

The recolonization of the southern Alps at the end of the Pleistocene and in the Early Holocene. New researches and perspectives.

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The Alpine area is one of the most interesting territories for the study of the last European hunter-gatherer groups. Although it was completely inaccessible during the Last Glacial Maximum, the favourable paleoclimatic conditions of the Late Glacial allowed an early deglaciation of the area. In the southern part of the Alpine chain human presence is attested since around 17,000 cal BP. With the beginning of the Holocene the recolonization process became quite intense as testified by the several hundred sites and find spots that were so far identified in the Alpine uplands and along the main valley bottoms. In this talk the current state-of-the-art of research in the south-eastern Alps will be summarized and some recent and ongoing projects aimed at understanding how this peculiar environment was exploited by the Late Palaeolithic and Mesolithic groups will be presented.

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