THE EARLY APTIAN AMMONITE BIOZONATION IN MEDITERRANEAN PROVINCE

Seyed Naser RAISSOSSADAT, Hugh G. OWEN, Joaquin GARCÍA-MONDÉJAR, Peter F. RAWSON

The Lower Cretaceous biozonation of the Tethys has been discussed during recent years. A biozonation has been introduced based on Deshayesitidae for the Upper Barremian-Lower Aptian (e.g. Bogdanova & Tovbina, 1994); a scheme accepted by the Lower Cretaceous Cephalopod Team as a standard for the Mediterranean area (Hoedemaeker et al., 1993). Genera of the family are recorded throughout the Tethyan Realm and extend into the Boreal Realm. Three genera of the family, Turkmeniceras, Deshayesites and Dufrenoyia, are well distributed in the Mediterranean region of Tethys and provide good indices for biozonation. Turkmeniceras provides a good index of late Barremian age; Deshayesites and Dufrenoyia are used for the Lower Aptian biozonation.

The ammonite faunas of the Early Aptian of Aralar Mountain in north Spain have been studied recently (publication submitted, García-Mondéjar et al., 2008). The reported genera and species permit a correlation of the successions in the Mediterranean Tethyan Belt. They demonstrate that the ammonite succession in the Kopet Dagh (Turkmenistan and north east Iran) at the opposite ends of the northern Mediterranean Tethyan belt (firmly established (Raisossadat, 2002), is uniform.

A Deshayesites tuarkycicus Zone had been proposed for the earliest Early Aptian. However, Raisossadat (2002) showed that Deshayesites oglanlensis was more characteristic of this time interval and this revision was accepted by 1st International Workshop of the IUGS Lower Cretaceous Ammonite Working Group (Hoedemaker et al., 2003). This species could be traced throughout the Mediterranean basin. The assemblage of this Zone is closely comparable in the north Tethyan province successions in Spain, France and the Kopet Dagh (Turkmenistan and north east of Iran). The English fissicostatus Zone (Casey, 1961) can be correlated with the Deshayesites oglanlensis Zone.

The succeeding Early Aptian ammonite zone is the Deshayesites weissi Zone. The weissi Zone is established from the stratigraphical range of two species, Deshayesites weissi and Deshayesites planus. While D. weissi is known only from North Germany, Romania, the Greater Balkans, Taurkyr and Kubadag (Kopet Dagh), the latter species is more widespread. It is believed that the weissi Zone in Transcaspia can be correlated with the forbesi Zone (Casey, 1961) in England and the weissi Zone (Kemper, 1976) in Germany.

The weissi Zone is succeeded by that of Deshayesites deshayesi, a common species of Deshayesites distributed throughout most of the areas from which the genus is recorded. It is thus used widely as the index fossil of the penultimate Early Aptian zone. There is now general agreement that the Deshayesites deshayesi Zone of Casey (1961) corresponds to the deshayesi Zone of other European authors.
Dufrenoyia is a widely distributed genus and D. furcata is the index fossil for the latest Early Aptian in the Mediterranean region. Casey (1961) proposed for this interval an index fossil, Tropaeum bowerbanki, which is associated with species of Dufrenoyia in southern England. Tropaeum is a heteromorph ammonite and is facies restricted and thus unsuitable as a widely recognisable index fossil. The distribution of Deshayesitidae family genera and their species in Mediterranean regain will be discussed in this paper.

References


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