Notes on the systematics, morphology and biostratigraphy of fossil holoplanktonic Mollusca, 19. Pteropods (Gastropoda, Euthecosomata) from the Eocene Lillebaelt Clay Formation (Denmark, Jylland)

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Sideritic fossiliferous concretions from the Eocene Lillebaelt Clay Formation, collected ex situ on the beach at Trele Naes (Jutland, Denmark) were found to yield two common pteropod species: Helicosoides lillebaeltensis spec. nov. and H. mercinensis (Watelet & Lefevre, 1885), the latter known to date from a Late Paleocene-Ypresian interval. A single further specimen might represent the species Limacina pygmaea (Lamarck, 1805), known only from the Lutetian. A study of the dinoflagellate assemblages in six of the concretions allowed an age assignment of Early Lutetian.

Key words: Gastropoda, Euthecosomata, Helicosoides, Limacina, taxonomy, dinoflagellates, biostratigraphy, Eocene, Lutetian, Denmark.

INTRODUCTION (K.I. Schnetler)

At Trele Naes peninsula, North of Fredericia (Jutland, Denmark), Eocene fossil bearing sideritic concretions and pyritic moulds of fossils are found on the beaches, washed out of days cropping out in coastal cliffs. In practically all concretions molluscs are poorly preserved, as the original aragonitic shell material is dissolved, leaving internal and external moulds allowing casting with silicone latex. Quite a number of them yielded pteropods, among which is an undescribed species.

Material has been collected since the 1960s (Bonde, 1968). A study of the benthic molluscs is forthcoming (Schnetler & Heilmann-Clausen, in prep.). Since the 1990s many concretions containing limacimid pteropod species were collected by two Danish private collectors, which are described here.

The following abbreviations are used: BMNH, The Natural History Museum, London, England; OB, colln O. Barsoe Hansen, Kolding, Denmark; ISL, colln K.I. Schnetler, Langå,

1 For nr 18 in this series see Basteria 70: 85.
The fossil bearing concretions originate from the southern coast of the Trelde Naes peninsula (fig. 1). Eocene sediments are present, underlying Quaternary deposits, throughout the country in NW–SE direction, connected with deposits of the same age in northern Germany (fig. 1). The deposits are the Rosøren Clay, Lillebælt Clay and Søvind Marl formations, all of Eocene age. Previously also Late Oligocene sediments (Brejning Clay, Vejle Fjord Formation) were cropping out in the southern part of the cliff, near Kirstinebjerg Skov (Schnetler, 1985). The occurrence is now considered glacially transported.

As the concretions generally are found ex situ on the beach, it is difficult to refer them to one particular bed. Collins & Jakobsen (2003) thus considered a decapod fauna from the concretions to be of Ypresian/Lutetian age. In a number of concretions Heliconoides specimens were found co-occurring with decapods (Mogens Madsen, pers. comm., 2007, and observations by the second author). The concretions with Heliconoides species, as specified in the systematic part below, contained in only two cases other molluscs (Volutocorbis spec. and Cuspidaria spec.) and furthermore, the two Heliconoides species have been found together in just a few cases. The palaeodepth was estimated to be over 200 m (Heilmann-Clausen, 1995).

Fig. 1. Map showing the distribution of the Eocene deposits (in black), with location map of Trelde Naes (after Gravesen, 1993, and Collins & Jakobsen, 2003).
Provenance of the concretions. - The cliffs expose glacially disturbed beds from most of the Eocene Lillebælt Clay Formation, i.e., the Beds L2-L6 (Heilmann-Clausen et al., 1985) (fig. 2). On the opposite coast of Trelde Næs the lower part of the overlying Eocene
Søvind Marl Formation is exposed. The strata in the cliffs of Trede Næs are very rich in dinoflagellate cysts, originally described in an unpublished master’s thesis (Heilmann-Clausen, 1978). A subsequent study of the entire Danish Eocene led to a dinoflagellate zonation, partially with a first order calibration to the calcareous nanofossil zonation (Heilmann-Clausen, 1988). Finally, a detailed stratigraphic-systematic study of the dinoflagellate succession in a cored section of the Lutetian-basal Rupelian of Denmark is provided by Heilmann-Clausen & van Simaeys (2005).

