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Water management and land-use practices from the Iron-Age to the Roman period in Eastern Iberia

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Abstract

This study investigates water and land usage in the territory of La Carència, an Ibero-Roman city located near Turís (Valencia, Spain) in eastern Iberia. The outstanding political importance of La Carència during the Iberian Iron-Age period is attested by its large size, the monumental character of its structures and on-site finds. Multidisciplinary and micro-regional landscape work at its territory documented significant differences between the Iberian and the Roman settlement patterns, which are attributed to the distinct agricultural production and water management systems of each period. While Iberian sites are more related to the agricultural exploitation of flat, dry land for which water sources, such as natural springs, were probably used, Roman sites seem to be associated with more productive soils that take advantage of flooding areas and the drainage of water accumulation zones.

Such different agricultural preferences based on large-scale water management are documented for the first time in the Iberian Peninsula and they attest to the great potential of multidisciplinary landscape archaeology to address past land-use practices.

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