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Multi-scalar Characterization of Raw Materials

Session 12: Use-Wear Analysis: The Same Protocols for Different Materials?

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Traceology, as a discipline, has always welcomed multi- and transdisciplinary approaches to better understand the complex phenomena related to the production and use of prehistoric tools. Such complexity stems to a large extent from the diversity of organic and inorganic raw materials used for tool production, and from a huge variation in the activities performed.

Current research on functional analyses faces an increasing interest for multi-technique and multi-scale approaches, including sequential views and quantitative methods to enable objective interpretations. However, there is still room for the improvement of standard analytical procedures, as well as uncertainty on the necessity of a “common modern traceological method”.

This session aims to promote this general debate and, specifically, to assess to what extent different raw materials require specific protocols in terms of experimental procedures, sample preparation, microscopic techniques, and quantitative assessment. Based on this goal, the call for participation is open to functional studies (use-wear and residues) dealing with a wide range of rocks as well as hard organic materials as bone, ivory, teeth, antler, or shell. Both methodological proposals and applied studies will be considered.