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## **Le Magdalénien supérieur dans le sud de l'Aquitaine (France). Réflexion à partir des archéoséquences de la grotte Bourrouilla (Arancou, Pyrénées-Atlantiques) et de l'abri du Grand Pastou (Sorde-l'Abbaye, Landes)**

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*Magdalenian chrono-stratigraphic correlations and cultural connections between Cantabrian Spain and Southwest France...and beyond.*  
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## **Le Magdalénien supérieur dans le sud de l'Aquitaine (France)** *The Upper Magdalenian in the south of Aquitaine (France)*

### **Réflexion à partir des archéoséquences de la grotte Bourrouilla (Arancou, Pyrénées-Atlantiques) et de l'abri du Grand Pastou (Sorde-l'Abbaye, Landes)** *Reflection from the archeosequences of the Bourrouilla cave (Arancou, Pyrénées-Atlantiques) and the rockshelter of the Grand Pastou (Sorde-l'Abbaye, Landes)*

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**Résumé :** La grotte de Bourrouilla à Arancou (Pyrénées-Atlantiques) et l'abri du Grand Pastou à Sorde-l'Abbaye (Landes) sont deux gisements de l'extrême sud de l'Aquitaine, situés dans le piémont pyrénéen ou à son immédiate proximité. Ils font l'objet de fouilles programmées mettant en œuvre des méthodes d'enregistrements fins des données de terrain et livrent des séquences stratigraphiques comparables où le Magdalénien supérieur est bien représenté. La démarche adoptée sur les deux sites présente des analogies, notamment quant à la vérification de l'état de conservation des différents niveaux d'occupation.

Le croisement des données archéologiques issues des deux sites conduit à identifier des parentés évidentes et des différences. Si le cerf (*Cervus elaphus*) tient une place essentielle dans la faune chassée sur les deux sites et si la chouette harfang (*Bubo scandiacus*) est bien représentée, le saumon (*Salmo salar*) est rare au Grand Pastou alors qu'il est abondant dans certains niveaux de Bourrouilla. Les équipements lithiques et osseux sont proches mais offrent eux aussi de légères différences. Pour leur part, la parure et l'art mobilier témoignent de fortes divergences, même s'ils s'inscrivent dans le spectre des productions symboliques classiques du Magdalénien supérieur. Au-delà du fait que les gisements correspondent à des saisons d'occupations différentes, il reste difficile d'interpréter les données reflétant sans doute de légers décalages chronologiques et des nuances dans la fonction des sites, qu'accentue la représentativité toute relative des surfaces fouillées par rapport aux aires occupées et aux activités pratiquées.

**Mots-clés :** sud de l'Aquitaine, Magdalénien supérieur, cerf, harfang, lamelles à dos, art mobilier.

**Abstract:** The cave of Bourrouilla at Arancou (Pyrénées-Atlantiques) and the rockshelter of the Grand Pastou at Sorde-l'Abbaye (Landes) are two sites in the extreme south of Aquitaine, on the edge of the Pyrenean foothills. The excavations were done within the framework of multi-year programs, using Cartesian recording methods of finds and yielded comparable stratigraphic sequences in which the Upper Magdalenian is well represented. The analytical approach taken at the two sites is analogous, in particular as regards verification of the conservation status of the different occupation layers.

The Grand Pastou Rockshelter contains a rather homogeneous sedimentary sequence within which several stratigraphic units are nonetheless identifiable. The top of the sequence documents visits of the site attributable to the Terminal Magdalenian as evidenced by the presence of thumbnail scrapers and a cortical flake of flint engraved with a geometric motif. The underlying layers document a classic Upper Magdalenian with no noticeable changes in basic contents from the base to the top.

The excavations at the Bourrouilla site were located in the rear chamber of the cave, under the entrance overhang (“porch”) and in front of it. However, a karstic resurgence in the corridor prohibits stratigraphic correlations between the back room on the one hand and the porch area and exterior on the other. Nevertheless, both sequences document occupations attributable to the Upper Magdalenian (Ensemble B in the vestibule and outside, and US [Stratigraphic Unit] 2007 in the cave). The geoarchaeological study and refittings confirm that the archaeological levels are well preserved, which is consistent with a series of radiocarbon dates.

The comparison between archaeological data from the two sites leads to the identification of both clear similarities and differences. Both reindeer and red deer played essential roles in the hunted fauna at both sites. The snowy owl is well represented; salmon is rare in the Grand Pastou, while it is abundant in certain levels of Bourrouilla (US 2007 E), mirroring an interesting difference between the nearby sites of Durfaure and Duruthy. Lithic and bone industries in the two sites are similar, but do also present slight differences. The first similarity lies in major exploitation of raw materials available on the alluvial terraces of the nearby Gaves rivers, where flint dominates. The second common point is the absence of the initial phases of the operating chains. Although the basic tools and the preponderance of bladelet tools constitute two other similarities, it is clear that some tools appear only in one series: Hamburgian points in the Grand Pastou, Teyjat points and backed bladelets with Couze-type truncations in Bourrouilla. In addition, the latter site (Ensemble B) documents an independent bladelets production chain from carenoïds nucleus.

The bone industry of both deposits has mainly technological and typological similarities. In particular, the practice of double grooving for “splinter” blank removal was employed on cervid (both reindeer and red deer) antler and bone, as well as the presence of rare micro-harpoons in the archaeological series. In Bourrouilla, elements made of deer and reindeer antlers bear the stigmata of a percussion extraction, although it is impossible to identify the aims of this method.

For their part, the personal ornaments and portable art objects display strong divergences, even if they are part of the spectrum of classic symbolic productions of the Upper Magdalenian. The personal ornaments of the Grand Pastou are marked by the presence of numerous shells, which are very rare in Bourrouilla. In the latter site, it is noted that perforated red deer canines do not appear everywhere and are notably absent from the base of US 2007. The portable art of Bourrouilla also offers a diversity and richness that contrasts with the poverty of such material in the Grand Pastou. The presence of a series of pendants and decorated smoothers, made on split ribs, proof of remarkable technical mastery, is the central element in the symbolic production at the site. However, the corpus is more varied, including both prepared and unprepared organic and lithic blanks, and documenting varying levels of technical mastery. In this aspect of material culture, the only common point between Bourrouilla and Grand Pastou is the use of snowy owl bones in the manufacture and the decoration of tubes.

The deposits correspond to different seasons of occupations: cold season in the Grand Pastou, where the occupation extended into the beginning of the warm season, versus the warm season until the autumn at Bourrouilla, where the catching of salmon was possible at the time of their run upstream to the Pyrenean spawning areas. It remains, however, difficult to interpret data which probably reflect slight chronological differences and nuances in the function of the sites accentuated by the relative representativeness of the areas searched in relation to the areas occupied and the activities practiced.

**Keywords:** *south of Aquitaine, Upper Magdalenian, reindeer, red deer, snowy owl, backed bladelets, portable art.*

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