

Fundamentals of the Plates vs. Plumes Debate

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The “plumes debate” concerns whether anomalous volcanic areas result from a) leakage of melt from the mantle, permitted by lithospheric extension (the Plate hypothesis), or b) the delivery of high-temperature material from the core-mantle boundary by thermally buoyant, deep-mantle plumes (the Plume hypothesis). This debate does not merely involve igneous petrology and mantle convection. It is extraordinarily cross-disciplinary and almost every branch of geology and geophysics is relevant. It is fundamental to how the Earth works, from the core to the surface. The Plate hypothesis predicts that magmatism is driven, either directly or indirectly, by plate tectonics [<http://www.mantleplumes.org/>]. Magmatism is envisaged to be a passive reaction to lithospheric extension. Its quantity and chemistry are predicted to reflect source fusibility and composition. Thus, where “anomalous” magmatism occurs, lithospheric extension is expected to be observed, e.g., an extensional plate boundary, a back-arc basin, distributed intraplate extension or a continental rift zone. It is a common misunderstanding that the mere existence of melt in the mantle is sufficient to explain surface eruptions—that the lithosphere is passive and melt in the mantle can pass through it unimpeded as light passes through a glass window. This is not the Plate hypothesis, which predicts that lithospheric extension is required for melt to escape to the surface. The Plate hypothesis views surface volcanism as mapping lithospheric extension, not the existence of melt in the mantle. Where melt volumes are large, the chemical fingerprints of high source fusibility are predicted.

The Plume hypothesis predicts a) surface uplift tens of millions of years before flood volcanism, b) flood volcanism lasting a few tens of millions of years, c) a “plume tail” extending from the surface to the core-mantle boundary, d) a time-progressive volcanic chain, and e) high source temperatures. These predictions are rarely confirmed with confidence and have never all been confirmed at a single “anomalous” volcanic province. The Plume hypothesis has survived for the last four decades only because it has been extensively modified in ad hoc ways to accommodate unpredicted observations. Modifications include proposals that plumes can arise from almost any depth, that plume material can flow sideways for thousands of kilometres, that plumes may have a wide range of geochemical compositions, and that where a predicted characteristic has not been observed, even in the face of extensive searching, it may be assumed that the characteristic exists. The plume model has become the default explanation for anomalous volcanism because it can be adapted to explain anything, the absence of anything, and the inverse of anything. It has evolved into a model that cannot be falsified, no matter what is observed or not observed. The scientific method involves testing predictions against observations in an attempt to falsify an hypothesis. In the case of the origin of anomalous volcanism, science has strayed from this path. In my presentation I shall outline the fundamental issues underpinning the “plumes debate”, I shall describe the challenges scientists face in resolving the issue, and I shall suggest research approaches that can potentially resolve this fundamental question.

Keywords: plate hypothesis, plume hypothesis, scientific method

プルーム、スーパープルーム、プレートテクトニクス、地球システム
Plume, superplume, plate tectonics, and Earth system

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The Earth is composed of solid planetary system of plate tectonics, plume, superplume tectonics, and growth tectonics in the core with averaged speed of cm-scale per year, except the outer core. The surface of the Solid Earth is covered by thin atmosphere of only 1 bar which is driven by Sun with extremely high-speed hydrological process, indicating the operation of separate system from the solid Earth. Dynamic convection of liquid outer core causes strong bi-polar geomagnetism to protect living organisms on this planet from solar winds and galactic cosmic rays.

Mantle convection in the spherical planets follow the 3D shape as plumes and superplumes from the depth, but it shows platy mode on or near the surface. When the surface is covered by liquid water which plays a critical role to decrease frictional intensity, hence causes the operation of plate tectonics. Plate tectonics provides a mild surface environment on the rocky planet. The three-fold coupling of tectonics, superficial plate tectonics, plume and superplume tectonics in the middle depth, and core tectonics in the deepest place is the cause of the characteristics of habitable planet. One more additional feature for habitability could be a small amount of water on the Earth, by which huge landmass can appear above sea-level.

Superplume operates probably only after 1.0Ga after the formation of the Earth, because of the extensive amounts of slab graveyards can generated and form a supercontinent. Those slab graveyard partially melted to form buoyant restites and sinks of partial melt enriched in FeO to grow anti-crust above CMB.

