

Anglo-Turkish Society / Royal Anthropological Institute lecture, 18 April 2019, 6.00 pm

Speaker: Lee Clare

Venue: Royal Anthropological Institute, 50 Fitzroy St, Fitzrovia, London W1T 5BT

Title: Göbekli Tepe - A remarkable archaeological site from 11,000 years ago

Göbekli Tepe lies some 15 km east of the city of Şanlıurfa in the Germuş mountain range. This prehistoric site, which is dated to between 9,500 and 8,000 BC, is meanwhile regarded as home to the earliest megalithic monuments in the world. Some 6,000 years older than Stonehenge in the UK, the monumental buildings in Göbekli Tepe were constructed of limestone and feature large monolithic T-shaped stone pillars, some of which carry breath-taking imagery, including carved depictions of wild animals. Göbekli Tepe was constructed by human group(s) during a period commonly referred to as the Early Neolithic when humans made the transition from hunting and gathering to farming, a process also known as *Neolithisation*. Remarkably, Southeast Turkey is a recognized centre of early Neolithisation. The fact that Göbekli Tepe was erected here at this time makes it especially important for archaeologists. Its carved imagery, in particular, provides us with unprecedented insights into the beliefs of the last hunter-gatherer populations to have lived in Şanlıurfa some 11,000 years ago. Following an introduction to the site and its imagery, we will discuss the outstanding universal value of Göbekli Tepe, asking who built Göbekli Tepe and why.

Booking essential: <https://lee-clare-lecture.eventbrite.co.uk>

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Lee Clare is research lecturer at the Orient Department of German Archaeological Institute (DAI) and coordinator of research and fieldwork at Göbekli Tepe. He completed his master's degree at the University of Cologne in 2005, majoring in prehistoric archaeology. Following the completion of his PhD in 2013, dedicated to climate-culture interactions in the Eastern Mediterranean during the Early Holocene, he joined the DAI as post-doctoral fellow in the frame of the Our Place: Our Place in the World project, financed by the John Templeton Foundation and coordinated by Klaus Schmidt (DAI) and Trevor Watkins (University of Edinburgh). In the frame of his current position, Lee has become a frequent-flyer, speaking regularly at international conferences. In addition to the Göbekli Tepe site, his other areas of academic expertise include Neolithisation and Neolithic dispersal processes, Early-Middle Holocene absolute chronologies, culture-climate interaction, prehistoric conflict, and cognitive evolution.

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