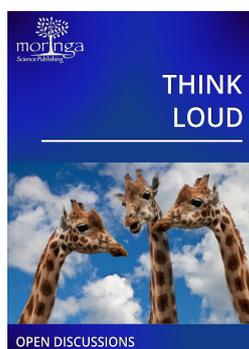


Editorial Decision: Rejection

Published: 2018-09-17

Title of submission: Withheld

Author(s) of submission: Withheld



THINK LOUD

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Editorial Decision: Rejection

Editors: Ingo R. Keck, Karla Franz-Baumann, Salua Nassabay

Affiliation: Moringa Science Publishing

Dear [...],

We regret to inform you that your paper entitled: "[...]", submitted to Moringa Science Publishing, has finally not been accepted.

Please understand that while we find your idea highly interesting, we also need to stick to the fundamentals of open science and that also means:

- correct references to previous works
- claims and arguments in the article are explained and can be followed by the (not expert in the field) reader
- format of the text, figures, tables and references should be consistent.

So far your article still does not confirm to some of these fundamental requirements we need to follow. We decided that it is best to stop the process now, as it is already running more than 6 months.

The rejection and the reviews will be published on our site. If you do not want to be named together with the title of your article, please tell us within 2 weeks and then we will remove all references to your name and the title from the reviews and decision.

Thank you for your interest in Moringa Science Publishing. You are cordially invited to continue participating with new articles.

Best regards,
Salua Nassabay, Karla Franz-Baumann, Ingo Keck.
(Editors)

Note to the reader: We decided to withhold author and title of the original submission now by default after sending the message stated above.

Review 1

By: Ingo R. Keck

Affiliation: Moringa Science Publishing

The author presents a combination from various different fields – geology, fossils, genetics and biology – to argue that Danakil in form of an island may be the cradle of the human ancestors. I personally find the presented idea very interesting and the arguments sound. While the article itself in the presented form needs a bit more work before it can be published, I advice to accept it after the changes have been done.

I am not an expert in any of the fields, and I am not able to judge the validity of the claims, other than by reading the references myself and finding that they seem to be mostly cited correctly, with a few exceptions where I was not able to easily follow the argument and therefore ask the author in the more detailed review to provide more information.

Detailed review

I would prefer if the abstract gave an overview of the central thesis of the article. It appears to me that the combination of everything is still missing there.

In Introduction, second paragraph: "P. deyiremeda" seems to only exist in articles by [...]. Reference 1 talks about Au deyiremeda and Parantrophus and that seems to be something different? I am no expert here, could you please explain or change to the common name?

In paragraph 5 the reference type changes to "(Popadin et al)". Please select one style and stay with that style. Throughout the article there are more changes in the citation style as well.

I was not able to find the map images in section "Fossil record of a counter-clockwise rotation of Danakil" in reference 3. Also I was not able to find the fossil places from the image as claimed in reference 4. Instead it seems the original reference was a Time Map image by Joe Lertola (http://www.joelertola.com/topo/topo_img/ethipoia_map.jpg), which unfortunately does not give the original references either. Please correct the references.

In the section "The coast-line..." I was not really able to follow the argument regarding the layers of clay and sandstone. The given reference was not really helpful as well. But I found interesting previous work by the author on the subject, for example [...] that either could be referenced as additional source or could be included in part.

Regarding the section "The island of Crete..." I see a kind of contradiction between the section before, where to me it seems the references claim that the area were a region of rivers and this section, where it seems the area was flooded by the red sea. Maybe both is correct because of different times? Maybe that is still up to discussion? I would like to ask the author to state in the article what he thinks is the correct answer here.

In section "section 2: The Darwinian origin..." in the first line there is again a reference given in the "et al" form instead of the numbered one. As written before, please stay consistent in the form of references. For the second paragraph in this section no reference is given. Is this a claim by the author? Please make it clear if that is a claim ("I/we believe" or simply write "the interbreeding could have been..." at the start instead of "would") or give a reference.

In Section "Evidence of hybridization..." you explain the NUMT. It would be good to give a reference to this section where the reader can find this information.

In the third paragraph of this section again it is not clear if the argument is cited or comes from the author. Please either cite the source of add a clear statement like "in my opinion" or "I believe" or whatever you think suits best.

In section "The ps5 NUMT data..." again citations are using a different form. As in the following sections. Please change it to a consistent form.

Review 2

By: Michael Lazar

Affiliation: University of Haifa, Marine Geosciences

[Note by Editor: This review has been given in form of comments in the pdf of the submission. To publish it we extracted the comments and only give the position relative to the text.]

Article: Introduction, first line.

Review: "This should be reworded. If read literally, it is an absurd statement. The author obviously meant that the land iguana evolved to become the only marine iguana in the world."

Article: Introduction, second paragraph.

Review: "Define "rapid""

Article: Introduction, fifth paragraph.

Review: "It is a problem citing this article since according to the BioRxiv website, it has not yet undergone peer-review. However, the people involved in the study are from leading institutions...

should just be a number [2] in keeping with the style of the paper

I do not follow the logic here. How does interbreeding fit Danakil as a Galapagos? Is there any evidence that this occurred on the Danakil block and not elsewhere in Ethiopia? It does not say so in the paper you cite..."

"Please add reference to the sites and dates."

"Who said that these species necessarily lived along the coast?"

Article: First figure.

Review: "Please reference these dates as well as the location of the circles"

"not the correct reference. this image appears in Garfunkel and Beyth 2006"

Article: Introduction, paragraph 8.

Review: "This is a reference to the rotation, not the evolution of the horse"

"the sentence is not clear. Please rewrite with the correct references."

Article: Introduction, paragraph 9.

Review: "Sentence is too long. Break it up. "

"for this to work, you need at least a short geological background to the Danakil Alps."

Article: Introduction, paragraph 10

Review: "What eroded mass? Please cite the paper that describes this"

"there are other explanations for the presence of these sediments"

Article: 4. figure, caption.

Review: "I do not know what this is based on."

Article: Introduction, paragraph 11

Review: "Please cite the relevant paper. I do not know of any study about the erosion of the Danakil Alps. Sandstone can be explained by other processes."

Article: Introduction, paragraph 12

Review: "Grassland was not deposited anywhere."

"Faulting does not necessarily cause deposition. "

"So your claim is that none of the fossils are in-situ but were transported from Danakil?"

How does this fit in with what the stratigraphy recovered from the main fossil sites?"

Article: Introduction, paragraph 13

Review: "Yes, but this is not new. It was already suggested by Sagri et l. (1998)."

Article: 6th figure caption

Review: "Faulting does not cause the open grassland environment. Climate does. "

Article: Section 2, second paragraph.

Review: "what evidence do you have that this occurred in fact on Danakil?"

Article: Section 2, fourth paragraph.

Review: "I do not understand the point of this paragraph. Please clarify its connection to the previous one."

Article: Section 3 title.

Review: "This section has nothing to do with the previous sections of the article. I do not understand why it is included here.

Article: Section references.

Review: "Inconsistency with how where the year of publication appears - in the first two references, it is at the end; in the third it is after the names."

"this is not the correct reference... The figure you use as a base is on page 25..."