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SPECIAL COLLECTION: DYNAMICS OF MAGMATIC PROCESSES

Geochemical and radiogenic isotope probes of Ischia volcano, Southern Italy: Constraints on magma chamber dynamics and residence time

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Abstract

The active volcano of Ischia, an island off-shore the city of Naples, Southern Italy, has a discontinuous volcanic activity characterized by caldera-forming paroxysmal eruptions, lava flows, and lava domes, and thus offers the opportunity to study the complexity of magma storage, differentiation, and extraction mechanisms in a long-lived magma reservoir. The overall geochemical composition of erupted magmas varies from shoshonite to latite and trachyte/trachyphonolite. Their Sr and Nd, isotope composition variation is typical of subduction-related magmas, akin to other potassic magmas of the Neapolitan District, and there is a complete overlap of radiogenic isotope composition among shoshonite, latite, and trachyte/trachyphonolite. The lack of systematic radiogenic isotope covariation during differentiation suggests that the radiogenic isotope variability could be a signature of each magma pulse that subsequently evolved in a closed-system environment. Erupted magmas record a recurrent evolutionary process consisting of two-step fractional crystallization along similar liquid lines of descent for each magma pulse, suggesting near steady-state magma chamber conditions with balanced alternating periods of replenishment, differentiation, and eruption. The dominant role of fractionating feldspars determines a significant depletion of Sr (<10 ppm) coupled with high Rb/Sr (>200) in the residual trachyte magma.

Several more-evolved trachytes have anomalous radiogenic $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i$ (>0.707) coupled with high $^{87}Rb/^{86}Sr$ (>50), all other geochemical and isotopic characteristics being similar to normal $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i$ trachytes at the same degree of evolution. This radiogenic Sr isotope signature is not consistent with assimilation of crustal material and demands for a time-related in-growth of ^{87}Sr during storage within the magma chamber. Rb-Sr isochrons on separated mineral-groundmass pairs provide robust constraints on a prolonged pre-eruptive history ranging from a few tens to hundreds of thousands of years at relatively low temperature (~750 °C). Remarkably, also normal trachytes with high $^{87}Rb/^{86}Sr$ (>200) yield a magma residence time from some 4 to 27 kyr, implying that the long-lived history of Ischia magmas is not limited to the anomalous $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i$ trachytes. This long-lived history could be a characteristic feature of the magma chamber reservoir of this active volcano, which other volcanic products (i.e., shoshonite and latite) cannot disclose due to their lower Rb/Sr (i.e., low ^{87}Sr in-growth rate) and higher magma storage temperature (>900 °C) (i.e., rapid Sr isotope homogenization via diffusion).

The magma chamber dynamics of the active volcano of Ischia, probed on the basis of geochemical and radiogenic isotope tools, is consistent with recent models of complex magma chamber reservoirs made up of multiple discrete melt pockets, isolated by largely crystalline mush portions, maintained in a steady-state thermal flux regime with no mass exchange, and with reactivation shortly before eruption.

Keywords: Ischia volcano, radiogenic isotopes, geochemistry, magma chamber dynamics, magma residence time

Introduction

The largest and most destructive eruptions on Earth are often characterized by the eruption of highly differentiated magmas. Melt enrichment in volatile elements due to differentiation processes changes the rheology of magma and provides favorable conditions for paroxysmal eruptions depending upon magma residence time along with magma chamber geometries and dynamics (e.g., Huppert and Woods 2002; Francalanci et al. 2005; Bachmann and Bergantz 2008a; Braschi et al. 2012; Conticelli et al. 2015a). Understanding the rate at which magma differentiates and how long magma resides in the magmatic system, is key for volcanological studies. Important constraints come

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from the "crystal-mush model" (Hildreth 2004; Bachmann and Bergantz 2004, 2008a, 2008b; Marsh 2006), suggesting that a significant mass fraction of magma resides within large bodies of crystal-rich zones of broadly intermediate bulk composition with highly silicic interstitial melt. Cooper and Kent (2014) have also proposed that magmas can be stored at relatively low temperature (inhibiting diffusion but not radioactive decay) for long periods of time, to be reactivated shortly before the eruption.

In this context, a recent model (Cashman and Giordano 2014) suggests that large magma reservoirs are made up of isolated pockets or lenses of melt separated by the presence of rigid or impermeable crystal mushes, along with physical and/or rheological barriers (e.g., Stroncik et al. 2009; Barker et al. 2015). These individual pockets can be tapped and erupted together (simultaneously or in succession) during major eruptions without significant physical and chemical homogenization. Such a new model is rapidly gaining consensus among the volcanological community (e.g., Ellis et al. 2014; Alloway et al. 2015; Barker et al. 2015; Tibaldi 2015; Willcock et al. 2015) and would have crucial implications on the mechanism of melt extraction and the duration of explosive volcanic eruptions in terms of prolonged maintenance and/or fluctuations of excess pressure (Gudmundsson 2012). Either direct or indirect evidence supporting (or contradicting) this new model, however, has proved difficult to obtain from classical geological, geophysical or geochemical data (e.g., Cashman and Giordano 2014).

The focus of our study is on the active volcano of Ischia, which forms one out of four volcanic complexes of the Neapolitan District (e.g., Conticelli et al. 2015b, and references therein), Southern Italy (Fig. 1, inset). The Ischia volcano offers the opportunity to investigate conditions of magma storage, differentiation, and extraction mechanisms in complex magma reservoirs because of its recent volcanic activity (from <150 ka to 1302 AD), which has been characterized by discontinuous highly explosive and effusive phases separated by long periods of quiescence (e.g., Gillot et al. 1982; Vezzoli 1988; Orsi et al. 1996; de Vita et al. 2006, 2010; Brown et al. 2008). Despite several different models that were suggested to explain the overall magma evolution, there is a general consensus that fractional crystallization, magma mixing/mingling, and assimilation of continental crust in an open system control the evolution and the geochemical and isotopic variations of Ischia magmas (e.g., Poli et al. 1987, 1989; Crisci et al. 1989; Civetta et al. 1991; Di Girolamo et al. 1995; Piochi et al. 1999; D'Antonio et al. 2007, 2013; Brown et al. 2014; Melluso et al. 2014). In this paper we report a comprehensive major, trace elements and radiogenic isotopes (Sr, Nd) data set of unpublished whole rock data, to discuss the differentiation processes occurring at Ischia and their timescales. We further test our interpretation with new Rb-Sr isochron data on mineral and groundmass separates, providing new insights into the temporal relationships of melt storage underneath the Ischia magmatic reservoir.

Volcanological background

The active volcanoes of Ischia, Procida, Phlegrean Fields, and Somma-Vesuvius, belong to the Neapolitan District (Fig. 1, inset) and form the southernmost cluster of volcanoes of the Roman Magmatic Province (e.g., Washington 1906; Conticelli et al. 2004, 2010, 2015b; Peccerillo 2005; Avanzinelli et al. 2009). The island of Ischia is the remnant of a larger volcanic edifice located at the northwestern corner of the Gulf of Naples (Fig. 1, inset). The subaerial portion of the Ischia volcano (~46 km^2) is composed of pyroclastic rocks with minor lava flows and domes, landslide deposits, and terrigenous sedimentary rocks (de Vita et al. 2006, 2010; Della Seta et al. 2012, and references therein). The morphology of the island reflects a complex history of alternating constructive and destructive phases, due to the interplay among tectonics, volcanic activity, and gravitational surface movements (e.g., Vezzoli 1988; Orsi et al. 1991, 2003; Acocella and Funiciello 1999; Acocella et al. 2001, 2004; de Vita et al. 2006, 2010; Della Seta et al. 2012). The subaerial volcanic activity of Ischia has been divided into five main phases (Fig. 1) on the basis of radiometric ages, and stratigraphic, geochemical, and radiogenic isotope data (e.g., Gillot et al. 1982; Poli et al. 1987, 1989; Vezzoli 1988; Crisci et al. 1989; Civetta et al. 1991; Tibaldi and Vezzoli 2004; Brown et al. 2008, 2014; Melluso et al. 2014).

