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(54) **Title:** PROCESS AND APPARATUS FOR REDUCING THERMAL SHOCK IN A HYDROCARBON STEAM CRACKING FURNACE

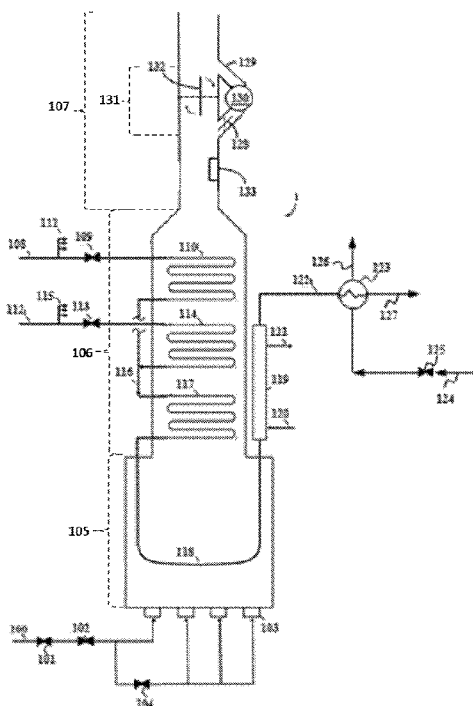


Figure 1

(57) **Abstract:** A method and apparatus of reducing thermal shock in one or more radiant tubes (115) of a pyrolysis furnace (1) is provided. The apparatus is a furnace comprising a blower (130) and blower bypass conduit (131) providing separate fluid communication paths for flue gas from the convection section (106) to a natural draft flue gas stack (107). The method comprises the steps of: redirecting at least a portion of the flue gas through the blower bypass conduit when a blower shut-off event is indicated as well as reducing the firing rate of the furnace.

**Declarations under Rule 4.17:**

- *as to applicant's entitlement to apply for and be granted a patent (Rule 4.17(ii))*
- *as to the applicant's entitlement to claim the priority of the earlier application (Rule 4.17(iii))*

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**PROCESS AND APPARATUS FOR REDUCING THERMAL SHOCK IN A
HYDROCARBON STEAM CRACKING FURNACE**

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

5 [0001] This application claims the benefits of and priorities to U.S. Serial No. 62/221,307, filed September 21, 2015, and EP 15192280.4, filed October 30, 2015, the disclosures of which are incorporated by reference in their entireties.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

10 [0002] The present invention relates to the field of thermal cracking hydrocarbons for the production of olefins, particularly low molecular weight olefins such as ethylene. More particularly the invention relates to methods and equipment for reducing thermal shock to steam cracking furnace tubes.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

15 [0003] Thermal cracking of hydrocarbon feeds in the presence of steam ("steam cracking") is a commercially important technology for producing light olefins such as ethylene, propylene, and butadiene. Hydrocarbon feeds can include one or more of ethane, propane, butane, naphtha, heavy gas oils, and crude oil. Steam cracking furnaces for carrying out steam cracking generally include a convection section, a radiant section located downstream of the convection section, and a quenching stage located downstream of the radiant section with respect to the flow of hydrocarbon feeds. At least one burner is included in the steam cracking furnace for providing heat to the convection and radiant sections. The burner(s) are located in at least one firebox, the firebox being proximate to the radiant section, with the convection section being located downstream of the radiant section with respect to the flow of heated combustion gases ("flue gas") produced by the burner. Tubular
20 coils ("tubes") are utilized for conveying the hydrocarbon feed, steam, and mixtures thereof through the furnace's convection and radiant sections where the hydrocarbon is cracked to produce a steam cracked effluent. The steam cracked effluent is quenched and conducted away for further processing to produce the light olefins.

25 [0004] The hot flue gas generated by the burners is conducted away from the firebox through the convection section and discharged to atmosphere via a flue gas stack. A negative pressure (also called "draft") is generated in the flue gas stack to facilitate proper combustion and flue gas removal. Additionally, the draft is maintained for safety reasons to prevent hot flue gas from exiting through any openings in the firebox, such as, at an open visual

5 inspection port. Maintaining draft ensures ambient air flows in through any firebox openings instead of hot flue gas exiting the firebox anywhere other than out the stack.

