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南大西洋中段被动陆缘阿普特盐岩研究进展

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摘要:南大西洋两岸被动陆缘盆地在早白垩世阿普特期沉积了一套分布广泛的蒸发岩,其成分和成因不仅对研究南大西洋的形成和演化具有重要意义,也是油气勘探关注的重点。通过综合分析近年来有关盐岩的分布、时代、成因和构造沉积背景等研究进展,总结目前存在的主要争议,指出分歧的原因和解决的方法:①盐岩厚度大,变形复杂,两侧宽度和对称性变化与盆地的伸展模式及板块破裂的位置有关;②生物地层和同位素定年表明,盐岩在各盆地的沉积下限约为 118~116 Ma,上限为 115~110 Ma,阿普特阶生物层型不完善和同位素年代数据太少是造成其差异的主要原因,化学地层学精细对比为确定其时代提供了新的方法;③盐盆北部较南部更富含易溶成分,相对于海水源自南部大洋和蛇纹石化脱水两种模式,源自北部大洋的热液卤水模式更能解释其成分差异,且与古生物、古地理及古气候证据相吻合;④基于对洋陆边界、不整合成因和盆地沉降机制认识的差异,对盐岩沉积于大洋形成前、形成后或是形成过程中仍存在不同观点,明确盐下基底的性质是解决这一问题的关键;⑤需要结合古气候、古地理综合分析盐岩沉积于浅水深盆还是浅水浅盆环境,而且随着蒸发作用的进行,盐盆水平面并非一直保持不变。

关键词:阿普特盐盆;盐岩时代;成分差异;盐岩成因;构造沉积背景

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0 引言

大西洋两岸盆地在早白垩世阿普特期沉积了一套厚度大、分布广的蒸发岩,由于其沉积于南大西洋形成的关键时期,其时代和成因对探讨陆壳减薄和被动陆缘演化具有重要意义^[1-2]。盆地油气资源丰富,近十几年来发现了多个大油气田^[3-4],是勘探热点区域,由于盐岩对圈闭形成、烃源岩生烃、运移保存等成藏要素具有控制作用^[5-7],盐的成分、厚度和分布一直是研究的重点。有关盐岩的分布、时代、岩性和成因前人曾开展了大量的研究,取得了丰硕的成果,但由于缺乏丰富的古生物证据,沉积

时代还未统一;盐岩成分空间差异明显,成因存在多种解释;南大西洋中段形成时间不明确,对于盐岩沉积于大陆裂解前、裂解过程中还是裂解后仍存在分歧^[2,8-9]。本文综合梳理了南大西洋近年来有关盐岩沉积时代、成分成因、构造背景等方面的研究内容,以期为本区相关研究提供一定参考和借鉴。

1 区域地质背景

早白垩世,南美板块和非洲板块自南而北裂解,形成了南大西洋,根据裂解时间的早晚、构造沉积等差异将南大西洋自南而北分为福克兰段、南段、中段和赤道段。中段位于里奥格兰德断裂带-沃尔维斯脊和阿森松断裂带之间,长度达 200 km,宽度为 500~100 km(图 1),面积约 74 万 km²^[10-11],其东、西两岸分别发育了宽扎、下刚果、加蓬和桑托斯、坎波斯等被动陆缘盆地(图 2)。

被动陆缘盆地的形成演化分为 3 期,分别是早

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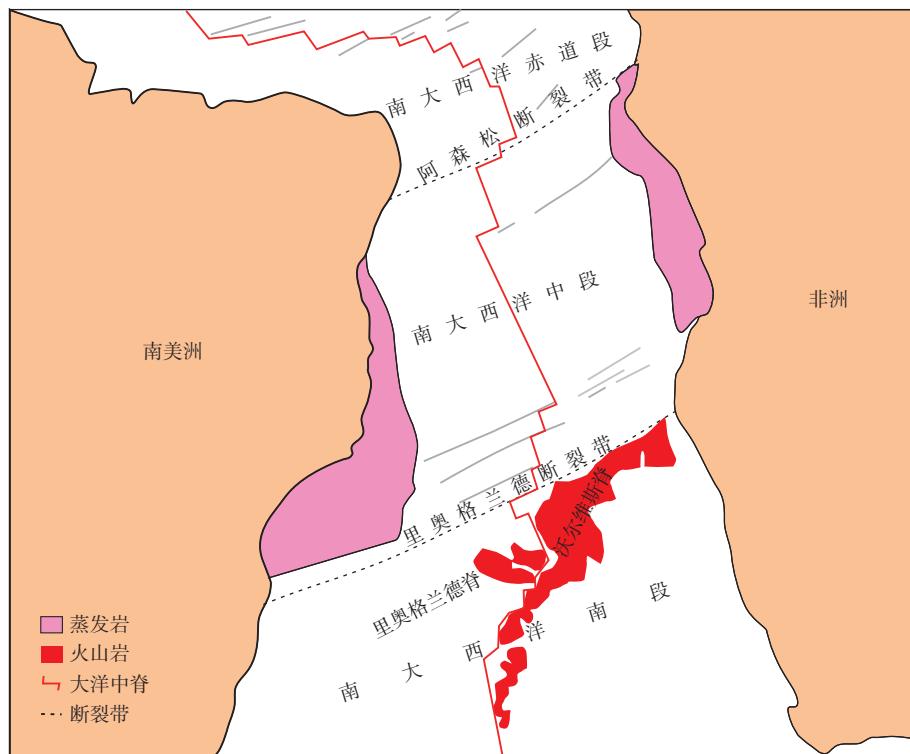


