Late Devonian and Triassic basalts from the southern continental margin of the East European Platform, tracers of a single heterogeneous lithospheric mantle source

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In Late Devonian and Early-to-Late Triassic times, the southern continental margin of the Eastern European Platform was the site of a basaltic volcanism in the Donbas and Fore-Caucasus areas respectively. Both volcanic piles rest unconformably upon Paleoproterozoic and Late Paleozoic units respectively, and emplaced during continental rifting periods some 600 km away from expected locations of active oceanic subduction zones.

This paper reports a comparative geochemical study of the basaltic rocks, and views them as the best tracers of the involved mantle below the Eastern European Platform. The Late Devonian alkaline basic rocks differ from the calc-alkaline Triassic basic rocks by their higher alkali-silica ratio, their higher TiO_2, K_2O, P_2O_5 and FeO contents, their higher trace element contents, a higher degree of fractionation between the most and the least incompatible elements and the absence of Ta-Nb negative anomalies. These general features, clearly distinct from those of partial melting and fractional crystallization, are due to mantle source effects. With similar Nd and Sr isotopic signatures indicating mantle-crust mixing, both suites would originate from the melting of a same but heterogeneous continental mantle lithosphere (refertilized depleted mantle). Accordingly the Nd model ages, the youngest major event associated with mantle metasomatism occurred during Early Neoproterozoic times ($\sim$650 Ma).

1. Introduction

The southern margin of the Eastern European Platform is structurally divided into two main parts: the Sarmatia segment of the East European Craton and the Scythian Platform lying south of it (figure 1).

The Sarmatia cratonic area is formed by four or five Archean terranes, welded together at 2.3 and 2.1 Ga (see Bogdanova *et al* 1996).

Episodes of rifting destabilized the subsequent platform regime of the East European Craton, the first during the Riphean (Meso- to Neoproterozoic) and the second during the Late Devonian. The latter created the large Pripyat-Dniepr-Donets intra-cratonic rift basin (Bogdanova *et al* 1996; Artemieva 2003).

The origin and nature of the Scythian Platform basement (figure 1) remain unclear. It is overlain by a quite thick Phanerozoic sedimentary

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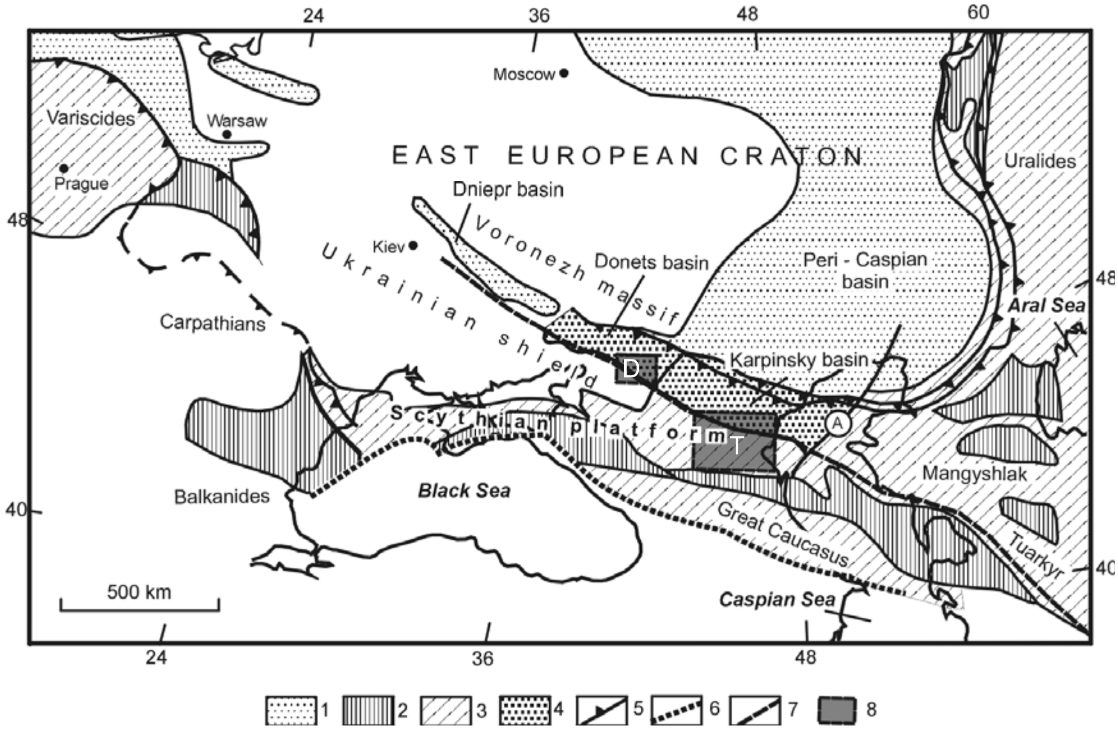

Figure 1. Late Paleozoic tectonic map of the southern East European craton and adjacent areas (modified after Tikhomirov *et al* 2004) in the hypothesis of a Variscan basement for the Scythian Platform (SP) (as for example in Zonenshain *et al* 1990). 1. Early Permian basins within the East European Craton; 2. Areas of Precambrian consolidation within the Late Paleozoic orogen; 3. Areas of Late Paleozoic consolidation; 4. Donets and Karpinsky basins, thought to be inverted during the Permian time; 5. Late Paleozoic and possibly younger thrusts; 6. Presumed shelf margin for the end of Permian; 7. Gissar-Donets fault zone; 8. Location of the Late Devonian (D) Donbas and Triassic (T) Fore Caucasus areas. A. Agrakhan–Guriev fault.

cover (locally more than 10 km thick). Geophysical data only allow characterizing the basement as few drill-holes reached at the deepest the Late Paleozoic succession. A classical model suggests that the Scythian Platform is part of the Late Variscan orogenic belt, between Western Europe and Urals (Arthaud and Matte 1977; Zonenshain *et al* 1990; Nikishin *et al* 1996 and presented as such on figure 1). However, no strong penetrative Late Paleozoic deformation is actually observed on the Scythian Platform. Another hypothesis to test is that the Scythian Platform was part of the Late Proterozoic Baikalian belt fringing Baltica (e.g., Saintot *et al* 2006). This Late Proterozoic orogenic event might have resulted from the amalgamation/accretion of subduction-related arc/oceanic complexes and micro-continental blocks (as the Beloretzk terrane along the Southern Proto-Urals, Glasmacher *et al* 1999; the Pechora-Barentsia terranes on the Timan-Pechora foldbelt, Nikishin *et al* 1996; see Torsvik and Rehnstrom 2001) along the margin of the present-day northern and eastern Baltica, without involving collision of large continental masses. The Scythian Platform, considered herein as part of the Late Proterozoic Baikalian belt, became a renewed passive margin affected by episodes of rifting during the Late Devonian, the Permo(?)-Triassic (Gaetani 2000), and further southwards, Jurassic (Lordkipanidze *et al* 1989; Nikishin *et al* 1998a, b) and Cretaceous (Nikishin *et al* 1998a, b).

