

Synthesis, structural, spectroscopic and thermoanalytical study of sol-gel derived $\text{SiO}_2\text{-CaO-P}_2\text{O}_5$ gel and ceramic materials

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Abstract

In the present work bioactive powders of the ternary $\text{SiO}_2\text{-CaO-P}_2\text{O}_5$ systems, which differ in the Ca/P molar ratio, were synthesized by means of a sol-gel route, using tetraethyl orthosilicate (TEOS, $\text{Si}(\text{OC}_2\text{H}_5)_4$), calcium nitrate tetrahydrate ($\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2\cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}$) and triethyl phosphate (TEP, $\text{OP}(\text{OC}_2\text{H}_5)_3$) as precursors of SiO_2 , CaO and P_2O_5 , respectively. In order to investigate the influence of the relative amount of each phase (in this study: SiO_2 , CaO and P_2O_5) the thermal properties of the synthesized gel-glass materials were studied as a function of the Ca/P molar ratio using thermogravimetric and differential thermal analysis (TG/DTA). After dehydration (in a single step), described from a kinetic point of view as a simple water evaporation without rupture of chemical bonds, all gels undergo a complex multi-step decomposition with endo and exothermic effects, followed by crystallization of calcium silicate phases at about 950°C . Furthermore, Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR), X-ray diffraction (XRD) and Scanning Electron Microscopy, coupled with energy dispersive spectroscopy (SEM/EDS), allowed us to detect the chemical modifications induced by modifying the Ca/P molar ratio and the sintering. This process is obtained by thermal treatment of the gel-glass precursors after analyzing their thermal behavior in the temperature range $600\text{--}1000^\circ\text{C}$, with the aim to convert them into ceramic powders, suitable for their applications. The results revealed that when temperature is up to 900°C , crystallization occurs and pseudowollastonite and wollastonite were formed. Finally, the amount of pseudowollastonite decreased with increasing the sintering temperature, while that of wollastonite increased.

Keywords: Sol-gel method, $\text{SiO}_2\text{-CaO-P}_2\text{O}_5$, TG/DTA, FTIR, XRD, SEM/EDS, crystallization, pseudowollastonite, wollastonite.

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34 **1. Introduction**

35 The need for durable and high-performances medical devices has induced researchers in the
36 biomedical field to develop several classes of materials with high biocompatibility. Another
37 important requirement of a material potentially useful in the dental and orthopaedic field is
38 bioactivity, which is the ability to bond living bones [1]. In the last years, several classes of
39 materials such as metals, alloys, polymers, glass/ceramics and composites materials have been
40 proposed for this application [2, 3]. Among them, glasses and ceramics have caught the attention of
41 many research groups. The first bioglass (45S5) was discovered in 1971 by L. Hench at al. [4]. Its
42 composition was 46.1 mol% SiO₂, 26.9 mol% CaO, 24.4 mol% Na₂O and 2.5 mol%P₂O₅. Since
43 then, many compositions were explored [5, 6], which differ in the type of oxide added as well as in
44 the composition (molar percentages) considered. In particular, ternary systems SiO₂·CaO·P₂O₅ with
45 low P₂O₅ content have shown to constitute a promising class of bioactive materials for bone repair
46 and substitution [7-11]. In addition to composition, the preparation method can also influence the
47 biological properties of the bioactive glasses and ceramics. It is proved [12, 13] that glasses and
48 ceramic synthesized by the sol-gel methods are more bioactive than those ones obtained by the
49 melt-quench technique. The sol-gel is a method that allows obtaining glassy materials using a low-
50 temperature hydrolysis and condensation process. It starts when water is added to a solution of
51 metal alkoxide in ethanol and stops when the formation of an inorganic and rigid network (the gel)
52 is formed. With further drying and heat treatment, the obtained gel can be converted into dense
53 ceramic or glass. The chemical nature of precursors and the low temperature ensure good
54 homogenization of the reactants, uniformity of the obtained gels and prevent potential
55 crystallization and phase separation. Moreover, the formation of a large number of residual
56 hydroxyl groups occurs as a result of the chemical sol-gel reactions and some of them remain even
57 after the thermal stabilization of the materials. Such –OH groups can stimulate the hydroxyapatite
58 nucleation on the material surface both during *in vitro* tests and *in vivo*, promoting the material
59 easier osseointegration and, thus, making the sol-gel glasses and ceramics generally very bioactive.

60 Moreover, sol-gel $\text{SiO}_2\cdot\text{CaO}$ and $\text{SiO}_2\cdot\text{CaO}\cdot\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$ materials are also very biocompatible. The sol-
61 gel glasses, in fact, are generally mesoporous and, thus, have a larger surface area than melt-derived
62 glasses of similar composition. This feature allows a potentially more rapid degradation rates of the
63 sol-gel derived $\text{SiO}_2\cdot\text{CaO}$ and $\text{SiO}_2\cdot\text{CaO}\cdot\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$ glasses and their dissolution and degradation
64 products can promote the bone tissue growth. Soluble silica and calcium ions, in fact, are able to
65 induce osteogenesis by activation and stimulation of osteoprogenitor cells at the implant site [14,
66 15].

67 The biological properties of the sol-gel materials are also affected by the heat treatment used in
68 order to stabilize and densify the materials, because the heating may induce structural
69 modifications. In a previous work [11], the authors proved that $\text{SiO}_2\cdot\text{CaO}\cdot\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$ sol-gel glasses are
70 bioactive and biocompatible and the samples containing high calcium content, calcined at 600°C ,
71 can improve their biological performance. Therefore, in order to develop rationally $\text{SiO}_2\cdot\text{CaO}\cdot\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$
72 gels and glasses/ceramic to be used as bioactive and biocompatible materials, it is necessary a full
73 comprehension of their thermal behaviour by means of thermal analysis and investigation of the
74 processes occurring during heating from a kinetic point of view.

75 In the present work, the thermal behaviour of $\text{SiO}_2\cdot\text{CaO}\cdot\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$ materials synthesized by sol-gel
76 method was studied by simultaneous thermogravimetry and differential thermal analysis (TG/DTA)
77 and the chemical, spectroscopic and structural characterization of the synthesized materials was
78 carried out as a function of both the molar Ca/P ratio and the heat-treatment used by FTIR, XRD
79 and SEM analysis.

80

81

82 **2. Materials and methods**

83 *2.1. Sol-gel synthesis*

84 Sol-gel glasses were synthesized starting from tetraethyl orthosilicate (TEOS, $\text{Si}(\text{OC}_2\text{H}_5)_4$, Sigma
85 Aldrich), calcium nitrate tetrahydrate ($\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}$, Sigma Aldrich) and triethyl phosphate

86 (TEP, C₆H₁₅O₄P, Sigma Aldrich) as sources of SiO₂, CaO and P₂O₅ respectively. TEOS was added
 87 under stirring to a solution of nitric acid (HNO₃ ≥ 65%, Sigma-Aldrich), water and ethanol (EtOH,
 88 99,8% Sigma-Aldrich). After 30 min, TEP was added to the obtained solution. After 30 min under
 89 stirring, calcium nitrate tetrahydrate was dissolved slowly and the sol was stirred for 3h at room
 90 temperature. The final mixture appears homogenous and transparent and the molar ratio of
 91 TEOS/H₂O was 1:4, H₂O/EtOH was 1:1 and the molar ratio of HNO₃/(TEOS+TEP) was 1:16.
 92 Four formulations of samples, which differ for the molar ratio Ca/P, were synthesized according to
 93 the procedure reported in the previous paragraph and their chemical composition is reported in
 94 Table 1. The samples were left to gel at room temperature. The obtained gels appear transparent,
 95 homogeneous and colorless (Fig. 1). Subsequently, they were treated at 120°C, 600°C and 1000°C
 96 for 3h. The heating was carried out in a furnace and the temperature increase to 9 °C/min. The flow
 97 chart of the process is shown in Fig. 2.