For the present study dinoflagellate cysts have been examined from c. 12 g samples of two concretions, OB 1203 with Helicocoides lillebaeltensis spec. nov. and OB 689 with Helicocoides mercinensis. The carbonate of the concretions was dissolved with cold 5N HCl and after dilution with water the residues were sieved on 20 micron nylon filters. The sieved residues mainly consist of dinoflagellate cysts and were mounted in glycerine-jelly on slides for light-microscopy. Several thousand well preserved cysts were recovered from each sample.

Sample OB 1203 contains a rather typical assemblage of the Wetzeliella articulata-ovalis Zone of Heilmann-Clausen (1988), with 7% Cleistosphaeridium diversispinosum (formerly identified as Systematophora placantha, see Heilmann-Clausen & van Simaeys, 2005), and 6% Ar eosphaeridium diktypo plakum-michoudii group. Wetzeliella articulata-ovalis is also common (4%). Dracodinium santlandicum and Hystrichosphaeropsis costae (= H. cf. ovum of Heilmann-Clausen, 1988) were not observed, probably excluding the lower part of the zone, which is also supported by the moderate abundance of Cleistosphaeridium diversispinosum. The assemblage clearly points to Bed L5 of the Lillebælt Clay Formation (Heilmann-Clausen, 1988).

Sample OB 689 contains an assemblage generally similar to that of sample OB 1203, except for the presence of Wilsonidium echinosaturnatum and the absence of Wetzeliella articulata-ovalis. Cleistosphaeridium diversispinosum accounts for 9% of the assemblage. The absence of markers of older and younger zones (Dracodinium pachydernum, Eolenicysta ursulae and Phthanneridium regalis) clearly refers this assemblage to the Wetzeliella articulata-ovalis Zone. W. echinosaturnatum has previously been recorded in the overlying P. regalis Zone (new name for the P. geminatum Zone of Heilmann-Clausen, 1988; see Heilmann-Clausen & van Simaeys, 2005) and may well occur sporadically in the upper part of the W. articulata-ovalis Zone as well. The sample probably originates from a level above sample OB 1203, and may lithostratigraphically be derived from Bed L5, or possibly Bed L6, of the Lillebælt Clay Formation.

Age of the concretions, based on dinoflagellate assemblages. – The base of the Phthanneridium regalis Zone in Denmark is probably near the base of the NP15 Zone, although previous nanofossil identifications correlated this level with NP14, see Heilmann-Clausen & van Simaeys (2005: 194). The Wetzeliella articulata-ovalis Zone with the two concretions can be correlated with the upper part of NP14 or lowermost part of NP15. The Ypresian-Lutetian boundary, as currently used, is in lower NP14, at a clearly older level than the Wetzeliella articulata-ovalis Zone. In conclusion, the concretions can be referred to the Early Lutetian, as currently defined (Luterbacher et al., 2004).

Note added in proof. – Four additional concretions with Helicocoides have been analysed for dinoflagellates; one concretion (2001/57) included both H. lillebaeltensis and H. mercinensis, and three concretions (2001/59, OB 932 and OB 982) contained H. mercinensis. The dinoflagellate assemblages are similar to those in the already studied concretions and compare to the higher part of the W. articulata-ovalis Zone. The concretions are therefore most probably washed out of Bed L5 (one of them, OB 982 with W. echinosaturnatum, might come from Bed L6).
The additional concretions corroborate the upper Lillebælt Clay provenance and Early Lutetian age of the entire studied material from Trelde Næs.

SYSTEMATIC PART (A.W. Janssen)

The concretions containing (among other specimens) the holotype and the illustrated specimens, as well as almost all concretions collected by MM are housed in MGUH, five concretions (leg./don. MM), are in colln ISL, one concretion (leg./don. MM) is in colln RGM, all other concretions are in the OB private collection. Silicone casts of all specimens referred to are furthermore in colln ISL and RGM.

Family Limacinae Gray, 1847

_Heliconoides_ d'Orbigny, 1836

_Type species_ – _Heliconoides inflata_ (d'Orbigny, 1836), by subsequent designation (Herrmannsen, 1846) (Recent).

_Heliconoides lillebæltensis_ spec. nov. (figs 3-8, 12-13)

Holotype. – Figs 3 and 13, external mould of specimen in sideritic concretion nr OB 229, leg. O. Barsoe Hansen (Kolding, Denmark), 2004, colln MGUH 28735; silicone latex casts in colln ISL and RGM 541.508. The same concretion contains 13 further specimens (paratypes), three of which illustrated (figs 4-6).

_Locus typicus._ – Trelde Næs, North of Fredericia, Jylland, Denmark, collected ex situ on foreshore.

