

SALT DEPOSITSDIDACTIC POTENTIAL OF A GEOLOGICAL SUBJECT

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For many years, the formation of salt deposits was explained by comparison with the methods used nowadays to extract salt from industrial salines. Phenomena of sedimentary subsidence were thus invoked to justify the thick layers that can be found in such orebodies. On the basis of the general features of those salt deposits e.g. their thickness and absence of tectonic deformations along the boundaries, that first explanatory model has now been replaced by another one in which thermohaline convection, associated with geotectonic morphologies characterised by marginal basins, bar zones and forebasins systems controls the sedimentation process. This commonly accepted model may be exploited having in mind the understanding of a wide range of geochemical, tectonical, geomorphological and mining concepts. On the grounds of our teaching experience about this theme in the course of Mining and Geo-Environment of the Mining Department of the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Porto - Portugal, namely in the discipline of Global Metallogenesis, we are aiming at summarising the features of the model by grouping the concepts according to the diverse geological themes included in the curricula of Earth Science subjects.