

1 **Nature, origin, transport and deposition of andosol parent material in south-central Chile (36-**
2 **42°S)**

3
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9
10 **Abstract**

11 The andosols of south-central Chile (36-42°S) are developed on yellow-brown loams that cover the
12 region with a thickness of several meters. In the literature, several hypotheses concerning the
13 nature, origin, mode of transport and deposition of the andosol parent material have been advanced
14 but no general agreement has been found. In this paper, we test these hypotheses by analyzing new
15 representative outcrops located around Icalma (38°50'S) and Puyehue (40°40'S) lakes by a pluri-
16 methodological approach. Our data demonstrate that the andosol parent material has the typical
17 mineralogical and geochemical signature of the regional volcanism and that these deposits are post-
18 glacial in age. The grain size of the deposits and the morphology of the coarse grains evidence that
19 most of these particles haven't been re-transported by wind but are direct volcanic ash falls
20 deposited throughout the Late Glacial and Holocene. Because of the prevailing westerly winds,
21 most of them have been transported to the East. Following the deposition of the volcanic particles,
22 weathering and pedogenetic processes have transformed part of the volcanic glasses and
23 plagioclases into allophane and have wiped out the original layering. This work demonstrates that
24 most of the andosols that occur in the Andes and in the eastern part of the Intermediate Depression

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25 of south-central Chile are developed on volcanic ashes directly deposited by successive volcanic
26 eruptions throughout the Late Glacial and Holocene.

27
28 *Keywords: Andosol, volcanic ashes, volcanic glasses, allophane, Chile*

29

30 **1. Introduction**

31 Volcanic soils cover over 50% of south-central Chile (36-42°S). Although regional variations exist,
32 these soils are mainly developed on yellow-brown soft deposits covering the area with a thickness
33 of several meters (Laugenie, 1982). These deposits cover the Andes and the eastern part of the
34 Intermediate Depression and constitute a nearly continuous formation between 36° and 47°S
35 (Besoain, 1985). This distribution is imposed by the location of the regional active volcanoes at the
36 western side of the southern Andes, which is part of the Southern Volcanic Zone of Chile (SVZ, 33-
37 46°S, Gerlach et al., 1998). The soils developed on these soft deposits are locally called Trumaos,
38 i.e. the Araucanian name for andosols signifying “dust accumulation” (Langohr, 1971).

39 The nature, origin and mode of transport and deposition of the Trumaos parent material have often
40 been discussed in the literature but up to today no agreement has been reached (for a review, see
41 Besoain, 1985, Moreno & Valera, 1985 and Veit, 1994). It seems that each author finds his own
42 explanation depending on the study location. For south-central Chile, three main hypotheses have
43 been proposed: (1) direct volcanic ash falls (Wright, 1965 In: Besoain, 1985); (2) loess-like deposits
44 (Laugenie et al., 1975) or (3) glacial transport with ablation moraine-like deposition (Langohr,
45 1974). Authors sometimes propose a mixed depositional pattern (Besoain, 1985). Locally,
46 pyroclastic flows, lahar deposits and fluvial sediments might have participated to the accumulation
47 of particles on which the andosols further developed (Wright, 1965 In: Besoain, 1985). The main
48 objective of this paper is to analyze new representative outcrops located around Icalma and Puyehue
49 lakes by a pluri-methodological approach, in order to test the diverse hypotheses about the nature,
50 origin, transport and deposition of the andosol parent material in south-central Chile.

51

52 **2. Geological setting**

53 Icalma lake (71°20'W, 38°50'S) is small water body (11.65 km²) located in the Andes at an
54 elevation of 1140 m (Fig. 1). Its watershed covers 147 km² and is flanked westward by three active
55 volcanoes: Lonquimay, Llaima and Sollipulli. On the other hand, Puyehue lake (72°20'W, 40°40'S)
56 is a larger lake located at the foothill of the Andes. Its watershed reaches 1267 km² and is
57 characterized by the occurrence of Antillanca and Puyehue-Cordón de Caulle volcanic complexes
58 eastward, with the Osorno volcano being nearby to the south (~ 50 km). The whole region is
59 dominated by westerly winds coming from the Pacific Ocean. Combined to the rough topography of
60 the Andes, these winds are responsible for high precipitation in the area, with an annual rainfall
61 reaching 2000-3000 mm/yr around Icalma (Mardones et al, 1993) and 2000-5000 mm/yr at Puyehue
62 (Muñoz Schick, 1980). Occasionally, a Foehn type easterly wind locally called “Puelche” blows
63 down from the Andes (Aravena et al., 1993).

64 The watersheds of both lakes are covered by unconsolidated and weakly stratified yellow-brown
65 loams, several meters thick. As in many locations of the Intermediate Depression and the Andes in
66 south-central Chile, andosols – i.e. soils developed on volcanic ashes - are developed on these
67 deposits (Fig. 2). In many locations and particularly at Icalma and Puyehue, these deposits sit on top
68 of glacial or fluvio-glacial sediments.

69 In the Icalma region, the andosol parent material reaches a maximum thickness of 6 m and bury all
70 the underlying Pleistocene deposits, whether they are glacial, fluvial or lacustrine (Mardones et al.,
71 1993). In addition, the deposits contain two distinct pumice layers that have been attributed to the
72 Holocene explosive eruptions of Sollipulli (Naranjo et al., 1993) and Llaima (Naranjo & Moreno,
73 1991) volcanoes, respectively dated at 2900 yr BP (Naranjo et al., 1993; De Vleeschouwer et al.,
74 2005) and 9000 yr BP (9030 yr BP, De Vleeschouwer et al., 2005 or 8830 yr BP, Naranjo &
75 Moreno, 1991). Westward, i.e. closer from Llaima and Sollipulli volcanoes, additional intercalated
76 and well distinct tephra layers occur.

77 Around Puyehue lake, the yellow-brown soft deposits are thinner (maximum 4 m) with no
78 intercalated distinct tephra layer. They overlay fluvioglacial and glacial deposits. Further to the East
79 the loam deposits are progressively replaced by coarse scoriae particles and volcanic rocks, which is
80 due to the proximity of the Puyehue - Cordón de Caulle and Antillanca volcanic complexes. On the
81 Argentinan side of the Andes, the yellow-brown soft deposits reappear, with the number of distinct
82 tephra layers decreasing eastward.

83

84 **3. Material and methods**

85 *3.1 Sampling*

86 The soft deposits covering the catchments of Icalma and Puyehue lakes have been studied in detail
87 during two fieldwork campaigns in summer 2001-2002 and in December 2003. As a result of a
88 preliminary geological investigation of the area, three representative sections were selected for
89 sampling around Icalma and two around Puyehue (Tab. 1, Fig. 1). After sedimentological
90 description and color characterization with a Munsell color chart, the sections were sampled for
91 mineralogical, geochemical and grain size analysis. Moreover, OC2 outcrop has been continuously
92 sampled and impregnated for observation in thin section following Boës and Fagel (2005). In this
93 paper, two representative sections are described in detail: OC2 and OC5.

94

95 *3.2 Grain size*

96 Grain size measurements were performed on organic matter-free samples using a laser diffraction
97 particle analyzer Malvern Mastersizer 2000. Organic matter was removed using H₂O₂ 10%. The
98 samples were introduced into a 100 ml deionized water tank free of additive dispersant, split with a
99 2000 rpm stirrer and crumbled with ultrasonic waves. The sample quantity was adjusted in order to
100 obtain a laser beam obscuration between 10 and 20 %. The grain size parameters are averaged over
101 10,000 scans. Although the grain size analyzer is theoretically capable of measuring particles within
102 a 0.02 - 2000 µm size range, samples containing particles coarser than 420 µm were systematically

103 analyzed by a combination of laser diffraction and sieving methods. The distribution parameters
104 have been calculated following Folk and Ward (1957). In order to assess the size of the coarsest
105 grains, the D99 parameter, i.e. the equivalent diameter for which the distribution sum has the value
106 of 99%, has been calculated.

107

108 *3.3 Mineralogy*

109 Bulk and clay mineralogy were achieved by X-ray diffraction (XRD) on a Bruker D8-Advance
110 diffractometer with CuK α radiations. Bulk samples were powdered to 100 μm using an agate
111 mortar. An aliquot was separated and mounted as unoriented powder by the back-side method
112 (Brindley & Brown, 1980). The powder was submitted to XRD between 2° and 45° 2 θ and the data
113 were analyzed in a semi-quantitative way following Cook et al. (1975).

114 Grain size separation of the clay fraction (< 2 μm) was performed by sedimentation in glass vials
115 according to the Stokes' law (Moore and Reynolds, 1989). Because the clay fraction obtained after
116 50 min of sedimentation (< 2 μm) did not contain enough material for X-ray diffraction, the clay
117 mineralogy was analyzed on the fraction obtained after 20 min of sedimentation (< 4 μm). Oriented
118 mounts of the clay-size fraction were realized by the "glass-slide method" (Moore and Reynolds,
119 1989) and subsequently scanned on the diffractometer. Slides revealing the presence of crystallized
120 clays after air drying (N) were scanned after two additional treatments: ethylene-glycol solvation
121 during 24h (EG) and heating at 500°C during 4h (500). As the mineralogy of the clay-size fraction
122 is dominated by amorphous particles, only a qualitative estimation of the amount of crystallized
123 clay minerals is given. It is based on the intensity of the highest clay diffraction peak on the natural
124 (N) diffractogram.

125

126 *3.4 Geochemistry*

127 The major elements of bulk samples from OC3 (5.00 m), OC5 (0.00, 0.75, 1.50 and 2.25 m) and
128 OC6 (-2,00, 1.00 and 3.00 m) sections were determined by X-ray fluorescence (XRF) on fused Li-

129 borate glass beads. Analyses were performed on a ARL 9400 spectrometer. The trace elements of
130 the OC5 (1.50 m) sample were analyzed by ICP-MS. In addition, the chemical composition of
131 individual grains was determined using a Cameca Camebax SX 50 microprobe at Louvain-La-
132 Neuve University, Belgium (Tab. 2). Finally, the chemical test of Fieldes and Perrot (1966) was
133 applied to a series of samples. This classical test for andosols is based on the propriety of allophanes
134 to produce an alkaline reaction with sodium fluoride (Quantin, 1972). It consists in controlling the
135 variation of pH after mixing 1 g of sediment with 50 ml of NaF 1N solution. In the presence of a
136 high allophane content, the solution reaches a basic pH (10-11) after 1 h.

