

Upper Paleolithic blues: consequences of recent dating fiasco on human evolutionary prehistory

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The evolutionary history of modern humans could be in for a bumpy ride following revelations that a German anthropologist, Professor Reiner Protsch von Zieten, falsified dates of human remains; an act that, according to his university in Frankfurt, resulted in him being forced into retirement.¹ Although the exposure of the fraud was announced in February 2005, doubts about Protsch's work had been reported in the UK *Telegraph*,² and also mentioned as a 'news in brief' item in *Nature*,³ in August 2004. While the extent of fraudulent dates may not be known at this stage, three specimens that were redated using the carbon dating method, by a team of Oxford University scientists, showed very different 'dates' than those obtained earlier by Protsch.

The new dates for Hahnöfersand Man (7,500 years old (yo)), Paderborn (Sande) Man (255 yo) and Binshof (Speyer) Woman (3,300 yo) are quite recent by evolutionary standards.¹ The radiocarbon dates obtained earlier by Protsch for Hahnöfersand (36,300 yo⁴), Paderborn (27,400 yo⁴) and Binshof (21,300 yo⁵) are much older. Protsch also supposedly dated the above three specimens by amino acid racemization, and obtained dates (Hahnöfersand: 36,000 yo⁴; Paderborn: 26,000 yo⁴; Binshof: 22,000 yo⁵) very much in agreement with the radiocarbon dates.

Luke Harding, in an article in the *Guardian*, quoted archaeologist Thomas Terberger (who discovered the hoax) as follows:

'Anthropology is going to have to completely revise its picture

of modern man between 40,000 and 10,000 years ago. ... Prof Protsch's work appeared to prove that anatomically modern humans and Neanderthals had co-existed, and perhaps even had children together. This now appears to be rubbish.'¹

It is disappointing that the exposure of the fraudulent dates has only received scant media coverage. The intent of this article is to investigate what implications the frauds have in regards to modern human evolutionary prehistory, free from the constraints of having to toe the evolutionary party line.

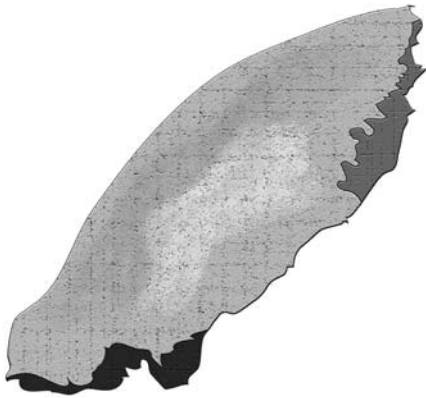
The Paderborn (Sande) calvarium,⁶ according to Fred Smith 'exhibits well-developed brow ridges (Table III) of early modern *H sapiens* form. There is a slight occipital bunning and a very robust nuchal plane,inion,⁷ and mastoid/supramastoid region. These features indicate that the specimen is male. The contours of the specimen are clearly modern *H sapiens* in form, and both the multivariate and univariate analyses of Henke and Protsch [1978] and Bräuer [1980] place it unquestionably in the modern *H sapiens* group.'⁸

As this specimen is considered by evolutionists to be a modern human, the assignment to a much younger age may not have that much significance beyond showing how easily an 'early modern' can become a 'present-day modern'. However, that a skull only 255 yo, which still had an odour when cut open,² could so easily pass as being 27,400 yo suggests caution in accepting dates handed out by evolutionists for other fossils. Not for the reason that there is deliberate fraud, but because radiometric dating methods^{9,10} and molecular clocks^{11,12} are based on unproven and problematic assumptions. The recent reports of soft tissue being found in *T. rex* bones¹³ suggest that the 'dates' of millions of years for these fossils have also been too hastily accepted.^{14,15}

