# **Drying of porous materials**

Teresa Diaz Gonçalves

### **Drying of porous materials**



- stone
- ceramics
- mortars
- earth materials





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porous materials: contain a network of interconnected voids, through which water (liquid and vapour) can migrate

- stone
- ceramics
- mortars
- earth materials





drying: process by which water leaves the porous material

why is it important?

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### why is it important?

#### moisture => material deterioration + health problems + aesthetical problems

- mechanical resistance is lowered
- thermal insulation is reduced
- harmful chemical reactions, such as sulphate attack,
- biodeterioration processes
- salt decay

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old buildings (thick, solid walls in contact with the ground) - moisture is chronic in conservation, most problems are related to the presence of water their repair absorbs a significant fraction of the available resources

# Drying of porous materials Lecture contents

- Introduction
- The two-stage model
- NMR animation of drying with pure water
- Drying tests
  - The evaporation curve
  - The drying index
- Slower drying: causes and effects
- Influence of soluble salts on drying + NMR animation
- Influence of paint layers on drying + NMR results
- Influence of hydrophobic treatments on drying + results \_

- ... including 3D effects



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Liquid continuity / wet material



Stage I

#### <u>Stage I</u>

- Liquid continuity across the sample
- Evaporation front at the surface
- Drying rate is constant wet surface

Two flows:

- liquid flow *interior*→*surface*
- vapour flow *surface*→*exterior*
- systems (constantly) tend to equilibrium
- equilibrium => liquid flow=vapour flow





Stage I

#### <u>Stage I</u>

- Liquid continuity across the sample
- Evaporation front at the surface
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Moisture content decreases uniformly across the sample ...



Stage I

- Liquid continuity across the sample
- Evaporation front at the surface
- Drying rate is constant

wet surface

• Decrease of the moisture content => lower liquid flow





Stage II

Stage I

Stage II

- Liquid continuity across the sample
- Evaporation front at the surface
- Drying rate is constant wet surface



• Evaporation front recedes into the material because the flows tend to equalize ...



Stage I

- Liquid continuity across the sample
- Evaporation front at the surface
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Stage II

#### <u>Stage II</u>

- Decrease of the moisture content => lower liquid flow
- Evaporation front recedes into the material

because the flows tend to equalize ...



Stage I

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#### Stage II

- Decrease of the moisture content => lower liquid flow
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Stage I



Stage II

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- dry surface



Side view

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NMR image of the saturated specimen

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#### 18°C - 0% RH



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20h – final state

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Stage II

EU project CHARISMA - ITINERANT COURSE ON STONE CONSERVATION - LNEC, 7-18 May 2012

### **Drying of porous materials – Drying tests**





Stage II

RILEM TC 25-PEM (1980) Materials and Structures 13, 204–207



Stage I



Stage II

RILEM TC 25-PEM (1980) Materials and Structures 13, 204–207

Specimens - laterally sealed with epoxy

- put in partial or total immersion
- removed and bottom sealed with film
- let dry in certain environment
- periodical weighting =>  $m_i$





Stage I



Stage II

RILEM TC 25-PEM (1980) Materials and Structures 13, 204–207

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Stage I



Stage II

• Measure the "evaporation curve"

RILEM TC 25-PEM (1980) Materials and Structures 13, 204–207

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- periodical weighting =>  $w_i = 100(m_i - m_s)/m_s$  [%]



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Stage I



Stage II

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RILEM TC 25-PEM (1980) Materials and Structures 13, 204–207

#### • Calculate the "drying index"

Commissione Normal, (1991) Misura dell'indice di asciugamento (drying index). Roma: CNR/ICR. Normal 29/88

# DI translates the drying curve into a single quantitative parameter


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Stage I



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 $DI = \frac{A_1}{A_2}$ 





Stage I



Stage II

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Stage I



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#### Compare the behaviour/effect of different:

- materials
- environmental conditions (T, RH, air velocity, etc.)
- paints, hydrophobic treatments, consolidants, etc.
- type and concentration of salt
- etc.



Stage II



Stage I



Stage II

=> longer stage I + higher DI





Stage II

#### => longer stage I + higher DI







Stage II

#### => longer stage I + higher DI



Possible causes:

Environmental conditions: higher RH, lower T, etc.





Stage II

#### => longer stage I + higher DI



Possible causes:

- Environmental conditions: higher RH, lower T, etc.
- Evaporation blocking layers (paints...)





Stage II

#### => longer stage I + higher DI



Possible causes:

- Environmental conditions: higher RH, lower T, etc.
- Evaporation blocking layers (paints...)
- Hydrophobic treatments



Stage II

#### => longer stage I + higher DI



Possible causes:

- Environmental conditions: higher RH, lower T, etc.
- Evaporation blocking layers (paints...)
- Hydrophobic treatments
- Salts ...





#### Water



#### **NaCl solution**

















#### **NaCl solution**









#### **NaCl** solution

- Drying is sower
- Stage I is longer => surface is wet at lower moisture contents



state of dynamic equilibrium ...





state of dynamic equilibrium ...





Relative equilibrium humidity (RHeq)...

**Consequences in terms of drying behaviour ?** 





**76%** 









## 20°C K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> solution 76% RH Hygroscopic absorption of moisture from the air 76% 43% RH RH<sub>eq</sub> < RH air 67

- The vapour pressure gradient can not fully explain the huge differences in drying rate



- The vapour pressure gradient can not fully explain the huge differences in drying rate
- Blocking of the pores by salt crystals ...



### **Drying of porous materials – Three-dimensional effects**

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In walls with rising damp...



### **Drying of porous materials – Three-dimensional effects**

#### In walls with rising damp...

... the liquid tends to <u>rise up</u> to where the <u>vapour flow</u> through the surface of the wall is <u>equal</u> to the <u>liquid flow</u> that penetrates through the base of the wall



#### water
#### In walls with rising damp...

... the liquid tends to rise up to where the vapour flow through the surface of the wall is equal to the liquid flow that penetrates through the base of the wall



#### salt solution









































With the paint:

- Drying is slower
- Stage I is longer

=> surface stays wet longer / at lower moisture contents

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- Colourless liquid

- Applied by brushing or spray

Water repellent treatments are used to:

• Reduce the capillary suction of the material



- Colourless liquid
- Applied by brushing or spray

Water repellent treatments are used to:

- Reduce the capillary suction of the material
- Protection of facades
  - prevent the ingress of moisture
  - prevent staining and moisture-related
  - deterioration of the surface



- Colourless liquid





- Five silicone-based treatments
- Acquired in the market
- Applied on cubic brick specimens
- Consumption respected the thresholds
- Drying tests (20°C 50% RH)





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- Applied on cubic brick specimens
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- Drying tests (20°C 50% RH)
- Slower drying: because there is no stage I...





Stage II

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- Acquired in the market
- Applied on cubic brick specimens
- Consumption respected the thresholds
- Drying tests (20°C 50% RH)
- Slower drying: because there is no stage I...





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# THANK YOU...