GEOTECHNICAL & STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING CONGRESS
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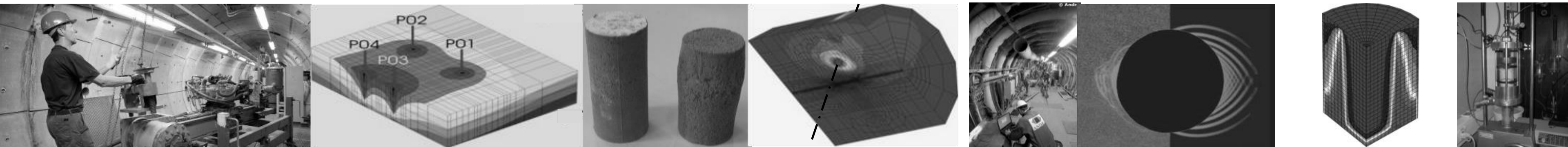
Desiccation cracks formation in clay-barrier for nuclear waste disposal

J. Hubert [1] – N. Prime [3] – E. Plougonven [2] – A. Leonard [2] – F. Collin [1]

[1] Université de Liège – Dep.t ArGEnCo
[2] Université de Liège – Dept. Chimie appliquée
[3] Université Savoie Mont-Blanc LOCIE

<u>Thesis director</u> : Frédéric Collin

Tuesday 16th of February



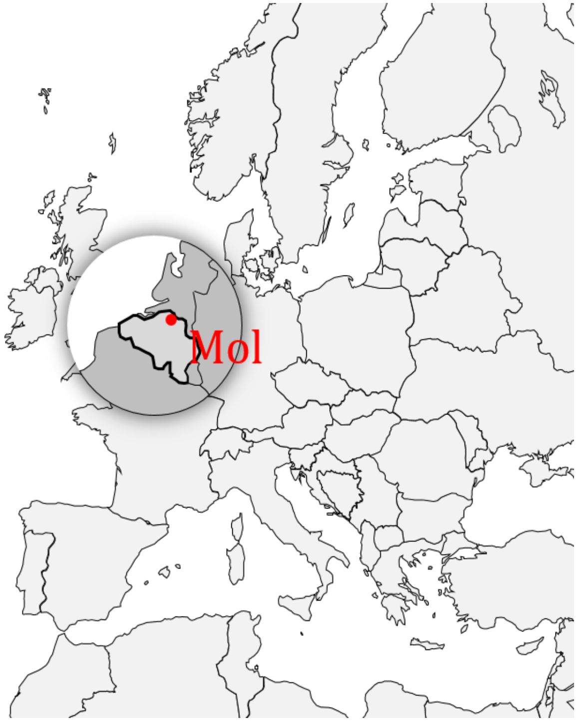
SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATION

- Nuclear waste disposal
- Material and method
- Drying kinetics
- Shrinkage
- Conclusions

NUCLEAR WASTE DISPOSAL

- High activity long life **radioactive wastes** need to be **isolated** for a **long period of time ⇒ Deep geological disposal**
  - Stable and low permeability rock formation required

    ⇒ in **Belgium** the studied formation is **Boom Clay**



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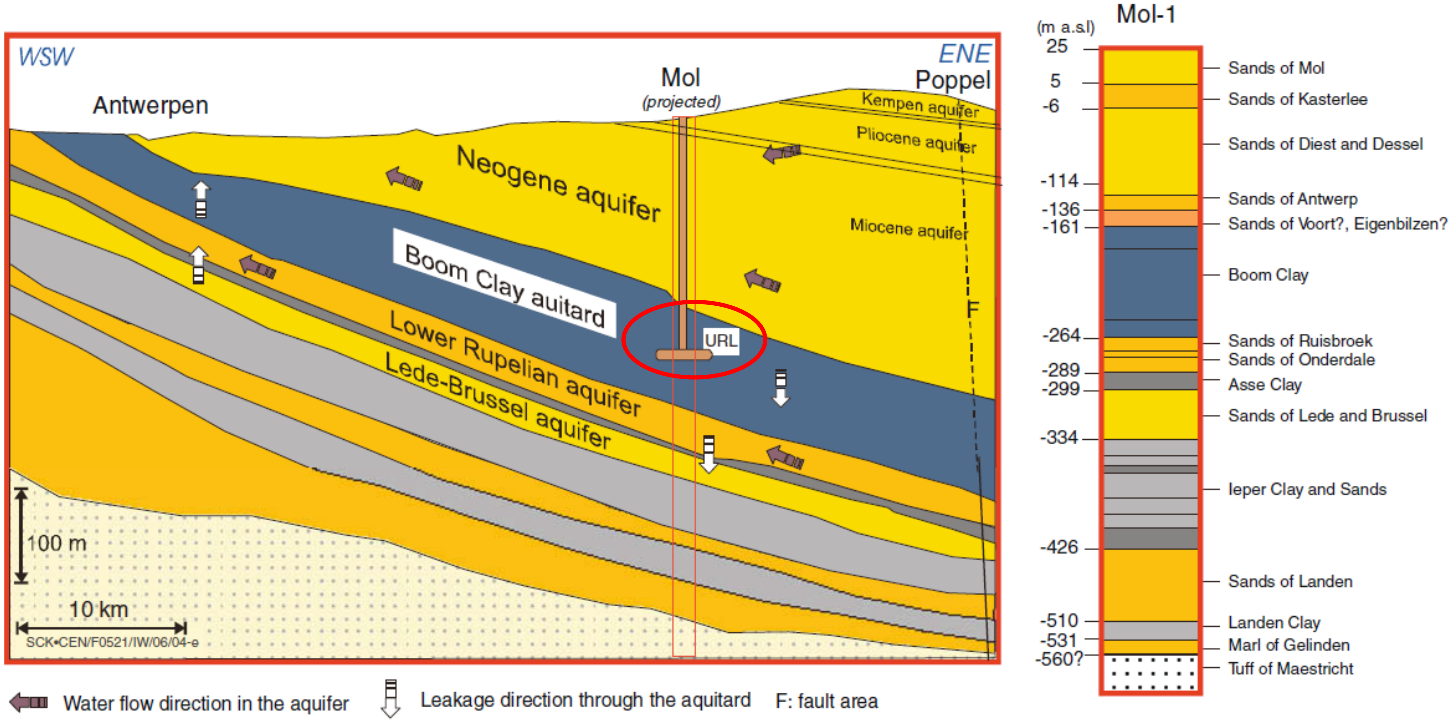

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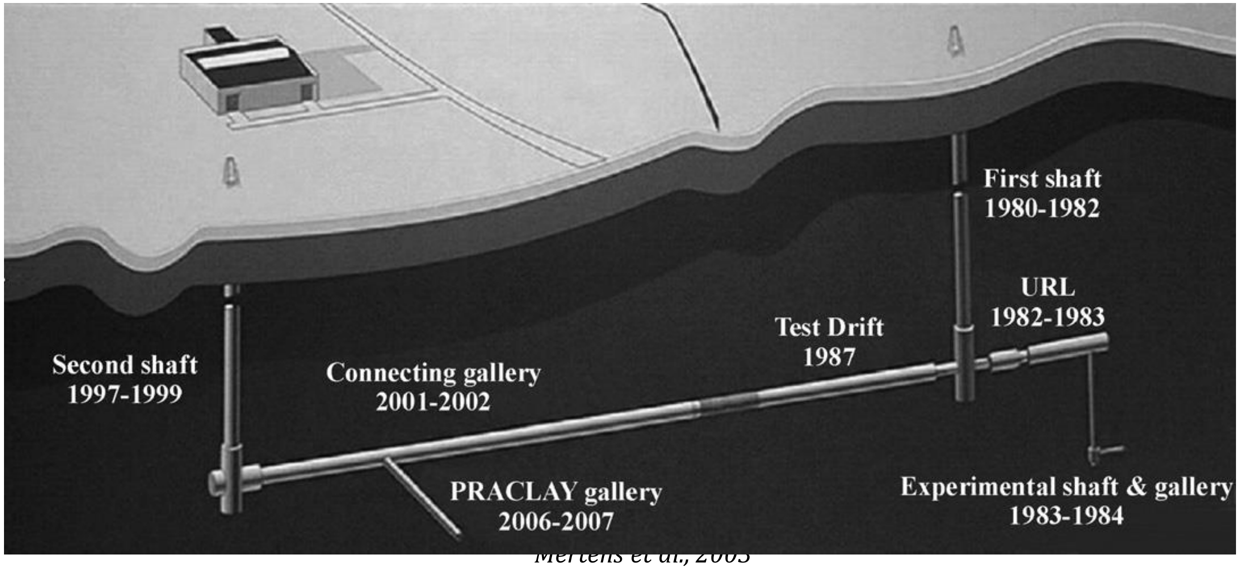
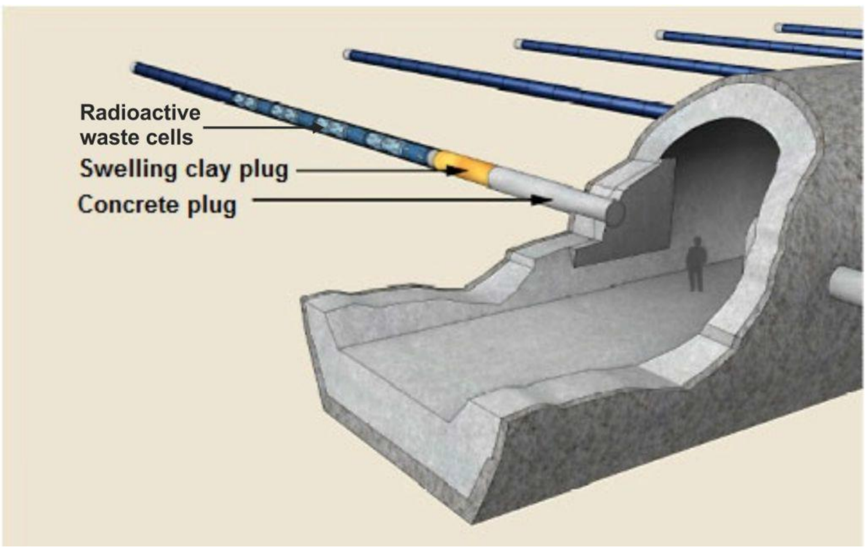


