

## Scandalous first dates for Neandertals

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### Hahnofersand and Professor von Zieten

A reanalysis of some Neandertal and *Homo sapiens* fossils reveals that they are much younger than they were claimed to be. Recently it was revealed that German anthropologist Professor Reiner Protsch von Zieten (age 65) has deceived many by claiming that a Neandertal specimen and two *Homo sapiens* specimens were much older than they actually were.

An adult frontal bone<sup>1</sup> found by H.R. Labukt in March of 1973<sup>2</sup> at Hahnofersand, Germany, has been claimed to be a hybrid of a modern *Homo sapiens* and a Neandertal. Ian Tattersall (citing Brauer<sup>3</sup>) says the specimen has ‘both Neanderthal and modern human affinities’.<sup>2</sup> The Hahnofersand fossil was said by von Zieten to be 36,000 years old based on carbon dating. In addition, according to Tattersall<sup>2</sup> (again citing Brauer<sup>3</sup>): ‘Direct dating by R. Protsch yielded 36 ka by amino acid racemization<sup>4</sup> and 36,300 ± 600 yr B.P. by conventional radiocarbon.’

Are these dates accurate? If in the past you had dared to question this date, it is likely that you would be ridiculed or called close-minded and unscientific. Do we have a valid reason to question this or other dates assigned to hominid fossils? We know that there are improvable assumptions inherent in dating fossils. There are also personal and political reasons that someone would claim a fossil is older than it actually is.

Can we trust the 36,000-year-old ‘age’ of Hahnofersand? Recently (2004), Oxford University’s carbon-dating laboratory has revealed that this skull was not as old as R. Protsch and others claimed, but only 7,500 years old. If accurate, this date would place Hahnofersand closer to a date consistent with that of biblical creation, and

farther from an evolutionary model of human origins.

Prof von Zieten told Germany’s *Der Spiegel* that ‘The new data from Oxford is all wrong’, and claims that the young date is from a shellac (a resinous varnish) used to preserve the specimen. This is unlikely, as the sample used would not have been obtained from simply scraping the outside of the skull, but from taking a piece from inside it. Even if the shellac did penetrate into some of the bone, a good sample could still be taken from the right side, a large portion of which was ‘removed for amino acid racemization and <sup>14</sup>C dating’.<sup>2</sup>

### ‘Bischof-Speyer’ skeleton

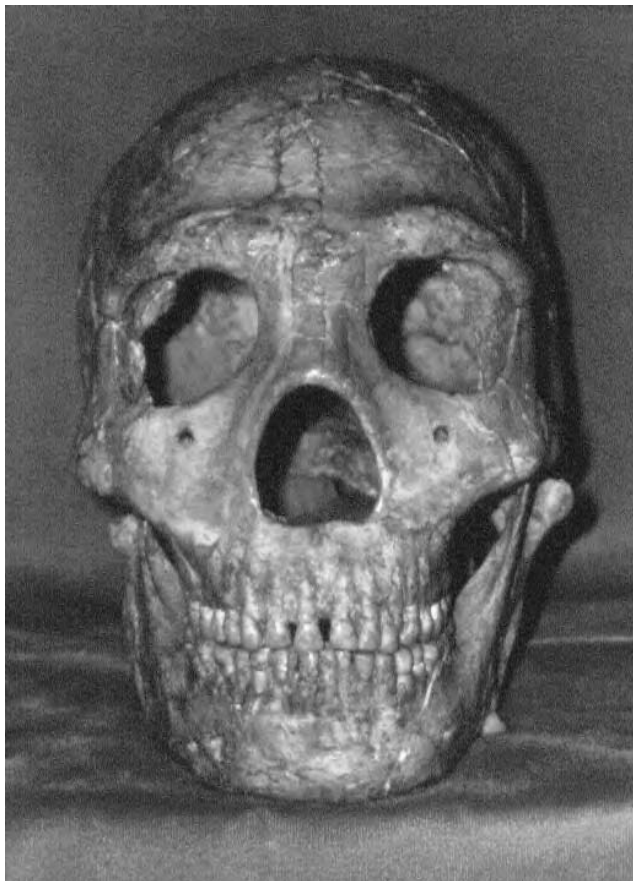
The ‘Bischof-Speyer’ skeleton is that of a female (*Homo sapiens*) individual. It was discovered near the south-west German town of Speyer and was claimed to be 21,300 years old. Later, this specimen was redated and the results from Oxford University indicated it was a mere 3,300 years old. This is an 18,000-year discrepancy!<sup>5</sup>

