

Commonwealth of Kentucky
Department of Highways

SEPARATION, FRACTIONATION AND MINERALOGY
OF CLAYS IN SOILS

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Prepared for Presentation at
The 25th Annual Meeting of
The Highway Research Board
Washington, D. C.

Session No. 4, December 7, 1948
(Printed Version)

Highway Materials Research Laboratory
Lexington, Kentucky

December, 1948

ABSTRACT

This paper describes a working method for separation, fractionation and identification of colloid and near colloidal clay minerals in soils. Technical information pertains to super-centrifugation, electron-microscopy and X-ray diffraction. On the basis of these techniques, twenty-two samples have been investigated in conjunction with a soil study of pumping pavements.

Soils were first dispersed and separated by gravity sedimentation. Fractionation was accomplished by controlled super-centrifugation. The separated fractions were purified and then analyzed by X-ray diffraction. Computed size fractions were checked by shadow castings and lineal dimensions on electron micrographs.

Results include identification of the mineral or minerals present and the properties of the natural sample from which the colloidal fractions were extracted.

These methods furnish a basis for more extensive research relating the behavior of the clay minerals and their contributions to the properties of soils.

INTRODUCTION

Many of the problems confronting the engineer in the field of Soil Mechanics are essentially problems in chemistry, geology, and mineralogy. This implies the need for further investigation of the constituents of soils and their contributions to the properties of the material as a whole.

Many of the general trends and relationships in soil science concentrate attention on the fine particles. Coarse-grained constituents are largely inert and provide inactive bulk to the soil. Surface phenomena are slight because of the limited amount of surface exposed. Logic indicates a progressive increase in the reactivity, particularly in surface phenomena, with progressive decrease in particle size. For illustration, imagine a 1 cm. cube having a surface area of 6 sq. cms. cut into cubes 0.001 micron on an edge and the particles will expose an area totaling 1-1/2 acres. It is obvious that surface effects would be greatly accentuated.

The words "clay" and "clay mineral" may be used interchangeably throughout this paper to specify known or unknown mineral suites, but not with the intent to specify size. In general, "clay" is a term referring to any or all of the naturally occurring finely divided hydrated aluminum silicates. The "clay minerals" are a known series of mineral suites, all falling in the monoclinic system. They may be separated into three major groups on the basis of the properties which they exhibit.

In Table I, several isolated properties of the clay mineral groups are listed in order to emphasize some of their

TABLE I. MAJOR CLAY MINERAL GROUPS AND SOME OF THEIR PROPERTIES

Clay Mineral	Properties of Clay Minerals			Properties They Contribute to Soils		
	Base Exchange Capacity	Height of Unit Cell (1)	Plasticity Index for Pure Clay (2)	Plasticity Index for Soil (3)	Relative Static Compaction	Relative Permeability
Kaolinite Group 4 members	3 - 15	7.2 Angstroms	29.6	6.2	Compacts a small amt. rapidly	Very permeable
Illite Group 1 member	20 - 40	10.0 Angstroms	No figures available	No figures available	Intermediate	Intermediate
Montmorillonite Group 3 members	60 - 100	12 - 26 Angstroms	91.1 (Calcium Base) 428 (Sodium Base)	34.7 (Calcium Base) 103.8 (Sodium Base)	Compacts a large amt. slowly	Impermeable

(1) Hanawalt Card File.

(2) After Endell, Loos, and Breth.

(3) Based on a (Quartz) 7 : 3 (Clay) mixture after Endell, Loos, and Breth.

(4) R. E. Grim, "Clay Minerals in Soils and Their Significance".

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inherent characteristics, and their influence in corresponding soil mixtures. There are other miscellaneous clay minerals which are not listed here.

Table I represents the most common and the most important groups of the clay minerals. The properties of these groups infer a trend in the reactivity. That is, Kaolinite should be the most stable and the most inert, while Montmorillonite should be very reactive and least stable. Illite should exhibit properties intermediate between Kaolinite and Montmorillonite.

For any clay mineral, there are definite size-behavior relationships. Base-exchange, for instance, is a function of the surface area exposed; and Johnson and Davidson (4) describe an equation for the relation:

$$X = (2 \times 10^{-5})S$$

where X = exchange capacity - m.e. per 100 g. (1)

S = specific surface - sq. cms. per g.

Theoretically this property is a manifestation of unsatisfied bonds and the number of these broken bonds is greatly multiplied by each degree of subdivision.

Montmorillonite has a high affinity for water and will expand its lattice in order to accommodate the water. In contrast, Kaolinite has only a very slight affinity for water. Further, the plasticity of Kaolinite is greatly altered by the addition of small amounts of Montmorillonite.

Clay minerals occur in the minus 5 micron fraction of soils and dominate the minus 1 micron fraction. It has been postulated by some that different clay minerals in a soil will

exist within discrete size levels. That is, in an Illite-Kaolinite mixture, Kaolinite is more abundant in the 1 micron to 0.2 micron fraction and practically extinct in the minus 0.1 micron fraction, while Illite will exist throughout the smaller fractions. For this reason the minus 1 micron fractions of the soils tested in this study were separated into discrete sub-fractions.

MATERIALS TESTED

The soils analyzed for clay mineral content were selected from samples obtained by the laboratory for a study of the pumping action of rigid pavements. These samples were taken from beneath the pavement and from locations with known performance. In conjunction with the pumping study (5), all routine engineering soil tests, as well as the CBR test, were conducted. Thus, the physical properties and some indication of the behavior of each soil were known prior to the analysis for clay mineral content. In Table II there is a list of the physical properties of the twenty-two samples thus far analyzed for mineralogic characteristics.

PROCEDURES

Pre-Treatment - Two to three hundred grams of soil passing the No. 40 sieve was taken as a sample. It was dispersed in a 4-liter beaker of distilled water by adding 5 cc. of concentrated ammonium hydroxide to the soil and water and mixing for 15 minutes with an electric mixer. The material was left in the beaker and after 24 hours, the top 10 cm. containing particles approximately 1 micron and smaller were siphoned off. The time

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required for particles to fall 10 cm. through the water was computed and a graph plotted, as shown in Fig. 1. The process of sedimentation was repeated until a five-gallon bottle was filled. The material was then fractionated by centrifugation.

