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SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Mesolithic Miscellany is issued twice a year, in May and November, as an informal communication among individuals interested in the Mesolithic of Europe. If you would like to subscribe and contribute to the newsletter, please send your name and address to the editor. The cost of a yearly subscription is US$3 or £3. There are several possible methods of payment: (1) Payment directly to the editor in US$, (2) European subscribers may send payment in sterling to Clive Bonsall, Department of Archaeology, 16-20 George Square, Edinburgh, or (3) individuals for whom currency exchange may be difficult should write directly to Clive Bonsall. He has arranged for the Institute of Archaeology at the University of Edinburgh to provide subscriptions in exchange for publications. Subscriptions for 1985 are due.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

III Mesolithic Congress

The III International Symposium on THE MESOLITHIC IN EUROPE will be held in Edinburgh, 31 March - 6 April 1985. Accommodations will be in Carlyle Hall at the University. Registration and room and board will be £135, due by 30 November 1984. Applications to attend the Symposium should be made to Clive Bonsall, Department of Archeology, University of Edinburgh, 16-20 George Square, Edinburgh EH8 9JZ, Great Britain.

To date, some 75 abstracts of papers have been submitted. Approximately 100 individuals, from at least 20 countries, have indicated they will attend. The symposium committee consists of Clive Bonsall, Organizing Secretary, Dennis Harding, Chairman, and Members: Lin Barnett, Roger Mercer, Barbara Ottaway, Eddie Peletenburg, David Ridgeway, and Trevor Watkins. The preliminary program was mailed earlier this year and provisional outlines of the major sessions are reproduced below. The third and final announcement will circulated shortly.

31 March  
Antecedents and Origins of the Mesolithic  
Fernandez-Tresguerres, Gonzalez-Echegaray, Barton, Tromna, & Fischer  
Artifacts, Raw Materials, and Technology  

1 April  
Artifacts, Raw Materials, and Technology  
Wickham-Jones, Perles, Burov, Smith, Foxon, Venci, Kobusiewicz.
Union Internationale des Sciences Pré- et Protohistoriques
XIth Congress - Southampton and London
1 - 7 September 1986

This meeting of archaeologists and others who are interested in the past is to be a truly international one. Most of the main subjects to be discussed should be of interest to people all over the world. The working sessions will take place at the University of Southampton and a significant event will be the opening of a major new exhibition at the British Museum. As its contribution to the congress, English Heritage will carry out a major excavation at the great hill-fort of Maiden Castle, Dorset. Contemporary hunter-gatherers from Australia, Africa and elsewhere will attend the Congress. The specific themes of the Congress will be based on pre-circulated papers so that the five days of meetings in Southampton will be entirely devoted to discussion. Major themes include:

- Cultural Attitudes to Animals
- Archaeology and the Very Remote Past
- Archaeological “Objectivity” in Interpretation
- Interactions between “Central” and “Peripheral” Cultures
- Cross-Cultural Social and Economic Contexts of Technology

The Proceedings of the Congress will be published in a series of volumes by Allen & Unwin. Persons interested in registering for this Congress should contact Prof. Peter Ucko, Department of Archaeology, Southampton University, Southampton, Great Britain.

Conference Report

The Culture and Environment of the Late Glacial Period in the Odra Basin against the Background of Central Europe

Rydzyna, Poland
30 May - 1 June, 1984

Once again the Poles have done it - organized and sponsored an archaeological meeting with great success. Dr. Michal Kobusiewitz of the Poznan branch of the Academy and dr. Jan Burdukiwicz of Wroclaw University were responsible for the three days: two days of sessions, interrupted in the middle by a full-day excursion. The latter took us to, i.e., the Kopanica
Valley with the Olbrachise sites and then to Pomorsko, which according to the reported evidence surely must be one of the most promising Late Glacial sites on the North European Plain. Furthermore, passing by Chwalińsk, a Preboreal site, we finally made it to the Hamborg site of Liny, just before the rain started.

Scholars from Czechoslovakia, the DDR, the BDR, USA, France, Holland, Denmark, and of course Poland, included not only archaeologists, but also geologists and geomorphologists. All were housed and dined at the beautiful castle of Rydzyna, just to the south of Lezno, in the western part of Poland.

In the good old days, everything was simple, and so was the Late Glacial. In fact, the time and space framework of the Late Glacial cultures had become a sort of textbook classic. Clear and well-defined pollen zones and distinct cultures, easy to identify and to date by way of the former, were demonstrable by everyone. However, like all simple systems, it was too good to be true and had for some time been open to revision. Pollen zones do not have the same significance as previously and have been subjected to different interpretations. For example, if Balling is not found at the type site of Balling, can Balling then be Balling, or should it rather be Allerød as the paleostratigrapher H. Ussing recently has suggested?

