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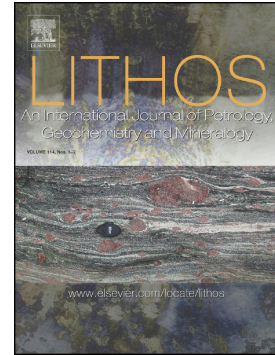


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Distributed deformation along the subduction plate interface: the  
role of tectonic mélanges

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## 1-Abstract

Recent geophysical monitoring of subduction zones has unraveled a complete spectrum of plate coupling behaviors, from coupled portions rupturing during earthquakes to decoupled portions slipping aseismically. However, the deformation mechanisms and the exhumed rock corresponding to these contrasted behaviors are not yet identified. Tectonic *mélange* zones are thought to play a major role in the deformation of the plate interface as they represent remnants of the subducted plate scraped off by the overriding plate. In this work we examine several tectonic *mélange* zones (Hyuga, Okitsu, Mugi) from the Shimanto Belt, an accretionary prism in southwest Japan connecting to the active Nankai subduction zone. These tectonic *mélange* zones have a block-in-matrix structure, with lenses of sandstones and basalts within a metapelitic matrix, and their deformation is distributed over zones of hundreds of meters in thickness. In addition, the examples of *mélange* considered here are bounded by sharp faults, some of them bearing pseudotachylyte layers, so that distributed deformation within the *mélange* and localized deformation on its boundary are juxtaposed. Distributed deformation involves the development of a foliation, as well as of a pervasive network of macroscopic and microscopic shear zones. Along with slip on this network, strain proceeds by fracturing and precipitation of quartz, in long veins parallel to the foliation or in smaller cracks perpendicular to stretching and forming in the neck of competent lenses of sandstones or former quartz veins. The analysis of shear band kinematics shows in all three examples a dominant, top-to-the-trench sense of shear, consistent with deformation along the plate boundary during subduction. Moreover, most shear zones, when foliation is restored back to syn-subduction position, are extensional structures. Finally, the geometry and kinematics of the *mélange*-bounding faults, as well as radiometric constraints, show that in most cases the faults (=localized structures) were formed during a later stage than *mélange* internal deformation. These findings bear several consequences on the structure and dynamics of the subduction plate boundary at seismogenic depths. First, there is no support for a model of plate boundary fault zone composed simultaneously

of localized slip zones and domains of more distributed deformation. Second, rather than proposed models of underplating, where all deformation is localized into the thrusts bounding the tectonic sheets, we suggest that underplating was to a large extent accommodated by distributed deformation within the *mélange* sheets. This underplating model accounts for (i) the large amount of strain within the *mélange*, (ii) the absence of contractional structures during underplating, (iii) thinning of the *mélange* required by the network of extensional shear bands and stretched boudins. Third, *mélanges* appear as likely candidates for portions of the plate interface deforming by aseismic slip. The seismic vs. aseismic character of the plate interface might depend on the ability of sediments on top of the subducting plate to undergo distributed strain, which in turn depends on the efficiency of pressure solution to operate.

## Highlights

- 1) Tectonic *mélanges* in fossil subduction zones reveal deep deformation processes
- 2) Distributed strain combines pressure-solution in quartz and slip on phyllosilicates
- 3) Underthrusting along subduction interface results from distributed strain
- 4) A network of extensional shear zones formed during *mélange* underplating
- 5) Fault zones, including pseudotachylytes, formed after underplating

## Keywords

Subduction zones; deformation; rheology; pressure solution; underplating

## 2-Introduction

The use of rate-and-state friction laws (Dieterich, 1994; Ruina, 1983) has proved to be a very powerful theoretical tool to reproduce the seismic behavior that occurs along plate boundaries. Earthquake cycles on strike-slip (Lapusta and Rice, 2003; Tse and Rice, 1986) or subduction faults (Kato and Hirasawa, 1997; Stuart, 1988) have been successfully modelled using imposed depth variations of friction parameters (a-b). Similarly to these models, slow-slip events (SSE), which occur towards the shallow or deep domain of the seismogenic zone (Bilek and Lay, 2018; Dragert et al., 2001; Obara et al., 2004; Obara and Kato, 2016; Ozawa et al., 2007; Peng and Gomberg, 2010; Saffer and Wallace, 2015; Schwartz and Rokosky, 2007), are commonly envisioned in the mechanical framework of friction. For example, assuming a transition from a velocity-weakening to a velocity-strengthening behavior towards the downdip limit of the seismogenic zone results in the spontaneous generation of SSE in this transition zone (Liu and Rice, 2005, 2007). From mega-earthquakes to SSE, the plate interface is therefore usually modelled as a frictional interface down to temperatures of 350-450°C where viscous processes are thermally activated (Hyndman et al., 1997; Oleskevich et al., 1999).

Considering the plate interface as a frictional surface, the corresponding natural structures are faults, which have been thoroughly studied and described in transcurrent settings (Chester and Logan, 1986; Faulkner et al., 2010; Faulkner et al., 2003; Sibson, 2003; Wibberley and Shimamoto, 2003). Common models of faults revolve around a single or a small number of high-strain fault cores or fault gouge bands (=principal slip zones), surrounded by a damage zone. The thickness of the principal slip zones which accommodate most of the strain, although depending on the nature of the wall rock (Faulkner et al., 2010; Faulkner et al., 2003), is always thinner than a few meters and often restricted to a dm- to cm-thick layer of gouge or ultracataclasite (Sibson, 2003; Wibberley and Shimamoto, 2003).

In subduction zones, seismic discontinuities interpreted as plate boundary décollements have been drilled at relatively shallow depths (<1km below seafloor). The NE Japan margin (Chester et al., 2013),

the Nankai Trough (Shipboard Scientific Party, 1991, 2001) or the Barbados (Maltman et al., 1997) décollements consist of a 5-30m thick zone concentrating, with respect to surrounding rocks, abundant deformation structures such as breccia and faults (Nankai Trough), or clay scaly fabrics (Barbados and NE Japan). Observations at larger depths are beyond the reach of active margin drilling and rely on fossil structures (e.g. (Rowe et al., 2013; Vannucchi et al., 2012a)). In the Shimanto Belt, the Cretaceous to Mesozoic accretionary prism bordering SW Japan, the Nobeoka Tectonic Line (NTL) is a large-scale, out-of-sequence fault that accommodated tens of km of displacement (Raimbourg et al., 2014a). Even though a damage zone is observable in the footwall, all the displacement is localized on a few cm thick cataclastic fault core (Kondo et al., 2005; Mukoyoshi et al., 2009). A network of sharp faults, with principal slip zones thicknesses of less than 10mm and displacement larger than a few kilometers, has also been recognized in the same belt on Shikoku Island (Mukoyoshi et al., 2006). In the Kodiak accretionary prism in Alaska, near Pasagshak Point, very-fine grained, black fault-rocks form a dm-thick horizon traceable over kilometers that was interpreted as an ancient pseudotachylyte layer (Meneghini et al., 2010; Rowe et al., 2011; Rowe et al., 2005). In the Shimanto Belt, similar cm-thick pseudotachylytes have been described, either forming tectonic boundaries or crosscutting preexisting boundaries (Ikesawa et al., 2003; Mukoyoshi et al., 2006; Ujiie et al., 2007).

In contrast to these very narrow zones of deformation, tectonic units of disrupted metasedimentary sequences, called tectonic *mélanges*, coexist with the cataclastic zones described above in many accretionary prisms such as Kodiak, the Shimanto Belt, the Franciscan Complex, the Apennines or the Otago Schists (Connelly, 1978; Cowan, 1985; Fagereng and Sibson, 2010; Festa et al., 2012; Kimura and Mukai, 1991; Meneghini et al., 2009; Moore and Wheeler, 1978; Wakabayashi, 2011). Tectonic *mélanges* have a block-in-matrix structure resulting from pervasive deformation and contain various deformation structures, such as cataclastic bands and shear zones, pressure-solution foliations and mineralized veins (Fisher and Byrne, 1987, 1990; Kimura and Mukai, 1991; Kitamura and Kimura, 2012). Some examples show thicknesses as large as several hundreds of meters, as noted in Rowe et

al. (2013), e.g. in the Shimanto Belt (Ikesawa et al., 2005; Imai et al., 1975; Kitamura et al., 2005; Okumura et al., 2010; Saito et al., 1996; Sakaguchi et al., 2006) or the Apennines (Vannucchi et al., 2010), while other mélanges are thicker than 1km, e.g. in the Northern Alps (Bachmann et al., 2009) or in Alaska (Byrne and Fisher, 1990; Fisher and Byrne, 1987).

Tectonic mélanges appear therefore as thick deformation zones, where strain is distributed over hundreds of meters of thickness, contrasting with localized faults (Cowan, 1974). A major question concerns the relationship between these different deformation structures. One possible view is to interpret all deformation structures, tectonic mélanges (=damage zones) as well as fault zones and pseudotachylyte layers (=principal strain zones), as part of a single deformation zone (Rowe et al., 2013). Following this line of thought, Alaskan mélanges have been interpreted as shear beneath a master décollement (Byrne and Fisher, 1990; Fisher and Byrne, 1987, 1990), and the Hyuga Tectonic mélange on eastern Kyushu coast has been interpreted as the damage zone of the NTL, a sharp fault constituting its roof thrust (Kondo et al., 2005).

In this work we reexamine this interpretation of tectonic mélanges as low-strain zones within a plate boundary zone, using new structural and microstructural data acquired through several tectonic mélanges from the Shimanto Belt in Japan. Compiling these structural and microstructural data with other arguments such as radiometric constraints, we show that the deformation recorded within mélanges corresponds to a new mode of underplating. We then discuss the chronological relationship between localized and distributed deformation.

### 3 Geological setting

#### 3.1 General architecture of the Shimanto Belt and studied areas

The Shimanto Belt is a partly exhumed accretionary prism forming the southern border of Japan and extending seaward into the active Nankai Trough margin (Kimura et al., 2016) (Figure 1). Biostratigraphic ages range from Cretaceous to Miocene and show an overall younging trend from

north to south (Taira, 1981; Taira et al., 1988; Taira et al., 1980a; Taira et al., 1980b). The belt is schematically divided into a northern Cretaceous and a southern Cenozoic subbelts, separated by a large-scale fault known as the NTL, on Kyushu. The Shimanto Belt consists mainly of a sedimentary accretionary wedge, predominantly composed of sandstones and mudstones in variable proportions. Other deep seafloor typical lithologies, such as red shales, radiolarites or basalts are volumetrically much less abundant. Most of the sediments preserve their sedimentary bedding, defining “coherent” units, in contrast with less abundant units of broken formations or tectonic mélanges (Festa et al., 2012). The general architecture of the wedge is an imbrication of km-scale units, separated by sharp contacts most often not observable on the field with an overall bedding or foliation dip to the north or northwest. The dip is commonly around 30° or less on Kyushu (especially in the Northern Belt and in the Hyuga mélange) and much larger on Shikoku, where most units are close to the vertical (Raimbourg et al., 2017).

From west to east of the Shimanto Belt, tectonic mélanges analyzed here are the Hyuga tectonic mélange on eastern Kyushu (Palazzin et al., 2016; Raimbourg et al., 2014a; Raimbourg et al., 2017) (Figure 2), the Okitsu and Kure mélanges on western Shikoku (Ikesawa et al., 2003; Mukoyoshi et al., 2006; Sakaguchi, 1999a, 2003; Sakaguchi et al., 2006; Taira et al., 1988) and the Mugi mélange on eastern Shikoku (Ikesawa et al., 2005; Kitamura et al., 2005) (Figure 3).

