
Human occupations at Navalmaíllo Rock Shelter (Pinilla del Valle, Madrid, Spain)

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Résumé

The Navalmaíllo Rock Shelter lies in the upper reaches of the valley of the River Lozoya in the Sierra de Guadarrama mountains, some 80 km north of Madrid. This area is home to karstic cavities (caves, rock shelters) developed on the Upper Cretaceous dolomite that outcrops on the valley floor on both banks of the river over 1000 m asl.

The bone accumulation in Level F, which represents the main occupation of the site, has been interpreted as mainly anthropic in origin. Abundant evidence of lithic industry and the presence of hearths support this interpretation, as do cutting marks on the bones, signs of percussion, impact marks on the bones, percussion cones on green bones, burned bones, and the scant evidence of carnivore remains. Some bones also show tooth marks made by a small-medium sized carnivore that might have eaten the Neanderthals' leftovers. Although the taxonomic richness is high, the remains of herbivores are the most abundant in the sample.

As occurred in other mousterian european sites where quartz is used when is locally available, the lithic industry of level F has been knapped mostly in quartz. The sample has a clear tendency to microlithism. The most frequent knapping strategies are the bifacial and unifacial, combined with the centripetal, unipolar-longitudinal, orthogonal, discoid, bipolar and, to a lesser extent, levallois. Levallois in quartz is present in some european archaeological sites, normally depending on the good quality of the raw material. In this site, although present, levallois technique is scarcely used while knapping quartz.

The use-wear studies undertaken on the lithic industry confirm in several cases the use of quartz tools in these tasks of butchering, as well as in others related to wood and hide working.

Mots-Clés: Mousterian, Neanderthal, Campsite, Iberian Peninsula, Late Pleistocene.

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