

# **Finding depth in the plains of the past: cognitive issues in late Pleistocene lithic core reduction**

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The study of cognition in early human evolution is increasingly recognized to be an important concern of archaeology. Yet, in the absence of a sound methodological approach, progress remains problematic. This paper reviews aspects of a multifaceted methodology I am developing for tracking specific aspects of core reduction and how these unfold within the human memory system and in particular, short-term working memory and the visio-spatial sketchpad. The study of a sample of late Pleistocene refitted cores from the site of Taramsa, Upper Egypt, offers the opportunity to examine the dynamic process of core reduction and hence is ideal for achieving understanding of the cognitive elements at play during this period of tool manufacture.