



Mercury isotopes reflect variable metal sources as a function of paleo-depositional setting in the Ediacaran-Cambrian Ocean, South China

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ABSTRACT

A broad spectrum of marine sediments, including metalliferous black shales, stratiform barite, phosphorite and sapropelite (combustible shale) was widely deposited during the Ediacaran-Cambrian transition on the Yangtze Platform. The source of metals in the metalliferous black shales and the trigger for ocean dynamics during this critical period remain controversial. We analyzed Hg isotopes in late Ediacaran to Early Cambrian carbonaceous sedimentary rocks from the basinal Sansui section, South China, and observed Hg concentrations of 10^2 – 10^3 ppb, which is high but within the global range of black shales. The late Ediacaran carbonaceous chert shows near-zero $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values (–0.05–0.09‰), which can be interpreted as input of terrestrial Hg or volcanic Hg. However, the transgressive near-coastal setting supports the terrestrial origin. The Early Cambrian V rich black shales display positive $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values (0.03–0.18‰), which are similar to those observed in polymetallic Ni-Mo-rich sulfidic black shales (0.10–0.22‰) and phosphorites (0.13–0.24‰) in the stratigraphically equivalent Maoshi and Zhijin sections, respectively. These positive $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values suggest that Hg was of dominantly seawater origin in a restricted basin setting. The variable $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values of the rock spectrum reflect the dynamic interplay of marine and terrestrial metal sources as a function of paleo-depositional setting within the transgressive-regressive system on the continental margin of the Ediacaran-Cambrian Yangtze platform.

1. Introduction

The Ediacaran-Cambrian (E-C) transition is a critical period for the rise of atmospheric/oceanic oxygen levels and the development of most phyla of modern animals and modern-like marine ecosystems (Li et al., 2017; Darroch et al., 2018; Wood et al., 2019). The plate rearrangement from the Rodinia to the Gondwana supercontinent was accompanied by large-scale continental flooding and rapid continental motion with peak true polar wander at ca. 525 Ma which induced transgressive events with an unusual micro-environmental spectrum (Kirschvink et al., 1997; Mitchell et al., 2015). The rifted continental margin of the Yangtze platform in South China displays a sequence of Early Cambrian black shale which hosts stratiform barite and manganese deposits, phosphorite, combustible sapropelite (“stone coal”), vanadium-rich shale, and

locally hyperenriched metalliferous black shale units (Mo-Ni-rich sulfide units) (Coveney et al., 1994; Steiner et al., 2001). The sources of metals in these deposits and metalliferous shale have been explained by two opposite models: (1) submarine hydrothermal venting (Lott et al., 1999; Steiner et al., 2001; Jiang et al., 2006; Han et al., 2015, 2017; Zhou et al., 2018; Zhu et al., 2021a) and (2) scavenging from seawater in redox-stratified basins (Mao et al., 2002; Lehmann et al., 2007; Xu et al., 2011, 2013; Xu and Mao, 2021; Yin et al., 2017). These models have different implications on ocean dynamics and metal cycling, and can be re-evaluated by using mercury (Hg) isotope systematics.

Mercury (Hg) is enriched in the Early Cambrian sulfide- and Mo-Ni-rich black shale units together with a broad spectrum of redox-sensitive chalcophile metals (Lehmann et al., 2007; Yin et al., 2017; Zhu et al., 2021b). Euxinic depositional environments, such as marine black shale,

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can have elevated Hg contents with a global mean of 320 ppb Hg (Ketris and Yudovich, 2009), compared to average shale with 64 ppb Hg (Grasby et al., 2019) and the average continental crust with about 30 ppb Hg (Rudnick and Gao, 2003). As a volatile metal, Hg is emitted primarily from volcanic activities (Grasby et al., 2019) and can undergo global transport in the atmosphere prior to deposition into terrestrial and oceanic ecosystems (Selin, 2009). In the ocean, Hg can be scavenged from seawater via the organic matter shuttle and buried into sediments (Yin et al., 2017). Mercury stable isotopes (196, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202 and 204, amu), which undergo mass-dependent fractionation (MDF, usually defined as $\delta^{202}\text{Hg}$) and unique mass-independent fractionation (MIF, usually defined as $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$), can provide critical information on the Hg cycle (Blum et al., 2014). In particular, Hg-MIF, which occurs mainly via photochemical processes with little contribution from other reactions, can provide clear source constraints (Blum et al., 2014; Kwon et al., 2020). Volcanic Hg derived from the primitive mantle has limited Hg-MIF signals ($\Delta^{199}\text{Hg} \sim 0$; Zambardi et al., 2009; Moynier et al., 2021; Yin et al., 2022). However, Hg(II) photoreduction processes on Earth's surface result in negative $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ in terrestrial materials (e.g., soil and vegetation) and positive $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ in marine materials (e.g., seawater and marine sediments) (Blum et al., 2014). Given these diagnostic features, Hg-MIF may help to constrain the source of Hg in the enriched Early Cambrian rock units, such as terrestrial, seawater and volcanic sources.

