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References

Aktuell

Bartsiokas 2015

Antonis Bartsiokas, Juan-Luis Arsuaga, Elena Santos, Milagros Algaba & Asier Gómez-Olivencia, *The lameness of King Philip II and Royal Tomb I at Vergina, Macedonia*. PNAS **112** (2015), 9844–9848.

King Philip II was the father of Alexander the Great. He suffered a notorious penetrating wound by a lance through his leg that was nearly fatal and left him lame in 339 B.C.E. (i.e., 3 y before his assassination in 336 B.C.E.). In 1977 and 1978 two male skeletons were excavated in the Royal Tombs II and I of Vergina, Greece, respectively. Tomb I also contained another adult (likely a female) and a newborn skeleton. The current view is that Philip II was buried in Tomb II. However, the male skeleton of Tomb II bears no lesions to his legs that would indicate lameness. We investigated the skeletal material of Tomb I with modern forensic techniques. The male individual in Tomb I displays a conspicuous case of knee ankylosis that is conclusive evidence of lameness. Right through the overgrowth of the knee, there is a hole. There are no obvious signs that are characteristic of infection and osteomyelitis. This evidence indicates that the injury was likely caused by a severe penetrating wound to the knee, which resulted in an active inflammatory process that stopped years before death. Standard anthropological age-estimation techniques based on dry bone, epiphyseal lines, and tooth analysis gave very wide age ranges for the male, centered around 45 y. The female would be around 18-y-old and the infant would be a newborn. It is concluded that King Philip II, his wife Cleopatra, and their newborn child are the occupants of Tomb I.

Keywords: Argead dynasty | Macedonia | paleopathology | Philip II | Vergina

Significance: The knee ankylosis and the hole through it ties perfectly with the penetrating wound and lameness suffered by Philip II and conclusively identifies him as the occupant of Tomb I in Vergina, Greece. The age estimates of the three occupants are consistent with those derived from the historical sources. Cleopatra's (Philip's wife) child was born a few days before Philip II's assassination and both were murdered soon after Philip's assassination. It follows that Tomb II belongs to King Arrhidaeus and his wife Eurydice and may well contain some of the armor of Alexander the Great. Thus, a nearly 40-y-old mystery concerning the Royal Tombs of Vergina has finally been solved that puzzled historians, archaeologists, and physical anthropologists.

Cook 2015

Robert A. Cook & Aaron R. Comstock, *Focusing on the old wood problem, A response to Hart and Nolan*. American Antiquity **80** (2015), 613–614.

Our recent paper demonstrated that radiocarbon assays sampled from wood charcoal were not systematically skewed when compared to non-wood samples from the same site. This suggests that the "old wood" problem may not be quite as problematic in the temperate Middle Ohio Valley as many suspect. In their comment, Hart and Nolan missed our broader point and mischaracterized our findings. Specifically, we did not suggest that our findings apply to the entirety of eastern North America, nor did we make analytical errors. A thorough reading of

our paper clearly supports the following rebuttal. Our main point is that scholars should think twice before discarding radiocarbon dates from wood charcoal, for in some contexts they are the most useful means of determining important chronological information. Despite the suggestion to the contrary, "old wood" concerns do form elements of several hygiene protocols, including Nolan's (2012).

Culotta 2015

Elizabeth Culotta, *New Life for Old Bones*. science **349** (2015), 358–361.

After a stormy adolescence, the field of ancient DNA enters its golden era.

Everett 2015

Jim A. C. Everett & Brian D. Earp, *A tragedy of the (academic) commons, Interpreting the replication crisis in psychology as a social dilemma for early-career researchers*. Frontiers in Psychology **6** (2015), 1152.

Several proposals for addressing the "replication crisis" in social psychology have been advanced in the recent literature. In this paper, we argue that the "crisis" be interpreted as a disciplinary social dilemma, with the problem facing early-career researchers being especially acute. To resolve this collective action problem, we offer a structural solution: as a condition of receiving their Ph.D. from any accredited institution, graduate students in psychology should be required to conduct, write up, and submit for publication a high-quality replication attempt of at least one key finding from the literature, focusing on the area of their doctoral research. We consider strengths, weaknesses, and implementation challenges associated with this proposal, and call on our colleagues to offer critical response.

