

1 Variable depths of magma genesis in Eastern Asia inferred 2 from teleseismic P wave attenuation

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15
16 **Abstract:** Eastern Asia is a prime location for the study of intracontinental tectono-magmatic
17 activity. For instance, the origin of wide-spread intraplate volcanism has been one of the most
18 debated aspects of East Asian geological activity. Measurements of attenuation of teleseismic
19 phases may provide additional constraints on the source regions of volcanism by sampling the
20 upper mantle. This study uses data from three seismic arrays to constrain lateral variations in
21 teleseismic P-wave attenuation beneath the Central Orogenic Belt and the North China Craton.
22 We invert relative observations of attenuation for a 2-D map of variations in attenuation along
23 with data and model uncertainties by applying a Hierarchical Bayesian method. As expected, low
24 attenuation is observed beneath the Ordos block. High attenuation is observed beneath most of

25 the volcanoes (e.g., the Middle Gobi volcano, the Bus Obo volcano and the Datong volcano) in
26 the study area, and estimated asthenospheric Q_p values span from 95 to 200. These values are
27 within the range of globally average asthenosphere. We infer that these volcanoes may tap melt
28 from ambient asthenosphere and occur where the lithosphere is thin, which is consistent with
29 previous petrologic studies. More complex mantle drivers of volcanism are not rejected but are
30 not needed to explain eruptions in this area. In contrast, at the Xilinhote-Abaga volcanic site, the
31 observed low attenuation (as low as beneath the Ordos block) excludes a typical shallow melting
32 column. Fluids from the subducted Pacific plate may initiate the deep melting and would be
33 consistent with petrological constraints.

34

35 **Key points:**

- 36 1. The teleseismic P-wave attenuation is obtained in Central Asian Orogenic Belt and North China
37 Craton.
- 38 2. Most volcanism in study area may tap melt from ambient asthenosphere and occur where the
39 lithosphere is thin.
- 40 3. A thick lithosphere and a deep magma source are inferred beneath the Xilinhote-Abaga volcanic
41 site.

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43 **Plain Language Summary:** Seismic attenuation provide complementary constraints in contrast to
44 velocity in travel time, as attenuation focuses on energy loss and frequency information of
45 seismic waves when passing through rocks. We present the first teleseismic attenuation map in
46 Central Asian Orogenic Belt and North China Craton based on 829 direct P phases from 38 deep
47 teleseismic events. We find low attenuation beneath the Ordos Block and elevated attenuation
48 beneath most of the volcanic sites in the study region (e.g., the Middle Gobi volcano, the Bus Obo
49 volcano and the Datong volcano), which is consistent with expectations of the sensitivity of
50 attenuation to temperature. Our results suggest that the asthenosphere beneath the study
51 region is as attenuating as global average. we infer most of the volcanism in this portion of
52 Eastern Asia may tap melt from ambient asthenosphere and occur where lithosphere is thin,

53 which is consistent with previous petrologic studies. Counter-intuitive low attenuation is
54 observed beneath the Xilinhot-Abaga volcanic site, which excludes a typical shallow melting
55 column and is consistent with a deep melting magma source. The magma genesis across the
56 study area are consistent with lithospheric thickness as a primary cause of variations in the
57 composition of erupted lavas.

58

59 **1. Introduction**

60 Much of the geological activity on Earth occurs at plate boundaries in accordance with the
61 theory of plate tectonics. However, magmatism and tectonic deformation can occur far from
62 plate boundaries in continental interiors, (e.g., Molnar and Tapponnier, 1975; Molnar and Deng,
63 1984; Barry and Kent, 1998; Walker et al., 2007). Eastern Asia is a prime example.
64 Intracontinental volcanism, orogenic uplift, and metasomatism all occurred in Eastern Asia during
65 collision between India and Asia to the southwest, subduction of the Pacific plate to the east, and
66 widespread mantle upwelling (e.g., Molnar et al., 1993; Tapponnier et al., 2001; Schellart and
67 Lister, 2005; Li et al., 2012). The effect of these processes on the already heterogenous
68 continental lithosphere leads to many styles of deformation and magmatism within the continent
69 (Fig. 1), making this area a unique site to explore intraplate activity (e.g., Griffin et al., 1998; Xu,
70 2001; Deng et al., 2004; Wang et al., 2006; Barry et al., 2007).

71 Seismic imaging of the Earth's interior can aid our understanding of such processes. The
72 most commonly imaged seismological parameter is seismic velocity, while seismic attenuation
73 may have greater importance when inferring the physical state of the subsurface (Karato, 1993;
74 Goes et al., 2000; Hammond and Humphreys, 2000). Seismic velocity is relatively well
75 characterized across Eastern Asia (e.g., Priestly et al., 2006; Tian et al., 2009; Li and van der Hilst,

76 2010; Lei, 2012; Li et al., 2013; Tao et al., 2018), while seismic attenuation across the region is
77 poorly understood. Constraints on variation in seismic attenuation can reflect variations in
78 temperature, the presence of fluids, partial melting, composition and grain size (e.g., Dziewonski
79 et al., 1982; Gomer and Okal, 2003; Dalton and Faul, 2010), and so can aid our understanding of
80 volcanism, seismicity, and variations in the strength of the lithosphere. Though several
81 investigations of seismic attenuation have been conducted (e.g., He et al., 2017), the deep
82 attenuation structure beneath Eastern Asia is still unknown, since previous studies used seismic
83 phases (Lg, Sn, Pg, Pn) that are only sensitive to the crust and the uppermost mantle.

84 In this study, we used combined data recorded by three temporary seismic arrays (Fig. 1),
85 located in Central Mongolia (CM array), Inner Mongolia, China, around the Xilinhot-Abaga (XA,
86 hereafter) volcanic site (NM array), and the Western and Central Blocks of the NCC (OD array), to
87 estimate teleseismic P wave attenuation by applying a time-domain waveform matching method
88 (Adams and Humphreys, 2010; Bezada, 2017; Byrnes et al., 2019). We obtained a 2-D map of
89 relative attenuation structure which shows significant lateral heterogeneity. The attenuation
90 structure we image is closely associated with local tectonic features and deep asthenosphere
91 processes. We find low attenuation beneath the Ordos block and elevated attenuation beneath
92 most volcanic sites, which is consistent with expectations. Counter-intuitively, low attenuation is
93 also found beneath the XA. We discuss the tectonic implications as well as outstanding questions
94 that we suggest as promising areas for future research.

95 **1.1 Regional Tectonic Background**

96 The study area is located at the center of Eastern Asia (Fig. 1), containing South-central

97 Mongolia and the XA volcanic site in the Central Asian Orogenic Belt (CAOB), and the western and
98 central parts of the North China Craton (NCC) (Fig. 1). The Mongolian plateau is located in the
99 core of the CAOB, one of the largest Paleozoic continental orogens on Earth (Windley et al., 2007).
100 Its high-standing topography (mean elevation of ~1500 m) is perplexing, given that it is far from
101 any plate boundaries. The Hangay Dome, in the west of the study region, reaches ~4000 m, and
102 the Khentii Mountains, within the study region, rise to ~3000 m. Even the Gobi Desert, which is
103 low-standing for the region, sits at an average elevation of ~1000 m (Barry and Kent, 1998;
104 Walker et al., 2007). Two possible and widely accepted models for the significant regional
105 elevation are lithospheric processes due to far-field effects of the India-Asia collision or high
106 asthenospheric temperatures due to an upwelling plume (e.g., Molnar and Tapponnier, 1975;
107 Windley and Allen, 1993; Mordinova et al., 2007; Hunt et al., 2012; Chen et al., 2015a).

108 Also noteworthy are the abundant, low-volume Cenozoic intraplate volcanoes that have
109 erupted over the past 30 Ma. This is expressed in numerous, small volume, alkali-basalt cones
110 that extend from the Baikal Rift across central Mongolia to north and northeast China (Barry,
111 2003; Hunt et al., 2012). Examples include the Middle Gobi and Bus Obo magmatic centers on the
112 northwest and northeast of the Gobi Desert, respectively, and the Dariganga Volcanic site on the
113 boundary between China and Mongolia (Fig. 1). The latter is connected to the XA volcanic
114 province in China and represents the largest volcanic province in central and eastern Asia (Fig. 1)
115 (Ho et al., 2008; Barry and Kent, 1998). The XA is located in Inner Mongolia, China, and consists of
116 more than 300 individual volcanoes and a lava plateau that covers over 10,000 km² (Wang et al.,
117 2006; Chen et al., 2015b). K-Ar dating suggests volcanic activity in the XA initiated sometime
118 between the middle Miocene and the early Pleistocene, similar to the Dariganga Volcanic site

119 (Kononova et al., 2002; Ho et al., 2008).

120 The North China Craton (NCC), one of the oldest Archean cratons in the world (Liu et al.,
121 1992; Lei, 2012), lies south of the CAOB and is bounded on the north by the Late Paleozoic
122 Yinshan-Yanshan Orogenic Belt (Fig. 1). The NCC became stable in the late Paleoproterozoic after
123 the collision of its eastern and western sections, and was reactivated in the late Mesozoic and
124 Cenozoic (e.g., Xu, 2001; Deng et al., 2004; Lei, 2012). The NCC consists of the eastern NCC, the
125 western NCC and the TNCO (Trans-North China Orogen). The eastern NCC lies to the east of our
126 study area and so will not be discussed further. The western NCC is mainly comprised of the
127 Ordos Block, and the Late Paleozoic Yinshan orogen, which separates it from the CAOB to the
128 north. The Ordos Block is a large Mesozoic intra-continental basin that has uplifted continuously
129 since the Cenozoic (Deng and You, 1985). The Ordos Block has a deep lithospheric keel which
130 reaches over 200 km depth (Tian et al., 2009; Lei, 2012), and is considered to be a stable block
131 given the notable absence of recent seismic and magmatic activity within it (Qiu et al., 2005).

