

Re: Do Eskimos count like New Guineans?

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- *From:* richard01 <richardparker01@xxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Thu, 10 Jan 2008 00:31:39 -0800 (PST)
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On 10 Jan, 04:49, benlizross <benli...@xxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

richard01 wrote:

On 9 Jan, 07:02, "benli...@xxxxxxxxxx" <benli...@xxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

On Jan 9, 5:28 am, richard01 <richardparke...@xxxxxxxxxx>
wrote:

On 8 Jan, 13:42, "benli...@xxxxxxxxxx"
<benli...@xxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

On Jan 8, 12:15 pm,
richard01
<richardparke...@xxxxxxxxxx>
wrote:

[...]

The
archaeology

hardly
gets
a
mention,
though
it
fails
to
support
either
his

Re: Do Eskimos count like New Guineans?

claim
that
Vanuatu
and
New
Caledonia
were
settled
a
lot
earlier
than
Polynesia,
nor
that
Maori
left
central
Polynesia
before
Rapanui.

It fails to
support my
claim
because
no-one has
yet found a
definitive
'first
settlement
date' almost
anywhere
east of
Buka, in the
Solomon
Islands.

Not true. Dates for the
whole Lapita area have been
stable for quite a
while now, even though new
sites continue to be
discovered. They range
from about 3500 BP in the
far west to, I think about
2800 in Samoa..
Check recent surveys by
Kirch for the figures. In

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other words, the interval between first settlement of Vanuatu/New Caledonia and that of Fiji/Western Polynesia is probably no more than 2–300 years.

The Lapita phenomenon did indeed happen very fast, but it's been vastly overblown by archaeologists, who don't have much more than pots and bits of chipped stone to go by.

What else do archaeologists normally have?

snipped – sorry

Lapita was never claimed to be a technical advance, nor even the first pottery around. It was simply an easily identifiable style. And east and south of the Solomons it appears with the first evidence of human settlement.

Yes, it was. I don't really object to Lapita pottery being used as an archaeological horizon by archaeologists, but I do object to the idea that it was the FIRST sign of 'civilisation' anywhere east of Mussau, the earliest and western-most Lapita site. And to the semi-desperate effort by Bellwood to connect that to Tapen' keng pottery in Formosa. And to the semi-automatic tying into that of the idea of proto-Polynesians whistling down there on their Express Train, hanging about a bit while they invented better boats to get to Fiji and Samoa, and then hanging about a bit more while they invented even better boats to get to Hawai'i, New Zealand and Rapanui, as 'Vikings into the Sunrise'.

Discussion of any of these belongs on sci.arch.

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If there are no retrievable archaeological finds in Vanuatu before the arrival of Lapita pots on certain beaches, then I'm not at all surprised. The Lapita pots on certain beaches are (could be) no more than evidence of short-term visitors or short-term settlers.

They are not all on beaches, and there is more than just pots. The presence of Lapita as part of the assemblage provides one clear connection with other sites in the region. These are clearly the earliest human inhabitants of Vanuatu. I don't see why you're so desperate to wave this away.

There's

no evidence of any connection between Lapita and Austronesian, except back-constructs to certain linguistic terms, that were connected (concocted?) by Pawley and Green in the 70s, and accepted ever since.

I have already explained what the connection between Lapita and Austronesian is. I don't know what "concocted" terms you can be referring to here.

The Lapita trail is a very over-simplified story. There's a nice paper at:

The spread of the 'Lapita people': a demographic simulation – Anne Di Piazza and Erik Pearthree (1999)

<http://jasss.soc.surrey.ac.uk/2/3/4.html>

where they end up (almost) stating that the Pacific colonisation must have been by sea nomads – very different from the proposition of deliberate colonisation by settled, but over-populated agriculturalists propagated by the Express Train crowd – Bellwood, Blust etc.

Sea nomads don't deliberately take cuttings and seeds of their favourite food plants, or puppies and piglets, or the village potter, or their whole family, on their voyages.

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That, to me at least, sounds like a better explanation of the Polynesian loss of dogs, pigs, and pots than any other.

??? What "Polynesian loss of dogs, pigs, and pots"??

And that brings up another ridiculed figure. To quote Andrew Pawley (pers comm) "Whatever you do, take no notice of Bill Solheim's maverick attempts at a grand synthesis, which I'm afraid are from another planet". Obviously – Bill Solheim proposed a very early sea nomad culture (Nusantao) around Western Indonesia/Philippines/Formosa , extending to coastal China and the Yayoi in Japan. Maybe he over–did it his ideas, but not a lot.

Again this belongs on sci.arch if you want to discuss it. The reason we deviated into archaeology/prehistory was that in your linked comment that started this thread you drew certain conclusions about settlement chronology from your numeral–evolution theory, and I pointed out that the archaeology (just basic dates, not grand theories) does not support these. That's where it stands.

Ross Clark– Hide quoted text –

– Show quoted text — Hide quoted text –

– Show quoted text –

Sorry about bringing in archaeology/prehistory, settlement chronology, etc if this is an isolated back room where the only permissible subject is current linguistics. You've probably seen, from my posts, that I have NO expertise (or real interest) in linguistics, per se, but I do have a lot in using it as a tool to tweak out significant bits of history or pre–history, together with archaeology and genetics

Against the (about) 1200 Austronesian languages have been described, more or less in detail, the number of samples of this vast area investigated by archaeologists or geneticists seem almost insignificant, or very much ball–park figures (in volume–of–knowledge terms). So the recorded data of Austronesian languages provides a wide geographical and historical record, which is both mine–able and map–able.

That is what I am trying to do, with just one set of related words, in each language. It's no Grand, pre–conceived Theory

regards

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Richard

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