

Geochronological age relationships of Carboniferous Plutons in the Eastern Pontides (NE Turkey)

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Abstract

Many plutonic rocks of varying age, size and composition exist in the Paleozoic to Cenozoic times in the Eastern Pontides. Especially Carboniferous aged plutons are observed in the larger masses and more commonly in the southern part, while they are seen in the smaller bodies and a lesser extent in the northern part of the Eastern Pontides. Carboniferous plutons are generally granite and granodiorite in composition and vary in size from 1 to 400 km². They exhibit low to high-K calc-alkaline and metaluminous to slightly peraluminous characters. The rocks show a wide range of variations in ⁸⁷Sr/⁸⁶Sr_(i) (0.69454 to 0.71057) and a narrow variation in εNd_(i) (-0.1 to -8.0) values. Carboniferous plutons in the Eastern Pontides, at least those with precise radiometric age data available, formed between 348 to 298 Ma. These rocks represent a late stage of Hercynian magmatism in the northern and southern part of the Eastern Pontides. Compared with Eocene and Late Cretaceous plutons in the Eastern Pontides, Carboniferous plutons have very coarse texture, lesser amount of mafic magmatic enclaves (MMEs) and mafic minerals, higher ratios of ⁸⁷Sr/⁸⁶Sr_(i) and lower values of εNd_(i).

Keywords: Carboniferous; plutonic rocks; geochronology; eastern pontides.

1. Introduction

Turkey is located on an east–west trending segment of the Alpine–Himalayan orogenic belt. The Pontides, a part of the Alpine–Himalayan orogenic belt, extend along the southern coast of the Black Sea. The Pontide tectonic unit [1] includes various extrusive and intrusive rocks, many of which are related to the convergence of Gondwana and Eurasia. The crystallization ages of the intrusive bodies range from Paleozoic [2-7] through Jurassic-Early Cretaceous [3, 8, 10-11] and Late Cretaceous–Paleocene [12-17] to Eocene–Oligocene [18-24]

(Figure 1).

Many of the earlier studies in the eastern Pontides have addressed the general characteristics of the plutons in the overall framework of the geological evolution of the region. However, studies on various aspects of plutonic rocks (such as tectonic setting, age, geochemical and isotopic evolution, and source) is rather scarce. In addition to data from the literature, new U-Pb zircon data for the Alazlı pluton are presented.

2. Geological setting

Based on lithological and structural differences, the eastern Pontides are generally divided into a southern and a northern zone (Figure 1b) [27-28]. Carboniferous plutons are observed both northern and southern zones (Figure 1c).

The basement rocks of the Eastern Pontides consist of Early Carboniferous metamorphic rocks [29] and Late to Early Carboniferous Plutonic rocks that are calc-alkaline in composition [3-6, 30]. These basement rocks are overlain by the Early and Middle Jurassic volcano-sedimentary rocks [31-33] and cut

by Mid to Late Jurassic plutons [8-11]. All these rocks are overlain by the Late Jurassic to Early Cretaceous carbonates. The Late Cretaceous units are unconformably overlain these carbonate rocks and consist of plutonic, volcanic and sedimentary rocks [16-17, 34-39]. The Eastern Pontides were above sea level probably due to the collision between the Pontides magmatic arc and the Tauride-Anatolide block from Paleocene to Early Eocene [18, 29]. The Eocene volcanic and volcanoclastic rocks overlie the Late Cretaceous series [40-43] and are intruded by plutons of similar age [17, 19-21, 23, 44-47]. Post-

Eocene uplift and erosion brought clastic input into locally developed basins [48]. The Miocene and post-Miocene magmatism are characterized by calc-

alkaline to mildly alkaline compositions [42, 46, 49-52]. Quaternary units comprise alluvium and terraces.

