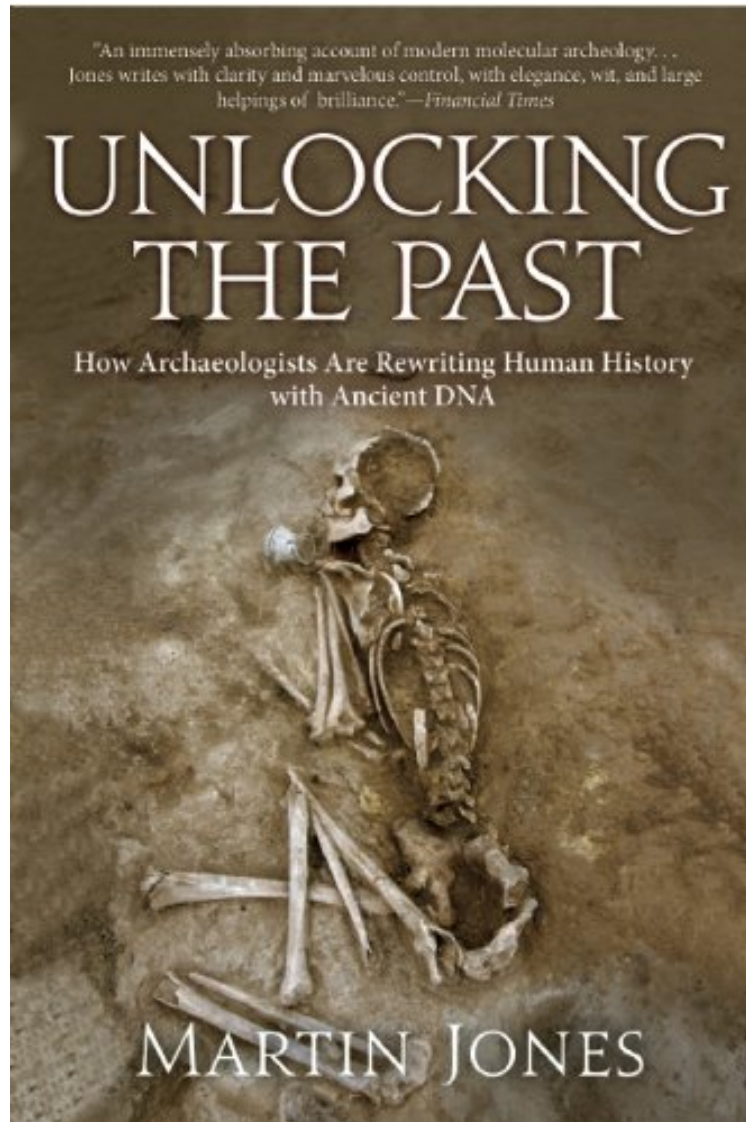


(Mobile book) Unlocking the Past: How Archaeologists Are Rewriting Human History with Ancient DNA

Unlocking the Past: How Archaeologists Are Rewriting Human History with Ancient DNA

Martin Jones

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Martin Jones : Unlocking the Past: How Archaeologists Are Rewriting Human History with Ancient DNA before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Unlocking the Past: How Archaeologists Are Rewriting Human History with Ancient DNA:

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating story of development of DNA, protein, and molecular testing and their application to evolution and migration studiesBy Bayard B.Fascinating story of how modern DNA

and other chemical testing methods reveal past history. The book discusses subjects such as human evolution and migration, as well as the evolutionary development and migration of species such as horses, cows, camels, dogs, and elephants. It also describes in reasonably simple yet complete terms the scientific and historical development of subjects such as DNA testing and other subjects such as proteins and various molecular markers. The book discusses in detail the historical development of ideas pertaining to human evolution. At one time in the early or mid 20th century it was thought that there was a single linear development of the human species culminating in us -- Homo sapiens. This is now known to be incorrect. The current thinking (and I have read this in many other books published over the last 20 or more years) is that 200 to 600 thousand years ago, there may have been as many as five parallel species of the genus Homo alive. And that doesn't even include species of humans that may have existed and died out much earlier. All but sapiens (us) eventually became extinct. This may at one time have been a fairly radical idea, but no one should be surprised, I think. After all, if there can be several species of dogs or other animals, then why couldn't there have been several species of humans? 10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Excellent book for archaeology buffs. By James G. Broadwell Sometimes too technical for me about cell structure (high school biology was 55 years ago, before DNA was widely recognized) But very interesting nonetheless. I've always been interested in physical (pots sherds, coins, post holes et al) archaeology and this brings a totally new angle on archaeology.. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating book, more about the science of the archaeology than the usual book of this order. By David L. Johnson I haven't finished this yet, but it is fascinating. Rather than just talk about what was discovered with these new molecular methods, he details the development of the methods themselves, and also explains how that led to the remarkable detail of archaeological information that they are finding. It was a little slow at first, but it gives a view behind the curtain of the subject.

In *Unlocking the Past*, Martin Jones, a leading expert at the forefront of bioarchaeology the discipline that gave Michael Crichton the premise for *Jurassic Park* explains how this pioneering science is rewriting human history and unlocking stories of the past that could never have been told before. For the first time, the building blocks of ancient life DNA, proteins, and fats that have long been trapped in fossils and earth and rock have become widely accessible to science. Working at the cutting edge of genetic and other molecular technologies, researchers have been probing the remains of these ancient biomolecules in human skeletons, sediments and fossilized plants, dinosaur bones, and insects trapped in amber. Their amazing discoveries have influenced the archaeological debate at almost every level and continue to reshape our understanding of the past. Devising a molecular clock from a certain area of DNA, scientists were able to determine that all humans descend from one common female ancestor, dubbed The Mitochondrial Eve, who lived around 150,000 years ago. From molecules recovered through grinding stones and potsherds, they reconstructed ancient diets and posited when such practices as dairying and boiling water for cooking began. They have reconstituted the beer left in the burial chamber of pharaohs and know what the Iceman, the five-thousand-year-old hunter found in the Alps in the early nineties, ate before his last journey. Conveying both the excitement of innovative research and the sometimes bruising rough-and-tumble of scientific debate, Jones has written a work of profound importance. *Unlocking the Past* is science at its most engaging.

"Some books change the way we think ... [*Unlocking the Past*] is one of the most important books of the year." *New Statesman* "Very timely and a delight to read ... Martin Jones brings together, for the first time, the story of the spectacular achievements of a generation of scientists from around the world. It is a story told with all the enthusiasm of one who has been among the pioneers. The birth of molecular archaeology is a scientific revolution that is transforming our concepts of the past." Barry Cunliffe, author of *The Ancient Celts* "An immensely absorbing account of modern molecular archaeology ... Jones writes with clarity and marvelous control, with elegance, wit, and large helpings of brilliance." *Financial Times* "Refreshing and lively ... Martin Jones captures the flavor of the chase and the enthusiasm of the researcher using some of the remarkable new techniques now available for investigation of the remote human past." Colin Renfrew, author of *Archaeology and Language* "[*Unlocking the Past*] is a mine of information about a fascinating field of scientific inquiry. You should come away enlightened and inspired." *Guardian*