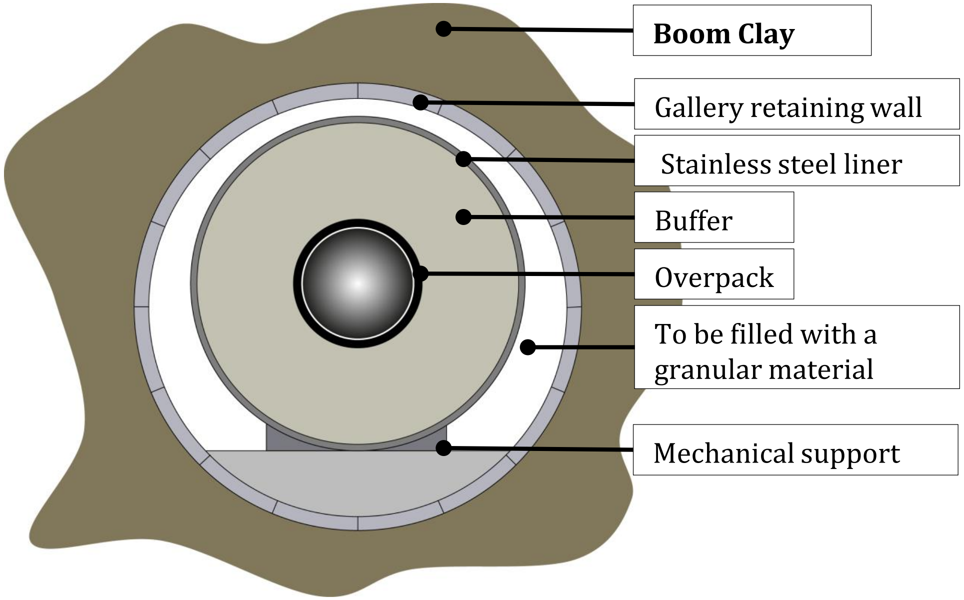
Mertens et al., 2003

NUCLEAR WASTE DISPOSAL

- Deep geological storage
  - Burial shaft and multi barrier principle:



Andra 2005



Craye et al., 2009

SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATION

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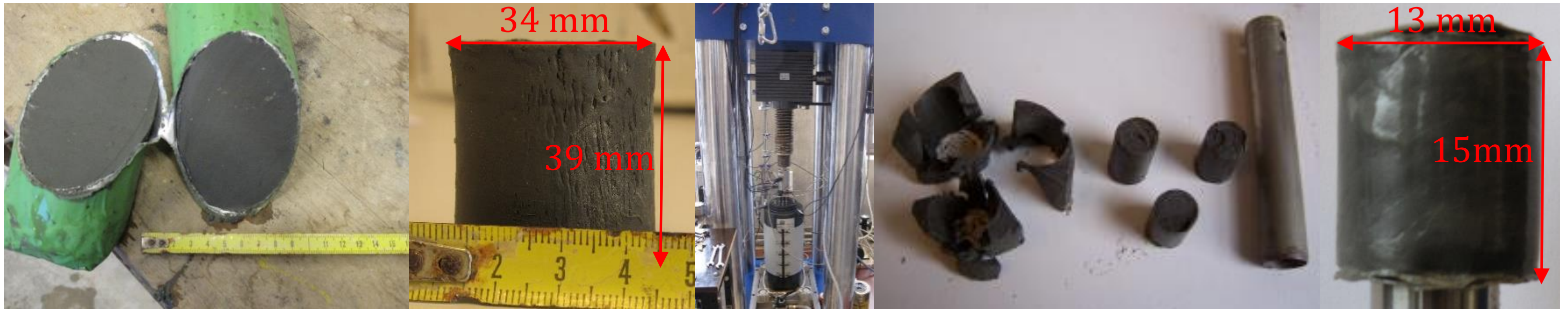
Material and method

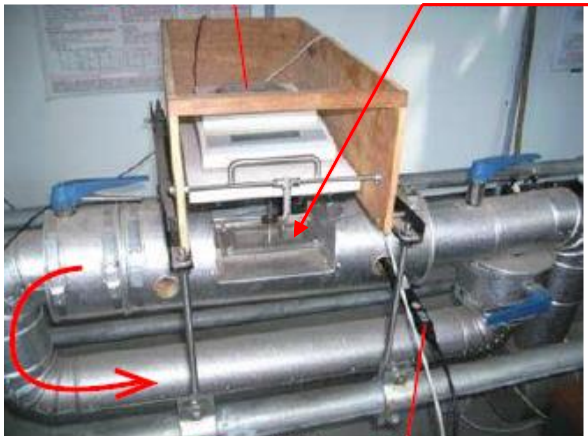
- Samples preparation

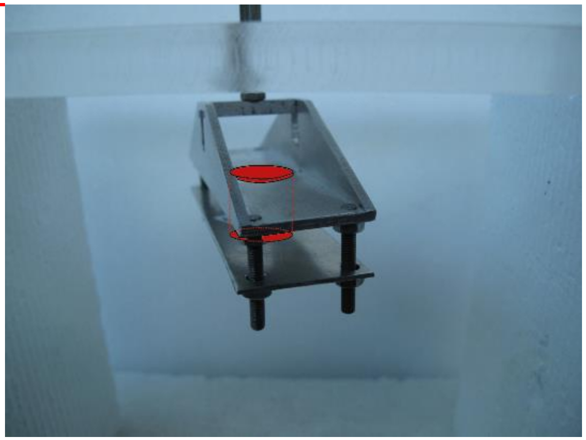


Initial core → Extracted samples → Saturation → Optimization → Finished samples

Material and method

- Convective drying test
  - Sample weighed every 30 seconds in the convective dryer

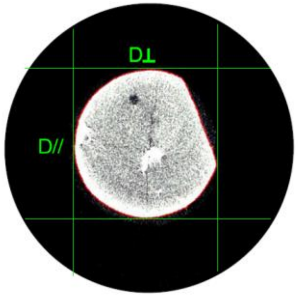


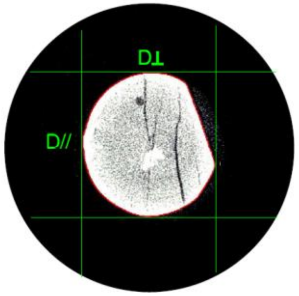


Drying conditions	
Temperature	25°C
Humidity	3,5 %
Air flow	0,8 m/s

Material and method

- Data acquisition and image processing
  - Shrinkage and cracking measurement





Identification of the bedding direction → **Dimensions at saturated state** → **Dimensions until dry state**

Skyscan 1172

Hole filling and binarization →

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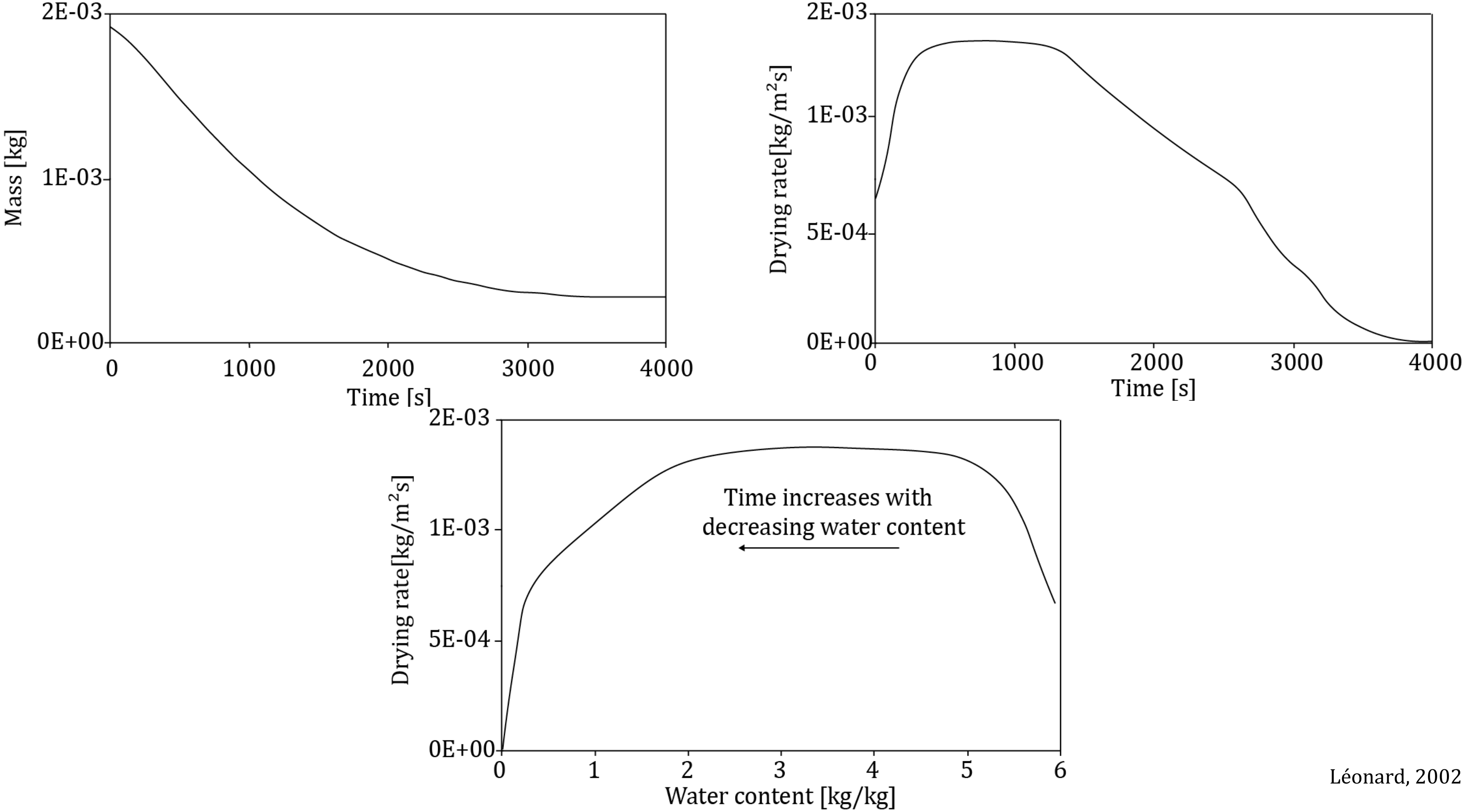
Drying kinetics

