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Short Note on the Use of Neotectonic and Palaeotectonic Nomenclature

of

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Abstract: The terms 'palaeotectonic' and 'neotectonic' are entrenched in the literature of Anatolian geology, used to subdivide the tectonic history before and after the last major tectonic change, which is frequently linked to the Arabia-Eurasia collision and the onset of westward Anatolian escape along the North Anatolian Fault Zone. This short note, however, illustrates that many different authors use different definitions for the age and cause of onset, and style of 'neotectonics', leading to needless confusion in Turkish geological literature. In addition, in recent years it has become common practice to use the neotectonic period as a stratigraphic correlation tool, leading to interpretations of the age of sedimentary units ('neotectonic units') based on the inferred tectonic context in which they were deposited. This practice should be abandoned, and authors should in all cases return to classical stratigraphic and structural nomenclature. Based on the wide array of meanings that authors attach to the term 'neotectonic', it is advocated here that this terminology should be abandoned altogether, and replaced by simple description of what is meant. This call is meant to clarify geological literature, and to strictly separate observation and interpretation.

Key Words: neotectonic, palaeotectonic, Anatolia, Turkey, Greece, Aegean

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