Temporal and Spatial Variations of Monthly Rainfall in Java, Indonesia

Tetsuzo Yasunari*

Abstract

The analysis of the long-term fluctuation of monthly rainfall (1951–1973) revealed that the year-to-year variability of the rainfall in and around Java is large in the “east monsoon” (dry) season and relatively small in the “west monsoon” (rainy) season. The empirical orthogonal function analysis of the anomaly rainfall showed that the quasi-biennial oscillation (QBO) is dominant over the whole of Java with the large variance (29.4% of the total variance), and that a large variability in the “east monsoon” season is mostly explained by this component. The second component (6.2% of the total variance) represents the variation in the “west monsoon” season with a contrastive spatial pattern between the Java Sea side and the Indian Ocean side of the island. It was also confirmed that the first component (the QBO mode) in the anomaly rainfall is closely connected with the QBO in the surface pressure field over Australasia through the eastern south Pacific and the second component is associated with the north- (or south-) ward shift of the winter monsoon circulation system in the Northern Hemisphere. In addition, the relations between these two modes and the “southern oscillation” are briefly discussed.

I Introduction

The broad area of the Indonesian islands including New Guinea is called the tropical “maritime continent,” and is described as one of the most humid areas in the world. The annual rainfall amount exceeds 3,000 mm in a large part of this area, and in mountainous and hilly places of some islands it is not uncommon to find the annual amount over 4,000 mm. The vast release of latent heat through cumulonimbus convection and rainfall contributes in forming one of the greatest heat sources of the global atmosphere, which in turn may have a great role in the atmospheric circulations. For example, it has been pointed out that the year-to-year variation of the intensity of this heat source largely affects the strength of the subtropical jet stream over far-east Asia [Ramage 1968]. On the other hand, this area is also known as one of the centers of action for large-scale atmospheric circulations in the Southern Hemisphere called the “southern oscillation,” which was discovered by Walker (Walker [1924], Walker and Bliss [1932; 1937], etc.). This circulation represents the standing oscillation in the pressure field between the eastern Pacific and Australia through the Indian

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Ocean with a time scale of two to ten years or so. In recent years, it has been found that this oscillation consists of the zonally oriented circulation cell along the equatorial Pacific region [Bjerknes 1969]. In a mean state, the upward motion is located over the warm and moist "maritime continent" and the downward motion is located over the cool and dry eastern Pacific. In other words, it seems that this oscillation derives its propulsion from the longitudinal heating contrast and its variability. In this context, the rainfall variations of the Indonesian region should be noted as one of the key factors in understanding the physical process of the atmospheric circulations in the tropics.

However, detailed analysis of the temporal and spatial variations of the rainfall over this region have not been undertaken, mostly because of a lack of available data. Tanaka [1980] scrutinized the fluctuation of the monsoon circulations over south, southeast and east Asia and associated general circulation patterns for both northern winter and summer monsoon. He also paid great attention to the southern oscillation as an important factor in controlling monsoon activity. However, his analysis of the variation of rainfall especially for the Indonesian region was not sufficient, because observation points utilized over there were sparse. Very recently, Kami moto [1981] studied the secular variations of the summer monsoon rainfall over the whole and regional areas of monsoon Asia, by using the empirical orthogonal function analysis. One of his conclusions was that the dominant mode in the Indonesia-Malaysia region (36 stations) is closely related to the southern oscillation. Unfortunately, since his analysis was based on data for the northern summer monsoon months (June to August), he did not discuss the exact time scales and seasonal dependencies of the dominant modes.

In this paper, we attempt to reveal the time-space characteristics of the seasonal and non-seasonal variations of rainfall in Java island, where data is available from a relatively large number of stations in comparison with the other islands. The atmospheric circulation patterns associated with the extracted dominant rainfall patterns will also be examined.