137

138 *3.5 Infrared spectrometry*

139 Infrared spectra of the clay-size fraction of OC3 (5.00 m) and OC5 (1.50 m) samples were recorded
140 with a Nicolet Nexus spectrometer in the 400-4000 cm^{-1} range. Two milligrams of sediment were
141 mixed with KBr in order to obtain a 150 mg pellet for analysis.

142

143 **4. Results**

144 *4.1 Description*

145 *4.1.1 Icalma*

146 At Icalma OC2 site, the andosol parent material sits on top of a coarse unit (-2 to 0 m, Fig 3a)
147 containing pebbles and sand grains similar in nature to the regional bedrock. The pebbles are
148 composed of granite (Galletue Plutonic Group) and blue-green sedimentary rocks (Icalma Member
149 of Biobio Formation *sensu* Suarez & Emparan, 1997). Between 0 and 1.30 m, gravel, sand and silt
150 occur with a fining upward texture. Above 1.30 m, the deposits are composed of organic matter rich
151 yellow-brown loams with two intercalated pumice layers: the Llaima pumice dated at 9000 yr. BP
152 (1.60 to 1.95 m) and the Alpehue pumice emitted by the Sollipuli volcano in 2900 yr. BP (3.65 to
153 4.00 m) (De Vleeschouwer et al., 2005). Under both pumice layers, outcrops show brunified buried
154 soils. Apart from the pumice layers and the three brunified horizons (Fig. 3a), no stratification was

155 observed. Microscopical inspection of thin sections revealed no lamination (Fig. 4). However, we
156 observed a high porosity, a very poor sorting of particles and we noticed the abundance of highly
157 coated grains. This clayey coating has a post-depositional pedogenetic origin and is probably due to
158 the high lixiviation of chemical elements (chitonic structure, *sensu* Stoops & Jongerius, 1975). It is
159 responsible for the yellow-brown color of the grains. Moreover, the observation of thin sections
160 revealed a succession of 5-10 cm thick organic-rich horizons. This indicates that the physical
161 processes controlling the deposition and reworking of particles were not constantly active, therefore
162 allowing enough time for a vegetal cover to develop.

163

164 4.1.2 Puyehue

165 From -10 to 0 m, the Puyehue OC5 outcrop shows fluvio-glacial deposits composed of coarse
166 volcanic particles with a grain size ranging from boulder (max 40 cm) to sand (Figs 3 and 5). The
167 andosol-bearing loams occur between 0 and 2.70 m and overlay the fluvio-glacial deposits by a
168 relatively sharp contact (Figs 3 and 5). No stratification was observed and the deposits contain no
169 distinct tephra layer. Pedogenetic processes are responsible for the brunification of the upper part of
170 the outcrop (30 cm).

171

172 4.2 Grain size

173 In volcanic soils, the original grain size distributions can be altered by weathering and illuviation
174 processes, transforming weatherable minerals into very fine-grained amorphous silicates (Buurman
175 et al., 2004). Moreover, the deposits contain 15-20 % of organic matter, which has a significant
176 effect on the bulk grain-size distribution of the samples. To better assess the original grain size of
177 the deposits, the organic matter was dissolved and the results are considered as a minimum of the
178 original grain size.

179 *Icalma*. The grain size data of OC2 section show four distinct units (Fig. 3): a) a fining upward unit
180 at the base of the outcrop, b) the two coarse pumice layers and c) a constant grain size for the

181 andosol parent material (loam to silt loam). Due to the presence of coarse non-weathered particles,
182 the upper two samples are coarser. The frequency curves characterizing the yellow-brown loams are
183 bimodal (modes at 15-30 μm and 300-450 μm ; fig. 3). Above the pumice layers, the yellow loam
184 deposits contain a few pumice fragments and are therefore coarser. The D99 values of the andosol
185 parent material without pumice fragments vary between 506 and 860 μm .

186 *Puyehue*. The grain size of OC5 samples does not significantly vary with depth and is typical for silt
187 loams (Fig. 3b). The base and the top of the outcrop are coarser, which is due to the presence of
188 coarse fluvio-glacial deposits and coarse non-weathered volcanic particles, respectively. The grain
189 size distribution curves are bimodal, with the coarse fraction always being less abundant (< 15 % in
190 volume). The D99 values vary between 87 and 783 μm .

191

192 4.3 Mineralogy

193 *Icalma*. The bulk mineralogical composition of the coarse unit at the base of OC2 outcrop (0 - 1.3
194 m) clearly differs from the overlying deposits (Fig. 3). It is principally composed of plagioclases,
195 pyroxenes, amphibole, chlorite and quartz, mainly originating from the bedrock. The samples do
196 not contain amorphous particles. Above 1.3 m, the typical yellow loam deposits are characterized
197 by a constant mineralogical composition, largely dominated by plagioclases and amorphous
198 particles (volcanic glasses, organic matter and non-crystalline clay minerals). Pyroxenes and quartz
199 are secondary minerals. Smear slides reveal that the amorphous particles are mainly composed of
200 allophane, which is identified by its typical microscopical characteristics: yellow-brown in color
201 and isotropic and amorphous under polarizing microscope. In smear slides, the coarse grains (> 200
202 μm) of OC2 samples have been identified as typical volcanic particles: scoriae (> 60%), pumices,
203 plagioclase and traces of pyroxene and olivine.

204 *Puyehue*. The yellow-brown loam deposits of OC5 outcrop are mineralogically similar to OC2
205 outcrop. They are dominated by amorphous particles, plagioclases and pyroxenes. The coarser than
206 200 μm fraction is composed of typical volcanic particles: scoriae, plagioclase, volcanic glasses,

207 pyroxene, olivine and amphibole. The sample collected at 0.00 m, i.e. at the limit with the
208 underlying fluvio-glacial deposits, is relatively poor in amorphous particles.

209 The andosol parent material of both sections does not contain crystalline clay minerals. The only
210 samples where non-amorphous clay minerals have been detected are samples from the base of
211 Icalma OC2 outcrop (low amounts of kaolinite, illite, chlorite or vermiculite have been identified).
212 The clay-size particles of the other samples are only composed of allophane. The allophanic nature
213 of the amorphous clay minerals is confirmed by the infrared (IR) spectrometry analyses. The IR
214 spectra display two broad absorption bands at 3450 and 1000 cm^{-1} and a weaker band at 1630 cm^{-1} ,
215 which is typical for allophane (Snetsinger, 1967; Henmi et al., 1981; Wilson, 1994; Gustafson *et al.*,
216 1999). The broad band near 1000 cm^{-1} (and its harmonic at 550 cm^{-1}) is due to Al-O and Si-O
217 stretching (Snetsinger, 1967; Gustafson et al., 1999), while the two others are due to absorbed
218 molecular water (Snetsinger, 1967; Kawano & Tomita, 1992; Wilson, 1994). In addition, the low
219 amount of $< 2 \mu\text{m}$ particles is a typical characteristic for andosols. It is due to the colloidal
220 behaviour of allophanes (Quantin, 1972).

221

222 4.4 Geochemistry

223 *Icalma*. The bulk chemical analysis of OC3 (5.00 m) sample reveals a basaltic composition (SiO_2 :
224 51.8%, TAS: 3.5%).

225 *Puyehue*. The bulk chemical composition of the samples from OC5 and OC6 outcrops is in the
226 range of basalts to andesites (SiO_2 : 49.2 – 63.5 %, TAS: 1.1-3.1 %), with the upper samples being
227 always more silicic.

228 Due to their abundance and to the petrogenetic significance of their geochemical composition, the
229 plagioclases have been extracted from the host sediment and analyzed by microprobe for major
230 elements (Tab. 2). Their composition varies from anorthite (An 90-100) to andesine (An 30-50)
231 (Fig. 6). The grains from Icalma OC3 outcrop (An 50-91, Or 0-1) tend to be enriched in Anorthite
232 (An) compared to grains from OC5 outcrop (An 42-85, Or 0-6). Analysis of plagioclases from the

233 Llama and Alpehue (Sollipulli) pumice layers show typical Andesine plagioclases: An 28-40, Or 0-
234 1 and An 32-47, Or 1-3 respectively (De Vleeschouwer, 2002; De Vleeschouwer et al., 2005)
235 (Fig.6).

236 For the OC5 (1.50 m) sample, some volcanic glasses (SiO_2 75-73 %, TAS: 4.5-5.9 %) and olivine
237 (Fo 75-83) were also analyzed.

238 The trace elements of the OC5 (1.50 m) sample are represented in a chondrite-normalized
239 spidergram (Fig. 7). For comparison, the trace elementary composition of volcanic rocks of the
240 Southern Volcanic Zone (SVZ) and of the Puyehue-Cordon de Caulle volcanic complex has also
241 been plotted. Except for Ba, K and Sr, the composition of the OC5 (1.50m) sample is in perfect
242 agreement with the typical volcanic signature of the SVZ (33-46°S).

243 The test of Fieldes & Perrot (1966) shows a pH rising to 10.5 after 30 min and reaching 11.5 after 2
244 hours (samples OC3 5.00 m and OC5 1.50 m). This confirms the high allophane content of the
245 samples.

246 In addition, we also analyzed the density and the pH of the same samples. The pH values are
247 between 6.4 and 6.5 and the bulk density of the samples is 0.85, which are both typical for andosols
248 (Quantin, 1972; Besoain, 1985).

249

250 *4.5 Scanning electron microscope*

251 Scanning electron microscope (SEM) observations were performed on different grain size fractions
252 of samples from OC3 and OC5 outcrops (from bulk sediment to the clay-size fraction). The
253 observations reveal that most of the grains are composed of cohesive agglomerates of particles (Fig.
254 8). Grains are neither rounded nor dull (Fig. 8a, 8b) and the samples contain fresh volcanic glass
255 shards (Fig. 8c).

256

257 **5. Discussion**

258 *5.1. Age of the andosol parent material*

259 Around Icalma and Puyehue, the yellow-brown loam deposits on which the andosols developed
260 overlay glacial and fluvio-glacial deposits. These deposits occurring at the base of the outcrops are
261 believed to date from the last glacial period (Llanquihue phase *sensu* Mercer, 1976 and Porter,
262 1981) and the last deglaciation (Laugenie et al., 1982; Mardones et al., 1993). Therefore, the
263 unconsolidated deposits on which the andosols developed are post-glacial in age.

