

Fossil evidence for alleged apemen— Part 1: the genus *Homo*

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This overview analyzes the fossil evidence for the alleged apemen within the genus *Homo*. The differences in morphological features of the fossil species included in *Homo*, excluding the invalid taxon *Homo habilis*, are believed to represent, among other factors, genetic variation within the one human kind. *Homo habilis* is believed to represent a collection of assorted fossils that either were human (e.g. *Homo erectus*) or were australopithecine apes. If fossils such as those categorized as *Homo erectus* and Neandertals were all fully human, then the case for human evolution essentially collapses, as there is an unbridgeable morphological gap between the australopithecine apes and these humans.

In Western society, the educational system and media teach and promote that man is, at best, nothing more than a highly evolved ape, and as their trump card, parade a string of supposed apemen fossils as the knock-out punch to anyone daring to doubt this tale. Is there really convincing fossil evidence proving that man has descended from the apes, or is this just another example of one-sided indoctrination into scientism, a materialistic philosophy that demands natural explanations for all phenomena in the cosmos?¹ Put another way; is it possible that the scientists who promote human evolution are not objective in their interpretation of the fossil evidence?

Paleoanthropologist Milford Wolpoff writes: ‘In my view, “objectivity” does not exist in science. Even in the act of gathering data, decisions about what data to record and what to ignore reflect the framework of the scientist.’² Evolutionists John Gribbin and Jeremy Cherfas acknowledge: ‘... we must admit that the history of palaeontology does not read as a shining example of the pursuit of truth, especially where it was the truth of man’s origins that was at issue’.³ They later say: ‘... we do know that the popular image of the scientist as a dispassionate seeker after the truth could not be further from reality’.⁴ Lastly, consider the following comment by Roger Lewin, author of the book *Bones of Contention: Controversy in the Search for Human Origins*:

‘It is, in fact, a common fantasy, promulgated mostly by the scientific profession itself, that in the search for objective truth, data dictate conclusions. If this were the case, then each scientist faced with the same data would necessarily reach the same conclusion. But as we’ve seen earlier and will see again and again, frequently this does not happen. Data are just as often molded to fit preferred conclusions. And the interesting question then becomes “What shapes the preference of an individual or group of researchers?” not “What is the truth?”’⁵

Scientists, both evolutionist and creationist, tend to interpret what they see in the world through their own peculiar lenses, which represent their framework, worldview or ideology. If the lenses have evolution written on them, then the data will usually be molded to fit that preferred framework. The author believes evolution to be false, and that only through a biblical worldview is our true origin properly understood. According to the Bible, God ‘made of one blood all nations of men’ (Acts 17:26). There is no room for any ‘apemen’ pre-dating humans because ‘from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female’ (Mark 10:6). Therefore, all the supposed apemen belong either to the genus *Homo*, and are descendants of Adam and Eve, or they belong to extinct apes. The article gives evolutionary ages for the purpose of putting the fossils in an evolutionary context, but in no way implies agreement with these age dates.

***Homo habilis* (incorporating *Homo rudolfensis*)**

The cranial capacity of *Homo habilis* ranges from just under 500 cubic centimetres (cm³) to approximately 800 cm³.⁶ Taxonomic confusion is perhaps the best way to sum up the current status of *habilis*, as there is considerable debate as to whether the fossils attributed to *habilis* all belong to the same species. Some experts have split the species into two, creating a new species, *Homo rudolfensis*, dated from about 1.8 to 2.4 million years ago (Ma), while retaining *habilis* (dated from about 1.6 to 2.3 Ma), albeit with fewer specimens in the latter.⁷ To further muddle the picture, Wood and Collard have even suggested that the species *rudolfensis* (exemplified by cranium KNM-ER 1470) and *habilis* (exemplified by cranium KNM-ER 1813) be transferred from the genus *Homo* to *Australopithecus*,⁸ but this latter notion has not received wide support. That *habilis* consists of at least two species is not accepted unanimously, with some evolutionists arguing the variation among specimens of *habilis* can be explained by intraspecific variation.⁹

In discussing the multiple species controversy, Wolpoff commented that some scientists had used *habilis* ‘as a garbage bag’.¹⁰ Tattersall and Schwartz have described ‘the status of *H. habilis* as an all-embracing “wastebasket” species into which a whole heterogeneous variety of fossils could

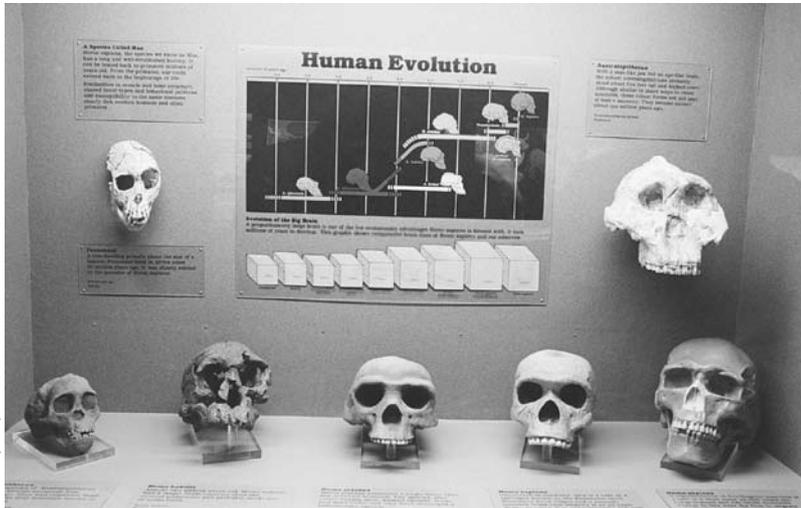


Photo by Raymond Strom

In Western society the idea that man is nothing more than a highly evolved ape is promoted throughout the educational system and media, and the trump card in this propaganda is to parade a string of supposed apemen fossils as a knock-out punch to anyone daring to doubt this tale.

