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Research Project

The blade industry from Abou-Sif (Israel) and the subsistence strategies of its makers.

Project funded by own resources

Project title The blade industry from Abou-Sif (Israel) and the subsistence strategies of its makers.

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This study analysed collections from the Abu Sif B and C sites that are housed in the IPH in Paris, Jerusalem University and the Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem.

The latest chronological and geographical data suggest the appearance of the laminar phenomenon in the heart of Palaeolithic in different places: the Near East, Central Asia, Europe and Africa. This activity seems to have developed over a long period and reflects different production strategies that always led to the production of an elongated support. In the Near East, the laminar phenomenon appears at the end of the Lower Palaeolithic immediately following the Acheulo-Yabrudian and is then seen systematically in the early Middle Palaeolithic and later in the heart of the Middle Palaeolithic.

Up today the comparison and interpretation of Abu Sif industries are limited to general observed tendencies. The Abu Sif site, with its low artefact density, was interpreted by Neuville as a short term occupation (1951:54). The low number of debitage by-products, and the high proportion of non-retouched and especially retouched blanks, suggests that the flaking took place away from the cave and that previously prepared blanks were introduced to the site. Furthermore, the homogeneity of tool-kits, with their pointed blades and short blanks, could indicate that particular activities were undertaken at the cave.

The Abu Sif lithic collection seems to be a part of the Early Middle Palaeolithic blade assemblages called Tabun D and is positioned in the stratigraphy above the Acheulo-Yabrudian.

The goal is to analyse the entire lithic assemblage from the site Abou Sif B and C to compare it with other blade industries from the Levant to better understand the subsistence strategies of early Homo sapiens, the most probable manufacturer of blade industries.

Keywords Blade industry, Tabun D, Middle Palaeolithic, Hummalian, Levant

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