264 Near Icalma, the andosol parent material does not directly overlay the glacial sediments. Both units
265 are separated by an intermediate fining-upward deposit, composed by a mixture of yellowish loam
266 particles and rock fragments similar in nature to the geological bedrock (e.g., OC2 outcrop 0.00 -
267 1.30 m). Because of the non-volcanic nature of the rock fragments this deposit cannot be confused
268 with the Curacautin ignimbrite, which is composed of ashes and basaltic scoriae (Naranjo &
269 Moreno, 1991). This layer probably originates from solifluction movements, which are frequent in
270 periglacial environments. Therefore, it probably dates from the last deglaciation.

271 Veit (1994) assumes that the andosol parent material accumulated during the Late Glacial and Early
272 Holocene, which would have left enough time for soils to develop during the rest of the Holocene.
273 However, around Icalma, the two pumice layers intercalated in the yellowish soft deposits, and
274 especially the upper pumice layer dated at 2900 BP (Naranjo et al., 1993; De Vleeschouwer et al.,
275 2005), indicate that these sediments accumulated during most of the Holocene.

276

277 *5.2. Allophane formation*

278 The investigated soils bear all the typical characteristics for andosols (amorphous bulk and clay
279 minerals, slightly acid pH, low density...) (Quantin, 1972; Besoain, 1985). As evidenced by
280 microscopic observations (SEM and smear slides), the amorphous particles detected in the bulk
281 samples are mainly non-crystalline clay minerals and volcanic glasses. Similarly, the clay-size
282 fraction is dominated by non-crystalline minerals and traces of plagioclase. The IR spectrometry
283 analyses have proved that these non-crystalline clay-size particles are allophane, a typical secondary
284 product of volcanic ashes under humid, temperate or tropical climatic conditions (Quantin, 1972;

285 Righi & Meunier, 1995). Although allophane can also derive from the weathering of plagioclases
286 (Aomine & Wada, 1962; Besoain, 1963; Snetsinger, 1967), it is mainly produced by hydrolysis of
287 volcanic glasses (Henmi & Wada, 1976; Laugenie, 1982). In the investigated samples, halloysite
288 and imogolite, which are clay minerals frequently observed in association to allophane in andosols,
289 have never been detected. However, it is known that halloysite forms by neoformation of allophane
290 (Laugenie, 1982, Besoain et al., 1992a) in a minimum time range of 8000 to 9000 years (Aomine &
291 Miyauchi, 1963) and that imogolite is a frequent intermediate product appearing during the
292 crystallization of allophane into halloysite (Besoain, 1968). However, due to the humid
293 mediterranean climate conditions of south-central Chile, allophane can regionally remain stable for
294 up to 18,000 to 22,000 years (Besoain, 1985). Because the transformation of allophane into
295 halloysite requires 18,000 to 22,000 years, its absence in our samples indicates that the investigated
296 deposits are younger than the Last Glacial Maximum, which is in agreement with the stratigraphic
297 evidence. This argument is supported by the detection of halloysite and imogolite in older andosol
298 samples from south-central Chile (Besoain, 1968; Laugenie et al., 1975).

299

300 *5.3 Volcanic origin*

301 Due to their relative young age, the investigated andosols still contain a lot of primary minerals and
302 non-altered volcanic glasses. Their mineralogical and geochemical composition clearly evidences
303 the volcanic origin of their parent material:

304 (1) The bulk mineralogy of the outcrops is dominated by plagioclases, amorphous particles
305 (original volcanic glasses and secondary allophane products) and pyroxenes (Fig. 3). These
306 minerals are typical for the regional volcanism (Laugenie, 1982). Similar conclusions were obtained
307 by Laugenie et al. (1975) when studying the heavy minerals of regional andosols.

308 (2) The trace elemental composition of the representative OC5 (1.50 m) sample shows a
309 typical SVZ signature (Fig. 7). The only elements deviating from the SVZ signature are Ba, K and

310 Sr. This depletion is due to the high mobility of Ba, K and Sr during weathering processes
311 (Martínez Cortizas et al., 2003).

312 (3) The nature of the plagioclases in OC3 and OC5 outcrops is characteristic for plagioclases
313 associated to basaltic and andesitic magma, which are typical for the regional volcanoes of the SVZ
314 (Fig. 6).

315 However, the nature of the plagioclases from Icalma OC3 outcrop (An 50-91) differs from the
316 plagioclases associated to the Llaima and Sollipulli pumice layers (An 28-40 and An 32-47
317 respectively; De Vleeschouwer, 2002) (Fig. 6). This difference is due to the relation between the
318 plagioclase composition and the magma chemistry, itself characteristic for the type of eruption (Fig.
319 6). Because of the dacitic (Si-rich) composition of the magma at the origin of the Llaima and
320 Sollipulli pumice layers (De Vleeschouwer et al., 2005), the plagioclases associated to these
321 pumices are enriched in Ab (Andesine-Oligoclase). However, the magma generally emitted by
322 Llaima, Sollipulli and Lonquimay volcanoes has a basaltic to andesitic composition (Besoain et al.,
323 1992b, Naranjo & Moreno, 1991, Suarez & Emparan, 1997), which means that most of the
324 plagioclases emitted by these volcanoes are An-rich, as they occur in the andosol parent material of
325 OC3 outcrop.

326 The plagioclases occurring in the OC5 (1.50 m) sample show an An content ranging from 42 to 85
327 %. This composition is roughly similar to the plagioclases associated with the post-glacial andesitic
328 rocks emitted by the Puyehue volcano (Fig. 6). As a general rule for the Puyehue – Cordon de
329 Caulle volcanic complex, the An content of the plagioclases decreases with an enrichment of the
330 magma in silica (Gerlach et al., 1988; Fig. 6). The best example is the Ab-rich plagioclases
331 associated to the exceptional rhyodacitic eruption of 1960. However, the Puyehue – Cordon de
332 Caulle is not the only volcano at the origin of the volcanic particles deposited around Puyehue lake.
333 A large part of the particles may originate from Antillanca and Osorno volcanoes which are typical
334 for the SVZ and basaltic or andesitic in composition (Gerlach et al., 1988). Although there is no
335 data available for Antillanca and Osorno in the literature, the relation between the plagioclase

336 composition and magma chemistry evidence that the volcanic products emitted by the volcanoes
337 located around Puyehue lake mainly contain An-rich plagioclases, as they occur in the OC5
338 outcrop.

339 In agreement with the results of Laugenie (1982), these new data demonstrate that the particles
340 composing the andosol parent material in south-central Chile have the same geochemical and
341 mineralogical characteristics than the regional volcanic products. They can therefore be considered
342 as volcanic ashes.

343

344 *5.4 Mode of transport and deposition*

345 The previous arguments have demonstrated that the andosol parent material is composed of
346 volcanic ashes that bear the mineralogical and geochemical signature of the SVZ volcanoes. Our
347 field observations demonstrate that these deposits cover the region whatever the elevation, with a
348 relatively uniform thickness draping all but the steepest topography. This argument is incompatible
349 with the glacial (Langhor, 1974) and pyroclastic flow (Wright 1965 In: Besoain 1985) origins that
350 would have concentrated the volcanic particles in valleys and local depressions. On the contrary, the
351 above-cited characteristics appear to be typical for pyroclastic fall (Orton, 1996) or loess-like
352 (Laugenie et al., 1975) deposits.

353

354 *5.4.1. Relation between the grain size and thickness of the deposits and their location to volcanoes*

355 The grain size and the thickness of the andosol parent material in Icalma and Puyehue outcrops are
356 significantly different. Around Icalma, the deposits are thick (4 to 7 m), they contain coarse
357 intercalated pumice layers and they are characterized by an average mean grain size of 25 μm (Fig.
358 3). Near Puyehue lake, the deposits are typically less than 3 m thick and the average mean grain size
359 is 18 μm (Fig. 3). These differences are due to the relative position of the outcrops compared to the
360 regional volcanoes. Because of the dominant westerly winds, the volcanic particles are mainly
361 transported from the volcanoes to the East. Therefore, the Icalma outcrops, which are located east of

362 Llaima, Lonquimay and Sollipulli volcanoes (Fig. 1), receive more and coarser particles than the
363 outcrops selected around Puyehue, which are located west of Puyehue and Antillanca volcanoes.

364 Within individual watersheds, a clear relation between the grain size and the thickness of the
365 deposits and their relative position to volcanoes has been noticed. In Icalma watershed the
366 sediments of OC4 outcrop contain 6 distinct tephra layers and are significantly coarser than in OC2
367 and OC3 outcrops which are located east of OC4 and therefore further away from the local
368 volcanoes (De Vleeschouwer, 2002). In the watershed of Puyehue lake, a significant fining and
369 thinning westward was deduced from the analysis of 7 outcrops located at various distances from
370 the Puyehue and Antillanca volcanoes (Bertrand, 2005). Laugenie (1982) made similar observations
371 around Villarica volcano.

372 These data evidence that since the end of the last glaciation the westerly winds are responsible for
373 the spatial distribution of the volcanic ashes and that they strongly influence the grain size and
374 thickness of the andosol parent material. These results are confirmed by the observations made
375 during historical eruptions, which show that most of the emitted particles have been transported
376 eastward, as far as Argentina (Wright & Mella, 1963; Moreno & Valera, 1985; Gonzàles-Ferràn et
377 al., 1989; Naranjo & Moreno, 1991; Naranjo et al., 1993; Gonzàles-Ferràn, 1994). Similar
378 conditions probably prevailed during most of the Quaternary period (Moreno & Varela, 1985).

379

380 *5.4.2. Grains morphology*

381 In order to characterize the type of aeolian transport which is responsible for the delivery of
382 volcanic ashes in south-central Chile (pyroclastic fall vs loess-like deposition), we compared the
383 size (using the D99 factor) and the morphology of the coarsest volcanic particles to typical loess
384 and pyroclastic deposits.

385 The occurrence of high D99 values, i.e. very coarse particles, in both outcrops is a new argument
386 for rejecting the sole loess-like origin of the andosol parent material. Indeed, the D99 values of the
387 andosol parent material range between 91 and 860 μm (506-860 μm for OC2 and 91-783 μm for

388 OC5), which is much higher than the typical D₉₉ values for loess deposits (typically lower than
389 100 μm; Manil & Delecour, 1957; Sun et al., 2000). Grains coarser than ~100 μm can not travel on
390 large distances by wind only.

391 The morphology of the volcanic ash soil particles are in agreement with a very limited transport of
392 the particles by wind. Indeed, the MEB observations display grains with a rough, not rounded
393 morphology (Fig. 8). The rough morphology is due to the agglomeration of smaller volcanic
394 particles during volcanic eruptions, which leads to the formation of strongly cohesive agglomerates.
395 These observations evidence that the particles composing the andosol parent material have been
396 directly deposited after volcanic eruptions. Because of their coarse grain-size and rough, non
397 abraded morphology, we can argue that these particles have virtually never been reworked by wind.

