

References

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objektyp: **ReferenceList**

Zeitschrift: **Eclogae Geologicae Helvetiae**

Band (Jahr): **57 (1964)**

Heft 2

PDF erstellt am: **24.09.2024**

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an independent stratigraphical standard scale for the Paleogene of the Soviet Union. The classical section of Bakhtchissaray in southwestern Crimea was chosen as «stratotype» for this scale. The section along the Kuban river (central part of Northern Caucasus) serves as «para-stratotype» for the pelagic facies.

This new standard scale has been recommended for general use in Europe.

Since the present paper deals only with planktonic foraminifera, it is mainly concerned with the Kuban section.

The planktonic foraminiferal faunas of the Central Northern Caucasus differ markedly from corresponding faunas of the Thetys province, although many species common to both provinces allow a limited correlation. The well known difference in planktonic foraminifera from Thetys and Boreal faunal provinces, existing during the Upper Cretaceous, is also observed during the Paleogene (see also BANDY, 1964).

Faunas from Anatolia, Aquitania, Vicentino, the northern part of the Atlantic coast of North America and the Lodo formation in California show great affinities to the corresponding faunas of Crimea, Northern Caucasus and Western Turkmenia; whereas the faunas of the Scaglia of Central and Northern Italy, Southern Iran, Egypt, Morocco and eastern Mexico compare well with the zonation established by BOLLI in Trinidad. For different faunal provinces, different zonations have to be established.

The Goriachy Kliutch svita and the Abazinsk svita of the central Northern Caucasus are characterized by impoverished and specialized planktonic faunas, inappropriate for a stratigraphical standard of more than regional value. The same is valid for the Upper Eocene Kumsk horizon.

The stratigraphical scale of the Paleogene has to be based on the sections developed in continuous pelagic facies from the Thetys faunal province with rich planktonic faunas. It is dangerous to base a standard zonation on only one section, which is never free from local and regional peculiarities. The attempted standard zonation will be purified from local trends and abnormalities by detailed studies of more and more sections in different regions of the Thetys. In this way, a useful tool for stratigraphic work of increasing refinement will be obtained. If the present paper might be a little step towards this goal, it has attained its purpose.

A stratigraphy based on the above principles should not be encumbered by stage names connected to strato-types more or less luckily chosen. The fundamental unit of a stratigraphy, based on fossil records, is the biozone. The assignment of biozones to stratigraphical units of higher rank is in great part a convention. The author of the present paper prefers the use of neutral terms, such as Lower, Middle and Upper Paleocene, rather than the misuse of poorly defined stage names.

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Abbreviations

- BMOIP: Biulleten Moskovskovo obshchestva ispytatelei prirody.
- CCLFR: Contributions from the Cushman Laboratory for foraminiferal research.
- CCFRR: Contributions from the Cushman Foundation for foraminiferal research.
- VNIGRI: Vsiesoyusново neftyanovo nauchno-isslyedovatel'skovo geologo-rasvyedochnovo instituta.