The "Néolithique moyen bourguignon" : summary

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by


The "Néolithique moyen bourguignon" (Burgundian Middle Neolithic) was originally coined as a chronological term; however its meaning was gradually transformed into the definition of a specific Neolithic group which occupied at the end of the fourth and during the first half of the third millennium B.C. the Burgundy, the Haute-Marne and the Franche-Comté.

Motived by our awareness of the danger of using a chronological notion (whose meaning may change with different authors from region to region) to define a civilization, as well as by a desire to improve the readability of the regional research history, we propose to retain uniquely the abbreviation: "N.M.B.”.

The cultural definition of the N.M.B. has been under discussion for some time and a diversity of names has been successively used to designate it: group of Salins, Salins facies of the Chassey-Cortaillod-Lagozza complex, eastern group of the Chassey culture, Middle Neolithic of Salins, Marcilly-sur-Tille group, Middle Neolithic of Burgundy and Franche-Comté, and, most recently, "Néolithique moyen bourguignon". In addition to characteristic artefacts (in particular certain pottery styles), the N.M.B. also includes a number of elements from the Chassey, Cortaillod and Michelsberg cultures, as well as some from older civilizations. A review of the research in this area demonstrates clearly the pitfalls of employing stylistic elements to define a civilization which appears in a contact zone, in this case between the northern and southern cultural areas. Nevertheless, a specific association of cultural elements clearly differentiates the N.M.B. from its neighbouring cultures. Although the N.M.B. is difficult to define precisely, it forms a conspicuous entity when compared with its neighbouring civilizations. As is often the case in ethnography and prehistory, the concept of N.M.B. can only be accepted in reference to the nearest neighbouring contemporary societies — (Cortaillod, Pfyn, Alsatian Michelsberg, Noyen and northern Chassey cultures) and necessitates our acceptance of their validity.

1. The geographical limits

The geographical area affected by the expansion and evolution of the N.M.B. can at present be fairly well-delineated (fig. 1).

To the northeast, the Belfort Gap was within the sphere of influence of this cultural phenomenon, whereas Alsatia in general was untouched. Little is known for the region of the Sundgau during the third millennium B.C.: the diffusion of aphanite axes may be advanced as an argument for linking it with the N.M.B. of Franche-Comté.

To the north, the relative lack of archaeological research in the departments of the Vosges prohibits us from proposing serious limits without further research.
Towards the Haute-Marne, the northwest limit of the N.M.B. may have corresponded to the southern slope of the Langres plateau. Further to the west, the N.M.B. occupied the south of the Yonne department (Avalonais), while in the central part of this same department (Auxerrois) the N.M.B. came in contact with the Noyen group.

To the southwest, the Côte-d’Or and the Chalonnais were within the expansion area of the N.M.B. Towards the south, Bugey, Bresse and Lyonnais were still a terra incognita for the Neolithic. The N.M.B. did not extend onto the opposite bank of the Rhône; however conspicuous traces of Cortaillod and Chassey cultures have been found there.

To the east the Jura mountains formed an effective and natural barrier; exceptions to the rule are the Cortaillod intrusions in the Upper Doubs valley (Abri de la Roche-aux-Pêcheurs in Chaillexon) and in the Combe d’Ain (Chalain and Clairvaux lakes).

2. Chronology

The following chronology is based primarily on C14 dating from N.M.B. contexts, but also takes into account the influences and imports of the Cortaillod within the N.M.B. area, as well as evidence of contacts between N.M.B. and Cortaillod discovered in the stratified lake-dwellings of the lakes of Neuchâtel and Biel. The dates are expressed as conventional C14 dates:

— the Chassey and Epi-Roessen groups form the original substrate the N.M.B. before than 3300 b.c.; the comparison of C14 dates from the Cortaillod of the lake of Neuchâtel suggest the beginning of the N.M.B. to be situated around 3200 B.C.

— the earlier phase of the Michelsberg culture, between 3300 and 3000 b.c., could have had an influence on the N.M.B.

