Illuminating Subduction Systems: 50 years of limited geophysical success and what to do with so many remaining challenges



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Colloque: 50 years of Plate Tectonics: Then, Now, Beyond.

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Subducted slabs beneath the eastern Indonesia–Tonga region: insights from tomography



Hall & Spakman EPSL 2002



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Regions of concentrated deformation and exchange of materials, fluids and volatiles



Three major topics for the 21st century

- ◆ Earthquakes and Slow Slip Phenomena at the mega-thrust interplate fault.
- ◆ Fluids across the forearc, and their (speculative) relation to deformation.
- The incoming plates of subduction zones.
- What do to next to advance?







Fig. 15. Worldwide distribution of all earthquake epicenters for the period 1961 through 1967 as reported by U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey [after *Barazangi and Dorman*, 1968]. Note continuous narrow major seismic belts that outline ascismic blocks; very narrow, cometimes steplike pattern of belts of only moderate activity along zones of spreading; broader very active belts along zones of convergence; diffuse pattern of moderate activity in certain continental zones.



EQ. recurrence & seismic gaps

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The complex mechanical behaviour of faults



Slip on fault during 2011 Tohoku-Oki Mw9 EQ



Broken Paradigms

"Almost all the recent EQ have violated some theories of where and when great earthquakes can occur and what their consequences can be." (*Lay, Nature 2012*).

Outdated conceptual models of where Giant EQ may occur

Young plates & Fast convergence (Ruff & Kanamori 1980)	2004 Andaman Mw9.2 slow convergence
Voluminous sediment in the trench (Ruff, 1984)	2011 Tohoku-Oki Mw9.0 sediment starved
Predict Max. EQ-Mw & recurrence time (Nishenko, USGS-report 1984).	2011 Tohoku-Oki Mw9.0 millennia-scale recurrence



Slow Slip Phenomena

LFE (red), VLF (orange), and SSE (green) occur in the Nankai trough while ETS (light blue) occur in the Cascadia subduction zone. These follow a scaling relation of $M0 \sim t$, for slow earthquakes. Purple circles are silent earthquakes. Black symbols are slow events listed in the bottom half of Table 1. **a**, Slow slip in Italy23,24, representing a typical event (circle) and proposed scaling (line). **b**, VLF earthquakes in the accretionary prism of the Nankai trough26. **c**, Slow slip and creep in the San Andreas Fault21,22. **d**, Slow slip beneath Kilauea volcano25. **e**, Afterslip of the 1992 Sanriku earthquake27. Typical scaling relation for shallow interplate earthquakes is also shown by a thick blue line.

Ide et al., (Nature 2007)







Slow Slip Phenomena

Ye et al. (2016)





Inline 2111 V.E. - 2 **CRISP-Rise** Multiple Depth (km) Inline 2276 1 km Relative Reflection Amplitude Bangs et al., G-3 -100 -50 0 Plate-boundary thrust 2015, EPSL 2016 Top of ocean crust Barcelona CSI

Mega-thrust fault and upper plate sampling, characterisation and monitoring Japan Chikyu Riser Ship

Costa Rica Seismogenesis Project CRISP

Understanding EQ nucleation, rupture propagation and arrest



Mega-thrust frictional environment: Fault mechanics

Wang et al., Nature 2012

Understanding EQ nucleation, rupture propagation, and arrest will require 4D observations





Newman, (Nature 2011)





Seepage at the seafloor

Ranero et al., (G-cubed, 2008)

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R. Stern, **Subduction Zones**, **Review of Geophysics**, 2002

"Review aimed at:

1) Advanced undergraduate or beginning graduate student.

2) Professional not specialised in subduction zones "





World Convergent Margins





About 50-50%



Accretionary prism structure is well displayed in seismic images

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The hydrogeological system of accretionary prisms



"On most prisms, fluid vents are thought to cover < 1% of the total surface area and although flow rates from active vents are high (10⁵-10¹⁰ mm/yr), <u>their contribution to estimates of total discharge</u> (dispersed plus focused, Table 3) <u>is not apparent</u>." (Carson and Screaton, Rev. Geophys. 1998)



Conventional Wisdom in early 2000s:

The hydrogeological system of accretionary prisms is largely controlled by decollement and matrix permeability.







