

## The Evolution of Mankind

There are many living beings on the earth, but mankind dominates the earth. Would you believe that mankind's ancestor was an ape? Let's explore our roots by looking at the process of human **evolution**!

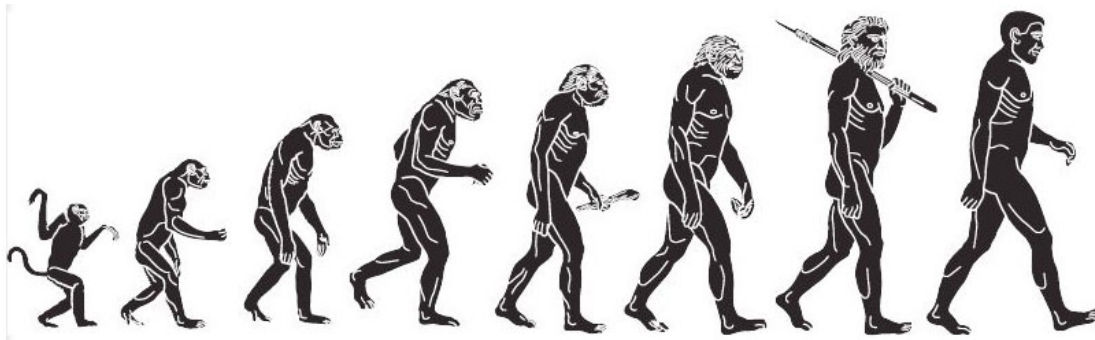


Fig.1 : Evolution process of mankind

[In Search of our Roots]

- Australopithecus Alpha (about 4 to 3 million years ago): Existing archaeological evidence show that the Australopithecus Alpha is the oldest ancestor of mankind. Archaeologists gave the name “Lucy” to the earliest Australopithecus Alpha. She was a Hominidae that lived on trees half of the time. Her brain size was about one-third of a person's brain. The most important thing was that she could only walked with her hind legs, so different from other animals that walked on four limbs.



Fig.2 : Australopithecus Alpha

- The Australopithecus Africanus (about 2.5 million years ago) could stand upright completely. It could gather plants and wild fruit for food and knew how to hunt. It would keep watch and resist an attack from wild beasts.
- Homo Habilis (about 2 million years ago): The Homo Habilis was also called the “Skillful Man” since he made tools from animal bone, stone, and even developed

a language!

- Homo Erectus (about 1.4 million years ago) was discovered only in Africa, but also in Europe and in Asia. He had a better ability to make stone tools and knew how to use fire. He also cooked his food!
- Homo Sapiens (about 200,000 years ago) was the closest ancestor of mankind. “Homo sapiens cromognon” belonged to the late stage of of Homo Habilis. His brow ridge was not so outstanding. He had a bigger head but smaller teeth and face. Besides hunting, the Homo sapiens cromognon could fish, make the clothes, and even developed an art!

[Independent Branch of the Homo sapiens neanderthalensis]

The era of the Homo sapiens neanderthalensis was nearly the same as that of early Homo Sapiens. They both had many primitive features of humans, such as the sloping forehead, the outstanding hindbrain spoon, and a large nose. The Homo sapiens neanderthalensis lived in the cave, could use fire, and made exquisite stone tools too. They could pass on their own experience to the next generation and even invented the funeral ceremony. It is still a puzzle why the Homo sapiens neanderthalensis later became extinct.

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