

エディアカラ紀とカンブリア紀の動物の台頭と同時に起きた浅海酸素濃度の2段階上昇

A two-step rise of oxygen concentration in shallow seas coinciding with the rise of animal life in Ediacaran-Cambrian

海保 邦夫^{1*}, 菊池 みのり¹, 千馬 直登¹, 静谷 あてな¹, 大庭 雅寛¹, チェン・ツォン チアン², 童金南², 高橋 聡³, ポール・ゴージャン⁴

KAIHO, Kunio^{1*}, KIKUCHI Minori¹, SENBA Naoto¹, SHIZUYA Atena¹, OBA Masahiro¹, CHEN Zhong-Qiang², TONG Jinnan², TAKAHASHI Satoshi³, GORJAN Paul⁴

¹ 東北大学大学院理学研究科, ² 中国地質大学, ³ 東京大学大学院理学系研究科, ⁴ ワシントン大学

¹Tohoku University, ²China University of Geosciences, ³University of Tokyo, ⁴Washington University

Two of the most significant events in Earth biotic evolution occurred in the Ediacaran and the early Cambrian periods. The first event is characterized by the appearance of primitive marine animals such as sponges and cnidarians in the Ediacaran, and the second step is the appearance of diverse marine animals in the early Cambrian. However, the cause of these macroevolutionary steps has not been clarified. Here we show that a two-step rise of oxygen level in shallow seas coincided with the rise of animal life in the Ediacaran and Cambrian. The changes in dissolved oxygen, marked by an organic molecular index, the pristane/phytane ratio, are detected from shallow marine sedimentary rocks from northwestern Australia and southern China. Low dissolved-oxygen conditions above storm wave base developed frequently in the early Ediacaran before and during the Gaskiers glaciation and end-Ediacaran to earliest Cambrian, before the Cambrian Explosion. High dissolved-oxygen conditions above storm wave base continued in late Ediacaran and into the time of the Cambrian Explosion. The high dissolved-oxygen conditions coincided with the Ediacaran biota and the early Cambrian fauna. Additionally, sporadic data from below storm wave base show low dissolved-oxygen conditions in the late Ediacaran, and high dissolved-oxygen conditions during and after the Cambrian Explosion horizon. We hypothesize that the two-step rise in dissolved oxygen is related to the two-step evolution of metazoans in the mid-Ediacaran and the Cambrian.

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