Conceptual Model for Erosional Plate Boundaries



von Huene, Ranero, Vannucchi, (Geology, 2004)



Seepage at the seafloor





Sahling et al., G-cubed 2008

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Seepage at the seafloor

What kind of fluids discharge at seeps?





Low Cl indicates fresh water discharging at seafloor seeps

Barcelona CSI

Ranero et al., G-cubed 2008 28

Pore water chemistry from seeps and origin of fluids







124 large seepage sites



Temperature along the plate boundary











Modelled flow rates at slope vents based on pore water chemistry



celona (

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Average fluxes of dehydration water under the forearc










The forearc fluid and material exchange between lithosphere and hydrosphere

Correlation between locked patches and fluid-poor fault segments





Saffer, GRL 2013

3. The Incoming plate of subduction zones





Fig. 8. Seismic reflection profile across the Japan trench extending easterly along 35° N from point M near Japan to point N [after Ludwig et al., 1966]. Vertical scale represents twoway reflection time in seconds (i.e., $1 \sec = 1$ km of penetration for a velocity of 2 km/sec). Note block faulting along seaward slope of trench demonstrating extension in crust and inclusion of sediments in basement rocks. Also note shoaling of oceanic basement on approaching trench as suggested by work of Gunn [1937]. Vertical exaggeration $\sim 25:1$.



Isacks, Oliver & Sykes, (JGR 1968)







Fig. 7b.

Figure 7 shows vertical sections through an island arc indicating hypothetical structures and other features. Both sections show down-going slab of lithosphere, seismic zone near surface of slab and in adjacent crust, tensional features beneath ocean deep where slab bends abruptly and surface is free. (In both sections, S indicates seismic activity.) (a) A gap in mantle portion of lithosphere beneath island arc and circulation in mantle associated with crustal material of the slab and with adjoining mantle [Holmes, 1965]. (b) The overriding lithosphere in contact with the down-going slab and bent upward as a result of overthrusting. The relation of the bending to the volcanoes follows Gunn [1947]. No vertical exaggeration.

Isacks, Oliver & Sykes, (JGR 1968)



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US-Margins 2000-2010 White Book



Are the lower planes of double seismic zones caused by serpentine dehydration in subducting oceanic mantle?



Peacock (Geology 2001)



Figure 2. A: Geotectonic map of northeast Japan depicting plate boundaries, location of thermal model, and focal mechanisms for selected outer rise earthquakes (Kanamori, 1971; Seno and Gonzalez, 1987; Engdahl et al., 1998). Solid triangles—Holocene volcanoes; M_w — moment magnitude; *z*—depth below seafloor. B: Cross section through northeast Japan (-39°N) showing earthquake hypocenters (Hasegawa et al., 1994) and calculated thermal structure. Isotherm contour interval = 100 °C.





Facts about peridotite serpentinization

> Only occurs below ~500-600°C

> Water uptake up to 13wt.% for complete transformation

> Latent heat of complete transformation is ~300°C (Exothermic !!)

> V_P decrease from 8 km/s to 4.5 km/s

Density decrease from 3.3 Mg/m³ to ~2.3 Mg/m³ (~40%)



Geologically fast! diffusion speed is upto 1 km/1 m.y.



Serpentine (Antigorite) Stability Phase Diagram

• at *P* corresponding to depths > ~200km: Serpentine transforms to hydrous Phase A *without dehydration* but increase in density.

 at higher P or depths > ~60km, deserpentinization occurs with increase in either P or T.

• at low *P: de-serpentinization* occurs with increase in *T.*

Serpentinite Seduction, Science, Nov 2002

Kerrick (2002): "Seductive" but extremely unlikely. Clearly a hydraulic impossibility to get water to such great depths...

"The hypothesis that surface water is drawn to such a depths [double seismic zones] by dilatancy arising from seismic pumping associated with deep earthquakes is difficult to reconcile with hydraulics."

"Propagation of cracks and fractures necessary for fluid ingress would be inhibited by the large increase in rock volume accompanying serpentinization."







