



**HAL**  
open science

## Rare-elements (Li-Be-Ta-Sn-Nb) magmatism in the European Variscan belt, a review

Jérémie Melleton, Eric Gloaguen

### ► To cite this version:

Jérémie Melleton, Eric Gloaguen. Rare-elements (Li-Be-Ta-Sn-Nb) magmatism in the European Variscan belt, a review. SGA 2015: Ressources minérales dans un monde durable, SGA (Society for Geology Applied to Mineral Deposits), Aug 2015, Nancy, France. hal-01156421

**HAL Id: hal-01156421**

**<https://brgm.hal.science/hal-01156421>**

Submitted on 27 May 2015

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

# Rare-elements (Li-Be-Ta-Sn-Nb) magmatism in the European Variscan belt, a review

Melleton J r mie, Gloaguen Eric

BRGM, Direction G oressources, ISTO, UMR 7327, B.P. 36009, F-45060 Orl ans (France)

Frei Dirk

Stellenbosch University, Department of Earth Sciences (South Africa)

**Abstract.** The European Variscan belt, which is characterized by a huge amount of granitic intrusions, displays several significant rare-elements pegmatites and/or granites fields which could represent an important source of raw materials. An overview of these occurrences gave the possibility to discuss the processes at their origin and their common classification. Indeed, the spatial and temporal distributions of rare-element pegmatites in the European Variscan belt suggest that rare-elements magmatism would rather be related to local specific conditions (in particular sources, tectonic and thermal regime) than lower crustal processes like rare-elements enrichment subsequent to their release during granulite metamorphism. Actual classification of rare-elements pegmatites, based on their geochemistry and mineral composition, does not allow to discern pegmatites formed in different tectonic regimes and which exhibit various internal structures (e.g. the pegmatites of the *lepidolite*-subclass from Western Iberia and from the Moldanubian domain of the Bohemian Massif for example).

**Keywords.** LCT pegmatites – rare-elements magmatism – rare metals - colombite-tantalite dating – Variscan belt

## 1 Introduction

Lithium and tantalum belong to the so-called rare elements or rare metals which are critical for the development of some technologies related to energy saving and telecommunications. The most important sources of raw materials for these metals are rare-element granites and pegmatites, in particular for tantalum (Linnen et al., 2012). Also, they represent important economic storehouses for industrial minerals like feldspar, quartz, mica or kaolin (Glover et al., 2012). Rare-elements magmatic bodies representing an economic potential are pegmatites of the LCT (Lithium, Caesium, Tantalum) class ( ern y&Ercit, 2005 and references therein) and high-phosphorus peraluminous rare-elements granites (Linnen et al., 2005), which principally emplace in orogenic settings (Martin & De Vito, 2005).

The European Variscan belt results of the Upper Paleozoic convergence and collision between two megacontinents, Gondwana in the south and Laurasia in the north, with several intervening microcontinents and closures of several oceanic domains (Matte, 1986; 1991).

