

Microstructural
Kinetics
Group



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CAMBRIDGE

Mechanical Properties of Metallic Glasses

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University of Cambridge*

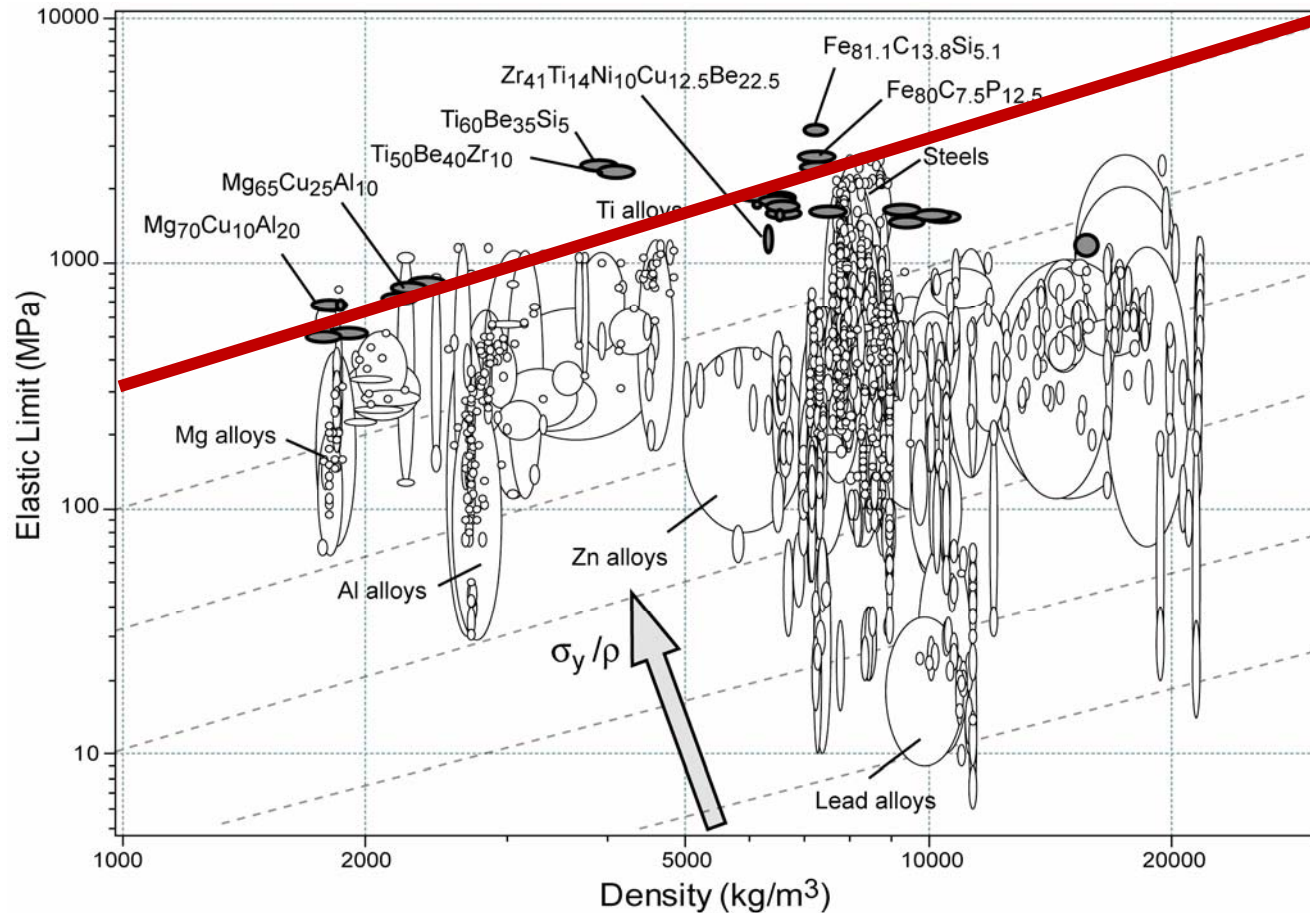
Emerging Concepts in Glass Physics
KITP, Santa Barbara, 21–25 June 2010

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A.R. Yavari
W.H. Wang
Y. Zhang

EU RT Network on “Ductile BMG Composites”
WPI-AIMR, Tohoku Univ., Sendai, Japan

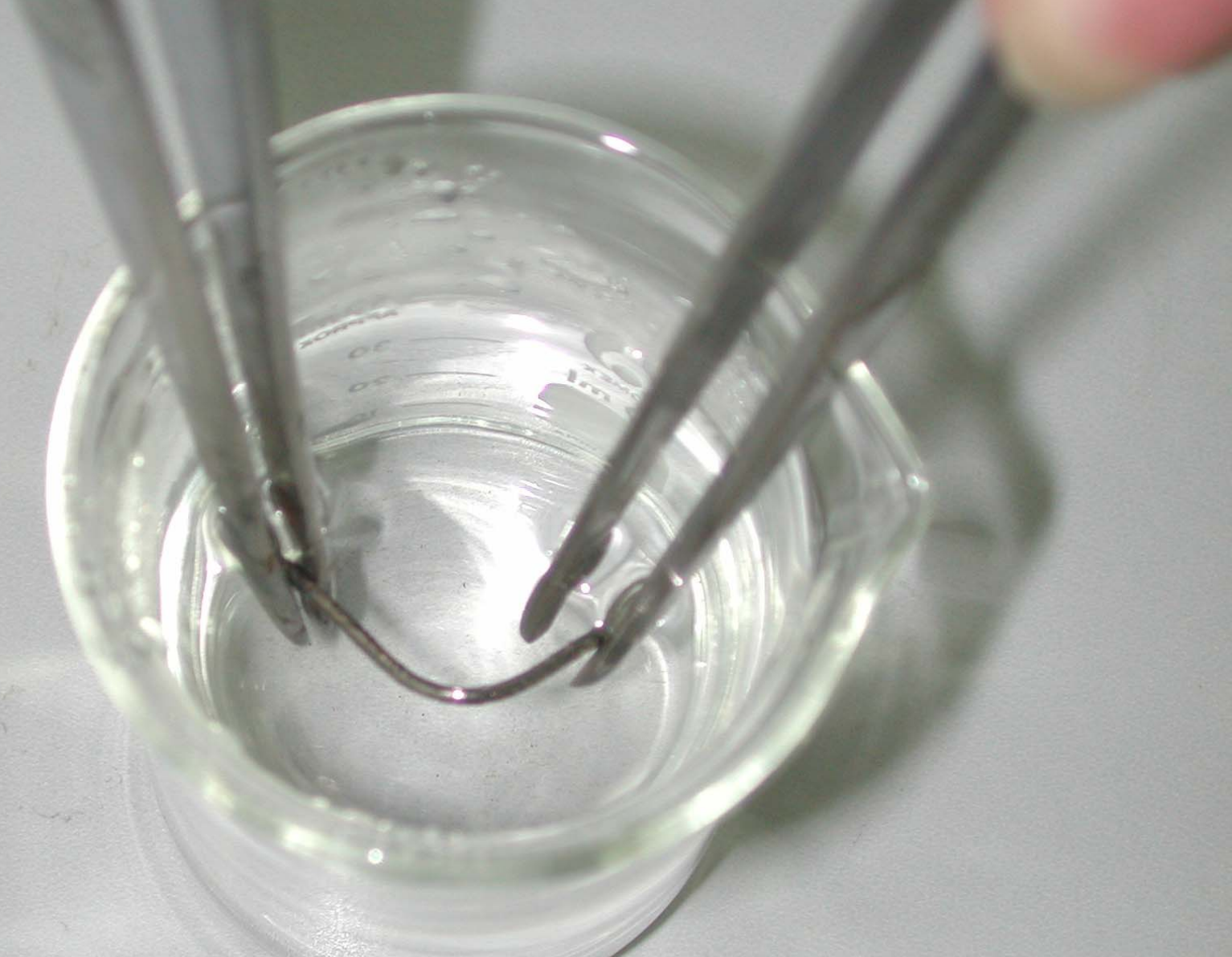
Metallic glasses for structural applications



Elastic limit σ_y plotted against **density** ρ for 1507 metals, alloys, metal-matrix composites and metallic glasses. The contours show the **specific strength** σ_y/ρ .

