

Music and Neanderthals: An Alternative Point of View

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Introduction

The controversial question of Neanderthals' ability is central to whether or not they could have been musical. On one side of this issue are those who try to represent the Neanderthals as very primitive people. On the other side are those who believe that the Neanderthals were far more advanced than we have given them credit for. Two opposing worldviews based on differing explanations of our origins are in play in this argument: evolutionism and creationism. The latter credits Neanderthals with advanced capabilities, including making music.

Two Views of Our Origins

Current theories of human origins are based on evolution from earlier life forms over billions of years. According to this scenario, ancient Neanderthal cave man had to be primitive, with more limited capabilities than we modern, "more evolved," people have.

The alternative view of human origins is that the first people were an intelligent man and woman created by a Divine Being, as described in Genesis of the Bible. All human beings from the beginning of time would therefore have been intelligent.



Biblical human history includes a Flood that destroyed the whole world except for Noah and his family. Then people spread out all over the world, after they rebelled against God at Babel and started to build a city and tower that displeased Him.

According to the biblical chronology, the universe was created less than ten thousand years ago. The world at large is overly impressed by secular arguments for an age of billions of years.

The two worldviews are not a matter of science versus religion, as popularly posed. Both sides claim to be scientific, and both are religious. What they offer is two differing belief systems re *origins and history*.

Who were the Neanderthals?

The unique physical characteristics of the Neanderthals were shown by orthodontist Jack Cuozzo to be those of people who had lived for hundreds of years.¹ In his research, Cuozzo X-rayed original Neanderthal skulls like the one below. Also he extrapolated known human cranial growth versus age via a computer simulation that showed Neanderthal characteristics at several centuries old.



It is not hard to find a historical record of people this old. The Bible lists them in the early chapters of Genesis. After the Flood, the earliest people had lifespans of over 400 years for several generations.

If these long-lived people were the Neanderthals that we know, this explains why their numbers were small, because they lived soon after the population bottleneck of the worldwide flood when there were not yet many people on earth.

The visible wear and tear on these people's teeth and skeletons is explained by their very old age. Cuozzo says that the current belief that Neanderthals lived short lives is based largely on incorrect assumptions about tooth growth. Scientists admit to finding unexplained growth inconsistencies if the Neanderthals were short lived.

The mystery of why Neanderthals died out is solved because lifespans were shortening from generation to generation, and eventually humans no longer lived long enough to develop the distinctive Neanderthal features, such as the orbital ridges (eye bumps).

The early people who spread out from Babel in all directions would have been Neanderthals. An important implication of the Cuozzo science is that we are all descended from Neanderthals.

1. Cuozzo, J. 1998. *Buried Alive*. Green Forest, Arkansas: Master Books.

Were Neanderthals Musical?

The prehistoric bone flute shown below was excavated in a Neanderthal cave in Slovenia in 1995.



Modern flute players are impressed by this instrument, and have no doubt that it could be anything but a flute. Not only does it look like a flute to them, but they are able to play beautiful music on copies of it.

Although Neanderthals were cave men because they lived during the Ice Age, they were not lacking in ability, as mistakenly thought. Scientists tell us that they did cave painting, wore colored shells, made sophisticated bone tools and adhesive, had fire hearths, used plants medicinally, sailed boats, buried their dead, and possibly even did iron smelting. We can picture Neanderthals whiling away long Ice Age nights, playing haunting music on instruments like this flute. The acoustics of their caves may have been excellent.

The biblical history of mankind mentions both musical instruments and metalworking in earliest pre-Flood times, indicating a high level of civilization back then. We would expect this knowledge to have been passed down through the ages to the Neanderthals.

But *Is* It A Flute?

Skeptics have tried to discredit the bone flute.



A favored argument is that the holes were gnawed by animal teeth. But this is highly improbable.

It has been shown by experiment that crunching of the teeth would have splintered the bone. Also, the statistical probability of animals gnawing holes in a straight row is about zero.

