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# Experimental approach of prehistoric rock art in the sandstone chaos of Fontainebleau massif : analysis of the engraved material, technical choices and engraving durations in a ritual practice dating from the 8th millennium BCE

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## Abstract

This talk develops the experimental and archaeometrical approach of Fontainebleau’s engravings undertaken over the last three years in the framework of a collective research program on Fontainebleau’s rock art featured in this session (B. Valentin et al.). Based on a detailed knowledge of the engraved material, the present contribution evaluates the technical involvement of mesolithic hunter-gatherers into these symbolic practices by examining two dimensions. The first one is technical and concerns the scarcity of curved grooves : is that scarcity resulting from a cultural choice or a material constraint linked to the engraved sandstone or the lithic tools ? The second one is temporal with the time span to complete the main patterns (grooves and grids) which is an essential data needed to understand this vast rupestrian phenomenon.

**Keywords:** engraving, sandstone, experimentation, hardness, duration, rock art

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