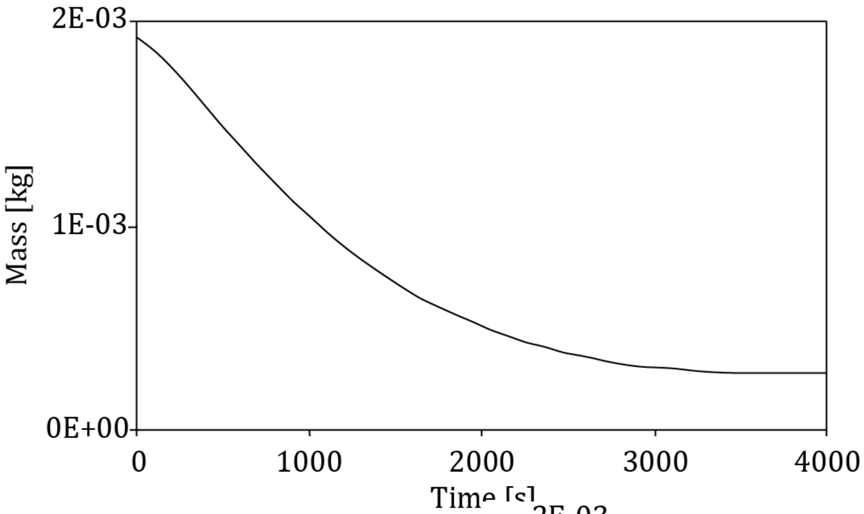
- Theory of porous media drying kinetics

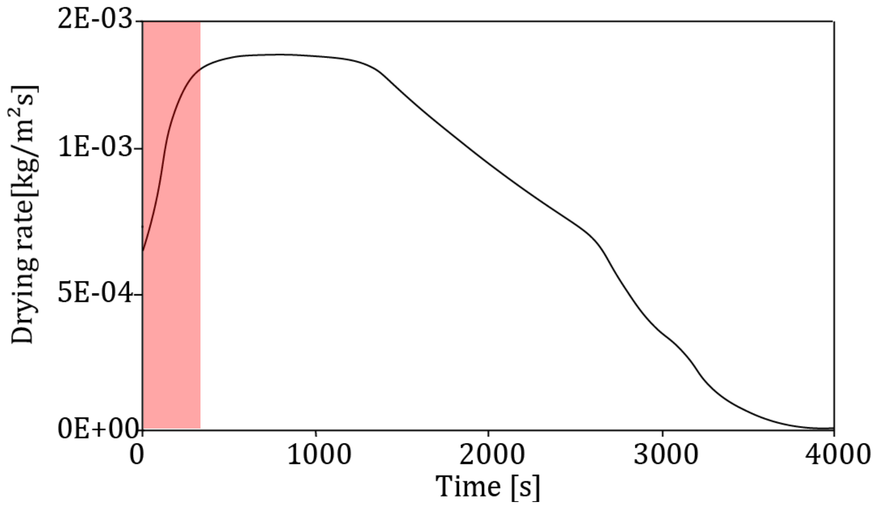


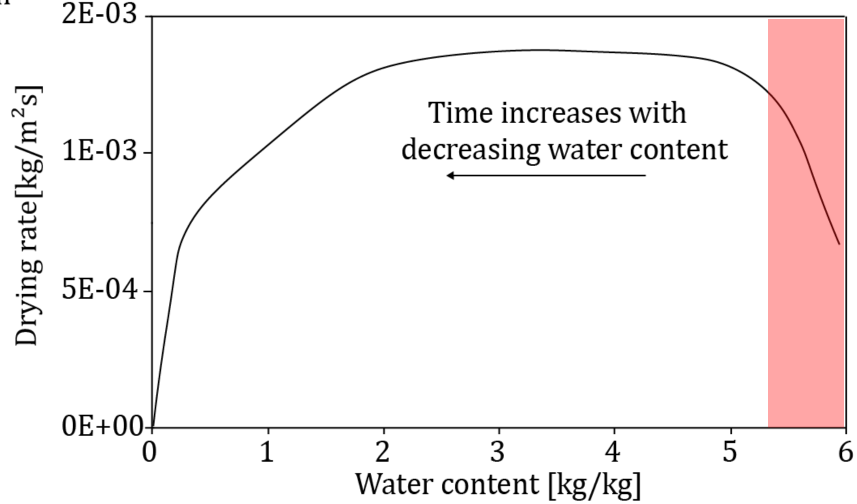
Léonard, 2002

DRYING KINETICS

- Theory of porous media drying kinetics







Léonard, 2002

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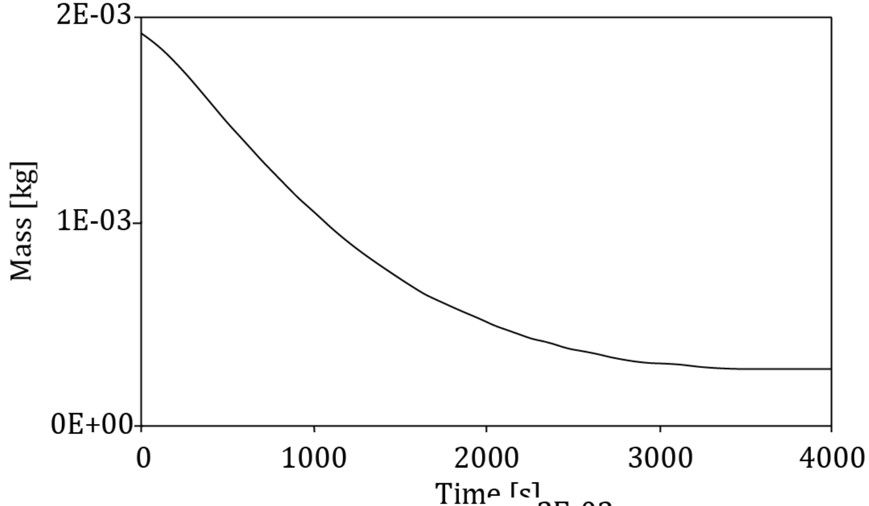

