

In some instances the two storytellers who supplied the tales to Sexton were able to identify from whom they heard a specific story, and each tale is supplied with this information as well as the particulars of how and when Sexton got it. A few of the stories are said to represent not *cuentos* (stories) but *casos* (stories believed by the teller to be true). Fairly extensive and very useful endnotes from the stories themselves, along with a brief glossary of local colloquial Spanish expressions, also in English and Spanish, follow the stories and precede a valuable listing of references cited.

The potential to inform, as well as the beauty, of the well chosen illustrative photographs in the book is unfortunately blunted by the fact that they are not in color, and most are not large enough to be fully appreciated. Nonetheless this collection of Mayan tales is a book of considerable value to Mayanists for comparative purposes and to the general public for learning something of another culture while reading some fascinating stories.

Brian Stross

**Shang, Hong, and Erik Trinkaus:** *The Early Modern Human from Tianyuan Cave, China*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2010. 245 pp. ISBN 978-1-60344-177-3. (Texas A&M University Anthropology Series, 14) Price: \$ 45.00

The evolution of modern humans across the Old World has been one of the most debated topics in paleoanthropology. At one end of the extreme are scientists that argue that modern humans arose in Africa by around 200,000 years ago, spread out across Eurasia, and replaced all indigenous populations (e.g., Neandertals in Europe), with no interbreeding (aka Replacement Model). At the other end of the extreme are scientists that support multiregional continuity – that is, that modern humans evolved in situ from earlier appearing hominin populations (e.g., Neandertals in Europe eventually evolved into modern humans in that region). Somewhere in the middle are supporters of an assimilation model according to which modern humans arose in Africa, but when they moved into other parts of Eurasia, there was some degree of admixture with the indigenous populations. Although the European, Levantine, and African records are relatively well known, one region of the Old World that has traditionally received less attention has been eastern Asia. Numerous reasons exist for why the eastern Asian record is relatively sparse. Some suggest that it is because there is an absence of data and important sites, while others, such as myself, have proposed that only by increasing the number of intensive multidisciplinary field and laboratory research projects (similar to what has been done in other regions of the Old World) will paleoanthropologists develop a deeper understanding of the eastern Asian human evolutionary record. Irrespective of what is the reason for the eastern Asian record getting minimized in discussion of modern human origins, the wonderfully written “The Early Modern Human from Tianyuan Cave, China” by Hong Shang and Erik Trinkaus is a much needed and welcome addition to what is a relatively scanty record.

Tianyuan Cave is located only about 6 km from Zhoukoudian, a hill that is most famous for the presence of 40–50 individuals of *Homo erectus* at Locality 1, and a set of modern human fossils, thought to have been interred, at Upper Cave. Because the excavations at Zhoukoudian Locality 1 and Upper Cave occurred during the 1920s and 1930s and the subsequent loss of the precious hominin fossils at the beginning of World War II, problems continue to plague analyses of the materials from the Zhoukoudian localities. However, Tianyuan Cave was discovered much more recently, in 2001, and fieldwork was conducted at the site soon afterwards by researchers from the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology (IVPP). Excavations at Tianyuan revealed a partial human skeleton (Tianyuan 1), whose analysis forms the core of the Shang and Trinkaus monograph. Although vertebrate paleontological materials were excavated, interestingly no artifacts (e.g., bone or stone tools) were identified.

The monograph includes a comprehensive description and analyses of the Tianyuan early modern human skeleton written by Hong Shang and Erik Trinkaus, with additional studies (presented in the appendices) by Yolanda Fernandez-Jalvo and Peter Andrews on the taphonomy and Yaowu Hu and Michael Richards on the isotopes. The figures and tables are nicely done. The color photographs are superb quality and the tables list a wide range of comparative data that Trinkaus has collected over the past four decades, primarily from Late Pleistocene European contexts, especially Neandertals and early and late modern humans. This is clearly evident from reading the core of the comparative analyses (chapters 5–13), where the authors conduct a wide diversity of metric comparisons against the better known European and Levantine datasets. As Shang and Trinkaus justifiably note in the text, the presence of only one human skeleton will not be able to completely refute or support certain debates in paleoanthropology. However, once the Tianyuan human skeleton was directly AMS dated to about 40,000 years ago, the importance of the skeleton was clearly understood.

Tianyuan 1 is an old individual that suffered from some degree of osteoarthritis (e.g., in the upper cervical vertebrae) and antemortem tooth loss with tooth sockets that were completely resorbed. From Shang and Trinkaus’ metric comparisons, it is interesting to note that they found a set of modern human characteristics (e.g., presence of a mental eminence), but also a variety of traits normally found in older, more archaic humans (e.g., a narrow medial pillar on the humerus, the middle hand phalanx has a wider base than found in modern humans). Based on body mass and stature reconstructions using the femoral head and length, Tianyuan 1 is thought to have a relatively stocky body structure, more in line with reconstructions of the older archaic *Homo sapiens* from Jinniushan and the western Eurasian Neandertals. Shang and Trinkaus suggest this is an adaptation to colder climates. Another interesting finding from the Tianyuan 1 analysis is that the middle proximal pedal phalanx displays a marked degree of gracility that indicates the Tianyuan 1 individual may have worn footwear. This would suggest that foot-

wear can now probably be pushed back to ~40,000 years ago, which is about 9,000 years older than previous estimates. Other characters that place Tianyuan 1 between anatomically modern humans and older archaic humans are: 1) the anterior to posterior dental proportions place it between modern humans and Neandertals; and 2) the probable presence of a small retromolar gap that occasionally is present in early modern humans and often present in Neandertals. Shang and Trinkaus interpret this evidence to indicate that Tianyuan 1 is an early modern human; not quite fully modern, but clearly not archaic. The Tianyuan 1 morphology is thought to be the result of some degree of admixture between modern humans moving into the region and indigenous archaic human populations.

