

A study on Ethnoarchaeology

Khadeeja Abdul¹

Available online at: www.xournals.com

Received 10th September 2018 | Revised 12th October 2018 | Accepted 21st December 2018

Abstract:

Ethnoarchaeology is the field of study that focus on the information required to draw the reliable behavioral inference from the archaeological data. The present study deals with the major role and importance of ethnoarchaeology that combine both the study of archaeology and ethnography. The ethnoarchaeology reviews the comparison of both the past and present data. It is well known for its facility to evaluate the assumptions utilize by the archaeologist. The review is done which contain the relevant information regarding hunter-gather mobility, technological system related with various research, prehistoric life with their archaeological records. The discussed processes was further help in the future advancement and were utilize worldwide.

Keywords: *Ethnoarchaeology, archaeology, ethnography, behavioral inference*

Authors:

1. Cairo University, Giza, EGYPT.

Introduction

Ethnoarchaeology is basically a sub discipline of anthropology which help the archeologist to experience a number of transformation to reveal the prehistoric description. The Ethanoarchaeology was formal dated to appearance in approx. 1956. Hence in 1957 Joseph Bauxar considered as the first to use the term ethanoarcehology. It is known as the combination of both the ethanographic and archeological approaches (**David and Kramer, 6-9**).

Ethnoarchaeology was simply defined as the need of archeologist which help them to explore the early or very old things of archeology. It was typically known as one facet of middle-range theory and research part. The ethanoarcehology is the complete formulation and testing of all the archeologically concerned and their related methods, models, hypothesis as well as theories with the ethnographic data. It conclusively initiate with the archeological testing of hypothesis and theories relevant to these interest and later back to the archeological record to implement knowledge gathered from the ethanographic data.

In preview of comparing past and present, Ethnoarcheology has been progressively associated with more behavioral and ecological approaches. One can isolate some of the aspects of culture i.e. the economic or technological with the other aspects so as to assume the optimized relations (**Hodder, 8**).

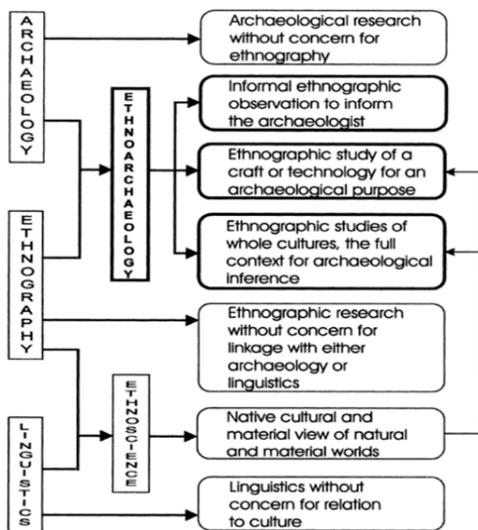


Figure 1 - Ethnoarcheology in anthropology

Origins and Growth of Ethnoarchaeology

The term Ethanoarchaeology is well known and used in early 1900 by Jesse Fewkes with the interaction with the local traditions and knowledge. The systematic Ethnoarchaeological research with the clearly defined the objectives and methodology did not start much later. The first piece of Ethnoarchaeological research was found with the study of Wauchope on Maya house for the collection data to facilitate interpretation of the ancient dwelling sites, in which there is no doubt that its origin as distinct sub discipline are associated with the anthropological approaches to archaeology in the North America during late 1950's.

Core Features of Ethnoarchaeology

- It is a research strategy and was not a theory.
- It basically focused to gather information directly applicable to assist the interpretation of archaeological remains and to revert their related questions.
- It conducted between living societies by the trained archaeological individuals.
- Combines the use of anthropological methods of the contributor observation and the common archaeological procedure for the recording sites, artefacts etc.

Ethnoarchaeology: An Obnoxious Spectator

Previously with the crystallization of Ethnoarchaeology the new archeology was continued an ambitious interpretation of the archeological records. Hence ethnoarchaeology opens the field of discipline whose determination to be prehistoric ethnography which frequently outstripped the use of the available data.

In the mid of 1970's Diane Gifford throw the light on the ethnoarchaeology that could be easily applicable at today's time. But later participating in one of the seminar on the Exploration of Ethnoarchaeology, she discussed about the hazards of ethnoarchaeology's undesirable comment i.e. it only rectify, define and boundaries of archaeology which is less than clear in directing the practical archaeology (**Simms,188**)

Review of Literature

Gould, (1989) stated about the recent attempts by the ethnoarchaeologist like Hodder and Binford to discuss about the past human behaviors lack credibility as they fail in identification or control for the wide range of relevant context. It basically involves the approach of ethnoarchaeologist who usually observe the fleeting and momentary behavior in the present time but to recognize and analysis the possibility of the relevant variables that organized the long-term historical reality.

