
Editorial

The “very first time” for JASs

Some excellent news: **JASs** has finally received its first Impact Factor evaluation by ISI Reuters. The value for the year 2008 (0.44) places our journal 39th out of the 61 titles contained in the “Anthropology” category of the Social Science Citation Index. Pretty good considering it is our “very first time”.... and we expect an higher IF value for 2009. Together with the recent inclusion of the **JASs** in the MEDLINE database, we are convinced that the IF assignment will help us make **JASs** even better!

These important results have been achieved thanks to the work that started in 2005. In fact, in four years, our team - Emiliano Bruner and Rita Vargiu - managed to reshape the century-old **JASs** journal, so that now it falls in line with the international standards of scientific publishing. The collaboration of Markus Bastir, Cristian Capelli, Andrea Cucina, Spartaco Gippoliti and Robert Paine has also been crucial. Special thanks must also go to all the authors who have helped increase scientific value and internationalization of **JASs**.

Passing to the current issue, we hope that everyone will note not only the broad coverage of anthropological topics, encompassing Evolutionary Genetics, Archeology, Primatology and Human Paleontology, but also the quality of the published papers. The three **JASs Invited Reviews** are especially worth noting thanks to their interdisciplinary insights. David Alba (on pages 11-48) tests the hypothesis that encephalization during Primate evolution can be used as a good neuroanatomical proxy for cognitive abilities, throwing yet more fire on the issue regarding the taxonomic interpretation of *Homo floresiensis*. In his overview of “neuroarchaeology” (49-72), Lambrous Malafouris focuses on the development of human self-awareness and material culture, and the possible role of neuroarchaeology as a bridge between brain and culture. Finally, Peter Mitchell (73-92) reviews genetic studies on southern African populations from an archeological perspective, pointing to the need to use more appropriate ethnolinguistic labels and identifying some specific questions on African prehistory which could be better asked by integrating genetic and archaeological approaches. Doing this, he actually provides an important integration to the forum published at the end of this **JASs** volume (see below). Among the reports, the paper concerning hand preference in the Neanderthal (113-127) contributes to the long lasting debate on Neandertal, ideally taking the baton from the report of Fernando Ramirez Rozzi and collaborators in this Journal (2009). David Frayer and colleagues claim, indeed, that data for hand preference from Vindija, other Mousterian and earlier sites support the hypothesis that language emerged with *H. neandertalensis* rather than *H. sapiens*.

Finally, just a few words to introduce **JASs** readers to the proceeding paper “Molecular Anthropology in the Genomic Era” (93-112) and the forum “Interdisciplinary views on Molecular Anthropology in the Genomic Era” (231-250). Both these contributions are an output of an international meeting organized by the *ISItA*. The paper presents an updated view of the genetic variability continent-by-continent and discusses perspectives and prospects of Molecular Anthropology in the genomic era. We hope it will be a useful reference for future initiatives designed to evaluate the state of the art and discuss perspectives and prospects of Molecular Anthropology in the genomic era. With “Interdisciplinary views on Molecular Anthropology in the Genomic Era” we have arrived at the fourth edition of the **JASs forum**, a formula which we will try to keep alive also in the future. As

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already done in “Sharing databases in the age of the digital anthropology: problems and perspectives” (Bruner, 2008; 2009), we call the attention of **JASS** readers to new opportunities and issues linked to the technological developments, moving here to the relations between interdisciplinary approaches and the methodological and theoretical innovations introduced by genomic research in human populations.

Bruner E. 2009. New tools and old perspectives in the management of the fossil resources. *J. Anthropol. Sci.*, 87:227-228.

Bruner E. 2008. Sharing databases in the age of the digital anthropology: problems and perspectives. *J. Anthropol. Sci.*, 86:199.

Ramirez Rozzi F.V., d’Errico F., Vanhaeren M., Grootes P.M., Kerautret B. & Dujardin V. 2009. Cutmarked human remains bearing Neandertal features and modern human remains associated with the Aurignacian at Les Rois. *J. Anthropol. Sci.*, 87:153-185.

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P.S. We would like to thank Donata Luiselli for her touching words in memory of our friend and colleague Loredana Castrì.