New Cranial Material of Hipparion Sensu Lato (Perissodactyla, Mammalia) from the Classical Locality of Pikermi, Greece

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This abstract refers to the biometric study of unpublished hipparionine material from the classical locality of Pikermi (Attica, Greece) stored at the Museum of Geology and Palaeontology (University of Athens). The age of the Pikermi fauna is considered as Late Miocene (middle Turolian, MN 12). The material studied comes from old excavations and includes cranial, mandibular and dental specimens of adult individuals. Two hipparionine horses, are identified, the Cremohipparion mediterraneum (Roth and Wagner, 1855) and the Hippotherium brachypus (Hensel, 1862).

Cremohipparion mediterraneum is characterised mainly by the small snout and the less elongated skull compared to the second species. The praeorbital fossa is placed close to the orbital one and the choanae are wide. The upper and lower cheek teeth are relatively small, demonstrate usually simple enamel plication in moderate wear stage and have short and wide plis. Furthermore, the protocone is usually subtriangular. Biometrical observations of the Hippotherium brachypus indicate that its skull is elongated, with long snout. The praeorbital fossa is far from the orbital fossa and the choanae are relatively narrow. The rostral margin of the choanae terminates at the level of the M3 paracone. The praeorbital fossa is deep and oval, pocketed caudally. The upper and lower cheek teeth are long, with deep and narrow plis.

Previous studies have documented the existence of at least two fossiliferous layers at the classical locality of Pikermi. Theodorou and Nicolaides (1988) have questioned the co-existence of the two hipparionine species in each layer. However, results from Theodorou *et al.* (2010) as well as data from this study provided evidence of the co-existence of the two species in the same layer.

Keywords: Cremohipparion mediterraneum, Hippotherium brachypus, Hipparion, biometry, Late Miocene, Pikermi.

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