

The nature of Tombstone Plutonic Suite rocks at Scheelite Dome, Tintina Gold Province: Evidence for an enriched mantle contribution.

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Magmatic-hydrothermal systems have long been recognized for their critical role in the generation of many ore deposit types. Examples of such deposits include tin and tungsten deposits related to felsic intrusions (Taylor, 1979), the spectrum of Cu±Mo±Au porphyry deposits (Titley and Bean, 1981; Sillitoe, 2000), and gold deposits related to alkaline magmatism (Muller and Groves, 1995; Jensen and Barton, 2000). Additionally, strong links have been demonstrated between porphyry systems and high-sulphidation epithermal systems (Hedenquist et al., 1998; Cooke and Simmons, 2000), and some workers have invoked an association of iron-oxide-copper-gold deposits with anorogenic alkaline magmatism (Hauck, 1990; Mutschler and Mooney, 1993; Groves and Vielreicher, 2001).

Although a wide range of gold deposit types have an intrusion-related affinity as outlined above, the term 'intrusion-related' has recently been adopted to recognize a specific class of gold deposits (Sillitoe, 1991; Sillitoe and Thompson, 1998; Thompson et al., 1999; Lang et al., 2000; Lang and Baker, 2001). In the literature this deposit class is typically described as: 1) being associated with metaluminous, sub-alkalic intrusions of intermediate to felsic composition that are weakly to moderately reduced; 2) forming inboard of recognized continental magmatic arcs in areas otherwise known for Sn and W mineralisation; 3) associated with variable enrichments of As, Bi, Mo, Sb, Te, and W; and 4) characterized by aqueous-carbonic hydrothermal fluids (Thompson et al., 1999; Lang et al., 2000). A large proportion of data on which this model is based has come from examples in the Tintina Gold Province (TGP), located in the Cordilleran Orogen of both Alaska and the Yukon Territory.

The TGP is a broad geographical expanse across the central Yukon and Alaska, that comprises numerous gold camps and districts that formed at different stages in the evolution of the Jura-Cretaceous orogen (Hart et al., 2002). Significant deposits include Donlin Creek (12.3 Moz), Pogo (5.8 Moz), Fort Knox (5.4 Moz), Dublin Gulch (4.1 Moz), Brewery Creek (0.85 Moz), and True North (0.79 Moz). The province encompasses a wide variety of gold deposits, including orogenic lode-style deposits, epithermal gold deposits, extensive placer-gold deposits, and the recently recognized class of intrusion-related gold deposits (Goldfarb et al., 2000; Hart et al., 2002). Gold mineralisation took place following deformation and metamorphism associated with the collision of exotic terranes and North America, and continued subduction of the Farallon plate under the Cordilleran margin, and in many areas, was co-eval with the emplacement of calc-alkaline plutons (Goldfarb et al., 2000).

Within the TGP, gold deposits that bear the strongest spatial and temporal relationships to intrusive rocks are those associated with the 92 Ma Tombstone Plutonic Suite (TPS). The TPS forms a narrow WNW-trending belt that extends for 550 km across the central Yukon, with a continuation in the Fairbanks district of east-central Alaska that was offset by latest Cretaceous to Tertiary displacement along the Tintina Fault. It is the youngest and most northerly (cratonward) of a series of mid-Cretaceous plutonic suites in the Northern Cordillera. Intrusions were emplaced into weakly metamorphosed latest-Proterozoic to Palaeozoic metasedimentary rocks of the Selwyn Basin. Magmatism occurred in a post-collisional setting that followed the waning of mid-Cretaceous subduction. The TPS is

characterized by numerous isolated magmatic centres that feature either a number of intrusions of varying composition, a multiphase composite pluton, or a single pluton. Individual intrusions are rarely larger than 5 km in length. Intrusions are calc-alkaline to alkalic, predominantly I-type, and mostly intermediate to felsic, with calc-alkaline lamprophyres also common in many locations. Although both magnetite- and ilmenite-bearing intrusions occur, titanite-bearing intrusions are dominant, suggesting an oxidation state intermediate between magnetite- and ilmenite-series intrusions.

Scheelite Dome is located in the central Yukon, and features a variety of tungsten and gold mineralization styles hosted in, and adjacent to, a TPS magmatic center. In contrast to other renowned systems associated with TPS magmatism, the majority of mineralization at Scheelite Dome is hosted in hornfelsed metasedimentary strata, rather than TPS intrusive rocks. Soil and stream sediment sampling during initial exploration for primary gold occurrences in the 1990's identified an extensive (approximately 10 x 3 km) gold-in-soil anomaly (>20 ppb Au). Within the anomaly, primary gold occurrences are hosted in a variety of reduced skarns, potassic (biotite) alteration, and quartz veins. A TPS pluton that is approximately 5 x 2 km crops out to the immediate north of the anomaly. The pluton is dominated by an early quartz-monzonite phase. Felsic, intermediate, and mafic dikes are emplaced into both the quartz-monzonite and metasedimentary strata to the immediate south, coincident with the location of the gold-in-soil anomaly. The quartz-monzonite is weakly porphyritic with potassium feldspar megacrysts, and mafic phenocrysts of clinopyroxene, biotite, and minor hornblende. Intermediate dykes are alkalic, with a greater abundance of clinopyroxene and biotite. Mafic dykes include both spessartite and minette lamprophyres. Spessartites are amphibole rich (actinolitic hornblende) with resorbed Cr-diopside phenocrysts. Minnettes contain phlogopite and Al-Ti-Cr-rich augite phenocrysts (Mg# >85). Granite dikes are porphyritic with clinopyroxene, hornblende, biotite and potassium feldspar phenocrysts, in a fine-grained matrix of quartz, plagioclase and potassium feldspar. Subordinate aplite and pegmatite dikes occur within the main quartz-monzonite. Collectively, the intrusive rocks form a spectrum of compositions from granite to lamprophyre (excluding aplitic phases). Determining the relative timing of emplacement is restricted by the limited exposure; however, the quartz-monzonite is clearly the earliest phase, crosscut by all others. Intermediate dikes were emplaced next, followed by granitic dikes. Lamprophyres mostly crosscut all other plutonic phases.

Uranium/Pb zircon and titanite dates for the quartz-monzonite yield an approximate age of 92 Ma, and $^{40}\text{Ar}/^{39}\text{Ar}$ dates for magmatic biotite from the quartz-monzonite yield an age of 92 Ma, whereas phlogopite from a minette that crosscuts both other intrusive phases and gold mineralization yields an age of 90 Ma (minimum age). This time interval is the window for both magmatism and gold and tungsten mineralization. Hydrothermal alteration overprints the quartz-monzonite, but has mutually crosscutting relationships with granite porphyry and lamprophyre dikes. $^{40}\text{Ar}/^{39}\text{Ar}$ dates of hydrothermal biotite from gold-bearing potassic alteration yield an age of 91.4 Ma., and hydrothermal biotite from a tungsten-rich quartz vein in the quartz-monzonite yields an age of 91.5 Ma, to confirm the co-eval timing of magmatism and hydrothermal activity.

Despite the compositional variation, all intrusive rock types have similar trace-element concentrations, and are strongly enriched in LILEs and LREE. Primitive mantle-normalized trace-element spider diagrams feature distinct negative Ti, Ta, and Nb anomalies. Intermediate to mafic phases contain elevated Cr concentrations (>100ppm), with spessartites containing >500 ppm Cr. Major-element variation diagrams show linear trends for FeO, MgO and CaO, with high variability for Al₂O₃, K₂O and Na₂O. Most intrusive rock types are weakly metaluminous, except for quartz-monzonites, which are weakly peraluminous. Titanite is common to all phases, ilmenite is rare, and magnetite is present in granite porphyry

dykes. Most rocks have heavy $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ whole-rock values of 10-12.5‰, except some minette dykes, which have lower values of approximately 6-10‰. Additionally, all rocks have similar initial $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$ ratios of 0.711 – 0.713 and epsilon Nd values range from -8 to -11.5. An investigation of zircons in intermediate and felsic rocks using a high resolution ion microprobe, indicates that the irregular zircon cores, which have an inherited appearance, are mostly either isotopically reset to the age of magmatism, or they are earlier, partially-resorbed magmatic phases from the same event. This suggests that magma temperatures exceeded those estimated for zircon saturation at Scheelite Dome (780-800°C), as determined following the method outlined by Watson and Harrison (1983).

Mafic enclaves of predominantly augite-diopside, biotite (high Mg #) and apatite are common in intermediate dikes, and to a lesser extent in quartz-monzonites. Such material has compositional similarities to minettes, and could represent pockets of frozen, more primitive magma, or possible restite material from the source region. Clinopyroxene is present in all intrusive phases at Scheelite Dome, excluding aplite dykes. Granite porphyry dikes contain diopside (Mg # ~ 60) with rare resorbed Cr-diopside grains (Mg # > 90) that are rimmed by amphibole. Intermediate dykes commonly contain a variety of clinopyroxenes, with resorbed Al-Ti-Cr-rich augite that has Mg numbers in excess of 85 (similar composition to augite in minettes), Cr-Ti-poor augite that has Mg numbers from 65 - 75, and fine diopside amongst quartz and potassium feldspar that has Mg numbers of 60-65. Coronae of fine diopside grains around quartz are also common. Some intermediate dykes also contain unusual miarolitic cavities with concentric bands of quartz-potassium feldspar-carbonate, and diopside. The cavities contain primary low-salinity aqueous-carbonic fluid inclusions, which are very similar in bulk constituents to fluid inclusions identified in the gangue assemblages of ore specimens.

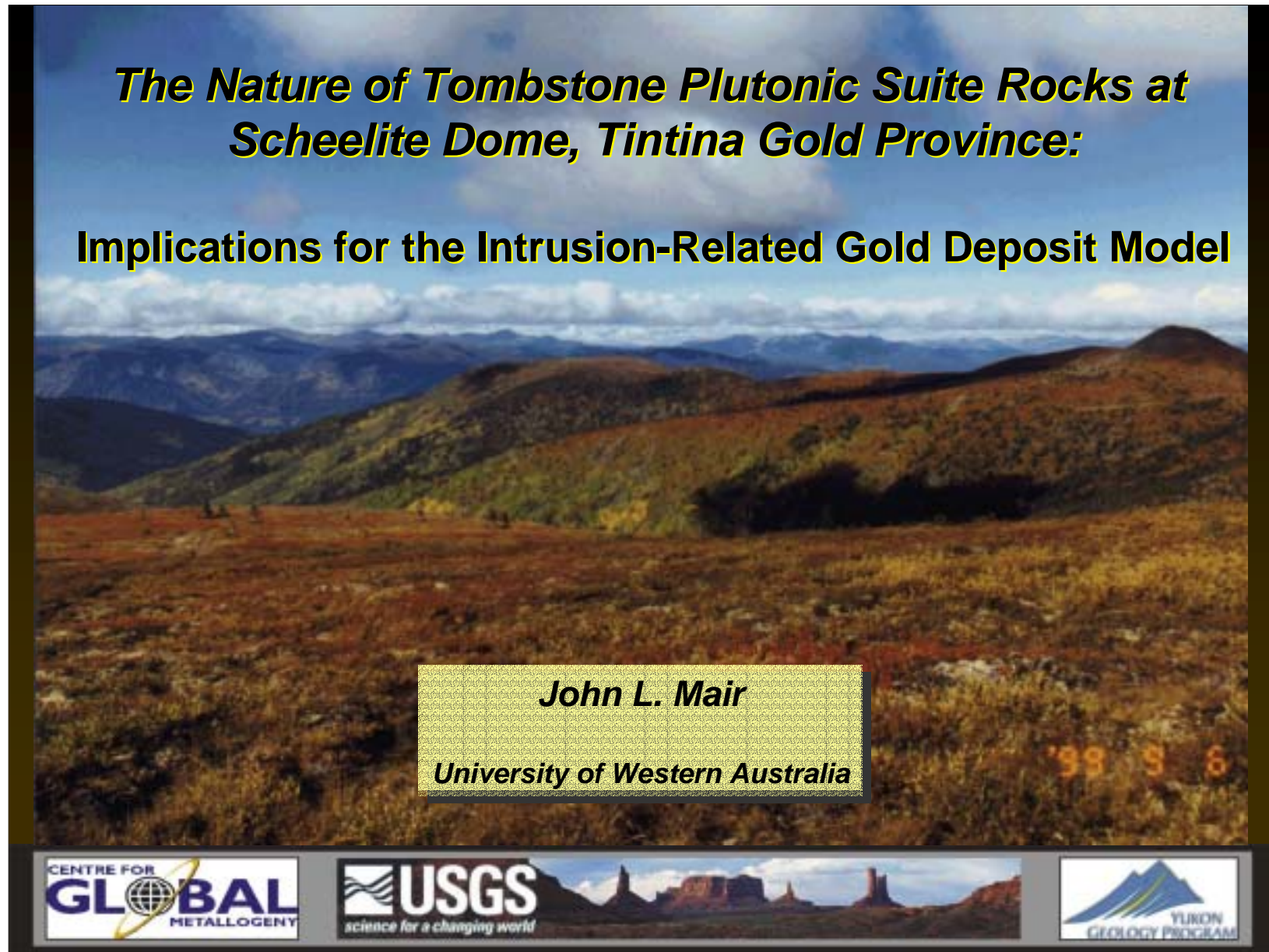
Tombstone plutonic suite rocks at Scheelite Dome cover a broad spectrum of compositions from mafic to felsic. Lamprophyres represent the mafic end member and are interpreted to be of a mantle origin, with their ultra-potassic nature, extreme enrichment of LREE and LILE's, and strongly radiogenic isotopic signature indicative of an enriched lithospheric mantle source. In contrast to minettes, all spessartites have heavier $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ whole-rock values (>10‰) that support greater crustal interaction. Felsic to intermediate phases all feature heavy $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ whole-rock values, radiogenic initial $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$ ratios, and apparent zircon inheritance, which all support a significant crustal component. However, similar radiogenic isotope signatures and similar trace element compositions across all intrusive phases, and the presence of primitive pyroxenes and mafic enclaves in more-evolved intrusive phases suggest strong genetic ties between the different plutonic phases. Collectively, the data support a model of localized crustal underplating by lamprophyric melts, with the influx of volatiles and heat promoting subsequent melting of the crust. The resultant felsic to intermediate melts have geochemical features indicative of a crustal component, but also have features common to the lamprophyres. Mafic magmatism continued with, and succeeded, felsic magmatism, resulting in intermediate dikes with strong petrographic and geochemical evidence for magma mingling.

Both field relationships and geochronology support a genetic relationship between gold (and tungsten) deposits at Scheelite Dome, and intrusive rocks of the TPS. The more evolved TPS magmas are similar to those more commonly associated with tungsten deposits (Candela, 1995), whereas the more primitive lamprophyric rocks are similar to alkaline rocks more commonly associated with some gold deposits (Muller and Groves, 1994; Jensen and Barton, 2000). In concert with the unusual setting for both gold mineralization and magmatism, TPS rocks can be considered anomalous: the product of a complex hybridized magma system that has both an enriched mantle and crustal component. Moreover, this study suggests that the this style of intrusion-related gold deposits may be derived from highly

specific magma types that are not present in the normal fore-arc settings of the more common orogenic gold deposits (Groves et al., 2003).

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***The Nature of Tombstone Plutonic Suite Rocks at
Scheelite Dome, Tintina Gold Province:***

Implications for the Intrusion-Related Gold Deposit Model

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Acknowledgements:

- **Advisors:**
 - Professor **David Groves**,
 - Ass. Professor **Rich Goldfarb**,
 - Ass. Professor **Steffen Hagemann**
- **Sponsors (*logistical & financial support*):**
 - **USGS**
 - **Yukon Geology Program**
 - **Society of Economic Geologists Foundation (student grants)**
- **Laboratory/technical support:**
 - **Professor Lang Farmer (Colorado University)**
 - **Dr Craig Johnson (USGS – stable isotope facilities)**



Overview

- The intrusion-related Au deposit model
- The *Tintina Gold Province*
- The *Tombstone Plutonic Suite (TPS)*
- Scheelite Dome
 - *Geology, mineralisation styles*
 - TPS rocks
 - *Types, field relations, absolute timing*
 - *Mineralogy, chemistry, textures*
 - *Source*
- Regional comparisons
- Implications for the *intrusion-related Au-deposit* model

The Intrusion-Related Au Deposit Model

- **Magmatic-hydrothermal systems**
 - *Porphyry – Cu, Mo, Au*
 - *High sulfidation epithermal Au ???*
 - *Sn & W skarns, greisens*
 - *Gold deposits associated with alkaline magmatism*

- **And Now..... “Intrusion-related gold”**
 - **Inboard of convergent plate boundaries**
 - **Magmatic provinces known for Sn and/or W**
 - **Metaluminous, sub-alkalic, weakly reduced intrusions**
 - **Au associated with Bi, Te, W, As +/- Mo, Sb**
 - **Aqueous-carbonic, low-salinity fluids**
 - **Sheeted vein complexes, replacements, skarns**

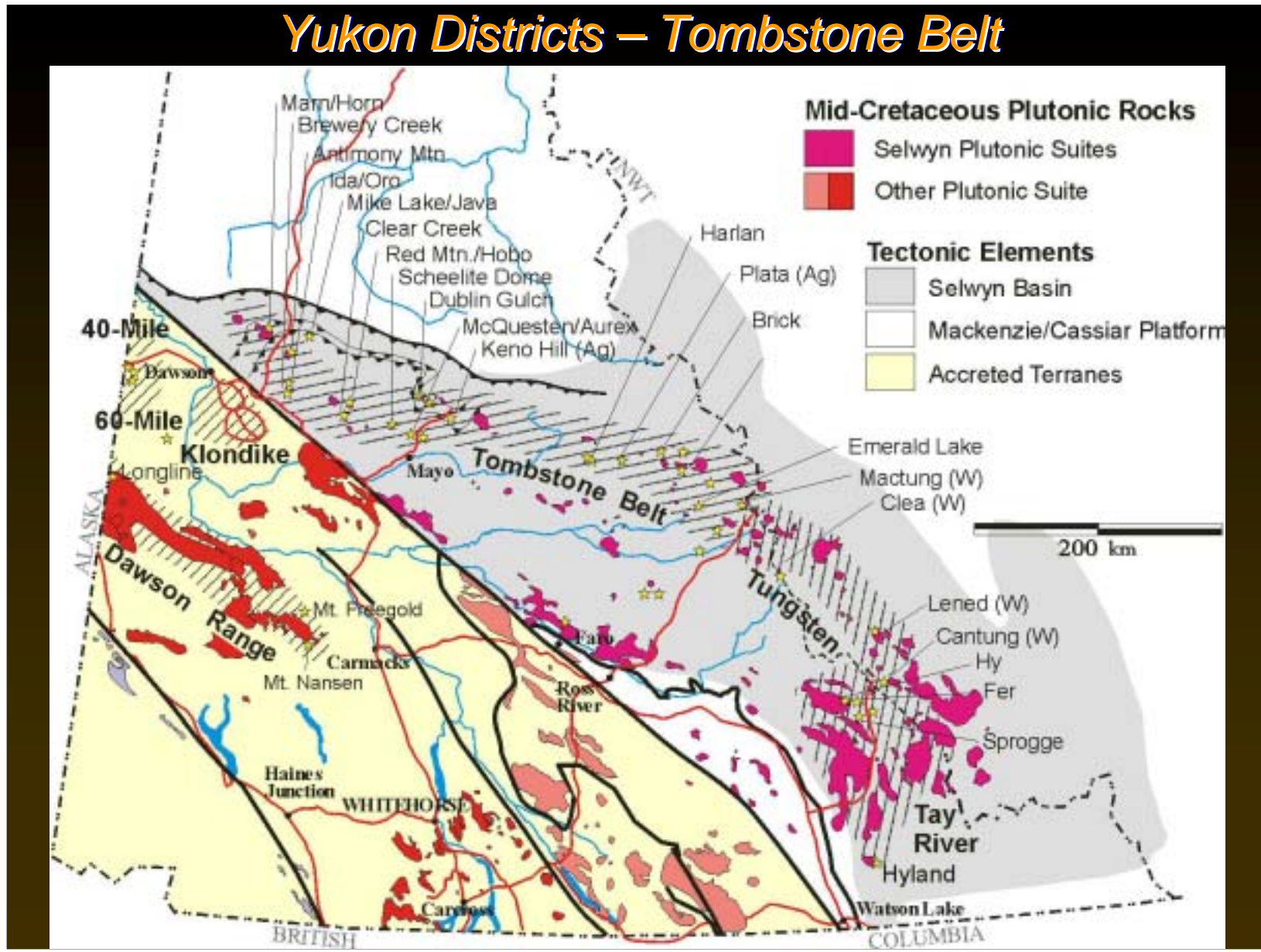
The Controversy

- **Despite numerous review-style papers – very little data exists....**
 - **Did the intrusions contribute fluids and metals exotic to the deposit environment, or are such components sourced from local country rocks??**
 - **If so...**
 - ***What is special about these intrusive rocks ?***
 - ***How are they generated ?***
 - ***In what kind of setting are they generated ?***
 - ***What tectonic history has an area undergone to be conducive to generating such magmas ?***
- **Existing data indicates such systems occur in convergent margin settings, and have similar hydrothermal characteristics to orogenic Au deposits**
 - **These factors have sparked contention and confusion**

