



HAL
open science

Tectonics and Geodynamics of South China: an introductory note

Michel Faure, Yan Chen, Zhuohai Feng, Liangshu Shu, Ziqin Xu

► To cite this version:

Michel Faure, Yan Chen, Zhuohai Feng, Liangshu Shu, Ziqin Xu. Tectonics and Geodynamics of South China: an introductory note. *Journal of Asian Earth Sciences*, 2017, 141, pp.1-6. 10.1016/j.jseaes.2016.11.031 . insu-01406026

HAL Id: insu-01406026

<https://insu.hal.science/insu-01406026v1>

Submitted on 30 Nov 2016

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.



Distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution - NonCommercial - NoDerivatives 4.0 International License

Accepted Manuscript

Tectonics and Geodynamics of South China: an introductory note

Michel Faure, Yan Chen, Zhuohai Feng, Liangshu Shu, Ziqin Xu

PII: S1367-9120(16)30400-X

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jseaes.2016.11.031>

Reference: JAES 2869

To appear in: *Journal of Asian Earth Sciences*

Received Date: 25 November 2016

Accepted Date: 27 November 2016



Please cite this article as: Faure, M., Chen, Y., Feng, Z., Shu, L., Xu, Z., Tectonics and Geodynamics of South China: an introductory note, *Journal of Asian Earth Sciences* (2016), doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jseaes.2016.11.031>

This is a PDF file of an unedited manuscript that has been accepted for publication. As a service to our customers we are providing this early version of the manuscript. The manuscript will undergo copyediting, typesetting, and review of the resulting proof before it is published in its final form. Please note that during the production process errors may be discovered which could affect the content, and all legal disclaimers that apply to the journal pertain.

Tectonics and Geodynamics of South China: an introductory note

Michel Faure¹, Yan Chen¹, Zhuohai Feng², Liangshu Shu³, Ziqin Xu⁴

1: Institut des Sciences de la Terre d'Orléans, UMR CNRS-Université d'Orléans, 1A Rue de la Férellerie,
45071 Orléans Cedex 2, France

2: College of Earth Sciences, Guilin University of Technology, China

3: State Key Laboratory for Mineral Deposits Research, Nanjing University, 210023 Nanjing, China

4: State Key Laboratory of Continental Tectonics and Dynamics, Institute of Geology, Chinese Academy of
Geological Sciences, 100037 Beijing, China

Introduction

Together with North China, Tarim, Qiangtang, Indochina or India, the South China Block (SCB) is one of the main continental pieces derived from Gondwana that assembled together and with Siberia to form the present Eurasia (e. g. Metcalfe, 2013; Fig. 1). The SCB is a composite continent. In its northeastern part, in Jiangxi and Zhejiang Provinces, the Jiangnan collisional orogen that welded together the Yangtze and the Cathaysia blocks, to the North and South, respectively is well acknowledged by the presence of ophiolites, subduction complexes, and HP rocks (e.g. Shu et al., 1994, 2006; Li et al. 2007a; 2009). The E-W striking Jiangshan-Shaoxing fault (JSF, Fig. 2) is commonly recognized as the Jiangnan ophiolitic suture. To the West, due to the Phanerozoic sedimentary cover, its southwestern extension is not fixed yet. Furthermore,

Neoproterozoic events are also recognized in the western part of the SCB. The precise timing of the tectonic events related to the Jiangnan orogeny remains disputed, from 1Ga to 850 Ma (e.g. Zhou et al., 2006; Shu et al., 2006, 2011; Wang et al., 2007; Li et al., 2007a, 2008, 2009, 2014). Whatever the exact location of the suture, and the age of the collision, the Neoproterozoic Jiangnan collision gave rise to the SCB. Since that time, the SCB continent experienced a complex geological history both along the block margins, but also within it indicating that it did not behaved as a rigid craton.

During the last decades, many petrological, geochronological, geochemical, and structural works provided a large amount of new data improving the understanding of the Phanerozoic evolution of the SCB. It is now widely recognized that during the Late Neoproterozoic (Cryogenian to Ediacaran), the SCB experienced a continental-scale rifting, responsible for the formation of the Nanhua rift that controlled a thick silico-clastic sedimentation coeval with a bimodal magmatism (e.g. Wang and Li, 2003; Shu et al., 2011; Li et al., 2014). The general NE-SW strike of this rift, though oblique to the Jiangnan suture, suggests a structural control of the rift development by ancient faults. This domain corresponds also to a Cambrian-Ordovician paleogeographic transition between carbonated and silico-clastic sediments in the former Yangtze and Cathaysia blocks, respectively. More generally, inherited structures played an important role to control the Paleozoic, and younger events experienced by the SCB.

The Early Paleozoic evolution of the SCB

The Middle Devonian detrital formations unconformably overlying granitoids, metamorphic rocks, and folded Sinian to Ordovician sedimentary rocks, recognized nearly one century ago at the beginning of geological investigations in South China (e.g. Grabau, 1924), argue for the existence of Early Paleozoic tectonic, metamorphic and

magmatic events. This orogen has been often referred to as "Caledonian", however, this term is just taken as a time interval, thus "Early Paleozoic" must replace "Caledonian". This age, which is presently supported by a wealth of radiometric data, shall become more easily understandable to the international community than a regional name borrowed to a very distant orogen of Northern Europe and unrelated to the geodynamics of SE China. Due to the lack of ophiolites, accretionary complexes, subduction related magmatism, the NE-SW striking Early Paleozoic Orogen of South China that develops along more than 1500 km, *from Zhejiang to NE Vietnam*, is now interpreted as an intracontinental belt (e.g. Faure et al., 2009; Charvet et al., 2010; Li et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2013).

