Dynamics of hunter-gatherers in the western Mediterranean: Southern Europe and North Africa between 18,500-10,000 cal. BP

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The research of hunter-gatherer societies in the Mediterranean biogeographical region covers a wide territory, but with diverse ecosystems, from southern France, the Iberian Peninsula, through Italy and northern Tunisia-Morocco. In each of these areas, there are different research traditions with distinct methodologies that often prevent comparisons between the results. This research tradition has also focused on defining cultural characteristics at the regional level, that has resulted in varied nomenclatures (eg. Badegoulian-Magdalenian-Epigravettian-Iberomaurusian; Epipalaeolithic-Epimagdalenian-Azilian) used to name the latest Palaeolithic technocomplexes and human groups of the same chronology.

Thus, we raise the following questions about inter-regional differences:

The differences that a priori exist between the diverse territories may be a consequence of the research tradition and/or the methodologies used. If this were the case, the existence of possible similarities between the territories should be considered.

If, on the contrary, we admit that the differences observed are not related to the research tradition or methodology, we should ask ourselves why these differences occur.

1- Which are the studies used to define the human groups at the regional level (lithic industry, fauna, flora, territory, art, burials...)?

2- How do climate changes or different ecosystems affect human groups in each region? Are there similar adaptive processes?

3- How do the different previous cultural traditions influence the development of human groups in Africa and in Europe in this chronology?

These questions form the starting point to establish a common methodology of study, capable of assessing if there is a process of regionalization on those dates of the Upper Palaeolithic and if the existence of common features between the territories can be formulated. The session aims to be a platform for viewing and discussing the results obtained in the different fields of research that support the study of hunter gatherers between 18,500-10,000 cal. BP in the Mediterranean biogeographical region. Therefore, in the face of the increasing specialization of research projects, we propose an effort of synthesis of an interdisciplinary nature. In this sense, we invite you to present works that show the dynamics of human groups, connecting the main axes of study: resources (biotic and abiotic), technology, paleoenvironment, symbolism, settlement / occupation patterns. All this included in an updated radiocarbon chronology, which allows to establish a common chronological framework for the different regions.
Which are the influences that affect the cultural characteristics of the hunter-gatherer groups in each region?

Western Mediterranean: Southern Europe and North Africa

Starting Point

Research tradition by region

Field of research

Methodology

Approach

Common framework update

Interdisciplinary works

Final objective

Compare results

Are there a regionalization process?

Are there any common characteristics?