

Dear Editor,

We kindly thank the three reviewers for their comments on our manuscript.

One common thread in their different discussions of the text is that we were a bit too quick in the step regarding our method and the description of figures. The primary changes in the manuscript focused on addressing these aspects and the issues with clarity that they brought.

Beyond this, Referee 2 noted some additional limitations to the interpretations we make and we now include those in the discussion. Additionally, Referee 3 drew our attention to a comparison to magnesite (the Mg end member of the carbonate system we investigate) and we have now also incorporated data from relevant experiments and discuss them. In both case, we thank the reviewers for drawing attention to literature we missed.

Lastly, during the review of the initial submission, Mario Ebel noted that figure 11, now figure 12, was problematic for readers with colour vision deficiencies. We have changed this figure to now label the lines with the model grain sizes. This should now cover all of the colour vision deficiencies, including Monochromacy/Achromatopsia.

We hope that the changes to the manuscript increase its clarity and scope.

Best,

James Gilgannon

In the follow rebuttal we have addressed each reviewer in turn. First we address the general points they raised and then the specific comments below that. We only included the relevant sections of the referee's comments and have coloured them in a light grey to make it easier to read our replies.

Referee 1

General comments

Specifically, I would like to learn more about the central methodological part of the manuscript - the normalization of the data (Sections 3.4 and 4). The procedure of normalization is the key part of the study, but its description is very short. Where do the values of exponents used in the normalization come from? Did you test different values? How did you choose these particular values? What is the estimated error range?

You are right the text is too short. We have changed the text accordingly. For the purpose of replying to your questions we have also briefly responded here as well.

The choice of exponents was as follows:

1. Grain size sensitivity was fixed at 3 in line with the microphysical model for grain boundary diffusion.
2. XMgCO₃ sensitivity was varied freely on both axes systematically. There was no statistical or mathematical basis for this iteration and convergence: it was user defined.
3. Stress sensitivity was a result of the normalisation in strain rate vs. stress space.

We did test different values as part of the user guided iteration toward data convergence on one 'master line'. A more sophisticated method would have been to automatically iterate through exponent values and find the best fit via a regression but we did not do this.

We do not have any estimated errors for the parameters, mostly because we cannot calculate through anything meaningful from the various data sources. If one was to run new experiments, then one might try and use uncertainties in the chemical measurements. One might also try and understand if the magnesium sensitivity is bundled, as we assume in our work, out of the frequency factor or if it is the mechanism represented in the activation energy that is sensitive. This would require propagation of error across the various sensors on the apparatus and the measurements of chemistry. Again, if we had used a more sophisticated exponent iteration that looked for a minimum in residuals then we could maybe give an empirical fitting uncertainty, but as we did not do this, the values must stand with out an error.

Specific comments

I also often miss information in figure captions. Namely:

Fig. 1 - what is the meaning of different colors? Is the same color coding also used in other figures in the manuscript? Abbreviations (H11, Eb08...) are not explained in the caption - a reference to Tables would help.

We have changed the caption accordingly.

Fig. 2c - description of this panel is not clear. What is in the inset panel? How is it related to the panel c)?

We have changed the caption accordingly.

Fig. 3! - The figure is busy and important at the same time, but the caption is practically lacking.

You are right, the caption only gives a very curt description. We have changed it to better explain what the reader is seeing.

Fig. 4 - What are the individual lines/curves? What is their spacing?

We have changed the colour bar to show ticks for the discrete values of the curves for clarity.

Fig. 10 - What is the relationship between the inset panel and the main panel? The caption is, again, too brief.

We have changed the caption to better guide a reader but we do point out that the relationship between the three dimensions of strain rate, stress and grain size are made explicitly clear through the constitutive relationship of the rheological relationship.

Fig. 11a - Can you plot the depth-XMgCO₃(T) relationship directly in the main panel (having a secondary x-axis)?

We do not think that this add to the figure. We prefer to retain the convention of the solvus plot shown in the inset.

Fig. 11b,c - References to the flow laws are missing in the caption.
We have changed the caption accordingly.

Fig. 12 - Which existing rheologies? Line 342 can be moved into the caption.
We have changed the caption to better explain what we refer to.

Minor comments:

Within captions, panels can be referred to as a) or b) and not Figure 1a or Figure 1b.
We choose to retain our formulation.

Some grey lines in the figures are barely visible.

We have looked through the figures and find them to be legible. With out more specific direction we retain their grey colour as we feel that it keeps the various figures' emphasis balanced.

Equations in sections 3.2, 3.3 - colons before the equations are missing?

We feel the that the formatting is correct and will take direction of the editing team as we go further towards publication.

line 217 - Why do you write pure "Cc" here? Is it explained anywhere?
The text has been changed accordingly.

line 228 - This heading is not clear to me

We have changed the text to:

"Rheology of samples with different grain size controlling mechanisms"

Lines 345-355 are difficult to follow

We have changed the text to:

"Most notably, for faster strain rates (1E-10 and 1E-12) at lower greenschist facies conditions the strength of carbonates flattens out with depth."

There are a lot of typos and small grammatical mistakes - a more careful reading and writing is needed.

The text has been changed accordingly.

Referee 2 - Brian Evans

General comments

In calcite rocks (and metals), twinning causes a similar effect by dividing the grains into separate slip domains. This inverse relation between twinning dimension and strength (the TWIP effect) is well-established (although the details are still a topic of discussion) [Rowe and Rutter, 1990; Rutter et al., 2022; Rybacki et al., 2021]. In the case of twinning, there is no change in chemistry during the deformation, and so, the strength effects are due solely to structural changes in the grains. Thus, I would be reluctant to say that reduction in grain (twin) size has a weakening effect on calcite rocks under all conditions.

This is a fair point and we have noted in the summary this limitation.

Similarly, in the discussion, you have extended the findings to conditions of T and rate in the Earth that are quite different from the experimental conditions (line 385 and following). This seems risky, particularly given that at least some of the data are derived from the transition between grain boundary sliding/ diffusion creep and dislocation creep. If the dependence on grain size changes with changes in T and rate as it does in metals, then it is more likely that there are two regions with different behavior, much the same as is proposed for deformation maps.

We have formulated this more carefully in the text now.

Specific comments

In abstract: Sentence beginning with “Most notably our results...can be shown to have a weakening effect in dislocation creep...” change to “in high temperature creep where diffusion is important...” Change sentence with “This is the opposite finding to the currently accepted flow law” to acknowledge the fact that we might expect there to be two regimes with different dependences on grain size.

We have changed the text to try and reflect the referee’s comments. While we agree, and discuss where the hardening effect may exist in the paper, we think that for an abstract we wish simply to state the fact that our results draw an opposite conclusion to previous work which analysed similar temperatures and rates.

Figure 1 and Table 2: The data sets are identified by codes (H03) and so on. But the codes are hidden in table 2; make a new column or include them in the first column so that they are more prominent. In the figure captions (Particularly figure 1) provide a reference to table 2 so that the reader will know what the codes mean.

We have changed the table 2 to make the abbreviations for experiments more prominent and added references in figure captions.

The description of the normalization techniques wasn’t at all clear. Was the success in normalization judged solely by observing a decreased dispersion of the data points? Did you quantify the normalization by some statistical measure? I am assume that the normalization technique robustly eliminates any cross-correlation between the grain size and the magnesium content.

This is something that Referee 1 also picked up on. We have added much more text and an example figure to more explicitly state what was done. Please refer to our answer to Referee 1.

Is it correct that there are 6 components (Afg, nfg, Qfg, Acg, ncg, Qcg)) to be determined for fine-grained samples, and three more to be determined for the coarse-grained samples? Given this number of variables can you be assured that you will achieve accuracy? I apologize if this question is ill-informed, but perhaps a comment in the text is in order.

There is nothing to apologise for, it is not an ill-informed question but a question that probes at one of our biggest limitations. We have added to the text to clarify this limitation more. Also please see our answer to Referee 1 on this matter as they raised it too.

Referee 3 - Andreas Kronenberg

General comments

One detail that might help the reader follow the development here is to state which carbonate minerals are included in the analysis.

The text has been changed accordingly and direction to the details of this change can be found in our replies to the referee's specific comments below.

Why not compare these results normalizing by parameters of grain size and XMgCO_3 ? It is worth stating the beginning premise(s) of this analysis (and why you include dolomite data). Taking this further, it might be interesting to include magnesite deformation data (with XMgCO_3 nearly equal to 1.0; Holyoke et al., 2014). Indeed, the mineral symmetry and structure of magnesite is essentially the same as calcite, while dolomite differs due to its ordered cation structure. Thus, any trends that go beyond creep of an individual carbonate phase might be more likely to hold for calcite and magnesite than for calcite and dolomite.

We appreciate the referee pointing us to the work by Holyoke et al. (2014) on magnesite as we had somehow missed it in our review the literature. We have added the magnesite data and expanded on the discussion where relevant. The details of where this was added are noted below in the responses to specific comments.

Specific comments

This manuscript is well written and shouldn't take much revision for final publication. In the following, I offer some minor points that may improve the manuscript. However, I leave much of this to the authors' discretion.

Early in Section 3.4 (Normalization of data), it would be worth stating more explicitly that all mechanical data sets where calcite compositions have been reported and dolomite have been used in the normalization. Or I may have misunderstood how this was done. The dolomite data may throw off a best-fit to calcite aggregate data. In any case, please state exactly how this was done.

We have expanded this section of the methods now and include a table to more explicitly highlight what was done and which data was used.

In Figure 11, it would be worth stating what the assumed tectonic setting is. These are classic lithosphere-dimensioned yield envelopes for carbonate deformation including frictional and plastic flow laws for an assumed, fixed strain rate, geothermal gradient and tectonic stress state (compressional, extensional, strike-slip/transform boundaries). Please include the assumed tectonic setting in the caption. Similarly, please include the assumed strain rate in figures 12b and 12c.

We have added a brittle envelope for the thrust and normal fault setting alongside the Byerlee strength we had previously included in figure 11. Figure 12 has the strain rates included in the figure but we now refer to them in the caption more clearly.

I find the comparisons of flow laws for non-zero- XMgCO_3 calcite aggregates and dolomite very interesting, and I wonder if the authors might add some possible explanations of the differences in the discussion of this manuscript. At the outset, differences in crystal symmetry and structure of calcite and dolomite, and the different slip systems of these two minerals offer obvious reasons that their flow laws for coarse-grained aggregates associated with intracrystalline deformation cannot readily be combined into one simple relation. However, it is fair to wonder why this doesn't work well for grain-size-sensitive deformation and processes at grain boundaries (grain boundary diffusion and sliding). We know little about the atomic structures of grain boundaries, so a relationship that includes grain size and XMgCO_3 might be expected to work for inter-crystalline creep mechanisms in relatively "unstructured" carbonate grain boundaries. It could be that mean jump distances or frequencies might differ for dolomite grain boundaries (where dolomite grains are ordered in Ca and Mg) from those at calcite grain boundaries. This might mean that grain boundary diffusion depends more strongly on XMgCO_3 than captured by grain-size-sensitive

calcite deformation results. Alternatively, nucleation (or reaction to add to one of the dolomite grains adjacent to a grain boundary) during diffusion creep and grain boundary sliding may differ at XMgCO_3 values near 0.5. I don't think these potential differences can be evaluated without further data or information, but they are interesting possibilities. I wonder if grain-size-sensitive deformation of magnesite (at $\text{XMgCO}_3 = 1$) with the same mineral structure as calcite might fit the universal carbonate deformation law presented here better than flow laws reported for dolomite.

We have changed sections 5.2 and 5.3 accordingly. We now include magnesite data and discuss the effects that the reviewer raises.

Throughout, this manuscript is well written and I have only very minor editorial suggestions for rewording, which I will list below by line number:

Line 2 (abstract) – "... limestones and marbles. Such an"

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 100 – Was this normalization done just for calcite samples? Or both calcite and dolomite samples? Please specify explicitly ("... of natural calcite samples..." or "... of natural calcite and synthetic (?) dolomite samples ...")

Line 108 – again please specify if just calcite samples or both calcite and dolomite. The max XMgCO_3 value of 0.17 certainly suggests that dolomite data were not included in the global fit.

The text has been changed accordingly to specify and clarify the data used.

Line 115 – "... sample data are transformed to:"

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 117 – "and results for coarse grained ..."

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 120 – "... exponents to collapse data to a one-to-one curve ..."

The text was meant to read "on to one curve", thank you for drawing our attention to it: it has been changed accordingly

Line 128 – "... regimes that we think contribute to deformation and can be used in investigation and normalization. In our data there are two"

We have changed the text to:

"...regimes that we think contribute to deformation and then invert the normalisation for flow law parameters. In our data there are two ..."

Line 129 – "... different deformation mechanisms are apparent: a low stress domain in which data have a slope of 1 in"

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 130 – "... a high stress domain characterized by a slope of 7 ..."

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 147 – delete "then"

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 155 – suggest deleting "that"

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 156 – "... mechanisms; (2) XMgCO_3 has two opposing effects ..."

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 157 – "... coarse grained natural samples is only half that of the compositional sensitivity of fine grained"

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 160 – suggest replacing “visualized” by “illustrated”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 171 – “... and coarse grained samples in sections 5.2 and 5.3.”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 174 – “The effect of magnesium on diffusion creep was first noted in the original work ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 177 – “... magnesium can be separated empirically from grain size. Therefore,”

The text has been changed accordingly

Lines 184-185 – “the observation of the same or broadly similar activation energies across Mg-carbonates (Herwegh et al., 2003). This observation suggests that mechanisms activated are thermodynamically equivalent, possibly the exact same mechanism for all chemistries.”

We have changed the text to:

“...the observation of the same or broadly similar activation energies across Mg-carbonates (Herwegh et al., 2003), and more broadly across the whole Mg-Ca carbonate series (Holyoke et al., 2014). These observation suggests that mechanisms activated are thermodynamically equivalent, possibly the exact same mechanism for all chemistries.”

Line 189 – “2008)) as reported for cation species self diffusion or diffusion creep of calcite (Herwegh ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 190 – “... one should expect that local spatial gradient are reduced as XMgCO₃ increases, and magnesium”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 191 – “... This is what we observe. ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 192 – delete “which are derived from linearly spaced XMgCO₃ values”

The text has been changed accordingly

Lines 196-197 – “... (fig. 4a and c). Indeed, our results suggest that this compositional effect on flow law extended beyond synthetic Mg-carbonates ...”

We have changed the text to:

“Indeed, our results suggest that this compositional effect on creep extends beyond synthetic Mg-carbonates to natural calcite samples.”

Line 198 – “strengthening by XMgCO₃ may be due to solute-drag ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 199 – “to the progress of linear defects. This second possibility is not expected if chemical diffusion is substantial as discussed earlier”

We have changed the text to:

“This second possibility may be unlikely if chemical diffusion is substantial, as discussed earlier...”

Line 235 – delete “the framing of”

We have changed the text to:

“Reinforcing the framing of our discussion into fine and coarse grained samples, the rheology of the coarser grained starting material cannot...”

