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TEZĂ DE DOCTORAT

CONTRIBUȚII PRIVIND REACTIVAREA SONDELOR DE GAZE NATURALE DIN ZĂCĂMINTE DEPLETATE

CONTRIBUTIONS REGARDING THE REACTIVATION OF NATURAL GAS WELLS FROM DEPLETED RESERVOIRS

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ABSTRACT

Este de-acum bine cunoscut faptul că România dispune de un potențial geologic considerabil în domeniul gazelor naturale, cu o tradiție îndelungată în explorarea și exploatarea acestor resurse. Bazinul Transilvaniei, în mod particular, conține numeroase zăcăminte de gaze libere, situate în structuri geologice complexe, care necesită metode avansate de analiză, simulare și optimizare a extracției. În condițiile în care, o mare parte a acestor zăcăminte este depletată, creșterea factorului final de recuperare devine un obiectiv strategic pentru industria de profil.

În plus, contextul actual marcat de provocările climatice, reglementările de mediu tot mai stricte și presiunea tranziției energetice impune o reevaluare a modului în care aceste resurse pot fi valorificate în mod sustenabil.

Lucrarea de față își propune să analizeze în profunzime caracteristicile geologice, petrofizice și tehnologice ale zăcămintelor de gaze naturale din Bazinul Transilvaniei, cu accent pe strategiile moderne de extracție și simulare numerică, în vederea optimizării procesului de exploatare. De asemenea, sunt abordate implicațiile economice și perspectivele de valorificare a zăcămintelor depletate, fie prin reactivare, fie prin conversia acestora în depozite subterane de înmagazinare în concordanță cu cerințele unei piețe energetice aflate într-un proces accelerat de transformare.

Mai mult dificultățile tehnologice întâlnite în exploatarea zăcămintelor de gaze naturale aflate la stadiul de maturitate sunt diferite, complexe și reclamă tratarea în mod diferențiat a celor trei componente fundamentale: zăcământ, sonde, infrastructură de suprafață. Intervenția într-una dintre ele sau intervenția concomitentă în cele trei componente este dictată de o rațiune bazată pe tandemul tehnico-economic.

Lucrarea este structurată pe cinci capitole propriu-zise, iar tematicile selectate pentru cercetare își au esența în constatările, observațiile sau fenomenele întâlnite de autor în procesul de exploatare a sondelor de gaze naturale din Bazinul Transilvaniei, ca urmare a implicării directe în procesele de lucru, ca și în elaborarea unor planuri de dezvoltare a unor zăcămintे comerciale.

Tendențele actuale de exploatare a zăcămintelor depletate de gaze naturale sunt prezentate în capitolul 1, în contextul aplicării conceptului de *reabilitare*. Am plecat de la premisa că pentru suplimentarea cantității de gaze necesare, există câteva metode generale: mărirea factorului de recuperare al zăcământului; identificare unor noi acumulări de gaze în cadrul obiectivelor de exploatare; identificare unor noi acumulări de gaze între obiectivele de exploatare; identificarea unor noi acumulări de gaze în afara obiectivelor de exploatare, prin posibilitatea continuității lor în afara perimetrelor de exploatare. Aceste metode au la bază rezultatele investigărilor geofizice moderne, reanalizarea datelor existente și reconstrucția

modelelor de zăcământ. Pentru atingerea unui FFR cât mai mare, realizat cu costuri cât mai reduse, am propus diferite principii și metode moderne, care, toate la un loc contribuie la o cunoaștere cât mai corectă a zăcămintelor unei structuri gazeifere. În principiu, e vorba de: folosirea principiilor moderne ale geologiei secvențiale prin identificarea ciclurilor de sedimentare; reinterpretarea proprietăților petrofizice pe baza investigărilor recente de gaură tubată/netubată; reinterpretarea modelului 3D, a contactelor de gaze/ apă, pe baza istoricului de producție; modelarea continuității zăcămintelor, forma, extinderea lor după identificarea faciesurilor depoziționale ale ciclurilor sedimentare; modelarea exploatării zăcământului pe baza istoricului de producție, a simulării curgerii și realizarea modelului dinamic 3D etc. Pentru a da consistență acestor aspecte, am prezentat cinci cazuri concrete din zăcăminte depletate, unde s-au aplicat cu succes metodele prezentate în această lucrare.

