

寒武纪大爆发——早期后生动物辐射之谜: 序言*

张志飞** 陈飞扬

(陕西省早期生命与环境重点实验室和大陆动力学国家重点实验室与西北大学地质学系, 西安 710069, elizf@nwu.edu.cn)

随着中国经济的持续、稳定发展和国家政府对基础研究的日趋重视,我国科技投入力度正在逐年加大,包括古生物学在内的地球科学基础研究近十年来取得长足的进步和发展。近些年,我国的古生物学已开始在多门类起源、系统演化和环境背景研究中处于国际领先,在部分研究方向开始发挥重要国际引领作用。加之华南、华北保存的化石材料优势和若干国家重大项目的稳定、持续支持(Zhu *et al.*, 2016a; Zhu and Li, 2017),使我国在科研队伍、论文数量和研究的力度、广度和深度方面均成为国际早期生命演化和寒武纪大爆发研究的重要阵地,成为推动国际相关领域研究的重要引擎,相继组织了一系列专辑和特刊(Maletz *et al.*, 2014; Isozaki *et al.*, 2014, Zhu and Li, 2017)。今年,在美国《古生物学报(Journal of Paleontology)》编委会的支持下,我们聚焦寒武纪主要类群的起源和演化,力求推动特异化石库和传统壳体化石的综合对比研究,在美国古生物学报成功组织了一期英文专辑(Zhang and Brock, 2017),获得了很好的国际反响(e. g. Skovsted and Topper, 2017)。然而随着国际化的加强,我国相关中文论文具有明显的减少趋势,本期专辑旨在将寒武纪大爆发与后生动物起源及相关重要进展和热点向国内学者和同行做以推介和呈现。借此机会对古生物学报编辑同仁和各位作者、老师表示诚挚的感谢:是你们的细致耐心的编辑工作和出色的研究才使得该专辑有了与各位读者及时见面的机会。

在长达 46 亿年的漫长地质历史时期中,寒武纪(541—485 Ma)是显生宙地球生物和环境发生巨变的重大转折时期,地球在经历了长达 35 亿年的前寒武纪微生物席主导的原始海洋生态系统之后,开始

向 5 亿年之久的后生动物主导的显生宙海洋生态系统转变(Mángano and Buatois, 2017; Bicknell and Paterson, 2017)。从前寒武纪末期的埃迪卡拉纪晚期至寒武纪初期(包括纽芬兰世和第二世),地球上开始爆发性地出现了至少 18 个动物门类与现代动物门类发育躯体构型(Body-plan)相似或者基本相同(Shu *et al.*, 2014)。同时,还出现了与现生动物躯体构型不同的灭绝动物(Shu *et al.*, 2010)。科学家通常将这次发生在前寒武纪-寒武纪界线附近后生动物(尤其是两侧对称动物)起源和快速辐射事件形象地称为“寒武纪生命大爆发”(Cambrian Explosion)(张兴亮、舒德干, 2014; Zhang *et al.*, 2014b; Budd and Jackson, 2017)。根据最新的集成式研究成果,寒武纪大爆发历时大约 4 千万年,导致地球动物树三大亚界(基础动物亚界、原口动物亚界和后口动物亚界)依次成型(2016 年国家自然科学二等奖:西北大学地球动物树早期成型项目)(Shu *et al.*, 2009, 2014),凸显了寒武纪大爆发的突发性、连续性和阶段性(插图 1)。其突发性是相对的,是指 4 千万年的演化相对漫长的 46 亿年的地球历史是短暂的,显示具有一定的瞬时性和爆发性特点。此外,后生动物的演化从宏观的地质记录来看,又具有明显的连续性,因为前寒武纪埃迪卡拉型,如蕨叶类(状)化石在寒武纪的化石记录中也广泛存在,但形态细节和解剖特征演化有明显的区别和递进特点(Shu *et al.*, 2006; Han *et al.*, 2017)。与此同时,其演化过程又展现出明显的阶段性特点,从埃迪卡拉纪为主的基础动物(刺胞动物及其相关类群),到前寒武纪-寒武纪之交大量出现的原口动物壳体化石(寒武纪纽芬兰世幸运阶—第二阶小壳化石),再到澄江化石库(第三阶)后口动物门的集体亮

