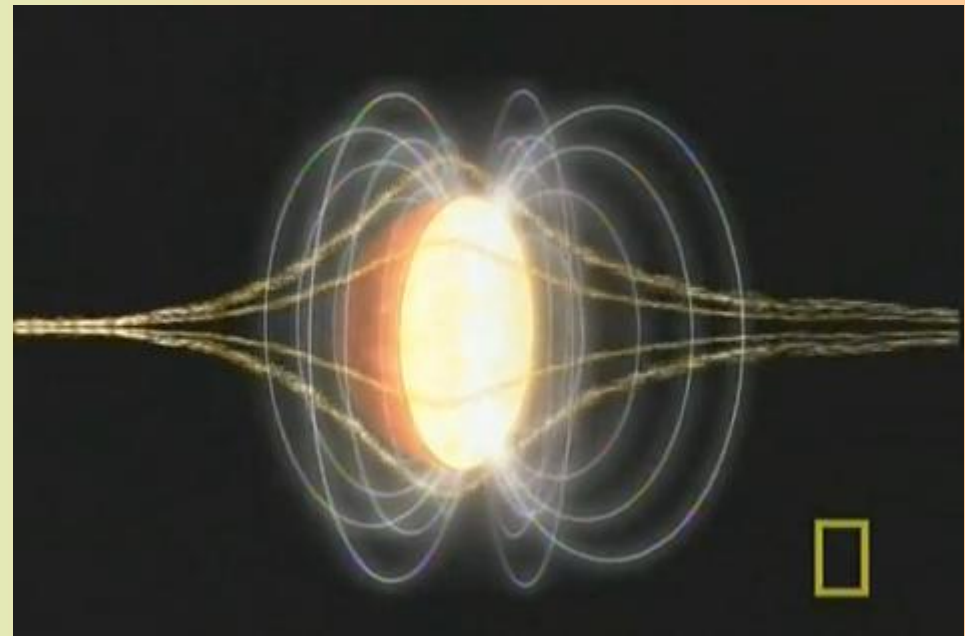


The Early Earth and Plate Tectonics



Earth has begun to take on its final form: a crust, a thin skin; under that a molten semi-solid mantle than boils an stream slow motion and finally two cores, ...

a liquid iron core causing a magnetic field that helps shield us from a deadly cosmic wind from our sun, and a solid nickel and iron inner core.



The Early Earth and Plate Tectonics



This cycle is repeated over and over to generate what scientist call a "convective flow".

The force driving the plates is the slow movement of the super hot semi-solid mantle that lies below the rigid plates. Superheated magma raises to the surface, begins to cool, sinks back down where is reheated and raises again.



The Early Earth and Plate Tectonics



The source of that immense heat is the radioactive material.

These materials release heat as they decay (decay = transformed into other atoms). That decay slows the rate at which the Earth is cooling.

Consequences:

Plates are being pushing apart and in the collision zones lighter plates slide over the heavier ones.

