



# The effect of high energy milling and high thermal treatment on the structure and thermal decomposition of minerals from natural CaO-SiO<sub>2</sub>-P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub> ceramic system

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## ABSTRACT

The major issue studied in this paper is a natural mineral aggregate of quartz, calcite, and fluorapatite (the raw material originated from Bulgaria) before and after high energy milling and thermal treatment, in the order to investigate the properties of natural CaO-SiO<sub>2</sub>-P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub> ceramic system. The activation effects are monitored by chemical analysis, X-ray powder diffraction, Fourier transformed infrared spectroscopy, and Thermal analysis (TG/DTG).

The activation effect study shows: (i) change of chemical bond strength; (ii) deformation of structural polyhedrons with the formation of new isomorphic phases; (iii) the prolonged time of HEM activation leads to lower raw mineral stability and to the formation of new phases; iv) increased SiO<sub>2</sub> reactivity resulting in solid-phase crystallization.

The obtained results can be used in the study of ceramic and cement materials (ancient and modern), soil conditioners, etc.

## 1. Introduction

The natural mixture of apatite, quartz, and calcite is a well-known system (CaO-SiO<sub>2</sub>-P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>) investigated by many authors as a source of bone bioactive ceramic [1,2], ancient and modern cement [3–7], ceramic composites [8–12], phosphorus fertilizers, and soil improvers, [13–16].

Apatite is the name of a mineral group consisting of several isomorphic minerals with end members hydroxylapatite (HAp), fluorapatite (FAp), and chlorite-apatite [17]. The object of interest is intermediate members of this series, characterized by the partially isomorphic substitution of PO<sub>4</sub>, OH and F, forming hydroxyl-fluorapatite (HFAP), carbonate-hydroxyl-fluorapatite (CHFAP), etc., after high

energy milling (HEM) treatment [18]. HEM treatment of solids causes the appearance of strain field, i. e. the solids accumulated energy in strain field. The accumulated energy relaxed into heat. The other way to energy relaxation is solid plastic deformation, which can lead to the destruction of the crystal (crushing). During high-energy milling, the size of crystals decreases to some critical values. Further energy supply to these crystals of limiting size causes further deformation of crystals, energy accumulation in the volume or at the surface of crystals, and subsequently amorphization/or transition into a metastable polymorphous state/or rupture of chemical bonds [19–21]. Suitable methods for studying such a system are powder diffraction X-Ray analysis, FTIR spectroscopy and thermal analysis [22–30].

The studied raw material (natural CaO-SiO<sub>2</sub>-P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub> system) is from

**Abbreviations:** A-type isomorphism, the isomorphic substitution of OH<sup>−</sup> by CO<sub>3</sub> in the apatite structure; A-B-type isomorphism, the isomorphic substitution of PO<sub>4</sub> by CO<sub>3</sub><sup>2−</sup> and occupancy of the vacancy; B-type isomorphism, the isomorphic substitution of PO<sub>4</sub> by CO<sub>3</sub><sup>2−</sup> in the apatite structure; B0, raw sample; B10, B30, B60, B120, and B240, samples milled for different milling times: 10, 30, 60, 120 and 240 min, respectively; CHFAP, carbonate-hydroxyl-fluorapatite; FAP, fluorapatite; FTIR, Fourier Transform Infra-Red; HAp, hydroxyl-apatite; HEM, high energy milling; HFAP, hydroxyl-fluorapatite; HPP, hydroxyl-pyrophosphate; ML, mass losses; PP, pyrophosphate; PXRD, powder X-ray diffraction; RT, room temperature; SSA, specific surface area; TCP, tricalcium phosphate; TG-DTG, Thermal analyses.

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Sanadinovo, Bulgaria, where the quartz is in higher quantity, followed by calcite and apatite. It was studied in the past and defined as low-phosphate and unpromising ore for agriculture because of the high quantity of  $\text{SiO}_2$  and  $\text{CaCO}_3$ , as well as the low quantity of  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$  [15,31]. This mixture was not studied for the properties of the system after HEM and thermal treatment of milled samples. The  $\text{CaO}-\text{SiO}_2-\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$  is part of ancient and modern cement and ceramic composites whose behavior at milling, rising temperature and atmospheric conditions ( $\text{CO}_2$  and  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ) is of practical importance for the clinker and ceramic minerals obtained as a result. The study of ancient building composite manufacturing technologies, as well as, used local raw materials for their production with practical application in archaeomineralogy and archaeological chemistry which contributes to knowledge of ancient environment. In the future, the low-phosphate ores could become an essential resource for agriculture due to the depletion of rich phosphor ores. The mentioned above the features of the  $\text{CaO}-\text{SiO}_2-\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$  system justified studying its properties after HEM and thermal treatment.

## 2. Experimental

Natural sedimentary mineral aggregate from Bulgaria has been investigated (sample B0) with chemical composition (mass%): 38.97 %  $\text{SiO}_2$ , 26.34 %  $\text{CaO}$ , 14.61 %  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_5^{\text{tot}}$ , 7.91 %  $\text{R}_2\text{O}_3$  ( $\text{R}_2\text{O}_3 = \text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3 + \text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ ) 2.63 %  $\text{F}_2$ , 2.10 %  $\text{K}_2\text{O}$ , 1.13 %  $\text{Na}_2\text{O}$ , 0.95 %  $\text{SO}_x$ , 0.84 %  $\text{MgO}$ .

The B0 sample was activated via high energy milling (HEM) for different milling times: 10, 30, 60, 120, and 240 min, where the milled samples were named B10, B30, B60, B120, and B240 respectively. The HEM activation was carried out in a planetary mill Pulverisette-5, Fritsch Co (Germany), using both Cr-Ni plain steel for the milling container of 250 mL volume and for the milling balls with a diameter of 20 mm and mass of 510 g. The treatment was implemented at a milling velocity of 320 rpm and the balls-to-powder mass ratio was 25.5:1 and sample mass of 20 g.

All samples (B0, B10, B30, B60, B120, and B240) were thermally activated at a temperature of 1050 °C.

The specific surface area (SSA) measurements were performed by the BET-method (adsorptive gas  $\text{N}_2$ , carrier gas He, heating temperature 150 °C) using an EMS-53 sorptometer and KELVIN 1040/1042 software (Costech International).

The powder X-ray diffraction (PXRD) measurements were made by D2 Phaser BrukerAXS,  $\text{CuK}\alpha$  radiation ( $\lambda = 0.15418 \text{ nm}$ ) (operating at 30 kV, 10 mA) from 5 to 80°20 with a step of 0.05° (ground sample weight –  $1.0 \pm 0.1 \text{ mg}$  and particle size below 0.075 mm). The PDF (Powder Diffraction File, ICDD, 2001) database was used for determining the phases and minerals in the samples [32].

The Fourier Transform Infra Red (FTIR) spectra were registered on Bruker Tensor 37 spectrometer in the range  $400-4000 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ , using KBr pellet technique. A resolution of  $2 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  was used collecting 60 scans for each sample.

Thermal analyses (TG-DTG) were performed on a LABSYS evo thermal analyzer (SETARAM, France) in the temperature range: room temperature (RT) – 1050 °C in air medium, with heating rate of  $10 \text{ }^{\circ}\text{C} \cdot \text{min}^{-1}$ .

