

1 **Revision 2**

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3 **Potassium isotope fractionation during silicate-carbonatite melt immiscibility and**
4 **phlogopite fractional crystallization**

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ABSTRACT

21 Potassium (K) isotopes have been used as a tracer of K recycling in the Earth, but K isotope
22 fractionation during magma evolution is poorly constrained. Here, we present K isotope data for
23 a magmatic suite of alkaline silicate-carbonatite affinity, which were formed from melt
24 immiscibility and subsequent phlogopite fractionation. The K isotopic ranges of different rock
25 types are in the following order: alkaline silicate lavas ($\delta^{41}\text{K} = -0.424\text{‰}$ to 0.090‰) >
26 carbonatitic silicate lavas ($\delta^{41}\text{K} = -0.640\text{‰}$ to -0.035‰) > carbonatites ($\delta^{41}\text{K} = -0.858\text{‰}$ and -
27 0.258‰). Phlogopite phenocrysts in the silicate lavas are isotopically lighter ($\delta^{41}\text{K} = -0.628\text{‰}$ to
28 -0.534‰) than the lavas in which they occur ($\Delta^{41}\text{K}_{\text{Phlogopite-whole rock}} = -0.502\text{‰}$ to -0.109‰).
29 Correlations between $\delta^{41}\text{K}$ values and chemical proxies of melt immiscibility and phlogopite
30 fractionation indicate that K isotopes are significantly fractionated by both processes at a $\sim 0.6\text{‰}$
31 magnitude. Such K isotope variation overlaps the range of $\delta^{41}\text{K}$ in arc lavas. Compilations of
32 literature data further confirm the critical roles of melt immiscibility and phlogopite fractionation
33 in K isotope variations of high-K lavas ($\text{K}_2\text{O} > 1 \text{ wt.}\%$) from post-collision orogenic and intra-
34 continental settings. In comparison, arc lavas are depleted in K_2O (mostly $< 1 \text{ wt.}\%$) and lack
35 evidence of significant phlogopite fractionation. The K isotope variations of arc lavas are mainly
36 controlled by their mantle sources, which were metasomatized by melt or fluid released from the
37 subduction slab. Therefore, K recycling and K isotope variation are controlled by distinct
38 mechanisms in various tectonic settings.

39 **Keywords:** K isotopes; Silicate rock; Carbonatite; Melt immiscibility; Phlogopite; Fractional
40 crystallization

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INTRODUCTION

43 Potassium (K) displays a large contrast between Earth's crust and mantle in concentration
44 due to its high incompatibility during crust-mantle differentiation ([Mittlefehldt, 1998](#);
45 [Lyubetskaya and Korenaga, 2007](#); [Palme and O'Neill, 2007](#)) and is thus a powerful tool to trace
46 crustal recycling and crust-mantle interaction. It is also a fluid-mobile element and its heavy
47 isotopes are in most cases preferentially partitioned into fluids ([Mittlefehldt, 1998](#); [Li et al., 2017](#);
48 [Tuller-Ross et al., 2019](#); [Hu et al., 2020](#); [Wang et al., 2021a](#)). Dehydration of the subducting slab
49 releases isotopically heavy melts/fluids to elevate $\delta^{41}\text{K}$ shown by arc lavas ([Liu et al., 2020](#); [Hu](#)
50 [et al., 2021a](#); [Parendo et al., 2022](#)). It has been proposed that further melting of dehydrated slabs
51 is taken to generate magmas showing light K isotopic compositions in tectonic settings far away
52 from subduction trench and arc ([Parendo et al., 2022](#)). However, recent studies have revealed
53 that mantle-derived potassic-ultrapotassic rocks in post-collisional and intra-continental
54 environments mostly do not show light K isotope composition compared with arc lavas ([Sun et](#)
55 [al., 2020](#); [Wang et al., 2021b](#); [Hu et al., 2021a](#); [Liu et al., 2021](#); [Parendo et al., 2022](#)). While
56 heavy K isotopic compositions are generally ascribed to hydrous fluids from subducted slabs, the
57 probable isotope fractionation during magma upward ascent is widely assumed to be negligible

58 (e.g., [Tuller-Ross et al., 2019](#); [Parendo et al., 2022](#)). However, mantle-derived potassic-
59 ultrapotassic rocks commonly undergo fractional crystallization of K-rich minerals such as
60 phlogopite and leucite, which could result in compositionally different isotopic trends compared
61 to other systems dominated by K-poor minerals. Thus, clarifying K isotope fractionation during
62 magma differentiation is essential in using K and its isotopes as a robust geochemical tracer.

63 Primary carbonatite melts are thought to be alkaline in composition ([Chen et al., 2013](#)), but
64 the partitioning and evolution of alkali elements in those melts might be complex due to
65 combined effects of melt immiscibility and fractional crystallization. Mantle-derived alkaline
66 silicate lavas are also commonly rich in K and in some cases associated with carbonatites
67 ([Stoppa and Schiazza, 2013](#)). Although many alkaline silicate rock and carbonatite occurrences
68 on the Earth formed from melt immiscibility, some localities lack both rock types at the current
69 level of exposure. In addition, phlogopite, in which K is an important major element, is a
70 common mineral phase in both alkaline silicate rocks and carbonatites. The potential effects of
71 melt immiscibility and phlogopite fractionation on K isotope fractionation have not been widely
72 addressed in earlier studies. The focus of this study is to explore such effects using K isotope
73 compositions of a suite of Cenozoic alkaline silicate rocks and carbonatites in Western Qinling,
74 China.

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GEOLOGY BACKGROUND AND SAMPLES

77 Cenozoic potassic-ultrapotassic volcanism is a widespread phenomenon in the Tibetan
78 Plateau and its surroundings (Ding et al., 2003). Western Qinling, located in northeastern Tibetan
79 Plateau, is a unique location where tens of potassic volcanic cones are distributed (Fig. 1; Yu et
80 al., 2005). These volcanic cones are composed of alkaline silicate lavas (also named kamafugite
81 in some literature) and associated coeval carbonatites. This silicate lava-carbonatite association is
82 one of the best-known melt immiscibility examples in the world (Stoppa and Schiazza, 2013).
83 They are believed as melting products of metasomatized mantle sources as evidenced by enriched
84 radiogenic isotopic features (Yu et al., 2004). The well-exposed, accessible outcrops in Western
85 Qinling are mainly distributed in Fenshuiling, Baiguan and Haoti villages (Fig. 1). The
86 carbonatite flow deposits alternate with silicate lavas (Fig. 2a) and mixed silicate lava lapilli and
87 bombs (Fig. 1b, c). The carbonatites have a fine-grained calcite matrix that contains
88 clinopyroxene, phlogopite, and apatite (Stoppa and Schiazza, 2013). The surface-exposed
89 carbonatites are mostly weathered and altered. Some outcrops are dominated by massive silicate
90 lavas. The silicate lavas contain carbonatite nodules in variable sizes (Fig. 1d), and calcite and
91 apatite are the most common Ca-rich phases (Fig. 1e), confirming that the samples are essentially
92 carbonatitic silicate lavas. Some outcrops are relatively pure silicate lavas with mantle peridotite
93 xenoliths (Su et al., 2010). According to field occurrences and mineral assemblages, samples
94 were classified into three groups, namely, pure silicate lava, carbonatite, and carbonatitic silicate
95 lava. All groups show seriate phenocrysts/microcrystals of olivine, phlogopite and clinopyroxene

96 setting in a matrix of melilite and clinopyroxene laths with intergranular calcite,
97 nepheline/kaliophilite, leucite, phlogopite, perovskite, apatite and titanomagnetite (Yu et al.,
98 2004). The main phenocryst host of K is phlogopite in different types of rocks (Fig. 1f) with
99 decreasing modal abundance from pure silicate lava through carbonatitic silicate lava to
100 carbonatite, while nepheline and leucite microcrystals likely host most K in matrix of the rocks.