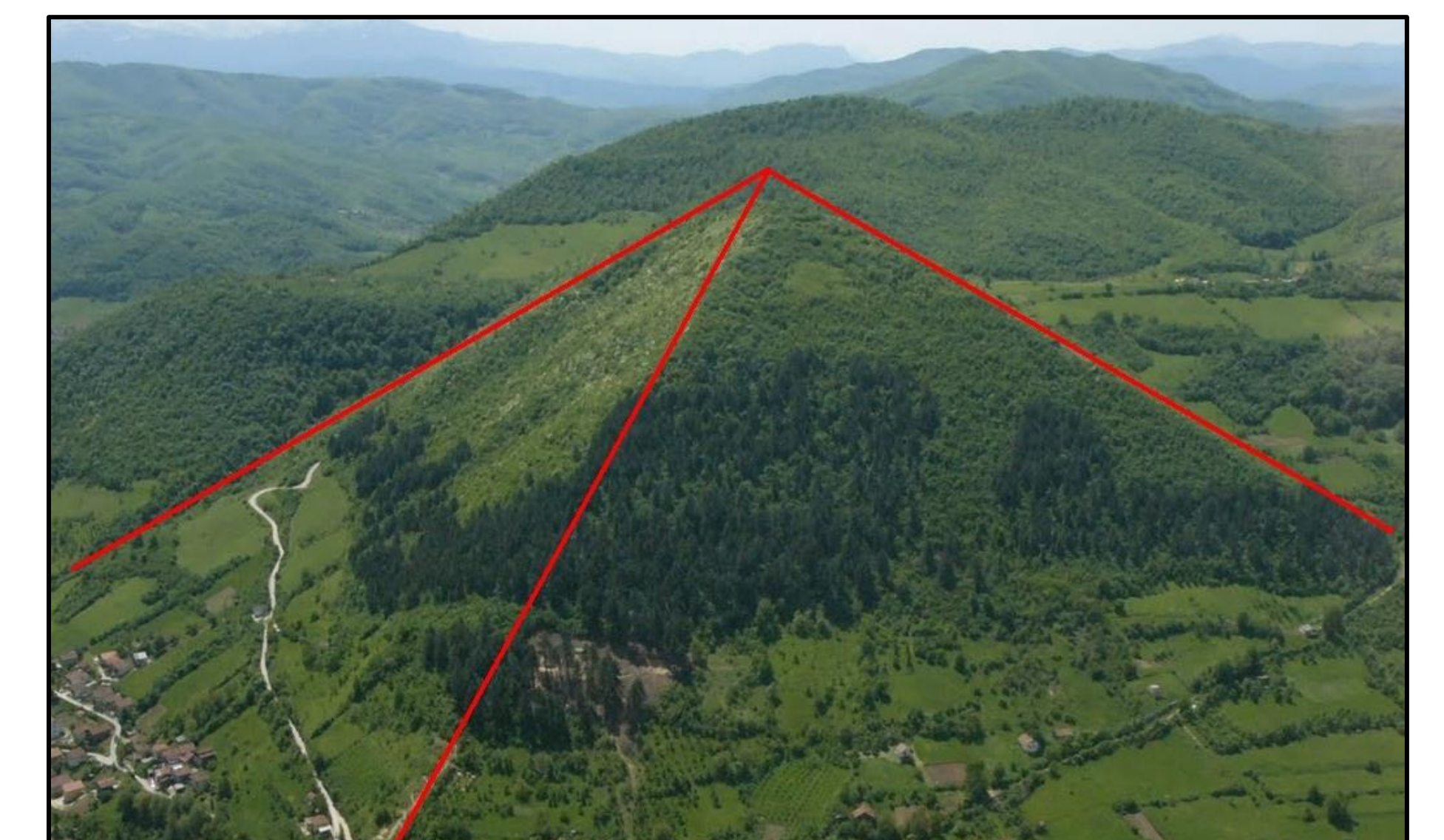
Worldview and Science

The weak arguments against this object as a flute appear to be based on a biased worldview that believes Neanderthals to have been too primitive to make musical instruments and play them.

There are other examples of scholars denying facts because of worldview. The Shanidar Neanderthal flower burial is one of these. It is claimed by skeptics that animals dragged flowers into the Neanderthal grave, rather than humans.

In Malta, the evidences for Neanderthals have been "lost" because of denial of pre-Neolithic history.

The Bosnian Pyramid of the Sun at Visoko, dating back close to Neanderthal times, is claimed to be a natural formation, even though it clearly *is* a pyramid.



Conclusion

It is quite believable that the Neanderthals could have made and played bone flutes if we accept the creationist worldview based on the Bible.

Figure Information and Credits

Noah's Ark: Floating Ark by free-bitsela.com.
Neanderthal skull: Discovered in 1909 at La Ferrassie, France. Photo 2007 Wikipedia.
Bone flute: Discovered in 1995 at the Divje Babe archaeological park near Cerklno, Slovenia. Photo credit: National Museum of Slovenia, where this bone flute is currently displayed.
Wolf: Wolf Snarl by silvercrossfox on deviantART.
Bosnian Pyramid of the Sun: Visoko, Bosnia-Herzegovina. The added red lines outline the edges of the pyramid. Photo credit: Sam Semir Osmanagic.

About the Author

Anne Habermehl, B.Sc., is an independent scholar who has published on various topics including Neanderthals, the search for Noah's Ark, the location of the Tower of Babel, biblical versus secular chronology, and the post-Flood Ice Age. She maintains her own creationist web site at www.creationsixdays.net. A musician, her interest is in sacred and Celtic music. She sings and plays piano, organ and harp.