Ye’elimite synthesis by chemical routes and role of iron

Fatima-Zahra Abir1,2,3*, Mohamed Mesnaoui2,4, Younes Abouliatim3, Lhbib Nibou5, Youssef El Hafiane1, and Agnès Smith1

1University of Limoges, Institute of Research for Ceramics (IRCER), UMR 7315, European Ceramics Center, 12 Avenue Atlantis, 87068, Limoges Cedex, France
2Laboratory of Materials Science and Process Optimization FSSM - University of Cadi Ayyad, Marrakech 40000, Morocco
3Laboratory of Materials, Processes, Environment and Quality, ENSA, University of Cadi Ayyad, Safi, Morocco.
4Center for Soil and Fertilizer Research in Africa (CESFRA) – Mohammed VI Polytechnic University, Benguerir, Morocco
5Systems & Applications Engineering Laboratory (LISA) - University of Cadi Ayyad, ENSA, Marrakech, Morocco

Abstract. The cement industry has been taking significant steps for years to reduce its carbon footprint by opting for alternative less polluting materials such as sulfo-aluminous cements (CSA). These binders, compared to ordinary Portland cements (OPC), have two advantages: reduction of the CO2 emissions and energy saving because the sintering temperature of CSA cements is much lower than ordinary cement (Portland). The aim of this work is to study the effect of iron oxide on the formation of the ye’elimite phase, which represents the main phase of (CSA). This study details the protocol for the chemical synthesis of ye’elimite containing increasing amounts of iron (general formula: Ca4Al(6-2x)Fe2xSO16 with x = 0.00 to 1.13). The maximum ye’elimite content is reached at a sintering temperature of 1250 °C. The presence of iron promotes the formation of cubic ye’elimite at the expense of the orthorhombic phase. The total incorporation of iron in ye’elimite structure is possible when x < 0.12. Beyond this content, the ferritic phase (CaO)(Al2O3,Fe2O3) appears as a minor phase and its quantity becomes more important with the increase of the percentage of iron introduced in the synthesis. Finally, the electron microscopy allows to observe nanometric grains assembled in larger aggregates.

* Corresponding author: fatima-zahra.abir@unilim.fr

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