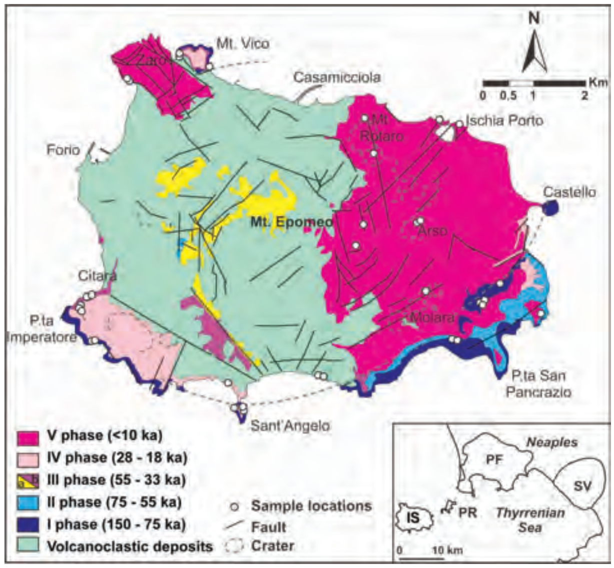

Figure 1. Simplified geological map of Ischia showing the outcropping areas of volcanic products of the five eruptive phases (after Orsi et al. 2003; Monti et al. 2010). The III phase has been subdivided in (**a**) Mt. Epomeo Green Tuff outcrop (55 ka paroxysmal event), and (**b**) volcanic products between 55 and 33 ka. White circles represent the samples collected in this study (for details and sample locations see Supplemental[1] Table 1). Inset: schematic map of the four active volcanoes of the Neapolitan District, belonging to the southernmost sector of the Roman Magmatic Province (IS = Ischia, PR = Procida, PF = Phlaegrean Fields, SV = Somma-Vesuvio). (Color online.)

I Phase is the oldest outcropping phase of subaerial volcanic activity and occurred between 150 and 75 ka with eruption of mainly trachytic and trachyphonolitic lava flows and domes, along with minor pyroclastic rocks (e.g., Gillot et al. 1982; Vezzoli 1988; Crisci et al. 1989; Brown et al. 2014; Melluso et al. 2014). The volcanic rocks of the first phase outcrop discontinuously along the southernmost shoreline of the island, from Punta Imperatore to Punta San Pancrazio, and in scattered outcrops along the periphery of the island (Fig. 1).

II Phase occurred between 75 and 55 ka, and was marked by a change of the eruptive style from mainly effusive to highly explosive eruptions with emplacement of complex successions of trachytic pumice falls interlayered with pyroclastic density currents and breccias (Orsi et al. 1991; Brown et al. 2008). The volcanic rocks of this phase outcrop continuously along the southeastern sector of the island overlaying the rocks of the I phase (Fig. 1).

III Phase occurred between 55 and 33 ka, and commenced with the paroxysmal Mt. Epomeo Green Tuff eruption, forming a ~10 × 7 km caldera and erupting some 40 km^3 of volcanic products (e.g., Vezzoli 1988; Tibaldi and Vezzoli 1998; Tomlinson et al. 2014). The Mt. Epomeo Green Tuff consists of trachytic ignimbrites partially filling a submerged depression, which now makes up the central part of the island (Fig. 1). Minor trachytic hydromagmatic to magmatic eruptions from small vents along the southwestern and northwestern sectors of the island (Fig. 1) prolonged this phase up to 33 ka (de Vita et al. 2010).

IV Phase occurred at 28 ka, after 5 kyr of quiescence, with the arrival of shoshonitic magma into the main reservoir, which triggered the Mt. Epomeo caldera resurgence of some 900 m (Poli et al. 1989; Civetta et al. 1991; Orsi et al. 1991; de Vita et al. 2006). This phase continued sporadically with mild explosive and effusive eruptions until 18 ka, and its products are scattered along the peripheral sector of the island, at Mt. Vico, between Punta Imperatore and Mt. St. Angelo, and south of Castello (Fig. 1).

V Phase is the last phase of activity and commenced at about 10 ka and is still active with the last historic lava flow eruption recorded at Mt. Arso in 1302 AD (de Vita et al. 2010, and references therein). This phase is characterized by mainly latitic to trachytic monogenetic volcanic activity and ongoing Mt. Epomeo caldera resurgence (e.g., Orsi et al. 1991, 1996; Buchner et al. 1996; de Vita et al. 2006, 2010). Caldera resurgence restricted eruptions to the eastern sector of the island with only a few vents located outside this sector, along regional fault systems. The volcanic activity was characterized by lava domes and high aspect ratio lava flows, together with magmatic and phreatomagmatic explosive eruptions that generated tuff-cones, tuff-rings, and variably dispersed pyroclastic fall and pyroclastic current deposits (de Vita et al. 2010, and references therein).

A historical record of earthquakes (e.g., the 1883 Casamicciola earthquake, Cubellis et al. 2004), historical ground movements (Buchner et al. 1996; de Vita et al. 2006; Della Seta et al. 2012), and fumaroles and thermal springs (Inguaggiato et al. 2000; Chiodini et al. 2004; Di Napoli et al. 2011) complements the present day activity.

Analytical techniques

Major and trace elements have been analyzed by ICP-AES and ICP-MS at Activation Laboratories Ltd. (Ancaster, Ontario, see http://www.actlabs.com for details). Mineral separation has been carried out at the IGG-CNR of Pisa, while Sr and Nd isotope measurements have been performed by magnetic sector multicollector Thermofisher Triton-Ti mass spectrometer at the Earth Science Department of the Università degli Studi di Firenze. Rb-Sr isotope dilution and isotope composition analyses have been performed on selected samples from single sample dissolution and subsequent splitting (20% solution for isotope dilution and 80% solution for isotope composition) using a mixed ^{84}Sr-^{87}Rb spike and then analyzed by the Thermofisher Triton-Ti mass spectrometer at the Earth Science Department of the Università degli Studi di Firenze.

The selected samples for isotope dilution have been crushed and then sieved at different particle size diameters. Enriched fractions of sanidine, clinopyroxene (300 and 250 μm), and glass/groundmass (150 and 100 μm) were obtained by a Frantz isodynamic separator. Each separated fraction has been handpicked under a binocular microscope to obtain >95% purity. The clinopyroxene has been separated only from the sample having this phase as microphenocryst (ISC10-01). After leaching with warm (50 °C) 1 N HCl for 1 h in ultrasonic bath, and rinsing with Milli-Q water, mineral separates and whole-rock samples were dissolved in 15 mL Savillex PFA beakers in a HF-HNO_3-HCl mixture. Rb-Sr, and Nd purification has been carried out using standard chromatographic techniques (e.g., Avanzinelli et al. 2005).

Sr and Nd isotopes were measured in dynamic mode (Avanzinelli et al. 2005) and the effect of mass fractionation has been corrected using an exponential law to $^{86}Sr/^{88}Sr = 0.1194$ and $^{146}Nd/^{144}Nd = 0.7219$, respectively. All errors reported are within run precision ($2\sigma_m$), and are typically <10 ppm. Repeated analyses of the NIST SRM 987 and a Nd internal standard (Nd-Fi) yielded $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr = 0.710249 \pm 11$ (2σ, n = 23), and $^{143}Nd/^{144}Nd = 0.511467 \pm 8$ (2σ, n = 15) over the period of analyses. The Nd isotope composition of the internal standard Nd-Fi is referred to the La Jolla $^{143}Nd/^{144}Nd = 0.511847 \pm 7$ (2σ, n = 53) measured in our laboratory. Rb-Sr isotope dilution analyses were performed in static mode and the effect of mass fractionation has been corrected using an exponential law to $^{86}Sr/^{88}Sr = 0.1194$ and a factor of 2.8‰ per amu for Rb on the basis of repeated analyses of the Rb standard Romil ($^{85}Rb/^{87}Rb = 2.6071 \pm 18$, 2σ, n = 12). Total procedural blanks were <290 pg (Sr), <120 pg (Nd), and required no correction to the samples.

Results

Petrographic characteristics

A total of fresh 38 rock samples (Supplementa1[1] Table 1) have been collected along well-established volcanic log sequences to represent the whole spectrum of magmas erupted during the five phases of subaerial volcanic activity at Ischia and provide geochemical arguments on differentiation processes, and magma storage timescales. Among these, four samples have been further selected for mineral separation and Rb-Sr isotope dilution analyses, on the basis of their whole-rock Sr isotope composition and high Rb/Sr.

