

77 mares

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Marsha Levine (2006)
mtDNA and horse domestication: the archaeologist's cut
In: Marjan Mashkour (ed), *Equids in Time and Space*.
Papers in Honour of Véra Eisenmann. Oxford. pp 192–201
www.arch.cam.ac.uk/~ml12/download/chap_15_Levine.pdf

Although there are controversial claims for horse domestication as early as 4500 BC, even by 3000 BC there is no direct evidence. The earliest undisputed date is c. 2000 BC, with the chariot burials of the Sintashta–Petrovka culture on the Ural steppe. By the mid 2nd millennium BC burial, textual and iconographic evidence shows that domestic horses (associated with chariots) were also known in the Near East, Egypt and Greece and by 1250 BC they had reached China.

Summary

This paper examines the results of recent genetics research into the origins of horse domestication from an archaeological perspective. Archaeological, ethological and historical data, used in conjunction with the results of an analysis of the largest available horse mtDNA sequence database, allows us to take interpretation one step further than previous studies. Ethological and archaeological considerations suggest that the earliest origins of the domestication of the horse may have been both temporally and spatially restricted. However, the mtDNA results show that mares from at least 77 separate lineages contributed to the modern genetic pool. This suggests that, as the original

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domesticated population expanded, horses from wild populations were introduced into the domestic herds.

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