

Investigation of smectite hydration properties by modeling experimental X-ray diffraction patterns: Part I. Montmorillonite hydration properties

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ABSTRACT

Hydration of the <1 μm size fraction of SWy-1 source clay (low-charge montmorillonite) was studied by modeling of X-ray diffraction (XRD) patterns recorded under controlled relative humidity (RH) conditions on Li-, Na-, K-, Mg-, Ca-, and Sr-saturated specimens. The quantitative description of smectite hydration, based on the relative proportions of different layer types derived from the fitting of experimental XRD patterns, was consistent with previous reports of smectite hydration. However, the coexistence of smectite layer types exhibiting contrasting hydration states was systematically observed, and heterogeneity rather than homogeneity seems to be the rule for smectite hydration. This heterogeneity can be characterized qualitatively using the standard deviation of the departure from rationality of the 00 l reflection series (ξ), which is systematically larger than 0.4 Å when the prevailing layer type accounts for ~70% or less of the total layers (~25% of XRD patterns examined). In addition, hydration heterogeneities are not distributed randomly within smectite crystallites, and models describing these complex structures involve two distinct contributions, each containing different layer types that are interstratified randomly. As a result, the different layer types are partially segregated in the sample. However, these two contributions do not imply the actual presence of two populations of particles in the sample.

XRD profile modeling also has allowed the refinement of structural parameters, such as the location of interlayer species and the layer thickness corresponding to the different layer types, for all interlayer cations and RH values. From the observed dependence of the latter parameter on the cation ionic potential (v/r ; v = cation valency and r = ionic radius) and on RH, the following equations were derived:

$$\text{Layer thickness (1W)} = 12.556 + 0.3525 \times (v/r - 0.241) \times (v \times \text{RH} - 0.979)$$

$$\text{Layer thickness (2W)} = 15.592 + 0.6472 \times (v/r - 0.839) \times (v \times \text{RH} - 1.412)$$

which allow the quantification of the increase of layer thickness with increasing RH for both 1W (one water) and 2W (two water) layers. In addition, for 2W layers, interlayer H₂O molecules are probably distributed as a unique plane on each side of the central interlayer cation. This plane of H₂O molecules is located at ~1.20 Å from the central interlayer cation along the c^* axis.

INTRODUCTION

Bentonite has been long used as buffer material for engineered barriers in municipal waste disposal sites because of its low permeability when compacted and because of its cation-retention ability. These properties also make bentonite a possible buffer material in multi-barrier designs for nuclear waste repositories. Specifically, bentonite may be used to isolate intermediate-level, long-lived wastes (ILLW wastes) from the host geological formation and from the biosphere. The retention and mechanical properties of this material are mainly influenced by its smectite component. The high smectite content provides bentonite with a self-healing capacity and the ability to sorb cations, the latter being enhanced by the high surface area of smectite. Sorption

would help limit or delay possible radionuclide migration. Both properties result from the specific hydration/expansion ability of this mineral component.

However, interactions between the nuclear waste package and the bentonite barrier could possibly alter these properties. For example, concrete as a civil engineering material or as a component of the waste package will produce alkali-rich, high-pH aqueous solutions (“pH plume”) during alteration. The effect of such solutions on smectite has been widely studied (Mohnot et al. 1987; Carroll-Webb and Walther 1988; Carroll and Walther 1990; Chermak 1992, 1993; Eberl et al. 1993; Huang 1993; Bauer and Berger 1998; Bauer et al. 1998; Bauer and Velde 1999; Cama et al. 2000; Taubald et al. 2000; Huertas et al. 2001; Rassineux et al. 2001; Claret et al. 2002). Smectite in the bentonite can be affected also by a thermal pulse resulting from the radioactivity of the waste package. By analogy with burial diagenesis in sediments

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(Weaver 1960; Hower and Mowatt 1966; Burst 1969; Perry and Hower 1972; Hower et al. 1976, etc.), smectite is expected to transform with increasing temperature into non-expandable illite through intermediate mixed-layer structures. Structural changes of smectites during the early stages of this transformation relate to the location and the amount of layer charge (Sato et al. 1996; Drits et al. 1997a; Beaufort et al. 2001). Because these changes probably produce subtle changes of the hydration/expansion properties of the smectite, which persist throughout subsequent stages of the illitization reaction (Drits et al. 1997a), a careful study of these hydration properties using X-ray diffraction (XRD) is possibly a way to investigate the early steps of the smectite-to-illite transition. However, because these properties also vary as a function of the nature of the interlayer cation and of relative humidity, the influence of these two parameters must be assessed first for reference smectite samples. In addition, the intrinsic heterogeneity of smectite materials (Calarge et al. 2003; Meunier et al. 2004) can lead to the coexistence within the same crystallite of layers exhibiting different hydration states. This effect can be quantified by comparing XRD patterns recorded under stable experimental conditions with patterns calculated assuming a random interstratification of layers exhibiting different hydration states.

This paper reports on a detailed characterization of the hydration properties of a low-charge montmorillonite reference sample (The Clay Mineral Society Source Clay, SWy-1). Following purification and size fractionation, aliquots of the <1 μm size fraction of this reference sample were saturated with K^+ , Na^+ , Li^+ , Sr^{2+} , Ca^{2+} , and Mg^{2+} interlayer cations. Experimental XRD patterns were recorded at fixed relative humidity (RH) conditions over a range from an essentially dry atmosphere (~0% RH) to approximately 80% RH. Experimental XRD patterns were compared with calculated models for each cation and each relative humidity to obtain the proportion of layers with defined hydration states. Additional structural parameters, such as the thickness of hydrated layers and the distribution of interlayer H_2O molecules, were also assessed with this modeling approach.

BACKGROUND

The ability of some 2:1 phyllosilicates, including smectites, to incorporate interlayer H_2O molecules and the subsequent change in basal spacing has been studied extensively for several decades. For example, Nagelschmidt (1936) and Bradley et al. (1937) showed by XRD that the basal spacing of smectite increases in steps as the amount of water increases in the sample environment. These discrete steps were later attributed to the intercalation of 0, 1, 2, or 3 planes of H_2O molecules in the smectite interlayer (Mooney et al. 1952; Méring and Glaeser 1954; Norrish 1954; Walker 1956). From these pioneering studies, hydration properties of 2:1 phyllosilicates (smectites) were shown to be controlled by such factors as the type of the interlayer cation, and the amount and the location of layer charge (by substitutions in octahedral or tetrahedral sites). These observations suggested several possible models where crystalline swelling is controlled by the balance between the repulsive force owing to 2:1 layer interactions and the attractive forces between hydrated interlayer cations and the negatively charged surface of siloxane layers (Norrish 1954; Van Olphen 1965; Kittrick 1969a, 1969b; Laird 1996, 1999).

Smectite hydration properties are often characterized by XRD from the evolution of $d(001)$ basal-spacing value under variable RH (Méring and Glaeser 1954; Harward and Brindley 1965; Glaeser and Méring 1968; Glaeser et al. 1967; Harward et al. 1969; Watanabe and Sato 1988; Sato et al. 1992; Yamada et al. 1994; Tamura et al. 2000, among others). Modeling techniques complement this approach. For example, Ben Brahim et al. (1983a, 1983b, 1984) studied the interlayer structure (atomic positions of interlayer cations and associated H_2O molecules) of Na-saturated montmorillonite and beidellite samples.

However, these studies systematically assume homogeneous hydration conditions for a given cation at a given RH whereas the coexistence of different hydration states in a sample is probably common even under controlled conditions (Méring and Glaeser 1954; Glaeser et al. 1967; Sato et al. 1992, 1996). For example, the irrational character of the $d(00l)$ reflection series at the transition between two discrete hydration states and the asymmetric profiles of high-angle reflections indicate such coexistence, most likely arising from a heterogeneous layer-charge distribution (Sato et al. 1992). Few studies have taken into account the coexistence of layers with contrasting layer thickness corresponding to different hydration states. Moore and Hower (1986) studied ordered structures composed of mono-hydrated and collapsed interlayers in montmorillonite, and Cuadros (1997) estimated the H_2O content of smectite as a function of the interlayer cation. Using a similar approach, Iwasaki and Watanabe (1988) were able to investigate the distribution of Na^+ and Ca^{2+} cations over the interlayers of smectite and illite-smectite mixed-layer structures. Assessing the cationic composition of smectite interlayers from the layer thickness (~15.0 and 12.5 Å for Ca^{2+} and Na^+ , respectively) Iwasaki and Watanabe (1988) demonstrated that Na^+ and Ca^{2+} cations occur in different interlayers leading to the presence of segregated domains. These domains are reminiscent of the “demixed state” described in the early works of Glaeser and Méring (1954), Levy and Francis (1975), and Mamy and Gaultier (1979).

Bérend et al. (1995) and Cases et al. (1997) applied such an XRD profile modeling approach in combination with adsorption-desorption isotherm experiments to assess the proportion of the different layer types (with 0–3 planes of interlayer H_2O molecules) coexisting along the isotherms. However, their calculations were limited to reproduce the position of the 001 reflection, whereas positions and shapes of higher-order 00 l reflections were not considered. These limitations did not allow a complete description of the real structure of their samples. More recently, Calarge et al. (2003) and Meunier et al. (2004) refined this approach by fitting both positions and profiles of the 00 l reflections over a large angular range and showed that randomly interstratified structures, each containing different layer types, coexisted in their montmorillonite samples.

To our knowledge, no study has described the interlayer structure of smectite as a function of RH for the different layer types, and possibly for different cations. The interlayer structure was determined for 0–3 planes of interlayer H_2O over a limited RH range for which the hydration of smectite is considered to be homogeneous. However, the coexistence of different layer types over an extended RH range has not allowed the interlayer structure to be determined as a function of RH. Furthermore, in most

studies of hydration heterogeneity of smectite, the structure of the interlayer H₂O has not been refined because the XRD profile fitting was usually performed over a limited angular range.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Sample preparation

The smectite used for this study is the SWy-1 montmorillonite reference from the Source Clay Repository of The Clay Minerals Society with structural formula (Stucki et al. 1984): $[(Al_{2.99}Fe_{0.43}Mg_{0.52})(Si_{7.97}Al_{0.03})O_{20}(OH)_4] M_{0.70}^{+}$ (<2 μm size fraction). This montmorillonite is originally Na-saturated, and exhibits a low octahedral charge and extremely limited tetrahedral substitutions (Mermut and Lagaly 2001).

Size fractionation was performed by centrifugation to obtain a suspension of the <1 μm size fraction. Each ion exchange was made at room temperature with 1 mol/L aqueous solutions of K-, Na-, Li-, Ca-, and Sr-chlorides, respectively. SWy-1 suspensions in each saline solution (~50 mg of solid in ~50 mL of solution) were shaken mechanically for 24 h before separation of the solid fraction by centrifugation and addition of fresh saline solution. These steps were repeated three times to ensure a complete cation exchange. Removal of the excess chloride was performed by washing the solid three times by immersion for 24 h in distilled water (Milli-Q, 18.2 MΩ/cm). The Mg-saturated sample was obtained using a 0.5 mol/L solution of magnesium perchlorate to ensure the complete dissociation of the Mg(ClO₄)₂ complex in water. Ten steps consisting of a 24 h contact between the solution and the solid followed by centrifugation and renewal of the saline solution guaranteed the complete saturation before the three steps of washing. These samples are hereafter referred to as K-, Na-, Li-, Sr-, Ca-, and Mg-SWy-1.

