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C.N. Zou, Z. Yang, S.Z. Tao, X.J. Yuan, R.K. Zhu, L.H. Hou, S.T. Wu, L. Sun

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Continuous Hydrocarbon Accumulation over a Large Area as a Distinguishing Characteristic of Unconventional Petroleum: The Ordos Basin, North-Central China

C.N. Zou, Z. Yang*, S.Z. Tao, X.J. Yuan, R.K. Zhu, L.H. Hou, S.T. Wu, L. Sun

Research Institute of Petroleum Exploration and Development, PetroChina, 100083, Beijing, China

*Corresponding author.

E-mail address: yangzhi2009@petrochina.com.cn

ABSTRACT

Global petroleum exploration is currently undergoing a strategic shift from conventional to unconventional hydrocarbon resources. Unconventional hydrocarbons in tight reservoirs show characteristics distinct from those of conventional hydrocarbon sources hosted in structural and stratigraphic traps. The characteristic features include the following: a hydrocarbon source and reservoir coexist; porosity and permeability are ultra-low; nano-pore throats are widely distributed; hydrocarbon-bearing reservoir bodies are continuously distributed; there is no obvious trap boundary; buoyancy and hydrodynamics have only a minor effect, and Darcy's law does not apply; phase separation is poor; there is no uniform oil-gas-water interface or pressure system; and oil or gas saturation varies. Examples of unconventional hydrocarbon accumulations are the Mesozoic tight sandstone oil province and the Upper Paleozoic tight sandstone gas province in the Ordos Basin, north-central China. Generally, continuous hydrocarbon accumulation over a large

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