M.F. Ashby & A.L. Greer: *Scripta Materialia* **54** (2006) 321.

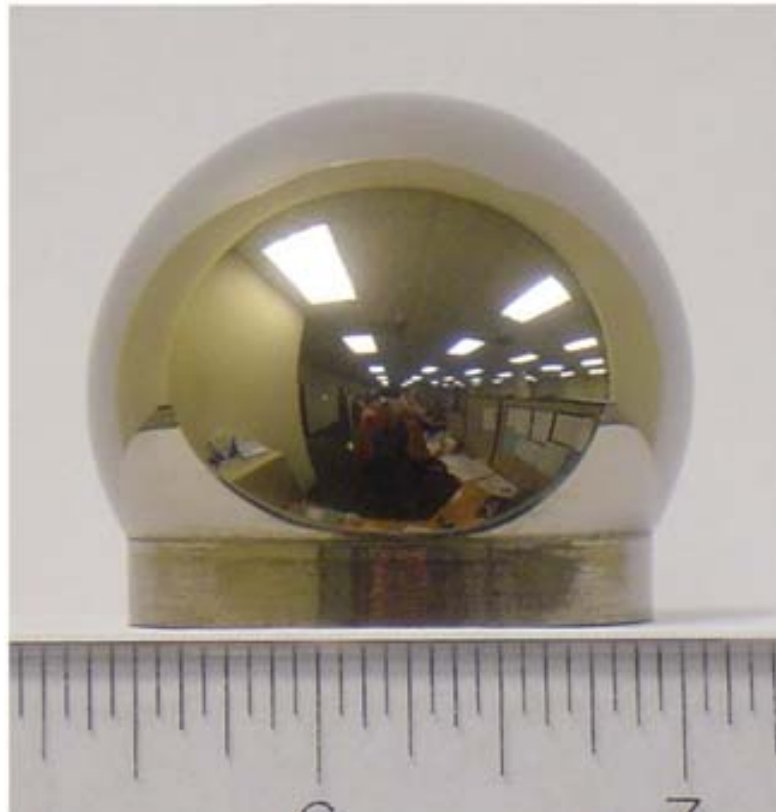
(in Viewpoint Set on *Mechanical Behavior of Metallic Glasses*, edited by T.C. Hufnagel)



$\text{Ce}_{70}\text{Al}_{10}\text{Cu}_{20}$ — $T_g = 338 \text{ K}$, $T_x = 390 \text{ K}$

B. Zhang, D.Q. Zhao, M.X. Pan, W.H. Wang & A.L. Greer:
“Amorphous metallic plastic”, *Phys. Rev. Lett.* **94** (2005) 205502.

