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Earliest paracamelus of the old world

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The evolution of Tylopoda mainly occurred in North America. The history of Camelidae in the Old World began at the end of Late Miocene, when as a result of lower ocean level, a Beringian corridor allowed faunistic exchanges between North America and Eurasia. The dispersion of camels is probably correlated with the zone MN12. The earliest *Paracamelus* remains are known from some Late Tortonian correlated sites in Europe and Asia.

Data on bone remains of large camels from the Kazakhstan site Pavlodar (= Gusinyi Perelet) (MN 12 zone) are very scarce. This locality at the Irtysh River yielded a single second phalanx (Havesson, 1954). Unfortunately, this find was not discovered in situ. Fossiliferous deposits are reversely magnetized and are correlated to the Lower Pontian (Vangengeim et al., 1993; Vislobokova et al., 2001).

Paracamelus remains in Eastern Europe originate from the near shore limestone deposits of the Lower Pontian (the Novorossian substage) of the Black Sea marine stratigraphic scheme (Late Miocene, MN 12). The reversely magnetized layers of the Lower Pontian are correlated with the upper part of the Tortonian (Pevzner et al., 2003). Isolated bones of *P. cf. aguirrei* are known from localities of the northern Sea of Azov and lower Don River regions (Sinyavskaya, Novocherkassk, Russia), the Crimea (Eupatoria, Ukraine), and the northern Black Sea Region, near Odessa (Odessa limestone quarry; Yablonya, Ukraine) (Titov, Logvinenko, 2006).

P. aguirrei was described from Messinian deposits in Spain (MN 13), at the sites of Venta del Moro and Librilla (Morales et al. 1980; Pickford et al. 1995). Also, bones of *P. cf. aguirrei* were described from the Late Turolian locality of Çobanpinar (Turkey) and also referred to the MN13 stage (Made et al. 2002). Finds of early Tylopoda originate from the lower horizon of the Khirgis Nur Suite of the Late Miocene

Mongolian locality Khirgis Nur-2 (levels 10-37). Their age is estimated as the latest Miocene, late Turolian, MN 13 (Vislobokova et al., 2001). Deposits of Khirgis Nur-2 are reversely magnetized (Pevzner et al., 1982). The oldest known records of fossil camel on the African continent are from Early Pliocene sites Kossom Bougoudi (Chad) and Wadi Natrun (Egypt) (Pickford et al. 1995; Likius et al. 2003). Late Miocene camels were the largest representatives of *Paracamelus*. They share many similar characters with North American *Megatylopus* (Macdonald, 1956; Honey et al., 1998; et al.; Titov, Logvinenko, 2006). The latter genus appeared in the end of the Miocene of North America (Harrison, 1985; McKenna, 1998). These large animals quickly dispersed over Eurasia, occupying "savanna" type biotopes. Apparently, earliest Eurasian camels were common members of Late Miocene hipparion communities.

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