

du Lazaret, Mas des Caves), in an attempt to gain a better understanding through comparison. Sklenář concludes that it is in fact a dwelling, more specifically, a strong surface hut probably used seasonally. The dwelling makes use of the rock face of the cliff as a structural component as well as many surrounding boulders. While being free standing, it was certainly protected on several sides. Structurally, it is very similar to the dwellings purportedly found at Terra Amata and Fermanville. Sklenář points out that similar types of dwellings are found only in more northern latitudes, suggesting that the harsher climate facilitated the use of indoor sleeping accommodations. He also comments that the structure at Přezletice is the furthest east of the known sites with such a dwelling suggesting that Central Europe may have been the earliest settled by *Homo erectus*.

All in all, the site report for Přezletice is a welcomed addition to the literature of the little known Lower Paleolithic of Europe. The book contains detailed descriptions of both the stratigraphy and the lithic artifacts. The accompanying photographs and drawings only enhance the overall quality of the book. One of my few criticisms of the book is the rather poor English translation, especially in the first sections. While it is greatly appreciated that such a worthwhile site report was made available to the English-speaking world, it may have been advantageous to have had the book edited for such grammatical and lexical errors.

Steven B. Mertens

**Vértesszőlös : Site, Man and Culture**, edited by M. Kretzoi and V. T. Dobosi, Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990, 555 p., 111 plates, 138 fig., 32 tables, 8 supplement figures off text.

Vértesszőlös, the single most important Lower Paleolithic Hungarian site, is situated on the fifth terrace of the Átálér river valley, 15 km south of the Danube and 50 km west of Budapest, Komárom county, at the western limits of the Gerecse mountains. It was discovered in 1962 during a geomorphological investigation of a travertine quarry near the village by M. Pécs. The excavations at the settlement, which took place between 1963 and 1968, were carried out under the direction of László Vértés. During this period, he published some results of the research. After his sudden death in 1968, the well-known paleontologist, M. Kretzoi, coordinated the activity of a large team of specialists in order to produce a comprehensive monograph of the site.

This massive volume, published in 1990 by the Hungarian Academic Press, is dedicated to the memory of László Vértés who devoted the last years of his life to the excavation of Vértesszőlös. It contains thirty contributions written by twenty-three authors (including L. Vértés) and is arranged in six parts which provide an exhaustive analysis concerning the various data and materials.

Preceded by a preface, introduction, and a presentation of previous research by M. Kretzoi (pp. 9–19), the first part of the volume (five studies, pp. 21–75) describes the natural environment of the site, the geological background, and sedimentological and petrographical analyses of the travertine and cultural layers. M. Pécs study describes the 4–5 terraces built by the Átálér river which are covered with travertine deposits from the thermal springs of the basal flood level. One of the most consistent sections, *The Palaeoenvironment* (ten studies, pp. 77–252), presents the results of the analyses of plant imprints and pollen and charcoal remains. They provide a wide range of floral development and paleoclimatic background also related to the archaeological layers. A very detailed analysis of Pleistocene ostracods and mollusc was also included. This section also includes a large discussion of the vertebrate faunal analysis, especially the faunal from the archaeological layers (M. Kretzoi). The kitchen-middens of *Homo erectus* were discovered in sites I and II, whereas the bone accumulations in site II are considered to be completely natural. In the third level of site III, a calcareous area of approximately 40 sq. m was discovered containing 125 animal footprints belonging to five species.

The next section, *Human teeth and bone remains* (pp. 253–262), discusses the unique discoveries which have made Vértesszőlös famous. The fossil remains of two human individuals, the partial dentition of a 6–7 year old child and an occipital bone of an adult, were recovered from the lowermost cultural layer of site I, and dated to the Mindel I–II interstadial. The adult occipital has been the subject of much discussion and debate. While it is generally agreed that the bone is thick, fairly angular with a continuous occipital torus, and its dimensions suggest a relatively large cranial capacity for a Middle Pleistocene hominid, morphological and metrical details of the specimen and its classification are still disputed (see

J. Cook et al. *Yearbook of Physical Anthropology*, 25, 1982, pp. 29–30). The paleoanthropologist A. Thoma wrote: "In terms of anatomy and metrical proportions, Vértesszőlös man is modern. This new feature combination justifies the establishment of a new subspecies which can be placed on the boundary between *Homo erectus* and *Homo sapiens* within the framework of traditional classification — insofar as the fragmentary remains allow taxonomical conclusions. In accordance with this position, it is given the taxonomic name *Homo erectus* or *Homo sapiens paleohungaricus*, type Vsz II, its closest relatives are the Bilzingsleben and Petralona fossil men."

