

JURASSIC VOLCANISM IN CENTRAL PATAGONIA: BIOSTRATIGRAPHY AND CORRELATIONS

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The Early to Middle Jurassic volcanism related to the precocious Gondwana rifting in the Río Chubut Medium Valley (Chubut Province, Argentina) exhibits definite changes in the vertical evolution. The sequence is built with the rise of three main petrographic sets: first rhyolites, then andesites, and finally basalts. In some places, the column is more than 2.000m thick.

The **rhyolitic** basal unit provided a Liassic (pre-Upper Pliensbachian) *Otozamites*-assemblage.

The conformably overlain Sierra de Olte Complex is formed by a wide distributed set of units deposited in different environments. The provenance of the rock materials characterizing the lower part of the same Complex is dominantly **andesitic**. In some places, this lower terms include Upper Pliensbachian to Middle Toarcian ammonoids.

The basal section of the Upper part of the Sierra de Olte Complex is composed by flooded **basalts** with olivine. These basalts grade up to lacustrine sediments. The latter exhibit different lithological facies including palynomorphs, plant remains, bivalves, pandemic ostracods of the *Darwinula magna* assemblage, conchostraceans and vertebrates of Dogger age.

The Lias-Dogger Complex is unconformably overlain by fluvial-lacustrine tuffaceous sediments of early Upper Jurassic age with palynomorphs and ostracods.

Local correlations are discussed. The geological framework, in order to analyze the possible intercontinental relationships with approximately coeval volcanic events from Gondwana (Stormberg and Drakensberg volcanism, Ferrar-Kirkpatrick volcanism, and Tawallum basalts), is displayed.