

Different development phases of Ethno-archaeology around the world

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Abstract

Ethno-archaeology is the study of the present to reveal facts of the past. Observation of the living societies and behavior can explain archaeological records as it provides an archaeological engagement with the living communities. Ethno-archaeology can include approach of archaeology and anthropology to understand the past and present cultures. It aims to better understanding of ancient founds and systems. Therefore, it's known also as "Archaeology of the present" or "action archaeology". By previous actions, Ethno-archaeology creates a live link between human and their heritage. Ethno archaeology can be precisely described as a strategic research that includes several processes to reveal the relation between materials and cultures in both forms: existing form and archaeological record and make use of such understanding in supporting archaeological theories and enhance interpretation.

The main goal of Ethno-archaeological studies is the fully use of ethnographic data in pursuit of interpretation and understanding of human past. Also gain ethnographic data to ease archaeological explanation. Attempt to set up a relation between human behavior and its archaeological result in the present. Add to that, Ethno-archaeology is the explanation and interpretation of tangible traces from archaeological materials in the form of activities by the help of ethnographic information. Ethno-archaeological studies intent to evaluate analytical tools to rate different factors affecting cultural materials. The main purpose of Ethno-archaeology depends on how ethnographic data can produce good results which help in interpretation of past behaviors. Therefore, Ethno-archaeology science is in need for further explanation especially their range of archaeological conclusion of past behavior.

Ethno-archaeology has developed differently in many places around the world in various consistencies. There is no doubt that most solid version of the field in theory and term is the American version because of its high impact successful application. And it produced several solid inferential reasoning of the past. It must be stated that many researchers around the world produced plenty Ethno-archaeological and ethnographic studies to explain archaeological materials. Some of these studies expected aims, methods and questions which developed in future by Ethno-archaeologists. And because most of these studies were executed by local traditional archaeologists and recognized locally, there are still great obstacles regarding language barriers makes them incomprehensible worldwide. Ethno-archaeology had developed independently around the world in different ways and scales.

The knowledge for other world contribution is limited due to the language barriers. It was essential to view and study phases of Ethno-archaeology around the world as they established differently. To recognize the development of such great science and factors affecting it.

Introduction

Ethno-archaeology can be defined as a research methodology that includes the use of information of living societies or cultures. This can take many forms such as ethnology, ethnography, ethno-history and archaeology. All targeting the interpretation and explaining of archaeological sites or even objects. Data of Ethno-archaeology can be extracted from field observation of living societies, written archives, photographs, artifacts or even oral history. Some considered Ethno-archaeology as a strategic method of collecting ethnographic data of human societies in order to solve or serve archaeological purposes. Since the early of the 20th century, ethno-archaeology developed and became famous as the new archaeology. ⁽¹⁾ This science was recognized and digested by science societies around the world differently. As researches vary due to local and regional cultural behaviours. Therefore, some of the worldwide Ethno-archaeology genesis, development and methodology will be viewed.

The American Tradition of Ethno-archaeology

It can't be denied that the emergence of Ethno-archaeology in the United States was by Jesse Walter Fewkes, (1850-1930) an American anthropologist, archaeologist, writer and naturalist. He specialized in two research fields; zoology and marine, then anthropology.

While a trip to the west of the states, he was captured by the Pueblo Indians' culture and history. Hence, he recorded their music and began a study of the Hopi. ⁽²⁾

Therefore, the development of Ethno-archaeology in the United States can't be ignored. The converging between archaeology and anthropology was used as a solution for explaining past cultural materials. However, Gould pointed out the limitation of using ethnographic analogy in archaeology. He encouraged archaeologists to use Ethno-archaeology to correct ethnographic data. In the American research, Ethno-archaeology definition is not explicit, its theory, strategy and research are understood. Stark, noted three theoretical developments of American Ethno-archaeology:

(a) Evolutionary ecology; in this theory Ethno-archaeological studies focuses on short events to monitor long changes.

(b) Behavioral archaeology; studies and recognizes archaeological records

(c) Neoprocessual archaeology; considers Ethno-archaeology as a guiding tool for studying human behavior and organize them. Whatever which theory is used, Ethno-archaeology main goal is to help answering archaeological questions. Most of Ethno-archaeological studies goal is to provide a reference for explaining archaeological record. These studies propose is to distinguish and create formal consistency between record of material and production organization. These principles led Ethno-archaeological studies around the world but, differ in focus and intensity due to political reasons and research goals.

