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Fatigue crack initiation and growth on a steel in the very high cycle regime with sea water corrosion

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Steel
Sea water corrosion
Crack initiation
Crack growth

1. Introduction

Mooring chains for offshore petroleum platforms, designed for 30 years, are loaded in fatigue in sea water environment in the gigacycle regime (around 10^9 cycles). The aim of this study is to investigate the gigacycle fatigue strength of low-alloy steel and the effects on this strength of pre-corrosion and corrosion in sea water environment. Many studies carried out on steel and aluminum alloys in the gigacycle regime have demonstrated that there is not a fatigue limit in such metals after 10^7 cycles as was believed in the past [1,2]. It has been shown that fatigue cracks initiate mainly at surface defects in the short fatigue life range, but may shift to subsurface in the long life range [3]. Other studies have shown that defects like non-metallic inclusions, pores and shrinkages [4] or pits [5–7] are the key factors, which control the fatigue properties of metals in very high cycle fatigue (VHCF). Furthermore, in some works it has been proven that crack initiation dominates the total fatigue life of specimens in gigacycle fatigue [8]. In this study the effect of corrosion on the fatigue strength will be quantified and the assessment of the crack propagation period will allow us to investigate the relationship between crack initiation and crack propagation.
Nomenclature

\begin{itemize}
\item \(a\) crack length
\item \(a_{\text{int}}\) crack length at initiation
\item \(a_0\) at the corner of the crack growth curve
\item \(b\) Burger vector
\item \(E\) Young modulus
\item \(N_{\text{prop}}\) number of cycles of the crack propagation period
\item \(N_{a\rightarrow a}\) number of cycles of the long crack growth period
\item \(N_{a\rightarrow a_0}\) number of cycles of the short crack growth period
\item \(R\) radius of the hemispherical surface defect
\item \(U_0\) amplitude of the displacement at the extremities of the specimen
\item \(v\) Poisson ratio
\item \(\Delta K\) stress intensity range (mode I)
\item \(\sigma_a\) stress amplitude
\end{itemize}

2. Material and experimental conditions

2.1. Material

The investigated material is a non-standard hot rolled low-alloy steel grade, named R5 according to the international denomination of the International Classification Societies of offshore systems. This steel is usually used to manufacture mooring chains and accessories intended for position mooring applications such as: mooring of mobile offshore units, mooring of floating production units and mooring of offshore loading systems.

This material has a typical fine grain microstructure, composed of tempered martensite and bainite, as shown in Fig. 1a. Its chemical composition is presented in Table 1. This steel is used after a double quenching in water at 920 °C then 880 °C and tempering at 650 °C with water cooling. After this heat treatment its mechanical properties under quasi-static monotonic tension are as follows: hardness 317 HB, yield strength 970 MPa, UTS = 1018 MPa, Young modulus \(E = 211\) GPa. The R5 steel is vacuum degassed with low hydrogen content (1 ppm maximum in the liquid steel after the vacuum treatment) and very low non-metallic inclusions content (Fig. 1b). Typical non-metallic inclusions according to both the ASTM E45 and AMS 2301 standards are indicated in Table 2.

(a) R5 steel microstructure after nital etching and (b) non-metallic inclusions (in dark).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>Mn</th>
<th>Si</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>Cr</th>
<th>Ni</th>
<th>Mo</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>Cu</th>
<th>O</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>12 ppm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2. Fatigue test conditions and geometry of the specimens

