UCL INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY

MA/MSc MODULE (15 credit): ARCL0109

ARCHAEOLOGY OF HUNTER-GATHERERS FROM THE EMERGENCE OF MODERN HUMANS

MODULE HANDBOOK 2021-22

Magdalenian cave art at Lascaux, France (Aujoulat 2004)

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Office hours: please email to make online appointment.
Please refer to the Institute of Archaeology Student Handbook
https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-student-handbook
and the Institute of Archaeology Study Skills Guide:
https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-study-skills-guide
for instructions on coursework submission, IoA referencing guidelines, marking criteria, as well as UCL policies on penalties for late submission, etc

MODULE OVERVIEW

MODULE DESCRIPTION
This module examines key issues in human ecology and behavioural evolution from the emergence of "cognitively-modern" humans until the beginnings of food production. The course will review contemporary debates on issues such as: (a) the emergence of biological and behavioural modernity in Africa; (b) the dispersal of modern humans into Europe and Asia and their interactions with resident hominin populations; (c) the adaptations of hunter-gatherers to the harsh environmental conditions of the last glacial in Europe; (d) the interpretation of symbolic imagery represented in mobilary and parietal art; (e) the transformations which occurred in hunter-gatherer populations prior to the development of farming; (f) the colonization of Australia and the Americas and human involvement in megafaunal extinctions.

AIMS
This module will examine key issues in human evolution and development from the emergence of modern humans in the late Middle Pleistocene until the transition to food production in the early Holocene. It will involve a comparative study of the archaeological records from Africa, Western Asia and Europe, and a review of the evidence for the colonization of Australasia and the Americas.

OBJECTIVES
On successful completion of this module, students will:
- be knowledgeable about the central debates concerning the development of hunter-gatherer societies through the later Pleistocene and early Holocene
- have an understanding of the nature of the evidence and the ways in which it has been collected and analysed
- have a critical appreciation of the range of models which have been used in its interpretation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of this module, students will have expanded:
- their skills in evaluating archaeological data-bases, and the techniques and models used in their analysis and interpretation,
- their experience in articulating complex ideas and information in written and oral presentations.
- their abilities to design and undertake original research.
GENERAL INFORMATION

TEACHING METHODS
This 15 credit module will be taught weekly through the autumn term in 10 two hour online sessions. Unless otherwise indicated, these will be held on Fridays at 14.00-16.00 in Room B13 at the Institute of Archaeology. Each session is likely to involve a lecture interspersed with discussion and in later classes short student presentations. This handbook lists highly recommended readings which should be undertaken before the class each week, so you can follow and actively contribute to the discussion. A copy of the powerpoints and other relevant resources will be made available each week on the Moodle site for the course.

ATTENDANCE
A 70% minimum attendance at all scheduled sessions is required (excluding absences due to illness or other adverse circumstances, provided that these are supported by medical certificates or other documentation, as appropriate). If you are unable to attend a class, please notify the coordinator by email. Departments are required to report each student’s attendance to UCL Registry at intervals through each term.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT
This module is assessed by means of:
- Powerpoint – 10 slides with accompanying notes of 1,000 words (30%)
- Essay – of 3,000 words (70%)
More detailed information is given in separate section below.

LIBRARIES AND OTHER RESOURCES
The essential reading for this course is available online through UCL’s e-library. However, further reading not available online will be found in the library of the Institute of Archaeology and UCL’s Science Library (particularly the Anthropology Section). Libraries outside of UCL which have relevant holdings include those at the University of London at Senate House and the British Library.

WORKLOAD
There will be 20 hours of lectures/seminars for this module. Students will be expected to spend around 80 hours undertaking background reading, and 50 hours preparing and producing the assessed work. This adds up to a total workload of 150 hours for the module.

COMMUNICATION
- If any changes need to be made to the module arrangements, these will normally be communicated by email. It is therefore essential that you consult your UCL e-mail account regularly.
- For any questions or to make online appointments to discuss aspects of course please email the module coordinator.
- The Moodle site will contain the handbook for the course and copies of powerpoints and other material presented in the weekly seminars. It can also be used as a forum for additional discussion.

