

Rheological implications of extensional detachments: Mediterranean and numerical insights

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12 **Abstract**

13 The Mediterranean realm shaped by extensive back-arc extension after multiple 14 collisions between Europe and isolated continental blocks is the second densest 15 occurrence of Metamorphic Core Complexes (MCC) after the North American Cordillera. 16 The present review aims at determining the factors controlling detachment system 17 development during post-orogenic extension in the continental lithosphere. 26 different 18 detachment zones over 23 different localities are systematically described and show 19 that MCC structures can be positioned in a three end-member classification. Beside the 20 high-temperature lower plate end-member, most of the time considered as the 21 archetypical MCC type, two cold end-members can be identified: a first one preserving 22 high pressure metasedimentary units in the vicinity of the detachment and represented 23 by numerous cases in the Mediterranean and a second theoretical one with strain 24 localized at the bottom of a resistant upper crust. These two end-members show a strain 25 pattern guided by inheritance more than thermal state. The relevance of this three end-26 member classification is then tested via numerical modelling of extension of layered 27 continental lithosphere. The compilation of our results and recently published similar 28 models show that over a 100 of different simulations the most critical parameter for 29 developing a MCC is the intra-crustal strength contrast $(S_{max}/S_{min}$, where S_{max} and S_{min} 30 stand respectively for the maximum – at the brittle-ductile transition – and minimum – 31 at the Moho – crustal strength). This contrast has to be risen only by 1 order of 32 magnitude to change extension mode. Below a critical value of 1000, narrow and wide 33 rifts develop. MCCs with a perennial detachment are produced for values slightly higher 34 than 1000, while higher intra-crustal strength contrasts systematically promote double-35 domes MCCs, with strain progressively relocalizing within the lower plate. Inherited 36 layering is as efficient as temperature for raising this intra-crustal strength contrast 37 while strain rate is actually a second order parameter. Metamorphic reactions are also 38 to be considered as a first order process in localizing detachments.

40 **1. Introduction**

41 Even if the seminal comprehensive descriptions of Metamorphic Core Complexes 42 (MCCs) in the American Cordillera mentioned lower plates constituted of gneiss and 43 intruded by granites (Snake Range, Miller et al. (1983), Whipple Mountains, Davis et al. 44 (1986), the actual definition of MCCs: « *Cordilleran metamorphic core complexes appear* 45 to be bodies from the middle crust that have been dragged out from beneath fracturing 46 and extending upper crustal rocks, and exposed beneath shallow-dipping (normal slip) 47 *faults of large areal extent* » (Lister and Davis, 1989) refers to rocks exhumed from the 48 middle crust whatever their thermal history. The fundamental property of this middle 49 crust resides in its ability to flow lateraly toward the forming dome (Block and Royden, 50 2010), to accommodate stretching of the upper plate and preserve a relatively flat Moho 51 (Figure 1). Even though thermal reequilibration can induce weakening of the lower 52 crust (Buck, 1991) and increases its ability to flow below a relatively strong upper crust, 53 a similar strength profile can also be inherited from pre-extension evolution of the 54 continental crust and promote development of the original structure leading to the 55 formation of MCCs: the detachment (Davis, pers comm.). In order to unravel the 56 rheological meaning of detachments, we propose here a review of extensional shear 57 zones described as post-orogenic detachments in the Mediterranean realm. These 58 examples share a common tectonic setting and often affect comparable lithotectonic 59 successions. A three end-members typology is proposed with high-temperature MCCs 60 (HT end-member) as one end-member, and two cold MCC end-members with a weak 61 middle crust due in most cases to the interlayering of high-pressure metasedimentary 62 nappes during syn-orogenic wedge building (HP end-member). Even if not met in 63 natural cases, a second theoretical cold end-member can be defined by the presence of a 64 strong upper crust also due to nappe stacking or even obduction (HS end-member). In

65 both cases, the inherited tectonostratigraphy is responsible for a sensible exaggeration 66 of the intra-crustal strength contrast.

67 Fully coupled thermo-mechanical modeling experiments allow testing these three end-68 member typologies and determining the critical intra-crustal strength constrast for the 69 perennial development of a detachment zone and building of a dome at the expense of 70 the lower plate. The comparison of natural cases classification and model-based 71 categories demonstrates the mechanical feasibility of all natural combinations and 72 possibly explains how long-lasting multiple detachment systems such as Menderes, 73 Turkey or North Cycladic Detachment System, Cyclades, Greece, evolve.

74

75 **2. Mediterranean Extensional Detachments**

76 Metamorphic Core Complexes are described in the Mediterranean within three large 77 extended domains (Carpathians and Pannonian basin, Western Mediterranean from 78 Alboran to Tyrrhenian, and Aegean domain *sensu lato*) subject to slab retreat during 79 Alpine orogeny (Jolivet et al., 2009a). Most of them are now located in continental 80 domains with Moho depths between 25 and 20 km, but not systematically in flat Moho 81 areas (Figure 2). Betic Cordilleras and Menderes are, for instance, on top of dipping 82 Moho with about 10 km vertical drop across them (Karabulut et al., 2013 for instance for 83 Menderes). Metamorphic rocks exhumed within Mediterranean core complexes show a 84 wide scatter in pressure-temperature conditions (Figure 3 and Table 1). Dating peak 85 metamorphic conditions and detachment mylonites or relative dating of the detachment 86 activity allow deciphering between rocks mostly exhumed during pre-extensional 87 thickening stages from rocks exhumed during extensional dynamics leading to the MCC

2.1 Tectonostratigraphic positions

107 The systematic description of tectonostratigraphic positions of Mediterranean 108 detachments allows highlighting the preferred decoupling levels within the continental 109 crust during its extension (Table 1 and 2). Among relevant characteristics, some were 110 considered necessary for defining a detachment zone in our compilation: the presence of

111 mylonites along the extensional fault system, in order to compare structures initiated 112 below the ductile-brittle transition only, and a clear extensional setting, in order to 113 compare post-orogenic extensional detachments only, and avoid exhumation shear zone 114 (syn-orogenic detachments in Jolivet et al., 2003). Some characteristics differ from a 115 detachment system to another: the lithology and PT conditions recorded by their 116 footwall (patterns and color code on Figure 4), the lithology of their hangingwall, as well 117 as the presence of plutons, with mantle or crustal origin. The presence of migmatites in 118 the footwall has also been systematically noted. The initiation context of the exhumation 119 process has also been checked : syn-orogenic for rocks partly exhumed during 120 convergence, post-orogenic for rocks exhumed only during post-orogenic extension. The 121 systematic documentation of those characteristics (Figure 4 and Table 2) shows a 122 distribution of natural cases with three theoretical end-members, between which they 123 can be positioned in a triangular diagram (Figure 5). The position of each case was 124 deduced from the relative weighing of high temperature criterion (migmatites or high 125 temperature lower plate or syn-kinematic intrusives), low temperature criterion 126 (preservation of HP-LT paragenesis in the footwall) or high strength upper plate 127 criterion listed in table 2. As will be discussed further, meditteranean natural cases plot 128 within and along edges of the proposed ternary plot. While the HT and HP end-embers 129 are represented by numerous natural cases, no case is found on the HS end-member. 130 None of the documented examples indeed has a strong upper plate as single criterion.

131

132 2.1.1 Detachments on top of High-Temperature lower plates

133 Some of the Mediterranean detachments cap high-temperature lower plates, with HT-LP metamorphic 134 rocks showing syn-extensional pervasive amphibolite facies metamorphism, possibly associated to 135 migmatization, and/or syn-kinematic granite intrusion.

136 The Kabylian Detachment, Greater Kabylia, Algeria (KaD, table 1C), is located between Permian phyllites 137 in its hanging-wall and amphibolite facies micaschists and orthogneisses in its footwall (Saadallah and 138 Caby, 1996). Migmatitic textures, syn-tectonic aplitic dikes and late peraluminous granite intrusions 139 indicate a temperature above the computed solidus (i. e. 700 $^{\circ}$ C) during the exhumation of paragneiss and 140 micaschists forming most of the lower plate. Rheological contrast between upper and lower plate is 141 mostly due to contrasted thermal histories. The Edough massif (Ed, table 1D) in Algeria shows a similar 142 structure (Caby et al., 2001) on top of various high grade metamorphic rocks reaching anatexis and 143 intruded by syn-kinematic leucogranites. Fragments of sublithospheric mantle were incorporated within 144 crustal stack and now constitute rheologically constrated inclusions (Bosch et al., 2014). Even if 145 exhumation ages in the Edough massif are younger than in Greater Kabylia (Bruguier et al., 2009), both 146 extensional domes actually built from the same crustal stack during Alboran slab retreat or later slab 147 related dynamics.

148 On Elba island, Italy, even though the cataclastic low angle normal Zuccale fault zone accommodated 149 substantial extension (Collettini and Holdsworth, 2004), the proper detachment zone (Capanne 150 Detachment Zone, Table1H), exhuming the lower Tuscan unit greenschists, is located at the top of the 151 syntectonic Monte Capanne granodiorite (Daniel and Jolivet, 1995). Mylonites are described in its 152 thermometamorphic aureole and localization of strain is related to its intrusion.

153 The Lubenik Line (LL, table 1L), in the Central Western Slovakian Carpathians and the Zaouia Fault Zone, 154 in the Beni Bousera massif, Morocco, even though both considered as structures inherited from orogenic 155 stages (Janák et al., 2001; Michard et al., 2006) also belong to the High Temperature detachments class. In 156 the Lubenik Line footwall, the Veporic unit is intruded by the syn-kinematic Rochovce granite and 157 mylonites localized strain at its top (Janák et al., 2001). In the Beni Bousera massif, amphibolite facies 158 metamorphism in the Fillali schists and associated kinzigites indeed indicate temperatures higher than 159 800 $^{\circ}$ C for their peak conditions, and leucogranite intrusions evidence partial melting of the lower plate 160 (Michard et al., 2006).