The two shoshonite and latite samples are from the V Phase of volcanic activity and represent the Arso lava flow and the Molara scoria cone (Fig. 1). One latite sample is a mafic enclave within the Zaro lava flow (Fig. 1). The other samples are all trachytes and trachytes/phonolites lava flows, domes, and pumices covering the five phases of volcanic activity at Ischia (Supplemental[1] Table 1).

Shoshonites and latites are porphyritic lavas with sanidine, plagioclase, clinopyroxene phenocrysts in a very fine-grained groundmass made up of feldspar laths, clinopyroxene, biotite, olivine, and magnetite. The mafic enclave within the Zaro lava flow has a porphyritic texture with phenocrysts of olivine, plagioclase, and clinopyroxene in a microcrystalline groundmass made up of feldspar, clinopyroxene, olivine, biotite, and magnetite. Trachytes and trachytes/phonolites have a porphyritic texture and are characterized by sanidine phenocrysts, up to 10 mm in elongation, in a micro-crypto-crystalline (lava flow and dome) to hyaline (pumice) groundmass composed of feldspar laths, biotite, clinopyroxene, and glass, with accessory magnetite, sphene, and apatite. Fluidal alignment of sanidine laths in the groundmass confers the typical trachytic texture to the rocks. The overall petrographic characteristics of the studied samples are consistent with previous studies on the same volcanic log sequences (e.g., Civetta et al. 1991; Di Girolamo et al. 1995;

[1]Deposit item AM-17-25724, Supplemental Tables 1–5. Deposit items are free to all readers and found on the MSA web site, via the specific issue's Table of Contents (go to http://www.minsocam.org/MSA/AmMin/TOC/2017/Feb2017_data/Feb2017_data.html).

D'Antonio et al. 2013; Brown et al. 2014; Melluso et al. 2014, and references therein)

Major and trace elements

Major and trace element data, along with Sr and Nd radiogenic isotope compositions of the 38 unpublished whole rock samples are reported in Supplemental[1] Table 2, and Table 3, respectively. Ischia volcanic rocks have potassic affinity ($Na_2O - 2 \leq K_2O$, Le Maitre et al. 1989), and belong to the shoshonitic series within the Neapolitan District of the Roman Magmatic Province (i.e., KS or low-K series, Appleton 1972; Conticelli et al. 2010; D'Antonio et al. 2013). The major element composition of the studied magmas at Ischia varies from shoshonite to latite, trachyte, and phonolite (Fig. 2), and cover the whole spectrum of composition reported in the literature (e.g., Poli et al. 1987; Civetta et al. 1991; Conticelli et al. 2010; Brown et al. 2014; Melluso et al. 2014, and references therein). Most of the samples collected in this study straddle the trachyte-phonolite boundary (hereafter trachyte as a whole), with minor latites and shoshonites (Fig. 2).

The geochemical evolution of Ischia magmas from shoshonite through latite, and trachyte is characterized by an abrupt compositional variation of the liquid line of descent at ~2 wt% CaO (e.g., Fig. 3), as previously outlined by Brown et al. (2014). Magma compositional variation from shoshonite (CaO ~7 wt) to trachyte (CaO ~2 wt%) exhibits a decrease in MgO, FeO, TiO_2, and P_2O_5 coupled with an increase in SiO_2, K_2O, and Na_2O, and constant Al_2O_3. Magma compositional variation within trachyte (CaO from ~2 to ~0.8 wt%) continues along the same liquid line of descent for all major elements but K_2O that exhibits a significant decrease (Fig. 3a). Incompatible trace elements (high field strength elements, rare earth elements, and most large ion litophile elements) have a smooth increase from ~7 to ~2 wt% CaO, and then a rapid two- to threefold increase from ~2 to ~0.8 wt% CaO (e.g., La, Fig. 3b), while Sr, Ba, and transition metals show a positive and continuous correlation with CaO (e.g., Sr, Fig. 3c). The same compositional variation of the liquid line of descent can be observed also using trace elements as differentiation index. For example, Rb/Sr increases from ~0.3 to ~3.3, from shoshonite to trachyte, and then reaches values as high

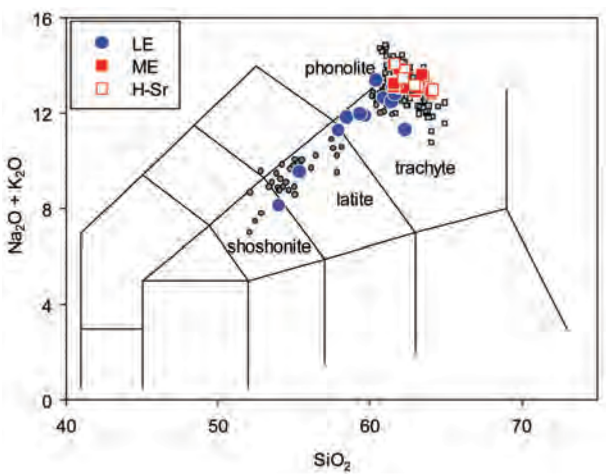

FIGURE 2. Classification diagram (Le Maitre et al. 1989) of the Ischia volcanic rocks. Solid circles and squares are referred to less- and more-evolved samples with CaO > 2 wt% (LE) and CaO < 2 wt% (ME), respectively (see Fig. 3); open squares represent a sub-group of more evolved samples (H-Sr) with anomalous radiogenic $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i$ (see Fig. 5). Gray circles and squares are literature data and maintain the same subdivision as our samples. Literature data sources: Poli et al. (1987, 1989), Vezzoli (1988), Crisci et al. (1989), Civetta et al. (1991), Orsi et al. (1992), Di Girolamo et al. (1995), Piochi et al. (1999), Slejko et al. (2004), D'Antonio et al. (2007, 2013), Andria (2008), Brown et al. (2008, 2014), Melluso et al. (2014). (Color online.)

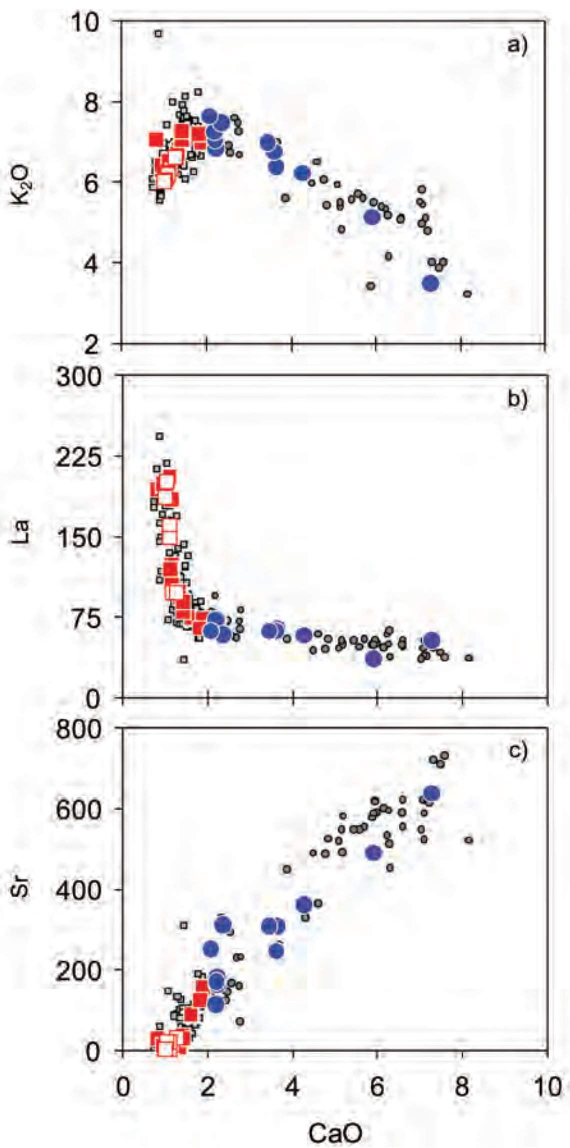

FIGURE 3. Harker diagrams of the Ischia volcanic rocks using CaO as differentiation index: (**a**) K_2O, (**b**) La, and (**c**) Sr. The samples plot along similar liquid lines of descent independent on the activity phase in all diagrams. Both K_2O (**a**) and incompatible trace elements such as La (**b**) exhibit a marked change of the liquid line of descent from less- to more-evolved samples, while compatible trace elements such as Sr (**c**) define a positive and continuous correlation with CaO with no change of the liquid line of descent. Symbols and data source as in Figure 2. (Color online.)

