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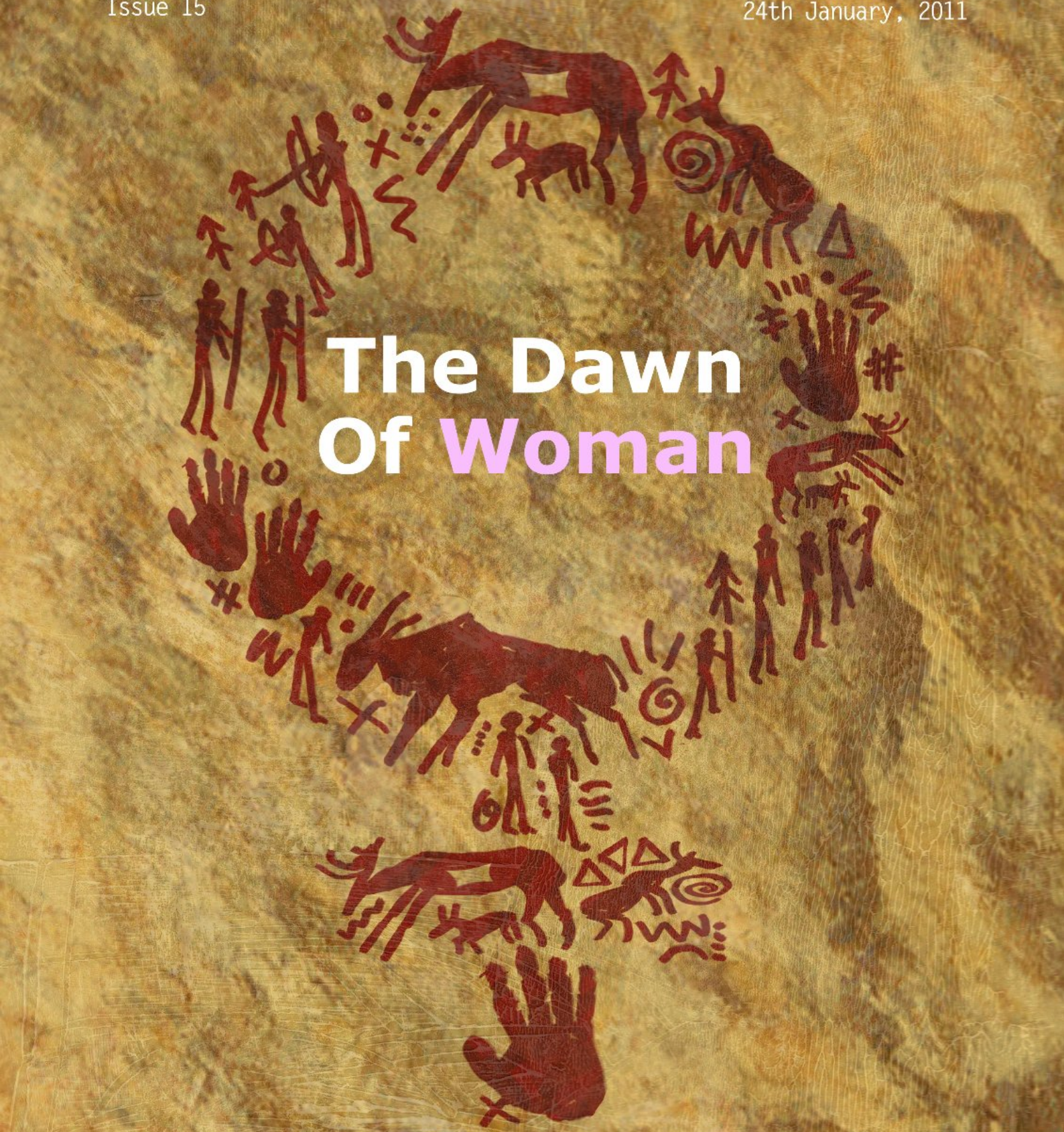

The Dawn Of Woman

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The Post Hole is a student run journal for all those interested in archaeology. It aims to promote discussion and the flow of ideas in the department of Archaeology for the University of York and the wider archaeological community. If you would like to get involved with the editorial process, writing articles or photography then please get in touch via email – (`mailto:editor@theposthole.org`).

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The Ascent of Mankind

Two and a half million years ago, as early man surveyed his surroundings, could he ever have guessed that the whole world would one day become his domain? That he himself would become master of it all. Yet he had all ready made the first great step towards that end, for he had learned to master stone. It was two and a half million years ago that man first started chipping away at river pebbles to shape tools, and this allowed him to finally defend himself and his family from predators, as well as gain a means to hunt and kill.

Yet, this small essay of mine is using some very politically incorrect terminology. I dared to say 'Mankind', 'Him' and 'His'. This is not the done thing at all, we must not mention genders and sexes when we look at the past; though to be honest, I hardly noticed I had done it, because all the narratives I read as a child were like this. I read about the evolution of man. I learned about when men discovered fire, how men painted on cave walls, how men shaped tools, how men hunted mammoths and how men invented farming and irrigation. I also saw pictures in my books of Australopithecine man evolving into Erectus man, then modern man, all of them very beardy and muscular, and standing increasingly upright.

