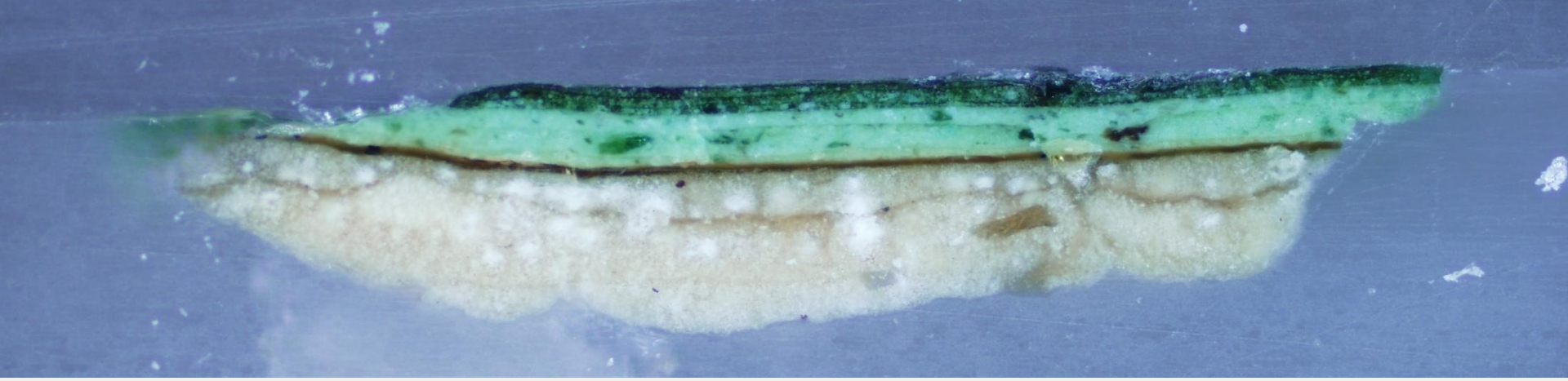

Optical Microscopy (OM)

Optical microscopy allows untreated objects or specifically prepared samples (stratigraphic sections and thin sections) to be observed and documented at various magnifications. Parts of the artefacts or representative samples are documented and studied at magnifications of up to about 100X. One variant is the stereoscopic microscope which, thanks to the two separate optical paths, enables the superficial morphology of the samples to be examined at relatively low magnifications (max. about 100 X). Stereomicroscopy is mainly used for the investigation of untreated artefact surfaces or samples, while the more complex OM techniques are generally employed on appropriately prepared samples: for example, polished cross sections can be viewed in reflected light microscopy (RLM) and under UV radiation.