Keywords: reproducibility of results | social dilemmas | methodology | best practices | psychological science

Gibbons 2015

Ann Gibbons, *Revolution in Human Evolution*. science **349** (2015), 362–366.

As it smashes disciplinary boundaries, ancient DNA is rewriting much of human prehistory.

Hart 2015

John P. Hart & Kevin C. Nolan, *"Evaluating the old wood problem in a temperate climate: a Fort Ancient case study", Comment on Cook and Comstock*. American Antiquity **80** (2015), 610–612.

In their recent report, Cook and Comstock (2014) purport to address the "old wood" problem in temperate eastern North America. Here we point out several interpretive and analytical errors in their work. We conclude that careful selection of wood charcoal for radiocarbon assay can result in accurate chronology for events of interest. However, this does not obviate the need to critically assess the extant database of wood charcoal dates in any chronology building effort.

Holly 2015

Donald H. Holly Jr., *Talking to the guy on the airplane*. American Antiquity **80** (2015), 615–629.

To wit, past episodes of the show have suggested that Kachinas, Egyptian hieroglyphics, and indigenous rock art depict aliens; that much of the monumental art

and architecture of ancient Mesoamerica, South America, Near East, Easter Island (of course), Malta, and elsewhere represents the genius of extraterrestrial visitors; that Mayan kings were not really people but alien overlords. My archaeologist friends post the meme because they think it is hilarious, but sometimes I wonder whether we are the only ones laughing. A lot more people seem to be listening, and even nodding in agreement.

For those few of you who have not yet met the type, you should know that "the guy on the airplane" is rarely belligerent or obstinate. In fact, he is often friendly. If anything, he tends to be undecided about alternative archaeological explanations. And therein lies our opportunity.

Anthropologists and archaeologists have been advocating for some time that we need to write books for the public. Some of this may reflect [...] an ethical obligation to make our work—which is often funded by tax-dollars and dependent on an indigenous record—accessible and meaningful to the broader public and descendant communities. But perhaps we need to not only write for the public, but listen to them and address their interests and questions too.

Some say that by merely engaging with pseudoarchaeology we legitimize it by creating the appearance of a debate, and I agree, but would offer that ignoring pseudoarchaeology has a similar effect, as one of the main assertions of pseudoarchaeologists is that there is an establishment conspiracy to bury their work.

Lim 2015

Xiao Zhi Lim, *Slow Chemistry*. nature **524** (2015), 20–21.

Slow, solid-state reactions used by lichens and Renaissance pigment-makers could help to make chemistry greener.

This is a radical departure from standard chemical-synthesis methods, which typically involve dissolving, heating and stirring ingredients in a solution to encourage them to react quickly. These techniques are fast and well understood, but they tend to consume large amounts of chemicals and energy, and pose a major environ mental challenge. An estimated 50–80 % of all chemical waste produced by industry and university labs consists of solvents left over from synthesis, separation and purification.

Let a mix of solid reactants sit around undisturbed while they spontaneously transform themselves. More properly called slow chemistry, or even just ageing, the approach requires few, if any, hazardous solvents and uses minimal energy. If planned properly, it also consumes all the reagents in the mix, so that there is no waste and no need for chemical-intensive purification. Such processes have been known for millennia: rusting iron is a familiar example, as is the decades-long weathering process that produced the Statue of Liberty's green patina. But only now are scientists starting to understand these processes and learn how to control them to obtain the products they want.

Pennisi 2015

Elizabeth Pennisi, *Lost Worlds Found*. science **349** (2015), 367–369.

Sugar cubes of buried soil reveal how ecosystems warmed after the last ice age.

Service 2015

Robert F. Service, *Protein Power*. science **349** (2015), 372–373.

Paleoproteomics hustles to catch up with its more developed cousin.

Because disease-related proteins can be 10 orders of magnitude scarcer than common proteins, instrument makers have continually refined their machines to detect vanishingly small amounts of protein—exactly what is needed to spot rare remnants of intact proteins in a sea of degraded organic matter.

Barnes's study did more than just solve an evolutionary mystery. It also demonstrated the research potential of ancient protein, which has some advantages over its more famous cousin, ancient DNA. For starters, tissues are made up of protein. "There is tons of it compared to DNA," Barnes says. So proteins need not be amplified during analysis, as is often done with DNA, and researchers are less likely to mistake a contaminant for the real thing. Proteins also resist the ravages of time far better than fragile DNA. "Protein sequencing has the potential to look a lot further back in time," maybe even millions of years ago, says Matthew Collins.