II Data

Monthly rainfall data from 54 stations in Java and the surrounding small islands (Madura, Bali and Lombok) was the fundamental data source for the present analysis. In addition, data from 29 stations in Sumatra, Borneo and Sulawesi were used. The time period of the data set was 23 years from 1951 to 1973, though two years' data for 1954 and 1955 were missing from all the stations. The data source was "Pemeriksaan Hudjan Di Indonesia (Rainfall Observations in Indonesia)" published by the Institute of Meteorology and Geophysics, Department of Communications, Indonesia. The locations of the stations in and around Java are shown in Fig. 1, and the names, the mean
Table 1 List of the Names, the Mean Monthly and Annual Rainfall of the Stations in and around Java

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**Note:** The table continues with similar entries for each station, showing monthly rainfall data and annual totals.
It should be noted, however, that the “rainy” and the “dry” seasons deduced as climatological mean values are not as stable as those in the continental monsoon regions of India and Southeast Asia. For example, Fig. 3 shows the series of monthly rainfall and the normal-year values at Lumbir in central Java, where the mean annual rainfall is nearly 2,800 mm (refer to Table 1). A large variation from month to month is apparent in this figure. Typically in 1957, July rainfall reached more than 700 mm but rainfall amount in “rainy” months were relatively small, while in 1972 no rainfall occurred in the “dry” months. To estimate the variability of the anomalies from the

III Seasonal Variation and Its Variability

It is well known that the seasonal variation of rainfall show a distinct annual cycle with the maximum in the months from December to March and the minimum in the months from June to September in most parts of Java. The rainy season corresponds with the northeast monsoon period in the northern winter, and the dry season with the southwest monsoon period in the northern summer. The prevailing wind over this area is W to WNW in the rainy season, and E to ESE in the dry season. Therefore, the local people in Java call the rainy season “angin barat (west monsoon)” and the dry season “angin timur (east monsoon).” The mean rainfall distributions for the rainy season (Dec. to Mar.) and the dry season (Jun. to Sept.) are shown in

![Fig. 2](image_url) Distributions of the rainfall amount for (a) the rainy season (December to March), and (b) the dry season (June to September). The areas of the rainfall amount over 1,000 mm are shaded in both figures, and the areas over 1,500 mm are cross-hatched in (a).
normal (or climatological mean) values, the variance of the anomalies \(V_a\) and its ratio to the total variance \(V_t\) were calculated for each station. That is:

\[
R(i) = \frac{V_a(i)}{V_t(i)} = \frac{\sum_t (P(i, t) - P_n(i, t))^2}{\sum_t (P(i, t) - \overline{P}(i))^2}
\]

where \(P(i, t)\) is the monthly rainfall, \(P_n(i, t)\) is the normal monthly rainfall, and \(\overline{P}(i, t)\) is the long-term mean rainfall for the whole period (1951–1973) for the \(i\)-th station. Here, \(P_n(i, t)\) was defined as the averaged values of the 23 years’ data for each month.

The spatial distribution of \(R(i)\) is shown in Fig. 4. As the total variance \(V_t(i)\) may roughly be the sum of \(V_a(i)\) and the variance of the mean seasonal variation (i.e., the variance of \(P_n(i, t)\)), the area of \(R(i) \geq 0.5\) may correspond with the area where the month-to-month anomaly

![Fig. 3 Series of monthly rainfall at Lumbir, central Java. The normal monthly values are also shown with solid lines.](image-url)

![Fig. 4 Spatial distribution of \(R(i)\) (the ratio of \(V_a\) to \(V_t\)). The areas of the values \(\geq 0.5\) are shaded.](image-url)
variation is larger in amplitude than the mean seasonal variation. In the whole area the ratio exceeds 0.3. Interestingly, the area of large values is mainly on the Indian Ocean side, where the rainfall during the "east monsoon" is relatively large (as referred to in Fig. 2). Thus, the large variability of the anomaly rainfall in Java may be mostly attributed to the fluctuation of the "east monsoon" which may be closely related to the atmospheric circulations in the southern winter.

