
The organization of lithic technology among Early Epigravettian hunter gatherers in the Italian peninsula at the end of the Last Glacial Maximum

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Résumé

It is here provided an overview of the lithic productions in the Italian peninsula in the frame of the paleoenvironmental and paleogeographic setting of the end of the Last Glacial Maximum (ca. 24,000- 20,000 calBP). It is first advanced a point of view on the Early Epigravettian hunter-gatherers settlement system and its archaeological correlates around the once exposed Great Adriatic Plain, whose outer areas featured dedicated activities in the earliest phase - like raw material procurement and specialized hunting expeditions - with the plain itself probably acting as residential area. The progressive reduction of the exposed landmass by the end of the LGM is paralleled by the southward diffusion of early Epigravettian assemblages within archaeological contexts increasingly consistent with palimpsests of diversified activities, interpretable as a reorganization of the Epigravettian settlement systems due to geographical and paleoenvironmental modifications. The very south-eastern end of the peninsula holds one among the later evidence of the Early Epigravettian in Italy and represents the tail of the chronological *décalage* characterizing the sites of the Adriatic side. Here, technological choices are aimed at the maintainability of the tool kits and at optimizing the use of exogenous raw materials. The assemblages are based on lamellar reduction chains, whose products are used in the manufacture of microlithic armatures such as shouldered points, backed points, backed truncated bladelets and triangles, which are often achieved also adopting the microburin technique.

Mots-Clés: Last Glacial Maximum, Early Epigravettian, technoeconomic behaviour, hunter gatherers land use.

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