Likewise, the classic cultures: Hamburg, Bromme, Ahrensburg, and the archerd-back points (ABP), or Federmesser, now appear to be very promiscuous. At Olbrachise (Poland), Hamborgian sites with ABP-elements occur together with pure Federmesser ones (Burdzukiewicz, this conference). The same mixture of Hamburgian and Federmesser can also be found in the Ahrensburg tunnel valley itself. Even in Denmark, where the first Hamborgian sites have recently come to light, Federmesser and Hamburgian elements occur together at the site of Jels.

In Holland, from the site of Oldeholtveld (what a charming name), D. Stapter (this conference) described a Hamborgian assemblage with normal Hamborgian points as well as Havelte ones - not forgetting some ABP elements. These lithic types were found within a single concentration just 7 m in diameter, bound together by a number of refits. Finally, this concentration was dated by 14C to the Allerød.

In order to finish with the Hamborgian and its possible mates, it must not be forgotten that J. Allain at Cepoy in the Paris Basin already for some time has been finding a mixture of Hamborgian elements with Late Magdalenian ones. By the way, N. Arts presented the meeting with the first Late Magdalenian site in Limburg, the southernmost province in the Netherlands.

Finally, it was very instructive to overhear the discussion when, on the last evening of the meeting, a recent surface collection from the neighborhood of Sessein, northwestern Poland, was being debated as to whether it was of Hamborgian origin or not. As far as I remember, end-of-blade scrapers were present together with zinkel-types and burins, although no typical notched and shouldered points have been found so far. On one side, there were those who saw it as genuine Hamborgian, while the opposing view considered it to be Late Mesolithic, i.e., of Ertebølle character. However, as a compromise, we all agreed as to its nature as a "hot spot". Just to indicate a few more examples, the same mixture can be seen between Bromme and Federmesser, between Ahrensburgian and Federmesser, and between Federmesser and Preboreal/Boreal Mesolithic.

Chronology: A number of chronologies have been proposed for the material in question, beginning with Schwantes, through Rust, Schwedissen, Taute, and Tromma; but now all of these schemes appear to be open to question. This is not the place for a long monologue on chronological matters but one reflection may be permitted. What for so long has seemed to be the foundation for this period - the chronology based on pollen zones - may in reality be more of a hindrance. Indeed, chronological phenomena seem to cross the borders of pollen zones, and the changes observed in the Lithic assemblages tend to appear within the zones instead of after the zones. Furthermore, and as paradoxical as it may seem, the very end of one of the Late Glacial cultures - the Masovian at the central Polish site of Kalowaniec - apparently continues right into the Early Preboreal, at the beginning of the Holocene. However, these questions are perhaps more a case for discussion at the forthcoming meeting in Edinburgh.

Space: A further complicating factor must also be considered and that is the uneven distribution of the various Late Glacial cultures over the North European Plain. With Hamborgian sites in Holland, southern Denmark, Schleswig-Holstein, and western Poland, why are there no such sites in the DDR? Furthermore, if Bromme and Ahrensburg are respectively an early and late variant of the same cultural phenomenon, why are there then no true Ahrensburgian sites in Denmark, or in northeastern Holland for that matter?

In his summary of the meeting, Romuald Schild demonstrated elegantly that many basic questions are still not resolved, and therefore that there was absolutely no danger that we would soon be out of business!

To my mind, the question of site integrity is paramount. Many of the most recent hybrids described above can, of course, be refuted on the grounds of artificial mixture of different habitations, instead of "cultural mixing". Or to paraphrase an old saying: "for the pure everything is mixed and for the mixed everything is pure". But after all, the mixers might be right! Furthermore, what is finally the interpretation of the various point types, the type fossils
of the Late Glacial on the North European Plain: Hamburgian Kerbspitzen, tanged points of Havelte, Bronne, Ahrensburg, and Hasovien (Swiderian) types, not forgetting the Federmesser points? It is chronological, regional, social, functional, or all of these things at the same time, or even something quite different? Metaphysically speaking, they may have been put there in order to confuse the archaeologists.

Although not openly expressed during the sessions, certain site names kept re-appearing in the discussions - just as there was one archaeologist who constantly was quoted and referenced. This, of course, was the late Alfred Rust and his investigations in the Ahrensburger Tunneltal. For those who knew him intimately, as well as those who had barely met him, he was the great archaeologist - the discoverer of the Late Glacial on the North European Plain in all its aspects, as well as a gifted excavator and the author of several outstanding monographs.

And so, in a way, we all paid homage to him by taking part in this meeting and the discussions of his material. If one of us at our wake is as well spoken of by so many archaeologists from so many countries, then perhaps there is a case for an optimistic archaeology.

