Does deep non-volcanic tremor occur in the central-eastern Mediterranean basin?

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Key Points:

- There is no unambiguous evidence for the occurrence of deep non-volcanic tremor in the central-eastern Mediterranean basin.
- The thermal structure of subduction zones has an important control on deep tremorgenic conditions.
- Very special physical conditions are required for deep tremorgenesis in settings that are not warm subduction zones.

Abstract

Non-volcanic tremor has been observed at the roots of many fault systems around the Pacific rim, including convergent and transform plate boundaries. The extent to which deep tremor signals are prevalent along plate boundaries elsewhere, including the Mediterranean basin, has not yet been documented in detail. A body of evidence suggests that tremor triggered during the surface waves of teleseismic events may commonly occur where ambient tremor during Episodic Tremor and Slip episodes occur, suggesting triggered tremor provides a useful tool to identify regions with ambient tremor. We perform a systematic search of triggered tremor at four major fault systems within the central-eastern Mediterranean basin, namely the Hellenic and Calabrian subduction zones, and the North Anatolian and Kefalonia transform faults, associated with large teleseismic events between 2010 and 2020. In addition, we search for ambient tremor during a ~50-daylong slow slip event in the eastern Sea of Marmara along a secondary branch of the North Anatolian Fault, and two ~4-month long slow slip events beneath western Peloponnese. We find no unambiguous evidence for deep triggered tremor nor for ambient tremor. The absence of triggered tremor at the Hellenic and Calabrian subduction zones supports the less favorable conditions for tremorgenesis in the presence of old and cold slabs. The absence of tremor along the transform faults may be due to an absence of the conditions commonly promoting tremorgenesis in such settings, including high fluid pressures and low differential stresses between the down-dip limit of the seismogenic layer and the Moho.

1 Introduction

The enhancement of geodetic and seismological monitoring systems over the last two decades has led to the discovery of various types of earthquakes, also known as slow earthquakes, with rupture velocities ranging from those of traditional earthquakes with rupture velocities ~2-3 km/s to roughly an order of magnitude faster than plate convergence rates, a few cm/yr (Obara, 2002; Rogers and Dragert, 2003; Obara and Kato, 2016). The range of speeds at which slip is accommodated is usually a function of depth, and may have implications for how plate tectonic loading stress is transferred along dip in major faults, therefore the analysis and interplay of slow and seismogenic earthquakes along fault zones is of particular interest (Schwartz and Rokosky, 2007; Obara and Kato, 2016). Slow earthquakes typically include seismically and geodetically observed events that vary over a range of characteristic time scales

(Obara and Kato, 2016). Seismically observed slow earthquakes include Low Frequency Earthquakes (LFEs) and non-volcanic tremor (hereafter referred to as tremor), with energy often concentrated between frequencies of 2-8 Hz (Obara, 2002), and Very Low Frequency Earthquakes (VLFEs) with energy concentrated between 0.02-0.05 Hz (Ito et al., 2007). Geodetically observed slow earthquakes tend to exhibit slower rupture velocities that do not generate seismic energy, and are subdivided into short-term and long-term Slow Slip Events (SSEs) with durations of days to weeks and months to years, respectively (Wallace et al., 2012; Obara and Kato, 2016). The occurrence of tremor, mostly composed of bursts of LFEs (Shelly et al., 2007), is usually accompanied by short-term SSEs and VLFEs (Obara and Kato, 2016). The coupled manifestation of tremor and short-term SSEs was first discovered in the Cascadia subduction zone (Rogers and Dragert, 2003) and has been termed Episodic Tremor and Slip (ETS). Tremor occurring during ETS episodes is also referred to as spontaneous or ambient tremor.

Several studies locate ETS episodes in subduction zones slightly deeper than the down-dip limit of the seismogenic zone, at depths spanning the intersection of the down-going slab and the upper-plate Moho (Obara, 2002; Wech and Creager, 2008; Brown et al., 2009; Ghosh et al., 2009b; Ide, 2012). ETS episodes along transform plate boundaries, where observed, mostly outline the upper boundary of continental Moho (Nadeau and Dolenc, 2005; Shelly, 2017). Although more widely studied, ETS episodes are not restricted to the down-dip portion of the seismogenic zone (Saffer and Wallace, 2015 and references therein). They have been also documented up-dip or within the seismogenic zone (e.g. Costa Rica, Walter et al., 2011, 2013; NE Japan trench, Nishikawa et al., 2019). In the following, we refer to ETS located below the down-dip limit of the seismogenic zone as deep ETS. The existing ~10-20 km gap between the deep ETS zone and the down-dip limit of the seismogenic layer is often filled by long-term SSEs (Obara, 2011; Husker et al., 2012; Wech, 2016; Gao and Wang, 2017) and does not appear to be strongly correlated to tremor and VLFEs (Husker et al., 2012; Obara, 2011).

Although the underlining physical mechanisms remain enigmatic, it is commonly accepted that slow earthquakes may straddle a transitional physical state between conditions favoring stick-slip behavior and conditions favoring stable sliding (Audet and Kim, 2016). It also appears that fault thermal structure affects the depth distribution and occurrence of slow earthquakes (Ide, 2012; Yabe et al., 2014; Gao and Wang, 2017) due to the primary temperature control on the brittle-plastic transition (Scholz, 1998). Numerical models with thermo-petrologically controlled rheology suggest the occurrence of the brittle-plastic transition at depths shallower than the upper-plate Moho as *conditio sine qua non* for slow earthquake occurrence in subduction zones (Gao and Wang, 2017). In fact, tremor has been primarily observed at young, warm subduction zones (Obara, 2002; Wech and Creager, 2008; Brown et al., 2009; Ide, 2012) where the brittle-plastic transition and peak dehydration reactions occur at shallower depths than in cold subduction zones (Peacock and Wang, 1999). However, the thermal structure of faults can be controlled by factors other than age (Yabe et al., 2014; Gao and Wang, 2017). For example, the often observed patchy nature of spatial deep tremor distribution (Ghosh et al., 2009b; Ide, 2012), indicates that tremor is also affected by other mechanisms such as pore fluid pressure (Kodaira et al., 2004; Audet et al., 2009), rock frictional properties (Houston, 2015), fault geometrical complexities (Romanet et al., 2018), sea floor irregularities and properties of overriding plate (Nishikawa et al., 2019). Seismological investigations often reveal the presence of near-lithostatic pore fluid pressures (e.g. high Vp/Vs ratios) in regions where tremor does occur (Kodaira et al., 2004; Audet et al., 2009; Audet and Kim, 2016;). Hence, the presence of high fluid pressure that reduces the effective stresses and the frictional strength along the fault is the mechanism most commonly invoked to control deep tremor generation within a transitional physical state (Kodaira et al., 2004; Audet and Kim, 2016; Gao and Wang, 2017). Similar conditions are proposed to control tremor generation up-dip of the seismogenic zone in subduction zones (Saffer and Wallace, 2015). Hence, potentially tremorgenic conditions could exist along many faults and possibly at different depths. However, to date, the description of favorable and non-tremorgenic conditions is practically limited to the observations along the Pacific rim and does not extend to fault systems where diverse physical and geological conditions may coexist such as in the Mediterranean basin.

In fault zones where ambient tremor is observed during ETS episodes, it is also commonly triggered during the passing of surface waves from teleseismic events (hereafter referred to as triggered tremor) (Fig. 1; e.g. Gomberg et al., 2008; Miyazawa et al., 2008; Miyazawa and Brodsky, 2008; Peng and Chao, 2008; Ghosh et al., 2009a; Fry et al., 2011; Chao et al., 2012a, 2012b, 2013). As triggered tremor typically has larger amplitudes than ambient tremor (Rubinstein et al., 2007), a systematic search for triggered tremor provides a useful tool to identify regions that might also experience (undocumented) ambient tremor.

