

1 Driven magmatism and crustal thinning of coastal South 2 China in response to subduction

3 Jinbao Su^{1*}, Wenbin Zhu², Guangwei Li²

4 *1 College of Oceanography, Hohai University, Nanjing 210098, China*

5 *2 State Key Laboratory for Mineral Deposits Research, Nanjing University, Nanjing*
6 *210023, China*

7 Abstract

8 The late Mesozoic igneous rocks along the coastal South China Block (SCB) exhibit
9 complex parental sources involving a depleted mantle, subducted sediment-derived
10 melt, and melted crust. This period aligns with the magmatic flare-up and lull in the
11 SCB, debating with the compression or extension in coastal region. Our study employs
12 numerical models to investigate the dynamics of the ascent of underplating magma
13 along the Changle-Nan'ao Belt (CNB), simulating its intrusion and cooling processes
14 while disregarding the formational background. The rheological structure of the
15 lithospheric mantle significantly influences magma pathways, dictating the distribution
16 of magmatism. This work reveals that the ascent of magma in the presence of faults is
17 considerably faster than in the absence of faults, and contemporaneous magmatic melts
18 could produce different cooling and diagenetic processes. Additionally, the influence of
19 pre-existing magma accelerated underplating magma emplacement. **The magma**
20 **beneath the fault ascended rapidly, reaching the lower crust within 20 million years,**
21 **with a cooling rate of approximately $\sim 35^{\circ}\text{C}/\text{Myr}$. Conversely, the thickened magma**
22 **took 40-50 million years to ascend to the lower crust, cooling at a rate of $\sim 10^{\circ}\text{C}/\text{Myr}$.**
23 **In contrast, magma without thickening and fault would take considerably longer time**
24 **to reach the lower crust.** The ascent of magma formed a mush-like head, contributing
25 to magmatic circulation beneath the crust and decreasing crustal thickness. Multiphase
26 magmatism increases the geothermal gradient, reducing lithospheric viscosity and
27 promoting underplating magma ascent, leading to magmatic flare-ups and lulls. Our
28 findings suggest that the Cretaceous magmatism at different times in the coastal SCB
29 may be associated with the effects of lithospheric faults under similar subduction
30 conditions. Boundary compression forces delay magma ascent, while rising magma

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¹ * Corresponding authors. E-mail addresses: jin.su@163.com

31 induces a significant circulation, decreasing the crustal thickness of the coastal SCB.
32 This study provides new insights into the complex interplay of magmatic processes
33 during subduction, emphasizing the role of lithospheric structure in shaping the
34 temporal and spatial evolution of coastal magmatism.

35 **Keywords**

36 South China; Crustal thinning; Coastal orogeny; Magmatic dynamics; Three-phase
37 flow

38 **1 Introduction**

39 Magmatism characterized by periodic flare-ups and lulls at convergent plate margins
40 usually manifests a subduction-related origin (Brown, 1994). However, there is no
41 agreement regarding the relationships between magmatism and the roles of subducted
42 slabs and the corresponding subduction styles (Morris et al., 2000; Faccenna et al.,
43 2010). Instead, a contradictory and multifaceted dynamic process emerges due to the
44 complex magmatic composition and considerable time span (Zhou et al., 2006) (Yoo
45 and Lee, 2023). Notably, the absence of high-pressure blueschist, which is typically
46 associated with subduction, has generated intense debate surrounding the accurate
47 timing of initial subduction and variations in slab dip, with proposals ranging from flat-
48 slab subduction to shallow and steep subduction (Suo et al., 2019; Xu, 2023; Su, 2023).
49 Some researchers proposed a model involving early Permian flat-slab subduction and
50 Jurassic foundering model in the SCB; however, this model lacks substantial evidence
51 of early-stage subduction-related magma (Li and Li, 2007). While most research has
52 focused on Jurassic subduction, early Jurassic intraplate igneous rocks deviate from
53 typical subduction arc-related rocks and display inconsistencies in spatiotemporal
54 distribution during coastward migration (Zhou and Li, 2000; Xu et al., 2017; Li et al.,
55 2019). Researchers contend that the SCB did not immediately experience the influence
56 of the Paleo-Pacific Plate in the Early–Middle Jurassic but experienced intensified
57 activity in the Late Jurassic to Cretaceous (Gan et al., 2021). Gradual steepening of the
58 shallowly subducting slab since the Middle Jurassic is proposed to explain the
59 corresponding flare-up of magmatism in the SCB (Zhou et al., 2006; Mao et al., 2021).
60 In contrast, Xu et al. (2023) interpreted voluminous intraplate silicic magmatism as a
61 response to slab stagnation and coastward migration, overlooking contemporaneous
62 compressional deformation in the Late Jurassic and early–Middle Cretaceous. In
63 contrast to the coastward migration model, the early–middle Cretaceous is considered

