

Neanderthal Man

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~1955

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In this paper I will discuss two main topics: the differences between the early “progressive” Neanderthals and the late “conservative” Neanderthals, and the question of how broad the term “Neanderthal” should be, or more specifically, whether the Rhodesian-Saldanha or Solo men should be considered Neanderthals.

I. Are the Rhodesian and Solo Men Neanderthals?

The European type Neanderthals form a definite and rather special group. Many anthropologists, however, like to class as Neanderthals the Solo Men of Java and the Rhodesian-Saldanha type of man of Africa. For example, R. Singer quotes Frany Weidermich as follows: “I would like to quote two appropriate sentences of Franz Weidermich’s (1940) with which I readily concur:

‘... for it proves that the so-called Neanderthal Man of Europe, notwithstanding his uniformity when compared with the Rhodesian Man of South Africa⁽¹⁾ (sic) or the Homo Soloensis of Java, has produced certain regional variations which are equivalent to social differences of to today.’”¹ (Weidermich classifies the European Neanderthals, the Rhodesian and Saldanha men, and the Solo Men as these different sub-species of Homo primai-genius.) Also, von Koenigswald and others refer to these men as Neanderthals.

I think this is wrong. First consider the Solo Men. What traits do they actually have in common with the European Neanderthals? Compared to Homo sapiens, both have very heavy brow ridges, a low, thick skull with its widest point for down, a marked occipital tower, small mastoid processes. But every non-sapien man we know of (excepting perhaps some of the Mt. Carmel specimen) has most of these traits — Homo sapiens is special in *not* possessing them. There is considerable difference between the European Neanderthals and the Solo Men — actually, the Solo skulls are much closer to the Pithecanthropines than to the Neanderthal Men, so if they *must* be classed with one or the other they ought to be put with the Pithecanthropus-Sinathropus group.

First of all, the cranial capacity of [TEXT ILLEGIBLE, POSSIBLY “Solo Man”] was apparently much smaller than that of Neanderthal Man, but much the same as that of Sinathropus. According to Van Koenigswald, the interval volumes of the Solo skulls were all between 1035 and 1255 cc. But Boule and Vallois, in *Fossil Men*, give these figures for various Neanderthals:

Neanderthal	1,408 cc.
Monte Circeo	1,550 cc.

¹ R. Singer, “The Rhodesian, Flourbad and Suldanha SKulle” in “Hubdert Hi=agbe Beabdertgaks”

(¹) Singer appended a footnote here: “Broken Hill is in Northern Rhodesia, not South Africa.”

...

This puts only one Neanderthal, a female, within the Solo range, and not one of the Solo skulls has a volume as large as even the female average of the European Neanderthals. This is surely outside the range of a mere racial variation. *Sinanthropus*, on the other hand, had a cranial capacity of about 1,150 cc., which is nearly in the middle of the Solo range.

Though both the Solo and the Neanderthal men had heavy supraorbital ridges, those of Solo were heavier and of very different form, being much more like the brows of the *Pithecanthropine* group. In the Solo skulls the brow ridge was like a single arch or bar of bone over the eyes; the continuity of the ridge was not distinctly broken in the middle. But in the European Neanderthals the brow ridge makes a strong downward dip in the center, thus forming two distinct [TEXT ILLEGIBLE], one over each eye. And in the Neanderthals the brows are of more or less uniform thickness, and curve down smoothly at the sides, while in Solo they are definitely more heavily developed at the corners and tend to jut out there, as with the *Pithecanthropus-Sinanthropus* group. (See Fig. 2)

The great occipital torus of Solo Man also puts him closer to the *Pithecanthropine* group than to the Neanderthals — and the shape of the whole occipital region differentiates him from both of them, particularly from the Neanderthals. The Neanderthals typically had a [TEXT ILLEGIBLE]-shaped occiput. In Solo Man you do not find this — and more important, there is a sharp breaking-off, at almost a right angle, at the level of the torus, with a flat nuchal plane. In other words, the occipital bone seems clearly divided into two surfaces. (See Fig. 1)

Also, Solo Man was closer to the *Pithecanthropine* group in his thicker skull, which is lower, narrower in the frontal region, and with less suggestion of a forehead than in Neanderthal Man. (Fig. 1) The endocranial cases of the Solo skulls are similar to those of *Sinanthropus*.

Thus, in any respect in which Solo Man seems similar to Neanderthal Man when contrasted with *Homo Sapiens*, he can be shown not only to differ from the Neanderthals in no small degree, but also to be much closer to the *Pithecanthropus-Sinanthropus* group. It is not sensible to put him in the former group (much less call him a mere *race* of *Homo neandertalensis*) when he is so much more like the latter. To call Solo Man a Neanderthal is to make the term “Neanderthal” so broad as to include almost anything between the *Sinanthropus* and *sapiens* levels...

... Thus it is wrong to call Rhodesian-Saraha Man a “Neanderthal”, or to make him a *race* of the same species, for two reasons: first, it would imply a close genetic relationship where the similarities are not sufficient to prove such a relationship; second, it would imply that Rhodesian Man fits in morphologically with the special Neanderthal group, while he does not; the differences are greater than any present-day racial differences. The term “Neanderthal” should be reserved for those fossils exhibiting a majority

of the special characteristics of the European Neanderthals, as these form a natural grouping.

II. The Difference Between the Early and Late Neanderthals

The datable Third Interglacial Neanderthal finds are few. According to F.E. Zeuner (*The Age of Neanderthal Man*) the only Neanderthals which can be assigned to this period are: ... Mt. Carmel skeletons ... Steinheim (maybe) ...

... Boule and Vallois say of Saccopastore I that the cranial vault is lower and the [ILLEGIBLE] is longer relative to the brain case than in the classic Neanderthals, and also that the cheekbone is especially massive. In these respects, Saccopastore would seem to be even more primitive than the late Neanderthals. But in many other respects, these skulls are more advanced. Saccopastore I has a more neatly vertical, better developed forehead than any of the classic Neanderthal skulls of which I could find photographs. Sengi also remarks on this character... the angle formed by its base part is the same as in *Homo sapiens*, but different from that in the Fourth [ILLEGIBLE] Neanderthals. According to Sengi, the dental arches of the Saccopastore skulls are horseshoe shaped, rather than U-shaped as in the later specimens, ...

This puts the Steinheim skull in an ambiguous position — neither a good Neanderthal nor a good sapien. Boule and Vallois call it a “Preneanderthalian” with the other early Neanderthals. Howells thinks it is more like *Homo sapiens*, and not a Neanderthal... I agree with Howells, myself. The Steinheim skull does not seem to fit in with the early Neanderthals...

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After being moved up a year in school, Ted was bullied and found an escape fantasy in books about Neanderthals living a primitive life. Quoting Ted:

“Unquestionably there is no doubt that the reason I dropped out of the technological system is because I had read about other ways of life, in particular that of primitive peoples. When I was about eleven I remember going to the little local library in Evergreen Park, Illinois. They had a series of books published by the Smithsonian Institute that addressed various areas of science. Among other things, I read about anthropology in a book on human prehistory. I found it fascinating. After reading a few more books on the subject of Neanderthal man and so forth, I had this itch to read more. I started asking myself why and I came to the realization that what I really wanted was not to read another book, but that I just wanted to live that way.”

— Theresa Kintzs’ Interview with Ted Kaczynski

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