Research Highlights

Neanderthals on the East European Plain: Excavations at Neporotovo 7 (Middle Dniestr valley, Ukraine)

Philip R. Nigst (Division of Archaeology)

The NEMO-ADAP research project (http://www.arch.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/nemo-adap) aims to investigate adaptive strategies of Neanderthals and modern humans and their responses to changing environmental conditions. In doing so, the project focuses its current field research in Central and Eastern Europe on loess-palaeosol sequences with a rather high palaeo-environmental resolution. The 2014 fieldwork in the Middle Dniestr valley (Ukraine), directed by Philip R. Nigst and Larissa Koulakovska (Museum of Archaeology, Institute of Archaeology, Kiev), was conducted in July and August 2014. We excavated three trenches at the Middle Palaeolithic site of Neporotovo 7 (discovered during the project’s survey work in July 2012), and collected lithic samples, as well as abundant samples for OSL and radiocarbon dating, for soil micromorphological studies and for pollen analysis. In the course of our work we were able to document four archaeological horizons, and excavated an area of c. 10 m$^2$ in two of them. These two Middle Palaeolithic horizons are currently placed in the Early Glacial and Early Pleniglacial respectively. During our 2014 fieldwork we also cleaned sections to explore the lateral variability of the deposits over a distance of c. 90 m; this work is scheduled to continue in 2015.

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Rock Art of Northern Russia

Liliana Janik (McDonald Institute)

The focus of this year’s research represents the outreach aspect of the Rock Art of Northern Russia project and aimed to create different ways in which various constituencies disseminate the results of the project. The emphasis of this grant was to take a leading role in providing graphic aid for visually impaired communities to explore prehistoric art. A booklet in half relief (with RNIB consultation) was created by Ms K. Szczęsna, a member of the Rock Art of the White Sea research project, and Dr L. Janik, as teaching material for learning about prehistoric art, and how skiing as a winter activity and sport developed. The voice commentary accompanying the pamphlet graphic and text was prepared simultaneously in Russian and English similarly to the project web page http://www.arch.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/northern-russia

Rock art (Zalavruga, Russia) skiing composition, subject of the booklet for the visually impaired.

Neporotovo 7: Sections along the Dniestr River Reservoir Lake.
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