

INTRODUCTION

“The Most Wonderful Story I know is, perhaps, that this bread, thousands of years old though it is, is not yet finished in the baking. Botanist, farmer, miller, and baker are still experimenting with it. The entire story of bread goes very deep-its social and technical, religious, political, and scientific story”

H.E JACOB “SIX THOUSAND YEARS OF BREAD”



A curation of over 2 million years of trial and error, research and development, the gathering and sharing of knowledge, and ultimately survival of the best fed people and their traditions. Passed down through the generations. The culinary traditions we take part in each and every day are not only what made us human but largely what makes us who we are today.

I hope this book finds you curious and hungry for the most mouthwatering, body nourishing, and spiritually enlivening food traditions gathered and refined over the millennia. This is our culinary heritage.

The fruit of plants in the family ____ (Grass) are what we call cereals or grains. Heritage grains are as ancient, nourishing and elemental to civilization as cooking is to humanity. With the current health crisis in America and abroad a lot of fingers are being pointed. Some wrongly so at grains. I'd like to help set the record straight. The chronic metabolic diseases causing our health crisis are verifiably caused by highly processed industrial food imposters, not our whole ancient grains. The science on this matter is overwhelming and definitive. In fact it is more measurable and well defined than the current climate science. Agreement abounds in the scientific community while corporations with immense financial interests and resources try to create doubt with corporately funded pseudo science. Highly refined carbohydrates and fats embedded in pseudo foods need simply be replaced by whole plant based foods and traditional preparations. What we have been eating all along until our home cooking was handed over to large scale corporate food production during the past 75 years.

Food doesn't need to be a battle against addictive corporate fake food substances. All we need to do is follow the traditions that we know lead to healthy lives. The well documented blue zone diets all have a common tapestry of food types. A diverse diet of minimally processed vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts and seeds. Small amounts of meat and dairy usually accompany these whole food plant based diets. Now if this is sounding to healthy for you just flip ahead...these are the most delicious foods on earth bar none. Let me take you there.

I have spent much of my life exploring the traditions from around the world that inspire and move me and this book contains the cream of the crop from my experience and work. I hope my passion and joy comes through these recipes and stories and ignites your kitchen with flames to keep you warm even on the coldest winter nights.

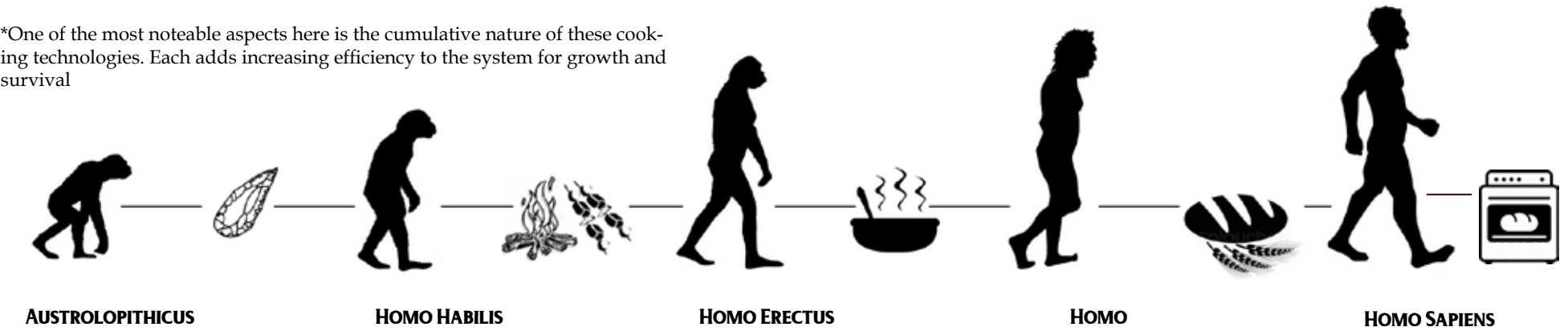
THE ROLE OF COOKING TRADITIONS IN HUMAN EVOLUTION

“Fossil evidence indicates that [the dependence on cooked food] arose not just tens of thousands of years ago, or even a few hundred thousand, but right back at the beginning of our time on earth, at the start of human evolution, by the habiline that became homo erectus...We should indeed pin our humanity on cooks.”

