

Rather, switzerland,  
czechoslovakia,  
hungary, italy and  
west



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Rather, it developed different regional forms and traditions and even their periods varied. It touts of convenience and to present a simple description that all these forms have been grouped the common heading of middle Palaeolithic.

Typo-Technology: In terms of tool typology Mousterian culture is characterizes by a preponderance of flake tools, ought, even before the Mousterian's, people of comedian, claytonia and Levalloisian cultures were also making flake tools but the Mousterian's were definitely much more advanced in technology and more innovative on flakes. Moreover, flake tools were their characteristic tools. The earliest Mousterian flakes resembled those of Levalloisian.

They also made pear shaped hand axes, though smaller in size than the Chellean-Acheulian. However, later on they completely switched over to scraper of different types. It was the characteristic tool of the Mousterian's. Side scrapers have been found in largest number from different sites although points, discs, knife blades and Levalloisian flakes have also been recovered. However, in Italy the middle Paleolithic culture is predominantly based on pebbles. True Mousterian industries occur rarely in open because the climate was becoming very cold. Naturally, the Mousterian's preferred to live in rock shelters and caves wherever available. Arctic reindeer abounded and the Mousterian tool makers were trying to perfect their techniques to hunt them as easily and efficiently as possible.

Many Mousterian flakes have been found in triangular form and leveled efficiently on sides. The usual technique was to first prepare a striking

platform on the flint and then remove the flake from that place. The Mousterian's also used the bones of the hunted animals and made pointed javelined tool and implements out of them. Such javelins/spears have been found from Spain and France. Several Mousterian sites have been found in West Germany, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Italy and West Asia. On the basis of tool types and their characteristics Mousterian culture can be divided into three stages.

(a) Lower Mousterian Culture (b) Middle Mousterian Culture (c) Upper Mousterian Culture Tools from the lower Mousterian culture demonstrate a distinct Levalloisian influence and heart shaped (cord form) coup-de-poking (hand axes) have been found in substantial numbers. By the middle Mousterian the Levalloisian like tools virtually disappear from the industries and there is abundance of side scrapers and, in smaller numbers, of points, discs, etc. By the upper Mousterian phase the tools showed a definite tendency of being much smaller and dominated absolutely by small side scrapers and points.

La Quinoa may be cited as the characteristic site of such an upper Mousterian assemblage. Habitat: Most of the excavated Middle Paleolithic home sites in Europe and the Near East are located in cave and rock-shelters. The same is true for the excavated Middle Stone Age home sites in sub-Saharan Africa.

We might conclude, therefore, that Neanderthals and other early Homo sapiens lived mostly in caves or rock-shelters. But that conclusion could be incorrect. Caves and rock-shelter may be over represented in the

archeological record because they are more likely to be found than sites originally in the open but now hidden by thousands of years of sediment.

Sediment dust, debris, and decay that accumulates over time; when we dust the furniture and vacuum the floor, we are removing sediment. Still we know that many early Homo sapiens lived at least part of the year in caves. This was true, for example, along the Dordogne River in France.

The river gouged deep valleys in the lime-stone of that area. Below the cliffs are rock-shelters with overhanging roofs and deep caves, many of which were occupied during the Middle Paleolithic. Even if the inhabitants did not stay all year, the sites do seem to have been occupied year after year. Quite a few honesties of early Homo sapiens were in the open. In Africa, open-air sites were located on flood plains, at the edges of lakes, and by springs.

Many open-air sites have been found in Europe, particularly Eastern Europe.

The occupants of the well-known site at Moldova in western Russia lived in river-valley houses framed with wood and covered with animal skins.

Mammoth bones surrounding the remains of hearths were apparently used to help hold the animal skins in place.

Even though the winter climate near the edge of the glacier nearby was cold at that time, there would still have been animals to hunt because the plant food for the game was not buried under deep snow. The hunters probably moved away in the summer to higher land between the river valleys. In all likelihood, the higher ground was grazing land for the large herds of animals the Moldova hunters depended on for meat. In the winter river-valley sites archeologists have found skeletons of wolf, arctic fox, and hare with their

paws missing. These animals, probably, were skinned for pelts that were made into clothing. Environment Economy: How early Homo sapiens got their food probably varied with their environments. In Africa, they lived in savanna and semiarid desert.

In western and eastern Europe they had to adapt to cold; during periods of increased glaciations, much of the environment was steppe grassland and tundra. The European environment during this time was much richer in animal resources than the tundra of northern countries is today. Indeed, the European environment inhabited by Neanderthals abounded in game, both big and small. The tundra and alpine animals included reindeer, bison, wild oxen, horses, mammoths, rhinoceroses, and deer, as well as bears, wolves, and foxes. Some European sites have also yielded bird and fish remains.

For example, people in a summer camp in northern Germany apparently hunted swans and ducks and fished for perch and pike. Little, however, is known about the particular plant foods the European Neanderthals may have consumed; the remains of plants are unlikely to survive thousands of years in a nonacid environment. In Africa too, early Homo sapiens varied in how they got food.

For example, we know that the people living at the mouth of the Lasses River in South Africa ate a great deal of shellfish, as well as meat from small grazers such as antelopes and large grazers such as eland and buffalo. But archeologists disagree about how the Lasses River people got their meat when they began to occupy the caves in the area. Richard Klein thinks they hunted large as well as small game. Klein speculates that since the remains

of eland of all ages have been found in Cave I at this site, the people there probably hunted the eland by driving them into corrals or other traps, where animals of all ages could be killed.

Klein thinks that buffalo were hunted differently. Buffalo tend to charge attackers, which would make it difficult to drive them into traps. Klein believes that since bones from mostly very young and very old buffalo are found in the cave, the hunters were able to stalk and kill only the most vulnerable animals. Lewis Binford thinks the Lassies River people hunted only small grazers and scavenged eland and buffalo meat from the kills of large carnivores. He argues that sites should contain all or almost all of the bones from animals that were hunted. According to Binford, since more or less complete skeletons are found only from small animals, the Lassies River people were not at first hunting all the animals they used for food. Religion: Another important cultural feature of the middle Paleolithic period is the presence of their belief in super-natural and some rituals or rites to propitiate such powers.

In a number of cave sites of this period cave bear skulls have been found in definite arrangements. This is still an enigma but it definitely indicates the presence of some cult. Further, in another cave site called Sandier in Iraq the presence of flowers have been established on the basis of the analysis of wild flower pollens. These could not have reached such interiors of the caves through wind activity. The point that this place was not used for habitation lends credence to the fact that the Neanderthal man, perhaps, was trying to express his emotions through flower, indicating towards some ritual or cult.

Funeral Rituals: People of middle Paleolithic had large brains; they buried  
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their deceased and, sometimes, used to put their tools and implements with the dead body in the grave. Paleontologists are of the view that during the last glacial the Neanderthal man had become extinct and their place was taken by the authors of the Aurignac a culture, the direct ancestors of Homo sapiens.