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Abstract

The seasonal Palaeolithic sites from the middle Dniester valley were reported as “kill sites” by analogy with the modern “caribou kill sites”. These sites yielded abundant remains of the extinct reindeer subspecies *Rangifer tarandus constantini* that was present in the region under study during the coldest phase of the last glaciation. The excavation of the site of Cosăuți (Moldova) unearthed numerous specimens of lethal weapons. The close range weapons are represented by pikes made of longitudinally split diaphysis of long bones, pikes with a dihedral tip and groove “to drain the blood” made of shed reindeer antlers. The group of medium-range weapons includes spearheads and darts made of bone, horn and, less frequently, ivory. Usually, the weapons of this type are double-ended, fusiform, 10–20 cm long, round in cross-section. The group of throwing weapons includes a harpoon made of reindeer antler with notched and serrated edges and a hole in its diamond-shaped basal part. The ability to hit targets at long distances is evidenced by the finds of bone arrowheads whose form and mass meet all the requirements associated with archery. They are divided into two types: the rod-like arrowheads with a displaced center of gravity and the leaf-shaped arrowheads with a partial stem.

Keywords: Middle Dniester region, Late Palaeolithic, Cosăuți site, kill sites, river crossing hunting, reindeer, bone and antler weapons.

References:

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