161 HT lower plate detachment class is therefore represented by detachment zones that exhume HT

162 metamorphic rocks, which reached peak P-T conditions just before exhumation or lower plate intruded by

163 plutons, responsible for local thermal weakening and strain localization. This mechanism is discussed in

164 section 4.2.3.

165

166 **2.1.2** Detachments within interlayered high-pressure metamorphic nappe

167 Most of the "Cold MCC" (Huet et al., 2010) exhume HP-LT metamorphic rocks in their footwall (Figure 3).

168 Even though most of these HP-LT rocks were actually partly exhumed prior to the proper detachment

- 169 tectonics related to extension, their preservation from thermal reequilibration during ultimate
- 170 decompression implies that no significant thermal reequilibration occurred during MCC formation.

171 Detachments faults described in the Betics, Spain (Mecina-Filabres Shear Zone, MSFZ, table 1A), on Syros,

172 Greece (Vari detachment, VaD, table 1P), in southern Italy (Catena Costiera and Aspromonte, CatCo and

173 Asp, table 1E & F), in Peloponnese, Greece and Crete (Cretan detachments 1 and 2, CrD1 and CrD2, table

174 1U &V) and also in the Rechnitz window, Austrian Alps (ReW, table1K) belong to this category.

175 The Mecina-Filabres Shear Zone develops as mylonites and gouges during extensional reactivation of a 176 former thrust (Platt et al., 1984). Eclogites are preserved within the Nevado-Filabrides lower plate, and 177 most of the syn-tectonic metamorphism is actually greenschist facies (Augier et al., 2005b). No drastic 178 lithological contrast is observed between the upper plate Alpujarrides phyllites, quartzites and graphitic 179 micaschists and the exhumed Bedar-Macael graphitic schists.

180 The Vari detachment, Syros, exhumes the Cycladic blueschist metasedimentary unit dominated by schists 181 and marble preserving eclogite to blueschist paragenesis, (Trotet et al., 2001), beneath the Vari and 182 "Upper unit" metabasites gneiss and serpentinites which experienced earlier HT reequilibration (Jolivet 183 and Brun, 2008). Even if mainly syn-orogenic, this detachment may have been active in the late stages of 184 post-orogenic extension (Jolivet et al., 2010a).

185 In Italy, the Catena Costiera detachment is described as a mylonites and cataclasites complex, accounting 186 for the post-orogenic exhumation of the blueschist-bearing metaclastics and marbles associated to the 187 Lower Ophiolitic Unit (LOU, Jolivet and Brun, 2008; Rossetti et al., 2004) beneath the seemingly Upper

188 Ophiolite Unit, composed of an ophiolitic melange and carbonates (Bonardi et al., 2001). The Aspromonte

189 detachment is a mylonite zone located on top of the Alpine blueschist Apromonte unit, considered as a

- 190 syn-to immediate post-orogenic structure (Heymes et al., 2010). Aspromonte and Stilo units on both sides
- 191 of the detachment are both composed of para and orthogneiss.
- 192 Cretan detachments, described on top of the blueschist facies Phyllites-Quartzites nappe in northern
- 193 Peloponnese (Jolivet et al., 2009b) and in Crete (Kilias et al., 1994) are represented by extensional
- 194 mylonites and high-strain phyllites along the reactivated thrust at the base of the Gavrovo-Tripolitza
- 195 nappe in Crete, or the underlying Tyros Beds in Peloponnese.
- 196 In the Rechnitz window group, the detachment zone is composed of serpentinites and quartz-micas
- 197 mylonites (Cao et al., 2013) at the base of the Austro-Alpine greenschist facies Wechsel unit, and at the top
- 198 of the blueschist-bearing Rechnitz Penninic unit. A limited HT imprint is recorded during the inferred
- 199 post-orogenic reactivation of the Austro-Alpine basal thrust (Hoinkes et al., 1999).
- 200 All the detachment detailed above are therefore located within a tectonostratigraphic sequence with no
- 201 significant systematic strength contrast, upper and lower plate being most of the time similar in
- 202 lithologies, except the HP paragenesis partly preserved in lower plates. Most of the time, extensional
- 203 strain localized on a former thrust. The reason why such thrusts are prone to extensional reactivation will
- 204 be discussed further.

205

206 2.1.3 Detachments at the base of a strong upper crustal unit

207 Two close classes of detachment emerge from this review: some localize at the base of a strong upper 208 plate and on top of a HP preserving cover unit and some at the base of a strong upper plate on top of a HT 209 lower plate.

- 210 In Nigde massif, Turkey (NiD, table 1W) the amphibolite facies Gumusler formation migmatites (Whitney
- 211 and Dilek, 1997) are exhumed beneath a massive ophiolite mostly composed of greenschist-facies gabbros
- 212 (Goncuoglu et al., 1991). Mylonites and cataclasites developed prior to the Uckapili leucogranite intrusion
- 213 (Gautier et al., 2002) during an early extension stage affecting the Central Anatolian continental block.

214 In southern and eastern Rhodope (Bulgaria-Greece), the Kerdylion detachment and the Tokachka and 215 Kechros detachment system (KerD and ToKeD, table 1M & N) developed at the base of high-grade rock 216 units: the Vertiskos Gneiss complex (Brun and Sokoutis, 2007) and the Kimi complex garnet-bearing 217 gneiss (Bonev and Beccaletto, 2007) respectively. They exhume the Southern Rhodope Core Complex, the 218 Kesebir-Kardamos and Kechros complexes, all of them being represented by migmatites (Boney et al., 219 2006) and amphibolite facies orthogneiss intruded by syn-kinematic granitoids (Vrondou and Symvolon 220 granodiorites in Southern Rhodope, and the Papikjon granitoid in Eastern Rhodope). The base of upper 221 plates is underlined by resistant lithologies such as the Therma and Volvi gabbros and basalts in Southern 222 Rhodope or meta-ophiolitic lenses in Eastern Rhodope (Burg et al., 1996).

223 The Motajica Detachment, Croatia-Bosnia Hercegovina (MoD, table 1, Ustaszewski et al. (2010) is located 224 at the base of the Tisza-Dacia unit ophiolite and at the top of an amphibolite facies meta-accretionary 225 wedge complex intruded by the Motajica granite a few Myr prior to extension initiation (Pamić et al., 226 2012).

227 In Kazdag, Turkey, extension localized along the northern Alakeci and southern Selale detachments 228 (AlSeD,table 1S). Mylonites, metaserpentinites and breccias separate the upper plate Cetmi ophiolitic 229 melange from an amphibolte facies basement unit (Beccaletto and Steiner, 2005; Okay and Satir, 2000) 230 topped with migmatites. The Cetmi, Karakaya and Denizgoren ophiolitic units all rest at the base of the 231 upper plate, suggesting a possible reactivated obduction thrust as a precursor for the extensional 232 detachments.

233 These detachment therefore superimpose resistant lithologies on top of HT metamorphic rocks, some 234 other superimpose the same type of resistant units on top of weaker HP-bearing cover units as reviewed 235 in the following.

236 In the Alpi Apuane, northern Italy, the Calcare Cavernoso mylonites (CalCa, table 1G, (Carmignani and 237 Kligfield, 1990) are found between the upper Tuscan nappes made out of massive carbonates at the base 238 and the subjacent blueschist-facies phyllites and metasandstones of the Massa and Autochtonous units. 239 Localization of strain is due to intense cataclasis of anhydrite and dolostone along a reactivated thrust. 240 The Liguride ophiolite on top of the whole lithotectonic pile has been preserved from most of the 241 extensional tectonics.

242 In Corsica, the Tenda Shear Zone and the Balagne-Nebbio unit basal detachment constitute a multi-level

243 detachment system (Jolivet et al., 1990; Marroni and Pandolfi, 2003) related to post-orogenic extension. In

244 the Cap Corse antiform, the non-metamorphic ophiolitic Balagne nappe directly rests on the Schistes

245 Lustrés calschists that preserved eclogite to blueschist facies assemblages. On the eastern edge of the

246 Tenda massif, ophiolitic units and basement slices associated to the Schistes Lustrés are separated from

- 247 the blueschist facies metagranitoids by a thick and complex mylonite zone developed to the expense of the
- 248 latest.

249 All these examples therefore lie in intermediate position between the HT end-member or the HP

250 preserving end-member and a theoretical third end-member, which would be represented by a

 251 detachment localized at the base of an anomalously strong upper plate.

252

253 Some other Mediterranean detachments also lie in intermediate position in the three end-member 254 classification proposed here (Figure 5).

255 **2.1.4 Detachments with intermediate characteristics**

256 The Malaguides-Alpujarrides detachment (MAD, table 1A, Lonergan and Platt, 1995) in the Betics and the 257 Naxos-Paros detachment (NaPaD, table 1Q, Gautier et al., 1993) in Central Cyclades plot along the HT and 258 HP preserving members joint (Figure 5). Both indeed localized at the top of a HP bearing unit, and 259 developed during a thermal reequilibration stage. This thermal reequilibration is more intense in the 260 Naxos-Paros lower plate where prealpine basement underwent pervasive anatexis during exhumation 261 (Vanderhaeghe, 2004), than in the Alpujarrides units, where high-pressure amphibolite facies overprint 262 induced local migmatization in the top Herradura unit and pervasive resetting of radiochronometers 263 (Azañón and Crespo-Blanc, 2000).

264

265 Other complex detachment systems such as the North Cycladic Detachment System in the Aegean (NCDS,

266 table 10, Jolivet et al., 2010a) or the Menderes detachments in Turkey also plot within the theoretical

 267 triangular classification, but show a singular evolution through time as detailed below.

