

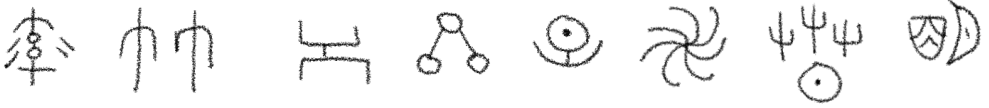
# Contact Theory

Documentation & Research on Parallel Domain 00071

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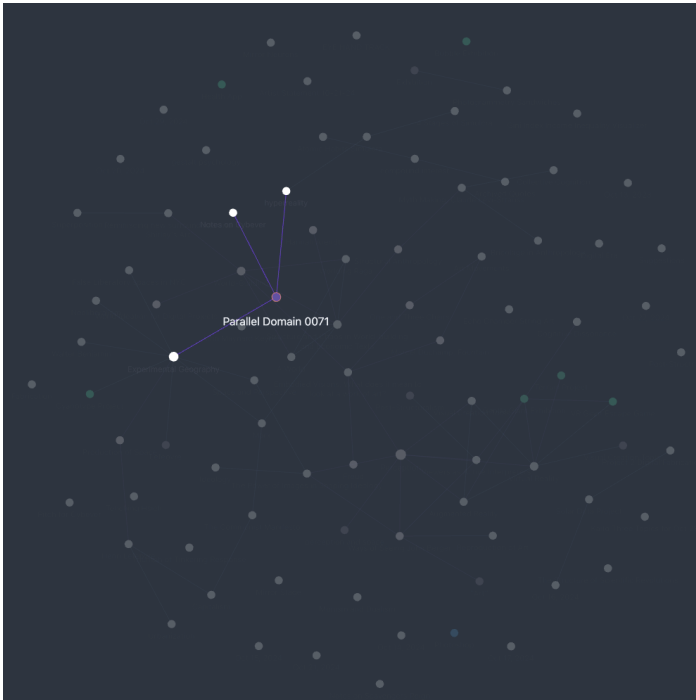
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## Introduction

This information booklet contains findings from multiple research expeditions, with contributions from both the Department of Parallel Domain Research, the Northwestern Institute of Social Sciences, and from NYU's Parallel Domain Cultural graduate research team.

We will examine findings detailing the early lifestyle and culture of the inhabitants of PD71. We will also delve into the practices of the current advanced society.



PD71 stands out even amongst Parallel Domains with various temporal and spatial anomalies, as PD71 contains some of the most advanced cultures and communities amongst domains with reality shifting anomaly levels S5 and higher. PD71 is unique since its societies also demonstrates incredibly low levels of inequality both in material wealth and class hierarchy, while maintaining a high level of scientific advancement.

Our goal in conducting this research is to examine the cultural history and traditions of the inhabitants of PD71, in order to possibly implement practices and concepts within our own current society in Earth Prime.

## Early Society Cultures & Practices

The planet I am on — for reference sake, will be referred to as Parallel Domain 71 (PD71) — is similar to Earth Prime (EP), except for one conceit and provides an intriguing case study for both anthropology and broader human sciences in the documentation of culture. Between 300,000 BCE to 299,500 BCE, the Middle Paleolithic period, PD71 seems to have deviated from the timeline of Earth Prime, with the introduction of a mechanism whose geological or physical phenomena remains a mystery to me and is simply accepted as a universal fact of life by the inhabitants of the planet. I have established the basic laws that govern the universe differently from my own:

1) Approximately every 24 hours inhabitants swap places with each other, seemingly at random.

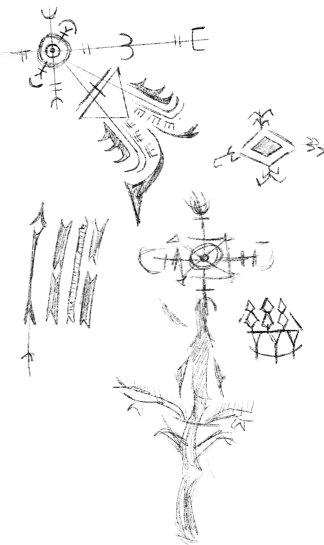
2) Skin-to-skin contact enables inhabitants to “teleport” or swap together as a group.

3) Non-living objects under 20 pounds are teleported alongside the inhabitant if physical contact is maintained at the point of the swap.