101 In this study, 23 samples were investigated for whole-rock major element analysis, and 19 of
102 them were selected for K isotope analysis using Nu Sapphire collision-cell multi-collector
103 inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry. Since the carbonatites have been subject to
104 weathering and erosion, only two pristine samples studied here were dug from depth. In addition,
105 phlogopite phenocrysts from three samples were separated for major element and K isotope
106 analyses.

107

108 ANALYTICAL METHODS

109 **Whole rock and phlogopite major element analyses**

110 Whole-rock major elements were determined using a Shimadzu X-ray fluorescence
111 spectrometer (XRF-1500) on fused glass beads at the Institute of Geology and Geophysics,
112 Chinese Academy of Sciences (IGGCAS), Beijing, China. Analytical uncertainties were 1-3 %
113 for elements present in concentrations >1 wt.% and about 10 wt.% for elements present in
114 concentrations <1.0 wt.%. Measurement procedures are described in detail by Chu et al. (2009).

115 Major element compositions of phlogopite were measured using JEOL JXA8100 electron
116 probe microanalyzer at IGGCAS. The analytical conditions were accelerating voltage of 15 kV,
117 10 nA beam current, 5 μm beam spot and 10-30 s counting time on peak. The precisions of all
118 analyzed elements were better than 1.5% (1 sigma). Natural jadeite [$\text{NaAlSi}_2\text{O}_6$] for Na, Al and
119 Si, rhodonite [MnSiO_3] for Mn, sanidine [KAlSi_3O_8] for K, almandine garnet [$\text{Fe}_3\text{Al}_2\text{Si}_3\text{O}_{12}$] for
120 Fe, Cr-diopside [(Mg, Cr) CaSi_2O_6] for Ca, olivine [(Mg, Fe) $_2\text{SiO}_4$] for Mg, synthetic rutile for
121 Ti, Cr_2O_3 for Cr, and Ni_2Si for Ni were used for standard calibration. A program based on the
122 ZAF procedure was used for matrix corrections. The whole-rock and phlogopite elemental
123 compositions are shown in [Tables 1 and 2](#), respectively.

124 **K isotope analysis**

125 Potassium isotopic analyses were conducted at Metallogenic Elements and Isotopes Lab at
126 IGGCAS, following the protocol described in [Li et al. \(2022, 2023\)](#). Approximately 5-20 mg of
127 sample powders were weighed and digested using mixture of concentrated HNO_3 and HF. The
128 digested sample solutions were evaporated to dryness and then treated sequentially with aqua
129 regia and 6 mol L^{-1} HNO_3 . After evaporating the solutions, the final residues were fully
130 dissolved in 0.5 mol L^{-1} HNO_3 twice prior to column separation. The sample solution was loaded
131 onto pre-conditioned 2 mL Bio-Rad AG50W-X8 (200-400 mesh) resin and then eluted with a 15
132 mL of 0.5 mol L^{-1} HNO_3 to remove the matrix elements. The same purification process was
133 repeated twice for silicate lavas and four times for carbonatites to ensure complete matrix

134 removal. The final K solution was redissolved with 2 % HNO₃ ready for measurement. The total
135 procedure blank for K isotope analyses is < 30 ng K, which is negligible compared with tens of
136 µg of K in the solution from sample chemical purification.

137 Potassium isotopic measurements were performed on the Nu Sapphire CC-MC-ICP-MS
138 (Nu Instruments, Wrexham, UK) using the low-energy path. The hexapole collision cell utilizes
139 He and H₂ gas to greatly reduce various Ar-based polyatomic species to very low levels, hence K
140 isotopic ratios can be measured in the low-resolution mode. An auto-sampler SC-2DX
141 (Elemental Scientific, USA) was connected to an Apex Omega desolvation nebulizer (Elemental
142 Scientific, U.S.A.) system for sample introduction. One Faraday cup is connected to a pre-
143 amplifier fitted with a 10¹⁰ Ω resistor for collection of ³⁹K⁺ ion beam, while the other two
144 Faraday cups using 10¹¹ Ω resistors collect ⁴¹K⁺ and mass 40 beams, respectively. Potassium
145 isotopic data are reported in δ notation relative to SRM 3141a, using the sample-standard
146 bracketing technique for instrumental mass fractionation correction (Hu et al., 2018):

$$\delta^{41}\text{K} (\text{‰}) = \left[\frac{({}^{41}\text{K}/{}^{39}\text{K})_{\text{sample}}}{({}^{41}\text{K}/{}^{39}\text{K})_{\text{standard}}} - 1 \right] \times 1000$$

147 The K concentration of each sample and standard was matched to within 5%. Each analysis
148 consisted of 1 block of 50 cycles with 4 s integrations. Five to seven repeated analyses were
149 conducted on each sample solution. The K isotope results of whole rocks and phlogopite are
150 shown in Table 3. Four geostandards analyzed during the course of this study yield values in

151 good agreement with literature (Xu et al., 2019; Li et al., 2020, 2022; Chen et al., 2022, Moynier
152 et al., 2022). Replicated analyses of nine samples are consistent within analytical uncertainty.
153 The long-term (six months) precision, based on multiple measurements of BCR-2 geostandard, is
154 ~0.04‰ (2SD; Li et al., 2022).

155

156

RESULTS

157 The pure silicate lava samples have SiO₂ contents of 39.9-42.1 wt.%, CaO of 12.1-12.8
158 wt.%, TiO₂ of 2.93-3.76 wt.%, Na₂O+K₂O of 5.15-6.70 wt.%, and K₂O of 1.35-3.14 wt.% with
159 K₂O/Na₂O ratios of 0.36-0.88 (Table 1). The low LOI values (loss of ignition, 0.42-1.74 wt.%),
160 together with pristine mineral assemblages, indicate that these samples are free of alteration.
161 Their δ⁴¹K values range from -0.424‰ to 0.090‰ (Table 3). The two carbonatite samples are
162 significantly rich in CaO and depleted in SiO₂, TiO₂ and alkali components in contrast to silicate
163 lavas (Fig. 3a-c). They have δ⁴¹K values of -0.858‰ and -0.258‰, respectively. The carbonatitic
164 silicate lavas have intermediate elemental compositions between the silicate lavas and the
165 carbonatites (Fig. 3a-c) and have δ⁴¹K values ranging from -0.640‰ to -0.035‰ (Table 3). Their
166 relatively higher LOI (1.10-5.41 wt.%; Table 1) are related to carbonatitic components and
167 phlogopite contents. Phlogopite phenocrysts in the silicate lavas and carbonatitic silicate lavas are
168 rich in TiO₂ (3.60-12.0 wt.%) and variable in K₂O contents of 7.68-10.2 wt.% (Table 2; Yu,
169 1994). They have low K isotope ratios (δ⁴¹K = -0.628‰ to -0.534‰) relative to the whole rocks.

