

PRESENT AND PAST NONANTHROPOGENIC CO₂ DEGASSING FROM THE SOLID EARTH

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Abstract. Global carbon cycle models suggest that CO₂ degassing from the solid Earth has been a primary control of paleoatmospheric CO₂ contents and through the greenhouse effect, of global paleotemperatures. Because such models utilize simplified and indirect assumptions about CO₂ degassing, improved quantification is warranted. Present-day CO₂ degassing provides a baseline for modeling the global carbon cycle and provides insight into the geologic regimes of paleodegassing. Mid-ocean ridges (MORs) discharge $1\text{--}3 \times 10^{12}$ mol/yr of CO₂ and consume $\sim 3.5 \times 10^{12}$ mol/yr of CO₂ by carbonate formation in MOR hydrothermal systems. Excluding MORs as a net source of CO₂ to the atmosphere, the total CO₂ discharge from subaerial volcanism is estimated at $\sim 2.0\text{--}2.5 \times 10^{12}$ mol/yr. Because this flux is lower than estimates of the global consumption of atmospheric CO₂ by subaerial silicate weathering, other CO₂ sources are required to balance the global carbon cycle. Nonvolcanic CO₂ degassing (i.e., emission not from the craters or flanks of volcanos),

which is prevalent in high heat flow regimes that are primarily located at plate boundaries, could contribute the additional CO₂ that is apparently necessary to balance the global carbon cycle. Oxidation of methane emitted from serpentinization of ultramafics and from thermocatalysis of organic matter provides an additional, albeit unquantified, source of CO₂ to the atmosphere. Magmatic CO₂ degassing was probably a major contributor to global warming during the Cretaceous. Metamorphic CO₂ degassing from regimes of shallow, pluton-related low-pressure regional metamorphism may have significantly contributed to global warming during the Cretaceous and Paleocene/Eocene. CO₂ degassing associated with continental rifting of Pangaea may have contributed to the global warming that was initiated in the Jurassic. During the Cretaceous, global warming initiated by CO₂ degassing of flood basalts, and consequent rapid release of large quantities of CH₄ by decomposition of gas hydrates (clathrates), could have caused widespread extinctions of organisms.

1. INTRODUCTION

Through the greenhouse effect, natural *nonanthropogenic CO₂ degassing* from the Earth is considered to have been a major factor in controlling global paleotemperature [Kump *et al.*, 1999]. (Terms in italic are defined in the glossary, which follows the main text.) Accurate modeling of the paleoatmospheric CO₂ content through time requires quantification of the temporal variation of CO₂ emission rates (fluxes) from a variety of geologic sources and environments.

This review considers CO₂ emission from sources that are not on or near the Earth's surface. Accordingly, CO₂ of biologic and soil origins is excluded. Much of the carbon dioxide considered herein originated from igneous or metamorphic sources.

2. THE GLOBAL CARBON CYCLE

Berner and Lasaga [1989, p. 59] state that "The most vexing problem we have encountered in modeling the global carbon cycle is to calculate the rate of degassing

of carbon dioxide due to igneous and metamorphic activity." The Berner-Lasaga-Garrels (BLAG) [Berner *et al.*, 1983; Lasaga *et al.*, 1985] and derivative [Berner, 1991, 1994] models of the global carbon cycle have been some of the major geochemical models for tracking paleoatmospheric CO₂ content through time and, via the greenhouse effect, retain global paleotemperatures. These models predict that on a long (>1 Myr) timescale the paleoatmospheric CO₂ content is controlled by the competing effects of the consumption (drawdown) of atmospheric CO₂ by continental silicate chemical weathering and associated precipitation of marine carbonates versus the addition of CO₂ to the atmosphere by Earth degassing. The models require quantifying the contemporary nonanthropogenic CO₂ degassing rate as a baseline for forward model convergence to the present. The present-day natural CO₂ degassing rate is obtained by the steady state assumption that the CO₂ degassing flux is equivalent to the atmospheric CO₂ drawdown by silicate weathering. In general, this assumption is justified by the correlation (feedback) between degassing and silicate weathering that is necessitated by the preclusion

of unrealistically warm or cold global paleotemperatures [Sundquist, 1991; Berner and Caldeira, 1997; Broecker and Sanyal, 1998; Kerrick and Caldeira, 1999; Kump et al., 1999]. In the BLAG and derivative models, CO₂ paleodegassing fluxes are derived by assuming that they were controlled primarily by CO₂ discharged into the atmosphere by volcanism and metamorphism at convergent plate boundaries. These models assume that CO₂ paleofluxes correlated with the rates of subduction and thus with the spreading rates at mid-ocean ridges. As epitomized by the above quotation, there is a clear need to supplant such indirect estimates of CO₂ degassing rates with more direct estimates.

Although not universally accepted [Veizer et al., 2000], the link between elevated atmospheric CO₂ content and global warmth remains a reasonable working hypothesis [Kump, 2000; Kürschner, 2001]. Consequently, periods of enhanced CO₂ degassing from the Earth should correlate with periods of global warmth. The validity of this hypothesis is assessed in this review.

3. CONTEMPORARY CO₂ DEGASSING

3.1. Introduction

Through the *Principle of uniformitarianism*, analysis of the sources, transport, and expulsion of CO₂ in a variety of contemporary tectonic and geologic settings provides important insight into the geologic regimes of CO₂ paleodegassing. However, although the processes affecting CO₂ degassing are assumed to be the same as in the past, this does not imply that the present-day CO₂ fluxes from various sources are assumed to be the same.

3.2. CO₂ Emission From Subaerial Volcanos

3.2.1. Active subaerial volcanos. Active volcanos are clearly a primary source for expulsion of magmatic CO₂ to the atmosphere. Subaerial volcanos are particularly efficient because they directly discharge gas into the atmosphere. CO₂ discharged from submarine volcanos dissolves in seawater and enhances atmospheric CO₂ content by seawater-atmosphere exchange.

Gas discharge into the atmosphere from the craters of active volcanos forms a “plume” in which gas transport occurs in the direction of the prevailing wind. Airborne measurements of *volcano plume* CO₂ fluxes are obtained by coupling measurements of the CO₂ concentration within cross sections of plumes (using an infrared detector on an aircraft) with the cross-sectional areas and wind speeds of the plumes [Harris et al., 1981; Gerlach et al., 1997]. Because SO₂ is a definitive magmatic gas component that is readily measured by direct and remote methods [Rose and Bluth, 1998], volcano CO₂ emission rates have been derived by coupling measurements of CO₂/SO₂ ratios of volcanic gases with the SO₂ flux (by correlation spectrometry) [Love et al., 2000; Burton et al., 2000]. However, because of the high am-

TABLE 1. CO₂ Fluxes From Nonerupting (Passive) Subaerial Volcanos

Volcano	Flux, 10 ¹⁰ mol/yr
Mount Etna ^a	58
Popocatepetl ^b	34
Kilauea ^c	7.2–7.3
Oldoinyo Lengai ^d	6.0
Augustine ^a	5.0
Mount St. Helens ^a	4.0
Stromboli ^c	2.5–5
Masaya ^f	2.3–2.6
White Island ^g	2.1
Galeras ^h	1.7
Erebus ^g	1.5
Merapi ⁱ	1.4
Redoubt ^a	1.5
Solfatara ^j	1.5
Grimsvotn ^k	0.3
Mammoth Mountain ^l	0.2
Vulcano ^a	0.2

^aGerlach [1991b].

^bDelgado et al. [1998].

^cGerlach et al. (submitted manuscript, 2001).

^dKoepenick et al. [1996].

^eAllard et al. [1994].

^fBurton et al. [2000].

^gWardell and Kyle [1998].

^hGoff et al. [1994].

ⁱVoight et al. [2000].

^jChiodini et al. [2001].

^kBrantley et al. [1993].

^lGerlach et al. [1999].

bient CO₂ concentration, remote measurements of CO₂ emission rates are challenging [Francis et al., 2000]. In addition to plumes, CO₂ discharged from craters flows down volcano flanks [Ryan, 2001].

Degassing occurs during noneruptive and eruptive stages of volcanism. Most measurements of degassing from active volcanos have been made during noneruptive periods (i.e., “passive” degassing).

As is summarized in Table 1, there are significant differences in the plume CO₂ fluxes from passive degassing of various active volcanos. The fluxes from Mount Etna and Popocatepetl are much larger than those of other volcanos. Because CO₂ solubility in alkaline magmas is considered to be higher than calc-alkaline magmas [Bailey and Hampton, 1990], the unusually high CO₂ flux of Mount Etna had been attributed to the alkaline composition of the Mount Etna volcanics [Gerlach, 1991a]. This conclusion was bolstered by the large CO₂ flux of Oldoinyo Lengai, which is the only active *carbonatite* volcano [Brantley and Koepenick, 1995]. However, because the Popocatepetl volcanics are andesitic and because the CO₂ flux of Mount Erebus is relatively small in spite of the alkaline nature of the extrusives [Wardell and Kyle, 1998], the relative CO₂ fluxes of volcanos cannot be directly correlated with magma composition.

In addition to the CO₂ content of magma chambers, the flux of CO₂ emitted from volcanos should correlate

with the size of the magma chamber and thus with the size of the volcanic edifice. Indeed, the large CO₂ fluxes from Mount Etna and Popocatepetl are commensurate with the fact that they are two of the largest active volcanos in the world.