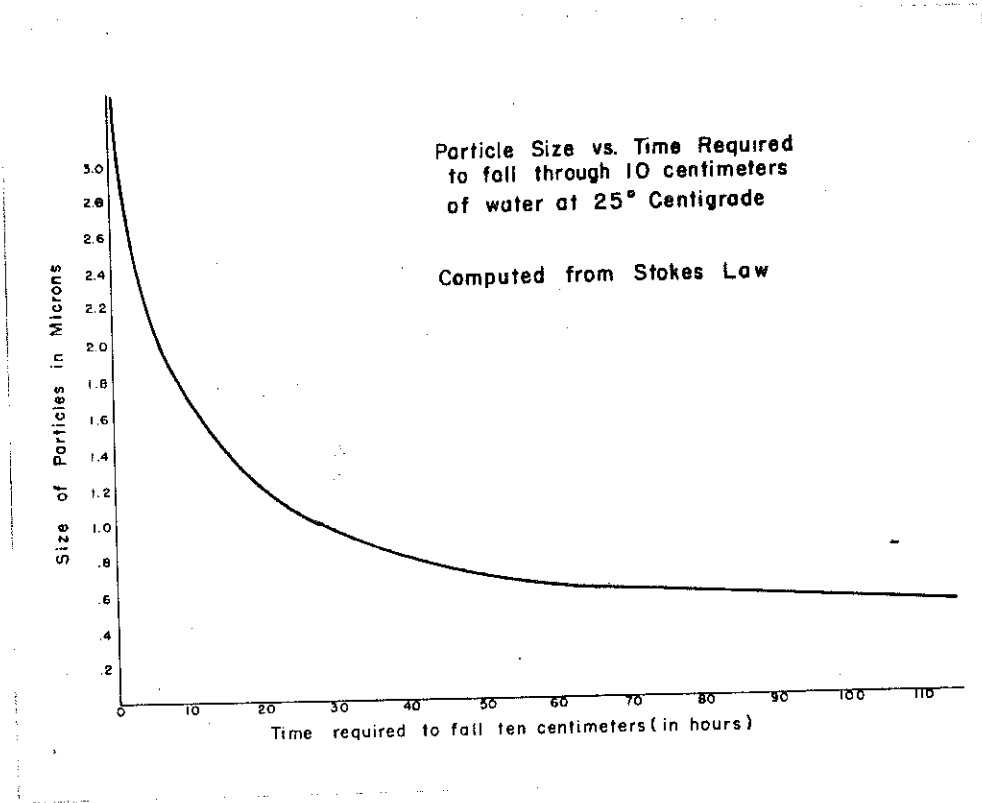


Fig. 1. Particle Size Versus Time Required to Fall 10 cms. through Water

Fractionation - Fractionation of small particles was based on sedimentation principles described as Stoke's Law:

$$\frac{D}{2} = \sqrt{\frac{9/2 n \ dx/dt}{(\rho_p - \rho_m)g}} \quad (2)$$

- D = effective diameter of particle
- n = viscosity of medium (in poises)
- ρ_p = density of the particle (assume 2.65)
- ρ_m = density of the medium
- x = distance of fall
- t = time to fall x distance
- g = acceleration of gravity

Thus, if the rate of fall of spherical particles is measured,* and the viscosity of the liquid, the difference in

*It is believed that plate-like particles cut a sphere during sedimentation. Johnson and Davidson (4)

density between the particle and the liquid, and the constant of the gravitational field are known, the particle size can be calculated. This statement is true for sedimentations in centrifuges as well as ordinary sedimentations. Accordingly, by adjusting conditions a process can be set up which will yield particles of any desired size.

Larger particles may be isolated by sedimentation under the force of gravity, but as the particle size decreases, the time factor becomes infinite as shown in Fig. 1. Modern centrifuge methods make it possible to multiply the effective force several thousand times. By adjusting the force, optimum time intervals may be obtained for the desired particle size.

Fortunately, clay minerals exhibit colloidal properties to such an extent that they can be dispersed and suspended in water, but still retain their "matter in mass" identities to such extent that they can be treated as discrete particles or crystals, exhibiting known surface phenomena, characteristic of so many finely divided materials and lyophobic colloids.

It was first decided to separate four fractions from the sample. The conditions of centrifugation were adjusted for recovery of particles 1 to 0.2 microns, 0.2 to 0.1 microns, 0.1 to 0.05 microns, and below 0.05 micron in diameter. Later the last two fractions were combined to contain the minus 0.1 micron sizes. A Sharples Super Centrifuge was used for the separation.

Schachman (6), Hauser and Lynn (7) and Seay (8) give a set of working equations for the use of the Sharples Super Centrifuge:

$$Y = \frac{18 Q K_1 N}{\pi (R_2^2 - R_1^2) D^2 W^2 P} \left[\frac{R_2}{2} \ln \frac{R_2}{X_0} - \frac{R_1^2}{2} \left(\ln \frac{R_2}{X_0} + \frac{X_0^2}{4} - \frac{R_2^2}{4} \right) \right] \quad (3)$$

where Y = vertical distance from bottom of centrifuge bowl to a point where the particle comes to rest on the bowl wall

R_1 = radius of air column in operating centrifuge bowl (cms.)

R_2 = inside radius of centrifuge bowl (2.22 cms.)

X_0 = distance from axis of rotation of bowl at which particle begins to settle (cms.)

Q = rate of feeding sol. into centrifuge bowl (cc/sec.)

$$K_1 = \frac{\frac{R_2^2}{2} - \frac{R_1^2}{2}}{3/4 R_1^4 + \frac{R_2^4}{4} - R_1 R_2 - R_1^4 \ln \frac{R_1}{R_2}} = 1.109$$

N = viscosity of dispersion medium (poises)

D = diameter of clay particle (cms.)

W = angular velocity of rotation (radians/sec.)

P = difference in density of dispersed and dispersing phases.

The solution of equation (3) is difficult, requiring a family of curves, or solution by determinates. Simplifying the equation by substituting numerical values for constants and rearranging, the equation becomes:

$$Q = \frac{112.7 D^2 P}{N} \quad (4)$$

The terms inside the brackets of equation (3) are the centrifuge factor and are called C for simplification. Actually C is a constant, and the plot of C versus Y used by Seay and Schachman was adopted since the dimensions of the bowls used

were the same.

Conditions were adjusted such that the minimum size retained was 0.2 micron at $Y = 20$ cms., particles below 0.2 micron remained in suspension and passed through. (Larger fractions are contaminated to some extent by the smaller sizes.) After recovery of the fraction and sol, the sol was run through again under more restricted conditions such that 0.1 micron was the minimum size retained at $Y = 20$ cms. until fractions greater than 0.2 micron, 0.2 to .01 micron, and 0.1 to .05 micron had been obtained. Particles smaller than 0.05 micron were finally obtained by precipitation.

A plot of Q versus D is advantageous for quick reference. See-Fig. 2.