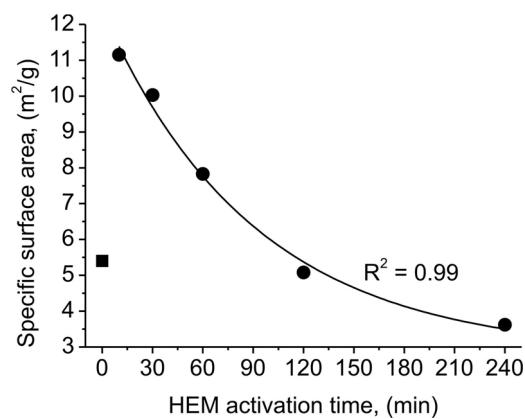
## 3. Results

### 3.1. SSA measurements

**Fig. 1** shows the results from the SSA measurements proving the dependence on SSA changes of HEM activation time. The HEM activated sample at 10 min displays the intensive increase of the SSA. After 10 min of HEM activation, the SSA decreases exponentially, while the solid line is the best fit:  $y = 9.56 \exp(-x/90.92) + 2.82$  ( $R^2 = 0.99$ ).

### 3.2. PXRD analysis

**Table 1** and **Fig. 2** present the results from PXRD analysis. Sample B0



**Fig. 1.** SSA as a function of HEM activation time: (●) samples with exponential decay dependence of the SSA and the best fit to these data (solid line) (B10, B30, B60, B120, and B240); (■) sample outside exponential dependence (B0).

shows the quartz -  $\text{SiO}_2$ , calcite -  $\text{CaCO}_3$ , and FAp –  $\text{Ca}_5\text{F}(\text{PO}_4)_3$  raw minerals, identified in all HEM-activated samples, as well. Three newly-formed phases were also found in the HEM activated samples: hydroxy- pyrophosphate (HPP) -  $\text{CaH}_2\text{P}_2\text{O}_7$  (B30, B60, B120 and B240), HFAP -  $\text{Ca}_{10}(\text{PO}_4)_6(\text{OH},\text{F})_2$  (B60, B120 and B240) and CHFAP -  $\text{Ca}_{10}(\text{PO}_4)_5(\text{CO}_3)(\text{OH},\text{F})_3$  (B60, B120 and B240). The mineral phases for thermally activated samples are different. The raw calcite is missing, while the raw quartz and FAp have been established for all samples. The HFAP formed during HEM activation has been preserved in B10 and B240. The identified new phases are: spurrite ( $\text{Ca}_5(\text{SiO}_4)_2(\text{CO}_3)_2$ ), sili- cocrandite ( $\text{Ca}_5(\text{PO}_4)_2\text{SiO}_4$ ) and tilleyite ( $\text{Ca}_5\text{Si}_2\text{O}_7(\text{CO}_3)_2$ ) presented in B10, B30, B60, B12 and B240; calcium pyrophosphate (PP)  $\text{Ca}_2\text{P}_2\text{O}_7$  (B30, B60, B12 and B240) and tricalcium phosphate (TCP)  $\alpha,\beta\text{-Ca}_3(\text{PO}_4)_2$  (B0, B120, B240). The peaks of spurrite are of low intensity because of lower crystal size or of small quantity, close to limits of detection of PXRD.

### 3.3. FTIR measurements

The FTIR measurements show the vibration modes of the  $\text{SiO}_2$ ,  $\text{SiO}_4$ ,  $\text{Si}_2\text{O}_7$ ,  $\text{PO}_4$ ,  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_7$ ,  $\text{CO}_3$ , and OH groups. The obtained FTIR spectra of B0 and samples after HEM and thermal activation are shown in **Fig. 3**.

The  $\text{SiO}_2$  group shows the absorption bands for all investigated samples at  $\sim 514$ ,  $\sim 687$ ,  $\sim 775$ ,  $\sim 795$ ,  $\sim 1092 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ , and  $\sim 1872 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ , assigned as Si-O in quartz [33–36]. The Si-O symmetric ( $\nu_1$ ) and asymmetric ( $\nu_3$ ) stretching vibrations are presented at  $798-800 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  and  $1085-1092 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ . The asymmetric ( $\nu_3$ ) stretching vibrations at  $1085-1092 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  can be assigned both to Si-O-Si, and P—O—P in  $\text{SiO}_2$  and  $\text{PO}_4$ , respectively. The absorption bands at  $463-468 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  ( $\nu_2$ ) and  $512-514 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  ( $\nu_4$ ) are attributed to the typical bending vibrations of Si-O-Si [2].

The  $\text{SiO}_4$  group is presented with peaks at  $\sim 902$  and  $\sim 938 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ , assigned as ( $\nu_4$ ) bending vibration mode of Si-O in  $\text{SiO}_4$  in spurrite [33]. The  $\text{Si}_2\text{O}_7$  group shows a peak at  $\sim 646$  ( $\nu_4$ ) bending vibration mode, assigned as Si-O in tilleyite [33]. Both  $\text{SiO}_4$  and  $\text{Si}_2\text{O}_7$  have been identified in thermally treated samples only.

The  $\text{PO}_4$  group of FAp shows absorption bands at  $\sim 463$ ,  $\sim 572$ ,  $\sim 599$ ,  $\sim 1046$  and  $\sim 1096 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  for all HEM activated samples [37]. All bands with a shift of several  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  have been presented in all thermally treated samples [33,38]. At thermally treated samples, the band of around  $420 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  appears, assigned as symmetric O—P—O ( $\nu_2$ ) bending mode in  $\beta$ -TCP.

The  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_7$  group has been established at  $\sim 963 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  for all thermally treated samples, assigned as double degenerated symmetric P—O—P ( $\nu_1$ ) stretching mode in PP [23,39,40]. The  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_7/\text{H}_2\text{P}_2\text{O}_7$  group in HPP is difficult to identify in the spectra of HEM activated samples due to low

