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STUDIES ON SYNTHETIC ALKALI-HYDRONIUM JAROSITES II: THERMAL INVESTIGATIONS

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Abstract. Thermal transformations and weight loss in the range 20—1000°C of synthetic alkali-hydronium jarosites were investigated. Chemical constitution expressed by the following general formula $A_{1-x}(H_3O)_xFe_{3-y}[(OH)_{6-3y}(H_2O)_{3y}(SO_4)_2]$ was confirmed. The DTA curves show six (or five) endothermic and three exothermic peaks at temperatures depending on monovalent cation present. The first four endothermic reactions are connected respectively with: dehydratation (removal of H_2O molecules, $190-340^{\circ}C$), deprotonation (removal of H_3O^+ ions, $240-440^{\circ}C$), dehydroxylation (removal of OH^- groups, $300-510^{\circ}C$), and removal of OH^- or H_2O trapped in the collapsed framework of decomposition products (about $540^{\circ}C$). The fifth reaction between $560-930^{\circ}C$ is due to the loss of SO_3 , and the sixth at $880^{\circ}C$ (recorded only for Na, H_3O -jarosites) to melting of Na_2SO_4 . It was assumed that out of the three exothermic reactions the first at about 510° corresponds to the formation of $\alpha-Fe_2O_3$, the second at 580° probably to liberation of "post-anionic-cages" energy, and the third at $700-780^{\circ}C$, splitting the sulphate dissociation peak, to alkali sulphate formation.

INTRODUCTION

Synthesis of alkali jarosites has yielded alkali and iron deficient minerals with excess water, part of which causes a change of the unit cell dimensions (Kubisz 1961, 1970). Some natural minerals are probably of similar type (Kubisz 1964). It was suggested that hydroxyls of iron coordination polyhedra are partly converted to $\rm H_2O$ molecules (refered to as "additional water") to balance the lacking $\rm Fe^{3+}$ charge, and alkalies are substituted by $\rm H_3O^+$ ions. The aim of the present paper was to confirm the proposed (Kubisz 1970) chemical constitution by means of thermal analysis.

Considering the general formula of jarosites two types of endothermic

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reactions are to be expected: decomposition of hydrogen-oxygen complexes $(H_3O^+,\ H_2O,\ OH^-)$ and decomposition of sulphate reaction products.

The mechanism of reactions connected with water expulsion is relatively complicated as compared with that of SO3 removal. According to different activation energies three processes of this type should be distinguished: dehydration (removal of H2O), deprotonation (removal of H₃O⁺), and dehydroxylation (removal of OH⁻).

The temperature of dehydration process is determined by the binding energy and lattice positions of H2O molecules, and structure type of the

crystal lattice (disregarding the experimental factors).

Deprotonation and dehydroxylation (compare Freund 1965) are two--steps reactions. In the first step the proton is transfered via hydrogen bonds to the nearest OH- group (or $\mathring{\mathrm{O}}^{2-}$) forming a $\mathrm{H}_2\mathrm{O}$ molecule:

deprotonation =
$$H_3O^+ \rightarrow H_2O^- + H^+ \mid OH^- + H^+ = H_2O^-$$

dehydroxylation = $OH^- \rightarrow O^{2-} + H^+ \mid OH^- + H^+ = H_2O^-$

The activation energy of this process depends on the transfer distance $O_d - O_p$, the height of the potential barrier between donnor (O_d) and acceptor oxygen (O_p) , and on O-H bond energy. In the second step of the reaction the resulting H₂O molecule migrates to the crystal surface. The velocity and direction of migration of H₂O molecule depend similarly as in the case of the dehydration process on its lattice position and crystal structure type.

The products remaining after removal of hydrogen-oxygen complexes are in an activated state. According to Freund (1965) the energy stored in resulting lattice vacancies (post-ionic ,,cages") is liberated spontaneously, the corresponding exothermic effect following close the endo-

thermic ones.

According to the general considerations presented above at least three distinct "water loss" reactions should occur in the investigated jarosites. The temperature of dehydration being the lowest, that of deprotonation intermediate, and that of dehydroxylation the highest.