398

399 *5.5. Unique event of successive eruptions?*

400 The previous arguments demonstrate that most of the andosol parent material is composed of
401 volcanic ashes originating from eruptions of regional volcanoes and directly deposited by gravity.
402 However, whether these particles accumulated rapidly during the Late Glacial and early Holocene
403 (Veit, 1994) or continuously since the last glaciation remained unclear. The only macroscopical
404 chronological markers occurring in the investigated outcrops are the two intercalated pumice layers
405 described in Icalma outcrops, which indicate that the andosol parent material around Icalma
406 accumulated during several volcanic eruptions throughout the Holocene. Several additional
407 arguments evidence that these particles accumulated during successive volcanic eruptions: (1) the
408 heavy minerals study of Laugenie (1982) shows that the mineral sources of the andosol parent
409 material were frequently renewed by successive magmatic eruptions; (2) the tephra record of
410 Puyehue lake sediments attest that at least 78 tephra reached the region since the Last Glacial
411 Maximum (Bertrand et al., 2007b); (3) the Icalma lake and peat deposits contain a large number of
412 Holocene tephra layers, representing 40% of the lake sedimentary infill at certain locations (De
413 Vleeschouwer, 2002; Bertrand et al., 2007a); (4) the high resolution geochemical analyses realized

414 by McCurdy (2003) on andosols from Calafquen (39°S) and Ensenada (41°S) evidence that those
415 outcrops are composed of several superimposed paleosoils. Therefore, we argue that most of the
416 particles composing the andosol parent material are typical fall-out ashes deposited by successive
417 volcanic eruptions throughout the Late glacial and Holocene.

418

419 *5.6 Layering and pedogenesis*

420 If the andosol parent material has been deposited during successive volcanic eruptions, one can
421 expect for it to be stratified. Our field observations have demonstrated that the only macroscopically
422 visible layering is caused by the Sollipulli and Llaima pumice layers in outcrops around Icalma and
423 by several distinct tephra layers in outcrops located at the vicinity of regional volcanoes. In thin
424 section, the OC2 deposits are not stratified either but they appear structurally homogeneous (Fig.
425 4a). The absence of stratification seems to be the result of intense weathering processes during the
426 soil formation, as they typically occur under the very humid climate of south-central Chile
427 (Laugenie et al., 1975). Moreover, previous studies have demonstrated that the biological activity is
428 able to generate a deep pedoturbation in the andosols of south-central Chile, especially by roots and
429 worms (Langohr, 1971). Therefore, we argue that the andosol parent material was initially layered,
430 but weathering and pedogenesis processes have rapidly wiped out the internal structures. Because
431 the development of andosols can only be interrupted by the deposition of thick volcanic sediments
432 (Buurman et al., 2004), only the two pluridecimetric Sollipulli and Llaima pumice layers have
433 interrupted the soil formation and buried older soils. All the thinner tephra layers have been
434 incorporated into previously deposited particles, although some of them have probably affected the
435 soil development during short periods of time, as evidenced by the occurrence of successive
436 organic-rich layers (5-10 cm) in thin sections.

437

438 **6. Conclusion**

439 The andosols of south-central Chile are developed on plurimetric yellow-brown loams mainly
440 composed of plagioclases and (bulk and clay-) amorphous particles. The mineralogy and
441 geochemistry of these particles is typical for the regional volcanism, except for allophane which
442 originates from the post-depositional weathering of volcanic glasses and plagioclases. The
443 stratigraphy of the andosol parent material and the tephra record of regional lake and peat deposits
444 demonstrate that the andosol parent material accumulated during successive volcanic eruptions
445 throughout the Late glacial and Holocene. Moreover, the presence of very coarse particles and the
446 rough morphology of the coarse grains evidence that these deposits haven't been re-transported by
447 wind. Therefore, even if a small fraction of the fine particles may have been re-transported by wind,
448 these deposits can not be considered as typical loess sediments. Our results evidence their direct
449 volcanic ash fall origin. Because of the prevailing westerly winds, most of the particles have been
450 transported to the East. Very locally, andosols might have developed on volcanic ashes re-
451 transported by glaciers, lahars or rivers.

452

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	Outcrop n°	Latitude	Longitude	Thickness (m)	Sampling step (cm)	Number of samples
Icalma	OC2	S38°47.079'	W71°17.062'	4.90	50 - 10	10 - 50
	OC3	S38°47.959'	W71°16.015'	6.15	50	10
	OC4	S38°50.237'	W71°22.377'	4.60	50	8
Puyehue	OC5	S40°42.974'	W72°24.312'	2.70	25 - 10	11 - 28
	OC6	S40°38.111'	W72°22.392'	4.30	50	9

593

594 Table 1 – Location, size and sampling intervals of the 5 investigated outcrops. See figure 1 for map

595 location. The geographic coordinates are referenced to the WGS84 datum. The thickness of the

596 andosol parent material doesn't take into account the underlying glacial or fluvio-glacial sediments.

597 For OC2 and OC5 outcrops, the two sampling steps represent samples collected for mineralogical

598 and grain size analysis, respectively.

	SiO ₂	TiO ₂	Al ₂ O ₃	FeO	MgO	CaO	Na ₂ O	K ₂ O	Total	An	Ab	Or
Plagioclases OC3 5.00 m	46.6	0.00	32.0	0.67	0.11	17.9	1.77	0.00	99.13	84.8	15.2	0.0
	45.1	0.00	33.0	0.52	0.11	19.3	1.27	0.05	99.31	89.1	10.6	0.3
	49.0	0.07	30.5	0.63	0.10	16.2	2.86	0.00	99.34	75.8	24.2	0.0
	55.3	0.00	26.5	0.56	0.09	10.8	5.64	0.12	98.92	50.9	48.4	0.7
	46.1	0.00	32.8	0.48	0.10	18.5	1.57	0.00	99.48	86.7	13.3	0.0
	55.7	0.00	26.6	0.38	0.06	10.6	5.70	0.12	99.19	50.3	49.0	0.7
	47.9	0.00	31.6	0.65	0.13	17.4	2.23	0.04	99.93	81.0	18.8	0.2
	51.2	0.09	29.1	0.55	0.17	14.4	3.69	0.08	99.33	68.1	31.4	0.5
	49.4	0.00	30.2	0.71	0.08	16.0	3.05	0.06	99.50	74.1	25.6	0.3
	45.9	0.00	32.9	0.51	0.08	18.9	1.34	0.00	99.59	88.6	11.4	0.0
	45.1	0.00	33.5	0.48	0.06	19.7	1.05	0.00	99.88	91.2	8.8	0.0
	47.6	0.00	31.2	0.68	0.13	17.1	2.28	0.00	99.04	80.6	19.4	0.0
44.9	0.00	33.2	0.48	0.08	19.2	1.22	0.00	99.14	89.7	10.3	0.0	
	SiO ₂	TiO ₂	Al ₂ O ₃	FeO	MgO	CaO	Na ₂ O	K ₂ O	Total	An	Ab	Or
Plagioclases OC5 1.50 m	56.0	0.00	26.5	0.33	0.03	10.6	5.71	0.20	99.35	49.9	49.0	1.1
	59.9	0.20	21.7	1.91	0.30	7.86	5.40	0.86	98.03	42.1	52.4	5.5
	52.4	0.00	28.7	0.53	0.18	13.7	4.09	0.19	99.73	64.2	34.7	1.1
	56.0	0.00	26.8	0.19	0.03	10.6	5.80	0.10	99.52	49.8	49.6	0.6
	46.6	0.00	32.4	0.55	0.08	18.2	1.81	0.00	99.64	84.8	15.2	0.0
	52.7	0.08	28.3	0.71	0.21	13.9	3.95	0.15	99.97	65.4	33.8	0.8
	51.6	0.06	28.9	0.89	0.16	14.1	3.76	0.16	99.66	66.9	32.2	0.9
	55.5	0.00	27.0	0.32	0.00	11.1	5.51	0.16	99.58	52.3	46.8	0.9
	55.6	0.00	27.3	0.25	0.00	10.9	5.49	0.16	99.68	52.0	47.1	0.9

600

601 Table 2 - Microprobe analyses of plagioclases separated from the sediments of OC3 (5.00m) and OC5 (1.50m) samples. An, Ab and Or represent the

602 Anorthite, Albite and Orthose content of each sample, respectively.

603 **Figure captions**

604

605 Figure 1 – Study area and sampling sites.

606

607 Figure 2 - Simplified pedological map of south-central Chile (FAO-UNESCO, 1971 In: Aravena et
608 al., 1993).

609

610 Figure 3 - Mineralogical composition and grain size of samples collected in OC2 and OC5 outcrops
611 (see Figure 1 for location). The grain size distribution has been measured on organic matter free
612 samples and the mean grain size has been calculated following Folk & Ward (1957). The minerals
613 detected in the bulk samples by x-ray diffraction were semi-quantified using the intensity of the
614 principal diffraction peak of each mineral corrected by a multiplication factor from Cook et al.
615 (1975) (pyroxenes: 5; chlorite: 4.95; plagioclases: 2.8, amphibole: 2.5 and quartz: 1). For the
616 amorphous material, we used a correction factor of 75, which has been calculated from diffraction
617 results on mixtures of known quantities of amorphous material and quartz. It applies to the
618 maximum of the broad diffraction band at 3.7 Å.

619

620 Figure 4 – Microscope images of some thin sections of OC2 outcrop sediments. Both images show
621 coated and very poorly sorted grains. a) bulk sediment (OC2 3.20 m); b) detail of the grain coating
622 (OC2 3.05 m).

623

624 Figure 5 - Picture of OC5 outcrop located in the watershed of Puyehue lake. The picture shows the
625 andosol parent material overlying fluvio-glacial sediments. The volcanic deposits are 2.70 m thick.

626

627 Figure 6 - Plagioclase composition of samples from Icalma (OC3 5.00m) and Puyehue (OC5 1.50
628 m) outcrops plotted in an Ab-An binary diagram. The An content is calculated as $An/(An+Ab)$. For
629 comparison, results obtained on plagioclases from the Llaima and Sollipulli pumice layers are

630 presented (De Vleeschouwer, 2002). The data from the Puyehue-Cordon de Caulle volcanic
631 complex are from Gerlach et al. (1988).