Among the rift basins which formed on the Scythian Platform during Phanerozoic times (figure 1), five were accompanied by significant eruptions and/or sub-surface intrusions of mantle-derived magma:

- the Late Devonian Dniepr-Donets-Donbas basin (Chekunov and Naumenko 1982; Wilson and Lyashkevich 1996; McCann *et al* 2003);
- the Triassic Eastern Fore Caucasus basin (Dubinski and Matsenko 1965; Burshtar *et al* 1973; Nazarevich *et al* 1986; Tikhomirov *et al* 2004);
- the Jurassic Western Fore Caucasus basin (Lordkipanidze *et al* 1989);
- the Cretaceous Karkinit rift basin (western part of Scythian Platform) (Muratov 1969; Chekunov *et al* 1976; Grigorieva *et al* 1981; Leschukh 1992; Nikishin *et al* 1998a, b, 2001);
- the Neogene Minvody basin (Stavropol High) (Polovinkina 1960; Adamia and Lordkipanidze 1989).

The two volcanic suites and associated sediments of interest herein, of the Donbas and of the Eastern Fore-Caucasus, were deposited in quite similar tectonic settings. The Late Devonian event of the Donbas and the Triassic event of the Eastern Fore Caucasus are both related to continental rifting of a previously deformed and peneplaned basement. The rifting was due to tensional lithospheric stresses in the Donbas (Saintot *et al* 2003), and more likely transtensional in the Eastern Fore Caucasus (Gaetani 2000).

At Late Devonian times, subaerial basaltic lava flows were emplaced at the beginning of the Donbas rift formation (figure 1) (McCann *et al* 2003 and ref. therein), well after the final Proterozoic consolidation of the Sarmatia basement (at 1500 Ma, according to Milanovsky 1996 and references therein, or at 2000–1800 Ma according to Bogdanova *et al* 1996).

From Early to Late Triassic times, three mafic volcanic suites, including some rhyolitic materials, were emplaced successively in continental and marine sedimentary environments on the Eastern Fore Caucasus (figure 1) (Tikhomirov *et al* 2004 and ref. therein), some tens of millions years after the basement consolidation of the Scythian Platform if Variscan or some hundreds of millions years after, if Baikalian.

Remark: The time gap between the last orogeny and continental rifting is important to specify in as much as the petrotectonic setting of these continental rifting-related eruptions is usually described as "anorogenic or continental intra-plate", and "post-orogenic or post-collisional" after either a long or a short time gap respectively. *A priori*, this time gap does not allow defining the depth, lithospheric or asthenospheric or even deeper, of mantle partial melting synchronous with the continental rifting process.

Two types of volcano-sedimentary environments developed, expressing the competition between uplift and subsidence at surface. Whereas the Late Devonian and Late Triassic volcanoes were subaerial and associated with intra-continental basins (active rifting with uplift prevailing over subsidence), the Early to Middle Triassic volcanoes emplaced within marine basins upon continental crust (passive rifting with subsidence prevailing over uplift).

In time and at large scale, the Late Devonian and the Triassic periods were both the early stages of a continental crust thinning process leading to the formation of continental marine basins (Nikishin *et al* 1996; Stovba and Stephenson 1999; Nikishin *et al* 1998a, b). Nevertheless the geodynamic setting of these basins is still under discussion especially for the Late Devonian time slice.

The Donbas rift belongs to the Prypiat-Dniepr-Donets (PDD) mega-rift (figure 1). This Late Devonian structure was contemporaneous with (1) widespread peri- and intra-cratonic magmatism elsewhere on the whole Eastern European Platform (about 4 million km^2) from the Timan–Pechora and East Barents Sea rift systems northwards to the Peri-Caspian Basin eastwards (Stephenson *et al* 2006), (2) the accretion of an intra-oceanic volcanic arc following the eastward subduction, therefore away from the Eastern European Platform of (or part of) the Paleo-Ural Ocean (Puchkov 1997; Brown *et al* 1998, 2002; Brown and Spadea 1999), and (3) development of extensional basins on the southern margin of the Scythian Platform (on the Greater Caucasus area, Khain 1975). The back-arc position of such remains uncertain despite the fact that a northward subduction zone of the Proto-Tethys Ocean has very often been adopted in plate kinematic models (e.g., Adamia *et al* 1981; Gamkrelidze 1986; Ziegler 1990; Zonenshain *et al* 1990; Stampfli *et al* 2001; Stampfli and Borel 2002; von Raumer *et al* 2003). The closest Paleozoic subduction zone, if any, could have been far to the south, at 600 km minimum along the Greater Caucasus, remnants of which are mafic and ultramafic rocks interpreted as an ophiolitic complex Devonian in age (Khain 1975; Adamia *et al* 1981) and emplaced prior to the late Visean (Khain 1975; Adamia *et al* 1981). Whereas Zonenshain *et al* (1990) considered this ophiolitic series as the suture of a wide ocean basin, that is, "proto-Tethys" or a branch of the Iapetus–Tornquist oceanic system, Adamia *et al* (1981) suggested the closure of a small back-arc oceanic basin with the main subduction zone south of the Transcaucasus area (Adamia *et al* 1981; Gamkrelidze 1986). However, if a Paleozoic subduction zone existed south of the Eastern European Platform, it seems unlikely to be responsible for the widespread peri- and intra-cratonic magmatism of the immense Eastern European Platform.

The Early Mesozoic subduction of Paleo-Tethys Ocean beneath Eurasia is better constrained. It should have been just north of the Lesser Caucasus and in Turkey along the Pontides (Stampfli *et al* 2001; Nikishin *et al* 2001; Dercourt *et al* 1993 and 2000 and all references therein). Therefore, the Eastern Fore Caucasus area was somewhat far (600 km minimum) from the subduction-related margin of the Paleo-Tethys. Furthermore, the Fore Caucasus basin formed probably onto the northern passive margin of a widespread back-arc basin behind this active margin. The Late Triassic volcanic cycle ended along with a general uplift of the Fore Caucasus area which lasted until the end of Jurassic. Then the overlying undisturbed marine Cretaceous cover attests to a stable Eastern European Platform, overlapped by the worldwide transgression.

The compositional changes recorded in the lithospheric continental mantle during orogenic events, are mainly due to its interactions with the crust, oceanic and continental, during the subduction processes during the closure of an ocean and the collision between its margins (Doglioni *et al* 1999). As mafic eruptive rocks are the most important source of information on mantle compositions, we have undertaken a comparative study of mafic volcanics emplaced on the Eastern European Platform margin during two successive continental rifting periods.

