

1 **Revision 1**

2

3 **Experimental confirmation of high temperature silicate liquid**
4 **immiscibility in multicomponent ferrobasic systems**

5

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24 **Abstract**

25 Here we report the results of an experimental study aimed at testing the existence of
26 stable, super-liquidus immiscibility between silica-rich and Fe-rich multicomponent
27 melts at temperatures above 1100 °C. Four pairs of the potentially immiscible
28 compositions were tested in a one-atmosphere gas-mixing furnace (Ar/H₂-CO₂ gas
29 mixture) at 1150 and 1200 °C and at the oxygen fugacity corresponding to that of the
30 QFM buffer. Pre-synthesized pairs of the silica-rich and Fe-rich starting compositions
31 were loaded in Pt wire loops, fused separately at 1300 °C, then brought in contact and
32 kept at constant experimental temperature for more than 24 hours. Three pairs of
33 compositions out of four used in this study did not mix. Some temperature-dependent
34 chemical re-equilibration was observed in the Fe-rich liquid phase but, in the cases of
35 immiscibility, the two liquids remained compositionally distinct and showed sharp
36 compositional gradients at contacts. One pair of liquids crystallized some tridymite,
37 whereas the other compositions were clearly above the liquidus. Overall, the results of
38 the experiments are in good agreement with the earlier centrifuge study and confirm
39 the existence of stable, super-liquidus immiscibility in some Fe-rich basaltic-andesitic
40 compositions at temperatures up to 1200 °C.

41

42 **Keywords:** experimental petrology; silicate liquid immiscibility; ferrobasaltic;
43 multicomponent silicate melts

44 **Introduction**

45

46 Liquid immiscibility between ferrobasaltic and rhyolitic melts in a broad
47 compositional range of natural magmas has been considered as a potentially important
48 mechanism of magma differentiation (Charlier et al. 2013; Kamenetsky et al. 2013;
49 Namur et al. 2012; Thompson et al. 2007; Veksler et al. 2007; Veksler and Charlier
50 2015). The existence of silicate liquid immiscibility in natural lavas of
51 ferrobasaltic-ferrodacitic composition has long been recognized (e.g., Roedder 1992
52 and Philpotts 1982), and in recent years traces of immiscibility and liquid-liquid
53 fractionation have been found in plutonic rocks in a number of mafic layered
54 intrusions worldwide, such as immiscible silica- and Fe-rich melt inclusions in apatite
55 and late-stage reactive microstructures (Jakobsen et al. 2005, 2011; Holness et al.
56 2011; Namur et al. 2012; Veksler and Charlier 2015). Stable coexistence of Fe-rich
57 and silica-rich immiscible liquids in equilibrium with typical gabbroic mineral
58 assemblages has been reproduced in numerous experiments (Charlier and Grove 2012;
59 Dixon and Rutherford 1979; Longhi 1990; Philpotts and Doyle 1983) but, with only
60 few exceptions (e.g., Roedder and Weiblen 1970; Krasov and Clocciatti 1979),
61 unmixing of ferrobasaltic melts has been documented only at temperatures close to
62 the liquidus of melts that have low liquidus temperatures, usually below
63 1020-1040 °C. The existence of high-temperature, super-liquidus silicate liquid
64 immiscibility at temperatures up to 1200 °C has been proposed for some
65 multicomponent ferrobasaltic-ferroandesitic compositions on the basis of centrifuge
66 experiments (Veksler et al. 2006, 2007), but the evidence and interpretation of
67 experimental results were challenged by Philpotts (2008) who argued that the

68 products of centrifuge experiments were metastable phases formed during quenching.
69 The results of centrifuge experiments were indeed questionable because phase
70 separation in many runs did not develop beyond the formation of sub-micron
71 emulsions, and interpretation of such emulsions and opalescent glasses has been
72 contentious (e.g., Visser and Koster van Groos 1976, 1977; Roedder 1977; Freestone
73 and Hamilton 1977). It has been pointed out (Veksler et al. 2008a,b, 2010) that the
74 protracted stability of the emulsions in the case of stable immiscibility may be due to
75 low interfacial tension between the immiscible liquids, but researchers who have
76 doubted the existence of stable immiscibility in natural ferrobaltic compositions
77 above 1040 °C seem to remain unconvinced (Kamenetsky et al. 2013)

78 The debate about the extent of silicate liquid immiscibility to higher temperatures
79 in multicomponent compositions has important implications for natural magmatic
80 systems, and it would be good to resolve it by experimental means despite the kinetic
81 obstacles encountered in previous studies (Veksler et al. 2006, 2007, 2008a,b). It is a
82 common practice in experimental petrology to test thermodynamic equilibrium by
83 conducting direct and reverse experiments. A reverse approach to equilibrium, as
84 opposed to the centrifuge experiments, would be to see whether two pre-synthesized
85 immiscible liquid compositions do or do not mix at long exposure times in a
86 conventional static setup. In the original centrifuge study, Veksler et al. (2007) tried
87 the reverse approach but the results were poorly reproducible and inconclusive. To
88 avoid metastable immiscibility, here we report the results of a new study, in which we
89 used two beads of glass (Fe-rich and silica-rich) touching each other in the experiment
90 and achieved good reproducibility of high-temperature immiscibility at exposure
91 times of 24 h or longer. After making minor modifications to the reverse static setup
92 used by Veksler et al. (2007) we have tested immiscibility for a few compositions

93 used in the original centrifuge study and two new ones, and confirmed the existence
94 of stable immiscibility at temperatures up to 1200 °C in three cases out of four.