The Tintina Gold Province





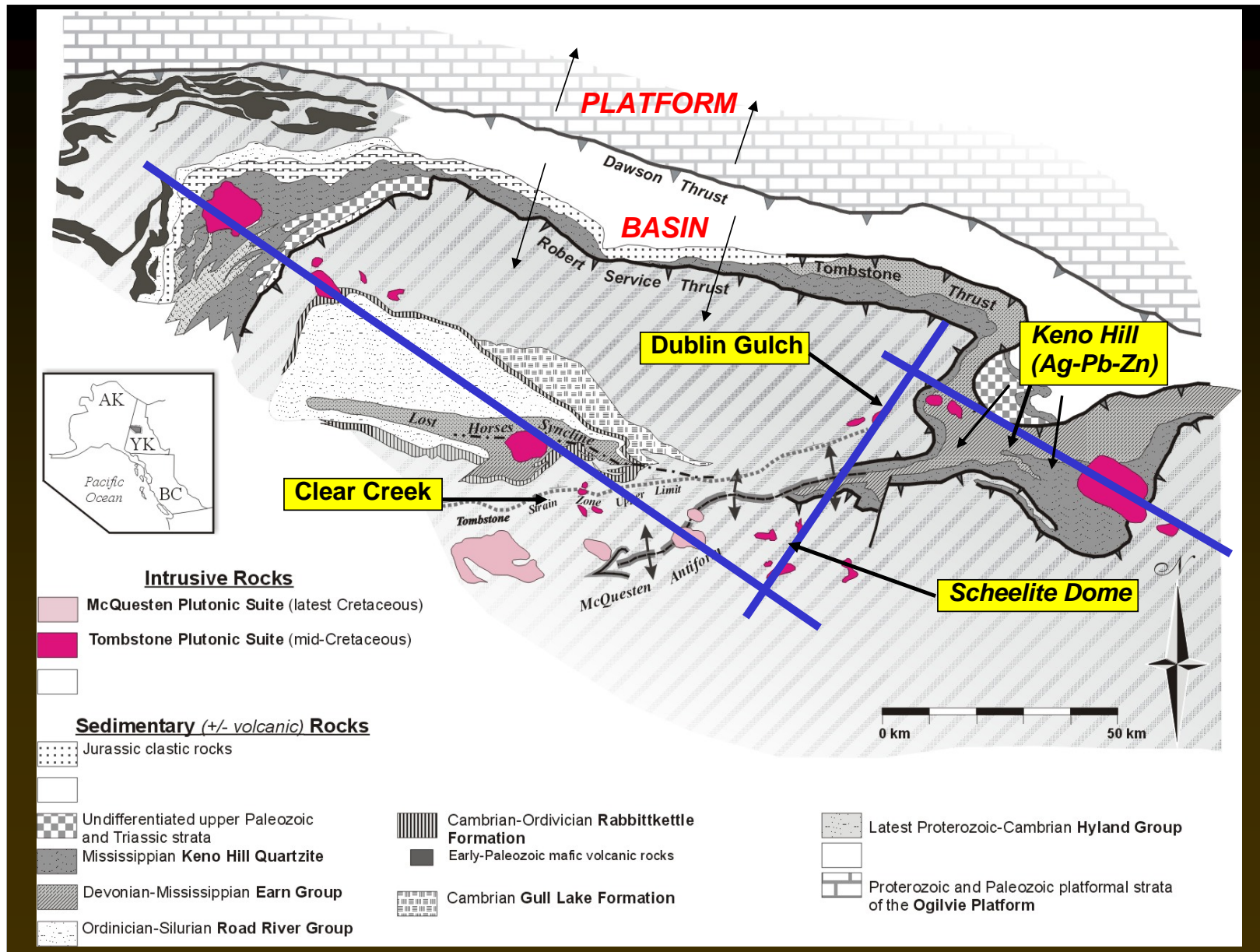


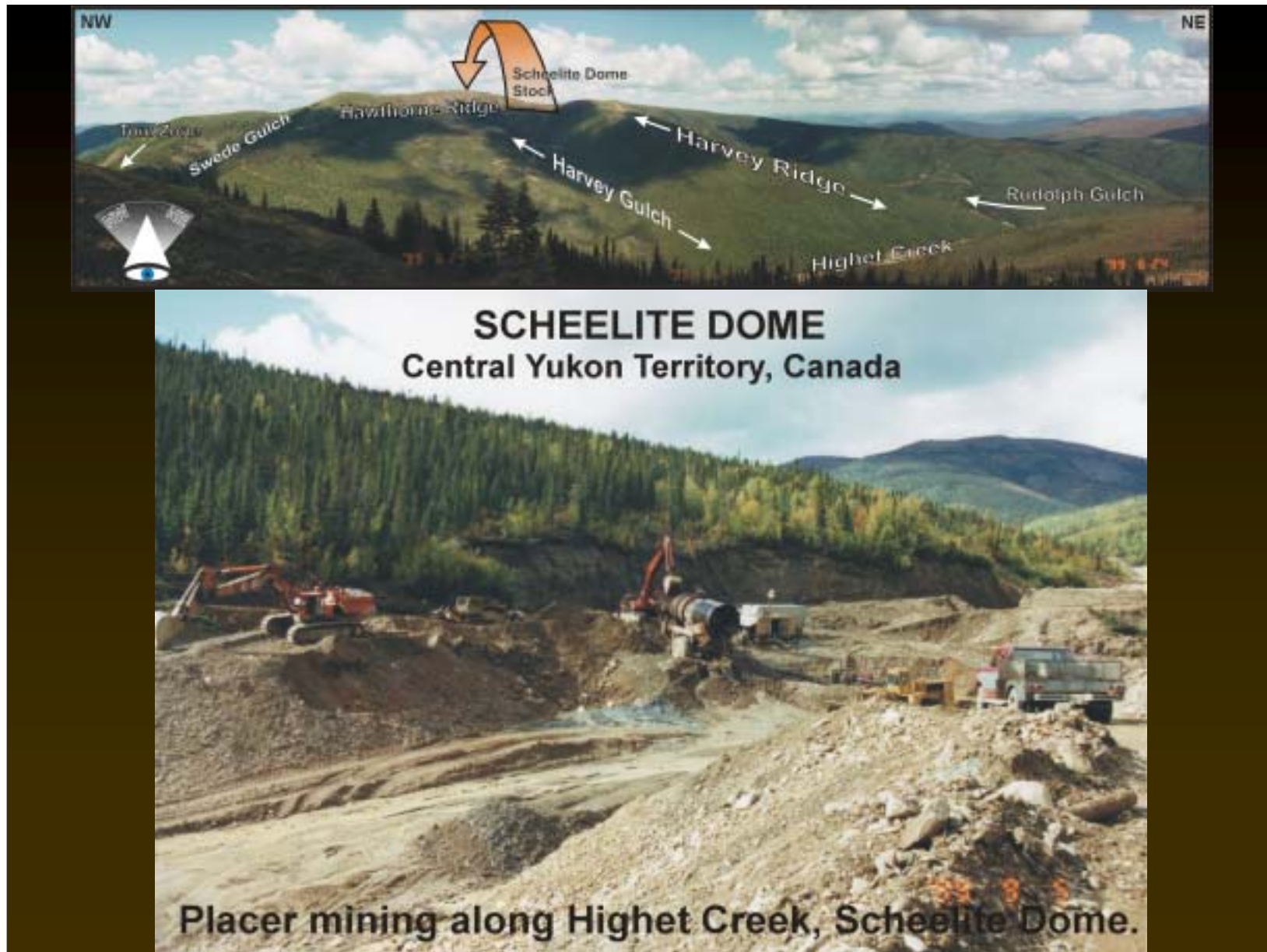
Yukon Districts – Tombstone Belt

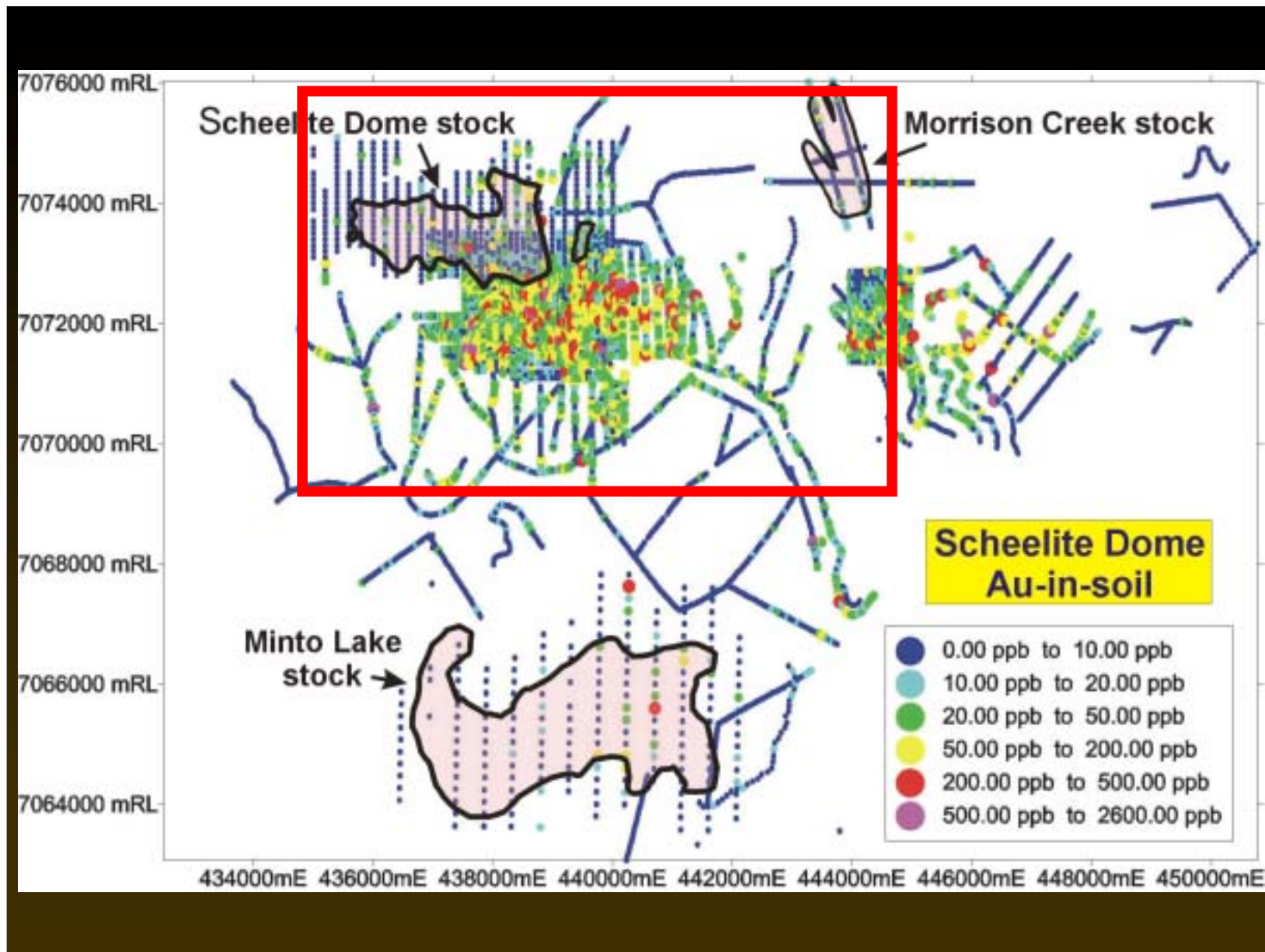


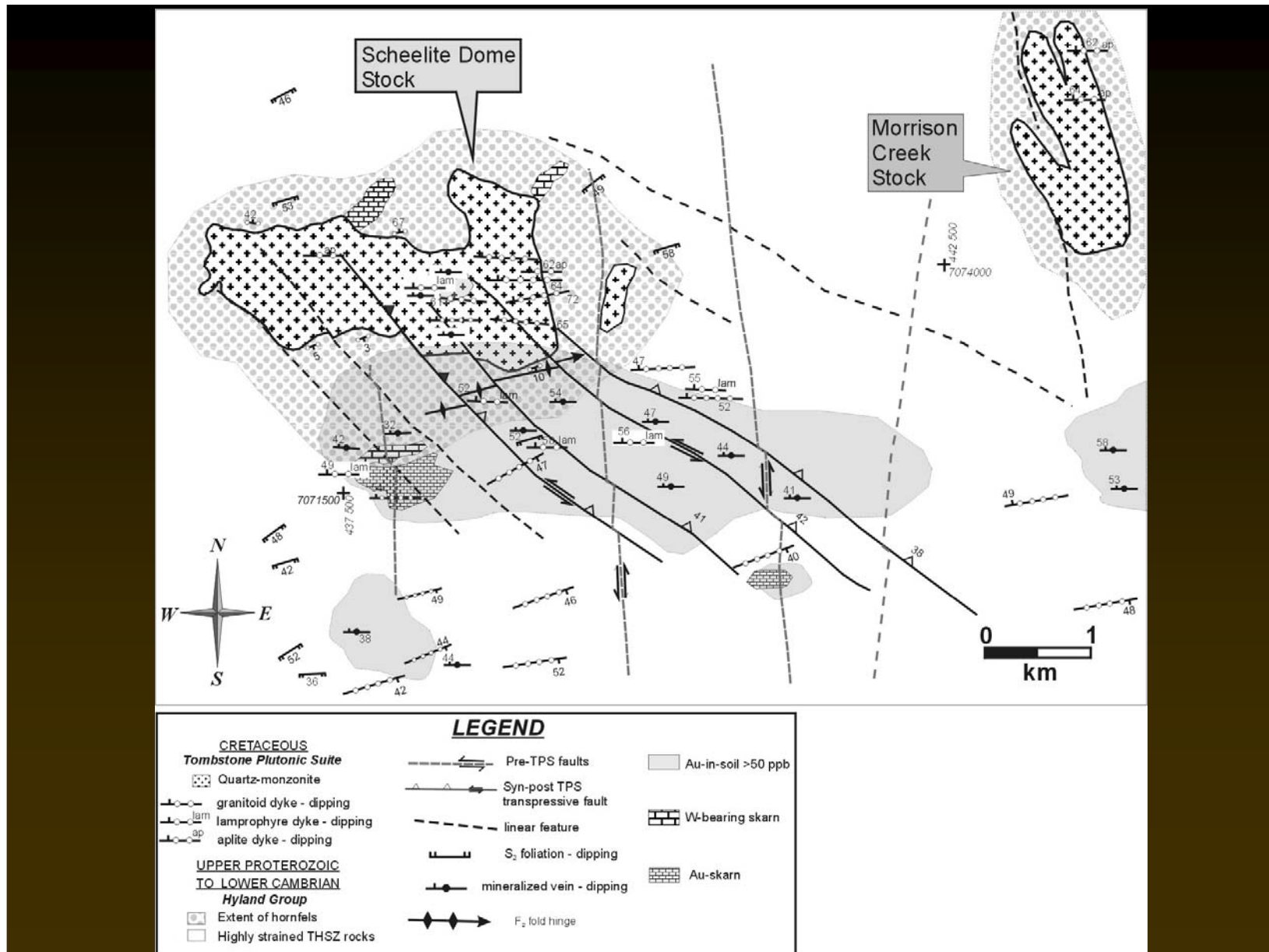
Tombstone Plutonic Suite:

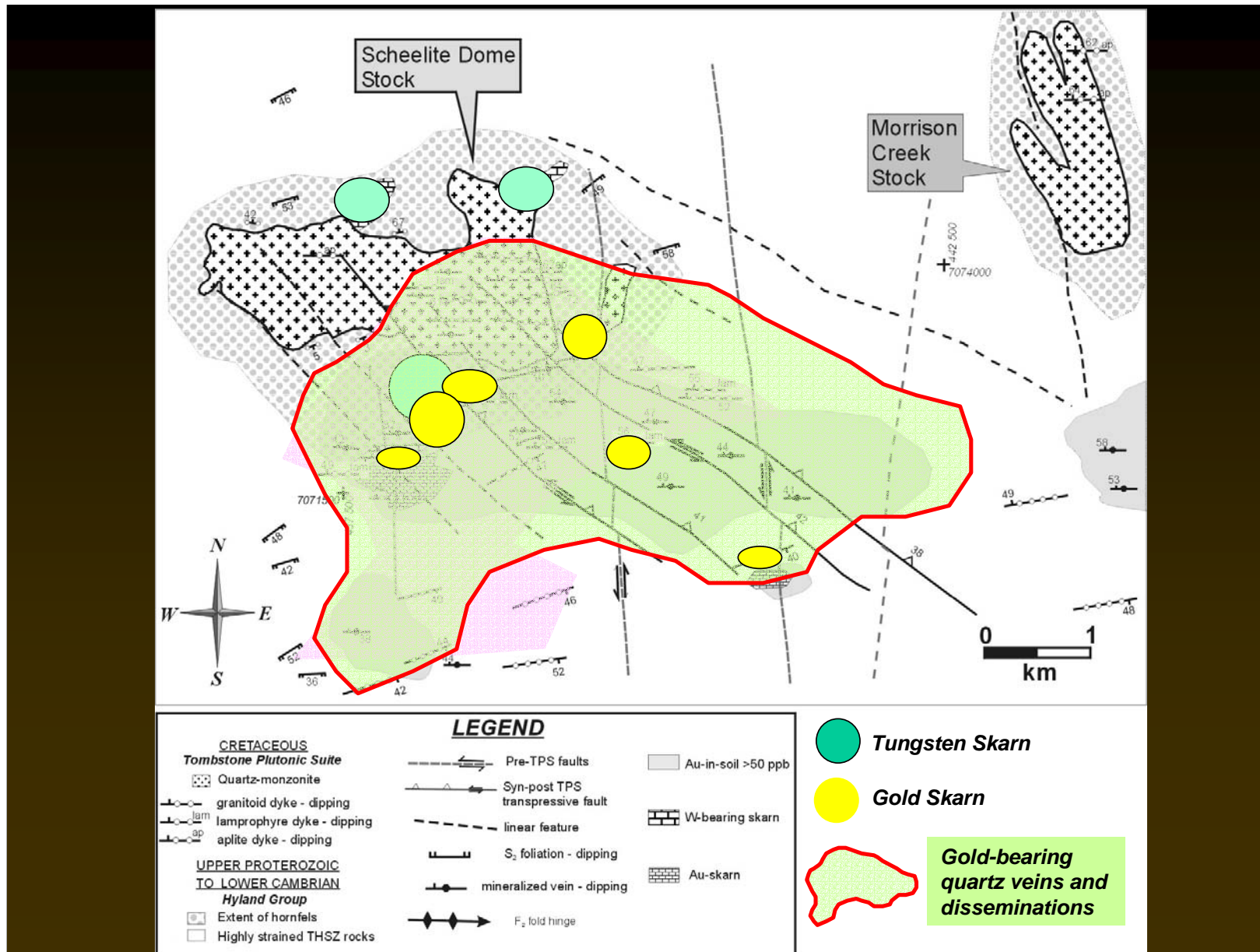
- Youngest, and most inboard (*cratonward*) of mid-K plutonic suites
- Isolated intrusive centres that comprise compositionally diverse intrusions.
- Individual intrusions rarely > 5 km in exposed length
- Calc-alkaline to alkalic, felsic to mafic (felsic dominated)
- Weakly oxidised to weakly reduced (titanite-bearing)
- Associated with W and Au (\pm Te, Bi, As) deposits





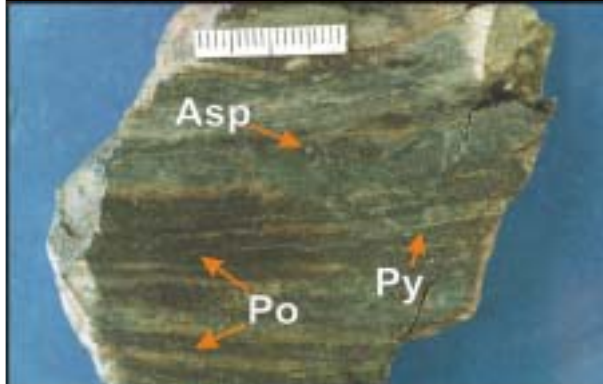








High temperature pervasive mineralisation



ELEMENT	FA-4
Mo	4
Cu	3927
Pb	7
Zn	52
Ag	5
As	3367
Sb	36
Bi	426
W	161
Au	17
Te	12

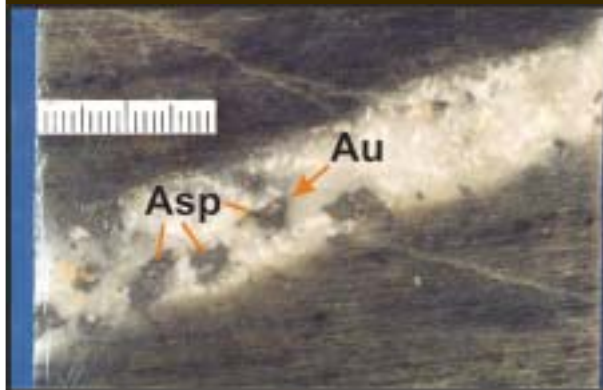


ELEMENT	TZL-1
Mo	6
Cu	72
Pb	85
Zn	37
Ag	11
As	99999
Sb	208
Bi	3961
W	4153
Au	152
Te	110

Au - skarn
Diopside-plagioclase gangue

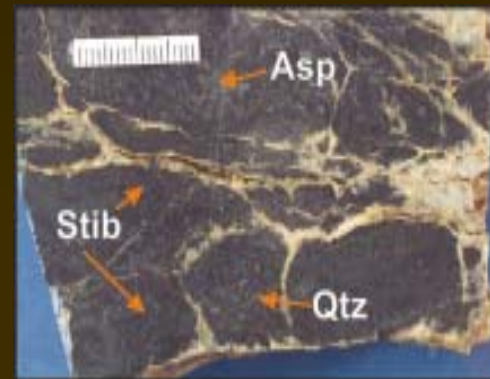
Potassic alteration
Phlogopite gangue

Vein-hosted mineralization (medium temperature)



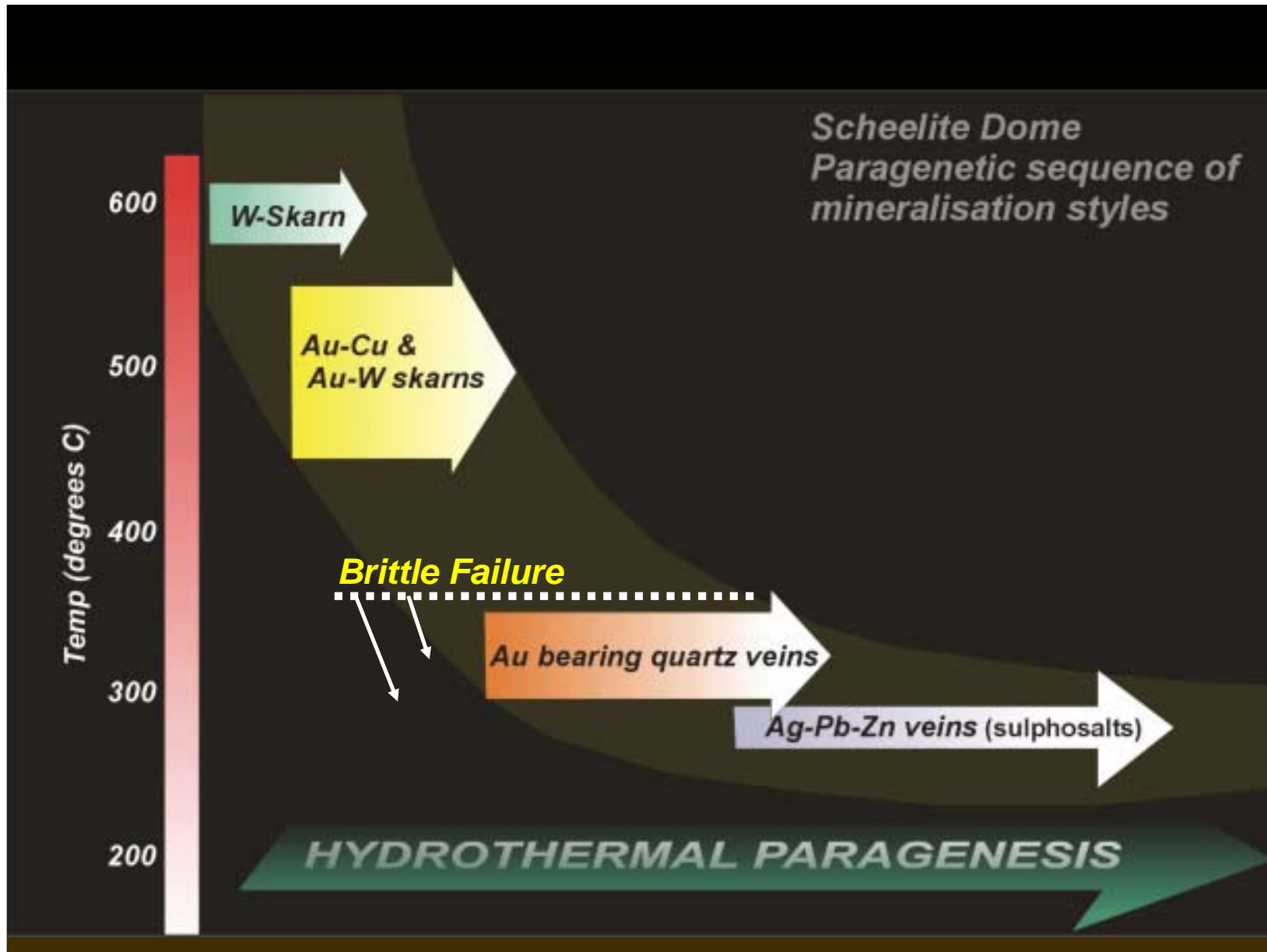
ELEMENT	SH11-78
Mo	2
Cu	46
Pb	125
Zn	82
Ag	11
As	35867
Sb	84
Bi	27
W	< 2
Au	60
Te	4

Tension vein



ELEMENT	1H
Mo	2
Cu	1865
Pb	21040
Zn	173
Ag	288
As	14883
Sb	20431
Bi	24
W	3
Au	2
Te	0

