FORTHCOMING:

No. 17 in the Series Modern Quaternary Research in Southeast Asia

THE DJIEF HUNTERS

Juliette M. Pasveer

Two prehistoric cave sites on the Bird’s Head of western New Guinea provide a detailed narrative of 26,000 years of human occupation of this area. During Late Pleistocene times, lower temperatures allowed a suite of montane animal species to descend onto the lowland Ayamaru Plateau. When the montane fauna receded during the subsequent climatic amelioration, people switched their hunting focus to a forest wallaby, known locally as Djief. Detailed analysis of this species’ remains, including the reconstruction of their age profile, provides insights into why prolonged hunting of this species did not lead to its extinction. The wallaby population evidently thrived at its demographic maximum throughout the early and mid-Holocene, suggesting that human population densities, and therefore hunting pressure, were low until c. 5000 BP. This volume of Modern Quaternary Research in Southeast Asia offers a unique perspective on sustainable hunting in prehistory and provides intriguing insights into hunter-gatherer subsistence, tool manufacturing and use, the changing intensity of occupation of the sites, and environmental exploitation from Late Pleistocene times onwards in a lowland tropical region. It forms an important contribution to the current debate on the possibilities of human occupation of tropical rainforest before the advent of agriculture.

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J.M. Pasveer: The Djief Hunters, Publication: April 2004
448 pp., Bound, ISBN 90 5809 633 7, Price EUR 89.00 /US$ 99.00

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THE JORDAN RIFT VALLEY

Aharon Horowitz

This book presents a synthesis of almost 150 years of research along the Jordan Rift Valley, where tectonics and climate variations interwove to create a succession of natural landscapes, inhabited by changing communities of plants, animals and Man. The complex geological and environmental evolution since its inception in the Oligocene, are expressed in a variety of sedimentary and magmatic rock units, preserved as continuous sequences in the deeper basins, where they had been penetrated by drillings, palynologically analysed and radiometrically dated. The outcropping formations encircling the basins represent alternating deposition and erosion phases, both discussed in detail. Based on a wealth of old and newly acquired data, a novel approach is presented in a model explaining the tectonic evolution of this part of the Syrian-African Rift Valley, which may change our views regarding the geotectonic pattern of the entire western Levant. Different views are also offered for comparison. Datings and palaeoenvironmental reconstructions are provided for all important phases in the history of the Jordan Valley. Particular attention is given to the last two million years, when numerous habitation sites, the oldest of which represents the initial spread of Man out of Africa, indicate the region was almost continuously populated.

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OLDEHOLTWOLDE

A HAMBURGIAN FAMILY ENCAMPMENT AROUND A HEARTH

Lykke Johansen & Dick Stapert

The well-preserved archaeological site at Oldeholtwolde (Friesland, the Netherlands) was inhabited by a small group of people - probably a family - during the final phase of the last Ice Age, some 13,000 years ago. They were reindeer hunters of the Hamburgian tradition, and camped here for a few weeks around a hearth: a shallow pit paved with sandstone slabs and containing willow charcoal. This book focuses on the analysis of the ca. 10,000 flint artefacts from Oldeholtwolde. These are subjected to modern approaches such as refitting analysis and spatial analysis, resulting in fascinating insights in the daily life of the Stone Age hunters. Refitting is putting back together what the flint knapper has split apart. In this way not only the flint technology can be studied, but also spatial patterns within the site. Moreover, refitting made it possible to identify three individual knappers on the basis of differences in their level of know-how: most probably a father and two sons. Spatial patterns were analysed using a new computer package, ANALITHIC, allowing the integration of various analytical approaches. In this way, a dynamical reconstruction of the site's occupation could be created. The extensive documentation and many illustrations make this book a valuable source.

Johansen, L. / Stapert, D.: Oldeholtwolde - A Hamburgian Family Encampment around a Hearth

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