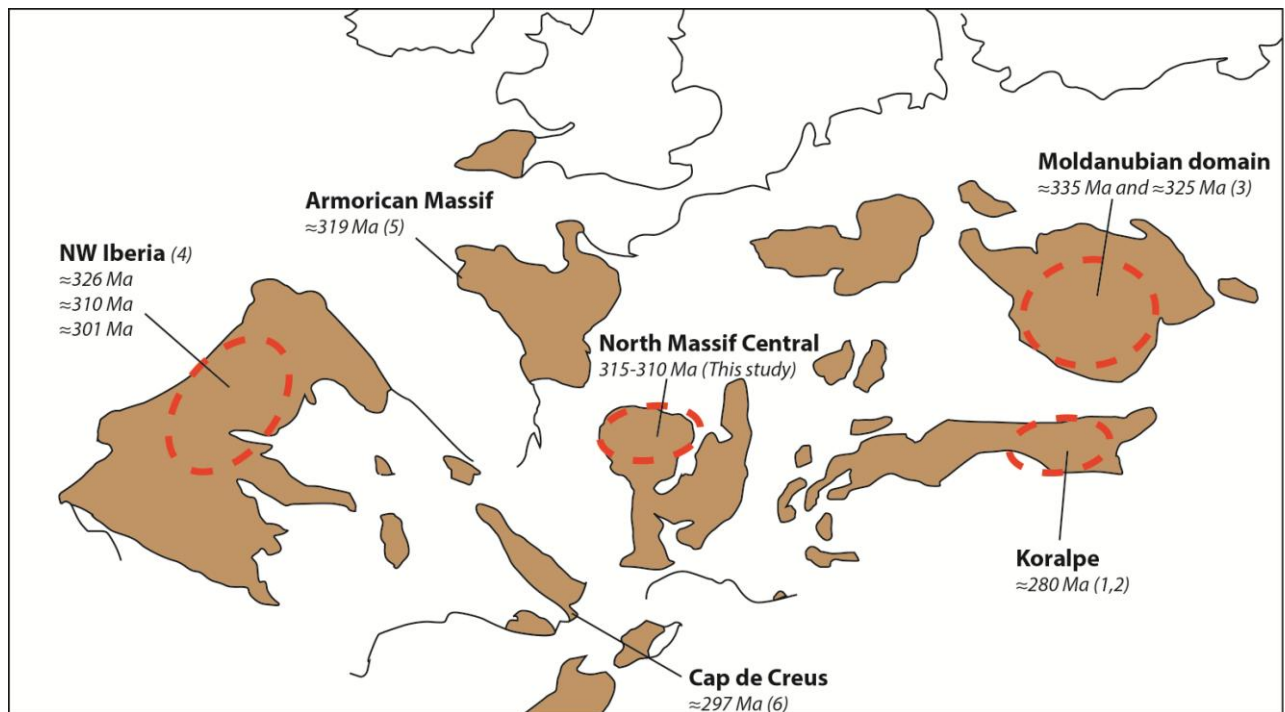
It is characterized by huge amounts of granitic intrusions, and also displays several districts of rare-elements granites and pegmatites related deposits (Fig. 1).

In this synthesis, we give a quick overview of three main European Variscan districts, i.e. the Moldanubian domain of the Bohemian massif, the French Massif Central (FMC), with new geochronological data, and the NW Iberia. This provides a basis for questioning the origin of rare-elements magmatism and the actual classification of rare-elements pegmatites, in particular the LCT pegmatites.

## 2 Main rare-elements districts in the European Variscan belt

### 2.1 The Bohemian massif

The Bohemian Massif represents the easternmost part of the European Variscan belt. From west to east, four major units have been described in the Bohemian Massif (Matte et al., 1990; Ch b et al., 2010 and references therein):(i) the Saxothuringian domain, consisting of a Neoproterozoic basement covered by Paleozoic sequences, lately intruded by numerous plutons of S- and A-type granites; (ii) the Tepl -Barrandian domain, interpreted as an independent crustal block and composed by a Neoproterozoic basement and a Lower Paleozoic cover poor in Variscan magmatic activity; (iii) the Moldanubian domain, corresponding to the inner part of the orogen and consisting of a medium- to high-grade metamorphic complexes intruded by numerous Carboniferous granitoids of calc-alkaline (I-type) and peraluminous (S-type) characteristics;(iv) the Brunovistulicum domain, representing a Neoproterozoic basement with Early to Late Paleozoic cover. Granitic pegmatites are widespread in most of the domain (Breiter et al., 2010). However, the LCT pegmatites ( ern y&Ercit, 2005) are most common in the Moldanubian domain, with currently about 70 individual dykes known in the region. Their emplacement seems mainly controlled by migmatitic domes and shear zones.



**Figure 1.** Location of the main districts of rare-elements pegmatites and granites within the European Variscan belt. Ages are from (1) Göd (1989); (2) Thöni et al. (2008); (3) Melleton et al. (2012); (4) Melleton et al. (*submitted*); (5) Branquet et al. (*inprep.*) (6) Grand’Homme (2012). All geochronological data are U-Pb on columbite-group minerals ages except for Korralpe where Rb-Sr (Göd, 1989) and U-Pb on zircon, monazite and xenotime have been performed (Thöni et al., 2008), and on columbite-group minerals and zircon for Cap de Creus pegmatites (Grand’Homme, 2012).

Two emplacement ages have been documented in the Moldanubian domain (U-Pb ages on columbite and tantalite; Melleton et al., 2012). The older at  $\sim 333 \pm 3$  Ma just follow HT-MP event of the end of the Moravo-Moldanubian phase and the younger at  $\sim 325 \pm 4$  Ma is contemporaneous with beginning of the Bavarian phase. The emplacement of Li-bearing rare-element pegmatites in the Moldanubian domain is the oldest known rare-element magmatic event during Variscan orogeny.

