MAN'S EARLIEST BEGINNINGS:
DISCREPANCIES IN EVOLUTIONARY TIMETABLES

James O. Dritt, Ph.D.
10517 Malaguena Lane, N.E.
Albuquerque, NM 87111-1840

ABSTRACT

Most popular and scientific publications portray an evolutionary countdown to man ending many millennia before written records appear. Why does recorded history begin just 4,000 to 5,000 years ago? Is agriculture so recent? Where are all the Stone Age bodies? These questions are investigated and compared in a Creation-Evolution context.

INTRODUCTION

According to evolutionary timetables, the long countdown to civilization began millions of years ago and ended with the recorded history of the great civilizations in the Middle East. The long evolution to man is described as ending with the last retreat of the continental ice-sheets and the coincident emergence of stone age Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon man, Homo Sapiens. The focus of this paper is the large gap of 95,000 years between these two events. The evolutionary interpretation of the data suggesting a long period of upward evolutionary change of mankind is compared with a creation interpretation of the data depicting the early history of mankind a few hundred years after the dispersion at Babel. The situation is presented graphically as follows:

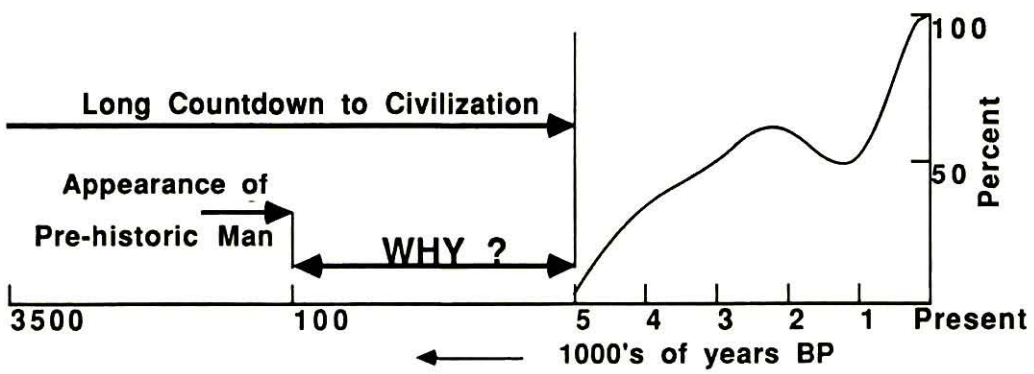

Figure 1. The unexplained gap.

The horizontal non-linear time line is marked in thousands of years BP (before present) while the vertical line represents the percent of completeness of recorded history. Reading from the left, millions of years elapse before the emergence of modern man, then many millennia pass before the advent of recorded history - civilization.

The Whys People Seldom Ask. Whenever Creation-Evolution is discussed among inquiring people, questions nearly always center on arguments regarding the age of the universe, earth, and especially of mankind. Our society has been so thoroughly indoctrinated by 'establishment scientific wisdom' regarding the extreme age of the earth and all life thereon, that rational, critical thinking is suppressed, or suspended altogether. People seldom ask: If evolutionary timetables are true and the age of mankind so old, why is it that recorded history begins just 4,000 to 5,000 years BP? Why is it that it took so many millennia for humans to discover that seeds placed in the ground would produce plants

for food? Why is it that we are not walking on innumerable bones of dead Stone Age people? The objective of this paper is to investigate and contrast the Creation-Evolution answers to these questions.

WHY IS IT THAT THE RECORDED HISTORY OF MANKIND IS SO SHORT?

Essentially every historical reference text and atlas begins historic time with the Sumerians in Bronze Age Mesopotamia (about 5,500 BP), the Semites of northern Mesopotamia, and ancient Egypt (about 3200 B.C.). We are told that civilization began among peoples living in the Middle East on fertile lands particularly well-suited for farming. The farmers built the first towns and from these the first cities grew. While some people farmed, others specialized in craftsmanship, using skills in metal-working. Another class governed the state, and priests began to keep written records (1). Although a precise date has not been determined and controversy still surrounds the circumstances, it is generally agreed that the recorded history of mankind begins about 5,000 years BP.

