

REVISION 1

Chessboard structures: atom-scale imaging of homologues from the kobellite series

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Abstract: High-angle annular dark field scanning transmission electron microscopy is a powerful Z-contrast technique able to depict the structural motifs in Pb-(Bi-Sb)-sulfosalts. Using two homologues from the kobellite homologous series, a group of “chessboard derivative structures”, represented by Bi- and Sb-rich pairs of natural phases (the kobellite-tintinaite isotypic series and giessenite-izoklakeite homeotypic series), we visualise the slabs underpinning crystal structural modularity for the N=2 homologue kobellite and the N=4 homologue, in this case a Bi-rich izoklakeite (Sb/Sb+Bi=0.35). The homologue number, N, can be readily calculated as $N=n_1/6-1$ and $N=n_2/4$, where n_1 and n_2 are the number of atoms in the PbS- and SnS-motifs, respectively. Atom-scale imaging of thinned foils extracted *in-situ* from samples for which compositional data are available also reveals syntactic unit-cell-scale intergrowths on [001] zone axis with $a_{\text{kobellite}} \parallel b_{\text{izoklakeite}}$. These are as small as half-unit cells of $b_{\text{izoklakeite}}$ and one-unit cell $a_{\text{kobellite}}$. Replacement relationships are also observed as irregular slabs of kobellite ‘intruding’ into izoklakeite. Both banded and irregular intergrowths account for the compositional fields measured at the μm -scale.

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24 **Keywords:** HAADF STEM, chessboard structures, izoklakeite, kobellite.

25 **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

26 Direct nanoscale visualisation of the crystal structures of complex minerals by scanning transmission
27 electron microscope (STEM) imaging offers unparalleled insights against which crystal structural models
28 can be validated, and microprobe-scale non-stoichiometry understood in terms of nanoscale
29 heterogeneity. The use of Z-contrast techniques such as high-angle angular dark field (HAADF) STEM
30 imaging is particularly relevant for enhanced high-resolution imaging of structures containing elements
31 with heavier atomic mass (Utsunomiya et al. 2004) and is thus well-suited to many ore minerals (e.g.,
32 Xu et al. 2014; Ciobanu et al. 2016; Cook et al. 2017). The complex family of sulfosalts is one such
33 mineral group where HAADF STEM atomic-scale imaging has allowed visualisation of modular Pb-Bi-
34 sulfosalt structures such as cupronyite (Ciobanu et al. 2016).

35 Sulfosalts are compounds chemically related to sulfides but containing one or more metalloids (Bi,
36 Sb, As) as cations according to the general formula: $(\text{Me}^+, \text{Me}^{2+}, \text{etc.})_x[(\text{Bi}, \text{Sb}, \text{As})^{3+}, \text{Te}^{4+}]_y[(\text{S}, \text{Se}, \text{Te})^{2-}]_z$,
37 where Me^{n+} are various metals (Moëlo et al. 2008). This formula is a simplification as oxy-sulfosalts are
38 also recognised (e.g., Kryukova et al. 2005; Doussier et al. 2008; Biagioni and Moëlo 2017) The ability
39 of metals and metalloids to form various coordination polyhedra, such as $(\text{Bi}, \text{Pb}, \text{Ag})\text{S}_6$ octahedra, bi-
40 capped prismatic PbS_9 polyhedra, or $(\text{Sb}, \text{As})\text{S}_4$ square-pyramidal coordination, opens-up a broad range
41 of block modularity in which structural motifs formed by the same polyhedral types are combined by
42 symmetry operators, e.g., twin, shear or inversion planes, etc., leading to some of the largest crystal
43 structures and their derivatives (e.g., Makovicky 1997). Smaller metals such as Cu, Fe, and in some cases
44 Ag, occur within interstitial tetrahedral sites. A focus of debate for sulfosalt classification is the
45 disagreement between the crystal-structural restrictions imposed on chemistry/substitution mechanisms
46 and the broad compositional fields identified for many sulfosalts (Moëlo et al. 2008, and references
47 therein). Secondly, these minerals are ideal for the study of non-stoichiometry versus structural disorder

48 since the presence of micron- to nanoscale intergrowths among species from the same or related series
49 appears to be an inherent characteristic rather than the exception (e.g., Ciobanu and Cook 2000; Ciobanu
50 et al. 2004; Pring et al. 1999; Pring and Ciobanu 2008).

51 Sulfosalt classification is based upon the structural motifs formed by polyhedral arrangements
52 corresponding to equivalent planes of PbS and SnS structures considered as archetypes for series of Pb-
53 Bi- and Pb-(Bi, Sb)-sulfosalts, respectively (Makovicky 1997). The kobellite homologous series belongs
54 to the wider family of Pb-(Bi, Sb)-sulfosalts and is defined as: $2(\text{Cu,Fe})_2\text{M}_{10\text{N}+6}\text{S}_{11\text{N}+13}$ for a 4Å-repeat
55 subunit of the structure, where M=Sb and Bi, and N is the homologue number (Zakrzewski and
56 Makovicky 1986; Makovicky and Mumme 1986; Fig. 1a-c). The series includes two homologues, each
57 represented by Bi-, and Sb-rich pairs of natural phases that currently classified as “chessboard derivative
58 structures” (Moëlo et al. 2008): N=2 for the kobellite-tintinaite isotypic series; and N=4 for the
59 giessenite-izoklakeite homeotypic series.

60 Giessenite, (monoclinic) was described from the type locality Giessen (Switzerland) by Graeser
61 (1963), with additional data provided by Graeser and Harris (1986) and Makovicky and Karup-Møller
62 (1986). The two specimens have Sb/(Sb+Bi) ratio of 0.195 and 0.146, respectively. The Sb-rich end-
63 member of the series, izoklakeite (orthorhombic), was first defined by Harris et al. (1986) from the type
64 locality (Izok Lake, N.W.T., Canada; Sb/(Sb+Bi) = 0.527). In the same year species of comparable
65 composition (Sb/(Sb+Bi)=0.453-0.555) were described from Vena, Sweden (Makovicky and Mumme
66 1986; Zakrzewski and Makovicky 1986). Additional compositional and structural data for Bi-richer
67 izoklakeite from other localities [Sb/(Sb+Bi) = 0.391-0.395] was subsequently provided by Armbruster
68 and Hummel (1987) and Ozawa et al. (1998). Members of the giessenite-izoklakeite series commonly
69 co-exist with other Pb-(Bi,Sb)-sulfosalts, notably the kobellite-tintinaite series (Harris et al. 1968; Mische
70 1971; Moëlo et al. 1984, 1995).

