
A microregional study: local raw material procurement in the "Mesolithic with geometrics" south of the "Picos de Europa" (Cantabrian Mountains, Spain)

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Résumé

The aim of this work is to determine the type of procurement and technological management developed in the local raw materials of two Mesolithic sites of the southern versant of central Cantabrian Mountains. It will be taking into account the available data on raw material sources and the analysis of the "chaîne opératoire" of the different varieties identified in the sites.

The knowledge of the potential lithic raw material supply sources in the central-western area of the Cantabrian Mountains (north of the Iberian Peninsula) has been remarkably increased in the last years, especially concerning the Palaeozoic cherts. Thanks to the survey works developed, eleven geological formations containing chert have been recognized, and two main lithological groups, from a macroscopical point of view, can be outlined: radiolarite and "black chert". The geographical distribution of the formations indicates that some varieties are located only in one of the slopes of the mountain chain. The description and definition of these different varieties of Palaeozoic cherts involves the same group of analysis: petrological, mineralogical, geochemical and thermogravimetric. In general terms, there are some common features among them such as the frequency of fracture planes, the size of the available nodules, the difficulties for its acquisition in primary position and the black colour in the "black chert" group. Nevertheless, there are features that can discriminate the different lithologies in a macroscopic and in thin section analysis, for example the lamination or the presence of certain fossil remains.

The geographical situation of the sites, the identification of the sources of chert, in primary or secondary position, and the analysis of the technological management of the raw materials will allow to differentiate mobility patterns and strategies of exploitation of the territory in the different levels of those Mesolithic groups.

Mots-Clés: Cantabrian Mountains, Mobility, Lithic raw material, Technology

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