Erik Brinchowski Petersen
Institute of Prehistoric Archaeology
University of Copenhagen

2 June 1984, on the train somewhere on the Plain -
between Warsaw and Berlin, heading for Copenhagen.

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RESEARCH REPORTS

The Mesolithic-Neolithic Transition
as seen from Southern Portugal:
Preliminary Report on the 1984 Field Season

What effect does a major change in the economy of a society have upon the health and demography of the people who compose it? Specifically, what happened when "Mesolithic" hunter-gatherers changed to "Neolithic" farmers and herders? And, why did they change in the first place? These are the sorts of questions we began to investigate in Portugal during June, July, and August of this year. Our research is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (Research Grant 410-B4-0300) and is undertaken in collaboration with the Archaeological Survey of Portugal and the Setúbal Museum. Our team consists of David Lubell (University of Manitoba), Christopher Meiklejohn (University of Winnipeg), and Mary Jackes (University of Alberta) as co-principal investigators for archaeology and paleoenvironments (CL) and human osteology (CH-J). Carlos Tavares da Silva (Setúbal Museum) heads the Portuguese team and is responsible for archaeological collaboration with Carlos Penalva (Archaeological Survey, Evora) and Joquina Soares (Setúbal Museum). Peter Sheppard (University of Waterloo) is responsible for the study of lithic technology and collaborates with Lubell and Soares on the overall lithic analysis. Achilles Gautier (University of Gent) is supervising the archaeozoological portion of the study. Rudolph de Cauwijnck (University of Gent) is responsible for palynology. Christopher Devereux (London) is undertaking geomorphological studies. Michael Kelly and Thomas Shay (University of Manitoba) are analyzing paleobotanical samples collected by Kelly this past summer. Gerd Weih (Victoria, British Columbia) collaborates with Jackes on osteological analyses. Henry Schwarcz (McMaster University) is doing isotopic analyses of shell and both human and non-human bone. Student field assistants this year were Richard Lello (Alberta, archaeology) and Catherine Schentag (Winnipeg, osteology). Additional work is being undertaken by Esther Palmer (osteology) and Catherine Hooley (geoarchaeology), both from the University of Alberta.

Physical Anthropology

As the list of team members indicates, our research this year had two complementary aspects. To begin with, we wished to study the human skeletal collections from the Muge sites (Moita do Sebastião, Cabeço da
Arruda, Cabeço da Amoreira) (a) to resolve problems of inventory and provenience (see Newell et al. 1979), (b) to establish as accurately as possible the paleodemography of these populations, and (c) to investigate the patterns of paleopathology. We were fortunate to obtain permission from the Geological Survey of Portugal to move the Moita collections from Lisbon to our field headquarters so that they could be studied during the same period as the excavations. Meiklejohn was responsible for the study of crania, while post-cranial remains were analyzed by Jackes and Weih. Weih designed and operated a drill to remove 9 mm diameter cores (for osteon counts) from all left femora (also X-rayed for cortical thickness measurements). These are now being investigated in Edmonton, Canada, by Jackes and Palmer to establish a more accurate demographic profile for the population.

Jackes and Weih did a complete inventory of the collections from Cabeço da Arruda housed at the Geological Survey in Lisbon, in preparation for a detailed study next year. Jackes and Kubell inventoried the human skeletal materials housed at the Institute of Anthropology, University of Porto.

Archaeological and Paleoenvironmental Aspects

The second major aspect of the work this past summer was the archaeological and paleoenvironmental study of two prehistoric sites on the Atlantic coast, south of the modern town of Sines.

The first site, Medo Tejoiro, has been the subject of a brief note by Zbyszewski and Penalva (1979). The site is located just south of the small village of Almograde and consists of two areas that are not necessarily closely related in time. One of these is a small (ca. 12 x 6 m) remnant of shell midden, sitting on and covered by dunes which cap earlier deposits. The midden itself is some 30 m above modern sea level and overlooks the sea from a precipitous cliff. We excavated an area of about 11 m² using a combination of artificial (5 cm) and natural levels within one meter squares. The maximum thickness of the midden deposit was about 75 cm.

Artifacts were rare, consisting of a few potsherds, several geometric microliths, one polished celts, one chopper, some bladelet fragments, and a few quartzite (or greywacke) flakes. These materials, according to Tavares da Silva, are consistent with an assignment to the Older Neolithic which, he says, is in accord with the preliminary radiocarbon date of 6140 bp obtained by the BMNH on a sample collected in 1983 during our preliminary inspection of the site. Additional samples, collected this year, will be analyzed shortly.

The second site investigated was Samouqueira, just north of the modern village of Porto Covo. The site is briefly described by Tavares da Silva and Soares (1981) who note the possibility of occupations dating to both the Mesolithic and the Neolithic based on their examination of surface finds.

Samouqueira is a very large site, covering an area of 120 x 140 m or more.
Our work there this year consisted only of four 1 m² test pits and an excavation of 7 x 2 m in 1 m squares, using 5 cm artificial levels within thicker natural strata; all these in the part of the site thought to contain deposits dating to the Mesolithic. Because the site lies in what is now a plowed field, there has been some disturbance. The ground slopes up from the edge of the sea (a 10 m cliff) to an old beach (about 200 m inland) and this entire area has been plowed. Thus, there has been a good deal of downslope soil movement and this is reflected in the depth of overburden which reached over 2 m at a distance of 40 m from the cliff edge. There were scattered cultural materials throughout this depth until apparently in situ deposits were reached.

