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Developments in Clay Science

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Chapter 1 General Introduction: Clays, Clay Minerals, and Clay Science

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Publisher Summary

This chapter attracts the attention of clay scientists in academe and industry as well as in politics (as research needs funding), and focuses on the importance of clay science to society and the quality of life. The economic benefits seem evident because clays are abundant, widespread, and inexpensive compared with other raw materials. The chapter discusses the industrial and environmental importance of clays and clay minerals. The great variety of physical, chemical, and thermal treatments that may be used to modify clays and clay minerals provide unlimited scope for future applications, particularly in terms of protecting the environment. Because of the multidisciplinary nature of clay science, its teaching is another challenging task. By learning about the mineralogical, physico-chemical, and industrial aspects of clay science, students would not only gain an appreciation of the "scientific method" and the physical environment but also find suitable employment and a fulfilling career.



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