

Submitted Abstract

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Abstract

The Upper Paleolithic open-air site at high-altitude of Montlleó (Prats i Sansor, La Cerdanya, Spain) is located in the Coll de Saig, a small hill in the middle of the Cerdanya valley at an altitude of 1,144m. The site has been identified as an early settlement in the Axial Pyrenees just after the Last Glacial Maximum, around 18,000 BP. The location of the site is considered to be a strategic point, not only in terms of a hunting site, but also as a camp with probably other aggregation purposes.

To carry on with this study, we have diverse elements of an ornamental nature, such as beads and perforated shells, together with several ochre remains, all of them ranging from the Upper Late Solutrean and the Badegulian to the ancient Magdalenian. These ochre evidences, together with lithics and bone industries, describes a context mainly of hunting activities, but they also suggest a cultural interest beyond their economic value, as could be determined by the analysis of their provenance, reinforced by the repeated use of it in various supports, mainly ornaments, and their appearance in the form of raw material too.

The aim of this work is to present a first cultural approach to correlate ochres, lithic raw materials and ornaments origins from a cultural point of view, considering this high-altitude location of the site of Montlleó.

The methodological approach considers the comparison between archaeological and natural evidences of ochre analysed under the same methodological conditions in order to define its economical functionality, according to its provenance, as well as its potential symbolic use, concerning their presence in various supports, of evident cultural value.