

TEC 154 2014S, Class 05: Stone Tools (2)

Overview

- Preliminaries.
 - Admin.
- Notes from SR
- Notes from AF
- Notes from DS

Preliminaries

Admin

- No readings for Friday. But you may want to start reading Petroski.
- Starting next week, I'll do my best to send comments on your questions to you as well as to the page. (Sorry, I'm not doing that retrospectively.)
- Note takers:
 - Wednesday: AF and DS
 - Friday: EG and ZS (okay?)
 - Please make a summary of the main points of the day's class.
 - I may also take notes this week, since I'm not leading the class.
- Missing: EG, CO, LY
- Extra credit:
 - Convocation next Wednesday (February 5)
 - Friday's CS table: The ACM Code of Ethics
 - Others?

Notes from SR

Review

- We learn a bit about the stone tools through experimentation.
- But the experimentation doesn't tell us what it was actually used for.
- The context from which the tool comes allows us to interpret a lot about the tool.
- A few specimens are coming around.
 - Spear head that is broken. Whittaker's atl atl tip has similar damage
 - Sickle blade that is highly polished. Comes from the silicate aspects of plants. (Sometimes you can identify the exact plant.)

- From the bronze age!

On to questions

- Why would we have a stone sickle from the bronze age?
 - Hypothesis one: Weight
 - Hypothesis two: Availability
 - Why is stone more available than metal?
 - Stone requires less equipment to turn into a tool
 - Simple answer: Stone is cheaper
 - Material is available
 - Requires less equipment to make
 - Fast to make
 - Easier, cheaper, more available
 - Early metal is *very* expensive
 - Mining
 - Processing from ore
 - Casting techniques, just being developed
 - What do you use metal for if its expensive?
 - Decoration and jewelry
 - High prestige (including weaponry)

[Detour: How many faculty does it take to reach StorageServer]

A few points from Washburn

- Washburn promotes an explanatory story that is bolstered by evidence.
- Model: At the point humans diverged from apes, they started standing upright (becoming bipedal)
 - Once you're bipedal you can use your hands.
 - Hands allow tools.
 - Tools increase fitness.
 - And hence the trait will expand.
- This is a model from 1960s - the start of the explosion in dealing with these fossils
- There's been a lot of new evidence since the 1960s.
- Washburn article kicked off by Leaky discovery in 1959
- Something that we don't want to call human (homo)
- Earliest stone tools are 2.5 million years
- We see fully bipedal creatures at least 3.5 million years ago (Australopithecine) - tracks and more.
- Hmmm ... what does this say to Washburn's hypothesis that tools had a cyclic positive effect on bipedalism?
 - Perhaps they are using another tool that doesn't survive or that we wouldn't notice.
 - Current evidence - Chimps certainly use sticks as tools.
- Although different people emphasize different parts, they agree on the various parts of the model.
 - Bipedalism
 - Hands

- Tools
- Larger brains
- Slow development of infants - need time to develop brain
- Social activity
- About 2.5 million years ago, we have three different groups
 - *Gautsolophiti*
 - *Homo habilis*
 - *Robust australopithecine*
- Possible to interpret in multiple ways
 - The *Zinjanthropus* was originally interpreted as a hunter in the site, but later as a victim.
- What happens when you have multiple species in the same territory?
 - They might compete
 - They might each find different niches
- In this case
 - Eating vegetables
 - Eating meat
 - Eating marrow (which may include tool use)

On to the Sharp article

- Example: Ad/axe
- Stone axes are relatively easy to make with simple tools.
- Steel axes are effectively impossible to make.
- Everyone needs axes
- Many axes obtained by trade
 - Trade is complex, particularly if you're warring with your neighbors
 - A long-term relationship
 - Often a gift model - *Yir Yoront* give spears made with stingray parts, trading partner gives axe.
- What's wrong with steel axes?
 - You get them differently - You work for them.
 - Anyone can get them if they work.
 - The authority figures (older men) don't tend to get them because they don't like to work for the missionaries and the missionaries don't particularly like them.
 - Religious belief has endless cycle
 - Something new undermines the religious belief
 - Whole different meaning
- Interestingly, steel axes aren't that much better
- There was a prediction that undermining the meaning of axes would have a huge impact, perhaps having the YY move to missionary locations and live very differently.
 - Things haven't changed as extremely as they
- When you use a technology, you say something.
- Example: Computing facilities
 - "You will get a good education"
 - "It is up to date"