2.2.1. Testing machine and geometry of the specimens

Two types of fatigue tests have been carried out: crack initiation and crack growth. All were carried out at 20 kHz with an ultrasonic fatigue testing machine [1] under fully reversed tension \( R = -1 \) (details can be found in [1]). Since the amplifier and the specimen must work at resonance, the specimen geometry was designed using the elastic wave theory. Fig. 2 shows the dimensions of the two types of specimens: (i) for VHCF tests (crack initiation) and (ii) fatigue crack growth (FCG) tests. The geometry of these last specimens (FCG) was designed according to the work of Wu and Sun [9,10]. The crack growth was measured with an optical binocular microscope with a maximum magnification of 200x. The roughness of the tested area of the VHCF specimens was \( R_a = 0.6 \) μm. The VHCF specimens were tested under three different conditions: (i) without any corrosion (virgin state), (ii) after pre-corrosion and (iii) under real time artificial sea water flow. All the VHCF tests were calibrated by using a wide band (100 kHz) strain gauge conditioner and a longitudinal strain gauge glued on the specimen surface. Such calibration allows the authors to be sure of the local strain amplitude and mean value in the smallest cross section of the specimen. These tests were carried out until a decrease of the resonance frequency of 0.5 kHz due to the presence of a crack; some times the specimen was broken in two parts but not always; this is discussed at the end of this paper together with the duration of crack growth period compared to the total life.

2.2.2. Corrosion of the specimens

The pre-corrosion of the specimens (before any mechanical loading) was carried out according to the ASTM G85 standard. The specimens stayed 600 h in a salt fog corrosion chamber under temperature and humidity control with the following conditions: 35 °C with 95% of humidity. The salt solution contains 5% of NaCl, its pH is 6.6 and it is applied in the chamber with a rate flow of 1.52 ml/h. After the pre-corrosion process the specimens were removed from the corrosion chamber, first chemically cleaned and then cleaned with emery paper to remove the oxide layer. Many corrosion pits were created by the salt fog, their diameter were between 30 and 80 μm (Fig. 3).

To carry out the VHCF crack initiation tests in sea water environment a special corrosion cell was home designed and made (Fig. 4). To avoid any cavitation and to be representative of the splash zone on the mooring chain (interface between the ocean and the atmosphere), it was decided to test the specimens under sea water flow without any immersion. The experimental setup is based on a peristaltic pump which creates a flow of artificial sea water (100 ml/min) on two opposite sides of the specimen surface in the tested area (diameter 3 mm). The sea water used was the A3 standard synthetic sea water; its chemical composition is (wt.%): 24.53% NaCl, 5.2% MgCl, 4.09% Na_2SO_4, 1.16% CaCl, 0.695% CaCl and 0.201% NaHCO_3. The pH of this solution is 6.6 and no electrical potential was applied between the corrosion solution and the specimen.

2.2.3. Fatigue crack growth tests

Fatigue crack growth tests were carried out under fully reversed loading \( R = -1 \), following a similar methodology as described in the ASTM E647 standard. But because with an ultrasonic fatigue testing device the specimen is loaded under displacement control, the range of the stress intensity factor, \( \Delta K \), was computed according to the equation proposed in Refs. [9,10]:

\[
\Delta K = U_0 \left( \frac{E}{1 - \nu^2} \right)^{1/2} \sqrt{\pi a} Y(a/w)
\]

(1)

where \( U_0 \) is the amplitude of the displacement imposed at the top of the specimen by the horn, \( E \) is the Young modulus and \( \nu \) the Poisson ratio of the material, \( Y(a/w) \) is a function depending on the specimen geometry, \( a \) is the crack length and \( w \) the width of the specimen.
3. Results and discussion

3.1. Fatigue crack initiation tests

Fig. 5 shows the S–N curves of the crack initiation tests. This figure shows a decreasing (around 50 MPa) of the fatigue strength for the specimens with pre-corrosion compared to the specimens without corrosion. Furthermore, the scatter of the fatigue strength of pre-corroded specimens is larger than for virgin ones. The effect of sea water flow during VHCF fatigue tests is very important. Indeed, for the specimens tested under sea water flow, the fatigue strength at $10^7$ cycles is around 300 MPa, not far from the value for pre-corroded specimens (360 MPa), whereas at $3 \times 10^8$ cycles the fatigue strength is around 100 MPa only. At this fatigue life the fatigue strength decreasing was $-71\%$ compared to pre-corroded specimens and $-74\%$ compared to virgin specimens. The fatigue strength decreased significantly in the tests under real time artificial sea water flow due to the detrimental corrosive effect.