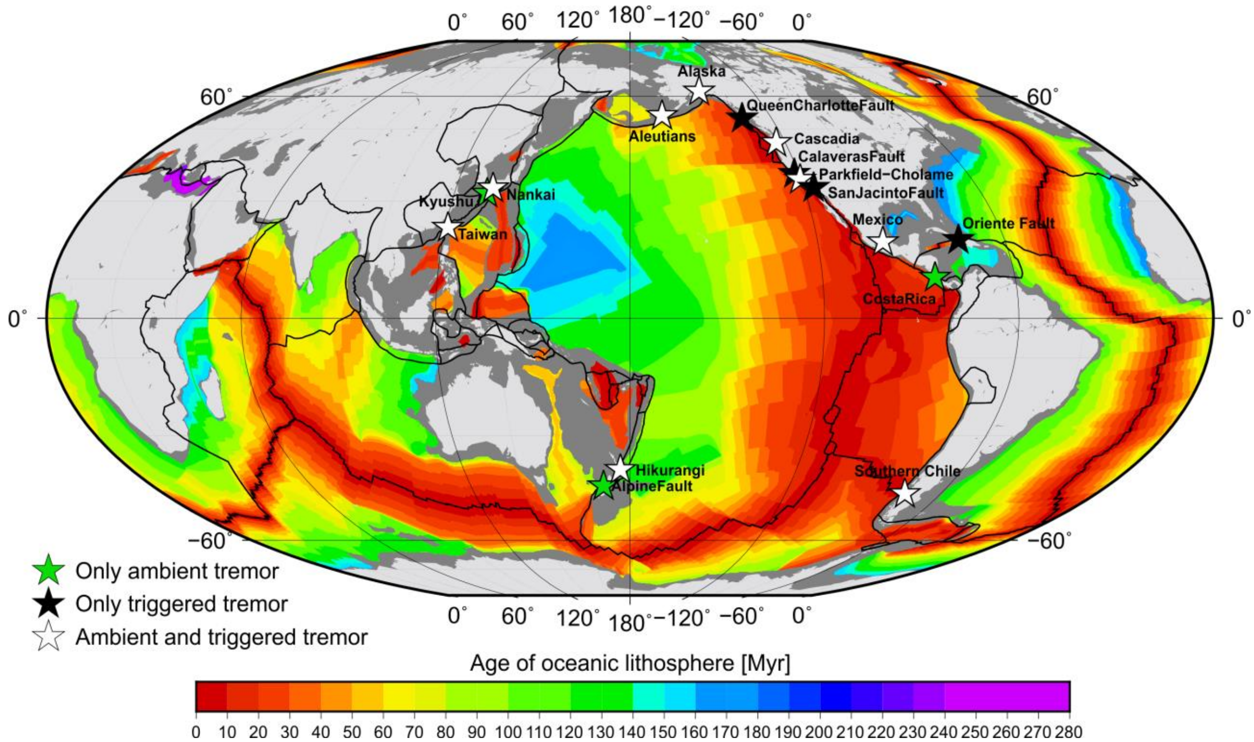


Figure 1. *Global distribution of well-documented (observed at a minimum of three stations) sources of triggered and ambient tremor, which is confined primarily to the Pacific rim (Nadeau and Dolenc, 2005; Brown et al., 2009, 2013; Peng et al., 2009; Kim et al., 2011; Chao et al., 2012a, 2013; Ide, 2012; Wech et al., 2012; Aiken et al., 2013; Sun et al., 2015; Nishikawa et al., 2019). Note the inverse correlation between the occurrence of tremor and the age of the subducting oceanic lithosphere, which is colored according to age (Müller et al., 2008).*

Teleseismically induced Peak Ground Velocities (PGV) as low as 0.01-0.03 cm/s, corresponding to dynamic stresses of about 1-3 kPa, are also capable of triggering tremor (Miyazawa and Brodsky, 2008; Peng et al., 2009; Chao et al., 2012a). Tremor triggering thresholds appear to be variable from region to region (Peng and Gomberg, 2010) and may depend on several factors including instrumentation differences and background tremor activity (Chao et al., 2012a). Furthermore, in some locations, tidally induced stress changes on the order of ~1 kPa seem to be capable of triggering tremor (Thomas et al., 2009; Houston, 2015; van der Elst et al, 2017). Despite the growing observations of ambient and triggered tremor, one of the most striking features of all well-documented cases (i.e. visible at least at three seismic stations), is that they are confined to transform and convergent plate boundaries, or fault systems, along the Pacific rim (Fig. 1). To date, the Oriente Fault near Guantanamo Bay (Cuba) represents the only exception with observed triggered tremor during two teleseismic events (Peng et al., 2013). Whether the absence (or infrequent occurrence) of deep tremor outside of the Pacific rim is due

to a sampling bias or to non-favorable physical conditions is still poorly understood. The dearth of studies reporting null results, i.e. an absence of tectonic tremor (Yang and Peng, 2013; Bockholt et al., 2014; Pfohl et al., 2015) make it hard to address such a question.
In this work, we perform a systematic search of triggered tremor within the central-eastern Mediterranean basin (Fig. 2). The region is generally well instrumented due to its intense seismic activity, and therein subduction zones exhibit different physical (e.g. old/cold subducting lithosphere and slower converge rates) and depositional conditions (e.g. thicker and wider accretionary wedges) compared to the Pacific rim. Moreover, for instance, its major transform faults, namely the Kefalonia and North Anatolian Fault, have formed more recently and have accumulated smaller relative displacement (Şengör et al., 2005; van Hinsbergen et al., 2006) than the Alpine and San Andreas Faults (Dickinson and Wernicke, 1997; Norris and Cooper, 2001), where tremor has been documented (Fig. 1). Hence, it is well suited to further explore necessary and inhibiting physical conditions for tremor occurrence. In the specific, we focus on four major active fault systems, namely the Hellenic and Calabrian subduction zones, and the Kefalonia and Marmara section of the North Anatolian transform faults (Fig. 2), where no unambiguous example of ambient and triggered tremor has been reported to date. In all analyzed regions, sufficient seismic station coverage was available over the past 10 years which is sufficient to detect triggered tremor, should it have occurred. Although the main focus of this study is triggered tremor, we also investigate the occurrence of ambient tremor during a SSE in the eastern Marmara Sea, along the North Anatolian Fault, and two SSEs beneath Peloponnese, in the western segment of the Hellenic Subduction Zone.

We limit our analysis to subduction zones and transform faults because they host the multitude of observed triggered and ambient deep tremor worldwide (Fig. 1). In Section 2 we provide a tectonic overview of the study regions, followed by a description of the datasets and methods in Section 3. We report the results in Section 4 and discuss, together with the implications of our study, the similarities and differences with other fault systems in Section 5. Conclusive remarks of the study are in Section 6.

2 Plate Boundaries in the central-eastern Mediterranean

The current tectonic setting of the Mediterranean area arose from a complex interaction between the long-lasting but comparatively slow convergence of the African and Eurasian plates

(Faccenna et al., 2014). Deformation concentrates along irregular and diffuse boundaries between fragments of continental and oceanic lithosphere moving independently from the overall convergent motion (Fig. 2) (Faccenna et al., 2014). Historical and instrumental seismicity, defined by frequent low-to-moderate and occasionally large (M>7) magnitude earthquakes (Guidoboni and Comastri, 2005), concentrates along the plate and microplate boundaries (Fig. 2). Compared to the western portion, the central-eastern Mediterranean basin releases larger seismic moment and displays larger strain rates (Martínez-Garzón et al., 2020). The oldest *in situ* oceanic lithosphere on Earth (>220-230 Ma) is currently subducting at the Hellenic and Calabrian Arcs (Granot, 2016; Müller et al., 2008; Speranza et al., 2012). These very narrow and arcuate subduction arcs (Faccenna et al., 2014), and the thick and wide accretionary prisms (Clift and Vannucchi, 2004) make the Mediterranean basin a unique region worldwide (Fig. 1-2).

In this region, the occurrence of slow earthquakes is still poorly investigated, and, to date, there is no unambiguous evidence of deep tectonic tremor in the Mediterranean basin. The Hellenic (Fig. 2c) and Calabrian (Fig. 2b) subduction zones, as well as the Kefalonia (Fig. 2a) and North Anatolian transform faults (Fig. 2d), share similar faulting styles with those of fault systems where deep tremor has been documented and therefore represent potential candidates for hosting deep tremor in the central-eastern Mediterranean.

Although all formed in the broad tectonic context of Africa-Eurasia convergence, the four fault systems developed at different times and present distinct seismotectonic settings (e.g. kinematics, seismic moment release, age). In the following subsections (2.1-2.4) we delineate the main seismotectonic properties of the regions selected for the search for tremor. We focus on the description of seismotectonic and geological aspects that are relevant to deep tremorgenic conditions.

2.1 The Kefalonia Transform Fault

The Kefalonia Transform Fault (Fig. 2a) marks the western termination of the Hellenic Subduction Zone (Louvari et al., 1999; Pérouse et al., 2012; Bocchini et al., 2018). It started to form in the late Miocene-early Pliocene and has accumulated most of its ~60 km of total displacement over the last ~4-5 Ma (van Hinsbergen et al., 2006). The fault accommodates ~2 cm/yr of differential convergence between oceanic subduction and continental collision taking place to the north and south, respectively (Pérouse et al., 2012). It is composed primarily of two active segments, namely the Kefalonia and the Lefkada segments (Fig. 2a) and exhibits pure right-lateral or transpressional slip motion (Louvari et al., 1999). The fault frequently generates M>6 earthquakes (Papazachos and Papazachou, 2003; Papadimitriou et al., 2017). The distribution of earthquakes suggests a seismogenic layer extending between 3 and 16 km (Papadimitriou et al., 2017), with a crustal Moho at ~28 km (Sodoudi et al., 2006). To date there is no documented evidence of slow earthquakes along the Kefalonia Transform Fault.

2.2 The Calabrian Subduction Zone

The Calabrian Subduction Zone (Fig. 2b) forms a narrow, arcuate subduction interface in southern Italy. The subduction of ~220-230 Ma old oceanic crust (Speranza et al., 2012) began ~80 Ma ago (Faccenna et al., 2001), and currently continues along a ~150 km wide sector between the Isthmus of Catanzaro to the north and the Strait of Messina to the south (Fig. 2b) (Maesano et al., 2017). The incoming plate has a 5-6 km thick layer of sedimentary cover forming a large accretionary prism (de Voogd et al., 1992). The subduction convergence rate is < 5 mm/yr (Pérouse et al., 2012), and has documented intraslab seismicity down to ~450-500 km (Selvaggi and Chiarabba, 1995), as well as a depletion of shallow interplate seismicity offshore in the Ionian Sea. The very low interplate seismicity and the low strain rates in the forearc (~10-20 nanostrain/yr) led some authors to consider the subduction as inactive (e.g. Pérouse et al., 2012). However, a recent study interprets unambiguous geodetic signals consistent with elastic strain accumulation at the megathrust being released episodically seismically and/or more likely through aseismic slip transients (Carafa et al., 2018). The interpretation also reconciles with the large historical earthquake data in Calabria (Carafa et al., 2018), and could suggest the occurrence of slow earthquakes.