Winfried Henke, in comparing the Binshof (Speyer) calvarium to 'other

upper paleolithic skulls', found that there were 'strong affinities of the female (?), mature calvarium to the cromagnide type of the early *Homo sapiens sapiens* in Europe'.¹⁶ Viewing photos of the Binshof (Speyer) cranium,¹⁷ the specimen does appear to show similarities to the supposedly 30,000-yo Cro-Magnon I cranium,¹⁸ the most famous Cro-Magnon specimen. Evolutionists generally believe that present-day Europeans are descendants of the Cro-Magnon people, a name first given to some specimens (including Cro-Magnon I) with modern anatomy found at the Cro-Magnon rock shelter in western France, but ultimately 'given to all the earliest *Homo sapiens* of Europe'.¹⁹ They are thought to have lived in the period between about 40,000 and 10,000 years ago.²⁰ According to Johanson and Edgar, 'Present-day Europeans have departed in anatomy from the skull shapes found at Cro-Magnon.'²¹ Hence, in an evolutionary scenario, the existence of Cro-Magnon-type people (i.e. the Binshof (Speyer) specimen) much later than expected, now only 3,300 years ago, leaves very little time for modern European people to depart in the 'anatomy from the skull shapes found at Cro-Magnon'. This, in itself, warrants a re-examination of 'modern' human evolutionary prehistory. However, as discussed below, the new, younger, date of the Hahnöfersand specimen threatens to further unravel the supposed evolutionary history of modern humans.

In an English summary of a German paper describing for the first time the frontal bone of a specimen called Hahnöfersand from Germany, discovered in 1973, the author, Gunter Bräuer, stated that Hahnöfersand 'may be seen as a first indication to a phase of hybridization between Neandertals and anatomically modern man in Western Europe'.²² In another paper shortly afterwards, Bräuer, in discussing the extensive analysis of the Hahnöfersand frontal bone in comparison to bones of other humans categorized as Neandertals, Upper Paleolithic, and 'intermediate' ones such as Skhul and



The Hahnöfersand frontal bone has some Neandertal features, such as low frontal profile angle and prominent brow ridges, and was considered to be from a hybrid between Neandertals and 'modern' humans by some evolutionists. (After Bräuer).³⁶

Qafzeh, wrote:

'Principal component analysis as well as multivariate distance measurements show strong affinities between Hahnöfersand and Neandertals such as La Ferrassie and Amud I. In contrast to the Neanderthaloid frontal profile, the morphology of the supraorbital region of Hahnöfersand mainly shows modern features. There is no continuous torus; the very robust glabella and superciliary arches are well defined.'²³

Bräuer summed up the results by concluding 'that Hahnöfersand has modern and Neanderthaloid affinities'.²⁴ Regarding Hahnöfersand and Neandertals, Bräuer again said that 'Hahnöfersand provides us perhaps with the first concrete indication of a hybridization phase between both groups in Western Europe'.²³ According to Stringer and McKie, Bräuer was

'a strong early advocate of the Out of Africa theory, but he still believes that some interbreeding between Neanderthals and early Cro-Magnons occurred in the Middle East and Europe, as demonstrated by the mixed features of the Hahnöfersand skull bone from Germany, and other fossils'.²⁵

Although they state that Hahnöfersand is overall modern in

morphology, Churchill and Smith list some of the 'primitive or even Neandertal-reminiscent features' in the Hahnöfersand specimen as a 'low frontal angle, prominent brow ridges, and large overall dimensions'.²⁶

Concerning the Hahnöfersand find, Stringer and Gamble commented that the

'specimen is robust enough to have led some scholars to suggest that it is from a transitional Neanderthal-Modern individual, either an evolutionary intermediate or an actual hybrid. But it seems more likely that it is just from a very strongly built early Modern.'²⁷

However, the authors, in particular Chris Stringer, are strong adherents of the 'Out of Africa' school of human origins, which believes that the Neandertals were replaced by modern humans migrating to Europe from Africa, with little or no interbreeding. Hence, it is not surprising that they view the Hahnöfersand specimen as merely 'strongly built', rather than as a hybrid or intermediate. However, earlier, Stringer *et al.* found the Bräuer model of hybridization between 'immigrant modern humans' and Neandertals 'to be quite plausible, given the published age for the fossil of more than 30 ky'.²⁸

