
The oldest prehistoric sites of Turkey and the expansion of the hominins between Africa, Europe and Asia during Pleistocene.

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Résumé

At the exit of Africa and at the crossroads between Asia and Europe, Turkey is a privileged zone to follow the animal and human dispersions through time. However few ancient prehistoric sites are known. Among these, Dursunlu has yielded lithic industries that, although not very characteristic, are dated to 1 Ma. At Kaletepe Deresi 3, obsidian assemblages including handaxes have been discovered, their age is currently debated.

In this context, the travertine of the Denizli Basin, whose upper deposits have preserved bones of large mammals as well as other indicators of biodiversity (leaves, crabs...) and a fragmentary skull of *Homo erectus*, corresponds to the only well-documented and dated spot of the whole region for the Early and beginning of Middle Pleistocene.

Indeed, a multidisciplinary work including a biostratigraphic approach, dating by cosmogenic nuclides, by paleomagnetism and by combined ESR/uranium-series, allowed to circumscribe the fossiliferous deposit between 1.6 and 1.2 Ma.

Moreover, an anthropological and cladistic analysis of the *Homo erectus* partial skull has highlighted its proximity to African fossils attributed to this species in the broad sense, notably those around 1 Ma (Daka-Bouri, Buia).

We can therefore suggest a common evolutionary history between these *Homo erectus* in East Africa and in Turkey, different from that of the Dmanisi fossils, dated to 1.8 Ma, who left Africa probably during a previous wave. We will discuss these possibilities by invoking all the proxies: paleogeography, paleoenvironment, fauna, hominins and their behaviors.

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