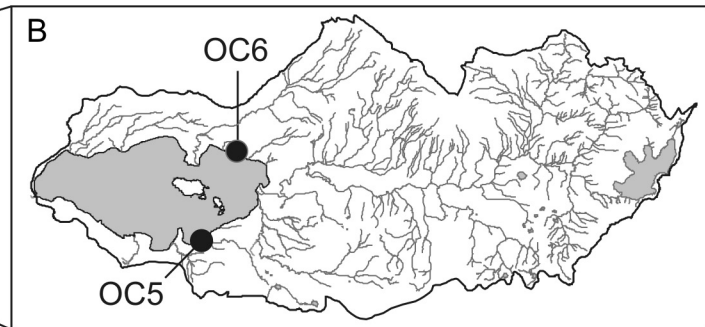
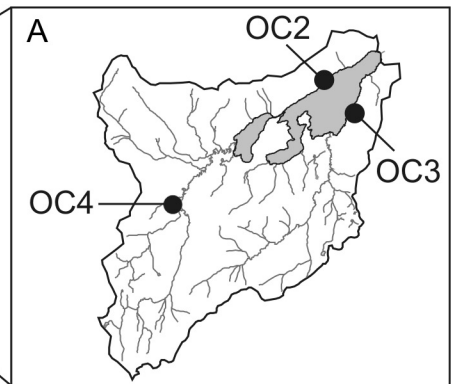
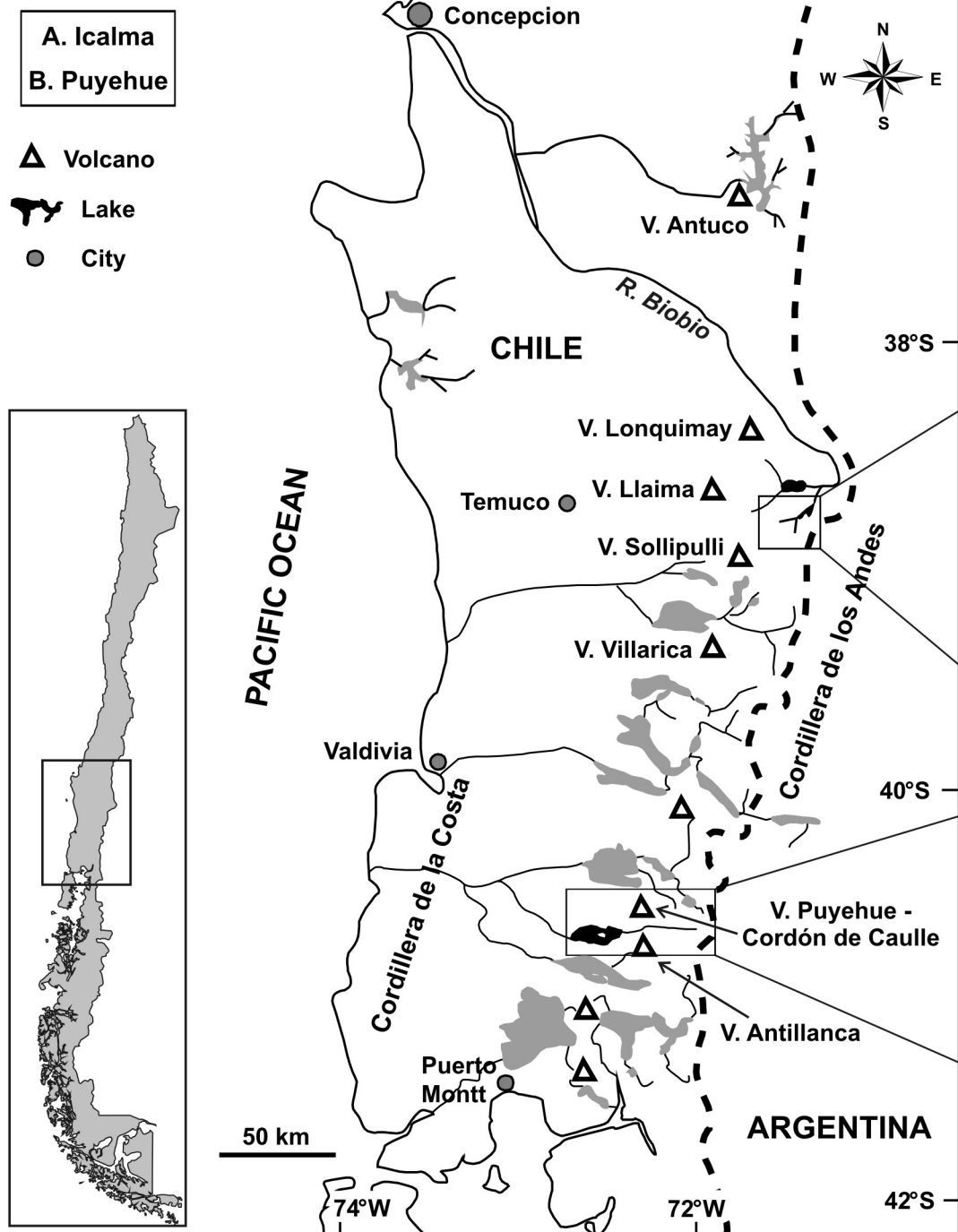
632

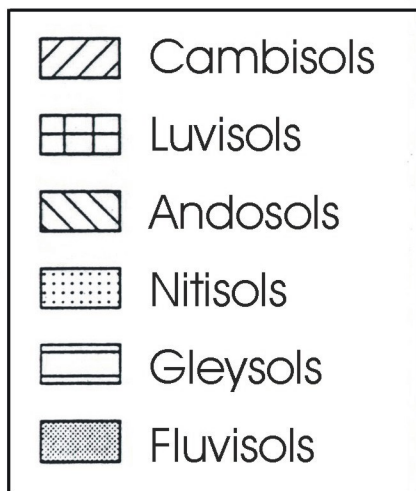
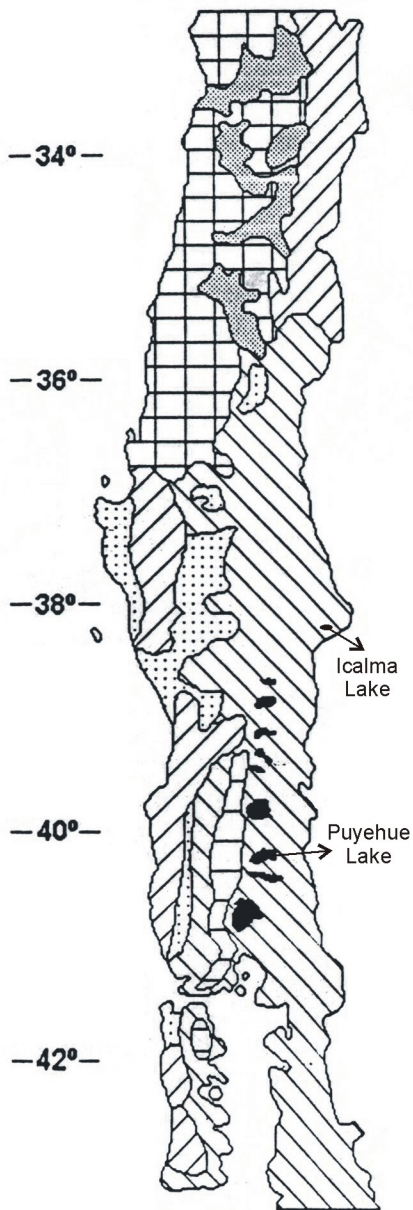
633 Figure 7 - Trace elements of the OC5 (1.50 m) sample plotted in a chondrite-normalized
634 spidergram. 1) OC5 (1.50 m) sample; 2) mean of the Southern Volcanic Zone between 33 and 46°S
635 (Georoc website); 3) mean of the post-glacial volcanic rocks from the Puyehue-Cordón de Caulle
636 volcano (Gerlach et al., 1988); 4) N-Morb (Sun & Mc Donough, 1989). The gray shaded area
637 corresponds to 90% of the reported values for the Southern Volcanic Zone between 33 and 46°S
638 (from the Georoc website: <http://georoc.mpch-mainz.gwdg.de/georoc/>). Data corresponding to
639 xenolithic rocks were removed from the database.

640

641 Figure 8 - Scanning electron microscope (SEM) images of particles from OC3 (5.00 m) sample. a,
642 b) coarse grains with a typical rough morphology; c) glass shard.

