

The lithic economy of the hunter-gatherer communities of the Côa Valley in the Middle Palaeolithic: first steps towards its knowledge

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Cardina Salto do Boi site in the Côa valley (Portugal) contains one of the most important stratigraphic sequences of the region, covering information on the occupation of the valley by human groups from MIS 5 to MIS 3. Having proved to be of substantial importance for the understanding of the Upper Palaeolithic territorial and resource management (Aubry, Luís, Llach, & Matias, 2012; Aubry, et al., 2022) by AMH in relation to its conceptualization through rock art, Cardina's archaeological site has provided data to similarly comprehend the ways by which Neanderthals dwelled therein.

With this poster we sum up the initial results of the typo-technological analysis of the archaeological materials of the excavated areas H/I, N/O and A/Z of the site pertaining to the neanderthal occupation and the assessment of the completeness of its chaîne(s) opératoire(s).

Our approach to the archaeological materials was based on the chaîne opératoire approach, with particular regard for the typo-technological and experimental procedures as investigative tools. Henceforth, we inquired to what extent the classical scheme for studying flint artifacts was useful for understanding quartz based collections of archaeological materials, as it had been done in previous works (Driscoll, 2010; de Lombera Hermida, 2009; de Lombera-Hermida & Rodríguez-Rellán, 2016; de la Peña, 2015; de la Peña, 2022; de la Peña & Wadley, 2014). Our hope was to articulate our research with the discoveries made on that subject.

This work integrated a master's degree dissertation founded by FCT through a scholarship and aimed at contributing to increase the knowledge of Neanderthals' economy in the Côa Valley, having been articulated with the existing project CLIMATE@COA - Clima e adaptação humana durante o último Período Glaciar na região do Vale do Côa (Portugal).

Furthermore, taking into consideration the extension of the stratigraphy of the site, although there is no direct evidence for the MP/UP transition, we believe a thorough description of the technology and resources used by both species can add to the understanding of the character of such transition.

We recognize the existing faults in the work being presented, however we understand it to be a starting point from which to further our inquiry, underlining the educational background in which such work has been developed.

Key words: Middle Palaeolithic; Lithic technology; Lithic raw material; Côa Valley; Methodology.

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