Introduction to Quantitative Geology

Geological advection:
Examples of advection in geological processes

Lecturer: David Whipp
david.whipp@helsinki.fi

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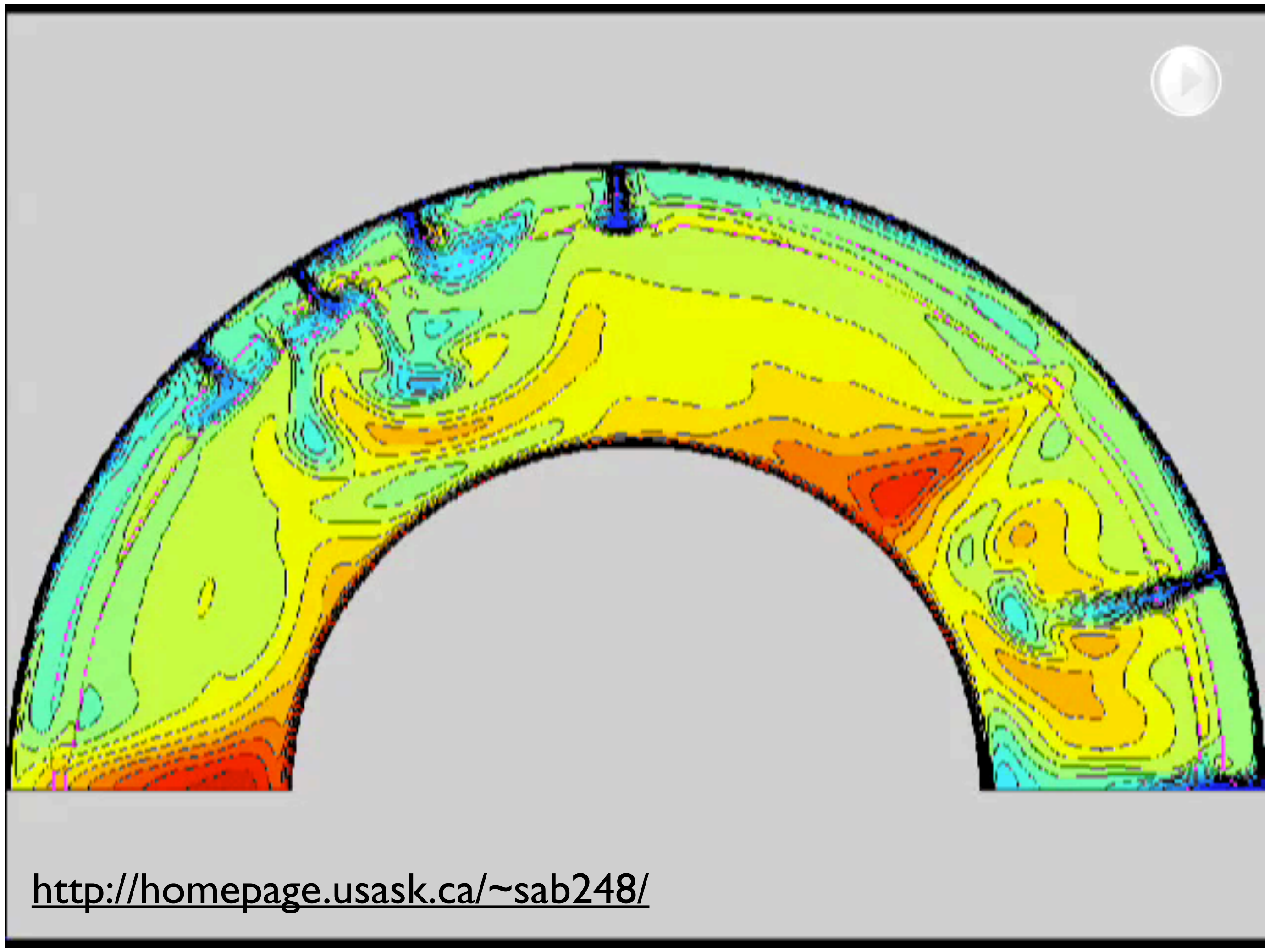
Goals of this lecture

- Introduce the **advection equation**
- Discuss application of the advection equation to **different geological settings**

What is advection?



