

The role of paleogeography in Asian monsoon evolution: a review and new insights from climate modelling

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Asynchronous apparition of the Asian monsoons features since the late Eocene and associated paleogeographic and climatic drivers

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Key Points:

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15	• Asian monsoons modern characteristics appeared sequentially during the Cenozoic,
16	driven by distinct paleogeographic and climatic forcings.
17	• Model results depict seasonal precipitation in parts of Southern and Eastern Asia
18	since the Paleogene.
19	• The Paratethys Sea retreat and the Arabian Platform emergence, by greatly increas-
20	ing continentality, are instrumental for the development of surface temperature gra-
21	dients between Asia and the Indian Ocean which reinforces the advection of moist air
22	towards Asia in summer.
23	• Iran-Zagros and East African landforms contribute to channel and enhance the So-
24	mali Jet that brings moisture to Southeastern Asia in summer, while the Himalayan-
25	Tibetan plateau uplift induces heavy orographic precipitation.
26	• Mongolian landforms uplift is the main driver for the Siberian high pressure settlement
27	in winter. It results in a broad reinforcement of East Asian Monsoon precipitation
28	seasonality, as it strongly reduces winter precipitation. It also induces aridification of
29	current Gobi desert region.
30	• Tian Shan and Pamir uplifts, by intercepting and deviating westerly moisture flux,
31	concur to force the summer northern Jet Stream migration in Tibet and Eastern
32	China. This triggers local orographic precipitation, increased winter precipitation in
33	India (weaker South Asian Monsoon), and increased summer precipitation in North-
34	eastern China (stronger East Asian monsoon). It enhances global aridification of
35	Gobi, Taklamakan and Northeastern Tibet regions.

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36 Abstract

Modern Asian monsoons are triggered by complex interactions between the atmosphere, 37 Asian and African orography and the surrounding oceans, resulting in a highly seasonal 38 climate characterized by typical regional features. Although long considered as a Neo-39 gene phenomenon, recent evidence for monsoon-like seasonality as early as in the Paleogene 40 Greenhouse, has come to challenge this paradigm. The occurrence of monsoons in a climatic 41 and paleogeographic context very different from the present-day question our understand-42 ing of the drivers underpinning this peculiar atmospheric phenomenon, in particular with 43 regards to its dependence to paleogeography. In this study, we take advantage of the wealth 44 of new studies to tentatively draw an up-to-date portrait of the Asian tectonic and pa-45 leoenvironmental evolution through the Cenozoic and of the questions that remain to be 46 answered. We then simulate the evolution of the Asian monsoon subsystems by investigating 47 seasonal trends of 20 paleoclimate simulations spanning the late Eocene to latest Miocene 48 (40-6 Ma). At odds with the traditional view of a monsoonal evolution driven mainly by 49 the Himalayan-Tibetan uplift, this study confirms the findings of previous works stating the 50 importance of peripheral landforms on the different Asian monsoons subsystems. Eastern 51 African and Anatolian-Iranian topography, as well as the Arabian Peninsula emergence all 52 concur to shape the South Asian summer Monsoon. Additionally, we suggest that conti-53 nentality, together with Mongolia, Tian Shan and Pamir orographic evolution, and pCO_2 54 decrease, played important parts in the settlement of the East Asian Monsoon and in the 55 aridification of inland Asia. 56

57 **1 Introduction**

The South and East Asian monsoons are highly seasonal climatic phenomenons, that 58 today conditions the livelihood of billions of people. During summer, moisture-loaded winds 59 blowing from the Indian Ocean (Fig. 1) trigger important nutrients-rich upwellings and 60 lead to heavy precipitation over Southeastern Asia, allowing for widespread agriculture and 61 fisheries. In winter, the reversal in wind direction induces advection of cold, dry and dust-62 loaded air masses from Siberia over Eastern and Southern Asia (Fig. 1). The spectacular 63 extension and intensity of the Asian monsoons, combined to the highly dynamic tectonic 64 context of the region, have triggered a lot of interest from the scientific community, in order 65 to understand potential links between orography, land-sea distribution, global climate and 66 the monsoon. 67

While monsoons have long been viewed as an atmospheric phenomenon intimately 68 intertwined with the Himalayan-Tibetan plateau uplift history (Molnar et al., 1993; Zhisheng 69 et al., 2001; Tada et al., 2016; X. Liu, Guo, et al., 2015) and rooted in the Neogene, first with 70 records of strong upwellings initiating in the Arabian Sea at ~ 8 Ma (Kroon et al., 1991), 71 then with evidence for massive dust deposition in the Chinese Loess Plateau since ~ 22 Ma 72 (Guo et al., 2002), a wealth of recent studies has come to challenge this paradigm. Indeed, 73 aeolian dust deposits in the Xining basin (northeastern China, see Fig. 1 for localities 74 mentioned in the text), as well as paleoflora and isotopic measurement in fossils indicating 75 a seasonal climate in Myanmar (Licht et al., 2014) and in the Yunnan region (South China) 76 (Sorrel et al., 2017; Fang et al., 2021; Zheng et al., 2022) have been interpreted as pieces 77 of evidence for an active monsoon as early as in the late Eocene. Proposing a monsoonal 78 onset in the Paleogene, in a warmer, ice-free climate, during the early stage of the Tibetan 79 plateau uplift and with much lower continentality due to higher sea level and to the presence 80 of the Paratethys Sea in the west (see the late Eocene paleogeography in Fig. 3a), radically 81 questions our understanding of the forcings of the monsoons. 82

Climate modeling provides a unique opportunity to understand the part played by each potential forcing on the resulting climate. Overall, such studies, and independently of the model used (complexity, resolution) or the simulation protocol (i.e., derived from modern geography or with realistic paleogeography), have tended to highlight that paleogeography

out-compete global pCO_2 variations or far-field ice-sheets effects when it comes to the SAM 87 and EAM settlement and intensification over multi-million years time scales (Farnsworth 88 et al., 2019; J.-Y. Lee et al., 2015; Zoura et al., 2019; Roe et al., 2016; Thomson et al., 89 2021). In a second time, sensitivity experiments of increasing complexity and precision, 90 have helped disentangle the effect of the Himalaya-Tibet (and its sub units) uplift from 91 that of peripheral landforms uplifts, such as the Tian Shan ranges, the Iranian-Anatolian 92 orogen, eastern African domes, Mongolia landforms (H. Tang et al., 2013; Acosta & Huber, 93 2020; R. Zhang et al., 2017), and from the effect of land-sea distribution changes (Fluteau 94 et al., 1999; Z. Zhang et al., 2007). While modeling studies provide mechanistic basis to 95 apprehend potential leverages for monsoon and aridity modulation, it remains paramount to 96 dispose of robust constraints on the paleogeography and paleoclimate evolution, and on the 97 relative chronology of these events. The past decades have been rich in both modeling and 98 field studies, for example with marine cores that were extended back to the late Paleogene 99 (W. Ding et al., 2021; S. Ali et al., 2021; Betzler et al., 2016; Beasley et al., 2021), and 100 increased coverage in well-dated paleoclimate indicators, which offer new constraints on 101 Cenozoic tectonic and paleoclimate. 102

In this contribution, and building upon previous work (Sarr et al., 2022; Tardif et al., 103 2020; Barbolini et al., 2020), we aim at providing a comprehensive picture of large-scale wind 104 circulation, precipitation seasonality and aridity evolution in continental Asia from the late 105 Eocene to the late Miocene, using realistic paleoclimate simulations. In the following parts, 106 we first describe in more depth the Asian monsoon subsystems characteristics (section 2), 107 and propose an up-to-date overview of the Asian monsoon history as understood through 108 proxy and models studies, and of remaining outstanding issues (section 3, Fig. 2). The main 109 paleogeographic events that affected the regions surrounding the Indian Ocean together 110 with continental Asia during the Cenozoic are presented (section 4), along with the past 111 continental configurations that have been used (Fig.3). Other boundary conditions and 112 simulations spin-up are then introduced, as well as criteria retained to track the Asian 113 monsoons evolution throughout the different simulations (section 5). Our results are then 114 presented and discussed in the light of actual knowledge. 115

¹¹⁶ 2 Modern Asian Monsoon subsystems characteristics

The Asian monsoon is subdivided into two regional subsystems: the South Asian 117 Monsoon, spreading roughly from Pakistan to Myanmar, and the East Asian Monsoon, from 118 Myanmar to Japan. We hereafter refer to them as SAM and EAM respectively, SASM and 119 EASM are used for the summer monsoon season while SAWM and EAWM refer to the winter 120 monsoon season. These regional monsoons present specific climatic characteristics and have 121 long been studied by distinct communities, although regions situated in the Southeastern 122 Asian Peninsula can present mixed attributes of both subsystems and may be referred to 123 as "transition area" in the literature (R. Spicer et al., 2017). 124

2.1 Summer season

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The SASM is associated with intense orographic precipitation over the Himalayan 126 foothills as well as over smaller mountains ranges like the Ghats in western India and the 127 Indo-Burman Ranges in Myanmar (Fig. SI 14 a,b). In these regions, summer precipitation 128 account for nearly 80% of the total annual precipitation and are responsible for massive fresh-129 water discharge in the Bay of Bengal, via the Ganga, Brahmaputra and Ayeyarwady Rivers 130 and in the Arabian Sea via the Indus River. Precipitation is supplied by moisture-loaded 131 air masses from the Inter Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ), which is steered towards the 132 Asian continent during summer, as a consequence of the wide low pressure belt develop-133 ing from Arabia to eastern China (Fig. SI 14 d). This typical pressure pattern is driven 134 by the establishment of a surface temperature gradient between the Indian Ocean and the 135 overheated Asian continent and the Arabian Peninsula (up to 40°C, Fig. SI 14 d). 136

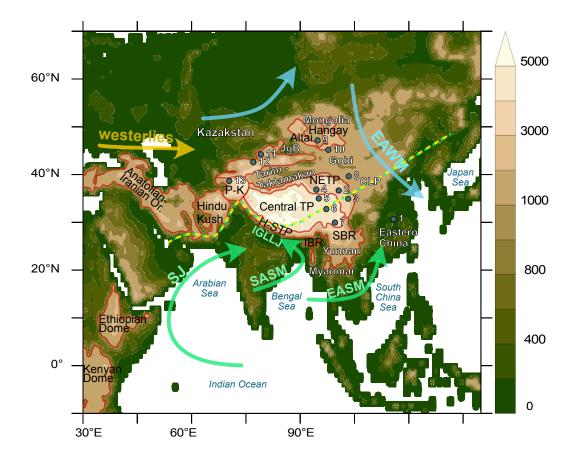


Figure 1. Modern geography and topography (in m), with main seasonal winds: Westerlies (yellow arrow), East Asian Winter monsoon (blue arrow) and Summer monsoons (green arrows) ; Somali Jet (SJ), Indo-Gangetic-Low Level Jet (IGLLJ). Dotted green/yellow line indicate the modern limit between the westerlies and the monsoonal regions. Main landforms units (in black) and main geographical regions (in white) mentioned in the text, with the following abbreviations: H-STP - Himalayas and Southern Tibetan Plateau, NETP - Northeastern Tibetan Plateau, IBR - Indo Burman Ranges, SBR - Sino Burman Ranges, ML - Mongolian Landforms, CLP - Chinese Loess Plateau, JgB - Junggar Basin. Smaller basins and localities mentionned in the text are numbered as follow: (1) Jianghan B., (2) Xining B., (3) Linzhou B., (4) Qaidam, (5) Hoh Xil B., (6) Nangqian B., (7) Markam B., (8) Bayanhot B., (9) Valley of Lakes, (10) Taatsin Gol, (11) Ili B., (12) Issyk Kul B., (13) Tajik B.

Characteristic low-level wind patterns are associated with the SASM, represented by 137 the Findlater Jet (Findlater, 1969) (or Somali Jet (H.-H. Wei & Bordoni, 2016)), which 138 crosses the equator alongshore East Africa and blows towards the Indian subcontinent (Fig. 139 SI 14 d). This powerful trans-equatorial jet triggers strong surface oceanic currents, flowing 140 up the East African and Arabian coasts, then circumventing India from West to East. These 141 currents generate strong upwellings in the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal (Schott & Mc-142 Creary, 2001), favoring broad phytoplankton productivity blooms from July to September 143 (Lévy et al., 2007). Over the Bay of Bengal, the Somali Jet splits into two distinct branches 144 (Fig. SI 14 d), one pursuing its northeastern flow towards southeastern and eastern Asia 145 (from Myanmar to China), and the Indo-Gangetic Low Level Jet (Acosta & Huber, 2017), 146 bifurcating towards northwestern India and the Himalayan foothills. 147

The EASM is characterized by a band of strong convective precipitation stretching 148 from Myanmar to Japan along eastern China, also called the Meiyu-Bayu front. This high-149 precipitation zone is fed by warm moist air, advected from the Bay of Bengal and nearby 150 Indo-Pacific Warm Pool (IPWP) (Fig. SI 14 d). The Meiyu-Bayu front results from the 151 ascension of these moist winds over the Jet Stream in the subtropics (Kong et al., 2017; 152 Molnar et al., 2010; Sampe & Xie, 2010). The progressive northward migration of the front 153 during spring and early summer is likely influenced by the seasonal displacement of the 154 Jet Stream relative to the Tibetan Plateau (TP): it is located south of the TP at $\sim 25^{\circ}$ N in 155 winter, and progressively migrates to its northern edge in summer. The EASM, observed up 156 to $\sim 40^{\circ}$ N, is an extra-tropical phenomenon, and is therefore regularly questioned as being 157 a "real" monsoon (Molnar et al., 2010; R. A. Spicer et al., 2016). 158

2.2 Winter season

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Boreal winter is marked by a generally dry climate over most of the Asian continent. 160 North of $\sim 20^{\circ}$ N, Eastern Asia is swept by northwestern winds bringing cold air and dusts 161 from inland Asia, while south of $\sim 20^{\circ}$ N, northeastern winds carry moisture from the Pacific 162 Warm Pool, leading to monsoonal precipitation over Indonesia and northern Australia (Fig. 163 SI 14 f). The Indian subcontinent experiences a more complex wind pattern, as the westerly 164 winds in the North are channeled by the Zagros and Himalaya-Tibetan orography and then 165 deviated into northeasterly winds over the Arabian Sea, towards the eastern African coast 166 (Fig. SI 14 f). These peculiar winds lead to the formation of upwellings in the Bay of Bengal 167 and the Arabian Sea, allowing phytoplankton productivity blooms to occur in winter as well 168 (Lévy et al., 2007). This typical winter wind circulation (Fig. SI 14 f) is controlled by the 169 pressure gradients forming between the Siberian High and the surrounding Aleutian Low 170 (over the North Pacific) to the East and the low pressure center settled over the Maritime 171 Continent to the South (L. Wang & Chen, 2014). The spectacular extent and strength of 172 the Siberian High in boreal winter is a consequence of a strong radiative cooling of the lower 173 troposphere over snow-covered Asia (Jeong et al., 2011; Cohen et al., 2001; Jhun & Lee, 174 2004). 175

2.3 Summary: what traces leave the monsoons ?

Asian climate is under the crossed influence of the dry East Asian winter monsoon and 177 of three moisture sources, the westerlies and the East and South Asian summer monsoon 178 (Fig. 1). Nowadays, the boundary between regions receiving most of their annual precipita-179 tion via the monsoons or via the westerlies is clearly bounded by the Himalayas in the South, 180 while it fluctuates in the East over China (Chen et al., 2021), crossing Eastern Tibet and 181 the Chinese Loess Plateau (Fig. 1). This boundary however likely evolved in the past, espe-182 cially during the Paleogene when the orography and land-sea distribution were substantially 183 different from today (no Himalayas, less extent Tibetan Plateau, presence of the Paratethys 184 epicontinental Sea until the EOT) (X. Liu, Guo, et al., 2015) (see section 4). Tracking the 185 monsoons back in time can be done thanks to a variety of paleoclimatic archives recording 186 either their winds (intensity, direction) or precipitation (amount, seasonality) (P. Wang et 187 al., 2005; Zhisheng et al., 2015; Tada et al., 2016). Markers of aridification on the other 188 hand, such as increased proportion of xerophytic or halophytic plants or aeolian deposits 189 (dusts, loesses) in the fossil record are often interpreted as evidence for the presence of a 190 winter monsoon. The next section depicts the evolution of the Asian climate throughout 191 the Cenozoic based on these different paleoclimate indicators. 192

¹⁹³ 3 Increasingly old testimonies of paleo-monsoons through times

The classical view for the Asian paleoenvironment evolution throughout the Cenozoic usually proposes a transition from a Paleogene "zonal climatic pattern" to a Neogene "monsoonal climatic pattern" (Guo et al., 2008; X. Sun & Wang, 2005; Jia et al., 2003). The

zonal pattern is described as a widespread arid to semi-arid band stretching across China 197 and bracketed in its southern and northern borders by two humid belts, while the mon-198 soonal pattern hosts a core of pronounced aridity in inland Asia, surrounded by monsoonal 199 (seasonally wet) climate on its southern and eastern edges. This view is mostly based on 200 paleoclimate indicators compilations (pollen, fossils and lithological arguments, e.g. from 201 Boucot et al. (2013)) used to infer either humid conditions (coal, indicators of forested en-202 vironments, large mammals, etc.) or arid ones (evaporites, desert and shrub environment, 203 etc.). Recent evidence for highly seasonal climate in India, Myanmar and China as early 204 as in the Eocene, at least 20 Myr earlier than previously thought, nevertheless challenge 205 this paradigm. This section aims at presenting in the most comprehensive way the broad 206 paleoenvironmental changes inferred from paleoclimate indicators in Asia from the Eocene 207 to the early Pliocene, which are tentatively gathered in Fig. 2 (upper part). Localities and 208 basins mentioned throughout the text are localized in Fig. 1. 209

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3.1 Eocene to Oligocene paleoenvironment evolution

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A progressive increase in summer monsoon indices from the Eocene to the Oligocene

Oldest testimonies of strongly seasonal precipitation in Southern Asia come from early 213 Eocene floras situated in northwestern India (Shukla et al., 2014; Bhatia, Khan, et al., 2021) 214 and from mid-late Eocene (40 Ma) floras and isotopic measurements in freshwater gastropod 215 shells and mammals tooth enamel found in Myanmar (Licht et al., 2014; H. Huang et 216 al., 2021). Both regions were however located further South at their respective period of 217 deposition (between the equator and $\sim 10^{\circ}$ N, Shukla et al. (2014); Westerweel et al. (2019)) 218 and their seasonality is therefore mainly interpreted within the scope of a pronounced ITCZ 219 seasonal migration rather than monsoonal climate. 220

Further east, in the Yunnan region (Southwestern China), today submitted to a mix-221 ture of Southern and Eastern Asian summer monsoon, a shift from arid/semi-arid to humid 222 environment is recorded during the late Eocene and interpreted as the onset of the Asian 223 monsoon at that time (Sorrel et al., 2017; Fang et al., 2021; Zheng et al., 2022). Such cli-224 mate transition is inferred by the presence of coal layers, a change in the pollen record from 225 xerophytic to mixed forest, change in lithology interpreted as lake and swamps expansion, 226 together with the presence of fossils of freshwater fishes, gastropods and large mammals. 227 While the precise date for this paleoenvironmental change is still debated between ~ 41 Ma 228 (Fang et al., 2021), ~36 Ma (Zheng et al., 2022) and ~35.5 Ma (Sorrel et al., 2017), it never-229 the the Eocene-Oligocene Transition (\sim 34 Ma). Proposed driving mechanisms 230 to explain this regional climate shift usually involve either the crossing of a Tibetan Plateau 231 elevation threshold (Zheng et al., 2022), a response to the Paratethys Sea retreat in the 232 west, that would have allowed the penetration of more moisture from the east (Fang et al., 233 2021), or a response to the global climate cooling initiated after the Middle Eocene Climate 234 Optimum (MECO) and subsequent sea surface temperature patterns reorganization (Sorrel 235 et al., 2017). 236

Signs for the presence of an Eocene East Asian summer monsoon are also debated. 237 In eastern China, Eocene paleovegetation mostly point to warm, humid and weakly sea-238 sonal every even forested environments on the coast (R. A. Spicer et al., 2016; X. Ma et al., 239 2012; Pound & Salzmann, 2017), except for northeastern middle-late Eocene Chinese floras 240 retrieved from the coal deposits of the Huadian basin, that already seem to indicate adapta-241 tion to highly seasonal climate (Meng et al., 2018). Further inland, toward the eastern edge 242 of the TP, these paleoenvironments gradually translate into sub-humid and/or seasonally 243 dry conditions, as attested by various basin displaying alternating mudstone and evapor-244 ite deposits (D. Wang et al., 2013; Abels et al., 2011). Highly resolved deposits from the 245 Jianghan basin, spanning the mid Eocene to early Oligocene ($\sim 40-34$ Ma), together with 246 modeling studies (Tardif et al., 2021), have shown that the penetration of moisture into east-247

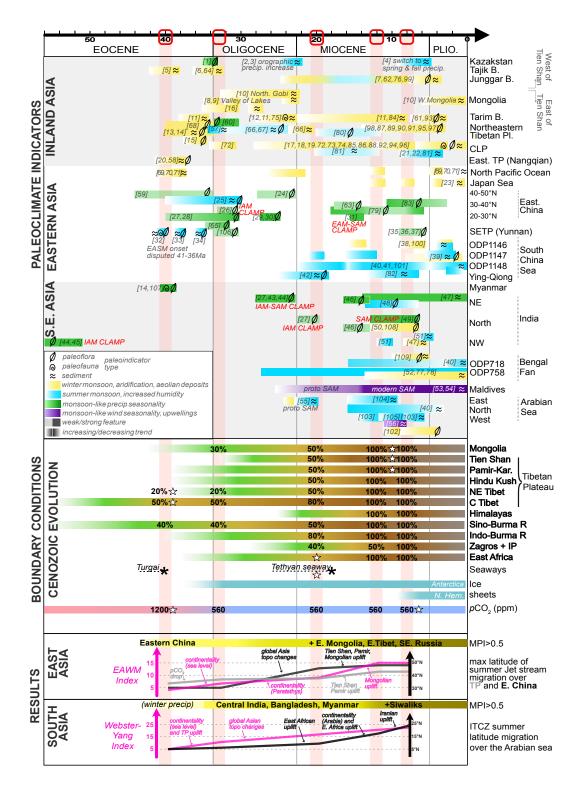


Figure 2. upper Paleoclimate tendencies recorded in inland, eastern and southern Asia. Bibliographic references in brackets are listed in SI Table 3 ; center Evolution of main landforms, seaways, ice sheets and pCO_2 during the Cenozoic overlain with values used in our reference simulations (elevations expressed in % of modern). White stars indicate parameters that where tested with sensitivity experiments ; **bottom** Overview of the main monsoon indicators evolution obtained in this study. We used the following abbreviations: NETP (SETP) - Northeastern (Southeastern) Tibetan Plateau, CLP - Chinese Loess Plateau.

ern China in the late Eocene was likely strongly modulated by orbital forcing. This may
indicate that this Paleogene wet/dry zonal climatic pattern previously introduced (Guo et al., 2008; X. Sun & Wang, 2005) was already periodically disturbed in the late Eocene, and
may have prefigured a more stable and widespread monsoon-like precipitation seasonality
settlement in the Oligocene.

