

TECTONIC CONDITIONS AND MOST IMPORTANT MILESTONES OF THE NORTHERN AND MIDDLE CASPIAN DEVELOPMENT

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Major tectonic elements determining the framework of the area in question are the Pre-Caspian syncline with an ancient Pre-Cambrian basement and Middle Caspian anticline, also with ancient Pre-Cambrian basement, located in the north. These major and ancient structures are separated by the Bozashi Paleozoic and Mangyshlak permo-Triassic narrow dislocation areas which were formed as a result of the coeval rift system inversion which, in their turn, originated due to the paleotethis impact on the Paleozoic lithospheric plate which stretched from the ancient East European platform to the Caucasus and Kopetdag branches of the Paleotethis.

Due to the movement in the upper flexible layer of the Earth crust, the microplates of Pre-Caspian: North Ustyurt and Middle Caspian were formed in the east of that huge lithospheric plate.

Active tectonic processes which greatly determined the modern framework and their mutual correlation are seen in late Riphean, Ordovician, early Devonian, late Devonian, early Turonian, late Carboniferous, early Permian, late Permian, early Triassic and Paleogene.

The most significant milestones of the North and Middle Caspian development, which have been more or less documented, are the opening and spreading of the Ural Tien Shan Paleoocean in early Devonian and the ocean closing and two lithospheric plates collision in late Carboniferous and early Permian.

Eventually, the southern part of the North Caspian and Middle Caspian region were developing under the tectonic process influence in Paleo and Mesotethis.

Important milestones occurred in the permo-Triassic - start of Mesotethis formation and Paleogene-Neogene - closing stage of the Caucasian and Kopetdag branches of Tethis and platform collision.