In the main test excavation, running from almost the western edge (sea side) of the site inland for 7 m, with a width of 2 m, we recovered a rich assemblage of lithic artifacts (both microlithic on flint and macro lithic on greywacke and/or quartzite). No ceramics were observed. Marine shell (mostly Mytilus and Patella with some Cardium) was common, and there were bones of Cervus elaphus, Sus scrofa, Lepus capensis, Vulpes vulpes, as well as a number of birds, fish (Sparus auratus), and possibly dog (?Canis lupus f. familiaris).

Two partial human skeletons (Samouqueira 1 & 2) were excavated from the cultural levels. S1 was either a lightly built male or a large female (using our data from the Mola population as a reference). The right humerus had probably been fractured and had healed poorly, with medial and anterior deflection of the distal end. There is evidence of osteomyelitis. S2 was a male between 173 and 175 cm stature (on the basis of Trotter and Gleser estimates), with strong muscle markings. Pronounced arthritic changes are evident at the right wrist. Both skeletons had been disturbed, probably by plowing and subsequently perhaps by downslope erosion. S1 may or may not have been buried in full articulation. S2 certainly was, probably as a flexed burial (after rigor mortis had relaxed) with the head to the west and the face to the north.

We plan to extend the excavations at Samouqueira in 1985 (during July) and to continue analysis of human skeletal collections, concentrating on the material from Cabeço da Arruda housed both in Lisboa and in Porto (August and September).

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References


DATIONAL RESEARCH SYNOPSIS

Mesolithic Research in Ireland over the Last Five Years

(1) Excavations at Bay Farm, Carnlough, Co. Antrim, 1978-80.

Joint Ulster Museum/Queens University research program in Glencloy. Excavation of extensive later Mesolithic chipping floor. This had been mostly destroyed by mud flows but an area of 10 x 6 m was still preserved intact. There were few traces of stake holes, hearths, etc., and no trace of adjacent settlement.

Date Range: 3800-3400 B.C. Final report in preparation.

Excavator: P.C. Woodman
Excavation of an Early Christian crannog (artificial lake dwelling) revealed extensive prehistoric occupation underneath, with a Later Mesolithic lakeshore occupation at the base. To date, only limited excavations have taken place. Industry is Later Mesolithic with some faunal remains present, including pig and (? ) cattle.

**Date Range:** 3200 B.C. (may be Mesolithic survival)

**Excavator:** J. Bradley

(3) Flint Identification program.

Due to the need to identify whether flint on Bann Valley sites was coming from Antrim coastal sites such as Bay Farm, a program of characterization has been undertaken using electron spin resonance. This procedure showed that Bann Valley artifacts had characteristics more in common with those in East Antrim coast flint (Griffiths and Woodman, *Proc. of the Fourth International Flint Conference*, in press.)

(4) Stone axe program.

Thin sections of stone axes from Bann Valley showed that the axes were probably made from rocks originating in the Paleozoic Peneplain to the south of Lough Neagh. These axes would have to be imported by man. (Johnston and Woodman, *J. Irish Archaeology* 2, forthcoming).

Mesolithic Research in Southwest Ireland

The Department of Archaeology, University College Cork, has been involved in three programs of research in southern Ireland:

(1) Support for the Ballylough Project in Co. Waterford (reported in *Mesolithic Miscellany* 5, 1):

(2) Co-Cork Field Walking Program. This project was carried on throughout the 1983/84 winter and was made possible financially through a grant from the Royal Irish Academy. The purpose of the project was to establish if there was any Mesolithic settlement in S.W. Ireland. Two areas were carefully examined: (a) the East Cork coast where one late Mesolithic site was discovered as well as several stray, later Mesolithic, Bann Flakes. With substantial changes in relative sea level and extensive coastal erosion, it is hardly surprising that few traces of pre-Neolithic settlement are found. (b) The Blackwater Valley where one certain early Mesolithic site was discovered on a cliff at the confluence of the Awbey and the Blackwater. This site has produced a number of microliths. In Ireland, microliths are presumed not to post-date 6000 B.C. Several other probable early Mesolithic sites were found but no later Mesolithic materials were encountered.

(3) Excavations at Ferriters Cove, Co. Kerry. This is a series of sites on a wave-cut platform at the western end of the Dingle Peninsula. The sites consist of hearths, small heaps of shells, pits, and occasional stake holes. The sites have been dated to the end of the Mesolithic, 3600-3200 B.C. (Woodman, Duggan and McCarthy, *J. Kerry Archaeol. Soc.*).

The fauna consists of deer, pig, fish and a range of shells. The artifacts are made primarily from rhyolite and volcanic ash. Some of the raw material had been brought to the site from nearby rock outcrops. As there is one stray Neolithic artifact from the immediate vicinity of the excavation, it is possible that these sites may lie at the interface between the Mesolithic and the Neolithic in this area.

In sum, work over the last year has shown that the distribution of Mesolithic sites reported in Woodman (1978) reflects activity on the part of research workers rather than Mesolithic hunter-gatherers.

