

Investigation the Sources and Uses of Obsidian During the Neolithic in Poland

With the help of remnants (relics and contexts in which they were found) left by societies which functioned in pre-history an archaeologist undertakes a task of recreating their world. For the Stone Age explorers one of the most important sources in fulfilling this task are siliceous rocks. By using various analyses – metric, geochemical, petrographic – a picture of functioning pre-historic communities is reconstructed.

A very rewarding material for this type of analyses is obsidian, since any kind of it is characterized by a complex of unique attributes. Having this quality we may connect artefacts made of obsidian registered on the site with a particular place of quarry of this raw material. As a result we receive the possibility of getting closer to the world of past societies in pre-history. This concerns above all the issues of mining and utilizing this material, but also questions relating to intercultural contacts, transport and exchange of goods.

The presented project has the aim of reconstructing the world of Neolithic societies on territories of modern Poland through the medium of several analyses of obsidian materials. The results obtained in course of the research shall be interpreted in collation with the theory of exchange. In effect we will attain a picture of pre-historic societies with particular emphasis on the importance of obsidian – its quarrying, processing and distribution. This will allow us a closer look on the ways these communities functioned. Will we get a picture of the culture of Neolithic communities, in particular of issues related to their mobility and intercultural contacts as well as their economy and the symbolism of “exotic” raw materials.