

The second aspect concerns whether discussions about periodization could lead to law-like formulations about cultural evolution. Nobody would dispute Müller-Karpe's emphasis on the priority of building-up local culture-sequences. But it should not be forgotten that the place of archaeology ultimately depends on its ability to formulate generalizations (however imperfect they may be) about cultural developments across time and space. Formulations like the law of cultural dominance and the law of evolutionary potential are already known in anthropological theory.

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A. LEROI-GOURHAN et M. BRÉZILLON: *Fouilles de Pincevent. Essai d'analyse ethnographique d'un habitat magdalénien*. Vol. I (text)-327 pages; Vol. II (plans). VII^e supplément à Gallia Préhistoire, Paris 1972.

Despite the fact that France has probably the richest number of Palaeolithic sites and that it is the birthplace of prehistory, prehistoric studies in this region are by and large one-sided in character. As this reviewer has pointed out elsewhere (Paddayya 1979, 678), French prehistory has hitherto adopted a vertical approach devoted to stratigraphy and delineation of cultural phases/periods and sub-phases within them. The long series of cave/rock shelter investigations are a witness to this research orientation. It is only during the last one or two decades that recognition has been accorded to the fact that only horizontal excavation of occupation sites, more particularly the open-air stations, could help us in reconstructing the Stone Age lifeways. Quite a few open-air sites have already been excavated with this end in view in different parts of the country. The work at the late Upper Palaeolithic site of Pincevent by a team led by A. Leroi-Gourhan, a well-known figure in European prehistory, is a fine example of this change in the research orientation of French prehistory. Both in respect of the patient and enormous nature of the job done and on account of the controlled use of imagination for reconstructing a segment of the Upper Palaeolithic life-world, this work at Pincevent must rank as a major contribution to prehistoric studies as a whole.

Pincevent is situated on the river Seine in northern France, and has been excavated for several seasons in the sixties. The late Magdalenian occupation, which constitutes the principal aspect of the site and forms the subject-matter of the present publication, took place on a gently sloping surface of sand deposits of fluvial origin. It is overlain by cultural remains ranging in age from Epipalaeolithic to the Roman times. The Magdalenian deposit has an overall thickness of two metres and has an areal extent of one and a half hectares. The four main cultural horizons distinguishable within this deposit are intercalated with thin, varve-like levels made up of fluvial silt. The excavators assure us that the fluvial activity could have caused little or no disturbance to the archaeological levels. In an earlier publication the authors (Leroi-Gourhan and Brézillon 1966) have given details about the site and results of excavation done in sectors 16 and 17, two of the grids (25 m × 25 m) into which the site had been divided.

The present publication (Volume I containing text and volume II containing ten plans of occupation surfaces) gives a full account of the results of excavation undertaken in Sector 36. Chapters I and II are introductory in nature, and respectively provide information about the procedures adopted for excavation and recording of objects, and the distribution of various categories of occupational evidence on the site. Chapter III is a detailed study of the flint industry comprising over 16 000 specimens. Of these, only a little over 1 700 are finished tools – end scrapers, burins, borers, backed blades, etc. Chapters IV, V and IX are devoted to a detailed study of the habitation units, fire-places, flint chipping areas and such other forms of occupational evidence, and thus constitute the most important part of the report. Chapter VI is a detailed account of the faunal material (including pieces shaped into arrow-straighteners and other artifact types) and its significance for reconstructing the food-economy of the Magdalenian inhabitants. Chapter VII is a brief statement about bone/antler objects bearing engravings, fossil shells, haematite pieces and such other items concerning prehistoric home art. In Chapter X entitled 'Synthesis and Hypothesis', Leroi-Gourhan weaves together in a lively way the various forms of evidence to arrive at a palaeoethnographic picture of the Magdalenian occupants of the Pincevent site. Following this chapter are four appendices, respectively dealing with flint waste products, fire places and related evidence, faunal material, and glossary of terms employed in the text.

