

HISTORY OF THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT (1940—1971)

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The varied history of Hungarian physical anthropology saw a period of flourish in the 1940's, indicated also by the establishment on October 19, 1940 of the „Institute of Anthropology and Race-Biology” in the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Science of Szeged University. The data concerning the period 1940 to 1959 have been compiled by first assistant GYULA FARKAS. The rather ominous term „race biology” *had to be included* — according to L. BARTUCZ's words — in the name of the new institute; but thanks to the progressive thinking of the teachers, the Department kept clear of that line.

As is usual with everything just born, the first steps were not easy. During the first 5 years were working with university professor LAJOS BARTUCZ mainly unpaid assistants (JÓZSEF NEMES, JÓZSEF PÁLFI, ZOLTÁN HEGYES, ALADÁR BARTÓK-CSATHÓ), and it was only from 1944 that the Department was granted of one single assistant position occupied by Dr. KÁROLY TESSZÁK till 1954.

The Department was accommodated in the central building of the University (Dugonics square) and had to face in the beginning not only a shortage of space but also financial problems. Nor was staffing a simple question since no special training of physical anthropologists was going at that time. The Institute was not spared by the war, either, one of its most talented junior assistants, JÓZSEF NEMES, falling victim to war events.

A doubtless favourable event of that period was that professor LAJOS BARTUCZ was elected Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences for the academic year 1943—44.. The interest of students in anthropology has been evidenced by that from its foundation up to the end of 1944 the Department had 504 students coming from the circles of biologists, physicians and jurists. The Scientific Institute of the Great Plain (Alföld) within our Institute was established on professor BARTUCZ's initiative with very modest financial support; and in its two yearbooks the researchers reported on the scientific investigations of the manifold (ethnographic, natural) phenomena of the Great Plain.

After the liberation of Hungary, the Institute started on a way of considerable progress. Also its name was modified to Anthropological Institute. This first period lasted till 1951. Although there was no notable development in respect of staff, the Institute met with recognition within the University manifested in professor BARTUCZ's repeated deanship of the Faculty of Natural Sciences in the academic year 1945/46, as well as his position as the acting director

of the editorial staff of the Yearbook of the Biological Institutes at the University of Szeged in 1950, etc.

In that period there were lectures in the Department on general anthropology, anthropology of human races, Hungary's ethnic anthropology, criminal anthropology, social anthropology and systematic anthropology for students of the liberal arts, of law, of the teachers training institute and of medicine. In those years teacher trainees attended lectures on anthropogenesis, palaeoanthropology and general anthropology for four semesters in 5 theoretical and 2 practical lessons a week.

Composition of the staff did not change notably, only Miss ILONA BOROS as an illustrator and — for two years — Miss KLÁRA STESSEL as an unpaid assistant were active in the Institute in addition.

This was the period when the first scientific plan was drawn up, aimed chiefly at the study of the anthropology of prehistoric age, of the migration period, and of the time of Hungary's conquest. The realization of this plan was doubtless impaired by the fact that the Scientific Institute of the Great Plain (Álföld) had been dissolved in February 1950.

Between August 10 and 27, 1951, the Institute moved to the ground floor of the building at Táncsics Mihály street, to a considerably smaller area. This caused great difficulties in the accommodation of the anthropological collection grown considerably by that time, and resulted in a drawback in the work of the Institute. The next period in the history of the Institute opened in 1951 and lasted till 1950.

The difficulties of that period resulted mainly from that in the academic year 1950/51 the teaching of a class of 124 teacher trainees in biology and chemistry was started, imposing an increased burden on the Institute, as well. This situation was eased but temporarily by that in 1953 the teacher trainee GYULA FARKAS was employed in the Institute as a demonstrator. The earlier established position of an assistant was abolished in September 1954, and Miss ILONA SZILÁGYI, who had been active successfully since the foundation of the Institute in questions of administration, organization, teaching and research alike, also retired in January 1955.

