



EES – LEIDEN EXPEDITION SAQQÂRA
REPORT ON WORK CARRIED OUT IN 1997

The expedition was in the field from 3 January until 6 March 1997. A season of study, recording and restoration was carried out.

The elaboration of human remains from the tomb of the harim official Pay and his son Raia was completed this season by Professor E. Strouhal and Dr L. Horáčková. The material in question derived from Room A and Shaft 1. Despite their very fragmented state and dispersal it was possible to obtain valuable results by studying the totality of the material by the anatomical method, bone by bone, and making calculations according to a number of characteristic features.

Chamber A must originally have been tightly packed with burials, surprisingly as many as 210. Only one of the skeletons was found and excavated in situ, the other remains were dispersed. Almost 60 immatures (infants, children, and juveniles), more than 90 adult males and some 60 adult females were discerned. There can hardly have been room for all these burials in the chamber at the same time. It seems probable that fragmented bones from earlier burials were pushed aside to make room for new interments. According to the evidence of small finds and pottery, Chamber A was used from Dynasty 26 down to the First Persian Period (c. 664-404 BC).

The area at the bottom of Shaft 1 yielded the remains of 3 immatures, 6 adult males, and 4 adult females. Some of all of them could be parts of the same bodies as those in Chamber A. The entire sub-structure of the tomb of Pay and Raia contained approximately 250 burials.

As regards the superstructure, the human remains found there were dispersed, and were thus studied only for palaeopathological purposes. They were mostly not datable.

The full elaboration of the rich variety of palaeopathological finds (traumas, degenerative-productive changes, inflammations, tumours, congenital anomalies, dental problems, etc.) will shed new light on ancient bone and tooth diseases present in the inhabitants of ancient Memphis.

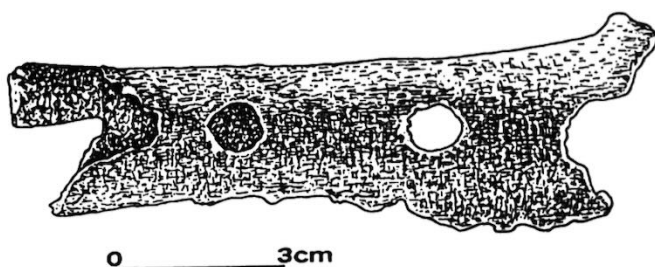
Eugen Strouhal

AN UNUSUAL FIND FROM SLOVENIA

In the last issue of *Razprave SAZU* three Slovenian archaeologists (I. Turk, J. Dirjec and B. Kavur 1995) published a preliminary report on the unexpected discovery of a bone flute coming from the Mousterian layer in the Divje Babe cave in the Idriječ river valley in the western part of Slovenia. Two of the authors (I. Turk and J. Dirjec) started this excavation in 1980, and revealed a multilayer situation with five Mousterian layers covered by an Aurignacian layer with a characteristic flat Aurignacian bone-point. This Aurignacian layer is dated 35,000±700 B. P. (RIDDL 734). The underlying fifth Mousterian layer, with Mousterian tools and a fireplace, was dated

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45,100±1, 500–1,800 B. P. (RIDDL 745) (dated by the Radio Isotope Detection Laboratory, Simon Fraser University, Barnaby, Canada). One spectacular find is the hollow femur bone of a young cave bear with two complete and two damaged circular holes each slightly less than 1cm in diameter. Their circumferences are finely trimmed, as if to enlarge the originally smaller holes into a suitable and equal size. The undisturbed stratigraphical position of the find is supported not only by the other four superimposed Mousterian layers, but also by an undisturbed conglomerate level immediately above the find. The layer with the find was dated not only by C₁₄ but also biostratigraphically (90 % of the animal bones belong to cave bears) and archaeologically (Mousterian stone tools).



There is no doubt that the discoverers can expect a lively reaction. It was not long ago that the idea that Neanderthal Man could not speak an articulate language was quite broadly disseminated (e.g. Lieberman, Crelin 1984). Some colleagues still do not accept the idea of any genetical and cultural participation by Neanderthals in the European Upper Palaeolithic population and Upper Palaeolithic culture. There are two possible parsimonious interpretations of the Divje Babe find: either the holes are traces of carnivore canines or they were man-made – in such a case by Neanderthals. So far the earliest findings of bone flutes come from Aurignacian layers from the Isturitz, Istallöskö and Pair non Pair caves. This opens the question as to what was their origin and how they appeared so well-shaped just after Middle Palaeolithic period. Based on our current knowledge and ideas, we are not, for the most part, prepared to accept such a spectacular find. Let us wait for the results of a more detailed study and try not to be influenced by traditional Eurocentric views, considering only and exclusively *Homo sapiens sapiens* as responsible for the origin of our culture.

REFERENCES

- LIEBERMAN P., CRELIN E.S., 1984: *The Biology and Evolution of Language*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge.
TURK I., DIRJEC J., KAVUR B., 1995: Ali so v Sloveniji našli najstarejšo glasbilo v Evropi? (The oldest musical instrument in Europe discovered in Slovenia?) *Razprave IV Razreda SAZU* (Ljubljana) XXXVI,12: 287-293.

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