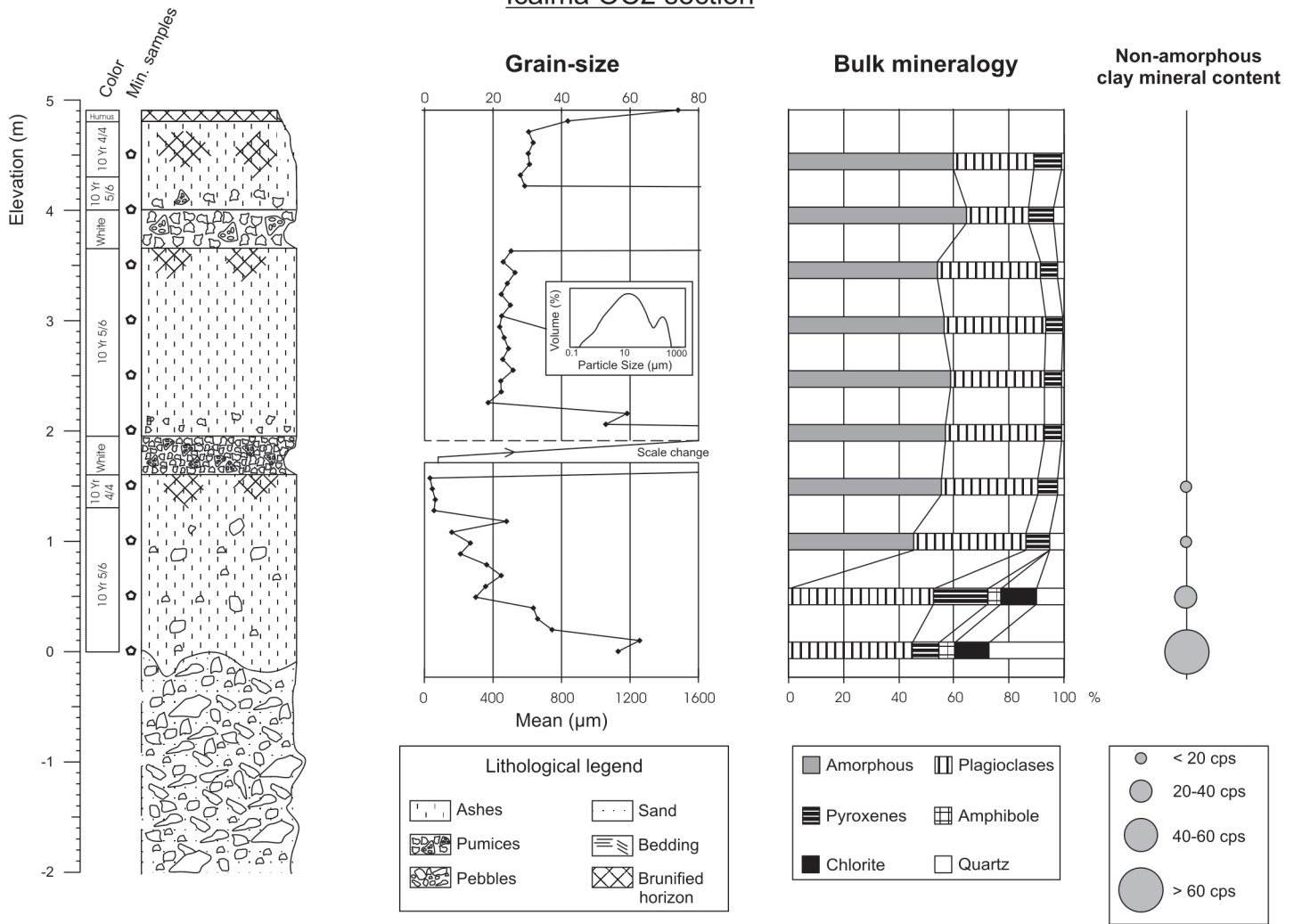
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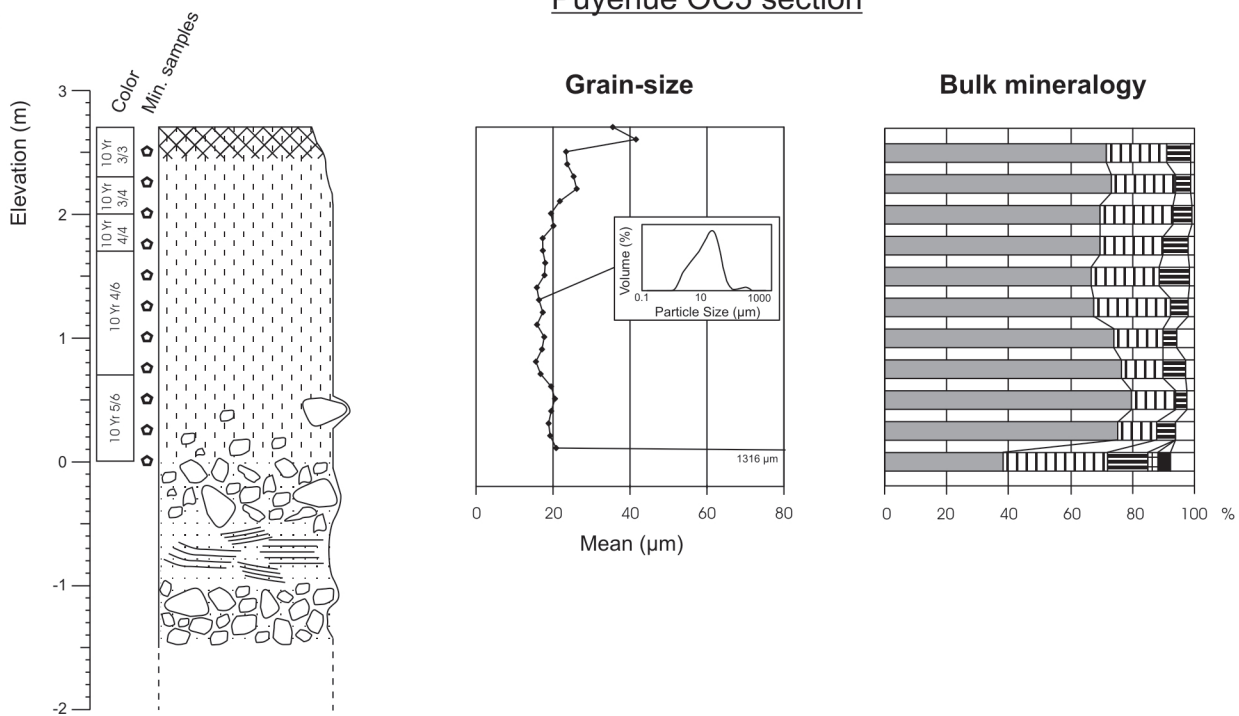
a)

Icalma OC2 section

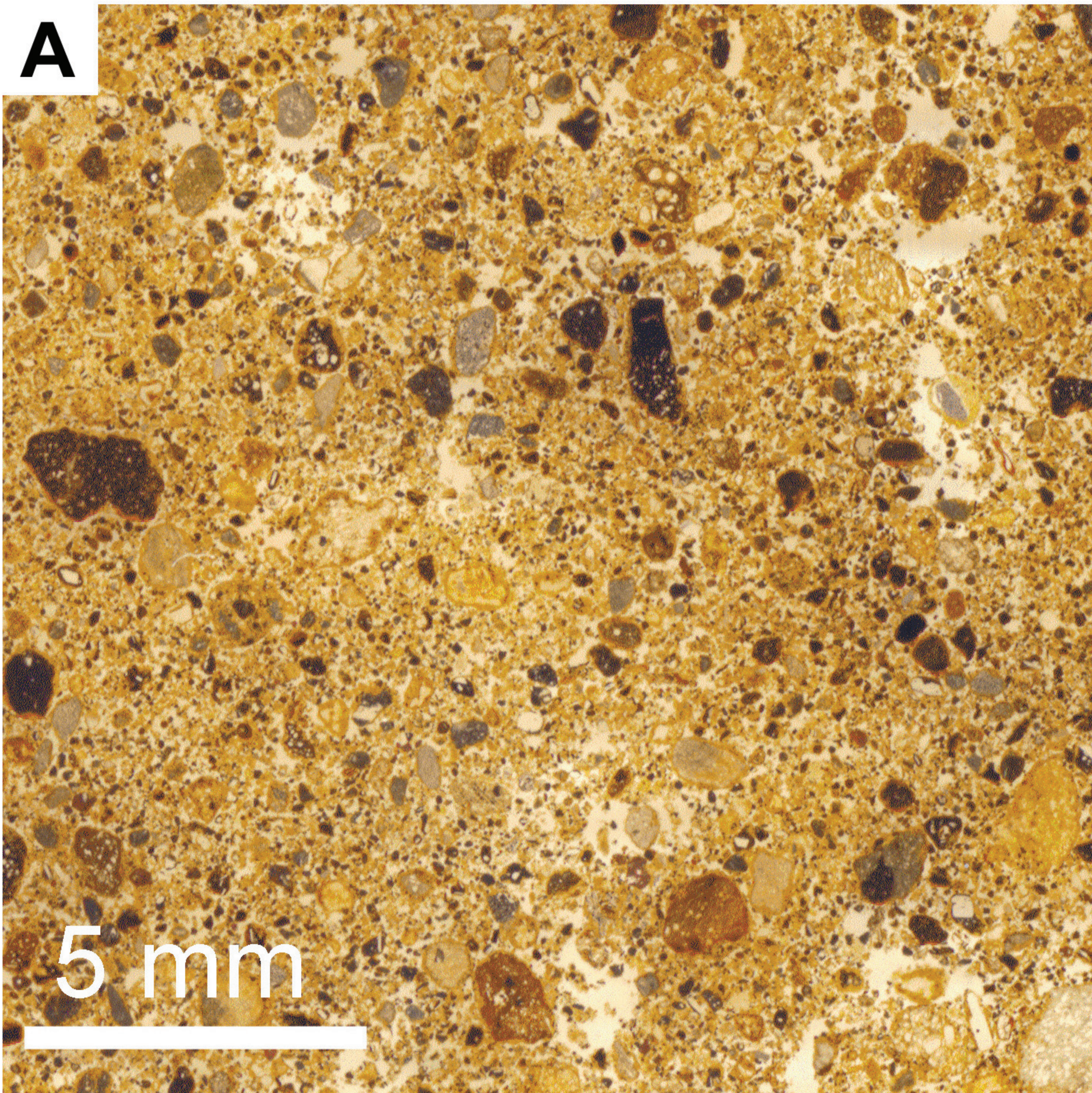


b)