— contacts with Pfyn, particularly towards 3000 b.c., may have occurred during the middle of the N.M.B. development stage.

— at Vitteaux and Clairvaux, the N.M.B. disappears in the middle of the third millennium, around 2600-2400 b.c. In the Combe d’Ain, the N.M.B. is followed by a well-developed Cortaillod facies, comparable to the Port-Conty type which is dated 2600-2500 b.c. on the Lake of Neuchâtel.

— in the southern part of the region under investigation, the general development of the Saône-Rhône complex brought to an end the N.M.B. around 2500 b.c.

— in the northern part, the successor to the N.M.B. will remain unknown as long as the relations between Horgen and S.O.M., as well as the eventual presence of other regional final neolithic groups has not been explained.

The duration of the N.M.B. can be estimated at about 700 to 800 years on the basis of conventional C14 dates, and at some 9 to 12 solar centuries, at least in the central area, after dendrochronological data from western Switzerland.

3. Pottery

It should be emphasized that prudence is necessary when comparing ensembles from very contrasting conservation contexts:

— in caves (Montceau-Echarnant), the presence of whole vessels reflect very particular conservation conditions.

— on fortified sites (Vitteaux), fragmentation of vessels conserves preferentially certain pottery forms by a selection process which is still poorly known (for example vessels with high or low placed handles are more frequently represented by the better-preserved grasps than by whole vessels).
— on lake-side dwellings (Clairvaux) the exceptional conservation conditions have preserved an ensemble of containing 100 profiles of vessels; this was the only case for which a global typometrical description is possible.

From the actual documentation (which includes a large number of Neolithic sites on the chalk table-lands) the importance of the pottery can be evaluated only on the basis of its presence or absence on each site; therefore the significance of the ceramic evidence is considerably limited.

On the technological basis, the N.M.B. pottery is clearly different from that of its neighbouring cultures:
— the Chassey vessels are well-fired, thin-walled, with dark burnished surfaces and without evident traces of coils.
— the Noyen pottery includes very thin-walled, small and large vessels, with regular and well-built forms, made of clay containing ground flint temperings.
— the Entzheim ceramic includes burnished and decorated fine ware, as well as larger vessels in yellow to reddish-brown coloured clay containing little tempering.
— the Alsatian Michelsberg pottery has brown-reddish ware fabric generally containing little tempering.
— the Classical Cortaillod vessels have a dark, well-smoothed ware fabric.

The N.M.B. pottery can be distinguished by the abundant and coarse tempering, the choice of refractory clays, the relatively systematic use of coil-built technique, the variety in the forms, and its firing temperature just below the temperature at which calcite desintegrates.

Technologically the N.M.B. ceramic is quite similar to the ceramic of the Pfyn and late Cortaillod groups.

The N.M.B. pottery includes a variety of forms which may be divided in two groups:

1. The Chassey tradition (southern Middle Neolithic I) includes round-based, carinated or lightly shouldered bowls (fig. 2:1), and carinated jars with straight to slightly incurvated walls (fig. 2:2) (Cohons, Vitteaux and Clairvaux). To this tradition, can be added hemispherical bowls (fig. 2:5), open dishes and plates (fig. 2:4), scoops with open cups and flat handles, as well as spoons. For suspension the vessel have either long perforated lugs (4-5 holes), bars or pegs (Vitteaux, Roche-d’Or, Moulin-Rouge, Chassey). Incised decorations of Chassey style appear exceptionally at Mesmont and Moulin-Rouge; also vase supports have only been found on these 2 sites. Finally the feminine figurine, found at Charigny is also of southern tradition.

Ladles and spoons, as well as sharply carinated forms ceased to exist towards the end of the N.M.B. of the Franche-Comté and in Burgundy; however, the total disappearance of the Middle Neolithic I tradition did not occur until the Final Neolithic (Chassey and Clairvaux-les-Lacs, la Motte-aux-Magnins).

