

## **Middle Palaeolithic lithic variability in southern Albania: A good time to raise questions**

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In the recent years, a number of studies have emphasised the dynamicity of the Middle Palaeolithic period based on research that has focused mostly in Western Europe. This part of the continent is traditionally better explored, but presently a greater focus is directed toward the geographically key region of the Balkans. It is in this larger context that the Middle Palaeolithic of Albania remains rather unknown to the wider circles of archaeology. However, in the recent years a number of surface collections have increased the amount of lithic finds especially from southern Albania. Even though there is so far no chronological control of each particular assemblage, they show interesting features with regard to their lithic composition. The differences presented by these assemblages, raises the need to explore site function, raw materials, synchronicity, diachronicity as the possible reasons for such local adaptations. In addition, such assemblage particularities could become an important indicator in the future not only for Neanderthal adaptations but also for the *Homo sapiens*. The unexpected early presence of the latter has been recently published in an adjacent area at Apidima Cave. Therefore, the identification and correlation of such cultural traits remains not only a question but also a very important future aim and task for early prehistoric research.