

AHIS191 World Archaeology

WEEK 1 - Introduction

Lecture 1 - 4th August

- Prehistory - beginnings of homo sapiens, palaeolithic, neolithic
- Near Eastern and Egyptian
- Europe - Bronze and Iron Ages
- Greek - Aegean Bronze Age and Greek archaic
- Roman
- Inner Asia
- Great Germanic migration in Late Antiquity
- Early Christianity
- Early medieval of Central and Eastern Europe

Assessment

- Research essay
 - 40%
 - 1500 words
 - 9th November
 - 5 sources
- Tutorial paper
 - 30%
 - 1000 words
 - 16th September
 - 3 sources
- Online quizzes
 - 20%
 - 2
 - 20 questions
 - Weeks 7 and 13
- Preparation and participation
 - Tutorials
 - 10%

WEEK 2

Lecture 2 - 11th August

Human Pre-History

- Several waves of colonisation out of Africa
- 70,000 years ago
- Different species - different genes
- Bodies similar to apes - behaviour basically a different species
- New kind of life
- Can't explain our behaviours in relation to anything else
- Unique and new
- Symbolic species
- Language develops us
- Start - fairly unremarkable ape
- No linear path from one ancestor to the next
- 200,000 years old

Ardipithecus Ramidus

- Bonobo and chimp
- Last common ancestor
- Chimps evolving like we have
- Upright
- No evidence of knuckle walking
- Every other type of monkey did
- Pelvis human like than chimp
- Some ape like features
 - Hands
 - Forearms
 - Toes
 - Able to climb
- All apes still have these toes
- Awkward walking
- 4-5 million years ago
- Ape like skull
- Our ancestors became bipedal very early (chimps and gorillas became quadrupedal)
- Early evidence that social and reproductive life was not like other apes (themselves diverse)
- Bipedal (does this affect its niche?)
- Moving from places
- Decreased sexual competition OR new forms of competition? (emotional modernity, capacity to cooperate)
- Better at fighting - body changes
- Highly conservative but more advanced tools (later)
- Plant, wood, sticks, leaves - stone (reworked)
- Tools did not change for 1 million years (obviously working and working very well)

Emotional Modernity

- Not just logic from bigger brain but greater self control
- Human patterns of food sharing, co-parenting, social life and teamwork
- Essential for learning, cooperation, strategy and rapid reproduction
- Delayed maturation
- Children competing for attention in group
- Brains grow faster, longer
- Maternal instinct is not a natural part of evolution
- Crying - children competing for attention

Homo Ergaster/Homo Erectus

- Females get taller faster
- Rounding of skull
- Skulls looking more human
- First colonising of apes
- East Asia, China, Indonesia - 1.7 million years ago
- Europe - 1.3 million years ago
- Extensification - the 'invasive ape'
- De-specialisation - general purpose body
- Different kinds of food (worn down teeth)
- Increasingly invasive and adaptable
- Developing a 'cultural kit'
- Symbolic behaviour and traditions
- Different tools - specialised to each group
- Not humans
- Culture, language, symbolic life, material culture
- Where food is going to be seasonally
- Change in the brain - 20 big jumps, not smooth, some points an acceleration

- Releasing of constraints (energy, diet)
- Size of jaw, ability to eat, brain size
- Smarter foraging and high energy foods
- Keeps brain from growing (apes)
- Gaining advantage (what's pay off?)
- More to learn and more benefit of this learning
- Simplify - seems linear but it's not
- Different 'experiments' died out
- Our ancestors came and were better than the rest

Homo Sapiens

- Africa
- 7-60,000 years ago moving out
- Australia, Asia, coastal
- Nice construction
- Evidence of when they got there
- Megafaunal extinction
- Fire stick farming
- Decreased predation
- Typical model of evolution through natural selection
- Making species less vulnerable
- Not getting tougher - weak are dying instead

Conclusion

- Ingredients
 - Great ape abilities
 - Distinctive generalised capacities
 - Increasing neurological resources
- Structure
 - Hyper-sociability
 - Diverse environment
 - Growing niche construction
- Goldilocks condition
 - Constraints removed
 - Increasing pay off for cognitive abilities
- Emergent properties
 - Collective and cumulative learning
 - New forms of thought and memory

Modern Human Behaviour and Life in the Upper Palaeolithic

Chronology

- Geology
 - Pleistocene era (periods of cold with warm interglacial periods)
 - Holocene era (agriculture)
- Archaeology
 - Lower P/Early Stone Age - 2.5 million years ago
 - Middle P/Middle Stone Age - 250,000-500,000 years ago
 - Late Stone Age

'Behavioural Modernity' Debate

- Upper P revolution with development of modern human behaviour
- Were other homo species modern?

