

Active Tectonics of the Pyrenees: A review

Revisión de la tectónica activa de los Pirineos

P. Lacan^{1,2}, M. Ortuño*^{1,3}

¹ *Centro de Geociencias, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México,
Blvd. Juriquilla, 3001, 76230, Juriquilla, Querétaro, Mexico*

² *Laboratoire des Fluides Complexes et leurs Réservoirs (LFC-R) UMR5150 - CNRS, Université de Pau,
IPRA, BP 1155, F-64013 Pau Cedex, France*

³ *Departament de Geodinàmica i Geofísica, Universitat de Barcelona, Martí i Franquès s/n, 08028, Barcelona, Spain*

**Corresponding author: maria_ortuno@geociencias.unam.mx.
Tel.: +52 (442) 238-1104 Ext. 104; fax: +52 (442) 238-1124*

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Abstract

The Pyrenees have experienced at least seven earthquakes with magnitude $M > 5$ in the last 400 years. During the last decades, several seismotectonic, neotectonic and paleoseismological studies have focused on identifying the main active structures of the areas experiencing damaging earthquakes. In spite of these studies, the regional stress regime is still discussed and there is no unequivocal seismotectonic model at the scale of the range. In this paper, we first present a revision of the former works on active faults in the Pyrenees, and then we discuss the main results in terms of their neotectonic setting. We have distinguished five neotectonic regions according to their seismicity, faulting style and morphologic evolution: the westernmost Pyrenees, the North Western Pyrenean zone, the Foreland basins, the Lower Thrust Sheets Domain and the Eastern Pyrenees. This review lead us to differentiate the range into two major domains: the High Chain, where active faults are controlled by vertical maximum stresses, and the Low Chain, where horizontal maximum stresses of variable orientation seem to be dominant. We propose that these different stress domains are related to the isostatic rebound in response to either the difference in crustal thickness and/or the distribution of the Plio-Quaternary erosion.

Keywords: Neotectonics, Seismogenetic sources, Stress field, Geodynamics, Isostatic compensation of erosion

Resumen

En los últimos 400 años, los Pirineos han sufrido al menos siete terremotos de magnitud $M > 5$. Durante las últimas décadas, varios estudios de sismotectónica, neotectónica y paleosismología han tratado de identificar las principales estructuras activas en las zonas epicentrales de los terremotos destructivos. A pesar de estos estudios, el estado de esfuerzos sigue bajo debate, sin que haya un modelo sismotectónico unívoco a la escala de la cordillera. En este artículo, realizamos una revisión de los trabajos previos sobre fallas activas en los Pirineos, y comentamos los principales resultados en términos de su contexto neotectónico. Hemos distinguido cinco regiones neotectónicas de acuerdo con su evolución geomorfológica, su sismicidad y el estilo de sus fallas: los Pirineos más occidentales, la Zona Noroeste Pirenaica, las cuencas de antepais, el dominio de láminas cabalgantes inferiores y los Pirineos Orientales. Esta revisión nos ha llevado a diferenciar la cadena en dos dominios principales: la Alta Cadena, donde estructuras paralelas a la cordillera son reactivadas como fallas normales y la Baja Cadena, donde las fallas han sido reactivadas por esfuerzos máximos compresivos subhorizontales y de orientación variable. En este trabajo proponemos que las diferencias en los esfuerzos de estos dominios guardan relación con el reajuste isostático en respuesta a diferencias en el espesor de la corteza y/o la distribución de la erosión Plio-cuaternaria.

Palabras clave: Neotectónica, Fuentes sismogénicas, Campo de esfuerzos, Geodinámica, Compensación isostática a la erosión

1. Introduction

Present-day plate convergence between Africa and Western Europe is mostly accommodated along the structures comprising the Betics-Alboran-Rif and Atlas domains. This motion has a main component oriented NNW–SSE to NW–SE and a rate of 4 to 6 ± 0.5 mm/year (DeMets *et al.*, 1994; Vernant *et al.*, 2010; Billi *et al.*, 2011). In the Pyrenees, the Present-day interplate velocity is certainly small, as attested by GPS measurements performed across the range over 10 years, which show uncertainties greater than the tectonic signal (< 1 mm/yr, Nocquet and Calais, 2004; Asensio *et al.*, 2012). In spite of this slow deformation rate, the Pyrenees exhibit continuous seismic activity and are the second most seismically area of the Iberian Peninsula and the main seismogenic region of continental France, as shown by its instrumental and historical seismicity (Fig. 1; Fig. 2; Souriau and Pauchet, 1998; Souriau *et al.*, 2001; Rigo *et al.*, 2005; Jiménez *et al.*, 1999; Herraiz *et al.*, 2000; Olivera *et al.*, 2006).

Although moderate earthquakes characterize the instrumental record (Fig. 2), the historical seismicity (Fig. 1) is indicative of the seismogenic potential of the Pyrenean structures, with at least four great earthquakes (with magnitudes $M = 6 - 7$) during the last 650 years (E.g.: Vogt, 1979; Lambert *et al.*, 1996; Olivera *et al.*, 2006). These destructive events had MSK intensities between VIII and IX and the last one occurred in 1750, more than 250 years ago. The absence of catastrophic earthquakes in the last century is reflected in the lack of social awareness of this hazard, and also in a scarcity of scientific research devoted to the thorough study of seismogenic structures.

The identification and characterization of potentially seismogenic faults in the Pyrenean landscape has to deal with specific challenges, as it is the absence of surface

faulting associated to the events recorded in the last centuries (e.g. Fleta *et al.*, 2001) and the poor preservation of neotectonic features in settings of high relief and low deformation rates (e.g. Ortuño, 2008; Lacan, 2008). Moreover, the assessment of the seismic risk in the range has to face the difficulties of being a political border, which is being partly solved through international efforts to share the geological data of potentially seismogenic structures (Paleosis project, Fleta and Goula, 1998) and seismic risk assessment and warning systems (e.g. SISPy, Isard project, Secanell *et al.*, 2008).

The seismic hazard maps proposed for the Pyrenean domain up to date (e.g. Dominique *et al.*, 1998; Autran *et al.*, 1998; Marin *et al.*, 2004; Secanell *et al.*, 2008; García-Mayordomo and Insua-Arévalo, 2011) are based on the seismicity distribution and on sismotectonic domains, without the consideration of the traces of the active faults determined by paleoseismological and/or geomorphological studies. Furthermore, no geodynamical model has been proposed so far to jointly explain the activity of the active faults of the range. The neotectonic indicators have been incorporated to the sismotectonic models only at a local scale (e.g.; Goula *et al.*, 1999; Herraiz *et al.*, 2000), which is probably the result of the scarcity of neotectonic studies and the lack of reviews focusing on this subject.

This paper searches 1) to summarize the potentially seismogenic faults previously identified in the Pyrenees, 2) to distinguish the neotectonic domains in which these structures are active and 3) to propose a geodynamical model explaining the co-existence of the active structures at a Pyrenean scale.

2. Neotectonic framework

The Pyrenean orogen results from the Iberian-Eurasian collision during the Mesozoic-Cenozoic alpine orogeny

(Choukroune and ECORS, 1989). This collision involved the Paleozoic basement affected by the previous Variscan orogeny and Permo-Triassic, Mesozoic and Paleogene rocks (Fig. 1), only deformed by thin skinned tectonics (e.g. Muñoz, 2002). The decrease of the orogenic forces (i.e. the beginning of the post-orogenic period) is asynchronous, starting during the Middle Oligocene in the eastern part and during the Middle Miocene in the western area (e.g. Paquet and Mansy, 1992; Vergés, 1994; Teixell, 1996). The post-orogenic period is characterized by a relatively slow convergence (E.g.: Vergés, 1993; Meigs and Burbank, 1997; Beaumont *et al.*, 2000; Fidalgo González, 2001; Sinclair *et al.*, 2005) with the result that the tectonic activity is not among the main factors defining the macromorphology. Although the chain could be considered as an inactive orogen, its seismicity and the ongoing tectonic activity of some of its structures indicate that it still is a living system.

In most of the Pyrenees, the neotectonic period (i.e. the period with a state of stress prevailing up to Present) started after the main compressional episode, and thus, is equivalent to the “post-orogenic period” defined above. The only region showing evidence of two consecutive post-orogenic phases is the Eastern Pyrenees. There, the alpine structures were affected by the Neogene Mediterranean rifting, which gave rise to the formation of Neogene intramontane and marine basins (e.g. Juliá and Santanach, 1980; Cabrera *et al.*, 1988; Roca, 1996; Gallart *et al.*, 2001; Mauffret *et al.*, 2001). During the Plio-Pleistocene times, some of the faults bounding the Neogene basins have been inverted (Philip *et al.*, 1992; Arthaud and Pistre, 1993; Grellet *et al.*, 1994; Goula *et al.*, 1999), and thus, the neotectonic period started more recently than in other parts of the range.

2.1. The stress state of the chain: a source of debate

During the last decades, several researches have aimed to understand the present day stress state of the Pyrenees based on the instrumental seismicity (Souriau and Pauchet, 1998; Souriau *et al.*, 2001; De Vicente *et al.*, 2008; Olaiz *et al.*, 2009; Chevrot *et al.*, 2011, among others) and/or on the definition of the seismotectonic regions with seismic hazard purposes (Olivera *et al.*, 1986; Souriau and Pauchet, 1998; Souriau *et al.*, 2001; Marin *et al.*, 2004; Ruiz *et al.*, 2006a; Secanell *et al.*, 2008; García-Mayordomo and Insua-Arévalo, 2011).

Focal solutions obtained show a great variety of results in similar oriented faults, in such a way that no homogeneous stress field could be calculated at a regional scale (Nicolas *et al.*, 1990; Delouis *et al.*, 1993; Souriau *et al.*, 2001). The diversity of mechanisms could be owed

to a real complexity of the tectonically active structures (Souriau et Pauchet, 1998; Souriau *et al.*, 2001; Rigo *et al.*, 2005). In spite of this difficulty, integrated analysis of geological data and nodal solutions led Herraiz *et al.* (2000) to propose a dominant vertical maximum stress (σ_1) with a minimum stress (σ_3) parallel to the range. Using a similar approach, Goula *et al.* (1999) proposed a N-S orientation of the maximum horizontal stress (σ_{Hmax}) for NE Iberia. More recently, determination of the focal mechanisms performed by De Vicente *et al.* (2008), Sylvander *et al.* (2008), Stich *et al.* (2010) and Chevrot *et al.* (2011) suggests an extensional stress regime for the Pyrenean range, or at least for its central part. Stich *et al.* (2010) consider that the updated moment tensor catalogue for NE Iberia is insufficient to establish the characteristics of faulting for this region. Recent GPS data performed during the last 3.5 years could also be compatible with a slow on-going extension perpendicular to the range (0.0025 ± 0.0005 mm/yr/km, Asensio *et al.*, 2012).