In this volume, Wang et al. (**this issue**) carried out petrographic, mineralogical, geochemical, and zircon U-Pb geochronological studies in the Longyou garnet amphibolite in Zhejiang Province (Fig. 1). These investigations document that some of the mafic igneous rocks emplaced at ca 880 Ma, underwent a plurifacial metamorphic evolution, with a Silurian (ca 446±5 Ma) amphibolite facies metamorphic peak around 0.90-0.97 GPa and 765-780°C. This event corresponds to the North-directed continental subduction that characterizes the early Paleozoic orogen of S. China (e.g. Faure et al., 2009; Charvet et al., 2010; Li et al., 2010).

Although the late orogenic plutonism is conspicuously developed in the Early Paleozoic belt (e.g. Wang et al., 2013), the volcanic rocks are rarely investigated. The Mashan and Hekou dacite and rhyolite formations in Guangdong Province yield U-Pb zircon ages at ca 445-435 Ma (**Zhang et al. this issue**). Geochemical analyses indicate that partial melting of the underlying Paleoproterozoic continental crust was responsible for the generation of these rocks. Furthermore, the Chayuanshan basalts, also in Guangdong province, were probably derived from partial melting of

subcontinental lithospheric mantle. It is worth to note that the calc-alkaline geochemical signature of these rocks does not reflect an oceanic subduction setting. This result complies with the intracontinental subduction mechanism responsible for the formation of the Early Paleozoic orogen.

In Fujian Province, the Xiqin pluton is an A-type granite dated at 410 Ma (**Cai et al., this issue**). Geochemical studies suggest that the partial melting of Mesoproterozoic metavolcanites and metasediments generated the parental magma of the Xiqin granite. A lithospheric delamination model is proposed to account for the asthenospheric upwelling responsible for heat transfer and subsequent crustal melting of the lower crust.

The Shedong W-Mo district of Guangxi Province consists of the Baoshan and Pingtoubei deposits hosted in granodioritic plutons. These rocks yield zircons dated at ca 440±3 Ma by U-Pb LA-ICP-MS method (**Jiang et al. this issue**). Initial $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$ ratios (0.7162 to 0.7173), $\epsilon\text{Nd}(t)$ values (-8.7 to -12.3), and $\epsilon\text{Hf}(t)$ values (7.8 to 1.3) suggest a crustal magmatic source for these rocks. Melting of Mesoproterozoic crust triggered by mantle-derived magma formed during the late orogenic stage can account for magma genesis and ore deposition.

Early Paleozoic events are also pervasively developed in the Qinling orogen along the northern boundary of the SCB. The age of the collision between the South and North China blocks is a long lasting controversy (e.g. Mattauer et al., 1985, 1991; Xu et al., 1986; Zhang et al., 1996; Faure et al., 2008; Dong et al., 2015; Xu et al., 2015). Near Shangnan, the Fushui gabbro-dioritic complex experienced a greenschist facies metamorphism during the South China-North China blocks collision. Zircons from these rocks yield U/Pb LA-ICP-MS ages at ca 500 Ma interpreted as those of the magmatic emplacement of the mafic rocks (**Shi et al., this issue**). $\epsilon\text{Nd}(t)$ values (-0.20 to -6.7) and

the T_{DM2} model age between 1.7 and 1.5 Ga, indicate that the mafic magma was extracted from a partially melted lherzolitic lithospheric mantle. A supra-subduction or an island arc setting is put forward to account for the formation of the Fushui mafic intrusion. These results comply with the interpretation that oceanic closure and subsequent collision between the South and North China blocks took place before 415 Ma.

The Late Permian intraplate magmatism

In the SW part of the SCB, the Emeishan Large Igneous Province (ELIP, Fig. 2) is acknowledged as a major global geodynamic event that dramatically influenced the Late Permian hydrosphere, atmosphere, and biosphere (e.g. He et al., 2003; Ali et al., 2005; Deng et al., 2010). The mafic lavas, dyke, and gabbro of Western Guangxi analyzed by **Liu X. et al. (this issue)** have extremely high Ti/Y ratios. The $\epsilon Nd(t)$ and REE patterns suggest a deep mantle source with a low degree of partial melting at pressure greater than 3.5 GPa. These data support the view that the Western Guangxi mafic rocks generated in a mantle plume and represent the outer extension of the ELIP. Therefore, the interpretation of these rocks as "ophiolites" can be definitely ruled out.

Late Paleozoic-Early Mesozoic tectonic evolution of the SCB

The Triassic is the main tectonic period in the SCB during which this continent collided with the Indochina-Lanping-Simao-Qiangtang one along the Jinshajiang-Ailaoshan-Song Ma ophiolitic suture that likely extends to the Song Chay-Hainan suture if a ca 800 km left-lateral offset along the Cenozoic Red River fault is assumed (Leloup et al., 1995; Faure et al., 2016a). This orogen was initially defined in N. Vietnam and Laos by the Late Triassic (Norian) unconformity of sandstone and conglomerate overlying folded and metamorphosed rocks as the "Indosinian" chain (Fromaget, 1941).

Subsequently, the term "Indosinian" was pervasively used for all Triassic events recognized in Asia. Nevertheless, strictly speaking, "Indosinian orogeny" must be reserved for the orogens bounding the southwestern and southeastern parts of the SCB. Other Triassic belts results of different lithospheric plates interactions.