*



80 line-39 40 11 40 km O

Ranero et al., Nature 2003

-4200

-5600

-2100

meter

0



Pervasive bend-faulting: The mechanism

Bend-faulting is a viable mechanism for creation of pervasive water-paths from seafloor to the mantle

b) Normal faults from seismic data



Ranero et al., Nature 2003



22'8

Anomalously-low crust and mantle velocities offshore Chile





Wide – Angle Seismic Studies of trenches (2004-2015)



All modern seismic studies of incoming plates at trenches found low mantle velocities: Exception: Cascadia -> Plate young and hot (~450°C at Moho)



Compilation of Vp perpendicular to trench axis

Decreasing VP means fracturaron OR serpentinisation?



Grevemeyer, Ranero, Ivandich (2018)



NIC-20 wide-angle seismic profile off Nicaragua

Grevemeyer, Ranero, Ivandich (2018)



a) P-wave velocity model



b) S-wave velocity model



NIC-20 offshore Nicaragua



Lab. studies show that serpentines have high Vp/Vs ratios compared to dry peridotite:

A Vp/Vs ratio of >1.8 supports serpentinization of the mantle of the Nicaragua trench.

Barcelona CSI Center for Subsurface Imaging

Grevemeyer, Ranero, Ivandich (2018)

How much water is carried in slabs?

The conventional model:



New proposition:





Water content in oceanic plates at trenches



The chemically bound water in a 15 km-high mantle column containing 15% serpentine is equivalent to a

~0.9 km-thick column of water.

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The complex structure of incoming plates and down-going slabs



Ranero et al., G-cubed 2005

Fault-induced seismic anisotropy by hydration in subducting oceanic plates Manuele Faccenda¹, Luigi Burlini², Taras V. Gerya¹ & David Mainprice³ (Nature, 2008)



Figure 3 | Schematic diagram of the tectonic and compositional structure of the slab and the inferred splitting behaviour. Vs1 and Vs2 are the fast and slow, orthogonally polarized, shear waves, respectively. The polarization of Vs1 aligns parallel to the strike of the fault set. The colour scheme of the slab is as in Fig. 2a, b.



Deep slab hydration induced by bending-related variations in tectonic pressure Manuele Faccenda¹*, Taras V. Gerya¹ and Luigi Burlini² (Nature Geos. 2009)



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Seismic evidence of negligible water carried below 400-km depth in subducting lithosphere

Harry W. Green II¹, Wang-Ping Chen² & Michael R. Brudzinski³

(Nature, 2010)





the mantle wedge along an Andean-type continental margin³⁰. c, Globally averaged number of earthquakes (body-wave magnitude, ≥5) per year as a function of depth. Notice that the horizontal scale is logarithmic. d, Summary of stability of various hydrous phases, emphasizing the effect of depth (or, equivalently, pressure). There is a sequence of dehydration reactions that can account for the concentration of seismicity above depths of about 350 km. In contrast, there is no corresponding dehydration for the concentration of seismicity at greater depths. Moreover, there is no seismicity associated with expected dehydration of nominally anhydrous olivine polymorphs and dense hydrous magnesium silicates at greater depths.



Seismic constraints on the water flux delivered to the deep Earth by subduction Savage (Geology 2012)





Figure 2. Simplified compressional wave speed model of Tonga-Fiji subduction zone. Subducting plate, dipping to left, is higher wave speed than background mantle model and includes undulating serpentine layer on top of plate. Lower right inset shows plate (blue box) and serpentine layer (green triangles). Comparison between data (top) and synthetic seismograms (middle, bottom) demonstrates that addition of a serpentine layer to top of plate improves fit between data and synthetics. Synthetic earthquake source is located at white star, and seismic station is at inverted triangle (black, at top). White arrows show determined mantle water fluxes into Earth (2.0 \times 10^s Tg/Ma), expelled due to serpentine conversion to phase A (1.5 \times 10^s Tg/Ma) and carried to deeper depths by subducting lithospheric mantle (0.5 \times 10^s Tg/Ma).



