

We are preparing a paper to show this rigorously.

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Hofmeyr man—another African ‘missing link’?

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While some journalists are calling it a ‘missing link’, from the point of view of trying to establish man’s ancestry from apes, Hofmeyr man (figure 1) is hardly an object of enthusiasm for evolutionists. That’s because the discoverers themselves are saying it’s fully human; in fact, it’s essentially of the modern type. Dr Alan Morris of the University of Cape Town is part of the international team (headed by Frederick Grine of New York’s Stony Brook University) studying the fossil. He says, ‘The skull is probably male and is completely modern. If he sat down next to you on the Sea Point bus you would not react, apart from wondering where he came from. He would not look like modern Africans or like modern Europeans, or like modern Khoisan people, but he is definitely a modern human being.’¹

But it’s worth commenting on, not just because it so clearly is not a ‘missing link’ (i.e. supposedly between the first modern humans who arose in Africa and modern humans of today) in the normal sense of the term, but because it gives an opportunity to discuss a related issue.

The fossil, known as the Hofmeyr skull, after the town in the Karoo region of South Africa where it was

discovered, was actually found decades ago in the 1950s. It is only after some ‘dating’ by a new technique that researchers got excited.

The skull could not be dated geologically because it was found in an erosion gully. The ‘date’ by this new technique (a ‘combination of optically stimulated luminescence and uranium-series dating methods, coupled through a radiation-field model’²) is 36,000 years, which puts it in the so-called Pleistocene era in evolutionary dating terms. The authors of the *Science* paper on the skull state that it ‘lacked sufficient collagen for an accurate age determination’ by the normally very sensitive AMS radiocarbon procedure.²



Figure 1. The Hofmeyr skull, which is regarded as totally ‘modern’, is therefore not what most evolutionists would call a ‘missing link’, as the newspapers did. The apparent difference in appearance between the two dates shown is due to handling damage after 1968 and subsequent reconstruction. Consider that in this case, they would have known what the original looked like, so imagine the difficulty in getting an accurate picture from any fragmentary fossil skull for which one does not have this advantage. (From Grine *et al.*²).

Unfortunately, no details for this were provided in the accompanying online data, because their wording suggests that there *was some* collagen, and AMS requires only minuscule amounts of carbon-containing material. It would have been interesting to know whether a ^{14}C date was obtained but discarded as ‘inaccurate’ because it was the ‘wrong date’.³

Why the excitement?

This skull has created interest because it is different to a typical skull from the local Khoisan people, having some affinities with European skulls. It is therefore consistent with the ‘Out of Africa’⁴ Hypothesis, and not the Multiregional Hypothesis,⁵ the two sides of the long-running battle between evolutionists.

Both sides agree that all human types originated in Africa over a million years ago. But the Out of Africa side claim that only some tens to hundreds of thousands of years ago, one population of modern humans emigrated from Africa again, and replaced all of the other human types like *erectus*, Neandertal, etc. which had left Africa much earlier. The Multiregional proponents claim that humans evolved in parallel in many parts of the earth, such that Europeans have some Neandertal heritage, aboriginal Australians an affinity with the Java *erectus* skulls, etc.—and of course they acknowledge that there would have been gene flow as the populations contacted each other from time to time, giving rise to the many continuities between geographically diverse populations.

Each side puts forward evidence, from both genetics *and* fossils, that supports their particular view. But within the long-age evolutionary model, they can’t both be right about what actually happened—hence the many bitter disputes and rivalries. However, in the biblical creation model, the evidence for both can be easily reconciled. Human types like *erectus*, Neandertal, ‘archaic sapiens’ and ‘moderns’ (like Cro-Magnon) are

all part of the range of human variation in the descendants of Adam, after the Flood/Babel.

And since all were human, it is no surprise when someone discovers genetic links between the populations. Nor is it a surprise to find fossil evidence of e.g. Neandertal/modern hybridization.⁶

Finally, in relation to ‘Hofmeyr man’, finding various differing representatives of the range of early post-Flood humanity sharing the same part of the world is no surprise; man was never ‘primitive’ or ‘half-intelligent’, but would have had the same sorts of exploratory and migratory tendencies as we see today.

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3. For an example of the flexibility of the dating game in anthropology, see Lubenow, M., The pigs took it all, *Creation* **17**(3):36–38, 1995.
4. Also variously known as the ‘Replacement’, ‘Noah’s Ark’, ‘African Eve’ or ‘Mitochondrial Eve’ hypothesis/concept.
5. Also known as the ‘Candelabra’ model, after the shape of the diagram of one path heading upwards, diverging into several separate paths. However, technically the Multiregional model is a modification of the original candelabra concept, through the addition of gene flow between populations.
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Jurassic mammals—more surprisingly diverse

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Evolutionists are rapidly extending the range of organisms, both younger (up) and older (down), in the evolutionary/uniformitarian geological column.¹ Sometimes the upward change is so drastic that the organism is found alive somewhere on Earth—supposedly a living fossil. During the past decade, many new mammals have been discovered further down in the column, mainly in the Cretaceous and Jurassic, the mid and late Mesozoic (uniformitarian names, ages and dates are used for argument purposes only).²

It used to be assumed just a decade ago, based mainly on teeth, that late Mesozoic mammals were just tiny shrew-like animals trying to avoid being squished by dinosaurs. This image has prevailed for over 100 years. A recent flurry of mammal fossil discoveries shows this image is false.³

For instance, a chipmunk-sized creature, probably adapted to digging, was found in Colorado.⁴ This animal is supposedly 150 Ma in the Late Jurassic, and a most interesting point was that its teeth were hollow and lacked enamel. However, these characteristics are not seen for another 100 Ma years. So, hollow teeth and lack of enamel in mammals has been pushed back much earlier.

A 1-m long badger-like animal was found in China that supposedly lived 130 Ma ago in the Early Cretaceous.³ The preserved stomach contents of its smaller cousin, an opossum-sized mammal showed that it actually had eaten a baby dinosaur!

Just recently, a swimming and burrowing mammal was found in the Middle Jurassic of northeast China.^{5,6} This exquisitely preserved mammal with soft parts was 50 cm long, had thick fur, webbed feet and a beaver-like tail—and is claimed to be 164 Ma old.