Indeed, after the global cooling and aridification occurring at the Eocene-Oligocene 253 Transition, pieces of evidence for monsoon-like precipitation seasonality of variable intensity 254 become more widespread in floras from both China (X. Ma et al., 2012; Herman et al., 2017; 255 Vornlocher et al., 2021; J. Ren et al., 2021; Miao, 2013; Ling et al., 2021; S. Li et al., 2018; 256 C. Huang & Hinnov, 2019; H. Tang et al., 2020) and India (Bhatia, Khan, et al., 2021; 257 R. Spicer et al., 2017; Srivastava et al., 2012). Additionally, oceanographic records from 258 adjacent seas (Bay of Bengal and South China Sea) that were recently extended back to 259 the late Paleogene, have been used to track the SAM and EAM evolution from the middle 260 Oligocene onward. Drilling from the Ying-Qiong Basin in the South China Sea, spanning 261 the late Oligocene to early Miocene (25-18 Ma), record an increase in terrigenous organic 262 matter influx, together with increased tropical-subtropical angiosperm pollen proportion, 263 which are interpreted as signs of increasing East Asian summer monsoon during this period 264 (W. Ding et al., 2021). In the Bay of Bengal (ODP 758), measurements of clays radiogenic 265 isotopic composition, indicating undisturbed weathering patterns over the last 27 Ma, are 266 interpreted as signs of stable South Asian summer monsoon activity since at least the late 267 Oligocene (S. Ali et al., 2021). 268

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3.1.2 Late Eocene aridification in response to the Paratethys Sea retreat and global climate cooling

Markers of arid to sub-humid climate are already widespread in inland Asia in the 271 Eocene with, for example, many sites displaying pollen assemblages characteristics of steppe-272 desert environments such as in the Xining, Hoh Xil, Qaidam and Tarim basins (Q. Yuan et 273 al., 2020; Miao, Wu, et al., 2016; X. Ma et al., 2012). During the mid-late Eocene (\sim 40-34 274 Ma), inland Asia records an evolution toward drier conditions, as suggested by increased 275 proportions of xerophytic plants such as Nitraria and Ephedra in Xining, Hoh Xil, Qaidam 276 (Northeastern Tibet), Nangqian (central-eastern Tibet) and Tarim basins (Q. Yuan et al., 277 2020; Barbolini et al., 2020; Hoorn et al., 2012; Miao, Wu, et al., 2016), δ^{18} O measurements 278 from ostracod shells in the Tarim basin (Bougeois et al., 2018), clumped isotopes from 279 pedogenic carbonates in the Xining basin (Page et al., 2019), compound-specific hydrogen 280 isotope analyses ($\delta^2 H$) applied to sedimentary leaf wax *n*-alkanes in the Qaidam basin (Wu 281 et al., 2021) and by lipid biomarkers and compound-specific carbon isotopic compositions 282 from bulk sediments in the Nangqian basin (J. Wei et al., 2022). The presence of detrital 283 material attributed to Asian dusts is also recorded in sediments from Central North Pacific 284 (GPC3 and ODP site 1215) since ~ 40 Ma (Pettke et al., 2002; D. Rea et al., 1985; Ziegler 285 et al., 2007). 286

This late Eocene aridification stage is mostly interpreted as resulting from the reduced 287 westerly moisture input during the two successive Paratethys Sea regression phases from 288 the Tarim and the Tajik basins, recorded between $\sim 41-37$ Ma (Carrapa et al., 2015; J. Sun 289 et al., 2020, 2022; Bougeois et al., 2018; Bosboom et al., 2014b; Kaya et al., 2019). Highly 290 resolved sediment deposits, such as those of the Xining basin (northeastern Tibet) display 291 good correlation between wetter evaporite layers and Paratethys Sea transgressions phases 292 into the Tajik and Tarim basins, and between arid mudstone intervals and regression phases. 293 This confirms the key role played by the westerlies and the Paratethys Sea as a major 294 moisture source for inland Asia in the Eocene, even over long distances (Meijer et al., 2019; 295 Bosboom et al., 2014a). Additionally, a strong obliquity cyclicity is imprinted on the Xining 296 evaporite/mudflat layers in the late Eocene (40-34 Ma), coeval with the appearance of loess-297 like dusts in the mudflat phases (Meijer et al., 2021; Licht et al., 2014). This hints a marked 298 influence of high latitudes dynamics, such as incipient ice-sheets at the poles (Abels et al., 299

2011; Xiao et al., 2010) and variations in the Siberian High intensity (Meijer et al., 2021), on inland Asian climate at that time.

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3.1.3 Oligocene climate fluctuations and inception of major modern Asian deserts

The Oligocene evolution of inland Asian climate appears both regionally and timely 304 contrasted. In the early Oligocene, a few sites situated within the westerly moisture re-305 gion tend to show increased humidity trends, recorded by δ^{18} O isotopic measurements in 306 pedogenic carbonates (Kent-Corson et al., 2009) in the Tarim and western Qaidam basins 307 together with δ^2 H measurements in leaf waxes (Wu et al., 2021) and leaf fossil CLAMP anal-308 ysis suggesting wet environment with weak (not monsoonal) precipitation seasonality (Song 309 et al., 2020) from western Qaidam. On the other hand, many testimonies for drier climate 310 are reported within the eastern Asian monsoon domain by δ^{18} O isotopic measurement in 311 pedogenic carbonates from the eastern Qaidam basin (Y. Sun et al., 2020; Kent-Corson et 312 al., 2009), Lanzhou basin in the Chinese Loess plateau area (B. Li et al., 2016), together with 313 CLAMP analysis on fossil leaves advocating for an increased (and monsoon-like) precipita-314 tion seasonality in Lanzhou (Miao, 2013), and Markam basin in southeastern TP (T. Su, 315 Spicer, et al., 2019), in agreement with records of increased monsoon-like precipitation sea-316 sonality in Eastern China introduced in the previous section. Interpretations nevertheless 317 diverge and suggest that this aridification trend may indicate either weakened East Asian 318 summer monsoon precipitation due to global cooling after the EOT (Wu et al., 2021), in-319 creased winter aridity due to the final Paratethys Sea retreat, global sea level fall after the 320 EOT and/or global cooling (Miao, 2013; B. Li et al., 2016), or be due to TP uplift (T. Su, 321 Spicer, et al., 2019). 322

In the Taatsin Gol region, at the southern edge of the Hangay Dome and extreme 323 north of the modern Gobi desert, isotope measurement from pedogenic carbonates indi-324 cate aridification since the early Oligocene (Caves Rugenstein et al., 2014). Finer resolved 325 records reveal several bursts of aridification at \sim 34-33, \sim 31, \sim 28 and \sim 23 (Baldermann et 326 al., 2021) and the presence of loess as soon as ~ 34 Ma (J. Sun & Windley, 2015). Proposed 327 mechanisms for such aridification involve increased continentality due to land-sea distribu-328 tion fluctuations at 34 Ma (J. Sun & Windley, 2015) and an early Hangay Dome uplift that 329 would have acted as a barrier to moisture advection from Siberia to Mongolia as soon as 330 the Oligocene (Caves Rugenstein et al., 2014). Better resolved records however highlight 331 the good correlation in time between ice sheets expansion phases and these aridification 332 pulses, and therefore propose that large scale climate fluctuations at that time were the 333 main drivers of Mongolia hydrologic dynamics (Baldermann et al., 2021). Further south, in 334 the Bayanhot basin (southern Gobi), two bursts of aridification inferred from environmental 335 magnetic, mineralogical and geochemical study at ~ 31 and ~ 28 Ma seem to further confirm 336 the influence of high latitude ice sheet fluctuation on Mongolian Oligocene climate (Wasiljeff 337 et al., 2022). 338

In the mid to late Oligocene, massive eolian dust deposits are reported in three major 339 sites: in the Chinese loess plateau in Northeastern Tibet starting at ~ 29 Ma (Garzione 340 et al., 2005; Qiang et al., 2011) (see (Meijer et al., 2021) for a full review), in the Tarim 341 Basin (hosting today the Taklamakan desert) at $\sim 27-22$ Ma (Zheng et al., 2015) and in 342 the Junggar basin at ~24 Ma (J. Sun et al., 2010). Aridification is also inferred from δ^{18} O 343 isotopic measurements from ostracods and pedogenic carbonates from the Tarim basin at 344 ~ 25 Ma (Bougeois et al., 2018; Kent-Corson et al., 2009) and from isotopic records in 345 stromatolites from the Junggar basin loosely dated in the early Miocene (W. Yang et al., 346 2019). This second step of aridification is coeval with δ^{18} O and δ^{13} C isotopic measurements 347 from pedogenic carbonates suggesting increased orographic precipitation in the Issyk Kul 348 and Ili basins, both situated on the western side of the Tian Shan ranges (Hellwig et al., 349 2018; Macaulay et al., 2016). Collectively, these observations are interpreted as the sign 350 that the Tian Shan-Pamir uplift had reached an elevation threshold that would have started 351

shielding the Tarim and Junggar basins from westerlies moisture input, thus favoring their
 aridification (Bougeois et al., 2018; W. Yang et al., 2019).

This late Oligocene to early Miocene aridification phase seems to be recorded by sev-354 eral oceanic drillings, for example in Central North Pacific, with an increase in dust mass 355 accumulation rate recorded at ~ 25 Ma by (drilling site GPC3) (D. K. Rea, 1994; Pettke 356 et al., 2002) and at ~ 22 Ma (ODP site 1215) (Ziegler et al., 2007). These drillings are 357 however situated far from the Asian coast and underwent important plate motion through-358 out the Cenozoic, making it difficult to disentangle variations due to inland Asia climate 359 changes, possible global atmospheric/oceanic circulation patterns changes, and variations 360 in the recorded signal due to plate motion. The presence of a proto winter monsoon wind 361 circulation is also suggested by increased proportion of dusts, inferred from magnetic sus-362 ceptibility measurement in the Maldives (IODP sites U1467, U1468) at ~ 24 Ma (Betzler 363 et al., 2016), and by an increase in water column mixing and ventilation evidenced by a 364 reduction in $\Delta \delta^{13}$ C, increase in bulk sediment Mn/Fe and Mn/Ti and for a miniferal Mn/Ca 365 in the eastern Arabian Sea (Beasley et al., 2021). 366

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3.2 Strengthening of summer and winter monsoon patterns in the Neogene

3.2.1 An East-West gradation in Miocene South Asian summer monsoon variations and the expansion of grassland

Despite a better coverage in both continental and marine records in the Neogene, sub-370 stantially diverging interpretations remain regarding the evolution of the monsoons winds 371 and precipitation seasonality, especially during the late Miocene. Precipitation proxies from 372 the South Asian Monsoon domain allow to highlight an East-West gradation in climate evo-373 lution throughout the Miocene, recorded in the Siwaliks deposits of the Himalayan foreland 374 basin. In northeasternmost India (Arunachal Pradesh), modern-like monsoon precipitation 375 seasonality is inferred from plant macrofossils since the middle Miocene (13 Ma) and dis-376 plays little variation in intensity when compared to early Pleistocene fossils from the same 377 locality (Khan et al., 2014). Further west, plant macrofossils and pollen from Darjeeling, 378 Nepal, northwestern India and Pakistan show a progressive replacement of middle Miocene 379 evergreen forests by deciduous forests in the late Miocene, and finally a massive expansion of 380 grassland in the latest Miocene (Hoorn et al., 2000; Bhatia et al., 2022; Bhatia, Srivastava, 381 et al., 2021; Srivastava et al., 2018). This late Miocene floristic change is also accompanied 382 by several shifts in δ^{13} C toward more positive values, recorded between 10.5 and 6 Ma by 383 isotopic measurements in pedogenic carbonates and organic matter and lipid biomarkers in 384 the Central Siwaliks (Nepal) (Quade et al., 1995; Neupane et al., 2020; Dettman et al., 2001), 385 and in the Western Siwaliks (northwestern India and Pakistan) (Sanyal et al., 2004; Vögeli 386 et al., 2017; Quade & Cerling, 1995). Similar trends are also recorded in nearby marine 387 basins by isotopic measurements from bulk sediments and leaf wax, pollen and macrofossils 388 at \sim 8-7 Ma in the Arabian Sea (ODP 722 and IODP U1457) (Feakins et al., 2020; Y. Huang 389 et al., 2007) and at \sim 7-6 Ma in the Bengal fan (Polissar et al., 2021). 390

This marked carbon isotope excursion is observed in other localities of the globe and 391 testify of an important ecological change, characterized by the replacement of plants using 392 the C3 photosynthetic pathway by grasslands using the C4 photosynthetic pathway (Cerling 393 et al., 1993; Tauxe & Feakins, 2020; Edwards et al., 2010). Recent re-calibration of these 394 Asian continental carbon isotope records and comparison to other available records allow to 395 show that C4 expansion occurred at distinct times: ~ 10 Ma in Africa, ~ 8 Ma in Pakistan, 396 \sim 7 Ma in peninsular India, \sim 6 Ma in Nepal and later during the Pliocene in Australia 397 and South America (Tauxe & Feakins, 2020). Although a late Miocene pCO_2 drawdown 398 was initially proposed as the main driver for the C_3/C_4 transition, such distinct timing in 399 ecological turnover over the globe is assumed to reflect the multiplicity of forcing factors at 400 play in this major biome reorganization. In the Siwaliks, this East-West climate gradation 401 likely reflects the crossing of a precipitation threshold somewhere in Nepal (Central Siwa-402

liks), with northwestern India, Nepal and Pakistan experiencing drier winters and overall aridification in the late Miocene compared to the more stably humid northeastern Indian region. The C4 grasslands expansion would thus possibly result from a combination of pCO_2 decrease, reduced moisture advection from the westerlies in this region, Tibetan Plateau and Himalayas uplift and to more frequent forest fire that would have favored grasses over trees (Sanyal et al., 2004; Vögeli et al., 2017; Quade & Cerling, 1995; Srivastava et al., 2018; Tauxe & Feakins, 2020; Polissar et al., 2021; Feakins et al., 2020).

Precipitation proxies recovered from marine drillings offer contrasting information. In 410 411 the central Bay of Bengal (ODP site 758), relatively undisturbed isotopic composition of clays issued from silicate weathering since the Oligocene (~ 27 Ma) are interpreted as signs 412 of a stable South Asian summer monsoon presence since that time (S. Ali et al., 2021). 413 On the other hand, chemical weathering (CIA, K/Al ratio) and sediment accumulation 414 rates from both the Indus Fan and the Bay of Bengal recording the physical erosion of the 415 Himalayas and southern Tibet, suggest that SASM precipitation reached a maxima in the 416 middle Miocene (\sim 10-16 Ma) before declining between \sim 8-3 Ma (P. Clift et al., 2008). This 417 decline was primarily interpreted as reflecting a weakened SASM precipitation (P. Clift et 418 al., 2008), although other studies based on similar proxies from the Bay of Bengal argue it 419 may rather reflect an intensification of the winter monsoon (S. Ali et al., 2021), possibly 420 coupled to a weakening of the South Asian summer monsoon (J. Lee et al., 2020), which 421 seem in better agreement with continental proxies, and with marine records from the South 422 China Sea (Wan et al., 2010) (developed in the next section). 423

Wind proxies retrieved from the Arabian Sea and the Bengal Fan pointing to the 424 presence of seasonal wind reversal (hence of a winter monsoon) since the middle Miocene 425 seem to corroborate this explanation, although some aspects of the SAM wind circulation 426 evolution remain debated. In the Arabian Sea, the appearance of *Globigerina Bulloides* 427 in the sediments had initially been used to infer an intensification (or an onset) of the 428 South Asian summer monsoon wind circulation at ~ 8 Ma (Kroon et al., 1991), based on 429 the assumption that stronger SASM winds would translate into stronger upwelling activity. 430 Those records have since then been extended back in time (Bialik et al., 2020; Zhuang et al., 431 2017; Gupta et al., 2015) and combined with analysis of current-controlled drift sediments 432 and geochemical tracers from the Maldives archipelago (Betzler et al., 2016). These new 433 studies now point to a settlement of a "proto" South Asian monsoon wind circulation since 434 the late Oligocene (~ 25 Ma), and of its reinforcement in the middle Miocene ($\sim 13-10$ Ma) 435 (Betzler et al., 2016; Zhuang et al., 2017; Bialik et al., 2020) and possibly also in the late 436 Miocene (\sim 8-7 Ma) (Gupta et al., 2015). Nevertheless, increasing number of studies based 437 on marine records from both the Arabian Sea and the Bengal Fan do not observe this latest 438 Miocene (8-7 Ma) SASM peak (Bolton et al., 2021; Tripathi et al., 2017; Betzler et al., 2016; 439 Y. Huang et al., 2007). Strong SAM wind circulation since at least 10 Ma is also supported 440 by clay mineralogy, detrital isotopes, export productivity and sediments accumulation from 441 records in the southern Bay of Bengal (IODP 1443) (Bolton et al., 2021; J. Lee et al., 2020)) 442 and the eastern Arabian Sea (IODP 1456) (Tripathi et al., 2017)). 443

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3.2.2 EASM in the Neogene

Summer precipitation typical of the East Asian summer monsoon is assumed to occur 445 throughout the Neogene (22-3 Ma), as attested by sediments exported to the South China 446 Sea, such as weathering indices (P. Clift et al., 2008), δ^{13} C measurements in black carbon 447 (Jia et al., 2003), pollen, biomarkers, kerogen composition and clay mineralogy (W. Ding et 448 al., 2021). On land, δ^{18} O from paleosol carbonates in the CLP (Suarez et al., 2011) and most 449 Chinese floras, studied with Coexistence Approach, CLAMP or Bayesian method applied 450 to pollen, point to summer precipitation comparable to modern amounts (Q. Wang et al., 451 2021; Yao et al., 2011; Xing et al., 2012; Hui et al., 2021; B. Wang et al., 2021; Q.-g. Sun et 452 al., 2002). Most of those studies nevertheless suggest wetter winters due to weaker winter 453 monsoon until the latest Miocene, with a few exceptions, such as the mid-Miocene floras 454

from the Zhangpu biota in southeastern China characteristic of megathermal seasonal forest
which CLAMP signature showing affinities with EAM and SAM floras (B. Wang et al., 2021).
The variations in EASM intensity throughout the Miocene remain controversial in both
continental and marine deposits, but two intensification peaks usually emerge, tentatively
linked to the Middle Miocene Climatic Optimum (~17-14 Ma) and to the Miocene-Pliocene
boundary (~8-5 Ma).

The middle Miocene EASM peak is inferred from sediments from the South China Sea 461 by chemical weathering proxies at 15-12 Ma (P. Clift et al., 2008), and δ^{13} C in black carbon 462 (Jia et al., 2003), although the latter rather point to a step-wise intensification of EASM in 463 the course of the Neogene (at ca. 20, 15, 10, 6 and 2 Ma). On land, characterization of iron 464 oxides from the Chinese Loess Plateau suggest an EASM peak at 16-14 Ma (H. Zhao et al., 465 2020). The proportion of *Fupingopollenites*, an extinct palynomorph supposed to be highly 466 dependent on summer moisture, has also been used in an extensive compilation spanning 467 available Miocene Chinese pollen records and point to an important penetration of EASM 468 moisture, up to the eastern Qaidam basin, during the MMCO, before retreating to the East 469 in the rest of the Neogene (Miao, Song, et al., 2016). 470

A substantial increase in EASM strength is also robustly suggested by many lines of 471 evidence in the late Miocene to Pliocene, although with notable variations in onset timing 472 (10-4 Ma). In the South China Sea, it is inferred from δ^{18} O and Mg/Ca derived temper-473 ature records of surface and sub-surface water (IODP U1501) (C. Yang et al., 2021), clay 474 minerals, grain size, major and trace elements analysis from terrigenous sediments (ODP 475 1146) (Wan et al., 2007, 2010) and by black carbon δ^{13} C (Jia et al., 2003). In China, this 476 EASM intensification is recorded through mineralogical, chemical and magnetic analysis of 477 sedimentary deposits in the Chinese Loess Plateau (Ao et al., 2016, 2021; H. Zhao et al., 478 2020), and by pollen from the Tianshui (Hui et al., 2021) and the Weihe Basin (L. Zhao 479 et al., 2020). The forcing factors responsible for these EASM intensification peaks remain 480 debated, but are usually attributed to global warming (Ao et al., 2021; H. Wang et al., 481 2019) and/or to Neogene TP uplift phases (Hui et al., 2021; X. Ren et al., 2020; H. Zhao 482 et al., 2020). Although EASM and EAWM evolution show few correlation during most of 483 Cenozoic, this late Miocene EASM increase is notably accompanied with EAWM increase 484 (described in next section). 485

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3.2.3 Miocene to Pliocene aridification pulses in response to regional uplifts

Throughout the Miocene, dust deposition continues in the Chinese Loess Plateau (Guo 488 et al., 2002; Meijer et al., 2021), Tarim-Taklamakan (Kent-Corson et al., 2009; Zheng et 489 al., 2015; Heermance et al., 2018) and Junggar basins (J. Sun et al., 2010). In parallel 490 with previously mentioned indices for an increased EASM during the MMCO (\sim 17-14 Ma) 491 (P. Clift et al., 2008; Jia et al., 2003; H. Zhao et al., 2020), a warmer and less arid climate 492 interval is suggested by pollen showing relatively lower proportion of xerophytic taxa in the 493 Junggar (J. Sun et al., 2010) and Qaidam basins (Miao et al., 2011). After the MMCO, 494 a pronounced step-wise aridification is recorded in most of inland Asia until the Miocene-495 Pliocene boundary (Lu et al., 2010; Lu & Guo, 2014; Z.-H. Tang & Ding, 2013). Here again, the timing for aridification steps varies with the region and is usually tentatively explained 497 by a combination of global cooling, ice-sheet expansion and multiple regional uplift episodes 498 occurring at that time. 499

In the eastern part of inland Asia, encompassing the Chinese Loess Plateau, central China and northeastern Tibetan Plateau, this aridification is attributed to northeastern TP uplift (Miao et al., 2012), Altai mountains uplift (Caves Rugenstein et al., 2014) and/or late Miocene cooling (Lu et al., 2010; Lu & Guo, 2014; Peng et al., 2016). Such aridification is supported by overwhelming evidences, such as pollen and biomarkers documenting a stepwise transition from sub-humid to arid environment starting at ~15 Ma (J. Liu et al., 2016;

Miao et al., 2011; Jiang & Ding, 2008; Peng et al., 2016), massive grasses expansion at 506 \sim 11-7 Ma (Suarez et al., 2011; Barbolini et al., 2020; Y. Ma et al., 2005; L. Zhao et al., 507 2020; H. Wang et al., 2019), widespread eolian deposition at ~8-7 Ma (X. Ma & Jiang, 2015; 508 Guo et al., 2002; Qiang et al., 2011; B. Li et al., 2016; Jiang et al., 2017), increased δ^{18} O of pedogenic carbonates and terrestrial mammals tooth enamel at $\sim 14-13$ and $\sim 7-5$ Ma 510 (B. Li et al., 2016; Kent-Corson et al., 2009; Wu et al., 2021; W. Liu et al., 2014; Y. Sun et 511 al., 2020; Kaakinen et al., 2006; Y. Wang & Deng, 2005), n-alkanes analysis from Qaidam 512 sediments since 13 Ma (Z. Liu et al., 2014) and dominance of cold-aridiphilous mollusks 513 proportion in the CLP from 7-5 Ma (F. Li et al., 2008). 514