3. Seismogenic structures in the Pyrenees

Five seismogenetic domains can be identified in the Pyrenees on the basis of the published data relating 1) the distribution of the seismicity and the focal mechanisms obtained for some of the earthquakes, 2) the geodynamics of the neotectonic structures and 3) the morphological evolution of the area. These domains are: (1) the Westernmost Pyrenees, (2) the North Western Pyrenean zone, (3) the Foreland basins, (4) the Lower Thrust Sheets Domain and (5) the Eastern Pyrenees (inset in Fig. 3; Table 1). These regions roughly match with the seismotectonic domains distinguished by García-Mayordomo and Insua-Arévalo (2011) and Secanell *et al.* (2008) (Table 2). In the following lines, we review each of these domains, paying special attention on the active tectonic structures identified up to date. We include a last section on induced seismicity.

3.1. Westernmost Pyrenees (Basque Massifs and Navarran Pyrenees)

Historical seismicity catalogs (Fig. 1) show a high density of low to moderate events at the Westernmost Pyrenees, whereas the instrumental seismicity presents several clusters, the most striking one around Iruña (or Pamplona) city (Fig. 2).

Ruiz *et al.*, 2006a have focused on the instrumental seismicity of the area and identified an E–W band of seismicity along the Leiza Fault (structure 1 on Table 1 and Fig. 3), the southern limit of the Cinco Villas Massif within the Variscan Basque Massifs. The authors have

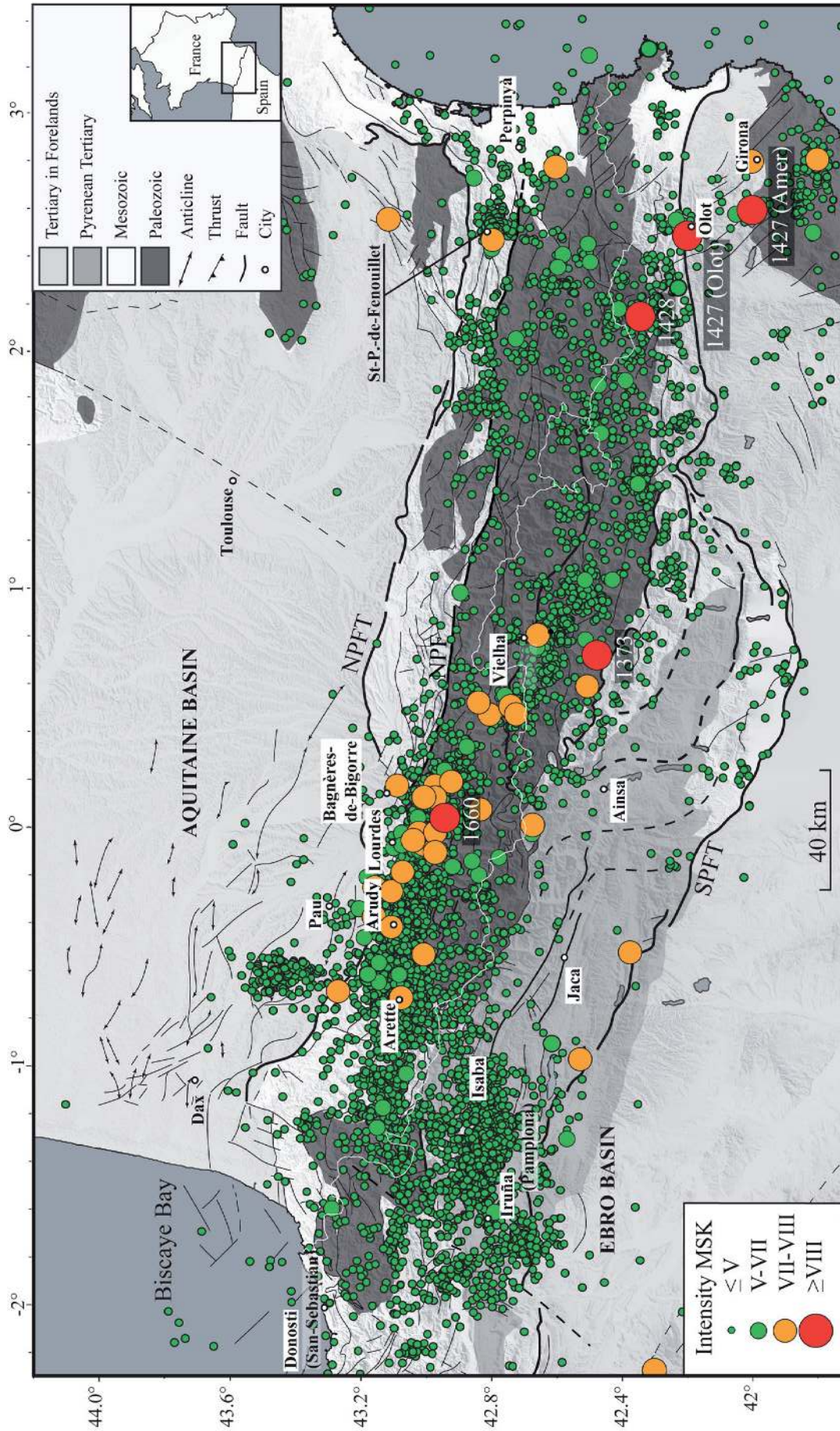


Fig. 1.- Historical seismicity (source: Servicio de Información Sísmica, Instituto Geográfico Nacional <http://www.ign.es/ign/layout/sismo.do>) plotted on the structural map of the Pyrenees (modify after Barnolas and Chiron, 1996). The dates of the earthquakes of magnitude $M > 6$ have been indicated. The epicenter of the 1427 (Amer) earthquake corresponds to Olivera *et al.* (2006).

Fig. 1.- Sísmicidad histórica (fuente: Servicio de Información Sísmica, Instituto Geográfico Nacional <http://www.ign.es/ign/layout/sismo.do>) proyectada sobre el mapa estructural de los Pirineos (modificado de Barnolas and Chiron, 1996). Se ha indicado el año de los terremotos de magnitud $M > 6$. La localización del terremoto de Amer (1427) se ha tomado de Olivera *et al.* (2006).

considered that the seismicity, which extends to the base of the seismogenic crust, is related to the activity of the Leiza Fault as a normal fault. To the south, other relevant seismic events are related to the central segment of the Pamplona Fault, and to different E–W thrust structures (Aralar Thrust, Roncesvalles Thrust; Ruiz *et al.*, 2006a; structures 2, 3 and 4 on Table 1 and Fig. 3).

In this area, only the Leyre Fault (structure 5 in Table 1 and Fig. 3) has been reported as possibly having a geomorphological expression (Insua-Arévalo and García-Mayordomo, 2009; García-Mayordomo and Insua-Arévalo, 2011) but not conclusive work has been published to date. Baize *et al.* (2002) document tectonic deformation of fluvio-glacial deposits without clear relation with a known fault at Isaba, Roncal Valley, which according to the authors could as well result from glacial-tectonics (site 6 on Table 2, Fig. 3).

Other references to neotectonic indicators at the Biscay coast are mentioned by Baize *et al.* (2002; and references therein). To date, these sites are poorly studied so they have not been included in this review.

3.2. The North Western Pyrenean Zone

The distribution of the historical and instrumental seismicity along the North Western Pyrenean Zone (NWPZ) singles this area out as the most seismically active of the Pyrenees (Fig. 1 and 2). The instrumental seismicity of the NWPZ clusters between the cities of Bagnères-de-Bigorre and Arette, in an 80 km long and 20 km wide area (Gagnepain-Beyneix *et al.*, 1982; Souriau *et al.*, 2001; Dubos, 2003; Rigo *et al.*, 2005; Ruiz *et al.*, 2006a; Dubos-Sallée *et al.*, 2007). This E–W Pyrenean band of seismicity seems to be limited to the east by the Adour Fault (or Bigorre Fault, structure 7 on Table 1 and Fig. 3), which does not show any geomorphological expression (Souriau *et al.*, 2001; Dubos, 2003; Dubos *et al.*, 2004).

Three destructive earthquakes have struck this area in 1750 (Lourdes, I = VIII), 1967 (Arette, M = 5.3 - 5.7; according to Souriau *et al.*, 2001) and 1980 (Arudy, MI = 5.1; according to Gagnepain-Beyneix *et al.*, 1982) (Fig. 1). The focal mechanism of the Arette earthquake corresponds to strike-slip (Trong and Rouland, 1971) or reverse faulting (MacKenzie, 1972). The main shock of the Arudy earthquake exhibits a right-lateral strike-slip component above an E–W trending nodal plane strongly dipping to the south (Nicolas *et al.*, 1990). However, more recently, De Vicente *et al.* (2008) and Sylvander *et al.* (2008) considered an unpublished focal mechanism (Global Centroid-Moment-Tensor Project) that suggests normal faulting for the main shock of this event.

Several studies, mainly located in the Arudy epicentral area, have been performed to identify and characterize neotectonic structures in the NWPZ. Only a few structures show surface expression and the scarcity of field evidence makes it difficult to properly characterize the regional neotectonic activity.

The Arudy epicentral area

Using the location of the instrumental seismicity, anisotropic wavelets, structural analysis, or soil gas profiles, some authors have identified some fractures and surface faults possibly related to the Arudy earthquake aftershocks sequence (Darrozes *et al.*, 1998; Gaillot *et al.*, 2002; Baubron *et al.*, 2002; Courjault-Radé *et al.*, 2009). The interpretation of the identified surface faults allows to explain the extensional focal mechanism of some aftershocks in the transpressional regime (σ_{Hmax} oriented NW-SE) generally recognized in this area. (Rebaï *et al.*, 1992; Delouis *et al.*, 1993; Souriau and Pauchet, 1998; Souriau *et al.*, 2001; Baubron *et al.*, 2002; Rigo *et al.*, 2005, among others). The faults and fractures identified are E–W to NW-SE oriented and less than 3 km long.

Also for this area and using seismological, structural and geomorphic data, Dubos-Sallée *et al.* (2007) proposed that the late Cretaceous inversion of the former Iberian Margin in a strike-slip mode resulted in a pop-up flower-like geometry limited to the south by the Mail Arrouy Thrust (structure 8 in Table 1, Fig. 3). This structure could correspond to the surface expression of the Herrère Fault (structure 9 in Table 1, Fig. 3), a buried crustal discontinuity reactivated as a right lateral fault in the present-day geodynamical arrangement. The authors consider that Herrère Fault could generate an earthquake with magnitude close to 6.5 based on its length (Table 3). The folding of late Pleistocene alluvial terraces formed on top of the Mail Arrouy Thrust indicates the recent activity of this fault as a reverse structure and supports the activity of the Herrère Fault in a strike-slip mode resulting from NE-SW horizontal compression (Lacan, 2008; Lacan *et al.*, 2012; Nivière *et al.*, submitted). Other possible indications of reverse faulting based on topographical anomalies of alluvial terraces have been reported in this zone of the Pyrenees (Pailhé and Thomas, 1984; Thomas and Pailhe, 1984; Delfaud *et al.*, 1985). We have not included these reports in the inventory of surface ruptures due to the lack of detailed descriptions published up to date.