- Advection involves a lateral translation of some quantity
    - For example, the transfer of heat by physical movement of molecules or atoms within a material. A type of convection, mostly applied to heat transfer in solid materials.

Diffusion equation

$$q = -D\frac{\partial C}{\partial x}$$

$$\frac{\partial C}{\partial t} = -\frac{\partial q}{\partial x}$$

- Last week we were introduced to the **diffusion equation**
  - Flux (transport of mass or transfer of energy) proportional to a gradient
  - Conservation of mass: Any change in flux results in a change in mass/energy

Diffusion equation

Diffusion

$$\frac{\partial C}{\partial t} = D\frac{\partial^2 C}{\partial x^2}$$

$$q = -D\frac{\partial C}{\partial x}$$

$$\frac{\partial C}{\partial t} = -\frac{\partial q}{\partial x}$$

- Substitute the upper equation on the left into the lower to get the classic **diffusion equation**

- q = flux per unit length

  D = diffusivity

  C = concentration

  x = distance

  t = time

Diffusion equation (heat transfer)

Diffusion

$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial t} = \kappa \frac{\partial^2 T}{\partial z^2}$$

- Substitute the upper equation on the left into the lower to get the classic **diffusion equation**
  - κ = thermal diffusivity
    T = temperature
    x = distance
    t = time

Diffusion equation (heat transfer)

Diffusion

$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial t} = \kappa \frac{\partial^2 T}{\partial z^2}$$

Advection

$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial t} = v_{\mathrm{z}} \frac{\partial T}{\partial z}$$

- This week we meet the **advection equation**

Diffusion equation (heat transfer)

Diffusion

$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial t} = \kappa \frac{\partial^2 T}{\partial z^2}$$

Advection

$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial t} = v_z \frac{\partial T}{\partial z}$$

- This week we meet the **advection equation**
- Two key differences:
  - Change in mass/energy with time <u>proportional to gradient, rather than curvature</u> (or *change* in gradient)
  - **Advection coefficient** v_z has units of $[L/T]$, rather than $[L^2/T]$

