

DIET ANALYSIS FOR LATE MIOCENE CATARRHINES FROM NAKALI IN KENYA

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One of the most interesting issues for research on the fossils is to shed light on ecological reconstruction of these fossil species. Dental remains can be a very good indicator for dietary adaptation of the species. The topographical analysis for molars can tell us general diet pattern, and the microwear indicates the diet of which the animal ate just few days before its death. Nakali, a Late Miocene fossil site in Kenya, had a great diversity of primates. Two species of large hominoids, at least three species of small non-cercopithecoid catarrhine, and several old world monkeys include colobines have been recovered from Nakali. There would be food segregations among Nakali primate species. The purpose of this study was to investigate dietary adaptation of Nakali fossil primates using the topographical analysis for outer morphology of molars and the microwear analysis for the second molar. Colobine monkey from Nakali had scratch dominant microwear, whereas others had pit dominant microwear. Colobine monkey from Nakali had higher occlusal relief and longer shearing crests than other species. This early colobus already had more folivorous diet. Other species from Nakali had similar diet pattern.

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