

Accepted Manuscript

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PII: S0142-1123(17)30086-5

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijfatigue.2017.02.027>

Reference: JIJF 4263

To appear in: *International Journal of Fatigue*

Received Date: 19 January 2017

Revised Date: 23 February 2017

Accepted Date: 26 February 2017



Please cite this article as: Qiu, J., Pei, C., Liu, H., Chen, Z., Quantitative Evaluation of Surface Crack Depth with Laser Spot Thermography, *International Journal of Fatigue* (2017), doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijfatigue.2017.02.027>

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Quantitative Evaluation of Surface Crack Depth with Laser Spot Thermography

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Abstract

In this study, a numerical method based on finite element method (FEM) is developed to simulate the heat flow generated by laser spot source and investigate the relationship between crack size and temperature distribution. The feasibility of the simulation method is validated by experiments both in time and spatial domains. The simulation and experiment results also show that the crack depth can be described by two characteristic parameters. Furthermore, a quantitative retrieval method based on neural network is developed for the crack depth evaluation by using the parameters. By using the proposed method, crack depth can be determined only by analyzing measured surface temperature values.

Keywords: Laser spot thermography; Surface crack; Quantitative evaluation; Neural network

1. Introduction

Detection of surface breaking cracks is an important task to ensure the safe operation of the key structures like nuclear plants. Besides the widely used NDT techniques, such as ultrasonic testing (UT) and eddy current testing (ECT), laser spot thermography (LST) is a novel remote inspection

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