Neanderthals Made Modern Tools

Written by Administrator Tuesday, 17 September 2013 01:52 -

Neanderthals made modern tools, according to articles in Nature News and ScienceDaily 12 August 2013, and ABC News in Science 13 August 2013. Archaeologists excavating Neanderthal sites at Abri Peyrony and Pech-de-l'Azé I in France have found a number of bone tools identical to those used in leatherworking today. The tools are called lissoirs, or burnishers, and are used to make leather more supple, lustrous and water resistant.

One of the archaeologists, Marie Soressi of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany, commented: "Lissoirs like these are a great tool for working leather, so much so that 50 thousand years after Neanderthals made these, I was able to purchase a new one on the Internet from a site selling tools for traditional crafts. It shows that this tool was so efficient that it had been maintained through time with almost no change. It might be one or perhaps even the only heritage from Neanderthal times that our society is still using today". Soressi also consulted a luxury-goods manufacturer of high fashion handbags. They recognised the Neanderthal tools as being the same as those used by their leather workers.

The Neanderthal site is dated as being older than the oldest modern human site so researchers claim this is evidence Neanderthals invented leatherworking tools themselves, rather than learning from modern humans. Soressi explained: "If Neanderthals developed this type of bone tool on their own, it is possible that modern humans then acquired this technology from Neanderthals. Modern humans seem to have entered Europe with pointed bone tools only, and soon after started to make lissoirs. This is the first possible evidence for transmission from Neanderthals to our direct ancestors".

Zenobia Jacobs, a geochronologist at the University of Wollongong, who dated the soil at the site, commented: "Over time we've been drifting from seeing Neanderthals as being cognitively challenged - a kind of dead end - to being something that was not that different to us. In coming years we may look at them more favourably".

ABC, Nature News, Science Daily

Editorial Comment: As we have been saying for many years, Neanderthals are us. Many studies over the last two decades of their bones, artefacts and living spaces show Neanderthals were simply human beings struggling to make a living in tough environmental conditions. The

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only reason people cling to the belief Neanderthals were another, inferior, species of human being is the evolutionary concept that many species of humans evolved from ape-like ancestors, but only one species Homo sapiens, modern man, has survived the struggle for life. These new discoveries provide yet more evidence for how resourceful they were in using whatever materials were available to achieve a purpose. It is time for museums and school textbooks to stop using Neanderthals as evidence for human evolution. (Ref. anthropology, craftsmanship, technology)

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