În capitolul 2 sunt abordate chestiuni legate de modelarea numerică a curgerii gazelor naturale în zăcămintele depletate. Mai exact spus, e vorba de utilizarea modelării numerice pentru identificarea posibilelor zone nedrenate sau slab drenate din zăcământ, a limitelor de drenaj dintre sondele adiacente, a extinderii conului depresionar din timpul producției, a interferențelor dintre sonde sau frontiere de curgere asimetrice etc. În acest sens, am avut în vedere câteva elemente de bază privitoare la calibrarea datelor din ecuație după istoricul de producție, compararea presiunii din grid cu curbele de refacere și calibrarea după istoricul de presiune. Pentru stabilirea bazelor teoretice ale modelării am trecut în revistă: aproximarea ecuației de difuzie prin metoda diferențelor finite; aplicarea seriei Taylor; stabilirea condițiilor inițiale și a celor la limita de drenaj; soluționarea câmpului de presiune prin rezolvare matriceală; soluția triunghiulară. În continuare, pentru a construi ecuațiile cu diferențe finite pentru curgerea gazelor reale am apelat la metoda de aproximare a blocurilor de grid. Finalmente, printr-un extins studiu de caz, am determinat zonele de influență ale sondelor la un zăcământ depletat (un zăcământ din depozitele sarmațiene ale bazinului Transilvaniei), obținând astfel o suplimentare a contribuțiilor, acest capitol sensibil al modelării numerice a zăcămintelor depletate. Mai mult, prin modelul prezentat, aplicat la un zăcământ de gaze libere din bazinul Transilvaniei, am construit un cadru teoretic prin care se poate urmări comportamentul zăcământului depletat prin discretizarea zăcământului și setarea unor proprietăți discrete (în cazul de față presiunea de zăcământ). Iar prin extinderea modelării, ea poate servi la identificarea unor zone slab drenate care se pot valorifica în viitor, contribuind astfel la mărirea factorului de recuperare.

În capitolul 3, dedicat tehnicilor performante de redeschidere a zăcămintelor depletate de gaze naturale, am prezentat, într-un tot unitar, evoluția și evidențierea rolului investigărilor geofizice moderne, strategia valorificării zăcămintelor depletate, precum și tehnicile moderne de extracție folosite pentru a atinge scopul dorit – mărirea factorului final de exploatare, într-o activitate cu rentabilitate maximă. Desigur, seismica 4D este una dintre cele mai importante dezvoltări tehnologice din industria geofizică. La scurt timp după introducerea sa, a devenit un instrument extrem de eficient pentru a aborda multe dintre provocările asociate cu gestionarea zăcământului, cum ar fi cartografierea gazelor nedrenate sau ocolite în rezervoare complexe,



incertitudinea evaluării rezervelor¹, amplasarea mai bună a sondelor de producție și injecție și proiectarea instalațiilor de dezvoltare, toate conducând la dezvoltarea optimizată a câmpului². Mai departe, aplicarea unor metode noi de cercetare prin inventarierea zăcămintelor existente, în afara noilor informații ale cercetărilor seismice 2D, 3D și 4D, trebuie să aibă în vedere și actualizarea informațiilor privitoare la starea găurii de sondă, la porozitate, la saturație ș.a., prin noile și variatele metode de investigații geofizice: PNN, RST, PLT, CBL-VDL, MIT-MTT.

