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Reading Europe's Paleolithic Writing

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During the late Bölling temperate climate phase, c. 12,500 years BC., there was a hunter/gatherer circular dwelling of the Magdalenian $\Sigma$ culture on an old terrace above the eastern bank of the Rhine River. The floor around the dwelling's central hearth was paved with engraved slate tablets. Here we read three engravings found at Gönnersdorf by interpreting drawings of the slates by Gisela Fischer.
She drills to fit in tie cords.

Cut lumber with stone tool.

Drill wood to fit in tie cords.

He drills to fit in tie cords.
dig with antler shovel

foundation trench

centerpole hole

holes for vertical wall beams
roof's inclined beams set

and tied

footed then braced

[s]he ties to vertical frame

then sets radial beams
set house frame

door sill in place

set in frame

double doors frame

tie tie in

horizontal beams
Inside only charcoal and animal-chip tiny fires are possible. Smoke vents are built to reduce roof melt drip-down and ice in well-insulated Magdalenian hide houses. Air channels are built to burn outside air and prevent carbon-monoxide poisoning. Gönnersdorf's flue rises from the air channel below the floor to the smoke hole.
The climate is dry. However, fall, spring, and summer rains will make the home dismal unless roofing hides are glued, overlapped like large shingles, and doubled. Magdalenian hunting clans had extensive knowledge of glue-making, waterproofing, dyeing, and paints heavily laden with clays which fireproofed the hide houses and created white interiors, vastly enhancing illumination by oil lamps.
set beams of wall

then tie in

make double walls

sleep places

with boughs hides furs
Gönnersdorf 161
Fire starter's Drill Handle
The stone is a fire drill handle with a center hole in its under side within which the drill spins. While bowing with one hand, the palm of the other hand presses down upon the stone's engraved surface to increase friction.
Lunar months are easily followed; however, lunar years and solar years are not commensurate from year to year, though they are much closer to being commensurate over five-year cycles; and this was known at Gonnersdorf, 12,500 years BC.
Horses are hunted during the 8th and 9th crescent moons near the Summer Solstice for hide used for walls and roofing of the winter house. At the same time, long mane and tail hair is used for cording, hoofs to make glue and waterproofing, and for wool, bone, and meat.
horse legs and buttock

horse's wet turd

near Summer Solstice
7th to 8th crescent moons
children collect dry horse turds for fuel during 10th to 11th crescent moons

link line from children to dry horse turds
horse turds drying during Autumn and Winter months

burning dry horse dung during 13th lunar month

From at least the 10th crescent moon through winter indoor fires are a necessity. Large fires cannot be risked in the winter house of hides. Dried bison chips, horse dung, charcoal, fats, oils and very small hardwood fires can be built in-doors.
[s]he starts fire in winter

presses down on fire drill stone

bows spinning drill

bow tinder cord wound around drill
Gönnersdorf 4
Needle - Making Stone
**Gönersdorf 4**

**Needle-Making Stone**
At Gonnersdorf they work with bone, antler and ivory to make needles, awls, darts, and spearpoints. Precious ivory is traded for finished goods. Work-intensive textiles, footwear, ivory needles and carvings are traded for raw materials.

he brings to her tusk bone tooth hoof hide antler

she works in the house with hair deer wool

she spins in the house threads makes cord
To make an ivory needle with the least probability of breakage and waste: saw flattened slat, drill hole in slat, grind needle about the ready-made eye, and polish by rubbing back and forth in a groove on the needle making stone.

clamp to saw piece of tusk

shape needle in groove

drill slat for needle eye

polish in groove

Seven grooves on the stone are used to grind needles. Four are straight and three are curved, which makes grinding points easier.
she makes needles

threads needles

she sews

garment to trade

old spinster
in long skirt

sews

garments

young spinster
trades

finished needles to trade
works cited
