

NEOLITHIC AND BRONZE AGE HUMAN ACTIVITY IN THE MOUNTAINS

The Case of the High Bieszczady Mountains, Carpathians

A N D R Z E J P E L I S I A K

Inspiration for archaeological research in the High Bieszczady Mountains came from information about human activity recorded in pollen diagrams from surroundings of Tarnawa, Wołosate and Smerek. Archaeological investigations in the High Bieszczady Mountains began in 2012. Up to 2019 more than 70 sites dated to the Late Neolithic and Bronze Age were discovered in the highland zones of Połonina Wetlińska, Połonina Caryńska, Mała and Wielka Rawka, Wielki Dział and Bukowe Berdo massifs, between 1000 and 1300 m a. s. l. Most of these sites are located in a close context of fresh and salt water springs. The sites are represented by single finds of stone artefacts and small assemblages of them. They correspond with the pollen record of animals herding. These finds confirm transhumant pastoralism performed by Neolithic and Bronze Age (probably mainly Early Bronze Age) people in this area.

Keywords: Poland, Carpathians, Neolithic, Bronze Age, mountain archaeology, lithic artefacts, transhumance.

INTRODUCTION

Inspiration for archaeological research in the High Bieszczady Mountains came from information about human activity dated from ca. 3000/3200 BC, recorded in pollen diagrams from surroundings of Tarnawa, Wołosate and Smerek (Fig. 1). Chronologically, these first signals can be connected with the Late Neolithic groups of Funnel Beaker and Corded Ware cultures people (*Ralska-Jasiewiczowa 1969; 1980*). Moreover, they reflect only animal herding, and up to the end of the Bronze Age there were no pollen records of sedentary settlements and plant cultivation in these diagrams. It also should be added that up to 2013 there was no archaeological evidence of human activity in the High Bieszczady Mountains in these times.¹ Archaeological investigations in the High Bieszczady Mountains were undertaken in 2012. They consisted of field prospections and collecting information about accidental discoveries of archaeological artefacts in this area. In result of works carried out from 2013 to 2019 more than 70 sites dated to the Late Neolithic and Bronze Age were discovered in the highland zones of Połonina Wetlińska, Połonina Caryńska, Mała and Wielka Rawka, Wielki Dział and Bukowe Berdo massifs (Fig. 2).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS

Till the end of 2019 there have been 72 archaeological sites registered in the Polish High Bieszczady which can be dated to the Late Neolithic or the Early Bronze Age. They are located around Moczarne, in the massifs of Połonina Wetlińska and Połonina Caryńska, in the built-up area of Wetlina village, in the massifs of Bukowe Berdo, Wielki Dział, Mała and Wielka Rawka, and in Cisna village. Information about all the sites and artefacts found there were already described and published (*Pelisiak 2014; 2016a; 2016b; 2016c; 2017a; 2017b; 2018a; 2018b; Pelisiak/Maj 2013; Pelisiak/Maj/Bajda 2015; Raczak 2018*). All finds were collected from the surface. It should also be added that all these sites and their vicinity were surveyed several times during spring/summer/autumn field seasons which in many cases brought to light new artifacts.

The sites were discovered in several parts of the High Bieszczady Mountains. Around Moczarne and in the area of the Pod Czerteżem Pass 16 new sites were registered: Wetlina 15 (irregular splintered piece of melinite chert); Wetlina 16 (crushed core and two splintered chunks of melinite chert, two-pole splintered piece of quartzite sandstone, pebble of the flysch gray radiolarite with irregular

¹ The only known find, made of black melinite hornstone and discovered in 1976 in the massif of Połonina Caryńska, was dated to the Neolithic or Early Bronze Age (*Valde-Nowak 1991*).

