The Cretan Mesolithic in context: new data from Livari Skiadi (SE Crete)

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Abstract

Investigations at Livari (south-eastern Crete) produced a small Mesolithic chipped stone assemblage, whose techno-typological characteristics situate it within an 'early Holocene Aegean island lithic tradition' (9000–7000 cal BC). The material provides antecedent characteristics for the lithics of Crete's founder Neolithic population at Knossos (c. 7000–6500/6400 cal BC). The idiosyncrasies of the Knossian material can be viewed as a hybrid lithic tradition that emerged from interaction between migrant Anatolian farmers and indigenous hunter-gatherers. Small quantities of Melian obsidian at Livari attest to early Holocene maritime insular networks, knowledge of which likely enabled the first farmers' successful voyage to Crete.

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Investigations at Livari (south-eastern Crete) produced a small Mesolithic chipped stone assemblage, whose techno-typological characteristics situate it within an ‘early Holocene Aegean island lithic tradition’ (9000–7000 cal BC). The material provides antecedent characteristics for the lithics of Crete’s founder Neolithic population at Damnoni and Moni Kapsa. As with Damnoni and Moni Kapsa, Livari is another site located in front of a rockshelter, its Mesolithic occupation discovered during the excavation of a Bronze Age burial ground, i.e. the earlier prehistoric finds were unfortunately in secondary contexts.