Tierney 2015

Adam T. Tierney, Jennifer Krizman & Nina Kraus, *Music training alters the course of adolescent auditory development*. PNAS **112** (2015), 10062–10067.

Fundamental changes in brain structure and function during adolescence are well-characterized, but the extent to which experience modulates adolescent neurodevelopment is not. Musical experience provides an ideal case for examining this question because the influence of music training begun early in life is wellknown. We investigated the effects of in-school music training, previously shown to enhance auditory skills, versus another inschool training program that did not focus on development of auditory skills (active control). We tested adolescents on neural responses to sound and language skills before they entered high school (pretraining) and again 3 y later. Here, we show that inschool music training begun in high school prolongs the stability of subcortical sound processing and accelerates maturation of cortical auditory responses. Although phonological processing improved in both the music training and active control groups, the enhancement was greater in adolescents who underwent music training. Thus, music training initiated as late as adolescence can enhance neural processing of sound and confer benefits for language skills. These results establish the potential for experience-driven brain plasticity during adolescence and demonstrate that in-school programs can engender these changes.

Keywords: music | training | auditory

Significance: We show that in-school music training changes the course of adolescent brain development. Relative to an active control group that shows the expected wane in subcortical response consistency, adolescents undertaking in-school music training maintained heightened neural consistency throughout high school. The music training group also exhibited earlier emergence of the adult cortical response, suggesting that in-school music accelerates neurodevelopment. These changes seem to benefit literacy skills: both groups improved in phonological awareness relative to the general population, but the music training group improved more compared with the active controls. Our results support the notion that the adolescent brain remains receptive to training, underscoring the importance of enrichment during teenage years.

Wade 2015

Lizzie Wade, *Breaking a Tropical Taboo*. science **349** (2015), 370–371.

Most ancient DNA comes from frigid environs. Can new methods sample hot and humid locales?

For decades, scientists have assumed that the only place to find viable ancient DNA was in cold, dry environments. Freezing temperatures slow chemical reactions and inhibit microbial activity that can eat away cells and expose the fragile DNA inside. And dryness should reduce water's attack on DNA's molecular bonds.

Amerika

Balter 2015

Michael Balter, *New mystery for Native American origins*. science **349** (2015), 354–355.

Rival papers compete to explain surprising link to Australia and Melanesia.

"Both models ... see in the Americas a subtle signal from" Australo-Melanesians. The Nature team concludes it came in one of two early waves of migration into the continent, whereas the Science team concludes it came much later, and was unrelated to the initial peopling. Willerslev contends that the ancestors of some of today's South Americans might have mixed with Asian populations related to today's Australo-Melanesians and carried those genes into the Americas during a wellestablished later wave of migration from Asia that also peopled the Aleutian Islands.

Anthropologie

Tattersall 2015

Ian Tattersall, *The strange case of the Rickety Cossack, and other cautionary tales from human evolution*. (New York 2015).

Archäologie

Pettigrew 2015

Devin B. Pettigrew, John C. Whittaker, Justin Garnett & Patrick Hashman, *How Atlatl Darts Behave, Beveled points and the relevance of controlled experiments*. American Antiquity **80** (2015), 590–601.

AmAnt80-590-Supplement01.pdf, AmAnt80-590-Supplement02.pdf, AmAnt80-590-Supplement03.pdf, AmAnt80-590-Supplement04.pdf, AmAnt80-590-Supplement05.pdf, AmAnt80-590-Supplement06.pdf, AmAnt80-590-Supplement07.pdf, AmAnt80-590-Supplement08.pdf, AmAnt80-590-Supplement09.pdf, AmAnt80-590-Supplement10.pdf, AmAnt80-590-Supplement11.pdf

Beveled retouch on stone projectile points has often been considered as a device to spin and stabilize a projectile. A recent paper showed that a beveled point will spin a small shaft under tightly controlled laboratory conditions. However, this experiment has little relevance for real projectiles such as atlatl darts, which flex dramatically and spin unevenly in flight, quite independent of point form. The spinning is related to the flexibility of the dart, which is necessary for spearthrower function. A beveled point cannot spin a dart in the air, but is likely to cause some rotation when encountering a solid target like flesh. Beveled points are probably not related to spinning either darts or arrows in flight and present a good example of why we need to have both theoretical understanding and experimental observations of details of projectile behavior before interpreting artifacts. Spinning in a carcass could make beveled points more lethal, but the suggestion that beveling mostly results from sharpening and other modification of stone points remains the best explanation.

