

Rivals F., 2002.- *Les petits bovidés pléistocènes dans le bassin méditerranéen et le Caucase. Etude paléontologique, biostratigraphique, archéozoologique et paléoécologique.* PhD dissertation. Perpignan: Université de Perpignan. 417 p.

Pleistocene small bovids from the Mediterranean area and the Caucasus. Palaeontological, biostratigraphical, zooarchaeological and palaeoecological study.

Abstract – In the Middle and Upper Pleistocene sites studied in the Mediterranean area and the Caucasus, small bovids are represented by 4 genera (*Ovis*, *Hemitragus*, *Capra* and *Rupicapra*). *Ovis ammon antiqua* and *Capra* aff. *caucasica* are similar to those known in other European and Caucasian populations. Two species of that are present at the Caune de l'Arago, namely *Hemitragus bonali* in the Middle Pleistocene levels and *Hemitragus cedrensis* in the Upper Pleistocene level. *Rupicapra* from the Caune de l'Arago is the oldest sample of the genera in Europe. This taxa would be phylogenetically linked to *Rupicapra pyrenaica*. A zooarchaeological approach was applied to the levels of units I and III of the Caune de l'Arago. The levels M, N and O from unit I correspond to carnivore occupations while in most of the levels of unit III, argali accumulation is due to human occupation. In level F dated from about 440,000 years, the cavity was occupied from the end of spring to the beginning of summer by groups which practised non selective hunting and argali was the main prey. The study of locomotive and dietary adaptations shows that fossil populations had very comparable adaptations to those of current populations. Dental microwear shows the seasonal changes in food selection which varied with the hunting season of small bovids and with palaeoenvironmental conditions.

Key-words: Small bovids, Pleistocene, Mediterranean, Caucasus, Hunting, Dental microwear.