268 **2.2** Evolution of detachments through time

269 Three features identified in this review allow discussing how detachment systems 270 evolve through time. When present, the nature of the collapse basin associated to 271 extension along the detachment has been systematically noticed (Figure 6) and evidence 272 how topography locally evolved during extension. The Cyclades and Menderes exhibit 273 complex cases of multi-level detachment systems that evolved through time. Eventually 274 relationship between ductile strain and brittle strain gives indices of how detachment 275 systems behave when crossing the brittle-ductile transition.

276

277 **2.2.1 Evolution of basins**

278 Most of the syn-tectonic basins described in the hanging-walls of detachment systems 279 have marine affinities or evolved through time from continental to shallow marine, 280 suggesting a topography close to sea level, and most of the time subsiding during 281 extension (Figure 6 and table 1, line 2.1). Accommodation is most of the time moderate, 282 with shallow marine coarse facies, but turbidites are described in the Kazdag massif, 283 suggesting a deep depositional environment (Bonev and Beccaletto, 2007). The opposite 284 trend from marine to continental is only described on Naxos, where marine sandstones 285 and pelites evolve into fluvial deposits (Bargnesi et al., 2013; Kuhlemann et al., 2004), 286 implying that accommodation is decreasing with time, unless regional parameters 287 actually prevail on local processes . Even in the case of detachments initiated in syn-288 orogenic conditions, such as in Crete, where possibly lacustrine breccias are described at 289 the base of Neogene basins (Jolivet et al., 1996), no proper intra-montane collapse 290 basins developed during activation of detachments in the Mediterranean realm. This

291 implies that initial topography was close to or rapidly lowered to sea-level while MCC 292 developed.

293

294 **2.2.2 Evolution of strain localization**

295 Complex detachment systems evolution can be traced in the three end-member 296 classification proposed here. As for the Cyclades, the north-verging North Cycladic 297 Detachment System (table 10, Jolivet et al., 2010a) and south-verging Western Cycladic 298 Detachment System (table 1R, Grasemann et al., 2011) are composed of several mylonite 299 zones that successively localized strain during regional extension. In Northern Cyclades, 300 the Tinos Detachment first localized along a former thrust at the top of the Cycladic 301 Blueschist Unit and beneath the Upper Cycladic Nappe, constituted of a thick and 302 resistant greenschist facies ophiolitic complex . Strain sequentially localized upward on 303 the Livada detachment and then Mykonos detachment, while granites progressively 304 intruded the lower plate and thermal reequilibration of the nappe pile occurred. On 305 Mykonos, syn-tectonic granite directly roots in the highly strained migmatites of the 306 lower plate (Denèle et al., 2011), evidencing a sharp contrast in thermal history between 307 the upper and lower plates. In Ikaria, the Fanari ductile to brittle detachment located at 308 the top of the syn-kinematic I type Raches granite and the ductile Agios Kyrkos shear 309 zone show strain and age patterns similar to the North Cycladic Detachment System, and 310 can be considered as the eastward extension of the same structure (Beaudoin et al., 311 2015; Laurent et al., 2015). The North Cycladic Detachment System therefore evolves 312 from lower bound toward the HT end-member in the ternary classification proposed, 313 with a perennial detachment zone relocalizing stepwise at the base of the upper plate 314 while the lower plate exhumes. The Western Cycladic Detachment System described on

315 Kea, Kythnos and Serifos islands possibly followed the same evolution with initial 316 detachment located at the base of the Pelagonian serpentinites and schists and 317 progressively moving upward in the nappe pile as the thermal effect of syn-tectonic 318 intrusions (on Serifos and Lavrion) modified the crustal rheological properties 319 (Rabillard et al., 2015).

320 In Menderes, the initial structure that accommodated extension during Hellenic slab 321 retreat is the Simav Detachment (SiD, table 1T, Isik and Tekeli, 2001). This large scale 322 high strain zone is localized at the base of the Izmir - Ankara Ophiolite, within a HP 323 nappes complex preserving eclogites and blueschists (Afyon, Tavsanli and Oren nappes 324 (Plunder et al., 2013). Rocks in its footwall mainly consist of amphibolite facies gneiss 325 with the metasedimentary Selimiye unit in uppermost position. Early northern 326 Menderes granites are considered as syntectonic to SiD (Isik and Tekeli, 2001), due to 327 development of high temperature foliation in these in the vicinity of SiD and overlap 328 between their U-Pb zircon crystallization ages and cooling ages of biotites within 329 derived mylonites (Dilek et al., 2009) in the early miocene . The younger Alasehir and 330 Kucuk-Menderes Detachment systems, Central Menderes, Turkey (AlKuD, table 1T), 331 subsequently cut across Menderes and divide it in Northern, Central and Southern 332 domains. Rocks beneath and above the Alasehir and Buyuk Menderes detachments 333 therefore derive from the same amphibolite facies metamorphic sequence (Bozkurt and 334 Oberhänsli, 2001). The north-verging Alasehir detachment located at the top of the 335 Salihli syn-tectonic granodiorite (Isik et al., 2003) in the late Miocene (Dilek et al., 2009) 336 and the antithetic detachment at the base of the Buyuk Menderes graben also relates to 337 the late Miocene intrusion of Menderes granites (Dilek et al., 2009). Even if recent 338 migmatites are actually present within Menderes (Bozkurt, pers. comm.) the sole 339 localization mechanism proposed so far for these detachments is the weakening due to

340 granite intrusion. Strain indeed localized at the top of these plutons that evolve from 341 isotropic in their core toward mylonites in the vicinity of detachment (Dilek et al., 2009). 342 Mylonitic foliation is marked by biotites within granites and greenschist facies 343 assemblages within mylonites. Strain therefore progressively localized during granite 344 cooling and exhumation The central detachments accommodated the late stages of 345 intra-Menderes extension in middle miocene times, while the top Menderes northern 346 Simav detachment progressively ceased localizing strain (van Hinsbergen, 2010).

347 These complex long-life detachment systems systematically show an initial localization 348 along intra-crustal rheological contrasts inherited from nappe stacking stages, the base 349 of ophiolites and HP-bearing cover units being prone to such localization. The later 350 stages are associated to HT metamorphism and/or syntectonic granite intrusions. Strain 351 is then localized higher up in the tectonic pile (as in the Cyclades) on a structure 352 synthetic to deeper precursors or symmetrically neoformed in the core of the already 353 exhumed lower plate (as in Menderes).

354

355 **2.2.3 Relationships with brittle deformation**

356 When evidenced, relationships between brittle strain in the upper and lower plates and 357 the ductile to brittle strain along the detachment system were systematically noticed 358 (Table 1, items 2.4, and 4.3). In most cases (Catena Costiera, Alpi Apuane, Rechnitz, 359 Northern Cyclades, Northern Menderes) brittle strain is expressed as high- to low-angle 360 normal faults, developed in the upper plate and rooting in the detachment zone. More 361 rarely brittle deformation cuts across and offsets the main detachment system. When 362 expressed as late stage high-angle normal faults (as in Balagne, Corsica, in the Motajica

363 window, in southern and eastern Rhodope or Crete), this brittle strain can be viewed as 364 late features accommodating the late stages of extension or unrelated later tectonics. 365 The case of Elba island, with the development of the Zuccale fault, is a rare described 366 case of a low angle brittle normal fault localizing independently of ductile inheritance 367 and cutting across the extended nappe pile (Collettini and Holdsworth, 2004). This 368 feature is also recognized today along the Apennine detachment system, with the low 369 angle normal active Alto Tiberina fault cross-cutting all the thrust structures (Chiaraluce 370 et al., 2007), which system the Zuccale fault zone also pertains to **(Collettini et al.,** 371 **2006).**

372 Interpretation of relationships between ductile and brittle strain is not unique:

373 depending on whether faults boarding basins are rooted on or cut across the

374 detachment system, Menderes basin system can be viewed as syn-tectonic collapse

375 structures (according to VanHinsbergen, 2010 for instance) or a wide rift zone with

376 periodic rift basins oblitering the core complex structure (Ring et al., 2003).

377

378 **2.3 Rheological implications of model end-members**

379 The three end-members proposed in this review are not equally straightforward in 380 terms of rheological implications. The HT end-member actually represents the most 381 widely accepted definition of MCC, with a hot and hence low-viscosity lower crust. It has 382 been quantitatively considered in many thermo-mechanical models (e.g. Rey et al., 2009; 383 Tirel et al., 2006). A theoretical HS end-member with resistant upper crust, constituted 384 of massive mafic or ultramafic lithologies thrust on top of a less resistant crust, can also 385 be considered. Intra-crustal rheological contrast is here produced by the tectonic

386 inversion of the rheological profile (Huet et al., 2010) and has been tested via thermo-387 mechanical modelling. The third HP end-member, representing detachments developing 388 at the top or within HP cover units is less straightforward in terms of strength profile. 389 Why would strain preferentially localize in or along such units in the post-thickening 390 nappe pile ? (Huet et al., 2010) considered the Cycladic Blueschist Unit as a weak layer 391 intercalated between the more resistant Upper Cycladic Unit ophiolite and the Cycladic 392 Basement Unit constituted of granitoids mainly. Before testing the effect of such a 393 layering, its relevance must be discussed. HP cover nappes can be considered weak due 394 to the nature of their protolith. Initially constituted of shales and carbonates, they are 395 fine grained, their water content is high and they are strongly foliated, thus being prone 396 to localize deformation. Nevertheless, metamorphic transformations may significantly 397 change their mechanical behaviour. In order to quantitatively discuss this point we 398 performed thermochemical modelling of the impact of exhumation on average crustal 399 lithologies (Figure 7). Modal evolution of a metabasalt, a metagranite and a metapelite 400 with 10 wt% added water (dry compositions basalt and granite : Le Maitre (1976), shale 401 : Boggs 1995) have been modeled with Theriak-Domino suite (de Capitani and 402 Petrakakis, 2010) along different pressure-temperature paths from blueschist (1.2 GPa, 403 500° C) to lower greenschist facies (0.3 GPa, 200°C) using Holland & Powell database 404 (Holland and Powell (2004) with Diener et al. (2007) activity model for amphiboles). 405 Two cases can be considered : a path with thermal reequilibration coeval with 406 decompression (path 1, Figure 7), and a path with decompression in the greenschist 407 facies prior to substantial cooling (Path 2, Figure 7), more representative of the PT paths 408 documented in HP units exhumed in Mediterranean MCC (Figure 3). In the case of a 409 basalt, exhumation is marked by decrease in amphibole amount (due to glaucophane 410 destabilization) whatever the path. Epidote is retrogressed into lawsonite along path 1

