



Prehistoric ornaments in Kharga Oasis

Mathilde Minotti

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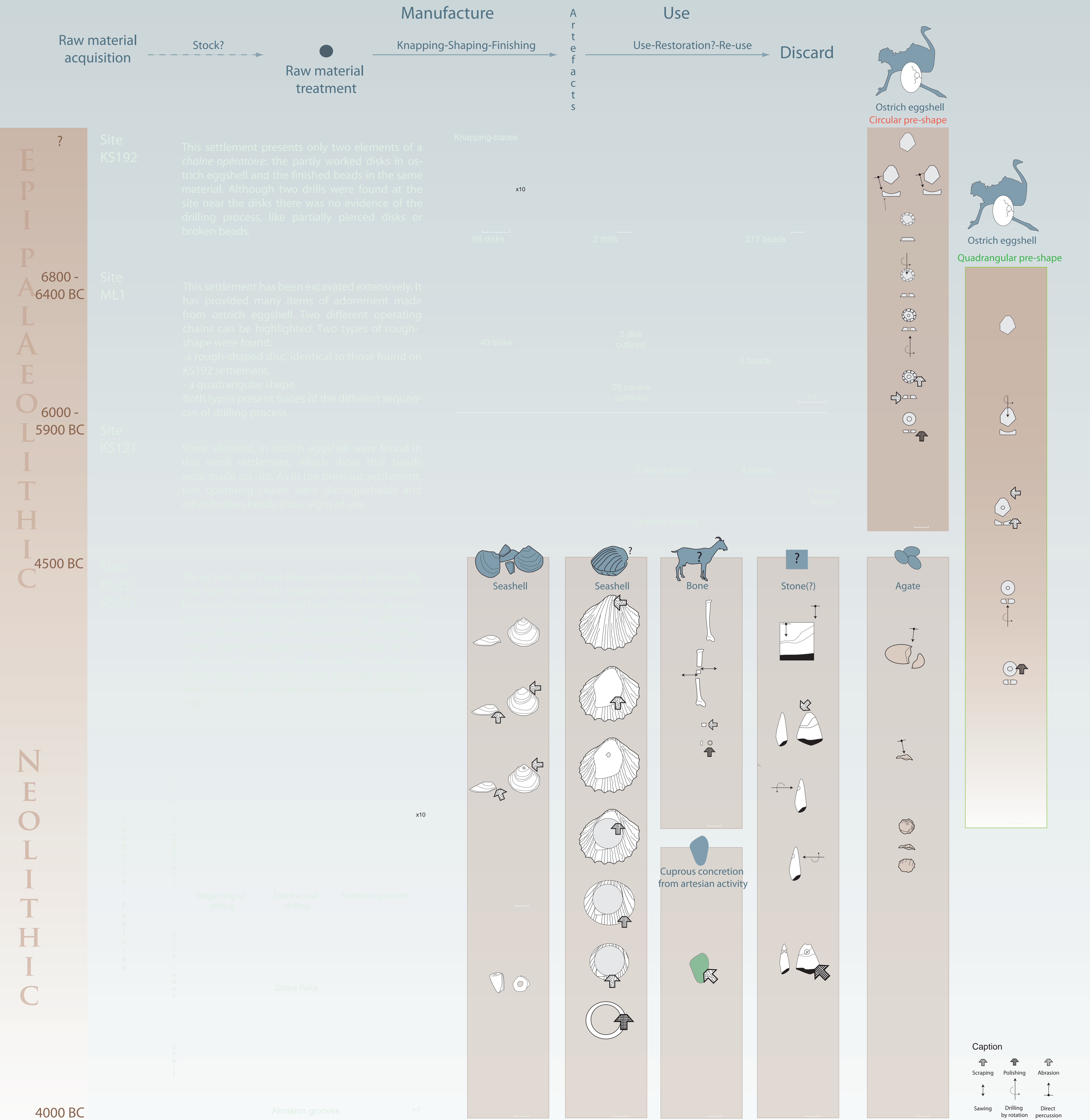
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PREHISTORIC ORNAMENTS IN KHARGA OASIS

MATHILDE MINOTTI
EHES-UMR5608 - TRACES

The recent work of the French Institute of Oriental Archaeology in the Oasis of Kharga aims at structuring the Holocene occupation for this area in the eastern Sahara. During the survey, several sites yielded elements of finery (beads and pendants) at various stages of their manufacture and use. These data allow us to address chronological aspects in finery through a technological approach. Tool marks in artefacts are not easy to detect since the desert wind creates a patina, although they are still visible on some pieces. The morphology of the finished finery, and the presence of unfinished pieces give indications That allow to establish the sequences of manufacturing process.



At the beginning of the Holocene sequence, the beads were made only from ostrich eggshell, two *chaînes opératoire* are observed. The **circular pre-shape** is used only during this period and coexists with the **quadrangular pre-shape** which continues through the Neolithic. Since the fifth millennium, raw materials and manufacturing processes diversify. Moreover, certain items could have been imported as finished products.