[0005] Some steam cracking furnaces are natural draft meaning they rely on the height of the stack and differences between hot flue gas density and density of the cooler ambient air to generate draft. Natural draft furnaces are not preferred in steam cracking because
10 very tall stacks must be designed to provide sufficient draft to meet the desired firing rate or rate of heat generation. Many modern steam cracking furnaces are designed to use a fan or blower as the means of generating draft and have only a very short stack located at the discharge of the blower. In these cases, if the blower ceases operation, either due to mechanical issues or loss of the driving power source, the furnace will lose draft. The flue
15 gas pressure inside the furnace will rise to above ambient pressure. It is normal practice to have pressure sensors located on the furnace which identify when the pressure rises above ambient pressure, and an automatic trip or safety-interlock system that will shut off the fuel supply to the furnace in such a situation. If the full fuel supply is shut off instantaneously, the furnace temperatures will cool down very rapidly, including the temperatures of the
20 radiant tubes. This rapid cool down, by itself, is detrimental to service life of the tubes as contraction and expansion lead to metal fatigue. However, the metal fatigue is exacerbated by the presence of coke formed inside tube walls.

[0006] During normal cracking operation the process forms coke on the inside of the radiant tubes. Coke has a coefficient of thermal expansion that is about an order of magnitude
25 lower than that of the radiant section tube material. During a blower shut-off event (e.g., blower failure), the radiant tubes may experience a large, sometimes rapid reduction in temperature. The differential in the coefficient of thermal expansion between the tube metal and the coke layer causes significant physical/mechanical stresses in both materials. If the coke layer is thin, the tube contracts more than the coke crushing the coke within. However,
30 if the coke is thick and the tube metal weakened, the tubes may split and fracture around the coke. Either way, these mechanical and physical stresses lead to tube degradation known as thermal shock. Thus, thermal shock significantly reduces tube lifetime, requiring process down-time, and expenditure of significant capital costs in furnace repair. This issue is most important in ethane cracking, as the coke formed in ethane cracking is the hardest coke
35 formed in steam cracking.

[0007] Therefore, a furnace design and process of operating a furnace that reduces or prevents thermal shock is desirable.

5 **SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

[0008] It has been found that thermal shock during a blower shut-off event can be reduced by providing a tall natural draft flue gas stack, conducting a portion of flue gas around the blower to the stack through a blower bypass conduit, and reducing the amount of flue gas generated. The tall stack develops draft to allow sufficient flue gas generation to
10 maintain the radiant tubes near operating temperature and avoid thermal shock when an undesired blower shut-off event occurs. The blower bypass conduit allows the flue gas to be redirected around the blower when the blower stops operating. A set of dampers can facilitate conducting flue gas through either the blower, blower bypass conduit, or both. A control system and sensor can identify a blower shut-off event and take action.

15 [0009] In one aspect, embodiments of the invention provide a method of reducing thermal shock in one or more radiant tubes of a furnace. The furnace comprises a firebox with one or more burners and one or more radiant tubes, a convection section in fluid communication with the firebox, a flue gas stack, a blower, and a blower bypass conduit. The blower and blower bypass conduit provide separate fluid communication paths so flue
20 gas may travel between the convection section and the flue gas stack through either or both paths. The method comprises several steps: First, provide fuel to the furnace. Second, combust the fuel in the firebox burners to generate flue gas. Third, use the blower to conduct the flue gas away from the firebox through the convection section, blower, and out the flue gas stack. Fourth, monitor a parameter indicative of an imminent or present blower shut-off
25 event. Fifth, when the parameter indicates a blower shut-off event, direct at least a portion of the flue gas from the convection section through the blower bypass conduit instead of directing that portion through the blower. Finally, reduce the amount of flue gas generated in the firebox.

[0010] In another aspect, embodiments of the invention provide a furnace comprising
30 several components. First, the furnace comprises a plurality of hydrocarbon feed conduits and a plurality of dilution steam conduits. The individual steam conduits are in fluid communication with their corresponding hydrocarbon feed conduits. Second, the furnace comprises a plurality of radiant tubes in fluid communication with the combined steam and hydrocarbon feed conduits. The furnace also comprises a firebox. The firebox comprises a
35 plurality of burners for generating flue gas used to heat the exterior of the radiant tubes. The burners heat the radiant tubes providing a cracked hydrocarbon effluent. Third, the furnace comprises a convection section in fluid communication with the firebox for heating the hydrocarbon feed and steam conduits with flue gas generated by the burners. Fourth, the

5 furnace comprises a flue gas stack, a blower, and a blower bypass conduit. The blower and the blower bypass conduit provide separate fluid communication paths for flue gas to flow from the convection section to the flue gas stack. Fifth, the furnace comprises a first damper adapted to control flow of flue gas through the blower and a second damper adapted to control flow of flue gas through the blower bypass conduit. Sixth, the furnace comprises a
10 partial trip valve configured to reduce flue gas generation (by reducing fuel flow) to one or more of the plurality of burners. Seventh, the furnace comprises at least one sensor configured to detect a parameter indicative of a blower shut-off event and a controller in communication with the sensor. The controller is configured to perform the following steps when the sensor indicates a blower shut-off event: (i) close the first damper to reduce flow of
15 flue gas through the blower, (ii) open the second damper to direct at least a portion of the flue gas through the blower bypass conduit, and (iii) close the partial trip valve to reduce flue gas generation.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0011] The invention is further explained in the description that follows with reference to
20 the drawing illustrated, by way of non-limiting examples, various embodiments of the invention wherein:

[0012] FIG. 1 illustrates a schematic flow diagram in a steam cracking furnace according to an exemplary embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

25 [0013] Various aspects will now be described with reference to specific embodiments selected for purposes of illustration. It will be appreciated that the spirit and scope of the process and system disclosed herein is not limited to the selected embodiments. Moreover, it is to be noted that the figure provided herein are not drawn to any particular proportion or scale, and that many variations can be made to the illustrated embodiments. Reference is
30 now made to the figure, wherein like numerals are used to designate like parts throughout. When an amount, concentration, or other value or parameter is given as a list of upper preferable values and lower preferable values, this is to be understood as specifically disclosing all ranges formed from any pair of an upper preferred value and a lower preferred value, regardless whether ranges are separately disclosed.

35 [0014] Referring now to FIG. 1, a non-limiting exemplary embodiment of a steam cracking furnace 1 is illustrated. Fuel comprising gas or liquid hydrocarbon fuel is provided via conduit 100 and through shut-off valve 101 and control valve 102. At least a portion of the fuel passes through valve 102 to at least one of a plurality of burners 103 that provide

5 radiant heat to produce the desired products by thermal cracking of hydrocarbon feed. A second portion of the fuel is directed through partial trip valve 104 to at least one of the plurality of burners 103. The burners 103 heat firebox 105 and generate hot combustion gas (“flue gas”) that flows upward through the convection section 106 and then out of the furnace to atmosphere via the flue gas stack 107.

10 **[0015]** During typical pyrolysis operation, the hydrocarbon feed is conducted via conduit 108 and control valve 109 to a preheating conduit 110 in convection section 106 where the feed is preheated by indirect contact with hot flue gas generated by burners 103. The feed may be any feed suitable for steam cracking. Feedstocks that may be employed herein may be any feedstock adapted for cracking insofar as they may be cracked into various olefins,
15 and may contain heavy fractions such as high-boiling fractions, evaporation residuum fractions, and crude oil fractions. For example, the feed may comprise C₁-C₄ hydrocarbons. The invention is particularly advantageous for feeds comprising ≥ 50 wt% ethane, e.g., ≥ 60 wt% ethane, ≥ 70 wt% ethane, ≥ 80 wt% ethane, ≥ 90 wt% ethane as these feeds tend to form the hardest coke during steam cracking.

20 **[0016]** A plurality of feed conduits 111 are arranged in parallel. Although not shown, each of the plurality of feed conduits 111 may be provided with a control valve 109. Each of the plurality of conduits 111 is in fluid communication with a corresponding preheating conduit (not shown) in parallel to preheating conduit 110 in convection section 106. The use of the term “plurality of conduits” is meant to refer to the fact that the convection section 106
25 is arranged wherein each multiple preheating conduit bank has at least two conduits in parallel. Four conduits are represented in FIG. 1, although furnaces having 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 16, 18 parallel conduits are known.

[0017] After the preheated hydrocarbon feed exits the preheating conduit 110, the preheated hydrocarbon feed is mixed with dilution steam. Dilution steam is provided via
30 conduit 112 through control valve 113 to steam preheating conduit 114 in convection section 106 where the dilution steam is preheated by indirect contact with hot flue gas. Dilution steam is added to provide the amount of H₂O required to achieve the desired hydrocarbon partial pressure during pyrolysis reaction. A plurality of steam conduits 115 may be provided corresponding to the plurality of feed conduits 111.

35 **[0018]** The mixture of dilution steam and preheated hydrocarbon feed is conducted via conduit 116 to heat exchange conduit 117 in convection section 106. Optionally for hydrocarbon feeds containing resids, the dilution steam and preheated hydrocarbon feed mixture can be conducted to a vapor liquid separator (not shown) to remove non-volatile

5 hydrocarbon components that promote coking when cracked. A plurality of heat exchange conduits (not shown) may be provided.

[0019] Upon exiting the heat exchange conduit 117, the heated mixture is passed to radiant tube 118 in the radiant section of firebox 105 for thermal cracking of the hydrocarbon. A plurality of radiant tubes (not shown) may be provided. The temperature of the heated
10 mixture exiting conduit 117 is generally designed to be at or near the point where significant thermal cracking commences. The temperature of the thermally cracked hydrocarbon exiting the radiant coil 118 can vary from about 788°C (1450°F) for some very heavy gas oil feeds to about 900°C (1650°F) for ethane or propane feeds. Typically, it is desirable to maintain the temperature of the radiant tubes above about 788°C (1450°F) to avoid thermal shocking.