411 only. No substantial change in phyllosilicate content is observed whatever the 412 considered path. In the case of a granite, the only substantial modal change modeled is a 413 decrease then increase in phyllosilicate content along path 2. Eventually, in the case of a 414 metapelite, epidote-lawsonite transition is also observed, and phyllosilicate content 415 rises close to 50 vol% along path 2. Considering the amount of phyllosilicates as one of 416 the first order mineralogical control on rocks strength in the blueschist/greenschist 417 temperature range (Gueydan, 2004), the comparison of its evolution along paths for the 418 different lithologies can yield the evolution of strength contrasts within a composite 419 nappe pile (Figure 7D&H). As expected metapelites exhibit the highest phyllosilicates 420 contents. No substantial contrast appear along path 1, while the more realistic two-stage 421 PT path 2 exhibits a strong contrast between metapelites, reaching 40 vol. % 422 phyllosilicates and other lithologies between 500 and 400° C i.e. within the ductile strain 423 domain. It seems therefore that initially weak metasedimentary sequences are 424 furthermore weakened by retrogression in the greenschist facies. Fluid transfers 425 implied by these transformations also can lead to strength changes during exhumation. 426 HP cover units can therefore be considered at first order as weaker zones interlayered 427 in the nappe pile, and therefore prone to localize deformation during syn-to post-428 orogenic extension. It seems from the presented review that the development of a 429 perennial detachment during extension of a beforehand-thickened crust is therefore 430 possible when a critical intra-crustal strength contrast appears, due to thermal 431 reequilibration (HT MCC case) or due to inheritance (strong upper crust and weak 432 middle crust). This conceptual model, can be quantitatively explored with thermo-433 mechanical models in order to estimate the order of magnitude of the required intra-434 crustal strength contrast and to assess how the different end-members can yield a 435 detachment structure.

436

437 **3. Numerical modelling**

438 **3.1 Numerical code used**

439 The numerical code used in the present study is based on the FLAC algorithm (Cundall, 440 1989) and its subsequent evolutions (Burov and Poliakov, 2001; Poliakov et al., 1993; 441 Yamato et al., 2007). Conservation of momentum equation and heat equation are 442 iteratively solved. No radiogenic internal heating was implemented in the present 443 simulations, mainly due to uncertainties on its value in the case of a crust resulting from 444 complex nappe stacking. Thermomechanical coupling is enforced using Boussinesq 445 approximation for the computation of density, including thermal stresses. Temperature 446 is advected with the mesh within the Lagrangian formulation of the code. The rock 447 behaviour is approximated by explicit visco-elasto-plastic rheology. Ductile deformation 448 is modeled with a power-law and brittle deformation with a Mohr-Coulomb plastic flow 449 law (table 3). The effective rheological behaviour is determined by current strain-rate, 450 state of stress and temperature (Le Pourhiet et al., 2004). A marker-based remeshing 451 procedure allows for handling of very large strains and displacements (Yamato et al., 452 2007). To focus on the influence of the rheological stratification, as in (Huet et al., 2010), 453 the model setups have been deliberately simplified. Erosion, shear-heating, partial 454 melting and mineral phase transitions are not considered in the computation.

455

456 **3.1 Initial set-up and initial boundary conditions**

457 Experimental design (Figure 8) directly derives from Huet et al. (2010). Thermal

458 boundary conditions are 0° C at the surface and fixed initial temperatures at the bottom

459 (1000, 1200 and 1400 °C at 90 km, implying initial Moho temperatures between 398 460 and 1015° C, as listed in table 4). Lateral heat flow is set to zero. These thermal 461 conditions allow to cover the complete crustal thermal gradient range (dashed curves 462 on Figure 3) from low $(13^{\circ}C/km)$, as inferred from PT paths in the Cyclades for instance 463 (Figure 3 and Huet et al., 2010) to moderate $(18^{\circ}C/km)$ as explored in previous thermo-464 mechanical modelling studies (Tirel et al., 2008 for instance).

465 Both sides of the models are assigned free slip condition. As in Huet et al., 2010, 466 asymmetric lateral velocity is applied with 1 cm/yr on the lefthand side and 0 cm/yr on 467 the righthand side.. Initial stretching rate for a 210 km long crustal segment is therefore 468 2.10⁻¹⁵ s⁻¹. This velocity boundary conditions corresponds to a mean value in the 469 sensitivity tests to strain rates in numerical studies (Tirel et al., 2008), or in the velocity 470 range used for analytical modeling (Buck, 1990). Upper surface is free, and bottom 471 behaves as a Winkler foundation, ensuring local isostatic compensation (Burov and 472 Poliakov, 2001). The initial velocity field is linearly interpolated from the boundary 473 conditions and the stress is initially lithostatic and isotropic. No resistance or density 474 anomaly is prescribed to localize strain, a random noise of 5 MPa has been instead 475 added to the mean cohesion value (20 MPa, table 3) in the upper crust, except on a 20 476 km wide zone on the left hand side of the model where cohesion is set to 30 MPa in 477 order to prevent artificial strain localization on the fast moving boundary (Huet et al., 478 2010).

479 The model is initially composed of a 210 km wide and 30, 45 or 60 km thick two-layers 480 continental crust resting on top of lithospheric mantle. Initial mesh grid size is 0.75 x 481 1.25 km. All crustal layers have the same nominal density and thermal expansion 482 coefficient (table 3), so that only temperature contrasts can yield density contrasts.

483 Mantle properties are the same in all simulations, its viscous behaviour is modelled as 484 the one of dry dunite (Chopra and Paterson, 1984). Viscosity parameters for crustal 485 layers derive from experimental data from quartz-diorite (Ranalli and Murphy (1987) as 486 used in Tirel et al., 2008), dry quartzite (Ranalli and Murphy (1987) as used in Huet et 487 al., 2011) and wet quartzite (Kirby and Kronenberg, 1987). Crustal structures can be 488 rheologically homogeneous (27 simulations: d/d , q/q and w/w series in table 4) or 489 heterogeneous. Among heterogeneous crust simulations, 18 were performed with upper 490 and lower crust the same thickness (evenly layered crust, table 4). 6 simulations were 491 performed with total crustal thickness 45 km composed with quartz-diorite upper crust 492 and dry quartzite lower crust, and 15 or 30 km thick upper crust.

493

494 **3.2 Results**

495 The 51 simulations run in this study are compared on the basis of the strain geometries 496 produced by extension as well as P-T paths followed by the possibly exhumed lower 497 crust. The different resulting geometries, exemplified in Figures 9, 10 and 11 are briefly 498 described before a more statistical approach is proposed for all simulations. Only 3 499 cases out of 51 (X in table 4) yielded numerically unstable computation, with mantle 500 rupturing from the very first stretching steps. These simulations, performed with cold 501 conditions (bottom temperature 1000° C) are considered as geologically meaningless. 502 Narrow rifts simulations all exhibit localized strain zones in the upper crust and upper 503 mantle that connect across the ductile lower crust to stretch the complete crust to 504 complete disruption after less than 10 Myr extension. They are characterized by high 505 amplitude Moho deflection and limited lower crustal flow. Margin geometries produced 506 exhibit complex geometries due to simple or complex rift systems (Figure 9C) isolating

507 upper crustal blocks. Wide rift geometries (Figure 9B, D and F) show no transcrustal 508 shear zones developing, upper crust disruption is compensated by lower crustal flow 509 and Moho deflection is limited. Nevertheless, as analytically predicted by Buck (1991), 510 lower crust resistance to flow is higher than plastic yield strength of the upper crust and 511 strain relocalizes laterally, before an extended lower crust dome is formed. Strain 512 localization shifts laterally in time with a wavelength determined by initial set-up. 513 Metamorphic core complex geometries can be sub-divided into two sub-types : 514 asymmetrical domes with a perennial detachment system assisting exhumation of the 515 lower crust over the whole stretching event (Figure 10), and more symmetrical 516 geometries with lower crust exhumation and strain localizing between two sub-domes 517 (double-dome core complexes, Figure 11, DDCC in table 4). In both cases, the upper 518 crust disruption is compensated by lateral and upward flow of the lower crust into a 519 single perennial core. In the perennial detachment metamorphic core complex case 520 (Figure 11, PDCC in table 4), strain relocalizes at the upper lower crust boundary 521 yielding an asymmetric flow pattern in the lower crust and the persistence of a 522 detachment system at the top of the dome structure with younging upward strain ages. 523 The youngest rocks exhumed are then found beneath this detachment system, and 524 exhibit "cool" PT path with no heating associated to decompression (Figure 10 B, F & G). 525 In the double-dome core complex case (Figure 11) the high strain zone is located at the 526 core of the exhumed lower crust, implying a symmetric flow pattern and exhumation 527 ages younging from the edges to the core (Figure 11B & F). The later rocks exhume, the 528 higher the amplitude of their decompressional heating (Figure 11G). Rocks exhumed 529 within or close to detachments systematically show decompression paths along lower 530 thermal gradients (Figures $10G & 11G$). This remarkable feature is due to progressive 531 cooling by the overriding upper unit, and might be less pronounced with viscous heating

532 implemented in the code used. Thermal impact of viscous heating along extensional 533 detachment systems has been estimated about 50° C temperature excess during 534 decompression of hanging-wall units (Souche et al., 2013), and would therefore affect 535 PT path shapes only on the second order.