170

171

DISCUSSION

172 **Melt immiscibility and phlogopite fractionation in genesis of the Western Qinling lavas**

173 Coeval silicate and carbonatite lavas in Western Qinling show close spatial affinity because

174 they are interlayered (Fig. 2a), and contain relics of their counterparts at various scales of field

175 outcrop, hand specimen, and micro-texture (Fig. 2b-e). The petrological characteristics of both

176 are compatible with geochemical compositions. The silicate lavas free of carbonatitic

177 components have notably higher SiO₂ contents and lower CaO than the carbonatites, while the

178 carbonatitic silicate lavas with observed carbonatitic components have intermediate oxide

179 contents between the silicate lavas and the carbonatites (Fig. 3a). These features are comparable

180 to typical silicate-carbonatite associations worldwide (e.g., Woolley and Kjarsgaard, 2008;

181 Stoppa and Schiazza, 2013), suggesting the studied lava samples here had experienced silicate-

182 carbonatite melt immiscibility but that the two immiscible melts were not completely separated.

183 Compositional differences of major elements such as SiO₂ and CaO between the rocks (Fig. 3a)

184 confirm that the silicate lavas and the two carbonatite samples could represent two immiscible

185 melt end-members, respectively, while the carbonatitic silicate samples are products of

186 incompletely-separated melts. Lower K₂O and Na₂O+K₂O contents and higher K₂O/Na₂O ratios

187 in the carbonatites than those in the silicate lavas (Fig. 3b, c) together with good correlation

188 between TiO₂ and K₂O (Fig. 3d) demonstrate that Ti and alkali components with relatively less K

189 than Na were preferentially partitioned into silicate melts. This is consistent with some
190 experimental observations (Martin et al., 2013).

191 Potassium behaves incompatible during mafic magma differentiation. Its contents in evolved
192 magmas are generally elevated by fractional crystallization of K-free or -poor phases (e.g.,
193 olivine, clinopyroxene and spinel), generating positive correlations with SiO₂ content. However,
194 fractional crystallization of K-rich phases (e.g., phlogopite) could deplete the residual liquid in
195 K₂O, creating a negative correlation with SiO₂ as observed in Fig. 3c. The presence of phlogopite
196 phenocrysts (Fig. 1f) and in places megacrysts (Yu et al., 2004) in all the studied rocks, together
197 with their chemical variations (Fig. 3b, c), reveal that the investigated rocks underwent fractional
198 crystallization of Ti-rich phlogopite. The composition of phlogopite resulted in significant
199 decrease of K₂O and TiO₂ contents and K₂O/Na₂O ratios, which are distinctive from the
200 compositional changes resulted from melt immiscibility (Fig. 3). Hence, the different
201 evolutionary trends among the three melt types outlined in Fig. 3 are not only dependent on the
202 degree of phlogopite fractionation but also their K₂O contents after melt immiscibility.

203 **K isotope fractionation during melt immiscibility and phlogopite fractionation**

204 Previous petrological and geochemical studies, including Sr-Nd-Pb-Hf isotopes, have
205 suggested that the parental magmas of the lavas were derived from a common mantle source via
206 low degree partial melting (Yu et al., 2004; Dai et al., 2017) and experienced crustal-level melt
207 immiscibility (Stoppa and Schiazza, 2013). The silicate lavas in this study are suitable to evaluate

208 K isotope fractionation during magma evolution because they contain significant phlogopite and
209 have the highest contents and largest variations of K₂O (Figs. 2f, 3c). The phlogopite phenocrysts
210 have lighter K isotopic compositions than the silicate host rocks (Table 3), and their whole-rock
211 δ⁴¹K values are well correlated with chemical indicators (e.g., K₂O/Na₂O, Na₂O+K₂O and TiO₂)
212 of phlogopite fractional crystallization. This suggests that phlogopite prefers to incorporate light
213 K isotopes from melt during crystallization, and thus phlogopite fractional crystallization resulted
214 in heavy K isotope enrichment in evolved melts with 0.6‰ magnitude fractionation in δ⁴¹K.
215 Similar variation trends of δ⁴¹K values are also observed in individual carbonatites and
216 carbonatitic silicate lavas (Fig. 4).

217 To further verify this inference, we conducted quantitative modeling based on the Rayleigh
218 fractionation and mixing modeling for the silicate lavas (Fig. 5a). The equation that governs
219 isotopic fractionation in a Rayleigh distillation process is:

$$220 \quad \delta^{41}\text{K}_{\text{melt}} = (\delta^{41}\text{K}_0 + 1000) f^{(\alpha-1)} - 1000$$

221 where the δ⁴¹K₀ is the initial K isotope of melts, and is set as -0.43‰, which is the mean
222 δ⁴¹K value of the bulk silicate earth (Tuller-Ross et al., 2019). The initial K₂O contents of melts
223 is set as 2.0 wt.%. The fraction of K₂O remaining in the melt and other phases is $f = (F \times C_{\text{melt}})$
224 $/C_0$, where C_{melt} and C_0 represent the K₂O concentration in the remaining melts with other phases
225 and the initial melts, and the F is the fraction of melts remaining. The fractionation factor α is
226 calculated by:

227
$$\Delta^{41}\text{K}_{\text{phl-melt}} = \delta^{41}\text{K}_{\text{phl}} - \delta^{41}\text{K}_{\text{melt}} \approx 10^3 \ln \alpha_{\text{phl-melt}}$$

228 Where the average phl-melt fractionation factors ($\Delta^{41}\text{K}_{\text{phl-melt}} = \delta^{41}\text{K}_{\text{phl}} - \delta^{41}\text{K}_{\text{melt}}$) is -0.146‰
229 in our model, and is calculated by average $\delta^{41}\text{K}$ values of phlogopite (-0.576‰) and basalts (-
230 0.430‰).

231 In mixing model, the equation that governs mixing of 2 end-members is:

232
$$C_A = (C_A)_{\text{melt},0} \times F_{\text{melt},0} + (C_A)_{\text{phl}} \times F_{\text{phl}}$$

233 Where C_A is the fraction of K_2O from the end member 1, end member 2, and the mixing
234 phase, and the F is the fraction in each member. The lines in Fig. 5a represent calculated mixing
235 lines between the residual melt and phlogopite. Phlogopite from the eruption samples have the
236 K_2O contents from 7.79 to 9.35 wt.%, and the average composition of $\text{K}_2\text{O} = 8.72$ wt.% has been
237 used as an end-member in the mixing calculation. The K isotope composition of unmodified lava
238 can be calculated by:

239
$$\delta^{41}\text{K}_{\text{lava}} = \delta^{41}\text{K}_{\text{residual melts},0} \times (C)_{\text{residual melts},0} \times F_{\text{residual melts},0} + \delta^{41}\text{K}_{\text{Phl},0} \times (C)_{\text{Phl},0} \times F_{\text{Phl},0}$$

240 where the $\delta^{41}\text{K}_{\text{residual melt},0}$ and $\delta^{41}\text{K}_{\text{Phl}}$ could identify with the $\delta^{41}\text{K}_0$ and $\delta^{41}\text{K}_{\text{lava}}$ in the model
241 for Rayleigh distillation.

242 The modelling results demonstrate that the obtained K isotopic compositions of the silicate
243 lavas are not a mixture between phlogopite and evolved melts but resulted from phlogopite
244 fractionation. The slightly high K_2O contents of the samples than the modeling results (Fig. 5a)
245 are likely due to K elevation by crystallization of K-free mineral (such as olivine and

246 clinopyroxene).