Line 238 – “0.3). Notably the newly defined XMgCO₃-sensitive diffusion creep law ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Lines 245-246 – “... Lochseiten mylonite data. It is important to ask how well the equations fit carbonates ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 248 – “Equations 5-6 were compared ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Lines 251-253 – “... data appear to be fit well. In the case of diffusion creep of the Lochseiten mylonite, the data fit equation 5 at higher temperatures but not at lower temperatures (fig. 8c). Figure 8d shows that, as the second phase content rises to 10% and above, the observed rheologies depart from our model.”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 255 – “The normalization of experimental results of coarse-grained natural sample results was limited to ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 258 – “When compared to other coarse grained calcite experiments, the data fit the model relatively well (9a-c). However, they do”

We have changed the text to:

“Despite this, when compared to other coarse grained calcite experiments the data fit the model relatively well (fig. 9a-c) , but could not account for experiments run on dolomite or magnesite (fig. 9d).

Line 261 – “the spread of data points.”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 262 – delete “will”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 263 – “there is a marked increase in strain. ‘the fit clearly overestimates ...”

We choose to retain our formulation.

Line 264 – “... with in the range of Carrara marble experimental results. Regardless”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 269 – “... result of differences in sample ...”

We choose to retain our formulation.

Line 271 – “... synthetic and natural for XMgCO_3 values that”

We have changed the text to:

“Figure 10 shows data from fine and coarse grained samples, that are both synthetic and natural, with XMgCO_3 values that are close together.”

Line 272 – “... Data plotted for $\text{SMgCO}_3 = 0.07$ come from a fine grained ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 275 – “While data plotted for $\text{XMgCO}_3 = 0.03$ comes from a fine grained ...

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 277 – “... is not restricted to synthetic samples alone – it is not an artifact”

The text has been changed accordingly

Lines 278-280 – “... there is a transition to a grain size sensitive dislocation creep field. We conclude from this that grain size sensitive and grain size insensitive dislocation creep fields are real.”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 292 – “a modified Hall-Petch relation has been proposed; the smaller the grain size, the stronger ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Lines 294-296 – “in the dislocation field appears to be similar to the d^{-3} dependence of diffusion creep. Moreover, figure 10 implies that there is a transition as grain size increases to a grain size insensitive rheology.”

We choose to retain our formulation.

Line 298 – “To explain the ever diminishing ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 300 – “... could transition from grain size strengthening to weakening and ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Lines 301-302 – “deformation as grain size increased. In this model the grain size sensitivity of dislocation accommodated deformation changes according to the storage and recovery of dislocations, and the dependence of these processes on grain size. Breithaupt et al. (2023)”

We choose to retain our formulation.

Lines 305-309 – “... Breithaupt, 2022). Thus, the apparent results for diffusion creep and grain size sensitive deformation of polycrystalline calcite might be linked to the storage and recovery in grains, and how these change with size of grains. The model of Breithaupt et al. (2023) also explains the variation (hardening and weakening) in the effect of grain size for different calcite experiments. ...”

We choose to retain our formulation.

Lines 312- 313 – “et al., 2002). This is most likely for lower temperature experiments of Sly et al. (2019). While the grain sizes of Renner et al. (2002) and Herwegh et al. (2003) seem to cover a similar range ...”

We choose to retain our formulation.

Lines 315-316 – “... vs area-weighted); grain size values of Renner et al. (2002) might be half those measured by Herwegh et al. (2003; cf. table 5 in Berhger et al., 2011).”

We choose to retain our formulation.

Line 319 – “... sensitivity is needed. Short of adapting”

The text has been changed accordingly

Lines 320-321 – “... the effect of XMgCO_3 , a pragmatic guide to modeling different rheologies based on grain size domains (Fig. 10).”

We choose to retain our formulation.

Line 323 – replace “if” by “for”

Line 325 – replace “if” by “for”

Line 326 – replace “if” by “for”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 328 – “... 1987), figure 11 illustrates this approach ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Lines 329-331 – “it to a case for fine grained dislocation creep rheology that shows no grain size effect (dashed lines in fig. 11b), and the published flow laws for calcite (Schmid et al. 1980; Herwegh et al., 2003) fig. 11c). Regardless of which composite ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Lines 333-336 – “when modelling crustal strength. Figure 11 also shows that the fine grained dislocation creep rheology predicts low strengths in the crust with depth.”

We have removed this section of text as it was not needed.

Line 338 – “Using temperature and grain size measurements for mylonites ...”

We have changed the text to:

“Using temperature and grain size measurements from natural carbonate shear zone mylonites we can account...”

Line 339 – “... Figure 12 shows data from several thrusts of the Helvetic”

Lines 340-341 – “... Naxos (Herwegh et al., 2011) deformed at greenschist to amphibolite facies conditions. As before, the calcite-dolomite solvus ...”

We have changed the text to:

Figure 12 shows data from mylonites deformed at greenschist to amphibolite facies conditions from several thrusts of the Helvetic Nappes (Ebert et al., 2008) and from Naxos (Herwegh et al., 2011).

Line 353 – “... Using the same data as previously, figure ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 355 – “... shear zones deform by a grain size sensitive ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 359 – “... a shear zone would show more strength evolution ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 367 – I’m a bit confused by the use of “grain size has a weakening effect”. This would seem to state that larger grain sizes weaken the flow law, but I think you mean to state that fine-grain sizes (or larger grain boundary densities) weaken the flow law. Please revise. How about “grain boundaries have a weakening effect”?

We have changed the text to:

“Furthermore for a given molar fraction of magnesium, our review of the data show that at high stresses, at which dislocation mediated deformation will occur, finer grain sizes produce higher strain rates (fig. 10).”

Line 382 – “An. Important conclusion of this work is that ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

Line 385 – “If true, this calls into question the predictions of carbonate paleopiezometry for crustal strength. More importantly, these”

The text has been changed accordingly to the referees more measured phrasing, but we note for purposes of this review that questionable predictions lack usefulness.

Lines 386-387 – “... also been shown that flow strength depends on iron concentration (Zhao et al., 2009-2018). ...”

The text has been changed accordingly

On unifying carbonate rheology

James Gilgannon¹ and Marco Herwegh²

¹School of Geographical and Earth Sciences, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, United Kingdom

²Institute of Geological Sciences, University of Bern, 3012 Bern, Switzerland

Correspondence: James Gilgannon (james.gilgannon@glasgow.ac.uk)

Abstract. We review the results from twenty four experimental works conducted on the rheology of carbonates from the last fifty years to revisit the long-noted discordance in the experimental results from a range of limestones and marbles. Such an exercise is needed to bring together the various datasets generated in the twenty three years since the last major review, as many of them observe relationships that run contrary to existing rheological models. By revisiting the large data set, we find that most low and high stress experimental measurements can be explained by the combined effect of grain size and the molar fraction of magnesium carbonate (XMgCO_3). Our results highlight that much of the calcite-dolomite series exists in a continuum of strength that changes with XMgCO_3 . In contrast to previous findings, we establish that diffusion creep in calcite is sensitive to both grain size and magnesium content, showing that an increase in XMgCO_3 acts to weaken a rock. While in dislocation creep we confirm the observation that XMgCO_3 has a strengthening effect but extend it beyond synthetic Mg-calcite samples to natural starting materials. Most notably our results suggest that when the composition of a carbonate is factored in then grain size can be shown to have a weakening effect in high temperature creep for fine grained rocks. This is the opposite finding to the currently accepted flow law for high homologous temperature deformation of calcite rocks where a decrease in grain size strengthens a rock. We contextualise these new results by combining them with data from natural shear zones to show that carbonates are much weaker than would be expected from previous flow laws in a crustal section. Ultimately our review provides new pragmatic flow laws for carbonates in the calcite-dolomite series for diffusion and dislocation creep.

Copyright statement. TEXT

1 Introduction

During mountain building, marine sediments are incorporated into an orogeny and often become subsequently important tectonic horizons (e.g. Pfiffner, 1982; Burkhard, 1990; Bestmann et al., 2000; Herwegh and Pfiffner, 2005; Ebert et al., 2007; Nania et al., 2022). Many of these sediments are calcareous and they have a range of compositions, distributions of mineral phases and grain sizes inherited from their depositional environments. Importantly these chemical and micro-structural characteristics can change with time as the material experiences metamorphism and deformation (Ebert et al., 2007). Figure 1 shows this variety, both in composition, in this case equilibrated molar fraction of magnesium (XMgCO_3) and deformationally induced steady state grain size. Understanding the effect these changes have on rock rheology is of great importance for eval-

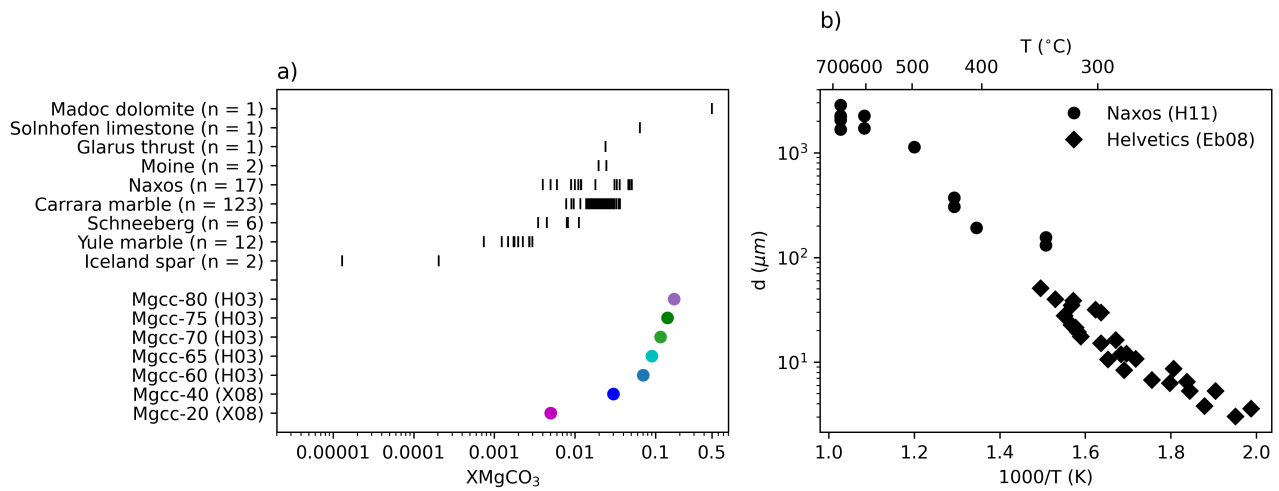


Figure 1. [Compilation of measurements from natural and synthetic carbonates \(see tables 1 and 2 for references\).](#) Figure 1a shows the variation in the amount of magnesium, while Figure 1b shows the how the steady state grain sizes of carbonate mylonites change with temperature. Abbreviations are H03 = Herwegh et al. (2003), X08 = Xu et al. (2008), Eb08 = Ebert et al. (2008) and H11 = Herwegh et al. (2011).

25 uating crustal deformation and is most readily established through laboratory deformation experiments.

Over the years experiments on carbonates have explored the role of different lattice impurities (Herwegh et al., 2003; Freund et al., 2004; Xu et al., 2008; Davis et al., 2008; Holyoke et al., 2013), the distribution of minor secondary phases (Olgaard, 1978; Walker et al., 1990; Austin et al., 2014), the effect of incorporating proportions of a stronger phase (Bruhn et al., 1999; Rybacki et al., 2003; Renner et al., 2007; Delle Piane et al., 2009; Kushnir et al., 2015), water content (Rutter, 1972; Olgaard, 1978; de Bresser et al., 2005) and the role of other microstructural characteristics like grain-size (Schmid et al., 1977; Walker et al., 1990; Rutter, 1995; Pieri et al., 2001; Renner et al., 2002; Herwegh et al., 2003; Barnhoorn et al., 2004; Xu et al., 2008). All of these variables have been shown to have some effect on rock strength, which makes understanding the deformation behaviour of calcite rich rocks complex.

35 Here we revisit and review a range of data from deformation experiments performed on several carbonates [at high homologous temperatures](#) with a focus on the role of grain size and magnesium content. Our motivation for doing so is that, since the last major review on calcite rheology (Renner and Evans, 2002), several new experiments have been conducted that further illuminated the role of these two important variables (e.g. Pieri et al., 2001; Herwegh et al., 2003; Barnhoorn et al., 2004; Xu et al., 2008). In particular we are interested in the fact that some of the more recent experiments may not conform to the constitutive relation that is currently used to unify dislocation creep in carbonates, the modified Peierls law (Renner et al., 2002; Renner and

Evans, 2002). For example, Barnhoorn et al. (2004) found that during shear zone formation and grain size reduction through dynamic recrystallisation lead to material weakening and not strengthening as would be expected by the modified Peierls law. So far, these newer results and older data have not been compiled and comprehensively compared to one another. Making an up to date comparison is of particular interest for carbonates because of the long standing observation of a lack of conformity between the high stress rheologies of various calcite single crystals, limestones and marbles (cf. Renner et al., 2002; Renner and Evans, 2002).

In this contribution we collate data from a range of deformation experiments and make this needed comparison. Starting from a core set of deformation experiments that record both grain size and magnesium content, trends are revealed and then compared to a wide range of data spanning the whole magnesium carbonate series to ultimately provide a perspective and flow laws that unify observations from most carbonate deformation experiments to date.

2 Problems with the current model

A primary insight of Renner and Evans (2002) was that experiments gained strength with decreasing grain size (Fig. 2a). However that observation was made in the absence of chemistry. If experimental data which also had chemical characterisation reported are plotted to visualise the variation of magnesium (Fig. 2b), then a different trend emerges - material strength increases with increasing magnesium. This fits with the experimental observations of Xu et al. (2008) where synthetic carbonates in the dislocation creep field were shown to harden with the concentration of magnesium. Continuing to account for chemistry also reveals that high stress domains of experimental data associated with the dislocation creep field are in fact grain size weakening (Fig. 2c), and not hardening as predicted by the modified Peierls law used by both Renner et al. (2002) and Xu et al. (2008) to fit data. Lastly, it was noted by Holyoke et al. (2014) that comparisons of exponents and activation energies for calcite, dolomite and magnesite might reflect shared rate-controlling mechanisms in dislocation creep for calcite and magnesite and across all three materials in diffusion creep. All of these observations highlight that while both grain size and magnesium are clearly important for carbonate rheology, we have not fully understood their effects. The following methods, results and discussion attempt to better characterise the effect of grain size and magnesium across a range of *nominally pure, magnesium bearing* and second-phase rich ~~magnesium~~-carbonates.

3 Methods

We revisit data from 23-24 publications that conducted carbonate deformation experiments as well as several studies that performed chemical and microstructural characterisations of naturally deformed carbonates. Data were collated from both reported values in tables and extracted from figures of publications (see supplemental material for a text file of all data). The rest of this section outlines how data were converted to the appropriate units for comparison.

