
Cave bears in the menu: hunting or scavenging at the Toll Cave (Moià, Barcelona, Spain)

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Résumé

Humans and cave bears coexisted in many environments during the Late Pleistocene. However, demonstrating regular contacts and direct confrontation between them is a complicated task which usually requires specific taphonomic evidence, such as the presence of

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cutmarks on bears' bones or toothmarks on human bones. Here, we want to tackle this problematic in the Toll Cave (Moià, Barcelona, Spain), where one of the most meridional populations of these animals was discovered during the 50' of the past century. Unfortunately, the collections recovered during those years were lost. Currently, a recent project of research restarted the works in this cave and allowed to recover significant remains of these animals. As previous studies, the current ones point out the presence of bears because of hibernation. Most of the specimens show evidence of carnivore damage inflicted mainly by other bears and hyenas. However, the presence of a small collection of lithic tools and cutmarked bones seems to indicate sporadic visits of human groups to the cave to take advantage of these carcasses. Although the anthropogenic evidence is not conclusive enough, the site allows to discuss about the regularity of these visits and the modalities of access to these cave bear carcasses developed by these human groups.

Mots-Clés: Cave bears, hunting, scavenging, Toll Cave, Moià, Barcelona, Spain