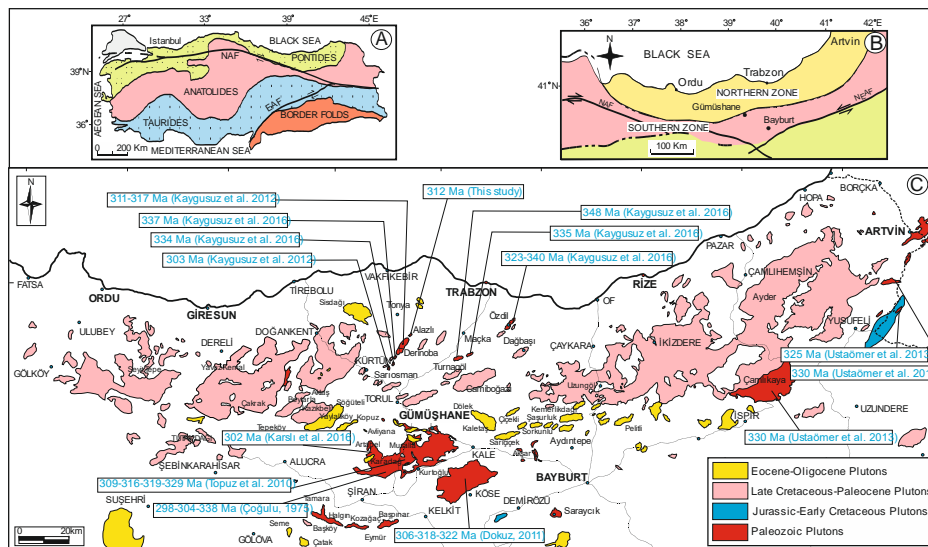


Figure 1. (a) Tectonic map showing the major sutures and continental blocks of Turkey and surrounding regions (modified after [25]), (b) Major structures of the Eastern Pontides and (c) Simplified geological map showing the main granitoid distribution and geochronological ages in the Eastern Pontides (modified after [26]).

3. Analytical methods

Zircon grains from the Alazlı pluton were selected by heavy-liquid and magnetic separation methods and the grains were purified by hand-picking under a binocular microscope. The selected grains were mounted on an epoxy resin and polished until halfway through. U-Pb dating of zircon was performed at the Geologic Lab Center, China University of Geosciences (Beijing) using LA-ICP-MS. A quadrupole ICP-MS (Agilent 7500a) was connected with a UP-193 solid-state laser and an automatic positioning system. U-Pb isotope

fractionation effects were corrected using zircon 91500 [53] as external standard. Zircon standard TEMORA (417 Ma, [54]) was also used as a secondary standard to determine the deviation of age measurement/calculation. Isotopic ratios and element concentrations of zircons were obtained with the GLITTER software (Macquarie University). Concordia ages and diagrams were calculated using Isoplot/Ex (3.0) [55]. Common lead was corrected using the method of [56]. Analytical details for isotope analyses are reported in [5].

4. Results

4.1. U-Pb zircon dating

Prior to this study, knowledge about the emplacement age of the Alazlı Pluton was insufficient for the reconstruction of their geological history. Considering the stratigraphic criteria and contact relationships, the age of the Alazlı Pluton was accepted as a Late Cretaceous age by [26]. In the field studies conducted by us, it was determined that the pluton was undertaken by the Liassic units and its age was accepted as Paleozoic.

U-Pb zircon analysis of granite sample of the Alazlı pluton was performed. The analysed zircons are colourless and in the form of short to long prismatic

crystals (50 to 200 μm) with aspect ratios of 1 to 3. They show pyramidal terminations and oscillatory zoning in CL image, displaying a magmatic origin [57]. A total of 21 spots for granite sample from the Alazlı Pluton provides a weighted $^{206}\text{Pb}/^{238}\text{U}$ mean age of 312.1 ± 2.1 Ma (MSWD = 1.3). Therefore, the weighted mean U-Pb age from the Alazlı pluton is consistent with a magma emplacement age during the Late Carboniferous period. This age data is also consistent with our field observations and local stratigraphy (Figure 1).

4.2 Geochemical characteristics

The Carboniferous plutons in the eastern Pontides have a large range in SiO_2 from 49 to 79 wt% (Figure 2a), corresponding to a compositional variation from gabbro to granite [58]. All samples are sub-alkaline and calc-alkaline in characters. They show low to high-K features (Figure 2b). The majority of samples

are Mg-rich, whereas some samples are Fe-rich in the classification diagram of [59] (Figure 3a). The samples are metaluminous to peraluminous, with values of alumina saturation index (ASI) ranging from 0.78 to 1.38 (Figure 3b).

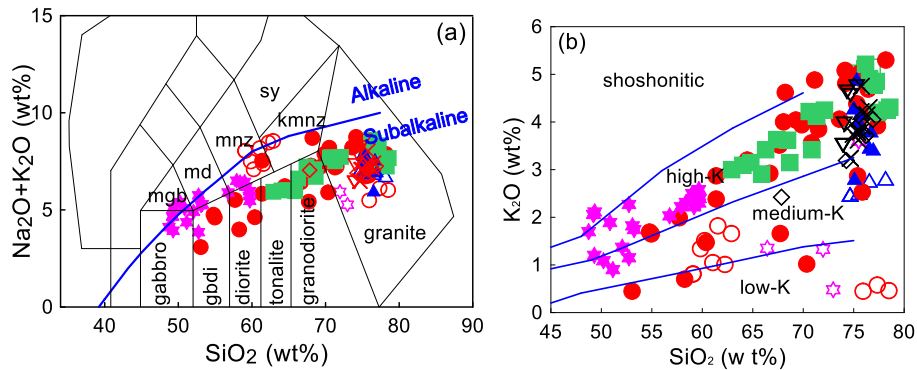


Figure 2. (a) Chemical classification diagram [58], (b) SiO_2 vs. K_2O diagram [60] from Carboniferous plutons in the eastern Pontides. References for Carboniferous Plutons in the eastern Pontides: [2-7, 9, 30].

