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### Title

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1 **Geomagnetic intensity variations for the past 8 kyr: New archaeointensity results**  
2 **from Eastern China**

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17

18 **Abstract**

19 In this study, we have carried out paleointensity experiments on 918 specimens spanning  
20 the last ~7 kyr, including pottery fragments, baked clay and slag, collected from  
21 Shandong, Liaoning, Zhejiang and Hebei Provinces in China. Approximately half of the  
22 specimens yielded results that passed strict data selection criteria and give high-fidelity  
23 paleointensities. The virtual axial dipole moments (VADMs) of our sites range from

24  $\sim 2 \times 10^{22}$  to  $\sim 13 \times 10^{22}$  Am<sup>2</sup>. At  $\sim 2250$  BCE our results suggest a paleointensity low of  
25  $\sim 2 \times 10^{22}$  Am<sup>2</sup>, which increases to a high of  $\sim 13 \times 10^{22}$  Am<sup>2</sup> by  $\sim 1300$  BCE. This rapid (less  
26 than 1000 years) six-fold change in the paleointensity may have important implications  
27 for the dynamics of core flow at this time. Our data from the last  $\sim 3$  kyr are generally in  
28 good agreement with the ARCH3k.1 model, but deviate significantly at certain time  
29 periods from the CALS3k.4 and CALS10k.1b model, which is likely due to differences in  
30 the data used to constrain these models. At ages older than  $\sim 3$  ka, where only the  
31 CALS10k.1b model is available for comparison, our data deviate significantly from the  
32 model. Combining our new results with the published data from China and Japan, we  
33 provide greatly improved constraints for the regional model of Eastern Asia. When  
34 comparing the variations of geomagnetic field in three global representative areas of  
35 Eastern Asia, the Middle East and Southern Europe, a common general trend of  
36 sinusoidal variations since  $\sim 8$  ka is shown, likely dominated by the dipole component.  
37 However, significant disparities are revealed as well, which we attribute to non-dipolar  
38 components caused by movement of magnetic flux patches at the core-mantle boundary.

39 **Keywords:** archaeointensity; China; regional model of Eastern Asia; non-dipolar moment

## 40 1. Introduction

41 The geomagnetic field is generated by the motion of the Earth's fluid outer core and its  
42 variation is driven by the Earth's deep internal dynamics. Therefore, the behavior of  
43 geomagnetic field has significant potential to yield insight into Earth's geodynamics,  
44 such as the influence of core-mantle interactions (Biggin et al., 2012; Bloxham, 2000),  
45 changes in outer-core flow and geomagnetic jerks (Bloxham et al., 2002; Dumberry and

46 Finlay, 2007; Manda et al., 2010; Olsen and Manda, 2008). Besides the geodynamic  
47 significance, connections between the geomagnetic field and global climate have been  
48 suggested (Courillot et al., 2007; Gallet et al., 2005; Kent, 1982), but **these claims**  
49 **remain controversial (Bard and Delaygue, 2008)**. Furthermore, archaeomagnetic studies  
50 focusing on the detailed evolution of the geomagnetic field over the past ~8 kyr have a  
51 potential application on archaeomagnetic dating (Ben-Yosef et al., 2008b, 2010;  
52 Pavón-Carrasco et al., 2009, 2011).

53 The geomagnetic field varies over a broad range of timescales. To understand the  
54 variation over periods of thousands of years we rely entirely on measurements of  
55 remanent magnetization from geological and archaeological materials. Archaeomagnetic  
56 data from Eastern Asia, however, are sparse, particularly those that would be widely  
57 regarded as reliable (Yu, 2012). The main archaeomagnetic work in China was carried  
58 out in the 1980s and 1990s (Huang et al., 1998; Shaw et al., 1995, 1999; Tang et al., 1991;  
59 Wei et al., 1982, 1986, 1987) and published data are rather scattered (Fig. S1). The scatter  
60 might reflect genuine rapid changes in the geomagnetic field, or inaccuracies in age  
61 models, poor data quality (Table S1) caused by lack of modern experiment technique and  
62 loose selection criteria or a combination of **these**. The longevity of Chinese civilization  
63 and the abundant nature of archaeological artifacts make archaeomagnetic studies within  
64 China an important tool for filling in many gaps in our current data sets. This  
65 archaeointensity study was carried out on archaeological artifacts from four locations in  
66 China spanning the past ~7 kyr.

## 67 **2. Sampling background**

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69 The artifacts used in this study were collected from four different provinces of Shandong,  
70 Liaoning, Zhejiang and Hebei, which are located at eastern China (Fig. 1). The  
71 archaeological structures cover living sites, saltern and kilns (Table 1) with materials  
72 varying from baked clay, pottery, porcelain to slag, spanning the past ~7 kyr (Fig. 2).  
73 Because of the lack of materials suitable for radiocarbon dating, all the dating here is  
74 based on archaeological estimates according to historic documents and pottery  
75 characteristics. In this paper, each province is treated as a paleomagnetic location, made  
76 up of multiple archaeological sites excavated at various times. While a paleomagnetic  
77 ‘site’ is defined as a single time horizon, the term in archaeology refers to independent  
78 excavations. We use the term in the archaeological context here. ‘Sample’ here refers to a  
79 discrete piece of material, such as a pottery fragment or brick, while ‘specimens’ are  
80 different fragments from a sample. Since samples from one archaeological ‘site’ might  
81 have different ages, we use sample level averages in the discussion in this study. The site  
82 name is generally derived from an abbreviation of archaeological site, for example, BQ  
83 represents samples from the Bei-Qian site. We use lower case letters and terminal digits  
84 to distinguish different samples and specimens separately. For instance, BQa-01 means  
85 the first specimen from sample ‘a’ of site BQ.

