Conclusions: This theoretical analysis has been confirmed experimentally by quantitative simulations of the reabsorption effects [9]. The kinetics of the LR oxidation reaction provide additional evidence that CaCO$_3$(s) must be present.

This analysis shows that CaCO$_3$ (either as calcite or aragonite) has the correct K$_{sp}$ to have produced the Viking LR successive injection reabsorption effects. Thus CaCO$_3$ or another MeCO$_3$, with very similar solubility characteristics must have been present on Mars. A small amount of soluble acid, but no more than 4 pmol per sample, could also have been present. We conclude that the pH of the regolith is 7 ± 0.1. This is the value that would be observed if 0.5 mL sample of regolith were sealed in a 10-mL volume with a martian atmosphere at 6 mbar and wetted with 0.5 mL of deionized H$_2$O at 25°C. The variation in pH values is very small, which is a consequence of carbonate buffering.

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THE MINERALOGIC EVOLUTION OF THE MARTIAN SURFACE THROUGH TIME: IMPLICATIONS FROM CHEMICAL REACTION PATH MODELING STUDIES. G. S. Plumlee, W. I. Ridley, J. D. De Braal, and M. H. Reed, 1 Mail Stop 973, U.S. Geological Survey, Denver Federal Center, Denver CO 80225, USA, 2 Department of Geological Sciences, University of Oregon, Eugene OR 97403, USA.

This report summarizes results to date of the MSATT-sponsored project, "Chemical Reaction Path Modeling at the Martian Surface Through Time." We have used chemical reaction path calculations to model the minerals that might have formed at or near the martian surface [1] as a result of impact-driven hydrothermal systems [1]; (2) as a result of weathering at the martian surface during an early warm wet climate [2,3]; and (3) as a result of meteorite or sub-zero 4°C brine-regolith reactions in the current cold climate.

Fundamentals of Chemical Reaction Path Modeling: Computer-driven chemical reaction-path modeling [5] quantitatively predicts the changes in water chemistry, amounts of minerals precipitated or dissolved, and amounts of gases formed as the result of specified geochemical processes such as rock reactions, fluid mixing, or fluid boiling. The modeling is based on equilibrium chemical thermodynamics, and takes into account both chemical reactions (through equilibrium constants) and mass balance relations between all solid, aqueous, and gaseous phases in a specified...
water-rock-gas system. A wide variety of reaction-path calculations can be performed to address potential variations in starting conditions and other factors that influence particular chemical processes. The chemical speciation and reaction path programs SOLVEQ and CHILLER [5,6] were used in this project.

It is important to note the limitations of the reaction-path modeling. First, the validity of modeling results are highly dependent on the quality of the thermodynamic data upon which the modeling is based. Thermodynamic data determined through laboratory experiments are generally the most accurate; experimentally derived data, especially those for reactions involving aqueous species, are best-developed at or near 25°C, are somewhat less available at hydrothermal temperatures above 50°–100°C, and are not well developed at near-zero or sub-zero °C temperatures. When experimentally derived data are not available, they are generally estimated instead by various techniques or are extrapolated from experimentally derived data at 25°C. Another limitation of the reaction-path modeling is that minerals predicted to be thermodynamically stable for a given set of geochemical conditions may not actually precipitate in nature due to kinetic factors. For example, minerals such as chalcedony, kaolinite, aluminum hydroxides, and feldhydrite are kinetically stable and much more likely to precipitate at 25°C than thermodynamically stable quartz, illites, smectites, other aluminosilicate minerals, hematite, and goethite [7]. The relative chemical effects of such kinetic controls on mineral precipitation can be evaluated in the modeling by carrying out runs in which kinetically inhibited minerals are allowed to precipitate, and runs in which these minerals are suppressed, thereby allowing kinetically more stable but thermodynamically less stable minerals to precipitate.

Chemical Modeling of Possible Martian Hydrothermal Processes: Hydrothermal systems associated with volcanoes and impact events have been proposed to play important roles in the development of the martian regolith and the valley networks [8–10]. Our chemical modeling results [1] indicate that such hydrothermal processes would produce a variety of alteration minerals and mineral precursors that can be readily searched for using remote sensing techniques. For example, condensation of SO$_2$ and CO$_2$-rich volcanic gases in the throats of martian volcanoes would probably generate highly acidic (pH < 1.5) fluids capable of altering the volcanic wallrocks to zoning silica-alumina-ahhydrite-hematite-nontronite-smectite-carbonate assemblages. If the gases condensed into hydrothermal waters circulating within the volcanos, then such acidic alteration assemblages could extend well away from the immediate vicinity of the volcano throats. If interactions between the hydrothermal fluids and volcanic gases were negligible, then hydrothermal systems circulating within the volcanos would alter the basaltic volcanics to quartz-pyrite-carbonate-epidote-albite alteration assemblages. Hydrothermal fluids that reacted with the regolith (such as permafrost meltwaters generated by a meteorite impact) were likely acidic (pH 3–5) and saline, and produced nontronite, anhydrite, kaolinite, Mg-smectite, Mg-chlorite, and quartz alteration assemblages within the regolith. Near-surface quenching of hydrothermal fluid outflows from impact- or volcano-driven hydrothermal systems should have produced extensive silica- and/or carbonate-rich precipitates analogous to the silica sinter and traver-tine terraces formed by terrestrial geothermal systems.

