



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**THE APPLICATION OF ELECTRICAL RESISTIVITY IMAGING
TECHNIQUE IN THE ASSESSMENT OF STRENGTH PARAMETERS OF
RESIDUAL SOIL DERIVED FROM GRANITIC ROCKS**

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By

UGANTHARAN MARUTHAVEERAN

**Thesis submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of
Science in the Faculty of Science and Environmental Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia**

March 2000



***Dedicated especially to,
Mom and Dad,
my brother Babu,
and
my sister Amma,
without whose love and continued support
this thesis would not have been possible.***



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science.

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Chairman: Dr. Shaharin Ibrahim, Ph.D.

Faculty: Science and Environmental Studies

This thesis reports on the result of an empirical study to use electrical resistivity imaging technique in the assessment of ultimate shear strength of residual soil derived from the weathering product of granitic rock and to identify the depth and lateral extent of possible slip surface of sloping ground located in granitic terrain.

Soil samples were taken from the field and its petrophysical, resistivity and shear strength properties were studied in laboratory. In the field, both electrical resistivity imaging survey and ultimate shear strength probing have been carried out. The result of cross-correlation between ultimate shear strength and resistivity from laboratory and field investigation were integrated to obtain a relationship, which was applied to determine the ultimate shear strength of residual soil from the electrical resistivity inversion data obtained from the study area. The residual soil was derived from the weathering of granitic rock along Kuala Kubu Bahru – Bukit Fraser federal road.



Soil classification results show that the soil at the study area comprised of mainly clayey sand soil of high plasticity index. This study shows that the formation factor, x (i.e the resistivity without the influence of solution salinity in the soil) and the shear strength, y was related by an equation $y = 12.347x^{0.5641}$. The present work also shows that this relationship could only be applied for soil at moisture content between 10% and 50%. The result of field survey and 2-D subsurface imaging, also indicate that the depth of the sliding surface of the failed slope surface was about 1m – 1.5m below ground surface. The boundary between the translated and intact soil was at the ultimate shear strength of about 200kPa.

Therefore it is possible to estimate the ultimate shear strength of the residual soil and to predict the depth and lateral extent of the possible slip surface using electrical resistivity imaging survey at lower cost and wider coverage of survey area.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains.

**PENGUNAAN TEKNIK PENGIMEJAN KERINTANGAN ELEKTRIK BAGI
PENILAIAN PARAMETER KEKUATAN TANAH BAKI YANG TERBENTUK
DARI BATUAN GRANIT**

Oleh

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Tesis ini melaporkan hasil dari satu kajian empirikal mengenai penggunaan teknik pengimejan kerintangan elektrik bagi penilaian kekuatan ricih tanah baki yang terbentuk hasil daripada proses luluhawa batuan granit serta mengenalpasti kedalaman serta kelansungan mengufuk permukaan gelinciran yang mungkin terbentuk di dalam tanah baki granit yang cerun.

Sampel tanah telah dikutip dari kawasan kajian dan telah diuji di makmal untuk sifat-sifat petrofizikal, kerintangan elektrik dan kekuatan ricih. Di lapangan, tinjauan pengimejan kerintangan elektrik dan pengukuran kekuatan ricih telah dilaksanakan. Hasil kajian korelasi antara kekuatan ricih dan kerintangan elektrik yang diperolehi dari kajian di makmal dan di lapangan telah diintegrasikan dan kaitan ini telah digunakan dalam penentuan kekuatan ricih tanah baki berdasarkan kepada data songsangan kerintangan elektrik yang diperolehi di kawasan lapangan. Tanah baki yang dikaji

adalah terbentuk daripada proses luluhawa batuan granit di sepanjang Jalan Persekutuan Kuala Kubu Bahru – Bukit Fraser.