### 86 *2.1. Samples from Shandong and Liaoning provinces*

87 Most of the samples from Shandong province were first collected by archaeologists  
88 during an archaeological survey or excavation prior to archaeomagnetic sampling, except  
89 for two samples from Shouguang city, which were collected *in situ*. The two samples  
90 from Liaoning province were collected together with the samples from Shandong and  
91 were not *in situ*. In some cases, only one sample is obtained from a site and we use the

92 single sample to represent the site level because of either the unexceptionable behavior of  
93 the sample during the paleointensity experiment (YJC) or consistent results with data  
94 from other sites of the same age (GJC). These artifacts cover 5 areas in Shandong and 1  
95 in Liaoning, which include 10 archaeological sites in total and span from early Dawenkou  
96 culture (5000-4000 BCE) to Song-Yuan dynasty (960-1368 CE). The archaeological  
97 structures are mainly living sites belonging to prehistoric culture, which are generally  
98 excavated in order to rescue the ancient relics exposed by construction projects.

### 99 *2.2. Samples from Zhejiang province*

100 Deqing county, situated in Huzhou city, Zhejiang province, is considered to be the cradle  
101 of protoporcelain (transition from pottery to porcelain). Many ancient kilns were found in  
102 this area during archaeological surveys. In this study, 11 archaeological sites are included,  
103 most of which were collected from or nearby Deqing county and thus all are named DQ  
104 for simplicity. DQ1-DQ6 were collected by archaeologists during a survey and preserved  
105 in the Deqing museum while DQ7-DQ11 were sampled *in situ*. Since most of the artifacts  
106 were collected from the ground surface at the unexcavated sites (only DQ10 is in  
107 excavation), stratigraphic information is not available. These materials span ~2500 years  
108 from Shang dynasty (16<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> Century BCE) to early Tang dynasty (618-763 CE).

### 109 *2.3. Samples from Hebei province*

110 Dingyao site is one of the most famous kiln sites in northern China. It is located 25 km  
111 north of Quyang county, Hebei province, and is well known for its white porcelain. This  
112 kiln site comprises a group of kilns spanning ~600 years, starting in the Tang dynasty and  
113 reaching a peak in activity during the Song dynasty followed by a decline during the

114 Jin-Yuan dynasty. Three excavations were conducted here and dozens of kilns were  
115 exposed. Samples from these sites are mainly porcelain fragments spanning the  
116 middle-late Tang dynasty (763-907 CE) to the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368 CE) recovered  
117 from five independent excavations. DY1-DY4 were supplied to us by archaeologists from  
118 archived materials while DY5-DY24 were collected from a unit originally excavated in  
119 1985, DY25-DY33 from a unit excavated in 2009, DY34-DY37 from a kiln used during  
120 the Jin dynasty, DY38-DY40 from Beizhen kiln site and DY41-DY42 from a pile of  
121 debris at Jiancixi. **These units are so close to each other that they have a limited**  
122 **difference of latitude and longitude.**

### 123 **3. Experimental techniques**

#### 124 *3.1. Rock magnetism*

125 Rock magnetic experiments are designed to characterize the rock magnetic properties  
126 such as mineralogy and domain state of the samples. Some of the hysteresis loops were  
127 measured with the MicroMag 2900 AGM in the paleomagnetism laboratory at Scripps  
128 Institution of Oceanography (SIO), CA, USA and the others were measured on the  
129 MicroMag 3900 VSM in the Paleomagnetism and Geochronology Laboratory (PGL) at  
130 Institute of Geology and Geophysics, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, China.  
131 Measurements of First Order Reversal Curves (FORCs) (Roberts et al., 2000) were  
132 conducted on the same MicroMag 3900 VSM in PGL. For the purpose of determining  
133 Curie temperature ( $T_c$ ) and detecting possible alteration during heating, variability of  
134 magnetization versus temperature was measured with the **MMVFTB (Magnetic**  
135 **Measurements Variable Field Translation Balance)** fixed with an oven in PGL. Rock

136 magnetic samples analyzed at SIO are small chips while the ones used in PGL are  
137 powders.

### 138 *3.2. Paleointensity*

#### 139 *3.2.1. 'Coe-Thellier' and 'IZZI' method*

140 A total of 918 specimens were processed for paleointensity experiments with a minimum  
141 of 4 specimens per sample. Of these, 258 were cut into cubes (1.7 cm× 1.7 cm× arbitrary  
142 height) and fixed in cubic ceramic boxes (2 cm× 2 cm× 2cm) with fire-resistant fiber  
143 cotton. The magnetic moment of the ceramic cubes is comparable to the background of  
144 the magnetometer used for the measurements. The procedure for the paleointensity  
145 experiment followed the modified version of Thellier-Thellier method (Thellier and  
146 Thellier, 1959) by Coe (1967a), referred to here as the 'Coe-Thellier' protocol. The  
147 pTRM checks were inserted at every other temperature step (Coe et al., 1978). A  
148 paleointensity furnace with temperature reproducibility within 2 °C was used for heating  
149 the specimens. Argon gas was circulated and charcoal powder was used during the  
150 heating-cooling cycle in order to reduce chemical alterations as much as possible.  
151 Heating steps were carried out from 100 °C to 580 °C with temperature intervals varying  
152 from 50 °C until 250 °C to 30 °C until 580 °C. Specimens cool in the oven after each  
153 heating step without the aid of fans, a process that takes up to ~12 hours. The laboratory  
154 field of 30 μT is applied along -z axis of the specimens with a precision of 0.1 μT. The  
155 remanence was measured with the 2G 760 SQUID magnetometer. The whole procedure  
156 of the experiment was conducted in a shielded room with residual field lower than 300  
157 nT.



