The Peopling of South America
ANT325

Three questions

- Where did the people come?
- When did they get there?
- Were the high cultures of South America autochthonous?
  - Drawn from local cultural norms and practices
  - By way of non-South Americans
    - Transcontinental
    - Transoceanic

When did they leave the Old World?

- Skeletal analysis indicates without doubt that fully modern humans populated the Americas, and fully modern humans arrived in Asia no earlier than 40,000 years ago.
- Why is this important?

Main Theory

- Beringia Land Bridge
  - During the Wisconsin glaciation 35,000-11,000 years ago at the last stage of the Pleistocene (1.8 million to ~10,000 years ago)
  - Key time frame possible for migration
    - 35,000 – 10,000 ya
    - Ocean levels 200ft lower
- Problems
  - When did humans colonize Asia?
  - Evidence hard to find
    - Coastlines are today underwater
    - Low level of material culture present at that time
**European Arrivals Theory**

- Visitors came by sea along the lowered coastlines
  - From N. Europe past Greenland

**Multiple waves or only one?**

- J. Greenberg hypothesis – three waves from Siberia
  - Linguistic evidence
  - Dental evidence
  - Most archaeological research tends to support Siberian origins

- Single wave from Mongolia based on mtDNA
  - Mitochondrial DNA is inherited directly from mother to child, with no paternal contribution and no recombination. This makes it traceable through the generations.
  - Highly prone to mutations, which are then passed to the next generation. The resulting slight differences between individual DNA sequences help geneticists group relatives.

**Genetic data says**

- Four haplogroups, labeled A, B, C, and D,
- Four specific mtDNA types brought into the New World from Asian peoples
- Varied progressively through mutations accumulated over generations of offspring with more of each farther south.
- More “A” in North A. and “D” in S America
- Not much evidence of mixing NA w/ SA

- Molecular evidence implies a single population left Siberia and headed into the Americas between 30 and 13 ka.
- Were there two or more streams of migrants?
- Why is this important?
- Kennewick Man
- NAGPRA, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
When did they get here?
- Based on these standing assumptions in the record, some archaeologists argue:
  - Colonization of the Americas occurred first about 15,000 years ago, immediately after the Pacific coast became deglaciated.
  - Only one migration?
  - How early could they have arrived?
  - How long would it take to travel the length of the Western Hemisphere?

The brunt of migration
- Bering Strait
- Which were the N – S routes of peopling?
- Were there multiple migrations?
- Diverse genetic populations?
- How fast did the whole continent become populated?

Take a journey thru time

Who were the First Americans?
- The first Americans were diversified hunter-fishers and used boats, dispersing along the coasts for at least 1,000 years.
- Clovis, the big-game hunters of horses and mastodons until 8500BC; also, giant sloths, other elephant types, saber-tooth tigers, deer, paleo-llamas.
- May be descended from these original Americans, or may represent a second dispersal from Beringia.
- Evidence of transhumance (coast and highlands and/or valleys).
- Rock paintings around 7500BC.
Pre-projectile Point Era

- Date of Monte Verde (South Central Chile) and Fell’s Caves (Patagonia) suggests strongly there was a pre-Clovis/pre-projectile point era
- What did they live from?
- Who were they?
- How did they get to southern S.A. so fast?
- Or did they arrive earlier than 15,000 ya?

South American Sites

- Monte Verde, Chile 14,600 ya pre-Clovis – wiped out by a tsunami?
- Ate wild several varieties of wild potatoes, seeds, nuts berries
- Had shelters, stone tools, trade with other settlements

- Fell’s Cave, Patagonia, 11,000 ya
- El Inga Cave, Quito, 9033 ya
- Many others illustrating
  - Coastal migration importance
  - Earlier cultures than Clovis
- How long to get from Bering strait to tip of South America?
- How many migration waves? – 1? 4?

Clovis culture

- Big game hunters - mastodons
- First identified at Clovis, NM
- Fluted projectile points are its characteristic
- Widespread after 11500 ya
- Folsom- 9500-8000 ya
  - Bifacial
  - Big game gone 10,000 ya
Where did the South American high cultures come from?

