THE BEREGOVO GROUP OF UPPER PALAEOLITHIC SITES IN TRANSCARPATHIA

SUMMARY — The Upper Palaeolithic in Soviet Transcarpathia is known thanks to two investigators — to Theodore Lehmus and to Czech archaeologist Josef Skutil. Especially significant is the information by J. Skutil, describing the Upper Palaeolithic site on Malaya gora, below the town of Beregovo (Beregovo I).

Since Transcarpathia belongs to Soviet Ukraine, Soviet prehistorians paid naturally great attention to the research carried out by J. Skutil in Beregovo. Their research realized in Malaya gora or Beregovo I and in the vicinity of Beregovo, has resulted in the discovery of new Upper Palaeolithic sites in eastern central Europe.

With the discovery of early Upper Palaeolithic in Korolevo the Beregovo group of Upper Palaeolithic finds has acquired special significance: it was important to compare Beregovo sites with the sites in Korolevo, both from the stratigraphic and technical-typological viewpoints.

This paper is an attempt at such a comparison.

KEY WORDS: USSR — Transcarpathia — Beregovo — Upper Palaeolithic — Stratigraphy — Typology.

Considering the archaic Upper Palaeolithic Korolevo horizons we justly ask about their dating. It is logical therefore to compare these complexes with the collections of other Upper Palaeolithic sites in Transcarpathia. In the course of the research realized by the Permanent Archaeological Expedition of the Archaeological Museum of the Institute of Zoology of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, headed by V. N. Gladilin, more than 40 Upper Palaeolithic sites have been discovered in the investigated region. The largest group is formed by the sites discovered in the surroundings of the town of Beregovo (Beregovo I—V, Muhlevo I, Dobronic 1). The sites are situated on various terraces level, between 20—80 m above the flood-plain of the Borzhava river.

Most important for the study of the Upper Palaeolithic in Transcarpathia is the open-air Beregovo I site on the Malaya Gora hill. The site is known from the early thirties of this century. It was investigated and studied by M. Jankovich (1931), J. Skutil (1933), V. N. Gladilin, S. V. Smirnov (1970, 1972), Gladilin, Smirnov, P. F. Sova (1972) and Smirnov (1974). For its stratigraphy it is of fundamental importance for the research of the Upper Palaeolithic of the region. Part of the site which is situated on a 20 m high terrace of the small river Verka, tributary of Borzhava river, was destroyed by quarrying. The excavations on Malaya Gora uncovered a many metres thick section of loess sediments with several paleosols (Fig. 1):

1. humified cinnamon-brown loam — contemporary soil (0.8 m)
2. greyish pale-yellow loam (0.7 m)
3. yellowish-cinnamon-brown loam — the first paleosol of the Transcarpathian regional section (0.5 m)
4. pale-yellow loam (0.3 m)
are proved also by paleomagnetic data (Adamenko et al. 1981, 1984). In the sections of the Upper Pleistocene sediments of the site the first paleomagnetic anomaly appears in the 3rd loam layer, below cultural remains of the Bronze Age and it may compare with the youngest event dated 12,000 years B.P. The other anomaly has been recognised in loam layer 4, above the second fossil soil. It correlates with an event of 25,000 — 23,500 years B.P., discovered in the sections containing archeological artifacts and dated with radiocarbon method in Mobolova V and Korman IV. The following (third) anomaly (Karagopolova), has been recognized at the top of the third palaeosol and is dated more than 44,000 years B.P. The fourth and last anomaly was observed at the bottom of the fourth palaeosol and seems to be the Ilische-event dated to about 110,000 years.

The Upper Palaeolithic cultural layer discovered in the lower part of pale-yellow loam 4 above the second palaeosol (Paudorf), contained sporadic dispersed small charcoal, oboe and stone artifacts. No faunal remains have been preserved. The collection consists of 1,073 artifacts. As raw materials for the manufacture of tools served dark-grey and black flint, light-grey flint with coarse structure, and a light-olive non-transparent flint. Also yellow-greyish slightly transparent chert was used, alongside with obsidian and andesite. Besides stone artifacts large quantities of oboe fragments, pebbles and unworked concretion have been collected. Most of the collection are waste, prismatic cores and precoscres, flakes, knapping debris and fragments — 959 pes. (83.5 %). Tools — 114 pes (10.3 %).

The technique is characterized by parallel flaking of the blanks. This is proved by exclusive prismatic cores (59 pes — 2.4 %) and precoscres (6 pes — 0.6 %). For their manufacture mostly fragments were used, less frequently also nodules. The dimensions of cores do not exceed 3—7 cm. They are usual for the developed Upper Palaeolithic industries and are represented by standardized types. Prismatic blades without traces of trimming amount to above 10% of all flakes. The prevailing majority of these flakes is fragmented. The blade index is 26.7 %.