**Only humans/humanoids are subject to this. It seems to be a form of teleportation and is only geographical.**

Over the course of several decades, I have derived an understanding of the symbolic language used by the entire planet (a solution to the inherent large scale coordination problem) and have studied the societies across this planet extensively. Strikingly, PD71 does not have any EP-characteristic concepts of personal property, wealth, or class, though some do maintain hierarchies.

*Excerpts from A Documentation of Contact Theory, a journal kept by Dr. Nina Collins, Ph.D., an anthropologist whose research was associated with the Northwestern Institute of Social Sciences.*



*Common symbols found from multiple sites*

Early society was characterized by tribes and factions, developed shortly after the discovery of communal teleportation. Given the impossibility of long-term agriculture without a fictitious tie connecting all people, highly communal, decentralized food systems developed after a level of technological and overall societal advancement. These factions were universally characterized by a much larger emphasis on nature and scavenging than our own, as well as the concept of altruism as selfishness.

Religion and the development of a symbolic language fueled information passing and until contemporary time, these societies relied heavily on oral tradition as EP’s development of paper required a fixed locale. The question of food is particularly of note: EP humanity’s success as a species is attributed to human’s unique trait for endurance hunting. Without a fixed location, these groups were forced to work together and develop systems of universal communication.

## Early Communities

From my understanding, there were several types of initial communities:

- Forager communities** focused on scavenging food, largely using traps.
- Hunter communities** are characterized by a patriarchal system often included cannibalism due to the difficulty of finding or hunting large animals.
- Heavily religious communities** diverged in doctrine, but the irregularity of life on E7 has yielded a much faster development of organized religion



*Conceptual recreation of a member of a forager community*

*Conceptual recreation of a member of the hunter community*



Some communities revolved around hunting other groups; with the difficulty of swappage meaning a hostile environment was always new and difficult to adapt to, some groups subsisted on cannibalism. One developed rituals and burial rites which involved acknowledging and thanking every soul and form of life they consumed, including that of plants.

Some of these tribes were incredibly isolationist; others were 'evangelical, emphasizing the importance of spreading the religion and personal conversion. The latter group was responsible for the initial development of the symbolic language.

These early societies almost invariably tended towards democratic due to the high exit options and intense agricultural variability, but some groups maintained hierarchy in times of food crisis (swappage to extreme climates). In particular, hunter groups tended towards hierarchical systems, often electing a leader for approximately a season (one group operated on every 95 swaps). Scavenging communities tended towards placing weight on age and the elderly.

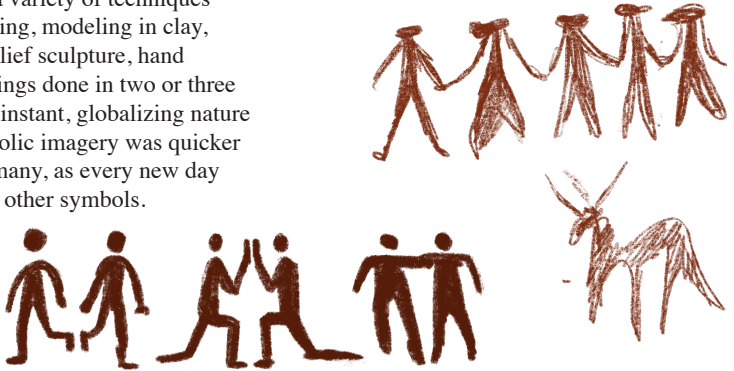


## Early Symbols

Eventually, there emerged a strong visual culture around kinship, handholding, community and a deep philosophical acceptance of change and uncertainty as central to life.

Altruism as selfishness; in order to survive, community became vital; the goodwill of the previous group was the only way to survive in a new location. Cave paintings, symbolism, and a rough language evolved as ways of maintaining humanity's survival.

Cave artists used a variety of techniques such as finger tracing, modeling in clay, engravings, bas-relief sculpture, hand stencils, and paintings done in two or three colors. Due to the instant, globalizing nature of the swap, symbolic imagery was quicker to be taken in by many, as every new day exposed groups to other symbols.



These symbols show us that there were various ways to establish skin-to-skin contact. In many, hand holding prevailed. Skin-to-skin contact resulted in extremely strong tribal and familial bonds, with some communities assigning different ways of establishing contact for specific relationships and positions.

Some subsets of religions would leave offerings for the next group, leading to the advancement of civilizations. People came to view this religion in particular in a positive light, leading to a robust conversion rate. Also incentivized the spread of knowledge.