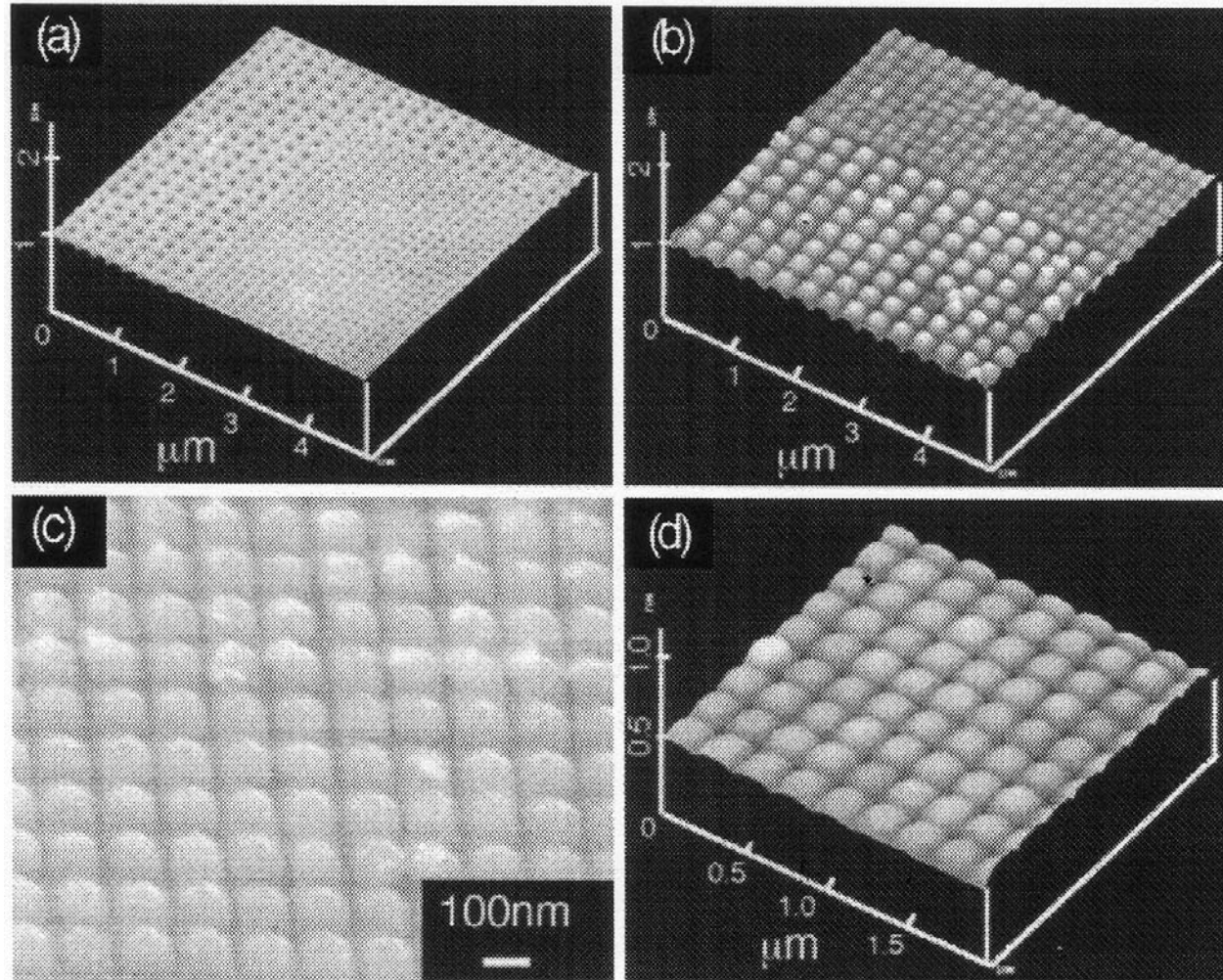




Microformability of BMGs

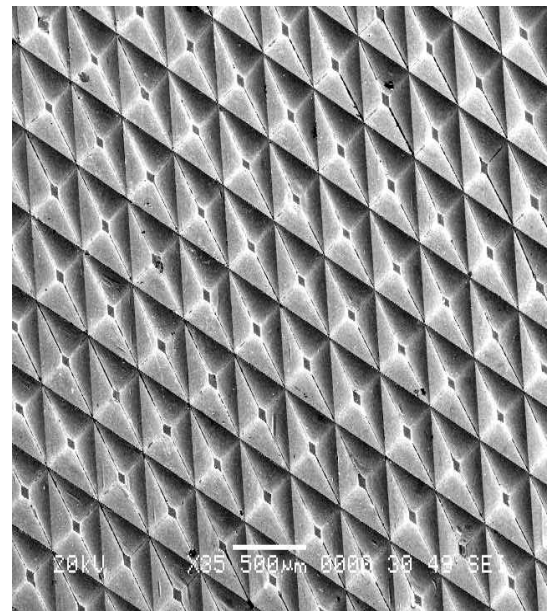
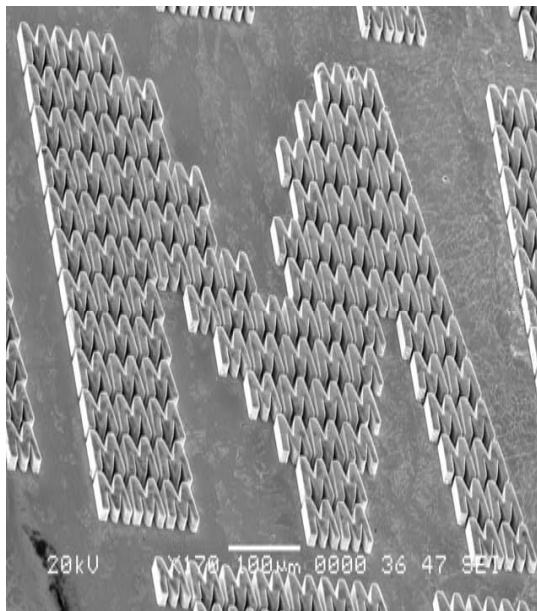
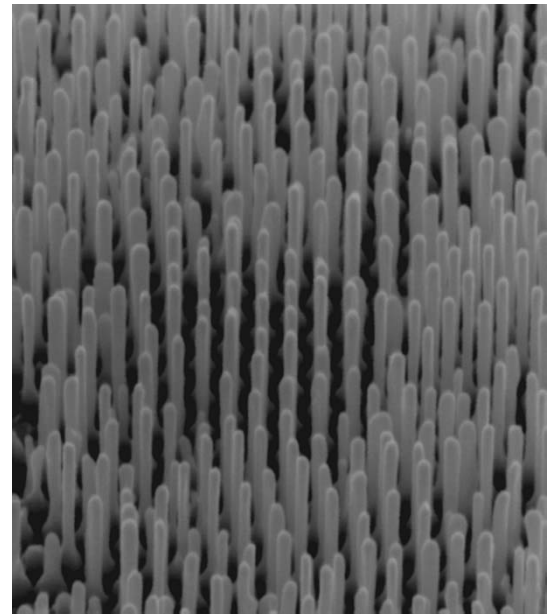
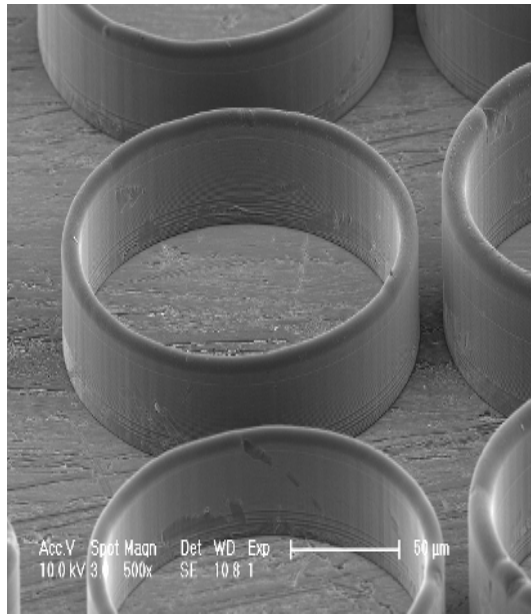
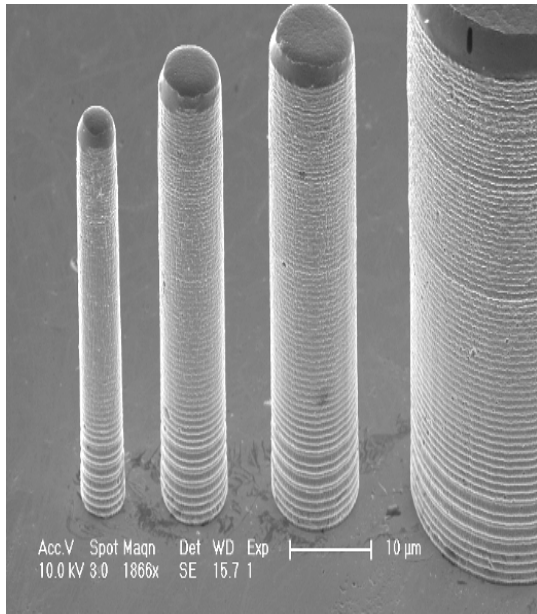
- of interest for micro- & nano-imprinting of surfaces

AFM and SEM images of a patterned (100) Si die and a Pt-based BMG imprinted with the die (10 MPa, 550 K, 300 s)



Y. Saotome et al. "The micro-nanoformability of Pt-based metallic glass and the nanoforming of three-dimensional structures", *Intermetallics* **10** (2005) 1241.

Surface Replication with BMGs



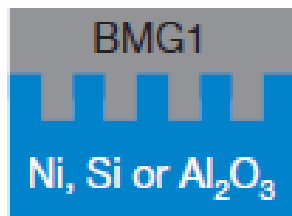
[J. Schroers, *Advanced Materials*, **21** (2010)]

Nanomoulding with amorphous metals

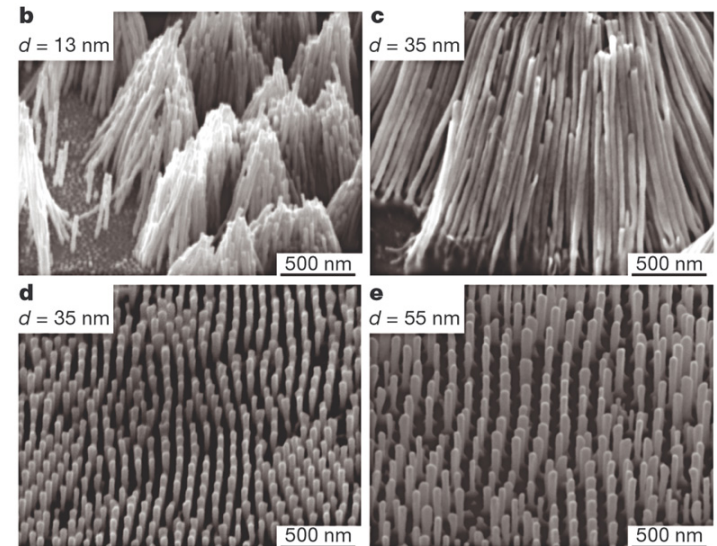
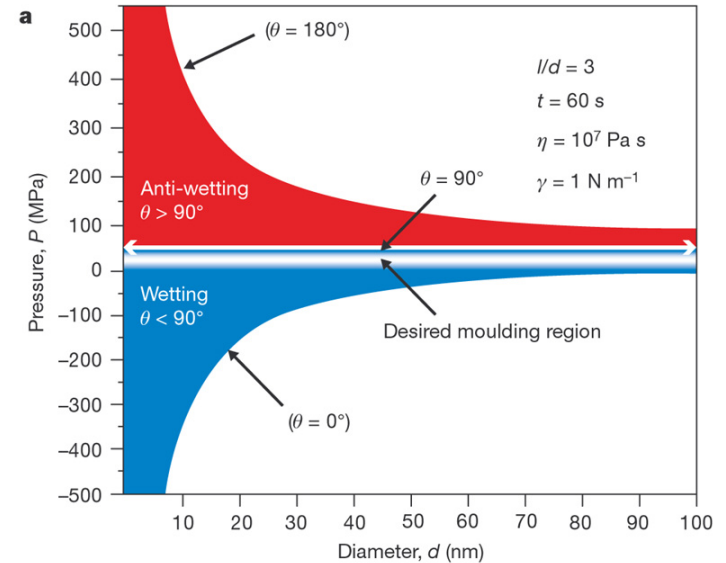
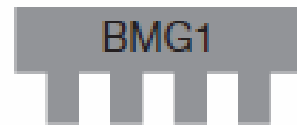
Controlling metallic glass moulding on scales smaller than 100 nm

