

Contents

Preface	vii
1 Introduction to SEM/EDX of cement and concrete	1
1.1 SEM and cement: typical examples of what you can do	1
1.1.1 Examples of imaging.....	2
1.1.2 Examples of X-ray microanalysis.....	4
1.1.3 Example of digital image analysis.....	5
1.2 Consolidation and development.....	7
2 Equipment for SEM/EDX.....	8
2.1 The SEM.....	8
2.1.1 Normal SEM or Environmental SEM?	9
2.2 X-ray microanalysis	12
2.2.1 EDX Versus WDX.....	12
2.2.2 EDX detectors	14
2.2.3 Elemental distribution maps and line profiles.....	16
2.3 Other essential equipment.....	19
2.4 Consolidation and development.....	20
3 Specimen preparation	21
3.1 Types of specimen	21
3.2 Specimen preparation: drying	22
3.3 Specimen preparation: applying a conductive coating.....	24
3.3.1 Carbon or gold (or gold-palladium)?.....	25
3.3.2 Coating layer thickness	25
3.4 Handling specimens.....	26
3.5 Fracture surfaces	26
3.6 Polished sections	28
3.7 Fracture surface or polished section?	29
3.8 Capsules	30
3.9 Specimen storage.....	31
3.10 Consolidation and development.....	32
4 Hints on using the SEM/EDX system	33
4.1 Start slowly and get some training	33
4.2 Some essential terminology.....	33

4.3	X-ray range and sampling volume	35
4.4	X-ray spectrum peak intensity and background.....	37
4.5	Chamber geography.....	38
4.5.1	Setting the coating layer thickness in the EDX software.....	39
4.6	Consolidation and development.....	39
5	Identification of materials.....	40
5.1	Getting started	40
5.2	Cement hydration products	43
5.3	Slag and fly ash	47
5.4	Common types of aggregate	48
5.5	Clinker minerals.....	51
5.6	Summary.....	53
5.7	Consolidation and development.....	54
6	Quantitative analysis: introduction	55
6.1	Careful preparation produces better data	55
6.2	The k-ratio.....	55
6.3	Why do we need a flat specimen?.....	57
6.4	Why do we need a homogeneous specimen?.....	59
6.5	Calculating the matrix effects	61
6.6	Performing an analysis using standards	61
6.6.1	Processing of the spectra	63
6.6.2	Example of analytical procedure	63
6.6.3	An initial test to see if you are obtaining good data	68
6.6.4	Data quality control, analysis totals and normalisation	69
6.7	Standardless analysis	70
6.8	Mineral standards	71
6.9	Verification of standards.....	73
6.10	Consolidation and development	75
7	Quantitative X-ray microanalysis	76
7.1	Analysis of a feldspar crystal	76
7.2	SEM/EDX and cement production	78
7.3	Identifying and analysing the principal clinker minerals	80
7.4	Analysis of hydration products - atomic ratio plots.....	84
7.4.1	Introduction to atomic ratio plots.....	84
7.4.2	Plots of pure and composite cement pastes.....	87
7.4.3	Tips for producing atomic ratio plots.....	91
7.5	Consolidation and development.....	95
8	Quantitative techniques	97
8.1	Determination of cement type: general considerations.....	97
8.1.1	Quantitative techniques: determination of cement type	99
8.2	Quantitative techniques: quantification of cement, slag and fly ash.....	101

8.2.1	Why use a calibration curve?.....	102
8.2.2	The linear interpolation method.....	103
8.2.3	The calibration curve method.....	104
8.3	Quantitative techniques: quantification of cement and fly ash	106
8.4	General notes on quantifying slag and fly ash	107
8.5	Wet chemistry data.....	109
8.6	Note on specimen heterogeneity.....	109
8.7	Water-cement ratio determinations	110
8.7.1	General considerations.....	110
8.7.2	A simple SEM-based method	112
8.8	Consolidation and development.....	115
9	Digital image analysis.....	116
9.1	Digital images and frame averaging.....	116
9.2	Porosity of mortar.....	117
9.3	Image adjustment and binary images	119
9.4	Concrete analysis.....	121
9.5	Consolidation and development.....	126
10	How to identify the main deleterious processes in concrete.....	127
10.1	Suitability of SEM/EDX for investigating damaged concrete	127
10.2	Preparatory procedures	128
10.2.1	Alkali-silica reaction (ASR).....	129
10.2.2	Sulfate attack.....	132
10.2.3	Delayed ettringite formation (DEF).....	134
10.2.4	Thaumasite form of sulfate attack (TSA).....	135
10.2.5	Carbonation.....	135
10.2.6	Leaching.....	137
10.3	Consolidation and development	138
11	Troubleshooting	139
11.1	Specimen preparation.....	139
11.1.1	Resin impregnation.....	139
11.1.2	Relief polishing	140
11.2	SEM Imaging.....	140
11.3	Probe current and accelerating voltage	140
11.3.1	Specimen charging	141
11.3.2	Image resolution	141
11.4	EDX: problems with microanalysis	141
11.4.1	EDX: Detector resolution	142
11.4.2	EDX: low take-off angle	143
11.4.3	Poor quantitative results	143
	Appendix A: Glossary.....	146

Appendix B: Making polished sections	175
Appendix C: Low-cost image analysis software and systems	187