X-ray diffraction

Oriented slide mounts were prepared for each sample by drying at room temperature a pipetted clay slurry covering a glass slide. XRD patterns were then recorded using a Siemens (Bruker) D5000 diffractometer using CuKα radiation and equipped with an Ansyco rh-plus 2250 humidity control device coupled to an Anton Paar TTK450 chamber. Usual scanning parameters were 0.04 °2θ as step size and 6 s as counting time per step over the angular range 2–50 °2θ. The divergence slit, the two Soller slits, the antiscatter, and resolution slits were 0.5, 2.3, 2.3, 0.5, and 0.06°, respectively. The relative humidity range used in the present study extends from almost saturated conditions (80% RH) to extremely dry conditions (~0% RH), the latter being obtained by evacuating the entire Paar chamber to a secondary vacuum (~10⁻³ Pa). For all samples, XRD patterns were first recorded under room conditions (297 K, and ~35% RH), which were controlled (RH) or monitored (temperature) and found stable over the entire data collection period. Then, XRD patterns were recorded for all samples following the same sequence of RHs (40, 60, 80, 20, and 0%) to avoid a possible irreversible collapse of some layers at low RH values. For any given sample, all six experimental XRD patterns were recorded within a timeframe that did not exceed 48 hours after the drying of the oriented preparation. This procedure avoided any kinetically driven dehydration process to occur.

The algorithms developed initially by Drits and Sakharov (1976), and more recently by Drits et al. (1997a) and Sakharov et al. (1999), were used to fit experimental XRD profiles over the range 2–50 °2θ using a trial-and-error approach. Instrumental and experimental factors such as horizontal and vertical beam divergences, goniometer radius, and length and sample thickness of the oriented mounts were measured and introduced without further adjustment. The mass absorption coefficient (μ^{*}) was set to 45, as recommended by Moore and Reynolds (1997, p. 361), whereas the parameter characterizing the preferred orientation of the sample (σ^{*}) was considered as a variable parameter as discussed below. The z coordinates for all atomic positions within the 2:1 layer framework were set as proposed by Moore and Reynolds (1997, p. 368), but z coordinates of interlayer species were further refined to improve the quality of fit. Additional variable parameters include the coherent scattering domain size (CSDS) along the c* axis, which was characterized by a maximum CSDS, set to 45 layers, and by a variable mean CSDS value (N, Drits et al. 1997b). In addition, because of the weak bonding between adjacent smectite layers, the layer spacing likely deviates from its average d(001) value. This cumulative deviation from periodicity was described as “disorder of the second type” by Guinier (1964) and detailed later by Drits and Tchoubar (1990) and Drits et al. (2005), and can be considered as crystal strain. A variance parameter σ_z was introduced to account for this strain. The effect of σ_z on the profiles of calculated XRD patterns is illustrated in Figure

1 for Ca-SWy-1 exhibiting a homogeneous hydration state with a layer thickness of 15.10 Å. When σ_z increases from zero (which corresponds to an ideal periodic structure) to 0.3 Å, the resulting high-angle maxima are significantly broadened. Moreover, their relative intensity is decreased as compared to low-angle reflections that are basically unaffected (Fig. 1). The overall fit quality was assessed using the unweighted R_p parameter (Howard and Preston 1989):

$$R_p = \sqrt{\frac{\sum [I_{obs}(2\theta_i) - I_{calc}(2\theta_i)]^2}{\sum I_{obs}(2\theta_i)}} \quad (1)$$

where I_{obs} and I_{calc} represent measured and calculated intensities, respectively, at position $2\theta_i$, the subscript i running over all points in the refined angular range. This parameter is mainly influenced by the most intense diffraction maxima, such as the 001 reflection, which contains essential information on the proportions of the different layer types and on their layer thickness.

Fitting strategy

XRD-pattern modeling was performed assuming the possible presence of different layer types. These different layer types correspond to the different hydration states commonly reported in smectites as a function of relative humidity. In the fitting process, we have introduced dehydrated layers (0W layers, layer thickness at 9.6–10.0 Å), mono-hydrated layers with one plane of H₂O molecules in the interlayer (1W layers at 11.5–13.0 Å), and bi-hydrated layers with two planes of H₂O molecules in the interlayer (2W layers at 13.9–15.8 Å). Because we did not consider RH values greater than 80%, no evidence for tri-hydrated layers (3W layers at 18.0–18.5 Å) was observed. If a good fit was not obtained with a unique periodic structure corresponding to one of the layer types, it was first assumed that this contribution is related to a randomly interstratified mixed-layer structure containing different layer types. If necessary, additional contributions, each containing different layer types in variable proportions, were introduced to reproduce the experimental XRD pattern. However, the use of two mixed-layer structures to fit all features of experimental XRD patterns does not imply the actual presence of two populations of particles in the sample as discussed below. As a consequence, layers in the same hydration state as those present in the different mixed-layer structures must have identical properties at a given RH value. Each given layer type was thus assigned a unique chemical composition, a unique layer thickness value, and a unique set of atomic coordinates for all mixed-layer structures at a given RH. Similarly, identical values of σ^{*}, N, and σ_z parameters were used for all mixed-layer structures at a

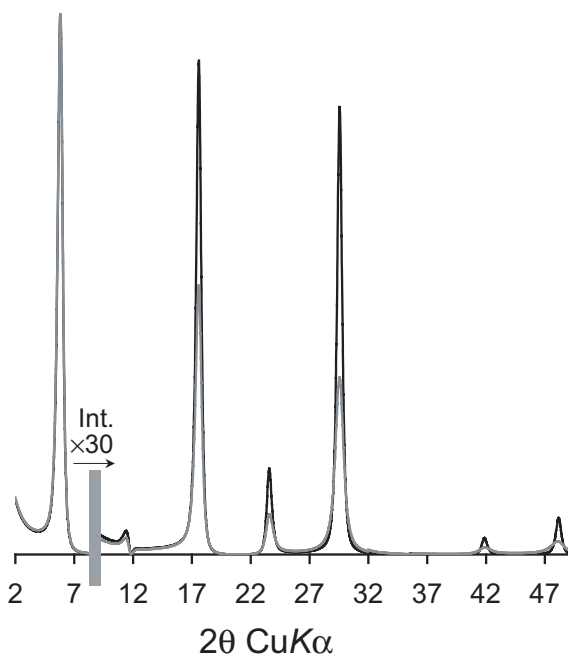


FIGURE 1. Influence on calculated XRD patterns of the cumulative deviation of the layer thickness from the strict $d(001)$ periodicity. This deviation is quantified here with the σ_z parameter. The effect is shown for an XRD pattern calculated for a pure bi-hydrated Ca-SWy-1 sample. Solid line: $\sigma_z = 0.0$ Å, gray line: $\sigma_z = 0.3$ Å.

given RH. Each parameter was allowed to vary as a function of relative humidity. The relative proportions of each mixed-layer structure and of each layer type in these structures were varied to fit experimental XRD patterns. Following Bérend et al. (1995) and Cases et al. (1997), the strategy used for XRD profile modeling was to match closely the 001 reflection of SWy-1 using a mixed-layer structure as homogeneous as possible, i.e., containing as few different layer types as possible. If necessary to obtain a good fit, a second mixed-layer structure was introduced to better match the calculated and experimental patterns, and to better account for the hydration heterogeneity of the sample. This strategy is illustrated in Figure 2 using the XRD pattern obtained for K-SWy-1 at 0% RH.

This pattern (Fig. 2) exhibits four major diffraction maxima with positions that do not deviate much from those expected for a rational series. However, significant asymmetry is observed on the low-angle side of the first maximum and on the high-angle side of the third maximum. The second maximum exhibits significant tail broadening (arrows on Fig. 2a). The difference plot between the experimental pattern and that calculated for dehydrated smectite (100% of 0W layers) shows maxima corresponding to the features mentioned above (Fig. 2b). It was not possible to reproduce these specific features with a single contribution corresponding to a mixed-layer structure. Rather, comparison between the positions of the maxima present on this difference plot with those corresponding to 0W (light gray ticks) and to 1W (dark-gray ticks) smectite and the use of Méring's principle (Méring 1949) suggest that they are probably related to a mixed-layer structure containing these two layer types. This result arises from coincidence between the features of the difference plot and the arrows. This depiction shows the position and breadth of the diffraction maxima of a mixed-layer structure as expected from Méring's principle (Fig. 2b). Two structures thus appear to be present: the initial structure (S1, 100% 0W layers) and a second (S2). The latter results from the random interstratification of 0W and 1W layers (70% and 30%, respectively). A good fit ($R_p = 3.73\%$) is obtained assuming a 81:19 ratio between S1 and S2 (Fig. 2c). A schematic of this result is given in Figure 2d where the relative proportions of the two structures contributing to the diffraction intensity are illustrated along the vertical axis by their respective surface areas in the square box whereas the proportion of the different layer types in each mixed-layer structure is represented on the horizontal axis.

Note that calculated XRD patterns are not plotted in the low-angle region (2θ angles lower than 7° in the present case) because the computed "background" shape in this region is not compatible with that measured on experimental patterns. The origin of this discrepancy is discussed below.

RESULTS

Qualitative description of experimental patterns

Figure 3 shows the evolution as a function of RH of the $d(001)$ values measured on the experimental XRD patterns. These values are also listed in Table 1 together with the full width at half maximum intensity (FWHM) of the 001 reflection. Table 1 also includes the standard deviation of the departure from rationality (ξ) of the $00l$ reflection series. This latter parameter is calculated as the standard deviation of the $l \times d(00l)$ values calculated for all measurable reflections over the $2\theta = 2\text{--}50^\circ$ range. On Figure 3, the usual hydration states are shown for smectites with 0W layers [$d(001)$ at 9.6–10.1 Å] observed only at 0% RH for Na-, K-, and Sr-SWy-1, 1W layers [$d(001)$ at 12.3–12.7 Å], and 2W layers [$d(001)$ at 15.0–15.8 Å] as given by Sato et al. (1992). However, the common coexistence of different hydration states are identified both from a $d(00l)$ value intermediate between those corresponding to the usual discrete hydration states (gray domains in Fig. 3) and from a high ξ value indicating the irrationality of $00l$ reflections (open symbols in Fig. 3). K-SWy-1, for example, shows mostly coexisting hydration states in Figure 3. The heterogeneity of hydration states, which leads to the interstratification of different layer types, produces an increased FWHM of the diffraction maxima as illustrated in Figure 4 which shows the correlation between the ξ parameter and the FWHM measured on the 001 reflection. From Figures 3 and 4, maximum values can

be defined for both the FWHM of the 001 reflection ($2\theta = 1.1^\circ$) and the ξ parameter (0.4 Å) limiting the "homogeneous" hydration domains. Values higher than these limits correspond to an extremely heterogeneous hydration state and/or to the transition between two discrete hydration states.

However, within these "homogeneous" or "heterogeneous" hydration domains, additional structural features can be determined from the careful examination of experimental XRD pat-

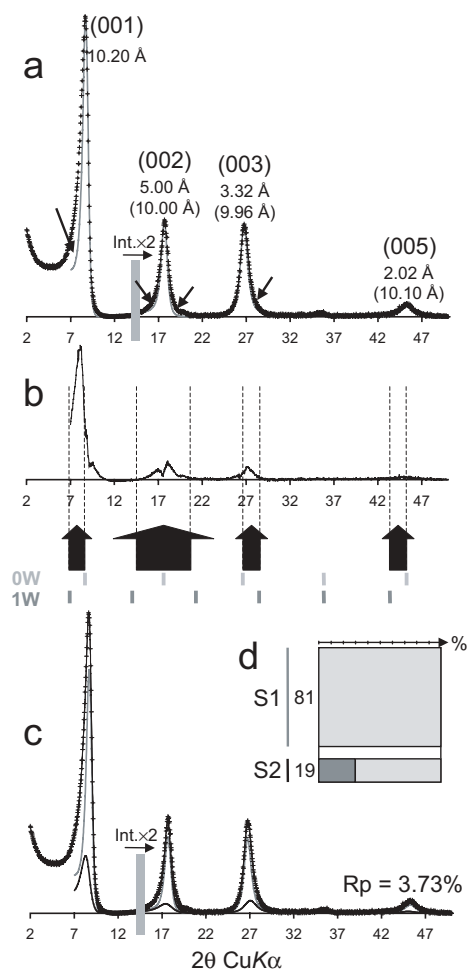


FIGURE 2. Basic principle of the strategy used to fit experimental XRD patterns (see text for details). (a) The experimental pattern of sample K-SWy-1 recorded at 0% RH is shown as crosses, whereas the XRD pattern calculated for a pure dehydrated smectite (100% 0W layers) is shown as a gray line. Values in parentheses correspond to $l \times d(00l)$ ideal positions. (b) The maxima of the difference plot between experimental and calculated patterns are located between elementary contributions corresponding to 0W and 1W layer types (light and dark gray ticks, respectively). (c) The optimum fit to the experimental data, shown as a solid line, consists of a mixture of the initial pure dehydrated structure with a mixed-layer structure (70:30 ratio between 1W and 0W layers). These two elementary contributions are shown as bold gray and solid lines, respectively. (d) Schematic representation of the structure model used to fit the experimental XRD pattern. Relative proportions, expressed in wt%, of the two elementary mixed-layer structure contributions are plotted on the y-axis whereas their compositions (relative proportions of the different layer types) are plotted on the x-axis. Light gray and dark gray bars represent 0W and 1W layers, respectively.

