PROCEEDINGS, 46th Workshop on Geothermal Reservoir Engineering
Stanford University, Stanford, California, February 15-17, 2021
SGP-TR-218

The Characteristics of Andesite Under Weathering and Alteration in Tatun Volcano Group, Taiwan

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Keywords: weathering, alteration, petrography, mineral assemblages, geochemistry, Tatun Volcano Group, Taiwan

ABSTRACT

The weathering and alteration are important processes for rock changing to soil. The Tatun Vaocano Group (TVG) is located in monsoon zone and active volcano phenomena areas. Therefore, the two pyroxenes basaltic andesite, which is igneous rock of TVG, records the processes of weathering and alteration. This study analyzed the petrography, mineral assemblages, geochemistry of andesite by microscope, x-ray diffraction, and energy dispersive x-ray fluorescence spectrometer.

This study presents that the predominant mineral assemblages are augite, hypersthene, bytownite, and hornblende, and the alteration mineral assemblages are cristobalite and halloysite. The andesite has thicker ring, which exists higher sulfur that is near the fumarole area. Finally, the two pyroxenes basaltic andesite of TVG is distinguished four stages by degrees of rock mass weathering. The silica, aluminum, and sulfur have higher contents as the more weathering and alteration.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Tatun Volcano Group is located in the monsoon zone, and there are widely hot springs distribution and significantly fumaroles (Yang et al., 1999; Lee et al., 2008; Liu et al., 2011). The rock is a well recorder that can record the source of rock and influence of weathering and hydrothermal alteration on the rock properties. The andesite has ring and different colour, which are common phenomenon, present in the Shibafen lava flow that is affected by chemical weathering and hydrothermal alteration.

The aim of this study analyzed petrography, mineral assemblages, geochemistry and weathering index for providing the conceptual model of minerals assemblages change under the processes of weathering and alteration.

2. METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLING SITES

This study applies microscope, X-ray diffraction, Energy Dispersive X-ray fluorescence spectrometer on the petrography, mineral assemblages, and geochemistry of andesite. In addition, this study calculates the weathering indexes of andesite by chemical index of alteration (CIA), chemical index of weathering (CIW), plagioclase index of alteration (PIA), weathering index (WIP) (Nesbitt and Young, 1982; Harnois, 1988; Fedo et al, 1995; Parker, 1970).

The equations as below:

$CIA = [Al_2O_3 * 100 / Al_2O_3 + CaO + Na_2O + K_2O]$

$CIW = [Al_2O_3 / (Al_2O_3 + CaO^* + Na_2O) * 100]$

$PIA = (Al_2O_3 - K_2O) / (Al_2O_3 - K_2O + CaO^* + Na_2O - K_2O) * 100$

$WIP = [(2Na_2O / 0.35) + (MgO / 0.9) + (2K_2O / 0.25) + (CaO / 0.7)] * 100$

The sampling sites locate on the Shibafen lava flow of Tatun Volcano Group of Taiwan (Figure 1a). This study collects ring samples and medium gray, grayish red purple and brown andesite from Shibafen lava flow (Figure 1b to Figure 1d).

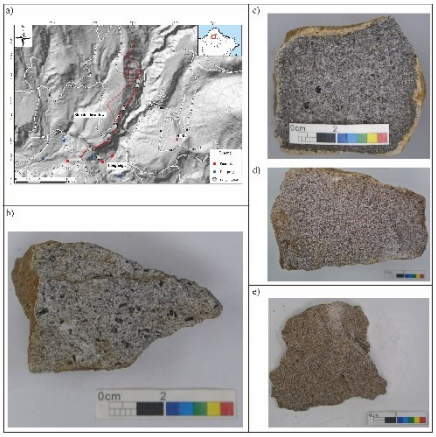

Figure 1: The sampling location and hand specimen. (a) It shows sampling locations in the Shibafen lava flow of Tatun Volcano Group of Taiwan. (b) medium gray andesite. (c) ring andesite. (d) grayish red purple andesite. (e) brown andesite.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The characteristics of fresh andesite

In the figure 2, it presents basaltic andesite, which is medium gray sample. The basaltic andesite consists of plagioclase (20 %-35 %), augite (2 %-12 %), hypersthene (2 %-5 %), opaque (1 %-3 %) and groundmass (47 %-72 %). Finally, the medium gray sample is named two pyroxenes basaltic andesite.

The results of geochemistry of medium gray two pyroxenes basaltic andesite show that silica are about 53.7%-55.4%, aluminum oxide are about 21.8%-24.6%, iron oxide are about 5.8%-7.3%, calcium oxide are about 8.2%-8.7%, magnesium oxide are about 1.7%-2.9%, potassium oxide are about 2.5%-3.1%, titanium oxide are about 0.6%-0.7%, sulfur oxide are about 0%-0.044% (Figure 3).

