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An empirical relation between velocity, mass discharge rate and vent area for normal through paroxysmal eruptions at Stromboli

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Abstract

 Based on published and new data for explosive events at Stromboli (Italy), we propose an 19 empirical relation that links mass discharge rate (MDR) and at-vent gas jet velocity (G_v) . We 20 use 65 simultaneous measurements of MDR and G_v and find two trends in both the cross-21 correlation and rank order statistics. Cross-correlation gives a power law relation: $MDR =$ 22 10^(0.015G_v+2.434) kg/s, R²=0.81, and applies to ash-dominated emissions. Combining this relation with the conservation of mass equation allows at-vent plume density and/or vent area 24 to be derived from MDR = G_v ϕA , ϕ being plume density and A being vent cross-sectional area. 25 We find that while a vent radius of 2 m and plume density of 0.35 kg/m³ fits with the "normal" 26 activity at Stromboli, a 290 \times 2.5 m vent area likely feeds a 10 kg/m³ jet during paroxysmal activity. Initial tests on available data shows promise in extending the correlation beyond 28 Stromboli and/or to events with higher MDR $(>10^7 \text{ kg/s})$. However, the exact relation will depend on magma composition, temperature and volatile content, as well as conduit radius and vent overpressure.

Keywords: Thermal imagery, Eruption intensity, Mass Discharge Rate, Particle Velocity,

Gas Jet Velocity, Stromboli

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Conflicts of interest/Competing interests

The authors declare no conflicts nor competing interest

Introduction

 Mass Discharge Rate (MDR, kg/s) is commonly used to classify the "explosiveness" of a volcanic eruption, especially through the Volcanic Explosivity Index (Newhall and Self, 1982). Time-averaged MDR can be estimated from the total erupted mass divided by eruption duration (e.g., Mason et al. 2004; Bryan et al. 2010; Pyle, 2015). Peak MDR has also been derived from maximum plume height, as MDR is proportional to plume height to the power-of-four for Vulcanian-to-Plinian eruptions (Wilson et al. 1978). Geophysical signals, such as seismicity, infrasound and Doppler radar (e.g., Brodsky et al. 1999; Freret-Lorgeril et al. 2018; Perttu et al., 2020; Maki et al. 2021), as well as lightning intensity rates (Van Eaton et al., 2016), have also been tested as a proxy for MDR.

 We propose a further option for deriving MDR from thermal or visible video using an 56 empirical relation between MDR and gas jet velocity (G_v) . We initially explore this relation for explosive events at Stromboli (Italy) where there is excellent constraint on the plumbing system (e.g., Bertagnini et al. 1999, 2013; Métrich et al. 2005, 2010, 2021), explosion source mechanisms (e.g., Chouet et al. 1999; Ripepe and Gordeev 1999; Ripepe et al. 2001) and emission dynamics (e.g., Patrick et al. 2007; Scharff et al. 2008; Gurioli et al. 2013). As a result data are available to test a relation between MDR and *Gv*. Stromboli also displays a range of explosive activity, which are commonly separated into three groups (Barberi et al. 1993). These are, in order of increasing magnitude: normal, major and paroxysmal. Named by Barberi et al. (1993) to describe the typical explosive activity that occurs at Stromboli, "normal" eruptions 65 send $10-10^4$ kg of bombs, gas and ash to a height of a few 10s to a few 100 m typically \sim 10 times an hour (Harris and Ripepe 2007; Patrick et al. 2007; Harris et al. 2013). Major eruptions 67 can occur several times a year, involve $10^5 - 10^7$ kg of bombs and ash, and send plumes to around a kilometre in height (Gurioli et al. 2013). Paroxysms are rarer, with four having occurred between 2003 and 2019, and form buoyant ash-rich plumes that ascend to several kilometres, 70 and involve $>10^8$ kg (Rosi et al., 2006; Pistolesi et al. 2011; Giordano and De Astis 2020).

