

Saturday Seminar Series



The seminars will be held online on Zoom.

Members

Individual lecture \$20
Entire series \$60

Non Members

Individual \$30
Entire series \$90

Nahal Qanah Gold Rings c. 4500 BCE.

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

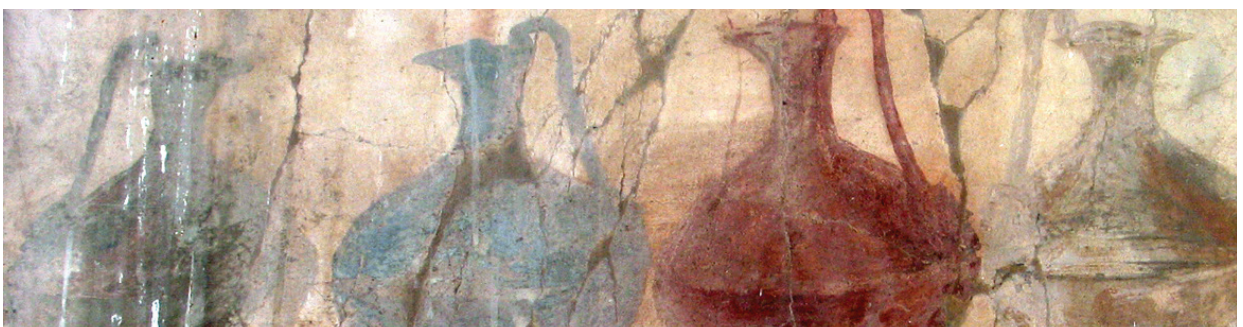
This Saturday series will move away from a site, period or historical perspective, and look at some of the major technological innovations and their impacts on their social, economic and environmental contexts in the ancient Near East.

In a series of eight lectures over four Saturdays, NEAF speakers will focus on a selection of intellectual, technological, and materials-based game-changers, and explore recent multidisciplinary approaches and new research tools that are deepening our understanding of the Near East.

These online lectures will be delivered via Zoom, and will start at 10am and last for approximately two hours. The two-hour block will be divided into two 45-minute lecture-sessions by different speakers.

The first lecture will start after a short introduction at 10am and there will be an opportunity to ask a few questions after this lecture.

The second lecture will begin at 11.05am and finish at 12 noon. There will be a ten-minute coffee-break between the two sessions.



Wall paintings of glass vessels from Herculaneum. Photo Dr Margaret O'Hea.



Date	Time	Lecturer	Topic
9 April	10am	Dr Stephen Bourke AM (University of Sydney)	Becoming Urban: tools and technologies of social complexity
	11 am	Dr Conni Lord (University of Sydney & University of Wollongong)	Ensuring Eternity: the process and performance of mummification in ancient Egypt
23 April	10 am	Dr Peta Seaton AM (University of Sydney)	Hoofing it: Ancient transport technologies and their impacts
	11 am	Professor Haskel J. Greenfield (University of Manitoba and St. Paul's College)	Animal bones: what they can tell us about the origins of metallurgy
30 April	10 am	Dr Margaret O'Hea (University of Adelaide)	What's for Dinner? Setting the Ancient Table: the importance of glass in antiquity
	11 am	Prudence Sheaves (University of Sydney)	From Roasts to Ghosts: Ceramic Technology in Ancient Times
7 May	10 am	Dr Joseph Lehner (University of Sydney)	The Rise of Metallurgy in West Asia: The evolution of metal technology and its impacts
	11 am	Dr Craig Barker (University of Sydney)	How to Build a Roman City: techniques in urban construction in ancient Roman cities



9 April 2022

Lecture 1: Becoming Urban: Tools and Technologies of Social Complexity

Dr Stephen Bourke AM | Sydney University
Sydney: Saturday 9 April 2022 | 10am-11am

Abstract: The varying links between developing economic specialisation, record keeping in its various forms, codified religious practice, trade and resource procurement, and the development of hierarchical social complexity is much debated. Archaeologically, we can discern some of these features emerging ever more strongly in what we might term 'pre-urban' societies of the Fifth Millennium BCE but deciding when the cumulative weight of changes in a given society alters the pattern of social organisation to such an extent that the old procedures are no longer viable is no easy task. In this lecture we'll explore some of the archaeologically visible drivers of change in pre-urban societies in the southern Levant and see how each element may have contributed to what eventually becomes a sustained and apparently unalterable pathway towards complex urban lifeways, that dominate Middle Eastern civilisation ever after.

Lecture 2: Ensuring Eternity: the process and performance of mummification in ancient Egypt

Dr Conni Lord | University of Sydney & University of Wollongong
Sydney: 9 April 2022 | 11am-12pm

Abstract: Ancient Egypt has left us many reminders of their past, including the colossal stone monuments, colourful art, elaborate jewellery and, the people themselves in the form of mummies. Much like the artisans who worked with stone, wood and paint, the embalmers of Egypt were extremely skilled in their profession, providing practical and spiritual protection for the newly deceased so they would be ensured of a successful journey into the afterlife.

This talk will focus on the techniques and rituals of mummification employed for over 4000 years in ancient Egypt, as well as exploring the idea that, to the ancient Egyptians, death was not the end but merely a necessary step for the continuation of life.

23 April 2022

Lecture 1: Hoofing it: Ancient Transport technologies and their impacts

Dr Peta Seaton AM | University of Sydney
Sydney: Saturday 23 April 2022 | 10am-11am

Abstract: In this talk we will look at the technology game changers in ancient transport, and consider what this meant for communication, social and economic change.

