

SESSION TITLE: Transitions after "The Transition" in the Upper Palaeolithic

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SESSION PROPOSAL:

When the word Transition appears in any forum of the palaeolithic research the prominent period of the Middle to Upper Palaeolithic transition comes immediately to one's mind. However, several transitions are visible in the Modern Human archaeological record between 36 and 10 kyears uncal. BP, which are rarely discussed and interpreted in the archaeological community.

The variable archaeological record of the Upper Palaeolithic may lead to deal with how Modern Human populations became (archaeological) culturally diverse. The palaeolithic material culture is divided into taxonomic units which are assumed to represent human societies, cultures or cultural traditions and their developmental stages. According to the lithic studies the behaviour that successfully helps subsisting humans may be in practise unchanged for thousands of years, probably by passing it from one generation to another. Therefore, lithic assemblages may be tested to genetic relations within, between, and among taxonomic units or "archaeological cultures" both in time and space by comparing technical behaviours in prehistorical perspective.

While this approach seemingly offers a clear method to study the transition, diversity and stability in the Upper Palaeolithic and Epipalaeolithic archaeological record, several other questions emerge which are planned to put under discussion in the proposed:

- Do the taxonomic units indeed represent "human cultures"?
- Are the changes in the lithic record related to the adaptation to changing environment, to diffusion of new behaviour, or to population replacement?
- How is a transition detectable and how does it take place in Modern Human lithic industries?

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