The western part of inland Asia, comprising the Tarim and Junggar basins and several 515 sites in eastern Kazakhstan, which all add to the body of evidence indicating mid to late 516 Miocene aridification, as shown by increased xerophytic and grasses pollen proportions at 517 ~7-5 Ma (J. Sun et al., 2010; J. Sun & Zhang, 2008; Z. Zhang & Sun, 2011; Barbolini et 518 al., 2020; J. Sun et al., 2008), massive eolian deposition in the western Tarim at \sim 12-7 Ma 519 (Heermance et al., 2018) and permanent drying of lakes in the eastern Tarim at ~ 5 Ma 520 (W. Liu et al., 2014). The pedogenic carbonates $\delta^{18}O$ record of these regions nevertheless 521 offers diverging pattern evolution, that have been tentatively explained by their location 522 with respect to the Tian Shan and Altai mountains (Caves Rugenstein et al., 2017). Regions 523 today lying upwind of the Tian Shan and Altai mountains, such as the Issyk Kul (Macaulay 524 et al., 2016), Junggar (Charreau et al., 2012) and Zaysan basins (Caves Rugenstein et 525 al., 2017) show a decline in δ^{18} O between 10-5 Ma (varying from ~1.5 to 4 ‰) which 526 was interpreted as a change in precipitation seasonality following the uplift of the Altai 527 Mountains (Caves Rugenstein et al., 2017). On the other hand, increased δ^{18} O values since 528 ~ 15 Ma and peaking at $\sim 7-5$ Ma in the Tarim basin, situated downwind of the Tian Shan 529 ranges display trends similar as those of the Qaidam basin (Kent-Corson et al., 2009), which 530 are interpreted as indicating aridification at that time. 531

EAWM intensification peaks are also recorded offshore at \sim 15-12, \sim 8-5 and \sim 3 Ma, 532 in usually good coherence with continental data. In the South China Sea, it is suggested 533 by increased black carbon concentration and accumulation (whose transportation to the 534 Sea would be favored by stronger winter winds) (Jia et al., 2003), planktic and benthic 535 δ^{18} O records and mixed layer temperature (A. Holbourn et al., 2021; A. E. Holbourn et al., 536 2018), clay mineralogy and grain size analysis (Wan et al., 2007), and by indices of decreased 537 chemical weathering (G. Wei et al., 2006). In the Sea of Japan, clay mineral assemblage 538 and isotopic analysis of silicate fraction covering the last 15 Ma suggests a stepwise drying 539 of Central Asia suggested at 12, 8 and 3.5 Ma (Shen et al., 2017). In the North Pacific, 540 an increase in Asian dusts proportion is recorded at ~ 10 and ~ 4 Ma (D. Rea et al., 1985; 541 Pettke et al., 2002). Last, brutal onset of SAM wind seasonality (and therefore occurrence 542 of winter monsoon reversed winds) is inferred at ~ 12 Ma in the Maldives (Betzler et al., 543 2016) and in the eastern Arabian Sea (X. Yang et al., 2020). 544

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3.3 Assessing forcings and mechanisms through climate models

3.3.1 SAM forcings assessed by modeling experiments derived from modern geography

Major forcings proposed to explain multi-million year monsoon variability are global 548 climate variations, changes in topography and changes in land-sea distribution. Attributing 549 a specific change to one or several of these forcings is nevertheless complicated by the 550 fact that they may vary at the same time, produce non-linear responses with potentially 551 antagonizing effects and because they are sometimes poorly dated or quantified. Modeling 552 experiments, first derived from modern geographies and boundary conditions, have helped 553 better understanding the role played by these different forcings in shaping the regional 554 monsoons. 555

The Tibetan Plateau has long been seen as instrumental in driving the South Asian 556 monsoon circulation and precipitation, its elevated heated surface acting as a "heat pump" 557 driving the convergence of the surrounding air masses (Kutzbach et al., 1993; Zoura et al., 558 2019; Molnar et al., 1993). It seems now that it is rather the physical barrier created by 559 the landform (the Himalayas or the Tibetan Plateau) that is essential to induce abundant 560 orographic precipitation over northern India, through steering and lifting of moist air masses 561 (Abbott et al., 2016; Boos & Kuang, 2010; Acosta & Huber, 2020). The condensation 562 of moisture in these ascending air masses leads to important latent heat release in the 563 high troposphere over northern India, which acts as a positive feedback sustaining summer 564 convection and precipitation in South Asia (He, 2017). The large-scale monsoon circulation 565 seasonal reversal resulting in the initial advection of these moist air masses over Asia in late 566 spring and early summer, on the other hand, is essentially driven by surface ocean-continent 567 temperature gradients and resulting pressure patterns (Acosta & Huber, 2020; Merlis et al., 568 2013). 569

Smaller orographic features were also shown to play a critical role in shaping and 570 strengthen the South Asian monsoon. By channeling the Somali Jet and insulating it from 571 the subtropical dry westerly flow, the Anatolian-Iranian landform were shown to greatly con-572 tribute to enhance moisture transport towards India and Eastern Asia (Acosta & Huber, 573 2020; He, 2017; H. Tang et al., 2013). The Eastern African highlands, positioned on the way 574 of the ITCZ flow, are critical in shaping both African and South Asian climate (Bannon, 575 1979; Rodwell & Hoskins, 1995; Sepulchre et al., 2006). Recent studies have specifically 576 demonstrated that Eastern African highlands presence contribute greatly to strengthen and 577 concentrate the Somali Jet, but that their absence would result, quite counter-intuitively, 578 into higher summer precipitation over SAM region, due to increased advection directly from 579 the ocean to the continent (H.-H. Wei & Bordoni, 2016; Chakraborty et al., 2009). This last 580 aspect hints that strong upwellings, due to strong atmospheric circulation, may not correlate 581 with strong precipitation on land. The effect of the Pamirs, Tian Shan and northeastern 582 TP uplifts on SAM remains unclear. When these uplift together with Mongolian landforms, 583 H. Tang et al. (2013) simulate increased moisture advection to eastern China but decreased 584 precipitation over India, while the opposite effect is obtained when not modifying (mod-585 ern) Mongolian topography (R. Zhang et al., 2017). Apart from differences coming from 586 the model and boundary conditions, this likely points to the complex interactions existing 587 between the SAM and EAM regional monsoons. 588

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3.3.2 EAM forcings assessed by modeling experiments derived from modern geography

In contrast with the modest effect it has on the SAM, the Tibetan Plateau uplift is 591 instrumental for the EASM, as the heating of the Plateau, induces a cyclonic circulation 592 anomaly promoting advection of moist air masses towards Eastern Asia (Z. Zhang et al., 593 2007; H. Tang et al., 2013; R. Zhang et al., 2017). Additionally, simulations testing the 594 effects of increased Asian continentality (to mirror a global sea level fall or the retreat of 595 the Paratethys Sea, for example), have shown that it results in amplified summer moisture 596 convergence from the Indian Ocean towards Asia, due to changes in surface temperature 597 gradients deepening the continental low pressure belt (Z. Zhang et al., 2007). 598

Although smaller than the HTP complex, the Pamir, Tian Shan and Mongolian land-599 forms are adequately situated in latitude to interfere both dynamically and thermally with 600 planetary-scale atmospheric circulation. Their uplift was shown to enhance the aridity in 601 inland Asia (actual Gobi and Taklimakan deserts), as it reinforces the EAWM circulation 602 patterns (X. Liu & Yin, 2002; X. Liu, Sun, et al., 2015; Baldwin & Vecchi, 2016; Sato, 603 2009). By creating a cold pool and deviating the westerlies towards northern Siberia, the 604 Mongolian orography has been proposed to be responsible for the Jet Stream northward 605 migration in summer and intensity in winter (White et al., 2017; Shi et al., 2015; Sha et al., 606 2020), and for most of the Siberian High location and intensity (Sha et al., 2015). 607

3.3.3 Modeling experiments derived from paleo boundary conditions

Modeling studies based on modern geographies are nevertheless limited in to what extent they allow to understand past changes, especially for periods where very different geographies and climate prevailed. Paleoclimate simulations, using sets of realistic (as much as possible) paleo-boundary conditions are however rarer. Indeed, they usually imply high computational cost, and require important background knowledge on past constraints (paleogeography, CO₂, solar constant, ice-sheets volume).

More specifically, paleoclimate modeling has confirmed that increasing Asian conti-615 nentality during the Oligocene and the Miocene, mirroring either the Paratethys Sea retreat 616 and/or global eustatic sea level fall, was a key leverage of increased moisture advection 617 toward Asia in summer (Fluteau et al., 1999; Ramstein et al., 1997; Z. Zhang et al., 2014; 618 Sarr et al., 2022). In Oligocene conditions, the uplift of the peripheral Tian Shan, Pamir 619 and northeastern portions of the TP was also shown to promote inland Asian aridity, when 620 compared to the sole uplift of the "core" Tibetan plateau (R. Zhang et al., 2017). In late 621 Eocene conditions, the latitude of the Tibetan Plateau was also shown to impact signif-622 icantly and non-linearly East Asian climate: with a TP uplifting in the tropics (\sim 11°N) 623 inducing precipitation on the reliefs but aridification in most of China, while a TP uplifting 624 at its modern latitude ($\sim 26^{\circ}$ N) would increase moisture advection to eastern China and 625 aridification of inland Asia (R. Zhang et al., 2018). 626

Although paleoclimate studies offer contrasted views regarding Eocene climate, some 627 suggesting the presence of monsoons at that time (Huber, 2003) and others not (Tardif et 628 al., 2020; Z. Zhang et al., 2012; R. Zhang et al., 2018), this divergence is most likely due to 629 the very different paleogeographic reconstructions that were used. Indeed, as many features 630 of the Eocene paleogeography remain highly controversial (height of the incipient Tibetan 631 topography, shape of Indo-Asian collision zone, height of peripheral landforms, land-sea 632 distribution, etc.), the geographic reconstructions may diverge widely from one study to 633 another. Paleoclimate modeling have nevertheless allowed to emphasize the prevalence of 634 geography impact on climate, rather than pCO_2 variations or far-field ice-sheets effects 635 when it comes to the SAM and EAM settlement and intensification over long time scales 636 (Farnsworth et al., 2019; Thomson et al., 2021). Collectively, these information rather 637 reinforce the need for good paleogeographic constraints, and for more sensitivity experiments 638 in paleo context, which we aim at doing in the present contribution. 639

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3.4 Summary: a diachronous settlement of SAM and EAM seasonal features, potential forcings and mechanisms and remaining uncertainties

The past decade have brought plenty of new analysis based on fossil material, both onshore and offshore. The history of SAM, EASM and EAWM settlement and intensification now clearly seem to have been diachronous and its evolution tightly linked to land-sea mask, topography and global climate evolution over long time scales. Some questions nevertheless remain to be answered.

First, it is unclear whether Paleogene records of highly seasonal precipitations at low 647 latitudes $(<20^{\circ}N)$ do describe an actual monsoon, given that no wind proxies can be pro-648 vided at this period, and that Eocene paleoclimate studies propose widely diverging scenar-649 ios. CLAMP (Climate Leaf Analysis Multivariate Program) paleobotanical analysis (Feng 650 & Poulsen, 2016; Wolfe, 1993; Jacques, Su, et al., 2011) have brought interesting insight 651 on this point. Generally, they show that, although strong precipitation seasonality was 652 likely present since the Paleogene in broad parts of Southeastern Asia (Bhatia, Khan, et 653 654 al., 2021; R. Spicer et al., 2017; Herman et al., 2017), these floras did not yet developed the characteristics of plants growing today in modern SAM or EAM regions until the mid-655 dle Miocene (~13 Ma) (R. Spicer et al., 2017; Bhatia, Srivastava, et al., 2021). Instead, 656 Paleogene Asian floras display a signature typical of the regions today dominated by the 657 ITCZ seasonal migrations (referred to as Indonesian-Australian monsoon, or IAM in Fig-658

⁶⁵⁹ ure 2). The reorganization from an ITCZ dominated to a monsoonal wind circulation may ⁶⁶⁰ have initiated in the Oligocene (\sim 28-23 Ma), according to fossils from northeastern India ⁶⁶¹ displaying a mixture of SAM and IAM leaf signatures (R. Spicer et al., 2017). These typical ⁶⁶² monsoonal signatures likely emerged from a combination of both biotic and abiotic factors, ⁶⁶³ although CLAMP method is unable to disentangle the forcings responsible for these spe-⁶⁶⁴ cific signatures. They however add to the body of evidence suggesting that precipitation ⁶⁶⁵ seasonality and typical monsoonal wind circulation may have been decoupled in the past.

Second, although modeling studies have started to explore localized landforms effect 666 in paleo context, there is plenty of room for improvement. For example, many of these 667 landforms have been tested collectively (eg. Tian Shan and Mongolia uplifting together), 668 and analyzed within the scope of a single time period. Significant hypotheses remain to 669 be tested in a paleo context, such as identifying the leverage for a Siberian High pressure 670 development, and its actual impact on inland Asian aridity. Indeed, the presence of loess-671 like deposits since the Eocene, that were tentatively explained by the presence of an active 672 Siberian High at that time (Meijer et al., 2021; Licht et al., 2014), question its actual 673 dependence to the presence of Tian Shan and/or Mongolian orogens, which are usually dated 674 later in the Oligocene to late Miocene. In addition, the notion of threshold elevation is a key 675 point to tackle, as strongly non-linear responses of climate circulation with respect to this 676 parameter are expected. These considerations highlight the need for a finer understanding of 677 the actual drivers of today's regional Asian monsoons. Given the demonstrated prevalence 678 of geography in shaping the Asian Monsoons, an accurate representation of its evolution is 679 therefore paramount to study their history over long time-scales. 680

4 Cenozoic paleogeography evolution

Simulations in this study have been performed with Eocene, Oligocene and Miocene 682 paleogeographic configurations from previous studies (Poblete et al., 2021; Tardif et al., 683 2020; Sarr et al., 2022; Barbolini et al., 2020), which are coherent with geological history. 684 The Eocene and the early Miocene paleogeographic configurations are from Poblete et al. 685 (2021); Tardif et al. (2020) reconstruction at 40 and 20 Ma. The early Oligocene geography 686 is based on the Eocene geography with an homogeneous sea level drop of 70 meters to 687 account for sea level changes related to Antarctic ice-sheet building during the Eocene-688 Oligocene transition (Miller et al., 2020). The mid and late Miocene geographies are based 689 on the PRISM4 (Dowsett et al., 2016) reconstruction used in PlioMIP2 (Haywood et al., 690 2020) with modifications to include a southward shift of the Australian continent and an 691 emerged Sunda Shelf (see Sarr et al. (2022) for details). We in addition performed sensitivity 692 experiments to test the impact of specific topographic features on different characteristics 693 of the Asian monsoons. 694

In this section, we provide an overview of the main landmarks and persistent uncertainties regarding the paleogeography evolution during the Cenozoic in our region of interest (see Fig. 2). The paleogeographic configurations used in our simulations are introduced, for each of these key regions (Fig. 3 and Table 1).

- 699 4.1 Asia
- 700

4.1.1 Indo-Asia collision and land-sea distribution uncertainties

The initiation of the Indo-Asian collision, marking the closure of the Neotethys Ocean (J. R. Ali & Aitchison, 2008; Chatterjee et al., 2013), is dated around ~50 Ma (C. Wang et al., 2014; D. J. J. van Hinsbergen et al., 2012; Dupont-Nivet et al., 2010; Jagoutz et al., 2015; Lippert et al., 2014; W. Huang et al., 2015), or alternately around ~58 Ma (D. J. van Hinsbergen et al., 2019; Ingalls et al., 2016), via sedimentology and paleomagnetic evidence. The morphology of the *Greater India* portion (i.e. northern India) before collision remains unclear. Depending on the collision scenario considered (see Kapp and DeCelles

Table 1. List of reference simulations (in bold) and sensitivity experiments used in this study. Abbreviations stand for East Antarctic Ice Sheet (EAIS), Antarctic Ice Sheet (AIS) and Greenland + Antarctic Ice Sheet (G+AIS). The last column explains the relationship between the different paleogeographic configurations, and therefore define the anomalies that can be tested (e.g. the effect of a lowered TP will be studied through the "LEo2_TP - LEo2_TPlow" difference, while the effect of pCO_2 halving in the Eocene is obtained with the "LEo1_REF - LEo1_2X". Likewise, all paleogeography sensitivity experiment from the Middle to late Miocene will be compared to the "LMio_smallT" simulation.

Simulation	$p\mathrm{CO}_2$	Ice sheets	Paleogeography
LEo1_REF	1120	-	from (Tardif et al., 2020)
LEo2_TP	1120	-	from (Poblete et al., 2021)
LEo2_TPlow	1120	-	from LEo2_TP, with TP lowered to 800 m
LEo2_TPhigh	1120	-	from LEo2_TP, with TP raised to 4500 m
$LEo2_TPsouth$	1120	-	from LEo2_TP, with TP shifted to the South (Poblete et al., 2021)
LEo2_BengalSea	1120	-	from LEo2_TP, with a Bengal Sea (Poblete et al., 2021)
LEo1_2X	560	-	from LEo1_REF, with pCO_2 halved to 560 ppm
EOli_REF	560	AIS	from LEo1_REF, with 70m sea level drop
EMio_REF	560	EAIS	from (Poblete et al., 2021)
$EMio_TetSw$	560	EAIS	from EMio_REF, with open Tethyan Seaway (120 m depth)
EMio_EAfr	560	EAIS	from EMio_REF, with modern East African landforms
MMio_REF	560	AIS	from (Sarr et al., 2022)
LMio_smallT	560	AIS	from MMio_REF, with a reduced Paratethys
LMio_noAr	560	AIS	from LMio_smallT, with immersed Arabia
LMio_noM	560	AIS	from LMio_smallT, with Mongolia lowered to 800 m
LMio_noTS	560	AIS	from LMio_smallT, with Tian Shan lowered to 800 m
LMio_noTSM	560	AIS	from LMio_smallT, with TienShan + Mongolia lowered to 800 m
LMio_noTSP	560	AIS	from LMio_smallT, with TienShan + Pamir lowered to 800 m
$LMio_REF$	560	$\mathbf{G} + \mathbf{AIS}$	from (Sarr et al., 2022)
LMio_1.5X	420	G+AIS	from LMio_REF with pCO_2 lowered to 420 ppm

(2019); Poblete et al. (2021) for a review), *Greater India* is represented as fully emerged 708 (Ingalls et al., 2016; C. Wang et al., 2014), or partially flooded until the middle-late Eocene 709 (D. J. J. van Hinsbergen et al., 2012; D. J. van Hinsbergen et al., 2019; W. Huang et al., 710 2015). From the Eocene onward, India's progressive migration to the North, indentation into 711 the Asian continent and counterclockwise rotation (Molnar et al., 2010) triggered widespread 712 orography changes in Asia, which are summarized below. The most salient of these events 713 is of course the Tibetan Plateau and Himalayas uplift, and the spreading of deformation 714 and uplift to peripheral terranes. 715

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4.1.2 Himalayas-Tibetan Plateau uplift history

The early uplift history of the Tibetan Plateau is highly debated. Oxygen isotopic 717 paleoaltimetry studies suggest that the Gangdese (Southern TP, Lhasa terrane) and Qiang-718 tang mountains (Central TP) are already as high as $\sim 4000-5000$ m during the early Eocene 719 (Rowley & Currie, 2006; L. Ding et al., 2014; Xu et al., 2013; Xiong et al., 2020; C. Wang 720 et al., 2014). The robustness of this method is however questioned by isotope-enabled cli-721 mate models demonstrating that other factors than elevation affect the δ^{18} O precipitation 722 signature, such as the air masses provenance, climate change, or water recycling (Poulsen 723 & Jeffery, 2011; Botsyun et al., 2016). Considering these additional factors, a revised Ti-724

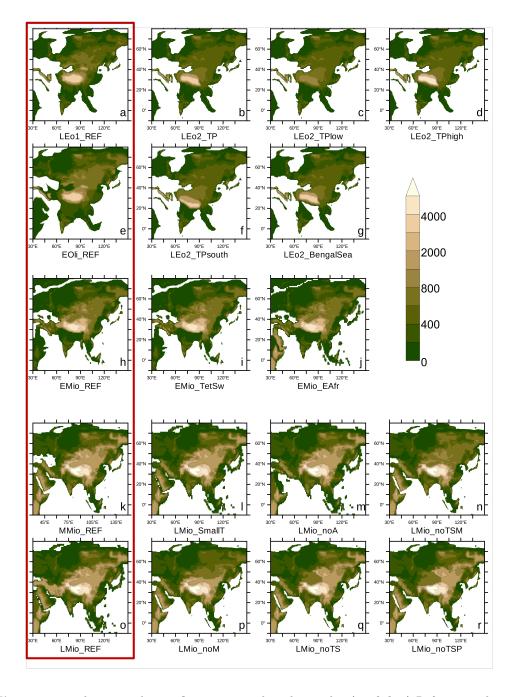


Figure 3. paleogeographic configurations used in this study. (a,e,h,k,o) Reference paleogeographic configurations for the late Eocene (~40 Ma), early Oligocene (~34 Ma), early (~20 Ma), mid (~12 Ma) and late Miocene (~8 Ma) are aligned in the first column (red box). Alternative configurations used for sensitivity tests are also presented, for the late Eocene (b,c,d,f,g), the early Miocene (i,j) and the mid to late Miocene (l,m,n,p,q,r)

betan Plateau paleo-elevation, most likely inferior to ~ 3000 m in the Oligocene, is suggested 725 (Botsyun et al., 2019). The presence of frost-intolerant fossil flora assemblage in Central 726 TP in the middle Eocene (T. Su et al., 2020) and late Oligocene (T. Su, Farnsworth, et al., 727 2019), as well as clumped isotope measures (Xiong et al., 2022), advocating for a subtrop-728 ical climate in this region, seems incompatible with a TP exceeding 4000 m. Therefore, a 729 more complex morphology for this proto-TP, with the presence of a low-elevated (~ 1500 730 m) valley dividing the almost fully uplifted (~3000-4000 m) Lhasa and Qiangtang terranes 731 until the late Oligocene has been proposed (T. Su, Farnsworth, et al., 2019; Xiong et al., 732 2020; R. Spicer et al., 2020; Xiong et al., 2022). 733

In the periphery of the proto-TP, data collected from different basins offer contradic-734 tory information. In southeastern Tibet, at the extremity of the Qiangtang terrane, T. Su, 735 Spicer, et al. (2019) use paleo-elevation calculated from the CLAMP method to suggest that 736 the Markam Basin was already high in the late Eocene ($\sim 3000 \text{ m}$) and could have reached 737 its modern elevation $(\sim 3900 \text{ m})$ by the earliest Oligocene. Alternately, paleo-elevation based 738 on oxygen isotopic measurements of the nearby Jianchuan Basin (belonging to the Qiang-739 tang terrane as well) could have not exceeded ~ 1200 m in the late Eocene (Gourbet et al., 740 2017). The northern TP is proposed to remain relatively low (maximum ~ 2000 m) in the 741 Eocene before uplifting in the Oligocene or the early Miocene, based on δ^{18} O measurements 742 from the Hoh Xil Basin (Cyr et al., 2005; C. Wang et al., 2014). An early uplift of the 743 northeastern TP is however suggested as early as the late Eocene by increased coniferous 744 pollen proportion in the Xining Basin (Hoorn et al., 2012), although cooling and Paratethys 745 Sea retreat were also shown to promote coniferous trees expansion in this region (Barbolini 746 et al., 2020). 747