IV Dominant Patterns of the Anomaly Rainfall in Time-space Field

IV-1. Empirical Orthogonal Function (EOF) Analysis

The above results suggested that the month-to-month or year-to-year deviations from the normal values have relatively large amplitudes even compared to the mean seasonal variations. The empirical orthogonal function (EOF) analysis was adopted to deduce some dominant spatial patterns and their temporal variations of the anomaly rainfall. To avoid the missing data for 1954 and 1955, the data for 18 years from 1956 to 1973 was used. Before applying EOF analysis, the anomaly rainfall values were normalized by dividing them by the standard deviation:

\[ P'(i, t) = (P(i, t) - P_n(i, t)) / \sqrt{\text{Var}(i)} \]

Then, the normalized anomaly rainfall \( P'(i, t) \) was expanded to the EOFs as follows:

\[ P'(i, t) = \sum_{m=1}^{N} F_m(i) f_m(t) \]

where \( F_m(i) \) is the space coefficient of the \( i \)-th station and \( f_m(t) \) is the time coefficient of the time \( t \) for the \( m \)-th component. Equation (1) was obtained under the condition of orthogonarity of time functions for an arbitrary pair of components:

\[ \sum_t f_i(t) f_j(t) = \begin{cases} \lambda_i & (i=j) \\ 0 & (i \neq j) \end{cases} \]

where \( \lambda_i \) corresponds with the variance of \( f_i(t) \), which is equal to the \( i \)-th largest eigenvalue for the correlation matrix of \( P'(i, t) \). The mathematical procedure to obtain equation (1) is described in the Appendix.

The variances (explained by the eigenvalues) and the cumulative fractions of the variances by the first eight components are given in Table 2. The spatial patterns (e.g., the distributions of the space coefficients), and their time coefficients for the first four components are shown, respectively, in Fig. 5 and Fig. 6.

It is conspicuous in Table 2 that the variance is concentrated to the first component (29.4%)
and the contributions of the other components are very small. The cumulative fraction by the first eight components occupies at most 60% of the total variance. This suggests that the rainfall in this area is greatly affected by the complex effect of local topography and variable nature of some meteorological elements even on a monthly basis. Especially, the large variability of the winds in the equatorial zone may contribute significantly to this capricious rainfall. Nevertheless, at least the first four components may be worth of attention on account of the systematic spatial patterns shown in Fig. 5 (From the fifth component the space coefficients show, more or less, random distributions.).

The first component dominantly affects the whole of Java with the same sign of the space coefficients in the whole area. This implies that this mode shows nearly in-phase temporal variation in this area. The center of variation is found on the Indian Ocean side of east and central Java, and the variance is relatively small in west Java. Moreover, the EOF analysis with the addition of data from the stations in Sumatra, Borneo and Sulawesi suggested that this mode dominates a broad area of the Indonesian islands including at least the southern half of three large islands, as shown in Fig. 7. This pattern seems to oscillate with a periodicity of about two years as shown in Fig. 5. It also seems that the time coefficients in most of the years show larger amplitudes in the dry months (May to Oct.) than in the rainy months (Nov. to
That is, the first component may be an important factor for the variation of the "east monsoon" rainfall. This will be discussed further later.

The second component clearly expresses the contrast between the Java Sea side and the Indian Ocean side, or preferably, the contrast between the plain area of the Java Sea side and the mountainous area to the south of it, since the line of the zero value corresponds well with the border area between the plain and the mountainous region. In contrast to the first component, the large amplitudes of the time coefficients appear mostly in the rainy months from December to March, which implies that this pattern mainly represents the variation of the "west monsoon" rainfall.

The third component shows a contrastive spatial pattern between east and west Java, but its association with the topography of the island is not clear. The fourth component shows a con-
IV-2. Spectral Analysis

To confirm the dominant time-scales (or the periodicities) of each component, the spectral analysis was applied to the time coefficients. The lag-correlation method [Blackman and Tukey 1958] was used to obtain power spectra. The total record length was 216 days, and the maximum lag of 36 days was adopted. The results for the first four components are shown in Fig. 8.

The first component exhibited remarkably a dominant periodicity of about two years with a significant level of 95% or more. This component, therefore, may represent the quasi-biennial oscillation (QBO) in the anomaly rainfall in the Indonesian region, which may be closely connected with the QBO mode in the southern oscillation [Berlage 1961] or the QBO in the Southern Hemisphere mid-latitudes [Trenberth 1975].

The second component showed no significant peaks in the defined period range (The spectral peak of about two months may be out of resolution with the sampling interval of one month.). However, this component
seems to have a time scale longer than three or four years if the large power densities in the low frequency range are considered. It is certain that in the original time series (Fig. 6(b)) large positive (or negative) values tended to occur in the time intervals of several years or more.