be conveniently swept'.¹¹ *Homo habilis* is often presented as the evolutionary link between the australopithecines and *Homo erectus*, but even some evolutionists admit that this notion is too simple. According to Bernard Wood, 'Advances in techniques for absolute dating and reassessments of the fossils themselves have rendered untenable a simple unilineal model of human evolution, in which *Homo habilis* succeeded the australopithecines and then evolved via *H. erectus* into *H. sapiens*.'¹² From a creationist position, *habilis* is an invalid taxon, being instead a collection of assorted fossils that can either be classified as humans (e.g. as *erectus*) or as australopithecine apes. To illustrate this, some examples are given below.

According to Wolpoff, who labels *erectus* as early *Homo sapiens*, the cranium KNM-ER 1813 from Koobi Fora, Kenya 'is associated with a cranial base and frontofacial region that is so similar to early *H. sapiens* that authors such as T. White include ER 1813 in the same taxon (for him, this is *H. erectus*)'.¹³ Wolpoff describes KNM-ER 1813 as 'very similar to, really indistinguishable from, early *H. sapiens* in its teeth and frontofacial architecture (except for its narrow mid-face) but has a much smaller brain size'.¹⁴ If the evaluation of KNM-ER 1813 by White and Wolpoff is correct, then this cranium, with a cranial capacity of only about 509 cm³,¹⁵ may have belonged to a very small human.

The interpretation of fossil cranium KNM-ER 1470, from Koobi Fora, Kenya, which has a cranial capacity of about 752 cm³,¹⁵ has been problematic for both evolutionists and creationists. In 1999 creationist Bill Mehlert's analysis, which focused on the disputed reconstruction of the face of cranium 1470, led him to believe that the cranium 'looks increasingly like a larger-brained gracile australopithecine'.¹⁶ However, creationist Marvin Lubenow has long argued for

its human status, and, in his revised and updated book *Bones of Contention*, recently stated that 'comparisons suggest that skull 1470 is more modern than any of the *Homo erectus* fossils—even the Kow Swamp material, which is only about 10,000 years old'.¹⁷ Creationist Malcolm Bowden has also argued that KNM-ER 1470 is 'simply a small human skull'.¹⁸ Although there are variations between specimens KNM-ER 1470 and KNM-ER 1813, much of it can be explained, according to evolutionist Wolpoff, 'if we assume that the larger crania and faces with powerful postcanine dentitions (and their structural consequences) of specimens such as ER 1470 reflect body size differences'.¹⁹ Although a gorilla skull has been found with the same cranial capacity (752 cm³)²⁰ as that of KNM-ER 1470, the cranium of the latter is much more likely that of a human than an ape.

It is not the purpose here to give an exhaustive case-by-case review of the fossils that are categorized as *habilis* by evolutionists. However, an illustration of a *habilis* specimen that most likely belongs with the australopithecines (probably *africanus*) is Stw 53 from Sterkfontein, South Africa.²¹ Kuman and Clarke list several major morphological traits of Stw 53 that they believe warrant its inclusion in the genus *Australopithecus*, including teeth that are very large and a braincase that 'is frontally narrow and restricted'.²² Also, computed tomography (CT) scans of the bony labyrinth of the inner ear have shown that the semicircular canal dimensions in the crania of Stw 53 'relied less on bipedal behaviour than the australopithecines'.²³ This would seem to rule out human status for this specimen, the incompleteness of which makes an estimate of brain size difficult.²⁴ The labyrinthine morphology study led by Spoor did find that a specimen (SK 847) from Swartkrans, South Africa, associated with *habilis*, had canal dimensions that were 'modern-human like'.²³ As pointed out by the authors and other researchers,²⁵ SK 847 has also been linked to *erectus*, with Johanson comparing it to *erectus* specimen KNM-ER 3733.²⁶ Hence, *erectus* is the most likely status for SK 847, but the cranium is too incomplete to make a definite diagnosis. From the cranial base, Wolpoff has estimated a cranial capacity of less than 500 cm³ for SK 847,²⁷ but given that most of the cranial vault is missing, this estimate is at best a ball park figure.

Postcranially, the modern, human-looking femora KNM-ER 1472 and KNM-ER 1481 are often linked to *habilis* (or *rudolfensis*), particularly since they were found in the same Koobi Fora locality as cranium KNM-ER 1470, but as they all come from different sections of the strata, there is no direct association.²⁸ Analysis of The KNM-ER 1481 femur has identified it with *erectus*,²⁹ and hence indicates

it belonged to a human. However, some evolutionists still prefer to refer to it as *habilis*,³⁰ but this appears to be more in order to prevent the establishment of an *erectus* presence too early, as the femur is dated by evolutionists to about 2 Ma. Obviously, in this fictitious scenario, the further back in time *erectus* goes, the less time there is for *habilis* to evolve into it.

The most significant postcranial remains attributed to *habilis* belong to the partial skeleton OH 62 from Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania, which belonged to an individual that, at the time, was ‘estimated to be as small as or smaller than that of any known fossil hominid’.³¹ Analyses of limb proportions have indicated a more ape-like humerofemoral index in OH 62 compared to the Lucy skeleton (*afarensis*), but this result depends on the limb-length estimates being correct.³² Most of the distal half of the OH 62 femur is missing, so its length can only be estimated by comparison to other femurs.³³ As illustrated recently by Haeusler and McHenry, using a different femur (OH 34) than the traditional Lucy (AL 288-1) femur that is often used in estimation yielded a humerofemoral index for specimen OH 62 within the modern-human range.³⁴ Hence, as the upper-to-lower limb proportions in OH 62 depend on which femur is used as a model comparison, this measure contributes very little to resolving its taxonomic status. However, the estimated brachial proportion, due to a relatively long forearm, exceeded that of modern humans, being more consistent with that of australopithecines and chimpanzees.³⁵ As pointed out by Lewin, it was the resemblance of the palate from the skull of OH 62 to that of Stw 53 that was influential

in assigning OH 62 to *habilis*.³⁶ As Stw 53 appears to be an australopithecine ape (see above), this may be the most likely status of OH 62 also.

