

Centre for the Philosophy of Natural and Social Science Literary Festival event



# **Wired for Culture**

Professor Mark Pagel

Head of Evolution Laboratory, School of Biological Sciences, University of Reading

Dr Helena Cronin

Chair, LSE









## Homo erectus





## **Neanderthals**





# "monkey see, monkey (mostly cannot) do"



# Social learning → cumulative cultural evolution

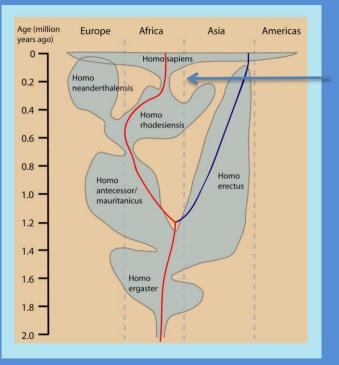








#### The Descent of the Homo lineage from 2 MYA

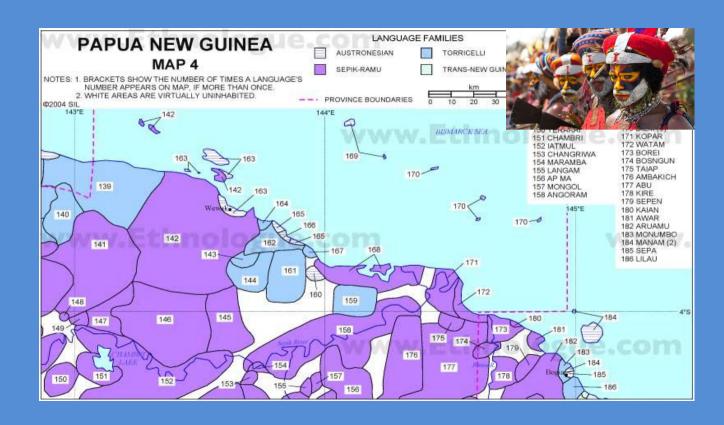


Human 'capacity for culture' evolved about here



### **New Guinea (New Guinea and Papua New Guinea)**

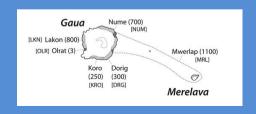




### The Island of Gaua, Vanuatu

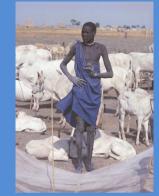


12 miles in diameter, active volcano five distinct languages spoken



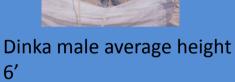
















Polynesian long-distance sailing















BBC NEWS: Man in underwear crawls over frozen river to rescue dog





### 11 December 2011 kidney donor and recipient meet

http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/34435481/ns/health-health\_care/t/largest-ever-kidney-swap-donors-patients-meet/#.T0dxacovBT4



Omaha Beach D-Day, 1944 Robert Capa



**Soldiers WW1** 



Vietnamese monk self-immolation 1963



#### **General Nguyen Ngoc Loan Executing a Viet Cong prisoner, Vietnam, 1968**





June 2008 Sainsbury's south-west London





### **The Modern World**







#### The 80,000 year triumph of cooperation



Bands->Tribes->chiefdoms->city states->nation states->supra-national organisations