The aims of our petrological study of these basaltic (s.l.) rocks, based on petrographic, geochemical and isotopic (Rb-Sr; Sm-Nd) data on whole rocks, are:

- to decipher and compare the compositions of mantle-derived magmas emplaced on a continental lithospheric plate;
- to deduce and compare the compositions of their possible mantle sources;
- to relate these results to the regional geodynamics.

2. Detailed geological background of both eruptive areas

2.1 *Donbas Foldbelt and Late Devonian volcanics*

The Donbas Foldbelt forms the inverted part of the 2000 km-long NW-SE-trending intracratonic Late Paleozoic Pripyat-Dniepr-Donets rift which developed on the south-western part of the Eastern European Platform (figure 1) (Chekunov *et al* 1992; Stephenson *et al* 1993). The rift cuts across the roughly N-S main structural grain of the Precambrian basement, and has separated the latter in two massifs, the Ukrainian Shield to the north and the Voronezh Massif to the south (figure 1). The Donbas Foldbelt consists of a folded Middle Devonian to Upper Carboniferous volcano-sedimentary sequence up to 22 km thick (Chekunov *et al* 1993; Stovba *et al* 1996). The tectonic inversion of the Donbas is Mesozoic (Latest Triassic and Latest Cretaceous) and not Permian (Stovba and Stephenson 1999; Saintot *et al* 2003) as classically described and presented as such in figure 1. The Permian tectonics of the Donbas is tensional leading to a rift reactivation associated with salt diapirism (Stovba and Stephenson 1999, 2003).

At the onset of lithospheric extension in Middle Devonian time, the Proterozoic Priazov and Voronezh Massifs, to the west of the Donbas area, underwent passive rifting with a shallow marine sedimentation (Nikishin *et al* 1996; Alekseev *et al* 1996). During the Late Devonian, continental rifting associated with basement uplift, fluviatile sedimentation and subaerial basaltic volcanism occurred from the Pripyat-Dniepr-Donets system in the south to the Barents Sea in the north (Chirvinskaya and Sollogub 1980; Wilson and Lyashkevich 1996; Stovba and Stephenson 1999; McCann *et al* 2003).

Our sampling area of basalts is located on the southern margin of the Donbas Foldbelt (30 km to the south of the city of Donetsk) (figure 1). The geology of the region is characterised by a series of WNW-trending half grabens filled with Middle Devonian to lower Visean volcano-sedimentary deposits. The earliest eruptions are Late Devonian basaltic fissure eruptions. The basalts are interstratified with fluviatile deposits. According to McCann *et al* (2003), uplift and fault activity predated and went on during eruptions. The studied samples come from lava flows (Df in table 1) and their possible feeder dykes (Dd in table 1) cross-cutting the Proterozoic basement to the south.

2.2 *Eastern Fore-Caucasus area and Triassic volcanics*

The Eastern Fore Caucasus is located in the eastern part of the Scythian Platform, between the East European Craton and the Great Caucasus Alpine belt (figure 1), few hundred kilometers from the Donbas area. As previously mentioned, the nature of the Scythian Platform basement is unknown and few are available on the Paleozoic succession.

The accessible data come from few boreholes reaching the Permo?-Triassic rocks between 3 and 6 km. These deposits have a highly variable thickness (up to 2 km). They unconformably overlie the older Paleozoic succession and are covered by Jurassic (Pliensbachian and younger) strata. The Paleozoic (Devonian to latest Carboniferous) succession shows greenschist facies metamorphism, and is intruded by Carboniferous to Early Permian granites (Letavin 1980).

According to the classical scheme of evolution (Zonenshain *et al* 1990; Nikishin *et al* 2001), after the Late Paleozoic folding and granitic intrusions, the Fore-Caucasus area was uplifted during Late Permian and eroded while continental sedimentation occurred eastwards.

Another interpretation could be as follows: the greenschist metamorphism was the result of a deep burial of the Devonian to latest Carboniferous succession before its exhumation and erosion during the widespread Permian uplift of the southern Eastern European Platform. This uplift was synchronous with a widespread continental rifting affecting not only the southern margin of the Eastern European Platform, but also the western Variscan Europe as well as the northern Europe (Ziegler 1990). No Late Paleozoic penetrative deformation is recorded in the succession of the Scythian Platform (Stephenson *et al* 2004; Saintot *et al* 2006). Where high grade metamorphism of the Scythian Platform basement is observed, as in the Stavropol High region, it is reported to be Baikalian in age (Belov 1981). As the basement of the Pre-Caspian basin, lying north of the area of interest, could contain relics of eclogites, Baikalian in age (Volozh 2003), the last major orogenic event recorded by the Scythian Platform could likely be Baikalian rather than Variscan.

During Triassic times, periods of continental and marine sedimentation alternated with some hiatuses in-between. The total rate of subsidence varied, being very low or even null in the central part (the Stavropol High) relative to the western and eastern parts.

Three eruptive cycles, in Early (T1), Middle (T2) and Late (T3) Triassic times, are recognized (Tikhomirov *et al* 2004 and references therein). They correspond to two different sedimentation epochs [Early to Middle Triassic = T1–T2] and [Late Triassic = T3] separated by a period of strong uplift and erosion. T1, T2 and T3 eruptive cycles followed each other in time over about 50 Ma.

The Early (T1) and Middle (T2) Triassic sequences include both transgressive (Early Triassic) and regressive (Middle Triassic) series. Continental clastics at the foot of Triassic strata presumably fill linear NW-SE striking troughs. In time, the sedimentation area widened, and continental clastic sedimentation was gradually replaced by marine clastic and carbonate accumulation. The maximal transgression corresponds to the Olenekian times when the Scythian platform was almost completely immersed. A marine carbonate sedimentation with bioherms dominated in the shallow central part of the Kayasula basin, while two deeper basins of terrigeneous sedimentation developed both to the north (Karpinsky) and to the south.

Eruptions of basaltic submarine lava flows associated with some rhyolitic and dacitic flows and domes occurred during both Early (T1) and Middle (T2) Triassic periods at the northern limit of the Kayasula area on the East Manych narrow zone (Nikishin *et al* 2001). They are interstratified with significant volumes of clastic marine sediments.

This volcano-sedimentary sequence is unconformably overlain by 300 m thick Ladinian (late Middle Triassic) subaerial (?) clastic rocks, reworking products of the volcanics.

Throughout this Early to Middle Triassic period, the tilting of strata at small and large scales attests for a high degree of instability of the basement. During the Early Triassic (T1), another eruptive zone located southwards to the East Manych zone would have been the source of rhyolitic ash falls.

Thus, T1 and T2 eruptions respectively occurred during the opening (increase of the subsidence rate during a passive syn-rifting process), then the disappearance (decrease of the subsidence rate during a passive post-rifting process) of a marine basin. That suggests a change/release of the lithospheric stresses.

