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# ATTI DELLA SOCIETÀ TOSCANA DI SCIENZE NATURALI

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SOCIETÀ TOSCANA  
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BRIDGING DISCIPLINES:  
SELECTED PAPERS IN HONOUR OF PROFESSOR CARLO TOZZI

Atti della Società Toscana di Scienze Naturali, Memorie, Serie A

Edited by ELISABETTA STARNINI & CRISTIANA PETRINELLI PANNOCCHIA, DCFS, UNIVERSITÀ DI PISA

Per celebrare la lunga e prestigiosa carriera accademica del Prof. Carlo Tozzi, questa parte del volume degli Atti della Società Toscana raccoglie una miscellanea di saggi nelle materie che egli ha per molto tempo insegnato e in cui ha ricercato con approccio multidisciplinare, coniugando in particolare le Scienze della Natura con le Scienze dell'Uomo. I contributi sono quindi necessariamente eterogenei per materia e per autori, spaziando tra giovani allievi dell'Università di Pisa e del Professore, colleghi e amici, ma spiccano tutti per l'attualità degli argomenti trattati e la metodologia utilizzata. Le curatrici auspicano che questo doveroso omaggio alla lunga carriera e all'importante contributo scientifico e didattico del Professore sia a lui gradito.

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Professore *Emeritus* dell'University di Pisa.

Ha svolto ricerche sul Paleolitico e sul Mesolitico con studi specifici e scavi in siti del Paleolitico inferiore dell'Abruzzo (Valle del Foro e Selvotta - CH), del Carso Triestino (Riparo di Visogliano - TS) e della Liguria (Grotte di Toirano - SV), del Paleolitico medio e superiore del versante tirrenico della Penisola (Grotta di Gosto - PG, Riparo Biedano e Cenciano Diruto - VT, Grotta La Fabbrica - GR, Grotta del Capriolo e Buca della Jena - LU, Pontecosi, Orecchiella, Riparo Piastricoli e Riparo Fredian - LU), del Mesolitico della Toscana settentrionale (tra cui La Greppia, La Murella, Monte Frignone, Garfagnana - LU e Appennino tosco-emiliano), della Corsica (Monte Leone) e della Sardegna settentrionale (Riparo di Porto Leccio).

Ha svolto ricerche anche sul Neolitico dell'Italia centro-meridionale con scavi in Abruzzo (Catignano - PE), Puglia (Ripa Tetta, Lucera - FG), Toscana (Pianosa e, in Garfagnana, Muraccio e Pian di Cerreto) e Sardegna (Perfugas - SS, Torre Foghe - OR). Oltre allo studio tipologico dei materiali litici e ceramici, ha posto particolare attenzione alla ricostruzione degli aspetti economici e paleoambientali delle culture preistoriche.

È stato membro del Comitato Nazionale del XIII Congresso UISPP e ha coordinato i Colloqui XIII (Formation of the European Mesolithic Complexes) e XIV (Adaptation to Postglacial Environment).

È stato membro della VIII Commissione dell'Unione Internazionale delle Scienze Preistoriche e Protostoriche (UISPP), come rappresentante dell'Italia.

È Socio fin dagli anni Sessanta del secolo scorso della Società Toscana di Scienze Naturali di cui negli anni Ottanta è stato anche Segretario Generale. Dal 2006 al 2018 ha ricoperto il ruolo di Vicepresidente della Società e dal 2019 al 2022 ha svolto l'incarico di Revisore dei conti.

JACOPO GENNAI <sup>(1)</sup>

## GROTTA DEL CERVO: AN ADDITIONAL STRATIFIED MOUSTERIAN SITE IN NORTH-WESTERN TUSCANY (LUCCA, ITALY)

**Abstract** - J. GENNAI, *Grotta del Cervo: An additional stratified Mousterian site in north-western Tuscany (Lucca, Italy)*.