2.3 The Hellenic Subduction Zone

The Hellenic Subduction Zone (Fig. 2) defines an approximately 1000 km long arcuate interface bounded to west by the Kefalonia Transform Fault and to the east, beneath south-western Turkey, by a tear in the slab (Bocchini et al., 2018). Oceanic lithosphere of age >220-230 Ma to the west (Speranza et al., 2012), and likely >300 Ma to the east (Granot, 2016) is currently subducting at a rate of ~35-40 mm/yr (McClusky et al., 2000). The down-going plate is overlaid by a wide sediment layer forming the Mediterranean Ridge Accretionary Prism which spans roughly up to 10-12 km thickness and is ~250-300 km long (e.g. Bohnhoff et al., 2001; Kopf et al., 2003). Nubian-Aegea convergence generates intense seismicity, even for M > 4(Fig. 2), and earthquakes as large as M~8 as reported in historical catalogues (Papazachos and Papazachou, 2003). Seismological and geodetic studies suggest that more than 70-80% of the relative plate motion occurs asesimically (Becker and Meier, 2010; Vernant et al., 2014; Saltogianni et al., 2020). Very recently, Mouslopoulou et al. (2020) reported two SSEs beneath the western coast of Peloponnese south of Zakynthos (Fig. 1Sb). Both SSEs were preceded by ~2 months of plate motion acceleration. The first geodetic transient started on 09/24/2014 and terminated on 03/20/2015, with the actual SSE starting on 11/29/2014. The second started on 05/14/2018 and terminated on 10/25/2018, with the actual SSE starting on 07/10/2018. Both SSEs are suggested to occur between 20 and 40 km depth along the plate interface. To date, no evidence of tectonic tremor is reported along the active margin between the down-going and overriding plates.

Crete represents a horst structure in the central Hellenic forearc (Fig 2c) currently undergoing fast uplift and extension (Meier et al., 2007). Subduction south of Crete started about 20–15 Ma, when the plate boundary stepped back to the southern edge of an accreted microcontinent, building most of the continental crust of present Crete (Thomson et al. 1998). The megathrust south of Crete, exhibits intense microseismicity that abruptly terminates at ~40 km depth below the southern coastline of the island (Meier et al., 2004), where the upper-plate crustal thickness is ~30-35 km (Bohnhoff et al., 2001; Meier et al., 2007).

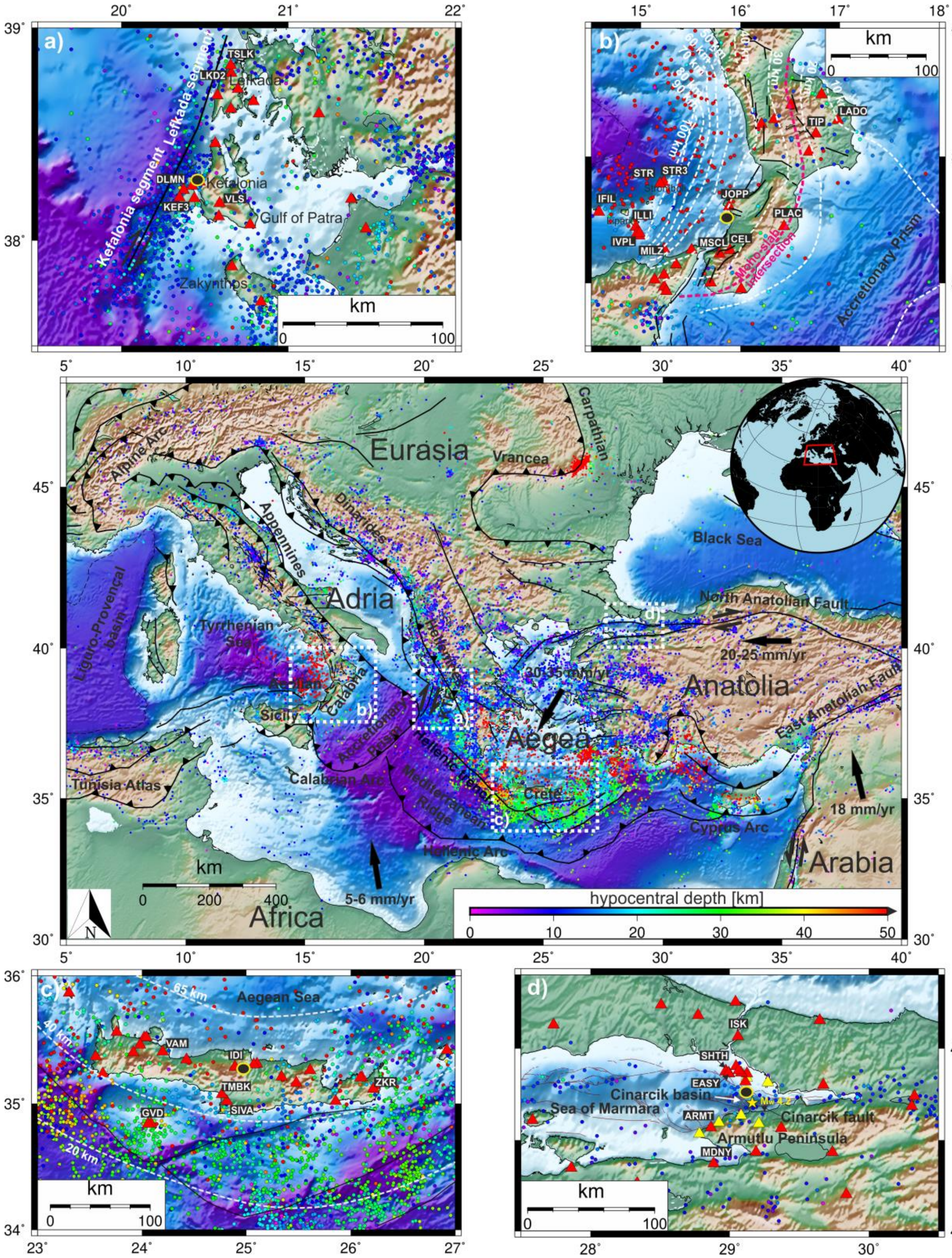


Figure 2. *Main panel: Central and eastern Mediterranean region. Main tectonic elements (black lines) from Faccenna et al., (2014). Black arrows indicate the relative plate-microplate motion with respect to stable Eurasia (McClusky et al., 2000). Earthquake hypocentral locations (dots) are color coded according to depth, saturated to 50 km. We plot all earthquakes with M>4*

documented by the International Seismological Centre (ISC) between 1964-2010 (ISC, 2020). Dotted white boxes in the main panel indicate the four study regions: a) Kefalonia Transform Fault, b) Calabrian Subduction Zone; c) Hellenic Subduction Zone, Crete; d) North Anatolian Fault, eastern Marmara Sea. Red triangles indicate the maximum number of available seismic stations (not necessarily available in all investigated periods), where station names used in Fig. 4 are shown in white. Yellow triangles in panel c indicate borehole stations. Dashed lines in panels b-c represent the top of the slab isodepths from Maesano et al., (2017) and Bocchini et al., (2018), respectively. Dashed magenta line in panel b indicates the location of the intersection with the overriding plate Moho. Yellow star in panel (d) indicates the epicentral location of the Mw 4.2 Yalova earthquake on June 25, 2016. Black circles with yellow edges indicate the location where initial Peak Ground Velocity values were estimated (see Section 3). Bathymetry is from Ryan et al., (2009).

2.4 The North Anatolian Fault.

The North Anatolian Fault is a 1200-km-long right-lateral transform fault forming the boundary between the Eurasian Plate and the Anatolian microplate with relative displacement of ~20-25 mm/yr (Fig. 2) (McClusky et al., 2000). It started to form 12-13 Ma ago during the late phase of Arabia-Eurasia collision that accumulated a maximum displacement of ~85-90 km decreasing from east to west (Bohnhoff et al., 2016). The North Anatolian Fault is well-known for its intense seismicity and frequent M>7 earthquakes (Bohnhoff et al., 2016), such as the earthquake sequence in the 20th century that ruptured all but the Sea of Marmara segments (Stein et al., 1997). The Sea of Marmara region (Fig. 2d) representing the western portion of the North Anatolian Fault is in a transtensional state and represents a pull-apart basin within two major branches of the North Anatolian Fault that are ~100 km apart (Armijo et al., 2002). It formed as part of a NS-extensional regime related to the fast rollback of the Hellenic Subduction Zone with the strike-slip regime being active since ~2.5 Ma (Şengör et al., 2005; Le Pichón et al., 2016). The northern part of the Sea of Marmara is characterized by the presence of three deep basins separated by bathymetric highs, from east to west: the Çınarcık, Central, and Tekirdag basins (Armijo et al., 2002). The Çınarcık basin is bounded to the south by the Çınarcık fault and formed ~1.7-2.0 Ma accommodating ~2 km of N-S extension and ~18 km of right-lateral deformation (Carton et al., 2007). Precise hypocentral solutions suggest a seismogenic layer extending down to 10-15 km in the eastern Sea of Marmara (Wollin et al., 2018) while the Moho is found at 26-41 km depth (Zor et al., 2006; Jenkins et al., 2020).