95

96 **Experimental and analytical methods**

97

98 *Preparation of starting mixtures*

99 Compositions and sources for the four pairs of the potentially immiscible
100 compositions (MZ, RY, KC and PZH) are listed in Table 1. All the starting materials
101 were synthesized by fusion in platinum crucibles of carefully weighed and mixed
102 reagent-grade chemicals [SiO₂, Al₂O₃, MgO, TiO₂, CaCO₃, Na₂CO₃, K₂CO₃ and
103 Ca₃(PO₄)₂]. To avoid strong oxidation and Fe losses to the crucibles, Fe-free glasses
104 were first prepared by repeated fusions in an electric furnace once at 900 °C, and then
105 twice at 1400 °C. The Fe-free glasses were then crushed to fine powders (grain size
106 less than 3 μm), and mixed and ground with reagent-grade FeO in an agate mortar
107 under acetone. The resulting powders of the glass-FeO mixtures were used as starting
108 materials for the experimental charges

109 *Experimental technique*

110 The experiments were conducted at GeoForschungsZentrum (GFZ) Potsdam,
111 Germany in a 1-atm vertical tube furnace (Vertical Gero Furnace Alsint tube type) in
112 which oxygen fugacity (f_{O_2}) was controlled by H₂/Ar-CO₂ gas mixtures. Gas flow was
113 regulated by digital Brooks mass flow controllers and a PtRh₆-PtRh₃₀ (type B)
114 thermocouple was used for temperature measurements. The thermocouple had

115 previously been calibrated against the melting point of gold (1064 °C).
116 Yttrium-stabilized zirconia electrolyte (SIRO₂) manufactured by Ceramic Oxide
117 Fabricators Pty. Ltd (Victoria, Australia) was used for the f_{O_2} measurements inside the
118 furnace. Uncertainties of the cited log f_{O_2} values and the temperature do not exceed
119 ± 0.2 and ± 2 °C, respectively.

120 Fine powders of the Fe-rich and silica-rich reactant mixtures moistened with a
121 drop of water and some water-soluble organic binder were loaded in separate Pt wire
122 loops about 3 mm in diameter, fused at 1300 °C and f_{O_2} corresponding to that of the
123 QFM buffer, and subsequently quenched in air. Preheating and fusion of the
124 potentially immiscible liquid pairs in the separate wire loops was the key modification
125 which we made to the experimental procedure used by Veksler et al. (2007), who had
126 loaded both starting compositions into the same loop. Pre-fused pairs of the Fe-rich
127 and silica-rich glass beads were then suspended in a new position, in contact with
128 each other and kept at constant experimental temperature (1150 °C or 1200 °C) for at
129 least 24 hours. At the end of the run, samples were quenched in air in a few seconds.

130 *Electron microprobe analyses*

131 Run products were mounted in epoxy, ground and polished, and studied by
132 electron microprobe at the GeoForschungsZentrum Potsdam using a JEOL
133 Hyperprobe JXA-8500F in wavelength-dispersive spectrometry (WDS) mode at 15
134 kV accelerating voltage and 15 nA beam current with spot sizes ranging from 10 to 15

135 μm depending on the properties and compositions of the analyzed materials. Counting
136 time for all the elements was set to 20 s on peak and 10 s on background. The
137 following synthetic and natural standards were used for the calibration: orthoclase (Al
138 and K), rutile (Ti), wollastonite (Si and Ca), albite and jadeite (Na), apatite (P),
139 hematite (Fe), diopside and periclase (Mg). The precision for oxide concentrations is
140 better than 1%.

141 Compositional mapping of a sample (PZH1200) for calcium was conducted using
142 a highly sensitive four-segment backscattered electron (BSE) detector. We used the
143 electron microprobe combined with X-ray, backscattered electron and
144 cathodoluminescence (CL) maps. By scanning over a specified target area, CL
145 wavelength and X-ray element distribution maps are acquired in parallel, enabling
146 direct comparison between elemental concentrations and textural features.

147

148 **Results**

149

150 As explained in the introduction, the idea of the reverse experiments was to see if
151 the pre-synthesized pairs of the Fe-rich and silica-rich liquid droplets would mix
152 when held for more than 24 hours in contact with each other at constant temperature
153 and $f\text{O}_2$ close to the QFM buffer. Mixing was supposed to be by chemical diffusion.
154 However, some minor mechanical stirring of the liquids due to wetting and gravity
155 forces was unavoidable, especially at the very beginning of the run. Surface tension
156 merged two droplets into one and the buoyant silica-rich liquid usually floated up and

157 positioned itself on top of the denser and less viscous Fe-rich liquid.

158 In summary, one pair of compositions (labeled MZ in Table 1) completely mixed
159 in both runs at 1150 °C and 1200 °C, which we take to indicate that the run durations
160 were long enough to expect complete mixing by diffusion for all compositions if the
161 two liquids were actually miscible. The other three pairs of the starting compositions
162 did not. In these latter cases, the two liquids remained compositionally distinct and
163 showed sharp chemical gradients at the contacts (Fig. 1). One pair of liquids (KC)
164 crystallized some tridymite (Fig. 1b), whereas the other compositions were clearly
165 above the liquidus. Tridymite crystallization in the RY compositions was also
166 observed in the centrifuge experiments by Veksler et al. (2007) and the results of the
167 direct and reverse experiments appear to be in a good agreement in this respect.