- **Two theories**
  - Diffusionists (thru people from other continents)
    - Is there clear evidence of contact?
    - Is there clear evidence of sustained contact?
    - Is there clear evidence of transferral?
  - Isolationists (inventionists)
    - Independent development of cultural practices
    - Outside contact was not significant enough

**Diffusionists: Contact Theories**

- **Ancient Astronauts**
  - Ancient art and architecture
    - Reflects alien culture and needs
    - Constructed for aliens
  - Nazca lines is an example he used

**Intercontinental Contacts**

- **Trans-Pacific contacts**
  - Kon Tiki raft (1947)
    - Thor Heyerdahl
      - To prove that there was contact from S. A. to Polynesia by using only the materials and technologies available to those people at the time, that there were no technical reasons to prevent them from having done so
    - Ecuador to Tuamoto Is.
      - 101 days
      - 4300 mi.
    - Currents- probably no reverse trip

- **Mu, a separate, sunken continent**
  - Augustus Le Plongeon popularized name “Mu” from Charles Étienne Brasseur de Bourbourg (1864) mistranslated what was then called the Troano Codex thinking the word ‘Mu’ referred to a land submerged by a catastrophe. Le Plongeon then turned this into a sunken continent whose Queen Moo fled to Egypt. Other refugees supposedly fled to Central America and became the Mayans
  - Later James Churchward d. 1936) connects Egypt, Greece, Central America, India, Burma and Easter Island, all known for megalithic art and architecture. Churchward and others made comparisons of these
  - Claims origin is the lost continent of Mu that flourished in the mid-Pacific and then was completely obliterated in almost single night. Symbols from throughout the world are used as proof.
  - Largely discredited today.
Jomon Culture - Japan
- Japan's Neolithic Era - ca 10500-300BC
- Jomon people produced ceramics by
  - Could have brought ceramic techniques to West Coast of the Americas
  - Valdivia, Ecuador seems to have specific relatedness in ceramic pot design and technique

China
- 1st Emperor Sui-jon, 3000 BC invented art of knot writing - similar to Inca quipu writing
- 2nd Emperor, Shon-nung (2737-2705) sculpture is similar to human head/animal sculpture in Chavin de Huantar, Peru
- Cult of serpent in China also found in S.A.
- Other contacts through the 1st millennium AD

Trans-Atlantic Contacts
- Vikings/Danes/Scandinavians
  - Leif Ericsson, ca. 1000AD arrives to Beothuk, Newfoundland from Greenland
  - Kensington runestone in R.I.,
  - "oldest building in America?"
  - ca. 1050AD

Lost Tribes of Israel
- Native Americans are one of the lost tribes of Israel, around 600BC
- LDS Church beliefs suggested in Book of Mormon
- Sailed to the New World led by the previously unknown prophet Lehi
- Mormon belief, until recently, suggests Lehi's children eventually became two warring factions, which included the good, white Nephites and the bad, brown Lamanites. The Lamanites, eventually killed all the Nephites by 500 A.D. But the bad, brown Laminates continued to live on and are now called Native Americans
**Atlantis**
- Plato - located somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean
- Beyond the pillars of Hercules (which are now called the Straits of Gibraltar and are between Spain and Libya)
- Today- the Bermuda Triangle?

**Egypt**
- Ra I and Ra II expeditions
- Thor Heyerdahl, 1970, Ra II
- Morocco to the Barbados in 57 days
- Use raft boats with styles and materials from Lake Chad and Lake Titicaca based on drawings of ancient boats in Egypt and Peru and Bolivia

**Inventionists: Theory Two**
- Most anthropologists believe that high civilizational cultures are autochthonous
- Most believe that high cultures centered in the Central Andean region
- They need to find reasons why
**Why the Central Andes?**
- Extensive marine resources
- Concentration of people around coastal rivers
- Variety of ecological niches
  - Archipelagoes
  - Verticality
- More...