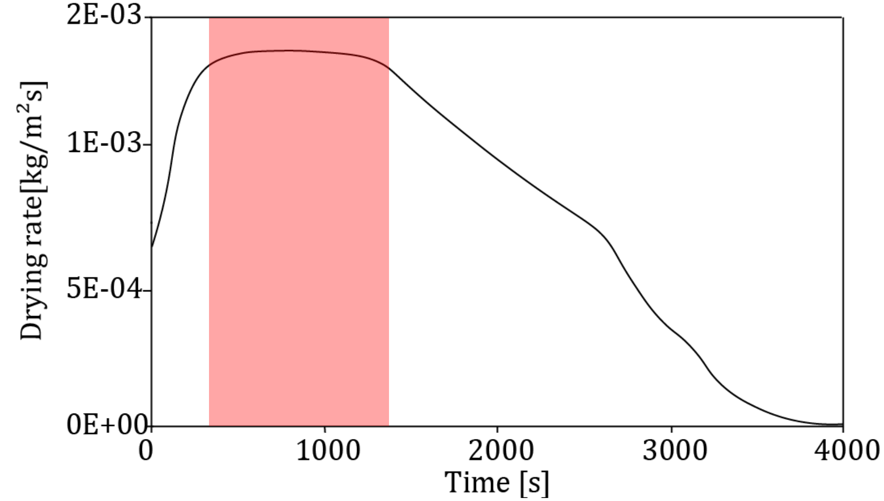

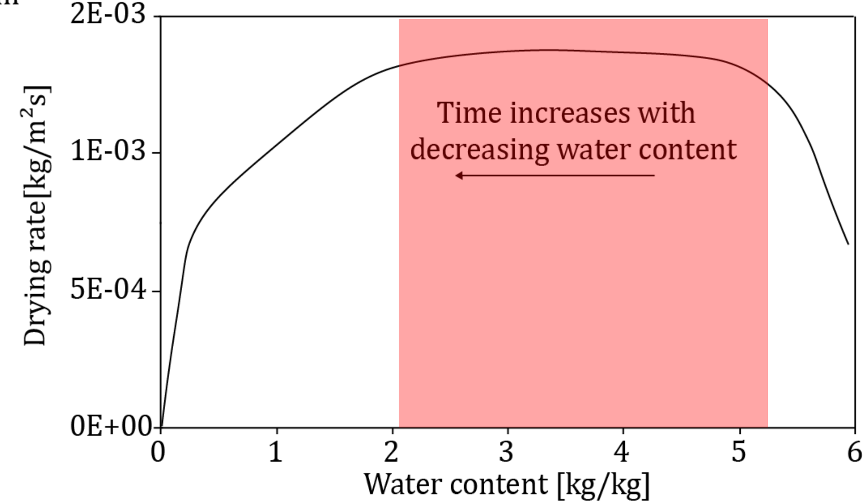

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Drying kinetics

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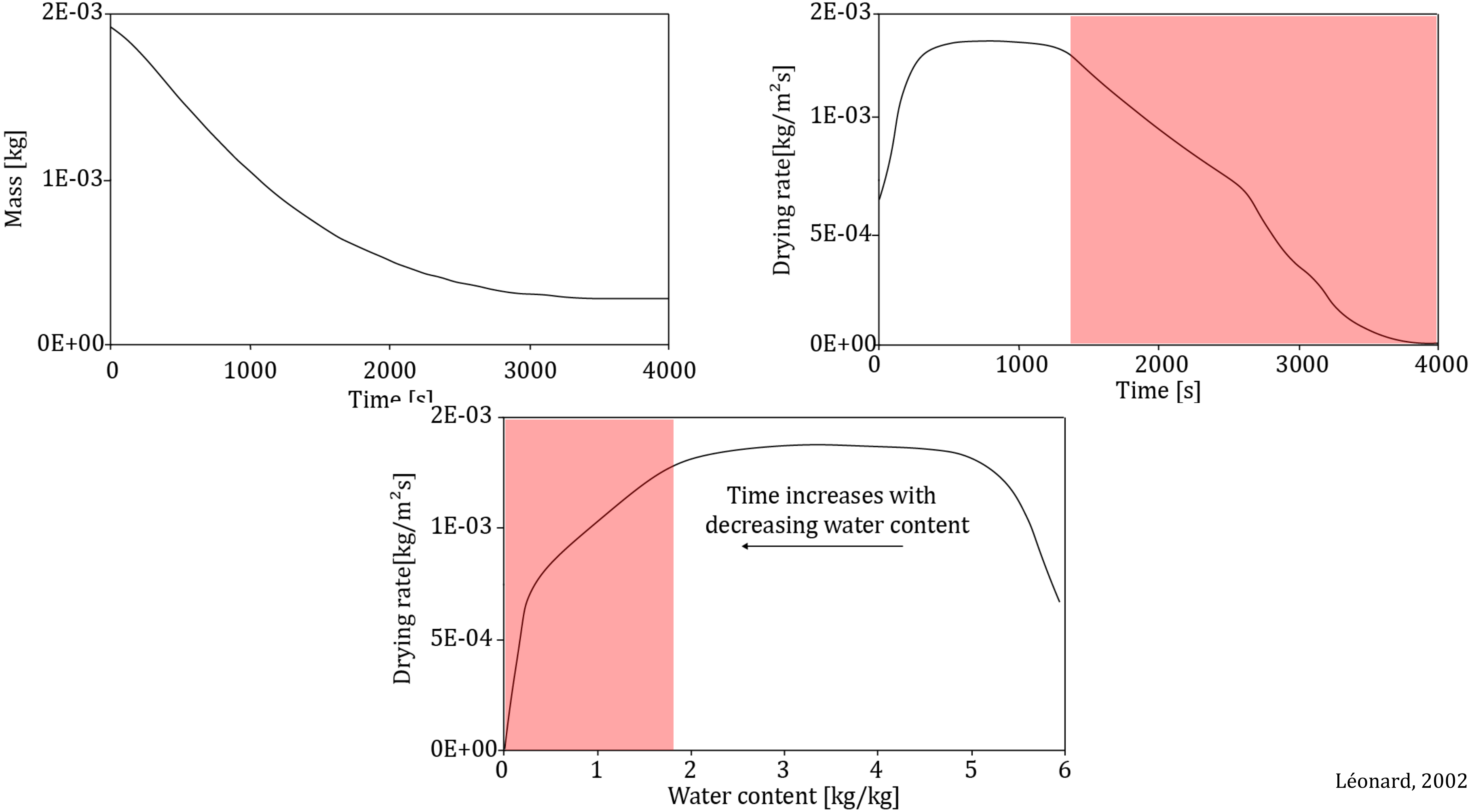
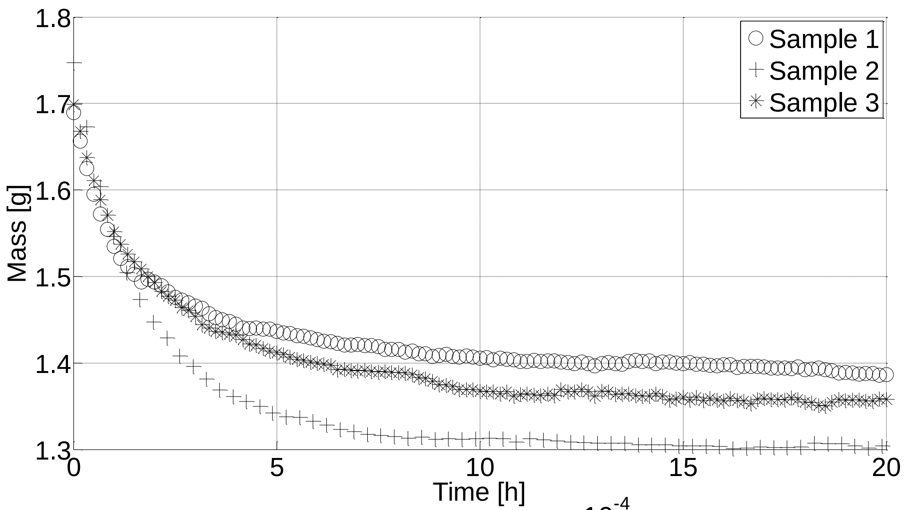
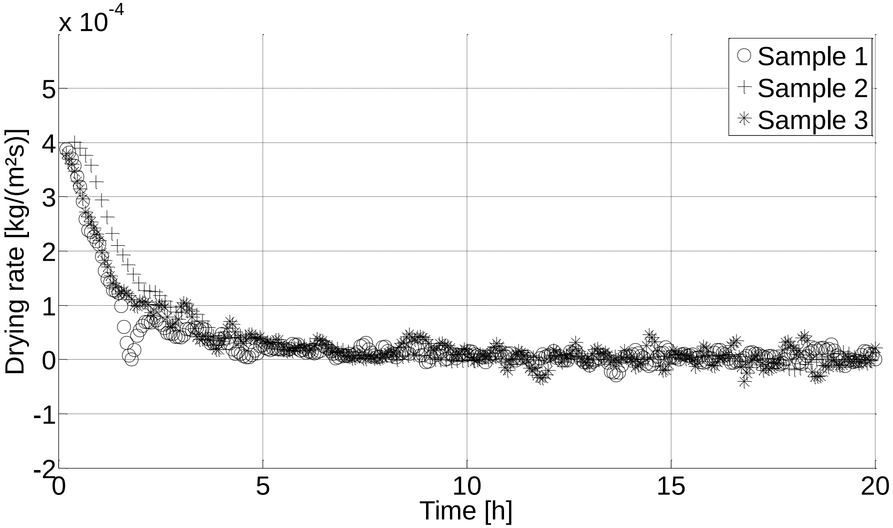


