
Nafta : A Middle Paleolithic site from South West of Tunisia : Paleoenvironmental changes and Human subsistence.

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Résumé

Abstract The site of Nafta is a new Middle Paleolithic Aterian locality discovered in 2013 in South-West of Tunisia. It is found in beach deposits on the northern margin of the endoreic depression of the Chott el Jerid. Currently the climate is arid and the basin desiccated, however, the beach deposit was formed in a past humid environment when the basin was full of water, forming a giant lake roughly the size of Belgium. Two seasons of excavation in 2015 and 2016 unearthed especially rich and well preserved faunal remains and lithics. OSL dates for the site range from 70 000 to 98 000 years ago. The fauna is characteristic of an open Savanna environment, whilst lithic material consists of flakes, cores and Aterian points. The site sheds light on the relationships between climate change in the Sahara and humans frequenting the site during the time when modern humans are thought to have dispersed across the Sahara.

Mots-Clés: MSA, Aterian, Nafta, Megalake, Tunisia

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