

## Kiran Basava

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**Research interests:** Macroevolution of cognition and sociality, integration of fossil data with phylogenetic methods, comparative database construction and transformation of qualitative to quantitative data

### Current

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2024- **Postdoctoral Research Associate**, School of Information, University of Arizona

### Education

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2019-2023 **DPhil in Anthropology**, University of Oxford  
Thesis: "The cultural evolution of warfare practices: examining the roles of social structure, political complexity, and resource ecology with cross-cultural comparative analyses"

- Developed data coding system for wartime behaviors and built quantitative cross-cultural datasets from qualitative ethnographic and historical sources
- Analyzed data with multiple regression models and phylogenetic comparative methods

2017-2018 **MSc in Human Evolution and Behaviour** (with Distinction), University College London  
Dissertation: "Eschatological beliefs and intergroup conflict: a phylogenetic case study of Islam"

- Constructed phylogenetic tree of religious groups using secondary historical sources
- Created coding system for afterlife beliefs and collective behaviors and tested for relationships with coevolutionary analyses

2011-2015 **Bachelor of Arts in Global Studies**; Minor in Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of California, Los Angeles  
Dissertation: "Effects of the Syrian Civil War on sectarian relations in Lebanon"

### Research Experience

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2021- **Research Assistant, Diverse Intelligences Project: A Theory for Cephalopod Intelligence**, Dept. of Psychological & Behavioural Science, London School of Economics and Political Science, U.K.

- Engaged in multi-institutional collaboration to research and code trait data on cephalopods (squid, octopuses, and cuttlefish) from existing literature into comparative cross-species database
- Reviewing recent studies of phylogenetic (evolutionary) relationships and compiling updated phylogenetic tree to be used in analyses with multiple sequence alignment of genetic data

2017-2020 **Research Assistant, Seshat: Global History Databank**, School of Anthropology & Museum Ethnography, University of Oxford, U.K.

- Researched and coded data on historical and archaeological societies into

large global history database; checked sources, consistency, and logic of evidence for coded variables

## Publications

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Basava, K., François, P., & Whitehouse, H. (2023). The Benefits and Challenges of Linked Datasets for Cliodynamics and Comparative Anthropology. *Cliodynamics: The Journal of Quantitative History and Cultural Evolution*.

Basava, K., Zhang, H., & Mace, R. (2021). A phylogenetic analysis of revolution and afterlife beliefs. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 5(5).

Turchin, P., Hoyer, D., Bennett, J., Basava, K., Cioni, E., Feeney, K., ... & Whitehouse, H. (2020). The Equinox2020 Seshat Data Release. *Cliodynamics: The Journal of Quantitative History and Cultural Evolution*, 11(1).

## Works in preparation

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Basava, K., Bendixen, T., Birk Sørensen, A. L., George, N., Vanhersecke, Z., Mather, J., & Muthukrishna, M. (2024). Coleoid Cephalopods Demonstrate Asocial Path to the Evolution of Big Brains.

## Additional writing

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Basava, K. (2021). Cultural phylogenetics of afterlife beliefs. *Nature Human Behavior: Behind the Paper*. <https://socialsciences.nature.com/posts/cultural-phylogenetics-of-afterlife-beliefs>.

## Presentations

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Mather, J., Basava, K., Bendixen, T., George, N., Birk Sørensen, A. L., Vanhersecke, Z., & Muthukrishna, M. "Why are cephalopod molluscs intelligent?" Animal Behavior Society Meeting, 2023.

Basava, K. "A cross-cultural analysis of social complexity and the taking of human body parts as trophies during war." Cultural Evolution Society, Aarhus University, Denmark, September 2022.

Basava, K. "A phylogenetic analysis of headhunting practices and political complexity in Austronesian societies." Evolution Meeting, virtual, June 2022.

Birk Sørensen, A. L.; Basava, K.; Vanhersecke, Z.; George, N. "Does behavioral repertoire predict brain size in coleoid cephalopods? A test of the cultural brain hypothesis". Cephalopod International Advisory Council, Sesimbra, April 2022.

Basava, K. "A cross-cultural study of social complexity and indiscriminate violence in war." European Human Behaviour and Evolution Association, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, April 2022.

## Training

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02/2023      Data Management with SQL for Ecologists, Data Carpentry- creating and querying relational databases with SQLite

07/2022      Sydney Phylogenetics Workshop, Molecular Ecology, Evolution, and Phylogenetics

	Laboratory- sequence alignment, phylogenetic analysis, and phylogenomics
12/2021	Software Carpentry Workshop, University of Oxford- version control with Unix shell and Python
01/2021	Macroevolution and Phylogenies short course, Transmitting Science- representation of phylogenetic trees and methods of modeling trait evolution in R
04-07/2020	<i>Statistical Rethinking: A Bayesian Course with Examples in R and Stan</i> by Richard McElreath, Reproducible Research Oxford (RROx) book club- collaborative reading, assignments, and lecture auditing for course in Bayesian statistics and causal inference
01-03/2020	Statistics: an introduction for life sciences researchers, University of Oxford- experimental design, descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing in R
02-03/2019	R for biologists, University of Oxford- working with datasets with tidyverse packages in R

### Funding

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2022	Graduate Writing-up Grant, University of Oxford
2019	St. Edmund Hall College Grant, University of Oxford

### Other activities

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06-07/2023	Diverse Intelligences Summer Institute <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fellow at interdisciplinary program with seminars and collaborative projects on topics including comparative cognition, AI, biological and cultural evolution, and collective intelligence</li> <li>Began collaboration examining data on within- and between-group variation in lethal aggression among primate species</li> </ul>
2020-	Cultural Evolution Server <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assisting with organization of cross-disciplinary, virtual journal club holding regular discussions and providing mutual research support for students and early career researchers in the field of cultural evolution</li> </ul>
2021-2022	Asylum Welcome, Oxfordshire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteered with the Advocacy and Communications team, editing/posting material to organization website and helping to conduct background research for advocacy efforts on behalf of asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants in Oxford and surrounding areas</li> </ul>