

one of the most debated issues is the age of the lowest stratum (VII) of the Ushki cluster. N.N. Dikov dated it to *c.* 14 300–13 600 BP, while T. Goebel and colleagues suggested a younger interval of *c.* 11 300–10 700 BP. Here, the authors state that it is quite possible that both views are valid because different parts of this large site cluster were sampled for radiocarbon dating. The Mesolithic (i.e. pre-pottery Holocene) sites—Podgornaya, Naivan, Kheta, Uptar, Kongo and Siberdik—are dated to *c.* 9800–8300 BP. The timing for the Dyuktai complex in the north-easternmost territories of North-east Asia has been extended up to *c.* 8000 BP. The Mesolithic Sumnagin complex (including the northernmost early Holocene archaeological site in the world at Zhokhov Island; see Pitul'ko 2013) is now placed at *c.* 9500–5000 BP, substantially later than was concluded by Mochanov (2009). The authors argue that both complexes co-existed. The same feature is observed for the Neolithic (i.e. pottery-using) cultures: Syalakh (*c.* 6800–4200 BP), Bel'kachi (*c.* 5200–3500 BP) and Ymyyakhtakh (*c.* 5000–1500 BP).

Chapter 6 summarises the research results and discusses a range of multidisciplinary issues. Some of the complications of radiocarbon dating in North-east Asia include the complex history of site formation and modification in a permafrost environment, and the diachronous nature of material introduced to sediments, such as wood and plant remains. All these factors must be taken into account when using radiocarbon dates from this region; as the authors state: “getting unexpected results is a reason to consider the causes of the results rather than a reason to assume that the results are wrong” (p. 156). The origin of microblade technology in North-east Asia, used to produce insets for grooved tools, is related to the disappearance of mammoth ivory as a raw material for making points and spears, and to the necessity of effective slotted hunting weapons. The authors conclude that influences from the southern parts of Siberia were the main mechanism of cultural changes: “Ideas about the autochthony of cultural complexes within Northeast Asia do not withstand the test of time” (p. 160).

This volume presents solid research and is recommended to students and professionals who study the Pleistocene archaeology of Asia, Beringia and the Americas. R.L. Bland, a veteran translator of Russian archaeological literature, is also acknowledged for making this volume available to the international community.

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MARIE-PIERRE KOENIG (ed.) *Le gisement de Crévéchamps (Lorraine). Du néolithique à l'époque romaine dans la vallée de la Moselle* (Documents d'archéologie française 110). 467 pages, 214 b&w illustrations, 13 colour plates, 56 tables. 2016. Paris: Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme; 978-2-7351-2081-9 paperback €55.



This important addition to the prestigious ‘Documents d'archéologie française’ series presents the results of excavations during 1989–1994 at the site of Crévéchamps in the Moselle Valley south of Nancy in the Lorraine region of eastern France. During the last 50 years, large-scale archaeological interventions in advance of mineral extraction have become commonplace in the major river valleys of Europe, but in France, a disproportionate amount of this work has focused on the Paris Basin and the corpus of published sites from other regions is more limited. In the case of eastern France, at Crévéchamps, after trial trenching an area of 40ha to establish the extent of the archaeology (much of which lay buried beneath alluvial deposits over 1m deep) six areas covering around 15ha were excavated. These investigations revealed a history of settlement and land-use spanning three millennia from the Neolithic to the Gallo-Roman period. This work, however, took place before the legal framework that nowadays governs

such interventions was introduced. It was thus not until 1999 that post-excavation study under the direction of Marie-Pierre Koenig began, funded by the state and the then newly formed Institut National de Recherches Archéologiques Préventives. This work has led to the current report, which is of far-reaching significance not only for its archaeological content, but also for the innovative manner in which the material is analysed and presented.

The volume structure is both thematic and diachronic, with six main chapters, supported by metrical data for all the buildings, radiocarbon dates, a corpus of drawn pottery (annexes 1–3), as well as detailed plans of each excavated area, a context catalogue and an index of archaeological sites mentioned in the text. After a short contextualisation of the project in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 analyses the natural and anthropogenic history of the valley and the farming strategies practised by its successive inhabitants. It draws on sedimentary evidence from late Glacial palaeochannels left behind in the valley floor from before the Moselle stabilised into a single, if meandering, course in the Boreal, along with on-site pollen and floral data and the little animal bone that survived the acidic soils. Particularly useful are a plan pinpointing the contexts yielding relevant data, a practice featuring throughout the volume, and tables comparing the archaeobotanical data from Crévéchamps with contemporary sites in France, Germany and Luxembourg. Chapter 3 examines the structural components of the different areas, predominantly posthole structures of earlier Iron Age date, but also *in situ* storage pots, wells, ovens, palisades that were used to divide up the settled area from the second millennium BC onward, and undated features that are probably remnants of cultivation. Elements of the Roman landscape include a dwelling area, a small cemetery, 300 pits dug to provide the raw material for a nearby tile factory, and a well-made road heading for a villa located—as in many other northern French river valleys—on the adjacent slopes, all within a system of Roman land-allotment on the same alignment as the road, completing the process of physical landscape division begun in the Bronze Age.