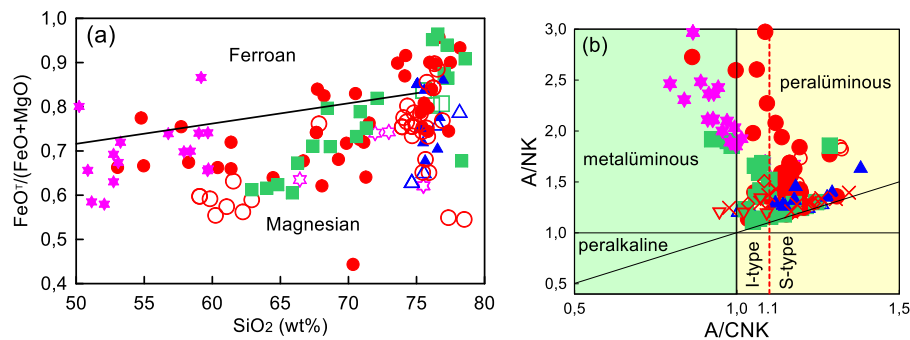


Figure 3. (a) SiO_2 vs. $\text{FeO}^T/(\text{FeO}^T+\text{MgO})$ diagram, (b) A/CNK vs. A/NK diagram [61] from the Carboniferous plutons.

4.3 Sr-Nd isotopic characteristics

The Carboniferous plutons in the eastern Pontides show significant variations in $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}_{(i)}$ (0.69454 to 0.71057) and small variation in $\epsilon\text{Nd}_{(i)}$ values (-0.1 to -8.0). The Köse Pluton display higher $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}_{(i)}$ and

lower $\epsilon\text{Nd}_{(i)}$ values, whereas the Gümüşhane Pluton display lower $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}_{(i)}$ and higher $\epsilon\text{Nd}_{(i)}$ values than the other Carboniferous plutons (Figure 3a).

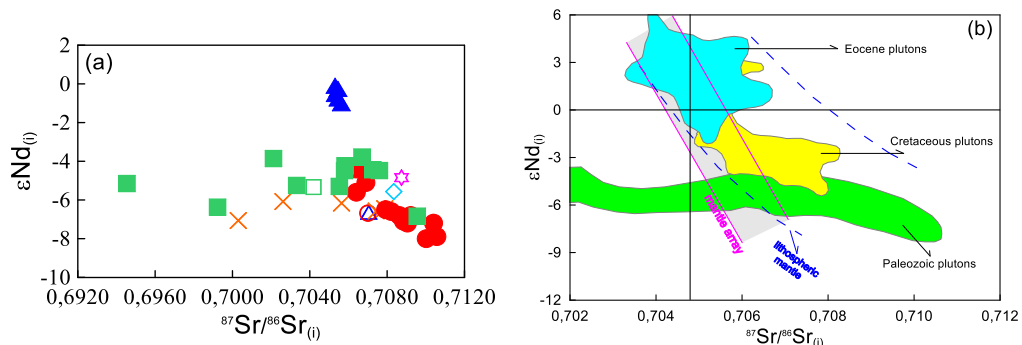


Figure 4. (a-b) $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}_{(i)}$ vs. $\epsilon\text{Nd}_{(i)}$ diagram for Carboniferous plutons. (a) References for Carboniferous plutons in the eastern Pontides: [2-6, 9, 30]. (b) The areas of the Paleozoic, Cretaceous and Eocene plutons from [46].