The Lourdes Fault

Alasset and Meghraoui (2005) have identified an east-west-trending 50 m high fault scarp between the city of

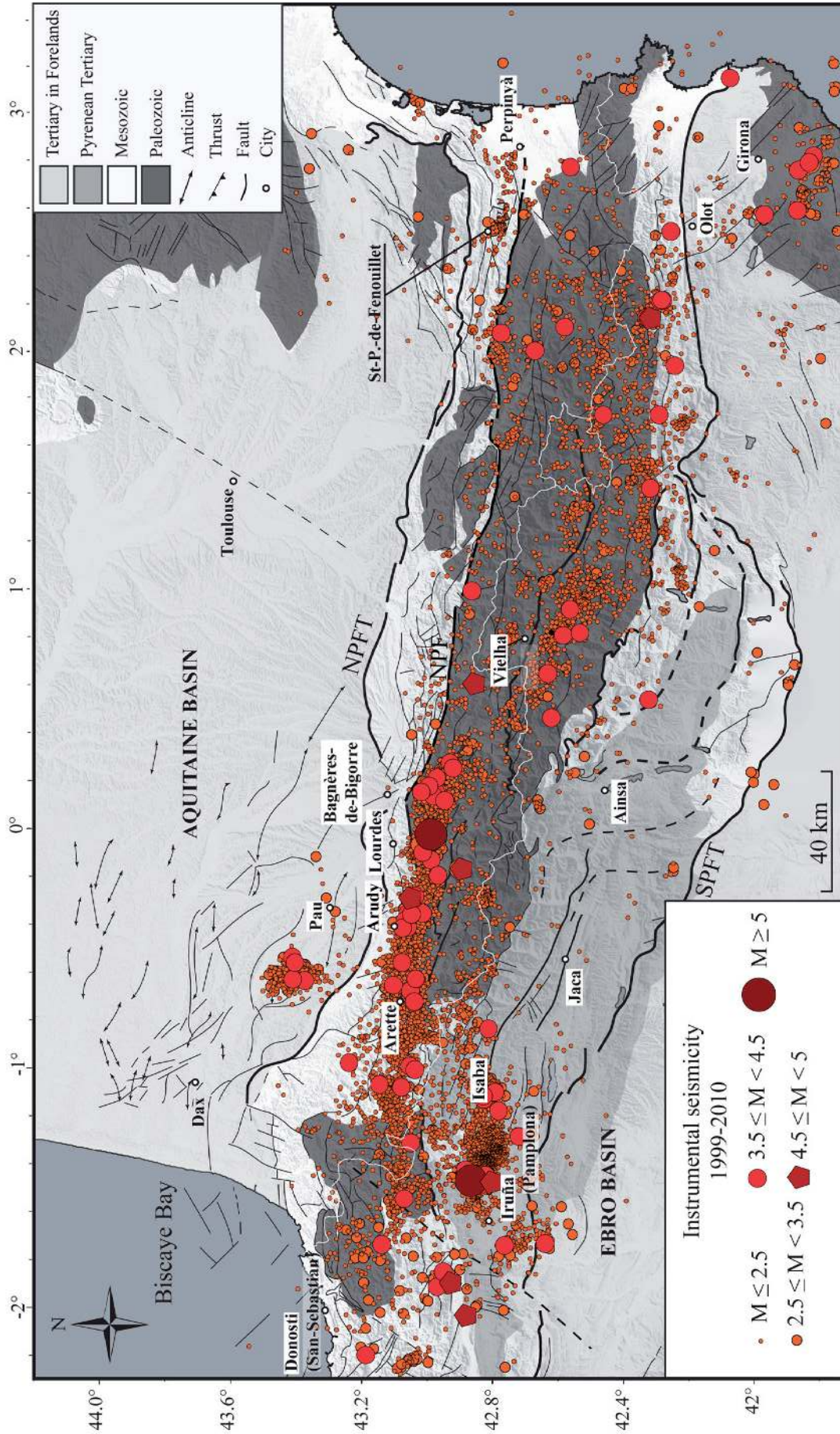


Fig. 2.- Instrumental seismicity from 1999 to 2010 (source: Observatoire-Midi-Pyrénées: http://rssp.omp.obs-mip.fr/sismicite_pyrenees/bulletin/bulletin.html) plotted on the structural map of the Pyrenees (modify after Barnolas and Chiron, 1996).
 Fig. 2.- Sismicidad instrumental desde 1997 al 2010 (fuente : Observatoire-Midi-Pyrénées: http://rssp.omp.obs-mip.fr/sismicite_pyrenees/bulletin/bulletin.html). proyectada sobre el mapa estructural de los Pirineos (modificado de Barnolas and Chiron, 1996).

Lourdes and Arette that they interpreted as the Lourdes reverse fault trace (structure 10 on Table 1 and Fig. 3). This fault has a 50 km long trace and is made of three contiguous linear segments. Trenches across the eastern segment exhibit a normal contact between Mesozoic cover rocks and Quaternary alluvium that is interpreted as the surface expression of the Lourdes fault (blind reverse fault). According to these authors, the most recent faulting event would have occurred between 4221 BC and 2918 BC. Fault parameters and paleoseismic results have led the authors to conclude that the Lourdes Fault and related sub-segments may produce M_w 6.5 to 7.1 earthquakes. The structural significance of the western segment of this fault is contested by Lacan *et al.* (2012).

3.3. *The foreland basins*

The Aquitaine and the Ebro basins are the major foreland basins of the Pyrenean range (Fig. 1). Their geology is characterized by low angle detachment structures that were inverted as thrust faults during the last episode of the orogenic compression (e.g. Jones, 2004; Teixell, 1996). Although these areas present low and sparse seismicity, deformation of Quaternary sediments has been reported at several locations, both at the Western Aquitaine and the North-eastern Ebro basins. In all cases, the setting of the deformation seems related to the growth of antiforms controlled by salt tectonics (halogenetic processes).

The Audignon and Campagne anticlines

Two sites described in the literature (structures 11 and 12 on Table 1; Fig. 3) show folding and faulting of Quaternary sediments in the Western Aquitaine basin: 1) the folding and reverse faulting of fluvio-glacial deposits located in the southern limb of the Audignon Anticline, at Horsarriu (Thibault, 1969; Baize *et al.*, 2002). The E-W to WNW-ESE orientation of the structures is parallel to the axis of the main anticline. This deformation is accompanied by injection of material from lower stratigraphic levels. According to Thibault (1969) and Baize *et al.* (2002), the deformation might be in part controlled by salt tectonics observed in the region; 2) oblique reverse and left lateral faulting of Quaternary interglacial fluvial sediments on top of the Campagne Anticline, at Mielhan. Also here, the orientation of the structures approximates the E-W strike of the anticline axis. The growth of the anticline seems to have uplifted fluvial terraces up to 40 m over the present day drainage level (Carbon *et al.*, 1995; Baize *et al.*, 2002). The study of a paleoseismological trench located in the younger succession showed the record of at least one paleoearthquake occurred < 500

ka ago, which vertically displaced the fluvial layers by 1.40 m along an array of 11 faults and caused fractures on pebbles (Carbon *et al.*, 1995). According to the authors, the faults probably are the surface expression of an active blind fault dipping to the south. Such a fault would be part of the detachment faults associated to the Aquitanian propagation front of the Pyrenean orogen. In this paper, we considered that the fractured pebbles next to the faults attest for the seismic origin of the deformation. Since the region is characterized by extensive growing of salt diapirs (Thibault, 1969 and references therein), we recommend considering the possibility of salt-tectonics as a second factor controlling the deformation.

For the Audignon and the Campagne anticlines, the evidence of active tectonics seem related to the reactivation of Pyrenean foreland detachment structures parallel to the range and under a NE-SW compression (Baize *et al.*, 2002 and references therein). However the influence of salt tectonics can not be excluded.

Canelles, Balaguer and Callús anticlines

At the Central South Pyrenees, Grellet *et al.* (1994; and references therein) and Goula *et al.* (1999), report tectonic deformation of Plio-Quaternary alluvial deposits at several sites, without identifying any major fault associated to it. The sites are all located near the South Pyrenean frontal thrust (structures 13, 14 and 15 in Table 1 and Fig. 3), the boundary between the Ebro foreland basin and the Mesozoic (alloctonous) cover. The faulting affects, in all cases, Plio-Quaternary fluvial deposits located in the flanks of anticlines. Goula *et al.* (1999) analyses the deformation observed at Canelles (next to Canelles Diapir), Ager (at the flanks of the Balaguer Anticline), and Callús (on the Callús Anticline). The neotectonic origin of these features is not unequivocal and a possible halogenic component of such deformation needs to be taken into account due to their location with respect to anticlinal structures with salt nuclei.

3.4. *The Lower Thrust Sheets Domain (LTSD)*

The “lower thrust sheets” is the structural term proposed by Muñoz (1992) to define the antiformal stack made of Paleozoic rocks in the core of the Pyrenean range. This area is part of the wider term “Axial zone” classically used in the division of the Pyrenees. All the active faults reported in this domain are active as normal faults.

Faults in the Western LTSD

The seismicity along the North-Western Pyrenean zone (Fig. 2) is organised, at its southern part, in several clus-