158 The remaining 660 specimens were processed at SIO. Samples were broken into irregular  
159 chips and fixed in 12-mm diameter glass tubes with glass microfiber paper and  
160 potassium-silicate glue (KASIL). The 'IZZI' protocol was used for the paleointensity  
161 experiment (Tauxe and Staudigel, 2004), which is believed to be better than the  
162 traditional protocols (Aitken et al., 1988; Coe, 1967a) because it can easily detect the  
163 effect of high temperature pTRM tails (Yu and Tauxe, 2005; Yu et al., 2004). The pTRM  
164 checks were also included at every other step. Specimens were heated in one of two  
165 ovens, which have residual fields less than 10 nT during zero-field steps, in the  
166 paleomagnetic shielded room at SIO. Measurements were made on a 2G cryogenic  
167 magnetometer. Heating steps were carried out from 100 °C to 580 °C (with a few up to  
168 600 °C) with temperature intervals varying from 100 °C to 15 °C, generally larger for low  
169 temperatures and smaller for high temperatures. Specimens were cooled in the oven after  
170 each heating step with a fan and cooling times are 30-45 minutes. A laboratory field is  
171 applied along  $-z$  axis of the specimens and field value of 30  $\mu$ T or 50  $\mu$ T was chosen  
172 depending on the expected ancient field of samples.

### 173 *3.2.2. Anisotropy correction*

174 The effect of anisotropy of TRM (ATRM) on paleointensity estimation has long been  
175 recognized (Aitken et al., 1981, 1988; Rogers et al., 1979). TRM anisotropy is sometimes  
176 observed in geological samples, but occurs frequently in archaeological artifacts because  
177 of manufacturing procedures, which makes the anisotropy correction in archaeological  
178 study non-trivial. The bias in paleointensity caused by ATRM can be corrected by  
179 determining the anisotropy tensor of each specimen (Selkin et al., 2000; Veitch et al.,  
180 1984). This can be determined by anisotropy of magnetic susceptibility (AMS) or

181 anisotropy of anhysteretic remanent magnetization (AARM) or ATRM. While it is  
182 generally agreed that AMS is a poor approximation for ATRM, the preference for AARM  
183 and ATRM remains controversial. Some authors prefer the ATRM correction because in  
184 theory AARM is different from ATRM (Chauvin et al., 2000). Others argue that AARM  
185 is preferable because the corrections are usually similar (Ben-Yosef et al., 2008a; Mitra et  
186 | al., 2013). it is faster to determine the AARM tensor than the ATRM one, and there is no  
187 further laboratory alteration with the AARM tensor. Some studies use a partial TRM  
188 (pTRM) to determine the ATRM tensor in order to avoid bias introduced by alteration  
189 when heating to high temperatures (Chauvin et al., 2000; Genevey and Gallet, 2002; Hill  
190 | et al., 2008), while total TRMs are used in other studies based on the assumption that  
191 total TRM correction avoids the complications of pTRM tails that may affect pTRMs.  
192 The use of pTRM checks insures that the ATRM tensor has not been affected by  
193 alteration (Shaar et al., 2010, 2011).

194 **Here we impart a total TRM along the six axes of each specimen (+/-x, +/-y, +/-z)**  
195 following the method of Veitch et al. (1984). For some specimens we used an initial  
196 demagnetization step to determine a baseline. When calculating the ATRM tensor, we  
197 prefer the original method proposed by Veitch et al. (1984) to the modified version by  
198 Selkin et al. (2000) because the latter might change paleointensity parameters which are  
199 critical to data selection (Paterson, 2013). Following the six ATRM measurements, we  
200 include an additional step, which is a repeat of the first measurement position to test for  
201 possible alteration during the heatings required to measure the tensor.

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### 204 3.2.3. Cooling rate correction

205 Dodson and McClelland-Brown (1980) showed that blocking temperatures of single  
206 domain grains are related to the cooling rate and the TRM acquired at different cooling  
207 rates in the same field might differ significantly. This will bias the estimation of  
208 paleointensity (Halgedahl et al., 1980). In order to obtain the most accurate results, we  
209 applied a cooling rate correction for each specimen after the paleointensity experiment.  
210 We followed the procedure suggested by Genevey and Gallet (2002) and used the same  
211 temperature as for the ATRM correction (the total TRM). We used a three-step protocol  
212 (4 in some cases including the baseline step). First, specimens were cooled 'fast', in about  
213 30 minutes, to acquire TRM<sub>1</sub>. Then they were cooled in a 'slow' step (without a fan)  
214 which takes ~12 hours to cool to 40 °C from 580 °C for TRM<sub>2</sub>. Finally, they were  
215 subjected to a second 'fast' step similar to the first for TRM<sub>3</sub>. The third step is for  
216 monitoring of alterations. The correction factor was calculated from the ratio of the  
217 average of TRM<sub>1</sub> and TRM<sub>3</sub> to TRM<sub>2</sub>. For consistency, the same specimens were used  
218 for all procedures during the paleointensity experiment, ATRM correction and cooling  
219 rate correction.

