
Final Pleistocene – Early Holocene complexes in the Eastern Caspian region.

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Résumé

During the Final Pleistocene-Early Holocene, the Eastern Caspian played an important role by being at the interfaces of multiple cultural territories and ecological niches. The Mesolithic assemblages from the region were attributed to the Trialetian complex by S.K. Kozłowski [1996], and later analyses supported this attribution [Brunet, 1999, Shnaider, 2015]. However the recent archaeological advances in Central Asia have brought new insights into the cultural diversities of this specific period of the human history. Thus, we propose in this paper to reinvestigate the question of the Eastern Caspian Mesolithic attribution in light of the new knowledge recently acquired by collection recoveries. In this aims, we present our analyses of the lithic assemblages from the multilayer key sites of Eastern Caspian – Dam-Dam-Cheshme 1 & 2. The lithic assemblages are characterised by the high frequency of blade/lets, geometric microliths (lunates, scalene triangles and trapezoids), backed pieces, notches/denticulates, scrapers, especially end scrapers. They show both strong technological and typological similarity with the contemporaneous Southern Caspian assemblages (Hotu, Kamarband, Ali-Tepe and Komishan), which were developed in the same environmental context [Jayez, Nasab 2014]. At the same time, some similarities on toolset (evolution of the shape variability of geometric microliths and metric characteristics) might be found with materials from Final Pleistocene- Early Holocene sites of Western Central Asia (Tutkaulian)[Shnaider et al. 2020]. However, our analysis identify differences with assemblages attributed to Trialetian industries (Chokh, Edzani and Hallan Çemi).

Thus, it seems that the Eastern-Southern Caspian macro region might have formed a cultural entity during the Final Pleistocene and Early Holocene, separated from the Trialetian culture. At the same time, during this period Caspian people might have maintained cultural interaction with the Tutkaulian population from the inner Central Asian territories.

Mots-Clés: Early Holocene, Eastern Caspian, lithic assemblage, Mesolithic

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