There is a difference between Ethno-archaeological and ethnographic method, as the latter is missing archaeological principles. Ethnographic studies provide data on manufacturing from different aspect that could be related to archaeological aspects. Despite that they are not guided by archaeological questions. The American Ethno-archaeology theories and their development can be found in the Ethno-archaeology studies of ceramic. As relevant archaeological questions answered by providing methods of explaining. ⁽³⁾

Ethno-archaeology in France

Since 1960s, André Leroi-Gourhan (1911 –1986), a French archaeologist, paleontologist, paleoanthropologist, and anthropologist suggested finding anthropological data resources for understanding archaeology. But in the same time warned about using this data should be with caution. As an example of these studies, the one conducted by A. Leroi-Gourhan on the Aïnous in the 1940s. Back then, all subjects investigated were related to archaeological sites. Analogy was explained by intellectual position which assured the need of ethnographic system. For examples, two journals were devoted for ethnoarchaeogy; the journal "*Les nouvelles de l' Archéologie*", 1980 for English speakers and The second journal was "*Lettre d' information d' archéologie orientale* " ,1982. In relation to Ethno-archaeology, the philosophy of reforming the structure of archaeology pointed out two remarks; the explanation of archaeological facts is resulted by analogy. Archaeological facts are collated with observation of field reference. If the two remarks executed identical, then the properties of the field facts are transformed into archaeological facts.

⁽⁴⁾ Archaeologists used analogy differently Because of their different concepts about archaeological interpretation.

Of course, analogy is considered here essential for explaining archaeology. In France the main goal of Ethno-archaeology is to assist in better gathering of knowledge. A. Gallay suggested unifying Ethno-archaeological theories to provide models of interpretation deal directly with archaeological knowledge. However, unified theories are without doubt complex and exhausting as they require defining constant elements of the processes under study. Hence, Ethno-archaeological studies in France are few. In French Ethno-archaeology, three main trends that share the same concept; answering questions by creating models from collected data. The three methods use case studies as reference to point out models. Finally, all methods use analogy to highlight archaeological data.

Recently there were calls for projects on craft transmission mechanisms French National Agency for Research, project CULT, edition 2012, the aim of such projects is to promote the developing of Ethno-archaeological studies for a better interpretation of the past. ⁽⁵⁾

Ethno-archaeology in Italy

Ethno-archaeology has taken place also in Italy but, remained restricted inside due to language barriers, historical and cultural reasons. Italy had faced some obstacles such as the hesitating in the academic establishment of Ethno-archaeology but, some prehistoric scientists were interested and curious about Ethno-archaeology as a secondary discipline of archaeology. Surprisingly, Ethno-archaeology was not recognized in local universities until 1990s. ⁽⁶⁾

It was difficult to work on a thesis with this topic. Thus, these those deal with cultural material or typology were demanded between students as source of information and analogy. Ethno-archaeology was not part of academic research, although Italy was advanced in archaeology. Public funds preferred archaeology over Ethno-archaeology to reveal prehistory period recently. Carlo Cattaneo, historian and philosopher, suggested taking in mind social and environmental factors in seeking of better understanding of human history. Nowadays, Ethno-archaeology spread between Italian researchers widely and more accepted. It's still an argument wither Ethno-archaeology of Italy has an identity or not due to lack of acceptance of this discipline for research in this country. Ethno-archaeology in the Italian perspective is a field scientific method that uses analogy and provides a connection between the present and the past. Ethno-archaeology is also a method for documentation of the history. It tracks subjects through history from different angle to that by archaeology. It must be stated that Italian scholars face more difficulties in dealing with the following studies: ethnographic comparisons, archaeology of the present, experimental archaeology and ethnological perspective of the ancient world. ⁽⁷⁾ The Italian Ethno-archaeological association started to promote to conferences which became international in 2010. This allow Ethno-archaeology to grow and enabled opening to the international information and encourage exchanging knowledge. One of the main reference of Italian Ethno-archaeology is the publishing of Massimo Vidale in 1992, "Protohistoric craft production Ethno-archaeology and Archaeology" and "What is Ethno-archaeology?" in 2004. ⁽⁸⁾

