UISPP, Congrès de Forli, 1996, Commission Paléolitique Supérieur, Bilan 1991-1996, ERAUL 76, p. 77 à 85.

9. THE HUNGARIAN UPPER PALAEOLITHIC (1991-1995)

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Following the tradition of the last thematic summary (ERAUL 52, 1991), new results of the Hungarian Upper Palaeolithic research are summarised below according to the standard accepted by the members of the VIIIth Commission of the U.I.S.P.P.

EXCAVATIONS

In my report, I am trying to follow the following sequence of presentation: topography, stratigraphy, settlement features, faunal-floral data, archaeological lithic industry, and chronology. Unfortunately, for most of the Hungarian Upper Palaeolithic sites this ideal sequence of information is poor or deficient or, unbalanced, like most of our site information.

Sajószentpèter-Margitkapu dülö, excavated by À. Ringer in 1991 (RINGER 1993, 73-78).

The middle phase of the north-eastern Hungarian river Sajó is bordered by the eastern foothill region of the Bükk Mountains, frequently with pebble sediments of talus cones, partly covered by loess. The site is located in an active stream valley near its meeting point with the Sajó river at 155 m a.s.l. The section of the site was studied in 6 m thickness, which is the most complete Upper Pleistocene section of the region. It is a loess sequence dissected by several fossil soil horizons. The Upper Palaeolithic finds were found in the palaeosoil layers at 1 and 2 meters, respectively. There were no settlement features observable and no biostratigraphical evidences were found. Archaeologically, the upper cultural horizon was a typical and beautiful aurignaco-gravettian using local raw materials and following Aurignacian traditions of technique. In the older layer, a transitional Middle/Upper Palaeolithic industry using mainly imported raw materials was discovered by Ringer. Chronologically, the two industries can be dated by soil formations of the Hengelo and Arcy interstadials, respectively.

Mogyorósbànya, DOBOSI 1991. (DOBOSI 1994).

Former excavations continued. From a steep limestone block of the NE Transdanubian Gerecs Mt. full of caves, an active stream valley is leading towards the Danube. This valley is deeply incised into the foothill plateau, covered by thick layers of typical loess. The settlement is located on the margin of this valley at 205 m a.s.l. The cultural layer is in the depth of 80-90 cm, under the

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leached B soil level in typical loess. The structure of the settlement is remarkable: so far, three settlement units were found, separated from each other by sterile stripes. The settlement patches are oval find concentrations of 5-8 m diameter, possibly with hearths, spots of charcoal and ashes, ochre grains, holes for brand and amber pieces. The fauna is under evaluation; according to preliminary results, it is fairly abundant but poor in species (dominated by reindeer).

Among the ca. 5000 objects excavated, there were 616 tools. The ratio of archaic tools made on pebbles is fairly high (>20%), in association with a traditional Upper Palaeolithic tool kit. Together with the well-known Upper Palaeolithic site Ságvár, this site can be classified to the Middle Gravettian settlement wave, the so-called Pebble Gravettian. From a chronological point of view, the cultural layer can be assigned to the older interstadial soil of the Ságvár period.

Korlát-Ravaszlyuktetö, SIMÀN K. 1991-1994 (Simán 1995)

The site is located at the middle of the Hungarian part of the Tokaj-Presov Mountains, on the Western side of the mountain range, facing the wide valley of the river Hernád. It is separated from the central body of the mountain by the valley of the Malom stream. The height of the distinct geographical area of the site is 320 m a.s.l. The site is spread over large territory, and has been excavated several times and several experts. Systematic survey of the area have been performed by K. Simán for 12 years. The site is situated to the south of the summit on a slight slope dissected by terraces. It has a varied stratigraphy. Over the underlying rhyolite tuff bedrock, we can find clayey-silty-loess sediments and their variants. The location of the site is governed by the thick hydroquartzite bench, parts of which could be found in some of the sections or its presence was indicated by its weathered debris. The raw material exploitation and preparation workshop was situated on this deposit. Settlement features were not observable, intensive (geological) reworking processes mixed the layers. There are no faunal or botanical data known from the site. The archaeological material excavated comprises more than 8000 items from the 125 sq. meters excavated by Simán. The rest is comprised by fabrication debris or naturally weathered pieces. Apart from precores and real cores, archaic Upper Palaeolithic tool types serve as a basis of cultural classification. Most remarkable items are leaf- and D-form scrapers of acheulean-micoquian tradition.

According to the excavator of the site (Simán 1995, 41), the workshop was utilised in the Upper Palaeolithic period, but observations indicate a previous and later (Neolithic) period of utilisation as well for the raw material deposit.