In February 1955 a professor's assistant was again added to the staff in the person of GYULA FARKAS. Thus beginning from that year, up to 1959, the permanent staff of the Institute consisted of two teachers and two assistant workers. Teaching was going on mainly in the branches of biology-geography and biology-chemistry where the principal aim was the acquisition of an up-to-date knowledge in hominid evolution in compliance with the new requirements. The number of theoretical lessons, however, was reduced gradually and the subject, formerly extending over four semesters, was reduced to one semester. Professor BARTUCZ was commissioned with writing the lecture notes „Anthropology” and „Anthropogenesis and fossil Man”, published in 1952 and 1953 respectively. These lecture notes were used as „central” notes at all the three Universities for the respective branches.

Research work continued to be limited mainly to the field of palaeo-anthropology, but in 1952 ethnic anthropological studies were resumed, and in 1958, as a new topic, also the investigations of physical growth. All this was supported, apart from the University budget, by a special credit — even if not in

a large amount — of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. One of the achievements of that period is also the establishment of the Special Section for Physical Anthropology of the Hungarian Biological Association in 1952, professor BARTUCZ, head of the Szeged Institute, being elected to be its president.

In that period the Institute also paid attention to the training of anthropologists, as a result of which two pupils of professor BARTUCZ, GYULA DEZSŐ and GYULA FARKAS, chose physical anthropology for their vocation.

In 1959 professor BARTUCZ was appointed to university professor and head of the Anthropological Institute of the Lorand Eötvös University in Budapest. For a year, the Anthropological Institute in Szeged was directed by professor GÁBOR KOLOSVÁRY, head of the Institute of Zoosystematics. That interim period lasted till March 1960, when museologist PÁL LIPTÁK, holder of a candidate's degree (from the Anthropological Collection of the Museum of Natural History, Budapest) was appointed by the Ministry of Education to reader and head of the Department. This event marked the beginning of a new period of prosperity in the history of the Institute.

The very first task was to increase the staff number because, besides the head of the Department, only one assistant, one laboratory technician and one office attendant were active in the Department at that time. There was not even an administrator in the beginning. From 1961 to 1963 the Department had got only a part-time administrator, being developed into a full-time post from August 1, 1963. Another improvement was that in 1967 the administrator Mrs. EMMA MOLNÁR was transferred from the Philosophical Faculty to our Department, and started its long overdue rearrangement in the summer of that year. She was promoted to the post of an executive in 1970. From 1968, Mrs. GIZELLA KOVÁCS, retired secondary school teacher of biology, was employed — with minor interruptions — for a part-time post to promote the scientific work of GYULA FARKAS.

In 1961 a teacher trainee of biology and geography, Mrs. ANTONIA BOROS, was commissioned with the work of a demonstrator, as a pupil of professor LIPTÁK; in 1963 she was appointed to research student, in 1964 professor's assistant. Meanwhile Miss JÚLIA NAGY worked as a demonstrator temporarily. In 1962 assistant GYULA FARKAS was promoted to the position of a first assistant.

It was a substantial help in the Department's work that — by the aid of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences — Miss EDITH LOTTERHOF, secondary school teacher of biology and chemistry, employed as a research student, was working at the Institute from Spring 1967 to December 1967. From Spring 1961 Mrs. ILONA FODOR occupied a part-time post for assisting scientific work (to the account of the Scientific Research Development Funds) and worked here with longer interruptions till July 1, 1970. With her departure the Department lost a most versatile worker, proficient in languages and typing. It has not been possible to fill this SRDF post permanently since then.

The laboratory assistant of the Institute retired in December 1960, making possible qualitative exchange. He was replaced by SÁNDOR PÓNYAI, employed first as a Department worker, later as a technician. After his departure to the Rector's Office there were two replacements of person in this sphere of work.

Teaching work has continued to be concerned mainly with the training of teachers of biology-geography and biology-chemistry, completed in 1969 by the education of specialists of physical anthropology within the framework of specialization in experimental biology. Even if on a modest scale, the training

of physical anthropologists proper means considerable progress as it is now possible for the first time to graduate in the University specialists with a qualification in physical anthropology.