64 a magmatic lull resulting from crustal shortening due to resubduction of the slab (Wei
65 et al., 2023). The uncertainty lies in whether subduction-induced magma can migrate
66 and intrude concurrently according to these different models. The Mesozoic tectonic
67 magmatism in the SCB was intricately linked not only to lithospheric properties but
68 also to subduction rates and mantle flow (Su, 2023). The transport of intrusive magma
69 spans a significant period, and the pathways of ascending magma play a crucial role in
70 determining the distribution of magmatism during the emplacement process.
71 Unfortunately, lag magma, which is potentially misunderstood as originating from other
72 sources, has received limited attention in current discussions.

73 The coastal South China Block (SCB) is characterized by the development of a 40-
74 60 km wide, NE–SW-striking ductile shear zone known as the Changle-Nan’ao Belt
75 (CNB) (Cui et al., 2013). This belt comprises gneiss exhibiting evidence of
76 metamorphism at greenschist, amphibolite, and granulite facies (Li et al., 2015).
77 Intrusions of gabbro, diorite, granodiorite, monzogranite, and two-mica granite plutons
78 are also prevalent within the CNB. The U–Pb age analysis of the oldest orthogneiss in
79 the CNB yields a date of 187 ± 1 Ma, with the youngest orthogneiss dating to 130 ± 1
80 Ma. Additionally, $^{40}\text{Ar}/^{39}\text{Ar}$ plateau ages fall within the range of 118–107 Ma (Wang
81 and Lu, 2000). The occurrence of voluminous igneous rocks spans two significant
82 periods, ranging from 143–130 Ma and 110–95 Ma. A debated magmatic lull observed
83 between 130 and 110 Ma is associated with syncollisional orogenesis (Chen et al., 2020;
84 Wei et al., 2023) or postorogenic extension (Cui et al., 2013; Li et al., 2014; Zhao et al.,
85 2015; Xu et al., 2023) according to the involved deformation and magmatic rocks.
86 Despite these insights, the relationship between intruded magma and orogenesis
87 remains uncertain, mirroring the ambiguous understanding of potential variations in
88 magma migration time in response to tectonic stress. In addressing this uncertainty, our
89 exploration focuses on understanding the emplacement and cooling processes of mantle
90 magmatism and their influence on crustal structure. Additionally, we delve into the
91 question of whether changes in the dynamic background instantaneously produce
92 magmas with different properties that can effectively intrude shallow layers.

93 **2 Emplacement and origin of Cretaceous magma**

94 Cretaceous magmatic rocks cover an area of approximately 117,190 km² on the
95 southeastern coast and in the Lower Yangtze region of the SCB (Fig. 1)(Liu et al., 2020).
96 The crustal Poisson’s ratios range from 0.22–0.26 in the interior to 0.26–0.29 in the

97 eastern coastal region (Guo et al., 2019), implying a high content of felsic minerals and
98 an increasing proportion of mafic minerals from the interior to the coast (Ji et al., 2002).
99 Seismic profiles reveal transparent reflective features of felsic rocks in the upper crust
100 and abundant high-amplitude, short isolated reflections of mafic sills in the middle-
101 lower crust (Li et al., 2023). The velocity ratio of P waves to S waves (V_p/V_s) on the
102 coast is 1.76, which is slightly greater than that in the interior SCB but lower than the
103 value of 1.79 for mafic underplating of the lower crust (Deng et al., 2019). The coastal
104 V_p values of the lower crust (~6.5 km/s) are not compatible with the mafic composition
105 ($V_p > 7.0$ km/s), implying that mafic magma underplating was not common or was
106 removed (Guo et al., 2019). However, high-resistivity anomalies in electrical resistivity
107 profiles indicate local mafic magma underplating (Cheng et al., 2021).

