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# L'utilisation du gibier au Middle et Later Stone Age à la Grotte des Pigeons, Taforalt, Maroc / The utilisation of game during the Middle and Late Stone Age at Grotte des Pigeons, Taforalt, Morocco.

Elaine Turner\*<sup>1</sup>, Louise Humphrey<sup>2</sup>, Abdeljalil Bouzouggar<sup>3,4</sup>, and Nick Barton<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Monrepos Archaeological Research Centre and Museum for Human Behavioural Evolution, Neuwied –  
Allemagne

<sup>2</sup>Centre for Human Evolutional Research, The Natural History Museum, London – Royaume-Uni

<sup>3</sup>Institut National des Sciences de l'Archéologie et du Patrimoine (INSAP) – Rabat, Maroc

<sup>4</sup>Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Department of Human Evolution – Leipzig,  
Allemagne

<sup>5</sup>Institute of Archaeology, University of Oxford, Oxford – Royaume-Uni

## Résumé

Since 2003, excavations at the Grotte des Pigeons at Taforalt have revealed an unparalleled sequence of Middle Stone Age (MSA) and Later Stone Age (LSA) occupations in the cave, dating to between 100,000 and 10,000 years ago, making this site an important locality in the study of the development of modern human behaviour in the Maghreb. Exceptionally well-preserved faunal remains from these deposits enabled us to undertake a diachronic study of the procurement and utilisation of game at Taforalt, against a background of changing cultural boundaries (MSA Aterian - late MSA - LSA) and changes in the utilisation of the site observed during the later part of the LSA. Assemblages of animal bone from the MSA and the LSA horizons were analysed and compared. On the whole, a pattern of procurement focussing mainly on medium-large sized animals, particularly Barbary sheep, whose carcasses were fully processed, is apparent in the MSA Aterian, late MSA and early LSA levels. It seems modern humans at Taforalt regularly exploited the same local and regional sources of game – a "hunting tradition" which appears to have continued throughout these periods. Interestingly, this tradition continued practically unchanged even when, at around 15 ka, the Iberomaurusian occupants of the cave shifted to a broader dietary spectrum, including hunting birds, collecting landsnails and the systematic harvesting and processing of wild plant foods (acorns, pine nuts). Barbary sheep was still the dominant game animal throughout this phase and their remains, in particular horn cores placed in graves from the Iberomaurusian period, indicate a secondary function for the crania of this species above mundane hunting and processing activities.

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