

Miniature and miniaturisation. Artefactual, technical and symbolic issues in worked material used as tools

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Abstract:

Among the various terms used to describe a small object, 'miniature' is often used. Beyond its primary meaning of a very small object modelled on a larger version, the notion suggests a conscious approach prior to the material and visual result. Miniaturisation is a technical process involving a limited amount of material, as well as a cognitive process with motivations stemming from various cultural contexts in which individuality plays an essential role.

But how can we truly define a miniature object? At what measurable threshold can it be considered small enough? These questions require a general corpus of comparative parameters and a particular category of objects. When it comes to tools, the distinction is not easy to make, especially since they may participate of a general process of size reduction which varies according to specific dynamics or contexts.

All researchers and heritage curators are welcome to submit proposals for presentation. The implications relating to the identification or origin of the raw material used will also be addressed. To enrich and broaden the thematic perspectives of the subject, more recent examples from any field from research would be welcome for comparison purposes.