168 Electron microprobe analyses of all the run products are presented in the
169 supplementary data set. The analyses of those samples that did not mix completely
170 showed that liquid compositions, and especially the compositions of the Fe-rich
171 phases, significantly changed in comparison with the starting compositions. Partial
172 dissolution of the silica-rich liquid *Lsi* in the Fe-rich liquid *Lfe* was observed in all the
173 runs in which the liquids did not mix completely. After the runs, unmixed *Lfe*
174 compositions contained 53-56 wt. % SiO₂ (Table 2) instead of 38-50 wt. % SiO₂ in
175 the starting *Lfe* mixtures (Table 1) and compositional contrast decreased for all the
176 other major components. Mutual solubility of the melts with starting compositions RY
177 and KC appears to increase with temperature, whereas the conjugate *Lfe* and *Lsi* melts
178 with the starting mixture PZH were practically unchanged at 1150 °C and 1200 °C
179 (Table 2). Losses of Fe into the Pt wire loops and losses of more volatile components
180 by evaporation appear to be insignificant, except for phosphorus in the P₂O₅-rich
181 mixtures RY, where P₂O₅ contents decreased by more than 50 % relative to the

182 concentrations in the starting reactant mixtures.

183 **Discussion**

184
185 In our view, the results of this study strongly support the existence of stable liquid
186 immiscibility in some multicomponent, geologically relevant aluminosilicate
187 compositions at temperatures up to 1200 °C. Except the complete mixing between the
188 starting compositions MZ, the results are generally in good agreement with the earlier
189 centrifugation study by Veksler et al. (2007). The coexisting immiscible liquid
190 compositions in this study and in the centrifuge experiments are not exactly the same,
191 but some compositional differences should be expected in view of the very different
192 redox conditions in the direct centrifuge and the reverse static experiments (below the
193 IW and at the FMQ buffers, respectively). Contacts between the immiscible liquids
194 are not razor-sharp menisci but they are somewhat blurred. Diffuse contacts between
195 the immiscible liquids have been also observed in some direct static experiments (e.g.,
196 Longhi 1990; Charlier and Grove 2012) and such textures have been interpreted as a
197 result of ineffective phase separation and sluggish chemical diffusion. In the case of
198 reverse “mixing” experiments, which is discussed here, diffuse contacts probably
199 formed at the start of the static runs when the liquid droplets were moved and
200 deformed by the forces of surface tension and gravity. Stirring by convection in the
201 low-viscosity Fe-rich liquid may be another reason for the formation of diffuse
202 contacts. If the liquids were close to chemical equilibrium, gradients of chemical
203 potentials of major components were probably very low across the diffuse contacts.
204 Therefore, sharpening by chemical diffusion of the contacts initially blurred by
205 mechanical stirring may require much a longer time than the exposure times of our
206 experiments. Nevertheless, the same result for the MZ sample, i.e. mixing, at two

207 different temperatures was observed, whereas all the other samples remained unmixed
208 for two temperatures. Therefore, we believe that MZ was not just more thoroughly
209 mechanically mixed (by chance) than the other three samples, but that the
210 observations indicate differences in miscibility for these different compositions.

211 **Implications**

212 Overall, the results of the experiments are in good agreement with the earlier
213 centrifuge study (Veksler et al. 2007) and strongly support the existence of stable
214 liquid immiscibility in some multicomponent, geologically relevant aluminosilicate,
215 i.e. Fe-rich basaltic-andesitic compositions at temperatures up to 1200 °C. Take the
216 example of the Panzhihua layered gabbros (Wang et al. 2013): based on the chemical
217 composition of the daughter minerals, including plagioclase and clinopyroxene and
218 the melt inclusion, we calculated the liquidus temperature of the immiscible melts in
219 this system. Our results showed that the liquidus temperature is about 1000 °C. Thus,
220 with temperature decreases, the compositions of the conjugate silicate liquids moved
221 further apart along the solvus, consistent with the previous studies (Charlier and
222 Grove 2012; Kamanetsky et al. 2013), but the upper limit (critical point) of the solvus
223 of the tholeiitic system is moderately higher than previously thought. Thus, silicate
224 liquid immiscibility in a broad compositional range of natural magmas could be
225 considered as a potentially important mechanism of magma differentiation.

226

227 **Acknowledgements**

228

229 We are grateful to Olivier Namur and an anonymous reviewer, and the editor Ian
230 Swainson for their thoughtful and constructive comments. Oona Appelt in Helmholtz
231 Centre Potsdam GFZ German Research Centre for Geosciences is thanked for
232 assistance with electron microprobe analysis. Parts of this work were supported by
233 Chinese 973 program (2012CB416806), the “Fundamental Research Funds for the
234 Central Universities,” the 111 Project (B07011) and DFG grant VE 619/2-1. IVV also
235 acknowledges support by Russian Science Foundation, grant No. 14-17-00200.

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237 SIGNATURES



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320
321

Figure caption

322 **Figure 1.** A series of back-scattered electron images of run products and electron
323 microprobe compositional profiles across the contacts between silica-rich (*Lsi*) and
324 Fe-rich (*Lfe*) glasses (a, RY1150; b, KC1150; c, PZH1200).