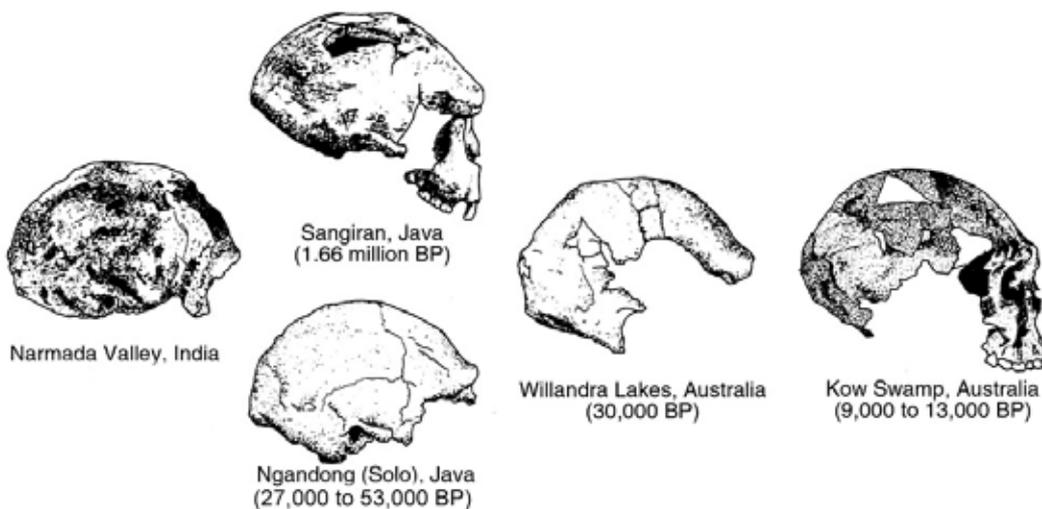
***Homo erectus* (incorporating *Homo ergaster*)**

Homo habilis is suggested as consisting of fossil specimens that can either be classified as extinct australopithecine apes or as humans, with some of the latter displaying *Homo erectus* characteristics. The fossils classified as *erectus* are believed by evolutionists to be the next evolved stage towards modern humans, with *habilis* the likely ancestor of *erectus* in this scenario. Using the rule of logic, if fossils attributed to *erectus* were not those of ‘apemen’, but fully human, then the case for human evolution essentially collapses, as there is an unbridgeable morphological gap between the australopithecine apes and *erectus* humans, with no missing links in between.

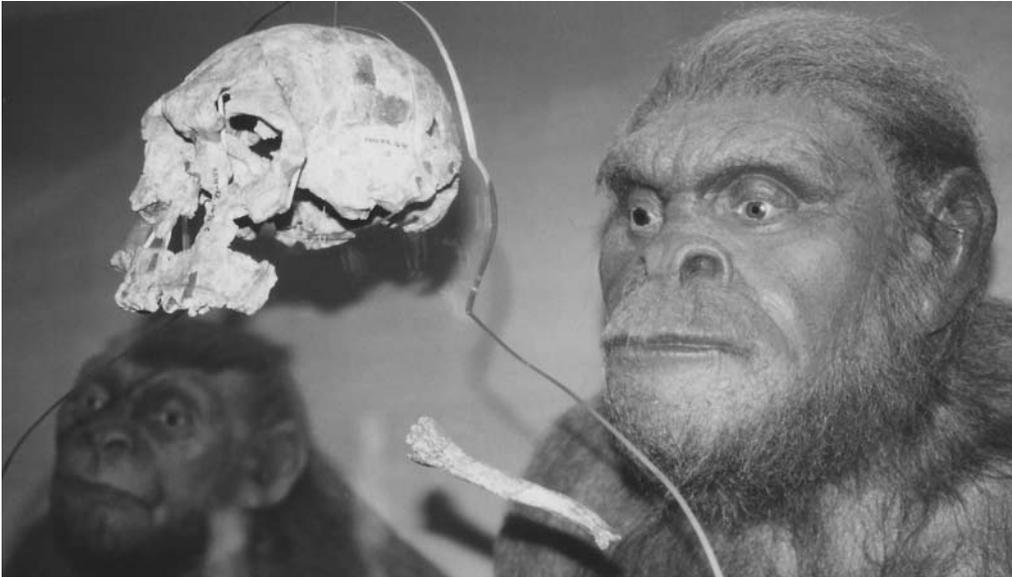
Fossil remains of *erectus* have been found in many parts of the world, dated by evolutionists from about 1.8 Ma to perhaps less than 100,000 years ago.³⁷ *Homo erectus* fossils from Java, Indonesia, have been dated to possibly as late as 27,000 years ago, which is quite recent in the evolutionary scheme of things.³⁸ Multiregional evolutionist Wolpoff refers to *erectus* as early *Homo sapiens* because ‘no single definition has been found that distinguishes *H. sapiens* (defined traditionally as the descendant of *H. erectus*) from *H. erectus* in all regions where the fossils are found’ and ‘there is no distinct beginning for *H. sapiens* as long as *H. erectus* is recognized’.³⁹ Others adopt a multiple species

approach, which, in its simplest form, ‘distinguishes early African *H. erectus* (i.e. fossils mostly from Koobi Fora and West Turkana) as *H. ergaster*, but leaves other African *H. erectus* (e.g. OH 9) and the Asian fossils within *H. erectus* (*sensu stricto*)’.⁴⁰ Here, *erectus* will be considered in the broad sense, including fossils from the restricted definitions of both *Homo erectus* and *Homo ergaster*.

