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Título do trabalho: Faunal remains from Cerrito da Soteia, PT-02, Ilha da Feitoria: Reviewing local and regional approaches to the economy and diet of the “moundbuilders”

Típo: Comunicação

Simpósio 7: Os Cerritos Revisitados Desde Uma Perspectiva Local, Regional e Macro-Regional

Resumo

Cerritos are archaeological sites comprising earthwork mounds and specific material culture, located across the pampa grasslands of modern-day Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina. Although their function has been debated since the nineteenth century; domestic sites, burial places, or symbolic territorial markers, various theoretical approaches with roots in the processualist paradigm have been used to explain the economy and diet of the moundbuilding populations based on the evidence for habitation. These include principles such as “economia húmeda”, “economia dúctil”, broad spectrum economy, broad spectrum diet and intensification. Faunal remains constitute one of the most commonly recovered forms of archaeological evidence, and are used to comprehend how these populations interacted with, and actively modified their environments, enabling the review of theoretical and interpretative approaches to economy and subsistence. This paper contextualizes faunal data from the southern Brazilian site PT-02, Cerrito da Sotéia, at the Ilha da Feitoria, Laguna dos Patos, dating to c. 1000 BP. The objective is to understand the relationship between this site and such narratives of regional occupation. Significant anthropogenic activity occurred at Laguna dos Patos from 2435±85 BP until 200±80 BP, with a local population occupying a range of littoral sites. Results from PT-02 reveal that, though cervids present a part of the biomass, with evidence for further bone processing, and related bone tool industries, the greatest biomass is represented by fish remains, of which the most abundant species are those most common within the lagoon today. The author argues that this is due to the predictability and abundance of this resource in the lagoon environment, pointing to economic choices driven by local resource availability. Fishing activities were most likely carried out within the lagoon, close to the Lagoa Pequena and arroyo Corrientes, two to three kilometres from the site, possibly using projectiles or harpoons. As such it appears that these groups were exploiting distinct environments in the locality, principally through fishing but also hunting and collecting. This information is compared with theoretical approaches and regional interpretations of Cerritos moundbuilder economy and subsistence.