71 Despite the common association between the two homologues of the kobellite series, no prior studies

72 have either addressed their lattice-scale intergrowths, or directly imaged the crystal-structural models
73 considered to underpin homology in the series. In the present study, we use transmission electron
74 microscopy (BF and HAADF STEM) imaging to address such issues in kobellite homologues found in
75 Au-rich ores from the Guitashan deposit, Southern China (Li et al. 2019a). Results show the modules
76 accounting for homology in chessboard structures are readily identifiable by such methods. Lattice-scale
77 intergrowths reveal both primary banding and replacement relationships.

78 SAMPLES AND METHODOLOGY

79 The Guitashan Au deposit is rich in Pb-Cu-Sb-As-sulfosalts (Li et al. 2019b) but also contains stringer
80 zones in which Pb-(Bi,Sb)-sulfosalts and subordinate Bi-tellurides are instead associated with gold. Six
81 thin foils for S/TEM study were prepared using focussed ion beam (FIB)-SEM methods from several
82 areas in a single polished block (Fig. A1, Appendix¹). Sulfosalts occur as micron-scale intergrowths with
83 one another and also with galena adjacent to coarse native gold and Bi-tellurides (Fig. A1, Appendix¹).
84 FIB-cuts were placed on areas assessed by electron probe microanalysis (EPMA); compositional data
85 are given in Table A1 Appendix¹. Each foil was screened by TEM to check sulfosalt orientation on the
86 [001] zone axis to allow imaging of the relevant crystal structural motifs. Of the six foils, one fulfilled
87 such condition and was studied using HAADF STEM imaging. EPMA data was obtained on a Cameca
88 SX-Five Electron Probe Microanalyser (EPMA) running Probe Software (Donovan et al. 2016).
89 Operating conditions and analysis details are given in the Appendix¹.

90 Thinned foils were extracted in-situ and thinned (to <100 nm) by ion beam (Ga⁺) milling using a FEI
91 Helios Nanolab 600 instrument. The TEM foils were attached to Cu grids. Electron diffractions and
92 imaging in BF-mode were performed on a Philips CM200 TEM operated at 200 kV. The instrument is
93 equipped with a LaB₆ source, double tilt holder and Gatan Orius digital camera. Energy-dispersive X-

¹ Deposit item.

94 ray spectra (EDS) were acquired using an Oxford Instruments X-Max 65T SDD detector running Aztec
95 software. Image and diffraction measurements were performed using DigitalMicrograph™ 3.11.1.
96 HAADF STEM imaging and EDX spot analysis/mapping were performed using an ultra-high resolution,
97 probe corrected, FEI Titan Themis S/TEM operated at 200 kV. This instrument is equipped with an X-
98 FEG Schottky source and Super-X EDS geometry. The Super-X EDS detector provides geometrically
99 symmetric EDS detection with an effective solid angle of 0.8 Sr. Probe correction delivered sub-
100 Ångstrom spatial resolution, and an inner collection angle greater than 50 mrad was used for HAADF
101 experiments using the Fischione HAADF detector. Diffraction indexing was obtained using Winwulff©
102 1.5.2 software and publicly available data from the American Mineralogist Crystal Structure Database.
103 Visualisations of crystal structure were carried out using CrystalMaker® version 10.1.1 and STEM for
104 xHREM™ version 4.1 software. All instruments are housed at Adelaide Microscopy.

105 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

106 The two sulfosalts in the association are kobellite and Bi-rich izoklakeite ($\text{Sb}/\text{Sb}+\text{Bi}=0.35$) with
107 empirical formulae: [1] $(\text{Cu}_{3.78}\text{Fe}_{0.5})_{4.28}(\text{Ag}_{0.1}\text{Pb}_{20.39}\text{Cd}_{0.09}\text{Sb}_{12.13}\text{Bi}_{19.16})_{51.87}(\text{S}_{69.86}\text{Se}_{0.07})_{69.93}$; and [2]
108 $(\text{Cu}_{3.99}\text{Fe}_{0.04})_{4.03}(\text{Ag}_{0.55}\text{Pb}_{51.32}\text{Cd}_{0.06}\text{Sb}_{13.85}\text{Bi}_{26.05})_{91.83}(\text{S}_{113.79}\text{Te}_{0.11}\text{Se}_{0.2})_{114.1}$, respectively. The data form
109 two clusters in $\text{Cu}+\text{Fe}(\text{+Ag})\text{-Bi}+\text{Sb}(\text{+As})\text{-Pb}(\text{+Cd})$ compositional space (Fig. 1c), with a slightly larger
110 spread for izoklakeite than kobellite. The two sulfosalts form nanoscale intergrowths, as documented by
111 imaging and variation in Pb and Bi distributions on EDS-STEM maps (Fig. 1d; Fig. A2, Appendix¹).

112 According to Zakrzewski and Makovicky (1986), definition of homologues in the kobellite series
113 considers two structural motifs: (i) larger $\text{M}_{6(\text{N}+1)}\text{S}_{7\text{N}+9}$ units based on the PbS archetype; and (ii) smaller
114 PbS units with the general formula $\text{M}_{4\text{N}}\text{S}_{4(\text{N}+1)}$ based on a SnS-like structure. These motifs form a
115 pseudotrigonal network of rods in both *a* and *b* directions and are interspersed with tetrahedrally
116 coordinated (Cu, Fe) atoms for each pair of rods (Fig. 1a, b). Lead and Bi occur preferentially in the PbS-
117 like motifs whereas Sb is concentrated in the SnS-like motifs. Incorporation of Ag is considered either

118 as substitution in the PbS rods, via $\text{Ag}+\text{Bi}=2\text{Pb}$, or filling interstitial vacancies (e.g.,
119 $\text{Cu}+\text{Pb}=\text{vacancy}+\text{Bi}$).