3.2. Fractography analysis

Except for some unusual internal crack initiation (Fig. 6), fatigue cracks initiated mainly at the specimen surface over the cycle range ($10^6$–$10^9$ cycles). Surface defects were the origin of the cracks for non-corroded specimens and corrosion pits for pre-corroded specimens (Fig. 7) and specimens tested under sea water flow (Fig. 8). For the specimens tested under sea...
water flow the crack initiation areas were all around the specimen surface due to several large corrosion pits. The size of the pits depends on the time (that is to say the number of cycles). At the moment it is difficult to show undoubted experimental evidence of the coupling between corrosion and the high strain rate due to the 20 kHz frequency. However the size of corrosion pits is larger under sea water flow (50–300 μm) than the pre-corroded specimens (30–80 μm). Furthermore, Fig. 8 right shows that all the flaws are perpendicular to the loading direction that is to say on the plane of maximum normal stress. This is probably characteristic of a corrosion/cyclic loading interaction. Finally, a specimen was tested under distilled

Fig. 5. S–N curves of the R5 steel under fully reversed tension at 20 kHz.

Fig. 6. Specimens without corrosion: (a) internal crack initiation $\sigma_a = 380$ MPa, $N_f = 2.78 \times 10^6$ cycles and (b) surface crack initiation $\sigma_a = 395$ MPa, $N_f = 3.61 \times 10^8$ cycles.
water flow (non-corrosive) under a stress amplitude of 200 MPa; no crack was observed after 10⁹ cycles. This confirm a coupling between fatigue and corrosion.

Due to the high frequency of ultrasonic fatigue tests carried out in this study, the question of possible effects of the frequency on corrosion-fatigue strength in the gigacycle regime arises. Yeske and Roth [6] have shown that the corrosion-fatigue strengths of 403 stainless steel (a 12% Cr steel) exposed to concentrated chloride solution are the same at two very different loading frequencies: 40 Hz and 20 kHz. Although large effects were induced by environment change, the S–N curves in the range 10⁷–10⁸ cycles have a very good overlapping at the two frequencies. In this work [6], it is reported that cracks initiated at the base of the pits formed on the test specimens at both frequencies, even though some of the tests at 20 kHz lasted only a few 100 s.

A possible explanation for this similarity of the environmental effects at the two very different frequencies is proposed by Yeske and Roth. Transport of metal ions out of the pit electrolyte must occur at a high rate in ultrasonic fatigue but it appears that transport may be accelerated by convection induced by the high frequency loading. According to the authors of the present paper, further studies are needed to confirm this explanation and to really understand the physical mechanisms in corrosion-fatigue at high and relatively low frequency. The mechanisms are probably dependent on both the material properties and the corrosive environment. Anyway, ultrasonic fatigue tests in corrosive environment is the only reasonable fatigue tests which could provide experimental data for the very high cycle regime. With an industrial point of view, one has also to keep in mind that the artificial sea water A3 is much more corrosive than real sea water where R5 steel is used, another interesting point for industrial application is the roughness effect.

Some complementary fatigue tests were carried out under sea water flow at a stress amplitude of 250 MPa on some specimens with the same geometry but with a surface polished with emery paper (Ra = 0.1 μm). There was no evidence of the surface roughness effect under sea water flow: the fatigue life was the same than without polishing (Fig. 5). The poor corrosion-fatigue strength was related to the size of pits which are nearly hemispherical surface defects. Due to the major role of the defects, the proportion of the crack propagation period compared to the total life is studied in the following.

3.2.1. Assessment of the crack initiation and propagation duration
3.2.1.1. Fatigue crack growth results. Fatigue crack growth tests were carried out on three specimens. The da/dN = f(ΔK) curve is illustrated in Fig. 9. This shows that in air the mode I (R = -1) stress intensity threshold for R5 steel is around 3.3 MPa m¹/₂.

