



First archaeological observations on Palaeolithic surface sites 2010 and damaged heritage sites 2015 in southern Syria

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While intensive research concerning the Paleolithic in northern and central Syria, especially, in the El Kowm area, has been conducted, the southernmost part of Syria is still, generally, a virgin area for prehistoric studies, in particular, those of the Paleolithic.

This poster addresses two different archaeological topics in the south of Syria. The first topic includes a brief study of surface collections from the site of Khawaby. The site has been found in 2010 during a survey conducted by the Damascus University and the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (DGAM) resulting in the recovery of 1212 stone artifacts from three adjacent sites (Khawaby, Sharar and Shayah). The small assemblage from Khawaby represents the first evidence for Middle and Lower Paleolithic artefacts in the region and can thus begin to fill the gap in the early Paleolithic landscape of southern Syria. The second topic discusses the documentation of damaged heritage sites, focusing on how the local community can be engaged to play a main role in the documentation and the protection procedures which were carried out by the DGAM in order to protect the heritage sites and the artefacts. More than 12 damaged heritage and illegally excavated sites have been documented by the author in 2015 during the armed conflict in the area.