Different origins of CO₂ must be considered in assessing and comparing CO₂ fluxes of various volcanos. Helium and carbon isotopic data suggest that the CO₂ emitted from Mount Etna is largely of mantle origin [Allard *et al.*, 1997; D'Alessandro *et al.*, 1997]. The large CO₂ discharge from Mount Etna may be attributed to a relatively shallow (up-arched) *asthenosphere* in this region [D'Alessandro *et al.*, 1997; Nicolich *et al.*, 2000]. Gerlach *et al.* [1997] concluded that the CO₂/SO₂ ratios of gases from Popocatepetl are not consistent with assimilation or breakdown of the subjacent carbonate sediments. However, the helium and carbon isotopic compositions of the Popocatepetl fumaroles imply a significant contribution from marine carbonates [Goff *et al.*, 1998]. Furthermore, the Popocatepetl extrusives contain *xenoliths* of carbonate rocks derived from the carbonate basement [Goff *et al.*, 2001]. Thus assimilation and/or metamorphic decarbonation of the intruded carbonate rocks may be responsible for the elevated CO₂ fluxes from Popocatepetl. Indeed, melting and assimilation of limestone may accompany *skarn* formation of metacarbonate rocks due to interaction with magma-derived aqueous fluids [Lentz, 1999].

Both airborne and ground-based methods have been used to measure CO₂ emission rates of the flanks of subaerial volcanos. The first airborne measurements of flank emission were carried out by Allard *et al.* [1991] on Mount Etna. Subsequent studies [Gerlach *et al.*, 1999] suggest that airborne measurements of volcano flank degassing could be complicated by wind dispersal. Ground-based methods include direct measurements of the CO₂ flux at the surface [Chiodini *et al.*, 1996, 1998], soil CO₂ gas concentrations coupled with computations of diffusive exchange between the soil and atmosphere [Giammanco *et al.*, 1995, 1998; Williams-Jones *et al.*, 2000], and measurements of the influx of magmatic CO₂ into groundwater [D'Alessandro *et al.*, 1997]. In assessing the accuracy of fluxes measured at the Earth's surface, it is important to carry out careful calibrations. The study by Evans *et al.* [2001] summarizing comparative fluxmeter measurements under controlled laboratory conditions is a notable example.

Large transient CO₂ fluxes are expected to accompany large explosive eruptions of volcanos. Gerlach *et al.* [1996] estimated that $\sim 9.6 \times 10^{11}$ mol of CO₂ were discharged during the climactic June 15, 1991, eruption of Mount Pinatubo. For comparison, this flux is ~ 1.5 times the annual CO₂ discharge of Mount Etna (Table 1). Clearly, the integrated CO₂ flux of explosive volcanism over a long time period could significantly add to the atmospheric CO₂ content.

We lack data on the CO₂ fluxes from the flanks of most active volcanos. To complicate matters, there are

significant differences in the various estimates of the flank degassing rates at Mount Etna [Allard, 1998]. Compilation of available data suggests that the flank degassing of Mount Etna [Giammanco, 1998] and Stromboli [Allard *et al.*, 1994] may not exceed 10% of the crater CO₂ flux. CO₂ flank degassing at Oldoinyo Lengai is estimated at <2% of the crater degassing [Brantley and Koepnick, 1995]. Varley and Armienta [2001] concluded that virtually no diffuse magmatic CO₂ emission is occurring on the flanks of Popocatepetl. Channelized gas emission through fractures and faults [Williams-Jones *et al.*, 2000] complicates assessment of the flux of CO₂ through the flanks of active volcanos.

3.2.2. Dormant subaerial volcanos. Dormant volcanos are traditionally considered as having no historical eruptive activity. However, as noted by Francis [1993, p. 17], this definition is not entirely satisfactory because some volcanos are located in remote areas. For this review I arbitrarily consider volcanos as dormant if no activity has occurred during the past ~ 500 years.

In spite of the lack of recent eruptive activity, elevated CO₂ emission is common in dormant volcanos. One of the best studied examples is Mammoth Mountain, California. Seismic activity in 1989 triggered strong emission of CO₂ that resulted in the death of trees in large areas around the flanks of the mountain [Farrar *et al.*, 1995]. Geochemical [Sorey *et al.*, 1998] and seismic [Julian *et al.*, 1998] evidence suggests that the CO₂ was emitted from a reservoir of gas that was derived from magma degassing. Continuous monitoring of soil CO₂ contents [McGee and Gerlach, 1998; McGee *et al.*, 2000; Gerlach *et al.*, 2001], measurements of the CO₂ discharge rates at the surface [Sorey *et al.*, 1999; Rogie *et al.*, 2001], and radiocarbon studies of plant leaves and tree rings [Cook *et al.*, 2001] provide insight into the temporal variation of the CO₂ flux from Mammoth Mountain. Gerlach *et al.* [1999] utilized airborne methods to measure a flux of ~ 250 t/d. This estimate is compatible with the flux obtained by ground-based measurements [Sorey *et al.*, 1999; Rogie *et al.*, 2001; Anderson and Ferrar, 2001]. Detailed measurements of CO₂ discharge with a continuous fluxmeter system, coupled with repeated measurements with a portable fluxmeter, suggest that since 1997 the total CO₂ emission from the Horseshoe Lake tree kill area, the largest tree kill area of Mammoth Mountain, has been relatively constant on annual timescales [Rogie *et al.*, 2001]. However, Rogie *et al.* [2001] documented large variations in the day-to-day emission rate. The study by Rogie *et al.* [2001] epitomizes the effort and care needed to accurately quantify the temporal variation of diffuse CO₂ degassing flux.

As exemplified by the catastrophic release of CO₂ from Lake Nyos and Lake Monoun, Cameroon, discharge of CO₂ into lakes occupying volcanic craters provides evidence of diffuse degassing of dormant volcanos. In some cases (e.g., the Laacher See, a *maar* lake in Germany), CO₂ continuously escapes to the surface as a free gas phase [Giggenbach *et al.*, 1991]. However, in

TABLE 2. Contemporary Annual Subaerial Volcano CO₂ Fluxes^a

Reference	Arc Volcano Flux	Non Arc Volcano Flux	Total Flux	Method
<i>Le Guern</i> [1982]	...	...	1.1	flux measurements
<i>Marty et al.</i> [1989]	0.3	...	...	C/S and S flux
<i>Williams et al.</i> [1992]	...	...	0.4–2.5	C/S and S flux
<i>Gerlach</i> [1991b]	...	...	1.8	flux measurements
<i>Allard</i> [1992]	0.7	0.82	1.5	flux measurements
<i>Marty and Le Cloarec</i> [1992]	...	...	1.5–2.5	C/ ²¹⁰ Po and Po flux
<i>Varekamp et al.</i> [1992]	1.5	...	3.3	C/ ³ He and volcanic mass flux
<i>Brantley and Koepenick</i> [1995]	...	...	2–3	flux measurements
<i>Sano and Williams</i> [1996]	3.1	0.03	3.1	C/ ³ He and ³ He flux
<i>Marty and Tolstikhin</i> [1998]	~2.5	0.1–3	...	see text

^aFrom *Marty and Tolstikhin* [1998, Table 2]. All fluxes are in units of teramoles (10¹² mol) per year.

other cases the CO₂ dissolves into deep lake water, leading to dangerously high CO₂ contents [*Aguilera et al.*, 2000]. In the 1980s the sudden overturn of deep CO₂-charged lake waters from Lake Nyos and Lake Monoun, Cameroon, released large quantities of CO₂ that resulted in many deaths [*Giggenbach et al.*, 1991]. The influx of CO₂ has been estimated as $1.1 \pm 0.3 \times 10^8$ mol/yr for the Laacher See [*Aeschbach-Hertig et al.*, 1996] and 2.6×10^8 mol/yr for Lake Nyos [*Evans et al.*, 1993]. Considering that at least 1300 volcanos have erupted during the Holocene [*Simkin and Siebert*, 2000], the worldwide integrated CO₂ flux from the craters of dormant volcanos could be globally significant.

Yellowstone is one of the world's largest centers of late-Cenozoic explosive volcanism. The Yellowstone caldera formed from three eruptions (0.6, 1.2, and 2.1 Ma), and the last eruptive activity occurred ~70 kyr ago [*Smith and Braile*, 1994]. The Yellowstone magmatism is produced by a mantle plume [*Smith and Braile*, 1994]. Helium isotopic signatures of the gases discharged from Yellowstone support a mantle origin. *Werner et al.* [2000a] determined a total CO₂ flux of $2.4\text{--}4 \times 10^9$ mol/yr from measurements of vents and diffuse emission in a small (~4 km²) area within the Yellowstone caldera. Eddy correlation measurements [*Werner et al.*, 2000b] provide supplementary CO₂ flux data for Yellowstone. In light of the anomalously large heat flow throughout the caldera, the total CO₂ discharge from the Yellowstone caldera could approach that of Mount Etna (C. Werner, personal communication, 2001).

On a larger scale, diffuse CO₂ emission from a belt of dormant volcanos has been quantified for the central Oregon Cascades [*James et al.*, 1999]. Isotopic analyses of springwaters in this region suggest that CO₂ was incorporated in the groundwater by diffuse magmatic degassing. Discharge of CO₂ to the atmosphere occurs upon degassing of the groundwater at springs [see also *Chiodini et al.*, 1999, 2000]. Coupling carbon isotopic compositions of springwater with spring discharge, *James et al.* [1999] derived a diffuse magmatic CO₂ flux (into the groundwater) of $\sim 3 \times 10^8$ mol/yr over the

75-km-long belt. Extrapolating over the entire length of volcanic arcs worldwide, they derived an approximate CO₂ flux of $\sim 3 \times 10^{11}$ mol/yr. Accordingly, the total CO₂ flux from diffuse degassing of dormant volcanos may be globally significant.

3.2.3. Global subaerial volcanic CO₂ flux. Because CO₂ fluxes have been measured for only a fraction (~10%) of the >100 active subaerial volcanos, estimating the total CO₂ discharge from volcanos worldwide requires considerable extrapolation. *Brantley and Koepenick's* [1995] estimate of subaerial passive volcanic CO₂ discharge ($2\text{--}3 \times 10^{12}$ mol/yr) was derived by coupling measured CO₂ flux (primarily on volcano plumes) with the assumption that the CO₂ fluxes from various volcanos follow a lognormal distribution.

