

5 SUBSISTENCE STRATEGIES IN THE IBERIAN PLATEAU: ZOOARCHAEOLOGY OF LA MALIA ROCK SHELTER

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Abstract format: Oral

Traditionally, the specialized literature suggests that the interior of the Iberian Peninsula was sparsely populated or even completely unpopulated during the Upper Paleolithic (UP). The orographic characteristics and the altitude of the Castilian Plateau, would have exacerbated the already challenging climatic conditions during the Last Glacial Period.

The Malia rock shelter (Tamajón, Guadalajara, Spain) represents a window into subsistence strategies, the exploitation of animal resources and human adaptation to the ecosystems of the high-altitude plateau. The site has been excavated since 2018, distinguishing 3 UP Lithostratigraphic Units (LU) subdivided in four levels dated between 20-37 ka cal BP. Here, we present the first zooarchaeological study of the site based on the analysis on 1260 faunal remains. *Cervus elaphus* is the best represented species in all the levels of the site, followed by *Equus* sp. in levels LUII and LUIVa. *Leporidae* is also abundant in levels LUIVb and LUV. However, other taxa such as *Bison prisca*, *Caprinae* or birds are less represented in the sequence.

If we look at the bone surface modifications, they indicate an anthropogenic origin of the assemblage. We found a high percentage of cut marks, anthropic breakage and burned bones. Anthropic processing has been documented mainly on red deer and horses in all the sequence, but also in leporids and bison. Carnivore tooth marks were scarcely documented in equids or red deer, but in greater proportion in leporids and birds. To sum up, humans seem to have concentrated their activity on macromammals, while the accumulation of birds and leporids seems to be more of a carnivore accumulation. These results add a new dimension to the debate about the mobility and occupation of our species during this period.

6 MOUNTAIN VS. COASTAL SITES. SETTLEMENT AND MOBILITY PATTERNS DURING EVOLVED AURIGNACIAN IN THE CENTRAL IBERIAN MEDITERRANEAN BASIN

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Abstract format: Oral

Due to the nature of its relief, the central Iberian Mediterranean basin has an outstanding contrast between the coastal lowlands and the mountainous hinterland. This characteristic fosters the existence of mountain sites and coastal sites in a small geographical area. In this study, we have selected the levels assigned to the Evolved Aurignacian from the altitude sites of Cova de les Malladetes (Barx, Valencia) and Abric de la Ratlla del Bubo (Crevillent, Alicante), as well as Cova Foradada (Oliva, Valencia) and Cova de les Cendres (Teulada-Moraira, Alicante) as examples of coastal sites.

Firstly, we analyse the botanical, faunal and lithic remains in order to assess the existence of divergences and similarities in the landscape, paleoclimatic conditions, resources exploitation and settlement patterns of the sites. Secondly, we use geographic information systems (GIS) to analyse the location of the sites in relation to the natural routes that connect the Mediterranean coast with the interior of the peninsula (East to West), as well as the corridors that link the territory longitudinally (North to South). We suggest possible circulation routes for the hunter-gatherer societies that inhabited the central Iberian Mediterranean region during the Aurignacian and we assess the relation between sites and raw material catchment areas.

In summary, the main objective is to find out how the location and biotopes of the sites influenced the occupation patterns and, finally, the possible circulation routes used by the Early AMH during the Aurignacian.