Germany

The German Ethno-archaeology started as selective tradition in the nineteenth century, then due to development, it transformed into analogy of history to explain archaeology in the early twentieth century. Afterwards, in the late of the twentieth century it became theoretical approach. Ferdinand Keller in 1854, interpreted the remains of houses substructures in Alps. He claimed that these houses were inspired by houses in "New Guinea" and others in south East Asia. Jean Jacques Rousseau (1717- 1786), used ethnographic discoveries in the interpretation of European prehistory. Gottfried Herder (1744–1803), studied many poems from different periods to assure the long effect of people through history. ⁽⁹⁾ Researchers were interested in anthropology and ethnology since the middle of 19th century. In 1870, Virchow established "Deutsche Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte". Most members of this institution were doctors thus science knowledge was applied to history studies as well as ethnology and physical anthropology. The general objective of archaeology and ethnology is to explain ancient societies. Günter Smolla (1919–2006), an archaeologist assured the importance of ethnological data in explaining archaeology. It's possible to recreate history not only based on archaeological findings, but also on analogous inclusion of ethnological condition. ⁽¹⁰⁾ Since the 1990s, culture-anthropology was integrated into archaeology teaching in universities. The first symposium entitled "Ethno-archaeology approaches" was held in 1993. 40 European participants most of them were archaeologists while a few were ethnologists.

The second symposium was in 1997 entitled "Burial features in an Ethno-archaeological perspective". In this event showed the contribution of Ethno-archaeology in the interpretation of archaeology. ⁽¹¹⁾

Ethno-archaeology in Russia

The development of archaeology in Russia was affected by several factors as follow:

a) The need for ethnographic and archaeological studies to cover huge areas.

b) The political influence on science development and Russian scientists isolation from the world. Archaeology in Russia mainly is based on chronological method, it can be described as different and had multi phases. Archaeology is not consisting of words, symbols or concepts; it consists of cultural material elements. Methodology of archaeology had developed in order to produce information from cultural materials. In 1930s to 1950s, Russian archaeologists used ethnographic analogies for archaeological searching as they used ethnographic data to revive archaeological topics. Starting from 1960s to 1970s, there were some attempts to use ethnography for reconstruction of archaeology. Recently Russian archaeologists started to use the American definition of "Ethno-archaeology" in complicated cases of ethnographic archaeology or vice versa depending on the study focus. Unfortunately, Russian Ethno-archaeological history hasn't been documented yet. But there are four main features can be recognized: analogy method development, the genesis of experimental archaeology, the development of archaeology and finally the development of ethnographic archaeology.

In the 19th century, ethnographic materials were used in archaeological reconstructions after the rise of the theory of evolution by Darwin. But the ethnographic data were mostly used without revision. Early 20th century, The Russian archeologists B. S. Zhukov and V. A. Gorodtsov demonstrated new method of archaeological analysis appeared specially; the comparative method which based on comparing archaeology with ethnography data. Recently, Russian scientists lost interest in Ethno-archaeology studies. Number of groups working in Ethno-archaeology field in Russia is few. On contrary, plenty of researches for Russian Ethno-archaeology can be found on the internet. Ethno-archaeology in Russia is tracked by a group of researchers directed by N. A. Tomilov since 1991. This community held annual symposiums on "Integration of archeological and ethnographic studies". They as well published a total of 11 volumes of the scientific series " Ethnographic - Archeological Complexes: Cultural and Social Issues". They also the only specialists to teach "Introduction to Ethno-archaeology" course in Russia. ⁽¹²⁾

Ethno-archaeology in China

Ethno-archaeology is considered as a new branch of archaeology appeared in 1960s in America and Europe. China has its own academic traditions. In past time, Chinese researchers used similar methodology to study history in Confucius times. In recent times, Cai Yuanpei, (1868- 1940) the president of Beijing university in 1929, proposed comparing ethnological materials with archaeological materials in order to understand and confirm history. Therefore, he revised the former observation of the Native Americans and compared them to ancient Chinese rope making and knots. He applied the same methodology as well with reveling making fire from drilling wood.

Gu Jiegang, (1893 –1980), a well-known historian, studied costumes from current communities in northwest and southwest of china to discover ancient customs. ⁽¹³⁾ These studies can be considered as the foundation of Chinese Ethno-archaeology. In 1950s and 1960s, the Chinese government started explaining prehistoric archaeology by launching huge numbers of ethnographic studies. By the time Americans formulated new archaeology in the 1960s; same studies were done in China but in isolated way. Wang Ningsheng, had a great role in developing chinese Ethno-archaeology. He developed many studies such as "Fire-Making Methods of Minorities in Yunnan" in 1984. He compared primitive methods of fire making with ancient China. Ethno-archaeology developed in an independent way in China. Local Ethnoarchaeologists studied many topics such as: pottery manufacturing, fire making and costumes. Ethno-archaeology methodology can be described by three main steps: Analogy, hypothesis and testing. Ethno-archaeology main objective is to reveal unknown details of prehistoric communities. ⁽¹⁴⁾

Ethno-archaeology in Egypt

Ethno-archaeology is not used widely between researchers in Egypt. The main reason is that Egyptian archaeology provides rich archaeological materials besides texts and symbols. Limited number of studies was executed comparing to others around the world. Many Egyptian authors assumed cultural continuity between ancient Egypt and recent days. Ethno-archaeology study in Egypt is not widely spread, but unique; studies focused on specific questions to answer by studying present Egyptian communities seeking for information.

