

## News & Comments

# Special Knives are Evidence of Human's Long-Distance Social Networks

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Being the most dominant species on Earth, humans have lived in almost every environment in the world. Which is due to the strong social connection among humans.

A lecturer in Archaeology, Amy Mosig Way in her new study shows that using stone tools from southern Africa, we now know that social connections between our ancestors around 65,000 years ago were stronger and wider than previously thought.

In her new study, she explains that it was a small, common stone tool known as a "backed artefact" that allowed us to test this idea in southern Africa around 65,000 years ago during the Howiesons Poort. These backed artefacts could be today's "stone Swiss Army knife".

These common knives with small blades allowed scientists to test the hypothesis that social connections existed more than 60,000 years ago.

This blade could have been made in any number of shapes in different places across southern Africa. It turns out, however, that they were made based on a very similar template around 65,000 years ago, extending over thousands of kilometres and occupying multiple niches in the environment.

At this time, geographically dispersed groups in southern Africa had strong social connections due to their similar appearances.

First-ever evidence of social connections in southern Africa before the great migration out of Africa is provided.

### KEYWORDS

Archaeology, stone tools, Southern Africa, human origins, technological change, population density, human behavioural evolution, environmental social sciences, evolution, social evolution