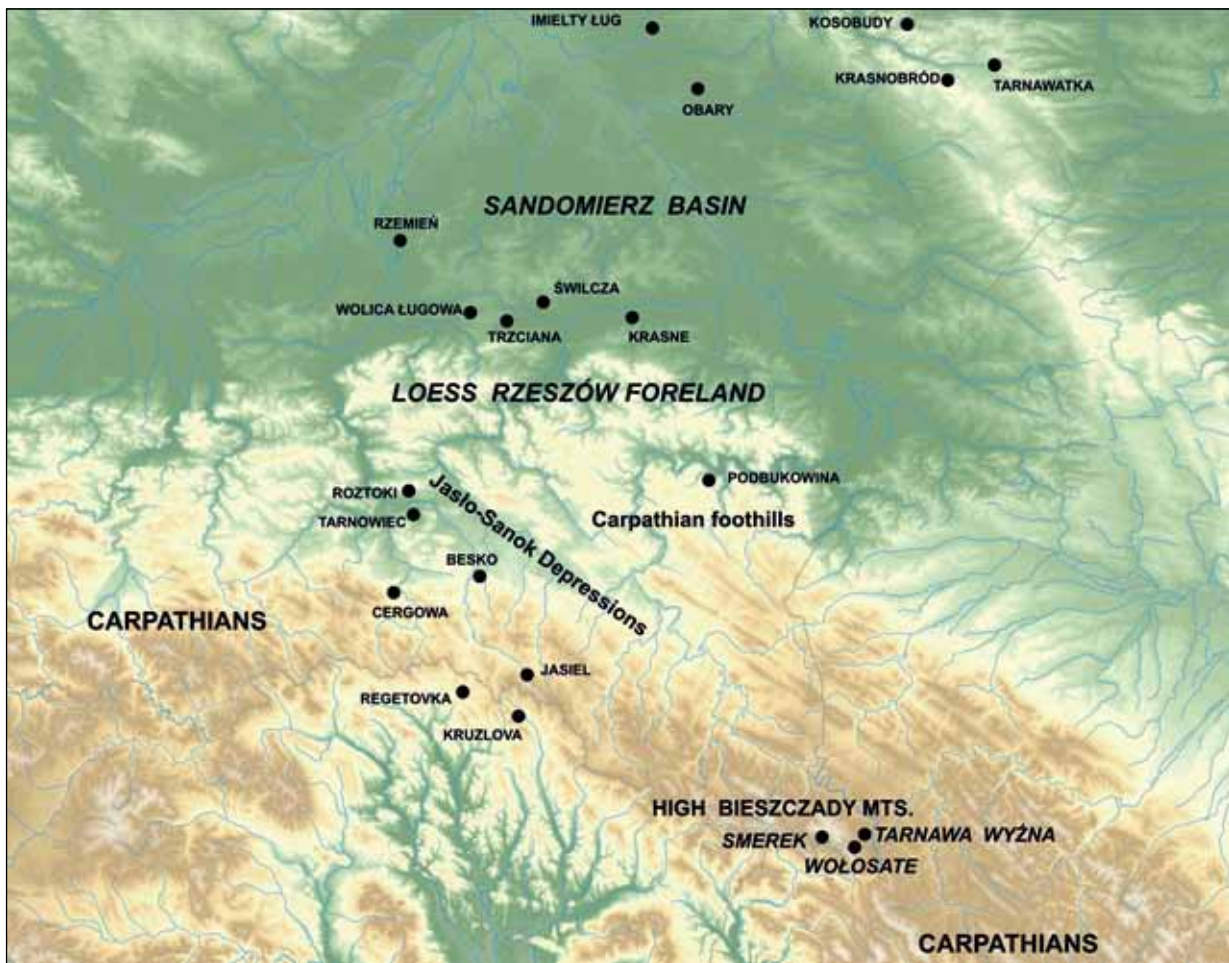


Fig. 1. Area of research and pollen diagrams from Bieszczady Mountains and adjacent regions in south-eastern Poland and Slovakia.

retouch on two edges – part of one edge is bifacially retouched, flake tool of the quartzite sandstone – possibly the fragment of an unfinished Krummesser, knife-like tool on a quartzite sandstone fragment with irregular bifacial retouch on one edge and the negative of a detached flake on the side, flake of black melinite chert with one-side retouch on one edge and the splinter negative on the side, fragment of crushed splintered piece of black melinite chert; Fig. 4: L, M, N); Wetlina 17 (quasi-discoid single-platform flake core); Wetlina 18 (flake core of the siliceous sandstone); Wetlina 19 (single-platform flake core of siliceous sandstone); Wetlina 20 (flaked piece of siliceous sandstone); Wetlina 21 (flake cores made of siliceous sandstone); Wetlina 25, Pod Czerteżem Pass (fragment of irregular blade with one edge partially retouched of flint of the Bircza type); Wetlina 27 (flake core of siliceous sandstone); Wetlina 30 (flake core of siliceous sandstone; Fig. 5: 1); Wetlina 32 (fragment of rough-out of Krummesser of quartzite

sandstone; Fig. 5: 3); Wetlina 40 (flake core of brown chert); Wetlina 50 (fragment of knife-like tool made from siliceous sandstone; Fig. 4: R); Wetlina 51 (flake core made of flysch radiolarite; Fig. 4: S); Wetlina 52 (flake core of siliceous marl; Fig. 4: T); Wetlina 53 (initial core of quartzite; Fig. 4: U).

There are known 31 archaeological sites from the massif of Połonina Wetlińska dated to the Late Neolithic and the Early Bronze Age: Wetlina 6 (arrowhead of melilite hornstone; Fig. 6: 1); Wetlina 22 (knife-like tool made of melilite hornstone); Wetlina 23 (end-scraper of melilite hornstone; Fig. 6: 2); Wetlina 24 (two small potsherds similar to pottery of the Corded Ware culture; Fig. 6: 3); Wetlina 26 (splintered piece of melilite hornstone; Fig. 6: 4); Wetlina 33 (65 artifacts of light brown chert, black melinite chert, siliceous sandstone and burnt artifacts of unrecognized rocks; Fig. 5: 4–6); Wetlina 35 (splintered piece of melilite hornstone; Fig. 5: 7); Wetlina 36 (splintered piece of melilite chert; Fig. 5: 8); Wetlina 37 (50 artifacts of quartzite, siliceous rock similar

