

# Guattari Cave - cranium (Guattari 1)

## General Information

**Name:** Guattari 1

**Synonym Name(s):** Monte Circeo 1

**First Description:**

**Repository:** Sezione di Anthropologia, Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico 'L. Pigorini'

**Property Status:**

**Copyright Holder(s):**

**Curator(s):** Luca Bondioli

**Cultural Attribution:** Middle Palaeolithic: Mousterian

**Geochronological Attribution:** OIS3

## Taxon / Sex / Age Group

**Taxon:** Neanderthal

**Sex:** Undefined

**Age Group:** adult (20y or more)

## Morphometrics

## Pathology / Preservation

**Pathology:**

**Pathology Bibliography:**

**Preserved Skeletal Party:** cranium/cranial fragment

**Laterality:** unknown

**Polarity:** -

**Preservation:** unknown

**Preservation Details:**

**Human Activity:**

**Carnivore Activity:**

## Age Determination

**Dating Abstract:** Between 60 and 50 ka (Schwartz & Tattersall 2002: 185).

**Dating Association:** Relative Dating

**Dating Analysis:**

## Discovery

**Location:**

**X Coordinate:**

**Y Coordinate:**

**Z Coordinate:**

**Unit:**

## Linked Files / Pages

**Data Type:**

**Collection Item(s):**

**Bibliography:** Schwartz & Tattersall 2002

**Multimedia Files:**

CT Guattari 1, info

STL Guattari 1

**Linked Pages:** Italy - Neanderthal

**Index:**

## Additional Content

"In sum, a detailed examination and analysis of the Guattari 1 cranium has failed to reveal any convincing evidence for hominid modification as predicted by the hypothesis of ritual mortuary practice. The evidence for carnivore modification to the cranium is strong, but not unequivocal. It is possible that the careful removal of adhering limestone matrix which remains on the specimen may uncover additional evidence. ... With the lack of direct skeletal evidence supporting the hypothesis for ritual mortuary activity involving the Guattari 1 cranium, the case for such a scenario is greatly weakened, and now rests entirely upon unconvincing contextual evidence. We suggest that other claims of ritualistic behavior in pre-anatomically modern hominid populations be assessed in a systematic, rigorous manner." (Toth & White 1991: 220)

"The surface fauna of Grotta Guattari, once interpreted as a Neandertal ritual chamber, appears on taphonomic grounds to represent a spotted hyaena maternity den. Spotted hyaenas also dominated bone collection in level G1 and possibly in G2, but the presence of lithic artifacts testifies to some hominid activity in these levels as well.

The origins of the assemblages in levels G4 and G5 are more ambiguous, because the bone samples are small. However, the relatively low frequencies of carnivore remains and gnawing, the high incidence of Mousterian lithics and certain damage patterns suggest that hominids were the principal bone collectors and modifiers. The faunas of levels G4 and G5 are analogous to head-dominated faunas known to have been collected by Mousterian hominids in another cave of the coastal Latium, Grotta dei Moscerini.

The taphonomic data on the G0 fauna have implications for the origins of the Guattari Neandertal cranium and mandibles. White and Toth have excluded the possibility of human-caused modification to the fossil, some gnawing damage is possible, and two of the fossils co-occur with what is clearly

## Pix



Foto of a cast of Guattari 1 (© Sibylle Pietrek / Neanderthal Museum).

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