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Victor Manuel LONGA. Dpto. de Literatura Española, Teoría de la Literatura y Lingüística General. Facultad de Filología. Avda. Castelao, s/n. 15782 Santiago de Compostela. Correo-e: victormanuel.longa@usc.es

A computational analysis of prehistoric lines: geometric engravings and language

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Paleoanthropology and Archaeology have usually analyzed prehistoric remains from the perspective of the behavior those remains could be associated with –symbolic, technological, social, etc.–. As regards language, symbolic objects of the archaeological record have been considered to automatically indicate the existence of complex language in Prehistory. This paper brings a very different approach to the fore: to consider prehistoric remains from the perspective of the mental computational processes and capabilities required for their production. This approach is not concerned with the ‘semantics’ of the pieces –i.e. their alleged symbolic or presentational nature–, but it is interested in the analysis of purely formal features revealing a language-like computational complexity. Starting from such a view, the paper analyzes (1) geometric designs from the Eurasian Middle and Lower Palaeolithic made by species like *Homo neanderthalensis* and perhaps *Homo heidelbergensis*, and (2) geometric designs from the African Middle Stone Age, made by Anatomically Modern Humans. The computational comparison between both types of designs makes it possible to infer the kind of language those species were endowed with.

Key words: Language evolution. Geometric designs. Chomsky hierarchy. Computational complexity. Automata. Context-sensibility. Symbolism.

903.2 (460.183) “626”

*José YRAVEDRA SÁINZ DE LOS TERREROS**, *Fernando DÍEZ MARTÍN***, *Polcarpo SÁNCHEZ YUSTOS***, *Diana GÓMEZ DE LA RÚA***, *Isabel DÍAZ MUÑOZ*** and *José Ángel GÓMEZ GONZÁLEZ****. * Dpto. de Prehistoria. Universidad Complutense de Madrid. C/ Prof. Aranguren, s/n. 28040 Madrid. Correo-e: joyravedra@hotmail.com. ** Dpto. de Prehistoria y Arqueología. Universidad de Valladolid. Plaza del Campus, s/n. 47011 Valladolid. *** Agencia Estatal de Meteorología. 47620 Villanubla (Valladolid)

Middle Palaeolithic subsistence strategies in the Spanish Northern Meseta. Corazón Cave (Mave, Palence)

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This work shows a first description of the subsistence strategies carried out by the Neanderthal communities that inhabited the Horadada Gorge (Mave, Palence). Through the analysis of the faunal collections retrieved from the Mousterian archaeological horizon unearthed at Corazón Cave, dated at 96 Ka, a first characterization of the models used by the Neanderthals to obtain meat resources in this site is presented. Corazón Cave represents a strategic corridor connecting the Spanish Northern Plateau with the Cantabrian Range and the set of subsistence strategies described here can shed light on the importance of this locale in its regional framework. The methodological framework used to undertake this study includes zooarchaeological and taphonomic bone analyses, and mortality patterns. Our results suggest an anthropogenic accumulation of horses, deer, goats and other herbivores. Cut-mark and fracture patterns on the bone assemblage support this. Cut marks have been identified in almost all anatomical sections, indicating a variety of activities related to skinning, disarticulation and fleshing. Apart from meat consumption, percussion marks and breakage patterns suggest access to marrow. Carnivores were present in the site as secondary scavenger agents, accessing to those remains left behind when Neanderthals abandoned the cave.

Key words: Horadada Gorge. Mousterian. Cut marks. Taphonomy. Hunting. Neanderthal.

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Paloma DE LA PEÑA ALONSO. Institute for Human Evolution & School of Archaeology, Geography & Environmental Studies. University of the Witwatersrand (Johannesburg, South Africa) y Grupo de Investigación en Geografía Física en áreas de Alta Montaña (GFAM, UCM). Correo-e: paloma.delapenya@gmail.com

Stratigraphic and techno-typological study for the basal levels of Les Mallaetes Cave (Barx, Valencia): new clues for the Mediterranean Early Upper Paleolithic

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This paper presents an analysis of the stratigraphy of the basal levels of Les Mallaetes cave and a techno-typological synthesis of its lithic industry. To carry out this task the first excavations (1946-1949, made by L. Pericot and F. Jordá) and the materials of the 1970 survey (by F. Jordá and J. Fortea) has been reviewed.

The analysis of the lithic industry has been carried out from a technological point of view. However, previously the stratigraphy was taken into account as a discriminant factor to establish archaeological conclusion.

After the analysis, the Aurignacian presence can not be held so strongly from the materials reviewed, although we describe the main characters of Les Mallaetes Gravettian remains and discussed in the context of the initial Upper Paleolithic of the Mediterranean zone.

Key words: Aurignacian. Gravettian. Mediterranean zone. Lithic industry. Fossils.

