

Re: Lokalalei vs Flores (Re: Importance of Flores Overstated?)

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From: Daryl Habel (*Dar_83001_at_yahoo.com*)

Date: 11/17/04

Date: 17 Nov 2004 10:03:42 -0800

paleocity@hotmail.com (Lee Olsen) wrote in message
news:<40a73547.0411161718.40344316@posting.google.com>...
> *Dar_83001@yahoo.com (Daryl Habel) wrote in message
news:<d24f0b9f.0411152322.3ddb6e42@posting.google.com>...*
> > *paleocity@hotmail.com (Lee Olsen) wrote in message
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> > > > > > *paleocity@hotmail.com (Lee Olsen) wrote in message
news:<40a73547.041112040.5015e48e@posting.google.com>...*
> > > > > > *From: Dar_83001@yahoo.com (Daryl Habel) Newsgroups wrote: Message-ID
> > > > > > <d24f0b9f.0411101647.407647c6@posting.google.com>
{humongous snippage}*
> > > > *I haven't re-read the de la Torre paper recently, but published in CA
> > > > it has the added bonus of additional comment by experts
> > >*
> > > *One thing I like about you already is your laid-back humor.
> >*
> > *I presume you make reference to my use of the term "experts".
>*
> *The comments made by the "experts" that are not doing original
> research on the Africa material don't know any more about the
> situation than we do. These people certainly are "experts" in some
> focused area, to be sure, but their off-handed opinions are just that.
> Every once in a while some reviewer will throw in an original data
> table, but it doesn't happen very often. Where is Roche, Toth, Jones?*

Good point.

{snip}

Concerning Morwood et al. (2004)

> > *He does call the small blades microblades. Whether microlithic (< 5
> > cm) blades can properly be termed microblades when the industry itself*

- > > *is not a formal microblade industry (which, as far as we can tell, Lia*
- > > *Buang is not), I cannot say. I'll remember to find out about this.*
- > > *For now, you can have it your way.*
- >
- > *OK, in return I'll start working on my public retraction when he*
- > *proves me wrong. Don't forget to remind me, I have a tendency to*
- > *forget when I'm wrong. I'm more like a New York cab driver: "all*
- > *those accidents you see on my driving record weren't my fault."*

As for myself – I am perfect and never make a mistake!!!! :-) Yes
I'll see if I can find a clarification of proper use for microlithic
blade and microblade. If I do, I'll make note in a later post.

(snip more old references)

- > > > *<random snips>*
- > > >
- > > > *And you would put the Lokalalei 2C (with the relatively more elaborate*
- > > > *knapping scheme) outside the Oldowan?*
- > > >
- > > > *No, I'm saying Lokalalei 2C (at 2.34 Ma) is enough different than*
- > > > *Semaw's 2.6 to 2.0 Gona tools (and presumably any where else in this*
- > > > *time slot, but I admit I haven't seen or read all the cited material)*
- > > > *to say that Semaw had better be careful lumping what he has with the*
- > > > *"2.0 –1.5 Ma" Oldowan industry. What he is calling "similar" is not*
- > > > *similar at all in my mind.*
- > >
- > > *de la Torre (2004:455): "Now the sample from West Turkana has been*
- > > *broadened to include Lokalalei 2C (Roche et al. 1999, 2003), IN WHICH*
- > > *FEATURES VERY SIMILAR TO GONA HAVE BEEN OBSERVED" [my caps of course).*
- > > *I haven't examined this issue closely enough to have an opinion.*
- >
- > *I agree with the authors, the basics are there early. The angles,*
- > *material choices, the multiple hits in succession etc were all in*
- > *place, if we didn't have those, we wouldn't know knapping was being*
- > *done at all. So in that sense they are SIMILAR :-). But how much more*
- > *does one have to have to know to get 50 flakes out of one cobble? A*
- > *lot more. And similar is not the same as. How can this be tested? By*
- > *"middle range research" as Lew Binford would say and like Toth would*
- > *do--- just go out and make one. Then keep track of the time needed to*
- > *learn what it takes to do what is seen in the record. So, I would*
- > *suggest de la Torre and Semaw make a few of these 50-flake cores and*
- > *then see if they still say SIMILAR.*

I'll add here that I got the idea that there were no prepared
platforms in ANY of the Pliocene lithic assemblages from de la Torre
(p. 454), quoting: "Repeated exploitation of the same knapping
surfaces (in general unifacial cores WITHOUT PREPARED STRIKING
PLATFORMS)[my caps, but de la Torre quote] is well documented at ALL
these sites, as is a lack of any rejuvenation or rotation of the
cores; when the knapping surfaces lose the required convexity, the
cores are abandoned..."

But I agree with you that it's difficult for me to visualize how 50 flakes can be extracted from a core without at least some rejuvenation (which could be termed re-preparation). Obviously, there's more here that needs investigation.

