

1: Deepcar - Wikipedia

Mesolithic archaeology has witnessed an acceleration of activity in recent years, with many new projects, more communication across old geographical and political barriers, and calls for archaeologists to examine the Mesolithic on its own terms, rather than as an inconvenient rung in some ladder of human progress.

During the Mesolithic the region was occupied by hunter-gatherers, but the term itself refers specifically to a technological stage. Translated literally, it means "Middle Stone Age" and was adopted in the 19th century, when this period was viewed as a not particularly interesting interlude between the old and new Stone Ages—the Palaeolithic and the Neolithic. This view is no longer accepted, and the Mesolithic is now seen as the period in northwest Europe when anatomically modern humans adapted to the challenges and opportunities of the Postglacial environment. Conventionally, it spans six millennia beginning about 10,000 b. TECHNOLOGY The diagnostic artifacts of the Mesolithic in northwest Europe are retouched blades of chert, flint, or similar stone, referred to as "microliths," because of their often very small size; examples less than 10 millimeters long are common. These microliths were components in composite hunting weapons, usually arrows. One microlith provided the piercing tip, while others mounted in series down the shaft acted as barbs, not to secure the arrow in the wound but to increase its size and stimulate bleeding. Examples have been found in Sweden, still mounted in their shafts. The adoption of the bow and arrow as the principal hunting weapon is a characteristic of the Mesolithic, although the origins of the practice lie among the Late Upper Palaeolithic communities at the end of the Ice Age. Microliths underwent development over time, and the various stages that have been identified have been used by archaeologists to subdivide the period. This practice has been superseded by the widespread application of radiocarbon dating. Three broad typological categories, however, are still referred to widely in the literature (fig. 1). The earliest types of microlith found in the northern part of the region were made on relatively broad blades that had been obliquely snapped, or truncated, to produce a robust tip. The origins of this type are found in Late Upper Palaeolithic assemblages referred to as Ahrensburgian. One lateral margin was abruptly retouched to facilitate insertion into the arrow shaft, and additional retouching sometimes extended around the tip and the base. These broad-blade, obliquely blunted points are widespread in southern Scandinavia, but they also are the characteristic find of the period down to about 6000 b. Assemblages in which this type predominates are referred to as Maglemosian in southern Scandinavia, but outside this region they are simply termed Early Mesolithic. Farther south, obliquely truncated blades also dominate early assemblages, but the blades themselves tend to be narrower than those used in the north and the resulting microliths more geometric in form. They seem to have been influenced by the small, simple backed blades of the Late Upper Palaeolithic Azilian assemblages. During the period between 10,000 and 6000 b. During this period microliths also became smaller, narrower, and more geometric in form. The third major technological stage was confined to mainland northwest Europe and saw the introduction from about 6000 b. The introduction of trapezoidal microliths suggests a change in hunting tactics, the trapezes being mounted singly at the end of the arrow shaft. Trapezes did not spread to the British Isles, where Late Mesolithic assemblages are characterized by the continued development of narrow-blade geometric microliths. The Mesolithic hunter-gatherers of northwest Europe used a wide range of materials in addition to chert and flint, but because many were perishable, few examples survive. Bone and antler provide something of an exception, and two categories of implements made from these materials have been recovered in significant numbers: Barbed points, which functioned as arrowheads, spearheads, and harpoon heads, also are known from Late Upper Palaeolithic assemblages; during the Mesolithic many different types were made to suit specific needs. The main change over time was in the production blanks, with long splinters of bone or antler being replaced about 6000 b. The mattocks show fewer signs of development through time. Early Mesolithic examples are made from the basal sections of the antler, whereas antler beams were favored in the Late Mesolithic. Other, spectacular finds made from organic materials include several dugout canoes and basketwork fish traps. There are indications, however, that toward the end of the period, some groups were beginning to manage aspects of their environment through the controlled use of forest fires to enhance its productivity. Over the six millennia of the Mesolithic period, the

