Institute of Archaeology
2020/2021, Term 1

ARCL0077 Archaeology in the World
Third Year 15 credit Core Course

Coordinator: Dr Miljana Radivojević
m.radivojevic@ucl.ac.uk

Online office hours: Thursday 4.30-5.30pm, Friday 2-3pm on Microsoft Teams (UK time).
Sign up online here.

At other times via the ARCL0077 Moodle Forum (essay/ class-related queries) or email (personal queries).

Please refer to the online IoA Student Handbook (https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-student-handbook) for instructions on coursework submission, IoA referencing guidelines and marking criteria, as well as UCL policies on penalties for late submission.
1. **MODULE OVERVIEW**

**Module description**

The purpose of this module is to help you develop your grasp of the ‘bigger picture’ and enhance your ability to communicate it. The ability to answer the ‘so-what’ question is vital for further academic development, but is also a valuable skill in many walks of life. A short lecture series will discuss the idea of ‘big’ or ‘deep’ history, ‘grand challenges’ and the role of archaeologists as public intellectuals, and will provide examples of some of the big themes to which archaeology can contribute. You will then take one of these themes or another of your choosing and explore how information and approaches learned in your 1st and 2nd year courses, fieldwork and extra-curricular experience can illuminate that theme. The course is taught using a combination of lectures, group discussion and some practical work. It is assessed via the construction of two written pieces that have a different (popular form), and you will be supported to develop the technical and writing skills necessary to achieve this. It is important to understand that during this we course we may revisit some topics that you have already encountered in the first or second year, but where that is the case we are expecting you to use the opportunity to explore how the ‘facts’ (which you may already know) connect to other topics and/or can be used to develop bigger narratives of potentially wide interest.

**Module Aims**

This module seeks to prepare you for graduation by providing a space in which you can draw together the various strands of archaeology that you have learned about and also reflect upon the relevance of archaeological knowledge for wider debates about the past, present and future of humanity. It aims to:

- Prepare you for higher-level academic study by providing additional intellectual training in how to use knowledge and understanding of particular cases to inform thematic research;

- Enhance your employability by preparing you to be able to draw on your archaeological knowledge and skills to address issues of wide concern to companies, NGO’s, local and national governments, policy ‘think tanks’, etc.;

- Inspire and equip you to be enthusiastic, thoughtful and articulate ambassadors for archaeology in wider society.

**Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this module you should:

- Possess knowledge of how archaeology can inform debate surrounding several major issues facing humanity;

- Possess knowledge of one particular big theme and be able to demonstrate how knowledge and skills you have acquired in other modules are relevant to it;

- Have enhanced your understanding of the potential and limitations of making inferences from the particular to the general;

- Be able to communicate the significance of archaeological findings to a non-specialist audience.

**Methods of Assessment**

This course is assessed by means of producing two courseworks:

1. A 1,000 word review of the museum object / site that resonates with contemporary issues (e.g. repatriation, race, pandemic, famine, poverty, conflicts etc) (25%)
2. A 3,000 word popular science article (blog) on the topic of choice, which includes in its elaboration a minimum of 3 different case studies (75%) Both are to be written in an accessible language to the wider audience, mainly with some academic / scientific background.

Communications
- **Moodle is the main hub** for this course.
- Important information will be posted by staff in the **Announcements section of the Moodle page** and you will automatically receive an email notification for these.
- Please post any general queries relating to module content, assessments and administration in the **MS Teams Module forum** (Link) (or alternatively in Moodle Q&A or via email if you prefer). The forum will be checked regularly.
- For personal queries, please contact the co-ordinator by email.

**Week-by-week summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Lecturers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>08-Oct</td>
<td>Introduction to the course; Big themes and Deep History</td>
<td>MR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15-Oct</td>
<td>Grand Challenges and Grand Narratives</td>
<td>ML</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>22-Oct</td>
<td>Communicating Archaeology and Communicating Archaeologists</td>
<td>GM/MR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>29-Oct</td>
<td>Escaping Inequality: Can the Past Reshape our Future?</td>
<td>DW/MR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>05-Nov</td>
<td>The Future is Rubbish</td>
<td>EG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>12-Nov</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>17-Nov</td>
<td>Niche construction from Early Agriculture to the Anthropocene</td>
<td>DF/MR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>26-Nov</td>
<td>The Future of Archaeology in the UK: archaeology under the UK planning system and the policies that protect it</td>
<td>HM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>03-Dec</td>
<td>Popular Science writing Workshop; Electronic Resources</td>
<td>ML/BH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>10-Dec</td>
<td>Brexit and the Collapse of Empire</td>
<td>AG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>17-Dec</td>
<td>Feedback and grant proposal writing</td>
<td>MR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lecturers (or other contributors):