The material culture (Chapter 4) is dominated by pottery. This includes a regionally rare Early Bronze Age group from a single pit, probably from a habitation of which the only other trace was a post-built storage structure and a remarkable assemblage of 200 Middle Bronze Age vessels from one of the

palaeochannels that criss-cross the site. Several pits, palisades and ovens belonging to this settlement survived along with a mass of heating stones also dumped in palaeochannels, but no recognisable dwellings. There is a sizeable assemblage of earlier Iron Age pottery, and some Gallo-Roman, but there is less ceramic evidence of either the Late Bronze Age or the Late Iron Age activity that is common in many river valleys. Other types of artefact are rarer, but include some residual lithic implements, indicating frequentation of the terraces by mobile groups prior to the first appreciable evidence of cereal cultivation in the Middle Neolithic—rather later than in the loess-covered areas of northern France—while a range of other utilitarian and decorative objects attest to the extent to which the local population were locked into wider procurement networks from the third millennium BC onward.

All this is brought together in the final two chapters, where the sequence is discussed and interpreted. Aside from the long span of activity in one locale, which alone makes Crévéchamps a key reference site beyond the region, important contributions to the bigger picture are the evidence of a Middle Bronze Age dwelling site and the model of shifting settlement derived from detailed analysis of the Iron Age structures. Notwithstanding the sheer density and extent of Iron Age features, this palimpsest is argued to be a product of cyclical shifts within a restricted zone by a handful of dwelling units over many generations. This kind of earlier Iron Age settlement nucleus is now well attested in the Paris Basin, but Crévéchamps is a still rare example in eastern France. Conversely, the lower visibility of late Iron Age activity allied to more *in situ* rebuilding is seen as reflecting a stabilisation of settlement linked to changes in the nature of land ownership.

Marie-Pierre Koenig and her collaborators are to be congratulated on a stimulating study, which is a model for the publication of development-led excavations across the continent. Of course, some criticisms could be levelled; most notably, for example, having obtained over 50 AMS dates, why not use Bayesian approaches to model the date and duration of the successive phases of occupation? But there is little else to quibble about. This excellent report deserves to be widely read by all scholars of later European prehistory, and it will be, thanks to the plentiful illustrations and comprehensive abstracts in French, German and English accompanying each chapter, ensuring that the results are accessible

not only throughout the continent, but also to linguistically challenged Anglophone archaeologists.

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COLIN RENFREW, OLGA PHILANIOTOU, NEIL BRODIE, GIORGOS GAVALAS & MICHAEL BOYD (ed.) *Kavos and the special deposits: the sanctuary on Keros and the origins of Aegean ritual*. 2016. xxx+614 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations, tables. Cambridge: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research; 978-1-902937-70-0 hardback £64.



The Cycladic culture of the third millennium BC exerted significant influence on the coastal communities of contemporary

mainland Greece, Asia Minor and Crete. The profound interaction between this comparatively little-known civilisation and early Minoan practices and ideas indicates the great importance of the former for understanding the Minoan and Mycenaean cultures of the second millennium. Irrespective of that, the famous Cycladic figurines—many of which were looted and dispersed across the world's major museums during the last century—have captured the imagination not only of third-millennium Cretans and Greeks, but also of modern visitors, artists and thinkers.

Kavos and the special deposits is the second volume of the ongoing series entitled: 'The Sanctuary on Keros and the Origins of Aegean Ritual Practice', and it should therefore be understood within this wider context rather than as an independent monograph. The primary focus of this volume is dedicated to the first large concentration of Cycladic figurines to be discovered entirely undisturbed by subsequent looting, having been found in a secondary deposit that has kept their secret for more than 4500 years. The deposit, on the island of Keros, is called 'Special Deposit South' and has a parallel 110m to the north in the 'Special Deposit North', which, unfortunately, was illicitly plundered.

All those who have wondered what the Cycladic figurines represent will find some evidence in this

volume either for or against their theories. But the volume offers much more than that. This is an exhaustive effort that illuminates the society, politics and rituals of the third-millennium Cyclades. A wide range of extremely detailed studies cast new light on arguments advanced by others or by the excavators themselves, either strengthening or weakening them. The hypotheses put forward culminate both in the disproval of previous theories and the emergence of a new working hypothesis for the site and its role, as well as for the wider significance of ritual in the third-millennium Cyclades.

The volume is a monument to thoroughness and transparency. There are chapters on every important type of find, including obsidian blades (Carter), spools (Haas-Lebegyev & C. Renfrew), stone discs (Boyd & Dixon), pottery (Sotirakopoulou, Tzavella, Hilditch), the imprints of leaves, matting and textiles (J. Renfrew), and statues, vessels and other artefacts of stone (Ugarkovic *et al.*). There is also a wide variety of analytical studies, including analysis of weathering (Maniatis & Tambakopoulos), spatial analysis (Boyd), soil and sediment analysis (French & Taylor) and a description of the areas around the site, including sustained comparisons with the Special Deposit North and the nearby settlement on the islet of Daskalio. The parallels with these two nearby sites, and especially the differences between them, are particularly illuminating. Two CD-ROMs provide high-resolution photographs of excavations and finds from both special deposits and the settlement at Daskalio.

The authors draw interesting conclusions, including:

a) that the South and North Special Deposits are comparable yet have important differences; b) that there are no joins between the two assemblages; and c) that the larger items, especially the marble figurines and the pottery, are largely fragmented and, in the overwhelming majority of cases, are only partially represented in the assemblage, thus arguing for the secondary rather than primary nature of the South Deposit. They also show that the deposition was made in various phases, with pits dug into existing deposits on some occasions in order to make new ones, and that all materials, especially the stone and clay items, come from a range of areas, mostly from Naxos but also from other neighbouring islands. Moreover, applying the criteria of repetition, invariance, the air of tradition, rule governance and formalism (Bell 1997; Kyriakidis 2005), Renfrew recognises this deposit as the result