Biostratigraphic ages in the matrix are Late Eocene to Early Oligocene for the Hyuga mélange (Sakai et al., 1984), and Campanian to early Maastrichtian (for the youngest shales) for the Shikoku mélanges (Hara et al., 2017; Taira et al., 1988). U/Pb dating of zircon grains from intercalated tuff layers within the Mugi mélange yielded Late Cretaceous to Early Paleogene ages (Shibata et al., 2008).

All these mélanges present a highly disrupted fabric. In most of their volume, the mélanges are strictly made of sedimentary material, with blocks of sandstones ± tuff layers embedded in a pelitic matrix. Locally, pods of basalts are also present, along with lenses of deep seafloor sediments such as radiolarites or red shales (Figure 2), in a pelitic matrix. The blocks of sandstones have a variable size,

from mm- to m-scales. Basalts, which show a preserved pillow-lava structure in some instances such as Mugi, form larger m- to tens-of-meters sized lenses. In some mélanges, the recognition of complete or partial ocean-floor stratigraphy (i.e. the succession of pillowed basalts, radiolarian cherts, red pelagic clays and varicolored hemipelagic shales (Taira et al., 1988)), and the occurrence of fault zones along the basal (i.e. southern) boundaries of basalt layers (e.g. (Kitamura et al., 2005)) led to the interpretation of mélange zones as a stack of several thrust sheets, each of them soled by a layer of basalts. For example, three thrust sheets are described in the Okitsu mélange (Sakaguchi, 2003), five thrust sheets in the Mugi mélange (Kitamura et al., 2005), while the internal subdivision of the Hyuga mélange is still unclear but several distinct lenses of basalts are present in the tectonic pile (Murata, 1994, 1997, 1999). In this respect, as the different blocks present in the mélange matrix originate from *in situ* tectonic dismembering of the stratigraphic succession on top of the oceanic plate, they are not strictly speaking “exotic” blocks and the mélange proper denomination should be “chaotic formation” (Festa et al., 2012). Nevertheless, for the sake of consistency with existing literature on Shimanto, we hereafter keep the term “tectonic mélange”.

### 3.2 P-T conditions of deformation

Metamorphic temperatures within the Hyuga mélange inferred from vitrinite reflectance, illite crystallinity and Raman spectra of carbonaceous matter (RSCM) geothermometers yielded similar values of ca. 240-270°C (Hara and Kimura, 2008; Kondo et al., 2005; Mukoyoshi et al., 2009; Raimbourg et al., 2017) (Table 1). On Shikoku, paleotemperatures in the Kure and Okitsu mélanges are of ~225°C (Mukoyoshi et al., 2006) and 230-265°C (this study, (Sakaguchi, 1999b)), respectively. On the basis of paleotemperatures, the Mugi mélange is divided into a “hotter” upper unit at ~220°C and a “colder” lower unit at 165-185°C (Ikesawa et al., 2005). Despite small discrepancies among geothermometers, both vitrinite reflectance and RSCM analyses show that maximum temperatures are, in descending order, Hyuga, Okitsu/Kure/upper Mugi and lower Mugi.

Pressure estimates for the Hyuga mélange, loosely constrained by the metamorphic assemblage prehnite–pumpellyite in greenstones, are of the order of 3-5kbar (Toriumi and Teruya, 1988). In Shikoku mélanges, some pressure estimates are primarily based on coexisting methane-rich and water-rich fluid inclusions, and by assuming equilibrium/coeval trapping (e.g. Matsumura et al. (2003)). This hypothesis was shown to be invalid in the Hyuga mélange (Raimbourg et al., 2014b) and in the Okitsu mélange (Sakaguchi, 1999a), so that such pressure estimates are not reliable. Other methods using only water-rich fluid inclusions trapped in syn-tectonic veins give an estimate of the minimum temperature and fluid pressure that accompanied deformation (Kondo et al., 2005; Matsumura et al., 2003; Raimbourg et al., 2015). The comparison of maximum temperature of deformation in the rock (from vitrinite reflectance, illite crystallinity or RSCM geothermometers) and minimum temperature in the fluid (homogenization temperature of water-rich fluid inclusions) are close in value. As a consequence, the pressure that can be deduced from the water-rich fluid inclusions is close to the liquid-vapor curve (where homogenization occurs) hence systematically very low (1-2kbar), which is interpreted as the result of either (i) cycles of fluid pressure and precipitation of the veins/fluid inclusion trapping at low points of the cycles or (ii) reequilibration of fluid inclusions during uplift (Raimbourg et al., 2018).

### **3.3 Geodynamical evolution and structural settings of deformation**

The first-order architecture of the Shimanto Belt, with a younging trend in stratigraphic ages towards the south, is the main argument in favor of a model of progressive accretion and growth from Cretaceous to Miocene. Such a model was disputed by the recognition of a collision stage in Early Miocene, based on geological observations on-land Japan of a belt-wide unconformity (Charvet, 2013; Charvet and Fabbri, 1987; Sakai, 1988; Sakai, 1985; Sakamoto, 1977; Tanaka, 1977) and on paleogeographic reconstructions showing the collision of SW Japan with the Northern Philippines Sea Arc (Wu et al., 2016). The collision was responsible for the development of a vertical foliation, as a result of horizontal shortening, in the Cenozoic part of the belt on western Shikoku (Raimbourg et al.,

2017). Additionally, this work suggested that the collision stage also affected more internal domains of the belt, through for example the movement on the NTL on Kyushu or through large-scale tilting of the tectonic units on Shikoku.

Most studies focused on *mélange* units have so far considered that their deformation is contemporaneous with their burial (Ikesawa et al., 2005; Ikesawa et al., 2003; Kimura and Mukai, 1991; Onishi and Kimura, 1995; Ujiie, 1997; Ujiie et al., 2007), which implicitly discards a possible influence of the Miocene collision, much more recent than subduction processes. This issue is in fact not so easy to solve, as the tectonic influence of the collision is attested on units from the Shimanto Belt located south of the *mélange* units considered here (Raimbourg et al., 2017). In addition, ages of deformation obtained in pseudotachylytes from faults bounding the Mugi (Tonai et al., 2016) or the Kure (Honda et al., 2011) *mélange* support post-subduction activity, possibly related to the collision.

The main argument in favor of simultaneous *mélange* internal deformation and subduction is the fact that this deformation is almost absent in nearby coherent units. This very strong contrast in deformation style and intensity between *mélange* units and adjacent coherent units suggests that *mélange* internal deformation was acquired relatively early in its history, at least before *mélange* units were stacked upon adjacent coherent units. In contrast, the Miocene collisional event (Charvet, 2013) should have affected the whole tectonic pile made of *mélange* units sandwiched between coherent units. On the other hand, the very localized deformation between units, in particular the occurrence of “out-of-sequence” thrusts, such as the NTL (Kondo et al., 2005) or the fault network cutting across Kure *mélange* and adjacent units (Mukoyoshi et al., 2006), could well be the expression, at least to some extent, of posterior later collision phase. The amplitude of this collisional phase is unclear, as there is no remaining exposed evidence of the colliding microblock. For these reasons, in the following section, we consider that all deformation distributed within the *mélange* is coeval with subduction, while the timing of faulting, either during subduction or during later collision, is unclear.

## 4 Deformation within mélanges in the study area

### 4.1 Structures of distributed deformation

Distributed deformation is illustrated by the presence of a pervasive foliation (S1) in the pelitic matrix, carrying flattened sandstone lenses. The foliation in Hyuga mélange strikes NE-SW and has a low dip to the NW, e.g. N044°E 40NW in site 112 or N065°E 33NW in site 202 (Figure 4). In Okitsu mélange, the foliation strikes WNW and is close to the vertical, e.g. N064°E 87NW in site 220 (Figure 5). In Mugi mélange, the foliation strikes WNW and is close to the vertical, e.g. N076°E 81NW at sites 346-347-348, or N050°E 89NW at site 349 (Figure 6)

Lineation is generally difficult to observe on the foliation, except in the Hyuga mélange, which has recorded the highest temperature conditions during deformation in its eastern area (Table 1). There, lineation trends NW-SE, e.g. N140-N150°E on cross-section A-B, or N134°E on cross-section C-D (Figure 4).

Macroscopic deformation is mainly represented by abundant cracks filled with quartz within sandstone lenses, especially in the necked domains towards the tips of the sandstone lenses (Figure 7-A). Another conspicuous deformation feature within the mélange is a network of shear bands (Figure 7, Figure 8 and Figure 9) deflecting the foliation within the shale matrix and the sandstone lenses. Shear bands often occur in zones of high concentration of quartz-filled cracks (Figure 7A). The spacing between adjacent shear bands is variable, from ~1m to a few cm (see below). Some shear bands contains synkinematic lenses of precipitated quartz (Figure 7B and Figure 8) while in other cases shear bands are not mineralized (Figure 7A).

### 4.2 Microstructures of distributed deformation

The patterns of deformation observed at outcrop-scale are transposable to smaller scales. Small lenses composed of sandstones or siltstone, but also of precipitated quartz forming elongated boudins within the foliation, are embedded within the shale matrix. These lenses are truncated by a

dense array of quartz-filled fractures perpendicular both to the foliation and to the lineation, i.e. parallel to the YZ plane (Figure 10). All the elongated and truncated lenses, including the ones formed by precipitated quartz, are deflected by shear bands (Figure 11, Figure 12, Figure 13). This deflection provides a cross-cutting criterion of anteriority of veins relative to shear bands. Quartz lenses are most often continuous across shear bands (Figure 11 and Figure 12), even if sometimes their thickness is much reduced by local high strain (see the necking structures in the central part of Figure 11 and Figure 12).

At the mineral scale, the shear bands have a composite structure, incorporating a network of chlorite-filled shear zones (Figure 13A) in addition to elongated domains of precipitated quartz (Figure 13B). In the latter quartz domains, abundant healed microcracks, materialized by secondary fluid inclusion planes, are oriented perpendicular to the local stretching direction (Figure 13B).

#### **4.3. Structures of localized deformation**

As mélangé faults have already been largely studied (Kitamura et al., 2005; Kondo et al., 2005; Sakaguchi, 2003; Ujiie et al., 2007, Mukoyoshi et al., 2009), this section only briefly summarize their characteristics relevant for the present study. In contrast to distributed deformation structures, localized fault are not scale independent: they represent large-scale structures on the outcrops, always > 10m in length and with an overall thickness of 0.1 – 10m. In Hyuga, Mugi and Okitsu mélanges, the largest fault zones constitute the northern boundaries of the whole mélanges. The NTL, forming the northern boundary of the Hyuga mélangé, is a major fault of the belt, associated with a large gap in the distribution of biostratigraphic ages (Hara and Kimura, 2008) and in paleotemperatures ( $\Delta T^\circ \sim 100^\circ\text{C}$ ; (Raimbourg et al., 2014a; Raimbourg et al., 2017)). In contrast, in Okitsu and in Kure areas there is no biostratigraphic age gap between the mélangé matrix and the coherent formation north of them (Kiminami et al., 1992; Taira et al., 1988) while the paleotemperature gap is small in Okitsu ( $\sim 30^\circ\text{C}$ , vitrinite reflectance data from Sakaguchi (1999b)

using conversion factors from Sweeney and Burnham (1990)), and absent in Mugi (Kitamura et al., 2005).

