

On the enigmatic *Djeddilia djeddilia* Jousseume, 1894
(Gastropoda, Caenogastropoda, ?Vermetidae)

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The poorly preserved holotype of *Djeddilia djeddilia* is described, illustrated and commented upon. Its identity and systematic position remain somewhat uncertain.

Key words: Gastropoda, Caenogastropoda, Vermetidae, taxonomy, *Djeddilia*, Red Sea.

While revising the many nominal genera of the family Pyramidellidae, which resulted in a critical evaluation by Schander et al. (1999), the holotype of *Djeddilia djeddilia* Jousseume, 1894, was studied, with very surprising results. The shell of *D. djeddilia* was not figured by Jousseume, who had only a single specimen (Lamy, 1932: 742).

Djeddilia djeddilia gen. nov., spec. nov., was described from Djedda (Red Sea coast) as follows (Jousseume, 1894: 101, no. 10):

“10. *Djeddilia djeddilia*.

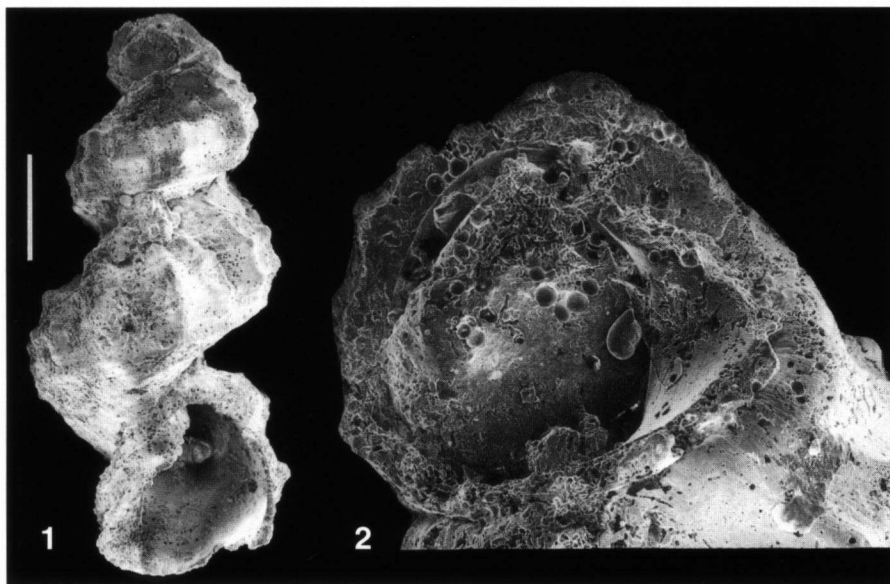
Testa cretacea, solida, rugosa, alba, cylindracea, contorta; anfr. 4 disjuncti, convexi, longitudinaliter et spiraliter costati; apertura oblongo-ovalis, postice angulata, columella contorta, crassa, bilobata, labrum tenue, rectum. Long. 4; diam. 2 millim..

Hab. Djedda.

Nota.- Ce genre est caractérisé par une coquille dont la forme est celle d'une colonne torse, et le bord columellaire très saillant, contourné en spirale et divisé en deux lèvres par un sillon longitudinal. On retrouve dans les genres *Velainiella* et *Columna* un bord columellaire identique à celui du genre *Djeddilia*.”

The genus *Columna* referred to above cannot be *Columna* Perry, 1811, which belongs to the pulmonate family Achatinidae, containing species with large shells, 35-100 mm high (Zilch, 1959: 372). Thiele (1929-1935) mentioned neither the genus *Velainiella* nor *Djeddilia*. Wenz (1938: 324) mentioned only *Velainella* Vasseur, 1880, with *Velainiella* Cossmann, 1918, as a synonym, as a monotypic genus erected for the Eocene species *Velainella columnaris* Vasseur, 1880. Unlike *D. djeddilia*, that species has a very slender shell, about 7 cm long, without any sculpture.

The only other author who has dealt with *Djeddilia djeddilia* is Lamy (1932), who also published a figure (ex Jousseume). Lamy (1932: 743) assigned *Velainiella* to the Pleurotomariidae and rejected the possible assignment of *D. djeddilia* to either *Velainiella* or *Columna*, with which I entirely agree. Lamy also suggested that “La seule espèce qui me semble offrir quelque analogie éloignée est le *Seguenzia laxa* Jeffreys, 1885” of which Warén (1980: 16) ascertained that it does not belong to the genus *Seguenzia* Jeffreys, 1876. I too find the suggestion that *D. djeddilia* belongs to the deep-water genus *Seguenzia*, characterized by conical shells with a conspicuously curved apertural lip (Hickman, 1998), most improbable. Probably because of the “deux lèvres divisé par un sillon longitudinal...” Lamy (1932: 743) suggested “.. peut-être .. un *Pyrgulina*?”. These structures however, are quite different from the teeth usually found in the family Pyramidellidae.



Figs 1-2. *Djeddilia djeddilia* Jousseume, 1894, holotype; Djedda (Museum national d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris). 1, shell in frontal view (scale bar, 1 mm); 2, detail of the top. Photographs by J. Goud.

Having studied the holotype of *D. djeddilia* it can be said that it is most probably not a scalaroid gastropod. It turned out to be a piece of the tube of a *Vermetus*-like animal (fig. 1). The apical whorls are missing; the apical part of the tube is filled with a piece of chalk (ostracod?) (fig. 2). It is concluded therefore that *D. djeddilia* is similar to some Vermetidae. The author was not able to identify more exactly a species or genus.

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