

Neanderthals and Cro-Magnons: A Further Comment

C. B. Goodheart

Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge

Reference the comment by Pearson following my short article entitled *The End of the Neanderthals*, which appeared in Volume 40 Number 4 of *The Mankind Quarterly*, I would like to clarify one or two matters.

Firstly, I suggested that the forebears of all contemporary *Homo sapiens* derive by common descent from a small group living at a high latitude during the last interglacial when the climate was far from severe, and known to have been a good deal warmer than it is at present. But at the start of the last Ice Age, when it began slowly to get colder, the newly evolved and now naked [furless] *Homo sapiens* moved back in to the tropics again, leaving behind the Neanderthals, which I regard as advanced and probably still furry *Homo erectus*, in what was indeed now an increasingly "severe northerly environment" round the edge of the ice cap.

Secondly, although I don't doubt that "most contemporary theorists will likely contest [my] view that true sapiens status was attained after migration out of Africa", they ought to think about the fact that emotional facial flushing and blushing, with its complicated sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous control, which must surely have had a sematic function in humans as it does in many other primates, is still found although now invisible in human populations living in the tropics. This suggests that they all derive from ancestors with pale skins, in which the sematic flushing was visible, who must have lived in high latitudes and only secondarily evolved skin pigmentation, in several different ways, for protecting their now naked bodies against the stronger tropical sun. That is one possible explanation of these undoubted observations, and I would challenge "contemporary theorists" to produce a better one.

Finally there is the question of what really is *Homo sapiens* "status" and when, where, why, and how was it achieved. It is generally agreed that the genus *Homo* is first found in Africa, and that what we call *Homo erectus* had appeared there by and probably before the beginning of the Pleistocene. This then evolved various physical features including

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a larger brain, and no doubt more advanced culture, at a slow and steady rate throughout the Pleistocene, until at some stage it was thought to deserve the new name of *H. sapiens*. But throughout this time only one single biological species was involved, racially polytypic perhaps but fully capable of interbreeding, and when it was to be called *H. sapiens* was a matter of arbitrary opinion and not of objective biological fact: at no time were there supposed to have been two species of *Homo erectus* living together sympatrically but unable to hybridize.

As Pearson pointed out, however, there is now considerable genetic and other evidence to support the opinion that when, at the end of the Ice Age, the Cro-Magnon *Homo sapiens* people came into contact with the Neanderthals they did not interbreed. Whether this was because of some Robertsonian chromosome change, as I suggest, is of course pure speculation, but there does seem to have been some genetic bar to hybridization, which suggests that two different biological species were involved. Since there is now only one single *Homo* species, namely *Homo sapiens*, racially polytypic but fully intra-fertile, this means that one of the two, i.e. *Homo erectus*, has been eliminated, presumably by competition with *Homo sapiens*.

The Continental Cult of St. Alban
(St. Alban and the End of Roman Britain Part III)

Philip Thornhill*

Clapton, London

This paper, which is part of a series dealing with the cult of St. Alban, examines similar cults associated with St. Alban on the European Continent and examines the evidence for their pagan antecedents.

Key Words: St. Alban, St. Albei, Celts, Germans, Greeks, Indo-European paganism, Arians, St. Ambrose, St. Ursus, St. Geryon, St. Germanus, St. Senis, Bishop Theonestus, Dionysus.

I briefly alluded, in Part I of this series of articles dealing with myths surrounding that Saint, to the fact that St. Alban seems to have had quite an extensive cult on the continent. This can be explained, up to a point, as due to the influence of churchmen like St. Germanus, who in all probability introduced the cult to Auxerre.¹

Its notable presence in Germany might be attributed to the influence of the Anglo-Saxon missionaries, but if so it is slightly curious why the cult did not make a better showing in their homeland. Likewise it is difficult to attribute the spread of the cult to the influence (alone) of Celtic 'peregrini' since the cult barely appears at all in the Celtic homelands, or only in 'disguised form', along the lines we have suggested above. What might be more likely is that the spread of the cult in Europe was to some extent associated with the British 'dispersion' of the fifth and sixth centuries: Fleuriot (1980: 134-58) has shown that the British emigrations extended well beyond Brittany. We have a very good record, for instance, of the British leader Riothamus and his troops in Southern France in the late fifth century (Sidonius *Ep.* II. 9; Jordanes' *Getica* 45). Also this was the period when we know that the cult was very important in Britain and so it may well have been

¹ In his *Miracula S. Germani* (I.17 in Duru 1864), of the 870s, Heiric describes St Germanus as bringing relics of St Alban from Britain and building a church dedicated to him, in Auxerre: See Picard 1990: 56