In some instances, fault zones also form the boundaries between individual thrust sheets within the *mélange* unit (Figures 5 and 6). In particular, the Mizoochi fault zone that separates the upper and lower sections of Mugi *mélange*, is associated with a temperature gap of 60°C (Kitamura et al., 2005). Strain is very heterogeneous within fault zones, and one or several cm- to dm-thick layers of cataclasites or ultracataclasites are present. The microstructure of the cataclasites and ultracataclasites is much different from the *mélange*, as it is composed of rounded clasts of variable sizes embedded in a very fine-grained, dark matrix. In the case of Mugi and Okitsu, evidence of melting is found within the ultrafine-grained layers, considered therefore as pseudotachylytes (Ikesawa et al., 2005; Ikesawa et al., 2003; Kitamura et al., 2005; Sakaguchi, 2003). A noteworthy feature of fault zones is the quasi-absence of quartz precipitation. Localized deformation structures rework or cut quartz veins of all kinds, and are therefore posterior to distributed deformation structures.

#### 4.4 Deformation kinematics

The kinematics of distributed deformation structures shares common features in all the studied *mélange* units (Figure 4, Figure 5, Figure 6). First, macroscopic quartz-filled crack veins in boudins are consistently perpendicular to the foliation plane for the three *mélanges* (Figure 10). In the case of the Hyuga *mélange* for which a lineation is observable, quartz-filled cracks are oriented N006°E on average, i.e. nearly perpendicular to the average direction of transport (N134°E). Second, kinematics of shear bands and ductile-brittle structures correspond to a top-to-the-SE sense of shear, with slickenlines oriented N134 – N150°E, in the Hyuga *mélange*, N145 – N157°E in the Okitsu *mélange*, and N157 – N166°E in the Mugi *mélange*. This top-to-the-SE sense of shear is consistent with the overall convergence direction in the whole Shimanto Belt and the asymmetry of the subduction zone. Third, the shear bands have a lower averaged dip than the *mélange* foliation, both in cases where

mélange foliation is steeply (Okitsu and Mugi) or gently (Hyuga) dipping. Finally, the slickenlines of the major pseudotachylite-bearing faults, observable at the boundary of the Okitsu and Mugi mélanges, are oriented N018°E and N070°E on average in the former and latter case, respectively. The kinematics of these faults is thus not compatible with the NW-SE direction of motion observed in mélange shear zones.

## 5-Discussion

### 5.1 Structures and microstructures of distributed deformation in mélanges

Foliation-parallel veins are a conspicuous feature of tectonic mélanges in the Shimanto Belt as shown on Figures 9 to 13. The orientation of healed microcracks (Figure 13B) and the crystallographic-preferred orientation of quartz shows that these veins grew through successive events of fracturing perpendicular to the stretching direction (Palazzin et al., 2016). Quartz-filled cracks in sandstone lenses, perpendicular to foliation, and veins parallel to the foliation (Figure 10 to Figure 12) are therefore kinematically consistent and were formed contemporaneously in spite of their different orientation. Foliation-parallel veins have also been reported in the Franciscan Complex in the USA, in the Kodiak Complex in Alaska, in the Chrystalls Beach Complex in New Zealand, and in the Internal Ligurian Units in Italy (Fagereng and Harris, 2014; Fagereng et al., 2011; Meneghini et al., 2009; Mittempergher et al., 2018). In these examples as well as in Shimanto, foliation-parallel veins are interpreted as extensional shear veins and record increments of deformation in crack-seal textures (Fagereng and Harris, 2014; Fagereng et al., 2011; Fisher and Byrne, 1990; Fisher and Brantley, 1992, 2014; Fisher et al., 1995). Conditions of formation of such veins span a large temperature range. They can be found at low temperatures (~150°C) in the Mugi mélange lower and “colder” thrust sheets (Kitamura et al., 2005), in the relatively shallow subduction channel of the Apennines (Mittempergher et al., 2018; Vannucchi et al., 2010), in unlithified to semi-lithified rocks from the Internal Ligurian Unit (Meneghini et al., 2007) and during the very shallow (40-70°C) stage of burial of Infra-Helvetia Flysch units of the Alps (Dielforder et al., 2015). Nevertheless, veins were also formed

at higher temperatures (250-300°C) in the Hyuga Tectonic mélange (Palazzin et al., 2016; Raimbourg et al., 2015), in the Otago Schists (Fagereng and Harris, 2014) or in Kodiak (Vrolijk et al., 1988) (see also the compilation of temperatures in (Raimbourg et al., 2018)). Additionally, at thin section scale, a network of microscale shear bands, forming an anastomosed network parallel to the foliation, contain a large proportion of preferentially-oriented chlorite flakes (Figure 13A), as was reported on other mélange examples (e.g. Meneghini et al. (2009)). Bulk-rock deformation at depth, for temperature conditions in the range ~150-300°C, is therefore the result of combined microfracturing, solution precipitation of quartz and slip on chlorite plates.

The other conspicuous deformation feature we observed in the different mélanges of the Shimanto Belt are macroscopic shear bands (Figure 7 to Figure 9) at a low angle to the foliation. Shear bands of similar geometry are also present in many tectonic mélanges, such as in Kodiak (Fisher and Byrne, 1987), or in the subduction channel exposed in the Northern Alps (Bachmann et al., 2009), for T that range from 150-400°C. There, deformation involves a combination of distributed shear zones and extension fractures (mainly oriented parallel to the foliation), which an increasing abundance with depth along the subduction channel.

The chronology of the deformation structures is similar between Okitsu, Mugi and Hyuga mélange zones. The first stage of deformation involves layer-parallel extension, which results in the development of necking of sandstone lenses, formation of tension cracks perpendicular to foliation and foliation parallel veins (which themselves are to a large extent the result of repeated tension microcracking, Figure 13B and Palazzin et al. (2016)). The elongated and fractured sandstones lenses and foliation-parallel veins are then deflected by macro- (Figure 7 to Figure 9) and microshear zones (Figure 11 to Figure 13), developed in a second stage.

A further indication on the relative timing of microstructures with respect to the mélange tectonic evolution is provided by the comparison between Mugi, Okitsu and Hyuga, which experienced increasing peak-T conditions. Only in the western domain of Hyuga, where the metamorphic

temperatures were the highest (ca. 240-270°C), a clear mineral lineation is visible, suggesting that lineation developed for maximum temperature conditions. The direction of motion indicated by the slickenlines over ductile-brittle structures carried by shear zone planes is parallel to the lineation (Figure 4), which shows that the shear bands themselves were active for the highest T conditions, at peak-burial conditions. Furthermore, in the Hyuga mélange, poles to tension veins (N096) and direction of slip on shear bands (N134) are close to each other in orientation, which suggests that veins and shear bands developed during the same framework of burial, but probably at different depths.

## 5.2 Kinematics of mélange deformation

The foliation is well-developed in the three mélange units studied here, whereas the lineation is well-defined only in the western domain of the Hyuga Tectonic mélange (Figure 4, see also Raimbourg et al. (2014a)). In the rest of mélange exposures (eastern part of Hyuga, Okitsu and Mugi areas), where temperatures did not exceed 240°C, it is therefore unclear whether the sandstone lenses within the foliation formed by flattening, pure or simple shear.

This evolution of finite strain markers with temperature is further supported by anisotropy of magnetic susceptibility (AMS) data. Sandstone lenses from the two sections of Mugi mélange shows a magnetic fabrics corresponding to a flattening régime (Kitamura and Kimura, 2012), with a well-defined foliation and magnetic lineations scattered in the magnetic foliation plane. In contrast, at higher temperatures (~340°C, i.e. Palazzin et al. (2016)) within the Makimine mélange, the magnetic fabrics change towards a 3-dimensional shape of a L-S tectonite (Kitamura and Kimura, 2012) and the magnetic lineations are clustered around NNW-SSE direction, parallel to the stretching lineation (Raimbourg et al., 2014a). The same magnetic fabrics was described in Okinawa islands, also belonging to the Shimanto Belt, in an underplated mélange unit (Ujiie et al., 2000). In tandem with the AMS fabrics, analysis of the 3D shape of radiolarians in the higher-grade units of the Shimanto

Belt ( $T \sim 350^\circ\text{C}$ ) has also revealed a preferred elongation direction, parallel to the shear direction (Kimura and Mukai, 1991; Toriumi and Teruya, 1988).

Extension parallel to the underthrusting direction is therefore revealed by the development of a clear stretching lineation, by the AMS or by the shape fabrics of radiolarians in the higher-temperature examples of *mélanges*, while in the lower temperature example the strain ellipsoid is more ambiguous, partly because of a lack of reliable strain markers.

In addition, in the examples treated here, the clearest microstructures, in terms of kinematics, are the macroscopic shear bands that develop within the *mélanges*, with directions oriented NW-SE in Hyuga and NNE-SSW in Okitsu and Mugi *mélanges*. These shear bands indicate consistently top-to-the-SE shear deformation in any example. This sense of shear is consistent with burial and underthrusting of the *mélange* below Eurasia in Early Cenozoic times (Raimbourg et al., 2014a; Sakaguchi, 1999b). Furthermore, as shear band dip is lower than the main foliation (Figure 4 to Figure 6), when the latter is restored back to underthrusting attitude (i.e. with a low landward dip), the shear bands become extensional structures.

Similar to these Shimanto case studies, the most commonly reported kinematic indicator in worldwide examples of *mélange* reflect layer parallel coaxial extension, top-to-the-trench shearing or both. In most cases, kinematics are interpreted as the result of shear along or near a master décollement (Byrne and Fisher, 1990; Fisher and Byrne, 1987, 1990). In the Uyak Complex in Alaska, conjugate normal faults are reported, with the set of normal faults synthetic with subduction-related shear dominant over the other one (Byrne and Fisher, 1990). In the Marin Headlands of the Franciscan Complex (Meneghini and Moore, 2007) or in the Mugi *mélange* of the Shimanto Belt (Kitamura and Kimura, 2012), structures are interpreted in terms of Y-P-R brittle fabrics and the abundant R planes are similar, geometrically and kinematically, to the extensional shear bands described in our work. In the northern Apennines, extensional shear bands and faults are also reported, but two conjugate sets seem to be present (Vannucchi et al., 2010). In the subduction

channel in the Northern Alps, shear bands are widely distributed, some of them with S-C geometry, and the preferred sense of shear is synthetic with the master shear on the décollement during subduction (Ring et al., 1989). Therefore the general pattern is that extensional shear bands, sometimes conjugate but in most cases synthetic with underthrusting-related shear, dominate the deformation in mélanges.

### 5.3 Underplating process of mélange

Mélange units in the Shimanto Belt have a relatively constant structure, with the imbrication of individual sheets composed of a basaltic sole below a thicker sequence of tectonic mélange composed of sedimentary material (and minor occurrences of other ocean-floor lithologies such as radiolarites or red and black shales). In addition, some of the basalt lenses or layers are associated with fault zones, for example in the Mugi (Ikesawa et al., 2005; Kitamura et al., 2005) or Okitsu mélanges (Ikesawa et al., 2003; Sakaguchi, 2003; Sakaguchi et al., 2006). The imbricated structure and the presence of faults has led to the model of localized underplating (Figure 14B), to account for the stacking of mélange sheets to the upper plate (Fisher and Byrne, 1990; Ikesawa et al., 2005; Kimura and Mukai, 1991; Onishi et al., 2001; Sample and Fisher, 1986). In this model, each individual thrust sheet is underplated at the base of the overlying plate as a result of the stepdown of the décollement to the upper levels of the basalt of the subducting plate. The resulting structure, after successive events of décollement step-down, is a stack of imbricated thrust sheets.

Such a model of imbrication during underplating share many similarities with fold-and-thrust belts, which have been widely studied in the external domains of collisional orogens (Bally et al., 1966; Chapple, 1978). Kinematics of deformation in fold-and-thrust belts has for example been derived from passive strain markers (e.g. oolites) in the Northern Mountains, in the Appalachians, showing that within thrust sheets the shortening axis of finite strain is close to the parallel to the transport direction (Evans and Dunne, 1991). Microtectonic analysis, applied to fold-and-thrust belts, has shown similarly that meter-scale faults record the same pattern of horizontal shortening as can be

deduced from imbrication of thrust sheets over a main thrust, as for example in Taiwan (Angelier et al., 1986; Angelier et al., 1990; Barrier and Angelier, 1986; Chang et al., 2000) or the French Jura Belt (Homberg et al., 2002).

