Bollettino
della
Società Paleontologica
Italiana

Fondato da
Eugenia Montanaro Gallitelli

Volume 45, n. 1, 2006

Atti delle
GIORNATE DI STUDIO IN ONORE DEL PROFESSORE PIERO DE CASTRO IN OCCASIONE DEL 75° COMPLEANNO

“PALEONTOLOGIA E STRATIGRAFIA NELLA PALEOGEOGRAFIA DELL’AREA MEDITERRANEA”
Napoli, 20-21 giugno 2005

Proceedings of the
STUDIES IN HONOUR OF PROFESSOR PIERO DE CASTRO ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 75TH BIRTHDAY

“PALEONTOLOGY AND STRATIGRAPHY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN PALEOGEOGRAPHY”
Naples, June 20-21, 2005

Editors:
Filippo Barattolo & Enrica Vecchio

SOCIETÀ PALEONTOLOGICA ITALIANA
This volume contains the scientific works presented at the “Paleontology and stratigraphy in the Mediterranean palaeogeography” Workshop promoted by the Earth Science Department in honour of Prof. Piero De Castro on the occasion of his 75th birthday. The aim of the Workshop, held on the 20th and 21st of June 2005 in the premises of National Society of Science, Letters and Fine Arts in Naples, was to express the great appreciation of those who had known Prof. De Castro as their teacher, colleague and friend for his intense and prolific University activity.

The workshop required much time and effort to organize; however, this was amply made up for by the motivation and enthusiasm of the Italian and foreign participants; they were deterred neither by the need to stay away from their home institutions in a period full of appointments, nor, for some, by the considerable journey.

The meeting was opened by the Rector of the University, Guido Trombetti, together with the Dean of the Faculty, Alberto Di Donato, the Director of the Earth Science Department, Maurizio de’ Gennaro, and the Director of the Natural Science Museum, Rosaria Ghiara, all of whom illustrated some of the more salient aspects of Prof. De Castro’s activity. Also the President of the Italian Paleontological Society, Antonio Russo, was present and recalled, amongst other things, the period he had spent in our University as teacher.

The author of this Preface was most happy to accept the task, but finds it no easy one to speak of his teacher, the man who guided his first steps on the path of research, because he considers him also a friend. Both these roles have meant so much in his life that it has become practically impossible to distinguish them, and they merge into one single strongly felt sense of respect, gratitude and affection.

Perhaps Prof. De Castro’s typical dictum from the Apulian idiom “wait old man before dying; you never finish learning” gives a good idea of his ever active personality, with the inexhaustible scientific curiosity he has applied both to observing thin sections and exploring the sea bed, continually seeking something new, while wherever possible preserving what is good in the traditional systems. His being methodic, tenacious and perfectionist in his research is what strikes not only those who know him as a teacher and identify in him their guide for more or less thirty years of daily contact, but also those who have shared only brief moments with him.

In his university activity, the strictly institutional tasks of teaching and research were blended together in a happy marriage as well as with other administrative ones at various levels (Institute, Department, University) and, in particular, with the reorganization of the University museums. Here, mention will be made of the most important facts.

