

Archaeology and its Purpose in Human Civilizations

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Opinion Article

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DESCRIPTION

Archaeology is the scientific study of human activity via the recovery and evaluation of material culture. The archaeological record is made up of artifacts and buildings that mix environmental sciences, places, and cultural landscapes. Archaeology is both a social science and a component of the humanities. In North America, archaeology is a subfield of anthropology, while in Europe, it is a distinct discipline.

From the development of the earliest stone tools at Lomekwi in East Africa a billion years old to recent decades, archaeologists investigate human prehistory and history. Paleontology, or the study of fossil remains, is not the same as archaeology. Archaeology is especially crucial for understanding prehistoric societies because there are no written records of them. From the Palaeolithic through the advent of literacy in communities around the world, prehistory encompasses almost all of human history. Understanding cultural history, reconstructing ancient lifeways, and documenting and explaining changes in human civilizations across time are some of the purposes of archaeology. The term archaeology is derived from Greek and literally means "the study of old history." Surveying, excavation, and data analysis are all part of the process of learning more about the past. Antiquity relies on a cross-disciplinary study in its wider definition.

Antiquarianism spawned archaeology in Europe throughout the 19th century, and it has since grown into a global discipline. Nation-states have exploited archaeology to develop certain images of the past. Maritime archaeology, feminist archaeology, and archaeoastronomy are only a few of the sub-disciplines of archaeology that have

emerged since its inception, and other scientific tools to aid archaeological study have been devised. Despite this, archaeologists now confront numerous challenges, including pseudo archaeology, artifact looting, a lack of public interest, and hostility to the excavation of human remains.

The objective of archaeology is to learn more about past societies and the human race's evolution. Over 80% of humanity's development took place in prehistoric cultures that did not use writing, thus there are no written documents to study. Archaeology is the only method to understand prehistoric society without such written documents. Because archaeology is the study of previous human activity, it can be traced all the way back to around a million years old, when the first stone tools were found - the Ancient Industry. Many major things in human history occurred in prehistory, such as the evolution of humanity during the Pal eolithic period, when early humans in Africa evolved from hominids to modern *Homo sapiens*. Many of humanity's technological advances, such as the capacity to use fire, the development of stone tools, the discovery of metal, the beginnings of religion, and the creation of farming, are disclosed through archaeology. Without archaeology, we might know nothing about humanity's use of material culture back to the emergence of writing.

Archaeology is sometimes the only way to learn about the existence and habits of ancient peoples. Thousands of cultures and communities, including billions of people, have come and gone over millennia, with little or no written record, or ones that are incomplete or inaccurate. Writing as we know it now did not appear in human culture until the third-century B.C., and only in a few technologically advanced civilizations. *Homo sapiens*, on the other side, have been around for at least ten thousand years, and other *Homo* species for millions of years (see Human evolution).