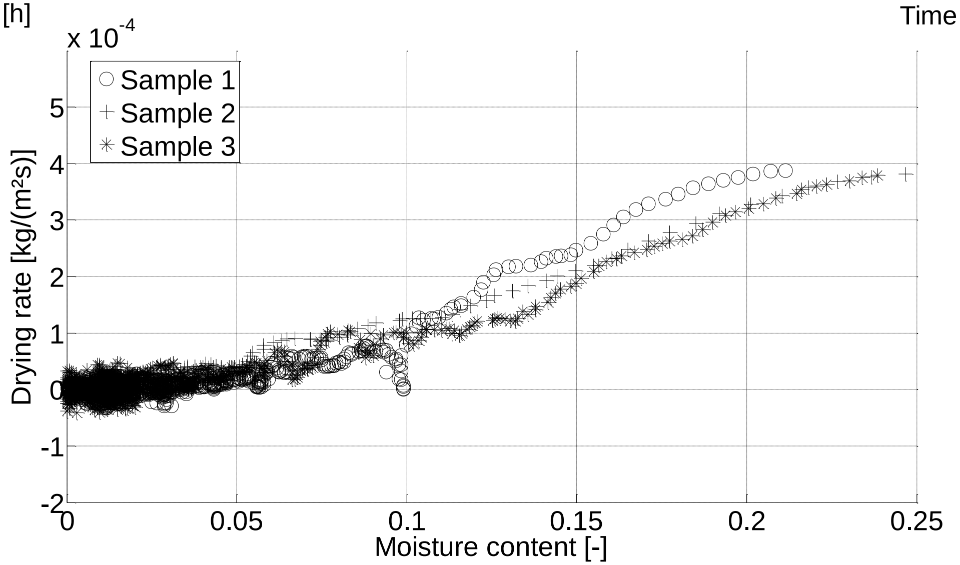
Léonard, 2002

DRYING KINETICS

- Experimental results

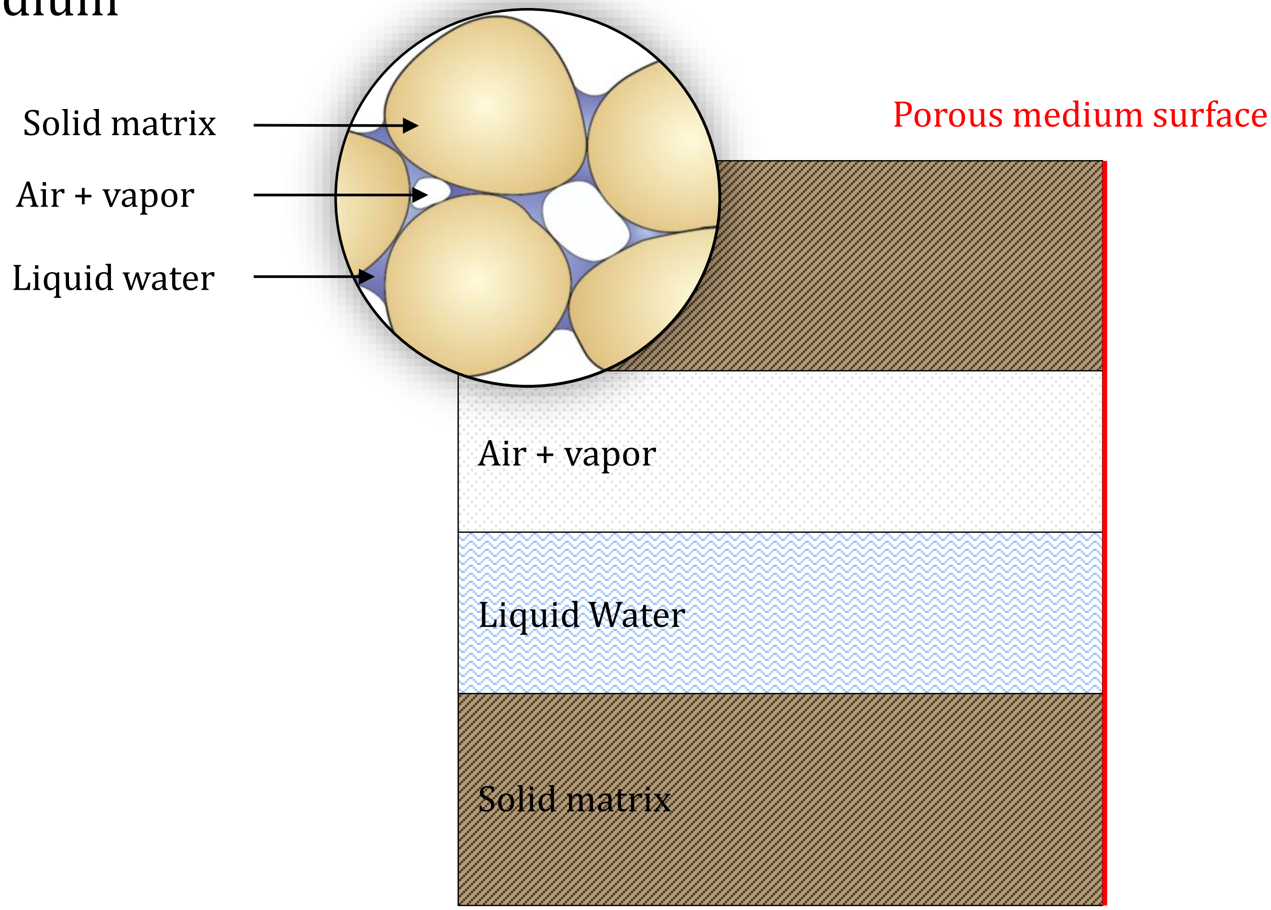






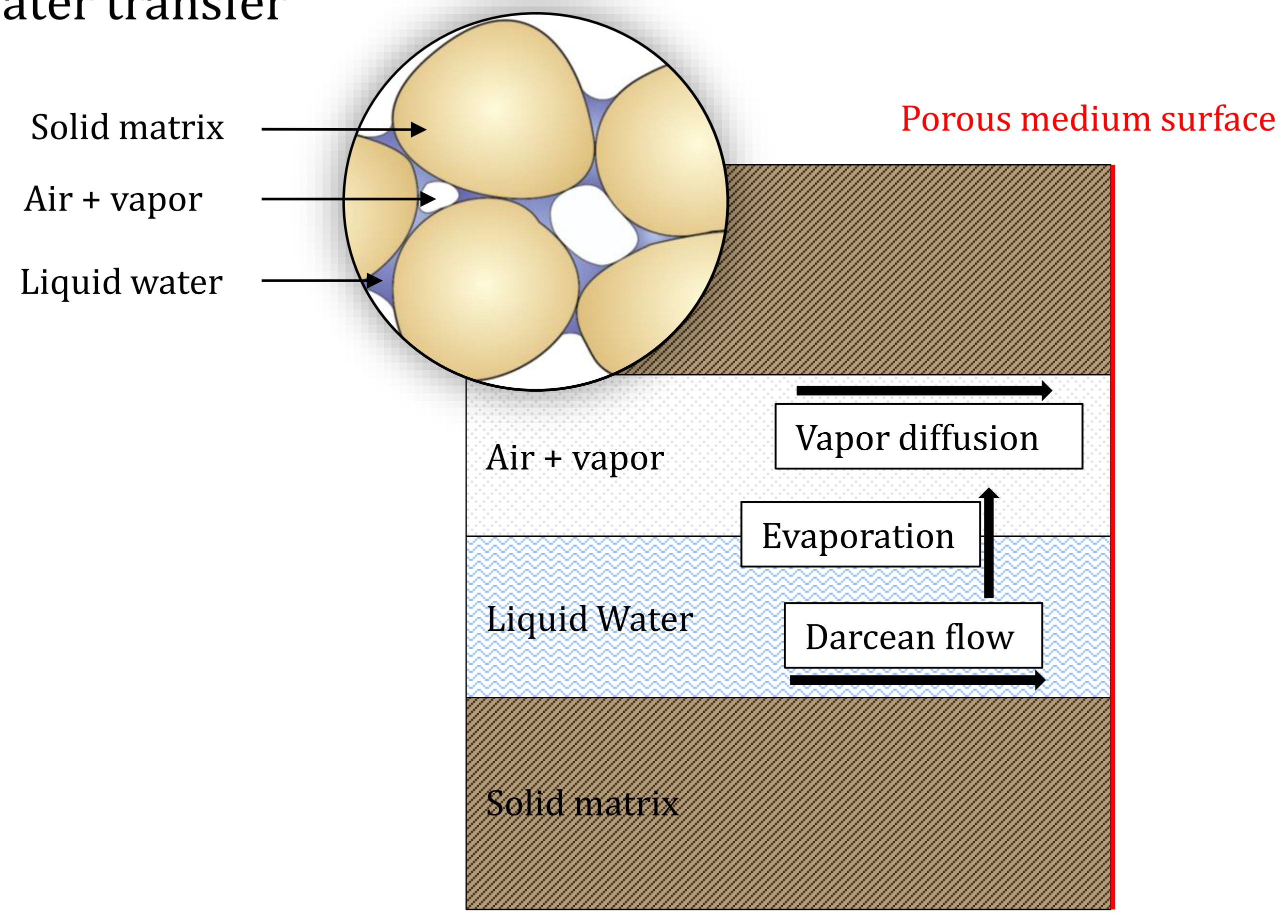
DRYING KINETICS

- Porous medium



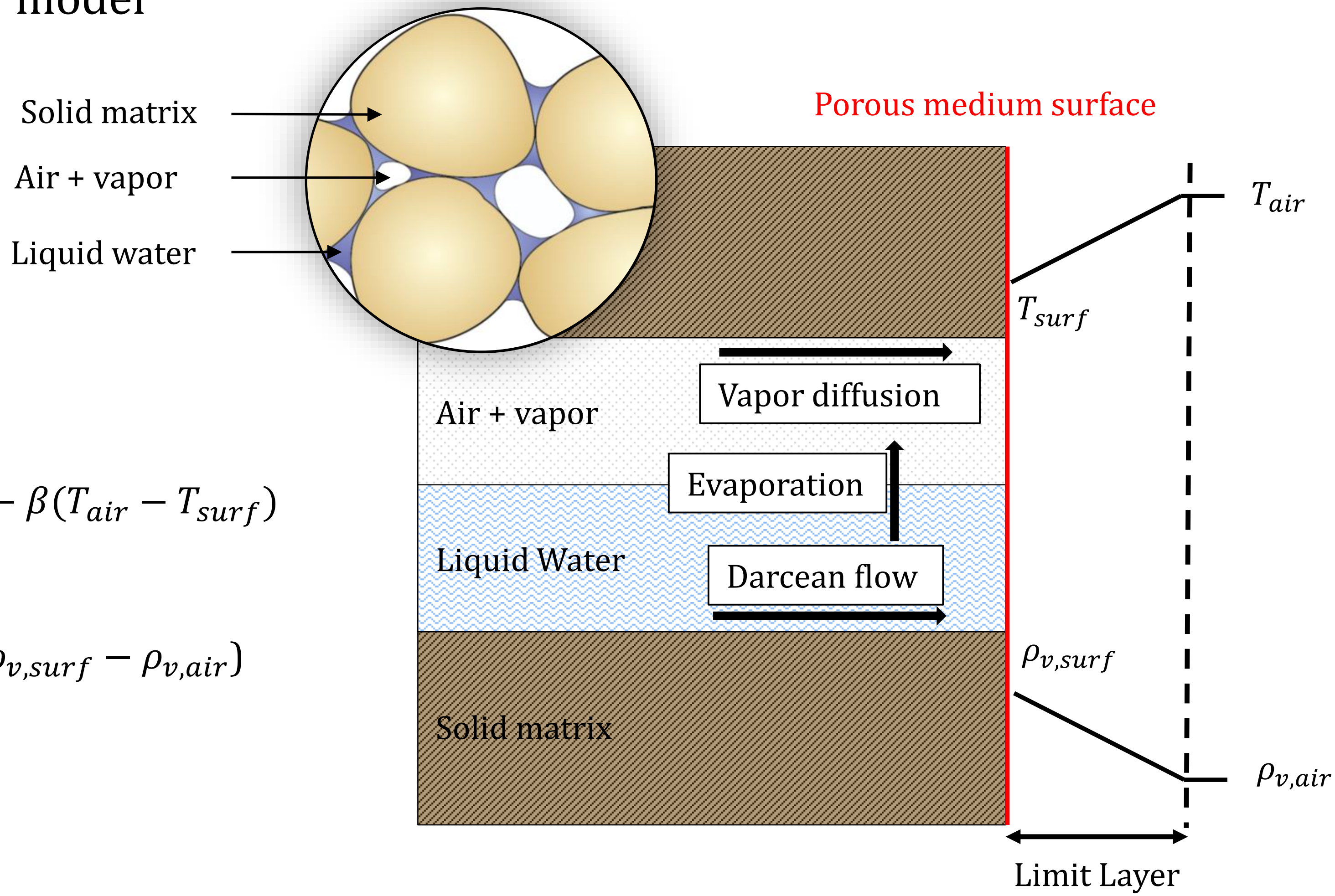
DRYING KINETICS

- Internal water transfer



DRYING KINETICS

- Limit layer model



Heat flux :

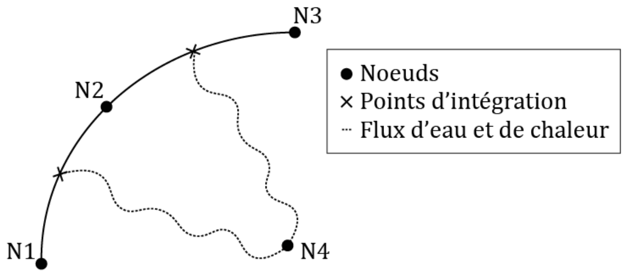
$$q_h = Lq_w - \beta(T_{air} - T_{surf})$$

Water flux :

$$q_w = \boldsymbol{\alpha}(\rho_{v,surf} - \rho_{v,air})$$

NUMERICAL STUDY OF THE DRYING KINETICS

- **Integration** of **limit layer model** into a **FEM framework** :
  - Use of a special kind of finite element :



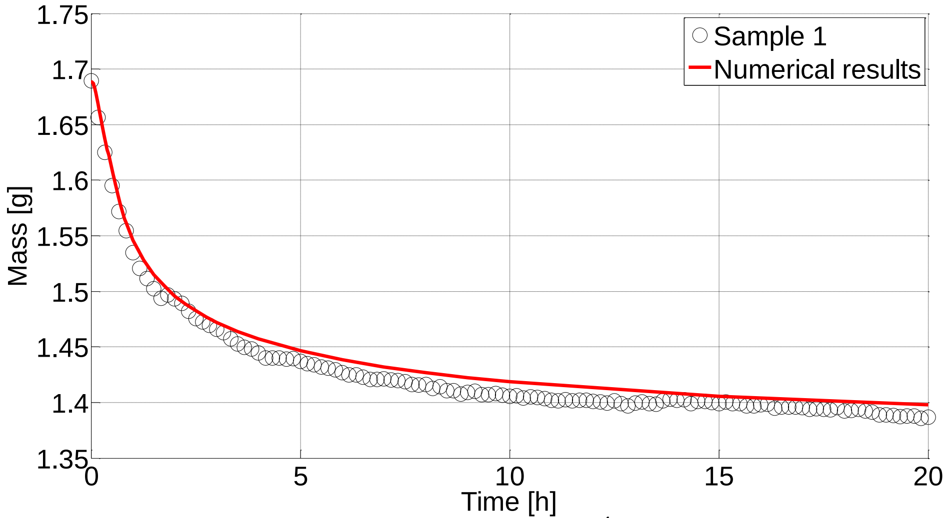
Gerard & al, 2008

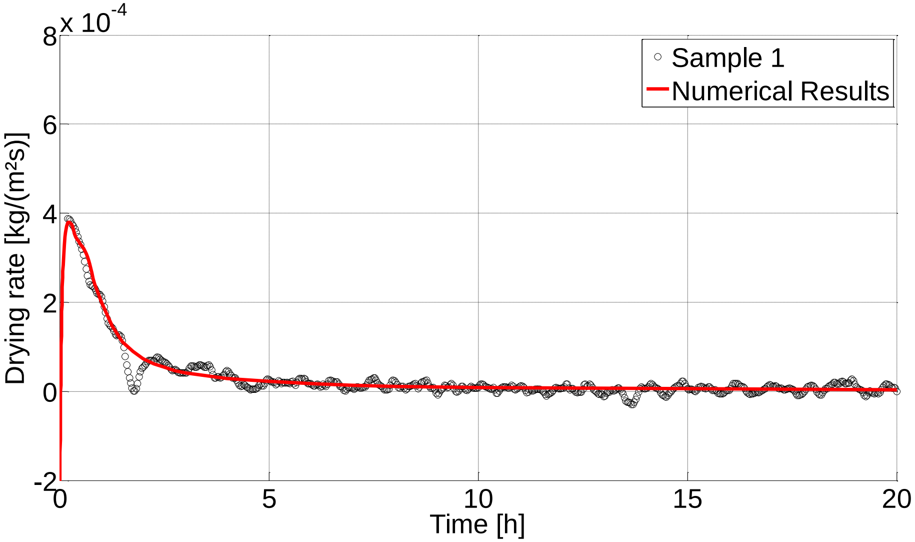
- Boundary conditions
  - **Water pressure** at the environment node : $p_c = -\frac{\rho RT}{M} ln(HR)$
  - **Temperature** at the environment node : $T = 25°C$
  - Transfer coefficients :