The history of the TP build-up from the Miocene onward is less controversial. The 748 Central TP would have reached modern elevation by the early Miocene, while the northern 749 TP uplift is completed by the late Miocene (C. Wang et al., 2014). Stratigraphy and detrital 750 zircon analysis indicate that the western TP (Pamir-Karakoram-Hindu Kush) may have 751 underwent several phases of uplift between the mid Eocene to latest Miocene (Bershaw 752 et al., 2012; L. Li et al., 2021; Blayney et al., 2016; Carrapa et al., 2015). Finally, the 753 Himalayas start uplifting in the early Miocene (~ 20 Ma) and reach their modern elevation 754 by the mid-late Miocene (\sim 15 Ma) (Gébelin et al., 2013; L. Ding et al., 2017; Xu et al., 755 2018; C. Wang et al., 2014; Webb et al., 2017). 756

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4.1.3 Inland Asia and Myanmar mountain building

Asian terranes located in the vicinity of the HTP complex are impacted by the Indo-758 Asian collision. In Myanmar, the Sino and Indo-Burman Ranges have distinct uplift histo-759 ries. Indo-Burma ranges build-up in a three-step process in the late Eocene, at the Oligo-760 Miocene boundary and Pliocene respectively (Najman et al., 2020; Morley, 2018; Maurin & 761 Rangin, 2009; Westerweel et al., 2020; Licht et al., 2018), as a result of the progressive in-762 dentation of the Burma block into the Eastern Himalayan collision zone. The Sino-Burman 763 Ranges inherited old landforms from previous collisions between Indochina and Sibumasu 764 terranes (Metcalfe, 2013) and experienced major uplift in the mid-late Miocene (\sim 13-9 Ma) 765 (Cook & Royden, 2008; Clark et al., 2005), as a result of the Tibetan crustal flow eastward 766 propagation. 767

North of the Tibetan Plateau, the collision propagated through reactivated pre-existing 768 tectonic structures and triggered the uplift of the inland Asia orogenic belt: the Tian Shan 769 and the Mongolian (Altai, Hangay and Sayan) landforms (Jolivet et al., 2010). The south-770 western and Central Tian Shan uplift initiation is very loosely constrained, either in the 771 middle to late Miocene (~ 15 Ma, (Käßner et al., 2016)), late Oligocene to early Miocene 772 $(\sim 25 \text{ Ma}, (\text{Bande et al., } 2017; \text{Macaulay et al., } 2016, 2014))$, or in the Eocene-Oligocene 773 (D. Liu et al., 2017; Tapponnier & Molnar, 1979). The northeastern Tian Shan, together 774 with the Sayan and Altai regions (in western Mongolia), likely remained quiescent until the 775

late Miocene (Bullen et al., 2003; Caves Rugenstein et al., 2017). After a global pulse of 776 uplift at the latest Miocene (~ 8 Ma) for the whole Tian Shan, Sayan and Altai mountains 777 (W. Yuan et al., 2006; Caves Rugenstein et al., 2017; Charreau et al., 2005), regional land-778 forms would have reached their full elevation after a last Pliocene uplift phase (\sim 5-3 Ma, 779 (Bullen et al., 2003; Caves Rugenstein et al., 2014; De Grave et al., 2007, 2009; Jolivet 780 et al., 2007; Vassallo et al., 2007)). The Hangay Dome uplift (in central Mongolia) began 781 in the mid-Oligocene (Caves Rugenstein et al., 2014; Cunningham, 2001), but the date of 782 completion of the uplift remains debated, either in the mid-Miocene (~ 13 Ma, (Smith et 783 al., 2016)), or the Pliocene (~ 3 Ma, (Yarmolyuk et al., 2008)). 784

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4.1.4 Evolution of Asia in our reference paleogeographic configurations and sensitivity experiments performed

Our late Eocene reference paleogeography (**LEo1_REF**, ~ 40 Ma, Fig. 3 a), previously 787 introduced in (Tardif et al., 2020), displays a fully emerged Greater India and a TP elevation 788 set to ~ 3000 m. Considering the persistent controversy surrounding the extension of India 789 and the TP morphology at that time, other configurations are tested to better understand 790 the sensitivity of our results to these features. LEo2_TP (Fig. 3 b) is an alternative late 791 Eocene paleogeography, with a slightly different Tibetan Plateau shape (obtained with the 792 "double collision model" in Poblete et al. (2021)), from which we derived sensitivity tests 793 with a lowered Tibetan Plateau (~800 m, LEo2_TPlow, Fig. 3 c) and a high Tibetan 794 Plateau (~4500, LEo2_TPhigh, Fig. 3 d). Two additional tests are performed, with a 795 Tibetan Plateau translated more to the South (LEo2_TPsouth, Fig. 3 f), obtained with 796 the collision model from Jagoutz et al. (2015) and the presence of a remaining Bengal Sea 797 (LEo2_sea, Fig. 3g), obtained with the collision model from D. J. J. van Hinsbergen et al. 798 (2012); D. J. van Hinsbergen et al. (2019). 799

The early Oligocene simulation (**EOli_REF**, ~ 33 Ma, previously introduced in Barbolini et al. (2020)), is designed to represent the Asian climatic state right after the Eocene-Oligocene Transition (Fig. 3 e). We use the same late Eocene paleogeography from LEo1_REF, in which the sea level is lowered by 70 m to account for an ice sheet over Antarctica with a modern extent (it is an end-member scenario). This leads to important changes in terms of land-sea distribution, principally in the Paratethys Sea region, detailed in section 4.2.3.

The early Miocene paleogeography (**EMio_REF**, ~ 20 Ma, Fig. 3 h) (previously in-807 troduced in Sarr et al. (2022) and Burls et al. (2021), from Poblete et al. (2021)) displays 808 an Indian subcontinent translated 5° further north compared to the Eocene, and an uplifted 809 Central TP close to its present elevation (\sim 5000 m), while western and northeastern TP 810 portions are lower ($\sim 2000-3000$ m). In the middle (**MMio_REF**, ~ 12 Ma, Fig. 3 k) and 811 late Miocene (LMio_REF, ~8 Ma, Fig. 3 o) paleogeographic configurations, the Himalayas 812 and Tibetan Plateau have reached their present day configuration, along with the peripheral 813 landforms in Myanmar and inland Asia (Fig. 3). Sensitivity tests are performed on inland 814 Asian landforms, lowering to ~ 800 m the elevation of Mongolia (**LMio_noM**, Fig. 3 p), 815 the Tian Shan (LMio_noTS, Fig. 3 q), both Mongolia and Tian Shan (LMio_noTSM, 816 Fig. 3 n), and finally, the Tian Shan and Pamir (LMio_noTSP, Fig. 3 r). 817

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4.2 The Peri-Tethys region evolution under the complex interplay of tectonics and global sea level changes

Throughout the Cenozoic, global sea level fluctuations in an active tectonic convergence context have lead to a profound paleogeographic reorganization and a general increase in continentality of the regions encompassing the Mediterranean Sea, Middle East and inland Asia. We resume here the main paleogeography changes (in terms of sea connections between Indian, Atlantic and Arctic Oceans).

4.2.1 Retreat of the Paratethys Sea and closure of the Neotethys Ocean

During the Paleocene-Eocene, Eurasia is largely flooded by the proto-Paratethys, an 826 epicontinental sea connected to the Arctic Ocean via the Turgai Strait and to the Neotethys 827 Ocean (Meulenkamp & Sissingh, 2003; Golonka, 2009). Paleoenvironmental analysis suggest 828 a maximal extension of the proto-Paratethys Sea reaching the Tajik and Tarim Basins, in 829 inland Asia, at the Paleocene-Eocene transition (~ 56 Ma), followed by a long-term westward 830 retreat, punctuated by marine transgressions of decreasing magnitude (Kaya et al., 2019; 831 Bosboom et al., 2014b, 2017; Carrapa et al., 2015). In Central Asia, the shrinkage of the 832 833 proto-Paratethys Sea during the Eocene is attributed to far-field effect of the Indo-Asia collision and to the early indentation of the Pamir and TP, leading to the progressive basins 834 infilling with sediments (Kaya et al., 2019; Carrapa et al., 2015). The build-up of the 835 Antarctic ice-sheet initiated in the late Eocene, resulted in a sea-level drop that culminated 836 at the EOT (~ 33.5 Ma, sea-level fall estimated at ~ 70 m by Miller et al. (2020)), which 837 drastically reduced the extent of the Paratethys and favored its isolation (Kaya et al., 2019; 838 Bosboom et al., 2014b, 2017). Water exchanges between the Paratethys and global oceans 839 are progressively restricted, as attested by δ^{18} O and δ^{13} C of foraminifera shells diverging 840 increasingly from global oceanic signals at that time (Ozsvárt et al., 2016). The Paratethys 841 Sea is fully isolated from the Mediterranean Sea at ~ 12 Ma, with the final uplift of the 842 Dinarides belt (Harzhauser & Piller, 2007). A connection with the Mediterranean Sea is 843 restored between 6.9–6.1 Ma when the Aegean region subsides during the latest Miocene 844 (Krijgsman et al., 2020). 845

The Tethyan Seaway (or Mesopotamian Seaway) which connected Indian and Atlantic 846 Oceans remained fully open before the Miocene (Straume et al., 2020). ϵ Nd data suggest 847 that it became strongly restricted around ~ 22 Ma (Bialik et al., 2019), with intermittent 848 periods of closure, as attested by evidence of mammal exchanges between Eurasia and 849 Africa through the Gomphotherium landbridge (Rögl, 1999; Harzhauser & Piller, 2007). 850 The Tethyan Seaway permanently closed at ~ 14 Ma (Bialik et al., 2019), due to combined 851 effect of Arabian-Eurasian plates collision and glacio-eustatic sea level fall associated with 852 the cooling following the Mid-Miocene Climatic Optimum (MMCO). 853

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4.2.2 Middle-East: Eastern Anatolian-Iranian Plateau and Zagros Mountains

The Middle-East experienced multiple changes in land-sea distribution and topogra-856 phy, forced by the collision of the Arabian plate with Eurasia, which drove the uplift of 857 the Zagros mountains and of the Iranian Plateau. The exact timing of the Arabia-Eurasia 858 collision in eastern Anatolia remains highly debated with estimated date ranging from the 859 Eocene-Oligocene (Karaoğlan et al., 2016; Darin et al., 2018; McQuarrie & Hinsbergen, 860 2013; Pirouz et al., 2017), the early Miocene (Okay et al., 2010; Gülyüz et al., 2020), to 861 the late Miocene (H. Su & Zhou, 2020; Z. Zhang et al., 2017). Most studies however pro-862 pose an early Miocene age (~ 20 Ma) for the hard collision related to the arrival of thick 863 Arabian crust along the Bitilis suture zone (Okay et al., 2010; Cavazza et al., 2018; Gülyüz 864 et al., 2020). After the collision, the Zagros orogen built up during three successive pulses 865 occurring within the last ~ 20 Ma (Agard et al., 2011; Mouthereau, 2011). 866

The Alborz mountains uplift (northwest of the Zagros) is dated during the middle 867 Miocene (~ 17.5 -13 Ma), according to sediments stable isotopic signatures (Ballato et al., 868 2010, 2015) and may have continued until the latest Miocene (Mouthereau et al., 2012). 869 A Miocene age for the commencement of the eastern Anatolian Plateau growth has been 870 estimated based on the youngest marine unit of the eastern Anatolian Plateau (~ 17 Ma) 871 (Gülyüz et al., 2020) and apatite fission-track data (18-13 Ma) (Okay et al., 2010; Karaoğlan 872 et al., 2016). Stratigraphic evidence suggest a rise due to crustal shortening and thickening 873 occurring between 15 and 12 Ma (Mouthereau et al., 2012). Numerical simulations suggest 874 a buildup of the Plateau within \sim 15-20 Ma after the continental collision, likely sustained 875

⁸⁷⁶ by slab break-off, mantle flow disruption and associated changes in dynamic topography, ⁸⁷⁷ followed by isostatic adjustment (François et al., 2014). With this mechanism, the modern ⁸⁷⁸ elevation (\sim 1500 m.a.s.l) is only reached during the late Miocene (\sim 7-10 Ma).

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4.2.3 Evolution of the Peri-Tethys region in our reference paleogeographic configurations and sensitivity experiments performed

Our paleogeographic reference configurations are consistent with the geological history 881 of the Paratethys Sea demise and with uplift phases in the region. In our late Eocene 882 geography (LE01_REF, Fig. 3 a) the proto-Paratethys Sea fills the Tarim Basin : it is still 883 connected to the Neotethys and Indian Oceans, but not to the Arctic, as the Turgai Strait 884 is already closed. In the Oligocene reconstruction (EOli_REF, Fig. 3 e), the 70 m sea 885 level drop (Miller et al., 2020)) leads to the emergence of continental portions in Arabia and 886 North-Africa, and to the drying of the Tarim Basin and lowlands north of the Turgai Strait, 887 which all conspire to increase greatly Asian continentality. The former shallow connection 888 between the Paratethys and the Tethys ceases in the Pamir-Zagros region at that time. In 889 the early Miocene geography (EMio_REF, Fig. 3 h), an emerged land-bridge interrupts 890 the Tethyan seaway that previously connected the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean, 891 but shallow sea persists at the location of the present-day Arabian Peninsula. Given the 892 uncertainty surrounding the precise closure time of the seaway, an alternative early Miocene 893 configuration is also tested, with a 120 m deep Tethyan seaway (EMio_TetSw, Fig. 3 i). 894 In the middle Miocene reference simulation (**MMio_REF**, Fig. 3 k), the Iranian Plateau 895 and Zagros mountains are halfway uplifted (~ 1000 m) compared to present-day and the 896 Paratethys extends up to 60°E. By the late Miocene (LMio_REF, Fig. 3 o), the Paratethys 897 is strongly reduced and the Iranian landforms have reached their modern elevation. An 898 intermediate reconstruction is proposed, testing the impact of the Paratethys retreat only, 899 in the mid-late Miocene (LMio_smallT, Fig. 3 l). Note that LMio_smallT is the mid-late 900 Miodene paleogeography to which all others late and middle Miocene simulations can be 901 compared to, to single out the effect of regional changes. 902

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4.3 East Africa and Arabian Peninsula evolution

While much attention has been paid to the Eastern African topography evolution in the 904 Neogene due to its implication on early homining development, its history fits in a broader 905 paleogeographic context rooted in the late Eocene to early Oligocene times (see Couvreur et al. (2021); Guillocheau et al. (2018) for a synthesis). Landforms in East Africa (Kenyan 907 and Ethiopian plateaux) developed during the late Cenozoic, triggered by a combination 908 of tectonics, basaltic flooding, and large wave-length deformation related to the African 909 superswell activity (Moucha & Forte, 2011; Faccenna et al., 2019; Roberts et al., 2012). 910 Uplift in the Ethiopian region would have began during the Eocene, with doming event 911 sustained by dynamic topography (Roberts et al., 2012; Faccenna et al., 2019) that then 912 propagates to Kenya during the middle Miocene. In the early Oligocene, basaltic flooding 913 in Ethiopia would have contributed to the formation of these large-scale elevated features 914 (Sembroni et al., 2016). Rifting initiated during the middle Miocene, with main uplift of 915 rift shoulders (Wichura et al., 2015). Overall, past elevations in the course of the Cenozoic 916 are poorly constrained in East Africa, but modern elevations were most likely reached by 917 the late Miocene to early Pliocene (Couvreur et al., 2021). 918

4.3.1 Arabian Peninsula

The Arabian Peninsula records successive marine and freshwater environments from the early Oligocene to the late Miocene, as attested by paleo-ichthtyofaunas (Otero & Gayet, 2001). Before the Neogene, the Arabian plate is assumed to be flat and low elevated (Daradich et al., 2003), making it particularly sensitive to sea-level changes. It is therefore largely submerged during the Eocene, and its southwestern part becomes par-

tially emerged after the sea-level fall at EOT (Barrier et al., 2018). During the Miocene, 925 the Arabian plate is tilted when transiting over the East-Africa mantle plume (Vicente de 926 Gouveia et al., 2018), leading to the uplift of the Red sea margin, and the flooding of its 927 northeastern corner, due to mantle convective drawdown (Daradich et al., 2003; Moucha 928 & Forte, 2011). This mechanism favored temporary transgression phases in the subdued 929 northeastern region in early Miocene times (Barrier et al., 2018), until its full emergence in 930 the late Miocene, possibly favored by global sea-level fall after the MMCT (Golonka, 2009; 931 Harzhauser & Piller, 2007; Miller et al., 2020). 932

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4.3.2 Evolution of East Africa and Arabia in our reference paleogeographic configurations and sensitivity experiments

Our reference paleogeographic configurations (Fig. 3 a,e,h,k,o) display a low East 935 Africa during the Eocene-Oligocene, which rises to \sim 750-1,000 m in the early Miocene and 936 a modern-like elevation in the mid and late Miocene reconstructions. Given the large uncer-937 tainties on east African topography precise elevation, we perform a sensitivity experiment on 938 an early Miocene paleogeography, with fully uplifted east African landforms (EMio_EAfr, 939 Fig. 3 j). Additionally, a mid-late Miocene configuration displaying an almost fully flooded 940 Arabian Peninsula is tested (LMio_noAr, Fig. 3 m), to account for its high sensitivity to 941 942 sea level fluctuations at that period.

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5 Materials and Methods

5.1 IPSL-CM5A2 model

We performed the simulations with the IPSL-CM5A2 Earth System Model (Sepulchre 945 et al., 2020), an updated version of the IPSL-CM5A model (Dufresne et al., 2013) suitable 946 for deep-time paleoclimate simulations. It is composed of the atmospheric model LMDz5A 947 (Hourdin et al., 2013), the land surface and vegetation model ORCHIDEE (Krinner et al., 948 2005) and the oceanic model NEMO (v3.6) (Madec, 2016) that also includes the LIM2 949 model (Fichefet & Maqueda, 1997) for sea-ice. OASIS coupler ensures synchronization 950 between the different model components (Valcke et al., 2006). Atmospheric component 951 has a nominal horizontal resolution of 96x95 grid points (3.75°) in longitude by 1.9° in 952 latitude) with 39 irregularly distributed vertical levels from the surface to 40 km high. 953 The land surface ORCHIDEE model is coupled with LMDZ5a and redirects runoff water 954 toward the ocean. The vegetation cover is represented through 11 Plant Functional Types 955 (PFTs), including one describing bare soil. NEMO uses a tripolar grid, with two poles in 956 the Northern hemisphere to avoid singularity (Madec & Imbard, 1996). It has a resolution 957 of 2° by 2° refined at 0.5° in the equatorial region, with 31 vertical levels, whose thickness 958 span from 10 meters near the surface to 500 meters in the deep ocean. Full description of 959 IPSL-CM5A2 can be found in Sepulchre et al. (2020); Dufresne et al. (2013). 960

IPSL-CM5A2 has been previously used for paleoclimatic simulations of the Miocene 961 (Burls et al., 2021; Sarr et al., 2022) and the Eocene (Toumoulin et al., 2020; Tardif et 962 al., 2020; Barbolini et al., 2020; Tardif et al., 2021; Toumoulin et al., 2022). The ability 963 of the model to simulate the modern Asian climate was previously assessed (Sepulchre et 964 al., 2020; Tardif et al., 2020) and a comparison with observations is provided (SI, Fig. 15). 965 While general atmospheric circulation patterns are well reproduced, IPSL-CM5A2 overall 966 underestimates precipitation amounts and delays inland monsoonal precipitation onset by 967 about a month, a feature shared with IPSL-CM5A version (Sepulchre et al., 2020; Valdes 968 et al., 2017). 969

970 5.2 Experiments design

The boundary conditions are summarized in Table 1. Experiments at Late Eocene are considered ice-free, as pCO_2 is above the threshold for permanent Antarctic glaciation

(Ladant et al., 2014; DeConto & Pollard, 2003). Unipolar glaciation, with Antarctic ice-973 sheet only, is used for the Oligocene and early Miocene and both Greenland and Antarctic 974 ice-sheets are accounted for in the late Miocene (Bierman et al., 2016) configurations. CO₂ 975 concentration varies from 1,120 ppm for the late Eocene to 560 ppm in the late Miocene 976 (Table 1) Foster et al. (2017); Rae et al. (2021), while other greenhouse gases are kept at 977 preindustrial values. Given the persistent uncertainties regarding precise pCO_2 concentra-978 tion during the Cenozoic, we performed two additional sensitivity tests on this parameter, 979 in the late Eocene (LE01_2X, 560 ppm), and in the late Miocene (LMio_1.5X, 420 ppm). 980 The solar constant was adjusted according to Gough (1981) and set to 1360.19 W.m^{-2} for 981 late Eocene and early Oligocene simulations, to 1362.92 W.m⁻² for early Miocene simu-982 lations and to 1364.30 W.m⁻² for late and middle Miocene simulations. Although orbital 983 variations are known to impact monsoonal circulation (Zhisheng et al., 2015; P. Wang et 984 al., 2005; Tardif et al., 2021), we prescribed a modern-like configuration to focus on the 985 impact of paleogeography on the monsoon system. Considering the lack of congruent global 986 vegetation reconstruction over the Cenozoic, the same PFT map was used throughout the 987 experiments, prescribing latitudinal bands of idealized vegetation cover based on modern 988 distribution, as done in previous studies (Tardif et al., 2020; Laugié et al., 2020). The 989 reference experiments have been run for 3000 years and deep ocean layers reached quasi-990 equilibrium after ~ 2000 years of integration. Sensitivity experiments were restarted from 991 there reference experiments an run for 300 to 500 years until reaching stable sea surface 992 temperatures. Model outputs are averaged over the last 50 years. 993

5.3 Monsoon metrics

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The evolution of Asian monsoons back in time is assessed through specific markers that are characteristic of the present-day phenomenon. We favored SAM and EAM features offering means of comparison with paleoclimate records, which typically involve precipitation amounts, seasonality and wind direction and strength. Several features of the monsoons, however, are not recorded by proxies, or in a very indirect way. This is for example the case of the pressure patterns, and of all mid-to-high tropospheric features associated with the modern monsoons. In that aspect, numerical simulations are a valuable tool to grasp the full signature of eventual paleo-monsoons.

