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The Obsidian Road

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Abstract

Obsidian is one of the rare commodities that can be traced back beyond doubt to source of origin. It was one of the long distance trade items important in the prehistory of the Carpathian Basin and that of Central Europe in general.

This paper tries to make inquiries into the mechanism and routes of the obsidian trade. Was there something like an ‘obsidian road’, on the analogy of famous trade systems like the Amber road or the Silk road? If yes, was it one obsidian road, for all periods, or are there changes of pattern and acquisition strategy throughout the long history of the lithic periods and beyond?

State-of-art evidence will be summarised and discussed and methods of spatial statistics utilised to answer these basic questions.