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マントルポテンシャル温度の地球史推移：ホットスポットとリッジ

Change in mantle potential temperature through Earth time: Hotspots versus Ridges

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Mantle potential temperature is the key parameter that determines rolls of mantle upwelling in mid ocean ridges (MORs) and hotspots including large igneous provinces (LIPs). We calculated mantle potential temperature (T_p), degree of partial melting (F), depth of melting column (P_{mt}), and source mantle depletion (expressed by fractions of DM and PM components) for MORB-like and some hotspot basalts of various ages using a forward trace element mass balance and heat balance calculation model named Ocean Basalt Simulator ver. 1 (OBS1). The samples examined include Cenozoic, Cretaceous, Jurassic, neo-Proterozoic, Proterozoic, and Archean basalts over 3.5 Gyrs covering the entire geological records available on the earth. Primary MORB-like basalt trace element compositions changed with time from unfractionated (flat relative to PM) with low abundances (3.45–2.70 Gyr), to flat with higher abundances (1.90–0.81 Gyr), to LREE-depleted with even higher HREE abundances (0.15–0.07 Gyr), to modern LREE-depleted N- and D-MORB (0 Myr). These temporal changes require an increasingly depleted mantle source and a decreasing degree of mantle melting through time and with decreasing mantle potential temperature. Our results using trace elements are similar to those using major elements by Herzberg et al. (2010), with the highest T_p ~1650 °C in the Archean and early Proterozoic (3.5 to 1.7 Gyr), some ancient basalts have T_p down to ~1400 °C but not lower. Our results suggest T_p maxima at around 2.7 and 1.7 Gyr, although we have few basalts between those ages. After 1.7 Gyr, T_p decreased linearly to T_p ~1300–1400 °C today. This long-term change is consistent with models of the Earth's thermal history that use a low Urey ratio in the convecting mantle. OBS1 models for non-MORB-like komatiites and picrites from large igneous provinces (LIPs) and hotspots have higher T_p up to ~1780 °C in the Archean to Paleoproterozoic, 1600 °C in the Jurassic, and 1500 °C today. These rocks may have formed from deep plumes. In contrast, the decreasing temperatures with time in MORB-like basalts reflect the cooling history of the upper mantle.

キーワード：マントルポテンシャル温度、海嶺玄武岩、ホットスポット玄武岩

Keywords: Mantle potential temperature, MORB, Hotspot OIB

プレート内部活火山下のマントル速度構造

Seismic imaging of the mantle structure beneath intraplate volcanoes

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We have used high-resolution seismic tomography to study the 3-D seismic velocity structure of the mantle or upper mantle beneath several intraplate volcanoes, including Erebus (Gupta et al., 2009), Yellowstone (Tian and Zhao, 2002), Cape Verde (Liu and Zhao, 2014), Tengchong (Lei et al., 2009; Wei et al., 2012), Hainan (Wei et al., 2012), as well as Changbai, Ulleung and Jeju in NE Asia (Zhao et al., 2009; Zhao and Tian, 2013; Wei et al., 2015). Beneath Erebus and Cape Verde, prominent low-velocity (low-V) anomalies are revealed in the upper mantle down to 500-600 km depths, whereas the structure in the lower mantle is not imaged because of the small aperture of the portable arrays deployed around each of the volcanoes. A significant low-V anomaly from the surface down to a depth of about 1000 km is revealed clearly beneath Yellowstone using abundant data recorded by the dense and large-aperture USArray. Beneath the Changbai, Ulleung and Jeju volcanoes, low-V zones are revealed in the crust and upper mantle down to about 400 km depth, whereas a high-velocity (high-V) zone is visible in the mantle transition zone (MTZ), suggesting that these intraplate volcanoes in NE Asia are caused by hot and wet upwelling flows in the big mantle wedge (BMW) above the stagnant Pacific slab in the MTZ. A similar feature is found for the Tengchong volcano in SW China, which may be caused by hot and wet upwelling in the BMW above the subducting Indian plate (or the Burma microplate). Beneath Hainan, a low-V zone exists in the upper mantle, which seems to extend down to at least 1000 km depth. These results indicate a great variety of the mantle structure and origin of the intraplate volcanoes.

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キーワード：プレート内部火山、マンテルプルーム、地震波速度構造

Keywords: Intraplate volcano, mantle plume, seismic velocity structure

Where was the Permian Emeishan mantle plume in southwestern China?

