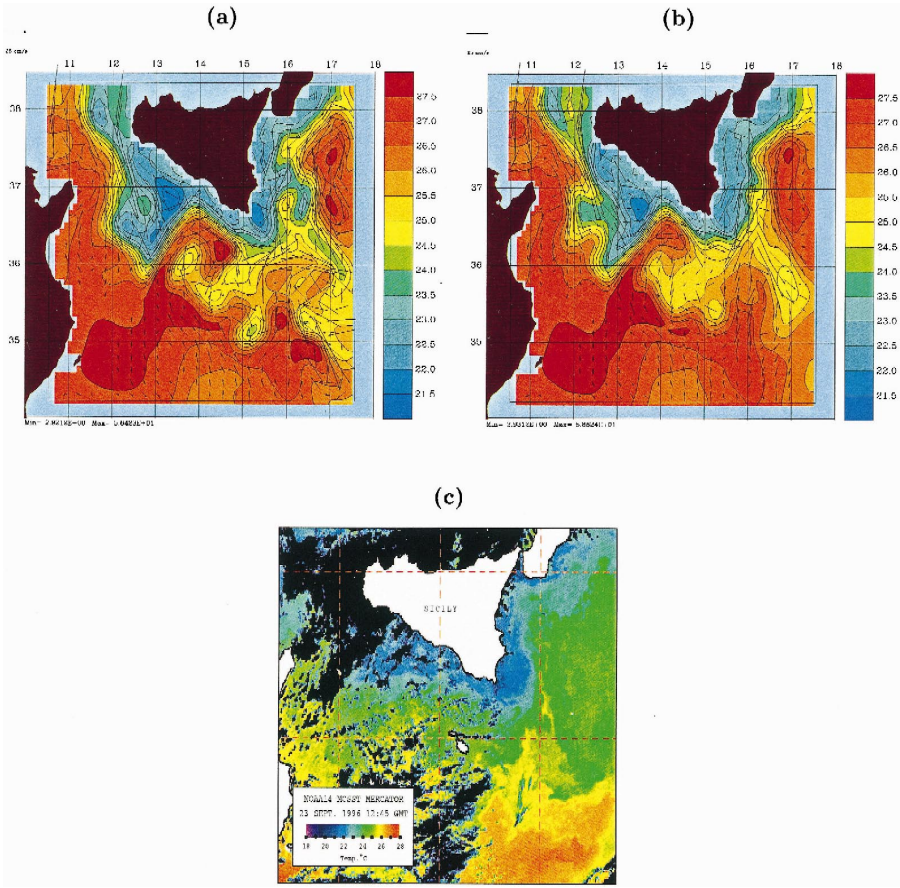


Fig. 20. Panel (a) shows the 8-day ESSE surface $T$ forecast for Sept. 23 (a 1-day forecast from the ESSE fields of Sept. 22), overlaid with surface velocity vectors (scale arrow is 0.25 m/s). Panel (b) is as (a) but for the OI (a 1-day forecast from the OI fields of Sept. 22). For each, an assimilation occurred on Sept. 18 and 22. Panel (c) is the satellite SST distribution for Sept. 23, 12:45 GMT. The scale differs from that of Fig. 12b. Clouded regions are black. The picture was downloaded from the real-time unclassified RR96 World Wide Web server of the SACLANTCEN.

present estimation gives the overall best fields. The evolution of the features whose variations dominate the variability during RR96 (as identified in Sections 3.1 and 3.2.1) is thus best illustrated by comparing Fig. 20a with Fig. 12d. Considering these features from west to east, the ABV has deepened to the southeast, with parts of the AIS flow pinching off a warm mesoscale eddy around (36.7°N, 12.8°E). The MCC has strengthened and moved northeastward. It has advected warm Tunisian shelf waters along its path and induced a recirculation of MAW origins to the southwest, which is now leading to a cold mesoscale eddy around (36°N, 13.6°E). The IBV has reduced its strength and horizontal extent, somewhat moving to the eastern coast of Sicily, north of Syracuse. The $T$ and $S$ fronts of the Ionian slope have been associated with a substantial