

*The Archaeological Institute of America Toronto Society and the UofT Archaeology Centre present an illustrated lecture:*



## **“Pleistocene Dispersals and the Paleolithic Archaeology of Anatolia (Turkey)”**

*By Steven Kuhn, Anthropology University of Arizona*

**Wednesday December 9, 2015 at 5:00 pm**

**Location: Bahen Centre Rm BA1200 40 St George St, Univ of Toronto**



Evidence from genetics has revolutionized our understanding of population movements in the deep past, painting a more complex picture of early human dispersals than had previously been imagined. Accounts of dispersals into Eurasia often assume that Anatolia (Asian Turkey) served as a land bridge connecting Europe with the Near East and ultimately Africa. Predictably, the situation on the ground is less clear. In fact, very little is known about the presence of humans and human ancestors in Anatolia during the Pleistocene. The scarcity of evidence is partly a consequence of limited research, but it also reflects the difficulty of locating Pleistocene-aged deposits in central Anatolia. Excavations at the site of Kaletepe Deresi 3 and a five-year survey project within the Göllü Dağ volcanic complex has helped sketch out a general framework for early human presence in central Anatolia. The area was especially attractive to Pleistocene humans because it contained an abundance of obsidian, prized for tool making. The excavations and survey reveal that hominins occupied the area during the Lower and Middle Paleolithic periods, beginning more than 500,000 years ago. Evidence for occupation during the Middle Paleolithic period, probably by Neanderthals, is especially well represented. Surprisingly, surveys identified no evidence for presence of humans during the Upper Paleolithic, raising questions about the route of the most recent dispersals of *Homo sapiens* from Africa to Europe.

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