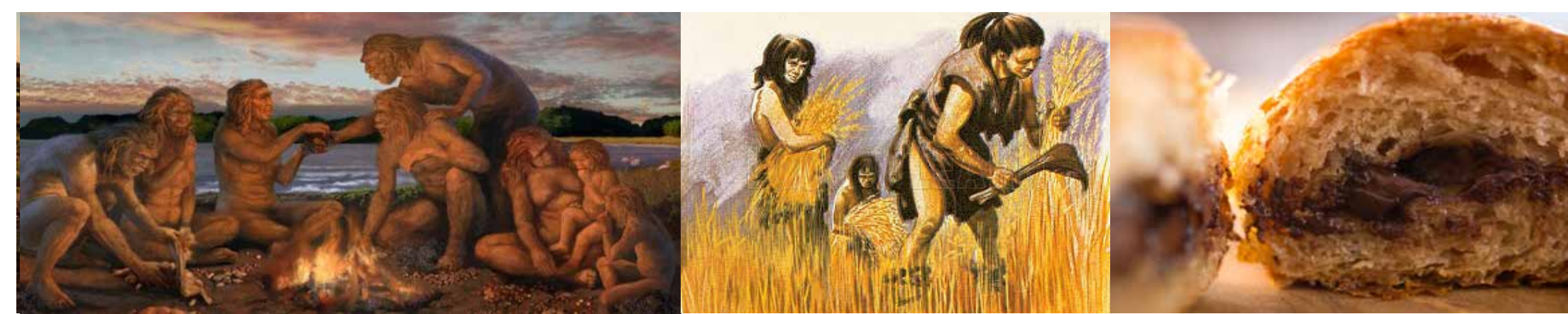
Richard Wrangham - Anthropological Biologist, Harvard University

4.5-1.9 MILLION YEAR AGO 2.8 - 1.5 MILLION YEARS AGO 1.9 MILLION - 143,000 YEARS AGO 400,000-28,000 YEARS AGO 200,000 YEARS AGO TO PRESENT

*One of the most notable aspects here is the cumulative nature of these cooking technologies. Each adds increasing efficiency to the system for growth and survival



<p>AUSTROLOPITHICUS</p> <p>Almost entirely raw food diet. The only access to cooked food for australopithecines would have been foraging in areas after a wild fire burned through as many primates still do today. But very infrequently one of the earliest of our ancestors with bipedal adaptations for traveling further distances to forage for food as the tropical jungles transitioned to savannah.</p> <p>These were also the first creatures to employ stone shards as knives. This was the primary catalyst of the evolution into Homo Habilis who extensively used made stone knives and other tools. They could now cut their meat and open bones to extract marrow.</p>	<p>HOMO HABILIS (HANDY MAN)</p> <p>With their stone tools, increased bipedalism, and increased brain capacity Homo Habilis would make perhaps the most catalyzing discovery of mankind; the discovery that fire could be controlled and used to soften and preserve food as well as providing warmth, light into the evening and protection from predators. Most importantly they got much more energy (about twice) from the same available foods.</p> <p>This allowed metabolic energies to shift from big mouths, jaws, teeth and guts to chew and digest raw foods to shrink in favor of much bigger brains and even better bipedalism.</p>	<p>HOMO ERECTUS</p> <p>As cooking techniques improved more and more energy would go into ever increasing brain size and smaller digestive systems. The erectus skeleton also shows continued development towards bipedalism making him a great runner, hunter and gatherer.</p> <p>Not only did his food taste better cooked and provide more energy but it lasted longer. Raw meat that would have spoiled in a few hours could be cooked and probably became the first “jerky”</p>	<p>HOMO NEANDERTALENSIS</p> <p>While we are still working to uncover the details of the Neanderthal diet, it is becoming increasingly possible to do so through the examination of fossils with increasing ability to decipher the origin of tiny old fragments of food, especially those found in dental calculus. A 40,000 year old Neanderthal tooth had cooked einkorn in its dental calculus. We know that Neanderthals not only ate einkorn but cooked it. Some leading archaeologists believe there is evidence to suggest that Neanderthals not only cooked with fire but boiled some of their food in water making the first soups and stews.</p>	<p>HOMO SAPIENS</p> <p>We still don't have all the answer to many questions about our evolution but one of the most important things right now is to identify the right questions to ask. If the control of fire and ability to cook foods were the primary catalyst in the evolution from habilis to erectus we have to ask was it certain milestones in the cooking process that catalyzed the evolution from erectus to Neanderthal and Sapiens. I propose this is likely the case as few things have as big an impact on one's body and mind than the foods we eat. Most species are largely defined by diet and humans are no certain exception. Perhaps it was the discovery of bread that created sapiens. I suspect we may have an answer to this question in the next 50 years.</p>
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*This graphic is not intended to suggest that evolution is a linear progression since it is not but instead to show the relationship between evolutionary catalysts and the species it led to. Many species in the human lineage are not present here. We now know that genes even move horizontally between species. Nothing is linear.