![Fig. 7. Specimen with pre-corrosion, σₜ = 370 MPa, N₉ = 4.37 x 10⁸ cycles.](image)

![Fig. 8. Specimen tested under sea water flow, σₜ = 160 MPa, N₉ = 1.8 x 10⁸ cycles.](image)
The fatigue crack propagation duration was estimated according to the work of Paris et al. [8,11], based on the Paris–Hertzberg–Mc Clintock crack growth rate

\[
\frac{da}{dN} = b\left(\frac{K_{eff}}{E}\right)^p \cdot \frac{1}{C_{16}/C_{17}}
\]

and

\[
\frac{K_{eff}}{E} = \frac{1}{C_{24}}K_{max}
\]

at the corner, where \(E\) is the elastic modulus and \(b\) the Burger’s vector of the material. Fig. 9 shows the agreement of this equation with our experimental data for \(E = 211\) GPa and \(b = 0.285\) nm. In our experiments at 20 kHz the measurement of \(K_{op}\) is not possible, thus in first approximation, \(\Delta K_{eff} \sim K_{max}\) and no water interaction with the stress intensity factor was considered.

To assess the crack propagation phase, a corrosion pit was modelled by an hemispherical surface defect with radius \(R\). A fatigue crack of depth \(a\) from the surface of the hemisphere and perpendicular to the loading direction was assumed due to inter-crystalline corrosion cracking. According to the asymptotic approximation proposed by Paris et al. [12] the crack tip stress intensity factor in mode I is:

\[
K_I = \sqrt{\pi a} Y(x, \nu)\]

where \(x = a/R\), \(\nu\) is the Poisson ratio and:

\[
Y(x, \nu) = 1.015\left[A(\nu) + B(\nu)\left(\frac{x}{1+x}\right) + C(\nu)\left(\frac{x}{1+x}\right)^2 + D(\nu)\left(\frac{x}{1+x}\right)^3\right]
\]

with:

\[
A(\nu) = 1.683 + \frac{3.366}{2.59} B(\nu) = -1.025 - \frac{12.23}{2.59} C(\nu) = -1.089 + \frac{14.35}{2.59} D(\nu) = 1.068 - \frac{5.568}{2.59}
\]

It was assumed that the propagation of the fatigue crack is divided in three stages: (i) a short crack propagation during \(N_{a_{int} - a_0}\) cycles, from initiation \(a_{int}\) to the crack size \(a_0\), then (ii) a small crack propagation period of \(N_{a_0 - a_i}\) cycles, from \(a_0\) to the crack size \(a_i\), and (iii) a long crack propagation \(N_{a_i - a}\) cycles, from \(a_i\) to the final crack size \(a\). In the short crack growth regime from \(a_{int}\) to the crack size \(a_0\) it was assumed [8] that \(\frac{da}{dN} = b\left(\frac{a}{a_0}\right)^{3/2}\).

With these three different regimes (illustrated in Fig. 10) the very quick propagation of short crack and the quick propagation of small crack compared to long crack were considered. From [8] the three durations of the three previous stages are the following:

\[
N_{a_{int} - a_0} = \frac{E^2}{Y_0^2 \sigma_0^2 \pi (\alpha/2 - 1)} \left[\left(\frac{a_0}{a_{int}}\right)^{\alpha/2} - 1\right]
\]

\[
N_{a_0 - a_i} = \frac{2E^2}{Y_0^2 \sigma_0^2 \pi} \left[1 - \sqrt{\frac{a_0}{a_i}}\right], \text{ if it is assumed that } Y(a/R) \approx Y_0 = Y(a_0/R) \text{ from } a_0 \text{ to } a_i
\]
And with the assumption that $Y(a/R) \approx Y(a_i/R)$ from $a_i$ to the final crack size $a$:

$$N_{a_i-a} = \frac{2E^2Y_0}{Y(a_i/R)^3} \sigma_0^2 \pi \left[ x^3 \sqrt{\frac{a_i}{a}} - x^3 \sqrt{\frac{a_0}{a}} \right]$$

(5)

Fig. 10. Model of the fatigue growth behaviour for short, small and long cracks according to [11].