For both SAM and EAM, we evaluated the evolution of precipitation seasonality using the Monsoon Precipitation Index (MPI) (B. Wang & Ding, 2008), expressed as follow:

$$MPI = \frac{Seasonal range of precipitation}{Mean annual precipitation}$$

where the seasonal range of precipitation is the difference between May to September 1005 (MJJAS) precipitation minus November to March (NDJFM) precipitation. Regional oc-1006 currence of a monsoon-like seasonality is considered providing a seasonal range superior to 1007 300 mm and a majority of precipitation falling during the extended summer season (MPI 1008 > 0.5). This criteria has the benefit of not being exclusive (with or without monsoon), as 1009 it proposes a discrete metric for seasonality amplitude (from 0 to 1). It also imposes the 1010 wet season to be in summer, as in the present-day monsoon region, as opposed to other 1011 existing precipitation metrics (such as the ratio of the 3 wettest month over the 3 driest 1012 month precipitation, commonly used in paleobotanic studies), which enables us to test the 1013 presence of modern-like climate patterns. 1014

¹⁰¹⁵ The wind patterns, described through their shape and strength, are the second funda-¹⁰¹⁶ mental characteristic observed. The latitudinal migration of the Somali Jet is tracked over ¹⁰¹⁷ the Arabian sea (Fluteau et al., 1999). The wind shear between low and high troposphere ¹⁰¹⁸ over India, that describes the vigor of the SASM zonal circulation and its inclusion in the ¹⁰¹⁹ Walker circulation, is calculated through the Webster-Yang Index (U₈₅₀-U₂₀₀, calculated in ¹⁰²⁰ an area from 0°:20°N to 40°E:110°E) (Webster et al., 1998). The positive thermal anomaly

observed at 200-300 hPa over northern India in summer has additionally been used as a 1021 marker of the deep convection characterizing the modern SASM (Boos & Kuang, 2010; 1022 Acosta & Huber, 2020). This feature is due to the important latent heat release provoked 1023 by the condensation of moisture in convecting air masses and in air masses ascending on the 1024 southern flank of the Himalayas, which heat the high troposphere (see Fig. 14 c). Fewer 1025 criteria exist to formally describe the EAM. In addition to the precipitation seasonality de-1026 scribed through the Monsoon Precipitation Index, we tracked the EASM via the description 1027 of the latitudinal displacement of the Jet Stream with respect to Tibetan and inland Asia 1028 landforms, and the surface wind patterns that constitute the Meiyu-Bayu front at present-1029 day. The EAWM is tracked principally through the evolution of temperature and pressure 1030 gradients, leading to the Siberian High formation in winter, and of its associated wind pat-1031 terns. Here we used the EAWM index defined by L. Wang and Chen (2014) that accounts for 1032 both the North-South (Siberia-Maritime continent) and West-East (Siberia-North Pacific) 1033 pressure gradients and is expressed as follow: 1034

 $I_{EAWM} = (2xSLP_S-SLP_{NP}-SLP_{MC})/2$

where SLP_S, SLP_{NP} and SLP_{MC} is the area-averaged Sea Level Pressure (SLP) over Siberia (40°:60°N, 70°:120°E), North Pacific (30°:50°N, 140°E:170°W) and the Maritime continent (20°S:10°N, 110°:160°E), respectively.

1038 6 Results

We present the results obtained for the five reference simulations as well as for the different sensitivity numerical experiments, first for the South Asian Monsoon, then for the East Asian Monsoon domain. Main outcomes in terms of seasonal winds and precipitations are qualitatively summed up in Table 6.

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6.1 South Asian summer monsoon controlled by the orography surrounding the Indian Ocean

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6.1.1 Spatial and seasonal precipitation patterns evolution

In the late Eocene a wide arid region (< 500 mm/yr) spreads from northern India 1046 to north of the proto-Tibet (Fig. 4 a). High mean annual precipitation amounts (> 30001047 mm/yr) are simulated over equatorial regions, in southern India and southeastern Asia. 1048 There is no monsoon-like seasonality according to the MPI index in India, because the 1049 rainy season in this region occurs in winter (as previously described in Tardif et al. (2020)). 1050 The precipitation pattern evolves from the early Oligocene onward, with the progressive 1051 translation of the arid region to Arabia and Northern Africa (Fig. 4 e,i,m,q). This in 1052 turn allows the penetration of rainfall in summer in South-Eastern Asia, and the onset 1053 of a monsoon-like seasonality in this region, as well as a reinforcement of monsoon-like 1054 seasonality in Eastern Asia. 1055

In the course of the Miocene, as India drifts northward, its southern tip receives less 1056 precipitation ($\sim 1500 \text{ mm/yr}$ in the late Miocene, Fig. 4 q), and the intensity and extent of 1057 highly seasonal precipitation increases greatly over southern and eastern Asia (red dotted 1058 regions in Fig. 4 e,i,m,q). Orographic precipitation over the southern flank of the Himalayas 1059 initiate by the mid Miocene simulation ($\sim 900 \text{ mm/yr}$, Fig. 4 m), and further increase in the 1060 late Miocene ($\sim 1200 - 1500 \text{ mm/yr}$, Fig. 4 q). These changes in precipitation patterns in 1061 both space and time are triggered by a profound reorganization of surface pressure patterns 1062 and winds throughout the Cenozoic. 1063

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TienShan+Pamir uplift (LMio)	+	+	1	+ (Somali Jet)	ł	2	ł	+ (SW)		+(orog.) -(Gobi, Takl.)	++(orog.) -(Tjk)

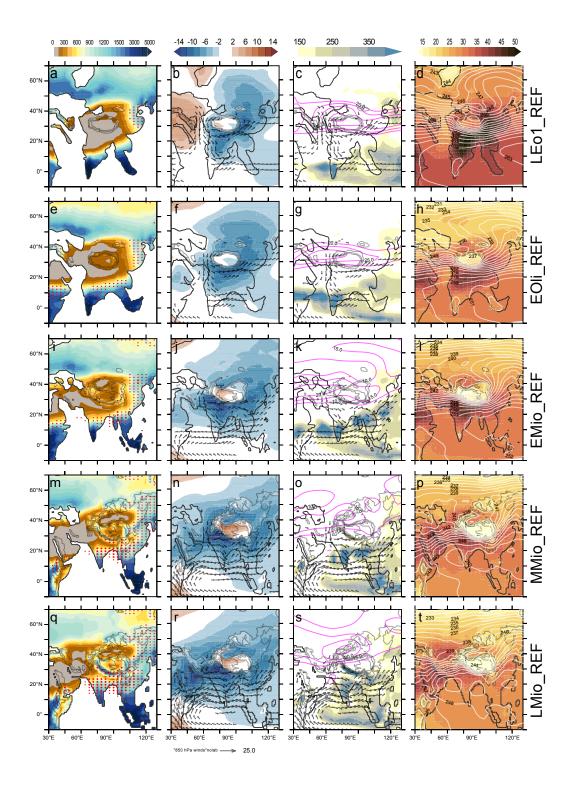


Figure 4. Evolution of the summer monsoon diagnostics since the Eocene. First column: Mean Annual Precipitation (shading, mm/yr) overlain with regions where the Monsoon Precipitation Index is over 0.5 (thin red dots) and 0.75 (thick red dots); Second column: June-August (JJA) normalized Sea Level Pressure (SLP) anomaly defined as the difference between summer SLP and mean annual SLP (shading, hPa) and 850 hPa winds over 4 m/s (vectors); Third column: August Jet Stream speed (magenta contour, maximal zonal wind velocity in the mid to high troposphere, in m/s), August monthly precipitation amounts (shading, mm/month) and 850 hPa winds over 4 m/s (vectors) ; Fourth column: JJA mean temperature at 2m (shading, Celsius) and 300 hPa atmospheric temperature (white contour, Kelvin). On all captions, topography is overlain in gray contour each 1000 m. -27-

6.1.2 Summer pressure and wind patterns reorganization

The summer (June to August, JJA) sea level pressure (SLP) patterns in Eurasia in 1065 the late Eocene experiment (Fig. 4 b) contrast strongly with the modern ones (Fig. 14 d). 1066 While a low-pressure center driven by extreme summer temperature forms over southeastern 1067 Asia (up to 50°C over *Greater India*, Fig. 4 d), the Paratethys Sea and Neotethys Ocean are 1068 the locus of a wide high pressure cell (Fig. 4 b). This induces low tropospheric anticyclonic 1069 wind patterns, that counteract potential moisture advection from the Indian Ocean towards 1070 South Asian regions. From the early Oligocene onward, the Paratethys Sea and Neotethys 1071 1072 shrinkage increase the Eurasian continentality and emerging landforms, such as Anatolia and Arabia, become the locus of high summer temperature (35-45°C, Fig. 4 l,p,t). This 1073 leads to the progressive widening of the South Asian low-pressure belt, while the Neotethyan 1074 anticyclone gradually regresses westward (Fig. 4 f,j,n,r). This low pressure cell reaches its 1075 modern-like extent in the mid Miocene simulation (Fig. 4 n), but only attains its current 1076 values (~-14 hPa over Arabia and northern India) by the late Miocene (Fig. 4 r). 1077

Mirroring this progressive strengthening and widening of the summer low-pressure 1078 belt over South Asia and Arabia, humidity-loaded air masses are gradually advected from 1079 the Indian Ocean towards the continent over the Cenozoic. A weak cross equatorial flow 1080 $(<4 \text{ m/s against } \sim 25 \text{ m/s today})$, confined to low latitudes $(<10^{\circ}\text{N})$, Fig. 5 a, simulations 1081 LE01_REF and EOli_REF) is simulated over the Arabian Sea in the late Eocene and early 1082 Oligocene experiments (Fig. 4 b,f). A proto-Somali Jet, mostly zonal and confined to 1083 low latitudes $(<11^{\circ}N)$ is simulated in the early Miocene simulation (Fig. 5 b, simulation 1084 EMio_REF). From the mid Miocene onward, and following the reinforcement of the Asian 1085 low-pressure belt, the now fully-formed Somali Jet increases in strength and migrates further 1086 north over the Arabian Sea (~18-24°N) (Fig. 4 n,r and Fig. 5 b, simulations MMio_REF 1087 and LMio_REF). 1088

The simulated tropospheric circulation above southern Asia deeply evolves since the 1089 Late Eocene, as exemplified by the calculation of the Webster-Yang Index. This index 1090 doubles between the late Eocene and the early Oligocene (from ~ 5 to 11 m/s, Fig. 5 c, 1091 reference simulations LEo1_REF and EOli_REF), and keeps increasing through the Miocene 1092 (from ~16 to 21 m/s, Fig. 5 d, simulations EMio_REF, MMio_REF and LMio_REF). Finally, 1093 while heating of the high troposphere (~ 300 hPa) due to deep convection is observed in most 1094 experiments (Fig. 4 d,h,l,p,t), its settlement over Northern India is only reached by the mid 1095 Miocene experiment, following the increase in summer convective precipitation in this region 1096 driven by orographic lifting. 1097

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6.1.3 Limited effect of pCO_2 drawdown and Tibetan Plateau changes on South Asian summer monsoon evolution

The non-linearity in the response of the Somali Jet through time calls for a more 1100 thorough analysis of the different forcing at stakes between each of these simulations. In 1101 this section, we take advantage of our different alternative paleogeography reconstructions 1102 and pCO_2 to attribute the simulated changes to their respective underlying drivers. Overall, 1103 the SASM presents a low sensitivity to pCO_2 changes, when compared to paleogeographic 1104 forcings. This is true for the late Eocene experiments, where a change from 1120 ppm to 560 1105 ppm only induces minimal variations in the WYI (Webster-Yang Index) strength, summer 1106 northward ITCZ migration (difference between experiments LEo1_2X and LEo1_REF in 1107 Fig. 5 a,c), or monsoon-like seasonality extension (Fig. 7 f). This is also the case for the 1108 late Miocene experiments, with a switch from 560 ppm to 420 ppm (difference between 1109 experiments LMio_1.5X and LMio_REF in Fig. 5 b,d). 1110

The paleogeography of *Greater India* and Tibetan regions have been recurrently proposed as a driver of monsoon onset or intensification (R. Zhang et al., 2012; Yu et al., 2018; Molnar et al., 1993). While alternative TP configuration lead to slightly different results (detailed below), their impact on the SASM large-scale wind circulation remains limited in

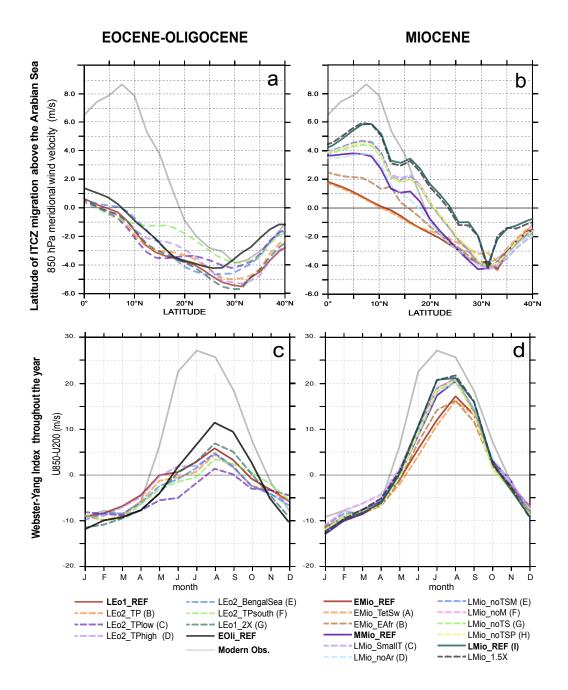


Figure 5. Estimation of the South Asian monsoon strength evolution in all the simulations via: (\mathbf{a},\mathbf{b}) the calculation of the summer (JJA) cross-equatorial flow latitude over the Arabian Sea, after Fluteau et al. (1999) and (\mathbf{c},\mathbf{d}) the calculation of the Webster-Yang Index (850 hPa minus 200 hPa zonal wind velocity, in the region 0:20 °N ; 40:110 °E, after Webster and Yang (1992)). For better readability, the experiments are split into Eocene-Oligocene (a,c) and Miocene (b,d) simulations. Reference simulations are highlighted in bold characters and full lines, while sensitivity tests are in dotted lines.

our simulations (Fig. 5 a,c and Fig. 6). In the late Eocene, increasing TP elevation strength-1115 ens the zonal wind shear over India (3000 m, WYI = ~ 6 m/s, for experiment LEo2_TP, 1116 Fig. 5 c), when compared to Eocene experiment with low topography in the region (800 m, 1117 WYI = 1 m/s, LEo2_TPlow). Additionally, the magnitude of the WYI gradually increases 1118 with the TP latitude, with values spanning from 3 m/s when its southern edge is at $\sim 20^{\circ}$ N 1119 (LEo2_TPsouth), 4 m/s (southern edge at $\sim 25^{\circ}$ N in LEo2_TP), to finally 6 m/s (southern 1120 edge at $\sim 30^{\circ}$ N, experiment LEo1_REF). The sea inlet that flooded the northern *Greater* 1121 India during the late Eocene, as sometimes suggested in the literature (D. J. J. van Hins-1122 bergen et al., 2012; D. J. van Hinsbergen et al., 2019), limits the northward migration of 1123 the ITCZ in summer (from ~ 7 to 3°N between experiments LEo2_BengalSea and LEo2_TP. 1124 Fig. 5 c). It also produce a decrease in year-round precipitation, especially in South and 1125 inland Asia (Fig. 6 m,n,o). 1126

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6.1.4 Continentality increase and East African and Iranian uplifts as major drivers of the South Asian summer monsoon

The changes induced by the Tibetan plateau uplift or by its latitudinal location on the 1129 South Asian climate are however out-competed by far by the effects of other paleogeography 1130 changes, namely a global sea-level fall, reflecting the Antarctica glaciation at the EOT and 1131 the uplift of peripheral terranes (Fig. 5). Indeed, the increase in continentality driven by the 1132 sea level fall, together with the pCO_2 halving, induces a colder and drier winter (Fig. 7 g) as 1133 well as hotter and wetter summer (Fig. 7 h), which results into a monsoon-like seasonality 1134 signal stretching over Southeastern Asia (Fig. 7 i). It also translates into a doubling of the 1135 WYI (from 6 to 11 m/s between experiments EOli_REF and LEo1_REF, Fig. 5 c) and a 1136 strong reorganization of summer Jet Stream behavior (see dedicated section below). 1137

Likewise, increasing continentality during the Miocene appears to be the key leverage 1138 for inducing a more pronounced migration of the ITCZ over the Arabian Sea (from 18 to 1139 21°N in more continental case, Fig. 5 b), as well as a slight increase of the WYI (Fig. 5 d). 1140 This is achieved either with the emergence of the Arabian platform (Fig. 8 g,h,i), or with the 1141 narrowing of the Neotethys Ocean and the shrinkage of the Paratethys Sea (Fig. 8 d,e,f). In 1142 both cases, the amplification of the summer low pressure belt results into increased moisture 1143 advection from the Arabian Sea, and therefore increased summer precipitation in SAM and 1144 EAM domains. The overall precipitation seasonality increase is however not homogeneous, 1145 because of contrasted effects on the winter season precipitation. Our results point that 1146 the Arabian platform emergence, by amplifying the winter Siberian high pressure would 1147 dry Eastern Asia and southeastern Tibet, which would increase precipitation seasonality 1148 in parts of SAM but mostly in EAM domain (Fig. 8 d,f). The retreat of the Paratethys 1149 Sea, on the other hand, would mostly increase precipitation seasonality in the South Asian 1150 monsoon domain (Fig. 8 i). Moreover, a clear dichotomy emerges between Central Asia, 1151 that becomes drier after the Paratethys Sea retreat, and all surrounding regions that become 1152 wetter (Fig. 8 i). 1153

Additionally, the successive buildup of both East African (difference between ex-1154 periments EMio_EAfr-EMio_REF) and Iran-Zagros landforms (difference between experi-1155 ments LMio_REF-LMio_smallT) is critical for the amplification of the ITCZ migration and 1156 strengthening of SAM. Each uplift triggers a $\sim 4-5^{\circ}$ northward migration of the ITCZ over 1157 the Arabian Sea in summer, as well as a slight increase in July WYI (Fig. 5 b,d). The 1158 uplift of East African landforms under Early Miocene conditions reinforces the Somali Jet 1159 and brings moisture to Iran-Zagros and SAM domain in summer (Fig. 9 e), which results in 1160 intensification of monsoon-like seasonality on the Himalayan foothills and in Southeastern 1161 Asia (mainly Myanmar, Fig. 9 f). Iran-Zagros landforms final uplift under late Miocene 1162 conditions promotes winter aridity and summer precipitation in SAM domain through a 1163 strong strengthening of the Somali Jet, resulting in a reinforced monsoon-like seasonality 1164 (Fig. 9 j,k,l). By preventing the advection of westerly mid-latitudes winds to lower lati-1165 tudes, it channels this humidity towards inland Asia in summer, thus reducing the aridity 1166

of the region. On the other hand, and although being sometimes put forward as a plausible event contributing to modification of monsoon strength during the Miocene (Bialik et al., 2019, 2020; Rögl, 1997; J. Sun et al., 2021), the mechanical effect of the Tethyan seaway closure, without strong modification of land extension in the Arabian Peninsula region, remains limited in our experiments (+1 m/s for the WYI between experiments EMio_REF and EMio_TetSw in Fig. 5 d).

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6.2 The Eastern Asian monsoon under the crossed influence of Asian orography, continentality and pCO_2

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6.2.1 EASM: precipitation patterns and summer Jet Stream position evolution

As opposed to the South Asian region, monsoon-like precipitation seasonality is simu-1177 lated in Eastern Asia in all reference experiments, although it remains initially confined to 1178 Northeastern China in the Eocene (Fig. 4 a). As this region of monsoon-like precipitation 1179 regime expands to southeastern and inland China throughout the Cenozoic and reaches 1180 modern-like extension in the mid Miocene experiment, the Paleogene broad zonal arid band 1181 retreats from China (Fig. 4 m). Today, precipitation in eastern China are triggered by the 1182 penetration of the Meiyu-Bayu front as it follows the migration of the Jet Stream north of 1183 the Tibetan Plateau during summer (Kong et al., 2017). In our simulations, the summer Jet 1184 Stream (approximated through the location of maximum zonal wind velocity in the tropo-1185 sphere in August), transits above the proto-Tibetan Plateau and Eastern China in a strong 1186 zonal flux in the Eocene and Oligocene experiments (up to 30-35 m/s centered at $\sim 30^{\circ}$ N 1187 Fig. 4 c,g). It then weakens (10-20 m/s) and progressively migrates north of the Plateau in 1188 the Miocene experiments (Fig. 4 k,o,s). The Jet also looses its very zonal configuration and 1189 undulates towards Japan. This relocation of the Jet Stream is accompanied by increased 1190 precipitation in eastern China, southeastern Siberia and Japan, reaching 200-300 mm in 1191 August (Fig. 4 k,o,s), and locally accounting for up to 25% of the annual precipitation in 1192 this sole month. These results suggest that the Jet Stream seasonal displacement indeed 1193 amplifies the EASM rainy season, although seasonal precipitation have been observed in 1194 this region in Late Eocene experiments. 1195

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6.2.2 Summer Jet Stream migration and associated EASM precipitation driven by pCO_2 decrease at the EOT and the Northern TP, Tian Shan, Pamir and Mongolian uplift in the Miocene

To identify the drivers responsible for the Jet Stream seasonal migration about the 1199 Tibetan Plateau, we here again take advantage of the available sensitivity experiments. All 1200 1120 ppm (or 4X) late Eocene simulations display a behavior of the Jet opposite to its modern counterpart, with a northward migration in winter, and a southward migration in 1202 summer, below or over the proto-Central TP (Fig. 10 a). This tendency remains relatively 1203 undisturbed with alternative TP configurations (Fig. 10 a and Fig. 6 e,h,k,n). The pCO_2 1204 halving in the Eocene-Oligocene reverses this tendency (LEo1_2X and EOli_REF, compared 1205 to LE01_REF). It induces a migration northward of the Tibetan landform in late summer 1206 to early fall (Fig. 10 a and Fig. 7 e,h), and an important decrease in winter zonal speed 1207 $(\sim 50 \text{ m/s against} \sim 70 \text{ m/s in other Eocene simulations, Fig. 10 a and Fig. SI 21 a to h).$ 1208 This migration is however restricted to the TP region, and the Jet Stream remains at low latitude over eastern Asia (\sim 35°N, Fig. 10 b and Fig. SI 19), with few summer precipitation 1210 (100-150 mm/month). 1211

All subsequent Miocene simulations display an important latitudinal migration of the Jet along the year, both in the TP region (Fig. 10 c,e), and over eastern Asia (Fig. 10 d,f). The northward migration of the Jet is comparable between early Oligocene and early Miocene experiments (up to \sim 38-40°N in September), despite a higher Central Tibet (from 3000 to 4000 m) and a wider Tibetan landform, due to the incipient uplift of Northeastern

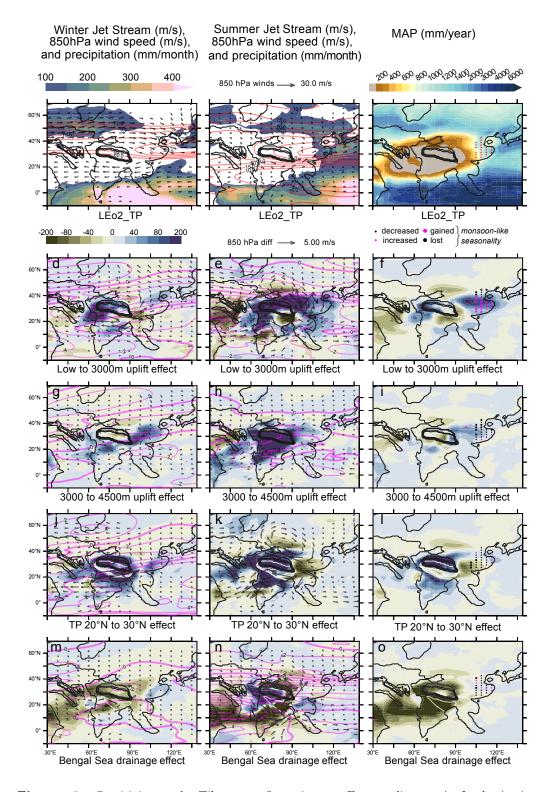


Figure 6. Sensitivity to the Tibetan configurations on Eocene climate: $(\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{d}, \mathbf{g}, \mathbf{j}, \mathbf{m})$ winter precipitation (shading), 850 hPa winds (vectors), jet stream speed (contour) ; $(\mathbf{b}, \mathbf{e}, \mathbf{h}, \mathbf{k}, \mathbf{n})$ on summer precipitation (shading), 850 hPa winds (vectors), jet stream speed (contour); $(\mathbf{c}, \mathbf{f}, \mathbf{i}, \mathbf{l}, \mathbf{o})$ mean annual precipitation (shading) and monsoon-like seasonality according to the MPI index (red dots). Sensitivity tests are compared to the simulation LEo2_TP ($\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{b}, \mathbf{c}$) and anomalies (\mathbf{d} to \mathbf{o}) are expressed as "test minus LEo2_TP", except for the "lowered TP effect" which is "LEo2_TP minus LEo2_TPflat"). Precipitation anomalies (shading) are expressed in % and normalized by the averaged precipitation of both simulations (therefore, a change from or to zero mm/year accounts for +/- 200%). In ($\mathbf{f}, \mathbf{i}, \mathbf{l}, \mathbf{o}$): four types of seasonality after lowering the TP are in small black dots) ; white and black topographic contours indicate the LEo2_TP and test topography.