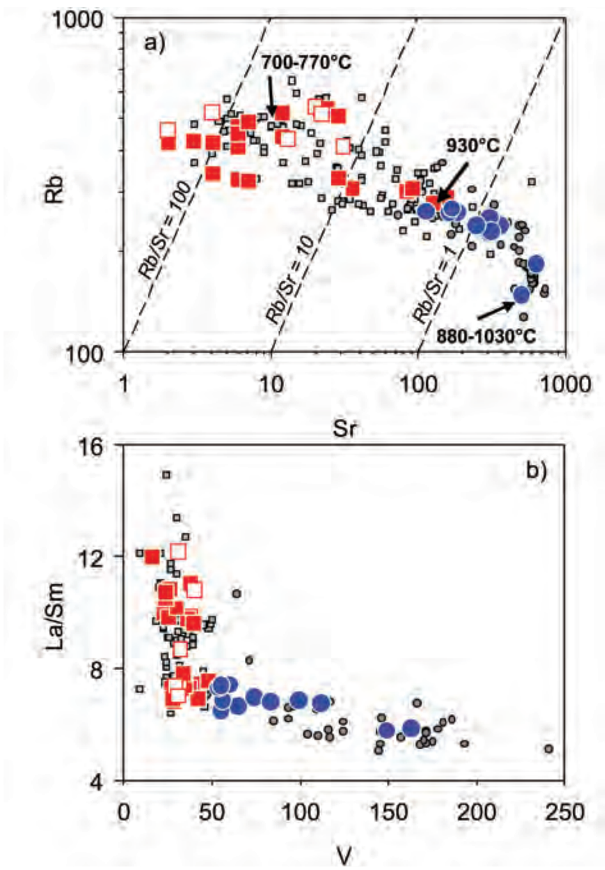

FIGURE 4. (**a**) Rb vs. Sr (bi-log scale), and (**b**) La/Sm vs. V of the Ischia volcanic rocks. The samples exhibit a marked change of the liquid line of descent from less- to more-evolved samples as in the case of CaO (Fig. 2). (**a**) Sr decreases to <10 ppm, and (**b**) LREE fractionation has a threefold increase in the more-evolved samples. The temperatures reported in **a** refer to estimates based on mineral-melt equilibria (Brown et al. 2014; Melluso et al. 2014). Symbols and data source as in Figure 2. (Color online.)

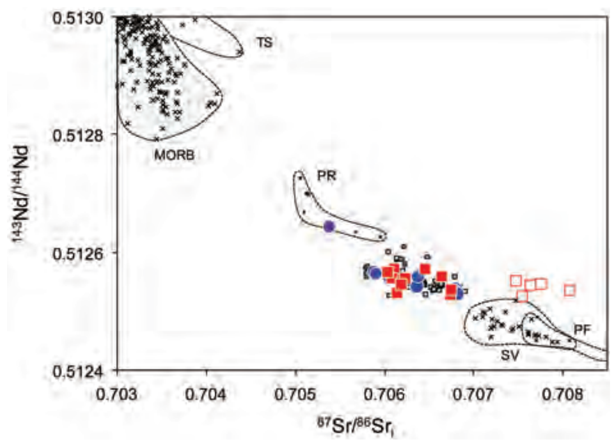

FIGURE 5. $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i$ vs. $^{144}Nd/^{143}Nd$ diagram of the Ischia volcanic rocks compared to other Neapolitan District potassic magmas (PR = Procida, PF = Phlaegrean Fields, SV = Somma-Vesuvio), along with Tyrrhenian Sea basalts (TS), and Mid-Ocean Ridge basalts (MORB). The overall radiogenic isotope signature of erupted magmas at Ischia has a complete overlap among less- and more-evolved samples. It is noteworthy that the anomalous radiogenic Sr trachytes (H-Sr) have Nd isotope compositions overlapping with other samples. Data sources: MORBs = Stracke et al. (2003); mafic Italian volcanic rocks (selected using MgO > 3.5 wt%) = Turi and Taylor (1976), Baldridge et al. (1981), Peccerillo and Manetti (1985), Joron et al. (1987), Civetta et al. (1991), Caprarelli et al. (1993), Villemant et al. (1993), D'Antonio et al. (1999), Ajuso et al. (1998), Gasperini et al. (2002), Conticelli et al. (2002), Avanzinelli et al. (2008), Melluso et al. (2012). Symbols as in Figure 2. (Color online.)

as 230 with proceeding trachyte evolution owing to the drastic decrease of Sr content (Fig. 4a). Light REE fractionation has a smooth increase from ~240 ppm to ~30 ppm V, followed by a rapid threefold increase at almost constant V content (Fig. 4b). Current estimates of temperature decrease with magma evolution (Fig. 4a) yield 880–1030 °C for a mafic inclusion within the Zaro shoshonite (Sr ~500 ppm), and 700–770 °C for a trachyte from Castello (Sr ~10 ppm) on the basis of titaniferous magnetite-melt equilibria (Melluso et al. 2014). Brown et al. (2014) reported a temperature of 930 °C for another trachyte (Sr ~100 ppm) based on both MELTS (Gualda et al. 2012) calculation and biotite-melt equilibrium.

Radiogenic isotopes

The Ischia volcanic rocks have Sr and Nd isotope compositions transitional between those of Procida and Somma Vesuvio within the Neapolitan District (Fig. 5) (e.g., Civetta et al. 1991; Piochi et al. 1999; D'Antonio et al. 1999, 2007, 2013; Conticelli et al. 2002, 2010, 2015b; Avanzinelli et al. 2008, 2009). In terms of Sr and Nd isotope composition, Ischia magmas exhibit a complete overlap among shoshonite, latite, and trachyte (Fig. 5), with no systematic variation between more-evolved and less-evolved magmas. The overall radiogenic isotope composition is similar to that of typical subduction related magmas (e.g., Elliott 2003), with negative correlation between $^{143}Nd/^{144}Nd$ vs. $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i$ (Fig. 5). In this context, the radiogenic isotope composition of Ischia magmas is consistent with the mantle source heterogeneity recorded as a whole by the potassic and ultrapotassic magmas of the Roman Magmatic Province, in particular those of the Neapolitan District (Fig. 5), pointing to variable addition of crustal components to the mantle wedge through the subduction process related to the Apennine orogeny (e.g., Crisci et al. 1989; Beccaluva et al. 1991; Conticelli and Peccerillo 1992; D'Antonio et al. 1999, 2013; Peccerillo 1999, 2001, 2005; Conticelli et al. 2002, 2009, 2010, 2015b; Avanzinelli et al. 2008, 2009; Moretti et al. 2013; Mazzeo et al. 2014).

A notable exception to the general co-variation between the different radiogenic isotope compositions is represented by several highly evolved trachytes with $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i > 0.707$. Despite their anomalous $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i$, these samples have Nd isotope compositions overlapping with other samples (Fig. 5). The other striking characteristics of such anomalous samples are (1) the invariably low Sr content (<34 ppm, Supplemental[1] Table 2, Fig. 4a), (2) the high Rb/Sr (from 13 to 230, Supplemental[1] Table 2, Fig. 4a), and (3) the evolution along a liquid line of descent indistinguishable from that of other trachytes (Figs. 3 and 4). Trachytes with high radiogenic Sr isotopes have been reported also by Poli et al. (1987), although these authors do not provide Nd isotope composition and do not discuss them in details.

Temporal evolution

Considering the temporal variation of erupted magmas over the past 150 kyr of volcanic activity at Ischia (Fig. 6a), the recurrence of more- and less-evolved products (using CaO as a *proxy*, Fig. 3) is indicative of alternating periods of replenishment, differentiation, eruption, and quiescence in a dynamic volcanic system (e.g., Poli et al. 1989; Civetta et al. 1991; de Vita et al. 2010; D'Antonio et al. 2013; Brown et al. 2014).

