NEW THOUGHTS ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSEMBLAGES OF THE SCIENTIFIC MISSIONS: THE MIDDLE STONE AGE LITHIC TECHNOLOGY OF LEBA’S CAVE (HUÍLA, SW ANGOLA)

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Resumo

Africa is the current focus of research on the issue of the emergence of humankind. With the increased amount of evidences suggesting that also the Homo sapiens lineage arisen in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle Stone Age has become a key period in the debate of the emergence of modern human behavior. The earliest dates for the pack of modern human behavior came from South Africa, but little is known about the neighboring territories such as Mozambique, Guinea or Angola that can bring important inputs to this question. These remain as important archaeological gaps.

The Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical (IICT) holds a large collection of lithic assemblages recovered by the fieldwork of Junta de Investigações do Ultramar (JIU) in Angola. One of the sites is Leba’s Cave in Huíla, SW Angola. Leba was excavated by Camarate França in the 1950s within the Anthropobiological Mission of Angola. It has a series of archaeological horizons embracing Early, Middle and Late Stone Age lithic artifacts and faunal remains that were just briefly published.

In this paper we present some preliminary results of the technological study of the lithic assemblage of Leba’s Cave. Our goals are (1) to shed light on the variability of stone tool production and use during the Middle Stone Age in Angola and (2) propose a chronological and cultural framework for this region.

Palavras-chave: Leba, Angola, Middle Stone Age, lithic assemblages, scientific missions

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