Accordingly, even if most of the strain is localized on a master fault, the model of localized underplating (Figure 14B) involves evidence for contractional deformation within the stacked thrust sheets. Contractional deformation has indeed been described in some *mélange* examples. For instance, deformation within the Kodiak *mélange* is divided into two stages, D1 related to shearing during burial, D2 related to fold and thrusting and to the formation of a slaty cleavage, during underplating and imbrication (Fisher and Byrne, 1990; Sample and Fisher, 1986; Sample and Moore, 1987). Contraction during underplating is also described in the *mélange* along Akamatsu river in eastern Shikoku, Japan (Kimura and Mukai, 1991). Similarly, although the subduction channel in the Alps is restricted to relatively shallow depths and temperatures (below  $\sim 150^{\circ}\text{C}$ ), early extensional structures are overprinted by compressional structures (Vannucchi et al., 2008).

A major ambiguity still regards the timing of the folds and thrusts that characterize the contractional deformation recorded in accretionary prisms such as Kodiak or the Shimanto Belt. Instead of having formed during underplating, it may as well result from a posterior stage of deformation, within the accretionary wedge itself. In the Shimanto Belt, a large-scale collision stage has been described, which has largely reworked the whole structure and may correspond to most or all mesoscale contractional structures (Charvet, 2013; Charvet and Fabbri, 1987; Raimbourg et al., 2017). Furthermore, the first-order faults, such as the Nobeoka Tectonic Line (Kondo et al., 2005), are out-of-sequence features, formed within the wedge after accretion. In the Alaskan case, the transition between underplating and later-stage intra-wedge shortening is rather unclear. As a consequence, it is difficult to assign contractional deformation unambiguously to underplating.

Furthermore, contractional deformation structures recorded in the three *mélange* zones investigated here are an uncommon feature and most of the deformation results from shear and non-coaxial

extension. In the other examples from the Shimanto Belt, distributed shortening is either limited to the vicinity of large-scale faults (Kimura and Mukai, 1991) or not observed (Hashimoto and Kimura, 1999).

A consistent model of *mélange* underplating should therefore incorporate both the repetitive formation of faults to stack thrust sheets one upon another and the dominance of extensional deformation distributed in the volume of *mélange* units. Rather than a succession of two stages, a possible model could consider that extension recorded in shear bands actually results from, and not predates underplating (Figure 14A).

Let us assume that, as an initial stage, *mélange* absorbs all, or a large fraction, of the relative displacement between the subducting and overriding plates. Such an assumption is closely related to the “subduction channel” model, where viscous deformation is broadly distributed within a channel of several hundreds of meters of thickness, composed of the incoming sedimentary sequence (or a fraction of it) between two rigid walls (Cloos, 1982; Cloos and Shreve, 1988a, 1988b; England and Holland, 1979; Mancktelow, 1995; Raimbourg et al., 2007b; Shreve and Cloos, 1986; Vannucchi et al., 2012b). The material flowing within the channel is neither part of the lower or upper plate; its velocity varies between null on top and plate convergence rate at the bottom of the channel (in upper plate reference frame). This kinematic role of *mélange* is suggested by the abundance of deformation microstructures (tension cracks, network of shear zones at all scales, stretching lineation, shape of rigid lenses), even if no strain markers enables to evaluate the absolute strain. In addition, the subduction channel model also postulates that there is no major, actively deforming fault bounding the sediment-filled channel. This point, discussed in the following section, is supported by the fact that the faults that limit the *mélange* in its present geometry were not active contemporaneously.

It is likely that at some point, shear will become more easily accommodated within a localized fault through the subducting basalts than within the sediment pile, for example because of strain- or

metamorphic-hardening. This scenario is required to form the internal architecture of *mélange* units, with a stack of several basalt-soled sheets (Figure 5 and Figure 6). After formation of such a fault within the oceanic crust, further subduction of the deforming *mélange*, connected to a more localized slip zone within the basalts, results in thinning the subducting sediment pile. This is readily apparent when comparing the velocity profiles across several sections at different depths. In the model, conservation of material is imperative. Therefore, if the channel walls are fixed, the flux through any section of the channel must be equal. Conversely, if the fluxes vary along the channel length, then motion of the walls are required. Conservation of the material implies therefore that when the deforming zone is thinner than incoming thickness, the roof boundary of the “channel” is necessarily pushed upwards, to accommodate a larger influx of material than what is flowing in (Figure 14A'4). As a result, the “nose” of the channel gets longer (at a velocity equal to burial) and its opening angle gets smaller with time (Figure 14A2 to A'4). The material flowing through it accommodates this thinning by the formation of synthetic extensional shear zones. Eventually, as the shear strain rate increases towards the tip of the channel (because the material is flowing in a thinner channel), at some point a new fault forms within the underlying basalts, and a new thrust sheet starts forming.

Unlike models of “localized” underplating, where material is strong and deformation is localized on faults, such a model of “distributed” underplating considers the *mélange* as soft and deformable, thus accommodating most of underplating-related strain. One of the advantages of this model is to account for the lack of shortening deformation within *mélange* units and the concomitance of extension and underplating, in contrast to the examples of fold-and-thrust belts cited above. This model also enables the connection between *mélange* deformation (distributed within the whole subducting pile) and fault formation during underplating, while localized models of underplating consider that slip occurs principally on the *décollement* (Fisher and Byrne, 1990; Ikesawa et al., 2005; Kimura and Mukai, 1991; Onishi et al., 2001; Sample and Fisher, 1986), which is equivalent to completely disregarding, in terms of strain accommodation, *mélange* distributed deformation. Finally,

our model also accounts for the thinning of the sedimentary pile (geometrically necessary because of the distributed extensional shear bands), which is not incorporated in other underplating models.

#### **5.4 Model of subduction plate boundary**

##### *5.4.1 Relationship between localized and distributed deformation*

Evidence of adjacent brittle deformation features, including pseudotachylytes (Ikesawa et al., 2003; Kitamura et al., 2005; Meneghini et al., 2010; Rowe et al., 2011; Rowe et al., 2005; Rowe et al., 2013) and distributed deformation in mélanges has led to a model of plate interface incorporating simultaneously zones of highly localized slip and domains of more distributed slip (Rowe et al., 2013). This generic fault zone, forming the plate boundary, follows the fault zone model by (Faulkner et al., 2010; Faulkner et al., 2003) composed of a ~100m-1km-wide “damage” zone, ~1-5m-wide fault-core and ~mm-to-cm-thick slip zones.

The coexistence, of distributed deformation and localized slip features, such as pseudotachylytes, in Kure (Mukoyoshi et al., 2006), Okitsu (Sakaguchi, 2003; Sakaguchi et al., 2006), Mugi (Ikesawa et al., 2005) or Hyuga (Kondo et al., 2005) mélange areas within the Shimanto Belt, might suggest that they were active at the same time, but our closer examination rather showed that they appear disconnected for different aspects.

Disconnection is in some cases geometrical, i.e. fault zones and pseudotachylytes are late-stage, or “out-of-sequence” faults, cutting across tectonic contacts and distributed deformation formed during underthrusting. For example, the faults zones (including pseudotachylyte-bearing faults) present in the Kure mélange (Mukoyoshi et al., 2006) cut across the boundary between the mélange and the adjacent tectonic unit, so these faults were formed after the deformation within the mélange acquired during underthrusting. This two-staged evolution is confirmed by age constraints: although underthrusting age is imprecise, the Kure mélange is associated with the Cretaceous Belt (Taira et al., 1988). In contrast, radiometric ages on the pseudotachylyte yield much younger ages of ca. 18Ma

(Honda et al., 2011), which were interpreted as reflecting a post-subduction stage of collision in Early Miocene (Raimbourg et al., 2017). Similarly, the pseudotachylyte-bearing ultracataclasite forming the roof thrust of the Mugi mélangé was dated by K-Ar radiochronology at ~23-29Ma, while authigenic illite formed synchronously with burial and deformation within the mélangé yielded ages between 85 and 48Ma (Tonai et al., 2016). In Okitsu, the maximum paleotemperature, revealed by the vitrinite reflectance geothermometer, is higher in the mélangé by ~30-50°C than in the overlying unit (Sakaguchi, 1999b; Sakaguchi et al., 2006). As discussed in (Ujiie et al., 2007), the boundary thrust, including the pseudotachylyte-bearing fault, is therefore interpreted as an out-of-sequence thrust, cutting across the thermal structure inherited from subduction/underthrusting stage. Similarly, the large-scale tectonic structure of the Cenozoic Shimanto Belt on Kyushu shows that the large-scale fault NTL is a late-stage feature cutting across a number of tectonic units and their internal deformation, including the Hyuga Tectonic mélangé (HTM) (Murata, 1996, 1997, 1998; Raimbourg et al., 2014a). The NTL constitutes the roof thrust of the HTM on the eastern coast, but further west the NTL cuts across the basal boundary of the HTM, so that the footwall of the NTL is there composed of the coherent turbiditic formation underlying the HTM (Figure 2). Therefore, while on the eastern coast the mélangé deformation was interpreted as damage resulting from slip on the NTL (Kondo et al., 2005), the map-scale relationships between the tectonic mélangé and the NTL show that in general mélangé deformation predates the fault slip event on the NTL.

In these examples, the mélangé deformation within the thrust sheets, interpreted as related to underthrusting, predates more localized deformation on faults, associated in most cases with a distinct, later-stage event. In the classical model of mélangé underplating (Fisher and Byrne, 1990; Ikesawa et al., 2005; Kimura and Mukai, 1991; Onishi et al., 2001; Sample and Fisher, 1986) (Figure 14B), there is also a clear disconnection between the mélangé-forming deformation, during burial, and slip on thrust sheets-bounding faults, during underplating. In the alternative model we propose in Figure 14A, distributed deformation in the mélangé during underplating, and repeated events of slips on faults within basalts, are coeval, although they occur at different locations along dip. But

irrespective of the model of underplating, there is no configuration such as proposed in Rowe et al. (2013) where large-scale faults and distributed slip act in parallel. Furthermore, as for the different examples from the Shimanto Belt, in most instances the most localized features, pseudotachylytes, are a later-stage event occurring within the wedge, after the underplating of the *mélange* at depth.

#### *5.4.2 Seismic vs. aseismic slip along the interface – rheological models*

A cm- or dm-thick fault zone deforming discontinuously through repeated earthquakes, or a ~hundreds of meters-thick subduction channel deforming through distributed shear, constitute two theoretical end-members of the plate interface (Fagereng and Sibson, 2010). Tectonic *mélanges*, in as much as they correspond to fossil plate interfaces, are thick deforming zones akin to the second endmember, and their role in aseismic slip, occurring in non-coupled portions of the plate interface (e.g. (Loveless and Meade, 2010; Moreno et al., 2010)), has long been hypothesized (Fagereng and Sibson, 2010).

Nonetheless, the actual rheology of tectonic *mélanges* is complex, as a result of their heterogeneous composition, and the distribution of strain and strain rate may depend on the proportion of the rigid blocks within the more deformable matrix (Fagereng and Sibson, 2010). Furthermore, the stability of *mélange* deformation, hence their potential to host large earthquake, might also depend on the strain rate applied, as suggested by friction tests on clay+quartz mixtures (den Hartog et al., 2012; Den Hartog and Spiers, 2014): subduction channels deforming by velocity-strengthening processes may switch to velocity-weakening behavior and unstable slip upon an increase in strain rate (Fagereng and Den Hartog, 2017).

