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## Tectonic erosion and crustal relamination during the India-Asian continental collision: Insights from Eocene magmatism in the southeastern Gangdese belt

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1 **Tectonic erosion and crustal relamination during the India-Asian continental**  
2 **collision: insights from Eocene magmatism in the southeastern Gangdese belt**

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## 11 **Abstract**

12       Understanding the processes of tectonic erosion and crustal relamination during  
13 continental collision has important implications for the growth and differentiation of the  
14 continental crust. The discrepancy in isotopic compositions between the pre- and syn-collision  
15 magmatic rocks from the Gangdese belt in south Tibet provides an opportunity for studying  
16 these processes during the India-Asian collision. The Nyingchi granites and Confluence  
17 hornblende gabbros from the eastern Gangdese belt have zircon U–Pb ages of ca. 50 Ma. The  
18 Nyingchi granites have high Sr/Y and  $(Dy/Yb)_N$  ratios, indicating that the magma was generated  
19 under eclogite-facies conditions. Their Sr–Nd–Pb–Hf isotopic compositions require significant  
20 incorporation of ancient supracrustal materials from the Gangdese belt and the Indian continent.  
21 The Confluence hornblende gabbros display arc-like trace element patterns but have enriched  
22 Sr–Nd–Pb–Hf isotopic compositions compared with those from the Jurassic–Cretaceous arc  
23 magmatic rocks, indicating significant input of ancient components into their mantle sources.  
24 The occurrence of the Cenozoic felsic metamorphic rocks in the lower crust of the Gangdese  
25 belt allows us to propose that the Nyingchi high Sr/Y granites were derived from partial melting  
26 of relaminated crustal materials which were removed from the Gangdese belt by tectonic  
27 erosion and the subducted Indian continent. The Confluence gabbros were sourced from  
28 lithospheric mantle which was metasomatized by inputs from relaminated crustal materials  
29 derived from the Gangdese belt and the subducted Indian continent. The estimated tectonic  
30 erosion rate is 150–188 km<sup>3</sup>/km/my, indicating significant crustal loss occurred during  
31 continental collision. Our study demonstrates that tectonic erosion and crustal relamination play  
32 an important role in the refinement of the composition of continental crust during continental

33 collision.

34

35 **Keywords:** tectonic erosion; relamination; continental collision; Gangdese belt; magmatism

36

## 37 **1. Introduction**

38 Tectonic erosion, which removes crustal materials from the upper plate above the lower  
39 subducting plate, occurs at all convergent plate boundaries and is a key process in destroying  
40 continental crust (e.g., Clift and Vannucchi, 2004; Scholl and von Huene, 2010; Stern, 2011;  
41 von Huene and Scholl, 1991). The crustal materials removed from the overriding plate by  
42 tectonic erosion could be relaminated to the base of the upper plate and eventually form a part  
43 of the upper plate (Hacker et al., 2011, 2015), or could be carried into deep mantle (e.g.,  
44 Willbold and Stracke, 2010). Understanding these processes of tectonic erosion and crustal  
45 relamination has important implications for the chemical and physical differentiation of the  
46 Earth, particularly the compositional evolution of the continental crust (Castro et al., 2013; Clift  
47 and Vannucchi, 2004; Hacker et al., 2011, 2015; Kelemen and Behn, 2016; Scholl and von  
48 Huene, 2009, 2010; Vogt et al., 2013). The subduction zones and continental collision belts  
49 represent locations in which continental crust is formed and modified by physical and chemical  
50 processes. It is therefore important to determine how large masses of crustal materials may be  
51 added to, or removed from, the crust during continental collision.

52 The Gangdese belt in southern Tibet was an Andean arc caused by the northward  
53 subduction of the Neo-Tethyan oceanic lithosphere before the India-Asian collision (Yin and  
54 Harrison, 2000). The widespread Triassic-Cretaceous arc magmatic rocks have low initial

55  $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$  ratios and positive  $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$  and  $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t)$  values, indicating that the crust of the Gangdese  
56 belt is juvenile (Harris et al., 1988; Ji et al., 2009; Xu et al., 1985; Zhu et al., 2011). By contrast,  
57 the Paleogene–Miocene magmatic rocks display large variation in Sr–Nd–Hf isotopic  
58 composition and show clearly negative excursions of  $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$  and  $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t)$  values (Chu et al., 2011;  
59 Ji et al., 2009; Ma et al., 2014; Zhao et al., 2011). These excursions represent the incorporation  
60 of older crustal material into the magma; however the mechanisms responsible are controversial.  
61 The negative excursions have been ascribed to the inputs of ancient Indian crustal materials  
62 (Chu et al., 2011; Ji et al., 2009; Ma et al., 2014) or assimilation of ancient basement of the  
63 Lhasa terrane (Zhao et al., 2011; Zhu et al., 2017a). Since the Indian continent, ancient basement  
64 and juvenile lower crust of the Gangdese belt have distinct isotopic compositions (e.g., Gariépy  
65 et al., 1985; Harris et al., 1988; Ji et al., 2009; Zhang et al., 2004; Zhu et al., 2011), they should  
66 be trackable in the syn- and post-collisional magmatic rocks. This provides an opportunity to  
67 investigate tectonic erosion and crustal relamination during the India–Asian continental  
68 collision.

69 In this study, we report zircon U–Pb ages, whole-rock major, trace element and Sr–Nd  
70 isotope, in-situ zircon Hf isotope and feldspar Pb isotope data for the Eocene Confluence  
71 gabbros and Nyingchi granites in the eastern Gangdese belt. Our results show that the Nyingchi  
72 high Sr/Y granites were derived from partial melting of both relaminated Gangdese crustal  
73 materials, removed by tectonic erosion, and the subducted Indian crustal materials. The  
74 Confluence gabbros were sourced from the lithospheric mantle which was metasomatized by  
75 felsic melts derived from relaminated crustal materials. Our study implies that significant  
76 tectonic erosion occurs during continental collision. The eroded felsic crustal materials may be

77 relaminated to the base of the upper plate, which plays an important role in crustal refinement  
78 during the process of continent-continent collision.