I remember seeing women too in pictures in the books, sometimes anyway, sat gazing upwards, babies in arms, behind their spear-wielding men-folk. I remember hearing on the radio in the 90s why women had taken such a backseat during our evolution. A helpful American anthropologist (I cannot remember who and have hunted for his comment ever since) had explained that we would have been unable to build and hunt because our breasts would get in the way. Ah, I see. Another worthy expert also said that we were a very important reproductive resource for these busy men. That is good then. Nowadays such talk of the past is very frowned upon, and archaeology texts speak of 'humans' and 'they' and 'us' and 'ours' and religiously avoid the dreaded word 'he'. Some call this 'political correctness gone mad'. Well, if so, the male-centric terminology is harmless enough, and therefore me switching the term 'man' for 'woman' in my easy-reading narrative on evolution will be perfectly harmless.

The Ascent of Woman a guide to the evolution of womankind

Two and a half million years ago, as early woman surveyed her surroundings, could she ever have guessed that the whole world would one day become her domain? That she herself would become master of it all. Yet she had all ready made the first great step towards that end, for she had learned to master stone. It was two and a half million years ago that woman first started chipping away at river pebbles to shape tools, and this allowed her to finally defend herself and her family from predators, as well as gain a means to hunt and kill. Before this point, women probably sheltered in trees, descending only to scavenge unwanted meat, and gather plant foods. Woman was also preyed upon, as can be seen in the

fossil record, and this may have been how she began to stand upright. Ancient woman would have seen predators better if she stood upright in the grasses of the African savannah that was her home. There has been a suggestion that these early women, Australopithecine afarensis, were also using stone tools, after butchery marks were found on dated fossil bones from three and half million years ago in Ethiopia, timing with the presence of the afarensis (McPherron et al. 2010). But by two and a half million years ago, woman was standing upright, running, making stone tools, hunting and experiencing much growth in her brain. However, we do not know if she was yet building huts, wearing clothes or lighting fires because no evidence has been found, but it is not considered to be very likely. Her name was now Homo habilis, meaning 'handy-woman'.

A million years later, an exciting change took place. Her brain had dramatically increased in size. Some say the extra protein in meat from her hunting abilities may have caused the growth, or it may have been that the movement of her hands in shaping stone tools spurred the brain to change: the hand movement and language areas of the brain are very closely connected (Ambrose 2001). Her name was now Homo erectus (upright woman). In fact, she had already been walking for a long time, but she had started doing some strange new things, for she had discovered fire. This was very important because it meant that she could leave the hot climate of Africa and enter Asia. Without shelters, she needed to light fires on Asian nights to keep warm, and we know from fossils that erectus women travelled all over the world, except for the Americas and Australia. At times, the planet would have been much warmer too, and at those times, ancient woman may even have reached the shores of England. East Anglia was supposedly connected by land to Europe then, so it would not have been difficult for these ancient women to get there. Also, erectus woman had started shaping her stone tools in a strange new way. They were becoming more and more symmetrical and some experts think this is a sign of the brain getting more developed and even starting to form into left and right hemispheres (Wynn 2002). A symmetrical stone tool like the ones made by ancient woman are known as handaxes. Its shape is called a 'biface'.

Woman and her Stone Tool: an ancient and special relationship

This primitive woman had also become a skilled hunter, and this could tell us something about her developing social abilities. Women would have hunted in groups, and this needed planning and communication. She would have had ways to communicate and plan with the other hunters, and it may be that this was an early sign of human language. No one yet knows though, how or why ancient woman first spoke, but one amusing idea is that she started shouting different angry sounds when hurting her hands while making tools! We do not know if we evolved from Homo erectus. It may be that this hominid was a cousin who reached a dead-end and became extinct after being out-competed. The most recently known Homo erectus was still alive around 13,000 years ago, on a remote Island called Flores (Brown and Maeda 2009). She and her kind had shrunk to a very small size, which can happen on Islands, and she even hunted miniature elephants . Most interesting of all is that the Island is not known to have been ever connected to land. She must have crossed water to get there, so it could be that Homo erectus had even invented rafts. She was

clearly a very capable 'ape-woman' and perhaps we should not under-estimate this interesting cousin and her clever mind. Our own brains are much bigger, but so are our bodies. This ancient woman was very small and short, and when her brain size is calculated as a ratio of her body size, her brain is almost as big as ours (Mithen 2005). In fact, the smallest brains of modern woman are about the same ratio to body size as the largest erectus woman brains.

The next actress on the scene is the Homo heidelbergensis (Heidelberg woman). This ancient woman was almost certainly a descendent of the Neanderthals, and she lived in Europe. She may have evolved from the Homo ergaster (the 'workwoman'). The Homo ergaster is a species that is often viewed as modern woman's direct ancestor, but we cannot be sure if she was. Finding fossils of ancient woman is very much a game of luck, and the chances of ancient woman's skeleton becoming fossilised are rare too. We may never find our true ancestor, but we do have a series of dated fossils that show that apes were changing, that their brains were growing and that they were getting more technological. There may have been many thousands of different species of hominids over this period of time, and only one line, possibly lost in the dark mists of time, resulted in modern woman. Homo heidelbergensis is interesting because of her presence in the UK, at the site of Boxgrove in Surrey, 500,000 yrs ago. (Stringer 2006) This site indicates a date when England was a peninsula of Europe, with a warm temperate climate that included hippos, crocodiles and lions. This warm climate allowed ancient women to migrate there before the invention of clothing (via needles and cognitive awareness of one's bodyshape). Interestingly, these ancient females appear to have been able to outcompete major predators and butcher prey animals, as well as knap symmetrical handaxes. A controversial horse skull with possible spear damage indicates they may even have been actively hunting, which means that woman may have had some level of language . Sadly, the repeated ice-age events of the Palaeolithic glaciated the UK, making our nation sometimes completely uninhabitable, and these women may have perished, or may have relocated further south.