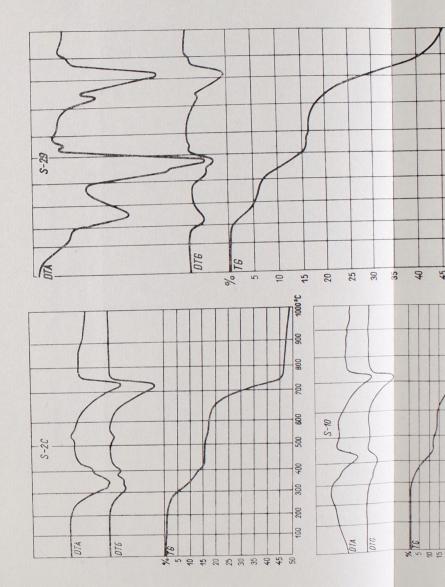
EXPERIMENTAL WORK

The thermal studies were performed with the Derivatograph (after F. and J. Paulik and L. Erdey) registering simultaneously the T, DTA, TG and DTG (derivative of the TG function) curves (Fig. 1). The sample was placed in a platinum crucible, and the temperature measured indirectly in its hollow bottom. Heating rate of 10°C/min was applied.

The different peak temperatures and shape of curves (Fig. 1) obtained are partly due to differences in the amount of sample (Tabs. 1, 2).

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

In the case of pure hydronium jarosite which does not contain "additional water" the liberation of hydrogen-oxygen complexes proceeds in



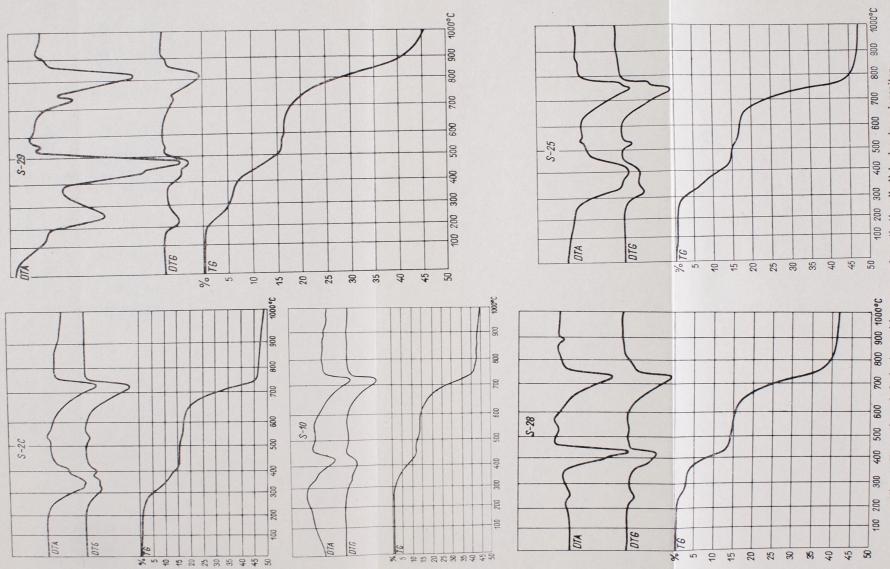


Fig. 1. Examples of derivatographic curves of synthetic alkali-hydronium jarosites DTA — differential thermal analysis curve, DTG — differential thermogravimetric curve, TG — thermogravimetric curve .S-2C — hydronium Jarosite, S-25, S-29 — K,H₈O-jarosites, S-10, S-28 — Na,H₈O-jarosites

Gravimetric data on the endothermic reactions of K,H₈O-jarosites

	U	0.4 5.3 4.1 5.9 0.9 4.5 21.1	16.6	9	6.36
S-29	a b	0-180 180-340 250 340-440 420 440-520 470 520-580 550 580-740 730 740-920 810	0-580	d	560
	0	0.1 4.3 3.5 6.0 0.5 4.8	14.4 25.4	0	6.01
S-27	a b	0-160 160-340 230 340-440 420 440-520 460 520-550 540 550-740 730 740-920 810	0-550	q	1456
S-4	0	0.6 2.1 10.4 0.6 6.4 19.3	13.7	о	5.64
	9	280 410 480 540 750 820			
	a	0-220 220-340 340-440 440-520 520-560 560-763 760-980	0-560	р	1809
	0	0.7 2.8 11.1 1.4 11.8	16.0	в	4.76
S-24	a b	0-220 220-320 260 320-480 440 480-560 540 560-720 700 720-900 760	0-560	р	289
S-25	0	0.8 5.7 8.3 1.3 18.6 12.0	16.1	9	1.58
	2 2	340 410 540 740 780			
	0	0-260 260-360 360-480 480-560 560-760 760-860	0-560	p	354

a — temperature interval of reaction (°C), b — peak temperature of reaction (°C), c — weight loss (weight, %0), d — initial weight of the sample (mg), e — amount of SO₃ bound with K_2O (weight, %0).