It is very difficult to obtain a reasonable estimate on how long humans have been around when evolutionists insist on a long pre-history of mankind. Is it possible to estimate a starting date for how long man has been around, and what criteria may be employed to arrive at a reasonable answer? New fossil discoveries and genetic evidences have fueled resounding debates among paleontologists, biologists, and archaeologists over the timing and circumstances of the last major event in human physical evolution, the emergence of anatomically modern Homo Sapiens. Few subjects have been the target for so much unprofessional speculation (2). At best, the picture is confusing what with alleged close fossil relatives found in the Pliocene some 3 million years ago ("Lucy" at 3.5 million years), Peking man at 350,000 years, Neanderthal at about 100,000 years, and Cro-Magnon at about 90,000 years BP. Some paleontologists assert that the geologic period during which the human form did most of its evolving was in the Pleistocene, which extended, they say, from about 2 million years BP to 10,000 years BP. In the Upper Pleistocene, there is a fossil group called the Neanderthal (3) which, for some very good reasons, many scientists believe to be the first real signs of human form along with the Cro-Magnon found chiefly in southern France. Using the evolutionary criteria of the emergence of the anatomically modern spectrum of humans (4), it is legitimate to start counting man's existence at about 100,000 years BP.

What do the scientific data of archaeology and anthropology tell us about pre-historic man? What were they like and how are they described? Although evolutionists cannot quite bring themselves to classify stone age Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon as fully human beings, current research indicates that there is every reason to believe that Neanderthals were at least as intelligent as modern men, if not more so (5). Also, it has been known for some time that Neanderthal could speak (although the media recently has made a 'to-do' over the discovery in Israel of a certain jaw-neck bone (hyoid) which anatomically allows for speech). Therefore, pre-historic man had the same ability as modern man for speech. Speech, language, and writing are very closely related and there is every reason to believe that intelligent men would fully use all these capabilities. The ability to communicate and express ideas, including abstract ones like religion, makes possible many areas of cooperative activity including recording daily life, building megalithic structures, making beautiful cave paintings, carving observations of animal behavior and plants on reindeer bone, as well as startling precision of lunar phases over a period of more than two months (6). The successful accomplishment of these and many other activities requires the speaking and writing of a common language by intelligent man.

Archeology reveals many other accomplishments of palaeolithic man: made stone tools and weapons; buried the dead ritually suggesting rudimentary religious beliefs (bodies were often accompanied by flowers and implements, possibly indicating a belief in an after-life (12, 5); peopled the globe; made jewelry; deliberately expressed strong feelings in pictorial form; painted dramatic pictures of how and what animals they hunted and domesticated; female forms, plant life, and signs on the walls and ceilings of deep caves at Lascaux in southwestern France, Altamira, in northern Spain, as well as Font-de-Saume, France, and many other locations; understood simple schematic art; developed the diagram, the teaching aid, the scale model, the toy, and the idol. The engravings and paintings speak eloquently and loudly of acute observation, a keen sense of time, master craftsmanship, and strong clues to human motives behind the art (6). They also built stone tombs (megaliths) and huge stone temples. Some stone arrangements tracked the movements of the sun, moon, and planets. One crowning accomplishment was metal working, a process which, they say, was to have far-reaching consequences for the whole of mankind and supposedly brought man out of his long stone age some 8,000 years ago. Certainly all these activities are extremely significant and, taken collectively, describe a well-developed extant culture.

Stone Age man kept a deliberate and often detailed record of the changing moon and passing seasons by the use of both literal images and abstract symbols. This reveals a level of observation and thought far too complex to be explained by evolutionary interpretations of their art. One may conclude beyond reasonable doubt that some of the paintings and engravings come very close to being valid examples of the historical recordkeeping of intelligent persons. Since man was certainly capable of doing so, it really does not make much sense to think that there was any reason he would wait to record his existence. The scientific evidence strongly indicates that Stone Age man recorded his activities as he lived. The archaeological data point to Stone Age Neanderthal as fully human beings struggling for existence in a harsh, hostile climate, but one rich with game. The data do not portray Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon man as brutish, grunting, and underdeveloped beings, just dropping out of the trees.