Advection and diffusion equations, a river profile example

River channel profiles

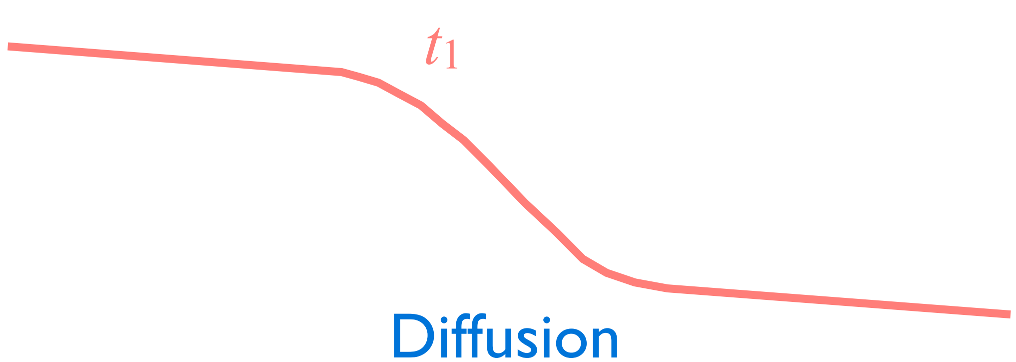


Fig. 1.7, Pelletier, 2008

Diffusion

$$\frac{\partial h}{\partial t} = -\kappa \frac{\partial^2 h}{\partial x^2}$$

Advection

$$\frac{\partial h}{\partial t} = c \frac{\partial h}{\partial x}$$

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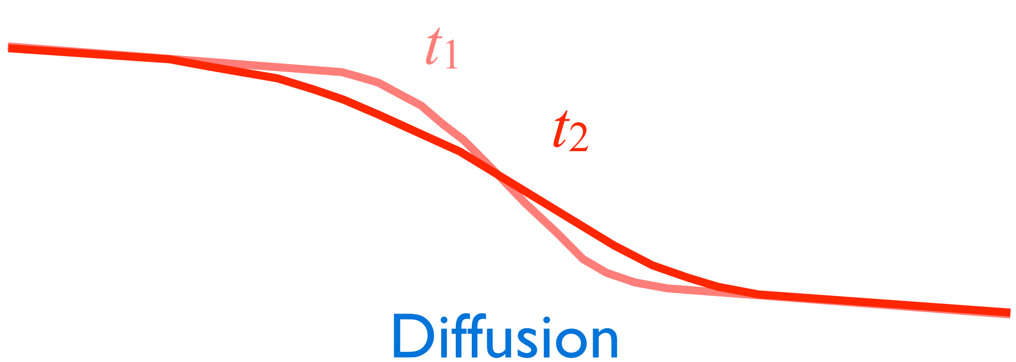

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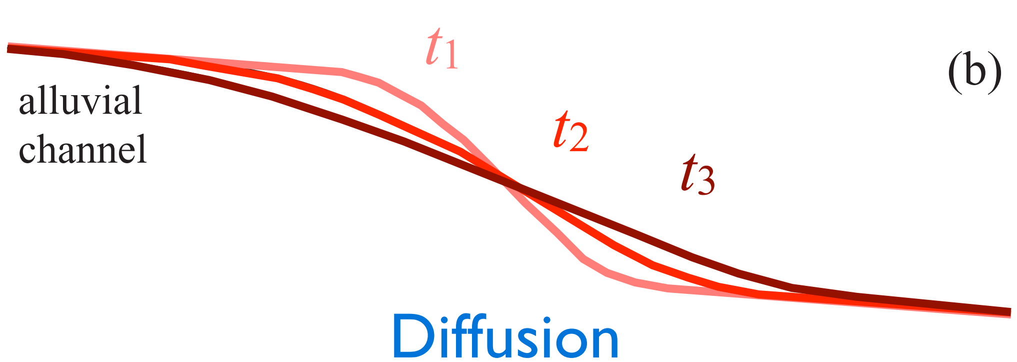

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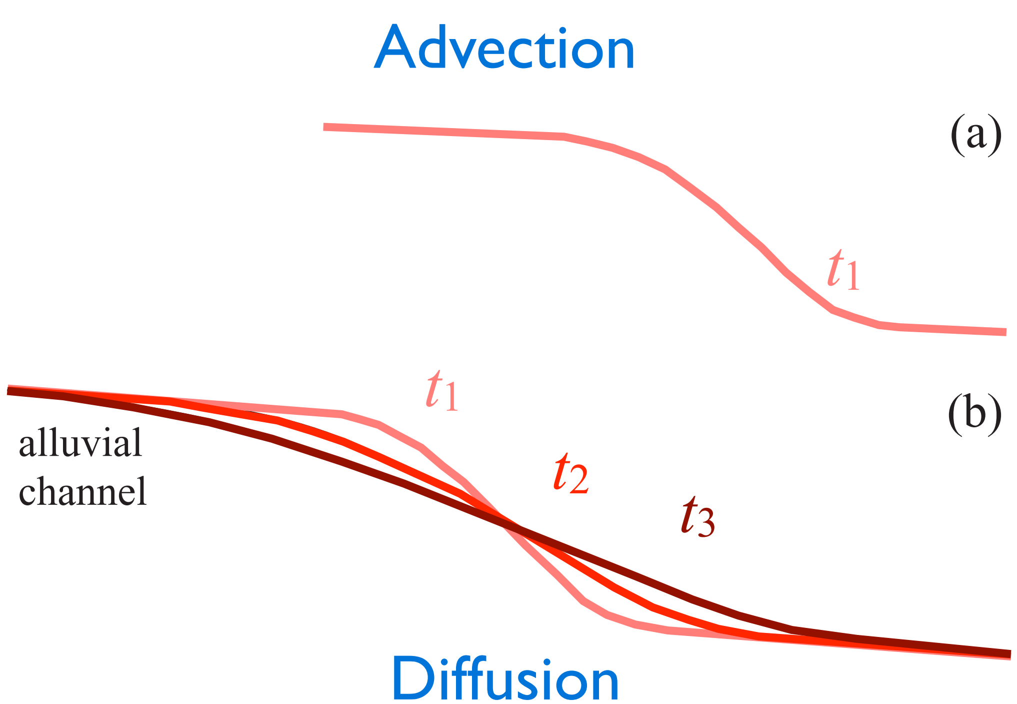