At an average of about 973 cm³,⁴¹ the brain size of *erectus* is smaller than the average, of about 1,350



An assortment of fossil crania is illustrated above. The Sangiran and Ngandong specimens are classified as *Homo erectus*; the Willandra Lakes hominid (WLH-50) and Kow Swamp as modern humans; the Narmada cranium status is unclear because of the uncertainty concerning its ‘evolutionary’ age (usually given as somewhere between 0.15 to 0.6 Ma), but it has been classified as possibly *Homo heidelbergensis* or archaic *Homo sapiens*. Studies have shown a closer affinity of the modern human cranium WLH-50 to the Ngandong *erectus*, than compared to modern human late Pleistocene Africans and Levantines.⁷⁹ This questions the notion of classifying *Homo sapiens* and *Homo erectus* as separate species.



A display at the San Diego Museum of Man, shows a replica KNM-ER 1470 cranium shadowed by a couple of 'apemen' models.

cm³,⁴² for living humans. The cranial capacity range for *erectus* (727–1,251 cm³) listed by Rightmire⁴³ is in the lower end of the broadest definition of the modern-human range (700–2,200 cm³) given by Molnar.⁴⁴ However, Molnar gave no source for the lower limit (700 cm³),⁴⁵ and so the lowest brain size on record for a normal adult is possibly a Melanesian with a cranial capacity of 790 cm³.⁴⁶

The crania assigned to *erectus* by Rightmire included Ngandong series, Zhoukoudian series, OH 9, OH 12, Bouri, Trinil, Sangiran series, Dmanisi 2280, KNM-ER 3883, KNM-ER 3733, Buia, Gongwangling, Sale, Hexian, Ceprano and KNM-WT 15000.⁴³ The table of *erectus* cranial capacities by Rightmire did not include the 'older subadult or young adult' Dmanisi cranium D2282 (~650 cm³)⁴⁷ and the most recent Dmanisi cranium D2700 (~600 cm³),⁴⁸ the age of which is stated as lying between the juvenile KNM-WT 15000 and D2282.⁴⁹ Although still not adult, the cranial capacity of these two Dmanisi specimens, assigned to *erectus*, would not be expected to expand significantly more. The other Dmanisi cranium (D2280) has a measured cranial capacity of 775 cm³.⁴⁷ However, there is also a lower jaw (D2600), unearthed in 2000, that has been described as 'enormous' and 'far too large to fit comfortably with any of the crania yet discovered'.⁵⁰ This large variation in size has led to suggestions that more than one species is represented by the Dmanisi fossils (dated by evolutionists to 1.75 Ma), but as the fossils were found in the same stratigraphic layer, it is more likely that they are all members of the same population.⁵¹ Stone tools⁵² found at the Dmanisi site indicate a human presence, and the Dmanisi specimens most likely represent the makers of the tools. That there appears to be a large difference in cranium size within the Dmanisi human population, assuming that the enormous mandible D2600 belonged to a much larger cranium than the

others, is consistent with the enormous variation in cranium size that exists in extant humans. A similar, or perhaps larger, degree of size variation than the Dmanisi fossils appears to be present in the Klasies River Mouth human fossils from South Africa (dated from about 0.12 to .09 Ma), regarded by evolutionists as 'near modern', as indicated by variation in lower jaw sizes, with one mandible (KRM 16424) described by Klein as 'among the smallest adult human jaws ever recorded'.⁵³

Brain size and intelligence

Does the difference in size, *per se*, between the average modern-human brain and the average *erectus* brain support the evolutionary notion that the brain has evolved in size during the alleged period of hominid evolution? The answer is no! According to evolutionist Holloway:

'The range of variation of cranial capacity of modern *Homo sapiens* is about 1,000 c.c., with no correlation between capacity and behavior readily demonstrable. Such a figure represents almost the total amount of increase in capacity from the Australopithecine level to that of modern man.'⁵⁴

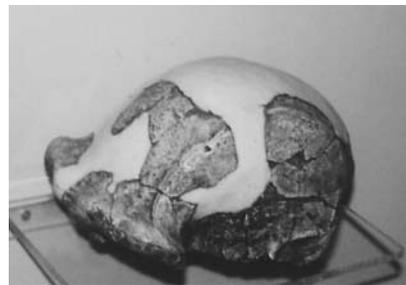
Physical anthropologist John Relethford acknowledges that 'Although their brain size was somewhat smaller than ours today, *Homo erectus* had an essentially human skeleton from the neck down, made sophisticated stone tools, and possibly used fire.'⁵⁵ The ability to make sophisticated stone tools indicates that a smaller brain size was no barrier to *erectus* possessing human intelligence. It should be remembered that Anatole France, who had a brain size of about 1,000 cm³, only fractionally above the *erectus* average, won the 1921 Nobel Prize for Literature.⁵⁶ Hence, why would evolution (if it could) bother developing a larger brain, at great cost, when it would provide no obvious extra benefit to that of a smaller brain? Evolution is supposedly all about adaptive value of new novelties (a minute few of which may confer some benefit) that are believed to be randomly generated by freakishly improbable genetic mutations. Hence, if a larger brain has no apparent adaptive value, then clearly it could not evolve even if evolution was possible. It has not been demonstrated how even 'beneficial' genetic changes can increase the functional information content of the genome, as these DNA changes

generally involve only sorting and loss of information.⁵⁷ Hence, the mechanism for ‘upward’ evolutionary change is a mysterious ‘black box’. The brain is almost infinitely complex, and to believe that some unknown natural force has been driving it to ever-increasing size during the period of alleged human evolution, without even any plausible adaptive value, is to believe in zero probability. Something else must have happened to explain the incredible variation in brain size of humans, and this was intelligent design by a Creator. The following quote by Holloway illustrates the dilemma for the evolutionist:

‘For another, there is some difficulty in suggesting that natural selection kept favoring larger brains if there is no connection made between the neural structures of the cortex and increasing behavioral adaptation. That is, the very units which comprise the gradual increase in cranial capacity over the span of the Pleistocene, cubic centimeters, cannot be demonstrably linked with real differences in behavior. The modern condition, where there is almost 1,000 c.c. variation without behavioral difference that can be analysed, warns that in attempting to explain the increase in cranial capacity during hominid evolution, some other parameter(s) must be used.’⁵⁸

This has not stopped a plethora of evolutionary ‘just-so-stories’ on how we supposedly evolved a large human brain, culminating with the ultimate absurdity that our ‘enormous human brain has been created by the memes’.⁵⁹ However, some may question whether the smallest *erectus* specimens had brains capable of human intelligence. If the recent fossil finds classified as *Homo floresiensis* (more later) are a guide, then the answer has to be in the affirmative as, in the words of evolutionist Kate Wong, ‘Would anyone have guessed that a creature with a skull the size of a grapefruit might have possessed cognitive abilities comparable to those of anatomically modern humans?’⁶⁰ According to *erectus* expert Philip Rightmire of Birmingham University: ‘If *Homo floresiensis* was capable of producing sophisticated tools, we have to say that brain size doesn’t add up to much.’⁶¹ It should be remembered, as stated by Holloway, that ‘One c.c. of chimpanzee cortex is not equivalent to one c.c. of human cortex, nor is it likely that any equivalent measure can be found.’⁶¹ Hence, it appears that neural organization is far more important than brain size, *per se*. Also, as discussed above, there is no demonstrable correlation between cranial capacity and behaviour, including measures of intelligence, as indicated by the following statement by Clark:

‘So far as it has been possible to apply appropriate tests, there is within such limits no marked correlation between the brain size and intelligence. To the paleoanthropologist this lack of correlation is particularly disconcerting for it means that he has no sure method of assessing the



Louis Leakey found the Homo erectus cranium OH 9 in 1960 at Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania. It is dated to 1.2 Ma and has a cranial capacity of 1067 cm³. It has huge brow-ridges. CT scans of the bony labyrinth of the inner ear of this specimen indicate a modern human morphology, reflecting human locomotion. The photo was taken at the San Diego Museum of Man.

mental capacity of extinct types of hominid simply by reference to cranial capacity.’⁶²

Locomotion and postcranial skeleton

CT scans of the bony labyrinth of the inner ear, in the few *erectus* specimens examined (OH 9, Sangiran 2 and 4), have indicated a modern-human morphology, reflecting human locomotion.⁶³ As already mentioned, evolutionists acknowledge that the postcranial skeleton of *erectus* was essentially human.⁵⁵ The first *erectus* postcranial skeleton of any significance (KNM-ER 1808) was discovered in 1973, dated at 1.7 Ma, but because of a bone disease, hypervitaminosis A, it was useless in terms of giving a clear picture of normal *erectus* morphology.⁶⁴ The skeleton of the female KNM-ER 1808 was estimated to be 173 cm tall,⁶⁵ and at the time the *erectus* postcranial skeleton was represented more by KNM-ER 1808 than all previous *erectus* postcrania combined.⁶⁶

Most of the information about the postcranial anatomy of *erectus* comes from the later discovery, at west Lake Turkana, Kenya, in 1984, of the almost complete skeleton of the 1.68-metre-tall Nariokotome boy (KNM-WT 15000), dated at 1.6 Ma.⁶⁷ The skeleton is also known as the Turkana boy, and is classified as *Homo ergaster* by the ‘splitters’. The skull morphology of the Nariokotome boy was *erectus*-like, but Wolpoff describes the postcranium of this individual as ‘mostly modern’.⁶⁸ The limb proportions of KNM-WT 15000, specifically the humerofemoral and brachial index, resembled modern humans.⁶⁹ According to Lewin the information gathered from the Nariokotome boy skeleton indicates that the *erectus* postcranium ‘is similar to that of modern humans, but more robust and heavily muscled’, which ‘implies routine heavy physical exertion’.⁷⁰ The cranial capacity of the boy, estimated to be 11 years old, measured about 880 cm³ at the time of his death, and an estimate of adult brain size is 909 cm³.⁷¹ As pointed out by Mehlert, there is no way to establish adult height size with certainty,⁷² but 185 cm is one estimate given for KNM-WT 15000.⁶⁵

To have such a tall *erectus* individual with a modern postcranium appear at such an early stage in the alleged evolutionary history of *erectus* is a problem for evolutionists. If evolution was true, then a more intermediate postcranial skeleton would be expected, one reflecting more of a mid-way stage between the australopithecines and modern humans, not one already at the modern human stage. Hence, there is a huge morphological gap between *erectus* and the australopithecines; the *habilis* taxon, as discussed earlier, is regarded as invalid. In what seems an almost desperate effort to dehumanize the Nariokotome boy, some evolutionists emphasize that the vertebral canal in this individual was smaller than in modern humans.⁷³ As such, they argue that his nervous system was not developed enough to carry out the entire fine breathing manoeuvres required for a fully human discourse, and conclude that at the time the boy lived ‘Language, as we understand the term, had probably not yet fully evolved.’⁷⁴ However, the revelation that the KNM-WT 15000 axial skeleton had significant abnormalities, suggesting that there was some form of abnormal development in the axial skeleton of the Nariokotome boy, nullifies any such argument and it can explain the narrowness of the vertebral canal.⁷⁵ This verdict, however, is still not accepted by some evolutionists.⁷⁶