Chemical Modeling of Weathering in an Early Warm Wet Climate: In the reaction-path calculations modeling weathering in an early warm wet climate [2], a range of initial water compositions was used to account for reasonable variations in ambient partial pressures of atmospheric CO$_2$ and O$_2$, and possible variations in the input of acidic volcanic gases such as SO$_2$ and HCl. Our results indicate that weathering processes in an early warm wet climate (temperature = 25°C) with at least some free atmospheric O would have altered basalts to mixtures of ferric and manganese hydroxides, chalcedony, kaolinite, apatite (or other phosphate minerals), dolomite, and calcite. Smectite clays are predicted to be thermodynamically stable in many of the weathering reaction paths considered; such clays may have formed if kinetic barriers to their nucleation were overcome. Acid rain (resulting either from high atmospheric CO$_2$ or influx into the atmosphere of acidic volcanic gases such as HCl and SO$_2$) would have enhanced the extent of the weathering reactions and increased the proportions of minerals such as carbonates and gypsum the weathering assemblages. Reaction paths modeling the limited evaporation of waters that had previously reacted with basalt predict the formation of gypsum, calcite, dolomite, sodium and potassium feldspars, dawsonite (a hydrated sodium-aluminum carbonate mineral), and phosphate minerals. Calculations modeling more extensive evaporation generally do not predict the precipitation of common halides such as halite or sylvite. Rather, unusual minerals such as Cl-bearing apatite (see below) or MgOHCl are predicted to form. We are currently evaluating whether the predicted lack of precipitation of halite and sylvite is geochemically and kinetically reasonable. Waters initially high in dissolved sulfate and chloride (such as acid rain) require substantially less evaporation to reach saturation with gypsum (and other readily soluble salts) than waters that derive their sulfate and chloride solely from the rocks. These results lend support to the premise that acid rain may have helped generate the high sulfate and chloride values measured in the martian regolith.

Our calculations show that weathering of P-bearing basalts would probably result in the transport of aqueous phosphate, the formation of phosphate alteration minerals such as apatite or crandallite, and the possible evaporative enrichment of phosphate in the regolith. Based on these results, we speculated in an earlier report [2] that Cl-bearing apatite could serve as a residence for chloride in the regolith. Recent infrared reflectance studies [T. V. King, 1992, oral communication] do not support the presence of Cl-apatite in detectable amounts in the martian regolith; however, further work is needed to evaluate if the chloride could be tied up in some other phosphate phase.

Regolith Weathering by Aqueous Solutions in a Cold Climate: We are currently modeling potential interactions of martian regolith and basaltic rocks with near-zero °C waters or sub-zero °C brines that may have been or are currently stable at or near the martian surface [3,4]. Model groundwaters at 0.1°C in equilibrium with the current martian atmospheric CO$_2$ and O$_2$ pressures are predicted to be acidic (pH 6) and oxidizing, while model groundwaters that have no contact with the atmosphere are predicted to be very alkaline (pH 11) and reducing. Calculations modeling weathering of a Shergotty basalt composition by the near-zero (0.1°C) groundwaters predict alteration assemblages that consist of Mg-norontinite, MgCO$_3$*3H$_2$O, chalcedony, kaolinite, trona (Na$_2$CO$_3$HCO$_3$*2H$_2$O), spurrine (Ca$_3$[SiO$_4$]$_2$CO$_3$), potassium feldspar, alunite, and MgOHCl, in order of decreasing abundance. If the nontronite and potassium feldspar were kinetically inhibited from precipitating, then the alteration
assemblages are predicted to contain abundant Fe-, Mn-, and Al-
hydroxides in addition to the dolomite, chalcedony, and kaolinite.
Subsequent evaporation of the groundwaters after reaction with
basalt is predicted to form, with progressive evaporation, dolomite,
MgCO₃·3H₂O, apatite (or other phosphate minerals), calcite, daw-
sonite, and gypsum. Halite and sylvite are not predicted to form,
even with extensive evaporation. Reactions of the regolith with
groundwaters near 0°C are predicted to result in acidic waters and
alteration assemblages containing abundant Fe- and Al-hydroxides
(or smectites), Mn-hydroxides, and kaolinite.