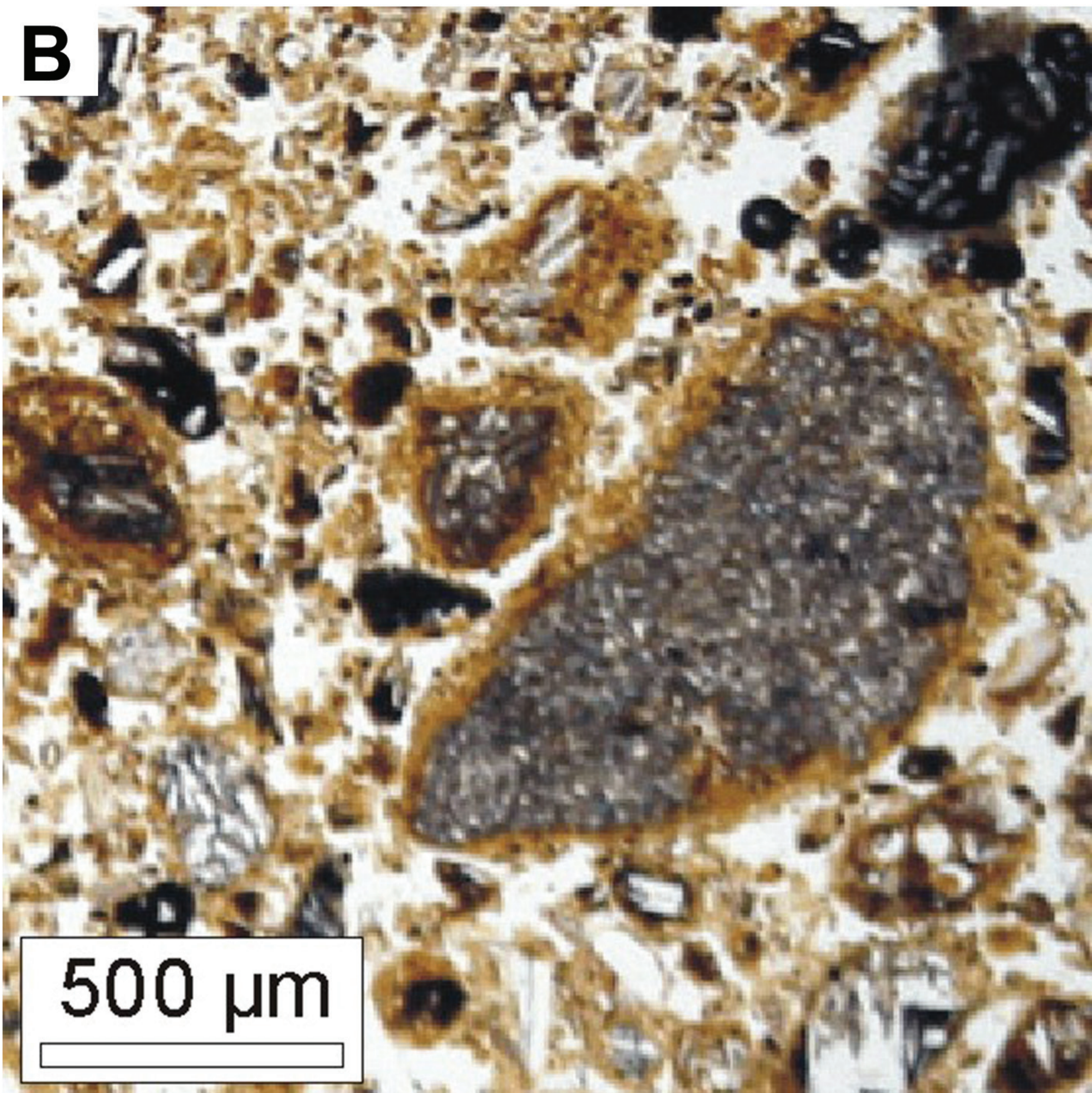
Puyehue OC5 section



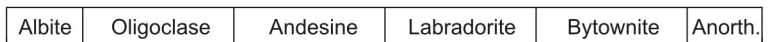
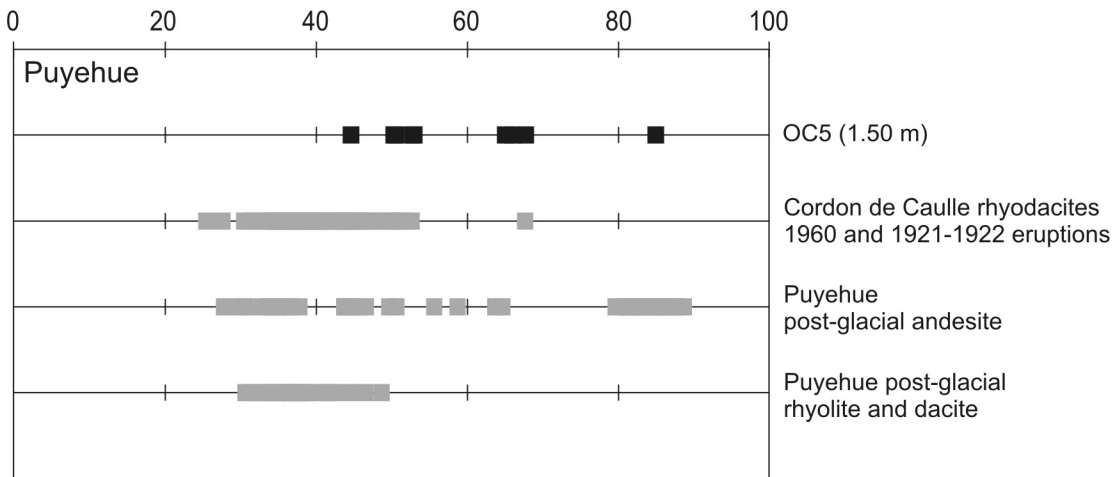
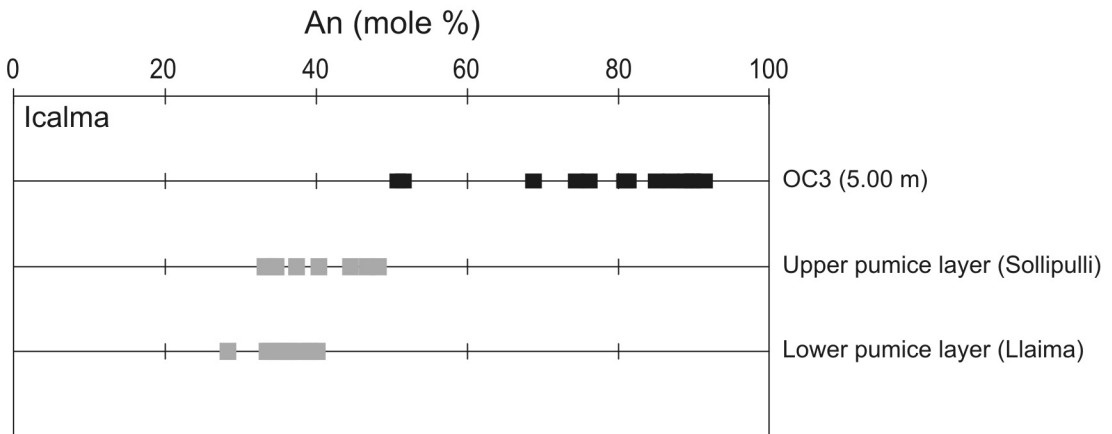
A