The third and fourth components showed some spectral peaks in a period range of less than 10 months. However, since these peaks are not distinguished significantly from the “white noise” level, it may be assumed that these two modes are close to a random process in the time series.

IV-3. Seasonal Dependencies

As briefly mentioned in the previous
In this area, this fact may be very important. That is, in the dry (and intermediate) seasons we should pay particular attention to the circulation patterns related to the QBO, while in the rainy season we should also note some other factors represented by the second and third components which may be inherent in this season. In other words, the above may be summarized as follows: the QBO mode in the Southern Hemisphere circulation may contribute effectively to the advance (or delay) of the beginning (or retreat) of the “west monsoon” season and the severely dry (or relatively wet) “east monsoon” season, but the rainfall amounts of the main “west monsoon” months also depend heavily on some other factors such as the influence of the Northern Hemisphere winter monsoon.

V Atmospheric Circulation Patterns Related to the Dominant Modes in the Anomaly Rainfall

V-1. The Quasi-biennial Oscillation (QBO) in the Southern Hemisphere

The first component of the anomaly rainfall over and around Java showed the QBO quite distinctly, with the maximum (or minimum) phases of the oscillation appearing frequently from June through August (refer to Fig. 6). The anomaly circulation patterns in the surface pressure field were then compared with the maximum and minimum rainfall of this component. In this analysis we utilized

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the monthly mean surface pressure data¹ for July given at 10° latitude-longitude intervals over the global region from 60°N to 50°S excluding the Atlantic Ocean area.

The mean composite maps for the years of the maximum rainfall (1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1962, 1968, and 1973) and of the minimum rainfall (1956, 1963, 1965, 1967, 1969, and 1972), and the map revealing the difference between the two are presented in Fig. 9. Fig. 9(c) shows a distinct pressure contrast between the areas over the eastern south Pacific and over and around Australia. The overall feature of the pattern over the Australia-New Zealand region rather resembles the P2 (the second component) pattern deduced by Trenberth [ibid.]. In addition, the variation of the time coefficients also correlates with that of the P2 pattern [ibid.] with the

¹) This data provided by Prof. T. Chang of Beijing University, was originally compiled by Prof. S. Wong at Beijing University, Beijing, Peoples' Republic of China.
QBO mode. We may conclude, therefore, that the first component of the anomaly rainfall in Java undoubtedly corresponds with the QBO of the surface pressure field in the Southern Hemisphere. Trenberth [ibid.] supposed that the variation of this mode may have resulted from changes in amplitude and position of wavenumber 3 in the middle latitudes. The locations of the maximum (and minimum) anomalies in Fig. 9(c) suggests, however, wavenumber 2 is instead responsible for this mode. The synoptic situation for the maximum rainfall (Fig. 9(a)) shows that the southern Indian Ocean high is confined to the western half of the ocean near Madagascar island while the southern Pacific high is strong. That for the minimum rainfall (Fig. 9(b)) shows, in contrast, that the Indian Ocean high elongates eastward to the Australian continent while the Pacific high is relatively weak. Therefore, it seems that the eastward shift of the stationary wave (probably correspondent with wavenumber 2) from its normal position may cause the abnormally dry condition during the “east monsoon” season in and around Java. Associated with the change in the pressure pattern of the subtropical and mid-latitude zone from Fig. 9(a) to Fig. 9(b), the pressure field over the Indonesian region changes from a cyclonic to anticyclonic pattern, which may accompany the change in the divergence field. Moreover, coupling of the relatively strong (weak) Indian Ocean high and relatively weak (strong) high over the dry Australian continent in Fig. 9(a) (Fig. 9(b)) may create a favorable (unfavorable) condition for the moisture supply to the Indonesian region. It is also interesting to note that the two centers of action in the Northern Hemisphere (e.g., the northern Pacific high and the Azores high) seem to show significant intensity changes between the two patterns (as shown in Fig. 9(c)). This may imply that the QBO dominating the Southern Hemisphere and the equatorial zone is also linked with the Northern Hemisphere circulation. This problem will be discussed elsewhere.

