

## CHRONOSTRATIGRAPHIE DE LA SECONDE MOITIE DU PLEISTOCENE SUPERIEUR EN MOLDAVIE

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Paleolithic sites are particularly numerous in the regions of the Middle Basins of the Prut and Dniestr, notably because of the abundance of good quality raw material (flint) present in the chalky formations that are cut through by the rivers. Among these sites, Molodova, Korman and Ripiceni are the most famous, but inaccessible because they are covered now by the Prut and Dniestr.

In the scope of the Sc-004 project, the IRSNB and the Université de Liège team gained access to two large sedimentary and archaeological sequences: *Mitoc Malu Galben* on the Roumanian bank of the Prut and *Cosautsi* on the Moldavian bank of the Dniestr.

The sequence of Mitoc Malu Galben provided a  $\pm 14$  m thick loess record incorporating a large number of occupation layers and workshops belonging to the Aurignacian and Gravettian cultures. The stratigraphic column, subdivided into 14 sedimentary cycles, reflects in fact a complex climatic sequence encompassing the second half of the Interpleniglacial and the Upper Pleniglacial. On a set of 31 consistent  $^{14}\text{C}$  datings on charcoal and occasionally on bone material, the period of human activity at Mitoc could be situated precisely between  $\pm 32,700$  and  $\pm 20,000$  BP.

At Cosautsi, an Upper Paleolithic multilayered site on the west bank of the Dniestr in North-East Moldavia, a  $\pm 15$  m loess record provided a stratigraphic sequence encompassing all the Upper Pleniglacial and the Late Glacial periods. The interest of this sequence also lies in the fact that more than 15 distinct occupation horizons were found in it and because these horizons (about half of them anyway) have delivered remarkably documented remains of Upper Paleolithic encampments with abundant stone and bone industries mostly associated to multiple hearths rich in charcoal, that were dated recently in Gröningen between  $\pm 19,400$  and  $\pm 17,000$  BP. Because this sequence records to the smallest detail the climatic variations of this crucial period (end of Pleniglacial and Lateglacial), the multidisciplinary approach of this remarkable site is making up one of the key elements of our study to increase the knowledge of the climatic transition leading from the maximum of the last glaciation to the beginning of the Holocene.

All in all, Mitoc Malu Galben and Cosautsi did provide two remarkable stratigraphic records, associated with multiple Upper Paleolithic occupation horizons, of which an accurate chronology was able to be done due to the large number of new  $^{14}\text{C}$  datings. What's more, these two sequences were found to be totally complementary and covered the whole of the period between  $\pm 32,000$  BP and the beginning of the Holocene.