

SETTLING AT HIGH ALTITUDES. Intra-site and inter-site variability, site-function and mobility of hunter-gatherers and the first agropastoralists

Session #319

Theme: archaeology_of_mountainous_landscapes

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Evidence of prehistoric settlement at high altitude is becoming more and more widespread. This demonstrates humans started occupying mountainous/high altitude landscapes across Europe soon after habitation in these regions commenced and whenever environmental conditions allowed it. Numerous projects developed at both territorial and site level are yielding a varied and rich record, highlighting the variability of settlement choices made at different times and depending on altering landscape use.

This session looks at highland occupation from a site-level perspective in the period spanning from the Palaeolithic to the early Neolithic. It also tries to explore the impact of different natural and cultural changes, such as climatic fluctuations and the shift to agropastoral subsistence. It focuses on the function and spatial organization of activities observed at high altitude settlements as well as on patterns of resource exploitation, thus also relating to year-round mobility cycles. By adopting a site-level perspective an important role will furthermore be played by data concerning dwelling structures, as well as artefact and ecofact chaînes opératoires, linking indirectly to activities taking place both within and beyond the studied sites themselves.

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