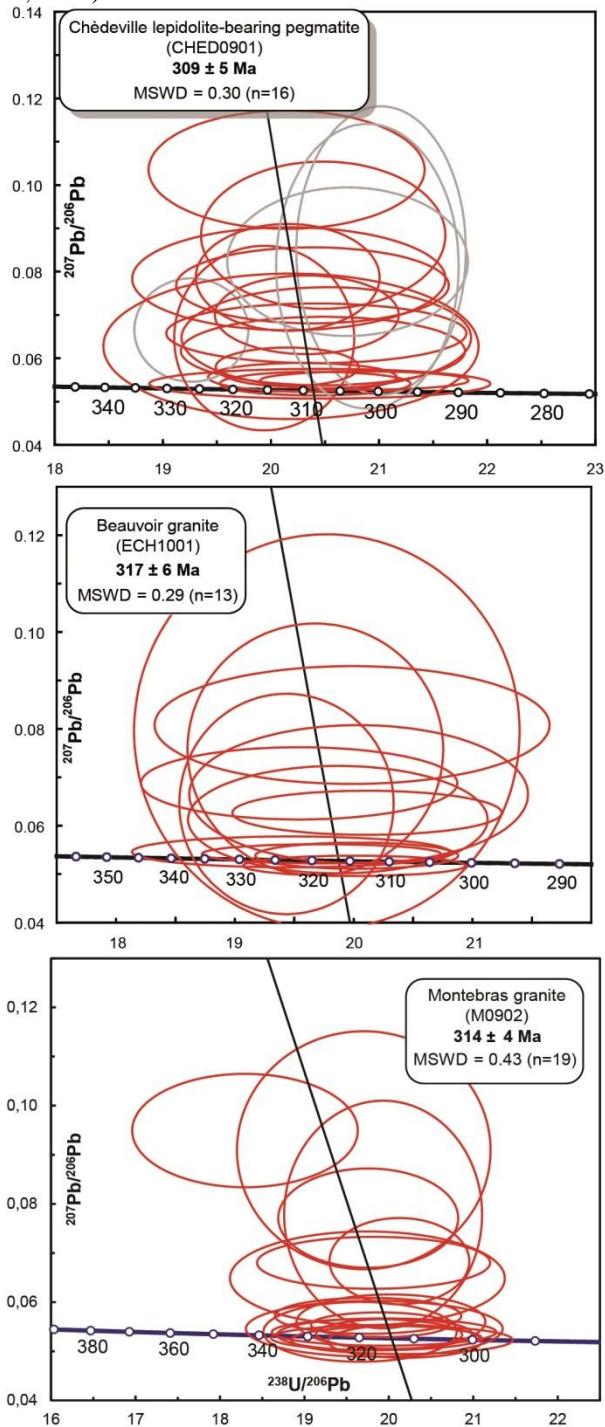
## 2.2 The French Massif Central

In the FMC, most of the actually known rare-elements magmatic bodies form a province in the North Limousin area (Marignac & Cuney, 1999), which represents the northwestern part of the FMC. The structure of FMC is a stack of metamorphic nappes, with, from bottom to top, four main tectonic units (Faure et al., 2009; and references therein): (i) the Para-autochthonous Unit consists of Neoproterozoic to Ordovician metapelite-metagraywacke series with some quartzite beds and volcanic rocks metamorphosed; (ii) the Lower Gneiss Unit (LGU) contains numerous Early Cambrian and Early Ordovician alkaline granitoids intruded in paraderived host rocks; (iii) the Upper Gneiss Unit (UGU) contains eclogite boudins, and mafic or felsic granulites lenses hosted by migmatitic paragneiss, metasediments and orthogneiss; (iv) and the Thiviers-Payzac Unit (TPU) formed by Cambrian metagraywackes, rhyolites and quartzites intruded by Ordovician granites. All these units are intruded by granitoids from the Late Devonian

to the Late Carboniferous. The “rare-metals” province of north FMC is composed by three types of intrusions showing equivalent geochemical characteristics and trends (i) the Beauvoir and Montebras rare-elements granites (ii) the Richemont rhyolite and (iii) the Mont d’Ambazac rare-elements pegmatites field. In these latter, several types of pegmatites have been recognized (Raimbault, 1998; Deveaud et al., 2013), but we consider here the Chèdeville pegmatite which belongs to the *lepidolite*-subclass. The Chèdeville dyke is the most important with 3 m thick, more than 100 m long and a layered internal structure, with an important development of aplitic textures. The Beauvoir granite, which emplaced in the Para-autochthonous unit and the Montebras granite (emplaced in a peraluminous batholith), have been extensively described by Aubert (1969) and Cuney et al. (1992).