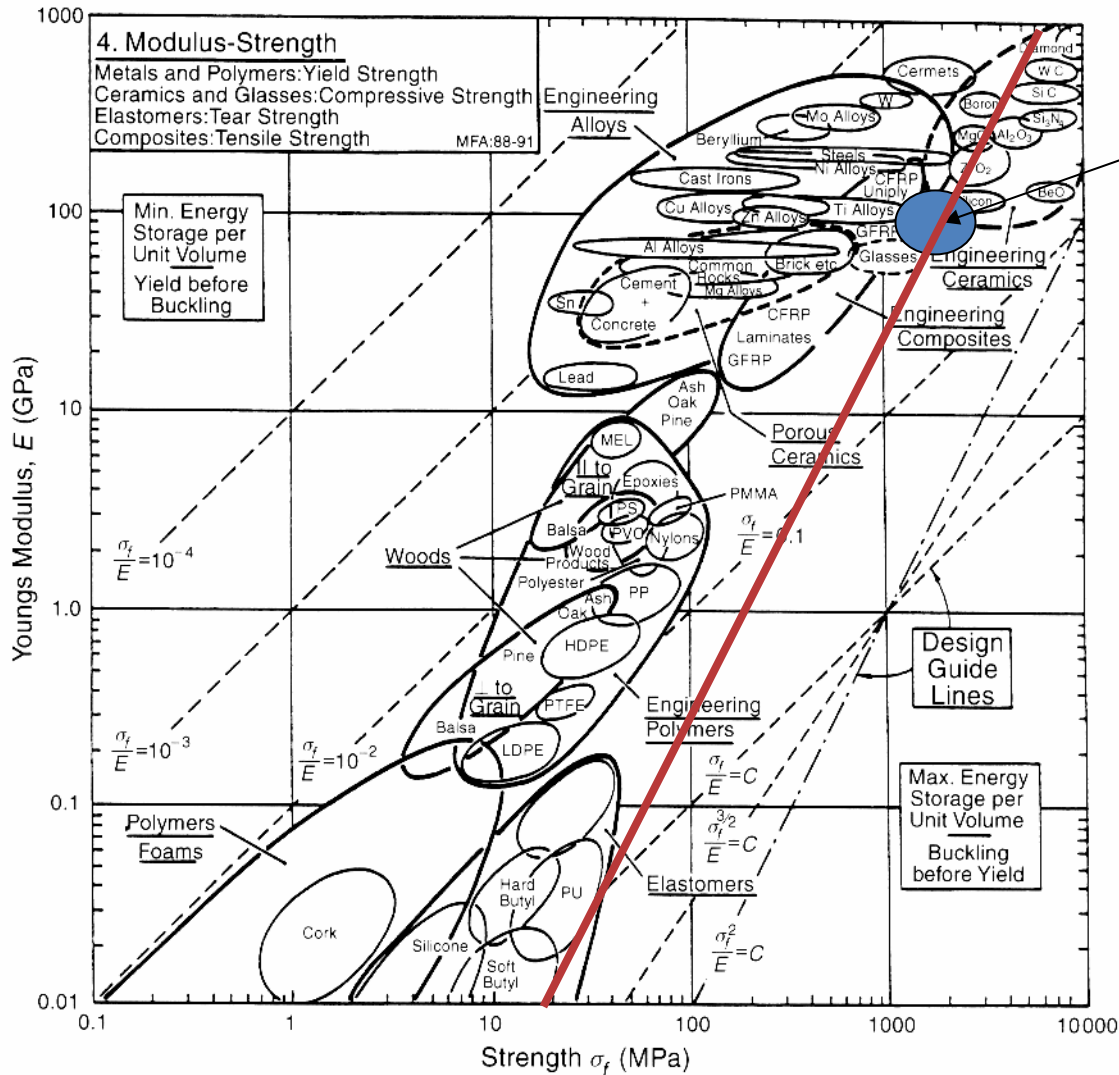
Pt-based BMG

Embossing BMG
on a mould
at $T > T_g$



Releasing BMG

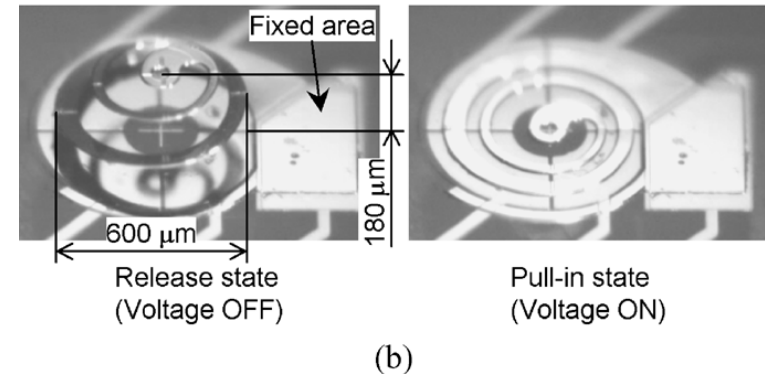
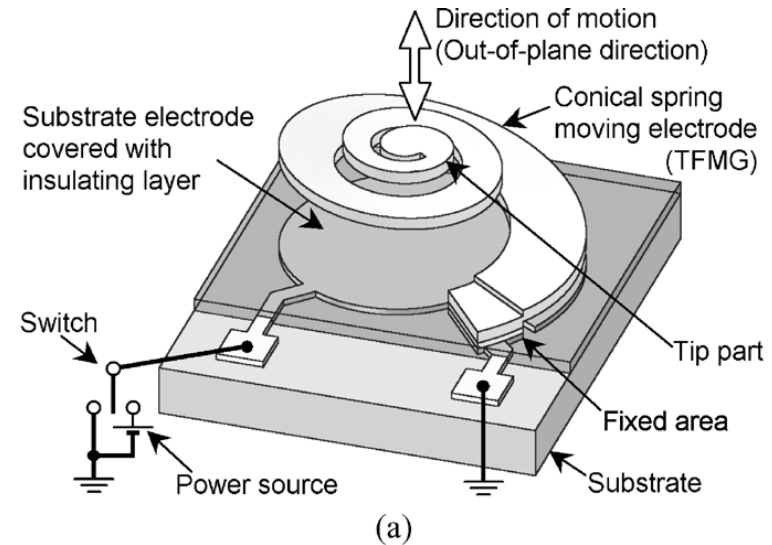




from *Materials Selection in Mechanical Design* (2nd ed.)
 M. F. Ashby, Butterworth-Heinemann, 1999

MEMS Applications

A conical spring microactuator with a long stroke of $200\ \mu\text{m}$ normal to the substrate. The spring is a $7.6\ \mu\text{m}$ thick film of $\text{Pd}_{76}\text{Cu}_7\text{Si}_{17}$ metallic glass.