| Structure name | Length and Orientation | Age of observed deformation | Main evidence of activity based on: | | Fault kinematics / Vertical slip rate (mm/yr) | Origin (degree of confidence: 1 proved, 2 to be proved, 3 under debate) | References | Regions |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|-------------------|
| | | | Geomorphologic / Stratigraphic expression/ Other methods | Associated historical/instrumental seismicity | | | | |
| 1. Leiza Fault | ~30 km long ; E-W* | / | / | Associated microseismicity; 1885 and 1934 (IV ≤ I<VII)? * | Normal fault | / | Ruiz <i>et al.</i> (2006a) | Westmost Pyrenees |
| 2. Pamplona Fault (or Estella Fault) | 20 to 50 km long ; NNE-SSW* | / | / | Associated microseismicity | Strike-slip/normal fault | / | Ruiz <i>et al.</i> (2006a) | |
| 3. Aralar Fault | ~30 km long ; E-W | / | / | Associated microseismicity ; 2002 (M = 4.1) | / | / | Ruiz <i>et al.</i> (2006a) | |
| 4. Roncesvalles | ~20 km long ; E-W* | / | / | Associated microseismicity; 1918 (IV ≤ I<VII)? * | Strike-slip fault | / | Ruiz <i>et al.</i> (2006a) | |
| 5. Leyre Fault | ~30 km long ; E-W* | Upper Pleistocene? under investigation | Fluvial terraces apparently displaced | Associated microseismicity | Reverse fault | Neotectonic (3) | Insua-Arévalo and Garcia-Mayordomo (2009); Garcia-Mayordomo and Insua-Arévalo (2011) | NWPZ |
| 6. Isaba site | N-S to NE-SW | Würm ? | Faulting of fluvial or fluvio-glacial terraces | none | Reverse fault | Neotectonic or Glaciotectionics (2) | Baize <i>et al.</i> (2002) and references there in | |
| 7. Adour fault | NNW-SSE | / | / | Associated microseismicity; 1989 (M = 4.6)? | / | / | Souriau <i>et al.</i> (2001); Dubos (2003); Dubos <i>et al.</i> (2004) | |
| 8. Mail Arrouy fault | ~30 km-long; N110°E | Since 17 ky | Fluvial terraces folded, subsurface geophysics | Associated microseismicity | Reverse fault | Neotectonic (1) | Lacan <i>et al.</i> (2012), Lacan (2008), Nivière <i>et al.</i> (submitted) | Foreland Basins |
| 9. Herrère fault | 25-30 km long; E-W | Since 17 ky? | Indirect geomorphic evidences | Associated microseismicity 1980 Arudy EQ (M = 5.1) | Right lateral fault | Neotectonic (2) | Dubos <i>et al.</i> (2007); Lacan (2008); Lacan <i>et al.</i> (2012) | |
| 10. Lourdes fault | 60 km long (three segments), E-W | between 4221 BC and 2918 BC | Geomorph markers displaced, paleoseismicity, subsurface geophysics | Associated microseismicity | Reverse faults and associated normal faults | Neotectonic (1) | Alasset and Megraoui (2005), Alasset (2005) | |
| 11. Audignon anticline (fault propagation fold?) | E-W to WNW-ESE | Inter-Riss; 100-30 ka | Folding and reverse faulting of glacial terraces | none | Folds and reverse faults | Neotectonic or Halogenetic (2) | Thibault, 1969; Baize <i>et al.</i> , 2002 | High Chain |
| 12. Campagne anticline (fault propagation fold?) | 11 E-W parallel faults | Middle Pleistocene Paleoseismicity < 500 ka | Folding and reverse faulting of aluvial deposits; Fractured pebbles show paleoseismicity | none | Left lateral reverse fault/ > 0,003* (1.4 m vertical slip per event and greater cumulated slip) | Neotectonic (A) and Halogenetic* (2) | Granier <i>et al.</i> , 1995; Carbon <i>et al.</i> , 1995; Baize <i>et al.</i> , 2002 | |
| 13. Canelles anticline | N135°E | Plio-Quaternary | Gypsum of Keuper facies are thrusting a Quaternary terrace | none | Right lateral reverse fault on gypsum anticline | Neotectonic or Halogenetic* (2) | Philip <i>et al.</i> (1992); Goula <i>et al.</i> (1999) | |
| 14. Balaguer anticline | E-W | Plio-Quaternary | Alluvial terraces affected by deformation (imprecise nature) | none | Reverse fault on gypsum anticline | Neotectonic or Halogenetic* (2) | Philip <i>et al.</i> (1992); Grellet <i>et al.</i> (1994); Goula <i>et al.</i> (1999) | |
| 15. Callús anticline | ENE-WSW | Quaternary | Alluvial terraces affected by deformation (imprecise nature) | none | Reverse fault on gypsum anticline | Neotectonic or Halogenetic* (2) | Goula <i>et al.</i> (1999) | |
| 16. Bedous fault | ~20 km long ; WNW-ESE | not well constrained Quaternary? | Geomorph markers displaced, disturbance on the longitudinal profile of river | Associated microseismicity | Normal fault | Neotectonic (2) | Lacan (2008) | High Chain |
| 17. Laruns Fault | ~20-25 km long ; WNW-ESE | not well constrained | Geomorph markers displaced, disturbance on the longitudinal profile of river | Associated microseismicity | Normal fault | Neotectonic (2) | Rigo <i>et al.</i> (2005), Lacan (2008) | |
| 18. Pierrefitte Fault | ~20 km long (various segments) ; WNW-ESE | not well constrained Quaternary | Geomorph markers displaced, disturbance on the longitudinal profile of river, glacial valley-side displaced | Associated microseismicity, 1660? and 17/11/2006 seismic crisis. | Normal fault | Neotectonic (2) | Rigo <i>et al.</i> (2005), Sylvander <i>et al.</i> (2008), Lacan (2008) | |
| 19. Pic du Midi de Bigorre Fault | 20 km long ; WNW-ESE | not well constrained | Geomorph markers displaced | Associated microseismicity 1660? | Normal fault | Neotectonic (2) | Rigo <i>et al.</i> (2005), Lacan (2008) | |
| 20. Pierre St Martin fault system | Various small faults (0.1 to 3 km); WNW-ESE to multidirectional | Quaternary | Erosional surfaces displaced. Faceted spurs | none | Normal fault | Neotectonic and/or Gravitational (2) | Hervouët (1997); Klarica <i>et al.</i> (2001) | |
| 21. North Maladeta fault | ~30 km long ; WNW-ESE | Since Late Miocene | Erosional surfaces displaced. Faceted spurs | Assoc. microseismicity 1373 Ribagorça EQ (M ~ 6,2); 1923 Vielha EQ (M _L = 5,2); 1969 (M = 4)*, 1989 (M = 4)* | Normal fault / 0.04 - 0.09 | Neotectonic (1) | Bordonau and Vilaplana (1986); Ortuño <i>et al.</i> (2008); Ortuño (2008); Ortuño <i>et al.</i> (accepted) | |
| 22. Rius-Cabanes fault system | Three <i>en echelon</i> faults, 2 to 6.3 km; WNW-ESE | Quaternary | Geomorph markers displaced | Associated microseismicity | Normal fault | Neotectonic and/or Glaciotectionics (2) | Ortuño (2008) | |
| 23. Coronas fault | 10.2 km long; NW-SE | Pleistocene and Holocene | Geomorph markers displaced | 1373 Ribagorça EQ (M ~ 6,2); 1969 (M = 4)*, 1989 (M = 4)* | Normal fault | Neotectonic and/or Gravitational (2) | Ortuño (2008); Gutierrez <i>et al.</i> (2008); Larrazaola <i>et al.</i> (2010) | |
| 24. Urgellet graben | undetermined | Quaternary | Fluvial terraces displaced | none | Normal faults | Neotectonic (2) | Turu and Planas (2005); Turu and Peña (2006a, b) | |
| 25. Escaldes graben | Undetermined | Quaternary | Fluvial terraces displaced | none | Normal faults | Neotectonic (2) | Turu and Planas (2005); Turu and Peña (2006a, b) | |
| 26. Merens fault | E-W | Quaternary | Glacial valley-side and rocky glacier displaced | none | Normal fault | Neotectonic and/or Glaciotectionics* (2) | Turu and Planas (2005) | |
| 28. Albanyà fault (Empordà) | NW-SE to N-S | Plio-Quaternary | Dextral faulting of lacustrine sediments related to the Albanyà fault reactivation | Associated microseismicity | Dextral strike-slip faults and normal faults (oriented N-S, NW-SE) | Neotectonic with some hydroplastic behaviour (1) | Fleta <i>et al.</i> (1996); Calvet (1999); Goula <i>et al.</i> (1999) | |

* Data assigned tentatively in this work

Table 1.- Summary of the published neotectonic data of the main active structures considered as possibly seismogenetic in this study.

Table 1.- Resumen de los datos neotectónicos publicados acerca de las principales estructuras activas consideradas como posibles fuentes sismogénicas en este estudio.

| Structure name | Length and Orientation | Age of observed deformation | Main evidence of activity based on: | | Fault kinematics / Vertical slip rate (mm/yr) | Origin (degree of confidence: 1 proved, 2 to be proved, 3 under debate) | References | Regions |
|--|---|--|---|---|--|---|---|------------------|
| | | | Geomorphologic / Stratigraphic expression/ Other methods | Associated historical/instrumental seismicity | | | | |
| 28. Albanyà fault (Empordà) | NW-SE to N-S | Plio-Quaternary | Dextral faulting of lacustrine sediments related to the Albanyà fault reactivation | Associated microseismicity | Dextral strike-slip faults and normal faults (oriented N-S, NW-SE) | Neotectonic with some hydroplastic behaviour (1) | Fleta <i>et al.</i> (1996); Calvet (1999); Goula <i>et al.</i> (1999) | Eastern Pyrenees |
| 29. Tech fault system (Alberes) | 20 km long; ENE-WSW 1.6 km vertical slip | Since Miocene (a) /Miocene-Pliocene (b) | Faceted spurs and deformation of Miocene and Pliocene strata | none | Normal fault / 0.1 since Late Miocene (b) | Neotectonic (1) | a) Brias <i>et al.</i> (1990); b) Calvet (1985; 1999) | |
| | NE-SW Maureillas fault/E-W Montesquieu fault | Quaternary | Geomorphologic markers displaced (a); Miocene and Quaternary (a) levels deformed | | Strike-slip and Reverse faults | Neotectonic (1) | a) Grellet <i>et al.</i> (1994); Calvet (1999); Goula <i>et al.</i> (1999); Fleta and Goula 1998; GEOTER (1999) | |
| 30. Capçir basin | ~7 km-long; N-S | Plio-Quaternary | Faceted spurs (b) | Associated microseismicity | Normal fault | Neotectonic (2) | (a) Calvet (1999) (b) Brias <i>et al.</i> (1990) | |
| 31. Cerdanya fault (SW southern Têt Fault) | ~40 km long; NE-SW. Activity observed in secondary faults within the graben | Late Quaternary | Quaternary sediments thrust on related faults | Associated microseismicity (e); 1970 (MI= 4.9; MI = 4.7); 1988 (M = 3.8)* | Reverse fault | Neotectonic (a-c) and/or Gravitational (d) (3) | a) Philip <i>et al.</i> (1992); b) Calvet (1999); c) Goula <i>et al.</i> (1999); d) Baize <i>et al.</i> (2002); e) Souriau and Pauchet (1998); f) Carozza and Baize (2004) | |
| 32. Conflent fault (NE southern Têt Fault) | 40 km long; SSW-NNE; 2 - 3 km vertical slip (a) | Plio-Quaternary/Inactive (a, g, h) | Deformation of Pliocene sediments/Exhumed faceted spurs | Associated microseismicity (c) | Sinistral strike-slip (d) | Neotectonic (3) | a) Calvet (1985; 1999); b) Philip <i>et al.</i> (1992); c) Souriau and Pauchet (1998); d) Carozza and Delcaillau (2000); e) Carozza and Baize (2004); f) Maurel <i>et al.</i> , 2008 g) Petit and Moutheteau (2011); h) Neopal (2012) | |
| 33. Northern Têt fault | 30 km long (b); SSW-NNE; 0.3 - 0.15 km during Pliocene (b) | Since Oligocene to - Early Pliocene (c, d) /From Early to Late Pliocene with exception of the southernmost segment, possibly active during the Pleistocene (b) | Faceted spurs (exhumed) and basin-fluvial morphology (b); Pliocene sediments deformed | Associated microseismicity | Oblique reverse-sinistral strike slip fault (a and c); Normal and left-lateral fault (b) | Neotectonic (3) | a) Goula <i>et al.</i> , 1999; b) Delcaillau <i>et al.</i> (2004) c) Calvet (1996; 1999); d) Carozza and Baize (2004) | |

* Data assigned tentatively in this work

Table 1.- Continuation

Table 1.- Continuación

ters. These clusters are located to the south of the North Pyrenean Fault (NPF) and within the Western LTSD, and seem to be arranged (according to Rigo *et al.*, 2005) in three deep-event-limiting surfaces dipping to the north with NW-SE to E-W strikes. Lacan (2008) proposed a correlation of these surfaces with four WNW-ESE faults displayed “en echelon” and named Bedous, Laruns, Pierrefitte and Pic du Midi du Bigorre Faults (structures 16 to 19 on Table 1 and Fig. 3). These faults are located at the northern limit of the Western LTSD and correspond, in most cases, to the traces of alpine thrusts reactivated as normal faults during the post-orogenic period. They seem to have partly controlled the Quaternary erosion and sedimentation distribution; the faults separate smoothy reliefs to the north, where the valleys are filled with Quaternary sediments, from sharply incised reliefs to the south, which result from strong Quaternary erosion. Topographic steps observed along the longitudinal profiles of the rivers crossing the fault traces are ascribed to the recent activity of each of these faults (Lacan, 2008) The Pierrefitte Fault has been considered as the most probable seismogenic source of the 2006 seismic crises (Lacan, 2008). The main evidence is the on-depth location of the main shock and of more than 250 aftershocks proposed by Sylvander *et al.* (2008).