To account for *mélange* rheology, microphysical models developed from deformation experiments of a mixture of quartz grains embedded in a phyllosilicate matrix, are particularly appropriate (den Hartog et al., 2013; Den Hartog and Spiers, 2014; Niemeijer, 2018; Niemeijer and Spiers, 2007; Niemeijer et al., 2008). Bulk strain results from the contribution of quartz grain deforming by pressure-solution, and frictional slip on a phyllosilicate foliation. Unlike classical rate-and-state

friction laws with parameters  $a$  and  $b$  (Dieterich, 1994; Ruina, 1983), geometrical parameters such as shear zone thickness can be explicitly considered in microphysical models and their effect on slip stability considered (e.g. (Fagereng and Den Hartog, 2017)). The few observations developed here on tectonic *mélange* structures and microstructures of deformation provide direct constraints on such microphysical models, hence on the rheology of the shear zones constituting the plate interface.

A key aspect of the microphysical models, necessary to trigger velocity-weakening behavior, is the competition between slip-induced dilatational strain and compaction resulting from thermally activated deformation of the rigid clasts. Stress corrosion cracking, i.e. sub-critical crack growth in quartz, is invoked as a major process in the deformation of the rigid quartz clasts (den Hartog et al., 2012; Den Hartog and Spiers, 2013), on the basis of observations in sandstone compaction experiments (Schutjens, 1991). Nonetheless, because of the lack of quantitative constraints, microcracking is not incorporated in the physical formulation of the clast deformation, which is described solely in terms of pressure solution.

The structures and microstructures shown in this work point indeed to the major role played by fracturing in the deformation of the rigid bodies at all scales. As shown by the example of the Mugi *mélange* (Figure 10B and Hashimoto et al. (2006)), tension veins in boudin necks start forming at shallow conditions, for  $T$  as low as  $\sim 150^\circ\text{C}$ , marking the transition from soft sediment behavior to the brittle behavior of cemented, low-porosity rocks (Fagereng et al., 2018). Pervasive fracturing of competent bodies, from meter-scale lenses of sand- or siltstones to millimeter-scale veins of quartz, can be found over the whole seismogenic depth range down to the transition to plastic deformation (Figure 10 and (Palazzin et al., 2018)). Multiple events of microfracturing of quartz veins, attested by crack-seal microstructures (Fisher and Byrne, 1990; Fisher and Brantley, 1992, 2014; Ujiie et al., 2018) or quartz textures revealed by cathodoluminescence (Raimbourg et al., 2018; Raimbourg et al., 2015) also suggest that fracturing is active throughout burial. The size and spacing of the rigid objects deforming through cracking provide characteristic transport distances for pressure-solution, even in

the absence of the physical laws for cracking itself. Assuming that silica, the vein-forming material, is dissolved and precipitated locally, then the spacing between fractured quartz veins or silt-/sandstone clasts gives an estimate of the transport distance, a key parameter of the pressure-solution flow laws (Gratier et al., 2009). In the most strongly deformed areas, pervasive veining (Figure 11 and Figure 12) form foliation-parallel lenses of quartz with a spacing of the order or below 1mm (Palazzin et al., 2016). Bulk-rheology, relevant at the plate tectonics scale, should account for imbricated scales, including the deformation of rigid grains in a phyllosilicate matrix explicitly considered in the microphysical models (Den Hartog and Spiers, 2014; Niemeijer and Spiers, 2007; Niemeijer et al., 2008), but also larger scales, in particular the behavior of rigid lenses (in particular of precipitated veins) in a quartz+phyllosilicate matrix.

Additionally, the large density of mode I cracks accompanying deformation of all rigid bodies (Figures 7 to 13) is a clear evidence of high fluid pore pressure attending deformation (Byrne and Fisher, 1990), even if the determination of in-situ fluid pressure from fluid inclusion record has remained so far elusive (see the review in (Raimbourg et al., 2018)). This bears some influence on the clasts+phyllosilicate microphysical model, as dilatancy, by decreasing the pore fluid pressure and decreasing the effective stress, has a strengthening effect on slip (Segall and Rice, 1995). Variations in fluid pressure have for example been described in Kodiak mélangé (Vrolijk, 1987) or in the Shimanto Belt (Raimbourg et al., 2014b), showing that the retroaction between fluid pressure and slip should be explicitly considered.

The last insight provided by the natural examples shown in here regards the nature of the phyllosilicate forming the network of shear zones, which is principally chlorite throughout the temperature range (Figure 13A). A similar development of a network of chlorite is also reported in Kodiak (Fisher and Byrne, 1987) and in the Franciscan Complex (Meneghini et al., 2009). In contrast, most friction experiments used to infer plate boundary rheology are based on mixtures of smectite, illite and quartz (Ikari et al., 2007; Saffer et al., 2001; Saffer et al., 2012; Saffer and Marone, 2003).

Friction experiments on chlorite show no large difference between illite and chlorite in terms of friction coefficient (Ikari et al., 2009; Moore and Lockner, 2004). Nevertheless, permeability differ significantly, and chlorite gouge have two to three orders of magnitude higher permeability than illite gouges (Ikari et al., 2009), which potentially plays a role when considering dilatation and pore pressure changes during slip. Furthermore, systematic data about dependence of friction on temperature, available for quartz+illite/muscovite mixtures (den Hartog et al., 2012, 2013; Den Hartog and Spiers, 2013) or smectite-rich natural sediments (Sawai et al., 2017), are still lacking for chlorite.

## 6-Conclusions

The comparative study of several tectonic *mélange* units within the Shimanto Belt revealed common features, providing insights into the processes occurring along the subduction plate boundary at depth. Several conclusions can be drawn from *mélange* micro- and macrostructures of deformation, regarding the processes of underplating and the distributed vs. localized character of deformation:

1) Distributed deformation, at the origin of the development of block-in-matrix structure of the *mélanges*, results from slip on a pervasive network of shear bands, ranging from meter-scale, quartz-filled structures to microscopic, chlorite-filled ones. Deformation on shear bands is accompanied by pervasive veining, either in cracks formed perpendicular to extension in more competent sandstone or quartz lenses, or in extension veins parallel to the foliation.

2) Kinematics of deformation, as deduced from the slip on shear bands, is a consistent top-to-the-trench shear. As shear bands have in average a lower dip than the foliation, they are interpreted as extensional structures.

3) Underplating is required by the repetition of several *mélange* thrust sheet units. Nonetheless, the absence of contractional structures within the *mélange* leads to a new model, where distributed extension within the *mélange* occurs during underplating. This model of “distributed” underplating,

contrasting with “localized” underplating models, is in accordance with the strong partitioning of strain within the mélange material.

4) Localized deformation on faults, including pseudotachylytes, occurs in many instances *after* underplating, as intra-wedge deformation, while mélange internal deformation occurs *before* (i.e. underthrusting) and *during* underplating. There is no evidence for a preserved structure of the plate boundary comprising a roof thrust and underlying mélange deforming simultaneously.

5) Mélange distributed deformation is a candidate for the aseismic slip observed along certain portions of active subduction plate interfaces. Mélange deformation features that should be incorporated into models of the plate rheology (such as microphysical models by Den Hartog and Spiers (2014)) include (i) the role of fracturing for clasts/rigid bodies deformation, (ii) the variable size (hence deformation processes) of the rigid bodies embedded in a weaker matrix, (iii) the large fluid pressure accompanying deformation and (iv) the role of chlorite to form the micro-scale network of shear zones within the weak matrix.

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## Figure and Table captions

Figure 1: Tectonic setting of the Shimanto Belt, along the southern border of Japan (Kimura et al., 2016). The studied *mélange* units are located on Kyushu (see Figure 2) and Shikoku islands (see Figure 3).

Figure 2: Geological map of Shimanto Belt on eastern Kyushu. The Hyuga *mélange* unit is located below the Nobeoka Tectonic Line (NTL) over most of the area, except for the northeastern area, where the NTL cuts across the limit between “Coherent Hyuga” and “Hyuga Tectonic *mélange*” (enlarged rectangle at upper right). The Hyuga *mélange* incorporates, in addition to strongly sheared sedimentary rocks, sheets of basalt and to a lesser extent of red shales. Adapted from Murata (1997). Cross-sections A-B and C-D in Figure 4.

Figure 3: Distribution of *mélange* units within the Shimanto Belt on Shikoku, adapted from Taira et al. (1988).

Figure 4: Kinematics of deformation within the Hyuga *mélange* (light blue color in the map and stereoplots). Stereo diagrams are equal area, lower hemisphere, with the numbering underneath referring to outcrops. Foliation is shown as the red plane, while planes with arrows correspond to shear bands. Cross-section locations refer to Figure 2.

Figure 5: Structures and kinematics of deformation in the Okitsu *mélange* unit. (A) Map of Okitsu area, with stereoplots of deformation kinematics. In blue stereoplots, compiling data from *mélange* structures, foliation is shown as the red plane, while planes with arrows correspond to shear bands. The pseudotachylite-bearing fault zone along its northern boundary is associated with a top-to-the-SSW thrust motion. Abundant shear zones in the *mélange* indicate top to the SE thrusting. Kinematic data on fault zone from Sakaguchi (2003). The average azimuth of slicken lines is shown as the thick black ticks. Stereo diagrams are equal area, lower hemisphere. (B) Cross-section of the stack of units constituting the Okitsu *mélange*, along the profiles X-X', Y-Y', Z-Z' in (A). Basalt is present in thick

layers, preserving their pillow structure, and locally in lenses embedded and deformed within the *mélange*. (C) The pervasive deformation of the *mélange* is visible in its sedimentary layers, with a dense network of macroscopic top-to-the-south mineralized shear zones deflecting the foliation and offsetting sandstone lenses. (D) More localized zones of deformation are present along the boundaries of the basalt lenses, including the pseudotachylyte-bearing one (PST). Note that the field drawing in (D) is a mirror image of the actual outcrop, to keep the same N-S orientation as (B) and (C).

Figure 6: Kinematics of deformation in the Mugi *mélange* (stereoplots with blue background). On each stereographic plot, the red plane corresponds to the average foliation, while planes with arrows correspond to shear bands. The white stereoplot on the right shows the data of the pseudotachylyte-bearing fault zone of Minami-Awa, which bounds the Mugi *mélange* unit (Kitamura, 2006; Kitamura et al., 2005). The numbers on the map refer to outcrops. The average azimuth of slicken lines is shown as the thick black ticks. Stereo diagrams are equal area, lower hemisphere.

Figure 7: Deformation structures within the Okitsu *mélange* (outcrop 220 – see Supp. Mat. for location). The vertical foliation, composed of elongated sandstone lenses embedded in a shale matrix, is crosscut by a dense network of shear bands with top-to-the-SSE sense of shear. Quartz precipitation is in A) mostly distributed within fractures cutting across the sandstone lenses. Alternately, in B), quartz precipitation is much more intense and quartz also precipitates along and in the vicinity of the shear bands. A and B photographs, A' and B' corresponding sketches.

Figure 8: Network of shear bands deflecting the vertical sandstone lenses and the foliation of the shale matrix within the Mugi *mélange* (outcrop 342 – see Supp. Mat. for location). Most of the shear bands are filled with quartz.

Figure 9: Deformation microstructures in the Hyuga *mélange* (outcrop 147 – see Supp. Mat. for location), from Raimbourg et al. (2014a). Lenses of sandstone, elongated parallel to the foliation within the pelitic matrix, are boudinaged. Quartz precipitated as foliation-parallel lenses and in

tension cracks forming the necks of sandstone lenses. Both quartz and sandstone lenses are deflected by top-to-the-SE shear bands.