图 1 南大西洋中段阿普特盐盆位置

Fig.1 Location of Aptian Salt Basin along the central South Atlantic margins

白垩世贝利阿斯至早阿普特裂谷期、中晚阿普特过渡期和阿尔布以来的漂移期^[4,8]。裂谷期盆地的构造和沉积特征南北存在显著差异,北部的塞尔西培-阿拉戈斯-北加蓬盆地和卡马姆-刚果盆地伸展作用始于贝利阿斯晚期,持续了 19~20 Ma,沉积了大量的陆相碎屑岩,而南部的桑托斯、坎波斯和宽扎盆地断陷始于早巴雷姆期,持续了 5~6 Ma,早期为火山岩及陆相碎屑岩沉积,晚期以湖相碳酸盐岩沉积为主^[12]。阿普特中期,盆地发生沉积间断形成了一个区域不整合面,而后南北两侧分别沉积了湖相碳酸盐岩和河流-三角洲相碎屑岩,随着海水的侵入和强烈的蒸发作用盆地沉积了一套厚度大、分布广泛的盐岩。阿尔布期开始,盆地进入漂移期,发育了巨厚海相碳酸盐岩及碎屑岩沉积,造成盐岩发生自陆向海的流动,形成复杂的盐构造^[6,13]。

2 盐岩的分布

盐岩分布广泛,两侧宽窄和对称性变化较大。在南美一侧,盐盆总体呈“南宽北窄”,桑托斯盆地宽度可达 500 km,向北至埃斯皮里图桑托盆地变为宽约 150 km,到最北部的阿尔马达-卡马姆盆地宽度仅 50~100 km。在西非一侧,盐岩宽度变化较小,

一般介于 200~300 km^[14]。两侧盆地自南向北呈宽-窄、宽-宽、窄-宽的分布(图 2),这种不对称性可能与盆地形成的拉张机制有关,但是纯剪切还是简单剪切难以确定,因为两种模式都可以形成对称和不对称的盆地。地震剖面揭示,盆地的不对称还与大洋裂解的方向和位置有关,在裂解过程中,大洋中脊发生从南美板块向非洲板块一侧迁移^[9]。

盐岩现今厚度变化大,微盆下部其厚度只有几十米,而盐墙高度可达几千米,这与受初始沉积厚度控制和后期盐活动有关。构造恢复得出,桑托斯盆地沉降中心最厚 1 500 m,坎波斯盆地和宽扎盆地中心厚度可达 2 000 m,而在盆地边缘或构造高部位盐岩变薄甚至缺失。地震资料表明,盐岩的厚度与下伏地层的厚度具有明显正相关性,指示了盆地沉降的控制作用^[9,15]。此外盐岩厚度还受气候影响,古气候模拟得出,阿普特晚期刚果河以南的地区气候更为干旱,相应的盐岩也更厚^[1]。

盐岩现今的厚度变化与晚期盐活动更为密切,由于其黏度低,具有良好蠕变性,在地壳沉降倾斜及上覆地层差异负载下易发生重力滑脱和重力扩展作用,形成复杂的盐构造(图 3)。自陆向海盐变形一般分为伸展减薄区、过渡变化区和挤压增厚区,在伸展减薄区主要发育盐筏、盐滚、盐焊、

