

Good example of evolution of man essay

[Parts of the World](#), [Africa](#)



The following is a layman's version on the processes that produced the first intelligent, sentient creature, the human being. The paper will address the time through the forest- savannah transition in east Africa and through to the first hand axe and spear making, a period of approximately three million years ago. The paper will propose probable events that might have occurred during that time. The pre-human ancestors went from among the weakest and defenseless prey on the plains of African grassland to the voracious terror of the modern world, within an interval of approximately one million years. How did that happen? How did the man make it, with no claws, no fangs and surrounded by large predators. With a smaller body than the modern man, and without trees to climb in that time, the early man adopted a fragile two legged stance in a four-legged world. Clearly the man was inferior at running and was not built for fighting against the bigger inhabitants. A lot has been studied, so much is known about the human evolution. The results of these studies are in paleontology, paleoanthropology and the archaeology literature that is in the public domain. To begin, approximately ten million years ago, East Africa was heavily forested and well-populated with tree dwelling primates of different types. At the end of Miocene Epoch, around five million years ago the environment began to change from wet subtropical to arid and grassland conditions (deMenocal, 2011). Over the next three and a half million years, the heavy forest cover slowly died out. It is during the late stage of that translation that the primates were forced down to the ground, amidst a lineup of predators. The hyenas, leopards, lions and wild dogs were roaming the vast continent in packs. They are still found in Africa to date, as they

were in the early days. They are almost in every African wildlife television shows but due to the human conflict they have been reducing in number. Paleontological and archaeological research studies showed that bipedal primates appeared first in East Africa approximately four million ages ago, at the start of a change from the forest to savannah conditions. Some creatures faced transitional challenges while adapting to savannah conditions. The leopards and lions of the time had forest dwelling predecessors who, being top of the food chain did not have difficult transitioning to savannah way of living without having to modify their general body conformation and behaviors. At the point where the forest cover began to disappear, the pre-human ancestor must have looked like a ground dwelling ape. Without the tree cover, they would have been clumsy and slow to survive the predation of the big cats. Instead, the hypothesis is that they were more alert, small in size, agile and active primates that looked like capuchin monkey. In fact the first proto-human creatures, the Australopithecus were less than five feet tall and thin bodies. On the savannah and among the predators, that creature would only have flight as its defense. According to Xi American scientist Journal, in the early 1970s, paleontologist excavated a sinkhole depression which they supposed might have been a cave where the early humans may have once lived. They found large amounts of detritus and numerous pre-human skull with some skeletal bones that were scattered. Majority of those human skulls had teeth marks on them and after a close review of the leopards' behavior they realize what had happened to the owners those skulls. During the wet transition period, only the widely scattered small clumps of trees that were in the low areas of the terrain such as sinkholes

remained. Leopard carried their prey up into the tree for their own safety and to secure their prey against the big predators. They use to consume everything in small prey, but the head was slippery and difficult to hold. They would occasionally drop the skull and thus their appearance in the sinkholes. As the paleontologists excavated other sinkholes in east Africa, they found additional skulls with teeth marks. It is clear that humans were once a defenseless prey. When the primate ancestors were first appeared in this sea of fangs and snarling teeth, they were not bereft of useful survival tools. The tree dwelling lifestyles equipped them with certain physiological characteristics that were useful then as they are today in the modern world (Klein, Richard, Teresa, 2013). To start, they had binocular vision that helped them gauge the distances between tree branches as they leaped on them. They also had large brains as compared to those of the ground predators. The brain had the ability to process critical visual input and perform complex body movements. They had a superb balance and exquisite hand and eye coordination and body control that were needed for moving about in the treetops. They were also prodigious leapers with designed hands for grasping and manipulating motions. They also had some reasoning capability as the chimpanzees today. Once on the ground though, the primate ancestors had only two options; avoiding predators and running from them. They opted for a tactic that was counter to instinct and differed to that of other animals. While the small mammals concealed themselves by hiding low in the grass and bushes, the primate ancestors would stand in clear view of the predators for many yards around. They would do that to visually scan over large areas for the predators, accurately measure their distances and

then move in a manner that avoids them. Their plant diet added into their problems because they use to get tender shoots and fruits from trees that were concentrated around the sources of water or scrub bushes.

Unfortunately, those were the same areas where the predators would seek shade in the heat of the day (Green, Zeresenay, 2012). Clearly the early man needed to improve their running skills if they were to survive. Since they were not built for speed or endurance, majority of the predators could outrun them and at that time they were only saved by agility, superior depth perception and the ability to leap, all that was necessary for close-in avoidance motions. That was the lowest point in the pre-human population level and predators may have relied on humans as their staple food. Clearly the pre-human ancestors had to evolve if they were to survive the running scenarios from the predators. They needed additional speed and gait. The chimpanzees of today use all fours when running and are not fast enough for savannah survival. The natural selection emphasized longer legs for more speed and upright stance for an earlier detection of the predator. By the hypothesis of the known facts, the paper has noted down the sequence of events by which tree dwelling primates evolved into humans. Considering the environmental changes that occurred and the known predatory conditions, the paper highlights the three phases of the human evolution. The first one is a tree dweller who was forced to forage on the ground, a ground dweller who became a competent sprinter to survive predation, a ground dwelling type who was almost made extinct by the predation, but escaped by developing running skills and weapons. If Harris is right about the development of larger brains for agility and running endurance, and if

Hawkins is correct about the rudimentary neural organization of the mind, the intelligence did not develop principally as a persistence tool but as an unforeseen consequence. Each additional neuron that that was meant for running, and endurance could also participate in rational thought. Just at the point where the early man was about to be overwhelmed in the escalating war over speed and endurance, the man suddenly whirled about and faced the predators off with weapons. Several millions of years ago, an insignificant creature scaled down from the trees and lived against all odds, on the plains of East Africa, among the frightful predators. That creature walked upright, in full view of the predators during the day. This papers postulation above might not be the accurate account of how that creature survived and became human, if this is not the case, other bizarre scenarios must be considered. It may have been interesting to watch when the first lion stalked the early man as a routine only to find that he did not run; instead he was armed with spears and the predator was turned into prey.

Work cited

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