Originally from Apulia (he was born at San Pietro Vernotico on the 14th of April 1929) he took his degree in Geology at the University of Naples Federico II. The effort he put into the geological survey of the northeastern Gargano for his graduation dissertation led Prof. Francesco Scarsella, the then Director of the Institute of Geology, to hand in his name to what was then the Ministry of Industry and Commerce for him to work as an analyst (1961-1964) on surveys and the updating of the Geological Map of Italy. In that period, the need to date the vast areas of Campanian carbonate platform facies went together with another one, given the hard nature of those rocks and with a view to dating them, of applying, on a routine basis, the technique of thin sections. Until then, this technique, was only occasionally applied, as was the, at that time, little developed knowledge of micropaleontology to the microfossils they contained (mainly foraminifers and algae); above all, the purpose was to determine them, beginning with the sections casually present in the thin sections of the rocks. Tenacious interest, curiosity, and much time devoted to those studies and spent at the microscope (then the Mesozoic limestone was an inexhaustible source of new discovery) allowed him to overcome the obstacles. The study and interpretation of the foraminifers in thin section (cf. Fig. 1) and of algal fossils, up to that moment only little investigated (and not only at Naples) formed the normal basis of his research and (this was a source of pride for the Neapolitan school) allowed him to transfer to his teaching the experience he had gradually acquired. His career in brief is the following: Assistant to the chair of Paleontology (first on a voluntary basis and then on a short-term contract and later as Full Professor) from 1961 to 1975; responsible for the Paleontological museum in 1963; Full Professor of Paleobotany from 1965 to 1975; chief assistant to the chair of Paleontology from 1971 to 1974; University Lecturer in Micropaleontology from 1968 (full time in 1974); Full Professor in Paleontology from 1975 to 1980, with full-time teaching duties in Micropaleontology from 1/11/1980 to 31/10/2004; teacher on an annual contract basis from 1/11/2001 to 31/10/2004; he retired for reasons of age as from 1/11/2004.

He was also Director of the Institute of Paleontology and of the relative museum for the two-year academic period 1975/76 to 1976/77, a post which was renewed for 1977/78 and 1983/84-1985/86. Director of the Department of Paleontology for the three-year period 1/11/1997 to 1/11/2000; as from 1 January 1999, this duty ceased following a fusion of the Department of Paleontology with that of Earth Science.
From 1980 to 1991, as a member of the sector for cultural activities at the University of Naples (Scientific Museums and Botanical Garden), he was instrumental in setting up the Centralized Museum of Natural Sciences in this University; from 1991 to 1993 he was a member of the University Commission for Scientific and Technological Research, of the museums, the Botanical Gardens, and the Science Parks.

Since January 1981, he has been a Member of the Accademia Pontaniana, and since 1992 of the Accademia di Scienze Fisiche e Matematiche (being President in 1996), and, as well, of the Società dei Naturalisti in Napoli and the Società Paleontologica Italiana.

He has also worked as proofreader for the Bollettino della Società dei Naturalisti in Napoli, Comptes Rendus de l’Académie des Sciences (Paris), Geologica Romana (Rome), Revue de Micropaléontologie (Paris), Rivista Italiana di Paleontologia e Stratigrafia (Milan); he is also a member of the Committee of Auditors of the Bollettino della Società Paleontologica Italiana (Modena) and of the Revue de Paléobiologie (Geneva).

In 1980, he organized and chaired an International Symposium in the framework of the Mid-Cretaceous Events Project; in 1991, he contributed as Director of the Department to the 5th International Symposium on Fossil Algae, which was organized and chaired by the present writer. He participated on the Committee for planning the regulations of the Italian Federation of Earth Science (FIST) and of the PhD course in Sedimentary Geology (organized jointly between the Universities of Naples and Palermo), and from 1985 was continuously a member of his Teachers Board. He was also in charge of the scientific research programs financed in various years by the National Research Council (CNR) and the Ministry for the University and Scientific and Technological Research (MURST).

His researches, mainly concerning the Jurassic and Cretaceous carbonate platform facies, have made a significant contribution to the biostratigraphy and systematics of the fossils they contain, with studies on the morphology and structure of the Foraminifera and green algae (Dasyycladales, Volvocales, and Thaumatoporellales) and subordinately of the Cyanobacteria. The researches have marginally concerned also the Quaternary of the Salento Peninsula and organisms living on the Ionian side of the peninsula. An important indication of the work carried out is represented by the setting up of various taxa of biostratigraphic importance: eight genera (Campanellula, Moncharmontia, Scandonea, Dargenioella, Pseudorhapydionina, Pseudorhipidionina, Fleuryana, Pseudochubbina) and about 20 species of Foraminifera (of which one dedicated to Professor Francesco Scarsella and another to Professor Angiola Maria Maccagno); one order (Thaumatoporellales), one family (Thaumatoporellaceae), two genera (Sgrossoella, Euteutloporella) and four species of green algae; and finally, one species of Cyanobacteria (Aeolisaccus barattoloi). In particular, mention should be made of his descriptions of biostratigraphic successions regarding almost all the Mesozoic and his work as an analyst on four sheets of the Italian Geological Map. Due to the widespread extent of
the facies investigated, the data supplied prove to be of general interest and are used in various sectors of Earth Sciences for dating and correlating rock masses.