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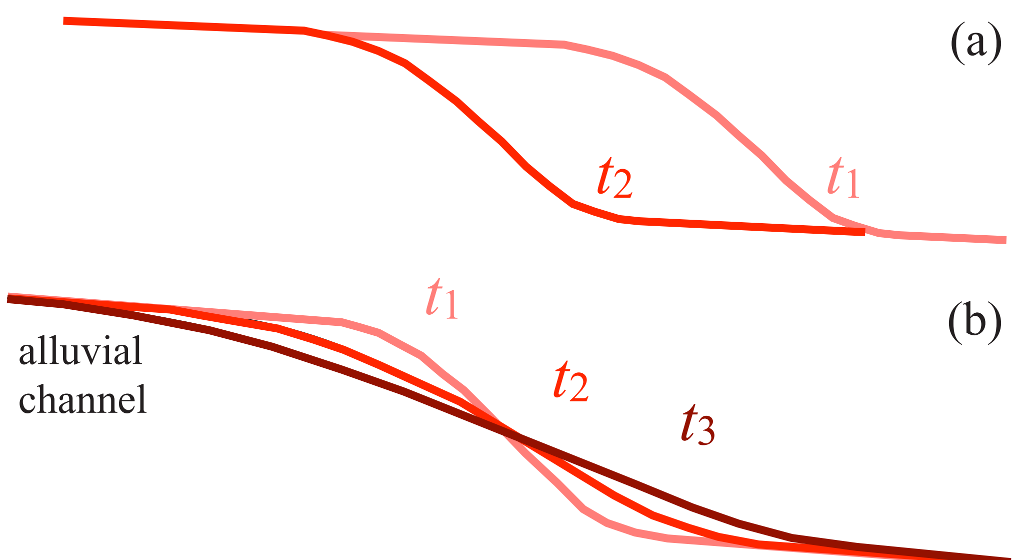