MR Miljana Radivojević  
ML Mark Lake  
GM Gabe Moshenska  
DW David Wengrow  
EG Elizabeth Graham  
DF Dorian Fuller  
HM Hana Morel  
AG Andy Gardner  
BH Barney Harris

PGTAs: Hannah Bullmore and Ana Midoes Lopes Branco Vital

**Weekly Module Plan**
Teaching will be by a mixture of pre-recorded sessions, live lectures, discussions and group work. The first lecture will provide an overview and you are asked to do the essential reading over the following weeks. The other lectures have a small number of essential readings which you should do ahead of time in order to follow and actively contribute to group discussion. Most lectures will have a pre-recorded talk, while live sessions will start with a short wrap up followed by discussions/ group work. Students will be notified when the pre-recorded talks are ready, approximately a week in advance of the scheduled sessions.
Workload

This is a 15-credit module which equates to 150 hours of learning time, including session preparation, background reading, and researching and writing your assignments. There will be up to 20 hours of lectures / seminars / in-class activities for this module for each group. You will be expected to undertake around 40 hours of reading for the module, plus 45 hours preparing for the assessed works and 45 hours producing it. This adds up to a total workload of 150 hours for the module.

2. ASSESSMENT

Each assignment and possible approaches to it will be discussed in class, in advance of the submission deadline. If students are unclear about the nature of an assignment, they should discuss this with the Module Co-ordinator in advance (via office hours or class Moodle forum). You will receive feedback on your written coursework via Moodle, and have the opportunity to discuss your marks and feedback with the co-ordinator in their office hours.

An electronic copy of each assessment must be submitted via the Module Moodle page by **11:59 PM on the day of the deadline**. By submitting on Moodle, you will be confirming your agreement with the UCL Plagiarism Statement. Submission through Moodle also submits the assessment to Turnitin.

For more details see the ‘Assessment’ section on Moodle. The marking criteria for this module assessments [https://moodle.ucl.ac.uk/mod/resource/view.php?id=462099] and IoA writing guidelines [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-student-handbook] are useful guides when writing your submissions. **Penalties for late submission:** see guidance [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-student-handbook/12-information-assessment] in UCL Student Handbook.

This module is assessed entirely by two courseworks.

**Assessment 1: Review of a museum object/site**

The first one is a **1,000 word** review of a museum object / site that resonates with contemporary issues (e.g. repatriation, race, pandemic, famine, poverty, conflicts etc). The aim of this task is to alert you to the types of debates archaeologists can participate in, help you focus and extrapolate the life on an object / site in modern days and ensuing debates / conflicts that this object, or a theme has been central to. The aim of the first task is also to prepare you for the second task.

**Deadline: 2nd November 2020**

**Assessment 2: Popular science article (or blog)**

The second assessment is a **3,000 word** popular science article on the topic of choice, which includes in its elaboration a minimum of 3 different case studies. This is akin to long format science articles you would read in Guardian, New York Times, New Statesman or similar. This coursework should address a major theme of wide interest, but should also demonstrate how detailed archaeological work contributes to knowledge of debate about this theme; to achieve this, you will be expected to juxtapose entries dealing with different scales of analysis (minimum 3 case studies). Your coursework should be written and illustrated so that non-specialists will find it engaging, but at the same time it should retain academic rigour; to achieve this you will need to adopt a voice which
is personal (yours) and so less formal than a journal article, but you should nevertheless provide citations and ensure that your prose is grammatically correct. The issue of voice will be discussed in weeks 3 and 8, and the practicalities of referencing (and compliance with copyright law) will also be covered in week 8. If you remain unclear about what is expected of you then please do discuss it with the Course Coordinator and/or the Teaching Assistants.

Your coursework is to be submitted to Turnitin via Moodle.

**Deadline: 18th December 2020**

The assessment criteria for both tasks are the same, and available on the module Moodle site at https://moodle.ucl.ac.uk/mod/resource/view.php?id=462099.

3. **Resources and Preparation for Class**

**Preparation for class**

You are expected to read **three essential readings as well as watching the pre-recorded lectures, completing any online activities on Moodle, or prepare as otherwise advised** each week. Completing the readings is essential for your effective participation in the activities and discussions that we will do, and it will greatly enhance your understanding of the material covered. **Further readings are provided in section 5** for you to get a sense of the range of current work on a given topic and for you to draw upon for your assessments. **Online reading list:** https://rl.talis.com/3/ucl/lists/F439DCFD-9CC9-B862-3281-BA5BA740EBB4.html

**Recommended basic texts and online resources**

There is no single textbook that covers the range of material introduced in this module. Please see the essential readings for each lecture below.

