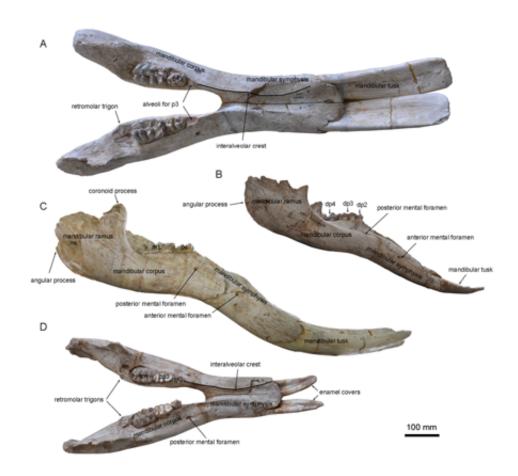


Konobelodon was discovered firstly in China

April 20 2016



Konobelodon robustus. Credit: Wang ShiQi

Konobelodon is a lesser known proboscidean species and was first reported in the U.S. in 1990. Owing to limited data, not much is known about its morphology, and its classification status has been controversial. In 2015, the occurrence of Konobelodon was confirmed in the Old



World after a research team from Greece classified Mastodon grandincisivus and Tetralophodon atticus from Europe and Western Asia into Konobelodon.

In the Late Miocene strata, Linxia Basin, Gansu, China, a lot of fossil proboscideans were found. The previous studies simply identified these materials as Tetralophodon exoletus, but the study results in Greece gave the researchers an important clue. After in-depth comparative study, Tetralophodon exoletus found in Linxia Basinhas now been classified into Konobelodon. The researchers identified a new species, Konobelodon robustus. The latest research result was published in *Geodiversitas*, 2016, Volume 38, Issue 1.

The study result shows that the Konobelodon robustus in the Linxia Basin, Gansu arrived much earlier than in Europe and America during that period, and it has many primitive features, so it is the ancestor of the other two species. The study also questioned the previous study verdict that the Konobelodon is originated from the Platybelodon as the Konobelodon robustus has a tiny dentine column structure in the lower incisors, which represents the initial evolutionary stage of dentine column. The dentine column structure in the lower incisors in the Platybelodon is well developed. Therefore, the corresponding structure in both Konobelodon robustus and Platybelodon cannot represent the same lineage. Meanwhile, the research also gave two possibilities for the origin of Konobelodon robustus. One is that Konobelodon robustus and American Amebelodon are in a sister group, and both originated from Protanancus in Eurasia; the other is that the Konobelodon robustus originates from Tetralophodon in Eurasia.

Provided by Chinese Academy of Sciences

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