15 [0020] After the desired degree of thermal cracking has been achieved, the furnace effluent is rapidly cooled. For this purpose, the furnace effluent is conducted to one or a series of more than one indirect transfer line heat exchanger(s) ("TLE") 119 where the heat energy from the furnace effluent is indirectly transferred to heat water provided via conduit 120 to produce high pressure steam conducted away via conduit 121. This technique is
20 generally favored as the high pressure steam produced may be further superheated and used to power steam-turbines useful in the process to separate and recover ethylene from the furnace effluent.

[0021] However, for some heavy liquid feeds such as heavy naphthas and gas oils containing crude oil residues, the use of transfer line exchangers alone is not possible due to
25 rapid fouling of the TLE 119. Crude oil and atmospheric residue often contain high molecular weight, non-volatile components with boiling points in excess of 595°C (1100°F). Pyrolysis of the non-volatile components of these feedstocks produces coke deposits on the inner surfaces of the TLE 119. As the TLE fouls, high pressure steam generation rates are reduced and the effluent temperature leaving the TLE 119 rises above the desired operating
30 temperature for downstream equipment. For example, in some cases the temperature leaving the TLE 119 rises as high as 675°C (1250°F). In such cases, a direct oil quench connection is often required downstream of the TLE. The oil quench connection allows addition of quench oil into the furnace effluent stream to provide heat transfer from the furnace effluent directly to the injected quench oil. In such a quench connection, the furnace effluent is cooled
35 primarily by the vaporization of the quench oil. Quenching techniques and quench fitting designs are described in U.S. Pat. Nos. 8,177,200; 3,593,968; 6,626,424; 3,907,661; 4,444,697; 3,959,420; 5,061,408; and 3,758,081, each of which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

5 **[0022]** The partially cooled furnace effluent leaving TLE 119 is conducted via conduit 122 to quench system 123. Quench system 123 may be any suitable system for cooling the partially cooled furnace effluent. In some embodiments, the quench system 123 comprises a direct oil quench system. Preferred oil quench fluids include a liquid quench oil, such as an aromatic oil. Preferred aromatic oil may have a final boiling point of at least about 400°C (750°F). Other particularly useful liquid quench fluid may include an aromatic distillate. In 10 other embodiments the partially cooled effluent is indirectly quenched with water. For example water may be provided via conduit 124 and valve 125. The heated water stream exits the quench system 123 via conduit 126. Cooled furnace effluent may be provided downstream recovery and/or purification processes (not shown) via conduit 127. The 15 temperature of the cooled furnace effluent in conduit 127 should be appropriate for feeding downstream separation equipment, for example, a primary fractionator (not shown) that receives furnace effluent at about 288°C (550°F) to 315°C (600°F).

[0023] Regardless of the hydrocarbon feedstock being cracked, over time an undesirable but largely unavoidable byproduct of the cracking process is the deposition of carbon 20 deposits (coke) on the inner surfaces of the convection section preheating conduits, radiant section radiant tubes, TLEs, and even direct oil quench connections. Of primary concern is coke build up on the internal surfaces of the radiant tubes that reduces the effective cross-sectional area of the tube, thereby necessitating higher pressures to maintain a constant throughput. Since coke is an effective insulator, its formation on tube walls also must be 25 accompanied by an increase in furnace tube temperature to maintain cracking efficiency.

[0024] Thus, the coke is typically removed by operating the furnace 1 in a decoking mode. Referring again to FIG. 1, during decoking, the hydrocarbon feed 108 is interrupted to the furnace and steam 112 continues passing through furnace 1. The cooled furnace effluent 127 is redirected away from the recovery and/or purification processes to atmosphere. Air is 30 added via conduit 108 to the steam passing through the furnace to create a decoking feed air/steam mixture in conduit 116. The air/steam mixture is heated in radiant tubes 40 to remove at least a portion of the coke deposits by controlled combustion. The effluent from radiant tubes 118 is cooled in transfer line exchanger 119 and in quench system 123. Because the decoking process effluent is ultimately exhausted to atmosphere, it is 35 conventional to use water coolant in quench system 123. The cooled effluent 127 is then exhausted to the atmosphere, either via a decoke drum, e.g., a cyclonic separator (not shown), or via the furnace firebox 105 and flue gas stack 107.

5 **[0025]** Under typical operation either in thermal cracking or decoking mode, the temperature of the radiant tubes 118 is at least about 788°C (1450°F). Maintaining this temperature is dependent in part on the generation and removal of hot flue gas. If insufficient draft (negative pressure) is developed, flue gas generation (or the firing rate) must be reduced or even stopped to avoid buildup of pressure inside the furnace firebox. Under conditions of
10 reduced or terminated firing, however, the temperature of the radiant tubes 118 may decrease significantly, leading to thermal stresses in the tube material and reducing the integrity and/or lifetime of the tubes.

