

ized from one striking platform which is a face of the pebble. The angle between the striking platform and the debitage surface is more or less 80-90°. The removals are unipolar or crossed. Sometimes, from this unique platform, the flaking used a large part of the periphery of the pebble. Mostly, we can still observe the pebble shape on the cores. The removals are consequently less numerous and the flaking seems to be short. Humans had a great quantity of available pebbles. In this case, most of the flakes are cortical flakes, thick and with either a cortical back or an oval section (pebble cortical face). The retouches on the tools are thick and often denticulate.

The Vértesszőlös assemblages show technological rules for flaking but also an opportunistic use of the pebble shapes. Numerous pebble faces are quickly worked to give some blanks and then abandoned after sometimes a voluntary break. Other pebbles are just broken without preliminary preparation and the pebble fragments are used as blanks.

Whatever that may be, a genetic link cannot be discarded among old sites such as Vértesszőlös or even Bilzingsleben, and more recent ones in the same geographical area.⁵⁴ Microlithic trends would have to be considered as a human choice, punctually occurring again over time.

Conclusion

If traditions really persist over time within a microlithic world, without environmental explanations (for example, a lack of large pebbles), Neanderthals were able to use very small blanks coming from diverse methods. On the basis of such data, the manner in which they used these small flakes has to be considered, perhaps from a different point of view. Through technological and microwear studies, we have evidence that Neanderthals had a small tool kit, and microwear analysis suggests multifunction even if some tools could be considered as specialized regarding their type of retouches. By their morphology and the types of retouch, the small products can be viewed as the products of any assemblage. However, in the case of microlithic assemblages, the first and main question is the possible way to hold these small blanks and tools. Anthropological analysis of the Neanderthal hand provided evidence that it was more powerful than that of *Homo sapiens*.⁵⁵ These artefacts could, thus, simply be held alone at hand. Nevertheless, the morphology and the location of the retouch for most flakes can lead to other hypotheses. In Tata, as in Külna or Taubach, numerous flakes are backed, triangular or elongated. They are thick or thin. The tools are rather rare, either side-scrapers or points. The retouch is ordinary and, above all, on one face, on the cutting edge opposed to the back or on the two converging edges. The bladelets are less retouched. The points are often, in the case of Tata, with a partial bifacial retouch, especially located on the base. Various studies on points show that

⁵⁴ MANIA et al. 1980.; DOBOSI 1988.; KRETZOÏ-DOBOSI 1990.

⁵⁵ VILLEMEUR 1994.