

Neves et al 1999

Article ...

▼ ... in a Journal

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Title:

LAPA VERMELHA IV HOMINID 1:
MORPHOLOGICAL AFFINITIES OF THE
EARLIEST KNOWN AMERICAN

Journal:

Genetics and Molecular Biology

Number:

4

Volume:

22

Year:

1999

Pages:

461-469

Keywords:

ISBN:

ISSN:

URL:

Abstract:

Several studies concerning the extra-continental morphological affinities of Paleo-Indian skeletons, carried out independently in South and North America, have indicated that the Americas were first occupied by non-Mongoloids that made their way to the New World through the Bering Strait in ancient times. The first South Americans show a clear resemblance to modern South Pacific and African populations, while the first North Americans seem to be at an unresolved

morphological position between modern South Pacific and Europeans. In none of these analyses the first Americans show any resemblance to either northeast Asians or modern native Americans. So far, these studies have included affirmed and putative early skeletons thought to date between 8,000 and 10,000 years B.P. In this work the extra-continental morphological affinities of a Paleo-Indian skeleton well dated between 11,000 and 11,500 years B.P. (Lapa Vermelha IV Hominid 1, or "Luzia") is investigated, using as comparative samples Howells' (1989) world-wide modern series and Habgood's (1985) Old World Late Pleistocene fossil hominids. The comparison between Lapa Vermelha IV Hominid 1 and Howells' series was based on canonical variate analysis, including 45 size-corrected craniometric variables, while the comparison with fossil hominids was based on principal component analysis, including 16 size-corrected variables. In the first case, Lapa Vermelha IV Hominid 1 exhibited an undisputed morphological affinity firstly with Africans and secondly with South Pacific populations. In the second comparison, the earliest known American skeleton had its closest similarities with early Australians, Zhoukoudian Upper Cave 103, and Taforalt 18. The results obtained clearly confirm the idea that the Americas were first colonized by a generalized Homo sapiens population which inhabited East Asia in the Late Pleistocene, before the definition of the classic Mongoloid morphology.

▼ ...in a Conference Proceeding

Author:

Title:

Editor:

Booktitle:

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Serie:

Number:

Volume:

Pages:

Publisher:

Keywords:

ISBN:

ISSN:

URL:

Abstract:

Monograph

▼ Book/Booklet

Author:

Title:

Year:

Editor:

Serie:

Volume:

Publisher:

How Published:

Keywords:

ISBN:

ISSN:

URL:

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Date of Access:

Date of Publication:

Version number:

∨ Chapter in a Book

Editor (Book):

Book Title:

Author (Chapter):

Chapter Title:

Year:

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Pages:

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