Püspökhatvan-Öregszölö (CSONGRÁDINÈ BALOGHÈ.-DOBOSI V. 1992

The site is situated 500 m to the NE and 5 m higher than Püspökhatvan-Diós, described in the previous report. It is located in the Cserhát Mts., member of the North Hungarian Mid-Mountain Range with various genetics. Its average height above sea level is usually below the limit of a "mountain" accepted in Hungarian geography, but the surface forms are varied and dissected, giving a

"mountainous" aspect of the area. It is bordered by, from the West, the stream Galga.

This watercourse has currently low water discharge, and it is oriented North-South in a wide, tectonically marked valley, covered by clayey loess formed on the foothill slopes. South of the village, along these slopes 80-100 cm thick, homogeneous hydroquartzite benches outcrop the surface. Püspökhatvan Öregszölö belongs to the same preparation and processing workshop complex as Püspökhatvan-Diós. Its stratigraphy is very simple; the level of worked pieces[1] is at a depth of 80-100 cm., in a fossil soil layer disturbed by recent activities.

The only faunal evidence is a mammoth tooth, where the lamellae are already fallen apart from the intermittent limy deposit. The archaeological finds comprise, in accordance with the function of the site, fabrication debris - or, better to say, the site is described as a workshop due to the observable type distribution of the artefacts. There are cores in different stages of preparation. The few items made of non-local materials (radiolarite, obsidian) are Upper Palaeolithic tool types.

The site can be assigned to the early phase of the Upper Palaeolithic period: as an older blade industry.

Jàszfelsöszentgyörgy-Székesdülö DOBOSI, 1992

In the vicinity of the same village, along the same sand hill, site Jàszfelsöszentgyörgy-Szúnyogos was excavated. The topographical position of the two sites were equal: Late Würm riparian sand dunes along the old bed of the Zagyva river. Stratigraphy and character of the industry are also identical. The hill protrudes from the level of the present surface 10-12 meters, with small patches of limnic vegetation under their curves even today. It is a characteristic formation of the Northern Alföld region, with patches of probably contemporary settlements in a row at 50-100 meters from each other along the dunes. The cultural layer is fairly poor, situated in light coloured sandy loess mixed with grains of ochre and charcoal. The bulk of the fauna is comprised of reindeer, the raw material of the artefacts is dominated by hydrothermal silices of the foothill region of the neighbouring Mátra Mountains. Several molluscs used for trinkets were found on this site as well. These molluscs are typical of the Gravettian period in Hungary, independent of the distance from the sources.

Other collecting spots located along the dunes could not be verified yet. The work is in progress.

Pilismarót-Bitóc DOBOSI 1993 Bánom DOBOSI 1995

These excavations were steps in the series of excavation started in the vicinity of Pilismarót 15 years ago. Preliminary results were published several times. The two new excavations represent two new settlement patches in a chain of habitation sites on the most exposed part of the Danube Bend, along the

1 It can be hardly called cultural layer, due to the complete lack of settlement features.

margin of the loess terraces on the right side of the river. The row of small sites were in a distance of visibility and hearing are fairly uniform. In more or less typical loess, in the depth of ca. 80 cm., there are oval settlement patches with general but fairly poor Upper Palaeolithic assemblage. Further research may contribute primarily to the relation of the small hunters' camps to each other and a hypothetical base camp.

The excavations at Pilismarót-Bánom were especially remarkable for two features. In an absolute superposition, two cultural layers were found at 40 and 70 cm. respectively. This authentic superposition is not typical for the sites in Pilismarót environs. 6 new pieces of rock crystal were also found.

From the aspect of cultural classification, the sites belong to the younger blade industry group of the Gravettian complex.

Megyaszó-Szelestetö SIMÀN and DOBOSI 1993-1994

The Hungarian part of the Tokaj-Presov Mts. is terminated - or connected to the Northern Alföld region - with a range of hills, oriented E-W. These hills are bordered by, from the West, the river Hern d. The second range of the hills surrounded by some higher peaks is Szelestetö, where this site was located by field survey. The stratigraphy of the site is very simple, the base rock of volcanic tuff was observed right under the cultural layer. Finds were spread in the reworked clayey-silty layer offering bad fossilisation conditions. In a small area, two cultural layers could be observed, separated from each other by sterile loess.

The archaeological material collected from the upper layer and, partly, the surface, is one of the most typical Upper Palaeolithic assemblages in Hungary (see Bodrogkeresztúr). The tool kit is varied and elegant made of varied and excellent quality raw materials.