The time now moves to around 150,000 yrs ago, and women are fairly neatly distributed around three continents: Europe, Asia and Africa. In Africa, genetics suggest that the first modern women had appeared. Neanderthal woman ruled Europe and Erectus woman was strongly present in Asia. There are some signs of Modern woman starting to leave Africa via Sinai and into the Fertile Crescent at around 120,000 years ago and this created encounters with Neanderthal women . Neanderthal women appear to have outcompeted Modern women at that time though, and the presence of Moderns in the Levant seems to disappear from the record. There were as yet no signs of Modern humans in Europe. This was possibly stopped by a very intense volcanic eruption 72,000 years ago (Rose and Chesner 1990). Toba was violent enough to change the climate and start an extinction level event. We do not know how this affected Neanderthal women but genetics suggest that Modern women may have almost faced extinction, with only one surviving group of women living in caves on the Southern cape of Africa (Gibbons 2003). We may all be descended from these women. They leave an interesting signal in the archaeological record though, which is that these women were creating art. The creation of art seems to be unique to modern woman, and at the Southern cape of Africa, in Blombos cave, woman left behind her a carved piece of ochre which has survived to the present

day.

Modern women seemed to find their footing again after 70,000 yrs ago. Maybe their more complex minds and social behaviour had given them advantages. They returned to the Levant and out-competed Neanderthal woman, they eliminated or replaced Erectus woman in Asia, crossed an ocean to reach Australia and then, around 40,000 yrs ago, spread into Europe, the icy cold and treacherous Ice Age domain of Neanderthal woman. Neanderthal women are a mystery to us now. Only a few skeletons are at hand, because the dry conditions of Europe at this time were not conducive for preservation. The Ice Age had gripped Europe and a large amount of water was trapped in the ice sheets, causing a global drought. This was a treacherous terrain and Neanderthal woman had become physically adapted to it, with broad faces, large noses, powerful muscles, short bodies, large heads and thick bones. These women were powerful enough to leap onto large prey and physically tackle them with thrusting spears, riding them like rodeo-rider (Berger and Trinkaus 1995). Neanderthal woman reveals this in her bones and the many injuries that she would sustain over her lifetime. She had also mastered fire, which was essential for survival in such a cold land, and she may have been tailoring clothing from chewed leather, using awls(Zilhao 2007). We also know that she had the genes and the physical equipment to speak, so she may have had language. She was, in fact, very human. She was very modern, but strangely archaeologists can find no sign of her creating art, except for her preference for ochre and occasional use of beaded personal ornamentation (Zilhao 2007). Her Mousterian tools were unique and distinctive, and very finely edged. Also they were more efficient than those of the Modern women she was to meet. But her graves were bare. No grave goods have been found, though there have been suggestions of possible ones, but we can see tender and expert care of disabled and injured Neanderthals in these graves (Spikins et al. 2010).

By around 20,000 yrs ago, she had vanished though, in spite of her strength and stoicism in a tough terrain. Could the artistic mind of modern woman really have been such a successful trait that we outcompeted this formidable ancient woman? Now we must reach today. Only modern woman has survived. Womankind has conquered the Earth, the Arctic Circle, penetrated the Pacific and Australia and there is even a small colony of scientists living in Antarctica. All our competitors are now extinct: the earth, finally, belonged to woman, and after a brief and prosperous hunter-gatherer phase at the start of the Holocene (the warm period we are in now), woman turned to farming, and then to building the great civilisations and vast cities of our own modern world. It truly is the Age of Womankind now, with our foremothers fighting and working and adventuring hard to get here. But we should perhaps not feel too much pride. Our world, as we know it, is a temporary affair and so are we. Our lush climate will not last forever; another Ice Age will inevitably arrive, crushing our great cities and vast monuments under huge moving icesheets. Will womankind be extinct on that day like all her cousins from the past, or will we even reach that point? As woman's populations explode, and Holocene resources get ever more depleted, we may precipitate our own demise long before an Ice Age falls upon us. Woman beware, we may have arisen, but the mighty will fall.

Was that ok? Was it a reasonable and fair appraisal of the past? Was it ever so slightly absurd? The archaeology is all there, and I have followed current understanding and evidence. But on top of that I painted another narrative

and I am hoping in doing so that I have highlighted that avoiding a male-centric terminology of the past is not 'political correctness gone mad'. The male-centric narratives of the past are not only absurd and completely speculative, but also, they could be harmful. Would you be happy for six year old boys to be read my essay and hear them be told by their teachers that this was a true picture of the past? How about boys growing up for 200 years being told the same biased view? How would this affect their self-esteem? And how might it affect girls? Would they start to feel quite masterful? Also, we have other biases above. The article speaks of the 'ascent' of our species, culminating in the high achievement of the establishment of civilisations and cities. Does this mean hunter-gatherers are not ascended? Also, where are the children in this account? They are simply not there, except to say they were highly dependent. Babies are highly dependent but children come in many ages. Disabled people also get little mention except to say that they were cared for. What about the elderly? A human community is actually a complex organism of all ages and sexes and a multitude of different abilities. Communities were not hand-held and guided into the future by healthy young men. They evolved together, they worked together. It was a group effort.