The existence of a magmatic arc on the Indochina side (e.g. Liu *et al.*, 2012; Roger *et al.*, 2012), the N, NE or E verging folds and thrusts in NE and NW Vietnam, Ailaoshan and Jinshajiang areas (Lepvrier *et al.*, 2011; Zi and Cawood, 2012; Liu *et al.*, 2015; Faure *et al.*, 2016a,b) argue for a south-directed subduction of the SCB below the Indochina one. In the Ailaoshan segment, of the Middle Triassic suture, a magmatic arc is well documented (Fan *et al.*, 2010; Lai *et al.*, 2014). The Dalongkai mafic-ultramafic layered intrusion is petrographically and geochemically well characterized (**Liu H. *et al.*, this issue**). Zircons from the gabbro and plagioclase pyroxenite yield U/Pb ages at 266 ± 6 Ma and 272 ± 2 Ma, respectively. The geochemical features (Cr, Ni content, Mg#) of the Dalongkai intrusion are analogous to the typical back-arc basin rocks suggesting that this body emplaced during the West-directed Middle Permian Paleotethys subduction.

North, or East, of the Song Chay suture, Triassic turbidites are widely distributed in the Song Hiem basin of NE Vietnam or the Youjiang-Nanpanjiang basin of Yunnan and Guangxi Provinces (Fig. 2). In spite of several sedimentological and detrital zircon distribution studies (e.g. Enos *et al.*, 2006; Yang *et al.*, 2012; Hu *et al.*, 2015; Lehrmann *et al.*, 2015) the geodynamic setting of this basin, either as a back-arc or foreland basin, remains controversial. **Qiu *et al.* (this issue)** provide new geochemical arguments to constrain the provenance of the clastic sediments. Both argillaceous and arenaceous sedimentary rocks yield major elements features identical to continental arc continental arc basins. The low Chemical Index of Alteration, and high Index of Compositional

Variability values indicate that these rocks experienced a weak chemical weathering. The geochemical Th-Sc-Zr, and La-Th-Sc discrimination diagrams suggest that the Middle Triassic clastic rocks record the evolution from an active continental margin to a collisional foreland basin.

As pointed out since a long time (e.g. Mattauer et al., 1985, 1991; Xu et al., 1986), after the Early Paleozoic collision between the NCB and SCB, the Qinling-Dabie belt experienced a major Triassic reworking. In the Dabashan and Wudanshan, the Neoproterozoic to Early Triassic formations are folded and thrust to the S or SW (e.g. Li et al., 2007c; Faure et al., 2008; Shi et al., 2012; Xu et al., 2015; Dong et al., 2016). Locally in the Wudangshan, Susong, and Zhangbaling areas (Fig. 2), a HP/LT metamorphism dated at ca 230 Ma coeval with a top-to the SW shearing. Then, a top-to the-North ductile shearing, coeval with the greenschist facies retrogression, overprints the top-to-the-S shearing (e.g. Lin et al., 2005; Faure et al., 2008). The detailed petrological and geochronological investigations in the Feidong-Zhangbaling area (**Shi et al., this issue**) place important thermo-barometric and time constraints on the evolution of the Zhangbaling massif. The HP metamorphism formed at ca 230 Ma, and 210 Ma retrogression coeval with exhumation. Shi contribution in this volume brings also new insights on the location of the NCB-SCB in the central part of the Tan-Lu fault zone, along the Zuding-Shimenshan fault.

West of the Tan-Lu fault, the southern margin of the NCB underwent also a Mesozoic (Triassic or Jurassic) deformation. The NW-directed Xu-Hai fold-and-thrust belt developed in the Neoproterozoic-Early Paleozoic formations of the NCB accommodated a ca 30 km decollement of the upper crustal series shortening interpreted as the consequence of a SE-ward under-thrusting of the NCB below the SCB (**Shu et al., this issue**).

Other Triassic belts, such as Longmenshan or Xuefengshan, exposed in the SCB, are also intracontinental orogens, however, they are not considered in this Special Issue.

Jurassic-Cretaceous magmatism of the SCB

Mesozoic magmatism is widespread in the SE part of the SCB. Although it is often proposed that the plutons are related to the oceanic subduction of the Paleo-Pacific plate below the SCB continental margin, (e.g. Zhou and Li, 2000; Li and Li, 2007), this simple model does not account for the variety of petrological types and emplacement settings of the plutonic rocks. Some Triassic plutons are probably related to the Xuefengshan intracontinental belt, or to the SCB-Indochina collision (e.g. Chu et al., 2012; Wang et al., 2013; Faure et al., 2016a). However, there are still controversies on the geodynamic significance of the Jurassic and Cretaceous plutons. Indeed, there is no unequivocal evidence for a Jurassic subduction below the SCB SE margin (Li et al., 2007b; Chen et al., 2008; Jiang et al., 2009; Huang et al., 2013),

In Hunan Province, the Taohuashan, Dayunshan-Mufushan, Wangxiang, and Lianyunshan biotite granite plutons yield zircons dated at 151-146 Ma, 132-127 Ma, and ca 117 Ma (**Ji W. et al., this issue**). The geochemical investigations support a source originated by the partial melting of metasedimentary rocks, possibly the Neoproterozoic Lengjiayi group and the underlying formations. The Early Cretaceous magmatism is attributed to the slab roll-back of the Paleo-Pacific plate while the Late Jurassic early stage might be a response to slab foundering, although the subduction sense is not settled yet.

Cenozoic evolution

The Western part of the SCB has been significantly reworked during the Cenozoic as a consequence of the India-Eurasia collision. With respect to the Cenozoic tectonics, "Sundaland" that includes also a part of Indochina must be preferred to SCB, which is used to account for the Paleozoic and Mesozoic tectonics. In SE Tibet (Yunnan Province), the Ximeng complex studied by **Chen et al. (this issue)** provides an example of the Miocene (ca 23-20 Ma) shearing that accommodated the exhumation of the Neoproterozoic and Paleozoic formations. Together with the sinistral Ailaoshan-Red River and dextral Sagaing shear zones, the Ximeng dome documents the internal deformation of Sundaland during its Southeastward extrusion. This study also highlights the importance of intraplate deformation that generally follows a continental collision. Localized crustal flow is a possible process to account for the extrusion tectonics.