More-evolved compositions (i.e., trachytes) are more common in the volcanic products preceding the Mt. Epomeo eruption at 55 ka, while in the most recent phases of activity the erupted magmas have a more variable composition including both more- and less-evolved products (Fig. 6a). Actual volume estimates or erupted volcanic product are, however, difficult to ascertain because of the lack of studies focused on the amount of erupted material during each eruptive phase. Tentatively, the reason of such a time-dependent distribution of erupted magmas could be simply due to an outcrop bias, i.e., shoshonite and latite eruptions of the older phases of activity are masked by products of the subsequent eruptive phases. Alternatively, the absence of shoshonite and latite in the oldest periods of activity could be due to a change in the eruptive style following the paroxysmal Mt. Epomeo eruption. This would mean that before 55 ka the volcanic system had an obstructed system of channels feeding the volcanic vents, allowing sufficient time to drive magma evolution and differentiation. Following the Mt. Epomeo eruption, due to the interplay between regional tectonics and volcanic activity (i.e., Mt. Epomeo block resurgence, Marotta and de Vita 2014, and references therein), the system of channels feeding the volcanic vents may have become less obstructed than in the previous volcanic history, allowing the eruption of less differentiated magmas, in the form of lava flows and lava domes, shortly after their arrival in the magma chamber without sufficient time for differentiation processes to operate.

The time-series Sr and Nd isotope composition of erupted magmas clearly shows that both more- and less-evolved magmas have similar radiogenic isotope signatures in each activity phase (Figs. 6b and 6c). The Sr isotope compositions of erupted magmas as a whole, except the highly evolved trachytes with $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i > 0.707$, define a sort of smooth sinusoidal variation curve with the least and the most radiogenic magmas erupted at ca. 6 and 55 ka, respectively. In the last 10 kyr, there is a slight trend toward Sr isotope composition similar to those of the I Phase (Fig. 6b). The variation of Nd isotope composition through time is less discernible than Sr isotopes (Fig. 6c), and, remarkably, the highly evolved trachytes with $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i > 0.707$ have the same Nd isotope composition as other more- and less-evolved magmas of the corresponding activity phase. The sample with the most radiogenic Nd and unradiogenic Sr isotope composition is a mafic enclave within Zaro lava flow (Supplemental[1] Table 3). It is noteworthy that despite the Sr and Nd isotope variation, each magma pulse over the past 150 kyr evolved and differentiated along similar liquid lines of descent (Figs. 3 and 4), suggestive of a steady-state volcanic system in term of fractionating mineral assemblage, independent upon age.

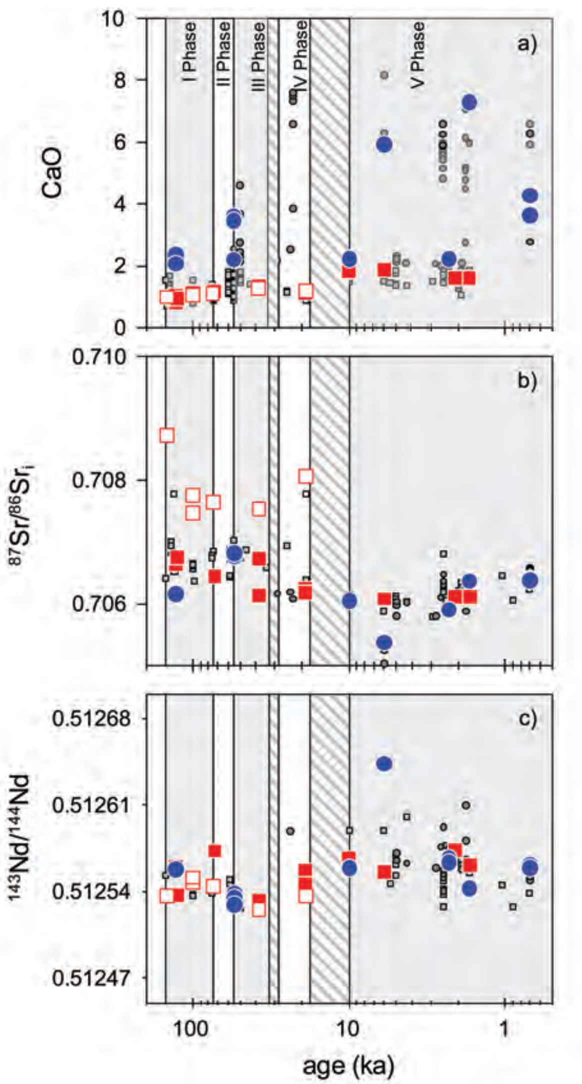

FIGURE 6. (**a**) CaO, (**b**) $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i$, and (**c**) $^{144}Nd/^{143}Nd$ vs. age (log scale) diagrams of the erupted magmas at Ischia volcano during the five phase of volcanic activity. Dashed areas represent quiescence periods. (**a**) The recurrence of less- and more-evolved magmas, using CaO as a *proxy* (see Fig. 3), during the last 150 kyr of volcanic activity, is suggestive of alternating periods of magma chamber recharge and differentiation. (**b**) The Sr isotope signature of erupted magmas, except the anomalous radiogenic $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i$ samples (H-Sr), has a complete overlap among less- and more-evolved samples, with a smooth sinusoidal variation curve. (**b**) The Nd isotope signature of erupted magmas has no clear time dependent variation, and the H-Sr samples have $^{143}Nd/^{144}Nd$ identical to the other more- and less-evolved magmas of the corresponding activity phase. The sample with the most radiogenic Nd and unradiogenic Sr isotope composition is a mafic enclave within the Zaro lava flow. Error bars within symbol size. Symbols and data source as in Figure 2. (Color online.)

DISCUSSION

Understanding magma chamber dynamics related to the long-term evolution of magmas and the transition from highly explosive to effusive eruptions is key to the volcanological study of Ischia, since large caldera-forming eruptions typically have long repose periods (10^3–10^5 yr, e.g., Cashman and Giordano 2014). Previous studies (e.g., Crisci et al. 1989; D'Antonio et al. 2013; Brown et al. 2014; Melluso et al. 2014, and references therein) have demonstrated that the overall geochemical evolution of Ischia magmas, from shoshonite through latite and trachyte, can be modeled as a two-step fractional crystallization process on the basis of the abrupt compositional variation of the liquid line of descent at ~2 wt% CaO (e.g., Fig. 3). The kink at 2 wt% CaO has been taken as evidence of changing the fractionating mineral assemblage. The first step is characterized by crystallization of olivine + plagioclase + clinopyroxene + Fe-Ti oxides + biotite + apatite, driving the magma composition from shoshonite (CaO ~7 wt%) to trachyte (CaO ~2 wt%). The second step, responsible for producing the most differentiated trachytic compositions (CaO <2 wt%) is dominated by crystallization of sanidine, as indicated by the sudden decrease in K_2O (Fig. 3a), with minor plagioclase + clinopyroxene + apatite.

Our new whole-rock data are consistent with the two-step fractional crystallization process, which remained constant over the past 150 kyr, with all samples evolving along similar liquid lines of descent (Figs. 3 and 4). The extreme enrichment of incompatible trace elements during the second step (e.g., threefold for La, Fig. 3b) is caused, in addition to changing the fractionating mineral assemblage, by the significant increase of the enrichment factor (C_l/C_0) as the fraction of residual liquid vanishes. The extreme Sr content depletion and Rb/Sr increase (Fig. 4a) is caused by the major role of feldspars (first step: plagioclase, second step: sanidine) during magma differentiation (e.g., Halliday et al. 1991).

In addition to the closed-system crystal fractionation process, the observed radiogenic isotope variation of less-evolved magmas belonging to the first step (solid circles, Fig. 5) has been attributed to contamination by Hercynian crust of the distinct magma batches feeding the Ischia magma chamber (e.g., Brown et al. 2014). The variation of Sr isotopes vs. Sr content (Fig. 7) is difficult to reconcile with contamination processes starting from a single parental magma composition. The $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i$ spread of magmas at the highest Sr content (some 500–600 ppm), is identical to that observed at low Sr content (Fig. 7), implying that there is no systematic $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ increase with proceeding evolution as would be expected in case of contamination processes by radiogenic crustal material. A similar correlation between Sr isotopes and indices of magma differentiations (e.g., Fig. 7) would be expected in the case of mixing between more- and less-evolved magmas with different isotope compositions. Therefore, the observed isotope variability can derive from either original differences of the parental magmas, which do not outcrop on the island, or to more complex contamination processes affecting, independently, discrete batches of magmas.