247 Assuming that the silicate lava and the carbonatite samples with the lowest $\delta^{41}\text{K}$ values (-
248 0.424‰ and -0.858‰, respectively) represent melts with the least degree of phlogopite fractional
249 crystallization, K isotopes could be fractionated at a magnitude of 0.43‰ during melt
250 immiscibility. Particularly for silicate melts, both melt immiscibility and phlogopite fractional
251 crystallization significantly increase their $\delta^{41}\text{K}$ values up to 1‰. Since the carbonatites are
252 depleted in K relative to the silicate lavas, crystallization of minor phlogopite would produce
253 larger fractionations as indicated by the K isotope compositions of the two samples (Fig. 4). The
254 differences in K_2O and TiO_2 contents between the two carbonatite samples may indicate variable
255 degrees of phlogopite fractional crystallization, thus resulting in a large range in K isotopic
256 composition. The isotopic differences between phlogopite and host rocks imply that heavy K
257 isotopes for K mass balance are probably hosted in matrix nepheline because nepheline is
258 predicted to have higher $10^3\ln\beta$ than phlogopite (Li et al., 2019). This significant K isotope
259 variation during magma differentiation overlaps the K isotope ranges of mantle-derived magmas
260 reported so far (Tuller-Ross et al., 2019; Sun et al., 2020; Hu et al., 2021b; Ionov and Wang,
261 2021; Wang et al., 2021b; Parendo et al., 2022) (Fig. 5b, c). Therefore, the possible effects of
262 melt immiscibility and phlogopite fractional crystallization should be considered prior to using K
263 isotopes to trace magma sources.

264 In addition to phlogopite, leucite is also a common K-rich phase in mantle-derived potassic

265 volcanic rocks (Bergman, 1987). and leucite + phlogopite may coexist in lamproites such as those
266 from the Alpine-Himalayan orogenic belt (Wang et al., 2021b). These lamproite samples fall
267 along the trend line of phlogopite fractional crystallization (Wang et al., 2021b; Fig. 5b, c),
268 implying that their K isotope variations are probably partially addressed by phlogopite
269 crystallization in addition to source control as discussed by Wang et al. (2021b). The data
270 presented in this study show mixed features of both processes. Moreover, alkali lavas elsewhere
271 containing leucite with rare phlogopite are also generally following the trend of phlogopite
272 fractional crystallization (Sun et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021b; Fig. 5b, c). Although it has not yet
273 (to our knowledge) been measured for K isotopes, leucite is predicted to have an even stronger
274 preference for isotopically light K than phlogopite (Li et al., 2019). This may indicate that
275 leucite plays a similar role to phlogopite in K isotope fractionation in alkali igneous systems.

276

277

IMPLICATIONS

278 Unlike the alkali volcanic rocks in orogenic or intra-continental settings, typical arc lavas,
279 mostly sub-alkaline in nature, are relatively poor in K (mostly $K_2O < 1.5$ wt.%) and rich in Na
280 with low K_2O/Na_2O ratio (< 1) (Fig. 5b, c). Arc lavas tend to crystallize hornblende and/or
281 clinopyroxene, rather than phlogopite, to form hornblendite and/or clinopyroxenite cumulates in
282 arc crust (DeBari and Coleman, 1989; Cui et al., 2020). Crystallization of these K-poor minerals,
283 instead of K-rich phases, increases K_2O contents and thus K_2O/Na_2O ratios in the evolved melts

284 and would not cause significant effect on K isotope ratios. Therefore, K isotope compositions of
285 arc lavas should reflect those of the mantle sources from which the lavas derived (Hu et al.,
286 2021b; Ionov and Wang, 2021; Parendo et al., 2022). Hydrous fluids released from subducting
287 slabs incorporate more heavy K isotopes into metasomatized mantle wedge (Liu et al., 2020,
288 2021; Sun et al., 2020; Ionov and Wang, 2021; Wang et al., 2021b), but at initial stages only
289 minor amount of K is released because of the low K content in most arc lavas. The subducting
290 slab and thus slab melt would become relatively K-rich and isotopically light, resulting in
291 progressively more K-rich and isotopically light metasomatized mantle with distance away from
292 the subduction trench (Fig. 6). This mechanism is consistent with K isotope variations in typical
293 arc lavas with higher $\delta^{41}\text{K}$ values in frontal arc than that in rear arc (Parendo et al., 2022). Intra-
294 continental alkaline to sub-alkaline silicate lavas, if derived from stagnated slab melt-
295 metasomatized mantle via low-degree partial melting, should be rich in K and have very light K
296 isotopic composition (Wang et al., 2021b; Sun et al., 2020). This contrasts with the low K
297 content and generally heavier K isotope composition of ocean island basalts (Tuller-Ross et al.,
298 2019) and arc lavas (Hu et al., 2021; Parendo et al., 2022), which are primarily controlled by
299 source compositions. As a consequence, K recycling and its isotopic variation are controlled by
300 distinct mechanisms in various tectonic settings.

301

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307

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417

418 **Figures**

419 Fig. 1 (a) Distribution of silicate lavas and carbonatites in Western Qinling, China.

420

421 Fig. 2 (a-c) Slices of silicate lavas occurring as interlayer, nodule and block in carbonatite bodies.

422 (d) Carbonatite components occurring as nodules of variable sizes in carbonatitic silicate lavas. (f)

423 Back-scattered electron image showing carbonatite components occurring as calcite (Cal) and

424 apatite (Apat) together with olivine (Ol) and clinopyroxene (Cpx) phenocrysts in silicate lavas.

425 (g) Occurrence of phlogopite (Phl) phenocryst in silicate lavas.

426

427 Fig. 3 Correlation diagrams of (a) SiO_2 vs. CaO, (b) $\text{Na}_2\text{O}+\text{K}_2\text{O}$ vs. $\text{K}_2\text{O}/\text{Na}_2\text{O}$, (c) SiO_2 vs. K_2O

428 and (d) K_2O vs. TiO_2 indicate incomplete separation between silicate and carbonatite melts in

429 carbonatitic silicate lava samples relative to pure silicate and carbonatite samples, and significant

430 phlogopite (Phl) fractionation in the samples. Phlogopite phenocryst data are available in [Table 2](#)

431 and [Yu \(1994\)](#).

432

433 Fig. 4 Correlation diagrams of (a) $\text{Na}_2\text{O}+\text{K}_2\text{O}$, (b) $\text{K}_2\text{O}/\text{Na}_2\text{O}$, and (c) TiO_2 vs. $\delta^{41}\text{K}$ indicate

434 significant fractionation of K isotopes during melt immiscibility and phlogopite fractionation.