132 The TNCO is an orogen that records the collision between the western and eastern halves of
133 the NCC (Zhao et al., 2005) (Fig. 1). The Shanxi Graben lies within the TNCO and formed during
134 Late Cenozoic extension in North China, where volcanic rocks are widespread and seismic hazard
135 is high (Xu and Ma, 1992; Deng et al., 1999). The Datong volcanic site located at the northern end
136 of Shanxi Graben (Fig. 1) is a typical representative of TNCO volcanism (Ye et al., 1987; Ren et al.,
137 2002).

138 **1.2 Previous Studies**

139 Several seismological experiments have explored the origin of the high topography and the

140 wide-spread Cenozoic intraplate volcanism in the Mongolian plateau, including the PASSCAL
141 (Program for Array Seismic Studies of Continental Lithosphere) arrays deployed around the Baikal
142 Rift, Siberian Craton and central Mongolia (Gao et al., 1994), the MOBAL (Mongolian-Baik
143 Lithosphere seismological Transect) array (Barruol et al., 2008), and the CM array
144 (China-Mongolia seismic array) , which is used in the present study (He et al., 2016). Imaging
145 based on data from the PASSCAL arrays (Gao et al., 2003; Zorin et al., 2003) and the CM array
146 (Zhang et al., 2017) delineates low Vp and Vs anomalies in the shallow mantle beneath the
147 Khentii Mountains and the Middle Gobi volcano, and so uplift and volcanism were both
148 attributed to the upwelling of hot mantle. Additionally, observations of high heat flow (60-70
149 mW/m²) (Khutorskoy and Yarmoluk, 1989), high Sn attenuation (He et al., 2017), and null
150 measurements from SKS splitting (consistent with either weak or vertically oriented fabric in the
151 mantle) (Qiang et al., 2017), are all consistent with the existence of hot mantle upwelling in this
152 area, though the source of the upwelling is still debated. To the south, a deep, strong low-velocity
153 structure in the upper mantle was imaged by teleseismic tomography from beneath the
154 southeast corner of south-central Mongolia to beneath the Gobi Desert (Zhang et al., 2017).
155 Zhang et al. (2017) interpret this anomaly to represent laterally flowing asthenospheric mantle
156 associated with the subducting Pacific slab. Asthenospheric flow is also supported by shear wave
157 splitting measurements of NW-SE trending fast polarization directions and relatively large
158 splitting delay times in south-central Mongolia (Barruol et al., 2008; Qiang et al., 2017; Qiang and
159 Wu, 2019).

160 The XA volcanic site is less well-studied than most of the other intraplate volcanoes in
161 Eastern Asia. A “big mantle wedge” model beneath Eastern Asia, associated with the dehydration

162 of the subducting Pacific slab, has been proposed to explain most if not all the volcanism in
163 Eastern Asia by several large-scale regional tomographic studies (e.g., Zhao, 2004; Huang and
164 Zhao, 2006). As for the Xilinhot-Abaga, body wave and surface wave tomographic studies showed
165 low V_p and V_s anomalies with, at most, modest amplitudes in the uppermost mantle beneath
166 this volcanic province (Tang et al., 2014; Guo et al., 2016a; Liu et al., 2017). Guo et al. (2016a) and
167 Liu et al. (2017) attributed the low-velocity anomalies and surface volcanism to local
168 asthenospheric upwelling induced by a mantle downwelling beneath the Songliao Basin to the
169 east, which is a distinct mechanism from the “Big Mantle Wedge”.

170 Abundant geophysical and geochemical studies have been focused on the tectonic evolution
171 of the NCC. Here, we focus on the TNCO and the western NCC. Body wave tomography revealed a
172 prominent low- V_p anomaly in the upper mantle beneath the TNCO, attributed to asthenospheric
173 upwelling (Tian et al., 2009). Petrological observations also imply asthenosphere upwelling which
174 could be responsible for the magmatic events and widespread volcanic rocks in the Shanxi
175 Graben (Deng et al., 1996; Xu et al., 2005). Meanwhile, the source of the Datong volcano is still a
176 matter of debate. Several regional tomographic studies have suggested that Datong volcanism is
177 driven by the dehydration of the subducted Pacific slab (Huang and Zhao, 2006; Tian et al., 2009).
178 Alternatively, Lei (2012) proposed that a lower mantle plume drives the Datong volcanism from
179 the observation that anomalies under the Datong volcano and Bohai Sea were connected to a
180 broader anomaly that extends into the lower mantle.

181 Moving to the western NCC, the tectonically stable Ordos Block is characterized by low
182 Bouguer gravity anomalies and low heat flow (40 mW/m^2) (Ma, 1989; Yuan, 1996; Hu et al., 2001;
183 Zhai and Liu, 2003; Qiu et al., 2005). A recent GPS study found low deformation rates (a few

184 nanostrain/yr or less) in the interior of the Ordos Block (Wang and Shen, 2020). Several
185 seismological investigations suggested there is consensus as to the presence of very thick and
186 cold lithosphere remaining beneath the Ordos Block (e.g., Tian et al., 2009; Lei, 2012; Tang et al.,
187 2013; Gao et al., 2018). Moreover, the LAB as imaged by receiver function and surface wave
188 tomography shallows northward from the Ordos Block towards the Yinshan orogen, and shallows
189 eastward from the Ordos Block to the TNCO (Chen, 2010; Tang et al., 2013).

190 **2. Data and Method**

191 Intrinsic seismic attenuation is caused by energy absorption due to anelasticity (Nowick and
192 Berry, 1972), and is quantified by the quality factor Q , defined as

$$193 \quad Q^{-1} = \frac{\Delta E}{2\pi E_0} \quad (1)$$

194 where ΔE is the energy lost per cycle and E_0 is the elastic energy in the wavefront. The
195 amplitude spectrum $A(\omega)$ of an attenuated signal is given by

$$196 \quad A(\omega) = A_0(\omega)e^{\frac{-\omega x}{2Q(\omega)c(\omega)}} \quad (2)$$

197 where $A_0(\omega)$ is the unattenuated spectrum, ω is the angular frequency, x is the traveled
198 distance and $c(\omega)$ is the phase velocity (Aki and Richards, 2002). The parameter t^* that
199 represents the cumulative effect of Q over the entire body-wave path, is commonly used for
200 seismic attenuation analysis and is defined as (Stein and Wysession, 2003)

$$201 \quad t^* = \int \frac{dt}{Q} = \int \frac{dx}{c^*Q} \quad (3)$$

202 where t is the travel-time in seconds. Teng (1968) developed a method for estimating the relative
203 attenuation (Δt^*) between the recordings of the same earthquake at two stations. This method

204 calculates the relative attenuation from the ratio of the amplitude spectra from waveforms of the
205 same event recorded by two stations. Later methods such as “reference/mean spectrum” (Adams
206 and Humphreys, 2010; Cafferky and Schmandt, 2015), “pseudo source” (Boyd and Sheehan,
207 2005), and “common spectrum” (Halderman and Davis, 1991), are improved spectral methods to
208 find the differential attenuation between all stations in an array simultaneously, without picking a
209 reference station. In this study, we aim to characterize intrinsic seismic attenuation beneath our
210 study area using a time-domain waveform-matching approach developed by Bezada (2017) based
211 on the time-domain method of Adams and Humphreys (2010). We use a time-domain method
212 rather than spectral methods because spectrum calculation and Δt^* estimation is sensitive to
213 the subjectively chosen window of time and frequency range considered for the measurement
214 (Adams and Humphreys, 2010; Bezada et al., 2019), and because time-domain methods allow for
215 straight-forward quality control of the measurements. The time-domain waveform method has
216 been applied successfully in Spain and Morocco (Bezada, 2017), Australia (Bezada and Smale,
217 2019), the Central Appalachian Mountains (Byrnes et al., 2019), and the Salton Trough (Byrnes
218 and Bezada, 2020) yielding results that correlate well with previous geological and geophysical
219 constraints.

220 **2.1 Data Selection**

221 We used data from three temporary broadband seismic arrays: The CM array with 69
222 stations installed in central Mongolia (August 2011-August 2013), the NM with 36 stations
223 installed in Inner Mongolia, China near the XA volcanic province (October 2012-July 2015), and
224 the OD array with 43 stations installed around the Ordos Block (May 2010-November 2011).
225 These deployments have a typically station spacings of 30 to 60 km (Fig. 1).

226 We use teleseismic P phases from events with epicentral distance between 30° and 90° .
227 We also choose events with hypocentral depths greater than 250 km in order to avoid the highly
228 attenuating asthenosphere (e.g., Dziewonski and Anderson, 1981) on the source side. In this way,
229 we maximize the effect of receiver-side structure on the attenuation signal. Furthermore, to
230 ensure the events have enough energy to produce high signal-to-noise ratios, we restrict the
231 event magnitudes to between Mb 5.5 and 7.3. Events in this magnitude range tend to have
232 simple, impulsive and short-duration source time signatures (Hwang et al., 2011), making them
233 amenable to our analysis.

234 We select a total of 38 events: 13 events recorded by the CM array, 14 events recorded by
235 the NM array and 16 events recorded by the OD array (Fig. 2). Additionally, 2 of the events were
236 recorded by both the CM and NM arrays, and 3 of them were recorded by both the CM and OD
237 arrays. The analysis is carried out on vertical velocity seismograms. After removing the mean,
238 trend, and instrument response (Haney et al., 2012), we filter the seismograms with a 4th order
239 Butterworth filter with corners at 0.02 and 3 Hz. We measured Δt^* on direct P-wave phases
240 which have consistent, simple and impulsive appearance across the array.

241 **2.2 Δt^* Estimation**

242 The first step of the waveform matching method is to estimate a minimally attenuated
243 source-time function for each event (Bezada, 2017). To do this, we select what appear to be the
244 least-attenuated records, based on visual inspection. The main selection criterion is the duration
245 of the recorded pulse. Less attenuated records will show more impulsive, shorter duration
246 waveforms than the more attenuated ones owing to the progressive depletion of high

247 frequencies with increasing attenuation. We then stack the least-attenuated traces to produce
248 the source time function estimate (Fig. 3), (Bezada, 2017). This process is iterative, in that
249 individual records are included and excluded from the stack until it is clear that only the
250 least-attenuated waveforms are selected.