terns (Fig. 5). In particular, within homogeneous 2W domains (Na-SWy-1 and Li-SWy-1: 80% RH; Sr-SWy-1: 40–80% RH; Ca-SWy-1: 35–80% RH; and Mg-SWy-1: 20–80% RH) the position and the width (FWHM) of the 001 reflection vary as a function of RH together with the ξ parameter (Table 1). Specifically, for samples saturated with divalent cations, the $d(001)$

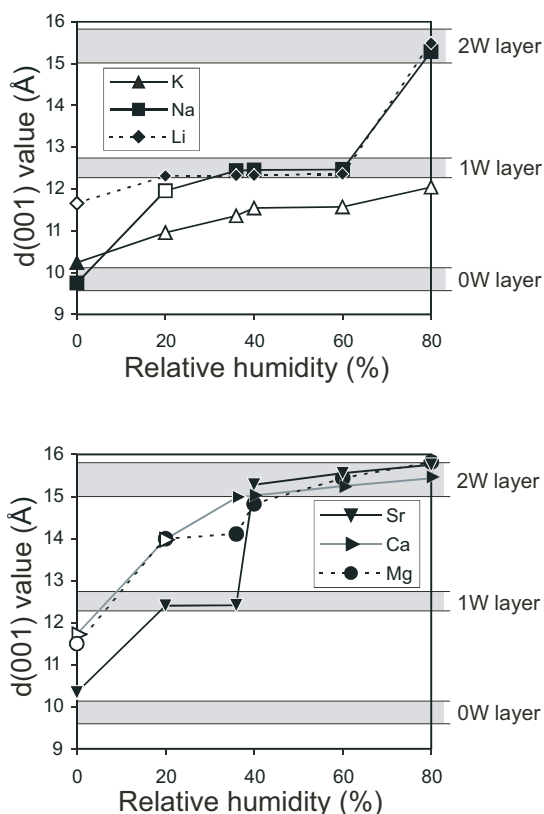


FIGURE 3. Variations of the basal spacing $d(001)$ measured on experimental XRD patterns as a function of relative humidity for samples saturated with monovalent and divalent cations. $d(001)$ values are plotted as open symbols when the departure from rationality parameter (ξ) determined for the basal reflection series (see text for details) is higher than 0.4 Å. Light gray areas represent commonly reported $d(001)$ values for bi-hydrated [$d(001)$ at 15.0–15.8 Å], mono-hydrated [$d(001)$ at 12.3–12.7 Å] and dehydrated smectites [$d(001)$ at 9.6–10.1 Å].

value increases with increasing RH whereas both the FWHM of the 001 reflection and the ξ parameter decrease. On experimental XRD patterns, the 002 reflection appears as a sharp and well-defined reflection only when the values of the latter two parameters are minimized (Sr-SWy-1: 60–80% RH; Ca-SWy-1: 80% RH; and Mg-SWy-1: 60–80% RH; Figs. 5d, 5e, and 5f). The position of the 001 reflection also varies as a function of RH within homogeneous 1W hydration state (Na-SWy-1: 35–60% RH; Li-SWy-1: 20–60% RH; and Sr-SWy-1: 20–35% RH) whereas other qualitative parameters remain constant for a given sample (Table 1). A homogeneous dehydrated state is observed only under vacuum conditions (0% RH) for K-SWy-1, Na-SWy-1 and Sr-SWy-1 samples. The experimental XRD patterns of these three samples exhibit well-defined sharp 001 reflections (Figs. 5a, 5b, and 5d).

In contrast, the presence of important hydration heterogeneities induce specific features on experimental XRD patterns (K-SWy-1: 20–80% RH; Na-SWy-1: 20% RH; Li-SWy-1 and Mg-SWy-1: 0% RH; and Ca-SWy-1: 0–20% RH). For example, XRD patterns of K-SWy-1 over the 20–80% RH range show

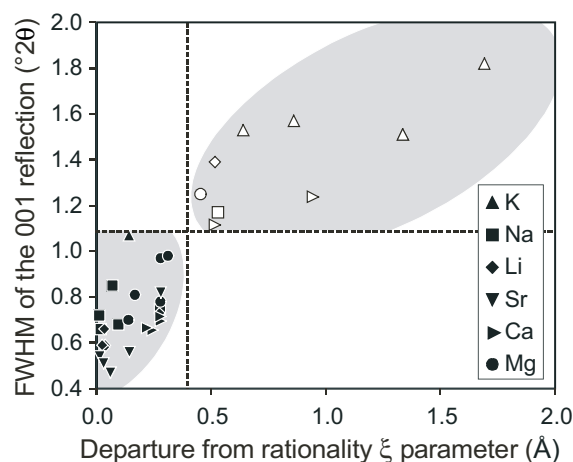


FIGURE 4. FWHM of the (001) reflection as a function of the departure from rationality parameter ξ (see text for details). Values of these two parameters (1.1 °2 θ CuK α , and 0.4 Å, respectively) limiting the “homogeneous” hydration domains are shown as dotted lines. Open and solid symbols as in Figure 3.

TABLE 1. Evolution of the basal reflection qualitative descriptors (position, width and rationality) as a function of relative humidity.

Sample	K-SWy-1			Na-SWy-1			Li-SWy-1		
	$d(001)$	FWHM	ξ, X_i	$d(001)$	FWHM	ξ, X_i	$d(001)$	FWHM	ξ, X_i
~0%	10.24	1.07	0.14, 3	9.75	0.85	0.07, 4	11.66	1.39	0.52, 3
20%	10.95	1.53	0.64, 3	11.96	1.17	0.53, 4	12.31	0.59	0.04, 4
~35%	11.36	1.57	0.86, 3	12.44	0.68	0.10, 3	12.32	0.58	0.04, 4
40%	11.54	1.51	1.34, 2	12.45	0.66	0.02, 3	12.33	0.59	0.03, 4
60%	11.57	1.51	1.34, 2	12.47	0.72	0.01, 3	12.36	0.66	0.04, 4
80%	12.04	1.82	1.69, 2	15.28	0.75	0.28, 3	15.49	0.73	0.28, 4
Sample	Sr-SWy-1			Ca-SWy-1			Mg-SWy-1		
	$d(001)$	FWHM	ξ, X_i	$d(001)$	FWHM	ξ, X_i	$d(001)$	FWHM	ξ, X_i
~0%	10.34	0.82	0.28, 4	11.72	1.12	0.50, 4	11.50	1.25	0.45, 4
20%	12.40	0.54	0.02, 4	13.98	1.24	0.93, 4	14.00	0.97	0.28, 4
~35%	12.41	0.51	0.03, 4	14.97	0.70	0.27, 4	14.11	0.98	0.31, 4
40%	15.28	0.56	0.14, 4	15.02	0.72	0.27, 4	14.83	0.81	0.17, 4
60%	15.56	0.47	0.06, 4	15.25	0.67	0.23, 4	15.44	0.78	0.28, 4
80%	15.75	0.47	0.06, 4	15.43	0.68	0.20, 4	15.82	0.70	0.14, 4

Notes: Position [$d(001)$] and FWHM of the 001 reflection are given in angstroms and in °2 θ CuK α , respectively. The ξ parameter which accounts for the departure from rationality of the 001 reflection series is calculated as the standard deviation of the $l \times d(001)$ values calculated for the X_i measurable reflections over the 2–50°2 θ CuK α angular range.

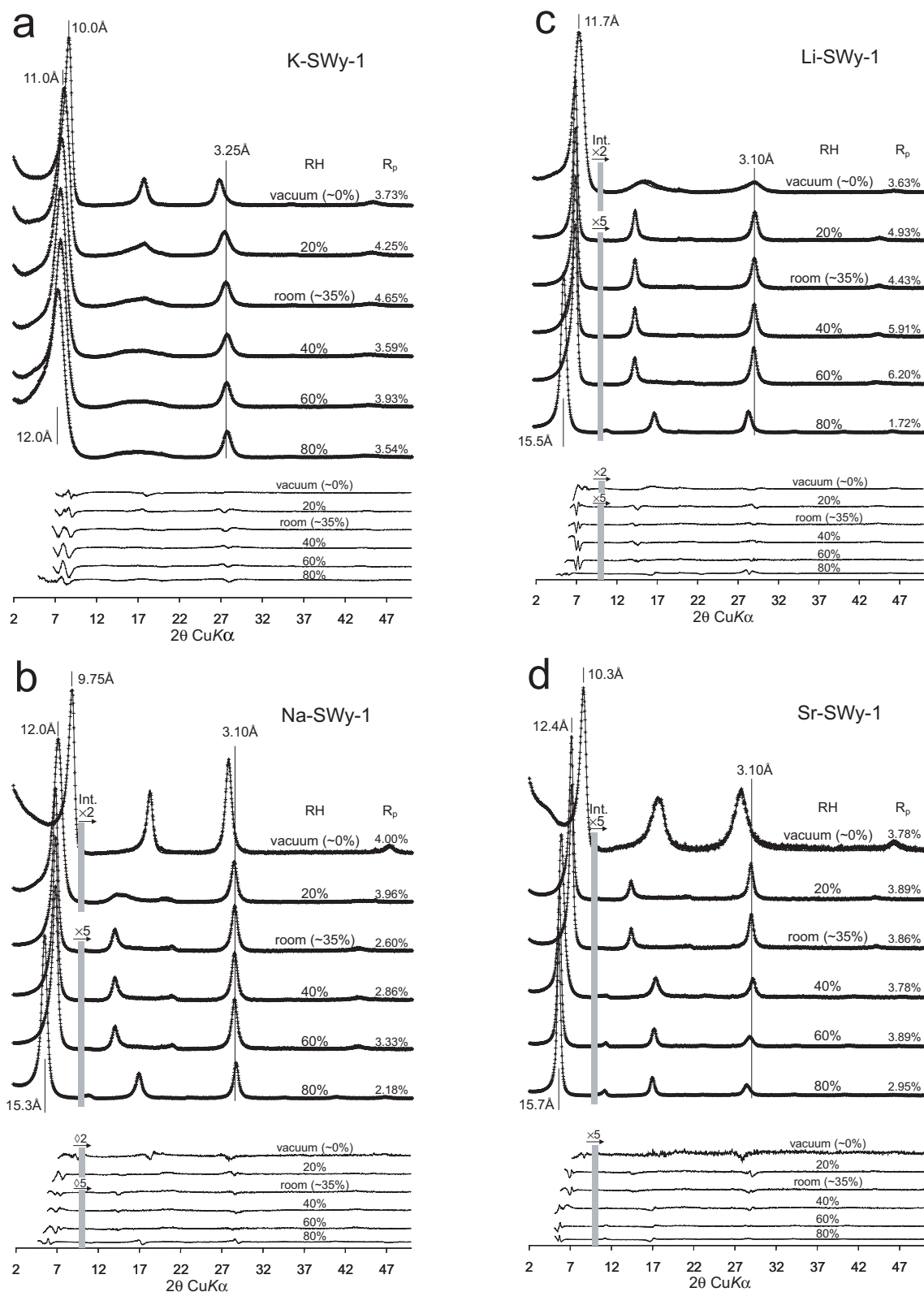
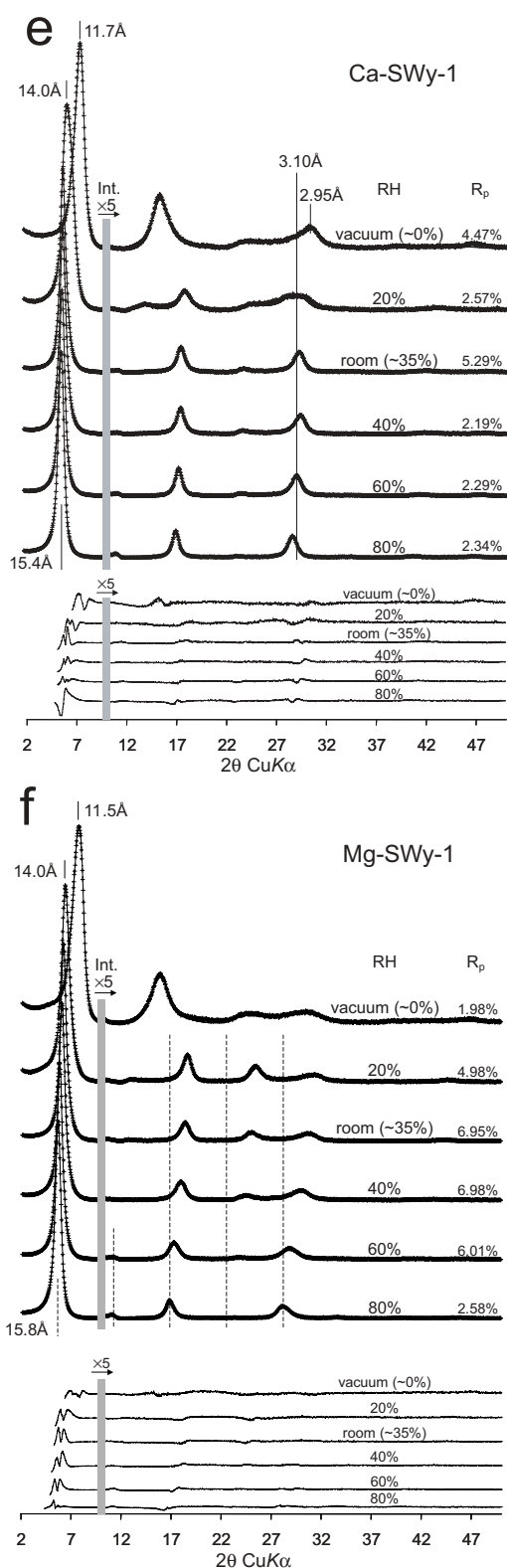


