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# Adaptation and sustainability of humans and natural environment. From the last hunter-gatherers to the first farmers and shepherds in the south of Catalonia.

Margarida Genera Monells<sup>\*1</sup>, Maria Garcia Barberà<sup>2</sup>, and Francesc A. Lavega Serra<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (Barcelona) (UNED) – Spain

<sup>2</sup>Universitat de València (UV) – Spain

<sup>3</sup>Universidad a Distancia de Madrid (UDIMA) – Spain

## Abstract

Through this article we intend to present the results of the investigation of a set of records that correspond to the period of time between the late Pleistocene and early Holocene in the territorial framework which coincides with the actual regions of southern Catalonia with coastal facade: Baix Camp, Baix Ebre and Montsià, in addition to the Priorat and Ribera d'Ebre, in order to draw conclusions that allow us to detect the strategies that used the last communities of hunter-gatherers, to continue the sociocultural progress that entails the passage to the Neolithic in these places. Considering that the study of prehistory is not limited to the tools of these societies, which have been preserved to this day, but also involves the reconstruction of the paleoenvironment in which all their activities are developed. We gather all evidence: archaeological, geological, faunal and pertaining to the landscape which -according to our criterion- is more significant for formulating an interpretative hypothesis, allowing us to sketch a picture of the environment. It comes to the development of a synthesis which constitutes a first approximation to pursue further research. The interest of the subject lies in being in a geographical area that presents a varied landscape rich in natural resources, exploited since the early stages of prehistory with a coastal front between the courses of the rivers Francolí and Sènia; the existence of wetlands, passing through the network of the Ebro (with its tributaries the rivers Siurana and Montsant), with a changing delta formation, which develops in fertile land, raw materials and basic foodstuffs; mountain areas of strong relief with rich and varied georesources in easy reach, as well as cavities of some length, suitable as living spaces. Therefore, it is no wonder the long list of researchers who have preceded us that already studied several sites in the area which have become today a scientific reference for its stratigraphic record, like the cave of La Mallada (Perelló) as well as the shelter of St. Gregory in Falset and the whole complex of deposits of the banks of the river Montsant in el Priorat, amongst countless other sites, such as the more than a hundred sites with surface stone tools, as well as an unknown number of archaeological sites, the result of emptying inventories Archaeological Heritage of Catalonia (IPAC), in addition to the most the most important rock art sites known in the northeast of the peninsula, where the Levantine and Schematic art coexist. In addition we have the recent discoveries of rock art in the Montsant and the Ports which make us consider the existence of a richness of quaternary settlements in this territory. The analysis of these artistic manifestations gives us valuable information on the behaviour of these human groups as well as an approach to their beliefs and religion.

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\*Speaker

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