Professor Leroi-Gourhan and his team deserve our warm appreciation for seizing an opportunity such as the one provided by the open air site of Pincevent in order to attempt a resuscitation of a phase of the Upper Palaeolithic culture-complex. While, as Leroi-Gourhan himself admits, the main conclusions emanating from these detailed investigations are as simple as saying that the Magdalenian habitants of the site lived in round or oval huts (probably housing nuclear families), that they mainly were hunting the red deer and that the occupation was of the seasonal type (from summer to the beginning of winter), what is really praiseworthy is the way the site has been investigated and the freshness of approach adopted for interpreting the data from excavation.

Quite apart from enriching our knowledge of European prehistory, the work at Pincevent has many methodological lessons to offer to other areas like India in connection with the investigation of open air Stone Age sites, especially of the Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods. First, Leroi-Gourhan has convincingly shown that open air sites, if approached sympathetically, could throw a flood of light on the prehistoric lifeways. This is a most welcome development because in regions like India, where the belief is still strong that it is only the cave sites which preserve occupation deposits, open air stations have not been given due attention. Secondly, Leroi-Gourhan says that the Pincevent excavation was not a *de luxe* one. Apart from the usual excavation equipment, a theodolite and two good cameras were all that he employed for recording purposes. High standards have been set both in plotting and in photographic recording. Also worth emulation is the use of 20 cm broad wooden planks to rest on while excavating, so that ample opportunity is provided for exposing and recording even small objects and remains like charcoal streaks, red ochre pieces and microlithic artifacts. We are further told that several photographs have been made for recording the positions of objects exposed in each square; these have been mounted together later for obtaining the final plan. Lastly, Leroi-Gourhan makes it clear that the work at Pincevent would have been unthinkable but for the team work. He even goes to the extent of saying that the leader of any archaeological team should be present at the excavation throughout, not so much for explaining everything that is being excavated but rather to critically examine it and even to predict the data that may be expected on the site – an exhortation that ought to be taken into account by archaeologists in India.¹

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Im Winter 1951/1952 wurde beim Bau einer Kläranlage bei Lebenstedt eine mittelpaläolithische Fundstelle entdeckt, auf der 1952 A. Tode eine ausgedehnte Notgrabung unternahm, deren Ergebnisse nur in einem Vorbericht (in „Eiszeitalter und Gegenwart“, Bd. 3, 1953) bekannt gegeben wurden. Nun erscheint die endgültige Bearbeitung der Steinindustrie als erster Teil eines zweibändigen Werkes, dessen zweiter Teil naturwissenschaftliche Beiträge enthalten wird. In seinem Geleitwort faßt der Herausgeber der „Fundamenta“ H. Schwabedissen die wichtigsten Ergebnisse wie folgt zusammen: 1) Mehrere exakte Befunde und Hinweise dürften beweisen, daß in Lebenstedt ein zeitlich einheitlicher Fundkomplex vorliegt. 2) Der Fundplatz lieferte ein sehr individuelles Artefaktinventar, das keine präzise Zuordnung zu einer der größeren Kulturgruppen erlaubt. Es gibt lediglich einen „Artefaktkomplex Lebenstedt“. 3) Die chronologische Einordnung der Station in eine Frühphase des Würm ist gesichert. – Diese Folgerungen sind jedoch nicht völlig problemfrei.

Nach einem Vorwort schildert der Verf. die Entdeckung des Fundplatzes sowie den Grabungsverlauf. Der Fundplatz befindet sich am NW-Rand von Lebenstedt, etwa 20 km SW von Braunschweig, an der Mündung eines Baches in das Tal der Fuhse. Die Grabung wurde auf etwa 150 m² durchgeführt; die in mehr als 4 m Tiefe liegende Fundschicht wurde in jeweils 10 cm mächtigen Lagen untersucht, wobei ihre Gesamtmächtigkeit etwa 2 m erreichte (von 4,25 – 6,20 m Tiefe). Auf sieben Tafeln ist die Verteilung von Knochen und Steinartefakten in verschiedenen Tiefenlagen festgehalten. Die Beschreibung der Stratigraphie wird dem zweiten Teil vorbehalten, den Bemerkungen des Verf. kann man entnehmen, daß die Funde in tonig-humosen und sandigen fluvialen Sedimenten eingebettet waren, in deren Liegendem sich die Steinsohle des Baches befand. Gegen einen längeren Wassertransport sprechen aber das frische Aussehen und die unversehrten

¹ I am thankful to Miss Claire Gaillard for her help in the preparation of this review.