Many estimates of global volcanic CO₂ degassing have been derived by scaling with the fluxes of tracers that are particularly indicative of volcanic gases, for example, ³He, ²¹⁰Po, and SO₂ [*Le Cloarec and Marty*, 1991]. *Williams et al.* [1992] computed a global subaerial volcanic CO₂ flux of $0.4\text{--}2.5 \times 10^{12}$ mol/yr by coupling measurements of the volcanic gas CO₂/SO₂ ratios with SO₂ flux. Because they considered the CO₂ flux from Mount Etna to be uniquely anomalous, their total subaerial volcanic CO₂ flux was derived by adding the flux from Mount Etna to fluxes obtained by extrapolation of measured data to the total number of eruptive (17) and noneruptive (101) active volcanos. *Allard's* [1992] estimate of global subaerial volcanic CO₂ degassing ($\sim 1.5 \times 10^{12}$ mol/yr) was derived by combining volcanic SO₂ fluxes and CO₂/SO₂ ratios. Assuming that atmospheric ²¹⁰Po is largely of volcanic origin, *Marty and Le Cloarec* [1992] coupled C/²¹⁰Po measurements of a subset of active volcanos with an estimate of the global volcanic ²¹⁰Po budget of the atmosphere. *Sano and Williams* [1996] computed arc volcanic CO₂ fluxes by combining estimates of total arc ³He fluxes with data on CO₂/³He of arc volcanic fumaroles, and CO₂ fluxes from hot spot (mantle plume) volcanism were derived from an estimate of the total mantle plume ³He flux coupled with data on the CO₂/³He contents of mid-ocean ridge basalt

(MORB). *Marty and Tolstikhin* [1998] (Table 2) extended this computational strategy to include estimates of the mean partial melting rate and rate of lava production for arc and *hot spot magmatism*. On the basis of *Marty and Tolstikhin's* estimate (Table 2) the CO₂ flux from arc magmatism may be considerably larger than that of hot spot magmatism. If so, arc magmatism would be the dominant volcanic source of atmospheric CO₂. This conclusion is consistent with estimates of the global flux of nitrogen from arc and hot spot volcanos [*Sano et al.*, 2001].

Because of the large extrapolation it is difficult to definitively assess the relative accuracy of the various methodologies for determining contemporary annual subaerial volcano CO₂ fluxes. Marked uncertainty in CO₂ fluxes derived from scaling to the ³He flux [*Sano and Williams*, 1996] arises from large differences in estimates of the ³He flux from subaerial volcanos [*Allard*, 1992]. *Marty and Tolstikhin* [1998] attempted to circumvent this dilemma by deriving the ³He flux by coupling an estimate of the CO₂ content and percent of melting in the mantle source with the volumetric rates of intrusive and extrusive arc magmatism. However, their estimate of arc ³He flux is clouded by potentially significant uncertainties in the percent of melting and in the volumetric rates of magmatism. Derivation of CO₂ fluxes from crater degassing is a well-established and well-tested methodology that provides consistent results for volcanic plumes [*Williams et al.*, 1992; *Symonds et al.*, 1994; *Gerlach et al.*, 1994, 1997; *Harris and Rose*, 1996; *Burton et al.*, 2000]. This methodology constrains contemporary subaerial volcanic CO₂ flux to 0.3–2.5 × 10¹² mol/yr (Table 2). By extrapolating crater CO₂ flux measurements to the total number of active volcanos, the estimates of *Gerlach* [1991b] and *Allard* [1992] yield consistent results (Table 2). *Brantley and Koepenick's* [1995] estimate of the maximum flux (Table 2) is compatible with the flux estimates of *Gerlach* [1991b] and *Allard* [1992]. If the recent measurement of the CO₂ flux from Popocatepetl [*Delgado et al.*, 1998] is added to *Gerlach's* [1991a] and *Allard's* [1992] estimates, I conclude that the best approximation of the total contemporary CO₂ flux from subaerial passive volcanic degassing is ~2.0–2.5 × 10¹² mol/yr. This is in agreement with T. M. Gerlach's unpublished value (2.5 × 10¹² mol/yr (T. M. Gerlach, personal communication, 2001)). Clearly, this estimate will be revised as additional CO₂ fluxes are measured. If no additional volcanos are found with anomalously high CO₂ flux (such as Popocatepetl and Mount Etna), this flux estimate will probably not be significantly changed by further measurements of CO₂ fluxes from active subaerial volcanos.

There are several important caveats in using contemporary subaerial volcanic CO₂ flux for quantification of the global carbon cycle. Contemporary volcanism represents a “snapshot” in geologic time and thus is inadequate for modeling with long time steps. Most measurements of volcano plume fluxes have been made over the

past 2 decades; however, the baseline “recent” CO₂ flux for modeling paleoatmospheric CO₂ contents requires measurement over a much longer time span. Modeling the global carbon cycle with a time step of 1 Myr [*Berner*, 1991] requires a baseline recent CO₂ flux that is averaged over much of the Quaternary. Measurements show that the CO₂ flux of individual arc volcanos can vary considerably over time [*Harris and Rose*, 1996; *Delgado et al.*, 1998; *Allard*, 1998]. To quantify the long-term CO₂ fluxes from active volcanos, we need integrated fluxes covering eruptive and noneruptive phases. As evidenced by Mount Pinatubo [*Gerlach et al.*, 1996], multiple infrequent large eruptions of major volcanos can add considerable CO₂ to the atmosphere over a long timescale. Furthermore, most of the present-day global subaerial volcanic CO₂ emission is from two volcanos (Mount Etna and Popocatepetl). Major variations in gas discharge from these volcanos throughout their eruptive history (>0.1 Myr in the case of Mount Etna [*Allard*, 1998]) would have produced correspondingly large variations in the flux of CO₂ to the atmosphere. For Mount Etna, there was an evolution from early *tholeiitic* to late *alkaline* magmatism [*Tanguy et al.*, 1997]. Although the correlation between CO₂ discharge and magma chemistry is not clear (as discussed in section 3.2.1), the evolution of the chemistry of the Mount Etna extrusives through time could nevertheless imply that there were corresponding changes in CO₂ output. The considerable variation in the eruptive versus quiescent history of Popocatepetl [*De la Cruz-Reyna and Siebe*, 1997] suggests that there could have been correspondingly large variations in the CO₂ discharge through time.

Coupling the above caveats with the facts that the plume CO₂ fluxes have been measured for a relatively small proportion of active volcanos and that the flank CO₂ emission fluxes are unknown for many volcanos, cynics could deride attempts to utilize estimates of the present-day volcanic CO₂ flux as a baseline for modeling the global carbon cycle. Considering that 500–600 volcanos have eruptive activity within recorded history [*Simkin*, 1993], we must continue to develop indirect methods for estimating the total CO₂ fluxes of these volcanos.

3.2.4. Submarine volcanism: Mid-ocean ridges.

Because ~75% of contemporary extrusive magmatism occurs at mid-ocean ridges (MORs) [*Crisp*, 1984], these ridges are clearly a significant global source for discharge of magmatic volatiles. Because most submarine volcanism occurs along MOR systems, MORs represent the primary discharge of magmatically derived CO₂ into the oceans.

The CO₂ degassing flux from MOR volcanism has been computed by two methods. One method involves measurements of the CO₂ contents of MORB (analytical methods summarized by *Ihinger et al.* [1994]). Coupling estimates of the preeruptive CO₂ content of MOR magmas (by measurement of the CO₂ contents of MORB glasses) with the global rate of MOR volcanism, *Gerlach*

[1991b] estimated MOR CO₂ emission as $0.5\text{--}0.9 \times 10^{12}$ mol/yr. More recent measurements of the CO₂ contents of MORB glasses [Kingsley and Schilling, 1995] support Gerlach's [1989] estimate (0.12 wt %) of the primary (predegassing) CO₂ content of MORB. Nevertheless, there is uncertainty in the primary CO₂ contents of MORB magmas [Jambon, 1994; Dixon et al., 1997; Marty and Tolstikhin, 1998]. An alternative method for computing MOR CO₂ emission involves ³He, which provides a unique volatile tracer for mantle-derived magmas [Lupton, 1983; Des Marais, 1985; Torgersen, 1989; Jambon, 1994]. Helium 3 is primarily discharged into the oceans from MOR igneous activity [Allard, 1992]. Coupling estimates of the global ³He emission from MORs [Torgersen, 1989] with data on the C/³He content of MORB glasses, the MOR CO₂ flux has been estimated as $\sim 2 \pm 1 \times 10^{12}$ mol/yr [Sano and Williams, 1996; Marty and Tolstikhin, 1998]. Uncertainties in the quantification of MOR CO₂ degassing are addressed by Jambon [1994].

In quantifying the role of MOR systems in the global carbon cycle, it is vital to consider that these systems are not only a CO₂ source (by magma degassing) but also a sink for CO₂. Hydrothermal activity at mid-ocean ridges causes CO₂ to be sequestered in carbonates [Staudigel et al., 1989; Caldeira, 1995; Alt and Teagle, 1999; Kerrick and Connolly, 2001b]. On the basis of the quantity of carbonate the CO₂ sequestration of the oceanic crust is estimated at $\sim 3.5 \times 10^{12}$ mol/yr [Alt and Teagle, 1999]. Because this consumption exceeds the estimated MOR magmatic CO₂ degassing flux ($\sim 2 \pm 1 \times 10^{12}$ mol/yr), MOR magmatism would not provide an uncompensated source for CO₂. In fact, MOR systems may instead be a net sink for CO₂ [Staudigel et al., 1989; Varekamp et al., 1992; Alt and Teagle, 1999; Sleep and Zahnle, 2001].

