

From the River to the Sea: The Palaeolithic and the Neolithic on the Euphrates and in the Northern Levant. Studies in Honour of Lorraine Copeland.

Olivier Aurenche, Marie Le Mière, and Paul Sanlaville (eds.)

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This volume holds its promise, with a title that accurately describes its contents—papers on the Paleolithic and Neolithic of the Euphrates River and the Northern Levant. Anyone working in Near Eastern prehistory will be familiar with the legacy of Lorraine Copeland's decades of work there. This book follows the example of previous works published by her in conjunction with the Editors and other colleagues, in which they aimed to synthesize all of their data (Copeland et al. 1973; Copeland et al. 1994). In this sense the BAR volume can be seen as an excellent compendium of past and ongoing work by researchers associated with Copeland and with one another. It is not a place for debate and dissent, since the underlying approaches are all in general agreement. The result is a harmonious volume that gives the impression of an extensive, international network of collaborators all working to expand knowledge of this important region of the world. The collaborations are evident in the fact that most of the authors cross-reference each other in the volume. The book contains a mixture of new data and syntheses of previously-published data, and has a good balance of raw data and theoretical discussion.

The first chapter is authored by Copeland herself, and is by far the largest of the book at nearly 100 pages. It is divided into four "chapters" but these are more like sections. The first section is structured like a brief report, ending with a conclusion and acknowledgements. It summarizes the thorough work carried out by her team for the Euphrates River surveys in the 1970s and 80s and the team's dating achievements using the river terraces. It ends with the latest chronostratigraphy correlating lithic industries and terraces. The second section of Copeland's chapter is a brief catalog of 43 sites by chronological phase; included are sites without geomorphological context and surface collections, which are useful because they are often excluded from archaeological publications. The third section describes the lithic material, using a revised techno-typology updated from the 1970s publications. This approach follows current practice in French archaeology and shows the author's willingness to revise her own ideas. Sometimes the new analyses vindicate earlier hunches—for example, a layer previously attributed to the Late Acheulian can now be re-assigned to the Middle Acheulian, which fits the lithic material better typologically. Section 4 is a discussion of the third section, showing that most of the material is Lower Paleolithic. Perhaps not surprisingly, because she worked

at the Institute of Archaeology in London for a time, Copeland asks the question of whether the absence of bifaces in the Qf_{IV} (OIS 16) terraces indicates a local flake and core industry ("Clactonian") or suggests they are part of an Early Acheulian Industrial Complex. The chapter is followed by an extensive 52-page appendix containing maps, photos, and drawings of all the lithics mentioned.

The next chapter, by Sanlaville, follows on smoothly from the first. It synthesizes his 25 years of work on the Pleistocene river terraces mentioned by Copeland. The data are presented in more detail and joined by excellent photos and diagrams, all of which will satisfy avid readers. In her chapter Copeland mentions that there are still no dates for these terraces, leaving the reader wondering why. Sanlaville now answers the question—the layers contain no fauna, and the team's attempts to date the Quaternary basalt flows failed. It can only be hoped that more dating attempts will be made in the future, although both authors seem to be content with their correlations of lithic industries and terraces.

The following chapter by Muhesen, Copeland's long-time Syrian collaborator, discusses the wider archaeological context. Although he at first appears to take "les Acheuléens" as a people, writing that the Lower to Middle Paleolithic transition saw new populations appear bringing new traditions (p. 137), he however rightly notes that we can no longer link specific material cultures with hominin species, because cultures were shared. This concurs with E. Coqueugnot, who argues that names of industries are simply names and must not be confused with populations; he adds that cultural units evolve in interaction with one another. Muhesen offers an honest and well-rounded discussion of problems in human evolution, admitting that there is still no evidence as to which species produced the Syrian lithics, or even if they were the product of only one species (*Homo sapiens* and/or Neanderthals).