5. Discussion

5.1 Age constraints

The well-developed oscillatory growth zoning and relatively high Th/U ratios in the zircon from the Alazlı pluton demonstrate that the zircons are all magmatic in origin. New U–Pb zircon ages also indicated that the Alazlı pluton (312 Ma) are older than other adjacent Carboniferous plutons, such as Çamlık Pluton (302 Ma [30]) and Kayadibi Pluton (303 Ma [5]) but slightly younger than Carboniferous Derinoba Pluton (avg. 314 Ma, [5]), Köse Pluton (avg. 315 Ma [4]), Gümüşhane Pluton (avg. 313 Ma [2]; avg. 318 Ma [3]), Çamlıkaya Pluton (330 Ma [9]), Narlık Pluton (330 Ma [9]), Özdil Pluton (avg. 332 Ma [6]), Demirkent Pluton (325 Ma [9]), Şahmetlik Pluton (334 Ma [6]), Seslikaya Pluton (335 Ma [6]), Kızılağaç Pluton (337 Ma [6]) and Soğuksu Pluton (348 Ma [6]) (Table 1). As can be

seen in Table 1, the Kayadibi (303 Ma) and Çamlık (302 Ma) plutons are the youngest plutons, and Soğuksu Pluton (348 Ma) is the oldest pluton for Carboniferous plutons in the eastern Pontides.

The crystallization ages of plutons in the Eastern Pontides range from Paleozoic to Eocene–Oligocene. Taking into account geochronological data indicated that the plutons formed during the Paleozoic (348 to 298 Ma), Triassic–Jurassic–Early Cretaceous (188 to 104 Ma), Late Cretaceous (89 to 66 Ma) to Paleocene–Eocene–Oligocene (57 to 36 Ma). Our U–Pb zircon age (312 Ma) for Alazlı pluton are coherent with the major plutonic phase during the Carboniferous (Table 1).

Table 1. Geochronological ages of Carboniferous plutons in the Eastern Pontides.

Era/Age	Pluton/Location	Age (Ma)	Method	Reference
Carboniferous	Köse (Gümüşhane)	322.2±3.8	Ar-Ar	[4]
Carboniferous	Köse (Gümüşhane)	306.6±4.2	Ar-Ar	[4]
Carboniferous	Köse (Gümüşhane)	318±2.4	Ar-Ar	[4]
Carboniferous	Gümüşhane	298	U/(Th-Pb)	[2]
Carboniferous	Gümüşhane	304	U/(Th-Pb)	[2]
Carboniferous	Gümüşhane	338	U/(Th-Pb)	[2]
Carboniferous	Gümüşhane	309.2±5.3	Ar-Ar	[3]
Carboniferous	Gümüşhane	316.8±2.9	Ar-Ar	[3]
Carboniferous	Gümüşhane	319±5	U-Pb	[3]
Carboniferous	Gümüşhane	329±6	U-Pb	[3]
Carboniferous	Çamlık (Gümüşhane)	302.01±0.68	U-Pb	[30]
Carboniferous	Alazlı (Tonya-Trabzon)	312.1±2.1	U-Pb	This study
Carboniferous	Derinoba (Tonya-Trabzon)	317.2±3.5	U-Pb	[5]
Carboniferous	Derinoba (Tonya-Trabzon)	311.1±2.0	U-Pb	[5]
Carboniferous	Kayadibi (Kürtün-Gümüşhane)	303.8±1.5	U-Pb	[5]
Carboniferous	Özdil (Yomra-Trabzon)	340.7±1.8	U-Pb	[6]
Carboniferous	Özdil (Yomra-Trabzon)	323.1±1.5	U-Pb	[6]
Carboniferous	Seslikaya (Maçka-Trabzon)	335.4±1.4	U-Pb	[6]
Carboniferous	Soğuksu (Maçka-Trabzon)	348.4±1.6	U-Pb	[6]
Carboniferous	Şahmetlik (Tonya-Trabzon)	334.5±1.4	U-Pb	[6]
Carboniferous	Kızılağaç (Tonya-Trabzon)	337.2±0.69	U-Pb	[6]
Carboniferous	Çamlıkaya (Yusufeli-Artvin)	330±4.0	U-Pb	[9]
Carboniferous	Demirkent (Yusufeli-Artvin)	325±3.0	U-Pb	[9]
Carboniferous	Narlık (Yusufeli-Artvin)	330±19	U-Pb	[9]

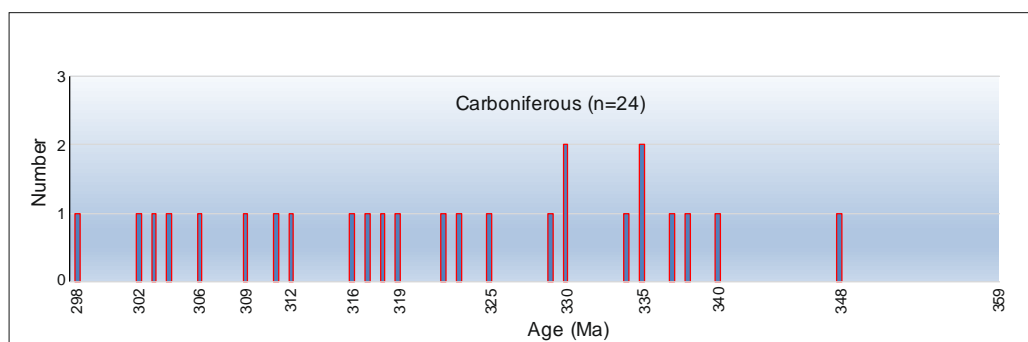


Figure 5. Histogram showing the age range of Carboniferous plutons in the Eastern Pontides.

