

of a planktonic foraminiferal marker known only between Middle Oligocene and Middle Miocene.

It is worth adding, perhaps, that the Cordillera Septentrional, particularly the Palo Alto area, represents by far the richest source of fossiliferous amber coming on the market.

Direct determinations of the amber age by the uranium fission track method are now planned with samples collected from different mines.

#### 5. Previous indications of fossils supposed to be Attini

FRIČ & BAYER (1901) concluded from a fossil leaf with irregular semi-circular cuts the presence of leaf cutting ants in the Upper Cretaceous from Bohemia. They even give it a generic and specific Latin name, „*Atta praecursor*“. However, cuts of this sort could equally have been produced by a lot of different (and even more probable) beings like Tenthredinid larvae, *Megachile*, etc. — apart from many other unknown Cretaceous creatures. Thus, it is obvious that „*Atta praecursor*“ is, at best, worth remaining in the literature just as an example of fertile imagination.

BROWN (1973) records the presence of „some winged myrmicines [which] appear to be attine males resembling those of *Mycetosoritis*“ in the amber of Chiapas (Mexico) which should be contemporary with the Dominican amber. Because these specimens are neither determined more precisely nor described, it is likely that they are poorly preserved or not suitable for a formal description. At the present time we are therefore not allowed to draw any conclusion, except, perhaps, the existence of the subfamily Myrmicinae.

It is remarkable that no attines have been recognized among the rich collection of North American Tertiary ants described by CARPENTER (1930).

#### 6. The first fossil gardening ant (worker caste)

##### *Trachymyrmex primaevus* n. sp.

**Holotype:** Worker in Dominican amber, preserved in the amber collection of the State Museum of Natural History, Stuttgart (Department of phylogenetic research), No. Do-377-K-1.

**Paratypes:** Workers included in the same piece of amber, Nos. Do-377-K-2 to Do-377-K-9. Same collection as holotype except one part of the amber piece containing the specimens Nos. Do-377-K-7, Do-377-K-8, and Do-377-K-9, which has been donated to Natural History Museum, Basel (Department of Entomology) where they have been entered in the collection with the number PE 154. 1—3.

**Derivatio nominis:** Latin „primaevus“ (= of the first age, of the youth time), referred to the attine evolution.

**Diagnosis:** A little polymorphic *Trachymyrmex* of small size with particularly slender body and pedicel, with prominent eyes, feebly tuberculate integument and antennal scapes without lobe at the base.

**Description** (measurements in mm): Total length, mandibles excluded, 3.7—4.4 (holotype 4.1); head length 0.72—1.00 (holotype 0.76); maximum head width, eyes excluded, 0.48 (? in a crushed specimen), otherwise 0.76—0.96 (holotype 0.96); maximum diameter of eyes 0.08—0.09 (holotype 0.10); scape length 1.00—1.04 (holotype 1.00); alitrunk length 1.16—1.52 (holotype 1.04);