In Late Triassic times (T3), the entire Fore-Caucasus area was first uplifted, tilted and deeply eroded during the Carnian. Then during the Norian, a huge event of subaerial eruptions occurred synchronously with a fluvio-lacustrine sedimentation (Tikhomirov *et al* 2004 and ref. therein). This T3 volcano-sedimentary sequence, named the Nogai Formation (Dubinskii and Matsenko 1965), is up to 1500 m thick. A few mafic lava flows (T3 in table 1) are interstratified with enormous volumes of rhyolitic and dacitic ignimbrites and related fall deposits. The sediments accumulated within a NW-SE striking linear depression superposed on the East Manych zone, suggesting an intra-continental rifting environment. The Nogai Formation was partially overlain by the Rhaetian Zurmutinskaya continental suite (up to 300 m thick) including minor rhyolitic tuffs. The same environment, but without volcanism, prevailed during Jurassic times.

3. Petrography of the basaltic rocks

3.1 *Late Devonian group*

The Late Devonian (D) basaltic samples, either from lava flows or dykes, are microlitic (25 to 50%), mostly porphyritic (1 to 8 mm in diameter; 1 to 20% in volume), and frequently microvesiculated. Minerals are Ti-augite (with frequent sector-zoning and concentric zoning), and/or pseudomorphs of olivine (not as microlites), and/or plagioclase (often as microlites only), magnetite, apatite (abundant in UK16) and sometimes brown hornblende. Mantle xenocrysts (deformed and partially resorbed olivine and pyroxene) are sometimes observed (UK44A1). More detailed descriptions are in McCann *et al* (2003).

Table 1. *Major and trace element (when available) compositions of basaltic suites from the Fore-Caucasus Triassic and Donbas Devonian areas. T1: Early Triassic; T2: Middle Triassic; T3 Late Triassic; Df: Late Devonian lava flows; Dd: Late Devonian dikes.*

Location	Donbas	Donbas	Donbas	Donbas	Donbas	Donbas	Donbas	Donbas	Donbas
Sample	UK 11 A	UK 16	UK 44A1	UK 45	UK 49B2	UK 50	UK 22	UK 59	UK 60
Age	Df	Df	Df	Df	Df	Df	Dd	Dd	Dd
SiO_2	43.61	51.34	43.07	46.24	47.10	47.92	47.90	46.65	44.87
TiO_2	5.31	2.61	3.60	3.51	3.45	4.43	4.21	3.78	4.00
Al_2O_3	12.77	18.35	9.96	16.08	14.18	10.75	16.37	14.23	13.39
Fe_2O_3	16.52	8.60	13.15	11.82	12.66	12.34	12.88	13.42	13.57
FeO	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
MnO	0.22	0.20	0.14	0.19	0.21	0.20	0.15	0.20	0.22
MgO	5.12	3.38	7.50	5.04	5.58	6.07	4.38	5.10	6.50
CaO	9.69	5.13	11.38	8.34	7.46	10.47	3.78	7.37	9.12
Na_2O	2.33	3.49	2.17	3.34	3.49	3.56	3.17	4.27	3.55
K_2O	2.47	5.07	1.61	2.32	2.15	1.77	1.99	1.81	1.76
P_2O_5	0.64	0.83	0.41	0.55	0.71	0.62	0.27	0.85	0.78
LOI	1.71	1.43	6.95	2.70	3.03	1.83	4.84	2.31	2.57
Total	100.39	100.43	99.94	100.13	100.02	99.96	99.94	99.99	100.33
Recalculated on an anhydrous basis									
SiO_2	44.19	51.86	46.32	47.46	48.56	48.83	50.37	47.76	45.90
TiO_2	5.38	2.64	3.87	3.60	3.56	4.51	4.43	3.87	4.09
Al_2O_3	12.94	18.54	10.71	16.50	14.62	10.95	17.21	14.57	13.70
Fe_2O_3tot.	16.74	8.69	14.14	12.13	13.05	12.58	13.54	13.74	13.88
FeO	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
MnO	0.22	0.20	0.15	0.20	0.22	0.20	0.16	0.20	0.23

MgO	5.19	3.41	8.07	5.17	5.75	6.19	4.61	5.22	6.65
CaO	9.82	5.18	12.24	8.56	7.69	10.67	3.97	7.55	9.33
Na_2O	2.36	3.53	2.33	3.43	3.60	3.63	3.33	4.37	3.63
K_2O	2.50	5.12	1.73	2.38	2.22	1.80	2.09	1.85	1.80
P_2O_5	0.65	0.84	0.44	0.56	0.73	0.63	0.28	0.87	0.80
As	0.63	0.59	0.81	1.27	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	0.51	< L.D.
Ba	1155	3133	552	1748	959	783	927	907	843
Be	1.38	3.26	1.92	2.25	1.84	3.37	2.16	2.03	1.92
Bi	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.
Cd	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	0.32	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	0.4292
Ce	126	224	83	109	152	141	73	129	129
Co	52	20	52	40	40	35	45	39	45
Cr	50	27	438	45	10	277	19	83	266
Cs	1.30	0.59	< L.D.	23.59	< L.D.	< L.D.	1.80	0.38	0.31
Cu	124	47	101	94	74	110	28	63	72
Dy	6.19	7.58	5.29	5.78	6.85	6.98	4.46	6.75	6.58
Er	2.48	3.26	2.25	2.22	2.78	2.67	1.99	2.68	2.56
Eu	3.67	5.11	2.66	3.16	3.93	3.85	2.64	3.93	3.77
Ga	23.7	32.2	19.1	22.3	26.6	15.0	25.4	24.4	23.5
Gd	10.07	12.43	7.29	7.86	9.96	10.55	6.79	9.72	9.56
Ge	1.45	1.32	1.50	1.39	1.39	1.64	1.98	1.66	1.78
Hf	8.80	12.70	6.07	7.20	9.65	9.19	5.43	9.05	8.42
Ho	1.04	1.29	0.92	0.95	1.18	1.13	0.76	1.14	1.13
In	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	0.13	0.11	0.12	0.11
La	59	112	40	52	73	66	35	58	58
Lu	0.24	0.36	0.27	0.26	0.34	0.30	0.23	0.30	0.29

