
For body or for spirit? Intriguing red polish on flint tools from Rzucewo Culture, Poland.

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Abstract

Rzucewo Culture is a unique Late Neolithic phenomenon related mainly to exploitation of marine resources. For years these people were called *seal hunters* due to numerous faunal remains found in their settlements located on the southern Baltic Sea coast. It is also known for intensive extraction and processing of amber.

Rzucewo Culture groups left numerous flint assemblages produced mainly of locally collected flint pebbles with the help of scale technique. Technology of flint production was very simple and uniform from site to site.

Eponymous Rzucewo site itself delivered ca. 30.000 lithics and this assemblage contained several dozens of flakes, blades, pebbles and tools carrying very distinct red polish. It spreads over surfaces and/or edges of flints. Presented paper discusses results of technological, typological and traceological considerations aiming to shed light on the genesis of this phenomenon. It also attempts to evaluate whether this polish was of any importance for the subsistence or reflects extra-utilitarian cultural behavior.

Keywords: functional study, Rzucewo Culture, Neolithic, red polish

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