

The course will deal with the archaeology of the modern humans who inhabited Europe and part of Asia during the Late Pleistocene. After an introductory lecture on the Neanderthal populations and the problem of their extinction in most of Europe before 35,000 years from the present, the other lectures will consider the different cultural aspects that characterise the Late Palaeolithic of Europe, from the earliest appearance of the first modern humans to the end of the Pleistocene. In better detail they will regard the so-called transitional period of the Chatelperronian in central-eastern France, the spread of the Aurignacian in Europe and the Asia from the Levant, and the later development of the Gravettian and Epigravettian aspects in western Europe. Both sites and burial rituals will be discussed, showing a few specific examples of wider topics still under discussion by the present authors, among which is the problem of the first settling of the Aegean islands at the end of the Pleistocene.