

WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY SEMINAR



Every Friday from 16.00-17.00
Institute Lecture Room
In-person unless otherwise stated

Archaeology around the world from all regions and periods.

Week 1, May 2: Ellen Hsieh (National Tsing Hua University, Taiwan),
online at 2 PM

Spanish Colonization in Asia: Indigenous Agency and Cultural Hybridization

Week 2, May 9: Andrew McNey (University of Oxford)

Nobody Wants to Be Here and Nobody Wants to Leave: Changing Land Settlement Patterns in the Late Antique Negev

Week 3, May 16: Moudhy Al-rashid (University of Oxford)

Between Two Rivers: Ancient Mesopotamia and the Birth of History

Week 4: May 23: Valeriy Manko (Institute of Archaeology, NAS Ukraine),
online at 4 PM

Migrations of the bearers of the pressing technique of blade production at the beginning of the Holocene: Middle East – Southern Caucasus – Southern Eastern Europe

Week 5: Wednesday May 28: Eduardo Herrera Malatesta (Leiden University)

Exploring the development of political landscapes: human-environment interactions and resource management practices among the Muisca

Week 5: May 30: Andrew MacIver (Yale University), **online at 5 PM**

Displacement, Trauma, and Becoming among Shang Communities during the Western Zhou Period (ca. 1046-771 BCE)

Week 6: June 6: Grace Turner (The Antiquities, Monuments & Museum Corporation, Nassau, The Bahamas)

Developing an Archaeology Program in a Small, Former British Caribbean Territory

Week 7: June 13: Siyi Wu (University of Oxford)

Masters of the Dragon Bowl: Producing Knowledge Beyond Imperial Patronage in Ming Dynasty Jingdezhen, China (1368–1644)

Week 8: June 20: Caterina Zaggia (University of Cambridge and UCL)

From Coffins to Cosmetics: Exploring Egypt through Science

Online Lectures Links

Week 1, May 2: Ellen Hsieh (National Tsing Hua University, Taiwan),
online at 2 PM

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Meeting ID: 316 651 886 186

Passcode: 5na3jb6K

Week 4: May 23: Valeriy Manko (Institute of Archaeology, NAS
Ukraine), **online at 4 PM**

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Week 5: May 30: Andrew MacIver (Yale University), **online at 5 PM**

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Meeting ID: 387 755 073 338 0

Passcode: jN3ku2nT

WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY SEMINAR

Friday **2PM**
Online via Teams

Archaeology around the world from all regions and periods.

Spanish Colonization in Asia: Indigenous Agency and Cultural Hybridization

Ellen Hsieh

(National Tsing Hua University)

Friday 2 May 2025, **2PM** via Teams



Spanish colonization in Asia during the early modern period played a critical role in global history, particularly in the birth of the modern Philippines, the flow of American silver to China, and the spread of Catholicism. However, the early development of the colony remains unclear due to limited information about indigenous communities that lived alongside the Spanish. Moreover, the Sangley Chinese, despite their vital contributions to the colonial economy and society, have often been marginalized in historical narratives, portrayed as outsiders rather than integral actors. This study adopts postcolonial theoretical frameworks to investigate the early hybridization of colonial Manila through a critical analysis of visual and archaeological evidence created and circulated within the contemporary colonial milieu. These material traces offer insights into the lived experiences and cultural negotiations that documentary sources often fail to capture. Examining artifacts through the lens of transculturation and considering the pre-European experiences reveals the agency of each community in shaping colonial society, challenging traditional Eurocentric narratives. Additionally, archaeological investigations of the Todos los Santos Church and indigenous sites in Hermosa (present-day Taiwan)—where Spanish presence lasted only 16 years—provide a unique opportunity to examine the integration of political and spiritual conquests, as well as the diverse responses of indigenous communities to Spanish colonization.

Teams Meeting ID: 316 651 886 186 Passcode: 5na3jb6K

WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY SEMINAR

Friday, 9 May, 2025, 16.00-
17.00

Institute Seminar Room

Archaeology around the world from all regions and periods.