Anyone who has enjoyed the opportunity of having Piero De Castro as his teacher, will certainly remember two things: an immediate dressing down when the work was lacking in seriousness and the chance of learning a valuable working skill. To the present writer, who organized the Workshop, he said at the end, “if you think you have moved me, I’m sorry but you haven’t succeeded”; but his real feelings could be heard in his voice.

May Professor Piero De Castro, who has accompanied and given me his support during my professional career, first as my teacher and then as a friend, transmitting to me his passion for and interest in Paleontology, continue to offer us new scientific contributions.

FILIPPO BARATTOLLO

1 - Piero De Castro (Napoli, Italy), 2 - Filippo Barattolo (Napoli, Italy), 3 - Enrica Vecchio (Napoli, Italy), 4 - Davide Bassi (Ferrara, Italy), 5 - Monique Hottinger (Basel, Switzerland), 6 - Esmeralda Caus (Barcelona, Spain), 7 - Adrià Casinos (Barcelona, Spain), 8 - Viviana Vitale (Napoli, Italy), 9 - Adriano Guido (Cosenza, Italy), 10 - Diana Barra (Napoli, Italy), 11 - Roberta Romano (Trieste, Italy), 12 - Giuseppe Aiello (Napoli, Italy), 13 - Valeria Zamparelli (Napoli, Italy), 14 - Lukas Hottinger (Basel, Switzerland), 15 - Rolf Schroeder (Frankfurt am Main, Germany), 16 - Yvette Tambareau (Toulouse, France), 17 - Maria Grazia Coppa (Napoli, Italy), 18 - Nikolaos Carras (Athens, Greece), 19 - Milvio Fazzuoli (Firenze, Italy), 20 - Antonietta Cherchi (Cagliari, Italy), 21 - Gianluca Perugini (Roma, Italy), 22 - Antonello Bartiromo (Napoli, Italy), 23 - Vlasta Ćosović (Zagreb, Croatia), 24 - Guido Roghi (Padova, Italy), 25 - Claudio Pede (Napoli, Italy), 26 - Olga De Castro (Napoli, Italy), 27 - Francesco Zeni (Napoli, Italy), 28 - Antonio Russo (Modena, Italy), 29 - Leonsevero Passeri (Perugia, Italy), 30 - Gloria Ciarapica (Perugia, Italy), 31 - Fabrizio Lirer (Napoli, Italy), 32 - Agata Di Stefano (Parma, Italy), 33 - Bianca Russo (Napoli, Italy), 34 - Italo Sgroso (Napoli, Italy), 35 - Virginia Eliseo (Napoli, Italy), 36 - Emma Taddei Ruggero (Napoli, Italy), 37 - Giuseppe Buono (Napoli, Italy), 38 - Katica Drobane (Ljubljana, Slovenia), 39 - Juan Ignacio Baceta (Bilbao, Spain), 40 - Helena Carro (Bilbao, Spain), 41 - Xabier Orue-Etxebarria (Bilbao, Spain), 42 - Daniela Milisci (Napoli, Italy).
Acknowledgements
I would like to thank my co-workers who have helped so much towards the success of the meeting: Prof. Diana Barra, Dr. Enrica Vecchio, Dr. Paola Di Martino, Dr. Doralba Farnetano, Dr. Viviana Vitale and Dr. Antonello Bartirromo. A special mention should be made of Dr. Alessia Carucci for the graphics of the meeting posters and the cover of the present volume. A particular thank-you is due to Enrica Vecchio for all her organizational work in preparing this volume; then to Professor Antonio Russo, who as President of the Italian Paleontological Society so warmly welcomed the proposal to publish the minutes; and also to Dr. Cesare Andrea Papazzoni, Secretary of the Bollettino della Società Paleontologica Italiana for all his efforts in editing the present volume and the valuable advice he offered during its preparation. Finally, a warm acknowledgement to the National Academy of Science, Letters and Fine Arts, who have received us as in these historic premises and to Dr. Antonina Badessa, and Carmela Avorio, Angela Ciurella and Mario Iacomino for all their kind help during the meeting.