251 Synthetic waveforms are then generated by applying a linear operator $L(\omega)$ that models
252 the effect of frequency-independent attenuation to the source estimate. The operator presented
253 by Azimi et al. (1968) is defined in the frequency domain by:

$$254 \quad L(\omega) = e^{-\omega t^* \left(\frac{1}{2} + \frac{i}{\pi} \ln\left(\frac{\omega}{\omega_0}\right) \right)} \quad (4)$$

255 where ω_0 is reference frequency. The choice of reference frequency only affects the arrival time
256 and not the shape of waveform, making it inconsequential for this study (Bezada, 2017). The real
257 and imaginary parts of (4) describe the attenuation and dispersion caused by anelasticity. We use
258 equation 4 to numerically attenuate the source time function estimate and grid-search over t^*
259 to find the value that minimizes the L2-norm of the difference between the observed and
260 numerically attenuated waveforms. This is followed by a visual quality-control step where
261 synthetic traces that do not conform to the observation are excluded from the analysis (Bezada,
262 2017). We remove the mean t^* for each event to produce relative attenuation measurements
263 (Δt^* , hereafter), since we do not know the value of t^* associated with the source estimate. In
264 this study, 829 Δt^* measurements were kept after quality control.

265 **2.3 Inversion**

266 To combine the Δt^* measurements into a statistically robust map, we use the Hierarchical
267 Bayesian Monte Carlo inverse method (Bodin et al., 2012a, b) implanted by Byrnes et al. (2019).

268 One advantage of this approach is that free parameters related to regularization (such as
269 smoothing and damping weights) are not needed, and the complexity of the solution is driven by
270 the estimated uncertainty of input data. We first draw a starting model of 2-D (map view) relative
271 attenuation from the prior, and then iteratively perturb the model in a way that maintains
272 consistency with Bayes' theorem.

273 We ran 10 parallel chains of the search with independent starting models for 10^5 iterations,
274 with a burn-in of 5×10^3 iterations, and saved each 100th model for analysis, as adjacent models
275 will be not be sufficiently different to be of interest. A final model is constructed by averaging the
276 values of the accepted models from all the chains interpolated onto a regular grid. At every point
277 in the grid, an estimate of model uncertainty is given by the standard deviation of the values in
278 the ensemble of accepted models.

279 **2.4 Synthetic Tests**

280 Combining relative attenuation data from three different arrays may pose challenges to the
281 inversion. We do not constrain absolute t^* , and so events measured at different arrays will be
282 separately demeaned. Before applying the inverse procedure to the data, we must ensure that
283 the procedure is able to accurately recover anomalies that span different arrays without
284 introducing artifacts at the array boundaries by performing a series of tests with synthetic data
285 that is demeaned in the same way as the real data. In the first two tests, we attempt to recover
286 smooth models of Δt^* across the entire study area. In these cases, Δt^* increase linearly with
287 either longitude or latitude from 0 to 0.5 s (Fig. 5a and 5b). For the third input model, we set up a
288 single rectangular anomaly with longitude and latitude boundaries of 40°N , 45°N , 108°E and

289 114°E, which intersects with all 3 arrays. Values of Δt^* inside and outside the rectangular
290 anomaly are set to 0.5 s and 0 s, respectively (Fig. 5c). The synthetic data set contains the same
291 configuration of station-event pairs as the real data set. Δt^* values are taken from the input
292 models described above, with the mean per event removed and with Gaussian white noise with a
293 standard deviation of 0.075 s added.

294 We recover the overall character of the input models in all cases (Fig. 5). The range of the
295 Δt^* are well-estimated, and gradational models can be easily distinguished from models with
296 sharp discontinuities. The recovered data uncertainty in each case is 0.074 s, 0.078 s, and 0.075 s
297 respectively, which are excellent matches to the standard deviation of the input Gaussian noise.
298 These results give us confidence in the geometry and amplitude of the anomalies we image when
299 inverting the real data set, without additional uncertainties introduced by using data from
300 different arrays.

301 **3. Results**

302 We present our preferred model for lateral variations of Δt^* in Fig. 6a, with high or low
303 attenuation anomalies labeled in the map as referred to in the following sections. The values of
304 Δt^* in the preferred model range from -0.2 s to 0.2 s (Fig. 6a), and the standard deviation of the
305 modeled values is typically in the range of 0.05 -0.07 s (Fig.6b). A uniform data uncertainty term
306 was solved by the inversion (see Byrnes et al., 2019 for details) with mean value of 0.18 s.

307 **3.1 Fundamental Features**

308 The relative attenuation map of the study area can be described as showing a broad band of
309 elevated attenuation running NNW-SSE from the Khentii Mountains to the Datong volcano,

310 flanked by two prominent low attenuation regions: one to the east at 42-46°N coinciding with the
311 Xilinhote-Abaga volcanoes, and another one to the west at 36-40°N coinciding with the Ordos
312 Block (Fig. 6). Along the high-attenuation band, values are highest in the north, near the Khentii
313 Mountains and the Middle Gobi volcano on the northeastern and southwestern edges of the area
314 covered by the CM array (referred to as HA1 and HA2, respectively). There, Δt^* values reach
315 0.13-0.15 s (Fig. 6, 7d, 7e). To the south, the Gobi Desert shows values of ~ 0.09 s (HA4) and
316 similar values are found continuing south all the way to the Datong volcano (HA3) (Fig. 6, 7d, 7e).

317 Low attenuation values are found in the XA volcanic province (LA2), with Δt^* reaching
318 values of -0.15 s (Fig. 6, 7a, 7c, 7f). However, the uncertainty is large and increases towards the
319 east. A sharp gradient in Δt^* separates LA2 from the higher attenuation to the west (HA3/HA4),
320 whereas the transition from the high values in HA3 to the lowest attenuation values in the Ordos
321 Block (LA1) is gradual (Fig. 6, 7b, 7c). Attenuation in the Ordos Block decreases from east to west,
322 with the lowest attenuation being similar to that found beneath the XA volcanic province (Fig. 6,
323 7b, 7c). Again, however, uncertainties on the minimum values are large and grow towards the
324 west.

325 **3.2 Correlations with Other Observations**

326 We consider our results in the context of lateral variations in topography, volcanism, and
327 seismic velocity by presenting 6 cross-sections across the study area that traverse the main
328 tectonic and volcanic provinces (Fig. 7). The seismic velocity model used a full waveform inversion
329 of regional seismograms (Tao et al., 2018). In general, we expect high attenuation to coincide
330 with low velocities in the mantle and low attenuation with high-velocity features, given the

331 sensitivity of both these physical parameters to temperature (e.g., Goes et al., 2000; Cammarano
332 et al., 2003) and the effect of anelasticity on velocity (Karato, 1993; Faul and Jackson, 2005).
333 Previous studies with this type of attenuation constraint typically observe this general pattern
334 (Byrnes et al., 2019; Bezada and Smale, 2019; Bezada, 2017), and we observe this anti-correlation
335 here as well.

336 Positive velocities anomalies underlie the cratonic Ordos block, where we observed negative
337 Δt^* anomalies (Fig. 7b and c). The mountain ranges further east show higher Δt^* values and
338 low V_p and V_s anomalies (Fig. 7b and c). The HA1 and HA2 anomalies, two regions with higher
339 attenuation near the Khentii Mountains and Middle Gobi volcano, are correlated with relatively
340 high elevation and low velocity anomalies in the shallow mantle (Fig. 7d, e and f). A narrow
341 low-velocity anomaly at depths shallower than 200 km underlies the rough, high topography of
342 the Yinshan-Yanshan Orogenic Belt, where we found elevated attenuation in our model (Fig. 7c).
343 In the eastern part of the Yinshan-Yanshan Orogenic Belt, we note a significant drop of Δt^*
344 directly north of the mountains where the profiles cross into lower elevation (Fig. 7a, c, d and e).
345 The Gobi Desert sits at relatively low elevation and is underlain by moderately high seismic
346 velocity anomaly down to 200 km, and we find reduced but still positive Δt^* values (HA4).

347 Volcanic provinces are commonly associated with low-velocity anomalies in the subsurface,
348 thinner lithosphere, the presence of melt, and high temperatures. Hence, the expected
349 observation near volcanoes is high attenuation (e.g., Shapiro et al., 2000). Nevertheless, our Δt^*
350 map does not show a consistent pattern of attenuation associated with regions exhibiting
351 Cenozoic volcanism. First, the DT volcanic site is near the highest Δt^* values in HA3 and, as
352 expected, is underlain by a high-amplitude low-velocity anomaly at depths up to 200 km (Fig. 6,

353 7a, 7b, 7d, 7e). However, the BO and MG volcanoes do not coincide with the northern extremum
354 of Δt^* (Fig. 6, 7d, 7e, 7f), though they are in the province of the most positive values in the
355 study area. Most surprising is the observation of some of the lowest Δt^* values near the XA
356 volcanic province (Fig. 6, 7a, 7c, 7f).

