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BRIEF COURSE DESCRIPTION

Recent historical and sociological scholarship has stressed how culture and biology are indissolubly connected in the way they shape societies and how particular human groups interact with each other and the world that surrounds them. Bio-archaeology as a discipline has developed out of these reflections over the last decade, combining the study of cultural and biological remains to understand human life in the past.

The integration of innovative and interdisciplinary methods of research and analyses has been on the agenda of bio-archaeology. Its application in the interpretation of funerary remains provides critical insights on past societies. New methods of DNA and isotopic analyses have developed recently and, even if still in their infancy, they open new stimulating research paths combined with the traditional methods of physical anthropology and archaeology. Demographic trends, migration dynamics, diets and standards of life, all processes that coeval written sources provide little information about, can be better understood when they are compared to the social and cultural dimensions visible in the archeological record.

This course, with the contribution of experts from a variety of disciplines connected to bio-archaeological studies including archaeology, history, physical anthropology, paleopathology, paleodemography, zooarchaeology, genetics and isotopic studies, aims at confronting students not only with the methods themselves and their potentials and limitation, but critically, also with the more complex issue of integrating information gained from such different approaches, arising from differences in scientific disciplines and traditions.

Four main topics will be developed during the two-week course: 1. Human bones as sources: an introduction to different methods, their limitations and potentials; 2. Interpreting bones: diet, diseases, standards of living; 3. When culture and biology interconnect: migration, exchange and resources; 4. The social dimension of corpses in the past: inclusion and invisibility in the funerary context.

Excursions will be organized to visit some museums and sites in Budapest and its surroundings. A day study trip will be made to the collections of the Department of Anthropology of the Hungarian Natural History Museum in Budapest to allow students to put into practice some of the aspects of funerary studies discussed during the course.



Central European University's summer school (CEU SUN), established in 1996, is a program in English for graduate students, junior or post-doctoral researchers, teachers and professionals. It offers high-level, research-oriented, interdisciplinary academic courses as well as workshops on policy issues for professional development, taught by internationally renowned scholars and policy experts (including CEU faculty). Application from all over the world is encouraged. Financial aid is available.

Application deadline: February 15, 2013

For academic information please visit the course web site:

<http://summer.ceu.hu/oldbodies-2013>

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