

I found his paper very interesting, but also raising a number of questions. In the first place, I note that practically all of the dates noted were obtained in the University of California Los Angeles laboratory, mainly on the amino-acid racemization dating with his colleagues, Berger and Bada. There are many American archaeologists who view the New World dates with skepticism - indeed, there are geochemists like Rubin of the U.S. Geological Survey who are skeptics. According to Protsch, the arrival of modern man into the New World would be earlier than the arrival of Homo sapiens sapiens in Europe. On p. 317 he says that the ages of 44.000 and 48.000 years B.P. for some southern California Palaeo-Indians is viewed with "some skepticism". If these dates using the same technique of dating is to be viewed with skepticism, why not the others? Moreover, we can add, if those dates for the California Palaeo-Indians be accepted, then using his logic, they should be Neanderthals, which of course they are not - and moreover, to my knowledge, none has ever been found in the New World. If I recall correctly, the date of 24.000 years has been claimed for a worked bone artifact found on Crow creek in northwestern Canada. The artifact could have been a fossil bone reworked by a modern Eskimo, according to some reports I have seen, and thus this claim could be discounted.

I come away with the feeling that Prof. Protsch has given us only selected information which fits his case. He has sidestepped totally the problem of the Skhul skeletons of Mt. Carmel, and the related finds at Qafzeh in Israel, which if anything, appear to be a cross between Homo sapiens sapiens and Homo sapiens neanderthalensis. He does not mention so far as I could tell, the placement of his "Homo sapiens palestinus" in the text. I am reminded by what Dr. von Koenigswald told me years ago, that there are as many schemes of evolutionary trees as there are investigators.

Why should everything begin in Africa? After all, there was Homo erectus in Java and China as well. Did Homo sapiens capensis replace them? I find myself confronted with many questions as I view Prof. Protsch's Fig. 1 and 2, problems of dating and relationships most paramount. The matter of geography appears to have been put aside altogether in the schemes, adding in my opinion to problems of interpretation.

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