220 The cooling rate correction was only applied for specimens processed at SIO because  
221 ovens there were cooled with a fan. The furnace used in PGL does not have a fan and  
222 specimens are cooled naturally, taking ~12 hours cooling to room temperature from 600  
223 °C. Therefore a cooling rate correction is not necessary for specimens processed in PGL,  
224 assuming that the original cooling also took of the order of 12 hours.

## 225 4. Results

226 4.1. Rock magnetic results

227 For the purpose of detecting the magnetic phases, representative sister specimens were  
228 selected for the hysteresis loops and FORC<sub>v</sub> measurements. Most of the specimens show  
229 similar hysteresis behavior (Figs. 3a, c) with slightly wasp-waisted or goose-necked  
230 shapes indicating either SP/SD mixtures or mixtures of different magnetic phases (Tauxe  
231 et al., 1996). Samples are generally saturated before 300 mT and the coercivity ( $B_c$ )  
232 ranges from ~10 mT to ~35 mT, which show the dominance of soft magnetic minerals.  
233 The hysteresis parameters are calculated following Tauxe (2010) and projected on the  
234 Day plot (Day et al., 1977) extended by Dunlop (2002a, 2002b). Most of the specimens  
235 fall into the pseudo-single domain (PSD) area and close to single domain (SD) region  
236 (Fig. 3b), which allows us to infer that SD particles mixed with superparamagnetic (SP)  
237 grains are dominant. This is supported by the FORC plots (Figs. 3d, e), which show  
238 weak-interaction SD particles mixed with SP grains (Roberts et al., 2000). The  
239 fine-grained composition of samples assures their possibility for achieving accurate  
240 paleointensity values.

241 The variations of magnetization versus temperature (M-T) are measured for  
242 determination of Curie temperature ( $T_c$ ) and detection of possible alteration during  
243 heating.  $T_c$ s estimated from M-T curves range from ~550 °C to ~580 °C, indicating  
244 titanomagnetite or magnetite as the main magnetic mineral. This is in agreement with the  
245 hysteresis analysis, which shows a dominant low coercivity component (Dunlop and  
246 Özdemir, 1997). Representative curves (Fig. 4) are reasonably reversible indicating slight  
247 or no alteration during heating, a prerequisite for successful paleointensity experiments.

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249 4.2. Paleointensity results

250 The selection parameters during paleointensity data analysis are crucial to the reliability  
251 of intensity estimation. Selection criteria used in this study are listed in Table S2. The  
252 upper bound for the scatter parameter  $\beta$  (Tauxe and Staudigel, 2004) determined by the  
253 standard error of slope of the best fit line normalized to the absolute value of slope is set  
254 as 0.09. The upper bound for DANG, the deviation angle between the best fit line and the  
255 line determined by the center of mass and the origin, is constrained to be  $7.5^\circ$  (Tauxe and  
256 Staudigel, 2004). The maximum angle of deviation (MAD) describing the scatter of  
257 NRM points about the best fit line is limited to be  $10^\circ$  (Kirschvink, 1980). DRAT and  
258 DRATS are two important parameters representing the quality of pTRM checks, which  
259 are affected by measurement noise or alteration. DRAT is the maximum difference  
260 between pTRM and the pTRM check at a given temperature step normalized by the  
261 length of the best fit line (Selkin et al., 2000) while DRATs is the difference sum between  
262 pTRM and relative pTRM check normalized by the pTRM acquired by cooling from  
263 maximum temperature of the best fit line to room temperature (Tauxe and Staudigel,  
264 2004). Both are limited to be 10% here. The remanence fraction  $f$  is calculated by the  
265 NRM component of the best fit line on the Arai plot (Nagata and Arai, 1963) over the  
266 intercept of the best fit line on NRM axis and we limit it to 0.54 (Coe et al., 1978).  $f_{vds}$  is  
267 an improved version of  $f$  calculated by the ratio of NRM component of the best fit line to  
268 the vector difference sum of the entire NRM (Tauxe and Staudigel, 2004) and is  
269 constrained to 0.6. The maximum extent of alteration during TRM anisotropy correction  
270 (alter\_atrm) is set to be 6% and that during cooling rate correction (alter\_cool) is 5%. For  
271 the sample level, at least two accepted specimens should be included when calculate the

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279 average intensity and the standard deviation of mean intensity ( $\sigma$ ) should be either less  
280 than 10% or smaller than  $5\mu\text{T}$ .

281 A total of 457 out of 918 specimens pass the selection criteria, for a success rate of ~50%.  
282 However, the success rate varies among the four studied locations, which is ~30%  
283 (80/264) in Shandong, ~73% (11/15) in Liaoning, ~63% (287/452) in Zhejiang and 42%  
284 (79/187) in Hebei. The representative accepted specimens are shown in Fig. 5a-c; these  
285 typically have one component trending to the origin (Figs. 5a, b) or a negligible soft  
286 component (Fig. 5c) removed by  $150^\circ\text{C}$  evident in the orthogonal projection plots and  
287 show straight-line behavior on the Arai plots. Specimens are rejected for three reasons  
288 generally: alteration during the experiment leads to failure of the pTRM check (Fig. 5d),  
289 curved behavior caused by MD particles (Dunlop and Xu, 1994; Xu and Dunlop, 1994)  
290 (Fig. 5e, many rejected specimens from Shandong are in this case) and large secondary  
291 components which overprint the original remanence (Fig. 5f) and lead to multiple slopes  
292 in the Arai plots. The accepted samples (91 in total) are listed in Table 2 and the  
293 specimen level results are listed in Table S3. Data are analyzed with PmagPy software by  
294 Lisa Tauxe including the Thellier GUI program by Shaar and Tauxe (2013).