Symbols left behind were largely those people could make with their hands, focusing on those with religious implications, and became a way to identify friendly communities.



Many petroglyphs had symbols mapped important resources surrounding the area occupied. These practices most likely stemmed from religious practices, but many groups start to adopt these mapping practices within their cultures. These would eventually lead to communal food storages and fire pits as well as universal maps/navigation systems. Collective knowledge and cooperation was necessary to survive; these groups became highly communal, and decentralized food systems evolved.

## Artifacts from Early Society

Each community likely developed its own theories regarding the mechanisms of swappage, creating unique systems of logic that intertwined scientific understanding with cultural significance. As a result, various religions and schools of thought emerged from prevailing ideologies and the notion of a "promised land" served as a primary motivation for many inhabitants, driving them to seek out favorable environments in the cyclical landscape.

Additionally, concepts of an afterlife were closely linked to the idea of revisiting space. In one tribe, the Fendara Collective, after burying a deceased member of their group, the potential to encounter their burial ground in a future swap symbolized a form of life after death, providing comfort and continuity to the living.

Moreover, the development of navigational devices, such as cross-staffs and astrolabes challenged existing schools of thought and laid the groundwork for more advanced scientific inquiry and a coordinate system emerged.

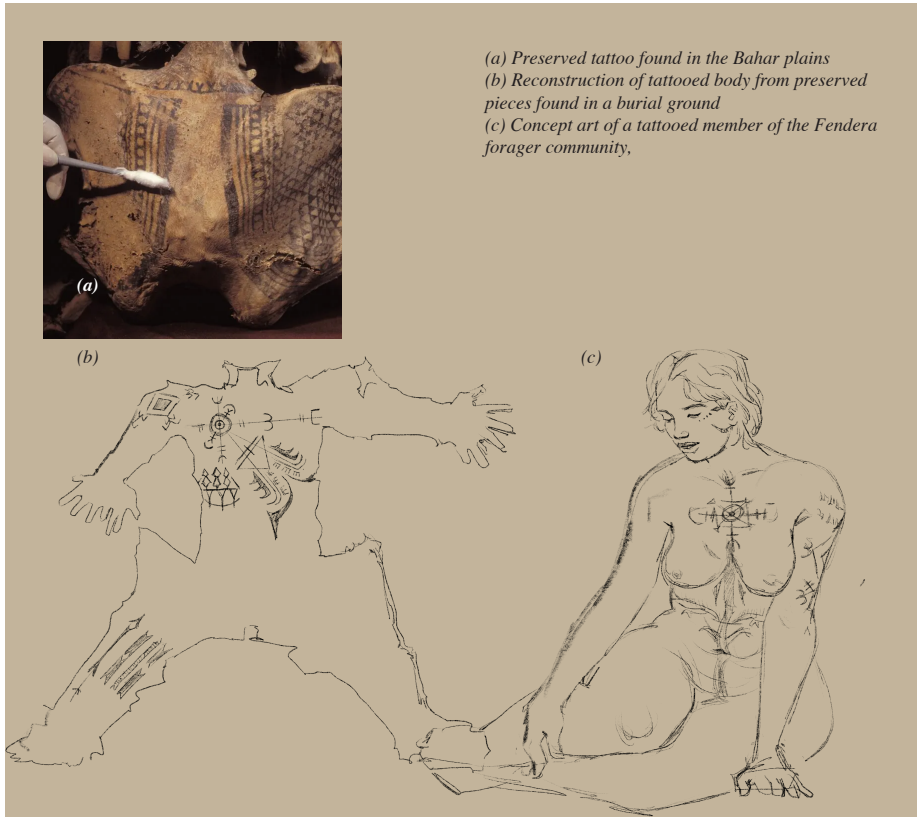
Various tools were developed from bones (human and animal) due to their relative lightness & ease of access. Many groups found spiritual significance in taking parts of dead group members with them, likely due to the inability to revisit the body after burial.



*Daggers carved from femurs found in the supercontinent Ao.  
(a) Hunting dagger (b) Dagger with symbols attributed to the Fendara forager communities*

Meat was often jerkied and preserved as long as possible, spread across various inhabitants. Due to the unpredictability of life, communities were extremely careful of their resources. These communities which focused on hunting tended to be patriarchal, while scavenging and gathering societies tended matriarchal.