U-Pb dating of columbite-group minerals from Beauvoir, Montebras and Chèdeville rare-elements magmatic bodies has been performed using laser ablation system connected to a single collector SF-ICP-MS (description of the analytical protocol is presented in Melleton et al., 2012). The Beauvoir granite leads to an emplacement age of  $317 \pm 6$  Ma (fig. 2) which is significantly older than previous  $^{40}\text{Ar}-^{39}\text{Ar}$  age on *lepidolite* at  $308 \pm 2$  (Cheilletz et al., 1992). Conversely, our U/Pb ages of  $314 \pm 4$  Ma and  $309 \pm 5$  Ma obtained for Montebras granite and Chèdeville pegmatite are identical within the uncertainties with previous published  $^{40}\text{Ar}-^{39}\text{Ar}$  at  $310 \pm 1$  Ma and  $309 \pm 1$  Ma respectively, but also with the Richemont rhyolite dated at  $313 \pm 3$  Ma (Cheilletz et al., 1992; Cuney et al., 2002). The Marche fault system, which crosscuts in a general E-W trend all the northern part of the Limousin, seems to be a key-structure for the rare-elements magmatism of the area, since it appears as a hyphen between all bodies. Moreover, the Marche fault system is coeval with the rare-element magmatism as evidenced by  $^{40}\text{Ar}-^{39}\text{Ar}$  ages ranging from  $316 \pm 5$  Ma to  $312 \pm 2$  Ma (Gébelin et al., 2007). Contemporaneous cordierite-bearing migmatitic gneisses dated at  $316 \pm 2$  Ma also mark a discrete migmatitic event in the North of the Limousin (Gébelin et

al., 2009).



**Figure 2.** New U-Pb ages on colombite-group minerals from the North FMC district.

## 2.4 Iberia

Although rare-elements pegmatites are spread in other Variscan massifs of Iberia, such as in Cap de Creus, the northwest part of the Iberian Variscan belt contains numerous fields that represent the first economic targets in Europe. It is subdivided into four main zones: (i) the Cantabrian domain; (ii) the West Asturian Leones Zone; (iii) the Galicia-Trás-os-Montes Zone (GTOMZ); (iv) the Central Iberian Zone (CIZ) (Julivert et al., 1974; Farias et al., 1987). These last two zones particularly exhibit

important rare-elements pegmatites fields. Most of these dykes exhibit no or very discrete layered internal structures, and correspond to huge bodies of several meters thick and up to several hundred meters long. In the CIZ, the Argemela granite corresponds to the only rare-elements granite known in Iberia (Charoy & Noronha, 1991; 1996). Three events of rare-elements magmatism have been recognized in Northwest Iberia (U-Pb on colombite and tantalite; Melleton et al., submitted): (i) emplacement of the Argemela rare-element granite, in the Central Iberian Zone (CIZ), with an age of  $326 \pm 3$  Ma; (ii) intrusion of rare-element pegmatites from the Galicia-Trás-os-Montes Zone (GTOMZ), at an average age of  $310 \pm 5$  Ma; (iii) emplacements of rare-element pegmatites in the CIZ and in the southern GTOMZ at about  $301 \pm 3$  Ma. These two last events are coeval to the two age peaks of the late orogenic magmatism at ca. 308 Ma and 299 Ma, and all dated rare-element pegmatites clearly emplaced during the late-orogenic evolution of the Variscan belt. Coeval fields of rare-element pegmatites are settled in belts following those formed by similar granitoid suites. Pegmatites fields from both the GTOMZ and the CIZ reveal a southward propagation of ages of emplacement, which matches the observed propagation of deformation, metamorphism and magmatism in the two different geotectonic zones. Moreover, the location of the main rare-elements pegmatites fields suggests a strong correlation between their emplacement and activity of major crustal shear-zones.

## 4 Origin of the rare-elements magmatism

Following the most accepted genetic model for rare-elements granites and pegmatites, these bodies represent the late withdrawal of residual melts enriched in fluxing elements (Li, F, B) and rare-elements (Ta, Nb, Be, Cs but also Sn and W) from the crystallization of parent granite (Černý et al., 2005; London, 2008).