[0026] To mitigate the effects of thermal shock as may occur when firing is reduced in response to a blower shut-off event, flue gas stack 107 is configured to receive flue gas
15 through one or both of a blower 130 or a blower bypass conduit 131. The flow of flue gas through blower 130 and blower conduit 129 is controlled with a first damper 128 configured and modulated to control pressure inside the furnace. The blower 130 may be of any suitable design. In some embodiments, blower 130 is a double suction, single discharge fan. The furnace 1 includes a blower bypass conduit 131 in fluid communication with flue gas stack
20 107. Preferably, the blower bypass conduit 131 is the same diameter as the flue gas stack 107. More preferably, the blower bypass conduit 131 is a portion of the flue gas stack 107. The blower bypass conduit 131 includes a second damper 132 configured to control the flow of flue gas there through. First and second dampers 128, 132 may independently be selected according to design requirements. Non-limiting examples of suitable dampers include
25 butterfly or louvre type dampers. Flue gas stack 107 may be of any suitable design. Under normal operating conditions the first damper 128 is in an open position and the second damper 132 is in a closed position allowing at least a portion of the flue gas to pass through the blower 130. In response to a blower shut off event, second damper 132 may be opened allowing at least a portion of the flue gas to be directed through blower bypass conduit 131.

30 **[0027]** In order to generate sufficient natural draft to permit enough flue gas generation and maintain radiant tube temperature, the height (measured from the end of the furnace convection section to the top of the flue gas stack) of flue gas stack 107 may be determined according to design principles. Generally, a taller flue gas stack will have a more negative pressure. In particular embodiments, flue gas stack 107 may be ≥ 5 m, e.g., ≥ 20 m, ≥ 30 m,
35 ≥ 40 m, ≥ 50 m, or ≥ 60 m. Additionally or alternatively, the height of the flue gas stack 107 may be ≤ 65 m, e.g., ≤ 55 m, ≤ 45 m, ≤ 35 m, ≤ 25 m. Particular ranges of the flue gas stack length include ranges formed by any pair of the above-enumerated values, e.g., 5 to 65 m, 20 to 55 m. Preferably the flue gas stack is ≥ 30 m tall.

5 **[0028]** Under normal operation, the first damper 128 and/or the blower 130 are configured such that the flow of flue gas through blower conduit 129 is greater than the flow of gas through the blower bypass conduit 131, e.g., the second damper 132 may be closed. The dampers 128 and 132 as well as blower 130 may be in electrical communication with one or more control systems (not shown) including at least one sensor 133 configured to sense
10 one or more parameters characteristic of a blower shut-off event (e.g., pressure, electrical current, blower speed, etc.) Sensor 133 may be of any suitable type. When one or more of the control systems sense an imminent or present blower shut-off event, second damper 132 is moved to a more open position allowing flue gas flow through blower bypass conduit 131. Optionally, first damper 128 may be moved to a more closed position to further direct flue
15 gas flow through blower bypass conduit. Draft pressure may be controlled using second damper 132 or another damper (not shown) in flue gas stack 107. In a particular embodiment, control system opens the second damper 132 when the detector 133 detects a blower shut-off event.

[0029] Redirecting flue gas through the natural draft blower bypass conduit 131 and
20 flue gas stack 107 generally will not generate as much draft as when flue gas is routed via an operational blower 130. The firing rate (amount of flue gas generated) must be reduced. Advantageously, a furnace configured with a tall flue gas stack according to the invention permits sufficient flue gas generation to maintain radiant tube temperature. For example, upon sensing that the parameter predictive of a blower shut-off event has exceeded the
25 predetermined value, the control system may close the first damper 128 and open the second damper 128. The control system also reduces the firing rate of the burners 103 to a level that maintains the radiant tubes at temperature to avoid thermal shock that would otherwise occur in a total furnace shutdown.

[0030] The control system may reduce the heat input to the furnace, by for example,
30 automatically shutting off only a number of burners in the furnace (“a partial furnace trip”). For example, the control system may close or partially close partial trip valve 104 to reduce the amount of fuel provided through the valve 104 to one or more of the burners 103. In exemplary embodiments, the firing rate is reduced such that amount of fuel used to heat the firebox during a blower shut-off event (by reduction in the number of burners that are
35 operated and/or in the amount of fuel provided to the burners) is ≤ 50 wt%, e.g., ≤ 30 wt%, or $\leq$ about 15 wt%, of the fuel used to operate the burners under normal operating conditions when the blower is functioning.