The knowledge of the structure of the middle and lower continental crust is essential to understand the rheological behavior of continents. The Cenozoic opening of the South China Sea is also a consequence of the extrusion of Sundaland. The petrophysical study of representative rocks from the Yunkai massif conducted by **S. Ji et al. (this issue)** documents the P-wave velocity and the anisotropy of the SCB continental margin. Twelve seismic profiles have been reinterpreted. The high velocity (ca 7.0 to 7.6 km/s) of the lower continental crust can be viewed either as representative of mafic rocks constitutive of the initial SCB lower crust or alternatively as underplated mafic magma emplaced from mantle melting during the opening of the South China sea.

Conclusion

The South China Block is one of the most diversified continental pieces that constitute the Eurasian continent. Although not covering all the tectonic and

geodynamic aspects experienced by this block, the contributions gathered in this Special Issue will shed light on the evolution of this complex continent.

Acknowledgements

All reviewers all warmly thanked for their time and constructive reviews that greatly helped authors and editors to improve the manuscripts.

References

Ali, J., Thompson, G.M., Zhou, M.-F., Song, X., 2005. Emeishan large igneous province, SW China. *Lithos* 79, 475–499.

Cai, D., Tang, Y., Zhang, H., Lü Z-H., Liu, Y-L., Petrogenesis and tectonic setting of the Devonian Xiqin A-type granite in the northeastern Cathaysia Block, SE China. *J. Asian Earth Sci.* this issue.

Charvet, J., Shu, L.S., Faure, M., Choulet, F., Wang, B., Le Breton, N., 2010. Structural development of the Lower Paleozoic belt of South China: genesis of an intracontinental orogen. *J. Asian Earth Sci.* 39, 309–330.

Chen, C.H., Lee, C.Y., Shinjo, R.I., 2008. Was there Jurassic paleo-Pacific subduction in South China? Constraints from $^{40}\text{Ar}/^{39}\text{Ar}$ dating, elemental and Sr–Nd–Pb isotopic geochemistry of the Mesozoic basalts. *Lithos* 106, 83–92.

Chen, X., Liu, J., Qi, Y., Fan, W., Wang K., Zhang, Y., Chen W., Miocene structural evolution and exhumation of the Ximeng dome in Yunnan, southeastern Tibet: Implications for intraplate deformation during extrusion of the Sundaland block. *J. Asian Earth Sci.* this issue.

Chu Y., Faure, M., Lin, W., Wang, Q., 2012. Early Mesozoic tectonics of the South China Block: insights from the Xuefengshan intracontinental orogen. *J. Asian Earth Sci.* 61, 199–220.

Deng, J., Wang, Q., Yang, S., Liu, X., Zhang, Q., Yang, L., Yang, Y., 2010. Genetic relationship between the Emeishan plume and the bauxite deposits in Western Guangxi, China: constraints from U–Pb and Lu–Hf isotopes of the detrital zircon in bauxite ores. *J. Asian Earth Sci.* 37, 412–424.

Dong, Y., Yang, Z., Liu, X., Sun, S., Li, W., Cheng, B., Zhang, F., Zhang, X., He, D., Zhang, G., 2015. Mesozoic intracontinental orogeny in the Qinling Mountains, central China. *Gondwana Research* 30, 144–158.

Enos, P., Lehrmann, D.J., Wei, J., Yu, Y., Xiao, J., Chaikin, D.H., Minzoni, M., Berry, A.K., Montgomery, P., 2006. Triassic evolution of the Yangtze platform in Guizhou Province, P.R.C. *Geological Society of America Special Paper* 417, 105 p.

Fan, W.M., Wang, Y.J., Zhang, A.M., Zhang, F.F., Zhang, Y.Z., 2010. Permian arc–back–arc

basin development along the Ailaoshan tectonic zone: geochemical, isotopic and geochronological evidence from the Mojiang volcanic rocks, Southwest China. *Lithos* 119, 553–568.

Faure, M., Lin, W., Monié, P., Meffre, S., 2008. Palaeozoic collision between the North and South China blocks. Triassic intracontinental tectonics, and the problem of the ultrahigh-pressure metamorphism. *C. R. Geoscience* 340, 139–150.

Faure, M., Shu, L.S., Wang, B., Charvet, J., Choulet, F., Monié, P., 2009. Intracontinental subduction: a possible mechanism for the Early Paleozoic Orogen of SE China. *Terra Nova* 21, 360–368.

Faure M., Lin W., Chu Y., Lepvrier C., 2016a. Triassic tectonics of the southern margin of the South China Block. *C. R. Geoscience* 348, 5-14.

Faure M., Lin W., Chu Y., Lepvrier C., 2016b. Triassic tectonics of the Ailaoshan Belt (SW China): Early Triassic collision between the South China and Indochina Blocks, and Middle Triassic intracontinental shearing. *Tectonophysics* 683, 27–42.

Fromaget, J., 1941. L'Indochine française, sa structure géologique, ses roches, ses mines et leurs relations possibles avec la tectonique. *Bull. Serv. Geol. Indochine* 26, 1–140.

Grabau, A., 1924. Stratigraphy of China, part I, Paleozoic and older, *Geol. Surv. of Agric. and Commerce*. Peking.

He, B., Xu, Y.-G., Chung, S.-L., Xiao, L., Wang, X., 2003. Sedimentary evidence for a rapid, kilometer-scale crustal doming prior to the eruption of the Emeishan flood basalts. *Earth Planet. Sci. Lett.* 213, 391–405.