The analysis of recent high temporal resolution geodetic data revealed the existence of temporal fluctuations of the creep rate with detection of accelerating bursts of shallow (i.e. 0-5 km) creep events (i.e. SSEs) along the segments of the North Anatolian Fault that ruptured during the 1999 Izmit earthquake (Aslan et al., 2019) and the 1944 Ismetpasa earthquake (Rousset et al., 2016). On 25 June 2016, a ~50-daylong SSE was recorded along the Çınarcık fault below the eastern Sea of Marmara (Martínez-Garzón et al., 2019). The authors obtain the best fit between calculated and observed signal, assuming the source location to be near to the M_w 4.2 Yalova earthquake (Malin et al., 2018) occurred during the onset of the SSE (Fig. 2d). The strain release during the SSE was equivalent to a M_w 5.8 at the depth of 9 km (Martínez-Garzón et al., 2019). However, the depth remains poorly constrained due to its recording at a single station.

A previous study found no evidence for triggered tremor and no unambiguous evidence for ambient tremor on the central segment of the North Anatolian Fault near Ismetpasa (Pfohl et al., 2015), while here we focus on the recently densely instrumented eastern Sea of Marmara (Fig. 2d).

3 Data and Methods

In the description that follows, we restrict the analysis in the Hellenic Subduction Zone to the segment south of Crete due to the higher open-access seismic station density and data quality relative to adjacent segments. For the North Anatolian Fault, we focus on the eastern Sea of Marmara because of the waveform data from dense local network deployments that are available. In addition, we search for ambient tremor in the eastern Sea of Marmara, eventually related to the ~50-daylong SSE and the M_w 4.2 event along the Çınarcık fault (Fig. 2d) on June 25, 2016 (Martínez-Garzón et al., 2019), and during the two ~6-month long aseismic transients, and related SSEs, beneath Peloponnese, along the western segment of the Hellenic Subduction Zone (Mouslopoulou et al., 2020).

As a first criteria to search for triggered deep tremor, we identify prospective triggering teleseismic earthquakes by selecting all events with Mw ≥ 6.5, hypocentral depths ≤ 50 km, and epicentral distances ≥ 800 km that generated a theoretical PGV larger than 0.01 cm/s within each study region. We restrict our analysis to large and shallow potential triggering mainshocks because they are most effective in generating large surface waves at teleseismic distances, and hence have the greatest potential of triggering tremor. We calculate theoretical PGV values at a point in the middle of each study region (Fig. 2a-d) using a ground motion empirical relationship (Aki and Richards, 2002; Lay and Wallace, 1995):

$$Ms = \log A20 + 1.66 \log \Delta + 2.0 \quad (1)$$

$$PGV \approx 2\pi \, A20/T \quad (2)$$

where Ms is the surface wave magnitude, A20 is the amplitude (in microns) of the Airy phase (surface wave with a 20 s period), Δ is the source-receiver (epicentral) distance, and T is the surface wave period (20 s). We assume M_s=M_w as first approximation. We download all mainshock candidate waveforms from the European Integrated Data Archive (EIDA, http://www.orfeus-eu.org/data/eida/). In addition to publicly available data, we use data from dense local deployments, namely the PIRES network (GFZ Potsdam BU-Kandilli, 2006) and the GONAF borehole network (Bohnhoff et al., 2017) to search for triggered tremor in the eastern Sea of Marmara.

As a second criteria for culling the list of candidate mainshocks, we calculate the observed PGV_{obs} value as the average value between the three components from all the available broad-band stations within each region (Fig. 2a-d), and reject the events which average PGV_{obs} < 0.01 cm/s (Fig. 3a-d). We retain a total of 16 candidates for the Hellenic and Calabrian subduction zones and for the Kefalonia Transform Fault and 18 events for the North Anatolian Fault (Fig. 3 a-d, Table S1). A complete list of analyzed events is reported in Table S1. Nearly all selected mainshocks are either strike-slip or reverse faulting earthquakes (Fig. 3a-d). They cover a wide range of back azimuthal directions, with a limited gap to the south (Fig. 3e-h).

To manually search for cases of triggered tremor, we visually inspect waveforms surrounding the time interval predicted for the passage of surface waves in each study region. We calculate theoretical surface wave arrivals using the TauP package and the iasp91 velocity model (Kennett and Engdahl, 1991) in Obspy (https://docs.obspy.org/packages/obspy.taup.html), and search temporal windows starting when a phase travelling at 4.4 km/s (approximate Love wave arrival) reaches the station and terminates with the predicted arrival of a Rayleigh phase travelling at 2.0 km/s. The time window choice ensures that Love and Rayleigh waves with the highest triggering potential and amplitudes are included in the analysis. We rotate horizontal components to transverse and radial directions to visually confirm the correct arrival time of Love and Rayleigh waves, respectively. Following a well-established procedure, we search for non-impulsive, coherent signals, applying either a 2-8 Hz bandpass filter or a 5 Hz highpass filter to remove the low-frequency teleseismic signal (i.e. primary and secondary arrivals) and preserve tremor signals in the frequency band where it is commonly observed to be most energetic. We require any prospective triggered tremor signal to be recorded by at least three seismic stations in order to be sure that the signal is local and of tectonic origin.

In addition to visual inspection, we also employ an envelope cross-correlation (Ide, 2012, 2010) to detect ambient tremor during the SSE in the eastern Sea of Marmara during an extended time period from (06/02/2016 to 07/30/2016) encompassing the SSE (Martínez-Garzón et al., 2019) and the two SSEs, in 2014-2015 and in 2018, along the western segment of the Hellenic Subduction Zone (Mouslopoulou et al., 2020). The procedure entails creating daily envelopes of signals filtered between 2 and 8 Hz and cross-correlating horizontal channels at stations located <100 km apart. An event is detected when a minimum cross-correlation value (0.5-0.7) is exceeded at a minimum number of channels (5-8). A more detailed description of the method is available at Ide (2010; 2012) and it is also provided in the supplement along with details on the station configuration (Text 1S). In Figure 2S, we report an example of ambient tremor detected using the envelope cross-correlation method employed in this study (Fig. 2S). We detect several tremor signals near the Parkfield-Cholame segment of the San Andreas Fault, where tremor is widely documented (Nadeau and Dolenc, 2005; Shelly, 2017), using the same settings as for the eastern Sea of Marmara (Fig. 2S). We are aware of the limitations of the detection method in the absence of the dense network coverage (Fig. 1S) that is needed to detect low amplitude correlated signals, particularly in the presence of intense background seismic activity that could mask possible tremor signals. However, although search of triggered tremor remains the focus of the paper, the occurrence of SSEs that could be associated with the occurrence of LFE/tremor activity warrants an additional search for ambient tremor.