120 The main structural motifs and their arrangement are readily observed on HAADF STEM images with
121 specimen tilted down to [001] zone axis (Fig. 2). The shorter SnS slab (slab 2) is darker than the larger
122 PbS one (slab 1) in both cases, whereas each contact between two types of rods is marked by a still darker
123 ribbon formed by intermittent 'spot'-like areas, only a few Å in width. The latter consist of the least
124 bright, smallest atoms surrounded by 5 atoms of brightness comparable with those in the main two slabs
125 (circled on Fig. 2a, b, upper right), suggesting these positions are occupied by Cu and Fe. Relative
126 changes in grey shade across the array of the two main building slabs are concordant with the distribution
127 of (Bi, Pb) and (Sb, Pb) in the PbS and SnS motifs, respectively. The two main slabs are twinned along
128 the 34 Å-repeat ($b_{\text{kobellite}}$ and $a_{\text{izoklakeite}}$) and form stacks of thinner and thicker blocks parallel with one
129 another, i.e., slab 1 + slab 2 at ~ 22.5 Å along $a_{\text{kobellite}}$, and ~ 38 Å along $b_{\text{izoklakeite}}$, on [001] in each sulfosalt.
130 The homologue number for each species can be calculated directly from the sum of atoms in these two
131 slabs using the formulae $N=n_1/6-1$ and $N=n_2/4$, where n_1 and n_2 are the number of atoms in the PbS and
132 SnS slabs, respectively. Direct counting of n_1 and n_2 on the images gives $n_1=30$ and $n_2=16$ for izoklakeite,
133 and $n_1=18$ and $n_2=8$ for kobellite (Fig. 2a, b, lower right). Considering the difficulty in calculating N for
134 species with compositional variation in terms of Cu, Fe, and Ag substitution (Zakrzewski and Makovicky
135 1986), HAADF STEM imaging is a straightforward method to confirm homologue identity.

136 STEM modelling for izoklakeite shows a better fit between the images (Fig. 3) and the refined
137 structural model for Bi-rich izoklakeite given by Makovicky and Mumme (1986) compared to that of
138 Armbruster and Hummel (1987). This is despite the composition of the species considered here being
139 very close to that in the second model ($\text{Sb}/(\text{Sb}+\text{Bi}) = 0.35$ and 0.395 , respectively). One difference
140 between the two crystal structural models is the occupancy of mixed (Sb, Bi, Pb) sites throughout the
141 two main structural motifs. The present data shows that slab 1 and 2 are distinctly brighter and darker,

142 respectively, suggesting overall distributions of Sb and Bi within one or the other main slabs, i.e., Sb and
143 Bi preferring the SnS and PbS configurations. The model of Armbruster and Hummel (1987) should be
144 further proven by investigating mixed site occupancy, e.g., by atom-scale STEM-EDX mapping. STEM
145 simulations for kobellite using the crystal structure of Miehe (1971) shows the main structural motifs but
146 does not match the imaged atoms (Fig. A3, Appendix¹), or the crystal structure model (Fig. 1a).

147 Selected-area of electron diffraction patterns taken down the [001] zone axis and Fast Fourier
148 Transforms obtained from images for izoklakeite and kobellite in this study show odd reflections of the
149 type $h00\neq 2n$ and $0k0\neq 2n$ which are incompatible with symmetry in *Pnmm* space group (Fig. A4,
150 Appendix¹). Odd reflections along twin directions have been discussed with respect to differences in
151 twin/block thickness for Pb-Bi-sulfosalts (Colaitis et al., 1981). The same effects likely cause non-
152 extinction Bragg reflections on both directions with slabs of different widths for the two chessboard
153 structures discussed here.

154 HAADF STEM imaging also reveals syntactic unit-cell-scale intergrowths between the two species
155 on [001] zone axis with $a_{\text{kobellite}} \parallel b_{\text{izoklakeite}}$ (Fig. 4a, b). The intergrowths extend down to the scale of 1/2
156 unit cells on $b_{\text{izoklakeite}}$ and one unit on $a_{\text{kobellite}}$. Such crystal-structural modularity among homologues of
157 the same series, or between related structures, can account for rhythmic compositional banding down to
158 the nanoscale as has been documented for other Bi-Pb-sulfosalts and interpreted as primary growth
159 textures (e.g., Pring et al. 1999; Ciobanu et al. 2004; Pring and Ciobanu 2008). Secondary replacement
160 of izoklakeite is also observed as irregular slabs of kobellite ‘intruding’ into izoklakeite in associations
161 which display step-wise contacts between the two species (Fig. 4c). Both types of intergrowths, banded
162 and irregular, account for the compositional fields measured at the micron-scale (Fig. 1c).

163 Nanoscale intergrowths among members of Pb-Bi-sulfosalts from the same series or across series
164 sharing crystal-structural blocks have been predicted (e.g., Makovicky 1997), or documented elsewhere.
165 The presence of smallest atomic-scale intergrowths among different species of sulfosalts with chessboard

166 structures, is documented here for the two kobellite homologues and elsewhere for different Cu-bearing
167 neyite species (Ciobanu et al. 2016) and may be an inherent feature of their 2-D modular architectures.
168 Although the N=3 homologue of the kobellite series is also predicted (Makovicky and Mumme 1986),
169 this is not observed to occur here, the relevant compositional field being represented by intergrowths of
170 N=2 and N=4 phases.

171 **IMPLICATIONS**

172 Imaging in HAADF STEM mode is better suited than conventional BF TEM mode since it can directly
173 visualise heavy atoms forming motifs underpinning crystal-structural modularity in Pb-Bi-sulfosalts, as
174 well as stacking sequences in mixed layer compounds, e.g., REE-fluorocarbonates of the bastnäsité-
175 synchysite group, or Bi-tellurides from the tetradymite group (Ciobanu et al., 2017; Cook et al. 2017).
176 Crystal-structural modularity is a topic of considerable interest for the definition of equilibrium
177 conditions in natural systems or high-tech applications of ‘smart’ materials capable of accommodating
178 incremental compositional variation through nanoscale intergrowths (e.g., Dittrich et al. 2009).

179 **Acknowledgements**

180 We acknowledge the support the Australian Microscopy and Microanalysis Research Facility for instrument
181 access. Financial support for Wei Li was provided by the National "973" Program of China (2014CB440902), the
182 National Science Foundation of China (41573042 and 41372090) and the MNR Key Laboratory of Metallogeny
183 and Mineral Assessment, Institute of Mineral Resources, Chinese Academy of Geological Sciences (ZS1702).
184 Comments from Yves Moëlo and two anonymous reviewers are gratefully appreciated and allowed us to clarify
185 aspects of this manuscript.

