
Siliceous rocks mining, using and identification – short overview of a history of archaeological friendship between humanities and natural sciences

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Résumé

Archaeology, as a scientific discipline, is quite young and is classified as a humanities discipline. But when it was developing the main core of sciences disciplines was already stable and solid so archaeology took some from each of the disciplines. Each "old science" had, and still has, its impacts on creating this "new science". It is especially seen in researches concerning prehistoric communities' uses of siliceous rocks.

Poland has a long history of cooperation of humanities with natural science. From the very beginning prehistorians, historians, collectors, and amateurs work together with geologists, physical anthropologists, and researchers of earth sciences. In Poland, the most known example of such cooperation is the partnership between Stefan Krukowski (archaeologist) and Jan Samsonowicz (geologist). Nevertheless, it is not the only example of friendship between humanities and natural science in the history of archeology in Poland. Marian Wawrzyniecki was the first who used 1903 the term "obsidian" in his publication concerning archaeological materials from the site Weżeń. Determination of the type of raw materials of discovered items Wawrzyniecki owes to Jan Lewiński (1876-1939), a geologist, and the founder and first director of the Geological Laboratory, part of the Museum of Industry and Agriculture in Warsaw. Similarly, also other archaeologists of the period appreciated the benefits that came from cooperation with representatives of other disciplines, such as geologists, physical anthropologists, and botanists.

In this presentation, we will present an overview of the main points of contact between researches from humanities and natural science in Polish research on the uses of siliceous rocks in prehistory. Their impacts on the shape of today's research on siliceous rocks: its sources and identification, as well as mining and use by prehistoric communities.

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