FIGURE 5. Comparison between experimental and calculated XRD patterns as a function of RH. Experimental and calculated optimal XRD patterns are shown as crosses and as solid lines, respectively. Difference plots are shown at the bottom of the figure. (a) Sample K-SWy-1. (b) Sample Na-SWy-1. (c) Sample Li-SWy-1. (d) Sample Sr-SWy-1. (e) Sample Ca-SWy-1. (f) Sample Mg-SWy-1. For Na-, Li-, Sr-, Ca-, and Mg-SWy-1 samples, the gray bar indicates a modified scale factor for the high-angle region. Dashed lines in Figure 5f indicate the ideal peak positions for 2W smectite (15.8 Å).



well-defined reflections only at 11.0–12.0 Å and ~3.25 Å (Fig. 5a). Other reflections appear as broad and diffuse maxima. The sharpness of the ~3.25 Å maximum is related to the proximity

between the 003 reflection of dehydrated smectite (~3.3 Å) and the 004 reflection of the mono-hydrated smectite (~3.1 Å). In addition, note that for higher RH values (40–80% RH), the FWHM of the 001 reflection is at a maximum although its position is close to the usual position for 1W layers. This result may be related to the increasing proportion of 2W layers, or to the residual presence of a high proportion of 0W layers. In the latter case, the shift in position of the 001 reflection induced by a relatively large proportion of 0W layers is limited because the structure factor of 0W layers is much smaller than that of 1W layers over the considered angular range, whereas the interstratification leads to increased FWHM values (Drits et al. 1994). If the heterogeneity is produced by the presence of 2W layers, the diffraction maximum at ~3.25 Å remains mostly unaffected as interferences with the 005 reflection of a 2W smectite (at ~3.10 Å) would not cause broadening. For Na-SWy-1 recorded at 20% RH, the measured irrationality of the 00 l reflection positions is associated, as for K-SWy-1, with a significant broadening of all diffraction maxima except for the two reflections at ~12.0 Å and ~3.10 Å, which remain sharp and well defined (Fig. 5b). For Li-SWy-1 at 0% RH, note that even the maximum at ~3.10 Å is significantly broadened (Fig. 5c). For Ca-SWy-1 at 0% RH, the position of the 001 reflection at ~11.7 Å is shifted away from values expected for a 1W smectite. In addition, there is a significant broadening of this reflection ($2\theta = 1.12^\circ$, Table 1). Accordingly, the ξ parameter is relatively large (0.50 Å, Table 1) and the reflection at ~2.95 Å is poorly defined, which occurs only when heterogeneous hydration states coexist within the sample. Similar observations can be made on the XRD pattern recorded for Mg-SWy-1 at 0% RH (Fig. 5f). For Ca-SWy-1 at 20% RH, the ~3.1 Å peak is even more diffuse, in agreement with the large values of the FWHM of the 001 reflection and of the ξ parameter ($2\theta = 1.24^\circ$ and 0.93 Å, respectively, Table 1).

Qualitative descriptions such as those above have allowed the determination of the main hydration states of smectites by using the position of the 001 reflection, and the characterization of smectite hydration properties as a function of the magnitude and location of layer charge (Harward and Brindley 1965; Harward et al. 1969; Yamada et al. 1994; Tamura et al. 2000). Parameters such as FWHM of the 001 reflection, or the irrational character of 00 l reflections provide additional data on the hydration state of these minerals and especially on their hydration heterogeneity (Watanabe and Sato 1988; Sato et al. 1992). However, results described above indicate that, although the general descriptions are similar for all parameters, specific features of the XRD patterns (such as the resolution of the 002 reflection for 2W smectite), are not accounted for by parametric descriptions. Furthermore, although these parameters allow the assessment of coexisting smectite layers with different hydration states in the same sample, they do not provide detailed insight into this heterogeneity. To achieve this goal, and in particular to determine quantitatively the relative proportions of the different layer types and their structural characteristics (e.g., layer thickness and number of interlayer H₂O molecules) the experimental XRD patterns were modeled using a trial-and-error approach described by Drits and Tchoubar (1990).

Modeling of X-ray diffraction profiles

XRD patterns were fitted using the strategy described above. Structural models to obtain optimum fits shown in

Figure 5 are described schematically (relative proportion and composition of the different mixed-layer structure contributions) in Figure 6. The relative proportions of the different layer types are reported in Figure 7 as a function of RH, whereas structural parameters are listed in Table 2.

K-SWy-1 sample. At 0% RH, the optimum model (described in the Methods section) is consistent with the qualitative description of the sample with a major contribution from a pure 0W smectite and a minor contribution from a mixed-layer structure containing 0W and 1W layers in a 70:30 ratio (Fig. 6a). The latter mixed-layer structure accounts for the low-angle asymmetry of the 001 reflection and for the tail broadening of the 002 reflection. Layer thickness of both 0W and 1W layers (10.0 and 12.4 Å, respectively) are consistent with published values. The broadening of the second-order diffraction maximum with increasing RH (Fig. 5a) is related to the increasing proportion of 1W and 2W layers for each of the two mixed-layer structure contributions (Fig. 6a). The two mixed-layer structures also account for the increase

of the ξ parameter with increasing RH (Table 1). The increased proportion of 1W layers with increasing RH produces a shift of the ~ 3.25 Å diffraction maximum toward higher angles. However, 0W layers are still prevailing at 80% RH, although the sample was not totally dehydrated before collecting this XRD pattern. At this high RH value, the position of the 001 reflection (12.04 Å, Table 1) differs significantly from the value expected for 0W smectite, because of the contrasting structure factors of 0W and 1W layer types (Drits et al. 1994). The large FWHM value measured for the 001 reflection results likely from the combination of the large number of 0W layers and of the minor presence of 2W layers. Structural parameters leading to the optimal fits (Fig. 5a) — such as σ^* , N , and, σ_z — do not vary significantly as a function of RH (4–5°, 8–13 layers and 0.20–0.25 Å, respectively, Table 2).

Na-SWy-1 sample. In agreement with its qualitative description, and with the presence of sharp and well-defined diffraction

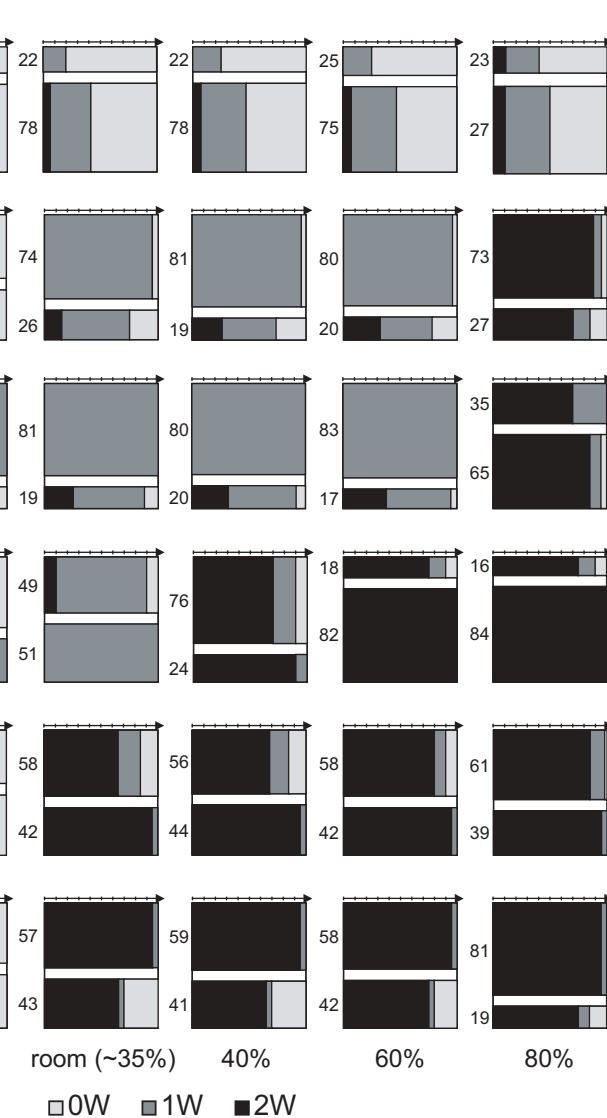


FIGURE 6. Structure models obtained from XRD profile modeling for all samples as a function of RH. Symbols and notations as in Figure 2d (solid bars represent 2W layers).

maxima, this sample contained a large proportion of 0W, 1W, and 2W layers at 0, 35–60, and 80% RH, respectively. At these different values of RH, the main layer type was essentially present in a major mixed-layer structure exhibiting little, if any, hydration heterogeneity. A minor mixed-layer structure accounts for most of the hydration heterogeneity. At 0% RH, this minor mixed-layer structure produces low-angle asymmetry of the 001 reflection and tail broadening of the 002 reflection. From 35–60% RH, the minor mixed-layer structure accounts for the low-angle asymmetry of the 001 reflection (at ~ 12.4 Å) and for the broad hump on the high-angle side of the 002 reflection. At 80% RH, the minor mixed-layer structure contributes to the intensity on the high-angle side of the 001 reflection (~ 15.3 Å) and also accounts for the slight asymmetries of 003 and 005 reflection (~ 5.2 and ~ 3.1 Å, respectively).