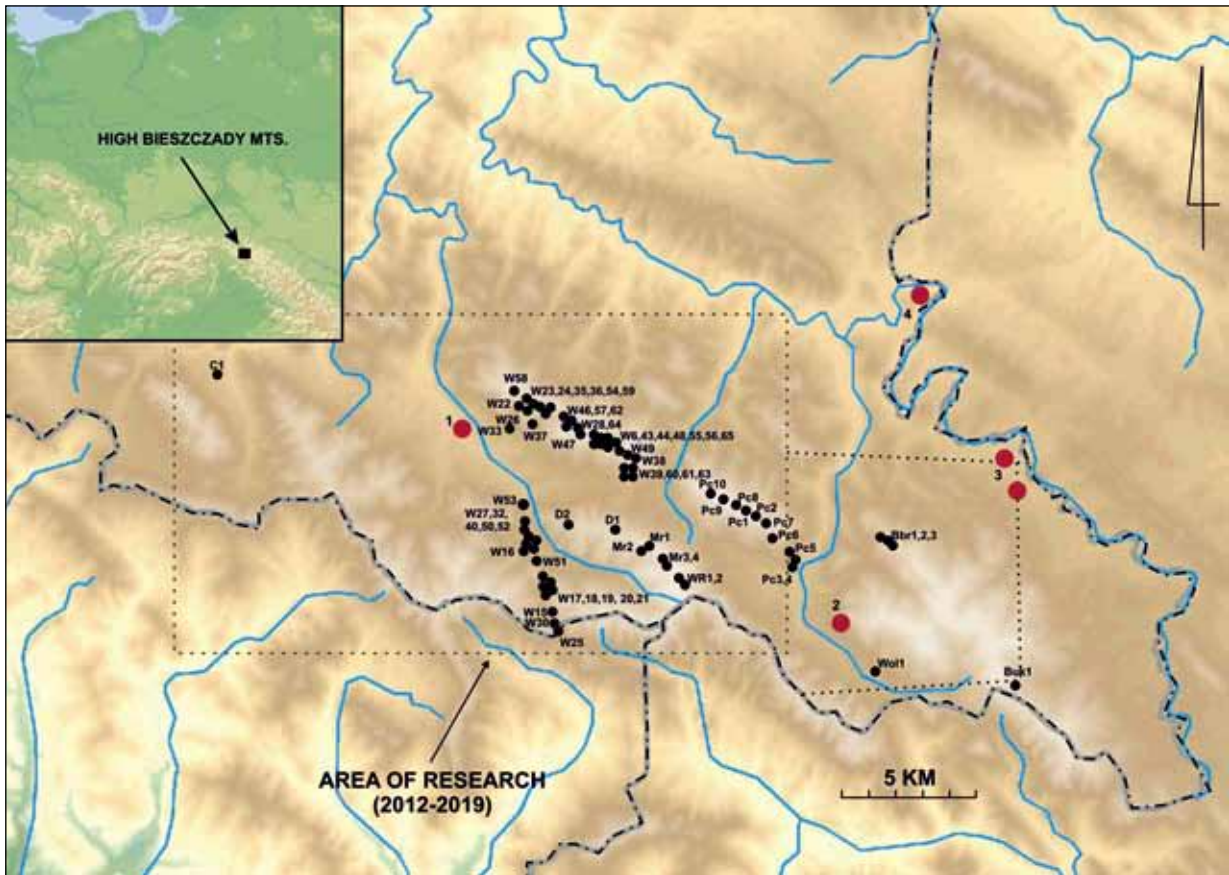


Fig. 2. Archaeological sites discovered in the High Bieszczady Mountains dated to the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age. C1 – Cisna, site 6; W5 – Wetlina, site 5; Połonina Wetlińska Massif; W6 – Wetlina, site 6; W22 – Wetlina, site 22; W23 – Wetlina, site 23; W24 – Wetlina, site 24; W26 – Wetlina, site 26; W 28 – Wetlina, site 28; W33 – Wetlina, site 33; W34 – Wetlina, site 34; W35 – Wetlina, site 35; W37 – Wetlina, site 37; W38 – Wetlina, site 38; W39 – Wetlina, site 39; W43 – Wetlina, site 43; W44 – Wetlina, site 44; W46 – Wetlina, site 46; W47 – Wetlina, site 47; W48 – Wetlina, site 48; W55 – Wetlina, site 55; W56 – Wetlina, site 56; W57 – Wetlina, site 57; W58 – Wetlina, site 58; W59 – Wetlina, site 59; W60 – Wetlina, site 60; W61 – Wetlina, site 61; W62 – Wetlina, site 62; W63 – Wetlina, site 63; W64 – Wetlina, site 64; W65 – Wetlina, site 65. Mozarne Region: W16 – Wetlina, site 16; W17 – Wetlina, site 17; W18 – Wetlina, site 18; W19 – Wetlina, site 19; W20 – Wetlina, site 20; W21 – Wetlina, site 21; W27 – Wetlina, site 27; W32 – Wetlina, site 32; W40 – Wetlina, site 40; W50 – Wetlina, site 50; W51 – Wetlina, site 51; W52 – Wetlina, site 52; W53 – Wetlina, site 53; W53 – Wetlina, site 53. Przełęcz pod Czerteżem: W25 – Wetlina, site 25; W30 – Wetlina, site 30. Wielki Dział: Wd 1 – Wielki Dział, site 1; Wd2 – Wielki Dział, site 2. Mała Rawka: Mr1 – Mała Rawka, site 1; Mr2 – Mała Rawka, site 2; Mr3 – Mała Rawka, site 3; Mr4 – Mała Rawka, site 4. Wielka Rawka: WR1 – Wielka Rawka, site 1; WR2 – Wielka Rawka, site 2. Połonina Caryńska Massif: Pc1 – Połonina Caryńska, site 1; Pc2 – Połonina Caryńska, site 2; Pc3 – Połonina Caryńska, site 3; Pc4 – Połonina Caryńska, site 4; Pc5 – Połonina Caryńska, site 5; Pc6 – Połonina Caryńska, site 6; Pc7 – Połonina Caryńska, site 7; Pc8 – Połonina Caryńska, site 8; Pc9 – Połonina Caryńska, site 9; Pc10 – Połonina Caryńska, site 10. Bukowe Berdo: Bbr1 – Bukowe Berdo, site 1; Bbr2 – Bukowe Berdo, site 2; Bbr3 – Bukowe Berdo, site 3; Buk1 – Bukowska Pass, site 1; Woł1 – Wołosate, site 1. Large points – pollen diagrams: 1 – Smerek; 2 – Wołosate; 3 – Tarnawa Wyzna region; 4 – Zakole.