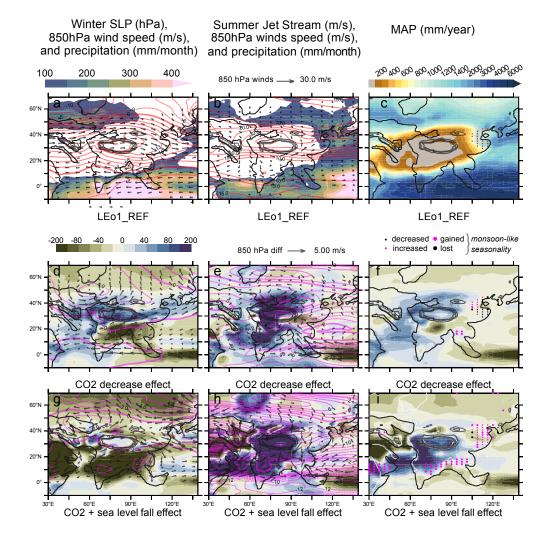


Figure 7. Influence of the pCO_2 decrease and sea level drop at the EOT on: $(\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{d}, \mathbf{g})$ winter precipitation (shading), 850 hPa winds (vectors), Sea Level Pressure (contour); $(\mathbf{b}, \mathbf{e}, \mathbf{h})$ on summer precipitation (shading), 850 hPa wind (vectors), jet stream speed (contour); $(\mathbf{c}, \mathbf{f}, \mathbf{i})$ mean annual precipitation (shading) and monsoon-like seasonality according to the MPI index (red dots). Sensitivity tests are compared to the simulation LEo1_REF $(\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{b}, \mathbf{c})$ and anomalies (**d** to **i**) are expressed in order to highlight the impact of the test (i.e. test-LEo1_REF). Precipitation anomalies (shading) are expressed in % and normalized by the averaged precipitation of both simulations (therefore, a change from or to zero mm/year accounts for +/- 200%). In (**f**,**i**): four types of seasonality changes induced by uplift are displayed (e.g. regions switching from no monsoon to monsoon-like seasonality after the sea level fall and pCO_2 decrease in thick magenta dots) ; white topographic contours indicate the LEo1_REF contour.

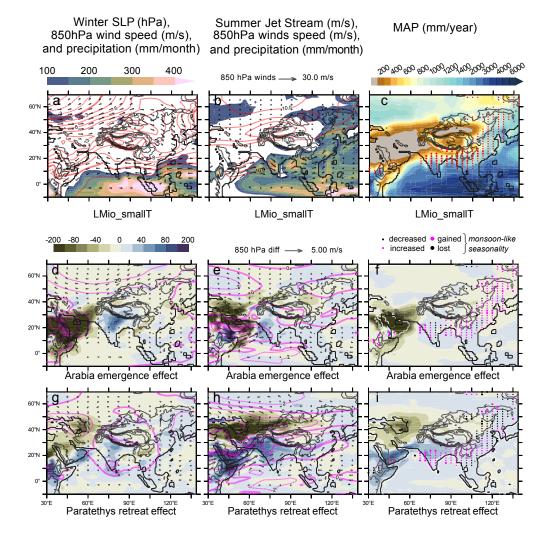


Figure 8. Influence of continentality increase in a Mid-late Miocene context on: $(\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{d}, \mathbf{g})$ winter precipitation (shading), 850 hPa winds (vectors), Sea Level Pressure (contour); $(\mathbf{b}, \mathbf{e}, \mathbf{h})$ on summer precipitation (shading), 850 hPa winds (vectors), jet stream speed (contour); $(\mathbf{c}, \mathbf{f}, \mathbf{i})$ and on mean annual precipitation (shading) and monsoon-like seasonality according to the MPI index (red dots). Sensitivity tests are compared to the simulation LMio_smallT $(\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{b}, \mathbf{c})$ and anomalies (**d** to **i**) are expressed in order to highlight the impact of the continentality increase (i.e. LMio_smallT-test). Precipitation anomalies (shading) are expressed in % and normalized by the averaged precipitation of both simulations (therefore, a change from or to zero mm/year accounts for +/- 200%). In (**f**,**i**): four types of seasonality changes induced by continentality are displayed (e.g. regions switching from no monsoon to monsoon-like seasonality after continentality increase in thick magenta dots) ; white topographic contours indicate the test simulation.

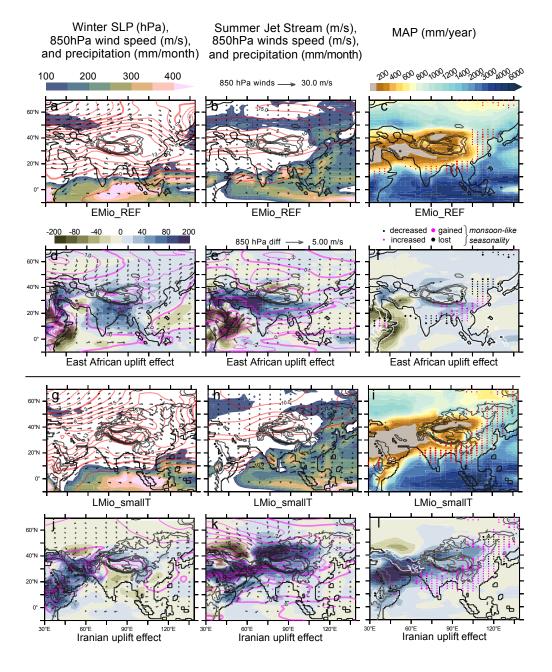


Figure 9. Influence of the East African uplift in the Early Miocene (a to f) and of Iran-Zagros uplift in the late Miocene (g to l) on: $(\mathbf{a,d,g,j})$ winter precipitation (shading), 850 hPa winds (vectors), Sea Level Pressure (contour) ; $(\mathbf{b,e,h,k})$ on summer precipitation (shading), 850 hPa winds (vectors), jet stream speed (contour); $(\mathbf{c,f,i,l})$ and mean annual precipitation (shading) and monsoon-like seasonality according to the MPI index (red dots). East African (Iran-Zagros) uplift is compared to the simulation EMio_REF (LMio_SmallT) ($\mathbf{a,b,c}$ and $\mathbf{g,h,i}$) and anomalies ($\mathbf{d,e,f}$ and $\mathbf{j,k,l}$) are expressed in order to highlight the impact of uplift (i.e. EMio_EAfr-EMio_REF and LMio_REF-LMio_smallT respectively). Precipitation anomalies (shading) are expressed in % and normalized by the averaged precipitation of both simulations (therefore, a change from or to zero mm/year accounts for +/- 200%). In ($\mathbf{f,i}$): four types of seasonality changes induced by continentality are displayed (e.g. regions switching from no monsoon to monsoon-like seasonality after continentality increase in thick magenta dots) ; white topographic contours indicate the uplifted area.

and Northwestern TP portions in the early Miocene simulation (the Tian Shan is ~ 1000 m and the NE Tibet ~ 2000 m high). We therefore suggest that the Jet Stream latitudinal migration is primarily triggered by pCO_2 drawdown, and resulting tropospheric temperature gradients, and that a significant threshold is crossed at the Greenhouse-Icehouse transition (EOT, ~ 34 Ma). In contrast, the subsequent variations in the Jet Stream latitudinal migration in the course of the Miocene, appear to be mainly driven by topography changes.

The opening of the Tethyan seaway in the early Miocene (comparing EMio_REF and 1223 EMio_TetSw), the Iran-Zagros landform uplift (comparing LMio_SmallT and LMio_REF), 1224 or a pCO_2 decrease (comparing LMio_REF and LMio_1.5X) in the late Miocene do not 1225 appear to trigger important variations in the Jet Stream migration (Fig. 10 c to f). Other 1226 experiments, on the other hand, induce notable variations in response to localized uplift 1227 of specific landforms, especially in the mid-late Miocene. Sensitivity experiments removing 1228 either Mongolia, Tian Shan, or a combination of both, or Tian Shan and Pamir show that 1229 these landforms all contribute to amplify the northward migration of the Jet in summer, 1230 both in the TP region and in Eastern Asia (from 39-41°N in LMio_noTS, LMio_noTSP, 1231 LMio_noTSM and LMio_noM to 43°N in MMio_REF and LMio_REF, Fig. 10 e and Fig. 1232 11 h,k,n). This is especially marked in the experiment removing specifically the Tian Shan 1233 orogen, which results in the Jet staying above the TP, without passing its northern edge (Fig. 1234 11 h,k,n). We therefore propose that the final uplifts of the Tian Shan, and in a lesser way 1235 of the Pamir (from ~ 1000 m in the early Miocene to ~ 3000 m in the mid and late Miocene 1236 experiments) and Mongolian mountains (from ~ 500 m in the early Miocene to ~ 1500 m in 1237 the mid and late Miocene experiments) are critical to deviate the Jet northward in summer 1238 (Fig. 11 e,h,k,n and Fig. SI 19 o to r). This relocation of the Jet Stream in summer induces 1239 orographic precipitation on the uplifted landforms, aridification of the regions standing to 1240 the west (-20 to -60% of summer precipitation in eastern Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan) and 1241 increased precipitation in Eastern Mongolia (+20 to 60%). This translates into increased 1242 monsoon-like seasonality in Northeastern Asia (magenta dots in Fig. 11 f,i,l,o). 1243

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6.2.3 East Asian winter monsoon: the Siberian High genesis

Modern EAWM is characterized by cold and dry climate, together with northwesterly 1245 low tropospheric winds above 20°N and northeasterly winds below 20°N. This peculiar atmo-1246 spheric circulation is driven by the strong pressure gradients settling between the Siberian 1247 High anticyclone, the Aleutian Low and the Maritime Continent Low (L. Wang & Chen, 1248 2014; T. Ma & Chen, 2021). Our results suggest strong changes in surface temperature 1249 gradients throughout the experiments, that induce an important remodeling of associated 1250 pressure and wind patterns (Fig. 12 and Fig. 13). In our Eocene experiment, a high-pressure 1251 band centered around 30°N is simulated, but it remains mainly zonal, following large-scale 1252 Hadley winter descending branch driven by latitudinal surface temperature gradients (Fig. 1253 12 b). Indeed, the temperature difference between Tibetan region ($\sim 10^{\circ}$ C) (located below 1254 the high pressure cell) and neighboring North Pacific Ocean ($\sim 30^{\circ}$ C) remains relatively low 1255 $(\sim 20^{\circ}$ C, Fig. 12 a), when compared to modern temperature difference at the same season 1256 $(\sim 40^{\circ}$ C, Fig. 14). As a result, no significant pressure difference is simulated between the 1257 Asian continent and the North Pacific in the Eocene and the calculated EAWM index is 1258 low (<5, Fig. 13), reflecting only the North-South pressure gradient between Asia and the 1259 Maritime Continent. 1260

The extent of the Asian high pressure zone increases gradually in the early Oligocene and early Miocene experiments (Fig. 12 d,f), but its modern-like Siberian High shape is only simulated in the mid and late Miocene experiments, when its center relocates over Siberia (\sim 40-60°N, Fig. 12 h,j). Additionally, the North Pacific low relocates 10° to the south from the early Oligocene simulation onward and steadily decreases until the late Miocene (from over \sim 14 to 10 hPa anomaly). All these changes conspire to increase progressively both North-South and East-West pressure gradients, and therefore the global EAWM index, which reaches maximal values in the mid and late Miocene experiments (\sim 15, Fig.

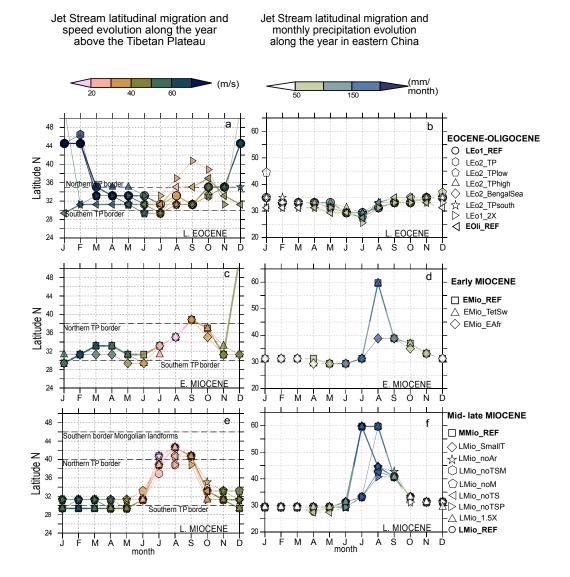


Figure 10. Jet Stream behavior along the year over the Tibetan Plateau and eastern China for all sensitivity experiments, divided into (up) Late Eocene, (mid) early Miocene and (bottom) mid to late Miocene. (left) Jet Stream latitudinal migration and speed (shading) evolution along the year in the Tibetan region (averaged over 80:90°E). Mean latitudes of the northern and southern bounds of the Himalaya-Tibet and Mongolian landforms are indicated. (right) Jet Stream latitudinal position and precipitation (shading) amounts along the year in East Asia (averaged over 100:120°E).

13). Following this reorganization in pressure patterns simulated during the Cenozoic, low tropospheric winds transiting over China display a progressive change in orientation. While their zonal component remains important in the Paleogene and early Miocene experiments (Fig. 12 b,d), the development of the Siberian High triggers a marked increase in their meridional component in the mid and late Miocene experiments (Fig. 12 h,j).

¹²⁷⁴ This profound atmospheric circulation reorganization is driven by temperature gradi-¹²⁷⁵ ent changes, and mainly due to progressive cooling of the Tibetan, Mongolian and Siberian ¹²⁷⁶ regions, as illustrated by the $\sim 22^{\circ}$ shift southward of the 0°C isotherm between the late ¹²⁷⁷ Eocene and the late Miocene simulations (Fig. 12 a,i). Several factors may be responsible

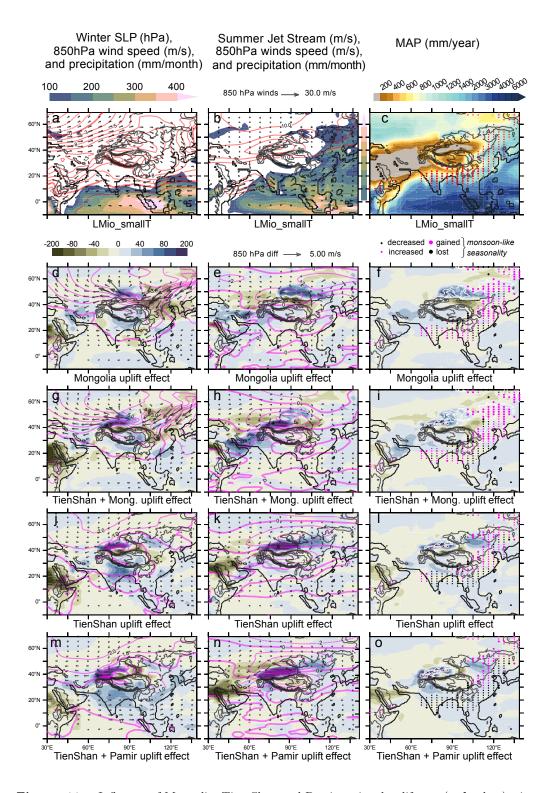


Figure 11. Influence of Mongolia, Tian Shan and Pamir regional uplifts on $(\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{d}, \mathbf{g}, \mathbf{j}, \mathbf{m})$ winter precipitation (shading), 850 hPa winds (vectors), Sea Level Pressure (contour) ; $(\mathbf{b}, \mathbf{e}, \mathbf{h}, \mathbf{k}, \mathbf{n})$ on summer precipitation (shading), 850 hPa wind (vectors), jet stream speed (contour); $(\mathbf{c}, \mathbf{f}, \mathbf{i}, \mathbf{l}, \mathbf{o})$ mean annual precipitation (shading) and monsoon-like seasonality according to the MPI index (red dots). Sensitivity tests are compared to the simulation LMio_smallT $(\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{b}, \mathbf{c})$ and anomalies $(\mathbf{d} \ \mathbf{to} \ \mathbf{o})$ are expressed in order to highlight the impact of the uplift (i.e. LMio_smallT-test). Precipitation anomalies (shading) are expressed in % and normalized by the averaged precipitation of both simulations (therefore, a change from or to zero mm/year accounts for +/- 200%). In $(\mathbf{f}, \mathbf{i}, \mathbf{l}, \mathbf{o})$: four types of seasonality changes induced by uplift are displayed (e.g. regions switching from no monsoon to monsoon-like seasonality aft²⁸uplift in thick magenta dots); white topographic contours indicate the landforms that were added.

for this important winter cooling, such as the pCO_2 drawdown, local topography changes or increased continentality.

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6.2.4 Siberian High inception driven mainly by Mongolia uplift in the Miocene and its impact on precipitation seasonality

The Eocene sensitivity experiments display a stable zonal high pressure pattern at mid latitudes (Fig. SI 18 a to g), with weak response to changing Tibetan orography or pCO_2 values (Fig. 13). Likewise, our Miocene sensitivity experiments allow to highlight that the winter pressure patterns in Asia (comprising the Siberian High, the North Pacific Low and the Maritime Continent Low) are not impacted by African or Iran-Zagros landforms uplifts, the Arabian platform configuration, the Paratethys extent, or a pCO_2 drop from 560 to 420 ppm (Fig. 13 and Fig. SI 18 i to n and s,t).

On the other hand, sensitivity experiments reveal the impact of the Mongolian land-1289 form uplift in the mid-late Miocene (either Mongolia alone, or both Tian Shan and Mongo-1290 lia). Indeed, their settlement induces a strengthening of both the Siberian High (up to ~ 6 hPa, Fig. 11 d,g) and the North Pacific low, resulting in a reinforcement of the East-West 1292 and North-South pressure gradients, and ultimately of the EAWM index (from ~ 8 to ~ 15 , 1293 Fig. 13). Mongolian (and/or Tian Shan and/or Pamir) uplift also results in increased pre-1294 cipitation localized over the landforms (Fig. 11 d to o), despite the overall dryness of inland 1295 Asia region (SI Fig. 16). As Mongolian uplift deviates the winter westerlies flux northward, 1296 Eastern China is swept by colder and drier winds coming from Siberia, which translates into 1297 a marked decrease in winter precipitation (up to 80% decrease, Fig. 11 d). The uplift of 1298 Tian Shan landforms, alone or together with the Pamir, has a lower impact on the global winter pressure patterns (Fig. 13), but nonetheless provokes an almost complete drying on 1300 its eastern flanks (modern Gobi and Taklimakan deserts), as it acts as an orographic barrier 1301 to westerly moisture flux (Fig. 11 g,j,m). 1302

These changes on winter wind circulation and precipitation amounts, combined to 1303 those observed in summer and described above, produce contrasted responses in terms of 1304 monsoon-like precipitation seasonality. As the Mongolian uplift generates a mixed response 1305 on summer precipitation in eastern China (Fig. 11 e,h), but dries consistently the region in 1306 winter (Fig. 11 d,g), it induces important spreading of new regions displaying monsoon-like 1307 precipitation seasonality in eastern China (thick magenta dots in Fig. 11 f,i). At the oppo-1308 site, Tian Shan and Pamir uplift, let alone the important year-round increase in orographic 1309 precipitation, triggers overall increased winter precipitation amounts in Southeastern Asia 1310 (Fig. 11 j,m), which leads to widespread reduction of precipitation seasonality in the SAM 1311 domain (Fig. 11 l,o). 1312

1313 7 Discussion

A long-standing debate opposes the effect of continentality against orography regarding 1314 the Asian climate evolution (Prell & Kutzbach, 1992; Kutzbach et al., 1993; Ramstein et 1315 al., 1997; Fluteau et al., 1999; Z. Zhang et al., 2007; Roe et al., 2016; Zoura et al., 2019; 1316 R. Zhang et al., 2021). Our results hint that these two features most likely impacted different 1317 climatic characteristics of the Asian Monsoons and all concurred to the settlement of current 1318 Asian climate (see Table 6 for a sum-up of the main effects of each forcing on monsoonal 1319 features). In the following sections we put our main findings in perspective with available 1320 paleoclimatic indicators and previous modeling work. 1321

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7.1 A possible inception of monsoons in the Paleogene: which dependence to pCO_2 , Tibetan paleogeography and continentality ?