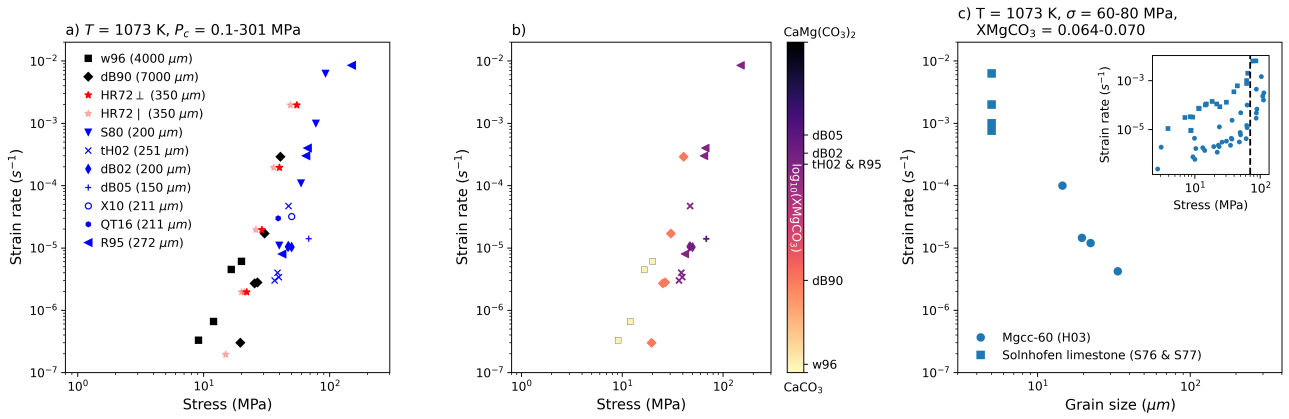


Figure 2. A starting point for evaluating carbonate rheology (see Table 3 for references and experiment abbreviations). Figure 2a visualises the core observation for the current understanding of calcite rheology, rocks are stronger for smaller grain sizes (cf. Renner and Evans, 2002). Data is colour coded by material: black = Iceland spar; red = Yule marble; blue = Carrara marble. Figure 2b shows an alternative trend where a rock strengthens with magnesium. Figure 2c highlights a consequence of this observation, that grain size actually has a weakening effect if data are observed at a fixed magnesium content. The dashed line in the inset highlights the stress at which grain size is evaluated in the main plot of Figure 2c.

Table 1: Reported and converted magnesium values of naturally deformed carbonates and experimental starting material.

Material	Reported value				XMgCO_3
	$\omega_{\text{Mg}}(\text{ppm})$	ω_{MgCO_3}	MgO (wt%)	XMgCO_3	
Moine					
Oden (1985) (n = 2)				0.0197 ^a	
				0.0245 ^b	
Schneeberg					
Schenk et al. (2005) (n = 6)			0.14 ^a		0.003474
			0.45 ^b		0.011154
Naxos					
Schenk et al. (2005) (n = 5)		1209.1 ^a			0.004974
			0.48 ^b		0.011896

^a Minimum value

^b Maximum value

^c Minimum from range from Sample D2-W (2k-7), both inside and outside of shear zone

^d Maximum from range from Sample D2-W (2k-7), both inside and outside of shear zone

Table 1: continued

Material	Reported value				XMgCO ₃
	$\omega_{Mg}(ppm)$	ω_{MgCO_3}	MgO (wt%)	XMgCO ₃	
Covey-Crump and Rutter (1989) (n = 12)				0.004 ^a	
				0.051 ^b	
Synthetic calcite					
Walker et al. (1990)				0.000	
Renner et al. (2002)				0.000	
Synthetic Mg-calcite					
Xu et al. (2008)				0.005 ^a	
				0.030 ^b	
Herwegh et al. (2003)				0.070 ^a	
				0.170 ^b	
Iceland Spar					
Wang et al. (1996) (n = 2)	3.2 ^a				0.000013
	10.5 ^b				0.000043
de Bresser and Spiers (1990)	49.8				0.000205
Yule marble					
McGee (1999) (n = 10)			0.03 ^a		0.000744
		0.0025 ^b			0.002966
Busenberg and Plummer (1983)				0.002740	
Busenberg and Plummer (1989)				0.002700	
Carrara marble					
Rutter (1995)	2250				0.009250
Covey-Crump (1998)	2250				0.009250
Pieri et al. (2001)			0.73 ^a		0.018074
			0.99 ^b		0.024487
Barnhoorn et al. (2005)			0.30		0.007440
Ter Heege et al. (2002)	2250				0.009250
de Bresser (2002)	3321				0.013234

^a Minimum value

^b Maximum value

^c Minimum from range from Sample D2-W (2k-7), both inside and outside of shear zone

^d Maximum from range from Sample D2-W (2k-7), both inside and outside of shear zone

Table 1: continued

Material	Reported value				XMgCO_3
	$\omega_{\text{Mg}}(\text{ppm})$	ω_{MgCO_3}	MgO (wt%)	XMgCO_3	
de Bresser et al. (2005)	4804				0.019718
	5845				0.023974
Oesterling (2004) (n = 43)				0.013761 ^c	
				0.028560 ^d	
Solnhofen limestone					
Barnhoorn et al. (2005) (n=1)			0.22 ^a		0.054160
			0.30 ^b		0.073626

^a Minimum value

^b Maximum value

^c Minimum from range from Sample D2-W (2k-7), both inside and outside of shear zone

^d Maximum from range from Sample D2-W (2k-7), both inside and outside of shear zone

Table 2: Naturally deformed carbonates from shear zones in the Helvetic Alps (Ebert et al., 2008) and Naxos (Herwegh et al., 2011)

	1T [°C]	2d [μm]	$^3\text{XMgCO}_3$
<i>Helvetics</i> ^a	230.0	3.6	0.012198
	239.4	3.03	0.012581
	259.1	3.81	0.013518
	252.0	5.31	0.013178
	269.0	5.31	0.013987
	271.1	6.49	0.014158
	283.2	6.31	0.014839
	280.4	8.66	0.014669
	296.3	6.78	0.015670
	318.2	8.41	0.017246
	308.9	10.75	0.016501
	331.8	10.59	0.018290

¹ T = deformation temperature

² d = grain size

³ XMgCO_3 = molar fraction of MgCO_3 converted from T

Table 2: continued

	1T [°C]	2d [μm]	3XMgCO_3
	320.8	11.89	0.017395
	316.3	12.06	0.017097
	325.3	16.31	0.017864
	337.8	15.18	0.018823
	355.9	17.53	0.020506
	358.7	19.39	0.020825
	360.9	21.44	0.021102
	364.6	22.71	0.021443
	371.3	27.78	0.022210
	337.8	29.85	0.018823
	342.6	31.62	0.019270
	364.6	34.97	0.021443
	363.1	38.68	0.021336
	380.4	39.81	0.023232
	395.4	50.85	0.025107
<i>Naxos^b</i>	390.0	130.78	0.024468
	390.0	155.74	0.024468
	470.0	192.55	0.037206
	500.0	373.09	0.043512
	500.0	305.56	0.043512
	560.0	1132.92	0.058913
	650.0	2250.63	0.089844
	650.0	1710.26	0.089844
	700.0	2852.89	0.111487
	700.0	2222.71	0.111487
	700.0	2062.35	0.111487
	700.0	2250.63	0.111487
	700.0	1668.1	0.111487

¹T = deformation temperature

²d = grain size

³ $XMgCO_3$ = molar fraction of
MgCO₃ converted from T

Table 3: Experimentally deformed carbonates

Experiment	¹ Abb	² T [K]	³ P _c [MPa]	⁴ d (d _p) [<i>μm</i>]	⁵ f _p [<i>μm</i>]	
<i>Synthetic calcite</i>						
Walker et al. (1990)						
	C50 R	w90	973	200	7.50	--
	C69 R		973	200	3.40	--
Renner et al. (2002)						
	C192	R02	1077	300	8.00	--
	C189		1076	300	11.00	--
	C376		1078	300	20.00	--
<i>Synthetic Mg-calcite</i>						
Xu et al. (2008)						
Mgcc-20						
	C948	X08	1073	300	27.00/19.00	--
Mgcc-40						
	C942		1058	300	25.00/20.00	--
Herwegh et al. (2003)						
Mgcc-60						
	cd-77	H03	1073	300	14.55	--
	cd-58 & 85		973	300	19.50	--
			1073	300	19.50	--
	cd-38		1073	300	19.50	--
	cd-53		1073	300	22.23	--
	cd-50		1073	300	33.48	--
Mgcc-65						
	cd-61		973	300	17.44	--
	cd-61 & 46		1073	300	17.44	--
Mgcc-70						
	cd-80		973	300	15.01	--
	cd-80 & 56		1073	300	15.01	--

¹Abb = experiment abbreviation²T = deformation temperature³P_c = confining pressure⁴d/d_p = grain-size/second phase grain-size⁵f_p = area/volume fraction of second phases

-- not applicable/not reported

* value taken from Barnhoorn et al. (2005)

Table 3: continued

Experiment	¹ Abb	² T [K]	³ P _c [MPa]	⁴ d (d _p) [μ m]	⁵ f _p [μ m]
<i>Mgcc-75</i>	cd-62	1073	300	17.56	--
	cd-51	1073	300	22.69	--
	cd-81 & 41	1073	300	13.54	--
<i>Mgcc-80</i>	cd-37	1073	300	11.91	--
	cd-45	1073	300	14.89	--
	cd-49	1073	300	17.34	--
<i>Synthetic dolomite</i>					
Delle Piane et al. (2008)					
	DP08	873	300	4.2-5.2	--
		923	300	4.2-5.2	--
		973	300	4.2-5.2	--
		1023	300	4.2-5.2	--
Davis et al. (2008)					
	D08	1073	300	2.5	--
<i>Iceland spar</i>					
Wang et al. (1996)					
	B3-B5	w96	1053-1073	0.1	4000.00
de Bresser and Spiers (1990)					
	P2	dB90	1073	0.1	7000.00
<i>Yule marble</i>					
Heard and Raleigh (1972)					
	714, 702, 708, 721, 733, 746	HR72	1073	500	350.00
Heard and Raleigh (1972)					
	715, 703, 709, 722	HR72	1073	500	350.00
<i>Carrara marble</i>					
Schmid et al. (1980)					

¹Abb = experiment abbreviation

²T = deformation temperature

³P_c = confining pressure

⁴d/d_p = grain-size/second phase grain-size

⁵f_p = area/volume fraction of second phases

-- not applicable/not reported

* value taken from Barnhoorn et al. (2005)

Table 3: continued

Experiment	¹ Abb	² T [K]	³ P _c [MPa]	⁴ d (d _p) [μ m]	⁵ f _p [μ m]
2736, 2663, 2695, 2868	S80	1073	300	200.00	--
Barnhoorn et al. (2004)					
PO344, PO298, PO266, PO264, PO422, PO263, PO362, PO267, PO274, PO303, PO265, PO222, PO352	BH04	1000	300	264.00	0.02*
Rutter (1995)					
37, 9, 23, 28	R95	1073	200	272.00	--
Ter Heege et al. (2002)					
36LM830/0.15	tH02	1102	301	251.00	--
36LM830/0.30		1103	299		
36LM830		1108	299		
50LM780		1049	298		
de Bresser (2002)					
HBCM01	dB02	1073	302		
HBCM03		1077	301		
HBCM04		1074	300		
de Bresser et al. (2005)					
5348	dB05	1073	300	150.00	--
Xu and Evans (2010)					
CM03	X10	1073	300	211.12	--
Quintanilla-Terminel and Evans (2016)					
CMhC (PI10)	QT16	1073	300	211.12	--
<i>Madoc dolomite</i>					
Davis et al. (2008)					
MD28E6, MD28E5, MD28E4	D08	1073	300	240.00	--
Holyoke et al. (2013)					
O-11	Hol13	1073	300	240.00	--
<i>Nevada magnesite</i>					

¹Abb = experiment abbreviation²T = deformation temperature³P_c = confining pressure⁴d/d_p = grain-size/second phase grain-size⁵f_p = area/volume fraction of second phases

-- not applicable/not reported

* value taken from Barnhoorn et al. (2005)

Table 3: continued

Experiment	¹ Abb	² T [K]	³ P _c [MPa]	⁴ d (d _p) [μm]	⁵ f _p [μm]
Holyoke et al. (2014)					
	M-23	Hol14	1173	1250	100.00
<i>Greek magnesite</i>					—
Holyoke et al. (2014)					
	M-18	Hol14	923	340	1.00
			973	350	—
			1003	370	—
<i>Synthetic calcite & alumina</i>					
Walker et al. (1990)					
	C129	w90	973	200	3.40 (0.25)
	C121		973	200	3.40 (0.25)
<i>Synthetic calcite & quartz</i>					
Renner et al. (2007)					
	C129	R07	973	200	8.20 (3.50)
<i>Solnhofen limestone</i>					
Schmid (1976)					
	2599, 2632, 2565,	S76	973	300	1-10
	2551, 2636, 2547,				—
	2613, 2654, 2641,				
	2655, 2606, 2631,				
	2610				
	2592, 2642, 2648,		1073	300	1-10
	2559, 2561, 2662,				—
	2646, 2549, 2557,				
	2608, 2668, 2554,				
	2591				
Schmid et al. (1977)					

¹Abb = experiment abbreviation

²T = deformation temperature

³P_c = confining pressure

⁴d/d_p = grain-size/second phase grain-size

⁵f_p = area/volume fraction of second phases

— not applicable/not reported

* value taken from Barnhoorn et al. (2005)

Table 3: continued

Experiment	¹ Abb	² T [K]	³ P _c [MPa]	⁴ d (d _p) [μm]	⁵ f _p [μm]
2793, 2802, 2795, 2678, 2668, 2851, 2882, 2702, 2762	S77	1073	300	4	—
<i>Lochseiten mylonite</i>					
Schmid (1982)	S82	873	300	6.5	—
		973	300	6.5	—

¹Abb = experiment abbreviation

²T = deformation temperature

³P_c = confining pressure

⁴d/d_p = grain-size/second phase grain-size

⁵f_p = area/volume fraction of second phases

— not applicable/not reported

* value taken from Barnhoorn et al. (2005)

3.1 Converting reported Mg content into XMgCO₃

To compare data to one another we have chosen to convert all reported magnesium values to molar fractions of magnesium carbonate (XMgCO₃) in the following way. Firstly, if the carbonate data fall somewhere between pure calcite and dolomite, then the molecular weight of this Mg-carbonate (MW_{MgCc}) can be defined as:

$$MW_{MgCc} = ((1 - XMgCO_3) * MW_{CaCO_3}) + (XMgCO_3 * MW_{MgCO_3}) \quad (1)$$

If considering data reported as the mass fraction of magnesium (ω_{Mg}), it follows that:

$$\omega_{Mg} = \frac{MW_{Mg}}{MW_{MgCc}} * XMgCO_3 \quad (2)$$

Substituting in equation 1 gives:

$$\omega_{Mg} = \frac{MW_{Mg} * XMgCO_3}{((1 - XMgCO_3) * MW_{CaCO_3}) + (XMgCO_3 * MW_{MgCO_3})} \quad (3)$$

Which can be rearranged to yield XMgCO₃:

$$XMgCO_3 = \frac{MW_{CaCO_3}}{MW_{CaCO_3} - MW_{MgCO_3} + \left(\frac{MW_{Mg}}{\omega_{Mg}}\right)} \quad (4)$$

A python script is provided for converting data in the supplemental material.