Fieldwork in the Ipoly valley, SIMÀN and DOBOSI 1995

Along the Northern margin of the Börzsöny Mts., on the two banks of the Ipoly river forming the state boundary between Hungary and Slovakia, sites from the Palaeolithic period were known since 60 years. We are planning to survey the terraces of the river in Nógrád county, for the identification of the old collection and excavation sites and the discovery of new sites. The area seems to have a network of sites reminding the Danube Bend region. In the first phase of work, 6 collecting spots were found, from which three could be identified with formerly known sites (Sahy, Parassa I. and Parassa II.)

Works of art

None.

New radiocarbon dates

Püspökhatvan	Deb 1901	27700 ± 300
Mogyorósbànya	Deb 1169	19930 ± 300
Jàszfelsöszentgyörgy	Deb 1674	18500 ± 400
Esztergom	Deb 1160	16600 ± 200

(Dobosi-Hertelendi 1993)

Synthesis

The publication of the first volume of the Lithotheca catalogue (BIRÓ-DOBOSI 1991) was a major step in Hungarian lithic raw material studies. We have started to work on the preparation of the second volume. Apart from the collection of new data, the following theoretical observations were made concerning the Upper Palaeolithic period.

TOPOGRAPHY

Natural endowments in Hungary allowed the classification of the environment of open-air Upper Palaeolithic settlements into three groups: mid-mountain, hilly and lowland settlements.

In mid-mountain environment, but not higher than 230 m a.s.l., typically between 170-230 m:

- margins of terraces overlooking river valleys or plains, foothill region of hills immediately: left bank of the Danube in the Danube Bend region, between Nagymaros and Vác, along the right bank, between Esztergom and Dümös Ipoly-valley, Hont-Parassa Galga-valley, Püspökhatvan Nadap, overlooking the Late Pleistocene depression of the Velence lake indirectly: over stream valleys leading out from the mountains Mogyorósbànya Hidasnèmeti Arka, together with raw material sources Bodrogkeresztur, with all advanteges of a mid-mountain environment, hilly region and vicinity of raw material sources.

On hilly regions, at almost similar elevation - which could be considered ideal - overlooking stream valleys, along characteristic surface morphological elements, protected plateaux with smooth surfaces. All places had a perspective view over large areas. Sites are typically located along animal tracks connecting regions of different ecological endowments.

It is a general observation, that hilly settlements tend to be not on the first, but the second row of hills overlooking the plains: probably, they were less exposed to unfavourable factors.

On the Lowlands, settlements were observed at 80-110 m a.s.l. Sites were located on parabolic dunes protruding from wetlands, covered with loess or eolic sand. These sites were generally used for a short time.

STRUCTURE OF SETTLEMENTS

So far, three basic settlement structures could be observed. These categories are not, and cannot be, exclusive. Because of the limited excavated surfaces, none of the Upper Palaeolithic settlements can be claimed to be excavated completely. Thus the complete richness of settlement structures remain uncovered. The combination of the types enumerated can be encountered as well.

The following types could be separated:

- large settlements loosely inhabited, thin cultural layer, poor and scattered finds, e.g., around Pilismarót where all trenches yielded some scattered evidence indicating the original surface.

- settlement with tents, in some cases, limited or marked (Dömös), in most cases only an oval concentration of finds, sometimes with pole holes or holes for keeping brand. At the margin of the patches, pebbles or antler pieces can be found, probably for fixing the tent cover. Within this type of settlements, we can separate 'cold' or 'warm' ones, depending on the presence or absence of fireplaces.

- complex settlement with several tents (Mogyorósbànya).

- special sites, workshops (e.g., Szob: collection of trinket-molluscs). Workshops can remind us to settlements with scattered finds, with important differences in artefact density, tool ratio and the almost complete lack of animal bones; not only booty, but even minimal food litter.

CULTURE

The interior parts of the Carpathian Basin were suited for considerable human inhabitation, according to our present state of knowledge, in the milder conditions of the interstadials alone. The sites are concentrated to the B interstadials of the Würm Pleniglacial period. Two small warmer climatic phases of the Paudorf and Ságvár periods allowed significant settlement waves of the Gravettian population. These three, chronologically separable settlement waves could be classified into three archaeological units, representing differences within the Gravettian entity on the facies level:

- Paudorf (Stillfried B: older blade industry / Pavlovian).

- Ságvár older interstadial (Laugerie: pebble Gravettian / Ságvárian).

- Ságvár younger interstadial (Lascaux: younger blade industry). In the same chronological period, there is another younger blade industry characterised by blunted blades, which seems different from the rest, represented so far by one site only, i.e., Esztergom.

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