98 Table 1 Chemical composition of the synthesized glasses

Label	Ca/P molar ratio	Composition		
		CaO/% _{mol}	SiO ₂ /% _{mol}	P ₂ O ₅ /% _{mol}
63S32C5P	3	63	32	5
62S35C3P	6	62	35	3
61S37C2P	9	61	37	2
61S38C1P	19	61	38	1

99

100 2.2. Chemical and spectroscopic characterization

101 The chemical and the structural characterization of the obtained glasses were carried out on the all
 102 the prepared samples after each heat treatment, in order to follow the evolution of the system as a
 103 function of both the temperature and the Ca/P molar ratio.

104 Synthesized glasses were analyzed using Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR) to
 105 characterize their chemical structure. Prestige 21 spectrophotometer (Shimadzu, Tokyo, Japan) was
 106 used for record transmittance spectra in the 400-4000 cm⁻¹ region with a resolution of 2 cm⁻¹ (45
 107 scans), the instrument was equipped with DTGS KBr (Deuterated Tryglycine Sulphate with

108 potassium bromide windows) detector. KBr pelletised disks containing 2 mg of sample and 200 mg
109 KBr were made. FTIR spectra were analyzed by Prestige software (IRsolution).

110

111 *2.3. Thermal analysis measurements*

112 The thermal behavior of the gels was investigated by using a Stanton Redcroft STA-1500
113 simultaneous TG/DTA apparatus, consisting of two Pt crucibles of cylindrical shape (with Pt–Pt/Rh
114 thermocouples): the reference crucible was covered with about 20–25 mg of alumina, while that of
115 the sample (whose size was approximately of 20–25 mg), was first filled with the minimum amount
116 to uniformly cover its bottom surface area to avoid any possible reaction between the sample and Pt
117 a high temperature. TG/DTA experiments were carried out under inert Ar atmosphere (50 ml min^{-1})
118 at a constant heating rate of 10 K min^{-1} from room temperature to $1200 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$. TG experiments were
119 carried out at heating rates of 5, 7, 10 and $15 \text{ }^\circ\text{C min}^{-1}$ (under the same gas atmosphere used for
120 thermal behavior study) and TG data related to mass losses recorded during the occurrence of
121 dehydration were exported in ASCII format before being processed to perform the dehydration
122 kinetic analysis. Calibration of sample temperature was performed using very pure indium and zinc
123 reference materials and a final average uncertainty of $\pm 0.5\text{K}$ was estimated over the whole
124 temperature range.

125

126 *2.4. SEM-EDX and XRD measurements*

127 Scanning electron microscopy with energy dispersive X-ray spectroscopy (SEM-EDX, Quanta 200,
128 FEI, the Netherlands) was used to investigate the morphologies of sol-gel glasses. Samples were
129 fixed on aluminum stubs with colloidal graphite and metalized with gold (K550X Sputter Coater,
130 Emitech, East Sussex, UK). X-ray diffraction (XRD) experiments were performed on a PHILIPS
131 diffractometer equipped with a PW1830 generator, tungsten lamp and Cu anode. Cu-K α radiation
132 ($\lambda=0.15418 \text{ nm}$) was employed.

133

134

135 **3. Results and Discussion**

136 *3.1. Thermal behavior and kinetic analysis of dehydration*

137 In order to make a correct interpretation of the thermal behavior and of the FT-IR spectra, in
138 addition to the samples object of this study (having molar ratios Ca/P = 3, 6, 9 and 19), the starting
139 material consisting of a gel glass containing CaO and SiO₂ in molar percentages of 70 and 30%,
140 respectively (denoted thereafter as 70C30C), was synthesized and used as control.

141 The TG/DTA curves of all the material investigated are shown in Fig. 3. All material investigated
142 undergo a three-step processes, the first of which is due to a simple dehydration (characterized by a
143 single step of mass loss of about 22-27% accompanied by a single endothermic event, recorded
144 between room temperature and 130°C by the TG and DTA curves, respectively). Actually, the
145 experimental conditions used (Ar flowing atmosphere and 10 K min⁻¹) avoid the possibility to
146 discriminate the release water molecules physically bounded that are lost at lower temperature
147 (<100°C) from the crystallization water, chemically bounded to Si-O-Si bridges, that evolved at
148 higher temperatures. Negligible differences were observed among the TG/DTA of the tested
149 materials: the curves are practically superimposable. Only slightly higher amount of water is
150 released by the sample 62S35C3P. Since this process can be approximately considered a single step,
151 it was possible to apply a kinetic procedure to analyze it with the aim to verify if, in spite of the
152 very similar thermal behavior of all the materials, some differences in the kinetics of water release
153 can be evidenced. The integral isoconversional kinetic method of Ozawa-Flynn-Wall [16, 17], with
154 the Doyle approximation [18], was considered, whose details were extensively reported in recently
155 published papers [19-23]. The isoconversional E_{α} vs. α plot for dehydration is shown in Fig. 4a-e.
156 A slight decreasing trend is observed for the E_{α} vs. α curves related to dehydration of all the
157 materials, with values ranging from about 46 to 34 kJ mol⁻¹, thus suggesting that a reversible
158 mechanism takes place [24]. This negligible variation of activation energy (within the estimated

159 uncertainties, always lower than $\pm 8 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$) makes it possible the application of this method,
160 according to the restrictions pointed out by Simon [25]. In addition, these values are in close
161 agreement with the standard molar vaporization enthalpy of water ($\approx 44 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$) and with those
162 reported in literature for water evaporation from bulk or from clays [26]. These results can be
163 reasonably explained by hypothesizing that no appreciable chemical bond dissociates during the
164 water release that could theoretically increased the energy barrier represented by the activation
165 energy. The second step takes place between 150 and 600°C (Fig. 3) and is made by two or three
166 consecutive reactions with corresponding total mass losses of about 27-30%, the first of which
167 seems to be correlated to the amount of P_2O_5 in the material: the higher is the P_2O_5 content, the
168 higher is the mass loss. Several endothermic effects (two or three depending on the material) seem
169 to be observed in this temperature range, and probably a slight exothermic one around 300°C that
170 could be attributed to a possible decomposition of nitrates, used in the preparation of the sol
171 precursors of this study as well as to other undesired components of the starting material. As
172 stressed in a recent study, coherently to the findings of Martin and co-workers [13], a not negligible
173 amount of calcium nitrate (soluble in the sol) could still remain in solution during the occurrence of
174 the condensation process and once water and solvent were driven off it coats the silica network [13,
175 19]. Finally, an exothermic effect without appreciable mass losses, clearly observed in the DTA
176 curve of 70S30C around 950°C and with negligible intensity for the samples containing P_2O_5 , is
177 ascribed to crystallization of calcium silicates, similarly to what has been already observed for other
178 similar materials [19, 27-29].

179

180 3.2. Spectroscopic characterization

181 Fig. 5 shows the spectra of the synthesized $\text{SiO}_2 \cdot \text{CaO} \cdot \text{P}_2\text{O}_5$ samples heat-treated at 120°C (Fig. 5a)
182 compared with those ones of pure $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}$, and the control materials: $\text{CaO} \cdot \text{SiO}_2$, P_2O_5
183 $\cdot \text{SiO}_2$, and SiO_2 (Fig. 5b). The spectra of the $\text{SiO}_2 \cdot \text{CaO} \cdot \text{P}_2\text{O}_5$ samples are very similar to that of