Nevertheless, another hypothesis for rare-element enrichment proposes the extraction of metasomatic fluids during lower crustal metamorphic processes (HP-HT) to explain the abnormal enrichment of fluxing elements (Li, F, B, Be) and HFSE (Marignac & Cuney, 1999; Cuney et al., 2002; Cuney & Barbey, 2014). This hypothesis is based mainly on geochronological results ( $^{40}\text{Ar}$ - $^{39}\text{Ar}$  on *lepidolite* and *muscovite*) from the North French Massif Central, where rare-element bodies would be emplaced simultaneously at about 310 Ma, i.e. when a HP-HT metamorphism event affected the lower crust of the French Massif Central. The depleted geochemical compositions in such elements, recorded in some granulite terrains, were also used to support this assumption (Cuney & Barbey, 2014).

Although our results confirm coeval emplacement ages for rare-elements bodies from the FMC and the HP-HT metamorphic event, comparison with other massifs, in particular for NW Iberia where several rare-elements magmatic events are recognized, leads to discuss this last hypothesis. Indeed, the succession of events in NW Iberia might suggest that HP-HT metamorphism would occur several times in the same tectonic domain and in a short time interval. This appears to us unlikely in a

general tectonic context of lateral movements rather than vertical structuration. Moreover, rare-elements pegmatites emplacement in the Moldanubian domain of the Bohemian massif clearly postpones the known HP-HT event, and marks the end of migmatitic doming and exhumation of HP units.

Another argument is the strong spatial location of rare-elements pegmatites fields, which more implies specific local conditions like particular sources, favorable tectonic processes and thermic regimes, rather than larger processes controlled by deep crustal events like delamination of the lower crust.

## 5 Classification of rare-elements pegmatites

The actual classification of pegmatites mostly used has been proposed by Černý & Ercit (2005). It is based on the depth of emplacement, the geochemistry and the mineral composition. Although it represents a useful tool for the description and comparison of rare-elements pegmatites, it does not take into account the internal structure of the dykes. Such a lack brings to group objects with similar mineralogy and geochemistry, but very different with respect to their internal organization, in the same class. Under this point of view, the classification of Černý & Ercit (2005) does not properly reflect the origin of the pegmatites. For example, the *lepidolite*-subclass pegmatites of the Moldanubian domain of the Bohemian massif show concentric organization, with the more differentiated zones in the center of the object. Geochemistry of these pegmatites is then very heterogeneous and their rare-elements characters are partly acquired by the internal evolution of the dykes. In another hand, the *lepidolite*-subclass pegmatites from NW Iberia, or the Chêdeville pegmatite in FMC, expose very similar layered organization, which suppose common processes for their origin. The geochemistry of these bodies is more homogeneous than in the case of Moldanubian pegmatites, which means that melts were already originally enriched in rare-elements.

## Acknowledgements

This contribution was supported by “Institut Carnot” and BRGM (French Geological Survey). It is published with the permission of the Directors of the Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland (GEUS). The authors wish to thank C. Beny (BRGM) and P. Recourt (Laboratoire Géosystème, UMR 8157, University of Lille 1) for SEM imaging.