The fourth section of the volume deals with *The occupation site* (pp. 263–521). V. T. Dobosi presents the results of the excavations at the site during the six-year excavation (1963–1968) under the direction of L. Vértés. Petrographical analysis of the lithic raw materials (K. Varga-Máthé) concludes that they were derived from the alluvial deposits of the Átálér river and the river cobbles of its Pleistocene terraces. They consist of sedimentary rocks (radiolarites including jasper, opal flint and chert, lydites, spongillites, marl, and limestone) and metamorphic rocks (quartz and quartzite). L. Vértés study (new translation of the text published in *Quaternaria*, 7, 1965, pp. 185–196) analyses the typology of the lithic assemblage. He establishes the typological criteria and a five-place digital code, that concentrates on all of the information concerning raw materials and typology of the implements. In addition, *The registration of tools and the coding system*, was presented by L. Vértés and V. T. Dobosi in the previous study. Next, V. T. Dobosi gives a detailed description of the archaeological materials. From a total of 8,890 stone artifacts discovered in the complex site at Vértesszőlös, 5,819 specimens could be classed within group D–E of the type code system as standardized tool types. Also, there were 3,071 non-standardizable tools (group B), as well as 105 bone objects, which apart from having been split, had additional marks of human modifications on them. Of these, 93 were assignable to type and were worked in the same manner with both flint and quartzite tools. The author established 48 types of standardized stone implements, represented by small (30–35 mm in length) choppers and chopping tools on flint and quartzite pebbles and flakes. On the basis of the comparison of cumulative curves of individual tools and using statistical test types, V. T. Dobosi suggested the following chronological sequence: "The oldest layer is the first culture-bearing layer of site III. It is followed by the active complex of culture-bearing layers from site I. The fourth and fifth layers from site III, which were considered together with those from site I, seem to be most recent of all". A relatively small artifact assemblage was discovered in sites II, IV, and V and could not be taken into consideration in this part of the analysis. The material from the whole complex of sites seems to represent a uniform culture named by L. Vértés, the "Buda industry". In detail, V. T. Dobosi also presents the areal and vertical distribution of the archaeological material, as well as fire-

places from sites I and III. These fireplaces consist of accumulations (30/40 cm size) of small burned bone fragments and ash that were deposited in a radial fashion around the outer area. The bones were intentionally used in the process of combustion and they undoubtedly prove the use of fire by *Homo erectus* at Vértesszőlős.

The fifth part (pp. 523–541) deals with paleonutrition and tool technology. M. Kretzoi offers some considerations concerning the *Settlement Fauna and Food Economy of Homo erectus*, on the analysis of faunal assemblages (macromammal species) especially from site I. M. Kretzoi believes that the inhabitants of Vértesszőlős were exploiting animals which frequently visited the thermal springs. The animals were ambushed and in the panic of their escape, several animals were injured and provided easier prey for the hominids. This assumption is purported by the tool assemblage which contains no hunting implements. Also, scavenging practices are admitted. V. T. Dobosi presents *Settlement and Technology: The Evaluation of the Site and Its Connections*, compiled on the basis of L. Vértés published articles and unpublished manuscripts. At Vértesszőlős, early man occupied the small basins excavated by springs in the lime tuff. The archaeological excavations were made in eight areas (sites I–VIII). The most important of these are sites I and III, whereas site II represents natural bone accumulations. The stratigraphy of site I contains four layers. The first three of these are in limestone beds, due to the deposition of a calcareous mud layer by the active spring. The fourth layer is a loess stratum. A great many of the bones found in the living floors of sites I and III

had been broken by man into finger-sized pieces, accompanied by lots of quartzite, flint, and chert chips and tools, all preserved "in situ". L. Vértés formulates several hypotheses concerning the *Homo erectus* skull cult and considerations concerning the lithic assemblages, including: raw materials, tool standardization and technological remarks. He also discusses the pebble tool industry and his interpretation of the proposed migration of *Homo erectus* populations out of Africa into Asia and Europe. The last part (pp. 543–555) offers the absolute dating of the fossil bones (K. Oakley, amino acid racemization). Also, using the Th/Th corrected method of dating, H. P. Schwarcz and A. G. Latham have obtained an absolute age of the culture layers at Vértesszőlős of between 210 to 185 Ky. These results indicate younger ages than those found by Cherdynstev and Osmond, that were highly contaminated with loessic silt. This data indicates that hominids used pebble tools much later than has previously been recognized and it is sustained by the results of magnetic polarity travertine measurements.

It is well known that the discoveries from Vértesszőlős are of major significance for the early Paleolithic period in Europe. The volume presented here offers a detailed analysis of various kinds of data concerning the site. Excellent illustrations and an accurate English translation contribute to make this book a good reference monograph of the Lower Paleolithic in Europe. This volume will serve as a lasting tribute to L. Vértés, who lived and died for Vértesszőlős.