Keputusan ujian klasifikasi tanah menunjukkan bahawa tanah baki dari kawasan kajian adalah terdiri daripada tanah pasir berlempung yang memiliki indeks plastik yang tinggi. Kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa hubungan antara faktor formasi, x (nilai kerintangan yang tidak di pegaruhi oleh kandungan garam dalam larutan air tanah) dan kekuatan ricih, y adalah $y = 12.347x^{0.3641}$. Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa hubungan ini hanya boleh digunakan untuk tanah yang memiliki kandungan air antara 10% - 50%. Hasil dari kerja lapangan dan pengimejan 2-D sub-permukaan, menunjukkan bahawa kedalaman permukaan gelinciran pada permukaan yang gagal adalah kira-kira 1m – 1.5m di bawah permukaan bumi. Sempadan antara tanah yang menggeluncur dan tanah yang utuh adalah pada kekuatan ricih maksimum kira-kira 200kPa.

Kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa teknik pengimejan kerintangan elektrik berupaya menilai kekuatan ricih tanah baki serta menentukan kedalaman dan kelansungan mengufuk permukaan gelinciran yang telah terbentuk pada kos yang rendah dan rantau peninjauan yang lebih luas.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|---------------|
| DEDICATION | ii |
| ABSTRACT | iii |
| ABSTRAK | v |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | vii |
| APPROVAL SHEETS | ix |
| DECLARATION FORM | xi |
| LIST OF TABLES | xv |
| LIST OF FIGURES | xix |
| LIST OF PLATES | xxiv |
| LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS | xxv |
| CHAPTER | |
| I INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| Overview of Electrical Method Potential..... | 1 |
| Study Area..... | 3 |
| Climatic Condition..... | 5 |
| Topography..... | 8 |
| General Geology..... | 9 |
| Previous Work..... | 10 |
| Scope of Present Study..... | 11 |
| II LITERATURE REVIEW | 13 |
| Electrical Methods for Geophysical Prospecting..... | 13 |
| Electrical Properties of Earth Materials..... | 19 |
| Formation Factor..... | 24 |
| Topographic Effect..... | 25 |
| Ohm's Law..... | 26 |
| Apparent Resistivity..... | 28 |
| Current Flow and Potential between Electrode..... | 30 |
| at Surface | |
| Traditional Resistivity Surveys..... | 32 |
| 2-Dimensional Electrical Imaging Surveys..... | 34 |
| Electrode Configurations..... | 36 |
| Slope Stability..... | 39 |
| Type of Slope Movement..... | 41 |
| Causes of Slope Instability..... | 45 |
| Weathering of Granites..... | 48 |
| Weathering Profile of the Study Area..... | 51 |
| Shear Strength..... | 51 |



| | | |
|------------|---|------------|
| | Friction: Basic Strength Property..... | 53 |
| | Cohesionless Soil..... | 57 |
| | Cohesive Soil..... | 63 |
| | Strength Properties for Clay and Mixed Soil..... | 64 |
| III | MATERIALS AND METHODS..... | 67 |
| | Introduction..... | 67 |
| | Laboratory Work..... | 68 |
| | Grain Size Distribution..... | 69 |
| | Specific Gravity..... | 72 |
| | Liquid Limit..... | 74 |
| | Plastic Limit..... | 77 |
| | Plasticity Index..... | 78 |
| | Permeability..... | 80 |
| | Electrical Resistivity Measurement..... | 84 |
| | Shear Strength Measurement..... | 86 |
| | Fieldwork..... | 88 |
| | Electrical Resistivity Survey..... | 93 |
| | Shear Strength Survey..... | 100 |
| | Desk Study and Data Interpretation..... | 102 |
| IV | RESULTS AND DISCUSSION..... | 109 |
| | Soil Classification..... | 109 |
| | Visual Examination..... | 109 |
| | Grain Size..... | 110 |
| | Specific Gravity of Soil Solids..... | 112 |
| | Consistency of Cohesive Soil..... | 115 |
| | (Liquid Limit, Plastic Limit and Plasticity Index) | |
| | Permeability..... | 120 |
| | Electrical Resistivity and Shear Strength Properties..... | 122 |
| | of Soil | |
| | Effect of Solution Salinity on Electrical..... | 122 |
| | Resistivity | |
| | Effect of Salinity of Saturating Solution on the..... | 125 |
| | Electrical Resistivity of Soil | |
| | Effect of Grain Size on the Electrical Resistivity..... | 128 |
| | of Soil | |
| | Effect of Clay Content on the Electrical..... | 132 |
| | Resistivity of Soil | |
| | Effect of Grain Size on the Shear Strength..... | 135 |
| | of Soil | |
| | Effect of Clay Content on the Shear Strength..... | 137 |
| | of Soil | |
| | Shear Strength Property of Soil from Study Area..... | 139 |