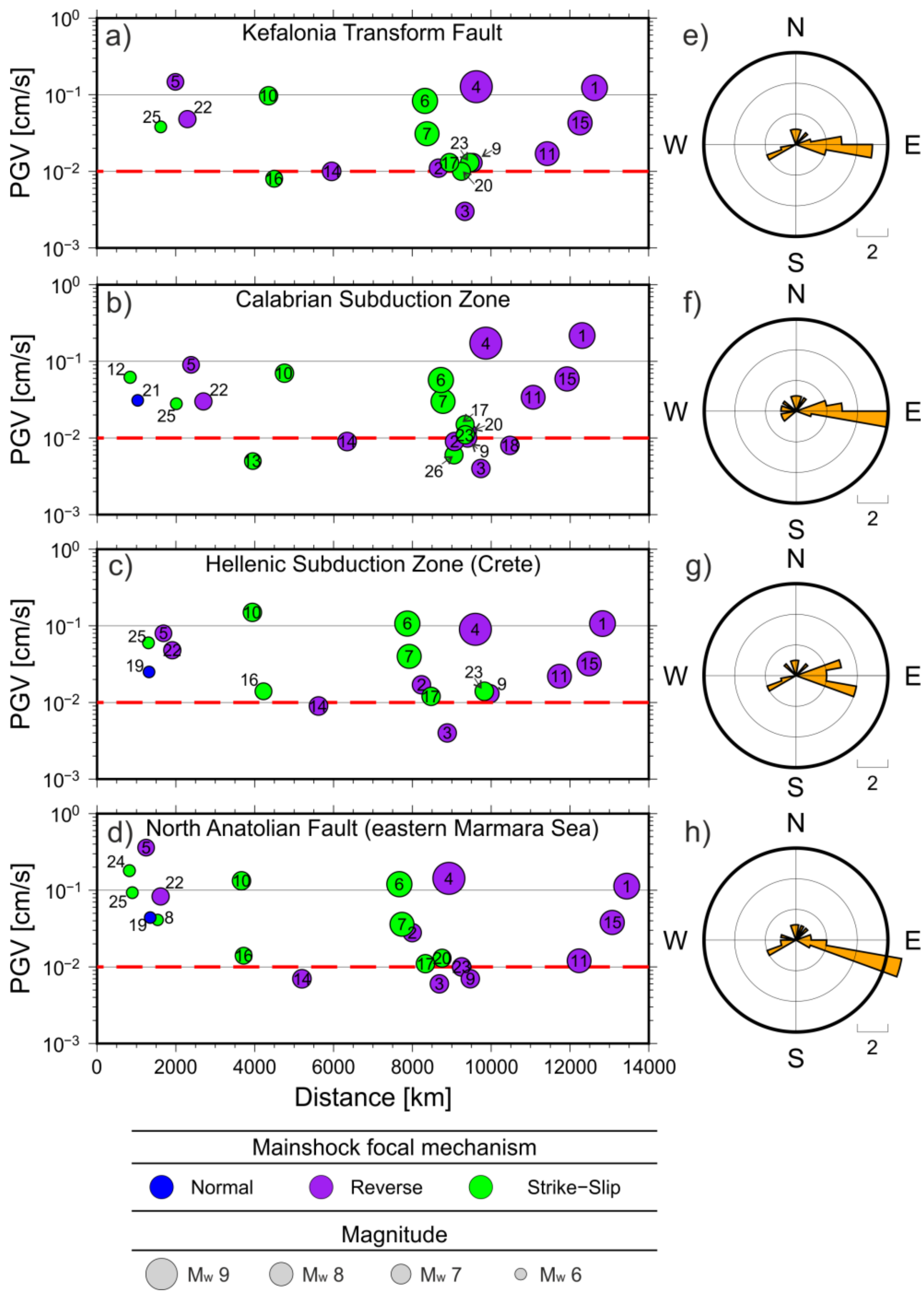
343 

Figure 3. *List of candidate mainshocks around which the search for triggered deep tremor is centered (a-d). (a-d) Symbol sizes correspond to magnitude, while color code corresponds to focal mechanism type. Dotted red lines indicate lower threshold of 0.01 cm/s Peak Ground Velocities (PGV) considered for mainshock candidates in this study. Observed PGV (PGV_{obs}) is calculated as the average value (unfiltered traces) among the three components of all the available broad-band stations within each region. (e-h) Back azimuths of candidate mainshocks producing PGV_{obs} > 0.01 cm/s. Numbers are event IDs and associated events are reported in Table S1.*

4 Results

The manual inspection of waveforms during the passage of surface waves from events in Table S1 at seismic stations along four major fault systems within the central-eastern Mediterranean basin reveals no unambiguous case of triggered tremor at any of the study areas, nor for ambient tremor during the documented SSEs. We first document the observations for triggered tremor (4.1), followed by ambient tremor below (4.2).

4.1 Triggered tremor

We find no unambiguous evidence for triggered tremor beneath Crete, along the Hellenic subduction zone, beneath Calabria at the Calabrian subduction zone, at the Kefalonia Transform Fault, and in the eastern Sea of Marmara, along the North Anatolian Fault, during the time period from 2010 to 2020 considered here. Although the minimum number of three stations may be a strict criterion relative to previous studies, we also do not observe coherent tremor-like signals if reducing the minimum number of required stations to two. In Figure 4, we show high frequency waveforms at a sample of stations during surface wave ground shaking of mainshock candidates inducing some of the largest PGV_{obs} within each region as a representative example of the lack of tremor energy.

We do observe potentially triggered low frequency signals at stations located along the Aeolian Arc, the volcanic arc of the Calabrian Subduction Zone (Fig. 2b). Two of the most striking signals are observed at station ILLI on Lipari Island (Fig. 3S) and at stations ISTR and IST3 on Stromboli (Fig. 4S). However, despite the good correlation between PGV_{obs} and low frequency signal occurrence, we cannot consider them as triggered signals. First, neither case fulfills the criterion of tremor-like signals exhibiting signal coherency at minimum three stations. In addition, careful inspection of the waveforms from one day before to one day after the mainshock reveals that the signal detected at station ILLI (Fig. 3S) is likely noise, due to the highly regular and repetitive nature of the candidate tremor signal (starting at ~6 am and ending at ~5 pm) in the frequency band of interest (2-8 Hz and higher). The signal we observe at stations ISTR and IST3 on Stromboli (Fig. 4S) is very likely a LFE of volcanic origin, however, we note that we also observe several LFEs events both before and after the ground shaking induced by the teleseismic event. Moreover, the slab interface at the closest stations to where the tremor-like signal is observed is located at ~100 km depth beneath the volcanic Arc (Maesano et al., 2017). A seismic signal originating at 100 km depth would not support a seismic source originating from the ETS zone, which is expected at shallower depths where the slab intersects the overriding plate, corresponding to ~25 km depth at the observed location (Fig. 2b).

The seismic stations on Crete exhibit evidence for a single tectonic tremor candidate during the M_w 8.3 Illapel (Chile) earthquake (ID 15 in Fig. 3, Tab. 1S). However, although visible at 3-4 stations (Fig. 5S) the signal is observed before the arrival of surface waves, when PGV_{obs} is smaller than 0.01 cm/s, suggesting an ambient, rather than triggered origin. We explore the possibility that the detected signal (Fig. 5S) could represent ambient tremor by running match filter detection in EQcorrscan (Chamberlain et al., 2018). We used 6-8s second-long signal time windows, filtered between 2-8 Hz, to correlate with continuous data in one-day time windows before and after the tremor-like signal occurrence. Observations of ambient tremor in other fault zones rarely document isolated tremor events, but more commonly clustered, prolonged activity. The matched filter detection yielded no additional detections of similar low frequency signals, in spite of testing a range of settings.

At seismic stations along the Kefalonia Transform Fault we do not observe any tremor like signal. We observe, as in the other regions, possible dynamically triggered local earthquakes (see example in Fig. 4a), however, we will dedicate further investigation of remote dynamic earthquake triggering to a follow-up study, as the purpose of this work is to investigate the occurrence of tectonic tremor. Unfortunately, for the Kefalonia Transform Fault we have only 2-3 stations available during the passage of surface waves of the M_w 8.8 2010 Maule and the M_w 9.1 2011 Tohoku earthquakes, the largest events occurred between 2010 and 2020.

Finally, we do not observe tremor activity during the passage of surface waves in the eastern Sea of Marmara. The latter represents the better instrumented region in our study. Observed correlated signals are either associated to local earthquakes or to instrument/cultural noise.