4. **Syllabus**

**Overview**

You must attend all timetabled lectures, listen to pre-recorded sessions or prepare as otherwise suggested.

**Weeks 1 & 2**

We start by exploring the notions of ‘deep history’, ‘grand challenges’ and ‘grand narratives’. You were introduced to ‘deep history’ in the first lecture of the first year module ARCL1003 World Archaeology, but here will focus on the theoretical and intellectual underpinnings of ‘big thinking’.

**Week 3**

We switch our focus to the communication of archaeological contributions to our understanding of big themes. We will consider the role of archaeologists as ‘public intellectuals’ and then consider how to capture readers’ attention along with appropriate tone-of-voice for blogs. We will analyse a number of archaeological or other relevant blogs/ popular science articles as well as show you some past submissions from this module. By the end of week 3 you will be prepared to start sketching your blog should you so wish.

**Weeks 4–7 & 9**

Five Institute of Archaeology theme lecturers present examples of how they are addressing big themes of contemporary relevance in their own research. You may have heard some of these
lecturers speak in other modules, but they will be bringing you up-to-date with the latest developments in their ongoing research. It is important to understand that these case studies are offered as exemplars to inspire you.

**Week 8**

As the deadline for the first formative blog approaches there will be further opportunity to brainstorm your ideas. We will also cover important practical issues such as how to locate and credit and reference electronic resources in such a way that your usage of them is legal.

**Week 10**

You will receive formative feedback on your blog and there will be an opportunity to gain greater understanding of the assessment criteria. The last session will also touch upon grant writing, which naturally comes after pitching ‘big ideas’ in your second coursework.

### 10-week syllabus

**Week 1: Introduction to the Course; Big Themes and Deep History (MR)**

**Lecture synopsis**

At the outset of your studies here (in ARCL1003 “World Archaeology”) we introduced you to the notion that as archaeology “addresses the lion’s share of global long-term history”, so it ought perhaps to play a major role in explaining “why human and other contemporary life on the planet has developed as it has, and looks as it does today”. In the introduction to this course I return to that theme, delineating some ‘big themes’ and distinguishing between ‘deep-history’, ‘world history’ and ‘big history’.

**Essential reading**

For the issue of causality and timescales in deep-history (you should already have read Smith 1992 for ARCL1003):


**Case study: Ian Morris, 2010, “Why the West Rules—For Now”**

See Moodle for links to video footage of an interview with Ian Morris, a lecture in Chicago outlining the content of this book, and a lecture he gave in the Institute of Archaeology in March 2015 which also includes critical responses from Kevin MacDonald and Corinna Riva.

**Week 2: Grand Challenges and Grand Narratives (ML)**

**Lecture synopsis**

In week one we discussed the notion that as archaeology provides the means by which we know about the bulk of global long-term history, so it ought perhaps to play a major role in explaining how the world got to its present state. We identified some big themes (the kinds of things you might write your blog about) and considered the different kinds of history of the long-term. Today we contrast the more ‘applied’ notion of the ‘grand challenge’ with that of the perhaps more intellectually oriented ‘grand narrative’. We ask who decided what could or should be archaeology’s grand challenges.
Essential Reading

For call for archaeology to address ‘grand challenges’:


See also https://seacunderground.wordpress.com/2014/01/25/regarding-the-grand-challenges-and-young-archaeologists/.

For the call to revive grand narrative in archaeology (you should already have read this for ARCL1003):


For the questioning of western grand narratives (you should already have read Tilley 1989 and Trigger 1984 for ARCL2028):


Week 3: Communicating Archaeology and Communicating Archaeologists (GM / MR)

Lecture synopsis

We consider whether archaeologists have, or should have, a role as ‘public intellectuals’—a rather timely topic given the recent denigration of ‘experts’ in western democracies. We then turn to the practicalities of communicating archaeology effectively. To do so we need to identify our audiences, messages, and media. Who do we want to inform about our work? What do we want them to know? How do we want to tell them? We will think about to modify terminology and levels of detail for these different audiences. We will analyse a number of blogs to help you think about the appropriate tone-of-voice of your own.