3.2 Modelling XMgCO₃ from temperature data

The calcite-dolomite solvus as defined by Anovitz and Essene (1987) was used to convert between XMgCO₃ and temperature in datasets from natural carbonates. The relationship is only valid between 473 and 1173 K.

$$0 = T - A(\text{XMgCO}_3) - B/(\text{XMgCO}_3)^2 - C(\text{XMgCO}_3)^2 - D(\text{XMgCO}_3)^{0.5} - E;$$

$$A = -2360.0, \quad B = -0.01345, \quad C = 2620.0, \quad D = 2608.0, \quad E = 334.0$$

3.3 Converting mechanical data

When data from torsion experiments are compared to other data, the reported shear stress (τ) and shear strain rate ($\dot{\gamma}$) values are converted to equivalent stress (σ_{eff}) and equivalent strain rate ($\dot{\epsilon}_{eff}$) following the relationships outlined in Paterson and Olgaard (2000).

$$\dot{\epsilon}_{eff} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}}\dot{\gamma} \quad \text{and} \quad \sigma_{eff} = \sqrt{3}\tau$$

3.4 Normalisation of data

A normalisation exercise was used as the primary method of analysis. ~~It was used to establish whether there are independent effects of grain size and magnesium on the strain rate in carbonates. Such an analysis can obtain parameters that account separately for any sensitivities in strain rate that exist.~~

For this exercise, two data sets with known grain size and magnesium contents were used: synthetic Mg-calcite experiments from Herwegh et al. (2003) and a suite of natural samples (Wang et al., 1996; de Bresser and Spiers, 1990; Ter Heege et al., 2002; de Bresser et al., 2005; Rutter, 1995). For the normalisation exercise we focused on data from 1073 K because this temperature had the greatest range in grain size and magnesium across the literature (see Table 4).

If experimental data are governed by the same underlying constitutive relationship then the normalisation of data should collapse all data on to one line in the relevant parameter space. For example, if $A = f(B, C^{-n})$ then if one was to plot data as AC^n against B , data would all fall on one line. In this way, if the value of n is unknown then one can iteratively arrive at its value by systematically normalising data by different values of n until data fall on one line in AC^n vs. B space.

115 In this contribution such a procedure was used to establish if there are independent effects of grain size and magnesium on
the strain rate in carbonates. We can only do this for data where the strain rate, stress, grain size, XMgCO_3 and temperature
are all known. Such an analysis can obtain parameters that account separately for any sensitivities in variables that exist when
combined with a constitutive relationship.

120 In this contribution we do not utilise any kind of iterative regression to establish when data lie on one curve, but rely on a
qualitative assessment of when data most tightly follow one relationship. This means that we cannot provide an uncertainty on
the exponents obtained. Moreover, we cannot provide any kind of meaningful uncertainty propagated from the other parameters
because we use data from a large number of studies in which individual measurement uncertainties are not always reported.

125 To help the reader visualise what such a normalisation means for data manipulation we have included Figure 3. In this figure
we plot some of the data from Herwegh et al. (2003) that is shown in the results but with only the effect of grain size accounted
for in the normalisation. It can be seen how for each fixed XMgCO_3 value data collapses on to one line, leaving only the effect
of XMgCO_3 .

130 To check the veracity of the exercise outlined above, we interrogated the results against both the data it was fit from and a
wide range of other experimentally deformed carbonate with various temperatures, grain sizes, magnesium and second phase
contents.

Table 4: Experimental studies used in the normalisation. All experiments were run at 1073 K.

Experiment	Material	$d [\mu m]$	XMgCO_3
<i>Synthetic samples</i>			
Herwegh et al. (2003)	Mg-calcite	11.91 - 33.48	0.070000 - 0.170000
<i>Natural samples</i>			
Wang et al. (1996)	Iceland spar	--	0.000013 - 0.000043
de Bresser and Spiers (1990)	Iceland spar	--	0.000205
Ter Heege et al. (2002)	Carrara marble	--	0.009250
de Bresser et al. (2005)	Carrara marble	--	0.019718 - 0.023974
Rutter (1995)	Carrara marble	--	0.009250

d = grain-size

-- Not used in normalisation

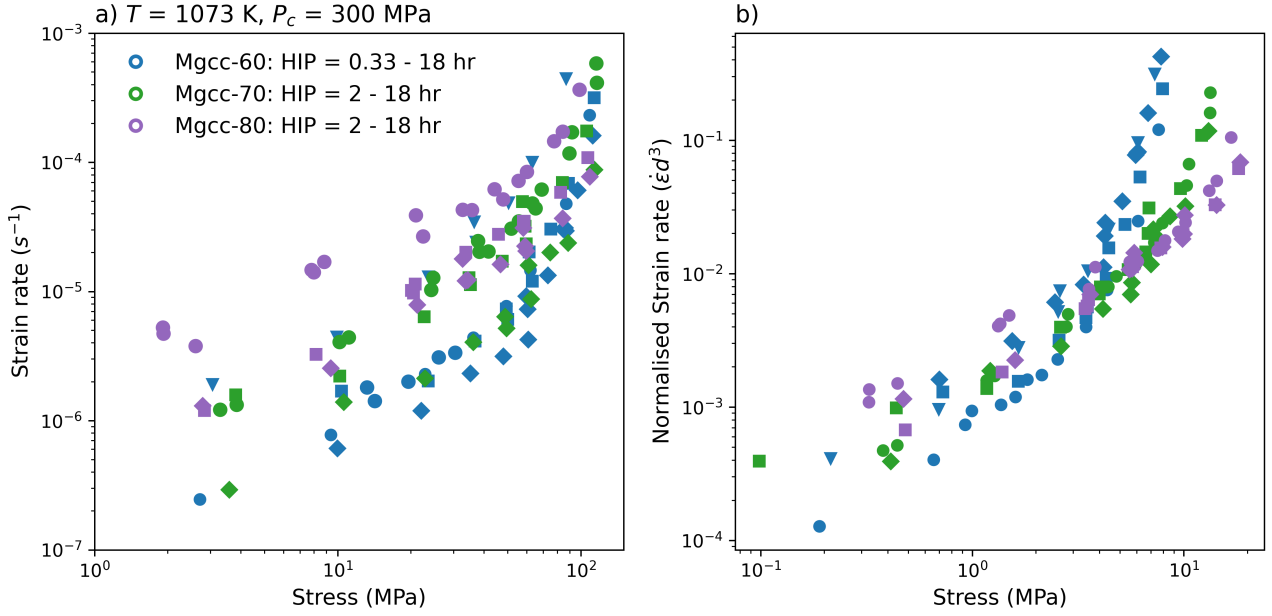


Figure 3. An example of normalising data. Figure 3a shows a selection of synthetic Mg-calcite experiments from Herwegh et al. (2003) that then have each data points strain rate normalised by the sample grain size to the power of 3 in Figure 3b. The power of 3 is the reciprocal exponent to that expected for a constitutive relation governed by grain boundary diffusion.

4 Results

Treating synthetic and natural samples separately, strain rate and stress data from deformation experiments were manipulated through multiplication of grain size and XMgCO_3 values to various exponents (fig Fig. 4). The grain size (min = 14.55 μm , max = 7000.00 μm) and XMgCO_3 (min = 0.000013, max = 0.17) values used for each experimental data point were sourced from literature and are reported in tables 1 and 3.

Starting from

$$\dot{\epsilon} = f(\sigma) |_T$$

The normalisation is such that fine grained synthetic sample data ~~is~~ are transformed to:

$$\dot{\epsilon} d^3 X_{\text{MgCO}_3}^{-1.5} = \sigma X_{\text{MgCO}_3}^{-0.6}$$

and results for coarse grained natural samples ~~becomes~~ become:

$$\dot{\epsilon} X_{\text{MgCO}_3}^{-1.5} = \sigma X_{\text{MgCO}_3}^{-0.3}$$

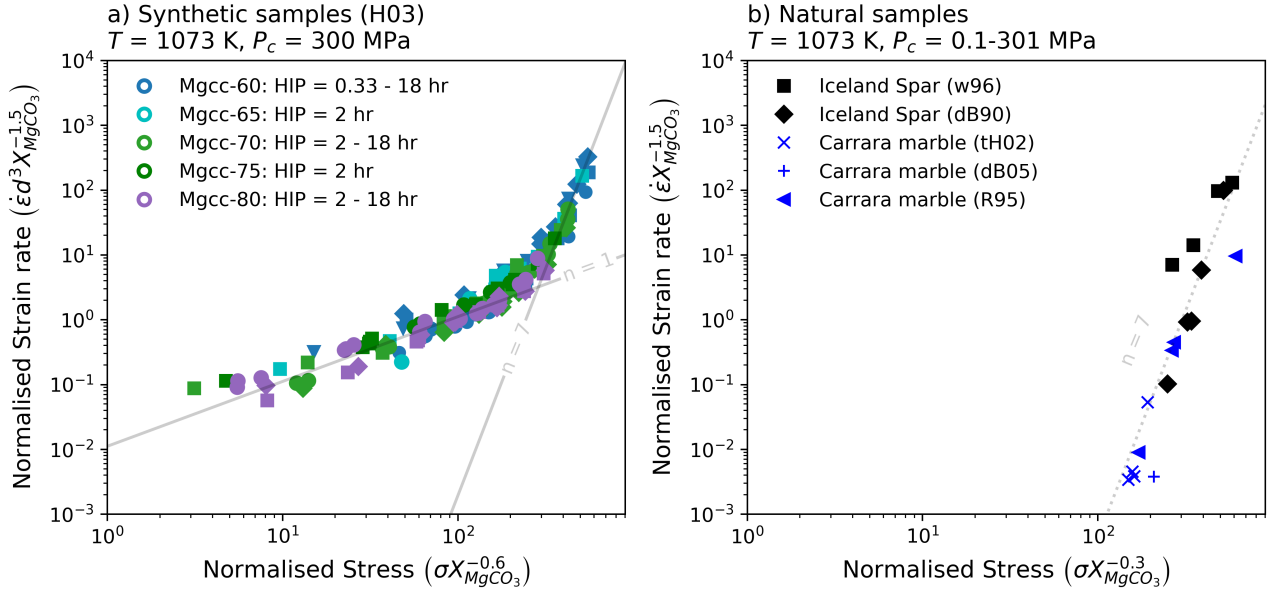


Figure 4. Normalisation of calcite data for data sets where grain size and magnesium contents were both known. See Table 4 for references of experiments and ranges of X_{MgCO_3} and grain size used.

For synthetic data both low and high stress domains are sensitive to grain size, while stress and strain rate require multiplication by X_{MgCO_3} to different exponents to collapse data ~~one-on~~ to one curve (figFig. 4a). Natural samples are not grain size
 145 sensitive and also require separate X_{MgCO_3} exponents (figFig. 4b). In both datasets the strain rate X_{MgCO_3} exponent is the same (-1.5) but is different for stress (-0.6 vs. -0.3).

These normalisation parameters can be used in conjunction with an assumed strain rate function to obtain useable flow law parameters. If the total strain rate is the sum of all rate accommodating micro mechanisms: $\dot{\epsilon}$

$$150 \quad \sum_{n=i}^j \dot{\epsilon}_n = \dot{\epsilon}_i + \dot{\epsilon}_{i+1} + \dots + \dot{\epsilon}_j,$$

and the normalised strain rate is a function of the normalised stress, we can substitute strain rate functions for the various deformation mechanism regimes that we think ~~are active in our data sets and contribute to deformation and then~~ invert the normalisation ~~for flow law parameters~~. In our data there are two domains in which it appears that different deformation ~~mechanism-act~~ mechanisms are apparent: a low stress domain with where data have a slope of 1 in log-log space, and a high
 155 stress domain ~~where data have characterised by~~ a slope of 7 in log-log space (figFig. 4). For simplicity we assumed these to rep-

resent diffusion creep ($\dot{\epsilon}_{diff}$) and dislocation creep ($\dot{\epsilon}_{dis}$) fields and with classical temperature dependant power-law flow laws.

Substituting power-law flow laws for diffusion and dislocation creep gives us the following grain size and XMgCO₃ sensitivities:

160

Fine grained synthetic samples (FG):

$$\begin{aligned}\dot{\epsilon}_{norm} &= f(\sigma_{norm}) \\ \Rightarrow \dot{\epsilon} d^3 X_{MgCO_3}^{-1.5} &= \\ 165 \quad &\left[A_{diff}^{FG} (\sigma X_{MgCO_3}^{-0.6})^{n_{diff}^{FG}} \exp\left(-\frac{Q_{diff}^{FG}}{RT}\right) \right] \\ &+ \left[A_{dis}^{FG} (\sigma X_{MgCO_3}^{-0.6})^{n_{dis}^{FG}} \exp\left(-\frac{Q_{dis}^{FG}}{RT}\right) \right]\end{aligned}$$

Coarse grained natural samples (CG):

$$\begin{aligned}\dot{\epsilon}_{norm} &= f(\sigma_{norm}) \\ 170 \quad \Rightarrow \dot{\epsilon} d^3 X_{MgCO_3}^{-1.5} &= \left[A_{dis}^{CG} (\sigma X_{MgCO_3}^{-0.3})^{n_{dis}^{CG}} \exp\left(-\frac{Q_{dis}^{CG}}{RT}\right) \right]\end{aligned}$$

Taking the observed stress exponents of $n_{diff} = 1$ and $n_{dis} = 7$, ~~then~~ we can rearrange for the parameters:

$$\dot{\epsilon}_{diff}^{FG} = A_{diff}^{FG} \left(\frac{d_{ref}}{d^3}\right) X_{MgCO_3}^{0.8} \left(\frac{\sigma^1}{\sigma_{ref}}\right) \exp\left(-\frac{Q_{diff}^{FG}}{RT}\right) \quad (5)$$

$$\dot{\epsilon}_{dis}^{FG} = A_{dis}^{FG} \left(\frac{d_{ref}}{d^3}\right) X_{MgCO_3}^{-2.7} \left(\frac{\sigma^7}{\sigma_{ref}}\right) \exp\left(-\frac{Q_{dis}^{FG}}{RT}\right) \quad (6)$$

$$175 \quad \dot{\epsilon}_{dis}^{CG} = A_{dis}^{CG} X_{MgCO_3}^{-0.6} \left(\frac{\sigma^7}{\sigma_{ref}}\right) \exp\left(-\frac{Q_{dis}^{CG}}{RT}\right) \quad (7)$$

in all cases a reference stress (1 MPa) and reference grain size (1 μm) are used to ensure that the frequency factor will have correct units for a first order rate equation (i.e. s⁻¹).

Three key results are established in equations 5 - 7: (1) ~~that~~ fine grained synthetic samples are grain size sensitive to the
180 same exponent (d^{-3}) across both mechanisms; (2) that XMgCO₃ has two opposing effects in diffusion (weakening) and

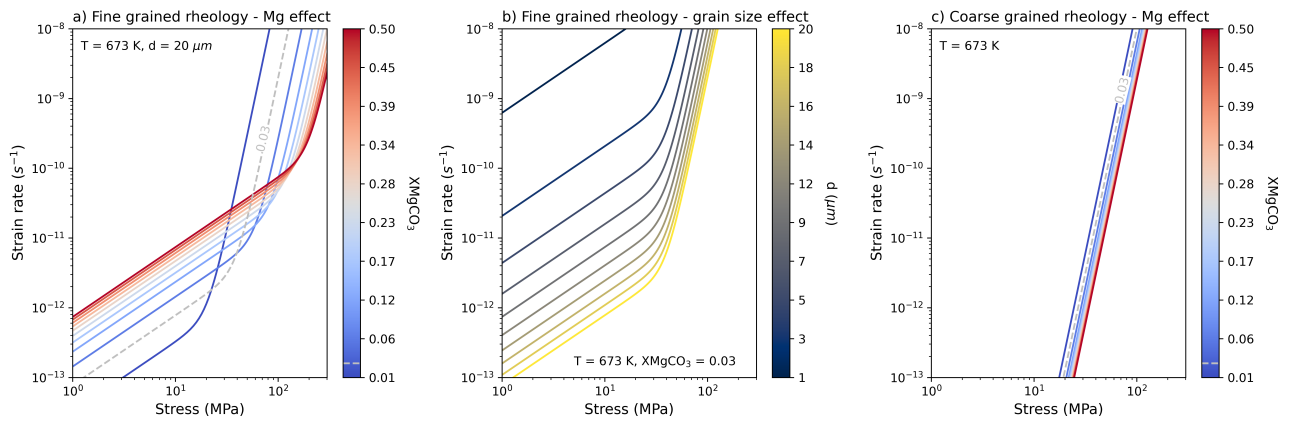


Figure 5. Plotting the flow laws obtained from normalisation. Curves are plotted at 673 K and the corresponding stable XMgCO_3 solvus value for 673 K, 0.03, is marked on plots. Colour bars are presented with tick values that correspond to the discrete values of the modelled curves.

dislocation creep (strengthening); and (3) the XMgCO_3 sensitivity of coarse grained natural samples is **half-as-a-sensitive-as fine-grainedsynthetic-samples** only half that of the **compositional sensitivity of fine grained**. Using data from experiments to invert for the frequency factor (A) and an assumed activation energy of 200 kJ mol^{-1} (cf. Herwegh et al., 2003; Renner and Evans, 2002) for both diffusion and dislocation creep (see **table-Table 5**), these last two points about XMgCO_3 sensitivity are **visualised-in-figure-illustrated in Figure 5**.

