
The high Tafna (Tlemcen Mountains, extreme northwestern Algeria), an underexplored prehistoric hinterland :Preliminary results of the 2021 season survey.

Youcef Sam^{*1}, Mourad Betrouni , and Latifa Sari

¹Centre national de recherches préhistoriques anthropologiques et historiques – Algeria

Abstract

As part of a research project initiated by the CNRPAH (Centre national de recherches préhistoriques, anthropologiques et historiques) which aims to improve our understanding of the prehistoric human settlement in the Tafna basin (*western Orania*), a territory hydrographically and topographically divided into three areas, the low, the middle and the high Tafna; a specific survey mission was conducted in march-april 2021 in the latter and mountaneous territory (800-1400 m) which has so far delivered no evidence of an important prehistoric settlement (until a short survey in 2016) compared to the other two ones. The primary objective was to know whether this research gap is due to the fact that this area is really devoid of human repeated occupation or to the lack of explorations. Preliminary results seems to confirm the second hypothesis as several find spots with lithic artefacts dating in apperance from the final paleolithic to the neolithic were found in a geographic domaine almost completely dominated by karst phenomena (caves and rockshelters).

Keywords: Water, Karst, Cave, Shelter, Lithic Artifact, Raw material, Occupation

*Speaker