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Mineral Chemistry and Petrologic Observations from IODP Expedition 391 Lavas Suggest a Complex Magmatic Plumbing System

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Abstract Text:

Initial chemical and textural observations of basaltic lavas collected during International Oceanic Discovery Program (IODP) Expedition 391 indicate the crystal cargo represents a mixture of primary phenocrysts from evolved magmas and cumulates that formed in more primitive melts. Basalts from the Walvis Ridge (sites U1575, U1576, and U1577) and Guyot province (site U1578) exhibit textural or mineralogical similarities. Basalts primarily contain phenocrysts of augite, bytownite, and rare Fo₇₇₋₅₅ olivine with groundmass clinopyroxene, labradorite to anorthoclase feldspar, titanomagnetite, ilmenite, and Fo₃₈₋₁₆ olivine. Glomerocrysts containing bytownite and augite are present in all observed lavas and are 2-9 mm in size. Augite phenocrysts often exhibit oscillatory zoning with correlated Cr- and Mg-enrichments that indicate magma recharge occurred. Augite phenocryst cores display sector zoning (most prominently in site U1578) in Si, Mg, Cr, Ca, Al, and Ti elemental maps, suggesting the clinopyroxenes experienced a low degree of undercooling during or prior to magma ascent (Figure 1). Augite rims exhibit oscillatory zoning with elevated Mg concentrations around the sector zoned core, consistent with a change in host melt chemistry upon injection into a secondary chamber or a change in undercooling conditions. Large (0.5-1.5 mm) forsteritic olivine crystals are rare and exhibit normal zoning with Fo₉₁₋₈₁ cores and Fo₇₇₋₇₀

rims. Given the size and core composition of these olivine crystals, we infer they represent cumulates from magma chambers that were entrained in the melts prior to eruption, rather than being direct crystallization products of the host melts. Suspected xenoliths in section U1578A-52R4 are 10-15 mm in size and contain Fo 82-81 olivine, Mg-rich (Mg# 86-85) augite, and An85-83 plagioclase. Olivine and augite crystals within these xenoliths have some of the highest Cr_2O_3 and NiO concentrations measured in the Expedition 391 samples, suggesting they represent magma chamber cumulates that formed from primitive melts. Collectively, the observations suggest that Expedition 391 basalts passed through a magma chamber system that experienced frequent magma recharge events resulting in entrainment of primitive cumulates within evolved melts, producing complex mineral zoning patterns.

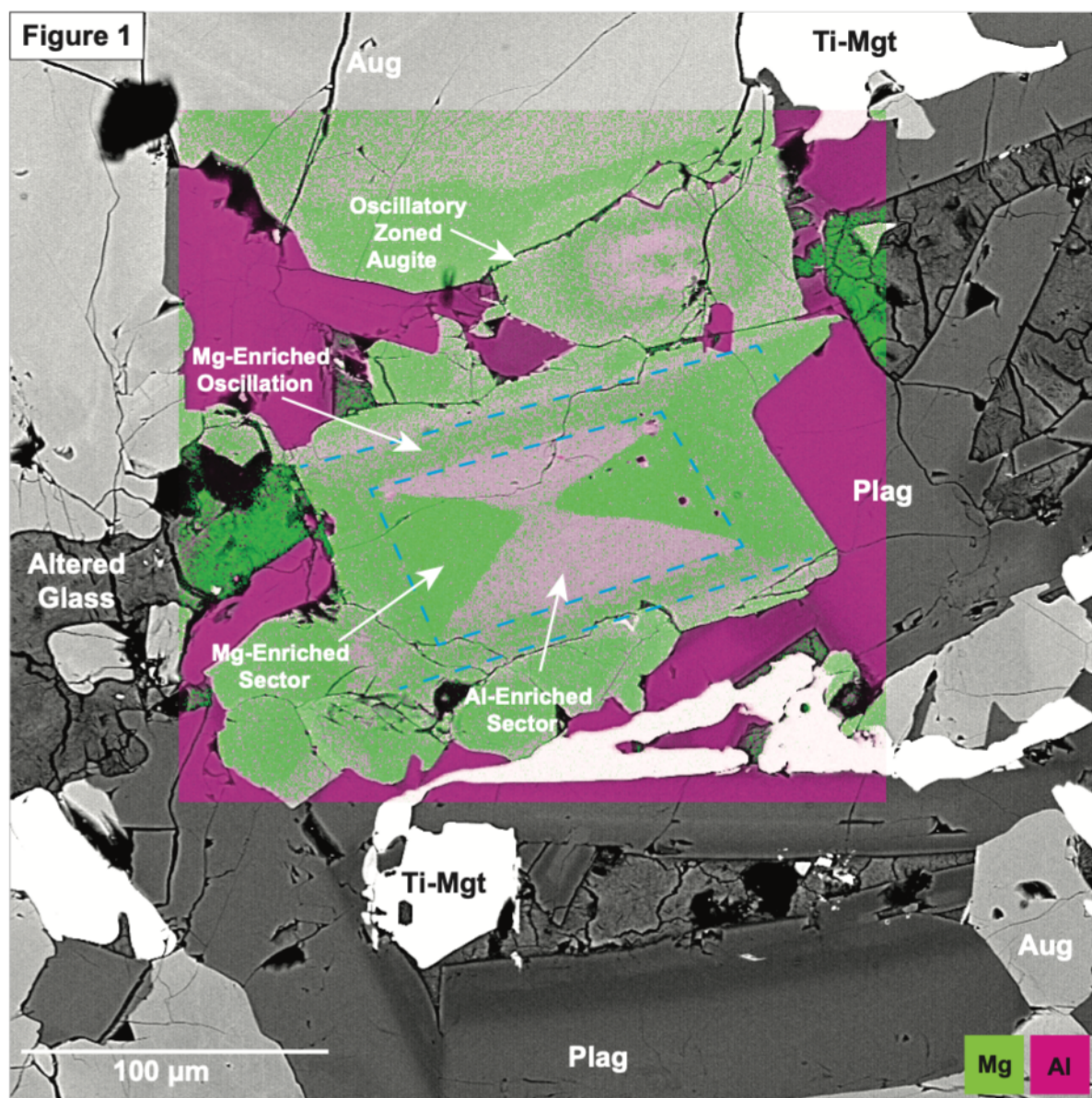


Figure 1: Backscatter electron image of sample 78A-29R2-9/11 with EDS map superimposed on a region of interest, showing the Mg-Al concentrations in different sectors of the clinopyroxene. ('Aug' is augite, 'Plag' is plagioclase, 'Ti-Mgt' is titanium magnetite, 'Mg' is magnesium, and 'Al' is aluminum).

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