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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE COLLECTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PALAEONTOLOGY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BUDAPEST

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The Department of Palaeontology of the University of Budapest (founded in 1635), organized in 1882 was the second special Department of this discipline in Europe. M. HANTKEN, the world-famous specialist of Tertiary foraminifers was its first Professor, and he had to establish the Collections serving the educational purposes almost out of nothing. From the Royal Hungarian Geological Institute where he formerly served as Director, he could obtain a collection of 4216 items which contained specimens of all the important classes of the invertebrates. Of this material, reflecting M. HANTKEN's research interest the Tertiary foraminifer material was extremely rich (728 items) and this was arranged according to REUSS's system. An extremely beautifully prepared Nummulitidae collection stored in finely ornamented wooden boxes also belonged to the material. A part of this won Gold Medal at the World Exhibition in Vienna in 1873, and most of the items are still preserved. (See T. KECSKEMÉTI's study in this volume.)

M. HANTKEN organized a separate collection of foraminifers for educational purposes. On small wooden tablets glass-pipes were attached and the Tertiary foraminifers cleansed from the samples of the mountains of the Buda region are stored in them. The drawings of the samples are also attached to the tablets.

After M. HANTKEN's death A. KOCH, besides being the Professor of Geology, became also the Professor of Palaeontology within the Geological-Palaeontological Institute (1894).

Besidesthe invertebrate collection, founded by his predecessor, he also began to organize a systematic collection of vertebrates, and also created a collection of index fossils for the future teachers. To this work he also made use of the still disarranged section of the materials of the Collections of the Royal Hungarian Geological Institute, including the material bought from the Hapsburg Archduchess, Marianna still in 1781. He also developed the collection by systematic collecting work in the field, by gifts from the Royal Hungarian Geological Institute, and by frequent purchases. A beautiful, complete medium-size Ichthyosaurus quadriscissus was his most valuable acquisition.

The collection, that, for educational purposes was excellent in that period, was stored and exhibited in a large hall with galleries (Fig. 1) together with the geological material and was even more interesting because of its arrangement. Within each palaeozoological class the material is deposited according to geological ages. The whole collection was designed, arranged, described and prepared by A. KOCH alone, or with an assistant's help, respectively.

After A. KOCH's retirement (1915), the Palaeontological Department, already under the Professorship of I. LŐRENTHEY, became independent again, and the collections were also separated accordingly.

I. LŐRENTHEY, as an excellent specialist of Decapoda, among others, enriched the collection with fine, recent crab-preparates, and Brachiopoda and Echinodermata species illustrating the anatomical details.

After I. LŐRENTHEY's sudden death (1917) no professor was appointed to the Department of Palaeontology for 30 years. During this period K. PAPP, Professor of Geology was in charge of the teaching. Though the Department remained an independent unit, its room-area was gradually shrinking, and it survived the siege of Budapest in 1944–1945 in one room of the university hardly suffering any damages.

During the short Professorship of K. TELEGDI ROTH, appointed to the Department in 1947, with the help of the Hungarian Geological Institute, a collection according to localities, and a systematic collection was organized. To them later, with L. BOGSCH acting as Professor, a general palaeontological collection was added.

In 1972, the material of the Collection of the Department was significantly increased. The collections of the Department of Mineralogy and Geology of the Technical University of Budapest organized still by F. SCHAFARZIK were dissolved, and the palaeontological part of the material was given to the Department. The finally prepared material, attached to wooden tablets, including also several fossil vertebrate remains, excellently complemented the already existing collections.

The Department, beside the still on-going field collection work for educational purposes has been also ready to preserve the collections of the staff-members compiled for research purposes. Among the smaller or greater collections of this type M. HANTKEN's photo collection of thin section limestones, prepared in the early 1880s deserves special attention. This material, though never published, can be righteously considered the world's first atlas of microfacies (Figs. 2 and 3).

Among the more recent collections the Lower and Middle Jurassic ammonites fauna from the Bakony and Gerecse Mts. (B. GÉCZY's and A. GALÁCZ's material), and the Dogger Ammonites from Villány (B. GÉCZY's material) are exceptionally noteworthy.

Finally perhaps the oldest and most precious item of the Collection of the Palaeontological Department should be mentioned. This is the Pterodactylus micronyx, a flying reptile specimen, coming from the lithographic shale of Solnhofen. Its first describer, I. BORN determined it as a crab belonging to the lobsters. According to MEYER's determination, and he was, at the same time, the denominator of the species, it is perhaps the earliest found flying reptile. The University acquired it together with Archduchess Marianna's (daughter of Queen Maria Theresa) collection of minerals and fossils. This fossil remain, depicted by MEYER in 1859 is item No. 39 in the catalogue prepared by WELLNHOFER about the 60 Pterodactylus found at Solnhofen (1970).

