

Abstract

The preliminary results of an intensive thirteen-month field programme are reported. Components of this programme included (1) an archaeological survey of the central Rift Valley stratified using elevation and precipitation, (2) test excavations at nine sites, (3) a re-evaluation of the geological stratigraphy and archaeology of Nderit Drift, (4) a witness section at Lion Hill Cave, (5) a re-analysis of archaeological material from Gamble's Cave, including the 1964 witness section excavated by Isaac and Clarke, (6) a re-analysis of pastoral 'Neolithic' pottery traditions from central Kenya, (7) a geological survey of occurrences of volcanic glass in the central Gregory Rift, and (8) test excavations at three sites at Lukenya Hill. Particularly significant discoveries include (1) an extensive Late Pleistocene fossil locality containing sealed occupation horizons, (2) sealed, datable occurrences of wares from six pottery traditions, including Akira (formerly 'T.I.P.'), Nderit (formerly 'Gumban A') and Narosura stratified in separate occurrences within the same site, (3) an early pastoral 'Neolithic' occurrence in which activity areas are clearly reflected in the composition and abundance of flaked stone tools and debris, and (4) forty archaeological occurrences interstratified in a complex series of lacustrine and alluvial strata at Nderit Drift.