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ABSTRACT BOOK

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Preliminary data on the *Mammot borsoni* (Hays, 1834) from Otman Hill (Colibași, Republic of Moldova)

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At the beginning of November 2011, Vasile Grigorița, history professor of the „Vasile Alecsandri” theoretical high school from Colibași village, Cahul District, was announced by the villagers that some very large teeth were found in the sand quarry from Otman Hill (45.73° N, 28.20° E), located north-east of the above-mentioned locality, and, in his turn, brought the discovery to the author’s attention.

As a result of subsequent excavations (November 9-13,

2011), other remains belonging to the so-called Borson’s mastodont, *Mammot borsoni* (Hays, 1834), were unearthed, among which the most important are those of the skull. The braincase was found in situ, in the easternmost wall of the quarry, and was lying on a west-east direction, 50 cm deep (Fig. 1. A). Other remains were collected from the slopes near the braincase.

The specimens were collected from horizontally stratified

Table 1. Features of the upper molars (M1-M2-M3 dex and sin) belonging to the *M. borsoni* specimen from Otman Hill, Colibași village.

	M1 dex	M1 sin	M2 dex	M2 sin	M3 dex	M3 sin
No. of crests	III	III	III	III	IV+t	IV+t
Length (cm)	92	94.6	112.1	113.1	160.02	160
Width (cm)	82.7 (III)	83.5 (II)	92.0 (III)	96.5 (III)	105.4 (II)	108.7 (II)
Height (cm)	>50.04 (III)	>51.5 (III)	61 (III)	62.5 (III)	64.5 (II)	69 (II)
Enamel thickness (cm)	-	-	-	3.9	-	-
Width index (3:2)	89.89	88.26	54.41	64.76	40.31	43.12



Fig. 1. Fossil remains of the *M. borsoni* individual from Otman Hill quarry. **A**, skull as it was found in situ. View from south to north (November 10, 2001). Arrow points to the occipital bones; **B**, during preparation at the „Vasile Alecsandri” High School, Colibași village (November 13, 2011). Braincase is 720 mm wide.

coarse alluvial sands, of yellow-gray and light brown colour, with local occurrences of iron and manganese oxides, boulders of clay, and sandstones. Such deposits occur in the southern part of the Republic of Moldova, and are typical for the faunal sites of the Moldovian Faunal Unit of Eastern Europe, the MN 15 biozone (Vangengeim et al., 2005).

The material consists in: fragments of I2; left and right premaxillary fragments bearing fragments of I2 in the alveoli; the almost complete braincase; two maxillo-palatine fragments bearing the left and right M1-M2s; left and right M3s; a crest of m3; rib fragments, and other bone fragments (Fig. 1. B and Table 1, 2 for measurements). Specimens belonging to other vertebrates were also found: 10 turtle shell fragments; the second phalanx of a (probably tragocericid) bovid; micromammals; coprolites; a beaver bone.

Prior to this discovery, skull fragments from a senile *Mammot borsoni* individual, of which only the maxillo-palatines bearing the left and right M3s were preserved, were found at the Budăi site, about 23 km north-east from the Otman Hill quarry (Obadă, 2001).

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Table 2. Skull dimensions (after von den Driesch, 1981; Tassy, 1997; Maschenko, 2002) of *M. borsoni* from Otman Hill, Colibași village.

Measured parameter	Size in mm
Greatest length starting from the occipital margin	>350
Occipital width	720
Greatest supraorbital width	420
Greatest width across the frontals	410
Basal length	422
Sagital occipital height	>450
Greatest length of occipital condyle	218
Greatest height of occipital condyle	119.9
Greatest width of foramen magnum	154
Length of M1-M2 sin and dex dental rows	M1-M2 sin: 209 M1-M2 dex: 209
Greatest diameter of dex I2, at the alveolus	width: 59 height: 66
Greatest diameter of sin I2 sin, at the alveolus	width: 63.4 height: 64

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