5 **[0031]** Under such a reduced firing rate, sufficient heat is provided to keep the tubes above about 788°C (1450°F) to avoid undergoing thermal shock and the amount of flue gas is kept below ambient pressure by the natural draft of the flue gas stack through the second damper 132 and blower bypass conduit 131. Optionally, the control sytem may start a timer at the outset of the partial trip. If after a preset time the pressure inside the furnace is not
10 below atmospheric pressure, the control system may stop the flow of all fuel to the furnace. For example, the control system may close shut-off valve 101 if the pressure inside the furnace is not below atmospheric pressure a preset amount of time after firing is partially reduced and flue gas is directed through blower bypass conduit 131.

[0032] All documents described herein are incorporated by reference herein for purposes
15 of all jurisdictions where such practice is allowed, including any priority documents and/or testing procedures to the extent they are not inconsistent with this text, provided however that any priority document not named in the initially filed application or filing documents is NOT incorporated by reference herein. As is apparent from the foregoing general description and the specific embodiments, while forms of the invention have been illustrated and described,
20 various modifications can be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. Accordingly, it is not intended that the invention be limited thereby. For example, the compositions described herein may be free of any component, or composition not expressly recited or disclosed herein. Any method may lack any step not recited or disclosed herein. Likewise, the term “comprising” is considered synonymous with the term
25 “including”. And whenever a method, composition, element or group of elements is preceded with the transitional phrase “comprising,” it is understood that we also contemplate the same composition or group of elements with transitional phrases “consisting essentially of,” “consisting of,” “selected from the group of consisting of,” or “is” preceding the recitation of the composition, element, or elements and vice versa.

30

5 **CLAIMS**

What is claimed is:

1. A method of reducing thermal shock in one or more radiant tubes of a furnace, the method comprising the steps of:
 - (a) providing fuel to the furnace, the furnace comprising a firebox with one or
10 more burners and one or more radiant tubes, a convection section in fluid communication with the firebox, a flue gas stack, a blower, and a blower bypass conduit, wherein the blower and the blower bypass conduit provide separate fluid communication paths between the convection section and the flue gas stack;
 - (b) combusting the fuel in the firebox burners to generate flue gas;
 - 15 (c) conducting the flue gas away from the firebox through the convection section, blower, and flue gas stack;
 - (d) monitoring a parameter predictive of a blower shut-off event;
 - (e) directing at least a portion of the flue gas from the convection section through the blower bypass conduit when the parameter indicates a blower shut-off event; and
 - 20 (f) reducing the amount of flue gas generated in the firebox.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the parameter predictive of a blower shut-off event comprises the furnace pressure or blower speed.
3. The method of any of claims 1 to 2, wherein reducing the amount of flue gas generated comprises reducing an amount of fuel provided to one or more burners configured
25 to heat the firebox.
4. The method of any of claims 1 to 3, wherein reducing flue gas generated comprises reducing an amount of fuel provided to fewer than all of the burners configured to heat the firebox.
5. The method of any of claims 1 to 4, wherein reducing flue gas generated in
30 step (f) comprises reducing the amount of fuel provided to the firebox to $\leq$ about 50 wt% of the fuel provided in step (a).
6. The method of any of claims 1 to 5, wherein the directing at least a portion of the flue gas through the blower bypass conduit in step (e) comprises closing a first damper to reduce the flow of flue gas through the blower and opening a second damper in the blower
35 bypass conduit.
7. The method of any of claims 1 to 6, further comprising providing a hydrocarbon feed in admixture with steam to the radiant tubes under steam cracking conditions.

- 5 8. The method of claim 7, wherein the hydrocarbon feed comprises ≥ 50 wt.% ethane.
9. The method of any of claims 1 to 8, further comprising the step (g) maintaining the temperature of the radiant tubes above about 788°C (1450°F).
10. The method of any of claims 1 to 9, wherein the monitoring a parameter
10 predictive of a blower shut-off event is performed using a least one sensor and a controller in communication with the at least one sensor.
11. The method of any of claims 1 to 10, wherein the directing at least a portion of the flue gas through the blower bypass conduit is performed using a first damper adapted to control flow of flue gas through the blower and a second damper adapted to control flow of
15 flue gas through the blower bypass conduit.
12. The method of any of claims 1 to 11, wherein the flue gas is conducted away via a flue gas stack from 5 to 65 m tall measured from the end of the convection section to the top of the flue gas stack.
13. The method of any of claims 1 to 11, wherein the flue gas is conducted away
20 via a flue gas stack ≥ 30 m tall measured from the end of the convection section to the top of the flue gas stack.
14. The method of any of claims 1 to 13, wherein the flue gas is redirected through a blower bypass conduit that is a portion of the flue gas stack.
15. A furnace, comprising:
- 25 (a) a plurality of hydrocarbon feed conduits;
- (b) a plurality of dilution steam conduits in fluid communication with their corresponding hydrocarbon feed conduits;
- (c) a plurality of radiant tubes in fluid communication with the corresponding combined steam and hydrocarbon feed conduits;
- 30 (d) a firebox comprising a plurality of burners generating flue gas for heating the exterior of the radiant tubes and providing a cracked hydrocarbon effluent from the radiant tubes;
- (e) a convection section in fluid communication with the firebox for heating the hydrocarbon feed and steam conduits with flue gas;
- 35 (f) a flue gas stack, a blower, and a blower bypass conduit, wherein the blower and the blower bypass conduit provide separate fluid communication paths for flue gas to flow from the convection section to the flue gas stack;