**Peter C. Woodman**

Department of Archaeology

University College, Cork

Reference

**DISCUSSION**

The Age of Red Deer or of Bowmen?

In *Mesolithic Miscellany* 5 (May, 1984), T.D. Price reviewed Grahame Clark's *Mesolithic Prelude*, noting the absence of a definition of Mesolithic. Price tries to fill that gap by defining the Mesolithic as "that period of time when Postglacial hunter-gatherers occupy the Continent prior to the introduction of agriculture".

Thomsen, in the re-organization of the National Museum in Copenhagen in 1836, distinguished the three ages: Stone Age, Bronze Age, and Iron Age. In 1847, Boucher de Perthes demonstrated the contemporaneity of man with extinct animals through the association with worked flint tools. In 1865, John Lubbock created the concepts of Paleolithic and Neolithic and, in 1869, G. de Mortillet divided the Paleolithic into Acheulean, Mousterian, Aurignacian, Solutrean, and Magdalenian. As early as the beginnings of the field of prehistory, the Paleolithic has been classified according to the activities of man and, more particularly, the tools he made, the proof of his other activities.

Price's hybrid definition would in part take us back to the short-lived paleontological classification of the periods of prehistory proposed by Larret and Christy -- to the Great Bear, Mammoth, and Reindeer Ages. That obsolete conception is repeated, but not revised, by Paul Mellars (*Mesolithic Miscellany* 2, 1981) for the only expressed reason that he was unable to go back from the tools that were used to the hunting technique which determined them (see below). From this perspective, man is a passive witness to geological developments, he is conditioned thoroughly by nature, which is beyond him. Cultural evolution is narrowly likened to an external, environmental/material determinism. Mellars adds this ridiculous conception: a limit fluctuating with time, as long as two millennia (while intercultural currents prove that these populations used to share technological improvements quickly).

For more than one hundred years, our predecessors and colleagues have admitted that G. de Mortillet's point of view was correct; for him and for us, prehistory is above all the continuation of human initiatives; inventions respond in the face of the constant pressure of the environment: There does not seem to be any serious reason why we should refute that line of argument, the fruitfulness of which has been proven by experience. One cannot consider as sufficient reason the inability of some people to understand the meaning of the changes that occurred around the 10th and 9th millennium, that is, before the end of the last glaciation.

Let us note casually the circular line of argument which, from an incorrect definition of the Mesolithic as Postglacial, leads one to say that climatic change (and not the continuous pressure of the environment) was the cause of the transformation. And, consequently, this perspective would place the obviously microlithic armatures of the Ahrensburgian or Valorguian in the Paleolithic -- quite contrary to common sense -- but would not put Azilian or Tjongerian armatures in the Mesolithic even though they were made for hunting stag during a period of temperate climate.

The article by Mellars (*Mesolithic Miscellany* 2, 1981) is a splendid illustration of that circular line of argument. Should I recall the Ahrensburgian microliths which weigh less than 1 g and are observed fixed to arrows which were found in peat? These microliths are dated to Dryas III which was a very cold period; they were found in Germany and the Netherlands, both areas which cannot be considered as southern.

Price (*Mesolithic Miscellany* 5, 1984) restates the well-known pseudo-arguments: there are a few microliths in the Magdalenian and, moreover, a lot of backed bladelets; the Upper Paleolithic is associated with temperate fauna in Spain (which should have convinced him that fauna is not a valid reference), along with dubious assertions regarding the permanent occupation of dwelling sites (the same was argued for the southwestern French Magdalenian). These arguments are just nonsense.

There is a well-known fact: the tool kits of the Upper Paleolithic can be studied with the de Sonneville-Bordes/Perrot typology while epipaleolithic assemblages cannot. It was necessary to develop special lists of type definitions, the validity/usefulness of which are not in question at this point.

Indeed, microlithic armatures (with the exception of backed bladelets) are present in very few Paleolithic sites and then only in very low numbers (e.g., not more than 5% of the entire assemblage at Gare de Couze). They are nothing more than first attempts, without any immediate continuation and without the general, permanent character that is the case in the Epipaleolithic. Of course no change occurred in a single day and it will be useful to discuss the limits.

The backed bladelets have quite a different character; they are not pointed, while other microlithic armatures are. This major morphological difference permits easy recognition of backed bladelets (for whatever use they might have). Let us also add that the geometrical or non-geometrical character of the armatures is totally unimportant -- Tardenois points, scalene bladelets, mistletoe leaves, istres points, for example, show that clearly.

Ethnographic interpretation, which has puzzled our predecessors for a century, is quite simple and well established: the abundant and widely spread
microlithic armatures are proof of the abundant and widely spread use of the bow and arrow as the way of hunting and the very basis of life, causing repercussions throughout the social organization and giving it its special character. The bow is one of the major inventions in human history (after fire, clothing, and the stages of working stone).