FEEDBACK
In trying to make this module as effective as possible, we welcome feedback from students. You will be asked to give your views on the module in an anonymous questionnaire which will be circulated at the end of the course. If students are concerned about any aspect of this module we hope they will feel able to talk to the Module Coordinator, but if they feel this is not appropriate, they should contact the Academic Administrator (Judy Medrington), or the Chair of Teaching Committee (Dr. Louise Martin).
ASSESSMENTS

The module will be assessed by a Powerpoint (30% of marks) and an Essay (70% of marks).

(1) Powerpoint
A powerpoint should be created on a particular theme or subject covered in the course comprising a maximum of 10 slides with 1,000 words of accompanying text. The text should provide a commentary on the information contained in each slide. Depending on the class size a range of these powerpoints may be presented online later in the term.

The deadline for the powerpoint with text will be: Friday 26 November

(2) Essay
An essay should be submitted on a theme or subject relevant to the course comprising a maximum of 3,000 words.

The deadline for the essay will be: Friday 14 January

Subject areas and titles for both the powerpoint and essay should be agreed with the Module Coordinator, who can help with recommending key items for reading. The coordinator is willing to discuss an outline of the student’s approach to the assignment, provided this is organised suitably in advance of the submission date.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION regarding word length, citing of sources, presentation style, method of submission, granting of extensions will be found in the Institute of Archaeology Student Handbook:
https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-student-handbook
and the Institute of Archaeology Study Skills Guide:
https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-study-skills-guide

Please note strict penalties are applied for overlength coursework and for late submission (if an extension has not been agreed). There are also serious penalties for plagiarism.

Coursework will be marked and returned within four calendar weeks of the official submission deadline.
COURSE SYLLABUS AND TIMETABLE: (Fridays 14.00-16.00 in Room B13, Institute of Archaeology)

Introduction and background

1. October 08: a) Hunter-gatherer diversity in the recent past.
   b) Late Pleistocene and early Holocene environments.

   b) Technology through the Middle and Late Palaeolithic.

   Emergence and Spread of Modern Humans

3. October 22: Emergence of behaviourally Modern Humans in Africa.

4. October 29: Late Neanderthals and early Modern Humans in West Asia and Europe.

   Hunter-gatherers of the last Glacial Maximum

5. November 05: Hunter-gatherers of the last Glacial Maximum in Europe.

   NOVEMBER 8 - 12: READING WEEK


   Hunter-gatherers in transition


8. December 03: Mesolithic adaptations to the post-glacial of North-West Europe.

   Colonisation of Australasia and Americas


SEMINAR DETAILS AND REFERENCE LIST

The following pages give details of the seminars/lectures for the module and identifies high priority (●) and optional readings relevant to each session. The majority of the texts are available online through UCL Library Services Explore, but information is provided as to where to find hard copies in UCL library if not online.

The highly recommended readings are considered important for keeping up with the topics covered in the module sessions, and it is expected that students will have checked these prior to the session under which they are listed.

(●) = highly recommended readings
Arch. = item in Archaeology library
Anthrop., Geology etc are held in the Watson Science Library.

1a. HUNTER-GATHERER DIVERSITY IN THE RECENT PAST

Hunter-gatherers only survive in very restricted areas at the present day, but there is historic documentation extending back into the early 19th century, giving some idea of the diversity of adaptations which may have existed in the more recent past. This session will discuss the demographic structure, subsistence strategies and social organization found in recent hunter-gatherer societies. It will also consider the value but also the pitfalls of using ethnographic analogy in interpreting the archaeological record.


1b. LATE PLEISTOCENE AND EARLY HOLOCENE ENVIRONMENTS

A review of the impact of climate change on global environments and resource distribution through the late Pleistocene and early Holocene. It will consider the impact of environmental events on the dispersal of modern humans and on the survival of the archaeological record.


Rasmussen S.O. et al. (2014) A stratigraphic framework for abrupt climatic changes during the Late Glacial period based on three synchronized Greenland ice-core records: refining and extending the INTIMATE event stratigraphy. *Quaternary Science Reviews* 106: 14-28. (Online)


### 2a. FOSSIL AND GENETIC EVIDENCE FOR THE EVOLUTION OF MODERN HUMANS

A review of the fossil and genetic evidence for the evolution of biologically modern humans and their dispersal through Africa and Eurasia where there is evidence for limited interbreeding and replacement of resident hominin populations (Neandertals, Denisovans etc).


