

*Prehistoric Man in Europe*. FRANK C. HIBBEN. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958. xv, 318 pp., 3 charts, frontispiece, 27 illustrations, 3 maps. \$4.95.

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We have a number of recent accounts of the history of Europe before writing came north of the Alps. The most scholarly is *The Dawn of European Civilization* (sixth edition, 1957) by the late V. Gordon Childe; its weakness in interpretation is remedied in the same writer's recent *Prehistory of European Society* (1958). Still sound, both in scholarship and interpretation, is C. F. C. Hawkes, *The Prehistoric Foundations of Europe to the Mycenaean Age* (1940), while a recent popular account is Geoffrey Bibby's *Testimony of the Spade* (1956).

Professor Hibben's new book does not replace any of these earlier works, since it is neither interpretative nor documented. Rather it is a straightforward account, without references and with a woefully inadequate bibliography, of what archeology can show us about the prehistoric period in Europe. Essentially it seems to consist of abstracts, site by site, of the existing archeological reports of the area. These abstracts are given without references to the literature and usually without any mention of the excavator

who did the work. They are presented with a minimum of interpretation and with a sparing use of general concepts so that the relationship between one site and another sometimes gets lost, even to Hibben himself. This weakness appears most clearly in respect to chronology. When dates are offered, they are invariably in accord with the most recent information and make sense in the whole context of European prehistory, but the ordinary reader of the book would rarely be aware of this virtue because chronology, even relative chronology, is referred to so infrequently that the ordinary reader would find it very difficult to see the time relationships. To some extent this weakness is overcome by several chronological tables (pp. 42, 268-271), but these provide chronology by large areas and do not reveal the relationships between sites (which is the backbone of interpretation and significance in prehistory).

The basic organization of the whole book is the old technological sequence of paleolithic, mesolithic, neolithic, chalcolithic, bronze, and iron ages, although this fact is concealed to some extent by using more fanciful titles such as "Flint and Reason," "Farms and Ships" or "The Dawn of Metal" for chapter headings. These chapters, of course, are presented in chronological order, but within each chapter the sites are described in a geographical rather than a chronological arrangement. In some places, as in Chapter 8, chronology is very confused. For example, the "Danordic" is discussed before the "Corded culture," although the latter is called earlier (p. 146). In Chapters 10 and 11 there is considerable chronological confusion, since the Bohemian area (Ch. 10) is discussed before the earlier Hungarian cultures (Ch. 11; see especially pp. 216-217).

This chronological confusion does not arise only from misplacement of topics in the book. Hibben is occasionally confused himself and sometimes falls into chronological error. On page 48 he estimates the time interval from pre-Günz to post-Günz as "several thousand years" when it is closer to 100,000, but on page 61 he speaks of a "half-million" year gap between Würm I and Würm II when this interval is unlikely to be as much as 10,000 years. On page 169 the Baltic Megalithic is called "extremely late" and the date fixed "around 2300 B.C.," which could hardly be called late. Much of this chronological confusion could have been avoided if the author had used the established sequence of climate periods as his standard. But the discussion of this subject in Chapter 2 leaves much to be desired. The relationship between varves, stratigraphy, pollen analysis, carbon-14, pelagic deposits, river terraces, and raised beaches is largely missed. When the climate terms "Atlantic" and "Boreal" are used (pp. 93-96) they are not defined, and where the climate sequence could have been used to organize a period (as in Chapter 8) it is not mentioned. Moreover, all the basic books concerned with this subject such as Flint, *Glacial and Pleistocene Geology* (1957; earlier edition, 1947), Wright, *The Quaternary Ice Age* (1937), Charlesworth, *The Quaternary Era* (2 vol., 1957), Libby, *Radiocarbon Dating* (1955) or Zeuner, *Geochronology* (1950) are missing from the bibliography.

Some of the weaknesses of this book clearly arise from over-hurried writing or possibly from the fact that three authors successively worked on the manuscript. The word "megaron" is not listed in the index; when it is first used on page 212, it is assumed that the reader has already been given information which does not actually appear until pages 284-285. Scattered errors may have a similar origin; these include a statement on page 279 that Middle Minoan cities were sacked by invaders about 1700 B.C.; or one on page 36 that "removal of the Piltdown find" made the evolutionary picture "more confused than it had been"; or the failure to distinguish between Neolithic culture and urban civilizations (pp. 113-114) so that irrigation systems, prevalence of

warfare, and stratification of society are mistakenly attributed to the former rather than to the latter. There are numerous examples of confidently dogmatic statements about highly disputed matters: that the Neolithic "celt" is an ax (p. 106); that the domestication of swine is "no mystery" (p. 111); that the Mesolithic "seems to have originated in western Europe" (p. 100); or that "Minoan traders . . . were for the most part undoubtedly pirates" (p. 279).

In spite of these criticisms it must be recognized that this book required a substantial amount of work in a very difficult field. As a summary account, site by site, of what archeology has found in Europe, it has a certain merit. But as an account of what happened in prehistoric Europe it leaves much to be desired. Probably its greatest weakness is a failure to decide what audience it was intended to reach. It is too lacking in reference or specific facts to be of any value as a scholarly approach to the subject, while it is too weak in interpretation or narration to be of much value to the general reader.

The index is far from satisfactory, while the "List of Supplementary Reading" is incredibly bad. Books are listed in German, Portuguese, Czech, Spanish, French, Serb, Danish, and English. Very impressive. But these are not the works on which the text itself is based, nor are they the standard works. In the acknowledgments (p. ix) we are told that the three chapters on the neolithic are based on Milošević, but his writings are not listed in the bibliography. Burkitt's outdated *Prehistory* (1925) is listed, but his *The Old Stone Age* (3rd edition, 1955) is not. The one essential work on the mesolithic, Clark's *Prehistoric Europe: The Economic Basis* (1952) is not listed. On the neolithic we look in vain for such titles as Piggott, *The Neolithic Cultures of the British Isles* (1953) or Bailloud and Mieg de Boofzheim, *Les Civilisations néolithiques de la France dans leur contexte européen* (1955). Hibben has two chapters on flint-making, but he does not list Oakley's *Man the Tool Maker* (3rd edition, 1955). A large part of the book is concerned with the origins and diffusion of metallurgy, but the basic works of R. J. Forbes, especially his *Metallurgy in Antiquity* (1950) are not here. The wonderful new series of volumes edited by Glyn Daniel under the rubric *Ancient Peoples and Places* does exactly what Hibben is trying to do, but on a regional or cultural basis and with considerably greater authority, yet not one of the dozen volumes now available is to be found on Hibben's list.

In general, a reader can hardly escape the impression that the author delegated the bibliographical list to someone else and sent it to the printer without looking at it. And, unfortunately, a somewhat similar impression of unclear purpose and hurried performance has also crept into the text itself.