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Report/Poročilo

7th Symposium on Mesozoic and Cenozoic Decapod Crustaceans, 17th–21st June 2019, Ljubljana (Slovenia)

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The 7th triennial Symposium on Mesozoic and Cenozoic Decapod Crustaceans was held in Ljubljana (Slovenia) this time, a European capital with a long history. The aim of the symposium is to meet with other decapod researchers every three years to discuss their research and to promote international collaborative work on fossil decapod crustaceans. The 44 attending palaeontologists and marine biologists from 17 countries exchanged new concepts and ideas in the fields of palaeobiology, with contributions on taxonomy, systematics, taphonomy, palaeobiogeography and macroevolution of decapods. Decapod crustaceans are evolutionarily one of the most successful groups of multicellular organisms. They form a diverse group of arthropods that inhabit various environments, ranging from shallow continental shelves to deep ocean floors, found in rivers, lakes and cave systems, with species even adapted to life on land. To advance and transform decapod palaeontology by sharing new findings and approaches, close scientific exchange between scientists, students and enthusiasts is necessary.

Comprising 26 oral presentations and 20 posters presented in two days of scientific sessions and followed by four fieldtrips, the symposium was staged by a Slovenian organising committee, consisting of Rok Gašparič (Oertijdmuseum, Boxtel), Luka Gale (Geological Survey of Slovenia, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering, Ljubljana), Matija Križnar (Slovenian Museum of Natural History, Ljubljana), Boštjan Rožič (Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering, Ljubljana), Bogomir Celarc (Geological Survey of Slovenia, Ljubljana) and Matic Rifl (Charles University, Faculty of Science, Prague).

The reception and ice breaker took place on the first day (17th June 2019) at the Slovenian Museum of Natural History, where attendees were greeted by museum director Breda Činč Juhant and had a chance to visit the temporary exhibition on Slovenian fossil decapod crustaceans. The scientific part of the symposium was hosted by the Geological Survey of Slovenia. The scientific session was opened by words of the organising committee chairman, Rok Gašparič, and Geological Survey director, Miloš Bavec. Two days of scientific sessions (18th and 19th June 2019) were concluded in a spirit of good co-operation with relaxed informal discussions and plenty of opportunity for individual meetings in between the session breaks. We opened the first day with a keynote lecture by Adiël Klompmaker on "Evolutionary and ecological trends in decapods" and concluded with a poster session, whereas the second day was kick-started by keynote speaker Matúš Hyžný on the state-of-the-art and future directions in research on Paratethyan decapods. We concluded the scientific part of the symposium with a final address, in which Zaragoza (Spain) was chosen as the next venue of the 8th Symposium on Mesozoic and Cenozoic Decapod Crustaceans in 2022, followed by a dinner in one of Ljubljana's authentic Slovenian restaurants.

Weather throughout the symposium was wonderful, so there were no issues with conducting the final two days of the symposium (20th and 21st June), which were reserved for field trips to the four fossil decapod-bearing localities in Slovenia. On Thursday (20th June) we started our field trip at the Geological Survey in Ljubljana and travelled south to explore the decapod-rich, upper Eocene (Lutetian) deposits along the road Gračišče–Kubed, and visited a nearby 12th century church of the Holy Trinity at Hrastovlje to admire the famous 15th century frescoes of Dance of Death or *Dance Macabre*. In the afternoon, the virgin forests of Trnovo Plateu protected us from the heat and gave us the opportunity to observe the Upper Jurassic (Oxfordian) coral barrier reef preserved *in situ*. The reef complex is composed of sponges, corals and stromatoporids, but also diverse molluscs, echinoderms and frequent decapods are found between stromatoporid and corals framework, which enabled preferential preservation of delicate carapaces.

For the last day (Friday, 21st June) the delegates were transported through the Miocene Paratethys sea all the way back to the Middle Triassic Tethyan Ocean. The final excursion started with a visit to the active quarry of Lipovica in middle Miocene (Langhian) limestone, where we followed the safety regulations and explored the abundant outcrops for the remains of Miocene decapods and lucky finds of the charismatic Paratethyan crab *Tasadia carniolica*. The final destination was a visit to one of the most picturesque European glacial alpine valleys, Logarska Valley, where we visited an exhibition on Middle Triassic fossil fauna at Solčava and hiked to a nearby outcrop of Middle Triassic (Anisian) bituminous, thin-bedded limestones with vertebrate remains and shrimp fossils. The field trip was concluded with an enjoyable dinner accompanied by many good-natured discussions and forgings of future collaborations.

We cordially thank all participants for attending the 7thSymposium on Mesozoic and Cenozoic Decapod Crustaceans in Ljubljana and for presenting their latest research in the exciting field of palaeocarcinology. The organisation of the symposium would not have been possible

Fig. 1. Opening address by Rok Gašparič to participants of the 7th Symposium on Mesozoic and Cenozoic Decapod Crustaceans at the ice breaker evening in the Slovenian Museum of Natural History in Ljubljana (photo: Matija Križnar).

Fig. 2. Scientific session at the Geological Survey of Slovenia in Ljubljana. Oral presentation by René H.B. Fraaije on new advances in paguroid evolution (photo: Rok Gašparič).

Fig. 3. Poster session at the Geological Survey of Slovenia. Explanation of poster by Antonio De Angeli on homolid crabs of Italy (photo: Matija Križnar).

Fig. 4. Closing dinner on Wednesday 21st June at Sokol restaurant in Ljubljana. A toast to speedy recovery to Rodney Feldmann, who was not able to attend the symposium (photo: Barry van Bakel).

without a lot of hard and selfless work from all the colleagues in the organising committee. In addition, we would like to express our thanks to the following organisations for their support: the Geological Survey of Slovenia, the Slovenian Museum of Natural History and the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering at the University of Ljubljana. Our sincere thanks to all volunteers and people who helped in the preparation of the symposium: Stanka Žibert, Valerija Majer and Matevž Novak (Geological Survey of Slovenia) for their organisational support, Andreja Žibrat Gašparič (University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, Department of Archaeology) for thorough proofreading and editorial work on the abstract book, Tomaž Hitij (Dental School, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ljubljana) and Jure Žalohar (T-TECTO d.o.o.) for help on Triassic localities, Manca Hočevar (Slovenian Museum of Natural History) for support in preparation of the reception at the museum, Željko Pogačnik (Georudeko d.o.o.) for access to the Lipovica quarry, Alex Žagar for work on the symposium webpage design, as well as Anja Kocijančič, Kristina Peulič and Miha Marinšek for their logistic support during the symposium.

Fig. 5. Participants on the first-day field trip to Eocene exposures of Gračišče, led by Matija Križnar (photo: Rok Gašparič).

Fig. 6. Luka Gale explaining the geology of Jurassic reefal limestones in Trnovo Plateau (photo: Rok Gašparič).

Fig. 7. Željko Pogačnik explaining the geology and safety measures of collecting fossils from Miocene rocks at the Lipovica quarry (photo: Matija Križnar).

Fig. 8. Field trip participants collecting decapods from Triassic laminated limestones in the Logarska Valley (photo: Rok Gašparič).