B







Ab An



Magma composition

Felsic

Intermediate

Mafic

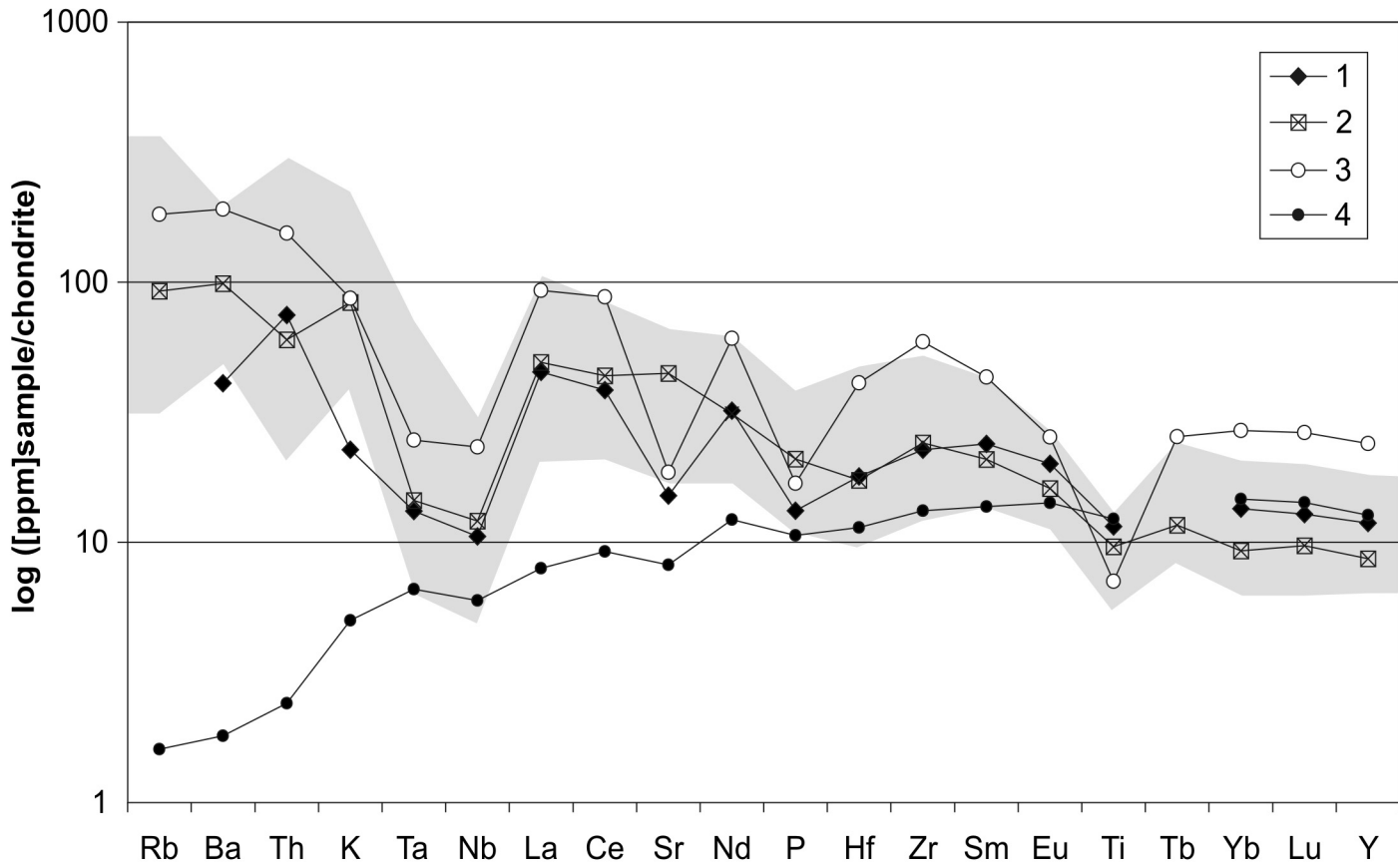
Related volcanic rock

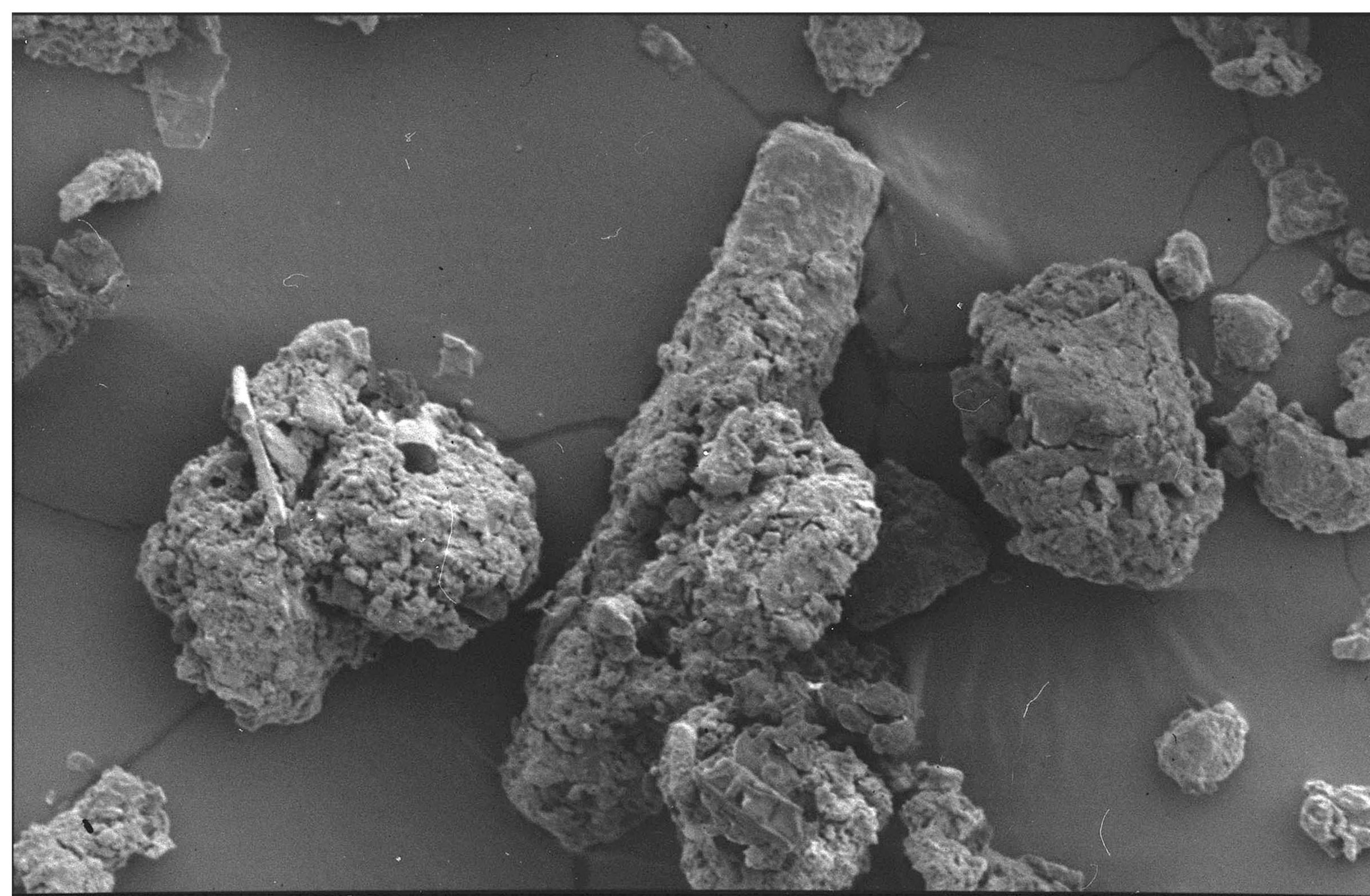
Rhyolite

Andesite

Basalt

decreasing Si content





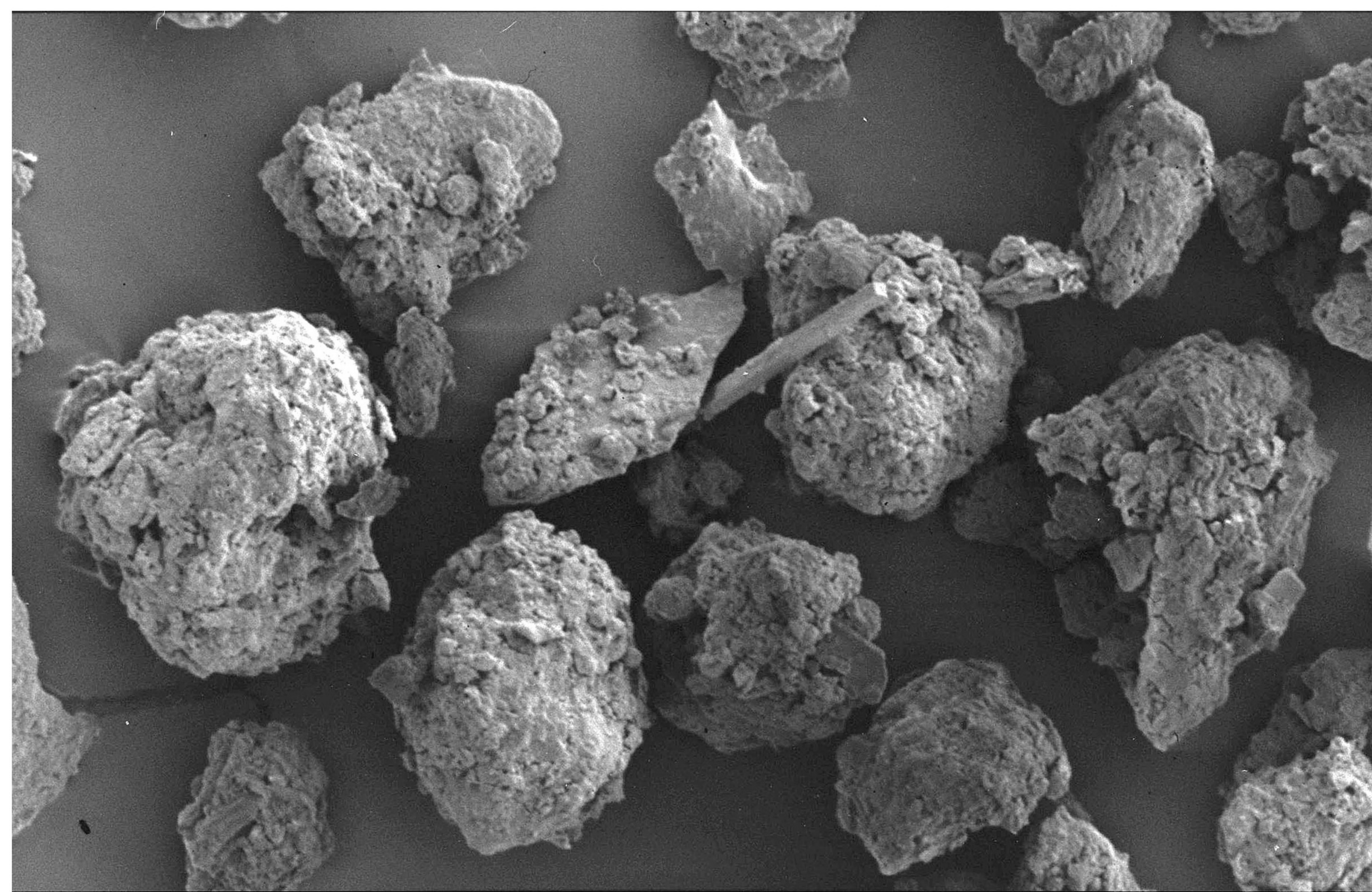
A.



5kV

10μm

x1,000



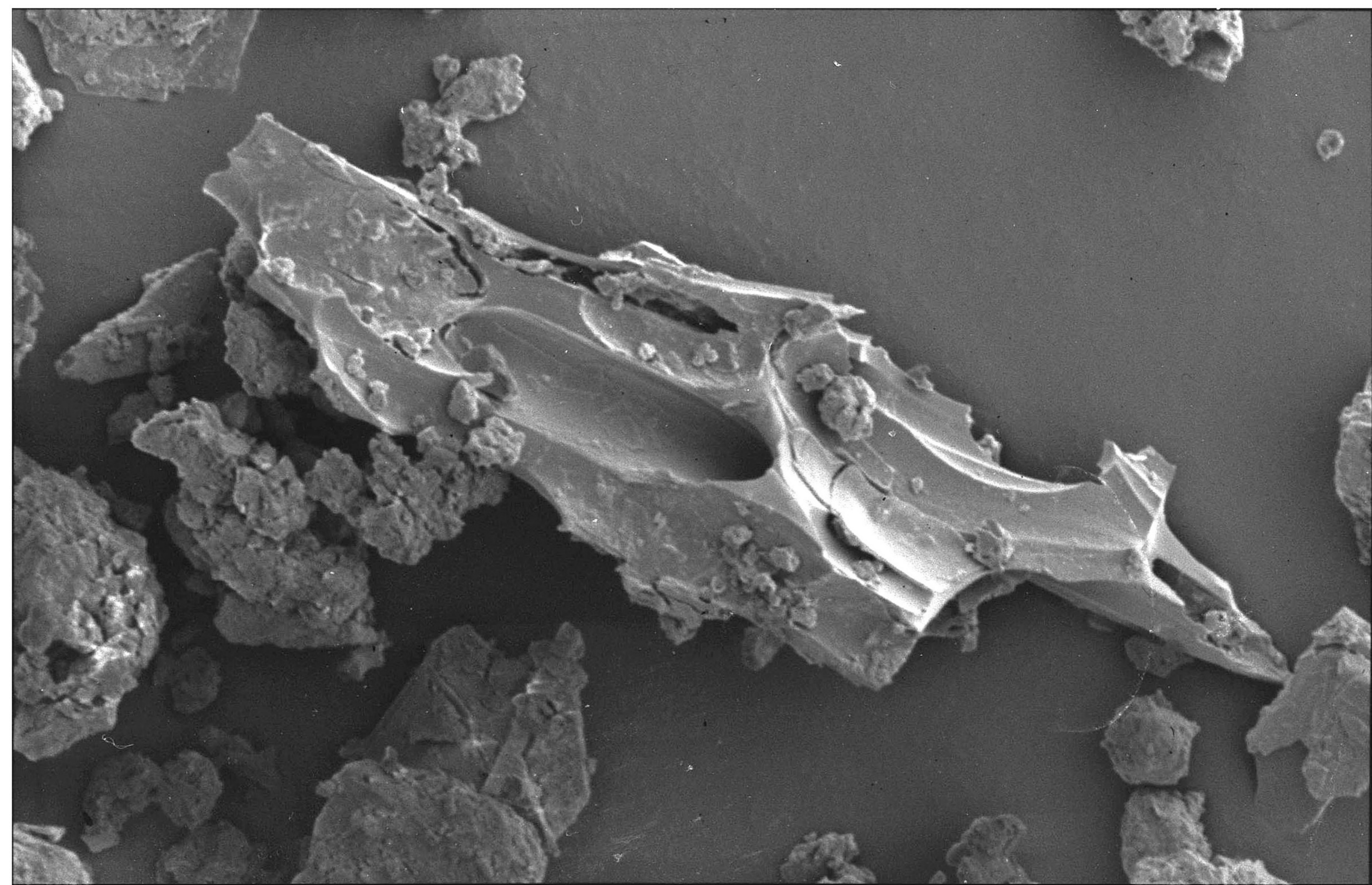
B.



5kV

10μm

x1,000



C.



5kV

10μm

x1,200