903.5 (460.21) “634/636”

Javier FERNÁNDEZ-ERASO and José Antonio MUJICA-ALUSTIZA. Área de Prehistoria. Dpto. de Geografía, Prehistoria y Arqueología. Facultad de Letras. UPV-EHU. Vitoria-Gasteiz. Correo-e: javier.fernandeze@ehu.es

The megalithic station of the Rioja Alavesa: chronology, origins and utilisation cycles

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The dolmenic station of the Rioja Alavesa has been, since its discovery, excavation and musealization, a reference point for Basque megalithic research. However, it presented serious deficiencies such as the lack of specialized studies which nowadays are essential in any research process. This work compiles AMS datings obtained from human bones from different individuals retrieved from five of the eight funerary architectures that compose the station. Regarding the other three, Los Llanos dolmen was already dated by its excavator, San Martín dolmen was recently dated and no human remains were retrieved at El Encinal. The most important series come from Chabola de la Hechicera, whose oldest dates are from the 2010 campaign, and particularly from Alto de la Huesera where remains from the 1948 and 2010 excavations have been dated. The radiocarbon dates show a funerary use of the megaliths which is discontinuous and of variable intensity, approximately from 6000 to 3000 cal BP. On the other hand, it becomes clear that the relative dating of the use of the megaliths taking into account only material assemblages is insufficient. It is necessary to corroborate and complete this information with the one obtained from human bones.

Key words: Radiocarbon dates. Dolmens. Construction. Reutilisation. Amortization.

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*Victor FILIPE**, *Ricardo GODINHO***, *Raquel GRANJA****, *Artur RIBEIRO***** and *António Carlos VALERA******. * UNIARQ-Faculty of Letters. University of Lisbon. Correo-e: victor.filipe7@gmail.com. ** Anthropologist. Research Centre for Anthropology and Health. University of Coimbra. Correo-e: ricardomiguelgodinho@gmail.com. *** ERA-Arqueologia collaborator. Correo-e: raagranja@gmail.com. **** Archaeologist, PhD student from Kiel University. Correo-e: artursribeiro@gmail.com. ***** Head of Archaeological Research Department of ERA-Arqueologia, S.A. Correo-e: antoniovalera@era-arqueologia.pt

Bronze Age funerary spaces in Outeiro Alto 2 (Brinches, Serpa, Portugal): the hypogea cemetery

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The Outeiro Alto 2 (Brinches, Serpa, Portugal) is part of a wider range of archaeological sites recently excavated on the left bank of the Guadiana River, Baixo Alentejo, in the context of the Empreendimento de Fins Múltiplos de Alqueva - EDIA (Alqueva Dam). The chronology of its occupation extends from the Final Neolithic to the Bronze Age, also through Chalcolithic, and it is located on a gentle hill with a wide view of the landscape. In this study we present the data concerning to the occupation of the site during the Bronze Age, more specifically the hypogea necropolis. It is a cultural reality badly known and scarcely characterized and documented until recently, proper to the region, but where it becomes evident the influence of Argaric Culture, especially in the funerary rituals.

Key words: Funerary practices. Southwest Bronze. Argaric Culture. Subterranean funerary structures. Ossuaries.

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Rodrigo VILLALOBOS GARCÍA. Dpto. de Prehistoria, Arqueología, Antropología Social y CC y TT Historiográficas. Universidad de Valladolid. Correo-e: rodrigovillalobosgarcia@gmail.com

Singular artefacts with southern connections in the Northern Meseta Copper Age. A limestone cup from El Fonsario (Villafáfila, Zamora)

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A stone cup similar to the ones well known in the Southern Iberia Copper Age has been recovered in El Fonsario –Zamora–. This example serves as the starting point for presenting a list of other Pre-Beaker Copper Age’s exotic artefacts from sites of the Northern Meseta. In this brief approach two main aspects are explored. On the one hand we intend to discover the socio-political role of these objects at the regional scenario. On the other hand we will analyse their distribution as a key for inquiring into the question of the supra-regional interactions. The singular nature of these artefacts, together with some of the contexts in where they were originally discovered, suggest that they could have been used as social differentiation markers obtained through exchange, locally made imitations or individual journeys or odysseys. Concerning their distribution it can be seen that the traditional dichotomy proposed for the Northern Meseta between extroverted –‘Las Pozas’– and isolated –‘Los Cercados’– areas could be modified because of the presence of some of these singular objects in Los Cercados’ area. The use and function of these elements are viewed in a process of growing social complexity.

Key words: Stone cup. Symbolic pottery. Perforated axe. Idol. Exotic objects.

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Francisco Javier JOVER MAESTRE* and Juan Antonio LÓPEZ PADILLA**. * Dpto. de Prehistoria, Arqueología, Historia Antigua, Filología Griega y Filología Latina. Universidad de Alicante. Aptdo. 99. 03080 Alicante. Correo-e: javier.jover@ua.es. ** Museo Arqueológico Provincial de Alicante, MARQ. Plaza Gómez Ulla, s/n. 03013 Alicante. Correo-e: jlopezp@dip-alicante.es

Textil production during Bronze Age in Eastern and Southeastern Iberian Peninsula: raw materials, products, tools and work processes

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In this paper, we try to assess the importance of textile production in the societies of the Bronze Age in the Eastern Iberian Peninsula. We have tried to characterize each of the crafts, weaving textiles, cordage and basketry, mainly. We have made a thorough inventory of the published archaeological evidence related to textile production. It has paid particular interest to those that allow us to infer how far this was an activity subject to social control. It has critically evaluated the archaeological evidence and the contextual information associated with it. We conclude that, as a whole and in space and time considered, some textile production processes –like cordage and basketry– were clearly developed in a household field, compared to

others, such as manufacture of fabrics and dresses, on which apparently it was exerted more control in their production and distribution.

