

Who were the first people who colonize the Americas?

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The controversy is on-going when the question “Who were the first people to colonize the Americas?” is thrown on the table. It has been part of so many healthy exchanges with my friends during our little roundtable animated discussions held in different parties that it has not cleared our minds of so many doubts.

In our AMHE Newsletter # 334, issued on October 2023, I brought to light what archaeologists thought were the first two waves of visitors coming through the Detroit of Bering in the Americas and I also bought light on the “Pedra Furuda” discovered in 1973 by a Brazilian and a French team excavating a site located in the south-eastern portion of what is now known as “The Serra da Capivara National Park”. This discovery was reported by the Brazilian archaeologist Niède Guidon who published her findings in 1986.

They were the “Amerindians” as the scientific wanted to call them, but the arguments kept coming back when other believed that the first visitors in the Americas were from the African continent with dark skin and with a high contain of melanine in the skin which disappeared over the years because of changes in the weather and less exposure to the sun... perhaps a new race was discovered in Northern America.



But the more lasting theory over the years, believes that the first American culture was that of the Clovis: the ancestors of the Native people of North America. They have migrated about 14,000 years ago via the Bering Detroit. In this reconstruction of history, the earliest civilizations would have been the North American while the Mayas, the Aztecs and the Incas would have come later.

“Pedra Furada” meaning pierced rock is part of an important collection of over 800 archaeological sites in the state of Piaul, Brazil, where you can also find hundreds of rock paintings dating from circa 12,000 years before present. More importantly, charcoal from very ancient fires and stones shards that appears to have been tools 48,000 to 32,000 years old (before present) suggesting the possibility of a human presence tens of thousands years prior to the arrival of the Clovis people in North America. Rock paintings were also found on the walls.



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The Bering Land Bridge was also known as “Beringia” and was a vast tundra landscape that connected Asia and Alaska during the last ice age.

Recent discoveries with additional DNA analysis have proven that archaeologist have been wrong, stating that the first civilizations in the Americas came to Central and South America, at least 15,000 to 20,000 years earlier than previously believed. They came “by sea” from Siberia and Sundaland (continent that disappeared) which represented the present days of Indonesia and the islands around.

In 2020, researchers published the results of the new discovery of human remains in Chiquihuite Cave, Mexico in the journal Nature. The findings in the cave completely revolutionized the opinions of archaeologists, suggesting that people lived in central Mexico at least 26,500 years ago. The revelations were made by archaeologist Cyprian Ardelean and his colleagues at the University of Zacatecas (Mexico). It took centuries or millennia for people to cross the Bering and arrive in the middle of Mexico. It took as well many years for them to get there by sea or land. This means that humans were likely in Central America long before 30,000 years ago.

The Chiquihuite cave is a possible Upper Paleolithic archaeological site in the Astillero Mountains (Zacatecas State) in North Central Mexico. This cave brings evidence of early human presence into the Western Hemisphere up to 33,000 years ago. It is located at 2,740 meters (9000 feet) above the sea level and 1 km higher than the valley below. Stones were discovered there with lithic artefacts 26,000 years old based on more than 50 samples of animal bone and charcoal found on the site. Some believe that they may represent human made tools confirming the evidence of human presence but no evidence of DNA or hearth has been unearthed. Many of the stones found in Chiquihuite Cave, are believed to be artefacts, human tools that have been used, made of black and green limestone. DNA from a wide range of animals was also located in the cave like black bears, bats, and rodents.

No human DNA was found so far. This is what pushes the archaeologist to state that the site was visited only occasionally by hunters or perhaps as a refuge during severe weather. It looks like there are significant evidences to state that humans were adapted to living in high mountainous altitude. More, another research center has found that the native people of Central and South America have not just one ancestor but two: a "Mother people" from Sundaland and a "Father people" from the Detroit of Bering from Siberia (Inupiat).

Archaeologists have disagreed over the significance of the excavations at the Chiquihuite cave. In 2021, Jams Chatters of Central Washington University stated that if the dating of the Chiquihuite site were accurate, the population present would have had to have been completely invisible to genetic studies and contributed no genes to ancestral Native Americans. Additional artefacts were called into question, because they may represent geofacts created as a result of natural process. The Clovis people are

thought to have been highly mobile group of hunter-gatherers... they were participating on hunting big game (mega fauna) especially mammoth, or mastodon, bison, camel and horse. It looks like they also hunted smaller animals and plants. Around 12,750 years, the Clovis culture was succeeded by more regional cultures, including the Folsom tradition in Central North America, The Cumberland point in the mid/southern North-America, the Suwannee and the Simpson points in the southeast and the Gainey points in the Northeast-Great Lakes regions.