The Mesolithic, regarded here as the bowman's period, is mainly Epipaleolithic. The upper limit, of course, corresponds to the introduction of the production of food and not to climate change (the same as before with the introduction of the bow and arrow). In Europe, this process appears to be intrusive, more especially so with the introduction of plants and animals from outside this area.

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Reference

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

A virtually complete aurochs skeleton was found in 1983 in a bog near the village of Prejlerup in northwest Zealand, Denmark. The aurochs was a large male, weighing perhaps 1000 kg. The animal was 18-20 years of age at the time of death which was likely in the winter. In addition to the well-preserved skeleton, 17 pieces of flint - including 15 microlithic points or fragments of points - and a 4 cm long pine arrowshaft with attached resin were recovered in the excavations by the Zoological Museum. The majority of the points were found in the rear of the animal. The microliths belong typologically to a later phase of the Maglemose culture and the site is radiocarbon dated to 8410± 90 b.p.

Aurochs at Prejlerup (numbers indicate locations of flint artifacts).
Mesolithic Miscellany 19 Volume 5, Number 2

These sites are linked with the cultures of the Microlithic cycle (Triangle complex). The economy of these people was based on hunting, fishing and gathering. The economy of the late phase of the Mesolithic Age does not show any essential differences in relation to the economy of the early phases of the Mesolithic. Generally speaking, the evolution of the Mesolithic age in northern Italy is common to other European regions such as France or Switzerland. Also noticed are similar ways of producing tools, both in the Mesolithic and Neolithic Ages, even if later ones are of larger dimensions. The first Neolithic communities are known from caves on the Ligurian coast, with finds dating to around 4500 b.c. Mesolithic material elements continue into the Neolithic. (Polish Archaeological Abstracts 1983.)


This article concerns the problem of harpoons in Switzerland, where late hunting cultures and early farming cultures existed simultaneously. Harpoons were widely popular in both periods. The author concludes that it is impossible to prove that Neolithic populations adopted Mesolithic harpoons. However, indirect evidence of contact between Tardenois culture and Linear Band Keramic cultures is present. The author, therefore, thinks that contacts resulting from such borrowings came, in earlier periods, from beyond Switzerland. (Polish Archaeological Abstracts 1983.)


Various approaches to the problem of quantifying population growth in the Western European Mesolithic are presented and evaluated. An archaeological approach through the study of site density and size gives the best results. The relatively slow population growth during
the period in question is due to a low fertility rather than to an exceptionally high mortality. The main agent which keeps fertility low is amenorrhea, caused by prolonged and intensive lactation. Secondary population depressant factors may include induced abortion and infanticide. The underlying factors are studied making use of analogous ethnographic hunter-fisher-gatherer populations.


Das mesolithische Abri Collombey-Vionnay VS wurde bereits vor einigen Jahren entdeckt, aber erst 1980 konnten erste Sondierungen stattfinden. Ausgedehnte Ausgrabungen sind für die Jahre 1982 bis 1984 vorgesehen. Der Aufsatz legt die vorläufigen Resultate der ersten Sondierungen vor:


Geräte aus Knochen: Trotz den sehr zahlreichen und gut erhaltenen Hirschknochen, konnten keine bearbeiteten Stücke geborgen werden. Hingegen fand sich eine durchbohrte Muschel (Columella rustica).

Organische Reste: Als einzige Funde sind etliche verkohlte Haarnusssschalen zu erwähnen.


The authors describe the contents of the oldest and only skeletal grave in Poland from the Janislawice Culture of the Boreal or Atlantic period. The skeleton was placed in a sitting position. Grave goods consisted of numerous flint, bone, and horn items (weapons, tools, and a necklace made of red deer teeth). (Polish Archaeological Abstracts 1983.)


The Sønderholm settlement site lies at the edge of the Kariisunde bog (East Zealand). In the latter part of the Atlantic period, the bog was a fjord. The excavation was carried out layer by layer according to a grid system of 0.5 m x 0.5 m units in order to avoid the time-consuming job of plotting in finds. The implements found at Sønderholm reveal that the site was inhabited throughout most of the Ertebølle culture, but the amount of implements from the late Ertebølle bears witness to intensive settlement in this phase. Stone paving found amid the culture layers may perhaps be interpreted as the foundations of a settlement site after a change in sea level. Among the finds were small bone points with unilateral barbs, assumed to be segments of composite fishhooks. A paddle of hazel wood, dated by pollen analysis to the period of the elm decline and by 14C to 3180 b.c., was found in marine deposits close to the site.


The Epigravettian of the Grotta della Cala at Marina di Camerota (Salerno). II. The lithic industry and the absolute chronology of the final Epigravettian. The author reports on the analysis of lithic
Industries from layers I-L, H, G, and F, associated with the Late Epigravettian. The artifacts can be divided into two subphases. The first, which is found in Layer I-L, is characterized by the prevalence of burins over scrapers, the development of the short scrapers, the presence of the geometrics wider than backed and truncated pieces. Typologically the industry is small with a predominance of flat tools and implements on flakes. The statistical analysis has indicated some connections with the underlying layer H (Evolved Epigravettian) a transition to the final phase on the basis of which Layer I-L may be considered a fluctuation with regressive characteristics inside the Final Epigravettian.