184 pure $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}$. All typical peaks of the salt are found, like the strong bands at 1423 and 1354
185 cm^{-1} , the sharp ones at 1382, 1047, 823 cm^{-1} and the weak at 738 cm^{-1} , due to asymmetric and
186 symmetric stretching vibrations and bending modes of nitrate ions [30]. Moreover, in the spectra of
187 the samples with high amount of P_2O_5 (63S32C5P and 62S35C3P) some bands are visible which
188 are ascribable to vibration modes of SiO_2 and P_2O_5 . In particular, the bands at 1165 and 1210 cm^{-1} ,
189 observed even in $\text{SiO}_2 \cdot \text{P}_2\text{O}_5$ spectrum and absent in $\text{SiO}_2 \cdot \text{CaO}$ spectrum (Fig. 5b), are due to the
190 asymmetric stretching vibrations of the P-O groups in Q^2 and Q^1 structural units, respectively [31].
191 The bands at 1082 and 958 cm^{-1} prove that the formation of the silica network occurred. Those
192 bands are assigned to the symmetric stretching of SiO_4 tetrahedra [32] and the surface silanol
193 groups [33] respectively. The intensity of the Si-O stretching band at 1082 cm^{-1} decreases with the
194 increase of the calcium nitrate amount and appears very weak in the spectrum of 61S38C1P sample.
195 To prove that the band at 1082 cm^{-1} is present in the FTIR spectra of all the samples, an enlarged
196 view of the spectral region between 1300 and 800 cm^{-1} is shown in Fig. 6. This band at 958 cm^{-1} is
197 found at 937 cm^{-1} in the spectrum of pure SiO_2 (Fig. 5b). The up-shift is probably due to the
198 interaction of the Si-OH groups with the ionic species present in the obtained materials (Ca^{2+} , PO_4^{3-} ,
199 PO_3^- , $\text{P}_2\text{O}_7^{4-}$, etc.).
200 Fig. 7 shows the FTIR spectra of the synthesized $\text{SiO}_2 \cdot \text{CaO} \cdot \text{P}_2\text{O}_5$ samples compared with pure SiO_2
201 spectrum after heat treatment at 600°C. The displacement of all nitrate signals is evident. It is
202 known that calcium is not incorporated into the silicate network until heat-treating beyond 350°C.
203 During the condensation reaction, which occurs in the sol, calcium nitrate remains in solution as
204 silica nanoparticles are formed and coalesce. During drying, the condensation by-products are
205 driven off and calcium nitrate coats the silica network [13]. This phenomenon explains why the
206 sample spectra recorded after treatment at 120°C are similar to that of pure $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}$.
207 However, as the temperature exceeds 400°C, calcium ions enter the network by diffusion and the
208 nitrate by-products (mainly gaseous NO_2 and O_2 produced by thermal degradation of the nitrate
209 ions) are driven off at temperature higher than 550°C [13]. The displacement of all nitrate bands

210 allows even the appearance of a strong signal due to the asymmetric stretching mode of Si-O-Si
211 bonds. This band is recorded at 1090 cm^{-1} in the spectrum of pure SiO_2 , whereas it appears shifted
212 to 1078 cm^{-1} with a shoulder at 1050 cm^{-1} in the spectrum of 63S32C5P. When the calcium content
213 increases the shoulder becomes a distinct band at 1050 cm^{-1} . Moreover, with the increase of the
214 CaO amount, the strong band shifted toward lower wavenumber: the peak is seen at 1090 cm^{-1} in
215 the spectrum of pure SiO_2 , while it appears as a shoulder at 1050 cm^{-1} in the spectra of the gel-
216 glasses with high CaO content. The shift toward lower wavenumber and the broadening of the Si-O-
217 Si band are caused by the presence of CaO modified oxide, which is able to increase the number of
218 non-bridging oxygen atoms [34, 35]. The high Ca^{2+} content causes also the appearance of a band at
219 1452 cm^{-1} in the spectra of both the 61S37C2P and 61S38C1P samples. This band can be ascribed
220 to the presence of CaCO_3 , due to Ca^{2+} , not incorporated in the network, carbonated by atmospheric
221 CO_2 [36].

222 Some changes involve also the phosphorous species. The bands at 1165 and 1210 cm^{-1} disappear
223 after heat-treatment at 600°C and two weak peaks at 572 and 603 cm^{-1} appear which are assigned to
224 the P-O bending vibration corresponding to the crystalline phosphates. The displacement of the
225 signal related to the presence of P-O groups in Q^2 and Q^1 structural units suggests that the small
226 clusters of P-species dispersed in the silicate matrix broke and a larger amount of Q^0 structural units
227 (PO_4^{3-}) forms. Moreover, in the spectrum of the sample with high P content (63S32C5P), another
228 shoulder at 960 cm^{-1} is seen, due to P-O vibration [37, 38]. Fig. 8 shows the FTIR spectra of
229 synthesized $\text{SiO}_2\cdot\text{CaO}\cdot\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$ samples after heat treatment at 1000°C . An enlarged view of the
230 changed region is reported with the aim to observe better these peaks. The spectra show all the
231 typical peaks of wollastonite (CaSiO_3) (1070 , 1030 , 950 , 900 and 800 cm^{-1}) and pseudowollastonite
232 [$\text{Ca}_3(\text{Si}_3\text{O}_9)$, 710 cm^{-1}]. Moreover, the two bands at 605 and 570 cm^{-1} confirm the presence of
233 tricalcium phosphate (TCP) and calcium phosphate silicate [$\text{Ca}_{15}(\text{PO}_4)_2(\text{SiO}_4)_6$] [23].

234

235 *3.3. Structural characterization by SEM-EDX and XRD measurements*

236 Fig. 9 presents SEM micrographs of synthesized and thermally treated samples. In panel A and B
237 can be observed 63S32C5P and 61S38C1P after 120°C respectively. The structure appears compact
238 and inhomogeneity are not present below 1 μm . EDX analysis of the surface (inserted in panel A)
239 confirms the composition of the materials. After the heat treatment at 600°C on the surface of the
240 samples (Panel C and D) plate-like shaped structures appear with size of 3-5 μm . The heat treatment
241 at 1200°C causes an increase of such plate-like crystals (Panel E and F). Their chemical
242 composition Ca-rich, investigated by EDX analysis (Panel F), their characteristic morphology
243 suggest that those structure are crystals, in accordance with Radev *et al.* [37]. The reported SEM
244 images are in a good agreement with FT-IR and XRD analyses of the samples. X-ray diffraction
245 pattern of fresh and calcined samples are reported in Fig. 10a-b, respectively. It is clearly evident
246 that fresh samples are amorphous, while those calcined at 1200 °C revealed the formation of two
247 crystalline calcium silicate phases: wollastonite and pseudowollastonite, thus confirming the
248 findings of FTIR measurements.

249 By coupling the results of the study of their thermal behavior with the structural characterization
250 it can be concluded that two temperatures should be considered for the thermal treatment of gel-
251 glasses precursors. At 600°C water, nitrates, and all possible volatile decomposition products are
252 eliminated, and a crystalline structure is going to appear (plate-like crystals), but is at 1200°C that
253 crystallization of several calcium silicate phases takes place, showing a well-defined structural
254 order, accompanied by an increase of crystal sizes.

255

256

257 **4. Conclusions**

258 In this manuscript we proposed the synthesis (by the sol-gel method) of four gel-glass materials
259 based on the ternary $\text{SiO}_2\text{-CaO-P}_2\text{O}_5$ system with different compositions. A multi-technique
260 approach (Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy, X-ray diffraction, Scanning Electron
261 Microscopy coupled with energy dispersive spectroscopy and simultaneous thermogravimetry and

262 differential thermal analysis (TG/DTA)) was considered to provide a complete characterization of
263 the tested materials. The chemical and structural characterization proved that heating induces
264 modification on the material. In particular, we focused our attention on thermal analysis techniques,
265 which were found able to be a useful tool, in combination with the previously mentioned
266 techniques, to analyze the thermal behavior of the materials investigated aiming at selecting the
267 most suitable temperatures to thermally treat and transform them into ceramic ones, being the latter
268 able to display a promising bioactivity.

269 **References**

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370 **Captions to figures**

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372 **Fig. 1** Images of representative obtained samples: A) 63S32C5P and B) 61S38C1P wet gels

373 **Fig. 2** Flow chart of the synthesis process.

374 **Fig. 3** Simultaneous TG/DTA curves (plots a and b, respectively) of the gel glasses investigated in
375 Ar flowing atmosphere (50 ml min^{-1}) at 10 K min^{-1} .

376 **Fig. 4** Conversion dependency of activation energy of dehydration, determined by the OFW
377 method. Estimated uncertainties are always less than 8 kJ mol^{-1} .