Proxies for Symbolic Language

- Behavioural innovations
 - Foods
 - Weapons
 - Images
 - Fishing
 - Daily human activities (practical)
 - Ochre - signify ownership or marking their bodies (no evidence of actual items just process)

Middle Palaeolithic

- Early forms of burial
- Personal decoration
 - Belonging to certain group
 - Traded
- Cave paintings
 - Why?
 - Aesthetic pleasure
 - Teaching/preserving rituals
 - Initiation rites

Tutorial 2 - 11th August

Papers

- Anthropology
- Sociology
- Economics
- Ethnography
- Archaeology
- Post-colonisation
- No archaeological culture

Archaeological Culture

- Repetition of activities over time and place
- Constantly recurring assemblage of artefacts assumed to be representative of a particular set of behavioural activities carried out at a particular time and place
- Art - sculptures/figurines
- Stone tools - lithics
- Burial practices
- Body art
- Human/animal remains
- Features

- CONTEXT = matrix + provenance + associations
- Primary - original, undisturbed location
- Secondary - after any post-depositional disturbance
- Formation processes - way materials came to be buried and their subsequent history
- N-transforms and C-transforms

1. Acquisition
2. Manufacture
3. Use
4. Disposal/discard (can happen at any point)

WEEK 3 - The First Neolithic Communities from the Near East to Europe

Lecture 3 - 18th August

Neolithic Transitions in South West Asia and Europe

Pleistocene-Holocene climate ca. 20,000 - present

Late Palaeolithic/Mesolithic transitions

- Complexity
- Marked by increased...
 - Population
 - Difference or diversity (hierarchy, specialisation)
 - Centralisation/organisation
 - Resources (natural and human)
- Foraging bands are simple societies
- Segmentary ('tribal') societies and most chiefdoms are 'middle range'
- States and perhaps some chiefdoms are complex societies
- Past social organisation studied by social archaeology, depending heavily on cultural anthropology

The Upper Palaeolithic III

- Magdalenian
 - Blade industries of the late Upper Palaeolithic of Europe
 - Associated with reindeer hunting and other large mammals present in Europe towards the end of the last ice age
- Divided into six phases
 - Early phase - blades and specific varieties of scrapers
 - Middle phases marked by the emergence of a microlithic component (particularly the distinctive denticulated microliths)
 - Later phases by the presence of 'harpoons' made of bone, antler and ivory

The Upper Palaeolithic: A Foraging Population

- The Upper Palaeolithic is the Late Stone Age from ca. 50,000-10,000 years ago
- Palaeolithic hunter-gatherer 'bands' range from 20-25 people each - larger clans of 100-200 people meet occasionally for trade and exogamy
- Bands tend to be mobile within a set territory
- Humans need ca. 30 square km each, ca. 600-750 for a typical group
- 10-20k people in all of Europe, world population ca. 5 million
- Population low but interaction continues, a web of genes and technology reaches most parts of the world

The Mesolithic/Epipalaeolithic/Final Palaeolithic

- Humans begin to exploit local environments more intensively
- Wandering of groups becomes more regular, with seasonal returns to specific places
- After about 12,000BC, change in southwestern Asia accelerates and spreads
- In unusually rich areas, groups establish permanent settlements (population increase_

The Mesolithic Transition

- The Epipalaeolithic/Mesolithic is a subdivision of the Palaeolithic and ends with the adoption of agriculture and pastoralism
- Limited change characterises the Mesolithic Era
- Free time and interaction between people/groups may have increased
- The groundwork has been laid for agriculture, but why make the leap?