to flint of the Bircza type, light brown chert, black melinite chert and siliceous sandstone; Fig. 5: 9–11); Wetlina 38 (three chunks of menilite hornstones); Wetlina 39 (splintered piece of menilite hornstone); Wetlina 41 (irregular retouched blade made of quartzite; Fig. 5: 12); Wetlina 43 (arrowhead of Volhynian flint; Fig. 5: 13); Wetlina 44 (retouched blade of black melinite hornstone; Fig. 4: O); Wetlina 46 (flake of menilite hornstone); Wetlina 47 (chip of undetermined rock); Wetlina 48 (two flakes, one chip,

three chunks of menilite hornstone, splintered piece of siliceous sandstone; Fig. 4: 9); Wetlina 49 (chip and two chunks of menilite hornstone); Wetlina 54 (two retouched flakes made of menilite hornstone); Wetlina 55 (end-scraper, flake and chunk of menilite hornstone); Wetlina 56 (arrowhead of Volhynian flint; Fig. 3: 2); Wetlina 57 (arrowhead of chocolate flint; Fig. 3: 3); Wetlina 58 (chunk of siliceous rock with technical negatives); Wetlina 59 (chip of chocolate flint); Wetlina 60 (splintered piece of

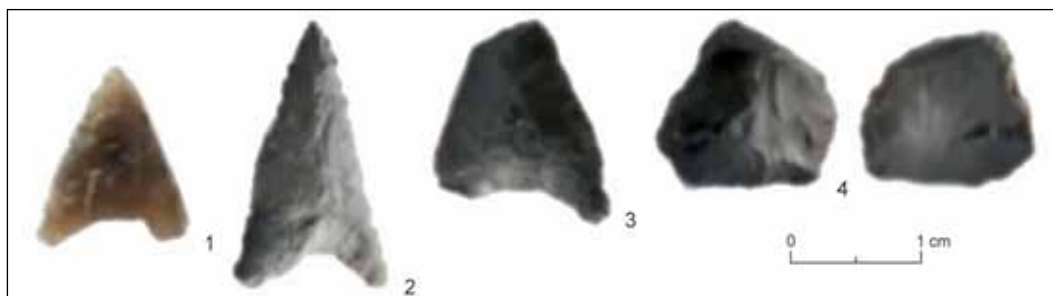


Fig. 3. Finds from the High Bieszczady Mountains (1–3). 1 – Wetlina, site 56; 2 – Wetlina, site 57; 3 – Przełęcz Bukowska, site 1; 4 – Duszatyn, site 17 (after Raczak 2018).

black menilite hornstone and chunk with technical negatives of brown chert); Wetlina 61 (chunk with technical negatives of menilite hornstone); Wetlina 62 (fragment of blade, fragment of bladelet and one chip, all of chocolate flint); Wetlina 63 (splintered chunk of menilite hornstone); Wetlina 64 (retouched flake of chocolate flint); Wetlina 65 (splintered piece of menilite hornstone).

Ten archaeological sites are known from the Połonina Caryńska massif: Połonina Caryńska 1 (blade of menilite hornstone); Połonina Caryńska 2/3 (flake and splintered chunk of menilite hornstone; Fig. 4: G, H); Połonina Caryńska 4 (numerous artefacts made of menilite hornstone; Fig. 4: I); Połonina Caryńska 5 (numerous artefacts made of menilite hornstone; Fig. 4: J); Połonina Caryńska 6 (flake of dark brown white dotted rock similar to flints of the Bircza type; Fig. 4: K); Połonina Caryńska 7 (splintered chunk of menilite hornstone); Połonina Caryńska 8 (flake fragment of dark gray siliceous rock similar to flints of the Bircza type); Połonina Caryńska 9 (splintered piece of menilite hornstone); Połonina Caryńska 10 (one end-scraper of dark gray siliceous rock similar to flints of the Bircza type, splintered chunk of black menilite hornstone).

From the area of Wetlina village a fragment of a blade made of quartzite was found.

Three sites on the Bukowe Berdo Massif were discovered: Bukowe Berdo 1 (retouched chunk of menilite hornstone; Fig. 4: A); Bukowe Berdo 2 (one retouched chunk, one splintered piece of menilite hornstone and one chunk with technical negatives of raw material similar to Bircza flint; Fig. 4: B, C); Bukowe Berdo 3 (splintered piece of menilite hornstone; Fig. 4: D).

On the ridge of Wielki Dział massif two sites were discovered: Wielki Dział 1 (chunk with technical negatives of menilite hornstone) and Wielki Dział 2 (retouched chunk of menilite hornstone).

On the wide ridge of Mała and Wielka Rawka massifs six sites dated to the Neolithic and Bronze Age were discovered: Mała Rawka 1 (one piece of quartzite – non local rock; Fig. 4: E); Mała Rawka 2 (splintered chunk of menilite hornstone); Mała Rawka 3 (partly retouched flake of siliceous rock); Mała Rawka 4 (blade of menilite hornstone); Wielka Rawka 1 (retouched flake made of siliceous rock); Wielka Rawka 2 (fragment of retouched splintered chunk of menilite hornstone).