environment of northwest Europe underwent a series of significant changes. In terms of plants and animals, species that had been driven out of the region or into its more southerly latitudes by the harsh conditions of the Ice Age migrated northward as the climate ameliorated. Throughout most of the Mesolithic the region was cloaked in a dense mantle of deciduous woodland, although the mosaic of species varied with latitude. For example, oak was predominant everywhere; in the south, warmth-loving species, such as pistachio, formed a significant component, whereas in the north, birch was often a major component. These woodlands provided a home for a range of animals, many of which experienced human predation. The most favored animals appear to have been red and roe deer, wild cattle, and wild boar. Moose were important early in the period, but their absence after about 6000 b.c. Small animals, such as hare, beavers, and pine martens, were trapped mainly for their pelts, and birds, especially waterfowl, also were taken. Evidence from a number of sites indicates that dogs had been domesticated by this time, and their status in society is reflected by the fact that they occasionally are found to have been given formal burial in cemeteries otherwise occupied by humans. Little is known about the use of plant resources, owing to the rarity with which such material survives, although hazelnuts are almost ubiquitous. Aquatic resources, both freshwater and marine, made a significant contribution to subsistence, but their role needs to be evaluated in light of the major changes in sea level that occurred during this period. Estimates vary, but eighteen thousand years ago the sea level around northwest Europe may have been as much as meters lower than it is today. With the melting of the ice sheets, the sea level began to rise, but by the beginning of the Mesolithic it was still around 35 meters below the present level. Britain did not become an island until the middle of the eighth millennium b.c. The effect of these changes in sea level was profound. During the Early Mesolithic the area of the North Sea was dry land, and bands of hunters could walk dry-shod from the Low Countries to southeast England. As sea levels rose, the loss of land led to population displacement. It also produced lengthening of the coastline and flooding of estuaries. These processes greatly increased the availability of aquatic resources and fish; marine mammals and shellfish became important components in later Mesolithic subsistence strategies. Substance patterns in Mesolithic northwest Europe can be illustrated by considering the faunal inventories recovered from numerous key sites. As well as large numbers of Early Mesolithic microliths and barbed antler points, the excavators recovered bones of moose, wild cattle, red and roe deer, pine marten, fox, and beavers. Surprisingly, no fish remains were recovered, but birds included redbreasted merganser, red-throated diver, and great crested grebe. Edible plant remains reported from Star Carr were water chestnuts, bog bean, fat hen, and nettle, in addition to hazelnuts. The site at Mount Sandel in the valley of the River Bann in Northern Ireland was occupied during the later part of the ninth millennium b.c. Of the mammal bones recovered, 98 percent were of wild boar. Ireland was cut off from mainland Britain by rising sea level at an early stage in the Postglacial, and this specialization on a single species may have been due to the impoverished nature of the available fauna, few species having successfully established themselves before access was cut off. Among the birds recorded were mallard, teal, wigeon, grouse, capercaillie, and snipe or woodcock. Fish were well represented, and 80 percent of the identified bones came from salmon or sea trout. Eel and bass also were present, and plant remains included hazelnut shells, pear or apple pips, and water-lily seeds, all of which probably contributed to the diet. Mammals comprised red and roe deer, wild boar, wild cattle, otter, fox, and wild cat, although the quantities of each are small. Predation appears to have been focused on river fish and birds, of which more than thirty different species have been identified. The fish species include carp, pike, catfish, eel, salmon, perch, and shad. These sites were excavated in the early years of the twentieth century, and the available details are not as extensive as for Star Carr and Mount Sandel. Nonetheless, the presence of trapezoidal microliths allows them to be placed in the later Mesolithic. Both sites consisted mainly of accumulations of food debris, called middens, into which had been inserted numerous human burials. Among the food species identified were shellfish, such as limpet, periwinkle, mussel, oyster, and scallop, and numerous fish bones, mainly of wrasse. Bird remains included waterfowl and auks; mammals consisted of red and roe deer, wild boar, fox and wildcat, and plants exploited included wild pear. Finally, the excavated sites at Hardinxveld-Giessendam near Rotterdam in the Netherlands have provided abundant data on subsistence resources at the end of the Mesolithic and the beginning of the Neolithic. The site at Polderweg was situated on a riverbank and witnessed three phases of occupation during

