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Preliminary study of the quartzite industry of a new archaeological site, Ruidera-Los Villares

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In the Iberian Peninsula, ancient industries are, for the most part, located in open-air contexts, mainly in fluvial environments that cover the different basins of the Iberian Peninsula from the Atlantic coast to the Guadalquivir basin. A large number of these sites are formed by abundant lithic remains and, in in some cases, there is the appearance of faunal remains that allow a more complete approximation to the functionality of these sites.

The formation of the Iberian Peninsula by large sedimentary basins means that the study of these sites can be established following these depressed areas. Upper Guadiana Basin, in the centre of the Iberian Peninsula, is a historically abandoned area. However, recent excavations of other sites in the area such as Albalá and El Sotillo, with the presence of Large Cutting Tools, have begun to complete the history of the Lower Pleistocene in this area. That is why in 2023, a new archaeo-palentological site called Ruidera-Los Villares was excavated in the Upper Guadiana Basin. In this area several sites with Acheulean industry made of quartzite are located. Although it is a newly excavated site, an important discovery has been made of a lithic industry associated with a possible ancient industry made of quartzite, a predominant raw material in ancient dated industries due to its easy location in the form of pebbles used in the Iberian Peninsula in ancient chronologies to make bifaces but which in this case has been used to create an industry of small tools. However, despite being in an environment surrounded by lagoons, they are devoid of this raw material. The faunal remains found at the site dated from 346±23-21 (ESR and U series) [1] years ago, which could be correlated with an ancient industry, since the industrial aspects studied indicate features that are not very common in the context of the Upper Guadiana. Thus, we intend to present the first results of a technological and morphometric analysis of the first remains of lithic industry found at this site.

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References: [1] Martínez, D.G., Duval, M., Zhao, J., Feng, Y., Wood, R., Huguet, R., Cifuentes-Alcobendas, G., Palancar, C.A., Moya-Maleno, P.R., 2022. Los Villares locality (Ruidera, Castilla-La Mancha, Spain): a new Middle Pleistocene fossil assemblage from the Southern Iberian Plateau with possible evidence of human activity. Cuaternario Y Geomorfología/Cuaternario Y GeomorfologíA. 36, 7–35.