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327 **Figure 2.** Ca distribution map in the sample PZH1200 showing a steep
328 compositional gradient at the contact between two immiscible liquids (*Lfe* and *Lsi*).

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Table captions

332

Table 1. Compositions of synthetic starting mixtures normalized to 100 wt.%.

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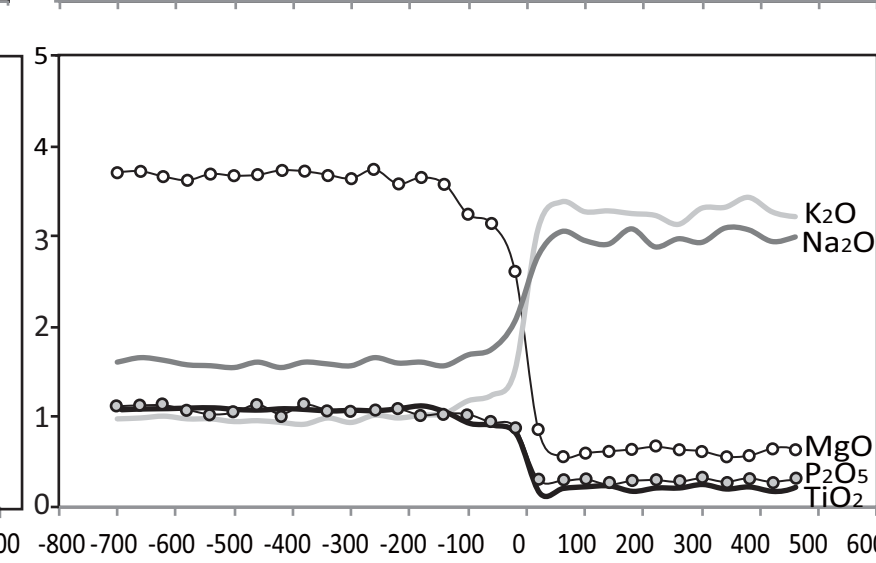
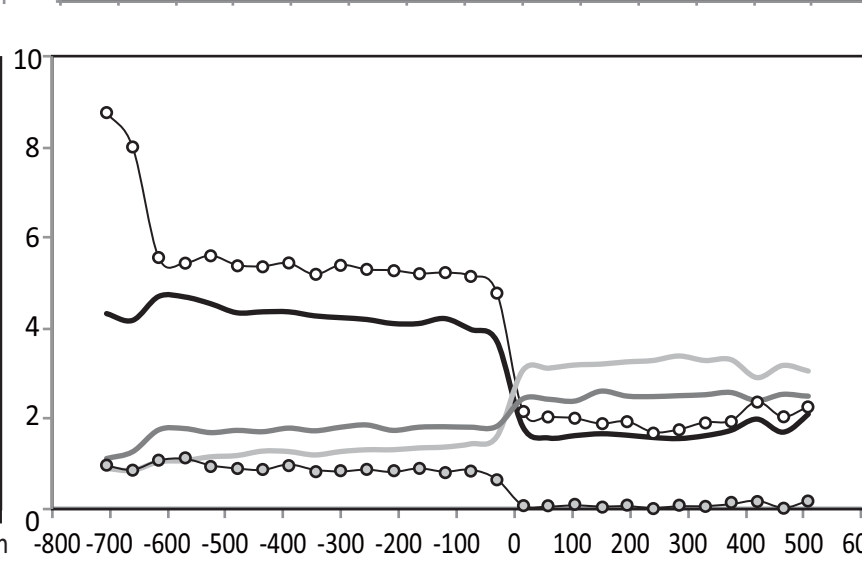
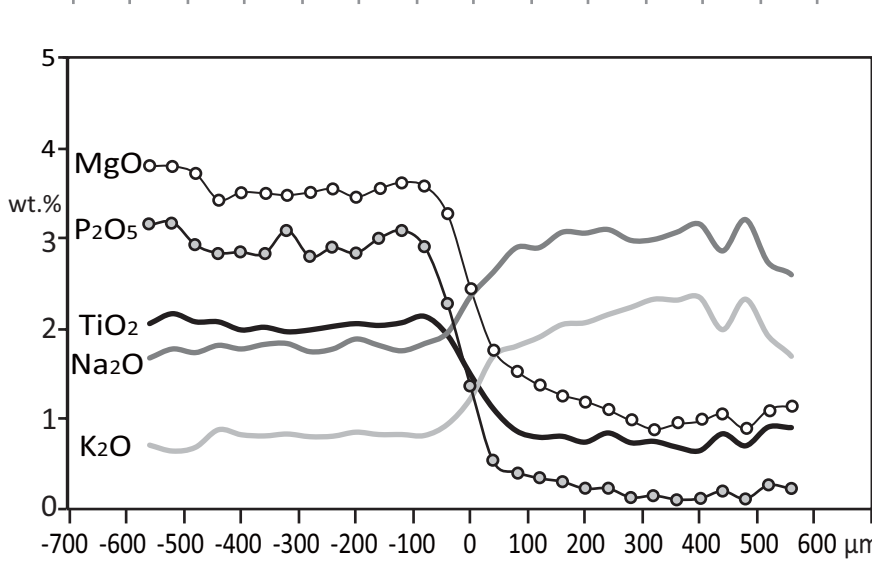
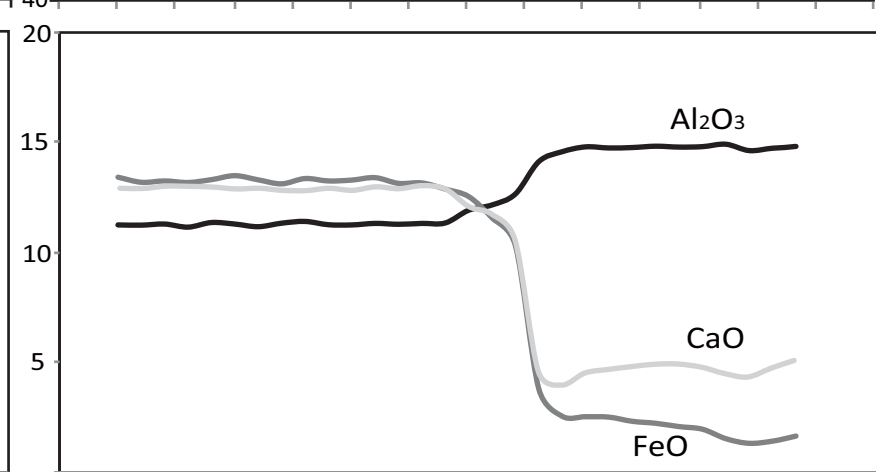
