Permian and Triassic rocks in the eastern Tethyan region form continuous marine sequences that record the waning phases of the Palaeozoic and the early stages of the Mesozoic eras. This book describes and interprets these rocks, summarizing the distribution of major fossil groups in a way that will allow detailed comparison with strata of comparable age in the western Tethys and other parts of the world. The sixteen contributions by forty authors are the culmination of the five-year long International Geological Correlation Programme Project 203. The detailed information presented here is gathered from many areas in the eastern Tethyan region – from France to Australia – and will be of use in the evaluation of the major changes in the global marine biosphere known to have taken place at the end of the Palaeozoic Era. The stratigraphic record for this fascinating segment of Earth history is not widespread elsewhere in the world and is most continuous in the region covered by this book.
Permo-Triassic Events in the Eastern Tethys
Permo-Triassic Events in the Eastern Tethys

Stratigraphy, Classification, and Relations with the Western Tethys

EDITED BY
W. C. Sweet, Yang Zunyi, J. M. Dickins, and Yin Hongfu

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Preface

The 16 reports that make up this volume constitute the final report of Project 203 of the International Geological Correlation Programme, which dealt with Permo-Triassic events of the East Tethys and their intercontinental correlation. During the five-year life of Project 203, participants met twice in Beijing, and once each in Columbus, Ohio (USA) and Brescia (Italy), to exchange views, consider new data, and examine pertinent sections in the field. These conferences have provided new insight into the stratigraphy, classification, and relations of strata within the Permo-Triassic boundary interval, and a wider appreciation of the problems involved in the correlation and interpretation of these rocks, which document an unusually significant period in Earth history.

It will be clear to the reader that the 48 contributors to this volume are in substantial agreement in their interpretation of many features of the Permo-Triassic boundary interval, but disagree, at least by implication, in their evaluation of others. Although as editors we have strove to achieve readability and uniformity in basic terminology, we have also attempted to avoid interference with strongly held individual views, even though they run contrary to those of other contributors. In brief, it would be inappropriate to suggest that in five short years participants in Project 203 solved all problems with respect to the Permo-Triassic boundary interval – for many of these are likely to persist as long as vigorous study continues. We do suggest, however, that data and ideas gathered and expressed during the five-year life of Project 203 and summarized in this volume are important contributions toward understanding and interpreting the rock and fossil record of the late Permian and early Triassic.

The co-leaders of Project 203 and Prof. Yin Hongfu have served as the editorial board for this volume. Prof. Sweet assisted authors with English versions of their manuscripts, coordinated reviews by the editorial board, arranged for revisions in figures, and served as principal contact with the publisher. All members of the editorial board, however, have seen and commented on every contribution, and in several cases have solicited reviews by other experts. This international division of labor has cost considerable time, but we believe it has resulted in a volume that is both authoritative in content and consistent internally.

YANG ZUNYI  J. M. DICKINS  WALTER C. SWEET
(Co-Leaders IGCP Project 203)
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