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During the past two decades, extensive geological and geophysical studies have been conducted on the Permian Emeishan flood basalt province in southwestern China, which is interpreted as a large igneous province (LIP). Most previous studies proposed that the Emeishan LIP was sourced from a mantle plume, based on the following lines of evidence: (1) 1-km of domal uplift prior to large-scale basalt eruptions; (2) the spatial distribution of low-Ti and high-Ti basalts from the inner zone to the outer zone of the LIP; (3) the presence of picrite in basalt layers and elevated MgO contents, which suggest high temperatures; (4) rapid eruptions of basalt over a short period of less than 1 Myr; and (5) fluctuations in paleo-temperatures and the occurrence of a mass extinction event.

However, recent structural, petrological, sedimentological, and geochemical evidence, together with precise zircon U-Pb dating, does not support previous interpretations of a mantle plume beneath the Emeishan LIP. Recent data show that the apparent 1 km of domal uplift is an artifact of modeling multi-stage deformation. Furthermore, there is no distinct spatial pattern in Ti-enrichment, only with respect to lower (low-Ti) and upper (high-Ti) profile features. Additionally, the initial response of the lithosphere to mantle upwelling would have been a rift system. Rather than picrite lava, there are mafic-ultramafic intrusions and cumulative olivine phenocrysts with corrosion structures, which cannot be used as evidence of a high-temperature primitive magma. Precise U-Pb age data show that the basalts erupted over a period of 10-15 Myr, but large-scale eruptions occurred rapidly within a period of ca. 5 Myr. However, the record of paleobiological evolution shows that the mass extinction event did not coincide with the large-scale eruptions during the 5 m.y. interval.

The available evidence does not support the hypothesis of a mantle plume beneath the Permian Emeishan flood basalt province. As the Emeishan LIP formed during the assembly of the Pangea supercontinent, the large-scale upwelling of volcanic magma may be explained by horizontal flow of the asthenosphere and northward motion of the Yangtze plate.

Keywords: mantle Plume, Emeishan LIP, Permian

Insights from geochemistry and age of associated seamounts into the mantle source evolution of Shatsky and Hess Rises

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Shatsky Rise in the Northwest Pacific is the best example so far of an oceanic plateau with two potential hotspot tracks emanating from it: the linear Papanin volcanic ridge and the seamounts comprising Ojin Rise. Arguably, these hotspot tracks also project toward the direction of Hess Rise, located ~1200 km away, leading to speculations that the two plateaus are connected. New ⁴⁰Ar/³⁹Ar ages and trace element and Nd, Pb, and Hf isotopic data were obtained from dredged rocks recovered from the massifs and seamounts around Shatsky Rise in an effort to understand the relationship between these plateaus and associated seamounts. The similar initial source composition and geochemical evolution supports a plausible connection between Shatsky Rise and Hess Rise, with the latter probably representing either a resurgent plume head pulse and/or a triple junction-aided second LIP eruption. Each of these rises could have evolved from plateau-building stage composed of isotopically-depleted tholeiites forming the large massifs to post-plateau building stage consisting of isotopically-enriched trachytes forming the much smaller seamounts, e.g., Shatsky Rise to Cooperation-Earthwatch-Ojin seamount and Hess Rise to DSDP Site 465A seamount. Like Shatsky Rise's Ojin Rise, a short chain of seamounts of alkaline composition (Wentworth Seamount Chain) extending SE from southern Hess Rise, i.e. from DSDP Site 465, seems to show an age progression that is consistent with being a classical hotspot track associated with the Hess plateau. Although the results of this study cannot unequivocally provide a direct link between the plateaus and seamount volcanism, further investigation of these similar trends of mantle source variation, not only between Shatsky and Hess Rise but also Ontong Java, Manihiki, and Hikurangi plateaus could lead to a better understanding of the origin, evolution, and emplacement mode of most Pacific oceanic plateaus.

Keywords: Shatsky Rise, Hess Rise, seamounts

リサイクルした海洋地殻を含むブルームの融解プロセスの実験的研究
Experimental Melting Study of Basalt-Peridotite Hybrid Source

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Very high productivity of magma in flood basalts and other LIPs is one of the major difficulties in mantle plume hypothesis (Coffin and Eldholm, 1994). Selective fusion of large amount of recycled oceanic crust entrained in the first phase of mantle plume has been proposed to explain flood basalts (e.g. Columbia River Basalt: Takahashi et al., 1998). Magma genesis in other hot spots may be largely influenced by recycled oceanic crust component involved in the mantle plume (e.g., Hawaii; Hauri et al., 1996; Takahashi & Nakajima., 2002; Sobolev et al., 2007). Therefore, understanding the melting processes in the basalt/peridotite hybrid plume source is very important. In order to figure out the geochemistry of recycled component as well as their melting process in Hawaiian hot spot, we conducted a series of high-P, high-T experiments. Melting experiments (1~10hrs) were performed under 2.9GPa with Boyd-England type piston-cylinder (1460~1540°C for dry experiments, 1400~1500°C for hydrous experiments) and 5GPa with Kawai-type multi-anvil (1550~1650°C for dry experiments, 1350~1550°C for hydrous experiments), at the Magma Factory, Tokyo Tech. Spinel lherzolite KLB-1 (Takahashi 1986) was employed as peridotite component. Two basalts were used as recycled component: Fe-enriched Columbia River basalt (CRB72-180, Takahashi et al., 1998) and N-type MORB (NAM-7, Yasuda et al., 1994).

In dry experiments below peridotite dry solidus, melt compositions ranged from basaltic andesite to tholeiite. Opx reaction band generated between basalt and peridotite layer hindered chemical reaction. On the other hand, alkali basalt was formed in hydrous run products because H₂O promoted melting process in both layers. Compared with melts formed by N-MORB-peridotite runs, those layered experiments with CRB are enriched in FeO, TiO₂, K₂O and light REE at given MgO. In other words, melts produced by CRB-peridotite layered experiments are close to alkali basalts in OIB and tholeiite in Hawaii, while those by layered experiments with N-MORB are poor in above elements. Thus we propose that Fe-rich Archean or Proterozoic tholeiite (BVSP 1980) would be a possible candidate for recycled component in OIB source.

キーワード：不均質ブルーム、海洋地殻成分、融解実験

Keywords: hybrid plume, oceanic crust component, melting experiments

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A tectonic model of the Unzen magmatism at the junction of the SW Japan Arc and the Ryukyu Arc

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The Unzen volcano is located in the subduction zone where the Philippine Sea Plate meets the Eurasian Plate. The origin of the volcanism there is an enigma. Seismic observations indicate that the subducting slab does not extend there. The Minami-Shiobara basalts erupted during the pre-stratovolcano stage of Unzen have geochemical features similar to OIBs. Their major element features, however, their low P-T origin such as 1.5 to 0.5 GPa and $T_p = 1300$ °C. Such a mantle upwelling would have been caused by shallow mantle processes such as plate tectonics. Unzen is located at the northeastern margin of the Amakusa-nada graben (ANG) currently subsiding. The magmatism started simultaneously with the sedimentation of the Kuchinotsu Group at 4.6 Ma (Otsuka et al., 1995), implying that the Unzen magmatism is related with the ANG subsidence.

The GPS deformations with respect to fixed NW Kyushu suggest that the southeast of the ANG migrates southwestwards with respect to the northwest of the graben. Focal mechanisms of earthquakes around the ANG have dextral strike-slip components. Anisotropy of V_s in the uppermost mantle beneath Amakusa is oriented to a NE-SW direction (Shimizu et al., 1993), which is similar to the GPS deformation. Directions of GPS displacements rotate counter-clockwise from Minami-Shiobara to Amakusa. The rotation of horizontal displacements would cause weak horizontally tensional stress in the graben. These observations therefore indicate that the ANG is a transtensional basin. The mantle upwelling causing the Unzen magmatism would have been induced by lithospheric thinning related to this basin formation.

GPS observations indicate that the transtensional tectonics at the ANG would be caused by the resultant of the northwestward displacement of the SW Japan Arc and the southward displacement of north Kyushu. The horizontal displacements also indicate that the southward migration is a feature of the Ryukyu Arc. The northwestward migration of the SW Japan Arc is explained by the mechanical coupling between the gently-subducting PSP and the overriding plate, since the direction of the SW Japan Arc migration is similar to the relative motion of the PSP. On the other hand, the southward migration of the Ryukyu Arc could not be explained by the mechanical interaction between the plates, since the direction of the overriding plate migration is discord with that of the subducting plate motion. Based on seismic features, a southward asthenospheric flow was already proposed beneath the Ryukyu Arc (Kubo and Fukuyama, 2003; Nakamura and Yamamoto, 2009). The southward migration of the Ryukyu Arc would be caused by such a horizontal asthenospheric flow.

