

LATE TRIASSIC PALYNOSTRATIGRAPHY: THE EARLY RHAETIAN IN THE NORTHERN CALCAREOUS ALPS (AUSTRIA)

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New data from an integrated palynological (pollen/spores, dinoflagellate cysts, acritarchs), (micro)paleontological (ammonoids, bivalves, conodonts, radiolarians) and magnetostratigraphic study of a 50 m thick Sevatian-Rhaetian transition in the Zlambach Formation (Kleiner Zlambachgraben section near Hallstatt, Austria) are presented. This well exposed Western Tethys key section of alternating deeper water limestones and marls shows successive FO and LO events in the marine faunal and phytoplankton record, as well as in the coeval terrestrial pollen/spore record.

Pollen/spore assemblages are dominated by the Classopollis group. However, two distinct palynological zones can be recognized: early Rhaetian assemblages still include a variety of typical Late Triassic elements (*Enzonalasporites*, *Vallasporites*, *Patinasporites*, *Ellipsovelatisporites*, *Partitisporites*, *Triadispora*), whereas middle Rhaetian assemblages show the presence of new elements, such as *Chasmatosporites*, *Quadraeculina*, *Limbosporites*. Dinoflagellate cysts (*Rhaetogonyaulax*, *Suessia*, *Dapcodinium*), are abundant in the higher part of the studied section. Intriguingly, the transition between the two zones is characterized by an acme of dinoflagellate cysts (*Rhaetogonyaulax*, *Noricysta*, *Heibergella*). These events in the palynological record coincide approximately with the FO of characteristic Late Triassic ammonoids (*Choristoceras*, *Cochloceras*).

The regional and global significance of the nature and magnitude of this event is discussed.