Neanderthals have been found in many parts of the world, including China and South East Asia. Why is it that some parts of the world (e.g. the Pacific Islands) remained unpopulated until only 2000 years ago? Could it be true that in 98,000 years, intelligent beings did not build boats and migrate out to islands? From earliest times, humans have been known to be explorers and wanderers. Why would there be this exception?

Discrepancies in Evolutionary timetables. Evolutionary timetables suggesting that pre-historic time was a long period of upward evolutionary change, simply do not fit the data. How does one account for an intelligent, capable being, like us, who would refrain from recording his existence and activities for 95,000 years? How could he do all the complex things he did before the supposed development of writing, arithmetic, or calendars? There are no easy answers for an evolutionist, if there are any at all, since the theory must be continually changed to fit the scientific evidence. Recent archaeological excavations in northern Israel confuse volutionary timetables with the discovery of the existence of modern man and date him as preceding Neanderthal. Placing the stepwise sequence of evolving mankind in the proper evolutionary order with any confidence is becoming more and more difficult for the evolutionist as additional research continues to reveal the speculative nature and inadequacy of current theories.

The Creation timetable. How might these same questions and situations be answered within the context of a Creation timetable outlined in Genesis 10, 11? This account describes human activity after the dispersion following the confusion of tongues at Babel approximately 1758 years after creation. Japheth's descendants migrated north into Russia and west into Europe, establishing their culture within a couple hundred years. These people were, in all probability, the Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon Homo Sapien Stone Age cave men. The people who stayed in the vicinity of the Near East, as well as others who migrated down into Egypt into more favorable climes, developed the great civilizations of ancient history that we read about in all the texts as the beginning of civilization. If one were to superimpose the scientific data on the Creation timetable, would there be gaps or glaring discrepancies? It turns out that there are no gaps or glaring discrepancies. In fact, I suggest there is a marvelously simple correlation between the two. The situation may be presently pictorially as follows:

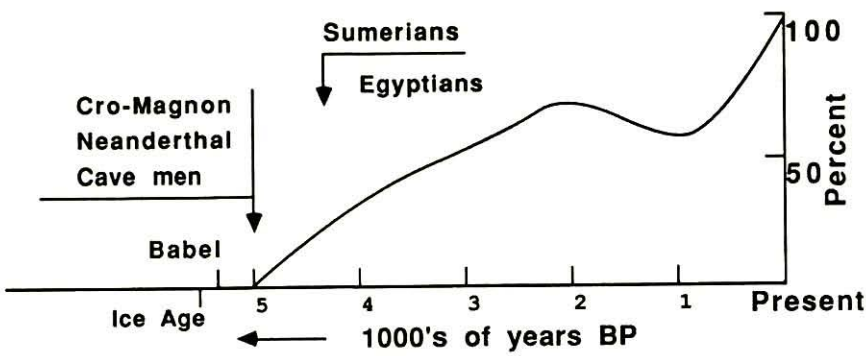

Figure 2. There is no gap.

The horizontal time line is marked in thousands of years BP while the vertical line represents the percent of completeness of recorded history. The better interpretation of the scientific data suggest that the gap of 95,000 years between the emergence of mankind

and the appearance of written records **does not exist!** There is no need to distort scientific evidence by imposing long times upon mankind for evolving intelligence, language, writing, religion, art, construction, observing nature, working in metal, etc. It is reasonable to conclude that recorded human history is in full accord with the Creation model beginning a few hundred years after Noah's flood (4500 years BP).

WHY IS IT THAT AGRICULTURE IS SO RECENT?

Evolutionary scenarios about the Stone Age tell of men existing as hunters and gatherers for some 100,000 years before discovering agriculture about 5,000 years BP (7). Other works describe an agricultural revolution 10,000 years BP, a few thousand years after the last ice age (8). Some historians describe man as taking 500,000 years to learn to produce his food! Regardless of the period of time involved, it is very strange that intelligent people would take that long to discover agriculture.