108 The coastal granitic gneisses exhibit varying cooling rates during different periods.
109 These rates were ~35°C/Myr at 130–120 Ma, 13–20°C/Myr at 126–110 Ma, ~10°C/Myr
110 at 110–100 Ma, and ~80°C/Myr at 100–90 Ma (Chen et al., 2002, 2020). The structural
111 pattern of the CNB shows solid-state ductile deformation with temperatures of 300-
112 350°C in the mylonitic gneiss and deformed volcanic rocks. Syntectonic granitoids
113 exhibit subsolidus magmatic flow (Wang and Lu, 2000; Wei et al., 2015). The
114 temperature and pressure of metamorphic minerals are 540–610°C and 0.28–0.35 GPa,
115 respectively, on the basis of plagioclase-amphibolite, and 485–640°C and 0.3 GPa,
116 respectively, based on a mica-quartz schist (Wang and Lu, 2000). The Cretaceous
117 magmatic rocks in the SCB belong to the I-and A-type series, with high-K calc-alkaline
118 to shoshonitic affinities and arc-like features. They are enriched in light rare earth
119 elements (LREEs) and large ion lithophile elements (LILEs) but depleted in heavy rare
120 earth elements (HREEs) and high field strength elements (HFSEs). They exhibit
121 negative $\epsilon_{Nd}(t)$ values ranging from –10.1 to –0.3, and variable zircon $\epsilon_{Hf}(t)$ values
122 ranging from –29.7 to +10.3. The mafic rocks have $\epsilon_{Nd}(t)$ values ranging from –14.27
123 to +8.0, and $\epsilon_{Hf}(t)$ values ranging from –9.5 to +1.9 (Chen et al., 2020). Isotopic data
124 indicate mixed sources, including ancient crust-derived, enriched mantle-derived and
125 depleted mantle-derived material. Some mafic rocks possibly originated from the
126 melting of the mantle wedge metasomatized by melts from the subducted slab and
127 sediments.

128 The mixed magmatic source indicates that partial melting was independent of the
129 type of subduction transport across the lithosphere. Subduction-induced melts migrate

130 upwards, and their pathways change depending on the stress conditions, resulting in
131 different time–temperature histories for emplacement and deformation of gneissic
132 magma.

133 3 Numerical simulation and model setup

134 The late Mesozoic magmatism in the SCB was triggered by the subduction of the Paleo-
135 Pacific plate (Su, 2023). A substantial volume of magma, originating from the subducted
136 slab, asthenosphere, and the lithospheric base, ascended towards the surface and
137 accumulated at the lower boundary of the lithosphere (Figs. 1 and 2a). To unravel the
138 dynamics of coastal magmatism in response to subduction geometry, two end-member
139 numerical models are considered. Our simulation focuses solely on modelling the
140 intrusion and ascent of magma that has accumulated at the bottom of the lithosphere,
141 without delving into the origins of magma from deeper sources (Fig. 2b). The models are
142 two-dimensional domains, with 400 km wide and 100 km deep, representing a trench-
143 perpendicular cross-section of a subduction zone, with the trench located to the right of
144 the model (Deng et al., 2019). The underplating magma is represented by a 4–8 km thick
145 body located at 100–80 km depth along the bottom of the model. The 8 km-thick magma
146 represents the accumulation of underplating magma due to subduction. A 10 km thick
147 square domain is assigned at 40 km depth, representing previously intruded magma in
148 the lithospheric mantle. The upper 30 km deep rectangle is continental crust. The
149 polygon located between the underplating magma and crust is the mantle lithosphere.
150 A 45 km wide rectangular domain is assigned at the left of the model representing a
151 lithospheric fault (Cui et al., 2013).