Nobody Wants to Be Here and Nobody Wants to Leave: Changing Land Settlement Patterns in the Late Antique Negev

Andrew McNey (University of Oxford)



Dendroecological evidence of a severe climate shift in the sixth century, referred to as the “Late Antique Little Ice Age”, has encouraged scholars to reconsider this period as demonstrable of unique resilience in the face of environmental change. Thus far research has focused on a macro scale asking questions of market volatility and imperial retraction or expansion. This focus has elucidated new trends of human-climate relations; however, it also silences historical agents that do not operate on the scale of global climate or politics. This presentation seeks to nuance this narrative by offering a new history of the agricultural communities of the late-antique levant. An interdisciplinary approach is applied that reconciles a textual analysis of the Nessana papyri with the archaeological data for a change in settlement patterns in the Negev.

WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY SEMINAR

Friday, 23 May, 2025,
16.00-17.00
Institute Seminar Room

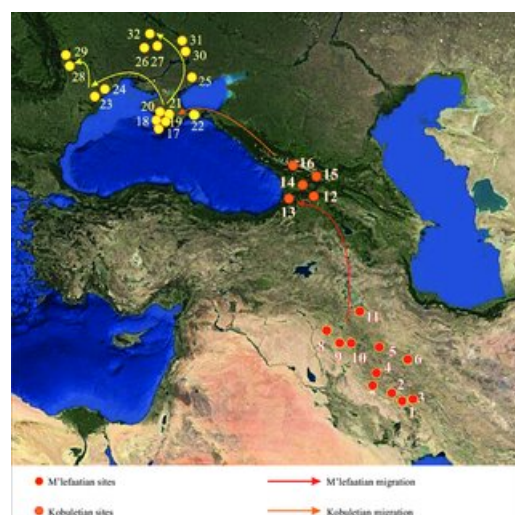
Archaeology around the world from all regions and periods.

Migrations of the bearers of the pressing technique of blade production at the beginning of the Holocene: Middle East – Southern Caucasus – Southern Eastern Europe

Dr. Valery Manko (Institute of Archaeology of NAS of Ukraine)

The appearance of the pressing technique in the Middle East took place in the Late Pleistocene, when the development of the M'lefaatian culture began. The development of this culture led to the emergence of agriculture and animal husbandry. On the eve of the emergence of new forms of economy, some groups undertook long-distance migrations. Migrants arrived in the South Caucasus at the end of the 10th millennium BC. The migrants found themselves in a region that could provide them with a variety of resources. The centre of development of the new cultural group was the valley of the Kintrishi river in Adjara, where the resources of the Kintrishi valley, the mountains and the coastal strip were available at the same time.

The migrant culture was named 'Kobuletian culture'. The sites of Kobuleti, Khutsubani, Anaseuli 1, Bavra and Bavra-Ablari have been investigated in the South Caucasus. Likely, a small area in the South Caucasus could not meet the needs of a large number of migrants. It is not surprising that we observe the continuation of the migration process. At the beginning of the 10th millennium BC, we find the appearance of the so-called Kukrekian culture in the Crimea. The settlement of the bearers of the M'lefaatian culture led to the emergence of a discrete entity in the Middle East, South Caucasus and Crimea. It seems that the Neolithic began to develop only in those regions which became part of an information entity connected with the centres of primary Neolithization.



Key words: pressing technique, Migrations, microliths, Neolithization, information entity

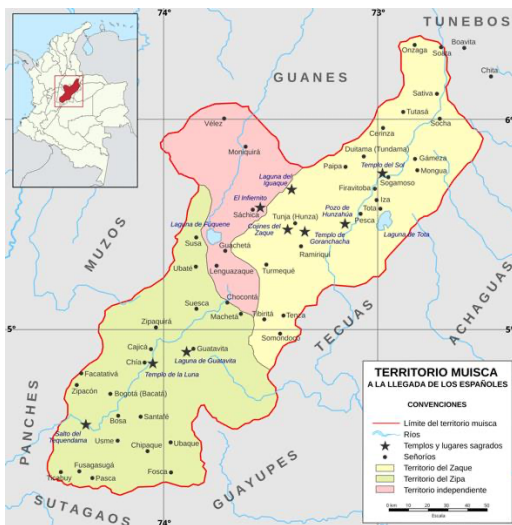
Wednesday, 28 May 2025
Institute Lecture Room