_Stratum typicum._ – Lillebælt Clay Formation (Eocene).

_Derivatio nominis._ – The species is named after the Lillebælt sound, which gave its name to the Lillebælt Clay Formation, from which the present material originates.

_Description._ – Shell small (holotype: H 2.1 mm, W 2.2 mm), sinistral, rounded conical, slightly wider than high to slightly higher than wide, with about 5 whorls, attaching above the periphery of the foregoing whorl. The whorls increase slowly and gradually in diameter. The body whorl occupies c. 90% of the total shell height. The base of the shell is rounded, umbilicus; umbilicus approximately one fifth of body whorl diameter (fig. 4). The aperture is obliquely droplet-shaped, pointed above and rounded below, higher than wide, its height c. three quarters of the total shell height. The apertural margin is reinforced externally (not visible in the holotype, but observed in several paratypes, figs 2, 3, 5, 6) by a narrow ridge or margin-parallel fold that in some specimens seems to be slightly sigmoid. Columella invisible in all available specimens. Variability seems to be restricted to a slightly higher or lower spira.

Figs 3-11. Heliconoides and Limacina spp. 3-8, Heliconoides lillebaeltensis sp. nov., silicone latex casts of 3, holotype and 4-6, paratypes, all in concretion OB 229 (compare figs 12-13), RGM 541.508, original in M GUH 28735; 7, paratype, silicone latex cast of specimen in OB 881, RGM 541.515, original in M GUH 28736; 8, paratype, silicone latex cast of specimen in OB 1065, RGM 541.518, original in M GUH 28737, all leg./don. Ole Barsæe Hansen; 9-10, Heliconoides mercinensis (Watelet & Lefèvre, 1885), 9, BMNH GG 7117, leg. D. Curry; 10, silicone latex cast of specimen in OB 868, RGM 541.514, original in M GUH 28738; 11, Limacina pygmaea (Lamarck, 1805) ?, silicone latex cast of specimen in OB 1072, RGM 541.519, original in M GUH 28739, leg./don. Ole Barsæe Hansen. Figs 3-8 and 10-11 from Treede Naa (Jutland, Denmark; Lillebaelt Formation, Early Lutetian), fig. 9 from Alizy-Jouy (Aisne, France; Sables de Cuise, Ypresian).

Fig. 12. Concretion OB 229 containing external moulds of the holotype and 13 paratypes of Heliconoides lillebaeltensis sp. nov. Coll. MGUH 28735, leg./don. Ole Barsæ Hansen, 2004. Photograph ISL.

Fig. 13. Silicone latex cast of part of concretion OB 229, RGM 541.508, original concretion (see fig. 12) in MGUH 28735, leg./don. Ole Barsæ Hansen, 2004. Photograph courtesy of Sten Lennart Jakobsen, MGUH; a: holotype (see fig. 3), b-d: paratypes illustrated figs 4-6.

Discussion. – Among the Eocene species described from the North Sea Basin only Limacina nemoris Curry, 1965 resembles the present new species. However, that species remains smaller, its spira is more elevated, the aperture is more rounded and there are no apertural reinforcements.

None of the species described from the Ypresian of SW France by Curry (1982) demonstrates similarity with Heliconoides lillebaeltensis. From species recorded from the Eocene of the United States by Hodgkinson et al. (1992) only H. stenzeli (Garvie, in Hodgkinson et al., 1992) resembles the new species, but it is distinctly more slender, with the whorls attaching at or below the periphery, and its aperture reaches only half the shell height. Also its apertural margin seems to be differently shaped and thickened internally.

Distribution. – Heliconoides lillebaeltensis spec. nov. is exclusively known from its type locality.

Heliconoides mercinensis (Watelet & Lefèvre, 1885) (figs 7, 8)

Planorbis ikke ulig Pl. vortex men maaske en Valvatina – March, 1874: 279.
Spiralis mercinensis Watelet & Lefèvre, 1885: 102. pl. 5 fig. 2a, c; Korobkov, 1966: 73, 77, 78.
? Valvatina mercinensis Watelet et Lefèvre; Dollfus & Ramond, 1886: 42.
Valvatina raphitoma Stolley, 1900: 12, figs 1a-c, 2; Ravn, 1907: 368; Huckle & Voigt, 1967: 99, 104, pl. 45 fig. 1.
Valvatina mercinensis (sic) (Wat. et Lef.); Coissmann & Pissarro, 1913, expl. pl. 60, rz. Pteropodes 2-2.
Solvania or Homolaxis, juvenile; Wrigley, 1924: 255 7
Valvatina spec.; Davis & Elliott, 1951: 337.
Description. — Shell sinistral, planorboid, with approximately 3½ rounded whorls in a regular spiral. Initial whorl not protruding, apical plane slightly concave. Aperture rounded in frontal view, only very slightly higher than penultimate whorl. The basal part of the aperture is lowered beyond the base of the foregoing whorl. Apertural margin with a rounded v-shaped incision (lateral view), internally thickened. Umbilicus wide and shallow.

