121. Stone Implements from the Rub’al Khali, Southern Arabia

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It puts the various factors that control human behaviour into their right proportions.' He believed, in particular, that 'for introducing medical students to the complexities of life it is extremely valuable, because it helps them over the boundary between physical science and the cultural sciences without a serious break.' Professor Young also pointed out that too much emphasis must not be placed upon genetic research and that 'the study of learning powers and their distribution might be as important.'

Speaking on 'The Experimental Approach to Physical Anthropology' Dr. N. A. Barnicot said that, although experimentation had indeed been of value in tracing the most probable course of primate and human evolution, the method had the greatest relevance to the study of biological variation of living populations. He presented a large number of interesting examples, genetic, physiological, biochemical, ecological and behavioural, in which the experimental method either had been or could be profitably used.

Because the genetics of many characters of human blood have now been worked out and because there is ever increasing evidence that these characters are extremely important in adaptations to particular ecological conditions, Dr. A. E. Mourant concentrated mainly on the methods for collecting, transporting and testing human blood in his paper 'Organization for Field Research.' He noted that 'the tendency now is more and more for the specialists in the various fields to co-operate in the study of particular populations.'

In his paper, Dr. J. S. Weiner dealt with 'Courses and Training in Physical Anthropology and Human Biology.' He pointed out that there are only some ten centres where active research in physical anthropology is being undertaken and that 'the total qualified personnel associated with these centres probably does not exceed 25 in all.' He further noted that only 'five are in a position to make the kind of sustained teaching impact which is a basic requirement for future progress.' In view of the fact that there is not only a need for professional physical anthropologists (in both pure and applied research) but also for the subject to be taught at an elementary level to students of medicine, dentistry, social anthropology, archaeology, ethnography, human geography and colonial affairs and, certain facets of it, at an advanced level to human anatomists, zoologists and students of social medicine. Dr. Weiner felt that there were too few University posts for physical anthropologists. He concluded that since many human anatomists are doing research which could reasonably be called human biology 'the most useful single practical step (to help the subject) that could be taken in Great Britain would be the expansion of teaching of physical anthropology at both elementary and advanced levels in departments of anatomy.'

Finally, a short paper on 'Physical Anthropology in the British Museum (Natural History)' was given by Dr. K. P. Oakley, F.B.A. He showed that there was a general demand for a single centre to function as a repository for material of anthropological interest (skeletal material, X-ray photographs, data cards, etc.) and said that the Museum was prepared to accept this role. He also briefly reviewed the research activities of the Anthropological Section of the Museum.

Dr. J. M. Tanner was unfortunately unable to attend the Symposium, but has presented a paper for the published proceedings entitled 'The Place of Human Biology in Medical Education with Particular Reference to Studies of Human Growth and Constitution.' In this he states that medicine should be taught as 'applied human biology,' and offers a curriculum for a preclinical course, centred on three major subjects, 'Cellular Physiology,' 'Mammalian Organization' and the 'Organization of Man.' In this course, genetics, ethology, growth and general pathology are integrated with the more usual preclinical subjects. Dr. Tanner also suggests that English and Mathematics be made compulsory subjects for medical students at the advanced G.E.C. level.

Each paper was followed by a general discussion. The day's proceedings were summed up by Professor Sir Sally Zuckerman, F.R.S., who, on behalf of all present, thanked Dr. J. S. Weiner for organizing the Symposium. While integrating many of the points made in the papers and discussions, he expressed concern that the Nuffield Blood Group Centre was in jeopardy and supported the suggestion that a group of professional human biologists should be established. (This is now in the process of being formed.) Finally, he said that 'physical anthropology must become professional; it must get rid of the slight tarnish of amateurism.' 'My own view is that we have simply got to face the fact that if the subject is going to live, it can only live today as part of the physical basis of demographic studies.'

Arrangements are being made to publish the papers presented at the Symposium.

Stone Implements from the Rub' al Khali, Southern Arabia.