295 The anisotropy of the studied specimens is not so strong as expected for archaeomagnetic  
296 materials, with  $\tau_1/\tau_3$  varying between 1.02~1.85 (97% of them less than 1.5), where  $\tau_1$   
297 and  $\tau_3$  are the maximum and minimum eigenvalues of the ATRM tensors respectively  
298 (Tauxe et al., 2010). The alterations during the TRM anisotropy correction experiment  
299 are generally less than 10% (Fig. S2a) and we exclude those with more than 6% to make  
300 sure accurate anisotropic tensors are calculated. The extent of correction described by the  
301 ratio of the intensity value after ATRM correction ( $B_{ac}$ ) to the raw intensity before any

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311 correction ( $B_{raw}$ ) ranges from 0.7 to 1.3 (but is generally between 0.9~1.1, Fig. S2b). The  
312 standard deviations ( $\sigma$ ) before and after ATRM correction are compared and 70% of them  
313 become smaller after the correction (Fig. S3) indicating the effectiveness of the  
314 anisotropy correction. Most of the alterations during cooling rate correction are less than  
315 5% (Fig. S2c) and the ones exceeding 5% are rejected. The correction factors are between  
316 0.85~1.05 (Fig. S2d).

## 317 **5. Discussion**

318 The important location and abundant archaeological artifacts make archaeomagnetic  
319 study in China both necessary and achievable. In this paper, a number of reliable  
320 archaeointensity results from four different locations are reported. The reliability of these  
321 data is assured by the use of a robust experiment procedure and stringent selection criteria.  
322 The dominant fine-grained titanomagnetite or magnetite minerals and their stability  
323 during heating indicate their suitability for paleointensity experiments. Most of the  
324 studied samples behave very well during the paleointensity experiment and a high  
325 average success rate of ~50% is obtained. However, the problem of age control remains.  
326 Any kind of material suitable for radiocarbon dating, such as charcoal, is unavailable.  
327 Therefore all the ages of the samples are estimated from the archaeological context.  
328 Nonetheless, these have great utility for two reasons. One is the extensive historical  
329 record in China makes the characteristic of artifacts during each period quite diagnostic.  
330 For example, the workmanship and decoration of potteries evolve with time, allowing  
331 experienced archaeologists to recognize them with great accuracy. The other reason is  
332 internal consistency of data thought to have the same age.

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333 In order to detect the regional variations of the geomagnetic field in Eastern Asia, we  
334 compare our new results with the published data from China and Japan compiled in the  
335 GEOMAGIA50 database (Donadini et al., 2006; Korhonen et al., 2008) (Fig. 6). The  
336 experimental details of the published data are generally not well documented and may be  
337 of uneven quality. At present, the database only allows us to select based on the general  
338 method, the number of specimens and the internal consistency of the average. Therefore,  
339 we choose only those data obtained through the double-heating protocol (widely  
340 considered the most robust), those were based on averages of at least two specimens with  
341 a standard deviation of mean intensity less than 10% or 5  $\mu$ T. The site locations of the  
342 selected data are shown in Fig. 1.

343 We try to explore the possible global behavior of the geomagnetic field during the past 8  
344 kyr by comparing the VADM variations in Eastern Asia (100 °E-140 °E) with those in  
345 the Middle East (30 °E-70 °E) and Southern Europe (10 °W-30 °E) (Fig. 7), where a  
346 number of archaeomagnetic studies were conducted. Because most of the data from  
347 Eastern Asia are concentrated between 25 °N-45 °N, we use data from the same latitude  
348 band in the Middle East and Europe to avoid the influence of latitudinal gradients (Mitra  
349 et al., 2013). The same data selection criteria used in Fig. 6 is adopted here. Besides that,  
350 some new published data that were not previously in the database are included: data from  
351 Yu (2012) in Japan (Fig. 7a), data from Shaar et al. (2011) and Ertepinar et al. (2012) in  
352 the Middle East (Fig. 7b) and data from Gómez-Paccard et al. (2012) and Tema et al.  
353 (2012) in Europe (Fig. 7c). The locations map of data points used in this study are shown  
354 in Fig. S4.

355 *5.1. New paleointensity low*



356 One surprising feature of the data shown in Fig. 6 is the appearance of a period of  
357 extremely low paleointensity ( $\sim 2 \times 10^{22}$  Am<sup>2</sup>) at  $\sim 2250$  BCE. The observed values (shown  
358 in red in Fig. S5) are lower than any of the published data for the period 5000-2000 BCE  
359 (blue in Fig. S5). One possible interpretation is that these represent a hitherto undetected  
360 geomagnetic excursion. However, since the definition of geomagnetic excursion is  
361 generally based on direction (Cox et al., 1975; Vandamme, 1994) and we have results  
362 from only two samples here, further evidence is necessary. In any case, it is clear that the  
363 intensity low observed here is not a global feature. We will refer to it as a 'Decrease in  
364 Paleointensity' (DIP) following the usage of Kent and Schneider (1995).