Moreover, on the Bukowska Pass (Bukowska Pass 1) a retouched flake of menilite hornstone was discovered. In the Wołosate village (Wołosate 7) an assemblage consisting of eleven artifacts made of Volhynian flint (artifact) and black menilite hornstone (other) was discovered near the place where an old orthodox church used to be before World War II.

NOTES ABOUT CHRONOLOGY

In respect of chronology and cultural affiliation the material from the High Bieszczady Mountains can be divided into several groups. Arrowheads from sites Wetlina 6, 43, 56 and 57 are typical for the Corded Ware culture (cf. *Budziszewski/Tunia 2000; Machnik et al. 2009; Machnik/Pilch 1997; Włodarczak 2006*). The retouched blade from Wetlina 41 may be related to the Funnel Beaker culture. However, relatively big blades appear also in assemblages of the Corded Ware culture (e. g. *Machnik/Pawliw/Petehyrycz 2011, fig. 20*). Blades made of various raw materials and tools made of blades can be placed in the Neolithic without more specific affiliation. Half-product of rectangular axe of black menilite chert found in Cisna 6 suggest the dating of this site to the Neolithic. On the other hand, black menilite chert was one of the most important siliceous raw materials used in the Carpathians during the Neolithic and the beginning of the Bronze Age. Nonetheless,

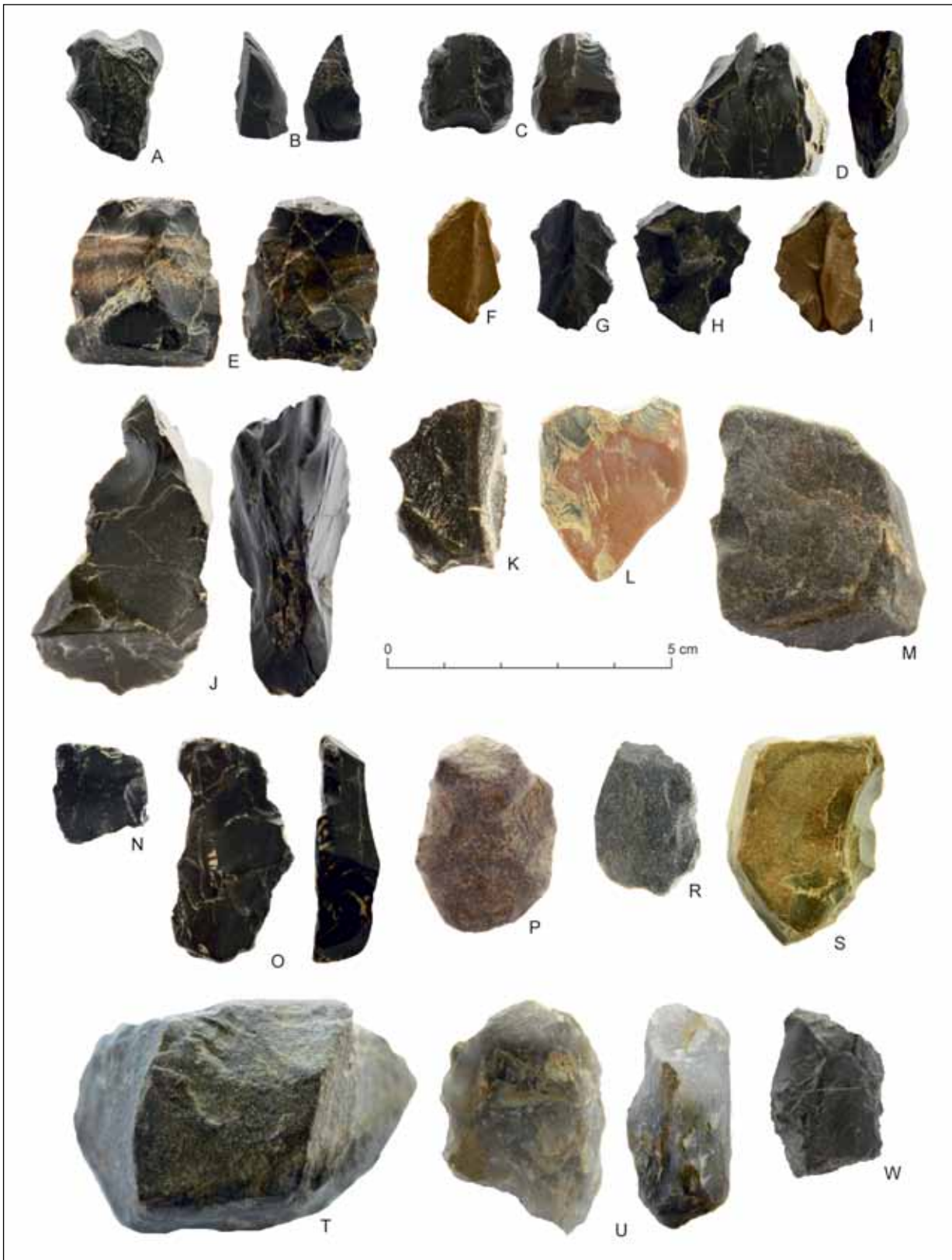


Fig. 4. Finds from the High Bieszczady Mountains. A – Bukowe Berdo, site 1; B – Bukowe Berdo, site 2; C – Bukowe Berdo, site 2; D – Bukowe Berdo, site 3; E – Mała Rawka, site 1; F – Mała Rawka, site 3; G – Połonina Caryńska, site 2; H – Połonina Caryńska, site 3; I – Połonina Caryńska, site 4; J – Połonina Caryńska, site 5; K – Połonina Caryńska, site 6; L – Wetlina, site 16; M – Wetlina, site 16; N – Wetlina, site 16; O – Wetlina, site 44; P – Wetlina, site 48; R – Wetlina, site 50; S – Wetlina, site 51; T – Wetlina, site 52; U – Wetlina, site 53; W – Wielka Rawka, site. 2 (after *Pelisiak 2018b*).