收稿日期: 2017-11-08

* 国家自然科学基金委员会杰出青年科学基金和国际(地区)合作与交流项目(批准号:41425008, 41720104002)、国家自然科学基金委员会创新研究群体科学基金(批准号:41621003)以及高等学校学科创新引智计划(111 项目,编号:D17013)联合资助。

** 通讯作者。

相(Shu *et al.*, 2010, 2014), 实现了有口无肛到口肛发育, 再到口肛倒转的阶段性发育过程, 从而实现了基础动物、原口动物, 再到后口动物三大亚界依次阶

段性、辐射演化的过程(舒德干等, 2009)。后生动物这些阶段性的多样性辐射事件(或生态扩张)预示了各大动物阶元在分类上应该有更早的化石记录。

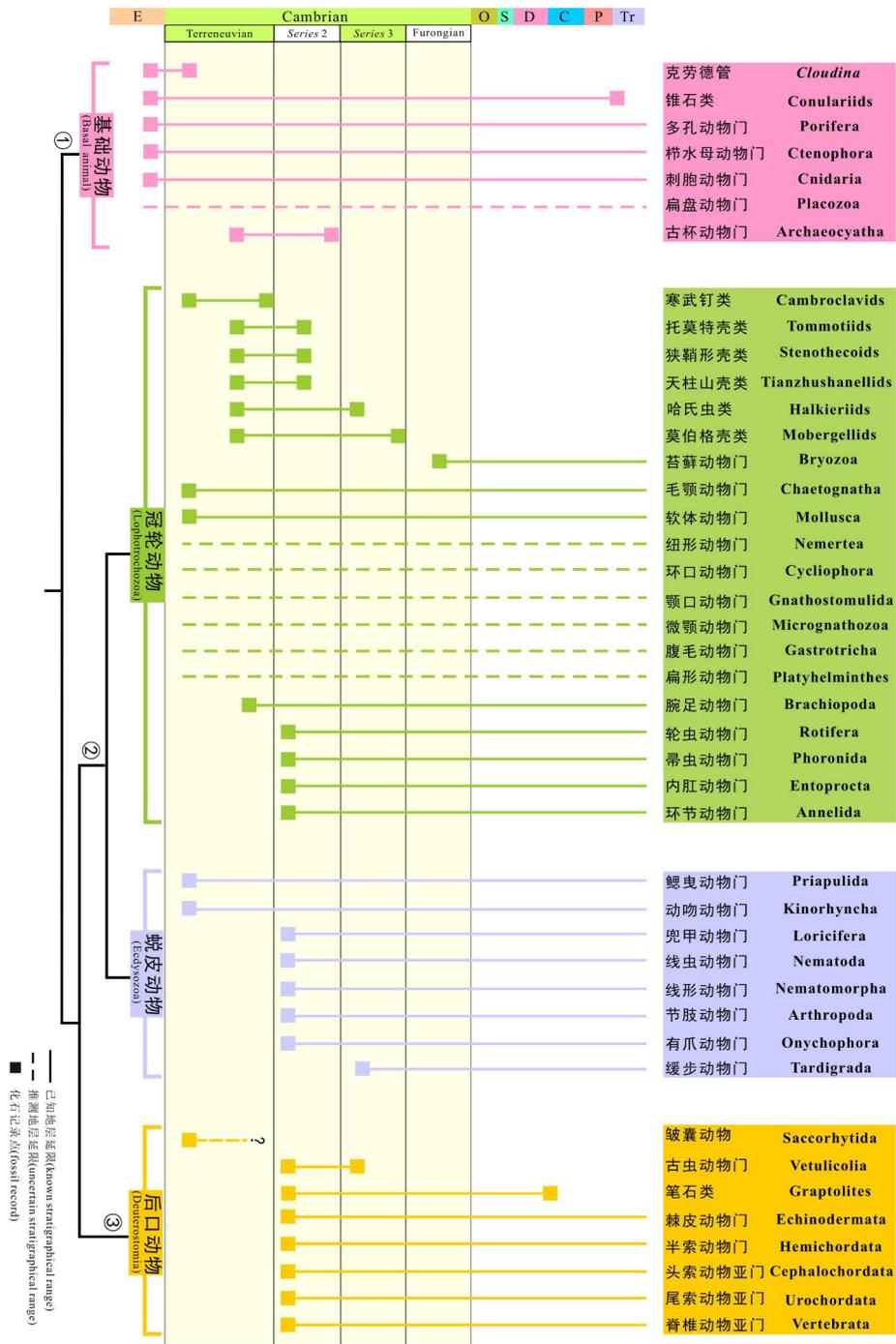


插图 1 寒武纪大爆发导致基础动物、原口动物和后口动物三大亚界依次成型

The schematic pattern of Cambrian explosion of metazoans, with explosive radiation of basal metazoans, protostomes and deuterostomes in successions

基础动物毫无疑问可以追溯到埃迪卡拉纪晚期, 在寒武纪纽芬兰世幸运期其骨骼类祖先大量辐射; 冠轮类原口动物大量出现在寒武纪幸运期, 而蜕皮类原口动物和后口动物化石记录出现较晚, 主要发现于寒武系第三阶。

The basal metazoans can be traced no double back to the late Ediacaran with their explosive radiation of their skeletonized ancestors in the earliest Cambrian (Terreneuvian Fortunian Stage); The mass appearances of lophotrochozoans in Fortunian were essentially earlier than the occurrence of most ecdysozoan protostomes and deuterostomes in Stage 3.

