

Human migration to Asia much earlier than thought, newly discovered teeth reveal

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Teeth from a cave in south China show that *Homo sapiens* reached China around 100,000 years ago — a time at which most researchers had assumed that our species had not trekked far beyond Africa.

“This is stunning, it’s major league,” says Michael Petraglia, an archaeologist at the University of Oxford, UK who was not involved in the research. “It’s one of the most important finds coming out of Asia in the last decade.”

Limestone caves pockmark Daoxian County in Hunan Province, China. Recent excavations of a cave system there extending over 3 square kilometres discovered 47 human teeth, as well as the remains of hyenas, extinct giant pandas and dozens of other animal species. The researchers found no stone tools; it is likely that humans never lived in the cave and their remains were instead hauled in by predators.

The teeth are unquestionably those of *H. sapiens*, says María Martín-Torres, a palaeoanthropologist at University College London who co-led the study with colleagues Wu Liu and Xie-jie Wu at the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology in Beijing. Their small size, thin roots and flat crowns are typical for anatomically modern humans — *H. sapiens* — and the overall shape of the teeth is barely distinguishable from those of both ancient and present-day humans. The team report their results in *Nature*.

Read full, original post: [Teeth from China reveal early human trek out of Africa](#)