

Course Syllabus for Spring 2018

PAPVB_28 Ethnoarchaeological studies with relevance to the archaeology of Mesopotamia

Language requirement

Non-native English

Course objectives

Although radical changes in the life-circumstances have occurred in SW-Asia in the recent decades, the excavator staying in or near villages is still to some extent 'immersed' in the use of some of the more traditional techniques, the local exploitation of raw materials and specific spatial patterns that are influenced by production, use and the final disposal of domestic products. Therefore hardly any scientific contributions by field excavators will be found that do not in one way or another contain allusions to rural or small-town life and some of the 'older crafts'. The course serves as introduction to the field.

Learning outcomes

The student will get a detailed understanding of how an ethnoarchaeology with representative results can be achieved.

Syllabus

PART I: ETHNOARCHAEOLOGICAL THEORY (Maximilian Wilding, MU)

Focus: Via a detailed study of the first chapters of N. David & C. Kramer's milestone '*Ethnoarchaeology in Action*' of 2001 the student will get insights in the principle, possibilities and limits of ethnoarchaeology.

Part II: ETHNOARCHAEOLOGICAL PRACTICE (Füsün Ertuğ, independant researcher, Turkey;

<https://wustl.academia.edu/FüsünERTUG>)

Focus:

I. PLANTS in archaeological context (ethno-archaeo-botanical focus)

a) Methodological tools of ethnobotany, ethnology, archaeobotany

b) Plants for Food & Feed: What do we eat and what do we find in the archaeological contexts? Food preparation, cooking, and storage: tools & techniques. What do we feed to animals, and what do we find in barns, yards, pens, sheds, and kraals? Dung studies, heating, firing etc.

c) Medicine & Health & Healing: How do we keep ourselves healthy? Methods of healing etc. What do we find in prehistoric contexts related to medicine-health-healing?

d) Tools & Materials (incl. shelter-housing-furniture-art). Wooden tools, plants for dying, fiber plants, textiles-clothing, baskets, mats etc.

II. GENDER Roles in archaeological context (gender focus)

- a) Considering, thinking, imagining faces & sexes: Besides burials, skeletons where and how do we consider gender?
- b) Division of labor
- c) Space division/ ownership / possessions

Teaching methods

Part I (lecture), Part II: (lecture + seminar). In part: co-moderated.

Assessment methods

Part I: Attendance & in-class discussion.

Part 2: Each student has to prepare a seminar work (presentation up to 10 min.) from both topics below (SE #1, SE #2). Every student is going to have two presentations (max.20 min) in the class at different sessions and each presentation will be discussed among students.

<http://digitalassets.lib.berkeley.edu/anthpubs/ucb/text/arfs014-001.pdf>

Literature

PART I:

David, N. & C. Kramer. 2001. Ethnoarchaeology in Action. Cambridge University Press (for course participants available as a pdf).

Watson, P. J. 1980. The Theory and Practice of Ethnoarchaeology with Special Reference to the Near East. Paléorient, Vol. 6. Paris: CNRS Éditions. pp. 55-64.

PART II:

Seminar #1: “Archaeobotanical methods applied in modern excavations for finding plant remains: flotation, phytolith, pollen, starch, wood charcoal, identification: lab process”.

Archaeobotanical database of the Near East (for references, projects, open databases):

<http://www.ademnes.de/>

http://archaeobotany.dept.shef.ac.uk/wiki/index.php/Main_Page (Online tutorial 2009)

http://www.crowcanyon.org/ResearchReports/Archaeobotanical/Principles_and_Methods/principles_methods.asp (2004).

Near Eastern Archaeobotany: <http://g.willcox.pagesperso-orange.fr/index.htm>

Seminar #2: “Coprolite (feces and dung) studies for diet, gender, disease and pathogens”.

<https://www.thoughtco.com/coprolite-human-fossil-feces-170564>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5217961/>

<https://www.nature.com/articles/511008c>

<https://www.arch.cam.ac.uk/SilkRoadDisease>

[<http://digitalassets.lib.berkeley.edu/anthpubs/ucb/text/arfs014-001.pdf>]

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