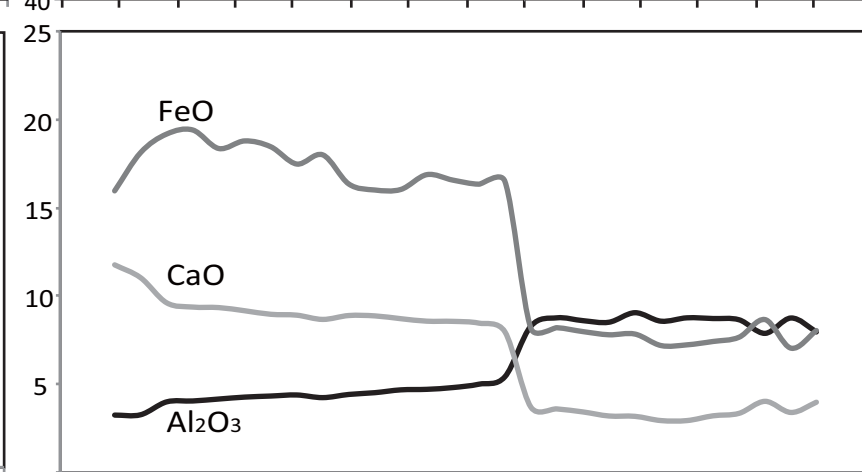
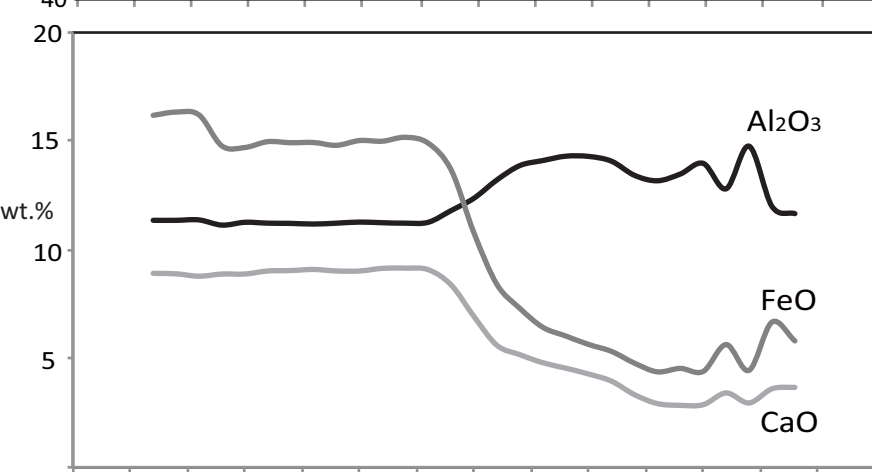
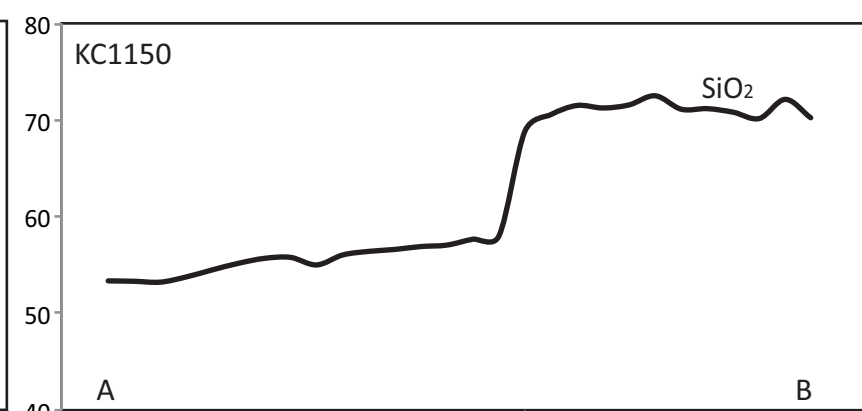
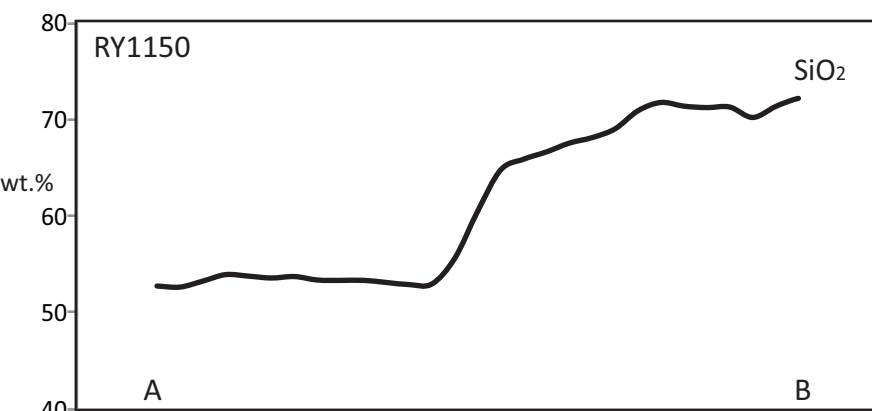
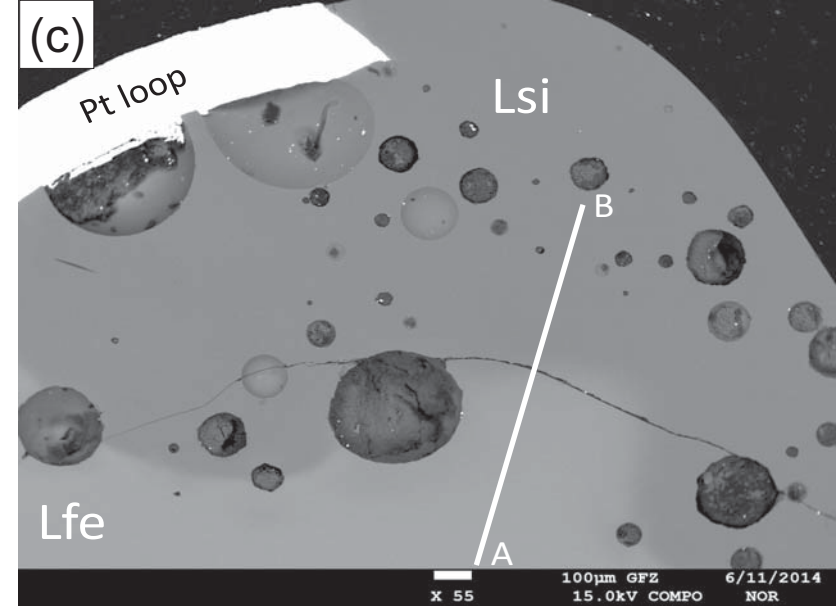
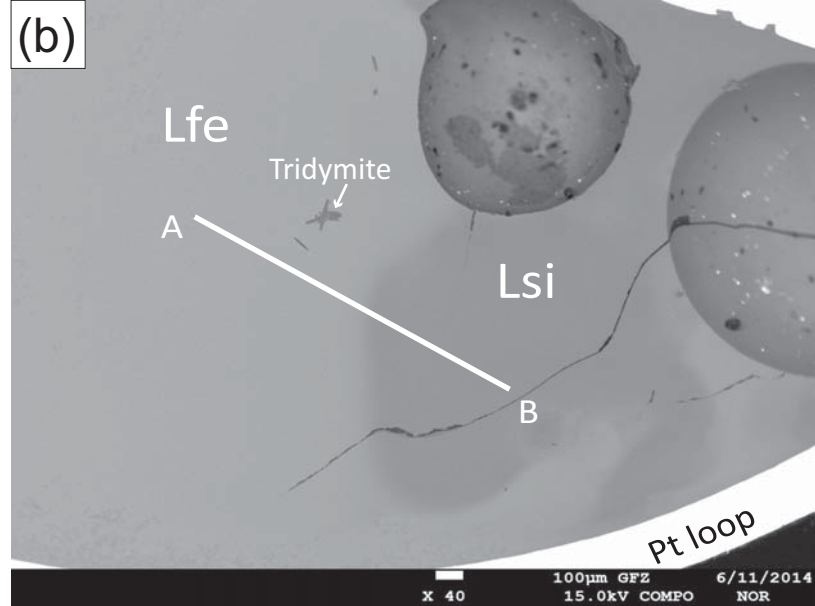
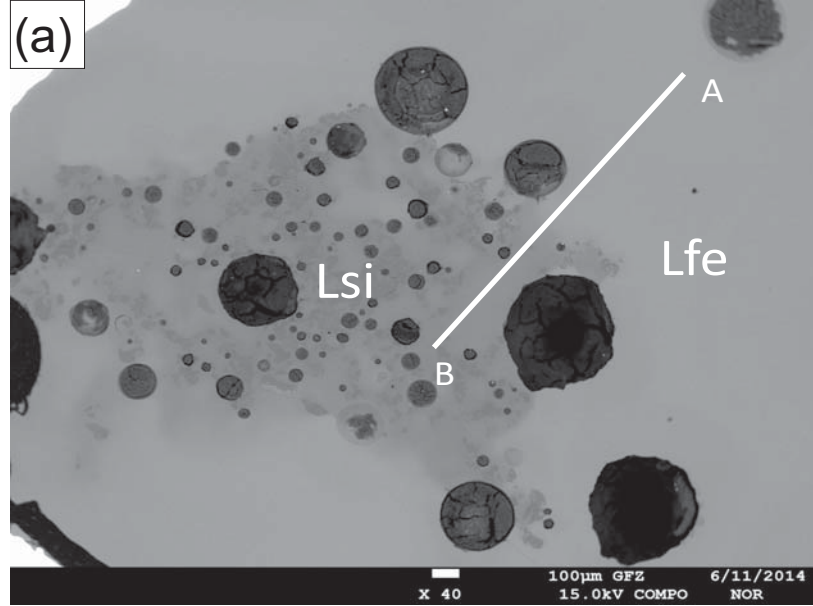
334