Several chapters describe new findings from old or new excavations. They are linked by a common thread related to Copeland's work. The chapter by Garrard, Conolly, McNabb, and Moloney presents a survey of inhabited caves on a Turkish plateau that was originally studied by Copeland. Boëda, Courty, Fedoroff, Griggo, Hedley, and Muhesen discuss their Syrian data in two sections. The first is a palaeoenvironmental reconstruction of the El-Meirah Acheulian site and is written with dense techno-jargon

which may be difficult for some readers. Section two presents a technological analysis of the material with detailed artifact descriptions. They discuss flaking methods in terms of volumetric structures, which is expected by any reader who knows Boëda's work (Boëda 1992). Yazbeck presents 500 new pieces from her thesis on Joubb Jannine II, one of Copeland's sites. Le Tensorer also offers new data on an industry identified by Copeland (the Hummalian), with a brief description of layers and tool types.

Other chapters present old data in new ways. In a new collaboration, Aurenche, Kozłowski, and Le Mière combine for the first time their previously-published analyses of ceramics and lithics. They provide a helpful glossary of the lithic and ceramic industries and groups mentioned in their text. Nishiaki offers a new analysis of data from sickle manufacturing technology. However, his chapter perplexingly includes the same diagram as Coguesgniot's Figure 5, although without reference to this latter. This may simply represent a polite nod to the French. The contribution by Akazawa summarises previously published data from Dederiyeh Cave, which was already well-published but deserves a place in this volume. E. Coqueugniot discusses changes in lithic typology over time, arguing that the PPNA and PPNB form a continuum. In keeping with the other chapters, in particular that of Akkermans, he also considers surrounding sites to draw comparisons with his material and place the region in a wider context. M.-C. Cauvin also confirms the continuity from the PPNA to the PPNB at Mureybet, using new analyses, and presents drawings for all the lithics discussed. The PPNB and Early Halaf material presented by Verhoeven offers an excellent synthesis of data from the author's previous excavations, including fauna, flora, lithics, and a discussion of symbolism, which is unique among the other papers' lithics-centered topics.

It is refreshing to read Melki's contribution because it is the only non-lithic chapter. This is a write-up of F. Hours' data about the Jiita II habitation structure, which consists of a Classical Kebaran rock shelter in which were built a pit and clay walls with stones set in clay. This structure speaks for continuous occupation of the Upper Paleolithic. In the next chapter, Akkermans follows on the theme by discussing continuity and innovations in the Syrian Neolithic. He offers a good overview and summary of relevant sites, which is useful for unfamiliar readers. These challenge the mainstream view that the Neolithic was a set of innovations related to subsistence and food production (pp. 281–282) which allowed the rise of civilizations, and furthermore that the Neolithic was always equivalent to sedentism which equates to agriculture. In this region, hunter-gatherers became sedentary villagers long before the known Neolithic,

as exemplified by a few rare dwellings such as Jiita II. In fact, few regions in Syria embraced sedentism at the same time; rather, a mosaic evolution is favoured by Akkermans. After nicely concluding this discussion, a further 1½ pages are devoted to a somewhat disconnected discussion of the ritual-interpretation of Neolithic settlement mounds. While insightful, this last section feels rather out of place, as if a mini-article had been tacked on to the end of an already finished paper.

Although Stordeur's chapter is about lithics, it is equally refreshing in that it presents descriptions and drawings of unusual small finds from the author's excavations at Jerf el-Ahmar. This contribution is important because this type of material is rarely published but can reveal similarities between unrelated sites. Similarly, the surface-collected material presented by Hole in his chapter is described in detail, which adds to the completeness of the volume.

From the River to the Sea is like a patchwork quilt, with each contribution filling in squares to give the reader a thorough picture of the whole Euphrates/Northern Levant region. The book is made more valuable by its breadth of contributors working on this tiny yet rich region of the world. The authors are from countries extending beyond French influence (United States, United Kingdom, Japan, Holland, Switzerland, Lebanon, and Syria) and the 17 papers are written in two languages (10 in French, 7 in English). The chapters are set in chronological order, which makes a nice succession although it jumps around geographically. The editors have shown meticulous editing and proofreading; they have generously included many images so that each chapter has an appendix of photos, diagrams, and/or drawings. These are probably almost as valuable as the text itself. *From the River to the Sea* is an excellent compendium of what is known in the prehistory of the Levant and is a must-have for anyone working in this region.

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