
Book Reviews / Comptes rendus

Anatoliy P. Derev'anko (ed. and comp.), *The Paleolithic of Siberia: New Discoveries and Interpretations*, Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1998, 406 pages, 231 figures (artifact drawings, maps, profiles, charts), 71 tables, index.

Reviewer: Alan L. Bryan
University of Alberta

This large volume is essential for any Americanist interested in the question of the original peopling of the Americas. It presents comprehensive summaries of most of the large number of Paleolithic sites of Pleistocene age known from Siberia and the Russian Far East, written by archaeologists working in each part of this vast territory. The important work in Yakutia by Yuri Mochanov is not summarized; and Nikolai Dikov's work in Kamchatka and Chukotka is only briefly summarized by Ruslan Vasil'evskiy. However, these gaps, except for the significant Diring Yuriakh site, are adequately filled by West's *American Beginnings* and Bland's translation of Dikov's *Asia at the Juncture with America in Antiquity*. A final report on Diring Yuriakh, the farthest north known Lower Paleolithic site, is being prepared by Mochanov.

Demitri Shimkin suggested a volume in English bringing together all the scattered references on the Siberian Paleolithic, and he arranged for the University of Illinois Press to publish it; but he died before being able to assist in its production. Inna Laricheva's translation of Derev'anko's compilation was organized and edited by Roger Powers and put into final form by Olga Soffer. The product, which contains remarkably few typographical errors, will be a significant data source for a long time to come. Like many edited compilations, however, the result was published almost a decade after the last data included; so readers will expect a sequel detailing all of the significant work accomplished during the 1990s, including that of a new generation of archaeologists.

Derev'anko intended the volume to be a compilation of basic data and not simply a set of interpretations, which are subject to change. Nevertheless, he allowed the authors of regional summaries to expand on their data; and German Medvedev's summary of the Angara River region is particularly memorable, perhaps because it includes a discussion of the impressive art style found only at the Mal'ta and Buret sites. The origin of this unique late-Upper Paleolithic art style

remains a puzzle. Did it develop in situ or was it introduced from the west, as many authors have suggested?

Pervading the entire volume are the basic questions of where Paleolithic Siberians came from, when they arrived and with what level of technology. Because these fundamental historical questions for any part of the world remain open for examination in Russia, these questions are closer to being answered in Siberia than they are in North America, where most archaeologists have simply assumed they know the answers; so they readily accept frequent attempts to explain away data that do not support the model of initial entry with an Upper Paleolithic lithic technology no earlier than about 14 000 years ago.

The crudeness of flaked pebbles recovered from the earliest sites, such as Ulalinka, can be questioned, and it does not help that the artifact drawings are not backed up by photographs; but nevertheless the evidence presented clearly supports the consensus that people with a Lower Paleolithic pebble and flake technology lived in Siberia early in the Middle Pleistocene, if not during the Lower Pleistocene before half a million years ago. Exact dating of even Upper Paleolithic sites that are not supported by radiocarbon dates will always be questioned by sceptics. Russian Upper Paleolithic archaeologists use typology, often an unreliable method, to date most of their complexes. Also, archaeologists seem confident that they can date earlier sites by artifact typology, associated faunal and floral assemblages and sequences of river terraces, which incorporate the majority of open sites. Many sites, especially if containing loess deposits, have been dated by paleomagnetism and thermoluminescence.

Of the several caves excavated in the Altai, the detailed summary of Derev'anko's excavation of Denisova Cave is notable. The earliest occupation of Denisova contains a late-Acheulian/early-Mousterian industry dated by thermoluminescence to more than 250 000 years. Later occupation of this deeply stratified cave continued through the Mousterian into Upper Paleolithic horizons.

As in the Americas, early human bones are very scarce in Siberia. Despite the dozens of excavated Paleolithic sites, only three Upper Paleolithic localities have yielded human bones, all fragmentary, and mostly of children. These fragmentary immature remains have yielded only debatable evi-

dence concerning genetic affinities. In the future, however, ancient DNA analyses might yield valuable information.

