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Household Archaeology: A Theoretical Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The household serves as a space for socialization processes. Household archaeology focuses on the household as a social unit, and involves research on the household's dwelling and other related architecture, material culture, features, and larger sociopolitical organizations that are associated with a specific culture. Household social relationships have been associated as serving as an "atom" for society. Household archaeology redefines the notion of the household and the domestic by challenging notions of what households are, how they operate and the social implications of such analysis. The material culture provides information about such activities. Households are families, domestic groups, and co-habitations.

Household archaeology involves investigations of household activities. It encompasses social formation processes, family or co-residential organization and the material culture associated with such activities. Scholarly inquiry into household studies began in the 1960s with research emphasis upon a micro-scale analysis of social groups. Households are commonly referred to as the most basic social unit. Households operate within social and economic processes aimed to structure general conditions of social life. "Household" and "family" are social phenomena. According to Bender, these constructions are "logically distinct and, under certain circumstances, vary independently of each other." The household has three elements: the social (demographic), the material (possessions and dwellings) and the behavioral (activities). Household membership employs a variety of strategies and behaviours. Household archaeology is concerned with the material culture remaining from basic activity patterns as a result of human behaviour.

In this paper authors will try to highlight theoretical perspective as well how this very less recognized branch of archaeology has vast potential to contribute a lot in terms of Asian archaeology.

Keywords: Household archaeology, Social formation, Demographic. Dwellings and behavioural

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