435 Legends same as Fig. 2.

436

437 Fig. 5 (a) Modeling of K isotopic variations during magmatic differentiation in silicate lavas.
438 Solid lines represent calculated K isotopic compositions of residual melts during phlogopite
439 fractional crystallization by assuming a Rayleigh distillation process. Dashed black lines
440 represent calculated mixing lines between the residual melt and phlogopite phenocrysts. The
441 $\delta^{41}\text{K}$ values of primary melt and phlogopite are assumed as -0.430‰ (Wang and Jacobsen, 2016;
442 Hu et al., 2018; Morgan et al., 2018; Chen et al., 2019; Xu et al., 2019; Sun et al., 2020) and -
443 0.576‰ (Table 3; average K isotopic compositions of phlogopite separates), with phlogopite-
444 melt fractionation factors ($\Delta\delta^{41}\text{K}_{\text{phlogopite-melt}} = \delta^{41}\text{K}_{\text{phlogopite}} - \delta^{41}\text{K}_{\text{melt}}$) of -0.146‰ . The K_2O
445 contents of primary melt are assumed as 2 wt.% following the average K_2O contents of Northeast
446 China lavas (Sun et al., 2020), and the colored stars represent the increased 33%, 50% and 60%
447 K_2O contents in melts caused by K-poorly mineral cumulations prior to phlogopite. The
448 phlogopite K_2O contents of 8.72 wt.% are calculated by average K_2O contents. (b, c)
449 Comparisons of K isotopes between mantle-derived rocks from various tectonic settings. Solid
450 line with arrow indicates a trend of phlogopite fractional crystallization, and the dashed line with
451 arrow indicates a trend of mantle source variation with distance to subduction trend.

452

453 Fig. 6 Simplified model showing K and its isotope behavior from arc to intra-continent setting.
454 Minor element K with preferential heavy isotopes is released from subducting slab in arc setting,
455 resulting in isotopically light dehydrated slab and decreasing tendency of $\delta^{41}\text{K}$ value in

456 metasomatized mantle and thus arc lavas with distance away from trench. Due to K depletion,
457 amphibole rather than phlogopite is the dominant K-host phase crystallized from arc lavas and
458 the fractional crystallization does not induce significant K isotope fractionation. Melting of
459 residual slab in depth generates K-rich and isotopically light melts to account for low- $\delta^{41}\text{K}$
460 features of primary intra-continental potassic-ultrapotassic lavas, while melt immiscibility and
461 phlogopite fractional crystallization lead to significant K isotope fractionation and thus relatively
462 large isotopic compositional variations.

Table 1 Major element compositions (wt.%) of carbonatitic silicate lavas, silicate lavas and carbonatites from Western Qinling, China

Sample	SiO ₂	TiO ₂	Al ₂ O ₃	TFe ₂ O ₃	MnO	MgO	CaO	Na ₂ O	K ₂ O	P ₂ O ₅	LOI	Total
Carbonatitic silicate lava												
BG1	39.7	3.77	9.07	12.4	0.17	12.8	12.6	3.15	2.66	1.29	1.10	98.7
BG2	39.1	3.14	7.93	11.1	0.16	16.0	12.9	1.84	1.23	1.21	4.44	99.0
BG3	39.9	3.19	7.94	11.4	0.15	15.5	12.5	2.44	1.43	1.16	3.42	99.0
BG4	38.9	3.21	7.77	11.2	0.16	15.7	12.6	1.47	0.97	1.49	5.41	98.8
BG5	38.4	3.07	7.42	11.2	0.15	18.3	12.2	1.13	0.70	1.40	5.09	99.1
BG6	38.4	3.06	7.47	11.2	0.15	18.3	12.2	1.07	0.68	1.41	4.99	98.9
Silicate lava												
HT1	40.2	3.73	9.49	12.3	0.17	12.4	12.3	3.56	2.99	1.09	0.50	98.7
HT2	40.2	3.64	9.49	12.1	0.16	12.6	12.3	3.48	2.95	1.09	0.60	98.6
HT3	40.1	3.65	9.37	12.2	0.17	12.7	12.3	3.47	2.95	1.12	0.64	98.7
HT3-r	40.0	3.64	9.34	12.2	0.16	12.7	12.4	3.49	2.93	1.12	0.60	98.5
HT4	41.0	3.30	9.34	12.0	0.16	12.7	12.2	3.54	1.99	1.10	1.40	98.7
HT5	39.9	3.66	9.55	12.1	0.16	12.4	12.2	3.56	3.03	1.07	0.42	98.1
HT5-r	40.0	3.68	9.46	12.1	0.17	12.5	12.2	3.58	3.01	1.07	0.42	98.2
HT6	41.3	3.00	9.21	11.4	0.16	12.3	12.4	3.66	1.62	1.15	1.76	97.9
HT7	40.1	3.68	9.44	12.2	0.17	12.2	12.2	3.42	2.89	1.01	0.96	98.2
HT8	42.1	2.93	9.16	11.1	0.16	12.8	12.6	3.80	1.35	1.17	1.74	98.9
HT9	39.9	3.76	9.47	12.3	0.17	12.4	12.3	3.56	2.97	1.08	0.62	98.5
HT10	40.4	3.68	9.50	12.1	0.17	12.3	12.3	3.54	3.05	1.01	0.76	98.8
HT11	41.9	3.08	9.21	11.4	0.16	12.8	12.8	3.74	1.59	1.25	1.58	99.5
HT12	40.6	3.70	9.46	12.2	0.17	12.4	12.4	3.35	2.95	1.05	0.96	99.2
HT13	40.2	3.65	9.66	12.1	0.17	12.1	12.1	3.56	3.14	0.97	0.84	98.4
HT14	40.0	3.68	9.43	12.1	0.17	12.5	12.4	3.50	2.94	1.10	0.60	98.4
HT15	40.3	3.69	9.55	12.2	0.17	12.3	12.2	3.56	3.04	1.00	0.66	98.7
HT15-r	40.3	3.68	9.52	12.2	0.17	12.4	12.2	3.53	3.04	0.99	0.64	98.6
Carbonatite												
FS01	22.4	2.26	5.56	8.00	0.11	5.27	26.3	0.17	1.04	1.31	27.9	100
FS01-r	22.4	2.26	5.56	7.98	0.11	5.28	26.3	0.15	1.04	1.31	27.8	100
FS02	30.8	2.89	6.73	10.5	0.15	3.62	21.5	0.12	0.59	0.96	22.4	100

Note: r, replicated analysis; LOI, loss of ignition.

Table 2 Phlogopite phenocrysts in silicate lavas from Western Qinling, China

SiO ₂	39.4	36.1	35.8	36.1	38.1	36.5	37.4	36.7	37.8	37.3	38.1	35.6	41.8	42.4
TiO ₂	8.12	9.48	9.29	9.55	8.28	9.27	9.24	9.57	8.78	9.57	8.40	9.69	7.30	7.28
Al ₂ O ₃	9.48	11.3	10.8	11.4	9.88	10.8	10.4	11.0	10.0	10.8	9.50	11.5	7.68	7.36
Cr ₂ O ₃	0.00	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.05	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.20	0.14
FeO	10.1	9.02	9.13	9.06	9.49	9.59	9.82	9.28	9.61	9.12	10.6	9.45	6.38	6.81
MnO	0.10	0.08	0.08	0.09	0.07	0.05	0.07	0.07	0.06	0.08	0.04	0.07	0.06	0.05
MgO	17.0	15.6	15.6	16.0	16.1	15.3	15.5	15.7	16.0	16.1	17.0	15.7	20.0	19.9
CaO	0.03	0.07	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.04	0.05	0.00	0.03	0.01	0.04	0.04
Na ₂ O	0.39	0.37	0.37	0.34	0.32	0.34	0.39	0.34	0.29	0.36	0.32	0.30	0.62	0.68
K ₂ O	9.35	7.98	8.02	7.91	8.89	8.12	8.60	8.33	9.02	8.54	9.10	7.79	9.40	9.93
NiO	0.00	0.03	0.03	0.08	0.07	0.08	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.08	0.03	0.02	0.05	0.04
Total	93.9	90.1	89.1	90.5	91.2	90.1	91.4	91.0	91.8	91.9	93.1	90.1	93.5	94.7

