ABSTRACT - The monotypic genus Prolixosphaeridiopsis gen. nov. is created for the taxon Cleistosphaeridium spissum McIntyre & Brideaux, 1980 which has previously been questionably assigned to ProlixosphaeridiumDavey et al., 1966.

INTRODUCTION
In their work on Valanginian palynomorphs from the Northern Richardson Mountains of the District of Mackenzie, Canada, McIntyre & Brideaux (1980) described the species Cleistosphaeridium spissum. The species was characterized by an ovoid, elongate shape, a lack of archaeopyle formation and a covering of numerous hollow, flattened processes. It was also noted that the orientation of many specimens was unknown and that on rare specimens, rows of proximally connected acuminate processes possibly delineated a paracingulum. Lentin & Williams (1981) questioned the transfer of the species to Prolixosphaeridiopsis.

During analyses of Jurassic-Cretaceous sediments from northwest Europe and the Russian Platform, numerous specimens have been observed by the present authors. It occurs in significantly older strata than originally described, with a total recorded range of Bathonian to Valanginian. Despite these widespread occurrences, it has not been figured by other authors since Davey, R. J., Downie, C., Sarjeant, W. A. S. & Williams, G. L., 1981. Fossil dinoflagellates: index to genera and species, 1981 edition. Bedford Institute of Oceanography, Report Series BI-R-81-12: 1-345.

SYSTEMATIC TAXONOMY
Algae Incertae Sedis
Genus Acritarcha Evitt, 1963

Type species. Prolixosphaeridiopsis spissus (McIntyre & Brideaux, 1980) comb. nov. = Cleistosphaeridium spissum (McIntyre & Brideaux, 1980), p. 20, pl. 1-4.

Diagnosis. Medium to large palynomorphs, ovoidal to cylindriform, consisting of a single wall layer or two layers in close contact. Wall ornamented with numerous, apparently hollow processes which are flattened, distally tapering before expanding into bifurcate or trifurcate terminations. Individual process elements may be proximally linked to adjacent elements to form a reticulum which may be medially aligned. No excystment aperture observed.

Derivation of name. In reference to the similarity of the genotype to the genus Prolixosphaeridiopsis Davey et al., 1966.

Remarks. The genus differs from all other genera in its combination of elongate shape, numerous hollow flattened processes and lack of excystment aperture. The genus is not considered a dinoflagellate cyst due to its lack of archaeopyle and additional features such as paratabulation. McIntyre & Brideaux (1980, p. 20) comment that, ‘rows of acuminate processes, seemingly connected basally, may represent pericingular parasutures’. This feature is clearly observable on the holotype.

Prolixosphaeridiopsis spissus (McIntyre & Brideaux, 1980) comb. nov.
1980 Cleistosphaeridium spissum McIntyre & Brideaux, 1980, p. 20, pl. 7, figs 1-4.
1981 Prolixosphaeridium spissum McIntyre & Brideaux) Lentin & Williams, 1980, p. 234.
Holotype. McIntyre & Brideaux, 1980, p. 20, pl. 7, figs 1-4.

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