**Competition for resources**
- Erratic rainfall
- Mountains compress ecological zones that elsewhere might be spread out of 1000’s of miles
- Verticality vs horizontality
  - At diff. elevations diff. crops harvested
  - The higher the elevation the shorter the growing season

**Circumscription Theory**
- Resources are closely circumscribed geographically
  - Irrigation invented very early
  - Andenes (terraced fields)
  - 20% of crops are above 3000m.
  - 90% of crops do better below 1000m
  - More people living at lower elevations
- Technology responds to circumscription, eg., ceramics

**Agricultural Transition in the Andes**
- Based on these three subsistence commodities:
  - Potatoes - 10000-7000 ya, altiplano
  - Maize - domesticated 9000-4500 ya in Mexico
    - Maybe separately in Peru around
  - Cotton - domesticated in Mexico by 7000 ya, in Peru (Huaca Prieta) around 6000 ya ago
  - Others: Quinua, peanuts (ca 4500ya), manioc (10,000ya), sweet potatoes (ca 5000 ya), peppers, tomatoes, llamas (6000ya), guinea pigs (7000ya)
Asia: Sugar cane, rice, mangoes, yams

North America: Avocados, sunflower seeds, maize (corn)

Central America: Peppers, beans, cocoa

South America: Potatoes, tomatoes, peanuts, maize, cotton, quinoa, manioc, llamas, guinea pigs

Africa: Coffee, radishes, watermelon, yams

Europe: Apples, green beans, carrots, wheat, beets

India: Cotton

Origins of Food by Region

Origins of Ceramics

- Asia
- Ecuador - Valdivia - 3200
- Norte Chico (Caral) - Peru’s Coast - prior to 2600BC - South America’s oldest city?
- Tutishcainyo Culture – C. Amazon Basin - 2000-1150BC, ceramic production and manioc staple
- Marajó Is.

Central Andes: Ecuador to Bolivia

- North coast
  - Far North
  - North central
- Central coast
  - Central
  - South central
- South coast
  - South
  - Far South

Central Andean Development

- Moving from north to south
- Going from hunting/fishing/gathering to agriculture and ceramics
- Urbanization begins prior to agriculture
- Ceramic production begins in Valdivia, Ecuador (13200 BC) and later moves to Peru’s North Coast (1600BC)
- Or it could have migrated from the Amazon basin
- E. Lanning / L. Lumbreras chronology
### Hunters & Gatherers

#### Of post-glacial Hunters & Gatherers
- **Lithic**: 1500-4000 BC
- **6000-4200 BC**: Period IV
- **8000-6000 BC**: Period III
- **9500-8000 BC**: Period II
- **? - 9500 BC**: Period I

#### Village Horticulturist
- **Beginning of Agriculture**: 4000-1200 BC
- **2500-1800 BC**: Period VI
- **4200-2500 BC**: Period V

#### Archaic
- **4000-1200 BC**: Period IV
- **2500-1800 BC**: Period III

#### Beginning of Ceramics
- **1800-900 BC**: Period II
- **Initial Period**: 1200 BC - 100 AD
- **900 BC - 200 AD**: Early Horizon

#### Post-Classic
- **1200 BC - 100 AD**: Formative
- **100-800 AD**: Pre-Classic
- **800-1000**: Tiawanaku
- **100-800**: Nazca
- **100-800**: Lima
- **100-800**: Recuay
- **100-500**: Gallinazo
- **100-800**: Moche

#### Regional Development
- **100-800**: Tiawanaku Expansion
- **800-1200**: Huari Expansion
- **600-1200**: Kingdom of Cuzco
- **500-900**: Chanka Confederation
- **500-900**: Ica-Chincha Culture
- **500-900**: Chimu Kingdom
- **500-900**: Chavin

#### Post-Classic
- **1200-1470 AD**: Huari Expansion
- **1476-1532 AD**: INCAS
- **1470-1532 AD**: Tawantinsuyo