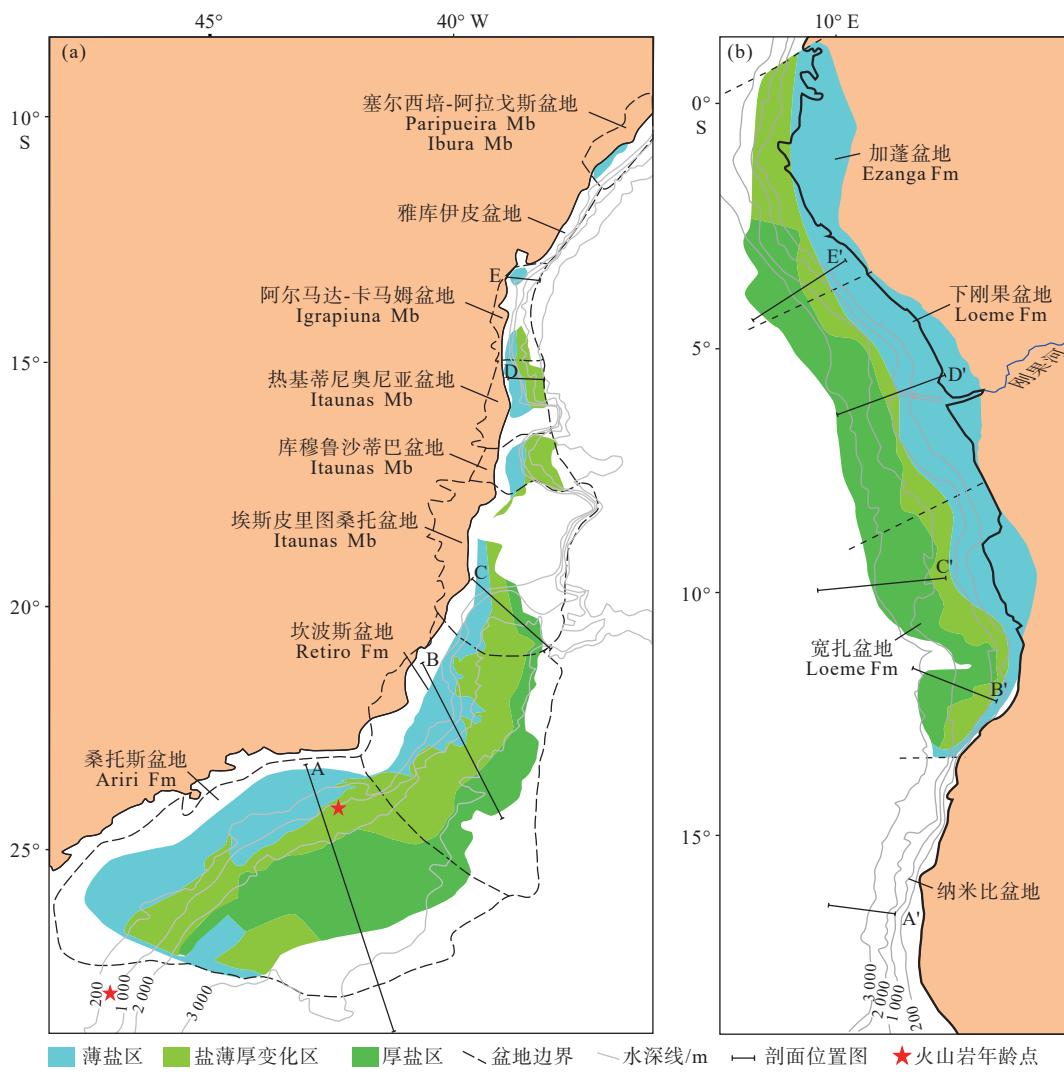


图 2 阿普特盐盆盐岩分布和现今厚度

Fig.2 Distribution of the Aptian salt basins and evaporite thicknesses

活化底劈等构造, 盐岩显著减薄甚至缺失, 厚度一般为几十米至几百米; 在过渡区以被动底劈为特征, 其形态变化多样, 厚度从几百米变化至几千米; 挤压区主要发育盐背斜、盐席等, 盐岩明显增厚, 最厚达 4 500 m^[13,16-17]。影响变形的因素主要有上覆地层的岩性和厚度、下伏地层的构造活动及自身的厚度。

3 盐岩的时代

由于盐岩中缺乏古生物化石, 其时代主要根据其上、下地层及火山岩的年龄来限定。桑托斯盆地盐下火山岩的年龄为 117~118 Ma^[18], 地层的生物时代为 116 Ma, 二者较一致, 坎波斯、埃斯皮里图桑托盆地盐下地层缺少年代数据, 通常认为与桑托