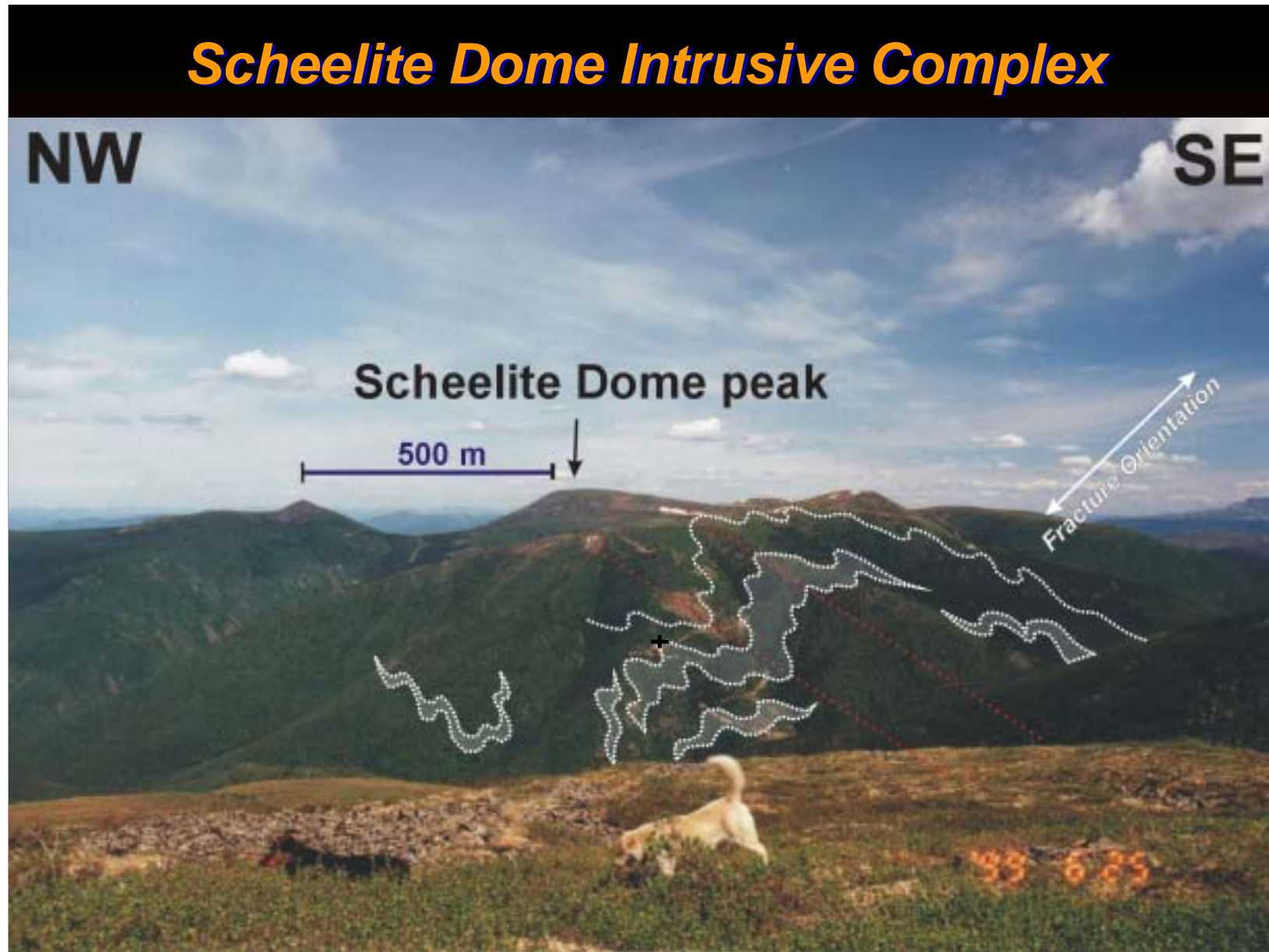
Fault vein

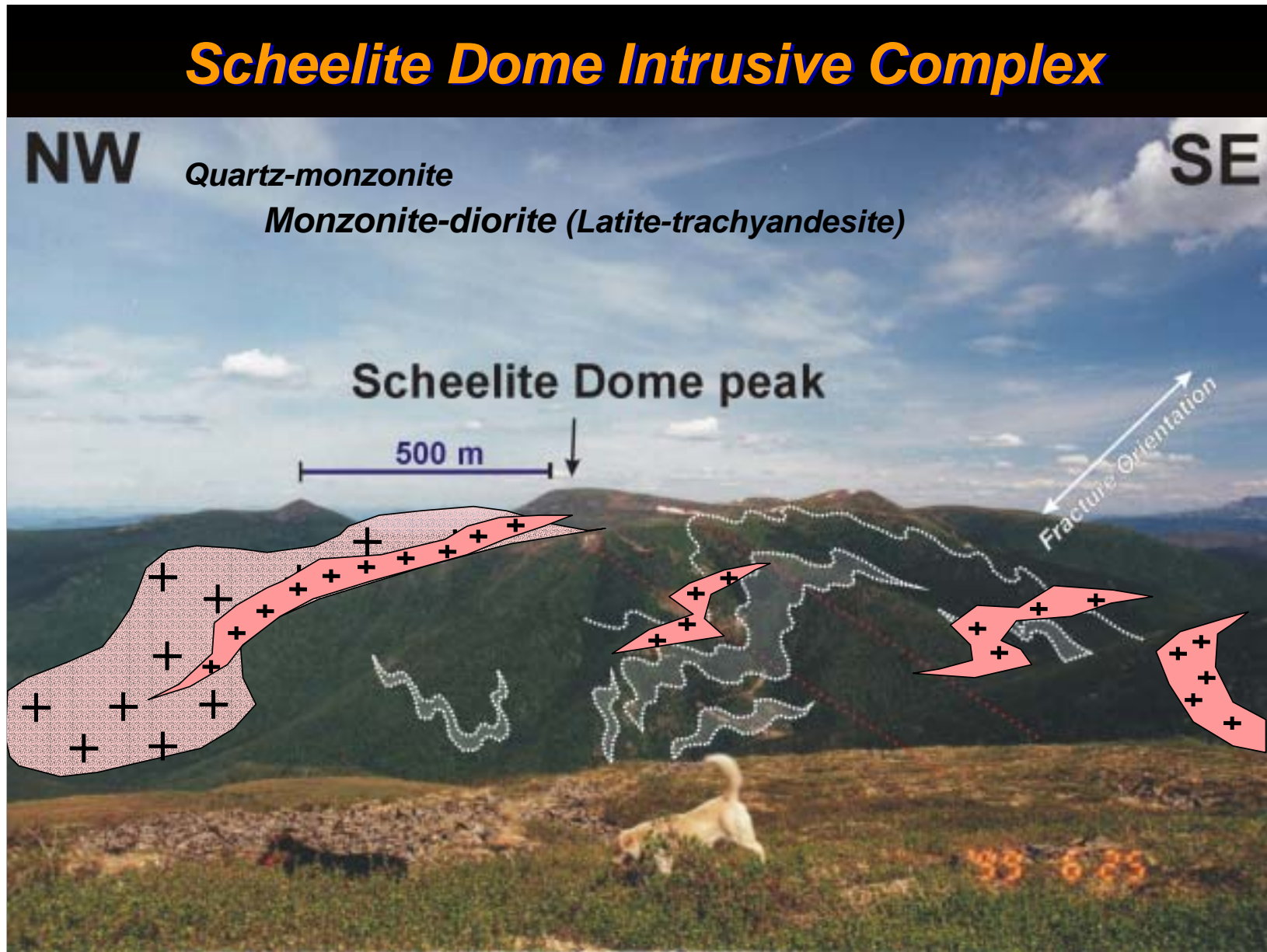


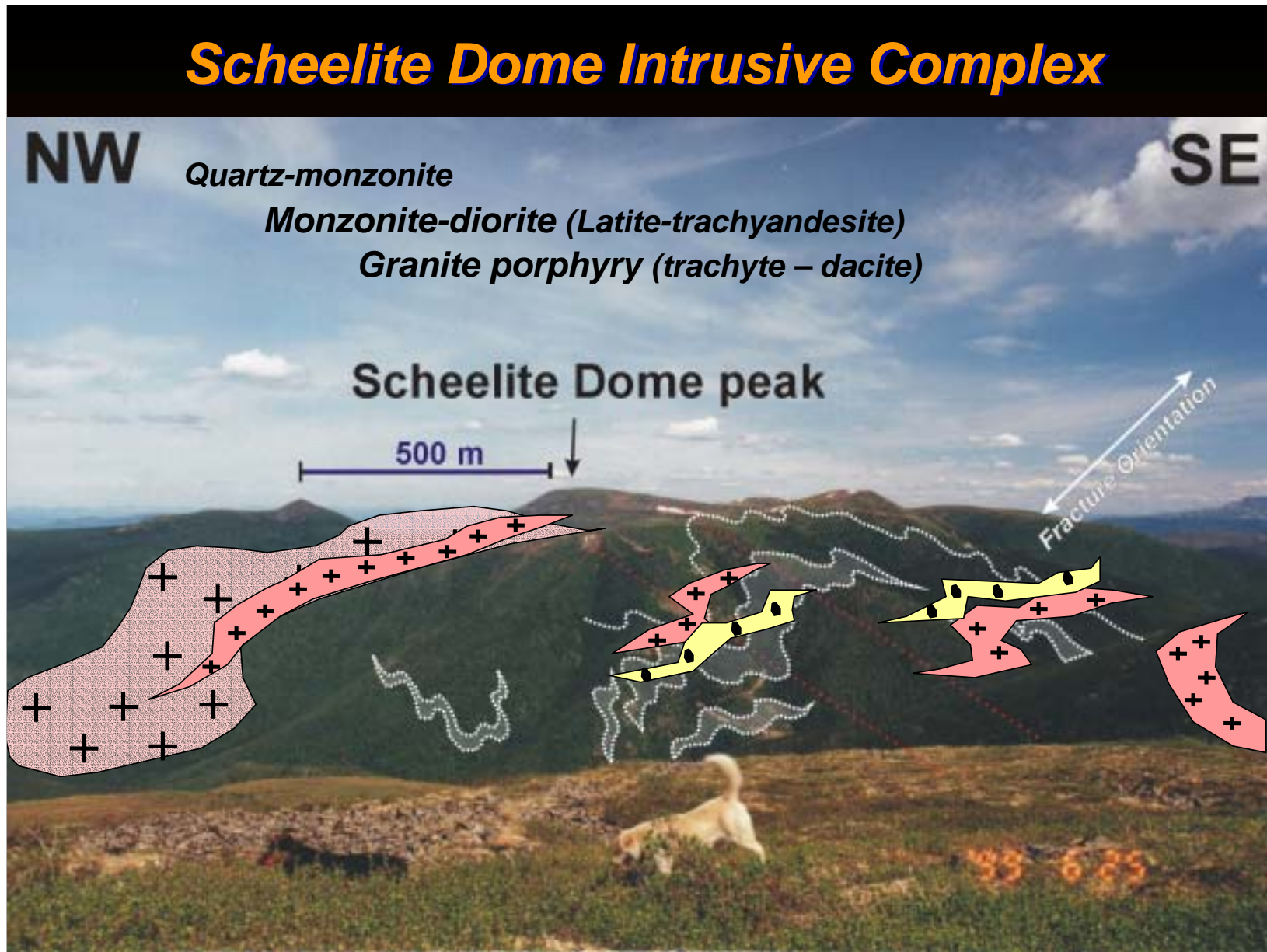
Tombstone Plutonic Suite Rocks at Scheelite Dome

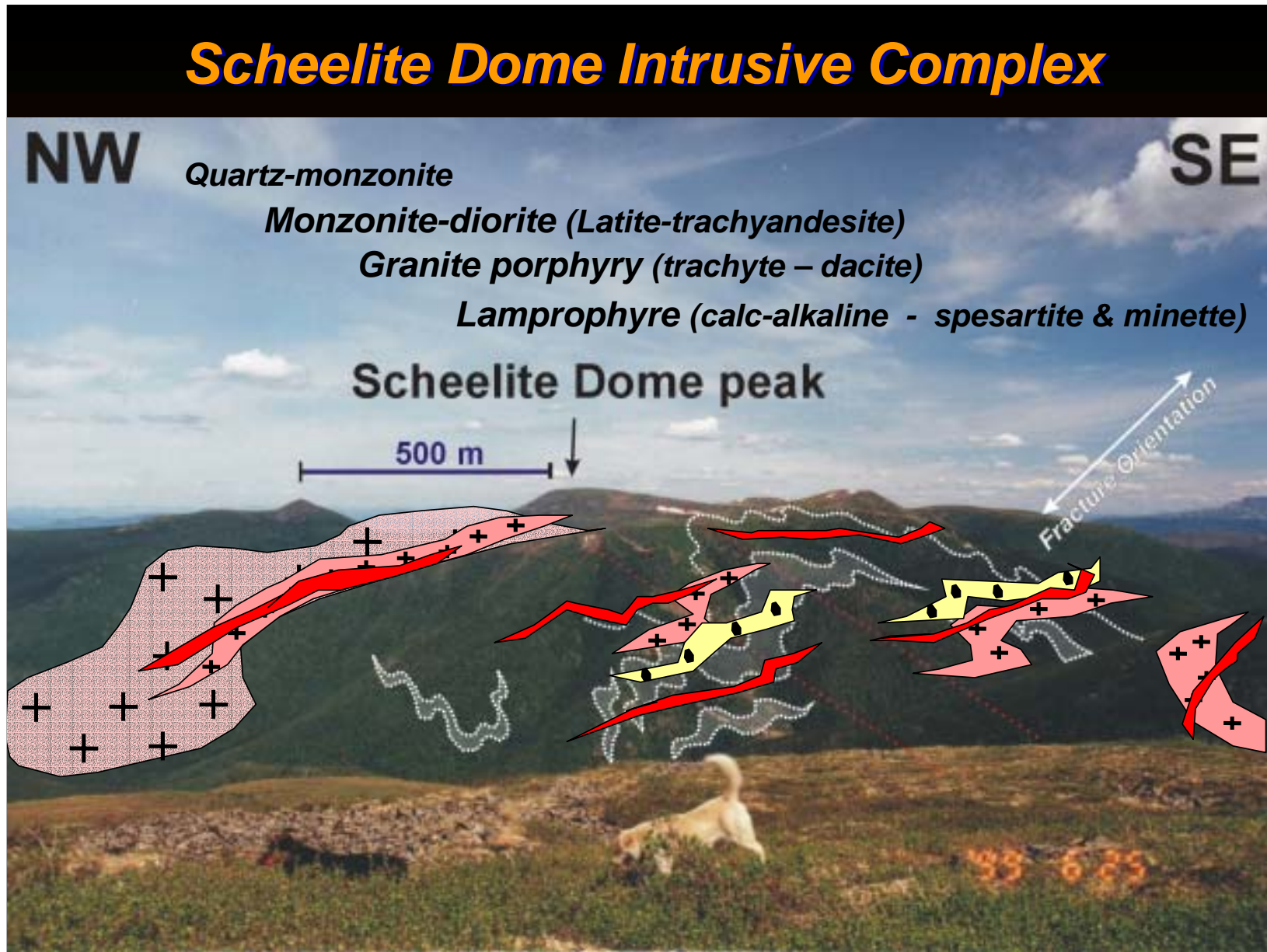
- **Variety of stocks and dykes crosscut collision-related deformation fabrics (*post collisional*)**
- **Emplaced at approximately 6-8 km depth**
- **Ambient geotherm ~ 250° C or less**

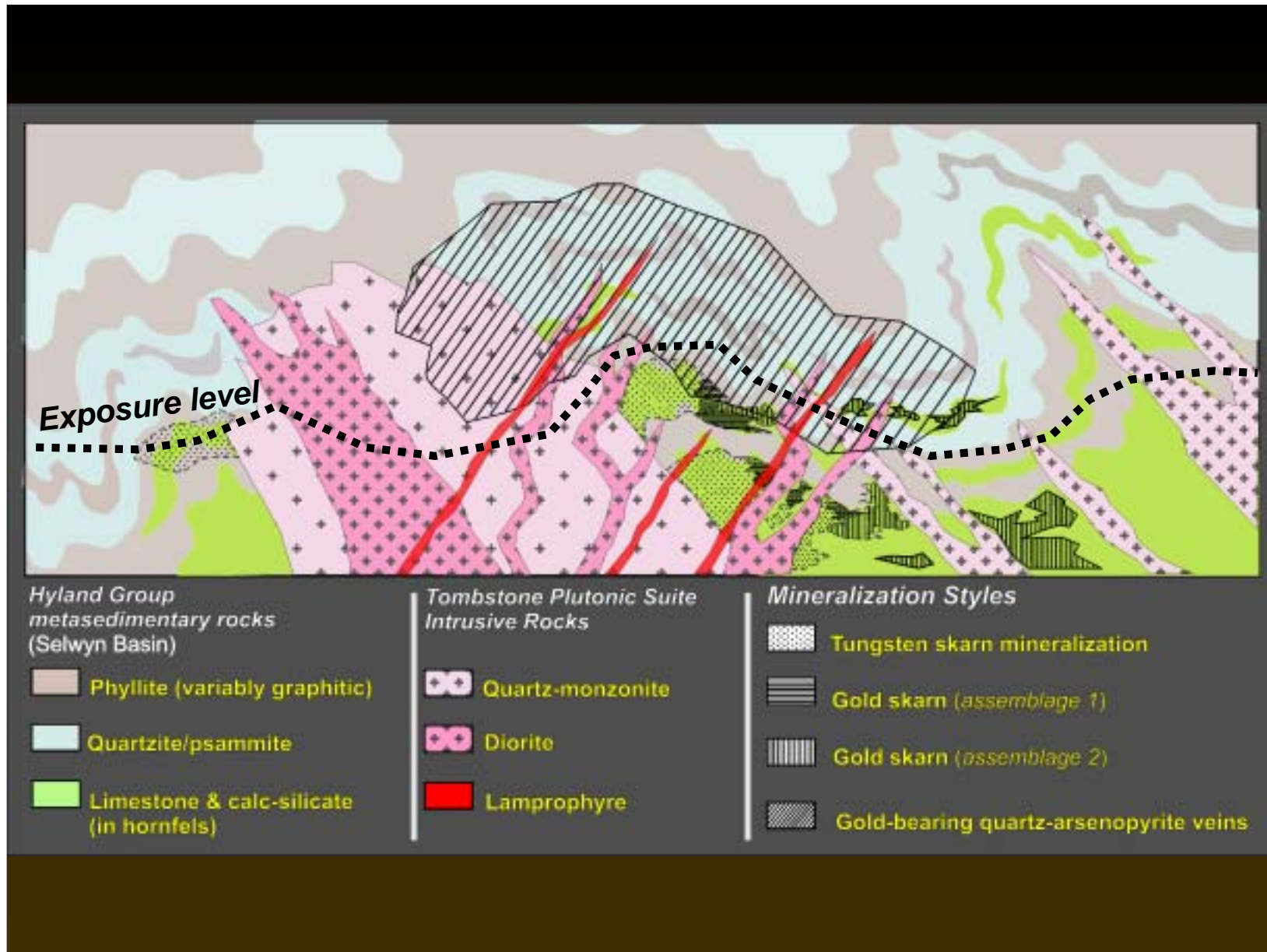
- **Compositionally diverse**
 - ***Granite to lamprophyre***





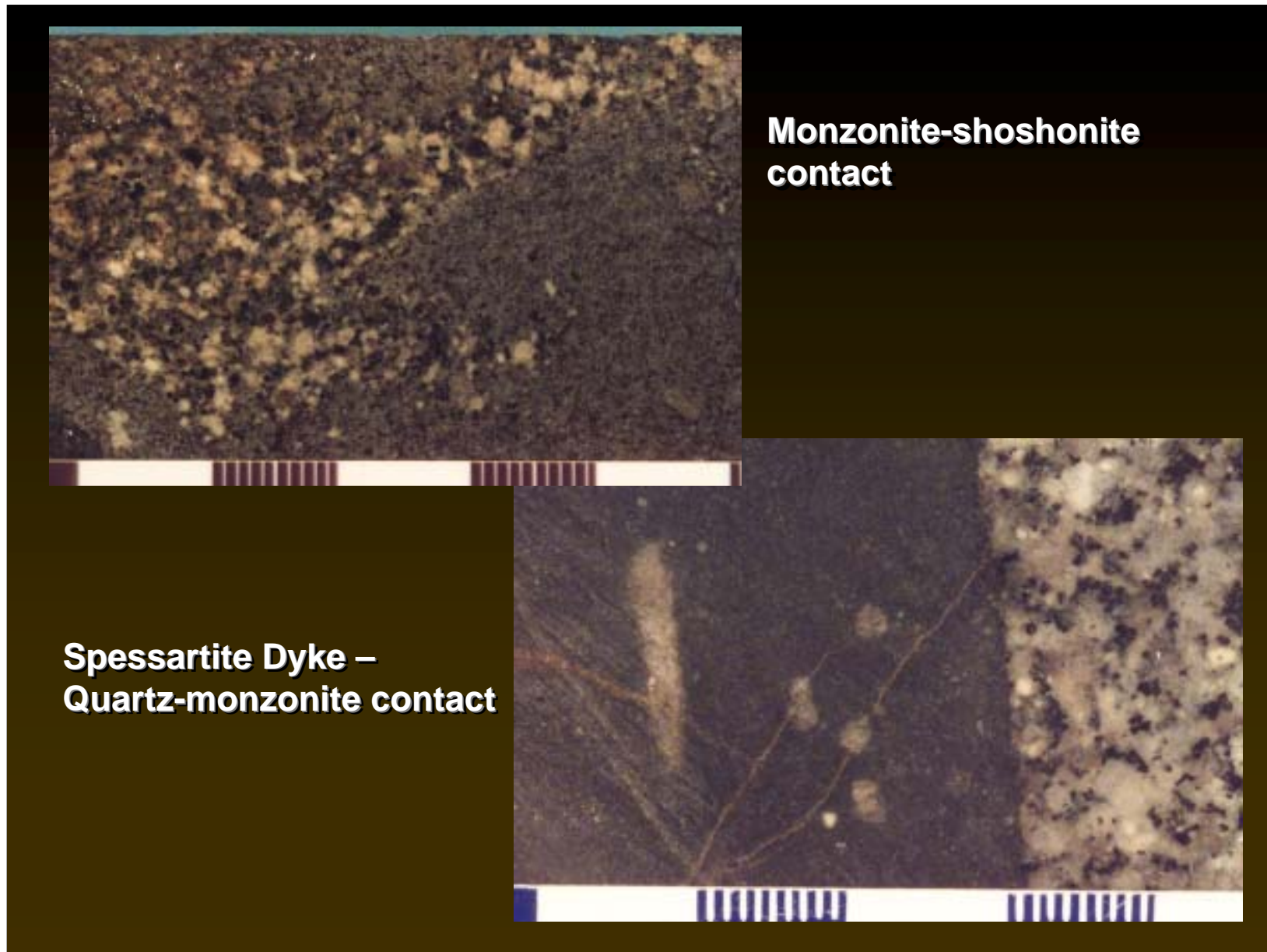




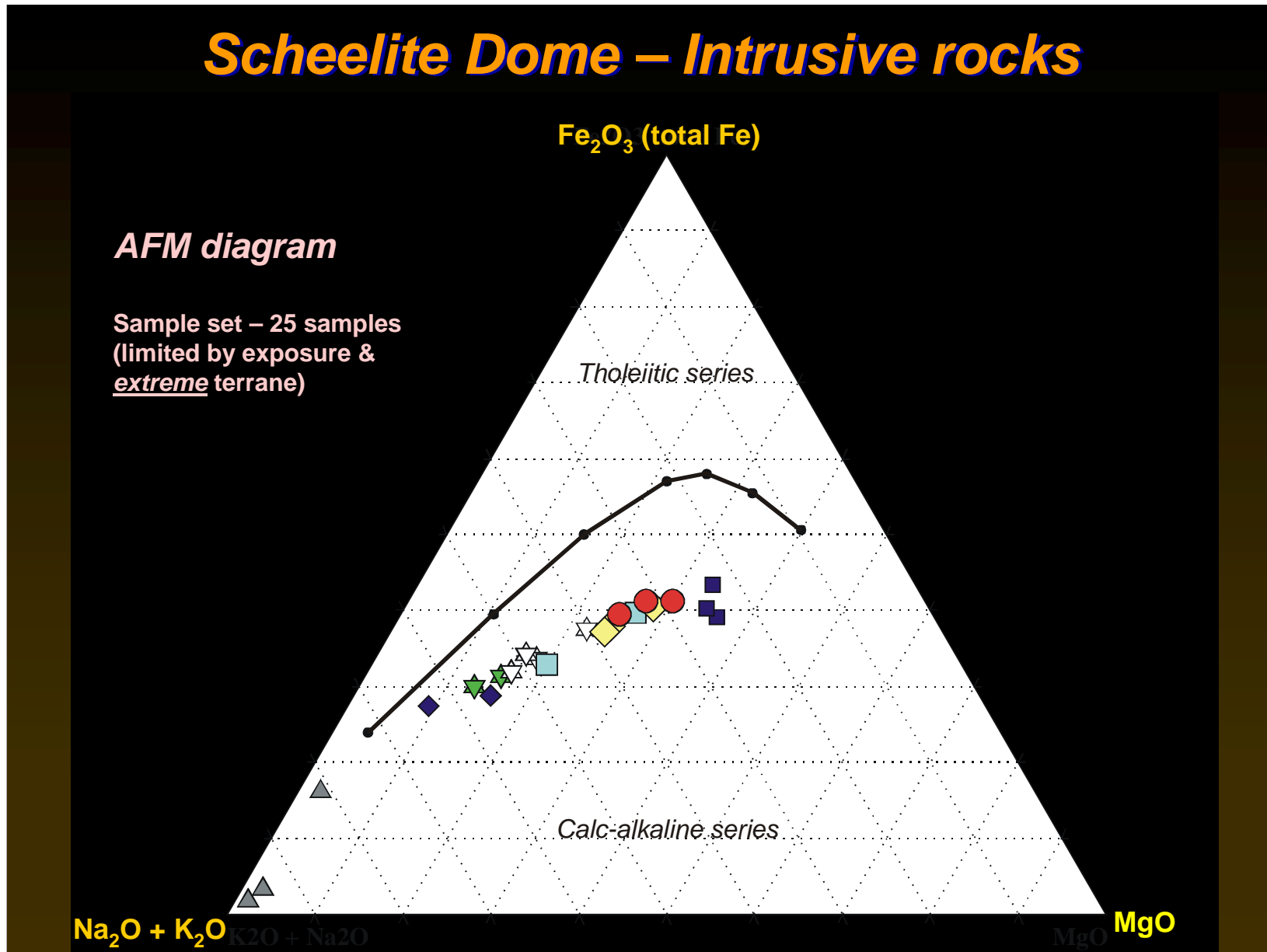


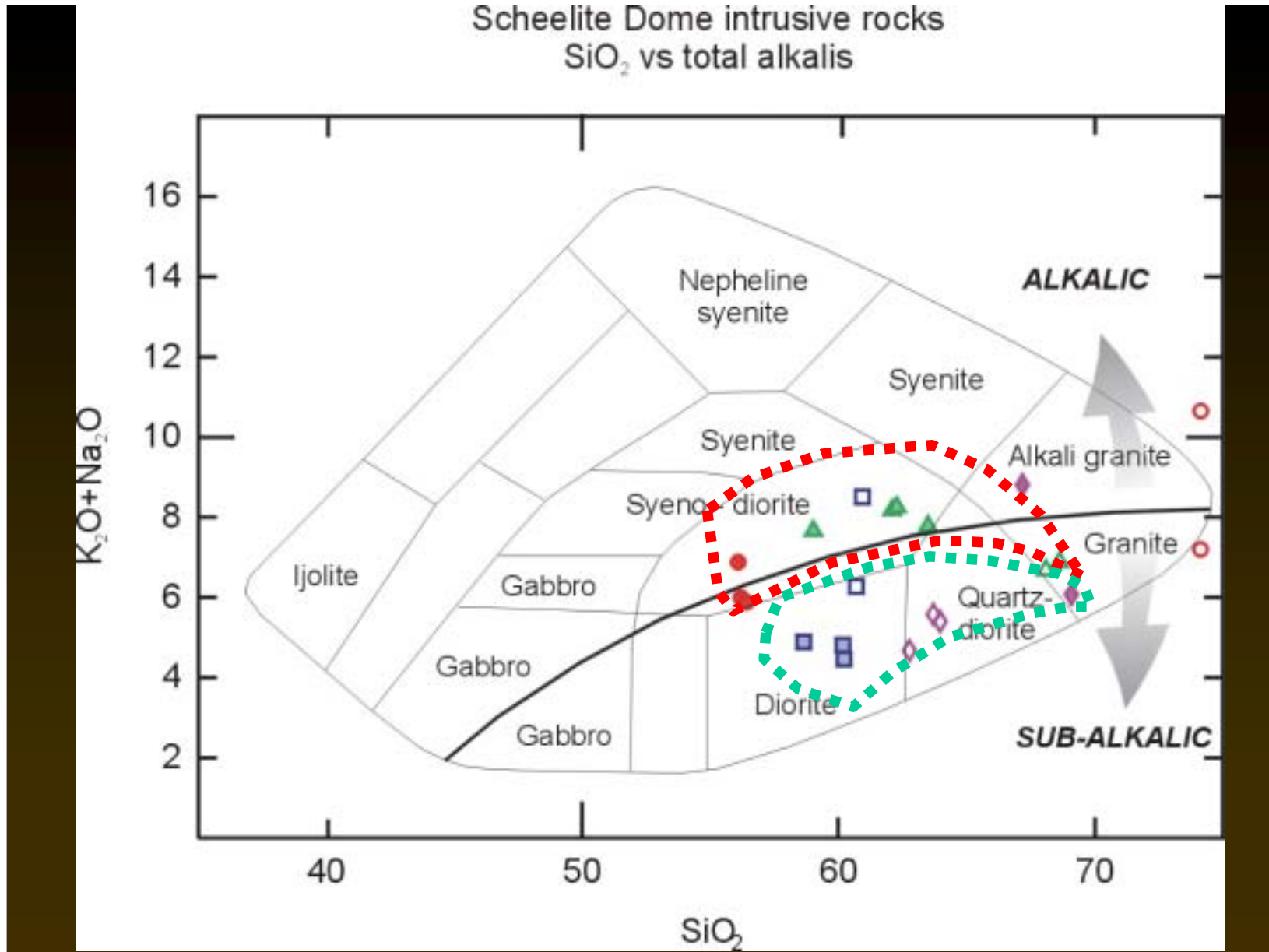
Timing Constraints

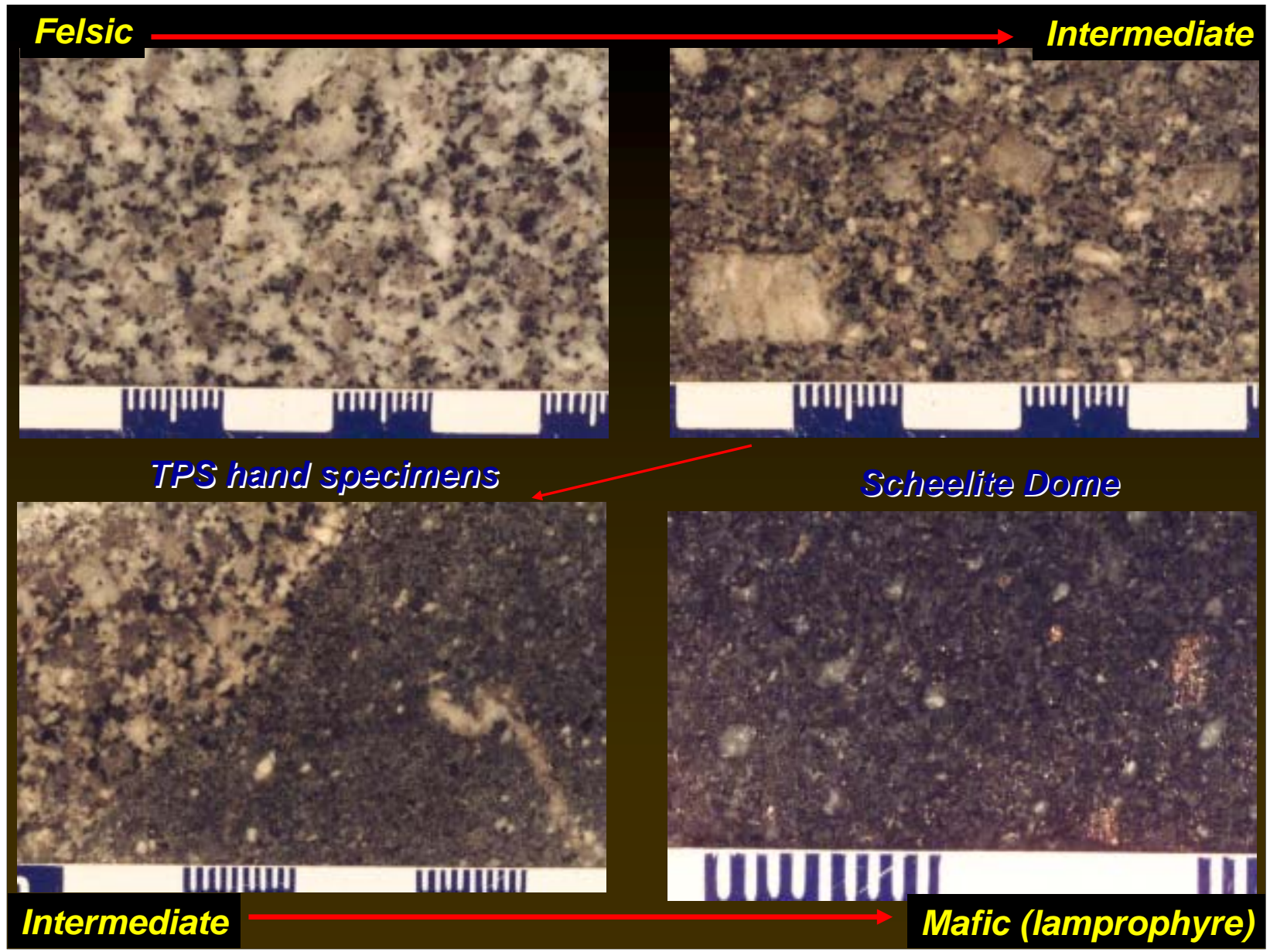
- **RELATIVE:**
- Qtz-monzonite cut by all other intrusive phases and hydrothermal assemblages
- Monzonite/latite and diorite/trachyandesite dykes emplaced next
- Lamprophyre and granite porphyry dykes feature mutually cross cutting relationships with mineralised hydrothermal assemblages
- **ABSOLUTE:**
- Qtz-monzonite – Emplaced @ ~ 92.5 Ma (U/Pb & Ar/Ar)
 - Hydrothermal assemblages (Au & W) – 91.5 Ma (Ar/Ar)
 - Late minette dyke (x cuts both mineralisation and intrusive rocks) – 91 Ma (Ar/Ar)

