

12th International Symposium on Knappable Materials

Budapest, 18th - 22th November 2019

Session Proposal: Stone tool production and processing techniques

Session Title: Beyond flint: the effect of raw material on artefact style, function and production techniques

Organisers: Sol Sánchez-Dehesa Galán¹ and Leslye Valenzuela²

¹Sapienza University (Italy), Paris Nanterre University (France)

²Paris Nanterre University (France)

Email addresses: leslyevalenzuela@gmail.com

??

The archaeological record attests to the use of different raw materials, techniques and methods for the production of tools through time, showing that knappers possessed a detailed knowledge of their geological landscape and of the physical properties of a diversity of rock types. Nevertheless, issues relating to how lithic raw materials can influence and even predetermine knapping decisions and end products (tools) remain relatively understudied and warrant further exploration.

In this session, we aim to draw together researchers working across a diversity of geographical and chronological contexts whose work primarily concerns non-flint raw materials with different or idiosyncratic mechanical properties, and that document how prehistoric knappers confronted the intrinsic constraints of “non-standard” materials on artefact style, function, and production techniques. We particularly encourage work incorporating experimental observations (within the frame of an archaeological questioning), and oriented toward the following issues: a) whether assemblage variability results from raw material constraints or human choices, b) the influence of raw material mechanical properties on innovation in knapping strategies, and c) the technical attributes that are more, or less, useful for determining knapping techniques on “non-standard” lithic raw materials.