斯盆地相同。3 个盆地盐上地层的有孔虫资料指示其沉积于阿普特末期^[19], 因此, 盐岩的时代约为 116~113 Ma。

不同学者根据个别钻井盐上地层的有孔虫资料推断, 宽扎盆地盐岩沉积于 121~124.5 Ma^[14] 或 119~116 Ma^[8] 之前, 哪个数据更可靠需要更多的资料来佐证, 但根据盐岩分布的广泛性和成分的相似性, 推测其时代在区域上应具有一致性, 因此, 后者可能更合理。

北部的塞尔西培-阿拉戈斯盆地发育 2 套盐岩沉积, 孢粉资料显示二者分别沉积于 124.8 Ma 和 114.5 Ma 之前^[8], 但后者的 Ar-Ar 同位素年龄为 110.64 ± 0.34 Ma, 与生物地层时代存在一定的差异。造成这一问题的根本原因在于阿普特阶和阿尔布阶缺少全球层型剖面和点, 现在的层型是基于特提

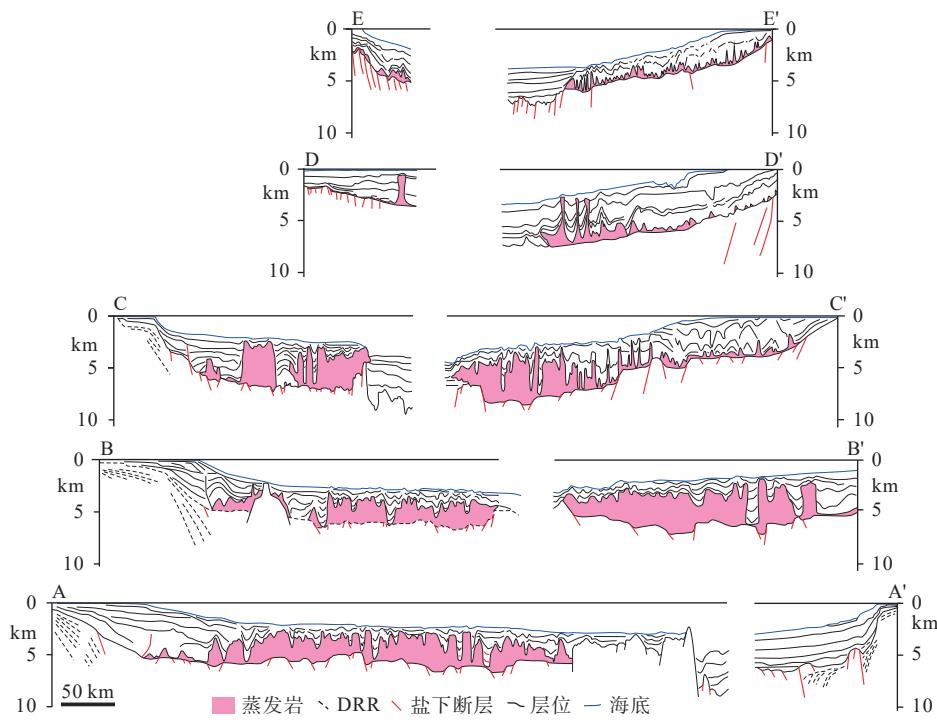


图 3 共轭盆地盐岩厚度剖面

Fig.3 Cross sections of Aptian salt basins in the conjugate margins of middle segment of Atlantic Ocean

斯洋建立的,可能与南大西洋不同^[18,20]。

利用化学地层方法对盐岩和泥岩夹层及上下地层的碳同位素分析结合生物地层的研究得出,加蓬盆地盐岩沉积于 118.4~116.8 Ma^[21],与塞尔西培盆地第 2 期盐岩的生物地层时代大致相同,说明二者在当时很可能是连通的。

基于不同的年代学数据对盐岩的沉积演化认识存在明显分歧。有的学者认为,北部盆地盐岩时代最早,宽扎盆地其次,南部桑托斯盆地最晚^[14],而另有一些学者认为,加蓬和宽扎盆地盐岩时代基本相同,稍早于南部桑托斯盆地^[8]。形成如此广而厚的盐岩需要蒸发巨量的海水,因此,这些盆地在盐沉积时可能是连通的,盐岩的时代应该是基本相同的。随着化学地层对比的开展和定年资料的增加及生物地层框架的统一,盐岩沉积的时代和空间变化会逐渐明确。