The Grotta del Cervo site, located in Piano di Mommio (NW Tuscany), provides insights into the late Neanderthal occupation of the region. Excavated in the early 1990s, it yielded Mousterian lithic artefacts and Pleistocene faunal remains from sediment layers partially reworked by post-depositional processes. This study presents a techno-economic analysis of the 70 lithic artefacts recovered from the site, comparing them with findings from the nearby Buca della Iena. The results suggest short-term visits by Neanderthal groups equipped with finished artefacts and roughed-out cores, leaving knapping products on site. Raw material sourcing indicates mobility primarily within the coastal areas of north-western Tuscany. In addition to the dominant Mousterian component, a few artefacts attest to Late Upper Palaeolithic occupations. The raw materials of these artefacts are comparable to those from the Garfagnana area, where numerous Late Upper Palaeolithic sites have been identified. Grotta del Cervo (Piano di Mommio) contributes to the growing evidence of late Neanderthal presence in north-western Tuscany.

**Key words** - Grotta del Cervo, Neanderthal, Tuscany, Lucca, Middle Palaeolithic, lithics

**Riassunto** - J. GENNAI, *Grotta del Cervo: un altro sito Musteriano in contesto stratificato in Toscana nordoccidentale (Lucca, Italia)*.

Il sito di Grotta del Cervo, situato a Piano di Mommio (Toscana nord-occidentale), offre informazioni fondamentali sull'occupazione dell'area da parte degli ultimi Neanderthal. Scavato nei primi anni '90, il sito ha restituito manufatti litici musteriani e resti faunistici pleistocenici provenienti da strati sedimentari in parte rimaneggiati da processi post-deposizionali. Questo studio presenta un'analisi tecnico-economica dettagliata di 70 manufatti litici recuperati dal sito, confrontandoli con i ritrovamenti della vicina Buca della Iena. I risultati suggeriscono brevi occupazioni da parte di gruppi di Neanderthal dotati di manufatti già finiti e nuclei già abbozzati, di cui restano gli scarti della manifattura. L'analisi macroscopica delle materie prime mostra un'areale limitato alla fascia costiera toscana. Oltre alla preponderante componente musteriana, alcuni manufatti suggeriscono brevi occupazioni durante le fasi avanzate del Paleolitico Superiore. Le materie prime di questi manufatti segnalano dei confronti con l'areale garfagnino. Grotta del Cervo (Piano di Mommio) rappresenta un'ulteriore prova della presenza di gruppi di Neanderthal nell'area della Toscana nordoccidentale.

**Parole chiave** - Grotta del Cervo, Neanderthal, Toscana, Lucca, Paleolitico Medio, industria litica

### INTRODUCTION

Northwestern Tuscany is a hotspot for Mousterian sites and features many of the stratified Mousterian sites in the region (Galiberti, 1997; Marciani *et al.*, 2020; Palma di Cesnola, 1970; Pitti & Tozzi, 1971). These sites are predominantly concentrated in smaller clusters, such as Grotta all'Onda and Buca del Tasso, located on the hills above the town of Camaione (LU, Italy), and Buca della Iena and Grotta del Capriolo, situated on the hills above the village of Piano di Mommio (LU, Italy). In contrast, Tecchia di Equi is isolated in the northern Apuan Alps, above the village of Equi Terme (MS, Italy). These sites have played a pivotal role in establishing the discipline of Prehistoric Archaeology in Italy. Excavations at Grotta all'Onda began as early as 1867 (Regnoli, 1867), and the foundational research on Grotta all'Onda, Buca del Tasso, and Tecchia di Equi dates back to investigations conducted during World War I and the interwar period (Blanc *et al.*, 1935; De Stefani, 1923; Graziosi, 1944; Mochi & Schiff-Giorgini, 1915; Puccioni, 1922). Mousterian lithics were found within these sites and the only likely Tuscan Neanderthal fossil was found at Buca del Tasso in a layer dated at  $40.2 \pm 1.3$  ka BP (Alciati *et al.*, 2005; Gennai *et al.*, 2025; Marciani *et al.*, 2024; Palma di Cesnola, 1970). In the late 1960s, surveys in the hills of Piano di Mommio led to the discovery of the Buca della Iena and Grotta del Capriolo sites (Fornaciari, 1966; Pitti & Tozzi, 1971). The abundance of sites in the area is primarily attributed to the richness of karstic environments. These often feature sediment-filled openings, some of which contain archaeological artefacts. One such karst opening, located adjacent to the Buca della Iena site, was excavated in the early 1990s, leading to the discovery of a new site, Piano di Mommio, which is the focus of this paper.