In the second subphase, represented by layers H and G, very homogenous between themselves, there is to be seen a predominance of scrapers over burins, a further development of the short scrapers with some subcircular shapes, a diminution of the geometrics which become inferior to the truncated pieces in width. The industries are of small dimensions on flat flakes.

The two absolute dates from layer H (around 12,000 years b.p.) and layer F (about 10,000 years ago) fall in the expected position within the Final Gravettian. Finally, comparisons on a structural level, with other industries and the same cultural complex, are expounded.


Continuing investigations near the town of Swifterbant, on the reclaimed land of Oost Flevoland, in the Netherlands, have resulted in the recovery of the remains of human occupation dating from both the Mesolithic and the Neolithic periods. The somewhat higher elevations of the river dunes appear to have been favored locales for habitation. During the Boreal period of the early Postglacial, this area would have been a fairly typical coversand environment in a riverine regime. The landscape would have been dominated by a relatively stable Boreal forest. As conditions became moister and sea level rose after 5500 b.c.


The article discusses the western-language sources available for the economies of the Jomon and Yayoi cultures. Little detailed evidence is available but the Jomon hunter-gatherers were apparently sedentary and exploited various combinations of marine and terrestrial resources. Good evidence for agriculture is available only in the Final Jomon Period (1000-300 B.C.). The uneven dispersal of rice cultivation after this period suggests that areas densely settled by foragers may not have been receptive to the spread of agriculture. This implies that agriculture spreads due to a series of particular, local causes, and not just as a result of a long period of general intensification and population growth among hunter-gatherers.


numbers have been found on a fishing site in the same bog area, and once again no later types were present. The finds were pollen-analytically dated to the Preboreal/Boreal boundary. The aurichs from Vlg was killed with arrowheads identical to the type represented in these two finds. Star Carr and Klosterlund have many of these blade arrowheads combined with slightly younger types. So Baremosse and Bjerby Enge seem to represent a phase of the Maglemose culture which is older than Klosterlund, and possibly the oldest manifestation of the Maglemose culture in Denmark. The flake axes, which were found on both sites, create a problem which is insoluble at the moment. There are three possible interpretations: (1) the flake axes are an accidental admixture left by Ertebelle people who happened to settle on exactly the same site as the Preboreal hunters; (2) the find should be dated according to the blade arrowheads and thus the specially shaped flake axes are much older than is generally assumed; or, (3) the find should be dated according to the flake axes and consequently blade arrowheads of the old type appear as late as the final phases of the Ertebelle. A final determination of this question cannot be made on the present materials, but the author is of the opinion that the first interpretation is correct.


During the excavation of the submerged Ertebelle site (4200 - 3200 B.C.) in Tybrind vlg, the oldest and best preserved dugout canoe from a Danish Mesolithic settlement context was found. The dugout canoe lay in the prehistoric reef belt just outside the settlement with its bow on the prehistoric seashore. The Tybrind boat, C.14 dated to 3310 B.C., is an example of the Ertebelle culture's boat form. The most important characteristics are as follows: the raw material is the straight trunk of a lime (Tilia.) worked with an axe or adze (chopping marks being visible over the entire surface). The outline of the boat is a long, narrow, sharpened, ellipse with a pointed bow and straight, cut-off stern. In cross-section the boat is trough-shaped with a rather flat bottom. The length is c. 9.5 m, the beam c. 50-60 cm, and height of the sides c. 25 cm. The thickness of the sides is c. 1-2 cm, of the bottom, 3-5 cm. The length-beam ratio of c. 17:1 is very characteristic of this
kind of boat. The open stern of the boat has been closed by a removable bulkhead secured by pegs mortised into eight rectangular holes in the bottom and sides.

Two Views of the Stern of the Tybrind Boat

At the stern was an oval hearth on an underlayer of sandy clay. The fireplace is most probably connected with (eel) fishing - the calm, shallow, muddy-bottomed bay of prehistoric Tybrind must have been ideal for the use of "eel-flares" in the summer months. The gunwale is even and smoothly rounded with a clearly defined edge along the inside. There are no traces of any sort of washboard, nor is there anything to suggest that the boat had been braced. In the boat a big flat stone - weighting 30 kg - was found, probably used as ballast. A boat of this size must have been able to carry a considerable load. Final calculations are not yet available, but preliminary estimates indicate that the boat was large enough to transport an entire family - 6 to 8 persons - in connection with seasonal movements within the group territory. The size and craftsmanship of the Tybrind boat is impressive and a striking expression of the Ertebelle culture's technological ability and skill with wood. With a few simple tools it was possible to turn a lime tree into a boat about 10 m long which could hold a family.