| | |
|--|------------|
| Relationship between Shear Strength and Formation..... | 142 |
| Factor of Soil from Study Area | |
| 2-D Subsurface Imaging | 144 |
| 2-D Subsurface Imaging Section of Electrical..... | 144 |
| Resistivity Distribution | |
| 2-D Subsurface Imaging Section of Shear..... | 152 |
| Strength Distribution | |
| Comparison between Shear Strength and Electrical..... | 168 |
| Resistivity Measurements | |
| V CONCLUSIONS..... | 170 |
| Recommendations for Further Studies..... | 172 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY..... | 173 |
| APPENDICES..... | 182 |
| VITA..... | 232 |



| | |
|---|-----|
| Table A.29: Electrical resistivity of soil with grain size of 1.00mm – 2.00mm..... | 201 |
| Table A.30: Electrical resistivity of soil with grain size of 0.50mm – 1.00mm..... | 202 |
| Table A.31: Electrical resistivity of soil with grain size of 0.25mm – 0.50mm..... | 202 |
| Table A.32: Electrical resistivity of soil with grain size of > 2.00mm..... | 203 |
| Table A.33: Electrical resistivity of soil with grain size of 1.00mm – 2.00mm..... | 203 |
| Table A.34: Electrical resistivity of soil with grain size of 0.50mm – 1.00mm..... | 204 |
| Table A.35: Electrical resistivity of soil with grain size of 0.25mm – 0.50mm..... | 204 |
| Table A.36: Electrical resistivity of soil sample from Kuala Kubu Bahru..... – Bukit Fraser. | 205 |
| Table A.37: Electrical resistivity of soil sample from Kuala Kubu Bahru..... – Bukit Fraser. | 205 |
| Table A.38: Electrical resistivity of soil with (100% sand : 0% clay) composition... | 206 |
| Table A.39: Electrical resistivity of soil with (80% sand : 20% clay) composition... | 206 |
| Table A.40: Electrical resistivity of soil with (60% sand : 40% clay) composition... | 207 |
| Table A.41: Electrical resistivity of soil with (40% sand : 60% clay) composition... | 207 |
| Table A.42: Electrical resistivity of soil with (20% sand : 80% clay) composition... | 208 |
| Table A.43: Electrical resistivity of soil with (0% sand : 100% clay) composition... | 208 |
| Table A.44: Shear strength of soil with grain size of > 2.00mm..... | 209 |
| Table A.45: Shear strength of soil with grain size of 1.00mm – 2.00mm..... | 209 |
| Table A.46: Shear strength of soil with grain size of 0.50mm – 1.00mm..... | 209 |
| Table A.47: Shear strength of soil with grain size of 0.25mm – 0.50mm..... | 210 |
| Table A.48: Shear strength of soil with (100% sand : 0% clay) composition..... | 210 |
| Table A.49: Shear strength of soil with (80% sand : 20% clay) composition..... | 210 |



| | |
|---|-----|
| Table A.50: Shear strength of soil with (60% sand : 40% clay) composition..... | 211 |
| Table A.51: Shear strength of soil with (40% sand : 60% clay) composition..... | 211 |
| Table A.52: Shear strength of soil with (200% sand : 80% clay) composition..... | 211 |
| Table A.53: Shear strength of soil with (0% sand : 100% clay) composition..... | 211 |
| Table A.54: Shear strength of soil from Kuala Kubu Bahru – Bukit Fraser..... | 212 |