Essential reading

For the question of whether archaeologists can/should function as ‘public intellectuals’:


On blogging:

‘How to write a blogpost from your journal article’ https://medium.com/@write4research/how-to-write-a-blogpost-from-your-journal-article-6511a3837caa

Case studies:
Week 4: Escaping Inequality: Can the Past Reshape Our Future (DW)

Lecture synopsis

We live in a world that increasingly resembles the old regimes of yesteryear. Many feel powerless to resist the rising tide of inequality. Reversing this trend means questioning basic assumptions about human history. In recent decades information has accumulated that could throw into disarray received understandings of the origins of social inequality, and not least in the fields of archaeology and anthropology. Hunter-gatherers did not live exclusively in tiny bands, and often created extreme hierarchies, only to reverse them again on a seasonal basis. Some of the earliest cities, by contrast, were startlingly egalitarian, and functioned in the absence of hierarchical management structures. ‘Civilisation’ and ‘the state’ were not single entities that came as a historical package, but uncomfortable amalgams of elements—such as sovereignty, bureaucracy, and urban life—that may now finally be in the process of drifting apart. Much of this information remains locked up in specialised academic journals that are read by only a handful of professionals. In this class we will consider how archaeology and anthropology could be put into action, as a contribution to pressing debates over the causes of rising global inequality, and our possible pathways out of it.

Essential reading and video

https://www.eurozine.com/change-course-human-history/
https://vimeo.com/145285143

Week 5: The Future is Rubbish (EG)

Lecture synopsis –The Future is Rubbish

Archaeology generally focuses on extracting objects from the earth for analysis. The matrix—the soil or sediment itself—is generally ignored, except to screen soil for artefacts or ecofacts. In our session I will introduce you to the hypothesis that our modern landscape and its soils are not simply a product of natural processes or of human-induced degradation but are also a product of the decay of the detritus of past societies and civilisations. In other words, I could say that the past is rubbish. This means that the ways in which soil fertility is measured in assessments of global agricultural potential must take account of these long-term processes. Unfortunately, such assessments do not. There are several implications: 1) Assessments of the effects of humans on the environment emphasise solely degradational processes and ignore the positive contributions of material remains to soil production; 2) Management of modern waste (domestic rubbish, human waste, industrial waste, construction debris) should take into account the decomposition of waste and its benefits—in other words, rubbish is a beginning and not just an undesirable end; 3) Burial practices need reconsideration in light of the future of soils—burial in cemeteries contributes to soil productivity and biodiversity but in many countries, including England, cemeteries are meant to remain off-limits in perpetuity. Our research also shows that detritus resulting from ‘bad’ habits, such as burning vegetation for fuel, or dumping waste from coal mining can, over a period of time, transform landscapes by enhancing soil fertility. In this scenario, the big threat to the planet is not climate change but soil degradation, and the drive to electrify cars and promote battery storage couldn’t be a worse option if one considers the damage to the environment from the refuse, as well as the mining for the rare earths and minerals needed to store energy.
Essential reading

ARCHSOL: Archaeology and Soil Security. An application to the European Research Council. It’s long but you can read the abstract.

THE ECOLOGY OF DEATH: An application to the British Academy.

(these are uploaded on Moodle)

**Week 6: Niche Construction from Early Agriculture to the Anthropocene (DF)**

**Lecture synopsis**

Humans have been characterized as an extreme example of a species that evolves through Niche Construction, by modifying the environment that subsequent generations adapt to. Niche construction refers to a view of evolution in which an organism inherits the ecology in which it lives as well as the genetic basis for adapting to that environment. In recent years, domestication and the origins of agriculture has been taken as a key example of this, both in evolutionary theory and amongst archaeologists. Over the longer time span of the Holocene the ecological inheritance of human systems, involving agriculture and other resource procurement and management practices, have shaped environments at regional and eventually global levels. Scholars across a diverse range of fields (ecology, geography, climate modelling) have an interest in better understanding how human practices have changed earth systems, including soil, water, vegetation and atmospheric composition (e.g. greenhouse gases). Recently, there has been explicit debate over whether to recognize and when to define an Anthropocene epoch as distinct from the Holocene. The “Anthropocene” would be defined by when human became a geological force in earth systems but is a formal designation useful, and when should it be? Debate over this parallels recent effort by some geologists to also formally sub-divide the Holocene into 3 stages, allowing the Anthropocene to be added as a fourth stage at the end.

**Essential reading**


**Week 7: The Future of Archaeology in the UK: archaeology under the UK planning system and the policies that protect it (HM)**

**Lecture synopsis**

This lecture introduces how archaeology grew as a profession in England and how it became legally embedded into the UK Planning System as an introduction to exploring the policy that protects the historic environment, and the importance of being involved in advocacy to ensure protections remain in place alongside other competing interests and priorities.
Essential reading


Week 8: Blogging Workshop (ML/BH)

Ahead of the formative blog deadline we further consider the practicalities of writing your blog. In particular, we will provide guidance about how to cite the work of others in your blog, explain how to avoid infringing copyright law when linking or embedding material available elsewhere on the internet and discuss a range of electronic resources that may be useful to you when constructing your blog.