Key words: Craftwork. Production and distribution systems. Eastern Iberian Peninsula. El Argar. Valencian Bronze Age.

903.25 (460) “06”

*Consuelo MATA**, *Helena BONET***, *Eva COLLADO**, *Mercedes FUENTES**, *Isabel IZQUIERDO****, *Andrea MORENO**, *Lourdes PRADOS*****, *Fernando QUESADA*****, *David QUIXAL***, *Pere Pau RIPOLLÈS**, *Alfred SANCHIS***, *Lucía SORIA****** and *Carmen TORMO***. * Facultad de Geografía e Historia. Universidad de Valencia. Correo-e: consuelo.mata@uv.es. ** Museo de Prehistoria de Valencia. *** Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte. **** Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. ***** Facultad de Humanidades de Albacete

Gendering *fibulae*: animals and gender roles in Iberian Iron Age societies

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Since ancient times, domestic and wild animals have been an integral part of human life as food for survival, as transportation and as icons on the construction of the cultural imagery. Iberian culture during the Iron Age depicted such animals in ceramics, stone and terracotta sculpture, metals objects, and coins. These “imaginary” remains and the “real” faunal assemblages of settlements, necropoleis, and cultic places both reflect the ongoing relationships between human societies and other living things in the same environment – in this case the southeast area of the Iberian Peninsula.

In this paper we analyze animal depictions in Iberian *fibulae* (brooches) as a means from which to approach gender as a cultural construct. These *fibulae* were made in precious metals and decorated with hunting scenes or individual animals. They should be considered objects of special significance in specific social groups and elites wielding power among the Iberians. Studying contexts and comparing similar images that appear in other media with documented faunal assemblages provides us insights into Iberian social status, the gender of the wearer, and the meaning of certain animals.

Key words: Iberian. Fauna. Jewelry. Symbolism. Social identity.

902.23 (460.35) “01/2”

Pablo RUIZ MONTES. Dpto. de Prehistoria y Arqueología. Universidad de Granada. Correo-e: prmontes@ugr.es

Fine ware pottery trade and exchange of in Baetica (Ith- IIth century A.D.): general reflections concerning the high-imperial economy linked to the analysis of Isturgitan example

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As a particular case of analysis, the pottery vessels produced at *Isturgi* workshops (*terra sigillata* and others), gives us the opportunity to think over some historical and archaeological aspects related to the exchange and trade of these goods during the greatest period of economic and social growth in roman *Baetica*. Therefore, in this paper, we shall focus on the nature of Roman imperial economy, on considering the ways and magnitude of that trade (local/regional and long distance trade) and his basic characterization, as well as on certain anthropological secondary issues like consumption, cultural and social value, and taste. This draws an exceptional situation of economic vitality where the production and trade on local pottery fine wares, especially samian or *terra sigillata* wares, is cause, but also consequence of it. The process, intensified during Claudius thanks to an outstanding geopolitical conditions founded on the development of the communications network infrastructure and transports, on the greater demand for goods, and on a moderate population growth, contributes to the emergence of new standards in baetic pottery vessels, until then still dominated by local traditions and by unstructured and rudimentary Peñaflor type pottery.

Key words: Pottery vessels. *Terra sigillata*. Road network. Los Villares de Andújar. *Baetica*.

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Silvia GONZÁLEZ SOUTELO. Dpto. de Historia, Geografía y Arte. Universidad de Vigo. Correo-e: silvia-tui2004@yahoo.es

The Thermal Spa of Baños de Montemayor (Cáceres, Spain). An archaeological description of a Roman Healing Spa building

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Although the Baños de Montemayor Roman healing spa has been included in the specialized bibliography because of the significant number of votive altars dedicated mainly to the Nymphs, surprisingly the Roman thermal spa building has not been yet well studied even though there is more than interesting evidences.

Therefore, in order to recognize the importance of this complex and to increase our knowledge about the Roman healing spas in *Hispania*, a brief revision of the existing information on this Roman thermal bath will be presented. In this way, the architectonic description of this interesting thermal Roman establishment will be completed with archaeological remains, in order to achieve an overall perception of the Baños de Montemayor Roman Spa. The successive reforms of the thermal complex have allowed to constate the presence of structures of different historical moments for the utilization of the thermal springs, discovering the significative presence of the Roman building.

Key words: Mineral-medicinal water. Roman healing bath. Roman rounded-pool. Roman building materials. Roman architecture.