378 **Fig. 5** FTIR spectra of: A) Synthesized $\text{SiO}_2 \cdot \text{CaO} \cdot \text{P}_2\text{O}_5$ samples and B) pure $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}$ and
379 control materials.

380 **Fig. 6** Enlarged view of the FTIR spectra of the four gel glasses in the region between 1300 and 800
381 cm^{-1} .

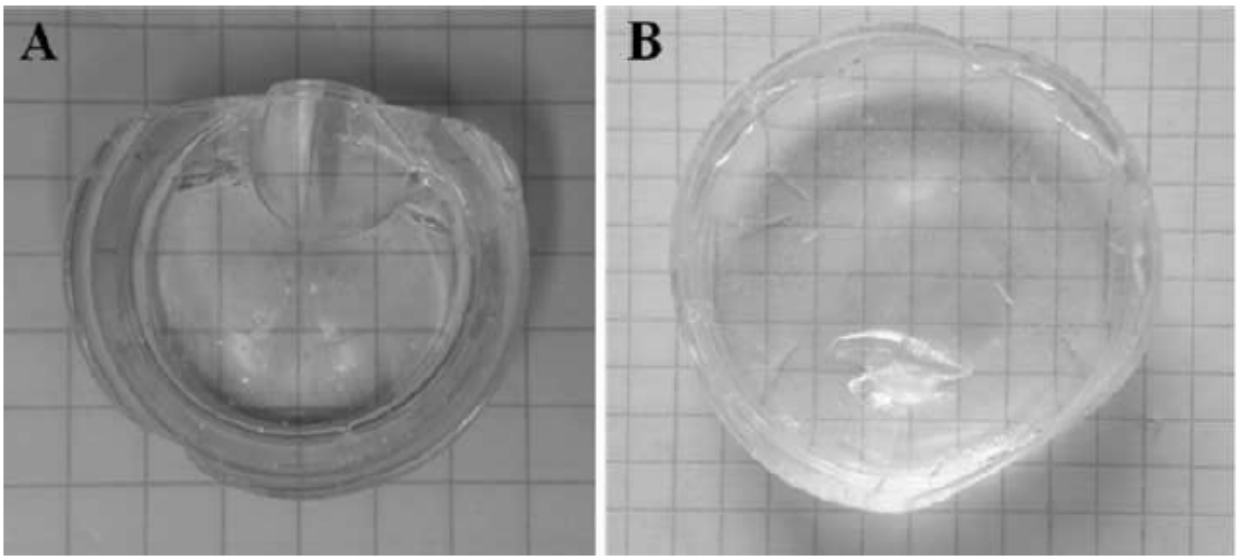
382 **Fig. 7** FTIR spectra of the synthesized $\text{SiO}_2 \cdot \text{CaO} \cdot \text{P}_2\text{O}_5$ samples compared with pure SiO_2 spectrum
383 after heat treatment at 600°C .

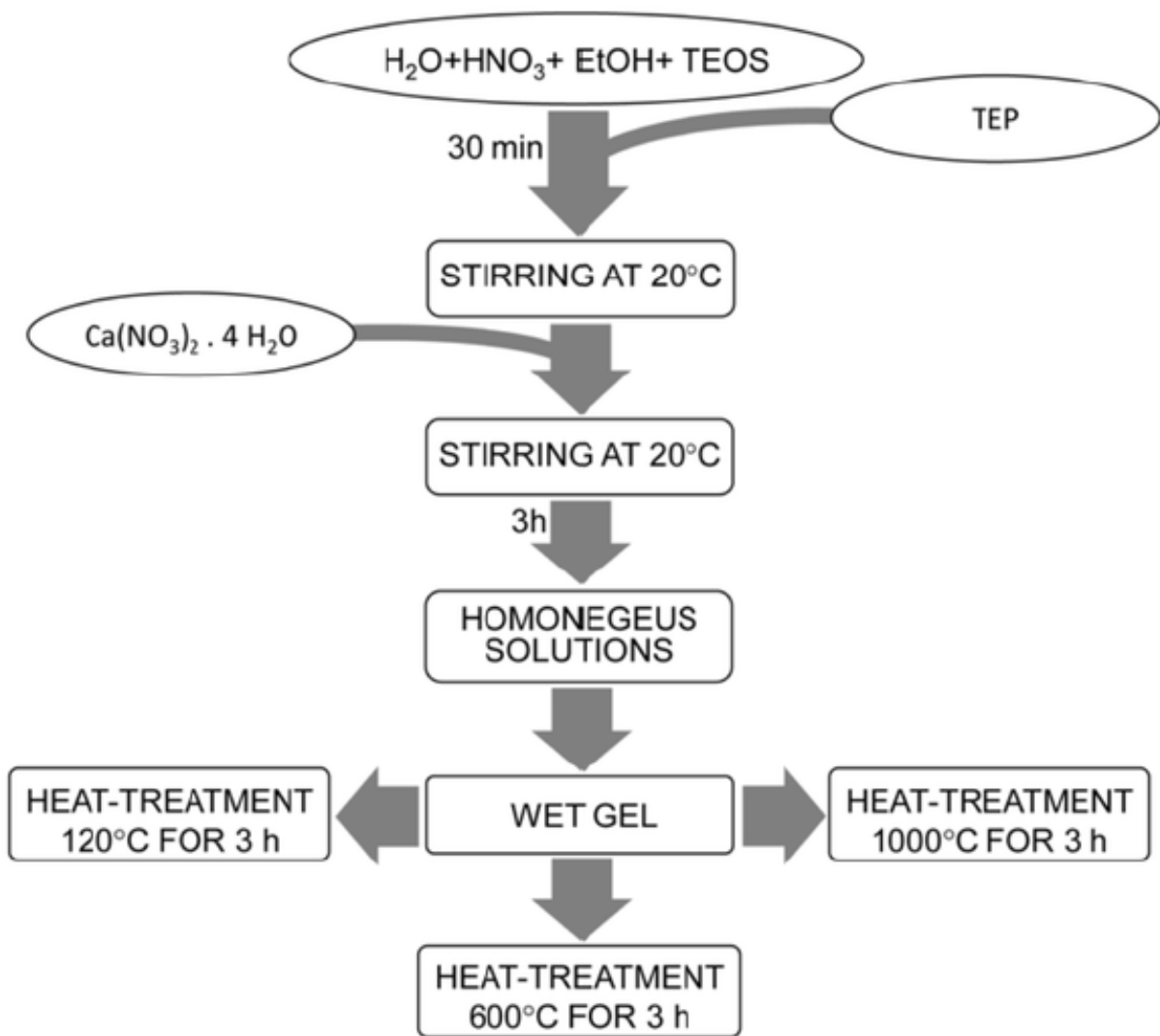
384 **Fig. 8** FTIR spectra of the synthesized $\text{SiO}_2 \cdot \text{CaO} \cdot \text{P}_2\text{O}_5$ samples after heat treatment at 1200°C .

385 **Fig. 9** SEM image of: A) 63S32C5P and B) 61S38C1P after 120°C and EDX spectra of the
386 surface; C) 63S32C5P and D) 61S38C1P after 600°C ; E) 63S32C5P and F) 61S38C1P after 1200°C
387 and EDX of crystal in the ring.