Donkeys, horses, boats, wheels, sleds, and Shank's Pony – we will look at the evidence for the earliest emergence of these technologies in the ancient Near East, who invented and used them, and how they shaped the cultures and politics of the region.

Lecture 2: Animal bones and what they can tell us about the origins of metallurgy

Professor Haskel J Greenfield | University of Manitoba & St Paul's College
Sydney: Saturday 23 April 2022 | 11am-12pm

Abstract: Most studies of the spread of copper and bronze metallurgy across the Old World have relied upon the relatively few metal finds that have survived. Further, most of these are from mortuary contexts

and indicate little about daily life activities. In recent years, a new method that circumvents the biased metallurgical record has been developed using microscopic groove analysis on zooarchaeological remains. In this paper, I present and compare data from the Near East and Europe to assess the nature of the spread of quotidian (daily life usage) metallurgy between the two regions. The paper will begin with an overview of what we know about metallurgy, followed by a presentation of the method, and finally the results from the numerous faunal assemblages from sites ranging from Egypt to Poland. The results allow an initial assessment of the relative importance of stone versus metal tools in different parts of the Old World for quotidian activities, such as meat processing.

30 April 2022

Lecture 1: What's for Dinner? Setting the Ancient Table

Dr Margaret O'Hea | University of Adelaide
Sydney: Saturday 30 April 2022 | 10am-11am

Abstract: The single most important technological change to glass-making was the invention of glass-blowing, at some time in the first century BCE, just in time to be spread throughout and beyond the Roman empire. It made glass relatively affordable and ubiquitous in Roman life: people now dined off glass, put their fruit for the first time in glass bowls, bought glass novelty items (including, for the hardy-stomached, glass chamberpots). The demand for glass promoted even greater degrees of recycling than ever before. Glass was now also available to be used in other Roman architectural innovations, such as glass windows (climate control, especially in bathhouses) and, eventually, ceiling lights.

Lecture 2: From Roasts to Ghosts: ceramic technology in ancient times

Prudence Sheaves | University of Sydney
Sydney: Saturday 30 April 2022 | 11am-12pm

Abstract: Ceramic vessels are some of the oldest artefacts known and are often instantly recognisable from the forms found in our cupboards today. Ceramics are integral to our everyday life and the everyday life of our ancestors but their production has become shrouded in mystery. How were Neolithic storage jars made? What is a slow wheel? Does a fast wheel lead to a better pot? And will better pots mean better quality of life? This talk will explore ceramic technology in the ancient world with a particular focus on how ceramic products were used in food preparation and medicine.

7 May 2022

Lecture 1: The Rise of Metallurgy in West Asia

Dr Joseph W. Lehner | University of Sydney
Sydney: Saturday 7 May 2022 | 10am-11am

Abstract: The last ten years of research in ancient metallurgy has changed fundamentally how we view the rise of this complex technology. Yet despite the incredible new details and new techniques in archaeological science, many large questions remain open. What gave rise to the invention, innovation and adoption of metallurgy? Was there more than one centre where metallurgy developed independently? What is the relationship between social complexity and metal? In this lecture, we will explore the latest research, from the earliest copper producers of the ancient Balkans to the precocious diversity and virtuosity of the earliest metal technologies across West Asia.

Lecture 2: How to Build a Roman City: techniques of urban construction

Dr Craig Barker | University of Sydney

Sydney: Saturday 7 May 2022 | 11am-12pm

Abstract: This talk will examine the processes of Roman urban architecture and infrastructure, from town planning and layout to colonnaded thoroughfares and plazas, arches and city walls, to public buildings such as theatres, amphitheatres, stadia, temples, basilicas, curia, markets and baths.

What made a Roman urban centre unique, and how did Romans adapt to earlier urban architecture and setting in the East of the empire?

This talk will use examples of Roman urban structures in Italy, Asia Minor, Cyprus, North Africa and the East and will take us through Roman methods of urban planning and design and construction techniques from quarrying and long distance trade of building materials through to the use of marble façading, methods of brick construction and the role of concrete through to decorative elements such as frescoes, painted plaster and mosaics.

We will examine some of the most famous buildings of the Roman world and examine the techniques of their construction and chronological changes and regional variation.



Septimius Severus Arch 203 CE.
View down the Cardo at Leptis Magna.

HOW TO BOOK

Please go to book via our NEAF website.

https://sydney.onestopsecure.com/onestopweb/V9P/tran?UDS_ACTION=DEFAULT&UDS_ACTION_DATA=988

You can register for the whole series at a discount, or book for specific Saturdays.

- NEAF Members: \$20 per session All 5 sessions: \$60
- Non-Members \$30 per session All 5 sessions: \$90
- All Students are free

Please note – a minimum of 20 attendees is required for each lecture for this series to run – our upper limit is 300 per lecture.

All lectures will be delivered by Zoom.

ZOOM MEETING ID

Once payment is received a receipt, Meeting ID and non-transferrable password will be sent to you.

On admission to the Zoom lecture, participants will be matched to names of financial participants. Please ensure your zoom log-in screen name correctly identifies you. If you are dialling in via telephone, please ensure the number listed when booking on our website is the same used when connecting via telephone.

FORMAT

Our Introduction will start at 9.55am.

The lecture will start at 10am and the second lecture will begin at 11.05am and finish at 12 noon.

There will be opportunity for questions following the lectures, time permitting.



Mural showing glass objects from a food shop at Ostia. Photo by Dr Margaret O'Hea.