The collection, in its present form, in more than 800 drawers, contains an important, first of all Tertiary and Mesozoic material from the Carpathian and from the Pannonian Basin. The most important parts are the collections of the Jurassic ammonites and the Tertiary molluscs that are well complemented by the com-

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parative material coming from abroad (Figs. 4 to 9). The history and main research fields of the Department is illustrated for the visitors by the small exhibition, organized on the centenary of the Department of Palaeontology of the University of Budapest in 1982.

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Figs. 4–9. Fossils from the collection of the Palaeontological Department of the University of Budapest: 4. Upper Jurassic Stephanoceras (France), 5. Paradoxides (Cambrian), 6. Upper Jurassic Mesolimulus (Solnhofen), 7. Triassic Encrinus (Germany), 8. Upper Devonian Bothriolepis (Canada), 9. Upper Jurassic Pterocoma (Solnhofen). (B. GÉCZY 1986) (Repr.: M. PELLÉRDY)

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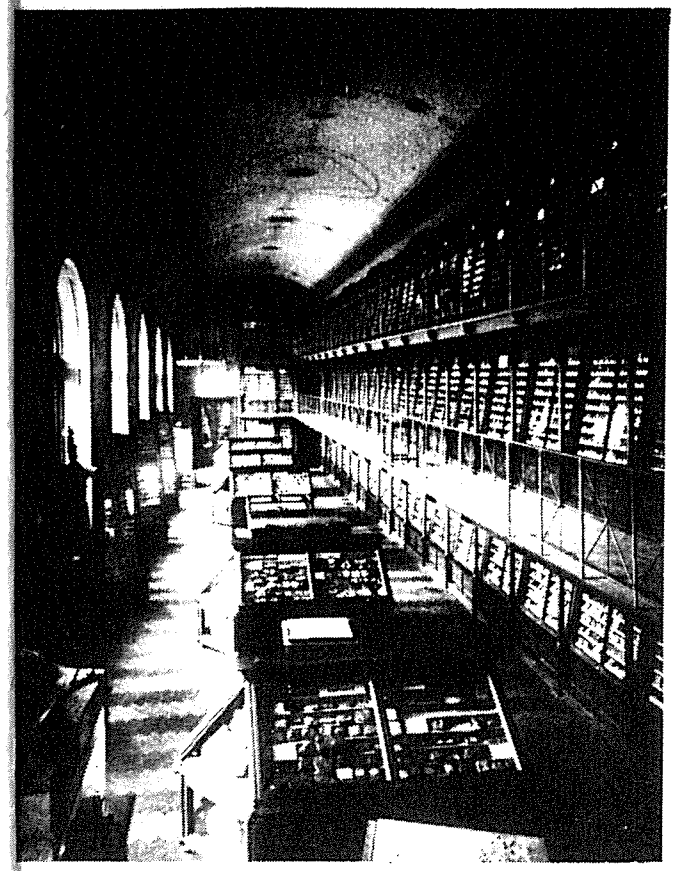

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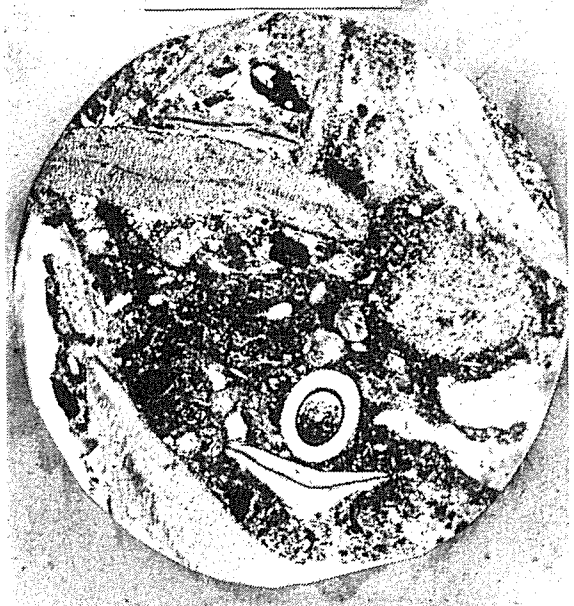
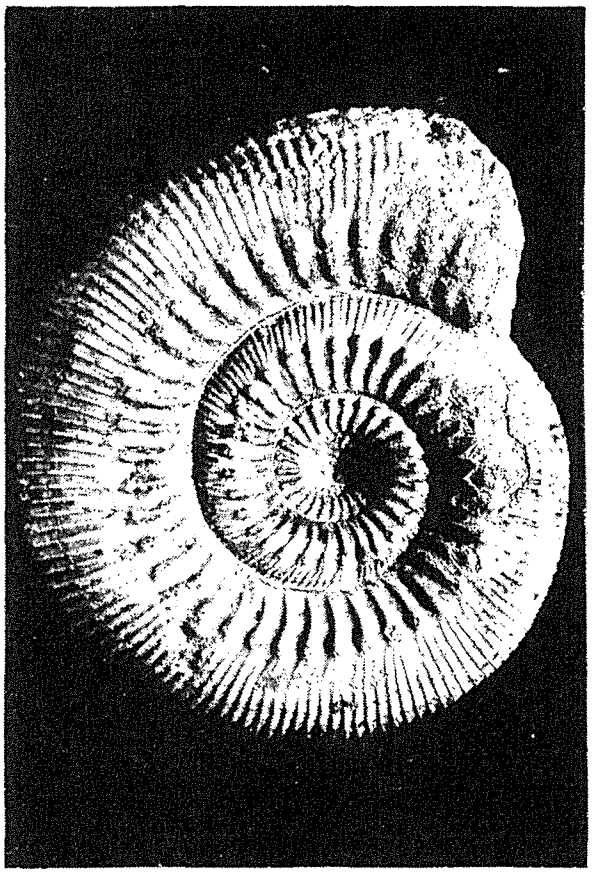
Török mészkő
Felső lias.

