

# Field School for Quaternary Palaeoanthropology and Prehistory of Murcia, S.E. Spain

## 28<sup>th</sup> Field Season 2017

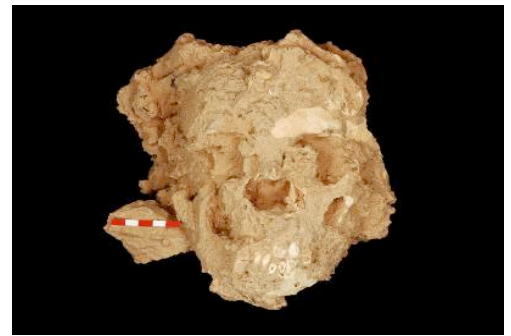


Cueva Negra hand-axe

June 30<sup>th</sup> – July 21<sup>st</sup> 2017 at Cueva Negra del Estrecho del Río Quípar (Session 1),  
July 21<sup>st</sup> – August 11<sup>th</sup> 2017 at Sima de las Palomas del Cabezo Gordo (Session 2)

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Sima de las Palomas Neanderthal child skull

Excavation has been ongoing for 28 years at these two sites. Cueva Negra has definite signs of fire, a final Early (i.e. Lower) Pleistocene fauna and Acheulian Levallois-Mousterian Palaeolithic artefacts in a sedimentary deposit from a time somewhere between 780,000 and 990,000 years ago according to both biostratigraphy and now palaeomagnetism. Sima de las Palomas has >300 skeletal parts (teeth, bones) of 9 or 10 Neanderthal individuals, including 3 articulated skeletons one of which is 8 complete from between 55,000 and 50,000 years ago, an early Late (i.e. Upper) Pleistocene fauna and Mousterian Palaeolithic artefacts, dated by <sup>14</sup>C, U-ser, OSL and ESF

Helpers are invited for the 2017 summer field season. All applications are considered sympathetically. You need not have archaeological experience. To apply, send an email with brief cv after going to our MUPANTQUAT web-page, clicking there on FIELD SCHOOL and then on "BRIEFING YOU" (there's no application form to fill as we keep paperwork to a minimum). The Murcian Association for the Study of Palaeoanthropology and the Quaternary (MUPANTQUAT) coordinates the Field School excavations and issues your Certificate of Attendance (we also sign any required forms you bring from your university).

While at Cueva Negra we stay at the residential Asacruz school (which has its own kitchen staff) at Caravaca de la Cruz. While at Sima de las Palomas we put up in the school in Dolores de Pacheco and take our meals in the restaurant of the village civic centre. At both places, you must bring sheets, pillow-slip, towel, soap and shower-gel. Summer is hot in Murcia: you'll get a chance to swim. Bring light work clothes and flat-soled light footwear for Cueva Negra but bring work boots for Sima de las Palomas. Bring sun-hats, sun-glasses, sun-cream, swimmers. If you've a driver's licence, bring it and help us with driving.

Ryanair flies daily to Murcia-San Javier Airport from London (Luton and Stansted). Easyjet flies (maybe only some days a week) from Gatwick, Bristol and Newcastle. Other budget airlines also fly here from the UK and other European countries. A new Murcia Airport has been built but is not yet open, though if flights land there in 2017 you will be met there, so don't worry. Provided we have their flight details in advance we ferry our helpers (free of charge) between Murcia Airport and our field headquarters who arrive on Friday June 30<sup>th</sup> or who arrive or depart on Friday July 21<sup>st</sup>, or leave on Friday August 11<sup>th</sup>. Caravaca is 100 km from the airport, but Dolores de Pacheco is only 6 km from it. We run from Fridays to Fridays as we often have USA helpers flying into Madrid who need to get connecting weekday flights to Murcia ((because weekend flights to Murcia often are cancelled without notice). Travellers by train on June 30<sup>th</sup> or July 21<sup>st</sup> can probably be also met by us. For Cueva Negra, train-travellers should arrive at Calasparra railway station (Madrid-Cartagena line) on June 30<sup>th</sup> and leave on July 21<sup>st</sup> For Sima de las Palomas, train travellers should arrive at Balsicas-Mar Menor railway station (Madrid-Cartagena or Barcelona-Cartagena lines) on July 21<sup>st</sup> and leave on August 11<sup>th</sup>. Other travellers must make their own arrangements to get to our headquarters at Caravaca or Dolores de Pacheco. We do not meet people at Alicante International Airport, whence travellers can take a "Costa Cálida" bus to Murcia, and then buses from Murcia bus station, either to Caravaca (for Cueva Negra), or to San Javier or Los Alcázares which are 5 km from Dolores de Pacheco (for Sima de las Palomas).



