Luigi Vassalli was born in 1812 in Milan. In 1828 he enrolled at the Brera Academy and around this period he joined the Mazzinian activism but after a failed conspiracy he was sentenced to death, only to be...
pardoned but exiled. He moved in several places across Europe and later he traveled to Egypt where he began working for the local government.

In 1848 Vassalli returned to his homeland to join the revolutionary movements against the Austrian Empire, but after the failure he returned to Egypt where he became a portrait painter and an archaeological guide for wealthy foreigners. Around 1858 he was appointed Inspector of excavations by the French Egyptologist Auguste Mariette, who was Director of Antiquities at this time. Vassalli assisted in excavations at Giza and Saqqara until 1860, when he returned home to give his contribution to the Expedition of the Thousand led by Giuseppe Garibaldi. After the victory he was appointed First Class Conservator at the Naples National Archaeological Museum; however, the office was soon abolished by the still pro-Borbonic museum management and Vassalli again came back to Cairo.

In Egypt he made several archaeological explorations in many sites such as Tanis, Saqqara, Dendera and Edfu from 1861 to 1868. He sent many mummy remains to the Museo Civico di Storia Naturale of Milan and in 1871 he made around 150 casts from monuments exhibited in the Bulaq Museum which he brought to Florence with him. During his short stay, the Italian government asked him to inspect many Egyptian collections in Italy, after which he returned to his duties in Cairo.

Also in 1871, along with Mariette, Vassalli discovered the mastaba of Nefermaat at Meidum, which is well known for the famous scene commonly referred as the Meidum Geese. Vassalli carefully removed the whole scene from the tomb wall and reassembled it inside the Bulaq Museum. This fact sparked a controversy over a century later in 2015, when the Egyptologist Francesco Tiradritti suggested that the Meidum geese scene is a 19th-century forgery possibly made by Vassalli himself, a claim disputed by Egyptian authorities, among them Zahi Hawass.

After Mariette's death in 1881, Vassalli became interim director until the installation of Gaston Maspero. He retired in 1884 and returned to Milan and then to Rome, where he committed suicide on June 13, 1887. (Source: Wikipedia)

Register in advance for this meeting:
https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEkdu6pqj4pHtPGJ7IOOrH8NVR3-RVyKv5i7

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting, along with a link on which you will click to join the meeting. Save the email, as you will need the link it contains to join the meeting. Please do not share the join link with anyone; it is unique to your email address.

Questions? Please email Glenn Meyer at arcencZoom@gmail.com.
About Dr. Francesco Tiradritti, Director of the Italian Archaeological Mission to Luxor

Francesco Tiradritti was born in Montepulciano, Italy, on August 17th, 1961. He is currently Director of the Italian Archaeological Mission to Luxor, where he is working in the Funerary Complex of Harwa (TT 37) and Akhimenu (TT 404) and the Tomb of Pabasa (TT 279). He received his PhD at the University of Rome “La Sapienza” with a doctoral thesis on the Propaganda on Royal Stelae of the XX Dynasty. He also obtained a D.E.A. at the University La Sorbonne in Paris.

Dr. Tiradritti has taken part in excavations in Italy, in the Sudan and at several sites in Egypt – including the Tomb of Sheshonq (TT 27) and at Gebelein. He has worked for many years as consulting Egyptologist at the Civiche Raccolte Archeologiche of Milan, and has taught Egyptology in Enna, Naples, Foggia, Turin and at the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia. In 2004-2005, Dr. Tiradritti occupied the Dorothy K. Hohenberg Chair of Excellence in History of Art at the University of Memphis in Tennessee. In 2013 he was scholar at the Getty Research Institute. He has been a member of the commission for the feasibility study of the Grand Egyptian Museum at Giza and for the renovation project of the Egyptian Museum in Turin. He has organized and worked on more than 20 exhibitions on various aspects of ancient Egyptian civilization in Italy, Hungary, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Czech Republic and in Egypt.

He is the author of Ancient Egypt: Art, Architecture and History, published in 2002 in Italian, English,
Cartouche
Spanish, & Chinese, and Egyptian Wall Paintings, published in 2008 in Italian, French, German, & English. Dr. Tiradritti is also the editor of Egyptian Treasures from the Egyptian Museum of Cairo, published in 1999 and translated into 13 languages between 1998 and 2000. He has authored several scientific publications on Egyptology and Sudanese archaeology, and regularly writes for The Art Newspaper and Archeologia Viva. Dr. Tiradritti’s research focuses primarily on a semantic approach to archaeology, history of art and the culture of ancient Egypt.

From the President
I’m excited about our own chapter’s developing 2021-22 schedule. Via Zoom, we’ll hear August 15 from Dr. Barry Kemp of the Amarna Trust. He’ll speak on “King Akhenaten’s Main Temple to the Sun God at Amarna: How Archaeology Is Revealing Its Development and Use.”

