AR2032  Foragers to Farmers

**Academic Year:** 2009-2010

**Semester:** 1

**Time and location:**
- Monday 13.00-14.00 BEN LT10
- Tuesday 15.00-16.00 PHY LTD

Hands-on sessions: Ceramics Lab
Seminars 1-3 Library Seminar Room

**First meeting:** 5th October 2009

**Module coordinator:** Huw Barton

**e-mail:** hjb15@le.ac.uk

**Room:** 104

**Office hours:** To be posted (see office door)

*Your individual appointments (e.g. tutorials, seminars):*

---------------------------------

---------------------------------

---------------------------------

---------------------------------

*document prepared by:* Huw Barton, 21st September 2007
Foragers to Farmers

AR2032

Weighting: 20 credits
Coordinator: Huw Barton
Other tutors: Lynden Cooper, Nick Cooper, Terry Hopkinson.

Module outline: This module addresses key issues in the study of prehistory, including the Palaeolithic, and the transition from foraging to farming. The course explores the themes of settlement and mobility providing a global coverage, and outlining the key debates in each region. The course covers a long period of archaeological time during which ways of life changed radically, but it unifies the study of prehistory through an emphasis on the ways that people solved the problems of resource acquisition, and consideration of adaptation to different climates and environments. Issues covered will include the evolution of hominids and human cognition, concepts of hunter-gatherer mobility, the impact of sedentism and with it the development of different systems of agriculture. In addition, the course will introduce students to the critical evaluation of the archaeological evidence for evaluating different life-ways in prehistory, and of the approaches and methods archaeologists have used to do this.

Aims: To build on the chronological/thematic awareness gained in AR1004, by providing students with a developed understanding of the character and development of prehistoric societies.

To introduce students to the key issues and theoretical debates informing the archaeological analysis of social, economic and technological change in human prehistory over time as foragers and/or farmers.

To examine the range of archaeological sources for prehistoric studies and critically consider their strengths/weaknesses.

To enable students to develop independent learning skills.

Intended learning outcomes: Demonstrate a broad knowledge of the archaeology and cultural development of the period (field trip and exam).

Demonstrate an improved understanding of the interpretative models for the period (field trip, seminar contributions, essay, exam).

Show an understanding of the interplay between archaeological evidence, method and theory (essay, exam).

Critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the archaeological sources for the period (essay, exam).

Method(s) of teaching: Two lectures per week; small-group teaching with three large group seminars; two ‘hands-on’ sessions to familiarise students with the material culture of the period; a one-day field trip to Cresswell Craggs to visit some Pleistocene sites of the East Midlands.

Method of assessment: One essay of 2500 words (50%) November 2009

One two-hour examination (50%) June-July 2010
Teaching schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Mon 5 Oct</td>
<td>Course Introduction/Landscape mosaics (HB/TH).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tues 6 Oct</td>
<td>Oldowan: technology and space (TH).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Mon 12 Oct</td>
<td>Acheulean and the handaxe (TH).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tues 13 Oct</td>
<td>Middle Palaeolithic subsistence and mobility (TH).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Mon 19 Oct</td>
<td>Lower-middle Palaeolithic transition: technology and settlement (TH).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tues 20 Oct</td>
<td>The emergence of <em>Homo sapiens</em> and modernity (TH).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Mon 26 Oct</td>
<td>Seminar 1 (HB/TH)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tues 27 Oct</td>
<td>Big game hunting in North America (HB).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Mon 2 Nov</td>
<td><em>Laboratory Class: Ceramics.</em> (NC/HB)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tues 3 Nov</td>
<td>Defining and identifying mobility in the archaeological record (HB).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>9-13 Nov</td>
<td>[Reading week]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Mon 16 Nov</td>
<td>Seminar 2 (HB/TH)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tues 17 Nov</td>
<td>Ethno-archaeology (HB).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Mon 23 Nov</td>
<td>The origins of agriculture (HB).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tues 24 Nov</td>
<td>The spread of agriculture into Europe (MVL).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Mon 30 Dec</td>
<td>Seminar 3 (HB/TH)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tues 1 Dec</td>
<td><em>Laboratory Class: Lithics.</em> (LC/HB)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Mon 7 Dec</td>
<td>The roots of tropical agriculture (HB).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tues 8 Dec</td>
<td>Revision Lecture (TH).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Seminars**