¹³²⁴ Our late Eccene set of simulations follows a previous study, in which we introduced ¹³²⁵ the results from LEo1_REF, displaying no monsoon circulation, and discussed a possible dry

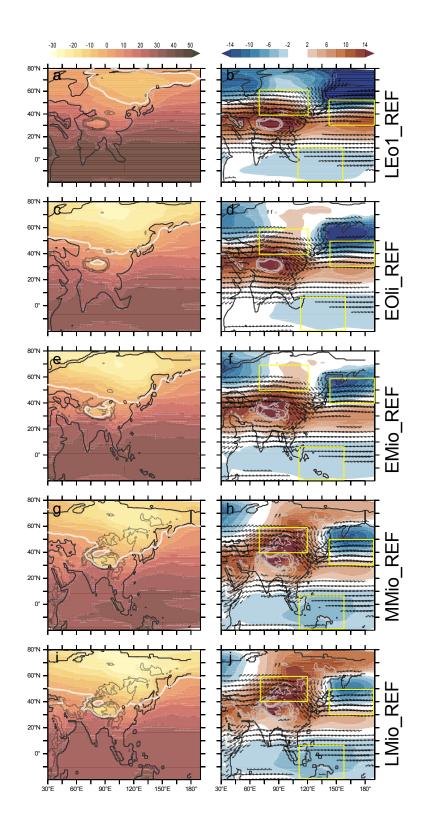


Figure 12. Evolution of the winter monsoon diagnostics throughout the Cenozoic. Left column: December-February (DJF) mean 2m temperature (shading, Celsius), overlain with a white contour line marking the 0°C isotherm ; **Right column:** DJF normalized Sea Level Pressure anomaly (shading, hPa) and 850 hPa winds above 4 m/s (vectors). In all captions, topography is overlain in gray contour each 1000 m. Yellow boxes indicate the regions over which are calculated the sea level pressure gradients from the East Asian Winter Monsoon Index, presented in section 5.3

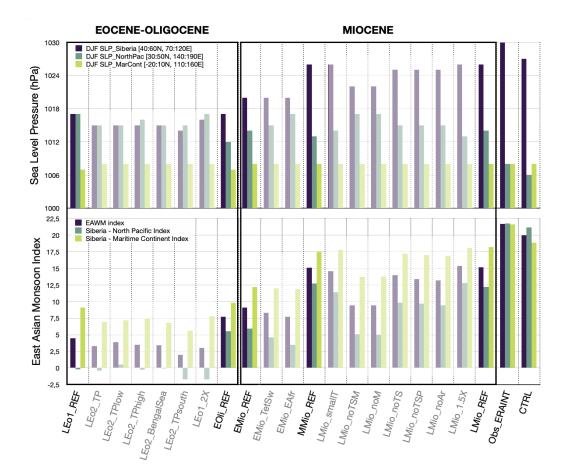


Figure 13. Upper panel: Winter (DJF) Sea Level Pressure (hPa) evolution over Siberia, North Pacific and the Maritime Continent ; lower panel: Evolution of the East Asian Winter Monsoon index (purple) and of the East-West and North-South regional indexes throughout the different reference and sensitivity experiments, after (L. Wang & Chen, 2014).

bias in our simulations, when comparing our results to several proxy localities indicating 1326 significantly wetter environments (Tardif et al., 2020). Indeed, while markers of arid to sub-1327 arid climate are widespread for the late Eocene for example in Northeastern TP (J. X. Li 1328 et al., 2018; Meijer et al., 2019), Tajikistan (Carrapa et al., 2015) or on the Tarim Basin shores (Bougeois et al., 2018), our Eocene experiment fails to render the wetter climate 1330 inferred from fossil paleoflora and paleofauna in Northern India (Saxena & Trivedi, 2009) 1331 and Tibet (T. Su et al., 2020; Sorrel et al., 2017). Asian overall aridity in this reference 1332 Eocene simulation was interpreted as resulting from the hot surface temperatures simulated 1333 in the region, together with strong mid-tropospheric subsidence that inhibits deep convection 1334 and condensation, especially over Northern India (Tardif et al., 2020). Nevertheless, much 1335 wetter and closer to monsoon-like summer climate patterns were simulated in both EAM and 1336 SAM domains for the late Eocene with the same model and paleogeography, but with orbital 1337 configurations inducing summer solar maxima (Tardif et al., 2021). This potential orbitally-1338 paced wet/dry climate dichotomy is, at least qualitatively, in agreement with stratigraphic 1339 and paleobotanic evidence from Eastern China (C. Huang & Hinnov, 2019; Tong et al., 1340 2002). Another hypothesis for this mismatch was an eventual sensitivity of the simulated 1341 climate to Asian paleogeography which, as introduced before, is still highly debated for this 1342 period. 1343

7.1.1 Late Eocene climate sensitivity to alternative paleogeographic configurations: persistent mismatch with paleoclimate indicators in SAM domain

In this study, we explored the Asian climate sensitivity to different late Eocene Tibetan 1347 configurations, which aimed at reflecting the main theories regarding the paleogeography at 1348 that time. We also evaluated the effect of decreased pCO_2 values (1120 to 560 ppm). Our 1349 results reveal that the arid pattern previously described shows low sensitivity to the Tibetan Plateau configuration or to a reduced pCO_2 , and is only disturbed by the presence of a 1351 Bengal Sea (LEo2_BengalSea), which lowers the surface temperatures and slightly enhances 1352 precipitation in this region (Fig. SI 16 f). This tendency is however opposite to similar 1353 modeling studies comparing an early and a late Eocene paleogeography, and which suggest 1354 increased precipitation after the drainage of this Bengal Sea (X. Li et al., 2017, 2018). 1355 Comparing these different simulations is nevertheless hampered by the significant difference 1356 between other boundary conditions that were used. Collectively, these results rather points 1357 to the high sensitivity of late Eocene climate to surface temperature gradients, at least with the IPSL-CM5A2 model, which is further emphasized by the changes induced by the sea 1359 level fall tested in our Oligocene simulation and presented in the next section. 1360

The EAM region displays higher sensitivity to the paleogeography changes that were 1361 tested. We simulate that an uplift in the Tibetan region (compared to a low ~ 800 m TP in LEo2_TPLow) would result into an onset or increase in EAM monsoon-like precipitation 1363 seasonality due to increased summer precipitation (up to 50, Fig. 6e, Fig. SI 16 b,c,d), 1364 in agreement with previous modeling works (R. Zhang et al., 2018, 2017, 2021; Z. Zhang 1365 et al., 2007; X. Liu & Yin, 2002; X. Li et al., 2017; Farnsworth et al., 2019; Thomson et 1366 al., 2021). Likewise, the decreased EAM intensity and increased inland Asian aridity due 1367 to the northern migration of the TP (its southern edge translating from ~ 20 to 30° N) is 1368 coherent with previous study testing the impact of the latitudinal position of the incipient 1369 TP (R. Zhang et al., 2017). 1370

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7.1.2 Imprint of the Eocene-Oligocene transition on summer monsoon and inland Asia aridification

Paleoclimatic indicators from inland Asia suggest increased precipitation seasonality
 in EAM and SAM domains, wetter conditions localized in the Tarim and western Qaidam
 basins and overall aridification everywhere else in inland Asia (described in section 3.1.3).
 This aridification was attributed either to global cooling a the EOT (J. Sun et al., 2015;

X. Li et al., 2017), to the Paratethys Sea retreat (Barbolini et al., 2020; Z. Zhang et al., 1377 2007), or both (J. Sun & Windley, 2015). Our sensitivity experiment testing the effect 1378 of cooling alone (LEo1_2X) seems to better render wetter conditions in the Tarim-Qaidam 1379 region and global drying in the Yunnan region (Fig. 7 f). Taking into account the EOT global sea level drop in addition to global cooling (EOli_REF) on the other hand, better 1381 simulates the monsoon-like precipitation seasonality suggested by paleofloras in both EAM 1382 (Vornlocher et al., 2021; R. Spicer et al., 2017; J. Ren et al., 2021; J. Huang et al., 2022; 1383 Herman et al., 2017; Ling et al., 2021) and SAM domains (R. Spicer et al., 2017; Srivastava 1384 et al., 2012), as well as precipitation amounts in Kazakhstan (Averyanova et al., 2021). 1385 Although the comparison to existing modeling studies is limited by the many additional 1386 parameters that may variate from our experiments (ice sheets, pCO_2 , etc.), those which 1387 explicitly tested the effect of the Paratethys Sea retreat (R. Zhang et al., 2021; Z. Zhang et al., 2007), tend to simulate similar SAM and EAM precipitation seasonality increase. Our 1389 Oligocene experiment however still underestimates precipitation over Tibet (Deng et al., 1390 2021; Song et al., 2020) and does not simulate the drying trend indicated by proxies in the 1391 Tajik and Junggar basins as well as in the Gobi region after the EOT (J. Sun & Windley, 1392 2015; Baldermann et al., 2021; J. Sun et al., 2015, 2020), although simulated Oligocene 1393 mean annual precipitation remain very low in these regions. We suggest this mismatch may 1394 be due to the shape of the proto-Tibetan orogen or paleoshorelines used in LEo1_REF and 1395 EOli_REF, as all of these locations stand very close to the boundary between regions that 1396 became indeed drier (Fig. 7). To further explore the impact of land-sea distribution change, 1397 the Miocene experiments offer additionnal input. 1398

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7.1.3 Continentality increase as a potential driver of Paleogene wintertime climate variability

The precocious observation of loess deposits in northeastern Tibet at 40 Ma was in-1401 terpreted as resulting from the periodical inception (or reinforcement) of the Siberian High 1402 in winter due to enhanced continentality after the Paratethys Sea retreat (Meijer et al., 1403 2021). Other loess deposits are reported during the Oligocene in the Chinese Loess Plateau 1404 and Mongolia, apparently coeval with periods of cooling and ice-sheets expansion (J. Sun & 1405 Windley, 2015; Wasiljeff et al., 2022). These discoveries question the presence of a Siberian 1406 High in the Paleogene, of its role in dust transport and accumulation, and of its forcing 1407 factors. Indeed, most modeling studies so far focused on the link between regional uplift 1408 and enhanced Siberian High and winter monsoon circulation rather than on the influence of continentality or global climate cooling. Our results suggest that both increased conti-1410 nentality and regional uplift have concurred to the progressive inception of modern Siberian 1411 High, while pCO_2 fall had apparently little impact on its intensity (Fig. 13). 1412

Oligocene global sea level fall increases winter sea level pressure by ~ 2 to 4 hPa over 1413 Siberia (Fig. 7 g) and induces the southward expansion of the North Pacific Aleutian 1414 low, which altogether increase the pressure gradient between those two regions. Similar 1415 trend is obtained, although in a lower magnitude, with our simulation testing the effect 1416 of the Arabian platform emergence, while the final retreat of the Paratethys Sea tested in 1417 Miocene configuration does not trigger changes (Fig. 13). A modern-like Siberian High with 1418 typical EAWM wind patterns is however not simulated until our middle and late Miocene 1419 simulations, when the current Tian Shan and Mongolian landforms are set to their present 1420 elevations. Collectively, these results suggest that continentality increase may have induced 1421 changes in wintertime pressure gradients and atmospheric circulation mostly before the 1422 uplift of Tian Shan and Mongolian landforms, but would have had a decreasing importance 1423 afterwards. 1424

We also acknowledge that the Mongolian and Tian Shan uplifting history was likely
more complex than depicted here, with signs of early uplift in the Hangay region as soon
as the Oligocene. Performing additional experiments allowing to test the role of an uplifted Hangay dome in an Oligocene configuration should allow us to evaluate the potential

presence of a Siberian High at that time. This may help interpreting precocious loess-like deposits observed at that time in the Chinese Loess Plateau and Mongolia (J. Sun & Windley,
2015; Wasiljeff et al., 2022). The presence loess-like deposits in the Xining Basin at ~40 Ma
however, seems too old to be attributed to the development of the modern Siberian High,
if its full development is conditional to uplift of the Mongolian and Tian Shan landforms.
This discrepancy suggest that additional mechanisms for dust transport over long distances
should be explored for this period, although testing this hypothesis would require further
investigation, likely with daily to hourly wind speed outputs (Aoki et al., 2005).

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7.2 Peripheral landforms critical role in monsoon seasonal feature settlement in the Miocene

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7.2.1 Tian Shan, Pamir and Mongolia: small mountains, strong effect

The role played by Mongolian landform uplift in the inception of the Siberian High is 1440 one of the most salient outcomes of these experiments. Previous modeling works based on 1441 modern geography that have tested the effect of Mongolia uplift (Sha et al., 2015; Shi et al., 2015; Yu et al., 2018) reproduce the same tendencies we have presented, namely a strong 1443 increase of the winter sea level pressure over Siberia and typical deflation of the westerly flow 1444 towards northern latitudes resulting in a pronounced drying of Eastern Asia and EAWM 1445 amplification (Fig. 11 d). Other studies simulate increased EASM precipitation and wind 1446 circulation, although they incorporate Tian Shan uplift together with Mongolia (Yu et al., 1447 2018; R. Zhang et al., 2012; H. Tang et al., 2013; Zhisheng et al., 2001), which remains 1448 coherent with our findings testing the uplift of both features (Fig. 11 h). Paleoclimate 1449 simulations using more realistic paleogeographic reconstructions (Eocene or Oligocene) tend to confirm such tendencies, although the effect of Mongolian landforms was not explicitly 1451 tested. Generally, we can observe that when a modern-like Mongolia was prescribed, the 1452 simulated winds and precipitation were close to modern-like EAWM (Licht et al., 2014; 1453 X. Li et al., 2017), while it is not the case with a reduced Mongolia elevation (Huber & 1454 Goldner, 2012). 1455

The effect of the Tian Shan ranges uplift on Asian climate is less conspicuous and 1456 seems also more sensitive to the degree of uplift of other surrounding landforms (such as 1457 the Pamir-Karakoram, the Hindu Kush or Iran-Zagros), likely owing to its lower latitude. 1458 While a rigorous comparison between our results and previous studies is hampered by too 1459 many diverging boundary conditions, all tend to point that the Tian Shan uplift would 1460 have i) increased yearly orographic precipitation on the ranges, ii) decreased it in the Tarim 1461 Basin located in their rain shadow and in inland Asia mid latitudes and iii) reinforced the EAM through increased summer precipitation (Fig. 11 m,n,o) (Baldwin & Vecchi, 2016; 1463 H. Tang et al., 2013; Yu et al., 2018; R. Zhang et al., 2017). The key role played by the 1464 Tian Shan ranges, together with the Pamirs and Mongolian landforms in triggering the Jet 1465 Stream northward migration in summer (Fig. 19e, f and Fig. 9e, h, k, n), as suggested by 1466 previous modeling works derived from modern geography (Sha et al., 2020; Shi et al., 2015), 1467 likely contributes to increase the EAM. Nevertheless, substantial differences are noted with 1468 other modeling studies, especially regarding the effect on SAM domain: where we simulate 1469 a weakening of SAM seasonality due to increased winter precipitation, opposite trend is 1470 simulated in studies where the Iran-Zagros and Hindu Kush are fully uplifted and prevent 1471 the westerly flux to bring moisture to India (Baldwin & Vecchi, 2016; H. Tang et al., 2013; 1472 Yu et al., 2018; R. Zhang et al., 2017; X. Wang et al., 2020). 1473

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7.2.2 East Africa and Zagros-Anatolia: the Far West uplifts and SAM evolution

¹⁴⁷⁶ Our set of simulation highlight in addition that paleogeographic evolution in the Middle
 ¹⁴⁷⁷ Eastern and East African regions have been important for the Neogene evolution of the
 ¹⁴⁷⁸ SASM as they strongly contributed to the settlement of modern-like atmospheric circulation

as discussed by Sarr et al. (2022). The presence of intermediate to high elevation topography
in East Africa in the early Miocene is for example crucial for the "early" bending of the
Somali Jet, before the closure of the West Tethys seaway and settlement of Iran-Zagros
topography with modern-like elevation (Fig. 9).

Increasing elevation in the East African region is also responsible, in our simulations 1483 for increasing SAWM precipitation (Fig. 9), which contrast with previous studies that sim-1484 ulate reduced SASM precipitation instead (H.-H. Wei & Bordoni, 2016; Chakraborty et al., 1485 2009) as topography would block the advection of moisture from equatorial Africa towards 1486 India. We hypothesize that such difference may come from these studies using present-day paleogeography, and/or unchanged fixed SSTs for all the experiments, thereby neglecting 1488 the potential effect of the East Africa uplift on Indian Ocean SSTs and SST gradients. These 1489 studies however critically highlight that a reinforced Somali Jet may not be systematically 1490 correlated with increased SAM precipitation, although this genetic relationship is commonly 1491 found in the literature. Alongside, increasing land exposure in the Arabian platform region 1492 in the middle Miocene, the uplift of the Iran-Zagros topography strongly reinforces the So-1493 mali Jet speed and northward migration, together with the summer precipitation amounts (Fig. 5, Fig. 9), as previously suggested by (R. Zhang et al., 2017; Acosta & Huber, 2020; 1495 H. Tang et al., 2013). 1496

Given their respective impact in the SAM, knowledge of the evolution of those western 1497 topographies, although seldom taken into account, is critical to interpret paleoenvironmental 1498 indicators. This is especially true for inland Asia and northwestern India regions, because of their key location with respect to the westerlies flux. Westerlies may indeed be deviated 1500 either to the North or the South depending on the Zagros-Iran and Tian Shan respective 1501 elevation. Indication of increased SAM precipitation during the Miocene (X. Yang et al., 1502 2020) could for example be, at least partly due to Zagros-Iran uplift, as geological evidences 1503 indicate that the high topography settled at that time (Austermann et al., 2017; François 1504 et al., 2014). 1505

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7.3 Miocene continentality increase as an amplifier of SAM, EAM and inland aridity

The northward motion of the ITCZ over the Arabian Sea and the stronger SASM 1508 precipitation in response to continentality increase in the Miocene is a feature clearly sim-1509 ulated in our experiments, and which is obtained with either the Paratethys Sea retreat or 1510 the Arabian peninsula emergence (Fig. 8 e,h). The role of the Paratethys Sea retreat as 1511 a vector of amplified summer low sea level pressure zone and resulting moisture advection via strengthened Somali Jet is well established by modeling experiments (Ramstein et al., 1513 1997; Fluteau et al., 1999; R. Zhang et al., 2021; Z. Zhang et al., 2007). The Paratethys Sea 1514 retreat also drastically dries the "westerly corridor" (centered around 40°N, Fig. 8 h) which 1515 overall results in increased inland Asian aridity and moderately increases EAM seasonality, 1516 north and south of this latitudinal band (Fig. 8 i). These patterns are mostly coherent with 1517 those obtained by previous modeling studies (R. Zhang et al., 2021; Z. Zhang et al., 2007), 1518 although here again, important differences in the paleogeography and type of model that 1519 were used prevent a rigorous comparison. 1520

On the other hand, the effect of increased land exposure in the Arabian peninsula 1521 region on Asian climate was, to our knowledge, significantly less explored by modeling 1522 studies and is never mentioned as a potential forcing by field work. In most modeling 1523 studies, the region usually evolves together with the global paleogeography, without being 1524 specifically tested. We putatively attribute this to the lack of constraints and data in this 1525 region. Given the shallowness and extension of the Arabian peninsula (~ 3 million square 1526 meters, roughly comparable to India area), it is very likely that the episodes of partial or 1527 complete flooding that it witnessed from the Oligocene to the late Miocene (Barrier et al., 1528 2018; Otero & Gayet, 2001) may have had great consequences on atmospheric circulation 1529

patterns. Our results show that increased peninsula exposure reinforces the Somali Jet 1530 in summer and enhances summer precipitation in SAM and EAM domains (Fig. 8 e). 1531 Additionally, it drives the onset of upwelling in the Arabian Sea (see Sarr et al. (2022), 1532 with the same set of simulations), which are traditionally used as proxies indicating the establishment of a monsoon regime in South Asia. These findings imply that a proto-Somali 1534 Jet and intense summer precipitation settled before the emergence the Arabian peninsula in 1535 the middle Miocene, and therefore before the recording of upwelling in the Arabian Sea. In 1536 any cases, the onset of upwellings in the Arabian Sea was likely decorrelated from potential 1537 Miocene uplifts events in the Himalaya-Tibet region (Sarr et al., 2022). 1538

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7.4 Persistent uncertainties and directions for further works

Our study demonstrates the key role played by land-sea distribution and by all topographic features surrounding the Indian Ocean in shaping the modern SAM, EAM and inland Asia aridity. Nevertheless, additional work is required from both modeling and the field research to help refine our understanding of the complex mechanisms at play throughout the Cenozoic in Asia.

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7.4.1 Opposite effect and thresholds crossings: the need for improved relative and absolute timing and elevation constraints on uplift events

Overall, our results highlight the strong crossed influence of the various sub-geographical units on resulting monsoons and therefore the conceptual limitations of performing tests based on modern geographies or assuming homogeneous Asian orography uplift in the course of time to evaluate past monsoon evolution. In that aspect, it is not surprising that most of such studies simulate somehow modern-like summer and winter monsoons when keeping uplifted African, Mongolian and Iranian landforms, as well as an emerged Arabia (Roe et al., 2016; Zoura et al., 2019; Acosta & Huber, 2020).

The need to better constrain the evolution in time, elevation and shape of the various 1554 Asian, East African and Anatolian landforms, appears paramount, in order to refine our 1555 understanding of Cenozoic paleoclimate evolution. Our results also suggest that some pa-1556 leogeographic events may have had contrary influences on either SAM or EAM, although 1557 we might picture them as roughly coeval. This is for example the case of the Tien-Shan 1558 and Pamir uplifts that weaken SAM seasonality, while Mongolian and Iran-Zagros uplifts, 1559 together with continentality strengthen it. Here, we chose to perform our mid-late Miocene 1560 sensitivity tests based on a halfway uplifted Iran-Zagros orogen (LMio_SmallT), but it is 1561 likely that we may obtain different results if testing the uplift on Mongolia (for example) in a 1562 paleogeography with an already fully uplifted Iran-Zagros topography. Refining the relative 1563 chronology of these various paleogeographic events is therefore critical to better interpret the variations in monsoon intensity recorded by the proxies. Additionally, paleoelevation 1565 thresholds are likely to be critical for constraining the Asian climate evolution, due to in-1566 teractions of the topography with either low level (e.g. the summer monsoon winds) or mid 1567 troposheric (e.g. the Jet Stream) air masses (X. Liu & Yin, 2002; X. Wang et al., 2020; 1568 Zhisheng et al., 2001; Prell & Kutzbach, 1992). 1569

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7.4.2 Land-sea distribution and gateway closure

A more precise view of land-sea distribution and regional seaways evolution is also 1571 paramount. Indeed, they influence the surface temperature gradients, and therefore con-1572 dition sea level pressure patterns, low tropospheric circulation as well as oceanic surface 1573 1574 circulation. Although our results point to a minimal effect of the mechanical closure of the Tethyan Seaway on regional results, other features need to be tested. For example, a better 1575 understanding of the Indonesian Gateway and Indonesian throughflow evolution would be 1576 of great interest, as they control part of Indo-Pacific Warm Pool SSTs distribution (Cane 1577 & Molnar, 2001). While the final step of the gateway constriction likely occurs during 1578

the Pliocene (Auer et al., 2019), its paleobathymetric and geometric configuration remains however largely undocumented between 17-3.5 Ma, due to difficulties in reconstructing the complex configuration of the region (Kuhnt et al., 2004). Although no major tectonic deformation is supposed to have occurred during this period, the shallow depth of the gateway likely made it sensitive to middle Miocene sea level fluctuations (Sosdian & Lear, 2020), with possible impact the Eastern Indian and Western Pacific oceans surface temperatures and therefore on SST gradients.