### Paderborn

Another apparent fraud involves a ‘prehistoric’ skull discovered near Paderborn, Germany, in 1976. This specimen was important because the Paderborn skull was considered to be the oldest human remains ever found in the region. Professor von Zieten dated the skull at 27,400 years old. The latest research, however, indicates that it belonged not to an ancient human, but to an elderly man who died around the year 1750.

Germany’s Herne anthropological museum, which owns the Paderborn skull, was so disturbed by the findings that it did its own tests. Not only was Oxford University correct, and the skull not as old as it was claimed, but it was not even fossilized. Museum director Barbara Ruschoff-Thale said ‘We had the skull cut open and it still smelt’, and ‘We are naturally very disappointed.’

Prof von Zieten’s counterfeit dates



**Figure 1.** Amud 1 Neandertal skull discovered in the Amud Cave, Israel

were revealed by anthropologists Thomas Terberger (Germany) and Martin Street (UK) after an investigation attempting to authenticate German prehistoric remains. Martin Street told the Sunday Telegraph:

‘We had decided to subject many of these finds to modern techniques to check their authenticity so we sent them to Oxford for testing ... It was a routine examination and in no way an attempt to discredit Prof. von Zieten.’<sup>5</sup>

But it seems to me as if authorities might have been tipped off on von Zieten’s dishonesty, as he is also currently being investigated concerning allegations that he tried to sell stolen property. American buyers were offered 280 chimpanzee skulls belonging to the university for \$70,000 (£38,000). Prof von Zieten denies this, and claims that he purchased the skulls in 1975. The university suspended von Zieten and is currently investigating

these claims.

There are many other instances of Neandertal fossils being tampered with<sup>6</sup> that have yet to be properly investigated, and those that have been revealed have received surprisingly little press.

### Amud 1

Another Neandertal individual discovered in the Amud Cave, Israel, by the Tokyo University Scientific Expedition to Western Asia (June–July 1961) gives a radiocarbon date much younger than evolutionists claim is possible for a Neandertal. This was revealed at least 30 years ago but is rarely mentioned.

The Amud 1 skull (see figure 1) was found in the B1 layer. This layer was dated with uranium and also radiocarbon. These methods gave vastly different dates. The ‘ages’ range from 45,000–47,000 years old from thermoluminescence dating, 27,000 (± 500 years), obtained from uranium/ionium growth and a uranium

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fission track date of 28,000 (± 35%) to a radiocarbon date of 5,710 years (± 80 years).<sup>7</sup> So here we have a number of ages differing a total of 41,290 years in time. This is an extraordinary range of time for radiometric dating, a technique that the general public believes to be an exact science.

Of these dates, which one do evolutionists accept and why? They

automatically dismiss the young date (approximately 5,710 years) because they adhere to an evolutionary paradigm. They cannot allow themselves to accept the young date because it is believed to be too young for a Neandertal. Usually, something like contamination of younger carbon is blamed for throwing out a date. There is no way to know for sure if this is the case, however, and it could very well be that this ‘young’ date is the correct one.

### References

1. The bone forming the front part of the skull that shapes the forehead and part of the eye sockets and nasal cavity.
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3. Brauer, G., New Evidence on the transitional period between Neanderthal and modern man, *J. Human Evolution* 10:467–74, 1981.
4. The process by which exclusively L-amino acids change into a mixture of the L- and D-forms.
5. Paterson, T., Neanderthal Man ‘never walked in Northern Europe’ <[www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2004/08/22/wnean22.xml&sSheet=/news/2004/08/22/ixworld.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2004/08/22/wnean22.xml&sSheet=/news/2004/08/22/ixworld.html)>, 21 February 2005.
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7. Day, M.H., *Guide to Fossil Man*, third edition, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, pp. 104–105, 1977.