
Mesolithic Montology: a space for connection

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Abstract

The use of mountain environments is a recurrent feature of Mesolithic settlement patterns across Europe, with evidence for a wide variety of hunter-gatherer uses of these landscapes. The ways in which humans live in mountain landscapes is an inherently inter disciplinary study, sometimes called Montology (Rhoades 2007). Most of these reviews, however, focus almost exclusively on agricultural adaptations to mountain environments and there is little consideration of hunter-gatherer use of mountains. There is a therefore a significant opportunity for Mesolithic archaeology to contribute to these broader debates and offer important long-term perspectives on how hunter-gatherers used mountain landscapes and how, as these landscapes changed over time people's activities changed. A recent synthesis from Price (Price 2015) outlines three reasons that mountains have been important to people (although all of his examples are agricultural): as sources of food; sources of valuable minerals and precious stones and as places of great cultural importance. This paper will use this framework to begin to sketch out an overall perspective on mountains and the Mesolithic. The intention is to open discussion and provide space for networks and connections with colleagues.

Price M. F. (2015) *Mountains: a very short introduction*. Oxford, Oxford University Press
Rhoades R. (2007) *Listening to the Mountains*. Dubuque, Kendall/Hunt Publishing

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