

RAPPORT SUR LE 4^e CONGRES DE PALEONTOLOGIE HUMAINE

Le 4^e Congrès de l'Association Internationale pour l'étude de la Paléontologie Humaine, couplé cette année avec l'association Internationale de Biologie Humaine, s'est tenu du 28 juin au 4 juillet 1998 à Sun City en Afrique du Sud.

- Plus de 360 chercheurs provenant de 77 pays ont participé à cette manifestation dont les points forts ont été les suivants:
- Présentation de nouveaux gisements préhistoriques sur le continent africain (Afrique du Sud, Malawi, Ethiopie, Erythrée) et sur le continent eurasiatique (Caucase, Chine, Espagne), et surtout dans le cadre de ce Congrès de Paléontologie Humaine des restes humains qui y ont été découverts: les restes de Drimolen en Afrique du Sud, le crâne Sts 505, individu masculin découvert à Sterkfontein où a été mise au jour la célèbre Miss Ples, dents à Laetoli en Tanzanie, crâne d'Erythrée et restes humains découverts à Malawi; et qui ont parfois donné lieu à de nouvelles espèces: *Ardipithecus ramidus* dans la moyenne vallée de l'Awash en Ethiopie par Tim White, *Australopithecus anamensis* près du lac Turkana au Kenya par Meave Leakey, *Australopithecus bahrelghazali* au Tchad par Michel Brunet.
- Renouveau et développement des recherches préhistoriques en Afrique du Sud, à travers notamment la formation d'étudiants et la présentation de leurs résultats de recherche, qui témoignent du potentiel de l'Afrique du Sud.
- Développement des recherches de terrain et de laboratoire en Espagne, illustré par la grande représentation des chercheurs venant de Madrid et de Barcelone.
- Précision sur la mise en place de quelques acquisitions: locomotion bipède, qui serait très ancienne, dès 4.2 millions d'années avec *Australopithecus anamensis* et qui évoluerait peu chez *Australopithecus afarensis* et *africanus*. Mise au point des connaissances concernant l'évolution du cerveau aussi bien chez les mammifères et les primates en général que chez les hominidés fossiles, avec un accent sur la mise en place du langage articulé (aires cérébrales, forme de la cavité buccale et des voies aériennes).
- Développement des approches et des techniques d'étude, en particulier en paléanthropologie, avec l'utilisation croissante de l'imagerie 3D. Ces techniques permettent d'apprécier des structures (structure interne de l'os, sinus du crâne, travées osseuses, intérieur de la voûte crânienne lorsque celle-ci n'a pu être dégagée) non visibles par l'observation classique. Ce nouvel outil, dont la technique est issue de la médecine, se révèle dorénavant indispensable en paléontologie humaine.
- Essais de démographie sur des populations fossiles (Atapuerca, Krapina, Arago et Hortus en Europe).
- Réflexions plus générales sur la phylogénie des hominidés à l'aide de la cladistique et de l'analyse du DNA.
- Résultats concernant l'étude des micro et macro-faunes, ainsi que la flore permettant la reconstitution de paléoenvironnements de plusieurs gisements tels que Lothagam au Kenya, Sterkfontein et Florisbad en Afrique du Sud et Atapuerca en Espagne.
- Datations concernant les gisements où des restes humains ont été découverts aussi bien en Afrique (Sterkfontein, Swartkrans, Kromdraai, Border Cave, Klasies River Mouth en Afrique du Sud, Est Turkana au Kenya) qu'en Asie (Sangiran en Indonésie, Zhoukoudian en Chine) avec un point fort concernant les datations absolues non destructives effectuées sur des restes humains de Java.
- Visite des sites de Sterkfontein et Swartkrans, les deux plus grands sites à Australopithecus d'Afrique du Sud par R. Clarke, K. Kuman et C. Brain.
- Exposition de fossiles originaux découverts en Afrique du Sud dont certaines découvertes très récentes (Drimolen, "Little foot" de Sterkfontein ou encore Sts 505).

Le débat sur les premiers hominidés (Australopithecus et premiers *Homo*) a été largement abordé sous tous ses aspects, au niveau paléanthropologique, archéologique, préhistorique, paléontologique et géologique.

Le second grand débat concernait les origines de l'homme moderne, toujours d'actualité, même si la thèse de l'origine africaine, éventuellement sous une forme atténuée, semble gagner la faveur d'une majorité de chercheurs.