 The wealth of data for explosions at Stromboli makes it an ideal location to test relations between a variety of eruption source terms (e.g., MDR and vent area) and plume ascent parameters (e.g., emission velocity and plume ascent velocity). We thus use Stromboli to explore an empirical relation between at-vent gas velocity and MDR using published and new datasets for which the two parameters can be simultaneously derived.

Method

 We examined 65 eruptive events (59 normal, two major and four paroxysmal) for which suitable data were available (Table 1). Harris et al. (2013) obtained the mass (*m*) of 21 normal eruptions from thermal video using the amount of energy lost by the bomb field during cooling.

 Ballistic velocities are obtained either through particle tracking and given by Harris et al. (2013) and Bombrun et al. (2015) for normal explosions, or ballistic trajectory modeling for major (Gurioli, Colo, et al., 2013; Pioli et al., 2014) and paroxysmal events (Rosi et al., 2006; Pistolesi et al., 2011; Andronico et al., 2013; Giordano & De Astis, 2020). We convert these 107 ballistic velocities (B_v) to gas jet velocities (G_v^b) using equation (8) of Harris et al. (2012b):

$$
G_{\nu}^{b} = 1.41 \times B_{\nu} + 15.3 \tag{1}
$$

 This relation is set for explosions at Stromboli and correlates well with directly measured gas ejection velocities (Fig. 1). The literature-derived database is given in Table 1, and our calculated MDR data are given in Table 2.

Results

 The 21 normal explosions at Stromboli recorded by Harris et al. (2013) lasted between 3 and 28 seconds, giving MDRs ranging from 32 to 800 kg/s (Table 2). Eruptions from vent NE1 lasted longer (average of 18 s) than eruptions from NE2 (average of 6 s). This leads to a wider range of MDR values for events at NE2 than NE1 (Fig. 2a). In Figure 2a, data from Bombrun et al. (2015) fall in a cluster of low MDR and high gas velocities (150–250 m/s, MDR $< 10⁴$) kg/s), and data from Tournigand et al. (2017) have high MDR with low gas velocities (<150 119 m/s, MDR $\geq 10^4$ kg/s). MDR for these normal explosions show correlations with gas velocity with an R² of between 0.5 and 0.83 depending on the data set used (Fig. 2a).

121 MDR for the major and paroxysmal events range between 10^4 and 10^7 kg/s, with gas jet velocities in the range 142–297 m/s (Table 1). The relation between MDR and gas velocity for 123 the six major and paroxysmal explosions shows a positive, linear correlation with an R² of 0.79. Eruption magnitudes have a power-law dependence (Pyle, 1998). This can be expressed as a rank order plot, as obtained by sorting the values from the highest to the lowest (Sornette et al.

1996). This method can be used to constrain whether the dataset is homogeneous (cf. Schneider

 and Barbera, 1998) within a single volcanic system. The rank order plot for our Stromboli data shows two trends representing two different populations (Fig. 3). These two populations are apparent in the rank order statistics for both gas velocity and MDR and involve a first group of low gas velocity and MDR, and a second group of high gas velocity and MDR. We thus define two main populations and treat them separately. The first involves ballistic-dominated normal emissions (Fig. 2a). The second includes all major and paroxysmal events, plus one ash- dominated normal eruption, this population being of ash-rich emissions involving plume ascent dominated by buoyancy (Fig. 2b)

Discussion

 The two trends apparent for Stromboli in the cross-correlation (Fig. 2) and rank order (Fig. 3) plots result from the different plume types considered and differences in their associated ascent dynamics. Normal explosions at Stromboli are associated with slug flow in the conduit (Gonnermann and Manga, 2012) and are characterized by very low levels of fragmentation to produce bomb-dominated plumes with particles that follow ballistic trajectories (e.g., Chouet et al. 1974; Patrick et al. 2007; Gurioli et al. 2013). In contrast, major and paroxysmal events involve rapid ascent of magma coupled with a gas phase ascending from depths of 7–10 km and are characterized by higher degrees of fragmentation (e.g., Bertagnini et al. 1999; Métrich et al. 2005, 2010, 2021; Pioli et al. 2014). The result is an ash-dominated plume whose ascent is characterized by a longer steady convection-dominated phase (cf. Wilson and Self 1980; Rosi et al. 2006; Harris et al. 2008).

