

# Davies 2002

## Article ...

▼ ... in a Journal

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The mammals and birds from the Gruta do  
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Caldeirão cave is 140 km north east of Lisbon near the town of Tomar. João Zilhão, of the University of Lisbon, excavated Caldeirão between 1979 and 1988. It contains a sequence of levels with associated cultural remains belonging to the Mousterian, Early Upper Palaeolithic, Solutrean, Magdalenian and Neolithic. Faunal remains from a wide spectrum of species were recovered by sieving. The most common large mammals include red deer, equids, goat, chamois, aurochs, and wild boar. Large carnivores, especially hyaena, were common in the older levels, and became scarcer or disappeared in the course of the cave's occupation. Other carnivores include four species of felids, wolf, fox, bear and badger. Rabbit, hare and beaver were also present. Caldeirão provides us with an interesting zoo-archaeological puzzle. Did the cave function more as a hyaena den, at least in its early

periods of occupation? The main indicators of hyaena activity include the presence of *Crocuta* remains, coprolites, and "semi-digested" bones. All these are most common in Mousterian and EUP levels. Burn marks are scarce in the Mousterian and EUP levels, but abundant in subsequent levels. The lithics to bone ratios are low in the Mousterian and EUP, but high in the Solutrean. Most remains of the equids and red deer are juvenile in the early levels and adult in the later ones — a possible reflection of hyaenas' inability to hunt and/or bring back to the cave adults of these species. It is proposed that the cave functioned more as a hyaena den in the early levels and that subsequently hyaenas disappeared as people used the cave more intensively. This decrease in hyaena activity in the course of time at Caldeirão is apparently common in Iberian sites, and suggests that in the Mousterian and EUP human populations were sparse. The rabbit to ungulate ratio also increases with time — another possible indicator of increasing intensity of human exploitation of the environment.

▼ ...in a Conference Proceeding

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