Table 5: **Flow law fitting parameters.**

	$A [\text{s}^{-1}]$	n	m	u	$Q [\text{kJ mol}^{-1}]$
Fine grained (low stress)	3.40E+07	1	-3	0.8	200
Fine grained (high stress)	4.00E-08	7	-3	-2.7	200
Coarse grained	2.16E-08	7	---	-0.6	200

¹ A = frequency factor
² n = stress exponent
³ m = grain size exponent

⁴ u = XMgCO_3 exponent
⁵ Q = activation energy
 --- not applicable

5 Discussion

The normalisation exercise revealed that the effects of grain size and magnesium can be separated in calcite rocks. That the effect of magnesium is different for deformation mechanism domains and different between natural and synthetic starting materials. It also showed that dislocation creep in fine grained synthetic samples is grain size sensitive but that coarse grained natural samples are grain size insensitive. Most interesting of all is that magnesium switches from having a weakening effect at low stress to a strengthening effect at high stress.

The following will discuss these points and evaluate how equations 5 - 7 perform across a wide range of carbonate deformation experiments and what these new rheological laws mean for the strength of natural shear zones. In light of the apparent divide identified in the results between fine and coarse grained carbonates, we choose to evaluate the derived equations with data from experiments that are separated into these categories of fine and coarse grained samples in sections 5.2 and 5.3.

5.1 ~~XMgCO₃~~ sensitivity

5.0.1 ~~XMgCO₃~~ weakens a carbonate in the diffusion creep field

Despite equations 5 - 7 being defined for calcite data we include in the following discussion comparisons to dolomite and magnesite data. This is done because, as first noted by Holyoke et al. (2014), there are similarities and possible systematic variations across the calcite, dolomite and magnesite rheological data. In particular because calcite and magnesite share essentially the same structure (the same symmetry but with magnesite having a contracted unit cell compared to calcite) they could conceivably behave similarly in dislocation creep. While this is less likely for dolomite where different cation ordering exists and for which different slip systems activate. Additionally, the conformity of diffusion creep rheological parameters across Mg-calcite, dolomite and magnesite strongly suggest a shared deformation mechanism. Our new XMgCO₃ sensitive equations may be able to pragmatically model rheological behaviour across the series and we use these end-member data sets to evaluate this.

~~Firstly, the effect~~ In the following discussion please refer back to Table 3 for all experimental abbreviations.

5.1 XMgCO₃ sensitivity in calcite

Before comparing the results to other carbonates in the Ca-Mg series (e.g. dolomite and magnesite) it is important to discuss why XMgCO₃ may have an effect on different micromechanisms in calcite rocks.

5.1.1 Weakening in the diffusion creep field

215 The effect of magnesium on diffusion creep was first noted in the original work of Herwegh et al. (2003). However, they interpreted that magnesium indirectly affected strain rate through its control on grain growth kinetics, and by extension, grain size. Hence it was concluded that the constitutive relation for Mg-carbonate or calcite did not require an XMgCO_3 term. Contrary to this, our new analysis suggests that the effect of magnesium can be ~~empirically separated from grain size~~separated empirically from grain size. Therefore, while the two variables are inter-dependent, we claim that magnesium has a quantifiable and direct
220 affect on the diffusion creep rheology of carbonates: an increase in XMgCO_3 weakens a carbonate experiencing diffusion creep by a power of $X_{\text{MgCO}_3}^{0.8}$ (~~fig~~Fig. 5a).

Considering that Mg has a smaller ionic radius than Ca, it may be that the energy required to mobilise a Mg cation is lower and hence a carbonate with more Mg may deform at a faster rate for the equivalent work done. However, this is at odds with the
225 observation of ~~a broadly constant the same or broadly similar~~the same or broadly similar activation energies across Mg-carbonates (Herwegh et al., 2003). ~~Suggesting that any mechanisms being~~and more broadly across the whole Mg-Ca carbonate series (Holyoke et al., 2014). ~~These observation suggests that mechanisms~~activated are thermodynamically equivalent, ~~or possibly only one mechanism is active possibly the same mechanism~~ for all chemistries. An alternative posit is that chemical diffusion of magnesium plays a larger role in driving cation exchange (Fisler and Cygan, 1999; Huang et al., 2008). In this case the local spatial gradients
230 in chemistry would encourage exchange and inter-diffusion of species. This is expected to be faster than self diffusion but has a similar activation energy (231.7 kJ/mol (Huang et al., 2008)) as ~~those reported for calcite~~reported for cation species self diffusion or diffusion creep of calcite (Herwegh et al., 2003; Renner and Evans, 2002). If this is the case, then one should expect that local spatial gradients are reduced as XMgCO_3 increases~~the local spatial gradients lessen~~, and magnesium content should have less of an effect on the strain rate. This is ~~in fact~~what we observe. Figure 5a highlights that an increase in XMgCO_3 has
235 an ever diminishing affect on diffusion creep curves, ~~which are derived from linearly spaced XMgCO_3 values~~.

5.1.2 ~~XMgCO_3 strengthening~~ Strengthening in the dislocation field

Magnesium was previously shown to strengthen Mg-carbonates in the dislocation field (Xu et al., 2008). Specifically it was demonstrated that, for a fixed strain rate, the strength of a Mg-carbonate could be described as a function of the molar percent of magnesium to the 1/3 power. Our results agree with this and build on it (~~fig~~Fig. 5a and c). ~~In particular~~Indeed, our results
240 suggest that this ~~observation~~compositional effect on creep extends beyond synthetic Mg-carbonates to natural calcite samples. As discussed in the work of Xu et al. (2008), the strengthening by XMgCO_3 may be due to solute-drag in the glide plane or inhomogeneity in the cation structures producing obstacles to the progress of linear defects. ~~The second speculation~~This second possibility may be unlikely if chemical diffusion is ~~active~~substantial, as discussed earlier for diffusion creep, because any heterogeneity in the magnesium cation distribution would become dispersed and remove these potential obstacles (Fisler and Cygan, 1999). In either case, increasing the molar fraction of magnesium would have the effect hardening the carbonate. This points to a continuum in strength in dislocation creep across much of the calcite-dolomite series, not necessarily including dolomite, but the exact sensitivity seems to change between fine and coarse grained samples at high stress.

5.2 The rheology of fine grained carbonates

5.2.1 Comparing to the data it was derived from

~~Before comparing equations-~~

Equations 5 - 7 ~~to other data it is worth checking how well the equations fit the~~ can be compared to the data they were derived from. ~~Together figure~~ as a sense check on the results before comparing them to other data. Together Figure 6 a and b show that a composite of the fine grained flow laws (eq.5 and 6) fit the data well and notably they perform much better than the published diffusion creep flow law of Herwegh et al. (2003). It also appears that the composite fine grained flow law performs adequately when compared to data acquired by Herwegh et al. (2003) at a lower temperature (~~fig~~Fig. 6c). As a last comparison, a composite of the fine grained diffusion creep and coarse grained dislocation creep was compared to data collected at 1073 K (~~fig~~Fig. 6d) to evaluate if the grain size sensitivity of dislocation creep identified in the normalisation could be modelled with the transition away from grain size sensitivity. It can be seen that a grain size intensive dislocation creep law fails to capture the behaviour of the experiments at higher stress. In total ~~figure~~ Figure 6 provides confidence that equations 5 - 7 do fit the data they were derived from, being robust enough to also fit data from the same series but acquired at a lower temperature.

5.2.2 Comparing to other experiential data

5.2.2 End-member performance: Pure Cc and Dolomite

5.2.3 Comparing to other experimental data

End-member performance: Pure calcite, dolomite and magnesite

As a test of the limits of the normalisation results we can compare equations 5 - 6 to pure synthetic calcite (Renner et al., 2002), very low XMgCO_3 synthetic Mg-calcite (Xu et al., 2008) ~~and~~, synthetic dolomite experiments (Delle Piane et al., 2008; Davis et al., 2008) and Greek magnesite (Holyoke et al., 2014). A XMgCO_3 minimum of 0.001 is taken as a sensible limit because data used in the normalisation is restricted to this order of magnitude.

Figure 7a shows that data from pure and very low XMgCO_3 experiments can be fit. Considering the uncertainties associated with grain size measurements the data are fit well. For dolomite (~~figs~~fig. 7b and c) lower temperature data are fit well but the relationship breaks down at higher temperature. However in the case of data from Delle Piane et al. (2008) equations 5 - 6 perform better than the flow law defined by Delle Piane et al. (2008), with the exception of the highest temperature experiments. In contrast, ~~the flow law of Davis et al. (2008) performs much better than our new fit.~~ our equations require larger grain sizes to fit the dolomite data of Davis et al. (2008) and the magnesite data of Holyoke et al. (2013). This may reflect the large, but broadly unquantified, uncertainty associated with grain size measurement (cf. Berger et al., 2011).

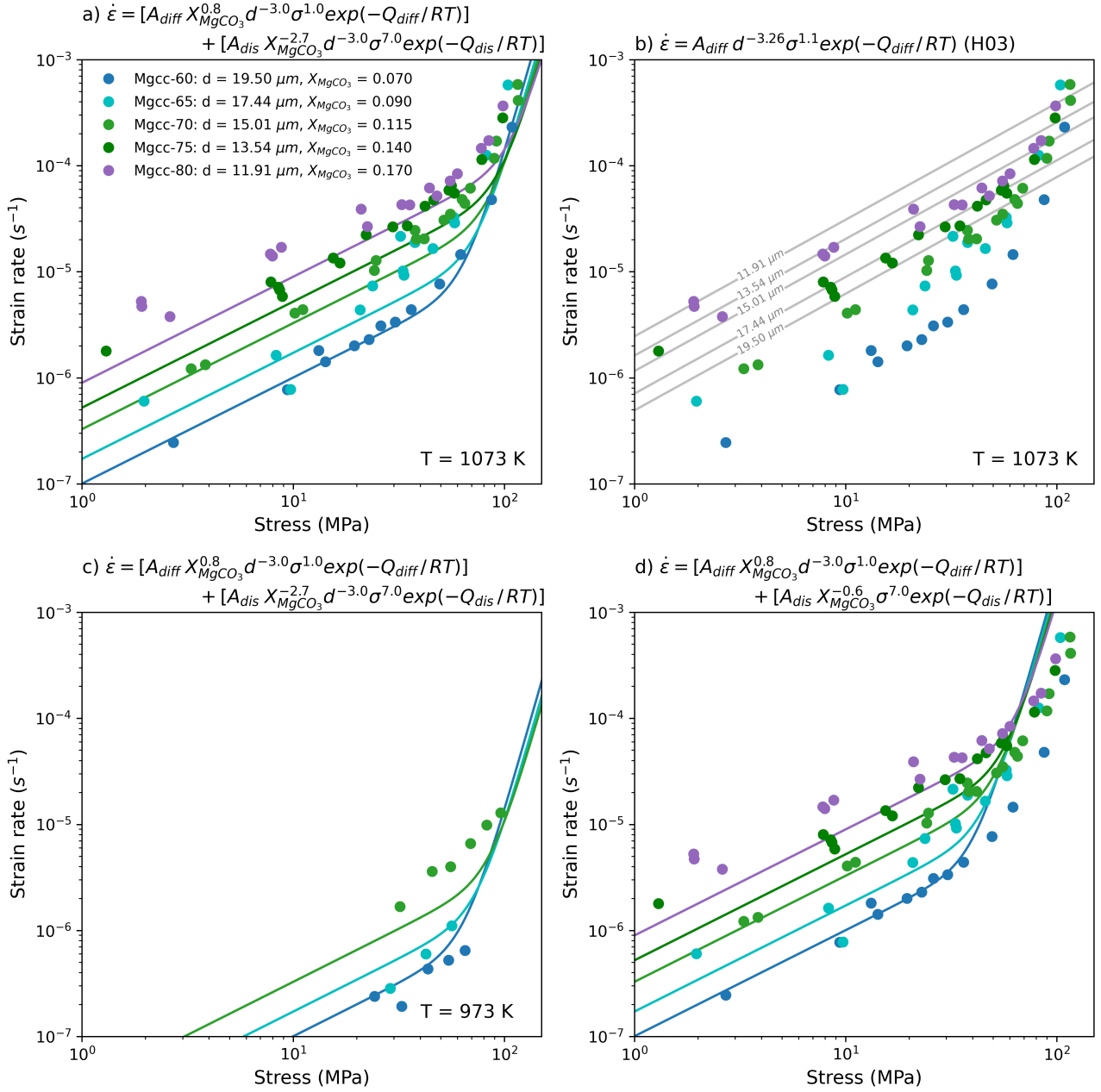


Figure 6. Plotting flow laws obtained from normalisation against data used in fit (Fig. 6a); to the fit of Herwegh et al. (2003) (Fig. 6b); to a lower temperature data set from Herwegh et al. (2003) not used in normalisation (Fig. 6c); and a pragmatic check to see if using the obtained coarse grained flow law can explain the fine grained high stress data (Fig. 6d).

Unfortunately, we do not have any fine grained dolomite or magnesite data at high enough stress and temperature to be in the dislocation creep field and as such cannot evaluate if the high stress XMgCO_3 sensitivity is successful in modelling the data points. If the XMgCO_3 strengthening mechanisms discussed above, of solute drag or chemical diffusion driven by spatial gradients, are responsible for our observations then it is unlikely that dolomite can be modelled with our high stress rheology ($n=7$). This is because the crystallography of dolomite is much more ordered, with Ca^{2+} and Mg^{2+} becoming segregated into alternating layers, and different rate limiting mechanisms will apply. In contrast fine grained magnesite at higher stress and temperature might be modelled with our flow laws and this should be tested with new data.

Rheology of samples with different grain size controlling mechanisms

We identified three experiments with similar XMgCO_3 values that can be used to understand how well equations 5 - 6 model the rheology of carbonates with contrasting grain size controls: statically grown grain size (Fig. 8a) (Xu et al., 2008), a dynamically recrystallised grain size (Fig. 8b) (Barnhoorn et al., 2004) and a second phase controlled grain size (Fig. 8c) (Schmid, 1982).