2. The northeastern Middle Neolithic I tradition is represented by pseudo-tulip shaped pots with low (fig. 2:12) or conical bodies and wide walls (Gondenans-les-Monthby, level VI) (fig. 2:11), as well as by ovaloid vessels with high necks similar to the Michelsberg I-II style (fig. 2:13 and 14). This may indicate two different influences: one coming through the Belfort Gap, and the other from the Paris Basin by the intermediary of the Noyen group.

The Lutzengüetle bottle from Gondenans-les-Monthby (fig. 2:10) and the Aichbühl type vessel from Clairvaux reflect southern German influences which may be at the origin of a series of typical N.M.B. forms.

The influence of the Cortaillod tradition was more discreet, at least on pottery forms.
The oval-bodied bottles with high necks and high or low placed handles can not actually be attributed to any precise current. Although they appear abundantly in the N.M.B., they seem to belong to a common middle Neolithic background. The same is true for the “plat à pain” (bread plate) which becomes scarce towards the end of the N.M.B.

3. Thus characteristic elements of the N.M.B. culture evolved in a manner far more complex than it was formerly believed. The most distinctive elements are: 1) the shoulder-supported, two (or one) closely spaced vertical bar-handles (3 from Moulin-Rouge), 2) the pairs of buttons (the combination of both may be found on the same vessel) which follow the northeastern breasted-vase tradition (older Pfyn, Classical Cortaillod); and 3) the arch-shaped decorative motives (Chassey, Clairvaux). The association of these two elements on shouldered vessels represents one third of the pottery found in level V of la Motte-aux-Magnins (Clairvaux).

In Burgundy (Côte-d’Or, Yonne), the distinctive forms are large vessels with ovaloid bodies and distinct necks; these vessels resemble the tulip-formed Noyen pots (fig. 2:9). More common in Franche-Comté are jars and beakers of all sizes with flat bases, shouldering and vertical or indented necks (fig. 2:6 and 7); however these are also present in Chassey. The flat bowls and dishes decorated with a deep groove on the outer surface (Jura and Côte-d’Or) can also be attributed to the N.M.B. (fig. 2:8).

The Lithic Industry

The N.M.B. flake industry employed flint from various origins, most often local, as well as a great quantity of local raw materials of lesser quality such as chert. At the site of Chassey, the honey-coloured flint was no longer in use.

The flaking and the tool supports were usually made on oblong flakes; regular blade flaking is only sporadically present, in opposition to the Cortaillod and Chassey industries.

The most common tools are:
- end-scrapers made of short or oblong flakes, with frequent secondary lateral retouches and without important cortical surfaces.
- simple side-scrapers made on flakes with sometimes attenuated bulbs (Etaules, “Le Châtelet”).
- denticulated tools made on thick flakes.
- awls made on short or oblong flakes.

Pointed arrowheads dominate. Amongst the most classical forms are:
- triangular points with flat bases, most often convex edges and invasive or transverse flaking.
- similar triangular points with convex bases.
- amygdaloid arrowheads which are plenteous in Burgundy and in the central Jura.
- transverse arrowheads with step-flaked edges appear occasionally (Montmorot, Moulin-Rouge, Gigny); the lozenge-shaped arrowhead is only found at Vitteaux.

Ground-stone tools in aphanite are present from the Early Neolithic (Gonvillars XI) to the Final Neolithic—Chalcolithic (Gonvillars IX) in Franche-Comté. These were widely distributed in northern Franche-Comté during the Middle Neolithic in the proximity of the probable rock sources and workshops; they also are found on the periphery in the form of rough or finished products (central Jura, Haute-Marne). In southern Jura (Montmorot, region of the lakes) and in Burgundy, a few aphanite axes are present on each site, however they are usually replaced by hard rock axes (Etaules, “Le Châtelet”, Chassey). The N.M.B. stone supply mainly came from the Vosges, although
the Chassey levels in Chassey contain axes originating from the Alpes or the Massif Central. The aphanite axes, generally of square section, are directly hafted without an antler sleeve; hafts with sleeves were more often used for the small hard-stone axes.