As archaeologists we give people their heritage and they take that heritage very seriously. Early prehistory defines people and tells them about the deepest parts of themselves, we tell them what their very essential nature is. We give them their origins. If a child reads such material it may define who they one day grow up to be. It may define who they think they are now as children and as boys and girls. So maybe care with terminology and gender is not 'political correctness gone mad'. For example, why not mention the role of children? In the past, they almost certainly would have performed a great deal of physical work within a group, and been trained in cultural and technological traditions. Injuries from hunting would probably have been part of life, so people we would class as disabled, with missing limbs for example, may well have been fully contributing members of their group and been a common sight. By accepting that the human story of the past was not a world worked and driven exclusively by healthy young men, we do more honour to the past and those who lived within it, and we do more honour to our society today.

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2 An Interview with Dr Alice Roberts

Maximillian Elliot

Dr Alice Roberts is one of the country's foremost osteoarchaeologists, as well as being a leading figure in anatomy and anthropology. She has appeared on numerous television programmes, including *Time Team* and *Coast*, as well presenting her own documentaries; *Digging for Britain, Dr Alice Roberts: Don't Die Young* and *The Incredible Human Journey* which have won her critical acclaim.

ME-Was it difficult to break into the world of archaeological media?

AR-I fell into archaeology on television almost by accident. I was producing bone reports for archaeological units in the South West, and *Time Team* asked me if I could write up some reports on skeletons from previous excavations. I produced some reports for them, and was then asked to come on a dig where I'd be looking at bones as they were excavated. It was an Anglo-Saxon burial site in Hampshire, which formed the focus of the *Time Team Live* dig in 2001. After that, I was invited back to join the team whenever there was a possibility of finding human remains, working with Professor Margaret Cox, which was a great privilege.

ME-Your career has encompassed many different disciplines within modern science including, Anatomy, Anthropology and Osteoarchaeology. What made you want to study these particular branches of science?

AR-These disciplines might seem very diverse, but the thing which links them all is a fascination with the structure of the human body. Anatomy was my favourite subject when I was an undergraduate studying medicine, but I didn't really expect it to become my career!

ME-During your tour of the archaeological sites of Britain in your amazing series, *Digging for Britain*, what was your favourite site or artefact and why?

AR-I loved being able to see the objects and bones in the archive at the Mary Rose Trust. The thousands of personal objects – combs, bowls and bows – from that ill-fated ship are very poignant reminders of the many lives lost at sea that day. The skeletons of the crew are preserved so well that they are like bones from an anatomical collection in a medical school rather than archaeological human remains. I was very interested in the pathology around the shoulder joint in those bones, which may relate to archery.

ME-What is it like to work on *Time Team*? Are there any interesting anecdotes that you could tell us about the team?

AR-It's hard work but great fun. The whole team stays on location together, and there's great camaraderie. Quite a few of the regulars would bring guitars along and evenings would often end with a few songs (marred slightly by the fact that no-one ever knows more than a verse of 'Norwegian Wood')!

ME-Your recent television series, *Digging for Britain*, has inspired many young people, including myself, into finding out more about archaeology. What else do you think can be done to increase awareness of archaeology amongst young people?

AR-I found my local museum a fascinating place to visit as a child – and I still enjoy it. Local museums tend to have a great mix of archaeological material on display – including objects found locally and pertinent to local history, as well as artefacts from farther afield. Archaeology provides us with a real, physical connection to the past, through the objects made and used by our ancestors, as

well as the remains of the people themselves. I would go as far as to say that free museums are an essential part of education outside the classroom – and for all ages. So – let's make sure we support our local museums.

ME-A lot of your work has involved the media and whilst this is obviously a useful way of communicating with the public, do you think that archaeology is represented accurately on television and in other forms of media? If not, how do you think this can be changed?

AR-No subject is always going to be represented accurately, at all times and in all places, on the media. And I imagine if you asked a dozen archaeologists what an 'accurate representation' might look like, you'd get a dozen different answers. Having said that, we wanted *Digging for Britain* to be as accurate and real as possible – our aims were to produce a programme which, for each period we covered, gave enough breadth of coverage to provide insight into that particular period, whilst reporting on that year's most interesting discoveries; provided the archaeologists with an opportunity to speak for themselves; gave some idea of the range of archaeological investigation – from excavations through to post-excavation analysis, and from research projects carried out by museums and universities to commercial, contract archaeology. I'm pleased with the programme, but I think we should try to include more on the contract side to make it more representative – more than 90 percent of archaeology carried out in the UK is, after all, contract archaeology.

ME-In May 2009, your fantastic series, *The Incredible Human Journey*, was broadcast! The series discussed the Out of Africa theory and showed the many possible routes which humans could have dispersed via. After travelling across all of these routes, which do you think would have been the best route out of Africa, from your experiences?