Plastic Deformation of Metallic Glasses

Ambient temperature / high stress
-- flow localization in shear bands

High temperature / low stress
-- homogeneous viscous flow

F. Spaepen: "A microscopic mechanism for steady state inhomogeneous flow in metallic glasses", *Acta Metall.* **25** (1977) 407.

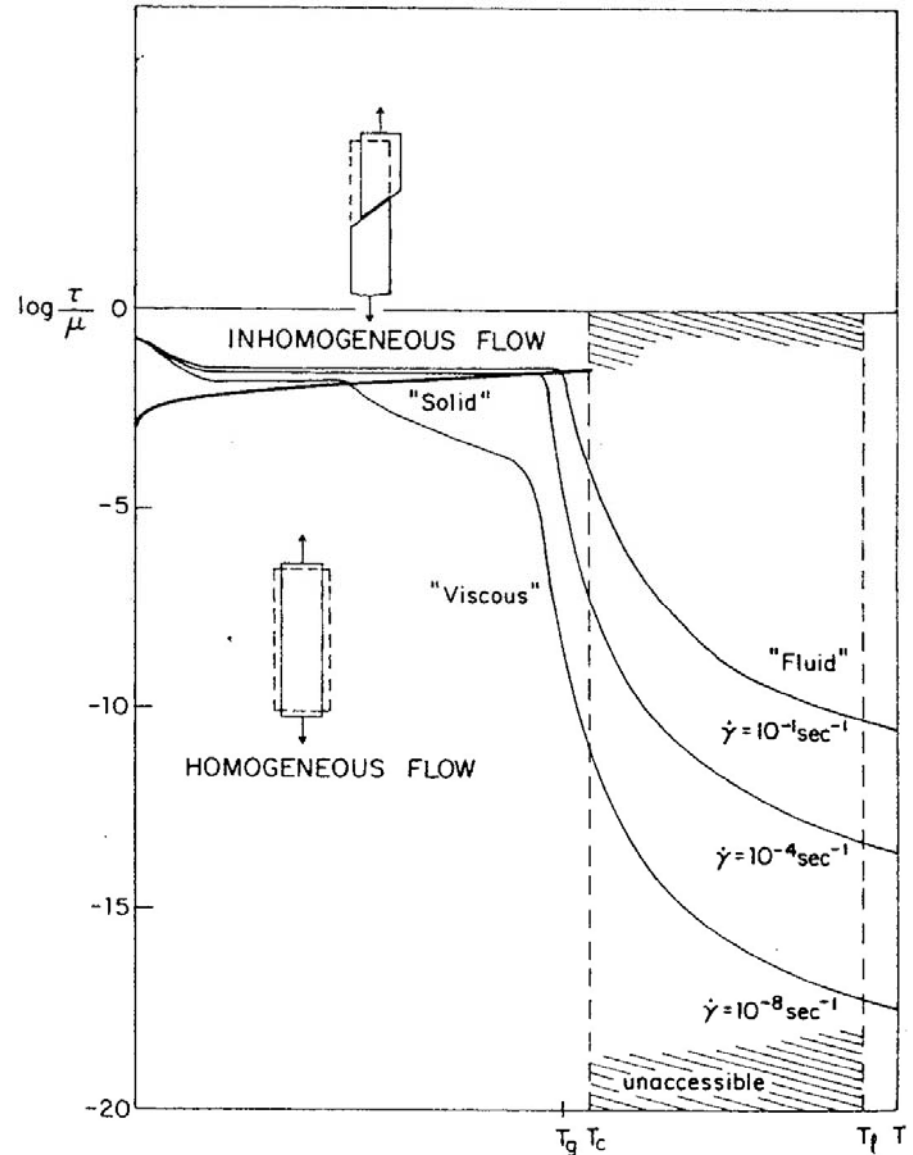
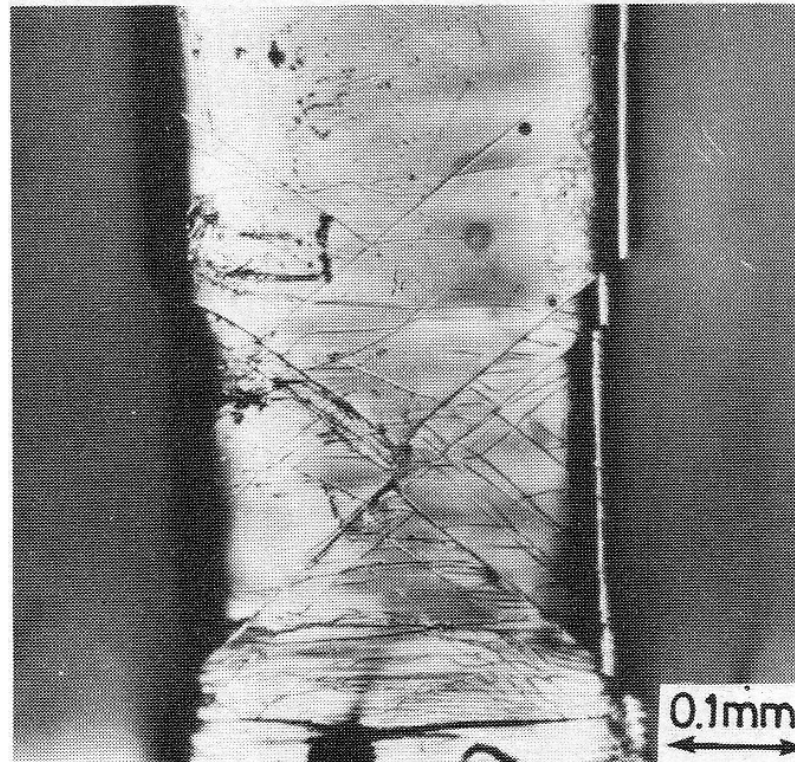


Fig. 2. Schematic deformation map of a metallic glass. The various modes of deformation are indicated.

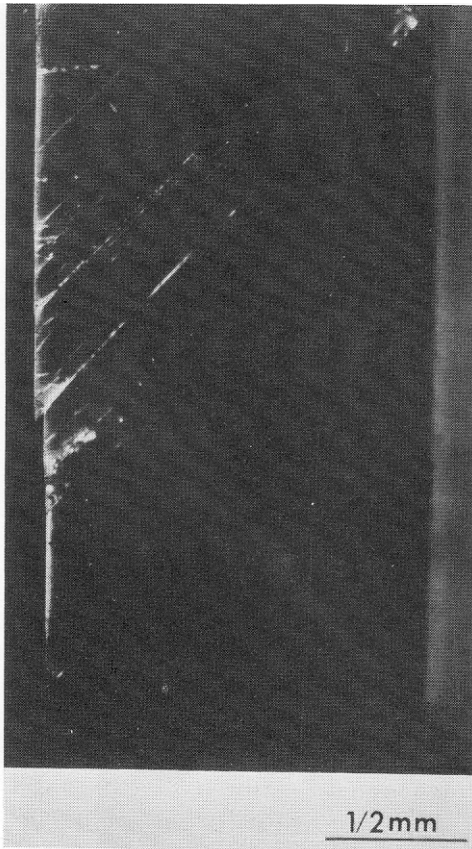
Plastic deformation of a thin plate of a thin plate of $\text{Pd}_{77.5}\text{Cu}_6\text{Si}_{16.5}$ glass in tension. **Shear bands** are consistent with **work-softening**.