5. Rough-stone tools

Rough-stone tools such as grinding and polishing stones occur in more or less fragmentary state and are made from local materials: arkose-sandstone in Moulin-Rouge and at Chassey, gritstone in Cohons, limestone in Clairvaux V. Long distance imports have also been discovered: granite originating from near the Morvan in Étuelles, “Le Châtelet” and in Vitteaux “Myard”, gritstone coming from the Vosges in Moulin-Rouge and gneiss in Cohons. The polishing-stones from level V of la Motte-aux-Magnins are generally made of green sandstone (molasse) imported from the Swiss slopes.

6. Antler and Bone Industries

The series of these objects are numerically so irregular that one can only partially attempt statistical comparisons. As with all the non-ceramical industries, specific N.M.B. forms are rare, but presence-absence studies reveal certain geographical and chronological particularities.

The ornaments are marked by the almost total absence of pendants of Mesolithic origin, of perforated teeth, and of long bones (frequent in other Middle Neolithic groups). On most N.M.B. sites, only one ornament originating in the Chassey culture is present: small bone- or pig canine-plaquettes which have cut and polished edges.

The bone industry is distinguished by the absence of double tools (double-points and -chisels) and by an intensive selection of the bones employed, mostly metapodia and ribs. One generally encounters small points and chisels on splints, chisels on long epiphyseal bones (except in Clairvaux), points with pulley-ends, points made on different epiphyses (mostly in Cohons and Clairvaux), long flat points made from ribs, and fragments of prepared pig canines.

The carving of deer antlers was preferentially made on shedded antlers of older deer and was generally carved with long retouches. Traces of transversal string-sawing are only on cylinders with axial perforations and appear to be related to their particular function rather than to cultural habit inherited from the Roessen-Wauwili culture. Antler plaquettes are above all present on sites which seem to be older (Cravanche, Gondenans, Moulin-Rouge), while tines were more frequently used at the end of the N.M.B. particularly for chisels. Hammer-axes are very rare.

Axe sleeves, on the basis of 90 known examples, can be divided into 4 types:
- straight sleeves with unretouched tenons.
- straight or obtuse sleeves with partially or totally retouched tenons without intermediary edges; these two models are the most common;
- obtuse sleeves whose the natural outer pear-like surface has completely smoothed by polishing and which are directly in connection with the entirely retouched tenon. This type is typometrically very homogeneous corresponding to the N.M.B. on the right shore of the Saône.
- sleeves with completely retouched tenons which are separated from the crown by a marginal ledge. This form represents an important technological novelty.
7. The settlement-sites

For a long time the fortified sites have been considered to be characteristic of the N.M.B. and a direct continuation of the tradition of the Roessen-Wauwil settlements on high positions near the Belfort Gap. However the problem is far more complicated: the generalization of highland settlements with a deliberate choice for hilltops, spurs and plateau edges does indeed occur in the N.M.B. Sites such as those on the “éperons-barrés” were protected by a rempart made of stone blocks against which a line of huts were built in wood and stone (Vitteaux and Cohons). However, in addition to these easily discovered fortified settlements and cave-sites, existed valley-bottom sites and lake-side dwellings. The internal structure of the valley-bottom sites is not known (Saint-Vit, Doubs; Apremont, Haute-Saône; Couternon, Côte-d’Or); in contrast the architecture and organisation of the lake-side dwellings has been well-studied (Clairvaux). A striking similarity exists between the inner organization of Station II Clairvaux with its row of houses and palissade and the architectural plan of highland sites. This type of settlement is also known in neighbouring civilizations, particularly the Cortaillod.

From our actual knowledge, it is probable that in Franche-Comté the sedentary fortified villages correspond with a dense occupation of a territory which has been colonized for a long time, whereas the open and less sedentary hamlets may be linked to slash and burn agriculture in a thickly wooded environment.