Exploring the development of political landscapes: human-environment interactions and resource management practices among the Muisca

Dr Eduardo Herrera Malatesta

(University of Leiden)

Wednesday, 28 May 2025



This paper will present a series of computational models used to understand the human-environment interactions and resource management practices among the past Muisca ethnic group that inhabited the Altiplano Cundiboyacense (Colombia). The Muisca was an indigenous culture that formed the Muisca Confederation that expanded along a large region (around 25,000 km²) of the Colombian Andes. The confederation was divided into two main subgroups, the Hoa and Psihipqua, each ruled by a cacique called Zaque and Zipa, respectively. The Muisca had a hierarchical political system which extended to the territorial organization. For example, the early chroniclers described that there were areas dedicated to the grow of crops to feed the larger population centers. One of these areas, was the Valley of Tena that was supposed to be the agricultural land of the population center of Bacatá, located at the Sabana de Bogota, the main population center in the Zipa territory. However, the role of the settlements of the Valley of Tena as temporary and only devoted to the growing of crops to maintain the larger population center of Bacatá, in a system defined as microverticality, has been recently challenged (Argüello García, 2015). Argüello's research open the door to reflect if the political and environmental patterns the Spanish chroniclers recorded during the early years of colonization were accurate for this region, something that has been already disputed for other regions of South America and the Caribbean (see e.g., Herrera Malatesta, 2022). This paper will present new research on the human-environment interactions and resource management practices of the Muisca in the Valley of Tena through over 1000 years of history. To model and better understand this relationship, a new set of analysis applying point process modelling, Monte Carlo simulations, and network science will be applied for the first time in this region. These methods allowed a detailed and deep exploration and analysis of the statistical and quantitative relations between settlement patterns and environmental features over time. The data for the analysis consists of a distribution of archaeological sites divided into three chronological periods (Herrera, Early Muisca, Late Muisca); a set of environmental features (e.g., soil maps, elevation, slope, rivers, etc.); and the spatial areas of known cultigens produced by the Muisca (e.g., maize, other tuber crops).

WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY SEMINAR

Friday, 30 May, 2025, 17.00

Online via Teams

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Archaeology around the world from all regions and periods.

Displacement, Trauma, and Becoming among Shang Communities during the Western Zhou Period (ca. 1046-771 BCE)

Andrew McIver (Yale University)



At the height of its prosperity, the Late Shang state (ca. 1250-1046 BCE) existed as one of the preeminent powers in the ancient world. With the fall of the Late Shang state following a series of conquests by the Zhou and their coalition of highland allies, the Shang people at Anyang and affiliated settlements dispersed widely throughout the Western Zhou (ca. 1046-771 BCE) world. While archaeologists have long recognized the material evidence for the Shang people in Western Zhou spaces, there remains much unknown regarding the complex social processes involved in the displacement of the Shang. This talk explores the lifeways of the Shang people in the aftermath of the Zhou conquests and the varied influences the Shang people held in Western Zhou society. Towards this end, I examine the ordinary spaces and mortuary contexts of diverse Shang communities. In confronting a time of social transformation, the Shang people significantly impacted the emerging Western Zhou order.

WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY SEMINAR

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Archaeology around the world from all regions and periods.

Developing an Archaeology Program in a Small, Former British Caribbean Territory.