AR-I was over the moon to be invited to film this series with the BBC. I'm fascinated by human origins, but never imagined that I would ever actually get to visit the Omo river valley, see the Hobbit, or be shown around Zhoukoudian Cave by Professor Wu in China. It was an amazing experience. To answer your question – there's still debate over whether modern humans would have emerged to the north of the Red Sea – through Sinai, or to the South, across Bab al Mandab (which I discuss in some detail in my book!). To settle that question, we really need to see some hard archaeological evidence – that is both diagnostic and datable – from the Middle East.

ME-If there was any direction you would like to see the discipline of archaeology advance in over the next few years, what would it be?

AR-I'd like to see the professionalization of field archaeology continuing in the direction it has been headed for a while now. It does need to be recognised as a profession rather than a hobby, with professional salaries. At the moment, it's financially very difficult for people to stay in the job over the long term. But that all comes down to how much we value our archaeological heritage, and who we think should be paying for archaeology.

ME-What is the most exciting project you have worked on and why?

AR-The Incredible Human Journey was the most exciting television project I have worked on to date – although I'll be filming a new series with BBC Science in the New Year – so I'll have to see how that measures up!

ME-Do you have any advice for anyone, like me, wishing to pursue a career in archaeological media?

AR-It depends what sort of advice you want! If you're interested in getting involved with archaeology on television, I'd say you might be safer to spread your net a bit wider – archaeology may be a hot topic at the moment, but the media is a fickle business. So either broaden your area of interest, or the ways in which you think about pursuing public engagement – schools outreach, working with museums and discovery centres, writing for print media or the internet, as well as the broadcast media, for instance. Go with the flow, be true to yourself, and with a good dose of luck, you may end up doing something you love as a job.

3 The Real Tomb Raider

Keneiloe Molopyane (mailto:km738@york.ac.uk)

Busting the Myths

Ok, so I was in my third year and had (still do) a strong passion on the subject that is archaeology. I came to the conclusion that there were a few misconceptions that needed to be cleared up. First of all, the villains faced by most archaeologists these days are not the same as those portrayed on the screen. Instead they come in the form of conservation and consultation issues – not that they are all that bad – and the occasional grave robber. I have also come across people who think that it is the archaeologists who are the true grave robbers, and in no way thanks to Hollywood. Well, archaeologists do not go around breaking into ancient tombs and grabbing the most priceless artefacts before the entire structure comes crashing down.

Today, we have our own adventures that are totally different from what is shown on the big screen (how I wish this were not true), but this point does not make the job any less exciting.

We are not dino-freaks.

I really do not understand why people always seem to associate archaeology with dinosaurs. Archaeology is not about that at all; as a matter of fact palaeontology may lead you in a closer direction towards dinosaurs than archaeology possibly could. Archaeology takes a look at how humans (and in some cases pre-humans) lived and interacted with each other and their environment by looking at the remains that are left behind. These remains, which may seem like complete junk to the non-archaeologist, are what we would like to term as 'material culture'. The most awesome thing about archaeology is that it is not a clear-cut discipline. One can mix it up with almost anything depending on what it is that you want to find out. There are just so many branches within archaeology such as: prehistoric, historical, classical and my main focus and favourite, forensic archaeology.

It is an adventure!

Over the past few years, I have been on the most amazing archaeological adventures that I am going to remember for the rest of my life. In my first year of Varsity (2006), I headed off with my classmates to camp out in the middle of nowhere on a farm in the Limpopo, South Africa, teeming with game, giraffe and a lone leopard. We had just our tents to sleep in the open field. Once I actually climbed up a steep cliff, just to stay off the trail of the said feline. I swear I must have made it up there in less than two minutes. Flash forward to 2008, my adventures placed me in Johannesburg, in the middle of the notorious Hillbrow district on a site called Constitution Hill. It was a fort in which political activists such as Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela were held. The fort has a much longer history and has played many more roles other then being a political prison. After having heard 16 random gunshots, police

and ambulance sirens the entire week, I was wondering what the hell I was doing there, but the objects that we found during our time there made it all worthwhile in the end.

Archaeological sites are not only confined to visitation by archaeologists, but the recent trend in South Africa is to open up these spaces to the general public for educational purposes. The most popular sites are the Cradle of Humankind, Sterkfontein and Mapungubwe. Mapungubwe in the northern region of South Africa spans an occupational period of over 1000 years. Its discovery was initially kept secret because the site's existence went against the belief that the Dutch, who landed in the Cape in 1652, were the first civilised people to inhibit South Africa. We have learned so much more about the archaeology and civilisations of southern Africa from sites such as Mapungubwe and Great Zimbabwe. All these archaeological adventures are on our collective doorsteps, if we take the initiative to take the first step outside.

4 The East African Diaspora: The Problem with Slaves

Nik Petek (mailto:np8465@bris.ac.uk)

Today, people of African descent are present all over the world. This is mostly due to the slave trade that was active from the 16th until the end of the 19th century AD. The dispersion of Africans and their descendants across the world (the African Diaspora) aroused interest in archaeology in the 1970s. The most studied regions today are the Caribbean and both Americas. Substantial investigation has also been conducted in western and southern Africa (Kusimba 2004; Orser 1998). But the African Diaspora remains an enigma in east Africa. Only a few individuals have done any archaeological investigations on this topic in the region. Fortunately, historical studies can provide us with some information (Cooper 1977; Lovejoy 1983; Manning 1990).