Table 2. Representative compositions of experimental products based on electron

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microprobe analyses of quenched glasses.

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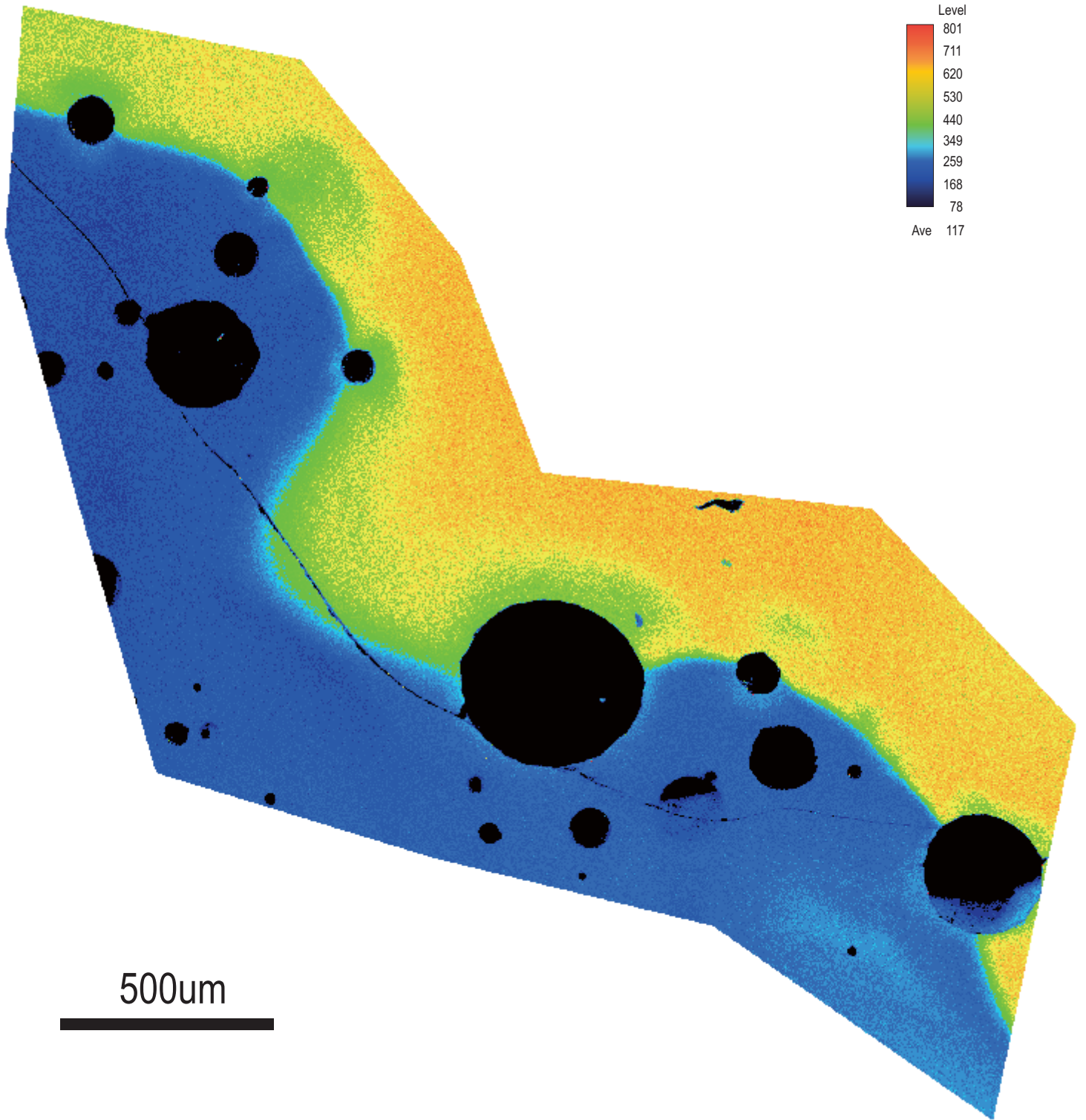


Table 1. Compositions of synthetic starting mixtures normalized to 100 wt.%.

