
‘Bearers of civilization’ or ‘useful idiots’. The southern Baltic coast Mesolithic and its relation with the Neolithic. The case from Dabki, Poland.

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Abstract

The Mesolithic occupation of Polish territory during the second half of 6th and 5th millennium BC, i.e. during the time of the first appearance and further development of the Early Neolithic Danubian societies, was intensive and diversified. The Mesolithic groups primarily inhabited the areas most suitable for hunter-gatherer-fisher style of life, environments which were rarely interesting for the early farmers. The southern Baltic coastal territories (nowadays called northern Pomerania), with its rich marine and terrestrial environs, witnessed the appearance of the most advanced foraging societies that ever inhabited Polish territories. A unique example of these types of groups is an aggregation of sites on Dabki Island. Twenty years of archaeological research provide evidence of a developed economy that was based on the diversified exploitation of fresh-water (also, occasional marine) and terrestrial resources. The people at Dabki maintained long-lasting relationships with Neolithic groups that approached this area from the south. The nature of these interactions as well as the potential implications for the development of some Neolithic societies is discussed in this paper.

Keywords: Late Mesolithic, Early Neolithic, transition, exchange

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