Skull features

Skulls classified as *erectus* are considered by evolutionists to exhibit key characteristics that differentiate them from modern humans. Key characteristics include: prominent browridges; insignificant chin; large mandible; forwardly projecting jaws; a flat, receding forehead; a long and low-vaulted cranium; occipital torus; relatively large teeth; relatively large facial skeleton; and a thick-walled braincase.⁷⁷ A major problem for evolutionists is that many (if not all) of the above-mentioned features, which supposedly differentiate *erectus* from modern humans, also occur in modern humans. This is illustrated in recent native Australians by the prominent browridges of cranium 3596 from Euston,⁷⁸ and the closer affinity of the modern human cranium from Australia, WLH-50, with the Ngandong *erectus*, compared to modern human late Pleistocene Africans and Levantines.⁷⁹



The Broken Hill cranium from Kabwe, Zambia is classified by most evolutionists as belonging to *Homo heidelbergensis*. The photo was taken at the San Diego Museum of Man.

According to Shreeve, ‘While some of the early modern humans from Aus-

tralia look much like people today, others bear all the markings of a more robust kind of human, with thick skull bones, swollen browridges, and huge teeth, even bigger than those of *Homo erectus* in some specimens.’⁸⁰

Examples of other typical *erectus*-type features in modern humans, such as flattish receding forehead and insignificant chin development, can be seen in a photograph of a living native Australian, published in the late Victorian age, when there was appalling racism within anthropology.⁸¹ Native Australians are as human and ‘modern’ as anyone else, and so the above *erectus*-type features cannot be considered ‘primitive’.

Stringer and Gamble, advocates of the Out of Africa theory of modern human origins, referred to the presence of the *erectus*-type features in Australian Aborigines as perhaps ‘apparent evolutionary reversals’,⁸² triggering a heated response from a group stating ‘such statements and their implications are unfortunate’.⁸³ Controversy aside, the statement does illustrate the chameleon-like nature of evolution theory, which appears plastic enough to accommodate almost any scenario. Clearly, there is no valid basis for rejecting *erectus* fossils as being fully human because of skull features that some evolutionists regard as being ‘primitive’ characters. Creationists are not the only ones protesting about the narrow definition of our species. In regards to the Out of Africa theory of modern human origins, evolutionists from the multiregional school of thought have expressed the following concern about defining the species *Homo sapiens* too restrictively:

‘We believe that an unfortunate aspect of the debate are [*sic*] definitions of *Homo sapiens* used by some “Eve” theorists. They have been found to exclude many Pleistocene and more recent Aboriginal Australians from our species (Wolpoff, 1986; P. Brown, 1990). Further examination of these individuals and collections of recent Aboriginal skeletal remains leads us to estimate that these definitions of modern *Homo sapiens* exclude anywhere between 40 000 and 60 000 living Aboriginal Australians. We feel that there is great danger in this. It is the duty of specialists to make sure that they include all living people in any definition of our species. If we do define humans as minimally including all living people, many of the fossils that the “Eve” theorists claim leave no descendants, including Neanderthals, fall into *Homo sapiens*.’⁸⁴

For the purpose of analysis, *erectus* has been considered as a separate group, but is it really that different from other fossil humans? For example, are fossil specimens allocated to *erectus* just because of their skull morphology, or is there a trend of categorizing specimens with smaller cranial capacities as *erectus*, and larger specimens to other taxa, such as *Homo heidelbergensis* and Neandertals? As

Photo by David Green



The Neanderthal Gibraltar 1 cranium was found in Forbes' Quarry, Gibraltar prior to 1848, and is dated somewhere between 45,000 and 70,000 years ago. It is said to be the first adult Neanderthal cranium discovered, but was not recognized as such until after the discovery of the original Neanderthal fossils in the Feldhofer cave, Germany in 1856.

the discussion moves on to the next group of fossil humans, the following comment from evolutionist Harry Shapiro is very revealing:

'But when one examines a classic Neanderthal skull, of which there are now a large number, one cannot escape the conviction that its fundamental anatomical formation is an enlarged and developed version of the *Homo erectus* skull. As in *Homo erectus*, it has the bun-shaped protrusion in the occiput, the heavy brow ridge, the relatively flattened crown that from the rear presents a profile like a gambrel roof. Its greatest breadth is low, just above the ears, and the absence of a jutting chin is typical.'⁸⁵

***Homo heidelbergensis* (archaic *Homo sapiens*)**

Homo heidelbergensis is a category invented to fill the alleged taxonomic vacuum between the Neanderthals and *erectus*. Previously, these fossils were labelled as archaic *Homo sapiens*.⁸⁶ Evolutionist Shreeve has referred to the taxon as 'more like a bushel basket into which you throw everything that is neither clearly *erectus*, nor obviously modern *Homo sapiens*'.⁸⁷ The *heidelbergensis* braincases are described as being 'more robustly built' than those of modern humans, and to 'have some, but not all, of the features of *H. erectus* crania, but lack the derived features of Neanderthal crania'.⁸⁸ The validity of having separate species classifications for *erectus* and *heidelbergensis* is questionable when, for example, the *erectus* Ngandong series crania⁴³ have also been classified as archaic *Homo*

sapiens (i.e. *heidelbergensis*),⁸⁹ and some evolutionists even advocate including the Ngandong fossils within *Homo sapiens*.⁹⁰ With crania displaying such interchangeability up and down the ranks of the genus *Homo*, evolutionists can hardly complain about creationists lumping the above species together. The cranial capacity range of *heidelbergensis* is between 1,100 and 1,390 cm³ (mean of about 1,206 cm³), with age dates varying between 200,000 and 700,000 years ago.⁹¹ The cast of specimens assigned to *heidelbergensis* includes Dali, Broken Hill, Bodo, Arago, Jinniushan, Ndotu, Petralona, Steinheim and Sima de los Huesos 4 and 5.⁹² The arguments above for assigning human status to *erectus* apply equally to *heidelbergensis*, particularly as evolutionists regard them as more 'modern' than *erectus*.