Table 3 Potassium isotope ratios (‰) of standards and carbonatitic silicate lavas, silicate lavas and carbonatites, and phlogopite phenocrysts in silicate lavas from Western Qinling, China

Sample	Comment	$\delta^{41}\text{K}$	2SD
Standard			
BCR-2		-0.413	0.037
Replicated		-0.441	0.050
BCR-2		-0.447	0.035
GBW07103(GSR1)		-0.511	0.041
Replicated		-0.481	0.027
DNC-2		-0.298	0.032
G2		-0.449	0.014
Carbonatitic silicate lava			
BG1	Whole rock	-0.640	0.019
Duplicated		-0.704	0.086
BG2	Whole rock	-0.188	0.025
BG3	Whole rock	-0.109	0.018
BG4	Whole rock	-0.184	0.029
Duplicated		-0.180	0.030
BG5	Whole rock	-0.089	0.045
BG6	Whole rock	-0.035	0.031
Silicate lava			
HT1	Whole rock	-0.332	0.029
HT2	Whole rock	-0.417	0.052
HT3	Whole rock	-0.355	0.043
HT4	Whole rock	-0.064	0.025
HT5	Whole rock	-0.424	0.050
Duplicated		-0.448	0.068
HT6	Whole rock	0.090	0.048
Duplicated		0.085	0.094
HT7	Whole rock	-0.355	0.060
Duplicated		-0.349	0.091
HT8	Whole rock	-0.142	0.034
HT11	Whole rock	-0.042	0.066
HT13	Whole rock	-0.332	0.036
Duplicated		-0.272	0.036
HT14	Whole rock	-0.324	0.032
Duplicated		-0.330	0.079
HT1	Phlogopite	-0.628	0.039
HT4	Phlogopite	-0.566	0.030
HT5	Phlogopite	-0.534	0.065
Duplicated		-0.511	0.035
Carbonatite			
FS01	Whole rock	-0.858	0.064
FS02	Whole rock	-0.258	0.036