**In some communities, tattoos became vital as a source of orientation, culturally, temporally, and geographically.**



Preserved piece of tattooed skin were kept as funeral rites in lieu of gravestones, which necessitate a fixed location. At the birth of children, symbols of their birthplace would be tattooed as a set of symbols that indicate geographical landmarks and unique coordinates (a system that was not entirely accurate, but spiritually significant). These became documentation of travel locations, passing on generational methods of survival.

*“You must become tattooed, so that you become beautiful, and that your skin does not shrink with age.*

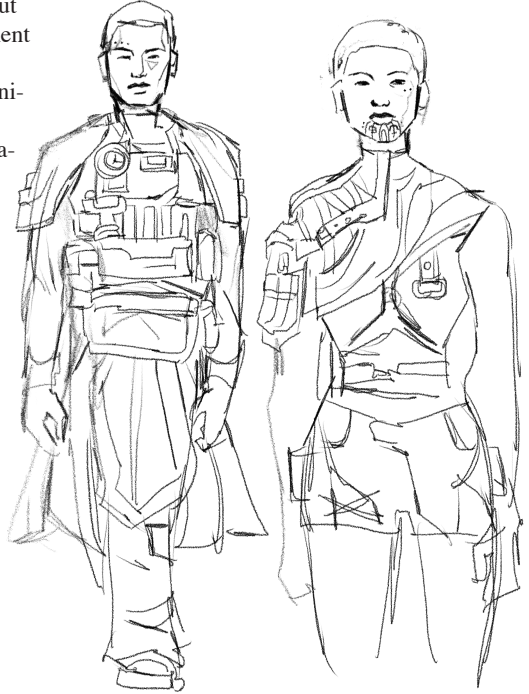
*The fish in the ocean are striped and have lines, and because of this the people must also have such lines.*

*Everything will pass after death, only the tattoos will remain; they will outlive you. A human will leave all and everything behind on earth, all his/her belongings; only the tattoo will be taken to the grave.’*

## Late/Contemporary Era Fashion

For larger cultures, open hands become an integral part of clothing (hands must not be covered or otherwise easily accessible) and imagery. Clothes must also be adaptable to different climates, with flexibility and tactical usability essential. Most groups learn to produce and fix garments and tools independently. Early symbols evolved but a few remained universal; the advancement of society focused not on industry, but improving the quality of life for community and others. Many groups learn to welcome trading of material and information, with violent encounters between groups becoming less common.

Contemporary fashion emphasizes multi-functional garments and accessories; ultra-utility becomes the norm.



However, some groups and cultures remain increasingly isolationist, with groups consisting of only close family members. The Apatu culture prepare their children for surviving on their own, with a “releasing ritual” where young adults are gifted hand coverings, signifying their coming of age. Apatu children train for this day, learning hunting skills and scavenging techniques, while also absorbing oral history and traditions in preparation for this graduation from their select group.

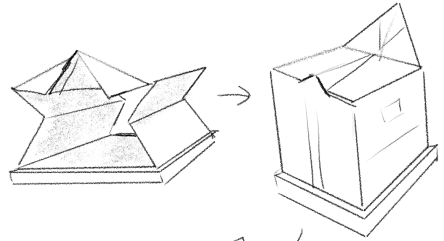


(a) Sketches of cultural garments worn by members of larger scale communities.

(b) Hand coverings found in an Apatu burial site.

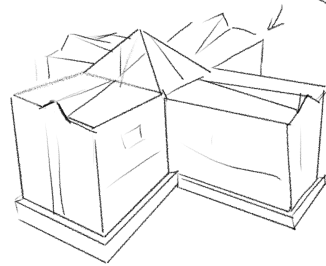
## Late/Contemporary Era Architecture & Ideas

Architecture evolved around the concept of modular design and shelters using lightweight materials. Architecture focused on flexibility, with cities and settlements designed to accommodate transient populations.



Structures are inherently migratory and meant for practicality. Monuments are slow, and built upon by strangers.

Information gathering evolved rapidly due to the nature of swappage and architectural designs and concepts such as the structural integrity of triangles became widespread.



Origin myths evolved; various religions largely focused on the figures of nature/animals. Swappage as a cultural narrative becomes one about hubris in some cultures and in others, a gift to connect with all people.

Identity became defined very minimally; through tattooing, rather than physical items or clothing which must be functional. Architecture and visual communication focused on integration with the environment and communal space and scalability and replication.

Some people have tried to create systems to predict teleportation and create large communities or strategically split up: otherwise trying to game-ify the system. STEM cell research has been conducted to determine if any living human cells will be teleported, regardless of connection to a human in 'entirety' (they do not).

