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Emanuele Cancellieri, 2011, *From the watershed to the Great Adriatic Plain: an investigation on humans and landscape ecology during the late Upper Paleolithic. The significance of lithic technology*. PhD Dissertation, Dipartimento di Biologia ed Evoluzione, Università di Ferrara, Italy

ABSTRACT

Methodology. In chapter 1, METHODOLOGY, the theoretical and methodological frame of reference is outlined. In chapter introduction a rapid *excursus* of the main directions followed by prehistoric hunter-gatherers archaeology is provided, with special reference to the informative potential of the lithic industries. In what follows the main descriptive and interpretive standards adopted in the analysis of the archeological material are provided.

Analysis. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 are devoted to the analysis, description and interpretation of the lithic assemblages of the sites of MADONNA DELL'OSPEDALE, FOSSO MERGAONI and GROTTA DI POZZO. The structure is the same for each chapter. First, a general description of the site is provided (*presentation of the site*), along with its geographic localization, the research activities carried out on it and the chronological and stratigraphic data. The main section of each chapter is represented by the lithic artefacts technological analysis (*lithic production*), whose description follows the theoretical phases of the reduction sequence. Contextually, morpho-technical and morpho-metric data are provided. The conclusive section of each chapter (*synthesis and discussion*) aims to organize data in a synthetic and organic frame, as well as to provide a behavioral interpretation of the circumstances leading to the assemblage formation.

Discussion. Chapter 5, THE EARLY EPIGRAVETTIAN OF THE NORTHERN ADRIATIC FRINGE: DISCUSSION, aims to put data within the frame of the human frequentation of the northern fringe of the Adriatic at the end of the LGM, along the borders of the once exposed Great Adriatic Plain. After a general introduction on the LGM at European scale, the archeological evidence from three study areas is synthesized: central Apennine (Marche and Abruzzi regions), Berici hills (Venetian region) and North-western Balkans (Slovenia, northern Croazia and northern Bosnia).

On the basis of edited data and those from the present work, it has been tried to contribute to the discussion about whether the Great Adriatic Plain could have represented a favorable environment for human groups in conditions of climatic worsening. A possible affirmative answer is advanced, because the supposed borders of such physiographic element bear evidence of contingent brief visits finalized to resources acquisition, which implies, at least, the existence of some more stable settlement areas, somewhere else. Data about mobility strongly point towards an East-west shifting direction followed by Epigravettian collectors, which suggests an active role of the once exposed Great Adriatic Plain.



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