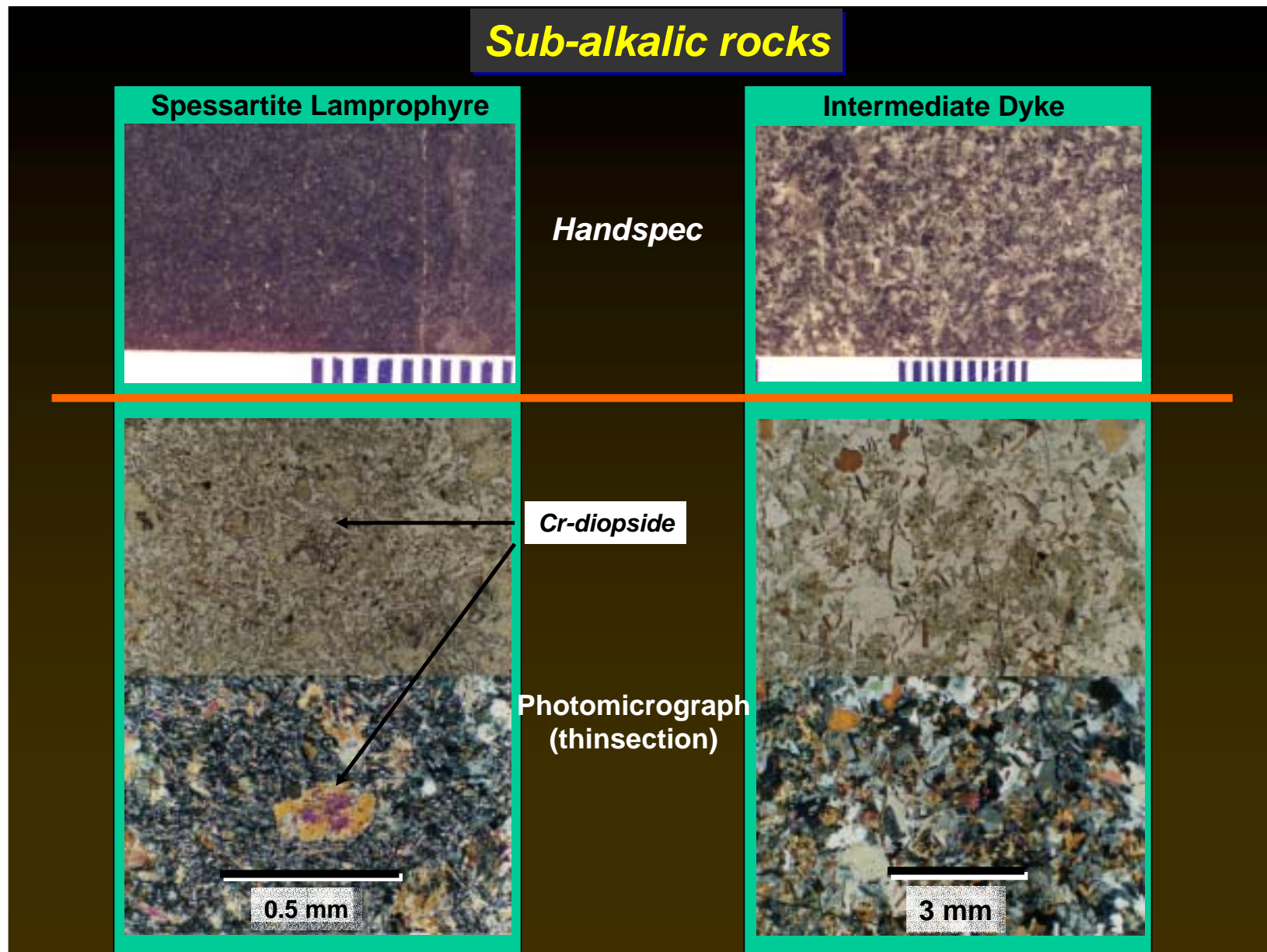


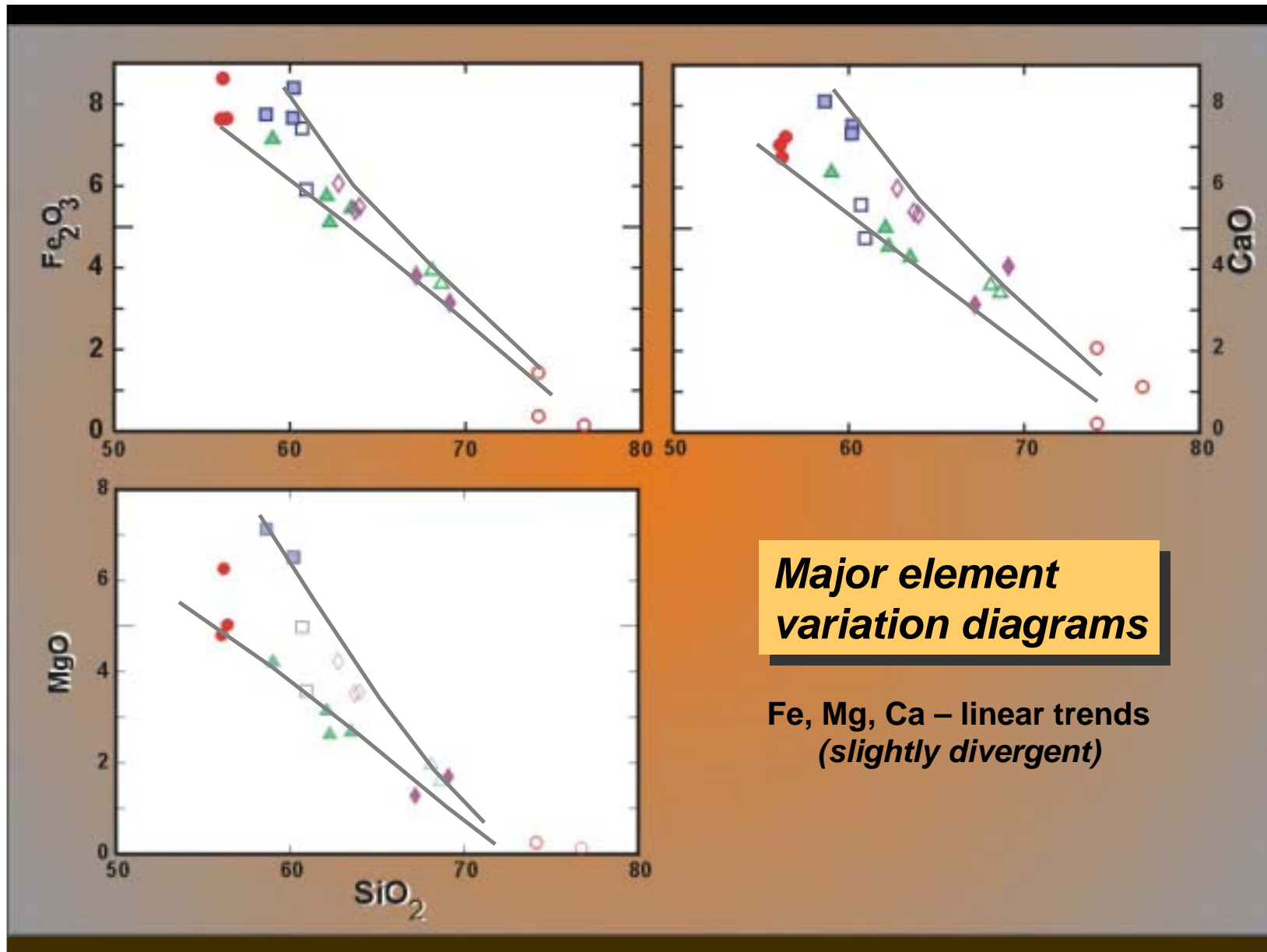
Scheelite Dome – Intrusive rocks

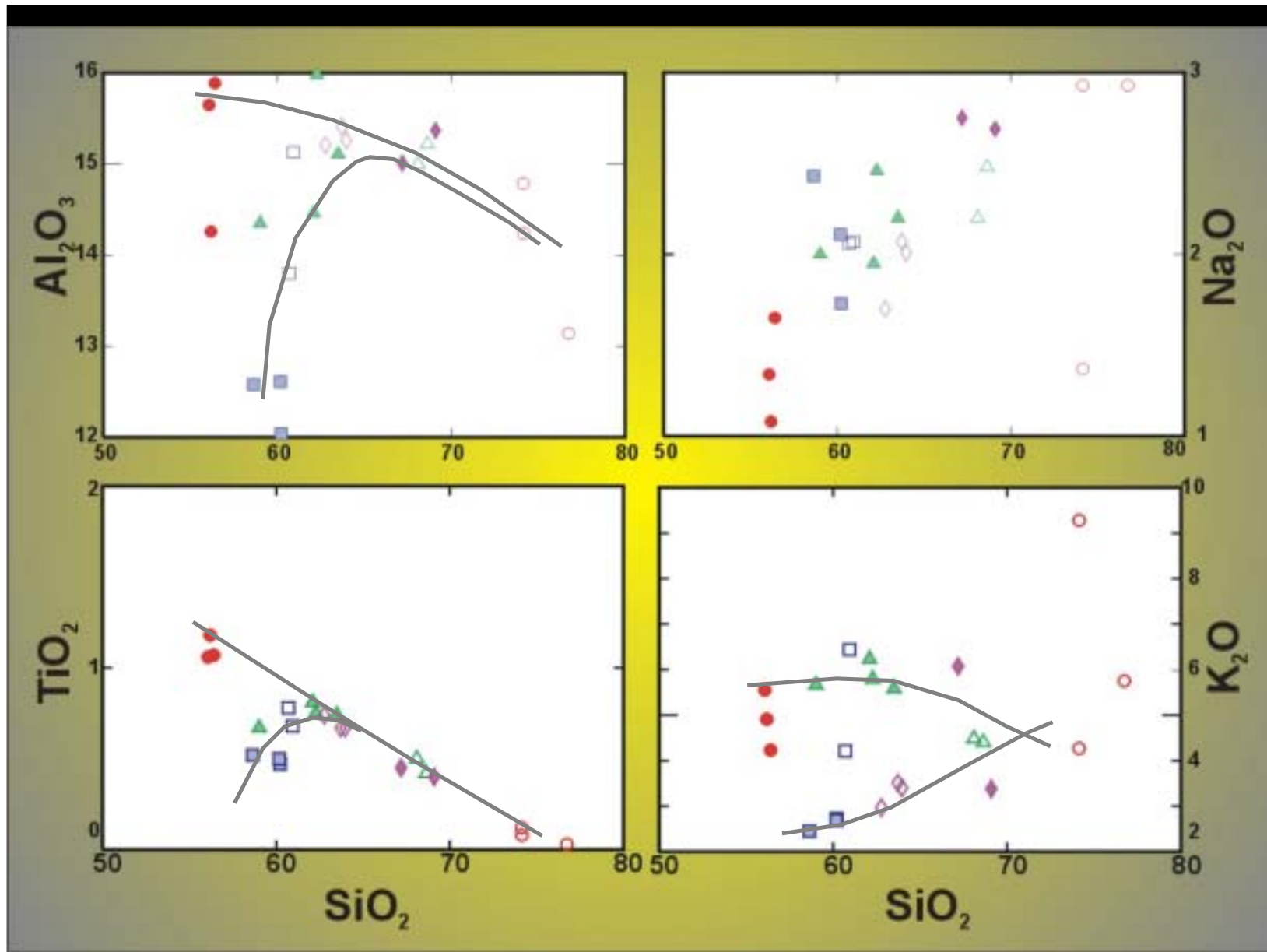


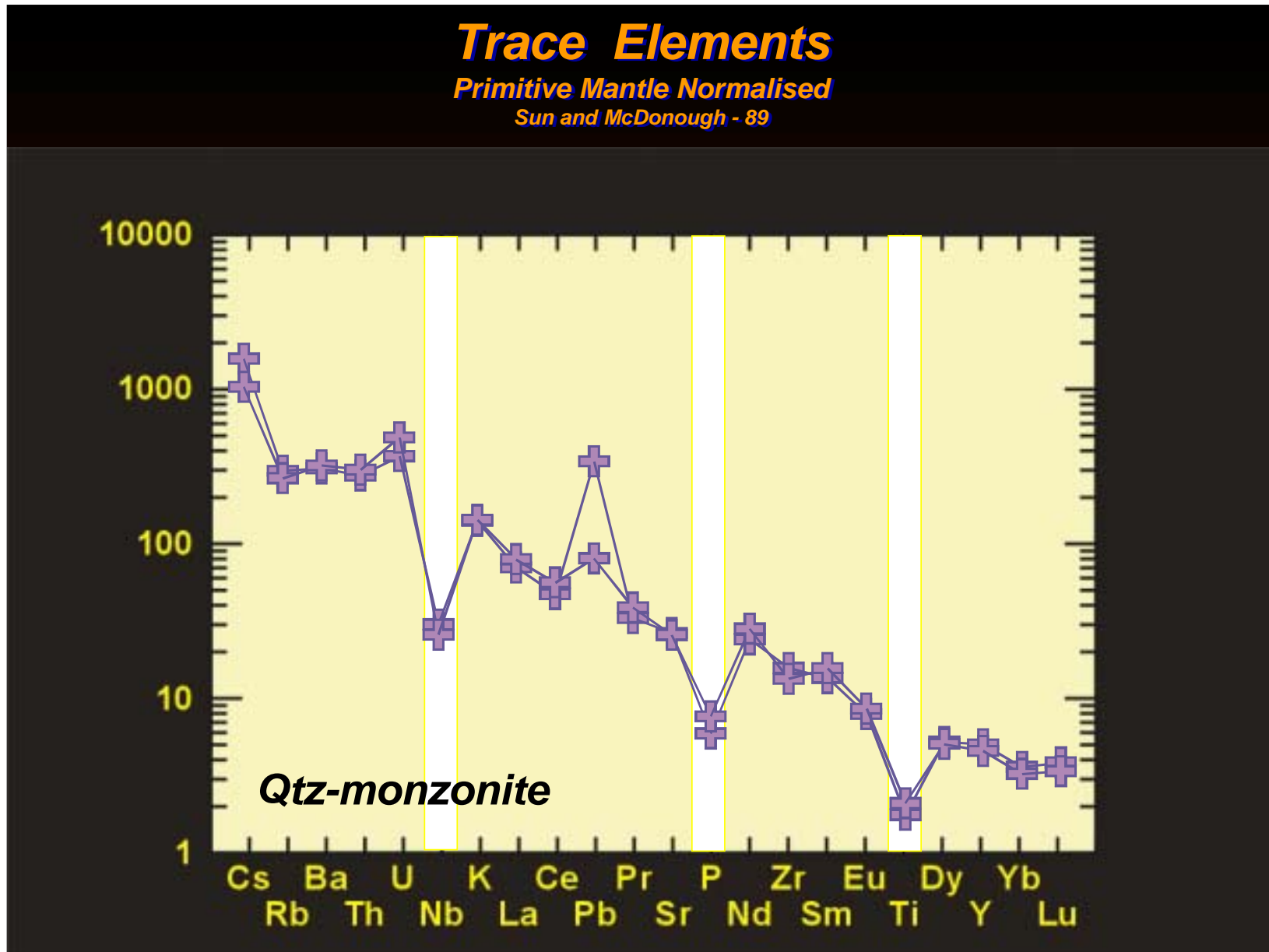


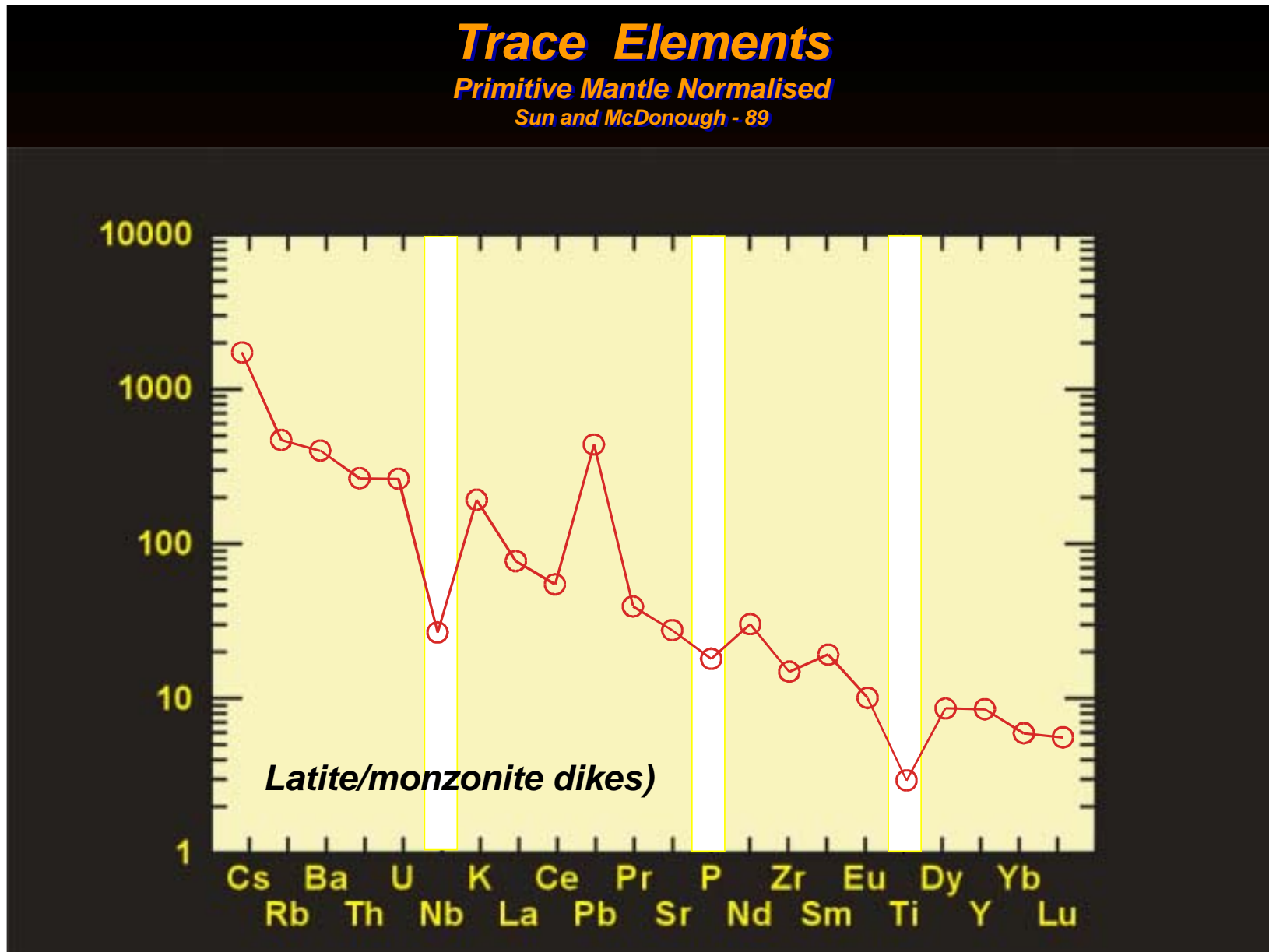


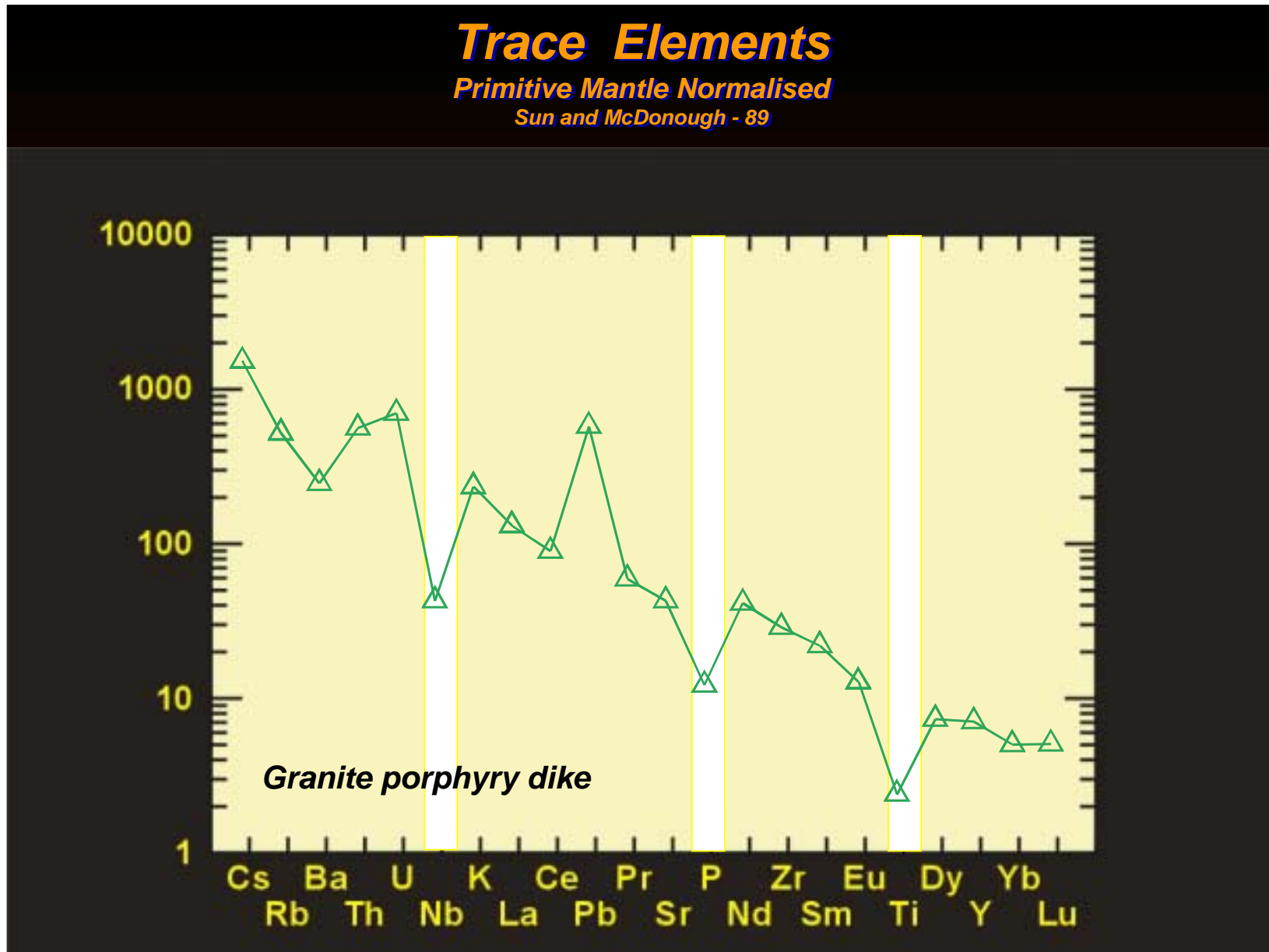


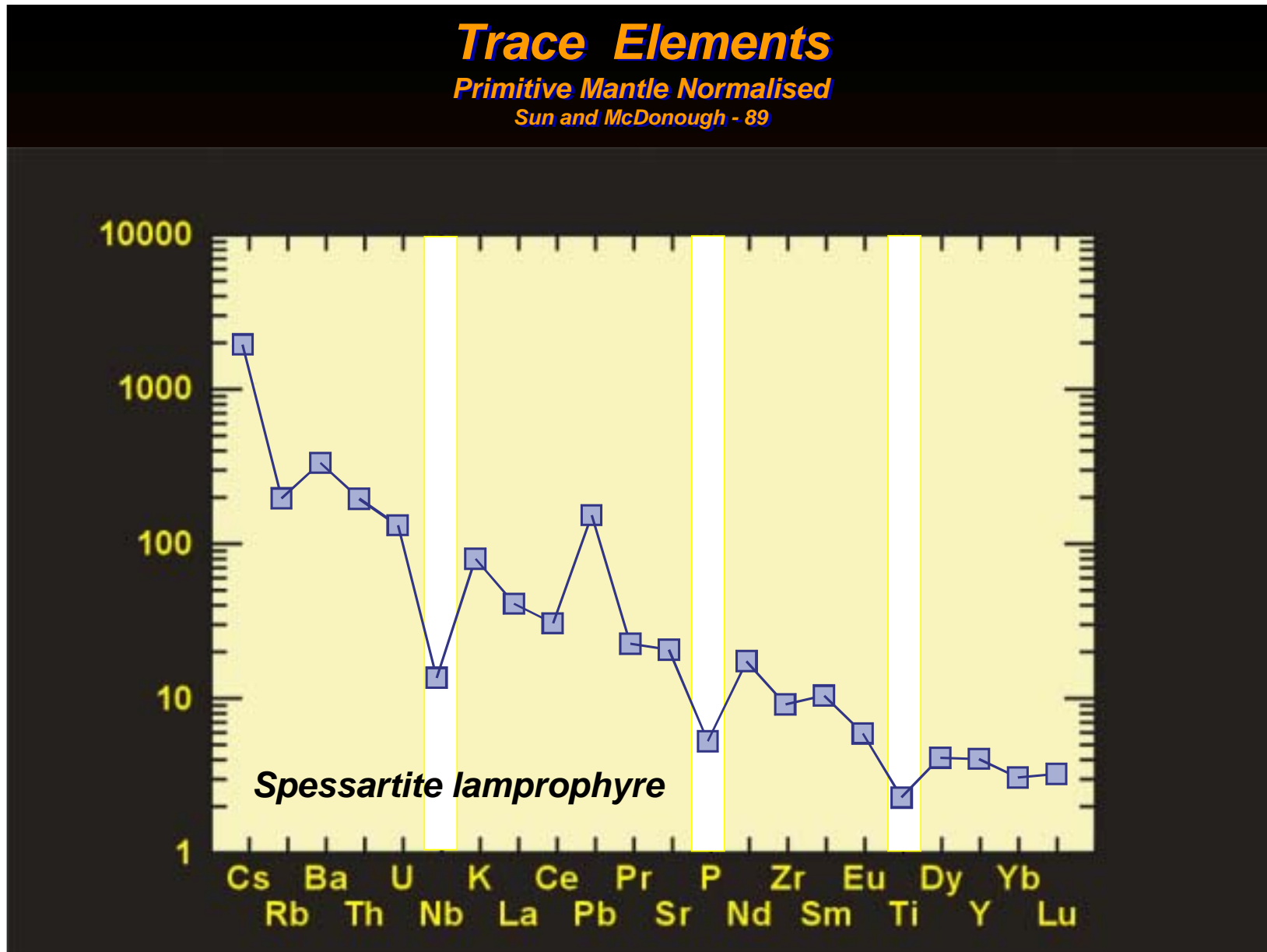


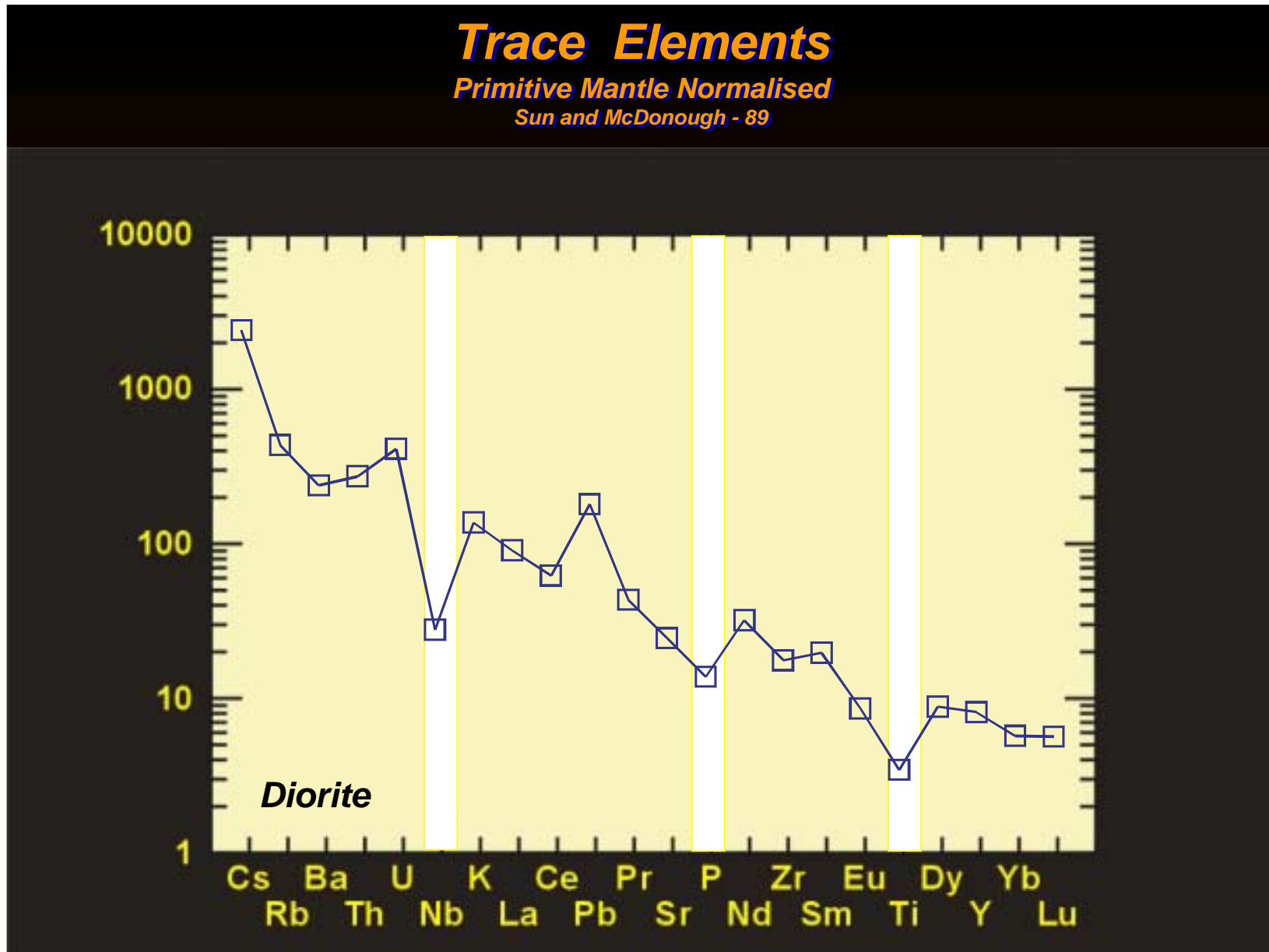


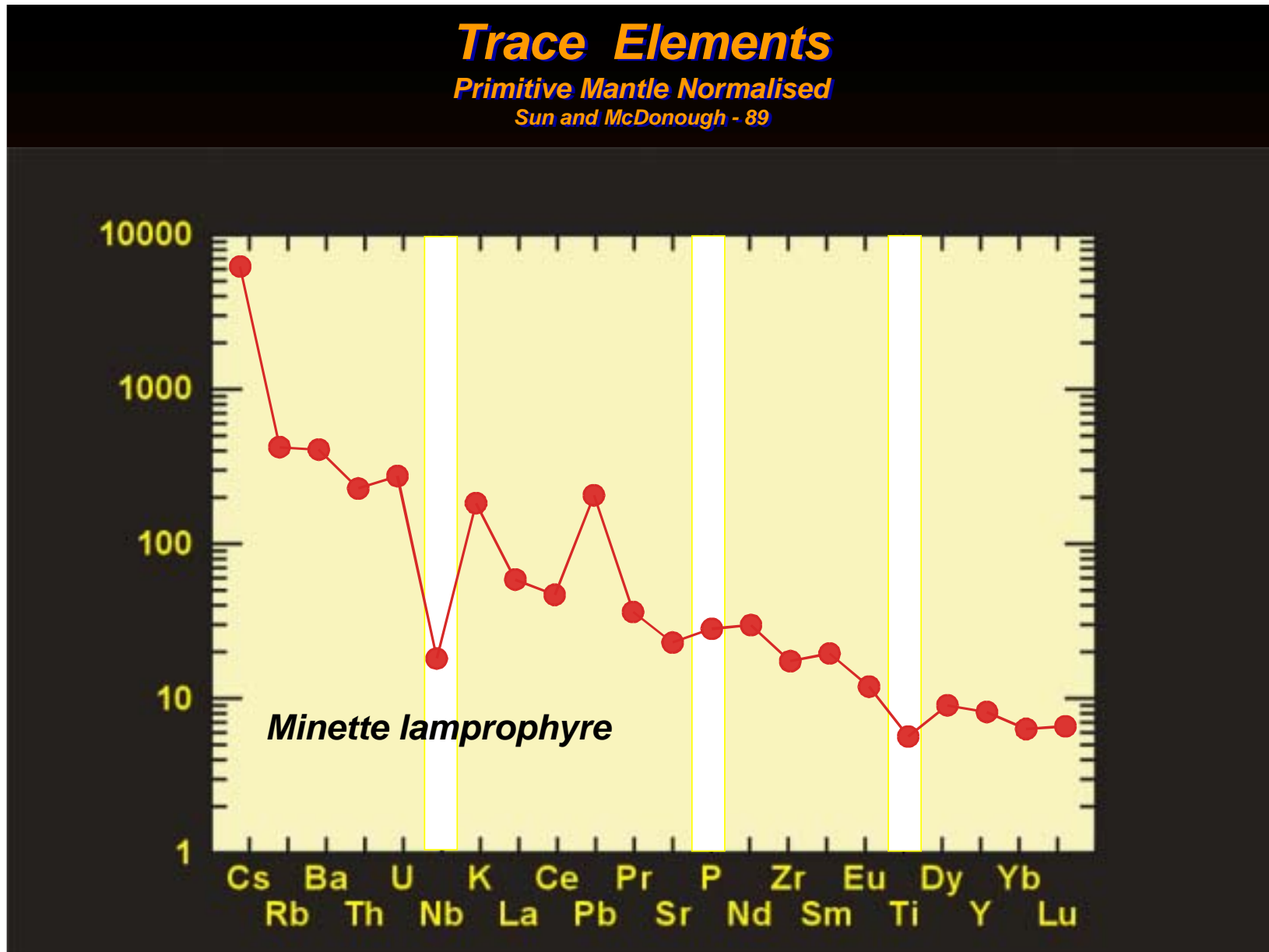


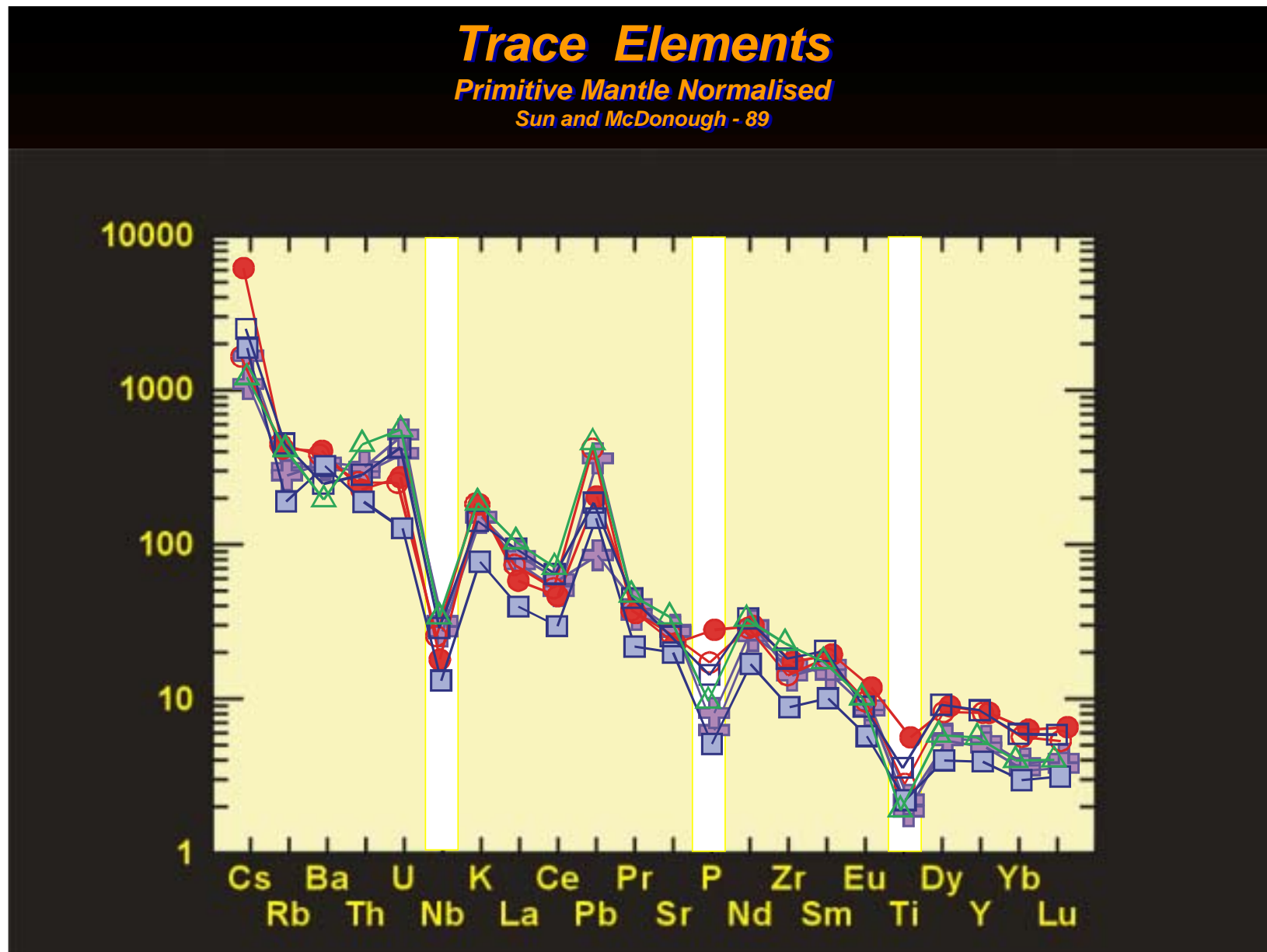