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geoscience

Seawater cycled throughout Earth's mantle in partially serpentinized lithosphere

M. A. Kendrick^{1*}, C. Hémond², V. S. Kamenetsky³, L. Danyushevsky³, C. W. Devey⁴, T. Rodemann⁵, M. G. Jackson⁶ and M. R. Perfit⁷

The extent to which water and halogens in Earth's mantle have primordial origins, or are dominated by seawater-derived components introduced by subduction is debated. About 90% of non-radiogenic xenon in the Earth's mantle has a subducted atmospheric origin, but the degree to which atmospheric gases and other seawater components are coupled during subduction is unclear. Here we present the concentrations of water and halogens in samples of magmatic glasses collected from midocean ridges and ocean islands globally. We show that water and halogen enrichment is unexpectedly associated with trace element signatures characteristic of dehydrated oceanic crust, and that the most incompatible halogens have relatively uniform abundance ratios that are different from primitive mantle values. Taken together, these results imply that Earth's mantle is highly processed and that most of its water and halogens were introduced by the subduction of serpentinized lithospheric mantle associated with dehydrated oceanic crust.

uantifying the global cycles of volatile elements into and out of the mantle is critical for modelling planetary evolution¹⁻⁷. Trace elements and radiogenic isotopes provide important information about mantle heterogeneity, with many features of ocean island basalts (OIBs) commonly attributed to the presence of recycled subducted ocean crust (the HIMU endmember) or sediment (EM endmembers) in their mantle sources⁸⁻¹⁰ (Fig. 1). Melts sampling EM (enriched mantle) reservoirs are known to be depleted in H₂O and CI relative to lithophile elements of similar mantle incompatibility, consistent with the presence of dehydrated sediment or continental crustal material in EM sources^{24,11-13}. However, the volatile content of HIMU (high-µ, meaning high U/Pb) reservoirs and the relative proportions of recycled versus primordial water in the mantle remain poorly constrained^{24,11-13}.



The current study combines new and published F, Cl, Br, I and



Growing Evidence of larger-scale transformation of incoming plates

Intense deformation of the lithosphere is **NOT** constrained to **ONLY** the **TRENCH** but occurs in a much broader region extending across the entire **OUTER RISE**.



Petit Spot : Major transformations?



Hirano et al., (Science 2008)





Pilet et al., (Nature Geos. 2016)





Significance

Mid Ocean Ridge Systems:

- ~60,000 km long system.
- **30-40 km** width of active deformation and magmatism.
- 0.5 2 m.y. of active deformation.
- Max. depth of intense deformation and exchange between hydrosphere and lithosphere reaches to ~10 km.

Incoming Plate at Subduction Trenches:

- ~55,000 km long system.
- **300-400 km** width of the active deformation, serpentinization & metasomatism.
- 1 4 m.y. of active deformation.
- Max. depth of intense deformation and geochemical exchange between hydrosphere and lithosphere may reach ~15-30 km.

Incoming Plates are a new class of geodynamic setting



4. What do to next to advance?

Why plate tectonics crystallised in the 1960s?

New Observations from <u>New Technologies</u> (after WWII):

- Magnetometers -> Seafloor spreading magnetic lineations
- Seafloor maps -> Mid Ocean Ridges and Trenches
- Worldwide seismological network -> Slabs in the mantle







1950 to 60's Marie Tharp maps provided a Key Observation: The MOR system





~1980's







What do we need to do to image subduction zones?

NEXT GENERATION GEOPHYSICS


Three-dimensional elastic wave speeds in the northern Chile subduction zone: variations in hydration in the supraslab mantle

Diana Comte,^{1,2} Daniel Carrizo,^{2,3} Steven Roecker,⁴ Francisco Ortega-Culaciati¹ and Sophie Peyrat⁵

Geophys. J. Int. (2016)







Ċ

100

300

400

500

600 km

200

1.8 2.0

Depth (km) 200 0.5

LR

400

Ô

008

22 24 26 28 30 32

600

log(Q_) = log (1/attenuation)

CLSC

elona enter for Subsurface Imaging

Figure 2

0.5

1200

1000

P-wave (a), S-wave (b), and Q_b (c) tomographic models for the Tonga-Lau subduction zon backarc basin from an ocean-bottom seismograph deployment. The P-wave and S-wave models are from Conder & Wiens (2006) and are given as velocity anomalies relative to IASPEI91 velocity model (Kennett & Engdahl 1991). The Q₀ structure was determined reinverting the attenuation measurements of Roth et al. (1999) using ray paths calculated the above velocity model. The solutions are masked where the structures cannot be adeq resolved. Circles denote earthquake hypocenter locations. CLSC denotes the position of Central Lau Spreading Center.