357 To demonstrate the variable correlations between velocity and attenuation in our study, we
358 compare our Δt^* results with $\Delta V_p/V_p$ at five different depths (Fig. 8) from the velocity model
359 of Tao et al. (2018). In general, we find attenuation anti-correlates with velocity variations at
360 depths from 100 to 200 km across the study area – as expected - except for LA2 region (Fig. 8).
361 The largest correlation coefficients occur for depths from 100 to 150 km (Fig. 8b, c), with weak
362 correlation at 50 km depth and essentially no correlation between velocity and attenuation at
363 300 km depth (Fig. 8d). The strong anti-correlation between attenuation and velocity is
364 consistent with the sensitivity of both to temperature, and possibly melt and water (e.g., Goes et
365 al., 2000; Cammarano et al., 2003). These observations support previous inferences that
366 teleseismic attenuation is primarily sensitive to the subcrustal lithosphere-asthenosphere system
367 (Kennett and Abdullah, 2011; Bezada and Smale, 2019; Byrnes and Bezada, 2020), while studies
368 based on seismic velocity can interrogate structure within the crust and below the asthenosphere
369 (Castaneda et al., in submission). The well-defined positive correlation at depths of 100-200 km
370 beneath the LA2 region (Fig. 8b, c, d) is counter-intuitive and cannot be explained by thermal
371 variations (e.g., Goes et al., 2000; Cammarano et al., 2003). In supplementary Section 1, we
372 present an F-test to further show that the two-trend relation between velocity and attenuation in
373 different regions at depths from 100 to 200 km is robust. The results of the F-test suggest that
374 the attenuation and velocity across the study area are better fit by a two-trend model than by a

375 single linear model with greater than 99% confidence even when the uncertainties on the
376 attenuation results are considered (Fig. S1). We also note that between the HA3 and the HA1,
377 HA2, and HA4 regions, large velocity variations at depths of 100 km occur without matching
378 fluctuations in attenuation (Fig. 8), and so some decoupling between velocity and attenuation is
379 likely real. We also note that while the model of Tao et al., (2018) is defined across the whole of
380 Eastern Asia, the most negative Δt^* values in the LA2 region occur at the edge of the station
381 coverage and rapidly become more negative as the edge of coverage is approached from west to
382 east. Further studies are needed to confirm the lateral extent of negative Δt^* anomalies in the
383 XA volcanic site.

384 **3.3 Estimates of Absolute Q_p**

385 Since the 2D Δt^* model only gives the path-integrated attenuation, and given that our data
386 are not sufficient to constrain a 3D tomographic model for Q_p , we explore several hypothetical
387 scenarios to estimate plausible values of Q_p using a procedure similar to that applied in Byrnes et
388 al. (2019) and Deng et al (2021). Q_p values are estimated assuming a vertically propagating P
389 wave from 200 km depth to the surface. We consider a two-layer model where the lithosphere
390 and asthenosphere have constant Q_p and the attenuation depends on the path length through
391 each of the layers and the Q_p values. We seek combinations of those parameters that are
392 consistent with the observed differences in attenuation between LA1 ($\Delta t^* = -0.04 \pm 0.03$ s) and
393 HA1-HA2 ($\Delta t^* = 0.11 \pm 0.03$ s), HA3-HA4 ($\Delta t^* = 0.08 \pm 0.03$ s) and LA2 ($\Delta t^* = -0.06 \pm 0.06$ s). We
394 use the minimum values of Δt^* in LA1 that is robust against the uncertainties, as we noted
395 above that the uncertainties grow towards west in LA1 (i.e., the Ordos block). Then equation (3)
396 becomes

397
$$\Delta t^* - \Delta t_{LA1}^* = \left(\frac{t_{asth}}{Q_{p_asth}} + \frac{t_{lithos}}{Q_{p_lithos}} \right) - \left(\frac{t_{asth_LA1}}{Q_{p_asth_LA1}} + \frac{t_{lithos_LA1}}{Q_{p_lithos_LA1}} \right) \quad (5)$$

398 where t_{lithos} and t_{asth} are the travel time through the lithosphere and asthenosphere,
 399 respectively. Q_{p_lithos} and Q_{p_asth} are the Q_p values in the lithosphere and asthenosphere,
 400 respectively.

401 We first explore the case where we hold lithospheric thickness fixed to 200 km under the
 402 Ordos block (LA1 region) and 70 km elsewhere based on the thermomechanical model of Guo et
 403 al (2016b). Under these conditions, for any assumed value of lithospheric Q_p , we can find the
 404 range of asthenosphere Q_p that is consistent with our observed dt^* and their uncertainties for
 405 any assumed value of lithospheric Q_p . We find that an attenuating asthenosphere is required to
 406 explain the observations in regions HA1-HA2 and HA3-HA4 (Fig. 9a). Estimates for the two
 407 regions overlap considerably, spanning Q_p values from 95 to 200 (Fig. 9a). Assuming that the
 408 Q_p/Q_s ratio is greater than 2, as expected (Karato and Speltzer, 1990) these values are within the
 409 range of globally average asthenosphere (e.g., Dziewonski and Anderson, 1981; Dalton et al.,
 410 2008, Dalton and Faul, 2010; Ma et al., 2020). Even at the more attenuating end of the results,
 411 Q_p is markedly higher than observed in many volcanic zones (e.g., Abers et al., 2014; Pozgay et al.,
 412 2009; Wei and Wiens, 2020; Byrnes et al., 2019; Byrnes and Bezada, 2020). Our results suggest
 413 that Q_p is lower in the north near the Middle Gobi and Bus Obo volcanoes than in the south
 414 beneath the Datong or Honggertu volcanoes, but this difference is not robust. A modest increase
 415 in temperature or hydration towards the north is therefore possible but not inferred here (Faul
 416 and Jackson, 2005). In contrast to the HA regions, this exercise shows that if the lithosphere
 417 beneath the XA volcanic site (LA2) is thin, a very high Q_p asthenosphere would be required to
 418 explain our observations (Fig 8a).

419 The previous estimates assume a 70 km thick lithosphere outside of the Ordos Block, but
420 variations are possible. Beneath HA1, HA2, and HA3, the estimates of asthenospheric Q_p are
421 likely robust (Guo et al., 2016b; Zhang et al., 2017; Tao et al., 2018), but Zhang et al. (2017)
422 inferred a lithospheric thickness of approximately 100 km beneath the HA4 region. To explore the
423 effect of variable lithospheric thickness below the HA regions we hold lithospheric Q_p fixed to
424 either 600 or 1400 (as plausible end members) and find the combinations of asthenosphere Q_p
425 and lithospheric thickness that are consistent with the observations in those regions. The
426 asthenospheric Q_p beneath HA4 spans from 80 to 140 if the lithospheric thickness equals 100 km
427 (Fig. 9b). Assuming a 150 km thick lithosphere, the asthenospheric Q_p beneath this region would
428 be below 80, and so lower than the other HA regions (Fig. 9b).

429 We similarly explore the effect of different lithospheric thicknesses below LA2 (XA volcanic
430 province). We find that the results can be explained with near-global-average values for
431 asthenospheric Q_p if the lithosphere beneath this region is ~ 150 km thick (Figure 8c). Our results
432 then allow for two end-member possibilities for this region: the first is that the lithosphere is
433 relatively thick, and the second is that the asthenosphere has higher Q_p than the global average.
434 Lithosphere as thick as beneath the Ordos block is allowed by the attenuation (Figure. 9c) but is
435 likely inconsistent with seismic tomography (Fig. 7b and c). Instead, seismic tomography reveals
436 modest high velocity anomalies that could reflect either modestly thick lithosphere or modestly
437 cool asthenosphere, or some combination of the two, both of which are consistent with our
438 observations (Fig. 9c). In any of these scenarios, we can reject the possibility of thin lithosphere
439 underlain by normal asthenosphere, which distinguishes this region from the HA regions.

440 **4. Discussion**

441 We primarily interpret our results in terms of variations in lithospheric thickness and discuss
442 the implications for magma genesis in Eastern Asia. Our results are consistent with a
443 lithosphere-asthenosphere system with thick lithosphere beneath the Ordos block, moderately
444 thick lithosphere beneath the XA volcanoes, and thin lithosphere in the rest of the study area.
445 Where the lithosphere is thin, widespread volcanism occurs and the asthenosphere is as
446 attenuating as the global average.

447 We make two inferences from these observations regarding the source of volcanism in this
448 region. First, the volcanism in the HA regions that we observe do not require unusual
449 asthenosphere conditions. We show above that Q_p values beneath this region is approximately
450 the same as in globally average asthenosphere. In contrast, lower Q_p values are observed
451 beneath volcanic regions where small-scale convection or subduction driven melting occurs (e.g.,
452 Abers et al., 2014; Pozgay et al., 2009; Wei and Wiens, 2020; Byrnes et al., 2019; Byrnes and
453 Bezada, 2020), and markedly lower Q_p values are inferred near the Hainan plume in South China
454 (Deng et al., 2021). We show in supplementary Section 2 that while lower Q_p values in the HA
455 regions are estimated if a reference value in LA1 of -0.1 s is assumed, a value at the lower end of
456 the uncertainty of the observations, the estimated Q_p values are lower but still similar to the
457 globally average asthenosphere (Fig. S2).

458 Instead, our results are consistent with the intraplate volcanism in this portion of Eastern
459 Asia primarily tapping melt from the ambient asthenosphere. Isotopic evidence suggests that the
460 widespread Cenozoic Mongolian volcanism is unlikely to involve a deep mantle upwelling, and

461 that the magma source resides instead in the shallow asthenosphere (Barry et al., 2003, 2007).
462 Petrological studies infer that the pressures of melts erupted at Datong are sourced from just
463 below the base of a 60 km thick lithosphere (Xu et al., 2005), at which depths elevated
464 temperatures are not required to explain melting. Many studies infer that the asthenosphere
465 contains a small fraction of partial melt due to the presence of volatiles, even in region far from
466 exceptional conditions such as mantle plume (e.g., Gaillard et al., 2008; Kawakatsu et al., 2009;
467 Debayle et al., 2020). These melts may be able to reach the surface in a region of thin lithosphere
468 or widespread fracturing, such as likely occurs beneath basin and range provinces (Plank and
469 Forsyth, 2016) or in some subduction zones (Hirano et al., 2006).

470 While our results are consistent with ambient asthenospheric processes as a mechanism for
471 volcanism, more active processes are allowed. Zhang et al. (2017) proposed that deep mantle
472 upwelling occurs beneath HA4, and that lateral flow beneath the lithosphere feeds volcanism
473 north and south of the Gobi Desert. Our results allow the lowest Q_p in this region, since the
474 lithosphere may be thicker than elsewhere (Zhang et al., 2017). The attenuation constraints thus
475 are consistent with but do not require this mechanism. A “Big Mantle Wedge” related to
476 subduction of the Pacific plate has also been invoked to explain volcanism. While our results do
477 not require unusual asthenosphere conditions, the results are compatible with this model. For
478 example, while melting beneath Datong volcano does not require elevated temperatures,
479 enrichment in the source may have come from fluids released from the subducted slab (Xu et al.,
480 2005).