3.3. Volcanic CO₂ Fluxes and the Global Carbon Cycle

If MOR systems do not provide a net source for atmospheric CO₂ and if we provisionally adopt a contemporary subaerial volcano CO₂ flux of $\sim 2.0\text{--}2.5 \times 10^{12}$ mol/yr, there is a marked deficiency in the amount of CO₂ degassed from subaerial volcanism compared with the estimated drawdown fluxes of atmospheric CO₂ by silicate chemical weathering and consequent precipitation of marine carbonates [Bernier, 1990; Varekamp and Thomas, 1998]. Even if uncertainties in the input and output fluxes are taken into account [Varekamp and Thomas, 1998], there remains a significant imbalance (several *teramoles* per year) between the amount of atmospheric CO₂ consumed by silicate weathering and the amount expelled from volcanos. Because of this deficiency and the assumption that the Earth degassing flux is approximately equal to the consumption of atmospheric CO₂ by silicate chemical weathering (as discussed in section 2), other major sources of CO₂ have been suggested to balance the global carbon cycle [Kerrick et al., 1995; Varekamp and Thomas, 1998]. Alternative CO₂ sources include metamorphism and degassing

of intrusives that are not associated with volcanic edifices [Varekamp et al., 1992; Kerrick et al., 1995; Varekamp and Thomas, 1998]. Accordingly, such "non-volcanic" sources are addressed in section 3.4.

3.4. Subaerial Nonvolcanic CO₂ Degassing

3.4.1. Introduction. Following Kerrick et al. [1995], I use the term nonvolcanic to specify gas that is not discharged from the craters and flanks of volcanos. As evidenced by fumaroles and well discharge in geothermal systems, regions with high heat flow are primary targets for evaluating emission of nonvolcanic CO₂ to the atmosphere. Some geothermal systems (e.g., Iceland and the Miravalles in Costa Rica) are hosted within volcanic edifices; however, many of the world's major geothermal systems are nonvolcanic. Although recent volcanism is typically associated with non-volcanic geothermal systems, we make the important distinction that CO₂ does not originate in subvolcanic magma chambers and thus is not discharged through volcanic edifices.

Subaerial regions of anomalously high nonvolcanic CO₂ emission were documented in seminal papers by I. Barnes and colleagues [Irwin and Barnes, 1975, 1980; Barnes et al., 1978]. They showed that this type of emission is prevalent in the circum-Pacific orogenic belt and in the Mediterranean portion of the Tethyan belt. Spatial association with major zones of seismicity implied that escape of the CO₂ from depth is aided by enhanced permeability in seismic zones [Irwin and Barnes, 1980]. Most of the areas of elevated nonvolcanic CO₂ emission are characterized by high heat flow that is attributed to subsurface magmas and include many of the world's major geothermal systems (e.g., Geysers, Salton Sea, and Taupo Volcanic Zone).

3.4.2. Regional examples. This section is a summary of well-studied regions of nonvolcanic CO₂ emission.

3.4.2.1. Taupo Volcanic Zone: Coupling data on convective heat flow with the temperatures and CO₂ concentrations of geothermal fluids, Kerrick et al. [1995] and Seward and Kerrick [1996] computed a CO₂ flux of $\sim 10^{10}$ mol/yr for the Taupo Volcanic Zone (TVZ). Isotopic evidence suggests that CO₂ discharged from the TVZ was derived from intrusive magmas [Seward and Kerrick, 1996]. The TVZ geothermal systems occur in a *back-arc basin* associated with a subduction zone. Because the TVZ tectonic setting is similar to that of other geothermal systems in the western Pacific (i.e., Indonesia, Philippines, Japan, and Kamchatka), Seward and Kerrick [1996] used the CO₂ flux from the 150-km-long TVZ as a baseline to derive a provisional total CO₂ flux estimate of $\sim 10^{12}$ mol/yr from back arcs of the entire $\sim 1.8 \times 10^4$ km length of western Pacific subduction zones.

3.4.2.2. Salton Trough: Using a strategy analogous to that used to determine the CO₂ flux from the TVZ, Kerrick et al. [1995] computed a CO₂ flux of $\sim 10^9$

mol/yr from all geothermal systems in the Salton Trough. The Salton Trough represents a relatively unique example of CO₂ production by thermal metamorphism of carbonate-bearing fluvial sediments in an unusual tectonic setting [Kerrick *et al.*, 1995]. As such, it is not useful as a benchmark for extrapolating to other geothermal systems.

3.4.2.3. Europe: Central Italy provides a remarkable example of contemporary nonvolcanic CO₂ degassing. In this area, CO₂ is discharged from dry gas vents, areas of strong diffuse degassing, and from thermal and cold springs. On the basis of measurements of CO₂ fluxes from selected areas of focused degassing (dry gas vents and strong diffuse emission), Rogie *et al.* [2000] suggest that the cumulative discharge from focused CO₂ emission in central Italy could be $\sim 10^{10}$ mol/yr (similar to Seward and Kerrick's [1996] estimate of the CO₂ flux from the entire Taupo Volcanic Zone). Vents and localized areas of strong CO₂ emission may in part result from degassing of groundwater in structural highs of the basement rocks [Chiodini and Frondini, 2001].

Influx of deeply derived CO₂ has produced elevated CO₂ contents of groundwaters in central Italy. Combining regional hydrology with data on the geochemistry and carbon isotopic composition of cold groundwater discharging at springs, Chiodini *et al.* [1999, 2000] computed a deeply derived CO₂ flux of $1\text{--}3 \times 10^{11}$ mol/yr. Carbon and helium isotopic data suggest a significant crustal signature for the CO₂ discharged from central Italy. As evidenced by young alkaline volcanics and carbonatites in central Italy and by the isotopic compositions of volcanic fumarole gases, it is possible that the CO₂ was derived by degassing of subjacent magmas [Chiodini *et al.*, 2000; Italiano *et al.*, 2000]. Thermal springs [Minissale, 1991] and associated travertine deposits [Pentecost, 1995a, 1995b; Ford and Pedley, 1996] are abundant along the western (Tyrrhenian) coastal region of central Italy. Discharge of CO₂ would accompany the precipitation of travertine-forming calcite via the reaction $(\text{Ca}^{2+})_{\text{aq}} + 2(\text{HCO}_3)_{\text{aq}} = \text{CaCO}_3 + \text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{CO}_2$. The quantity of CO₂ released by thermal spring discharge is not known, but in coupling rough estimates of the total thermal spring discharge with the $(\text{HCO}_3^-)_{\text{aq}}$ content of thermal springwaters (A. Minissale, personal communication, 2001), it appears that the total CO₂ emission from Italian thermal springs could be similar to the total CO₂ discharged from cold springs in central Italy.

The basin of the Tyrrhenian Sea was apparently formed by extensional tectonism [Faccena *et al.*, 1997]. On a larger scale, there appears to be an up-arched mantle underlying the Tyrrhenian Sea [Cella *et al.*, 1998] and much of central Europe to the north [Hoernle *et al.*, 1995]. As in the Tyrrhenian belt, CO₂-rich vents are common in France [Barnes *et al.*, 1978, 1984; Matthews *et al.*, 1987; Arthaud *et al.*, 1994] and Germany [Barnes *et al.*, 1978, 1984; May *et al.*, 1992; Griesshaber *et al.*, 1992]. Isotopic evidence [Griesshaber *et al.*, 1992; Marty *et al.*,

1992; Lollar *et al.*, 1997] suggests that CO₂ emitted from vents in Germany originated from the mantle. Quaternary volcanics in the regions of CO₂ emission in central Europe [Griesshaber *et al.*, 1992] support the contention that CO₂ originated from mantle-derived intrusives. Seismic imaging suggests that the Quaternary Eifel volcanic field in Germany is fed by a mantle plume [Ritter *et al.*, 2001]. Ritter *et al.* [2001] noted that relatively little extrusive volcanism accompanies the apparently large mantle plume in the Eifel region of Germany. Accordingly, significant quantities of CO₂ could be discharged at the surface from degassing of large intrusive mantle plumes. On the basis of an estimated influx of deeply derived CO₂ into groundwaters of extensional basins in Hungary and Austria, Lollar *et al.* [1997, p. 2295] concluded that "the addition of mantle-derived carbon to the crust in areas of continental extension is significant and may have been previously underestimated."

3.4.2.4. Northern California Coast Ranges: Discharge of nonvolcanic CO₂ is widespread in the north-central Coast Ranges of California [Barnes *et al.*, 1975; Irwin and Barnes, 1982; Kerrick *et al.*, 1995]. The Geysers geothermal system, the largest commercial field in the world, is located in this region. Isotopic data suggest that the CO₂ is derived from the decomposition of calcite and organic material in the basement (Franciscan Complex) [Bergfeld *et al.*, 2001a]. This region is at the northern edge of a northward propagating *slabless window* [Liu and Furlong, 1992; Benz *et al.*, 1992]. The northward decrease in the age of Cenozoic volcanism in the California Coast Ranges is compatible with the northward migration of the upwelling asthenosphere [Liu and Furlong, 1992; Liu, 1993]. The isotopic data suggesting a mixed mantle-crustal source for the CO₂ are compatible with recent volcanism (0.01 Ma [Donnelly-Nolan *et al.*, 1993]), teleseismic data [Benz *et al.*, 1992], and xenoliths of high-grade metamorphic rocks in the volcanics [Stimac *et al.*, 1992]. Widespread seismic reflections in the lower crust and Moho in this region are interpreted as mafic melts derived from the asthenosphere [Levander *et al.*, 1998]. Accordingly, this region may be undergoing metamorphism and anatexis produced by intrusion of asthenospheric melts into the lower crust.

3.4.3. Continental rifts. Continental rifts represent potentially significant sources of nonvolcanic CO₂ emission. A notable example of possible high CO₂ emission is provided by the East African Rift system. CO₂ emission from fumaroles, dry boreholes, and seeps is widespread in the Kenya Rift Valley [Darling *et al.*, 1995]. Isotopic data and the presence of carbonatite magmatism suggest that the CO₂ emitted from the Kenya Rift Valley is of mantle origin [Darling *et al.*, 1995].

