

# Analyzing the landscape in the pre-Pyrenees inhabited by Neanderthals

May 12 2020

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Roca dels Bous. Credit: A. Benito Calvo

Researcher Alfonso Benito Calvo, head of the Geomorphology and Formation Processes line of research at the Centro Nacional de Investigación sobre la Evolución Humana, is the lead author of a paper

just published in the journal *Quaternary Research* that analyzes the formation of Roca dels Bous (Lleida, Spain), which was inhabited by Neanderthals, in relation to the evolution that took place of this landscape in the pre-Pyrenees over the last 60,000 years.

In the paper, the processes that intervened during the Neanderthal occupation of this Mousterian site in the gorge of the Segre River (Sant Llorenç de Montgai) were investigated using 3-D geomorphological techniques using drones, as well as stratigraphic, statistical and luminescence dating (OSL) techniques.

"The [landscape](#) we see today is very different from that inhabited by the Neanderthals. Roca dels Bous was not a vantage point overlooking the valley. On the contrary, the data indicate that it lay next to the valley bottom, and the Neanderthals had the resources offered by the Segre River floodplain, which was wider than it is now," explains Benito Calvo.

Reconstructing how the landscape in this zone evolved is key to understanding the Neanderthal occupation patterns in this territory, which served as a nexus between the rest of Europe and the Iberian Peninsula by connecting the highlands of the Pyrenees with the Ebro Basin.

**More information:** Alfonso Benito-Calvo et al. Reconstructing Mousterian landscapes in the southeastern Pyrenees (Roca dels Bous site, Pre-Pyrenees ranges, Spain), *Quaternary Research* (2020). [DOI: 10.1017/qua.2020.29](https://doi.org/10.1017/qua.2020.29)

Provided by CENIEH

Citation: Analyzing the landscape in the pre-Pyrenees inhabited by Neanderthals (2020, May 12) retrieved 26 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2020-05-landscape-pre-pyrenees-inhabited-neanderthals.html>

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