

LatinosUSA

little chews

“A Donkey’s Tale” by Matias Travieso-Diaz

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The following narrative is based on a presentation given by Boaz Ben-Frenkel, the head archeologist at the Israel government's research facility in Ma'ale Adumim's industrial park, five miles from Jerusalem. The presentation arose from the analysis of a fossilized donkey jawbone found in the ruins of old Nazareth, a small village built into a valley surrounded by low limestone hills in the land known as Galilee. The jawbone was dug up in an area of terraced abodes, small courtyards, and animal dwellings with mangers carved on hill slopes around the settlement's perimeter. The analysis of the jawbone was intended to reconstruct aspects of life in Nazareth, which at the time the jaw's owner perished (first century of the Common Era), had an estimated human population in the low hundreds.

A multidisciplinary team applied advanced technologies to revive the nerve cells in the fossilized jawbone. One of the techniques energized those cells by the direct application of micro-pulses of electric energy. The cells contained replicas of many of the memories once stored in the brain of the donkey, and their stimulation yielded a set of recollections that retraced the donkey's life experiences, to the extent these were preserved.

The research team turned the donkey's memories into images and accompanying texts. What follows is a simulated description by the donkey of some of its memories, which pertain to a famous historical figure of whom the donkey was a contemporary. The accuracy or completeness of the donkey's recollections cannot be assessed and remains conjectural.

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Call me Hamar, the name humans used to refer to me when I was alive. I am currently not living, but am a reconstruction by experts who have endeavored to recreate the memories of a living creature from my jawbone.

There is a lot that can be learned about a long-dead creature like me from a fraction of its anatomy. From my jawbone, scientists were able to establish the basic elements that defined me as a member of my species: posture, number of limbs, joint structure, hoof structure, neck length, trunk proportions, tail morphology, body mass, and shoulder height. They could also determine my age at death (about fifty years), my diet, the amount of bit wear, and the fact that I was a working donkey.

Specific individual details about me could not be determined from my jawbone, such as coat color, exact height, weight, body condition, temperament and behavior patterns, and life history; some of these details were uncovered to the extent possible in the last stage of the analysis, in which my memories were electrically revived and organized sequentially. My life history, to the extent it could be reconstructed, was as follows.

I was born in Nazareth and lived there all my life with my owners, a human family of limited means. The female head of the family, who was called Mary, was a woman married to an older man by the name of Joseph, a craftsman. Their oldest son was called Jesus, and there were other children: one by the name of James, and several others, male and female, whose names I do not remember.

With respect to the human named Jesus, he was born at a moment when there were other humans visiting Joseph's household. The visitors were hosted in the main living areas, located in the upper level of the dwelling. For that reason, at the time of delivery, Mary and an assistant had to retire to the lower area of the house (where I and other animals were kept) so that her offspring's birth took place in private. It was the first human birth I witnessed. It was a messy but uneventful occurrence, not accompanied by any extraordinary circumstances, except for the appearance in the skies of a bright star that remained in place for many moons.

The humans visiting Joseph and Mary at the time of Jesus' birth gave the parents presents for the baby, which they brought in their camels, and the occasion was celebrated by a feast from which I was able to enjoy leftovers.

As a youth, Jesus displayed a friendly disposition. He grew into a benevolent human who treated me and the other animals in the household (a cow, sheep, and a dog) with respect and kindness. Once he reached maturity, Jesus was often absent from his home; I transported him in some of his travels, during which he visited human population centers similar to Nazareth, or a bit larger. He would often meet with many other humans in those travels, and was always well received, for he was able to elicit positive responses from those gathered to listen to his utterances.

Later, when Jesus took what became a final trip south from Galilee, I transported Mary to the big city to follow in her son's footsteps, for he went there on foot. We arrived in time to witness Jesus being hung on a wooden cross, wounded, and allowed to linger in agony until his death. After Jesus' body was buried, I transported a distressed Mary back home, where she received many visitors. She survived her son by a dozen years, living quietly as a bereaved elder within a household in Nazareth.

I took my final rest in a community that spent much time sharing remembrances of the deeds of Jesus. My last memories were of many humans speaking and chanting words of apparent praise that often included Jesus' name.

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The above reconstruction of a donkey's mental images is not intended to support or refute any religious or philosophical arguments but to clarify, to the extent an animal's vague but unbiased recollections can, certain important aspects of the history of a famous human being. The State of Israel takes no position on the significance of the facts reflected in this long-deceased animal's memories, but offers them for the enlightenment of the public.

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Una respuesta a «“A Donkey's Tale” by Matias Travieso-Diaz»



Patty L. Fletcher 7 de marzo de 2026

I found this a fascinating tale.

I would love to know, is the research you were inspired by real? If so where can I learn more of that?

★ Le gusta a 1 persona

Responder

Deja un comentario

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