

The continental drift theory essay sample



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How has paleomagnetism influenced the transition from continental drift to plate tectonics?

The Continental Drift Theory of Alfred Wegener in 1912 was the first to come out as geologists and paleontologists of various generations diligently studying about the Earth and the significance and relativity of each continent with each other. Continental drift theory suggested that existing continents were once belong to a single huge land situated on an oceanic crust floating, and that this huge land was divided into pieces as a result of the seafloor spreading. However, Wegener failed to illustrate why and how such seafloor spreading or continents drifting happen.

Paleomagnetism played an important part by determining the cause of continental drift. The discovery of recorded Earth's magnetic field that has preserved in rocks and fossils of different geologic era determined the ages of existence and extinction, together with and crust's direction, intensity and movement. Evidence showed that disproportionate deformation of continents was the result of unpredictable Earth's vertical axis rotation and activities. Paths of magnetic poles in every single Earth's magnetic field favorably guided to the confirmation of past locations of each continent.

Through this discovery of paleomagnetism, another concept of investigation has been promoted in the 1960, which called the Plate Tectonics theory. This theory is recognized and enhanced by the scientists especially geologists around the globe to further explain the older theory and its evidences. Plate tectonics theory remained accepted until today. Thus,

paleomagnetism influenced the shift from continental drift theory to plate tectonics theory.

R E F E R E N C E

“ Chapter 26: Paleomagnetism.” Evolution Encyclopedia Vol. 3. Evolution-facts. org

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