V-2. The Fluctuation of the Winter Monsoon Circulation in the Northern Hemisphere

The second component of the anomaly rainfall represents one of the dominant modes in the rainy (or “west monsoon”) season. Actually, the months of large negative (or positive) time coefficients correspond almost invariably with the above- (or below-) normal rainfall months for the whole island, usually January. In the same manner as described in the previous sub-section, the anomaly circulation patterns for January were prepared according to the years of large negative and positive time coefficients of this component. For the years of large negative coefficients (e.g., the maximum rainfall years for the Java Sea side), 1959, 1962, 1963, 1965, 1971, and 1972 were selected, and for the large positive coefficients (e.g., the minimum rainfall years for the Java Sea side) 1957, 1958, 1964, 1966, 1969,
1970, and 1973 were selected. The mean composite maps for the maximum and the minimum rainfall on the Java Sea side, the map showing the difference between the two are presented in Fig. 10.

In Fig. 10 (a) the Siberian high distinctly extends southward to south China compared to the case in Fig. 10 (b) (note, for example, the contour line of 1020 mb) though the location and intensity of the high is substantially the same in both cases. In the western north Pacific region a remarkably large pressure difference is prominent between the two cases as evident in Fig. 10 (c). Although the Aleutian low itself is weaker in Fig. 10 (a) than in Fig. 10 (b), a relatively low pressure area expands toward the lower latitudes. This feature may be attributed to the southward (or northward) shift of the cyclonic activity over the north Pacific in the case of Fig. 10 (a) (Fig. 10 (b)). That is, the southward (or north-

![Composite Maps of Surface Pressure](image)

Fig. 10 Mean composite maps of the surface pressure in January for the years of (a) the maximum rainfall, (b) the minimum rainfall in the Java Sea side according to the second component, and (c) map of difference between the two ((a) minus (b)).
ward) shift of the winter monsoon circulation system over the Asiatic continent through the north Pacific may be responsible for the maximum (or minimum) rainfall in Java (especially on the Java Sea side). It should also be noted that in Fig. 10(a) the center of the equatorial through (low pressure) zone is located over northern Australia, whereas in Fig. 10(b) it is located over the western south Pacific with weaker intensity. This anomaly pattern of the Southern Hemisphere (Fig. 10(c)) reminds us of the "southern oscillation" pattern with the pressure contrast between the eastern Pacific and the Indian Ocean.

The anomaly patterns in Fig. 10 are nearly identical with those for the active (or weak) winter monsoon defined with reference to the strength of the easterly wind at 150 mb over Singapore by Tanaka [1980], since the selected typical years here are nearly the same as his. He commented that the anomaly circulation patterns including the Northern Hemisphere are closely connected with the southern oscillation with a periodicity of several years or more. White and Walker [1973] also found an association of the winter circulation over the north Pacific with the southern oscillation.

VI Summary and Remarks

Through the analysis of the long-term fluctuation of the monthly rainfall (1951–1973), we found that the variability of the rainfall in and around Java is large in the "east monsoon" (dry) season and relatively small in the "west monsoon" (rainy) season.

The EOF analysis of the anomaly rainfall from 1956 to 1973 revealed that the quasi-biennial oscillation (QBO) is dominant over the whole of Java with a large variance (29.4% of the total variance) and that the variability in the "east monsoon" season is mostly explained by this component. It was also confirmed that this mode in the anomaly rainfall is closely connected with the QBO in the surface pressure field over Australasia through the eastern south Pacific described by Trenberth [1975]. The second component (6.2% of the total variance) represents the variation in the "west monsoon" season with a contrastive spatial pattern between the Java Sea side and the Indian Ocean side of the island. This component seems to depend mostly upon the increase or decrease of the "west monsoon" rainfall on the Java Sea side with a larger amplitude than on the Indian Ocean side. This mode may be associated with the north- (or south-) ward shift of the winter monsoon circulation system in the Northern Hemisphere which may be linked with the southern oscillation in a time scale of several years or more.

In recent years not a few studies have attempted the problem of the preferred time scales and related spatial structures of the southern oscillation (e.g., Troup [1965], Kidson [1975], Trenberth [1976], etc.), though conclusive results have not been obtained yet. Through the present analysis, however, we can postulate that
there exist at least two modes of the southern oscillation in a broad sense with different time scales (of about two years and several years or more) which affect (or, may be affected by) the rainfall variation in the Indonesian "maritime continent." However, the problem still remains as to why these two modes have large seasonal dependencies in relation to the rainfall variation in this area. This problem may reveal some important clues for understanding the mechanism of the southern oscillation.