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$x$</th>
<th>$a_0/a_0$</th>
<th>$N_{ai-a_i}$</th>
<th>$N_{i-a_i}$</th>
<th>$N_{a_i-a}$</th>
<th>$N_{exp}$ (cycles)</th>
<th>$N_p$ (cycles)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>6704</td>
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<td>4,507,080</td>
<td>4,557,935</td>
<td>539,600</td>
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<td>15,736,091</td>
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<td>6404</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4,557,635</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Case 2: $a_0 = 370$ MPa, $R = 70 \mu m$, $a_0 = 7.104 \mu m$, $a = 2.15$ mm, $N_{exp}$ = $4.4 \times 10^8$ cycles

| 25  | 0.9       | 5113          | 23,220      | 1,402,860   | 1,431,193          | 510,836        |
|     | 0.94      | 2248          |             |             | 1,428,328          |                |
|     | 0.97      | 909           |             |             | 1,426,989          |                |
| 100 | 0.9       | 88,331        | 23,220      | 1,402,860   | 1,541,411          |                |
|     | 0.94      | 10,041        |             |             | 1,436,121          |                |
|     | 0.97      | 1754          |             |             | 1,427,834          |                |
| 200 | 0.9       | 8,531,566     | 23,220      | 1,402,860   | 9,957,646          |                |
|     | 0.94      | 114,932       |             |             | 1,541,012          |                |
|     | 0.97      | 4884          |             |             | 1,430,964          |                |

Case 3: $a_0 = 425$ MPa, $R = 37.5 \mu m$, $a_0 = 6.28 \mu m$, $a = 1.96$ mm, $N_{exp}$ = $1.56 \times 10^7$ cycles

| 25  | 0.9       | 4519          | 28,651      | 2,717,227   | 2,750,397          | 387,175        |
|     | 0.94      | 1987          |             |             | 2,747,865          |                |
|     | 0.97      | 804           |             |             | 2,746,682          |                |
| 100 | 0.9       | 78,065        | 28,651      | 2,717,227   | 2,823,943          |                |
|     | 0.94      | 8874          |             |             | 2,754,752          |                |
|     | 0.97      | 1550          |             |             | 2,747,428          |                |
| 200 | 0.9       | 7,540,073     | 28,651      | 2,717,227   | 10,285,951         |                |
|     | 0.94      | 101,575       |             |             | 2,847,453          |                |
|     | 0.97      | 4317          |             |             | 2,750,195          |                |

And with the assumption that $Y(a/R) \approx Y(a_i/R)$ from $a_i$ to the final crack size $a$: $N_{ai-a} = \frac{2E^2Y_0}{Y(a_i/R)^3} \sigma_0^2 \pi \left[ x^3 \sqrt{\frac{a_i}{a}} - x^3 \sqrt{\frac{a_0}{a}} \right]$.
The effect of the two previous approximations: $\left( \frac{Y(a/R)}{C^2} Y_0 = \frac{Y(a_0/R)}{C^2} \right)$ on the calculated number of cycles was checked by comparison with numerical integration of the crack growth curve. No significant effect was seen.

Finally, the total duration of the crack propagation is:

$$N_{\text{Prop}} = Na_{\text{int}} - a_0 + Na_0 - ai + Na_{ai} - a$$

The previous equations were applied to our data assuming that the initial crack has a length, $a_0$, corresponding to the corner:

$$\frac{\Delta a}{dN} = b \frac{K_{\text{eff}}}{E} = 1$$

Some experimental cases were considered with $x = 3$, $x = 25$, 100 and 200, and different $a_{\text{int}}/a_0$ ratios. For instance, in Table 3 a pre-corroded specimen with a pit of $R = 48 \mu m$ with $N_{\text{experimental}} = 1.83 \times 10^6$ cycles. In Table 4 a pit with $R = 300 \mu m$ for a specimen under sea water flow with a life of $1.83 \times 10^7$ cycles. In the first case 99.1% of the fatigue life is due to initiation. For the fifth case, 94% of the fatigue life was consumed by the initiation phase. One can notice that with a high $x$ and large $a_{\text{int}}/a_0$ one obtains similar $N_{\text{Prop}}$ results than with a low $x$ and small $a_{\text{int}}/a_0$ that is because with a higher $x$ the crack does not grow as far due to the slope of the $\Delta a/dN$ curve in the threshold region, then $a_{\text{int}}/a_0$ must be larger, and with a lower $x$, $a_{\text{int}}/a_0$ must be smaller. Furthermore one can notice that an equally appropriate approximation of the crack growth period according to [8]: $N_p = \pi E^2/[2(\Delta \sigma)^2]$ gives results in the same order compared to $N_{\text{Prop}}$ (it is a rough approximation).

