3.986 The Human Past: Introduction to Archaeology

Fall 2006

Key terms and vocabulary

Nov. 9-14: Agricultural origins: the transition from hunting and gathering to plant domestication and sedentary village life, Tehuacan and Oaxaca examples.

Archaic Period seasonality

Tehuacan Valley scheduling

Oaxaca Valley microbands/macrobands

Guilá Naquitz

Notes:

Comparing processes in Mesoamerica and the Near East: the important questions

- 1) Were the circumstances of the first domestication of plants and animals in Mesoamerica similar to those of the Middle East?
- 2) Was the transition from hunting and gathering economies to agricultural economies in Mesoamerica, similar in trajectory to the path in the Middle East?

The short answer: They appear to have been very different! - but in what ways?

We have a significant problem in comparability of data and coverage in the two regions, but despite our "sampling problem" we feel that very different conditions and processes were at work.

The discussion questions (#6) for next week with the specific ways in which the two cases differ.

Mesoamerican domesticates (probable)

Plants

grains: maize amaranth

legumes: beans (many varieties)

vegetables: tomato chili peppers (Capsicum) ?sunflower

squash pumpkins gourds

fruits: avocado papaya guavas

prickly pear

drinks/flavorings: cacao vanilla

containers: bottle gourd other: tobacco

Animals

Muscovy duck turkey