


**This biannual learning is being organized in 2026-2027**

Teacher(s)	Langohr Charlotte ;
Language :	French > English-friendly
Place of the course	Louvain-la-Neuve
Prerequisites	To have followed <i>LARKE1230 Materials and Techniques of Antiquity</i> is an advantage.
Main themes	In the continuity of <i>LARKE1230 Materials and Techniques of Antiquity</i> , this teaching unit proposes a set of theoretical and methodological frameworks for the study of archaeological artifact assemblages, according to the different types of materials and technical gestures employed by the humans who produced them (ceramics, stone, metal, wood, glass). At the same time, the variety of trajectories of archaeological objects ("object biography") and their contexts of discovery are discussed, in that these variants impact the interpretative processes. Starting from the description of archaeological artifacts, analytical methods are examined that allow the reconstruction of the techniques and uses to which they were subjected. Such reconstructions are also scrutinized in that they are the materialized expressions of the related social groups.
Learning outcomes	<p><b>At the end of this learning unit, the student is able to :</b></p> <p>At the end of the course, the student will be familiar with the methods of analysis of archaeological artifacts from the point of view of their material properties and the technical gestures that produced them, as well as their functional analysis.</p> <p>He or she will also be able to explain the variety of questions and issues involved in the practice of archaeology when it focuses on the reconstruction of the technical traditions and uses of the communities studied, and when it tends to infer cultural and social dimensions.</p>
Evaluation methods	<p>Continuous assessment, oral group presentations during seminar sessions, and individual written essay to be submitted during the exam's session.</p> <p>The written essay, the details of which are explained during the seminar, may be written in French or English. A plan and a first outline of the issues to be addressed in the paper must be submitted in advance, and will be taken into account in the final assessment.</p> <p>Generative artificial intelligence (AI) must be used responsibly and in accordance with the practices of academic and scientific integrity. As scientific integrity requires to cite sources, the use of AI must always be reported. The use of artificial intelligence for tasks where it is explicitly prohibited will be considered as cheating.</p>
Teaching methods	<p>The first sessions of the seminar deal with the concepts and theoretical frameworks, as well as the variety of methods of analysis that relate to the study of material culture. Emphasis is placed on the concepts of the <i>chaîne opératoire</i> and the biography/itinerary of objects, which are illustrated through the presentation of several case studies.</p> <p>Some sessions are linked to an article to be read beforehand. The content of the article is discussed at the beginning of the session on the basis of questions raised by the students.</p> <p>The remaining sessions mainly consist of exercises involving the macroscopic examination of different types and collections of objects, in particular at the Musée L or the CRAN laboratory at UCLouvain. Visits to museums or laboratories may also be organised, to familiarise students with the methods used to treat different archaeological materials.</p>
Content	<p>Material culture is central to all aspects of archaeology, and has been theorised in a variety of ways: materiality, symmetrical archaeology, agency, material engagement theory, 'entanglement' theory (cf. LARKO2231 Histories and Theories of Archaeology). Other approaches focus on the relationships between human beings and things/objects by probing the interconnection of their respective lives. These include the concept and tool of the <i>chaîne opératoire</i>, and the notion of the biography (or trajectory, or itinerary) of objects.</p> <p>In the first case, starting with archaeological artefacts (and samples), we look at the different types of operations, phases and sequences in the production chain used to make artefacts from clay, glass, wood, stone and metal. We discuss the methods used to describe, characterise and interpret these technical processes, and consider how their study, in close connection with the context in which the objects were found, informs us about the specific or shared characteristics of the communities in question. Ultimately, by exploring the diversity of ways of doing things, or the technical traditions of the different social groups studied, we attempt to approach the dynamics at play, i.e. both the functional constraints of the materials and the cultural and social factors, the latter making it possible to approach processes as diverse as those of invention, innovation, borrowing, adoption, rejection, transfer and acculturation.</p>

	<p>In the second case, a variety of issues relating to the circulation and use of different categories of archaeological materials and artefacts is addressed. Based on the analysis of objects, which takes into account a wide range of aspects (materials, techniques, traces of wear and use, contexts of use or discovery), students are invited to consider the variety of representations and forms of interaction or organisation of the ancient societies that produced, exchanged and used these objects, at different regional and chronological scales.</p> <p>The main aim of this seminar is to sharpen the archaeology students' eye for observing and analysing artefacts, to familiarise them with the variety of analytical methods so that they are able to apply the most relevant ones according to the problems and questions posed at the start of a research programme. After the seminar, the students will get acquainted with the approach that consists of interpreting the techniques and uses associated with archaeological artefacts as <i>social productions</i> of the communities that produced and manipulated these artefacts.</p>
<p>Inline resources</p>	<p>Available and downloadable on Moodle: powerpoints of the sessions, bibliography and portfolio of articles; additional readings and resources.</p>
<p>Bibliography</p>	<p>Une bibliographie détaillée est fournie sur Moodle. Un portefeuille de lectures obligatoires est également discuté durant certaines séances de cours.</p>
<p>Faculty or entity in charge</p>	<p>EHAC</p>

<b>Programmes containing this learning unit (UE)</b>				
Program title	Acronym	Credits	Prerequisite	Learning outcomes
Master [120] in History of Art and Archaeology : General	ARKE2M	5		
Master [60] in History of Art and Archaeology : General	ARKE2M1	5		