

First Proof of Ancient Early Human Hybrid Found in Siberian Cave

By [Reuters](#)

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Scientists have found concrete evidence of interbreeding between different species of early humans.

In 2012, a bone fragment from a teenage girl who died some 90,000 years ago was recovered from the Denisova cave in Siberia's Altai Mountains, according to a new study published in *Nature*.

Analysis of the genome conducted at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology revealed that the girl was a hybrid — her mother was a Neanderthal while her father was Denisovan.

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Denisovans are a hominin group distinct from Neanderthals and modern humans. Only a few of their bone fragments have been found, so their appearance and behavior remain a mystery.

Researchers did find that this particular Denisovan had some Neanderthal ancestry, while the mother was genetically closer to Neanderthals in western Europe than to one who had lived in the cave earlier.

Scientists knew from looking at the genetic patterns of ancient humans and homo sapiens that the different groups mated with each other, but the findings mark the first time a first-generation offspring of these pairings has been found.

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