

Chapter 1: *An animal of no significance*

This chapter talks mostly about our unknown brothers and sisters and about us, *the Homo-Sapiens*. But first, Noah Harari talks about the three important revolutions that shaped the course of our history. These are: The Cognitive Revolution 70.000 years ago, The Agricultural Revolution 12.000 years ago and The Scientific Revolution 500 years ago. These events changed history and started something completely different.

Something very important to understand about pre-historic humans is that they were animals with almost no impact on the environment just like other animals. But, they loved, played and formed close relationships like other animals did too.

Biologists think that two animals belong to the same species if they tend to mate with each other and if two animals are related, they like to bunch them under the heading genus. For example, with lions, tigers and leopards they bunch them with their common genus, the panthera. They also like to label species with two-part name, they also do it with us.

That means that there were other hominids living in the globe. How is that possible? It was very difficult for us to believe, but it's true. Some of them were massive and others were dwarves, depending on the necessities. However, there are things on which they were very similar, the brain.

Although we are very grateful about our evolutionary brains now, in the past our brains made us spend more time searching for food because they consume a lot of energy and they are heavy. In fact, despite having a big brain, we used to live in constant fear of predators. Homo learned how to be up in the food chain by learning how to use fire and making spiky tools for hunting. About 300.000 years ago they discovered that they can cook with fire, making things easier. Whereas chimpanzees spent five hours a day chewing raw food, an hour was enough for the homo because they ate cooked food.

An interesting question is why we are the only ones left. 70.000 years ago, Sapiens spread from East Africa to North finding other hominids. Scientists don't agree about what happened between them. There are 2 important theories. The first one is that Sapiens mingled with other hominids making a unique species. The other one is Sapiens exterminated the others.