The critical issue is that the less-evolved magma pulses, whatever the origin of their Sr isotope signature, evolve along liquid lines of descent from shoshonite through latite and trachyte without any increase in $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ (Fig. 7), and $^{143}Nd/^{144}Nd$ (Fig. 6c). The broadly horizontal liquid lines of descent displayed by the samples (Fig. 7) are thus consistent with a closed-system fractional crystallization process, and all Ischia volcanic rocks evolve along similar liquid lines of descent (Figs. 3 and 4) independent on differences in radiogenic isotope composition.

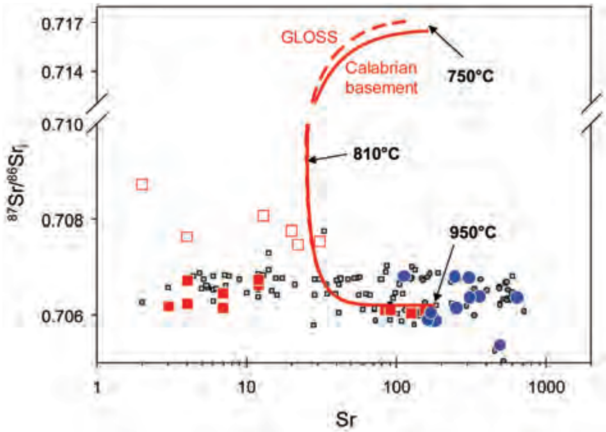

Figure 7. $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i$ vs. Sr (log scale) diagram of Ischia volcanic rocks. The two evolution liquid lines of descent represent the EC-AFC (Spera and Bohrson 2001) model starting from the more-evolved magma (ME) at Sr = 180 ppm during the second step of crystallization (see Table 1 and Supplemental[1] Table 4). The temperature of evolving magmas along the two liquid lines of descent is also reported. Symbols and data sources as in Figure 2. (Color online.)

Moreover, it is noteworthy to highlight the significant spread of Sr isotope composition at similar degree of differentiation, also within a single eruptive phase (Fig. 8). This is obviously true for the highly evolved trachytes with $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i > 0.707$, but also for other samples, especially within V Phase. Considering a vertically stratified magma chamber, this evidence implies that magmas with similar major and trace element composition, thus hypothetically at the same level, have not been fully re-homogenized. Hence, Sr isotopes are consistent with a more complex structure of the reservoir made up by isolated pockets of melts with broadly similar crystallization history that did not actually interact with each other (e.g., Cashman and Giordano 2014).

The highly evolved trachytes with $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i > 0.707$ do not make an exception to this rule, and are indistinguishable from other samples at the same degree of evolution considering all major and trace elements (Figs. 3 and 4), and radiogenic isotopes but $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ (Figs. 7 and 8). However, their anomalous Sr isotope compositions, coupled with their high Rb/Sr can provide constraints on the magma storage timescales of Ischia volcano. The following discussion will be focused on these samples that have never been given a detailed assessment despite they can reveal important implications on the magma chamber dynamics at Ischia.

The origin of trachytes with $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i > 0.707$

The anomalous highly evolved trachytes with $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i > 0.707$ do not comply with the proposed closed system differentiation trend, since there is no less-evolved counterpart (i.e., shoshonite) with similar $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i$ at high Sr (and also CaO) content (Figs. 7 and 8). The first, and perhaps more obvious, explanation that could account for their anomalous Sr isotope composition is the occurrence of open system processes with assimilation of country rocks. To constrain the potential role of crustal assimilation, we modeled an energy constrained assimilation and fractional crystallization (EC-AFC) process (Spera and Bohrson 2001) operating on trachytic magma during the second step of fractional crystallization (Brown et al. 2014). The results are reported in Table 1, plotted in Figure 7, and in Supplemental[1] Table 4. As assimilated material, we used both the average composition of the Hercynian Calabrian basement (Fornelli et al. 2002) and the GLOSS (Plank and Langmuir 1998) as a reference. The modeled EC-AFC process, albeit apt to increase the Sr isotope composition of evolving magmas, is unable to reproduce the low Sr content measured in the highly evolved trachytes (from 34 to 4 ppm, Fig. 7). At the temperature of these highly evolved trachytes (some 750 °C, Fig. 4), the modeled liquid lines of descent of both assimilation scenarios yield

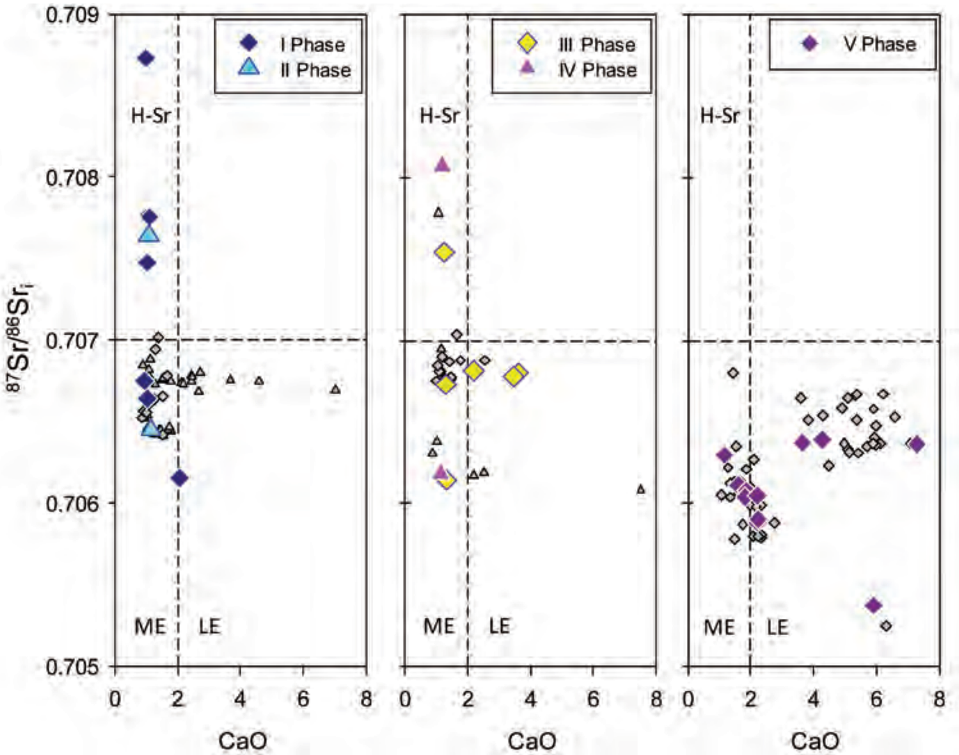

FIGURE 8. Variation of Sr isotope composition within each activity phase at similar degree of differentiation (i.e., CaO) of the Ischia volcanic rocks. Dashed lines mark the threshold at CaO = 2 wt% (LE vs. ME samples), and $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i = 0.707$ (ME vs. H-Sr samples). (Color online.)

TABLE 1. Energy constrained assimilation and fractional crystallization model of Ischia trachytes during the second step of crystallization

		Input parameters		
Magma liquidus temperature	tlm	970 °C	Wall rock 1—Calabrian basement	
Initial magma temperature	tm0	950 °C	Sr (ppm)	351
Wall-rock liquidus temperature	tla	900 °C	$^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$	0.7166
Initial wall-rock temperature	ta0	400 °C		
Wall-rock solidus temperature	ts	650 °C	Wall rock 2—GLOSS	
			Sr (ppm)	327
Equilibration temperature	T_{eq}	750 °C	$^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$	0.7173
Sr content in magma (ppm)	180		D^{Sr} during wall rock melting	0.8
$^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ of magma	0.7062			
D^{Sr} during magma crystallization	3			
		Results		
			Mass fraction and composition of contaminated magma at T_{eq} with:	
			Wall rock 1	
			Sr (ppm)	160
Mass of magma[a]	Mm	0.28	$^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$	0.7165
Mass of assimilated wall rock[a]	Ma	0.22		
			Wall rock 2	
			Sr (ppm)	150
			$^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$	0.7172

Notes: Synopsis of the input parameters and results of the EC-AFC model reported exhaustively in Supplemental[1] Table 4. The bulk distribution coefficient of Sr (D^{Sr}) during magma evolution has been estimated using (1) the two steps fractionating mineral assemblages identified with major elements by Brown et al. (2014) and Melluso et al. (2014), and (2) the mineral-melt partition coefficients of Fedele et al. (2009, 2015) on similar rock types from the nearby Phlaegrean Fields. The initial temperature of the magma is from Figure 4, while that of the wall rock is from Brown et al. (2014). The liquidus and solidus temperature of the wall rock, and the bulk distribution coefficient of Sr (D^{Sr}) during wall rock melting (both the Calabrian basement and the GLOSS) has been assumed referring to Thompson (1996).
[a] Normalized to original mass of magma body.