481 In contrast, the observations require that the source of the magma feeding the XA field is
482 deep. Our results admit two possibilities: Either the lithosphere is thicker beneath the XA region

483 than beneath any of the HA regions, or the asthenospheric Q_p is very high. In the high- Q_p
484 asthenosphere scenario, the low attenuation would be inconsistent with a mantle sufficiently
485 close to the solidus to generate volcanism (e.g., Abers et al., 2014), and can thus be ruled out.
486 The thicker lithosphere scenario is supported by petrologic models for melting in the XA region
487 (Guo et al., 2020). Chen et al (2015b) show the volcanic rocks from XA have lower Na/Ti ratios
488 than those from surrounding Cenozoic volcanic fields including Datong, indicating that XA
489 volcanism may be characterized by the deepest melting and thickest lithosphere.

490 The hypothesis of a thicker lithosphere beneath XA may be inconsistent with previous
491 seismic tomography studies (e.g., Tao et al., 2018). One possible explanation is that, as noted
492 above, the negative tail of attenuation (Fig. 8e) at the XA volcanoes reflects the edge of our
493 station coverage and may not be confirmed by future studies. However, observations of volcanic
494 regions with low-velocity anomalies and low attenuation are not unprecedented. Low
495 attenuation is observed beneath the volcanic provinces of Morocco and the Southeast Volcanic
496 Province of Spain (Bezada, 2017) and the Yellowstone hot spot (Lawrence et al., 2006; Adams and
497 Humphreys, 2010). Lawrence et al. (2006) and Adams and Humphreys (2010) proposed the
498 presence of partial melt and consequent dehydration of lithosphere may account for the positive
499 correlation of attenuation and velocity. However, the effects of water and partial melt on
500 attenuation are still debated, with some experiments arguing a strong dependence on water but
501 a weak dependence on melt (e.g., Karato, 2003; Shito et al., 2006), while others argue for a weak
502 effect of water (Cline et al., 2018) and significant effect of melt (e.g., Chantel et al., 2016) and
503 oxidation state (Cline et al., 2018). Given these uncertainties, we do not propose mechanism for
504 the positive correlation here. However, whatever the mechanism, the structure of melting

505 column beneath the XA volcanoes must be distinct from the other volcanoes in the region that
506 exhibit the expected anti-correlation between velocity and attenuation. Our results do
507 confidently show that regionally high temperatures or typical asthenosphere cannot be present
508 beneath the XA volcanoes.

509 Thus, some mechanism enabling melting at depths greater than the either thick lithosphere
510 or high-Qp asthenosphere beneath the XA volcanoes is likely required by the seismic
511 observations. Melting beneath XA likely involves fluids released from the stagnant Pacific slab in
512 the mantle transition zone (Chen et al., 2015b). A marked signal of a pyroxenite source and
513 elevated $^{206}\text{Pb}/^{204}\text{Pb}$ ratios indicate a contribution from the crust of the recently subducted
514 Pacific plate (Zhang and Guo, 2016). Alternatively, the retreating Pacific slab may drive melting by
515 expelling material from the wet mantle transition zone into the water-poor upper or lower
516 mantle (Yang and Faccenda, 2020). The XA is located in the south Xing'an-Mongolia Orogenic Belt,
517 which places the XA volcanoes within the region where Yang and Faccenda (2020) hypothesize
518 volcanism will occur through this mechanism, while the Datong, Middle Gobi, and Bus Obo sites
519 are too far to the west.

520 **5. Conclusion**

521 Observations of teleseismic P wave attenuation provide new constraints for the genesis of
522 volcanism beneath the Central Orogenic Belt and North China Craton. As expected, we found low
523 attenuation beneath the Ordos block and generally high attenuation beneath many of the
524 volcanic sites in the study area (e.g., the Middle Gobi volcano, the Bus Obo volcano and the
525 Datong volcano). Counter-intuitive low attenuation, however, is revealed beneath the

526 Xilinhot-Abaga volcanic site. Absolute Q_p values are estimated based on the relative attenuation
527 constraints and previously observed variations in lithospheric thickness. Our results do not
528 require unusual asthenosphere conditions for most of the volcanism in this portion of Eastern
529 Asia. We infer that these volcanoes could be sourced from ambient asthenosphere and occur
530 where the lithosphere is thin, though contribution from deeper sources of fluids are possible. In
531 contrast, at the Xilinhot-Abaga volcanic site, our results exclude a typical shallow melting column,
532 consistent with lithospheric thickness as the primary cause of variations in the composition of
533 erupted lavas across the study area.

534

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543 <http://dx.doi.org/10.17632/vthcnhdnsn.1>.

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810

811

812 **Figure caption**

813 **Fig. 1. Map of study area and station distribution.** Upper panel shows an overall view of Eastern
814 Asia with our study area indicated by the black rectangle. Bottom panel gives tectonic features of
815 the study area in detail, where the red triangles denote volcanoes, red stars are cities and thick
816 dark grey lines represent outline tectonic provinces. The dashed white lines delineate boundaries
817 among tectonic blocks labeled by white words. The yellow circles, squares and triangles are
818 seismic stations from the OD array, NM array and CM array respectively. Abbreviations of
819 tectono-magmatic features are: ALSB – Alashan Block, CAOB – Central Orogenic Belt, NCC – North
820 China Craton, DT – Datong, HG – Honggeertu, DG – Dariganga, MG – Middle Gobi, BO – Bus Obo.

821

822 **Fig. 2. Distribution of used events data received by three arrays respectively.** The black triangle,
823 square and circle represent locations of the CM array, NM array and OD array respectively. Circles
824 are events. Color denotes focal depth and size denotes magnitude.

825

826 **Fig. 3. Example of P phases used to construct a source estimate for one event recorded by the**
827 **NM array.** This event occurred in Tonga-Fiji subduction zone on 28 April 2015, with a magnitude
828 of Mb 6.1, epicentral distance of 89° and focal depth of 580 km. Black curves in (a) are vertical

829 velocity seismograms showing the first-arriving P phase. Thick lines are traces picked for the
830 estimated source-time function with their station names on the top right corner. In (b), blue,
831 brown and yellow curves are selected traces from (a), recorded at stations NM11, NM13 and
832 NM39 respectively. The dashed and solid red line denotes reference source trace within and
833 without the fitting window.

834

835 **Fig. 4. Example of waveform-matching and quality control for the event in Fig. 3.** a). Black lines
836 are observed seismograms, red lines are synthetic seismograms (cf. Fig. 3). b). The dashed and
837 solid red line in panel (b) denotes synthetic traces within and without the fitting window. The
838 result of station NM04 shown in panel (b) did not pass the quality control.

839

840 **Fig. 5. Input and output models of synthetic tests.** Figure (a1) and (b1) show the synthetic input
841 models linearly increasing with longitude and latitude, respectively. Figure (c1) represents the
842 synthetic input model with a fixed frame. Figure (a2), (b2), (c2) show the input Δt^* values which
843 are demeaned. Figure (a3), (b3) and (c3) are demeaned results of three synthetic tests,
844 respectively. Triangles, squares and circles are seismic stations, the same as shown in Fig. 1.

845

846 **Fig. 6. Preferred inversion for Δt^* .** a). Δt^* , marked by color, four high-attenuation anomalies
847 and two low-attenuation anomalies mentioned in the paper are labeled HA1, HA2, HA3, HA4 and
848 LA1, LA2 respectively, and identified by thick black lines. Thick grey lines denote the location of
849 six profiles shown in Fig. 7. b). Standard deviation of the Δt^* model in panel (a), is presented in
850 this panel. Seismic stations and volcanoes are shown in by black dots and purple triangles,
851 respectively.

852

853 **Fig. 7. Comparison of geophysical observations along six profiles.** Four panels of each profile are
854 surface elevation, relative attenuation, V_p and V_s perturbation from top to bottom respectively.
855 Velocity perturbation is extracted from the velocity model beneath Eastern Asia presented by Tao
856 et al. (2018). Locations of the six profiles are shown in Fig. 7. Abbreviations in topographic map
857 are: DT – Datong volcano, YYOB - Yinshan-Yanshan Orogenic Belt, XA – Xilinhote-Abaga volcanic
858 site, MG – Middle Gobi volcano, HM – Khentii Mountains, BO – Bus Obo volcano. HA1-4 and
859 LA1-2 are labeled high or low-attenuation anomalies discussed in the paper and explained in Fig.
860 6.

861

862 **Fig. 8. $\Delta V_p/V_p\%$ at different depths versus Δt^* values.** We sample $\Delta V_p/V_p\%$ values of
863 different regions at different depths ranging from 50-300 km from the velocity model of Tao et al.
864 (2018), and then plotted them versus our Δt^* results to show the relation between attenuation
865 and velocity. Points are sampled with a space interval of 50 km, which is bigger than the
866 resolution (40 km*40 km*40 km) of the velocity model of Tao et al. (2018). In all the panels, blue,
867 black, red, pink, and green squares denote samples from LA1, LA2, HA3, HA4, and HA1-2 (HA1 &
868 HA2) regions. The size of squares are scaled by the inverse of the uncertainty of Δt^* values.
869 Black lines represent linear regression results using samples from all the regions except for LA2,
870 with correlation coefficients and slopes shown as black words on the top right corner. Brown lines
871 represent linear regression results using samples from LA2, with correlation coefficients and
872 slopes shown as brown words on the top right corner. All the regressions are weighted by the
873 uncertainty of Δt^* results in this study.