At face value what appears to be suggested by the evolutionist Bräuer, the person who has done probably the most extensive analysis on the Hahnöfersand specimen, is that Hahnöfersand Man was a product of Neandertals and anatomically modern humans interbreeding; that is, hybridization. According to the late evolutionary biologist Ernst Mayr:

'Hybridization is traditionally defined as the intercrossing of established species. A hybrid is the product of such a cross. Gene exchange among different populations of the same species is frequent (referred to as gene flow), but should not be called hybridization. Rather, hybridization occurs whenever the isolating mechanisms are inefficient ("leaky"). Successful hybridization leads to the transfer ("introgression") of

genes of one species into the genome of another species.'²⁹

Logically, if Hahnöfersand Man was a product of hybridization, Neandertals must have been alive at the time of Hahnöfersand Man for this to have occurred. The question now becomes, will the revised dates of the specimen alter its status as a hybrid? That is, will the hybridization model still be considered plausible given that the new age for the fossil is now 7,500 yo, much younger than the previous age of 36,300 years? One strongly suspects it will no longer be considered plausible, as this would be the same as admitting that Neandertals lived at least until 7,500 years ago, which would be unthinkable to Out-of-Africa theorists. To them this would almost be like having Neandertals knocking on their door, and would most definitely rewrite their model of human prehistory.

The orthodox evolutionary view, which is the Out-of-Africa model of modern human origins, is that the arrival of 'modern' humans to Europe happened around 40,000 years ago, with the extinction of the Neandertals believed to have occurred 27,000 years ago.³⁰ Hence, in the conventional evolutionary scenario, there is an overlap in time between the two groups. According to Churchill and Smith,

'modern humans were almost certainly established in Europe by ca. 32 ky BP, with a strong possibility that they were there by ca. 36 ky BP. ... Neandertals and modern humans coexisted in Europe for at least 2,000–4,000 years, and perhaps for 8,000–10,000 years or longer.'³¹

Because the earlier dating of the specimen put it at a time when co-existence between Neandertals and modern humans was believed to have occurred, the thought of Hahnöfersand Man being a hybrid was plausible to evolutionists. While they may now consider such ideas as 'rubbish', the fact is that the Hahnöfersand frontal has the same morphology now, with the much younger date, as it did before, with the older date. Hence, if evolutionists now remove Hahnöfersand

status as a hybrid, reclassifying it as a modern human without any influence of Neandertal genes in its genome, *it can only be because of its new date*. As such, it would demonstrate unequivocally how ‘rubbery’ the definitions of modern humans and Neandertals really are.

Creationists differ from those evolutionists that view Neandertals and modern humans as belonging to separate species; rather, they are viewed as just reflecting variation within the same species. As such, Hahnöfersand Man just reflects the variation that exists within humans, whether it is due to genetic or environmental factors. Hence, as they are considered to belong to the same human *kind*, there is no reason why, for example, a Neandertal-type individual and one categorized as a ‘modern’ human could not have interbred and produced offspring. The evidence of interbreeding between Neandertals and ‘modern’ humans (and this is not an isolated example³²) has implications even without the revised dates.

In his proposed test of his progressive creation (or ‘old-earth day-age’) model, Hugh Ross states that ‘Research will prove Neanderthals made no contribution to the human gene pool, existed before Adam and Eve, and went extinct, either shortly before or after the creation of Adam and Eve.’³³ According to Ross, ‘Neandertals represent a prehuman primate species’.³⁴ The first humans, Adam and Eve, are believed by Ross to have lived about 50,000 or so years ago.³⁵ Concerning Hahnöfersand Man, there is evidence of interbreeding between Neandertals and humans categorized as ‘modern’, which, from a progressive creation point of view, means that Neandertals interbred with the descendants of Adam and Eve, and therefore contributed to the human gene pool. Also, because of the redating, Neandertals must have existed until at least 7,500 years ago, if evolutionist dating methods are used, which, for progressive creation chronology, means that they did not become extinct *shortly* after the creation of Adam and Eve, but *long* after. Hence, not only is this dating fiasco a

blow to the evolutionary model of human prehistory, it also undermines the progressive creationist model.

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