Results and simulations in Table 3 show that the duration of the crack propagation period is small compared to the total life of the specimen except for $x = 200$ and $a_{\text{int}}/a_0 = 0.9$. For the fatigue test under sea water flow the conclusion is the same: the fatigue life is dominated by the crack initiation regime as soon as the fatigue life is more than $\sim 10^7$ cycles.

### Table 4

Hemispherical surface crack growth vs. experimental fatigue life for some specimens under sea water flow with, $x = 3$, $x = 25$, 100 and 200, and different $a_{\text{int}}/a_0$ ratios.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$x$</th>
<th>$a_{\text{int}}/a_0$</th>
<th>$Na_{\text{int}} - a_0$</th>
<th>$Na_0 - a_0$</th>
<th>$Na_{ai} - a$</th>
<th>$N_{\text{Prop}}$ (cycles)</th>
<th>$N_p$ (cycles)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case 4: $a_x = 160$ MPa, $R = 300 \mu m$, $a_0 = 41.5 \mu m$, $a = 2.6$ mm, $N_{\text{experimental}} = 1.83 \times 10^6$ cycles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.9</td>
<td>29,840</td>
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<td>10,258,700</td>
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<td>2,731,700</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.9</td>
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<td>168,014</td>
<td>10,258,700</td>
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<td>10,258,700</td>
<td>60,213,818</td>
<td>10,455,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 5: $a_x = 350$ MPa, $R = 200 \mu m$, $a_0 = 6.66 \mu m$, $a = 2.3$ mm, $N_{\text{experimental}} = 7.4 \times 10^6$ cycles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>902,654</td>
<td>8,921,376</td>
<td>920,473</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case 6: $a_x = 240$ MPa, $R = 220 \mu m$, $a_0 = 15.65 \mu m$, $a = 2.88$ mm, $N_{\text{experimental}} = 5.2 \times 10^7$ cycles</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.9</td>
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<td>44,271</td>
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<td>2,670,372</td>
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<td>2,431,480</td>
<td>21,273,497</td>
<td>2,728,983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 7: $a_x = 200$ MPa, $R = 290 \mu m$, $a_0 = 23.015 \mu m$, $a = 2.81$ mm, $N_{\text{experimental}} = 1.08 \times 10^8$ cycles</td>
<td></td>
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Of course the previous calculations were carried out by assuming that the crack growth is the same in air and under sea water flow. Consequently some other investigations have to be done for assessing more precisely the crack growth curve under sea water flow. An additional point has to be kept in mind for the specimens tested under sea water flow: crack initiation may be simultaneous with corrosion pit growth, whereas this is not the case for pre-corroded specimens. In this paper the part of the fatigue crack trajectory respective to the corrosion pit growth has not been distinguished. This may lead to an error in the assessment of the duration of the crack growth period under sea water flow. But, since several authors have shown that the crack growth rate in humid air, or in water is an order of magnitude higher than in dry air, even if the corrosion pit growth would be considered with a model able to assess both the crack growth rate and the corrosion pit growth in a coupled model (the authors do not know such a model in literature), the duration of the crack propagation period should stay short compared to the total fatigue life.

4. Conclusion and prospects

Very high cycle fatigue tests were carried out up to $10^9$ cycles on smooth specimens in hot rolled martensitic-bainitic steel under three different conditions: (i) virgin specimens, (ii) pre-corroded specimens and (iii) under artificial sea water flow during the fatigue test. The fatigue strength at $10^8$ cycles is significantly reduced by a factor of 74% compared to the virgin specimens and of 71% compared to the pre-corroded ones. The assessment of the crack growth shows that crack initiation dominates the total fatigue life when $N > 10^7$ cycles. The proposed assessment is reasonable for pre-corroded specimens, but other studies must be done to study the effect of corrosion pits under real time sea water flow. The effect of sea water on the crack growth and the stress intensity factor also needs to be studied. A possible coupling between environment and high frequency cyclic loading should be studied too. However, ultrasonic fatigue test immersed in flowing sea water is the only experimental way to investigate very long life of steel under corrosion conditions.

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References