$$\begin{array}{c} 4 H_3 \text{OFe}_3 \left[(\text{OH})_6 (\text{SO}_4)_2 \right] \rightarrow 4 H_2 \text{O} + 4 \text{Fe}_3 \left[(\text{OH})_5 H_2 \text{O}(\text{SO}_4)_2 \right] \\ 4 H_2 \text{O} + 4 \text{Fe}_3 \left[(\text{OH})_5 (\text{SO}_4)_2 \right] \rightarrow 9 H_2 \text{O} + 2 \text{Fe}(\text{OH}) \text{SO}_4 + 2 \text{Fe}_2 (\text{SO}_4)_3 + \\ + 3 \text{Fe}_2 \text{O}_3 \rightarrow H_2 \text{O} + \text{Fe}_2 \text{O}(\text{SO}_4)_2 + 2 \text{Fe}_2 (\text{SO}_4)_3 \end{array} \qquad [1]$$

The ratio of water molecules expelled in the above reactions should be equal to 4:4:9:1. However, due to similar activation energies the first three reactions are not distinctly resolved. Therefore it was impossible to establish the exact amount of water (Tab. 2) lost in particular reactions.

In the investigated alkali-hydronium jarosites thermal dissociation is more complicated. "Additional water" is expelled first, prior to deprotonation and dehydroxylation and in higher temperatures alkali sul-

phates A_2SO_4 (A = K, Na) form, besides iron sulphates.

Additional water, filling iron vacancies, is removed between 190-340°C. This process being accompanied by a change of unit cell volume (Kubisz 1970). Maximum of the reaction lies at 260-270°C, depending on the cation present (Tab. 3) and relative amount of this water. The corresponding peak on DTA curves is assymetric and sometimes clearly split (S-4). This may be evidence of two kinds of additional water. One, "compensating", localized in FeO2(OH, H2O)4 polyhedra, and one in iron lattice vacancies. Considering that iron oxy-hydroxide and hydrated iron sulphates, which may be present as slight admixtures, lose water in the same temperature interval, the true nature of the endothermic process described was ascertained by carrying out DTA curves of artificial mixtures of S-29 and varying amounts of FeO \cdot OH and Fe₂(SO₄)₃ \cdot $\cdot 9 H_2 O$. These mixtures give three more endothermic reactions (140°, 190°, 320°C) distinctly resolved from the peak representing the loss of additional water.

Deprotonation $H_3O^+ \rightarrow H_2O^- + H^+$ and the removal of resulting H_2O molecules takes place at about 320°C in the case of pure hydronium jarosite. The proton of hydronium ion jumps either to sulphate oxygens Os or to hydroxyl oxygens Oh which most probably lie at a distance less than 3.0 Å from the monovalent ion. Assuming per analogy with H₃OGa₃ $[(OH)_6(SO_4)_2]$ (Johansson 1963) that hydronium in jarosites is closer to Oh oxygens than it is to Os oxygens, it is more likely for the proton to join hydroxyl groups. Statistically, however, a fraction of hydronium protons will react according to the scheme:

 $+ \text{ FeH(SO}_4)_2 + \text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3.$ [2]

Which means a three-steps loss of water (compare reaction scheme 1). In alkali-hydronium jarosites deprotonation occurs at much higher temperatures (at about 410°C).

Dehydroxylation is connected with destruction of jarosite framework and formation of various sulphates and Fe₂O₃. Maximum of this reaction

0

9

	0	0.3	2.4	2.4	7.0	0.5	5.7	6.4	12.3	14.8	27.0	в		5.62
S-28	9	260	3907	420	460	530	049	730	092					
Ω	a	0-220	320-400	400-430	430-500	200-260	260-700	700-740	740-830	0-260	560-1000	d		490
	0	0.2	5.1	5.9		1.4	5.4		20.8	14.7	28.3	0)	5.65
S-26	9	000	390	430		530	049		730					
S	a	0—220	320-320		201	460—560			710-800	0-260	560-1000	7	3	247
	C	0.2	2.0	2.0	9	1.4	7.9	2	18.6	14.8	27.7		a a	4.92
S-23	9		280	900	770	530	680		720					
S	a	0—220		320-390		460-560	377		008-069	0-560	560-1000		p	226
	0	0.5	3.8	0.4	4.7	9 1	0.1	0.1	21.2	14.6	31.2		9	2.19
S-10	9		340	400	430	061	070	01.0	730					
S	a	0-280	280-360	360-420	420-480			089-099	680—780	088	560-1000		q	371
	0	9.0	6.1	5.0	3.4		1.4		30.2	0 0	33.0		. 0	0.00
S-17 (= S-2C)	p		320	370	410	6	530		750					
S-17 (a	0-220	220-340	340-400	400-480		480-260		260-800	000	560-1000		q	320

