**Cleopatra's Pearls:**

**Trade and Adornment in Roman Egypt**

A Lecture by the American Research Center in Egypt – Northwest Chapter  
Co-sponsored by the UW Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization

**Thursday, 26 January 2012**  
7:00 pm – 8:30 pm  
Gowen Hall, Room 201, University of Washington, Seattle Campus

Pearls, the only gem created by a living animal, were widely prized in the Roman world as markers of status and beauty. Stories about their mysterious origin in India and display at the courts of Alexandria and Rome enhanced their appeal through the Mediterranean world. Cleopatra, in particular, was reputed to be a great lover of pearls.

In his talk, Professor Walker will explore Egypt's role in the ancient pearl trade and the story of the world's most famous pair of pearl earrings.

**Joel Walker** is an associate professor for the History Department at the University of Washington and also an ARCE NW board member. He earned his PhD from Princeton University in 1998. He is currently working on *Jewel of the Palace and the Soul: Pearls in the Arts, Imagination, and Economy of Late Antiquity*, a monograph integrating literary, art historical, and archaeological evidence to examine the role of pearls as objects of adornment and spirituality in the Roman Empire, early Christianity, Byzantium, the Sasanian Empire, and early Islam.

For more information about the American Research Center in Egypt Northwest and this event contact us via email at nw.arce@gmail.com or visit our website at www.arce-nw.com