**Table 1**  
Results from the PXRD phase analyses.

After HEM activation	Sample	After HEM and Thermal activation
Quartz, $\text{SiO}_2$ (46–1045) – 3.34*	B0	Quartz, $\text{SiO}_2$ (46–1045) – 3.34* FAp, $\text{Ca}_5\text{F}(\text{PO}_4)_3$ (15–0876) – 2.79 *
Calcite, $\text{CaCO}_3$ , (47–1743) – 3.04*		$\beta$ -TCP, $\beta\text{-Ca}_3(\text{PO}_4)_2$ , (09–0169) – 2.88*
Quartz, $\text{SiO}_2$ (46–1045) – 3.34*	B10	Quartz, $\text{SiO}_2$ (46–1045) – 3.34* FAp, $\text{Ca}_5\text{F}(\text{PO}_4)_3$ (15–0876) – 2.79* *
Calcite, $\text{CaCO}_3$ , (47–1743) – 3.04*		HFAp, $\text{Ca}_{10}(\text{PO}_4)_6(\text{OH},\text{F})_2$ [9] – 2.80* Spurrite, $\text{Ca}_5(\text{SiO}_4)_2(\text{CO}_3)$ (13–0496) – 2.69*
Quartz, $\text{SiO}_2$ (46–1045) – 3.34*	B30	Tilleyite, $\text{Ca}_5\text{Si}_2\text{O}_7(\text{CO}_3)_2$ , (24–0184) – 3.00* Silicocarnotite, $\text{Ca}_5(\text{PO}_4)_2\text{SiO}_4$ (40–0393) – 2.81*
Calcite, $\text{CaCO}_3$ , (47–1743) – 3.04*		Spurrite, $\text{Ca}_5(\text{SiO}_4)_2(\text{CO}_3)$ , (13–0496) – 2.69*
HPP, $\text{CaH}_2\text{P}_2\text{O}_7$ (51–0200) – 3.35*		Tilleyite, $\text{Ca}_5\text{Si}_2\text{O}_7(\text{CO}_3)_2$ , (24–0184) – 3.00* Silicocarnotite, $\text{Ca}_5(\text{PO}_4)_2\text{SiO}_4$ (40–0393) – 2.81*
Quartz, $\text{SiO}_2$ (46–1045) – 3.34*	B60	PP, $\text{Ca}_2\text{P}_2\text{O}_7$ , (20–0024) – 3.02* Quartz, $\text{SiO}_2$ (46–1045) – 3.34* FAp, $\text{Ca}_5\text{F}(\text{PO}_4)_3$ (15–0876) – 2.79* *
Calcite, $\text{CaCO}_3$ (47–1743) – 3.04*		Spurrite, $\text{Ca}_5(\text{SiO}_4)_2(\text{CO}_3)$ (13–0496) – 2.69*
HPP, $\text{CaH}_2\text{P}_2\text{O}_7$ (51–0200) – 3.35*		Tilleyite, $\text{Ca}_5\text{Si}_2\text{O}_7(\text{CO}_3)_2$ , (24–0184) – 3.00* Silicocarnotite, $\text{Ca}_5(\text{PO}_4)_2\text{SiO}_4$ (40–0393) – 2.81*
CHFAp, $\text{Ca}_{10}(\text{PO}_4)_5(\text{CO}_3)(\text{OH},\text{F})_3$ (21–0145) – 2.71*		PP, $\text{Ca}_2\text{P}_2\text{O}_7$ , (20–0024) – 3.02* Quartz, $\text{SiO}_2$ (46–1045) – 3.34* FAp, $\text{Ca}_5\text{F}(\text{PO}_4)_3$ (15–0876) – 2.79* *
HFAp, $\text{Ca}_{10}(\text{PO}_4)_6(\text{OH},\text{F})_2$ [9] – 2.80	B120	Quartz, $\text{SiO}_2$ (46–1045) – 3.34* FAp, $\text{Ca}_5\text{F}(\text{PO}_4)_3$ (15–0876) – 2.79* *
Quartz, $\text{SiO}_2$ (46–1045) – 3.34*		Spurrite, $\text{Ca}_5(\text{SiO}_4)_2(\text{CO}_3)$ , (13–0496) – 2.69*
HPP, $\text{CaH}_2\text{P}_2\text{O}_7$ (51–0200) – 3.35*		Tilleyite, $\text{Ca}_5\text{Si}_2\text{O}_7(\text{CO}_3)_2$ , (24–0184) – 3.00* Silicocarnotite, $\text{Ca}_5(\text{PO}_4)_2\text{SiO}_4$ , (40–0393) – 2.81*
CHFAp, $\text{Ca}_{10}(\text{PO}_4)_5(\text{CO}_3)(\text{OH},\text{F})_3$ (21–0145), – 2.71*		PP, $\text{Ca}_2\text{P}_2\text{O}_7$ , (20–0024) – 3.02* $\alpha$ -TCP, $\alpha\text{-Ca}_3(\text{PO}_4)_2$ , (09–0348) – 2.90*
HFAp $\text{Ca}_{10}(\text{PO}_4)_6(\text{OH},\text{F})_2$ [9] – 2.80		Quartz, $\text{SiO}_2$ (46–1045) – 3.34* FAp, $\text{Ca}_5\text{F}(\text{PO}_4)_3$ (15–0876) – 2.79* *
Quartz, $\text{SiO}_2$ (46–1045) – 3.34*	B240	Spurrite, $\text{Ca}_5(\text{SiO}_4)_2(\text{CO}_3)$ , (13–0496) – 2.69*
Calcite, $\text{CaCO}_3$ , (47–1743) – 3.04*		Tilleyite, $\text{Ca}_5\text{Si}_2\text{O}_7(\text{CO}_3)_2$ , (24–0184) – 3.00* Silicocarnotite, $\text{Ca}_5(\text{PO}_4)_2\text{SiO}_4$ , (40–0393) – 2.81*
HPP, $\text{CaH}_2\text{P}_2\text{O}_7$ , (51–0200) – 3.35*		PP, $\text{Ca}_2\text{P}_2\text{O}_7$ , (20–0024) – 3.02* $\alpha$ -TCP, $\alpha\text{-Ca}_3(\text{PO}_4)_2$ , (09–0348) – 2.90*
CHFAp, $\text{Ca}_{10}(\text{PO}_4)_5(\text{CO}_3)(\text{OH},\text{F})_3$ (21–0145), – 2.71*		Quartz, $\text{SiO}_2$ (46–1045) – 3.34* FAp, $\text{Ca}_5\text{F}(\text{PO}_4)_3$ (15–0876) – 2.79* *
HFAp $\text{Ca}_{10}(\text{PO}_4)_6(\text{OH},\text{F})_2$ [9] – 2.80		Spurrite, $\text{Ca}_5(\text{SiO}_4)_2(\text{CO}_3)$ , (13–0496) – 2.69*

\* strongest line.

peak intensities and their overlapping with other peaks. The peaks at  $\sim 414 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  ( $\nu_2$ ) (inserted in peak at  $\sim 463 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ );  $\sim 568 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  ( $\nu_4$ ) (inserted in peak at  $\sim 572 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ );  $\sim 732 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  ( $\nu_1$ ) and  $\sim 915 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  ( $\nu_1$ ) (inserted in peak at  $\sim 1048 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ ); and  $\sim 1114 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  ( $\nu_3$ ) have been taken with a high probability of HPP crystallization in these samples [41].

In all studied samples peaks appear at  $2360$  and  $2344 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  due to  $\text{CO}_2$  absorption from the air [38]. The doublet stayed unchanged after

HEM- and thermal treatment of the samples.

Absorption bands at  $\sim 875 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  and in the range of  $1400$ – $1600 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  are attributed to ( $\nu_3$ )  $\text{CO}_3$  symmetric and asymmetric stretching modes and as ( $\nu_2$ )  $\text{CO}_3$  stretching modes in apatite structure [33,38]. They are typical of all HEM-activated samples. The band at the  $1400$ – $1600 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  range dramatically decreases in intensity, while the peak at  $\sim 875 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  is absent for all thermally treated samples. The peak positions of HEM activated samples are obtained by multiple peak deconvolution applying Gauss function (Table 2).

Absorption bands at  $\sim 2500$  and  $\sim 2874 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  are assigned to  $\text{CO}_3$  in calcite [33]. They are typical of B0 and all HEM activated samples and stay in practically unchanged positions, and are missing in the thermally activated samples.

