New systematic insights about Plio-Pleistocene moles from Poland

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The generic attribution of the Plio-Pleistocene Polish moles ?Neurotrichus polonicus and ?Neurotrichus skoczeni has been questioned several times in the past. The fossil material belonging to ?Neurotrichus polonicus and ?Neurotrichus skoczeni is re-evaluated here and a new diagnosis is provided on the basis of qualitative considerations. In addition, a Geometric Morphometric analysis of the humerus has been performed including both extant and extinct Neurotrichini and Urotrichini taxa for comparison. Our results proved the unique morphology of the Polish material suggesting a distinct taxonomic state. The morphological variations evidenced by the humeral shape analysis agree with the observed qualitative differences and support a new generic allocation. The new genus Rzebikia gen. nov. is proposed for all the material previoulsy ascribed to ?Neurotrichus polonicus and ?Neurotrichus skoczeni.

Key words: Mammalia, Talpidae, Neurotrichus, Geometric Morphometrics, humerus, systematics, taxonomy, Pliocene, Pleistocene, Poland.

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