

Bar-Yosef 1992b

Article ...

▼ ... in a Journal

Author:

[PublicAdministrativeSpace:Bar-Yosef, Ofer]

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The role of western Asia in modern human origins.

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Abstract:

Western Asia provides the best collection of human skeletal remains relevant to the two basic models for the modern humans, namely the 'rapid replacement' and the 'regional continuity' models. Regardless of the taxonomic particular hominids, their chronology is of crucial importance. Thermoluminescence (TL) and electron spin dates demonstrate that the Acheulo-Yabrudian and Mousterian entities and their associated fossils (Zuttiyeh, Qafzeh, Kebara, Shanidar, Amud) span the late Middle and Upper Pleistocene period. These new dates initiate chronological revisions and renewed discussion of the cultural-archaeological implications. One of the most important conclusions is that the Middle to Upper Palaeolithic transition (or Revolution) 45-40 ka ago has nothing to do with the appearance of anatomically early modern humans in western Asia, which occurred some 100 ka ago or more in the coastal region of the eastern Mediterranean, was both a corridor for movement of humans and animals as well as during climatically harsh periods. The mixture of morphological characteristics among the available Middle Pleistocene human fossils is interpreted as reflecting the presence of immigrant and local populations. Archaeologically, behavioural changes are taken as hints to the pre-adaptations of the Middle to Upper Palaeolithic revolution. The archaeological record of western Asia can contribute significantly to explaining the Middle to Upper Palaeolithic transition. This region was the core area where the 'Neolithic Revolution' took place. The shift to systematic cultivation and domestication of animals occurred within a short time.(ABSTRACT TRUNCATED AT 250 WORDS)

▼ ...in a Conference Proceeding

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