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lies at about 390—480°C. The removal of H_3O^+ ions coordinated to OH-groups causes the dehydroxylation temperature to be the lowest $(390\pm10^{\circ}\text{C})$ in pure hydronium jarosite. It is intermediate in Na, $H_3O-(440\pm10^{\circ}\text{C})$, and highest in K, H_3O -jarosites $(460\pm10^{\circ}\text{C}, \text{Tab. 3})$.

Exothermic peak at about 510° C following close that due to dehydroxylation may be attributed partly to the crystalization of α -Fe₂O₃ (Kulp and Adler 1950) and partly to the liberation of energy stored in "post-anionic cages" (Freund *loco cit.*).

Table 3

Endothermic reactions in alkali-hydronium jarosites

Loss of	Jarosite	Mean temperature interval of the reaction, °C	$\begin{array}{cc} Mean & peak \\ temperature & (T_{max}), \\ & {}^{\circ}C \end{array}$
	K	190-340	260
H ₂ O	Na	220-320	270
	H ₃ O	?	
	K	340—440	420
H ₃ O+	Na	320—400	390
	H ₃ O	240 -350	340
	K	340?—510	480
OH-	Na	320? —470	440
	H ₃ O	300? —480	390/410/
	K	560-930	800/730/
SO ₃	Ńa	560-810	730/670/
	H ₃ O	560-800	750

^{*} In the evaluation of mean temperatures S-25 and S-10 have been treated as hydronium jarosites, together with S-17 (S-2C).

Decomposition of hydroxyl containing reaction products $Fe(OH)SO_4$ or $Fe[SO_3OHSO_4]$ and liberation of H_2O trapped in the collapsed jarosite structure occurs at about $520-550^{\circ}C$. The high activation energy of this reaction is due to low migration ability of H_2O in the collapsed framework rather than to exceptionally high bond energy of these hydroxyls, as suggested by some authors (Cvietkov and Valiashihina 1955).

The second (very weak) exothermic reaction about 580°C may be due to liberation of "post-anionic cages" energy, like the former one, or according to Cvietkov and Valiashihina (1955) to $\alpha \to \gamma$ transition of Fe₂O₃.

In the temperature interval of $560-780^{\circ}$ (810°) in Na, H₃O- and $560-850^{\circ}$ (930° C) in K,H₃O-jarosites respectively decomposition of Fe₂(SO₄)₃, Fe₂O(SO₄)₂ and AFe(SO₄)₂, and crystallization of A₂SO₄ takes

place (A = K,Na). The removal of SO_3 is, however, not complete. Part of it (2—4%, Tab. 1, 2), trapped in the collapsed sulphate framework is liberated after the main reaction (small shoulders on the main peaks between 780—930°C, Fig. 1), and a small amount still remains up to 1000°C in the decomposition products.

The sulphate dissociation peak (Fig. 1) is clearly split. Similar phenomenon noticed in other substances is attributed (e.g. Mackenzie 1957) to the presence of several grain classes, or to the formation of transitional phases (Stoch, Zabiński 1964). In the authors opinion this could hardly be the case in the investigated jarosites. More probably the splitting is due to exothermic crystallization of alkali sulphates A_2SO_4 , with molar ratio $A_2O:SO_3=1:1$ (A=K,Na). Their formation from jarosite dissociation product $AFe(SO_4)_2$ ($A_2O:SO_3=1:4$) requires complete destruction and reorganization of its structure:

$$2AFe(SO_4)_2 \rightarrow A_2SO_4 + Fe_2O_3 + 3SO_3$$

The heat of formation of K_2SO_4 is higher than that of Na_2SO_4 , therefore the corresponding exothermic peak is more intense in K,H_3O -jarosites (Fig. 1). There is another phenomenon supporting the proposed explanation of the discussed splitting: The amount of SO_3 liberated before the exothermic deflection (splitting) is inversely proportional to the amount of A_2O present in the particular sample (Tab. 1, 2). This is not so easy to note in the case of Na,H_3O -jarosites where the exothermic reaction maximum is difficult to determine (Tab. 2).