the latter part of the sixth millennium b. Throughout this period the main activity appears to have been pike fishing, probably undertaken during the second half of the winter. Roach, bream, tench, eels, catfish, and salmon also were caught, probably through the use of sophisticated traps. Beaver and otter were the most important mammals, probably trapped for their pelts, as were pine marten, wild cat, and polecat. The remains of wild boar and red and roe deer also were present in the assemblage. Fowling concentrated on ducks, and plant resources comprised acorns, hazelnut, water nut, wild apple, and various berries. The flint assemblage at Polderweg is dominated by simple blades but includes three arrowheads of a type normally found on Early Neolithic Linearbandkeramik sites in the region. The presence of simple bag-shaped pottery vessels also testifies to contacts between these Late Mesolithic hunter-gatherers and their Early Neolithic neighbors; unlike the nearby and slightly later site of De Bruin, however, domestic animals and cultivated grains are absent. In general, hunter-gatherers needed to live a mobile, seminomadic existence, moving from one area to another as resources became available at different times of the year. The deciduous woods of northwest Europe offered a fairly homogeneous environment, but seasonal movements would have been undertaken by most groups, migrating between the coasts and the interior and between the lowlands and uplands. Movement also would have been necessitated when resources in one region became exhausted or disturbance of prey species led to diminishing returns. Two patterns of mobility can be identified. The American anthropologist Lewis Binford coined the term "residential foraging" for this pattern of behavior. In the alternative pattern, moves were made less frequently, and part of the group might have remained in one location over several seasons while specialist task groups were sent out to hunt and gather farther afield. Binford calls this "logistic collecting. Rather, the emphasis probably shifted on a tactical basis from season to season and from year to year. Groups may have been residential foragers in spring and early summer, when resources were generally scarce, but shifted to a more logistic strategy in autumn, which was the season of plenty. Storage of the autumn abundance may have limited the need for frequent moves in the winter. Settlement mobility is difficult to demonstrate, but it sometimes is possible to show that a site was occupied only at certain times of the year, with the implication that at other times the people were living elsewhere. Star Carr was visited mainly in the spring and summer, Mount Sandel in the autumn, and Polderweg during the winter. Another way of monitoring mobility is through the distribution of raw materials. For example, flint found on Mesolithic sites in the Pennine uplands in northern England originated up to 80 kilometers away in Yorkshire, whereas material found at Polderweg came from the Meuse gravels 50 to kilometers away. It may reasonably be assumed that these materials give an indication of the distances covered by the groups in the course of an annual cycle. Caution must be exercised in interpretation, however, as in the case of Wommersom quartzite, items of which also were found at Polderweg. This material outcrops naturally in a very restricted area of central Belgium, but artifacts made from it are found over an area of about 45, square kilometers, extending from the North Sea to the valleys of the Rhine and Meuse. Within this area the distribution can be subdivided into a core lying between the Meuse and Schelde in which Wommersom quartzite can form up to 77 percent of assemblages and a wider zone in which its contribution to assemblages is usually less than 5 percent. Whereas the distribution within the core area probably reflects the movements of individual groups to and from the source or the deployment of logistic task groups, the marked falloff indicated by the wider distribution is more reminiscent of the patterns generated by down-the-line trade or exchange. These patterns of mobility have meant that archaeologists can encounter a range of site types. From the finds made, some appear to have been home bases where the whole group resided for at least part of the time, while others seem to have been the locations of more specialized activities.

2: Mesolithic Europe : Penny Spikins :

Mesolithic Britain Chris Tolan-Smith; 6. New developments in the study of the Mesolithic of the low countries Leo Verhardt; 7. The Mesolithic in France Nicolas Valdeyron; 8.