Active continental rifting is occurring in the Basin and Range province [Kearey and Vine, 1990; Snow and Wernicke, 2000]. This region is characterized by thin crust, high heat flow, and the presence of numerous, small, fault-localized geothermal fields. Geophysical evidence suggests that the lower crust contains abundant

mantle-derived mafic intrusives [Larkin *et al.*, 1997]. The limited volcanism attending the rapid extension of the Basin and Range province is attributed to ponding of magmas at middle-to-lower crustal levels [Gans and Bohrsen, 1998]. However, in contrast to the East African Rift system, fluids expelled in the Basin and Range geothermal systems appear to have a crustal origin [Bergfeld *et al.*, 2001b; F. Goff, personal communication, 2001].

3.4.4. CO₂ expulsion from major fault zones.

Major fault zones may provide conduits for significant expulsion of deeply derived CO₂ to the atmosphere. Quartz-carbonate vein systems along major shear zones attest to the transport of large quantities of CO₂ along such zones [Kerrick and Feng, 1992]. Seismically induced CO₂ degassing along faults has been proposed [King, 1986; Sibson, 1992]. In the north-central California Coast Ranges, CO₂ vents are aligned along faults [Goff and Janik, 1993; Sims and Rymer, 1976]. A notable example of fault-controlled CO₂ emission is the alignment of CO₂-rich springs along the 40-km-long Bartlett Springs fault [Goff and Janik, 1993]. Because this fault zone has earthquake *hypocenters* that are up to 12 km deep [Dehlinger and Bolt, 1984], the CO₂ discharged at the surface could be of deep origin. Faults as conduits for CO₂ expulsion have also been demonstrated in areas other than the California Coast Ranges [Barberi and Carapezza, 1994; Zheng *et al.*, 2001]. Major transform faults such as the San Andreas could be particularly effective conduits for expulsion of deep CO₂ [Kharaka *et al.*, 1999]. However, although CO₂ flux anomalies have been measured in traverses across the San Andreas fault, carbon isotopic data for CO₂ emitted along the Parkfield segment of the San Andreas fault [Lewicki and Brantley, 2000] suggest that the CO₂ is largely derived from shallow biogenic processes.

3.4.5. CO₂ derived from abiogenic CH₄. Within a relatively short time period (~10 years [Wahlen, 1993]), methane expelled into the atmosphere is oxidized to CO₂. Thus, on a geologic timescale, CH₄ degassing provides a source for atmospheric CO₂. Two geologic regimes are likely for generating significant fluxes of abiogenic methane.

3.4.5.1. MOR hydrothermal vents: Numerous papers have documented emission of CH₄-rich fluids from MOR hydrothermal vents [e.g., Welhan and Craig, 1979; Bougault *et al.*, 1993]. *Serpentinite* outcrops on the ocean floor are common in the regions of transform-ridge intersections on slow spreading ridges in the Atlantic Ocean [Cannat, 1993]. Geochemical signatures of the vent fluids [Kelley, 1996] and experimental studies on serpentinization of ultramafics [Berndt *et al.*, 1996] strongly suggest that the methane is generated during serpentinization by the Fisher-Tropsch reaction, CO₂ + 4H₂ = CH₄ + 2H₂O [Berndt *et al.*, 1996]. In MOR hydrothermal systems the CO₂ is supplied by the seawater, and H₂ is generated by the oxidation of Fe accompanying transformation of olivine to magnetite [Berndt *et*

al., 1996]. CH₄ emanation from subaerial exposures of serpentinite [Abrajano *et al.*, 1988] confirms this reaction. Not all of the CH₄ emanating from MOR hydrothermal vents necessarily arises from serpentinization since reduction of CO₂ to CH₄ can accompany hydrothermal alteration of MOR basalts [Welhan, 1988]. Coupling CH₄/He ratios of fluids discharged from submarine hydrothermal vents with the ³He flux into the oceans from MOR systems, Welhan and Craig [1979] estimated a CH₄ flux of 1.3 × 10⁹ m³/yr (equal to 6.5 × 10⁹ mol/yr). Although this flux suggests that CH₄ emission from MOR systems would not have been a significant factor in the late Cenozoic global carbon cycle, this does not rule out the potential importance of this process earlier in Earth's history.

3.4.5.2. Thermocatalysis of organic matter:

Thermal decomposition (thermocatalysis, or "cracking") of organic matter is considered to be the major source of CH₄ in hydrothermal systems [Welhan, 1988]. Isotopic data [Poreda *et al.*, 1986, 1988] suggest that helium in natural gas deposits associated with many active continental margins has a significant magmatic signature. This conclusion is compatible with the marked late Cenozoic magmatic activity in these margins. Poreda *et al.* [1988] concluded that CH₄ was generated by thermocatalysis of organic matter by *contact metamorphism* of sediments.

An *accretionary prism* is a potentially significant source for large quantities of thermogenically derived CH₄ [Moore and Vrolijk, 1992]. Indeed, carbon isotopic data of fluids discharged from accretionary prisms suggest a thermogenic origin for CH₄. Submarine and subaerial mud volcanos [Barber *et al.*, 1986] provide focused discharge of CH₄ from accretionary prisms. To the author's knowledge, the total flux of CH₄ from accretionary prisms has not been estimated. If the average concentrations of CH₄ in fluids of accretionary prisms were known, the total CH₄ emission could be calculated from the total volume of fluids expelled from accretionary prisms (~1 km³/yr [Kastner *et al.*, 1991]).

4. PAST CO₂ DEGASSING

4.1. Introduction

Analysis of present-day CO₂ degassing provides insight for a geologically based assessment of paleodegassing. Because most CO₂ released by contemporary degassing appears to have a magmatic origin, the paleomagmatic record should be a primary focus in elucidating CO₂ paleodegassing.

4.2. Magmatic CO₂ Paleodegassing

4.2.1. Weaknesses of the Earth paleodegassing model assumptions. In most geochemical models of the global carbon cycle the CO₂ paleoflux is correlated with the MOR spreading rate. It is assumed that the

quantity of CO₂ released from volcanic arcs was proportional to subduction rates and thus correlated with MOR spreading rates. CO₂ released by arc volcanism is considered to have originated by decarbonation of subducted carbonate-bearing lithologies.

There are several reasons why correlating arc CO₂ degassing with spreading/subduction rate is a questionable model assumption. First, for the circum-Pacific arc volcanism, there is no correlation between the number of active volcanos (i.e., the number of volcanos per unit arc length) and the subduction rate [Cambray and Cadet, 1994], and the relative volumes of Quaternary volcanics in the Central American and Antilles arcs are not correlative with the relative subduction rates [Wadge, 1984]. Second, correlation between spreading/subduction rate and volcanic arc CO₂ degassing implicitly assumes that the CO₂ contents of subducted slabs are identical for all subduction zones. In fact, there are marked differences in the CO₂ contents of marine sediments entering various subduction zones [Rea and Ruff, 1996], and there is considerable variation (and uncertainty) in the amount of CO₂ in metabasaltic rocks of the oceanic crust [Alt and Teagle, 1999]. Because the CO₂ content of oceanic metabasalts increases with age [Alt and Teagle, 1999], subduction zones with older subducted oceanic crust would have a more fertile CO₂ source than subduction zones with younger subducted oceanic crust. In addition, the accumulation rate of pelagic carbonate has increased through the Cenozoic [Caldeira, 1992; Nakamori, 2001]; consequently, the proportion of subducted pelagic carbonate has increased during this time period. Third, as was shown by Kerrick and Connolly [1998, 2001a, 2001b], the extent and depth of subduction zone metamorphic decarbonation are very dependent upon the pressure-temperature conditions (geotherms) along the tops of subducted slabs. The generalized geochemical models for arc degassing implicitly assume that metamorphic decarbonation and the transfer of metamorphic CO₂ to arc magmas are the same for all subduction zones. Fourth, CO₂ emission from hot spot and continental rift magmatism and from metamorphism resulting from continent-continent collision [Kerrick and Caldeira, 1998] is neglected. Fifth, most of the contemporary arc volcanic CO₂ is emitted from only two volcanos (Popocatepetl and Mount Etna). Furthermore, Mount Etna magmatism is not generated by a typical subduction zone process [Gvirtzman and Nur, 1999; Nicolich et al., 2000], and the rock types are not typical of subduction zones [Marty et al., 1994].

4.2.2. Introduction. Extrusive magmas provide a particularly efficient mechanism for transfer of magmatic volatiles to the atmosphere. Thus the role of volcanic CO₂ emission in past periods of global warming has been a major focus. Because the magmatic record is best preserved in younger rocks, most research has focused on correlations between magmatism and paleoclimate in the Mesozoic and (especially) the Cenozoic.

Evaluation of the role of magmatic CO₂ degassing on paleoatmospheric CO₂ levels and thus on greenhouse global warming is a twofold task. First, a temporal coincidence between periods of enhanced magmatism and global warmth must be established. Second, the amount of magmatic CO₂ released during these periods must be quantified. This quantification involves coupling the rate of magma production through time with estimates of the amount of CO₂ contained within the magmas. The latter is obtained through estimates of preeruptive CO₂ solubilities in magmas [Johnson et al., 1994]. Sigurdsson [2000] published a recent summary of the estimated rates of volcanism for the past 150 Myr.

Quantification of the role of magmatic paleodegassing in global paleoclimate requires independent evidence on paleoatmospheric CO₂ levels. Primary methodologies for determining paleoatmospheric CO₂ contents involve isotopic data of paleosols [e.g., Cerling, 1992; Yapp and Poeths, 1996], marine sediments [e.g., Pagani et al., 1999; Pearson and Palmer, 2000], and fossil plant cuticles [Retallack, 2001]. There is general agreement that elevated atmospheric CO₂ contents were likely during the Cretaceous [Spicer and Corfield, 1992; Berner, 1992; Andrews et al., 1995; Kuypers et al., 1999; Poulsen et al., 1999] and the late Paleocene–early Eocene [Sloan and Rea, 1995; Pearson and Palmer, 2000]. However, there is controversy regarding the atmospheric CO₂ levels during other time periods. In particular, in contrast to previous studies [e.g., Douglas and Woodruff, 1981], Pagani et al. [1999] concluded that atmospheric CO₂ levels were not elevated during the Miocene.