随着研究的深入和化石解析手段的不断改进(如 X-射线 CT 断层扫描技术),发现基础动物亚界、原口动物亚界中的冠轮动物和蜕皮类群以及原始后口动物化石记录在我国陕南寒武系宽川铺组磷块岩(纽芬兰统幸运阶,距今约 5.35 亿年前)中已经开始交织、共同出现,从而使我国陕南宽川铺生物群再次成为国际演化古生物学关注的焦点(Liu *et al.*, 2014; Zhang *et al.*, 2015; Han *et al.*, 2017a)。根据目前的研究,我国陕南寒武纪初期的宽川铺动物群中不仅包括早期发现的各种藻类、球状化石、刺细胞动物、原牙形动物、软体动物和大量的椎管类和软舌螺类(钱逸等, 1999),还发现有疑似节肢动物(Steiner *et al.*, 2004)、最古老的环神经动物(如最古老的鳃曳动物和可能的动物动物)(Liu *et al.*, 2014; Zhang *et al.*, 2015),以及可能的后口动物(Han *et al.*, 2017a)。系列研究已经成为继澄江化石库之后,代表国际早期后生动物实体化石记录的重要发现和

重大研究进展(Liu *et al.*, 2014; Han *et al.*, 2017a,b)。除此之外,还出现有典型的埃迪卡拉动物群的子遗或后期演化类型,进一步实证了前寒武纪—寒武纪演化的连续性(Han *et al.*, 2017b)。因此,在本专辑中我们对我国寒武纪最早期宽川铺生物群也给予了特别的关注(插图 2),邀请了多个长期从事宽川铺生物群研究的不同课题组报道了其最新的发现和主要研究进展(插图 2)。他们的研究认为宽川铺生物群在构成上明显有别于其他的寒武纪晚期以节肢动物为主要类型的化石动物群,主要由多种辐射对称类型的刺细胞动物,如阿纳巴管类、骨状壳类、六方锥石类等(张虎等, 2017; 张亚楠等, 2017)构成。诚然,除了成体化石外宽川铺组还富含大量原生动动物(张奇等, 2017)、胚胎化石(姚肖永等, 2017; 郑亚娟等, 2017),这些化石为理解早期动物的营养结构和不同类群动物的早期微型发育过程提供了重要信息(Dong *et al.*, 2013; Han *et al.*, 2013, 2017 a,b)。