Absorption bands at  $3200$ – $3800 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  and  $\sim 1797 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  are assigned to structural OH-groups in apatite structure (stretching modes) [33]. The broad band at  $3200$ – $3800 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  is composed of three peaks and their position is obtained by peak deconvolution by Gauss function of experimental FTIR measurements (Table 2). The OH-bands are presented in all HEM activated samples and the B0 sample. The exact peak positions of all samples are shown in Table 2. The thermally activated samples show a significant intensity decrease of the band at  $3500$ – $3800 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  and no peak at  $\sim 1790 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ .

The peak at  $\sim 1630 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ , found in HEM activated samples, is assigned as crystal bonded ( $\nu_2$ ) OH-group in HPP [40,41]. For thermally activated samples this peak vanishes.

### 3.4. Thermal analysis

Table 3 and Fig. 4 show the results from the thermal analysis of B0 and HEM activated samples. The results prove thermal decomposition of carbonate phases and new solid-phase formation after HEM activation. The thermal reactions complete with a total of 11–12 % mass losses (ML). For sample B0, the temperature stages are: RT– $200^\circ\text{C}$  (0.40 % ML),  $200$ – $510^\circ\text{C}$  (2.34 % ML),  $590$ – $750^\circ\text{C}$  (5.74 % ML) and  $800$ – $910^\circ\text{C}$  (1.44 % ML).

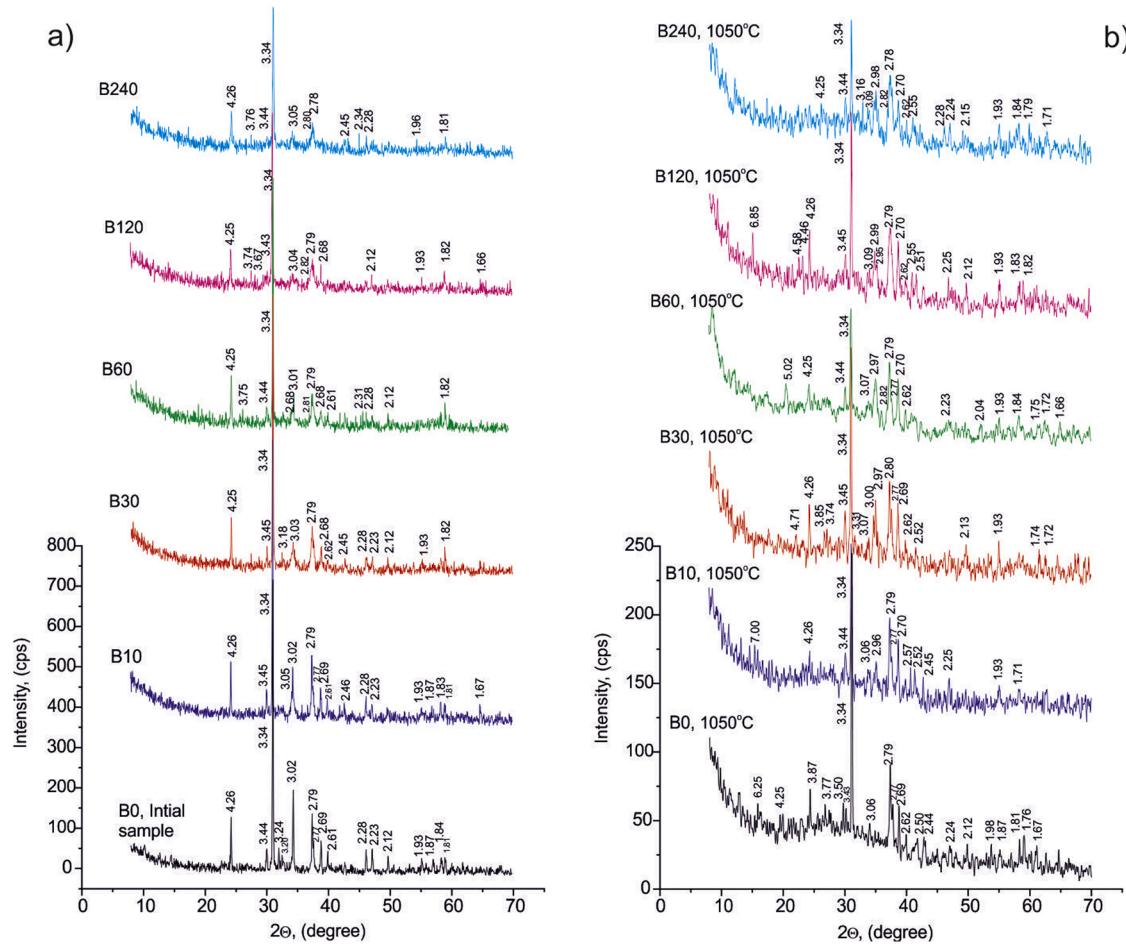
The decomposition of HEM activated samples is characterized by parallel thermal reactions in which low values of ML are measured. The ML of HEM activated samples are distributed in the following three temperature intervals:  $50$ – $370^\circ\text{C}$  (0.53–2.70 % ML);  $430$ – $530^\circ\text{C}$  (0.72–1.67 % ML) and  $530$ – $920^\circ\text{C}$  (decrease from 6.40 % to 4.56 % ML). ML decreases in the third temperature range, while an increase is measured in the first two. The four stages of decomposition have been distinguished in the third temperature range marked in Table 3 with No 3, 4, 5, and 6, respectively.

## 4. Discussion

The obtained experimental results of BET method, PXRD analysis, FTIR spectroscopy, and Thermal analysis for all studied samples agree.

### 4.1. The B0 raw sample

The PXRD measurement shows the following mineral composition: quartz, calcite, and FAp. The FTIR spectroscopy confirms the presence of quartz and calcite and gives new data on the chemical composition of FAp. The peaks position of ( $\nu_3$ )  $\text{CO}_3^{2-}$  (Table 2) evidence the isomorphic substitution of  $\text{PO}_4$  by  $\text{CO}_3^{2-}$ , while the OH- band at  $\sim 3550 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  shows the isomorphic substitution of F- by OH- in FAp. The defect substitution of  $\text{PO}_4$  by  $\text{CO}_3^{2-}$  is quite known both in literature [17,18,25,28–30,43] and our previous investigations [24,27], known as B-type substitution. The  $200$ – $500^\circ\text{C}$  temperature interval shows a weak step in the TG curve (Fig. 4a, Table 3) with 1.23 % ML caused by burning a small amount of organic matter. The presence of organic matter is related to the sedimentary origin of B0. After HEM activation, this effect overlaps with the dehydroxylation process without a significant influence on the reaction mechanism of thermal decomposition of HEM activated samples.



**Fig. 2.** PXRD patterns of B0 and HEM activated samples: (a) measurements at RT; (b) measurements after thermal activation at 1050 °C.

The general formula of such apatite is  $\text{Ca}_{(10-x+u)}(\text{PO}_4)_{6-x}(\text{CO}_3)_x\text{F}_{(2-x+2u)}$ , where  $0 \leq x < 2$  and  $0 \leq u < 1$  [17,18,22]. According to our results, the chemical formula of B0 is  $\text{Ca}_{10}(\text{PO}_4)_5(\text{CO}_3)(\text{OH})\text{F}_2$ , where  $x = 1$  and  $u = 1$ . The low degree of isomorphic substitutions is probably a reason for PXRD identification of raw material as FAp.

