

CONSIDERATION OF THE AURIGNACIAN IN ANATOLIA AND THE NEAR EAST

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The Aurignacian belongs to the earliest and most widespread Upper Paleolithic cultures, covering a territorial diapazone from the Atlantic Ocean to the Near East. Its material culture is substantially uniform across Europe and in some countries of the Near East. Differences among assemblages from individual areas of the Aurignacian phenomenon appear as a result of regional and local divergences which were determined both by environmental conditions and particularities of its development in a given area.

It is certain, however, that Upper Paleolithic assemblages in various European regions followed different Middle Paleolithic cultures and produced regional variations. A similar situation appears in the Near East as well. Here, however, the Upper Paleolithic is frequently inserted between final phases of Middle Paleolithic industries, or various Mousterian stratified sequences, such as Acheulo-Mousterian, Levallois Mousterian or Yabrudian.

A. Rust's (1950) examination of the important Syrian site of Yabrud revealed, within a stratified Middle Paleolithic sequence, horizons which were marked by a blade industry of Upper Paleolithic character. These levels represent the so-called pre-Aurignacian / Amudian horizon which is also known at the sites of Yabrud I, Adlun, Et Tabun, Abri Zumoffen, and Zuttiyeh. These earliest horizons of an Upper Paleolithic blade industry are overlain by various Mousterian layers, as well as layers representing Acheulo-Mousterian horizons, and dating places them within the early Würm period. Nevertheless, the earliest Upper Paleolithic industries or technocomplexes appear in many cases, as in Europe, *after* the fading phases of the Middle Paleolithic (at Ksar Akil, Antelias, El Quad, Kebara, Abu Halka, Ewq-el-Ahmar, etc.).

L. Copeland and F. Hours (1971) presented several differences between Levantine and Western European Aurignacian on the basis of material studies of J.W. Ewing's excavation of the cave site of Antelias.

Thus it comes out that Aurignacian finds in Europe and the Near East have deeper roots that can be evidenced in stratified Middle Paleolithic sequences, traditions which contain significant quantities of Middle Paleolithic tool types and a similar production technique. Although examination has just begun, almost every Aurignacian variant in the Near East spans through time in different variations until the Mesolithic. Even the less examined Aurignacian finds from Anatolia (Samandag, Adiyaman, Karain) incline to the Near East Aurignacian rather than to that of Europe. An objective view of the Aurignacian industries of the Near East and Europe leaves no doubt that the Aurignacian was spread across a vast space. The question of a possible common origin of Near East, East, Central, and Western European Aurignacian,

whether in Europe or the Near East, cannot be given a simple and unambiguous answer. The first difficulties appear at the moment when we try to confirm or reject the origin of the European Aurignacian in the Near East, or vice versa. The two industries are undoubtedly on the same level of civilization, in spite of their typological differences, as mentioned above.

In Central and Western Europe, we recognize certain limited regions of Aurignacian settlement with their specific development and settlement continuity. Similar to the European Aurignacian, the Yabrud cycle too is marked for its main regions with various adjacent, peripheral areas containing material typologically less distinguished.

Summing up the above-mentioned observations, it can be assumed in essence that the Aurignacian civilization stage had *centers* of development in various parts of Europe and Anatolia. These centers, which we understand as independent ones, evolved developmental cycles that were probably also independent and self-contained. To me, it seems highly probable that Aurignacian settlement was composed of smaller territorial wholes occupied by certain social units of kinship, each with its own internal structure of organization.

A new light is thrown upon the problem by recent investigations of Upper Paleolithic settlement at Bacho Khiro Cave, Bulgaria (Kozłowski 1982). Here, D.A.E. Garrod's excavations in the pre-war years (1939) already searched for a point of departure in the solution to the question of contact between European and Anatolian-Levantine territories. There have been found artifacts of typical Aurignacian, such as split-base bone points and trapezoidal elongated points of Mladec-Lautsch type, alongside the Aurignacoid industry of Bacho-Khiro type. Complex elaboration of these new investigations and comparison of Aurignacian finds from Bacho-Khiro with those from southern Anatolia (Karain, etc.) may substantially enrich our knowledge of the problem of a possible link between the Aurignacian of Europe and the Near East. Within the context of an Aurignacian expansion, this phase provides us with a connecting link in the form of a very typical tool: the split base bone point. This is widely spread in Western Europe during the Early Aurignacian and can be well traced also in Central Europe (Istállóskő), in the Balkans, and sporadically in the Near East as well (El Queir).