### 365 *5.2. Rapid change in field intensity*

366 Our new data show a six-fold increase from  $\sim 2250$  BCE to  $\sim 1300$  BCE with VADM  
367 values rising sharply from  $\sim 2 \times 10^{22}$  to  $\sim 13 \times 10^{22}$  Am<sup>2</sup>. The rate of change of geomagnetic  
368 intensity during this period is  $\sim 6$   $\mu$ T/century or 47% per century (calculated from the  
369 lowest value at  $\sim 2250$  BCE and highest value at  $\sim 1300$  BCE). This variation is not as fast  
370 as the one reported by Gómez-Paccard et al. (2012) with a rate that varies from  $\sim 12$  to  
371  $\sim 80$   $\mu$ T/century between 600-1300 CE in western Europe and much lower than the one  
372 reported by Shaar et al. (2011) in which the intensity changes  $\sim 30$   $\mu$ T in 30 years  
373 (910-890 BCE) in Levantine area. But a six-fold change of the field ( $2 \times 10^{22}$ - $13 \times 10^{22}$   
374 Am<sup>2</sup>) in less than 1000 years is still abrupt. One thing that should be mentioned is that the  
375 data from  $\sim 1300$  BCE,  $\sim 513$  BCE and  $\sim 348$  BCE from sites DQ7-DQ11 seem to be quite  
376 scattered with respect to the trend of VADM versus time. But if we calculate the average  
377 value of all acceptable samples from each site, consistent mean intensities (with  $\sigma < 10\%$ )  
378 can be obtained except  $\sigma$  of DQ7 is 10.4% (Table S4). However, we argue that the scatter

379 in the data is genuine geomagnetic field behavior and not experimental noise. Hence, we  
380 prefer to treat the sample results to avoid averaging out fluctuations of the geomagnetic  
381 field. For example, the variations of field intensity shown by our new results during the  
382 three period of 1600-1000 BCE, 550-476 BCE and 475-221 BCE are  $\sim 10 \times 10^{22}$ - $13 \times 10^{22}$   
383  $\text{Am}^2$  ( $\sim 2 \mu\text{T}/\text{century}$ ),  $\sim 9 \times 10^{22}$ - $11 \times 10^{22} \text{Am}^2$  ( $\sim 19 \mu\text{T}/\text{century}$ ) and  $\sim 7 \times 10^{22}$ - $10 \times 10^{22} \text{Am}^2$   
384 ( $\sim 7 \mu\text{T}/\text{century}$ ) respectively.

### 385 *5.3. A possible spike at ~200 CE*

386 Ben-Yosef et al. (2009) used the term ‘geomagnetic spike’ to refer to a short-lived peak  
387 in the geomagnetic field, in contrast to ‘excursion’ or ‘DIP’ reserved for periods of  
388 unusually low geomagnetic field intensities. There is no formal definition for a  
389 ‘geomagnetic spike’ presently. Here, we suggest using a definition of a sharp increase in  
390 the field intensity to more than twice the present value ( $\sim 16 \times 10^{22} \text{Am}^2$ ) in less than 500  
391 years as a ‘spike’. Such a spike was suggested at  $\sim 200$  CE in the published data from Wei  
392 et al. (1982, 1986). This feature, although based on data without modern precautions  
393 against the effects of laboratory alteration or unremoved pTRM tails, is supported by a  
394 great number of data from different places (including a data point from Japan). However,  
395 we failed to confirm the existence of the intensity spike in results reported here.  
396 Therefore, additional evidence is required to establish the validity of the 200 CE ‘spike’.

### 397 *5.4. Comparison with the predictions from global models*

398 When comparing our data with the predictions of the variation of geomagnetic field at the  
399 center of China ( $37^\circ\text{N}$ ,  $120^\circ\text{E}$ ) from the three global models, our new data fit well with  
400 the ARCH3k.1 model (Korte et al., 2009) but deviate significantly at certain periods from

401 the CALS3k.4 (Korte and Constable, 2011) and CALS10k.1b model (Korte et al., 2011)  
402 (Fig. 6). This is likely to be because of the different input data of the models. The models  
403 including the sedimentary data are greatly smoothed, especially for the CALS10k.1b  
404 model. An implication here is that more reliable input data are necessary to improve the  
405 global models.

#### 406 *5.5. Improvement of regional model of Eastern Asia*

407 Apart from the ‘spike’ discussed previously, the new data reported here are generally  
408 consistent with the published data from China and Japan, showing strong fluctuations of  
409 the geomagnetic field during the past 8 kyr. We provide a great number of reliable  
410 archaeointensity data for the Eastern Asia where paleointensity data are sparse and thus  
411 improve the regional model of the geomagnetic field in Eastern Asia greatly, which have  
412 potential implications for archaeomagnetic dating in this area in the future.

#### 413 *5.6. Comparison among Eastern Asia, the Middle East and Southern Europe*

414 As most of the data in the GEOMAGIA50 database come from Eurasia, we consider now  
415 variations as a function of longitude across Eurasia. In order to eliminate latitudinal  
416 gradients, such as those documented by Mitra et al. (2013), we consider data in three  
417 longitudinal bands (Eastern Asia: 100 °E-140 °E, the Middle East: 30 °E-70 °E and  
418 Southern Europe: 10 °W-30 °E), with bounding latitudes of 25 °N and 45 °N (see Fig. S4).  
419 The general trend of intensity variation since ~8 ka is one of fairly low field strengths  
420 (VADMs:  $\sim 5 \times 10^{22}$  Am<sup>2</sup>) around 5000 BCE, rising to up to three times that, with several  
421 peaks in intensity (shown in cyan and pink bands in Fig. 7) followed by a general decline  
422 to the present field value of approximately  $8 \times 10^{22}$  Am<sup>2</sup>. This general trend may be

423 dominated by the behavior of the geomagnetic dipole (shown in Fig. 8 for various  
424 models). However, the timing and amplitude of the peaks vary in different areas.