 Cross-correlation using data for ballistic-dominated normal explosions at Stromboli gives a 148 relation between MDR and G_v of (Fig. 2a, yellow regression line):

$$
MDR = 10^{(0.003G_v + 1.933)} \qquad R^2 = 0.50 \text{ (2a)}
$$

 Considering only a single vent improves the correlation, where the relation for vent NE1 (Fig. 2a, blue regression line) is:

$$
MDR = 10^{(0.004G_v + 1.906)} \qquad R^2 = 0.83 \text{ (2b)}
$$

 These two relations are consistent with differences in vent size, gas/particle ratio, crater geometry, overpressure and volatile content between craters and events.

Finally, the cross-correlation for ash-dominated normal, major and paroxysmal events gives

$$
MDR = 10^{(0.015G_v + 2.434)} \qquad R^2 = 0.81 \tag{3}
$$

This is the black regression line of Figure 2b.

The next largest event at Stromboli?

 Application of maximum likelihood statistics to our rank order plots (cf. Sornette et al. 1996; Pyle 1998) can indicate the most probable MDR and gas velocity for the hypothetical, but next largest, eruption not recorded in our data (i.e., an event larger than the 2003 paroxysm). On this 162 basis an eruption at Stromboli larger than the 2003 paroxysm would have an MDR of $2.19 \times$ 163 10⁷ kg/s and a gas ejection velocity of 338 m/s. Our current data set for Stromboli is missing at least two paroxysms, i.e., those of 1456 and 1930. Both have been described as being larger than the 2003 paroxysm (e.g., Rosi et al. 2006; Bertagnini et al. 2011; Métrich et al. 2021), but 166 both lack an assessment of MDR and G_n . We thus speculate that the MDR and G_n calculated for the next largest eruption in our dataset are possibly representative of the 1456 and 1930 paroxysms.

Vent size during normal and paroxysmal activity

170 MDR is related to bulk average (V) velocity, gas-particle mixture density (ρ) and vent cross sectional area, *A*:

$$
MDR \approx \rho VA \tag{4}
$$

 Given a vent radius typical for Stromboli, i.e., 2 m (Harris et al. 2012b), we use our range of ejection velocities and MDR values to solve for mixture density. We find that the normal gas 175 and ballistic-dominated events fit with a cloud density of 0.35 kg/m^3 (Fig. 2a). This corresponds

to the density of water vapor at 650 K. Instead, ash-dominated normal events fit with 10 kg/m^3 (Fig. 2a). Note, that these values are for at-vent conditions and are hence in the gas-thrust region of the jet before entrainment of air.

 The lower and higher limits of the data set for major and paroxysmal eruptions can only be 180 reproduced with a cloud density of 10 and 2600 kg/m^3 , respectively (Fig. 2b). The latter density is close to the dense-rock value of basaltic magma, and does not provide a realistic plume density. For paroxysmal eruptions the conduit radius likely exceeds 2 m. Using the MDR and G_v for the July 2019 paroxysm (Table 1), with a cloud density of 10 kg/m³, gives a circular vent radius of ~13 m. A 290 m long and 2.5 m wide source also provides a fit for the paroxysmal events. This would represent an eruption from the entire length of a SW-NE trending dyke underlying the crater terrace, and is consistent with emission from all three active craters during a paroxysm (Rosi et al., 2006). It is also consistent with collapse of the crater terrace following paroxysms to create a continuous trench in place of the typical three-crater system that characterizes Stromboli's crater terrace during normal activity (cf. Harris and Ripepe, 2007) and the ejection of meter-sized blocks of the "shattered shallow subvolcanic system" (Renzulli et al., 2009).