79

## 80 **2. Geological background and samples**

81 The Lhasa terrane of southern Tibet is separated from the Qiangtang terrane to the north  
82 by the Bangong–Nujiang suture and from the Himalayas to the south by the Indus–Yarlung  
83 Tsangpo suture (Fig. 1A). The Lhasa terrane is underlain by Proterozoic basement with juvenile  
84 crust accreted towards its southern and northern margins (Zhu et al., 2011). The Gangdese belt  
85 in the southern Lhasa terrane is dominated by the Triassic–Tertiary Gangdese batholith and the  
86 Paleogene Linzizong volcanic succession, with minor Triassic–Cretaceous  
87 volcano–sedimentary rocks (Mo et al., 2007; Pan et al., 2006). The batholith is composed of a  
88 variety of lithologies including gabbro, diorite, granodiorite to granite (Harris et al., 1988; Ji et  
89 al., 2009; Wen et al., 2008; Xu et al., 1985). Zircon U–Pb dating results revealed that the  
90 Gangdese magmatism began in Middle-Late Triassic and lasted until Miocene, with four  
91 magmatic flare-up events at 205–150 Ma, 100–80 Ma, 65–40 Ma, and 30–10 Ma (Ji et al.,  
92 2009; Wang et al., 2016; Wen et al., 2008; Zhu et al., 2011). The 65–40 Ma magmatic flare-up  
93 event is generally attributed to the rollback and break-off of the Neo-Tethyan oceanic slab after  
94 the India-Asian collision (Ji et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2012; Wen et al., 2008; Zhu et al., 2015).  
95 Most Triassic–Cretaceous arc magmatic rocks have positive  $\epsilon_{Nd}(t)$  and  $\epsilon_{Hf}(t)$  values and low  
96 initial  $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$  ratios, indicating that their magmas were derived from partial melting of the  
97 asthenospheric mantle or of juvenile crust under the Gangdese arc (Harris et al., 1988; Ji et al.,  
98 2009; Zhu et al., 2011). By contrast, the Paleogene-Eocene magmatic rocks show clearly

99 negative excursion of  $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$  and  $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t)$  values, which was attributed to the involvement of the  
100 ancient Indian crust (Chu et al., 2011; Ji et al., 2009; Ma et al., 2014) or to the assimilation of  
101 the basement of the Lhasa terrane (Zhao et al., 2011; Zhu et al., 2017a). In addition, the  
102 magmatism during the Paleogene-Eocene flare-up shows significant geochemical variations in  
103 magma compositions, including calc-alkaline, low-K, shoshonitic, peraluminous, and adakitic-  
104 type rocks (Guo et al., 2011; Ji et al., 2017; Lee et al., 2012; Zhang et al., 2010a, 2013).

105         The eastern Gangdese belt in the western margin of the Namche Barwa syntaxis (Fig. 1B)  
106 mainly consists of the high-grade metamorphic Nyingchi Complex and Mesozoic–Cenozoic  
107 (165–22 Ma) granitoids (Booth et al., 2004; Dong et al., 2012; Guo et al., 2011, 2012, 2013; Ji  
108 et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2008, 2010a, 2010b, 2013, 2014, 2015). The Nyingchi Complex  
109 represents the exposed middle-lower crust of the Gangdese arc and is composed of mafic and  
110 felsic granulites, amphibolites, migmatites, orthogneisses, paragneisses and marble (Guo et al.,  
111 2012, 2013; Zhang et al., 2010b, 2013, 2014, 2015). The mafic granulites from the Nyingchi  
112 Complex have protolith ages of 82–95 Ma and metamorphic ages of 90–68 Ma (Guo et al., 2013;  
113 Zhang et al., 2010b, 2014). Their protoliths have depleted Sr–Nd–Hf isotopic compositions that  
114 are typical of arc magmatic rocks (Guo et al., 2013; Zhang et al., 2014). The protoliths of the  
115 felsic granulites-facies and amphibolite-facies metamorphic rocks include Mesozoic–Cenozoic  
116 sedimentary rocks and 65–38 Ma Gangdese granitoids which have large variation in Sr–Nd–Hf  
117 isotopic compositions (Guo et al., 2011; Zhang et al., 2010b, 2013, 2015). These felsic rocks  
118 underwent granulite-facies metamorphism and protracted crustal anatexis from 67 Ma to 41 Ma,  
119 and amphibolite-facies metamorphism from 35 Ma to 26 Ma (Dong et al., 2012; Guo et al.,  
120 2011, 2012; Wang et al., 2008a; Zhang et al., 2010b, 2013, 2015). The granitoids in the

121 Nyingchi area have a wide range of crystallization ages from 165 to 22 Ma, and mainly formed  
122 during the periods 67-44 Ma and 28-22 Ma (Guo et al., 2011, 2012; Ji et al., 2017; Liu, 2012;  
123 Zhang et al., 2008, 2010a).

124 The studied Confluence hornblende gabbro and Nyingchi granite samples were collected  
125 in the eastern Gangdese belt near the confluence of the Yarlung Tsangpo and Nyang rivers (Fig.  
126 1B). Both the hornblende gabbros and granites intruded the high-grade metamorphic Nyingchi  
127 Complex and were cut by the Oligocene two-mica granites with sharply cross-cutting contacts  
128 (Supplementary Figure S1). The hornblende gabbro samples show medium to coarse-grained  
129 texture and consist mainly of amphibole (50–55 vol. %), plagioclase (35–40 vol. %), biotite (3–  
130 8 vol. %), and clinopyroxene (1–3 vol. %), with accessory zircon, apatite, and magnetite  
131 (Supplementary Figure S2A). The Nyingchi granites are coarse-grained with gneissic textures  
132 and are composed of plagioclase (30–40 vol.%), K-feldspar (25–30 vol.%), quartz (25–30  
133 vol.%), and biotite (5–10 vol.%) with accessory zircon, apatite, epidote, and Fe–Ti oxide  
134 (Supplementary Figure S2B).

