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# NEW ARCHAEOZOOLOGICAL DATA AT EL CIERRO CAVE (ASTURIAS, SPAIN): THE UPPER SOLUTREAN LEVELS (22000 CAL BP)

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## Abstract

El Cierro cave is an archaeological site of the Cantabrian region located at the council of Ribadesella (Asturias, Spain), on the western margins of the Sella river. It is a cave with a broad stratigraphic sequence that runs from late Middle Palaeolithic to Mesolithic. The aim of this paper is to show the results of the archaeozoological analysis of levels H1 and H2, ascribed to the Upper Solutrean and dated *ca.* 22000 cal BP, which come from the excavations directed by A. Gómez Fuentes and F. Jordá Cerdá during 70's of the 20th century, and the ones conducted during 2016. The archaeozoological and taphonomical study of the mentioned levels has allowed us to describe the subsistence strategies carried out by the Solutrean inhabitants of El Cierro, as well as the intervention of other living beings on the archaeological record. For that purpose, we establish a prey ranking dominated by red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) on both levels, followed by ibex (*Capra pyrenaica*), roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*), and horse (*Equus ferus*). We also take into account the presence on the archaeological record of some species that were not part of the diet of the site's inhabitants, as is the case of the fox (*Vulpes vulpes*). In addition, our analysis focuses on the taphonomic marks, both the anthropic ones (obtaining preliminary conclusions about butchering and consumption processes), and the ones made by other agents (carnivores, plants, etc.). Finally, we put our results on a broader perspective, that of the Solutrean period in the Sella river valley and the Cantabrian Region.

**Keywords:** Upper Pleistocene, Solutrean, Archaeozoology, Taphonomy, Spanish Cantabrian Region

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