



Universitat  
Pompeu Fabra  
Barcelona



SimulPast and CaSEs workshop on socio-ecological systems

**Empty spaces or creative interfaces?  
A multi-scalar perspective on current dryland archaeology.**

Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF) – Campus de la Ciutadella – Auditori Merce Rodoreda  
15-17 February 2017  
Barcelona

A workshop sponsored by the [Simulpast project](#).

Flexibility, opportunism, and resilience: these are the factors driving human life in low-resource environments such as arid and semi-arid lands. Recent research in Old World's drylands is progressively reverting traditional assumptions and paradigms, revealing unexpected scenarios for past human frequentations of African and Asian deserts. Doubtlessly, the end of the Middle Holocene climatic optimum posed new challenges to past societies, which reacted in a different way to a set of climatic disturbances occurred during the fourth and third millennia BC. The onset, and/or increase of arid conditions triggered a broad spectrum of responses, ranging from societal collapse to adaptation to the new settings. The archaeology of drylands has generally focused on main settlements with permanent or semi-permanent water resources, such as oasis or river systems. Yet, the '*outside world*' set at the *periphery* been the place of often-neglected innovation and development. Mixed agro-pastoralism, rapid shifts in settlement pattern, expedient farming practiced by nomadic herders, and other less known strategies have likely played a crucial role in coping with erratic rainfalls and patchy resources. A previously unknown set of late prehistoric and historical vestigial remains in the form of tombs, settlements, forts, campsites, quarries, and rock art from the last five millennia is currently under the spotlight and testifies of the success of these strategies. Ranging from large-scale approaches, mainly using Earth Observation techniques, to micro-scale investigations focused on resources exploitation, different research projects are establishing new baselines for the comprehension of the cultural trajectories at the dawn of the current arid period. Due to their patchy and scarce vegetation, low urbanization, excellent visibility of archaeological remains, and often exceptional state of preservation, drylands are an ideal scenario for the application of non-destructive, non-invasive, and cost-effective investigations. In this symposium, we aim at gathering scholars actively engaged in research projects in hot and cold drylands that use a multi-proxy approach for the reconstruction of past-to-present human-environment interactions.

### **Confirmed invited speakers**

John Kinahan (Namib Desert Archaeological Survey)

Cameron Petrie (University of Cambridge, UK)

Remy Crassard (Laboratoire Archéorient, MOM - Lyon, FR)

Saverio Kratli (International Commission on Nomadic Peoples)

Andrea Zerboni (University of Milan, IT)

Alfredo González-Ruibal and Jorge DeTorres (INCIPIT-CSIC, Galicia, SP – and British Museum, UK)

Michael Frachetti (Washington University in St. Louis)

Gian Luca Bonora («L.N. Gumilev »Eurasian National University, Astana, KZ)

### **Website**

Details of the workshop, including the programme, maps, and information on how to reach Barcelona and the workshop venue can be found on the [workshop webpage](#) that will be constantly updated.

### **Call for Papers**

\*\*\* Attendance to the workshop is free \*\*\*

Abstract submission: 15<sup>th</sup> December 2016

Abstract Length: max 250 words

Notification of Acceptance: 20<sup>th</sup> December 2016

To register and submit your abstract, please fill the online [Registration Form](#) (you can access the registration form also via the webpage)

### **Venue**

UPF Campus de la Ciutadella – [Auditori Mercè Rodoreda](#)

### **Organizers and contacts**

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### **Co-Organizers**

Jorge Caro Saiz (CSIC), Debora Zurro (CSIC), Marco Madella (ICREA, UPF, CSIC)

**Management and administration:** Marta Perellò (UPF)

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[Simulpast Project](#) - Gobierno de España - MINECO



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