
Distribution of rhyolites from Jebel Sabaloka (central Sudan): the case of gouges.

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Résumé

There is a number of key issues of the social and economic conditions in Northeast Africa during Neolithic period, which have not been dealt with satisfactorily yet. One of these is the issue of the emergence of intensive forms of exchange. In my paper I would like to present case study on this topic. As an example of the artefact, which was distributed over a significant distances, were chosen gouges (axe like lithic artefacts). They are an iconic artefact of the early phase of the Neolithic period in central Sudan (the Gouge Culture – *Arkell 1949*; now known as the Early or Khartoum Neolithic *Arkell 1953*). These artefacts are usually made of rhyolites from Sabaloka area and often were transported over long distances. There is a significant number of issues connected with distribution of gouges. Even when there were many important articles published on this issue (e.g. *Kobusiewicz 2011*; *Magid 2003*), there are many questions which are not answered clearly enough:

- 1) function
- 2) technology of production
- 3) distribution

This paper focus on the technological aspect of their production and distribution. High professionalism in their production is very important for better understanding of their role in the society. There are several lines of explanation of role of these artefacts from purely utilitarian to highly symbolic. I would like to present preliminary information which comes from comparative analysis of gouges from several sites in central Sudan. Especially compare differences between materials which are from sites which are right near the source of the raw material to the collections which come from more distant areas.

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Mots-Clés: Lithics, Neolithic, Central Sudan, Distribution, Technology