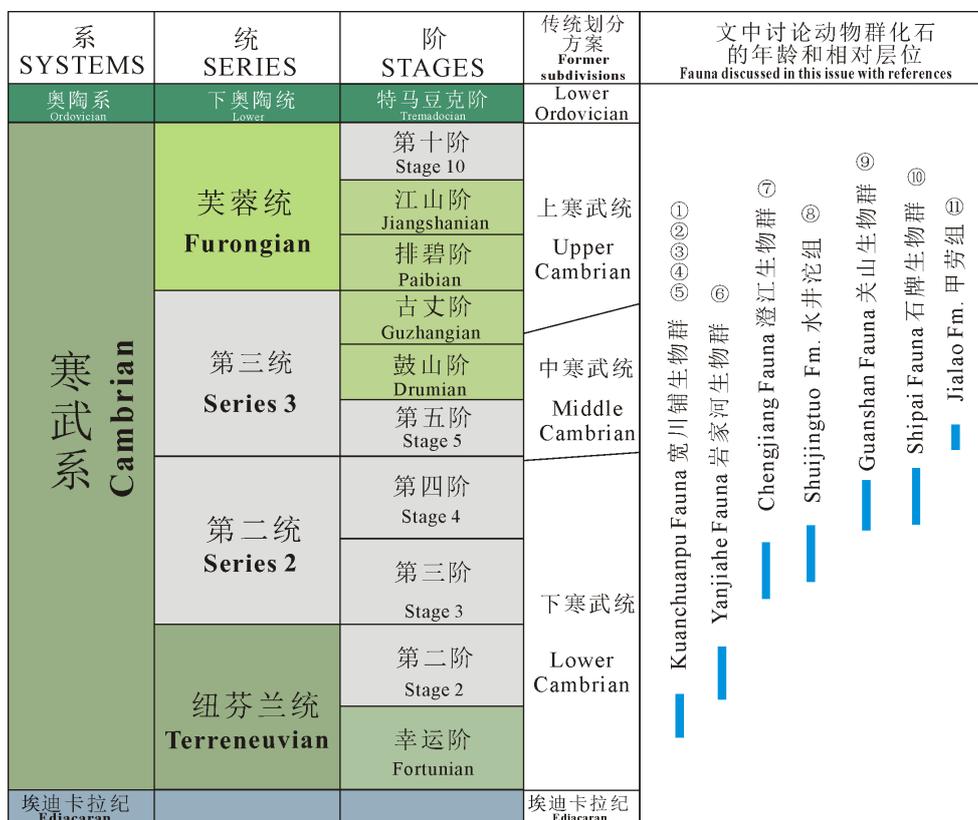


插图 2 图示本专辑文章讨论的动物群化石及其相对地层年代

The current global chronostratigraphic subdivisions of the Cambrian System and the occurrence and horizons of the Chinese fossils dealt with in the papers involved in this SI volume

图中①—⑪分别代表本专辑 11 篇寒武纪大爆发论文,依次是:①张金等;②张亚楠等;③张虎等;④郑亚娟等;⑤姚肖永等;⑥郭俊锋等;⑦赵婷等;⑧张志亮等;⑨吴迪等;⑩刘璠等;⑪段晓林等。

11 articles in this special issue focusing on the Cambrian Explosion are marked respectively by the Numbers ①—⑪: ① Zhang Jin *et al.*, ② Zhang Ya-nan *et al.*, ③ Zhang Hu *et al.*, ④ Zheng Ya-juan *et al.*, ⑤ Yao Xiao-yong *et al.*, ⑥ Guo Jun-feng *et al.*, ⑦ Zhao Ting *et al.*, ⑧ Zhang Zhi-liang *et al.*, ⑨ Wu Di *et al.*, ⑩ Liu Fan *et al.*, ⑪ Duan *et al.*

郭俊锋等(2017)综述了湖北宜昌-长阳地区寒武系岩家河组发现的岩家河生物群的组合和群落构成。该生物群中的典型宏体化石出现于寒武系第二个小壳化石带,化石组合面貌与寒武纪早期的“梅树村小壳动物群”有明显区别,加入了宏体动、植物化石的分子,代表着寒武纪早期小壳化(梅树村期)宏体(厘米级)动、植物化石首现。这些厘米级的宏体化石主要包括锥管状动物化石原锥虫属 *Protocornites*、疑难类后生动物小岩家河虫属 *Yanjiahella* 和大量宏体层状富集的宏观藻类。多层富集的化石中还包括大量的原锥虫属和部分疑难类(郭俊峰等, 2017),为揭示寒武纪早期底栖生态群落的建立提供了可靠的化石依据。