Figure 10: Veining in mélanges in Okitsu (A), Mugi (B) and Hyuga (C) areas. Quartz veins form as tension cracks perpendicular to stretching direction in rigid lenses of sandstones (blue arrows), and in veins parallel to foliation S1 (red arrows). Samples references are respectively HN323, HN462 and HN64 (see Supp. Mat. for location). Each sample is rotated to its actual dip.

Figure 11: Deformation within the mélange is made of a distributed network of shear zones, affecting lenses of sedimentary material as well as precipitated quartz (“quartz veins”). Quartz precipitation occurs (i) in fractures cutting across sandstone lenses, (ii) in the neck of boudinaged sandstone lenses and (iii) in lenses elongated parallel to the main foliation (sample HN299 – see Supp. Mat. for location).

Figure 12: Detail of a shear band cutting across elongated lenses of quartz and siltstone, within the Hyuga mélange (sample HN299 – see Supp. Mat. for location). Quartz lenses are continuous across the shear band and deflected by it. Most of the lenses in this pervasively deformed sample are not composed of sedimentary, coarser-grained siltstone, but rather of lenses of precipitated quartz. The two rectangles in the left picture correspond to Figure 13.

Figure 13: Optical microscope photographs, without (A, B) and with (A', B') crossed-nicols, of deformation microstructures within the shear band in Figure 12. A-A') A network of microscale, chlorite-filled shear zones (“Chl.”) develop within the main shear zone. B-B') Quartz lenses elongated within the shear band are pervasively affected by microcracking, apparent in the dense array of fluid inclusion planes, shown as arrows, oriented perpendicular to the stretching direction. Quartz crystals (B') are elongated preferentially parallel to the stretching direction.

Figure 14: Underplating models, with distributed (A) and localized (B) deformation. For the “distributed underplating” model, in an initial stage (A<sub>1</sub>), all the plate relative motion is

accommodated within the mélange. Because of strain or metamorphic hardening of the mélange, a localized slip zone forms within the basalt of the subducting plate ( $A_2$ ) and connects to the upper boundary of the mélange to form a wedge-shape zone. In the resulting evolution ( $A_3$  and  $A_4$ ), this wedge of mélange stretches, to account, because of mass conservation, for the difference in flow resulting from thinner section in the wedge (velocity profiles in  $A_4''$ , corresponding to stage  $A_4$ ). Mélange flowing through the wedge accommodates the geometrical thinning through the development of pervasive extensional shear zones, similar to the ones recorded in fossil mélange examples. Two successive stages of deformation are recorded in the mélange (model A), first layer-parallel shear (far from underplating zone), then extensional shear (during underplating).

Table 1: P-T conditions of deformation within the mélange units. Sample locations are given in decimal degrees. Temperatures were calculated from vitrinite reflectance according to the equations in Barker (1988), in agreement with the study of Laughland and Underwood (1993). Please note the slight difference in the reflectance values reported in the literature, either mean or maximum reflectance. RSCM temperatures were calculated from the calibration by Lahfid et al. (2010). Temperatures were calculated from illite crystallinity according to the equations in Hara and Kimura (2008).

Area	Method	Sample	Location		Number of analyses		Average T (°C)			Reference
Hyuga mélange	RSCM		Longitude	Latitude		$RA1=(D1+D4)/(D1+D2+D3+D4+G)$	Equivalent T(°C)	Stand. Dev. on T		Raimbourg et al., Tectonics 2017
		HN 54	131.73098	32.59126	10	0.540	207	11		
		HN 64	131.46297	32.59442	9	0.565	238	6		
		HN 65	131.40357	32.54517	10	0.567	240	6		
		HN 68	131.39923	32.54939	10	0.587	264	22		
		HN 75	131.24460	32.41619	10	0.570	244	11		
		HN 77	131.24460	32.41619	10	0.585	261	27		
		HN 85	131.31481	32.42867	10	0.569	242	11		

		HN 91	131.24250	32.41610	10	0.561	233	8		
		HN 93	131.58203	32.60445	10	0.570	244	16		
		HN 94	131.57563	32.60837	10	0.563	235	13		
							<b>243</b>			
	<b>Vitrinite reflectance</b>		In the vicinity of the NTL, on eastern coast of Kyushu			Rmax	Equivalent T(°C)	Stand. Dev. on Rmax		
		NBO 3				2.75	253	0.26		Kondo et al. Tectonics 2005
		NBO 1				2.72	252	0.16		
		NBO 16				2.73	252	0.22		
		NBO 8				2.58	247	0.09		
		NBO 18				2.69	251	0.11		
							<b>251</b>			
	<b>Illite crystallinity</b>					Mean IC value	Equivalent T(°C)	Standard deviation on IC value		
			western area of Miyazaki-ken		32	0.370	277	0.04		Hara and Kimura, Island Arc 2008
			just below the NTL, throughout its outcropping area		8	0.424	266	0.07		Mukoyoshi et al. 2009
							<b>271</b>			
	<b>Fluid inclusions</b>						T homogenization	Type of vein		
		NB2 2	just below the NTL, throughout Miyazaki-ken		23		180	Type 1 veins, i.e. tension cracks in boudinaged sandstone blocks	Kondo et al. Tectonics 2005	
		NB2 7			20		175			
		NB3 0			21		295			
		NB3 1			12		305			
		Ve1 1			15		220			
							<b>235</b>			
		HN4 8a site1	32.40899	131.25497	15		227	33	Extension veins	This study and Raimbour

		HN74	32.49138	131.37704	22		245	24	and microcracks	get al., Tectonophysics 2015
		HN51b site2	32.41610	131.24250	82		224	35		
		HN75 site3	32.52284	131.38497	17		200	19		
							<b>224</b>			
<b>Kure mélangé</b>						Rmean	Equivalent T			Mukoyoshi et al. EPSL 2006
			Along the coast			2.3	235			
						2.1	225			
						2.1	225			
			2km onland			2.3	235			
						1.8	209			
							<b>226</b>			
<b>Okitsu mélangé</b>	<b>RSCM</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Longitude</b>	<b>Latitude</b>	<b>Number of analyses</b>	$RA1=(D1+D4)/(D1+D2+D3+D4+G)$	<b>T mean (°C)</b>	<b>Stand. Dev. on T</b>		This study
		HN321	33.21362	133.24004	12	0.546	214	21		
		HN323	33.20323	133.23441	11	0.550	219	8		
		HN325	33.20200	133.23532	10	0.563	235	25		
		HN329	33.16339	133.18384	10	0.577	252	9		
							<b>230</b>			
	<b>Vitrinite reflectance</b>					Rmax	Equivalent T			Sakaguchi, Island Arc 1999
		OK521				3.21	269			
		OK801				3.02	263			
		OK805				3.45	277			
		OK831				2.96	261			
							<b>267</b>			
	<b>Fluid inclusions</b>						T homogenization		Calcite veins	Sakaguchi, Island Arc 1999
					115		<b>210</b>			
<b>Mugi mélangé</b>	<b>RSCM</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Longitude</b>	<b>Latitude</b>	<b>Number of analyses</b>	$RA1=(D1+D4)/(D1+D2+D3+D4+G)$	<b>T mean (°C)</b>	<b>Stand. Dev. on T</b>		This study
<b>Lower section</b>		HN452	33.67394	134.45467	18	0.500	163	39		

		HN4 54	33.6739 4	134.45 467	20	0.540	206	46		
		HN4 56	33.6723 3	134.45 231	23	0.525	189	34		
		HN4 57	33.6712 2	134.45 139	18	0.516	176	35		
							<b>184</b>			
	<b>Vitrinite reflectance</b>						Equivalent T			
						Rmean				
						1.40	183			
						1.50	190			
						1.55	194			
						1.05	153			
						1.00	148			
						1.05	153			
						1.00	148			
						1.40	183			
						0.85	131			
						1.30	175			
						1.05	153			
						1.00	148			
							<b>163</b>			
	<b>Fluid inclusions</b>				n		T homogeni- zation			
		MVE -5			2		195			
		MVE -6			6		125		Extensi on veins in sandsto ne boudins	
		MVE -46			13		165			
		MVE -29			16		185			
		MVE -28			20		175			
		MVE -3			2		245			
		MVE -7			10		135		Veins in basalts near thrust zone	
		MVE -8			8		205			
							<b>179</b>			
<b>Upper section</b>	<b>Vitrinite reflectance</b>						Equivalent T			
						Rmean				
						2.90	259			
						3.15	215			
						2.80	206			
						2.65	202			
							<b>220</b>			

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## Supplementary Material

Outcrop number	sample reference	Latitude (N)	Longitude (E)
220		33.203233	133.234406
342		33.683763	134.477061
147		32.409790	131.254973
111		32.431239	131.310953
112-113		32.430541	131.312791
116		32.416224	131.320819
2020		32.415133	131.278167
	HN64	32.594418	131.462973
	HN299	32.403317	131.279000
	HN323	33.203232	133.234406
	HN462	33.670679	134.449622

Supplementary Material: Outcrop and sample location, in decimal degrees.

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ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

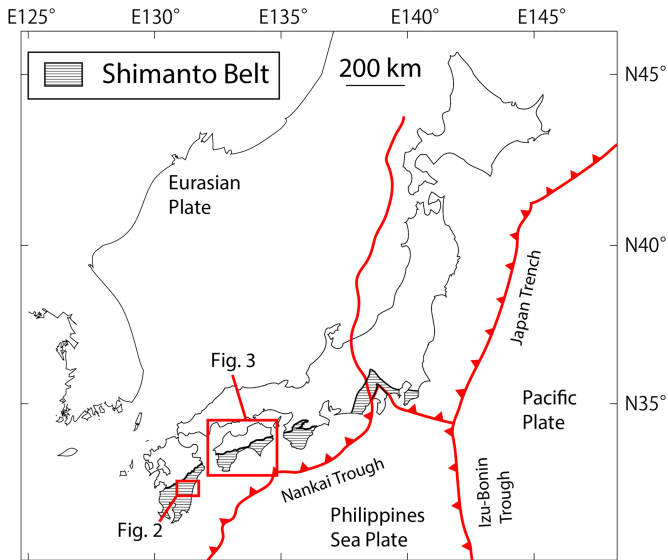


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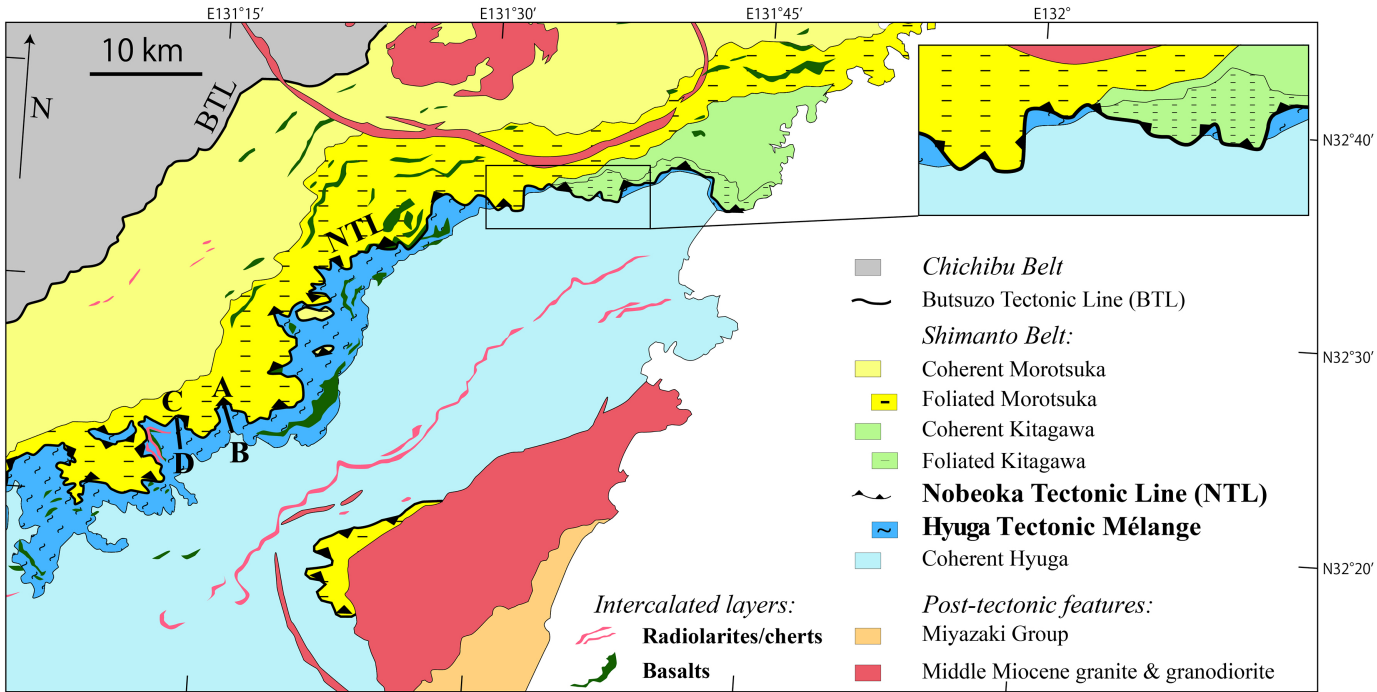


