



**Second Palaeolithic Seminar, Thursday 9/11/2023, 19:00**



## **From the First Tools to Symbolic Thought and Social Distinction**

**Professor Nena Galanidou, University of Crete**

### **Abstract**

The Acheulean, the longest-lived tool tradition in the history of technology, was produced by several different species of the genus Homo. Its geographical spread ranged from Africa to Asia and Europe, lasting for almost 1.5 million years. The iconic Large Cutting Tools of the Acheulean “toolkit” served various needs efficiently, and mark the emergence of form in the history of sculpture. Sometimes, certain specimens from these tool assemblages prompt a lasting visual impression and appear to have gone beyond what may be considered a narrow functional purpose. Gigantism, framing of holes, fossils or some kind of flaw embedded in the rock, absolute symmetry or extreme refinement enhance this visual effect. These exceptional artefacts reflect complex cognitive processes associated with the emergence of abstract thought and possibly with the need for social distinction. This seminar presents the archaeological discussion addressing why a Palaeolithic individual would have wanted to cause lasting impressions through Acheulean tools, and the social context within which *such* impressions would have been placed.

Lectures are open to the public, free of charge. To attend the seminar pre-book your seat here: [Pre-booking](#)



#### **Location**

Amphitheater, Benaki Museum of Greek Culture  
1 Koumbari St. & Vas. Sofias Ave., 106 74 Athens



**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ**  
Υπουργείο Πολιτισμού

#### **Coordination**

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