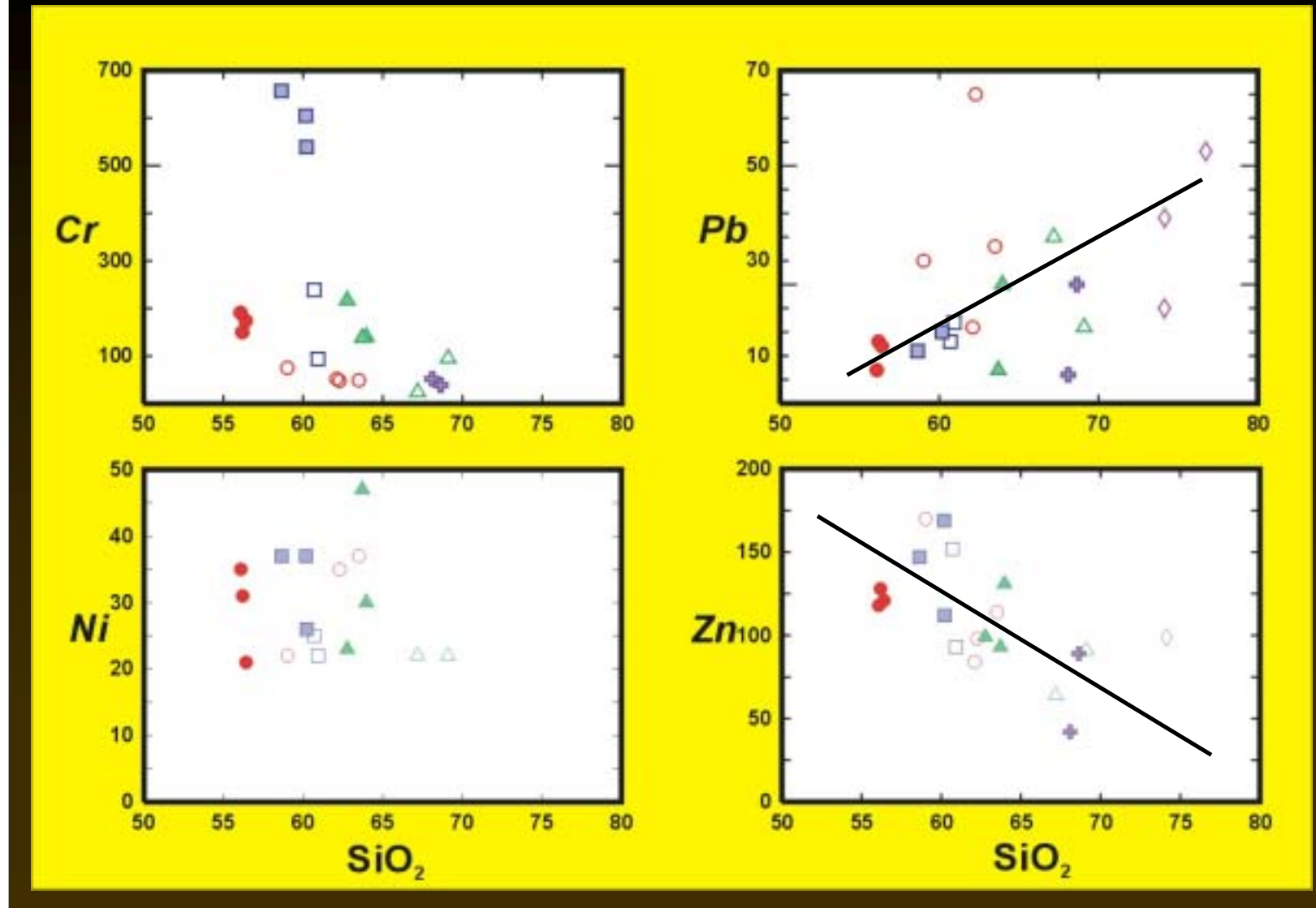






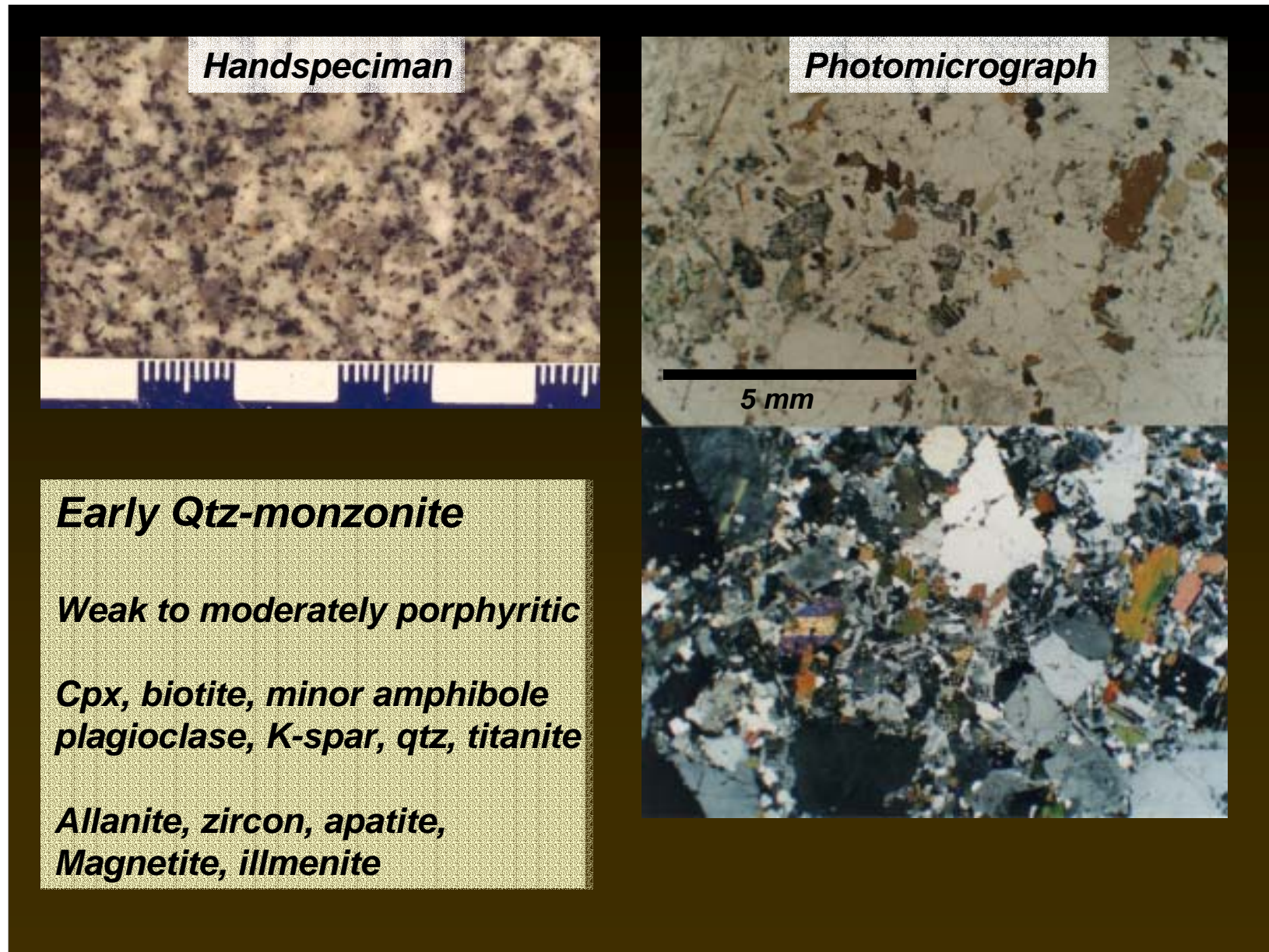



Metals



Mineralogy

- All intrusive phases (excluding aplites) contain **cpx, biotite**, variable **amphibole, allanite, titanite** and **apatite**
- Alkalic phases contain mostly **cpx** and **biotite**, with only minor amphibole
- Sub-alkalic phases (spessartites, diorites, granite porphyry dikes) contain greater abundance of **amphibole**





