

ΠΑΛΑΙΟΝΤΟΛΟΓΙΑ - PALAEOONTOLOGY
ΣΤΡΩΜΑΤΟΓΡΑΦΙΑ - STRATIGRAPHY

A NEW HOMINOID PRIMATE BEARING LOCALITY FROM THE LATE MIOCENE OF MACEDONIA (GREECE)

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A new late Miocene mammal locality from the lower Axios valley (Macedonia, Greece) found on September 1989, gave us the face with the maxilla of a hominoid primate. The locality is named «Xirochori-1» (XIR) and situated into Nea Mesimvria Formation; it is dated back to late Vallesian, 9-10 myr.

Miocene hominoid material is very scarce. The early Miocene skull of *Proconsul africanus* from Rusinga (Kenya, early Miocene) is the most complete specimen. Other significant remains are a maxilla with the lower anterior part of the face of *Proconsul nyanzae* from Rusinga, a maxilla with complete dentition from Moroto (Uganda, middle Miocene?), crushed skulls from Lufeng (China, late Miocene), a maxilla with the lower part of the face from Yassören (Turkey, late Miocene), a maxilla with the lower part of the face from Ravin de la Pluie (Macedonia, Greece, late Miocene), and a reasonably complete face with maxilla and mandibles from Potwar plateau (Pakistan, late Miocene) referred to *Sivapithecus indicus*. The new specimen is a *Ouranopithecus macedoniensis* BONIS & MELENTIS 1977 adult male and consists of the right part of the face with a portion of the frontal, a portion of the left part of the face and the maxilla with the complete dentition except the right M³. The characters of this new face do not fit with the ones of *Sivapithecus* and the pongids. They are more primitive and they are plesiomorphic for the recent hominid clade (*Gorilla*, *Pan* and *Homo*). The characters of the dentition differ morphologically and metrically from those of the recent great apes and fit better with *Australopithecus afarensis*. *Ouranopithecus* seems now the best candidate to be considered as the forerunner of the Plio-pleistocene Hominae (*Australopithecus* and *Homo*).