Imaging the source region of Cascadia tremor and intermediate-depth earthquakes

Geoffrey A. Abers^{1*}, Laura S. MacKenzie², Stéphane Rondenay³, Zhu Zhang⁴, Aaron G. Wech⁵, and Kenneth C. Creager⁵ (Geology, 2009)



Figure 1. Broadband seismic stations used in this study (blue), tremor (red dots), and contours to slab seismicity (yellow). Stations symbols are dark blue if used in migration image or light blue if only used to estimate incident wavefield and for earthquake location. Symbol shape indicates network (legend): CAFE—Cascadia Arrays for Earthscope; TA—Earthscope Transportable Array; PNSN—Pacific Northwest Seismic Network. Tremors (dots) from 2004, 2005, 2007, and 2008 sequences located by automated detection technique (Wech and Creager, 2008). Contours show depth to Juan de Fuca slab at 20 km intervals (McCrory et al., 2004). Dark lines denote cross-section projection region (Fig. 2). Stars show epicenters of three largest (M > 6.5) recorded intraslab earthquakes, in 1949, 1965, and 2001(Data Repository, Section C; see footnote 1). Inset, lower left, shows earthquakes used in migration (diamonds).





Figure 2. Migration images for central Washington, with seismicity and tremor. Transect location shown on Figure 1; horizontal distance of 0 km corresponds to coastline. A: Histogram of number of tremors shown in Figure 1 between section lines, in bins 5 km wide. B: *S*-wave velocity variations *dVs/Vs*, from migration. Green circles: earthquakes >20 km deep and between 47°N and 48°N latitude, occurring during CAFE and relocated using same velocity model as migration. Yellow circles: select events from local catalog (McCrory et al., 2004). Red triangle: Mt. Rainier volcano. Stars: three largest (*M* > 6.5) recorded earthquakes at waveform-derived depths. C: Same as B, but for *P*-wave velocity variations *dVp/Vp*.

Pervasive Seismic Wave Reflectivity and Metasomatism of the Tonga Mantle Wedge

Yingcai Zheng,¹ Thorne Lay,¹* Megan P. Flanagan,² Quentin Williams¹

(Science 2007)





State of the art geophysics for 3D higher-resolution physical properties determination

Pre-Stack Depth Migration



Travel Time Tomography

Full Waveform Inversion

Target:





Pre-stack **Depth migration** of Seismic reflection data (relatively short offsets)
Excellent definition of boundaries and geometry (e.g. RTM)

• Limitations to determine physical properties > need velocity model building (TTT)

• **Travel Time Tomography** (Inversion) using arrival time of refracted + reflected phases.

• Ray theory > Resolution $\sim(\lambda d)^{1/2} \approx 10^3 \text{ m}$

• Moderately non-linear > robust; moderate computational cost; limited resolution.

• Full waveform inversion (phases and amplitudes) > Advantages TTT & PSDM.

- Wave equation > Resolution $\sim \lambda/2 \approx 10^{1}$ - 10^{2} m (similar to MCS+PSDM).
- Strong non-linearity > Initial model, low freq, noise, source, computational cost.

State of the art geophysics for 3D higher-resolution physical properties determination

Raypath geometry for one node/receiver gather:







Full azimuth 3D data

Three major topics of subduction zones for the 21st century

- ◆ Earthquakes and Slow Slip Phenomena at the mega-thrust interplate fault.
- ◆ Fluids and their relation to deformation.
- The incoming plates and slab structure.
- New technologies (instruments and algorithms)



End presentation

Thank You!