4.2.3. MOR magmatism. Compilations of the global magmatic activity in various geologic regimes show that magmatism at mid-ocean ridges is dominant [Crisp, 1984; Kaiho and Saito, 1994]. However, as was discussed in section 3.2.4, it is imperative to consider that MOR systems may be a net sink for CO₂. Accordingly, in spite of the fact that the dominant source for global magma production through time is attributed to MOR magmatism, correlation of MOR magma production with periods of elevated atmospheric CO₂ levels and global warmth must be viewed with considerable caution. Suggestions that enhanced CO₂ degassing from MOR magmatism significantly contributed to the Cretaceous warmth [Kaiho and Saito, 1994; Tajika, 1998] or that diminished MOR CO₂ degassing significantly contributed to global cooling during the Cenozoic [Kaiho and Saito, 1994; Godd ris and Fran ois, 1995] may not be justified. Furthermore, there is controversy as to whether there was enhanced MOR crust production (and, by inference, enhanced MOR CO₂ degassing) during the middle Cretaceous [Heller et al., 1996]. Considering that MOR systems are a sink for CO₂, Sleep and Zahnle [2001] hypothesized that subduction of carbonated oceanic crust maintained low atmospheric CO₂ contents during the early Earth (Archean and Hadean eons). To address the validity of such suggestions, considerably more research will be necessary to quantify the

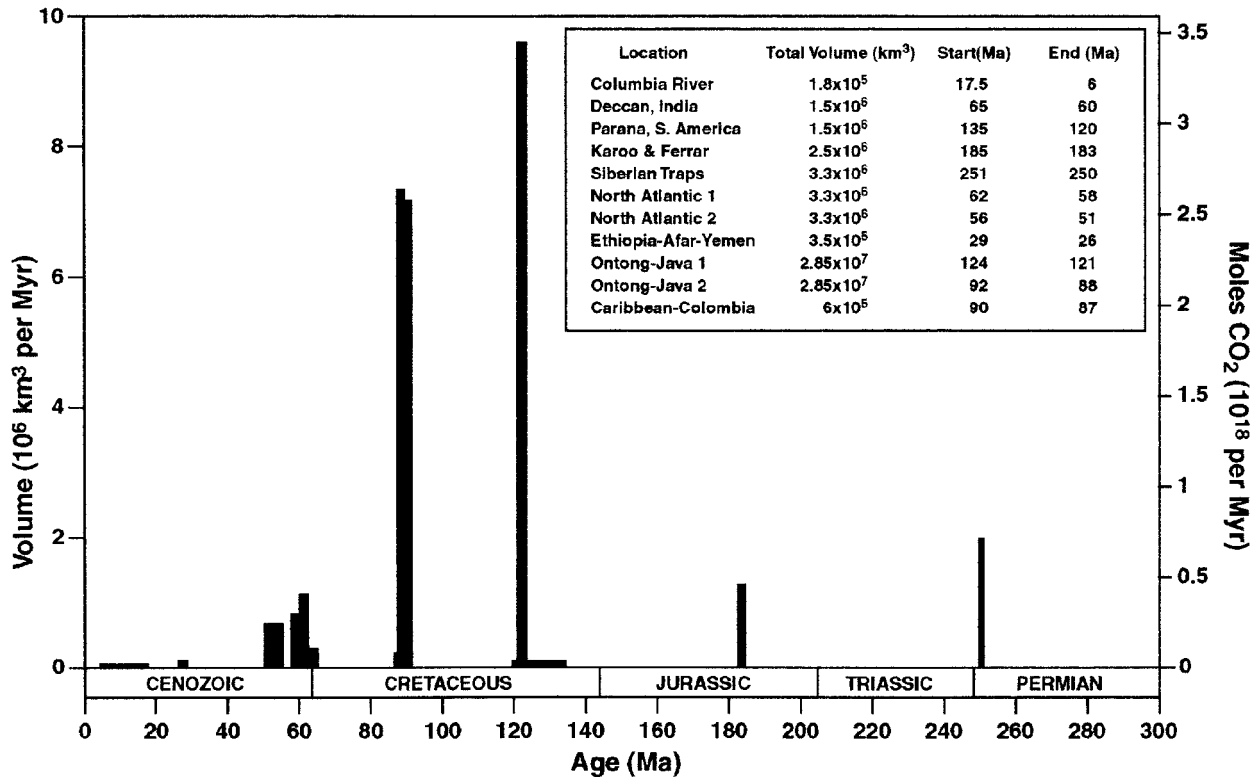


Figure 1. Left ordinate shows estimated total volume of flood basalts (large igneous provinces) since the Permian. Data are compiled using a time step of 1 million years. Data sources for the inset are as follows: Siberian Traps, *Wignall* [2001]; Karoo and Ferrar, *Encarnación et al.* [1996]; all others, *Coffin and Eldholm* [1994], *Mahoney and Coffin* [1997], and *Hooper* [2000]. Right ordinate shows computed CO₂ released from flood basalts (see text for details).

on-axis and off-axis sequestration of CO₂ through time by hydrothermal alteration of the oceanic crust [*Alt and Teagle*, 1999].

4.2.4. Hot spot magmatism: Flood basalts. Large igneous provinces (LIPS) are characterized by aerially extensive flood basalts [*Coffin and Eldholm*, 1994; *Hooper*, 2000]. Flood basalts are the extrusive magmatic products of mantle plumes (hot spot volcanism). Paleomagmatic CO₂ degassing from LIPS has been quantified by coupling estimates of the solubility of CO₂ in magmas with the volumetric rates of extrusion [*Leavitt*, 1982; *Arthur et al.*, 1985; *Eldholm and Thomas*, 1993].

Because there have been numerous relatively short lived periods of voluminous flood basalt extrusion through time [*Coffin and Eldholm*, 1994] and because aerially extensive flood basalt flows would provide particularly efficient transfer of magmatic CO₂ to the atmosphere [*Eldholm and Thomas*, 1993], flood basalts have been a focal point for the correlation between magmatism and paleoatmospheric CO₂ levels. Accordingly, flood basalts have been considered to have affected the atmospheric CO₂ contents at the Permian-Triassic boundary [*Krull and Retallack*, 2000], Triassic-Jurassic boundary [*Hames et al.*, 2000], middle Cretaceous [*Caldeira and Rampino*, 1991; *Tajika*, 1999; *Gibbs et al.*,

1999], Cretaceous-Tertiary (K/T) boundary [*McLean*, 1985; *Caldeira and Rampino*, 1990a, 1990b], late Paleocene-early Eocene [*Rea et al.*, 1990; *Eldholm and Thomas*, 1993; *Bralower et al.*, 1997], and Miocene [*Hodell and Woodruff*, 1994]. Nevertheless, there is controversy regarding the impact of flood basalts on paleoatmospheric CO₂ levels. On the basis of estimates of CO₂ solubilities in basaltic melts and the volumetric rates of extrusion, *Arthur* [2000] concluded that the Deccan flood basalts, which had previously been considered to have a major impact on atmospheric CO₂ at the K/T boundary [*McLean*, 1985], would have produced a very small increase in atmospheric CO₂ concentration. *Caldeira and Rampino* [1990a, 1990b] concluded that CO₂ released to the atmosphere by the Deccan volcanism (Figure 1) resulted in a small (<1°C) degree of global warming.

CO₂ release by LIPS magmatism (Figure 1) was computed from data on the volumes and timing of LIPS magmatism (see inset in Figure 1) coupled with a provisional estimate of 0.5 wt % CO₂ in the preeruptive basaltic magmas [*Johnson et al.*, 1994]. The long-term effect of the computed CO₂ degassing (Figure 1) on global warming must consider the competing drawdown of atmospheric CO₂ by silicate chemical weathering

[Berner and Caldeira, 1997; Kerrick and Caldeira, 1999; Berner, 1999]. Using a geochemical model for the global carbon cycle, Kerrick and Caldeira [1993] concluded that over a 1-million-year period, excess CO₂ degassing of $>0.5 \times 10^{18}$ mol would be required to produce notable global warming (i.e., minimal temperature increases of 1°–2°C). The computed CO₂ released by LIPS magmatism during the Cretaceous (Figure 1) would have significantly contributed to global warming during that period. However, it is questionable whether enough CO₂ was released by LIPS magmatism before and after the Cretaceous (Figure 1) to have caused global warming.

There is a significant correlation between periods of LIPS magmatism and widespread extinctions of organisms [Stothers, 1993; Courtillot et al., 1996; Pálffy and Smith, 2000; Wignall, 2001]. Primary examples include the Permian-Triassic at ~250 Ma (Siberian flood basalts), the Early Jurassic at ~183 Ma (Karoo and Ferrar basalts) [Pálffy and Smith, 2000], and the Cretaceous-Tertiary at ~65 Ma (Deccan flood basalts). However, Rampino and Self [2000] concluded that the relatively small increase (<200 ppm) in paleoatmospheric CO₂ produced by flood basalts is unlikely to have been a significant factor in causing mass extinctions. Furthermore, they concluded that emission of acidic volatiles from flood basalts (H₂SO₄, HCl, and HF) was unlikely to have had a major environmental impact. Nevertheless, controversy continues about the role of enhanced CO₂ emission [Knoll et al., 1996] and acidic volatiles [Ray and Pande, 1999] in extinctions. In a recent review, Wignall [2001] demonstrated the strong correlation between LIPS magmatism, global warming, and marine anoxia. It has been hypothesized that global warming produced by CO₂ emission from flood basalts triggered rapid release to the atmosphere of large quantities of CH₄ derived from destabilization and oxidation of seafloor methane hydrates (clathrates) and subsequent rapid oxidation of CH₄ to CO₂ [Thomas et al., 2000; Wignall, 2001]. The abrupt global warming accompanying the rapid CH₄ emission resulted in marine anoxia [Wignall, 2001]. As a corollary, the apparent numerous and relatively abrupt transient increases in paleoatmospheric CO₂ contents over the past 300 Myr are compatible with massive CH₄ release by dissociation of gas hydrates [Retallack, 2001]. However, although CO₂ released by flood basalt volcanism could have accounted for extinctions during the Cretaceous (Figure 1), it is questionable whether the small (<2°C) temperature increase produced by CO₂ released by major flood basalt volcanism during other time periods (Figure 1) was sufficient to cause massive dissociation of gas hydrates.