Based on methodologies of the different weathering indexes, the CIA, CIW, PIA, and WIP are 52.9-56.8, 57.4-62.1, 43.4-58.6, and 49.1-57.3 for the medium gray two pyroxenes basaltic andesite, respectively.

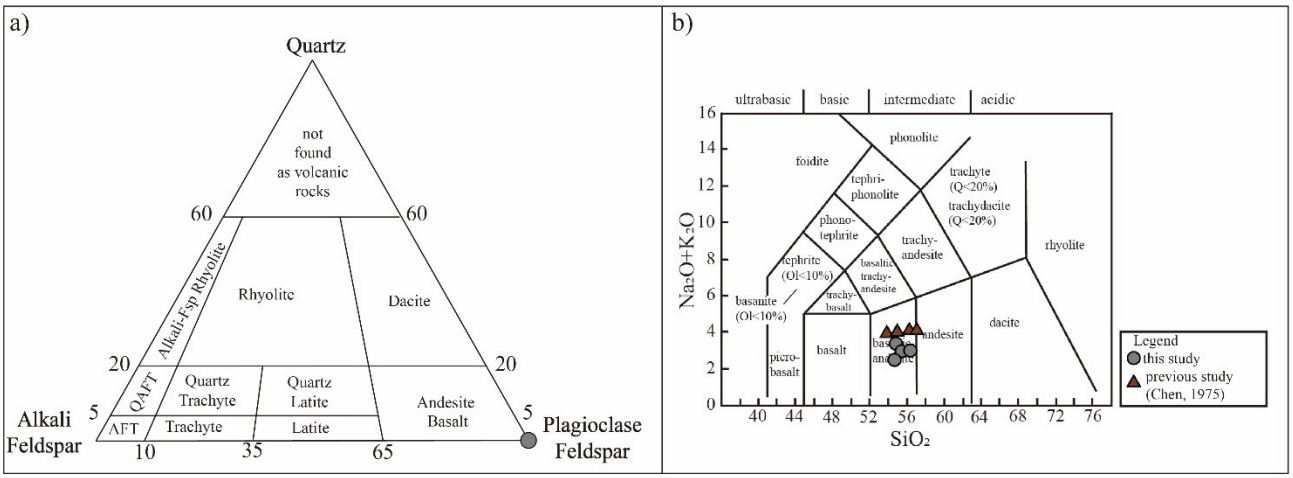

Figure 2: The classification by QAP and TAS diagrams in this study.

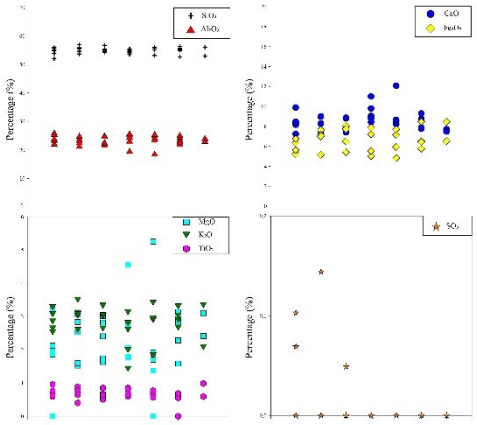

Figure 3: The geochemistry data of medium gray two pyroxenes basaltic andesite.

3.2 The characteristics of weathering and alteration andesite

The core part of ring two pyroxenes basaltic andesite consists of plagioclase (25%-35%), augite (4%-12%), hypersthene (1%-4%), opaque (1%-5%) and groundmass (49%-69%). In the figure 4, the results of geochemistry of core part of ring two pyroxenes basaltic andesite show that silica are about 54.9%-55.7%, aluminum oxide are about 18.1%-24.7%, iron oxide are about 5.0%-10.9%, calcium oxide are about 4.4%-8.9%, magnesium oxide are about 1.9%-3.1%, potassium oxide are about 3.8%-7.3%, titanium oxide are about 0.8%-1.8%, sulfur oxide are about 0%-1.937%.

Based on methodologies of the different weathering indexes, the CIA, CIW, PIA, and WIP are 54.6-57.8, 59.0-69.4, 55.4-61.7, and 51.8-60.0 for the core part of ring two pyroxenes basaltic andesite, respectively.