FOV = 2mm

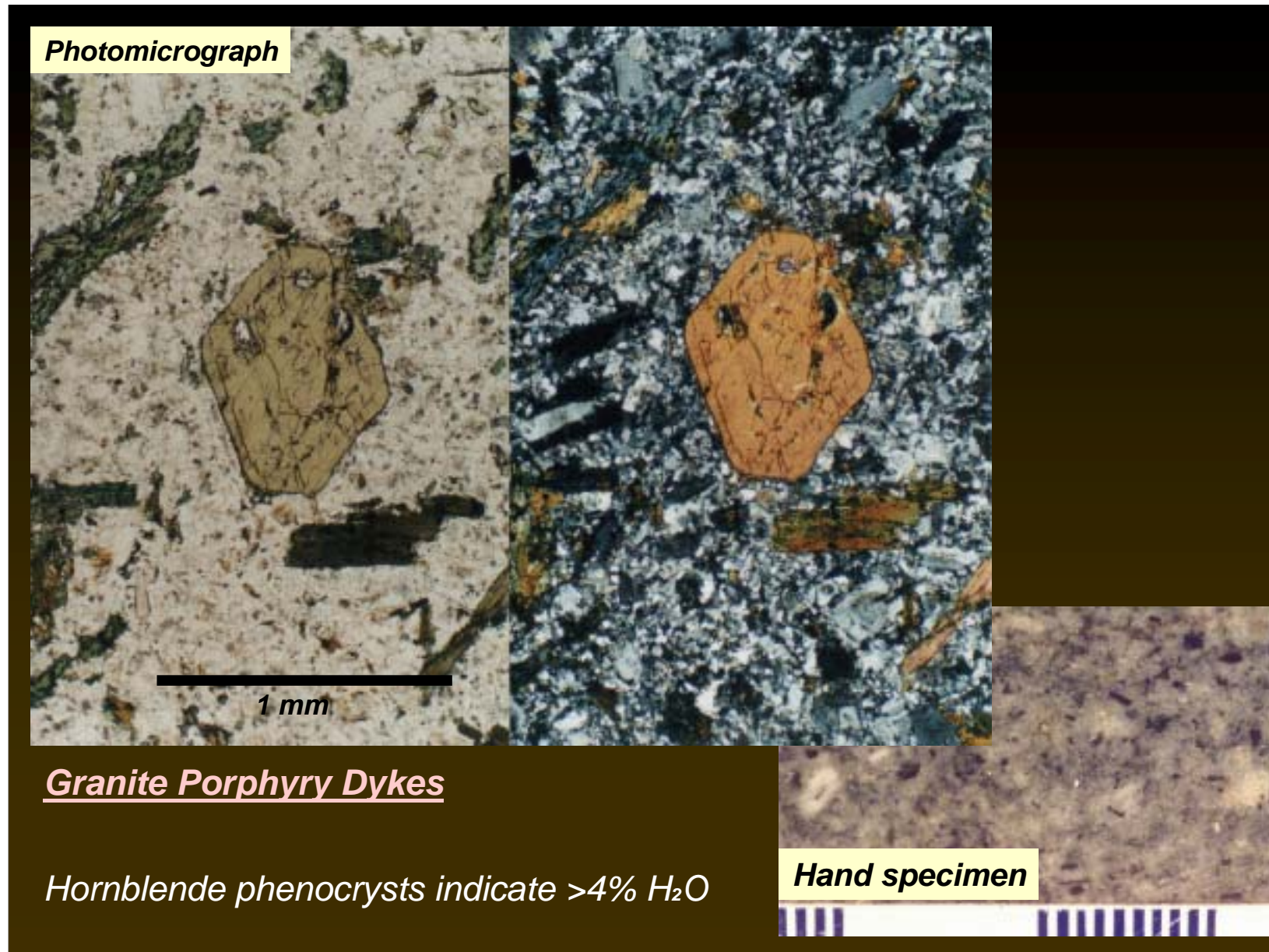
FOV = 250 um

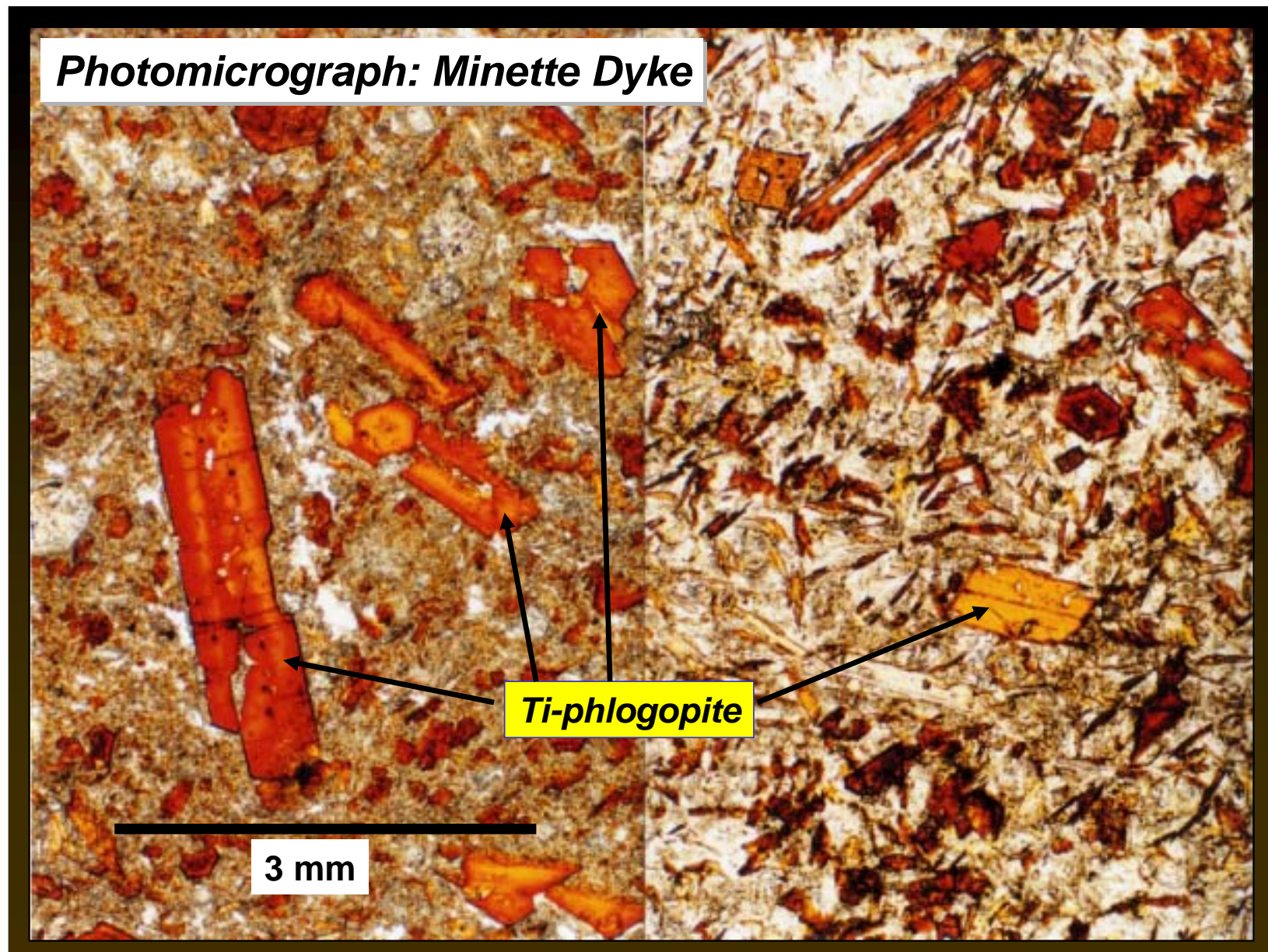
Quartz ocelli
(clinopyroxene rimming quartz)

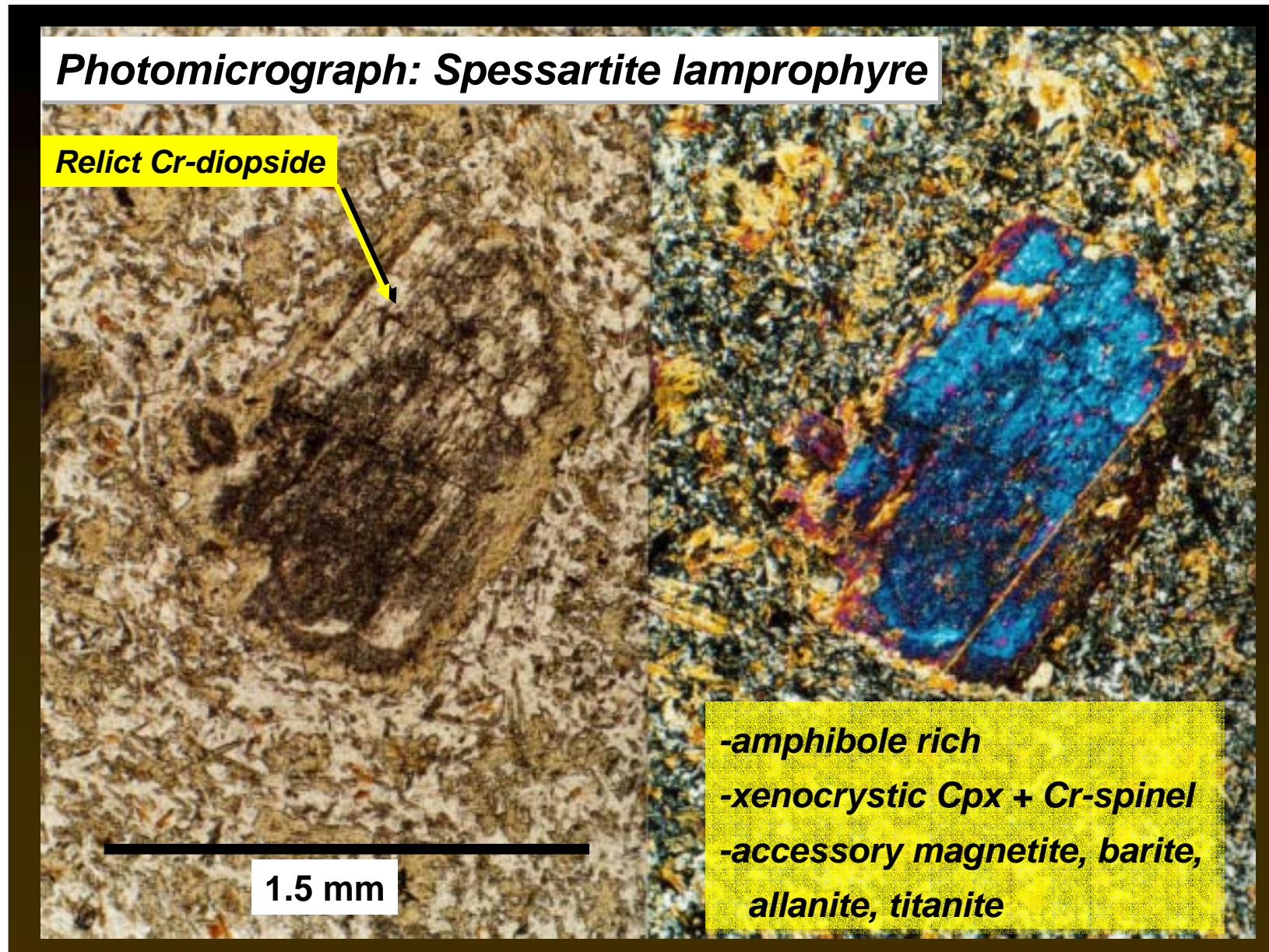
Textures:

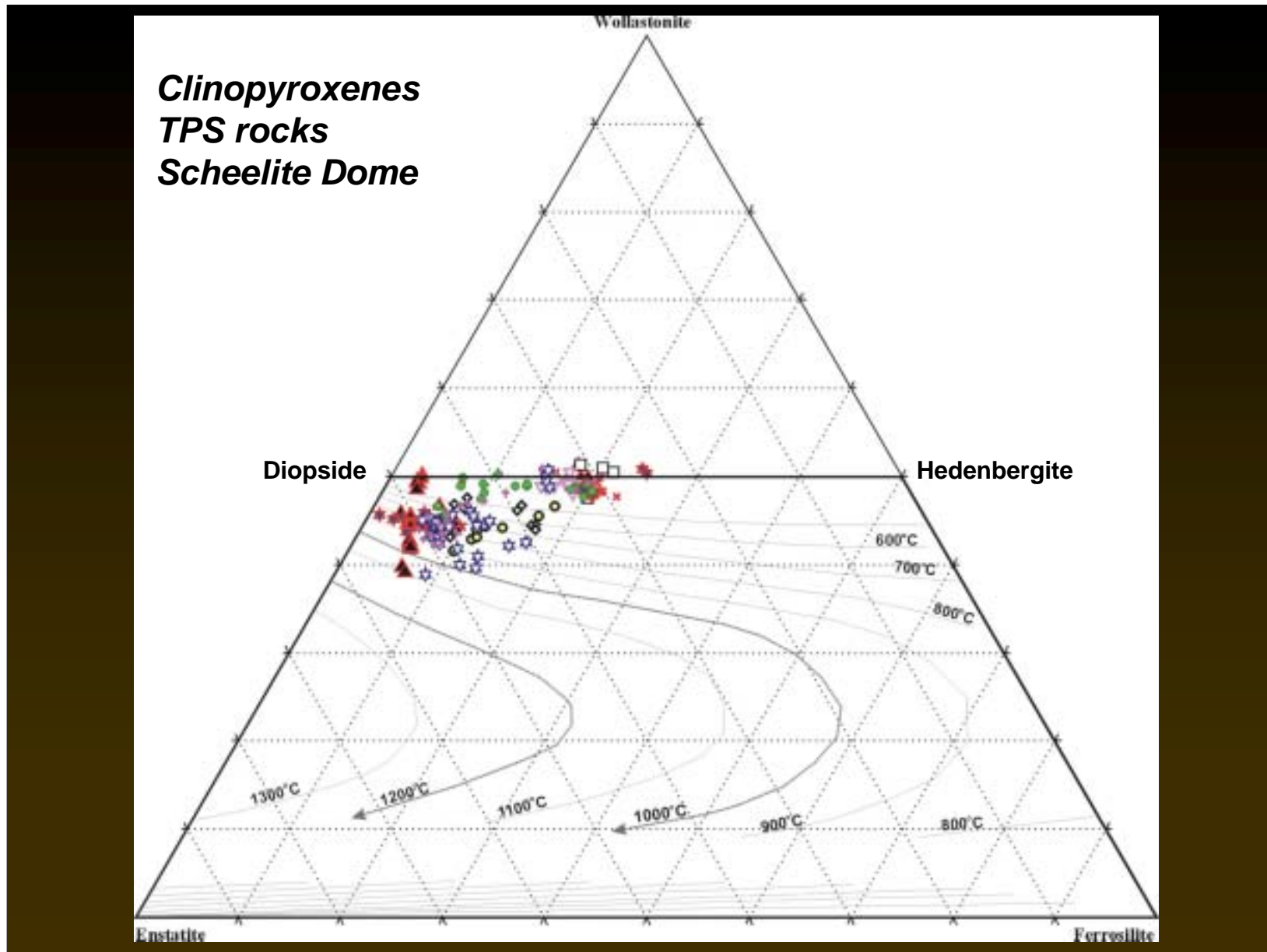
- Weak to moderately porphyritic
- 2 generations of cpx growth
- Cpx coronae around quartz
- Fine grained cpx in silica rich areas
- Evidence of quenching, mixing

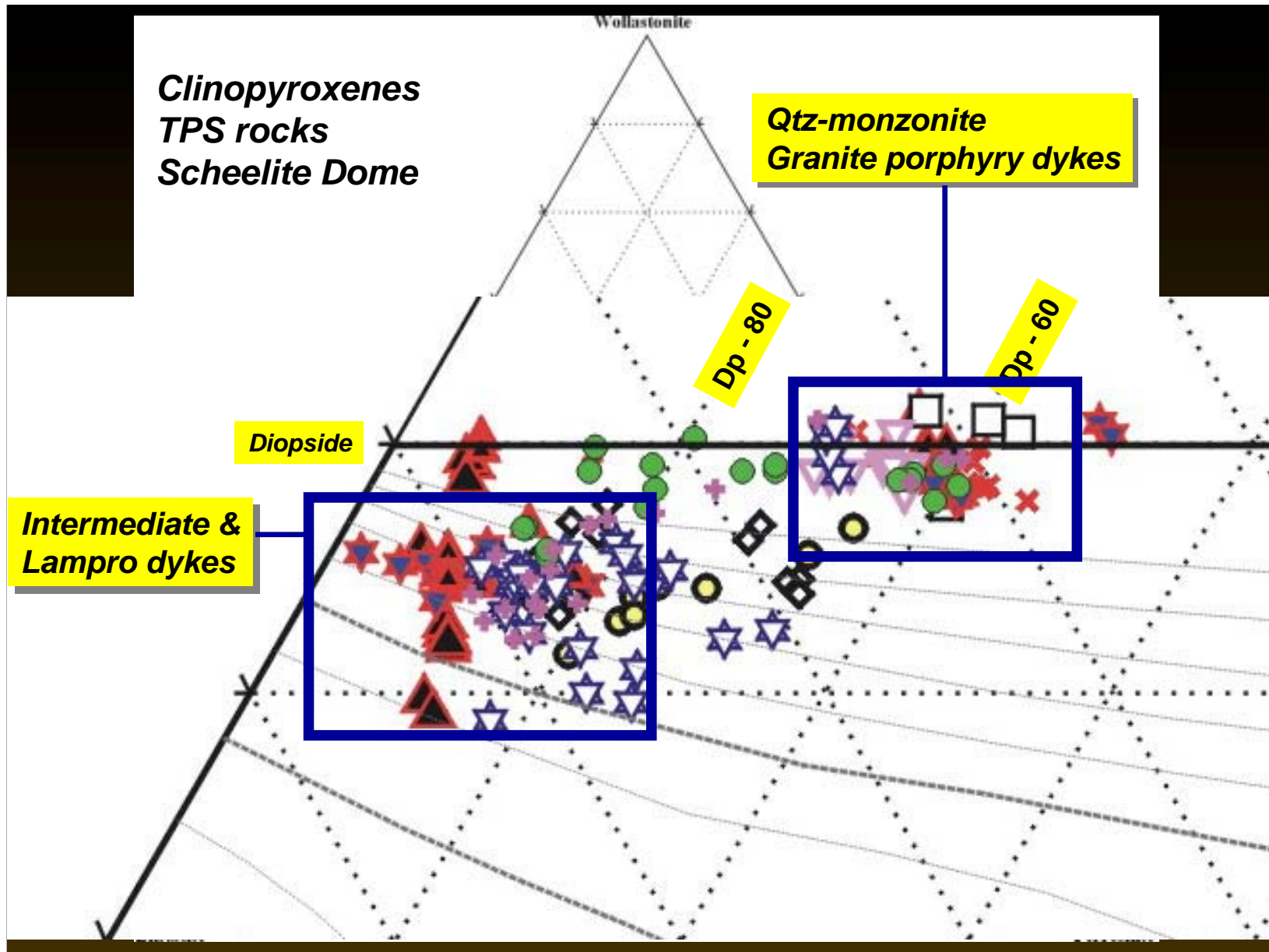
Monzonite/latite
(Photomicrograph)

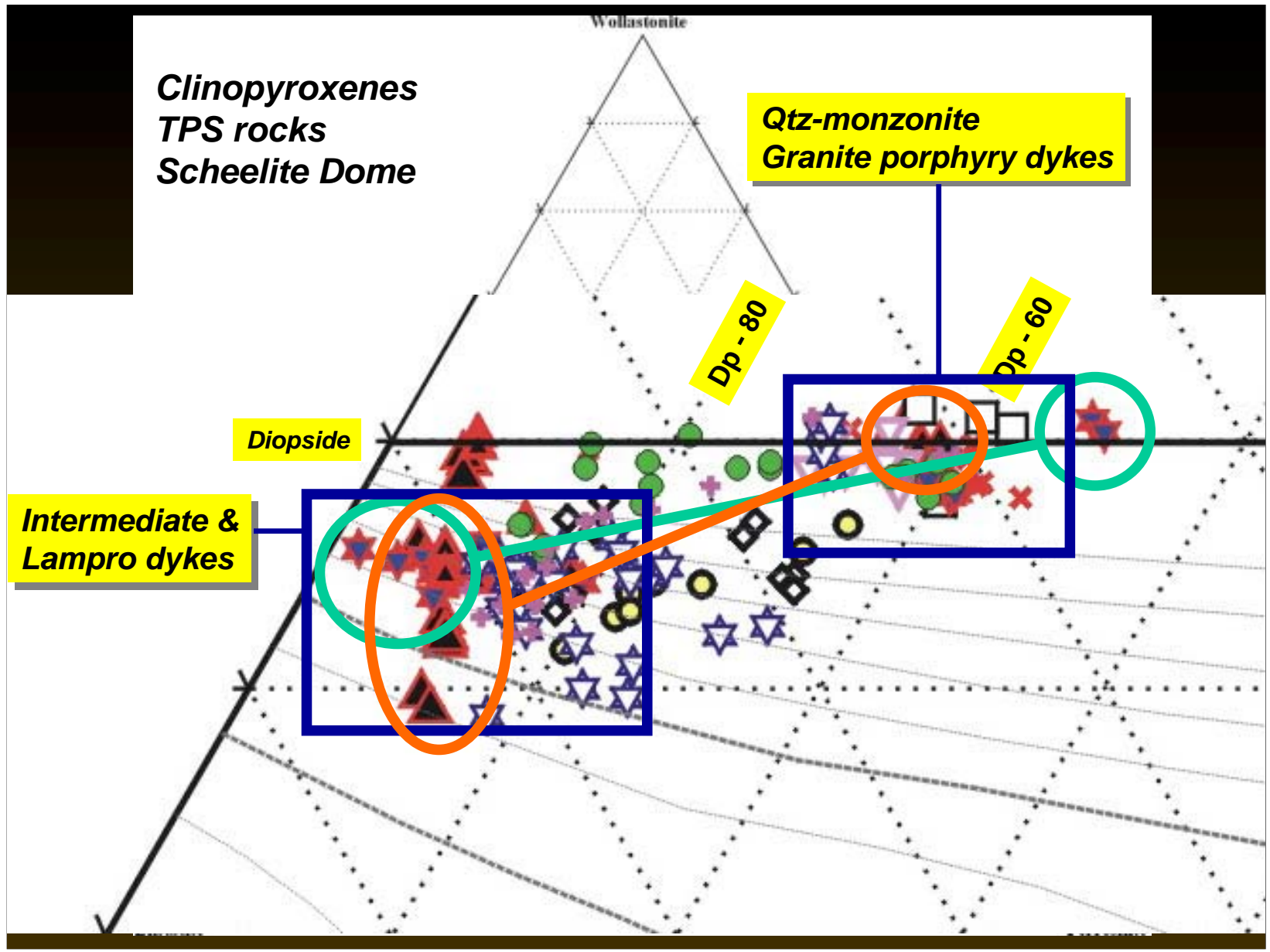




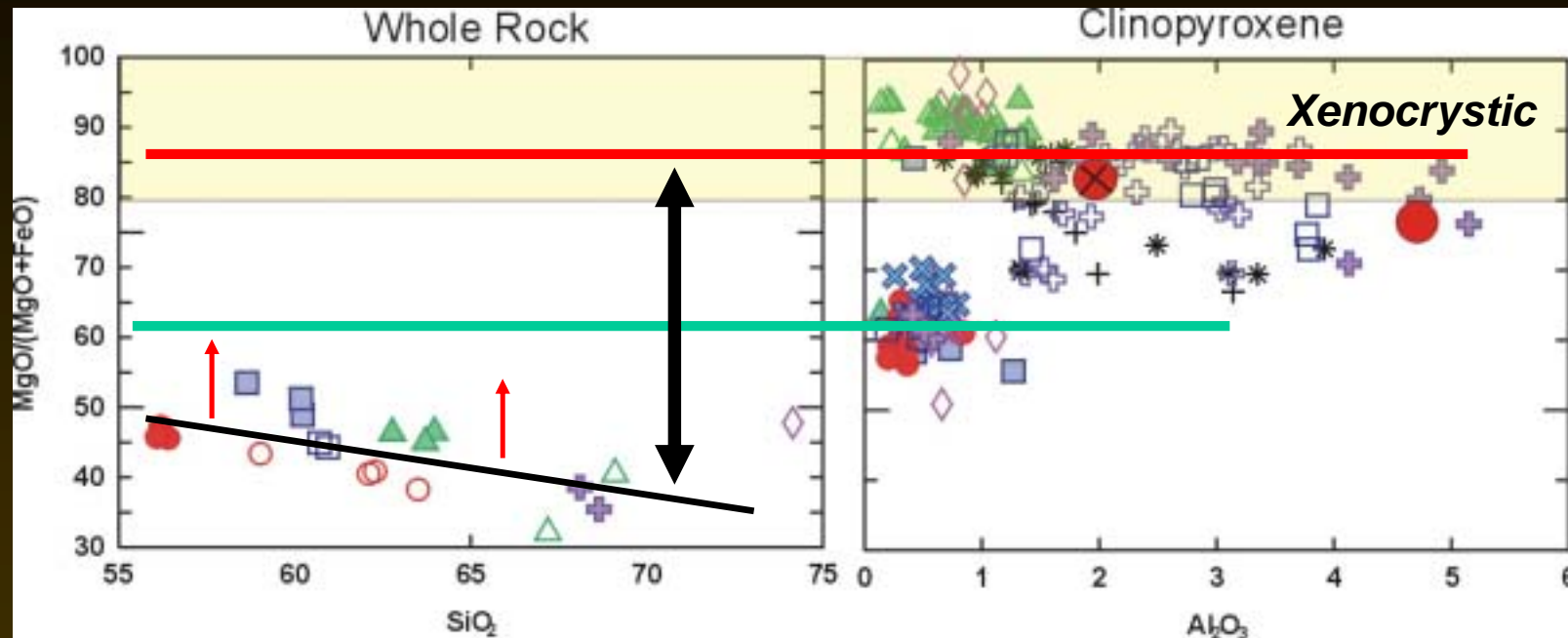






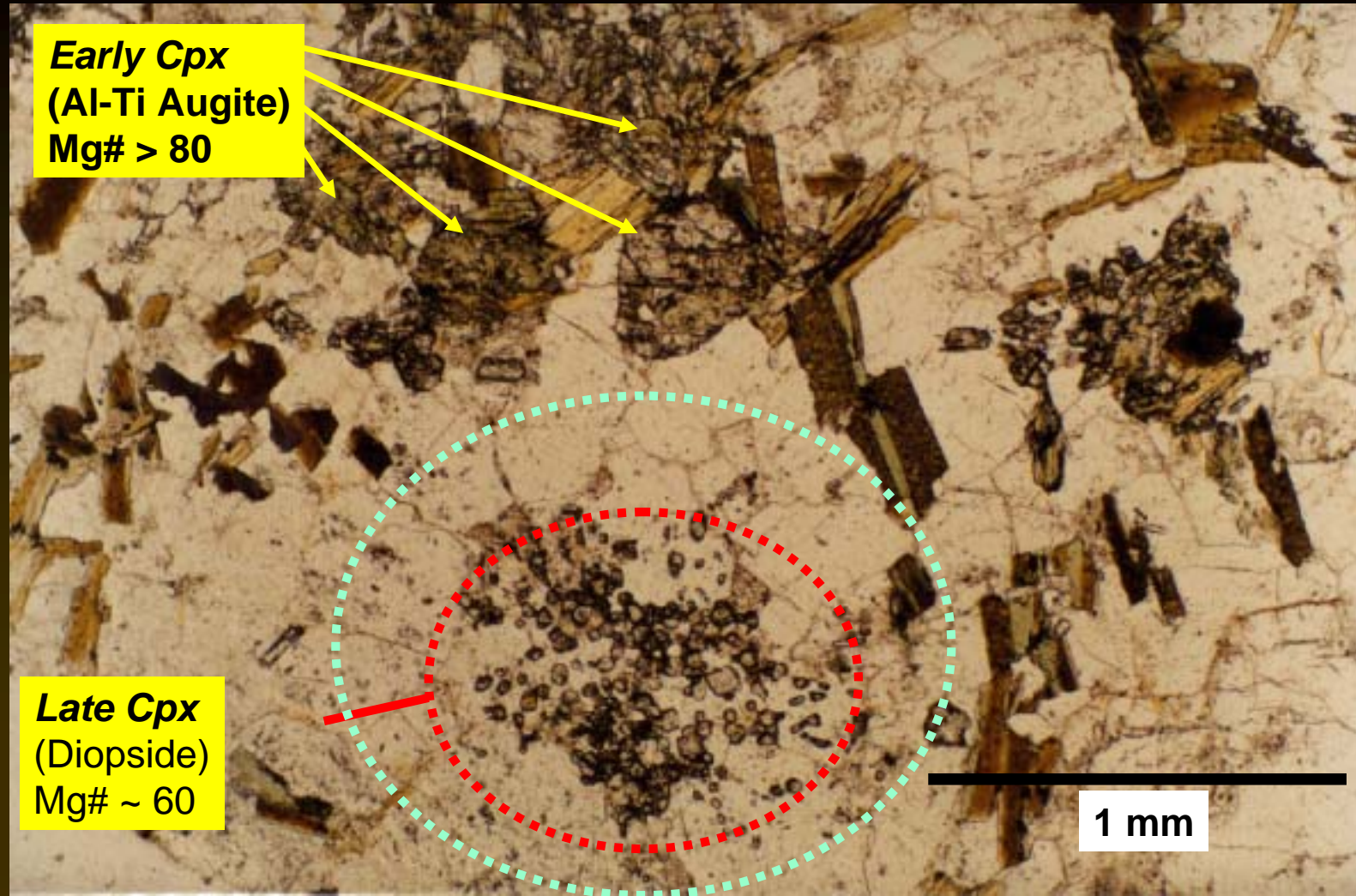


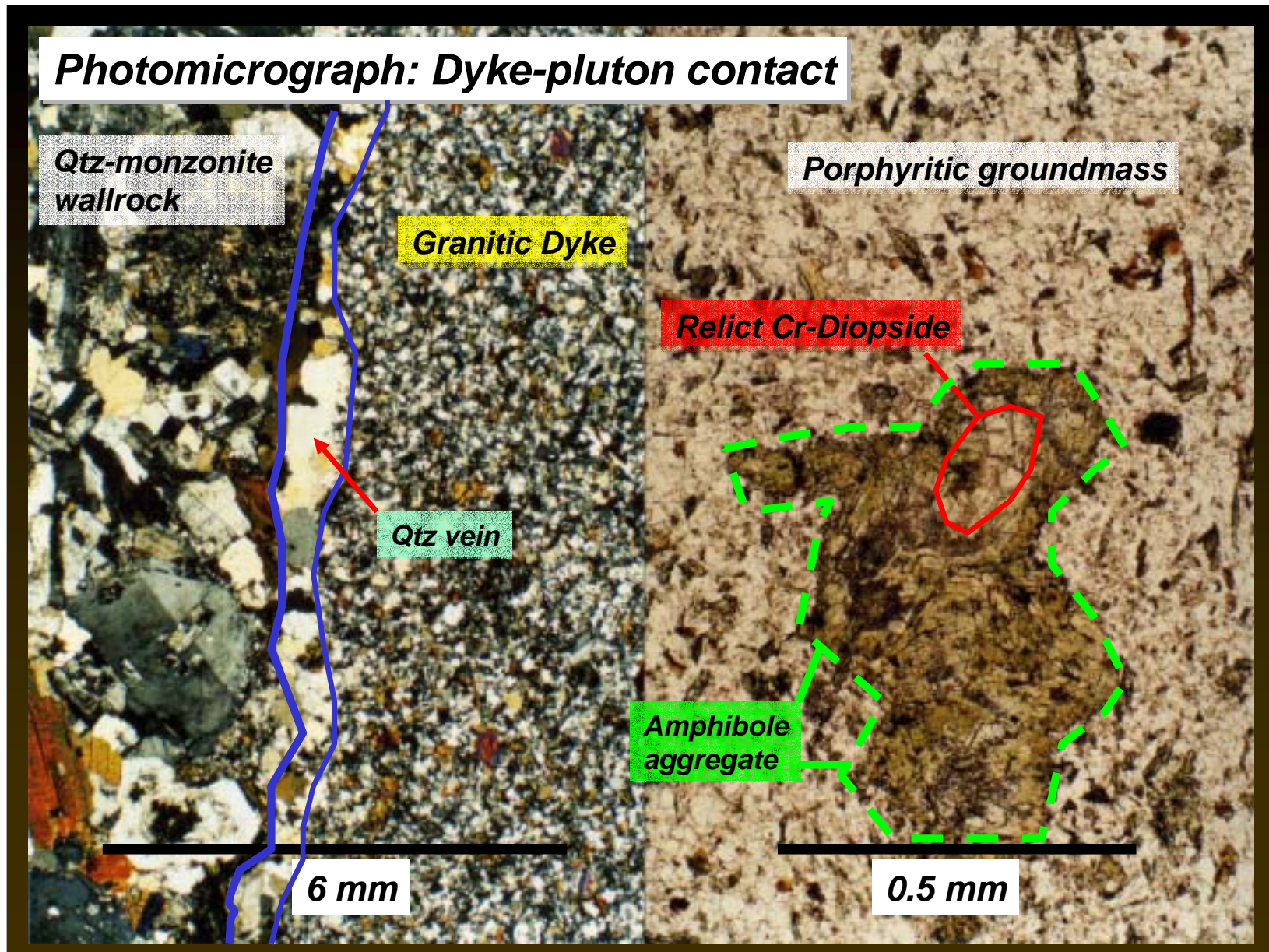
Whole rock Mg no. vs Cpx Mg no.