874

875 **Fig. 9. Q_p estimates assuming two layers beneath different regions.** Panel (a): Range of Q_p
876 beneath HA1, HA2, HA3, HA4, and LA2 regions, assuming a lithosphere with a 200 km thickness
877 beneath LA1 as a reference, and 70 km thickness beneath the other regions. The grey part above
878 the black line denotes where asthenospheric Q_p is larger than lithospheric Q_p , which are
879 hypotheses considered unfeasible. Yellow dashed line represents the asthenospheric Q_p from
880 PREM (Dziewonski and Anderson, 1981), and the cyan dashed line represents the globally
881 average asthenosphere Q_p from Dalton et al. (2010). Green, red and black dashed lines denote
882 observed lower asthenospheric Q_p values from Abers et al. (2014), Byrnes et al. (2019) and Wei
883 and Wiens (2018). Values are calculated assuming a Q_p/Q_s ratio of 2.25 (Karato and Spetzler,
884 1990). Panel (b): Range of asthenospheric Q_p for different lithospheric thicknesses beneath HA4
885 region, assuming that lithospheric Q_p equals 600 and 1400, respectively. Panel (c): Range of
886 asthenospheric Q_p varying with lithospheric thickness beneath the LA2 region, assuming
887 lithospheric Q_p equals 1400.

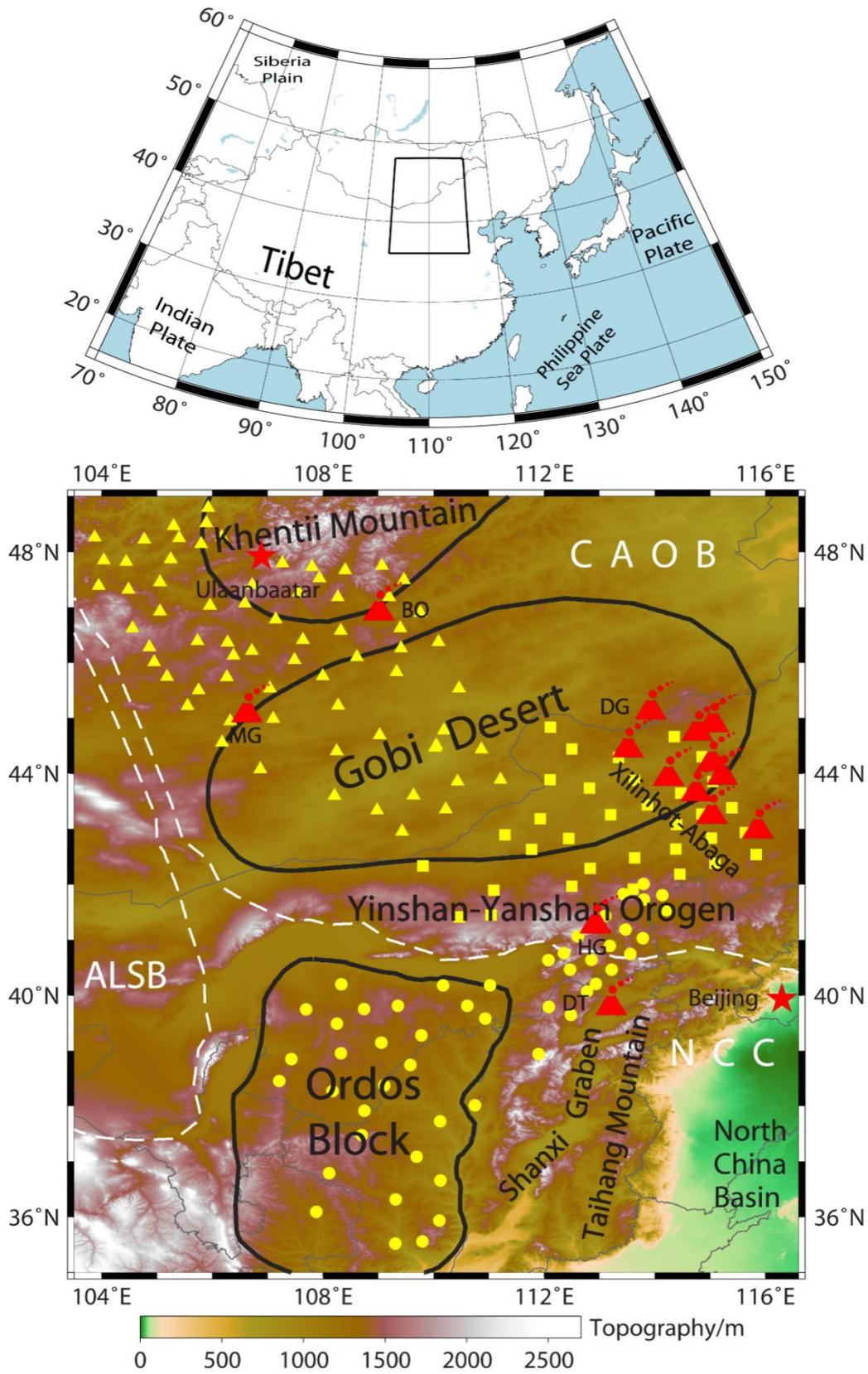
888

889 **Fig. 10. Cartoon illustrating the relationship between volcanism and lithospheric thickness.** In
890 the left panel, the black line delineates an "N"-shaped transect in the study area, and the pink
891 triangles are volcanoes. The volcanoes and abbreviations are the same as in Fig. 1. In the right
892 panel, a cartoon illustrating the main interpretation of this study is shown along the "N"-shaped
893 transect. Green dashed line denotes a mean LAB inferred from Guo et al. (2016b). Black thick line
894 is an inferred LAB from our results, and the black thin line is surface topography. Seafoam wavy
895 lines denote fluids or/and oceanic crust in the asthenosphere inferred from Zhang and Guo (2016)
896 and Yang and Faccenda (2019). Dark blue block denotes the ~200 km thick lithosphere beneath
897 the Orodos block inferred from Guo et al. (2016). Red thin arrows represent the path of ascent

898 for magma to the surface. Red thick arrow denotes the possibility of deep upwelling beneath the
899 Gobi Desert if the lithosphere is thicker beneath this region. Red triangles are volcanoes. The
900 abbreviations and volcanoes are the same as in Fig. 1.

901

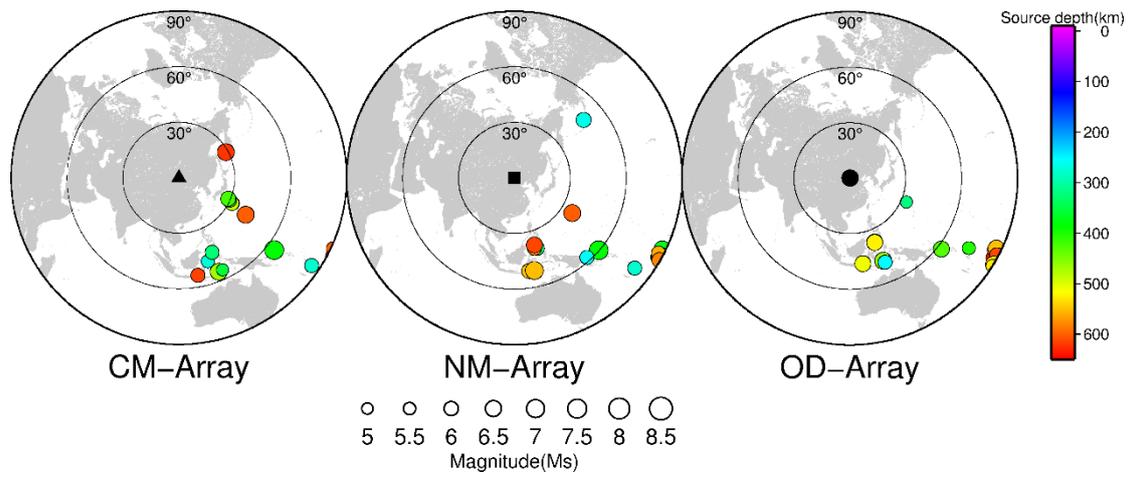
902 Fig 1.



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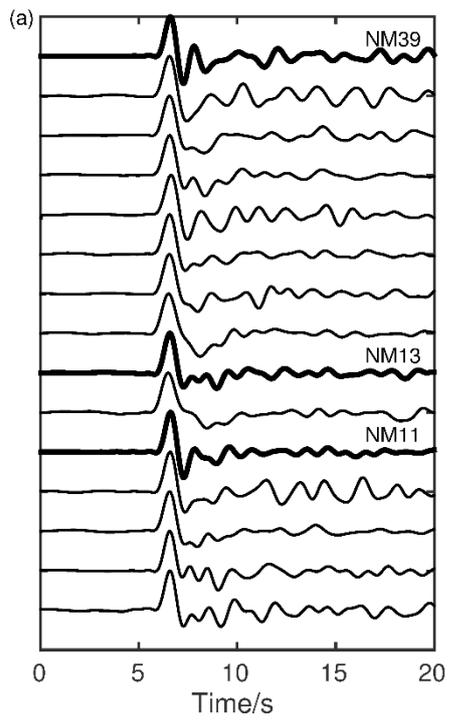
905 Fig 2.



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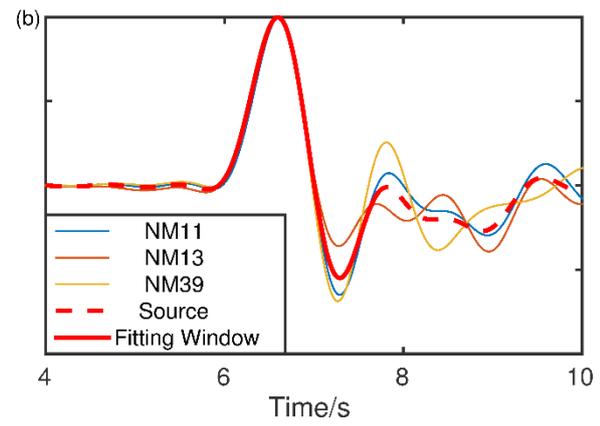
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908 Fig 3.