To conclude, a particular word of thanks to all those who have materially contributed to the success of the meeting:
Prof. Guido Trombetti, Rector of the Federico II University in Naples, Prof. Alberto Di Donato, Dean of the Faculty of Science, Prof. Paolo De Luca, Director of the Botanical Gardens, Prof. Antonio Barletta, Director of the Department of Biology, Prof. Gennaro Corrado, Director of the Department of Geophysics and Volcanology, and Prof. Maria Rosaria Ghiara, Director of the centralized Museums.

Participants in the Workshop
Giuseppe Aiello (Napoli, Italy), Estibaliz Apellaniz (Bilbao, Spain), Juan Ignacio Baceta (Bilbao, Spain), Carmela Barbera (Napoli, Italy), Diana Barra (Napoli, Italy), Davide Bassi (Ferrara, Italy), Glauco Bonardi (Napoli, Italy), Giuseppe Buono (Napoli, Italy), Nicolaes Carras (Athens, Greece), Esmeralda Caus (Barcelona, Spain), Antonietta Cherchi (Cagliari, Italy), Gloria Ciarapica (Perugia, Italy), Maria Grazia Coppa (Napoli, Italy), Vlasta Cosovic (Zagreb, Croatia), Bruno D’Argenio (Napoli, Italy), Paola de Capoa (Napoli, Italy), Katica Drobne (Ljubljana, Slovenia), Paola Di Martino (Napoli, Italy), Doralba Farnetano (Napoli, Italy), Milvio Fazzuoli (Firenze, Italy), Vittoria Ferreri (Napoli, Italy), Gianluca Frijia (Napoli, Italy), Adriano Guido (Cosenza, Italy), Lukas Hottinger (Basel, Switzerland), Fabrizio Lirer (Napoli, Italy), Anna Mancinelli (Camerino, Italy), Ruggero Matteucci (Roma, Italy), Carlo Meloro (Napoli, Italy), Claudio Neri (Cosenza, Italy), Xabier Orue-Etxebarria (Bilbao, Spain), Mariano Parente (Napoli, Italy), Leonsevero Passeri (Perugia, Italy), Edoardo Perri (Cosenza, Italy), Gianluca Perugini (Roma, Italy), Nevio Paglise (Trieste, Italy), Michela Ragusa (Roma, Italy), Pasquale Raia (Napoli, Italy), Andrea Randisi (Napoli, Italy), Anna Rao (Cosenza, Italy), Roberto Rottori (Perugia, Italy), Guido Roghi (Padova, Italy), Carmen Romano (Cosenza, Italy), Roberta Romano (Trieste, Italy), Antonio Russo (Modena, Italy), Bianca Russo (Napoli, Italy), Rolf Schroeder (Frankfurt am Main, Germany), Franca Sgarrella (Napoli, Italy), Italo Sgrosso (Napoli, Italy), Alessandra Spadafora (Cosenza, Italy), Emma Tatdei Ruggiero (Napoli, Italy), Yvette Tambareau (Toulouse, France), Enrica Vecchio (Napoli, Italy), Viviana Vitale (Napoli, Italy), Valeria Zamparelli (Napoli, Italy).