LIST OF FIGURES

| | Page |
|---|-------------|
| Figure 1.1 : Location of the study area..... | 4 |
| Figure 1.2 : Annual rainfall (1990 - 1997) for Kuala Kubu Bahru..... - Bukit Fraser area. | 6 |
| Figure 1.3 : Annual raindays (1990 - 1997) for Kuala Kubu Bahru..... - Bukit Fraser area. | 7 |
| Figure 2.1 : Wenner configuration for arrangement of voltage and current..... electrodes. | 14 |
| Figure 2.2 : Two electrode configuration..... | 15 |
| Figure 2.3 : Square array..... | 16 |
| Figure 2.4 : A graphical plot of the resistivity values of different type of..... materials. | 23 |
| Figure 2.5 : Arrangement of current electrode (A and B) and potential..... electrodes (C and D). | 28 |
| Figure 2.6a: The cross section showing equipotential lines and lines of current..... flow in the vertical plane containing the current electrodes. | 31 |
| Figure 2.6b: Equipotential lines and lines of current flow on the plane of earth's..... surface at current electrodes A and B. | 31 |
| Figure 2.7 : Distortion of current flow lines by bodies having (A) anomalously..... high or (B) anomalously low conductivity. | 32 |
| Figure 2.8a: 1D model..... | 33 |
| Figure 2.8b: 2D model..... | 33 |
| Figure 2.8c: 3D model..... | 33 |
| Figure 2.9a: Wenner arrangement; “a” is electrode spacing as used in resistivity..... formulae. | 37 |
| Figure 2.9b: Schlumberger arrangement; “a” is constant and “r” is increased..... during the measurement. | 38 |

| | |
|--|----|
| Figure 2.9c: Dipole arrangement; separation “r” between centre of respective electrode pairs is changed during the measurement. | 38 |
| Figure 2.9d: Three point arrangement; current electrodes is kept fixed at a very large distance from the remaining three, which have a uniform separation “a”. | 39 |
| Figure 2.10: Typical slope failure. | 41 |
| Figure 2.11: A simple classification of landslides. | 43 |
| Figure 2.12: Examples of activities that cause of a net increase in stress. | 46 |
| Figure 2.13: Slope stability condition. | 53 |
| Figure 2.14: Friction of plane surfaces. | 54 |
| Figure 2.15: Friction of uneven surfaces. | 56 |
| Figure 2.16: Description of forces acting on representative slice of cohesionless soil in uniform slope. | 58 |
| Figure 2.17: A Submerged slope. | 60 |
| Figure 2.18: Relative failure envelopes (or shear strength values) due to differences in peak and ultimate ϕ values. | 62 |
| Figure 2.19: Effect of capillary moisture on shear strength of cohesionless soil. | 62 |
| Figure 2.20: Qualitative comparison of shear strength envelope from consolidated drained and consolidated undrained tests. | 66 |
| Figure 3.1 : Plasticity chart. | 79 |
| Figure 3.2 : Arrangement of constant-head permeability test. | 83 |
| Figure 3.3 : Cable laid horizontally. | 93 |
| Figure 3.4 : Cable laid vertically. | 94 |
| Figure 3.5 : Data sheet. | 97 |
| Figure 3.6 : The arrangement of electrodes for 2-D electrical survey and the sequence of measurements used to build up a pseudosection. | 98 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Figure 3.7 : Arrangement of blocks used in a model together with the datum points in the pseudosection..... | 103 |
| Figure 3.8 : Data format for DIPIX PLUS program..... | 107 |
| Figure 4.1 : Grain size distribution of soil from Kuala Kubu Bahru - Bukit Fraser area..... | 111 |
| Figure 4.2 : Graph showing changes in specific gravity as clay content varies..... | 113 |
| Figure 4.3 : The effect of clay content on liquid limit of soil..... | 116 |
| Figure 4.4 : The effect of clay content on plastic limit of soil..... | 117 |
| Figure 4.5 : The effect of clay content on plasticity index of soil..... | 118 |
| Figure 4.6 : Plasticity chart shows the type of soil from the study area which is represented by the dark region..... | 119 |
| Figure 4.7 : The effect of grain size on the permeability of soil..... | 120 |
| Figure 4.8 : The effect of clay content on the permeability of soil..... | 121 |
| Figure 4.9 : Variations in resistivity of solution from different sources..... | 124 |
| Figure 4.10: Effects of salinity and moisture on resistivity of soil from study area.... | 126 |
| Figure 4.11: Effects of salinity and moisture on formation factor of soil from study area..... | 127 |
| Figure 4.12: Effects of grain size and moisture on resistivity of soil..... | 129 |
| Figure 4.13 : (a) cubic packing and (b) hexagonal packing..... | 130 |
| Figure 4.14: Effects of clay content and moisture on resistivity of soil..... | 133 |
| Figure 4.15: Effects of grain size and moisture on shear strength of soil..... | 136 |
| Figure 4.16: Effects of clay content and moisture on shear strength of soil..... | 139 |
| Figure 4.17: Effects of moisture on shear strength of soil from study area..... | 140 |
| Figure 4.18: Schematic arrangement of clay particles and sand grains..... | 141 |
| Figure 4.19: Established relationship between shear strength and formation factor..... | 143 |



