

INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY – BRITISH MUSEUM MEDIÉVAL SEMINAR SERIES 2017–18

Following the Sir David Wilson Lecture on 18th October, the 2017–18 seminar series will consist of the following meetings, all of which start at 6 pm.

AUTUMN TERM

Tuesday 7 November (IoA Room 209)

Mateusz Fafinski (Freie Universität Berlin): *(Re-)Using Rome: Roman Infrastructure as Early Medieval Governance Resource in Britain*

The transformations of the late antique Roman world have been a subject of vivid debate among historians and archaeologists, with Britain being one of the most interesting but at the same time most difficult to interpret regions of the post-Roman West. We might learn much more about the nature and character of those transformations by analysing the patterns of re-use and abandonment of Roman infrastructures by the polities of Early Medieval Britain. The role that those infrastructures have played as governance resources is of particular importance, not only on practical but also on symbolical level and it can reveal interesting parallels with continental examples.

Tuesday 14 November (IoA Room 612)

Dr. Toby Martin (Oxford Archaeology): *Gender, jewellery and the making of early medieval Europe*

Early medieval Europe is well known for its regionally distinctive and elaborate jewellery, and during the 5th to 7th centuries AD an enormous quantity of it was put into women's graves throughout much of present-day Europe. As such, it was not only an everyday aspect of the manner in which many women dressed, but it also possessed significance in terms of how gendered and regional identities were understood for an extended period. The origins of this phenomenon lie in the transition between late Roman and early medieval Europe, and during these few decades what had once been the paraphernalia of the late Roman military became an overwhelmingly feminine mode of attire. Using the largest yet assembled corpus of this material, this paper focuses on the origins of these jewelleries in an attempt to answer why this became such a prevalent and fundamentally gendered behaviour, and what the consequences of this were for the ensuing centuries.

Tuesday 12 December (IoA Room 612)

Dr. Letty ten Harkel (University of Oxford): *Kings, Vikings, distant monks or local peasants: who was who in the early medieval trading site and ringforts in the Domburg area, island of Walcheren (Netherlands)?*

The small coastal island of Walcheren in the SW Netherlands, situated in the estuary of the river Scheldt, is extremely rich archaeologically. In addition to the probable site of an early medieval emporium, comparable in wealth to Dorestad, the island housed no less than 3 closely spaced early medieval ringforts. Yet many questions surround the nature and significance of this archaeological heritage, not least because much has been destroyed by coastal erosion since remains were first studied by Antiquarians in the 19th century. Who were the inhabitants of the island? Who built the ringforts? This talk aims to answer some of these questions, combining a critical reevaluation of older interpretative frameworks with new scientific results from the 'Investigating the Dead in Early Medieval Domburg' project.

SPRING TERM

Tuesday 23 January (IoA Room 612)

Dr. Tim Pestell (Norwich Castle Museum): *Norwich Castle Keep: A 12th Century Building Reinterpreted for the 21st Century*

Norwich Castle Museum is focused upon its early twelfth-century Keep, one of the most architecturally sophisticated in north-west Europe. However, it has proven a challenge to interpret ever since it was converted from a prison into a museum in the 1880s, a problem that has been compounded over the years by the limitations of the Victorian architecture. Today, a £13 million redevelopment project is aiming to transform the Keep and reinterpret it for modern audiences. This talk will look at the ethical and practical issues of such a large project.

Tuesday 20 February (IoA Room 612)

Dr. David Petts (University of Durham): *Current work on the Anglo-Saxon monastery of Lindisfarne*

Despite its importance, the early medieval monastic site of Lindisfarne has seen relatively little archaeological research. This presentation will review the current state of knowledge about the archaeology of the early ecclesiastical presence on the island and review the results of recent fieldwork being carried out on the island by Durham University and DigVentures.

Tuesday 20 March (IoA Room 612)

Dr. Gordon Noble (University of Aberdeen): *Discovering the Northern Picts: Kingship and Society in Northeast Scotland c.300-1000 AD*

The Picts are a 'lost people of Europe' and a past society of enduring public fascination. First mentioned in late Roman writings as a collection of troublesome social groupings north of the Roman frontier, the Picts went on to dominate northern and eastern Scotland until late first millennium AD. The archaeology for this period has often been seen as being problematic adding to the mysterious air surrounding the Picts. This talk will highlight the results of the University of Aberdeen Northern Picts project which has uncovered a number of Pictish power centres, settlement sites and a silver hoard that all shed important new light on early medieval society in northern Britain.

SUMMER TERM

Wednesday 23 May (IoA Room 612)

Drs Sarah Semple and Sue Harrington (University of Durham): *People and Place: The making of the Kingdom of Northumbria 300-800 CE*

Followed by a summer party in the **Staff Common Room**.

Convenors

Sue Brunning (BM) sbrunning@britishmuseum.org
Stuart Brookes (IoA) s.brookes@ucl.ac.uk

Meetings Secretary: Rob Briggs (IoA) robert.briggs.15@ucl.ac.uk

Sponsored by the World Archaeology Section (IoA) and the British Museum.