#### 4.2. HEM activated samples

The raw minerals: quartz, FAp, and calcite have been identified in all samples by PXRD and FTIR. For B10 sample they remain the only mineral phases. This has been confirmed by BET analysis results (Fig. 1) – the maximum of SSA is measured for B10 because of mechanical fragmentation of the sample, without the formation of new mineral phases because of quartz and FAp low chemical activity [17,18]. The prolonged time of HEM activation leads to exponential decrease of SSA due to crystal aggregates formation [19,21]. For the B30 – B240, the new mineral (HPP) and new isomorphic members of the apatite group (HFAp and CHFAp) arise, proven by PXRD and FTIR.

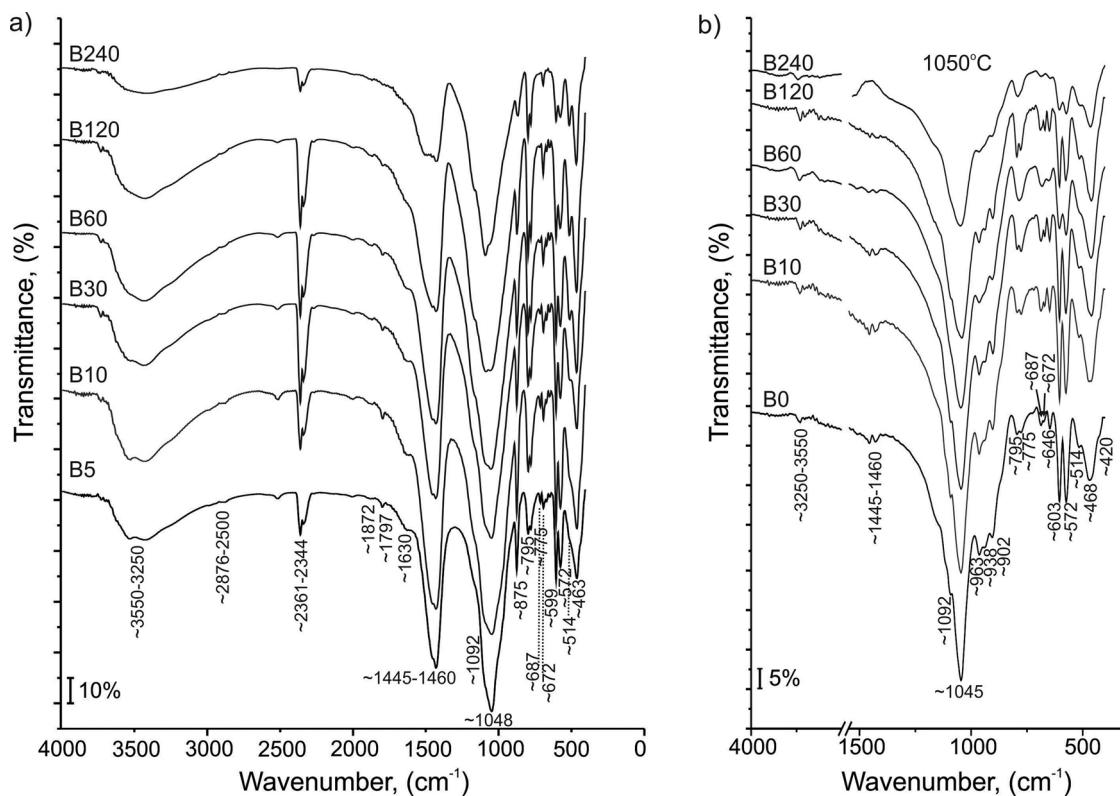
The quartz, having strong covalent bonds, high hardness (7 by Mohs), and high melting point, remains chemically inactive during HEM activation: (i) PRXD patterns show decreasing peaks intensity without any broadening for B10 – B240 (Fig. 2), in accordance with decreasing SSA after HEM activation (Fig. 1) and (ii) FTIR measurements show practically unchanged Si-O vibration modes of quartz (Fig. 3).

FAp and calcite are with lower hardness - 5 and 3 by Mohs, respectively, and with lower melting points. Therefore, the effect of HEM activation is greater – the intensity decrease of PXRD is obvious, as well as the formation of new minerals (Figs. 2, 3 and Table 1).

The crystallization of HPP is a result of P-ions direct pairing (cationation) with pyrophosphates  $[\text{H}_2\text{P}_2\text{O}_7]^{2-}$  formation (Table 2), skipping orthophosphates -  $[\text{H}_2\text{PO}_4]^-$  and/or  $[\text{HPO}_4]^{2-}$  [47–49].

The formation of HFAp and CHFAp is proven by both PXRD and FTIR. The presence of peaks close to 1418, 1458, and  $875\text{ cm}^{-1}$  evidence the B-type isomorphic substitution structure [17,18]. The  $\sim 1515\text{ cm}^{-1}$  peak shows the isomorphic substitution of OH<sup>-</sup> by CO<sub>3</sub> in the apatite structure, known as A-type substitution [46]. Theoretically, the charge compensation at heterovalent substitution is most frequently realized by the occurrence of cationic vacancy [18,50]. The  $\sim 875\text{ cm}^{-1}$  peak presents the A-type substitution in all samples, while due to B-type substitution, the band splitting for B120 and B240 and the presence of two additional peaks at 862 and  $868\text{ cm}^{-1}$  have been observed [18,51]. The cationic vacancy at the Ca positions, formed during the HEM activation, is very likely to be occupied by CO<sub>2</sub> adopted from the air or by migrating CO<sub>3</sub>-ions which leads to the third type of isomorphic substitution, namely A-B-type. The appearance of A-B-type isomorphism is proved by shifting of the peak close to  $\sim 1515\text{ cm}^{-1}$  to a higher wavenumber (Table 2) [18]. Additional evidence for isomorphism in the CaO-P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub> system has been obtained from the thermal analysis.

The maximum at  $\sim 3570\text{ cm}^{-1}$  shows substitution of OH<sup>-</sup> by CO<sub>3</sub> [18,38]. As a result, the isomorphic transformation from raw FAp to HFAp occurs. The probable mechanism of such type of substitution is determined by: (i) adsorption of CO<sub>2</sub> from the air [52] and (ii) partial decomposition of calcite and relocation and migration of CO<sub>3</sub> in the tetragonal positions of the phosphate ions in the course of HEM-activation. It is known that peak intensity close to  $3550\text{ cm}^{-1}$  decreases with the increase of CO<sub>3</sub> content in the apatite structure and the area of  $\nu_1$ ,  $\nu_2$ , and  $\nu_3$  CO<sub>3</sub> peaks increases with the rise of CO<sub>3</sub> [46]. On