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261 **Figure captions**

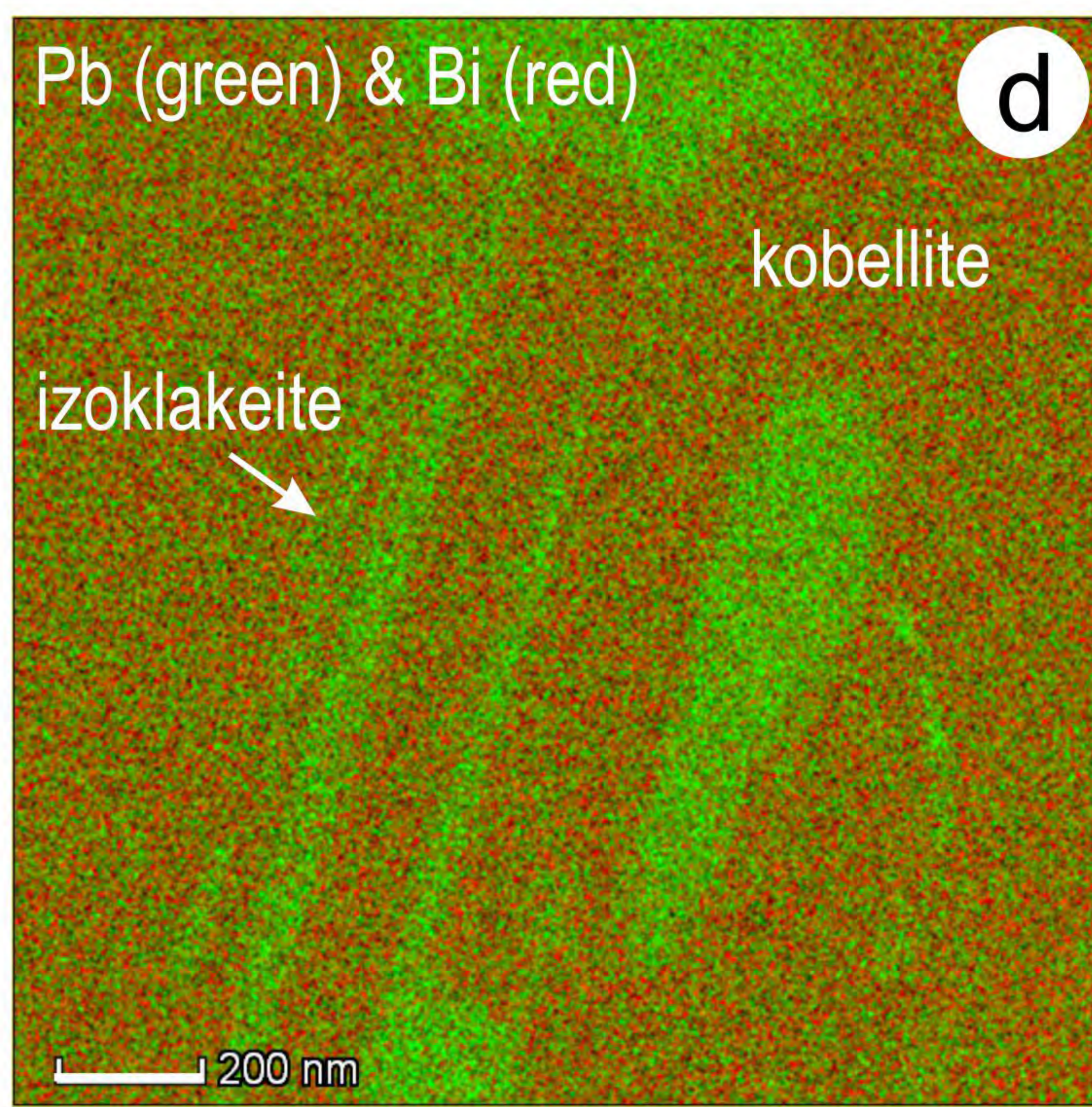
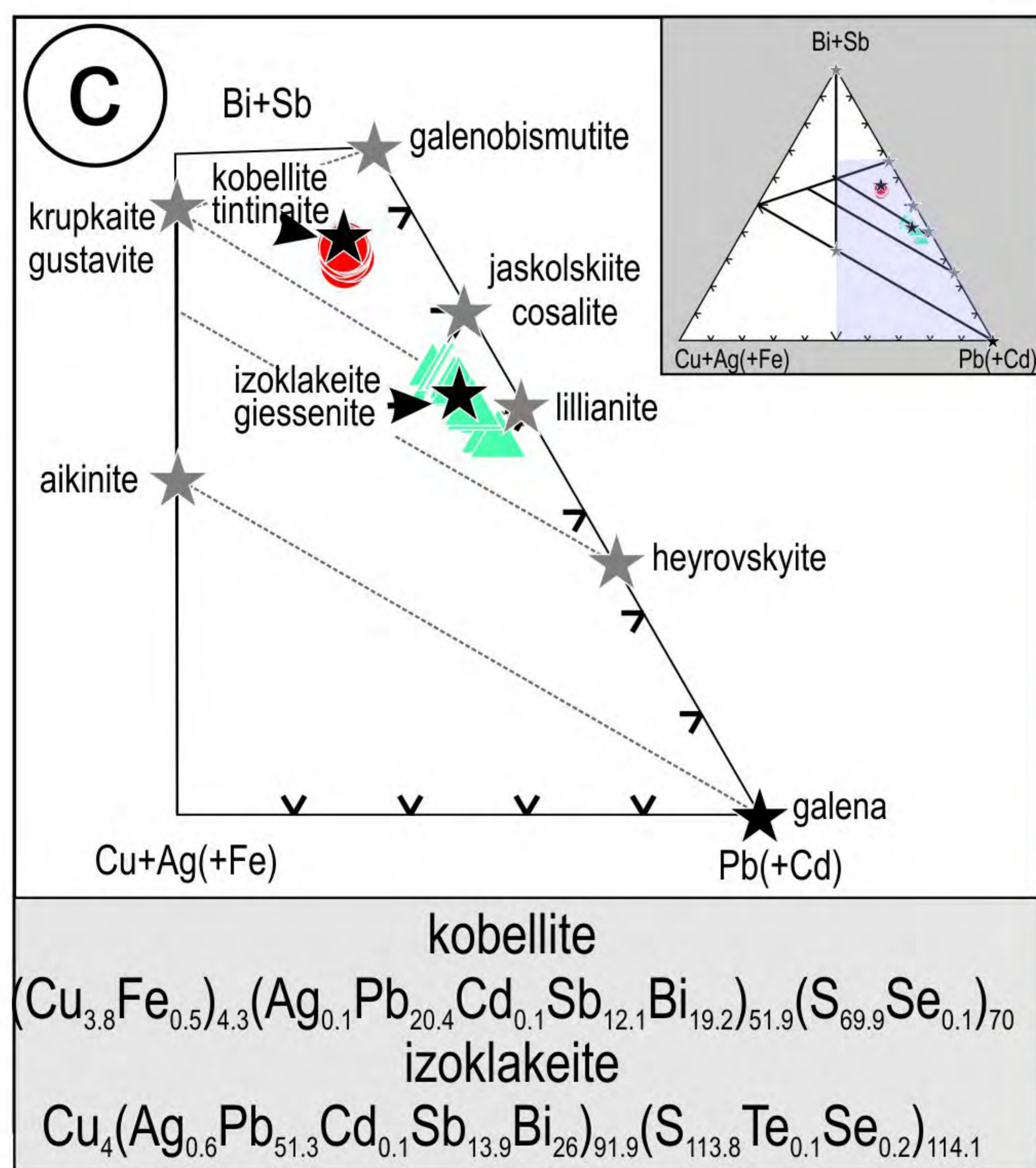
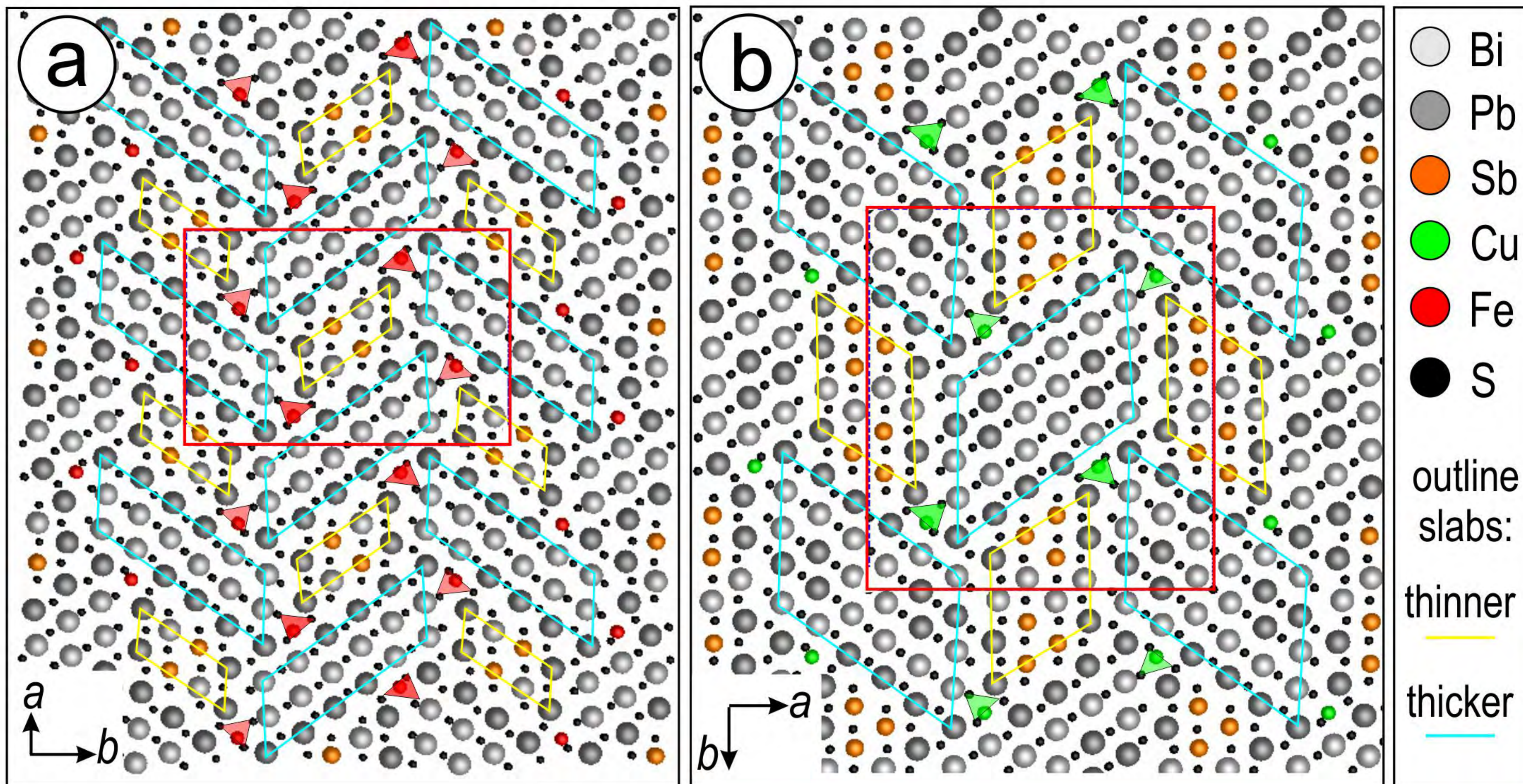
262 **Figure 1.** Atom filling models of kobellite (a) and izoklakeite (b) on [001] zone axis obtained using data from
263 Miehe (1971) and Armbruster and Hummel (1987), respectively. Unit cells (Å) for kobellite: $a=22.575$; $b=34.104$;
264 $c=4.038$; and izoklakeite: $a=34.221$; $b=37.933$; $c=4.063$; space groups for both are *Pnmm*. (c) Cu+Ag(+Fe)-Bi+Sb-
265 Pb+(Cd) ternary diagram showing composition of the two sulfosalts. Grey stars represent ideal Pb-Bi-sulfosalts
266 added for reference. (d) EDS-STEM map of nanoscale intergrowths between the two analysed sulfosalts.