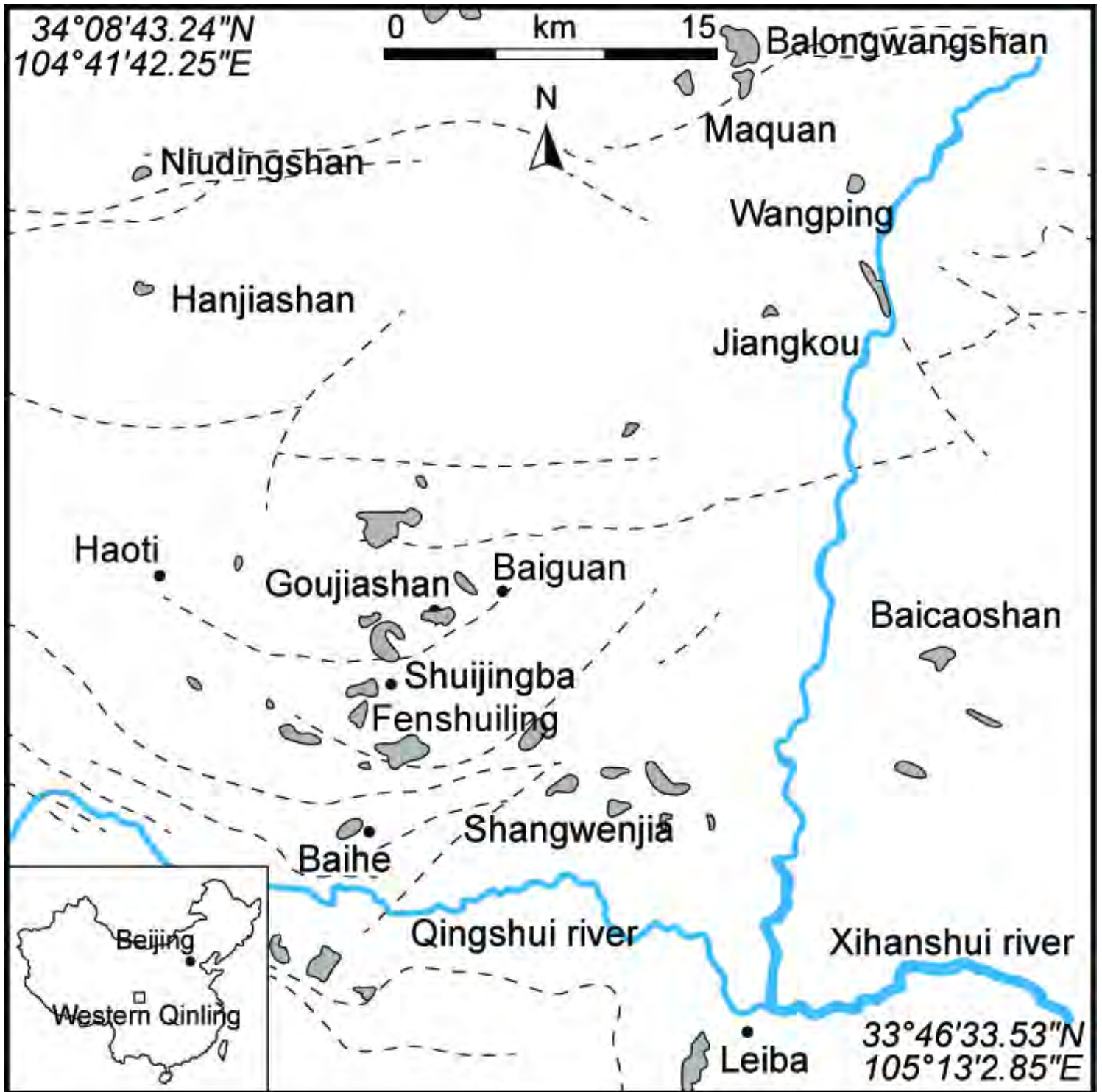


Fig. 1

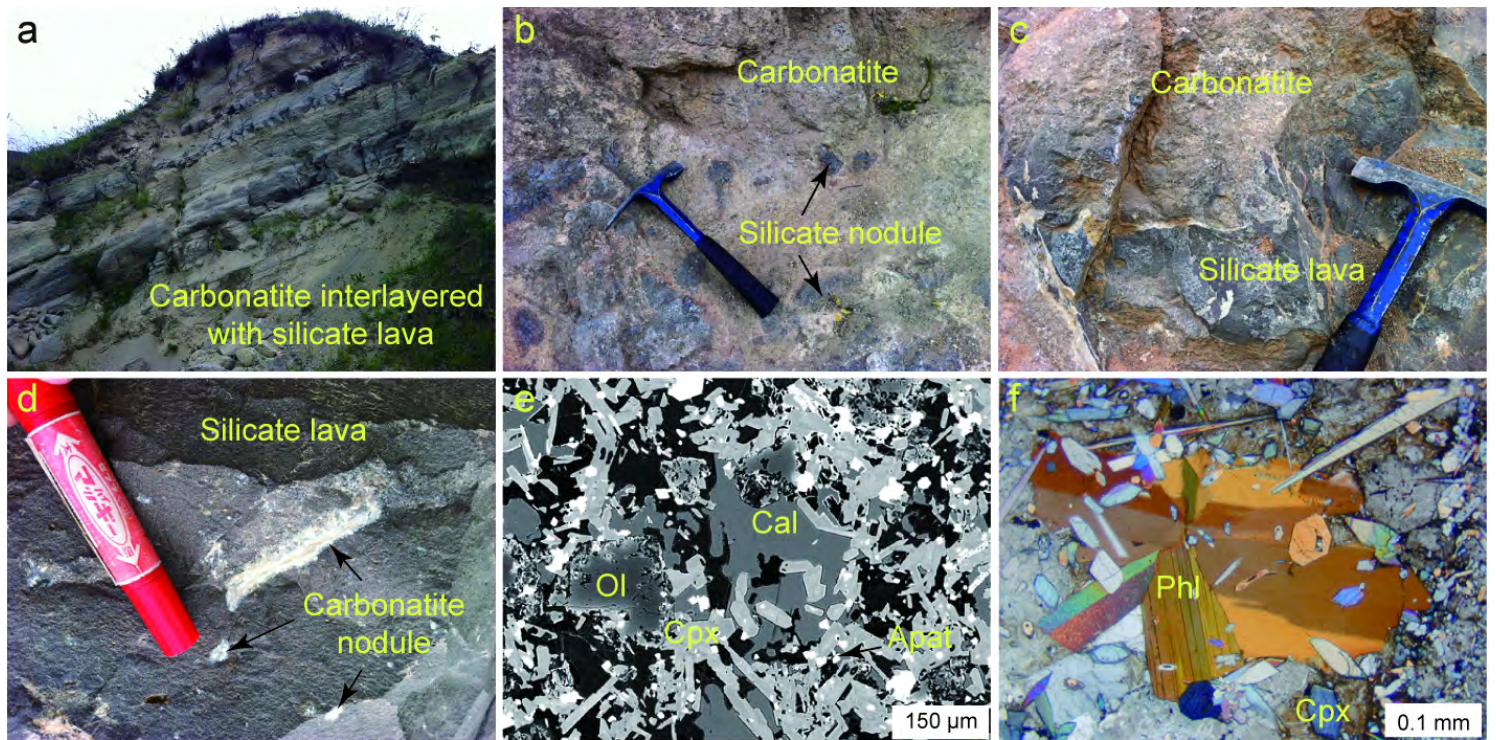


Fig. 2

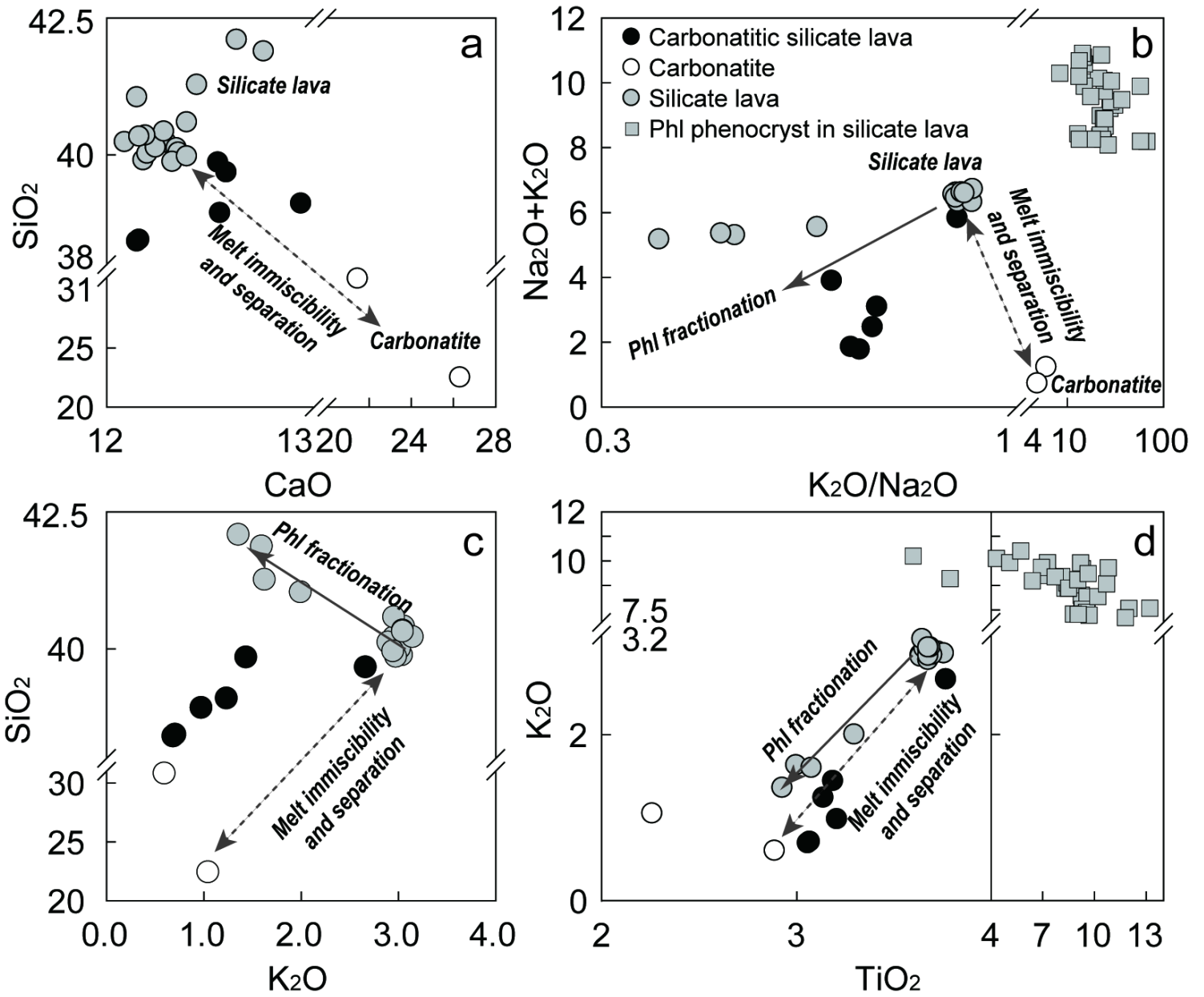


Fig. 3

