

More evidence Neandertals were fully human

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A recent report^{1,2} describes a new discovery of ‘modern human’ fossils in a cave in Romania. Using conventional dating methods the fossils are estimated to be about 35,000 years old.³ Although prevailing evolutionary theory has ‘modern humans’ migrating out of Africa in the last 200,000 years, these fossils are the ‘oldest’ that have been found in Europe. The fossils, which are from at least three individuals, include a male adult jawbone with teeth and the facial bones of an adolescent.

The teeth in the adult jawbone are huge, and this along with other features have led several prominent anthropologists to suggest that these ‘modern humans’ hybridized with ‘archaic’ humans including Neandertals. This suggestion is hotly debated by others, who point to comparisons of mitochondrial DNA between ‘modern humans’ and Neandertals, which are supposedly significantly different. However, the results of the DNA analysis, on the

two Neanderthal samples tested, could be interpreted differently, and at best can only be used to conclude that the mothers of the specimens tested did not contribute DNA to the subset of ‘modern human’ DNA it was compared to. More likely the differences noted at locations of mutational hotspots are not statistically significant to the entire genome.⁴

The idea that ‘modern humans’ and Neandertals interbred (and thus are the same species) is strongly supported by evidence that Neandertals lived side-by-side with modern humans in the Middle East for 100,000 years of evolutionary time, and made virtually identical stone tools and jewellery.^{5,6} Fossils combining features of both Neandertals and ‘modern humans’ are known from a number of areas,⁷ including a recent find of a child in Portugal.⁸ Several excavation sites include both Neanderthal and ‘modern humans’ buried together.⁹ It is not difficult to conclude that Neanderthal Man was totally human, and that ‘modern humans’ and Neandertals likely amalgamated in Europe.

The find of these huge teeth will obviously impact on previous statistical analysis of dental crown data.¹⁰ This analysis noted that the Krapina (Croatia) Neandertals, on average, differ more

from ‘modern human’ groups than do the ‘modern human’ groups among themselves. Yet even in those studies, there was a significant degree of overlap. Neandertals are more similar to modern north-eastern Siberians than the sub-Saharan Africans are to any other *modern* group of humans (except the Chinese).¹¹ Likewise, the Krapina-Neanderthal/modern-Siberian-human differences are *less* than those that exist between the Aboriginal Australians and every other ‘modern human’ group (except the Siberians).

The Bible tells us that all humans are descended from Adam and subsequently Noah, and were dispersed into different language groups at Babel. Neanderthal fossils are the remains of one or more of these groups, made in the image of God. Their unique characteristics are within the range of what is termed ‘modern human’, as further confirmed by the evidence of the teeth in this recent discovery.

References

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Photo courtesy: David Green

This skull, from a Neanderthal female, was located during an excavation in Gibraltar. Recent research into Neanderthal fossils found in Romania confirm other data that Neandertals hybridized with ‘modern’ humans. Neandertals are descendants of Noah, forming a post-Babel subset of people with robust physical characteristics.