The melting of A_2SO_4 may be observed only on Na, H_3O -jarosite curves (endothermic peak at about $880^{\circ}C$, Fig. 1). K_2SO_4 melts above 1000° , at $1059^{\circ}C$.

The slight deflection on sulphates dissociation peak (at 645° C) of pure hydronium jarosite (Fig. 1) is most probably due to successive decomposition of Fe₂O(SO₄)₂ and Fe(SO₄)₃. This deflection is sometimes seen around $700-760^{\circ}$ C on A,H₃O-jarosite curves (e.g. S-24, S-29).

Synthetic K,Na,H₃O-jarcsites have been investigated thermogravimetrically by Brophy and Sheridan (1965) using a static point method of heating. The samples were held for 24 hours at each temperature point. The resulting TG curve given in their paper shows three water expulsion reactions at 80-150°, 240-280°, and 365-470°C, which they attribute to the loss of adsorbed water, hydronium and hydroxyls respectively. The reaction temperatures recorded agree well with initial temperatures found by the present author for corresponding reactions in high hydronium minerals (around 150-190°, 210-250°, and 320-370°C, respectively). This is not the case with temperatures of reaction maxima. It must be remembered, however, that only the initial temperature (if measured in the same manner) is the characteristic one for any given reaction. While the temperature of reaction maximum is a complex function of e.g. graining, weight, and shape of the sample as well as of heating rate and type of sample holder (Stoch 1967). Thus the present author do not agree with Brophy and Sheridan's assignment of the first two reactions. It is more likely that the first reaction recorded by these authors is due to the loss of "additional water" and the

second one to deprotonation $(H_3O^+ + OH^- \rightarrow 2H_2O)$. It is highly improbable that adsorbed water should be held up to 150° in well crystallized materials like jarosites.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of thermal investigations have shown that three kinds of isoelectronic hydrogen-oxygen complexes are present in the structure of synthetic jarosites with deficient iron content. The $\rm H_3O^+$ ions, occupying the monovalent cation positions, the $\rm H_2O$ molecules, and $\rm OH^-$ anions, the latter forming coordination polyhedra around $\rm Fe^{3+}$ ions (or filling iron vacancies). Chemical analyses of some natural jarosites (Kubisz 1964) show that similar iron deficient minerals do exist in nature. The analysis of data supplied by thermal investigations supports the chemical constitution of jarosites put forward by the author (Kubisz 1970):

$$A_{1-x} (H_3O)_x Fe_{3-y} [(OH)_{6-3y} (H_2O)_{3y} (SO_4)_2]$$

(A = K⁺, Na⁺, Ag⁺, NH₄⁺, . . ., or 1/2 Pb)

Expulsion of structural water molecules (dehydration) takes place between about 190—340°C. The peak temperature of this reaction being the higher the greater the water content, and beside of this higher in Na,H₃O-, than in K,H₃O-jarosites (Tab. 3). Deprotonation, consisting of proton transfer from H₃O+ to hydroxyl or sulphate oxygens and subsequent removal of resultant H₂O molecules, occurs between 240—440°C. The peak temperature of this process is lowest in high hydronium jarosites (320—340°C) intermediate in Na,H₃O- (∞ 390°C) and highest in K,H₃O-jarosites (∞ 420°C) with low hydronium content.

Dehydroxylation takes place in two steps. The destruction of iron-hydroxyl octahedra in the interval of $300-510^{\circ}\text{C}$, and the removal of "trapped" water between $510-560^{\circ}\text{C}$. Maximum of the main reaction shifts by some ten degrees to lower temperatures from K,H₃O- and Na,H₃O-, to H₃O-jarosites with increasing hydronium content (Tab. 3).

The process of SO_3 expulsion from the dehydrated jarosite between $560-930^{\circ}C$ (highest in K,H₃O-members, Tab. 3) is interrupted by exothermic reaction of alkali sulphate (A₂SO₄) crystallization. Maximum of SO_3 loss reaction lies at about the same temperature in H₃O-, and Na,H₃O-jarosites. It is however, by some ten degrees higher in K,H₃O members.

Evidently K-O bonds are stronger than Na-O bonds in $AFe(SO_4)_2$ which must be destroyed first, prior to SO_3 removal.

It was established that deprotonation, dehydroxylation as well as SO_3 removal require much higher temperatures when K^+ ions are present in jarosite structure. On the other hand hydronium ions which are expelled first in the course of thermal transformations, thus emptying monovalent cation positions of the framework, lower all reaction temperatures.

