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L'acquisition et le traitement des matières végétales et animales par les néandertaliens : quelles modalités et quelles stratégies ?

The archaeological assemblages analyzed

Céline Thiébaut, Émilie Claud, Sandrine Costamagno, Michel Brenet, Maria Gema Chacón-Navarro, David Colonge, Aude Coudenneau, Marianne Deschamps and Vincent Mourre



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CHAPTER 1

The archaeological assemblages analyzed

(C. Thiébaud, É. Claud, S. Costamagno, M. Brenet, G. Chacón-Navarro,
D. Colonge, A. Coudenneau, M. Deschamps and V. Mourre)

The corpus analyzed under this project involved 18 archaeological levels located over 16 different sites. It differs slightly from that envisaged 10 years ago, for which the initial choices of assemblages was guided by the different work, whether in progress or completed, and the different archaeological issues being addressed by the members of the research project. The study of several assemblages has since had to be abandoned, because of the poor state of preservation of the remains (Cueva Morín and El Pendo for use-wear analysis on flake cleavers), because of difficulties encountered in accessing them, or because of the departure or professional reorientation of certain members of the research project. Although some assemblages have thus been abandoned, our corpus has also been enriched with assemblages from the ocean coast following the archaeological discoveries made by the Inrap teams (Bayonne le Prissé).

The different sites studied, which are mainly located in southwestern France (figure 171), with the exception of Payre, which is situated in the Ardèche and El Castillo in Cantabria, reflect a topographical diversity of sites occupied by Neanderthal groups (caves, cave entrances, rock shelters, foot of cliffs, avens, and open-air sites). The occupations of the levels studied are mainly attributed to the late Middle Palaeolithic, to OIS 3 and 4, with the exception of Coudoulous 1, which has been attributed to OIS 6 and Payre which has been attributed to OIS 7–8 (table 46).

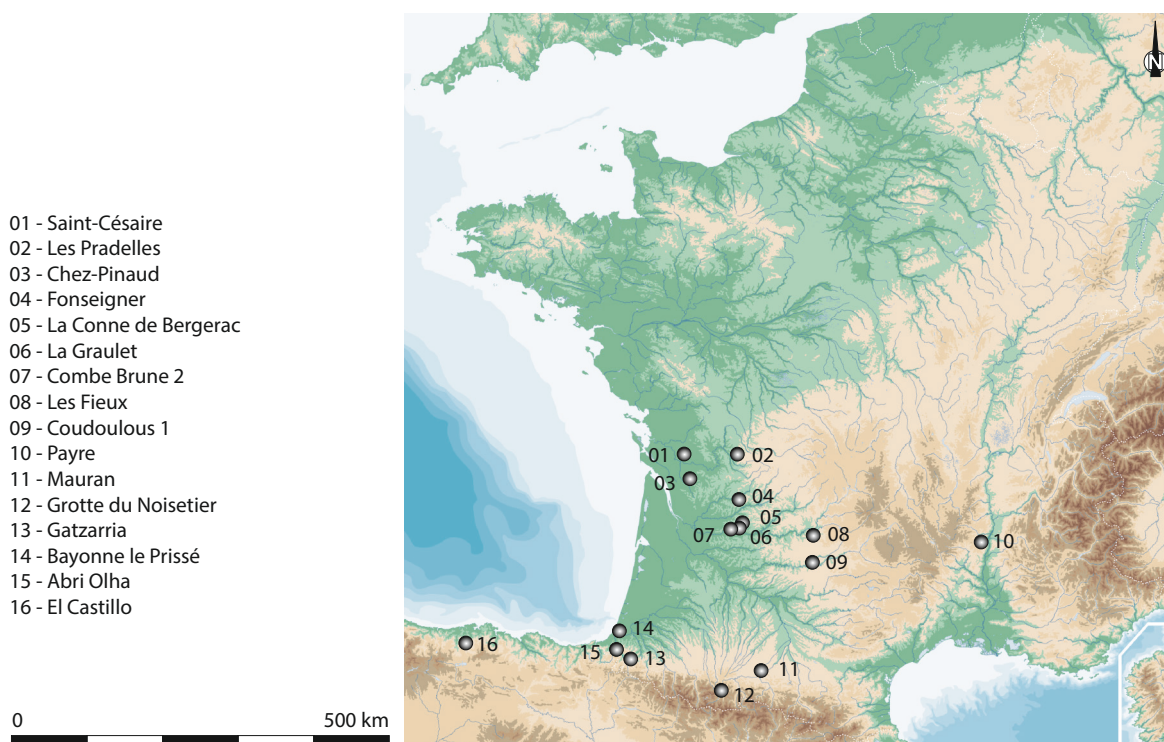


Figure 171 - Locations of the study sites included in the PCR study
(base map: géoatlas).