If you attended last month’s ARCE Virtual National Meeting, enjoyed a particular talk/s and would like us to consider bringing an expanded version to our chapter, please let board member Nancy Corbin know.

Meanwhile, check out May’s offerings from National, including one with a recipe for mayba, a restorative Egyptian drink, to be prepared in advance and enjoyed during the May 29 Q&A.

Cheers,
Barbara Wilcox
President, ARCE Northern California

Alyson Caine awarded Buttery Memorial Student Grant
Our chapter is pleased to award our 2021 ARCE Northern California Marie Buttery Memorial Student Grant to Alyson Caine, a doctoral candidate at the University of California, Merced. Alyson’s dissertation research focuses on a legacy collection from LIsht that was originally excavated by the Egyptian Expedition Fund in the early 20th century. Since then, its skeletal material, archival documents and archaeological finds have been separately housed in various Western institutions. Alyson plans to use our grant to collect osteological data from the large suite of skeletal material housed at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institute, Washington D.C. Her research aims to recontextualize and synthesize data from this and other collections to better understand mortuary practices, specifically their relation to lived experience and identity during the Middle Kingdom.

Marie Buttery was founding president of ARCE Northern California in the mid-1990s. Each spring, our chapter awards a grant in her memory to an undergraduate or graduate student in Egyptology who attends school or has a hometown in Northern California.

We also award a grant each winter to honor Dr. Eugene Cruz-Uribe, a chapter member and Greco-Roman specialist who died in 2018. Eligibility is the same as for the Buttery grant. Call for applications will go out in late fall.
Free virtual talks in May from National

May 9, 10 a.m. PDT
Sacred Baboons as Engines of Egyptian Trade and Seafaring
Dr. Nathaniel Dominy
Register [here](#)

This talk will focus on the bones and teeth of mummified baboons recovered from New Kingdom temples and Ptolemaic tombs. The isotope composition of these tissues is a valuable source of information about the life and lifeways of an animal. In some cases, our evidence points to captive breeding and a lifetime spent in Egypt. In other cases, we find evidence of importation from distant lands. So far, this evidence corroborates consensus on the location of Punt, putting it in the modern-day countries of Eritrea and northern Somalia.

May 29, 10 a.m. PDT
Egyptian History and its Many Cuisines: An Exploration of Egyptian Food History
Dr. Mennat-Allah El Dorry
Register [here](#)

This talk will explore the cuisines of each phase of Egyptian history, identifying some of the highlights or developments of each time period, starting with ancient Egypt and through to the 20th century. It will also investigate the transformations, and how these may or may not have had an impact on the face of today's Egyptian food. After the talk, join us for Q&A over a drink, but not just any drink, a historical concoction. Prepare this drink (below) in time for the talk, and we can have a virtual drink together.

*Mayba* is an "aromatic restorative quince drink" recorded in a 14th century Egyptian cookbook known as "A Treasure Trove of Benefits and Variety at the Table". Historical recipes do not give the same detailed instructions expected of recipes today, and much is implied. This is a simplified version of *mayba*. Instead of having to find quinces and pound them yourself, you can just use apple juice. There is no need to follow it to a tee, have fun with the recipe, change it to your taste, and enjoy!

Pound (or blitz) 4 [apples](#) – not the tart ones – and squeeze the liquid out. Or use apple juice.
Add 1 measure of the apple juice to 1.5 measures of [wine](#) (the original recipe calls for red wine that has been cooked to about a third of its original volume). You can use grape juice.
Cook the mixture until reduced to half the volume.
Add a quarter of this amount in [honey](#) or [sugar](#).
While it cooks, add in spices tied up in a piece of cloth. Spices can be coarsely crushed before being placed into the cloth or used in powdered form.
Use approximately ¼ tsp each ginger root, cinnamon, cloves, crushed black pepper (or peppercorns), nutmeg, 2 cardamom pods and a strand of saffron.
You should also add ¼ tsp of [cassia](#), [spikenard](#), and [aloeswood](#) (but these or any of the spices can be omitted or adjusted to taste)
Leave to cook until it becomes a syrupy consistency and store in the fridge. Dilute with water as desired.
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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

All talks below are Sunday, 3 p.m. PDT via Zoom.

May 2, 2021  
Dr. Francesco Tiradritti  
The Life and Deeds of Luigi Vasselli, Painter, Patriot and Egyptologist

Aug. 15, 2021  
King Akhenaten’s Main Temple to the Sun God at Amarna: How Archaeology Is Revealing Its Development and Use  
Dr. Barry Kemp, Amarna Trust

Sept. 12, 2021  
Hand Unto Ethiopia: The First African-Americans to Visit Nubia  
Dr. Jeremy Pope, University of William and Mary