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# ESR/U-SERIES DATING OF THE PALAEOANTHROPOLOGICAL SITE OF QALEH KURD, IRAN - PRELIMINARY RESULTS

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## Résumé

Recent excavations organized at Qaleh Kurd Cave (Qazvin Province, Iran) in the frame of the joint French and Iranian Palaeoanthropological Project (FIPP) have provided the discovery of one in situ human decidual tooth associated with Mousterian-like archaeological artefacts and paleontological remains with evidence of human butchery in a 3m thick stratigraphic sequence subdivided in two sedimentary sub-sequences. The upper sub-sequence 1

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corresponds to Holocene deposits as demonstrated by radiocarbon dates ranging between 1,390 BP and 520 BP while the underlying sub-sequence 2 was dated by the same method older than 43,500 BP. In order to precise the age of this sub-sequence 2, herbivorous teeth were selected in two excavation trenches (Trench 1 and Trench 3) to be analyzed by ESR/U-series method. The preliminary ages obtained range from ca 150 to 450 ka, indicating that the main part of the sub-sequence 2 was deposited during the Middle Pleistocene. New analyses including in situ gamma dosimetry and additional ESR/U-series analyses would be performed in the few next years to confirm the antiquity of the dated levels, placing the site amongst the oldest human evidence in Iran.

**Mots-Clés:** ESR/U, SERIES, PALAEOANTHROPOLOGICAL SITE, QALEH KURD, IRAN