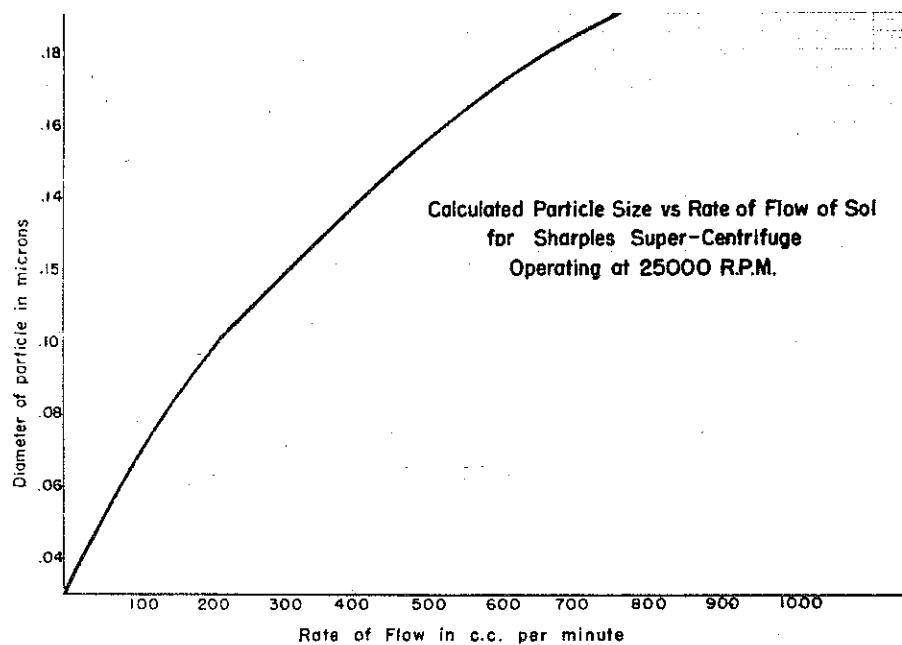


Fig. 2. Calculated Particle Size Versus Rate of Flow of Sol

Control of conditions was completed by calibration of rate of flow through appropriate drags, nozzles, or orifices against various pressure heads, using suitable means of maintaining a constant head for each height. See Fig. 3 for calibration curves and Fig. 4 for a diagram of apparatus.

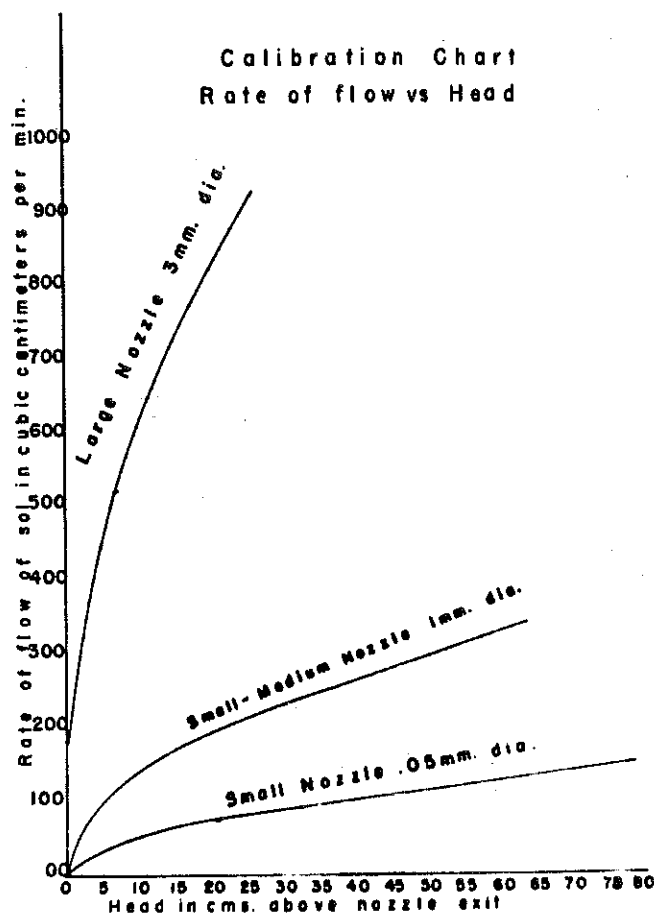


Fig. 3. Calibration of Flow Rates

Eighteen liters of soil was collected, in which the maximum particle size was 1 micron. A 0.003 in. cellulose acetate liner was inserted into the centrifuge bowl to collect the fraction. The head was adjusted to give the desired size. The speed of the centrifuge was maintained at 25000 R.P.M. by

use of a voltage regulator. The liner was removed and a new one inserted after each fraction was collected. The fraction was dried on the acetate sheet after which the particles were easily chipped off. As indicated in Fig. 2 it is impractical to separate fractions below 0.05 micron centrifugally. This final fraction is precipitated by adding NaCl to the sol from the last fraction.

Flow Regulation - Control of the flow of sol was by means of the flow regulator apparatus shown in Fig. 4. The sol was forced out of the bottle by blowing into the system of rubber tubing and starting the siphoning action. The sol flowed into the constant flow apparatus and filled the outer tube until it reached the bottom of the inner tube. As the sol continued out a partial vacuum was set up in the air space of the bottle and the sol stopped flowing out of the bottle. The sol in the outer tube then flowed out to the centrifuge until the level dropped below the bottom of the inner tube. At this time an air bubble entered the bottom of the inner tube and rose to the air space in the bottle, thus releasing the vacuum and allowing more sol to flow into the outer tube and raising the level again to the bottom of the inner tube. The cycle was repeated again and again and created a constant head of sol at the bottom of the inner tube which varied about 1 mm. due to bubbling of air. The height of this head was changed by adjusting the inner tube so that it was level with the desired height measured on a scale marked on the wall beside the apparatus.