Table 1. *(Continued)*

Location Sample Age	Donbas UK 11 A Df	Donbas UK 16 Df	Donbas UK 44A1 Df	Donbas UK 45 Df	Donbas UK 49B2 Df	Donbas UK 50 Df	Donbas UK 22 Dd	Donbas UK 59 Dd	Donbas UK 60 Dd
Mo	1.66	1.25	1.77	2.51	0.58	1.34	0.85	1.30	1.76
Nb	64	101	40	55	69	66	35	64	58
Nd	66	95	44	53	71	68	39	69	66
Ni	70	17	160	48	26	101	11	44	63
Pb	2.82	6.15	6.33	4.23	3.72	4.14	14.17	11.86	5.42
Pr	15.9	25.6	10.4	13.2	18.1	17.0	9.5	16.5	16.2
Rb	44	108	27	64	38	32	183	44	47
Sb	0.12	0.11	0.16	< L.D.	< L.D.	0.12	< L.D.	0.68	< L.D.
Sm	11.78	16.58	8.53	9.77	13.05	12.94	8.29	13.05	12.48
Sn	2.69	3.69	2.09	2.66	2.75	3.07	2.19	2.70	2.61
Sr	897	2152	340	1315	867	484	377	786	829
Ta	5.02	7.49	3.09	4.27	5.41	5.15	2.64	4.86	4.48
Tb	1.26	1.60	0.91	1.02	1.35	1.41	0.86	1.26	1.25
Th	5.75	12.43	3.63	4.87	6.94	6.30	3.84	6.14	5.16
Tm	0.332	0.445	0.310	0.278	0.389	0.343	0.262	0.345	0.329
U	1.52	2.76	0.55	1.55	1.41	1.59	4.23	1.64	1.32
V	427	184	332	277	303	313	424	289	318
W	0.36	0.78	0.59	0.40	0.40	0.42	0.77	0.77	0.72
Y	28.5	35.3	24.9	25.4	30.8	31.1	22.1	30.1	29.1
Yb	1.86	2.63	1.84	1.91	2.28	2.30	1.68	1.94	1.81
Zn	182	161	118	133	158	205	188	168	154
Zr	364	566	256	304	380	371	207	388	349

Table 1 (suite). *Major and trace element (when available) compositions of basaltic suites from the Fore-Caucasus Triassic and Donbas Devonian areas. T1: Early Triassic; T2: Middle Triassic; T3: Late Triassic; Df: Late Devonian lava flows; Dd: Late Devonian dikes.*

Location	Fore-Caucasus	Fore-Caucasus	Fore-Caucasus	Fore-Caucasus	Fore-Caucasus	Fore-Caucasus	Fore-Caucasus	Fore-Caucasus	Fore-Caucasus
Drillhole	Arbali-11	Arbali-11	Ilmenskaya-1	Ilmenskaya-1	Ilmenskaya-1	Ilmenskaya-1	Svetloyarskaya-102	Svetloyarskaya-102	Svetloyarskaya-102
Sample	73375	73360	78270	78273	78277	78290	82602	82616	82603
Age	T3	T3	T2	T2	T2	T2	T2	T2	T2
SiO_2	45.91	49.04	46.72	46.65	49.57	51.06	50.78	51.61	52.52
TiO_2	1.34	1.46	1.22	1.12	1.76	1.41	2.27	2.18	2.14
Al_2O_3	16.78	17.18	16.46	15.95	15.49	16.38	15.93	15.46	14.98
Fe_2O_3	10.98	9.13	9.64	10.15	10.49	8.76	12.27	11.79	11.73
FeO	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
MnO	0.18	0.08	0.15	0.20	0.20	0.14	0.22	0.19	0.22
MgO	6.42	4.47	9.05	10.06	5.86	4.84	3.98	3.98	4.01
CaO	4.82	5.31	8.94	7.40	8.18	8.83	5.54	5.47	5.94
Na_2O	3.91	2.86	2.66	3.11	3.88	4.82	5.49	5.16	4.30
K_2O	1.20	2.09	0.98	0.75	1.70	0.78	0.62	0.68	0.90
P_2O_5	0.23	0.47	0.19	0.19	0.27	0.21	0.34	0.35	0.32
LOI	8.10	7.79	3.88	4.31	2.47	2.61	2.43	3.03	2.81
Total	99.87	99.88	99.89	99.89	99.87	99.84	99.87	99.9	99.87
Recalculated on an anhydrous basis									
SiO_2	50.03	53.25	48.66	48.81	50.89	52.51	52.11	53.28	54.11
TiO_2	1.46	1.59	1.27	1.17	1.81	1.45	2.33	2.25	2.20
Al_2O_3	18.28	18.66	17.14	16.69	15.90	16.85	16.35	15.96	15.43
Fe_2O_3tot.	11.96	9.91	10.04	10.62	10.77	9.01	12.59	12.17	12.09
FeO	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

Table 1. *(Continued)*

Location Drillhole Sample Age	Fore-Caucasus Arbali-11 73375 T3	Fore-Caucasus Arbali-11 73360 T3	Fore-Caucasus Ilmenskaya-1 78270 T2	Fore-Caucasus Ilmenskaya-1 78273 T2	Fore-Caucasus Ilmenskaya-1 78277 T2	Fore-Caucasus Ilmenskaya-1 78290 T2	Fore-Caucasus Svetloyarskaya-102 82602 T2	Fore-Caucasus Svetloyarskaya-102 82616 T2	Fore-Caucasus Svetloyarskaya-102 82603 T2
MnO	0.20	0.09	0.16	0.21	0.21	0.14	0.23	0.20	0.23
MgO	7.00	4.85	9.43	10.53	6.02	4.98	4.08	4.11	4.13
CaO	5.25	5.77	9.31	7.74	8.40	9.08	5.69	5.65	6.12
Na_2O	4.26	3.11	2.77	3.25	3.98	4.96	5.63	5.33	4.43
K_2O	1.31	2.27	1.02	0.78	1.75	0.80	0.64	0.70	0.93
P_2O_5	0.25	0.51	0.20	0.20	0.28	0.22	0.35	0.36	0.33
As	39.89	4.98	0.61	< L.D.	< L.D.	1.07	1.66	3.13	0.91
Ba	63	225	224	319	239	148	174	174	274
Be	3.19	1.84	< L.D.	1.36	1.35	1.10	1.03	1.58	1.53
Bi	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.
Cd	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	0.338	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.
Ce	15.8	59.3	24.0	20.5	35.3	28.8	40.9	39.8	39.3
Co	46	35	48	44	33	31	31	29	28
Cr	536	221	420	394	157	109	10	11	7
Cs	2.58	10.22	7.82	2.65	3.01	0.22	1.88	2.30	2.22
Cu	75	52	43	60	55	34	32	35	35
Dy	2.86	4.06	3.59	3.50	5.38	4.28	6.14	5.80	5.61
Er	1.87	2.03	2.15	2.18	2.94	2.66	3.56	3.63	3.40
Eu	0.90	1.58	1.34	1.27	1.80	1.53	2.03	2.01	1.87
Ga	19.4	16.6	17.0	16.5	17.8	17.8	23.4	22.8	22.0
Gd	3.23	5.16	4.17	3.78	6.10	5.02	6.50	6.50	6.04
Ge	0.99	1.54	1.18	1.26	1.61	1.82	1.88	1.90	2.04
Hf	2.70	3.85	2.54	2.44	3.63	3.09	4.60	4.24	4.17
Ho	0.65	0.82	0.75	0.75	1.08	0.92	1.27	1.31	1.17
In	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.	0.110	< L.D.	0.116