Grace Turner
(The Antiquities, Monuments & Museum
Corporation, Nassau, The Bahamas)

Friday 6 June 2025



The Bahamas became independent from Britain in July 1973. By the 1980s The Bahamas faced a critical challenge. Christopher Columbus' first landfall in the Americas was on an island in this archipelago. The 500th anniversary of this occasion was a decade away. There was much new archaeological research to be done but a sticking point was what became of any materials excavated. To this point the usual practice was these finds to be taken to institutions abroad. An objective of a new archaeology program was to address this issue. The decision on the status of excavated cultural materials became the rationale and basis of cultural legislation that was enacted about 20 years later. Related issues continue to unfold with regard to the disposition of Underwater Cultural Heritage. For the Caribbean region The Bahamas has been willing to take significant risks.

WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY SEMINAR

Friday, 13 June, 2025, 16.00-
17.00, Institute of
Archaeology, 36 Beaumont St

Archaeology around the world from all regions and periods.

Masters of the Dragon Bowl: Producing Knowledge Beyond Imperial Patronage in Ming Dynasty Jingdezhen (1368–1644)

Siyi Wu (University of Oxford)



Jingdezhen has been globally renowned for its blue-and-white porcelain production since the 14th century, including large-sized fishbowls decorated with dragon motifs. Initially challenging to produce, these impressive vessels were believed to represent the technological prowess of imperial patronage during the Ming dynasty. This talk presents a fresh perspective that challenges the grand imperial success narrative of fishbowl production in Jingdezhen. Drawing on recent archaeological discoveries, ethnographic research, and scientific analysis, it examines the knowledge development, skill transmission, and production processes behind these remarkable vessels. This maker-focused research not only questions the presumed technical superiority associated with imperial patronage but challenges the traditional divide between imperial and non-imperial that has long dominated Chinese ceramic connoisseurship and scholarship.

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Archaeology around the world from all regions and periods.

From Coffins to Cosmetics: Exploring Ancient Egypt Through Science

Caterina Zaggia
(*University of Cambridge, UCL*)

Friday 20 June 2025



Egyptology historically prioritized iconographic and symbolic interpretations. Despite advancements in materials science and analytical techniques, challenges remain, including restrictive sampling policies and the reliance on museum collections with uncertain provenance. Recent efforts, such as those presented at the First International Conference on the Science of Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technologies (SAEMT), continue to advocate for a more interdisciplinary approach.

This study operates within this evolving yet fragile landscape, aiming to bridge the gap between Egyptology and scientific analysis. By addressing both micro- and macro-scale questions, it seeks to reconstruct technological skills, material choices, and manufacturing techniques while integrating these insights into broader archaeological interpretations.

Leveraging established scientific methodologies from other archaeological disciplines, this research presents three case studies focusing on understudied materials: the preparatory grounds of coffin sets from Egypt and makeup materials from Nubia. The first case examines the coffin set of Pakepu (Fitzwilliam Museum, E.2.1869), followed by a comparative analysis of Roman mummy masks from the Glyptotek in Copenhagen. Finally, the study explores how scientific analysis of kohl can shed light on Nubian identity during Egyptian occupation. These case studies demonstrate the potential of scientific inquiry to deepen our understanding of funerary craftsmanship and material culture in Ancient Egypt and its broader cultural interactions.



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The seminar series coordinators of Eurasian Archaeology, Barbarians Prehistory, Archaeology of the Middle East, and Americanist Archaeology Seminar Series have joined forces to form a new, broad seminar series: World Archaeology. Reaching beyond the traditional topics of these former series, World Archaeology hosts seminars without temporal or spatial boundaries and provides a platform for archaeologists from around the globe. Our aim through World Archaeology is to provide a wide-ranging weekly seminar that promotes a variety of topics. Please see below to get involved or suggest a speaker.

Contact email: : world.archaeology@arch.ox.ac.uk

Do you have a suggestion for a speaker? Click [here](#)!

Would you like to be involved in coordinating this seminar? Email: world.archaeology@arch.ox.ac.uk

Are you a DPhil student who would like to present at our seminar? Click [here](#)!

Coordinators:

-Dr Anke Hein - Dr Alex Guerds -Michael Leadbetter -Akari Goda-Maurezzutt
-Dr Jade Whitlam -Dr Bill Finlayson – Guopeng Chen