Figure 8a shows that, in line with results above, equations 5 - 6 fit synthetic Mg-cc data well. Equations 5 - 6 also perform well when compared to an experiment where the grain size evolved to stable grain size during deformation (Fig. 8b). Reinforcing the framing of our discussion into fine and coarse grained samples, the rheology of the coarser grained starting material cannot be modelled with equations 5 - 6. Lastly, it appears that the low stress rheology of a second phase controlled mylonite from the Glarus thrust can be modelled with the new laws, but the high stress behaviour deviates, possibly resulting from a very high second phase content ($f_p \leq 0.3$). Notably the newly defined XMgCO_3 sensitive diffusion creep law performs much better than the diffusion creep law of Herwegh et al. (2003).

Second-phase rich carbonates

In nature, very few carbonate mylonites consist of nominally pure calcite aggregates. Despite the volumetric dominance of calcite as a matrix phase, the vast majority of these mylonites contain variable amounts of other minerals, so called second phases (e.g. Ebert et al., 2007; Herwegh and Jenni, 2001; Herwegh and Kunze, 2002; Herwegh and Pfiffner, 2005; Herwegh et al., 2008). It is therefore important to evaluate the effect of such second phases on calcite rheology of mylonites, this is reflected in the partial success of equations 5 - 6 in modelling the Lochseiten mylonite data. It becomes obvious is important to ask how well the equations would fit carbonates with other lower second phase contents.

For this equations 5 - 6 were compared to experiments run on synthetic calcite samples with fine grained alumina added (Walker et al., 1990), Solnhofen limestone (Schmid, 1976; Schmid et al., 1977), synthetic mixtures of calcite and quartz (Renner et al., 2007) and Lochseiten mylonite data from various temperatures (Schmid, 1982). Figure 9 shows that for lower second phase contents (figs. 9a and b) data appear to be fit well. The success of equation 5 to model In the case of diffusion creep of the Lochseiten mylonite, the data fit equation 5 at higher temperatures is not repeated at lower temperature (fig but not

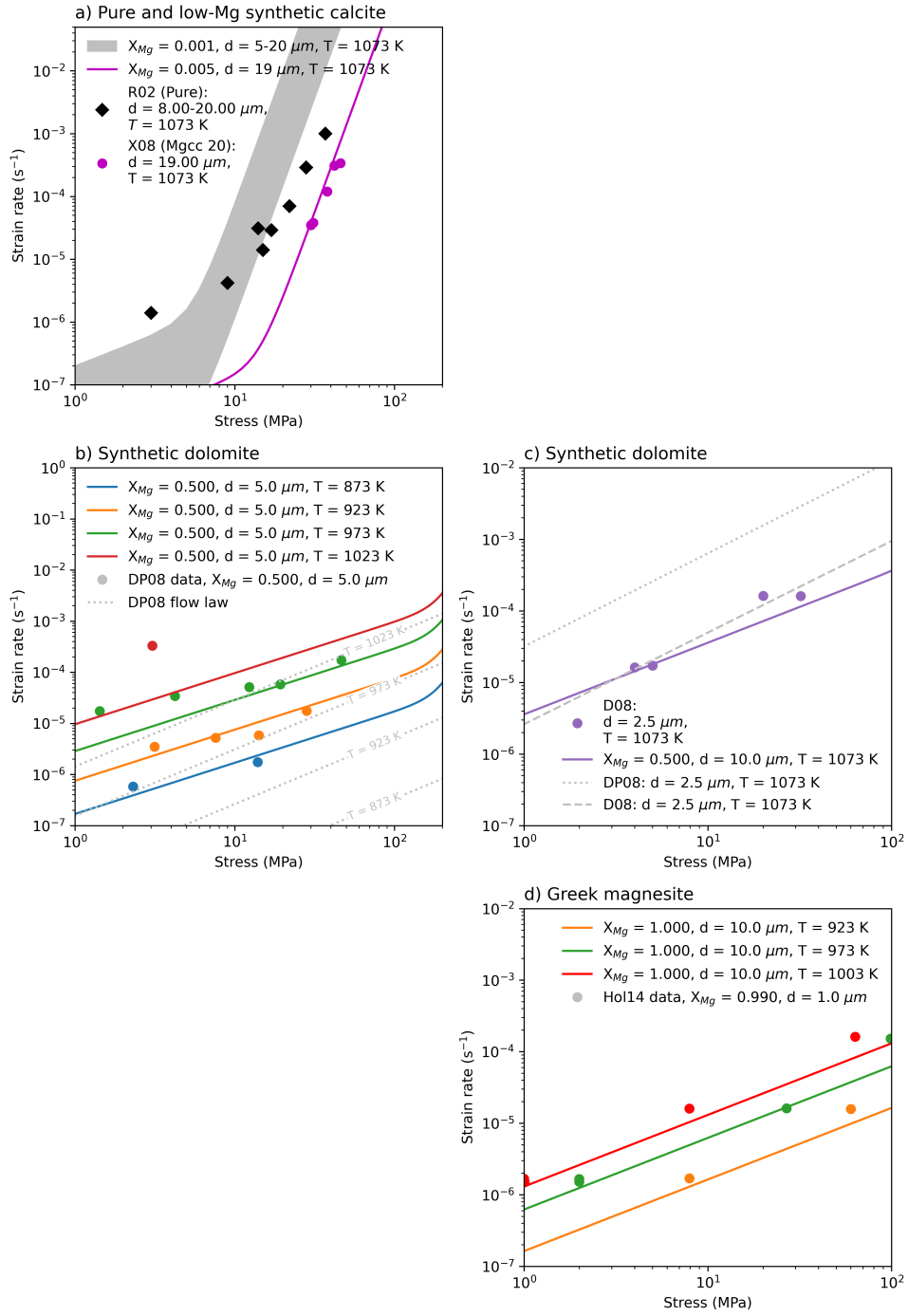


Figure 7. Exploring how well the fine grained flow laws obtained fit calcite, dolomite and magnesite end member data. Please refer to Table 3 for experiment abbreviations.

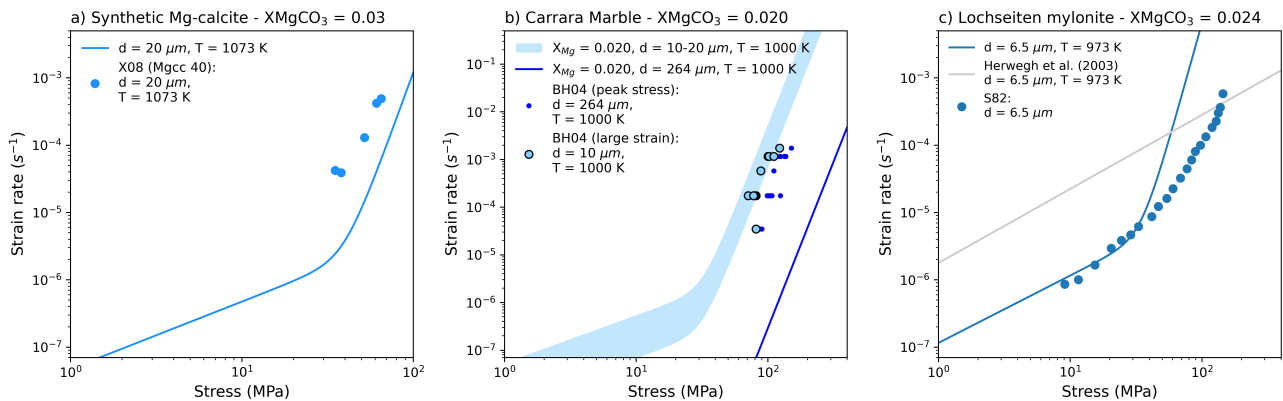


Figure 8. Exploring how well the fine grained flow laws fit data from experiments with stable microstructures generated with different processes that share the same magnesium content: statically annealed synthetic sample (Fig. 8a), before and after dynamic recrystallisation of a natural marble (Fig. 8b), and a natural second-phase rich ultramylonite from a large shear zone (Fig. 8c). Please refer to Table 3 for experiment abbreviations.

at lower temperatures (Fig. 9c). Figure 9d visualises how shows that, as the second phase content rises to 10% and above the rheology of transitions away from what our result can, the observed rheologies depart from our model.

5.3 The rheology of coarse grained carbonates

The normalisation of experimental results from of coarse grained natural samples was limited to datasets where chemical and mechanical analyses were both run on the same samples. This restricted the data to two Iceland spar and three Carrara marble experiments (Wang et al., 1996; de Bresser and Spiers, 1990; Ter Heege et al., 2002; de Bresser et al., 2005; Rutter, 1995). Despite this, when compared to other coarse grained calcite experiments the data perform-fit the model relatively well (Fig. 10a-c), but could not account for experiments run on dolomite (or magnesite (Fig. 10d).

As discussed in section 5.2, this is not surprising for dolomite, as its different crystallography likely promotes different accommodation mechanisms during deformation (cf. Davis et al., 2008), but is more surprising that magnesite cannot be fit with all of its similarities to calcite. Holyoke et al. (2014) found that that the activation barrier for dislocation glide in calcite and magnesite was not affected significantly by cation size or bonding, seen in similar activate energies, implying that to connect both materials with one equation an additional XMgCO_3 sensitivity would need to be placed, as we have done, in the constitutive law. The inability of equation 7 to replicate the magnesite data might simply reflect an issue with the XMgCO_3 exponent our work arrived at.

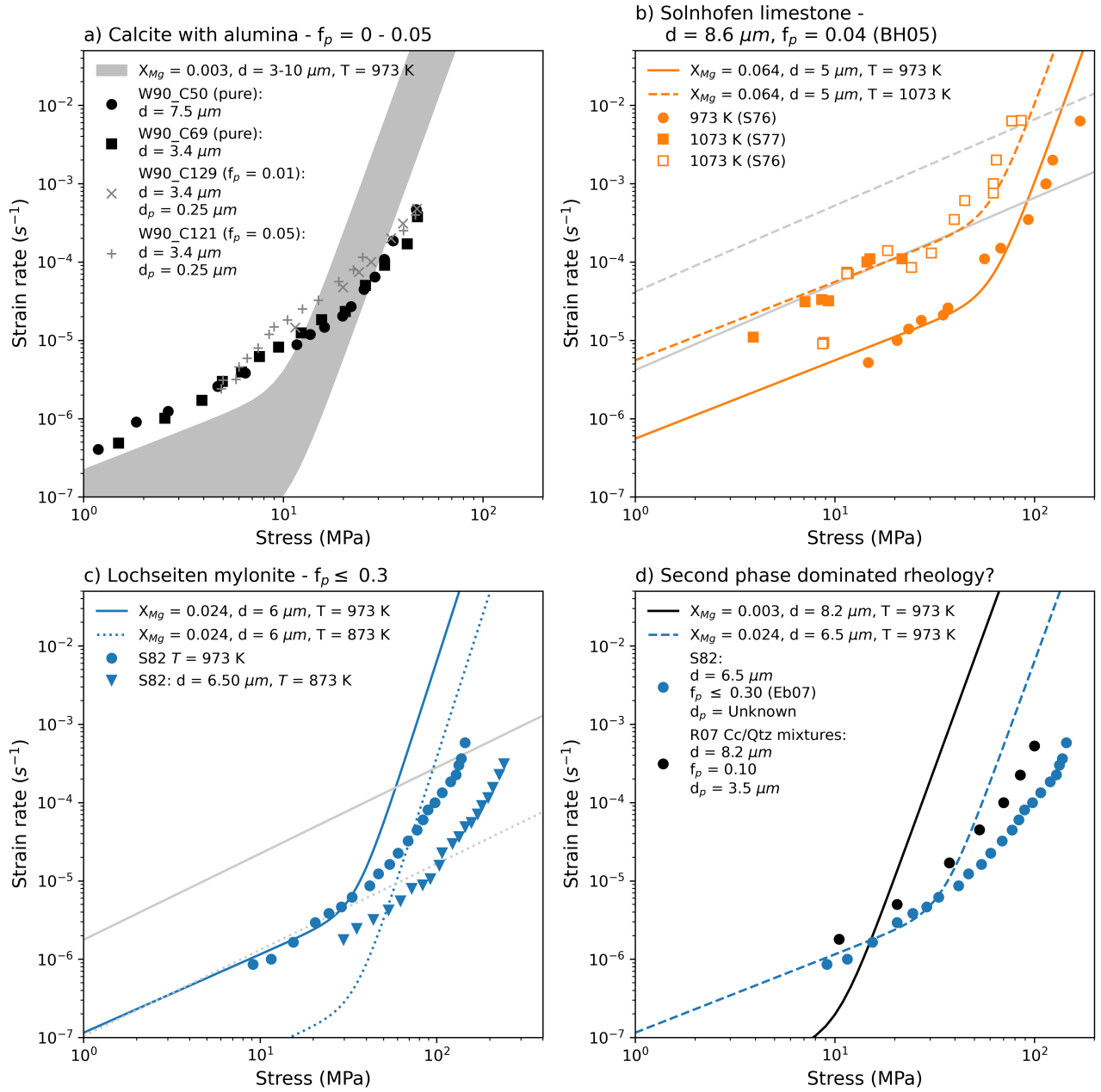


Figure 9. Exploring how well the fine grained flow laws can fit carbonates with a variety of second-phases contents: synthetic samples doped with alumina (Fig. 9a), Solnhofen limestone (Fig. 9b), a natural second-phase rich ultramylonite deformed at two different temperatures (Fig. 9c). Figure 9d highlights the limits of the the flow laws to model the rheology of second-phases rich carbonates by comparing them to data from a synthetic calcite-quartz mixture with no magnesium to a natural ultramylonite with magnesium. Fig. 9b and c show the equivalent diffusion creep flow law of Herwegh et al. (2003) as grey lines. Please refer to Table 3 for experiment abbreviations.

330 In all calcite experimental cases it is clear that the range of possible mechanical fits shown with coloured regions, which are given by the available XMgCO_3 data (see ~~table~~ Table 1), are narrower than the ~~the~~ spread of data points. For some outlying data there are easy explanations. For example, in Iceland spar experiments the concentration of Mn ~~will also influence~~ also influences rheology (cf. Wang et al., 1996) and for the highest stress data point of Rutter (1995) this can be explained by a marked increase in strain. However, the fit clearly overestimates the strength of Yule marble and does not capture the experimental data point of
335 de Bresser et al. (2005) with in the range of Carrara marble ~~possibilities~~ experimental results. Regardless, it would appear that much of the characteristics of the rheology of coarse grained natural calcite samples is fit well with equation 7.

5.4 Grain size sensitive dislocation creep?

One puzzling result is that fine grained samples are grain size sensitive in the dislocation creep field. The various underlying mechanisms documented for dislocation creep in calcite are not grain size dependent in a way that weakens the rock (cf. Renner
340 et al., 2002). This raises several questions: is this effect real or a result of ~~difference~~ differences in sample fabrication? Why would there be a difference between fine and coarse grained samples in dislocation creep?

