

Asian Paleoprimatology

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Kyoto University, Japan**

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**Overseas Research Report of Studies on
“Origins and Evolution of Hominoids in East Asia”**

**Kyoto University Primate Research Institute
2000**

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Preface

We have studied the early anthropoid primate fossils for more than ten years in Oligocene South America (early New World monkeys) and in Miocene East Africa (early hominoid primates). In the course of our study, we gradually sifted our research focus on the ancestor of these anthropoid primates. Many recent discoveries of anthropoid fossils from the late Eocene to early Oligocene sediments of Fayum, Egypt have revealed a complicated early evolution of anthropoids, suggesting an African origin for anthropoids. Recently, however, several anthropoid primates have also been reported from Asia. Although there still remains some debates on their anthropoid status, the evolution of Eocene primates in Asia is a very important issue in the primate evolution.

Pondaung primates from Myanmar have been somewhat of an enigma since its initial description by Pilgrim in 1927. Although not yet positively classified, the Pondaung primate has been recognized as a close relative of anthropoid. The lack of agreement concerning the anthropoid status of this fossil is undoubtedly a result of the extreme scarcity of information on maxillary teeth and cranial bones.

We focused our research on Southeast Asia, especially in Pondaung formation in Central Myanmar and Miocene deposits in Thailand. Fortunately, we could get a permission from the Government of Myanmar (Office of Strategic Studies, Ministry of Defense) and could make a cooperative research team with Myanmar researchers. We could also get a permission of paleontological research in Thailand from the Government of Thailand. We also made a preliminary paleontological research in China for our future research.

We were very successful in our joint research in 1998 and 1999 in Myanmar and in 1999 in Thailand. This volume reports the results of our field survey (1998, 1999) in Myanmar, Thailand, and China.

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We thank the staff of the Department of Geological Sciences in Chiang Mai University, and of the Chiang Mai National Museum, for their support during our research. Our thanks are due to the staff of the lignite mines (Chiang Muan, Ban Pu, Pa Kha, Na Klang, Mae Moh), for their kind assistance and useful information given to us.

Our thanks also extended to Miss Junko Furukawa of Kyoto University who assisted in our secretarial management.

Nobuo Shigehara

Primate Research Institute

Kyoto University

Research Projects

Research activity in 1997

1) China

Members

Prof. Nobuo Shigehara: Professor, Primate Research Institute, Kyoto University
Dr. Masanaru Takai: Lecturer, Primate Research Institute, Kyoto University
Dr. Yutaka Kunitatsu: Lecturer, Primate Research Institute, Kyoto University
Prof. Takeshi Setoguchi: Professor, Faculty of Science, Kyoto University
Mr. Hiroshige Matsuoka: Graduate student, Faculty of Science, Kyoto University

Schedule of Field Survey

Nov. 1 – Dec. 20, 1997

2) Thailand

Member

Dr. Haruo Saegusa: Lecturer, Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Man and Nature

Schedule of Field Survey

Dec. 1 - Dec. 14, 1997

Research activity in 1998

1) Myanmar

Members

<Japanese side>

Prof. Nobuo Shigehara
Dr. Masanaru Takai
Mr. Tsubamoto: Graduate Student, Faculty of Science, Kyoto University

<Myanmar side>

Colonel Than Tun: Head of Department, Office of Strategic Studies, Ministry of Defense

Major Bo Bo: Office of Strategic Studies, Ministry of Defense
Major Kyaw Kyaw: Office of Strategic Studies, Ministry of Defense
Mr. Soe Thura Tun: Lecturer, Dagon University
Mr. Aung Naing Soe: Lecturer, Yangon University
Dr. Aye Ko Aung: Lecturer, Dagon University

Schedule of Field Survey

Nov. 1, 1998	Prof. Shigehara, Dr. Takai and Mr. Tsubamoto arrive at Yangon
Nov. 2 - 3	Yangon
Nov. 4	Bagan
Nov. 5	Bahin Village
Nov. 5 - 12	Bahin: Field Exploration
Nov. 12 -16	Pangan/Magyigan: Field Exploration
Nov. 17 - 22	Mogaung: Field Exploration
Nov. 22 - Dec. 7	Yangon National Museum
Nov. 30	Prof. Shigehara leave Yangon to Japan
Nov. 7	Dr. Takai a Mr. Tsubamoto leave Yangon to Japan