4 盐岩的成因

南大西洋盐岩沉积序列主要为石盐-钾盐-光卤石-溢晶石-水氯镁石,缺少硫酸镁成分,与现代海水蒸发的产物不同,一度认为是由裂谷期的热液卤水沉积的^[22]。包裹体数据证实,在白垩纪中期(124~94 Ma)海水成分与现今不同,其富含 Ca^{2+} 、

Na^+ 、 K^+ 而贫 SO_4^{2-} ,通过蒸发作用是可以形成上述盐岩序列^[23-24],而且盐岩的溴(Br)等微量元素的变化趋势也与蒸发过程一致^[21,25-26],因此,现一致认为其是由海水蒸发形成的。

盐岩的成分在南、北盆地存在明显差异。在南部的桑托斯、坎波斯和宽扎盆地,盐岩主要为石盐夹石膏(图 4a),为蒸发早期的产物^[1,27];而在北部的加蓬、塞尔西培-阿拉戈斯盆地及下刚果盆地北部,硬石膏的含量较少,盐岩主要由石盐和光卤石组成,蒸发晚期的水氯镁石和溢晶石含量较多^[28-30](图 4b)。上述现象与古气候模拟结果相悖,后者得出盆地北部当时比较湿润^[8],不利于盐岩的沉积,更难以形成蒸发晚期的矿物^[26]。

针对盐岩的成分差异,一些学者用海水来自南部来解释,南大西洋海水周期性漫过南部的沃尔维斯脊-里奥格兰德火山脊,先在南部蒸发沉积,随后高咸度的海水进入盆地北部沉积^[31-32]。海水来自南部,与南大西洋白垩纪以来古水深的研究^[33]和加蓬和宽扎盆地沉积物中生物标志物的研究结果一致^[34]。但有一些学者根据盐岩上下地层缺少南大西洋的海相生物而含有特提斯洋的生物推断海水来自北部,提出赤道段的走滑断层为海水涌入提供了通道,而南部的火山脊直到晚白垩世土伦期才打开^[9,19-20,35-36]。南大西洋古生物的缺乏可能是因为

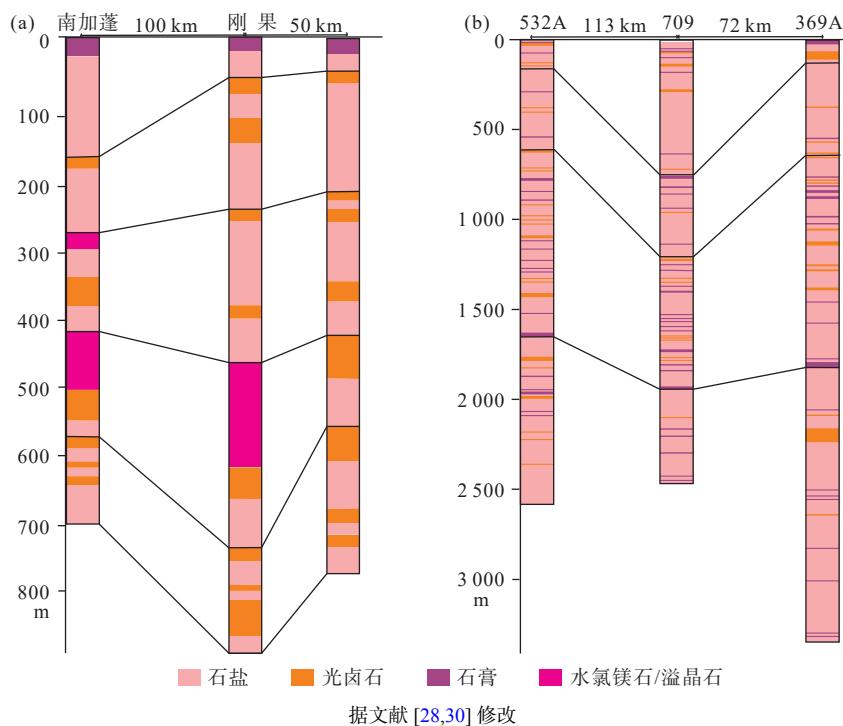


图 4 加蓬-下刚果盆地 (a) 与桑托斯盆地 (b) 盐岩成分

Fig.4 Compositions of the salt rock in the Gabon-Lower Congo and Santos Basins

海水从南部火山脊中渗滤过去的^[16],也可能海水主要来自北部,一部分来自南部^[20],由于其来源关系到南大西洋的构造演化及古地理格局,对这一问题的研究一直在持续^[34]。