536 Resulting geometries occur logically according to initial set-up (Figure 12). Narrow rifts 537 are produced by thin crust simulations whatever their thermal state, except when lower 538 crust is drastically weak. Wide rift geometry is indeed produced for wet quartzite lower 539 crust simulation with initial crustal thickness 30 km and initial Moho temperature above 540 400 $^{\circ}$ C (Figure 12C). On the other hand double-dome core complexes geometries are 541 produced in thick crusts, whatever their thermal state, except when especially strong. 542 Simulation with 60 km thick quartz-diorite homogeneous crust and TMoho =752 $^{\circ}$ C 543 indeed yield a wide rift pattern. The most sensible crustal thickness is 45 km. With this 544 thickness, weakening of the whole crust promotes a switch from wide rift to double 545 dome MCC pattern (Figure 12 A, B & C). Weakening of the lower crust only has the same 546 effect but intermediate strength lower crust simulations (Figure 12D) yield wide-rift 547 geometry when cold and perennial detachment MCCs pattern when warmer. The 548 position of the intra-crustal strength contrast within the crust also has an impact. 549 Thinner lower crust geometries (line $2/3$ on Figure 12F) vield a narrow rift pattern 550 when cold, which can be explained by an easier connection between localized strain in 551 the upper crust and in the mantle and an overall less ductile rheology (higher 552 ductile/brittle ratio). Thicker lower crust simulations (lower ductile/brittle ratio, line 553 1/3 on Figure 12F) yield more distributed extension mode (wide rift or double dome 554 MCCs according to thermal state). Perennial detachment MCCs are produced for 555 intermediate and maximal initial Moho temperatures and low to intermediate lower 556 crust thicknesses. From this analysis, several general comments arise: i- thermal state is

557 not the dominant controlling factor on extension modes, at least in the range explored 558 here, ii- crustal thickness has a critical impact in the 30-60 km range, iii- perennial 559 detachment MCCs are developed only in specific conditions with intermediate initial 560 crustal thicknesses and intermediate intra-crustal strength contrasts.

561 In order to explain them with unified criteria, occurrences of the four final geometries 562 described here (narrow and wide rifts and metamorphic cores with perennial 563 detachment or double dome geometry) have systematically been reported against initial 564 thermal and rheological parameters for the tested lithospheres (Table 4 and Figure 13). 565 Intra-crustal strength contrast, i.e. ratio between the strength at the brittle-ductile 566 transition depth and viscous strength of the crust at Moho depth as well as the 567 integrated lithospheric strength expressed in MPa.km, have been calculated from the 568 initial conditions of all models. These parameters have been chosen for their relevance, 569 as well as for their easy calculation for already published comparable studies (cf 570 discussion). Tested integrated strengths range over more than 1 order of magnitude, 571 cold and thin crusts leading as expected to stronger lithospheres than warm and thick 572 ones. Intra-crustal strength contrasts range over 4 orders of magnitudes, with the thin 573 and cold crusts having contrast ratios lower than 10 and warm and thick crust 574 exhibiting ratios higher than $10⁴$. Rift geometries are produced for high lithospheric 575 strength and low strength ratios. Only such lithosphere can indeed reach their plastic 576 vield strength and connect localized upper crust strain to localized strain in the mantle. 577 Wide rift geometries are produced over a wide range of integrated strength but a 578 narrow range of strength ratio. This reflects the close balance between upper crust 579 strength and lower crust ability to flow implied by the development of wide rifts. Double 580 dome MCCs are develop over a wide range of integrated strengths for strength ratios 581 higher than $10³$. The specific conditions prone to the development of perennial

582 detachment appear as a narrow intra-crustal strength contrast range close to 10³. In this 583 range, all the possible extension modes are actually produced; only rifts are produced 584 for contrasts lower than 10^{2.5} (i.e. \sim 300) and only double dome MCCs are produced for 585 contrasts higher the $10^{3.5}$ (i.e. \sim 3000).

586 The effect of each tested parameter can be precised with series having one varied 587 parameter only (dashed lines on Figure 13). As expected, the initial crustal thickness 588 and initial thermal state impact both parameters. Thick and/or warm crusts yield high 589 intra-crustal strength contrast for low integrated strength. Layering has an impact on 590 contrast more than on integrated strength. The intra-crustal strength contrast 591 parameter is actually irrelevant to investigate the effect of the depth of inherited 592 strength discontinuity within the crust (crosses on Figure 13). More sophisticated 593 parameters would help, but would necessarily be more design-dependent.

594 The parametric study presented here yields some qualitative and quantitative 595 conclusions about the boundary conditions and lithosphere properties prone to the 596 development of MCC patterns. First, MCCs can form in moderately thickened crust along 597 geotherms as low as 13° C/km. Depending mainly on the intrinsic strength ratio between 598 the upper and lower crust, two types of MCCs can develop: double domes for crusts with 599 a high strength ratio, MCCs with a perennial detachment at their top for crusts with a 600 strength ration close to 10^3 . Exhumed lower crust material shows limited heating during 601 decompression in MCCs with a perennial detachment, and only material exhumed late in 602 double-domes exhibits substantial heating. MCC pattern development is therefore 603 thermally compatible with the preservation of HP-LT paragenesis in their core, 604 especially on their limb.

605

606 **4. Discussion**

607 **4.1 Parameter study and published MCC models : critical intra-crustal strength** 608 **contrast for MCC formation**

 609 In order to test our parameter study against published analogue studies, the same 610 parameters (intra-crustal strength contrast and integrated lithosperic strength) were 611 computed for published simulations with comparable initial set-up (Figure 14). 32 612 simulations from Tirel et al. (2008) and 9 cases study in Huet et al (2011) were 613 performed with the same numerical code as present and layered or homeogeneous 614 crustal geometries. Among the 4 simulations presented in Rey et al. (2009) and 615 performed with the Ellipsis finite element code (Moresi et al., 2003), the 2 melt-free 616 cases with varied stretching rate $(2.10^{-16}$ and 2.10^{-15} s⁻¹) can yield representative initial 617 crustal strength constrast and integrated strength values. In the study performed by 618 Schenker et al. (2012), with the I2VIS code (Gerya and Yuen, 2003) 12 initial geometries 619 were tested with a rheologically homogeneous crust and varied initial thickness and 620 Moho temperatures. In these two studies, partial melting is implemented as a viscosity 621 drop down to a threshold value $(10^{18}$ Pa.s in Rey et al., 2009, 10¹⁷ Pa.s in Schenker et al., 622 2012). Eventually, the two-layer wedge shape crust simulations without prescribed 623 weak zone (A and B type models) from Wu et al. (2015), performed with a modified 624 version of PARAVOZ (Tan et al., 2012) can be plotted on the same diagram as segments 625 between their thin and thick ends. Compilation of these simulations with ours give a 108 626 simulations dataset, produced by different numerical codes, different crust and mantle 627 representative materials, and a variety of boundary conditions. They all plot along the 628 same trend in the intra-crustal strength contrast vs integrated lithosphere strength. 629 Tirel et al. (2008) explored a linear domain across the whole possible field, while Huet et

630 al. (2011) and Rey et al. (2009) focused on weak lithospheres and intermediate strength 631 profiles. The equivalence between the present-study classification and other studies is 632 not straightforward. The "double-domes" produced by Rey et al. (2009), the spreading 633 domes in Huet et al., (2011) and the double-dome MCCs in the present study can be 634 considered as equivalents. The "true rifts", "wide rifts" and "MCCs" produced in Huet et 635 al. (2011) are respectively synonyms in terms of dynamics with rifts, wide rifts and 636 perennial detachment MCCs produced here. Even if Schenker et al. (2012) mainly 637 focused on the impact of the depth of the heat source (within the crust or within the 638 mantle) on the lithospheric response, their classification also has a morphological basis. 639 The "dysharmonic dome" and "lower crustal dome" types distinguished actually 640 respectively correspond to the perennial detachment mode and the double-dome core 641 complex types used here. "Gneiss domes" and "narrow rifts" structures produced in Wu 642 et al. (2015) with 2 layer crusts show some periodicity that could relate them to wide 643 rifts produced in the present study. In first approximation, "narrow rifts" and 644 "continental margins" types can be considered as localized extension modes with crustal 645 necking, while the "gneiss dome" mode compares with the double-dome MCCs produced 646 here. In Tirel et al. (2008) the only available categorization is "crustal necking" vs "MCC". 647 Even if presented examples of MCCs rather exhibit perennial detachment core 648 complexes geometries, we keep the classification as simple as published. This 649 compilation eventually shows that rifts or MCCs can be produced over a wide range of 650 integrated lithospheric strength. Intra-crustal strength contrast seems a sensitive 651 parameter for extension mode prediction: here again, only rifts are produced for 652 contrasts lower than $10^{2.5}$ (i.e. \sim 300) and only double dome MCCs are produced for 653 contrasts higher the $10^{3.5}$ (i.e. \sim 3000).