1586 8 Conclusions

In this study, we took advantage of the rich discoveries that have allowed to extend 1587 the fossil record to the Paleogene in Asia, as well as the consolidation of the understanding 1588 of the physical concepts underpinning the monsoons brought by modeling studies. Overall, we simulate an intensification of all considered monsoon metrics throughout the Cenozoic, 1590 in response to specific forcings. We find that, in agreement with paleoclimate indicators, 1591 modern-like monsoons, in terms of atmospheric circulation, seasonality and precipitation 1592 amounts, likely exist since at least the mid-late Miocene. We however show that high 1593 seasonality in precipitation may have existed since the Paleogene in both SAM and EAM 1594 domains, before the settlement of modern atmospheric circulation patterns. In agreement 1595 with previous studies, our results highlight the rather limited effect of pCO_2 when compared 1596 to paleogeographic changes, with the notable exception of the effect of the pCO_2 drawdown 1597 at the EOT on the Jet Stream latitudinal migration over the year in the Tibetan region. 1598

First, although the exact shape and extent of coastal shallow environments remain 1599 poorly constrained, our results strongly hint that any variations in the land-sea distribution, 1600 whether due to tectonic activity, or sea level fluctuations, would have strongly impacted the 1601 Asian climate. Many episodes of increased continentality are documented in the course of the 1602 Cenozoic, including the regional regressions of the Paratethys epicontinental Sea, periodical 1603 exposure of the Arabian platform due to sea level fluctuations, and global sea level fall 1604 at the Eocene Oligocene Transition. All of these events likely favored the enhancement of 1605 summer moisture penetration into Asia, by promoting the extension of the wide subtropical 1606 low pressure belt and thus amplifying the seasonal latitudinal migration of the ITCZ on 1607 land. 1608

Second, while the HTP complex was recurrently put forward as the leading mech-1609 anism in Asian climate evolution, our results rather points toward a shared responsibility 1610 between all landforms surrounding the modern Indian Ocean. We also stress the fact that all 1611 paleogeographic features do not bear the same importance on SASM, EASM or EAWM re-1612 spectively. The Tibetan Plateau uplift likely favored the onset of monsoon-like precipitation 1613 seasonality in eastern Asia in the Eocene, by promoting the advection of moist air masses 1614 in summer, and by partially shielding the region from westerly moisture input in winter. 1615 The Miocene Eastern African and Iran-Zagros uplift were critical to intensify and redirect 1616 the Somali Jet towards the Indian subcontinent, and thus develop the modern-like South 1617 Asian monsoon summer circulation and amplify moisture advection to Asia in summer. 1618 Additionally, Iranian-Anatolian uplift, by blocking moisture advection from the westerlies 1619 to lower latitudes likely contributed enhance winter aridity in most of Southeastern Asia. 1620 The Himalaya-Tibet complex then conditions the SASM precipitation distribution over the 1621 South Asian region, triggers heavy orographic precipitation and upper atmosphere heating 1622 over northern India. 1623

We show that the uplift of the Tian Shan and the Mongolian mountains was key for
the settlement of the winter Siberian high pressure cell, and resulting aridification of inland
and eastern Asia in winter. The summer Jet Stream migration northward of the Tibetan
Plateau was likely amplified in the mid-late Miocene, as the Pamir and Tian Shan landforms
approached their modern elevation and contributed to its channeling toward higher latitudes.
This relocation of the Jet Stream amplifies the penetration of moist air masses over eastern

China, thus contributing to increase the EAM precipitation seasonality. Overall, our results,
in agreement with available paleoclimate indicators and most previous modeling studies,
show the fundamentally polygenetic history of monsoonal evolution, suggesting that the very
concept of a "monsoon onset" is inappropriate. We also stress the need for more accurate
constrains regarding paleoshorelines evolutions, relative timing of uplift and landforms paleoelevations in order to propose better global climate evolution scenarios.

1636 Acronyms

- 1637 ITCZ Inter Tropical Convergence Zone
- 1638 SASM South Asian Summer Monsoon
- 1639 EASM East Asian Summer Monsoon
- 1640 EAWM East Asian Winter Monsoon
- 1641 HTP Himalaya-Tibetan Plateau
- 1642 IGLLJ Indo-Gangetic Low Level Jet
- ¹⁶⁴³ MMCO Mid Miocene Climatic Optimum
- 1644 EOT Eocene Oligocene Transition

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1662 **References**

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3330 9 Supplementary

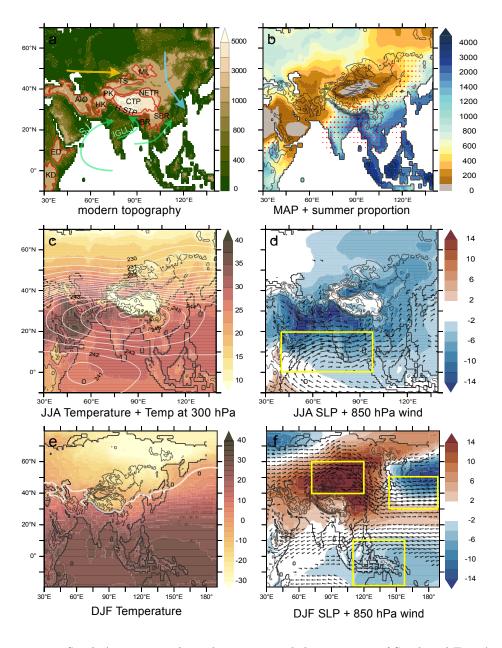


Figure 14. South Asian orography and main seasonal characteristics of South and East Asian Monsoons subsystems from observations an reanalysis. (a) Modern geography and topography (in m), with main seasonal winds: Westerlies (yellow arrow), Winter monsoon (blue arrow) and Summer monsoon (green arrows); Somali Jet (SJ), Indo-Gangetic-Low Level Jet (IGLLJ) and main geographic units mentioned in Section 4 highlighted: KD - Kenyan Dome, ED - Ethiopian Dome, AIO - Anatolian and Iranian orogens, PK - Pamir-Karakoram, HK - Hindu Kush, CTP - Central Tibetan Plateau, H-STP - Himalayas and Southern Tibetan Plateau, NETP - Northeastern TP, TS - Tian Shan, IBR - Indo Burman Ranges, SBR - Sino Burman Ranges, ML -Mongolian Landforms.; (b) Mean Annual Precipitation (shading, mm/yr), and regions where the Monsoon Precipitation Index is over 0.5 (thin red dots) and 0.75 (thick red dots). The Monsoon Precipitation Index is defined in the Monsoon Metrics section 5.3; (c) JJA mean 2m temperature (shading, Celsius) and 300 hPa atmospheric temperature (white contour, Kelvin); (d) JJA normalized Sea Level Pressure anomalies (shading, hPa) and 850 hPa winds (vectors over 4m/s). Yellow box highlight the region of calculation of the Webster-Yang Index, defined in the Monsoon Metrics section 5.3; (e) DJF mean 2m temperature (shading, Celsius); (f) DJF normalized Sea Level Pressure anomalies (shading, hPa) and 850 hPa winds (vectors over 4m/s). Yellow boxes highlight the regions of calculation of the Eastern Asian Monsoon Index, defined in the Monsoon Metrics section. In all captions, topography (each 1000 m) is in gray contour. Precipitation for 1979-2021 from the Global Precipitation Climatology Project (GPCP) (Pendergrass, Angeline, Wang, Jian-Jian National Center for Atmospheric Research Staff (Eds). Last modified 06 Nov 2020. "The Climate Data Guide: GPCP (Monthly): Global Precipitation Climatology Project." Retrieved from https://climatedataguide.ucar.edu/climate-data/gpcp-

	Reference
1	(Averyanova et al., 2021)
2	(Hellwig et al., 2018)
$\frac{2}{3}$	(Macaulay et al., 2016)
4	(Caves Rugenstein et al., 2017)
5	(Carrapa et al., 2015)
6	(J. Sun et al., 2022)
7	(J. Sun et al., 2010)
8	(J. Sun & Windley, 2015)
9	(Baldermann et al., 2021)
10	(Caves Rugenstein et al., 2014)
11	(Kent-Corson et al., 2009)
12	(Zheng et al., 2015)
13	(Meijer et al., 2021)
14	(Licht et al., 2014)
15	(Wasiljeff et al., 2022)
16	(Hoorn et al., 2012)
17	(X. Ma & Jiang, 2015)
18	(Guo et al., 2002)
19	(Guo et al., 2008)
20	(Q. Yuan et al., 2020)
21	(Ao et al., 2016)
22	(Ao et al., 2021)
23	(Shen et al., 2017)
24 25	(S. Li et al., 2018)
25 26	(C. Huang & Hinnov, 2019) (Ling et al. 2021)
$\frac{26}{27}$	(Ling et al., 2021) (B. Spicer et al. 2017)
$\frac{27}{28}$	(R. Spicer et al., 2017) (Herman et al., 2017)
$\frac{28}{29}$	(Vornlocher et al., 2017)
$\frac{29}{30}$	(J. Ren et al., 2021)
31	(Q. Wang et al., 2021)
32	(Fang et al., 2021)
33	(Zheng et al., 2022)
34	(Sorrel et al., 2017)
35	(Jacques, Guo, et al., 2011)
36	(Xia et al., 2009)
37	(Xing et al., 2012)
38	(Wan et al., 2007)
39	(Jia et al., 2003)
40	(P. Clift et al., 2008)
41	(P. D. Clift, 2020)
42	(Z. Ding et al., 2021)
43	(Srivastava et al., 2012)
44	(Bhatia, Khan, et al., 2021)
45	(Shukla et al., 2014)
46	(Khan et al., 2014)
47	(Vögeli et al., 2017)
$\begin{array}{c} 48 \\ 49 \end{array}$	(Bhatia et al., 2022) (Photia Srivestave et al. 2021)
$\frac{49}{50}$	(Bhatia, Srivastava, et al., 2021) (Srivastava et al. 2018)
$\frac{50}{51}$	(Srivastava et al., 2018) (Sanyal et al., 2004)
52	(S. Ali et al., 2004) (S. Ali et al., 2021)
$\frac{52}{53}$	(Betzler et al., 2021)
$55 \\ 54$	(Betzler et al., 2010) $(Betzler et al., 2018)$
55	(Beasley et al., 2010)
56	(Zhuang et al., 2017)
57	(Page et al., 2019)
58	(Q. Yuan et- $82-, 2021$)
59	(Meng et al., 2018)
0 0	

59 | (Meng et al., 2018) **Table 2.** List of references used in Figure 2 for paleoclimate indicators compilation

	Reference (suite)
60	(Miao, 2013)
61	(Z. Zhang & Sun, 2011)
62	(J. Sun & Zhang, 2008)
63	(Qg. Sun et al., 2002)
64	(J. Sun et al., 2020)
65	(J. Sun et al., 2020) (T. Su, Spicer, et al., 2019)
66	(Wu et al., 2021)
67	(Song et al., 2020)
$\begin{array}{c} 68 \\ 69 \end{array}$	(Miao, Wu, et al., 2016)
	(D. Rea et al., 1985) (Battles at al. 2002)
70 71	(Pettke et al., 2002) (Zierden et al., 2007)
71 70	(Ziegler et al., 2007)
72 72	(B. Li et al., 2016)
73	(Garzione et al., 2005)
74	(Qiang et al., 2011)
75	(Bougeois et al., 2018)
76	(W. Yang et al., 2019)
77	(J. Lee et al., 2020)
78	(Bolton et al., 2022)
79	(Hui et al., 2021)
80	(Miao, Song, et al., 2016)
81	(H. Zhao et al., 2020)
82	(C. Yang et al., 2021)
83	(L. Zhao et al., 2020)
84	(Heermance et al., 2018)
85	(J. Liu et al., 2016)
86	(Jiang & Ding, 2008)
87	(Peng et al., 2016)
88	(Suarez et al., 2011)
89	(Barbolini et al., 2020)
90	(Y. Ma et al., 2005)
91	(H. Wang et al., 2019)
92	(Jiang et al., 2017)
93	(W. Liu et al., 2014)
94	(Kaakinen et al., 2006)
95	(Y. Wang & Deng, 2005)
96	(F. Li et al., 2008)
97	(Z. Liu et al., 2014)
98	(Miao et al., 2011)
99	(Charreau et al., 2012)
100	(A. E. Holbourn et al., 2018)
101	(G. Wei et al., 2006)
102	(Y. Huang et al., 2007)
103	(Gupta et al., 2015)
104	(X. Yang et al., 2020)
105	(Bialik et al., 2020)
106	(H. Tang et al., 2020)
107	(H. Huang et al., 2021)
108	(Hoorn et al., 2000)
109	(Polissar et al., 2021)

109(Polissar et al., 2021)Table 3.(suite) List of references used in Figure 2 for paleoclimate indicators compilation

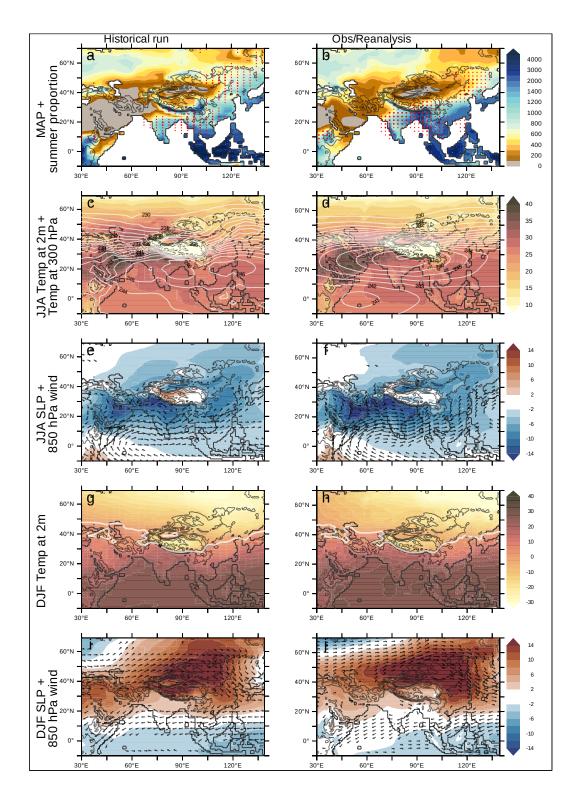


Figure 15. Comparison of monsoon diagnostics obtained in our control historical simulation (Left column) with modern observations and reanalysis (Right column). (a,b) Mean Annual Precipitations (shading, mm/yr), and regions where the Monsoon Precipitation Index is over 0.5 (thin red dots) and 0.75 (thick red dots) ; (c,d) JJA mean 2m temperature (shading, Celsius) and 300 hPa atmospheric temperature (white contour, Kelvin) ; (e,f) JJA normalized Sea Level Pressure anomalies (shading, hPa) and 850 hPa winds (vectors over 4m/s); (g,h) DJF mean 2m temperature (shading, Celsius) ; (i,j) DJF normalized Sea Level Pressure anomalies (shading, hPa) and 850 hPa winds (vectors over 4m/s); in all captions, topography in gray contour, each 1000 m. On the right column, precipitation are from GPCP, pressure and 300hPa temperature from ERAINT, 850hPa winds and surface temperature& 4from ERA40.

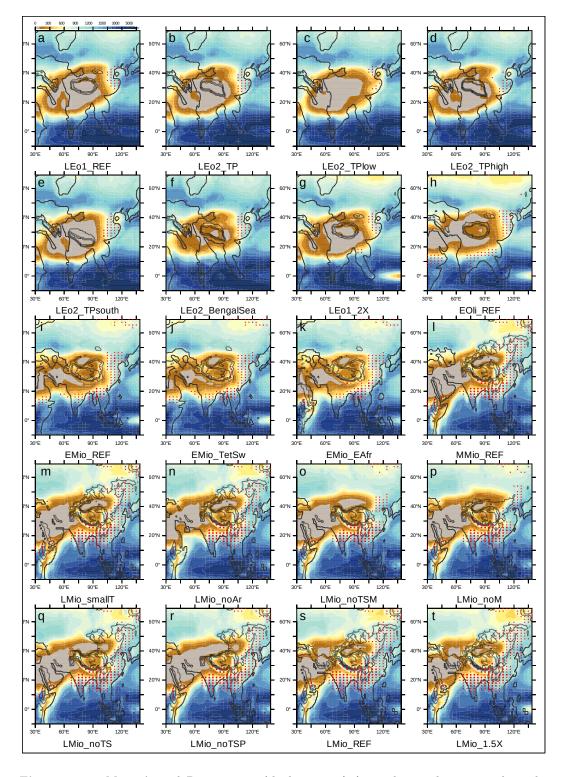


Figure 16. Mean Annual Precipitation (shading, mm/yr), overlain with regions where the Monsoon Precipitation Index (B. Wang & Ding, 2008) is over 0.5 (thin red dots) and 0.75 (thick red dots), for all reference and sensitivity experiments.

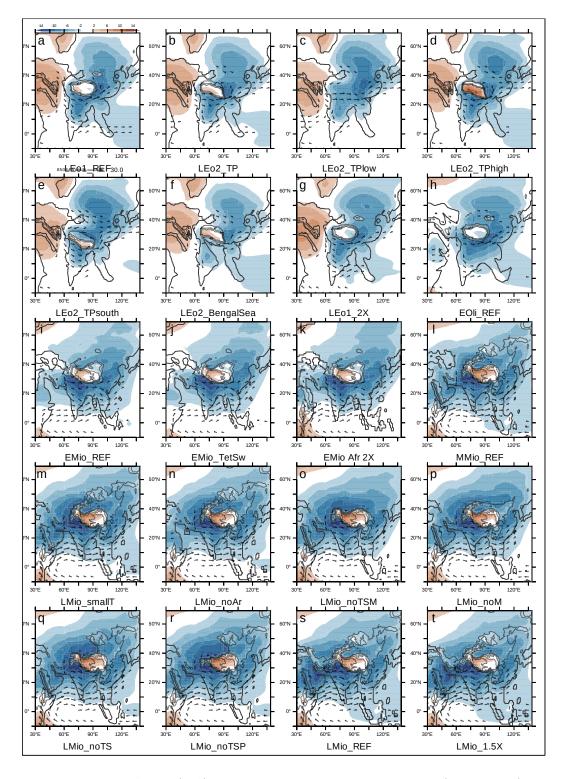


Figure 17. June-August (JJA) normalized Sea Level Pressure anomalies (shading, hPa) and 850 hPa winds over 4 m/s (vectors), for all reference and sensitivity experiments.

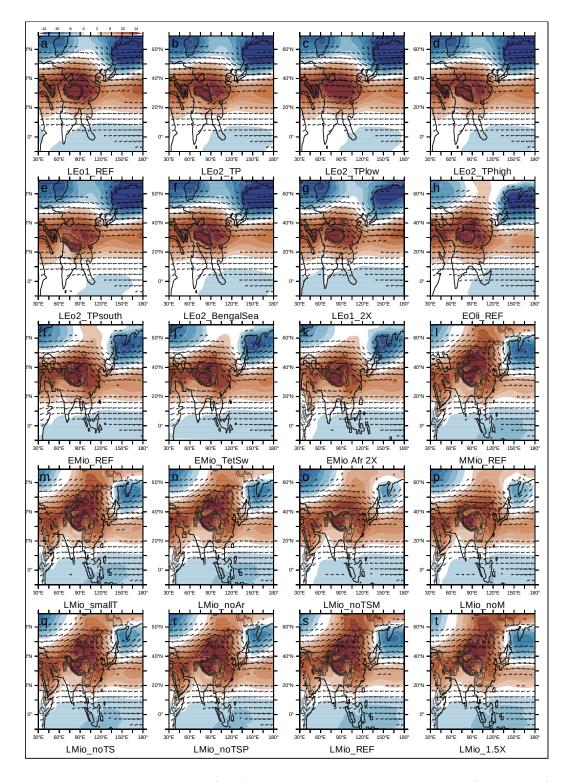


Figure 18. December-February (DJF) normalized Sea Level Pressure anomalies (shading, hPa) and 850 hPa winds over 4 m/s (vectors), for all reference and sensitivity experiments.

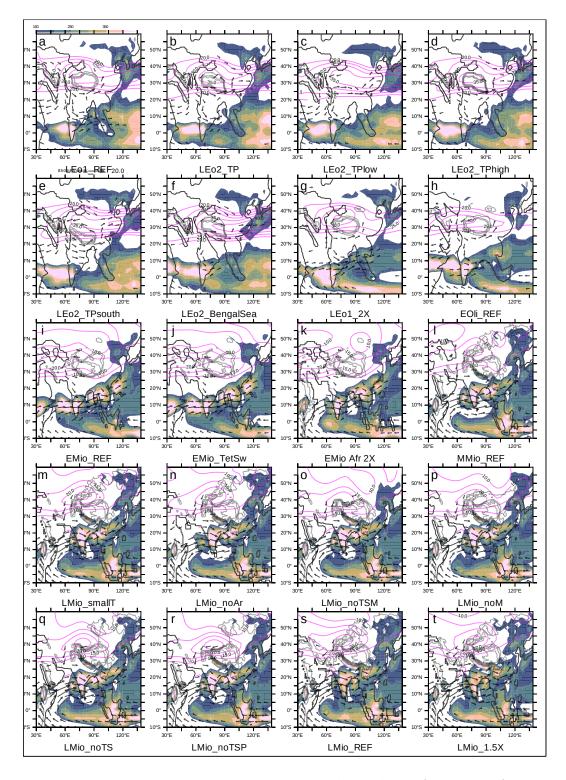


Figure 19. Jet Stream velocity and localization over Asia in August (purple outline), for all sensitivity experiments and precipitation for the month of August (shading, mm/month).

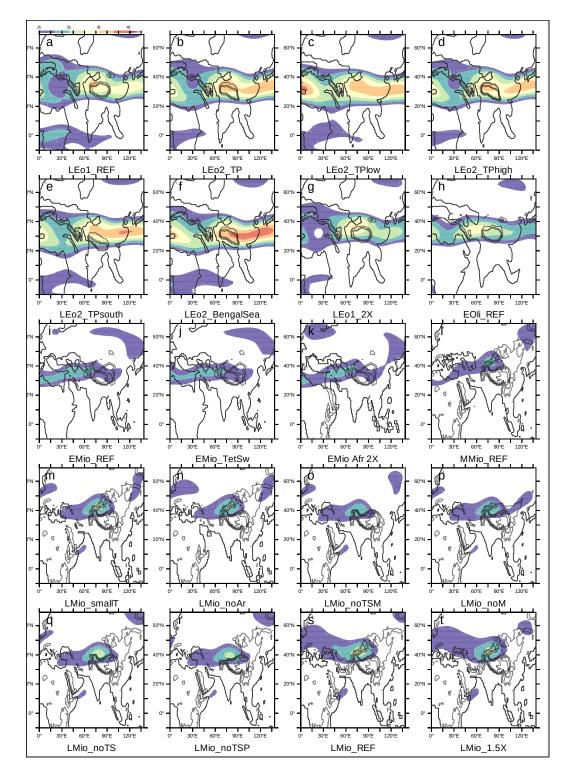


Figure 20. Jet Stream August velocity and localization over Asia, for all sensitivity experiments.

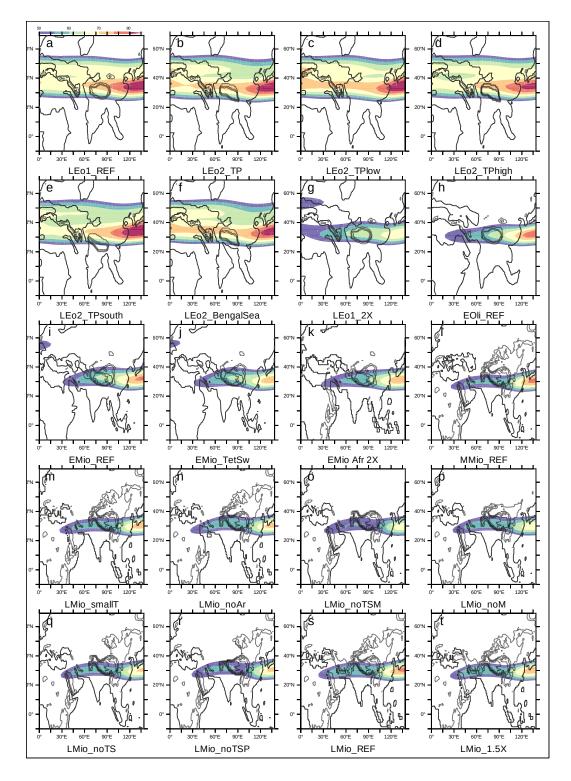


Figure 21. Jet Stream April velocity and localization over Asia, for all sensitivity experiments.