

UCL Institute of Archaeology Research Networks

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During the 2010–11 academic year, the Institute of Archaeology undertook a re-evaluation of its internal research structures, which until then had been in the form of five overarching Research Groups (Environment and Culture, Material Culture and Data Science, Social and Cultural Dynamics, Complex and Literate Societies, Heritage Studies) which academic staff and researchers joined for seminars and discussion. The new proposal in 2010-11 was to disband the Research Groups and instead encourage the development of Research Networks, to promote interdisciplinary research activity and to reflect genuine engagements of academics in pursuing shared research aims and objectives. Research Networks are also intended to be more purposefully aligned with issues of global concern, including UCL's Grand Challenges. As a result, groups of staff and research students, along with external collaborators, have so far developed seventeen such Networks covering a wide range of research themes. In line with recent national and global research strategies, the Networks have agreed life-spans, to reflect specific aims and objectives, and have predefined outputs (e.g. publications, developing resources and pilot studies for on-going and future research initiatives, workshops/conferences, seminars, web presence, outreach programmes).

It should be stressed that Research Networks do not encompass the full range of Institute research activities, but rather com-

plement existing initiatives and serve as an additional way of stimulating and promoting research groupings. In 2011–12 ten small grants from a one-off Faculty fund, of about £1000 each, were made to enable these Networks to carry out specific activities (such as workshops, conferences and pilot studies) A full list of Research Networks' activities can be found on the Institute's website, but here is a selection of recent examples:

The **Pacific Islands Research Network**, led by Sarah Byrne, Sue Hamilton, Jago Cooper and Kaori O'Connor (of UCL Anthropology) hosted an international conference at the Institute, in September 2012, on *Feast and Famine: Exploring Relationships with Food in the Pacific*. The event aimed to provide a platform for more engaged dialogue between archaeology, anthropology, history, ecology, economics, epidemiology, health and medical studies, and food studies; see http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/research/directory/pacific_network/conference. Members organised a session on *Interpretative Archaeology in the Pacific* at the Easter Island Conference in Santa Rosa in July 2012.

The **Archaeology and Communication Research Network** (led by Chiara Bonacchi) organised a one-day workshop at the Institute, in May 2011, focused on proposing strategies by which archaeologists can engage the non-specialist public through digital media experiences, with participants from UCL and the universities of Southampton, Oxford, Bristol, Nottingham and York. The proceedings have been published in C. Bonacchi ed. (2012), *Archaeology and Digital Communication. Towards Strategies of Public*

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Engagement (London: Archetype Publications). In spring 2012, a workshop was held on *Barriers to Participation in Archaeology Online* to explore factors that limit or impede public participation in archaeology and heritage, via digital media and the Internet. Additionally, Andrew Gardner undertook a pilot study on *Computer Games and Public Engagement with the Past* with the aim of expanding this research area.

The **Imperial Logistics: The Making of the Terracotta Army** network (led by Martos Martínón-Torres and Thilo Rehren, UCL Qatar) is a collaboration with the Museum of Emperor Qin Shihuang's Mausoleum, China. Its aims are to investigate the crafting methods and logistical organisation behind the construction of the Terracotta Army and the broader mausoleum of the First Emperor of China (see *Archaeology International* 13/14: 65–75). It draws on Institute expertise to develop novel hypotheses and methods, via artefact-scale metric analysis, materials science and spatial modelling, for studying craft specialisation, logistical organisation, cross-craft interactions and strategies of enforced social cohesion in emerging imperial systems. As reported above (p. xx), the initiative was adopted as a British Academy Research Project in 2012; see <http://www.britac.ac.uk/news/news.cfm/newsid/750>.

The research network **Material Cultures of Prehistoric and Dynastic Egypt** (led by David Wengrow) hosts workshops in the galleries of the UCL Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, attracting students and staff from research institutes and museums around and beyond London. Recent guest speakers include Rafi Greenberg (Tel Aviv University), discussing 'Egypt's relations with the Levant in the fourth and third millennia BC', and Simon Holdaway (University of Auckland) on 'Time, space, and structure in the Neolithic of the Egyptian Fayum'. A further seminar series, in the summer term of 2012, brought colleagues from European institutions to present recent research: Laure Pantalacci (Lyon) on '*Scribes and craftsmen:*

the noble art of writing on clay'; Robert Schiestl (Berlin) on '*Connecting floating islands, cities and their hinterland: regional survey around Buto, Egypt*'; and Andreas Effland (Hamburg) on '*The ritual landscape of Abydos*'. The network also serves as a forum for discussing the Egyptian archaeology research projects of Institute staff and students.