135

### 136 **3. Results**

137 Analytical methods are detailed in the supplementary materials. Whole-rock major and  
138 trace element and Sr–Nd isotope data for the Nyingchi granites and the Confluence hornblende  
139 gabbros are provided in the supplementary Table S1. Laser ablation inductively coupled plasma  
140 mass spectrometry (LA–ICP–MS) zircon U–Pb geochronology, zircon Hf isotope data, and in-  
141 situ feldspar Pb isotope data for the Nyingchi granites and the Confluence hornblende gabbros  
142 are documented in the supplementary Tables S2–S4, respectively.



143

### 144 **3.1 Zircon U–Pb Ages**

145 LA–ICP–MS zircon U–Pb isotope data are presented in Appendix Table S2. Zircon grains  
146 from two Confluence hornblende gabbro samples T1339 and 14GT004 have similar  
147 morphological and textural features. They are euhedral or subhedral in shape, range in length  
148 from 100 to 400  $\mu\text{m}$  with aspect ratios of 1:1–4:1. They show broad oscillatory zoning in the  
149 CL images (Fig. 2A and 2B), which is consistent with the magmatic zircon in mafic rocks (Corfu  
150 et al., 2003). The analyzed zircon grains from two samples have variable U (72.4–2088 ppm)  
151 and Th (24.1–1456 ppm) concentrations, with high Th/U ratios of 0.26–1.70 (Table S2).  
152 Nineteen analyses of sample T1339 yield  $^{206}\text{Pb}/^{238}\text{U}$  ages ranging from 48.1 to 51.4 Ma with a  
153 weighted mean of  $49.4 \pm 0.5$  Ma (MSWD = 0.68; Fig. 2A). Seventeen analyses of sample  
154 14GT004 yield  $^{206}\text{Pb}/^{238}\text{U}$  ages ranging from 49.1 to 52.5 Ma with a weighted mean of  $50.3 \pm$   
155  $0.5$  Ma (MSWD = 1.8; Fig. 2B).

156 Zircon grains from the Nyingchi granites (sample T774) are euhedral, 150–300  $\mu\text{m}$  in  
157 length, and have aspect ratios of 2:1–3:1. They show well–defined oscillatory zoning in the CL  
158 images (Fig. 2C). Some zircon grains display inherited zircon cores. Twenty analyses were  
159 conducted on 19 zircon grains. These zircons have Th of 31.8–416 ppm and U of 42.4–1104  
160 ppm, with high Th/U ratios of 0.29–1.26 (Table S2). Nineteen analyses on zircon grains with  
161 oscillatory zoning yield  $^{206}\text{Pb}/^{238}\text{U}$  ages ranging from 49.1 to 53.4 Ma with a weighted mean of  
162  $50.4 \pm 0.9$  Ma (MSWD = 2.2; Fig. 2C). An inherited core yields a  $^{207}\text{Pb}/^{206}\text{Pb}$  age of  $1643 \pm 89$   
163 Ma (Table S2).

164

### 165 3.2 Whole-rock Major and trace element compositions

166 Whole-rock major and trace element data for the Confluence hornblende gabbros and  
167 Nyingchi granites are presented in Table S1. The Confluence hornblende gabbros have SiO<sub>2</sub>  
168 concentrations ranging from 44.85 wt. % to 53.06 wt.%. All gabbro samples are rich in Na<sub>2</sub>O  
169 with K<sub>2</sub>O/Na<sub>2</sub>O of 0.43–0.84. Except for sample T1336, the other samples plot in the alkaline  
170 field on the total alkaline-silica (TAS) diagram (Fig. 3A; Middlemost, 1994). All gabbro  
171 samples fall in the high-K calc-alkaline to shoshonitic fields on the K<sub>2</sub>O–SiO<sub>2</sub> diagram (Fig.  
172 3B; Peccerillo and Taylor, 1976). Their MgO (3.25–6.38 wt.%) and Mg# (43–54) are rather low  
173 compared with mantle-derived primary magmas, with corresponding low Cr (1.24–49.8 ppm)  
174 and Ni (1.27–12.7 ppm), and high concentrations of strongly incompatible trace elements (e.g.,  
175 Rb = 12.1–67.6 ppm, Th = 0.43–7.08 ppm). The MgO, TFe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> (total iron as Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>), Cr and Ni  
176 contents and (Gd/Yb)<sub>N</sub> decrease as SiO<sub>2</sub> increases from ca. 44 wt.% to ca. 48 wt.%, but slightly  
177 increase for SiO<sub>2</sub> higher than 48 wt.% (Fig. 4). The Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>, P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub> and Sr concentrations increase  
178 with SiO<sub>2</sub> contents between from ca. 44 wt.% to ca. 48 wt.%, but decrease profoundly for SiO<sub>2</sub>  
179 contents higher than 48 wt.% (Fig. 4). The CaO concentration is characterized by an initial steep  
180 decrease followed by a modest decrease as SiO<sub>2</sub> increases from ca. 44 wt.% to ca. 54 wt.% (Fig.  
181 4). The Confluence hornblende gabbros exhibit fractionated rare earth element (REE) patterns  
182 [(La/Yb)<sub>N</sub> = 3.7–9.7] and weak negative Eu anomalies with Eu/Eu\* = 0.76–0.93 (Fig. 5A).  
183 Their primitive mantle-normalized trace element distribution patterns are characterized by  
184 positive anomalies in Rb, K, Th, U and Pb, but negative anomalies in Nb, Ta, P, Zr, Hf and Ti  
185 (Fig. 5B).