Bibel

Faust 2011

Avraham Faust, *Deportation and Demography in Sixth-Century* b.c.e. *Judah*. In: Brad E. Kelle, Frank Ritchel Ames & Jacob L. Wright (Hrsg.), *Interpreting Exile, Displacement and Deportation in Biblical and Modern Contexts*. Ancient Israel and its literature 10 (Atlanta 2011), 91–103.

In sum, deportation is only one factor—and probably not the most important demographically—that must be considered when discussing demographic change after war. It must be noted that the evidence from Mesopotamia seems to indicate high numbers of deportees. Yet no matter how extensive deportations may have been, they were only of secondary importance in comparison to the range of other factors identified above. It is these factors that one must bear in mind in future discussions of the great demographic decline in Judah in the sixth century. It deserves to be repeated: the population of Judah was not exiled in toto in the sixth century b.c.e. But such was never claimed in past scholarship.

While various claims and counterclaims were raised in the subsequent debate over the reality in Judah after the Babylonian campaigns, no one really claimed that the entire population was deported (and the land completely empty) nor has anyone, except the proponents of the continuity thesis, assumed that the deportation might be the sole or primary cause for the population decline. The repeated claims that it is impossible that all the population was exiled so as to leave the country empty are therefore completely irrelevant for the study of the demography in Judah in the sixth century, and they do not contribute to our understanding of the reality during this important period.

Biologie

Lv 2015

Jun Lv et al., *Consumption of spicy foods and total and cause specific mortality, Population based cohort study*. British Medical Journal **351** (2015), h3942.

bmj351-h03942-Supplement.pdf

Jun Lv, Lu Qi, Canqing Yu, Ling Yang, Yu Guo, Yiping Chen, Zheng Bian, Dianjianyi Sun, Jianwei Du, Pengfei Ge, Zhenzhu Tang, Wei Hou, Yanjie Li, Junshi Chen, Zhengming Chen & Liming Li on behalf of the China Kadoorie Biobank collaborative group

Objective To examine the associations between the regular consumption of spicy foods and total and cause specific mortality.

Design Population based prospective cohort study.

Setting China Kadoorie Biobank in which participants from 10 geographically diverse areas across China were enrolled between 2004 and 2008.

Participants 199 293 men and 288 082 women aged 30 to 79 years at baseline after excluding participants with cancer, heart disease, and stroke at baseline.

Main Exposure Measures Consumption frequency of spicy foods, self reported once at baseline.

Main Outcome Measures Total and cause specific mortality.

Results During 3 500 004 person years of follow-up between 2004 and 2013 (median 7.2 years), a total of 11 820 men and 8404 women died. Absolute mortality rates according to spicy food consumption categories were 6.1, 4.4, 4.3, and 5.8

deaths per 1000 person years for participants who ate spicy foods less than once a week, 1 or 2, 3 to 5, and 6 or 7 days a week, respectively. Spicy food consumption showed highly consistent inverse associations with total mortality among both men and women after adjustment for other known or potential risk factors. In the whole cohort, compared with those who ate spicy foods less than once a week, the adjusted hazard ratios for death were 0.90 (95 % confidence interval 0.84 to 0.96), 0.86 (0.80 to 0.92), and 0.86 (0.82 to 0.90) for those who ate spicy food 1 or 2, 3 to 5, and 6 or 7 days a week, respectively. Compared with those who ate spicy foods less than once a week, those who consumed spicy foods 6 or 7 days a week showed a 14 % relative risk reduction in total mortality. The inverse association between spicy food consumption and total mortality was stronger in those who did not consume alcohol than those who did (P=0.033 for interaction). Inverse associations were also observed for deaths due to cancer, ischemic heart diseases, and respiratory diseases.

Conclusion In this large prospective study, the habitual consumption of spicy foods was inversely associated with total and certain cause specific mortality, independent of other risk factors of death.

What is already known on this topic A beneficial role of spices and their major bioactive components has been reported in a variety of chronic disorders in experimental and small sized population studies Evidence relating daily consumption of spicy foods to mortality from prospective cohort studies is lacking.