What do the scientific data tell us? The early stages of agriculture grew out of a hunting and gathering society where gazelle, fallow deer, wild boar, wild cattle, ibex, hare, were hunted, and wild cereals and pulses were gathered. Domestication of these activities, herding animals and deliberately planting crops, marked the beginning of the agricultural revolution. Agriculture is described as starting in the Near East in a belt stretching from northern Greece to Iran and from Jordan to the Crimea. It was here that wheat and barley grew wild and that goats and sheep lived. Later, agriculture was characterized by well developed irrigation systems of the Tigris, Euphrates, and Nile rivers (10).

Since Stone Age men were just as intelligent as Modern man, is it reasonable to subscribe to the idea that mankind existed solely as hunters and gatherers for about 90,000 years before discovering that seeds planted in the ground would grow into plants for food? Even little children find that out by the age of two or three. I believe the answer is obvious -- No. As far as nutrition and diet are concerned, it is significant that recent field studies cast serious doubts on whether hunter-gatherer people could live and thrive without some sort of cultivation of plant materials (9). Even though the Efe people of Africa are well adapted to an abundant forest, 67% of their calories come from cultivated crops or gardens, and this from another group of people. (Isn't it an amazing coincidence that nutritionists today are recommending that we divide our mealtime plates into thirds and allocate two-thirds of our diet to plant material and one-third to animal material. Perhaps that is the way humans are built.) Even the lush, undisturbed primitive forest deep in Africa will not adequately support a relatively small hunting and gathering population. It appears that agriculture is an essential ingredient for human survival, even for this type of people. I conclude that it is very unlikely that pre-historic man existed solely as a hunter-gatherer.

The Creation model incorporates agriculture early in human history starting in Genesis 2:15 when Adam was placed in the garden to "cultivate it and keep it" (NASB). In Genesis 4:26, we are told that Adam's son Cain "was a tiller of the ground" (NASB). After the flood, man was given meat to eat along with the plants (Genesis 9:3, NASB). When Noah and his sons and their wives left the Ark, they came upon the plain of Shinar (Genesis 11:2, NASB). Undoubtedly, their immediate occupations were animal herding, hunting-gathering, and agriculture in the Tigris and Euphrates valley (the plain of Shinar) in a cold, wet climate becoming progressively warmer. As people migrated out over the face of the earth following the dispersion at Babel, they hunted and gathered and planted crops. The length of the stone age varied from a few years (Mesopotamia, Sumeria) to a few hundred years (Europe, India), to several thousand years (North America, Australia). It would be difficult to imagine any scientific data that fit the Creation model any better!

What is the best answer to the question about recently discovered agriculture? I suggest that it did not take mankind thousands of years to discover agriculture and, therefore, there was no agricultural revolution about 10,000 years ago, or any number of years ago. Archaeological data tells us that agriculture has always been a basic human endeavor. Agriculture was not recently discovered.

WHY IS IT THAT WE DON'T FIND MANY BURIED STONE AGE BODIES?

Evolutionary anthropologists state that for at least 100,000 years, the population of Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon men was roughly constant, between 1 and 10 million, during which time they were burying their dead (11). Allegedly, the population remained fairly constant because the hunter-gatherer way of life would only support that many people over the face of the earth. The evolutionary population information is presented as follows:

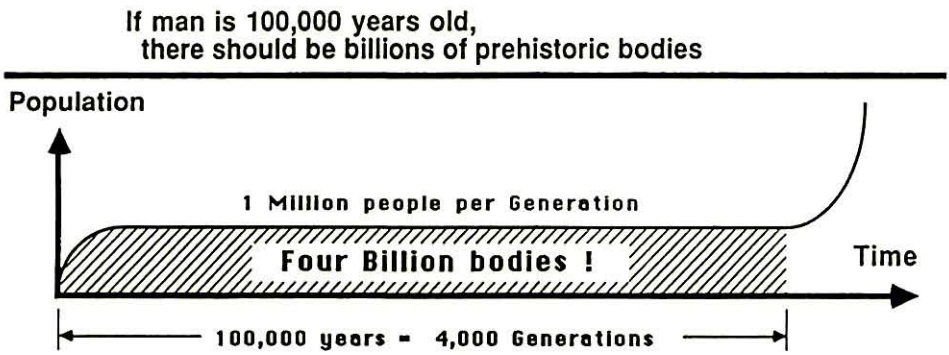

Figure 3. Pre-historic population.