- 5 (g) a first damper adapted to control flow of flue gas through the blower and a second damper adapted to control flow of flue gas through the blower bypass conduit;
- (h) a partial trip valve configured to reduce flue gas generation in one or more of the plurality of burners;
- (i) at least one sensor configured to detect a parameter indicative of a blower shut-off event; and
- 10 (j) a controller in communication with the sensor configured to perform the following steps when the sensor indicates a blower a blower shut-off event,
- a. close the first damper to reduce flow of flue gas through the blower,
- b. open the second damper to direct at least a portion of the flue gas through
- 15 the blower bypass conduit, and
- c. close the partial trip valve to reduce flue gas generation.
16. The furnace of claim 15, wherein the flue gas stack is from 5 to 65 m tall measured from the end of the convection section to the top of the flue gas stack.
17. The furnace of claim 15, wherein the flue gas stack ≥ 30 m tall measured from
- 20 the end of the convection section to the top of the flue gas stack.
18. The furnace of claim 15, wherein the blower bypass conduit is a portion of the flue gas stack.

1/1

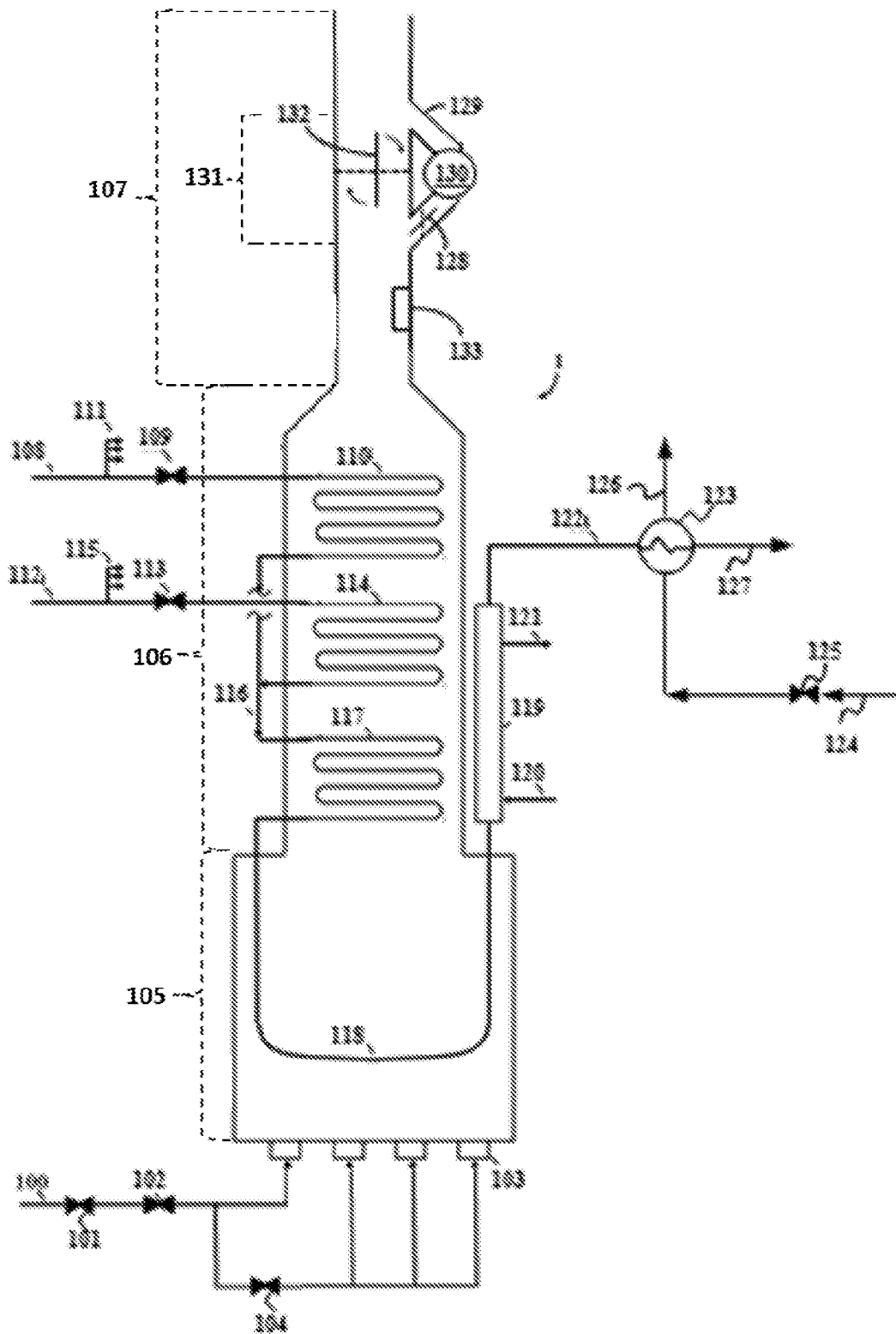


Figure 1

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

(PCT Article 18 and Rules 43 and 44)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 2015EM227	FOR FURTHER ACTION see Form PCT/ISA/220 as well as, where applicable, item 5 below.	
International application No. PCT/US2016/021459	International filing date (<i>day/month/year</i>) 9 March 2016 (09-03-2016)	(Earliest) Priority Date (<i>day/month/year</i>) 21 September 2015 (21-09-2015)
Applicant EXXONMOBIL CHEMICAL PATENTS INC.		

This international search report has been prepared by this International Searching Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 18. A copy is being transmitted to the International Bureau.

This international search report consists of a total of 4 sheets.

☒

It is also accompanied by a copy of each prior art document cited in this report.

1. Basis of the report

a. With regard to the **language**, the international search was carried out on the basis of:

☒

the international application in the language in which it was filed

☐

a translation of the international application into _____, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (Rules 12.3(a) and 23.1(b))

b. ☐

This international search report has been established taking into account the **rectification of an obvious mistake** authorized by or notified to this Authority under Rule 91 (Rule 43.6**bis**(a)).

c. ☐

With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, see Box No. I.

2. ☐

Certain claims were found unsearchable (See Box No. II)

3. ☐

Unity of invention is lacking (see Box No III)

4. With regard to the **title**,

☒

the text is approved as submitted by the applicant

☐