Figure 11 shows data from fine and coarse grained samples, that are both synthetic and natural ~~from~~ with XMgCO_3 values that are close together. Data plotted ~~from~~ for $\text{XMgCO}_3 \approx 0.07$ is made up from a fine grained synthetic starting material ,
345 Mgcc-60 (Herwegh et al., 2003), and a fine grained natural starting material, Solnhofen limestone (Schmid, 1976; Schmid et al., 1977). While data plotted ~~from~~ for $\text{XMgCO}_3 \approx 0.03$ is made up from a fine grained synthetic starting material , Mgcc-40 (Xu et al., 2008), and a coarse grained natural starting material, Carrara marble (Ter Heege et al., 2002). Together these data highlight that: (1) the grain size sensitivity of fine grained carbonates is not restricted to ~~only synthetic samples~~ synthetic samples alone - it is not an artifact of Hot Isostatic Pressing (HIP) used in synthetic sample preparation; (2) there is a transition
350 towards a grain size insensitive dislocation creep field. We conclude from this that ~~it is a real observation that carbonates have~~ a grain size sensitive and grain size insensitive dislocation creep field fields are real.

Grain size sensitive dislocation creep rheologies have been phenomenologically described in other experiments run on geological materials. For example in olivine (Hansen et al., 2011, 2019), quartz (Fukuda et al., 2017), ice (Qi and Goldsby, 2021)
355 and calcite (Renner et al., 2002; Renner and Evans, 2002; Sly et al., 2019). These grain size sensitivities have been found to be both strengthening and weakening and have been explained in different ways. For olivine when grain size has a weakening effect ($d^{-0.7}$, Hansen et al., 2011) a rheological model of dislocation-accommodated grain boundary sliding was proposed. In this case dislocations are thought to be generated at grain boundaries and triple junctions and as such a grain size dependence emerges. For quartz when grain size has a weakening effect ($d^{-0.51}$, Fukuda et al., 2017) it was suggested that experiments
360 recorded a mixed signature of end member grain size sensitive and insensitive mechanisms. In ice, grain size weakening ($d^{-0.35}$, Qi and Goldsby, 2021) was also explained by a contribution of the dislocation-accommodated grain boundary sliding mechanism when the grain size was larger than the equilibrium subgrain size. By contrast cases where a grain size hardening effect was observed, there a modified Hall-Petch relation has been ~~evoked~~ proposed: the smaller the grain size the stronger the

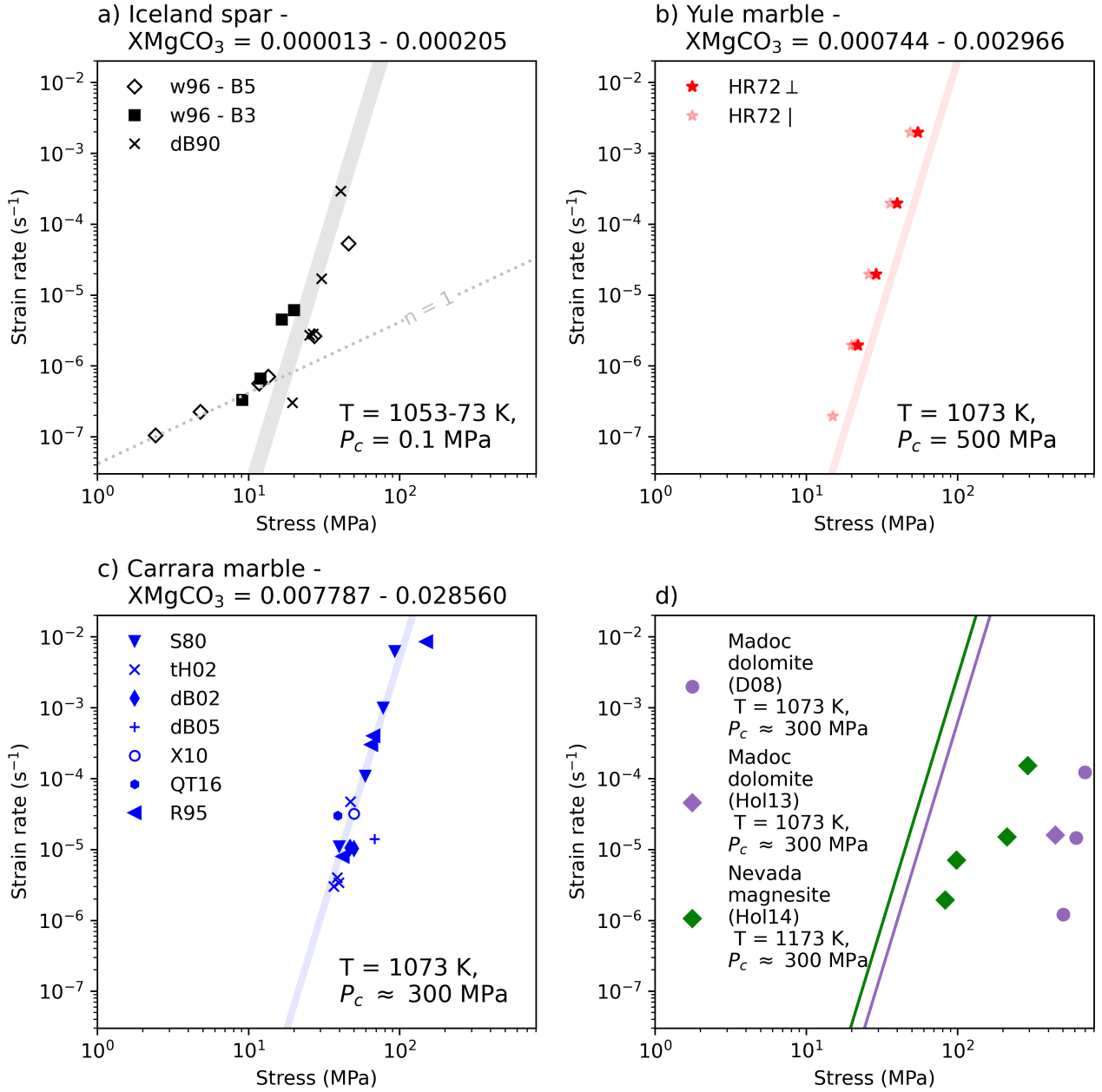


Figure 10. Exploring how well the coarse grained flow law fits both the data it was fit from and other data where Mg is known for the material but not the experiment itself. Shaded areas use the max and min XMgCO_3 values to bracket the possible rheology. Dolomite and Magnesite are modelled as $\text{XMgCO}_3 = 0.5$ and 1.0 . Please refer to Table 3 for experiment abbreviations.

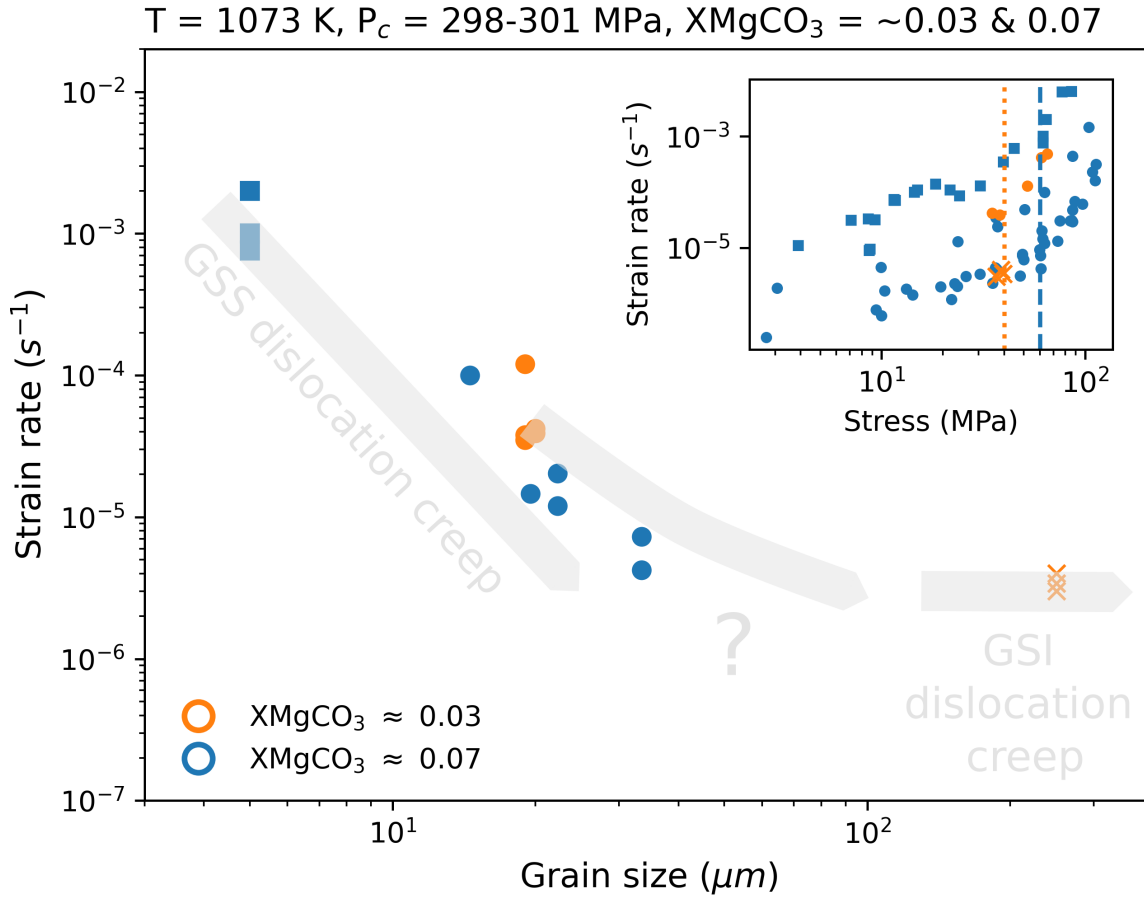


Figure 11. The effect of grain size on strain rate in the dislocation creep field at fixed $XMgCO_3$ values.

material (e.g. Renner et al., 2002; Hansen et al., 2019). Our results do not align with any of these models, we find that the strain rate in the dislocation field is sensitive to what one would expect from a diffusion creep deformation mechanism (d^{-3}). Moreover, [figure Figure 11](#) implies that there is a transition as grain size increases towards a grain size insensitive rheology and any underlying model would need to explain this.

~~For this explanation of an~~ [To explain the](#) ever diminishing effect of grain size in the dislocation field we can turn to recent work by Breithaupt et al. (2023), who proposed a self-consistent model for deformation mediated by dislocations in which they were able to show how a material could transition from a grain size strengthening ~~, then to~~ weakening and ultimately grain size insensitive rheology as grain size increased. In this model the grain size sensitivity of a dislocation accommodated deformation

changes because the effect of how dislocations are stored and recovered in crystals changes with grain size. Breithaupt et al. (2023) applied their model to olivine and found that it agreed with the grain size exponent measured by Hansen et al. (2011).
 375 If one extends the model of Breithaupt et al. (2023) to include diffusion creep then our phenomenological curves become more comparable (cf. fig 1c and fig 3.3 in Breithaupt et al., 2023; Breithaupt, 2022). Thus it might be that for the calcite experiments we revisit there is a mixed signal of diffusion creep and a grain size sensitive model for dislocations that relates not to grain boundaries as sources of dislocations, but to how dislocations are intrinsically stored and recovered in grains, and how the effects of this changes with the size of grains. The model of Breithaupt et al. (2023) also allows some explanation of the variation
 380 (hardening vs weakening) in the effect of grain size in different calcite experiments. The previous work of Renner et al. (2002) and Sly et al. (2019) that found a strengthening effect of finer grain sizes likely capture specific conditions where diffusion creep has not been activated and hence record a domain where the Hall-Petch effect dominates (cf. fig. 7 and fig. 9b in Renner et al., 2002). For Sly et al. (2019) this is likely because experiments were run at much lower temperatures. Alternatively, for Renner et al. (2002) the difference might be due to a much finer grain size than the experiments of Herwegh et al. (2003).
 385 While the grain sizes of Renner et al. (2002) and Herwegh et al. (2003) seem cover a similar range they use different grain size quantification methods (line intercept vs area-weighted) and if one was to convert the values of Renner et al. (2002) this might lead to as much as a halving of the value reported (cf. table 5 in Berger et al., 2011).

Regardless of the underlying reasons, what is clear is that our fine grained calcite data cannot be modelled well with a grain
 390 size insensitive dislocation creep rheology and some component of grain size sensitivity is needed. ~~In the absence~~ Short of adapting the model of Breithaupt et al. (2023) to include the effect of XMgCO_3 , one could be pragmatically guided by ~~figure~~ Figure 11 to explicitly model different rheologies based on grain size domains.

For example using equations 5-7,

$$395 \text{ if } d < 30 \mu\text{m}, \text{ for } d < 30 \mu\text{m}, \quad \dot{\epsilon}_{tot} = \dot{\epsilon}_{diff}^{FG} + \dot{\epsilon}_{dis}^{FG} \quad (8)$$

$$\text{if } 30 < d < 200 \mu\text{m}, \text{ for } 30 < d < 200 \mu\text{m}, \quad \dot{\epsilon}_{tot} = \dot{\epsilon}_{diff}^{FG} + \dot{\epsilon}_{dis}^{FG} + \dot{\epsilon}_{dis}^{CG} \quad (9)$$

$$\text{if } d > 200 \mu\text{m}, \text{ for } d > 200 \mu\text{m}, \quad \dot{\epsilon}_{tot} = \dot{\epsilon}_{diff}^{FG} + \dot{\epsilon}_{dis}^{CG} \quad (10)$$

Using an assumed geotherm, pressure with depth relation and the calcite-dolomite solvus to relate temperature to XMgCO_3 (equation 23 in Anovitz and Essene, 1987), ~~figure 12 visualises~~ Figure 12 illustrates this pragmatic approach (solid lines in
 400 ~~figFig. 12b)~~ and compares it to a case ~~where no grain size sensitive for~~ fine grained dislocation creep rheology ~~is used that~~ shows no grain size effect (dashed lines in ~~figFig. 12b)~~, and ~~to the expected rheology from the~~ published flow laws for calcite (Schmid et al., 1980; Herwegh et al., 2003) (~~figFig. 12c)~~. The first point of note is that, regardless of which composite rheology

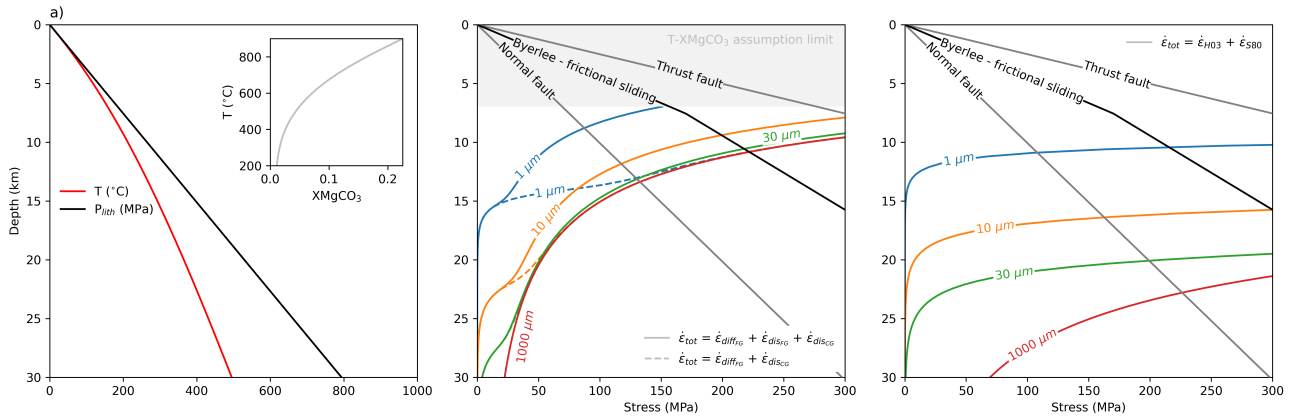


Figure 12. Modelling crustal strength for a given temperature-pressure-depth- XMgCO_3 profile (Fig. 12a). The reference stress state with depth is $P_{lith} = \rho g z$. The geotherm is calculated following an assumed constant heat flow in a stable continental crust (cf. Stüwe, 2007, eq. 3.70: $h_r = 10\text{E}^3 \text{ m}$, $S_0 = 3\text{E}^{-6} \text{ W m}^{-3}$, $z_c = 30\text{E}^3 \text{ m}$, $q_m = 0.025 \text{ W m}^{-2}$, $C_2 = 300 \text{ K}$). The calcite-dolomite carbonate solvus of Anovitz and Essene (1987) is used to relate T and XMgCO_3 . Figure 12b shows the strength for various grain sizes using two combinations of the three flow laws obtained (eqs. 5 - 7). Figure 12c shows how strength changes using a composite flow law made up of previously published dislocation and diffusion creep rheologies (Schmid et al., 1980; Herwegh et al., 2003). Frictional strength envelopes are given by Byerlee's law for frictional sliding (Byerlee, 1978) and Sibson (1974), assuming $\mu = 0.75$ and $\lambda = 0.5$.

one chooses from our results, a XMgCO_3 sensitive flow law predicts much weaker carbonates with depth for a given grain size. This shows that the effect of XMgCO_3 must be included explicitly when modelling crustal strength. Figure 12 also highlights that if the fine-grained dislocation-creep rheology is accounted for, and it appears that it should as it explains much of the experimental data—including the enigmatic Solnhofen Limestone data sets (cf. 9b), then the crust becomes even weaker with depth. We know from natural shear zones that grain size also changes with temperature and so the effect shown in figure Figure 12 will not fully capture the strength profile of carbonates.

