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## Middle Palaeolithic lithic tools: Techno-functional and use-wear analysis of target objects from SU 13 at the Oscurusciuto rock shelter, Southern Italy

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### ABSTRACT

The Oscurusciuto rock shelter (Ginosa, Puglia, southern Italy) is a Middle Palaeolithic site characterized by a significant stratigraphy made up by several anthropic levels. The stratigraphic unit 13, consisting of a sandy compact deposit mixed with pyroclastic sediment, is a short palimpsest situated on a layer of tephra, identified as Mt. Epomeo green tuff (dated Ar/Ar ~ 55 ka BP).

From a technological point of view, the aims of the production were backed flakes, convergent flakes, and other flakes obtained by means of a Levallois debitage, plus (less represented) bladelets produced by an additional volumetric reduction system.

Our aim in this research was to examine a selection of the above-mentioned target objects produced by debitage in order to understand the manufacture and life-cycle of each single tool from a dynamic perspective.

We integrated techno-functional and use-wear analyses: the first was implemented to globally comprehend each tool, identifying each single techno-functional unity (prehensile and transformative portions), whereas the second revealed the way in which these tools had been used, proceeding to identify the activity involved (e.g., piercing, cutting and/or scraping), and the type of material (vegetable/animal, soft/hard) on

which these activities had been carried out.

The combined use of these two approaches allows us to ascertain the intention of the prehistoric craftsmen, the gestures and procedures involved in making the tools, and the way they had been used. From one single object we are thus able to reconstruct a series of complex behaviours, encompassing the creation, the life-cycle and finally the 'death' or repurposing of the tool in question.

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