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## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The site, also referred to as Grotta del Cervo in publications (Galiberti, 1997), was excavated during four campaigns between 1989 and 1992. However, only brief excavation reports have been published (Cocchi-Genick, 1992, 1989). This paper presents a detailed analysis of the lithic artefacts recovered from the site.

### *Excavation and site details*

The site is located adjacent to Buca della Iena, on the north-facing side of the hill (43.9143446 N, 10.2850449 E; Fig. 1). It features a larger cavity than Buca della Iena branching into two shallow sections. The cave opens to the west and is bordered by a dry-stone wall marking the modern terrace edge. To the south and southwest, it reportedly connects with the Buca della Iena excavations, while the northern boundary consists of large boulders (Cocchi, 1989; Gennai, 2024). Before excavation, the cave opening measured 3.85 m wide, 2.5 m deep, and 0.80 m high. Following the completion of the excavation, the depth extended to 3.30 m (Cocchi, 1989; Cocchi-Genick, 1993, 1992; Gennai, 2024). The excavation area was divided into a 1 m<sup>2</sup> grid, with numbers (1-7) increasing south to north along the X-axis and letters (A-F) increasing east to west along the Y-axis. The deposits were broadly categorised into two zones: the external deposit (squares D1-F7) and the internal deposit (squares C1-A7). Excavation proceeded in 5 cm spits, and the soil was wet-sieved using a 2 mm mesh. Carlo Tozzi was involved from the start, due to the possibility of Palaeolithic findings, and suggested opening a trench in the external deposit. Hence, the first campaign opened a 2 × 2 m (F4-E5) sounding outside and a 1 × 7 m trench covering the whole North-South transect (D1-D7). The excavation's original surface was uneven, with the datum point established at the northernmost corner of the cave wall. Depth measurements were taken relative to this point. At the limit of the external excavation area, the initial surface was approximately 0.8 m below the datum level. The external trench excavation removed the humic layer to a depth of 30 cm, followed by a thin layer of reddish silt mixed with gravel, reaching a depth of 1 m. The same depth was reached in the D1-D7 trench, revealing the two internal branches of the cave. These branches contained human remains of juveniles and young adults, as well as a pottery fragment (within 0.8-1.8 m depth), suggesting the cave was used as a secondary burial site, a practice common in the regional Copper Age facies (Fornaciari, 1977). Excavation of the northern branch stopped at a depth of 1.30 m

upon encountering a layer with large rocks, while the southern branch was excavated to a depth of 2.20 m. The external trench extended to a depth of 2.90 m. During the second campaign, the southern branch was completely excavated down to the layer with large rocks (2.40-2.50 m depth), and the external trench was further expanded. Similar deposits were uncovered, with Pleistocene finds appearing predominantly below 2.40 m depth (Cocchi-Genick, 1992). The third campaign extended the excavation inside the cave to the previously reached depth of 2.90 m and further expanded the external trench. Sparse Mousterian lithic artefacts and Pleistocene fauna were recovered from the lower spits. The fourth campaign reached the final depth of 3.30 m, both inside and outside the cave. The sediments exhibited increasing compaction and a higher concentration of Pleistocene fauna and Mousterian lithic artefacts (Cocchi-Genick, 1993). The deposits consisted of homogeneous reddish silt with gravel, transitioning to a brown-greyish hue at the lower levels, with larger stones in the deepest spits (Cocchi-Genick, 1992). Pleistocene fauna began appearing at a depth of 1.05 m, with their frequency increasing in the lower spits. Mousterian artefacts were first identified in spit 13 (1.65-1.70 m depth) and became more frequent in the lower levels. However, the sediments showed signs of extensive disturbance from fossorial animals and agricultural activities. Below a depth of 2.80 m (spit 36), the deposit appeared firmer and less reworked (Cocchi-Genick, 1993, 1992, 1989).