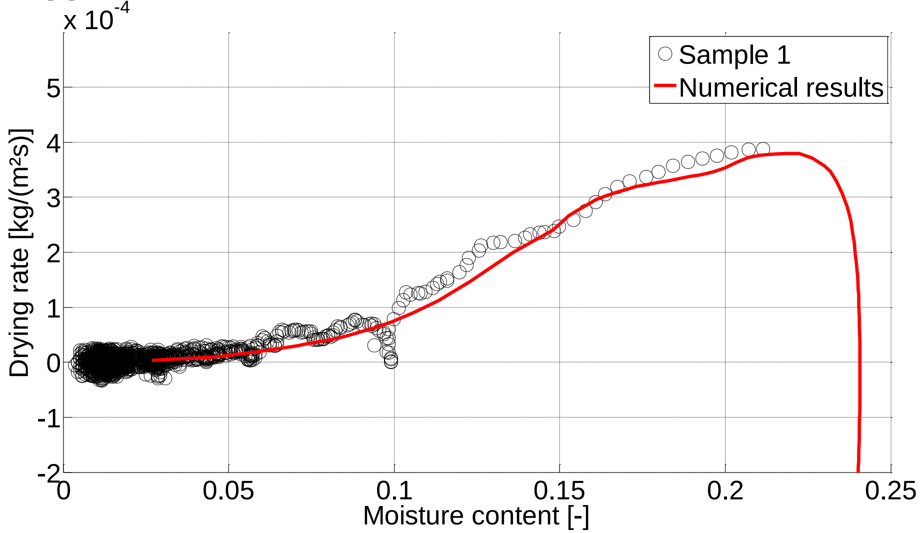
$\alpha\ [m/s]$	$\beta\ [W/m^2/K]$
0.048	53

Numerical study of the drying kinetics

- Numerical results:







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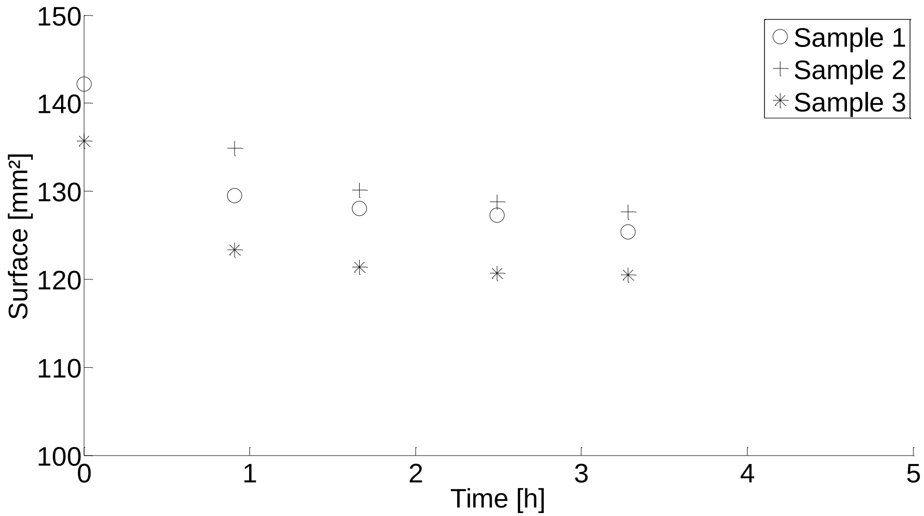
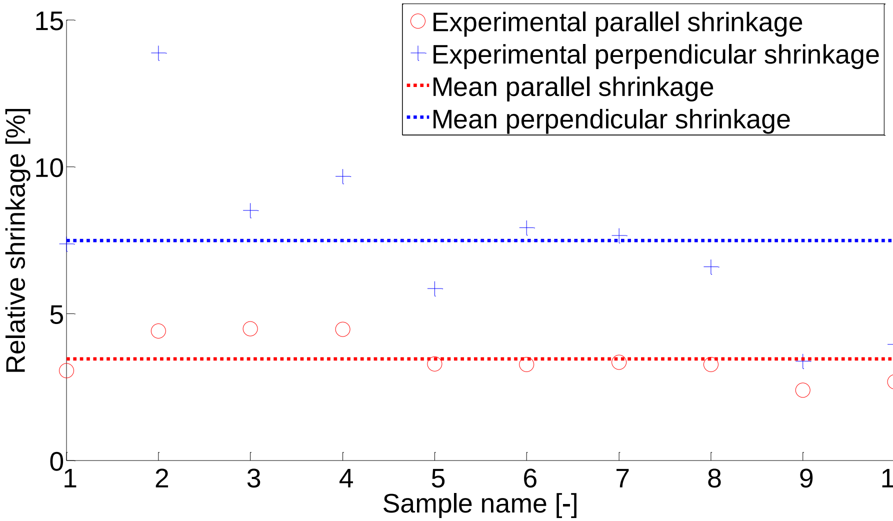
DRYING SHRINKAGE

- Experimental results

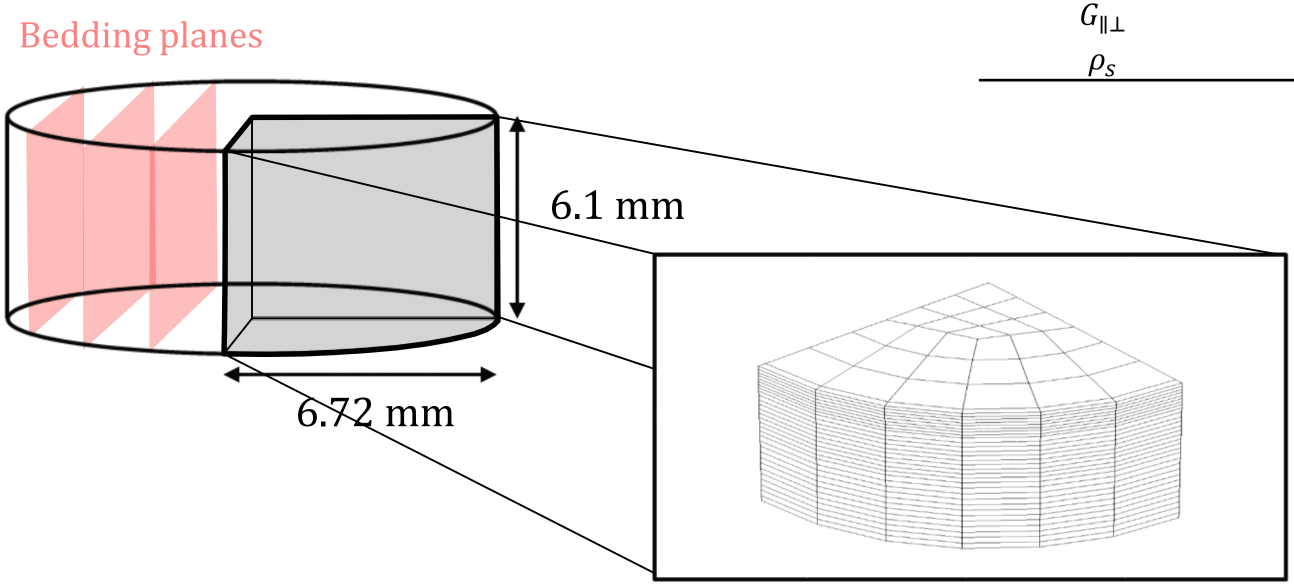




NUMERICAL STUDY OF THE DRYING SHRINKAGE

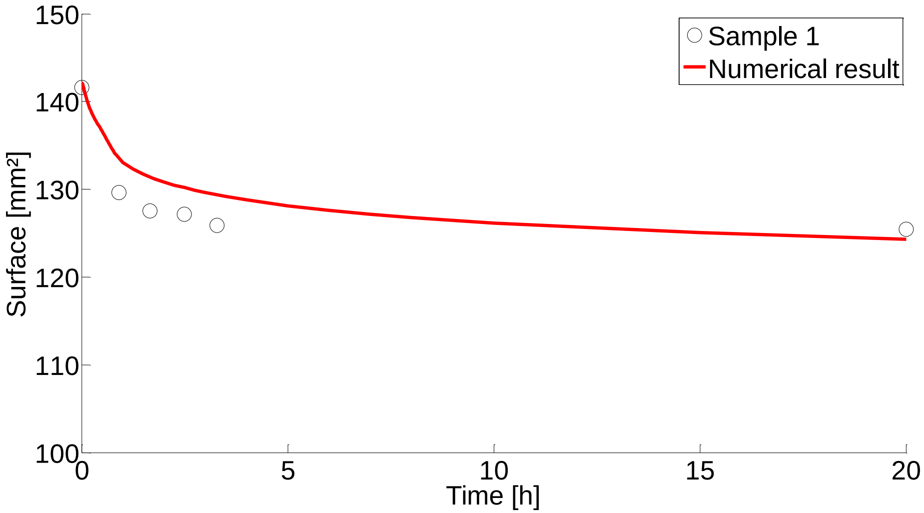
- Numerical mechanical model
  - 3D Orthotropic hydro-mechanical model

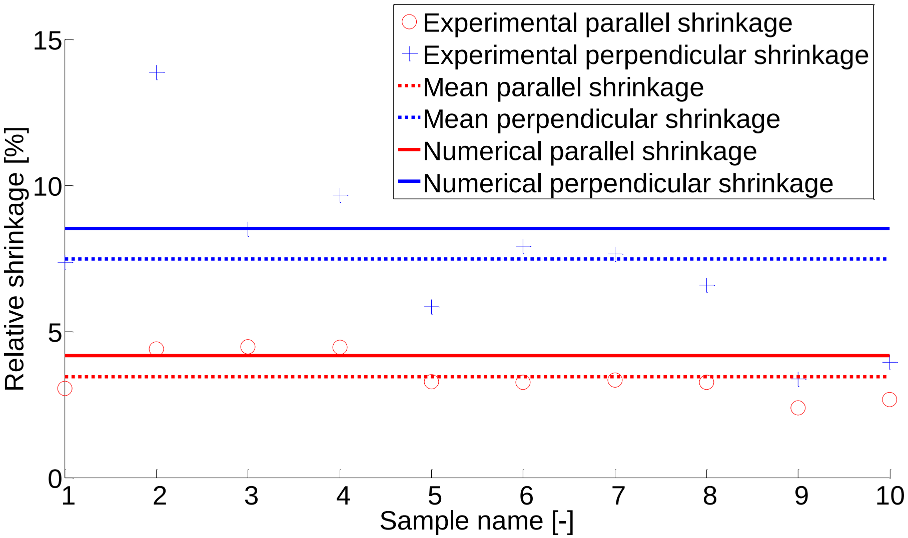
MECHANICAL PARAMETERS (*DIZIER, 2011*)		
$E_{\parallel}$	700	$[MPa]$
$E_{\perp}$	350	$[MPa]$
$\nu_{\parallel\parallel}$	0.25	$[-]$
$\nu_{\parallel\perp}$	0.125	$[-]$
$G_{\parallel\perp}$	1.4	$[MPa]$
ρ_s	2670	$[kg/m^3]$