The ring part of ring two pyroxenes basaltic andesite consists of plagioclase (15%-30%), augite (1%-6%), hypersthene (0.5%-1%), opaque (0.5%-3%) and groundmass (59%-83%). In the figure 4, the results of geochemistry of ring part of ring two pyroxenes basaltic andesite show that silica are about 48.1%-57.6%, aluminum oxide are about 10.4%-23.2%, iron oxide are about 9.7%-18.4%, calcium oxide are about 2.2%-5.2%, magnesium oxide are about 0%-4.7%, potassium oxide are about 3.8%-7.3%, titanium oxide are about 0.8%-1.8%, sulfur oxide are about 0%-1.937%.

Based on methodologies of the different weathering indexes, the CIA, CIW, PIA, and WIP are44.1-69.0, 60.7-78.6, 37.0-75.1, and 49.4-67.2 for the ring part of ring two pyroxenes basaltic andesite, respectively.

The grayish red purple two pyroxenes basaltic andesite consists of plagioclase (15%-25%), augite (4%-13%), hypersthene (1%-3%), opaque (0.5%-3%) and groundmass (55%-73.5%). In the figure 5, the results of geochemistry of grayish red purple two pyroxenes basaltic andesite show that silica are about 50.9%-54.5%, aluminum oxide are about 25.4%-29.2%, iron oxide are about 6.5%-8.7%, calcium oxide are about 5.1%-6.6%, magnesium oxide are about 1.5%-2.6%, potassium oxide are about 0.8%-2.8%, titanium oxide are about 0.7%-3.6%, sulfur oxide are about 0%-0.050%.

Based on methodologies of the different weathering indexes, the CIA, CIW, PIA, and WIP are 63.0-70.9, 68.1-74.9, 65.3-72.6, and 33.2-47.6 for the grayish red purple two pyroxenes basaltic andesite, respectively.

The brown two pyroxenes basaltic andesite consists of plagioclase (25%-30%), augite (9%-16%), hypersthene (1%-4%), opaque (1.5%-3%) and groundmass (53.5%-57%). In the figure 6, the results of geochemistry of brown two pyroxenes basaltic andesite show that silica are about 47.5%-56.2%, aluminum oxide are about 25.9%-32.8%, iron oxide are about 5.5%-9.3%, calcium oxide are about 5.3%-9.3%, magnesium oxide are about 2.2%-2.7%, potassium oxide are about 0.7%-2.4%, titanium oxide are about 0.7%-0.9%, sulfur oxide are about 0.025%-0.105%.

Based on methodologies of the different weathering indexes, the CIA, CIW, PIA, and WIP are 64.7-76.0, 69.3-77.4, 66.9-77.0, and 27.0-42.9 for the brown two pyroxenes basaltic andesite, respectively.

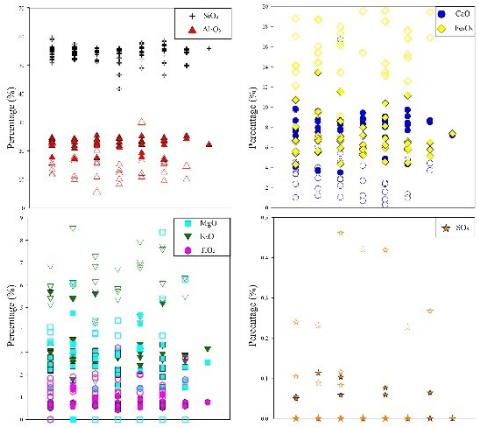

Figure 4: The geochemistry data of two pyroxenes basaltic andesite with ring (solid and hollow symbols display core and ring parts of ring andesite, respectively).

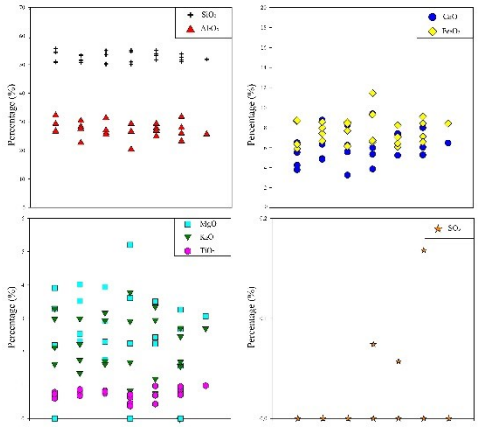

Figure 5: The geochemistry data of grayish red purple two pyroxenes basaltic andesite.

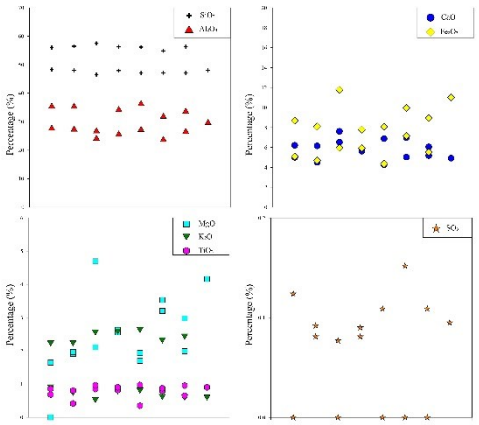

Figure 6: The geochemistry data of brown two pyroxenes basaltic andesite.