Homo antecessor

The tendency to split the genus *Homo* into more and more species is revealed by naming the fragmentary Gran Dolina remains from Spain, which included a juvenile partial face (ATD6-69) that had a 'fully modern facial topography',⁹³ as a new species, *Homo antecessor*. Surely room could have been found in the *heidelbergensis* 'bushel basket' to include the Grand Dolina remains. One suspects, with an evolutionary age (about 0.78 Ma) of the remains that was older than any member of *heidelbergensis* from Europe, the temptation to give these 'oldest known Europeans' a new name was just too much at the time, particularly as *antecessor* then 'claims a key spot on the human family tree'.⁹⁴

***Homo neanderthalensis* (Neanderthal)**

Neanderthals are believed by evolutionists to have been confined to Europe, western Asia and the Middle East between about 30,000 and 150,000 years ago, and are regarded by most evolutionists 'as a side branch of the human evolutionary tree, with extinction their fate'.⁹⁵ The relatively long history of the discovery and emerging knowledge of the Neanderthals has been told many times, albeit mostly from an evolutionary point of view, and will not be revisited here.⁹⁶ The Neanderthals had quite a culture inventory, and buried their dead.⁹⁷ To anyone not blinded by evolutionary bias, this in itself should be ample evidence that the Neanderthals were fully human. Classical Neanderthal specimens include Neanderthal, La Chapelle-aux-Saints, La Ferrassie I, Spy I, Le Moustier, Saccopastore II, Shanidar 1 and 5, Tabun and La Quina, while 'progressive' specimens include Spy II, Saccopastore I, Monte Circeo, the Krapina remains, Shanidar 2 and some of the Skuhl and Qafzeh specimens.⁹⁸ The Neanderthals labelled 'classical' are considered by some evolutionists to be the more 'primitive'.⁹⁹

The mean Neanderthal brain size of about 1,485 cm³

(range: 1,245–1,740 cm³)¹⁰⁰ is at the very least on par with modern humans, if not slightly larger. Apart from a large cranial capacity, Lubenow lists the following distinct Neandertal morphology:

‘(2) skull shape low, broad, and elongated; (3) rear of the skull rather pointed, with a bun; (4) large, heavy browridges; (5) low forehead; (6) large, long faces with the center of the face jutting forward; (7) weak, rounded chin; and (8) postcranial skeleton rugged with bones very thick.’¹⁰¹

Other adult Neandertal features include a retromolar space, broad nasal opening and large dentition.¹⁰² While evolutionists regard Neandertal as a separate species, a creationist view is that ‘*erectus* is just a smaller version of Neandertal and the most unique aspect of both is their skull shape’.¹⁰³ There are also non-evolutionary explanations for some of the Neandertal features, such as the stress of biomechanical forces influencing skull morphology.¹⁰⁴ Additionally, in his book *Buried Alive*, Jack Cuozzo demonstrates disturbing instances of faulty reconstructions of Neandertal specimens. In one example he illustrates how the Le Moustier specimen has been assembled to make the jaw appear more ape-like than it was,¹⁰⁵ and in another, Cuozzo presents evidence that the chin of La Quina 5 was cut off to make it appear more ape-like.¹⁰⁶

As mentioned previously, many of the features supposedly differentiating *erectus* and Neandertal from modern humans also occur in some modern humans. For this reason the proponents of the multiregional view of human evolution, in contrast to those of the Out of Africa view, believe that *Homo erectus*, archaic *Homo sapiens* (*heidelbergensis*) and Neandertals ‘should be reclassified into a single species, *Homo sapiens*, that is subdivided only into races’, because they are insufficiently distinct from *Homo sapiens*.¹⁰⁷ Consider the following statement by proponents of the multiregional school:

‘Neandertals have much larger browridges than living Europeans, and they are always continuously developed across the forehead. A significant number of recent and living Indigenous Aboriginal Australians have large, continuously developed browridges. Does this make them more primitive than Europeans? Does this make the Neandertals modern?’¹⁰⁸

If you believe that certain skull traits are indicative of a more ‘primitive’ status, then the above questions pose a real problem.

According to Stringer and Gamble,

‘The Neandertals were not apemen, nor missing links—they were as human as us, but they represented a different brand of humanity, one with a distinctive blend of primitive and advanced characteristics.’¹⁰⁹

This seems at best a confusing statement, as how can one say the Neandertals were ‘as human as us’, and then immediately follow this by a qualifier that ‘they represented

a different brand of humanity’? Either they were human or they were not. As aptly put by Lubenow, ‘The Neandertal problem is primarily the evolutionists’ problem. Simply put, evolutionists don’t know where the Neandertals came from or where they went.’¹¹⁰ To creationists, Neandertals were fully human. There is no basis for considering some skull features as more primitive than others because we are all equally human, regardless of the diversity of features that exists within the human *kind*, and because there never were any apemen.