Apoi, odată identificate zonele cu potențial din zăcămintul depletat, ca și riscurile legate de valorificarea lor, se pune problema modalităților de realizare concrete: reveniri la teste vechi; adăunări în cadrul obiectivelor deschise; reperforări ale zonelor deschise; adâncirile sondelor existente în zonele depletate; gaură nouă de sondă din coloana existentă ("sidetrack"), forajul unei sonde noi pentru mărirea FFR a zăcămintului ("infill drilling") ș.a. Alegerea uneia sau a alteia dintre aceste modalități este legată de factori economici, de accesibilitatea pe teren, de gradul de conservare a găurilor de sonde existente, de geometria lor etc. Și nu în ultimul rând, în cadrul acestui capitol, am prezentat, într-o formă sintetică, tehnicile moderne pentru lucrările de redeschideri: soluții moderne de perforare a stratelor; lucrări de fisurare hidraulică; soluții de cimentare a găurilor noi pentru zonele depletate; soluții în cazul forajului sub presiune controlată (MPD); soluții la lucrările realizate la subechilibru.

În capitolul 4 am prezentat șase studii de caz semnificative pentru: reperforarea zăcămintului (sonda 1); adăunare în cadrul zăcămintului (sonda 2); retragere la zăcămintul superior (sonda 3); mărirea gabaritului de exploatare al zăcămintului (sonda 4); revenire la zăcămint testat la 45 MSMCD cu sonda respectivă (sonda 5); propunerea de adâncire la zăcămintul inferior (sonda 6).

La fiecare dintre ele am prezentat premisele proiectării lucrării, operațiile efectuate și rezultatele obținute.

În ultimul capitol, al 5-lea, sunt sintetizate concluziile și contribuțiile personale prezentate pe parcursul întregii lucrări.

¹ G.E. Archie, "The Electrical Resistivity Log as an Aid in determining some Reservoir Characteristics", AIME, Vol.146, p.54. (1942)

² Wheaton, R., 2016. Fundamentals of applied reservoir engineering. Cambridge, MA: Gulf Professional Publishing, an imprint of Elsevier

ABSTRACT

It is now well known that Romania has considerable geological potential in the field of natural gas, with a long-standing tradition in the exploration and exploitation of these resources. The Transylvanian Basin contains numerous free gas deposits located in complex geological structures, which require advanced methods of analysis, simulation, and optimization of extraction. Given that a large part of these deposits is depleted, increasing the final recovery factor becomes a strategic objective for the industry.

Moreover, the current context—marked by climate challenges, increasingly strict environmental regulations, and the pressure of the energy transition—requires a re-evaluation of how these resources can be sustainably utilized.

This paper aims to thoroughly analyse the geological, petrophysical, and technological characteristics of natural gas deposits in the Transylvanian Basin, with a focus on modern extraction strategies and numerical simulation to optimize the exploitation process. It also addresses the economic implications and prospects for valorising depleted deposits, either through reactivation or by converting them into underground storage facilities, in line with the requirements of an energy market undergoing rapid transformation.

Furthermore, the technological difficulties encountered in exploiting mature natural gas deposits are varied and complex, requiring differentiated treatment of the three fundamental components: the deposit, the wells, and the surface infrastructure. Intervention in one or all three components is dictated by a rationale based on the technical-economic tandem.

The paper is structured into five main chapters, and the research topics selected are rooted in the findings, observations, or phenomena encountered by the author during the exploitation of natural gas wells in the Transylvanian Basin, because of direct involvement in work processes and in the development of commercial deposit development plans.

Current trends in the exploitation of depleted natural gas deposits are presented in Chapter 1, in the context of applying the rehabilitation concept. The premise is that to supplement the required amount of gas, several general methods exist increasing the recovery factor of the deposit; identifying new gas accumulations within exploitation targets; identifying new gas accumulations between exploitation targets; identifying new gas accumulations outside exploitation targets, through the possibility of their continuity beyond the exploitation perimeters.