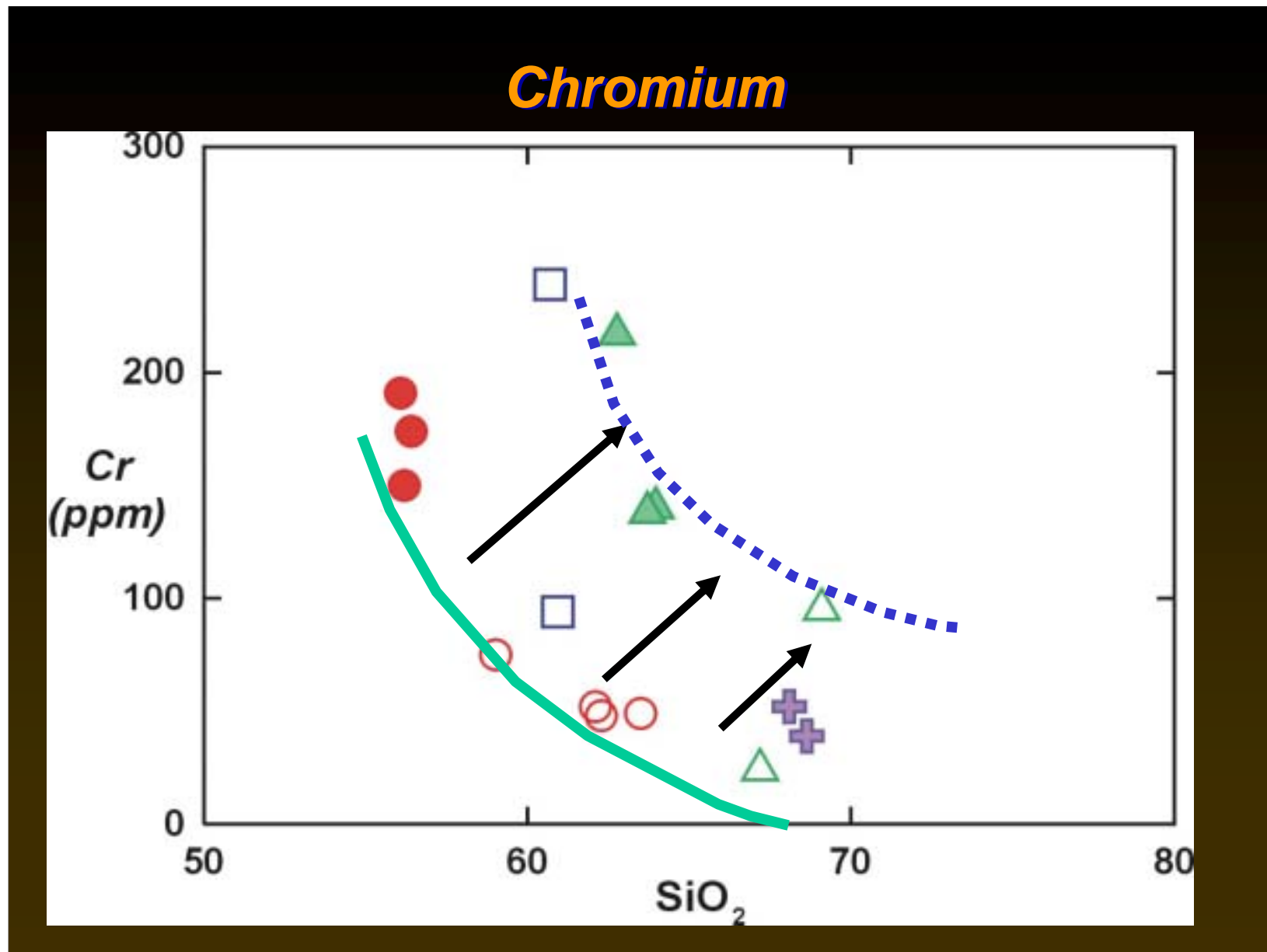


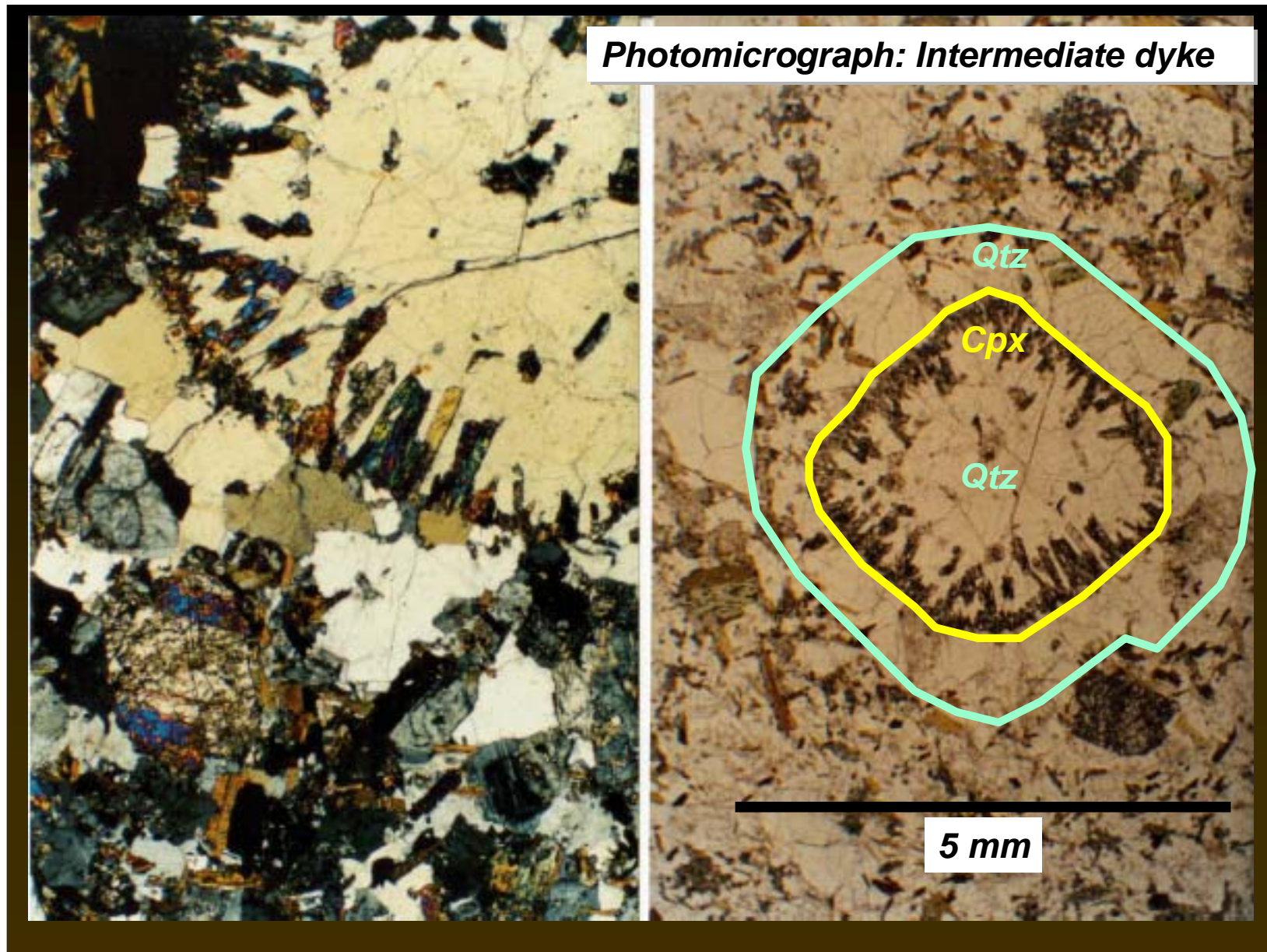
Clinopyroxenes are compositionally equivalent with those described in mantle xenolith studies: that is they equilibrated with mantle rocks in a high P-T setting

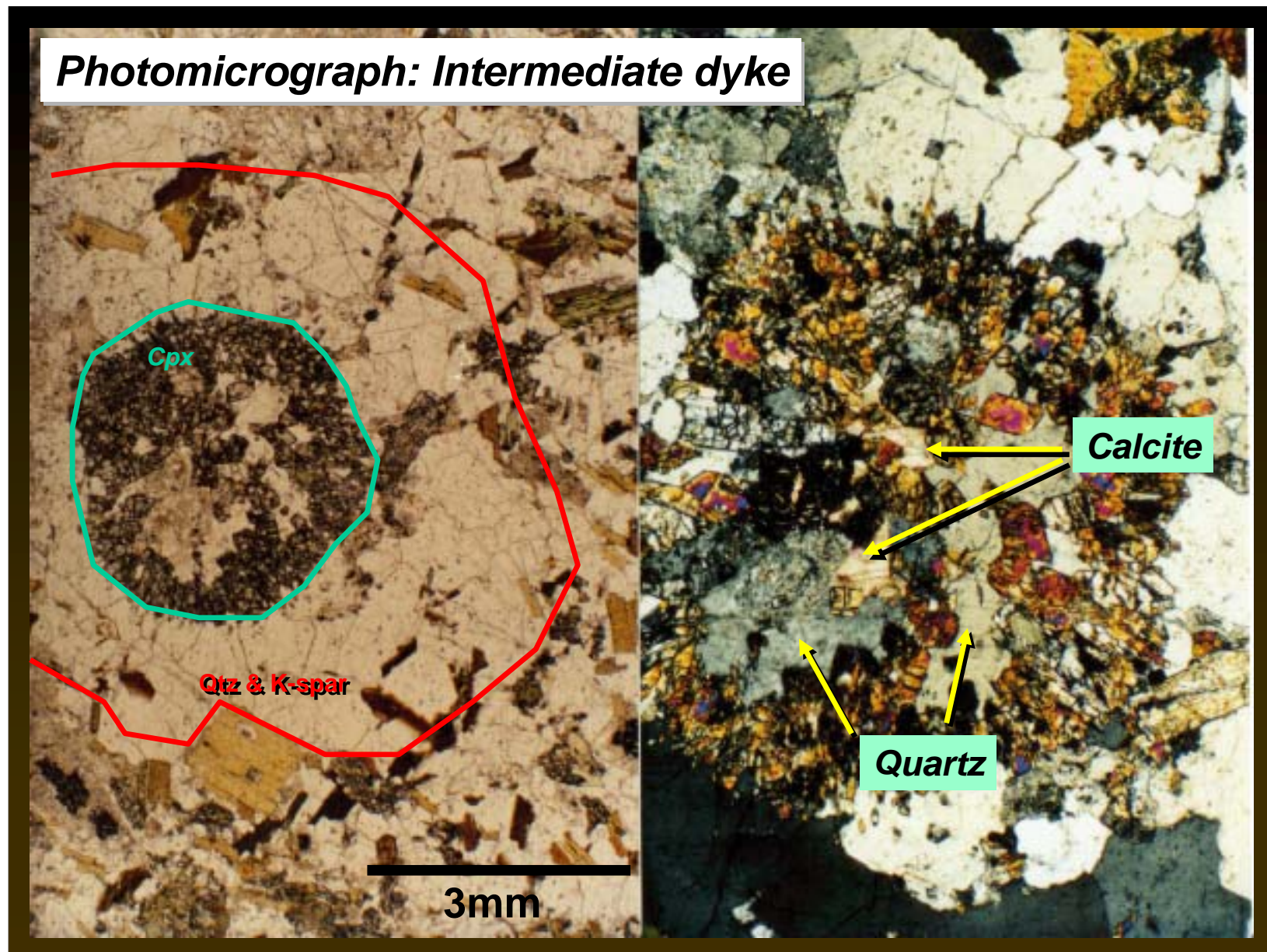
Photomicrograph: Intermediate dyke



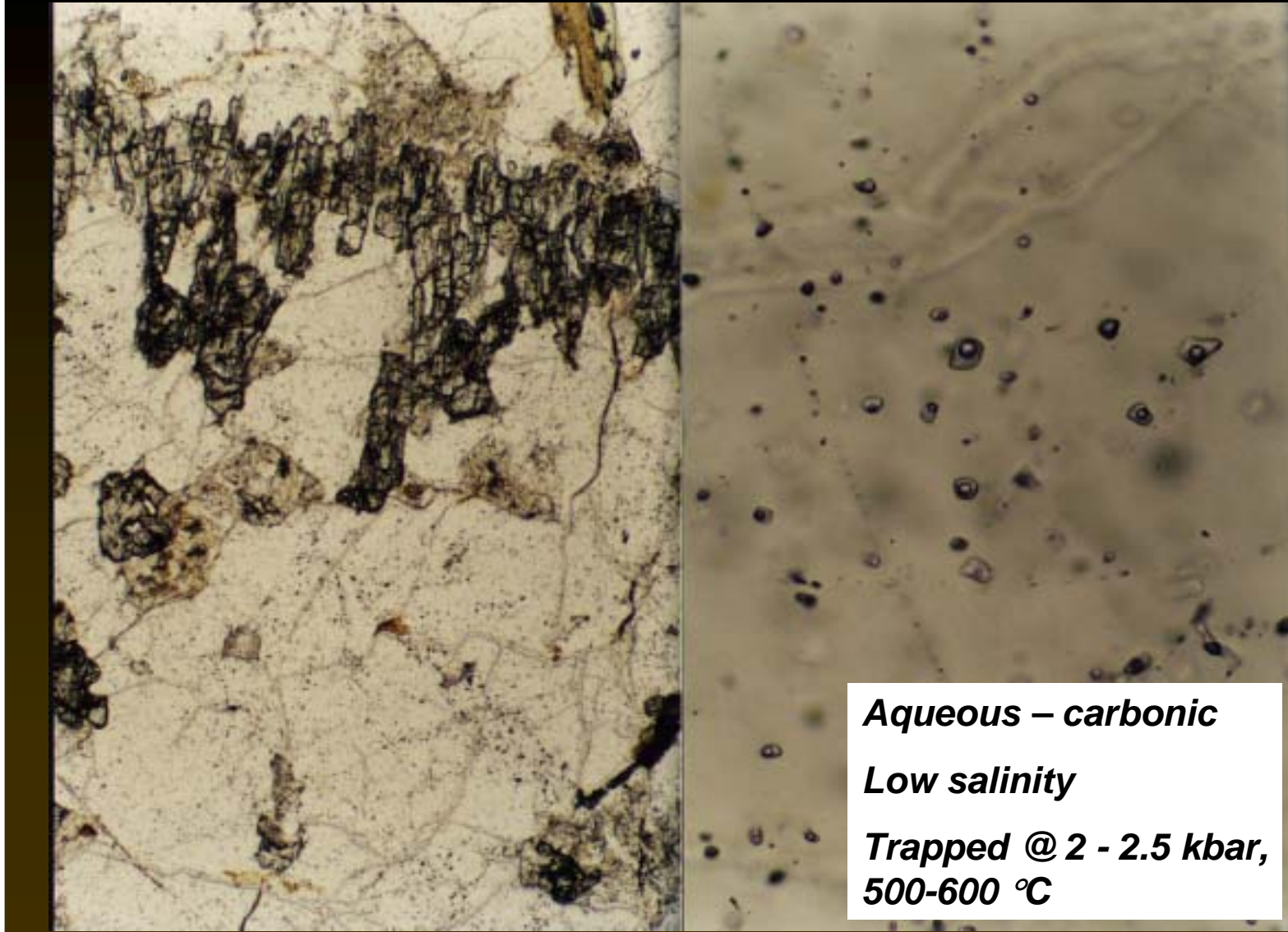








Magmatic Fluid Inclusions

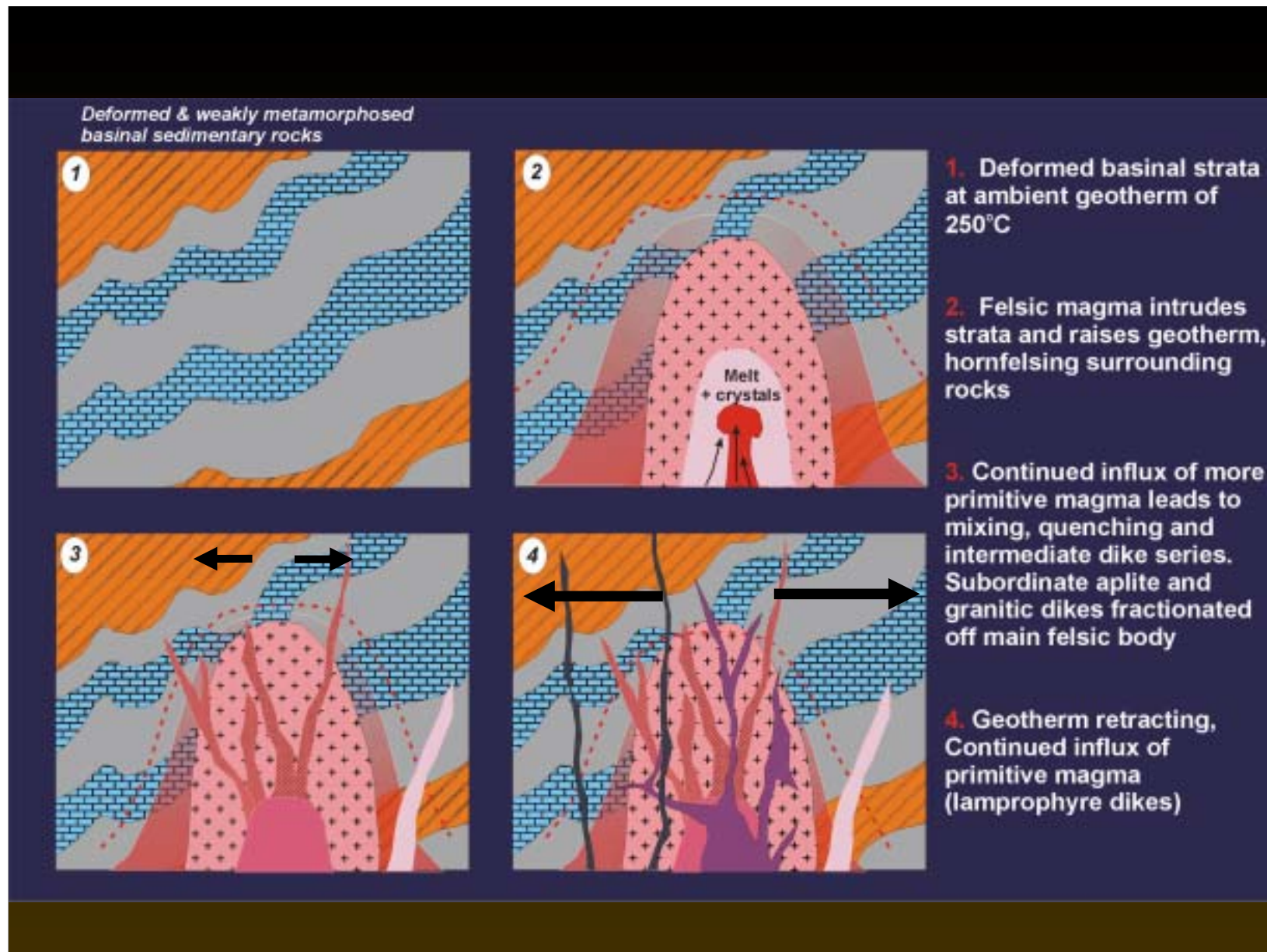


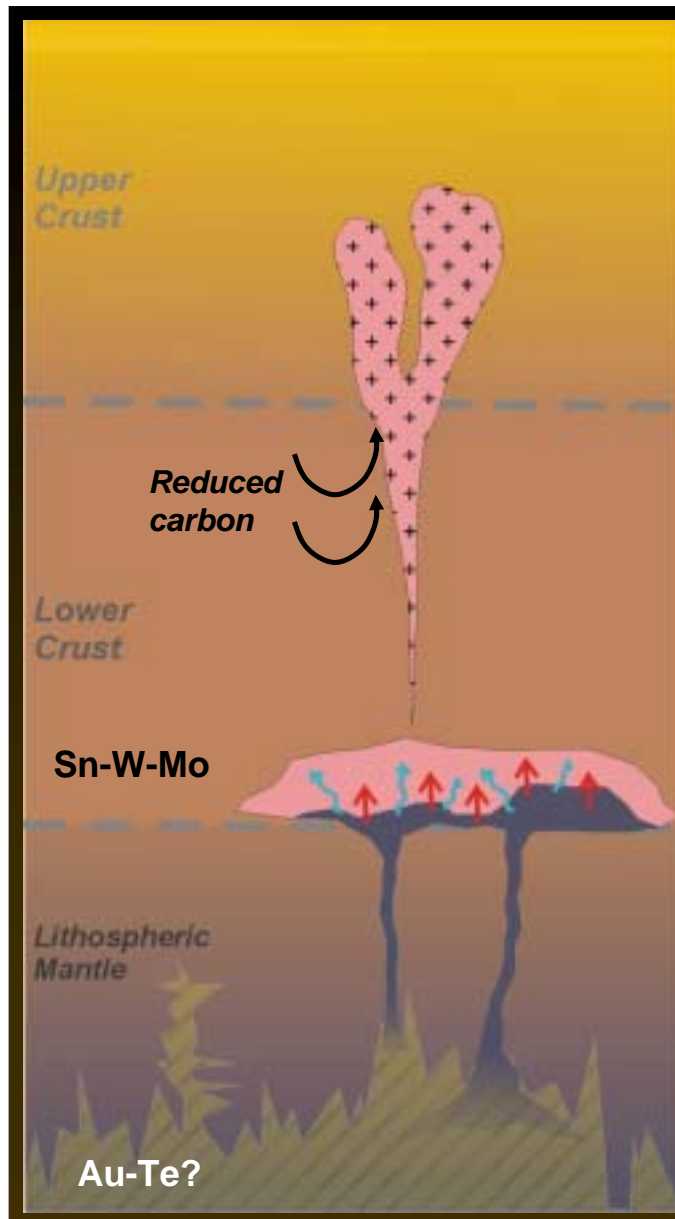
Isotopic Constraints

- **Oxygen (*whole rock & selected minerals*) 10.5 – 12.5 ‰ $\delta^{18}\text{O}$**
 - **Except minettes 6 – 12 ‰ $\delta^{18}\text{O}$**
- **All intrusions highly radiogenic (initial Sr >0.71)**
 - **Most ~ 0.712 - 0.713**
- **All intrusions feature ϵNd -8 to -11**
- **All intrusions feature $^{206}\text{Pb}/^{204}\text{Pb} \sim 19.5$ & $^{207}\text{Pb}/^{204}\text{Pb} \sim 15.6 - 15.8$**

Source Components

- **Lithospheric mantle source for lamprophyres (*EM II* isotopic signature)**
 - ***Minettes*** – modally metasomatised source region – phlogopite clinopyroxenite ??
 - ***Spessartites*** – lower modal % of metasomatic phases – retains “depleted major element signature – < **Ti, Al, Fe, Mg, Cr** >”
- **Sialic crustal material**
 - **Inherited zircons (Proterozoic to Late Archaean – where cores *have not* been reset)**
 - **Heavy $\delta^{18}\text{O}$**
 - **Reduced – marine siliciclastic rocks**



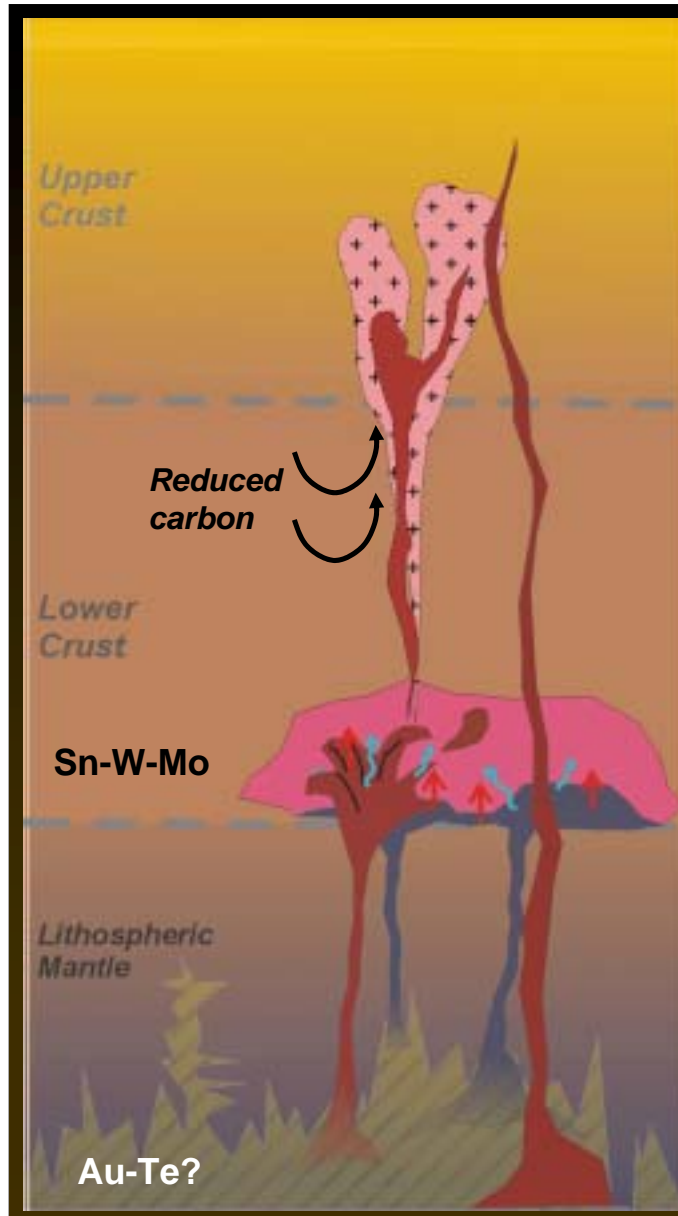


Schematic Lithospheric Section

- **Post-collision and subduction processes**

Volatile-rich mafic, alkalic melts from metasomatised upper mantle contribute heat and volatiles to the lower crust, to promote melting.