The lithic artefacts have undergone a comprehensive techno-economic analysis (Geneste, 1991; Soressi & Geneste, 2011). Each artefact has been assigned to a Raw Material Unit (RMU) on the grounds of macroscopic characteristics (colour, macroscopic texture, cortex - Roebroeks, 1989). Then, each artefact underwent technological classification to ascertain its position within the reduction sequence (Soressi & Geneste, 2011). The Levallois and Discoid methods were identified based on criteria established by Boëda and Guette (Boëda, 1994, 1993; Guette, 2002). The volumetric laminar method was recognised following the frameworks of Pelegrin and Andrefsky (Andrefsky, 2005; Pelegrin, 1995). Bladelets were classified as laminar items measuring less than 12 mm in width (Tixier, 1963). Daniela Cocchi-Genick documented eleven (11) lithic artefacts during the first excavation campaign, twelve (12) in the second campaign, and ten (10) in the final campaign (Cocchi-Genick, 1989; Cocchi-Genick, 1992; Cocchi-Genick, 1993). However, in the Archaeological Museum storehouse in Viareggio (LU), I identified seventy (70) artefacts labelled as originating from Grotta del Cervo (Piano di Mommio).

## RESULTS

*Lithics distribution*

Most of the lithic artefacts were recovered from the external area (N = 48, squares D-F) compared to the internal area (N = 22, squares C-A). Most of the assemblage originates from deposits likely affected by reworking (up to spit 36, N = 50), with only 20 artefacts found within the lower, likely undisturbed 0.55 m span (spits 37-47).

Within these divisions, spit 37 yielded the highest relative number of lithics (N = 11), while the reworked spits displayed a more evenly distributed vertical occurrence, with notable higher concentrations in spits 22-23, 28-29, and 33-35 (3-7 artefacts each). The only core within the assemblage was discovered in square C5, spit 28.

*Lithics taphonomy*

The artefacts show a good level of preservation. Most of them are without any sign of patina, ridges are fresh. Cortical surfaces are naturally smooth. Edges show probable taphonomical damages (Fig. 2). No micro-debitage is recorded.

*Lithics techno-economy*

The lithic assemblage exhibits notable variability, including a small number of artefacts attributable to the Upper Palaeolithic: a blade, two bladelets, and a burin spall. Of these, only the burin spall originates from spit 37, while

the blade and bladelets were recovered from higher spits. The remainder of the assemblage predominantly appears Mousterian in character. Most of the artefacts are complete (41 out of 70), followed by fragments. Non-cortical artefacts dominate, with most cortical pieces being semi-cortical. The lithic assemblage primarily consists of simple flakes, core-edge flakes, and recurrent unidirectional Levallois flakes (Tab. 1; Fig. 2). Platforms are typically oriented at angles of 70-80°, with fewer artefacts displaying inclined platforms or negatives secant to the intersection plane. Two of these artefacts are pseudo-Levallois points, hence possibly witnessing a rare Discoid reduction together with the more frequent Levallois one. Plain platforms are the most frequent, followed by faceted and dihedral types. The negatives predominantly exhibit a unidirectional organisation. The single core in the assemblage has a faceted platform, from which a large, inclined negative on the main flaking surface starts, and with additional negatives utilising the core's thickness along the left and distal edges. A portion of the base remains cortical, indicating that the core was originally derived from a pebble (Fig. 2).

Eight (8) artefacts show intentional modification, three of them are on Levallois recurrent flakes. They mostly correspond to simple lateral and transversal endscrapers (Fig. 2).