186 The Nyingchi granites show a relatively narrow range in many major element

187 concentrations (Fig. 4), with high SiO<sub>2</sub> (70.74–75.86 wt.%), Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> (12.93–15.7 wt.%), and CaO  
188 (2.01–3.74 wt.%), but low Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> (0.94–2.91 wt.%) and MgO (0.29–0.88 wt.%). All samples  
189 plotted in the subalkaline granite field on the TAS diagram (Fig. 3A). They have variable K<sub>2</sub>O  
190 of 1.06–5.15 wt.% and plot in the low-K, calc-alkaline, and shoshonitic fields on the K<sub>2</sub>O–SiO<sub>2</sub>  
191 diagram (Fig. 3B), with K<sub>2</sub>O/Na<sub>2</sub>O ratios of 0.26–1.11 (Table S1). They are weakly  
192 peraluminous with A/CNK values of 1.03–1.07 (Table S1). The Nyingchi granites are  
193 characterized by strongly enrichment of LREEs relative to HREEs on the chondrite-normalized  
194 REE diagram (Fig. 5C), with high (La/Yb)<sub>N</sub> (38–153) and (Dy/Yb)<sub>N</sub> ratios (2.0–6.1), and  
195 negative to positive Eu anomalies (Eu/Eu\* = 0.48–1.57). The Nyingchi granites have high Sr  
196 (522–638 ppm), low Y (5.25–12.5 ppm) and Yb (0.30–0.74 ppm), and thus high Sr/Y ratios  
197 (48–121). All Nyingchi granite samples plot in the adakite fields of Sr/Y–Y and (La/Yb)<sub>N</sub>–  
198 (Yb)<sub>N</sub> diagrams (Fig. 6A and 6B; Defant and Drummond, 1990; Drummond and Defant, 1990).  
199 They define a positive correlation between (La/Yb)<sub>N</sub> and (Dy/Yb)<sub>N</sub> (Fig. 6C). Most Nyingchi  
200 granite samples have high Nb/Ta ratios relative to the bulk continental crust and lower crust  
201 (Fig. 6D). For the trace-element spider diagram, Nyingchi granites exhibit enrichment of Th,  
202 K, Pb, and Sr, and depletion in Nb, Ta, Zr, Hf and Ti relative to their neighboring elements (Fig.  
203 5D).

204

### 205 **3.3 Sr–Nd–Hf–Pb isotopic compositions**

206 Whole-rock Sr–Nd isotopic data for the Confluence hornblende gabbros and Nyingchi  
207 granites are reported in Table S1 and illustrated in Fig. 7. Initial isotopic compositions were  
208 calculated at 50 Ma for all studied samples. The Confluence gabbros record a narrow range of

209 values for both initial  $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{87}\text{Sr}$  (0.705650–0.706074) and  $^{147}\text{Nd}/^{144}\text{Nd}$  (0.512404–0.512468)  
210 (Fig. 7), corresponding to  $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$  values of -3.3 to -2.1. The Nyingchi granites provide a moderate  
211 range of initial  $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{87}\text{Sr}$  (0.707054–0.708162) and  $^{147}\text{Nd}/^{144}\text{Nd}$  (0.512232–0.512327) (Fig. 7),  
212 corresponding to  $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$  values of -6.7 to -4.8.

213 The results of *in situ* zircon Lu-Hf isotopes were listed in supplementary Table S3 and  
214 illustrated in Fig. 8. Zircons from the gabbro sample T1339 have  $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t)$  values of +0.1 to +1.8  
215 (Fig. 8) with two stage Hf model ages of 1008–1111 Ma (Table S3). Zircons from the gabbro  
216 sample 14GT004 have  $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t)$  values of -0.7 to +2.7 (Fig. 8) with two stage Hf model ages of  
217 797–1164 Ma (Table S3). Zircons from the granite sample T774 have negative  $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t)$  values of  
218 -11.8 to -10.1 (Fig. 8) with two stage Hf model ages of 1764–1869 Ma (Table S3).

219 Fresh plagioclase from the Confluence gabbros and K-feldspar from the Nyingchi granites  
220 were selected for *in situ* Pb isotope analyses. The results are listed in the supplementary Table  
221 S4 and illustrated in Fig. 9. The plagioclase from the Confluence gabbro samples T1332, T1334,  
222 T1336, and T1339 yield the following ranges of values:  $^{206}\text{Pb}/^{204}\text{Pb} = 18.524\text{--}18.750$ ,  
223  $^{207}\text{Pb}/^{204}\text{Pb} = 15.499\text{--}15.685$ ,  $^{208}\text{Pb}/^{204}\text{Pb} = 38.529\text{--}39.015$ ,  $^{207}\text{Pb}/^{206}\text{Pb} = 0.834\text{--}0.840$  and  
224  $^{208}\text{Pb}/^{206}\text{Pb} = 2.076\text{--}2.086$  (Table S4; Fig. 9). By contrast, the K-feldspar from the Nyingchi  
225 granites generally have lower  $^{206}\text{Pb}/^{204}\text{Pb} = 18.307\text{--}18.643$ ,  $^{207}\text{Pb}/^{204}\text{Pb} = 15.378\text{--}15.618$ ,  
226  $^{208}\text{Pb}/^{204}\text{Pb} = 38.246\text{--}38.821$  and higher  $^{207}\text{Pb}/^{206}\text{Pb} = 0.838\text{--}0.842$ ,  $^{208}\text{Pb}/^{206}\text{Pb} = 2.082\text{--}2.092$   
227 than those of the Confluence gabbros (Table S4; Fig. 9). To constrain the magma sources of the  
228 Nyingchi granites and the Confluence gabbros, the plagioclase from the mafic granulite samples  
229 (16GT022 and 16GT023) in the lower crust section of the eastern Gangdese belt (Guo et al.,  
230 2013) were also selected for *in situ* Pb isotope analyses. The plagioclases from the granulites

231 have lower  $^{206}\text{Pb}/^{204}\text{Pb} = 18.355\text{--}18.470$ ,  $^{207}\text{Pb}/^{204}\text{Pb} = 15.511\text{--}15.736$ , and  $^{208}\text{Pb}/^{204}\text{Pb} =$   
232  $38.309\text{--}38.605$ , and higher  $^{207}\text{Pb}/^{206}\text{Pb} = 0.842\text{--}0.855$  and  $^{208}\text{Pb}/^{206}\text{Pb} = 2.085\text{--}2.102$  compared  
233 with those of the Nyingchi granites and the Confluence gabbros (Table S4; Fig. 9).