Felsic crustal melts of lower density than mafic melt



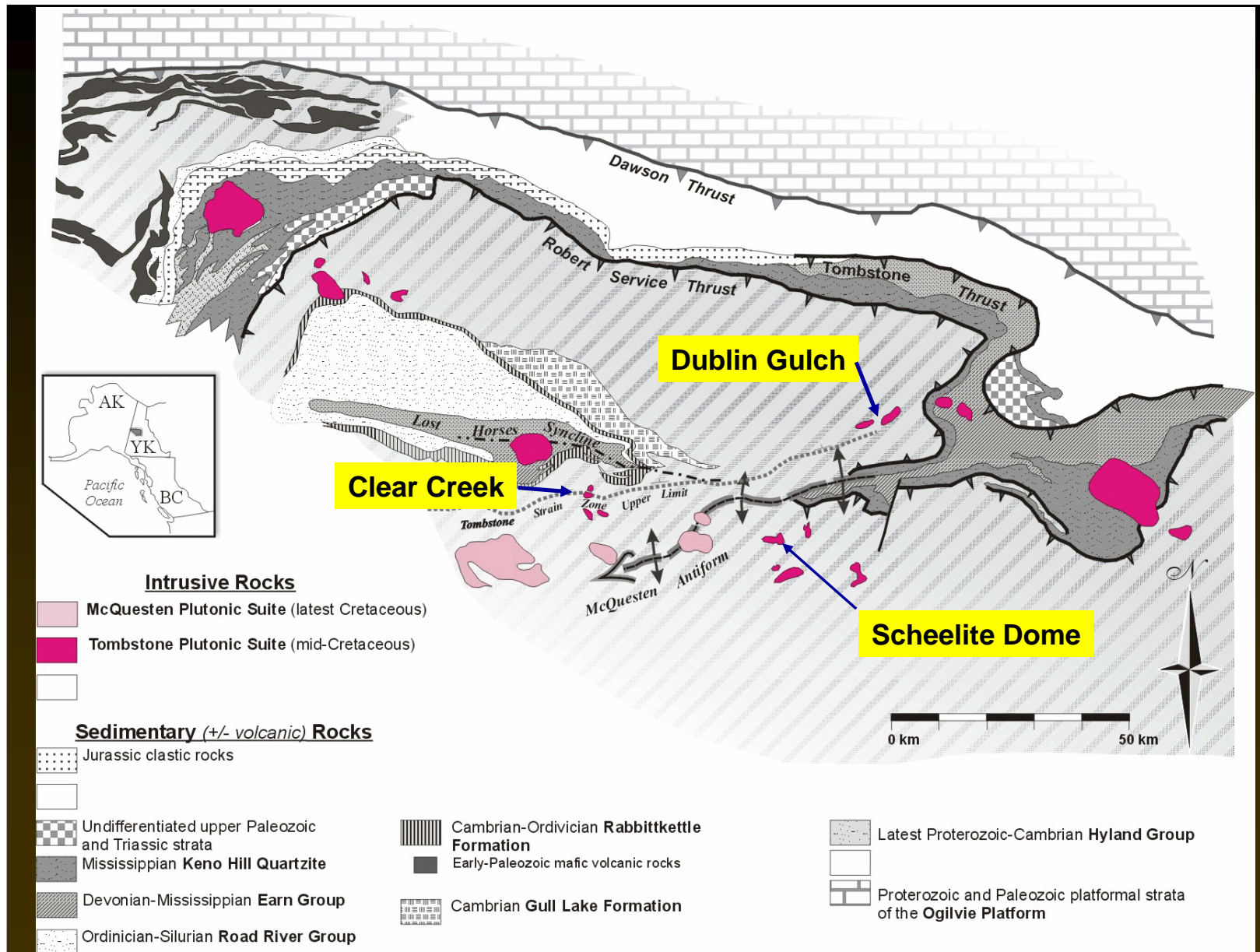
Schematic Lithospheric Section

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Felsic crustal melts of lower density than mafic melt

Influx of mafic magma continues, with progressively less crustal contamination







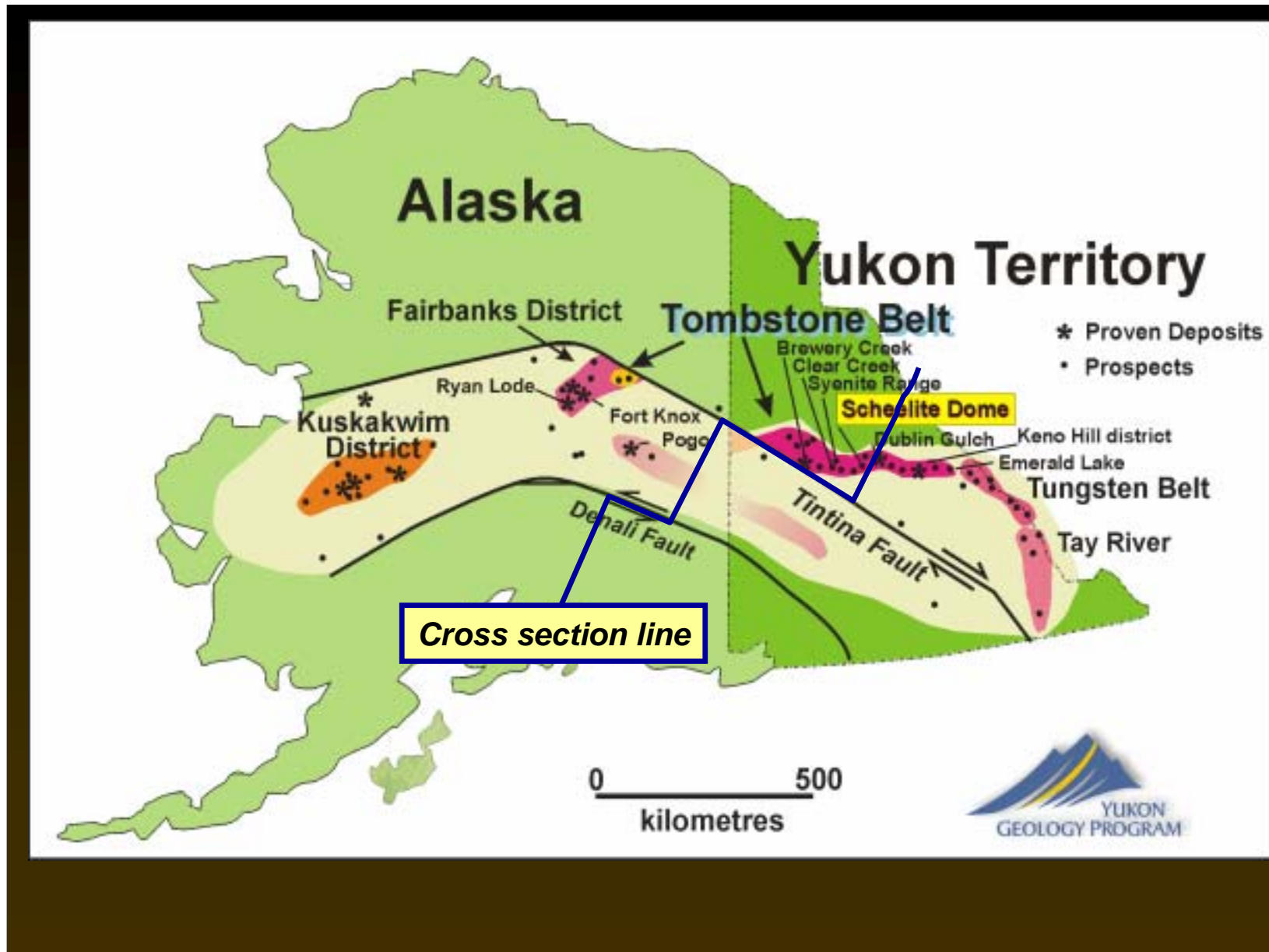
Summary - Tombstone Plutonic Suite Scheelite Dome

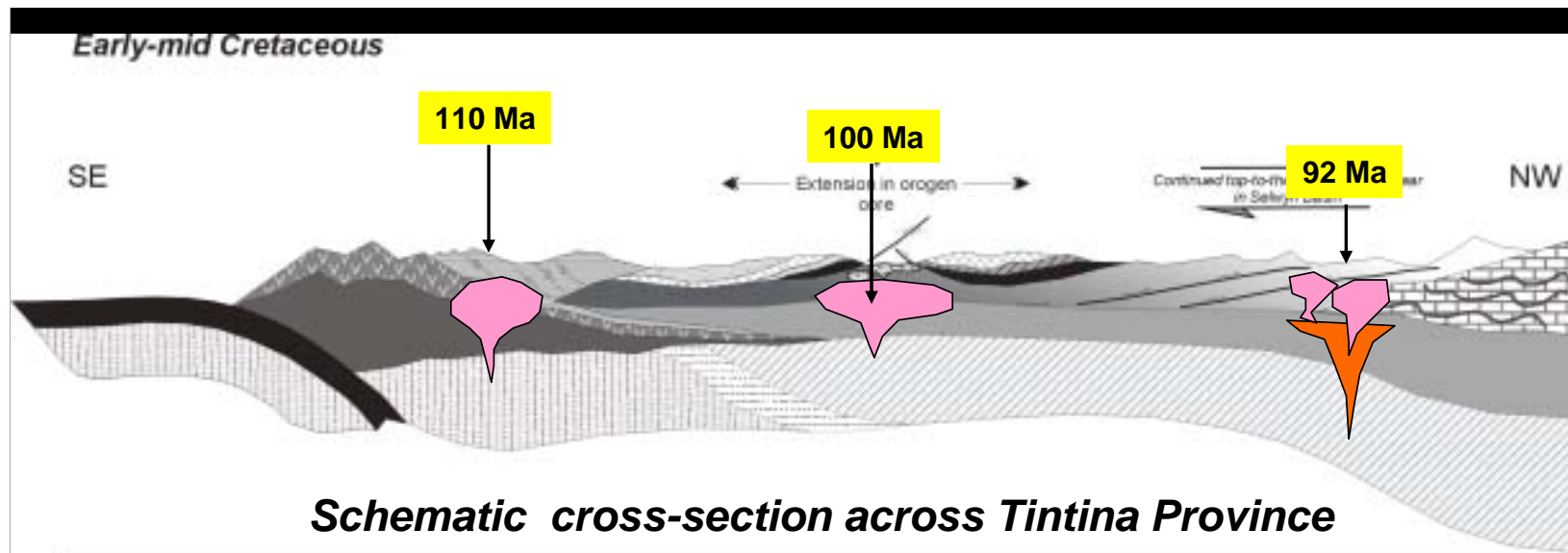
- Hybridised magma system emplaced at ~ 92 Ma in a post-collisional setting
 - Felsic to mafic (lamprophyric)
- Metaluminous to weakly peraluminous
- Weakly *oxidised* to weakly *reduced* (titanite bearing)
- Sub-alkalic to alkalic,
- Magmas can be considered *hot* – reset zircon cores, cpx dominant mafic phase



- **Regional Associations**

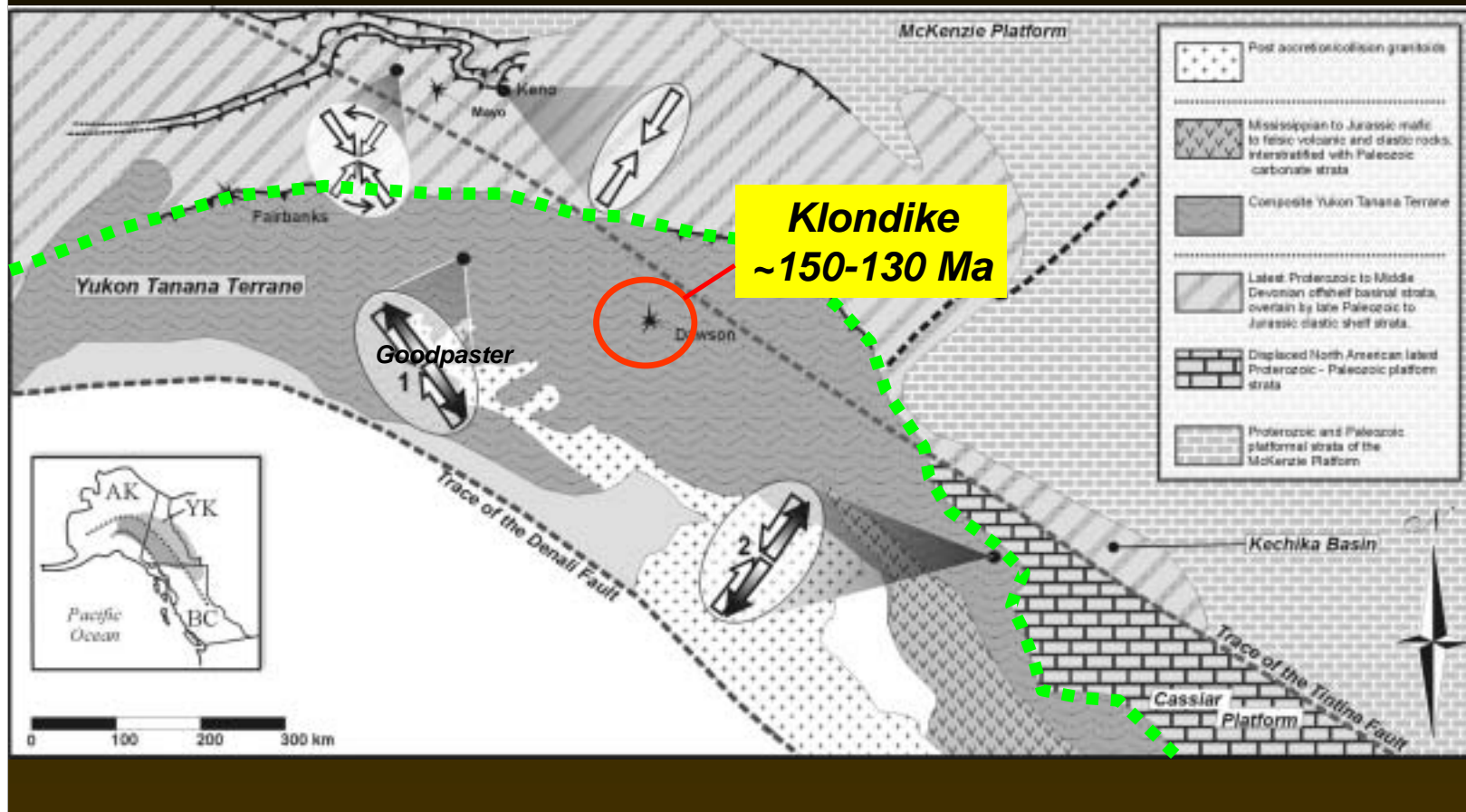
- **Au-rich systems associated with a component of alkalic magmatism**
- **All occur in a post-collisional to weakly extensional setting**
- **All occur inboard (cratonward) of accreted terranes, over old lithosphere**
- ***Ultimately are TPS-related systems another sub-variety of Au-deposits related to enriched alkalic magmatism ??***



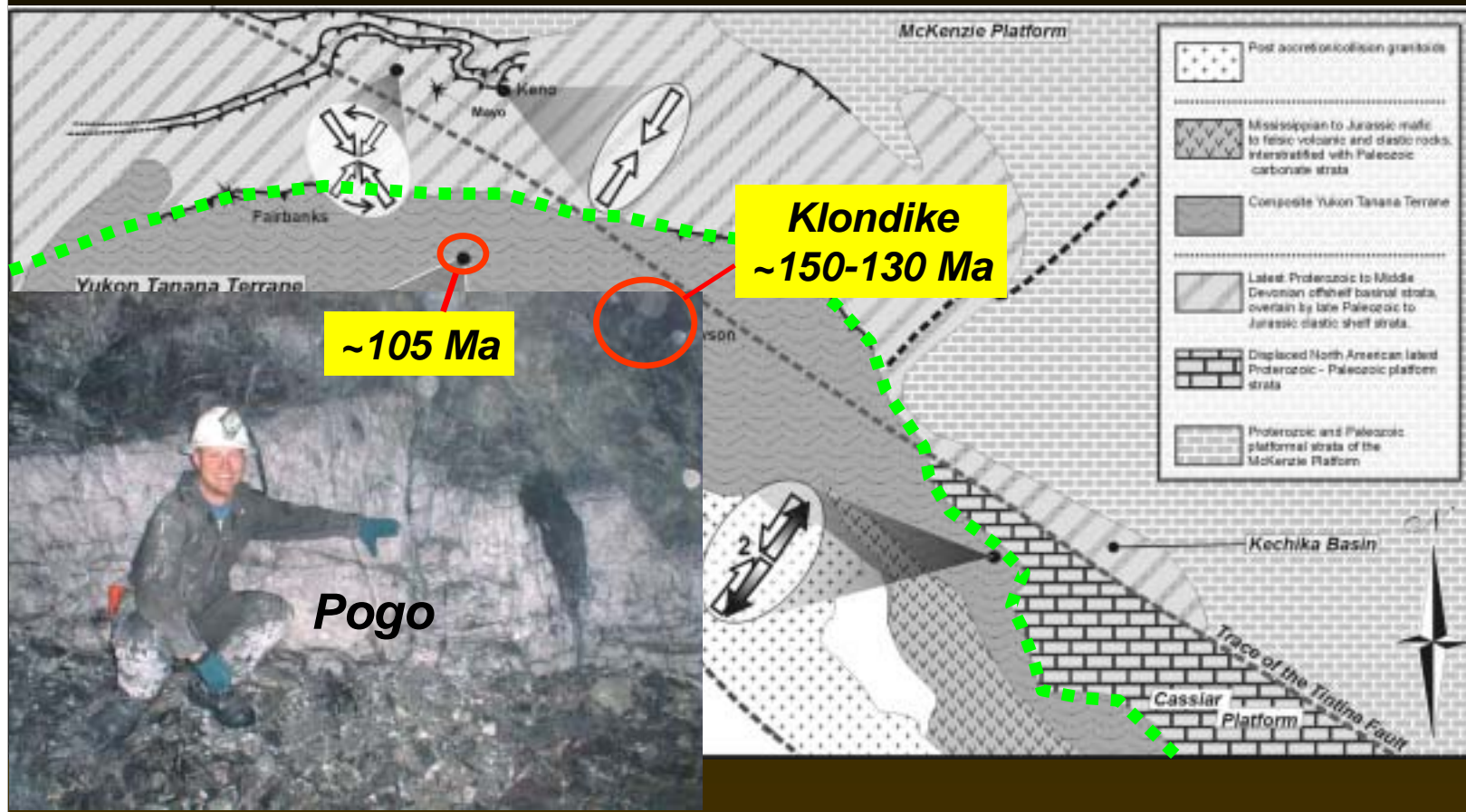


- ***TPS-style hybridised magmatism is restricted to inboard part of collisional orogen over old North American lithosphere***
- ***Such magmatism is not usually present in the accretionary and collisional belts that usually host orogenic lode-style Au deposits***

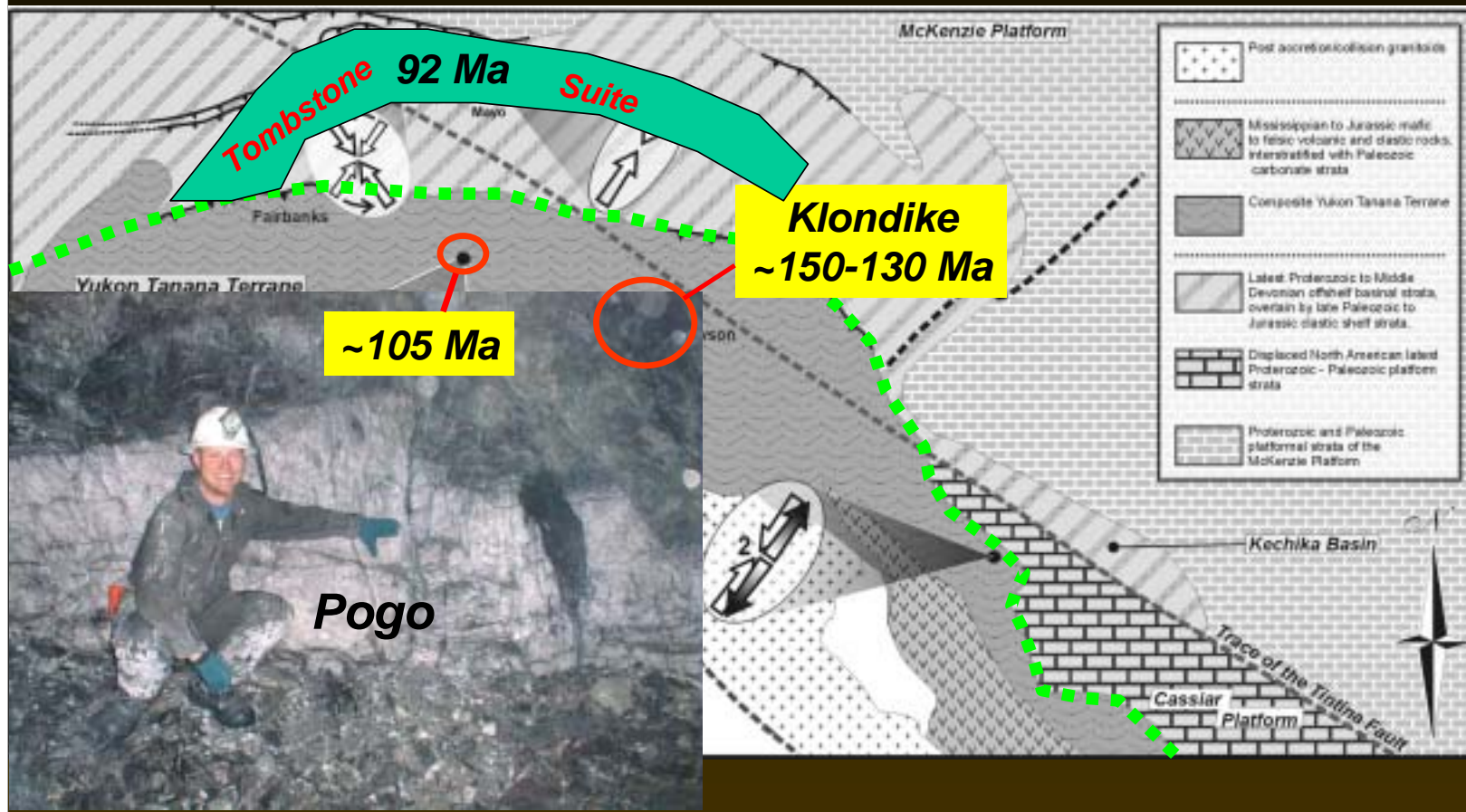
Summary – Tintina Province Timing



Summary – Tintina Province Timing



Summary – Tintina Province Timing



Conclusions:

- Hybridised mantle-crustal magma systems
- Mantle component – volatile-rich alkalic magmas
 - Sourced from metasomatised lithospheric mantle (*old refractory mantle enriched by metasomatic processes*)
- Melts are **weakly oxidised** to **weakly reduced**, mostly weakly metaluminous
- Associated hydrothermal systems are **Au (+Te, Bi, As)** and **W** rich (*in contrast to oxidised Cu-rich systems*)
- A variety of Au-rich magmatic hydrothermal systems related to volatile-rich alkalic magmatism