DEPARTMENTAL SEMINAR

Tanti non emo, Sexte, piper:
Pepper Prices, Roman Consumer Culture,
and the Bulk of Indo-Roman Trade

Professor Ernst Emanuel Mayer

CHAIRMAN
Dr Daniel Jew

Wednesday, 14 March 2018, 3pm, History/Political Science Lounge,
Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences,
Block AS1, #04–01, 11 Arts Link, Singapore 117573

Abstract:
In contrast to other Indian exports, black pepper was widely available throughout the Roman World, and affordable for ordinary working people. The relatively low price of black pepper indicates that Indo-Roman trade was not just pitched at the very wealthy, but benefited a much broader segment of the population. This throws new light on the scale and cultural impact of Indo-Roman trade, which appears to have exploited Rome’s burgeoning non-elite “consumer culture” in the early imperial period.

About the Speaker:
Emanuel Mayer holds a PhD in Classical Archaeology from the University of Heidelberg (Germany). After completing his PhD, he spent a year traveling across three continents under the auspices of the German Archaeological Institute’s ‘Reisestipendium’ (Travel Fellowship). Prior to joining Yale-NUS, Professor Mayer taught at the University of Oxford and the University of Chicago.

Professor Mayer’s research is driven by questions of how material evidence can reveal patterns of social, economic and cultural history, and enrich, complement, and contextualise evidence from ancient literature and epigraphy. His scholarly focus is on urban life and visual culture, but he also works on the archaeology of the ancient economy and the role of trade and technology in the Roman Empire. Professor Mayer is currently writing a book that explores the social and cultural consequences of long distance trade between the Mediterranean and India.

For enquiries, please contact the Seminar Coordinator, Dr Portia Reyes at hisrp@nus.edu.sg