8. The Burials

Burials containing N.M.B. material are rare. The exceptions are:

- scattered, disarticulated human bones at the settlement in Cohons.
- extended or bent inhumations under a stone-packed tumulus (Mont-Vaudois in Héricourt).
- extended or bent inhumations in small stone coffins (Beaucourt, Mont-Vaudois).
- collective inhumations in stone coffins (2 x 1 m.) (Monnières, Jura).
- simple inhumations in caves (grotte de la Tuilerie in Gondenans-les-Monby, Doubs; grotte du Peuh-Trou in Montceau-Echarnant, Côte-d’Or).
- deep pits dug in alluvion (possible existence of a wooden coffin) (Grisy-sur-Seine, Seine-et-Marne) with one or two inhumations in bent position.

Two major trends are discernible for the position of the skeletons:

- the extend inhumations, particularly frequent in the Belfort Gap where the Roessen tradition is more important.
- the bent position in the southern region where the meridional influences are stronger.

On the basis of pottery fragments, L. Lepage proposes to attribute the construction of two dolmens on the Cohons plateau to the N.M.B. New examples of partial incineration such as those found on Mont-Vaudois by F. Voulot have not been encountered.

Material associated with the dead is scarce, generally limited to one to three objects. These may be aphanite axes, triangular arrowheads, perforated teeth, pottery, antler cups, pig canine ornaments and round pearls made of Unio shells.

9. The development of the N.M.B. The substrate and its function

The N.M.B. developed from substrates which are sometimes regionally quite different; this fact strengthens the originality and dynamic character of its industries.
In the northern Franche-Comté, the Epi-Roessen groups possessed an important regional tradition (Gonvillars group) and had prolonged contacts with the Upper Rhine Valley (Aichbühl, Lutzengüetle). Epi-Roessen attributes are to be found as far south as Salins. The early Michelsberg vessel from level IX sup. of Gondenans-les-Montby is also indicative of a tradition older than the local N.M.B. The same can be said to the antler plaquette working-tools.

In the lower Doubs valley and in the Salins region, there is sparse but clear evidence of Chassey ceramic and lithic industries; more to the south, along today’s vineyards, appeared a very special group (grotte des Planches-près-Arbois) which has temporarily been defined as Proto-Cortaillod (work definition, awaiting its precise definition).

In southeastern Burgundy and in a part of the Yonne, Chassey appears to have preceded N.M.B., in contact with the Epi-Roessen ceramic styles. The recent discovery of a Chassey ensemble at Beaumont (Yonne) raises again the question of the role of the Chassey culture in the origin of the Neolithic in this region.

Along the Burgundian border, the N.M.B. is influenced by the Augy style which has a Bandkeramik substrate and may be contemporary to Cerny (or earlier). At Charigny, the possibility of contact with the Augy group may be raised. In the Yonne, the collections of the Nermont cave are associated with Chassey as well as Roessen elements; this association may reflect the precocity of the east-west relations which have been more firmly established by the recent discovery at Passy (Yonne) of a tomb with a Grossgartach vessel.

In the Seine-Yonne region, the final Cerny substrate is associated with elements of Epi-Roessen (of southeastern origin), Menneville (of northern origin) and Chassey. On the basis of the documentation actually available a hiatus seems to exist between final Cerny and later Grisy (where the synthesis of northern and Chassey currents seems to be perfectly realised).

The N.M.B. substrate corresponds above all to a chronological horizon in the middle of the fourth millennium which covered a sector extending from the west to the northeast. It is symptomatic that the N.M.B. developed within the zone of contact between meridional influences (Chassey, Cortaillod) and north/northeastern (Aichbühl, Lengyel, Entzheim) influences, much in the same manner as did the Noyen culture. However it must not be forgotten that an indisputable chronological hiatus exists between this phase (3500 b.c.) and the beginning of the N.M.B. (3200 b.c.) and that this period is still poorly known.