La	5.9	28.6	10.0	8.6	14.4	12.0	17.2	16.0	16.0
Lu	0.291	0.312	0.321	0.306	0.427	0.388	0.553	0.519	0.495
Mo	< L.D.	0.84	0.51	< L.D.	0.56	0.47	1.78	1.11	1.88
Nb	3.26	20.41	3.83	4.22	5.67	4.64	7.84	7.48	7.27
Nd	10.8	28.9	15.1	12.7	22.3	18.1	25.1	23.9	22.8
Ni	158	124	142	142	53	33	< L.D.	< L.D.	< L.D.
Pb	18.92	9.95	3.55	2.44	4.67	5.30	3.96	4.56	4.29
Pr	2.29	6.86	3.25	2.81	4.62	3.88	5.36	5.34	5.07
Rb	41.3	63.4	22.4	19.3	42.0	18.5	24.6	27.0	28.6
Sb	0.34	1.10	0.13	0.25	0.14	0.15	0.61	0.49	0.53
Sm	2.77	5.68	3.83	3.25	5.70	4.54	6.08	5.78	5.83
Sn	1.32	2.08	1.36	0.95	1.58	1.31	2.06	2.14	2.01
Sr	161	410	320	253	416	180	499	497	455
Ta	0.281	1.500	0.327	0.350	0.462	0.381	0.643	0.649	0.621
Tb	0.456	0.654	0.627	0.548	0.850	0.728	1.002	0.937	0.923
Th	0.63	4.92	1.79	1.41	2.49	2.16	3.10	3.01	3.01
Tm	0.290	0.271	0.294	0.289	0.432	0.391	0.553	0.531	0.506
U	0.254	1.092	0.507	0.326	0.627	0.566	0.926	1.092	0.900
V	209	183	199	226	268	292	311	305	295
W	1.062	0.480	0.196	0.254	0.268	0.378	0.513	0.384	0.327
Y	17.4	21.3	20.5	21.0	30.2	26.0	37.8	35.3	34.9
Yb	1.97	1.93	1.98	2.14	2.88	2.51	3.53	3.36	3.15
Zn	134	94	84	81	101	81	118	116	129
Zr	113	169	111	100	155	126	196	184	183

Table 1 (suite). *Major and trace element (when available) compositions of basaltic suites from the Fore-Caucasus Triassic and Donbas Devonian areas. T1: Early Triassic; T2: Middle Triassic; T3: Late Triassic; Df: Late Devonian lava flows; Dd: Late Devonian dikes.*

Location Drillhole Sample Age	Fore-Caucasus Svetloyarskaya- 84 78552 T3?	Fore-Caucasus Ilmenskaya- 1 78285 T2	Fore-Caucasus Ilmenskaya- 1 78292 T2	Fore-Caucasus Ilmenskaya- 1 78293 T2	Fore-Caucasus Ilmenskaya- 1 80202 T2	Fore-Caucasus Svetloyarskaya- 102 82598 T2	Fore-Caucasus Svetloyarskaya- 102 82599 T2	Fore-Caucasus Svetloyarskaya- 102 82618 T2	Fore-Caucasus Svetloyarskaya- 102 82631 T2	Fore-Caucasus Svetloyarskaya- 102 AN-94-5 T2
SiO_2	45.16	47.77	49.17	48.90	48.19	41.38	48.74	49.26	51.00	51.71
TiO_2	1.69	1.65	1.54	1.50	1.80	1.32	1.36	1.10	2.44	2.24
Al_2O_3	15.45	15.60	14.56	15.95	16.23	15.69	16.65	16.70	16.02	15.20
Fe_2O_3	10.58	9.91	9.95	11.57	11.44	2.43	2.49	2.29	5.17	11.80
FeO	–	–	–	–	–	6.10	7.19	5.88	5.81	–
MnO	0.17	0.20	0.16	0.29	0.21	0.17	0.17	0.16	0.27	0.21
MgO	7.59	6.90	8.01	6.36	7.88	4.41	7.07	7.32	4.18	4.15
CaO	9.04	6.77	7.73	5.34	4.80	12.53	6.44	7.50	6.34	5.43
Na_2O	4.71	5.20	4.07	4.55	4.29	4.50	4.68	4.20	3.70	5.61
K_2O	1.08	0.21	0.73	0.85	0.96	0.08	0.22	0.42	1.10	0.75
P_2O_5	0.22	0.25	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.20	0.19	0.14	0.40	0.36
LOI	3.64	5.38	3.33	3.71	3.89	8.09	2.37	1.93	1.44	2.28
Total	99.33	99.84	99.48	99.26	99.92	96.9	97.57	96.9	97.87	99.74
Recalculated on an anhydrous basis										
SiO_2	47.19	50.57	51.14	51.18	50.18	46.59	51.20	51.87	52.89	53.06
TiO_2	1.77	1.75	1.60	1.57	1.87	1.49	1.43	1.16	2.53	2.30
Al_2O_3	16.15	16.51	15.14	16.69	16.90	17.67	17.49	17.58	16.61	15.60
Fe_2O_3tot.	11.06	10.49	10.35	12.11	11.91	2.74	2.62	2.41	5.36	12.11
FeO	–	–	–	–	–	6.87	7.55	6.19	6.03	–
MnO	0.18	0.21	0.17	0.30	0.22	0.19	0.18	0.17	0.28	0.22
MgO	7.93	7.30	8.33	6.66	8.21	4.97	7.43	7.71	4.33	4.26
CaO	9.45	7.17	8.04	5.59	5.00	14.11	6.76	7.90	6.57	5.57
Na_2O	4.92	5.50	4.23	4.76	4.47	5.07	4.92	4.42	3.84	5.76
K_2O	1.13	0.22	0.76	0.89	1.00	0.09	0.23	0.44	1.14	0.77
P_2O_5	0.23	0.26	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.23	0.20	0.15	0.41	0.37

Table 1 (suite). *Major and trace element (when available) compositions of basaltic suites from the Fore-Caucasus Triassic and Donbas Devonian areas. T1: Early Triassic; T2: Middle Triassic; T3: Late Triassic; Df: Late Devonian lava flows; Dd: Late Devonian dikes.*