在湖北宜昌地区,张志亮等(2017)主要研究了该地区最早三叶虫时代的乳孔贝类腕足动物始强壮贝(*Eohadrotreta*)的形态、发育和壳体显微结构。乳孔贝类变态发育的提出和发现在国际上尚属首次,作者主要图示了乳孔贝腕足动物的变态发育序列和肉茎孔的发育形成过程,厘定了相关的术语,为推动国内外的相关研究做出了努力。在湖北宜昌地区茅坪镇的下茶庄村附近的石牌组,刘璠等(2017)发现了大量成层富集的乳孔贝类腕足动物。重要的是在这些腕足动物内模富集的层面上作者还发现有较为完整保存的蠕虫状鳃曳动物化石,其表面保存有精美的骨片和纹饰。除此之外,还发现有铰合保存的软舌螺和双瓣壳节肢动物等。下茶庄剖面石牌组顶底发育、出露良好,代表着石牌动物群的新发现,为进一步研究石牌动物群的组成、层位富集、群落结构和地理分布范围提供了新的产地。

段晓林等(2017)首次报道贵州剑河八郎地区甲劳组下部粉砂质、砂质页岩中发现的太阳女神螺类化石小厄兰岛螺属(*Oelandiella* Vostokova, 1962) 1 相似种: *Oelandiella* cf. *accordinonata* (Runnegar and Jell, 1976)。作者认为剑河甲劳组中 *Oelandiella* 具有较为显著的横向背脊和壳体两侧对称的同缘褶,据此推测该属可能生活在正常浅海环境。因此该类化石的发现有助于了解甲劳组的沉积环境,为深入探讨其沉积环境提供新的证据。

除了新材料和新化石报道外,赵婷等(2017)和吴迪等(2017)分别介绍了显微 CT 技术在澄江动物群节肢动物和体式荧光显微镜在重新研究关山动物群棘皮动物始海百合中的成功经验。赵婷等(2017)通过显微 CT 技术和 Drishti 软件应用,成功提取了澄江化石库化石围岩内部保存的节肢动物周小姐虫

(*Misszhouia longicaudata*) 的三维立体附肢结构,为 CT 技术在深入研究澄江动物群不同类型的化石提供了新的范例。吴迪等(2017)结合普通体式光学显微镜和荧光体式显微镜的对比研究,以关山动物群中珍稀武定始海百合为例,揭示了普通光学显微镜很难觉察到的触手边缘排列的边缘刺和腕板,为软组织或者其他精细结构的观察和信息提取提供了新的观察手段。此外,贾慧等(2017)还介绍了主成分分析法在壳斗科植物化石鉴定中的应用。他们经过主成分分析法压缩挑选 10 个主要性状特征,能够实现壳斗科化石植物的准确鉴定。最后,李相传等(2017)介绍了植物大化石在定量重建云南景谷早古新世古气候的应用。

致谢 感谢《古生物学报》主编戎嘉余院士、执行主编詹仁斌研究员的鼓励和支持,以及《古生物学报》编委会的编辑、评审和帮助。该专辑在组织过程中同时也借鉴了今年美国古生物学报专辑顺利组织的成功经验,在此向美国古生物学报主编靳吉锁教授的支持和建议表示衷心的感谢。同时感谢南京古生物所李国祥老师在专辑组织、评审过程中的帮助和建议。

参 考 文 献 (References)

