**A New View of Human Evolution**

**Scientists have unveiled what they believe are the oldest Homo sapiens remains ever found, a major discovery that potentially upends our understanding of when and where our species evolved. The fossils -- a skull, bones, and teeth from five individuals -- were unearthed in a remote area of Morocco, in what was once a cave. After using advanced dating analysis on stone tools and a tooth found at the excavation site, researchers determined that the bones are between 300,000 and 350,000 years old -- 100,000 years older than any other known Homo sapiens fossils. The individuals had a mixture of modern and primitive characteristics, with a face and jutting jaw nearly identical to that of a modern human, and an elongated brain case characteristic of early humans. Until now, it was widely believed Homo sapiens evolved from earlier forms of the Homo genius in a small region of East Africa about 200,000 years ago, then spread out across the continent and the world. This discovery suggests our species arose much earlier, and that the process took place over a wider area. "We did not evolve from a single 'cradle of mankind,'" paleoanthropologist Philipp Gunz, who co-authored the research, tells The New York Times. "We evolved on the African continent." That conclusion remains controversial. With no universally accepted set of features that distinguishes modern humans from our older ancestors, some paleontologists say the new remains are merely an example of early humans just before they evolved into Homo sapiens. *(The Week magazine, June 23, 2017) omo***