
The Neanderthals and AMHs Odyssey in the hellenic peninsula

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Résumé

Finds in eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Anatolia and the Levant based on archaeological and anthropological studies have shown that AMH's after their exodus from Africa occupied the Levant between 130 and 80 ka BP. In the Levant they met with the Neanderthals, who resident the Levant between 75 and 45 ka BP after migrating from central Europe during MIS 4 and MIS 3 to avoid the cold. The AMHs finally started spreading from the Levant to Europe around 50 and 47 ka BP through the Bosphorus land-bridge. Since then AMHs and Neanderthals did coexist in many parts of Europe.

In this paper recent archaeological and palaeo-geographical studies from the Hellenic peninsula are presented, for addressing the following questions: (i) did Neanderthals and AMHs coexisted in the Hellenic peninsula and (ii) did Neanderthals and AMHs in their movement from the Levant and Anatolia to Europe and vice versa were crossing the Aegean sea using the islands during MIS 4 and MIS 3 (74 to 23 ka BP).

For answering the aforementioned a chrono-cultural framework is established for the Hellenic Peninsula and the Aegean Sea for the MIS-4 and MIS-3 and compared to those from the Levant, Anatolia and eastern Europe. Furthermore, the palaeo-shoreline configuration of the Aegean Sea is established over the same time span, to examine the insularity of the Aegean islands

The analysis of the above data shows that: (i) the Hellenic peninsula was occupied by the Neanderthals during MIS 4 and MIS 3, (ii) Neanderthals and AMHs co-existed in the Hellenic peninsula at around 40 cal ka BP, (iii) the max. time-span of the Neanderthals and AMHs co-existence in the Hellenic peninsula may extend from 44 to 33 cal ka BP, (iv) Neanderthals and AMHs were seafaring in the Aegean Sea, the former from around 60 to 35 ka BP and probably from 120 to 35 ka BP, the latter from 35 ka BP and onward, (v) Neanderthal and AMHs in their movement from the Hellenic peninsula to the Anatolia and vice-versa had established a coastal route via the Aegean Archipelago, "the Aegean route", which might have been used as an alternative route to the Bosphorus land-bridge.

Mots-Clés: Neanderthals, AMHs, Hellinique Peninsula, seafaring, human migration, Aegean route

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