The Beregovo I industry is dominated by end-scrapers — 20 pes. (93.3 %), 62.5 % of them are on prismatic flakes, 32.5 % on prismatic blades, 5 % on core-like fragments. Characteristic feature of the end-scrapers is the standardization of types. They are simple end-scrapers, some uni- or bilateral retouched and also with a platform for gripping.

Burins — 12 pes. (18.5 %). They are on broken blades, angle, median and beak-shaped, bushed and core-like. 60 % of artifacts are on blades and 40 % on flakes.

Rezaikis amount only to 9.1 % of all tools (6 pes.). They are various so-called flat burins on flakes and blades with well perceptible working parts at the angle of the artifact or protrusions on the longitudinal edges, in the form of hooks. The proportion of these tools on flakes and on blades is roughly the same.

Knives — 15 pes. (22.7 %). The working edges of these artifacts are usually straight, slightly convex or slightly corrugated. Some of them have backs. 40 % of these tools are on blades, 60 % on flakes.

There are two microblades in the collection, one of them with retouched longitudinal edge is truncated by steep retouch, the other is broken.

The collection includes few borers — 1 (1.5 %), chopping-tools on flakes 2 (3 %), chisels — 1 (1.5 %), push-planes — 2 (3 %).

Whole or fragmented pebbles were used as hammerstones (6 pes — 7.5 %).

The technical-typological characteristics of other sites of the Beregovo group (Beregovo II, V, Mushe-
vo I) are very close to Beregovo I, (Figs. 2—6).

In the literature there were already attempts to compare the Upper Paleolithic Beregovo collections (Beregovo I, II, Bigney and Didovaya Gora — Smirnov, 1973, 1974, 1975).

The common territory comprising the sites of the Beregovo group, similarity and in many cases identity of primary flaking methods and in the structure of the assemblage, and the practically contemporary age of the sites support the views of V. N. Glushin, that they belong to an independent Upper Paleolithic culture — to Beregovo Culture.

Analogies close to Beregovo collections appear also in the adjoining East Slovakian Region of Czecho-slovakia, (Barca I, Šefa I and Kechene I: Bárna, 1969, 1969, 1968a, and in Moravia (Klepce, Klíma, 1969)). These Upper Paleolithic complexes are also characterized by prismatic technique of stone flaking. In the tool collections of the above Czecho-slovak sites the share of end-scrapers varies between 26—37 %; a proportion typical of the Beregovo collections. Among burins prevail those on broken blades and median ones amounting to 20 %. Angle burins occupy an important position. The multifaceted artifacts with truncated retouch, similarly as in Beregovo materials, are not too numerous. The Czecho-slovak sites yielded also analogous core-like burins. Many flakes and blades with partial retouch, made on the angle of the artifacts, according to their illustrations look very much like the Beregovo rezhiks. There are also flat burins, appearing also in the Beregovo collections of rezhiks. Knives on blades appear in significant series. The retouched microblades (up to 7 %) appearing in the above Czecho-slovak sites are also analogous to Beregovo finds.

The comparison of Beregovo complexes with the Upper Paleolithic sites of East Slovakia and Moravia reveal their close relationship.

In the past it was believed that there were two Upper Paleolithic groups in East Slovakia (the Horný River Valley and the Upper Tisá Valley groups (Bárna, 1969). It has been proved also that the Beregovo complexes are somewhat younger than the analogous East Slovakian sites (Smirnov, 1974).

On the techno-typological level the Barca I assemblage is attributed by L. Bárna without any doubt to Aurignacian, namely to its central European type. Besides that, due to the unclear stratigraphic situation it is impossible to date the site more precisely. In the meantime Bárna, referring to F. Prošek, attributes Barca I to the Würm II stadial. However, Bárna adds, that the dating of the excavated Barca pits is not well founded (Bárna, 1968a, 14—17).

Neither is it clear, according to the attached section of pit 2 (the sections of pits 1 and 3 are missing), where were situated the paleolithic finds. According

FIGURE A. Beregovo I: 1-2 — end-scrapers, Beregovo II: 5 — end-scrapers, Beregovo V: 3-4, 6-8 end-scrapers.
FIGURE 5. Beregovo I: 1 — burin, Beregovo II: 2, 6 — end-scrapers; 3 — denticulated tool. Beregovo V: 5 — burin; 4 — end-scaper.

FIGURE 6. Nueva-Elina I: 1 — burer; 2, 5 — retaikla; 3—4, 6 — burios; 7—8 — paopyumne; 9 — denticulated tool; 10 — chisel.
FIGURE 7. Musciano 1: 1 — knife; 2—5 — end-scrapers; 6—7 — retouch.

FIGURE 8. Musciano 1: 1 — chopping-tool on flake; 2—3 — knives.
REFERENCES


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