Because of insufficient information on the volume and timing of magmatism [Nicolaysen et al., 2000] the Kerguelen LIPS is excluded from Figure 1. Thus assessment of the role of flood basalt degassing on past global warming warrants additional research.

4.2.5. Hot spot magmatism: Ocean island basalts.

Ocean island basalt (OIB) is the product of mantle plume (hot spot) volcanism within oceanic plates. As exemplified by the Hawaii-Emperor chain, there are linear chains of seamounts and ocean islands that form from plate movement over stationary hot spots [Winter, 2001]. OIB magmatism is characterized by dominant tholeiitic and subordinate alkaline magma types. The primary (undegassed) magma supplying the tholeiitic Kilauea volcano is estimated to have 0.83 wt % CO₂ (T. M. Gerlach et al., Summit CO₂ degassing rate of Kilauea volcano: Implications for primary magma and its supply to the summit reservoir, submitted to *Journal of Geophysical Research*, 2001, hereinafter referred to as Gerlach et al., submitted manuscript, 2001). However, parental (undegassed) CO₂ contents of 1.3 wt % are estimated for alkaline basalts associated with the Hawaiian OIB system [Dixon et al., 1997]. These studies are commensurate with the comparatively high CO₂ solubilities in alkaline magmas [Bailey and Hampton, 1990; Holloway and Blank, 1994]. Thus, although the total volume of OIB magmatism represents only a few percent of all oceanic volcanism, the relatively high CO₂ solubilities imply that the CO₂ flux from OIB alkaline magmatism could be significant. Because the relative volumes of tholeiitic versus alkaline rocks of OIB volcanism are unknown [Winter, 2001], we cannot at present estimate CO₂ paleofluxes by coupling estimated CO₂ solubilities in parental magmas with the volumes of OIB magmatism.

4.2.6. Arc magmatism. In comparison with flood basalts, quantifying arc magmatic CO₂ paleodegassing from mass loss computations is complicated by uncertainty regarding the relative volumes of extrusive versus intrusive arc magmatism. Crisp [1984] concluded that the ratios of the volumes of intrusive to extrusive magmatism are ~10:1 for continental magmatism. However, more recent analyses of volcanic systems suggest that this ratio may be considerably larger [Francis et al., 1993; Allard et al., 1994; D'Alessandro et al., 1997; Allard, 1997]. Thus intrusives may account for the bulk of magmatic CO₂ degassing. It is likely that volcanic conduits overlie intrusive magma bodies in the upper few kilometers of the crust. Consequently, much of the volatiles released from such magmas could have escaped to the atmosphere through the overlying volcanic conduits. Indeed, studies of Stromboli [Allard et al., 1994], Mount Etna [Allard et al., 1991, 1997; D'Alessandro et al., 1997], Popocatepetl [Gerlach et al., 1997], and Kilauea (Gerlach et al., submitted manuscript, 2001) suggest that CO₂ is directly degassed from shallow magma chambers (i.e., open system degassing) beneath these volcanos. However, this does not necessarily imply that noneruptive degassing occurs from a stationary magma chamber. The temporal variations of the CO₂ and SO₂ fluxes from Mount St. Helens [Harris and Rose, 1996] suggest that the CO₂ is produced by crystallization of a stationary

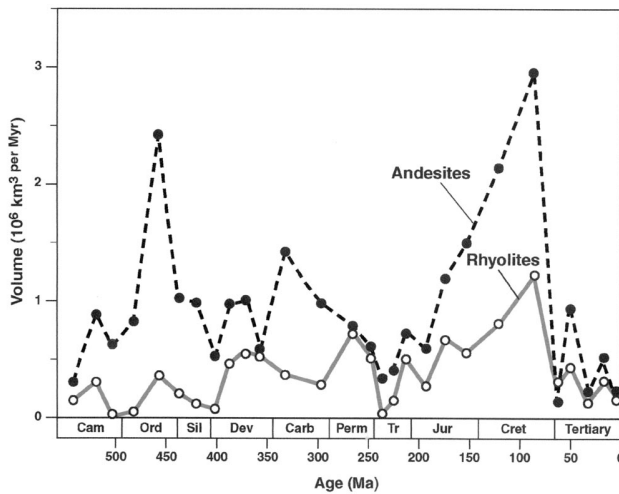


Figure 2. Estimated total volumes of andesites and rhyolites (through the *Phanerozoic* eon) intercalated within sedimentary continental rocks [from *Bogatikov et al.*, 2000, Figure 7.6]. Each data point represents the total volume for an epoch; the time for each point corresponds to the midpoint of the epoch (e.g., the Paleogene at ~60 Ma; for details, see *Bogatikov et al.* [2000, Figure 7.6]).

magma chamber coupled with episodic degassing of melts ascending into the magma chamber.

Because of uncertainties regarding the degassing of magma chambers associated with arc volcanism, this review considers only the temporal correlations between the volumes of extrusive and intrusive magmatism and global paleoclimate.

4.2.6.1. Extrusive arc magmatism: Magmatic arcs are dominated by magmas of calc-alkaline composition. Accordingly, the volumes of rhyolites and andesites through time (Figure 2) are an indicator of the temporal evolution of arc volcanism. In the Paleozoic (Figure 2), there was marked andesitic volcanism in the Ordovician. Thus CO₂ expelled from arc volcanos may have contributed to the elevated CO₂ levels during this period [*Gibbs et al.*, 2000]. As is shown in Figure 2, there was a marked and steady increase in the amount of andesitic and rhyolitic volcanism from the Early Jurassic to Late Cretaceous followed by a marked decline in the latest Cretaceous. Within the Cenozoic, there were notable spikes in andesite and rhyolite volcanism in the Paleogene (Eocene) and Neogene (Miocene) (Figure 2). The enhanced volcanism in the Eocene (37–42 Myr ago) is supported by Ocean Drilling Program (ODP) drill cores of marine sediments associated with the circum-Pacific and Caribbean arcs [*Cambray and Cadet*, 1994]. In addition to the Eocene, ODP drill cores of these sediments reveal enhanced Cenozoic volcanism in the Miocene (13–17 Ma) and Pliocene-Quaternary (past 5 Myr) [*Cambray and Cadet*, 1994; *Arculus et al.*, 1995].

4.2.6.2. Intrusive arc magmatism: Figure 3 is a graphical summary of *Crisp's* [1984] compilation of the volumes of intrusive (batholithic) magmatism through

time. *Crisp* [1984] derived the volumes by coupling the areas and ages of exposed *batholiths* with the generalized assumption that batholiths are 10 km thick. *Crisp's* [1984] compilation (Figure 3) reveals a marked increase in the volume of intrusive magmatic activity during the Late Cretaceous (Campanian), maximum activity from the Late Cretaceous through the Eocene, and a decline in intrusive activity since the late Eocene. Because of the general correlation between erosional exhumation and age the apparent decline in intrusive activity through the Cenozoic (Figure 3) may not be indicative of the actual rates of intrusive magmatism during this era. However, exposures of Mesozoic intrusives are widespread in orogenic belts; thus estimates of the volumes of intrusive magmatism through the Mesozoic may be more accurate than during the Cenozoic. Because Mesozoic intrusives in the western United States were emplaced at shallow crustal levels [*Barton and Hanson*, 1989], it is possible that a significant fraction of the CO₂ released from these intrusives escaped to the Earth's surface. However, an important caveat to this conclusion is that an unknown fraction of CO₂ released from intrusive magmas would have been sequestered in carbonates formed in hydrothermal aureoles [*Varekamp et al.*, 1992].

4.2.7. Carbonatites. Because of the relatively large CO₂ flux from the active carbonatite volcano Oldoinyo Lengai [*Brantley and Koepnick*, 1995] and because of the CO₂-rich magma composition [*Bailey and Hampton*, 1990; *Dawson et al.*, 1994; *Dixon et al.*, 1997], carbonatite magmatism could have provided a significant paleomagmatic CO₂ flux. *Woolley's* [1989] compilation of radiometric age data for carbonatites for the past 3000 Myr suggests that there has been an increase in carbonatite magmatism through time. In particular, his data show that post-Jurassic carbonatites are particularly

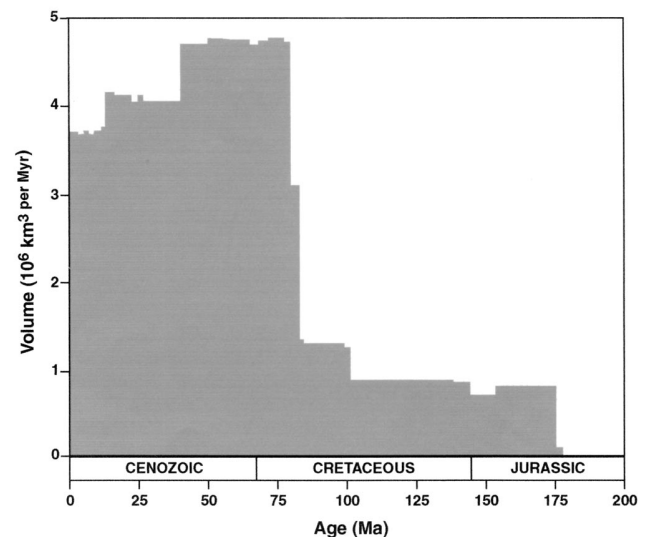


Figure 3. Estimated total volume of intrusive igneous rocks since the Middle Jurassic [from *Crisp*, 1984, Table 3]. Data are compiled using a time step of 1 million years.

abundant in Africa and South America [Woolley, 1989]. As is illustrated by Bailey [1993, Figure 3], there were four major periods of post-Jurassic carbonatite magmatism in Africa: Early Cretaceous, Late Cretaceous, Eocene-Oligocene, and Miocene-Recent. It is notable that with the exception of the late Cenozoic the time periods of the African carbonatite magmatism correlate with periods of global warmth. However, Veizer *et al.* [1992] considered that the apparent increase in the proportion of carbonatites through time is an artifact of their preservation. Nevertheless, the temporal correlations between carbonatites and periods of global warmth are intriguing and warrant further analysis.