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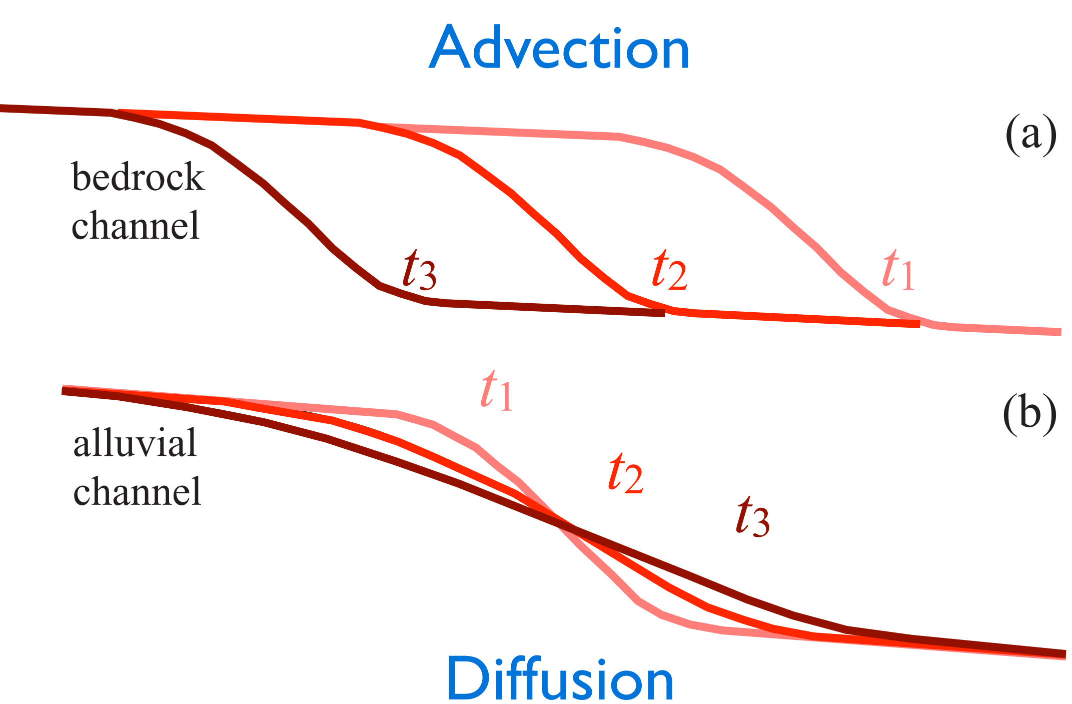

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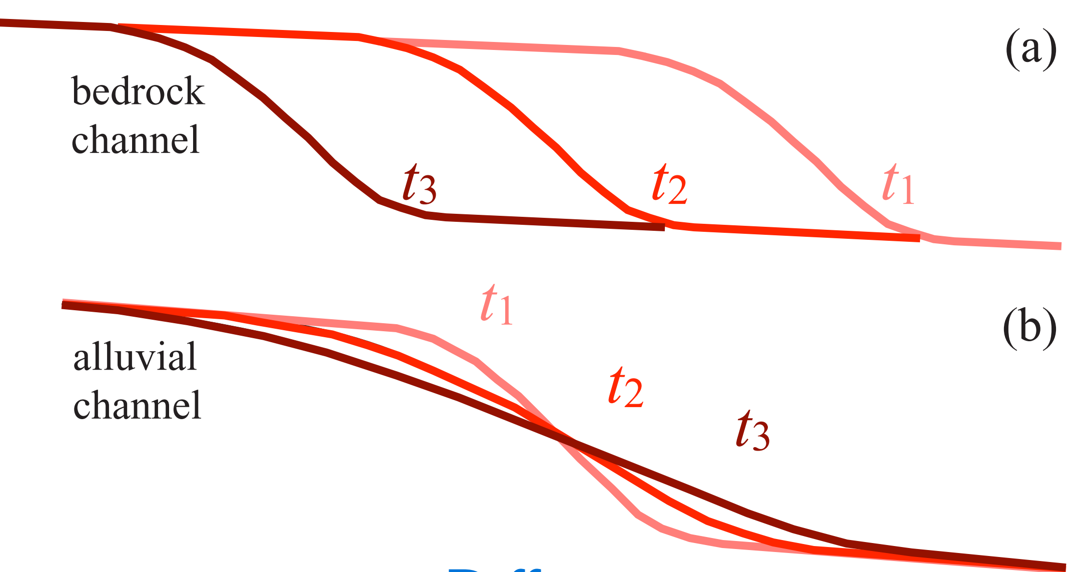

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Advection

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- **Diffusion**: Rate of erosion depends on change in hillslope gradient (curvature)
- **Advection**: Rate of erosion is directly proportional to hillslope gradient
  - Also, no conservation of mass (deposition)

Recap

- **What is the main difference between the advection and diffusion equations?**

References

Pelletier, J. D. (2008). *Quantitative modeling of earth surface processes* (Vol. 304). Cambridge University Press.