Site name	Location	Topography	Concerned level	Chronology	Raw material	Main flaking method	Associated retouched tools	Faunal association	Species	Environmental data	Proposed site function (before this work)	Analyses realized during this work	Bibliographical references
Abri Olha I	Pyrénées-Atlantique, France	rock shelter	Fi 3	-	flint, quartzite, quartz	<i>stricto</i> and <i>lato sensu</i> Discoid + secondary Levallois	side scrapers, denticulates, flake cleavers, bifaces	diversified but no recent study available	Red deer, Bison, Horse	-	occupation?	lithic technology (MD), use-wear analysis (EC)	Passemard, 1936; Deschamps, 2014, 2017
Abri Olha II		rock shelter	askf1	-	flint, quartzite, quartz	<i>stricto</i> and <i>lato sensu</i> Discoid + secondary Levallois	side scrapers, denticulates, flake cleavers, bifaces	present but unpublished	-	-	occupation?	lithic technology (MD), use-wear analysis (EC)	Laplace, Sáenz de Buruaga, 2000; Deschamps, 2014, 2017
Bayonne le Prissé		open air site	PM1	44.3 ± 1.9 ky (TL)	flint (scarce quartzite)	<i>stricto sensu</i> Discoid	scarce, side scrapers, denticulates, flake cleavers, bifaces	no fauna	-	-	knapping workshop	lithic technology (M.D, D C), use-wear analysis (EC)	Deschamps, 2014; Colonge <i>et al.</i> , 2015; Deschamps <i>et al.</i> , 2016
Bayonne le Prissé		open air site	PM2	-	flint (scarce quartzite)	preferential and centripetal recurrent Levallois	side scrapers, bifaces	no fauna	-	-	temporary occupation?	lithic technology (MD, DC), use-wear analysis (EC)	Colonge <i>et al.</i> , 2015, 2017a
Chez-Pinaud	Charente-Maritime, France	rock shelter	US 06/07	39 ± 3 ky (TL)	flint (very few items in very fine-grained green sandstone including a biface)	miscellaneous: Levallois, Discoid, combination of both	bifaces, side scrapers, denticulates, notches	diversified	<i>Bos</i> , <i>Equus</i>	quite temperate and relatively humid environment including forest cover	occupation?	use-wear analysis (EC)	Claud, 2008, 2012; Jaubert <i>et al.</i> , 2008
Combe Brune 2	Dordogne, France	open air site	level 2	63.1 ± 6.5 ky < Ivl 2 < 39.2 ± 4,0 ky (OSL)	flint	no flaking	bifaces, side scraper	no fauna	-	-	consumption site	lithic technology (MB), use-wear analysis (EC)	Claud, 2008; Brenet <i>et al.</i> , 2008; Frouin <i>et al.</i> , 2014; Brenet <i>et al.</i> , 2016
Coudoulous 1	Lot, France	aven	layer 4	157 ± 14 ky (ESR/US) 144 ± 11 ky (TT-OSL)	quartz, quartzite, flint	Discoid, bipolar on anvil (quartz and quartzite), centripetal recurrent Levallois (flint)	simple, double and convergent side scrapers (flint)	monospecific	<i>Bison priscus</i>	continental climate, low temperatures and maximum amplitudes (microfauna)	kill and primary butchery site, end of spring/early summer	lithic technology (VM), use-wear analysis (FV, CL)	Brugal <i>et al.</i> , 1996; Jaubert, Mourre, 1996; Jaubert <i>et al.</i> , 2005; Coumont, 2006; Hernandez <i>et al.</i> , 2015
El Castillo	Cantabria, Spain	cave entrance	layer Alpha (layer 20)	48.7 ± 3.4 ky 49.4 ± 3.7 ky (C ¹⁴ AMS)	quartzite, flint, quartz	<i>stricto</i> and <i>lato sensu</i> Discoid	side scrapers, denticulates, flake cleavers	diversified	Red deer, Bison, Horse	open environment prevailing with partial reforestation	?	flake cleavers technology (MD.), use-wear analysis (EC)	Cabrera Valdès, 1996; Dari, Renault-Miskovski, 2001; Bernaldo De Quirós <i>et al.</i> , 2006; Deschamps, 2014, 2017; Wood <i>et al.</i> , 2016
Fonseigner	Dordogne, France	cliff foot	Dsup	50.2 ± 5.3 ky (TL)	flint (+ quartz, quartzite, schist, mica schist, granite, gabbro pebbles)	Levallois	side scrapers, Mousterian points, bifaces (denticulates and notches rather of taphonomic origin)	diversified but no recent study available	<i>Bos</i> , <i>Elephas primigenius</i> , <i>Capreolus capreolus</i> , <i>Equus caballus</i> , <i>Rangifer tarandus</i>	-	production and consumption site	use-wear analysis (EC)	Geneste, 1985; Claud, 2008
