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Left: The head of a lion and the body of a man: the Lion Man was carved out of ivory from a mammoth's tusk. This and other figurines from Swabia are the oldest known examples of figurative art.

Below: This preserved flute from the cave at Hohle Fels is made from the bone from a vulture's wing. The person who made it incised markings to ensure that the holes were pierced in the right positions.

Below: The Neanderthals had already been living in Europe and Asia for several hundred millennia when modern people arrived and took over.

Above: The first farmers in Germany built this solar observatory at Goseck over 7,000 years ago. This means Goseck is considerably older than the better-known stone circle, Stonehenge. At the midwinter solstice, you can see the sun rise and set through two gaps in the wooden palisade.

Left: The people who used Göbekli Tepe dragged huge blocks of stone to the site. They carved images of scorpions, birds and other animals, and erected the stones in the round buildings where they worshipped.

Left: Mammoths are the most frequently occurring motif in the Rouffignac cave. Over 150 such pictures have been found.

Right: Ötzi weighed only about 50 kilos, but he was strong and wiry. The museum in Bolzano, Italy, displays the model with a bare torso. However, a striped cloak made of goat hide, a loincloth of goat leather, a bearskin cap and a raincoat made of grass stalks were among the finds.

Below: Brother, sister and betrothed? The three young people in Dolni Vestonice's triple grave are the oldest found to belong to haplogroups U5 and U8. All of them died about 31,000 years ago.

Left: The Nebra sky disc is made of bronze, with pieces of gold plate attached. It could be used by an expert to help predict the summer and winter solstices and synchronise the lunar and solar years.

Left: At the archaeological site of Khirrokitia, archaeologists and craftsmen have reconstructed some of the round buildings where Cyprus's first farmers lived.

Below: Stonehenge seems to have been used mainly at the winter solstice. Farming people had been erecting similar circles of wooden posts almost since they first arrived in England. But the world-famous megaliths were added later on, some of them at the dawn of the Bronze Age.

RAPID CHANGES AFTER THE ICE AGE

Left: While the Ice Age was gradually slackening its grip on the globe, regional temperature changes could be dramatic. The curves illustrate analyses of cores from the Greenland ice sheet.

Below: DNA analyses shows the dispersal of people from the Yamnaya steppe culture, first towards the Corded Ware culture of central Europe and subsequently towards the Bell Beaker culture of western Europe.

THEY CAME FROM THE STEPPE

R1a CLANS

The Indo-European pastoralist culture of the steppes included men belonging to haplogroup R1a. During the Bronze Age, they had a very large number of descendants who spread throughout Europe and down to south Asia.

Right: There is a guesthouse today next to the site where the first Cro-Magnons were discovered. The house is built into the cliffs, just like the huts of the Cro-Magnon people. Here I am in front of the house.

Right: My mother, Anita, aged about twenty.

Below: My paternal grandmother, Hilda, with her mother, Elin, and her daughter, Gunnel. The little girl in the picture is my cousin Kristina. Today she is a grandmother herself, and her daughter's daughter has the same mitochondria as the women depicted here.