

Growth of monazite during prograde metamorphism

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GROWTH OF MONAZITE DURING PROGRADE METAMORPHISM

RUNNING TITLE: PROGRADE MONAZITE GROWTH

ABSTRACT

The reactions leading to monazite growth during progressive metamorphism are still not completely understood. This has a flow-on effect of not being able to completely and reliably link monazite U–Pb age data to specific parts of the P–T evolution of rocks. A suite of progressively contact-metamorphosed metapelites and metapsammities from Mt Stafford in central Australia were used to constrain metamorphic monazite growth mechanisms. U–Pb monazite geochronology is used to distinguish detrital (>1800 Ma) from metamorphic (<1800 Ma) monazite, and in granulite facies samples indicates that >50% of monazite is detrital. Differences in grain-separate yields are interpreted to reflect detrital and metamorphic monazite in greenschist facies samples being considerably finer-grained (<70 μm) than in granulite facies samples, since the sum of REE + Y + Th + U in samples is relatively uniform regardless of metamorphic grade. Comparatively low-Th rims on higher-Th monazite ‘cores’ in granulite facies samples are interpreted to reflect metamorphic monazite overgrowths on either detrital or (slightly) older metamorphic cores. Therefore, pre-existing monazite is interpreted as a major contributor to metamorphic monazite growth. Apatite—observed as inclusions in monazite—and xenotime, and possibly major silicate minerals such as plagioclase, biotite, muscovite and andalusite/sillimanite, are also interpreted to be contributors on the basis of their presence, their composition and, in the case of silicates, their vast abundance relative to monazite even if they only contain a minor amount of REEs. This study argues that pre-existing monazite is a major contributor to metamorphic monazite growth and therefore that the link between monazite growth and changes to P–T (as monitored by changes to silicate mineral assemblage) is not straightforward.

KEYWORDS

Metamorphism, Monazite, REEs, Mt Stafford, Metapelite, Psammite

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Growth of Monazite During Prograde Metamorphism	i
Running Title: Prograde monazite growth	i
Abstract.....	i
Keywords.....	i
List of Figures and Tables	2
Introduction	3
Background and Geological Setting.....	7
Methods	9
Sample Collection – Mt Stafford, Arunta Region NT.....	9
Sample Preparation – Whole-Rock Analysis	10
Sample Preparation – Thin Sections.....	10
Sample Preparation – Resin Mounts	10
Back-scattered Electron Imaging.....	11
Mineral Chemistry – Electron Probe Micro-analysis (Electron Microprobe)....	11
Geochronology – LA–ICP–MS	12
Observations and Results.....	12
Whole rock chemistry.....	12
Petrography.....	15
Monazite Composition and monazite element maps.....	17
Apatite and Xenotime Composition	23
Monazite U–Pb age data.....	23
Discussion	29
Chemical Characteristics of Detrital vs. Metamorphic Monazite	29
Why is monazite more abundant in high-grade samples?	31
Growth of monazite during progressive metamorphism	32
Conclusions	34
Acknowledgments	35
References	35
Appendix A: Whole-rock Geochemistry	38
Appendix B: Electron Microprobe Analyses.....	39
Appendix C: Monazite Geochronological Data	40

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1: Location map of Mt Stafford (Bottom) including zone boundaries indicating metamorphic grade (derived from Greenfield 1997), as well as a map of the wider Reynolds-Anmatjira Ranges (Taken from Morrissey et al. 2014).	6
Figure 2: A comparison of SiO_2 wt% concentration vs, Al_2O_3 wt% concentration in whole rock chemistry. The data is divided distinctly into two groups, with the SiO_2 rich group being designated psammitic, and the Al_2O_3 rich group being designated the pelitic.	13
Figure 3: Table of whole-rock compositions for samples in this study, oxides displayed in wt% and trace elements displayed in ppm. Sum total of REEs + Y + Th + U and calculated heat production for each sample is also displayed.	14
Figure 4: BSE images from sample STF 21c show cores of apatite with monazite overgrowth.....	20
Figure 5: BSE image and elemental maps of monazite grain from granulite facies sample STF 21a. Inclusions of apatite are clearly visible in Ca map (B), rim features are visible in Th map (D).	21
Figure 6: BSE image and elemental maps of monazite grain from granulite facies sample STF 21a. Internal grain complexity and rim features are apparent in each elemental map (B-E).....	22
Figure 7: Histograms of monazite ages for each metamorphic sample. Relative probability curves indicate the most probable mean age of monazite grains.....	24
Figure 8: Histograms of monazite ages for each igneous sample. Relative probability curves indicate the most probable mean age of monazite grains.	27
Figure 9: Concordia plots of each sample in this study.....	28
Figure 10: Comparison of wt% concentrations in element pairs; La vs. Ce, U vs Y and Th vs. Ca, in both pelitic samples and psammitic samples.....	29