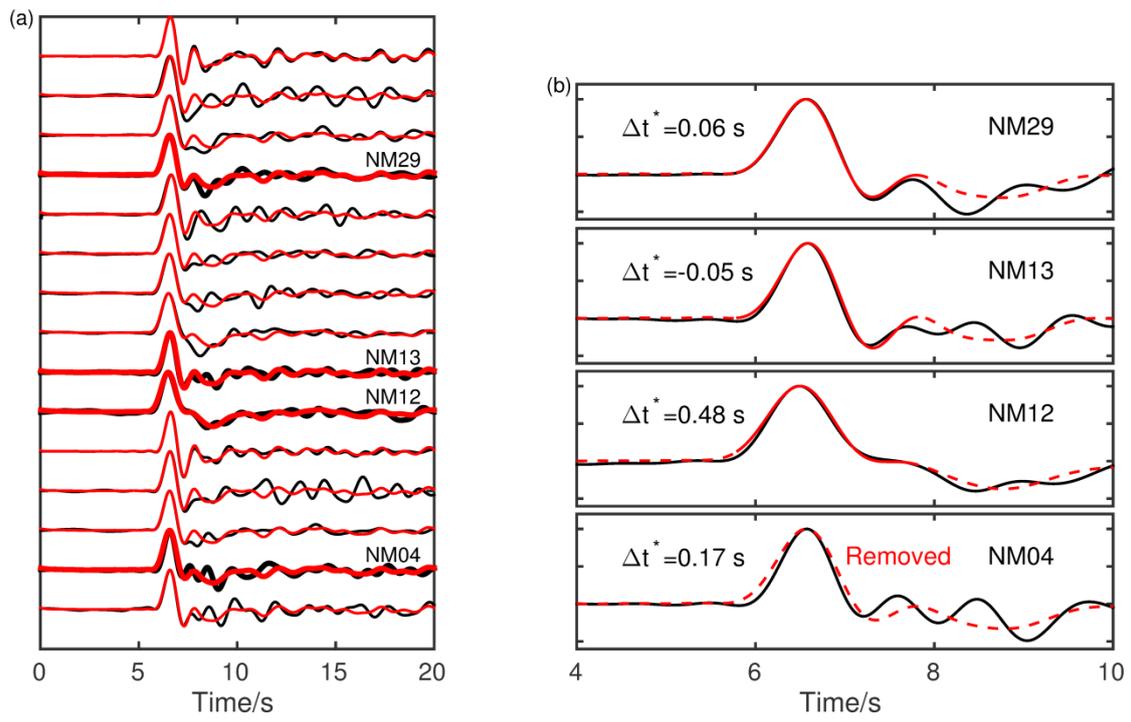


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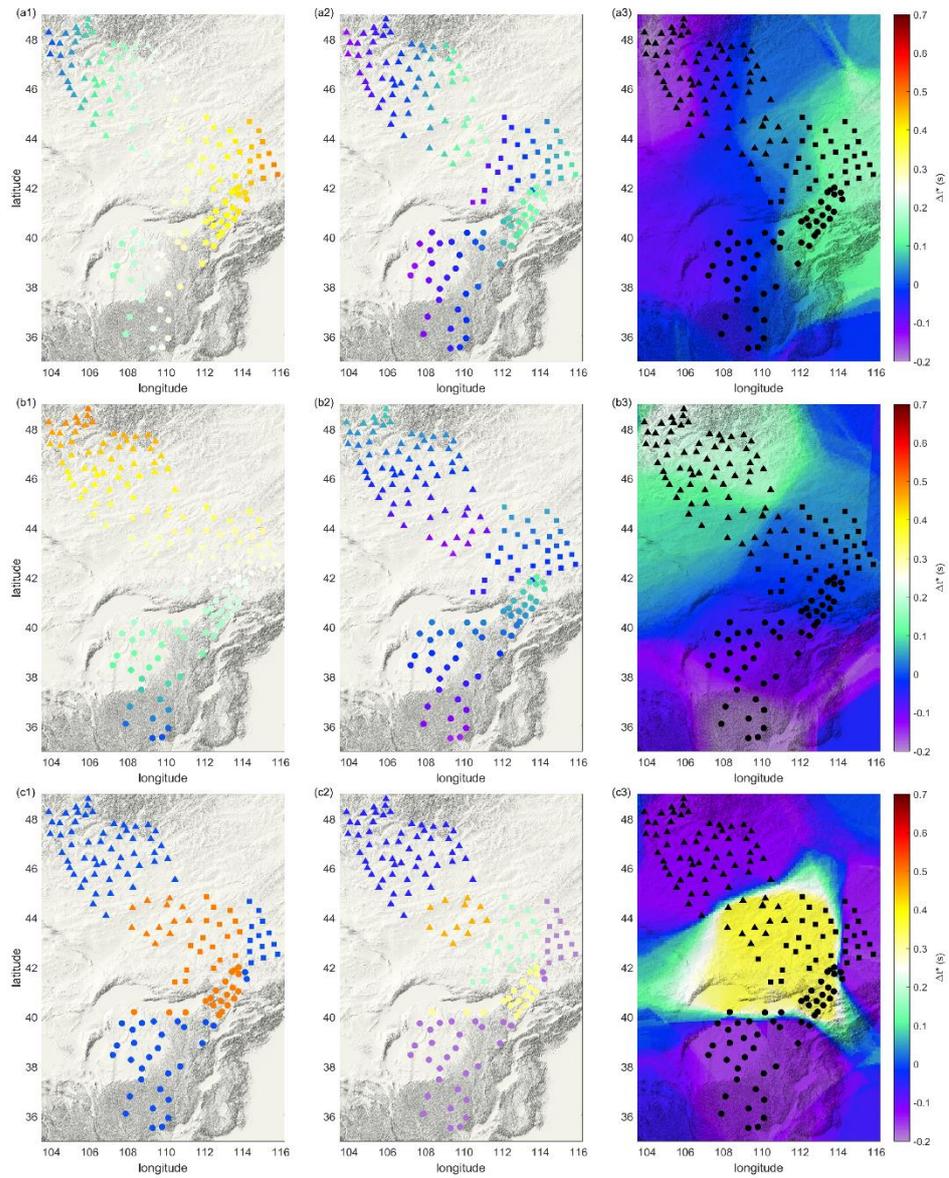
911 Fig 4.



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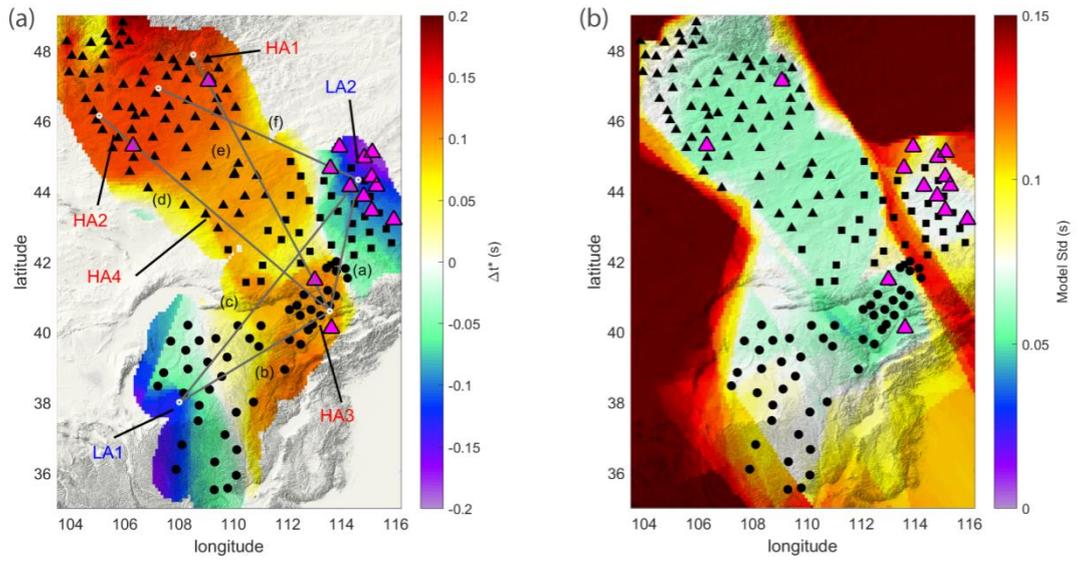
914 Fig 5.