The assemblage incorporates a diverse range of raw materials, all fine-grained, with no evident association between techno-typological categories and specific raw materials. Most artefacts are crafted from calcilitites sourced from primary and secondary outcrops located within 1.5 km of the site. Calcarenites from the same

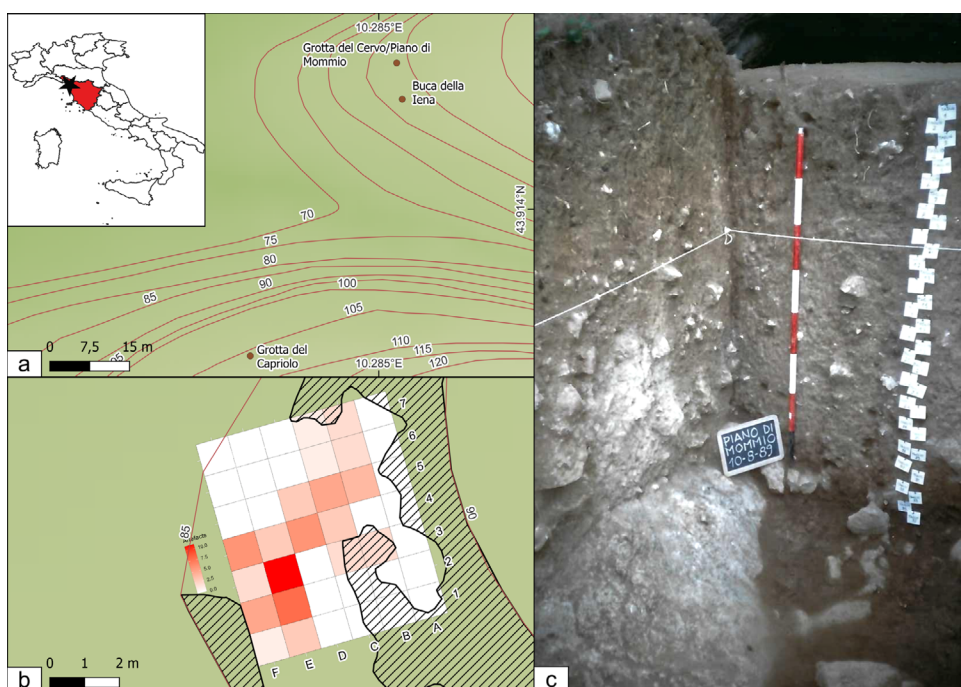


Figure 1. Grotta del Cervo location and stratigraphy. A) location of Grotta del Cervo within the Italian peninsula and in the local area, with reference to nearby sites such as Grotta del Capriolo and Buca della Iena b) Grotta del Cervo excavation grid and the frequency of artefacts by square c) Grotta del Cervo profile displaying the main lithological layers and the excavation spits.



Figure 2. Grotta del Cervo lithics. Bladelets and blade: n. 1, 2, 3, 5; Burin spall: n. 4; Overshot flake: n. 6, 12; Cortical flake: n. 33; Levallois recurrent flake: n. 7, 13, 17, 19, 22, 25 (retouched), 27, 30, 31, 32, 35; Pseudo-levallois point discoidal: n. 8, 4; Pseudo-levallois point Levallois: n. 18; Simple flake: n. 10, 28, 29, 34, Core-edge flake: n. 11, 15, 16, 20, 21 (retouched), 24, 28; Levallois blade: n. 14; Chunk: n. 23 (retouched); Core: n. 36.

outcrops are also represented, alongside other lithologies such as radiolarite, quartzite, and flints from the Tuscan Nappe (Conti *et al.*, 2020, 2010). Notably, the Upper Palaeolithic blade and bladelets are fashioned from radiolarite and Tuscan Nappe flints (Conforti & Tozzi, 2022). The typometry of the artefacts is rather homogeneous, flakes' median dimensions are comprised within 40-20 mm in length, 20-30 mm in width, 10-5 mm in thickness. The bladelet is 14.8 × 8.2 × 2.6 mm. The core is 35.7 × 36.8 × 18.0 mm, the last negative measured on its flaking surface is 21.9 × 31.1 mm.