Hu, L., Cawood, P.A., Du, Y., Yang, J., Jiao, L., 2015. Late Paleozoic to Early Mesozoic provenance record of Paleo-Pacific subduction beneath South China. *Tectonics* 34, 986–1008.

Huang, H.Q., Li, X.H., Li, Z.X., Li, W.X., 2013. Intraplate crustal remelting as the genesis of Jurassic high-K granites in the coastal region of the Guangdong Province, SE China. *J. Asian Earth Sci.* 74, 280–302.

Ji, S., Wang, Q., Salisbury, M.H., Wang, Y., Jia, D., P-wave velocities and anisotropy of typical rocks from the Yunkai Mts. (Guangdong and Guangxi, China) and constraints on the composition of the crust beneath the South China Sea. *J. Asian Earth Sci*, this issue.

Ji, W., Lin, W., Faure, M., Chen, Y., Chu, Y., Xue, Z., Origin of the Late Jurassic to Early Cretaceous peraluminous granitoids in the northeastern Hunan province (middle Yangtze region), South China: Geodynamic implications for the Paleo-Pacific subduction. *J. Asian Earth Sci*, this issue.

Jiang, Y.H., Jiang, S.Y., Dai, B.Z., Liao, S.Y., Zhao, K.D., Ling, H.F., 2009. Middle to late Jurassic felsic and mafic magmatism in southern Hunan province, southeast China: implications for a continental arc to rifting. *Lithos* 107, 185–204.

Jiang, X., Kang, Z.-Q., Xu, J., Feng, Z., Pang, C., Fang, G., Wu, J., Xong, S., Petrogenesis and tectonic setting of granodioritic plutons in Shedong W-Mo ore district, Guangxi, South China: Constraints from zircon U-Pb geochronology, whole-rock geochemistry and Sr-Nd-Hf isotopes. *J. Asian Earth Sci.*, this issue.

Lai, C.-K., Meffre, S., Crawford, A.J., Zaw, K., Xue, C.-D., Halpin, J.A., 2014. The Western Ailaoshan Volcanic Belts and their SE Asia connection: a new tectonic model for the Eastern Indochina Block. *Gondwana Res.* 26, 52–74.

Lehrmann, D.J., Chaikin, D.H., Enos, P., Minzoni, M., Payne, J.L., Yu, M., Goers, G., Wood, T., Richter, P., Kelley, B.M., Li, X., Qin, Y., Liu, L., Lu, G., 2015. Patterns of basin fill in Triassic turbidites of the Nanpanjiang basin: implications for regional tectonics and impacts on carbonate-platform evolution. *Basin Res.* 27, 587–612.

Lepvrier, C., Faure, M., Van, V.N., Vu, T.V., Lin, W., Trong, T.T., Hoa, P.T., 2011. North-directed Triassic nappes in Northeastern Vietnam (East Bac Bo). *J. Asian Earth Sci.* 41, 56–68.

Leloup, P.H., Lacassin, R., Tapponnier, P., Schärer, U., Zhong, D., Liu, X., Zhang, L., Ji, S., Trinh, P.T., 1995. The Ailao Shan–Red River shear zone (Yunnan, China), Tertiary transform boundary of Indochina. *Tectonophysics* 251, 3–84.

Li, Z.X., Li, X.H., 2007. Formation of the 1300 km-wide intra-continental orogen and post-orogenic magmatic province in Mesozoic South China: a flat-slab subduction model. *Geology* 35, 179–182.

Li, Z.X., Wartho, J.A., Occhipinti, S., Zhang, C.L., Li, X.H., Wang, J., Bao, C., 2007a. Early history of the eastern Sibao Orogen (South China) during the assembly of Rodinia: new mica $^{40}\text{Ar}/^{39}\text{Ar}$ dating and SHRIMP U–Pb detrital zircon provenance constraints. *Precambrian Res.* 159, 79–94.

Li, X.H., Li, Z.X., Li, W.X., Liu, Y., Yuan, C., Wei, G.J., Qi, C.S., 2007b. U–Pb zircon, geochemical and Sr–Nd–Hf isotopic constraints on age and origin of Jurassic land A-type granites from central Guangdong, SE China: a major igneous event in response to foundering of a subducted flat-slab? *Lithos* 96, 186–204.

Li, S.Z., Kusky, T.M., Wang, L., Zhang, G.W., Lai, S.C., Liu, X.C., Dong, S.W., Zhao, G.C., 2007c. Collision leading to multiple-stage large-scale extrusion in the Qinling orogen: Insights from the Mianlue suture. *Gondwana Res.* 12, 121–143.

Li, W.X., Li, X.H., Li, Z.X., Lou, F.S., 2008. Obduction-type granites within the NE Jiangxi Ophiolite: implications for the final amalgamation between the Yangtze and Cathaysia Blocks. *Gondwana Res.* 13, 288–301.

Li, X.H., Li, W.X., Li, Z.X., Lo, C.H., Wang, J., Ye, M.F., Yang, Y.H., 2009. Amalgamation between the Yangtze and Cathaysia Blocks in South China: constraints from SHRIMP U–Pb zircon ages, geochemistry and Nd–Hf isotopes of the Shuangxiwu volcanic rocks. *Precambrian Res.* 174, 117–128.

Li, Z.X., Li, X.H., Wartho, J.A., Clark, C., Li, W.X., Zhang, C.L., Bao, C.M., 2010. Magmatic and

metamorphic events during the early Paleozoic Wuyi–Yunkai orogeny, southeastern South China: new age constraints and pressure–temperature conditions. *Geol. Soc. America Bull.* 122, 772–793.

Li, XH, Li, ZX., Li WX., 2014. Detrital zircon U-Pb age and Hf isotope constraints on the generation and reworking of Precambrian continental crust in the Cathaysia Block, south China: a synthesis. *Gondwana Res.*, 25, 1202-1215.