the text has been established by this Authority to read as follows:

5. With regard to the **abstract**,

☐

the text is approved as submitted by the applicant

☒

the text has been established, according to Rule 38.2, by this Authority as it appears in Box No. IV. The applicant may, within one month from the date of mailing of this international search report, submit comments to this Authority

6. With regard to the **drawings**,

a. the figure of the **drawings** to be published with the abstract is Figure No. 1

☒

as suggested by the applicant

☐

as selected by this Authority, because the applicant failed to suggest a figure

☐

as selected by this Authority, because this figure better characterizes the invention

b. ☐

none of the figures is to be published with the abstract

Box No. IV Text of the abstract (Continuation of item 5 of the first sheet)

A method and apparatus of reducing thermal shock in one or more radiant tubes (115) of a pyrolysis furnace (1) is provided. The apparatus is a furnace comprising a blower (130) and blower bypass conduit (131) providing separate fluid communication paths for flue gas from the convection section (106) to a natural draft flue gas stack (107). The method comprises the steps of: redirecting at least a portion of the flue gas through the blower bypass conduit when a blower shut-off event is indicated as well as reducing the firing rate of the furnace.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No

PCT/US2016/021459

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
 INV. F23N5/24 C10G9/20
 ADD.

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
 F23N C10G F23J

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, WPI Data

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 2014/221718 A1 (TATE JAMES D [US] ET AL) 7 August 2014 (2014-08-07) paragraphs [0001], [0002], [0010], [0011]; figures 1, 2 paragraph [0014] -----	1-18
A	US 3 887 336 A (HUTCHINSON BRUCE R ET AL) 3 June 1975 (1975-06-03) column 1, line 8 - line 16; figure 6 column 2, line 48 - line 51 column 9, line 51 - column 10, line 66 -----	1,15
A	EP 2 370 731 A1 (SCHRAEDER GMBH [DE]) 5 October 2011 (2011-10-05) paragraph [0001]; figure 1 paragraph [0005] - paragraph [0008] paragraphs [0018], [0021], [0022] paragraph [0026] - paragraph [0028] -----	14,15



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents :

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

10 May 2016

Date of mailing of the international search report

25/05/2016

Name and mailing address of the ISA/

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Authorized officer

Hauck, Gunther

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No

PCT/US2016/021459

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 2014221718	A1	07-08-2014	NONE

US 3887336	A	03-06-1975	NONE

EP 2370731	A1	05-10-2011	DE 102008059432 A1 02-06-2010
			EP 2370731 A1 05-10-2011
			WO 2010060606 A1 03-06-2010