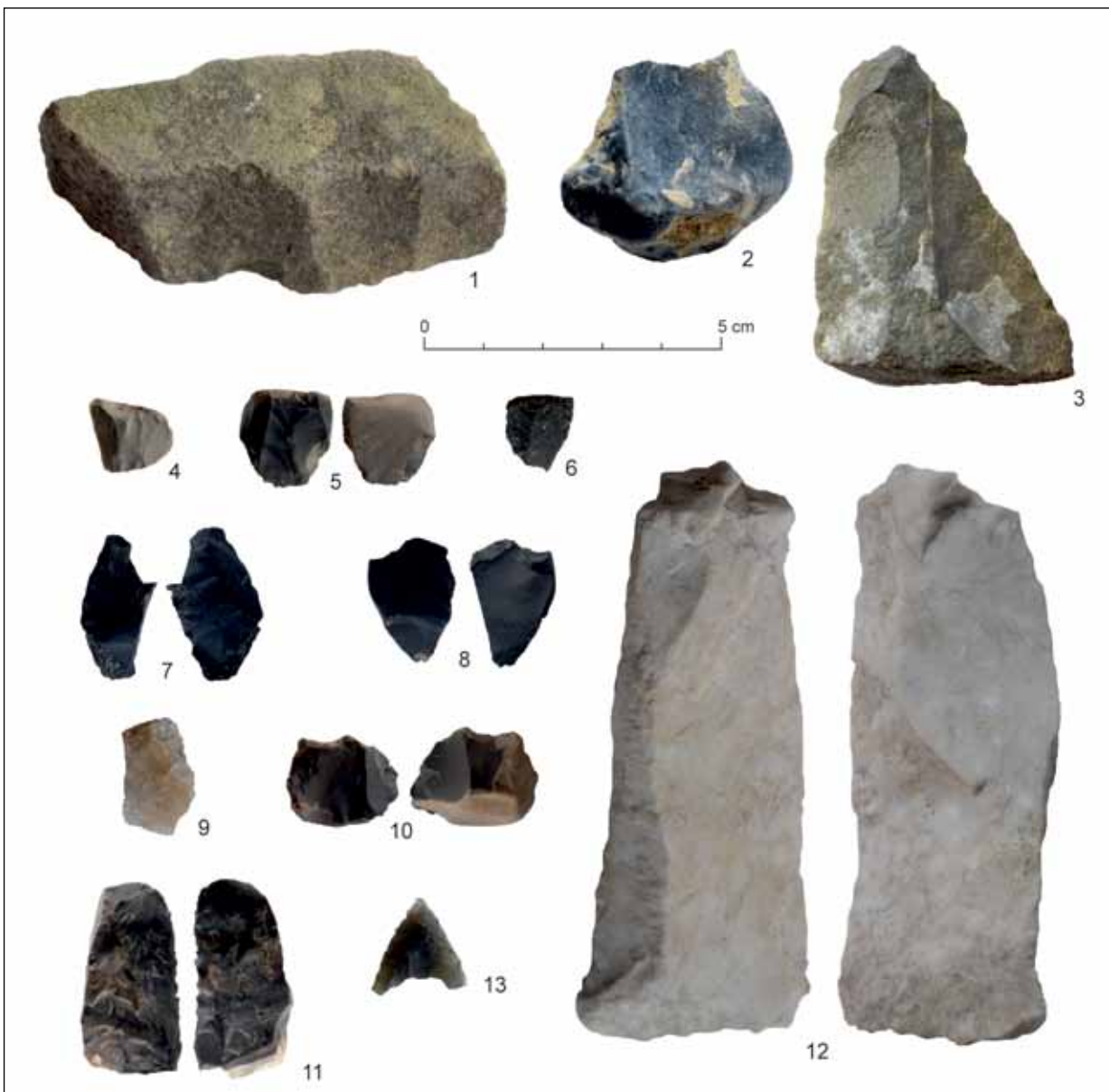


Fig. 5. Finds from the High Bieszczady Mountains. 1 – Wetlina, site 30 ; 2 – Wetlina, site 31; 3 – Wetlina, site 32; 4, 5, 6 – Wetlina, site 33; 7 – Wetlina, site 35; 8 – Wetlina, site 36; 9, 10, 11 – Wetlina, site 37; 12 – Wetlina, site 41; 13 – Wetlina, site 43 (after Pelisiak 2018b).

only very few sites linked with extraction and processing of this rock are known as so far (Valde-Nowak 1991; 1995; 2013). Chronology of a substantial part of finds from Wetlina can be referred on the basis of the formal characteristics to the Bronze Age, e. g. Krummesser fragments of sandstone (or perhaps half-products of this tool type) from Wetlina, sites 16 and 32 (Kopacz 2001; 2011), knife of flake with natural back from Wetlina, site 22 (Kopacz/Valde-Nowak 1987a; 1987b; Valde-Nowak 1986a; 1986b; 2006). Material dated to the Neolithic and Bronze Age without cultural affiliation form the largest group.