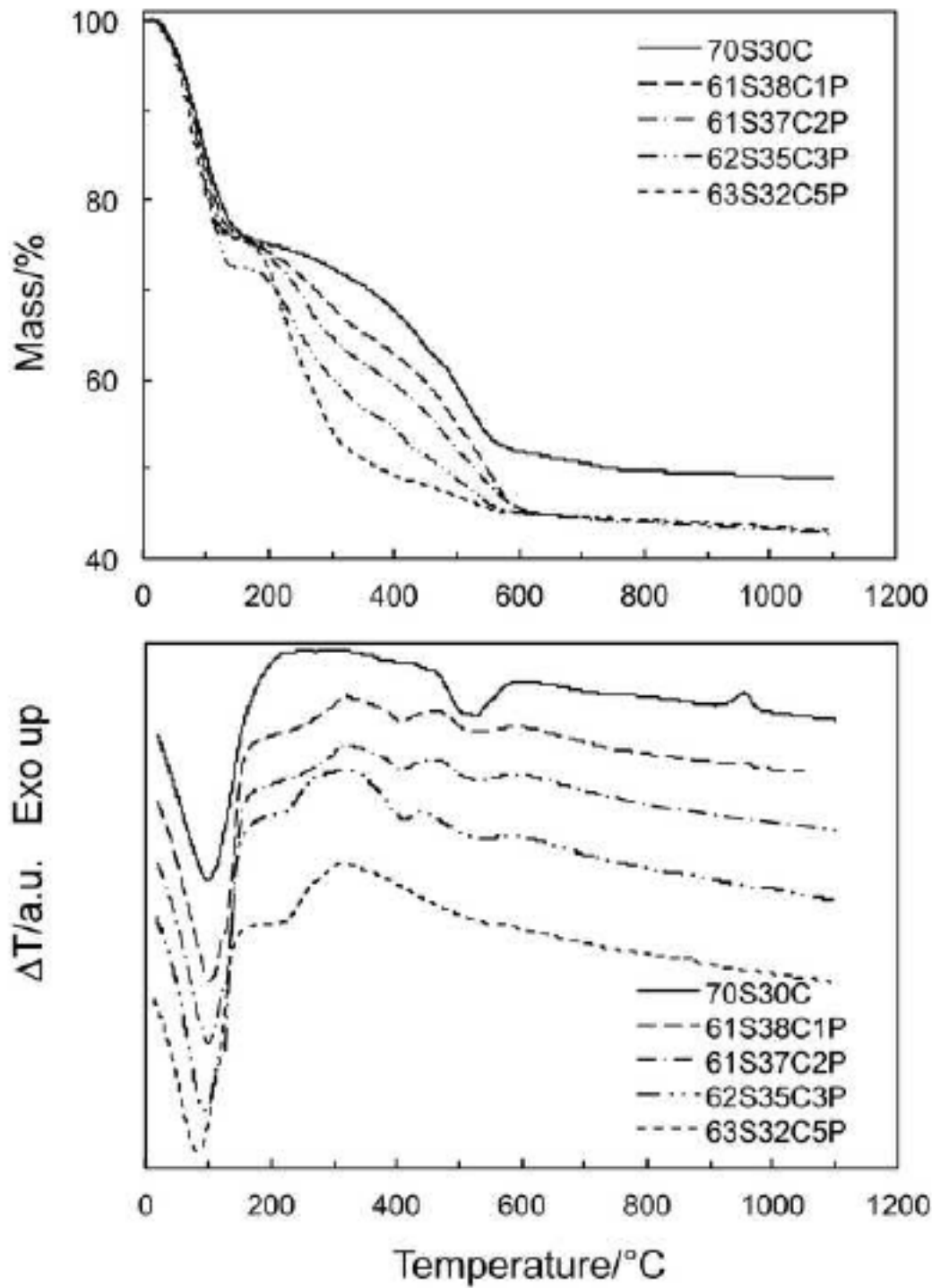
388 **Fig. 10** X-ray diffraction pattern of fresh (only 61S38C1P and 63S32C5P) and calcined (at 1200°C)
389 samples (plots a and b, respectively). Pseudowollastonite (*), wollastonite (+) and
390 $\text{Ca}_{15}(\text{PO}_4)_2(\text{SiO}_4)_6$ (#).

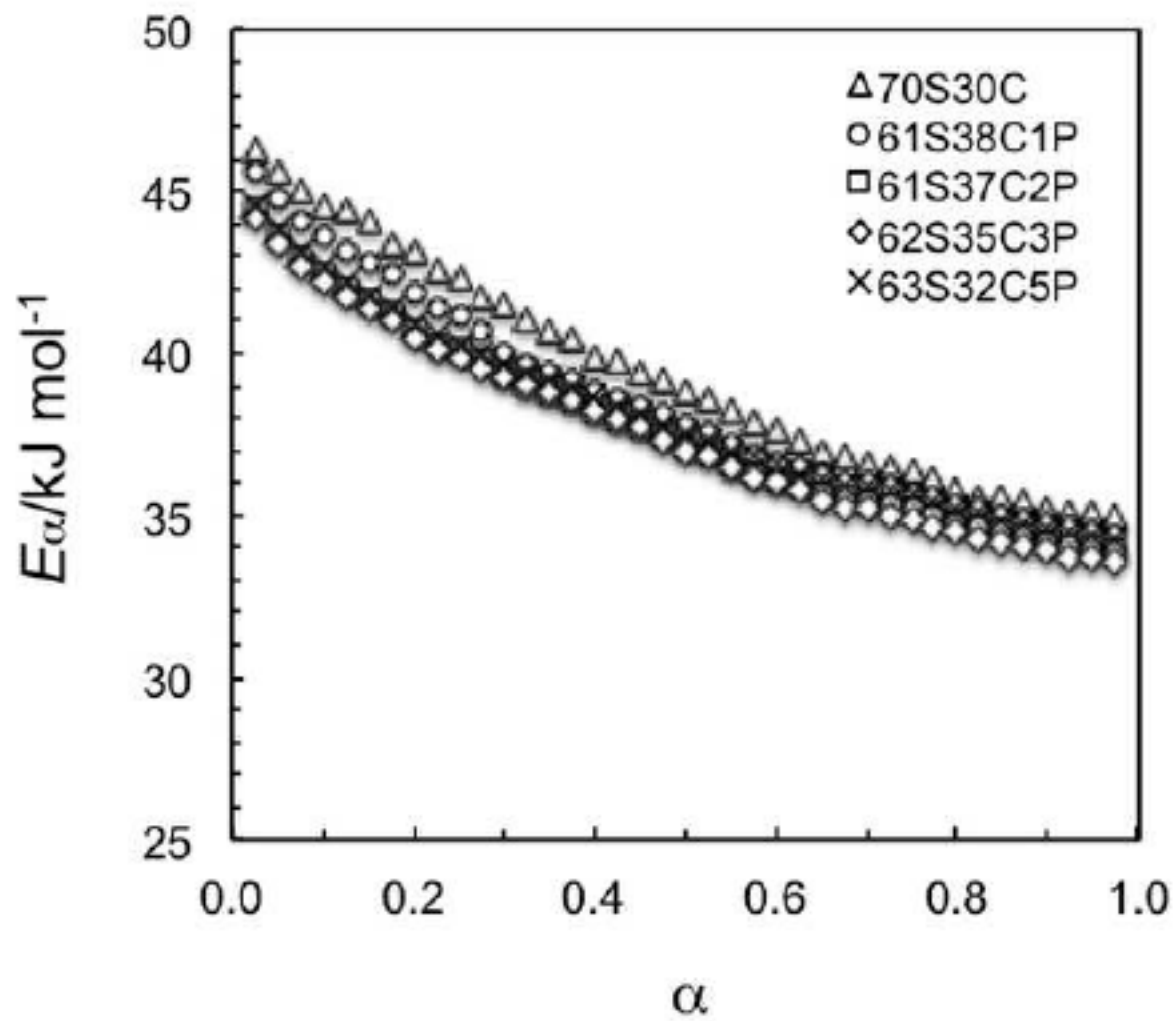
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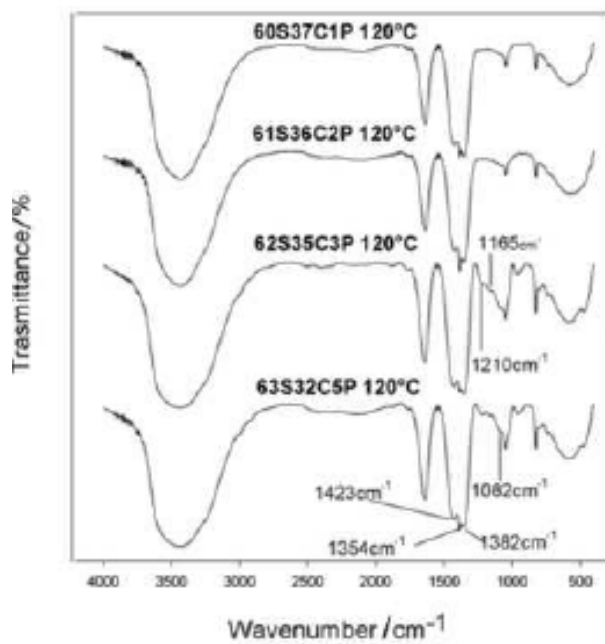