234

## 235 **4. Discussion**

### 236 **4.1 Origin of the Eocene Nyingchi high Sr/Y granites**

237 The Eocene Nyingchi granites have low Y (5.25–12.5 ppm) and HREE (Yb = 0.30–0.74  
238 ppm) abundances, high Sr (522–638 ppm) abundances, and high Sr/Y (48–121), (La/Yb)<sub>N</sub> (38–  
239 153) and (Dy/Yb)<sub>N</sub> ratios (2.0–6.1), which are similar to those of the adakitic rocks (Fig. 6A  
240 and 6B; Defant and Drummond, 1990). Garnet is the only rock-forming mineral that can  
241 substantially fractionate middle REE and heavy REE. Positively correlated high (Dy/Yb)<sub>N</sub> and  
242 (La/Yb)<sub>N</sub> ratios (Fig. 6C) imply that the dominant role of garnet in fractionating REE of the  
243 Nyingchi granites during partial melting. Elevated Sr abundances and a lack of correlation  
244 between CaO and Eu/Eu\* (not shown) rule out plagioclase as a residual phase in the restite or  
245 a prominent mineral during crystal fractionation. Rutile has high partition coefficients for Nb  
246 and Ta and generally partition Ta over Nb (Green and Pearson 1987; Foley et al., 2000). The  
247 presence of rutile in the residue would result in high Nb/Ta of melts (Foley et al., 2002). The  
248 Nyingchi high Sr/Y granites show variable and high Nb/Ta ratios (Fig. 6D), indicating that rutile  
249 was stable in the residue (Foley et al., 2002). Therefore, their primary melts with high Sr/Y,  
250 (Dy/Yb)<sub>N</sub> and Nb/Ta ratios were in equilibrium with garnet and rutile in the absence of  
251 plagioclase and thus were generated under eclogite-facies conditions.

252 High Sr/Y magmatic rocks may be generated by partial melting of subducted oceanic or

253 continental crust (e.g., Defant and Drummond, 1990; Wang et al., 2008b), partial melting of  
254 thickened or delaminated lower continental crust (e.g., Atherton and Petford, 1993; Chung et  
255 al., 2003; Kay and Kay, 1993; Xu et al., 2002), fractional crystallization from parental basaltic  
256 magmas with or without crustal assimilation (e.g., Castillo, 2012; Macpherson et al., 2006), and  
257 by magma mixing (e.g., Guo et al., 2007). The low Mg# values (38–42), Cr (0.46–6.49 ppm)  
258 and Ni (1.91–4.11 ppm) abundances of the Nyingchi granites are distinct from the adakitic rocks  
259 derived from partial melting of subducted oceanic crust and delaminated lower crust, which  
260 generally have high Mg#, Cr and Ni concentrations due to melt-peridotite interactions during  
261 the melt ascent through the mantle (Defant and Drummond, 1990; Wang et al., 2008b; Xu et al.,  
262 2002). The Nyingchi granites are unlikely to have been directly derived from fractional  
263 crystallization of the coeval Confluence mafic magma because of the different Sr–Nd–Pb–Hf  
264 isotopic compositions (Fig. 7–9). Furthermore, no correlations between Sr/Y, (Dy/Yb)<sub>N</sub> ratios  
265 and SiO<sub>2</sub> has been observed (Fig. 6E and 6F). The petrogenetic model of magma mixing can be  
266 ruled out because the Nyingchi granites have high SiO<sub>2</sub> concentrations (70.74–75.86 wt.%) and  
267 lack field and petrographic evidence of magma mixing.

268         The Nyingchi high Sr/Y granites have high initial <sup>87</sup>Sr/<sup>86</sup>Sr ratios (0.70705–0.70816) and  
269 negative ε<sub>Nd</sub>(t) (–6.7 to –4.8) and ε<sub>Hf</sub>(t) values (–11.8 to –10.1), which are similar to those of the  
270 thickened lower crust-derived high Sr/Y rocks in the collisional orogens (e.g., Liu et al., 2010;  
271 Wang et al., 2005). However, the eastern Gangdese belt is likely to have a juvenile lower crust  
272 prior to the India-Asian collision as inferred from the following: (1) the Triassic–Cretaceous  
273 Gangdese arc magmatic rocks, including the Late Cretaceous lower crust-derived adakitic rocks  
274 (Wen et al., 2008), have depleted Sr–Nd–Hf isotopic compositions (Harris et al., 1988; Ji et al.,

275 2009; Zhu et al., 2011) (Fig. 7 and 8); (2) Late Cretaceous mafic granulites and ultramafic-  
276 mafic cumulates from the exposed Gangdese arc lower crust also display depleted Sr–Nd–Hf  
277 isotopic compositions (Fig. 8; Guo et al., 2013; Ma et al., 2013a; Zhang et al., 2014). Because  
278 of the juvenile nature of this lower crust, the enriched isotopic geochemistry of the Nyingchi  
279 granites indicates that they could not be directly derived from partial melting of the lower crust.  
280 Ancient crustal components are required to contribute to the magma sources following the  
281 India-Asian collision. Previous studies show that the Eocene high Sr/Y granites in the central  
282 Gangdese belt resulted from partial melting of the thickened lower crust (Chu et al., 2011; Guan  
283 et al., 2012; Ma et al., 2014; Zhu et al., 2017b), and that ancient Indian crustal materials were  
284 involvement into their magma sources after India-Asian collision (Chu et al., 2011; Ma et al.,  
285 2014).

