

THE TYRRHENIAN SEA

An Introduction

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Under the auspices of the Netherlands Commission of the Upper Mantle Project a symposium was held in Delft in November 1968 on the subject Oceanization in the Western Mediterranean. The lectures and discussions have been compiled into a volume (number 26) of the Transactions of the Royal Netherlands Geological and Mining Society, published in 1969.

Three years after the symposium at Delft the Geophysical Circle organized an evening meeting at Leiden on the theme: The Tyrrhenian Basin, the easternmost deep basin in the Western Mediterranean. Three speakers, prominent contributors to the former symposium, gave short lectures, disclosing the latest developments in their respective fields of study: Dr. A.R. Ritsema on the seismicity of the area, Dr. Schuil-ling on the possible geothermal history and Professor van Bemmelen on the geological development of the circum-Tyrrhenian mountain chains. The authors were asked to prepare a written account of their lectures to be offered for publication in "Geologie en Mijnbouw" as a contribution of the "Geophysische

Kring". The first two authors restricted themselves in their accounts very closely to the actually spoken word — each speaker was allotted 20 minutes —, but Professor van Bemmelen has preferred to extend largely on the subject. He compiled and analysed all the latest data available, put them in a wider context and brought forward his views on the ultimate causes of orogeny with the Tyrrhenian Sea as a test case.

We consider these articles an important contribution to the solution of the complex problem of the Cenozoic development of a small but very active part of the zone of marginal and inland seas. It is clear that no synthesis can be expected from one discipline alone. This series of three articles demonstrates that all available data have to be used in the construction of a synthetic model like the one presented by van Bemmelen. Let these studies be a plea for combining geological, geophysical and geochemical research efforts in the future, even more than has been done in the past.

May we look forward to more integrated studies like the present one.

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