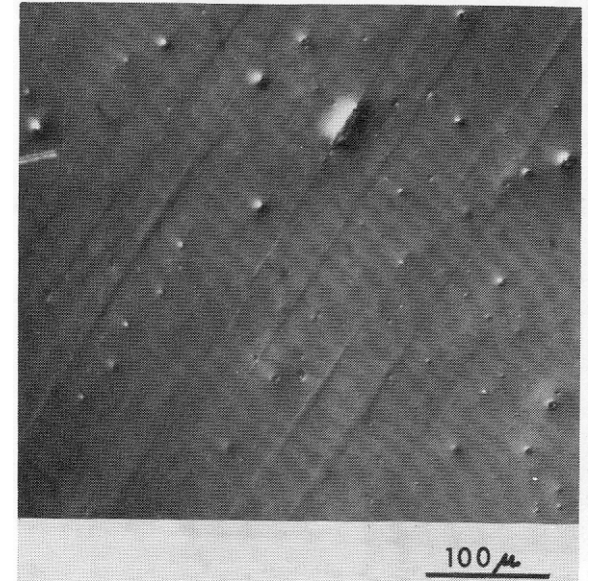
H. Kimura, PhD Thesis (1978) Tohoku Univ.

Shear bands

— residual change of structure after deformation



**Preferential etching
on polished surface**

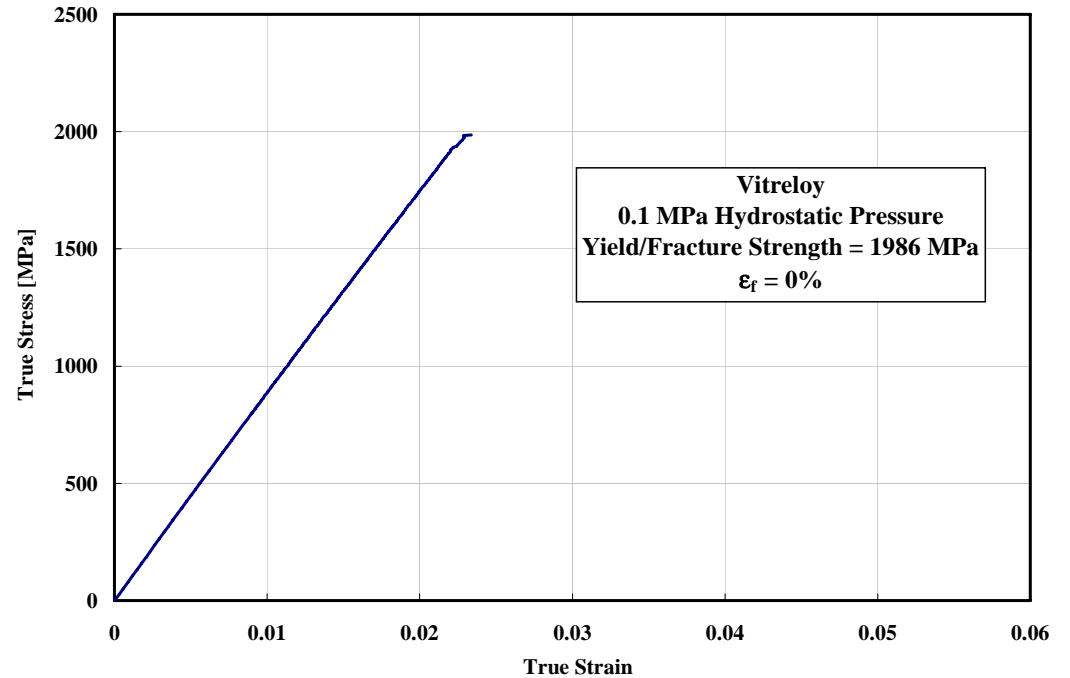


**After reshaping and electropolishing,
deformation resumes on pre-existing
shear bands**

C.A. Pampillo & H.S. Chen
Mater. Sci. Eng. **13**, 181-188(1974).



J.J. Lewandowski

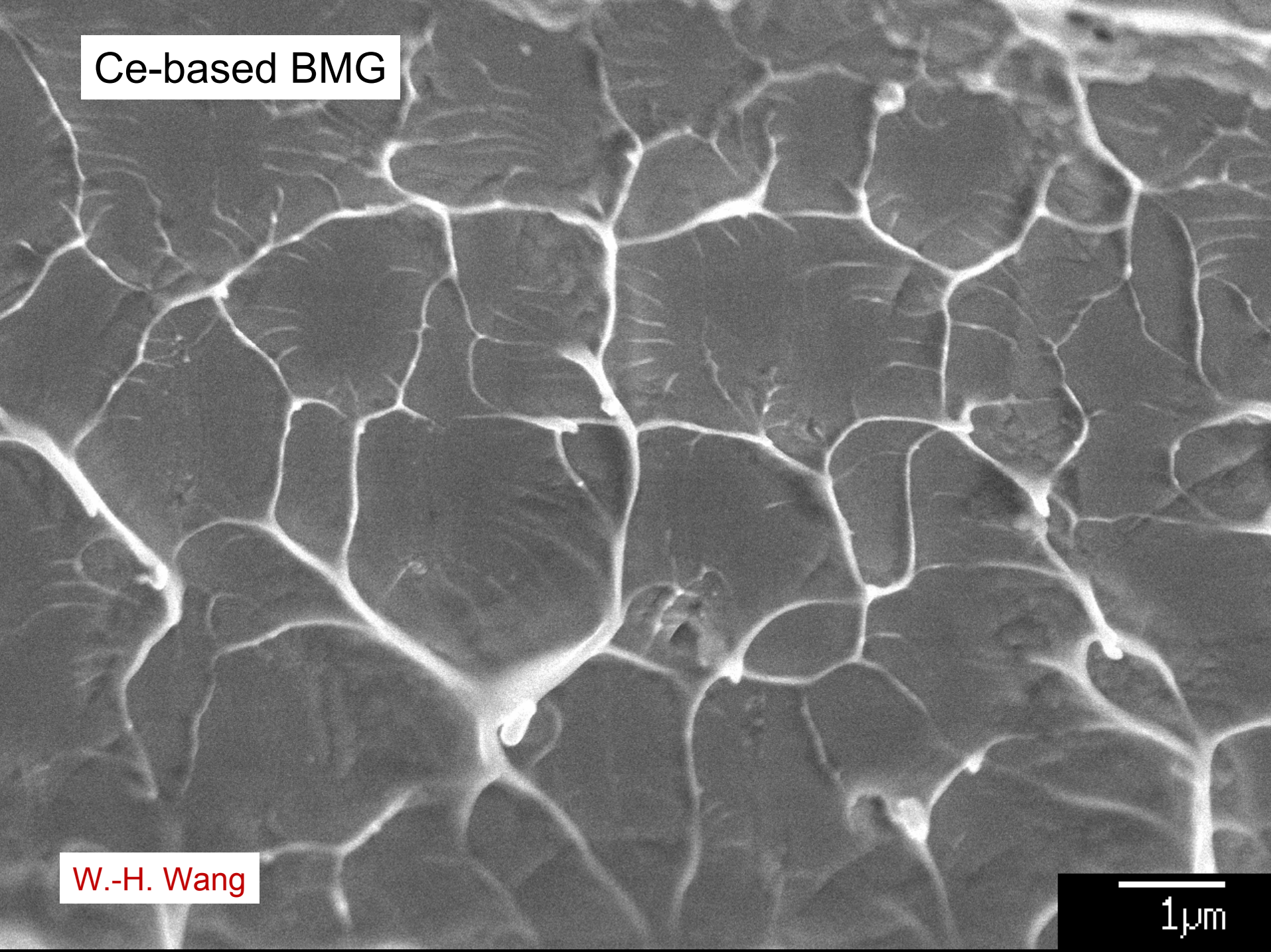


At ambient temperature, metallic glasses in tension can **appear macroscopically brittle**, despite extensive local deformation in the shear bands.