**Seminar 1 (TH & HB) Why do Stone Tools Vary?**


In this tutorial you will consider some ways in which archaeologists have understood stone artefact variability. The reading refers mainly to the Middle Palaeolithic but the arguments put forward can be applied equally to such variability in any other period of the Palaeolithic and even to later periods including the present.

**Seminar 2 (TH & HB) Megafaunal Extinctions: were humans to blame?**

Readings to be posted on Blackboard.

**Seminar 3 (TH & HB) Was agriculture inevitable?**

Readings to be posted on Blackboard.

**Creswell Craggs field trip** (hotlink to the Creswell website).

There will be a one day field trip to Creswell Craggs and the surrounding landscape to directly engage with the Pleistocene archaeology of the East Midlands. **Saturday 7th November 2009. Depart University at 9am.**
Assignments and deadlines

All students on this course must submit one essay of up to **2500 words**, which counts for 40% of the overall mark for the module. Essays should be word-processed. The essay deadline is **4.30pm on Monday 23rd November 2009**. The remainder of the course will be assessed by exam worth 60% in June-July.

*You must use Tunitin*

You are also required to submit an electronic copy of your essay via the **Turnitin** facility of the (insert Module code and/or title here) Blackboard site – please make sure that you have read the **Turnitin – Personal Data and Intellectual Property** section of your Undergraduate Handbook.

The electronic copy is to be submitted by the same deadline as the paper copy. Please note that this electronic submission is **COMPULSORY**. Late submission of either copy will result in the appropriate lateness penalties being applied to the final mark. Students failing to submit both paper and electronic copies by the designated deadline will be deemed to have **FAILED** the assessment (i.e. a mark of zero will be recorded)

**Essay titles**

1. Oldowan archaeological sites have been interpreted as evidence for hunting and food sharing in the period before 1.5 mya. What are the problems with this viewpoint and what alternatives have been proposed?

**General Overviews**


**Key Readings**


Further Reading


2. Why do some European Lower Palaeolithic stone tool assemblages lack handaxes?


3. Were late Neanderthals behaviourally ‘modern’?


4. What is ‘agriculture’ and how can archaeologists identify its presence in the past?

**These are suggested titles to get you started – you will need to go and search out some journal articles as well to provide a well rounded answer to this question.**


Smith, B. *The emergence of agriculture*. New York: Scientific American Library.

5. Discuss what you consider to be the most important factors which led to the origins of agriculture? Illustrate your answer with at least two case studies.


For case studies, see the general reading list.

6. Can we understand human behaviour in the past without the use of ethnography and ethno-archaeology? Archaeology has grappled with this question for decades. It is a debate that strikes right at the heart of how we create knowledge about past human behaviour. It is important to be familiar with these debates, as they are central to many interpretations of the British Mesolithic.


Wylie, A. The reaction against anaology. *Advances in Archaeological Method and Theory* 8: 63-111.

---

**Core reading list**

This is only a core reading list, a fuller list will be posted on blackboard as will some key articles that are available in word or pdf format. Links to useful web sites may also be listed by tutors.

**Prehistory**

**Handaxes**


**Issues of modernity**


**Hunter-gatherers**


**Europe**


t


**Australia**


**America**


**Neolithic**


Sommer, U. 2001. ‘Hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother’: Change and persistence in the European early Neolithic. *Journal of Social Archaeology*. **1**: 244-270.


**Agriculture and food production**


