

MILAN STLOUKAL

SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE ON THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF THE BRONZE AGE

The Anthropological Department of the National Museum in Prague organized a scientific conference on the anthropology of the Bronze Age. The event took place on March 1/2, 1977 and was attended by more than 40 anthropologists, archaeologists and specialists of related scientific branches. The stimulus for the conference was given by the fact that an international symposium dealing with the same topic had been called to Florence for the autumn of 1977 and each European country was to be represented in it by one anthropologist. We did our best to sum up the newest achievements and problems of our Bronze Age anthropology, so as to furnish the Czechoslovak representative with sufficient material for his report comprising also the results of the most recent research that have not been published. We asked therefore all the Czechoslovak anthropologists who deal with the problems, even those who touch upon it only marginally, and also all the important archaeological institutions in Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia to take an active part in the conference. Naturally not all the invited were able to appear at the conference, some of them were abroad at the time or had other pressing duties to fulfil.

Preparations for the symposium started in the autumn of 1976, in mid-February 1977, however, we were told that there would be no international symposium in 1977, that it would be postponed by at least one year. By that time it was too late to cancel our conference, and in fact we would not have canceled it even if it were possible. The extraordinary interest of the anthropologists and archaeologists in the event exceeded all our expectations. The conference proper showed that all the invited (most of them actively participating in the conference both days) regarded our meeting as an extraordinarily interesting and unique opportunity to exchange views on these topics. The keen interest of the participants in the conference was documented also by a very vivid discussion concluding both days. I would like to mention a detail characterizing the massive interest of our researchers in the event; the Archaeological Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Nitra had to hire a bus to transport all the participants to the conference. Altogether 17 papers have been filed for the conference. Four authors, however, due to illness or their stay abroad were not able to appear personally, but two of them, J. Pavelčík and J. Jakab, sent in their paper so that we could give them a public reading. This collection

of papers is so important and it contains such a mass of important data and ideas that it would be a great loss let them fall into oblivion or to disperse them into various periodicals. They are of specific value as a set of monothematic papers. We have therefore accepted very gladly the offer by the Scientific Editor of *Anthropologie* dr. J. Jelinek to publish all these papers in a single issue of his periodical. We have managed to gather all the papers with one exception; M. Hanulík will publish his paper on the anthropological material of the Early Bronze Age burial site in Branč elsewhere.

The papers have been arranged for publication in the same way as they were read at the conference in the National Museum. First are the three papers by archaeologists summing up the present views on the classification of the Bronze Age, then follow the anthropological papers containing a survey of anthropological materials and research in various regions of Czechoslovakia. Other groups of papers deal with the results of anthropological research at certain localities, and the conference was concluded by papers on related scientific disciplines (zoology, botany, and stomatology).