Daily routine: we rise at 7 a.m. and after a light breakfast we excavate from 8 a.m. till 2 p.m. with a mid-morning sandwich. A cooked lunch at 2 p.m. is followed by a nap. We sort finds from 5 p.m. till 9 p.m. when we have a hot dinner. In each 3-week period, there are talks and seminars about our work and human evolution, and we also visit local places of interest. The programme is thus based on a 3-week Session (if you stay for a shorter time you'll miss part of the programme). The normal contribution from helpers staying for a full Session corresponds to €50 euros (€50) a day; covering instruction, board, lodging, and local transportation, or €45 a day when both full sessions are attended (first-time participants staying for less than one full session should contribute €60 a day). To guarantee a place you must send a refundable deposit, preferably by May 1st 2017, of €250 (euros) per each 7 days of intended stay. You pay the balance on arrival. You must arrange your own health and personal accident insurance cover beforehand, holiday/travel insurance if desired, and sign an indemnity form on arrival. EU residents should bring the EU card from their country entitling them to public health care in other EU Member States.

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**BASIC INFORMATION**

Organization: Murcian Association for the Study of Palaeoanthropology and the Quaternary, MUPANTQUAT

Session 1: Fri June 30 – Fri July 21, 2017, at Cueva Negra del Estrecho del Río Quípar (Caravaca, Murcia, Spain).

Session 2: Fri July 21 – Fri August 11, 2017, at Sima de las Palomas del Cabezo Gordo (Torre Pacheco, Murcia, Spain).

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Further information : <http://www.mupantquat.com>

Description	Excavation and instruction at Pleistocene Palaeolithic sites with hominid remains: Cueva Negra: late-Early-to-early-Middle Pleistocene transition about 800,000 years ago; signs of fire; Acheulo-Levalloiso-Mousteroid Palaeolithic implements; Sima de las Palomas: early Late (i.e. Upper) Pleistocene about fifty-thousand years ago, with abundant Homo neanderthalensis skeletal remains and Mousterian palaeolithic implements.
Periods	Session 1, June 30 – July 21, 2017; Session 2, July 21 – August 11, 2017.
Country	Spain
Locality	Session 1: Cueva Negra del Estrecho del Río Quípar (Caravaca, Murcia, Spain); Session 2: Sima de las Palomas del Cabezo Gordo (Torre Pacheco, Murcia, Spain)
Travel	Participants will be picked up by our staff at Murcia-San Javier Airport in the late afternoons of June 30 and July 21 to be driven to our bases, and driven back to it in the early afternoons of July 21 and August 11. Participants wishing to make alternative travel arrangements should consult us beforehand, but it mayn't be possible to meet you so you may have to make your own way to our bases.
Duration	Two three-week sessions. In order to get the most out of their stay we strongly recommend participants to stay for one full session at least.
Age	Minimum 18 years
Qualifications	Previous experience is not essential though preference is given to undergraduates and graduates in appropriate subject areas.
Work	All participants take part in excavation and cleaning and sorting finds, and will receive both practical instruction and talks about our research and about human evolution and Palaeolithic archaeology in the Pleistocene.
Language	English (any knowledge of Spanish is also useful).
Accom.	Bunks in schools with showers etc. Light breakfast, mid-morning sandwich, cooked lunch, cooked evening meal. Vegetarian, halal or kosher menus are NOT available. Bring your own sheets and towel.
Contribution	<b>FOR A COMPLETE SESSION:</b> 50 euros per day includes bed, meals, instruction, local travel from airport and back, daily travel from our base to site and back, official excursions. You must pay your own air fares to Murcia-San Javier Airport and personal expenses. <b>FOR TWO COMPLETE SESSIONS:</b> 45 euros per day. <b>FOR LESS THAN 21 days:</b> 60 euros per day.
Application	<b><i>There is no application form: just send an email to <a href="mailto:mjwalke@gmail.com">mjwalke@gmail.com</a> and you MUST attach a 1-page (brief) c.v. which MUST include (1) your full name, (2) date of birth, (3) nationality and passport number, (4) permanent home address, (5) address for correspondence, (6) contact phone number(s) and email address(es). If that information is not sent, you probably will not get a reply from us.</i></b> Visit our web-site <a href="http://mupantquat.com">http://mupantquat.com</a> , save or print out a long download called <i>Briefing You</i> and read it carefully. A non-returnable deposit in advance is required of 250 euros per 7 days of intended stay, with balance payable on arrival. Preference is given to applicants wishing to stay for a full 3-week session whose deposits are received before May 1 <sup>st</sup> 2017.
Notes	Each session includes one full-day excursion to other nearby sites of archaeological interest. We issue attendance certificates with number of hours of practical experience and instruction. Although US college credit is NOT available from us, undergrad US college students often can arrange beforehand with their faculty professors to gain credit for participation by presenting papers about it after their return home and we are willing to assist in orientating them during their period on site. We regard all of you as <i>field helpers</i> and in 2017 your contribution will include automatic 2017 membership of MUPANTQUAT. We appeared in the PBS-NOVA television documentary " <i>Decoding Neandertals</i> " that was shown in January 2013 in the USA: to see Sima de las Palomas and our Neanderthal woman Paloma go to <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3nH1fqd0Ryo">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3nH1fqd0Ryo</a>