

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERIZATION AND GEOTECTONIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CONTINENTAL CRETACEOUS DEPOCENTERS ACROSS SOUTHERN BRAZIL, URUGUAY AND ARGENTINA (PARANÁ BASIN): A PRELIMINARY CORRELATION.

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The central-southern South America shows Middle to Upper Cretaceous continental sedimentary records severely damaged by the Early Tertiary erosion and covered by modern deposits. In consequence, the paleogeographic reconstruction of these depocenters demands a great effort on a continental scale correlation using different surface and subsurface data. The Aptian/Albian basins (e.g. Caiuá basin in Brazil and Paraguay) exhibit connections with an unique former regional base level modified by the Tertiary uplift of the Rio Piqueri shear zone (around the Brazil-Paraguay border). On the other hand, we propose a common base-level for the coeval Guichón/Puerto Yeruá basin (Uruguay and Argentina) located towards the Chacoparanaense region in the central-northeastern Argentina. In the central-southern South America, the Early/Middle Cretaceous revolution is characterized by a large extensional tectonic phase. The created continental lowland acted as a huge base level for all the eastern sag type basins with cratonic margins (Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina), as well as, for the deep rift type basins surrounding Sierras Pampeanas (central Argentina). Nevertheless, the Late Cretaceous is marked by an important tectonic inversion dominated by compressional styles. The related sedimentary basins (mostly with endorreic regime), show a complex paleogeographic framework superposing earlier compartmentations, where each depocenter exhibits isolated base levels expressed by big lakes. These Turonian to Maastrichtian basins are well represented by the Bauru basin (Brazil) and the Mercedes basin (Uruguay and Argentina).