Sr content >140 ppm and $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ >0.714 (Fig. 7), which are not compatible with the observed compositions. This is because the relatively high Sr content of the assimilated crustal material (both Hercynian Calabrian basement and GLOSS, Table 1) yields a liquid line of descent toward increasing $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ with a Sr content threshold (some 25 ppm at ~810 °C, Fig. 7) significantly higher than the observed values in the highly evolved trachyte samples. Moreover, crustal contamination is expected to produce a coherent Nd isotope composition variation from shoshonite to latite and trachyte (Supplemental[1] Table 4), while the highly evolved trachytes have $^{143}Nd/^{144}Nd$ identical to the other more- and less-evolved magmas of the corresponding activity phase (Fig. 6c).

To investigate the magmatic processes forming the anomalous high-radiogenic Sr trachytes, we compared the major and trace element composition of these samples with the overall trend described by Ischia magmas. As stated above, the high radiogenic Sr trachytes fall along a common liquid line of descent with other samples, showing no significant differences from "normal" trachytes (Figs. 3 and 4). The same is true for Nd isotopes that are within the range of other samples with *normal* $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i$ (Fig. 6c). This means that the origin of their high radiogenic Sr isotope composition must be related to magmatic processes that did not significantly affect the major, trace element, and Nd isotope composition of the magmas, but only their Sr isotope composition, such as time-related radiogenic ^{87}Sr in-growth.

The trachyte samples with $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i > 0.707$ are characterized by elevated $^{87}Rb/^{86}Sr$ (up to 667, Fig. 9), developed during the second step of crystal fractionation. These high Rb-Sr ratios imply that isolated trachytic magma portions, remaining in a partially liquid state even for only a few tens of thousands of years, are liable to develop significant ^{87}Sr in-growth and become more radiogenic than other portions of the magma chamber (e.g., Davies and Halliday 1998; Heumann 1999; Heumann and Davies 2002; Heumann et al. 2002; Simon and Reid 2005; Crowley et al. 2007; Chamberlain et al. 2014).

On the basis of the correlation between $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i$ and $^{143}Nd/^{144}Nd$ (Fig. 5), we assumed that the anomalous high-radiogenic Sr trachytes had a nominal $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ of ca. 0.7065 at the time of their formation in the Ischia volcanic system. This Sr isotope composition would suggest a hypothetical magma residence time between 210 kyr and 1.9 Myr (Fig. 9). These timescales, however, have to be considered as indicative, due to the significant uncertainty in the measured Rb/Sr because of the low Sr content of the samples (a few parts per million determined by ICP-MS, Supplemental[1] Table 2), and to the somewhat arbitrary choice of starting Sr isotope composition.

To further explore this hypothesis and place more robust constraints on magma residence time in the active volcanic system at Ischia, we carried out high-quality Rb-Sr isotope dilution and Sr isotope composition analyses on separated mineral fraction and either groundmass or glass (hereafter generally indicated as groundmass) pairs. We selected five phenocryst-groundmass pairs in trachyte samples with both *anomalous* $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ (ISC 10-01 and ISC 10-05) and, by comparison, *normal* $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ (ISC 10-04 and ISC 10-08, i.e., in the same range of the other volcanic products, Fig. 9). The rationale is that the radiogenic ^{87}Sr in-growth process, if any, must have left a record in the Sr isotope composition of phenocrysts occurring in the trachyte magmas.

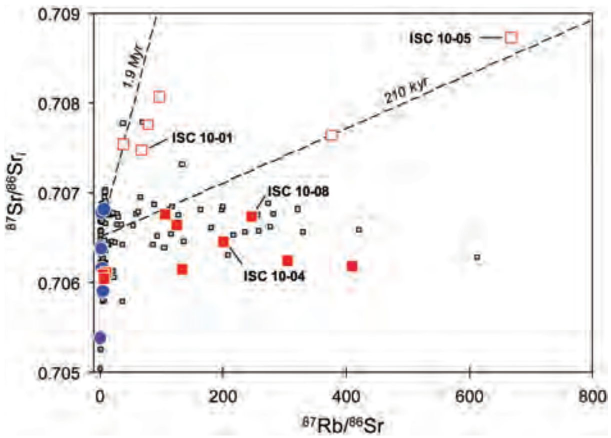

FIGURE 9. $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i$ vs. $^{87}Rb/^{86}Sr$ diagram of the Ischia volcanic rocks. Both ME and H-Sr trachytes have high $^{87}Rb/^{86}Sr$ developed during the second step of crystal fractionation (Fig. 4). H-Sr trachytes have also $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_i > 0.707$, suggesting a hypothetical ^{87}Sr in-growth process, with an age span from 210 kyr to 1.9 Myr (dashed lines), starting from magmas with nominal $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr = 0.7065$ (see text). Symbols and data source as in Figure 2. (Color online.)

Residence time analysis

The Rb-Sr isotope dilution and $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ isotope composition analyses performed on groundmass and mineral separates are reported in Supplemental[1] Table 5, along with mineral residence times obtained by subtracting the known K-Ar eruption age (Gillot et al. 1982; Poli et al. 1987; Tibaldi and Vezzoli 2004) from the mineral-groundmass Rb-Sr age. The results are also plotted in Figure 10, using a backward modeling approach to calculate the time t_0 at which each phenocryst-groundmass pair had the same $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ starting from the measured $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ and $^{87}Rb/^{86}Sr$.

All of the samples yield variable timescale information predating the eruption age from ~4 to 890 kyr (Supplemental[1] Table 5), indicating that the long-lived storage timescale is not restricted to the *anomalous* $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ trachytes but also to the *normal* $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ trachytes (Fig. 10). The two samples with *normal* $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ (ISC 10-04, ISC 10-08), along with one of the samples with *anomalous* $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ (ISC 10-05) yield similar timescale information (from 4.2 to 34 kyr, Figs. 10b, 10c, and 10d). The other *anomalous* $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ trachyte sample (ISC 10-01) yields timescale information from 640 kyr (clinopyroxene) to 890 kyr (sanidine) (Fig. 10a). Based on the assumption of chemical equilibrium during crystallization and subsequent negligible Sr isotope homogenization via diffusion, the timescale information obtained from phenocryst-groundmass pairs (Supplemental[1] Table 5) could be interpreted as magma residence times. Chemical equilibrium between sanidine-groundmass pairs has been ascertained by careful petrographic analyses of thin sections demonstrating no evidence of reaction textures, as also confirmed by a previous study (Melluso et al. 2014). Sr diffusion coefficient in minerals is strongly dependent upon temperature, and the degree of Sr isotope homogenization can be modeled applying the Equation 6.20 from Crank (1975) for diffusion in a sphere. The estimated temperature of samples at the same degree of evolution as the analyzed trachytes (Fig. 4) is 700–770 °C (Melluso et al. 2014). Sr chemical diffusion in

