

Lithic resource management dynamics from the Middle Palaeolithic to the Middle Neolithic in northern Hungary: a research project

Zsolt Mester¹, Sándor Józsa², György Lengyel³, Ágnes Novothny⁴, Norbert Faragó¹, Piroska Csengeri⁵, László Domboróczki⁶, Mónika Gutay⁶, József Szeberényi⁷

1 : Institute of Archaeological Sciences, University Eötvös Loránd, Múzeum krt. 4/B, H-1088 Budapest

2 : Department of Petrology and Geochemistry, University Eötvös Loránd, Pázmány Péter sétány 1/C, H-1117 Budapest

3 : Institute for History, University of Miskolc, Building B/2, H-3515 Miskolc–Egyetemváros

4 : Department of Physical Geography, University Eötvös Loránd, Pázmány Péter sétány 1/C, H-1117 Budapest

5 : Herman Ottó Museum, Görgey A. u. 28, H-3529 Miskolc

6 : Dobó István Castle Museum, Vár 1., H-3300 Eger

7 : Geographical Institute, Research Centre for Astronomy and Earth Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budaörsi út 45., H-1112 Budapest

Natural resource management was a basic questions of adaptation along human history. Our project studies this topic with the focus on lithic raw materials resources within a time frame, from the Middle Palaeolithic to the Middle Neolithic, with important climatic-environmental changes and important economic-cultural changes. The Northern Hungarian Range, belonging to the inner Western Carpathians, is dominantly built up from Mesozoic and Tertiary rocks of sedimentary and volcanic origins. Due to its complicated formation history, there are various geogical formations which contain different types of siliceous rocks. The southern foothill regions of the Northern Hungarian Range, especially the Mátralja and the Bükkalja areas, are rich in human occupation sites from the Stone Age. Taking into account palaeogeography, settlement strategy, access to raw material source, aptness of raw materials to knapping, and lithic economy, it will be possible to see a diachronic tendency with cultural and natural factors. Our research project use a complexe methodology. All occurences of siliceous rocks will be mapped in the regions by studying geological properties, using Fine-grained Pebble Examination (FPE) method and field surveys. They will be evaluated as raw material sources regarding exploitation possibilities and rock quality. Applying palaeogeographic reconstructions their palaeo-accessibility will be reconstructed for the study periods. Human settlements from the study periodes will be mapped in the study areas using archaeological data and field surveys. The exploited raw material spectrum in an archaeological assemblage will be identified. Based on technological analyses the modes of acquisition and processing of each raw material will be recognized. Due to the application of GIS based data processing on geological, geomorphological and archaeological data sets, the modelling of the dynamics of the lithic economy will be undertaken for the study time frame. The role played by the changes in the environmental and the cultural factors will be evaluated.

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