What role did the different substrates have on the regional development of the N.M.B.? In Burgundy, the fortified N.M.B. villages are found in regions which had not been colonized by the Chassey culture. At Chassey, discordance between the levels 6 and 7 is obvious. In the Grotte des Planches, one single N.M.B. element appears at the very end of the local Proto-Cortaillod evolution when the site was abandoned. In the Belfort Gap, no continuity between the underlying cultures and the N.M.B. is apparent; however the number of examined sites is still limited and intermediary phases, showing a strictly local evolution, are certainly missing.

In the N.M.B. industry, the impact of the Chassey and Proto-Cortaillod influences is insignificant (lozenge-shaped arrowheads). More important seem to have been northeastern influences (with strong affinities with the Pfyn lithic industry) and Epi-Roessen traditions (which are characterised by the transition from the blade to the flake industry).

The manufacture on antler and bone appear to follow new technical constraints in the line of an evolution which was uniquely, limited to the Jura area and the Lake of Neuchâtel, and which appeared as early as the Classical Cortaillod phase; the importance of the cultural substrate is ambiguous. Characteristic of the N.M.B. is a specialization in a single type of ornaments of Chassey origin. The only evidence of northern influence is the existence of obtuse rodlets; in the contrast the Chassey and Cortaillod influences can be
seen in the constant diminution of the frequency of chisels on long epiphysial bones, and in the presence of points with pulley-ends, and simple axe-sleeves.

In the case of the ceramic, the Mediterranean traditions (Chassey-Cortaillod) are incontestable, particularly in low pottery forms, sharply carinated vessels, long multiperforated lugs, and certain incised decorations (Mesmont, Côte-d’Or). A Michelsberg tradition is perceptible in the vessels with individualized bodies and open necks and in the jars and bottles with low handles. Most, however, of the undecorated forms, shouldered beakers, and jars can not be attributed to Chassey-Michelsberg influences; clear comparisons can be made with the contemporary Aichbühl jars of Upper Rhine where shouldering, lugs and pegs are also present. If it were necessary to classify the influences preceding the N.M.B. uniquely on the basis of the pottery, one would first propose contacts with the Upper Rhine, and after with the Chassey and Michelsberg cultures. To support this hypothesis, it would be necessary to define the stylistic evolution in Upper Suabia and in the Upper Rhine valley between 3500 and 3200 b.c. which is actually poorly known.

In addition to the traditions originating from different substrates, the N.M.B. demonstrates a strong vitality which is particularly perceptible in specific pottery styles and in a rapid integration of exterior influences; this situation is classic in a zone of contact between northern and southern cultural zones. This analysis does not, however, solve the problem of the origin of this group for which no direct filiation can be proposed.

10. Internal evolution and contacts with neighbouring groups

Over the more than ten solar centuries during which the N.M.B. flourished, an evolution in pottery styles, as well as in other materials certainly occurred, even if it is not clearly perceptible in the actual documentation.

A proposition of an internal chronology for the southern Franche-Comté has been made:

— an early N.M.B., type Moulin-Rouge, very influenced by the Chassey and Michelsberg cultures, in which beakers and shouldered jars are still rare. This phase can be paralleled to the Noyen group.

— a late N.M.B., type Clairvaux V, with conspicuous regional characteristics, as well as repeated Cortaillod contacts. Contacts are confirmed here with the Balloy group in the Petite-Seine.

The bone industry also shows a chronological differentiation. On one hand, sites like Moulin-Rouge, the Mont-Vaudois, Roche-d’Or and the Peuh-Trou have Classical Cortaillod imports such as antler cups or axe-sleeves, as well as points with pulley-ends and chisels on epiphyses (which prevail over the other types). Of a later date appear to be sites where epiphysial points and pig canines are preponderant (example Cohons and Clairvaux).

The intermediary stage (type Montmorot) is only the result of a typological construction. This chronological attempt for the southern Franche-Comté should not be generalized for the entire region occupied by N.M.B.