654 Tirel et al. (2008) extensively explored the effect of strain rate on extension mode, and 655 Rey et al. (2009) also varied this parameter. Their results on this diagram show that an 656 increase of 1 (for Rey et al., 2009) or close to 1 (for Tirel et al., 2008) order of magnitude 657 only slightly modifies the crustal properties, and only changes extension mode for 658 lithospheres in the critical domain next to 10^3 . Wu et al. (2015) who studied the effect of 659 layered wedge shape come to the same conclusion as here: intrinsic strength contrast 660 due to inherited layering is a first order parameter for changing extension mode. The 661 realistic values used in that study actually cover a 2 orders of magnitude range in 662 strength contrast between the strongest (plagioclase above dry quartz) and the weakest 663 (plagioclase above wet quartz with 0.12% added water).

664 Scaling of analogue models in Figure 14 diagram is impossible, but viscosity and strain 665 rates values used in (Brun et al., 1994) allow the calculation of a $10^{1.2}$ intra-crustal 666 strength contrast in the tilted-block mode extension and $10^{2.39}$ contrast in MCC mode. 667 Here again, an increase about 1 order or magnitude is sufficient to promote MCC pattern 668 development.

669 Since the first order parameter often considered as critical for MCC pattern development 670 is initial thermal state (Buck, 1991, Tirel et al., 2008) to such an extent that MCCs are 671 sometimes considered as restricted to warm lithospheres, the effect of intra-crustal 672 strength contrast can be evaluated in regard to initial Moho temperature (Figure 15). All 673 simulations considered here cover a wide domain of initial thermal conditions between 674 400°C and 1340 °C Moho temperatures, i.e. much wider that the expected possible 675 values, even in the most severe post-orogenic thermal relaxation. The present study 676 produces MCCs with initial Moho temperature as cold as 680° C. Huet et al. (2009) and 677 Wu et al. (2015) yielded the same result, highlighting that cold MCCs constitute a

678 thermo-mechanically sound concept. The rift patterns with the initially warmest 679 lithosphere were actually produced by Tirel et l. (2008). The domain in which the 680 different models can give any of the distinguished extension modes actually span from 681 470° C to 950 $^{\circ}$ C initial Moho temperature, meaning that thermal state, in its admitted 682 range, is not a critical parameter for predicting lithospherical extension mode.

683

684 **4.2 Numerical insights versus Mediterranean examples**

685 **4.2.1 Natural vs numerical categorization**

686 The parametric study presented here, together with a compilation of similar numerical 687 modelling of continental extension modes leads on one hand to a 4 end-member model, 688 with double domes MCCs, perennial detachment MCCs, wide rift and narrow rift as 689 possible resulting geometries. On the other hand, the review of Mediterranean 690 extensional MCCS points to a 3 end-member categorization of MCCs : HT MCCs with a 691 high temperature lower unit, HP MMCs with an interlayered high-pressure nappe 692 preserved in the vicinity of the detachment, and High Strength (HS) upper crust MCCs 693 localizing strain at its base. The juxtaposition of both reviews enables discussing the 694 mechanical properties behind the three natural types defined here. Actually each of the 695 numerical studies also explored a ternary diagram with 3 end-members : high 696 temperature, weak middle crust and strong upper crust (Figure 15 inset) that resembles 697 the ternary diagram used for classification of natural meditarranean cases. Weak middle 698 crust relate to the HP natural end-member, and strong upper crust to HS end-member. 699 Tirel et al. (2008), Schenker et al. (2012) as well as the high temperature experiments 700 conducted here confirm the acknowledged behaviour of continental lithosphere with

701 high thermal gradient (HT end-member). Within this category the distinction of double-702 dome vs perennial detachment MCCS will de discussed further. Huet et al. (2009) 703 explored the effect of an inter-layered weak zone, representing a HP metasedimentary 704 nappe in natural cases. In this respect, they explored the left joint of the ternary 705 diagram. The present study, with 2-layer crust lithospheres, as well as Wu et al. (2015) 706 *pro parte* explored the right-hand joint of the diagram. Numerical modelling therefore 707 evidences the mechanical feasability of all natural end-members.

708

709 **4.2.2 Natural double domes and perennial detachment MCCs in nature**

710 Not all natural cases can be plotted in the diagram derived from numerical simulations 711 (Figure 16), since their initiation thermal conditions and intra-crustal strength contrasts 712 remain uneasy to assess. Nevertheless, some of them can be qualitatively localized and 713 tend to confirm the relevance of this categorization. The description of double-domes by 714 Rey et al. (2009) is based on a two dimensional projection of Naxos core complex main 715 features. Schenker et al. (2012) also consider Naxos as a natural case for their collisional 716 heat induced migmatitic core complex, while Rhodope represents the asthenospheric 717 heat induced migmatitic core complex. These cases (table 1) all illustrate the high 718 temperature-high strength(Figure 16) end of our simulations, with low-viscosity 719 migmatites exhumed in the core of the lower plate beneath a detachment located at the 720 base of an unmetamorphosed ophiolite-bearing unit. Among cold MCCs, the Catena 721 Costiera detachment (Rossetti et al., 2004) exhumed blueschist continental metaclastics 722 and marbles beneath a greenschist ophiolitic melange. Mylonites and cataclasites 723 derived from weak marbles and metapelites, implying a strong inheritance effect. Strain 724 indicators show a pervasive asymmetric sense of shear toward NNW, related to the

725 activation of a single detachment zone. Other large MCCs such as Northern Cyclades, 726 Motajica, Menderes or Betic cordilleras actually show evolution through time that can 727 relate to the evolution of the mechanical properties of the crust they develop in. 728 Compilation of PT paths in metamorphic units from the Aegean domain {Jolivet:2008eb} 729 shows variations in decompression paths similar to synthetic paths computed from 730 numerical modelling (Figures 10G & 11G), with cooler paths for the latest rocks 731 exhumed in Crete or in Peloponnese. PT paths shapes are therefore relevantly 732 reproduced without viscous heating in our models testifying that this process is a 733 second order phenomenon in detachment system, especially when weak lithologies are 734 implied over time scales about 10 Myr (Souche et al., 2013) or that shear heating is 735 counterbalanced by local cooling processes such as fluid advection within detachment 736 (Famin et al., 2004, Mezri et al., 2015).

737

738 **4.2.3 Temporal evolution of multiple detachment systems**

739 Detachment systems $(\S$ 2.2.2) as well as smaller structures with several detachments 740 (Betics and Motajica for instance) can be described as a sequence of changes in strain 741 localization levels. Menderes and Cycladic systems evolve toward the high temperature 742 end-member in the ternary diagram proposed for natural cases (Figure 5). Nevertheless, 743 their mechanical evolution differ and they do not follow the same trend in the intra-744 crustal strength contrast vs thermal state diagram (Figure 16). In Menderes (Figure 745 17A), strain is first localized at the base of or within the high-pressure metamorphic 746 rocks and the Izmir Ankara Ophiolite, along the Simay Detachment, which actually 747 reactivates an older thrust. Whether the equivalent thrust at the base of the Lycian

748 nappes effectively accommodated extension remains unknown. Even though the 749 intrusion of the syn-tectonic Egrigoz granite (crystallization at 20-21 Ma and cooling at 750 20 Ma, Dilek, 2009) is expected to lower the effective strength of the detachment zone, 751 mylonites along Simav Detachment exhibit similar ages (22.8 Ma, Tekeli, 2001) implying 752 a short activation duration for the Simav Detachment. Strain is accommodated in a 753 second time within the lower plate, between 16 and 7 Ma according to syntectonic 754 granites ages (Figure 17A), basin infills in hanging-walls of detachments (16.7 to 14.9 755 Ma) and dating of white micas in mylonites $(7 \pm 1 \text{ Ma Lips}, 2001)$. The Alasehir and 756 Buyuk detachments (Table 1) constitute a synchronous and antithetic detachment pair, 757 that relocates strain at the core of the Menderes massif while stretching goes on. This 758 implies that this domain is eventually weaker than the previously activated Simav 759 Detachment zone, probably due to crustal thinning, rise of thermal state and intrusion of 760 granites. Intra-crustal strength contrast is probably rising with thermal state during 761 stretching and extension mode evolves from perennial asymmetric detachment to a 762 double-dome symmetric MCC.

763 In Northern Cyclades (Figure 17B) the successive Tinos, Livada and Mykonos 764 detachment zones (Jolivet et al., 2010) progressively relocate strain higher within the 765 upper plate while stretching develops from 30 to 9 Ma and thermal state increases with 766 consecutive intrusions of syn-tectonic granites at 14-15 and 11-13 Ma. Late reactivation 767 of the Vari detachment on Syros at 10 Ma is limited and the North Cycladic Detachment 768 System can be considered as a perennial asymmetric detachment system responsible for 769 most of the exhumation in northern Cyclades. It seems that intra-crustal strength 770 contrast remained governed by inheritance and that intrusion of granites only promoted 771 upward migration of the shear zone within the upper plate. For this reason, the North

772 Cycladic Detachment System evolution can be viewed as a rise in thermal gradient 773 without drastic change in intra-crustal contrast through time.

774 The Betic cordilleras (Figure 17C) clearly show a double detachment system, with the 775 older Malaguides-Alpujarrides Detachment (activated from 23 to 20 Ma) on top and the 776 younger Mecina-Filabres Shear Zone (activated from 16 to 7 Ma, Augier et al, 2005). 777 While the first one is highly asymmetric with only top-to-the-North shear sense 778 indicators developed in the northern mylonitic edge of the Sierra de las Estancias massif 779 (Lonergan and Platt, 1995), the Mecina Filabres shear zone wraps a multiple dome 780 structure (Sierra de los Filabres and Sierra Alhamilla) with divergent shear sense 781 indicators (Augier et al., 2005a). Even if highly tridimensional, this pattern implies that 782 the older detachment system (MAD, Figure 17C) progressively hardens while lower 783 detachment activates.