It was considered necessary by the Ministry of Education to prepare a new, more up-to-date and not too extensive lecture note (10 printed sheets). The head of the Department dr. PÁL LIPTÁK, was commissioned with this work and in 1962 a local university lecture note was published under the title „Physical Anthropology and Human Evolution”. In 1966, the same author wrote under the same title a uniform university lecture note of 15 printed sheets for all the universities in the country. The head of the Institute, University professor PÁL LIPTÁK Academic Doctor of the Biological Sciences (D. Sc), was commissioned by the competent committee of the Ministry of Education, authorizing seven sheets extension of size, to write a university textbook of the size of 22 printed sheets under the title „Physical Anthropology and Human Evolution” that was published in December 1969. This meant substantial progress in the teaching of physical anthropology in Hungary since there existed no special university textbook of physical anthropology in Hungary till that time. Teaching was promoted also by that a local lecture note was edited under the title „Anthropological Practices” by GYULA FARKAS in 1962.

The activity of the new head of the Department brought a certain change to the topics of research work. Pál LIPTÁK has introduced in the historical anthropological (palaeoanthropological) research work his own, so-called „taxonomic method”, writing himself, as well, several studies on the elaboration of anthropo-systematics based on skeletal material. In the transition period GYULA FARKAS started independent studies of the questions of body growth and development and later co-operated in addition in the evaluation of the very important Bronze Age series. By making use of good relations with the archeologists, the head of the Department devoted great attention to enriching the Institute's cranial and skeletal collections without any financial support.

In the most recent period of the Institute it is a considerable achievement that it has been possible to equip a dry basement as a storeroom with a metal framework construction, and that at last, in 1971, the long-planned laboratory of bone chemistry was laid out and equipped, as well. The latter makes possible to engage in a further line of research work with the support of dr. Med. IMRE LENGYEL as temporary lecturer and the co-operation of GYULA FARKAS.

Meanwhile the palaeoanthropological study of finds from South Hungary was going on systematically and was greatly helped by repeated excavations made in co-operation with archeologists since 1957; these raised the standards of the collection of the Institute. For this we are indebted among others to the understanding support by candidate OTTO TROGMAYER, archeologist in Szeged and director of the County Museum, and to the archeologists of the Museums in Baja, Hódmezővásárhely, Gyula, Kecskemét and elsewhere. This was the reason, among, others, why distinguished professors and researchers from abroad have more and more often visited the Institute since 1960 (DEBETZ, GINZBURG, TROFIMOVA, OLIVIER, GRIMM, CORRENTI, ULLRICH, SCHOTT, BACH, STLOUKAL, FERÁK and others). Besides palaeoanthropological studies, the research works relating to the ethnic anthropological study of the living population — started earlier but interrupted — resumed again. The results of them were published as

separate chapters in two extensive monographs (monographs of Orosháza and Tápé).

One of the outstanding achievements of the Department's research work was that the author of this article obtained the Academic Doctor's degree of Biological Sciences (D. Sc) by defending his thesis „Palaeoanthropology of the Ethnogenesis of the Ancient Magyars" in January 1969, as a result of which he was appointed to university professor in the same year.

The close connections between teaching and scientific work are characterized by the intensive work of the students' association, the many papers on specialized topics, prepared in the Department, the competition essays submitted by the students, the papers presented with and rewarded by the National Student's Association Conferences. It was an appreciation of the work in the Institute that its leading teacher, first assistant GYULA FARKAS was put in charge of organizing the IXth National Scientific Conference of the Students' Associations.

Another important fact is that, under the guidance of PÁL LIPTÁK, the teachers of the Institute, GYULA FARKAS and Mrs. ANTONIA BOROS, took their examinations for a University doctor's degree. Following that, Miss JÚLIA NYILASI, GYULA DEZSŐ, KÁROLY VÁMOS, Miss KATALIN ZSILKÓ, SÁNDOR WENGER, Miss JÚLIA BAGÁNY and JÓZSEF JANZSÓ defended their doctor's thesis in physical anthropology as the main subject. As a co-examiner and critic, PÁL LIPTÁK took part at the University of Debrecen in the examination for university doctor's degree of OTTO EIBEN (at present first assistant in the Lorand Eötvös University, Budapest).

