

## **DAILY LIFE IN THE UPPER TIGRIS: MICRODEBRIS ANALYSIS AT KENAN TEPE, TURKEY**

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Badè Museum of Biblical Archaeology  
1798 Scenic Avenue, Berkeley  
T/Th 9:30am—12:30pm

### **COURSE INFORMATION**

For this project, students will be involved with microdebris analysis of samples derived from Late Chalcolithic Period (3500-3000 BCE) domestic contexts at the site of Kenan Tepe, Turkey. Microdebris analysis involves the recovery of minute (<1cm) pieces of stone, pottery, bone, and seeds that become embedded in living surfaces during the daily usage of a space. Due to their small size, microartifacts represent unintentional deposition at the original location of an activity. They are also most likely to not be affected by cleaning or sweeping activities in the past or post-depositional processes, such as erosion and bioturbation.

The recovery and quantification of these “microartifacts” through sorting, identification, and quantification can reveal the level, frequency, and location of human activities within and outside of household spaces. Microartifacts may also provide information on activities that are rarely represented by larger artifacts. Likewise many items, such as fine ware ceramics, may *only* be preserved in micro-artifact form.

### **DUTIES**

One research apprentice, with the assistance of post-graduate scholar Dr. Catherine Foster, will be responsible for sorting microdebris samples into their constituent materials: ceramics, stone, bone, shell, mud brick, charcoal, and seeds. The apprentices will also get the opportunity to build and contribute to a brand new microarchaeology website/blog that will serve as a microartifact classification database and online resource for microarchaeologists across the globe.

### **GRADING & ASSIGNMENTS**

Grades for this URAP project will be based on: 1) attendance, 2) participation/execution of lab work, 3) completion of a 5-page report at the end of each term, and 4) contribution to MicroCommons web database.

*Attendance*

Consistent attendance is necessary for any URAP project to be successful. Any foreseen (and if possible, unforeseen) absences should be brought to the instructor's attention as early as possible so that alternative laboratory work hours can be scheduled.

*Participation*

Showing up to class is only half the battle! Apprentices are expected to fully participate in all aspects of laboratory assignments and duties as discussed in this syllabus and presented by the instructor. Remember that basic laboratory procedures will be taught and are not a prerequisite.

*Report*

A 5-page report written by the apprentice will be required at the end of each semester documenting the research questions raised, theoretical approaches considered, methodological techniques used, and preliminary conclusions.

*MicroCommons*

MicroCommons is a worldwide online research community of microarchaeologists and scholars interested in microarchaeology. Developed by Catherine P. Foster in concert with the Alexandria Archive Institute, MicroCommons provides a centralized database and forum to facilitate the sharing of images, publications, methods and ideas to promote microarchaeological studies for all regions and time periods.

Apprentices will be able to contribute to this online community by including additional data to the microartifact classification database (images and descriptions) and providing content for the MicroCommons website such as links, how-to documents and Creative Commons licensing information.

**READINGS**

Foster, C.P. 2009. *Household Archaeology and the Uruk Phenomenon: A Case Study from Kenan Tepe, Turkey*. Doctoral Dissertation, University of California Berkeley. Chapters 2-3.

Parker, B.J. ND. *The Upper Tigris Archaeological Research Project (UTARP): A Brief Overview of the Excavations at Kenan Tepe, 2000-2007*. Report for the Turkish Antiquities Authority.

Parker, B.J. et al. 2009. "The Upper Tigris Archaeological Research Project (UTARP): A Preliminary Report from the 2007-2008 Field Seasons at Kenan Tepe." *Anatolica* 35: 85-152. "Microarchaeological Analyses" section (pgs. 93-109).

Area G: Trench Notes and Summaries by various authors, 2004-2005.