

Buchbesprechungen

MIKLOS GABORI: *Les Civilisations du Paléolithique Moyen entre les Alpes et l'Oural; Esquisse Historique*. Traduit par Kenez, Erno; 278 pp., 65 Fig., 30 Planches. Akademiai Kiado, Budapest 1976.

The aim of this book is an analytical study of 223 Middle Palaeolithic sites over a vast geographical area, between the Rhine and the Pamir feet. The author, who has personally studied the lithic collections under discussion, attempts a 'Historical reconstruction' of the origins, development and relations of the various facets of what he believes to belong to a 'Basic Mousterian'.

The book is in six chapters, divided into three informative and three of summary. The information chapters are geographically divided: The Middle Palaeolithic around the Alps (I), between the Alps and Ural (II), and the Caucases and Central Asia (III). The concluding chapters summarise the different facets of the lithic assemblage (IV), the assemblages in their environment (V), and finally, the origin of the various techno-typological facets (VI).

The informative chapters constitute a detailed, analytical description of a great quantity of Middle Palaeolithic finds. Years of first-hand study of this material enable the author to determine the resemblances between groups of sites, at times correcting the opinion of the excavator. The author mostly draws on lithics and faunal remains; other finds (e.g. pollen, dwellings and human remains) were not treated. Numerous very clear maps are included in the book, and these help to precisely place each of the 223 sites mentioned. A complete list of numerated sites is given at the end of the book, and it serves as caption for all the maps. An index might have greatly facilitated the use of this book.

Chapter IV is the only one where lithics are drawn to illustrate the various facies; these drawings are unfortunately much reduced and too sketchy. The 30 plates at the end of the book include lithics from selected sites, and are well drawn.

The environmental conditions over such a vast area can only be treated very briefly (Ch. V). The author deals mainly with altitude and present-day vegetation belts, while the fauna is treated in the discussion of each site in the informative chapters. The author does not see any clear relation between the techno/typological facies and environmental conditions.

Reading the book one is inevitably confronted with the thought of how a similar book would look had it been a collective effort, each specialist contributing in his or her special field. Certainly, such a volume should have contained more detailed information and, presumably, cover more fields of knowledge. But it is as certain that we would have lost the analytical and comparative approach due to a single author's methodology. Gabori should be congratulated on this achievement, which allows the reader to find useful, detailed and critical information on so many sites spread over such a vast area. There are ten full pages of bibliography.

A. Ronen

MANIA, DIETRICH, VOLKER TOEPFER, EMANUEL VLČEK: *Bilzingsleben I, Homo erectus – seine Kultur und seine Umwelt*. Veröffentlichungen des Landesmuseums für Vorgeschichte in Halle, Band 32, 131 Seiten, 43 Tafeln. VEB Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, Berlin 1980. DM 60. –

Unter den großen mitteleuropäischen Fundstätten des prähistorischen Menschen nimmt Bilzingsleben eine besondere Stellung ein. Dies beruht sowohl auf den bedeutungsvollen Funden des *Homo erectus*, als auch auf seinen reichen Hinterlassenschaften, der Fundqualität und dem recht kontrovers diskutierten Altersproblem. Diese bereits nahezu 270 Jahre währende Diskussion ist nicht kontinuierlich geführt worden, da bisweilen andere wichtige Fundplätze, wie etwa Weimar-Ehringsdorf und Burgtonna, das Interesse der Gelehrten von Bilzingsleben abgelenkt hatten. Dennoch wurden erneut ab 1969 in Bilzingsleben (südlich der Hainleite am Tal der Wipper gelegen) derartig interessante Funde gemacht, daß das Landesmuseum für Vorgeschichte in Halle a. d. Saale seit 1971 unter starker staatlicher Unterstützung umfassende Forschungsgrabungen durchgeführt hat, von denen angenommen wird, sie könnten wohl erst gegen 1990 beendet werden. So muß man den Autoren sehr danken, daß sie jetzt einen Zwischenbericht über die bis 1976 erzielten geologischen und anthropologischen Ergebnisse vorlegen. Dieser Bericht stellt den ersten Teil einer geplanten Publikationsreihe dar, auf deren Inhalt man sehr gespannt sein darf.