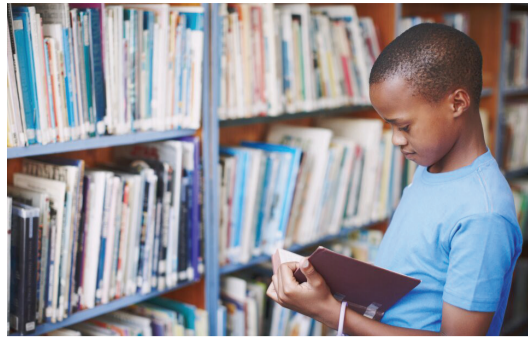


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Brain networks

When a person reads a sentence, two distinct networks in the brain are activated, working together to integrate the meanings of the individual words to obtain more complex, higher-order meaning, a new study showed. The study helps us better understand how distributed hubs in the brain's language network work together and interact to allow us to understand complex sentences.

Cave writing in Iran dates back to 148,000 years ago



the walls in red and black, Ata Hassanpour said.

Archaeological studies show that existing paintings are divided into two groups. The former is artworks that humans have drawn on stones and rocks based on their artistic taste, and the latter is ritual patterns that indicate preparation for hunting. According to Hassanpour, 1,000 caves have been identified in Lorestan, 165 of which have been registered on the National Heritage List.

"There are several caves in the Paleolithic era in the province, on which American archaeologists have conducted studies during the 1960s. Among all the caves of Lorestan, Khorramabad Valley has 17 prehistoric sites, which have the five caves of "Qamari", "Yafte", "Konji", "Garajaneh" and "Pasangar" that have been excavated. As mentioned in the final speech of American archeologist Frank Hole in Khorramabad in 2010, the prehistoric capital of Iran was Khorramabad Valley.

Referring to the excavations done from 1961 to 1963, he said, McBurney from Cambridge University was dispatched to identify the caves of Lorestan. Accompanied by a tourism official in Lorestan, Hamid Izadpanah, and local people in the 1960s, he discovered paintings on the rocks of the mountains in

parts of Kuhdasht. However, before him, Mrs. Claire, in a report in Iran magazine, had already mentioned the existence of such caves because, until then, this site was not registered as an archaeological site. Years later, McBurney explored these caves and documented its rock patterns.

The archaeologist believes that these rock paintings, in addition to their artistic features, are similar to the caves of Lascaux in France and Altamira in Spain. In addition, they have two important historical features: they have the highest altitude above sea level; they have the oldest absolute dating among Iranian sites.

Speaking about the motifs on the rocks, he said that they are human, animal, plant and geometric shapes, being categorized in four sections: human motifs, including a rider, a warrior, sitting, standing, spear in hand, sword in hand, and throwing a lasso; animal motifs including horses, deer, goats, cows, dogs and foxes; geometric motifs are not very clear, but they are probably ritual patterns; last but not least are tree motifs.

Regarding the elucidation of a painting, he said, the painting of a man riding a horse and hunting a deer has two different interpretations: first, it evokes the desire of a man on a horse, or

the reality that existed and was depicted.

Hassanpour said that based on thorium-uranium tests, the age of the place where the paintings are located dates back to 148,000 years ago. Of course, it must be admitted that this dating cannot be considered for the paintings as well. According to the latest investigations, a small part of the paintings was delivered to the laboratory to receive the necessary tests. We hope that the results will lead us to a more accurate dating and provide more information to the art researchers of the world.

"The range of colors of these motifs is generally ochre, black, and in some places yellow," he said. "Studies on these paintings show that the colors are natural, which were taken from the red soil of the Sarsorkkeh or Sarsoren region."

The mountain where these paintings are located on its walls is called Sarsorkkeh. A rocky mountain made of limestone that gives a red glaze when dissolved in water. Once the glaze is mixed with the gum of wild pine trees or animal fat, it becomes permanent. In addition, they are placed under the arch of the mountain and no wind, water or sunlight can destroy these motifs, so they have remained for a long time.

Arts & Culture Desk

EXCLUSIVE

It has always been believed that the oldest human painted animal images are located in the caves of Chauvet and Lascaux in France, or in the cave of Altamira in Spain, which dates back

32,000 years, but the Hoomian and Mirmelas caves in Iran's Lorestan shattered that illusion. The chief tourism official in Lorestan Province told Iran newspaper that, based on a piece of bone excavated by Charles McBurney from Cambridge University, the age of the area where the Hoomian rock paintings are

located dates back to 148,000 years ago.