784 In the Carpathian (Figure 17D), the Motajica dome is also the result of a two stage 785 extension between 25 and 13 Ma (Ustaszewski et al., 2010). Until 18 Ma, the main 786 structure accommodating strain is the former Tisza-Dacia unit basal thrust reactivated 787 as a detachment, strain is then accommodated along a symmetric listric faults system 788 (Figure 17D) that cuts across the Motajica Detachment. The Motajica granite, that 789 yielded a 27 Ma U-Pb zircon age (Ustaszewski et al., 2010) predates the regional 790 extension stage so that relocalization of strain within the metamorphic Sava zone cannot 791 be ascribed to intrusion. Nevertheless, this example is a supplemental illustration of the 792 recurrent evolution from perennial detachment MCCs toward double-dome MCCs with 793 increasing stretching of the crust. This conclusion is apparently opposite to the temporal 794 evolution of extension modes speculated from short term modelling (Buck, 1991) and 795 exemplified by the Basin and Range: from MCC to wide-rift and then narrow-rift. Ring et

796 al. (2003) also view Menderes as a wide-rift structure overprinting a former MCC 797 pattern. The main difference between these two evolutions is the heat budget and time 798 scale. The perennial detachment toward double-dome MCC evolution implies heat input 799 at the base of the crust higher than heat dissispation due to stretching, due to 800 lithospheric stretching for instance, while the MCC toward rift evolution implies a 801 decreasing heat budget due to efficient heat dissipation during MCC extension phase. 802 While the first evolution seems supported by natural evidences over short time periods 803 (15 to 20 Myrs in examples developed here, Figure 17), the later could be relevant for 804 longer time-scale evolutions (over more than 40 Myrs for the Great Basin MCC cluster 805 (Dickinson, 2002)

806

807 4.3 Thermal state, inheritance, strain rate and metamorphism as controlling 808 **parameters for intra-crustal strength contrast**

809 The present study after other numerical modelling of extension modes of the continental 810 lithosphere (Huet et al., 2010; 2011; Rey et al., 2009; 2011; Tirel et al., 2008; 2006; Wu 811 et al., 2015) enables to discuss the balance between parameters controlling the intra-812 crustal strength contrast within the crust. The present compilation of models shows that 813 an exaggeration of one order of magnitude of the intra-crustal strength contrast is 814 sufficient to switch extension mode from rifting to MCC. In a crude approximation, the 815 impact of the different parameters invoked is to lower the effective strength of the lower 816 crust. Maximum strength within the crust being controlled by frictional behaviour, it is 817 unlikely to vary over one order of magnitude for material governed by Byerlee's law. 818 Using the different lithologies considered as relevant for crustal materials (diorite, 819 quartzite and wet quartzite), a simple calculation of effective strength for various

820 temperatures and strain rates (Figure 18) shows that for a quartz-diorite at 650° C, 821 strained at $10^{-13.5}$ s⁻¹, strain rate must decrease of more than 2 orders of magnitude (A in 822 Figure 18), or temperature must rise of 200 \degree C (B in Figure 18) to lower its effective 823 strength of 1 order of magnitude. Alternatively, a wet quartzite in the same conditions is 824 also 10 times less resistant (C in Figure 18). Strain rate and temperature therefore must 825 change drastically in order to promote high intra-crustal strength contrast. Layering due 826 to inheritance can therefore be a first order parameter responsible for such contrasts. 827 These three effects actually can add up: a warm and layered crust stretched at a low 828 strain rate will definitely develop a MCC pattern.

829 Together with layering, inner complex structures can be inherited from preliminary 830 thickening stages. Dipping lithological contrast have a strong impact on extensional 831 behavior of the crust (Huet et al., 2011; Le Pourhiet et al., 2004; Wu et al., 2015). Lateral 832 strength contrast gradients produced with realistic geometries (Wu et al., 2015) are also 833 about 1 order of magnitude (Figure 14). Dipping interfaces therefore also constitute a 834 first order inheritance effect. Transcurrent structures, prone to develop during 835 thickening

836 Metamorphic reactions responsible for destabilization or crystallization of weak phases 837 or fluid influx were not taken into account in all the studies considered here, that all 838 focused on materials with continuous rheology. According to experimental studies 839 (Jaoul et al., 1984), a quartz aggregate with 0.28 wt% H_2O has an effective viscosity 100 840 times lower than a dry aggregate. This severe effect implies that the destabilization or 841 crystallisation of a limited percentage of hydroxyl-bearing minerals during the 842 exhumation of the lower plate (Figure 7) can induce high intra-crustal strength contrast. 843 This effect has also been implemented in numerical modelling with complex feedback
844 between strain, permeability and metamorphic reactions (Mezri et al., 2015). It appears 845 that models implementing water-controlled phase change develop an asymmetric 846 detachment MCC evolving into a double-dome MCC, while reference model (TMoho 847 810°C, stretching rate 0.8 cm/yr) yields a narrow rift extension pattern. Second 848 invariant of strain rate tensor in the high fluid flux domains is more than one order of 849 magnitude higher than in the low fluid flux domains, implying a weakening effect of 850 more than one order of magnitude. Partial melting, observed in most of high 851 temperature MCCs cores, has also been considered in models as a sharp viscosity drop 852 within the lower crust (Rey et al., 2009, Schenker et al., 2012). When implemented as 853 such, solidus envelope at depth constitutes a sharp intra-crustal strength contrast and 854 promotes the development of double-dome MCCs. Intra-crustal strength contrasts in 855 these cases are close to 3 orders of magnitude higher than the critical value defined here 856 (Figure 14, 15).

857

858 **Conclusion**

859 The understanding of MCC development and the localization of strain on a perennial 860 detachment zone was initially based on models with homogeneous crust, and 861 highlighted the major role of crustal thickness and temperature in the mode of extension 862 of continental lithosphere. The examination of natural cases in the Mediterranean realm 863 emphasizes a second type of MCCs exhuming "cold" metamorphic rocks beneath a 864 detachment system localized along sharp intra-crustal strength contrast inherited from 865 thickening stages of orogenic crusts. Interlayered HP parametamorphic nappes and 866 basal contacts of resistant upper units most of the time localize extensional strain. The 867 comparison of new and published numerical models of extending continental

868 lithosphere confirms the mechanical feasability of core-complex in continental 869 lithosphere with low thermal gradients and marked layering. It also shows that intra-870 crustal strength contrast is a key parameter for predicting the extension mode of 871 continental lithosphere. Beyond a critical value of 1000, MCCs develop, whatever the 872 initial thermal state, thickness or strain rate. For high values of this contrast, double-873 dome core complex develop, with strain progressively re-localizing at the center of the 874 footwall during stretching, while asymmetric dome geometries with one perennial 875 detachment are produced for intra-crustal strength contrast close to 1000. Natural 876 examples of Mediterranean detachment systems also show these two MCC types, and 877 evolution of multiple detachments system show that in most cases inheritance controls 878 the first extension steps and asymmetric strain pattern, and that further stretching is 879 accommodated by double dome dynamics, driven by thermal effects mainly.

880 The present study is based on mediterranean that share a common tectonic setting and 881 possibly some specificities of the post-variscan crust and alpine cover. Nevertheless the 882 proposed critical parameter for MCC development proposed here, i. e. the intra-crustal 883 strength contrast and the gradation of extension modes and core-complex types could 884 be used in comparable settings. The Cordilleran Core Complexes developed during post-885 orgenic extension or the numerous comparable studies recently described in China 886 (Whitney et al., 2013) could also be considered in a broader review.

887

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894 manuscript.

895

897 Table and Figure captions

898 Table 1: Caracteristic features of Mediterranean detachments and associated domes 899 and basins. Pand T estimates for metamorphic peak conditions (4.2) are given in 900 supplemental table A1. A: amphibolite, BS: blueschist, E: eclogite; GS: greenschist, 901 HANF: high angle normal fault, HPA: high pressure amphibolite, HPG: high pressure 902 granulite, LANF: low angle normal fault, LPA: low pressure amphibolite,

903

904 Table 2 : Main features of Mediterranean detachments tectonostratigraphies. C for calc-905 mylonites, m/c for marine vs continental basins, S and P for syn- and post-orogenic 906 initiations. c continental, m marine, off off-shore. The relative weighing of ticks between 907 lines 1,2 and 3, line 4 and line 5 was used to place natural cases on figure 5. 908 AA Alpi Apuane, ABMDS Alasehir-Buyuk Menderes Detachment System, Asp 909 Aspromonte, ASZ Alakeci Shear Zone, Bal Balagne basal contact, BB Beni Bousera, CaD 910 Capanne Detachment, CCD Calcare Cavernoso Detachment, CMe Central Menderes, CR 911 Corinth Rift, CrD Cretan Detachment, Ed Edough, GK Grande Kabylie, Ik Ikaria, Kaz 912 Kazdağ, KD Kabylian Detachment, KnD Kerdylion Detachment, LL Lubenik Line, MAD 913 Malguides-Alpujarrides Detachment, MeSZ Messaria Shear Zone, MFSZ Mecina-Filabres 914 Shear Zone, Mo Motajica, NCDS Northern Cycladic Detachment System, NCy Northern 915 Cyclades, Ni Niğde, NP Naxos-Paros, NPD Naxos Paros Detachment, SD Simav 916 Detachment, SD Simay Detachment, Sy Syros, Sif Sifnos, TeSZ Tenda Shear Zone, TKD 917 Tokachka-Kesebir Detachment, VD Vari Detachment, Ve Veporic, ZFZ Zaouia Fault Zone.

918

919 Table 3: Rheological parameters used and varied for the differents models. Dislocation 920 creep law for the mantle is dry dunite (Chopra and Paterson, 1984), and for the crust 921 guartz-diorite and dry quartzite (Ranalli and Murphy, 1987) and wet quartzite (Kirby 922 and Kronenberg, 1987).