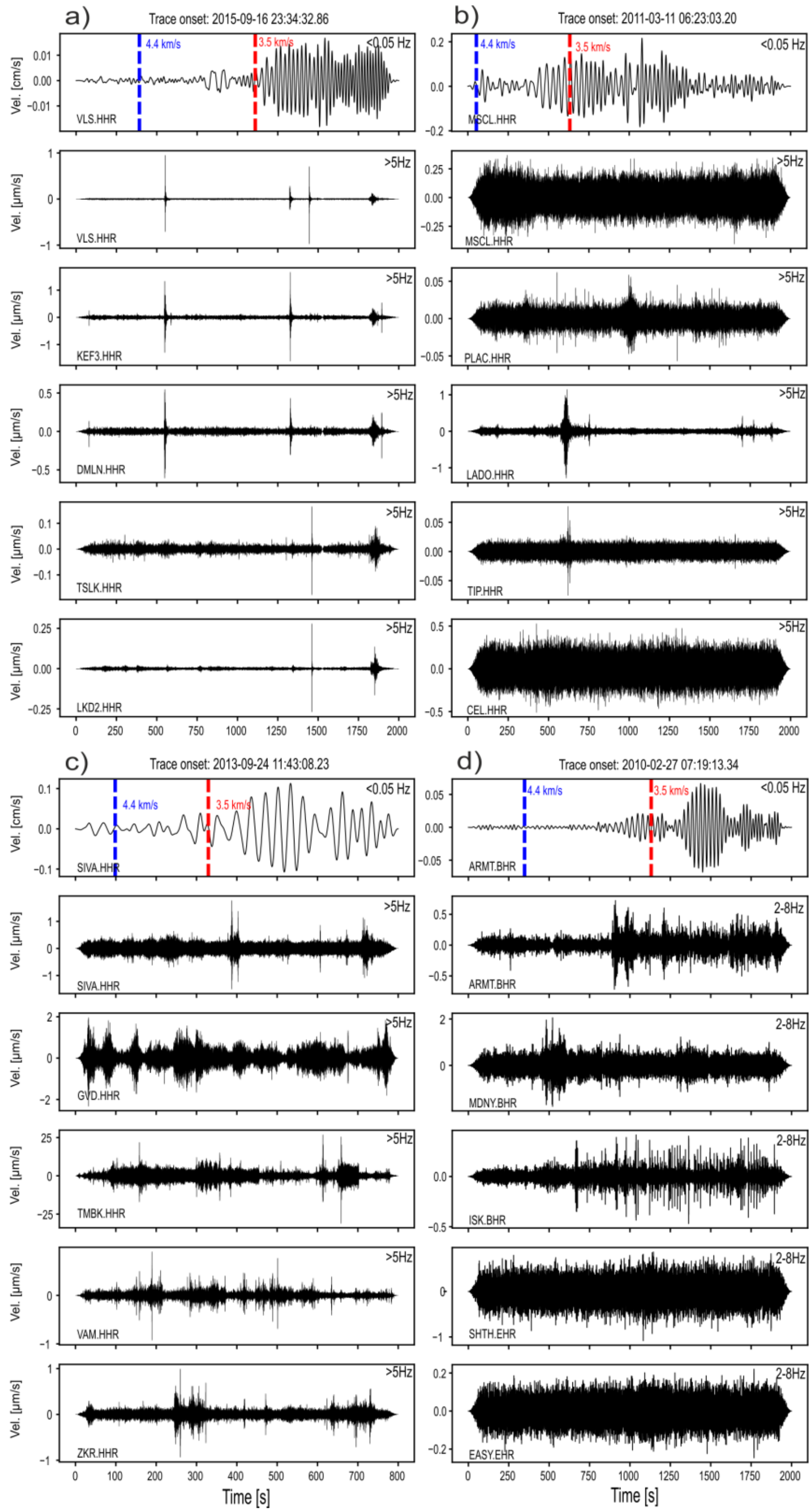


Figure 4. *Example of waveforms exhibiting a lack of evidence for triggered tremor at the a) Kefalonia Transform Fault, during the M_w 8.3 Illapel (Chile) earthquake (ID 15 in Fig.3 and Tab. 1S); b) Calabrian Subduction Zone, during the M_w 9.1 Tohoku (Japan) earthquake (ID 3 in Fig.3 and Tab. 1S); c) Hellenic Subduction Zone (Crete), during the M_w 7.8 Pakistan earthquake*

(ID 10 in Fig.3 and Tab. 1S); d) Eastern Marmara Sea (North Anatolian Fault), during the M_w 8.8 Maule (Chile) earthquake (ID 1 in Fig.3 and Tab. 1S). The candidate triggering earthquakes are among those generating the largest recorded PGV_{obs} locally (Fig. 3). The onset time of the signals in each region is indicated on top of each panel. Three clear local earthquakes (one between 500 and 750 sec and two between 1250 and 1500 sec) are visible at the Kefalonia Transform Fault (a), and a more distant earthquake is visible between 1750 and 2000 sec. In other regions, only uncorrelated noise is visible except for stations LADO and TIP at the Calabrian Subduction Zone (b) where a local signal is visible between 500 and 750 sec. The dashed red and blue lines in the topmost panels indicate the estimated arrival time of phases travelling at 4.4 and 3.5 km/s, respectively, used as preliminary arrival time of Love and Rayleigh waves. The location of seismic stations used herein is shown in Fig. 2a-d.

4.2 Ambient tremor

We find no unambiguous examples of LFE/tremor activity accompanying the SSEs in the eastern Marmara Sea and beneath western Peloponnese. Such result, although possibly affected by the limitations described before in Section 3, are consistent with the absence of triggered tremor along the investigated plate margins. As suggested by examples elsewhere in the world, triggered tremor tends to occur in regions where also ambient tremor occurs (Fig. 1).

In addition to local earthquakes with energetic signals in the frequency band both higher than 10 Hz and in the 2-8 Hz frequency band, we detect signals with dominant frequencies in the tectonic tremor frequency band (2-8 Hz, Fig. 5). However, other factors suggest that the signals as shown in Figure 5, are not tectonic tremor. The signal in Figure 5a has, at the closest station, a duration > 15 sec and a frequency content <10 Hz. However, at stations exhibiting a higher Signal-to-Noise-Ratio (e.g. DRO Fig. 5a), the same signal more closely resembles a local earthquake rather than tremor. We also detect signals (S-waves) from more distant earthquakes that could be misinterpreted as an LFE if one restricted observation of such phases to stations located near SSEs sources where tremor activity would be expected (Fig 5b). For example, the signal shown in Figure 5b, exhibits low frequency energy at stations on the Armutlu Peninsula (e.g. ARMT, KURT, YLV), however, at stations located to the west of the Marmara Sea (e.g. KRBG, RKY) the typical character of an earthquake appears clear. Because of the occurrence of several examples as those reported in Figure 5, we visually check all the detections. At the Hellenic Subduction Zone, due to the longer cumulative duration of the two geodetic transients (~1 year), we checked all detected signals with duration longer than 15 seconds (through a preliminary investigation we observed that signals shorter than 15 seconds were mostly local earthquakes and in very few cases noise).

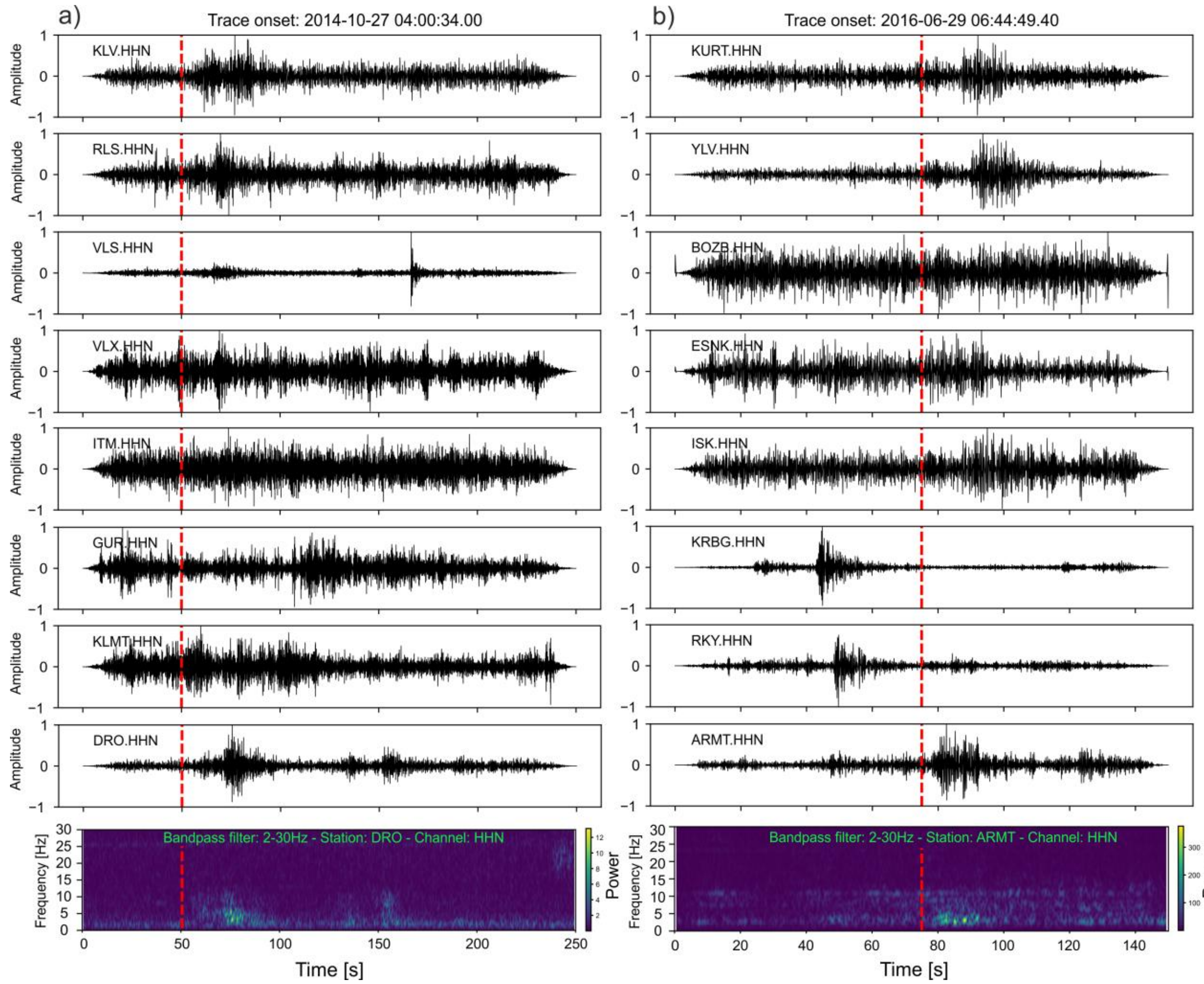


Figure 5. *Example of detected signals using the automatic cross correlation method at the Hellenic Subduction Zone (a) and in the eastern Marmara Sea along the North Anatolian Fault (b). The red line shows the detection time of the signal which does not correspond to the origin time. The bottom panels show the spectrogram of the detected signals shown in the panels above them. The signals are detected by using half-overlapping windows of 300 sec and a cross correlation value of 0.6 at 5 or more channels at stations located <100 km apart. Amplitudes are normalized (-1, 1). All traces are bandpass filtered between 2-8 Hz. Station location is shown in Figure 1S.*