Then these data compared with archaeological data. So Ethno-archaeology and archaeology are two independent sciences that provide information with no effect or assist on each other. Some Egyptian Ethno-archaeological studies tend to deny changes occurs in communities through history as researchers follow direct historical method. Winifred Blackman, in 1927 wrote a book entitled "*The fellahin of Upper Egypt, their religious, social and industrial life to - day with special reference to survivals from ancient times*". This book followed the previous methodology. In her book she studied Egyptian villages and gave a general description of their location, different rituals and superstitions.

In the last chapter of Blackman's book entitled "Ancient Egyptian Analogies", she compared number of village rituals and archaeological sources such as: objects, wall paintings and ancient texts. The same can be told on Fayza Haikal an Egyptologist, in 1994, assured the continuation of the past; she gave examples of similar expressions in ancient Egyptian and Egyptian Arabic. Add to that, the similarities in burial rituals between ancient Egypt and nowadays Egypt. Mohamed Ghallab in 1929, published his PhD thesis entitled "*Les survivances de l' Égypte antique dans le folklore égyptien modern*" which also created a direct relation between ancient and present Egypt. It can be told that Ethno-archaeology is used to explain phenomena similar to archaeological records. ⁽¹⁶⁾

Anatolia

Ethno-archaeology arrived to Turkey later but, it's unknown when arrived. In order to execute an Ethno-archaeological study, it demands developed perspective, strong background with coherent philosophy to understand the past well. The aim of Archaeology developed and changed from "to know" to "to understand". Add to that the appearing of "cognitive archaeology", which focused on studying the value of found objects for those who made them rather than present communities. Therefore, Ethno-archaeology appeared as sub discipline as researchers wanted to make interpretation of data. In Turkey, archaeology was a science for documenting and recording. Ethnography didn't have a clear definition in Turkey. The same can be told on anthropology which was given as additional material in universities. In late of 20th century, professor Robert Braidwood (1907-2003) introduced new Archaeology to Turkey by working on Çayönü Excavation Project. he successfully introduced many definitions and concepts in archaeology. Between 1960s and 1990s, non-Turkish archaeologists practiced Ethno-archaeology in Anatolia. Turkish researchers assured the importance of documenting architecture and ethnographic data to understand archaeology. Since 1980s, studies focused on ethnographic information which has a direct relation with archaeology. The same time appeared the definition of "Ethno-archaeology". In 21st century, Ethno-archaeology was more known, but still number of researches was limited. Studies were based on comparing materials or the manufacturing of products like pottery.

Most of Ethno-archaeological studies in turkey were focused on documenting of material origin and manufacturing. Instead, Ethno-archaeology should concentrate on the relation between material and present world. It can be told that there is lack of theoretical foundation in Turkish archaeology prevents it to formulate a proper interpretation. ⁽¹⁷⁾

Conclusion

Ethno-archaeology has developed differently in many places around the world in various consistencies. It must be stated that many researchers around the world produced plenty Ethno-archaeological and ethnographic studies to explain archaeological materials. Some of these studies expected aims, methods and questions which developed in future by Ethno-archaeologists. And because most of these studies were executed by local traditional archaeologists and recognized locally, there are still great obstacles regarding language barriers makes them incomprehensible worldwide. Ethno-archaeology had developed independently around the world in different ways and scales; the American Ethno-archaeology is unfamiliar with the most of European concepts or methods. There are many factors affected the Ethno-archaeology around the world. Language barriers are one of the great obstacles faced the development, spreading and communicating of Ethno-archaeology through countries. Also, political reasons and research goal had a great effect on the grow of Ethno-archaeology. It can't be denied that historical and cultural reasons affected the flourishing of Ethno-archaeology in some countries like Italy for certain times. Ethno-archaeology was not recognized in local universities until 1990. It was difficult to work on a thesis with this topic. Ethno-archaeology was not part of academic research, although Italy was advanced in archaeology.

It was essential to view phases of Ethno-archaeology around the world as they established differently. Finally, it's fair to say that Ethno-archaeology developed in an independent way around the world.

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