Selected radiocarbon determinations for Mediterranean Europe Preface and Acknowledgments In this volume, we bring together a series of regional syntheses of the Mesolithic in different parts of Europe, intended to be of interest and benefit both to specialists and to those with a more general interest in archaeology. Mesolithic archaeology has witnessed an acceleration of activity in recent years, with many new projects, more communication across old geographical and political barriers, and calls for archaeologists to examine the Mesolithic on its own terms, rather than as an inconvenient rung in some ladder of human progress. Accounts of the Mesolithic are typically absorbed into general syntheses of prehistory, submerged in works unified by wider-ranging theoretical or methodological themes, fragmented in publications of individual site-based or regional field projects, or combined in the proceedings of specialist conferences. Here, our aim is to provide an up-to-date overview of the current state of knowledge about the Mesolithic period, a demonstration of the richness and diversity of the material now available and the various approaches to its study, and a source for those who wish to delve more deeply into the literature. Our brief to our contributors was to provide an interpretive synthesis of their region, varying the emphasis according to the available material and drawing on broad categories of information: We also encouraged them to range both backwards and forwards in time to consider the nature of the boundaries that traditionally mark the beginning and the end of the Mesolithic, including the transition to agriculture. We are, of course, acutely aware of the arbitrary nature of our selections and the boundaries they imply, and the inevitable unevenness of coverage. In a continent notable for a history of political fragmentation reinforced by barriers of geography, language, nationality, and cultural tradition, total coverage, let alone uniformity of approach, was hardly to be expected. Archaeologically, the field of enquiry has been further complicated, and indeed enriched, by different intellectual traditions, by the historical dominance of the French and the Danes, by Anglophone traditions of method and theory, and most recently by regional synthesis and diversification. We could have devoted a single chapter to every nation-state within the geographical boundaries of Europe. But that would have produced far too large and uneven a volume, and it is questionable how far modern political boundaries are helpful or relevant in assessing the prehistoric record, although we acknowledge the influence of modern political history on intellectual traditions of investigation and interpretation. Our selection of chapters is necessarily a compromise between what we would have liked to include and what was realistically possible. Some chapters range widely across geographical and political boundaries, others focus more sharply on areas delimited by modern political borders. Some areas achieve disproportionate attention because of the long histories of study, the abundance of material, or the impact of distinctive types of new evidence or new ideas. Others may seem underrepresented or referred to only tangentially in relation to adjacent areas. If nothing else, the volume of material presented here should leave little doubt about the substantial nature of the Mesolithic record, its potential to illuminate new dimensions of human variability, and the prospect of a truly comparative picture ranging from the Atlantic coast of Ireland to the Urals, and from the sub-Arctic to the Aegean. The regional chapters are organised in broadly geographical order. Chapter 2 provides a wide-ranging geographical and thematic overview, focussed on the Baltic, followed in Chapter 3 by a review of Norway, where new investigations have produced a substantial and distinctive body of new material, and in Chapter 4 by a discussion of the classic material of southern Scandinavia. Subsequent chapters move from west to east across the middle zone of Europe, from the British Isles, via the Low Countries, France, and the Rhine and Danube drainages, to the vast territory comprising Belarus, Russia, and the Ukraine, and thence to the south, to the Iberian Peninsula and the Mediterranean coast. In our editorial contributions, our opening chapter provides an introduction to the field of study, to the issues raised in subsequent chapters, and to some of the ideas that are beginning to influence a new generation of interpretation. Our final chapter provides an overview of the Mesolithic period as a whole and an indication of new directions for future research. The editorial chapters are single-authored, reflecting both the dominant

input of each editor and the differences of perspective and approach among the editors and contributors. They are, nevertheless, also the result of joint effort and discussion and in their totality reflect a body of ideas to which we both subscribe, and a jointly held belief that the Mesolithic record offers an unparalleled opportunity to explore the relationship between the very large scale and the very small, between millennial and pan-continental trends and the actions of social groups and individuals. The position has become more confused in recent years by the refinement and widespread adoption of calibration curves and by a host of different abbreviations – BP.