152 3.1 Governing equations

153 The materials of the domain are regarded as incompressible viscous fluids according
154 to the Boussinesq approximation. The models satisfy the following mass, momentum,
155 and energy conservation equations:

$$156 \quad \nabla \cdot \mathbf{u} = 0 \quad (1)$$

$$157 \quad \nabla \cdot [\eta \cdot (\nabla \mathbf{u} + (\nabla \mathbf{u})^T)] - \nabla P + \rho \mathbf{g} = 0 \quad (2)$$

$$158 \quad \rho C_p \cdot \left(\frac{\partial T}{\partial t} + \mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla T \right) = \nabla (k \nabla T) - \alpha \rho v_z T \quad (3)$$

159 where \mathbf{u} is the velocity field, η is the viscosity, T is the temperature, P is the
160 pressure, ρ is the density, \mathbf{g} is gravity, C_p is the specific heat, t is the time, k is the
161 thermal conductivity, α is the thermal expansion coefficient and v_z is the vertical
162 velocity component (Rodríguez-González et al., 2012). The heat capacity is set to 1000

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164 J/(kg·K), the ratio of specific heat (γ) is set to 1 and the thermal conductivity is
165 set at 2.5 W/(m·K) in all domains of the models (Chapman, 2021). The density of the
166 continental crust varies linearly with depth, increasing from 2600 kg/m³ at the surface
167 to 2900 kg/m³ at 30 km depth. The mantle lithosphere has a fixed density of 3400 kg/m³,
168 whereas the molten magma is modelled with a fixed density of 2800 kg/m³ (Chapman,
169 2021; Su, 2023).

170 The crustal material has a power-law stress-strain rate relationship (Chapman, 2021).
171 η is the dynamic viscosity and its expression is:

$$172 \quad \eta = \left(\frac{d^p}{A \cdot f_{H_2O}} \right)^{\frac{1}{n}} \cdot \varepsilon_{II}^{\frac{1-n}{n}} \cdot \exp \left(\frac{E + P_{lit} \cdot V}{n \cdot R \cdot T} \right) \quad (4)$$

173 where A is the pre-exponential factor; E and V are the activation energy and volume,
174 respectively; P_{lit} is the lithostatic pressure; R is the gas constant; and n is the stress
175 exponent. The dynamic viscosity was calculated via the wet quartz flow law of Hirth
176 et al. (2001). The viscosity was calculated at each time step using the temperatures
177 returned from the model, a quartz material parameter (A) of 1.36742x10⁻⁵ MPa⁻ⁿ/s
178 with a stress exponent (n) of 4, a quartz activation energy (E) of 135 kJ/mol, a water
179 fugacity (f_{H_2O}) of 1,000 MPa, and a strain rate of 10⁻¹⁵ s⁻¹ (Chapman, 2021). The strain
180 applied in the modelling takes a 2D approximation and is based on slab subduction
181 studies (Liu and Currie, 2019). The viscosity was updated after each time step based
182 on the temperature. The mantle lithosphere and the molten magma are modelled with
183 constant dynamic viscosities of 1e21 Pa·s and 1e20 Pa·s, respectively. The heat
184 capacity is set to 1000 J/(kg·K), the ratio of specific heat (γ) is set to 1 and the
185 thermal conductivity is set at 2.5 W/(m·K) in all domains of models (Chapman,
186 2021). The model fault was assigned a low viscosity of 1e19 Pa·s to represent the
187 CNB (Vissers et al., 1995; Columbu et al., 2015).

188 The models are run using the three-phase flow, phase field interface option, which
189 accounts for the surface tension between immiscible phases, the contact angles with
190 the walls, and the density and viscosity of each fluid. The three-phase flow model
191 obeys the Cahn-Hilliard equation (Boyer et al., 2010). The fluid motion causes the phase
192 field variable to change from phase to phase, but the sum of all phase field variables ϕ_i
193 at each point in the space is 1. Its expression consists of the order parameter of each phase
194 as in equation

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$$\begin{cases} \phi_i = \phi_i \\ \phi_a + \phi_b + \phi_c = 1 \end{cases} \quad (5)$$

196 The three phases are continental crust ϕ_a , mantle lithosphere ϕ_b and magma ϕ_c . Three-
197 phase flow is automatically computed via a phase initialization study step by solving for
198 the geometrical distance to the initial interface. The initialized three-phase flow function
199 is then defined from the analytical steady state solution for a straight fluid-fluid interface.