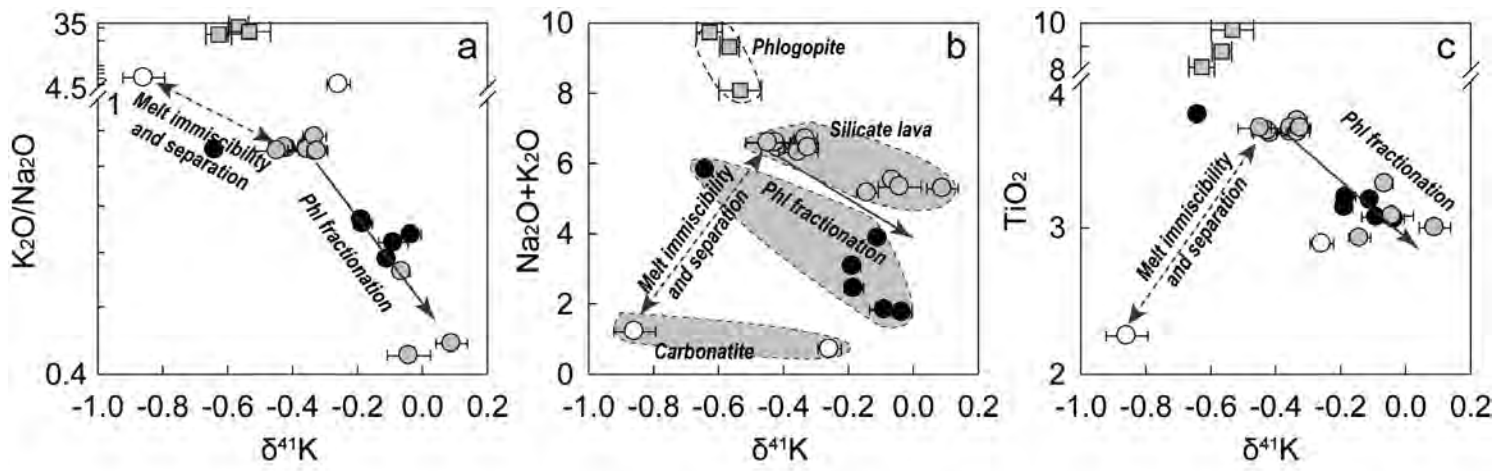


Fig. 4

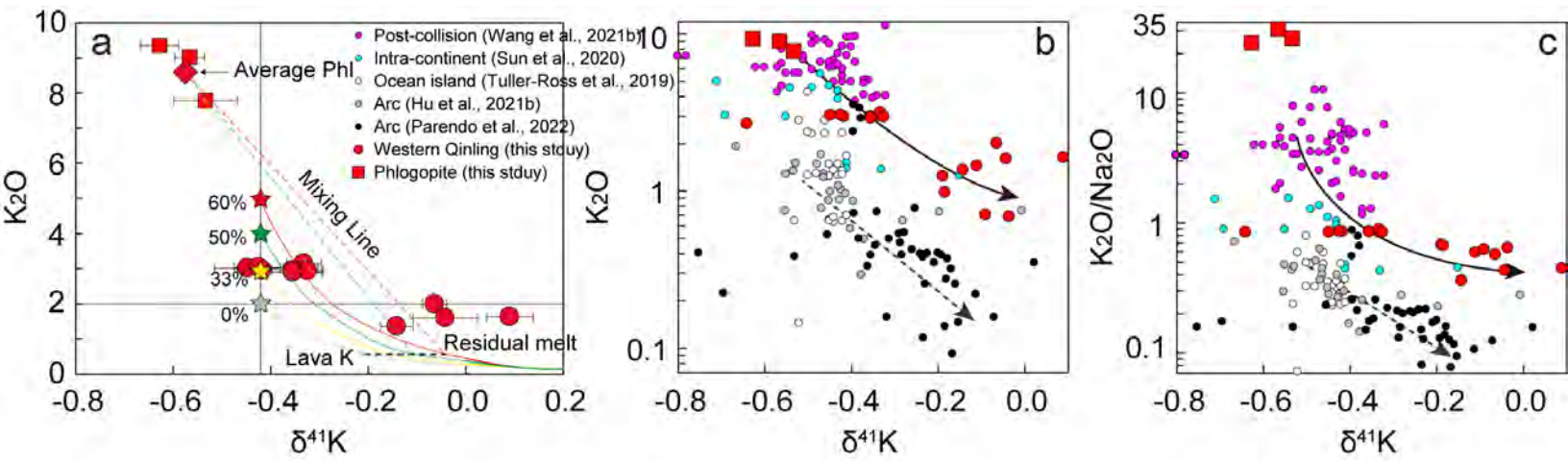


Fig. 5

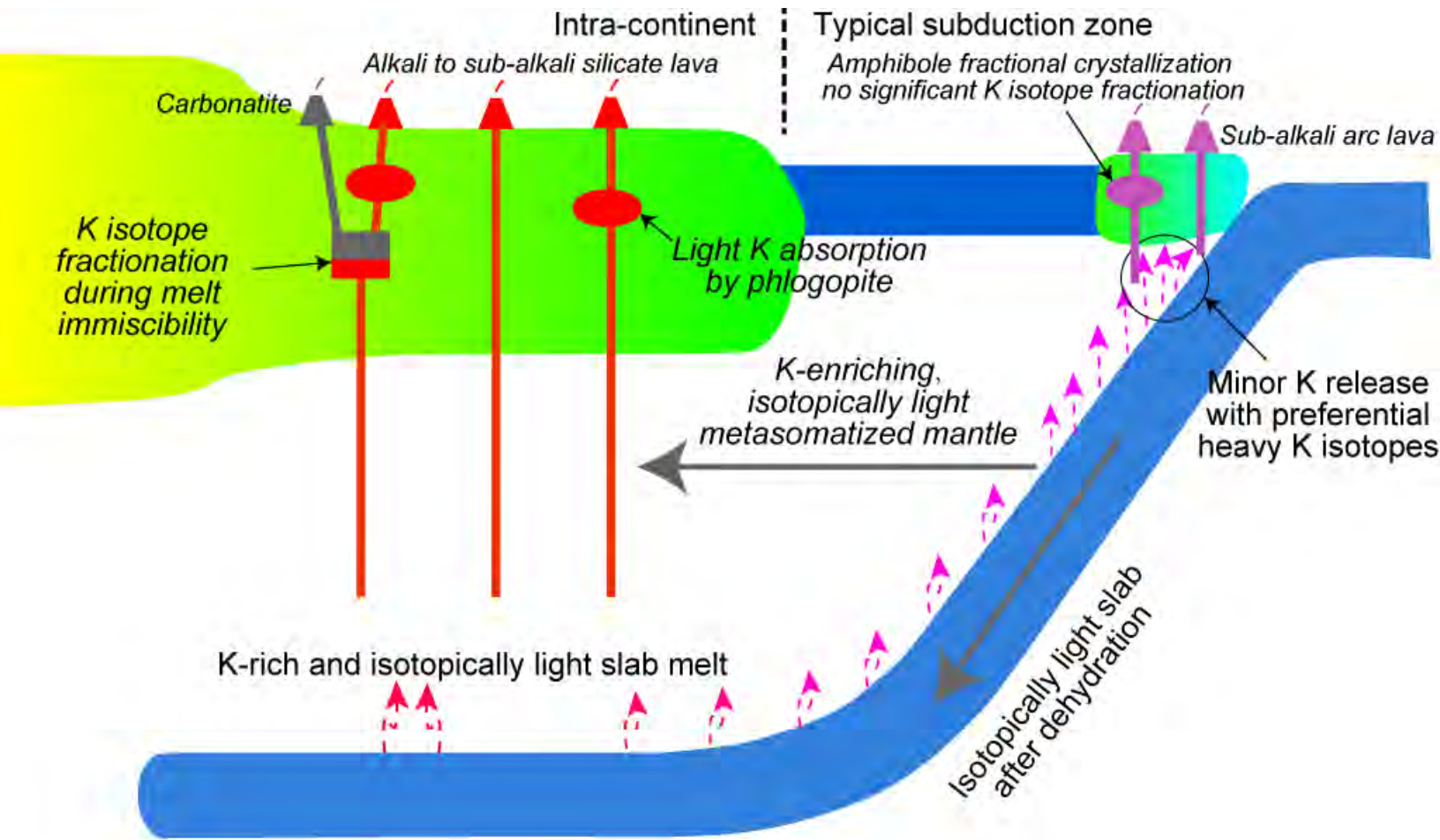


Fig. 6