**MSA Site: Kulkuletti**

In civilized worlds people have separate places to do everything in their daily lives. They have rooms to eat, sleep, socialize, work, etc. The archaeological site Kulkuletti shows us that the population of early humans during the Middle Stone Age were no different than modern people. Kulkuletti was a stone workshop for the Homo Sapiens. At this site there were no fire hearths, bones (neither prey nor H. Sapien bones), or any other foreseen use for daily living other than a place to make their stone tools. The technology found at this site is normal for the time period when these H. Sapiens lived, but the site’s concentration and dispersion of the artifacts, flakes and cores, is what had archaeologists excited.

This small site began its excavation during 1972 under H. Wieckowska and F.A. Servello. They took in careful consideration what needed to be done to gather all available information from the site. Since the site is stratified they slowly scrapped away each layer and recorded the spot of any artifact that they came across. The documentation of the site was done in a manor that allows us to see how cluttered the site was with flakes and cores and the distribution of the flakes and cores. The stratified layers helped the archaeologists put the site back together.

Volcanic eruptions and shifts in the tectonic plates in the Ethiopian Rift Valley region formed the stratified layers. Kulkuletti is just south of the Lake Ziway, the most northern of the four large lakes in the region. The site was an
open-air site that was still in situ within the stratified layers. Today the region is a basin that has the Bul Bulla River running through it. There is Mt. Cilalo and the Somali Plateau on the eastern side and basin/plain like regions to the west. The Rift Valley is a great place to find archaeological sites due to the volcanic activity and the ease of dating the sites.

There are several different ways to date a site and the artifacts found at that site. In the Rift Valley the most efficient method is K/Ar or Ar/Ar dating, because of the accurate dates this method can come up with. When this procedure was done with samples from the Kulkuletti and the Gademotta, a site in the same area, the dates ranged from .181 MYA to .013 MYA. The later dates were found in the lower stratified layers and the more recent dates were in higher layers. Since there were no faunal remains we cannot correlate these dates with known faunal dates.

This area of the world was, is and still will be a changing landscape until the world ceases to be. The sites are now found in the Galla Basin which was described earlier as a mountainous region with valleys and plains. The current day fauna is consisted of light and scattered tree cover, grasses and shrubs. The lakes that are currently in the region have not always been there. During the occupancy of the site there were fluctuating water levels which helped sculpt the landscape today. The fauna and environment are similar to that of old and the animals found at the Gademotta site are found in the present day environment but in their evolved form.
The workshop at Kulkuletti is a typical MSA or MP site with all the trademark signs of the stone industries during this time period. The largest concentration of stone artifacts at the site was of the Levallois industry. The flakes that are made during the manufacturing of the Levallois tools cluttered the ground in such a manor it was next to impossible to put a specific function to the site. This site shows all the preparation process stages known in the Levallois industry. The presence of every type of Levallois technology shows that the H. Sapiens in the region depended on that technology very frequently in their daily living. There are 2500 core preparation flakes, 38 cores, 305 flakes, 105 blades and thousands of other Levallois type flakes scattered throughout the site. The raw materials used for the stone tools was mainly material that could be found in close proximity of the site. Mainly all volcanic rock like obsidian. The site was classified as a MSA or MP site because of the K/Ar dating and because of the extensive amount of Levallois stone tools found at the site.

Even though there was an extensive amount of tools and their flakes contained in the site there were no bones to be found. But at a site not too far away, excavated at the same time, Gademotta there were remnants of game. At Gademotta archaeologists found the remains of equids, hippopotamus and antelope. Out of these three the favorite or most abundant prey was the antelope, although there was no proof for eating at Kulkuletti.

The only feature of this site that stands out is the amount of artifacts that were recovered from this site in such a small area. The spatial distribution of the
artifacts helps us and hurts us. On one hand the distribution of artifacts tells us that there were more than one period of occupation or work at the site. But the down side is Mother Nature has disturbed the artifacts over the years. During the period when the earth surrounding the artifacts was new rain, faunal roots and plate activity could have disrupted the lay of the artifacts. Due to this disturbance and the sheer number of artifacts cluttering the ground we cannot pinpoint any one workstation or organization of labor. But we do know that the site was occupied for some time and use more than once.

From the evidence this site has given archaeologists they can prove that during the MSA/ MP hominids of this era revisited sites and possibly had a place to do their stone preparation. This might show early signs of culture or communication abilities of hominids. This site also gives a view of the entire Levallois industry from one site.