

The background of the slide is a photograph of ancient Mesopotamian ruins. The structures are built from reddish-brown mud bricks and feature several arched doorways and windows. The scene is set outdoors under a clear blue sky, with some green vegetation visible on a hillside in the upper right. The text is overlaid on this image in white boxes.

Human-Animal Relationships in Mesopotamia: Evidence of Fictive Kinship

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Mesopotamia

- Rich cultural history
- Agriculture
- Domestication
- State-level society



Salinization

Research Questions

- 1) What kinds of human-animal relationships did early agriculturalists have in Mesopotamia?
- 2) Did the culture regard some animals with kinship status, more specifically, what roles did animals play outside of food or labor?
- 3) Were any animals given the role of a “fictive kinship” and invited to live with the means of the human family?
- 4) How did animals play a role within social hierarchy?

*Fictive kinship: a role given to non-sanguinal individuals that invite them to live as relative to the family

Prior Research

Animals used as:

- Food (Stein 1993)
- Production (Goulder 2016)
- Travel
- Religious (Berthon 2016)

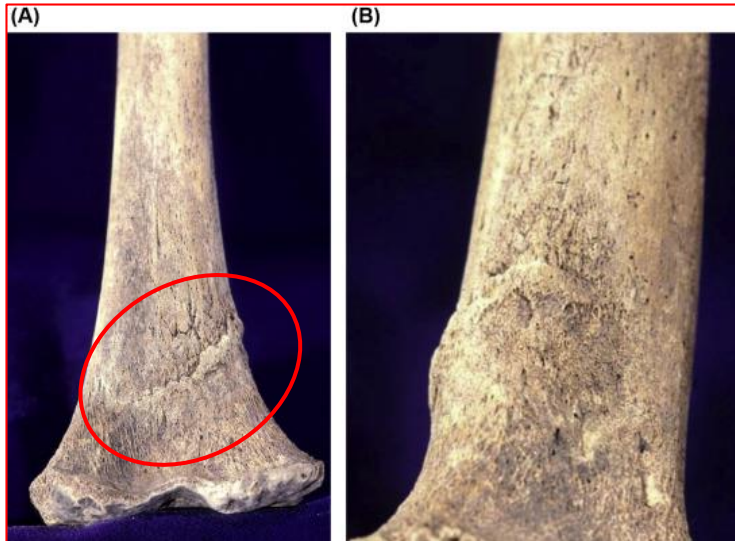
I am interested in personal relationships and possible kinship connections. How did the animals fit into the personal lives of individuals?



Methods

Grave Analysis (Syria, Iraq)

- Skeletal remains
- Grave contexts



Contextual Analysis (Great Britain)

- Artwork
- Writings



Why...

...is this important?

- New insight to societal importance
- Kinship dynamics and depth
- Relevant to today!

...am I the best anthropologist to conduct this research?

- BA from PLU
 - Courses in archaeology, forensic anthropology, sociology
- Animals as family! (Irvine 2013 & 2017)



Questions?