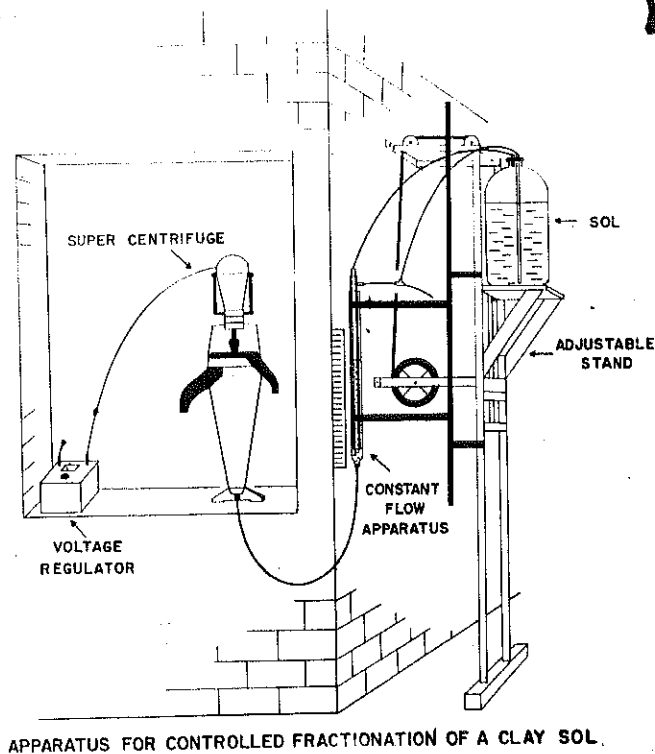


Fig. 4. Flow Regulator Apparatus

Post Treatment - Treatment of the fraction after separation involved leaching out the soluble material such as iron and carbonates with HCl and mild heat, followed by H₂O₂ with boiling to remove organic materials, finally washing, centrifuging down with acetone and drying.

Electron Microscopy - In order to check the size of separated fractions and give complete confidence in the accuracy of separation, it was decided to observe the sizes by means of the electron microscope.

Optical microscopy is limited by the wave-length of

visible light-- that is, even by ultra-violet light, 0.36 micron or 3600 Å -- whereas particles were separated into fractions smaller than 0.05 micron. Obviously these particles are beyond the limit of optical observations. The electron microscope utilizes the shorter wave-lengths of an electron beam in addition to the advantage of higher magnification. Fortunately, clay minerals demonstrate sufficient opacity to the electron beam to provide good detail.

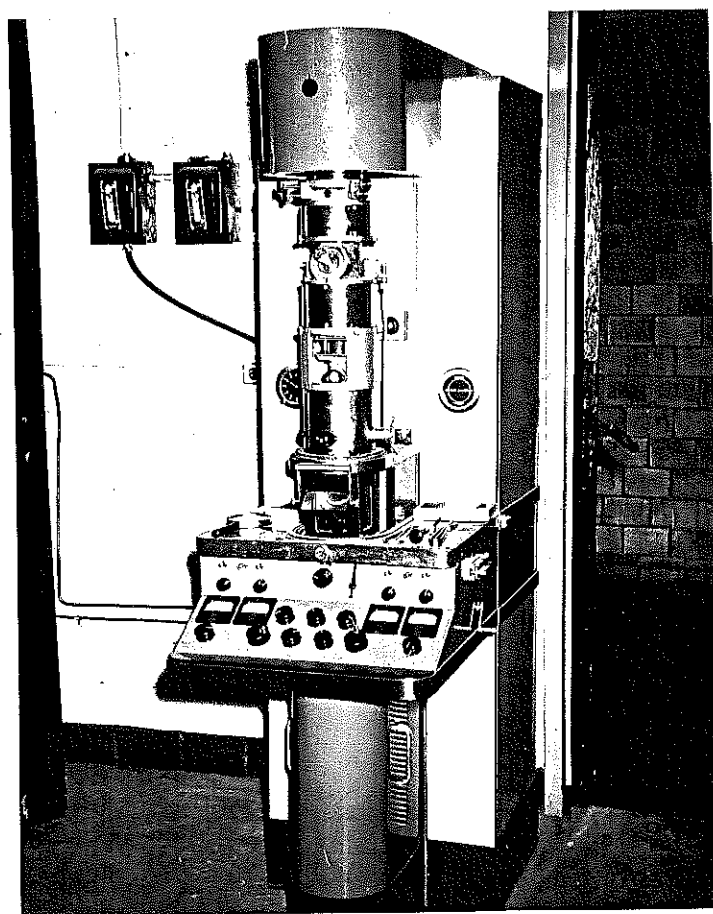
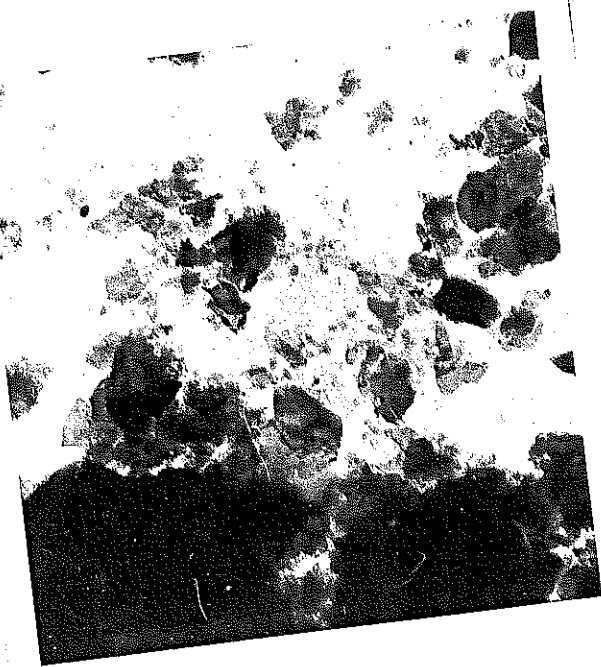


Fig. 5. Electron Microscope

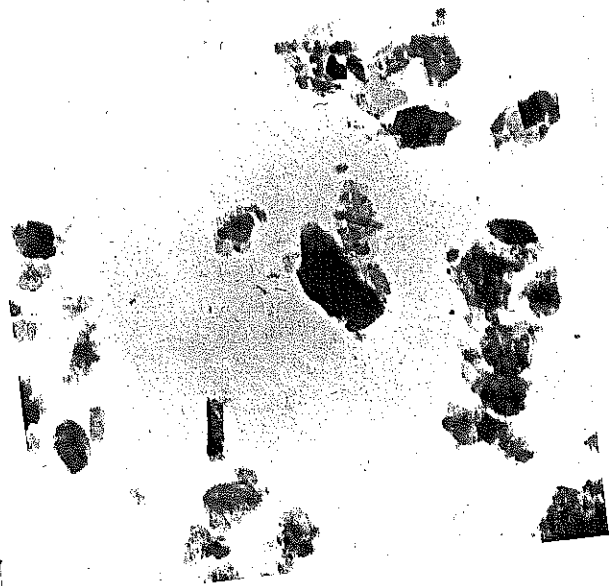
Specimen mounts were prepared using one part U.S.P. Collodion (containing 24 percent alcohol) and four parts amyl

acetate, filtered and allowed to age 24 hours. Mounting films were prepared by dropping the collodion from an eye-dropper held one inch above the surface of water in a container having a diameter of 12 inches or greater. The film was allowed to stand until the diffraction patterns disappeared. Prepared screens, approximately 3.5 mm. in diameter, of 275-300 wire mesh were dropped onto the film (burred edges upward so as not to puncture the film), then a clean glass microscope slide was cautiously placed onto the floating film, covering the screen. The film was split with a scalpel on each long side of the slide extending radially outward to the edge of the container. A pair of crucible tongs was inserted into the slits and the slide was held to the surface of the water while excess film was lapped over and onto the top of the slide. Then the slide was raised from the surface, inverted, and the excess film removed from the bottom edge with the fingers. The slide was placed on end and dried. Thus, the screen supported a micro-film and was held to the slide until the specimen was mounted and ready for observation.

