

LOWER CRETACEOUS MICROFOSSILS FROM ARARIPE BASIN, NORTHWESTERN BRAZIL: AN STRATIGRAPHICAL APPROACH

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The Araripe basin, NE Brazil, is a worldwide famous Lower Cretaceous lagerstätten with excellent preserved diversified fossil assemblages, including ostracodes and palynomorphs. Stratigraphical studies have demonstrated a polycyclical sedimentation in this basin, whereas the biostratigraphy based on microfossils decisively contributed to identify the following chronostratigraphical units: Dom João local stage (Jurassic? - Lower Cretaceous?), Rio da Serra local stage (Neocomian), and Alagoas local stage (Aptian-Albian). A large hiatus between the Rio da Serra and Alagoas local stages is well defined for the first time. These chronostratigraphical units are in agreement with the lithostratigraphical scheme proposed for the Araripe basin in the beginning of this decade.

The microfossil distribution throughout the stratigraphical column in this basin seems to be strongly influenced by the polycyclical sedimentation and, therefore, it permits a best paleoenvironmental evolution interpretation of the Araripe basin.