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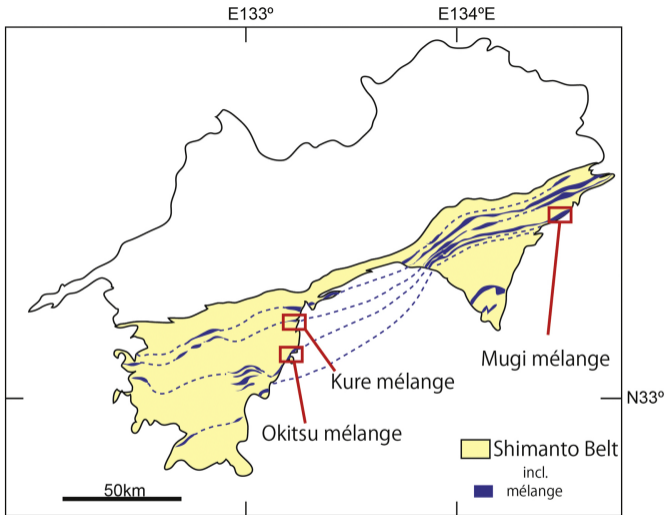


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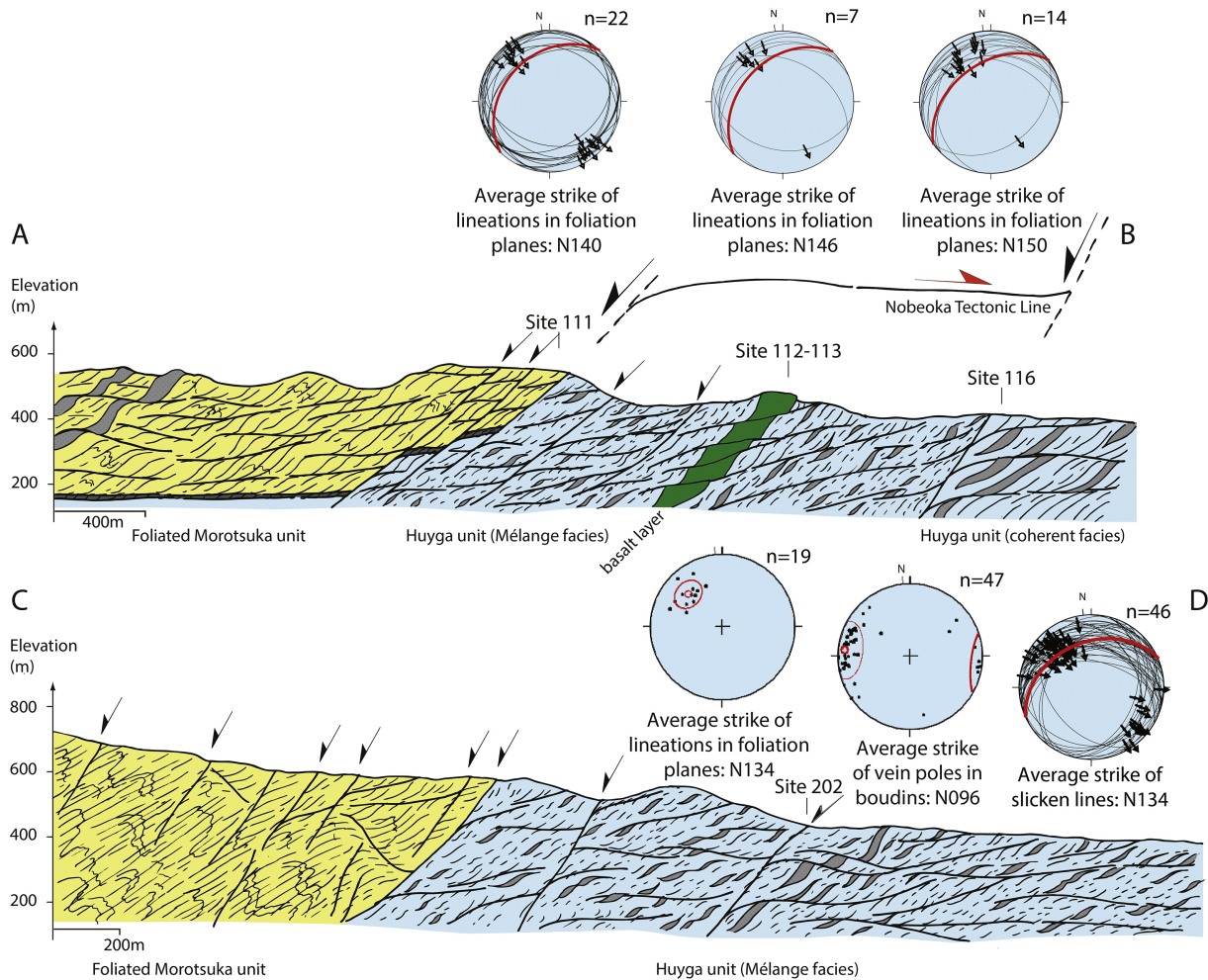


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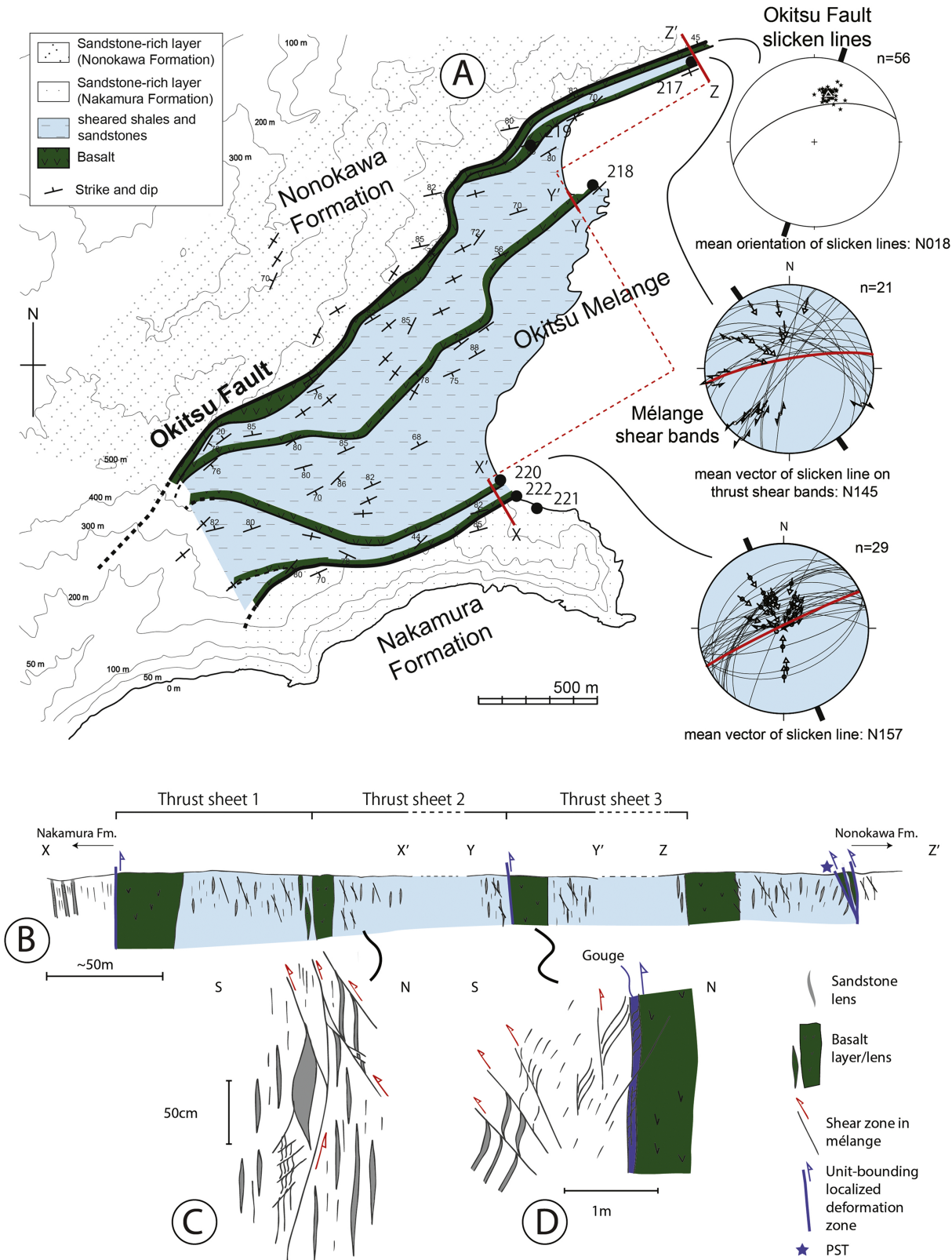