Concerning the distribution of the eastern Pontide plutons, it is interesting to note that there is no spatial and temporal relationship from east to west, and

north to south. Instead, magmatism becomes older from the centre (Özdil and Seslikaya plutons) of the eastern Pontides (Figure 3).

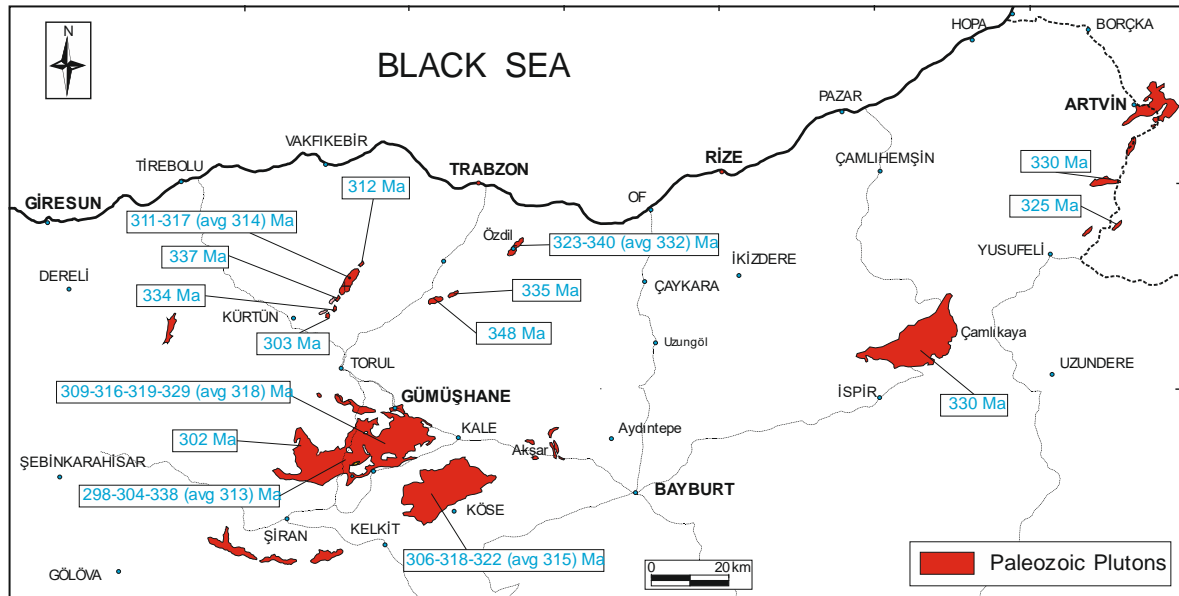


Figure 6. Age-time distribution of Carboniferous plutonic rocks in the Eastern Pontides.

6. Conclusions

Carboniferous plutons are found both northern and southern zones of the Eastern Pontides. They have low to high-K calc-alkaline and peraluminous features. These plutons also have a relatively wide range of $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}_{(t)}$ ratios and a narrow range of $\epsilon\text{Nd}_{(t)}$ values.

Including presently available geochronological age data, the Carboniferous plutonic rocks in the Eastern Pontides are dominantly 348 to 298 Ma in age. As becomes apparent from the existing data, a major pulse of igneous activity occurred around 302 to 340 Ma, and the age of the Alazlı pluton presented in this study (312 Ma) coincides with this peak. The age compilation also shows that there was continuous

magmatic activity between 298 to 348 Ma. Considering the geochronological ages made up to this time of Carboniferous plutons in the Eastern Pontides, the Kayadibi (303 Ma) and Çamlık (302 Ma) plutons are the youngest, and Soğuksu Pluton (348 Ma) is the oldest pluton from Carboniferous plutons in the eastern Pontides.

Concerning the distribution of the eastern Pontide plutons, it is interesting to note that there is no spatial and temporal relationship from north to south, and east to west. Instead, magmatism becomes older from the centre (Özdil and Seslikaya plutons) of the eastern Pontides.

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