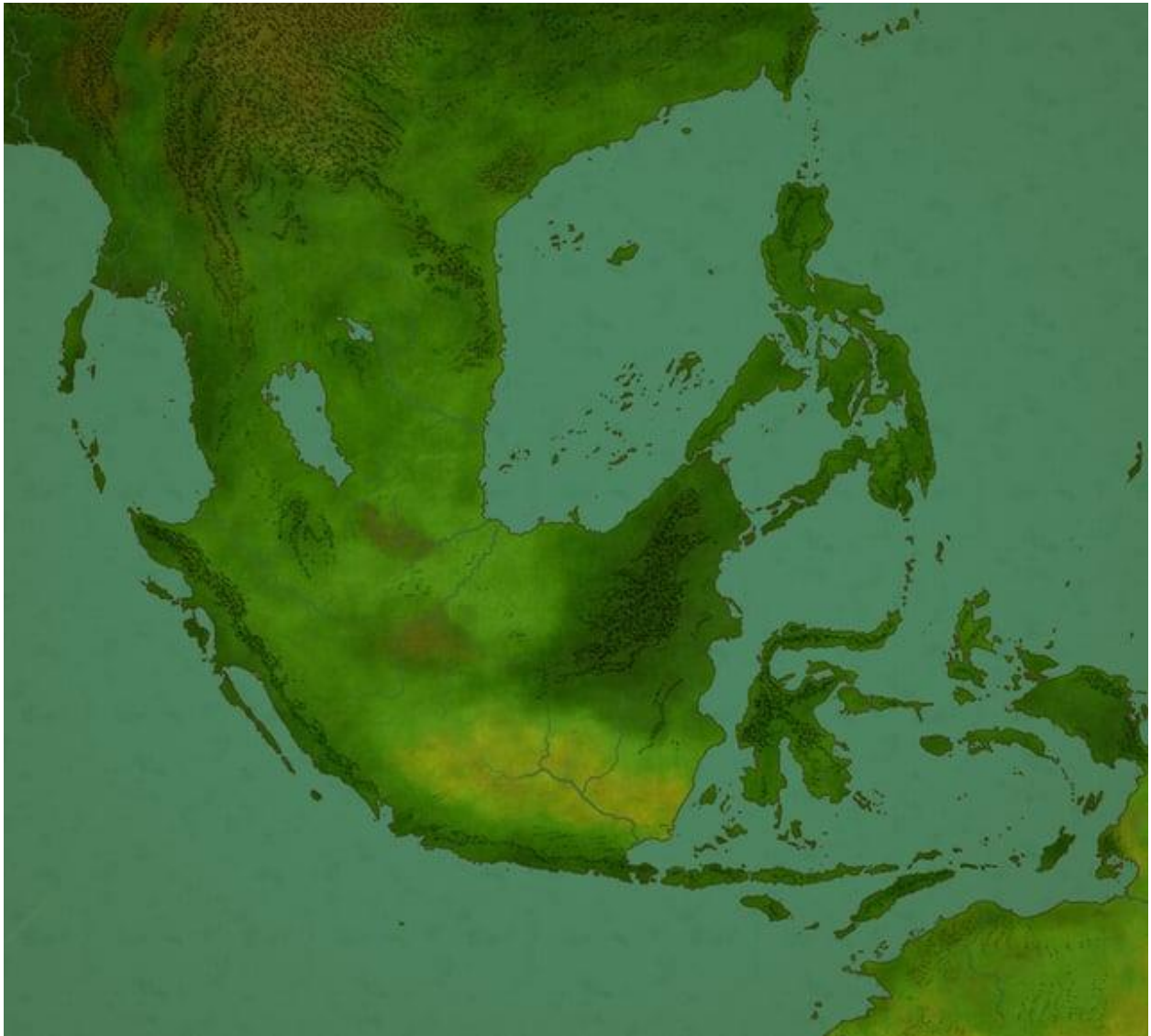
It appears that people 30,000 years ago, were able to travel from Australia to Central America. This is a revolution in the world of Archaeology and nothing prevented people from reaching Central America or even Egypt. Still, archaeologists will have to discover to whom belong the oldest ruins found on different lands... or who created the gigantic “Nazca drawing” and what was the reasons behind it? The past of the Americas needs to be re-discovered.

Scientists believe that the majority of lines drawn, were made by the Nazca people who flourished from around 1 to 700 A.D. It looks like certain areas of the pampa look like a well-used chalk board with lines overlapping other lines or designs in the high desert in southern Peru: Geometric designs with trapezoids, rectangles, triangles, swirls with zigzags, representing more distinct shapes like spiders, monkeys, hummingbirds etc. Can these discovery in Central America help comprehend all the observations made? “What do those lines reveal?” was asking the Peruvian archaeologist Toribio .ejia Xesspe in 1926. There is so little rain; wind and erosion that those exposed images have remained intact for more than 2000 years.

Spiders are believed to be sign of rain, hummingbirds are associated with fertility, and monkeys are commonly found in the Amazon perhaps simulating the abundance. We will have to wait longer for the meaning.

It seems that we will have to study more this bio-geographical region of the southeast Asia “Sundaland” (Sundaica) which was long-time ago a larger landmass that was exposed during periods of lower sea levels which has included the Malay peninsula, the islands of Borneo, Java, Sumatra, and other little islands, 2.6 million years ago.

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Sundaland

References:

- 1- Maxime Coles MD AMHE Newsletter # 334. October 2023