A recent study on two Early Cambrian shale sections of the Niutitang Formation of South China (Maoshi and Zhijin sections) has shown overall positive $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values in both phosphorite and Ni-Mo-rich polymetallic sulfidic shale, suggesting that Hg was sourced from seawater (Yin et al., 2017). We here add additional data from the Sansui section at the Bagong vanadium deposit, which covers the latest Ediacaran Liuchapo Formation and overlying Early Cambrian lower Jiumenchong Formation, and provides a broader view at the E-C transition on the Yangtze Platform. Our data suggest significant changes in metal sources as a function of near-coastal versus restricted basin setting.

2. Geological background

During the E-C transition, South China, consisting of the Yangtze platform and Cathaysia Block (Fig. 1), was under a low paleo-latitude and in a passive margin setting (Zhu et al. 2003; Merdith et al., 2021). Sedimentation in the Yangtze Platform has been paleogeographically recognized as shallow shelf facies (carbonate platform) in the northwest to transitional and deep basinal facies of black shale and chert in the

southeast (Zhu et al., 2003; Wallis, 2007). Segmented carbonate uplifts separated the transitional zone from the deep basin, forming a locally restricted offshore basin environment at the transition zone (Zhu et al., 2003). Polymetallic sulfide-rich shale (e.g., Ni-Mo-V-Ba-PGE) and phosphorite units occur discontinuously over a strike length of >1500 km in the basal Early Cambrian Niutitang Formation (and equivalent formations). The polymetallic Ni-Mo-sulfide-rich shale is in the restricted offshore basin facies, whereas the phosphorite deposits occur both in the restricted offshore basin facies and the relatively shallower carbonate platform margin facies (Fig. 1).

The studied Sansui section in eastern Guizhou (N: 26°95', E: 108°67'), and the two previously studied Maoshi (N: 27°49', E: 106°46') and Zhijin (N: 26°35', E: 105°52') sections in northern and western Guizhou, respectively, are located in the restricted offshore basin facies. As shown in Fig. 2, the Maoshi and Zhijin sections comprise the late Ediacaran Dengying Formation (dolomite), and the overlying Early Cambrian Niutitang Formation (black shale), separated by a disconformable erosional contact with karst features. A 10 cm-thick polymetallic sulfide-rich black shale unit and a stratigraphically equivalent up to 20 m-thick lower unit of phosphorite are hosted in the basal Niutitang Formation at Maoshi and Zhijin, respectively (Yin et al., 2017). The Sansui section (Fig. 2) comprises the late Ediacaran Liuchapo Formation (carbonaceous chert, equivalent to the Dengying Formation) and the Early Cambrian Jiumenchong Formation (black shale, equivalent to the Niutitang Formation). Different from the Maoshi and Zhijin sections, no unconformity or stratigraphic hiatus was observed between the two formations at Sansui (Chen et al., 2015). The upper part of the Liuchapo Formation hosts two tuff units (bentonite) which gave CA-ID-TIMS U-Pb concordia ages on zircon of 536.6 ± 0.7 Ma (1.2 m below the contact of the Liuchapo and Niutitang Formations) and 541.5 ± 0.4 Ma (2.4 m below the contact of the Liuchapo and Niutitang Formations) (Wang et al., 2020). A 50-cm-thick polymetallic V-rich unit, consisting of black shale and carbonaceous chert with dolostone lenses and phosphorite nodules, is observed in the basal Jiumenchong Formation, which is stratigraphically comparable with the Ni-Mo layer in the Maoshi section and the phosphorite deposit in the Zhijin section in the Niutitang Formation. A recent study yielded a LA-ICPMS U-Pb concordia age on zircon of 520.9 ± 1.0 Ma for a tuff layer in the polymetallic V-rich unit at Sansui (Wu et al., 2021), which is similar to the zircon U-Pb age for the phosphorite deposit at Zhijin (522.7 ± 4.9 Ma; Wang et al., 2012) and the Re-Os age for the polymetallic Ni-Mo-rich layer at various mine sites in Guizhou and Yunan (521.0 ± 5.0 Ma; Xu et al., 2011) (Fig. 2). Unlike