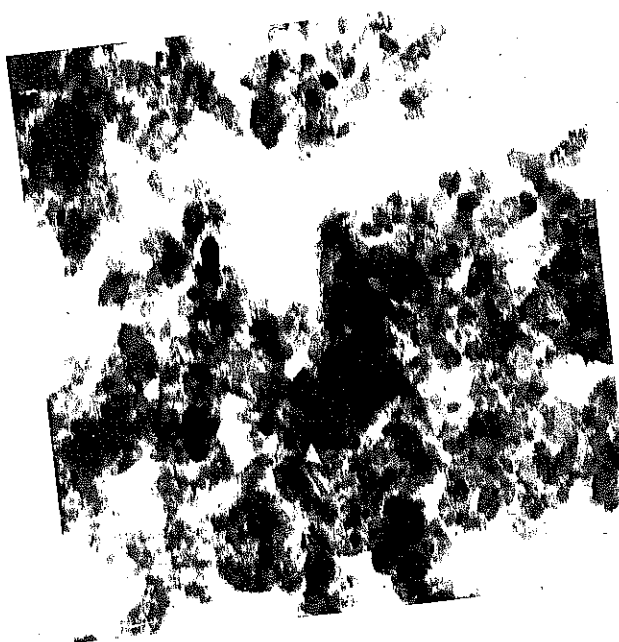
The clay sample to be observed was re-dispersed and re-suspended in water (only a few cubic centimeters are necessary and must be of such concentration that only a very slight trace of opacity is apparent); and, with the aid of a micro-pipette, a small drop of the sol was placed onto the screen and allowed to dry. Inspection of the sample thus prepared can be made to a good advantage under an optical microscope. In this manner it is possible to determine the distribution and concentration of the particles in order to assure good



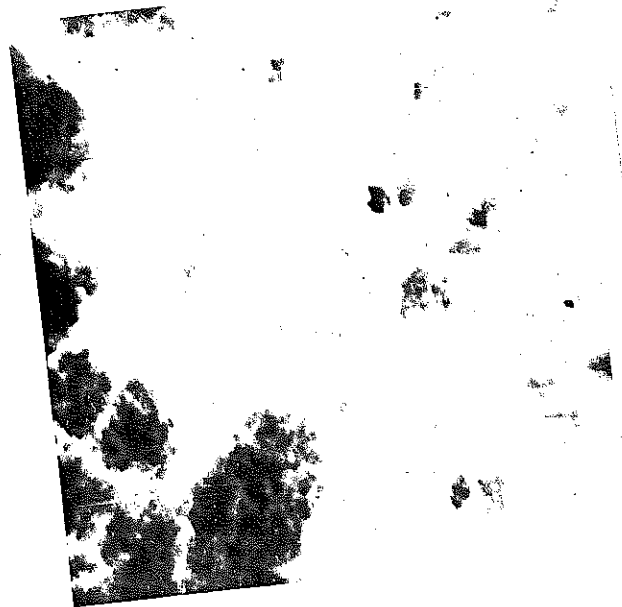
A. Greater than 0.2 micron



B. 0.2 to 0.1 micron



C. 0.1 to 0.05 micron

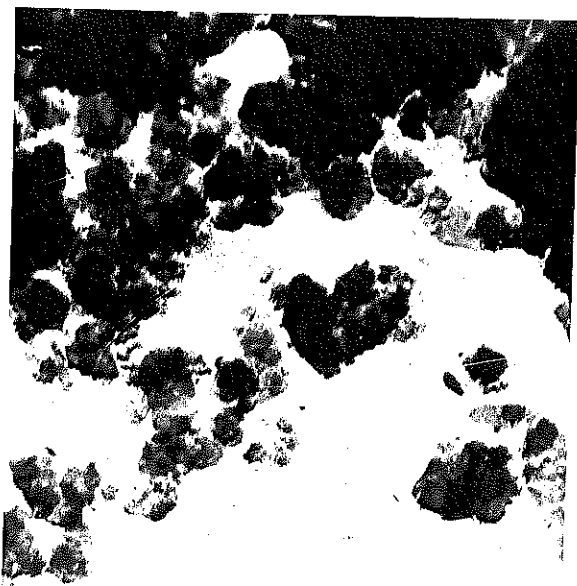


D. Less than .05 micron

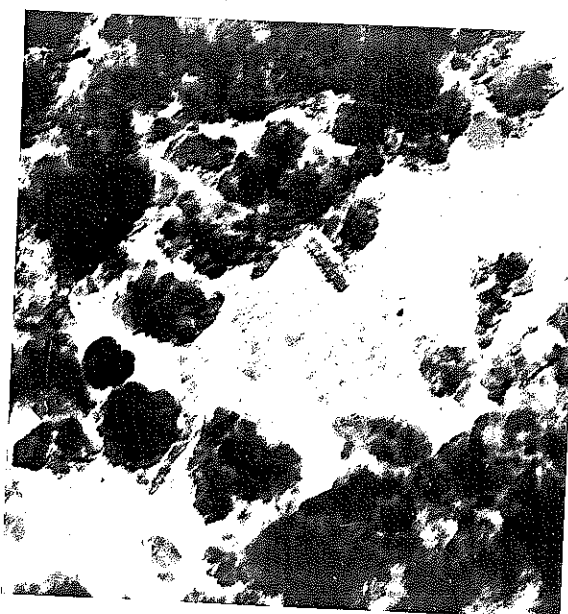
Fig. 6. Electron Photomicrograph of Fractions from Soil No. 202. White Line in Each Instance Represents a Distance of 1 Micron in the Sample

results and facilitate observation.