Homo floresiensis

Media headlines in late October 2004, such as ‘Lost race of human “hobbits” unearthed on Indonesian island’,¹¹¹ must have astonished every ‘hominid’ watcher on the planet. For once, the incredible media ‘hoopla’ surrounding the announcement of yet another supposed new hominid species, *Homo floresiensis*, was not overrated, although the assignment of a new species name to these hobbits seems a bit premature, as, despite their small size, the remains may well be descendants of Adam.¹¹² The hobbits must have had substantial seafaring skills to reach Flores and sophisticated cognitive abilities, ‘as indicated by the technology of the stone artifacts associated with *H. floresiensis* at Liang Bua’.¹¹³ If the tools belonged to *floresiensis*, which seems very likely, then these people clearly possessed human intelligence.

The finding of fossils from hobbit-size people, who appear to have possessed human intelligence, with one specimen (LB1) evolutionarily dated to around 18,000 years ago and standing about 1 metre tall, with a cranial capacity of approximately 380 cm³,¹¹⁴ questions the notion of an arbitrary cerebral rubicon (at least at the 600–800 cm³ brain size level)¹¹⁵ that must be passed in order to have a human mental faculty. People with microcephalic brains (400–600 cm³),¹¹⁶ as well as dwarf humans (517 cm³),¹¹⁷ also have brain sizes measured below this arbitrary rubicon. The average brain size of chimpanzees is 383 cm³, orangutans, 404 cm³, and gorillas, 504 cm³.⁴² Hence, the 380 cm³ brain size of *floresiensis* from the Indonesian island of Flores is very small if it is human. However, when considering brain size, one should also take into account body size. This is done when calculating a value known as the encephalization quotient (EQ).¹¹⁸ If the body of *floresiensis* specimen LB1 is assumed lean and narrow, then the estimated EQ places LB1 easily within the *erectus* range.¹¹⁹

In terms of similarity, LB1 is described as: ‘In the overall shape of its skull and its teeth, the creature most closely resembles *Homo erectus*.’¹²⁰ Despite its small stature and cranial capacity, LB1 had few other things in common with the australopithecines. According to the authors of the *floresiensis* paper:

‘... it does not have the great postcanine tooth size, deep and prognathic facial skeleton, and masticatory adaptations common to members

of this genus. Instead, the facial and dental proportions, postcranial anatomy consistent with human-like obligate bipedalism, and a masticatory apparatus most similar in relative size and function to modern humans all support assignment to the genus *Homo*—as does the inferred phylogenetic history, which includes endemic dwarfing of *H. erectus*.¹²¹

Peter Brown, paleoanthropologist and first author of the *floresiensis* *Nature* paper, in regards to the hobbit's small cranium, commented that 'The internal structure of the brain—the neural pathways—must have been more human-like than ape-like to be able to make these types of tools.'¹²² An even more likely scenario is that the internal structure of *floresiensis*' brain was human, as was the brain architecture of many other fossil specimens with small craniums, in particular those assigned to *erectus*.

The team who unearthed the find suggests that *floresiensis* may be the descendants of *erectus* from the nearby island of Java, believed to have been there as long as 1.6 Ma.¹²³ They comment that the first hominid immigrants to Flores 'may have had a similar body size to *H. erectus* and early *Homo*, with subsequent dwarfing; or, an unknown small-bodied and small-brained hominin may have arrived on Flores from the Sunda Shelf'.¹¹⁹ An alternative view is that *floresiensis* is 'a miniature human being exhibiting part of the same range of post-Babel human variation as encompasses the larger so-called *Homo erectus*'.¹²⁴ Claims have been made by pathologist Maciej Henneberg of the University of Adelaide that the LB1 individual suffered from a pathological growth condition called secondary microcephaly, and that 'the skull of the Flores hominid is very similar to a 4,000-year-old microcephalic modern human skull found on the island of Crete'.¹²⁵ Also, Indonesian paleoanthropologist Teuku Jacob is reported to have said the LB1 skeletal remains were from a 'modern human, *Homo sapiens*, that lived about 1,300 to 1,800 years ago' who was a member of the 'Australomelanesid race, which had dwelled across almost all of the Indonesian islands',¹²⁴ and that the Flores people suffered 'from microcephaly which shrank their brains to the size of a chimpanzee's'.¹²⁶ However, the more remains of these tiny individuals that are found, the stronger the argument against LB1 being a diseased individual is, and there are reports of another lower jaw identical in shape and size to LB1's.⁵⁶

The controversy over the hobbit may well result in two rival camps feuding over the issue, a bit like the ongoing quarrel between the Out of Africa and multiregional schools of thought over the origin of modern humans. If so, don't expect any resolution soon. However, even if the specimens turn out to be pathological, the use of sophisticated tools, even by 'abnormal' people, indicates that they were quite intelligent, and illustrates that brain size, *per se*, is not as important as neural organization.

Conclusion

Homo habilis consists of fossil specimens that can either be classified as extinct australopithecine apes or as humans, with some of the latter displaying *Homo erectus* characteristics. Without the burden of having to fit fossils into an evolutionary scheme, there is no reason not to accept fossils such as those categorized as *erectus*, and Neandertals as belonging to the one human *kind*. Differences in skeletal anatomy may simply reflect a greater genetic diversity within the human *kind* in the past, and in some instances living under particularly harsh environmental conditions, or even dietary habits, may have influenced skeletal development. The stress of peculiar biomechanical forces, as well as pathology,¹²⁷ may also have influenced skull and postcranial morphology in some instances. The Bible also indicates that people lived longer in the past, with longevity declining post-Flood. As most of the fossils would have belonged to early post-Flood humans, it is possible that their natural lifespans may have been greater than those of people today. Hence, it is unclear what effect longevity, and possibly a different rate of skeletal maturation, would have had on skeletal features.

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