267 **Figure 2.** HAADF STEM images showing kobellite (a) and izoklakeite (b) on [001] zone axis. The PbS (brighter)
268 and SnS (darker) motifs are stacked alternatively along the *b* axis whereas ‘twinning’ of PbS and SnS motifs is
269 apparent along *a*. Bright dots represent heavy atoms with size decreasing in the order Bi, Pb (white circles), to Sb

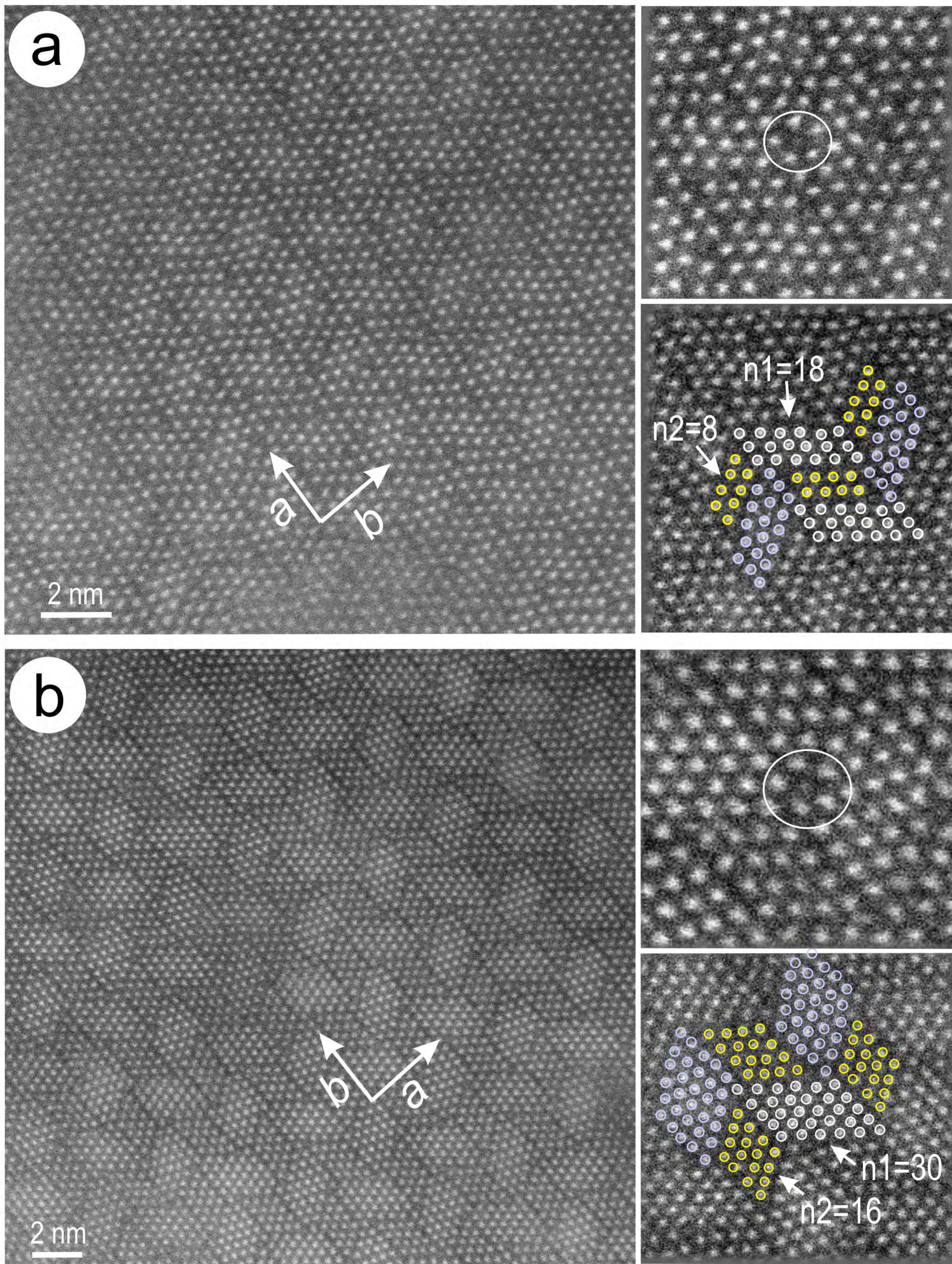
270 (yellow circles) as highlighted in images bottom-right. Mixed sites may be present but cannot be resolved. Smallest
271 atoms (Cu, Fe), located at the junction between the two main motifs, are highlighted in images top-right. The
272 images (bottom right) allow calculation of the homologue number as $N=n1/6-1$ and $N=n2/4$, where $n1$ and $n2$ are
273 the number of atoms in the PbS and SnS motifs, respectively.

274 **Figure 3.** STEM simulations of izoklakeite on [001] zone axis using crystal structures from Makovicky and
275 Mumme (1986) in (a), and Armbruster and Hummel (1987) in (b). Unit cell in yellow, PbS and SnS motifs
276 highlighted as blue and yellow shades. HAADF STEM image (c) shows a better fit with (a), i.e., the contrast
277 between the two atoms within the modules, and between the two modules, does not vary much due to mixed sites
278 as in (b).

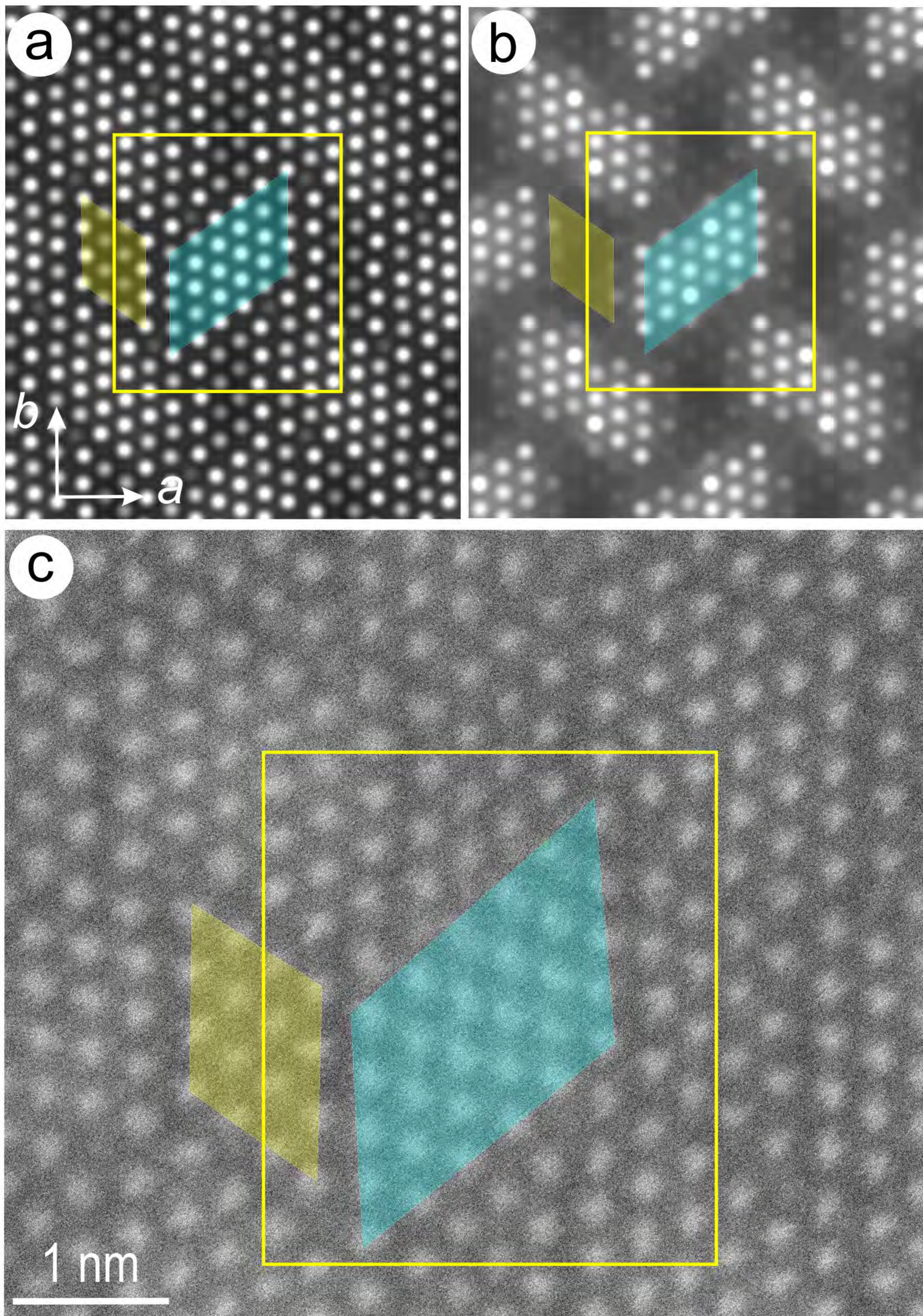
279 **Figure 4.** HAADF STEM images showing rhythmic banding between kobellite and izoklakeite (a, b) and replacing
280 relationships in (c). The smallest repeats between PbS (green in izoklakeite and blue in kobellite) and SnS (yellow
281 in izoklakeite and orange in kobellite) stacks along the $b_{\text{izoklakeite}}$ and $a_{\text{kobellite}}$ are shown in (b).