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Appendix: The Empirical Orthogonal Function Analysis

Equation (1) can be written in vector form

$$P_t = Ff_t$$  \hspace{1cm} (I-1)

where

$$P_t = \begin{bmatrix} P'(1, t) \\ P'(2, t) \\ \vdots \\ P'(m, t) \end{bmatrix}, \quad f_t = \begin{bmatrix} f_1(t) \\ f_2(t) \\ \vdots \\ f_m(t) \end{bmatrix}$$

and

$$F = \begin{bmatrix} F_1(1) & F_1(2) & \ldots & F_1(n) \\ F_2(1) & F_2(2) & \ldots & F_2(n) \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ F_m(1) & F_m(2) & \ldots & F_m(n) \end{bmatrix}$$

Then, the transposed matrix of (I-1) is multiplied by both sides of (I-1), and the ensemble mean of the product is made as follows:

$$E[P'P'] = FE[f't]P^T \hspace{1cm} (I-2)$$

where $E[\ ]$ means the ensemble mean.

Here, the left-hand side of (I-2) is equal to the covariance matrix of $P'(i, t)$. In this case, as $P'(i, t)$ is normalized, it is equal to the correlation matrix of $P'(i, t)$:

$$R = E[P'P']$$

where $R$ is the correlation matrix of $P'(i, t)$.

Under the condition of orthogonality as shown in (2), (I-2) can be rewritten as follows:

$$R = F \begin{bmatrix} \lambda_1 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & \lambda_2 & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & \lambda_m \end{bmatrix} F^T \hspace{1cm} (I-3)$$

If we add the condition that $F$ is normalized as

$$FF^T = e$$

where $e$ is a unit vector, then, (I-3) is transformed as

$$RF = F \begin{bmatrix} \lambda_1 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & \lambda_2 & \cdots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & \lambda_m \end{bmatrix}$$

or

$$RF_t = \lambda_i F_t \hspace{1cm} (I-4)$$

That is, (I-4) implies that $\lambda_i$ corresponds with the $i$-th eigenvalue and $F_i$ with the $i$-th component of the eigenvector of the correlation matrix $R_i$.

To obtain the eigenvalues and eigenvectors of $R_i$, Jacobi's method was adopted in the computing procedure. Time coefficient vectors $f_t$ were obtained by using $F$ and $P_t$ as follows:

$$f_t = (F^TP)^{-1}F^TP_t = F^TP_t \hspace{1cm} (I-5)$$

References


ジャワ島周辺における月降水量の時空間変動の解析

ジャワ島およびその周辺地域における23年間（1951-1973）の月降水量変動を解析した結果、変動度（variability）は、乾期（東風卓越期）に大きく、雨期（西風卓越期）には比較的小さいことが明かとなった。

年変動の時間的空間的特性を、平年偏差値についての帯域的次元数解析を用いて調べた。その結果、準2年周期振動（QBO）がもっとも卓越する成分（総分散の29.4%）として現れ、この振動は、ジャワ島のみならず、少なくともスマトラ、ボルネオ、サラウェン各島の東半部にまで拡がる地域で、ほぼ同位相を持って卓越していることが明らかとなった。乾期における大きな変動度は、このQBOが大きく寄与しており、乾期（雨期）の伸縮、時間的な差、乾期降水量の増減を決める因子として重要なモードと推論される。

第2成分（総分散の6.2%）は、雨期最盛期（1,2月）の降水量変動を説明しており、数年（以上）の長周期変動として現われている。空間パターンは、島の北側平野部と南側山岳部が逆の位相で変動していることを示している。

上記ふたつの卓越成分に関連した大気循環パターンを、グローバルな地上気圧資料を用いて調べた結果、第1成分は、オーストラリア周辺から南太平洋東部域を中心とする南半球中緯度の気圧のQBOに対応したものであり、第2成分は、北半球冬期のモンスーン環流系（シベリア高気圧－アフリカ低压帯）の南北方向の偏位に関連していることが確認された。これらふたつの変動モードと、いわゆる“southern oscillation”との関連についても、若干の考察を試みた。