
The Mesolithic of La Baume de Monthiver (Vallée du Jabron, Var): context and nature in a mid-mountain holocene occupation

Guilia Ricci*¹, Antonin Tomasso², Benjamin Audiard³, Leïla Hoareau⁴, Marie-Anne Julien⁵, Carlo Mogni^{7,6}, Louise Purdue⁸, and Guillaume Porraz⁹

¹Archéologies et Sciences de l'Antiquité (ArScAn - AnTET) – Université Paris Nanterre : UMR7041 – Maison René Ginouvès Boîte 3 21, allée de l'université 92023 NANTERRE CEDEX, France

²Travaux et recherches archéologiques sur les cultures, les espaces et les sociétés (TRACES) – École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Université Toulouse - Jean Jaurès, Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique : UMR5608 – Maison de la Recherche, 5 allée Antonio Machado 31058 TOULOUSE Cedex 9, France

³Culture et Environnements, Préhistoire, Antiquité, Moyen-Age (CEPAM) – CEPAM - UMR7264 – Université Nice Sophia Antipolis Campus Saint-Jean-d'Angély - SJA3 24, avenue des Diables Bleus 06357 Nice Cedex 4, France

⁴Cultures et Environnements Préhistoire, Antiquité, Moyen Âge (CEPAM) – CNRS : UMR7264, Université Côte d'Azur (UCA) – France

⁵Histoire naturelle de l'Homme préhistorique (HNHP) – Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Université de Perpignan Via Domitia, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique : UMR7194, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique : UMR7194 – Institut de Paléontologie Humaine 1, rue René Panhard 75013 Paris, France

⁷Culture et Environnements, Préhistoire, Antiquité, Moyen-Age (CEPAM) – 7264 – Université Nice Sophia Antipolis Campus Saint-Jean-d'Angély - SJA3 24, avenue des Diables Bleus 06357 Nice Cedex 4, France

⁶Géoazur – Université Côte d'Azur, CNRS, IRD, Observatoire de la Côte d'Azur, Géoazur – Bât 1, 250 rue Albert Einstein Les Lucioles 1, Sophia Antipolis 06560 VALBONNE, France

⁸Culture et Environnements, Préhistoire, Antiquité, Moyen-Age (CEPAM) – Université Nice Sophia Antipolis [UNS], CNRS : UMR7264, Université Nice Sophia Antipolis (UNS) – Université Nice Sophia Antipolis Campus Saint-Jean-d'Angély - SJA3 24, avenue des Diables Bleus 06357 Nice Cedex 4, France

⁹Laboratoire méditerranéen de préhistoire Europe-Afrique (LAMPEA) – Aix Marseille Université : UMR7269, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique : UMR7269, Ministère de la culture – MMSH 5 Rue du château de l'Horloge BP 647 13094 AIX EN PROVENCE CEDEX 2, France

Abstract

In the northern Mediterranean basin, the dominant model favours the idea of continuous and polymorphic cultural processes from the Pleistocene to the Holocene, and the Early Mesolithic of the Liguro-Provençal region is usually considered arising from the Epigravettian

*Speaker

traditions. The reality and significance of this process is nonetheless still under debate. A clear reading of this historical process appears hindered by the reduced number of sites and the scarcity of archaeological data in the region, in contrast to the major neighbouring areas (e.g. south-western France or north-eastern Italy). Moreover, archaeological assemblages from the Liguro-Provençal zone reveal a remarkable heterogeneity, but multiple explanatory factors - environmental, functional and/or cultural - remain to be explored.

The recent excavations at La Baume de Monthiver (Vallée du Jabron, Var), brings new data on the Early Mesolithic technical and subsistence practices, as well as on the mobility of the human groups, and the evolution of the local environmental conditions of a mid-mountain settlements in the pre-alpine territories. The human occupations of La Baume de Monthiver (1) show the absence of geometrical armatures, a recurrent feature in regional mesolithic assemblages; (2) offer information on the presence of marine shell ornaments (*Columbella rustica*) pointing to links between the coastline and this mid-mountain valley; (3) highlight subsistence strategies (fauna and carp remains) indicating a diversified collecting in the environment close to the site and (4) are related to an environmental evolution marked by the climatic event 8.2.

Here we will draw up a general assessment of the multidisciplinary study of the level M-B' of La Baume de Monthiver and proposes interpretative avenues within the wider context of the Mediterranean Mesolithic.

Keywords: Liguro, Provençal region, Early Mesolithic, mesolithic assemblages without geometrical armatures, climatic event 8.2