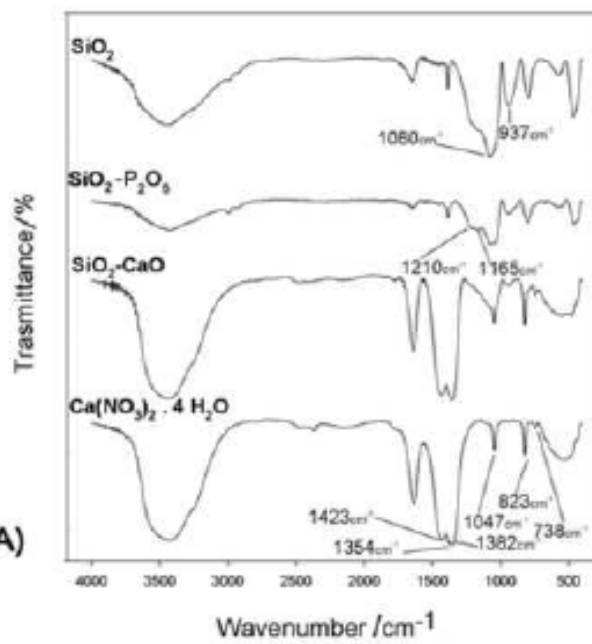
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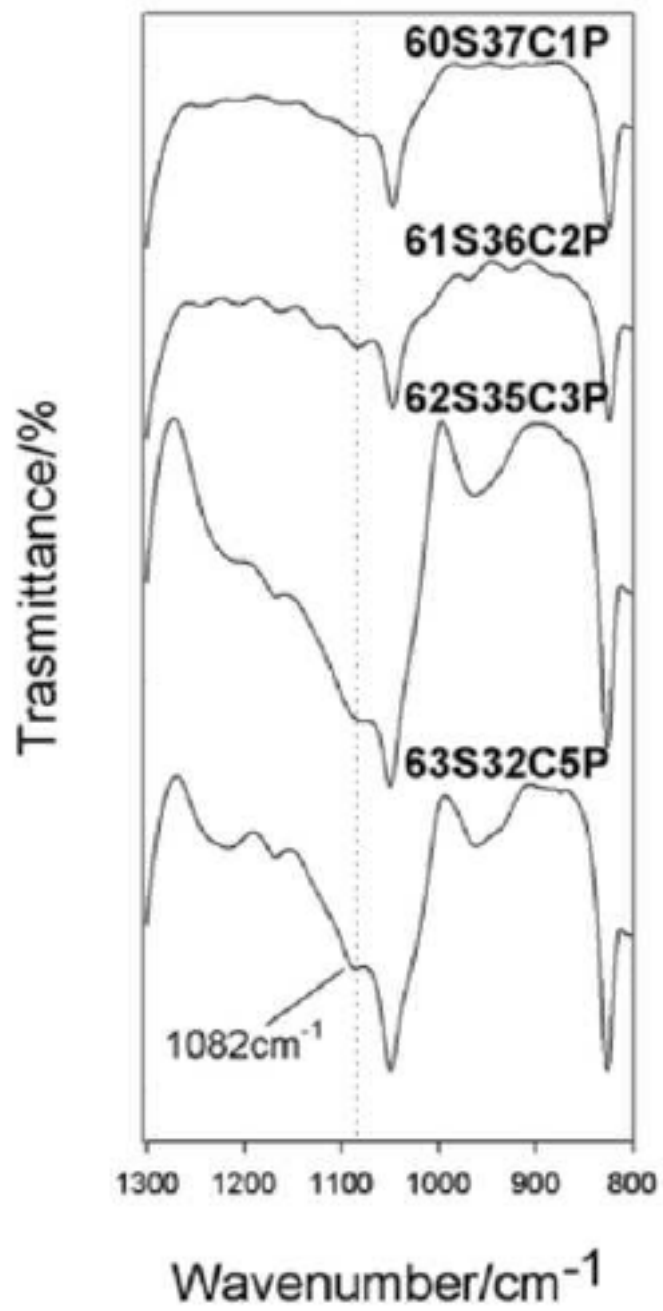
(A)