192 We calculate the at-vent volume fraction of pyroclasts (f) within the plume using a simple mixture model:

194
$$
\rho \approx f \times \rho_{pyroclast} + (1 - f) \times \rho_{gas}
$$
 (5)

195 An average pyroclast density ($\rho_{pyroclast}$) of ~800 kg/m³ (Pichavant et al. 2022), a gas density 196 (ρ_{gas}) of 0.35 kg/m³ (Harris et al. 2013), and a plume density of 10 kg/m³ results in a mixture 197 of \sim 1 % pyroclasts and \sim 99 % gas volumes (respectively \sim 97 % pyroclasts and \sim 3 % gas mass fraction) . A low gas weight fraction indicates that the cloud was ejected out of the vent without any mixing with the atmosphere (Wilson and Self, 1980).

Towards a global predictive model for eruption intensity?

 At-vent gas and particle velocities vary as a function of vent geometry, over-pressure, magma temperature, volatile content, particle size and gas density (Steinberg and Babenko, 1978; Woods and Bower, 1995). By restricting our consideration to a single system, we limit the variation in volatile content, temperature, crater/vent geometry, pressure, ash/gas ratio, and gas density. Our results for Stromboli indicate that, if eruption types and styles are considered separately according to their dynamics, and measurements of mass eruption rate, gas velocity and particle velocity are available, then an empirical relation relating the three can be derived. We assess whether this can be extended to other, higher magnitude systems by considering:

-
- 209 Pinatubo 1991 (VEI = 6; based on the data from Simkin et al, 1981);
- Mt. St. Helens 1980 (VEI = 5; Venzke 2022);
- 211 Fuego 2012 (VEI \leq 2; Venzke 2022);
- Sakurajima 2013 (VEI ≤ 3; Venzke 2022).

213 For Fuego and Sakurajima we take the MDR and G_v as derived from thermal and visible imagery by Tournigand et al. (2017). For Pinatubo, an MDR ranging between 6.8×10^8 and 10^9 kg/s has been calculated from granulometry (Koyaguchi and Ohno 2001) and satellite data (Koyaguchi and Tokuno 1993). MDR estimates for Mt. St. Helens range from an average of 2 217×10^7 kg/s for the whole eruption (Carey and Sigurdsson, 1985; Pyle, 2015), to $2-6 \times 10^9$ kg/s for the initial lateral blast (Brodsky et al. 1999). In all cases, we use the full range. For Pinatubo whether we calculate gas velocity using the at-vent decompressing jet model (6) or the freely decompressing model (7) of Woods and Bower (1995) is debatable:

$$
G_{\nu} = 0.95 \times (n_0 RT)^{1/2} \tag{6}
$$

$$
G_{\nu} = 1.85 \times (n_0 RT)^{1/2} \tag{7}
$$

223 Here n_0 is the difference between melt inclusion volatile concentration (6.4–7 wt %, Rutherford and Devine, 1996) and glass matrix average volatile concentration (1.45 wt.%, Hammer et al., 225 1999), R is the vapor-gas constant (461.5 J/kg K), and T is the magma temperature (1073 K). The value we obtain is likely a maximum since experimental studies suggested disequilibrium degassing for this eruption (Mangan and Sisson, 2000), which would delay nucleation and thus 228 decrease magma ascent rate and G_n . For Mt. St. Helens we use the range of velocities for the Plinian phase given by Carey and Sigurdsson (1985) and Woods and Bower (1995), i.e., 200– 300 m/s. We use velocities as close as possible to the vent-leaving values, where the at-surface decompression of the volcanic jet has the least impact (Woods and Bower, 1995) and where vent-leaving values can be compared between cases.