Gatzarria	Pyrénées-Atlantique, France	cave	Cjr	>47.4 ky ; >50.3 ky (C ¹⁴ AMS)	quartzite, flint, quartz (+ other pyrenean rocks)	<i>stricto</i> and <i>lato sensu</i> Discoid	side scrapers, denticulates, flake cleavers	diversified but no recent study available	Red deer, Horse, Bison	-	occupation	lithic technology (MD), use-wear analysis (EC)	Barshay-Szmidt <i>et al.</i> , 2012; Deschamps, 2014, 2017
Grotte du Noisetier	Hautes-Pyrénées, France	cave	complete sequence	from 47 ± 2 ky BP (layer 3) to 29.5 ± 3 ky BP (US0) (C ¹⁴ AMS)	quartzite, flint, quartz (+ other pyrenean rocks)	<i>stricto</i> and <i>lato sensu</i> Discoid, Levallois on quartzite	side scrapers, denticulates, flake cleavers	poorly diversified	Red deer, Ibex (partly anthropic accumulation), Pyrenean chamois (non anthropic accumulation)	mountain climate, temperate environment close to present day's but more open (microfauna)	temporary occupation?	lithic technology (VM, CT, DC), use-wear analysis (EC), archeozoology (SC, AV, CL), retouchers (SC, CT, VM)	Mourre <i>et al.</i> , 2008a, 2008b; Mourre, Thiébaud, 2008; Costamagno <i>et al.</i> , 2008; Malliye <i>et al.</i> 2012a, 2012b; Thiébaud <i>et al.</i> , 2012; Costamagno, 2013; Jeannet, 2015
La Conne de Bergerac	Dordogne, France	open air site	unique level	end of OIS 4 (chrono-stratigraphy)	flint, quartzite	Levallois and Discoid	side scrapers, bifaces	no fauna	-	-	knapping workshop and consumption site	lithic technology (MB), use-wear analysis (EC)	Claud, 2008; Brenet <i>et al.</i> , 2016
La Graulet		open air site	lower level	end of OIS 4 (chrono-stratigraphy)	flint	Levallois	bifaces	no fauna	-	-	hunting camp?	lithic technology (MB), use-wear analysis (EC)	Claud, 2008; Brenet <i>et al.</i> , 2016
Les Fieux	Lot, France	aven	Kdenticulate	OIS 3 (microfauna)	quartzite, flint, quartz	<i>stricto sensu</i> Discoid	partly retouched tools, denticulates, notch	poorly diversified	Bison, Red deer, Horse	open environment	different occupations at different seasons including bison kill site during winter and early spring	lithic technology (CT, VM), use-wear analysis (AC, CT), archeozoology (MG), retouchers (MG, CT, SC)	Gerbe <i>et al.</i> , 2014
Les Pradelles	Charente, France	aven	facies 2A and 2B	2A : OIS 4 (fauna) 2B : 58 ± 4.8 ky BP (TL)	flint	Quina	side scrapers	monospecific	Reindeer	open and cold environment	hunting camp	archeozoology (SC, M-CS), retouchers	Costamagno <i>et al.</i> , 2006; Meignen <i>et al.</i> , 2007; Maureille <i>et al.</i> , 2010a, b; Rendu <i>et al.</i> , 2011, 2012; Royer <i>et al.</i> , 2013
Mauran	Haute-Garonne, France	cliff foot	XV2 (C2)	44 ± 3 ky BP (ESR)	quartzite, flint, schists, lydite	<i>stricto sensu</i> Discoid	denticulates, notches	monospecific	Bison	open environment	kill site and occupation site, end of summer	use-wear analysis (AC, CT)	Farizy <i>et al.</i> , 1994; Jaubert, Mourre, 1996; Rendu, 2007; Thiébaud <i>et al.</i> , 2011; Rendu <i>et al.</i> , 2011
Payre	Ardèche, France	cave	Ga	247 ± 29 ky (OIS 8-7)	flint, quartz, quartzite, basalt, limestone, sandstone	Discoid, orthogonal ("Levallois" and "Quina" strategies)	side scrapers, points (either retouched or not), denticulates, notches and a few bifacial tools	diversified	<i>Cervus elaphus</i> , <i>Bos primigenius</i> , <i>Equus ferus</i> , <i>Dicerorhinus hemitoechus</i> , <i>Elephas</i>	semi-forest environment, microfauna: open, cold and dry	occupation (accumulation of seasonal occupation, autumn and spring)	lithic technology (MG, C-N), use-wear analysis (AC)	Moncel <i>et al.</i> 2002, 2008, 2014; Grün <i>et al.</i> , 2008; Valladas <i>et al.</i> , 2008; Rivals <i>et al.</i> , 2009; Baena <i>et al.</i> , 2014
Saint-Césaire	Charente-Maritime, France	rock shelter	level Egpf	40.9 ± 2.5 ky BP (TL)	flint	<i>stricto</i> and <i>lato sensu</i> Discoid	scarce, denticulates	diversified	Bison, Reindeer, Horse	cold climate, open environment with meadows	occupation	lithic technology (CT), use-wear analysis (EC)	Morin, 2004 Thiébaud, 2005; Thiébaud <i>et al.</i> , 2009a