As a result of investigations carried out at Bacho-Khiro, Kozłowski (1982) has recognized a Bacho-Khirian horizon in Layer 11 superposing a Levallois Mousterian stratum (41,000 years BP). This separate horizon preceded development of the Aurignacian with a poor stone industry of retouched blades and "Aurignacian blades" as well as thick-nosed endscrapers, notches, denticulates, and scaled pieces. According to Kozłowski, the Bacho-Khirian and Olszewian industries together represent components of the typical Balkan Aurignacian, which is also found in Layers 6/b/7 and 7/6/a of Bacho Khiro, Level F/g in Velika Pechina, and at Shandaliya. The Bacho-Khirian and Olszewian appear under the typical Balkan Aurignacian proper, as expressed by Kozłowski.

Turkey, as a mediating country between the Balkans and the Near East, has provided us with only rare evidence of Aurignacian settlement as yet. With the exception of the Ankara region, yielding slight traces of an Aurignacian presence (Adiyaman), we find other traces in Turkey only along the coastal zone of the Mediterranean, namely in the Antalya area, and in

the eastern province of Hatay. The sites near Antalya are Magraçık and Karain in particular. Karain contains multiple Aurignacian layers below Mousterian ones, parts of which could be possibly compared to Aurignacian stages I-III. The find presents an industry of blade character with pointed and Aurignacian blades, triangular Mousteroid points and discs (Kökten 1963).

These Antalyan finds seem to incline to those of the Near East rather than to the European Aurignacian, similar to artifacts from the Hatay province in direct contact with Syria, from the vicinity of Samandag. The local so-called "First Cave" (Cevlik), examined by Bostanci, has provided an Aurignacian over a Levallois Mousterian in horizon IV (Layers III and II), containing pointed retouched blades, flakes, carinated and thick-nosed endscrapers. The industry also includes straight and angle dihedral burins, borers, and even bone awls. M. Senyürek and E. Bostanci (1958) argue that a sterile stony layer occurring between Levels IV and III evidences a relatively short interval from older Aurignacian to younger Levallois Mousterian. The Samandag site is usually considered to be contemporaneous with the Palestine Aurignacian that has been dated to Early Würm at Mugharet-el-Wad (Layer E) by F. Zeuner, and a part of Aurignacian (Layer D) and the Atlitian (Layer C) to the second Würm stadial.

As already mentioned above, industries from Antalya (Karain, Magracik) show a link to the Near East rather than to Europe. New investigations in the Balkans and the Near East, mainly at the site of Ksar Akil (Tixier 1970), and new excavations in Israel (Ronen *et al.*) have not yet been given a complete elaboration. Still, they promise to bring a new knowledge on the development of Aurignacian industries in this region. So far it seems that some phases of the Near East Aurignacian appear only in certain places, e.g., Phase A of the so-called Levantine Aurignacian has been identified only at Ksar Akil (Copeland 1975). However, we do not dispose any clear relation between the Yabrud pre-Aurignacian and industries which fall between the Levallois Mousterian and the earliest Aurignacian at Ksar Akil.

The later Aurignacian phase of the Near East allows better comparison, especially in the horizon represented particularly by the sites of Ksar Akil (Layers 10-9), Abu Halka (Layer VI c), Antelias (Layers IV-III), Yabrud (Layers 6-4), and new work by Ronen *et al.*

The Near East Aurignacian plays a role in further development (by small carinated endscrapers) by laying the foundations for Late Paleolithic and Epi-Paleolithic industries of the Near East. In conclusion, it can be stated that the means of procuring food, clothing, and raw material for making tools were substantially similar across the vast territory of Europe from the Atlantic to the Near East, especially as the material culture of the Aurignacian shows very great similarity in substantial, if general, characteristics. Therefore, it is no accident that this culture or stage of civilization was almost uniform throughout this widespread territory, being founded and growing out of the firm structure of kinship-clan organization.

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