

## COMENTARIO DE LIBROS

### TECTONIC EVOLUTION OF SOUTH AMERICA

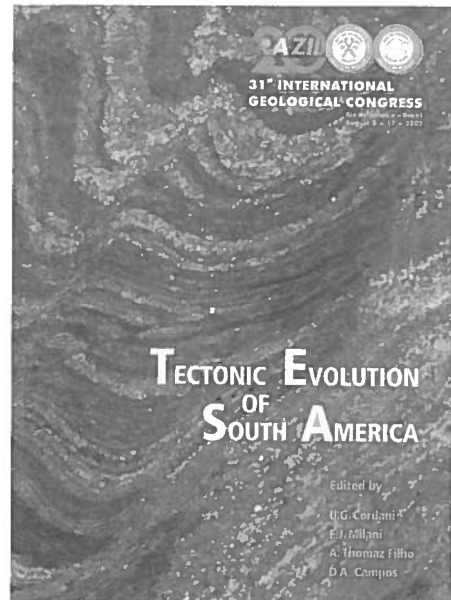
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During the 31<sup>st</sup> International Geological Congress in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the long awaited book 'Tectonic Evolution of South America' was released. The book, produced by the Brazilian Academy of Science and cosponsored, among other institutions, by the Departamento Nacional de Produção Mineral (DNPM), has been the result of a prolonged effort of the editors, in particular, of Professor Umberto Cordani, to bring together an updated version of the geology of South America. The Handbook on South American Geology by Jenks was published in 1953, and since then no comprehensive text on the geology of South America had been produced.

In its 854 pages, 66 authors from ten different countries, have written state of the art papers on the areas of their research. Five articles deal in 150 pages with the geologic evolution of the older nuclei of Cratonic South America. The Brazilian Orogenic Cycle is covered in 8 articles extending over 200 pages. Eighty pages are devoted to the study of the Phanerozoic cratonic cores, marginal belts and sedimentary basins, one article being general for South America, one restricted to Patagonia, and one dealing with the geologic evolution of the Sierras Pampeanas during the Paleozoic. The Andean Belt is dealt with in 5 articles. Each with different geographic coverage: northern Andes, Andes of Ecuador, Perú, Bolivia and northern Chile, southern Central Andes and the Southern Andes. An overview of the tectonic evolution of the belt is also incorporated. Finally, 150 pages in the 4 articles relating to Mineral and Fossil Fuels Resources of South America, specifically dealing with oil, coal, Andean and South American Platform metallogenesis.

It is evident from most of the articles that there has been an explosive increment in the production of scientific data and in the number of geologic publications on South America in the last



decade. This is particularly the case with isotope geology and geochronology, to which some of the contributions are biased, giving however new information of general interest.

If some criticism can be done to the book content, it is that South America stands by itself as the object of the study, and little space is devoted to establish its relationships with other continental areas during the geological evolution. Also this local flavour is one of its strengths, as it will be from now on difficult to produce megasynthesis of this evolution, without considering the information given in its pages.

In all, a good feeling has traversed the continent with the publication of this book, which will be a necessary source of reference and orientation both for scholars and for mining and oil companies active in the continent.