The East African diaspora can be traced back to three causes: (1) the migration of ethnic groups, like the Zulu, (2) to the slave trade and (3) to climatic changes, which caused wars and forced ethnic groups to abandon certain areas (Kusimba 2004; Lovejoy 1983; Manning 1990). Because of the slave trade, which reached its peak in the 19th century, East Africans are now present on the Arabian peninsula, the Persian Gulf, Pakistan, India and even as far as Bengal (Harris 1971). The major slave traders were the French, Portuguese and the Omani. The Omanis were the main distributors of slaves and almost had a monopoly of this trade on the East coast from Kilwa to the African Horn. Even though slaves were dispersed around the Indian Ocean, most of them remained in Africa. The slaves were brought from the coast's hinterland to towns on the coast, like Zanzibar, Malindi and Mombasa. They worked on plantations, in craft shops or the docks. They were used as administrators, soldiers, eunuchs, concubines or domestic slaves (Cooper 1977; Lovejoy 1983; Manning 1990). Thus, the East African Diaspora is mainly associated with the dispersion of different ethnic groups within Africa.

Here I am going to concentrate on what archaeology may expect to find of the diaspora caused by the slave trade in East Africa. I am going to give an account of how this phenomenon has been approached in the Americas, and then I am going to refer to other objects and features that could be evident in the landscape because of the slave trade. Discerning slavery in East Africa has been elusive and in the end a few points will answer why this is so.

Archaeology and the evidence of the diaspora

In both Americas and the Caribbean the archaeology of African Diaspora has been practiced for a few decades now and is quite successful in discovering archaeological sites and providing adequate interpretations for them and the material excavated. This type of archaeology is divided into the archaeology of identity, archaeology of freedom and archaeology of race (Orser 1998).

Archaeology of identity looks for material evidence of continuation of cultural traits. These were used by slaves as representation of otherness to empower themselves. In the western diaspora, pots provided the representation of otherness. They provided a pan-African sense of syncretic culture as opposed to the white American. The pots may also be seen as a form of resistance and cultural

boundary maintenance between Africans and whites. Other clues pointing to identity are hidden in graves and in the objects buried with the dead (Alexander 2001; Orser 1998). Archaeology of race, drawing from the archaeology of identity, searches for tangible aspects of identity as ethnic markers (Orser 1998). One aspect is spatial arrangements of plantations and houses. Fortunately, one such study has been done by Donley (1987), where, by looking at the spatial arrangement of Swahili houses in Lamu, she concluded that slave quarters were on the ground floor, while their masters' rooms were located on the first floor. Another aspect is the artefacts. Artefacts, rather than being simply static containers of ethnic self-identity, can serve as symbols of group identity whose meanings can be manipulated, while at the same time they promote a sense of peoplehood. Mullin's study (1996, as cited in Orser 1998, 75-76) showed how a simple objects like knickknacks were used by non-African Americans to cement the power relations over African Americans. For the African Americans receiving this item signified redefinition of their material circumstances, as knickknacks were out of reach for them before 1850. In Zanzibar, it can be said that land had been used in the same way. After the revolt in the 1820s slaves could use a small portion of land for their own purposes. This satisfied the slaves. But they were bonded to the plantation even more and the likelihood of running away was diminished (Cooper 1977; Manning 1990). Slave masters therefore saved money on buying new slaves.

Archaeology of freedom studies the material conditions of freedom (Orser 1998). This study is mostly associated with Maroon villages. Maroon villages offer information about syncretic cultures (since slaves took up cultural features of their masters, while interacting with the natives), the creation of diverse social connections, and the preservation of economic, political and spiritual life (Harris 1996). Palmeras in South America was the biggest Maroon village and is now a symbol of resistance. In East Africa, the Maroon settlement of Fulladoyo was the biggest, but no site has been found (Cooper 1977). Even though Maroon sites are difficult to locate, they have the potential to provide information about how slaves maintained their traditional culture in alien environments.

This three-fold approach to the diaspora could also be used in East Africa. The approach is mostly concerned with identity and how it is perceived through material evidence. But it does not provide data about everyday slave life and the extent of slavery. Remains of plantations and slaves' houses can shine a light on these two issues.

Plantations took up approximately one quarter of Zanzibar Island and two thirds of Pemba. 31,000 acres of plantations surrounded Malindi and there were extensive plantations around Mombasa (Cooper 1977). By employing the techniques of landscape archaeology, we could precisely define the extent of the plantations and recognize boundaries between them (lines delineating Iron Age fields in Britain are still visible on aerial photography (Renfrew and Bahn 2008). Old maps and documents could also be of assistance (Renfrew and Bahn 2008). The information, these techniques can provide us with, in addition to recognising slave houses that were situated on plantations, can give a more precise estimate of the number of slaves working on plantations then we have now from inaccurate historical records.

Slaves' houses can illuminate the everyday life of slaves on plantations. On Zanzibar slaves tended to live in small groups in a small house. Attached to the house was a small garden. In Malindi gang labour was employed, thus a

bigger plantation site would have a small slave village (Cooper 1977; Lovejoy 1983; Manning 1990). Preferably, garden tools, pots and other essential utensils would be unearthed.