In this study films were prepared, varying the film thickness from 3 drops to 10 drops. It was found that in some instances 3, 4, and 5-drop films were strong enough to withstand the force of the electron beam, but 7, 8, 9, and 10-drop films gave better strength and showed less boiling due to heat generated in the particle by the beam. These thicker films were sufficiently transparent to give good contrast. Fractions over 0.2 micron, 0.2 to 0.1 micron, 0.1 to .05 micron, and below 0.05 micron were prepared and observed. Electron micrographs were taken at a magnification of approximately 7,300 diameters. On this basis 0.73 cm. on the negative represents 1 micron. This dimension is shown as a white line on photographs shown in Figs. 6 and 7.



A



B

Fig. 7. Electron Photomicrographs of Shadow-Cast Fraction 0.2 to 0.1 micron -- Soil No. 202

In order to estimate the vertical dimensions, the 0.2' to 0.1 micron fraction was shadow-cast. In this process, a companion specimen was used. The shadow was cast by plating chromium, vaporized from a hot filament situated so that the angle of incidence caused the particles to shadow areas such that the horizontal lengths of the shadows were five times the vertical dimensions of the particles. This specimen was observed again in the scope and photo-micrographs made. See Fig. 7.

The photo-micrographs in Fig. 6 substantiate the validity of the procedure used in fractionation of the particles on the basis of sizes. It is to be noted that smaller sizes contaminate the larger fractions, but that the larger sizes conform to the specified limits. The photographs show considerable aggregation of particles, but many isolated particles appear as flakes or thin sheets.

Examination of the shadow-graphs in Fig. 7 show some isolated particles which cast shadows only 0.2 micron horizontally. The corresponding vertical dimension approximates 400 Angstrom units, and it is of interest to compare this with 10 Angstrom units which is the height of the unit cell for Illite.

X-ray Diffraction- One of the latest methods for analysing macroscopic to sub-microscopic substances is based on the Bragg (9) method of X-ray analysis.

This method utilizes the short wave lengths of X-rays and the principles of diffraction gratings. In X-ray crystallography the wave lengths approximate the magnitude of the atomic interstices separating the planes of symmetry within the crystal. Since each of the planes of symmetry is a reflecting

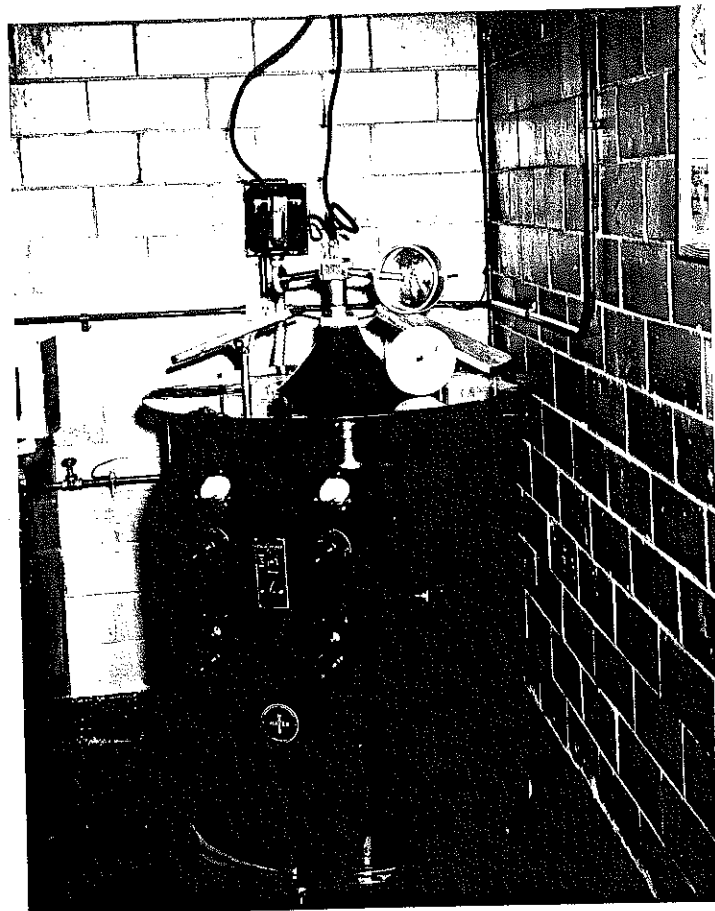


Fig. 8. X-ray Spectrograph with Diffraction and Microradiographic Cameras in Position

plane and the incidence angle approaches the critical point, some rays are scattered and constructive interference results, provided the fundamental equation is satisfied. These conditions are described in equation (5).

$$n\lambda = 2 d \sin e \quad (5)$$

λ = wave length of X-ray (Cu. = 1.54 Angstrom units)

n = whole number (small multiple)

d = distance between planes of symmetry (in Angstrom units)

e = angle of reflection where constructive interference occurs

The clay minerals lend themselves readily to the powder diffraction method. The advantage of the powder method is in the fact that a fine powder orients all planes to the beam and produces a continuous arc registered on the film. The distance is a characteristic constant for any crystalline identity. The constants used are given in the Hanawalt Index (1).

The samples were first ground in a mullite mortar to pass a No. 325 pigment sieve. Samples that were moist had to be dried to assure disaggregation. The powder was pressed into a wedge-shaped specimen holder, piling until a sharp line of the powder was obtained. The specimen holder was then placed in a Debye-type cylindrical camera, (see Fig. 8), film was clamped around the inner periphery, the camera sealed, and the exposure started. Two hours of exposure was usually sufficient using 40 kilo-volts and 15 milli-amperes, copper radiation, and nickel foil filter. The film was processed and patterns such as those shown in Fig. 9 were obtained.