>
>> I
>> *don't think I could be comfortable with characterizing 1 million years*
>> *of lithic development as a period of stasis.*
>
> *Right on.*
(snip)

>>> *By the way, do you know what the definition of *prepared* is?*
>>
>> *Of course. I am. I'm an old Boy Scout :-)* Perhaps you could be more
>> *specific.*
>
> http://www.brynmawr.edu/Acads/Anthro/anth240/chipped_stone.pdf

Thanks, nice paper. I've generally been following clues from Schick & Toth "Making Silent Stones Speak", the SARC webpages <http://www.hf.uio.no/iakk/roger/lithic/sarc.html> and a small book by Bob Patten "Old Tools–New Eyes: A primal primer of flintknapping (1999. Lakewood, Colorado: Stone Dagger Publications).

> *Nice brief paper on stone tools. Page 5 and 9 give the definitions and*
> *explain the core reduction process. So if the Lokalalei creatures*
> *even struck the cobble once, to get it into two pieces before they*
> *started a series of flakes, that would be preparation.*

Agreed.

> *This looks to*
> *me what happened in fig. 4 (Roche 1999), but this depends on how the*
> *person who does the analyzing decides which order the flakes were*
> *removed. Notice the author in the pdf says over 100 flakes from a*
> *volume of flint the size of a volleyball for a modern knapper. The*
> *Lokalalei creatures were getting 50 from a volume somewhat smaller,*
> *not bad.*
>
> <snip>
>
>> *I think others have been more vocal about the*
>>> *different species idea, although I don't have those other papers of*
>>> *hers in front of me.*
>>
>> *Roche (2000). In the last sentence of the abstract (referring to*
>> *Lokalalei 1 and 2C differences), quoting: "we will discuss the fact*
>> *that they may also result from diversified cognitive capacity and/or*
>> *technical choices, among different hominid species or within the same*

> > *hominid species.*" Another quote from the very last paragraph: "In...
(snip)
> Yep.
>
> <snip>
> > > <snip>
> [more snip]

> > *I can't find a retraction in the 2 I have. Only an apparent omission
> > of "prepared". All I have is her quote from Roche (2000), published
> > later,
>
> Sometimes the "date received" is published. Could you check to see if
> we really are dealing with a 2000 paper that is actually newer than
> the 1999 Nature article (which was first received 21 December 1998)?*

There is no submission or acceptance date. Supplement 19 was a special issue devoted to a conference held in Beijing that year. While googling for information on this I used in the Google search, the terms "Acta Anthropologica Sinica Roche) and came up with a selection of 8 related items. One of these is a pdf paper entitled "Oldowan: Rather more than smashing stones". This is a paper from a Barcelona conference held in 2001, and it discusses the vagaries of "angular fragments" in lithic classification. I think this bears on some of the ambiguities we've been having over whether the Lokalalei 2C cores were prepared platform and whether rejuvenation took place. The original document is now gone from the Google ref, but it still can be downloaded from the Google page (they've saved it in a file somewhere). The search URL is 5 miles long, so if you're interested, use the terms I gave above and you'll easily find it (or I can e-mail it if needed).

>
> > *which omits "prepared" and reads (requoted from above)"This
> > knapping scheme implies the selection of cobbles with a specific
> > morphology – with a triangular or quadrangular section and at least
> > one flat surface – and a natural, adequate platform." Maybe she's
> > tricked me.
>
> Or me. So I guess the moral of the story is that one should read as
> many papers as they can.*

I agree.

> > (snip).
(snip)
> > > *Probably because all they were
> > > trying to produce was a sharp edge on a flake.
> > >
> > > An orang can do that. What Lokalalei 2C creatures were after was
> > > getting every last flake they possibly could from a single core, and
> > > that is pretty human-like thinking, and far more difficult to learn*

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- > > > *than making a small flake from a flores type core.*
- > >
- > > *I agree. But certainly by making this point, I hope you are not*
- > > *implying that the Lokalalei 2C hominins lacked equivalent skills.*
- >
- > *Than who, the orang or F. floresiensis?*

Lia Buang (implied "H. floresiensis"). I sent a separate correction on this

- > > > *The fact that from*
- > > > *a typological standpoint the Flores flake may look MP/UP transitional*
- > > > *to you doesn't mean there is anything cognitively complicated about*
- > > > *making one.*
- > >
- > > *Well, to this I'll only say I take a gradualistic view of Paleolithic*
- > > *technological development, meaning I'm not one of those that sees*
- > > *punctuated cognitive advances for the overwhelming adoption of blade*
- > > *industries at the beginning of the Upper Paleolithic or for any other*
- > > *development in lithic technology during the earlier periods of the*
- > > *Paleolithic. Once learned, people tend to retain knowledge and pass*
- > > *it along to the next generation. Looking at it like this, there's no*
- > > *reason to jump to a conclusion that the Flores people were not able to*
- > > *practice raw material conservation and efficiency if they needed.*
- > > *What's your real beef?*
- >
- > *Considering this last round of clarifications, I don't have any real*
- > *beef with you at all (so far :-).*

I'll try harder :-)

Dar

>

> > *[snip]*

(more snip)