The death rate among slaves was high, at around 15 percent (Manning 1990). In Zanzibar this meant that some 12,000 slaves had to be replaced each year (Cooper 1977). The dead were either buried in mass graves or in a cemetery. The artefacts with which they were buried (if they were buried with any) could provide information about ethnicity and identity. Furthermore, by using stable isotope analysis we would have the potential to see patterns of migration and the origin of individuals.

Slavery did not only affect the places where slavery was practiced, but also the coast's hinterland, where slaves were captured. Kusimba's case study (2004) of Tsavo confirms this. Tsavo is an area in Mombasa's hinterland. It was home to an array of diverse ethnic groups, which were interconnected by relationships of trade and intermarriage. Members of these ethnic groups were kidnapped or captured by the Arabs and Swahili and sold as slaves. Thus, the groups sought safety on Mount Kasigau, around which they built a ring of rockshelters. They are hard to reach but easily defensible. Kusimba (2004) excavated three of them. All were dated to the 18th and 19th century when, according to oral accounts, the demand for slaves and ivory increased. This fortification was likely to be the response to slave raiding, and acted as refuge for people and livestock when threatened by enemies.

Oral and historical accounts show that 18th and 19th century East Africa was punctuated by insecurity and instability, as a consequence of slave trade, warfare and drought. This also affected the regional trade and alliance networks. Destruction of indigenous settlements, depopulation of whole regions, fortification buildings, Muslim artefacts in indigenous villages and slave quarters can all be traced back to the slave trade (Alexander 2001; Kusimba 2004).

The accumulation of a large number of people can also be preserved in the archaeological record, either through artefacts or features (Renfrew and Bahn 2008). A large number of slaves would be such an accumulation of people. It is probable that slaves in East Africa formed communities, as the Afro-Americans in both Americas and the Afro-Asians in Hyderabad did (Harris 1971, 1996; Orser 1998).

Slaves on some East African plantations had 2 days a week off and the amount of time spent working depended on the time of the year. In addition, slaves were allowed to go to town and to do what they wanted if the time allowed it. During their spare time slaves socialised with each other. Slaves had festivities and meetings, where they would dance and perform rituals (Cooper 1977; Harris 1996; Manning 1990). They were creating their own culture and society.

The culture of the slave community would be syncretic between that of their masters and the array of cultural backgrounds from which the slaves came. Slaves' masters were obliged to teach their pagan slaves Islam. Some slaves accepted Islam freely or under pressure, but in the end the religion and the language (Arabian) became the common denominators of the slave community, since slaves' religion and mother tongue were all different (Cooper 1977; Manning 1990). The same instance happened in the Caribbean and in the southern states of North America, where slaves converted to Christianity and made Creole their common language (Orser 1998). Islam was reinforcing

the brotherhood among the slaves and acted as a pacifier, as it justified slavery and facilitated the control of a dominant group (Cooper 1977; Harris 1971).

Archaeologically visible traces of such a community would be community buildings like mosques or simple halls. Emigrants in America and India had them (Harris 1971, 1996; Orser 1998). If there were not any visible structures, the community had to have a designated space where they would have gathered. Instruments for dancing at festivities and symbols with which they would signalise their affiliation to a certain group were essential to that community. Also, a different expression of religious affiliation must be visible between the slave and the master, since Islam allows a degree of syncretism. The different take on Islam would have been evident in practice.

Problems of interpretation

Nonetheless identifying slave remains is much harder than described above. Taphonomy, the current residing population of the site under question, and past and present influences on people can all distort the interpretation of archaeological data.

A major influence on the slave's life was the experience of enslavement and life as a bonded person. These experiences caused slaves to forget their mother tongue, to learn Arabic and to modify their traditional way of life. Slaves took some of the Arabian culture as their own and syncretism between many African cultures and Islam is hard to identify (Alexander 2001; Harris 1971, 1996; Kusimba 2004; Lovejoy 1983; Manning 1990). This is because African slaves remained in Africa and the stylistic differences of artefacts would not be as prominent as when comparing a European and a Chinese culture. Furthermore, since Islam was the common denominator of the slaves, Islam's presence in the new syncretic culture would be dominant. Slaves also had enough freedom to go to town and conduct business with their own products, which resulted in an even further assimilation with the foreign culture (Cooper 1977; Manning 1990). In towns like Malindi and Mombasa some aspects of culture between the slaves and their master did not differ at all. Slave owners were Africans and the owner's slaves were captured as close as 150km from the town, in villages where trade with these towns was of prominence (Cooper 1977; Kusimba 2004).

Muslims distinguish between many forms of slave statuses (Cooper 1977). It does matter if a slave was captured as a mature person, if a baby was born to slaves or freed individuals, or what kind of slave an individual is. Along with the status came the duties and rights. Children of slaves and slaves with a higher status had more liberty and better opportunities to gain material wealth. The result would be the neglecting of the native culture and identifying with the foreign one.

Some forms of slavery would be almost impossible to recognise in the archaeological record. Eunuchs, concubines and domestic slaves were almost identical to their Muslim masters material-wise. They were part of the Muslim household and were thus more likely embraced by the family. These slaves were in constant contact with the Islamic culture and could therefore not disaffect themselves from that culture in the same degree as plantation slaves. The option to join or form a community as the plantation slaves was thus also inhibited and some slaves had greater affection for the master than other slaves. With the master's death eunuchs, concubines and domestic slaves were often freed. They also had

several privileges. Gain in material and status was made easier for them. They were fully submerged in the Islamic culture (Alexander 2001; Cooper 1977; Manning 1990). Soldier slaves were also fully assimilated with the Muslim culture, since they were, apart from their skin color, undistinguishable from other soldiers (Harris 1971).

