REVIEWS

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Florian KLIMSCHA. Pietrele 1; Beile und Äxte aus Stein: Distinktion und Kommunikation während der Kupferzeit im östlichen Balkangebiet (= Archäologie in Eurasien 34). Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, 2016, XVI + 382 pp., 270 figs., 87 tables

Stone tools and weapons represent an important part of archaeological material, and their analysis is essential so that complete and correct conclusions can be made about a given site or an entire culture to which they pertain. They provide data on the knowledge of natural resources, level of technological development, social and religious relations, connections with distant territories, etc. It has been for years that Florian Klimscha recognizes the significance of such archaeological material. The culmination of the many years of his studies of stone adzes and axes was reached with his PhD thesis, defended at the Free University of Berlin (Klimscha 2008). Parts of that thesis found their way into this book on stone adzes and axes from the site of Magură Gorgana in Pietrele (Romania). In fact, those stone adzes and axes from Pietrele, a settlement from the Gumelniţa culture, researched in the period from 2002 to 2013, were the basis for a much wider discussion on the chronological, cultural and social significance in a wider supraregional and long term framework.

Florian Klimscha's book contains 12 chapters. After the introduction, with basic details about the site of Magură Gorgana in Pietrele and the research of stone adzes and axes so far, a chapter follows which deals with the exploration level and research frameworks (*Forschungsstand und Grenzen der Untersuchung*), with a detailed representation of natural and historical conditions prevailing during the Eneolithic in the Eastern Balkans. The author also gives an overview of the research of adzes, from the 19th century up to today, in Europe, and especially in its South-Eastern part.

A detailed analysis of adzes and axes from Pietrele, a total of 422 objects, is given in chapter 3 *Der Fundstoff I: Beile und Äxte aus Silex und Felsgestein*, constituting the fundamental part of the book. All other chapters that follow after this one are discussions on stone and copper adzes and axes in a wider supraregional context in the Eneolithic. The typology of this type of stone tools defined by F. Klimscha is especially noteworthy. All adzes and axes are sorted, on the basis of their size, in three groups. The first group comprehends small, most prominently short tools, the second one slightly longer and more massive (thicker) tools, while the third group is constituted by large adzes and axes (rather large and notably heavier than tools from the first two groups). The author believes that tools from group III were the first ones in the series of products of this sort, and that adzes and axes from groups I and II were created by reducing larger examples after they had been damaged. Thus, tools from group I were actually the last ones in the recycling series and they were in fact the final products whose fragments were not large enough for another tool of the same type to be made. Diversity in

shapes in groups I and II was almost exclusively the result of continuous remodelling of damaged tools.

This typology is substantiated by the author through a very detailed representation of all dimensions of adzes (length, width of the cutting edge, thickness, weight) and their interrelations. The detailed analysis of all manners and cases of remodelling (recycling) damaged adzes and axes is rather impressive. A new tool could be made from every fragment sufficiently large to be remodelled into a group I tool – parietal part, distal part, longitudinally broken adzes etc. After this chapter, entitled *3.5 Recycling*, one can fully comprehend the author's typology of adzes and their classification into 3 basic groups according to their size. All diversity of shape noted not only on the site of Magură Gorgana in Pietrele, but also across Europe is most likely the consequence of the maximal usage of stone raw material. Good raw material – hard and resilient stone, without cracks, which would not break after mere several strikes of the tool against the material one was working upon, was not easy to find. Such stone had to be used to the maximum, and that meant that every fragment which was large enough was shaped into a tool. The author of this review has had the opportunity to analyse a large number of stone adzes from the territory of the Central Balkans herself, but she linked the typological diversity among ground stone adzes and axes to the raw material type and the manner in which they were used. Reparations of damaged artefacts were also noted, but this manner of modelling adzes was not dominant enough to be taken into consideration as a basis for a typology. The size of adzes does have a certain bearing on the characteristics of cultures from different territories. The oldest ground stone adzes and axes from the territory of the Balkans, those from the late Mesolithic and early Neolithic, are massive, cylindrical, and their shape reminds us more of axes. Their size and massiveness were reduced in later periods, which is especially conspicuous in the Eastern Balkans, thus marking a notable difference between this territory and the rest of the Balkans. In his book, F. Klimscha provides a lot of space for thought and further researches. The question is asked whether there was a continuity in the production of ground stone adzes and axes, not only in the technology of production but also in the use of stone tools from previous cultures. A partial answer to this question could be given after more precise petrographic analyses, which were not performed on the material from Pietrele.

