
Grotta del Romito (Calabria, South Italy): funerary rite in a cave, symbolic burials, organization of space in late Paleolithic contexts

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Résumé

Grotta del Romito is one of the most significant Paleolithic evidences in Italy, well known to the scientific community for the researches of the University of Florence, begun in the 960s by Paolo Graziosi and then continued from the year 2000. The site is identified above all with the majestic engraving of *Bos primigenius*, but its evidences, defined by multidisciplinary research, have allowed a climatic and environmental reconstruction, production trends, economic assets starting from 24,000 years ago up to the Neolithic, with a more significant and in-depth definition for the upper Paleolithic. The funerary contexts found on the site, with nine individuals, offer an important contribution to the definition of the Epigravettian funeral rite. They are accompanied by small sunken structures containing few and selected objects, which broaden the symbolic profile. The cave thus becomes a place where the excavation of cavities (funeral pits, dimples) takes on a symbolic value as a memory space, the location of which in the site is inserted according to a non-random spatial code. The authors present a series of reflections with which an evaluation is proposed that correlates the individual evidences in a unitary vision.

Mots-Clés: Grotta del Romito, Calabria, funerary rite, symbolic burials, organization of space, late Paleolithic

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