**Fig. 3.** FTIR spectra of: (a) B0 and HEM-activated samples; (b) B0 and thermally activated samples.

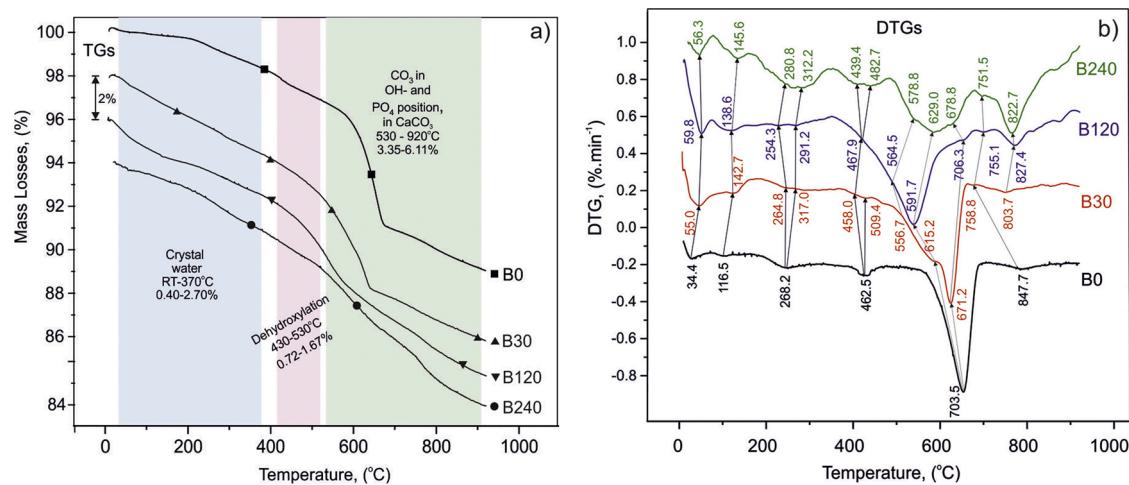
**Table 2**  
Peak positions of CO<sub>3</sub> and OH vibration modes in apatite.

sample	CO <sub>3</sub>				OH			
	(v <sub>3</sub> ) 1400–1600 cm <sup>-1</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> peak fit	(v <sub>2</sub> ) ~875 cm <sup>-1</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> peak fit	3200–3800 cm <sup>-1</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> peak fit		
B0	1416	1458	–	0.999	875	–	0.993	3230
B10	1416	1472	–	0.998	875	–	0.994	3225
B30	1411	1453	1508	0.999	875	–	0.992	3270
B60	1410	1452	1509	0.998	875	–	0.992	3233
B120	1409	1452	1515	0.996	862	874	0.996	3254
B240	1410	1453	1521	0.997	868	875	0.998	3260

**Table 3**  
Mass losses and temperature intervals of thermal decomposition.

No	B0		B10		B30		B60		B120		B240		Description
	T <sub>infl.</sub> *, (°C)	ML, (%)	T <sub>infl.</sub> , (°C)	ML, (%)	T <sub>infl.</sub> , (°C)	ML, (%)	T <sub>infl.</sub> , (°C)	ML, (%)	T <sub>infl.</sub> , (°C)	ML, (%)	T <sub>infl.</sub> , (°C)	ML, (%)	
1	34.4 116.5	0.20 0.20	89.5	0.53	55.0 142.7	1.40 0.60	103.3 250.8	1.45 0.59	59.8 126.3	0.68 0.91	56.3 280.8 312.2	145.6 0.60 1.02 0.78	Dehydration of physical and crystal water
2	462.5	1.23	467.7	0.72	458.0 509.4	0.83 0.60	468.3	1.10	467.9	1.28	439.4 482.7	0.92 0.75	Dehydroxylation of HPP (B10-B240) [17] and Decomposition of organic matter (B0)
3	–	–	559.2	0.95	556.7	1.23	534.7	1.36	564.5	1.82	578.8	0.93	Decarbonation (A-type substitution) [18,19,20,21,18,24,25,26,42]
4	703.5	5.74	697.3	4.29	615.2 671.2	1.57 2.18	613.0 661.3	2.60 1.13	591.7 706.3	1.37 1.27	629.0 678.8	1.35 1.07	Decarbonation (B-type substitution) [11,19,22,23,24,18,24,27,28,29,37]
5	847.7	1.44	760.7	0.76	758.8	0.54	758.1	0.52	755.1	0.53	751.5	0.79	Decarbonation of CO <sub>3</sub> from free CaCO <sub>3</sub>
6	–	–	815.0	0.31	803.7	0.58	839.6	0.91	827.4	1.04	822.7	2.70	Decarbonation (A-B-type substitution) [24,30,43,44,45,46]
	11.20	8.61		12.10		10.78		11.97		11.22		Total ML, (%)	

T<sub>infl.</sub>\* - Temperature in inflection point.



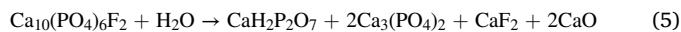
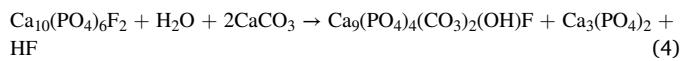
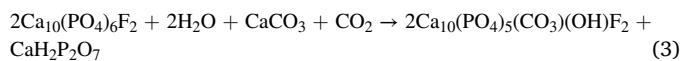
**Fig. 4.** Thermal analysis of B0, B30, B120, and B240: (a) TGs curves; (b) DTGs curves.

the other hand, the decrease of peak intensity close to 3550 cm<sup>-1</sup> could be due to: (i) decrease of samples crystallinity [46] because of increased CO<sub>3</sub> content or (ii) HEM-activation (Fig. 1) [53]. The results show decreasing intensities of both peaks due to the reduction of crystallinity of HEM-activation, proven by SSA measurements (Fig. 1).

The three peaks in the broad band at 3200 – 3800 cm<sup>-1</sup> (Table 2) assumes the OH–F substitution in the apatite structure [54,55].

The position of the peak close to 3550 cm<sup>-1</sup> defined the quantity of OH in the F position, whereas the peak shift to 3580 cm<sup>-1</sup> displays an increase of OH (Table 2). The increase of OH-content in the apatite structure appears as a result of the sample HEM-activation and supposes isomorphic transformation from raw FAp to HFAp.

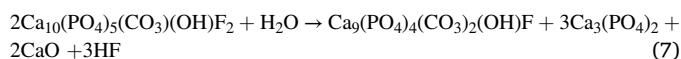
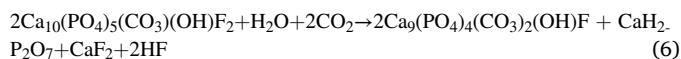
The chemical mechanism of the isomorphic substitutions and the formation of the new phases could be presented by the following possible reactions:



and/or



Taking into account the obtained formula of B0 - Ca<sub>10</sub>(PO<sub>4</sub>)<sub>5</sub>(CO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>(OH)F<sub>2</sub>, the reactions (3) and (4) could be transformed in accordance with a possible increase of CO<sub>2</sub> and H<sub>2</sub>O adsorption from the air as following:



#### 4.3. Thermally activated samples

After thermal activation of HEM activated samples, the

redistribution of CO<sub>3</sub>, PO<sub>4</sub>, P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>7</sub>, and Si-ions occurs, proven by PRXD and FTIR identification of new mineral phases (Figs. 2,3, Tables 1,2) and thermal effects by Thermal analysis are registered (Fig. 4, Table 3).