5 Discussion

The most prominent worldwide reported examples of ambient and triggered tremor are primarily limited to fault systems or plate bounding faults located along the Pacific rim (Wech and Creager, 2008; Brown et al., 2009; Ide, 2012; Wech, 2016). The Oriente Fault in Cuba represents, to date, the only exception (Peng et al., 2013) to the above correlation. The results presented here suggest that the lack of deep tremor evidence outside of the Pacific rim point to a requirement that specific conditions may be needed for tremor genesis. In the following, we discuss similarities and differences between the Pacific and the Mediterranean regions to better understand the most relevant conditions for tremor genesis. Although the station coverage is less dense compared to some regions where tremor is observed, it is nevertheless sufficient to observe triggered tremor in the study regions in which we focus, should it occur. Triggered tremor has been recorded at stations more than 100 km apart (Peng et al., 2009), a significantly wider station spacing than used in all four study regions in this work. One limitation of the triggered tremor analysis could be the short time period of investigation, particularly in cases where hypothetical ETS episodes would have longer inter-event periods (for example, if they were to exceed 10 years in the other three regions). The relation between background and triggered tremor is still poorly understood (Chao et al., 2012a), however, many documented cases suggest that tremor is commonly triggered by low stress perturbations (slightly larger than, or similar to tidal stresses e.g. Thomas et al., 2009; Houston, 2015) in areas where ambient tremor occurs, and the time windows considered should be ample to detect triggered tremor. For instance, along the Simi Valley segment of the San Andreas Fault in southern California, where no unambiguous case of ambient tremor is documented, apparent triggering threshold are suggested to be much larger than those for the Parkfield–Cholame section of the San Andreas Fault (>∼12 kPa and 2–3 kPa, respectively; Yang and Peng, 2013), where ambient tremor occurs. Another limitation could be the relatively low PGV_{obs} values recorded in our study regions with respect to circum-Pacific fault systems where tremor occurs, that lie closer to the sources of M>7-7.5 earthquakes. However, we note that the 0.1 cm/s threshold is exceeded during 4-5 events, or 3 events considering a 20 sec period, within each region (Fig. 3a-d), and the estimated dynamic stresses perturbations are > 9 kPa. Therefore, many of what appear to be the important physical criteria associated with observed cases of triggering are met by the candidate mainshocks here. Thus, working on the assumption that the mainshocks generated stress perturbations sufficient to trigger tremor, in the following, we discuss possible causes of absence of tremor in the investigated subduction (5.1) and transform fault systems (5.2).

5.1. Absence of tremor along the Calabrian and the Hellenic Arc

The most striking difference between the Pacific subduction zones and the Mediterranean subduction zones is arguably the age of the down-going plate (Fig. 1, Müller et al., 2008). In addition, relevant differences are represented by the accretionary prisms, with those in the

Mediterranean Sea being wider and thicker (Clift and Vannucchi, 2004), and by the convergence rates, which are on average lower within the Mediterranean basin (Matthews et al., 2016).

The age of the down-going slab controls the thermal state of subducting plate with older slabs being colder and younger slabs being warmer (Peacock and Wang, 1999). Young slabs dehydrate at shallower depths while older slabs dehydrate at greater depth, resulting in significant differences in subduction dynamics (Peacock and Wang, 1999). For instance, in warmer subduction zones (e.g. Cascadia, Mexico, Nankai), the brittle-plastic transition (assumed to be near the 350° C isotherm) occurs at shallower depths (Fig. 2a-b; Peacock and Wang, 1999), and the mantle wedge corner is more hydrated (Abers et al., 2017) relative to older subduction zones (Fig. 6). Thermal models for the Hellenic subduction zone show that the 350° isotherm lies at ~60 km depth (Bocchini et al., 2018; Halpaap et al., 2019), well-below the down-dip limit of the seismogenic zone south of Crete and the intersection between the down-going plate and the overriding plate Moho (Fig. 6b). Although the intersection between the upper-plate Moho and the down-going slab south of Crete is not well-defined, it is not located far from the southern coastline of the Island (Bohnhoff et al., 2001). Hence, the absence of deep tremor is not surprising if we expect it to occur when the down-dip limit of the megathrust is shallower than the slab upper-plate Moho intersection depth (Fig 6a; Gao and Wang, 2017).

A similar situation can be hypothesized for the Calabrian arc, due to the similar age of the subducting slab and its intersection with the upper-plate Moho at ~25 km. In fact, thermal models suggest that the 350° isotherm occurs at depths much greater than 25 km (Fig. 2b) (Syracuse et al., 2010). However, although not in oceanic crust as old as the Mediterranean oceanic lithosphere (>220-230 Ma), tremor does occur at subduction zones where the down-going slab is older than 100 Ma. Examples are the Hikurangi trench in New Zealand (Ide, 2012) and the NE Japan Trench (Nishikawa et al., 2019), where both have common, unique conditions that may prime them for the occurrence of tremor. For instance, deep tremorgenic conditions in New Zealand are explained to be consequence of the high frictional heating along the megathrust that shifts the brittle-plastic transition at depths shallower than that of the upper-plate Moho (Yabe et al., 2014; Gao and Wang, 2017). In NE Japan, tremor occurs at seismogenic depths where tremorgenic conditions are promoted by frictional heterogeneities likely induced by pore fluid changes, sea floor roughness, and/or fracturing of the upper-plate (Nishikawa et al., 2019). We note that in the latter case, tremor at seismogenic depths may be viewed as a special case, as it does not fulfill the definition of deep tremor outlined at the beginning of the paper. In addition, we note another unique example involving the subduction of fluid rich sediments, which is also invoked to explain the deep tremor sources at the eastern termination of the Alaskan subduction zone (at 60-80 km), to date the deepest, well recorded example of tremor worldwide (Wech, 2016).

Very likely there are no anomalous physical conditions present at the Hellenic and Calabrian subduction zones that would be able to create a tremorgenic environment. For instance heat flow values offshore south of Crete (20-30 mW/m2; Eckstein, 1978), as well as in continental Calabria (~40 mW/m2; Loddo et al., 1973) are comparatively low and consistent with the age of the subducting slab, hence excluding the presence of a warm, strong megathrust as in the case of Hikurangi (Gao and Wang, 2014). The mantle wedge corner at both subduction zones is expected to be poorly hydrated due to the old nature of the subducting lithosphere (Abers et al., 2017; Halpaap et al., 2019). In addition, the mantle wedge corner beneath Crete is expected to be poorly hydrated because the current subduction configuration was reached only 15-20 Ma ago (Thomson et al., 1999). It has been proposed that temperature-dependent silica precipitation by upward migrating fluid derived from the down-going slab, by reducing permeability in the forearc crust, favor fluid overpressures and therefore deep tremorgenic conditions (Audet and Bürgmann, 2014). The potential for silica-rich fluids exists in subduction zones where conditions favor high temperatures (Manning, 1997) and it is greatly enhanced by complete serpentinization of the mantle wedge corner (Audet and Bürgmann, 2014). At both the analyzed subduction zones such conditions are not met.

The role that the very thick layer of sediments on the down-going plate could play is not easy to address. ETS episodes are observed in erosional (e.g. Mexico) as well as in accretional (e.g. Cascadia or Nankai) subducting margins (Clift and Vannucchi, 2004). Sediments are water rich and can carry it down, up to 200 km depth. However, they release a considerably smaller amount of water than other slab dehydration sources (van Keken et al., 2011), therefore are not expected to significantly contribute to the hydration of the mantle wedge corner.

With respect to the low geodetic locking depth at both the Hellenic (Vernant et al., 2014) and the Calabrian subduction zones (Pérouse et al., 2012), previous studies suggest that variation of geodetic locking is not correlated to the distribution of deep tremor (Brown et al., 2013).

Therefore, we do not consider the low geodetic locking as relevant to prevent the occurrence of tremor. At the Calabrian Arc, the very low convergence rate may affect the occurrence of tremor, as tremor is not observed elsewhere fault systems moving slower than 5 mm/yr. We note the convergence rates at the Hellenic subduction zone are comparable to those of the slower subduction margins where tremor is observed (e.g. Cascadia, Hikurangi), therefore should not prevent tremor occurrence.

This study does not exclude that tremor could occur above the up-dip limit of the seismogenic zone. The presence of widespread mud volcanos between the backstop and the accretionary wedges of both the Calabrian (Panieri et al., 2013) and Hellenic (Huguen et al., 2001) subduction zones hints at large amounts of fluids released by sediments. High pore fluid pressure could promote tremorgenic conditions above the up-dip limit of the seismogenic zone (Saffer and Wallace, 2015). As already stated, we do not observe any coherent tremor-like signal during surface wave shaking of large mainshocks which suggests the absence of such signals also from different locations other than the down-dip limit of the seismogenic zone. However, as in case of Crete, the up-dip limit of the seismogenic zone is located ~50-60 km to the south of the island (Meier et al., 2004), therefore it could be difficult to observe low amplitude signals at land stations. To rule out or confirm the occurrence of tremor at shallower depths than those expected for the ETS zone, the deployment of dense Ocean Bottom Seismometer networks, as for instance in NE Japan (Nishikawa et al., 2019), would be needed.

Very recently SSEs have been found at the down-dip limit of the seismogenic zone, at depths of 20-40 km beneath western Peloponnese (Mouslopoulou et al., 2020) leaving open the possibility that they may even occur along other segments of the Hellenic Subduction Zone (Saltogianni et al., 2020). The limitation of publicly available geodetic data may have prevented their detection elsewhere. The duration, location and the equivalent moment magnitude released are consistent with those of long-term SSEs (Obara and Kato, 2016). Long-term SSEs are suggested to be manifestation of semi-brittle more towards viscous behavior and are not commonly associated with tremor (Gao and Wang, 2017). In contrast, semi-brittle more towards brittle behavior is invoked to explain ETS episodes (Gao and Wang, 2017). The observations of long-term SSEs at the Hellenic Subduction Zone may suggest the more widespread conditions for long-term SSEs occurrence with respect to that required for ETS episodes (Bürgmann, 2018).