鉴于盐岩成分差异与古气候模拟结果的矛盾,一种模式认为盐岩的沉积是由地幔蛇纹石化脱水作用造成的^[37],根据这种机制形成上千米的盐岩需要整个地幔都被蛇纹石化,这显然是不可能的,且其产物富含镁离子,与南大西洋盐岩的成分也不同,后者的沉积结构和旋回特征更支持其蒸发成因^[25]。另一种模式认为盐的易溶成分与来自北部热液流体有关,这些富含矿物的流体来源于中大西洋扩张过程中洋底玄武岩与海水的水-岩作用^[27]。这个模式既化解了上述矛盾,也解释了盐岩沉积的各种现象,而且与古生物资料相一致。

5 盐岩的构造沉积背景

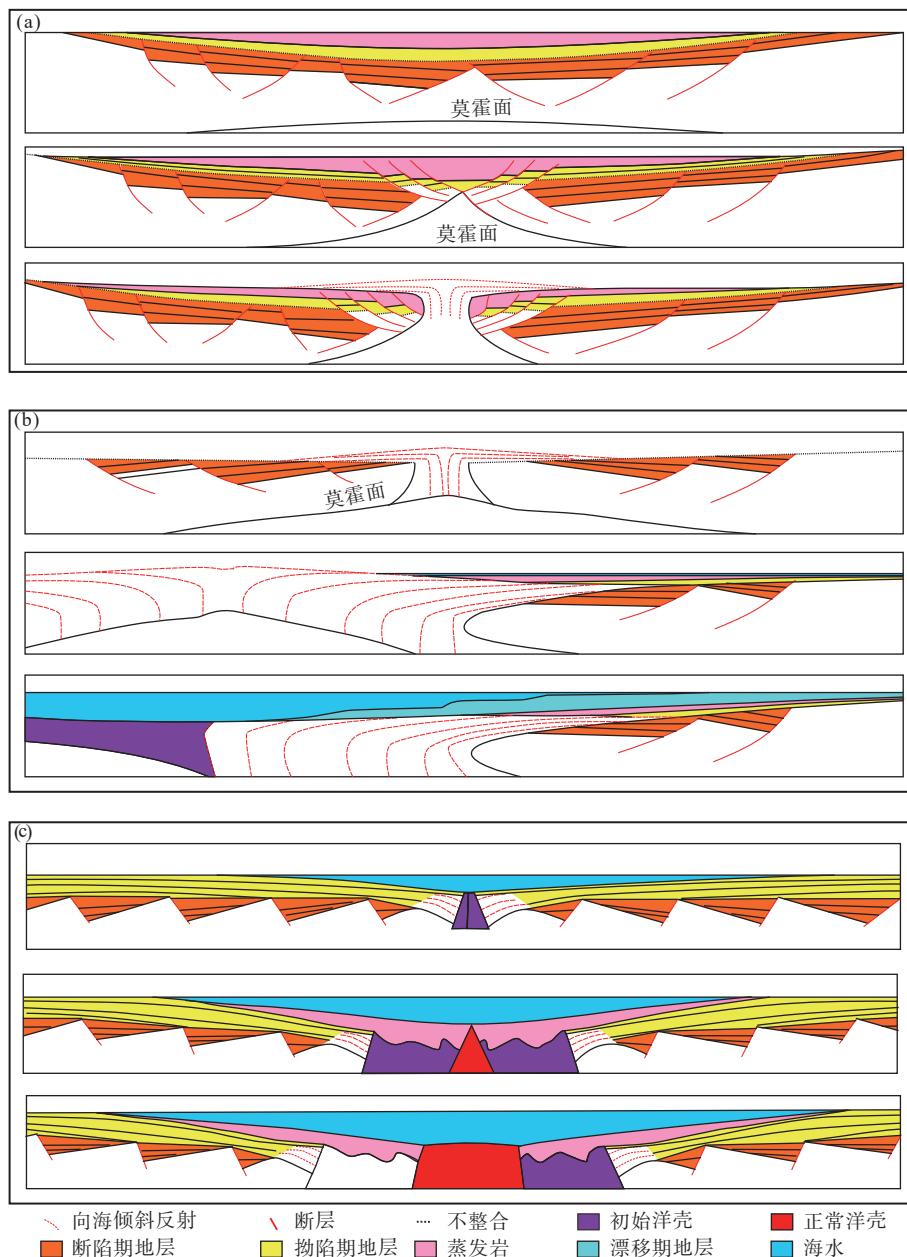
阿普特盐岩厚度大、分布广,现今缺少可以类比的对象,其形成的构造沉积背景一直是研究的重点,但南大西洋中段形成于早白垩世超静磁期,其起始时限和演化过程一直不明确^[11],从而对于盐岩是沉积于大洋形成前还是后仍存在分歧,这关系到当时盆地是一个统一的大盐盆还是被洋脊隔开的