200 3.2 Model setup

201 The resolution of the model is physically controlled but generally represented by a
202 triangular mesh, with side lengths of 2-5 km, a minimum area of 1.8 km² and a
203 maximum area of 3.2 km². The top and sides of the model are no-slip boundaries and
204 are fixed, whereas the bottom of the model is a free-slip boundary in Model 1. The
205 sides of the model are thermally insulated and the top and bottom are held at constant
206 temperatures of 0°C and 950°C, respectively. The initial temperature of the
207 underplating magma is 1250°C. The geothermal gradient was assumed to be 3°C/100
208 m (Fig. 2b).

209 In Model 1, magma underplating at varying depths and a lithospheric fault are
210 included to simulate the ascent of magma originating from subduction. In contrast,
211 Model 2 has similar boundary conditions and is assigned a 2e9 Pa horizontal force on
212 the right side, representing the compression effect induced by subduction. Model 2
213 includes a boundary force to simulate magmatism influenced by compression during
214 subduction. The numerical experiments were conducted utilizing the finite-element
215 software COMSOL Multiphysics, which is accessible at <https://www.comsol.com>. The
216 lithospheric thickness was estimated based on the current thickness derived from P-
217 wave velocity measurements (Deng et al., 2019). The density and viscosity of magma
218 were coupled to the thermal model and allowed to vary according to the wet quartz flow
219 law (Chapman, 2021).

220 4 Underplating magma and circulation

221 The modeling results elucidated the temporal evolution and migration pathway of
222 magmatism originating from the subsurface. In Model 1 (Fig. 3a-e), underplating
223 magma accumulates at the lithospheric fault and locations of initial thickened magma
224 along the bottom. In Model 1, after 10 Myr, the bottom magma was divided into five
225 upwelling magma bodies: 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6. Magma body 1 corresponds to the fault
226 location, bodies 1, 2 and 5 correspond to pre-existing thickened magma bodies, body 4

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227 corresponds to relatively shallow pre-existing magma, and body 3 is located below
228 body 4. At this stage, bodies 1, 2, and 5 are uplifted higher than bodies 3 and 6. As
229 evolution progresses, body 3 reaches the position of body 4 and rapidly achieves heights
230 comparable to those of bodies 2 and 5 (Fig. 3e), whereas body 6 is significantly less
231 uplifted. In Model 2, under compressive stress, four rising magma bodies formed at the
232 bottom. No rising magma bodies formed at the bottom right. The formed magma bodies
233 tilted and ascended to the left (Figs. 3f-j).

234 The magma rises upwards, generating mush-like features in the mantle, and grows
235 laterally beneath the location of initial thickened and shallowly assigned magma (Fig.
236 3). The ascent of magma follows an up-and-down circulation pattern, driving lower
237 crustal thickening and subsidence in front of the growing magma mush. The
238 underplating magma ascends rapidly from the bottom to the lower crust, crossing a
239 distance of approximately 70-80 km within 20 Myr through the lithospheric fault (Fig.
240 3), whereas, without a fault, the magma ascends a distance of only 50-60 km. In Model
241 2 (Fig. 3f-j), under the influence of compression from the right boundary, the diapiric
242 magma slightly migrates to the left, causing thinning of the crust to the right.

243 The migration of magma and its temporal pattern are significantly influenced by
244 lithospheric viscosity and temperature (Chapman, 2021). In our models, we specifically
245 examine the effects of pre-existing magma and a lithospheric fault. The models provide
246 cooling histories for five diapiric underplating magmas, which are then compared with
247 observed coastal magmatism (Fig. 4a). The results indicate a more rapid cooling rate
248 for the ascending magma through the fault ($\sim 35^{\circ}\text{C}/\text{Myr}$) and a slower cooling rate for
249 underplating magma ($\sim 10^{\circ}\text{C}/\text{Myr}$) (Fig. 4a) without pre-existing melted magma. The
250 cooling history of other magmas is inconsistent with that of actual igneous rocks,
251 emphasizing the influence of faults in this region. Moreover, the ascent of magma to
252 the location of pre-existing magma is also faster than that without pre-existing magma
253 (e.g., magma 3 and magma 6 in Fig. 3a-e).