| | |
|---|-----|
| Figure 4.20: 2-D resistivity model section of slope 1. (Horizontal direction)..... | 145 |
| Figure 4.21: 2-D resistivity model section of slope 2L. (Horizontal direction)..... | 146 |
| Figure 4.22: 2-D resistivity model section of slope 2R. (Horizontal direction)..... | 146 |
| Figure 4.23: 2-D resistivity model section of slope 3. (Horizontal direction)..... | 146 |
| Figure 4.24: 2-D resistivity model section of slope 4. (Horizontal direction)..... | 147 |
| Figure 4.25: 2-D resistivity model section of slope 5. (Horizontal direction)..... | 147 |
| Figure 4.26: 2-D resistivity model section of slope 6. (Horizontal direction)..... | 147 |
| Figure 4.27: 2-D resistivity model section of slope 7. (Horizontal direction)..... | 148 |
| Figure 4.28: 2-D resistivity model section of slope 2. (Vertical direction)..... | 149 |
| Figure 4.29: 2-D resistivity model section of slope 4. (Vertical direction)..... | 150 |
| Figure 4.30: 2-D resistivity model section of slope 5. (Vertical direction)..... | 150 |
| Figure 4.31: 2-D resistivity model section of slope 7. (Vertical direction)..... | 151 |
| Figure 4.32: 2-D shear strength model section of slope 1. (Horizontal direction)..... | 155 |
| Figure 4.33: 2-D shear strength model section of slope 2L. (Horizontal direction).... | 156 |
| Figure 4.34: 2-D shear strength model section of slope 2R. (Horizontal direction).... | 157 |
| Figure 4.35: 2-D shear strength model section of slope 3. (Horizontal direction)..... | 158 |
| Figure 4.36: 2-D shear strength model section of slope 4. (Horizontal direction)..... | 159 |
| Figure 4.37: 2-D shear strength model section of slope 5. (Horizontal direction)..... | 161 |
| Figure 4.38: 2-D shear strength model section of slope 6. (Horizontal direction)..... | 161 |
| Figure 4.39: 2-D shear strength model section of slope 7. (Horizontal direction)..... | 162 |
| Figure 4.40: 2-D shear strength model section of slope 2. (Vertical direction)..... | 164 |
| Figure 4.41: 2-D shear strength model section of slope 4. (Vertical direction)..... | 165 |
| Figure 4.42: 2-D shear strength model section of slope 5. (Vertical direction)..... | 166 |



