
Three years of the Journal of Lithic Studies

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The methods of analysing lithic artefacts from archaeological contexts have had an outstanding development in the last decades. Along with methodological achievements, new conceptual frameworks help to interpret the prehistoric record, all getting us closer to understanding the realities of the human past. Thus, the appearance of several journals focused on disseminating the investigation of stone tools was needed and became a reality for some decades. Three years ago, the Journal of Lithic Studies came to join those publications focused on lithics research. It was established from the beginning as an *open access* journal, with a clear interest in making information available worldwide.

In the three years that have already passed we have enjoyed the participation of authors residing and working in numerous countries including Spain, Brazil, Israel, the U.K., Italy, Serbia, Romania, France, India, Hungary, Canada, Japan, Russia, the U.S.A., Bulgaria, Portugal, Uruguay and Norway. Still, we hope to continue to expand our geographic coverage and readership. This is, in my opinion, the main challenge that the editors of the journal will face in the future: making the journal known in various geographic and cultural contexts where potential authors are working.

Most of the papers published until now dealt with the problems raised by the raw material availability and its use during prehistory and less on use-wear and residue analysis, experiments in reconstructing prehistoric technologies or understanding taphonomic processes, fracture mechanics, the application of mathematic principles in studying artefacts and similar. This was not a premeditated choice though, but rather reflects the general trends of lithic research, at the moment.

Fortunately, so far, we have a balanced representation of articles focusing on assemblages coming from different time periods; those concerned with the stone industries of hunter-gatherers do not surpass much, in ratio, those dealing with Neolithic and Bronze Age lithic collections.

The current issue (Vol. 3, Nr. 1, 2016) consists of ten research papers, two reports, one synthesis, a commemoration and several book and events reviews. In this issue, there are two articles that focus on the Itaparica industry from Brazil. One is written by J. C. Moreno de Sousa who gives us a technological insight into the flaking remains from the Grutas das Araras rockshelter, while the other one comes from R. A. Flores and colleagues and presents the technological analysis of a limace from Lapa Grande de Taquaraçu. Interesting is the fact that the residues preserved on the artefact represent the most ancient evidence of processing



starchy plants in the Americas. The “rediscovery” in the collection of the Hunterian Museum (University of Glasgow) of a lost single-edged tanged point coming from Brodgar on Orkney (Scotland) opened a discussion by T. B. Ballin and H. B. Bjerck on the dating of the object and its cultural attribution. B. A. Bradley demonstrates, in this issue, the usefulness of overshot flaking in the Clovis biface production strategies on the basis of his own experiments. D. Loponte and colleagues present the technological features of Fishtail projectile points specific to early hunter-gatherers in South America. By using geometric morphometrics, M. Okumura & A. G. M. Araujo show that stone points from the Pleistocene-Holocene boundary made by human groups in south-eastern Brazil are different in terms of morphology from those made by southern groups. A. Prieto and his team propose a GIS based approach for understanding the strategies of flint procurement and territorial management during the Upper Palaeolithic in the south-western Pyrenees. Based on the extensive use of local raw materials, the absence of ramified productions, and the use of centripetal and SSDA (*Système par Surface de Débitage Alternée*) knapping systems, J. Rios-Garaizar argues in favour of framing level III of Ventalaperra cave to being in the Early Middle Palaeolithic. Two connected papers are those written by R. W. Yerkes and Katia Zutovski and their respective teams in which the authors present a use-wear perspective on the use of and a techno-typological insight into the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age fan scrapers discovered at the Ein Zippori site in Israel.

A synthesis article is provided by A. N. Batalla who depicts a history of lithic procurement studies in Uruguay. In this issue T. Bjarke Ballin evokes the figure and professional contributions of “one of Britain’s finest lithics specialists” - Alan Saville who passed away earlier in 2016. In his honour, one report that we publish this year is one of last papers he was working on (with introduction and conclusions written by P. C. Buckland). Another report from this issue, authored by O. Crandell and colleagues, deals with the use of stone tools in ceramic production at the prehistoric sites from Măgura and Vitănești.

The fact that we host eight book reviews is gladdening, since people are eager to share their opinion on bibliographic events that they consider should not be overlooked. This volume is completed by the presentations of four events: a symposium and a knapping workshop, both from Brazil, a field school in India (containing also an interesting depiction of the current state of Quaternary research in the area) and one introductory course in Spain on the study of knapped lithic materials.

A new challenge for the editors of *Journal of Lithic Studies* is the appearance in 2016 of three issues, as a result of hosting the proceedings from various lithic related conferences as special issues. Thus, the second issue of 2016 will be a volume dedicated to the “International Symposium on Knappable Materials” from Barcelona (September 2015) and the third issue will present the proceedings of the “1st Meeting of the Association for Ground Stone Tools Research” from Haifa (July 2015).

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