254 5 Discussion

255 The $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t)$ values of the late Mesozoic igneous rocks along the coastal South China
256 Block (SCB) tend to increase, peaking at positive values during 110-130 Ma (Fig. 4b).
257 These values suggest that these rocks were derived from depleted mantle, subducted
258 sediment-derived melt, and melting crust (Zhao et al., 2015). This period corresponds
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267 to the magmatic lull in the SCB, which coincided with a compression phase in the CNB
268 during 130-105 Ma (Wei et al., 2023). Previous researchers attributed this phase to a
269 transitional stage in subduction involving slab foundering, break-off, or steepening (Xu
270 et al., 2023). Intriguingly, they demonstrate the potential for producing underplating
271 magma beneath the lithospheric mantle, resulting in different compositions rising into
272 the crust. Therefore, our models adopt underplating magma to simulate upwards
273 magmatic intrusion and cooling processes, irrespective of the formational background.
274 The rheological structure inevitably influences the pathway of underplating magma as
275 it traverses the thick lithospheric mantle, ultimately dictating the distribution of
276 widespread magmatism (Fig. 3). High viscosities in the lithospheric mantle may limit
277 magma transport, with the effective viscosity of the upper mantle estimated at
278 approximately $1e20-1e22$ Pa·s in continental China (Shi and Cao, 2008), which
279 decreases with increasing temperature. Considering the widespread magmatism and
280 geothermal activity in the coastal SCB during the Cretaceous, an effective viscosity of
281 $1e21$ Pa·s for the lithospheric mantle is plausible.

282 It was suggested that once the shear zone network went through, the shear strength
283 of the lithospheric mantle drastically decreased (Vissers et al., 1995). The CNB
284 indicates long-term tectonic shearing activity, which would result in a lower viscosity
285 than that in the interior of the SCB. Therefore, we assigned a low viscosity of $1e19$ Pa·s
286 to represent the active fault in the model. If the fault only changes in viscosity and the
287 bottom magma is not thickened, then the magma at the bottom will not upflow. Shear
288 zones control the ascent and emplacement of magmas (Weinberg et al., 2004). This
289 implies that the shear zone should be a pathway for thermal fluid and have higher
290 thermal expansivity (Afonso et al., 2005). Therefore, the weak CNB compared with
291 that of the interior SCB facilitated the emplacement of mantle magma during the
292 magmatic lull.

293 The rise of underplating magma into the middle crust, with an ascent of 70-80 km,
294 takes 20-25 Myr through a lower-viscosity lithospheric fault, while it takes more than
295 40-50 Myr without a fault. This time discrepancy aligns with the magmatic lull in the
296 coastal SCB. Thus, magmatism with different ages in the Cretaceous coastal SCB
297 potentially formed through the exploitation of distinct ascent pathways under the same
298 subduction conditions, rather than contemporaneously varying with steepening
299 subduction geometry. Partially molten magma can persist for at least 25 Myr at

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303 temperatures exceeding 700°C (Cavalcante et al., 2018), contributing to the
304 heterogeneous and mixed magmatism observed in the coastal SCB.

305 The ascent of magma generates a mush-like head, accommodating the rheological
306 structure of the lithospheric mantle and leading to magmatic circulation. These magmas
307 underplate beneath the crust, decreasing the crustal thickness at the head and causing
308 crustal subsidence on both sides. Importantly, pre-existing magma can accelerate the
309 emplacement of underplating magma (Fig. 3). The underplating magma beneath the
310 lithospheric mantle ascends rapidly when pre-existing magma is present. It is possible
311 that multiphase magmatism increases the geothermal gradient in the SCB, reducing
312 lithospheric viscosity and further promoting the ascent of underplating magma and the
313 occurrence of a subsequent magmatic flare-up. In addition, the ascent pathways of
314 magma change under the influence of a boundary force, resulting in increased transport
315 time and delayed magmatic emplacement into the crust (Fig. 4c). Continued
316 compression also contributes to the uplift of the lithospheric mantle, which is associated
317 with the removal of crust, thereby decreasing the crustal thickness (Fig. 4c). This
318 provides a new perspective on the crustal thinning of the coastal regions during
319 subduction.

320 The deep structure of the late Mesozoic SCB is poorly constrained, resulting in
321 speculative assumptions about key parameters such as fault depth and magma thickness.