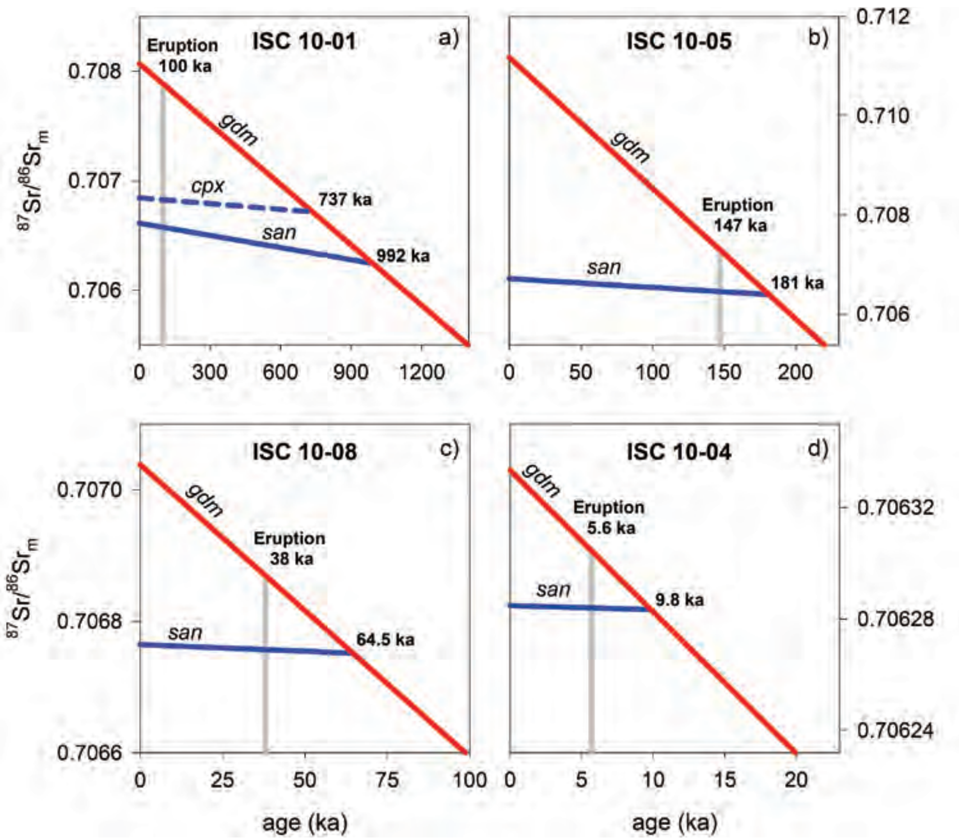

FIGURE 10. $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr_m$ vs. age of samples selected for mineral separation and Rb-Sr isotope dilution analyses with both *anomalous* (**a** and **b**), and *normal* (**c** and **d**) whole-rock $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$. Straight lines represent groundmass (gdm) and minerals (san = sanidine, cpx = clinopyroxene) backward evolution of $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ based upon their respective $^{87}Rb/^{86}Sr$. The intersection, i.e., when minerals and groundmass have the same $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$, yields the mineral crystallization age. The mineral residence time is then calculated subtracting the K-Ar eruption age (Supplemental[1] Table 5). (Color online.)

sanidine at a nominal temperature of 750 °C is 9.0×10^{-19} cm^2/s (Cherniak 1996), implying that Sr isotope homogenization in a crystal with a radius of 2 mm is <2% after 27 kyr (e.g., ISC 10-05, Supplemental[1] Table 5), and still <8% even after 890 kyr (ISC 10-01, Supplemental[1] Table 5). Another constraint on the occurrence of negligible Sr isotope homogenization is provided by the overall Sr isotope data set. The range of the calculated Sr isotope composition of sanidine-groundmass pairs at the time of crystallization t_0 is between 0.7062–0.7067 (Supplemental[1] Table 5, Fig. 10). If significant Sr isotope homogenization had occurred (i.e., using wrong temperature estimates), this would result in sanidine with $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr < 0.7062$ at the time of crystallization, contrary to the Sr isotope signature exhibited by the feeding magmas at low Rb/Sr (Fig. 9). This means that the calculated residence times, albeit only on four samples, can be considered reliable estimates.

Sr diffusion in clinopyroxene is orders of magnitudes lower than in sanidine at 750 °C (Sneeringer et al. 1984), and the single clinopyroxene-groundmass pair measured for sample ISC10-01 yields a calculated residence time of 640 kyr, significantly shorter than that calculated for sanidine in the same sample (Fig. 10a). The different residence times can correspond to the actual crystallizing succession during the second step. Indeed, differentiation modeling performed with rhyolite-MELTS (Gualda et al. 2012) suggests that, in the absence of plagioclase, sanidine precedes clinopyroxene in the crystallization sequence. An alternative hypothesis could be that the clinopyroxene derives from mingling processes with a successive pulse of highly evolved trachytic magma, although we do not have arguments to assess which hypothesis is more reliable.

The long-lived storage time of sample ISC10-01 (Fig. 10a) is somewhat puzzling, although the oldest age of volcanic rocks at Ischia (150 ka) is limited to the subaerial portion and not to the entire volcanic edifice below sea level. Admittedly, more data are needed to confirm the timescale obtained by this single sample, and have a comprehensive scenario on the onset of volcanic activity at Ischia, although in the Pontine Islands, just a few kilometers north of Ischia, K-rich magmatism is dated back at 1 Ma (Cadoux et al. 2005).

In summary, our results indicate that several more-evolved trachytic magmas remained stored for variable timescales (Fig. 10) in isolated pockets within the magma chamber at relatively low temperature (~750 °C), in agreement with the estimates of Melluso et al. (2014). It is also noteworthy that the samples with *normal* $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ (Fig. 9) yield a magma residence time before eruption from 4 to 27 kyr (Supplemental[1] Table 5, Figs. 10c and 10d), implying that the low-T storage is not limited to the *anomalous* $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$ trachytes (Fig. 9), but could be a characteristic of the magma chamber dynamics of the active Ischia volcano. The assessment of pre-eruptive time information in less-evolved magmatic products of Ischia remains, however, undisclosed for two reasons: (1) the high temperature of these magmas (1030–930 °C, Fig. 4), enhancing Sr isotope homogenization and resetting any time-related information, and (2) their relatively low Rb/Sr (Fig. 9), preventing to achieve phenocryst-groundmass Sr isotope differences beyond current external reproducibility of Sr isotope measurements via TIMS ($2\sigma = 1–1.5\ 10^{-5}$, e.g., Avanzinelli et al. 2005) in only a few tens of thousands of years.

Implications for magma chamber dynamics

The magma chamber dynamics of the active Ischia volcano consists of alternating periods of magma recharge, differentiation, eruption, and quiescence from at least 150 kyr to present (e.g., Poli et al. 1989; Civetta et al. 1991; de Vita et al. 2010; D'Antonio et al. 2013; Brown et al. 2014). The erupted magmas record an evolutionary process consisting of recurrent two-step fractional crystallization events (Brown et al. 2014), controlling extreme trace element variations such as low Sr and high Rb contents along with high La/Sm in more-evolved trachytes. Remarkably, no distinction is observed in the differentiation pathways of each magma pulse with distinct Sr isotope composition. The lack of systematic Sr and Nd isotope co-variation during magmatic differentiation from shoshonite to latite, and trachyte indicates that the overall isotopic variability cannot be related to a simple process of contamination by crustal material. The Sr, and to a minor extent Nd, isotope variability at similar degree of differentiation, even within a given activity phase, suggests that the magmas erupted at Ischia do not come from a single re-homogenized reservoir. And this is consistent with multiple magma pockets that have remained isolated within the volcano feeding system, despite following similar differentiation pathways, according to the model of Cashman and Giordano (2014).

The occurrence of several highly evolved trachytes with extremely low Sr contents and high Rb/Sr, having anomalous high-radiogenic $^{87}Sr/^{86}Sr$, reinforces this interpretation and sets constraints on magma storage timescale at Ischia. The high radiogenic Sr isotope signature cannot be ascribed to crustal contamination processes, and implies a long-lived history of magma storage, in the order of a few tens to hundreds of thousands of years. Rb-Sr isochrons on separated mineral-groundmass pairs set compelling evidence on the occurrence of variable magma residence timescales in the active Ischia volcanic system. Such variable residence times are consistent with storage of the most differentiated magmas at relatively low temperature (~750 °C), within isolated magma chamber pockets (e.g., Cashman and Giordano 2014; Cooper and Kent 2014). These more-evolved magma pockets have to be stored in a partially liquid-state to develop radiogenic ^{87}Sr in-growth. Consequently, given the relatively shallow-depth of the Ischia magma chamber (~6–7 km, Piochi 1995; Moretti et al. 2013; Brown et al. 2014, and reference therein), these pockets must necessarily be in a steady-state thermal flux regime to maintain the estimated temperature of ~750 °C, and there must be no mass exchange with other, less-evolved, portions of the magma chamber to preserve low Sr content and high Rb/Sr (i.e., overall magma chamber recharge without chemical interaction). The occurrence of high average heat flow of some 500 mWm^2 (Carlino et al. 2014) support the possibility to maintain storage of magma pockets in a partially liquid state.

The magma chamber dynamics of the active Ischia volcano, probed on the basis of geochemical and radiogenic isotope signatures, is consistent with recent models of complex magma chamber reservoirs made up of multiple melt lenses isolated by largely crystalline mush portions (Cashman and Giordano 2014), and opens new scenarios to future studies on this active volcano.

Acknowledgments

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