3.3 The conceptual model of two pyroxenes basaltic andesite under weathering and alteration

The figure 7 presents the conceptual model of two pyroxenes basaltic andesite under weathering and hydrothermal alteration. According to the results of petrography, geochemistry, mineral assemblages, and weathering index, the medium gray two pyroxenes basaltic andesite is fresh sample, the ring sample belongs to slightly weathered, grayish red purple andesite is moderately weathered, and brown andesite has highly weathered (Figure 8 and Figure 9).

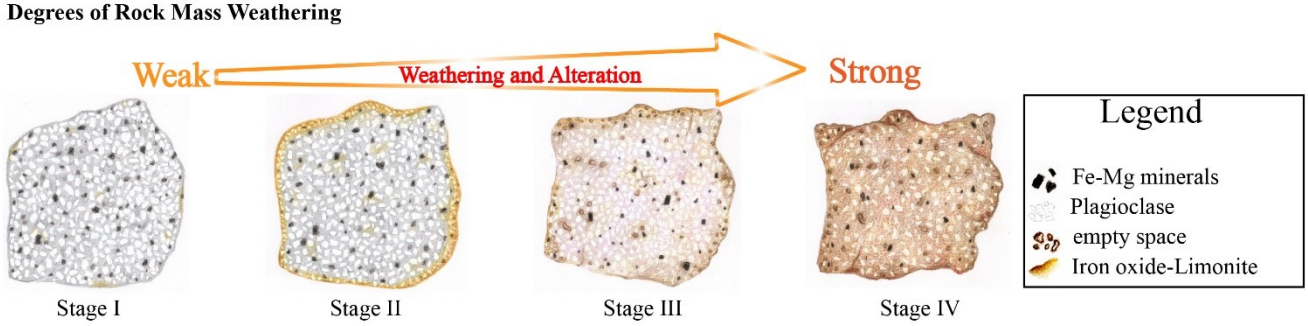

Figure 7: Degrees of rock mass weathering in the Shibafen lava flow of Tatun Volcano Group, Taiwan.

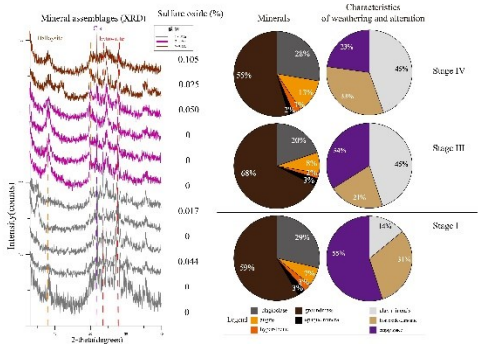

Figure 8: In the Stage I, III and IV, the mineral assemblages by X-ray diffraction, sulfur oxides, mineral percentages and characteristics of weathering and hydrothermal alteration by microscope.

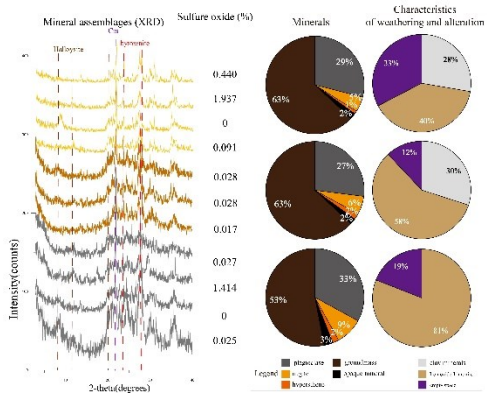

Figure 9: In the Stage II, the mineral assemblages by X-ray diffraction, sulfur oxides, mineral percentages and characteristics of weathering and hydrothermal alteration by microscope.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Three of these findings are worth summarizing:

(1) In this study, the fresh andesite belongs to two pyroxenes basaltic andesite by QAP and TAS diagram.

(2) According to the results of petrography, geochemistry, mineral assemblages, and weathering index, the two pyroxenes basaltic andesite of Shibafen lava flow can be classified to four stages by degree of rock mass weathering. Stage I is medium gray two pyroxenes basaltic andesite. Stage II belongs to slightly weathered degree that is ring sample. Stage III is grayish red purple andesite that belongs to moderately weathered degree. Stage IV is brown andesite that has highly weathered degree.

(3) When the ring sample has more thick ring, it contents higher sulfur dioxide that the hydrothermal alteration has more influence than weathering.

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