286 The potential isotopically enriched sources for the Nyingchi granites include the subducted  
287 Indian continental crust and ancient crustal materials from the Nyingchi Complex in the eastern  
288 Gangdese belt. In the eastern Himalayan syntaxis area, the Zhibai and Duoxiongla gneisses and  
289 migmatites from the Greater Himalayan Sequence which represent the subducted Indian  
290 continental crust have extremely high initial  $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$  ratios (0.74524–0.98165 at 50 Ma) and  
291 negative  $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(50 \text{ Ma})$  (–19.8 to –10.0) and  $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(50 \text{ Ma})$  (–42 to –27) values (Fig. 7; Guo et al.,  
292 2017; Zhang et al., 2010a), which preclude an origin directly from subducted Indian crust for  
293 the Nyingchi granites. The results of isotopic mixing models between the Indian crustal  
294 materials and juvenile lower crust of the Gangdese belt also cannot account for the Sr–Nd  
295 isotopic compositions of the Nyingchi granites (Fig. 7). By contrast, mixing of 20–35% ancient  
296 gneisses from the Nyingchi Complex (Zhang et al., 2015) with 65–80% depleted mafic lower

297 crust of the Gangdese belt can generate the isotopic features of the Nyingchi granites (Fig. 7).  
298 Pb isotopes are sensitive indicators of involvement of ancient crustal materials because of the  
299 shorter half-life of  $^{238}\text{U}$ ,  $^{235}\text{U}$ , and  $^{232}\text{Th}$  isotopes compared with those of  $^{147}\text{Sm}$  and  $^{87}\text{Rb}$   
300 isotopes. The Pb isotopic compositions suggest that the Nyingchi granites were derived from  
301 melting of both the Gangdese and Indian continental crustal materials (Fig. 9). The reason why  
302 the Sr and Nd isotopes are ineffective to identify the Indian crustal materials is probably that  
303 the involvement of the Indian crustal materials is limited to change the Pb isotopic compositions  
304 but to change the Sr-Nd isotopic compositions. Therefore, we propose that the high Sr/Y  
305 Nyingchi granites were generated by the introduction of the Nyingchi gneisses from the  
306 overlying Gangdese crust through tectonic erosion and the subducted Indian continental crust.  
307 Both the ancient Indian crustal materials and the Gangdese crustal materials were carried into  
308 the subduction channel. The mixed crustal materials were transported to the lower crust or  
309 mantle depths in the channel and partially melted under eclogite-facies conditions. The melts  
310 could have risen through buoyancy and either relaminated the lower crust or intruded the upper  
311 Gangdese arc crust to form the Nyingchi high Sr/Y granites.

312

## 313 **4.2 Petrogenesis of the Confluence hornblende gabbros**

### 314 **4.2.1 Evaluation of crustal contamination and fractionation**

315 The ca. 50 Ma Confluence hornblende gabbros display arc-like trace element patterns (Fig.  
316 5B). In addition, their enriched Sr-Nd-Hf-Pb isotopic compositions are different from those of  
317 the mafic arc magmatism in the eastern Gangdese belt (Fig. 7-9; Ma et al., 2013a). These  
318 geochemical signatures could result from (1) crustal assimilation during magma ascent and/or



319 magma chamber processes, (2) partial melting of lithospheric mantle metasomatized by  
320 enriched crustal materials, or (3) a combination of both processes. The relatively limited range  
321 of whole-rock Sr–Nd and zircon Hf isotopic compositions (Fig. 7 and 8) and absence of  
322 correlations for the studied samples in the diagrams of  $(^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr})_i$  versus  $\text{SiO}_2$  or  $(^{147}\text{Nd}/^{144}\text{Nd})_i$   
323 versus  $\text{SiO}_2$  (not shown) indicate that crustal assimilation did not play a significant role during  
324 magma evolution of the Confluence gabbros. Therefore, these geochemical signatures of the  
325 Confluence gabbros would have been inherited from their mantle sources without significant  
326 crustal assimilation.

327 The mantle-derived primary magmas generally show  $\text{Mg\#} > 65$ . The Confluence  
328 hornblende gabbros have low  $\text{Mg\#}$  (38–42), indicating that significant fractional crystallization  
329 had occurred after the formation of the primary magma. The studied gabbro samples define  
330 kinked trends on the plots of major and trace elements against  $\text{SiO}_2$  (Fig. 4). The associated  
331 decrease in  $\text{MgO}$ ,  $\text{TFe}_2\text{O}_3$  and  $\text{Ni}$  contents with increasing  $\text{SiO}_2$  is due to olivine removal, while  
332 the decrease of  $\text{CaO}$  and  $\text{Cr}$  can be explained by the crystallization and removal of  
333 clinopyroxene from the magmas. The early decrease of  $(\text{Gd}/\text{Yb})_N$  suggest that the fractionation  
334 of hornblende. The  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ ,  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$ , and  $\text{Sr}$  contents firstly increase and then decrease, indicating  
335 that the plagioclase and apatite are late crystallizing phases in the Confluence gabbros.  
336 Therefore, the parental magma of the Confluence gabbros underwent fractional crystallization  
337 at depth involving an early fractionation assemblage of olivine + clinopyroxene + hornblende  
338 and a later assemblage of plagioclase + apatite.

339

#### 340 **4.2.2 Mantle source and enrichment processes**

341 Due to the evolved geochemical composition of the Confluence gabbros, neither the  
342 degree of mantle melting, nor the composition of primary mantle melts could not be precisely  
343 evaluated. Nevertheless, the low La/Yb (5.4–13.1) and Dy/Yb (1.8–2.3) ratios of the gabbros  
344 suggest that their primary melts were not in equilibrium with garnet and formed at a relatively  
345 shallow level of the mantle in the spinel peridotite stability field. The Confluence hornblende  
346 gabbros have high K<sub>2</sub>O and LILE contents, indicating that they were derived from partial  
347 melting of a K<sub>2</sub>O, LILE and H<sub>2</sub>O-rich mantle. Phlogopite and amphibole are the main K<sub>2</sub>O and  
348 H<sub>2</sub>O phase in the mantle. In the K<sub>2</sub>O/MgO versus CaO/Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> diagram (Fig. 10A), most  
349 hornblende gabbro samples match the major element composition of experimental melts of  
350 phlogopite- and/or amphibole-bearing spinel peridotite and mixed peridotite + felsic granitoid  
351 sources (Couzinié et al., 2016, and references therein). This suggests that the primary melts  
352 were derived from partial melting of a phlogopite- and/or amphibole-bearing spinel peridotite  
353 or of a spinel mantle peridotite metasomatized by felsic granitic melts.