2) Thailand

Members

<Japanese Side>

Dr. Haruo Saegusa

Dr. Shinji Nagaoka: Faculty of Education, Nagasaki University

Dr. Yutaka Kunimatsu

Mr. Takehisa Tsubamoto

<Thai Side>

Prof. Benjavun Ratanasthien: Professor, Chiang Mai University

Schedule of Field Survey

Jan. 31 - Feb. 5, 1999	Chiang Mai
Feb. 6 - 7	Chiang Rai
Feb. 8	Sob Mae Tham
Feb. 9	Chiang Mai
Feb. 10 - 16	Sob Mae Tham
Feb. 17 - 24	Chiang Muan & Pong Basin
Feb. 25 - 27	Li Basin
Feb. 28	Sob Mae Tham
Mar. 1	Li Basin
Mar. 2	Sob Mae Tham
Mar. 3 - 4	Mae Moh
Mar. 5	Chiang Mai
Mar. 6	Hab Pu Dai

Mar. 7

Chiang Mai

3) China

Member

Prof. Takeshi Setoguchi

Sep. 18 – Oct. 14, 1998

Preliminary research in China and arrangement for future paleontological survey

4) France

Member

Dr. Hirofumi Matsumura: National Museum of Natural History, Japan

Dec. 8 - Dec. 23, 1998, Comparative study of the fossil and extant hominids in France

Research activity in 1999

1) Myanmar

Members

<Japanese side>

Prof. Nobuo Shigehara

Dr. Masanaru Takai

Dr. Naoko Egi: Research Fellow, National Museum of Natural History, Tokyo

Mr. Takehisa Tsubamoto

<Myanmar side>

Colonel Than Tun

Major Bo Bo

Dr. Tin Thein: Professor, Patheingyi University

Mr. Soe Thura Tun

Mr. Maung Maung: Lecturer, Mandalay University

Schedule of the Survey

Nov. 1 1999 Dr. Takai, Dr.Egi, Mr.Tsubamoto arrive at Yangon

Nov. 3 Yangon to Monywa

Nov. 4 Monywa to Mogaung Village

Nov. 5 - 9 Mogaung village: Field Exploration

Nov. 8 Prof. Shigehara Arrive at Yangon

Nov. 10 Mogaung to Monywa, Yangon to Monywa

Nov. 11 Monywa

Nov. 12	Monywa to Bahin Village
Nov. 13 -19	Bahin villages: Field Exploration
Nov. 20	Bahin to Magyigan
Nov. 20 - 22	Magygan: Field Exploration
Nov. 23	Magygan to Bagan
Nov. 24	Bagan to Yangon
Nov. 26	Prof. Shigehara leaves Yangon
Nov. 30	Dr. Takai and Dr. Egi leave Yangon
Dec. 4	Mr.Tsubamoto leave Yangon

Feb. 13 -26, 2000 Mr. Tsubamoto, comparative study at the National Museum

2) Thailand

Members

<Japanese Side>

Dr. Hideo Nakaya: Faculty of Engineering, Kagawa University

Dr. Shinji Nagaoka

Dr. Yutaka Kunimatsu

Mr. Yuusuke Nakano: Graduate student, Shimane University

Mr. Mototaka Saneyoshi: Graduate student, Shimane University

<Thai Side>

Prof. Benjavun Ratanasthien

Mr. Thanuchai Silaratana: Chiang Mai University

Miss Bantita Udomkan: Chiang Mai University

Schedule of Field Survey

Jan. 17, 2000	Chiang Mai
Jan. 18 - 21	Sob Mae Tham
Jan. 22 - 29	Chiang Muan & Nan
Jan. 30	Mae Lai
Jan. 31 - Feb 3	Nan
Feb. 4	Chiang Mai

3) China

Member

Dr. Takeshi Setoguchi

Oct. 18 - Nov. 12, 1999, Preliminary research in Fuxin, Liaoning Prov., China