Americanists are very fortunate that three volumes giving fresh insights into the early prehistory of Northeast Asia have been published recently. Also relevant is Keiji Imamura's recent synthesis of Japanese prehistory (*Prehistoric Japan*), which includes the Kamitakamori site, dated 500 000 years. American archaeologists should now realize that there are no actual or logical barriers to the occupation of eastern Beringia and beyond during most of the Late Pleistocene; i.e., before about 30 000 years ago, when the Upper Paleolithic in the Russian Far East began, and before glacial ice closed the hypothetical ice-free corridor east of the Rocky Mountains, and covered most of the coasts of southern Alaska. American archaeologists should admit that they do not know when people first ventured into Alaska, and open their critical minds to careful consideration of all reported evidence, no matter now early it appears to be.

References Cited

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Imamura, Keiji

1996 *Prehistoric Japan*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
West, Frederick Hadleigh (ed.)

1996 *American Beginnings, the Prehistory and Palaeoecology of Beringia*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

F.G. Bailey, *The Need for Enemies: A Bestiary of Political Forms*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998, xiv + 223 pages.

Reviewer: *Anthony P. Cohen*
University of Edinburgh

"Politicians are like lawyers," says Bailey, "they rate victory higher than truth." That is perhaps the tersest and most lucid summary to date of Bailey's anthropology of politics. To make it, he revisits his 40-year-old field work in Bhubaneswar, Orissa, the work first described in his 1963 book, *Politics and Social Change*. He poses the question of the personal agendas which lie behind political disagreement, differences of view which seem to require explanation because of the extent to which they belie the appearance of collective sentiment and the claim of consensus. In the case presented in this book, the first derives from the Independence struggle; the latter, from the rhetoric of the Orissa Chief Minister. There is nothing very startling about the agendas he reveals: of caste and class; of political careers and anti-colonial experience; of aspiration, commitment and corruption. His data are in the form of extended interviews, the texts of which will be intriguing in themselves to historians of the early post-Independence period.

There is also little in the argument which will surprise readers who are already familiar with Bailey's work. We have masks; we have the axiomatic distinction made between "the political person" and "the whole person"; we have another essay on the theme of political fatalism ("Enantiodromia"), the inexorable movement from principle to compromise: "In the end, reality must win; there is a nemesis" (p. 176). It is elegantly written with more than a hint of world-weariness (and strong reminders of the influence which Manchester left on the author).

But I am not clear what this book adds to Bailey's oeuvre. I am not an Indianist, and therefore cannot judge the significance of these data. As a generalist, I suppose I take the view that a book based on 40-year-old data must either be justified by their rarity, or by the novelty of the argument. I am doubtful about the first, and unconvinced about the second. Nor do I think he demonstrates the proposition about politicians' compulsion to win. Rather, the impression I take from his vivid accounts of politics in Orissa in 1959 is that running things is more difficult than people suppose, for whatever reason. The movement from absolutism to pragmatism could be restated as one from unrealistic simplicity to actual complexity. Politicians disappoint not so much because the complexity paralyzes them, but because they seem to respond to it by reverting to a simplicity which cannot but fail many of the people and their diverse interests. This is a less interesting view of politics: that alongside the corrupt and the visionary, most politicians muddle along trying to do the best they can in the face of overwhelming odds. It is the view to which I am increasingly persuaded.

Eric Schwimmer, *Le Syndrome des Plaines d'Abraham*, Montréal: Les éditions de Boréal Express, 1996, 205 pages.

Reviewer: *Gerald Gold*
York University

From personal and research experience, Schwimmer considers three models of nationalism and sovereignty and relates each of these to the "sectorial nationalism" and cycles of tolerance which characterize the relationship of Canada and Quebec. Beginning with the toleration of 16th-century Holland, and subsequently in New Zealand, Indonesia and in New Guinea, this book adds an original perspective to studies of Quebec nationalism. Schwimmer asserts that sovereignty is the only workable solution to centuries of cyclical tolerance and acceptance of Québécois minority status. A process of "minorization" (forced acceptance of a minority status) is illustrated symbolically by the "syndrome of the Plains of Abraham." In a compelling and sometimes controversial argument he combines a critical, though selective reading of history with field work in the Mauricie region of Quebec. As the outside Dutch observer, Schwimmer comments on the political strategies of (undefined) "English" Canadians and Quebec