Table 1. Grotta del Cervo technological categories counts divided in RMU

	<b>Reworked Deposit</b>	<b>Safer</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Calcilutite</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>36</b>
Blade		1	1
Burin Spall		1	1
Core Secant	1		1
Core-Edge Flake	4	2	6
Cortical Flake	1	1	2
Simple Flake	4	2	6
Levallois Blade	1		1
Levallois Recurrent Flake	8	3	11
Overshot Flake	1	1	2
Pseudo-Levallois point	3		3
Chunk	1		1
Fragment	1	1	2
<b>Calcarenite</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>
Core-Edge Flake	1		1
Simple Flake	2	1	3
Levallois Recurrent Flake	1	1	2
Fragment		1	1
Quartzite	5	2	7
Flake	3	1	4
Chunk		1	1
Fragment	2		2
<b>Radiolarite</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>
Bladelet	1		1
Core-Edge Flake	1	1	2
Cortical Flake	1		1
Crest	1		1
Simple Flake	1		1
Levallois Blade	1		1
Levallois Recurrent Flake	1		1
Overshot Flake	2	1	3
Fragment	3		3
<b>Tuscan Nappe Flints</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>2</b>
Blade	1		1
Bladelet	1		1
Indeterminate	2	1	3
Core-Edge Flake		1	1
Simple Flake	1		1
Predetermining Flake	1		1
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>70</b>

## Discussion

The Grotta del Cervo lithic assemblage, though small and widely scattered within likely reworked deposits, provides insights, especially when compared to the nearby Buca della Iena. The low number of artefacts recovered cannot be attributed to methodological shortcomings, as the sediment was meticulously wet-sieved using a 2 mm mesh, yielding even micromammal remains and small, fragmented artefacts, such as a bladelet.

The stratigraphy and lithological characteristics at Grotta del Cervo closely resemble those at the nearby site of Buca della Iena (Gennai, 2024; Gennai *et al.*, 2025). The reddish, loose silt at Grotta del Cervo corresponds to the uppermost 40 cm of sediment at Buca della Iena (up to spit 4), while the greyish-light brown sediments at Grotta del Cervo align with the lower stratigraphic units at Buca della Iena (above the stalagmite, up to spit 13) (Gennai, 2024). Both sites feature a layer with large rocks at approximately the same depth, interpreted as evidence of a generalised roof collapse that transformed both caves into rock shelters, gradually infilled by sediments.

New analyses of the Buca della Iena updated the information about the site and added chronological determinations (Gennai *et al.*, 2025). A thick yellow clay layer with abundant faunal remains, absent in Grotta del Cervo, has been dated to approximately 50 ka cal BP. This layer is associated with hyena denning activities and is capped by a flowstone formed between 41-51 ka BP (Fornaca-Rinaldi & Radmilli, 1968; Gennai *et al.*, 2025; Pitti & Tozzi, 1971). Above the flowstone, artefacts appear in light-brown and reddish-brown sediments, dated between 47-42.5 ka cal BP (Gennai *et al.*, 2025). The Grotta del Cervo deposit likely corresponds to these artefact-bearing layers, although it lacks the yellow clay deposit observed in Buca della Iena.

Also, in Buca della Iena, the artefacts are largely ascribed to the Mousterian way of knapping, with an emphasis on Levallois reduction. The artefacts are showing probably repeated short visits with some pre-formed gear, discarded on site, hence the Levallois flakes, and some cores, testified by some cortical and convexity management artefacts. This is the same composition found in Grotta del Cervo. The short visits are most likely due to the primary occupation of the site by hyaenas (Gennai *et al.*, 2025). On top of the Mousterian sequence in Buca della Iena, a few volumetric bladelets are found, and even a retouched backed point in radiolarite (Fornaciari, 1966). These largely correspond to the volumetric bladelets of Grotta del Cervo. The raw materials of volumetric bladelets at Grotta del Cervo bear a resemblance to those found in Epigravettian contexts within the Garfagnana and Apuan Alps regions (Conforti & Tozzi, 2022; Lombardo & Tozzi, 2023).