- Computers help symbolically.
- Having good computer skills is a sign of a capable/intelligent person
- What does it mean when a faculty member has a typewriter instead of a computer?
 - Conservative or traditional, and they want you to know that
- Useful as scapegoats
- We treat them as if they are animate objects

Flint and steel

- A sharp piece of flint
- A piece of steel
- Rub the steel quickly across the flint. (Students seem to be able to do.)
- You then put the spark on something else (e.g., char cloth)
- And the smoldering char cloth on something else, and add oxygen.
- Early light: Spinning steel wheel that you put up against flint, gives a shower of sparks.
 - Thought to be safe for lights.
- Flintlock weapons
 - Press trigger
 - Flint falls down
 - Hits steel
 - Spark goes into starter
 - Starter ignites powder
- Industry needed!
 - Each flint does about ten shots.
 - Military needs lots of flint - millions and millions
 - Creates huge piles of waste - road material
 - Make long blades and then break them up into the basic flints for the flintlock.
- Brandon, England.
 - Proud of their heritage.
 - It's a cottage industry - Make it in your home or shop and then sell through middleman.
 - Subsidiary industries
 - Dig up flint from the chalk - often 30 meters deep
 - Blocks of flint are a few hundred pounds
 - Big blocks broken up into cores
 - Cores broken up into the blades - A good flaker can make 10K flakes per day (in a twelve hour day)
 - The knapper turns the blades into the square segments for gunflints. Could make 4000 gunflints in a day.
 - Also needed to sort
- Also lots of waste
- Obselence.
 - By 1879, the industry was already in decline - cartridges and such
 - During the Napoleonic wars, 200 flintworkers
 - By 1800s: 100

- By 1868: 56
- By 1907: 22
- 1924-194s: 7
- 1993: 1 (Fred Avery)
- There are no longer people trained in the traditional system.
- As industry declines, there are fewer products, fewer specialized tools, loss of related industries, loss of culture, loss of vocabulary
- Subsidiary culture features vanish
- Why does an industry in decline survive?
- Why does something like stone tools survive into the industrial age.
- Sometimes an old technology survives because it's still better
 - Cheap
 - Fills a niche
- There's a biological model: Artifacts compete for niches
- Current stone bows and arrows are made in the traditional technique
 - But for sale to tourists
 - And probably not as good for the original use

Some important points:

- Biology, behavior, and technology interact.
- "Old" technologies continue to be used in new ways.
- Technology has economic and social implications.
- There's a biological model: Artifacts compete for niches

Notes from AF

1/29/2014 Notes

Early use of metal was purely ornamental

mental component of technology upon Whittaker figuring out how computer works with aid of student

Washburn article points: * promotes a model and explanatory studies on how humans are involved

basic model: at the point where humans diverge from apes the important thing that happens is that they start standing up right (bipedal) which means hands can be used. In turn, tools can be used.

So those that can stand up and use tools can reproduce more tools in Washburn's models, kicks [?] of bipedalism

1959, an old fossil was found, Australopithecus (there are robust ones, and grass ones that would look like upright chimpanzee) human in terms of not walking up right, but not using tools. This messes with Washburn's idea that stone tools are driving force for bipedalism.

Student: pointed out that it was probably that the Australopithecus was using other tools.

Prof: asks about the evidence (and not only to preserve theory)

student: taking a stick taking off leaves and putting it in termite hole (so it promotes hand use and bipedalism)

Tools, intelligence, reproductive change, more social activity, all of this work together, as Washburn focuses on tools.

