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Title: Land and Sea Interaction in the Marginal Sea of the Eastern Yangtze Coast, China: Quaternary Stratigraphy, Palynology, and Transgression

Abstract:

In 2001, a Quaternary sediment borehole (PD) of 360m long was recovered from the Yangtze coast. The borehole penetrated Quaternary sediment, late Tertiary sediment section, which overlies the bedrock of Miocene. Paleomagnetic test in association with numerous petrological and biological evidences records the Quaternary environmental evolution of the delta region. The early Pleistocene stratigraphy (289-153m) consisting of several major sediment cyclicities is the thick yellow and gray gravelly sand and silt. Sorting is poor. Large-scale trough bedding appears in the sediments. Marine fossils occur throughout. The mid-Pleistocene stratigraphy (153-104m) is rather thin and is dominated by the yellow coarse to fine sand and mottled muds. Sorting is relative poor. Trough and undulate beddings are present. Foraminifera and marine ostracode appeared sporadically. Late Pleistocene stratigraphy (104-29.4m) consists chiefly of one major sediment cyclicity. The yellowish to gray, coarse to medium sands occurs as basal sediment section, and fine sand and silt appears at upper section. Various sedimentary beddings are seen in the sediment, i.e. trough, wavy, and undulate, etc. Foraminifera and marine Ostracode occurred throughout. Holocene stratigraphy (29.4-0m) comprises the gray fine sand and mud. Sorting becomes good, cross beddings are seen, and marine fossils present. A stiff mud layer (32.40-29.4m) without marine fossils separates the late Pleistocene and Holocene sediment sections. Numerous pollen-spore samples were analyzed to examine the temporal variations of paleoclimate changes through Quaternary. Pollen spore assemblages reveal alternated glacial and interglacial epochs, and delineate the warmer climate setting in early Pleistocene represented by high proportion of evergreen species such as Castanopsis, Oleaceae, Evergreen Quercus, Ilex. Temperature began to rise from the late period of early Pleistocene to mid-Pleistocene, as marked by high proportion of coniferous-deciduous species, i.e. Pinus, Abies, Picea, Ulmus, Deciduous Quercus, etc. Climate obviously enters into a warm period in late Pleistocene and Holocene indicated by a large amount of evergreen, grass, and ferny species occurring throughout. We propose that this climate warming in late Pleistocene and Holocene timing at 100 ka tends to link with global change affected by the Tibetan uplift since Pleistocene, and had been closely associated with enhanced monsoon in the eastern Asia marginal sea. Quaternary transgression can be differentiated both from foraminiferal occurrence and geochemical indicators.