The Tybrind boat was an essential means of transportation for the mesolithic population - both in connection with the many fishing activities and open-sea hunting, and also for communication along the coastlines from site to site. What the boat looked like as it sailed in the bay of Tybrind at that time we shall never know exactly, nor for that matter why it was abandoned on the beach. But thanks to the remarkable state of preservation and to modern methods of underwater excavation, this find has yielded not only new and important information about the Ertebelle culture, but also about the evolution of man's oldest and most important means of transportation: the boat.


The French Pyrenees occupy a key, gateway position between southern France and the Iberian Peninsula. In prehistoric studies this region has long been overshadowed by the Perigord - yet it is an archaeologically rich area and was the scene of work by some of the earliest and greatest pioneers in prehistory: Noulet, Larret, Piette, and the first work by the abbe Breuil. It contains two type sites - Aurignac and the Mas d'Azil - and many of the finest examples of palaeolithic parietal and portable art. It is the region with the most evidence for the enigmatic activities of Magdalenian man in deep caves; and it is rich in megalithic monuments.

This book is the first synthesis of the prehistory of the French Pyrenees; it attempts to present an up-to-date account of the subject - from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean and from Tautavel to the Iron Age. Emphasis is not on the artifacts but on site locations and the development of subsistence patterns, 'in regard to environmental/climatic change and to topography. The volume argues that Upper Paleolithic man could have manipulated herds of animals, that Mesolithic man was by no means a miserable eater of snails, and that the distribution of megalithic monuments is directly related to the seasonal, altitudinal movements of pastoralists. The volume includes all of the Mesolithic, from Piette's discovery of the Azilian to the problems of neolithization, and features important sites such as Mas d'Azil, La Tousasse, Poeymae, and Guilaine's most
recent excavations in the eastern Pyrenees and Andora.
The book contains a complete list of absolute dates for the region, a
bibliography of over 1300 references, over 80 illustrations, 41
climatic and dietary tables, and 35 maps.

Belgique Préhistorique dans leur Cadre Naturel. Bruxelles:
L'Institut royal des Sciences naturelles de Belgique. 280 pp., 115 figs., 13
tableaux, index, bibliographie, résumés. 470 francs belges.

Réalisé par des chercheurs appartenant aux diverses universités et
institutions scientifiques du pays, cet ouvrage renoue avec une
tradition de recherche archéologique, paléontologique et géologique
très féconde et dans laquelle la Belgique joua, au dix-neuvième siècle,
un rôle de pionnier. Il constitue la première synthèse des découvertes
anciennes et des recherches les plus récentes qui soit exclusivement
consacrée aux peuples chasseurs de la Belgique préhistorique et à
l'évolution de leur milieu naturel.

De l'aube de Quaternaire jusqu'à l'époque actuelle et des premiers
occupants de l'Europe de Nord-Ouest jusqu'à l'arrivée des agriculteurs
néolithiques, il y a 6500 ans environ, l'évolution du paysage, des flores
et des faunes est décrite parallèlement à la succession des cultures
préhistoriques, retraçant ainsi une histoire couvrant plus d'un
demi-million d'années et qui déborde largement le cadre national.
La diversité des thèmes abordés, des introductions méthodologiques,
e une illustration abondante et originale, un index des sites
archéologiques, une bibliographie exhaustive et des résumés français,
néerlandais, anglais et allemands font ce livres un ouvrage de référence
indispensable pour le spécialiste. C'est aussi, pour un public beaucoup
plus large, une bonne initiation à l'archéologie préhistorique.

A chronological chart from this volume appears on the following page.

reconsideration of the Mesolithic skeleton from Rastel (Commune de
Pellion, Alpes-Maritimes, France). Bulletin, Musee d'Anthropologie
Prehistorique de Monaco 26: 75-89.
particular unusual occurrence in Late Mesolithic society and this assumption is supported by the discovery of another Late Mesolithic site, Skateholm III, with strong indications for the same conditions.


The basis of the research concerns two Late Mesolithic gravefields, designated Skateholm I and II, from Scania, southern Sweden. \(^{14}C\) datings indicate the time interval 3420±90 b.c. to 3890±125 b.c. for settlement/burial at Skateholm I, while dates from the occupation layer at Skateholm II are somewhat older. Thirty-seven graves have been thoroughly investigated to date. Of these, 29 contain the remains of Homo, two of which were children and one was an almost fully developed fetus or newborn. The remainder of the individuals were adult or sub-adult. The average life-span of those individuals whose age could be satisfactorily determined was c. 44 years for males and c. 34 years for females. These are remarkably high for prehistoric material. Further, it may be noted that two individuals are deemed to have reached 460 years of age. The average height for males was 168 cm and 155 cm for females.

Similar to the more or less contemporaneous Vedbæk population, the majority of the examined skeletons from Skateholm display connections with the Cro-magnon type, in the form of both the cranium and pelvis. Individuals are, however, present in the Skateholm material (including two in a double grave) who features do not deviate in any demonstrable way from recent or sub-recent Northwest European types. Several discrete traits have been observed, a few of which are quite rare. This suggests that the Skateholm population has been genetically isolated to a certain extent.