

## In memoriam Professor Tamás Báldi, 1935 – † 2014

Recently, at the end of last year, I was called upon by Arie W. Janssen to be an associate editor of *Cainozoic Research*. At the same time, he informed me about the fact that previously the journal already had a Hungarian associate editor, namely Professor Tamás Báldi, between 1992 and 2012. It was a confirmatory information to accept the invitation with great pleasure, as earlier I already succeeded Professor Báldi in several cases (e.g. as curator of the Hungarian Natural History Museum, or as secretary and chair of the Palaeontological and Stratigraphical Section of the Hungarian Geological Society).

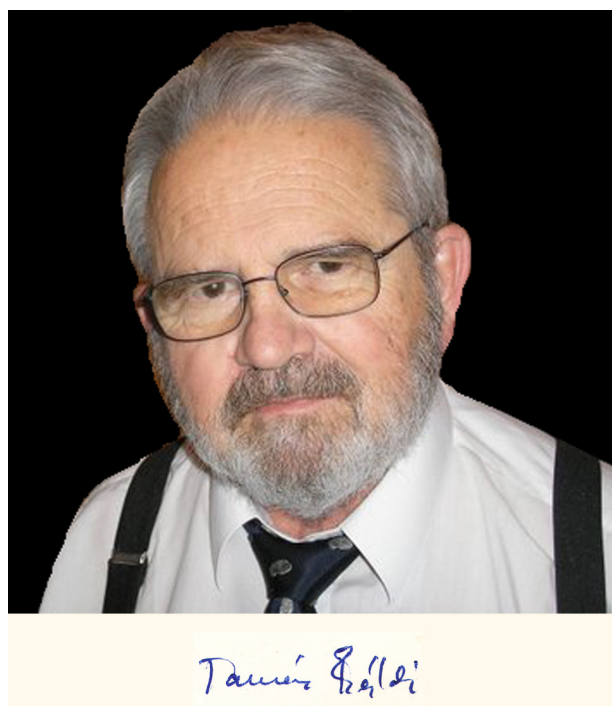
The issue of *Cainozoic Research* (14-1), in which I was introduced as new associate editor arrived to me just on 14 July 2014. It was a sad day both to me and to the whole Hungarian palaeontological community. It was the day of Professor Tamás Báldi's funeral ceremony in Üröm (a small village near Budapest), where we could say a final goodbye to one of the most effective researchers of the Hungarian Cainozoic. Unfortunately, my first contribution to *Cainozoic Research* has to be a commemoration of our late colleague.

T. Báldi graduated as a geologist at Eötvös University, Budapest, in 1958. After a short period at the Department of Palaeontology of the same university, he became a curator of the Cainozoic invertebrates of the Hungarian Natural History Museum (Department of Geology and Palaeontology) between 1959 and 1966. From 1966 until his retirement (2002) he was employed by the Eötvös University (Department of Geology, later Department of General and Historical Geology; 1966–1971: assistant professor; 1971–1981: associate professor; 1981: professor). For a long time, from 1971 to 1994 he was also head of the department. Generations of geologists were educated by Professor Báldi, and his excellent student's books are used until recently.

Tamás Báldi was always a very active member of the Hungarian Geological Society. He was the founder secretary and later the chairman of the Palaeontological and Stratigraphical Section of the society (1963–1978). The Hungarian palaeontological journal, *Őslénytani Viták* (*Discussiones Palaeontologicae*) was initiated by T. Báldi in 1963 and he was also a board member of the society from that year onwards. Several symposiums were organized by him for Hungarian palaeontologists and students (e.g. on micropalaeontology; evolution; palaeoecology; stratigraphy) and he guided several wonderful field trips all over Hungary. He invited foreign colleagues even from Western Europe in the 60's and 70's, which was not an easy task at that time (he and his wife Mária, for example, together with colleagues Pál Müller and József Kókay, received and guided Arie Janssen for a week in October 1979, showing him around in Hungary). He was one of the organizers of the "Colloquium on Neogene Stratigraphy" in 1969 (at the occasion of the Hungarian Geological Institute's centenary). A very successful international meeting was also organized by T. Báldi on the Eocene/Oligocene boundary (1979, Visegrád). He was member of editorial boards in several Hungarian scientific journals (*Őslénytani Viták*, *Földtani Közlöny*, *Acta Geologica Hungarica*, *Annales Universitatis Scientiarum Budapestinensis de Rolando Eötvös Nominatae, Sectio Geologica*), and he was also invited by international journals to participate in editorial works (*Contributions to Tertiary and Quaternary Geology*; *Cainozoic Research*).