Material examined. — Two concretions with respectively many and two specimens, leg./don. M. Madsen, 2000, colln MGÜH, silicone casts in ISL 1999.56 and 1999.58, and RGM 429.552, and 429.554. The concretion with many specimens also contains four paratypes of Helicostoma lilclusaletentis spec. nov. Three concretions with five specimens, leg./don. M. Madsen, 2006, colln MGÜH, silicone casts in ISL 2007.3-4 and 2007.6 and RGM 541.503-504, RGM 541.506. One concretion also contains eight specimens of Helicostoma lilclusaletentis spec. nov. One concretion with c. 55 specimens, leg./don. M. Madsen, 2006, colln RGM 541.507, also containing ten specimens of Helicostoma lilclusaletentis spec. nov.; silicone cast in ISL 2007.7. Two concretions with c. 30 and c. 20 specimens, leg. O. Barsøe Hansen, 2004 (OB 608, OB 676) Silicone casts in ISL 2007.10 and 2007.12, and RGM 541.510 and RGM 541.512. Two concretions with five specimens leg./don. O. Barsøe Hansen, 2007 (OB 868, OB 881), colln MGÜH; one specimen in OB 868 illustrated Fig. 10 (MGÜH 28738); silicone casts in ISL 2007.14-15 and RGM 541.514-515. Both concretions also contain specimens of Helicostoma lilclusaletentis spec. nov. Two concretions with one and c. 35 specimens, leg. O. Barsøe Hansen, 2007 (OB 931, OB 982); silicone casts in ISL 2007.16-17 and RGM 541.516-517); OB 931 also contains 8 specimens of Helicostoma lilclusaletentis spec. nov.

Discussion. — Although quite a number of specimens are present in the available concretions the apertural reinforcements are not visible in any of the silicone latex casts. Still, the general shape is so typical that the identification cannot be doubted. Helicostoma mericenesis was originally described from Ypresian ('Cuisian') deposits of Mercin, Paris Basin (France, department of Aisne). The present specimens reach slightly larger dimensions than the Paris Basin shells (W = 2.3 mm, specimen illustrated herein fig. 10).

According to Curry (1965: 366) the six syntype specimens are absent from the Warelet collection, housed in the Musée de Soissons, France. In the original description no mention is made of the apertural morphology, for which reason Curry (1965, fig. 16) illustrated a specimen from the Sables de Cuise at Aisy-Jouy (just 20 km from the type locality). His drawing demonstrates clearly the v-shaped incision of the apertural margin, but not the internal apertural ridge. We reproduce here some drawings (fig. 9a-d) of the same specimen (BMNH GG 7117, leg. D. Curry) from Aisy-Jouy, in which this feature is clearly seen.

The taxon Spiralts 'subangustus' Warelet & Lefèvre (1885: 102, fig.1a-c), obviously a lapsus for S. subangulusus, as seen in the explanation of their fig. 1, described on the basis of a single specimen (also not found in the Warelet collection), from the same locality Mercin, was considered by Curry (1965) with some doubt to be a synonym of the present species. However, considering the shape of the aperture, as illustrated by Warelet & Lefèvre, showing a subangular abaxial margin never seen in Helicostoma mericenesis, this
seems unlikely. The choice of the name 'subangulosus' indicates that the shape of the aperture is not only an unsuccessful drawing (unless, of course, the description was based on the drawing!). Also the size (W = 2.5 mm) exceeds that of H. mercingensis from the Paris Basin. Dollius & Ramond (1885: 39), by the way misspelling the name as Spiralis 'subangulatus', considered it a synonym of the freshwater gastropod Planorbis hemistoma Sowerby, 1815. The original description of P. hemistoma in Sowerby (1815: 91, pl. 140 fig. 6), however, is too short and the illustrations are too small to be certain about this.