3 species occupy the same territory, competition is going to happen unless they eat different things and divide the niche and do different things.

related to the fossils Leaky found that could say that the Homo was the predator, or that they had different roles. The grass Australopithecus had smaller chewing muscles, as they ate small plants.

wanted to see from old Washburn's article that a model can be created for the behavior of humans, the tools they create, etc.

no evidence that connects to oceanic development

most important point of course: technology has economic and social implications

Sharp article: introduction of steel axes affected *Yir Yoront* tribe.

- simple to make with local materials [questionable, see a few bullet points later]
- used by everyone, like women gathering wood
- men use it to get honey
- impossible to make simply, need to happen through missions or trade

important, because a place where tribes are suspicious of each other tribes you need a trading partner. they are connected to you by marriage or friendship or connected through elders. you give them what you have access too (like *Yir Yoront* has stingrays and spear and they would receive part of stone ax)

stone axe MALE AUTHORITY- women and children need to ask to use it, it defines power

ax symbol of masculinity. so stone axes have social meaning.

Symbolism of the ax: always been there

steel ax not so much better than stone ax, but different meaning. It is sharper using a technology is a social action

ex. the college recruiting material, part of it talked about the computing facilities (and athletic facilities). so what does computing mean (student: because you are going to get a good education)

Prof: since they are up to date you will get a good education. so computers are a symbol to help with recruiting.

Prof: What does the professor want to know if you walk in and there is a typewriter?

Student: Resistance to change

Prof: per chance they refuse to learn. we all use our computers as scapegoats, and we use them as objects and we probably have said bad things to it technology is something we think about and use as thought tools

different suite [phase?] of technology: from beginning of stone tools to end of stone tools by looking of stone tools we can see general principles of how tools become obsolete

Flint industry, not just good for cutting things, but for making fire . Students will be making sparks.

has a distinctive sound, one of the popes forbad smoking because of the noise of people trying to start fire was disturbing service

need flit and steel and also something for spark to catch. ex. charred linen cloth. once spark lands on it. then needs to get it into something else and put oxygen in it. you can fairly effectively create fire (and put it out)

can create light with this.

can also fire guns with flint gun. Does some flint work and shoots the gun, developed in 17th century and created a demand for stone tools. There were people making flints but once you have guns and the military starts to use them, you need millions and millions of gun flints.

british military based on stone tools, so a stone tool industry survive british industry: industry flints where a whole bunch were made a lot of scraps made used for roads, etc.

Flintknappers, guys who made flints, advertised in bar

performed by small groups and family, and then collected by middle man

needed to raise flint and heave over your head from one step to another. Limited technology to get flint, COTTAGE INDUSTRY, since not that many people, and families in homes

need to get the larger pieces, then the flaker is needed that can produce 10,000 flakes a day. Incredible level of speed and efficiency

then it went to the Napper, who used a specialized hammer and cut them into square and sort them, 4,000 a day desired. By products, waste (used to finish buildings in England), finished gunflints, different sizes etc.

Gunflint industry in 1979 was already in decline, because more efficient ways of firing guns were being created.

Example: Flintworkers in Brandon:

- Napoleonic wars (200)
- Mid 1800 (100)
- 1868 (56)
- 1960s-1993 (Fred avery)

So although still proud of Flintworkers, it's gone now. As it's gone you get loss of culture things, but also specialized vocabulary, ex. jag.

parts of stone tools survive because it does things better than other things. It is cheap and efficient and fills a niche. As other ignition systems, the flints die out. Part of the principle is there a biological model, as artifacts compete for a niche the same way that organisms do. And if they can do different things that none other can do effectively, they will survive.

Bows and arrows still sold by Mayans in Mexico, because it fills a niche of tourist buying it. Since the Tourist is not going to sue it, it isn't going to be well-made, shortcuts will be used things that are reduced and fitting other niches, often get reduced in some ways.