As expected from the high values measured for both the FWHM of the 001 reflection and the ξ parameter (Table 1), hy-

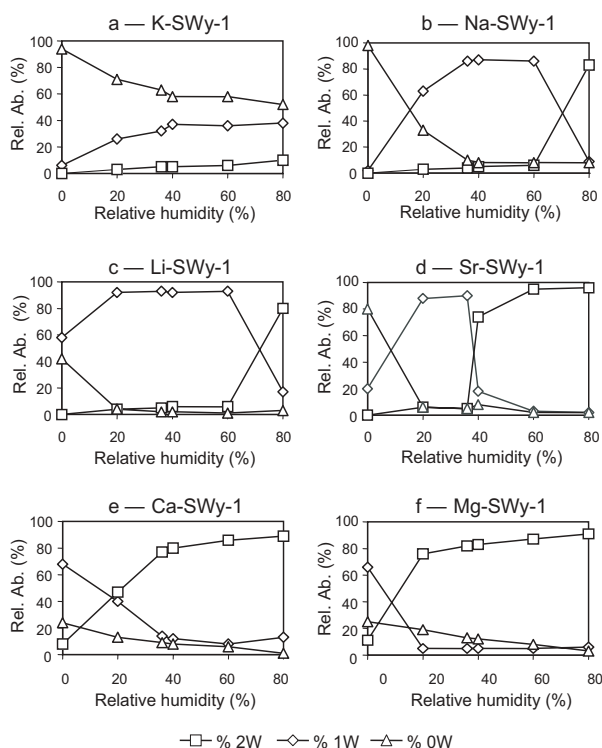


FIGURE 7. Evolution of the relative abundance of different layer types (including all mixed-layer structures) as a function of RH for all samples. (a) Sample K-SWy-1. (b) Sample Na-SWy-1. (c) Sample Li-SWy-1. (d) Sample Sr-SWy-1. (e) Sample Ca-SWy-1. (f) Sample Mg-SWy-1. Triangles, diamonds, and squares represent 0W, 1W, and 2W layers, respectively.

dration of this sample is more heterogeneous at 20% RH. In this case, two mixed-layer structures are present in similar proportions, and they both include at least two layer types in significant proportions. As a result, 1W and 0W layers, which prevail in this intermediate hydration state, account for 63 and 33% of all layers, respectively (Figs. 6b and 7b). The two mixed-layer structures describing this experimental XRD pattern give similar contributions to the diffracted intensity. However, the small compositional difference between the two mixed-layer structures allows for a better fit to the broadened and diffuse maxima.

As a result of experimental constraints, XRD patterns of Na-SWy-1 were collected from two oriented mounts. One was used for the 0% and 20% RH measurements, whereas the other covered the 35–80% RH range. This difference is especially visible on the σ^* value ($5-6^\circ$, and $\sim 3^\circ$ for the 0–20 and 35–80% RH ranges, respectively, Table 2), and possibly on the σ_z parameter. Despite this experimental hiatus, values obtained for all other structural parameters are consistent throughout the range of RH (Table 2).

Li-SWy-1 sample. In agreement with the low values of the FWHM of the 001 reflection and of the ξ parameter (Table 1), XRD patterns recorded for Li-SWy-1 at 20–60% RH can be reproduced satisfactorily with a main homogeneous 1W smectite and the accessory contribution of a mixed-layer structure containing all three layer types (Figs. 5c and 6c). The mixed-layer structure accounts for the slight asymmetry of the 001 reflection

and for the broad hump on the high-angle side of the 002 reflection. The hump increases with increasing RH from the growing proportion of 2W layers. At 80% RH, 2W layers prevail but each mixed-layer structure includes a significant proportion of 1W layers, and even a few 0W layers (Figs. 6c and 7c). The minor mixed-layer structure contribution allows better fitting of the high-angle side of the 001 and 005 peaks, and the low-angle side of the 003 reflection. The maximum hydration heterogeneity occurs at 0% RH, and a satisfactory fit was achieved by using contributions from two mixed-layer structures (38:62 ratio), each containing 0W and 1W layers. The main features of these two contributions to the diffracted intensity are similar, although shifted in position as a result of the contrasting proportions of the two layer types (30 and 50% of 0W layers respectively). The combination of these similar features and of their positional shift allowed reproducing the broad and diffuse diffraction maxima obtained for the second- and third-order reflections.

Sr-SWy-1 sample. The sharp and well-defined maxima observed on all XRD patterns for Sr-SWy-1 were modeled assuming a major homogeneous contribution (Figs. 5d and 6d). For example, a homogeneous 2W smectite represents the main contribution over the 60–80% RH range. In addition to this homogeneous phase, a minor mixed-layer structure, incorporating all three layer types, accounts for the broadened tails of all reflections and for the high-angle side asymmetry of the 001 reflection. At 40% RH, hydration heterogeneity occurs as expected from the increased ξ parameter (0.14 \AA as compared to 0.06 \AA for the 60–80% RH range, Table 1). For this RH value, 2W layers prevail at $\sim 75\%$ of all smectite layers (Fig. 7d), but 0W and 1W layers coexist in the two mixed-layer structures contributing to the calculated pattern. The contributions of these two mixed-layer structures are similar, although the slight positional shift allows the faint asymmetry and broadening of the different reflections to be reproduced. From 40 to 80% RH, the intensity of the $\sim 3.1 \text{ \AA}$ diffraction maximum decreases whereas the 002 reflection becomes sharper and better defined. The latter evolution of the peak profiles and intensity is related to the decreasing number of 1W layers when 2W layers prevail (Fig. 7d). The decreased intensity of the $\sim 3.1 \text{ \AA}$ diffraction maximum results from the increase of layer thickness for 2W layers that produces a decrease of the structure factor.

A 5% lower RH produces a dramatic hydration change as 1W layers prevail at 35% RH. A pure 1W smectite accounts for about half of the diffracted intensity. 1W layers also occur in the complementary mixed-layer structure. The latter contribution accounts for the low-angle side asymmetry of the 001 and 004 reflections and for the high-angle side tail of the 002 reflection. A similar structure model was used to fit the XRD pattern of Sr-SWy-1 recorded at 20% RH although the mixed-layer structure accounts for about 60% of the diffracted intensity. The relative contribution of the pure 1W smectite is decreased. Finally, at 0% RH, a unique mixed-layer structure dominates with 0W layers (80% of the layers) randomly interstratified with 1W layers (Fig. 6d). For this XRD pattern, note the presence of a broad reflection at $\sim 22 \text{ \AA}$ on the low-angle side of the 001 reflection. This reflection may correspond to a regular ($R = 1$ with maximum possible degree of order) mixed-layer structure containing similar proportions of 0W and 1W layers. However, all attempts to include this contribution to the overall fit proved unsuccessful, most likely because of intrinsic problems in fitting

TABLE 2. Optimum structural parameters used for the simulation of XRD profiles

RH	0	20	40	60	80
K-SWy-1					
L. Tck. 2W	–	15.55	15.55	15.55	15.55
nH ₂ O		2×3.2	2×3.2	2×3.2	2×3.2
L. Tck. 1W	12.40	12.42	12.50	12.55	12.60
nH ₂ O	2.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
L. Tck. 0W	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
N	7.5	12.0	11.0	12.0	13.0
σ*	4.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
σ _z	0.25	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20
Na-SWy-1					
L. Tck. 2W	–	15.40	15.45	15.45	15.45
nH ₂ O		2×3.2	2×3.2	2×3.2	2×3.5
L. Tck. 1W	12.30	12.37	12.45	12.46	12.47
nH ₂ O	2.8	3.0	3.3	3.6	3.8
L. Tck. 0W	9.60	9.60	9.60	9.60	9.60
N	7.5	9.5	7.5	7.5	7.0
σ*	6.0	5.0	3.2	2.8	3.0
σ _z	0.15	0.15	0.22	0.25	0.22
Li-SWy-1					
L. Tck. 2W	–	15.50	15.55	15.55	15.75
nH ₂ O		2×2.6	2×2.6	2×2.6	2×3.2
L. Tck. 1W	12.10	12.255	12.265	12.28	12.296
nH ₂ O	2.2	3.7	3.9	3.9	4.2
L. Tck. 0W	9.60	9.60	9.60	9.60	9.60
N	7.0	9.5	9.5	9.0	7.8
σ*	10.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	3.7
σ _z	0.40	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.20
Sr-SWy-1					
L. Tck. 2W	–	15.10	15.30	15.53	15.73
nH ₂ O		2×2.5	2×3.0	2×3.0	2×3.0
L. Tck. 1W	11.90	12.35	12.35	12.40	12.70
nH ₂ O	2.0	3.0	3.0	3.5	5.5
L. Tck. 0W	9.80	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
N	11.0	10.0	10.0	9.0	7.5
σ*	10.0	6.0	6.0	5.5	5.5
σ _z	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.30	0.35
Ca-SWy-1					
L. Tck. 2W	14.30	14.79	15.10	15.11	15.30
nH ₂ O	2×2.5	2×2.6	2×3.3	2×3.3	2×3.3
L. Tck. 1W	11.65	12.58	12.75	12.76	12.80
nH ₂ O	1.5	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2
L. Tck. 0W	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
N	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	7.0
σ*	7	11.0	7.0	7.5	7.0
σ _z	0.35	0.36	0.27	0.27	0.27
Mg-SWy-1					
L. Tck. 2W	13.90	14.20	14.45	14.80	15.42
nH ₂ O	2×1.73	2×1.73	2×1.73	2×3.0	2×3.0
L. Tck. 1W	11.50	12.10	12.30	12.50	12.70
nH ₂ O	2.5	2.5	3.0	3.0	3.5
L. Tck. 0W	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
N	8.0	8.0	7.0	6.5	6.0
σ*	9.0	5.5	5.2	5.2	5.2
σ _z	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.52	0.52

Notes: Layer thickness (L. Tck.) of bi-hydrated, mono-hydrated and dehydrated layers (2W, 1W and 0W layers, respectively) are given in Å. For hydrated layers, the amount of interlayer H₂O molecules is indicated per O₂₀(OH)₂. N is the mean number of layers in the coherent scattering domain, orientation parameter σ* and layer thickness variability parameter (σ_z) are given in degrees and in angstroms, respectively.

the low-angle region (see Discussion section).

Ca-SWy-1 sample. For XRD patterns over the 35–80% RH range, the coexistence of two mixed-layer structures with very consistent compositions was assumed (Figs. 5e and 6e). The most homogeneous structure accounts for ~40% of the diffracted intensity and contains essentially 2W layers and a few 1W layers, whereas the main mixed-layer structure contains all three layer

types. The latter contribution accounts for the high-angle asymmetry of the 001 reflection, for the broadened tails of the 003 reflection, and for the shift toward lower-angles of the 005 peak. These features are reduced with increasing RH as the content of 0W and 1W layers decreases. However, the 002 reflection is systematically broad as an indication of the significant proportion of 0W and 1W layers in the structure, in contrast to the Sr-SWy-1 patterns at high RH values.

For lower RH values, smectite hydration is more heterogeneous, and the ~3.1 Å diffraction maximum is diffuse (Fig. 5e). At 0% RH, heterogeneity results from the coexistence of two mixed-layer structures with similar compositions. 1W layers occur in the two structures despite the essentially dry atmosphere. Differences in the composition of these two mixed-layer structures are required for fitting the broadened tails of the 00/ reflections. At 20% RH, although both mixed-layer structures contain the three layer types, their respective contributions to the diffracted intensity differ, with one structure dominated by 1W layers, and the other structure dominated by 2W layers (Fig. 6e). Both mixed-layer structures contribute equally to the diffracted intensity so that the complex tabular shape of the diffraction maximum at ~3.1 Å may be fitted (Fig. 5e). The similar intensities of these two contributions and their structural heterogeneity produces a significant irrationality of 00/ reflections (Table 1).

