



## *Developing Geoarchaeological Approaches to the Palaeolithic Surface Record of Saudi Arabia*

### **SEMINAR PRESENTED BY THE CENTRE FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL SCIENCE (CAS)**

**DATE:** THURSDAY 9TH JUNE

**TIME:** 12:30PM-1:30PM

**VENUE:** 43.G01, UOW

**PRESENTER:** ROBYN INGLIS

Robyn Inglis is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Global Fellow at the University of York UK, currently based in the Department of Environmental Sciences, Macquarie University. She utilises geoarchaeological techniques from the site to landscape scale (soil micromorphology, sedimentology, geomorphology) to examine human-environment interactions during the Late Pleistocene, with a particular emphasis on the emergence and global spread of modern humans in presently arid and semi-arid environments. Her research focuses mainly on the Middle East and North Africa, and most recently on the relationship between landscape evolution, lithic artefact distribution and hominin behaviour in Southwestern Saudi Arabia.

### **SEMINAR OVERVIEW:**

Southwestern Saudi Arabia possesses a surface record key to understanding the conditions of Pleistocene dispersals out of Africa. How different *Homo species* (*H. erectus*, *H. sapiens*), utilised their landscapes, and subsequent implications for their abilities to disperse from Africa is poorly understood. Added to this, interpretation of past hominin landscape use from present-day artefact distributions is not straightforward. Distributions are the sum of varying behaviours over time, while landscape evolution alters the distribution and availability of resources linked to these behaviours (e.g. water, raw materials), and the differential preservation and visibility of archaeological evidence. Only by developing a robust, well-dated model of landscape evolution, and detailed recording of surface artefacts in relation to the geomorphological units comprising the landscape, coupled with theoretical paradigms that engage with the variable time depth of surface assemblages, can the potential of this record for informing on past hominin landscape interactions be realised.

This talk will outline geoarchaeological approaches to these challenges that are currently being taken as part of the EC-funded SURFACE project (2016-2018). This project will develop and apply the geoarchaeological approaches to lithic artefact distributions in the landscape established by researchers in Holocene arid Australia and Egypt to the Pleistocene surface record of the Southwestern Saudi Arabia in order to understand further how successive populations of hominins dispersed across the globe.



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