- Bicknell R D C, Paterson J R, 2017. Reappraising the early evidence of durophagy and drilling predation in the fossil record: implications for escalation and the Cambrian Explosion. *Biological Reviews*; doi:10.1111/brv.12365.
- Budd G E, Jackson I S, 2016. Ecological innovations in the Cambrian and the origins of the crown group phyla. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London B*, **371**(1685):20150287.
- Dong X P, Cunningham J A, Stefan B, 2013. Embryos, polyps and medusae of the Early Cambrian scyphozoan *Olivoooides*. *Proceedings Biological Sciences*, **280**(1757):20130071.
- Duan Xiao-lin(段晓琳), Yang Xing-lian(杨兴莲), Wang Yuan(王媛), 2017. *Oelandiella* from the Cambrian Jialiao Formation of Guizhou, China. *Acta Palaeontologica Sinica* (古生物学报), **56**(4):529—537(in Chinese with English abstract).
- Guo Jun-feng(郭俊峰), Qiang Ya-qin(强亚琴), Song Zu-chen(宋祖晨), Zheng Ya-juan(郑亚娟), Yao Xiao-yong(姚晓勇), Xiao Liang(肖良), Li Xiang-chuan(李相传), 2017. Research progress and prospect on the Early Cambrian Yanjiahe biota. *Acta Palaeontologica Sinica* (古生物学报), **56**(4):461—475(in Chinese with English abstract).
- Han J, Cai Y P, Schiffbauer J D, Hua H, Wang X, Yang X G, Uesugi K, Komiya T, Sun J, 2017b. A *Cloudina*-like fossil with evi-