 MDR values for Sakurajima, Pinatubo, and Mt. St. Helens are one-to-three orders of magnitude 234 higher than those for Stromboli and Fuego at similar G_v (Fig. 4). However, the relationship 235 between G_n and MDR remains linear and positive. This is consistent with the decompressing jet model of Woods and Bower (1995) for the emission dynamics of gas-particle mixtures, where variations in magma volatile content, over-pressure, vent geometry, and magma temperature account for the differences observed between each system (Fig. 4).

Conclusion

 We derive an empirical relationship between gas jet velocity and MDR which applies to explosive events at Stromboli with VEI ranging from 0 to 3. At Stromboli, a network of continuously recording thermal cameras allows measurement of gas jet velocity (Delle Donne 243 and Ripepe, 2012). This means that real-time measurements of G_v can potentially be converted to MDR for the two event types (ballistic and convective emissions) common at this well-monitored site.

 Extending the analysis to events with higher VEI suggest a wider applicability a linear relation 247 between G_v and MDR. Our argument is thus for a database with simultaneous measurements

- of MDR and at-vent velocities for a variety of systems, allowing extension of this analysis.
- Such data requires a video camera network targeting the vent, which is rarely possible. All the
- same, given the importance of MDR as a key source term in forward modeling (cf. Bonadonna
- et al. 2011), such a fast and straightforward empirical approach to potentially derive MDR in
- near-real time shows promise.

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Figure caption listing

456 **Fig. 1** Comparison between max gas velocity, as derived from ballistic ejection velocity (G_v^b) , 457 and directly measured maximum gas velocities (G_v) for major to paroxysmal eruptions at Stromboli. See Table 1 for data and sources.

 Fig. 2 Relationships between MDR and maximum gas velocity (data points) and ballistic velocity (colored fields) for (a) normal, and (b) major and paroxysmal eruptions at Stromboli. 461 Gray line gives fit obtained from Equation (4); red dashed lines represent the σ uncertainty envelope. The yellow trend is the fit to the data of Bombrun et al. (2015) and NE1 data of Harris et al. (2013), and the blue trend considers all NE crater data. Both trends look very similar, the difference with the correlation coefficient both lies in the amount of data used for each fit and because the NE2 vent data are scattered around the trendline.

 Fig. 3 Rank order representation of Stromboli's normal, major and paroxysmal eruptions in terms of a) the mass discharge rate and b) the maximum gas ejection rate. Both MDR rank order 468 and G_v rank order analyses display a gap between a higher and lower group. The dashed line marks the separation between the higher ranked group composed of paroxysmal, major and ash-dominated emissions, and the lower ranked group of ballistic-dominated normal events.

 Fig. 4 MDR and G^v relations. Orange field is that defined by the data for ash-dominated 472 emissions at Stromboli, where the positive, linear increase as a function of gas density (d_{gas}) , 473 volatile content (C_{vol}) , conduit size and vent overpressure (P_{vent}) , magma temperature (T) and silica content (X). The blue "Vulcanian-Plinian" field falls on a similar trend but is at a level two orders of magnitude higher than the "Strombolian" trend. Sakurajima, Mt. St. Helens and Pinatubo data fall within this field, all three being volcanoes associated with higher magma 477 volatile content (C_{vol}) , silica content (X) , conduit size and vent pressure (P_{vent}) than Stromboli.

479 **Table caption listing**

- 480 **Table 1** Data set for ballistic (B_v) and gas (G_v) velocities and mass discharge rate (MDR) for
- 481 normal, major, and paroxysmal eruptions at Stromboli. B_v and G_v re-calculated using
- 482 Equation (8) of Harris et al. (2012) are given in bold.
- 483 **Table 2** Mass and duration data obtained from thermal video for normal explosions at
- 484 Stromboli's NE1 and NE2 vents (derived MDR in bold)*.*

493 **Table 1**

494

495 **Table 2**

** data from Harris et al. (2013)*

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