

EDITORIAL COMMENT

This special calibration issue of *RADIOCARBON* is an offshoot of the Proceedings of the 12th International Radiocarbon Conference, Trondheim, June 24–28, 1985 (*RADIOCARBON*, Vol. 28, No. 2A). Current “state of the art” radiocarbon age calibration is discussed in 12 papers. The age range covered by tree rings (with ages derived from dendrochronologic methods) approaches 10,000 yr (Fig 1). The various time intervals covered include the most recent millennia where the twin papers of Stuiver and Pearson and Pearson and Stuiver constitute *the* internationally accepted calibration curve for the AD 1950–2500 BC interval. This curve is based on the measurements of bi-decadal wood samples. More detailed time separation for the same interval can be obtained from the Stuiver and Becker curve which is based on decadal data.

Pearson *et al* provide a bi-decadal data set for the 4500–7200 cal yr BP interval. This interval is also covered by sections of Vogel, Fuls and Visser, de Jong, Becker and Mook, and Kromer *et al*. Bristlecone Pine data are given by Linick *et al* for the 7300–8500 cal yr BP stretch. Kromer *et al* and Stuiver *et al* go back to ca 9200 cal yr BP through ^{14}C matching of floating German Oak chronologies. Becker and Kromer and Kromer *et al* provide information on the $\Delta^{14}\text{C}$ levels back to 9800 cal yr BP, and Stuiver *et al* use varve chronologies for the tentative calibration of a few additional millennia.

A calibration curve for marine samples is available back to 9200 cal yr BP (Stuiver, Pearson & Braziunas).

The calibration curves and tables provide the maximum amount of information for a single issue of *RADIOCARBON*. But the conversion procedure which involves curve reading and number interpolation is rather cumbersome. The solution, of course, is a computerized version of the conversion process. An IBM compatible program is described in the Stuiver and Reimer paper. This program converts radiocarbon ages, with associated standard deviation, into cal ages and cal ranges. The program which utilizes the above data sets, can be obtained from the Quaternary Isotope laboratory, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington 98195, USA, on a floppy diskette. For additional details, see Stuiver and Reimer.

The cal AD/BC (cal BP) nomenclature recommended by the Trondheim meeting has been used throughout the calibration issue. Further discussions on nomenclature are planned by the archaeological community for the Symposium on C14 and Archaeology, to be held in Groningen in September 1987.

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