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Article ...

▼ ... in a Journal

Author:

[Bolus, Michael|PublicAdministrativeSpace: Bolus, Michael] [Conard, Nicholas J.|PublicAdministrativeSpace: Conard, Nicholas J.]

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Radiocarbon dating the appearance of modern humans and timing of cultural innovations in Europe: new results and new challenges

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irgenstein, and Vogelherd in the Swabian Jura of southwestern Germany indicate that the Aurignacian of the region spans the period from ca. 40-30 ka BP. If the situation at Vogelherd, in which skeletal remains from modern humans underlie an entire Aurignacian sequence, is viewed as representative for the region, the dates from the Swabian Jura support the hypothesis that populations of modern humans entered the region by way of the "Danube Corridor." The lithic technology from the lower Aurignacian of Geißenklosterle III is fully developed, and classic Aurignacian forms are well represented. During the course of the Aurignacian, numerous assemblages

rich in art works, jewelry, and musical instruments are documented. By no later than 29 ka BP the Gravettian was well established in the region. These dates are consistent with the "Kulturpumpe" hypothesis that important cultural innovations of the Aurignacian and Gravettian in Swabia predate similar developments in other regions of Europe. The radiocarbon dates from Geißenkloster corroborate observations from other non-archaeological data sets indicating large global fluctuations in the atmospheric concentrations of radiocarbon between 30 and 50 ka calendar years ago. These fluctuations lead to complications in building reliable chronologies during this period and cause the "Middle Paleolithic Dating Anomaly" and the "Coexistence Effect," which tend to exaggerate the temporal overlap between Neanderthals and modern humans.

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