Location	Fore-Caucasus	Fore-Caucasus	Fore-Caucasus	Fore-Caucasus	Fore-Caucasus	Fore-Caucasus	Fore-Caucasus	Fore-Caucasus	Fore-Caucasus
Drillhole	Svetloyarskaya-102	Svetloyarskaya-102	Svetloyarskaya-102	Svetloyarskaya-102	Svetloyarskaya-102	Svetloyarskaya-102	Svetloyarskaya-102	Svetloyarskaya-102	Svetloyarskaya-102
Sample	AN-94-6	82652	82656	82660	82661	82667	82672	82676	82677
Age	T2	T1	T1	T1	T1	T1	T1	T1	T1
SiO_2	51.78	52.60	46.42	47.28	47.22	49.32	49.40	48.76	47.96
TiO_2	2.30	1.98	1.32	1.48	2.08	1.72	1.86	1.70	1.52
Al_2O_3	15.39	15.97	15.71	15.55	16.43	15.00	15.79	16.82	18.52
Fe_2O_3	11.63	2.59	2.32	2.34	2.00	1.71	1.67	1.46	1.47
FeO	–	7.91	7.59	6.64	7.53	7.09	6.90	7.82	8.01
MnO	0.22	0.17	0.21	0.19	0.20	0.23	0.26	0.27	0.11
MgO	3.82	5.07	10.59	9.09	7.83	7.73	7.57	6.28	6.96
CaO	5.31	4.23	6.44	8.20	6.62	8.46	8.38	10.59	6.96
Na_2O	5.69	3.94	2.64	3.76	4.24	3.56	3.66	2.85	3.44
K_2O	0.63	0.38	0.28	0.10	0.18	0.40	0.20	0.30	0.42
P_2O_5	0.37	0.38	0.22	0.26	0.29	0.27	0.28	0.30	0.23
LOI	2.13	1.42	2.01	3.55	1.62	1.91	1.16	1.25	1.17
Total	99.27	96.64	95.75	98.44	96.24	97.4	97.13	98.4	96.77
Recalculated on an anhydrous basis									
SiO_2	53.30	55.24	49.52	49.83	49.90	51.65	51.47	50.19	50.17
TiO_2	2.37	2.08	1.41	1.56	2.20	1.80	1.94	1.75	1.59
Al_2O_3	15.84	16.77	16.76	16.39	17.36	15.71	16.45	17.31	19.37
Fe_2O_3tot.	11.97	2.72	2.47	2.47	2.11	1.79	1.74	1.50	1.54
FeO	–	8.31	8.10	7.00	7.96	7.42	7.19	8.05	8.38
MnO	0.23	0.18	0.22	0.20	0.21	0.24	0.27	0.28	0.12
MgO	3.93	5.32	11.30	9.58	8.28	8.10	7.89	6.46	7.28
CaO	5.47	4.44	6.87	8.64	7.00	8.86	8.73	10.90	7.28
Na_2O	5.86	4.14	2.82	3.96	4.48	3.73	3.81	2.93	3.60
K_2O	0.65	0.40	0.30	0.11	0.19	0.42	0.21	0.31	0.44
P_2O_5	0.38	0.40	0.23	0.27	0.31	0.28	0.29	0.31	0.24

3.2 *Triassic groups*

The Early (T1) and Middle (T2) Triassic basic rocks do not differ from each other. They comprise basalts, dolerites, and gabbros forming a series of lava flows and cognate subsurface intrusions. Basalts and basaltic andesites are sparsely porphyritic (1 to 3% of olivine and rare plagioclase, 1–3 mm in size), massive or vesicular (up to 10% by volume). Groundmass often has a quenched texture with hollow 'box-shaped' plagioclase and skeletal pyroxene, typical of subaqueous basic lavas. Dolerites and gabbros are massive, mainly poikilitic or equigranular, with large (up to 5 mm) brown augite (40–50%) including numerous weakly zoned plagioclase An_{40-60} (55–45%), ilmenite and Ti-magnetite (up to 5%).

The Late (T3) Triassic basic rocks are found as lava flows and subsurface intrusions. Basalts are somewhat more crystal rich than T1 and T2. The phenocrysts (up to 10–15% by volume; 1–5 mm in size) include plagioclase, corroded olivine, augite and sometimes brown amphibole, scattered within an intersertal matrix. Dolerites are usually equigranular, never poikilitic, with the same mineralogical assemblage than T1 and T2. More detailed descriptions are in Tikhomirov *et al* (2004).

In summary, there are no significant petrographic differences between these groups of alkaline basic rocks, except that the augite is much more titaniferous in the Late Devonian group, and a brown amphibole appears in the Late Triassic (T3) group. The most massive and less altered samples were chosen for the geochemical study.

4. Chemical and isotopic compositions of basaltic rocks

4.1 *Analytical methods*

Both major and trace elements have been analysed respectively by ICP-AES and ICP-MS (SARM; CRPG-CNRS Nancy) on available samples of the Late Devonian and Triassic volcanics. Among the Triassic samples, if major elements are available for mafic rocks of each period, no one Early Triassic (T1) sample was available for trace element and isotopic analysis at CRPG. Besides major element data alone are given for samples analysed by wet chemistry in 1983–84 at the chemical lab of "Ukrchermetgeologia" state enterprise (Khar'kov, Ukraine) and in 1996 at the Leeds University analytical lab (Great Britain). Sr and Nd isotope data were obtained after standard chemical separation techniques on a Finnigan MAT 262 (CNRS-CRPG; Nancy). Rb and Sm concentration isotope data were determined by isotopic dilution on the ICP-MS Elan 6000.

4.2 *Major element compositions and preliminary interpretations about mantle source compositions and genetic relationships between volcanics of each group*

Major element data from Donbas and Fore-Caucasus samples are listed in table 1. On the whole diagrams, Late Devonian (D), Early (T1), Middle (T2) and Late (T3) Triassic groups are identified. Each of them is successively characterized then compared to each other.

The Late Devonian (D) samples, either lava flows (Df) or feeder dykes (Dd) include, after Le Maitre classification (1989), mainly trachybasalts and rare basanites, basalts and basaltic trachyandesites (figure 2 – data recalculated on an anhydrous basis). The LOI (lost on ignition) values for whole rocks (1.5 to 3% on average; up to 7%) are not related to significant loss or gain in SiO_2, K_2O and Na_2O (figure 3 – untreated data). Nevertheless only data recalculated on an anhydrous basis are plotted in the binary diagrams where MgO in abscissa is considered as the best discriminator (figure 4). First, no distinction exists between flows and dykes. On the whole, volcanics are rather silica-poor (44 to 49% in average; up to 52%) and alkali-rich (4 to 6%; up to 8%) with a moderate MgO content (8 to 5.5%; down to 3.5%) and a CaO content between 12 and 4%. They belong to the group of alkali basalts (s.l.). Like alkali basalts,

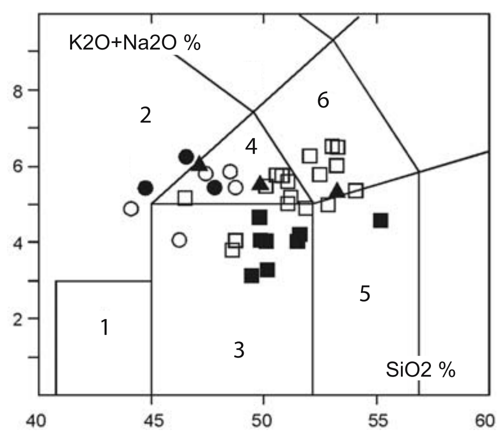

Figure 2. Variations of total Alkali *vs.* SiO_2 (data recalculated on an anhydrous basis) and classification of magmatic whole rocks after Le Maitre (1989). Circle: Late Devonian (D) Donbas volcanics; white: as lava-flow; black: as dyke; square and triangle: Triassic Fore Caucasus volcanics; black square: Early Triassic (T1) lavas; white square: Middle Triassic (T2) lavas; black triangle: Late Triassic (T3) lavas. 1. Picrobasalt; 2. tephrite-basanite; 3. basalt; 4. trachybasalt, 5. basaltic andesite; and 6. basaltic trachyandesite.