Given the evidence, it is likely that the artefacts from Grotta del Cervo are part of the Buca della Iena occupations. Unfortunately, the dispersion caused by fossorial animals and agricultural activities complicates further attribution to specific Buca della Iena layers, although these layers remain largely undisturbed in the neighbouring Grotta del Cervo. Nonetheless, a significant portion of the Grotta del Cervo lithics is found in the area immediately adjacent to Buca della Iena, which supports the interpretation of a single occupation. The presence of a burin spall, an artefact usually found in Upper Palaeolithic contexts, in the lower spits of Grotta del Cervo might show a deeper and localised intrusion due to the postdepositional disturbances affecting the deposit.

The techno-typology of the Mousterian lithics from the north-western Tuscany sites largely resembles that of the Late and Final Mousterian in the Italian Peninsula (Marciani *et al.*, 2020). In particular, the presence of denticulates and notches among the retouched blanks is minimal and is more likely to be the result of edge damage rather than indicative of a distinct tradition (Dini & Koehler, 2009).

The recently established dating of Buca della Iena (Gennai *et al.*, 2025) highlights the role of north-western Tuscany in the complex dynamics of the Middle-to-Upper Paleolithic Transition in the Italian Peninsula (Higham *et al.*, 2024; Marciani *et al.*, 2020). Neanderthal populations persisted or retreated to the north-western corner of the Peninsula until the beginning of the Aurignacian (Frouin *et al.*, 2022). Evidence from north-western Tuscany closely matches that from late Neanderthal groups at the Balzi Rossi complex. In both cases, there is evidence of hyper-local resource exploitation (Pothier-Bouchard *et al.*, 2024; Riel-Salvatore *et al.*, 2022).

However, Neanderthals in north-western Tuscany still largely relied on surface core exploitation, leading to Levallois reductions. A large proportion of the assemblages consists of finished Levallois flakes. Despite potential biases in the collection process, this suggests slight differences between the two areas. Levallois reduction, which requires a longer core-preparation phase (although shorter core configurations are possible (Marciani, 2024; Marciani *et al.*, 2016; Peresani, 2012; Peresani *et al.*, 2017), may have functioned as a means of preparing a reserve of raw material for the production of predetermined items. Additionally, Levallois technology offers flexibility in the variety of blanks produced, as evidenced by the occasional presence of elongated Levallois items in the north-western Tuscany assemblages.

Studies from south-western France have shown that Levallois is often associated with a broad range of faunal species and non-selective foraging strategies, primarily targeting red deer and roe deer (Delagnes &

Revenu, 2011). Roe deer are represented in the faunal assemblage of Grotta del Capriolo, and the broader faunal evidence suggests a mix of open and forested environments (Gennai *et al.*, 2025; Pitti & Tozzi, 1971). Therefore, the adoption of Levallois technology appears to be an ideal adaptive response to the diverse ecotones available, which are further shaped by the region's varied geomorphology, including hilly, mountainous, and plain areas.

Further insights into the Neanderthal occupations of north-western Tuscany may be gained through the re-analysis of the extensive lithic collections, albeit out of context, found in the Massaciuccoli Lake humid area (Blanc *et al.*, 1953). Also, the area will benefit from an extensive program of surveys to detect new karstic infillings to investigate with modern stratigraphical approaches.

## CONCLUSION

Grotta del Cervo provides further evidence of the widespread occupation of north-western Tuscany by late Neanderthals. Unfortunately, the sites were small, and much of the evidence has been destroyed through excavation. However, by re-examining the fieldwork documentation and the findings, it is often possible to update our understanding, even though some information will remain lost forever. For instance, the scatter of artefacts and their similarity to those from Buca della Iena makes it difficult to determine whether these represent distinct occupations or part of a series of brief visits. Nevertheless, the findings are crucial for reconstructing mobility and behavioural patterns and will continue to inspire new research in the area.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The author declares that he has no conflict of interest neither known competing financial interests nor personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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