2个盐盆。针对这个问题,目前主要有3种观点。

第1种观点认为,盐岩形成于大洋形成前的裂谷期(图5a),两侧盐盆是统一的^[2,8]。利用二维和三维地震资料,基于对两侧盆地莫霍面形态、盐下地层结构及断层产状分析得出,盐岩沉积于伸展断陷期,拗陷期的热沉降无法快速提供盐岩所需的可容空间^[38-39];盐岩和盐下地层厚度均向海方向增加,指示它们具有相同的沉降中心,盐下阿普特期的不整合是由湖平面下降引起的,或与伸展减薄晚期的地幔剥露有关^[40],并不是破裂不整合。

第2种观点认为,盐岩形成于大洋扩张后(图5b)。板块恢复显示两侧盐盆有近220 km的重叠,远大于盐岩流动的距离,说明盆地远端的盐岩是沉积在洋壳或准洋壳上,盐下向海倾斜反射(SDR)也为洋壳的发育提供了佐证;盐岩均位于破裂不整合之上,根据盐下火山岩和不整合的时间推断,南美和非洲大陆的裂解发生在约123 Ma,比盐岩沉积早约6 Ma;盐岩沉积的快速沉降来源于地幔柱的热延迟作用^[31,41]。

第3种观点认为,盐岩沉积与大洋形成同期(图5c)。该模式中,洋陆边界位于盐下裂谷盆地和SDR的外边缘,盐岩沉积于不断形成的洋壳上,并持续流向洋中脊;两侧盐岩是连续的,随着大洋的扩张而被减薄、拉断^[18,42-43]。



(a)前裂解期沉积模式; (b)后裂解期沉积模式; (c)同裂解期沉积模式; 据文献 [18,31] 修改

图 5 盐岩沉积的构造演化模式

Fig.5 Tectonic evolution of the salt deposits

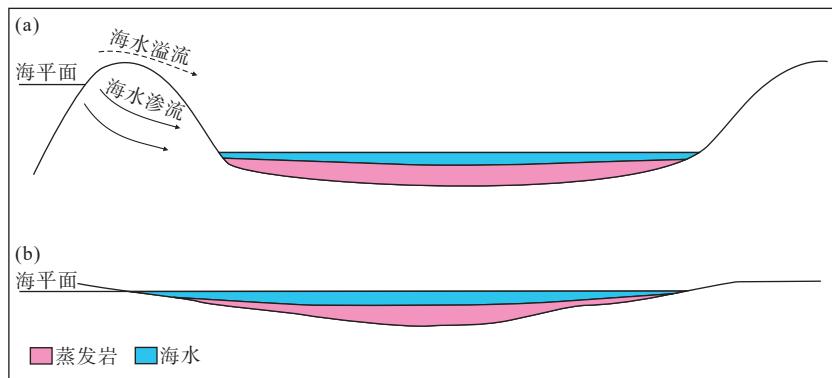
造成上述不同观点的原因在于对洋陆边界、不整合的成因和沉降机制的不同解释。由于缺少磁异常条带,洋陆的边界还不明确,以不同的边界进行板块恢复结果差异很大,边界的确定需要结合古地磁、断层、地壳厚度、莫霍面连续性等资料综合分析^[44];盐下是否发育 SDR 还存在不同看法,目前仅在个别地方见到,分布特别局限,很可能是地层的沉积结构^[38-39];盆地外侧隆起是沉积岩还是火山岩,代表洋壳还是陆壳亦或过渡壳,尚有待证实,这是解决盐岩沉积与大洋形成先后关系的关键,虽然地震资料可以较清晰地刻画其反射特征,但岩性还

需要钻井证实,这可作为未来大洋钻探的研究目标;盐下不整合的类型和成因随着日益增多的高品质三维地震资料有望明确;地幔柱的延迟沉降可以用来解释周边盆地,但对于如何解释远离它的盆地需要进一步的思考。

虽然对盐岩沉积的构造背景看法不同,但多数都认可其形成于一个局限浅水盆地,但是对于是浅水深盆还是浅水浅盆尚存在分歧。一些学者认为,盐岩厚度大、沉积快,盆地在短时间内难以产生这些沉积所需的可容纳空间,从而认为盐岩形成于浅水深盆环境^[45](图 6a),即盐盆水平面低于全球海平面。