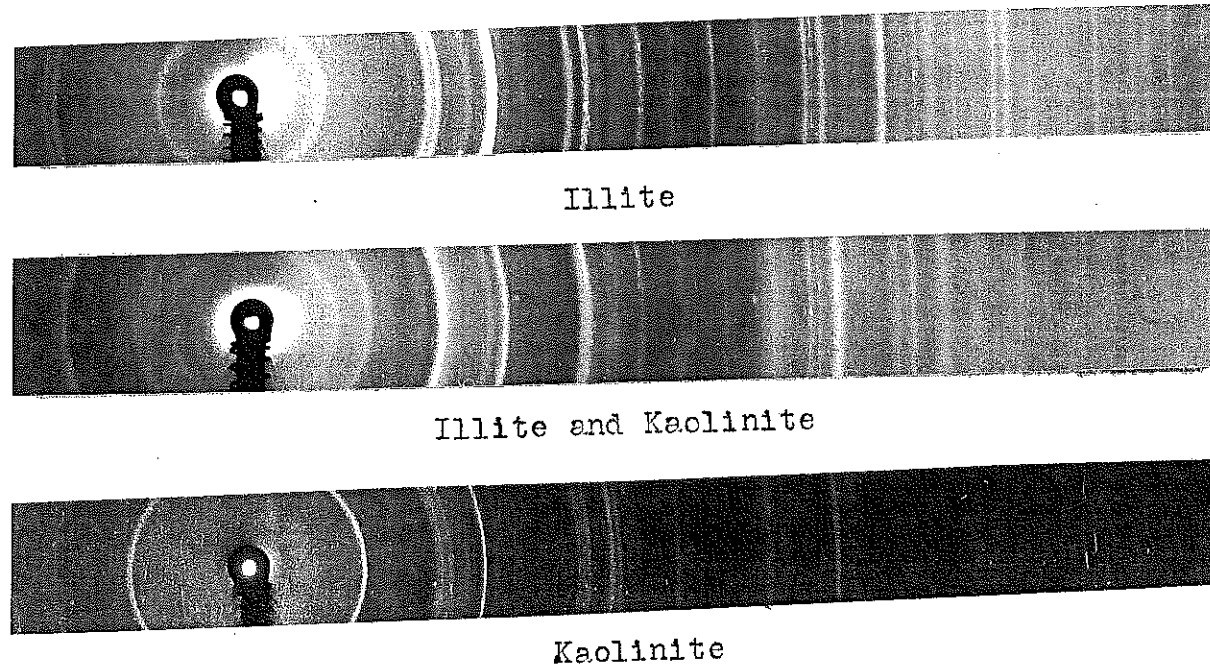


Fig. 9. X-ray Diffraction Patterns

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was primarily to test the procedures and practical applications of clay mineralogy to soils research. As a matter of course some indications of trends resulted. Because of the extremely limited number of samples analysed, fundamental limitations of the physical soil tests, and the lack of control over extraneous influences such as exchangeable bases, organic matter, soluble silica, the pH of the soils, and oxides; it is impossible to arrive at any definite correlation between the clay mineral content and the routine soil tests. Nevertheless, the trends that were develop establish definite lines for future investigations and survey work.

The twenty-two soils which were analysed for clay mineral content are listed in Table III. The "Relative Percent

TABLE III

RESULTS OF THE CLAY MINERAL ANALYSIS

Soil Number	Fraction in Microns	Relative Percent of Clay Mineral Occurrence	Quantitative Distribution (Relative)	Percent of Clay Minerals	Percent Colloids (Total Sample)
201	>.2	Illite 60 Kaolinite 40	20	Illite 62 Kaolinite 38	20
	.2 - .1	Illite 70 Kaolinite 30	2		
	.1 - .05	Illite 80 Kaolinite 20	1		
202	>.2	Illite 100	4	Illite 100	28
	.2 - .1	Illite 100	2		
	.1 - .05	Illite 100	1		
203	>.2	Illite 100	25	Illite 100	5
	.2 - .1	Illite 100	5		
	.1 - .05	Illite 100	1		
204	>.2	Illite 100	6	Illite 100	25
	.2 - .1	Illite 100	3		
	.1 - .05	Illite 100	1		
206	>.2	Illite 100	6	Illite 100	19
	.2 - .1	Illite 100	2		
	.1 - .05	Illite 100	1		
209	>.2	Illite 10 Kaolinite 90	4	Illite 13 Kaolinite 87	13
	<.2	Illite 25 Kaolinite 75	1		
228	>.2	Illite 60 Kaolinite 40	6	Illite 60 Kaolinite 40	33
	.2 - .1	Illite 60 Kaolinite 40	3		
	.1 - .05	Illite 60 Kaolinite 40	1		
229	>.2	Illite 50 Kaolinite 50	20	Illite 53 Kaolinite 47	22
	.2 - .1	Illite 60 Kaolinite 40	4		
	<.1	Illite 90 Kaolinite 10	1		
232	>.2	Illite 60 Kaolinite 40	8	Illite 59 Kaolinite 41	12
	.2 - .1	Illite -- Kaolinite --	4		
	<.1	Illite 50 Kaolinite 50	1		
239	>.2	Illite 100	8	Illite 100	34
	.2 - .1	Illite 100	4		
	<.1	Illite 100	1		
256	>.2	Illite 100	24	Illite 100	16
	.2 - .1	Illite 100	1		
	<.1	Illite 100	1		
257	>.2	Illite 30 Kaolinite 20	15	Illite 80 Kaolinite 20	17
	.2 - .1	Illite 90 Kaolinite 10	3		
	.1 - .05	Illite 60 Kaolinite 40	1		

TABLE III - Continued

RESULTS OF THE CLAY MINERAL ANALYSIS

Soil Number	Fraction in Microns	Relative Percent of Clay Mineral Occurrence	Quantitative Distribution (Relative)	Percent of Clay Minerals	Percent Colloids (Total Sample)
258	>.2	Illite 75 Kaolinite 25	16	Illite 78	19
	.2 - .1	Illite 90 Kaolinite 10	2	Kaolinite 22	
	<.1	Illite 90 Kaolinite 10	1		
260	>.2	Illite 100	9	Illite 100	33
	.2 - .1	Illite 100	-		
	<.1 - .05	Illite 100	1		
264	>.2	Illite 10 Kaolinite 90	--	Illite 10	26
	.2 - .1	Illite 50 Kaolinite 50	--	Kaolinite 90	
	<.1	Illite -- Kaolinite --	--		
279	>.2	Illite 90 Kaolinite 10	9	Illite 90	18
	.2 - .1	Illite 90 Kaolinite 10	2	Kaolinite 10	
	<.1	Illite -- Kaolinite --	1		
281	>.2	Illite 100	20	Illite 100	25
	.2 - .1	Illite 100	4		
	<.1	Illite 100	1		
293	>.2	Illite 100	12	Illite 100	34
	.2 - .1	Illite 100	3		
	<.1	Illite 100	1		
325	>.2	Illite 33 Kaolinite 33 Montmorillonite 33	--	Illite 33 1/3	24
	<.2		--	Kaolinite 33 1/3 Montmoril- lonite 33 1/3	
340	>.2	Illite 40 Kaolinite 60	10	Illite 36	18
	.2 - .1	Illite 10 Kaolinite 90	3	Kaolinite 64	
	<.1	Illite 75 Kaolinite 25	1		
341	>.2	Illite 60 Kaolinite 40	12	Illite 62	16
	.2 - .1	Illite 60 Kaolinite 40	2	Kaolinite 38	
	<.1	Illite 90 Kaolinite 10	1		
351	>.2	Illite 100	20	Illite 100	25
	.2 - .1	Illite 100	4		
	<.1	Illite 100	1		

of Clay Mineral Occurrence" is given for each fraction analysed. This figure is based on an estimate of the relative intensities of the lines on the X-ray diffraction patterns. In the next column the "Relative Quantitative Distribution" appears. This value, based on the volumes of recovered fractions, was derived by assigning the lowest size fraction a value of one and relating the other sizes to it in whole numbers.

