

The Institute of Archeology in the late 1990s Peter Ucko

Peter Ucko, who became Director in August 1996, describes some new developments at the Institute

Having known the Institute well in the 1950s and 1960s, when I was, first, an undergraduate, then a postgraduate student there, and immediately afterwards a junior member of staff in the UCL Department of Anthropology who gave occasional courses at the Institute on archaeology and ethnography, it was in some senses a homecoming when I moved here from Southampton in 1996. In the intervening years, not only had archaeology been transformed as an academic discipline, but the Institute had expanded greatly – as David Harris explains in the preceding article – both numerically in terms of students and staff, and physically beyond the confines of the main building.

Clearly, expansion had brought its own benefits, for example by increasing the range of expert coverage in teaching and research, but it had carried costs too, for example by increasing the separation of Institute activities in its specialized departments and sections, the boundaries of which were to a large degree historically based and academically arbitrary.

One of my first aims has been to reshuffle the academic pack to bring the Institute more into line with contemporary concerns in archaeology. We have approached this difficult task collectively, by proposing and refining a series of thematic research groups that cut across the boundaries of the Institute's former departments. All the academic staff have participated in the formulation of primary-level and secondary-level research groups, and they, as well as all the support staff, have then chosen to which group they wish to belong. The outcome of this complex process, which occupied most of the 1996–97 academic year, has been agreement on the establishment of four primary and three secondary groups, each with a coordinator chosen by the group. The coordinators of the primary groups, together with the chair of the Institute's Teaching Committee and myself, form an Institute Policy Group, which has just begun to function and will normally meet fortnightly. The research groups are now beginning to develop their own initiatives and to organize seminars and conferences. Their activities will be reported in some detail in next year's issue of *Archaeology International*.

Another major initiative has been a comprehensive review of the Institute's whole teaching syllabus. A syllabus committee, with a series of working groups reporting to it, critically examined existing courses, suggested some changes to them, proposed

new ones, and recommended a more structured syllabus for the BA and BSc degrees – a recommendation that was accepted at a meeting of all the staff. The changes include the introduction of some mandatory second-year courses, which build on those taken by all students in the first year, and a much greater emphasis on progression to more specialized courses, most of which will be taught only in the third year.

We have also reviewed the academic aims and content of all the taught master's degrees, with the result that some have been substantially changed, and new ones have been introduced (see the back cover of this issue of *Archaeology International* for a list of the MA and MSc degrees currently offered by the Institute). As the list shows, there has been a major expansion of the Institute's involvement in cultural heritage studies and in what may, more generally, be called public archaeology; and the public role of the Institute has itself been defined by means of a unanimously agreed mission statement, which is reproduced at the end of this article.

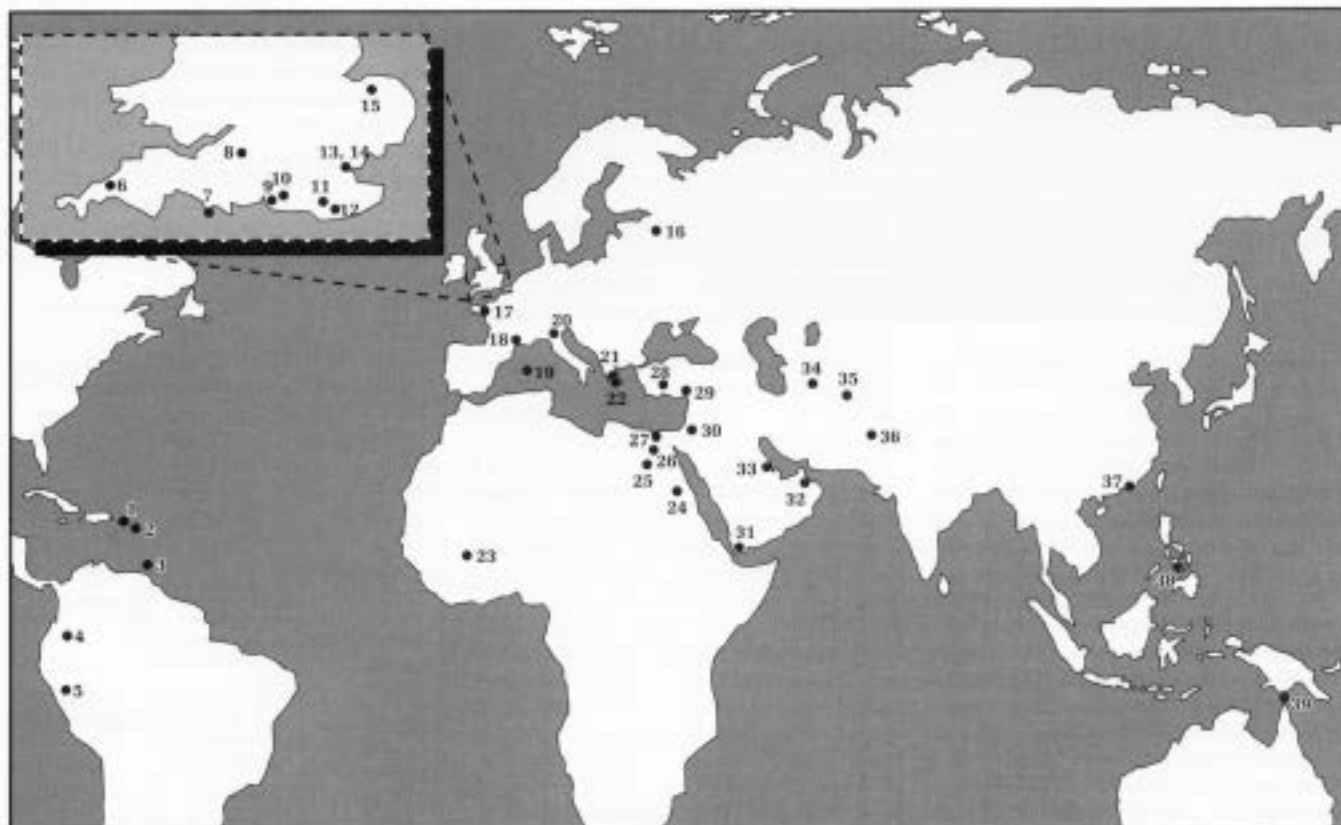
Looking to the world beyond the Institute, we have been actively developing academic links with archaeology departments and individual scholars abroad. These initiatives reaffirm the Institute's historical commitment to world archaeology – which is now enshrined in the mission statement. The Institute is not only fostering research and teaching visits from, and to, other countries, but has also established a formal long-term collaboration with the Department of Archaeology at the University of Trondheim in Norway.