During its past of 30 years, the Institute of Physical Anthropology at the Szeged University has achieved a distinguished rank in Hungarian physical anthropology. The participants of this work have won considerable appreciation several times. Thus previously professor BARTUCZ was conferred on, and professor PÁL LIPTÁK acquired by defending his thesis, the degree of an Academic Doctor of Biological Sciences. LAJOS BARTUCZ was awarded to the golden class of the „Order of Labour" in 1964, and GYULA FARKAS the title „Eminent Worker of Education" in 1970. Professor LAJOS BARTUCZ was the president of the Anthropological Section of the Hungarian Biological Society between 1952 and 1956, and professor PÁL LIPTÁK has been its president since 1968. In two periods (about 7–8 years long) during the last decade, PÁL LIPTÁK was member of the General Biological Committee of the National Postgraduate Degree Granting Board, as well as of the Biological Committee operating at the Ministry of Education. PÁL LIPTÁK has been member of the Anthropological Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences since its existence, GYULA FARKAS since 1966, and he has been its secretary since 1970.

A close co-operation has been established with the archeologists and anthropologists of the neighbouring Yugoslavia, and teachers of the Institute (GYULA FARKAS and Miss EDITH LOTTERHOF) have co-operated in international excavations in the Voivodina on this basis.

The teachers of the Anthropological Institute took part in congresses, conferences and study tours abroad several times. Of these we only mention the most important ones. PÁL LIPTÁK: Bulgaria 1956, Paris 1960, Moscow 1961, Helsinki 1965, United Kingdom 1970, Tallinn 1970, where he gave lectures, too.

GYULA FARKAS: Poland 1966, Yugoslavia 1969, German Democratic Republic — several times.

Summing up, we may conclude that the results of the 30 years' work of the Anthropological Institute have been brought about by the secondary-school teachers diplomas, by the university teachers and researchers passed from among them, and they consist of a large number of studies. It appears beyond any doubt, anyway, that the initiative to create the Anthropological Institute in the University of Szeged turned out to be right, it being in 1971 in Hungary the only really independent university department, headed by a qualified anthropologist with scientific degree. Thanks to the understanding of top-management, it was partly possible to remedy the backwardness of the first decades in recent years. The perfect solution as regards staff, finances and equipment is a task of the near future.

Finally we should like to give a brief account of the publishing activities of the research workers in the Department.

Between 1940 and 1971 — before compiling this report — the teachers working in the Institute published altogether 138 papers. Of these publications LAJOS BARTUCZ wrote 28 (between 1940 and 1971), PÁL LIPTÁK wrote 41 (between 1960 and 1971), GYULA FARKAS wrote 61 — including works of popularization — (between 1955 and 1971), Mrs. ANTONIA BOROS wrote 7 (between 1966 and 1971), Miss EDITH LOTTERHOF wrote 3 (between 1969 and 1971), and KÁROLY THESSZÁK wrote 1 (between 1943 and 1954). It is to be noted that this enumeration does not include some 220 publications — including the many popularizing articles — of LAJOS BARTUCZ, and 30 scientific studies of PÁL LIPTÁK, drawn up not in the Szeged Institute, but at their other places of work. There are also books and university lecture notes among the anthropological works published. LAJOS BARTUCZ wrote 3 books and 2 lecture notes, PÁL LIPTÁK wrote 1 book and 2 lectures notes, GYULA FARKAS wrote 1 lecture note; PÁL LIPTÁK and GYULA FARKAS were co-authors of certain parts in 3 monographs.

These publications have been contained mainly in Hungarian anthropological journals, archeological journals, yearbooks of Museums, in the Acta of University and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, in congress publications and in anthropological journals and periodicals abroad. For those interested in more details in publication activities of the Department we may refer to the following bibliographies:

- IRMA ALLODIATORIS: Anthropological Bibliography of the Carpathian Basin. — Budapest, 1958 (in Hungarian and in German).
 GY. FARKAS—GY. DEZSŐ: Bibliography of Hungarian Anthropology (1952—1964). — Anthropológiai Közlemények (=AK) 9, 1965.
 GY. FARKAS: Bibliography of Hungarian Literature in, or Relating to, the Subject of Anthropology (1965). — AK. 10, 1966.
 The same (1966). — AK. 12, 1968.
 The same (1967—1968). — AK. 13, 1969.

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