Lin, W., Faure, M., Wang, Q., Monié, P., Panis, D., 2005. Triassic Polyphase deformation in the Feidong-Zhangbaling Massif (eastern China) and its place in the collision between North China and South China blocks. *J. Asian Earth Sci.* 25, 121–136.

Liu, J.L, Tran, M., Tang, Y., Nguyen, Q.L., Tran, T.H., Wu, W., Chen, J., Zhang, Z., Zhao, Z., 2012. Permo-Triassic granitoids in the northern part of the Truong Son belt, NW Vietnam: geochronology, geochemistry and tectonic implications. *Gondwana Res.* 122, 628–644.

Liu, H., Wang, Y., Cawood, P.A., Fan, W., Cai, Y., and Xing, X., 2015. Record of Tethyan ocean closure and Indosinian collision along the Ailaoshan suture zone (SW China): *Gondwana Res.* 27, 1292–1306.

Liu, H., Wang, Y., Zi, J-W., Petrogenesis of the Dalongkai ultramafic-mafic intrusion and its tectonic implication for the Paleotethyan evolution along the Ailaoshan tectonic zone (SW China). *J. Asian Earth Sci.* this issue.

Liu, X., Liang, Q., Li, Z., Castillo, P.R., Shi, Y., Xu, J., Huang, X., Liao, S., Huang, W. Wu, W.,
Origin of Permian extremely high Ti/Y mafic lavas and dykes from Western Guangxi, SW
China: Implications for the Emeishan mantle plume magmatism. *J. Asian Earth Sci.* this
issue.

Mattauer, M., Matte, P., Malavieille, J., Tapponnier, P., Maluski, H., Xu, Z., Lu, Y., Tang, Y.,
1985. Tectonics of the Qinling Belt: buildup and evolution of eastern Asia, *Nature* 317,
496–500.

Mattauer, M., Matte, P., Maluski, H., Xu, Z., Zhang, Q., Wang, Y., 1991. La limite Chine du
Nord–Chine du Sud au Paléozoïque et au Trias : nouvelles données structurales et
radiométriques dans le massif du Dabieshan (chaîne des Qinling), *C. R. Acad. Sci. Paris*,
Ser. II 312, 1227–1233.

Metcalf, I., 2013. Gondwana dispersion and Asian accretion: tectonic and
palaeogeographic evolution of eastern Tethys. *J. Asian Earth Sci.* 66, 1–33.

Qiu, L., Yan, D.P., Yang, W-X., Wang, J., Tang, X., Ariser, S., Early to Middle Triassic
sedimentary records in Youjiang basin, South China: Implication for the Indosinian
orogenesis. *J. Asian Earth Sci.* this issue.

Roger, F., Maluski, H., Lepvrier, C., Tich, V.V., and Paquette, J-L., 2012. LA-ICPMS zircons
U/Pb dating of Permo-Triassic and Cretaceous magmatism in Northern Vietnam -
Geodynamic implications. *J. Asian Earth Sci.* 48, 72–82.

Shi, W., Zhang, Y.Q., Dong, S.W., Hu, J.M., Wiesinger, M., Ratschbacher, L., Jonckheere, R., Li, J.H., Tian, M., Chen, H., Wu, G.L., Ma, L.C., Li, H.L., 2012. Intra-continental Dabashan oroclinal, southwestern Qinling, central China. *J. Asian Earth Sci.* 46, 20–38.

Shi, Y., Petrology and zircon U-Pb geochronology of metamorphic massifs around the middle segment of the Tan-Lu fault to define the boundary between the North and South China blocks. *J. Asian Earth Sci.* this issue.

Shi, Y., Pei, X., Castillo, P.R., Liu, X., Ding, H., Guo, Z., Petrogenesis of the 500 Ma Fushui mafic intrusion and Early Paleozoic tectonic evolution of the Northern Qinling Belt, Central China. *J. Asian Earth Sci.*, this issue.

Shu, L.S., Zhou, G.Q., Shi, Y.S., Yin, J., 1994. Study of the high-pressure metamorphic blueschist and its Late Proterozoic age in the Eastern Jiangnan belt. *Chin. Sci. Bull.* 39, 1200–1204.

Shu, L.S., Faure, M., Jiang, S., Yang, Q. and Wang, Y., 2006. SHRIMP zircon U-Pb age, litho- and biostratigraphic analyses of the Huaiyu Domain in South China. *Episodes* 29, 244-252.

Shu, L.S., Faure, M., Yu, J.H., Jahn, B.M., 2011. Geochronological and geochemical features of the Cathaysia block (South China): new evidence for the Neoproterozoic breakup of Rodinia. *Precambrian Res.* 187, 263–276.

Shu, L., Yin, H., Faure, M., Chen, Y., Mesozoic intracontinental underthrust in the SE margin of the North China Block: Insights from the Xu-Huai thrust-and-fold belt. *J. Asian Earth Sci.*, this issue.

Wang, J., Li, Z.X., 2003. History of Neoproterozoic rift basins in South China: implications for Rodinia break-up. *Precambrian Res.*, 122, 141-158.

Wang, X.L., Zhou, J.C., Griffin, W.L., Wang, R.C., Qiu, J.S., O'Reilly, S.Y., Xu, X.S., Liu, X.M., Zhang, G.L., 2007. Detrital zircon geochronology of Precambrian basement sequences in the Jiangnan orogen: dating the assembly of the Yangtze and Cathaysia blocks. *Precambrian Res.* 159, 117–131.

Wang, Y.J., Fan, W., Zhang, G., Zhang, Y., 2013. Phanerozoic tectonics of the South China Block: key observations and controversies. *Gondwana Res.* 23, 1273–1305.

