

Model workshop.
Wood, gesso,
pigment. Egypt, First
Intermediate Period,
Dynasty 9, ca. 2200 BC.
OIM E10514



HOUSEHOLD STUDIES IN COMPLEX SOCIETIES (MICRO) ARCHAEOLOGICAL & TEXTUAL APPROACHES

MARCH 15-16, 2013

THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
ORGANIZED BY MIRIAM MÜLLER,
POST-DOCTORAL SCHOLAR

Much can be learned about the structure of a society by analyzing house architecture, artifact assemblages, the production and consumption of goods, and the interactions of individuals and families. Household archaeology is crucial for understanding past societies. Micro-archaeological techniques have advanced and are increasingly recognized as valuable tools used to understand how households functioned. Integrating contemporaneous text sources reveals important information on the appearance of a house, house inventories, and changes in ownership. Texts can support or negate the picture gained from excavations.

This seminar focuses on three major aspects of households: the theory of specific house forms, the archaeology of households, and the significance of material culture. The first aspect looks at the physical unit, namely, its architecture, as well as theories concerning the formation of specific house forms and their origins. The archaeology of households concentrates on sociocultural factors that lead to specific compositions of households and their expression within the architectural surroundings. The material culture represents household activities, informs about room functions, and can also influence the interaction among the residents. This seminar brings together scholars who specialize in the household archaeology of Mesopotamia and Egypt, Anatolia and the Levant, Greece and Italy, as well as the Mesoamericas to form a comparative cross-cultural approach on what can be learned on the micro-scale level and the implications on the macro-historical framework.

FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 2013

INTRODUCTION || 9:00-9:30 AM

Opening remarks by Gil Stein, Director of the Oriental Institute
Introduction by Miriam Müller

SESSION 1 || METHOD & THEORY || 9:30-10:50 AM

- ADELHEID OTTO** "How to Reconstruct Daily Life in a Near Eastern Settlement: Possibilities and Constraints of a Combined Archaeological, Historical, and Scientific Approach"
- KATE SPENCE** "Ancient Egyptian Houses: Architecture, Conceptualization and Interpretation"
- PAOLO BRUSASCO** "Interaction between Textual Materials and Social Space in the Definition of Family Composition in Mesopotamia"

BREAK (10:50-11:10)

SESSION 2 || ACTIVITY-AREA ANALYSIS || 11:10-1:00 PM

- PETER PFÄLZNER** "Activity-area Analyses of Room and Grave Contexts in Third- and Second-millennium BC Syria"
- LYNN RAINVILLE** "Everyday Life in an Assyrian City: Micro-archaeological and Ethno-archaeological Approaches to the Study of Activity Areas"
- FELIX ARNOLD** "Clean and Unclean Space in Houses on Elephantine"
- LISA NEVETT** "The Use and Abuse of Artifact Assemblages in Classical Greek Domestic Contexts"

LUNCH (1:00-2:30)

SESSION 3 || SOCIAL STRATIFICATION || 2:30-3:30 PM

- MIRIAM MÜLLER** "An Ancient Egyptian Middle Class as Revealed in a Neighborhood of Tell el-Dab'a/Avaris"
- HEATHER BAKER** "Family Structure, Household Cycle, and the Social Use of Domestic Space in Urban Babylonia"

BREAK (3:30-4:00)

SESSION 4 || ETHNICITY & IDENTITY || 4:00-5:00 PM

- NICHOLAS PICARDO** "Hybrid Households: Institutional Affiliations and Household Identity in the Town of Wah-sut (South Abydos)"
- AARON BRODY** "Living in Households, Constructing Identities: Ethnicity, Boundaries, and Empire in Iron IIB-IIC Tell en-Nasbeh"

RECEPTION || 5:00-6:00 PM

SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 2013

SESSION 5 || PRIVATE & POLITICAL ECONOMY || 9:00-10:00 AM

- JENS-ARNE DICKMANN** "Crucial Contexts: A Close Reading of the Household of the Casa del Menandro at Pompeii"
- KRISTIN DE LUCIA** "Micro-archaeology and the Identification of Household Multi-crafting among Lakeshore Communities in Pre-Aztec Central Mexico"

SESSION 6 || URBAN-RURAL / CORE-PERIPHERY || 10:00-11:00 AM

- PETER MIGLUS** "Private House or Temple: Decoding Patterns of the Old Babylonian Architecture"
- NEAL SPENCER** "Amara-West: House and Neighborhood in Egyptian Nubia"

BREAK (11:00-11:30)

RESPONSES & ROUNDTABLE || CYNTHIA ROBIN
ELIZABETH STONE || 11:30 AM-1:30 PM
NADINE MOELLER
DAVID SCHLOEN

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

For complete program details, contact Miriam Müller: mmuller@uchicago.edu
Seminar website: <http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/symposia/2013.html>
The Oriental Institute is handicapped accessible. Persons with disabilities who need assistance should contact Miriam Müller at (773) 702-7497.