Table 46 - List of the sites and stratigraphic units included in the PCR study with succinct descriptions of topography, dates, technological, faunal, and environmental data; key publications from which this information was obtained.

The environmental data available on some of the archaeological levels indicates occupations involving a variety of contexts. The levels at Saint-Césaire, Mauran, Coudoulous, Les Fieux, and the cave entrance at El Castillo are thus attributed to cold, open environments, sometimes with a partial regaining of forest cover. The climatic context of Les Pradelles appears to have been very cold, as suggested by the presence of reindeer, while Payre presents an occupation level in a semi-forest environment associated with a cold, dry climate. Finally, the levels of Chez-Pinaud and Grotte du Noisetier are associated with a forest environment in a temperate, humid climate.

Depending on the levels studied, the fauna can vary in a specific aspect, reflecting different types of environment, as can it vary in terms of the diversity of species hunted. Some levels are dominated by a single species (bison at Mauran and Coudoulous and reindeer at Les Pradelles) or a majority species such as bison at Les Fieux and ibex at Grotte du Noisetier, while others involve a greater diversity of fauna (Chez-Pinaud, Payre, Saint-Césaire, and El Castillo, see [table 46](#)). Thus, based solely on the study of the fauna and lithic remains, depending on the sites, a relative diversity of occupation patterns seems to appear: seasonal or longer-term occupation for the sites of Payre, Chez-Pinaud, Saint-Césaire, Grotte du Noisetier, and Gatzarria, while others seem closely related to a dominant hunting or butchery activity (Coudoulous, Mauran, Les Fieux, Les Pradelles). Other levels could have had occupations more closely linked to lithic tool production activities such as Bayonne le Prissé PM1 and La Conne de Bergerac. The results of the use-wear analyses have allowed us to specify the occupation type for the majority of the sites in the corpus, particularly for the levels in which fauna are absent. We shall therefore discuss the different functions of the occupation levels in more detail in Part II, chapter 4.5.

From a technical point of view, with the exception of blade and bladelet debitage, the levels analyzed are a good illustration both of the wide diversity of raw materials used by Neanderthals (flint, quartz, quartzite, lydite, ophite, schist, ...) and of the great diversity in the technical objectives of the knappers and the types of tools present: bifaces, flake cleavers, flakes, Levallois flakes, pseudo-Levallois points, side scrapers, Mousterian points, denticulates, and notches.

Given the large faunal, technical and environmental diversity that characterizes the archaeological assemblages of the corpus ([table 46](#)), we would have liked to be able to examine them by means of a true interdisciplinary study crossing results from lithic technology, use-wear analysis, and zooarcheology with environmental data. However, data is missing for some levels. As the fauna has disappeared from the open-air sites of La Graulet, La Conne de Bergerac, Combe Brune 2 and Le Prissé, we were only able to combine technological analyses with the use-wear studies. For the levels at Abri Olha, some stratigraphic issues rendered a global and interdisciplinary analysis of the formerly identified levels irrelevant. For these levels, only the flake cleavers were analyzed in order to answer functional questions specific to this type of piece (Deschamps, 2014). Regarding the flake cleaver assemblages on the other side of the Pyrenees, it was not possible to access the faunal remains. However, the existence of recent zooarchaeological studies, available on the fauna from the sites of Coudoulous 1 and Mauran meant that it was not necessary to review them. Nevertheless, the poor state of the surfaces of the faunal remains from Coudoulous, Mauran and Les Fieux prevented us from carrying out a detailed analysis of the cutmarks in terms of their location and morphology. Furthermore, it was not possible to gain access to certain zooarchaeological or lithic assemblages from the Pre-Pyrenees, the Charente or the Charente-Maritime. In the end, only Grotte du Noisetier benefited from the different analyses and it is unfortunately not the easiest site to interpret from a stratigraphic point of view, nor the best preserved in terms of surface condition or the condition of the working edges of the lithic tools.