



Romanian Black Sea region from Paleolithic to the beginning of the Bronze Age. Mineral resources and goods exchange.

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The archaeological research in the Romanian Black Sea region increased in volume and quality during the last ten years as well as broader scientific interest for the Black Sea problems.

Although larger projects started during this period and researchers begin looking at the larger context of archeological phenomena there is still much to do in what we call today environmental archaeology and its processes.

For the area that I am presenting in this poster, we have by now more than 200 Paleolithic/Mesolithic/Neolithic and less than 30 Bronze Age settlements. However, only a small part of these was excavated – less than 50. Therefore, our documentary base is fragile but still important in our efforts of understanding the evolution of human communities on the Black Sea coast during prehistory.

The main mineral resources that I’m interested in are flint (regardless of quality) and copper (including here all composites). Those two were extensively used in prehistory mainly for manufacturing tools but also for other categories of artifacts such as jewels or weapons. Less used but equally important were other metals, like gold, rocks such as limestone, granite and marble or minerals used for pottery decoration as red ochre (hematite) and graphite.

All these minerals were, either exploited from local sources, or brought in by exchange, sometimes from long distances. In the poster, I will present maps with the geographical distribution of the mineral sources from the Romanian Black Sea region along with the location of the settlements. For all periods presented, I will make a

qualitative and quantitative analysis of the data, which in many cases (especially for flint) comes from field surveys and isolated finds, and rarely from excavations.

I must stress that I am not interested in tools (object) typology (regardless of material) but in finding a relation between local sources and human evolution in this area. As for goods exchange or trade, almost the only argument is the presence of objects made of unknown minerals in Dobrogea (name of Romanian Black Sea region), at least for prehistory. In my opinion there were two main directions of goods exchange through prehistory of Dobrogea – from South (Bulgaria) to North (Dobrogea) in Paleolithic-Neolithic and from North-East of the Black Sea to Dobrogea in the beginning of the Bronze Age. Unfortunately we do not have many chemical analyses for metal objects or good geological data for the tools made from flint or other rocks that can argument this opinion. There is still much to do in this direction and I hope that future projects will improve our knowledge.

These are few of the problems that I will present and illustrate in my poster along with a list of all C14 data available for the prehistory of Dobrogea.

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