

History in the making: new discoveries that change everything

SCIENTISTS DISCOVER AN ANCIENT SUNDIAL, LOST MICROCONTINENT AND THE FIRST STONE SPEAR TIPS

BY JOSH BARKER
STAFF WRITER

There is a lot left to learn about this world.

Over the last year, there have been a number of highly important scientific and historic discoveries made. Among these discoveries is the world's oldest sundial, a lost microcontinent off of the coast of Africa and stone spearheads dating back 250,000 years farther than scientists had previously predicted.

"History is like any venture of study and process," said Scott Weiss '12. "Discoveries like these, while scientific in nature, add to the complexity of our understanding of the development of our society and culture."

Sundial Found in the Valley of the Kings

A limestone sundial, believed to date back to the thirteenth century B.C., was found in the Valley of Kings in Egypt. The sundial is thought to be one of the world's oldest and was likely used to measure the work day.

This artifact is marked with a black semicircle that is separated into 12 sections. Each section is believed to represent the hours of a day. There is also a hole in the top of the sundial, suggesting that it once hung on a wall.

"This piece is ... roughly one thousand years older than what was generally accepted as (the) time when this type of time measuring device was used," said Susanne Bickel of the University of Basel to The Huffington Post.

Lost Microcontinent Found in the Indian Ocean

Tourist destination and volcanic island Mauritius, located about a thousand miles east of Madagascar, is now believed to be part of an ancient sunken microcontinent, a fragment of a larger continent that broke off of the main mass to form distinct islands.

Scientists have named the microcontinent Mauritia and believe it to be about a quarter of the size of Madagascar.

Mauritia was swallowed by the ocean when India broke apart from Madagascar some 85 million years ago.

The landmasses "were tucked together in one big continent prior to the formation of the Indian Ocean," said Bjorn Jamtveit, geologist at the University of Oslo, to National Geographic.

Stone Spear Tips Found in South Africa

Spear tips made of stone, believed to be half a million years old, have been found in South Africa. The spear tips date back 250,000 years earlier than when scientists had previously estimated spear tips were in use.

The spear tips were found in a Homo heidelbergensis site. The Homo heidelbergensis were an early human species noted as the first to live in colder climates and to build shelters.

Due to the communication required for their creation, these spear tips may also be a sign that Homo heidelbergensis was also one of the earliest human ancestors to develop language.

The discovery is "like finding an iPod in a Roman Empire site," said paleoanthropologist John Shea to the National Geographic. "It's that level of weirdness."

Discoveries such as these prove just how much we still have to learn about this earth we call home.

"Honestly, hearing these discoveries in conjunction leads me to say aliens," said Weiss. "Also, an ancient continent east of Madagascar? Is anyone else thinking Atlantis?"

Women in the World Summit unites female leaders for change



Diane von Furstenberg, Tina Brown and Jane Harman co-hosted the Women in the World Summit in New York City.

BY CHRISTIANNA VAN DALSEN
STAFF WRITER

On April 4, over 2,500 women from across the globe packed into New York City's Lincoln Center to participate in the Women in the World Summit. The gathering brought together some of today's most influential female CEOs and leaders to engage in interviews about their successes and discuss women's issues.

Among the diverse crowd of women speaking at the event, four of these females made particularly inspiring appearances. Tina Brown, editor-in-chief of Newsweek and The Daily Beast, selected these women to co-host because of their impressive contributions to people in need across the globe.

The co-hosts led the segment "Who I am here for," in which each highlighted a woman they admired.

Dr. Hawa Abdi highlighted Gladys Kiranto from Kenya, who endured female genital cutting at age 12.

"Many a girl has bled to death after being cut," said Abdi on behalf of Kiranto. "Other girls die due to infection. I was lucky enough to survive."

Abdi built a free healthcare clinic in Somalia for internally displaced people and has received the Social Humanitarian and the Women of Impact awards.

Abdi's influence in Somalia and her support for women everywhere is evident in the title of her recently released memoir, "Keeping Hope Alive: One Woman - 90,000 Lives Changed."

Ai-jen Poo told the story of domestic worker Jennifer Bernard from Trinidad and Tobago. Bernard was denied payment if she didn't work extensive hours and ultimately left her job and its poor working conditions.

Poo is the founder of an organization of minority caregivers, housekeepers and nannies in New York as well as the director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance.

"She's definitely someone to look up to ... being able to have so much motivation to organize all these programs to help others," said Early College Senior May Wang.

Poo's moving dedication and passion has gained her recognition as one of Newsweek's 150 Fearless Women and one of Time magazine's 100 Most Influential People in the World.

Maya L. Harris spoke of Delmy Palencia, an undocumented Mexican woman. Palencia, who participates in the movement titled "We Belong Together," was estranged from her children and forced to leave the U.S. and her family.

In 2008, Maya L. Harris currently

stands as the vice president of the Ford Foundation's Democracy, Rights and Justice program. Her leadership has helped achieve one of the Ford Foundation's primary goals to "fulfill the promise of human rights."

"Harris sets a good example that if you set your mind to something, you can do it, no matter the gender roles society has placed on women," said senior Casey Coxwell.

Jane Harman showed her support for female positions in government by quoting Marianna Ibrahim, a political activist in Egypt, saying "We (women) just need to move from Tahrir square to the political square."

Harman served as a U.S. representative for California for nine terms before resigning in 2011 to become the first female President, CEO and Director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

Harman's commitment and achievements have been recognized by magazines such as Foreign Policy, which named her as one of the 50 most influential democrats on foreign policy.

On the second day of the Women in the World Summit, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton kicked off the program by declaring, "Women's rights are human rights." The fruits of the co-hosts' labor demonstrates the value behind Clinton's statement.

COURTESY OF WWW.DAILYBEAST.COM