| | |
|--|-----|
| Figure 4.43: 2-D shear strength model section of slope 7. (Vertical direction)..... | 167 |
| Figure 4.44: Graph describes the differences between shear vane and electrical..... resistivity measurements of shear strength of soil from study area. | 168 |
| Figure A.1 : Penetration versus moisture content for soil composition of..... (80%sand:20%clay). | 192 |
| Figure A.2 : Penetration versus moisture content for soil composition of..... (60%sand:40%clay). | 192 |
| Figure A.3 : Penetration versus moisture content for soil composition of..... (40%sand:60%clay). | 193 |
| Figure A.4 : Penetration versus moisture content for soil composition of..... (20%sand:80%clay). | 193 |
| Figure A.5 : Penetration versus moisture content for soil composition of..... (0%sand:100%clay). | 194 |
| Figure A.6 : Changes in ultimate shear strength with depth for slope 1.(station 1)..... | 219 |
| Figure A.7 : Changes in ultimate shear strength with depth for slope 1.(station 2)..... | 220 |
| Figure A.8 : Changes in ultimate shear strength with depth for slope 2.(station 1)..... | 221 |
| Figure A.9 : Changes in ultimate shear strength with depth for slope 2.(station 2)..... | 222 |
| Figure A.10 : Changes in ultimate shear strength with depth for slope 3.(station 1)..... | 223 |
| Figure A.11 : Changes in ultimate shear strength with depth for slope 3.(station 2)..... | 224 |
| Figure A.12 : Changes in ultimate shear strength with depth for slope 4.(station 1)..... | 225 |
| Figure A.13 : Changes in ultimate shear strength with depth for slope 4.(station 2)..... | 226 |
| Figure A.14 : Changes in ultimate shear strength with depth for slope 5.(station 1)..... | 227 |
| Figure A.15 : Changes in ultimate shear strength with depth for slope 5.(station 2)..... | 228 |
| Figure A.16 : Changes in ultimate shear strength with depth for slope 6.(station 1)..... | 229 |
| Figure A.17 : Changes in ultimate shear strength with depth for slope 7.(station 1)..... | 230 |
| Figure A.18 : Changes in ultimate shear strength with depth for slope 7.(station 2)..... | 231 |



LIST OF PLATES

| | Page |
|--|-------------|
| Plate 3.1 : Sieves..... | 70 |
| Plate 3.2 : Mechanical shaker..... | 70 |
| Plate 3.3 : Density bottle..... | 73 |
| Plate 3.4 : Cone penetration apparatus..... | 75 |
| Plate 3.5 : Arrangement of electrical resistivity test in laboratory..... | 85 |
| Plate 3.6 : Arrangement of shear strength test in laboratory..... | 87 |
| Plate 3.7 : Shear strength apparatus..... | 87 |
| Plate 3.8 : The vane..... | 88 |
| Plate 3.9 : Slope 1..... | 89 |
| Plate 3.10: Slope 2..... | 90 |
| Plate 3.11: Slope 3..... | 90 |
| Plate 3.12: Slope 4..... | 91 |
| Plate 3.13: Slope 5..... | 91 |
| Plate 3.14: Slope 6..... | 92 |
| Plate 3.15: Slope 7..... | 92 |
| Plate 3.16: The electric cables are connected to the electrode via copper tube..... and crocodile clip. | 94 |
| Plate 3.17: Control panel..... | 95 |
| Plate 3.18: McOhm resistivity meter..... | 96 |
| Plate 3.19: Shear strength measurement in the field..... | 101 |

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------------|---|
| AFMAG | Audio Frequency Magnetic Field |
| DIPIX PLUS | Plotting and contouring of Dipole-Dipole Resistivity and Induced Polarization Data and Profile Data |
| Eh | A measure of the ability of a system to bring about an oxidation or reduction reaction |
| EM | Electromagnet |
| IAEA | International Atomic Energy Agency |
| IAEG | International Association of Engineering Geology |
| IP | Induced Polarization |
| LCD | Liquid Crystal Display |
| pH | Value taken to represent the acidity or alkalinity of an aqueous solution. |
| RES2DINV | Rapid 2-D Resistivity Inversion |



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Overview of Electrical Method Potential

Pressure on natural resources from growing population, with growing demands for water supply, infrastructure and housing has increased in the past decades and can be expected to rise. Further stress on the environment due to pollution will increase the need for detailed geological knowledge for geotechnical, hydrogeological and environment protection purposes. To meet the challenge, earth scientists have developed more and more sophisticated techniques of exploration. The geophysical techniques most widely employed for exploration work are the seismic, gravity, magnetic and electrical methods. Less common methods involve the measurement of radioactivity and temperature at or near the earth's surface and in the air.

The electrical method is one of the youngest geophysical disciplines. Although the first step in applying geoelectrical methods to geology were made more than 100 years ago, the study of geoelectricity only began to develop at the beginning of this century. Electrical prospecting makes use of a large variety of techniques; each based on some different electrical property or characteristics of materials in the

