

Wish for 2014: Any ancient African DNA sample

What's on your wish list for the new year in the world of anthropology and human genetics?

Here's my #1 item: Any ancient African DNA.

The study of prehistoric Eurasians has revealed that modern populations are not simply descended from the people who lived in the same areas even a few thousand years ago.

The people best preserving the genetic legacy of central European Neolithic farmers can be found on the island of Sardinia; of west European hunter-gatherers in the shores of the Baltic; of Upper Paleolithic Siberians in the jungles of the Amazon; of Middle Paleolithic Siberians in Papua and Australia.

And yet, the model for Africa largely remains one of continuity across two hundred thousand years, since the emergence of anatomically modern humans in eastern Africa. The study of modern populations has revealed evidence for both [archaic African](#), and -more recently and surprisingly- even a little archaic [Eurasian](#) ancestry. More evidence is needed.

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