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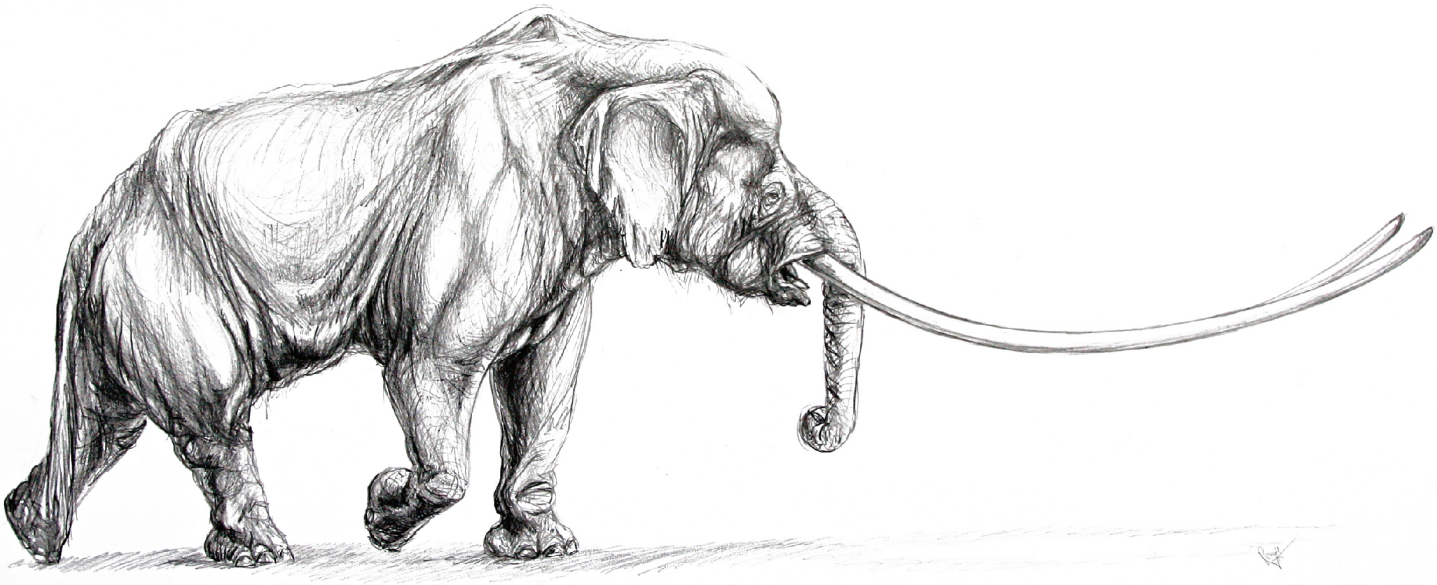

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ABSTRACT BOOK

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Note on the Eastern European occurrences of *Stegotetrabelodon* Petrocchi, 1941

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Specimens assigned to *Stegotetrabelodon* Petrocchi, 1941 are so far reported from the following fossiliferous sites of Eastern Europe: Kerch, Ukraine (Pavlow, 1903), Khersonian, MN 10 biozone; Sklearovka (Novoalexandrovski District, Stavropol Territory), Russia (Alekseeva, 1959), Khersonian-Meotian, MN 10-MN 11 biozone; Tanacu (Vaslui District), Romania (Macarovci and Zaharia, 1967), Khersonian, MN 10 biozone; Novoukrainka, (Razdelnyansky District, Odessa Territory), Ukraine (Korotkevichi, 1979; Krakhmalnaya, 2008), Khersonian, MN 10 biozone; Cherevychne (Belyaev District, Odessa Territory), Ukraine (Korotkevichi, 1979), latest Meotian, MN 13a biozone; Ţareuca (Rezina District), Republic of Moldova (e.g. Obadă, 2007), Khersonian, MN 10 biozone.

The revision of some collections from the Republic of Moldova and Romania led to the taxonomical assignment of some fossil proboscidean remains. Some of these specimens were assigned to the genus *Stegotetrabelodon*: 1. The basal ivory fragment from Ungheni, previously assigned to *Amebelodon* sp. (e.g. Obadă, 2005) or to *Protanancus* sp. (Markov and Verghiev, 2010) allowed for the identification of Schreger lines in the outer layer, in transverse section, a typical feature of the genus *Stegotetrabelodon* (Ferretti et al., 2003); 2. A distal ivory fragment from Teleneşti District, Republic of Moldova (precise locality unknown), was identified in the collection of the State University of Tiraspol (with the headquarters in Chişinău), presenting a ivory pattern similar to the specimen form Ungheni. Its probable age is (?) - Khersonian, MN 10 biozone; 3. The following specimens, assigned to *Stegotetrabelodon* are housed in the collection of the National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History of Moldova, Chişinău: Pd4–M1 sin. and M1 dex., from the same specimen. They were collected during the excavations made for the foundations of the "Nicolae Dimo" Institute of Pedology, Agrochemistry and Soil Protection, from Schinoasa slum (Ialoveni street, Chişinău) at the absolute altitude of 222-226 m (in gray-greenish sands, possibly deposited in an oxbow lake), Khersonian, MN 10 biozone. Three Zygolophodon turicensis (Schinz, 1824) isolated molars (m2 and m3 sin. and dex.) were collected alongside the specimens mentioned above; 4. The Museum of Original Paleontological Collections from the „Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University, Iaşi, Romania, houses a fragment of the mandible, including the symphyseal portion and the base of the vertical branch, also bearing the m3 dex., found at Vutcani, Vaslui District. This specimen is also reported here as belonging to the genus *Stegotetrabelodon*.

E.L. Korotkevichi (1979) identified two „forms" of stegoterabelodons in Ukraine: a basal one, from Upper Sarmatian deposits (Novoukrainca, Ukraine; she also assigns to this "form" the specimens from Mannersdorf, Austria, and Oreahovo), and a derived one, from Meotian deposits (Cerevichnyi, Ukraine). Tobien (1978) estimates that stegotetrabelodontids are not primitive elephants, but evolved bunodont mastodons. Geraads et al. (2005) assign (even if provisionally) the specimens determined by different authors as *„Mastodon" grandincisivus* and the *„T. longirostris* grandincisivoid form" of this group to the genus *Amebelodon* Barbour, 1927. The same authors mention that more complete skull and mandibles are necessary for choosing one option and the other. It is worth mentioning now that the only *Stegotetrabelodon* skull known from Eastern Europe (and possibly the only one in Europe) was collected from Cerevichnyi fossil site, Ukraine (Meotian, MN 13 biozone) (Korotkevichi, 1979), but it was destroyed during transportation to the "V. Topachvsky" Palaeontological Museum (National Museum of Natural History at the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Kiev) and requires extensive restoration. Given that the African deposits that yielded *Stegotetrabelodon* orbus are around 7.5 My old (Lothagam, Kenya; Sanders et al, 2010), and the ones in Eastern Europe are about 10.2 My age (Pevzner et al., 1987; Pevzner and Vangengeim, 1993; Krakhmalnaya, 2008) we can presume that this genus appeared in Eastern Europe, and subsequently migrated to the African continent.

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