354 While the Jurassic–Cretaceous mafic arc magmatic rocks in the eastern Gangdese belt have  
355 depleted Sr–Nd–Pb–Hf isotopic composition (Gariépy et al., 1985; Harris et al., 1988; Ji et al.,  
356 2009; Zhu et al., 2008, 2011), the Eocene Confluence gabbros display enriched Sr–Nd–Pb–Hf  
357 isotopic characteristics (Fig. 7–9). This indicates that the lithospheric mantle was  
358 metasomatized by ancient crustal materials shortly after the India-Asian collision. The Sr–Nd–  
359 Pb isotopic compositions of the Confluence gabbros are in a similar situation to those of the  
360 Nyingchi granites. A simple modeling for source contamination indicates that mixing the  
361 depleted upper mantle peridotite with about 15–20% of the ancient crustal materials (the  
362 Nyingchi gneisses) from the eastern Gangdese belt can explain the present Sr–Nd isotopic

363 features of the gabbros (Fig. 7). However, the incorporation of material from the Nyingchi  
364 gneisses into the mantle beneath the Gangdese arc cannot account for the Pb isotopic  
365 composition of these gabbros (Fig. 9). The Confluence gabbros have lower  $^{207}\text{Pb}/^{206}\text{Pb}$  and  
366  $^{208}\text{Pb}/^{206}\text{Pb}$  ratios than those of the Gangdese batholith, the lower crust of the Gangdese arc, the  
367 Lhasa basement and the Eocene Nyingchi high Sr/Y granites (Fig. 9). This requires an  
368 involvement of Indian crustal materials which have low  $^{207}\text{Pb}/^{206}\text{Pb}$  and  $^{208}\text{Pb}/^{206}\text{Pb}$  ratios (Fig.  
369 9; Gariépy et al., 1985). Therefore, we suggest that the crustal components in the mantle source  
370 results from influx of felsic melts from melting of the Indian plate together with components  
371 from partial melting of the eroded crustal materials from the Gangdese belt (Fig. 11). This  
372 metasomatized mantle region provides a ready source for potassic magma during the late stages  
373 of lithosphere convergence related to extension and mantle upwelling (Castro, 2014). The  
374 composition of the bulk continental crust (Rudnick and Gao, 2003) is taken to represent the  
375 felsic melts because both upper and lower crust materials were involved in the subduction  
376 channel through tectonic erosion and continental subduction (Fig. 11B). The modeling results  
377 show that the melts can be generated from 15–25% partial melting of a hybrid source consisting  
378 of 75–90% depleted mantle and 10–25% of the felsic component (Fig. 10B), which is consistent  
379 with the result of the binary Sr–Nd isotopic mixing model (Fig. 7).

380 In summary, the Eocene Confluence gabbros were derived from partial melting of the  
381 phlogopite- and/or amphibole-bearing spinel peridotite, formed by contamination of the mantle  
382 by limited amounts of crustal materials that were subducted during the early stages of the India-  
383 Asian collision.

384

### 385 **4.3 Tectonic erosion during the India-Asian continental collision**

386 As stated above, the magma sources of the ca. 50 Ma Nyingchi high Sr/Y granites involved  
387 significant ancient crustal materials from the Nyingchi Complex which predominantly is  
388 composed of metagranitoids and metasedimentary rocks. However, these ancient crustal  
389 materials were not subject to high-grade metamorphism until the India-Asian continental  
390 collision (Dong et al., 2012; Guo et al., 2011, 2012, 2017; Wang et al., 2008a; Zhang et al.,  
391 2010b, 2013, 2015). The metagranitoids have protolith ages ranging from Paleoproterozoic (ca.  
392 1782 Ma), Cambrian (ca. 496 Ma), Mesozoic (165-83 Ma) to Cenozoic (65-38 Ma) (Dong et  
393 al., 2012; Guo et al., 2012; Lin et al., 2013; Zhang et al., 2013, 2015). The protoliths of  
394 Mesozoic-Cenozoic metagranitoids resulted from the subduction of Neo-Tethyan oceanic slab  
395 or from the collision of India-Asian continents (Guo et al., 2012; Zhang et al., 2013, 2015). The  
396 protoliths of the metasedimentary rocks from the Nyingchi complex include Neoproterozoic,  
397 Late Paleozoic, Mesozoic, and Cenozoic sedimentary rocks (Guo et al., 2011, 2017; Xu et al.,  
398 2013; Zhang et al., 2008). Inherited detrital zircon from the Mesozoic-Cenozoic  
399 metasedimentary rocks yielded age peaks at 95-60 Ma and 171-138 Ma (Xu et al., 2013; Zhang  
400 et al., 2008, 2015), which is consistent with the age spectra of the Gangdese arc magmatic rocks,  
401 indicating that their protoliths were probably deposited in the forearc basin. The felsic  
402 metamorphic rocks from the Nyingchi Complex underwent granulite-facies metamorphism and  
403 protracted crustal anatexis from 63 Ma to 41 Ma, and amphibolite-facies metamorphism from  
404 35 Ma to 23 Ma (Dong et al., 2012; Guo et al., 2011, 2012; Lin et al., 2013; Wang et al., 2008b;  
405 Xu et al., 2013; Zhang et al., 2013, 2015). Their metamorphic ages are close to their protolith  
406 ages, indicating that these supracrustal rocks underwent rapidly burial and metamorphism after

407 the Indian-Asian collision. In addition, the existence of abundant Early Cenozoic inherited  
408 zircons in the Oligocene high Sr/Y granites indicates significant reworking of the Gangdese  
409 crust (Ding and Zhang, 2019; Zhang et al., 2008; Zheng et al., 2012).