What this study adds The habitual consumption of spicy foods was inversely associated with total and certain cause specific mortality (cancer, ischemic heart diseases, and respiratory diseases), independent of other risk factors of death.

Klima

Kennett 2015

James P. Kennett et al., *Bayesian chronological analyses consistent with synchronous age of 12,835–12,735 Cal B.P. for Younger Dryas boundary on four continents*. PNAS **112** (2015), E4344–E4353.

James P. Kennett, Douglas J. Kennett, Brendan J. Culleton, J. Emili Aura Tortosa, James L. Bischoff, Ted E. Bunch, I. Randolph Daniel Jr., Jon M. Erlandson, David Ferraro, Richard B. Firestone, Albert C. Goodyear, Isabel Israde-Alcántara, John R. Johnson, Jesús F. Jordá Pardo, David R. Kimbel, Malcolm A. LeCompte, Neal H. Lopinot, William C. Mahaney, Andrew M. T. Moore, Christopher R. Moore, Jack H. Ray, Thomas W. Stafford Jr., Kenneth Barnett Tankersley, James H. Wittke, Wendy S. Wolbach & Allen West

The Younger Dryas impact hypothesis posits that a cosmic impact across much of the Northern Hemisphere deposited the Younger Dryas boundary (YDB) layer, containing peak abundances in a variable assemblage of proxies, including magnetic and glassy impact-related spherules, high-temperature minerals and melt glass, nanodiamonds, carbon spherules, aciniform carbon, platinum, and osmium. Bayesian chronological modeling was applied to 354 dates from 23 stratigraphic sections in 12 countries on four continents to establish a modeled YDB age range for this event of 12,835–12,735 Cal B.P. at 95 % probability. This range overlaps that of a peak in extraterrestrial platinum in the Greenland Ice Sheet and of the earliest age of the Younger Dryas climate episode in six proxy records, suggesting a causal connection between the YDB impact event and the Younger Dryas. Two statistical tests indicate that both modeled and unmodeled ages in the 30 records are consistent with synchronous deposition of the YDB layer within the limits of dating uncertainty (≈100 y). The widespread distribution of the YDB layer suggests that it may serve as a datum layer.

Keywords: Younger Dryas | comet | Bayesian | radiocarbon | synchroneity

Significance: A cosmic impact event at ≈12,800 Cal B.P. formed the Younger Dryas boundary (YDB) layer, containing peak abundances in multiple, high-temperature, impact-related proxies, including spherules, melt glass, and nanodiamonds. Bayesian statistical analyses of 354 dates from 23 sedimentary sequences over four continents established a modeled YDB age range of 12,835 Cal B.P. to 12,735 Cal B.P., supporting synchroneity of the YDB layer at high probability (95 %). This range overlaps that of a platinum peak recorded in the Greenland Ice Sheet and of the onset of the Younger Dryas climate episode in six key records, suggesting a causal connection between the impact event and the Younger Dryas. Due to its rarity and distinctive characteristics, the YDB layer is proposed as a widespread correlation datum.

Kultur

Perry-Gal 2015

Lee Perry-Gal, Adi Erlich, Ayelet Gilboa & Guy Bar-Oz, *Earliest economic exploitation of chicken outside East Asia, Evidence from the Hellenistic Southern Levant.* PNAS **112** (2015), 9849–9854.

pnas112-09849-Supplement.doc

Chicken (Gallus gallus domesticus) is today one of the most widespread domesticated species and is a main source of protein in the human diet. However, for thousands of years exploitation of chickens was confined to symbolic and social domains such as cockfighting. The question of when and where chickens were first used for economic purposes remains unresolved. The results of our faunal analysis demonstrate that the Hellenistic (fourth–second centuries B.C.E.) site of Maresha, Israel, is the earliest site known today where economic exploitation of chickens was widely practiced. We base our claim on the exceptionally high frequency of chicken bones at that site, the majority of which belong to adult individuals, and on the observed 2:1 ratio of female to male bones. These results are supported further by an extensive survey of faunal remains from 234 sites in the Southern Levant, spanning more than three millennia, which shows a sharp increase in the frequency of chicken during the Hellenistic period. We further argue that the earliest secure evidence for economic exploitation of chickens in Europe dates to the first century B.C.E. and therefore is predated by the finds in the Southern Levant by at least a century. We suggest that the gradual acclimatization of chickens in the Southern Levant and its gradual integration into the local economy, the latter fully accomplished in the Hellenistic period, was a crucial step in the adoption of this species in European husbandry some 100 y later.

