

Archaeology - neanderthals and modern humans

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According to much of Ronald Wright's work, he believes that there is not much of a notable difference in human kind now and what there was 10, 000 years ago. His belief on human evolution is one where he says that it is a very slow moving progress, so therefore there would not be that remarkable of a variance in the cognitive abilities of Neanderthals and the 20th century version of mankind today (CBC Radio Interview 2005).

In one of the last lines of Wright's book, it is written that " Our species is an Ice Age Hunter, only half evolved towards intelligence, clever but seldom wise" (Wright 207-208). Wright claims that human evolution is pretty much the same although technology is adapting and has always been revolving with the times. Human kind is very clever in this regard as well as in the regard of preserving life in severe environments, for a period of time. Yet, he states that human kind has often driven species to extinction and I have to personally agree with his position on this topic. Human kind is known to abuse the environment around it and this is no different from then as now. This is the main reason why so many living biological organisms are either extinct now or on the verge of extinction. Human kind over does it in practically every aspect of living so therefore my opinion is not very different from Wright's. Wright's belief is that it is this mentality of human kind that has ultimately lead to the downfall of many ancient civilizations.

His point is that human kind falls into progress traps. We develop things that create a negative impact in our environments and that negatively affect our very own existence, thereby driving our own species into extinction. Wright also claims that cultural phenomena have absolutely nothing to do with human evolution and again I tend to agree with this.

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One of the examples that he gives in his book, in regards to the problem solving skills of mankind, is indicative in the summary he does of the Samarian people. The Sumerians were one of the first civilizations discovered through archeological artifact findings. Their irrigation technique that was found to have been developed and they improvised was what lead to their civilizations downfall. They did not consider the long term problems to this short term solution. This ancient people ultimately destroyed themselves as well as others who had similar problems within their existence, according to Wright's book.

In regards of how Ronal Wright claims there would not be a very remarkable difference in Neanderthals and humans today, another Anthropologist had this same view point. In 1939, anthropologist, Carlton Coon drew a reconstruction of a Neanderthal man but he did so representing him clean shaven and dressed in that time era's form of clothing. The visual image did not differ from ordinary men walking down the street and in fact the contrast was very strikingly similar. I have to agree, that visual perception would not mediate very much from what Coon and Wright both emphasized in their work. It has even been theorized that Neanderthal people had much larger brains than do humans today. However the problem solving skills from then and now don't vary that much.

I agree with Wright in how he compares the period of Neanderthals to us. His claim that possibly their civilization disappeared due to an evolutionary dead end seems to be plausible. However, if their extinction was born of violence then possibly ours might end the same way.

In closing, Milford Wolpoff has written, " You can't imagine one human population replacing another except through violence". I agree with this <https://assignbuster.com/archaeology-neanderthals-and-modern-humans/>

viewpoint as well and I fear that our very own existence is now on the precept of extinction due to our violent tendencies.

References

CBC Radio Interview (2005). Ronald Wright: A Short History Of Progress.

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