Even though the Bedous, Laruns, Pierrefitte and Pic du Midi du Bigorre Faults present some indirect signs of Quaternary tectonic activity, available geomorphological evidence are insufficient to demonstrate and quantify their Quaternary activity.

To the south of the Bedous Fault, a group of small WNW-ESE normal faults displacing the glacial surfaces of the Pierre-Saint-Martin Massif have been described as faults that might result from gravity forces (structure 20 on Table 1 and Fig. 3; Hervouët, 1997; Klarica *et al.*, 2001). According to Lacan (2008), such a gravitational movement could be related to the activity of the Bedous Fault.

Faults in the Central LTSD (Maladeta Massif and Andorra).

Olivera and Fleta (1996) and Souriau and Pauchet (1998) have noticed a NW-SE oriented and deep cluster of instrumental seismicity in the Maladeta Massif region. Olivera and Fleta (1996) identified a shallower zone with a maximum depth of 6 km around the epicentre of the Vielha earthquake (1923, ML = 5.2; Susagna *et al.*, 1994). In this region, Bordonau and Vilaplana (1986) ascribed for the first time Quaternary activity to the North Maladeta Fault in this area. More recently, Ortuño (2008)

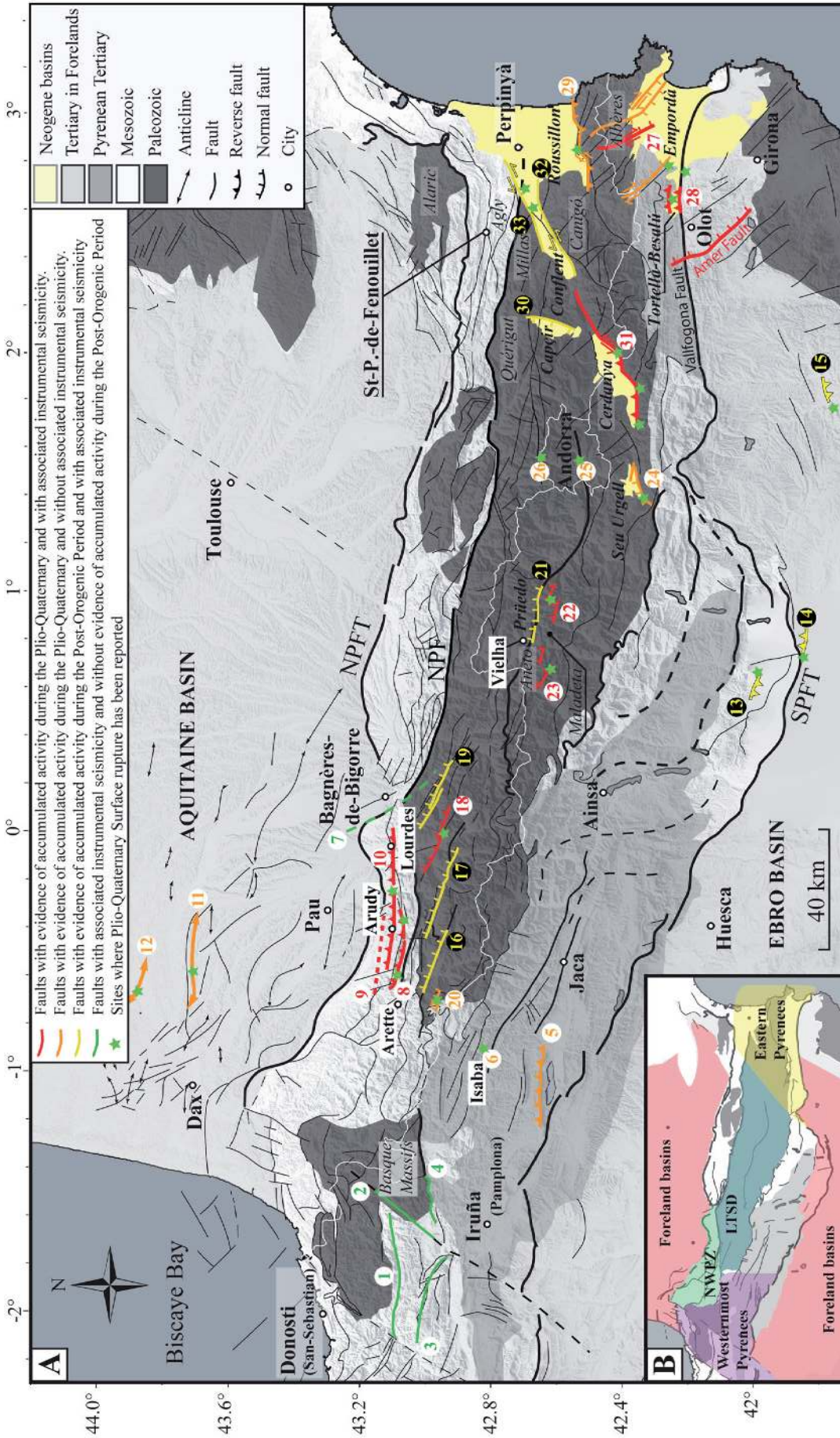


Fig. 3.- Main active or supposed active structures discussed in the text and in table 1, plotted on the geological map of the Pyrenees (modified after Barnolas and Chiron (1996)). The structures are grouped in the five seismotectonic regions considered in the text (sketch on the left-lower corner). Name of structures or sites: 1, Leiza; 2, Pamplona; 3, Aralar; 4, Roncesvalles; 5, Leyre; 6, Isaba; 7, Adour (Bigorre); 8, Mail Arrouy; 9, Herrère; 10, Lourdes; 11, Audignon; 12, Campagne; 13, Canelles; 14, Balaguer; 15, Callús; 16, Bedous; 17, Pierre St Martin System; 18, Laruns; 19, Pierreffitte; 20, Pic du Midi du Bigorre; 21, North Maladeta; 22, Rius-Cabanes; 23, Coronas; 24, Urgellet; 25, Escaldes; 26, Merens; 27, Tortellà-Besalú; 28, Empordà; 29, Tech (Alberes); 30, Capcir; 31, Cerdanya (SW southern Têt); 32, Conflent Fault (NE southern Têt); 33, Northern Têt.

Fig. 3.- Principales fallas activas o supuestamente activas referidas en el texto y en la tabla 1, localizadas en el mapa estructural de los Pirineos (modificado de Barnolas and Chiron, 1996). Las estructuras se agrupan en las cinco regiones seismotectónicas consideradas en el texto (esquema en la esquina inferior izquierda). Nombre de las fallas o localidades: 1, Leiza; 2, Pamplona; 3, Aralar; 4, Roncesvalles; 5, Leyre; 6, Isaba; 7, Adour (Bigorre); 8, Mail Arrouy; 9, Herrère; 10, Lourdes; 11, Audignon; 12, Campagne; 13, Canelles; 14, Balaguer; 15, Callús; 16, Bedous; 17, Pierre St Martin System; 18, Laruns; 19, Pierreffitte; 20, Pic du Midi du Bigorre; 21, North Maladeta; 22, Rius-Cabanes; 23, Coronas; 24, Urgellet; 25, Escaldes; 26, Merens; 27, Tortellà-Besalú; 28, Empordà; 29, Tech (Alberes); 30, Capcir; 31, Cerdanya (SW southern Têt); 32, Conflent Fault (NE southern Têt); 33, Northern Têt.

| | <i>Region</i> | <i>Number of structures with surface expression</i> | <i>Corresponding Seismotectonic region of García-Mayordomo and Insua-Arévalo (2011)/Secanell et al. (2008)</i> |
|---|-----------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | Westernmost Pyrenees | 2* | 7 (Pamplona) and 8 (Lumbier)/5 |
| 2 | North Western Pyrenean Zone | 2 | 2 (North Pyrenean region, central part)/part of 7 |
| 3 | Foreland basins | | |
| | Western Aquitanian | 2 | 1 (North Pyrenean region, western part)/6 |
| | North-Central Ebro | 2 | 10 (South Pyrenean region, Graus)/5 |
| 4 | Western Central High Chain | 9 | 5 and 6 (Western and Central Axial Pyrenees)/part of 7 and 8 |
| 5 | Eastern Pyrenees | 6 | not considered/4 |

* not conclusive works performed

Table 2.- Correlation between the five seismotectonic regions distinguished in the text and those considered by Secanell *et al.* (2008) and García-Mayordomo and Insua-Arévalo (2010).

Table 2.- Correlación entre las cinco regiones sismotectónicas diferenciadas en el texto y las consideradas por Secanell *et al.* (2008) y García-Mayordomo y Insua-Arévalo (2010).

and Ortuño *et al.* (2008; accepted) have identified and characterized several possible seismogenic faults by multiproxy analyses combining macroseismological, geomorphological, structural, paleoenvironmental and subsurface geophysical data. The North Maladeta Fault (fault 21 on Table 1 and Fig. 3) is a WNW-ESE normal fault that offset the remnants of a pre-Late Miocene penepain, giving place to the formation of the Prüedo neotectonic basin. The central part of this structure has been considered the most probable source of the Vielha earthquake. Ortuño *et al.* (accepted) have provided data on the late Miocene paleoelevation of this area and single out the North Maladeta Fault as the structure accommodating the differences in recent exhumation recorded at the downthrown and upthrown blocks.

To the south of the North Maladeta Fault, the WNW-ESE Rius-Cabanes system displays three normal faults *en echelon* (structure 22 on Table 1 and Fig. 3). These faults displace the glacial surfaces of the Maladeta Massif, and have lengths that range from 2 to 6.3 km. According to Ortuño (2008), they could be responsible of the cluster in seismicity detected by Olivera *et al.* (1994). At the south-western continuation of the North Maladeta Fault, the NW-SE oriented Coronas Fault (structure 23 on Table 1 and Fig. 3) shows evidence of neotectonic activity, as it is the displacement of the southern slope of the Aneto Massif (Ortuño, 2008). Hydrologic alterations (Larrasoña *et al.*, 2010) as well as the repeated gravitational sliding (Gutierrez *et al.*, 2008) in the area may also be consequences of the paleoseismic activity of the Coronas Fault.

The location of all the former faults within the area of epicentral uncertainty of the Ribagorça earthquake (1373, $M_w = 6.2 \pm 0.5$; Olivera *et al.*, 2006) leads to consider

all of them as possible seismogenic sources of this event (Ortuño, 2008).

To the East, in the headwaters of the Segre River, Turu and Planas (2005) and Turu and Peña (2006a, b) report Quaternary faulting of fluvial terraces located at the Urgellet and the Escaldes grabens (structures 24 and 25 on Table 1 and Fig. 3), interpreted as possible neotectonic features among other features described in the region. Turu and Planas (2005) also report recent activity on the E-W oriented Merens Fault (structure 26 on Table 1 and Fig. 3), which seems to vertically displace rocky glaciers originated during the Last Glacial Period. The location of this fault with respect to the glacial valley suggests that it could be related to glacial rebound processes, according to the criteria proposed by Ortuño (2008, 2009). Not detailed research has been published so far relating these structures.