Keywords: chicken | Gallus gallus | zooarchaeology | Hellenistic | Levant

Significance: This study offers new evidence on the cultural history of the chicken, a species that until recently received limited attention compared with other domesticated animals. We provide evidence for the earliest known economic exploitation of the chicken outside its original distribution. This intensified use is first documented in the Southern Levant during the Hellenistic period (fourth–second centuries B.C.E.), at least 100 y before chickens spread widely across Europe. We explore the mechanisms for the spread of chickens as an important species in livestock economies from Asian to Mediterranean and European economies in antiquity to become one of the most widespread and dominant domesticates in the world today.

Methoden

McClelland 2015

John A. McClelland, *Revisiting Hohokam Paleodemography*. American Antiquity **80** (2015), 492–510.

Archaeological evidence documents apparent depopulation of the Hohokam region of Southern Arizona at the end of the Classic period (A.D. 1150–1450). Major population centers were no longer occupied, and many distinctive material culture traits associated with the Hohokam tradition seem to disappear. Proposed explanations include migration, dispersion of the population into less archaeologically visible settlements, and wholesale population decline. The latter hypothesis is attractive partly because of a seminal study of paleodemography and health at the Classic-period site of Pueblo Grande in the Phoenix Basin. That study suggested that the population was not sustainable due to very low life expectancy, a very high dependency ratio of juveniles to adults, and other indicators of biological stress. A hazards analysis of the published demographic data reveals life expectancy at birth in the expected range for prehistoric populations with no evidence of a dependency crisis. Population decline at the end of the Classic period is more likely explained by reduced fertility than by increased mortality. Birth rates are sensitive to cultural and economic forces, and we should look beyond health factors in trying to account for the disappearance of Hohokam traditions.

Pastoors 2015

Andreas Pastoors, Tilman Lenssen-Erz, Tsamkxao Ciqae, Ui Kxunta, Thui Thao, Robert Bégouën, Megan Biesele & Jean Clottes, *Tracking in Caves, Experience Based Reading of Pleistocene Human Footprints in French Caves*. Cambridge Archaeological Journal **25** (2015), 551–564.

Some of the painted caves in southern France preserve human footprints from the Ice Age of 17,000 years ago. Research has so far dealt with them sparsely and through a morphometric approach only. In 2013 three indigenous hunters/trackers from the Kalahari had an opportunity to read several spoor accumulations in four caves on the basis of their indigenous knowledge. As a result of this morpho-classificatory approach to track readin,g they produced new hypotheses on prehistoric cave visitors. Most spectacular is the narrative which the trackers generated from the footprints not far from the clay bison at Tuc d'Audoubert. Further research is planned to inspect more tracks and look into the epistemological status of the indigenous tracking method.

Mittelpaläolithikum

Soriano 2015

Sylvain Soriano et al., *The Still Bay and Howiesons Poort at Sibudu and Blombos, Understanding Middle Stone Age Technologies*. PLoS ONE **10** (2015), e131127. DOI:10.1371/journal.pone.0131127.

Sylvain Soriano, Paola Villa, Anne Delagnes, Ilaria Degano, Luca Pollarolo, Jeannette J. Lucejko, Christopher Henshilwood & Lyn Wadley

The classification of archaeological assemblages in the Middle Stone Age of South Africa in terms of diversity and temporal continuity has significant implications with respect to recent cultural evolutionary models which propose either gradual accumulation or discontinuous, episodic processes for the emergence and

diffusion of cultural traits. We present the results of a systematic technological and typological analysis of the Still Bay assemblages from Sibudu and Blombos. A similar approach is used in the analysis of the Howiesons Poort (HP) assemblages from Sibudu seen in comparison with broadly contemporaneous assemblages from Rose Cottage and Klasies River Cave 1A. Using our own and published data from other sites we report on the diversity between stone artifact assemblages and discuss to what extent they can be grouped into homogeneous lithic sets. The gradual evolution of debitage techniques within the Howiesons Poort sequence with a progressive abandonment of the HP technological style argues against the saltational model for its disappearance while the technological differences between the Sibudu and Blombos Still Bay artifacts considerably weaken an interpretation of similarities between the assemblages and their grouping into the same cultural unit. Limited sampling of a fragmented record may explain why simple models of cultural evolution do not seem to apply to a complex reality.