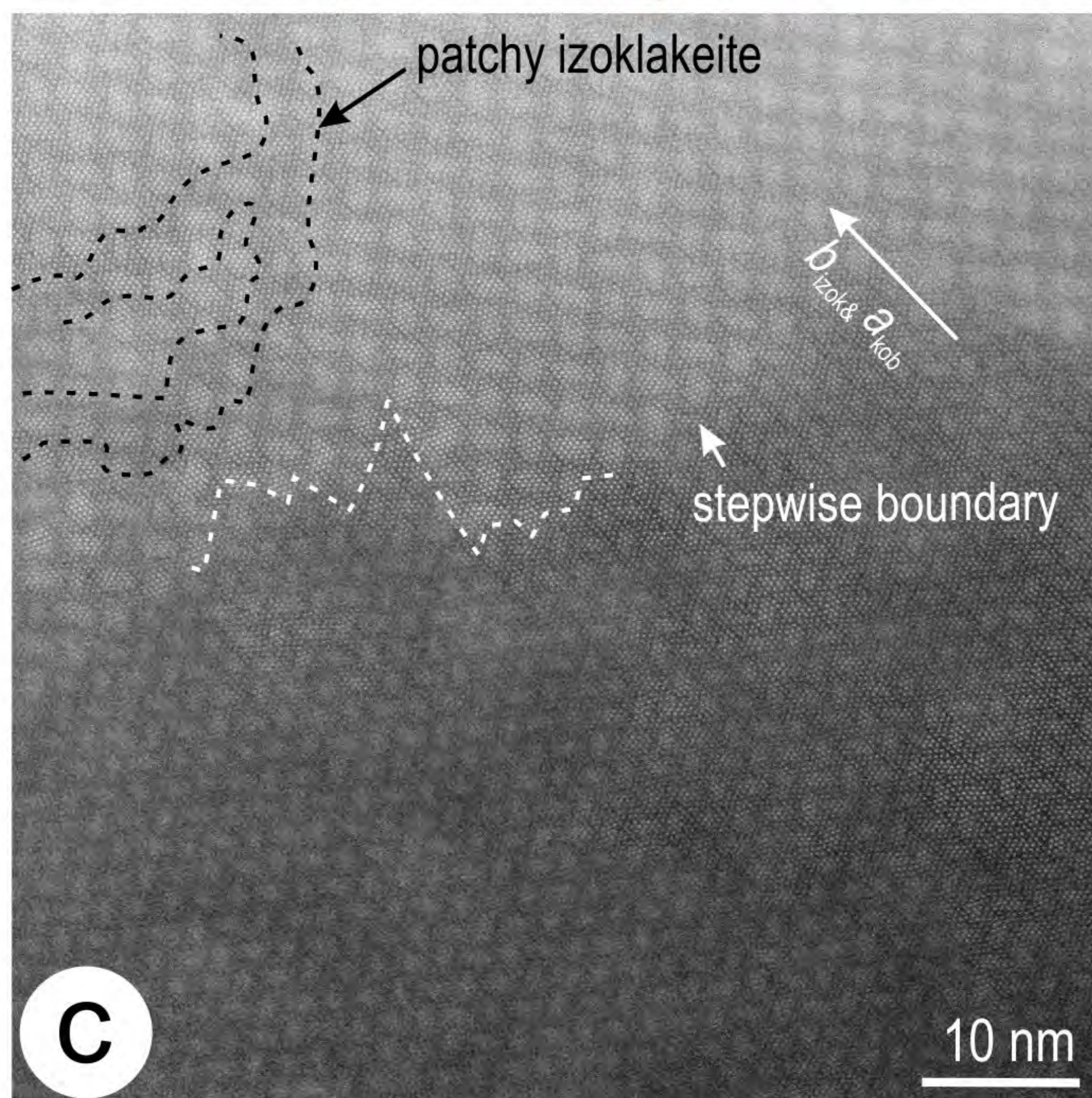
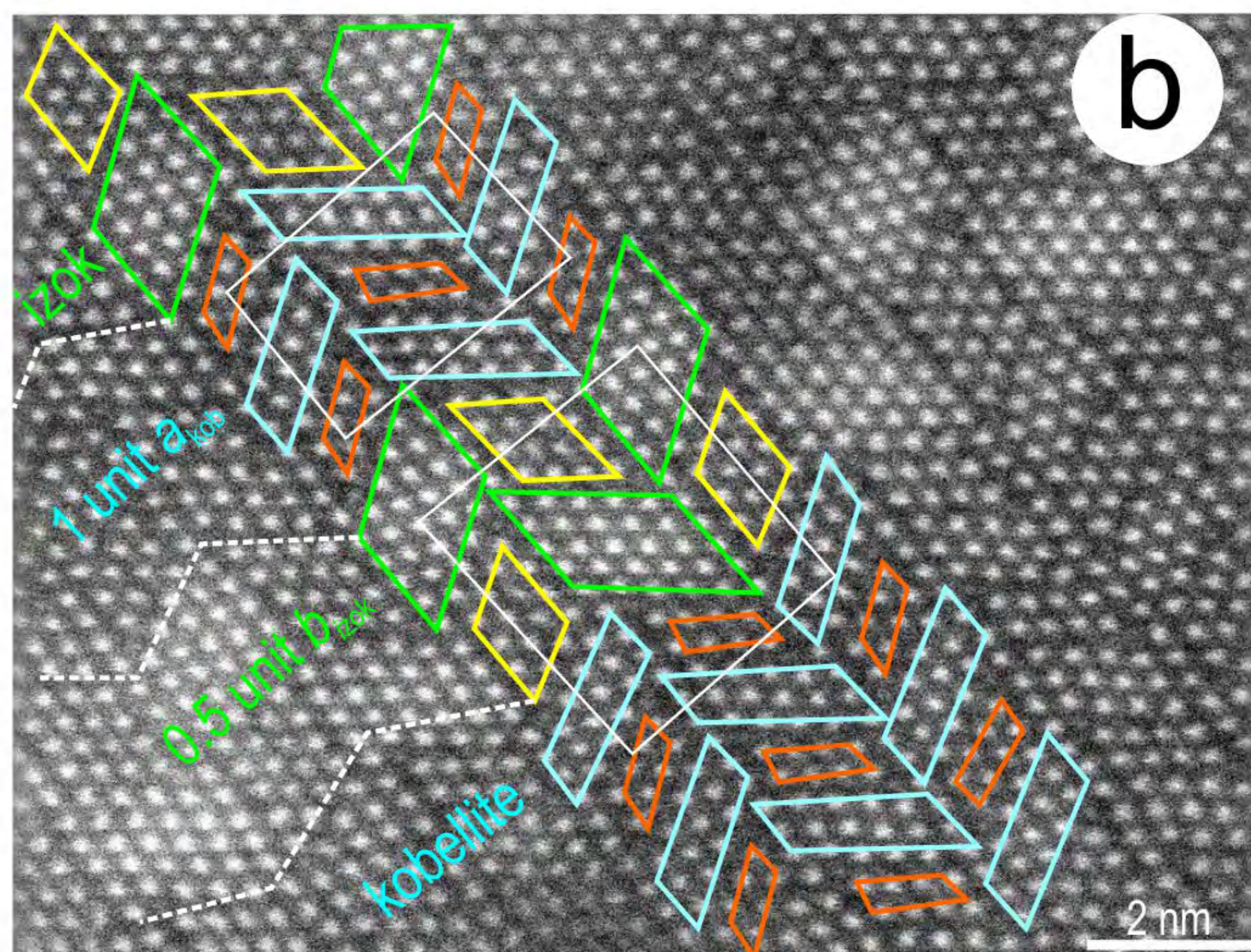
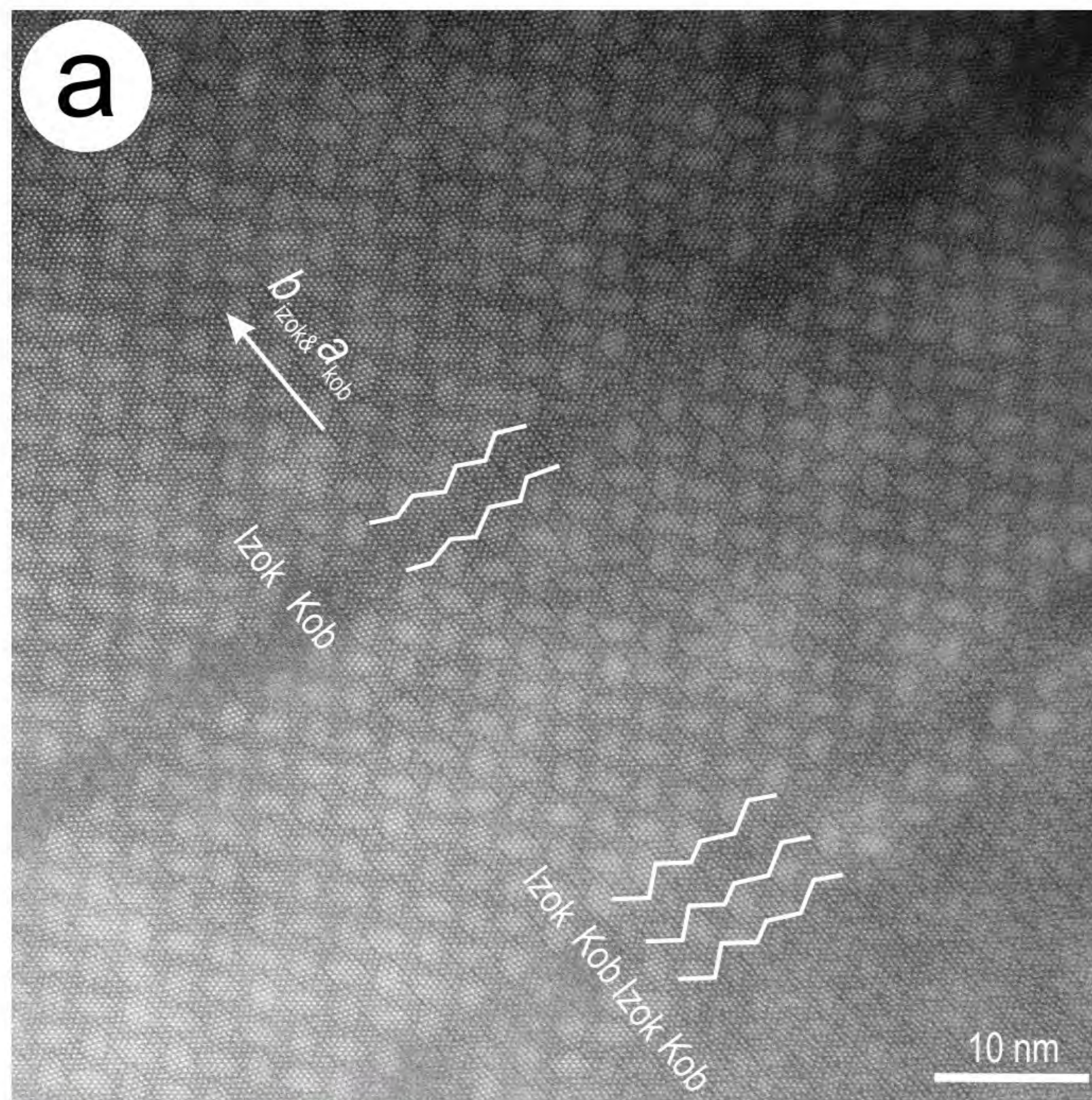
Li et al., Figure 1



Li et al., Figure 2



Li et al., Figure 3



Li et al., Figure 4