3.5 The Easternmost Pyrenees

The instrumental seismicity at the eastern end of the range is moderate and relatively sparse (Fig. 1 and 2), but some of the most damaging earthquakes in the historical catalogue, the Middle Age seismic crisis of 1427 – 1428 (Olivera *et al.*, 2006), took place in this region. Souriau and Pauchet (1998) identify several zones where the instrumental seismicity concentrates: a cluster around the Garrotxa volcanic field (around Olot town), an alignment along the northern boundary of the Empordà Basin (structures 27 on Table 1 and Fig. 3), and an alignment along the NE prolongation of the northern Têt Fault (structure 28 on Table 1 and Fig. 3) and parallel structures within the Agly Massif (Figs. 2, 3).

This domain has experienced tens of $M \geq 4$ events during the instrumental period, some of which have been studied by Gallart *et al.* (1982), Olivera *et al.* (1996) and Rigo *et al.* (1997), among others. The inversion analysis of 18 focal mechanisms (11 of them located at the Eastern Pyrenees) obtained for NE Iberia by Goula *et al.* (1999) has led the authors to propose an horizontal N-S main stress for this region, but has not allow them to determine orientation of the minimum stress. For the Saint Paul de Fenouillet event (18/02/1996; $M = 5.2$), Rigo *et al.* (1997) and Pauchet *et al.* (1999) obtain a focal mechanism indicating dextral slip along ENE-WSW to E-W oriented faults, compatible with a $N030^\circ E$ compression.

The Eastern Pyrenees was affected by the Neogene Mediterranean rifting, geodynamical episode that spread out through a wide region of Western Europe. The extension that reached the easternmost Pyrenees also affected neighbouring regions as its transition to the Alps (Languedoc-Provence Region, also affected by the *Massif Central* geodynamical evolution) and the Catalan Coastal Ranges. In this paper, we have not included potentially seismogenic structures located out of the Pyrenean domain, as those of the Gulf of Lion and Languedoc-Provence region (e.g. Mazamet Fault) or the Catalan Coastal Ranges (faults in the Vallès-Penedès) neither the Amer Fault (Fig. 3) (Perea *et al.*, 2012).

Faults in the Empordà Basin

The Empordà Basin is dissected by E-W to N-S faults which show Plio-Quaternary activity, as reported by Philip *et al.* (1992), Fleta *et al.* (1996), Calvet (1999) and Goula *et al.* (1999), among others. These authors report Plio-Quaternary faulting related to the E-W reverse faults bounding the Tortellà-Besalú Basin (structure 27 on Table 1 and Fig. 3) and its continuation within the Empordà Basin, structures related to the reactivation of the Vallfogona alpine thrust (Fig. 3). Additionally, some of the N-S to NW-SE Neogene faults in the area have been reactivated with a dominant dextral component during the Plio-Quaternary. The Incarcàl outcrop, associated to the Albanyà Fault (structure 28 on Table 1 and Fig. 3) shows hydroplastic structures in faulted vertebrates of Plio-Quaternary age, interpreted as possible coseismic and synsedimentary features by Calvet (1999), among others. The existence of a halogenesis and karstification obscures the pure neotectonic origin of these structures (Calvet, 1999).

The Tech Fault System

The ENE-WSW oriented Tech Fault bound the Rosselló Basin to the south. This basin is the northern limit of

the Alberes Massif. The Tech Fault (structure 29 on Table 1 and Fig. 3) was characterized by normal faulting during the Oligo-Miocene extension and at the Pliocene (Calvet, 1985; 1999; Briais *et al.*, 1990). Briais *et al.* (1990) have classified the Tech fault as an active normal fault based on its geomorphological expression. The post-Pliocene activity of some of its segments as a compressive structure reported by Calvet (1985; 1999), Grellet *et al.* (1994), and Goula *et al.* (1999) suggests that the geomorphic features analysed by Briais *et al.* (1990) are inherited from the previous extensional period.

Goula *et al.* (1999) describe the deformation of Miocene deposits by the Montesquieu segment, an E-W reverse fault dipping to the south, and to the Maureillas Segment, a NE-SW strike-slip fault that displaces the trace of the Tech main fault. Calvet (1999) also identifies deformation on Quaternary river terraces at these sites.

To the south of the Tech Fault, Calvet (1985) reports the activity of vertical NNW-SSE faults displacing old penepains within the Alberes Massif. To the north fault, within the Rosselló basin, Goula *et al.* (1999) report normal faulting of upper Pliocene deposits by a NNE-SSW fault, with no major morphostructural feature associated to it (Fig. 3).

The Têt (Cerdanya-Conflent) fault system

The main faults identified in the easternmost Pyrenees are part of a NE-SW oriented system that extends along ~ 120 km and is composed of three distinctive segments: a) the Cerdanya Fault (or SW southern Têt Fault), which dips to the NW and bounds the Cerdanya Semigraben to the SE, b) the Conflent Fault (or NE southern Têt), which dips to the NW and bounds the Conflent Graben to the SE and c) the northern Têt Fault (or Prades-Ille sur Têt Fault), which dips to the S-SE and separates the Conflent-Rousillon Graben and the Agly Massif (Fig. 3). Some of the authors dealing with these fault segments consider a) and b) (e.g. Briais *et al.*, 1990) or b) and c) (e.g. Carozza and Delcaillau, 2000) as two parts of a single fault system.

The tectonic activity of these structures as normal faults extends from the Miocene until the Late Pliocene (Cabrera *et al.*, 1988; Roca, 1996; Pous *et al.*, 1996; Carozza, 1998; Calvet, 1999; Calvet and Gunnell, 2008, among others). The activity of the fault system during the Plio-Quaternary has been under debate. Briais *et al.* (1990) have supported that the fault system is still active as a pure extensional structure, mainly based on its geomorphological expression. More recent researches (commented below) have shown that this expression does not correspond to the recent activity of the fault system,

supporting the inactivity of some of its segments and/or reporting the Plio-Quaternary activity as reverse and sinistral strike slip faults of other segments. Both the reverse and strike slip dynamics of the Têt Fault system are explained by an N-NE compressional regime (e.g. Grellet *et al.*, 1994; Calvet, 1999; Goula *et al.*, 1999; Herraiz *et al.*, 2000, Carozza and Delcaillau, 2000) following the Neogene extension at this part of the range. To the north of the Cerdanya Semigraben, the Capçir Basin (structure 30 on Table 1 and Fig. 3) is also bounded to the east by a N-S Neogene fault (Calvet, 1999), still active during the Quaternary according to Briais *et al.* (1990).

For Goula *et al.* (1999), the Cerdanya-Confluent Basin is the westernmost region affected by the Neogene Mediterranean rifting. Quaternary evidence of reverse faulting of the south-westernmost segment, the Cerdanya Fault (structure 31 on Table 1 and 2; Fig. 3), has been described by Philip *et al.* (1992), Calvet (1999) and Goula *et al.* (1999). These authors document deformations of Pleistocene fluvial terraces of the Segre River (at Estavar) by a WNW-ESE reverse fault oblique to the main fault system. Baize *et al.* (2002) reported more than 2 m of along-dip displacement of Miocene deposits thrust over Pleistocene fluvial sediments, as observed in a trench perpendicular to the fault. The gravitational origin of this deformation, excluded by Calvet (1999), is considered feasible by Baize *et al.* (2002). Two other indicators of active tectonics are reported by Grellet *et al.* (1994) on faults oblique to the main Cerdanya Fault: a) the reverse faulting of the Miocene sequence along the SW termination of the fault and b) the normal faulting of Late Quaternary fluvial sediments by N010E oriented faults at Ossejà (secondary faults at the Cerdanya Fault northern termination). Baize *et al.* (2002) interpret this latter outcrop as a natural fluvial feature and reject it as a neotectonic feature.

Goula *et al.* (1999), Baize *et al.* (2002) locate two macroseismic events occurring in 1970 ($M = 4.9$; 5/4) and ($M = 4.7$; 13/4) in the Cerdanya Basin, whereas other macroseismic events are located at the SW continuation of the fault ($M = 3.6$; 20/02/1988) and at the SE block ($M = 4.5$; 19/03/1992;). The maximum intensities of several historical earthquakes are located within the Cerdanya Basin (e.g. in 1876 and 1894, according to Baize *et al.*, 2002 and references therein). Moreover, some authors (e.g. Briais *et al.*, 1990; Baize *et al.*, 2002) have proposed the Cerdanya fault as the possible seismogenic source of the seismic crisis of 1427 – 1428 ($I_{\max} = \text{VIII} - \text{XIX}$). Contrarily, Fleta *et al.* (2001) and Perea (2009) have identified the Amer Fault (Fig. 3) as the seismogenic source of the two earthquakes occurring in 1427, and Perea (2009)

has suggested that the stress transfer produced at those earthquakes could have triggered the 1428 event, whose epicentre (as determined by Olivera *et al.*, 2006) locates in a northernmore area. No systematic research on active faults has been performed within that area, i.e. between “Olot” and “Cerdanya” names in figure 3.

The activity of the Confluent Fault (structure 32 on Table 1 and 2; Fig. 3) during the Plio-Quaternary has been the focus of several researches. Calvet (1999) has documented normal to strike-slip faulting only until the Early Pliocene. Maurel *et al.* (2008) have relied in the exhumation history of the Canigó Massif derived from thermochronological data to discard any uplift related to the Confluent Fault after the Middle Miocene and Carozza and Delcaillau (2000) have assigned a sinistral strike-slip movement to the Confluent Fault during that period based on the analysis of the macrogeomorphology. Moreover, Carozza and Baize (2004) interpreted the faceted spurs of the fault as erosional-exhumed features, dating from the previous extensional period. Recent studies performed by Petit and Mouthereau (2011) on the slope development of the Confluent Scarp has suggested that the freshness of the faceted spurs is not the result of the fault activity but it is owed to the good preservation related to the fabric of the mylonitic rocks exposed.

The activity of the northern Têt Fault (structure 33 on Table 1 and 2; Fig. 3) has also been discussed. The multiproxy analysis of the fault scarp, the drainage network developed on the uplifted block (Querigut-Millas Massif) and the sedimentary infill of the adjacent Confluent Basin have led to Delcaillau *et al.* (2004) to conclude that the Confluent Basin was a pull-apart basin related to the sinistral-strike slip activity of the Confluent and northern Têt faults during the Pliocene. The authors have also stated that the northern Têt Fault does not seem active during and after the Pleistocene, with exception of its westernmost segment. Following a similar approach, Carozza and Baize (2004) have concluded that the geomorphologic expression of the northern Têt fault is mainly inherited from pre-Pliocene times. Calvet (1999) and Goula *et al.* (1999) have reported oblique reverse and sinistral strike-slip activity of this fault affecting Pliocene sediments, with up-to 1 m of vertical displacement in one of the two localities described, i.e. Ille-sur Têt and Nefiach.