410 Previous studies proposed that crustal shortening and thickening resulted in the Oligocene  
411 reworking of the Gangdese crust (Ding and Zhang, 2019; Zhang et al., 2015). If this  
412 interpretation is true, at least 50% crustal shortening of the Gangdese crust is required to enable  
413 upper crustal rocks (e.g., granitoids generally intruded at depths from 5 to 15 km) to be  
414 subjected to amphibolite- or granulite-facies metamorphism during the Eocene and Oligocene.  
415 This is at variance with the limited shortening and unlikely to have descended of the Gangdese  
416 belt after the India-Asian collision (Mo et al., 2007). Furthermore, the supracrustal sediments  
417 are unlikely to have descended to the depths of the lower crust through crustal shortening in  
418 less than 40 Myr. Structurally, the simplest interpretation for these metagranitoids and  
419 metasedimentary rocks is that they were underplated by tectonic erosion during India-Asian  
420 collision (Xu et al., 2013; Zhang et al., 2008, 2015). According to the tectonic erosion model  
421 (Scholl and von Huene, 2010), the subduction of buoyant Indian continental crust would  
422 enhance the front and basal erosion of the forearc of the Gangdese belt. The tectonic erosion  
423 invokes collapse and accommodation of upper plate materials into the subduction channel  
424 which hybridized the ancient crustal materials from the Indian continent and ancient upper-  
425 middle and juvenile lower crustal materials from the Gangdese crust (Fig. 11). The mixed  
426 crustal materials were transported to lower crust or mantle depths by subduction and partially  
427 melted under eclogite-facies conditions.

428 After the closure of Neo-Tethys Ocean, material from the leading edge of the Indian

429 continent was dragged into the subduction channel. The buoyant continental crust probably  
430 enhanced the mechanical coupling between the subducted and overlying continents, inducing  
431 pervasive abrasion of the overriding plate (Fig. 11). Arc magmatic fronts commonly form 200–  
432 250 km inboard of the trench axis (Scholl and von Huene, 2010). The direct contact between  
433 the Gangdese batholith and Indian continent requires the removal of the former forearc in the  
434 eastern Gangdese belt since India-Asian collision at ca. 60 Ma. (Fig. 1). If we assume that the  
435 former Gangdese forearc was similar to the modern Andean forearc in its dimensions and  
436 geometry, the width of forearc was 200–250 km just prior to the India-Asian collision (Fig.  
437 11A). An average crustal thickness of 45 km is used to estimate the rate of long-term loss of  
438 crustal materials from the upper plate (Clift and Vannucchi, 2004). If the loss of forearc is  
439 ascribed entirely to tectonic erosion, the calculated long-term erosion rates are 150–188  
440 km<sup>3</sup>/km/my, which is higher than those observed in most modern ocean-margin subduction  
441 zones (30–115 km<sup>3</sup>/km/my) (Clift and Vannucchi, 2004; Scholl and von Huene, 2007, 2009;  
442 Stern, 2011). Our result suggests that significant crustal loss by tectonic erosion occurred during  
443 the continental collision.

444

#### 445 **4.4 Crustal relamination and its implications**

446 During continental collision, felsic crustal materials derived from both the subducted plate  
447 (by anatexis) and from the upper plate (by tectonic erosion) can be relaminated to the base of  
448 the upper plate and eventually form a part of the upper plate, whereas the mafic crustal materials  
449 are recycled into the mantle (Hacker et al., 2011, 2015; Maierova et al., 2018). These crustal  
450 materials can be carried into lower crust or mantle and undergo partial melting to produce

451 adakitic melts (Stern, 2011). Some felsic melts could react with the overlying wedge peridotite  
452 and serve as metasomatic agents for crust-mantle interaction in the continental subduction  
453 channel (Stern, 2011; Willbold and Stracke, 2010). Our study shows that the Eocene Nyingchi  
454 high Sr/Y granites in the eastern Gangdese belt were derived from partial melting of relaminated  
455 crustal materials, and the Eocene Confluence gabbro was sourced from lithospheric mantle  
456 metasomatized by relaminated crustal melts (Fig. 11B). The Cretaceous lower crust of the  
457 Gangdese arc was dominated by mafic granulite and ultramafic/mafic cumulates (Guo et al.,  
458 2013; Ma et al., 2013b; Zhang et al., 2010b, 2014). By contrast, the substantial occurrence of  
459 felsic granulite-/amphibolite-facies metamorphic rocks in the lower crustal section of the  
460 Gangdese arc (Dong et al., 2012; Guo et al., 2012, 2017; Xu et al., 2013; Zhang et al., 2010b,  
461 2015) further indicates that substantial amounts of felsic crustal materials were relaminated to  
462 the base of the upper plate during the India-Asian collision. In addition, the whole-rock  $\epsilon_{\text{Nd}}(t)$   
463 and zircon  $\epsilon_{\text{Hf}}(t)$  values of the magmatic rocks exhibit clearly negative excursions (Fig. 7 and  
464 8) during the Eocene (ca. 50 Ma) magmatic flare-up event in the Gangdese belt (Chu et al.,  
465 2011; Ji et al., 2009; Ma et al., 2014). We propose that these negative excursions result from  
466 relamination of ancient crustal materials removed from the Gangdese belt by tectonic erosion  
467 and from subducted Indian continental crust. As a result, crustal relamination rejuvenated the  
468 supply of melt-fertile lithosphere and ignited the Eocene flare-up event (Ducea and Barton,  
469 2007; Ducea et al., 2015). The substantial addition of felsic rocks into the lower crust probably  
470 shifted the lower crust composition of the Gangdese arc from basaltic to andesitic. Our study  
471 demonstrates that crustal relamination plays an important role in refinement of the continental  
472 crust composition (Castro et al., 2013; Hacker et al., 2011, 2015; Kelemen and Behn, 2016;

473 Vogt et al., 2013).

474

## 475 **5. Conclusions**

476 In the eastern Gangdese belt, the Eocene Nyingchi high Sr/Y granites were derived from  
477 partial melting of relaminated crustal materials which contained the Gangdese crustal materials,  
478 removed by tectonic erosion, and subducted Indian crustal materials. The Eocene Confluence  
479 gabbros were sourced from the lithospheric mantle which was metasomatized by relaminated  
480 crustal melts and by melting of the Indian plate forming the footwall of the subduction zone.  
481 Our results suggest (1) that significant crustal loss by tectonic erosion occurred during the India-  
482 Asian continental collision and (2) more felsic rocks rise buoyantly to be relaminated to the  
483 base of the upper plate, a process which probably plays an important role in refinement of the  
484 composition of the continental crust.

485

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497

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