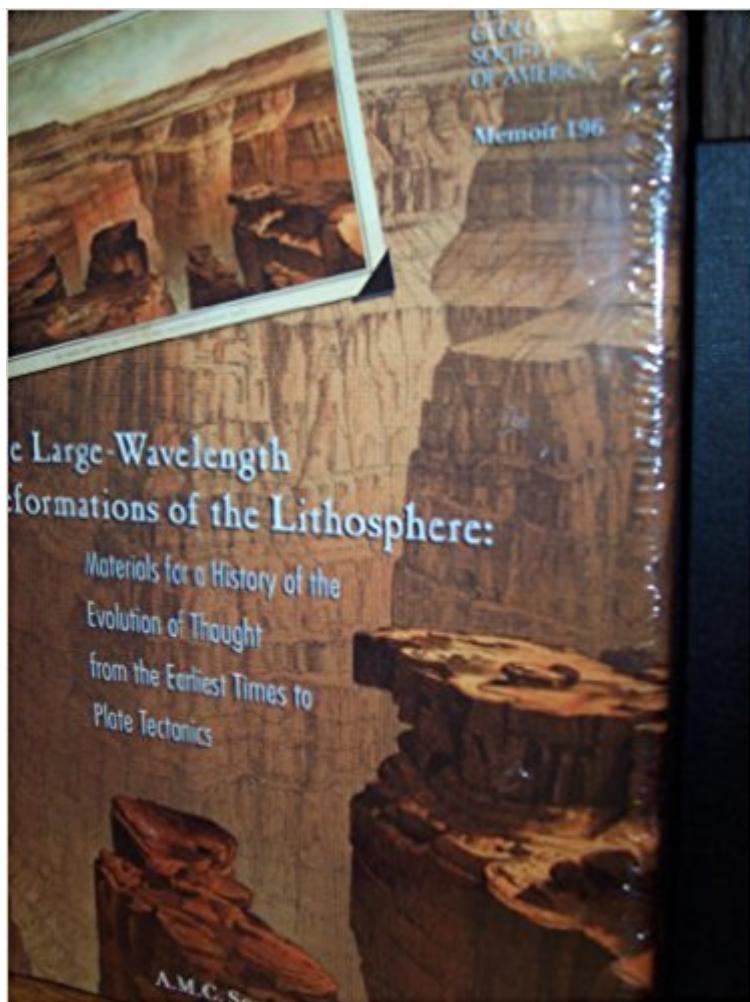


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The Large Wavelength Deformations Of The Lithosphere: Materials For A History Of The Evolution Of Thought From The Earliest Times To Plate Tectonics (Memoirs (Geological Society Of America))





Synopsis

Today, the geodynamic deformations of the lithosphere manifest themselves in two main categories: structures of small wavelength and structures of large wavelength—"wavelength of structure" being defined as the distance between two amplitude crests of cogenetic structures belonging to the characteristic size category within a field of deformation. I call structures of small wavelength copeogenic (because they cut the lithosphere) and the structures of long wavelength falcogenic (because they bend the lithosphere). This book traces the rise of the awareness of long-wavelength structures with the objective of understanding their essential features. The subdued expression and enormous size of long-wavelength structures have been joint impediments to the recognition and the understanding of their nature, yet many have known of their existence from the earliest times—mainly on the basis of observations of sea-level change. Change of level has been inferred so early that the origin of this inference is lost among mythic speculations. Vertical motions of the rocky surface with respect to a reference fixed to the earth have been much harder to recognize because of the difficulty of finding an appropriate point of reference and the selection of gauges showing distance to that point of reference in the past. The earliest explanatory models were based on observations that, in some areas, land was actively gaining on the sea and that in others in the past, some of the present land areas had been covered by marine waters, as shown by fossils.

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