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# The high mountain exploitation onset. New prehistoric occupation evidence in Central Pyrenees (Ordesa and Monte Perdido National Park).

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## Abstract

The beginning of the so-called high-mountain archaeology has proved the use of inhospitable territories during different prehistoric periods. High altitude archaeological sites usually show a scarce material culture probably due to short and intermitent uses. Therefore, the absence of these cultural materials and/or domestic species can question a reliable anthropic use.

Here we address two new prehistoric sites found as a result of an intensive archaeological prospection during three campaigns that covered a territory of 400 ha (1700-2000 masl) inside the Ordesa and Monte Perdido National Park. The excavations of both sites, Cueva FP5 and Mallata Valle Pardina, reveal a simple stratigraphy probably due to a stational use, typical of a pastoral economy. Radiocarbon dates confirm the contemporaneous occupation of both sites (second half of the 3rd millennium cal BC). Archaeological remains, mostly pottery with carenated beakers, also help us to confirm the chronocultural period.

Our results have confirmed the occupation and exploitation of this territory since at least the second half of the 3rd millennium cal BC. Further surveys and excavations in the area will help us to precise the origin and extension of the (pre)historic human occupations.

**Keywords:** Prospection, shepherding, caves, rockshelters, Final Neolithic, Chalcolithic, Bronze Age

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