但各盆地研究得出的差值数值不同, 根据下伏地层厚度和超覆特征推测, 加蓬及下刚果盆地低于海平面 500~650 m^[8]; 利用沉降反演模拟计算出桑托斯盆地低于海平面约 400 m^[46]; 坎波斯和宽扎盆地低于海平面约 700 m^[47]。另外一些学者认为, 盐岩沉积于正常的浅水浅盆(图 6b), 即盐盆水平面与全球海平面一致, 原因是盐岩分布广泛, 并非局限在盆

地中部, 而且盆地边缘缺少与盐沉积同期的大型剥蚀面^[11,48]。需要通过古气候、古地理和古构造的综合分析判断具体是哪种模式, 若如古气候模拟所示北部的盐岩沉积于湿润环境, 则盐盆水平面不会太低; 盐盆与大洋连通时水平面应该是一致的, 但沉积晚期由于强烈的蒸发作用水平面一定是变化的而不会维持在一个值。



(a) 浅水深盆模式; (b) 浅水浅盆模式; 据文献 [45] 修改

图 6 盐岩沉积模式

Fig.6 Sedimentary models of the salt deposits

6 结论

(1) 盐岩在各个盆地的厚度、成分和变形特征都得到了精细刻画, 其分布的宽窄和不对称性与伸展模式和洋中脊迁移有关, 但究竟是哪一种机制还难以判断, 因为不同的变形机制可以形成相同的变形结果。

(2) 生物地层和同位素定年结果得出, 不同盆地盐岩的年龄下限约为 118~116 Ma, 上限为 115~110 Ma, 造成这一较大差异的原因在于阿普特阶全球层型未完全建立, 同位素年龄数据少, 其精度和代表性有待验证, 精细的化学地层研究有助于推动其时代的确定。

(3) 对于盐岩成分南北差异的解释存在 3 种假说: 海水来自南部大洋、蛇纹石化脱水和来源北部大洋的热液卤水。其中, 后者与古生物、古气候和古地理证据吻合度较高, 是目前最合理的解释模式, 虽然与加蓬盆地通过地层生物标志物研究得出的结论相反, 但上述研究只有 2 口井, 不能代表整个区域。

(4) 由于对洋陆边界、盐下基底的性质、不整合成因和盆地沉降机制认识的不同, 盐岩沉积于大洋形成前、形成后还是形成过程中还存在争议, 根本

原因在于南大西洋中段形成于超静磁期, 具体的过程和时间不确定, 明确盐下基底的性质有助于解决这一问题。

(5) 盐岩形成于局限浅水盆地, 是形成于浅水深盆还是浅水浅盆需要结合古气候、古地理综合分析; 盐盆在蒸发过程中水平面应该是动态变化的, 而不是保持不变。

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Progress in the study of the Aptian salt basins in the passive continental margin of the central South Atlantic

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Abstract: A set of widespread evaporates was deposited in the conjugate basins in the passive continental margin of the central South Atlantic during the early Cretaceous Aptian Stage, and the composition of the evaporates and the origin of the basins are important for the study of the southern Atlantic Ocean evolution and hydrocarbon exploration. We reviewed the recent progresses in the study of the distribution, age, origin, tectonic and sedimentary settings of the evaporates, summarized the main disputes that exist today, and pointed out the reasons of the disagreements and the resolutions. Results show that ① the thick evaporates were deformed strongly and variations in width and symmetry are related to the pattern of basin extension and location of the plate breakup. ② Biostratigraphy and isotopic dating indicate the salt deposition started at 118-116 Ma and ended at 115-110 Ma, and the differences are caused by incomplete Aptian international framework and scarce radiometric data, which could be solved by precise correlation of chemostratigraphy. ③ The northern part of the salt basin is richer in soluble components than the southern part. Compared with the two models of seawater that originated from the southern ocean and from serpentinization dehydration, the hydrothermal brine model in which seawater is originated from the northern ocean can better explain its compositional differences and is consistent with paleontological, paleogeographic and paleoclimate materials. ④ Based on the differences in understanding of ocean-continent boundaries, the origin of unconformities, and the mechanism of basin subsidence, there are different views on whether the evaporates were deposited before, after, or during the rifting. Clarifying the nature of the subsalt basement is the key to solving this problem. ⑤ It is necessary to comprehensively analyze whether the salt rock was deposited in a shallow water deep basin or a shallow water shallow basin environment based on paleoclimate and paleogeography. Moreover, as evaporation proceeds, the level of the salt basin does not remain unchanged.

Key words: Aptian Salt Basin; salt age; composition difference; salt origin; tectonic-sedimentary setting