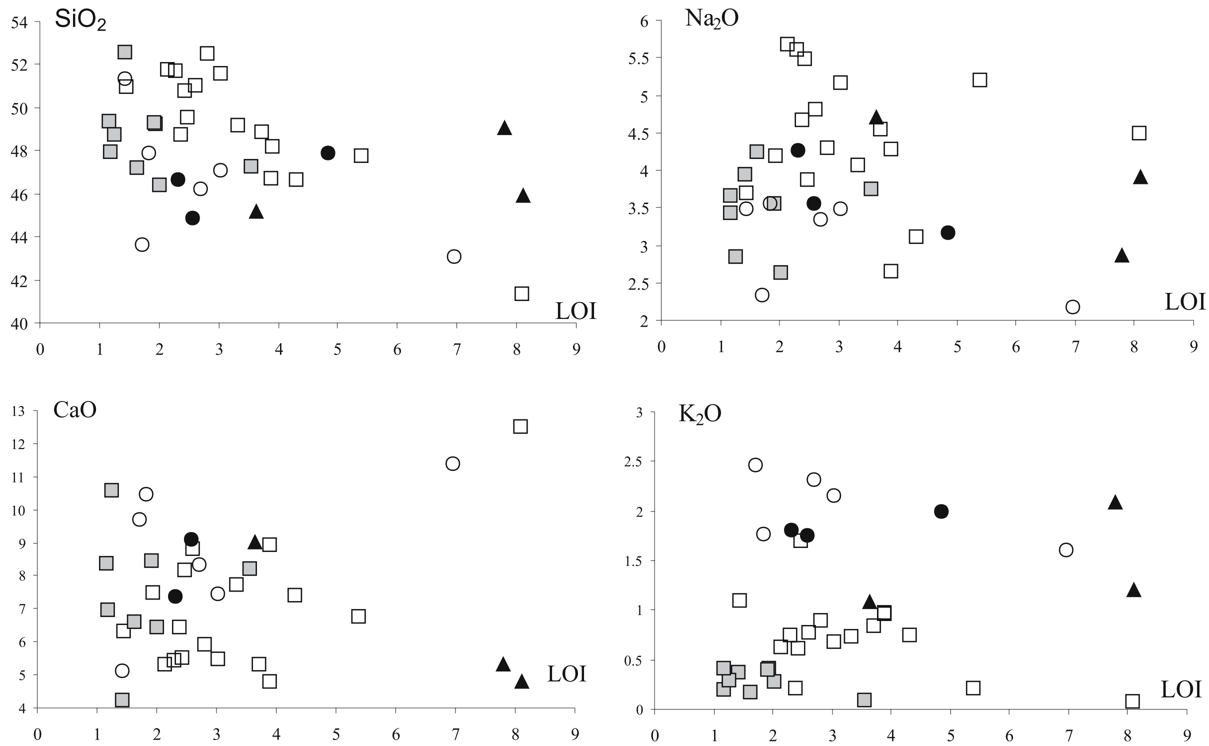

Figure 3. Variations of SiO_2, Na_2O, CaO and K_2O with Loss On Ignition (LOI) on whole-rocks (untreated data). Same symbols as in figure 2.

they are significantly rich in TiO_2 (3.5 to 4.5% in average; up to 5.4%), FeO (11 to 15% in average), P_2O_5 (0.5 to 1%), and rather poor in Al_2O_3 (10 to 15%). Positive correlations exist between MgO, FeO, CaO, and TiO_2 on one hand, and SiO_2, Al_2O_3, P_2O_5, Na_2O and K_2O on the other.

Data for the *Early (T1) and Middle (T2) Triassic samples* do not overlap in the classification diagram (figure 2 – data recalculated on an anhydrous basis), T2 having a higher alkali/silica ratio. T1 includes basalts and rare andesites, whereas T2 comprises basalts, trachy-basalts and trachy-andesitic basalts and rare basaltic andesites. Both groups show a positive correlation between alkali and silica. The LOI (lost on ignition) contents of T1 samples (figure 3 – untreated data) are rather low (up to 2%) and do not show any correlation with silica, alkali and CaO. In turn, the somewhat higher LOI contents (up to 4%) of T2 samples are correlated with more or less significant loss in SiO_2 and Na_2O. As for the Donbas samples, only data recalculated on an anhydrous basis are plotted against MgO in the binary diagrams (figure 4). T1 and T2 data overlap in most diagrams, except that T2 rocks have slightly lower P_2O_5 and higher K_2O contents than T1 rocks. These differences could be primary in as much as it is a feature of the whole group and there is no correlation between both oxides and LOI variations. Besides some T1 and T2 samples contain more than 10% MgO, and are relatively primitive rocks. On the whole, SiO_2, TiO_2, Na_2O and P_2O_5 are inversely correlated with MgO, whereas K_2O, CaO, FeO and Al_2O_3 do not show significant variations with MgO decrease.

The Late Triassic T3 samples are mostly trachybasalts (figure 2), slightly more potassic than T1 and T2 (figure 4). The small number of available samples does not allow evaluation of positive correlation of their rather high LOI contents with K_2O and SiO_2 and negative correlation with Na_2O and CaO (figure 3 – untreated data). In figure 4, the T3 compositional field overlaps more or less with the T2 and T1 ones. Nevertheless T3 shows significant and sometimes opposite variations between major elements compared to those existing within T1 and T2. In T3, SiO_2, K_2O and Al_2O_3 are negatively correlated with MgO, whereas CaO, FeO and TiO_2 are positively correlated with MgO. Note that T3 shows a positive correlation between MgO and Na_2O and the strongest opposite correlation between Na_2O and K_2O. Nevertheless both features could be due to some loss in Na_2O with alteration.

Preliminary interpretations: The Late Devonian (D) and Triassic (T) basic rocks are both rather alkali-rich with a more or less high alkali/silica ratio, an indication of mantle sources of rather