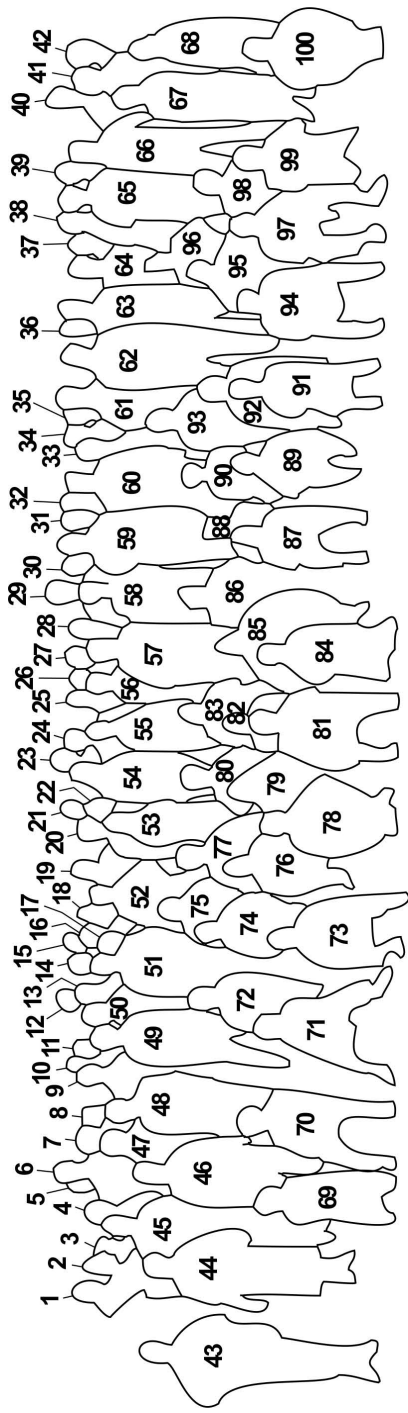




Participants of the symposium on August, 5th 2003 in front of the main building of the Graz Karl-Franzens-University.

1 Ali Soliman, 2 Bernhard Riegl, 3 Francesca Bosellini, 4 Ana Maria Contento, 5 Jaroslaw Stolarski, 6 Andreas May, 7 Brian Rosen, 8 Agostina Vertino, 9 Mikolaj K. Zapalski, 10 Boo-Young Bae, 11 Ian Somerville, 12 Marie-Anne Mötus, 13 John E.N. Veron, 14 Piotr Luczynski, 15 Dong-Jin Lee, 16 Susanne Pohler, 17 Yuko Suzuki, 18 Yasunobu Maeda, 19 Holger Nübel, 20 Yoichi Ezaki, 21 Werner E. Piller, 22 Saori Nakai, 23 Sergio Rodríguez, 24 Robert J. Elias, 25 Simon Schneider, 26 Alan Pedder, 27 Christoph Iven, 28 Stefanie Klug, 29 Eberhard Gischler, 30 Bernard Lathuilière, 31 John Pickett, 32 Ronald R. West, 33 Ann Budd, 34 Kenneth Johnson, 35 Thomas Albert Stemmann, 36 Michel Coen, 37 Xiangdong Wang, 38 Bruno Mistiaen, 39 Gregory Webb, 40 Jacob Leloux, 41 Bernhard Hubmann, 42 Joachim Szulc, 43 Pere Busquets Buezo, 44 Elzbieta Morycowa, 45 Evgeny Krasnov, 46 Galina Melnikova, 47 Vladimir Tsyganko, 48 George D. Stanley, 49 Adelaide Mastandrea, 50 Antonio Russo, 51 German Álvarez-Pérez, 52 Alfred Fagerstrom, 53 Natsuko Adachi, 54 D. Raegan Porter, 55 Maria Hecker, 56 Antonio Perejón, 57 Olga Kossosvaya, 58 Elena Moreno Gonzáles de Eiris, 59 Koichi Nagai, 60 Desmond Strusz, 61 Ross A. McLean, 62 Francisco Soto, 63 Stefan Schröder, 64 Yasufumi Iryu, 65 Edouard Poty, 66 Ryuji Mori, 67 Isabel Méndez-Bedia, 68 Marie Coen-Aubert, 69 Ewa Roniewicz, 70 Volodymyr Grytsenko, 71 Franco Russo, 72 Boguslaw Kolodziej, 73 Weihua Liao, 74 Hannes Löser, 75 Isao Niikawa, 76 Carlo Salerno, 77 Vassil Zlatarski, 78 Martin Nose, 79 Mireille Rohart, 80 Oliver Weidlich, 81 James Sorauf, 82 Jean-Claude Rohart, 83 Mohammed Gameil, 84 Rosemarie Baron-Szabo, 85 Jindrich Hladil, 86 Victor V. Ogar, 87 Anke Brückner, 88 Carsten Helm, 89 Joseph Botting, 90 Dimitri Kaljo, 91 Erika Kido, 92 Tetsuo Sugiyama, 93 Dieter Weyer, 94 Chuluun Minjin, 95 Markus Aretz, 96 Tomasz Wrzosek, 97 Klemens Oekentorp, 98 William A. Oliver, 99 Makoto Kato, 100 Michael Rasser