North of this fault, tectonic deformation of recent deposits and landforms has been documented at three locations (Fig. 3): a) At Caramany (within the Agly Massif), several authors (Philip *et al.*, 1992; Grellet *et al.*, 1994; Calvet, 1999; Goula *et al.*, 1999) have described the ca. 10 m thrusting (with sinistral component) of Paleozoic gneisses over Quaternary slope deposits along a N060°E structure dipping to the SE. More recently, Baize *et al.*

(2002) have considered that the neotectonic origin of this deformation is not clear in the field, and have suggested that the outcrop could also correspond to the deposition of slope deposits over an old fault plane. Calvet (1999) report two other outcrops in the same valley, all showing recent deposits affected by E-W reverse faults b) To the north of the Agly Massif, Ellenberger and Gottis (1967) refer to a fault zone oriented NE-SW, aligned with the Alaric-Cévennes Reliefs and made of several strands (L'Etagnol and la Peyrouse-Basse faults). The activity of these faults has caused the tilting of Quaternary glacis and the offset of Middle Quaternary travertines by ~ 30 m along more than 0.5 km. c) Within the Agly and the Millas crystalline Massifs, the activity of vertical faults offsetting glacial surfaces has been described by Lagasquie (1984) and Arthaud and Pistre (1993). We have not included any of these faults in the inventory of active faults due to the lack of a more detailed research clarifying the geometry and length of the structures observed.

The tectonic boundary between the Querigut and the Millas Massifs (Fig. 3) shows a cluster of seismicity down to 10 km (Souriau *et al.*, 1998). The northernmost boundary of this zone is the NPF, which does not seem to have recent surface expression. To the north of the NPF, the Saint Paul de Fenouillet Epicentre (18/02/1996; $M_L = 5.2$) is located within the Agly Massif. This earthquake is the largest event since the installation of the improved seismic network in 1986 (Olivera *et al.*, 1996), and occurred in the epicentral zone of another macroseismic event (23/7/1922). The earthquake caused hydrogeological alterations (Toutain *et al.*, 1999), and according to Sylvander *et al.* (2007), it took place several kilometres underneath the Agly Batholith, probably in an intracrustal fault parallel to the North Pyrenean Thrust Front (NPTF, Fig. 3).

3.6. Induced Seismicity

In the Aquitaine basin, more than 2000 clustered local low-moderated events ($M_L < 4.2$) were induced by the extraction of gas in the Lacq field since 1969 (Grasso and Feignier, 1990; Maury *et al.*, 1992; Segall *et al.*, 1994; Souriau and Pauchet, 1998; Bardainne *et al.*, 2008). To the east of Iruña, a 4.6 mbLg magnitude earthquake was widely felt on September 18 of 2004 in an area lacking significant seismic activity in recent times. The main shock was preceded by series of foreshocks reaching 3.3 mbLg magnitudes and was followed by an aftershock series of up to 200 events until the end of 2004, with a maximum mbLg magnitude of 3.8. This foreshock–aftershock series is largely interpreted as a rapid response case

of reservoir-triggered seismicity, burst by the first impound of the Itoiz reservoir (Ruiz *et al.*, 2006b; Jiménez *et al.*, 2009; Durá-Gómez and Talwani, 2010; Santoyo *et al.*, 2010; García-Mayordomo and Insua-Arévalo, 2011).

4. Discussion

The Pyrenees are a mountain region where the deformation rates are low and where the surface imprint of active faulting is easily obliterated by the enhanced Quaternary erosion, increasing human activity and extensive vegetation cover. It is then difficult to identify and characterize the active faults as illustrated by the limited number of conclusive studies dealing with active tectonics. Most of these studies focus on the areas where the maximum intensities of the great historical earthquakes took place (i.e. Lourdes, Arudy, Maladeta and Cerdanya-Olot zones, Fig. 3).

In spite of the sparse information, some models integrating seismological and/or neotectonic data have been proposed to characterize the Present-day stress field (e.g. Souriau and Pauchet, 1998; Goula *et al.*, 1999; Calvet and Gunnell, 2008; De Vicente *et al.*, 2008; Stich *et al.*, 2010; Chevrot *et al.*, 2011). In the present study, we reviewed for the first time, the different works performed on active faulting along the whole range. The time-window considered in such studies comprises hundred to thousands seismic cycles, which in the slow deforming areas usually overpass 10 ka, widely exceeding the seismological catalogs. Thus, even if more neotectonic studies are needed, the available neotectonic data provide valuable informations for the identification of the Present day stress state. In the following lines, we discuss the data reviewed above in the frame of a new model proposed to understand the neotectonics of the Pyrenees.

4.1. High chain vs Low chain

The active structures identified in the Pyrenees are re-activated faults inherited from the Variscan and Alpine orogenies or from the Neogene Mediterranean rifting. The data reviewed in section 3 led us to distinguish the distribution of the tectonic activity of the Pyrenees in two major zones: the “High Chain” and the “Low Chain”.

The High Chain of the Pyrenees corresponds to the Western and Central LTSD and some neighboring areas in the Eastern and Western Pyrenees characterized by relatively high mean altitudes (over ca. 1500 m, e.g. the Basque, Canigò, Millas or Agly massifs). In these areas, all the data reviewed only show normal faulting since the late Miocene, suggesting the existence of a dominant ver-

tical stress. This stress is in agreement with the extensive focal mechanisms recently published by De Vicente *et al.* (2008), Sylvander *et al.* (2008) and Chevrot *et al.* (2011). Nevertheless, since these areas are also characterized by high reliefs and high altitudes, some of the faults might be controlled by local gravitational or glacial-rebound forces at a valley scale, factors that are not representative of the regional stress field.

We refer to the Low Chain as the areas of the Pyrenees characterized by a relatively low mean altitude (below ca. 1500 m). These areas are located within the foreland basins and the piedmont of the Pyrenees (included in the NWPZ, the Western and the Eastern Pyrenees). Most faults in this domain have been reactivated during the neotectonic period as reverse or strike-slip faults, suggesting that the geodynamic arrangement is still compressive in this area. This deformation is compatible with the NE-SW to NW-SE orientation of the main stress inferred by different authors (e.g. Souriau and Pauchet, 1998; Goula *et al.*, 1999; Baize *et al.*, 2002). These studies are sparse and in many cases, the role of additional factors, as the salt tectonics or the glacial tectonics has not been clarified.

4.2 Neotectonic model

In the following lines, we propose a neotectonic model to explain the contrasting neotectonics of the High and the Low Chain by considering the most outstanding difference between them: the mean altitude. To analyze how can the altitude play a crucial role in the variation of the stresses across an “inactive” orogen, one should pay attention to the surface processes and the geomorphological evolution of these areas. In the last decades, several works (Vanara *et al.*, 1997; Vanara, 2000; Perez-Vila *et al.*, 2001; Agustí *et al.*, 2006; Calvet and Gunnell, 2008; Gunnell *et al.*, 2008; 2009; Lacan, 2008; Ortuño, 2008; Suc and Fauquette, 2012; Ortuño *et al.*, accepted) have reported post-orogenic surface uplift > 0.5 km and up to 2 km since the late Miocene at several sites, all located at the High Chain. The same occurs with the data on post-orogenic enhanced exhumation (Fitzgerald *et al.*, 1999; Calvet and Gunnell, 2008; Maurel *et al.*, 2008; Gunnell *et al.*, 2008; 2009; Metcalf *et al.*, 2009; Méresse, 2010), which can be owed to the surface uplift and/or enhanced erosion.

In the absence of sufficiently large orogenic forces that could explain the surface uplift as a consequence of orogenic building the most probable cause of the observed uplift is the presence of isostatic forces. The possible factors that have been discussed as the causes of the isostatic compensation of the chain are 1) the loss of weight due to erosion, suggested by Lacan (2008), Ortuño (2008) and

Ortuño *et al.* (accepted) for the Western and Central High chain, 2) the partial loss of the subducted lithosphere, proposed by Gunnell *et al.* (2008) and Gunnell *et al.* (2009) for the Eastern Pyrenees on the light of the tomographic study performed by Souriau *et al.* (2008) and 3) the combination of erosion and tectonic denudation relating the Neogene rifting process suggested by (Lewis *et al.*, 2000) for NE Iberia. As pointed by the authors, buoyancy forces related to lateral differences in the mantle density probably reinforced this phenomenon. Options b and c do not apply for the Central and Western Pyrenees, although they might explain part of the activity of the normal faults located in the Eastern Pyrenees and next to areas of enhanced post-orogenic exhumation (e.g. vertical faults in the Querigut, Millas and Canigó massifs). For the rest of the High Chain, the isostatic response to relatively higher erosion seems to be the simplest explanation for the uplift documented.

In addition to the topographic gradient leading to the river entrenchment, other physical factors as the effects of successive glaciations, the weathering characterising peri-glacial environments (e.g. the effect of frost wedging) and the local absence of vegetation cover have accentuated the erosion in the High Chain with respect to the Low chain of the Pyrenees. This contrast in the erosion rate is probably resulting on differential uplift by isostatic compensation (Lacan, 2008; Ortuño, 2008; Ortuño *et al.*, accepted).

Hivert (2011) and Hivert *et al.* (2011) have recently modelled the effects of the erosion on the distribution of the deformation at the Pyrenean range. The authors assume an isostatically compensated crustal root and test the model using different erosion laws and convergence rates. They conclude that depending on the erosion rate, extension can be observed within the inner part of a range even for convergence rates of several mm/yr. The linkage of local erosion and isostatic uplift has been the subject of thorough researches explaining the Present-day differences in uplift rates through particular cross sections of the Alps (e.g. Schlunegger and Hinderer, 2001; Champagnac *et al.*, 2007). In our opinion, the model of Hivert (2011) and Hivert *et al.* (2011) can apply for the Central and Western parts of the chain, and should be tested in future researches by incorporating the location of the known active faults and well constrained variations in the erosion rate.

