

Paleolithic vs. neolithic

[Business](#), [Industries](#)



It has long been understood that in order for a species to survive there needs to be a certain level of adaptation. It is an integral and well-known concept of the human race and a familiar and widely accepted component in the development of man. Essentially, this is what happened when the Paleolithic cultures evolved into the Mesolithic, and eventually the Neolithic culture.

The concepts of specialization and diversification were relevant in the transformation of these cultures. Specialization can be defined as “ a structural adaptation of a body part to a particular function or of an organism for life in a particular environment” (Merriam-Webster). The hunter-gatherers of the Paleolithic culture were prepared, sometimes at a moment’s notice, to pick up and evacuate their current living areas in order to migrate to an environment in which their living conditions would be greatly improved. Such conditions included better climates, and most importantly, more suitable land to live off of.

The scarcity of food was a major problem at the time. The hunter-gatherers of the Paleolithic society were tasked with solving this prevalent issue and they did so with the strategic use of tools and stone. Such tools include the common hand axe, chisel, the arrow and spearhead, and the grinder (“ Early Humans”). Tools such as these enabled them to acquire larger quantities of food and necessities for a longer, and ultimately, a more healthful life. The decision process of the nomadic people with regards to the settlement location and migration patterns were largely a factor based upon the current conditions of the weather. There were not many women or children whom survived, the population mainly consisted of aggressive men who were a

part of smaller groups, made up predominately of adults usually numbering around thirty.

This in turn made it easier to provide food and shelter since there were a fewer number of people. During the Paleolithic era, people's main occupation was probably finding enough food to survive. Eventually, the Paleolithic culture had to undergo a transformation in order to sustain a longer, improved lifestyle, taking them out of the Stone Age and into the New Age, also known as the Neolithic Era.

The Neolithic culture began when humans discovered agriculture and raising cattle, which allowed them to no longer need to live a nomadic life style ("Hunter-Gatherers to Farmers"). The culture of the Neolithic people began to progress due to the fact that they began to settle with larger groups in a more stationary setting of one area. By this point, the Neanderthals were now all deceased. In this reality sprung the early signs of civilization such as cities, the social system of hierarchy, and an overall more literate population of people. This time period, beginning around about 9500 B. C., became known as the agricultural revolution.

They eventually evolved from hunter-gatherers into farmers whom still gathered food from the wild, but they now had crops that they cultivated, making the food supply more abundant and more tailored to an increasing population. They were able to settle in fertile areas with predictable climate, usually near river basins ("Neolithic vs. Paleolithic"), but no longer were the inhabitants of these lands "light on the earth" like the Paleolithic people before them. The accumulation of more possessions such as livestock became prevalent, thus requiring more space. More women and children

survived as well, making the size of the groups increase from around 100 to 1, 000 people; a drastic change from the Paleolithic groups.

The increase in population caused diseases to spread amongst the groups of Neolithic people because of the close proximity and relativity to others. A social hierarchy eventually had to be enacted to keep the growing population in order. Technology, language, and art continued to advance in the Neolithic culture once people started to work together, extending the knowledge, and creating an environment more suitable for the developments to come. The issue of ownership also became prevalent since before there existed no concept of owning specific land. Private property came to be during this time, in effect causing the emergence of ownership of land, livestock, and even tools.

As I became more informed on the transformation of the Paleolithic to Neolithic culture, I could not help but to start comparing the changes they underwent to that of the Native Americans and White Settlers. The Native Americans led a simple life, one marked by the use of land as a means of survival. They were a nomadic type of hunter-gatherers usually ruled by tribal leaders and elders just as the Paleolithic people were. When obstacles such as seasonal-change and weather were thrust upon them, they would uproot and find another place to survive. Also, the Paleolithic culture believed in spiritual rituals, as did the Native Americans. Dr. Miles H. Hodges explains, “ His (Paleolithic man) world view informs him that all events in life result from the actions of the spiritual world working in an invisible way in and through the visible world.

The visible world of material reality is merely the outer form or dressing of an even greater inner reality” (“ Paleolithic Society and Culture”). This concept aligned with the beliefs of the Native Americans and their respect for the spiritual world. An example that is parallel with the spiritual beliefs of both the Native Americans and Paleolithic people would be if a hunt were to bring success there were important spiritual rituals to be performed. The Neolithic people became the White Settlers in my mind mainly because of the fact that life became more structured in a sense. Due to this structure, more focus was put on the advancement and expansion of the culture. They also had a similar effect on the land because they did not live lightly or have the same respect for it as the Native Americans did.

The Neolithic Age marked the beginnings of established society for modern man, comparable to the White Settlers when they institutionalized beliefs such as religion. Overall, the reason for comparing the Paleolithic and Neolithic times with the Native Americans and White Settlers is because of the fact that an evolution, or change, that began approximately 11, 500-5, 000 years ago (“ Neolithic Revolution”), essentially repeated at a time more relevant to generations closer to us. This concept, in turn, has made the subject in its entirety, an easier topic to understand.

Changes are constant in this world; they have continued to be so since the beginning of the human race. In the end, the Paleolithic culture was a gateway into the Neolithic culture and ultimately served as a stepping-stone for the advancement of the Neolithic culture. The resulting innovations in society, economy, and technology in the Neolithic Age then paved the way for all of modern civilization. The change from roaming hoards of prehistoric

man to settled agriculturists allowed for the establishment of society out of a nomadic culture.