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Chronological, taphonomical, and paleoenvironmental aspects of a Late Pleistocene
mammalian fauna from Guanambi, Bahia, Brazil

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Abstract

Bahia state is widely known for the presence of fossiliferous deposits of Late Pleistocene – early Holocene. Although most studies in the state have been carried out on cave environments, studies concerning natural tank deposits have been expanded in the last few years, particularly in other states of Northeast Brazil. Therefore, the present work aims to study two new natural tanks: “Lagoa das Abelhas” and “Lagoa do Rancho”, in Guanambi municipality, south-central Bahia, Brazil. The identified taxa include representatives of Xenarthra (*Eremotherium laurillardi*, cf. *Glossotherium* sp., *Pachyarmatherium brasiliense*, Glyptodontinae, *Propaopus sulcatus*, *Pampatherium humboldti*, and *Holmesina paulacouto*), Notoungulata (Toxodontidae), Proboscidea, Perissodactyla (*Tapirus terrestris* and *Equus (Amerhippus) neogaeus*), and Cetartiodactyla (Camelidae). The taphonomic analysis allowed the fossiliferous deposit from Lagoa das Abelhas to be classified as an *ex situ* assemblage, while the Lagoa do Rancho deposit was interpreted as a peripheral assemblage. Based on its paleofaunal composition, the landscape of the Guanambi region would have comprised open areas with pastures and patches with arboreal elements. The ^{14}C radiocarbon dating results point to ages of $22,230 \pm 55$ years for the Lagoa das Abelhas and $16,020 \pm 40$ years for the Lagoa do Rancho tanks, indicating that the Guanambi paleofauna lived during the Last Glacial Maximum, in a drier phase of the Late Pleistocene.

Keywords: Quaternary, Megafauna, Brazilian Intertropical Region

Introduction

The fossil record of Pleistocene mammals from the northeastern region of Brazil is mainly concentrated in caves and natural tank deposits, which demonstrate that this fauna was widely distributed (Viana et al, 2007). In Bahia state, natural tanks preserving this Pleistocene megafauna (herein considered as herbivores with a mass

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