

Preface and acknowledgements

Compiling and editing this volume has entailed a lengthy gestation process. There are 24 chapters in this monograph, some of which were readied for publication in 2007 while others took much longer to prepare and, allowing for editorial comments and corrections, were completed at the end of 2010. The volume grew out of a multidisciplinary research project with the main excavation occurring in month-long field seasons over four years from 1995 to 1998. Some of the preliminary results of this work appeared in 'Neanderthals on the Edge' (edited by Stringer, Barton and Finlayson 2000) and a companion volume on 'Gibraltar during the Quaternary' (edited by Finlayson, Finlayson and Fa, 2000). The excavations were led by the Natural History Museum and were funded by generous grants from the British Academy, National Geographic Society, Leakey Foundation, Natural History Museum, Society of Antiquaries, NERC, Oxford Brookes University, and Oxford University. The project was in partnership with the Gibraltar Museum who also secured funding for the excavations via the Gibraltar Heritage Trust, Gibraltar Earth Sciences and Archaeology Trust, and the Government of Gibraltar. We would like to thank them and all of the volunteers from Gibraltar, Spain, UK and other areas of the world who worked with us on the excavations of the caves.

The volume is divided into two main sections that focus on the results of excavations at Gorham's and Vanguard Caves. This is preceded by an introduction to the project and there is a final section that reflects on the wider implications of the study of these two major Neanderthal occupation sites. Each cave may be read as an separate site report, with the primary evidence and analysis presented by stratigraphic context and according to the area of specialism. The specialist topics are arranged broadly in the same order for each of the sites to facilitate comparison. Where overlap occurs, for example in presentation of the coprolitic evidence, a single chapter covers the results of both caves. Some of the chapters have grown out of postgraduate theses and the titles of these dissertations are provided below for further reference. In one instance, the initial study of molluscs was not written up as chapter. This will be dealt with as part of another volume being prepared by members of Gibraltar Museum. Inevitably, in editing this monograph, some concessions have had to be made and these include the use of black and white illustrations in place of colour. In cases where colour is important to the interpretation we have compensated by making images available on-line and these can be found on the Oxford University website

(www.arch.ox.ac.uk/monographs/gibraltar). In bringing this monograph to its final publication stage, I have relied very heavily on the help of a small group of people who have given unstintingly of their time and assistance. In particular I would like to thank Ian Cartwright and Alison Wilkins of the Institute of Archaeology's Photography and Illustration Unit and to Cath Price and to Lynda Smithson of Oxford University for their eagle-eyed attention to detail in spotting typographical and other mistakes, and for their all round copy-proofing skills. As co-editor, I take full responsibility for any errors that have survived this process. Clive Finlayson would also like to state that not all of the views expressed in this monograph are necessarily shared by himself.

In a rapidly evolving field of scientific endeavour, there are undoubtedly some aspects of work in this monograph that will require updating and development sooner than others. We hope, however, that the data presented here will provide a narrative of the excavation and site archives that others will find relatively easy and useful to follow.

The 1995–1998 project excavations gave rise to a number of postgraduate dissertations and provided raw material for some of the chapters. These include:

- Bell, A. 2002: *Climate and environmental evaluation of two Neanderthal-occupied cave sites on Gibraltar, using molluscan evidence*. (Unpublished MSc Dissertation, Reading University).
- Cáceres, I. 2002: *Tafoonomía de yacimientos antrópicos en Karst. Complejo Galería (Sierra de Atapuerca, Burgos), Vanguard Cave (Gibraltar) y Abric Romani (Capellades, Barcelona)*. (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Tarragona)
- Cooper, J.H. 1999: *Late Pleistocene Avifaunas of Gibraltar and their Palaeoenvironmental Significance*. (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Royal Holloway, University of London).
- Jennings, R.P. 2007: *The Human Occupation of Southern Iberia in the Late Pleistocene* (Unpublished DPhil Thesis, Oxford University).
- Ward, S. 2007: *Reconstructing Late Pleistocene Vegetation Dynamics from Archaeological Cave Sites in the Western Mediterranean: Links with Climate and Cultural Changes*. (Unpublished DPhil Thesis, Oxford University).

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