

UPPER PLEISTOCENE GEOARCHAEOLOGICAL AND DEPOSITIONAL ENVIRONMENTS OF KOREA

KIM J. Y. and Yang D. Y. (Korea Institute of Geology, Mining and Materials, Yaejon, Korea)

In Korean Peninsula there are numerous open-air prehistory archaeological sites. Quaternary geology of them are typified by alluvial to fluvial terrace sequence at the lowermost part and slope deposits on the upper part. The lower alluvial terrace sequences are mostly related with interglacial period when sea level was higher than present. This old sequence, which is composed of terrace gravel deposits and old river deposits, is commonly found at the river valley. The river valley was repeatedly sedimented and eroded out after Middle Pleistocene. Particularly during the Last Interglacial, the river bottom, was above 10m to 15 m higher than that of the present. The depositional sequences are mostly composed of either sand or gravel bar deposits along the main river channels, or old fluvial terraces deposits, which are developed parallel to the main river channels.

Above the old fluvial deposits are the last glacial depositional sequences which are genetically classified as slope deposits in most cases, and partly intercalated with old fluvial deposits, including backswamp deposits. These deposits contain weathered clastic particles, transported from the mountains by solifluction and mass movement above the old terrace surfaces. They are very poorly sorted or even completely unsorted including angular and gravelly rock fragments with a matrix of fine-grained materials. Some degree of pedogenesis was imprinted in the palaeosurface under the influence of palaeo-climatic change. where cold climatic evidences are preserved within these slope deposits.