Wang, J., Shu, L. Yu, J., From the Neoproterozoic mafic rock to the Silurian high-grade metamorphic rock: evidence from zircon U-Pb geochronological, bulk-rock geochemical and mineral EPMA studies of Longyou garnet amphibolite in SE China. *J. Asian Earth Sci.* this issue.

Xu, Z., Lu, Y., Tang, Y., Mattauer, M., Matte, P., Malavieille, J., Tapponnier, P., Maluski, H., 1986. Deformation characteristics and Tectonic evolution of the eastern Qinling orogenic belt, *Acta Geol. Sin.* 60, 23–35.

Xu, Z. Dilek, Y., Cao, H., Yang, J., Robinson, P., Ma, C., Li, H., Jolivet, M., Roger, F., Chen, J. Paleo-Tethyan evolution of Tibet as recorded in the East Cimmerides and West Cathaysides. 2015. *J. Asian Earth Sci.* 105, 320-337.

Yang, J., Cawood, P.A., Du, Y., Huang, H., and Hu, L., 2012. Detrital record of Indosinian mountain building in SW China: Provenance of the Middle Triassic turbidites in the Youjiang Basin. *Tectonophysics* 574-575, 105–117.

Zhang, G., Meng, Q., Yu, Z., Sun, Y., Zhou, D., Guo, A., 1996. Orogenesis, and the timing of the Qinling orogen, *Sci. China Ser. D* 30, 225–234.

Zhang, X.S., Xu, X-S, Xia, Y., Liu L., Early Paleozoic intracontinental orogeny and post-orogenic extension in the South China Block: Insights from volcanic rocks. *J. Asian Earth Sci.* this issue.

Zhou, X.M., and Li, W.X., 2000, Origin of Late Mesozoic igneous rocks in southeastern China: implications for lithosphere subduction and underplating of mafic magmas. *Tectonophysics* 326, 269–287.

Zhou, M.F., Ma, Y., Yan, D.P., Xia, X., Zhao, J.-H., Sun, M., 2006. The Yanbian Terrane (Southern Sichuan Province, SW China): a Neoproterozoic arc assemblage in the western margin of the Yangtze Block. *Precambrian Res.* 144, 19–38.

Zi, J.-W., Cawood, P.A., Fan, W., Wang, Y., Tohver, E., McCuaig, C., and Peng, T.,

2012. Triassic collision in the Paleo-Tethys Ocean constrained by volcanic activity in SW China. *Lithos* 144–145, 145–160.

Figure captions

Fig. 1. Tectonic map of Asia with the main continental blocks and large-scale faults. In the South China Block (SCB), the purple dashed line represents the Jiangnan suture, the green dashed line depicts the Early Paleozoic "scar of the intracontinental orogen, and the pink dashed line outline the Middle Triassic Indosinian orogen slip by the Red River fault (RRF), and the intracontinental Xuefengshan orogen (XFS) in the central part of the SCB. Other Triassic belts are not represented. TLF: Tan-Lu fault. MCT: Main Central Thrust.

Fig. 2. Structural map of the SCB showing the main tectonic elements. Black squares show the location of the articles presented in this Special Issue.

