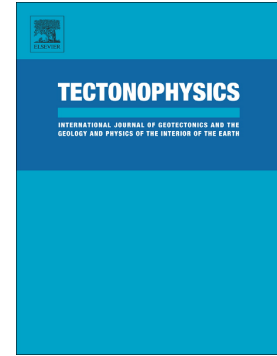


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Hydraulic properties of a low permeable rupture zone on the Yingxiu-Beichuan fault activated during the Wenchuan earthquake, China: Implications for fluid conduction, fault sealing, and dynamic weakening mechanisms

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Abstract: Fluid transport properties of fault rocks are crucial parameters that affect earthquake nucleation and rupture propagation. In this study, we examined the internal structure, mineral composition and fluid transport properties of fault rocks collected from two shallow boreholes penetrating a granitic rupture zone on the Yingxiu-Beichuan Fault (YBF) that was activated during the 2008 Wenchuan earthquake. Fluid transport properties were measured using water as pore fluid at effective pressures (P_e) ranging from 10 MPa to 165 MPa. Permeabilities of fault rocks exhibit a wide variation from $2.1 \times 10^{-22} \text{ m}^2$ to $4.6 \times 10^{-17} \text{ m}^2$, strongly depending on rock types and overburden pressure. Specifically, at P_e of 165 MPa, the damage zone samples have permeabilities from $5.0 \times 10^{-21} \text{ m}^2$ to $1.2 \times 10^{-17} \text{ m}^2$, and the fault gouges are between $2.1 \times 10^{-22} \text{ m}^2$ and $3.1 \times 10^{-19} \text{ m}^2$. Thus, the YBF consists of a low-permeability fault core acting as fluid barrier, and surrounding high-permeability damage zones acting as fluid conduits. Combining the structural and compositional results and transport data together, we propose that the interplay between cataclasis and fluid-rock interactions controls the hydraulic properties and their response to the

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