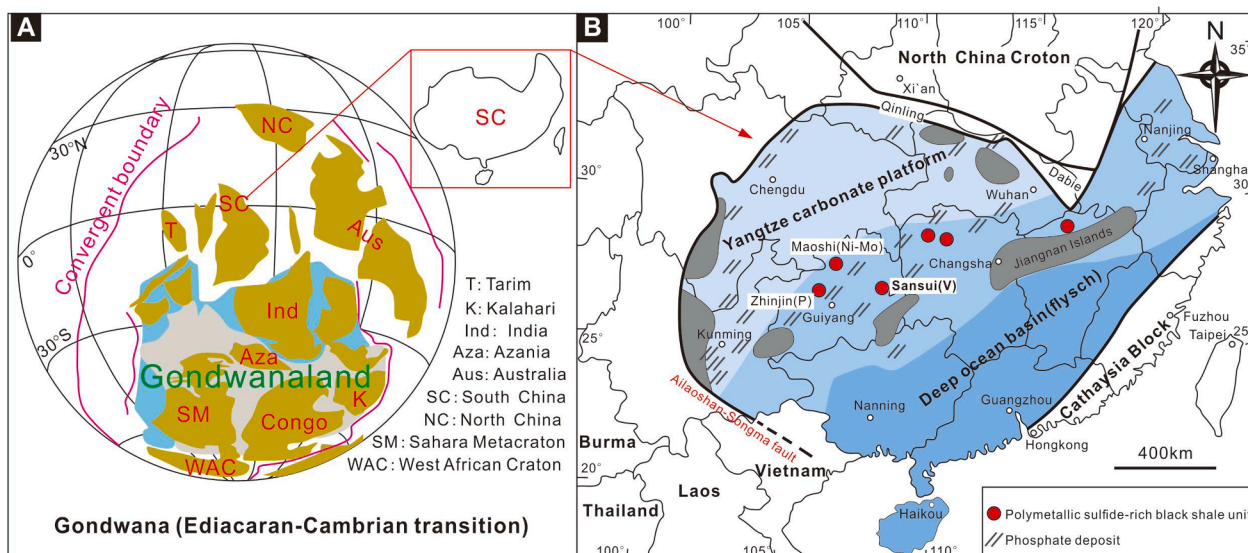


Fig. 1. (A) Paleo-plate tectonic model during the E-C transition (modified from Merdith et al. 2021). (B) Simplified map showing the paleogeography of the Yangtze Platform during the E-C transition (modified from Lehmann et al., 2016).

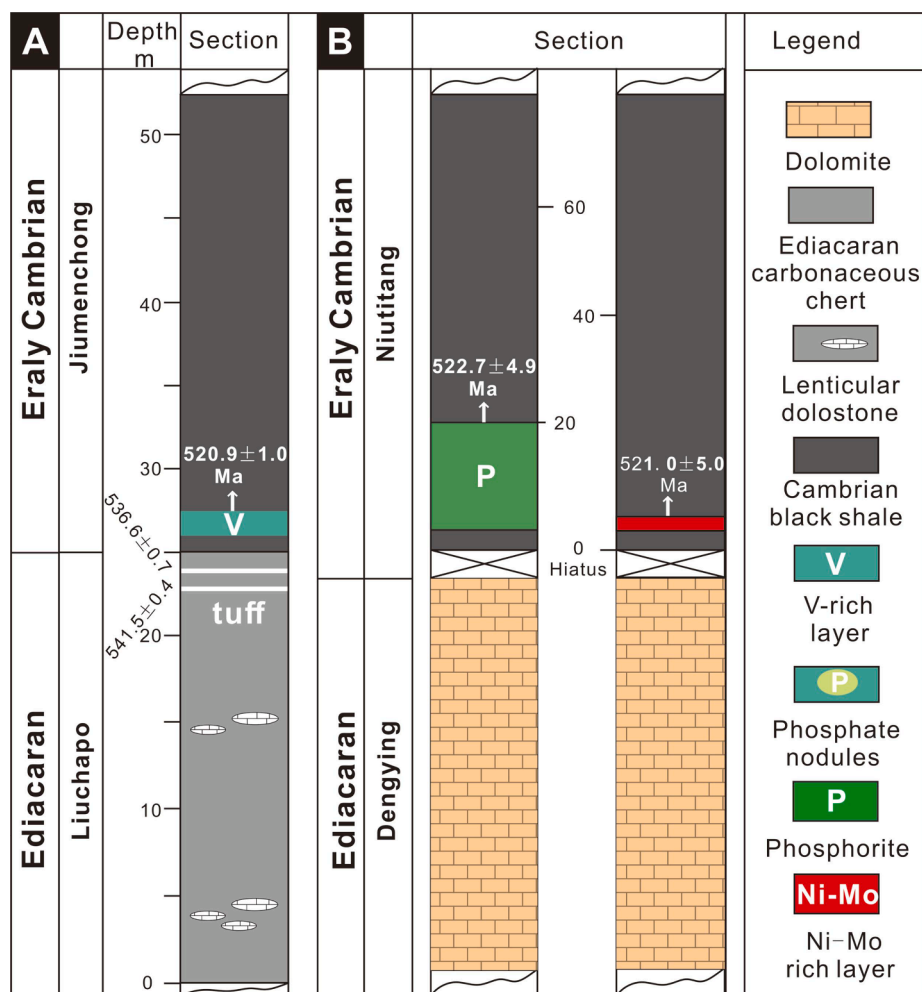


Fig. 2. Stratigraphic columns showing the E-C sedimentary sequences of (A) the Sansui section and (B) the Zhijin and Maoshi sections (modified from Yin et al., 2017).

the Maoshi and Zhijin sections, a paleo-uplift area is closely located near the Sansui section, which is part of the Jiangnan paleo-islands (Fig. 1B).

3. Methods

3.1. Sample collection and preparation

Bulk rock samples ($n = 19$) were collected from the Sansui section over a stratigraphic interval of 26 m, including 11 samples (carbonaceous chert and dolostone) from the Liuchapo Formation and 8 samples (black shale) from the Jiumenchong Formation (Fig. 2A and Table S1). The samples from the Jiumenchong Formation include an 0.5-m-thick interval of V-rich black shale which is mined for vanadium. After carefully removing all weathered surfaces, the samples were cleaned, dried, powdered to 200 mesh size and homogenized, prior to chemical analysis.

3.2. Hg concentration and isotopic composition analysis

Total Hg concentrations were measured by a Milestone DMA-80 atomic absorption spectrophotometer, which yielded Hg recoveries of 90–100% for the soil reference material SRM GSS-5. The relative standard deviations of Hg concentrations for replicate samples were all < 10%. A double-stage tube furnace was used to preconcentrate Hg from the samples into 5 mL of 40% acid mixture ($\text{HNO}_3/\text{HCl} = 3/1$, v/v) (Zerkle et al., 2020). The preconcentrated Hg was then analyzed by

Neptune Plus multi-collector inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry at the Institute of Geochemistry, Chinese Academy of Sciences (IGCAS), following the method described in Yin et al. (2016). Hg-MDF is expressed in $\delta^{202}\text{Hg}$ notation in units of permil (‰) referenced to the NIST-3133 Hg standard (analyzed before and after each sample analysis):

$$\delta^{202}\text{Hg}(\text{‰}) = \left[\left(\frac{{}^{202}\text{Hg}/{}^{198}\text{Hg}_{\text{sample}}}{{}^{202}\text{Hg}/{}^{198}\text{Hg}_{\text{standard}}} \right) - 1 \right] \times 1000$$

Hg-MIF is reported in Δ notation, which describes the difference between the measured $\delta^{\text{xxx}}\text{Hg}$ and the theoretically predicted $\delta^{\text{xxx}}\text{Hg}$ value, in units of ‰, with xxx = 199, 200 or 201:

$$\Delta^{\text{xxx}}\text{Hg} \approx \delta^{\text{xxx}}\text{Hg} - \delta^{202}\text{Hg} \times \beta$$

β is equal to 0.2520 for ${}^{199}\text{Hg}$, 0.5024 for ${}^{200}\text{Hg}$, and 0.7520 for ${}^{201}\text{Hg}$ (Blum and Bergquist, 2007). The Hg concentration and acid matrices of NIST-3133 standard solutions were matched with the sample solutions. Long-term analytical uncertainties were assessed by replicate analyses of NIST-3177 secondary standard solutions, which yielded $\delta^{202}\text{Hg}$ of $-0.53 \pm 0.11\text{‰}$, $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ of $-0.02 \pm 0.06\text{‰}$, $\Delta^{200}\text{Hg}$ of $0.01 \pm 0.05\text{‰}$ and $\Delta^{201}\text{Hg}$ of $-0.01 \pm 0.07\text{‰}$ (2σ , $n = 4$). Soil standard reference material GSS-4 was prepared the same way as the samples and yielded $\delta^{202}\text{Hg}$ of $-1.71 \pm 0.12\text{‰}$, $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ of $-0.38 \pm 0.07\text{‰}$, $\Delta^{200}\text{Hg}$ of $0.01 \pm 0.06\text{‰}$ and $\Delta^{201}\text{Hg}$ of $-0.39 \pm 0.07\text{‰}$ (2σ , $n = 3$). The larger values of standard deviation (2σ) for either NIST-3177 or GSS-5 are used to reflect analytical uncertainties.

3.3. Total organic carbon and trace element analysis

Major elements and total organic carbon (TOC) were measured at the ALS Chemex (Guangzhou) Co. Ltd. by a Philips PW2424 X-ray fluorescence spectrometer (XRF) and Leco CS230 carbon/sulfur analyzer. Trace elements were measured at IGCAS by inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometer (ICP-MS) with a PerkinElmer ELAN DRC-e quadrupole (Q-ICP-MS), following a method reported previously (Han et al., 2018). The analytical accuracy was better than 5% for the measured elements. Al-normalized enrichment factors (EF) of Mo and U are proxies of oceanic redox conditions, which were calculated by the equation $X_{EF} = [(X/Al)_{sample}/(X/Al)_{AUC}]$ (Tribouillard et al., 2006, 2012; Algeo and Tribouillard, 2009), where X represents Mo or U, and AUC represents average upper continental crust. The AUC data were taken from McLennan (2001).

4. Results

The analytical data are compiled in Table 1, and some parameters are graphically shown in Fig. 3. Samples of the late Ediacaran Liuchapo Formation have 1.5 ± 1.2 wt% Al_2O_3 (1 SD; n = 11) and 2.2 ± 1.0 wt% C_{org} (1 SD; n = 8), with the three samples from dolostone lenses excluded. This is different from the black shale and siliceous black shale samples of the Early Cambrian Jiunchong Formation with 11.8 ± 7.1 wt% Al_2O_3 (1 SD; n = 8) and 5.5 ± 4.7 wt% C_{org} (1 SD; n = 8), respectively. A sample in the Liuchapo Formation (SYC-08) shows visible barite and extremely high Ba concentration (82,100 ppm). The Jiunchong Formation samples are enriched in redox-sensitive elements such as V (609–7830 ppm), Cr (124–748 ppm), Mo (12.8–89.3 ppm), U (10.4–125 ppm) and Hg (287–4260 ppb), and positive correlations can be observed between V and Cr, Mo, U and Hg in these samples (Fig. 4).

Yin et al. (2017) also reported very high Hg concentrations in the Early Cambrian polymetallic Ni-Mo layer (Hg: 15800 ± 6960 ppb, SD; and elevated TOC: 21.9 ± 1.98 wt%, 1 SD) and in phosphorites (Hg: 1030 ± 892 ppb, SD; TOC: 1.30 ± 0.85 wt%, 1 SD) from the Maoshi and Zhijin sections, respectively. The Liuchapo Formation displays average $\delta^{202}Hg$ of -0.07 ± 0.56 ‰ (1 SD) and average $\Delta^{199}Hg$ of 0.01 ± 0.04 ‰ (1 SD), while the Jiunchong Formation displays average $\delta^{202}Hg$ of 0.14 ± 0.14 ‰ (1 SD) and average $\Delta^{199}Hg$ of 0.04 ± 0.08 ‰ (1 SD). Two samples from the polymetallic V unit show distinctly positive $\Delta^{199}Hg$ values (SYC-18: 0.12‰; SYC-19: 0.18‰), which are similar to those observed in polymetallic Ni-Mo-rich sulfidic black shales (0.10–0.22‰) and phosphorites (0.13–0.24‰) from the Maoshi and Zhijin sections,

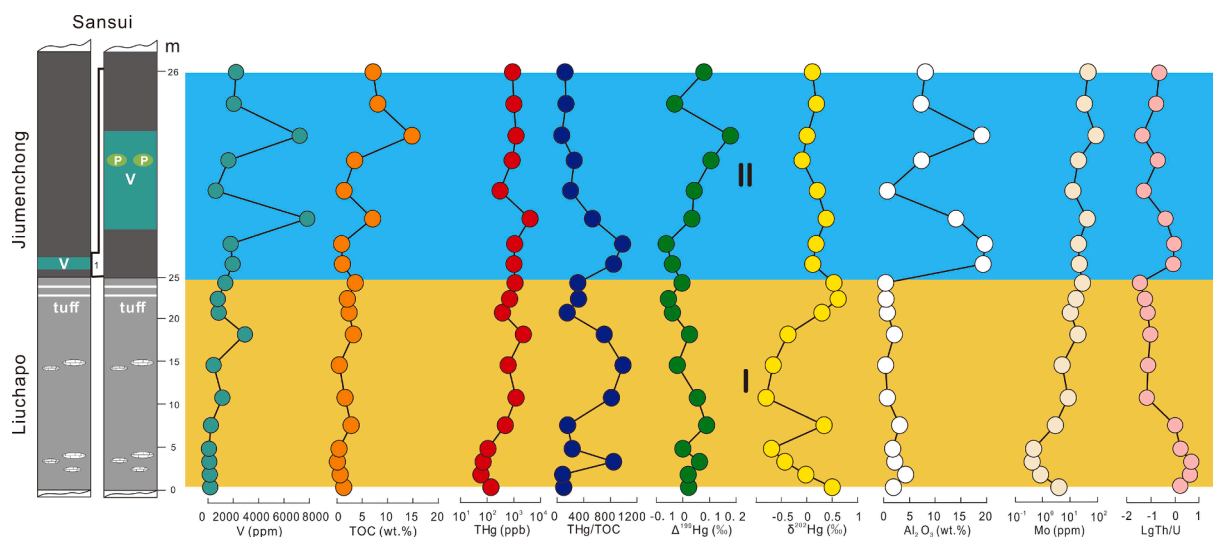


Fig. 3. Stratigraphic distribution of TOC, THg, THg/TOC ratio, $\Delta^{199}Hg$, $\delta^{202}Hg$, Al_2O_3 , Mo and CIA for the Sansui section samples.

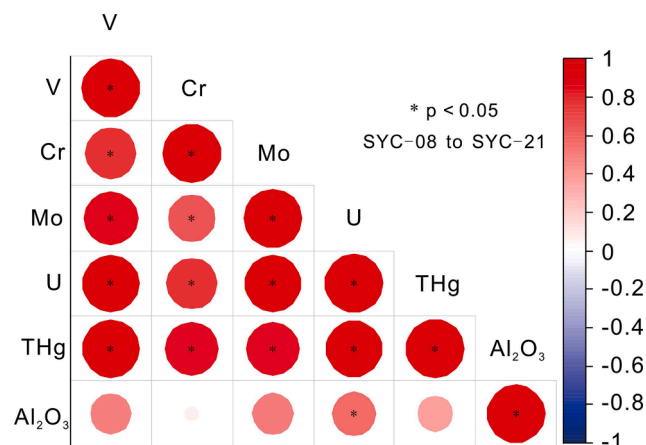


Fig. 4. Correlation diagram between V and Cr, Mo, U, Hg, Al_2O_3 for the upper 15 m of the sample section (SYC-08 to SYC-21). Size of circles and intensity of color shading refer to the strength of correlation.

respectively (Yin et al. 2017).

5. Discussion

5.1. Changes in depositional environment and oceanic redox conditions during the E-C transition

Mo/TOC ratios reflect the degree of restriction in marine environments, with values of >35 ppm/%, $15\text{--}35$ ppm/%, and <15 ppm/%, relating to weak, moderate, and strong restriction, respectively (Algeo and Lyons, 2006). The Sansui samples show Mo/TOC ratios of 6.6 ± 4.8 (Fig. 5A), reflecting basin conditions of strong restriction during the E-C transition. A restricted environment in the offshore basins at the transition zone of the Yangtze platform is documented by the very variable thickness of the Niutitang Formation (Zhu et al., 2003). Segmented carbonate uplifts separated the transitional zone from the deep basin (Fig. 1B), which may have played an important role in forming a restricted offshore basin environment at the transition zone.

The Mo_{EF} versus U_{EF} diagram (Fig. 5B) suggests a redox fluctuation in the depositional environments at the E-C boundary. The Mo_{EF} and U_{EF} values of the lowermost part of the section (0–7.5 m with values of <10) suggest suboxic conditions, also seen in the lowermost 0.2 m of the Jiunchong Formation, whereas the much higher Mo_{EF} and U_{EF} values

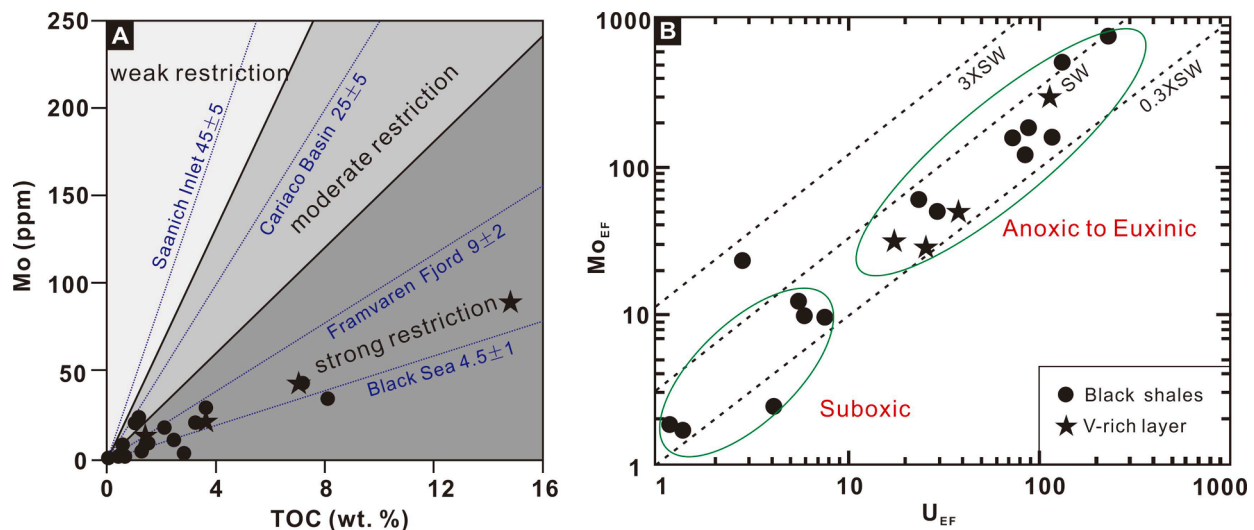


Fig. 5. (A) Mo versus TOC (modified from Algeo and Lyons, 2006) and (B) Mo_{EF} versus U_{EF} for the Sansui section samples.

in the upper part of the Liuchapo Formation and the V-rich unit of the Jiumenchong Formation and above suggest anoxic and possibly up to euxinic conditions (Li et al., 2010, 2017; Fan et al., 2018; Qin et al., 2022), which can be supported by Th/U index as well (Fig. 3).

5.2. Changes in Hg sources to the ocean during the E-C transition

Samples in this study show Hg concentrations (10^2 – 10^3 ppb) similar or higher compared to those observed in average marine black shale (320 ppb Hg, Ketris and Yudovich, 2009), and much higher than the average shale value of Hg of 64 ppb (Grasby et al., 2019). Hg isotopes (especially $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$) can trace the source of Hg, since volcanic Hg has $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ of ~ 0 , while terrestrial reservoirs (e.g., soil) have negative $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values and marine reservoirs (e.g., seawater) have positive $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values (Blum et al., 2014). The variation of $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ observed in our study suggests subtle changes in Hg sources in the ocean, during the E-C transition.

The late Ediacaran carbonaceous chert in the Sansui section shows $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values close to zero (-0.05 – 0.09 ‰), which could be explained by input of volcanic Hg with near-zero $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values (Zambardi et al., 2009). The break-up of Rodinia associated with volcanism, and the Central Iapetus magmatic province (CIMP), may explain the generally high Hg concentrations and the near-zero $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values in the Ediacaran carbonaceous chert, consistent with the interpretation of Hg data on marine sediments and related LIP events at other geologic times (Grasby et al., 2019). Alternatively, the near-zero $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values can also be explained as input of terrestrial Hg with negative $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values. Plants transfer atmospheric Hg(0) into the soil, resulting in negative $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ in terrestrial soil (Yin et al., 2013, 2014). A recent study by Žárský et al. (2022) suggested the expansion of the first terrestrial flora during the Cryogenian interglacial period. Terrestrial materials during the E-C transition may have negative $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values (Deng et al., 2022). During the E-C transition, rapid continental motion driven by the plate rearrangement from Rodinia to the Gondwana supercontinent led to rifting of continents associated with extensive terrestrial erosion. The Ediacaran Dengying Formation (dolomite) in the Maoshi and Zhijin sections (Fig. 6A) suggests that those two sections were located in shallow platform settings during the late Ediacaran. The unconformity between the late Ediacaran Dengying Formation (dolomite) and the overlying Early Cambrian Niutitang Formation (black shale) in the Maoshi and Zhijin sections (Fig. 6B) suggests that the two sections rifted to above seawater levels and underwent terrestrial erosion during the E-C transition. In the Sansui section, the lack of an unconformity between the Ediacaran Liuchapo Formation (carbonaceous chert, equivalent to

the Dengying Formation) and the Cambrian Jiumenchong Formation (black shale, equivalent to Niutitang Formation) suggests that this section was continuously located beneath the seawater level during the E-C transition (Feng et al., 2014; Chen et al., 2015). As a result, the Sansui area would have received a substantial amount of terrestrial material due to nearby terrestrial erosion. This is supported by the paleogeographic location near the Jiangnan paleo-islands (Fig. 1B).

In the Early Cambrian, $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ of the black shales in the Sansui section shifted from -0.03 ‰ to positive values up to 0.18 ‰, especially in the V shale unit (Fig. 6C). The latter value is a distinct marine signal, consistent with the composition of modern seawater, and suggests that Hg was mainly sourced from the global marine seawater reservoir, with little or no contribution from near-shore, i.e. riverine sources. Positive $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values were observed in the Early Cambrian polymetallic Ni-Mo-rich sulfidic black shales (0.10–0.22 ‰) and phosphorites (0.13–0.24 ‰) from the Maoshi and Zhijin sections, respectively, in which Hg was derived from seawater via the organic matter shuttle and sulfide fixation, given that organic matter has a strong affinity to seawater Hg (Yin et al., 2017). The positive correlation between $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ and TOC in the Early Cambrian samples suggests that Hg was deposited mainly via the organic matter shuttle (Fig. 7). As shown in Fig. 6C, we propose that during the Early Cambrian, the rifted continental margin of the Yangtze platform produced segmented carbonate uplifts which separated the transitional zone from the deep basin to form a restricted offshore basin environment in the transitional zone. Such an environment, associated with rising seawater levels, i.e. transgression, and strong terrestrial erosion (as expected from the topographic relief created by rifting of the continental margin) contributed abundant nutrients to the restricted basin. This, in turn, resulted in high oceanic productivity and enhanced organic matter burial on the seafloor. The rain of organic matter produced anoxic/euxinic conditions in the lower part of the seawater column where incomplete organic matter decay and sulfate-reducing bacteria caused black shale and sulfide deposition (Johnson et al., 2017; Frei et al., 2021; Lehmann et al., 2022). The anoxic/euxinic conditions in the deeper water column favored the deposition of seawater Hg and other metals (e.g., Mo-V-U), given their affinity to organic matter and/or reduced sulfur.

6. Conclusion

We observed a large variation of $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values in E-C samples in the Sansui section, which indicates changes in Hg sources as a function of near-coastal versus restricted basin setting in South China. The near-zero $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values in Late Ediacaran carbonaceous chert imply large input of

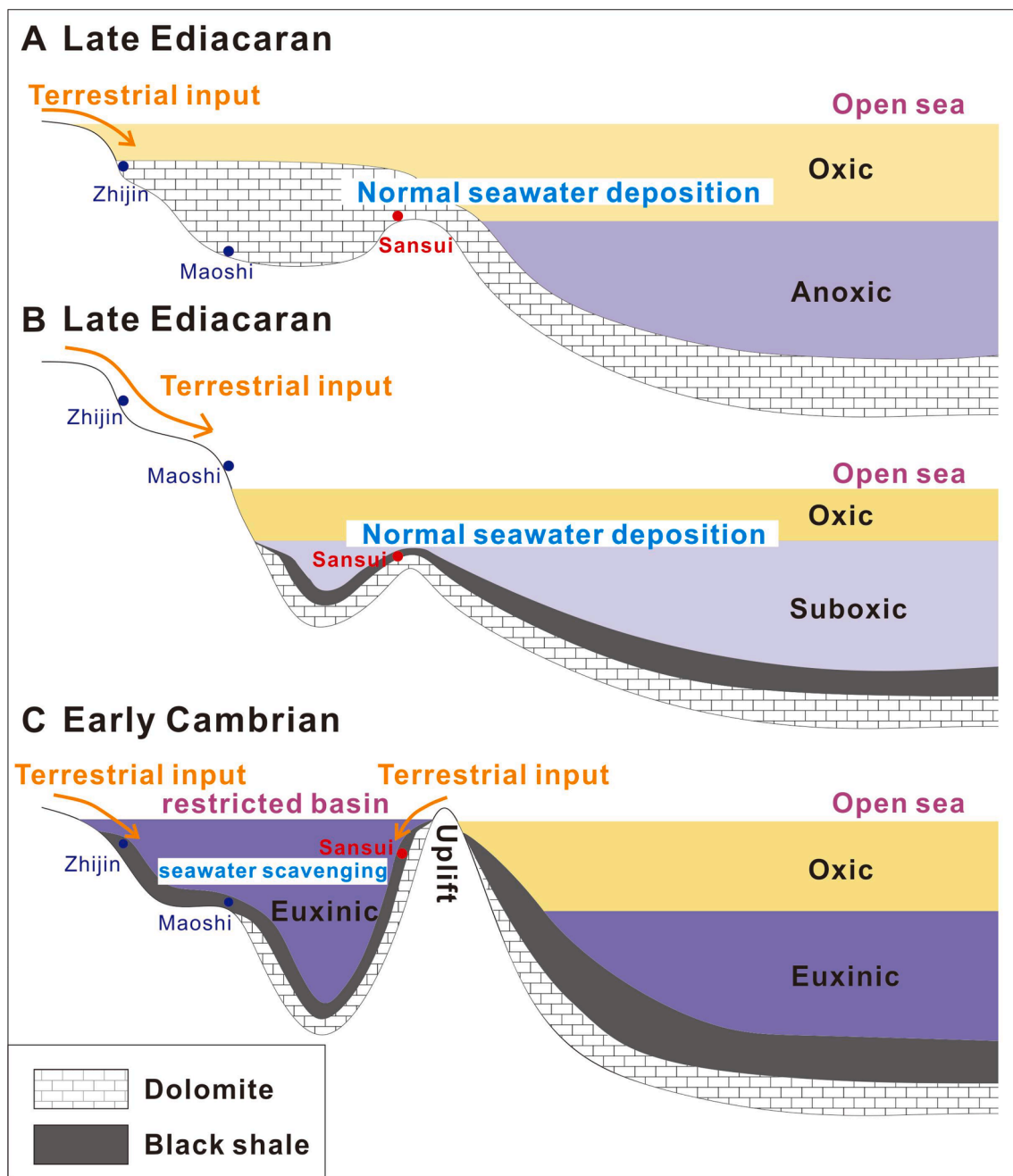


Fig. 6. A conceptual model showing the paleo-depositional setting and Hg sources to the ocean in South China, during (A-B) the Late Ediacaran and (C) the Early Cambrian.

terrestrial Hg (with negative $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values) or volcanic Hg (with near-zero $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values) in a transgressive near-coastal setting. The shift to positive $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ values in the Early Cambrian metalliferous black shales with elevated Hg content suggests Hg was derived from the global seawater reservoir, and efficiently scavenged in a restricted basin setting with very low clastic input. Our study is in line with a model of regional ocean dynamics in the Early Cambrian, with the interplay of terrestrial and global marine reservoirs in the control of oceanic productivity, seawater redox conditions and the deposition of metalliferous shales, as also shown by other stable isotope systems, such as Cr and Cd (Lehmann et al., 2016; Frei et al., 2020, 2021).

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Zhongxi Xue: Investigation, Writing – original draft. **Runsheng Yin:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Supervision, Writing – original draft. **Bernd Lehmann:** Supervision, Writing – original draft. **Ruidong Yang:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Supervision. **Hai Xu:** Data curation, Investigation. **Jun Chen:** Data curation, Investigation. **Hongyan Geng:** Data curation, Investigation. **Junbo Gao:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Supervision, Writing – original draft.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence

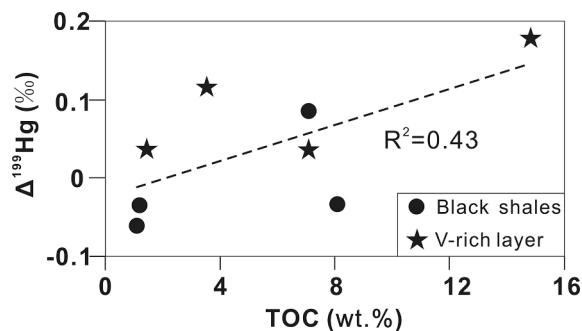


Fig. 7. Correlation diagram of $\Delta^{199}\text{Hg}$ and TOC for the Sansui section samples from the Early Cambrian Jiumenchong Formation.

the work reported in this paper.

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Appendix A. Supplementary material

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.precamres.2022.106749>.

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