

Archaeological Sites and Associated Vertebrate Fossils in the OIS3 Stratum of the Baikal Area, Siberia

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It has become evident that the area around Lake Baikal during the last glacial period was an area where anatomically modern humans developed and acquired the cultural adaptations required for migration to northeast Eurasia and the New World. The authors have conducted an archaeological survey of the widely distributed sites in upper Pleistocene strata of the area, and plan to elucidate activities showing human adaptive behavior to the environment in the OIS3 level period, in a collaborative interdisciplinary research project. After securing funding, the research began in 2009.

In the summer of 2009 excavations took place at the Bol'shoj Naryn site (53°N, 103°E)¹ on the south shores of the Bratsk Reservoir. From the Karginian Interstadial paleosol (approx. 25-55,000 yBP), the excavations have unearthed numerous stone and bone implements, and also fossilized remains of vertebrates, mainly horses, as well as concentrations of organic carbon that may be the remains of fireplaces. During their residence in Irkutsk the authors also examined archaeological materials from the Gerasimov and Sedova sites, excavated in recent years during the course of the redevelopment of the city.

A part of the results of the research reported here has been publicized on the internet (at: <http://www.flet.keio.ac.jp/~sato/21251009/>). In the next years we plan to proceed with further detailed studies of the stone tools, bone artifacts, and fossilized animal remains from the three sites, as well as collect and organize information for an exhaustive database of Pleistocene sites in the Baikal-Siberia region.

¹ Sato T. *et al.* (2008) Vertebrate fossils excavated from the Bol'shoj Naryn site, East Siberia, *Quaternary International* 179: 101-107.