- dence of asexual reproduction from the lowest Cambrian, South China. *Geological Magazine*, **154**(6):1294—1305.
- Han J, Kubota S, Li G, Yao X Y, Yang X G, Shu D G, Li Y, Kinoshita S, Sasaki O, Komiya T, Yan G, 2013. Early Cambrian pentamerous cubozoan embryos from South China. *Plos One*, **8**(8):e70741.
- Han J, Morris S C, Ou Q, Shu D, Huang H, 2017a. Meiofaunal deuterostomes from the basal Cambrian of Shaanxi (China). *Nature*, **542**(7640):228.
- Isozaki Y, Shu D, Maruyama S, Santosh M, 2014. Beyond the Cambrian Explosion: From galaxy to genome. *Gondwana Research*, **25**(3):881—883.
- Jia Hui (贾慧), Sun Bai-nian (孙柏年), Ferguson D K, Meng Xiang-ning (孟祥宁), 2017. The application of Principal Component Analysis to the identification of Fagaceae leaf fossils. *Acta Palaeontologica Sinica (古生物学报)*, **56**(4):538—548 (in Chinese with English abstract).
- Li Xiang-chuan (李相传), Guo Zheng-hong (郭郑宏), He Wen-long (何文龙), Xiao Liang (肖良), Dai Jing (戴静), Sun Nan (孙楠), Wang Nan (王楠), Li Rui-yun (李瑞云), Lü Jian-kuo (吕荐阔), 2017. Quantitative paleoclimate reconstructions of the Early Miocene megafloora of Jinggu, Yunnan. *Acta Palaeontologica Sinica (古生物学报)*, **56**(4):549—561 (in Chinese with English abstract).
- Liu Fan (刘璠), Chen Fei-yang (陈飞扬), Chen Yan-long (陈延龙), Zhang Zhi-fei (张志飞), 2017. Notes on the Shipai Biota (Cambrian Series 2, Stage 4) yielded from a new section (Xiachazhuang) in the Maoping Town of Zigui County, western Hubei Province, South China. *Acta Palaeontologica Sinica (古生物学报)*, **56**(4):516—528 (in Chinese with English abstract).
- Liu Y H, Xiao S H, Shao T Q, Broce J, Zhang H Q, 2014. The oldest known priapulid-like scalidophoran animal and its implications for the early evolution of cycloneuralians and ecdysozoans. *Evolution & Development*, **16**(3):155—165.
- Maletz J, Steiner M, Weber B, Zhu M Y, 2014. The Cambrian bio-radiation event: A Chinese perspective. *Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology*, **398**(1):1—3.
- Mángano M G, Buatois L A, 2017. The Cambrian revolutions: Trace-fossil record, timing, links and geobiological impact. *Earth Science Reviews*, **173**:96—108.
- Qian Yi (钱逸), 1999. *Taxonomy and Biostratigraphy of Small Shelly Fossils in China*. Beijing: Science Press. 1—247.
- Shu D G, Conway M S, Han J, Li Y, Zhang X L, Hua H, Zhang Z F, Liu J N, Guo J F, Yao Y, Yasui K, 2006. Lower Cambrian Vendobionts from China and early diploblast evolution. *Science*, **312**(5774):731—734.
- Shu D G, Conway M S, Zhang Z F, Han J, 2010. The earliest history of the deuterostomes: the importance of the Chengjiang Fossil Lagerstätte. *Proceedings Biological Sciences*, **277**(1679):165—174.
- Shu D G, Isozaki Y, Zhang X L, Han J, Maruyama S, 2014. Birth and early evolution of metazoans. *Gondwana Research*, **25**:884—895.
- Shu De-gan (舒德干), Zhang Xing-liang (张兴亮), Han Jian (韩健), Zhang Zhi-fei (张志飞), Liu Jian-ni (刘建妮), 2009. Restudy of Cambrian explosion and formation of animal tree. *Acta Palaeontologica Sinica (古生物学报)*, **48**(3):414—427 (in Chinese with English abstract).
- Skovsted C B, Topper T P, 2017. Mobergellans from the early Cambrian of Greenland and Labrador: new morphological details and implications for the functional morphology of mobergellans. *Journal of Paleontology*, in press.
- Steiner M, Li G X, Qian Y, Zhu M Y, 2004. Lower Cambrian small shelly fossils of northern Sichuan and southern Shaanxi (China), and their biostratigraphic importance. *Géobios*, **37**(2):259—275.
- Wu Di (吴迪), Liu Yu (刘雨), Zhao Ting (赵婷), Chen Hong (陈红), Hou Xian-guang (侯先光), 2017. The restudy of eocrinoids in the Guanshan biota. *Acta Palaeontologica Sinica (古生物学报)*, **56**(4):504—515 (in Chinese with English abstract).
- Yao Xiao-yong (姚肖永), Zheng Ya-juan (郑亚娟), Han Jian (韩健), Guo Jun-feng (郭俊峰), 2017. The stellate cuticle of embryo fossils from Lower Cambrian Kuanchuanpu Formation. *Acta Palaeontologica Sinica (古生物学报)*, **56**(4):449—460 (in Chinese with English abstract).
- Zhang Hu (张虎), Liu Yun-huan (刘云涣), Qin Jia-chen (秦嘉琛), Zhang Ya-nan (张亚楠), Shao Tie-quan (邵铁全), Zhang Ting (张婷), Wei Rong-hao (魏荣浩), Wang Feng (王凤), Zhang Hong-ze (张宏泽), Luo Lei (罗磊), Yin Chun-tao (尹春涛), 2017. New materials of Early Cambrian microfossils *Hexaconularia sichuanensis* from Zhangjiagou Section in southern Shaanxi. *Acta Palaeontologica Sinica (古生物学报)*, **56**(4):433—439 (in Chinese with English abstract).
- Zhang H Q, Xiao S H, Liu Y H, Yuan X L, Wan B, Muscente A D, Shao T Q, Gong H, Cao G H, 2015. Armored kinorhynch-like scalidophoran animals from the early Cambrian. *Scientific Reports*, **5**(12):16521.
- Zhang Jin (张金), Hao Xin (郝欣), Hu Ying (胡滢), Yang Xiao-guang (杨晓光), Wang Xing (王星), Yao Xiao-yong (姚肖永), Shen Yang (沈阳), Han Jian (韩健), 2017. A spherical hat-shaped organism from the Lower Cambrian Kuanchuanpu Formation. *Acta Palaeontologica Sinica (古生物学报)*, **56**(4):415—424 (in Chinese with English abstract).
- Zhang X L, Shu D G, 2014. Causes and consequences of the Cambrian explosion. *Science China: Earth Sciences*, **57**(5):930—942.
- Zhang Xing-liang (张兴亮), Shu De-gan (舒德干), 2014. Causes and consequences of the Cambrian explosion. *Science China: Earth Sciences (中国科学: 地球科学)*, **44**(6):1155—1170.
- Zhang Ya-nan (张亚楠), Liu Yun-huan (刘云涣), Qin Jia-chen (秦嘉琛), Zhang Hu (张虎), Shao Tie-quan (邵铁全), Zhang Ting (张婷), Wang Feng (王凤), Wei Rong-hao (魏荣浩), Luo Lei (罗磊), Zhang Hong-ze (张宏泽), Yin Chun-tao (尹春涛),

