

PLIENSBACHIAN BRACHIOPOD BIOGEOGRAPHY OF THE "MEDITERRANEAN  
MICROCONTINENT"

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Twenty-two Pliensbachian brachiopod faunas have been analysed from a belt extending from Sicily across the Apennines and the Alps to the West Carpathians. Numerical comparison of species compositions, distribution of distinctive genera, and the occurrences of NW-European forms show that the Mediterranean province can be divided into two sub-provinces: one bordering the NW margin of the Mediterranean microcontinent /"Carpatho-Sicilian"/ and another, more internal one /"Appennino-Transdanubian"/. The differentiation of the two sub-provinces can be due to their palaeogeographical position and partial separation, and to local environmental factors. The NW-European/Mediterranean provinciality might have been caused by the filtering effect of a deep ocean/mid-oceanic ridge system.