Piszke.
Esztergommegye Piznicze
hegy.

Orbitoid mészkő
Alsó oligocen



Nagy Kovácsi.
Pestmegye.



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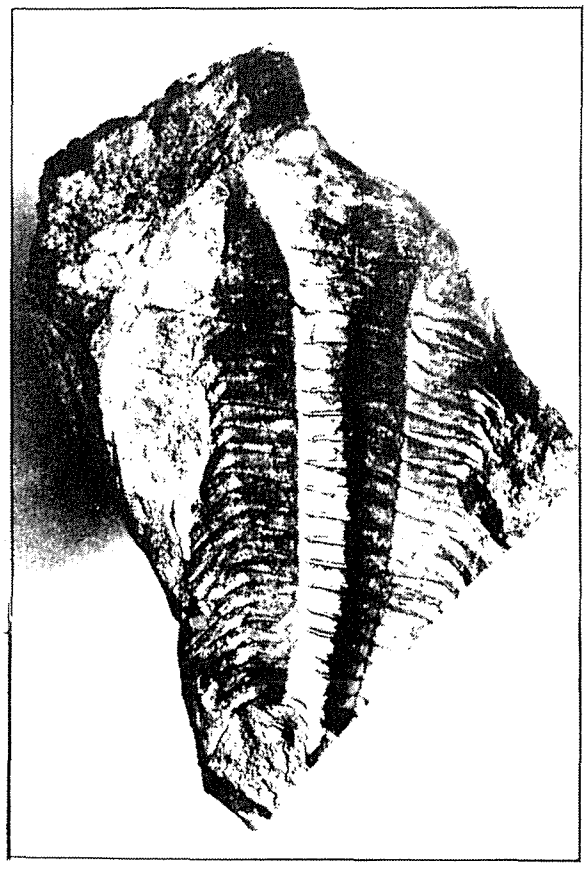

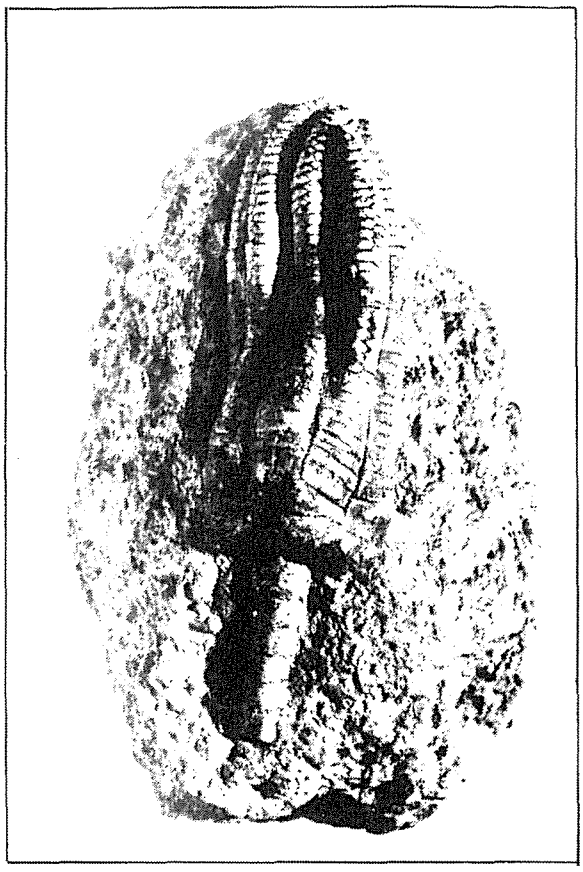

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