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# Introducing Jaljulia: A late Acheulian mega-site in central Israel

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## Résumé

Two excavation seasons at the newly discovered site of Jaljulia have revealed a rich archaeological layer, containing numerous flint artifacts and high number of handaxes in excellent preservation condition. The archaeological layer, found in changing depths of 2-5 m' below modern surface, is estimated to cover an area of at least 1 hectare, representing a dynamic fluvial deposition environment: A vast flood-plain was apparently formed in the contact between an ancient stream coming from the east (possibly the ancient route of the adjacent Nahal Qana) and the sand-dunes covered coastal plain, presenting an attractive location for human activity. Geological observations indicated that this area saw some transitions from a slow-flowing stream to a standing water body (swamp) and vice-versa. Also of note is the probable presence of a sweet water springs within the excavated area.

Six excavation areas were opened, exposing the archaeological layer over approximately 60 m<sup>2</sup>. Field observations pointed out some differences in techno-typological affinities between assemblages according to excavation areas, suggesting some spatial variability. Only one area (D) demonstrated bones preservation. Area G proved to be the most complex, presenting multiple archaeological horizons and a compound stratigraphy.

Preliminary techno-typological observations have demonstrated the existence of several technological trajectories, the most prominent is revolving around the production and maintenance of bifacial tools, including hundreds of handaxes. Another trajectory was aimed for the production of relatively thin and wide flakes through the use of prepared, central surface cores, conceptually resembling the later, more evolved Middle Paleolithic Levallois method. Other trajectories include the production of large flakes for massive scrapers as well as the extensive use of cores-on-flakes.

The site was ascribed to the Late Acheulian based on techno-typological affinities (e.g., handaxes morphology and the abundance of central surface cores). Magnetostratigraphic analysis demonstrated a normal polarity throughout the sequence. This talk aims to present the first two excavation seasons in Jaljulia, as well as preliminary results of a multidisciplinary study including a geomorphological analyses and dating attempts using OSL.

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**Mots-Clés:** Late Acheulian, Jaljulia, Lower Paleolithic