



ministère de la Culture
et de la Communication
ministère de
l'Enseignement supérieur
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de recherches
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préventives



The prehistory of the others Anthropological and archaeological perspectives on non-Western pasts

International conference organized by the French national institute for preventive archaeological research and the Quai Branly Museum
January 18th and 19th 2011

How anthropologists address the past of the “tribal” societies they study? How do these societies represent their history and how can archaeology serve to expand it? What does archaeology bring to our understanding of these “timeless” societies? What historical and archaeological perspectives should we assign to these societies? In return, can the anthropology and archaeology of non-European societies provide new perspectives for “Western” archaeologists to follow?

By bringing together archaeologists and anthropologists working on non-Western cultures, this conference intends to provide an overview of recent advances in research focusing on non-Western prehistory. General summaries and case studies will help us take stock of the diversity of the fields and the geographical areas treated during the conference.

Claude Lévi-Strauss Theatre
Free entrance

Tuesday January 18th

9.30

Opening

Stéphane Martin, Quai Branly Museum

Jean-Paul Jacob, Inrap

Archaeology and social anthropology

In English-speaking countries archaeology is considered to be a field of anthropology while in France the discipline is associated with history and the history of art. This contrast provides us with an additional source of analysis and interpretation in our endeavour to apprehend “Other Prehistories”.

Chaired by Anne-Christine Taylor, Quai Branly Museum

10 00

The Prehistory of the Others: from deny to challenge

Alain Testart, CNRS, Laboratoire d'anthropologie sociale

10.30

Only Apes have our so-called Human Nature

Marshall Sahlins, The University of Chicago

11.00

Kernels of imagination and symbolic dimensions of human relationships

Maurice Godelier, EHESS

11.30

Lascaux or the birth of “non occidental” art

Margaret Conkey, University of California Berkeley

12 00

Ceramic traditions and social identity in Africa: a different history or straight History?

Olivier Gosselain, Centre d’anthropologie culturelle, Université libre de Bruxelles

12.30

Debate

Societies in their natural environment

Providing meat and raw materials for hunter-gatherers, the natural environment gives populations certain stability. With the domestication of plants and animals, accompanied by sedentarization and urbanization, the exploitation of the environment increases—as do the risks and the upheavals.

Chaired by Danièle Lavallée, CNRS

14.30

A long-term perspective on the co-evolution of humans and their natural environment”

Sander Van der Leuw, Arizona State University, Tempe

15.00

What part did agriculture really play in the social and political structure of early Amazonia ?

Eduardo Góes Neves, Universidade de São Paulo

15.30

Little Foot at Sterkfontein (South Africa): geoarcheology of a “hunted hunter”

Laurent Bruxelles, Inrap, UMR 5608

16.00

The Early ceramic complexes of Saint-Louis on the Lower Maroni River, French Guiana

Martijn Van den Bel, Inrap

16.30

The use of shells among pre-Columbian societies of the Lesser Antilles: elements of the technical, social and cultural systems

Nathalie Serrand, Inrap, UMR 7209

17.00

The a-temporal figure of the “steppe nomad” in inner Asia
Carole Ferret, CNRS, Laboratoire d’anthropologie sociale

17.30

Debate

Wednesday January 19th

Societies and their objects

Traditionally considered to be a simple marker of time or an indication of “progress”, material culture has in the last thirty years been given a central place in both anthropological and archaeological disciplines. Through the study of “operational sequences”, material culture provides us with an insight into the technological, economic and social aspects of the past.

Chaired by Pascal Depaepe, Inrap

9.30

Pincevent between archeology and anthropology

Claudine Karlin, CNRS, UMR 7041

10.00

Soft hammer percussion in the East African Acheulean industries

Sophie Clément, Inrap, UMR 7055

10.30

Lithic experimentation in Blombos Cave (South Africa) and operational sequences

Vincent Mourre, Inrap, Laboratoire TRACES, UMR 5608

11.00

Understanding the megaliths of Senegambia: genealogy of the explanatory models
Augustin Holl, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago

11.30

The cultural unification of the Nile Valley during the 4th millennium

Nathalie Buchez, Inrap, Laboratoire TRACES, UMR 5608

12.00

To access the past of a region : The material culture of Neolithic and Protohistoric sites in dunes context in Senegal

Sandrine Deschamps, Inrap, UMR 7041

The ideal and the material

With their funerary practices and feasts, as well as their agricultural techniques and architecture, human groups integrate their symbolic activities into their everyday lives. Power, cohesion, difference, identity... a multitude of abstract qualities and conditions are expressed in the material and ideal dimensions of societies past and present.

Chaired by Maurice Godelier, EHESS

14.00

Objects for thinking what cannot be said. Converging theories of material culture studies

Pierre Lemonnier, Credo, université de Provence

15.00

Hamlets shared by the living and the dead: funerary practices of the first sedentary societies in the Middle East

Fanny Bocquentin, CNRS, UMR 7041

15.30

Material culture and symbol-objects : the question of nomadism in the steppes at the beginning of the 1st millennium

Guilhem André, musée Guimet and Hélène Martin, Inrap

16.00

Funerary rites among the Chachapoyas of the Peruvian Andes

Sonia Guillén, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Lima

16.30

A marine sanctuary in Neolithic Arabia

Vincent Charpentier, Inrap and Sophie Méry, CNRS

17.00

Decorated ignams among the Abelams of Papua New Guinea. The Operational sequence of a “total social object”

Ludovic Coupaye, University College London

17.30

Conclusion

Michaël Rowlands, University College London

18h

Debate

Programmation

Anne-Christine Taylor, musée du quai Branly

Paul Salmona et Nathan Schlanger, Inrap

Partnership : *Le Monde*, *Sciences et Avenir*, *Le Journal des Arts et France Culture*