322 The model might oversimplify the complex geological features, potentially leading to
323 inaccurate results. Additionally, assuming a uniform crustal thickness may not capture the
324 true variability of the crust. The geometry of the lithospheric faults in the model is
325 simplified, and important details that could affect magmatic processes are neglected.

326 Variations in interpretations of fault characteristics and magma properties contribute to
327 the idealized nature of our model results, which may differ significantly from actual
328 geological conditions. This study aims to use these idealized scenarios to illustrate the
329 complexity and diverse interpretations of magma evolution processes along the South
330 China coast. Moreover, given the model's two-dimensional nature, it simplifies the
331 intricate three-dimensional processes that likely influence magmatic evolution. Future
332 research will focus on addressing these complexities to provide a more comprehensive
333 understanding.

334 **6 Conclusions**

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337 The model results describe the pathways and time spans of underplating magma
338 rising into the crust under the influence of a lithospheric fault, pre-existing magma, and
339 boundary stress. Magmatic flare-ups or lulls are not controlled solely by the slab
340 subduction conditions. The Cretaceous magmatism along the coastal SCB could have
341 occurred under the same subduction conditions, with the CNB facilitating the upwelling
342 and intrusion of underplating magma under various regional stresses. A boundary force
343 delays the ascent of underplating magma, whereas rising magma induces a significant
344 circulation, which decreases the crustal thickness of the coastal SCB.

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351 **Competing interests**

352 The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication
353 of this article.

354 **Data availability**

355 The data used in this study are available in the references and Supplementary
356 Material. The finite-element software COMSOL Multiphysics is accessible at
357 <https://www.comsol.com>.

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504 **Figure captions**

505 Fig. 1 (A) Regional geological map of Southeast China showing distribution of
506 Mesozoic magma; (B) geological magmatism of the Changle-Nan'ao Belt and
507 corresponding ages (refer to Wei et al. 2023).

508
509 Fig. 2 (A) Schematic cross section illustrating the subduction of the Paleo-Pacific plate.
510 (B) Reference model geometry depicting temperature, density and viscosity variations
511 with depth (see location in Fig. 1). The boundary conditions are the same between
512 Model 1 and Model 2, except that Model 2 is assigned a horizontal force on the right
513 side.

514
515 Fig. 3 Results of Models 1 and 2, illustrating magma upwelling for 10-50 myr,
516 respectively. (a)-(e): Underplating magma rising, forming five magma bodies of
517 varying heights in Model 1; (f)-(j): Underplating magma tilting under right-sided
518 compression in Model 2. The crust, mantle and magma materials are modelled as phases
519 (fluids) on a dimensionless scale, with values of 0, 0.5 and 1, respectively. The contours
520 denote the flow distribution of mantle fluid.

521
522 Fig. 4 (a) Comparison of the observed cooling histories of the CNB magmatic plutons
523 (data from Chen et al. 2020) with time-temperature paths generated by models of rising
524 magma; the green shadow represents the actual cooling age of the CNB magmatic
525 plutons. (b) Zircon Hf isotopes and ages of coastal magmatic rocks in the SCB (data
526 from Li et al., 2023). (c) Sketch illustrating the formation stage of the underplating
527 magma and tectonic background during 80-110 Ma, 110-130 Ma and 130-160 Ma. The
528 olive shadow crossing sections (a) and (b) denote the age range of 110-130 Ma.

