How and why have our reconstructions of the social life of Neanderthals changed over the last 150 years?

The territory of Western Europe, Central and North Asia so as North Africa was inhabited by species or subspecies of archaic human, Neanderthals. We believe promo- Neanderthals lived 350,000-600,000 years ago with the appearance of 'real Neanderthals' 200,000-250,000 years ago. The name Neanderthal originates from Germany, Neander Valley where a group quarrymen found bones in 1856. Naturalist Johann Carl Fuhlrott, using the publication of Charles Darwin "The Origin of the Species", first concluded that bones found in Neander Valley belonged to an ancient human. Many types of research have given evidence explaining human's relatives with Neanderthals, debated whether they are distinct species of Homo genus (Homo neanderthalensis) or a subspecies of Homo sapiens, clarified their close look and explained their lifestyle. However, numerous researches and studies substantially changed our view of Neanderthals over the last 150 years, and therefore the primary purpose of this essay is how and why those changes happened.

Neanderthals were shorter than human, stockier with angled cheekbones, had wide noses as well as prominent brow ridges (Szalay, 2016a). Some evolutionists have claimed that Neanderthals were not able to talk considering their incapability of producing the full spectrum of vowels (Lieberman & Crelin, 1971a; Trinkaus & Shipman, 1992a) while other scientists strongly contradict. Furthermore, Neanderthals had a bigger volume of the brain than humans, the same number of bones (Trinkaus & Shipman, 1992b) and they are often represented as ingenious due to the sophisticated tools and musical instruments archaeologists have found. Hence, more and more people think Neanderthals were similar to present humans according to these observations. There is also a theory that Neanderthals, humans and other Homo species shared the Earth at least for a time.

While studying the skull, researchers got to the fact about Neanderthals which led to the numerous debates. They concluded Neanderthal's brain was larger than modern human's for