Dominique Grimaud-Hervé
Gilles Berillon
François Marchal

REPORT ON THE CONFERENCE: "MODELS AND RECONSTRUCTION IN ANTHROPOLOGY AND ARCHAEOLOGY" HELD ON JUNE 2-3, 1998, AT THE MASARYK UNIVERSITY'S FACULTY OF NATURAL SCIENCES IN BRNO, CZECH REPUBLIC

The conference was organized by the Department of Anthropology at Masaryk University's Faculty of Natural Sciences in Brno in cooperation with several other organizations focusing on culture, anthropology, archaeology and history. The conference was presided over by the Rector of Masaryk University Prof. Eduard Schmidt. The meetings of experts and students took place at Brno's Faculty of Sciences on June 2-3, 1998. The themes were divided into four categories: "Life in Primeval Times", "Life in the Middle Ages", "How Castles of the Middle Ages Looked", and "How the Hunters of Mammoths Lived".

The conference opened with papers from experimental archaeology. R. Tichý and J. Waldhauser reported on the reconstruction of a Neolithic house including grain silos and clay houses fit for production activities. In these surroundings they observed the storage of artefacts for the production of tools or ceramics in buildings and in the surrounding terrain. All experimental work was consistently carried out with replicas of the tools from two cultures – the Únětice and Lusatian. O. Šedo discussed the reconstruction of buildings in illustrated form and with models. He discussed both a sinking cottage with six-pillar construction from older Roman times, and the reconstruction of a structure made of clay and wood from the Roman camp at Mušov from the time period of Tiberius's military crusade against the Markoman king Marobud in the sixth century AD.

R. Tichý closed the first round of papers with a report on an experimental archaeological expedition in a dinghy hollowed from a log. The experiment aimed to shed light on the beginnings of maritime voyage in the Aegean Sea in relation to the Neolithic colonization of Europe.

M. Bureš and V. Kašpar opened the second round entitled "Life in the Middle Ages". They introduced those present to a project in the archaeological park in Prague-Liboc in which buildings from the 13th century have been reconstructed according to the original construction technology. In her paper E. Černá assessed the contribution of the experiment focusing on the interpretation of results of archaeological research on glass works from the High Middle Ages. The conducting of experimental smelting allowed to verify the functionality of the glass furnace model, and it was also possible to follow in detail the process of glass works production. The task of preparing copies of historical dress and historical textiles was covered in the analysis of M. Bravermanová, who presented example copies of the funeral dress of Rudolf I Habsburg from 1307 and Ferdinand I Habsburg from 1565.

From the results of archaeological research P. Šimeček and J. Kohoutek reported on the attempt to reconstruct the nine phases of construction from the Hradisko Monastery site in Olomouc. L. Balák presented the new reconstruction of the Slavonic fortification and small courtyard at Pohansko near Břeclav. Several speakers (J. Chotěbor, J. Pospíšil, J. Kohoutek, P. Šimeček and J. Unger) reported on the reconstructed appearance of castles of the Middle Ages in illustrated form and to a lesser degree in model form. L. Svoboda spoke on issues of computerized reconstruction and the possibilities of interpretation of the construction phases of historical buildings. He reported on the use of the computer for presentation of monuments and showed samples of the modelling of monuments and castles on the computer.

The second day of the conference focused on the lifestyles of mammoth hunters. B. Klíma discussed the question of reconstruction in the conditions of Paleolithic research aimed at the Dolní Věstonice site. O. Soffer reported on the problems of existence in textile manufacturing and basket-making in early Paleolithic times. The findings resulting from her cooperation with J. Adovasio and D. C. Hyland give proof of the existence of pattern prints on fragments of fired clay found in Dolní Věstonice and the Pavlov region. It is possible to consider the unique discovery of textile manufacturing and basket-making as the oldest evidence of this technique in the world. The papers of M. Buňatová and D. Sosna, whose efforts were to support the conclusions presented by the colleagues of O. Soffer, were dedicated to experimental verification of textile production in the later Stone Ages. Their reconstruction of textile manufacturing was carried out in conditions as they were originally found, plant material was cultivated with a simple technique, together with the impression of the finished products in clay.

O. Šedo reported on the reconstruction of a Paleolithic abode at the museum exhibition in Dolní Věstonice. L. Jarošová's paper reported on the verification of experiments (the production of tools, hunting, life in natural conditions, etc.) in the shooting of a film on the life of Paleolithic hunting. M. Lázníčková spoke on the attempt of experimental production and firing of Paleolithic sculpture in a reconstructed kiln in Dolní Věstonice. P. Škrdla reported on technology dealing with stones in Paleolithic times and experimental verification in the production of tools. E. Drozdová presented the possibility of using experiments in the anthropological study of human tooth fragments (Mesolithic, Česká Lípa).

The current theme of reconstruction and modelling of both long-standing human activity and creation, of which to date only traces or indiscernible remnants remain, has aims which are partly for scholarly ends and partly for arousing public interest. In the experimental reconstruction of past events it is possible to become aware of different relationships and circumstances in the process of sourcing the most wide-ranging artefacts and subsequently to follow their reflection in anthropological situations, which enables not only the testing of theoretical hypotheses, but also, to no lesser degree, the presentation of science to the public.