Mg-SWy-1 sample. Over the 20–80% RH range, one of the two mixed-layer structures contains 2W layers (90–95%), and the relative amounts of this structure increases from 53–81% with increasing RH (Fig. 6f). A peculiar characteristic of the second mixed-layer structure, in which 2W layers also dominate, is the presence of 0W layers, which systematically dominate over 1W layers. As a result, the 002 reflection is systematically diffuse. At 60 and 80% RH, the contribution of the latter structure accounts for the high-angle asymmetry of the 001 reflection, and for the broadened tails of the 003 and 005 reflections. At lower RH (20–40% RH), XRD patterns are strikingly different from those collected at 60–80% RH although the structure models are similar (Fig. 6f). This result is caused by the dramatic change in the layer thickness of 2W layers that decreases to a stable value of 14.2–14.8 Å over the 20–40% RH range. Thus, there is a significant shift of the 003 and 005 reflections toward higher angles and a strong increase in intensity of the 004 reflection. This increase results from the effect of the change of the layer thickness on the structure factor. Thus the positional shift of the 001 reflection results primarily from a change in the layer thickness of 2W layers, rather than from the interstratification of different layer types. This hypothesis is consistent with the values determined for the FWHM of the 001 reflection and for the ζ parameter (0.8–1.0° and 0.2–0.3 Å, respectively, Table 1), which indicate a limited interstratification. For this RH range, the minor mixed-layer structure contribution accounts for the high-angle asymmetry of 001 and 004 reflections and for the low-angle asymmetry of 003 and 005 reflections.

At 0% RH, hydration of the Mg-SWy-1 is more heterogeneous with the presence of two mixed-layer structure contributions, one containing all three layer types and the other containing only 0W and 1W layers. The diffraction features of these two mixed-layer structures are similar, and the positional shift resulting from their contrasting compositions allows fitting the broad and diffuse maxima of the experimental XRD patterns.

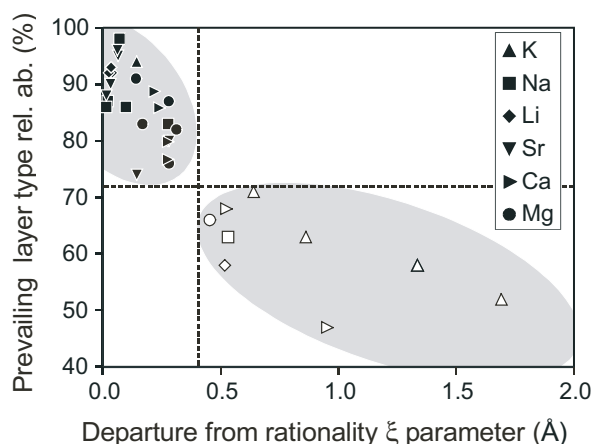


FIGURE 8. Relative proportion of the major layer type (whatever its nature) derived from XRD profile modeling as a function of the departure from rationality parameter ξ . Dotted lines as in Figure 4; solid and open symbols as in Figure 3.

DISCUSSION

Hydration properties of SWy-1 as a function of interlayer cation (Ca, Na, K)

The above quantitative description of the smectite hydration evolution is consistent with previous studies of smectite hydration (e.g., Sato et al. 1992). The XRD pattern at 0% RH for sample K-SWy-1 exhibits a rational series of basal reflections because the structure is dominated by 0W layers (Figs. 3 and 7a). A similar dehydrated state was described at 20% RH by Sato et al. (1992), although in the present study, the evolution toward a more-hydrated state occurs at this RH. However, the irrationality limit used by Sato et al. (1992) is not clearly defined, and the observed differences may result from a different threshold. The marked hydration heterogeneity observed by these authors over the 20–60% RH range is in agreement with the present study, but they reported a homogeneous mono-hydrated state at 80% RH in contrast to the significant proportion of 0W layers reported in the present work.

The description of Na-SWy-1 (Sato et al. 1992) is also consistent with the present data, with the only significant difference being the onset of the hydration process at low RH values (<20%) observed here. In contrast, Sato et al. (1992) described the transition between dehydrated and mono-hydrated states for RH values slightly higher than 20%.

Finally, our study is consistent with that of Sato et al. (1992) for mostly homogeneous bi-hydrated state for Ca-SWy-1 over the 40–80% RH range, although they described the partial dehydration to the mono-hydrated state through highly heterogeneous structures for RH values of <30%. At 0% RH, the $d(001)$ value reported by Sato et al. (1992) is similar to our study, but they reported a homogeneous hydration state for this RH in contrast to our results. Again, this difference may result from a different definition of the irrationality threshold in the two studies. Similar hydration behavior of homoionic SWy-1 also was reported by Cases et al. (1992, 1997) and Bérend et al. (1995).

Qualitative indicators of smectite hydration heterogeneity

The ξ parameter, which accounts for the departure from rationality of 00 l reflections, is a good indicator of the hydra-

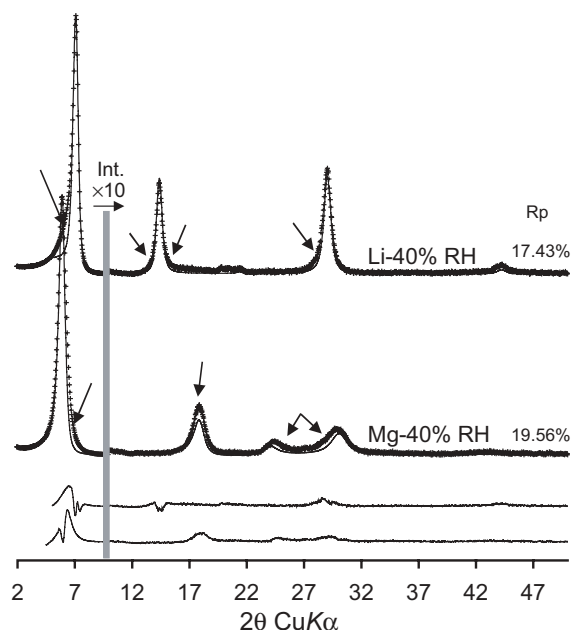


FIGURE 9. Comparison between the experimental XRD patterns obtained for Li- and Mg-SWy-1 samples at 40% RH and that calculated considering only the most homogeneous phase from the optimum structure models reported in Figure 6.

tion-state heterogeneity. When heterogeneity increases from the coexistence of different layer types, this parameter increases significantly in magnitude. Figure 8 plots the relative proportion of the prevailing layer type, whatever its nature, as a function of the ξ parameter. Note the low proportion of XRD patterns (~25%) that were modeled with >90% of the total layers of one layer type. However, even for homogeneous samples, there is still a need to account for hydration heterogeneity to obtain a quality fit as illustrated in Figure 9 for Li- and Mg-SWy-1. In these two samples, the prevailing layer type (1W and 2W layers, respectively) account for 92 and 83% of the total layers. However, it is still necessary to consider other mixed-layer structures.

There is an approximately equal proportion of patterns that involve 70% or less of the total layers attributed to one prevailing layer type as for 90% or more. Thus, heterogeneity rather than homogeneity is the rule for smectite hydration state. From Figure 8, note that the increasing heterogeneity is correlated with an increase of the ξ parameter, which is larger than 0.4 Å when the prevailing layer type accounts for ~70% or less of the total layers. This parameter is a good indicator of heterogeneity in the hydration state of smectite. The FWHM of the 001 reflection, which is larger than 1.1° when the ξ parameter is larger than 0.4 Å, can also be used for this purpose (Fig. 4). However, the dependence of the FWHM on the CSDS leads to important variations of the former parameter even for low values of the ξ parameter. For example, over a limited 0.00–0.15 range of the ξ parameter, the FWHM of the 001 reflection scatters from 0.47–1.07° 2 θ (Table 1). Larger variation of the FWHM parameter can be expected if different samples are used. The use of the irrationality indicator (ξ parameter) to characterize hydration heterogeneity is thus preferable, as recommended by Bailey (1982). However, the FWHM

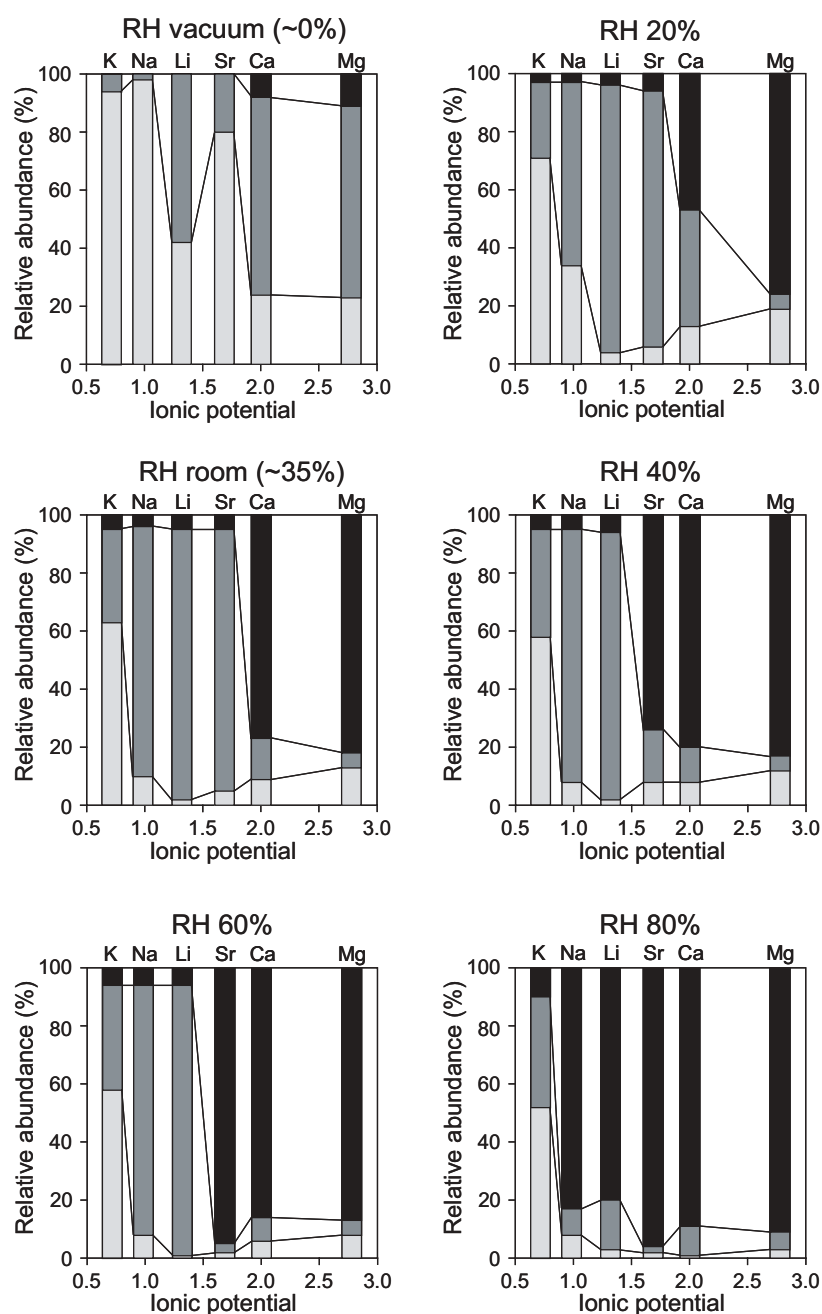


FIGURE 10. Relative proportion of the different layer types determined at each RH for the different samples. Samples are ranked as a function of their ionic potential (v/r). Light gray, dark gray, and solid bars represent 0W, 1W, and 2W layers, respectively.

of the 001 reflection can be used as an alternative indicator of hydration heterogeneity by taking into account the evolution of 001 reflection FWHM as a function of the l index. After correction by $\cos \theta$ to take into account crystal-size broadening, the FWHM of 001 reflections should be about constant if hydration is homogeneous. Conversely, if hydration heterogeneity is important the evolution of this parameter is irregular.

In addition, in specific cases, hydration heterogeneity can be deduced directly from specific features of the experimental

XRD patterns, related to 001 line broadening. When heterogeneity arises from the coexistence of 0W and 1W layers (e.g., K-SWy-1 for RH = 20–80% and Na-SWy-1 at RH = 20%) there is no well-defined maximum on experimental XRD patterns between the 001 reflection (10.2–12.0 Å) and the maximum at ~ 3.1 – 3.2 Å. If heterogeneity results from the coexistence of 1W and 2W layers (e.g., Ca-SWy-1 at 20% RH), the maximum at ~ 3.1 Å is most affected and becomes broad. Finally, for highly hydrated smectite samples, a small proportion of 1W layers may be easily detected from the broadening of the 002 reflection at ~ 7.6 Å (e.g., see Sr-SWy-1 at 40 and 60% RH in Fig. 5d).

