

The Dawn of Human Culture

Richard Klein and Blake Edgar

I have few criticisms of this book and none of importance. I do have comments on the subject of human evolution in general. These are not disagreements with the authors who hike the mountain tops of their field.

There are three comments in the book I take some exception to. As I have stated in other book reviews I do not want to know the authors religions or political views unless the subject of the book is religion or politics. On page 153 the authors state “on the Golan Heights in Syrian territory presently controlled by Israel.” They could have just said “on the Golan Heights” and it would not have taken anything away from what they were presented as related to the theme of the book. The additional comments added nothing except to present their politics. It was unprofessional. This was the only such instance of this behavior I came across. The two other places of some disagreement where related to the subject.

On page 107 one finds concerning humanoids many years ago “When a female saw a large, well-made biface in the hands of its maker, she might have concluded that he possessed just the determination, coordination, and strength needed to father successful offspring.” Is one to assume from the section that this comment appears in that the brain size of males was 2/3 the brain size of modern males and the brain size of females was 50% bigger than the brain size of modern females?

The third area I have problems with is one in which the authors present their weakest and somewhat deceptive arguments. The authors present without directly stating it that one mutation can make a great leap in evolution. On page 271 one finds “... a team of geneticists led by Cecilia Lai of Oxford University indirectly supported this idea when they identified a single gene that is probably ‘involved in the developmental process that culminates in speech and language’.” Words to look out for here are “indirectly supported” and “probably”. In other book reviews I have expressed my thoughts on evolutionists presenting probable or hypothetical situations and then a page and a half later drawing conclusions from them that are claimed to be proven true having proceeded from the hypothetical situation. This is what is called the Dawkings phenomenon. The authors do

not go to the extent as others, but purposely leave the impression that one mutation resulted in speech.

The study shows that a defect in that one gene adversely affected speech recognition. To say that one gene is responsible for speech one would have to put a defect in every other gene, one at a time, and show that it had no effect on speech. The one mutation theory is the author's explanation for modern human culture. The mutation happened 40,000 to 50,000 years ago. It had no physical effect. Its only effect was on the brain. That is difficult to accept. The author's subtly express their belief, but it is expressed.

To say that one mutation resulted in speech recognition or the advent of culture is beyond what can logically be accepted. One does not have to rely on the lack of believability of the one mutation hypothesis. There are other more obvious problems. For the one mutation to propagate into the future it would seem that a male and female at the same location, at the same time would have to have the same mutation. These two people would have to get cozy with each other and have offspring that got cozy with each other. The mutated gene could be a dominate gene in which case the person with it could get cozy with many other people resulting in cultured offspring. It would seem that the recessive gene would still be around. That would mean that there would be a large number of uncultured people without voice recognition around. Organized society could not work. Many of these people would get into politics. We would have leaders who do not listen and pass laws no one wants and increase taxes no one can pay,

There is another greater problem with the one mutation hypothesis. Homo sapiens had a large extension in the world 50,000 years ago. Not only would cultured Homo sapiens have replaced Neanderthals and Homo erectus, they also would have replaced all non-cultured Homo sapiens.

Other more general comments need making. Many, if not most, conclusions are determined from bones. Can similar bones really be classed as different species? I believe one definition of species is a group on animals that can interbreed. All dogs can interbreed. Some classify dogs not as a species but as a sub-species. Dogs come in many shapes, sizes, and with quite varying intelligence. If those that classified the ancient primate bones were given a trunk load of bones from dogs without being told anything about when the animals lived, how many species would they

come up with? There could well be a hundred species of dog from such a classification. The point is, are all these different species of primates really different. Or are they the same species with micro-evolutionary changes. Can it be told from the bones that humanoid primates from all these species could not interbreed?

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