The portion of the project in which we model sub-zero brine-
regolith interactions has required extensive modifications
to the computer programs that carry out the reaction-path calculations and
the thermodynamic database that serves as the basis for the calculations.
Modeling calculations below 0°C are still in progress.

Summary: Although the chemical reaction-path calculations
carried out to date do not define the exact mineralogical evolution
of the martian surface over time, they do place valuable geochemical
constraints on the types of minerals that formed from an aqueous
phase under various surficial and geochemically complex conditions.
Based on these results, we believe that further chemical reaction-
path modeling efforts are needed as new remote sensing data and
other lines of evidence are acquired on possible surficial mineralogies.
By integrating such geochemical modeling calculations with remote
sensing studies, more realistic and geochemically valid models for
the evolution of the martian surface through time can be developed.


CONTROLS ON THE CO₂ SEASONAL CYCLE. J. B.
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The meteorology experiment on the Viking landers carried out
accurate measurements of the surface pressure over the course of
several martian years [1]. These data show substantial variations in
pressure on seasonal timescales that are characterized by two local
minima and two local maxima. These variations have widely been
attributed to the seasonal condensation and sublimation of CO₂ in
the two polar regions. It has been somewhat of a surprise that the
amplitude of the minimum and maximum that is dominated by the
CO₂ cycle in the north was much weaker than the corresponding
amplitude of the south-dominated extrema. Another surprise was
that the seasonal pressure cycle during years 2 and 3 of the Viking
mission was so similar to that for year 1, despite the occurrence of two
global dust storms during year 1 and none during years 2 and 3.

We have attempted to model the observed seasonal pressure
variations with an energy balance model that incorporates dynamical
factors from a large number of general circulation model runs in
which the atmospheric dust opacity and seasonal date were system-
atically varied [2,3]. The energy balance model takes account of the
following processes in determining the rates of CO₂ condensation
and sublimation at each longitudinal and latitudinal grid point: solar
radiation, infrared radiation from the atmosphere and surface, sub-
surface heat conduction, and atmospheric heat advection. Conden-
sation rates are calculated both at the surface and in the atmosphere.
In addition, the energy balance model also incorporates information
from the GCM runs on seasonal redistribution of surface pressure
across the globe, a process that has very little effect on CO₂ conden-
sation and sublimation per se, but which can alias surface pressure
measurements at local sites.

Numerical experiments with the energy balance model show
that the following factors make important contributions to the sea-
sonal pressure variations measured at local sites: albedo and emiss-
itivity of the seasonal CO₂ polar caps, topography of the polar regions,
seasonal atmospheric heat advection, and seasonal redistribution of
the surface pressure. The last factor contains contributions from
seasonal variations in atmospheric dynamics and from scale height
changes in the presence of topography. The model-derived values of
cap emissivity may contain an influence from CO₂ ice clouds that are
particularly prevalent in the north during its fall and winter seasons
[4]. Atmospheric dust influences each of the above factors, albeit in
different ways. For example, atmospheric heat transport to the poies
rapidly increases as the dust opacity increases from 0 to 1, but then
tends to approach an asymptotic value. We suggest that the similarity
of the seasonal CO₂ cycle between years with and without global
dust storms may reflect this type of saturation effect. Indeed, runs
with the energy balance model performed using Viking-lander-
measured opacities during years 1 and 2 [5] tend to substantiate this
hypothesis.

We have used estimates of the surface temperature of the sea-
sonal CO₂ caps [4] to define the infrared radiative losses from the
seasonal polar caps. This information implicitly incorporates sur-
f ace topography, a quantity that is poorly known in the polar regions.
We have been able to closely reproduce the seasonal pressure
variations measured at the Viking lander sites. Our best models are
characterized by a lower cap emissivity in the north than in the
south. We attribute this difference to the influence of CO₂ ice clouds
[4]. According to our calculations the reduced amplitude of the
north-cap-influenced pressure extrema, when compared to that of the
south-cap-influenced extrema, are due to the following: lower cap
emissivity in the north (due to a greater frequency of CO₂ ice clouds
in the north), greater heat advection during northern winter
when the dust opacity is elevated, and a larger amplitude to the
seasonal pressure redistribution during northern winter when the
dust opacity is higher. Opposing these factors is a lower CO₂ ice
temperature in the south due to its higher elevation.