Sample	MZ ^a		RY ^b		KC ^c		PZH ^d	
Phase	<i>Lfe</i>	<i>Lsi</i>	<i>Lfe</i>	<i>Lsi</i>	<i>Lfe</i>	<i>Lsi</i>	<i>Lfe</i>	<i>Lsi</i>
SiO ₂	45.66	64.56	38.40	72.50	49.86	71.82	43.38	71.31
TiO ₂	5.41	1.80	3.50	0.80	4.45	1.63	1.46	0.25
Al ₂ O ₃	9.78	13.25	8.20	15.20	2.93	8.50	9.03	14.84
MgO	4.15	2.32	6.60	1.00	6.79	2.02	5.59	0.65
FeO	21.00	7.39	20.00	4.50	22.07	7.62	20.97	2.82
CaO	10.65	6.34	14.00	1.39	9.96	2.98	16.68	5.26
Na ₂ O	2.44	2.81	1.00	2.90	1.95	2.45	1.14	2.89
K ₂ O	0.48	1.37	0.30	1.70	0.96	2.98	0.31	2.31
P ₂ O ₅	0.43	0.15	8.00	0.00	1.03	0.00	1.44	0.26
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Notes: *Lfe*, Fe-rich glass; *Lsi*, silicic glass.

^a Immiscible pairs produced by the centrifuge experiments of [Veksler et al. \(2007\)](#), where the starting composition is based on estimates of the liquid composition at the top of the Lower Zone of the Skaergaard layered intrusion.

^b Natural immiscible liquids in melt inclusions (quenched glasses) in native iron (c.f. [Veksler et al. 2007](#)).

^c Natural immiscible liquids (quenched glasses) in mesostasis of basaltic lavas (c.f. [Veksler et al. 2007](#)).

^d Natural immiscible liquids in melt inclusions hosted in apatite from the Middle Zone of the Panzihua layered intrusion, China ([Wang et al. 2013](#)).

Table 2. Representative compositions of experimental products based on electron microprobe analyses of quenched glasses.

Sample	MZ1150	MZ1200	RY1150		RY1200		KC1150		KC1200		PZH1150		PZH1200	
T(°C)	1150	1200	1150		1200		1150		1200		1150		1200	
Phase	<i>L(N=3)</i>	<i>L(N=3)</i>	<i>Lfe(N=3)</i>	<i>Lsi(N=3)</i>	<i>Lfe(N=3)</i>	<i>Lsi(N=3)</i>	<i>Lfe(N=3)</i>	<i>Lsi(N=3)</i>	<i>Lfe(N=3)</i>	<i>Lsi(N=3)</i>	<i>Lfe(N=3)</i>	<i>Lsi(N=2)</i>	<i>Lfe(N=3)</i>	<i>Lsi(N=3)</i>
SiO ₂	54.86	55.16	52.89	71.27	54.23	68.87	53.31	70.81	56.00	71.05	54.50	69.32	54.34	71.17
	(1.29)	(1.31)	(1.17)	(1.28)	(1.25)	(1.13)	(1.20)	(1.25)	(1.36)	(1.26)	(1.27)	(1.16)	(1.26)	(1.27)
TiO ₂	3.93	4.02	2.05	0.79	2.01	1.09	4.39	1.90	4.22	1.72	1.01	0.27	1.09	0.28
	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.10)	(0.12)	(0.10)	(0.05)	(0.12)	(0.10)	(0.21)	(0.09)	(0.05)	(0.01)	(0.05)	(0.01)
Al ₂ O ₃	13.76	12.92	11.37	12.81	11.92	14.69	3.52	8.21	4.45	8.48	11.37	14.34	11.26	14.72
	(1.24)	(1.16)	(1.02)	(1.15)	(1.07)	(1.32)	(0.32)	(0.74)	(0.22)	(0.42)	(0.57)	(0.72)	(0.56)	(0.74)
FeO	8.39	8.38	16.25	5.65	14.72	4.00	17.76	7.92	16.21	7.29	12.88	3.35	13.29	1.46
	(0.17)	(0.17)	(0.33)	(0.56)	(0.29)	(0.31)	(0.36)	(0.40)	(1.46)	(0.66)	(1.16)	(0.30)	(1.20)	(0.13)
MgO	4.18	4.22	3.72	1.01	3.57	1.76	7.45	2.22	6.13	2.21	3.50	0.73	3.71	0.64
	(0.21)	(0.22)	(0.19)	(0.15)	(0.18)	(0.09)	(0.37)	(0.11)	(0.31)	(0.11)	(0.18)	(0.04)	(0.19)	(0.03)
CaO	9.27	9.19	8.87	3.42	8.27	3.99	10.81	3.81	9.44	3.85	12.45	5.09	12.80	5.25
	(0.46)	(0.45)	(0.44)	(0.47)	(0.41)	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.19)	(0.47)	(0.19)	(0.62)	(0.25)	(0.64)	(0.26)
K ₂ O	0.79	0.77	0.64	1.94	0.73	1.64	0.91	3.03	1.15	3.10	1.02	3.44	0.99	3.31
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.15)	(0.06)	(0.08)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.07)
Na ₂ O	3.65	4.02	1.68	2.81	1.89	3.03	1.36	2.45	1.56	2.46	1.54	2.81	1.63	3.01
	(0.18)	(0.18)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.15)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.08)	(0.06)
P ₂ O ₅	0.22	0.21	3.04	0.16	2.79	0.63	0.94	0.10	0.86	0.05	0.97	0.28	1.13	0.31
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.06)	(0.02)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.02)	(0.10)	(0.01)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.02)

Total	99.09	98.92	100.5	99.87	100.1	99.69	100.44	100.46	100.02	100.19	99.22	99.62	100.23	100.14
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Note:

N represents the number of the analyses points of the immiscible phases that are away from the contact zone, and the composition is an average of these analyses. *Lfe*,

Fe-rich glass; *Lsi*, silicic glass. Standard deviations are in parentheses
