Experimental Constraints on the Redox State and Size of the Angrite Parent Body

FRANÇOIS L.H. TISSOT¹, MAX COLLINET¹, NICOLAS DAUPHAS², TIMOTHY L. GROVE¹

¹EAPS Department, MIT, (<u>tissot@mit.edu</u>). ²Origins Lab, The University of Chicago.

Angrites are silica undersaturated, volatile depleted achondrites [1], key anchors for early solar system chronology [2], which have recently come under increased scrutiny as possible building blocks of the Earth [3]. More generally, the nebular and planetary processes that shaped the angrite parent body (APB) can be relevant to Earth's building blocks [4]. Yet, due to the limited sample set available in earlier work (n=4-6) [5], few constraints exist on the petrogenesis of angrites. The APB is thought to be fairly reduced (\sim IW+1, [1]) and small (r~100-200 km, [6-7]), and our experimental study aims to constrain these first-order parameters.

With 16 different types of angrites, the current collection allows us to identify two compositional groups of quenched angrites, which can be related by fractional crystallization [8]. Samples in the Group 2 (D'Orbigny, Sahara 99555, NWA 1296) have similar compositions, suggesting that the liquids from which they formed are more evolved than those in Group 1 and were multiply saturated in Ol-Cpx-Plag. A series of 1 atm equilibrium experiments were performed on an oxide mix with D'Orbigny composition, at variable fO_2 s and T. Comparison of the Cpx Mg# in the experimental charges and Group 2 angrites indicate that the APB fO₂ was ~IW+1.6, in agreement with previous estimates [1]. At such fO2, olivine, plagioclase and spinel are liquidus phases and fassaitic pyroxene appears after ~50 % crystallization, far from the liquidus, indicating that the actual crystallization pressure must be greater than 1 atm. Higher P experiments are underway to determine the conditions of Ol-Cpx-Plag saturation, which will provide a lower limit on the size of the APB.

Our initial results suggest that the idea of a small APB [6-7] might need to be reassessed.

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