Prüfer, K. et al. (2014) The complete genome sequence of a Neanderthal from the Altai Mountains *Nature* 505: 43-49. (Online)


• Reich D. (2018) *Who We Are and How We Got Here*. Oxford University Press. (Chapters 1-3) (Arch: BB1 REI)


### 2b. TECHNOLOGY THROUGH THE MIDDLE AND LATE PALAEOLITHIC / STONE AGE

A review of the key technological developments which occurred through the Middle and Late Stone Age in Africa and Middle and Late Palaeolithic in Eurasia.


• Inizan M.-L. et al. (1999) Technology and Terminology of knapped stone. Nanterre, CREP. (available online from internet but not from UCL library)

3. THE EMERGENCE OF BEHAVIOURALLY MODERN HUMANS IN AFRICA

This seminar will begin by determining the behavioural characteristics associated with human “modernity” and the factors which may lay behind their development and how they might be recognised in the archaeological record. It will continue over the next two sessions with a comparison of the archaeological record from the Middle and early Late Stone Age of Africa (250-30 ka) which has the earliest fossil evidence of Homo sapiens, with the archaeological records from the Middle and early Upper Palaeolithic in Western Asia and Europe where Neanderthals were resident until 50-40 ka. It will look particularly at developments in technology, food procurement and the use of symbolic imagery.

NATURE OF “MODERNITY” AND “THE HUMAN BEHAVIOURAL REVOLUTION”


MIDDLE STONE AGE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

- Texier P.J. (2010) A Howieson’s Poort tradition of engraving ostrich eggshell containers dating to 60,000 years ago at Diepkloof Rock Shelter, South Africa. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of USA 107: 6180-85. (Online)
- Ziegler M. et al. (2013) Development of Middle Stone Age innovations linked to rapid climate change. Nature Communications 4: (1905) (Online)
4. LATE NEANDERTHALS AND EARLY MODERN HUMANS IN WESTERN ASIA AND EUROPE

Early Modern Humans had appeared in West Asia by at least 100 kyr and in Europe by 40 kyr. In both areas there was a period of overlap with Neandertals and there has been much interest in any behavioural distinctions which can be drawn between the two populations and the nature of any interactions. The evidence from western Europe is intriguing as there are suggestions that Neandertals may have already developed some of the hallmarks of “modern human” behaviour before Homo sapiens appeared on the scene.

WEST ASIA
Douka K. et al. (2013) Chronology of Ksar Akil (Lebanon) and implications for the colonization of Europe by Anatomically Modern Humans. PloS One 8 (9) e72931 (Online)

EUROPE
Rougier H. et al. (2016) Neandertal cannibalism and Neandertal bones used as tools in northern Europe. Scientific Reports 6 (29005) (Online)
5. HUNTER-GATHERERS OF THE LAST GLACIAL MAXIMUM IN EUROPE

During the coldest stages of the last glacial, parts of southern Europe provided refuge for human, animal and plant communities, displaced from further north. This session will examine the nature of subsistence and settlement strategies in two such areas. Firstly, south-western France where caves and rock-shelters have provided an extremely rich record for this period. Secondly, the Dnepr-Desna river valleys in the Ukraine where intriguing open-air sites have been found containing the remains of mammoth-bone structures. It will also consider whether there is evidence for social complexity during this period in Europe.

GENERAL ON UPPER PALAEOLITHIC EUROPE


SUBSISTENCE AND SETTLEMENT IN WESTERN EUROPE


SUBSISTENCE AND SETTLEMENT IN EASTERN EUROPE

6. THE NATURE AND INTERPRETATION OF UPPER PALAEOLITHIC ART

This session will explore the nature and interpretation of the prolific portable/mobiliary and cave/rock art produced in various areas of Europe through the Upper Palaeolithic. It will look closely at the discoveries from the Aurignacian period at Chauvet Cave (c 32 kyr) and from the Magdalenian period at Lascaux Cave (c.17 kyr) in France. The interpretative section will examine some of the ethnographic explanations which have been developed based on recent hunter-gatherer art in Australia and South Africa.