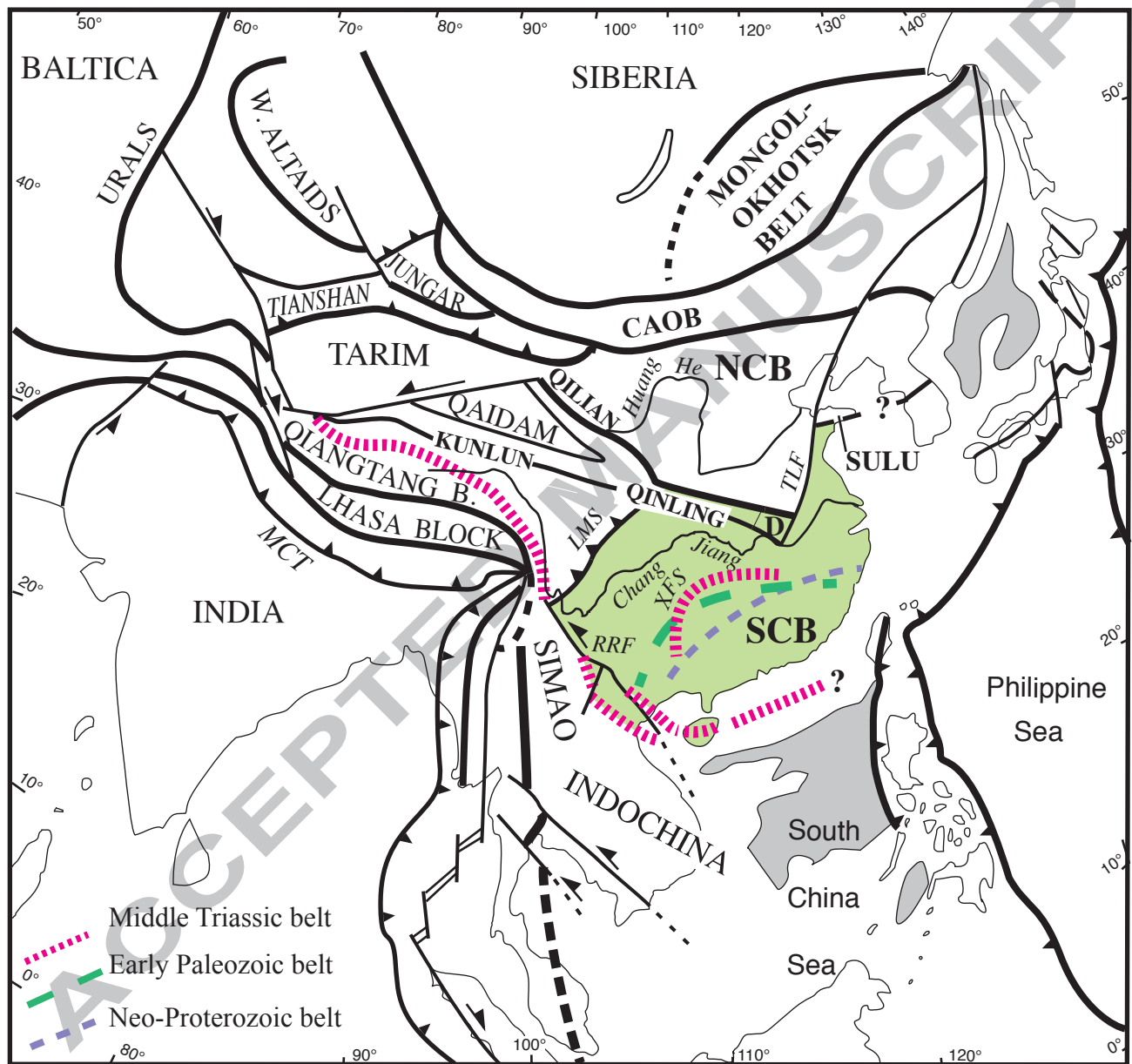


Fig. 1

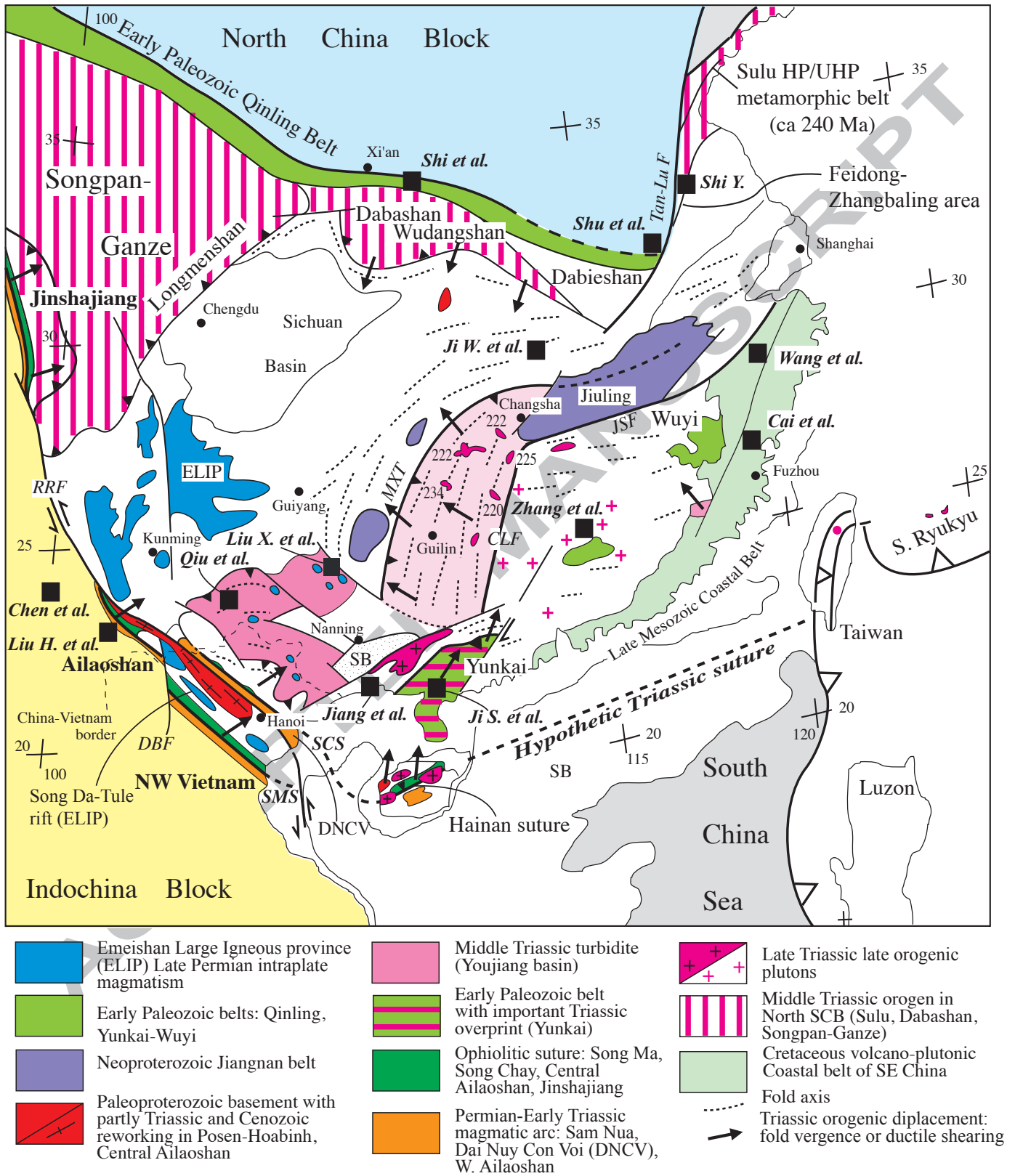


Fig. 2

Highlights

The Neoproterozoic Jiangnan collision of Cathaysia and Yangtze is responsible for the formation of the South China Block (SCB)

During the Early Paleozoic, the SCB was welded to the North China block along the Qinling belt, and also experienced an intracontinental orogeny that partly reworked the Jiangnan belt

During the Middle Triassic, the SCB was welded to Indochina, the Qinling belt was reworked by N-directed intracontinental subduction.

The Xuefengshan belt is also a Middle Triassic intracontinental orogen