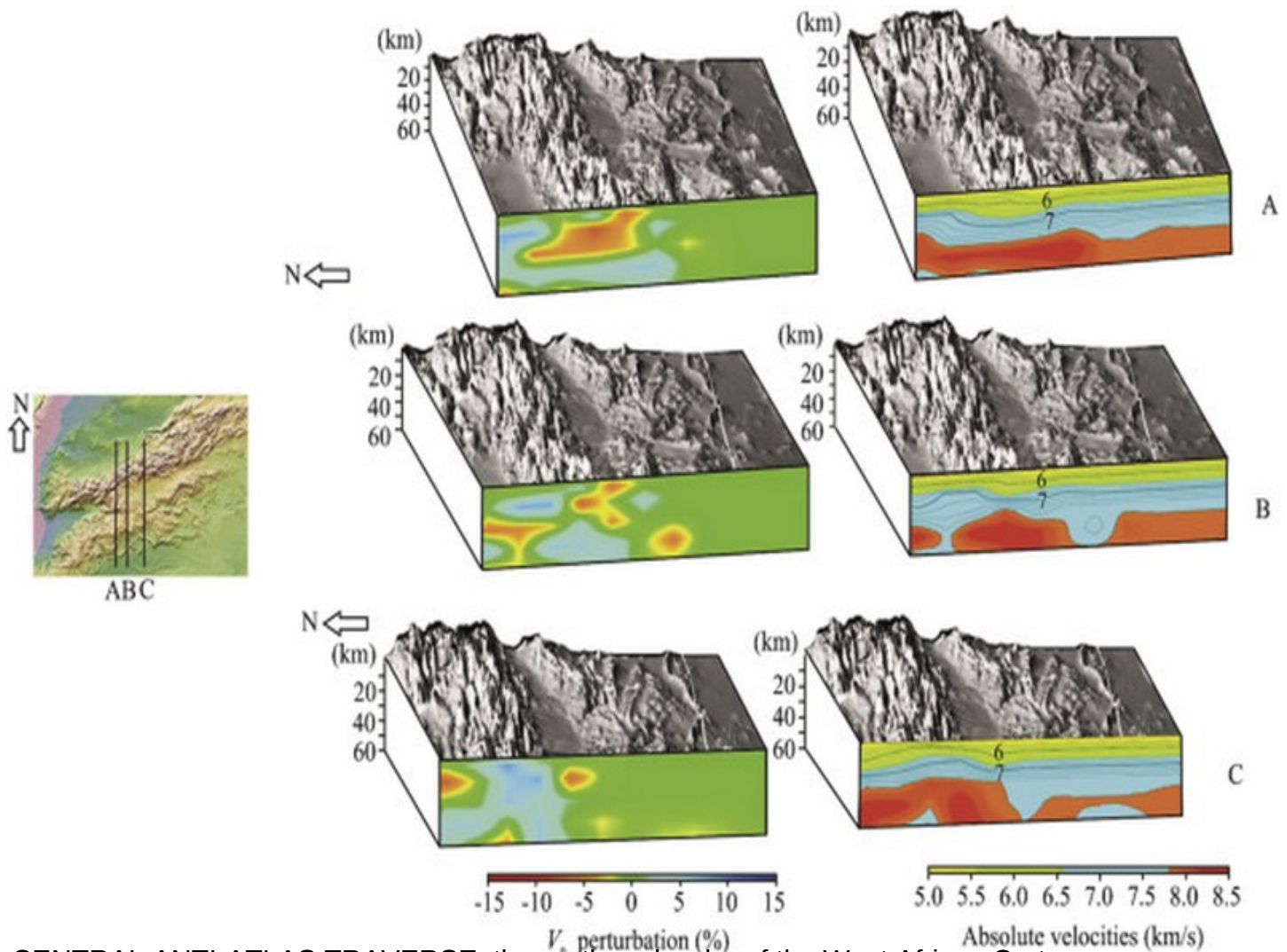




CENTRAL ANTI-ATLAS TRAVERSE: the northern border of the West African Craton

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ITINERARY and OBJECTIVES

The south of Morocco is one of the most attractive touristic areas with diversified landscapes from snowy mountains to desert plains. The High Atlas with his 3000 to 4000 meters forms a major climatic barrier to the Atlantic perturbations, which account for the arid climate of the Anti Atlas sub Saharan domain south of the chain. These regions are occupied by berbere speaking populations with long hospitality tradition. The two day trips follow most touristic roads and visit outstanding outcrops illustrating a central transect across the Anti-Atlas belt (figures G1 & G2), which corresponds to the external fold belt of the Hercynian (Variscan, Alleghanian) chain, but it also includes large Pan African inliers. The High Atlas formed during the Cenozoic at the expense of an aborted Triassic Jurassic rift. Therefore, three superimposed Wilsonian cycles can be illustrated during the trips. The itinerary will make possible to illustrate the complex geological history of these areas from 2 Ga to present day. Our purpose is to present and discuss various regional and thematic (sediment logical, structural, magmatic and metamorphic) features, which record the main geodynamical events during this long geological history. Magnificent minerals (erhytrite, vanadinite...) and fossils (trilobites, goniatites...) can be purchased at many places. During this field trip, the AgdzBou Azzer Tazenakht Agdzloop (figureG3)allows the participants to



discover the PanAfrican belt (external platform domain in the Zenaga inlier, ophiolitic suture zone at Bou Azzer), the early volcano clastic cover sequence (late Neoproterozoic), and the mildly folded Early Paleozoic sediments (Cambrian and Ordovician). Detailed road log for the trip are provided below along with Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) location at each stop. Note that all the stops are on public roads, and that the use of hammers and the collection of rocks are permitted .

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