Archeological Perspectives of Palmares: A Maroon Settlement in 17th century Brazil

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Abstract
The goal of the current paper is to analyze several interpretations made by analysts with the human sciences, especially by historical archeologist, about the Palmares Quilombo, a maroon settlement in 17th century Brazil. Presented with a multiplicity of views of this quilombo, one can conclude that there is no consensus in historical studies of this past community and culture, and, most importantly, that choosing and celebrating one of the historical accounts over others entails certain political positions.

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In the 18th century, a small Maroon settlement in South Carolina included four houses in a square measuring 17x14 feet. A larger one measured 700x120 yards and included 21 houses and cropland, accommodating up to 200 people. This town's people grew domesticated rice and potatoes and raised cows, pigs, turkeys, and ducks. The most successful Maroon settlement was Palmares in Brazil, established about 1605. It became larger than any of the North American communities, including over 200 houses, a church, four smithies, a six-foot-wide main street, a large meeting house, cultivated fields, and kingly residences. Palmares is thought to have been made up of a core of people from Angola, and they essentially created an African state in the Brazilian hinterland.