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# Operational chains and technical decision making in the MSA in the rainforest of Equatorial Guinea

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## Résumé

The plasticity of technical behavior is considered a characteristic of the "modern cognition" of *Homo sapiens* and is the ability to adapt resources to specific needs to obtain a specific result, while a rigid (non-creative) behavior that is conditioned The properties and quality of the raw material is considered a condition of a "non-modern" mentality, either in *Homo sapiens* or in other hominin species.

The colonization of new ecosystems is another sign that is considered diagnostic of modern behavior. In order to document the appearance and dispersion of *Homo sapiens* in the rainforests of Central Africa, several sites of the Middle Stone Age (MSA) period have been excavated in the continental territory of Equatorial Guinea. The paleoenvironmental reconstruction of the MSA occupation of the Mabewe I site clearly demonstrates the habitation of human beings in the Guinean rainforest.

On the other hand, the analysis of operating chains of the lithic excavation and surface industry allowed to demonstrate the coexistence of four different technical processes in the same site and, most likely, contemporary with each other.

The presence of four different operational chains on the Mabewe site, which are not conditioned by the quality or class of raw material and that lead to different kinds of tools, documents the technical ability of the human beings who colonized the rainforest of Equatorial Guinea, approximately 50,000 years ago and the "modern" nature of their cognition, both by choosing the material and the appropriate technical procedure for each objective, and by their ability to survive and even modify the jungle environment for an extended period of time during the Pleistocene superior.

La plasticidad de comportamiento técnico es considerada una característica de la "cognición moderna" de *Homo sapiens* y consiste en la capacidad de adecuar los recursos a las necesidades específicas para la obtención de un resultado concreto, mientras que un comportamiento rígido (no creativo) y condicionado a las propiedades y calidad de la materia prima se considera una condición de una mentalidad "no moderna", ya sea en *Homo sapiens* o en otras especies de homínidos.

**Mots-Clés:** *Homo sapiens*, complex cognition, MSA, operative chains

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