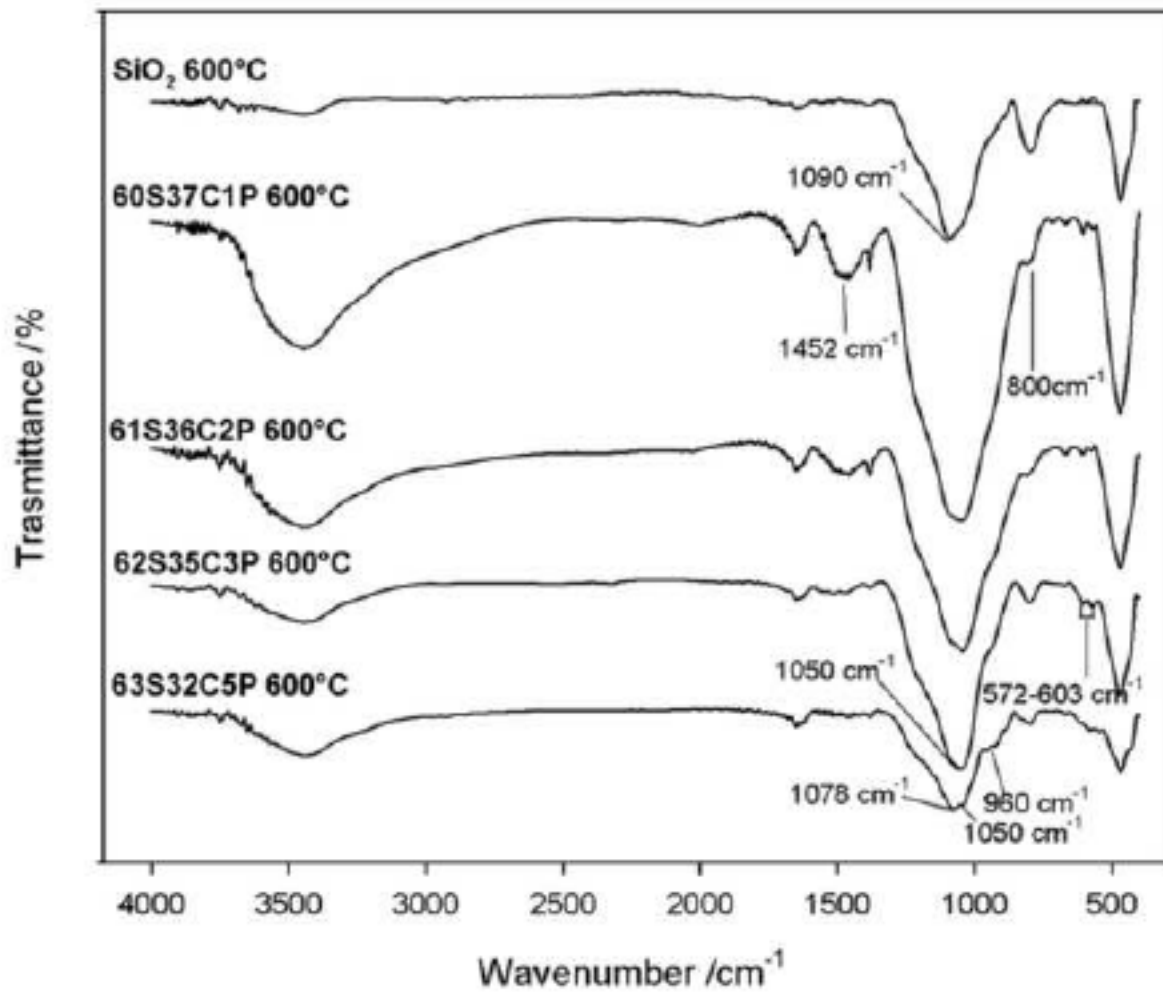


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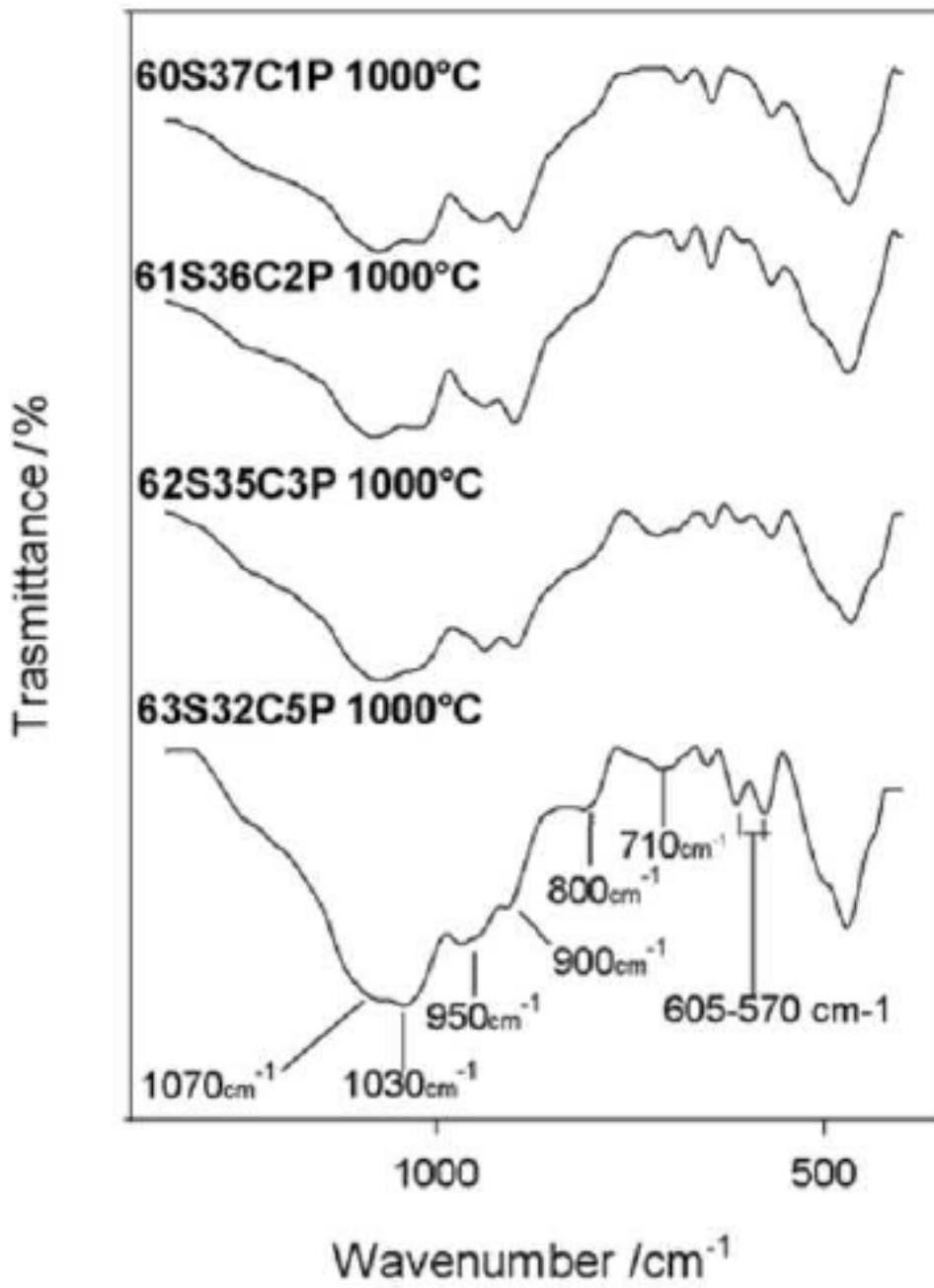
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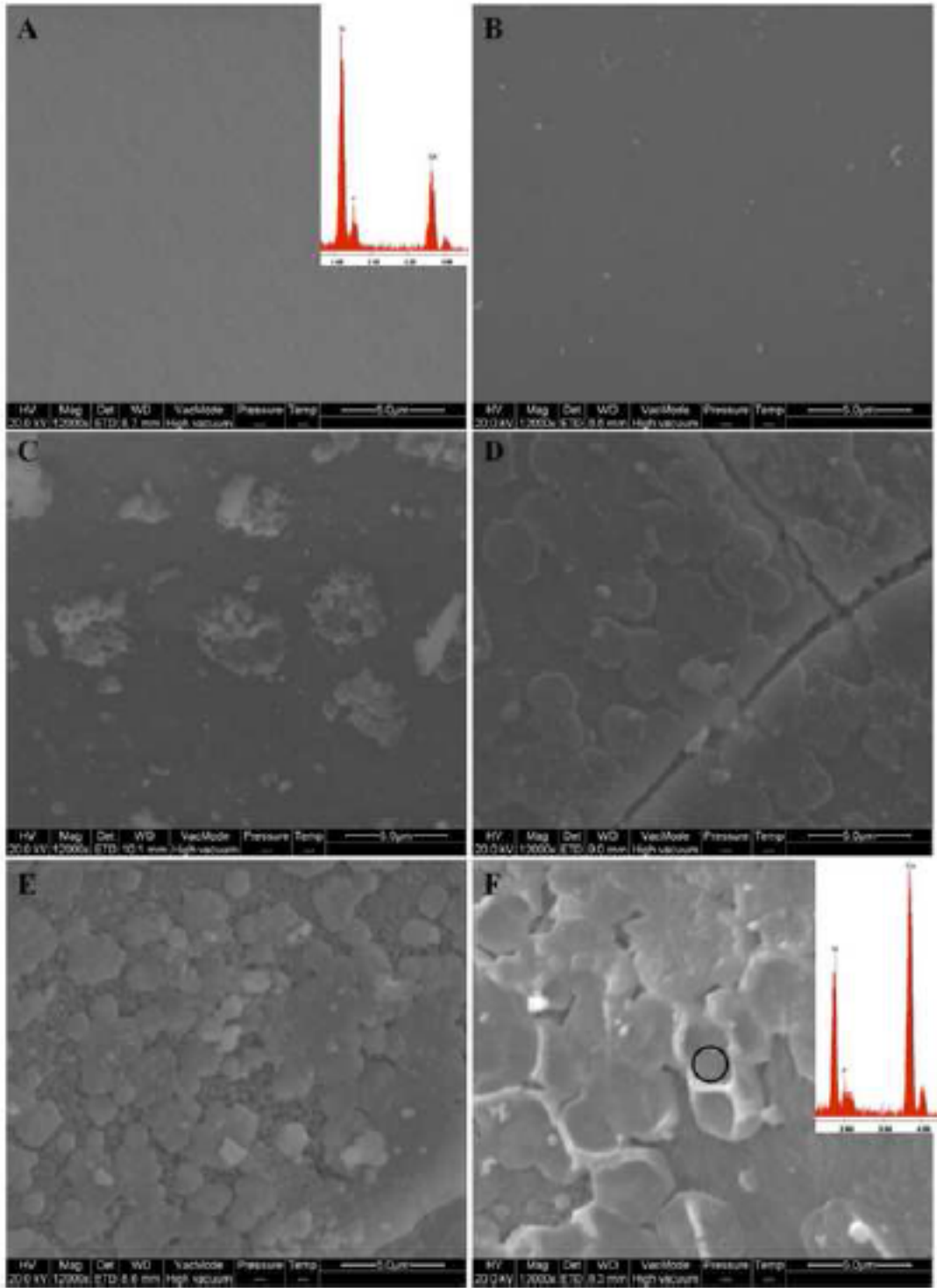
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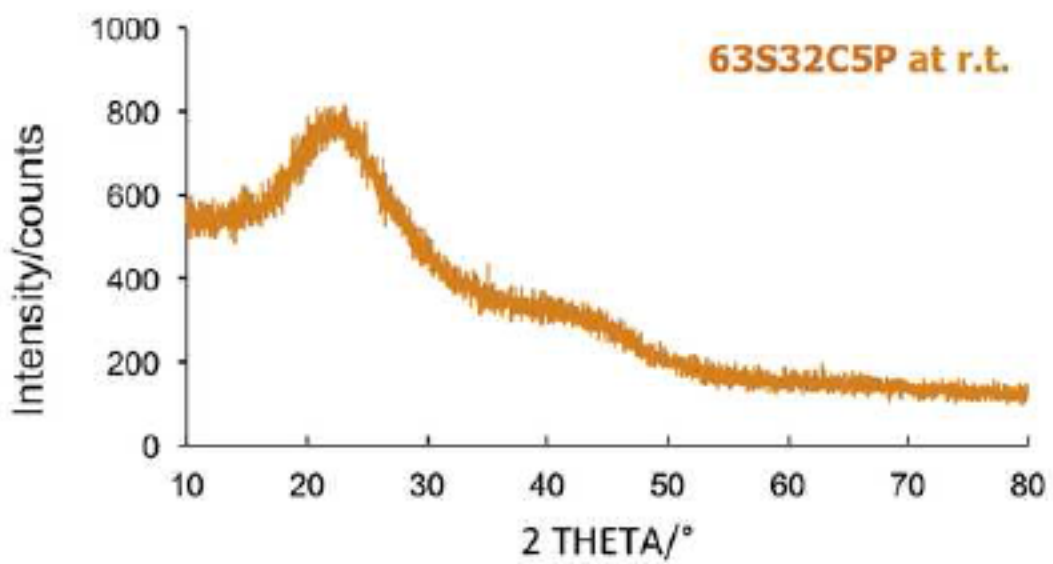
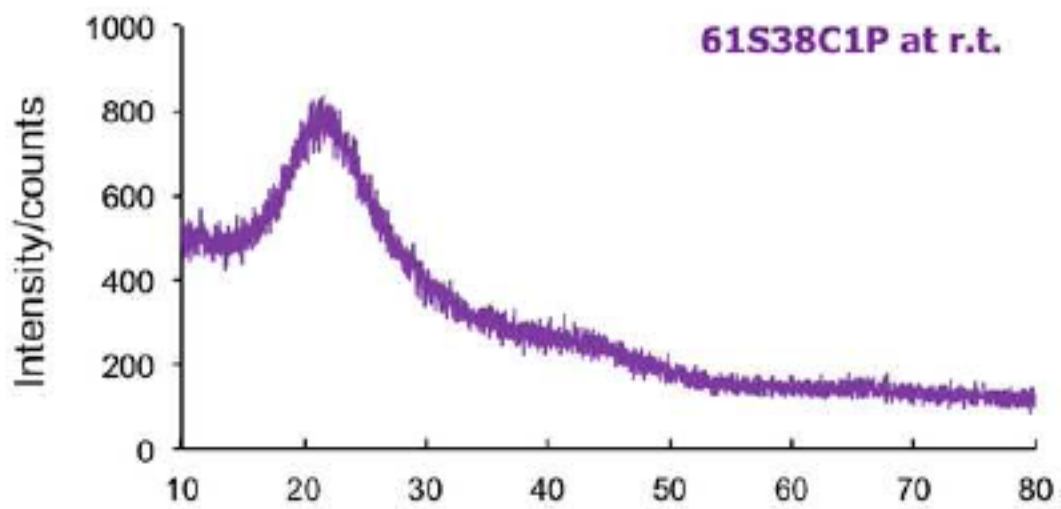