There are splintered pieces, chunks and chips, re-touched flakes and chunks and natural chunk with splintering traces and/or re-touched edges.

FINAL REMARKS

One of the important forms of human activity since the last centuries of the 4th millennium BC was the dissemination and intensification of seasonal mountain grazing. I think that they could have been the basis for important social changes,

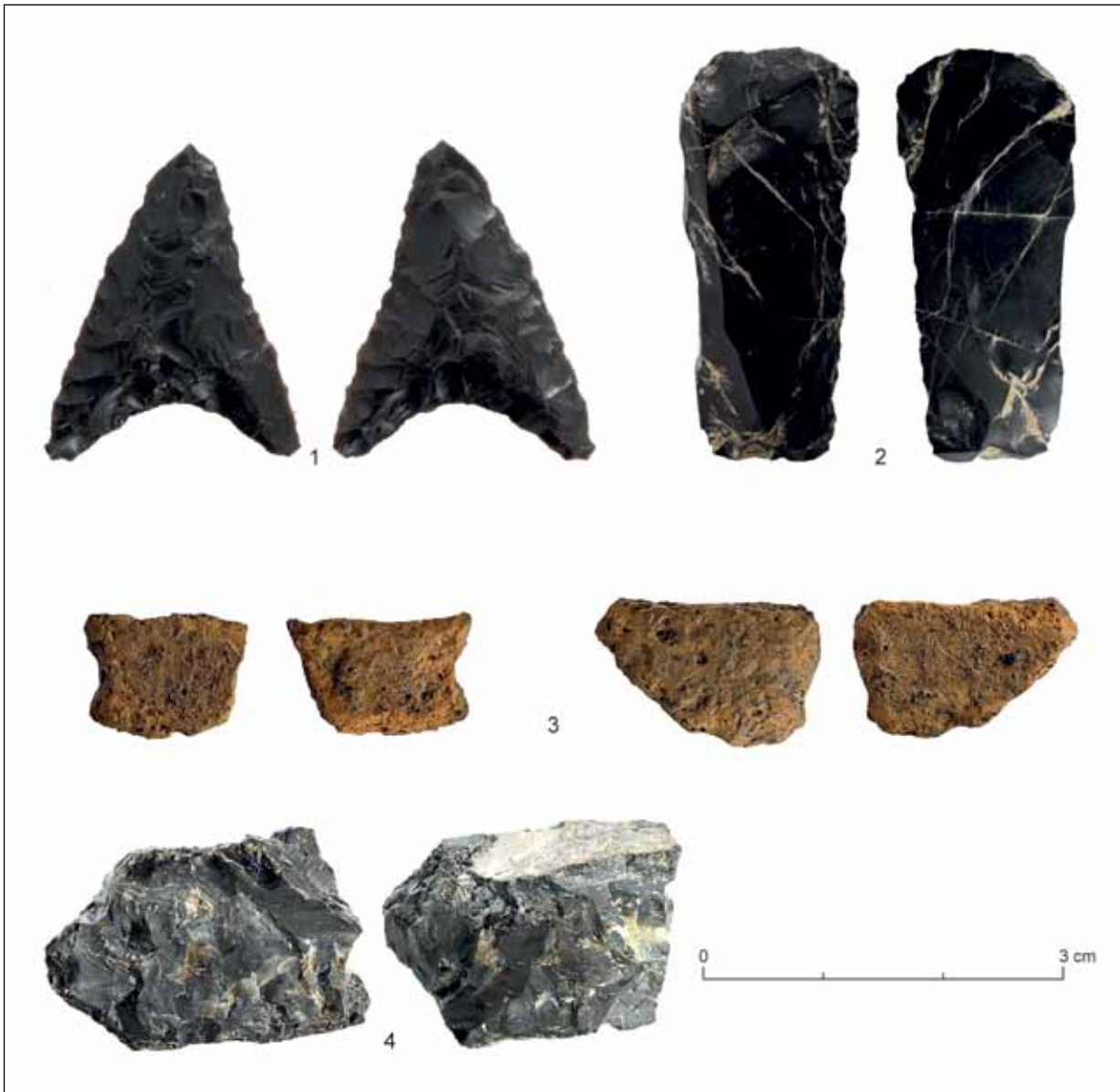


Fig. 6. Finds from the High Bieszczady Mountains. Połonina Wetlińska. 1 – Wetlina, site 6; 2 – Wetlina, site 23; 3 – Wetlina, site 24; 4 – Wetlina, site 26 (after *Pelisiak 2018b*).

whose archaeological expression was a change in the cultural image in much of Central and Central and Eastern Europe. Archaeological finds presented above came from relatively small part of the Carpathians – from the High Bieszczady Mountains. They correspond to the palynological record of human activity in this area. The vast majority of these sites is located in the highland zones, from 1000 to 1300 m a. s. l. They confirm transhumant

pastoralism performed in this part of Carpathians during the Late Neolithic and the Bronze Age. During the Late Neolithic and Bronze Age the Bieszczady Mountains highland zones were used for this purpose. However, archaeological research in high parts of the Bieszczady Mountains has only short history and the available database of evidences is still inadequate. It should be hoped that the situation will get better in the near future.