2017. New materials of Early Cambrian microfossils *Olivoides multisulcatus* from Zhangjiagou Section in southern Shaanxi. *Acta Palaeontologica Sinica*(古生物学报), **56**(4): 425—432 (in Chinese with English abstract).
- Zhang Z F, Brock G B, 2017. New evolutionary and ecological advances in deciphering the Cambrian Explosion of animal life. *Journal of Paleontology*, in press.
- Zhang Zhi-liang(张志亮), Zhang Zhi-fei(张志飞), Holmer L E, 2017. Studies on the shell ultrastructure and ontogeny of the oldest acrotretid brachiopods from South China. *Acta Palaeontologica Sinica*(古生物学报), **56**(4): 483—503 (in Chinese with English abstract).
- Zhao Ting(赵婷), Hou Xian-guang(侯先光), Zhai Da-you(翟大有), Wu Di(吴迪), Chen Hong(陈红), Zang Shao-gang(臧少刚), Liu Yu(刘煜), 2017. Application of the Micro-CT technique in the studies of arthropods from the Chengjiang biota: A case of *Misszhouia longicaudata*. *Acta Palaeontologica Sinica*(古生物学报), **56**(4): 476—482 (in Chinese with English abstract).
- Zheng Ya-juan(郑亚娟), Yao Xiao-yong(姚肖永), Han Jian(韩健), Guo Jun-feng(郭俊峰), 2017. Microscopic fossils with multi-level tetrad cell structures from the Cambrian Kuanchuanpu Formation in southern Shaanxi. *Acta Palaeontologica Sinica*(古生物学报), **56**(4): 440—448 (in Chinese with English abstract).
- Zhu M Y, Li X H, 2017. Introduction: From Snowball Earth to the Cambrian explosion — evidence from China. *Geological Magazine*, **154**(6): 1187—1192.
- Zhu S X, Zhu M Y, Knoll A H, Yin Z J, Zhao F C, Sun S F, Qu Y G, Shi M, Liu H, 2016a. Decimetre-scale multicellular eukaryotes from the 1.56-billion-year-old Gaoyuzhuang Formation in North China. *Nature Communications*, **7**: 11500.

INTRODUCTION: THE CAMBRIAN RADIATION OF METAZOANS —NEW ADVANCES AND FOSSIL DISCOVERIES FROM CHINA

ZHANG Zhi-fei and CHEN Fei-yang

(*Shaanxi Key Laboratory of Early Life and Environment, State Key Laboratory of Continental Dynamics and Department of Geology, Northwest University, Xi'an 710069, China, elizf@nwu.edu.cn*)

Key words Kuanchuanpu Biota, Chengjiang Biota, Shipai Biota, Shuijingtuo Formation, Jialao Formation

Abstract

Cambrian Explosion represents an astonishing burst of evolutionary innovation with the first 30 million years of the Cambrian witnessing the appearance of most bilaterian animal body plans, many of which still exist today. Alongside crown group phyla there are other bizarre stem group Cambrian forms which made sudden appearance, but soon became extinct. New data from a range of exceptionally preserved Cambrian *Könversat-Lagerstätte* of China provide crucial data to unravel the evolutionary and revolutionary scope of this

milestone biological event. The fossils discussed in the Special Issue (SI) of *Acta Palaeontologica Sinica* mainly come from the Cambrian Terreneuvian Fortunian Kuanchuanpu Biota of southern Shaanxi Province; the pre-trilobite Yanjiahe Biota (Terreneuvian, Stage 2) and the Cambrian first-trilobite age Shuijingtuo Formation (upper Stage 3—lower Stage 4) and the Shipai Biota (Stage 4) in the Three-Gorges area of Yichang, western Hubei Province; the Chengjiang (Stage 3) and Guanshan (Stage 4) biotas in the eastern Yunnan Province; and the Jialao Formation (Series 3, Stage 5) of Guizhou Province.