Corneliu Beldiman

*Le Paléolithique et le Néolithique de la Roumanie en contexte européen*, V. Chirica and D. Monah (editors), Bibliotheca Archaeologica Iassiensis IV, Iași, 1991, 471 p., 169 figures, 3 tables.

The city of Iași, the capital of Moldavia, has a very active archaeological research center. The specialists that work at the Institute of Archaeology of the Romanian Academy, the History College of the University of "Al. I. Cuza", and the History Museum of Moldavia, promote the systematic excavations at many important archaeological sites, from the Paleolithic through the Middle Ages. The results of their research are published in such notable periodical reviews as: *Archaeology of Moldavia*, *Historical Research*, *Annual of the Institute of Archaeology and History "A. D. Xenopol"*, *Studia Antiqua et Archaeologica*, or in many monographic studies (volumes). In 1987, a new archaeological series, *Bibliotheca Archaeologica Iassiensis* (BAI), was initiated, which aims at publishing recent archaeological studies and monographs in several languages to facilitate easier access by foreign scholars. It has published three volumes to date: *The Cucuteni Civilization and the European Context* (BAI I 1987, M. Petrescu-Dîmbovița et alii eds.), *The Genesis and Evolution of Paleolithic Cultures in Romania* (BAI II 1987, V. Chirica ed.), and *The Gravettian in the East Romanian Carpathians* (BAI III 1989, V. Chirica). Recently, a fourth volume in this series was published, *Le Paléolithique et le Néolithique de la Roumanie en Contexte Européen* (The Paleolithic and the Neolithic of Romania in an European Context). This volume is dedicated to the memory of N. N. Morosănuș, the father of modern Paleolithic research in Romania (1990 commemorates the 50th anniversary of his death).

The volume contains twelve articles and studies related to the Romanian and European Paleolithic (pp. 7–187) and ten to the Neolithic (pp. 188–453). Most of these articles are published in French, as well as English and German (one each). Based on recent archaeological research and radiocarbon results, V. Chirica discusses the important problems of the Gravettian culture in Romania and especially the discoveries from Moldavia. Taking into consideration the recent chronometric assays or the Middle and Upper Paleolithic, K. Honea points out the research perspectives for this epoch in our country. M. Cărciumaru examines from a palynologic and geochronologic point of view the strata of the Paleolithic site at Mîloc "Piriul lui Istrati", Botoșani county. A. Farcaș offers a synthesis of the paleofaunal data from some Moldavian Upper Paleolithic sites. The set of papers regarding the Paleolithic of the rest of Europe begins

with B. Kourtesis-Philippakis' article concerning the history of research in Greece. The discoveries from the archaeological zone in the Dniestr valley are presented by N. K. Anisutkin, *The Chronology of the Mousterian culture*, and I. A. Borziac, *The Gravettian site at Cosăuți*. Republic of Moldavia. G. V. Grigorieva and M. V. Anikovitch's work points out the cultural relations between the Upper Paleolithic sites from Hungary and those from the Ukraine, based on the analysis of lithic assemblages and radiocarbon dates. V. T. Dobosi presents the main results of the Paleolithic research in Hungary, developed during the last 80 years and especially during the last three decades. Two other papers refer to the features of the Aurignacian culture in Moravia (M. Oliva) and to raw materials used by Aurignacian populations in eastern Slovakia (L. Kaminská). The last article concerning the Paleolithic is J. Gausson's contribution in knowledge of the Magdalenian culture in the Périgord, at the excavations of the open-air site of Le Chatenet.

The majority of the studies concerning the Neolithic refer to various regions in Romania. Three of the papers present research stages for very important Early and Middle Neolithic cultures: the Linear Ceramic culture in Moldavia (N. Ursulescu), the Boian culture in the southern part of Romania (E. Comșa), and the Hamangia culture in Dobrogea (P. Hașotti). The following six papers deal with several categories of discoveries from Neolithic sites. A. S. Luca presents and discusses a unique type of clay statuette belonging to the Vinča culture and found at the Liubcova site in the Banat region. I. Paul's subject of study is the typologic and stylistic analysis of the painted pottery of the Petrești culture (Transylvania). He also examines the periodization of this culture. The ceramic vessels, which originate typologically and ideologically from the Near East, were used for cult purposes by many Neolithic communities in Romania. C. M. Mantu presents this category of manufacturing products discovered at the Scinteia site, Iași county, and belong to the famous Cucuteni culture, phase A3. In his consistent study, V. Ursachi discusses an exceptional discovery also related to the Cucuteni culture, phase A, which was discovered at the Brad site, Neamț county, and consists of a rich deposit of copper pieces (bracelets, rings, disks, an axe, and cylindrical beads), gold disks, and beads in marble and roe-deer canines. D. Monah discusses salt exploitation in Mol-