Numerical study of the drying shrinkage

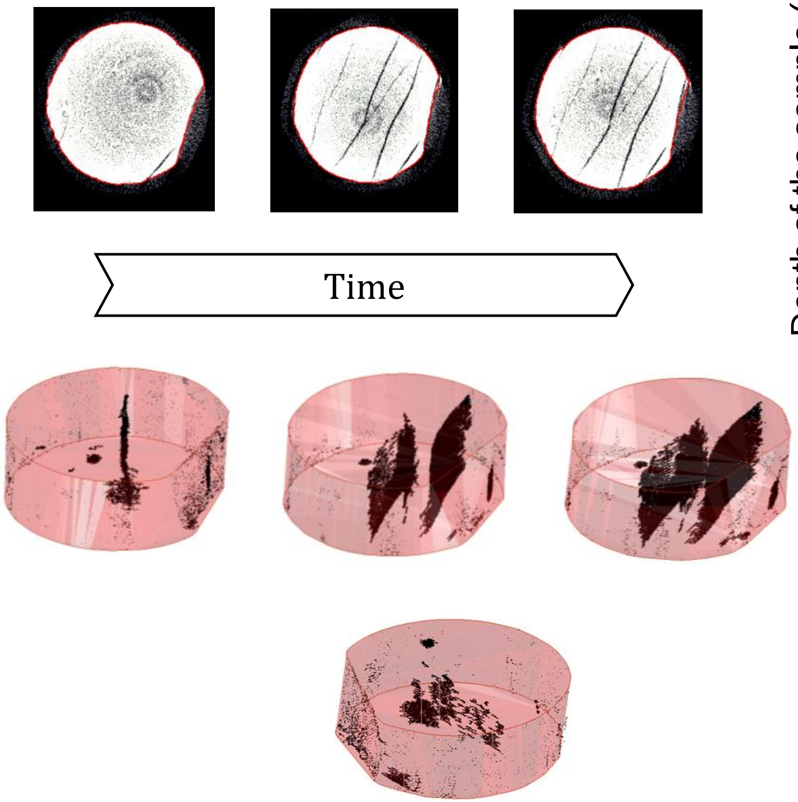
- Numerical results

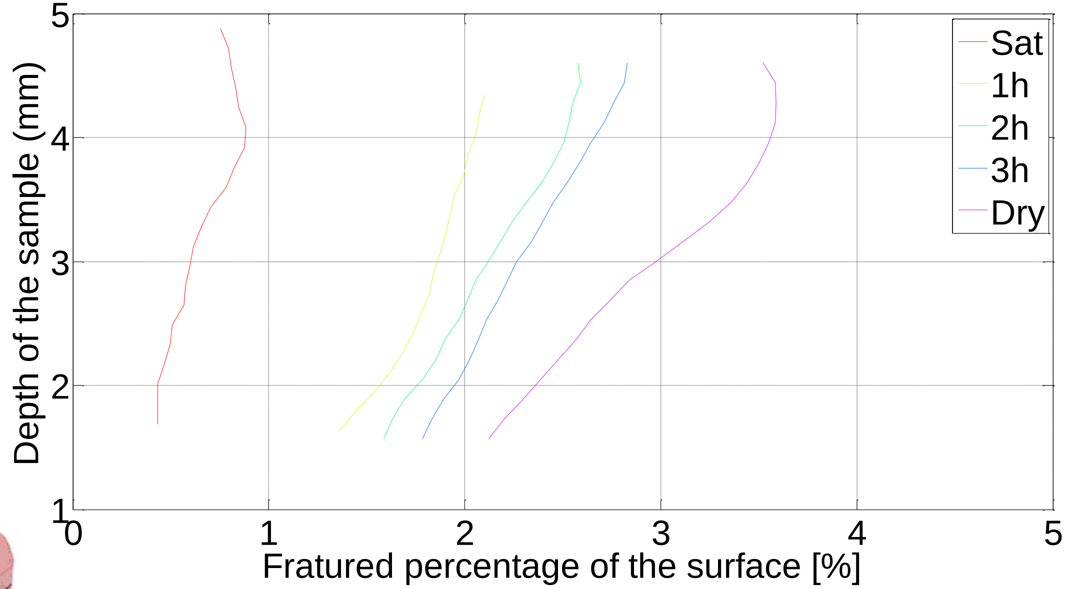




CONCLUSION

- Dessication cracking





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Gerard P., Charlier, R, Chambon, R, & Collin, F. 2008. Influence of evaporation and seepage on the convergence of a ventilated cavity. Water resources research, 44(5), W00C02.

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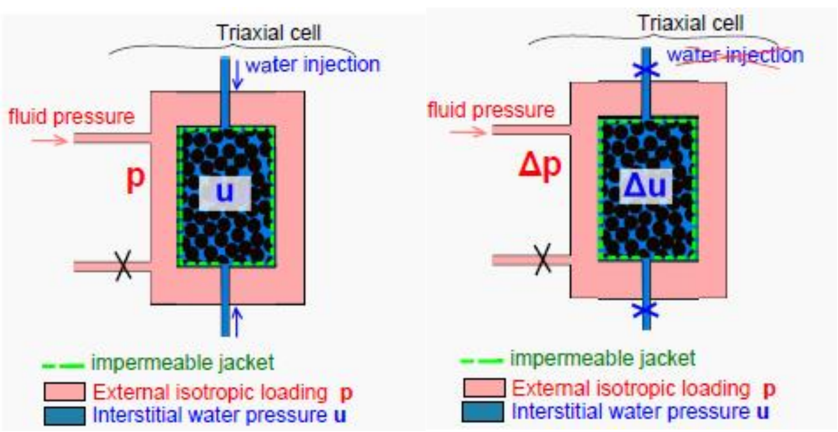
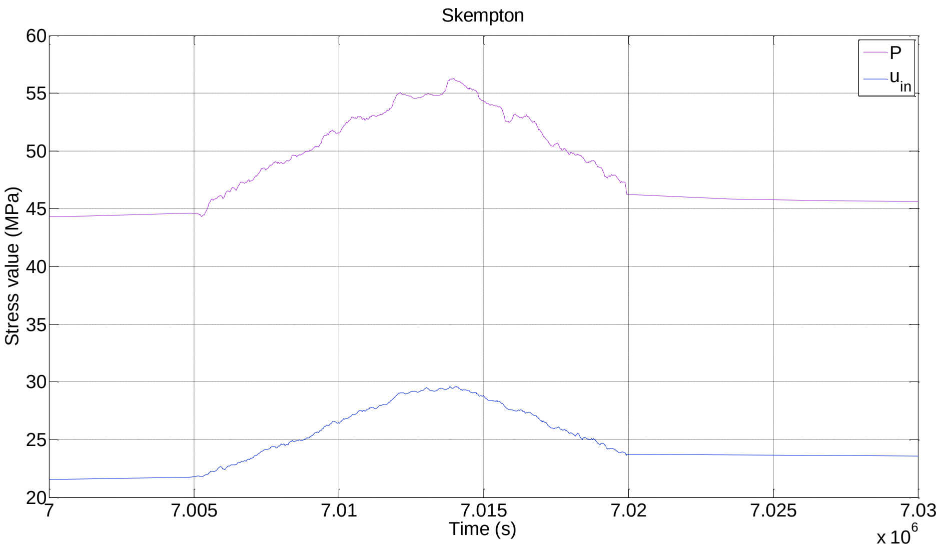
Thank you !

julien.hubert@ulg.ac.be

SATURATION CONTROL

- Skempton coefficient





Materials and methods

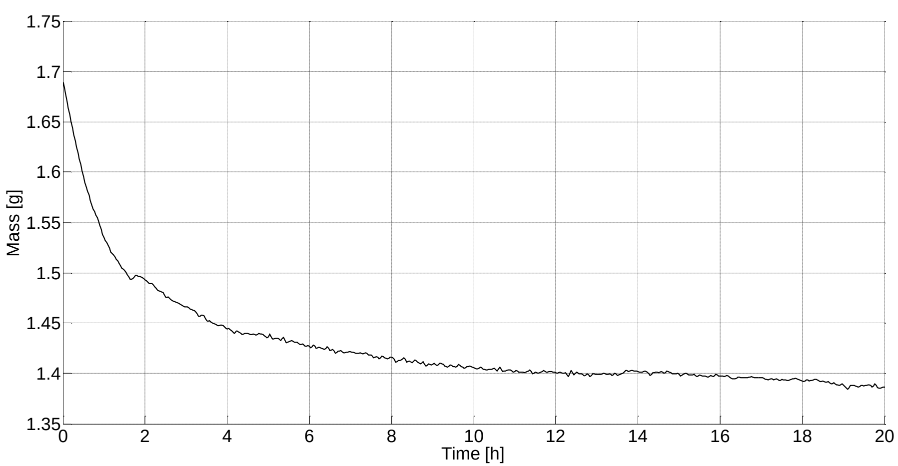
- X-Ray tomography characteristics
  - Cross section acquisition using a X-Ray microtomography