425 The first peak in field intensity (indicated by cyan bands in Fig. 7) appears to have  
426 occurred at ~1300 BCE in Eastern Asia (Fig. 7a), at around 1000 BCE in the Middle East  
427 (Fig. 7b) and at ~500 BCE in Southern Europe (Fig. 7c) and was largest in the Middle  
428 East. The second peak (indicated by pink bands in Fig. 7) appears at ~200 CE in Eastern  
429 Asia (Fig. 7a), at ~800 CE in the Middle East (Fig. 7b) and around ~700 CE in Southern  
430 Europe (Fig. 7c). If these are indeed the same features, the first peak appears  
431 progressively from east to west, which could be explained by the well-known westward  
432 drift of geomagnetic field (Bullard et al., 1950; Vestine and Kahle, 1968). However, it  
433 traveled ~21 km/yr from Eastern Asia to the Middle East but only ~4 km/yr from the  
434 Middle East to Europe. The second peak traveled ~12 km/yr from Eastern Asia to the  
435 Middle East and then from west to east (from Europe to the Middle East) with a speed of  
436 ~20 km/yr. Dumberry and Finlay (2007) reported that both eastward and westward drift  
437 of geomagnetic field can occur, which might help to explain the behavior of the second  
438 peak and the extremely discordant speed of the first peak by attributing the lower speed  
439 from the Middle East to Europe to the stack of eastward and westward movement.

440 Nevertheless the result mentioned by Dumberry and Finlay (2007) is just for the last three  
441 millennia and little robust information could be obtained for older periods because of the  
442 sparseness of the database. Therefore, we have not enough evidence for the scenario of  
443 westward drift even though it is a possibility.

444 An alternative view of the behavior observed in Fig. 7 is that the peaks are not travelling  
445 features of the geomagnetic field (say migrating flux patches), but are distinct features of

446 the non-dipole field that grow and decay in place (Amit et al., 2011; Hartmann et al.,  
447 2011). To investigate this possibility, we calculate the average VADMs for Eastern Asia,  
448 the Middle East and Southern Europe using the same data set (both published and new) in  
449 Fig. 7 for each region and plot them in Fig. 8. The average VADMs of the three areas are  
450 well grouped at about ~3000 BCE and approximately equivalent to the strength of the  
451 axial dipole (heavy grey line) at that time. The values are more scattered at ~1000 BCE  
452 and 200 CE, however, and in places much stronger than the axial dipole moment (heavy  
453 cyan and green lines), indicating strong non-dipolar behavior. The divergence from the  
454 axial dipole continues through to about 1000 CE, when the local fields converge again  
455 with the axial dipole moment (heavy cyan and green lines).

456 Interestingly, the local agreement or disagreement of the average VADMs across Eurasia  
457 does not always agree with the patterns of intensity across the globe predicted by the  
458 models (insets to Fig. 8). The intensity of surface field at 3000 BCE predicted by the  
459 CALS10k.1b model appears to be dipolar and that at 200 CE (predicted by the  
460 ARCK3k.1) model is much more non-dipolar in character. These agree with the variation  
461 of average VADMs which are well grouped at about ~3000 BCE and scattered at ~200  
462 CE. However, they do not agree around 1000 BCE when the average VADMs are  
463 scattered but the surface field is predicted to be more dipolar and vice versa at 1000 CE.  
464 As shown in Fig. 6, there is rather poor agreement between the data from China and  
465 Japan and the behavior predicted from the global field models, especially the CALS  
466 series. One reason for this might be that the predictions from the models are only based  
467 on the published data in the database and the new data are not included. Therefore, we  
468 suggest that the global models need to be updated with the new data.

469 **6. Conclusions**

470 In this study, new, reliable, archaeointensity results covering the last 7 kyr are obtained  
471 from four locations in eastern China. These fill the gap of archaeomagnetic study in  
472 China ever since the systematic work carried out by Wei et al. (1982, 1986, 1987) during  
473 the 1980s. Several conclusions can be drawn from our new data set.

- 474 | 1. A newly detected period of low paleointensity (a DIP) as low as  $\sim 2 \times 10^{22}$  Am<sup>2</sup> at  
475 |  $\sim 2250$  BCE, even though based on only two samples, is revealed by our results.
- 476 | 2. A sharp, up to six-fold increase in paleointensity from the DIP at  $\sim 2250$  BCE to a  
477 | high field strength at  $\sim 1300$  BCE with VADM ranging from  $\sim 2 \times 10^{22}$  to  $\sim 13 \times 10^{22}$   
478 | Am<sup>2</sup> is detected. The rate of change of geomagnetic intensity during this period is  
479 |  $\sim 6$   $\mu$ T/century or 47% per century.
- 480 | 3. A possible intensity spike of  $\sim 17 \times 10^{22}$  Am<sup>2</sup> at  $\sim 200$  CE is suggested by the  
481 | published data from Wei et al. (1982, 1986), which needs further investigation as  
482 | the data were obtained by methods lacking modern checks.
- 483 | 4. The new data generally agree with the ARCH3k.1 model but deviate significantly  
484 | from the CALS3k.4 and CALS10k.1b model at certain periods because of the  
485 | different input data of the models, suggesting that more reliable inputs are  
486 | necessary to improve the global models.
- 487 | 5. Combining the published data in China and Japan, we provide greatly improved  
488 | constraints for the regional model of Eastern Asia, which has implications for  
489 | archaeomagnetic dating in this area in the future.