Returning to the domestic scene, I am very pleased to be able to report that, in the near future, almost all the Institute staff will be under one roof. After lengthy deliberations in the University of London, the Institute of Classical Studies, which had shared 31–34 Gordon Square from the outset, has moved into the Senate House. The Provost of UCL agreed that the Institute of Archaeology should occupy the space thus vacated on the fifth and sixth floors. In return, we have now to vacate the space in the houses on the west side of Gordon Square that David Harris “won” from the College when the UCL departments of Classical Archaeology and Egyptology joined the Institute. But, overall, we have gained a little extra space, and, once we are regrouped in the main building (we hope in time for the 1998–99 academic year), students and staff alike will enjoy the benefits of easier day-to-day contact and collabora-

tion – a process that is now stimulated by monthly “happy hours” at which colleagues and visitors regularly share their thoughts, and gossip, over a glass or two of wine.

Mission statement

- To develop the Institute of Archaeology as a research-led institution recognized also for the excellence of its teaching.
- To be internationally pre-eminent in the study, and comparative analysis, of world archaeology.
- To enhance its national and international reputation for the quality and breadth of its multidisciplinary and thematic approach to the study of the human past.
- To promote best practice in the management of cultural heritage and in the care and preservation of archaeological artefacts.
- To ensure that the social, political and economic contexts of the practice of archaeology are taught and appreciated.
- To be at the forefront of international research in archaeological sciences.
- To play a major role in furthering the understanding of London's archaeological and historical past.
- To provide archaeological opportunities of the highest quality to all, regardless of background.



World distribution of current field projects

Caribbean and South America	England	Continental Europe	Africa	Asia
1. Caguana, Puerto Rico Oliver: pre-Hispanic	6. Bodmin Moor, Cornwall Hamilton, Tilley: Bronze Age	16. Novgorod, Russia Hather, Orton: medieval	23. Inland Niger Delta, Mali MacDonald: pre-Islamic	28. Çatal Höyük, Turkey Martin: Neolithic
2. Tortola, Virgin Islands Drewett: pre-Hispanic	7. Portland, Dorset Thomas: Mesolithic	17. Brittany, France Graham-Campbell, Lockyear: medieval	24. Hierakonpolis, Egypt Adams: predynastic	29. Sakcagözü, Turkey Garrard: Palaeolithic-Neolithic
3. Barbados Drewett: pre-Hispanic	8. Compton Bassett, Wiltshire Reynolds: multiperiod	18. Empurias, Spain McGlade: multiperiod	25. Faiyum Oasis, Egypt Hassan: predynastic	30. Wadi Faynan, Jordan Wright: Bronze Age
4. Cali, Colombia Bray: pre-Hispanic	9. Boxgrove, Sussex Roberts: Palaeolithic	19. Menorca, Spain Whitehouse: Bronze-Iron Age	26. Memphis, Egypt Jeffreys: dynastic	31. Wadi Siham, Yemen Phillips: pre-Islamic
5. Batan Grande, Peru Merkel: pre-Hispanic	10. Bignor, Sussex Rudling: Roman	20. Eastern Po Plain, Italy Whitehouse: Bronze Age, Roman	27. Kafr Hassan Dawood, Egypt Hassan: multiperiod	32. Kalba, Sharjah, UAE Phillips: pre-Islamic
	11. Bedingham, Sussex Rudling: Roman	21. Sparta, Greece Wilkes: Roman-Byzantine		33. Saar, Bahrain Crawford: Bronze Age
	12. Willingdon Levels, Sussex Greatorex: Bronze Age	22. Karpathos, Greece Broodbank: multiperiod		34. Jeitun-Balkhan, Turkmenistan Harris: Mesolithic-Neolithic
	13. Thames intertidal zone, London Milne: multiperiod			35. Merv, Turkmenistan Herrmann: multiperiod
	14. Southwark Cathedral, London Milne: medieval-present			36. Bannu, Pakistan Thomas: multiperiod
	15. Sedgeford, Norfolk Faulkner: multiperiod			37. Hong Kong, China Drewett: Neolithic
				38. Negros, Philippines Bacus: multiperiod
				39. Torres Strait, Australia Barham: prehistoric

• Only the main projects currently run by members of the Institute, or to which they make an important contribution, are included (individual research student's field projects are excluded) and only the main members of the Institute involved in each project are listed: staff from other UK and overseas universities and other organizations also participate in, and in some cases co-direct, particular projects.

• All the overseas projects depend on collaboration with local archaeologists and with the relevant antiquities services and/or universities, and several of them also involve collaboration with other UK universities, colleges and museums, e.g. 16 (Bournemouth), 19 (Reading), 21 (King's College London), 28 (Cambridge), 30 (Leicester), 34 (Oxford, Sheffield and York) and 36 (British Museum).