



New Geoarchaeological Views at the old Palaeolithic site of La Ferrassie, Dordogne, France

SEMINAR PRESENTED BY THE CENTRE FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL SCIENCE (CAS)

DATE: FRIDAY 10TH FEBRUARY

TIME: 3:30-4:30PM

VENUE: 41.G03A, UOW

PRESENTER: DR PAUL GOLDBERG

Paul Goldberg is a geologist by training and Professor Emeritus of Geoarchaeology in the Archaeology Department of Boston University, and Senior Professorial Research Fellow, CAS, University of Wollongong. He has investigated prehistoric cave sediments in Israel and France, and Quaternary landscapes in Israel. He has developed the technique of micromorphology and its application to geoarchaeological problems, which resulted in the publication of *Soils and Micromorphology in Archaeology* (1989). His main interests still focus on micromorphology and its application to the study of site formation processes and is currently researching Pleistocene caves in France, Indonesia (Liang Bua), and Siberia (Denisova), and anthropogenic deposits from later time periods: e.g., Spanish Civil War trenches, 16th century Spanish settlements in Jamaica, and Iron-Age/Roman sites in Menorca.

SEMINAR OVERVIEW: *GEOARCHAEOLOGICAL VIEWS AT LA FERRASSIE, DORDOGNE, FRANCE*

The site of La Ferrassie (Dordogne, France) is one of the best-known Middle and Upper Palaeolithic sequences in Europe and is famous for its eponymous Ferrassie Mousterian industry. Its well-preserved Neanderthal remains (LF1 and LF2 and 5 other individuals), have played a major role in the debate about Neanderthal mortuary behaviour. New excavations (2011-14) re-exposed intact layers in the western area of the site immediately adjacent to the location of LF1 and LF2. Geoarchaeological goals of the recent project included reconstruction of the stratigraphic, sedimentary, and environmental histories of the western area, and evaluating the stratigraphic context of the Neanderthal remains. Field and micromorphological evidence reveals that sedimentation in the west differs substantially from that in the east. Although the taphonomy of the most complete Neanderthal specimens LF1 and LF2 is still open to interpretation, it is clear La Ferrassie was not a Neanderthal cemetery.



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