These methods are based on the results of modern geophysical investigations, reanalysis of existing data, and reconstruction of deposit models. To achieve a higher final recovery factor (FRF) at lower costs, various modern principles and methods have been proposed, all contributing to a more accurate understanding of the deposits within a gas-bearing structure. These include: using modern principles of sequence stratigraphy by identifying sedimentation cycles; reinterpretation of petrophysical properties based on recent cased/uncased hole investigations; reinterpretation of the 3D model and gas/water contacts based on production history; modelling the continuity, shape, and extent of deposits after identifying the depositional facies of sedimentary cycles; modelling deposit exploitation based on production history, flow simulation, and creating a dynamic 3D model, etc. To substantiate these aspects, five concrete cases from depleted deposits are presented, where the methods discussed in this paper were successfully applied.

Chapter 2 addresses issues related to the numerical modelling of natural gas flow in depleted reservoirs. More specifically, it discusses the use of numerical modelling to identify potentially undrained or poorly drained zones within the reservoir, drainage boundaries

between adjacent wells, the extent of the depression cone during production, well interference, and asymmetric flow boundaries. To this end, several fundamental elements were considered, such as calibrating equation data based on production history, comparing grid pressure with recovery curves, and calibrating based on pressure history.

To establish the theoretical foundations of modelling, the following were reviewed: approximation of the diffusion equation using the finite difference method; application of the Taylor series; setting initial conditions and drainage boundary conditions; solving the pressure field through matrix resolution; and the tridiagonal solution. Subsequently, to construct finite difference equations for real gas flow, the grid block approximation method was used. Finally, through an extensive case study, the influence zones of wells in a depleted reservoir (from the Sarmatian deposits of the Transylvanian Basin) were determined, thereby contributing to this sensitive chapter on numerical modelling of depleted reservoirs. Moreover, through the presented model applied to a free gas reservoir in the Transylvanian Basin, a theoretical framework was built to monitor the behaviour of the depleted reservoir by discretizing it and setting discrete properties (in this case, reservoir pressure). By extending the modelling, it can serve to identify poorly drained zones that may be exploited in the future, thus contributing to increasing the recovery factor.

Chapter 3, dedicated to advanced techniques for reopening depleted natural gas reservoirs, presents a unified overview of the evolution and role of modern geophysical investigations, strategies for valorising depleted reservoirs, and modern extraction techniques used to achieve the desired goal—maximizing the final recovery factor in a highly profitable activity. Of course, 4D seismic is one of the most important technological developments in the geophysical industry. Shortly after its introduction, it became an extremely effective tool for addressing many challenges associated with reservoir management, such as mapping undrained or bypassed gas in complex reservoirs, uncertainty in reserve evaluation, better placement of production and injection wells, and development facility design—all leading to optimized field development.

Furthermore, the application of new research methods through inventorying existing reservoirs, beyond the new information from 2D, 3D, and 4D seismic surveys, must also consider updating data on wellbore condition, porosity, saturation, etc., using new and varied geophysical investigation methods: PNN, RST, PLT, CBL-VDL, MIT-MTT.

Once zones with potential in the depleted reservoir are identified, along with the risks associated with their exploitation, the question arises of how to proceed practically: revisiting old tests; additions within open targets; reperforation of open zones; deepening existing wells in depleted zones; side-tracking from existing casing; drilling new wells to increase the reservoir's recovery factor ("infill drilling"), etc. The choice among these methods depends on economic factors, field accessibility, the preservation state of existing wellbores, their geometry, and more.

Lastly, this chapter presents, in a synthetic form, modern techniques for reopening operations: advanced layer perforation solutions; hydraulic fracturing operations; cementing solutions for new wellbores in depleted zones; solutions for managed pressure drilling (MPD); and solutions for underbalanced operations.

Chapter 4 presents six significant case studies for:

- Reperforation of the reservoir (Well 1);
- Addition within the reservoir (Well 2);
- Withdrawal to the upper reservoir (Well 3);
- Expansion of the reservoir's exploitation capacity (Well 4);



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- Return to a reservoir previously tested at 45 MSMCD with the respective well (Well 5);
 - Proposal for deepening to the lower reservoir (Well 6).

For each case, the design premises, operations performed, and results obtained are presented.

Chapter 5, the final chapter, synthesizes the conclusions and personal contributions presented throughout the entire work.

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