Based on this data, they would have buried 4 billion bodies during that period of time. This is conservatively calculated by dividing 100,000 years by 25 years/generation to arrive at 4,000 generations. With a million people dying every generation, this results in a total of 4 billion buried bodies. Lest the reader think this number to be too high, at least one anthropologist estimates "a cumulative total of about 110 billion individuals seem to have passed their days, and left their bones, if not their marks, on this crowded planet" (7). So the figure of 4 billion bodies is a very conservative one indeed compared to 110 billion. Shouldn't many of the supposed 4 billion Stone Age skeletons still be around since evolutionists readily claim that buried bones last a lot longer than 100,000 years (e.g. Lucy and humans and dinosaurs that have survived millions of years in the earth)? Compare that number with the world population today of about 5 billion. If that many people died and were buried today, graves would be everywhere! It is truly amazing that only a few thousand pre-historic bodies have been found. Where are all these dead bodies?

If the Stone Age truly lasted 100,000 years, 1 million years, or 10 million years, or whatever evolution speculations dictate, archaeologists should be finding innumerable buried Stone Age bodies. They are not. The data do not fit the evolutionary model.

If the stone age only lasted a few hundred years, the total population would have been very low, hence archaeologists would be finding a comparable number of buried Stone Age bodies, a few thousand. That is what archaeologists are finding. The data do fit the Creation model.

This is a monumental unanswered discrepancy in evolutionary timetables.

CONCLUSION

The single most significant and basic assumption that is causing these discrepancies in evolutionary timetables - the 95,000-year gap between the appearance of man and recorded history; the alleged discovery of agriculture 10,000 years ago; and the lack of buried stone age bodies - is the underlying idea of a long period of pre-history. If one were to eliminate the long period of pre-history and the inclination that early man was somehow greatly inferior to modern man, these discrepancies would disappear.

The anthropological and archaeological data herein presented fit in very well with the Creation model which describes a short Stone Age period of time and intelligent, creative human beings. Evolutionary timetables, however, require a long period of time as well as a gradual ascent of mankind and cannot tolerate fully capable pre-historic man. Therefore, evolutionists are driven to the conclusion that pre-history was long and man was not capable. The one piece of scientific data which they claim in support of their position is radiologic dating of archaeologic artifacts. However, a great deal of research is being done today indicating that the radiometric dates commonly accepted by evolutionists are grossly in error (see other papers at this Conference).

Although the Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon Homo Sapiens population in Europe was low, they were co-existent with, and contemporaries of, the recorded peoples in Mesopotamia and Egypt. The reason writing and agriculture did not appear on a grand scale in Europe during their time was because their energies were primarily devoted to surviving in a harsh climate at the edge of retreating glaciers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I gratefully acknowledge the encouragement and guidance of D. Russell Humphreys. I truly appreciate the help of Darlene Anderson in the expert typing and preparation of this manuscript.

REFERENCES

1. THE LAST TWO MILLION YEARS, The Reader's Digest Association, London, 1974.
2. Brace, G. Loring, THE STAGES OF HUMAN EVOLUTION, p. vii.
3. Ibid, p. 5.
4. Ibid, p. 105.
5. Ibid, p. 80.
6. Marshak, A, "Exploring the Mind of Ice Age Man," NAT. GEOG. (Jan 1975), pp. 64-89.
7. Deevey, E. S, "The Human Population," SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN (Sept 1960), pp. 194-204.
8. Lewin, R, HUMAN EVOLUTION, p. 95.
9. Bailey, R. C., "The Efe: Archers of the Rain Forest", NAT. GEOG. (Nov 1989).
10. THE WORLD ATLAS OF ARCHAEOLOGY, p. 166.
11. Deevey, E. S, "The Human Population," SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN (Sept 1960), pp. 194-204.
12. Hawkes, J., THE ATLAS OF EARLY MAN, p. 19.
13. Robinson, Charles A. Jr., ANCIENT HISTORY, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1966.
14. Pritchard, James B., ed., THE HARPER ATLAS OF THE BIBLE, Harper & Row, 1987.