


THE FIRST



HOMO SAPIENS IN EUROPE



Tooth and bone fragments discovered in a Bulgarian cave have revealed the earliest proven presence of Homo sapiens – or modern humans – on the European continent.



Bacho Kiro cave is located in the region of Dryanovo, in the picturesque canyon of Andaka river and Dryanovska river. In the vertical limestone cliff 25 meters high of 335 m above sea-level



The Middle to Upper Palaeolithic transition in Europe witnessed the replacement and partial absorption of local Neanderthal populations by Homo sapiens populations of African origin



Scientists from the **Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology** in Germany have analyzed 4 bone fragments and a tooth discovered in the cave. Radiocarbon dating and DNA tests show that the fossils date back to 46,000 years ago.



The tools and ornaments found alongside modern human remains at Bacho Kiro, such as pendants made of cave bear teeth, closely resemble artifacts from Neanderthal sites in western Europe dated several thousand years later



The new findings highlight the mystery of why Neanderthals disappeared when they did, if, as these new findings suggest, they coexisted with modern humans for millennia. If they were able to persist side by side for so long, what finally drove Neanderthals to extinction?

Every discovery is one minuscule step closer to giving a complete map of how we came about and perhaps where we can eventually evolve.