

dedicated to dermatoglyphs, in spite of the fact that a few days before the opening of the Congress in Florence the town of Poppi (Arezzo) was the venue of a workshop and symposium on methods applied to dermatoglyphic studies.

From Czechoslovakia 24 anthropologists attended the congress. The nine papers presented by Czechoslovak participants had a very positive echo.

The next congress of the European Anthropological Association will take place in Lisbon, Portugal.

Milan Stloukal

POST-CONGRESS SYMPOSIUM ON UPPER PALAEOLITHIC AND MESOLITHIC POPULATIONS OF EUROPE AND OF THE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN IN PISA

In connection with the IVth Congress of the European Anthropological Association the Institute of Anthropology and Human Palaeontology of the University of Pisa organized a specialized symposium on the Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic Populations of Europe and the Mediterranean Basin. The event took place between September 8–10, 1984 and was attended by 25 renowned specialists from 8 countries. It was a typical multidisciplinary session at which open problems were confronted mainly by archaeologists and physical anthropologists.

Most scholars agree that the differences between the physical types of the Mesolithic and Neolithic populations are connected with one of the most important changes in human evolution — with transition to food producing economy. This transition is manifested both by the reduction of dental system, and by correlated craniometric changes. The reduction is mostly explained mechanistically, as a direct consequence of softer food, not requiring such a large chewing surface as the consumption of food consisting mostly of meat in the earlier periods. Some experts believe, however, that it had been a direct consequence of the growth of the population density in the process of sedentarization. Certain samples document that this transition was not connected with the reduction of size only, but also with considerable changes in shape. Morphological changes of such a degree are — in the view of certain authors — hard to be explained through mere microevolution caused by ecological changes and they postulate therefore the migration of various human groups. The increased variability of the size in the Neolithic period, as compared with the Mesolithic, is explained by the growth of isolation (due to genetic drift or selection processes), however, it was not the only factor, as we shall mention further.

The dispute of long standing between advocates of the origin of the European Neolithic populations by migration seemingly advancing along the major rivers, namely Danube, and between the supporters of the theory of autochthonous development (in the recent years documented among other regions also in Moravia) seems to end in a compromise agreeing with both views. Thus e. g. the populations of Lepenski Vir and Vlasac in the transition period between the Late Mesolithic and Early Neolithic show the coexistence of two distinct morphological types. The advancing Neolithic population obviously did not exterminate the previous Mesolithic people, but penetrated step by step the local, autochthonous population. The recent Neolithic finds from the southern part of the Sinai Peninsula also show that on the margin of the Fertile Crescent, in which agricultural traditions reach back to the very end of the Epipalaeolithic period, there were still population that had not passed to food production. Morphologically they are very close to the recent Beduins of the southern

and currently on the basis of the analysis of accurate elements.

New Mesolithic material was recently found in the Uzzo Cave in Sicily. It is remarkably homogeneous, showing small sexual dimorphism, and the percentage of dental caries is surprisingly high. Another paper contained a survey of the hitherto known Palaeolithic and Mesolithic burials from Italy. In the postcranial material from the Arene Candida Cave Epigravettian and Neolithic individuals were compared and it appeared that both the length and robusticity of the lower limbs had been reduced, while the circumference of clavicles and of the bones of the upper limbs had increased, the length of the latter, however, remained the same in the Neolithic as it was in the Mesolithic period. These changes are related to agricultural activities and to a more sedentary way of life. The study of three geographical samples of Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic skulls (Western, Central and Southern Europe) revealed clinal variability in the robusticity and in the proportions of the face, probably as the result of climatic adaptation.

Eugen Strouhal

5TH EUROPEAN MEETING OF THE PALAEO-PATHOLOGY ASSOCIATION IN SIENA

Two years after the successful conference in Middelburg, Netherlands, the European Palaeopathologists and several guests from the overseas met again in Siena, Italy, on September 3–4, 1984. It was a great advantage that the Siena meeting immediately preceded the 4th Congress of the European Anthropological Association in Florence, so that many anthropologists interested in palaeopathology were able to attend. The Organizing Committee of the meeting was headed by Professor V. Capecchi, anatomist at the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery of the Siena University, assisted by (Mrs.) Dr. E. Rabino Massa from Turin. The Scientific Committee, comprising a number of leading palaeopathologists from various European countries was chaired by Professor A. Ascenzi from Rome. The sessions were held in the modern "Aula Magna" of the Le Scotte polyclinic, belonging to the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery of the Siena University.

The papers were arranged into several thematic groups. The opening address was delivered by the main organizer of the life of the Palaeopathology Association, the agile Mrs. E. Cockburn. She spoke about the pressure groups in the USA, Israel, Egypt and Australia, calling for burying again the human remains excavated at archaeological sites. This would lead to the destruction of priceless materials that can offer further scientific evidence in the future. The only solution is to secure really respectful dealing with the human remains in the laboratories of scientific institutes. The American Anthropological Association has already voiced its attitude against re-burial and the Palaeopathology Association joins it.

The first block of papers concentrated on the application of new methods in palaeopathology. Of these new methods we may quote crystallography used for the analysis of pleural adhesions found in male skeletal remains coming from a medieval burial ground in Switzerland, analysis with the help of a scanning electron microscope used for studying porotic changes and cribra orbitalis in the Avar populations in Hungary, and a number of others.

Another group of lectures dealt with caries in the ancient populations of Cyprus, Egypt, Italy, Ireland, in *Australopithecus* and *Homo habilis* from Olduvai. Several lectures presented pathological finds from various historical periods and from various countries, including finds from the Qurqumas mausoleum in Cairo, from the St. Domeni-