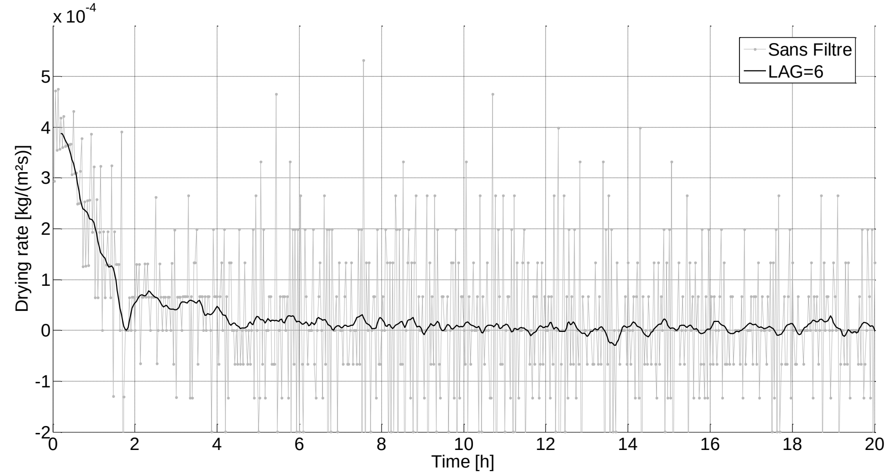
Skyscan 1172

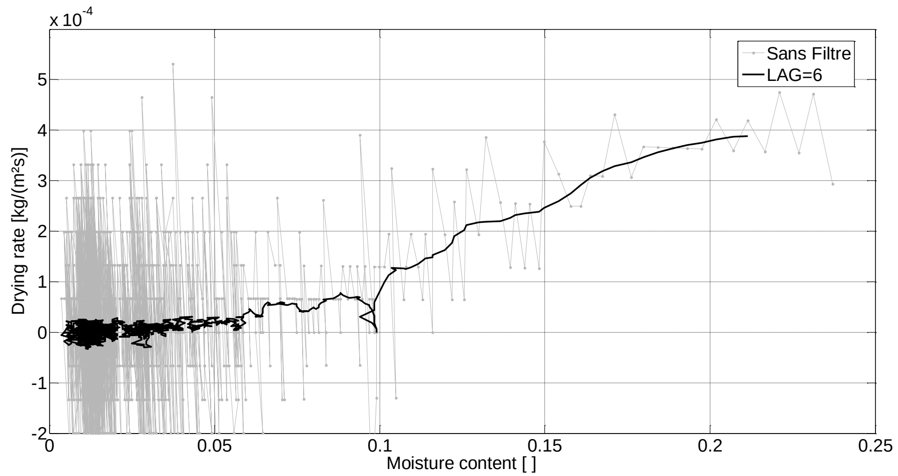
Source Voltage = 100 kV	Filter = Al 0.5 mm	4x4 binning = 900x666 pixel radiograms
Pixel size = 27.27 µm	Exposure time = 510 ms	Rotation Step (deg)= 0.65
180° rotation	2 vertically-connected scans	Scan duration = 8 minutes

Experimental results

- Numerical filter

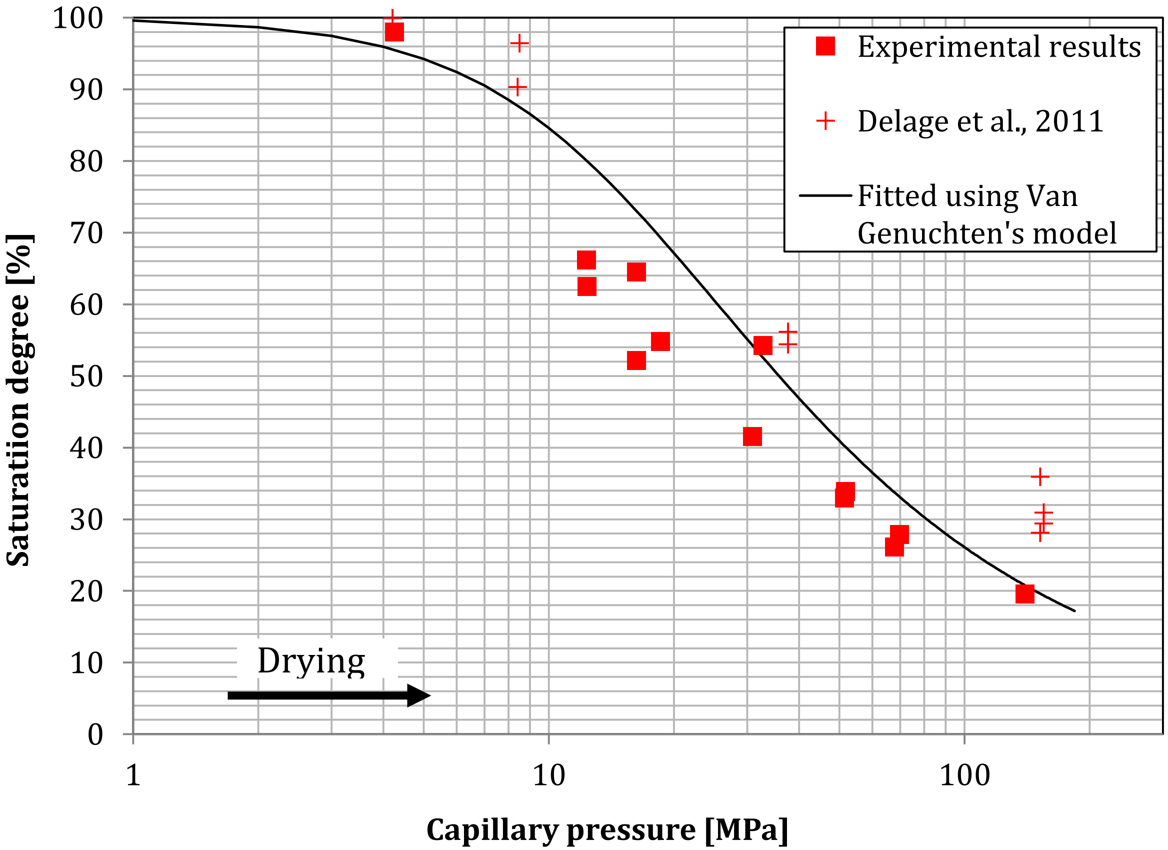






WATER RETENTION CURVE

- Samples put into chamber with controlled suction (saline solution)
- Water content measured ⇒ saturation degree deduced



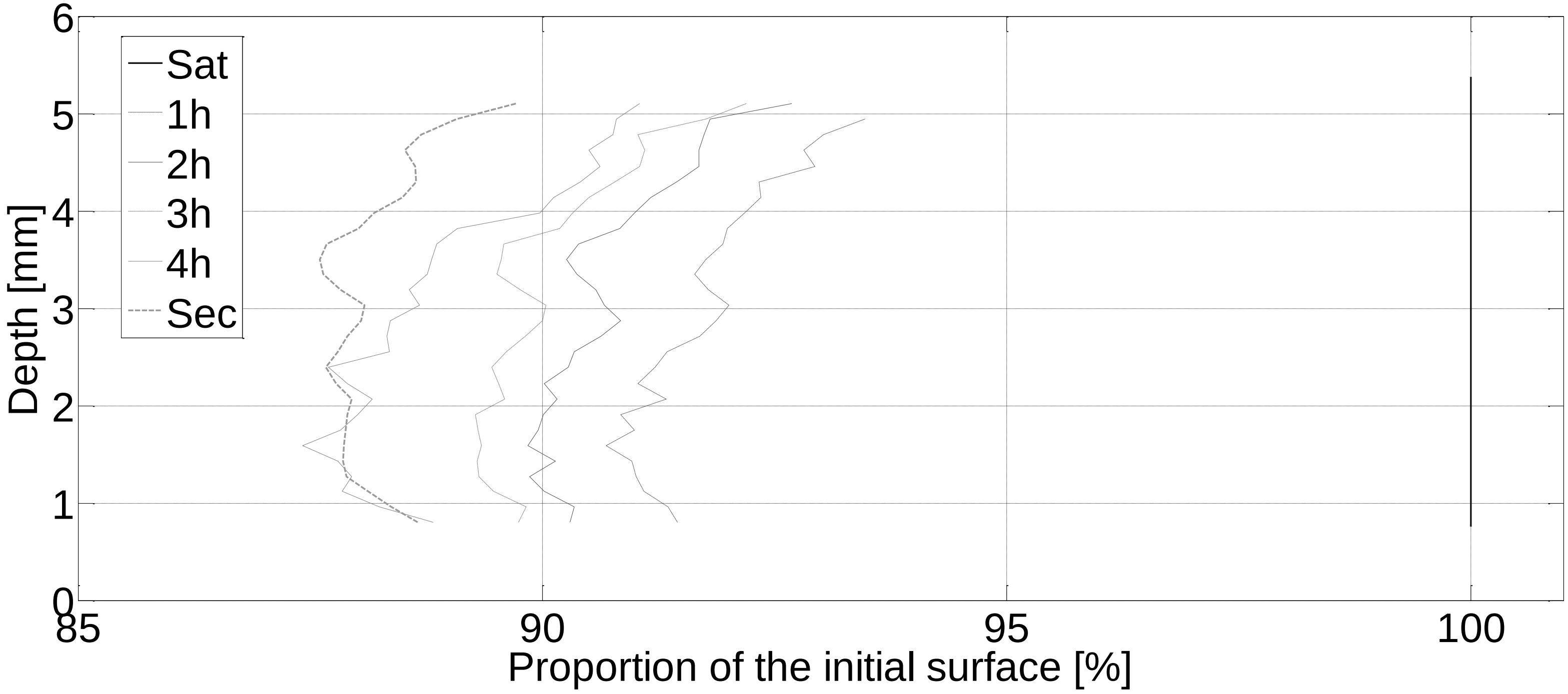
Van Genuchten formulation :

$$S_{r,w} = S_{res} + (S_{sat} - S_{res})\left[\left(1 + \frac{p_c}{\alpha}\right)^{n_{vG}}\right]^{-m_{vG}}$$

VAN GENUCHTEN FORMULATION		
S_{res}	0	[-]
S_{sat}	1	[-]
α_{vg}	15	$[MPa]$
m_{vg}	0.449	[-]
n_{vg}	1.70	[-]

DRYING SHRINKAGE

- Quickly homogeneous on the whole sample



NUMERICAL STUDY

- Parameters used :

PARAMETERS	VALUES	UNITS
	HYDRAULIC PARAMETERS	
$k_{sat,\perp}$	8.10^{-12}	[m/s]
$k_{sat,\parallel}$	2.10^{-12}	[m/s]
n	0.39	[-]
	MECHANICAL PARAMETERS	
$E_{\parallel}$	700	$[MPa]$
$E_{\perp}$	350	$[MPa]$
$\nu_{\parallel\parallel}$	0.25	$[-]$
$\nu_{\parallel\perp}$	0.125	$[-]$
$G_{\parallel\perp}$	1.4	$[MPa]$
ρ_s	2670	$[kg/m^3]$
	THERMAL PARAMETERS	
c_s	2080	$[\frac{J}{kg*K}]$
ρ_s	2670	$[kg/m^3]$
c_w	4185	$[\frac{J}{kg*K}]$
ρ_w	1000	$[kg/m^3]$
c_a	1004	$[\frac{J}{kg*K}]$
ρ_a	1.2	$[kg/m^3]$