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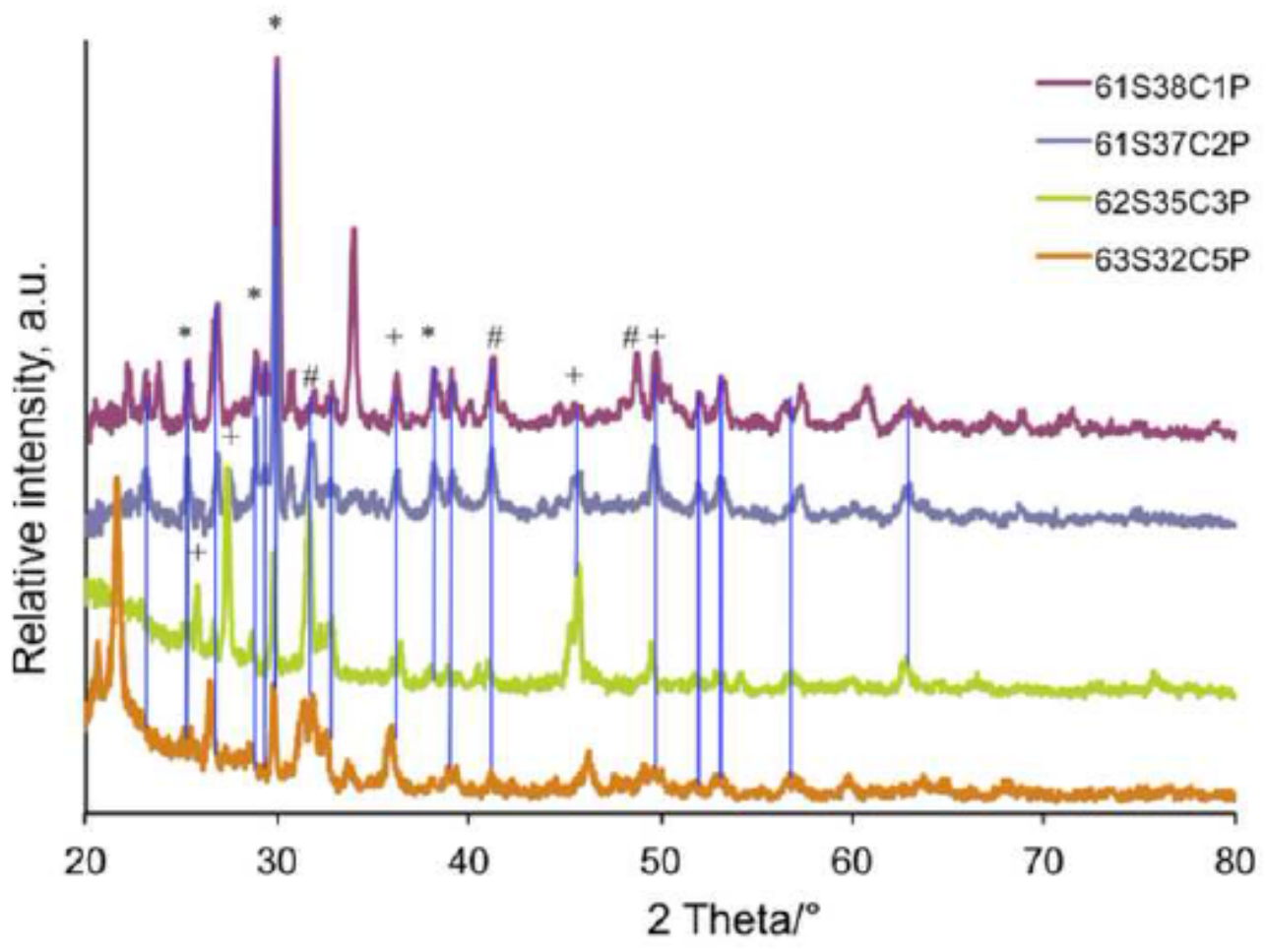


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