This conference, whose theme of reconstruction and experiments in the field of archaeology and anthropology contributed to the exchange of knowledge and experience gained as well as to the discussion of results accessible to scholars in these fields, again proved that experiment makes it possible to verify the results of theoretical work.

Markéta Svenssonová

12th EUROPEAN MEETING OF THE PALEOPATHOLOGY ASSOCIATION IN PRAGUE AND PILSEN (CZECH REPUBLIC) IN 1998

The 12th European members meeting of the Paleopathology Association was included within the scope of activities celebrating the 650th anniversary of Charles University in Prague. Since its establishment in 1973, this scientific group has organized every year alternating conferences either in the USA, where most of its members live, or in Europe. This year's European meeting was the first one to be realized in a former socialist country; its organizers were the Institute for the History of Medicine, First Medical Faculty, CU Prague and the Institute for Histology and Embryology, Medical Faculty CU Pilsen, in co-operation with the Czech Anthropological Association, Prague, the Society for the History of Science and Technology, Prague, and the Institute of Anatomy, Medical Faculty, Masaryk University, Brno. Among the 17 member National Organizing Committee there were its President Prof. MUDr. PhDr. Eugen Strouhal, DrSc., the Vice-President Prof. MUDr. MUDr. PhDr. Eugen Strouhal, DrSc., the General Secretary RNDr. A. Němečková, RNDr. J. Slípka, DrSc., and the high patronage of the President of Charles University Prof. JUDr. Karel Malý, DrSc., the Dean of the

First Medical Faculty of CU Assoc. Prof. MUDr. P. Hach, CSc., and the Dean of the Medical Faculty of CU in Pilsen Assoc. Prof. MUDr. B. Kreuzberg, CSc. It was morally supported by a 27 member International Scientific Committee.

A hundred active participants together with 30 accompanying persons took part in the meeting, coming from 19 European countries and 4 overseas countries – the USA, Canada, Egypt and Jordan. The presence of 36 participants from former socialist countries and of 3 colleagues from the Third World countries was enabled by a generous grant from the Bioanthropology Foundation.

The conference was inaugurated by a festive opening session in the Great Hall of the Carolinum in Prague on August 27, 1998. After inaugural speeches by university authorities and the President of the Association, Ms. Eve Cockburn, the Vice-President of the University Prof. MUDr. J. Koutecký, DrSc., handed over jubilee and memorial medals of Charles University to three representatives of the discipline for their merits for the development of paleopathology. These were Prof. D. J. Ortner (Washington), Prof. Dr. M. Schultz (Göttingen) and Ms Eve Cockburn (Detroit). The dean of the First Medical Faculty Assoc. Prof. MUDr. P. Hach, CSc. granted memorial medals of the Faculty to four Czech paleopathologists – to RNDr. A. Němečková, CSc., Prof. MUDr. E. Vlček, DrSc., Prof. L. Vyhnánek, DrSc., and Prof. MUDr. PhDr. E. Strouhal, DrSc. Having visited the exhibition celebrating the 650th anniversary of the University and the historic halls of the Carolinum, the participants were transported by buses to Pilsen. Scientific sessions took place in the Šafránek Pavilion of the local Medical Faculty.

Paleopathology, an independent scientific discipline since the foundation of the Association by the late Dr. Aidan Cockburn 25 years ago, is situated in the interdisciplinary cross between archaeology, physical anthropology and medical sciences. These disciplines provide its study material by exhumation of skeletons or mummies of people of past populations and furnish modern methods of natural and medical sciences for investigation. The object of paleopathology are diseases of past populations of humans and animals. In the Meeting, most attention was concentrated on infectious diseases, which were the theme of 22 oral and poster communications, followed by *varia* (19). Further presentations concerned populational paleopathology (12), disorders of metabolism (10), traumatic changes (9), tumours (9), degenerative – productive processes (6) and congenital disorders (6). Together there were 46 oral communications and 47 posters, in sum 93 presentations. Moreover, A. Němečková with collaborators prepared a methodological workshop on light and scanning electron microscopy of tumours and an international exhibition of interesting paleopathological specimens from Bohemian, Moravian, Austrian, Italian and Catalan sites was organized.

The social programme of the participants was enriched by an excursion to the town of Klatovy (south-western Bohemia), where they could inspect the famous mummies and main historical monuments. They were received by the Mayor and at the local Town-Hall they were offered a festive dinner.

Eugen Strouhal

11th CONGRESS OF THE EUROPEAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION IN JENA (GERMANY) 1998

The Institute of Human Genetics and Anthropology of the Friedrich-Schiller-University in Jena under the guidance of its Director Prof. Dr. Herbert Bach, supported by an efficient team of collaborators, organized splendidly this important scientific meeting on the premises of the 440 year old university of Jena (Thuringia) from 30th August to 3rd September 1998 as the first European Congress taking place in Germany. It was attended by 228 participants from most countries of Europe and by several ones from overseas.