Ce-based BMG

W.-H. Wang

1 μ m

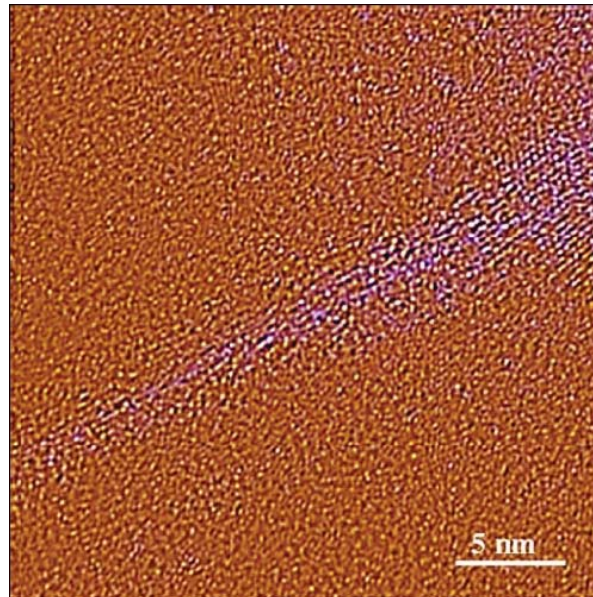
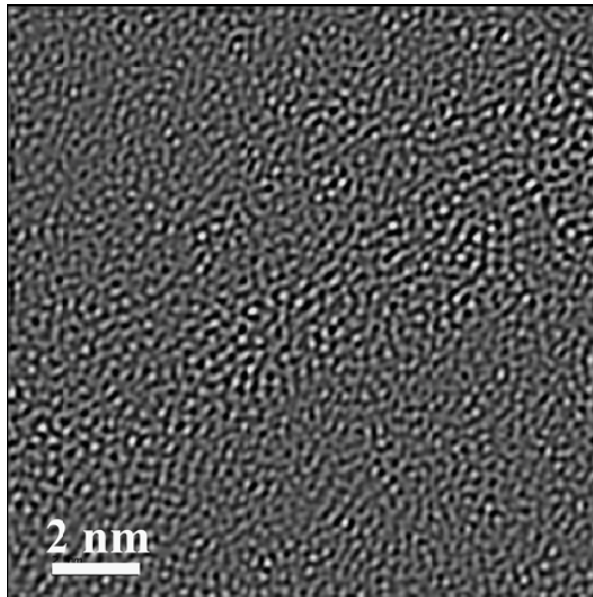
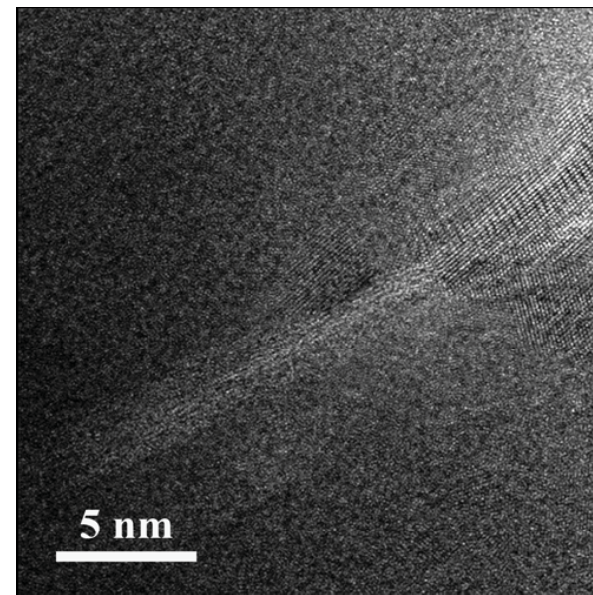
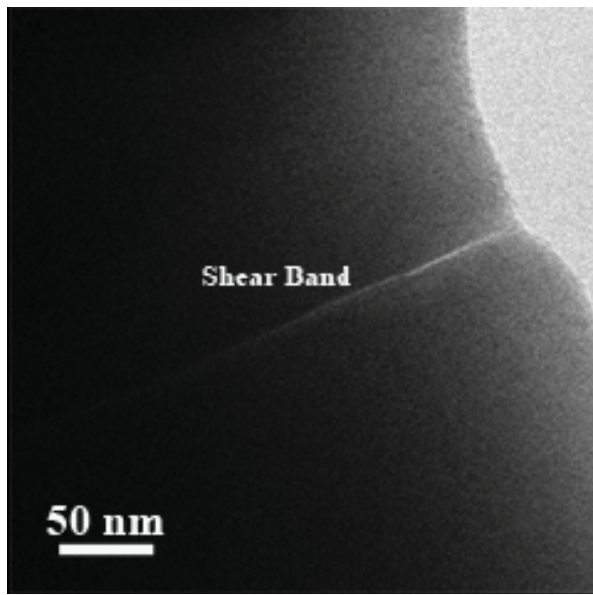


Shear banding

— is a symptom of the **work-softening** that leads to near-zero ductility, and is the major mechanical-property impediment to wider application of metallic glasses.

Questions about shear bands:

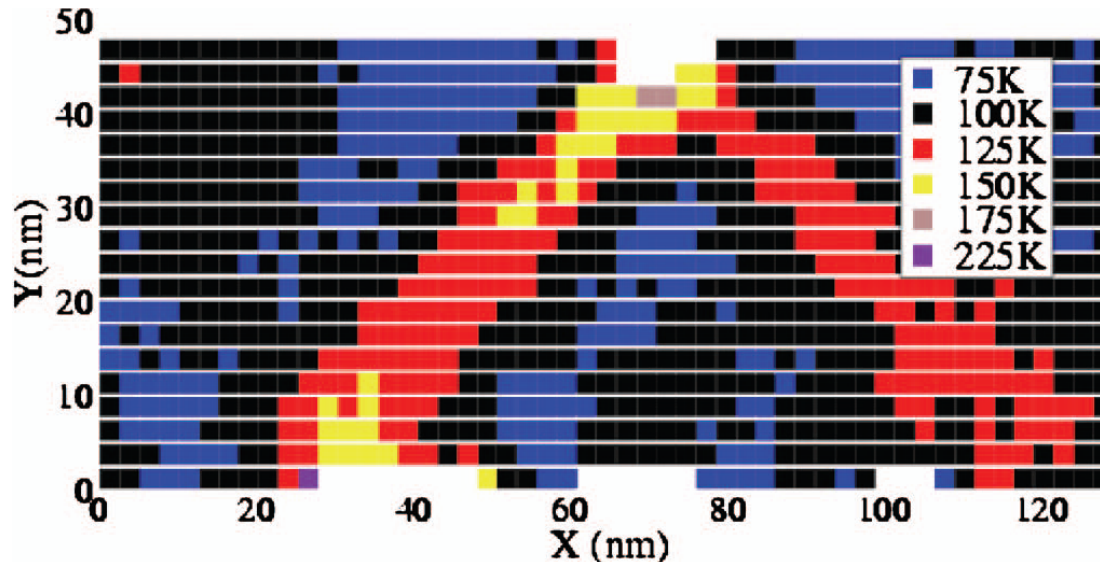
- how thick are the shear bands?
- what is the work dissipated in shear?
- how fast is the shear?
- how large is the hot zone around a shear band?
- what is the state of the material in the bands during/after shear?
- how can shear-banding be controlled to optimize properties?