His extensive scientific and educational activities were granted by several prizes and honours. Hantken Miksa Medal was given by the Hungarian Geological Society (1975, for his Egerian mollusc monograph); Quality Prize by Publisher's Directorate General (1979, for his 'Elementary historical geology' students' book); Eötvös József Prize from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (2011, for his complete scientific oeuvre). He was a honorary member of the Hungarian Geological Society from 2000.

Concerning his scientific activity, Professor Báldi has spent his whole life in research of the Cainozoic, however, with a continuous and significant stratigraphic shift from Miocene through Oligocene to the Eocene. At the beginning of his career he started to study the Miocene mollusc faunas: middle Miocene of the Börzsöny Mountains (Szokolya;



**Professor Dr Tamás Báldi**, photographed in the Hungarian Geological Institute in December 2005, on a special event organized by the Hungarian Geological Society, celebrating his 70th anniversary.

Kismaros) and early Miocene in the environs of Budapest (Törökbálint, Budafok). Later he included also some late Oligocene faunas and localities (e.g. in a small monograph on European Oligocene and Miocene *Glycymeris*). From the mid 60's onwards he very intensively studied the late Oligocene (Egerian) faunas, mainly in North Hungary and in the Transdanubian Range, which resulted in a voluminous, internationally well-known and frequently cited monograph on the Egerian molluscs of Hungary. The monograph contains descriptions of 240 taxa, illustrated in 51 plates (among which 10 taxa are new, and further 31 species or subspecies that were introduced in his earlier publications). Additionally to the systematic descriptions, he discussed in detail the geological background and the palaeoecological and palaeogeographical aspects of the fauna.

Meanwhile he studied the Egerian stratotype section in Eger in detail, and furthermore a type section in Novaj and a parastratotype in the Budafok-2 borehole; he was 'the father of the Egerian', the regional stage of the Central Paratethys. The Egerian was introduced and designated by Tamás Báldi and Jan Seneš (Bratislava) in 1975. Another regional Central Paratethyan stage name attached inseparably to Professor Báldi's life is the Kiscellian (early Oligocene). The Kiscellian stage was first proposed in 1979 by T. Báldi and designated and formally introduced also by T. Báldi in 1986. After the Egerian monograph, another very successful book was published on Mid-Tertiary stratigraphy and palaeogeographic evolution of Hungary in 1986. Here he discussed in detail all Hungarian formations from the late Eocene to the earliest Miocene (stratigraphy, correlations, facies, palaeogeography, tectonics). The most important mollusc taxa of the Tard and Kiscell clays are described in an appendix. In the 80's and early 90's the terminal Eocene and early Oligocene events were intensively studied, including the separation and the early evolution of the Paratethys. The evolution of the Hungarian Paleogene Basin and the palaeobathymetry of the Bakony Eocene Basin were studied together with his wife, Dr Mária Báldi-Beke.

His kind personality will be missed in the university lecture rooms, at the events of the Hungarian Geological Society, during field trips and also in the pubs where geologists regularly rest and tell stories after a tiring day in the field. However, his very widespread scientific results will be used for a long time, both in Hungary and abroad, not only by palaeontologists and stratigraphers, but by a very wide range of earth scientists.

A full bibliography of Professor Báldi's scientific activity will be published in one of the forthcoming issues of *Földtani Közlöny* (Bulletin of the Hungarian Geological Society).

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