By examining use-wear traces on stone adzes and axes from Pietrele, the author reached interesting conclusions. There are visible traces of long-term work on them, and it can be deduced from their distribution whether the person handling them was left-handed or right-handed, so the author concludes that adzes and axes were quite certainly a part of a personal toolkit of one craftsman.

Adzes made of silex certainly represent one of the most interesting occurrences in the Neolithic and Eneolithic in Europe. These tools appear in large numbers in Northern Europe, on the British Isles, but also in Eastern Europe, especially within the Cucuteni-Tripolye culture. Those are all areas where flint was the dominant raw material for making stone adzes and axes and where mines of this raw material were discovered. The Eneolithic settlement in Pietrele was not in such an area, or, at least, no flint mines have been discovered in its wider

surroundings, and therefore those silex adzes represent a very uncommon type of findings. Hence, the author dedicated a special attention to them.

Following chapters do not deal with the material from Pietrele anymore, and a discussion on its place within the European area in the Eneolithic is given instead. This discussion will certainly provoke different reactions through the course of time – some will support such opinions, others will disapprove of them, but the most important thing is that the author enabled enough space for a scientific discussion, which is a feature of all good studies. Thus, in chapter 4 *Der Fundstoff II: Beile und Schwergeräte aus Kupfer* a representation is given of copper tools and weapons which are chronologically parallel to stone adzes and axes from Pietrele. The author of this review feels a need to dedicate special attention to this chapter. In his book on stone adzes and axes from Pietrele, Klimscha included these tools as well, which come from the territory of the Eastern Balkans, with the intention of confirming the theory about the interconnection of Eneolithic cultures on a wider European area, as presented in the chapter on silex adzes (*3.8.1 Komplex-hergestellte Silexbeile*). Probably no other type of findings can give such a confirmation of Europe as a unique cultural space as much as copper and bronze weapons and tools do. Adzes and axes of the same shapes and types occurred on the wider area from the Aegean to the Baltic Sea since the beginning of the Eneolithic. It is therefore rather strange that the author chose this type of findings to underline the link between the Eastern Balkans, Central and Northern Europe, as vividly shown on Fig. 203–205 and Fig. 211–213, omitting numerous findings from the rest of the Balkans. The reason for this omission might be that the author, at the time he was writing this book, did not see new results on the diffusion of copper and bronze tools and weapons in that part of Europe (Antonović 2014), although some earlier papers do provide a lot of data on that subject (Schubert 1965; Žeravica 1993). I hope that in some of his future studies on this problem Klimscha will bear in mind possible connections between the Eastern and the Western Balkans in the Eneolithic.

A very interesting discussion on the meaning of flint adzes in Neolithic and Eneolithic societies is based on ethnographic data from Papua New Guinea, Australia and South America. The author dedicated a lot of space to the research of the symbolical meaning of silex adzes, and also a large number of perforated axes, in chapters *5 Die (Be-)Deutung von Beilklingen und Streitäxten im Neolithikum* and *6 Heiße Zeiten – kalte Zeiten? Interpretation der Ergebnisse: Die Kupferzeit anhand von Beilen und Äxten gedeutet*.

At the end of the book, there is a catalogue of stone adzes and axes from Pietrele. Before that, in chapter *11 Fundlisten*, there is a list of adzes and axes made of flint, other types of rocks and copper from the territory of the Eastern Balkans.

Florian Klimscha's book on artefacts from the site of Magură Gorgana in Pietrele actually represents a very serious study on stone axes and adzes from the Eastern Balkans area in the Eneolithic. I have no doubt that this book, due to its methodological approach and very detailed considerations on the meaning and significance of adzes and axes in prehistoric societies, will soon be essential for every research of prehistoric stone tools and weapons from now on.

Bibliography

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