4.2.8. Concluding remarks. Although the role of magmatic CO₂ degassing and global warming may be uncertain for other time periods, there is general agreement that enhanced magmatism was a major contributor to the elevated atmospheric CO₂ levels, and thus to global warmth, during the Cretaceous [Spicer and Corfield, 1992; Kuypers *et al.*, 1999].

4.3. Paleometamorphic CO₂ Degassing

Most analyses of the global carbon cycle assume that the main role of metamorphism in the global carbon cycle is the release of CO₂ by breakdown of carbonates in subducted marine sediments and/or breakdown of carbonates in subducted hydrothermally altered oceanic crust and transfer of this CO₂ to the atmosphere by arc volcanism [e.g., Kump *et al.*, 1999, p. 147].

Areas undergoing widespread, shallow “low-pressure metamorphism” would provide particularly suitable regimes for expulsion of large quantities of metamorphic CO₂ to the atmosphere [Kerrick and Caldeira, 1998]. With this scenario, CO₂ is generated by thermal decomposition of carbonates, with heat supplied by regionally extensive intrusives. To emphasize the heat source, Spear [1993] referred to this as “regional contact metamorphism” (RCM).

There are two tectonic regimes for RCM. One is in magmatic arcs created by ocean-continent or continent-continent collisions such as the Sierra Nevada (California) and Himalaya mountain ranges, respectively. The other regime is in continental rifts. The Basin and Range is considered a contemporary example of this type of metamorphism [Spear, 1993]. Indeed, geophysical data [Larkin *et al.*, 1997] and the crustal origin of CO₂ expelled in Basin and Range geothermal systems [Bergfeld *et al.*, 2001b] are consistent with derivation of the volatiles from RCM.

Kerrick and Caldeira [1998] quantified metamorphic CO₂ paleofluxes by two methods. One method involves coupling estimates of average fluid fluxes during metamorphism with the CO₂ contents of the fluids. To determine fluid fluxes, Ferry [1994] has championed the “reaction progress” method whereby the fluid fluxes through rocks undergoing metamorphism are derived from the extent (“progress”) of metamorphic reactions (obtained by modal data of metamorphic rocks). Com-

putation of CO₂ fluxes requires data on fluid compositions and on the duration of the metamorphic event. The other method involves a mass loss approach that requires, for a contiguous belt of metamorphic rocks, estimating the total volume of carbonate rocks, the amount of carbonate consumed by *metamorphic decarbonation*, and the duration of metamorphism. Both of these methods require assumptions regarding the efficacy of expulsion of the deeply generated CO₂ at the Earth’s surface. Sequestration of CO₂ by formation of vein carbonate would diminish the amount of metamorphic CO₂ that is expelled at the Earth’s surface. From analysis of the quantity of carbonate veins in the Eocene Cordilleran metamorphic belt, Kerrick and Caldeira [1998] concluded that ~9–18% of the CO₂ generated by metamorphism was lost to carbonate veins. Accordingly, it is possible that a significant proportion of CO₂ generated by RCM was expelled at the Earth’s surface.

For the Cenozoic, Kerrick and Caldeira [1993, 1994, 1998, 1999] evaluated the role of metamorphic CO₂ degassing and paleoclimate. Because the late Paleocene to early Eocene is the best documented example of early Cenozoic global warming, we focused on evaluating metamorphic CO₂ degassing from Cenozoic metamorphic belts. Our earlier research [Kerrick and Caldeira, 1993, 1994] suggested that regional metamorphism associated with the early Cenozoic India-Asia collision could have significantly enhanced paleoatmospheric CO₂ contents and thus could have contributed to early Cenozoic global warming. However, our subsequent re-analysis [Kerrick and Caldeira, 1998, 1999] suggested that regional metamorphism in the Himalayan belt probably had an insignificant effect on the Cenozoic atmospheric CO₂ content. We concluded that the widespread Eocene RCM in the Cordilleran metamorphic belt of North America could have released significant quantities of CO₂ to the atmosphere and thus could have contributed to Eocene global warming [Nesbitt *et al.*, 1995; Kerrick and Caldeira, 1998]. Quantification of the permeability of the continental crust [Ingebritsen and Manning, 1999] supports our contention that in orogens undergoing metamorphism the flux to the surface of CO₂ generated at middle-to-deep crustal levels may be adequate to significantly affect paleoatmospheric CO₂ levels. By combining modeling of mass transfer, chemical reaction, and heat transport with field studies, Ague [2000] demonstrated the efficacy of metamorphic decarbonation of carbonate lithologies induced by the influx of H₂O from interbedded *pelitic* lithologies.

Widespread magmatism and regional metamorphism associated with collision and subduction occurred in the circum-Pacific orogen during the Mesozoic. The temporal and spatial correlation between magmatism and RCM has been documented in the western United States [Barton and Hanson, 1989]. Consequently, the global warmth during the Mesozoic could be attributed in part to metamorphic CO₂ degassing from RCM asso-

ciated with the widespread emplacement of intrusive batholiths.

As is illustrated by the Basin and Range province, considerable RCM CO₂ degassing could have accompanied periods of widespread continental rifting. Relevant here is the *Wilson cycle*, which is the dispersion and reassembly of supercontinents. The latest Wilson cycle began in the Jurassic (~200 Ma) with the breakup of *Pangaea*. Accordingly, during the Jurassic, there was widespread continental rifting. Within the rifts, extrusive and intrusive magmatism, coupled with RCM, could have released considerable magmatic and metamorphic CO₂ to the atmosphere and thus could have contributed to the global warming that began during the Middle Jurassic [Condie and Sloan, 1998]. LIPS magmatism associated with continental breakup [Dalziel et al., 2000] could have provided a significant flux of CO₂ to the atmosphere at the beginnings of Wilson cycles.

5. EPILOGUE

Because of the large extrapolation, there are significant uncertainties in the estimates of global CO₂ emission. Quantification of paleodegassing is particularly uncertain at this stage. Assessing global-scale paleodegassing from generalized modeling of volcanic CO₂ emission is clouded by the fact that at present, two volcanos (Popocatepetl and Mount Etna) emit far more CO₂ than do other active volcanos. Nevertheless, this should not be a deterrent to further analysis of the global nonanthropogenic CO₂ emission from the solid Earth. Modeling and quantifying the global carbon cycle is still in its infancy. The author is confident that by protracted diligence, significant advances in the quantification of CO₂ degassing from the Earth will be forthcoming.

GLOSSARY

Accretionary prism: A wedge of sediment associated with trenches of subduction zones.

Alkaline: Igneous rocks with alkalis (Na and K) that are high relative to silica.

Archean: An eon in the Precambrian (~4000–2500 Myr ago).

Asthenosphere: A layer of the Earth that is directly below the lithosphere. It is characterized by relatively slow seismic velocities and is considered to be a zone with partial melt.

Back-arc basin: Region adjacent to a subduction zone magmatic arc on the opposite side of the subducting plate and trench.

Batholith: A large (>100 km² aerial exposure) body of intrusive igneous rock.

Caldera: A large eruption-produced depression of a volcano.

Carbonatite: Carbonate-rich igneous rock.

Contact metamorphism: Localized metamorphism caused by the thermal effect of an intrusion.

Hadean: Earliest Precambrian eon (before ~4000 Myr).

Hot spot magmatism: Magmatic activity arising from plumes of melt arising from the deep mantle. The Hawaiian volcanic chain is a classic example.

Hypocenter: Initial point of rupture resulting in an earthquake.

Maar: Low-relief crater formed by explosive volcanism.

Mantle plume: Deeply generated, elongated magma column rising through the Earth's mantle.

Metamorphic decarbonation: Release of carbon dioxide due to metamorphic reactions involving the consumption of carbonate minerals.

Metasomatism: Change in bulk rock composition during metamorphism. Metasomatism results from the influx and/or efflux of chemical elements by diffusion or fluid flow.

Nonanthropogenic CO₂ degassing: Release of gas by processes other than the burning of fossil fuels.

Pangaea: Supercontinent that existed in the late Paleozoic to early Mesozoic (~300–200 Myr ago).

Pelitic: An aluminum-rich sedimentary rock. Most metamorphosed pelites were originally mud rocks.

Phanerozoic eon: All of the geologic time following the Precambrian eon (i.e., the past ~540 Myr).

Principle of uniformitarianism: Posits that processes operating in the present are analogous to those in the past.

Serpentinite: Metamorphic rock containing abundant serpentine group minerals (antigorite, chrysotile, and lizardite). Serpentinites form by the addition of water to ultramafic rocks.

Skarn: Metamorphic rock rich in calcium silicate minerals. Skarns are formed by the *metasomatism* of limestone.

Slabless window: Region undergoing extension, crustal thinning, and upwelling of the asthenosphere.

Teramole: Equivalent to 10¹² mol.

Tholeiitic: Igneous rocks (basalts) that are characterized by Ca-poor pyroxene and little or no olivine.

Travertine: Carbonate rock formed by precipitation from thermal springs.

Volcano plume: Column of volcanic gas discharged into the atmosphere.

Wilson cycle: Fragmentation and subsequent reassembly of supercontinents. The latest Wilson cycle began with fragmentation of *Pangaea* ~200 Myr ago.

Xenoliths: Fragments of “foreign” rock within an igneous rock.

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