

Session Proposal

European Association of Archaeologists (EAA) 12th Annual Meeting

Krakow, Poland

19th to 24th September 2006

Organizer: Pierre Allard, Françoise Bostyn, François Giligny, Jacek Lech

Theme:

Archaeology and Material Culture: Interpreting the Archaeological Record

Session Title:

Flint Mining in Prehistoric Europe : interpreting the archaeological records

Abstract:

The aim of this session is to bring together scholars concerned with studying high-yield flint extraction and processing sites and/or methods in Prehistoric Europe.

Shaft mining is a well known type of underground mining, acknowledged as far back as the 19th century at a number of large European flint-mining sites, but several other modes of access to flint have since been identified for prehistoric times. These include open air quarrying, drift mining cutting into hillsides, and shallow opencast pit mining.

Exhaustive recent excavations have also shown that the intensive processing of flint was not always necessarily connected with a specific type of extraction. Located close to the outcrops and generally described as workshops, these areas where flint was massively knapped are characterized by a variety of lithic productions.

Another newly identified instance of intensive processing pertains to cases where flint-working is dissociated from outcrops and takes place at a main settlement site or even at several contemporaneous sites distributed within a micro-region (the latter in particular seems prevalent in the Central European Early Neolithic). Finally, there are also examples of large-scale transfers of end products, for which the modes of access to the raw material or indeed the location of the outcrops themselves are not yet clearly identified.

The session is therefore an opportunity for scholars interested in the different aspects of prehistoric raw material exploitation to meet and discuss recent developments in issues related to extraction processes and modes of distribution

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