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STUDIUM SYNTETYCZNYCH JAROSYTÓW ALKALICZNO--HYDRONIOWYCH II: BADANIA TERMICZNE

Streszczenie

Badania termiczne serii syntetycznych potasowo-hydroniowych i sodowo-hydroniowych jarosytów, wykonane na derywatografie, potwierdziły zaproponowaną (Kubisz 1970) konstytucję chemiczną minerałów tej grupy. Na krzywych DTA (fig. 1) zaznacza się sześć (lub pięć) endoi trzy efekty egzotermiczne. Ich temperatury zależą od rodzaju jednowartościowych kationów (tab. 3) występujących w danym jarosycie. Pierwsze trzy efekty endotermiczne przyporządkowano odpowiednio: dehydratacji — usunieciu drobin "dodatkowej wody" (190—340°C), deprotonacji — usunięciu jonów $\rm H_3O^+$ (240—440°C) oraz dehydroksylacji — usunięciu grup OH- (300—510°C). Czwarty (około 540°C) odpowiada zapewne wydzieleniu grup OH- lub drobin H₂O uwięzionych pułapkowo w zapadniętej więźbie krystalicznej produktów rozpadu, piąty (560—930°C) związany jest z wydzieleniem SO₃, a szósty (880°C) zaznaczający się tylko na krzywych jarosytów zawierających sód — z topieniem Na₂SO₄, który tworzy się w czasie przemian termicznych. Ubytki ciężaru próbek podano w tabelach 1 i 2. Efekty egzotermiczne przypisano odpowiednio: pierwszy, około 510°, krystalizacji α-Fe₂O₃, drugi, około 580°, wydzieleniu energii z "klatek poanionowych" (Freund 1965), a trzeci, około 700—780°C, rozszczepiający przegięcie związane z dysocjacją siarczanów żelaza, krystalizacji siarczanów alkaliów.

OBJASNIENIE FIGURY

Fig. 1. Przykłady krzywych derywatograficznych syntetycznych jarosytów alkaliczno-hydroniowych derywatograficznych produce pro

Ян КУБИШ

ИЗУЧЕНИЕ СИНТЕТИЧЕСКИХ ЩЕЛОЧНО-ГИДРОНИЕВЫХ ЯРОЗИТОВ: II. ТЕРМИЧЕСКИЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯ

Резюме

Термические исследования серии синтетических калий-гидрониевых и натрий-гидрониевых ярозитов, произведенные на дериватографе, подтвердили ранее высказанное предположение (Кубиш 1970) о химическом составе минералов этой группы. На кривых ДТА (фиг. 1) намечается шесть (или пять) эндотермических и три экзотермических эффекта. Их температуры зависят от типа одновалентных катионов (табл. 3), находящихся в данном ярозите. Три первых эндотермических эффекта связываются соответственно: с дегидратацией — удалением молекул "дополнительной воды" (190—340°C), депротонацией — удалением ионов Н₃О+ (240—440°С) и дегидроксилацией — удалением групп ОН (300—510°С). Четвертый эндотермический эффект (около 540°C) соответствует, повероятности, выделению групп OH или молекул H₂O, заключенных в ловушках кристаллической решетки продуктов распада, пятый (560—930°С) связан с выделением SO₃, а шестой, отмечающийся лишь на кривых ярозитов, содержащих натрий, с плавлением Na₂SO₄, который возникает в процессе термических изменений. Потери веса образцов приведены в таблицах 1 и 2. Экзотермические эффекты связываются соответственно: первый (около 510°С) с кристаллизацией α-Fe₂O₃, второй (около 580°С) с выделением энергии из "послеаиионных ячеек" (Фройнд 1965) и, наконец, третий (около 700—780°С), расщепляющий перегиб, связанный с диссоциацией сульфатов железа, с кристаллизацией щелочных сульфатов.

ОБЪЯСНЕНИЯ К ФИГУРЕ

Фиг. 1. Примеры дериватографических кривых синтетических щелочно-гидрониевых ярозитов **DTA** — кривая термического дифференциального анализа, **DTG** — дифференциальная термогравиметрическая кривая, **TG** — термогравиметрическая кривая, **S**-2C — гидрониевый ярозит, **S**-25, **S**-29 — K,H₃O-ярозит, **S**-10, **S**-28 — **N**a,H₃O-ярозит