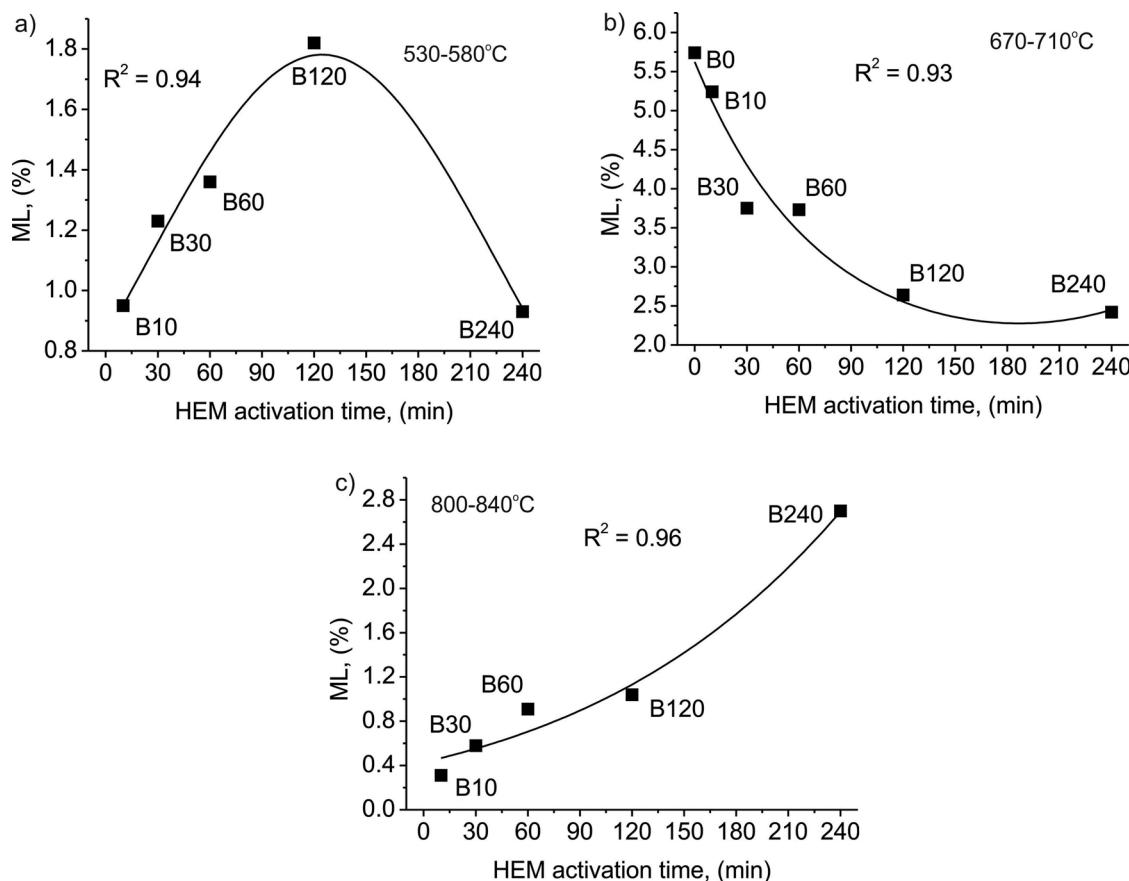
The accomplished measurements show solid-phase formation of new phases due to: (i) dehydration of physical and crystal water and dehydroxylation of HPP; (ii) decarbonation of carbonate substituted apatite phases and calcite; and (iii) partial transformation of SiO<sub>2</sub> into SiO<sub>4</sub> and Si<sub>2</sub>O<sub>7</sub>.

The dehydration of physical and crystal water is established via FTIR by reduced and/or lack of OH-structural bands in FAp, CHFAp, and HFAp (Fig. 3). The dehydroxylation of HPP is presented by transformation into PP (Table 1) as thermal analysis has registered ML in the first temperature range (Fig. 4, Table 3).

The decarbonation of calcite is proved with FTIR spectra due to the lack of CO<sub>3</sub>-calcite bands (Fig. 2), whereas PXRD does not identify calcite peaks (Table 1). The decarbonation of carbonate substituted apatite phases is seen from Fig. 3 - the CO<sub>3</sub>-apatite bands do not exist [33,38]. The thermal analysis also proves decomposition of apatite and calcite minerals: ML at 527–607 °C show decarbonation of CO<sub>3</sub> from OH-position (A-type isomorphism) [18,24–26,42], ML at 670–840 °C - decarbonation of CO<sub>3</sub> from PO<sub>4</sub>-position (B-type isomorphism and A-B-type isomorphism), and of CO<sub>3</sub> from calcite [18,24,27–29,37] (Fig. 4, Table 3).

The results from PXRD show that after HEM activation, the degree of isomorphic defects in apatite increases. According to thermal analysis, HEM activation influence has been determined in apatite structure defects by measuring ML in the three temperature ranges: i) 530–580 °C (A-type isomorphism) (Fig. 5a); ii) 670–710 °C (B-type isomorphism) (Fig. 5b); and iii) 800–840 °C (A-B-type isomorphism) (Fig. 5c).

Fig. 5a shows the exponential dependence of HEM activation time by ML for decarbonation of CO<sub>3</sub> from OH-position (A-type isomorphism) with the best fit:  $y = \exp(0.167 - 0.011x - 4.792 \times 10^{-5}x^2)$  ( $R^2 = 0.94$ ). The ML increase has been detected with the prolonged HEM activation time up to 120 min and a sharp decrease with prolonged activation time (240 min) (Table 3). The measured increase of ML from 0.95 % to 1.82 % is due to the increase of CO<sub>3</sub> in OH-positions, i.e. structural defects rise. This process has taken place with the SSA growth with prolonged time of HEM activation (Fig. 1) leading to fresh reaction surface increase. The additional amount of CO<sub>3</sub> could be caused by CO<sub>2</sub>-diffusion from the air and by intrinsic system redistribution of CO<sub>3</sub>. The sharp decrease of measured ML for B240 is due to a lowering degree of A-type substitution. Such prolonged time of HEM activation, leads to particle aggregation [19,21]. This process cannot be detected by the measured SSA values (there is no substantial difference in the values of B120 and B240 - Fig. 1), as they depend on the crystallite-to-aggregates size ratio, which



**Fig. 5.** HEM activation time dependence of the measured ML duringapatite decarbonation and best fit to these data: (a) A-type substitution; (b) B-type substitution; (c) A-B-type substitution.

is also observed in previous studies in other HEM-activated materials - eggshells [53] and bi-phase ceramic [56]. However, probably because of the particle aggregation sharp decrease of CO<sub>2</sub> incorporation in the structure has been observed. It is likely that A-type defect formation is related to CO<sub>2</sub> absorption from the air.

Fig. 5b presents exponential decrease of ML with increase the HEM activation time for CO<sub>3</sub> decarbonation from PO<sub>4</sub>-position (B-type isomorphism) with the best fit:  $y = \exp(1.727 - 0.009x + 2.600 \times 10^{-5}x^2)$  ( $R^2 = 0.93$ ) in the temperature range of 670–710 °C. The reduction of mass losses from B0 (5.74 %) to B240 (2.42 %) is by 58 %, which shows a significant decrease in CO<sub>3</sub> at B-type position. The latter is related to CO<sub>2</sub> evolving of from the system and very likely to internal migration and position relocation of CO<sub>3</sub> (from B- to other positions), both take place in the course of HEM activation.

