In study of protohistorical and early historical times, the general indifference for late lithic industries, and the idea that stone-metal replacement was a self-evident and automatic process, explains why, traditionally, archaeologists focused on the new materials and technologies related to their productions. The emergence and development of metallurgy has always been more attractive. Lithic productions were neglected and considered a heritage of prehistoric traditions. Although chipped-stone tools were recognized as a component of the material culture of the Metal Ages, lithic industries did not interest the archaeologists working on protohistorical and early historical societies, or the Paleolthic and Neolithic flint tool specialists. The limited importance given to lithic productions as an expression of cultural identities of protohistorial and early historical societies drives the archaeologists working on these periods to prefer other materials considered to be more informative. At the same time, these industries did not seem suitable for approaching the socio-political and historical aspects which are the dominant topics in archaeological research of these periods.

Despite these premises, analyses of chipped stone tools of the Metal Ages have developed significantly since the 60’s in Europe and the 80’s in the Near East. These studies show new potential for the characterization of the societies producing and using flint tools, and for understanding the ultimate replacement of those tools by metals.

In this session, we will bring together scholars working in the Near East, in Eastern and Western Europe to present their research and present the state of art of lithic industries in metal using societies. We will encourage debate on change and continuity related to the use of chipped-stone tools, theoretical frameworks, methodological approaches and current issues. We anticipate stimulating discussions among the participants from these different geographical areas that focus on lithic industries from protohistorical and early historical times.

Key words: Metal Ages, lithic, technology, use-wear analysis, experimental archaeology