Week 9: The New Identity Politics of the Past: Brexit, Neo-Nazis, and Post-Truth (AG)

Lecture synopsis

The last two years have seen identity politics reach new levels of significance. Among numerous dramatic events, the UK referendum on membership of the European Union has brought many issues of interest to archaeologists to the fore. These range from entirely contemporary concerns, such as the future of research funding in Britain, to topics of more longitudinal significance, including the interactions between different identity groups in particular economic and political circumstances. Other political developments occurring most obviously in Europe and the US, but also in other parts of the globe, pose the same questions. On the one hand, archaeologists have a lot to contribute to debates about identity, continuity and change; on the other, our expertise to do so is increasingly questioned in the ‘post-truth’ world. In this session, we will focus on the distinctive position of Britain as an illustration of identity dynamics in the long term, focussing on the relationship between imperialism and identities and viewed through the lens of recent work in border studies. Brexit can be seen as the culmination of the collapse of the British Empire, and transformation of British identity, in the post-Second World War era and the particular dynamics of this process invite comparison with Britain’s earlier position as one of the frontier provinces of the Roman Empire, especially in the 4th and 5th Centuries AD.

Essential reading


**Week 10: Feedback and grant proposal writing (MR)**

The final week is devoted to formative feedback on your first entries to ensure that you have a good understanding of the assessment criteria (see Moodle and the assessment section here). Grant proposal writing basics will also be covered.

5. Further reading

**Week 1: Introduction to the Course; Big Themes and Deep History (MR)**

Further reading for tackling deep history / big themes

Over the first five weeks of the module you should familiarise yourself with one or more relevant and comparatively recent works, according to your interests. The following are all in UCL libraries:


In addition, these papers may be of interest, particularly if you are more interested in quantitative approaches inspired by the natural sciences and/or have a particular interest in human-environment interaction:


**Week 4: Escaping Inequality: Can the Past Reshape Our Future (DW)**

Further reading

https://www.thenation.com/article/the-inequality-industry/

https://medium.com/whose-society-whose-cohesion/rethinking-cities-from-the-ground-up-73d92059b15f
Week 5: Past and Future Earth (EG)

Further reading

If you think you might be interested in the topic or want to explore it on your own in future, here are some recommended readings. The topic has different facets and you may be interested in a particular facet. Perhaps pick one and ask me about it.

The dangers of nuclear energy:
“Rubbish Theory: The Heritage of Toxic Waste” by Marcos Buser (available on Moodle). This is about the poor recording and mapping of where nuclear waste dumps are located.

Impact of human activities on the environment—my own research: This paper (below) is an example of my team’s research on ancient waste. It has a lot of the rather boring analytical stuff, so just have a look at the abstract to get a feel for what our goals are:


A new look at ancient environmental impact This chapter provides some of the background to my present research into ancient human impact on soils:


The future of global agriculture This summarises the harmful effects on soils of the global focus on the raising of cattle for beef:


Anthropological/social science on waste; also waste as heritage


Sustainable urban food systems; agro-urbanism There is a great deal of literature on this. If anyone is interested, get in touch with me. I’ll suggest here a short article by me on farming in cities:


. . . and a slightly different take on agro-urban landscapes:

**Week 6: Niche Construction from Early Agriculture to the Anthropocene (DF)**

Further reading


**Week 7: The Future of Archaeology in the UK: archaeology under the UK planning system and the policies that protect it (HM)**

Further reading

*Introduction to UK archaeology*


*Profiling the Profession*

**AITCHISON, K.** 1999. Profiling the Profession: A Survey of Archaeological Jobs in the UK. York, London & Reading: CBA, EH & IfA


*Bands of Light*


PIA, 2013. Forum 2013: The Challenges and Opportunities for Mega-Infrastructure Projects and Archaeology. *PIA Vol 23*

*Democracy*


**UK Policy Guidance and Heritage Advocacy**


**Sustainability**


**Useful Websites of Archaeology Organisations in the UK**

ALGAO [https://www.algao.org.uk](https://www.algao.org.uk)

CBA [https://new.archaeologyuk.org/](https://new.archaeologyuk.org/)

CIfA [https://www.archaeologists.net/](https://www.archaeologists.net/)

FAME [https://famearchaeology.co.uk/](https://famearchaeology.co.uk/)

Heritage Alliance: [https://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/](https://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/)

**RESCUE Archaeology:** Report of on-going financial cuts on throughout the UK [https://rescue.crowdmap.com/](https://rescue.crowdmap.com/)