Preface

The 9th meeting of "The International Association for the Study of Fossil Cnidaria and Porifera", an association founded 1971, was held in Graz from August 3–7, 2003. To locate the 9th symposium at the Karl-Franzens-University in Graz was decided during the general assembly of the association at the previous meeting in Sendai (Japan). A small staff of palaeontologists of the Institute of Geology and Palaeontology (now Department of Earth Sciences) organized the scientific and social programme. During the 5 days of the symposium Graz experienced the hottest ever recorded days during August known in local weather chronicle. Nevertheless, the symposium lectures were attended every day by a majority of the 123 participants coming from 30 countries.

Three field trips prior to the conference visited Palaeozoic, Mesozoic, and Cenozoic "coral-sponge bearing successions" in different parts of Austria. Some destinations, especially the tour to Lake Wolayer in the Carnic Alps were only attainable by a several hours walking tour through the mountains. Post-symposium excursions focussed locations in Austria's neighbouring countries, e.g. Czech Republic and Slovenia.

During the symposium 120 presentations were given, either oral (75) or as posters (45). Titles of these presentations demonstrated a wide range of topics, and were arranged in sessions entitled skeletal structures, evolution and phylogeny, coral assemblages (Palaeozoic, Mesozoic, Cenozoic and recent), porifera, and reefs and environment. On the occasion of Brian Rosen's retirement a special session was held to honour his scientific input into the field of coral studies.

In this proceedings volume the printed version of 31 papers presented during the symposium is summarized. As a reflection of the symposium's scientific diversity the content of this volume covers a wide range of topics related to the study of cnidarians and porifers. We find subject matters spanning from classical systematic procedures, stratigraphic and environmental presentations, ontogenetic and functional-morphological investigations, to analyses of microstructures, biometric data logging, and considerations on the evolution and phylogeny of corals. The stratigraphic range of the presented topics is remarkably comprehensive, covering an interval from the lower Cambrian to the recent. The arrangement of the articles follows a certain logic. It starts with a group of papers focussing predominantly on palaeobiological issues of Palaeozoic corals (SORAUF, LEE et al., PORTER et al., HLADIL, PLUSQUELLEC et al., NOTHDURFT & WEBB) but includes also results on modern scleractinian corals (SORAUF & BUSTER). The second group of articles deals with sponges including archaeocyaths (PEREJÓN & MORENO-EIRIS) and stromatoporoids (MAY, MISTIAEN, MÉNDEZ-BEDIA & MISTIAEN). A selection of three papers on lower Palaeozoic corals (GRYTSENKO, SOTO & SCHRÖDER, ADACHI & EZAKI) is followed by the largest group on upper Palaeozoic ones. These cover a wide geographic area from N America (FEDOROWSKI & BAMBER) over different parts of Europe (POTY, RODRÍGUEZ &

SOMERVILLE, SOMERVILLE et al., SOMERVILLE & RODRÍGUEZ, SAID et al., ARETZ & NUDDS, KOSSOVAYA) to the Far East (EZAKI et al.). Mesozoic and Cenozoic corals are represented by systematic-taxonomic papers (MORYCOWA & SZULC, ALTUNA et al.) as well as palaeoecologically oriented studies (STEMANN et al., JOHNSON, SUZUKI et al.). The final group includes three papers dealing with more general aspects on corals (VERON, WRZOLEK, ZLATARSKI).

Each manuscript submitted to the symposium committee for publication was sent for peer review at least to two specialists. Here we want to take the opportunity to express our thanks to all authors for cooperation and to thank the following colleagues for their laborious and time-intensive reviewing work: Markus Aretz, Wayne Bamber, Rosemarie Baron-Szabo, Blazej Berkowski, Francesca Bosellini, Ann Budd, Yoichi Ezaki, Jerzy Fedorowski, Eberhard Gischler, Maria Hecker, Hans-Georg Herbig, Jindrich Hladil, Bernhard Hubmann, James S. Klaus, Kenneth Johnson, Stephan Kershaw, Wolfgang Kiessling, Olga Kossovaya, Hannes Löser, Andreas May, Ross McLean, Galina Melnikova, Bruno Mistiaen, Elzbieta Morycowa, Isao Niikawa, Klemens Oekentorp, Christine Perrin, John Pickett, Werner E. Piller, Yves Plusquellec, Edouard Poty, Joachim Reitner, Bernhard Riegl, Jean-Claude Rohart, Ewa Roniewicz, Brian Rosen, Stefan Schröder, James Sorauf, George D. Stanley, Colin Stearn, Carl W. Stock, Tetsuo Sugiyama, Francis Tournier, Dragica Turnsek, Daniel Vachard, Xiang-dong Wang, Gregory Webb, Ronald R. West, Dieter Weyer, Anthony J. Wright, and Graham Young.

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Graz, October 2006

Bernhard Hubmann
Werner E. Piller