Notes from DS

Recap:

- The context the artifact comes and the residue surrounding the artifact tell us crucial information.
- Striations and the polish on the artifact can enhance our understanding of how the artifact was used for (i.e. different types of polish leave different imprints on the artifact; the polish left by meat would be greatly different than the polish left by plants).

Why Would people in the Bronze Age have a Stone Sickle:

- Stone is more easily accessible, requires less manufacturing, cheaper.
- Early metal is hard to come by and requires casting techniques that are hard to complete multiple times and consistently.
- Metals: what are they used for, cheap metals or expensive metals- expensive metals were ornamentally, while cheap metals were used for cooking.

Washburn & Sharp:

- Promotes an explanatory: the basic model = humans and apes diverge -> humans become bipedal -> using tools -> more tools leads to a separation creating a better off group of humans -> more tools correlates to more bipedal and more able to reproduce.
- Evidence = 1959 Leaky finds a fossil, stating that there are ape like human ancestors.
- Australopithecus dates back 2.5 million years- we know he was bipedal because of footprints found in volcanic ash, but it is claimed that he was not using stone tools.
- Washburn does NOT like this, he claims that tools are the most important factor that leads to bipedalism.
- Pushing the point that they must have used tools that were not preserved (i.e. wooden tools) or we do not recognize the tools.
- Also claims: bipedal -> ability to use their hands -> use of tools ->enlarged brain -> enhancement use

of bipedalism -> more social.

- Leaky comes across three fossils, all of which he claims are upright, all capable of creating tools! survival of the fittest. Leaky believes that these three groups compete with each other until the others are eliminated OR they divide up the area in a way that is conducive to the groups coexisting peacefully.
- Leaky also claims that the Homo Habilis is able to access high value products (i.e. bone marrow) which allows that group to rise to the top.

Technology has economic and social implications: Steel Axes

- New technologies can have an upsetting effect on the current flow. Technology also says something = the technology a person chooses to use says a lot about them (i.e. a person who gets a new computer is stating that they are going to use the newest and best technology, while a person who uses a typewriter in this modern day is stating that they are resistant to change).
- Steel axes are easy to make, though trading is required to obtain all the parts and these axes strongly enhance day-to-day life.
- To create these axes a relationship between two different groups of people must occur and be long-standing. This is not only a long-range relationship but also institutes a long-term social relationship between two groups.
- Social implications- displays male authority= women and children have to ask to borrow the axe, a totemic symbol.
- Steel axes came from the missionaries which undermines the original religious beliefs.

The End of Stone Tools: We can see the principles of how some technologies became obsolete.

- Gunflinting: the process of shaving steel off and creating a spark! can be used to create light, used to shoot guns (starting in the 17th century).
- Demand for flints increases and many gunflints are needed for wars and such.
- The usage of stone tools survives into this period to support the gunflint gun industry- a mass quantity is needed to support the usage of these guns, creating a cottage industry.
- While stone tools were used, other subsidiary tools were used as well.
- Providing these flints enlisted a set of professionals: miners, quarters (sp?), flakers, knappers.
- Industrial production created on a minor scale, using specialized tools and using the waste products in special production.
- 1779 was the beginning of the decline of these stone tools, due to new technologies such as more advanced guns. From 1780-1815 there were 200 professionals and by 1993 there was only one flintknapper left.
- A few people are still able to do this, though they were not trained through the traditional system- this results in a loss of a chunk of culture and a loss of vocabulary.

Why Do Stone Tools Survive Into the Steel Age?

- This is because these stone tools are better than newer technologies. These tools are cheap, efficient and fill a niche!
- Biological model = artifacts compete for a niche, if the artifact can be repurposed or is multifaceted then the likelihood that it becomes obsolete decreases immensely.
- Fitting into a niche especially if it is reduced to a different usage leads to a lesser version of the

artifact (i.e. selling bows and arrows on native american reservations- the ones sold today fill a different niche and are not made with the same quality)

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