Paronychoceras gen. n., a new ammonites genus (Cephalopoda)

We describe a new microconch genus and two new species of Phymatoceratinae, Paronychoceras gen. n. pseudoplanum sp. n. and P. costatum sp. n. These new forms are homeomorphic of Onychoceras, which is the microconch of the Upper Toarcian genus Hammatoceras. The Hammatoceratinae are deriving from the Phymatoceratinae during an episode of high environmental stress (the Variabilis-Thouarsense NW-european marine regression) which is responsible for the extinction of four main Middle Toarcian ammonites families and subfamilies (Mercaticeratinae, Dactylioceratidae, Hildoceratinae, Phymatoceratinae). This is a new example demonstrating that major evolutionary jumps in ammonoids occur during severe extinction events, and are charaterized by the sudden appearance of simple, primitive-looking forms which are atavistic with respect to their more complex immediate ancestors (proteromorphosis).