

17. Early ancestors of man

The academic establishment tries to persuade us that there exists an “evolutionary tree” showing the gradual development of man. Their conclusions are based on fossil records which very often consist of small fragments of bones, teeth or a part of the skull. They believe that the ancestors of man arrived in the following order;

The earliest known hominin, belonging to the *Australopithecus* genus - upright walking ape like beings, stood 120 cm to 140 cm tall and had a cranial capacity of 300 to 600 cubic centimeters. Fossil records of the first *Australopithecus* are dated to about 4 million years ago. Several different groups of australopiths lived in East and North Africa between 4.2 and 2 million years ago. These species differed greatly anatomically and were on different levels of development.

About 2.5 million years ago the genus *Homo* appeared, which was more closely related to *Homo sapiens* than *Australopithecus*. The earliest known species of the *Homo* genus is *Homo rudolfensis* who lived in Kenya, Ethiopia and northern Malawi between 2.5 and 1.8 million years ago. *Homo rudolfensis* had a large cranial capacity, around 750 cubic centimeters.

The oldest *Homo erectus* fossils are dated to roughly 1.8 million years ago, while the youngest fossils assigned to this species date to about 300,000 years ago. Remains of *Homo erectus* are found throughout Africa and in western and eastern Asia as far as Java. The average brain size of *Homo erectus* is estimated to have been approximately 900 cubic centimeters.

The last group prior to the arrival of *Homo sapiens* were Neanderthals who lived in Europe and Asia from about 400,000 years ago and disappeared about 28,000 years ago. The average brain size of Neanderthals was about 1600 cubic centimeters which is bigger than *Homo sapiens*.

The actual development of man is much more complex and does not fit to the evolutionary model. A more realistic picture is presented by Michael Cremo and Richard Thompson in their book *The hidden history of the human race*. They challenge the academic evolutionary tree and show that the development of hominin groups did not progress chronologically from less developed to more developed species, but some early hominin groups were more advanced than later groups.

Some had large brains, some used tools, some had a more human like posture. They describe several wrong classifications of some fossils.

For example, scientists believe that the famous fossil of *Australopithecus*, the 3.5 million year old “Lucy”, found in 1974 in Ethiopia was an early human ancestor because it was assumed that she walked upright like a human. They ignored the fact that her shoulders, arms and wrists were adapted for tree climbing.

The authors say that most paleoanthropologists believe that *Australopithecus* was a direct human ancestor with a very humanlike body walking erect like modern man. However several prominent scientists opposed this view. In spite of the extensive evidence to the contrary, *Australopithecus* is still presented as the human ancestor.

Michael Cremo and Richard Thompson showed that the genus *Homo* was more than 5 million years old, rather than 2.5 million years old. They think that the conventional description of human evolution must be modified. They criticized the academic establishment for a strongly biased and partisan interpretation of the fossil records.

The authors criticized dating methods used by researchers. Since technical dating gives a very wide period range, the supporters of evolution “adjusted” the dates in such a way that the age of fossils fitted in the correct evolutionary chronology.

The problem with the fossil history of man is that it does not show a continuous chronological evolutionary progress from primitive to present-day man, but it is like a mosaic of different groups of hominins being at different stages of development.

Fossil records can identify physical changes and even increases in cranial capacity but they do not show the most important aspect of our ancestors – the development of the mind and the social and cultural level of hominins who lived millions of years ago.