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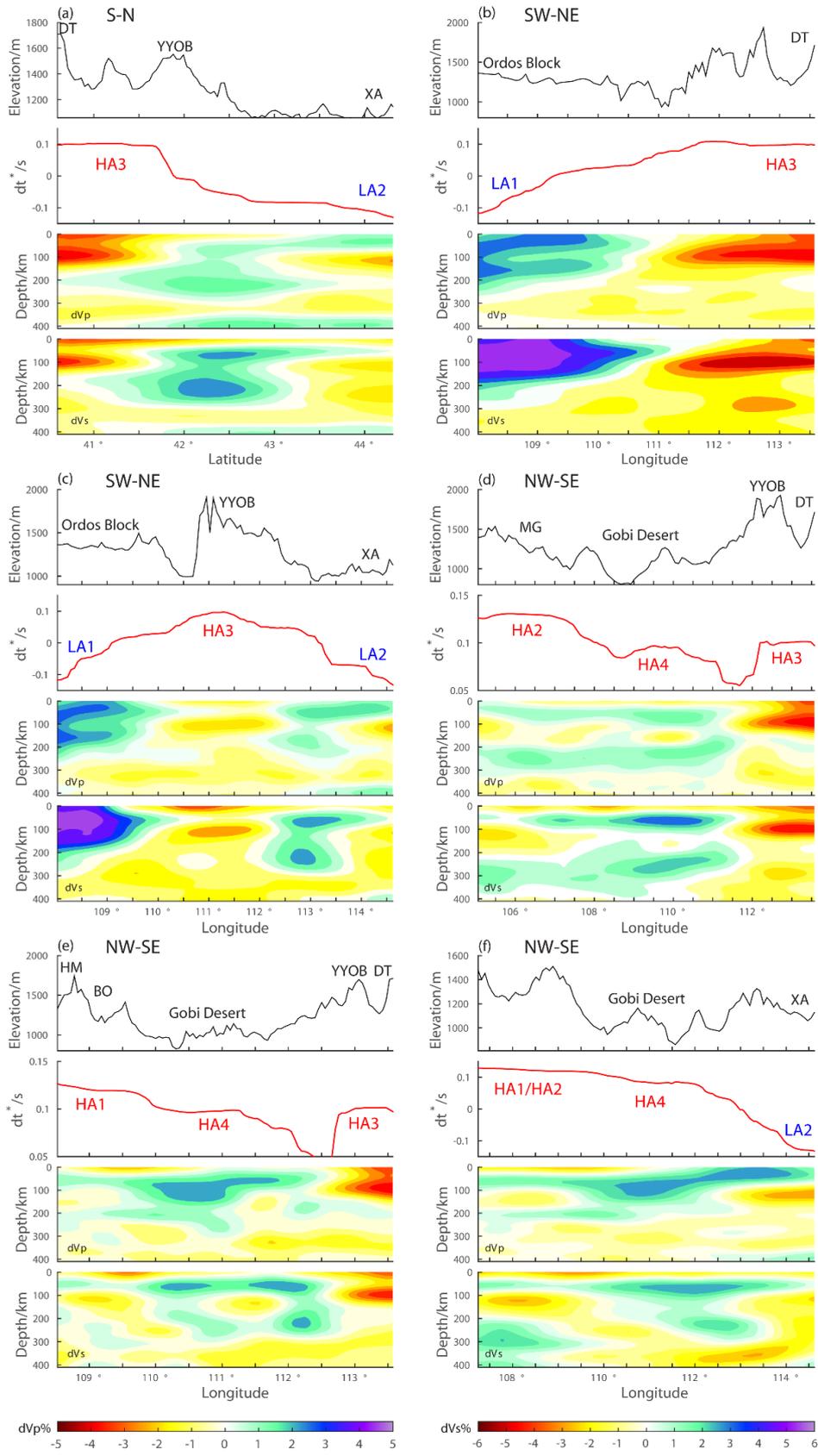
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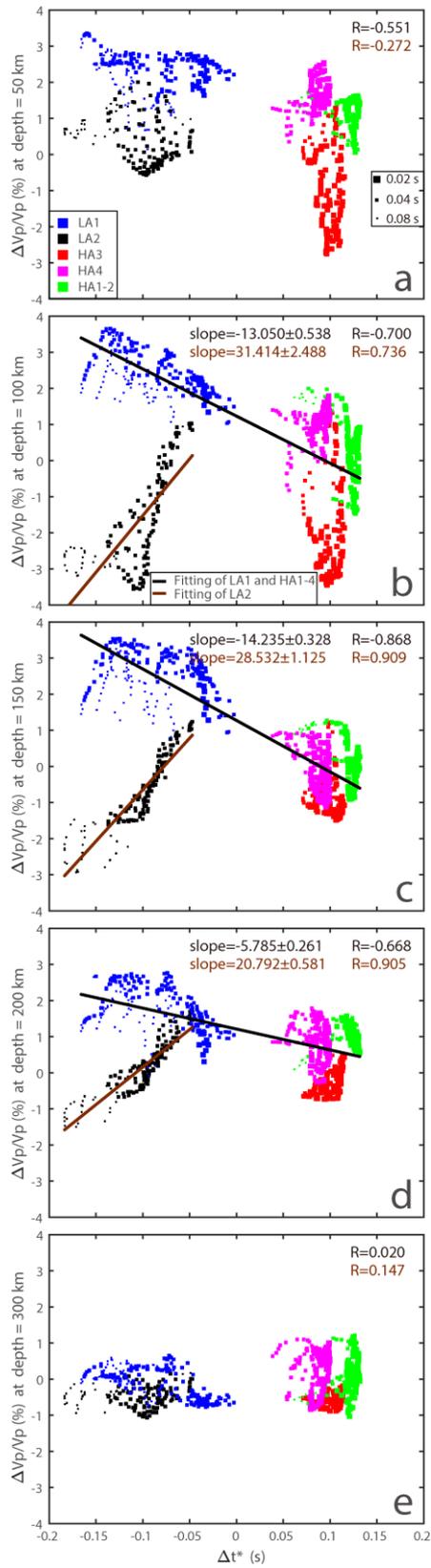
917 Fig 6.



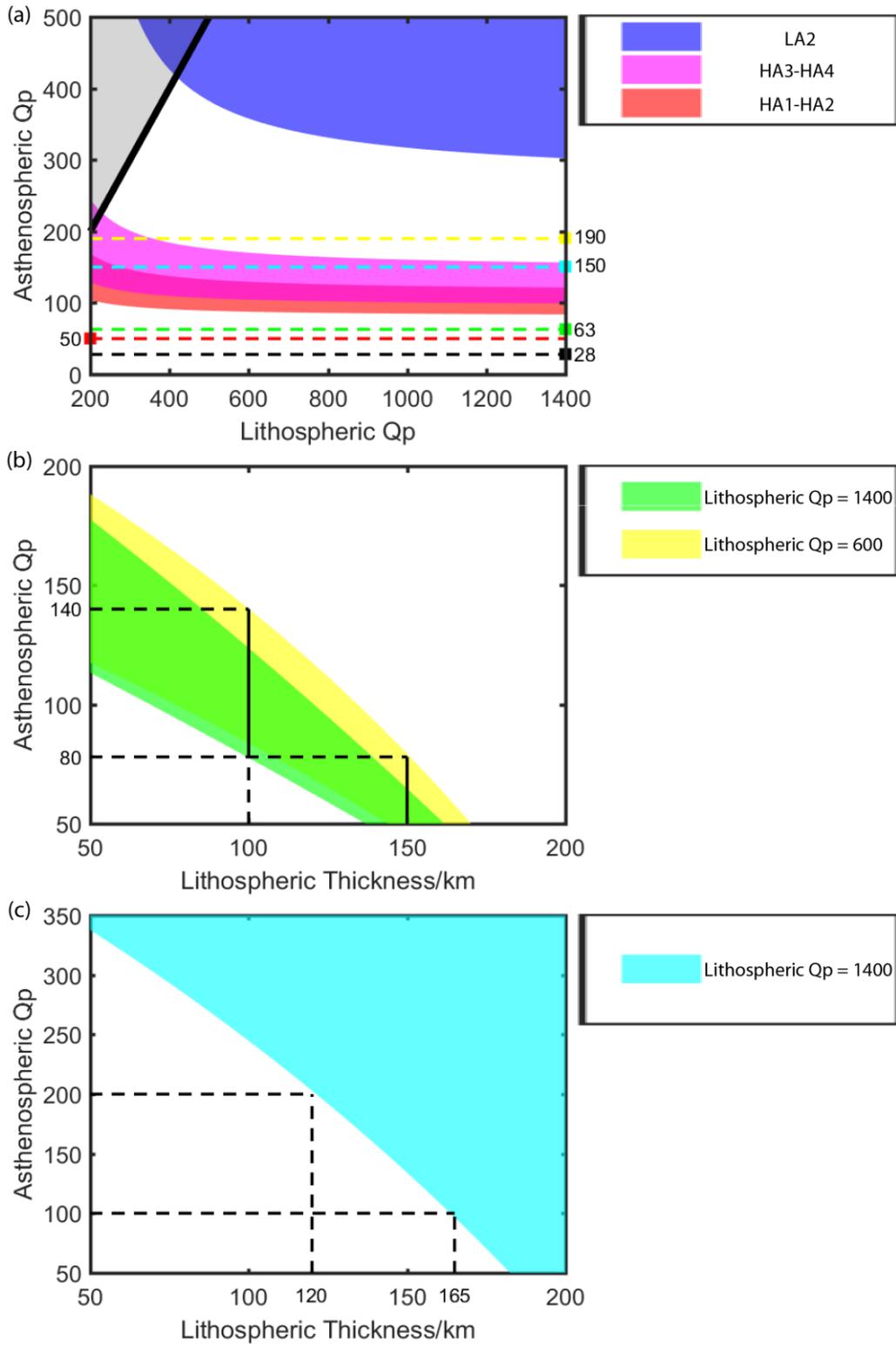
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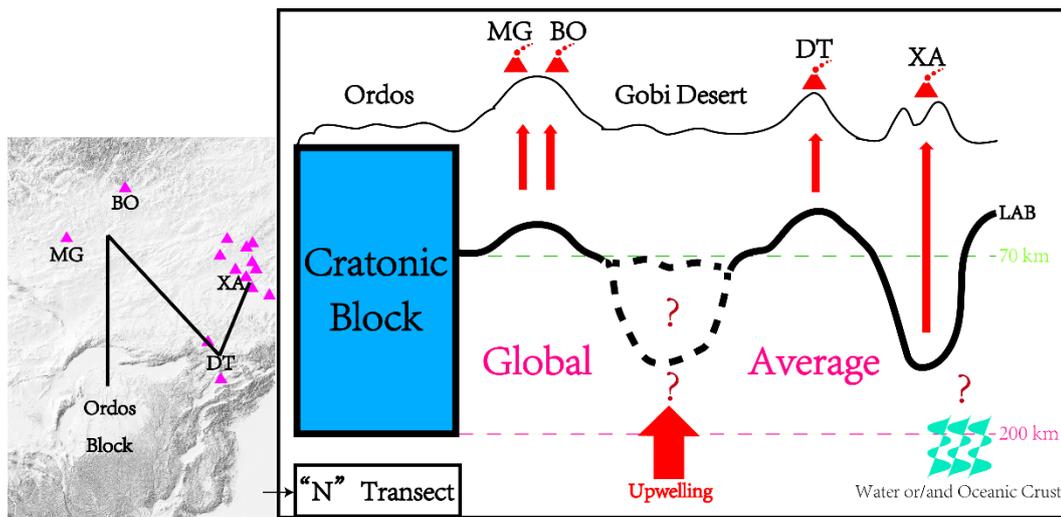
926 Fig 9.



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928

929 Fig 10.



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