

Attempts to identify the possible existence of traces of Palaeolithic man in the caves of the Polish Tatra Mountains at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century were unsuccessful. Until now, knowledge about prehistoric settlement in both the Slovak and Polish Tatra Mountains is close to zero. The Early Iron Age finds from the Dupnica Cave are an exception. Until today, unexplained indications that the Tatra Massif was also penetrated earlier, in the Stone Age, are single loose finds accidentally discovered both in the Slovak part (e.g. the Eneolithic copper axe from Velka Studena Dolina) and the Polish part (e.g. the Neolithic flint core from the Kondratowa Valley) of this mountain range. This state of uncertainty was weighed last year in favour of the undoubted evidence of the settlement of the late Paleolithic Magdalenian culture, obtained from the first surveys in the Hučiva Cave in the Belianske Tatras in Slovakia. As part of the project, interdisciplinary, comprehensive excavation works at this site will be undertaken. On the Polish side of the Tatra Mountains, exploratory research will be undertaken to select a cave facility that meets the conditions for similar research. One of the realistic possibilities is to excavate the Oblazkowa Cave in the Mylna Cave group. In the first place, the project covers archaeological issues. The group of Magdalenian monuments from the 13th millennium BC obtained last year is unique, among other things because of the set of blades and tools very rarely found in the inventories of this culture in Central Europe. These original traces of settlements with a fire, relics of a flint workshop, a bone needle and a rich set of faunal remains will significantly complement the knowledge of both the taxonomy of the Late Palaeolithic and the range of the main cultural complexes to the north from the middle Danube and in the Vistula rivers basin, as well as the natural environment of the Late Pleistocene in this part of Europe. The project aims to explain the settlement potential of this mountain group, which varied during the dynamic changes of the natural environment in the Pleistocene and the first half of the Holocene.