

# Origin and Evolution of Man

10+2

Evolutionary Biology

Barun Prabhat

## ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF MAN

*Dryopithecus* and *Ramapithecus*: About 15 mya, primates called *Dryopithecus* and *Ramapithecus* were existing. They were hairy and walked like gorillas and chimpanzees. *Ramapithecus* was more man-like while *Dryopithecus* was more ape-like. Few

fossils of man-like bones have been discovered in Ethiopia and Tanzania.

These revealed hominid features leading to the belief that about 3-4 mya, man-like primates walked in eastern Africa.

They were probably not taller than 4 feet but walked up right.

*Australopithecines*: Two mya, *Australopithecines* probably lived in East African grasslands.

Evidence shows they hunted with stone weapons but essentially ate fruit. This creature was called the first human-like being the hominid and was called *Homo habilis*.

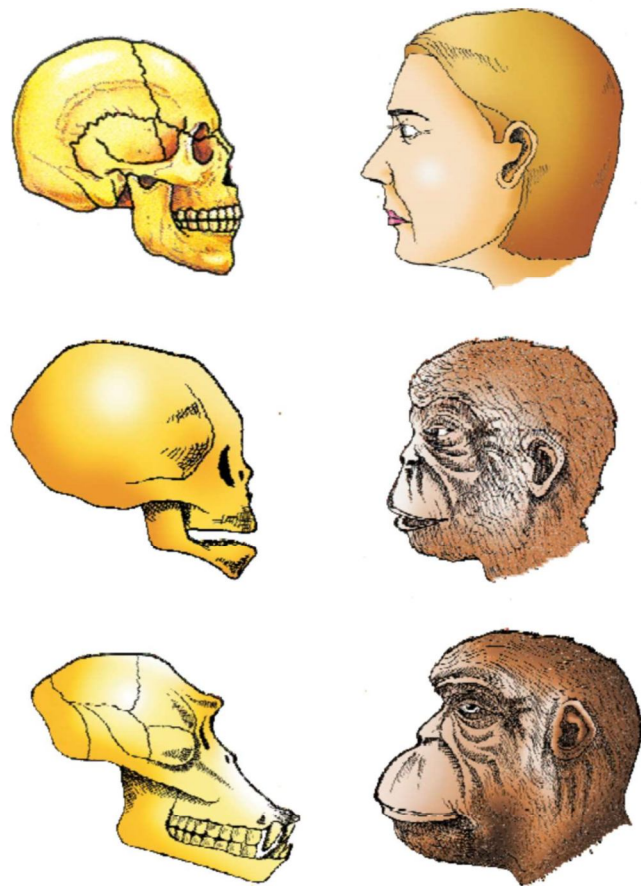


Figure 4 Comparison of the skulls of adult modern human being, baby chimpanzee and adult chimpanzee

The brain capacities were between 650-800cc. They probably did not eat meat.

*Homo erectus*: Fossils discovered in Java in 1891 revealed the next stage, i.e.,

*Homo erectus* about 1.5 mya. *Homo erectus* had a large brain around 900cc.

*Homo erectus* probably ate meat. The Neanderthal man with a brain size of 1400cc lived in near east and central Asia between 1,00,000-40,000 years back. They used hides to protect their body and buried their dead.

*Homo sapiens* originated in Africa and moved across continents and developed into distinct races. During ice age between 75,000-10,000 years ago, modern

*Homo sapiens* arose. Pre-historic cave art developed about 18,000 years ago.

Agriculture evolved around 10,000 years back and human settlements started.