The remaining paintings and drawings on the south and north walls of Hoomian Cave are mostly images of fighting, hunting, humans and animals such as deer, cows, dogs, foxes, and especially horses and riders shooting, hunting, engraved on

Migration of Aryans



We have no information as to how and when the Aryans moved from the eastern to the western part of Iran. The Medes are mentioned for the first time in 835 BCE in an inscription of the Assyrian king Shalmaneser II; it is not clear whether these Medes were Aryans from the outset, or whether Aryan conquerors had adopted the name of earlier occupants of the country. Aryan proper names appear only with the inscriptions of Sargon, the first ruler of the Akkadian Empire (721-705 BCE). Furthermore, we do not know whether the Aryan migration occurred only along the northern route, that of the Medes, or whether it also followed the southern route from Sistan to Kerman and from there to Fars. The latter seems more likely, considering the fact that the Persians who asserted themselves in Fars included, according to Herodotus, the

Gedrosians and Germanians or Kirmanians, which meant that the entire southern part of modern Persia was occupied by one branch of Iranians who called themselves Persians, Parsa. Since the Medes appeared in history before the Persians, it is very likely that the migration along the northern route occurred earlier. The movement of the Aryans through the northern part of Persia probably followed the age-old route between western and eastern Asia, in other words, along the southern slope of the mountains that constitute the northern limit of the Iranian Plateau. Certain itineraries suggest that in antiquity a part of this route passed further to the north. Thus, according to Isidore of Charax, a Greco-Roman geographer of the 1st century BCE, the road from the region called Qumis by the Arabs, with the

towns of Damghan and Semnan, proceeded northward to Hyrcania, that is, to the banks of the Gorgan, a river that flows into the Caspian Sea. From there it continued into the country of the Parthians. The movement of the Aryans may thus have skirted the banks of the Gorgan. The name Hyrcania (from Wrkana, "land of wolves"), is purely Indo-European. The migration then proceeded along the southern slope of the mountains, since the southern shore of the Caspian was occupied right down to the time of the Persian rule by populations of non-Aryan stock. Besides the route through Hyrcania, the present-day main route is mentioned, as well: Already Arrian, a Greek historian, writes that Hyrcania was to the left of the road from Media to Parthia, an ancient land corresponding roughly to the modern region of Khorasan (Khurasan) in Iran.

A 'Dream' left behind



Late January, 2023, a female Siberian Crane was flown from the breeding center at the Cracid Breeding and Conservation Center (CBCC) in Zutendaal, Belgium, to Iran, hoping that she would join Omid, the last survivor of its species' western population. For 15 years, a solitary male Siberian Crane named Omid, meaning "Hope" in Farsi, has spent his winters in northern Iran. As the last surviving member of his species' western population, Omid has become a beloved figure among nature en-

thusiasts around the world. Since 2006, Omid has made the long journey from his breeding grounds in Siberia to his wintering grounds in Iran without a mate. The fate of his species now rests solely on his shoulders. Then enters Roya, whose name means "Dream" in Farsi. She was transported to Tehran on January 25 with great care. The Iranian Department of the Environment collaborated with CBCC to secure the necessary permits for international transporta-

tion of an endangered species. Roya was then taken to Omid's winter home in Feyzdoonkenar Marsh. Despite a lengthy 24-hour journey, she was acclimated to her new surroundings in a specialized aviary over the course of three days. At the time, it was stated that "The bonding of these two birds represents the last hope for the western population of this Critically Endangered species", according to the International Crane Foundation. The Siberian Crane, also known as the White Crane, is a majestic bird that has captured the attention of people all over the world. With its snow-white feathers and regal bearing, this migratory bird spends its summers in the wetlands and marshes of northern Russia and Siberia, and during the winter months, it travels thousands of miles to wintering grounds in warmer places of Asia.

Historically, there were three migration routes of the Siberian Crane in Asia, according to data made available by the International Crane Foundation. The central population, which wintered in India, has been extinct since 2002. The eastern population, wintering in China, now has around 5,000 birds, but their habitat is threatened by dam construction, loss and degradation of wetland habitat, and climate change. And then there is the western population, of which Omid is the last survivor. Previously the CBCC has had success with reintroducing endangered birds in South America. When the news broke out that they are engaged with a similar program for Siberian Cranes, hope sparked among Siberian Crane enthusiasts. Zutendaal is home to dozens of cranes of different species who live there in large aviaries.