Neolithikum

Sterelny 2015

Kim Sterelny, Trevor Watkins; Ofer Bar-Yosef, Amy Bogaard, Stephen Shennan & Melinda A. Zeder, *Neolithization in Southwest Asia in a Context of Niche Construction Theory, With Comments*. Cambridge Archaeological Journal **25** (2015), 673–705.

The term 'neolithization' as it is generally used in relation to southwest Asia narrows the focus of research, and works against our efforts to envision explanations of the process in terms of the long-term evolution of human societies. Here, we re-frame the neolithization process, setting it within the framework of niche construction theory. We argue that the concept of cultural niche construction fits the purpose, but needs to be extended to encompass the more complex social worlds of the Holocene in the form of the cognitive-cultural niche.

Religion

Mohagheghi 2015

Hamideh Mohagheghi & Hanane El Boussadani, *Frauen für den Dschihad, Das Manifest der IS-Kämpferinnen*. (Freiburg 2015).

Und wenn wir die Gesellschaft während der prophetischen Zeit in Medina betrachten – und sie war unwidersprochen seit jener Zeit die beste Gesellschaft mit der besten Führung -, dann gelangen wir zu dem Ergebnis, dass es sich hierbei um eine in finanzieller Hinsicht und bezogen auf weltliche Wissenschaften wirklich einfache Gesellschaft handelte, aber sie war sehr stark, was den Glauben und das Wissen über das Jenseits angeht. In jener Zeit verhungerten die Menschen mehr; als dass sie satt wurden, sie bewohnten Häuser aus Lehm und Palmenblättern und ritten auf Kamelen und Pferden, sie besaßen wenig Wissen über Physik, Architektur und Astronomie usw.; doch trotz alledem stand diese Gesellschaft an erster Stelle vor dem Erhabenen Allah, und dies war ebenso vor seinen frommen Dienern [Menschen].

Und daher sollen wir korrigieren, was man in unseren Gedanken zu befestigen versuchte, seitdem wir klein waren, denn man redete uns ein, dass der Muslim unbedingt den europäischen Ungläubigen und anderen beweisen soll, dass er zu seiner vergangenen Blütezeit eine materialistische Zivilisation aufbaute, deren Helden Atheisten und Ketzer sind, so wie Avicenna, der "Internist", es war, oder

Ibnan-Nafis und Ibn al-Haitam und andere. Die Zivilisation dieser Menschen wurde auf den Trümmern vorangegangener aufgebaut. Wir erklären an dieser Stelle, dass wir uns von diesen Ketzern stark distanzieren. Jene wie auch die anderen aus Europa stammenden, rückschrittlichen Genies sind miteinander verbündet. Der Muslim hat es nicht nötig, etliche seiner Jahre damit zu verbringen, weltliche Wissenschaften zu erlernen, die zu keiner Belohnung führen -es sei denn, das Böse der Ungläubigen wird dadurch abgewandt und die Muslime können daraus Nutzen ziehen. Und dies ist eine deutliche und bekannte Angelegenheit. Gewiss hat der Muslim all dies nicht nötig.

Story or Book

Draaisma 2015

Douwe Draaisma, *In the blink of an I.* nature **524** (2015), 32–33.

Douwe Draaisma is impressed by a study on the science behind 'maladies of the self'.

The Man Who Wasn't There: Investigations into the Strange New Science of the Self. Anil Ananthaswamy. Dutton: 2015

It might happen while you are lecturing. All of a sudden, you hear yourself talking: an autopilot version of yourself seems to have taken over. With rising panic, you struggle to get back in, praying that what this autopilot has to say makes sense. In most cases, the 'split' dissolves quickly and you slip back into the driver's seat. You have experienced a brief spell of depersonalization.

Could the feeling of a split self in depersonalization be the inverse of the ecstatic feeling of oneness with the world sometimes experienced during an epileptic seizure originating in the temporal lobe? (The brain region that is hyperactive during ecstatic seizures, the anterior insula, is underactive during chronic depersonalization, which seems to point in this direction.)

Power 2015

Stephen S. Power, *Stripped to Zero.* nature **524** (2015), 130.