Smectite structure as a function of the nature of the interlayer cation and of relative humidity

Assessment of the smectite structure model. For almost all smectite samples described here, we considered two distinct contributions to the XRD profiles. These two contributions represent a simplified approach to describe the hydration heterogeneity of the sample under investigation, with different layer types not being distributed at random in the different crystallites. The excellent quality of the fits clearly suggests that the proposed model is realistic. However, the use of two mixed-layer structures to fit all features of the XRD patterns does not imply the actual presence of two populations of particles in the sample. Accordingly, the relative proportions of the different mixed-layer structures contributing to the diffracted intensity vary as a function of RH (Fig. 6). As a consequence, layers exhibiting the same hydration state that are present in the different mixed-layer structures have identical properties (Table 2) as they may be accounted for in one structure or the other depending on the RH.

Influence of the affinity of the interlayer cation for water. For a given RH, the relative proportion of the different

layer types may be given as a function of the cation ionic potential (valency over ionic radius ratio, Fig. 10). Ionic radii considered here are given by Shannon (1976) for octahedrally coordinated cations (1.38, 1.02, 0.76, 1.18, 1.00, and 0.72 Å for K^+ , Na^+ , Li^+ , Sr^{2+} , Ca^{2+} , and Mg^{2+} , respectively). At 0% RH, 0W layers prevail in K-, Na-, and Sr-SWy-1, whereas Li-, Ca-, and Mg-SWy-1 are dominated by 1W layers. In Ca- and Mg-SWy-1, some 2W layers are present despite the dry atmosphere. When increasing RH to 20%, only K-SWy-1 remains mostly dehydrated, in agreement

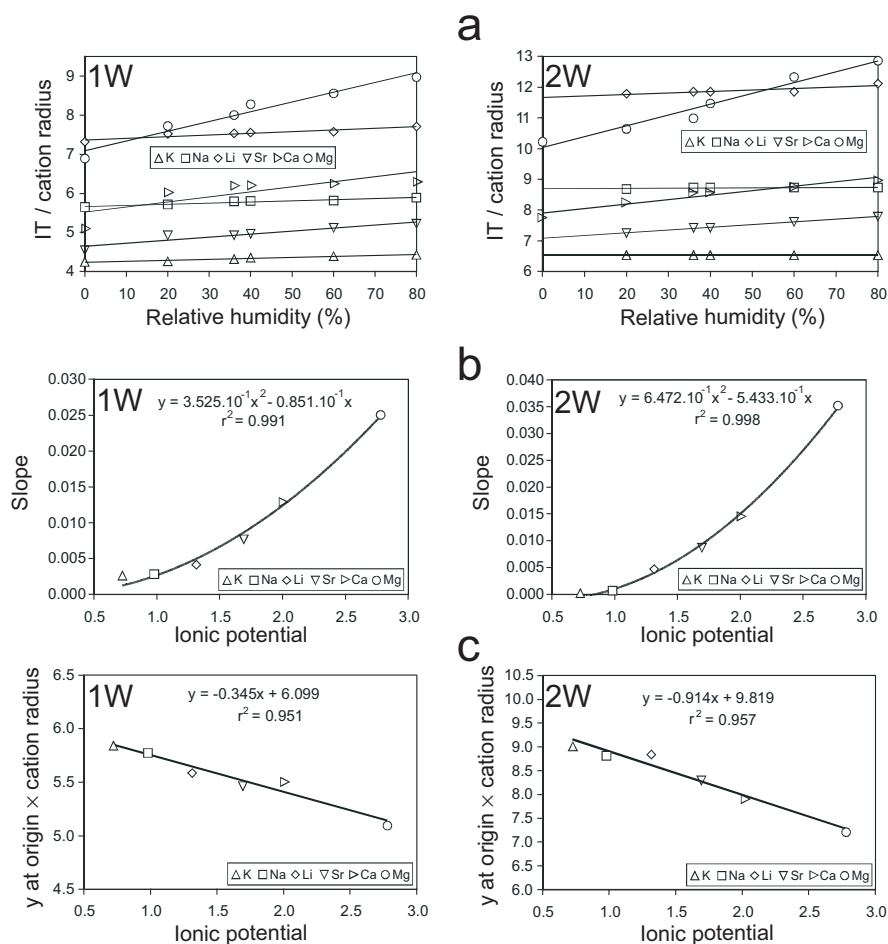


FIGURE 11. Evolution of layer thickness as a function of RH for all samples. Evolutions for 1W and 2W layer types are shown on the left and right columns, respectively. (a) Evolution of the interlayer thickness (IT), that is, layer thickness minus the thickness of the 2:1 layer (6.54 Å), weighted for the cation ionic radius as a function of RH for all samples. Linear regression lines are plotted for each cation. (b) Evolution of the slope of the linear regressions shown on Figure 11a as a function of the ionic potential of the interlayer cation. A 2nd order polynomial regression is fitted to these data. (c) Evolution of the IT weighted for the cation ionic radius at 0% RH obtained from the linear regression shown on Figure 11a as a function of the ionic potential of the interlayer cation. Linear regressions are fitted to these data.

with its low affinity for H₂O among the studied cations, whereas Na-, Li-, and Sr-SWy-1 are dominated by 1W layers. Even at RH = 20%, Mg-SWy-1 is mostly bi-hydrated, in agreement with its high affinity for H₂O, whereas Ca-SWy-1 exhibits an intermediate hydration state between 1W and 2W. At 35% RH, the only significant difference is the hydration state of Ca-SWy-1 which is essentially bi-hydrated, whereas Sr-SWy-1 becomes so at 40% RH. Finally, at 80% RH, all samples are primarily bi-hydrated except K-SWy-1, which is dominated by 0W and 1W layers, in agreement with the low affinity of K⁺ for H₂O. From the above results, the cation ionic potential, which is directly related to the affinity of the cation for H₂O, allows a direct comparison of the results obtained for all cations.

Evolution of layer thickness with relative humidity. Except for the omnipresence of hydration heterogeneity, the modeling of experimental XRD patterns collected for a given interlayer cat-

ion requires the consideration of variable layer-to-layer distance (i.e., layer thickness) over the 0–80% RH range for a given layer type (1W and 2W layers, Table 2). The layer thickness is greater with increasing RH for all samples, whatever the interlayer cation (Table 2). For samples displaying a stable and homogeneous hydration state over a large RH interval (e.g., Li- and Mg-SWy-1), such an increase in layer thickness allowed the XRD patterns to be described by a consistent structure model. In particular, it was possible to reproduce the steady evolution of peak position without considering major interstratification effects. For 1W layers, the increase of layer thickness is associated with an increased number of interlayer H₂O molecules, except for K-SWy-1 at medium-to-high RH values. The apparent inconsistency observed for this latter sample likely arises from the contrasting sensitivity of XRD to two parameters: (1) *Layer thickness* was adjusted systematically in the fitting process to reproduce satisfactorily the position and profiles of 00l reflections. (2) The influence of the *number of interlayer H₂O* on the reflection profile is minor; this parameter is essentially constrained from the relative intensities of 00l reflections. The number of interlayer H₂O was thus modified only

when significant differences between the model and experimental XRD pattern were observed. For K-SWy-1 it was possible to fit all XRD patterns recorded at medium-to-high RH values using a fixed number of interlayer H₂O. A similar increase of interlayer H₂O molecules and layer thickness is observed for 2W layers. However, for monovalent cations the precision of the structural parameters determined for 2W layers is low because of their low abundance (except at 80% RH for Na⁺ and Li⁺).

The interlayer thickness (IT), that is, the layer thickness minus the thickness of the 2:1 layer (6.54 Å), is divided by the cation ionic radius and plotted as a function of RH in Figure 11a. For each cation, a linear correlation was obtained between the weighted IT and the RH value, which is expressed as:

$$(IT)/r = a \times RH + b \quad (2)$$

where RH is expressed in fraction (0–1), *r* is the cation ionic

radius expressed in angstroms, and a and b represent the slope and axial intercept, respectively. The regression lines obtained for the different cations (Fig. 11a) show that their slopes increase with increasing cation ionic potential as indicated, for example, by the comparison between Mg-SWy-1 and Na-SWy-1. For both 1W and 2W layers, monovalent and divalent cations were compared by plotting these slopes as a function of the ionic potential (Fig. 11b), and successfully fitting a second-order polynomial function to these data with ($r^2 \sim 0.99$):

$$a_{1W} = 3.525 \cdot 10^{-1} \times (v^2/r^2) - 0.851 \cdot 10^{-1} \times (v/r) \quad (3)$$

$$a_{2W} = 6.472 \cdot 10^{-1} \times (v^2/r^2) - 5.433 \cdot 10^{-1} \times (v/r) \quad (4)$$

where v is the cation valency. IT values weighted for the cation ionic radius obtained at 0% RH from the linear regression relationships shown in Figure 11a also correlates with the ionic potential for both 1W and 2W layer types ($r^2 = 0.95$ for the two linear regressions, Fig. 11c) leading to the following relations:

$$b_{1W} = -0.345 \times (v/r^2) + 6.099 \times (1/r) \quad (5)$$

$$b_{2W} = -0.914 \times (v/r^2) + 9.819 \times (1/r) \quad (6)$$

From the combination of the above two regression relations, it was possible to derive equations relating layer thickness to the RH value and to the ionic potential of cations:

$$\text{Layer thickness (1W)} = 12.639 - 0.345 \times (v/r) - 0.851 \cdot 10^{-1} \times v \times \text{RH} + 3.525 \cdot 10^{-1} \times [(v^2 \text{RH})/r] \quad (7)$$

$$\text{Layer thickness (2W)} = 16.359 - 0.914 \times (v/r) - 5.433 \cdot 10^{-1} \times v \times \text{RH} + 6.472 \cdot 10^{-1} \times [(v^2 \text{RH})/r] \quad (8)$$

which can be transformed to:

$$\text{Layer thickness (1W)} = 12.556 + 0.3525 \times [(v/r) - 0.241] \times (v \times \text{RH} - 0.979) \quad (9)$$

$$\text{Layer thickness (2W)} = 15.592 + 0.6472 \times [(v/r) - 0.839] \times (v \times \text{RH} - 1.412) \quad (10)$$

These equations allow the quantification of the steady increase of layer thickness with increasing RH for both 1W and 2W layers. Because the ionic potential of all cations considered here is higher than 0.241, the 1W layer-thickness value will increase systematically with increasing RH for all cations. For monovalent cations, 12.556 Å represents a maximum layer-thickness value for 1W layers whereas larger layer-thickness values may be obtained for divalent cations over the 50–100% RH range. Similarly, the 2W layer-thickness value will increase with increasing RH for all cations except K^+ , whose ionic potential is lower than 0.839 Å. For K-saturated smectite, layer thickness should be about constant over the whole range of RH.