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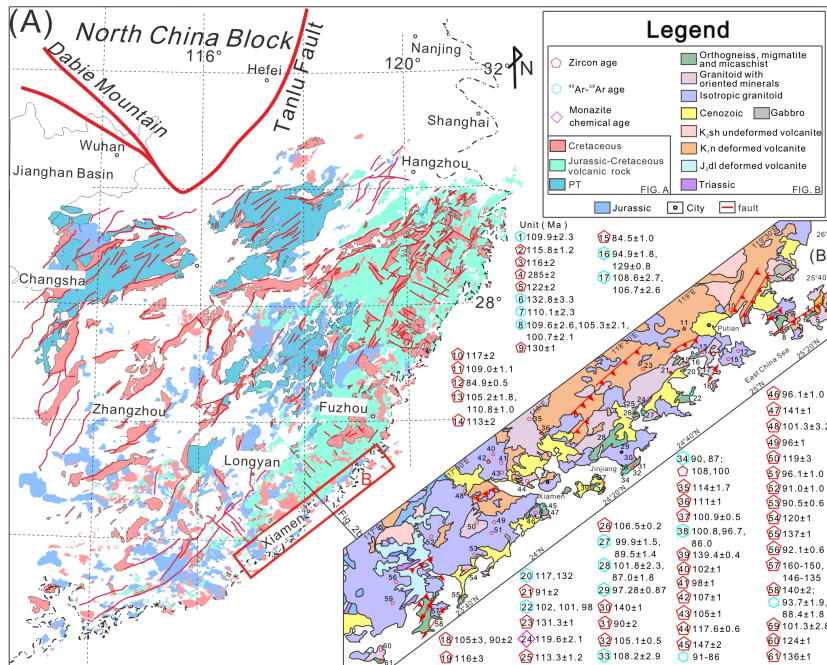


Fig 1

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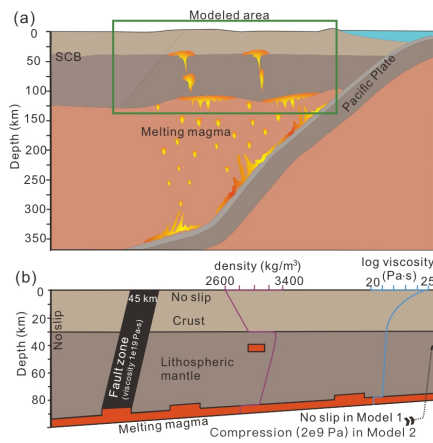
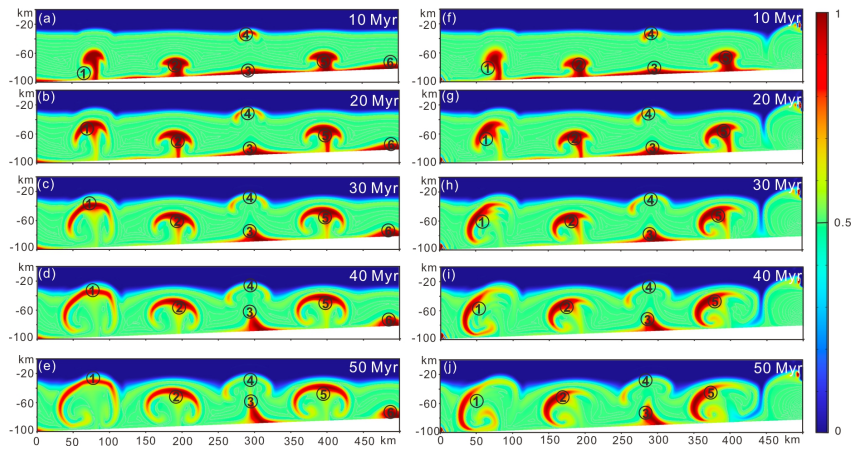


Fig. 2

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Fig. 3

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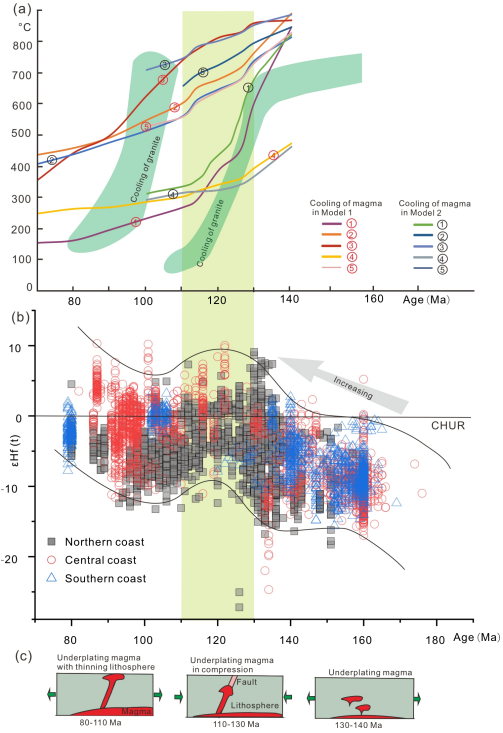


Fig. 4

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