Engelhardt and Rogers, (1991) discussed the ethnoarchaeological research of nomadic sea peoples in Phuket, southwestern, Thailand. The discussion depends on the tools and materials used in their maritime adapted activities are discarded. Basically focused on the stone artifacts, altered surfaces of activities. They also illustrated the depositions and structural evidences in form of postholes and driplines. The model used is based on the hope that it will help to predict the cultural and environmental transforms which affect the Southeast Asian coastal sites which conclusively support the readability in the archaeological record.

Stark, (2003) discussed about the recent advancement of ceramic ethnoarchaeology by the involvement of regional traditions, competing approaches and field's current definitions etc. this paper discussed about the future ceramic ethnoarchaeologist which will conduct their research which remain as open question and later rapid disappearance of ceramic systems around the world. Lastly the paper focus on the future research of ceramic ethnoarchaeology which is dynamic and popular in today's world.

According to **Kelly, Poyer and Tucker, (2005)** ethnology is defined as the field which goals to provide the details use to draw the reliable behavioral inference from the archaeological data. This paper combined with the other researches on mobility. Hence the archaeologist use the ethnographic data on the architecture so as to gather the numerous aspects of prehistoric behavior. It also include the sharing of the largely function of food's nature i.e. its packaging size and the quality of nutrition.

Sullivan, (2008) detailed the study on ceramic ethnoarchaeology which reveals the factors influence the variation in making, use and remove of entire pottery vessels. This paper focused the relationship between ceramic ethnoarchaeological research and the archeological methods for the determination of annual accumulation rates of shreds for the sites in Southwestern Colorado.

Gelabert, Asouti and Marti, (2011) described the charcoal analysis as an important role in development of both the landscape and palaeoethnobotanical reconstructions. This paper aims to expand the early archeological work on the interpretation of charcoal macro remains with the study of firewood collection as socially, historically and archaeologically observed landscape practice and hence so as to represent it and ethnoarchaeological case study from the Fang Society of Equatorial Guinea is used so as to understand the complex interactions between all the ecological, economic and cultural variables in the strategies of firewood collection.

Mallol and Henry, (2017) stated the ethnoarchaeology of Palaeolithic fire, in this the ethnoarchaeological research basically focused on exploring the differential preservation of open-air hearths and potential to identify the activities related with fire and their technology by using both the micromorphological and anthropological analysis. This paper discuss about the weakness and strength of ethnoarchaeological method for the study of Paleolithic fire and also highlights on the future research work.

Conclusion

The present review paper discussed about the significant role of Ethnoarchaeology in delivering the concept of archaeology and anthropology with the combination of behavior and cultural factors both. It is justified in the present study by reviewing the different study work on the ethnoarchaeology i.e. involving the ethnographic and archaeological methods. This paper also focus on the future perspective and the importance of ethnoarchaeological study in the today's time and further use in the prehistoric data.



References:

David, Nicholas, and Carol Kramer. *Ethnoarchaeology in Action*. Lightning Source UK Ltd., 2010.

Gelabert, Llorenç Picornell, et al. "The Ethnoarchaeology of Firewood Management in the Fang Villages of Equatorial Guinea, Central Africa: Implications for the Interpretation of Wood Fuel Remains from Archaeological Sites." *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology*, vol. 30, 2011, pp. 375–384.

Gould, Richard A. "Ethnoarchaeology and the Past: Our Search for the 'Real Thing.'" *Fennoscandia Archaeologica*, 1989, pp. 3–22., www.sarks.fi.

Hodder, Ian. *The Present Past: An Introduction to Anthropology for Archeologists*. Pen & Sword Archaeology, 1982.

Kelly, Robert L., et al. "An Ethnoarchaeological Study of Mobility, Architectural Investment, and Food Sharing among Madagascar's Mikea." *American Anthropologist*, vol. 107, ser. 3, Sept. 2005, pp. 403–416.

Mallol, Carolina, and Auréade Henry. "Ethnoarchaeology of Paleolithic Fire Methodological Considerations." *Current Anthropology*, vol. 58, Aug. 2017, pp. 217–229., www.journals.uchicago.edu.

Rogers. "The Ethnoarchaeology of Southeast Asian Coastal Sites: A Model for the Deposition and Recovery of Archaeological Material." *Journal of the Siam Society*, vol. 86, 1991, pp. 131–159., www.siamese-heritage.org.

Stark, Miriam T. "Current Issues in Ceramic Ethnoarchaeology." *Journal of Archaeological Research*, vol. 11, ser. 3, Sept. 2003, pp. 193–241. 3, www.anthropology.hawaii.edu.

Sullivan, Alan P. "Ethnoarchaeological and Archaeological Perspectives on Ceramic Vessels and Annual Accumulation Rates of Sherds." *American Antiquity*, vol. 73, no. 1, Jan. 2008, pp. 121–135., www.cambridge.org.