Fig. 5c presents exponential growth of ML with increase the HEM activation time for CO<sub>3</sub> decarbonation from PO<sub>4</sub>-position and vacancy (A-B-type isomorphism), with the best fit:  $y = \exp(-0.747 - 0.008x - 0.355x^2)$  ( $R^2 = 0.96$ ). The ML rise from 0.31 % (B0) to 2.70 % (B240), i. e. by 88 %. This effect is a result of defect increase during HEM activation. As the rise of ML at A-B-type isomorphism is much higher (88 %) than the decrease of ML at B-type isomorphism (58 %), there could exist different mechanisms for position occupancy during HEM activation:

- Relocation of CO<sub>3</sub>-ions from B-type to A-B-type position;
- Redistribution of CO<sub>3</sub>-ions obtained after calcite decarbonation. Calcite is a mineral with low hardness and it is possible to partially decompose during HEM activation and CO<sub>3</sub> to get distributed depending on the energy and thermodynamic state of the system. In addition, the measured ML from calcite decarbonation (Table 3, row 5) show a decrease from 1.44 % (B0) to 0.52–0.54% (B30-B120).

#### - Incorporation of CO<sub>2</sub> from the air.

The partial decomposition of FAp has been proved both by the decarbonation process and the shift of PO<sub>4</sub> – bands in FTIR spectra [33, 38] which explains the detected β-TCP at B0 and, β-TCP at B240 by PRXD (Table 1).

SiO<sub>2</sub> partially transforms into SiO<sub>4</sub> and Si<sub>2</sub>O<sub>7</sub>. After HEM activation of samples, quartz accumulates energy in the structure [20] and remains stable because of its strong covalent bonds. The accumulated energy relaxed into heat leading to the destruction of the quartz (crushing) [20, 21]. During the subsequent high-temperature treatment accumulated heat energy released through solid phase reactions with the formation of spurrite, and tilleyite. These new phases are identified by PXRD and FTIR. Another new phase is registered - silicocarnotite (a member of silicocarnotite–ternesite solid solution [57]). Silicocarnotite crystallized under high-temperature conditions (artificial, calcium silico-phosphate phase in slag [58] and natural mineral, a product of pyrometamorphism [57]). In the studied case, silicocarnotite is a product of the interaction between FAp or/and β-TCP with larnite [58]. Larnite has not been identified. The spurrite and larnite PRDX positions are very close, which along with the low peaks intensity, do not allow larnite phase to be identified.

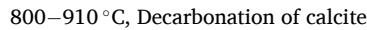
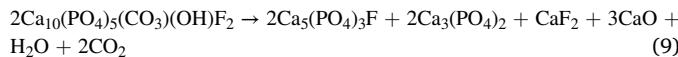
The detected new minerals are products of solid-state reaction as a result of decarbonation and SiO<sub>2</sub>-ion transformations. These effects are shown in Table 3. The last row displays increasing ML with decreasing temperature and rising HEM activation time.

The reaction mechanisms of samples thermal decomposition are as follows:

#### Sample B0:

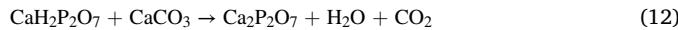
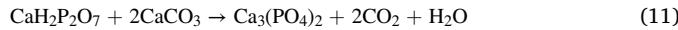
The main reaction of thermal decomposition of apatite is presented

by (1). Taking into account the identification of sample B0 as CHFAP, the reaction (1) is modified into decarbonation of CHFAP via  $\text{CO}_3$  from  $\text{PO}_4$ -position:

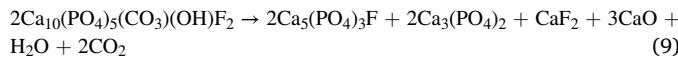


#### *HEM activated samples (B10-B240)*

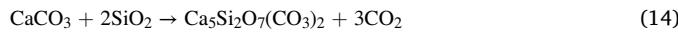
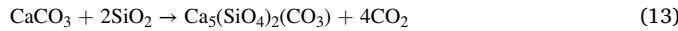
Up to  $370^\circ\text{C}$ , Dehydration of free physical and crystal water  
 $430\text{--}530^\circ\text{C}$ , Dehydroxylation of HPP



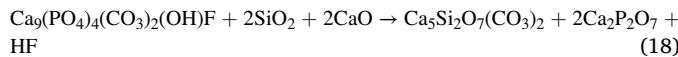
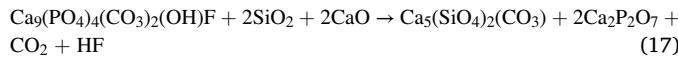
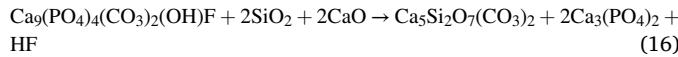
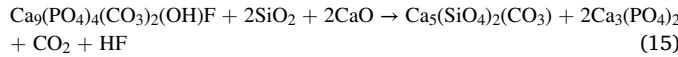
$530\text{--}920^\circ\text{C}$ , Decarbonation of  $\text{CO}_3$  from different types of isomorphic substitutions and  $\text{CO}_3$  from calcite:



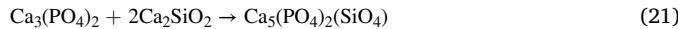
Solid-phase crystallization of spurrite and tilleyite from calcite and quartz:



Solid-phase crystallization of spurrite and tilleyite from apatite, quartz and CaO:



#### Solid-phase synthesis of silicocarnotite:



## 5. Conclusions

After HEM- and thermal treatment, the redistribution of CaO,  $\text{SiO}_2$ , and  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$  occurs as follows:

- Strength change of chemical bonds:  $\text{SiO}_2$  partially passes into  $\text{SiO}_4$  with the formation of new phases during thermal activation. The increased reactivity of  $\text{SiO}_2$  is a result of HEM treatment of the samples and after their thermal treatment, the solid-phase reactions of Ca-Si-carbonates crystallization occur;
- deformation of structural polyhedrons and formation of new isomorphic apatite phases after HEM activation: (i)  $\text{CO}_3$  both partially substitutes  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$  and OH in two different positions and occupies the vacancy in apatite structure, as the degree of defects depends on HEM-activation time by functional dependencies; (ii) OH partially substitutes F in the apatite structure;

- the prolonged time of HEM activation leads to decreasing raw mineral stability leads to the formation of new phases: (i)  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$  partially passes into  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_7$  with the formation of new phases during both types of treatment; (ii)  $\text{CaO}$  after thermal treatment is transformed from Ca-carbonate into Ca-silicate, Ca-phosphate, and Ca-silicate-carbonate phases.

The obtained results can be used as a reference in the study of ceramic and cement materials (ancient and modern), soil conditioners, etc.

## 6. Projects contributions

The KP-06-PN-40/6 grant has sponsored the following activities: sample collection, sample preparation, and chemical analysis; the KP-06-N39/9 grant - experiments and measurements of HEM activation, and results interpretation. The contribution of both projects is 50:50.

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## Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper

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