

# Preface

The year 2006 was declared *Jahr des Neanderthalers* by the state of Nordrhein-Westfalen to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Johan Carl Fuhlrott's discovery of the famous human fossils in a small cave in the Neander Valley near Düsseldorf. Two major exhibitions were devoted to the jubilee, one "Roots//Wurzeln der Menschheit" at the Rheinisches Landesmuseum Bonn and the other one "Leben in Extremen" at the Westfälisches Landesmuseum in Herne.

The scientific community celebrated the jubilee from 21–26 July 2006 in Bonn with the international congress "150 Years of Neanderthal Discovery", organized by Wighart von Koenigswald (paleontologist at the University of Bonn) jointly with paleoanthropologists Friedemann Schrenck (Senckenberg Institute and University of Frankfurt) and Silvana Condemi (CNRS, Paris). More than 200 colleagues from all over the world came to Bonn, representing all relevant scientific disciplines, such as paleontology, biological anthropology, archaeology, geology, physical geography and genetics.

The results of the talks presented are published in two volumes in the Vertebrate Paleobiology and Paleoanthropology series, one devoted to Neanderthals and related aspects of paleontology and the evolutionary relationship between Neanderthals and modern humans and this volume about the archaeology of Neanderthals, chronology and paleoenvironments.

The editors of this volume would like to thank many people who made this publication possible.

Andreas Maier, Stefan Heidenreich and Götz Ossendorf (all from Cologne) arranged the contributions and helped in communicating with authors and reviewers.

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