The physico-chemical evolution of carbonaceous material during low-grade metamorphism of Archean stromatolites by Raman spectroscopy and carbon isotopes

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Chitradurga Schist Belt (CSB) in the Archean Western Dharwar Craton (WDC), southern India is a sediment dominated greenstone belt (3-2.5 Ga) that has undergone low- to medium-grade metamorphism with diverse occurrence of carbonates including stromatolites. The present study compares the Raman spectroscopy of CM thermometry (RSCM) and carbon isotope thermometry of the low-grade meta-carbonates to evaluate the changes in the physicochemical conditions of CM included in carbonate rocks during progressive metamorphism and also to understand the role of precursor material and host rocks in the thermal maturation process. Three types of CMs have been recognized in the CSB; a) irregular globular or subhedral type found as inclusions b) aggregates in grain boundaries c) thin and slightly elongated filamentous carbon found along the grain boundaries. The carbonates with type a and b CM are consistent with RSCM and carbon isotope thermometry, meanwhile, the carbonates which possess type c CM has a lower crystallinity (R2 ratio = 0.35), when compared to type a CM (R2 ratio = 0.2) which yielded temperature of equilibration at around 475 and 535 °C, respectively. Contrastingly, the carbon isotopes equilibrated at a lower temperature around 400 °C. The possible reasons for the inconsistencies between the conditions of equilibration might be due to (1) pervasive post metamorphic aqueous hydrothermal fluid infiltration, deduced from the lowering of $\delta^{18}O$ values of carbonates without significant variation in $\delta^{13}C$ (2) the negative $\delta^{13}C$ shift in CM from -8.5 to -13 ‰ caused by dissolution recrystallization following CO_2 degassing, lowered the crystallinity of CM. Here we reach the conclusion that the type a CM might preserve the actual thermal condition and the bulk carbon isotope analysis is not suitable to the temperature estimate as it gets mixed with different types of CM. Therefore, our results suggest that by evaluating the complementary relationship between the physico-chemical properties of CM hosted in carbonates, we can constrain the applicability of both thermometry. Further morphological and carbon isotopic characterization of CM using SEM and HRTEM is being carried out to understand the structural and isotopic evolution and extend of preservation of the precursor material.

Key words:
Raman Spectra of carbonaceous material thermometry
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Degassing and dissolution reprecipitation

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