With the intent of measuring the percentage of frequency of the clay minerals with relation to the soil as a whole, a percentage value was derived using the "Relative Percent of Clay Mineral Occurrence" and the "Quantitative Distribution (Relative)". This value called "Percent of Clay Minerals", is moderately accurate and is a basis proposed for future analysis.

In the final column of Table III, the "Percent Colloids" is shown, based on the total soil. This value was derived from a sieve and a hydrometer analysis of each soil sample. The fact that the hydrometer analysis is not 100 percent accurate, coupled with the fact that unknown quantities of organic matter, oxides, and other extraneous materials appear in the "colloid" fraction, produces considerable magnitude of error in this value, if it is to be used as a criteria for quantity of clay minerals. As the analysis is of a limited nature, it is felt that some fair indication of the quantity of clay mineral can be derived from "Percent of Clay Minerals" and "Percent Colloids of the Total Sample".

The premise that any admixture of clay minerals will show varying percentages in different micro-fractions is substantiated by the results obtained. In general, Kaolinite

does not reduce easily to smaller sizes. Illite reduces more readily to smaller sizes and is usually dominant in any Illite-Kaolinite mixture below the 0.2 micron fraction. Montmorillonite when present might be expected to dominate the lowest fractions. The single occurrence of this mineral is not enough to show this.

Some good correlation is shown between geologic derivation and clay mineral content in Table IV. However, it is nowhere conclusive. In the case of the soils derived from the Silurian and Devonian formations, some difficulty in correlation might be explained by the absence of any positive geological identification, due to the type of locality. These samples all came from the same vicinity. This might be cleared up by analyzing soils from similar but more widely scattered areas.

The fact that only one clay mineral occurs in a soil can very well indicate a mature soil. This has been demonstrated by the Ordovician soils in Table IV, all of which contain Illite exclusively. This does not imply that geologic age has anything to do with the maturity. It merely represents a soil in which nature has established a balance.

The fact that some soils show a wide variation of percentages of clay mineral constituents might be attributed to several factors. Local relief might influence this, such as in the Pottsville Sandstone, a resistant layer which in some areas determines the relief. Depending on the relief, combinations of weathering products of several formations might form the resultant soil. This has produced tremendous variations in the samples classed as Pottsville. Further, general differences in climatic conditions are known to influence clay

TABLE IV
CLAY MINERAL ANALYSES GROUPED GEOLOGICALLY

Soil Number	Geologic Formation	Clay Mineral (Percent)	
Ordovician			
206	Trenton	-	Illite 100
293	Trenton	-	Illite 100
239	Cynthiana	-	Illite 100
202	Eden	-	Illite 100
281	Eden	-	Illite 100
351	Maysville	-	Illite 100
204	Maysville	-	Illite 100
Silurian			
256	Silurian	-	Illite 100
257	Silurian	-	Illite 80 Kaolinite 20
Devonian			
260	Devonian	-	Illite 100
264	Devonian	-	Illite 10 Kaolinite 90
Mississippian			
228	St. Louis	-	Illite 60 Kaolinite 40
325	St. Louis	-	Illite 33 1/3 Kaolinite 33 1/3 Montmorillonite 33 1/3
Pennsylvanian			
340	Pottsville	-	Illite 36 Kaolinite 64
341	Pottsville	-	Illite 62 Kaolinite 38
Loess			
209	Loess	-	Illite 13 Kaolinite 87
232	Loess	-	Illite 59 Kaolinite 41
Alluvium			
279	Alluvium	-	Illite 90 Kaolinite 10 (Ohio River)
201	Alluvium	-	Illite 62 Kaolinite 38 (Ohio River)
203	Alluvium	-	Illite 100 (Kentucky River)
Glacial			
229	Glacial	-	Illite 53 Kaolinite 47
258	Glacial	-	Illite 78 Kaolinite 22

mineral formation, so that under one set of influences Kaolinite might form and under another set of influences Montmorillonite might form from the identical parent rock. Information of this phase is not complete enough to use, but it is thought worthy of mention. It is also reported that soil conditions of acidity or alkalinity will influence the clay mineral formed.

In the interpretation of X-ray diffraction patterns, several pertinent things were learned. Below 0.05 microns, the clay mineral tends to become a minor fraction, dominated by the organic material and silica gel. If this fraction is to be analysed, post-treatment with intent to destroy the organic matter is necessary. Samples not so treated merely produce broad bands across the film under X-radiation, obscuring the clay mineral lines.

Iron and aluminum oxides occur in every fraction of most soils. When copper X-radiation is used the iron oxide fluoresces so as to obscure the first lines on a pattern, often hopelessly confusing the pattern. Treatment to remove the iron or the use of some other wave length of radiation becomes necessary.

Fractions above 1 micron in size almost invariably contain quartz. From 1 to 5 microns, fractions are either mixtures of quartz and some clay mineral or are dominated by quartz. This limits the clay minerals to a dominate position in the 1 to 0.05 micron sizes for this group of soils.

CONCLUSIONS

The limited number of samples practically excludes any specific conclusions. However, some general trends have been established from the foregoing results.

(1) The preceding work indicates that although different fractions show varying abundance of clay identities, fractionation is not necessary for soil survey work since no mineral becomes extinct in any fraction.

(2) There is some indication that clay mineral identities characterize geologic areas of limited regional extent.

(3) Organic matter and silica gel usually appear in the minus 0.05 micron sizes. Oxides of aluminum and iron appear in considerable abundance in all fractions and seem to be closely associated with the clay minerals and to influence their behavior. The influence of silica gel is a matter for further study.

In view of the indiscriminate variations in the properties of any clay identity, as indicated by the lack of correlation with routine soil tests, the influences of exchangeable bases and accessory materials must provide the source of the variations. In the future, attempts will be made to further define the influences of these accessory factors.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors wish to thank Dr. Martin E. Weeks of the University of Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station for his advice and assistance on equipment and soil preparation, Mr. William Seay for use of procedures and information developed in his M.S. thesis, Dr. Morris Scherago, Dr. O. F. Edwards and Mr. D. C. McMurtry, of the Department of Bacteriology at the University of Kentucky for their work and instruction in Electron Microscopy.

The authors also wish to express appreciation to the staff of the Laboratory for their assistance and work related to this study, and to Mr. L. E. Gregg, Associate Director of Research, for his interest and advice in the preparation of this paper.

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