A big obstacle archaeologists always encounter is how to interpret the data. Although most and the biggest slave owners on the coast and islands were Muslims, there were also Christians and native Africans who were slave owners. The Christian and Muslim concept of slavery, both defined in different legal systems, interacted with a variety of indigenous forms of slavery (Alexander 2001). What is then Muslim, Christian or indigenous?

Even evidence that can clearly point to slavery and slave trade can be interpreted in many ways. Muslim objects at indigenous sites can occur because of slave trade or trade. Destruction and abandonment of settlements, and the depopulation of a whole region can come about because of droughts and food shortage. In the 19th century, when the slave trade was at its peak on the East African coast, several droughts befell the land, some causing major migrations of ethnic groups. Some buildings can be interpreted as either dungeons or slave quarters (Alexander 2001). Thus, data pointing to one solution, one clear interpretation, is hard to find.

Cemeteries could contain a pool of information about slaves and their identity. Unfortunately, the Muslim religion does not allow the excavation of graves. Also, since the slaves converted to Islam, it is possible that Muslim slaves were buried in Muslim cemeteries. The question arises if there were different cemeteries for slaves and their masters or did both use the same one (Alexander 2001).

Slavery in East Africa lasted until after the Great War (Lovejoy 1983; Manning 1990). Thus, at least some descendants of slaves are still alive and their memories are an invaluable resource to the explanation of archaeological remains. Archaeological projects, like Catalhoyuk or District 6, successfully used natives' accounts to complement their data. Furthermore, Cooper (1977) wrote a great book about the plantation slavery, using historical data and informants. Adding anthropological methodologies to the research of the East African Diaspora could dispose of insecurities in interpretation of the data.

In archaeology, the East African Diaspora remains an untackled topic. Many new things can be discovered. The methodology of how to study diaspora in the Americas can serve as the basis, but should be tailored to the East African region. I also think that studying the East African Diaspora can contribute to the archaeology of identity in a major way, as slave identity was much more intertwined with that of his master than in the Americas. Thus, a big chunk of African past remains to be researched, and this research can contribute to archaeological studies overall.

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5 An Interview with Tracey Sweek

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Tracey Sweek is a Senior Conservator of stone, wall paintings and mosaics at the British Museum. She studied a conservation programme at the City and Guilds of London Art School between 1983 and 1986. After graduating she worked in private practice with a number of companies until joining the British Museum in 1994. After three years, she left the museum to work with a conservator in Edinburgh to gain experience conserving sandstone objects and monuments. In 1999 she left Edinburgh and joined a London company for a further five years before rejoining the British Museum in 2004. Tracey has a total of twenty-four years experience in conservation but this has been with a various employers. A recent role she has taken at the British Museum is the Project Coordinator for Conservation and Science regarding the World Conservation and Exhibition Centre. This will be a new facility for conservation and science.

SS-What inspired you to become a conservator?

TS-I fell into conservation accidently. A friend of mine from school was attending a fine art course at the City and Guilds of London Art School and happened to mention on an occasion when we met that there was a course on the conservation/restoration of wood, stone and polychrome materials. Immediately I was interested – the course combined all the things I was fascinated by – art, history and archaeology. So I don't feel I was ever inspired because I knew very little about conservation/restoration until I discovered this course but I knew from that point this was what I wanted to do. During the twenty-four years I have been in conservation I have never wanted to do anything else and to be honest, I have been very lucky in the career path that I have followed.

SS-What is your current project?

TS-Currently I have been working in Sudan. Three years ago a request came from the Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan to visit a site north of Khartoum called Dangeil. The purpose of my visit to this Amun Temple was to determine and implement a conservation programme of protecting the architectural elements. The temple dates from the 1st century AD and comprises of a variety of materials – mud brick, fired brick, plaster and sandstone. Dangeil is a small village close to the Fifth Cataract, and resources are limited both in labour and materials. So for the last three seasons, I have been refining and searching for the materials necessary to complete the conservation as well as training local men in building and capping with lime. The building and lime capping is acting as a sacrificial intervention: the site is exposed to the environment and human activity and this results in the upper elements of the architecture either being displaced or becoming unstable due to the ingress of water. The new building materials are very different to the original and therefore there is no confusion between ancient and modern. The challenges are infinite especially in this remote area of Sudan where resources are limited. There have been problems in acquiring a good source of lime and the heat itself is an ordeal when trying to control the drying of lime mortars. The work will continue for a few more years and it is hoped that the conservation will progress and due to its simplicity will be continued to be maintained by the local workmen.

SS-Do you have any advice for archaeologists looking for a career in conservation?

TS-There are a high number of archaeologists that have moved into the field of conservation especially those wishing to work as archaeological conservators. To follow a career in conservation a student would have to enrol on a degree course in conservation – with no degree it would be hard to find employment. There are a number of courses throughout the country each specialising in various aspects of conservation – archaeology, stone and wood, metals, ceramics to name just a few.