UNION INTERNATIONALE DES SCIENCES PRÉHISTORIQUES ET PROTOHISTORIQUES
INTERNATIONAL UNION OF PREHISTORIC AND PROTOHISTORIC SCIENCES

National Archaeological Institute with Museum
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Исторически музей
Дряново

Annual Meeting of UISPP Commission 8 „RECENT UPDATES ON EURASIAN UPPER PALAEOLITHIC“

&

International Workshop „ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE EURASIAN INITIAL UPPER PALEOLITHIC“

13 - 17 October 2025

Abstract books and program



Dryanovo, Bulgaria

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PREFACE

We welcome you to Dryanovo, Bulgaria, for this joint UISPP Commission 8 meeting and "Origins and Development of the Initial Upper Paleolithic in Eurasia" workshop. Nestled in the Balkan Mountains, Dryanovo provides an ideal setting for discussing the cultural and biological transitions that shaped early *Homo sapiens* dispersals across Eurasia.

The Initial Upper Paleolithic (IUP) represents a crucial transitional period in human prehistory, characterized by technological innovations and demographic expansions during the Middle-to-Upper Paleolithic transition (50-40 ka BP). Yet critical questions remain: How did IUP blade technologies facilitate *Homo sapiens* adaptability in diverse environments while Neanderthals persisted? How can we distinguish between final Neanderthal technologies and those of early modern humans? What role did regions like the Levant, the Balkans, Central-Eastern Europe, and Central Asia play as corridors or refugia?

This meeting brings together specialists to address these themes through 51 interdisciplinary presentations, bridging paleoanthropology, ancient DNA, and radiocarbon dating, with emphasis on lithic studies within their archaeological contexts.

Scholars from 26 countries across Europe, Asia, and North America have convened to examine IUP technologies, *Homo sapiens* dispersal patterns bearing Neanderthal genetic legacy, and regional archaeological developments. This diverse participation underscores Dryanovo's significance as a hub for Paleolithic research and highlights the importance of international collaboration in advancing our understanding of early human dispersals and cultural evolution.

The program is designed to facilitate academic exchange and future collaborations through integrated events. The schedule includes visits to Bacho Kiro Cave, the inaugural exhibition at the History Museum - Dryanovo titled "Legacy in Stone and Bone: *Homo sapiens* at 45,000 Years in Bacho Kiro Cave" showcasing finds from 2015–2021 excavations, and key lectures on critical topics in Paleolithic research. These presentations focus on *Homo sapiens* dispersal patterns and Neanderthal interactions, complemented by groundbreaking ancient DNA studies of the Bacho Kiro individuals and advances in radiocarbon dating.

By combining fieldwork, museum exhibitions, and recent excavation data, this event creates a dynamic platform for interdisciplinary dialogue and hands-on engagement with archaeological evidence.

We extend sincere appreciation to the History Museum - Dryanovo and Dryanovo Municipality for their partnership, to all participants for their contributions, and to the scientific advisory team for their efforts. We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of our sponsors, recognized on the opening pages, which made this international forum possible.

Dr. Tsenka Tsanova and the organizing committees



Prof. Kozłowski in Egypte, 1978.
Photo Prof. M. Otte



In Memoriam

Prof. Janusz Krzysztof Kozłowski

1936-2025

(https://www.snap.org.pl/zmarl-profesor-janusz-krzysztof-kozlowski/)



Broksivinia, 1970. De droite à gauche: Prof. Kozłowski, Prof. N. Sirakov, Prof. B. Ginter. Photo: Prof. M. Otte



Banyoles, Colloque UISPP 1995, . Prof. Kozłowski debout en train de lire, à droite Prof. J.-Ph. Rigaud. Photo: Prof. M. Otte



Colloque UISPP de Nerja (Málaga, Espagne), novembre 2004. Visite à la grotte ornée paléolithique de La Pileta (Málaga). De gauche à droite Loudmila Iakovleva, Josep M. Fullola-Pericot, Janusz Kozlowski, Réné Desbrosse et deux jeunes préhistoriens espagnols, José Miguel Tejero et Xavier Esteve

Annual Meeting of UISPP Commission 8

"Recent Updates on Eurasian Upper Palaeolithic"

Upper Palaeolithic in Northwestern Anatolia: Where is it? What is it?

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The Upper Palaeolithic period is the least well-known era in Turkey. Despite the paucity of research conducted on the Palaeolithic in the country, the Lower and Middle Palaeolithic periods are much better known, while the finds from the Upper Palaeolithic period are almost non-existent. The reasons for this phenomenon were explained firstly, the period is comparatively brief when measured against the duration of the Lower and Middle Palaeolithic periods. Secondly, population was decreased during that period and thirdly the evidences of the Upper Paleolithic sites were destroyed due to geomorphological movements that occurred after the ice age. Nevertheless, the fact that archaeological discoveries from the Upper Paleolithic period cannot be identified by archaeologists, particularly in surface surveys, has not been cited as a reason.

In the surveys conducted in Northwestern Anatolia, blade technologies, which do not resemble the Lower and Middle Palaeolithic finds known from the region, are generally associated with later periods, Neolithic and later. The absence of typical Upper Palaeolithic artefacts like endscrapers is the reason for that, especially in this part of Türkiye, we do not know any technology resembling the Upper Palaeolithic of Europe yet.

The recent discoveries of probable Upper Palaeolithic artefacts in Karaburun, Izmir and Turkmen Mountain, Kütahya, suggest that Upper Palaeolithic technologies in this region of Türkiye may differ from those in Europe. The purpose of this presentation is twofold: firstly, to introduce the technologies in question; and secondly, to discuss the Upper Palaeolithic in Turkey.

Keywords: Upper Paleolithic Turkey, Blade technologies, Karaburun-Kütahya, Geomorphological bias