The Eastern Pyrenees: a complex history

At the Eastern Pyrenees, the recent geodynamical evolution has apparently been more complex than in the rest of the chain. The present-day macromorphology of this

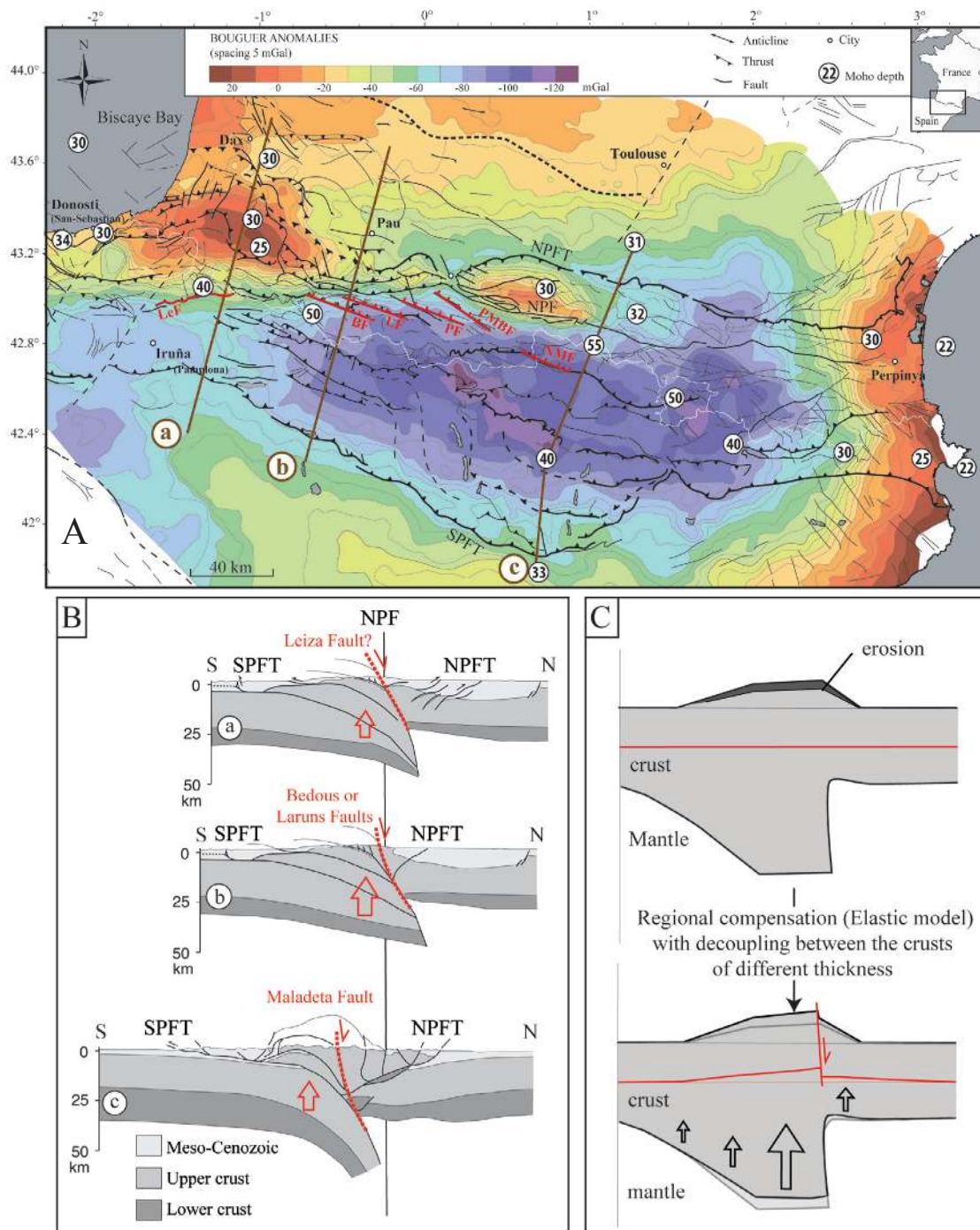


Fig. 4.- A: Main normal faults at the interface between the crusts of different thickness plotted on the Bouguer anomaly map (modified from Bayer *et al.*, 1996 and Casas-Sainz *et al.*, 1997); the Moho depth is also represented (modified from Vergès *et al.*, 1995); B: Structural cross sections of the chain showing the main normal faults distinguished on A and their relation with the change in crustal thickness: a) the westernmost Pyrenees (modified from Daignières *et al.*, 1994); b) the Central-Western Pyrenees (modified from Séguret and Daignières, 1986; Casas-Sainz and Pardo, 2004), c) The Central Pyrenees (Ecors profile: Muñoz, 1992); C: Schematic model of isostatic compensation of the erosion in case of decoupled crusts (modified from Lacan, 2008). Acronyms: LeF, Leiza Fault; BF, Bedous Fault; LF, Laruns Fault; PF, Pierrefitte Fault; PMBF, Pic du Midi du Bigorre Fault; NMF, North Maladeta Fault; NPFT, North Pyrenean Frontal Thrust; NPF, North Pyrenean Fault; SPTF; South Pyrenean Frontal Thrust.

Fig. 4.- A: Fallas normales principales en la interfase entre cortezas de diferente espesor proyectadas en el mapa de anomalías de Bouguer (modificado de Bayer *et al.*, 1996 and Casas-Sainz *et al.*, 1997); se ha incluido la profundidad de la Moho (modificada de Vergès *et al.*, 1995); B: Secciones estructurales de la cadena mostrando las fallas normales principales diferenciadas en A y su relación con los cambios de espesor cortical: a) Pirineos Orientales (modificado de Daignières *et al.*, 1994); b) Pirineos Centrales-Orientales (modificado de Séguret and Daignières, 1986; Casas-Sainz and Pardo, 2004), c) Pirineos Centrales (perfil Ecors: Muñoz, 1992); C: Modelo esquemático de la compensación isostática en respuesta a la erosión en caso de cortezas desacopladas (modificado de Lacan, 2008). Acrónimos: LeF, Falla de Leiza; BF, Falla de Bedous; LF, Falla de Laruns; PF, Falla de Pierrefitte; PMBF, Falla de Pic du Midi du Bigorre; NMF, Falla Norte de la Maladeta; NPFT, Cabalgamiento Frontal Norpirenaico; NPF, Falla Norpirenaica; SPTF; Cabalgamiento Frontal Surpirenaico.

area seems to mainly reflect the Neogene Mediterranean extensive episode (Baize *et al.*, 2002). However, the neotectonic data reviewed in this paper seems to indicate that this episode, controlled by a mean NW-SE extension (e.g. Roca and Guimera, 1992) was followed by a compressional stress regime with a horizontal NE-SW to NW-SE orientation, as suggested by Philip *et al.* (1992), Grellet *et al.* (1994), Calvet (1999) and Goula *et al.* (1999) among others. Furthermore, the focal mechanisms obtained for earthquakes in this area are compatible with a N-S compression (Souriau and Pauchet, 1998; Goula *et al.*, 1999).

The crustal thinning associated with the Neogene rifting seems to have acted jointly with the erosion of the “Thermal Pyrenean slab” proposed by Gunnell *et al.* (2008; 2009). This last event could be responsible from a rapid post-orogenic uplift of the Eastern Pyrenees reported by different authors (Pérez-Vila *et al.*, 2001; Agustí *et al.*, 2006; Suc and Fauquette, 2012) and possibly reflected in the exhumation history of the area (Calvet and Gunnell, 2008; Maurel *et al.*, 2008).

During the Plio-Quaternary, the low compressive stress resulting from the African-European convergence could have been enough to reactivate major inherited faults as it was proposed for the foreland and piedmont areas. Even if the convergence stresses are low, the activity of reverse and strike slip faults oriented perpendicular and oblique to the convergence vector in the Eastern Pyrenees could be feasible due to the low thickness of the crust and the absence of a crustal root (and its related vertical stress). Additionally, some of the Eastern Pyrenean faults located in high elevation zones (as those at Querigut and Millas Massifs) could have been activated by differential isostatic uplift in response to variations of the erosion.

Thus, one could say that the crust of this region ceased to be under the influence of the “Pyrenean orogenic evolution” during the Neogene Mediterranean rifting, and that the recent reactivation of some of the extensional structures under a submeridian compression has “re-incorporated” them to the post-orogenic history of the belt.

Enhanced neotectonic activity and major changes in crustal thickness

The uplift observed at the High Chain must be reflected in the activity of the structures that enable its decoupling with respect to the Low chain. The zones of high contrast in thickness of the crust between the different parts of the Pyrenees (e.g. Daignières *et al.*, 1981; Pous *et al.*, 1995; Souriau and Granet 1995; Souriau *et al.*, 2008; Fig. 4A) are proposed here as preferable zones accommodating the differential uplift observed through the chain. Indeed, these areas of contrasting crustal thickness have been

previously identified by Gallart *et al.* (1985) and Souriau and Pauchet (1998) as areas of enhance seismicity. Lacan (2008) has noted that the Leiza normal Fault, studied by Ruiz *et al.* (2006a) in the Westernmost Pyrenees, is exactly located at the interface between crusts of different thickness (Fig. 4B-a). More to the East, in the Western Pyrenees, the crustal thickness decreases abruptly from 45-50 km in the High Chain to 25-30 km in the NWPZ (Souriau and Granet 1995; Fig. 4B-b). The location of the major normal faults identified in the area (Bedous, Laruns, Pierrefitte, Pic du Midi du Bigorre faults) corresponds exactly to the step in depth between the two crusts of different thickness. This peculiarity suggests that the faults could play as decoupling structures accommodating differential isostatic uplift in response to changes in erosion (Lacan, 2008; Fig. 4B-b and 4-C).

Compared to this area, the lower instrumental seismicity recorded in the Central Pyrenees, where the contrast in crustal thickness is about 15 km (ECORS, Gallart *et al.*, 1985) could be explained by a stronger coupling of the European and Iberian crusts, which may induce more regional isostatic compensation. However, the interface between crusts of different thickness at this area well correspond to the North Maladeta Fault (Fig 4-B-c), which accommodates differences in exhumation, and probably also uplift, as discussed by Ortuño *et al.* (accepted). The decoupling related to the isostatic compensation of the erosion through these three transects (Fig. 4-B) would explain the neotectonic activity above the present-day main plate boundary (Fig. 4-C).

In spite of the differences that we exposed about the evolution of the Eastern Pyrenees, the exhumation history of the Canigò Massif (Fig. 3), related to the post-orogenic reactivation of the Têt Fault (Calvet and Gunnell, 2008) could also be explained by such a model.

5. Final remarks

The present-day neotectonic and paleoseismological studies in the Pyrenees are too scarce to properly characterize the neotectonics of the range. The present-day knowledge on active faulting in the Pyrenees lead us to differentiate the range into two major zones: the High Chain, where active faults are controlled by vertical maximum stresses, and the Low Chain, where horizontal maximum stresses of variable orientation seem to be dominant. This distribution of these dominant stresses is explained within a neotectonic model which relates the dominant vertical stress to larger isostatic rebound (resulting from either enhanced erosion and/or adjustments derived from the loss of the slab) and the dominant hori-

zontal stress to the effect of the convergent forces on a relatively thinner crust (locally combined with the effect of salt tectonics).

The differential isostatic compensation to the erosion explains well the neotectonic differentiation between High and Low Chain of the Pyrenees. Moreover, is in agreement with (1) the neotectonics and geomorphological data previously exposed, (2) the location of enhanced seismicity at the boundary between crusts of different thickness, and (3) the numerical simulations performed by Hivert, 2011 and Hivert *et al.*, 2011. However, this review highlights the variety of the competing forces that take part into the definition of the state of stress all along the range. Further research is needed to better characterize the active faults, the seismicity and the uplift of the chain, and thus to validate the consistency of this neotectonic model.

The distribution of the active faults identified so far in the Pyrenees evidences that the most detailed neotectonic studies are located around the epicenters of the historical destructive earthquakes. The low Present-day deformation rates are related to large recurrence periods between consecutive earthquakes produced in a given structure. This makes the epicentral distribution of the historical catalog little representative of the areas that might experience destructive events in the future. The absence of neotectonics studies in other areas poses a large handicap in the understanding of the geodynamical evolution of the chain and thus, in the improvement of the seismic hazard zonation of the chain. Under these circumstances, we highly recommend to further study the areas where neotectonic activity has been reported, and to conduct neotectonic researches at those areas of the Pyrenees characterized by structural and orographical features comparable to those areas where active tectonics has been shown.

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