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Author	吉川, 英樹(Yoshikawa, Hideki) 山下, 京子(Yamashita, Kyoko) 遠藤, 和豊(Endo, Kazutoyo) 中原, 弘道(Nakahara, Hiromichi) 今村, 峯雄(Imamura, Mineo) 古川, 路明(Furukawa, Michiaki)
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## Radiochemical Techniques Applied to the Study of Volcanic Gases

H. YOSHIKAWA, K. YAMASHITA\*, K. ENDO\*, H. NAKAHARA\*,  
M. IMAMURA\*\* and M. FURUKAWA\*\*\*

吉川英樹, 山下京子\*, 遠藤和豊\*, 中原弘道\*, 今村峯雄\*\*, 吉川路明\*\*\*

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Using natural radioactivities, we can study the origin and the underground transport behavior of the volcanic gas. For example, two radioactive isotopes of radon are contained in the gas, and their concentrations are considered to be related to the migration time and mixing of various gases existing underground. Those two isotopes offer two different time scale for the study of the gas.

The chemical inert gas, Radon, has  $^{222}\text{Rn}$  ( $T_{1/2}=3.82$  d) and  $^{220}\text{Rn}$  ( $T_{1/2}=55$  s) isotopes. They inevitably co-exist in the volcanic gas and are detected simultaneously. We have developed a simple and reliable method for their determination using an especially designed portable liquid scintillation counter. Because of the short half life of  $^{220}\text{Rn}$ , a method for rapid sampling, sample preparation, activity measurement, and data analysis for the absolute determination of the concentration was examined.

On the other hand, we have also collected the Rn decay products from the gas and, after a simple chemical separation, measured the radioactivities of  $^{212}\text{Pb}$  ( $T_{1/2}=10.64$  h) and  $^{214}\text{Pb}$  ( $T_{1/2}=26.8$  m) with a liquid scintillation counter. We have compared this indirect method with the above direct method of the  $^{222}\text{Rn}$  and  $^{220}\text{Rn}$  measurement.

Carbon dioxide is the principal component of volcanic gas, and it contains the radiocarbon  $^{14}\text{C}$  ( $T_{1/2}=5730$  y). It is expected that the ratio of  $^{14}\text{C}$  to  $^{13}\text{C}$  (or  $^{12}\text{C}$ ), gives some useful information on the amount of the  $\text{CO}_2$  produced by the strongly acidic magmatic gas near the surface or on the mixing of atmosphere with the volcanic gas. We have tried the radiocarbon measurement using the method of accelerator mass spectroscopy.

We tested those methods in the field for the study of hot spring gas and volcanic gas at 8 geothermal areas in Japan.

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\* 都立大学理学部  
\*\* 東京大学原子核研究所  
\*\*\* 名古屋大学理学部