

Re: Related languages (Re: A China–Sumer connection)

Source: <http://sci.tech–archive.net/Archive/sci.archaeology/2005–03/1630.html>

From: Martyn Harrison (*nospam_at_spammers.of.the.world.unite*)

Date: 03/10/05

Date: Thu, 10 Mar 2005 11:54:14 GMT

Apparently on date 9 Mar 2005 19:08:24 –0800, phippmartin@hotmail.com said:

*>Of course, there's also the problem that the behaviour of people is
>less predictable than that of stars and planets. That's frustrating
>for someone from the physical sciences.*

It's a bit simpler than that. The reason physics is a hard science, is because it really is black and white in most respects, while other sciences like archaeology tend to being shades of grey with few absolute certainties.

You can get similar things in physics, e.g. room temperature fusion, but when other scientists attempt to reproduce the results and can't, it quickly turns into a recognised hoax.

Whereas, a lot of archaeology depends on the single find, or one test, of a single person. There is an enormous scope for error or fraud in that sense.

*>I want to know WHY languages
>have changed. I don't like the idea that things happen at random.
>It's not part of my mindset.*

Last time I checked, astrophysics was all about random quantum fluctuations in pure vacuum leading to an appearance of causality that is actually just an expression of large scale probability.

That's the second difference. Take billions of atoms, and some will spontaneously decay during a given period of time, in line with the half–life of that element. The half life rule is predictable, the individual decay of an atom is not. Human history is more like taking billions of people, they elect a leader, and the leader has them all doing something in a non–probabilistic way.

Because of that, large numbers of atoms can be seen to orbit around the sun in an entirely predictable way, even though there is a lot of pure randomness going on at the atomic level. Whereas, large numbers of people may behave quite unpredictably due to an individual making a decision wrongly, unwisely, or at long odds, and influencing the rest disproportionately. Atoms don't cheat, in

sci.archaeology: Re: Related languages (Re: A China–Sumer connection)

other words, even if God is an inveterate gambler after all.