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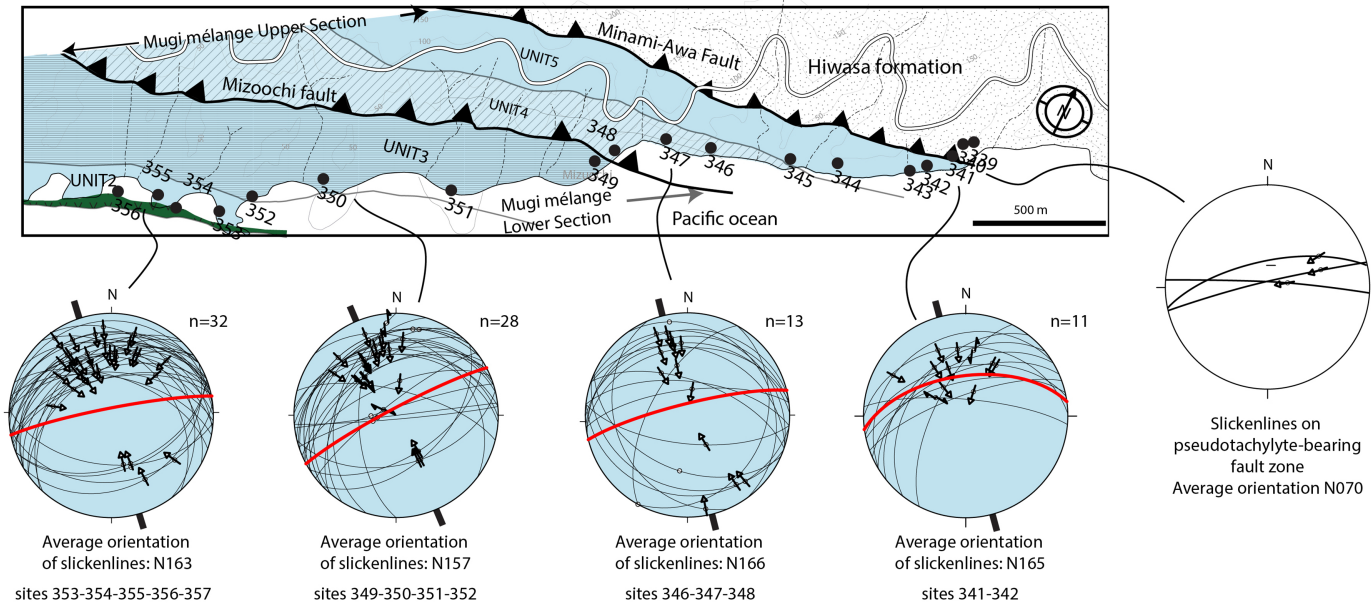
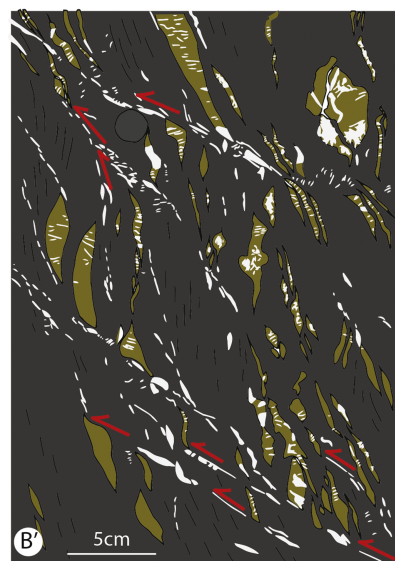




Figure 6



 Sandstone lens

 Shale matrix with S1

 Shear band


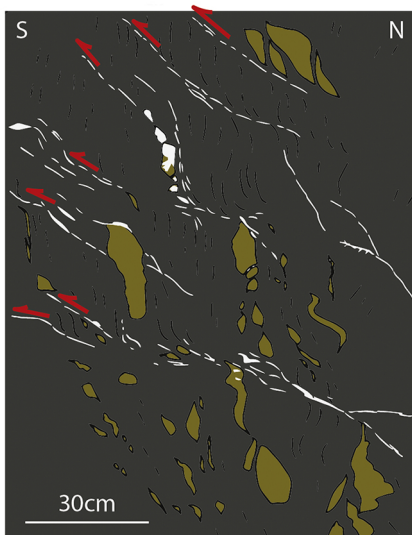
 Quartz vein

Figure 7



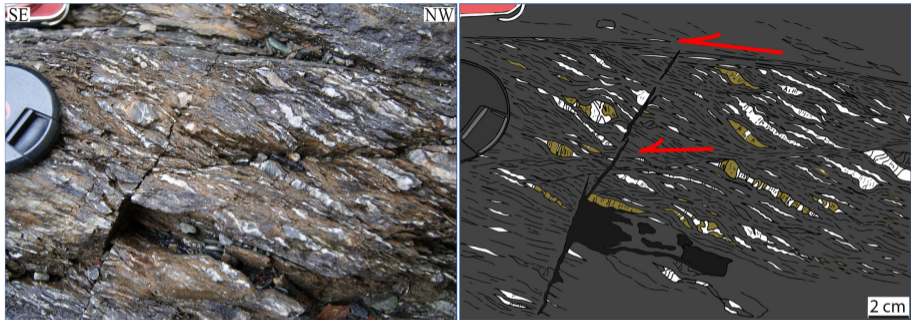
 Sandstone lens

 Shale matrix with S1

 Shear band

 Quartz vein

Figure 8



 Sandstone lens

 Shale matrix with S1

 Shear band

 Quartz vein

Figure 9

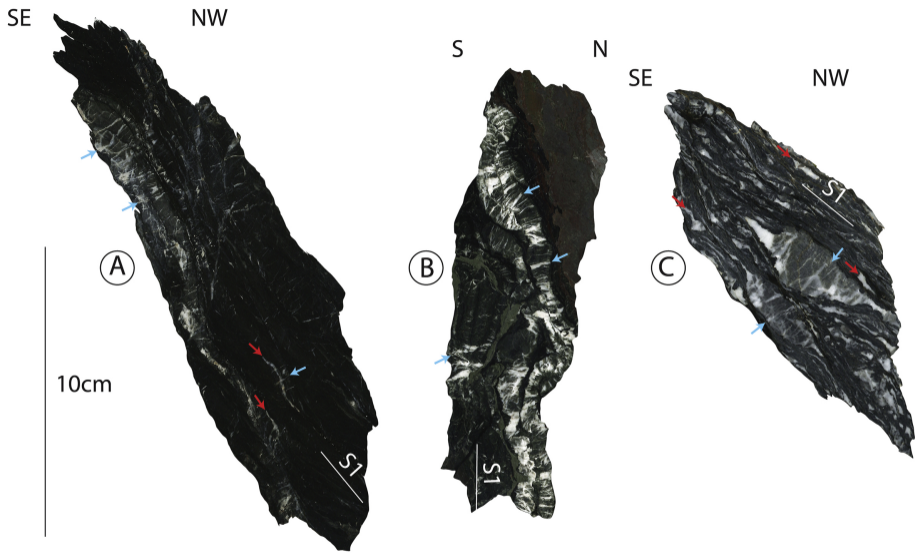


Figure 10

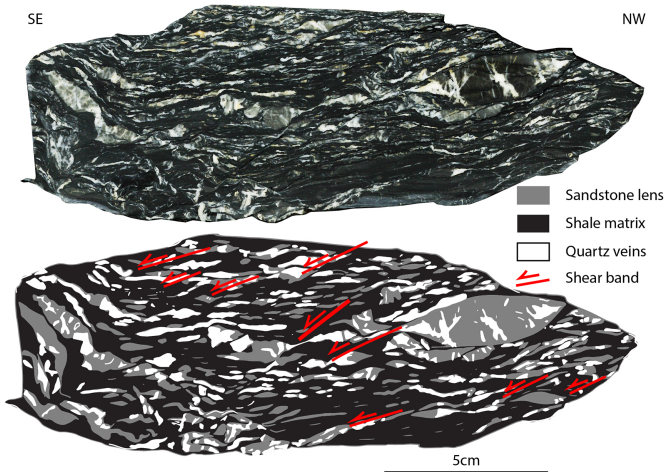
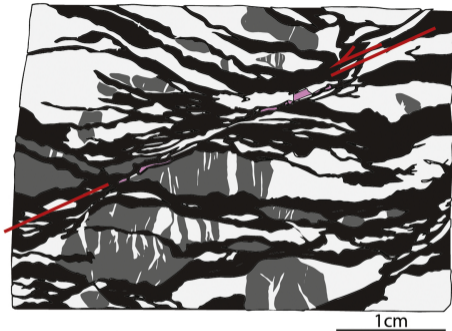
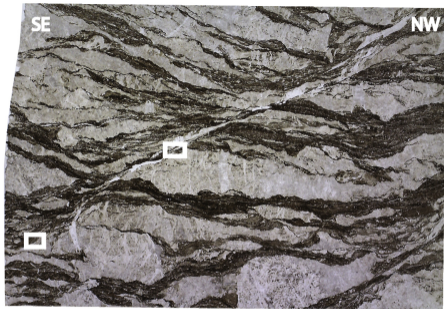


Figure 11



- Shale matrix   ■ Siltstone lens   □ Quartz lens   ■ hole   ↯ Shear band

Figure 12

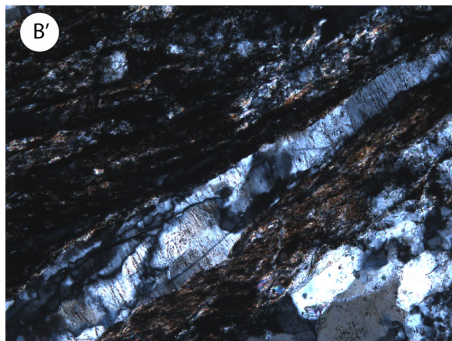
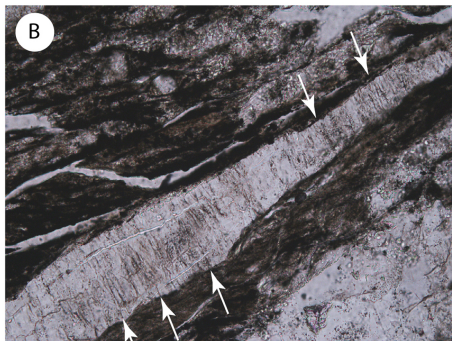
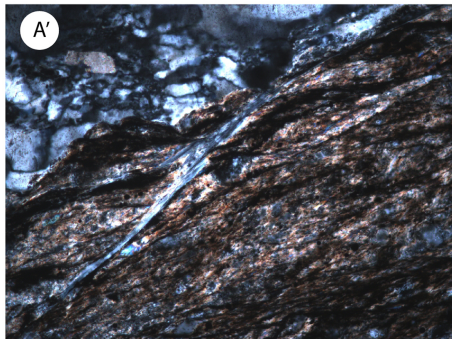
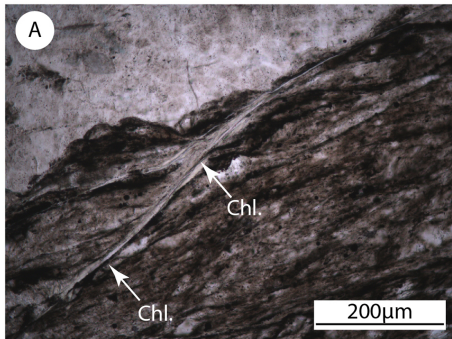
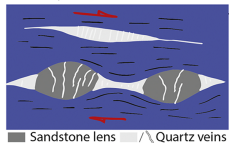


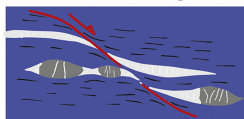
Figure 13

# Microstructures

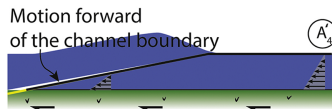
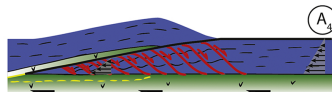
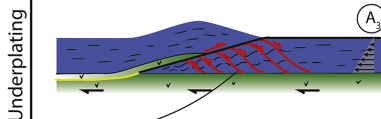
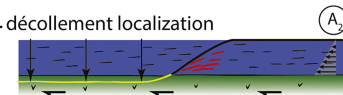
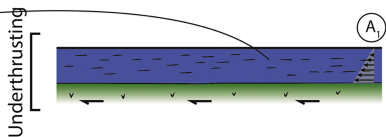
Layer-parallel shear



Top-to-the trench shear and thinning

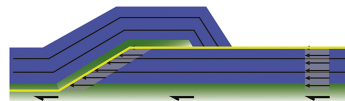
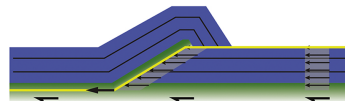
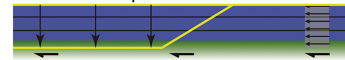


## (A) «Distributed» underplating



## (B) «Localized» underplating

décollement step-down



Subduction channel boundary  
 — without localized slip  
 — with

intra-mélange shear bands

velocity (wrt. upper plate)



Figure 14