The **Centre for Museums, Heritage and Material Culture Studies** (now a research network, led by Paul Basu) was a partner in a major workshop at the Tropenmuseum in Amsterdam, entitled *Museums, Heritage and International Development*, in September 2011. The Centre hosted a special event associated with the *Reanimating Cultural Heritage in Sierra Leone* exhibition at UCL, at which the Sierra Leonean High Commissioner in the UK and the Sierra Leonean government's Director of Cultural Affairs gave keynote speeches; see <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/calendar/articles/20120108>. The Centre continues to be engaged in the provision of professional development short courses, including *Ethnographic Objects Analysis* (in collaboration with the British Museum and Horniman Museum) and a bespoke course for the Hunterian Museum on *The Principles of Conservation*.

The research network on **Neanderthals and Modern Humans in the Palaeolithic of Europe and Western Asia** (led by Andrew Garrard) held a workshop to discuss experimental approaches to Stone Age projectile technology, in June 2012, involving participants from UK and other European institutions, including the Defence Academy at Shrivenham. Network members have continued their research on Palaeolithic sites on Jersey (Matt Pope), in Lebanon (Andy Garrard), Spain and East Africa (Ignacio de la Torre).

The **Ceramic Research Network** (led by Bill Sillar) brings together the Institute's expertise on pottery production and has a primary aim to develop a book and online manual (aimed at students and professionals), explaining the application of analytical methods for investigating pottery manufac-



Fig. 1: History of Archaeology Research Group. The forum and temple of Artemis at Jerash, an image from the Horsfield Collection.

turing technology, using a range of archaeological, ethnographic and experimental case-studies. The group has undertaken pilot research in collaboration with a professional potter from West Dean College on replication of archaeological ceramics to further research into production methods.

The **History of Archaeology** research network (led by Amara Thornton) has undertaken a wide range of activities, from group meetings and discussions to public events, workshops and an exhibition. It has created and maintained connections across UCL departments and with UK universities, learned societies, museums and public audiences. In autumn 2011, the group organized a UCL inter-departmental workshop, with Michael Berkowitz (Hebrew and Jewish Studies) on *Tourism as Colonial Policy? The History of Heritage Tourism in British Mandate Palestine and Transjordan*, funded by a UCL Grand Challenges Collaborative Pioneer Award. Both UK-based and international academics participated. Alongside the papers, there was an exhibition of images and documents from the Horsfield Collection (**Fig. 1**), which form part of a digitization project of network members

Amara Thornton, Rachael Sparks and Ian Carroll. In May 2012 the network hosted a workshop on *Financing Archaeology: the economic history of archaeology – perspectives of the past for the future*. The proceedings of both workshops are to be published, in *Public Archaeology* and the online open-access journal *Present Pasts*, respectively.

The **Hunters and Herders – Global Perspectives** network (led by Louise Martin) has held a series of seminars, during which the following areas of mutual research interest were identified: (1) *Domestication Processes: rates of change, comparing animals and plants*, with an international workshop being planned on this topic; (2) *Scales of livestock herding and exchange*, to develop zooarchaeological and quantitative methods; and (3) *Modelling Wild Herd Ungulate Mobility*, with pilot research undertaken by Liz Henton, combining animal dentition isotope analysis (with Bloomsbury Environmental Isotope Facility and NERC Isotopes Geosciences Laboratory) with dental microwear analysis, to assess the seasonal mobility of wild animals in prehistory (initially applied to southern Levantine gazelles and Epipalaeolithic hunting strategies).

The **Archaeology and Development Research Network** (led by Paul Burtenshaw) is involved in attempting to raise the profile of archaeology as an asset in development and make connections with partners in the development industry. The group hosted the *Archaeology and Economic Development* conference at the Institute, in September 2012, to discuss the theory and practice of pursuing economic development goals utilizing archaeological and heritage assets; see <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/calendar/articles/20120921>.

Future issues of *Archaeology International* will report on the activities of the Institute's other research networks, including: **Archaeology and Empire; Metals and Metallurgy in the Americas; Managing Archaeology in the New Urban Context; An Ethnography of Archaeology; Conservation and Development: The Social and Political Impacts of Conservation; Pattern and Process in Early State Formation: A Comparative Approach;** and the **Evaluating Archaeology Research Network**.