GENERAL AND INTERPRETATION


CHAUVET AND LASCAUX CAVES


• Quilis, A. et al. (2016) A high-precision chronological model for the decorated Upper Palaeolithic cave of Chauvet-Pont d’Arc, Ardèche, France. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 113: 4670-75. (Online)


UPPER PALAEOLITHIC FIGURINES


7. LATE PLEISTOCENE ADAPTATIONS IN THE NEAR EAST

Coinciding with the major environmental changes at the end of the Pleistocene there is evidence for the development of sedentism amongst certain hunter-gatherer communities in the Near East (the Natufian phenomenon) and intensification in the use of plant and animal resources which was a precursor to their domestication in the Neolithic. Cemeteries and a range of mobiliary art objects have been found in association with these settlements providing insights into changing social and ideological practices.

GENERAL ON DEVELOPMENTS THROUGH EPIPALAEOLITHIC


BURIAL PRACTICE


8. MESOLITHIC ADAPTATIONS TO THE POST-GLACIAL OF NORTH-WEST EUROPE

During the terminal Pleistocene and early Holocene, recolonisation occurred of the previously glaciated areas of north-western Europe and a wide range of new adaptations are seen in technology, subsistence, settlement and social practice. This session will focus on the extremely well-preserved Mesolithic record from southern Scandinavia and will also briefly examine the transition to agriculture in this area. There will also be some discussion of the British sequence.

GENERAL ON NORTH-WEST EUROPEAN MESOLITHIC


MESOLITHIC IN S. SCANDINAVIA AND TRANSITION TO FARMING


- Jessen C.A. et al. (2015) Early Maglemosian culture in the Pre-Boreal landscape: archaeology and vegetation from the earliest Mesolithic site in Denmark at Lundby Mose, Sjaelland. *Quaternary International* 378: 73-87. (Online)


9. THE COLONISATION OF SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND AUSTRALASIA

Modern humans appear to have reached northern Australasia by 50 kyr and during the following 20 kyr had colonized most parts of the continent. There will be a discussion of the nature of the colonization process, the adaptations developed by the communities and their impact on the indigenous fauna and flora. There will also be a brief discussion of the much earlier colonization of island south-east Asia (Wallacea) by Homo erectus populations and the nature of the dwarf hominin population found on the island of Flores.

LATE PALAEOLITHIC OF S.E. ASIA


THE COLONISATION OF AUSTRALASIA


- O’Connor S. et al. (2011) Pelagic fishing at 42,000 years before the present and the maritime skills of Modern Humans. *Science* 334: 1117-1121. (Online)


FAUNAL EXTINCTIONS


10. THE COLONISATION OF EASTERN SIBERIA AND THE AMERICAS

There is still considerable controversy about the date of the first colonization of the Americas, but there is intriguing evidence from Central and South America indicating that small populations may have arrived by the last glacial maximum. This session will examine the evidence for the colonization process, and the adaptations of communities to the wide ranging environments encountered. It will also examine the factors which may have led to the extinction of megafauna in the late Pleistocene.

LATE PALAEOLITHIC OF NORTH-EAST SIBERIA & BERINGIA

• Pitulko V. et al. (2012) The oldest art of the Eurasian Arctic: personal ornaments and symbolic objects from Yana, RHS, Arctic Siberia. *Antiquity* 86: 674-95. (Online)

THE COLONISATION OF THE AMERICAS

• Meltzer, D.J. (2009) *First peoples in the New World*, University California Press.(Chapters 2, 4, 8) (Online)
• Pedersen M. et al. (2016) Postglacial viability and colonization in North America’s ice-free corridor. *Nature* 537: 45-49. (Online)

SOUTH AMERICA


Guidon N. et al. (1996) Nature and age of the deposits in Pedra Furada, Brazil. *Antiquity* 70: 408-21 (reply to article by Meltzer) (Online)


**FAUNAL EXTINCTIONS**