In the Belfort Gap, the N.M.B. is only present in its older form; a Lutzengüetle-type bottle with a flat base and low handles was found in Gondenans-les-Montby.

For Burgundy, it is not possible to advance a well-founded chronology for the evolution of N.M.B. The sites of the Côte-d’Or show close affinities with the Paris basin; Michelsberg influences are present in Lusigny-sur-Ouche and could be at the origin of the ovoid-bodied vessels with distinct necks. On the other hand the site of Charigny is certainly earlier. The pottery forms of Myard are similar to those found at Coq Galleux in
Compiègne and at Boury-en-Vexin in a northern Chassey context (high jars with more or less wide necks, with or without lugs); this comparison suggests an evolution of the northern Chassey and Noyen cultures in parallel with the N.M.B. Chassey level 6 has flat-based ceramic forms which correspond to the pottery of Clairvaux level V and probably belong to the later phase of the Burgundian N.M.B.

Towards the northeast, the relations with the Alsatian Neolithic or with Munzingen are not clear. In order to explain the great number of jugs found in the Dessoubre valley towards 3000 B.C., it is necessary to evoke the Pfyn culture and the Upper Rhine valley. This is a curious coincidence since the same axe form is found on Entzheim sites. In addition to this fact the influence of the Michelsberg culture (also traceable in Pfyn) is well-developed immediately to the west of the Belfort Gap.

The synchronism between N.M.B., Cortaillod and the later phases of Michelsberg is apparent at the level of the interpenetration of pottery styles within the studied region, as well as in the continuity of the Chassey tradition. To the west of the Saône, appeared new styles influenced by contacts with the northwest. To the east of the Saône and in the Belfort Gap, the contacts with northeastern influences is more noticeable. And finally to the south of Salins, contact with Cortaillod profoundly marked the pottery styles.

II. The end of the N.M.B.

The emergence of the N.M.B. from regional substrate and southern (Chassey) and northern (Epi-Roessen, Aichbühl, Michelsberg) influences is difficult to discern; however some general trends have been recognized. The end of the N.M.B. is even more problematic.

— in the northern Jura and the southern Doubs no final Neolithic sites are known.
— towards the north, in the Haute-Saône and in the Belfort Gap, some pottery elements similar to those of the N.M.B. have been found in small dolmens with a perforated eastern slab (Schwörstadt type); these suggest a relation between the end of the N.M.B. and a particular funerary ritual which appeared between the Rhine and the Haute-Marne at the beginning of the Final Neolithic.
— in the Haute-Marne, the site of Cohons “La Vergentièvre” has yielded evolved, barbed, tanged lozenge arrowheads (frequent in the C.S.R.), butted axe sleeves and an undefined Final Neolithic pottery.
— at Vitteaux “Myard” in the Côte-d’Or, in the stratigraphy below the rampart protecting the N.M.B. settlement was found a Final Neolithic level (with lozenge-shaped tanged and lightly barbed arrowheads) superposing a N.M.B. level, especially in the stone extraction pits in front of the fortifications.
— at the camp of Chassey, a Final Neolithic level with characteristic traits which differ clearly from those of the C.S.R. (S.O.M.?) superposes the N.M.B. level.
— to the south of the Jura, in the Combe d’Aïn, a very long rivalry between the Cortaillod and N.M.B. began around 2800 B.C., long before the local apparition of the C.S.R. Finally the N.M.B. was replaced by a highly evolved Cortaillod facies.

This article clearly demonstrates the weakness of the regional documentation which is at our disposition for the period concerning the passage from the Middle to the Final Neolithic (with the exception of the information from the Combe d’Aïn and the sites of Chalain and Clairvaux). It should be emphasized that there exists locally no proof of evolution of the N.M.B. towards one of the known Final Neolithic civilizations (Horgen, S.O.M., Corded ware, C.S.R.). The Final Neolithic styles which developed within the N.M.B. area of influence may be intrusive or may attest a strong stimuli from the exterior.

(Traduction: C. Dunning; K. Lundström)