

HOW FAR DID THE EARLY INDO-PACIFIC BIOPROVINCE EXTEND TO THE WEST? - THE GASTROPOD'S POINT OF VIEW.

1HARZHAUSER, M. and 2PILLER, W. E. 1Museum of Natural History, Vienna, Austria; 2Karl-Franzens-University, Graz, Austria.

The marine gastropods from Iran clearly furnish evidence that the Central-Iranian basins, as key-area between the Western Indo-Pacific and the Eastern Mediterranean, display a fair Mediterranean character throughout the Oligocene and Lower Miocene. Similarities of the Eastern Mediterranean and especially of the Central Iranian gastropod assemblages with those described from Pakistan are high during the Oligocene when a broad seaway between these areas favoured the distribution of gastropods in the entire Western Tethys Region. This percentage decreases distinctly during the Lower Miocene when only a small number of Mediterranean species appears in Pakistan and vice versa. Only few Pakistanian species reach as far west as the Iranian Qom Basin. However, a small part of the Burdigalian species reported from Iran are absent at the European coasts and may be a hint to an Indo-Pacific influx in an overall Mediterranean gastropod fauna. Similarities on species level between Mediterranean and Indo-Pacific gastropods are observed as far south-east as Pakistan but are completely vanishing at any time further east. Indo-Pacific species known from Burma or Java are well represented as far west as Pakistan but did not extend to the Eastern Mediterranean. Thus the melting pot between Indic and Mediterranean gastropod faunas was located in the Pakistanian area during the Oligocene, while in this area a take-over by Indo-Pacific gastropods happened during the Lower Miocene.