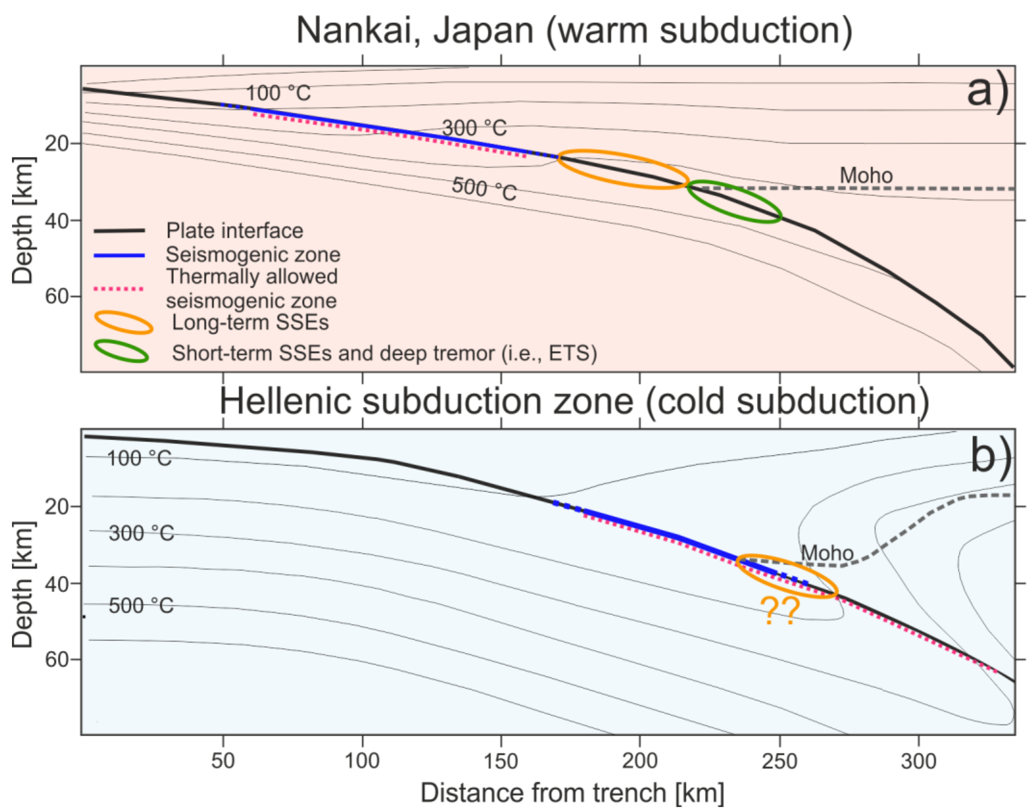


Figure 6. *Sketch comparing typical slip behavior in a (a) warm subduction zone and a (b) cold subduction zone. (a) Cross-section along the Nankai trench (Japan) adapted from Gao and Wang (2017). (b) Cross-section across Crete using slab geometry and thermal structure from half-space cooling model in Bocchini et al. (2018). Upper-plate Moho depth in subfigure b from available active and passive seismological studies (Bohnhoff et al., 2001; Meier et al., 2007).*

5.2. Absence of tremor along the Kefalonia Transform Fault and North Anatolia Fault in the Sea of Marmara

Of the documented cases of tremor along transform margins, the most well-established examples are for the Parkfield-Cholame segment of the San Andreas Fault (Nadeau and Dolenc, 2005; Peng et al., 2009, Shelly, 2017). The occurrence of tremor in the Parkfield-Cholame area is interpreted to be related to the presence of remnants of partially serpentinized mantle wedge from a former subduction zone (Kirby et al., 2014). The frequency of tremor episodes significantly decreases towards NW (Calaveras) and SE (San Jacinto) along the SAF (Gomberg et al., 2008; Peng et al., 2009) enhancing the primary control exerted by the water reservoir beneath the Parkfield-Cholame segment. Although less frequent, deep tremor activity beneath the Alpine Fault in New Zealand is also related to the presence of high pore fluid pressures (Wech et al., 2012). Along the Kefalonia Fault and the North Anatolian Fault segment in the Sea of Marmara, such a fluid source is possibly missing and/or do not exist the conditions to create high fluid pressures to promote tremorgenesis. Our results along the North Anatolian Fault are consistent with those of Pfohl et al. (2015) that found no unambiguous evidence for triggered or ambient tremor along the central segment of the North Anatolian Fault. In addition, the transtensional regime in the Sea of Marmara may also not be favorable for tremor occurrence, as most observations of tremor occur along compressive or transform/transpressive margins (Fig. 1). While the Kefalonia Transform Fault exhibits transpressional deformation like the Alpine and San Andreas Faults, it shows a different tectonic evolution. For example, it is not located along a former suture zone and it is much younger, with less accumulated displacement (van Hinsbergen et al., 2006). Furthermore, the seismogenic layer and the Moho depths do not occur at anomalous depths at either the Kefalonia Transform Fault as well as at the Çınarcık segment of the North Anatolian Fault (section 2.1 and section 2.4) that could hint at significantly high or low temperature gradients.

The absence of triggered tremor in the eastern Marmara Sea agrees with the absence of LFE/tremor activity accompanying the ~50-daylong SSE along the Çınarcık fault (Martínez-Garzón et al., 2019). The absence of ambient tremor would imply that the SSE could have either occurred at shallow depth, consistently to adjacent segments of the North Anatolian Fault (Aslan et al., 2019; Rousset et al., 2016) or if at the down-dip limit of the seismogenic zone, to exhibit similar characteristics of the long-term SSEs that are observed to be not strongly correlated with the occurrence of tremor (Husker et al., 2012; Obara, 2011). The occurrence of shallow SSE along adjacent segments of the North Anatolian Fault would support the shallow origin of the signal.

6 Conclusions

We find no unambiguous evidence for triggered deep tremor at the Hellenic Subduction Zone, beneath Crete, at the Calabrian Subduction Zone, at the Kefalonia Transform Fault, and at the North Anatolian Fault, in the eastern Marmara Sea, during the passage of surface waves of 16-18 teleseismic events between 2010 and 2020. Furthermore, we find no unambiguous examples of LFE/tremor activity accompanying the SSE in the eastern Marmara Sea and the two SSEs beneath Peloponnese, along the western segment of the Hellenic Subduction Zone. The absence of tremor along the North Anatolian Fault agrees with the findings from a previous study. The absence of triggered tremor, strengthened by the absence of ambient tremor during

SSE episodes, suggests the absence of favorable physical conditions for a deep ETS zone in the central-eastern Mediterranean basin. The results confirm the significant influence of the slab thermal structure on the occurrence of deep tremor in subduction zones. The very old and cold slabs at the Calabrian and Hellenic subduction zones do not favor tremorgenesis. The possible absence of fluid sources, able to promote elevated pore fluid pressures at the base of the seismogenic layers at the Kefalonia and North Anatolian transform faults could explain the absence of tremor. In addition, the transtensional regime within the Çınarcık basin, in the eastern Sea of Marmara, does not seem favorable to the generation of tremor. The absence of LFEs/tremor activity accompanying the SSE along the Çınarcık Fault in the eastern Sea of Marmara would suggest that the detected ~50-daylong SSE occurred either at shallow depths in agreement with observations from adjacent segments, or that, if deep, could be classified as long-term SSE. The depth range, duration, and absence of tremor during the SSEs along the western segment of the Hellenic Subduction Zone are also consistent with those of long-term SSEs observed elsewhere. The absence of deep tremor indicate the more widespread conditions for the occurrence of long-term SSEs, likely a manifestation of semi-brittle more towards viscous behavior, compared to that suggested for ETS that require a restoration of a brittle or semi-brittle regime at depths where under normal condition rocks would deform viscously.

Acknowledgments, Samples, and Data

G.M.B has been funded with Ruhr Uuniversity of Bochum new faculty startup funds awarded to R.M.H.. P.M-G. acknowledges funding from the Helmholtz Young Investigators Group: SAIDAN (VH-NG-1323). We are grateful to the Institute of Geodynamics of the National Observatory of Athens (NOA, Greece) and all partners of the Hellenic Unified Seismic Network, including the University of Patra, University of Thessaloniki and University of Athens, to the Technological Educational Institute of Crete (Greece), to INGV (Italy), to KOERI (Turkey) technical staff for the installation and maintenance of seismic networks and for publicly sharing data. Data from such networks used in this study are freely accessible from EIDA database. Thanks to the Turkish Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) in Ankara for providing waveform data from the GONAF observatory. Access to the GONAF and PIRES networks is granted upon request to Marco Bohnhoff (GFZ). Many thanks to Yajing Liu for her constructive comments on a draft of the manuscript and to Satoshi Ide for having shared the envelope cross-correlation code for ambient tremor detection. Figures were realized using the Global Mapping Tool (Wessel et al., 2013) and matplotlib. Waveform data processing was performed with Obspy.

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