Limacina planidorsalis Hodgkinson (in Hodgkinson et al., 1992: 18, pl. 3 figs 11-13), from Early to Middle Eocene of some offshore wells E of Canada, resembles Helicoides mercingensis closely and might be a synonym. The apertural features, however, are not preserved in the type specimens.

Distribution. – The presence of this species in sediments of Early Lutetian age is surprising. Helicoides mercingensis is the oldest pteropod species known. Apart from the Ypresian occurrences in the Paris Basin this species is also known from the earliest Ypresian of Denmark (Fur Formation, Mo Clay), from the Late Palaeocene (Tuscaloosa Sand Formation, Bear Creek Marls) of Alabama (USA), from the Ypresian (London Clay Formation) in England, from the Ypresian (Panisel and Flanders formations) in Belgium, and from supposed Ypresian sediments in The Netherlands (Opende borehole) (most of these colln RGM).

Specimens recorded from the Ypresian of Gan (Aquitaine Basin, France) by Curry (1982) belong to another species (see Janssen & Cahuzac; in prep.).

Limacina Bosc, 1817

Type species: Limacina helicina (Phipps, 1774), by monotypy (Recent).

Limacina pygmea (Lamarck, 1805) ? (fig. 11)

Ampullaire pygmée, Ampullaria (pygmea); Lamarck, 1805: 30.
Ampullaire pygmée, Ampullaria pygmea; Lamarck, 1806, pl. 61; fig. 6a-b.
Spiratella pygmea (Lamarck) 1804; Curry, 1965: 362, figs 18a-b, 19 (with further synonymy).

Description. – A single, poorly preserved specimen has a very low spira, considerably lower than all specimens of the accompanying species Helicoides lillebaeltensis spec. nov., and might belong to this well-known Lutetian species. Its apertural features are not visible.

Material examined. – One specimen from the type locality of Helicoides lillebaeltensis spec. nov., co-occurring with 15 specimens of that species in concretion OB 1072, leg./don. O. Barsøe Hansen, 2007, colln MGHU 28739; silicone casts in ISL 2007.19 and RGM 541.519.

Distribution. – Eocene (Lutetian) of the Paris and North Sea basins. Also recorded (Curry, 1982) from the Ypresian of Gan (Aquitaine Basin) and from the Middle Eocene (Bartonian) of Texas (USA). The illustrations, however, of the latter occurrence in Hodgkinson et al. (1992, pl. 3 figs 14, 15) represent another species. Spiratella pseudopygmea Eames (1952: 150, pl. 6 fig. 146a-b), based on juvenile specimens from the Eocene of India/Pakistan, might be related or even identical.
BIOSTRATIGRAPHICAL NOTES (A.W. Janssen)

The pteropod assemblage found in the Trelede Naes concretions yielded two common pteropod species, and a single doubtful specimen of a third species. The most abundant species, Heliconoides mercinensis, is an extremely common species in several deposits of Late Palaeocene to Early Eocene (Ypresian) age and is also known from Cuisian (=Ypresian) sediments in the Paris Basin. Janssen & King (1988) recorded occurrences of this species in pteropod zones 6 to 9, covering a Late Palaeocene-Ypresian age. The present study includes a reliable age assignment of the concretions as Early Lutetian, which extends the range of H. mercinensis upwards, as the species had not been found in Middle Eocene deposits so far.

The fact that the new species Heliconoides lillebaeltensis is common in the present samples, and co-occurs with H. mercinensis in a number of concretions, is striking. It indicates that in a (maybe relatively short) Eocene interval the species occurred quite abundantly in the North Sea Basin. Still, in the UK, in Denmark and The Netherlands, where pteropods from the Eocene are well-studied, the species has never been found so far. Most probably the occurrences have to be included in the basal part of Pteropod Zone 9 of Janssen & King (1988), but other species known from this interval, such as Limacina taylori (Curry, 1965), L. lutetiana (Curry, 1965), Euchilotheca succincta (Defrance, 1828) and/or Camptoceras prisca (Godwin-Austen, 1882), were not found.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors are especially grateful to Messrs Mogens Madsen (Fredericia, Denmark) and Ole Barsee Hansen (Kolding, Denmark) for donating material and for permission to study specimens in their collections. Mr Sten Lennart Jakobsen (MGUH) was kind enough to make the photograph of fig. 13. The first author is grateful to Messrs Mogens Madsen and Ingemann Schnetler, for making all silicone latex casts and donating a set of these to the RGM collections. Dr Crispin Little (School of Earth and Environment, University of Leeds, UK) critically read the manuscript and improved the English.

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