



sapiens

In the path of the human being

Monograph coordinated by Jordi Agustí

Despite the disorientation caused by the almost continuous bombardment of news about the discovery of a new fossil that revolutionises everything we knew about human evolution, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, there is a broad consensus on certain key moments in our evolution: from the first clearly bipedal hominines, about 4 million years ago, to the origin of our own species, *Homo sapiens*, around 300,000 years ago. This consensus on the broad lines of our evolution, however, does not preclude a considerable number of unanswered questions and uncertainties, which are still under discussion today.

This MÈTODE SSJ monograph aims to review some of these outstanding issues. Some of these questions affect the origin and evolution of the genus *Homo*, to which I have dedicated my contribution, the one opening the monograph. Precisely the difficulty of defining and recognising new species in the fossil record of our genus is the issue raised by Ian Tattersall in his document. The irruption of paleogenomics in the study of human evolution, the subject of Carles Lalueza-Fox's participation, has opened new expectations in this regard. Research on the Georgian site of Dmanisi occupies a prominent place in this matter, both in the case of the variability observed in the hominid population of the site, and in the case of the conditions that forced the first departure, which I analyse together with Professor David Lordkipanidze.

But the study of human evolution is not only sustained by paleontological remains, but also by the archaeological evidence associated with them, in the form of lithic utensils that inform us about the behaviour of our ancestors, as evidenced by the text by Eudald Carbonell, José María Bermúdez de Castro, and Robert Sala. This contribution also highlights the relevance of the research in the Atapuerca karstic complex for the study of the first human populations in Europe. A monograph, in short, which explores the origins and evolution of our species.

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Artist Moisés Mahiques (Quatretonda, Spain, 1976) is the author of the works illustrating this monograph. Through human figures, Mahiques's work guides us through a monograph that shows us the evolution and movement of our species.

On the left, Moisés Mahiques. *After head study LXI*, 2010. Ink on paper, 50 × 70 cm.