The interesting finds from the Fernandez-Jalvo and Andrews taphonomic study is that they found a great deal of evidence on the other animal bones that indicates humans were the primary accumulators of the associated faunal assemblage. Although no photographs of percussion marked bone were included it is interesting that the authors were able to identify a wide diversity of cultural marks, despite the complete absence of any stone artifacts. The Hu and Richards piece is interesting because they found evidence in the isotopic record that Tianyuan 1 probably consumed large quantities of freshwater fish, despite the absence of any fish remains at the site. Presence of fish at penecontemporaneous Zhoukoudian Upper Cave is used as indirect evidence that fish were abundant in the region at the time and was likely regularly consumed by the Tianyuan human.

The Shang and Trinkaus study is one of the first comprehensive metric analyses of a modern human skeleton from eastern Asia that derives from solid context and age. In addition to the studies of the fossils from Zhoukoudian Upper Cave, Minatogawa, and Niah Cave, the analysis of the Tianyuan 1 human will make a very nice addition to the literature. This monograph will definitely be of interest to any senior researcher or graduate student working on questions related to the evolution of modern human morphology.

Christopher J. Bae

**Shapira, Reuven:** Transforming Kibbutz Research. Trust and Moral Leadership in the Rise and Decline of Democratic Cultures. Cleveland: New World Publishing, 2008. 397 pp. ISBN 978-0-9776818-1-5. Price: \$ 21.95

In the foreword to Reuven Shapira's "Transforming Kibbutz Research," the senior Israeli anthropologist, Emanuel Marx, comments that, despite what the voluminous research on the kibbutz took for granted, the kibbutz was never a utopian enterprise. This is partly misleading, for in a fundamental way even the book under review (whatever the author understands) still smacks of a venture in utopia. Shapira's positively critical emphasis on "high-morality" as a condition of the success of such communities echoes, unmistakably, the kibbutz movement's original ideological goal of creating a "new man" (*Ha'adam Hahadash*). The expectation was that the collectivist organization of these communities would effectively resocialize individuals, acculturating them anew,

adults and children alike, as supremely moral, and therewith as perfectly suited to the exhaustive democracy projected by the ideology. Without attending to this utopian ideal, a student of this community risks missing a fundamental, explanatory element of quotidian kibbutz social life as well as crises or other exceptional events that arise in the course of that life. Even so, Emanuel Marx's observation undoubtedly finds solid ground in another hard to miss element of the kibbutz, one to which Martin Buber drew attention decades ago, namely, the conspicuous pragmatism of these communities. Shapira's argument may be read to bring into relief both sides of this seeming contradiction, between pragmatism and perfectibilism.

At its broadest, Shapira's argument is threefold: first, he sets forth an explanation of the "decline" of the movement and its democratic ideal; second, on the basis of this explanation, he proposes a solution to the decline; third, he runs a polemic against most if not all previous research on the kibbutz, in light of his finding that that research ultimately failed to grasp the reason for the decline. The reason, he argues, is "oligarchization," as brought about at the level of the kibbutz federations. Because the federations are run autocratically rather than democratically, and because they enjoy critical control over their constituent kibbutzim, the democracy of the latter was systematically undermined by a trickle-down effect, to the point of inauthenticity. In other words, the leadership at the top being anything but democratic, the idyllic democracy at the bottom, in the collectives themselves, suffered a slow death. As a solution to this state of affairs, Shapira proposes a different, and intriguing, system of succession to positions of leadership in the movement, one that in practice would obviate the emergence of power elites. In making this argument, he draws painstakingly on an impressive array of social scientific literature on the kibbutz proper and beyond.

The book's principal argument is keyed to Robert Michels' well-known "iron law of oligarchy," in which democracy is undercut by bureaucracy and in turn the development of power elites and self-interest. In this regard, particularly imposing is Shapira's analysis of *rotatzia* or the kibbutz rule of equal and relatively rapid rotation of all positions of authority among the members of the community. In relation to his findings and observations about "patronage" (appointments given by power elites to loyal supporters) and "parachuting" (the circulation of individuals who have served competently in a particular office into positions for which they lack the requisite qualifications, thus occasioning mediocre leadership at best), this analysis makes a robust contribution to kibbutz studies. Shapira maintains that together these two common but perverse practices at once belie the spirit of *rotatzia* in the kibbutz and suggest that the very implementation of the rule of rotation served to mask the resulting corruption.

Shapira's critique of the previous research on the kibbutz is comprehensive, directed at the work by both "insiders" and "outsiders." As sociologically remedial as his argument about power elites is, though, his polemic strikes me as excessive. His basic charge is that this research missed the negative influence of the movement's