923 Table 4 : Simulation results. Each simulation is named after its layering (d: quartz-924 diorite, $q:$ quartzite, w: wet quartzite), the initial crust thickness, in km, and initial 925 bottom temperature in Celsius. Evenly layered crusts have two half-crust layers. All 926 parameters are computed with initial geometry and a 1 cm.yr⁻¹ stretching rate for a 210 927 km long crustal segment, i.e. strain rate = 2.10^{-15} s⁻¹. Intra-crustal strength contrast is the 928 ratio of maximum strength at the brittle-ductile transition over viscous strength at Moho 929 depth, Integrated lithospheric strength is calculated on the 90 km height of models. 930 Result types are listed as : R, narrow rifts, WR, wide rifts, PDC perennial detachment 931 core complexes, DDC double dome core complexes. X refers to geologically meaningless 932 simulations. Bold lines refer to simulations used as examples in figures 8, 9 and 10. 933 **Figure 1**: Principle sketch of a Metamorphic Core Complex, showing the association of

934 structures and fault-rock types considered as symptomatic for ductile extensional mode. 935 Rheological envelope associated to these structures is also shown. BDT : Brittle-ductile 936 transition.

937 **Figure 2** : Map of Mediterranean core complexes on top of Moho isobaths, homogenized 938 and smoothed after (Dèzes and Ziegler, 2001; Di Luccio and Pasyanos, 2007; Koulakov 939 and Sobolev, 2006; Marone et al., 2003; Tiberi et al., 2001) The large Menderes and 940 Betics domes have been subdivided into units. Shoreline in white.

964 Gumusler, HGMU High grade metasedimentary u., HPU High pressure u., IAO Izmir-965 Ankara ophiolite, LANF Low Angle Normal Fault, LiD Livada detachment, Malag. 966 Malaguides, MGU Migmatite-granite u., Mul Mulhacen, MyD Mykonos detachment, N.F. 967 Nevado-Filabrides, NMM, CMM & SMM North Central and South Menderes massifs, 968 Pelag. Pelagonian, Phyllites-Q. Phyllites-quartzites, Pi Pindos, Ro Rochovce, S. L. Schistes 969 Lustrés, Seb. Sebtides, TB Tyros beds, Tell. Tellian u., TiD Tinos Detachment, Tu Turgutlu 970 granite, UOU, LOU Upper and Lower ophiolite u., ZF Zaroukla fault

971 **Figure 5** : Ternary diagram representing the balance of thermal and inheritance effects 972 on the different Mediterranean extensional detachments, abbreviated as in Table 1. 973 Positions in the triangle come from the relative weighting of caracteristic features listed 974 in table 1. Regular case: detachments inherited from syn-orogenic tectonics, bold case : 975 post-orogenic detachments. HT high temperature footwall, HP high pressure unit 976 preserved in the footwall, HS high strength hanging wall. White arrows represent time 977 evolution of detachment systems.

978 **Figure 6**: Synoptic comparative time evolution or relative position of syn-detachment 979 collapse basins preserved in the Mediterranean realm according to their sedimenrary 980 infill. Arrow senses represent time evolution : most of basins evolve tward marine 981 (downward arrows), only NaPaD basin is evolving from marine to continental with time 982 (upward bold arrow). Color represent paleobathymetry for marine basins (light grey: 983 shallow, darker grey: deep) Refers to line 2.1 in table 1 and references therein.

984 Abbreviations as in table 1.

985 **Figure 7** : Thermochemical modelling of mode evolution of three protoliths

986 representative for pelites, granites and basalts as detailed in table I B95, Boggs, 1995,

987 LM76 : Le Maitre, 1976. A, B, C and E, F, G : modal evolutions in volume fractions along

988 paths 1 and 2 as shown on J. Micas are phengite and paragonite together. More chaotic 989 curves in C and G are due to poorly constrained complex local equilibria along main 990 reactions in mafic rocks. D and $H : Phyllosilicates$ volume fraction evolution along the 991 same paths. Shaded areas represent brittle quartz domain.

992 **Figure 8** : Set-up of numerical experiments initial conditions for a 45 km thick double 993 layered crust (?/?_45_???? cases in table 4) See Huet et al., 2011 for details. Bottom 994 temperatures are varied between 1000, 1200 and 1400° C. Resulting initial Moho 995 temperatures are listed in table 3. Hatched column on the left represent a 20 km wide 996 area with no noise on cohesion and a higher cohesion (30 MPa instead of 20 MPa).

997 **Figure 9**: Compared output of numerical experiments for simulation d/q_2 30_1400, 998 representative of a rift-type extension mode $(A & C)$ after 6 Myr stretching and 999 simulation q/q_145_1200 representative for the wide rift extension mode after 12 Myr 1000 stretching. White curves show foliation trajectories from finite strain computed as in 1001 Huet et al., 2011. C & D represent instantaneous strain rates. Initial strength profiles 1002 computed for 2.10^{-15} s⁻¹ and parameters detailed in table 2 are depicted in E and F. 1003 Values are precised in table 3.

1004 **Figure 10** : Simulation d/q 45 1200 output representative for perennial detachment 1005 core complex extension mode. $A \& B$: geometry after 4 and 14 Myr stretching, with 1006 position of markers used for PT and exhumation calculations. White curves show 1007 foliation trajectories from finite strain computed as in Huet et al., 2011. C & D : 1008 instantaneous strain rates profiles, E Initial strength profile computed for 2.10^{-15} s⁻¹ and 1009 parameters detailed in table 2F & G: exhumation history and PT paths for markers 1, 2 1010 and 3.

1011 **Figure 11** : Simulation d/w 45 1200 output representative for double dome core 1012 complex extension mode. A & B: geometry after 4 and 14.1 Myr stretching, with position 1013 of markers used for PT and exhumation calculations. White curves show foliation 1014 trajectories from finite strain computed as in Huet et al., 2011. C & D : instantaneous 1015 strain rates profiles, E Initial strength profile computed for 2.10^{-15} s⁻¹ and parameters 1016 detailed in table 2F & D: exhumation history and PT paths for markers 1, 2 and 3.

1017 **Figure 12**: Resulting geometries of the simulations run in this study. Series are refered

1018 to as in table 3. A, B & C represent homogeneous crust simulations, D and E evenly

1019 layered crust simulations and F unevenly layered simulations. Line 45 km on D

1020 represents the same simulations as line 1/2 on F.

1021 **Figure 13**: Intra-crustal strength contrast vs integrated lithosphere strength logarithm

1022 plot for all 48 meaningfull simulations listed in table 3. Effect of different tested

1023 parameters is highlighted by series tied by dash lines. Triangles: series $d/q \times 1000$,

1024 squares: series d/d_60_X, diamonds: d/X_45_1200, crosses: d/q_45_1200. 1/3, 1/2, 2/3

1025 refer to the relative size of the upper crust in unevenly layered crust simulations.

1026 **Figure 14**: Intra-crustal strength contrast vs integrated lithosphere strength log-log

1027 plot for 46 published numerical simulations compared to present study. TS This Study,

1028 H11 (Huet et al., 2011), all 9 simulations are reported, T08 (Tirel et al., 2008) all 32

1029 simulations reported, R09 (Rey et al., 2009) 2 simulations reported, with no melt effect

1030 at slow $(2.10^{-16} \text{ s}^{-1})$ and fast $(2.10^{-15} \text{ s}^{-1})$ stretching rate. S12 (Schenker et al., 2012) all 12

1031 models reported. W15 (Wu et al., 2015) 3 models reported, with wedge-shape layered

1032 crust and no prescribed weak interface. Calculations were made at each initial model

1033 end (thick and thin ends). Bold squares : stretching rate effect, as explored by Tirel et al.

1034 (2008) on the series with initial crustal thickness 60 km and initial Moho temperature 1035 830 $^{\circ}$ C (mantle heat flux 30mW.m⁻²)

1036 **Figure 15**: Intra-crustal strength contrast vs initial Moho temperature logarithm plot 1037 for 46 published numerical simulations compared to present study. Legend as in figure 1038 14. Triangle inset refers to ternary end-member MCC types analogue to ternary diagram 1039 used for Mediterranean examples (Figure 5). Symbols at triangle edges refer to where 1040 different studies plot in this diagram.

1041 **Figure 16**: Synthetic diagramm showing preponderance of intra-crustal strength

1042 contrast over thermal state of the crust on extension mode in mediterranean natural

1043 cases on the basis of thermal evolutions recorded.

1044 **Figure 17**: Examples of time evolution of multiple detachment systems in the

1045 Mediterranean. Detachment named as in Table 1. Moho depth as in Figure 2. A

1046 Menderes, IAO: Izmir Ankara Ophiolite, modified after VanHinsbergen, 2010 and Ring,

1047 2003, B- North Cycladic Detachment System, after Jolivet et al., (2010), C Betic

1048 Cordilleras after Augier et al. (2005) and Lonergan and Platt (1995), D Motajica after

1049 Ustazjewski et al. (2010). g. for granite

1050 **Figure 18**: Strength contours in MPa (presented with a logarithmic scale) for different

1051 crustal lithologies used in the present study. A, B and C are responsible for the same

1052 strength drop of 1 order of magnitude. A: strain rate drop, B: temperature increase, C:

1053 lithological change from quartz-diorite to wet quartzite.

1054

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Table 1a

Table 1b

Table 1c

Table1d

Table1e

Table1f

Table1g

table 3

Uneven layered crust:

upper crust/lower crust_upper thickness/total thickness [km]_Tbottom [°C]

table 4

Temperature (°C)

Initial Moho Temperature [°C]

 600 620 650 690

 650 550 500

450 500
375 525

 550 450

 520 720 370 450