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491 6. When comparing the Eastern Asian curve with that of two representative areas in  
492 the world, the Middle East and Southern Europe, we conclude that the spike in  
493 intensity observed in the Middle East around ~1000 BCE may not be global. We  
494 prefer to explain the peaks in the three areas as distinct features of the non-dipole  
495 field that grow and decay in place as opposed to travelling features of the  
496 geomagnetic field caused by migrating flux patches.

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705

706 **Fig. 1** Distributions of archaeomagnetic sites in China and Japan. Black solid/open circles  
707 represent locations of the accepted/rejected archaeointensity data in China from  
708 GEOMAGIA50 database. Red stars/green triangles down/magenta triangles /blue  
709 diamonds represent Shandong/Liaoning /Zhejiang/Hebei locations in this study. Yellow  
710 squares represent the accepted published data in Japan from GEOMAGIA50 database.  
711 Data selection criteria please see the text.

712

713 **Fig. 2** Various samples analyzed in this study: (a) baked clay from Shandong, (b) slag  
714 from Zhejiang, (c) porcelain fragment from Hebei, (d-h) pottery fragments with different  
715 shapes and decorations from Zhejiang.

716

717 **Fig. 3** (a) and (c) Hysteresis loops of representative samples. Red (blue) loop is before  
718 (after) paramagnetic correction. The hysteretic parameters,  $B_c$ : coercivity,  $B_{cr}$ : remanence  
719 coercivity,  $M_r$ : remanent magnetization and  $M_s$ : saturated magnetization, are listed on the



720 plots. Data are analyzed with the software of Pmagpy-2.184 by Lisa Tauxe. (b) Day plot  
721 after Dunlop (2002a, 2002b). Red dots are projections of hysteretic parameters. Samples  
722 of DQ5b and STZb are marked as blue and green dots separately. (d) and (e) FORC plots  
723 after Roberts et al. (2000). Data are analyzed with the software of FORCinel\_1.17.

724

725 **Fig. 4** Normalized magnetization variations versus temperatures of representative  
726 samples. Samples are cooked in air in an applied field of ~1 T with heating/cooling rates  
727 of 30 °C/min. Red solid (blue dashed) line represents heating (cooling) procedure.

728

729 **Fig. 5** Arai plots and orthogonal projections (insets) of representative accepted (a, b, c)  
730 and rejected (d, e, f) specimens. Numbers on the plot are temperature steps in centigrade  
731 (°C). Red squares (blue solid circles) are projections on the vertical (horizontal) plane.  
732 The 'x' axis is rotated to NRM direction.

733

734 **Fig. 6** Regional model of virtual axial dipole moments (VADM) in Eastern Asia. Black  
735 solid circles/yellow squares are the accepted published data in China/Japan from  
736 GEOMAGIA50 database. Data selection criteria please see the text. Red stars/green  
737 triangles down/magenta triangles/blue diamonds represent new data of this study from  
738 Shandong/Liaoning/Zhejiang/Hebei location. The color lines are predictions from global  
739 models of CALS10k.1b (grey), CALS3k.4 (cyan) and ARCH3k.1 (green) at the center of  
740 China (37 °N, 120 °E).

741

742 **Fig. 7** Comparison of VADM variations among areas of (a) Eastern Asia, (b) the Middle  
743 East and (c) Southern Europe. Data symbols please check the legend in each plot. Data  
744 selection criteria please see the text. Peaks of each area are highlighted by cyan and pink  
745 shades. The orange lines are variations of average VADMs calculated every 400 years  
746 with a 200-years sliding window.

747

748 **Fig. 8** Variations of average VADMs in the areas of Eastern Asia (black solid circles), the  
749 Middle East (magenta triangles) and Southern Europe (blue squares). Data selection  
750 criteria please see the text. The averages are calculated every 200 years with a 100-years  
751 sliding window. The insets are predictions of the geomagnetic field intensities at the earth  
752 surface from CALS10k.1b (older than 1000 BCE) or ARCH3k.1 (younger than 1000  
753 BCE) model at different time periods. Maps of geomagnetic fields are generated by  
754 MAGMAP of R.L. Parker. Grey/cyan/green heavy line represents the axial dipole  
755 moment predicted by CALS10k.1b/CALS3K.4/ARCH3k.1.

756

757 **Table 1** Sample information analyzed in this study. Dating is based on archaeological  
758 background. Lat/Lon: latitude/longitude; N/n: number of samples/specimens.

759

760 **Table 2** The list of accepted results on sample level.  $B_{lab}$ : applied field in the lab;  $B_{acc}$ :  
761 average paleointensity of a sample after anisotropy and cooling rate correction (those

762 without cooling rate correction are marked with (\*));  $\sigma_B$ : standard deviation of  $B_{acc}$ ;

763  $\sigma_{VADM}$ : standard deviation of VADM;  $n_d$ : number of specimens accepted.