キーワード：雲仙、火成作用、テクトニクス、島弧会合点、ブルーム

Keywords: Unzen, magmatism, tectonics, arc junction, plume

プレート内部活火山下のマントル速度構造

Seismic imaging of the mantle structure beneath intraplate volcanoes

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During the past two decades, extensive geological and geophysical studies have been conducted on the Permian Emeishan flood basalt province in southwestern China, which is interpreted as a large igneous province (LIP). Most previous studies proposed that the Emeishan LIP was sourced from a mantle plume, based on the following lines of evidence: (1) 1-km of domal uplift prior to large-scale basalt eruptions; (2) the spatial distribution of low-Ti and high-Ti basalts from the inner zone to the outer zone of the LIP; (3) the presence of picrite in basalt layers and elevated MgO contents, which suggest high temperatures; (4) rapid eruptions of basalt over a short period of less than 1 Myr; and (5) fluctuations in paleo-temperatures and the occurrence of a mass extinction event.

However, recent structural, petrological, sedimentological, and geochemical evidence, together with precise zircon U-Pb dating, does not support previous interpretations of a mantle plume beneath the Emeishan LIP. Recent data show that the apparent 1 km of domal uplift is an artifact of modeling multi-stage deformation. Furthermore, there is no distinct spatial pattern in Ti-enrichment, only with respect to lower (low-Ti) and upper (high-Ti) profile features. Additionally, the initial response of the lithosphere to mantle upwelling would have been a rift system. Rather than picrite lava, there are mafic-ultramafic intrusions and cumulative olivine phenocrysts with corrosion structures, which cannot be used as evidence of a high-temperature primitive magma. Precise U-Pb age data show that the basalts erupted over a period of 10-15 Myr, but large-scale eruptions occurred rapidly within a period of ca. 5 Myr. However, the record of paleobiological evolution shows that the mass extinction event did not coincide with the large-scale eruptions during the 5 m.y. interval.

The available evidence does not support the hypothesis of a mantle plume beneath the Permian Emeishan flood basalt province. As the Emeishan LIP formed during the assembly of the Pangea supercontinent, the large-scale upwelling of volcanic magma may be explained by horizontal flow of the asthenosphere and northward motion of the Yangtze plate.

Keywords: mantle Plume, Emeishan LIP, Permian

Insights from geochemistry and age of associated seamounts into the mantle source evolution of Shatsky and Hess Rises

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Shatsky Rise in the Northwest Pacific is the best example so far of an oceanic plateau with two potential hotspot tracks emanating from it: the linear Papanin volcanic ridge and the seamounts comprising Ojin Rise. Arguably, these hotspot tracks also project toward the direction of Hess Rise, located ~1200 km away, leading to speculations that the two plateaus are connected. New ⁴⁰Ar/³⁹Ar ages and trace element and Nd, Pb, and Hf isotopic data were obtained from dredged rocks recovered from the massifs and seamounts around Shatsky Rise in an effort to understand the relationship between these plateaus and associated seamounts. The similar initial source composition and geochemical evolution supports a plausible connection between Shatsky Rise and Hess Rise, with the latter probably representing either a resurgent plume head pulse and/or a triple junction-aided second LIP eruption. Each of these rises could have evolved from plateau-building stage composed of isotopically-depleted tholeiites forming the large massifs to post-plateau building stage consisting of isotopically-enriched trachytes forming the much smaller seamounts, e.g., Shatsky Rise to Cooperation-Earthwatch-Ojin seamount and Hess Rise to DSDP Site 465A seamount. Like Shatsky Rise's Ojin Rise, a short chain of seamounts of alkaline composition (Wentworth Seamount Chain) extending SE from southern Hess Rise, i.e. from DSDP Site 465, seems to show an age progression that is consistent with being a classical hotspot track associated with the Hess plateau. Although the results of this study cannot unequivocally provide a direct link between the plateaus and seamount volcanism, further investigation of these similar trends of mantle source variation, not only between Shatsky and Hess Rise but also Ontong Java, Manihiki, and Hikurangi plateaus could lead to a better understanding of the origin, evolution, and emplacement mode of most Pacific oceanic plateaus.

Keywords: Shatsky Rise, Hess Rise, seamounts