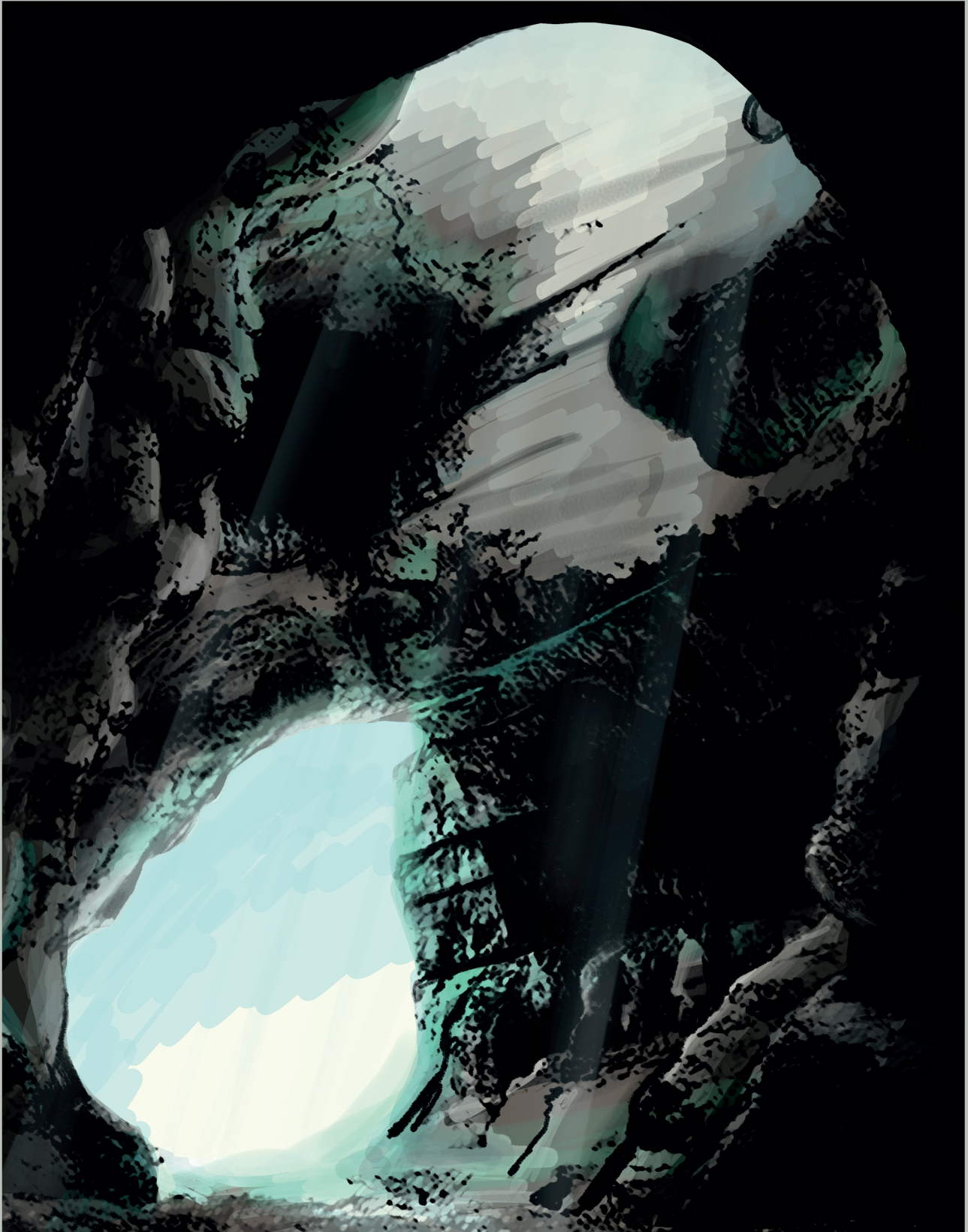


Hugo Obermaier-Gesellschaft

für Erforschung des Eiszeitalters und der Steinzeit e.V.



58th Annual Meeting in Budapest

March 29th – April 2nd 2016

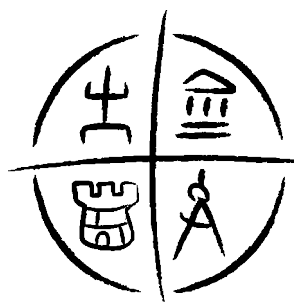
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Content (*Inhalt*)

Programme overview (<i>Programmübersicht</i>)	5
Detailed programme (<i>Ausführliches Programm</i>)	6
Abstracts of Reports and Posters (<i>Kurzfassungen der Vorträge und Poster</i>)	14
Bericht zur 57. Tagung der Gesellschaft in Heidenheim	77
List of Participants (<i>Teilnehmerliste</i>)	85

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Kseniya Stepanova

Upper Palaeolithic grinding stones from the East European Plain

The paper shows the diversity, main characteristics and spatial-chronological distribution of grinding stones from some of the Upper Paleolithic sites of the East European Plain (from the Prut–Dniestr region to the Lower Don basin) and suggests a variant of their hierarchical classification.

Grinding stones are considered as a single category of objects comprising two subcategories, associated with passive and active modes of action (principles formulated by S. de Beaune, 1989). The former subcategory includes lower grinding slabs (supports) only. They are well represented at all Upper Palaeolithic stages and in different territories (Kosoutsy 1; Doroshivtsy 3; Poushkari I; Chulatovo 2; Kostenki 4, upper layer; Borshevo 5, layer 1; Kamennaya Balka 2, upper and middle layer).

The subcategory of active tools consists of grinders (for backward and forward action, and for circular/chaotic actions), pestles-grinders and pestles. Grinders appear at the middle stage of UP (Radomyshl 1; Poushkari I). At the late stage of UP they may sometimes take the form of modified tools (Chulatovo 2; Suponevo, Divnogorie 1), resembling handstones of later periods. Pestles-grinders tend to occur at the sites of the East Gravettian circle in the central part of the East European plain (Kostenki 4, upper layer; Poushkari I; Klussy). Pestles as specialized tools are rarely found at the UP sites (Kostenki 11, Northernmost point and Mezhighirtsy 1).

Grinding stones are often used in palaeoeconomic reconstructions. Nowadays, the progress in palaeobotany makes it possible to obtain additional information on the character of worked substances. While the proposed classification doesn't take into account the character of worked materials, it is interesting to note that about a third of grinding stones bear traces of ocher.

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