

PRÉHISTOIRE

INSTITUT DE PALÉONTOLOGIE HUMAINE

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Paris, le 20 septembre 1967

Dear Don,

Excuse my very long delay in writing to you.

It worries me. Please, dear Don, pardon me, I had been so busy :  
December : in Lebanon, February and April : excavations in a very  
interesting mousterian site ( 5<sup>m</sup>,50 of stratigraphy and 22 levels ! )  
of Marocco, June : excavations in the Neolithic site of algerian  
Sahara, July , August and begining of september: excavations at la  
Faurélie with very good results (among a lot of artifacts  
of flint, bone, antler : a magdalenian "lamp"). So you can judge: no  
time to experiment. I have made some blades by chest pressure in  
good glass and obtained the bulb accident you showed me in france. It  
is a very curious thing and if I know how it happens I don't  
know why !... ( fig 1 )

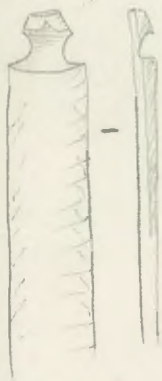


Fig. 1

I received your papers in Tebiwa. They are very  
good and very explicit ; Thank you for the citation of my experiments.  
Also your package of obsidian slabs, preforms and "precores". One or two  
slabs were broken but it does'nt matter. Once more I thank you very  
much, you can imagine the pleasure I have to get obsidian I'll soon  
work on some preforms and send you for your opinion. I'll also send  
you some very good glass for blades and retouch, capsian~~core~~ and  
blades and flint.

I saw francois during summer time and he is now  
in good health and in high spirits . He had been working much on  
blade " débitage" with punch and became very clever. Sure he will show  
you soon. He said me he plane to go to I daho. I wish Fracois and you

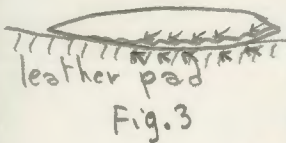
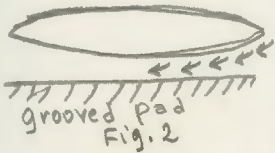
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a good " experiment time".

— Some observations I made on capsian cores and blades : During Upper Capsian the overhang left from the previous blades is always removed but it is not removed during the Neolithic of Capsian tradition so the platforms of the blades are larger in N.C.T. It is very clear when you observe the proximal end of the blades from these two cultures. Your core on grand-Pressigny untreated flint is very good but you get some step fracture so I get. Also the blades are very often broken in my experiments. I don't know why? But capsian blades are not so long. They are often of 6, 7 or 8 cm long and not so regular than yours. The platform of the capsian cores (finely preformed by percussion) is never ground ; it is refreshed all around by small flakes removed from the top of the core after one or two blades and the concave surface created by each small flake avoid slippage.

— On grooved pad:

J experimented once a grooved rubber pad. It gives easily a diamond shaped cross section and a good retouch without waves. It is very difficult to say why. It seems to me that the vibrations propagates more freely in the air (see fig. 2) but the retouch seems to be shorter than on a leather pad which gives a longer and more undulate retouch (see fig. 3) It is so difficult to me to explain it in English that J send you a separate paper on this point in french. Hope you 'll be able to obtain a translation.

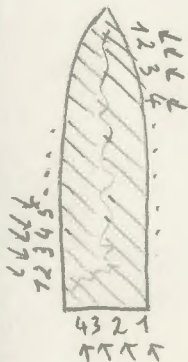


— May J ask you some questions ?

- What is "spacking" ? a word J found in one of your letters and j don't understand.

- Do you know in North or South America pieces entirely covered with parallel oblique retouch over all both faces ? J made one (glass) with inverse parallel retouch of the base (see Fig. 4) but j don't know if it does really exist !...

- About the lanceolate experiment made by your student Gene Titmus (inverse parallel retouch) : did he use a grooved pad?



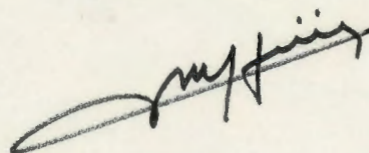
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- What is the ultimate length of blades you can remove from an obsidian core ?

It is not a new address, but J am Director of prehistory in a circumscription of France since 1964; so is Francois. Please send me your letters to Paris.

I 'ill be glad to hear mor from you  
My kind regards to Evelyne.  
Sincerely, your friend, jacques



J. TIXIER

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Fig 2 Grooved rubber pad :

Il semble que les ondes qui détachent l'éclat sous la pression de l'outil se développent librement dans l'air sans buter sur un obstacle mais sont plus vite absorbées qu'avec un "leather pad"

Fig 3 Leather pad

Quand il est bien en contact avec la pièce à retoucher il semble que les ondes rebondissent sur le cuir, sont renvoyées de nombreuses fois du <sup>cuir</sup> à la pièce donnant ainsi des ondulations plus marquées mais prolongeant aussi la retouche. Si le renvoi des ondes est trop accentué, il y a alors "step fracture", ce qui n'arrive jamais avec un "grooved rubber pad".