

Description of Anthracotheriidae Remains from the Middle and Upper Siwaliks of Punjab, Pakistan

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Abstract : In this paper, new dental remains of Merycopotamus (Anthracotheriidae) are described. The specimens were collected during field work by the authors from the well dated fossiliferous locality 'Hasnot' belonging to the Dhok Pathan Formation, and from 'Tatrot' village belonging to Tatrot Formation of the Potwar Plateau, Pakistan. The stratigraphic age of the Neogene deposits around Hasnot is 7 - 5 Ma; whereas the age of the Tatrot Formation is from 3.4 - 2.6 Ma. The newly discovered material when compared with the previous records of the genus Merycopotamus from the Siwaliks led us to identify all the three reported species of this genus from the Siwaliks of Pakistan. As the sample comprises only the dental remains so the identification of the specimens is solely based upon the morpho-metric analysis. The occlusal pattern of the upper molar in Merycopotamus dissimilis is different from Merycopotamus medioximus and Merycopotamus nanus in having a mesostyle fully divided, forming two prominent cusps, while mesostyle in M. medioximus is partly divided and small lateral crests are present on the mesostyle. A continuous loop like mesostyle is present in Merycopotamus nanus. The entoconid fold is present in Merycopotamus dissimilis on the lower molars whereas it is absent in Merycopotamus medioximus and Merycopotamus nanus. The hypoconulid in M. dissimilis is relatively simple but a loop like hypoconulid is present in M. medioximus and M. nanus. The results of the present findings are in line with the previous records of the genus Merycopotamus, with M. nanus, M. medioximus and M. dissimilis in the Late Miocene - Early Pliocene Dhok Pathan Formation, and M. dissimilis in the Late Pliocene Tatrot sediments of Pakistan.

Keywords : Dhok Pathan, late miocene, merycopotamus, pliocene, Tatrot

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