

REFLECTIONS ON THE DISTRIBUTION OF POLYTYPIC SPECIES
OF THE GENUS *VASTICARDIUM* (MOLLUSCA, CARDIIDAE) FROM
THE INDO-PACIFIC

Jacques Vidal

*Attache au Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Laboratoire de Biologie des
Invertebres Marins et Malacologie, 55 rue Buffon, 75005 Paris, France.*

ABSTRACT

Vasticardium rugosum (Lamarck, 1819) is a junior synonym of *V. pectiniforme* (Born, 1780), which is the valid name for this species. Much confusion exist in the literature because *Vasticardium rugosum* has erroneously been considered a synonym of *Vasticardium flavum* (Linne, 1758), which, however, is a polytypic species occurring as three subspecies in the Indo-Pacific. I have examined the characters and the distribution of the three subspecies *Vasticardium flavum flavum* (Linne, 1758), *V. flavum subrugosum* (Sowerby, 1840) and *V. flavum dupuchense* (Reeve, 1845). The transition zone between *V. flavum flavum* and *V. flavum subrugosum* occurs along the eastern coast of Sulawesi, while *V. flavum dupuchense* apparently is parapatric with the others. Distribution of the four subspecies of *Vasticardium orbita* (Broderip & Sowerby, 1833), the three subspecies of *Vasticardium luteomarginatum* (Voskuil & Onverwagt, 1991), and the six subspecies of *Vasticardium elongatum* (Bruguiere, 1789) shows that the relations between the different forms (subspecies and even species) are sometimes difficult to understand. However, the available data indicate that the presence of the Sunda Shelf in the Neogene could account for the differentiation and distribution of these taxa.