## References

- Aubert G (1969) Les coupoles granitiques de Montebrias et d'Echassières (Massif Central Français) et la genèse de leurs minéralisations en étain, lithium, tungstène et béryllium. Mémoires du BRGM, 46 (in french).
- Breiter K, Cempírek J, Kadlec T, Novák M, Škoda R (2010) Granitic pegmatites and mineralogical museums in Czech Republic. In Proc. Int. Mineral. Assoc. (Budapest). Novák M & Cempírek J (eds). Acta Mineralogica–Petrographica, Field guidebook series 6.
- Cameron EN, Jahns RH, McNair AH, Page LR (1949) Internal structure of granitic pegmatites. Econ. Geol., Monograph 2.
- Černý P, Ercit ST (2005) The classification of granitic pegmatites revisited. Can. Mineral., 4, 2005-2026.
- Černý P, Blevin PL, Cuney M, London D (2005) Granite-Related Ore Deposits. Economic Geology 100th anniversary volume, pp. 337-370.
- Cháb J, Breiter K, Fatka O, Hladil J, Kalvoda J, Šimunek Z, Storch P, Vašíček Z, Zajíc J, Zapletal J (2010) Outline of the Geology of the Bohemian Massif. Czech Geological Survey, Praha, Czech Republic.
- Charoy, B, Noronha, F (1991). The Argemela granite-porphry (Central Portugal): the subvolcanic expression of a high-fluorine, rare-element pegmatite magma. In: Pagel & Leroy (Eds), Source, Transport and Deposition of Metals. Balkema, Rotterdam. pp. 741-744.
- Charoy, B, Noronha, F (1996) Multistage Growth of a Rare-Element, Volatile-Rich Microgranite at Argemela (Portugal). Journal of Petrology, 37, 73-94.
- Cuney M, Barbey P (2014). Uranium, rare metals, and granulite-facies metamorphism. Geosciences Frontiers, 5, 729-745.
- Cuney M, Marignac C, Weisbrod A (1992) The Beauvoir Topaz-Lepidolite Albite granite (Massif Central, France): The disseminated magmatic Sn-Li-Ta-Nb-Be mineralization. Econ. Geol., 87, 1766-1794.
- Deveaud S, Gumiaux C, Gloaguen E, Branquet Y (2013) Spatial statistical analysis applied to rare-element LCT-type pegmatite fields: an original approach to constrain faults-pegmatites-granites relationships. J. Geosciences, 58, 163-182.
- Faure M, Lardeaux JM, Ledru P (2009). A review of the pre-Permian geology of the Variscan French Massif Central. Comptes Rendus Geosciences, 341, 202-213.
- Gébelin A, Brunel M, Monié P, Faure M, Arnaud N (2007) Transpressional tectonics and Carboniferous magmatism in the Limousin, Massif Central, France: Structural and <sup>40</sup>Ar/<sup>39</sup>Ar investigations. Tectonics, TC2008, doi:10.1029/2005TC001822.
- Gébelin A, Roger F, Brunel M (2009) Syntectonic crustal melting and high-grade metamorphism in a transpressional regime, Variscan Massif Central, France. Tectonophysics, 477, 229-243.
- Glover AS, Rogers WZ, Barton JE (2012) Granitic Pegmatites: Storehouses of Industrial Minerals. Elements, 8: 269-273.
- Göd R, 1989. The spodumene deposit at “Weinebene”, Koralpe, Austria. Mineral Deposita, 24, 270-278.
- Grand’Homme A (2012) Petrology and geochronology U-Pb on zircon and colombo-tantalite from Cap de Creus pegmatites. Master thesis (in French).
- Linnen RL, Cuney M (2005). Granite-related rare-element deposits and experimental constraints on Ta-Nb-W-Sn-Zr-Hf mineralization. In: Linnen RL, Samson IM (Eds.) Rare-Element Geochemistry and Mineral Deposits. Geological Association Canada Short Course Notes, 17, 45-68.
- Linnen RL, Van Lichtervelde M, Černý P (2012) Granitic pegmatites as Sources of Strategic Metals. Elements, 8: 275-280.
- London D (2008) Pegmatites. Can. Mineral. Spec. Pub., 10: 347 pp.
- Marignac C, Cuney M (1999) Ore deposits of the French Massif Central: insight into the metallogenesis of the Variscan collision belt. Mineral. Depos. 34: 472-504.
- Martin RF, De Vito C (2005) The patterns of enrichment in felsic pegmatites ultimately depend on tectonic setting. Can. Mineral., 2027-2048.
- Matte P (1986) Tectonics and plate tectonics model for the Variscan belt of Europe. Tectonophysics, 126, 329-374.
- Matte P (1991) Accretionary history and crustal evolution of the Variscan belt in Western Europe. Tectonophysics 196, 309-339.
- Melleton J, Gloaguen E, Frei D, Novák M, Breiter K (2012) How are the emplacement of rare-element pegmatites, regional metamorphism and magmatism interrelated in the Moldanubian domain of the Variscan Bohemian Massif, Czech Republic? The Canadian Mineralogist, 50, 1751-1773.
- Melleton J, Gloaguen E, Frei D, Lima A, Roda-Robles E, Vieira R, Martins T. Polyphased rare-element magmatism during late orogenic evolution: geochronological constraints from NW Variscan Iberia. Submitted to Mineralogy and Petrology.
- Novák M, Selway JB (1997) Locality No. 1: Rožná near Bystřice nad Pernštejnem, Hradisko hill, a large lepidolite subtype pegmatite dike. In Novák M & Selway JB (eds) International Symposium Tourmaline 1997, Nové Město na Moravě, Czech Republic. Field Trip Guidebook, 23-38.
- Raimbault L (1998) Composition of complexe lepidolite-type granitic pegmatites and of constituent columbite-tantalite, Chêdeville, Massif Central, France. Can Mineral., 36, 563-583.
- Thöni M, Miller C, Zanetti A, Habler G, Goessler W (2008) Sm-Nd isotope systematics of high-REE accessory minerals and major phases: ID-TIMS, LA-ICP-MS and EPMA data constrain multiple Permian-Triassic pegmatite emplacements in the Koralpe, Eastern Alps. Chem. Geol., 254, 216-237.