5.5 Application to natural carbonate shear zones

Using temperature and grain size measurements made in mylonites from natural carbonate shear zones-zone mylonites we can account for the combined effect of grain size and XMgCO_3 on strength. Figure 13 shows data from the various thrusts in the Helvetic mylonites deformed at greenschist to amphibolite facies conditions from several thrusts of the Helvetic Nappes (Ebert et al., 2008) and from Naxos (Herwegh et al., 2011) that covers greenschist to amphibolite facies conditions in carbonate shear zones. As before, the calcite-dolomite solvus can be used to relate temperature measurements to inferred XMgCO_3 values. For the purposes of visualisation figure Figure 13 shows moving average curves for the various rheological models but only shows data points for one rheology-rheology - the pragmatic composite rheology, eg. eqs. 5 - 7.

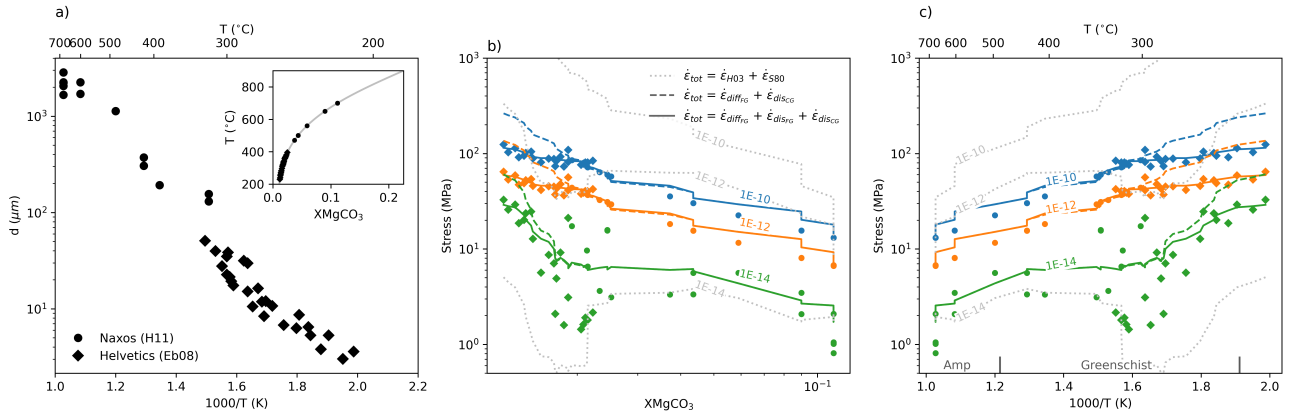


Figure 13. Modelling crustal strength using real grain size and temperature data (Fig. 13a). $XMgCO_3$ values are derived from temperature values (inset in Fig. 13a). Figure 13b and c show the stress expected for a variation in $XMgCO_3$ and temperature using two combinations of the three flow laws obtained (eqs. 5 - 7). For the purposes of visualisation figure moving average curves are shown for the various rheological models with data points only shown for $\dot{\epsilon}_{tot} = \dot{\epsilon}_{diff}^{FG} + \dot{\epsilon}_{dis}^{FG} + \dot{\epsilon}_{dis}^{CG}$. A composite flow law made up of previously published dislocation and diffusion creep rheologies is shown for comparison as dashed grey lines. Three strain rates are modelled and they are noted on the moving average curves.

Most notably, for faster strain rates in $(1E^{-10}$ and $1E^{-12})$ at lower greenschist facies conditions the strength of carbonates with depth flattens out flattens out with depth. This occurs because of the competing effects grain size and magnesium at these conditions (weakening - $\propto d^{-3}$ & $X_{MgCO_3}^{-2.7}$; strengthening - $\propto X_{MgCO_3}^{0.8}$). Carbonate rheology in these shear zones seems to balance out the effects of moving from smaller to larger grain sizes and an increasing $XMgCO_3$ content. For higher temperatures it is expected that a shear zone will widen, and therefore strain rate will decrease, making it hard to compare data from the Helvetic and Naxos together. Field observations from the Helvetic nappes suggest that, when accounting for shear widths, strain rates are relatively constant and can be reasonably modelled with values of between 1×10^{-10} and 1×10^{-11} (Herwegh and Pfiffner, 2005). Following from this if we only use data from the Helvetic and assume a strain rate of 1×10^{-11} we can more carefully consider the strength of a crustal scale carbonate shear zone. Using the same data as previous, figure previously, Figure 14 presents only data from the Helvetic. The blue and orange diamond markers give upper and lower bounds on crustal strength for rheologies that are grain size and $XMgCO_3$ sensitive. If fine grained shear zones deform with rheology that includes by a grain size sensitive dislocation creep flow law (blue diamonds) then the crustal strength becomes very close to constant for an interval of roughly 200 °C. This is comparable to estimates that come from accounting for grain size distributions (crosses in figFig. 14). If however, the rheology is considered to be a composite of a grain size and $XMgCO_3$ sensitive diffusion creep mechanism and a $XMgCO_3$ sensitive dislocation creep mechanism (orange diamonds) then a shear zone would have a larger show more strength evolution with increasing temperature but it would still be weaker than predicted by piezometric relations.

435 6 Summary and outlook

6 Summary and outlook

We have brought together much of the existing literature of carbonate deformation experiments run at high homologous temperatures and found that most data can be explained well by the distinct effects of grain size and the molar fraction of magnesium carbonate. For a given grain size, the above results highlight that there is a quantifiable continuum in strength of carbonates with magnesium content and that the role of magnesium changes with deformation mechanism (Fig. 5a). Furthermore for a given molar fraction of magnesium, our review of the data show that at high stresses, at which dislocation mediated deformation will occur, grain size has a weakening effect (finer grain sizes produce higher strain rates (Fig. 11). This is contrary to the current use of the modified Peierls law for calcite dislocation creep rheology at high homologous temperatures, where grain size has a hardening effect.

445 Together these new results suggest that the deformation of magnesium carbonates should be considered in a more unified fashion. For low stress, high temperature, diffusion creep behaviour it might be more pragmatic to view these carbonates as existing in a continuum of material strength and not as distinct materials. Data across the calcite-dolomite-magnesite XMgCO_3 data seem to mostly fit our fine grained diffusion creep flow law. This is not true for the dislocation creep field where dolomite, nor magnesite, seems to not conform to predictions of a continuous change in strength with magnesium. In cases of mixed grain/clast populations of calcite and dolomite one should still identify both the phase proportions and XMgCO_3 of equilibrated dolomite and calcite if one wishes to calculate a mixed rheology (e.g. Dimanov and Dresen, 2005; Renner et al., 2007).

The two biggest limitations of our contribution is that we cannot provide an underlying microphysical model. This is nor uncertainty estimates for parameters. Regarding uncertainty, some of this limitation is unavoidable as not all experimental data we revisit can report errors or the kind of errors cannot be compared. The most complex parameter to compare between datasets is grain size and it is unclear if you would obtain a sensible error from propagating what is available in the literature. Beyond this future work may try and use a more sophisticated method to fit for exponents which could give fitting errors. Despite this, our first attempt seems to provide flow laws that can replicate a wide range of carbonate experiments. As for accounting for a microphysical model, this is particularly challenging because our data show that the underlying deformation mechanisms need to account for both the effect of magnesium and a grain size weakening dislocation creep. The Across the 24 publications we revisit microstructures are not always provided and as such we cannot unequivocally establish if other processes like twinning are significantly impacting strength and grain size adjustments at high homologous temperatures in the data we revisit (cf. Rybacki et al., 2021). We assume that any mixed activity of processes that effect grain size and strength ultimately homogenise to give us our observed bulk grain size sensitivity in dislocation creep (d^{-3}). In light of our above discussion, the best starting point would appear to be to build on the work of Breithaupt et al. (2023) and include a physically sensible magnesium dependence.

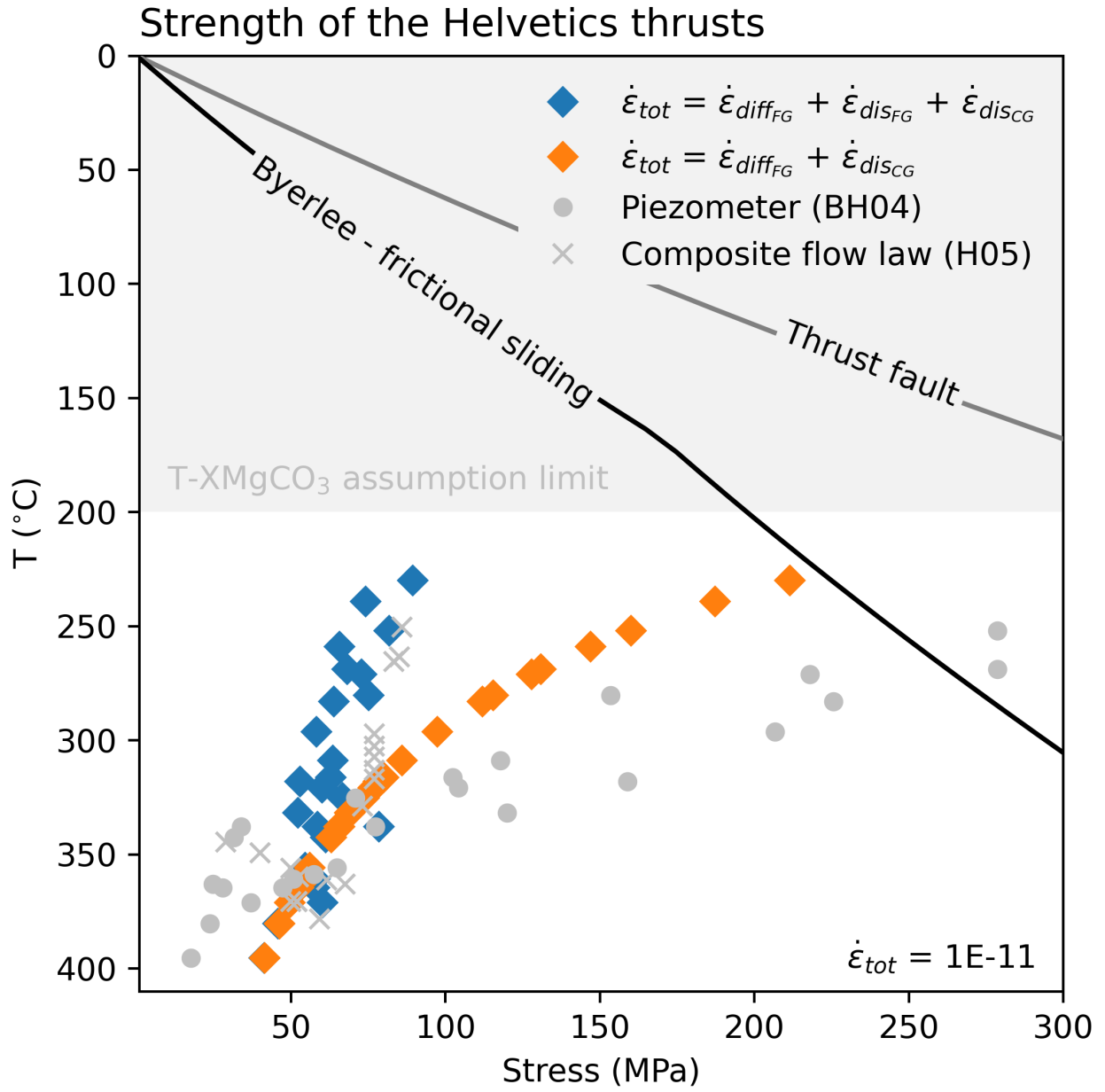


Figure 14. A crustal strength profile constructed with only the Helvetic thrust data set (Ebert et al., 2008). Strength estimates from a grain size paleopiezometer (Barnhoorn et al., 2004) and from naturally constrained rheological modelling that includes grain size distributions (Herwegh et al., 2005) are plotted for comparison. Frictional envelopes follow the same assumptions as Figure 12.

~~A main take away from~~ An important conclusion of this work is that even small differences in magnesium can have a large
470 effect, especially when compounded by the role of grain size. Our discussion explored how crustal strength might significantly
deviate from the current expectations, producing a very weak and almost uniform rheology with temperature and therefore
depth (~~fig~~Fig. 14). If true, this ~~removes any usefulness of carbonate paleopiezometry for estimating~~ calls into question the
predictions of carbonate paleopiezometry for crustal strength. More importantly, these results could extend to the olivine
system where it has also been shown that ~~there is a change in strength with an increase in~~ flow strength depends on iron
475 concentration (Zhao et al., 2009, 2018). For olivine the relative activity of creep mechanisms and their sensitivity to chemistry
will be different but the way in which the extra chemical parameter might impact strength estimates should be established. As
such our work highlights the need to better integrate the effects of solid solutions ~~in important Earth materials~~ into the rheology
of important rock forming minerals.

Code and data availability. A python script for the conversion of magnesium data and a csv file of the mechanical data reviewed in this
480 publication are provided in the supplement.

Author contributions. JG and MH designed the study. JG performed the data collation and analyses. All authors were involved in the
interpretation of the results and the writing of the final manuscript.

Competing interests. The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

Acknowledgements. Jörg Renner is thanked deeply for his contribution to the discussion of data over the course of the many years it took to
485 bring this publication together. This research has been supported by the Schweizerischer Nationalfonds zur Förderung der Wissenschaftlichen
Forschung (grant no. 162340) and the Leverhulme Trust through the Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship.