

《新证据：人类出现的时间远比我们想象的早》



Scientists have found new evidence that Homo sapiens, or humans, have been around longer than we thought.

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Bones found at a site called Jebel Irhoud in Morocco are 300,000 years old.

????Jebel Irhoud????????????30????

That is about 100,000 years older than any other known remains of our species.

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They were discovered far from where the oldest fossils had been found before in Ethiopia.

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Scientists decided that skulls, limb bones and teeth they found represent at least five individuals.

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They show people from an early stage of our species' development.

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They are a mix of modern and more ancient, or simpler, humans.

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Jean-Jacques Hublin works at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany,

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and the College of France in Paris.

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He and others described the new findings in two papers released last week by the journal Nature.

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They are not just like us, said Hublin.

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But they had "basically the face you could meet on the train in New York."

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While their face and teeth might look like today's humans, these fossils show a different shaped brain.

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Their braincases—the part of the skull that contains the brain—were longer.

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That means it took time for our brains to evolve to their present form.

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Given their modern-looking face and teeth, Hublin said these people may have blended in today if they wore a hat.

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Hublin said that along with other evidence,

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the Moroccan fossils suggest that humans may have reached their modern-day form in more than one place within Africa.

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The message we would like to convey is that our species is much older than we thought, Hublin said.

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He added it did not come from just one place, "a small 'Garden of Eden' somewhere in East Africa."

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Instead, Hublin said, it was a process that moved across Africa, and is "more complex" than what was believed before."

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The Moroccan fossils were found between 2007 and 2011, in what was a cave setting.

2007?2011????????????

They represent three adults, one adolescent and one child about 8 years old.

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It was thought that they lived a hunter-gatherer lifestyle—meaning they hunted or gathered their food, instead of

farming.

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They were found alongside bones of animals they hunted—gazelles and zebras.

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There were also stone tools, possibly used as spearheads for hunting and knives.

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The tools were made from flint, a kind of stone, from about 40 kilometers away.

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Researchers also found evidence of much fire use.

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Today, Homo sapiens are the only human species.

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But 300,000 years ago, they would have lived on Earth with several now-extinct relatives in Eurasia.

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These included Neanderthals in the west and Denisovans in the east, and others in Africa.

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Even with the discovery,

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Hublin believes there is an earlier stage of human ancestor that would have walked on Earth before this group from

Morocco.

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I'm Anne Ball.

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