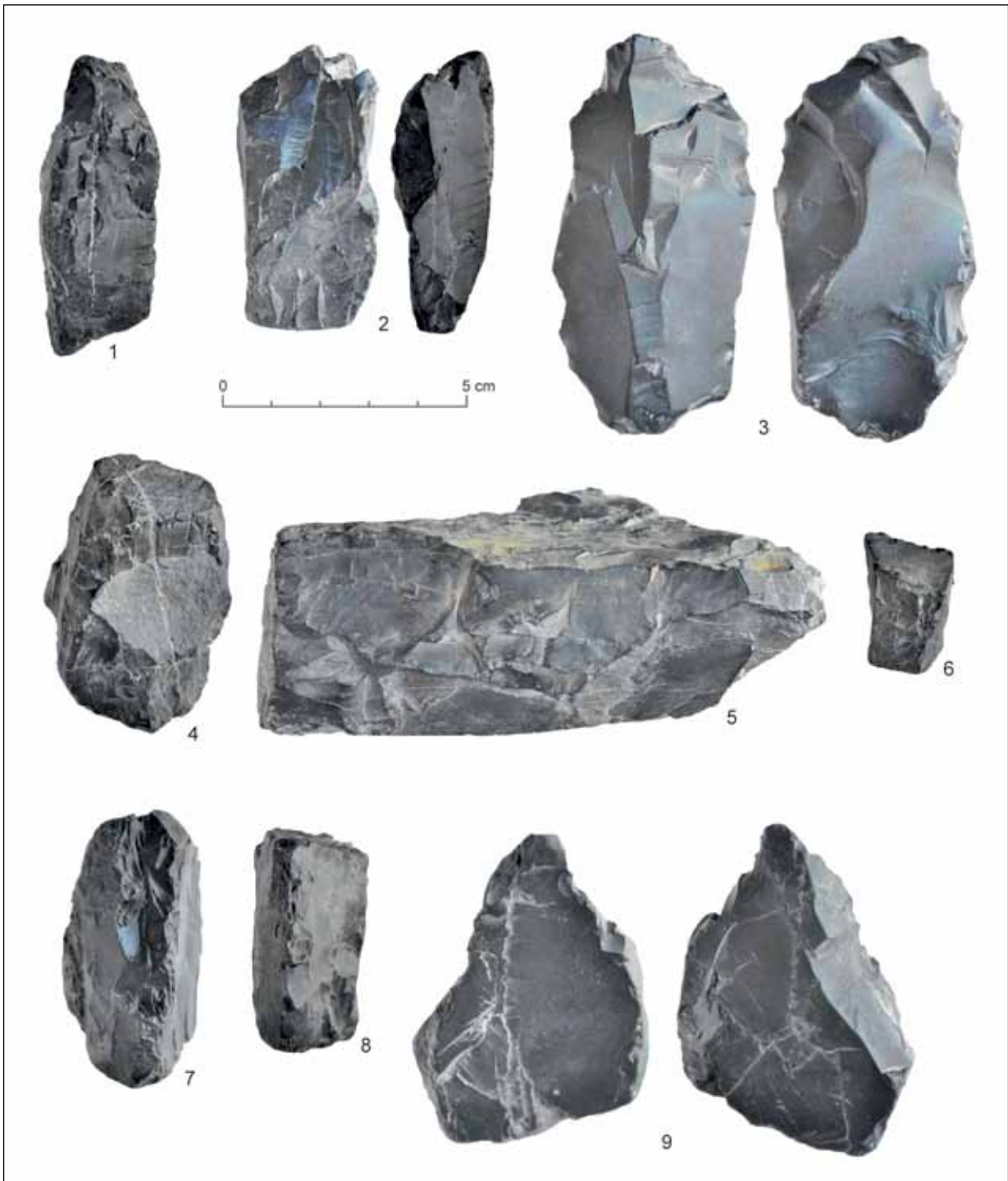


Fig. 7. Cisna, site 6. Menilite workshop remains. Selection of artifacts (after *Pelisiak 2018b*).

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Ľudská činnosť v horách v neolite a v dobe bronzovej Príklad Vysokých Beskýd, Karpaty

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SÚHRN

Archeologický výskum v pohorí Vysoké Bieščady bol podnietený údajmi o ľudských aktivitách zaznamenaných v peľových diagramoch z okolia Tarnawy, Wołosatego a Smereku. Prieskum v rokoch 2012–2019 vyústil do objavenia viac než 70 archeologických lokalít datovaných do obdobia neolitu a doby bronzovej. Všetky boli položené vo vysokej nadmorskej výške (medzi 1000 a 1300 m n. m.) viacerých horských masívov (Połonina Wetlińska, Połonina Caryńska, Mała and Wielka Rawka, Wielki Dział a Bukowe Berdo). Lokality sú reprezentované ojedinelými nálezmi a malými súbormi kamenných nástrojov vrátane tých vyrobených zo silicítov. Nachádzajú sa v blízkosti prameňov

pitnej vody a soľanky. Archeologické nálezy z pohoria Vysoké Bieščady dobre korešpondujú s peľovými záznamami o chove zvierat a pre miestne obyvateľstvo potvrdzujú pre obdobie neolitu a doby bronzovej (pravdepodobne staršej doby bronzovej) praktizovanie transhumantného pastoralizmu. Nálezy z pohoria Vysoké Bieščady rovnako potvrdzujú rozšírenie a intenzifikáciu sezónneho horského pastierstva. Tieto procesy sa začali prejavovať v posledných storočiach 4. tisícročia pred n. l. Domnievam sa, že mohli byť základom dôležitých spoločenských zmien, ktorých archeologickým prejavom bola zmena kultúrneho obrazu vo veľkej časti strednej a východnej Európy.