These results are consistent with those reported by Tamura et al. (2000) for synthetic smectite with a homogeneous layer-charge distribution, as they demonstrated that the hydration steps characterizing discrete hydration states (0W, 1W, 2W, ... layers) do not correspond to fixed d -values. However, the present study

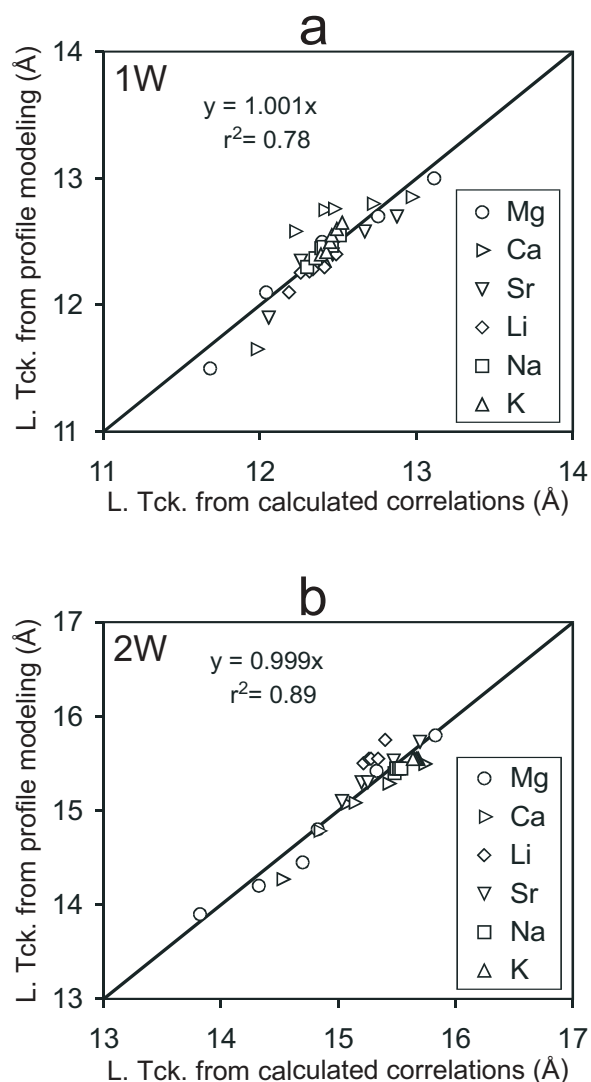


FIGURE 12. Comparison between the layer-thickness values determined for 1W and 2W layers from Equations 7 and 8, respectively, with that obtained from XRD profile modeling. Linear regressions are fitted to the data. (a) 1W layers. (b) 2W layers.

demonstrates, in contrast to Tamura et al. (2000), that the layer-thickness increase also depends on the interlayer cation and on its ionic potential. From the above equations, it is possible to determine *a priori* the layer thickness for 1W and 2W low-charge montmorillonites for any interlayer cation. The validity of these equations for smectite with different amounts and location of charge needs to be assessed. Figures 11 and 12 show that the above regression equations lead to a realistic estimate of the experimentally determined layer thickness values for all samples except for 1W layers with interlayer Ca.

Interlayer H_2O . As described above, the increase of layer thickness as a function of RH is associated with an increase of the number of interlayer H_2O molecules (Table 2). Although this change was not systematic when comparing from one RH value to another, this increase was required to describe all XRD patterns. Together with an increase in the proportion of layers

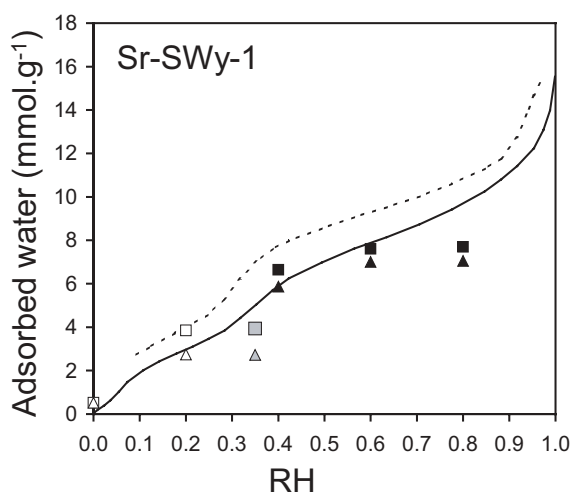
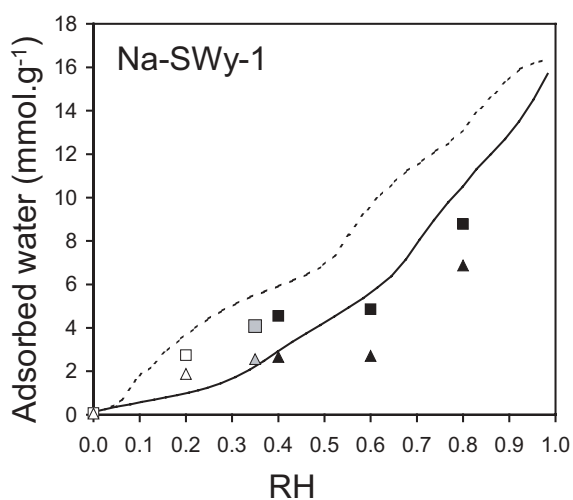


FIGURE 13. Comparison between the amount of water determined from water vapor adsorption-desorption isotherms by Bérend et al. (1995) and Cases et al. (1997) and that derived from XRD profile modeling. Adsorption and desorption pathways are shown as solid and dashed lines, respectively. Solid and open patterns indicate results derived from the modeling of XRD patterns recorded in adsorption and desorption conditions, respectively. Triangles indicate results derived from the modeling of XRD patterns assuming the fixed amount of interlayer H₂O molecules commonly used in the calculation of XRD patterns involving hydrated smectites (Moore and Reynolds 1997). Squares indicate results derived from the modeling of XRD patterns assuming a variable amount of interlayer H₂O molecules as described here. Gray patterns indicate the starting conditions (~35% RH).

with higher hydration states, the greater number of interlayer H₂O molecules with increasing RH is essential for the increase in sample hydration. Interlayer H₂O is best quantified using water vapor adsorption-desorption isotherms experiments (Cases et al. 1992, 1997; Bérend et al. 1995). With increasing RH, the combination of the average hydration state of smectite and of the variable number of interlayer H₂O molecules determined for each layer type allows a reasonable estimate of the number of H₂O molecules in SWy-1 (Fig. 13). The experimental water vapor

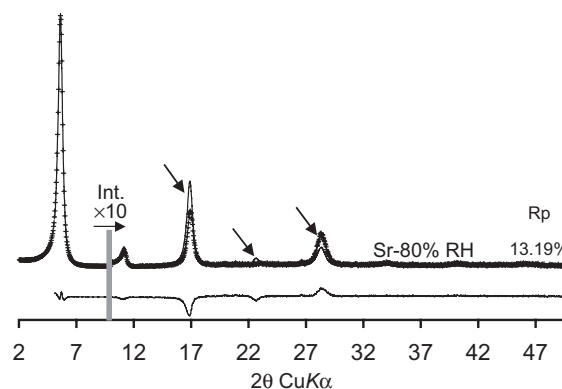


FIGURE 14. Comparison of the experimental XRD pattern recorded for Sr-SWy-1 sample at 80% RH with that calculated using a structure model similar to the optimal one (Table 2) but replacing the refined atomic positions for interlayer H₂O molecules by that proposed by Moore and Reynolds (1997). Patterns as in Figure 2a.

adsorption-desorption data are not fitted as closely when a fixed number of interlayer H₂O molecules is considered, as usually assumed in the calculation of XRD patterns involving hydrated smectites (Moore and Reynolds 1997, Fig. 13).

According to Moore and Reynolds (1997), interlayer cations are sandwiched between partial planes of H₂O molecules [0.69 H₂O per O₂₀(OH)₄] located at 0.35 and 1.06 Å from the cation along the *c** axis. A third and denser plane [1.20 H₂O per O₂₀(OH)₄] is located further from the central interlayer cation at 1.20 Å along the *c** axis. In our study, XRD patterns were modeled for 2W layers by defining a unique plane of H₂O molecules on each side of the central interlayer cation. This plane is located at 1.20 Å from the central interlayer cation along the *c** axis. This plane is analogous to the dense plane of H₂O molecules of Moore and Reynolds (1997). By using the hydration heterogeneity determined above for Sr-SWy-1 at 80% RH, it is possible to fit satisfactorily the 001 reflection using the positions of interlayer species proposed by Moore and Reynolds (1997, Fig. 14). However, the interlayer positions and the associated interlayer species proposed by Moore and Reynolds (1997) produced an intensity distribution dramatically different from the experimental data for higher-angle reflections (Fig. 14). No attempt was made here to further refine the *z*-coordinate of the H₂O plane as a function of interlayer cation ionic radius.

Fluctuation in atomic *z*-coordinates – σ_z parameter. Two trends are obtained for the σ_z parameter (Table 2), which corresponds to fluctuation of layer thickness, obtained for the different samples. First, high values for σ_z are commonly observed for highly heterogeneous samples (e.g., Li-SWy-1 at 0% RH, Ca-SWy-1 at 0 and 20% RH). These high values may result from the incomplete transition of a given interlayer from one hydration state to the next. As a result, different hydration states would coexist within a given interlayer leading to a large variation of the interlayer thickness.

Second, the σ_z parameter is usually significantly higher (0.25–0.52 Å) when the sample is saturated with divalent cations rather than monovalent cations (0.15–0.25 Å, except for the Li-SWy-1 sample at 0% RH). This behavior may be related to two possible structural features. The first feature relates to the valency of the

cations. The density of divalent cations is half that of monovalent cations, which produces an extremely heterogeneous distribution of electrostatic interactions between the 2:1 layer and interlayer cations. This heterogeneous distribution could perhaps induce fluctuations of the layer thickness within a given interlayer allowed by the flexibility of the 2:1 layers. The second structural feature for such an increased σ_z parameter probably relates to the affinity of divalent cations for the bi-hydrated state. The higher layer thickness observed for 2W layers implies weaker electrostatic interactions between the negatively charged layer and the interlayer cations. Consequently, the position of interlayer cations with respect to the 2:1 layer is weakly constrained and the resulting variation of layer thickness from one interlayer to an adjacent interlayer is greater. However, the affinity of divalent cations for 2W layers is probably a second-order influence as shown by the low values of the σ_z parameter on Na- and Li-SWy-1 at 80% RH, even though these two samples are dominated by 2W layers.

Size of the CSD (N) and sample orientation (σ^*). The CSD size along the c^* axis determined for each sample is globally stable over the entire RH range investigated (Table 2). However, a small decrease of the CSD size is systematically observed at RH = 0% for monovalent interlayer cations. Except for the Li-SWy-1 sample, these samples are strongly dehydrated with a high proportion (>95%) of 0W layers. Such dehydration probably increases porosity, including intra-crystalline porosity, that could reduce the CSD size. This observation is supported by the non-variance of the N value at low RH for smectite having divalent interlayer cations (Table 2). Consistently, σ^* values determined for these dehydrated samples were systematically higher than those adjusted for higher RH values, possibly as a result of the textural modifications resulting from increased porosity. However, the increase of σ^* is observed even for SWy-1 samples exchanged with divalent cations, possibly as an early indication of the ongoing dehydration process.

Lower values of N were also determined for each sample at high RH values (60–80%) possibly as the result of the splitting of some layer stacks induced by the “osmotic” swelling of some smectite interlayers. No significant change of the sample orientation is observed at these high RH values suggesting a different cause for the decrease in N , as compared to the low RH conditions. In our study, lower N values may thus possibly indicate the presence of a small number of 3W layers that are not accounted for in the calculation, but such layers would disrupt the stacking order. This hypothesis is consistent with the transition from 2W to 3W smectite which occurs for RH values higher than 90% for Ca-exchanged smectites (Watanabe and Sato 1988).

Possible improvements to the proposed description. The fluctuations of N and σ^* described above may also result from the difficulty in fitting the low-angle region of experimental XRD patterns. The calculated patterns are always intense over this angular range as compared to experimental patterns. The alternative model proposed by Plançon (2002) for the description of layer stacking in crystals could possibly better account for such textural defects in the stacking sequences. In this model, “particles” rather than crystals are considered. Particles have sizes larger than crystals and contain defects such as cracks, inner-porosity, bent layers, edge dislocations, etc. These defects

disrupt the periodic layer stacking by inducing variations in the d -value that are accounted for in the proposed formalism. XRD patterns calculated using this formalism nearly coincide with those calculated in our study except in the low-angle region ($<5^\circ 2\theta$ CuK α , Plançon 2002), and thus do not challenge the structure models described in the present work. Over the low-angle region, XRD patterns calculated using the formalism of Plançon (2002) exhibit a much lower background intensity that would fit better the experimental XRD data. According to this alternative model, the observed decrease of N is described as the increased frequency of defects whereas the overall size of the “particles” would probably be constant.

In addition, our study shows that the positions and concentrations of interlayer species proposed by Moore and Reynolds (1997) are incorrect. Although the quality of the models obtained in our study is satisfactory, structural parameters may possibly be further refined by utilizing hydration heterogeneity.

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