3: The Mesolithic of Northwest Europe | www.enganchecubano.com

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In other parts of Europe, the Mesolithic begins by 11, years ago the beginning Holocene , and it ends with the introduction of farming, depending on the region between ca. Regions that experienced greater environmental effects as the last glacial period ended have a much more apparent Mesolithic era, lasting millennia. Such conditions produced distinctive human behaviors that are preserved in the material record, such as the Maglemosian and Azilian cultures. Such conditions also delayed the coming of the Neolithic until some 5, BP in northern Europe. Animated image showing the sequence of engravings on a pendant excavated from the Mesolithic archaeological site of Starr Carr in [4] The type of stone toolkit remains one of the most diagnostic features: In some areas, however, such as Ireland, parts of Portugal, the Isle of Man and the Tyrrenian Islands, a macrolithic technology was used in the Mesolithic. There is some evidence for the beginning of construction at sites with a ritual or astronomical significance, including Stonehenge , with a short row of large post holes aligned east-west, and a possible "lunar calendar" at Warren Field in Scotland, with pits of post holes of varying sizes, thought to reflect the lunar phases. Both are dated to before c. Mesolithic adaptations such as sedentism, population size and use of plant foods are cited as evidence of the transition to agriculture. In north-Eastern Europe, the hunting and fishing lifestyle continued into the Medieval period in regions less suited to agriculture, and in Scandinavia no Mesolithic period may be accepted, with the locally preferred "Older Stone Age" moving into the "Younger Stone Age". The Rock art of the Iberian Mediterranean Basin , which probably spreads across from the Upper Paleolithic, is a widespread phenomenon, much less well known than the cave-paintings of the Upper Paleolithic, with which it makes an interesting contrast. The sites are now mostly cliff faces in the open air, and the subjects are now mostly human rather than animal, with large groups of small figures; there are 45 figures at Roca dels Moros. Clothing is shown, and scenes of dancing, fighting, hunting and food-gathering. The figures are much smaller than the animals of Paleolithic art, and depicted much more schematically, though often in energetic poses. The rock art in the Urals appears to show similar changes after the Paleolithic, and the wooden Shigir Idol is a rare survival of what may well have been a very common material for sculpture. It is a plank of larch carved with geometric motifs, but topped with a human head. Now in fragments, it would apparently have been over 5 metres tall when made. Russian archaeologists prefer to describe such pottery-making cultures as Neolithic, even though farming is absent. This pottery-making Mesolithic culture can be found peripheral to the sedentary Neolithic cultures. It created a distinctive type of pottery, with point or knob base and flared rims, manufactured by methods not used by the Neolithic farmers. Though each area of Mesolithic ceramic developed an individual style, common features suggest a single point of origin. It appears in the Elshan or Yelshanka or Samara culture on the Volga in Russia 9 ka, [14] [15] and from there spread via the Dnieper-Donets culture to the Narva culture of the Eastern Baltic.

4: CiNii Books - Mesolithic Europe

Mesolithic Britain / Chris Tolan-Smith New developments in the study of the Mesolithic of the Low Countries / Leo Verhart The Mesolithic in France / Nicolas Valdeyron.

5: Mesolithic Europe - Geoff Bailey - HÅrftad () | Bokus

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6: Mesolithic - Wikipedia

Mesolithic Europe: glimpses of another world / Penny Spikins --Innovating hunter-gatherers: the Mesolithic in the Baltic / Marek Zvelebil --Norwegian Mesolithic trends: a review / Hein Bjartmann Bjerck --Southern Scandinavia / Hans Peter Blankholm --Mesolithic Britain / Chris Tolan-Smith --New developments in the study of the Mesolithic of.

7: Timeline of Sheffield history - Wikipedia

Deepcar is a village located on the eastern fringe of the town of Stocksbridge, in the electoral ward of Stocksbridge and Upper Don, 7 miles approximately northwest of Sheffield city centre.

8: Mesolithic Europe

In Old World archaeology, Mesolithic (Greek: μέσος, mesos "middle"; λίθος, lithos "stone") is the period between the Upper Paleolithic and the Neolithic.

9: Mesolithic Europe in SearchWorks catalog

Mesolithic: Maglemosians are known to have occupied the Deepcar area of Sheffield. Late Neolithic or Bronze Age period: Evidence of occupation can be found in Ecclesall Woods where early inhabitants carved a 'cup and ring' stone.

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