Surface stone implements have been collected by the staff of the Arabian-American Oil Company (ARAMCO) within the triangle bounded by the Wadi Dawasir—Bahr-As-Saf—Umm Gharib in the south-western Rub' al Khali.

A new site (Station 13) located at Lat. 18° 17' 39" N. and Long. 47° 06' 58" E. was found on 9 November, 1956. This ancient camp stands on a broad gravel plain with remnants of an old lake (?) deposit surrounded by large moving sand dunes. On 13 January,
1957, Mr. O. A. Seager made a collection of flint and quartzite tools and flakes (figs. 1 and 2), which he presented to the Peabody Museum, Harvard. This surface station lies equidistant from the rich sites of Jildah (18° 48' N. and 46° 10' E.) and the Aramco camp (18° N. and 48° E.).

The implements include arrowheads, points, Solutrian-type feuilles de laurier and one discoidal scraper. The material is flint, chert and fine-grained quartzite. The surface which lay exposed was polished by the wind and sand; many specimens possess 'desert varnish.' The flint and chert implements range in colour from milky white, light yellow, grey, pink to dark brown. The quartzites tend to be dark reddish brown, but there are some pink and some yellowish pink points. The thinness of the blades combined with the delicate retouching indicates excellent pressure-flaking techniques, reminiscent of Ancient Egyptian, Western European and Danish craftsmen. Since no stratified deposit has yet been found in this area, no dating is possible. However, these implements may be assigned temporarily to a 'Neolithic' cultural phase.²

Since the completion of my map (No. 24) of the Archaeological Sites of Arabia,¹ two new surface stations have been found by Aramco geologists and surveyors. The following notes were supplied by Mr. O. A. Seager on 7 December, 1956:

1. Station 6 (18° 45' N. and 46° 10' E.) on 16 May, 1955. This locality, five miles east of Jildah, lies amid isolated gravel patches with much petrified wood between large sand ridges. The country opens to gravel plains 20-30 kilometres to the west.

2. Station 7 (17° 20' 30" N. and 47° 10' 30" E.) on 17 May, 1955, at Shaurah, a large embayment on a sandstone outcrop amid gravel plains surrounded by dune sand opening to plateau country to the south.

It seems probable that this station and the others already found within the great Rub‘al Khali served as camp sites for the ancient hunters, who sought the oryx, gazelle tahr, cheetah, wolf, hyena, jackal, fox and ostrich.

As each new site is added to the mosaic, the general picture becomes clearer. The greatest gap is from Aramco camp G-2554 (18° 18' N. and 49° 46' E.) in the Umm Gharib desert eastward to near Awaifa³ in Wadi Amair— a distance of 500 miles.

It is hoped that future discoveries in this area will be published so that valid deductions may be drawn.

Notes


³ See MAN, 1955, 145.

The Institute of Race Relations

122 A new body entitled the Institute of Race Relations has been formed 'to promote, encourage and support the study and understanding of, and the exchange of information about, relations between different races and peoples and the circumstances and conditions in which they live and work.' The Chairman of the Council of the Institute is Sir Alexander Carr-Saunders, and Mr. Philip Mason has been appointed its Director.

The Institute takes over the work on race relations hitherto conducted in the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House), which began when Mr. Mason was appointed Director of Studies in Race Relations at Chatham House in October, 1952. It was then envisaged that a separate Institute would eventually be formed and the original intention has now been fulfilled. The Registered Office of the new Institute is at 6, Duke of York Street, London, S.W.1 (telephone: Trafalgar 4161).

Closing of the Department of Archaeology, Carnegie Institution of Washington. Communicated by Dr. H. E. D. Pollock, Director

123 As indicated in recent annual reports, the Carnegie Institution of Washington is withdrawing from the field of Middle American archaeology. On 1 July, 1958, the offices of the Department of Archaeology, at 10 Frisbie Place, Cambridge, Massachusetts, will close, and the Department will cease to exist. After that date all correspondence concerned with the past activities of the Department should be addressed to the Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1530 P Street, N.W., Washington, 5, D.C.