

Anthropology

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The Environment of the Pleistocene The Pleistocene period was marked by a series of glaciations. Archeological evidence points out that the period may have been ended about 10, 000 years ago before modern history could be written. It is said that there was much flooding in the area that is now Idaho, and that climate fluctuated during much of this time. Sea levels in Pleistocene period fluctuated because the period had glaciation and interglaciation period. In the Pleistocene, evidence has it that the present-day Idaho was much wetter than it is today. It is also believed that it was cooler than today. There was occasional flooding occasioned by the melting glaciers. Most of the mountains in Idaho still have evidence of these Pleistocene glaciers (Digital Geology of Idaho 1).

During this period, many animals roamed the plains and mountains of Idaho. Animals such as mammoth, giant sloths, and Smilodon amongst others roamed the earth. My favorite animal that roamed the world during this time was the mammoth. From the remains I saw at the Museum, the mammoth seemed such a huge animal. It is its mere sight that fascinates me more than scares me. All of these mammoths lived and died during the ice age (IMNH 1). As far as diet is concerned, the mammoth fed on grass, bushes, and sedges. Other foods that the mammoth ate included blue spruce, cactus and fruits amongst others. This implies that the Pleistocene period in Idaho was marked by rich vegetation since the mammoth also browsed. Another factor that makes me conclude that the Pleistocene period was marked by rich vegetation is the fact that the mammoth was much bigger than the present elephant yet it survived. In terms of physical appearance, the mammoth also had long tusks as the modern elephant. It must have been furry to that it

adapted to extreme cold temperatures when the cold season and glaciers swept down the lowlands. However, it later became extinct due to reduced food availability and the ice age that greatly reduced its food sources. Human activity during this age was just beginning to take shape. The fact that this period was also marked by warm temperatures during certain seasons explains the origin of the early man. Archeological evidence point to the fact that man lived during this age and later migrated out of Africa. The early man during this period was the Neanderthal man, whom is said to have evolved after the Home erectus man. The early man had attained an upright posture during this time. He hunted wild animals, gathered food and learned how to make fire. Essentially, culture was developing at this time. The brain capacity of the early man was still relatively less than that of Homo habilis. Various fossils found in China, Europe, and East Africa confirms that there was constant migration during this period. The latter species of Homo sapiens all migrated during the Pleistocene period. As one may observe, the Pleistocene period was an era in which many geographical, physical, environmental and biological did take place. Idaho is probably lucky to have been part of that history.

Works Cited

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