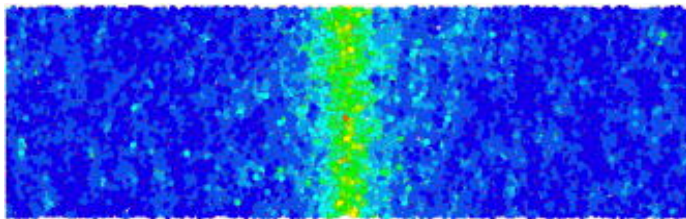
M. Chen, A. Inoue, W. Zhang & T. Sakurai: "Extraordinary plasticity of ductile bulk metallic glasses", *Phys. Rev. Lett.* **96** (2006) 245502.

Molecular-dynamics simulations

— also show a shear-band thickness of ~ 10 nm



N.P. Bailey, J. Schiøtz &
K.W. Jacobsen, *Phys. Rev. B*
73 (2006) 064108.



Q.-K. Li & M. Li, *Appl. Phys. Lett.* **88**
(2006) 241903.

Heating at Shear Bands in Metallic Glasses

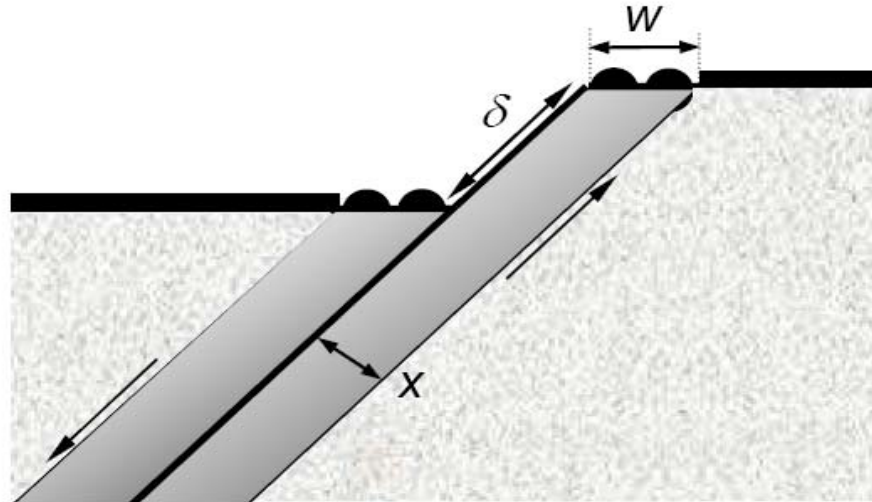
TEM shows that the shear is sharply localized —
— thickness of shear band = 10 to 20 nm

The origins of localization remain controversial — **structural change**, or **temperature rise**?

Measurements of temperature rise **0.4 K to 1000 K**

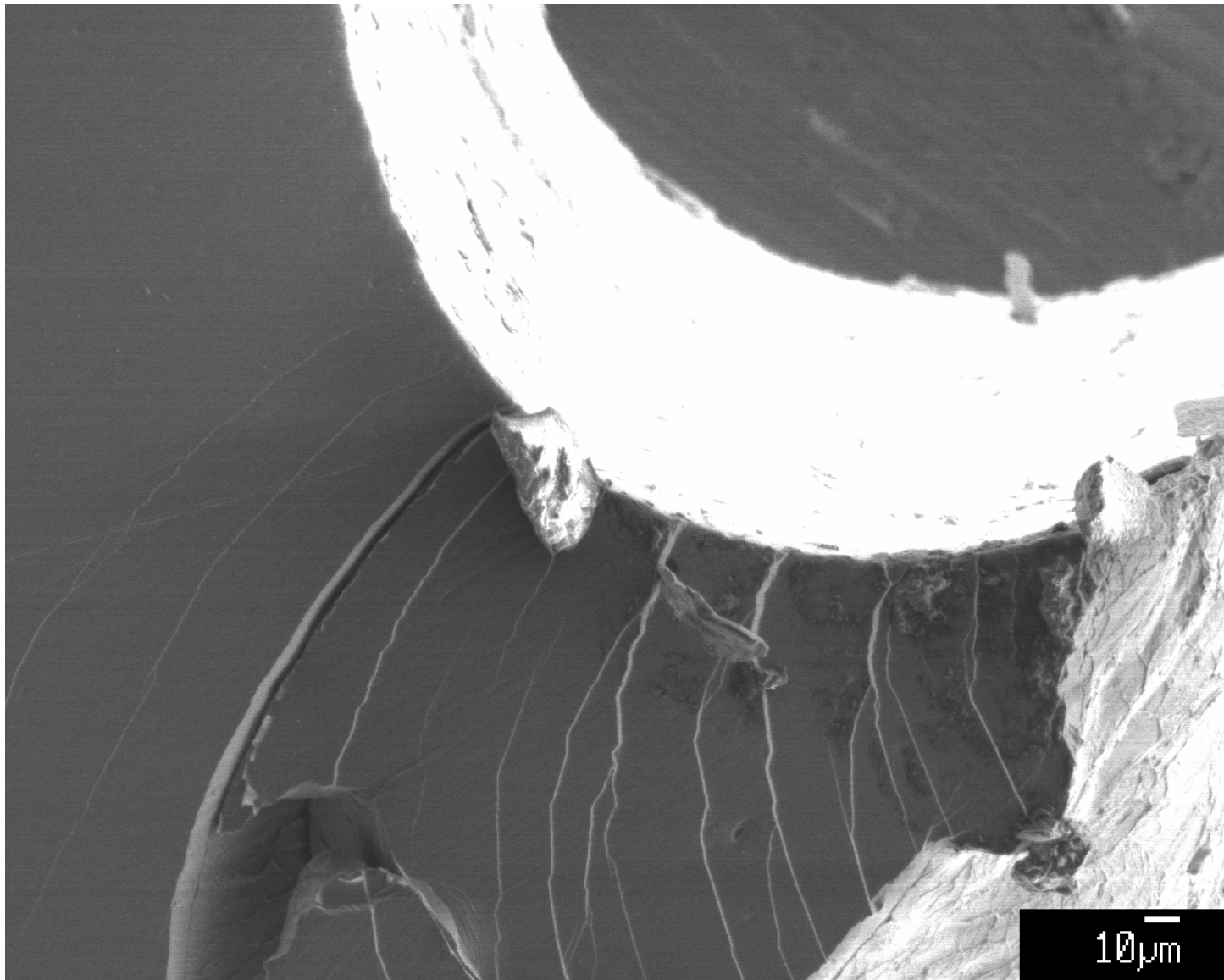
Predictions of temperature rise **40 K to 1000 K**

The fusible-coating method

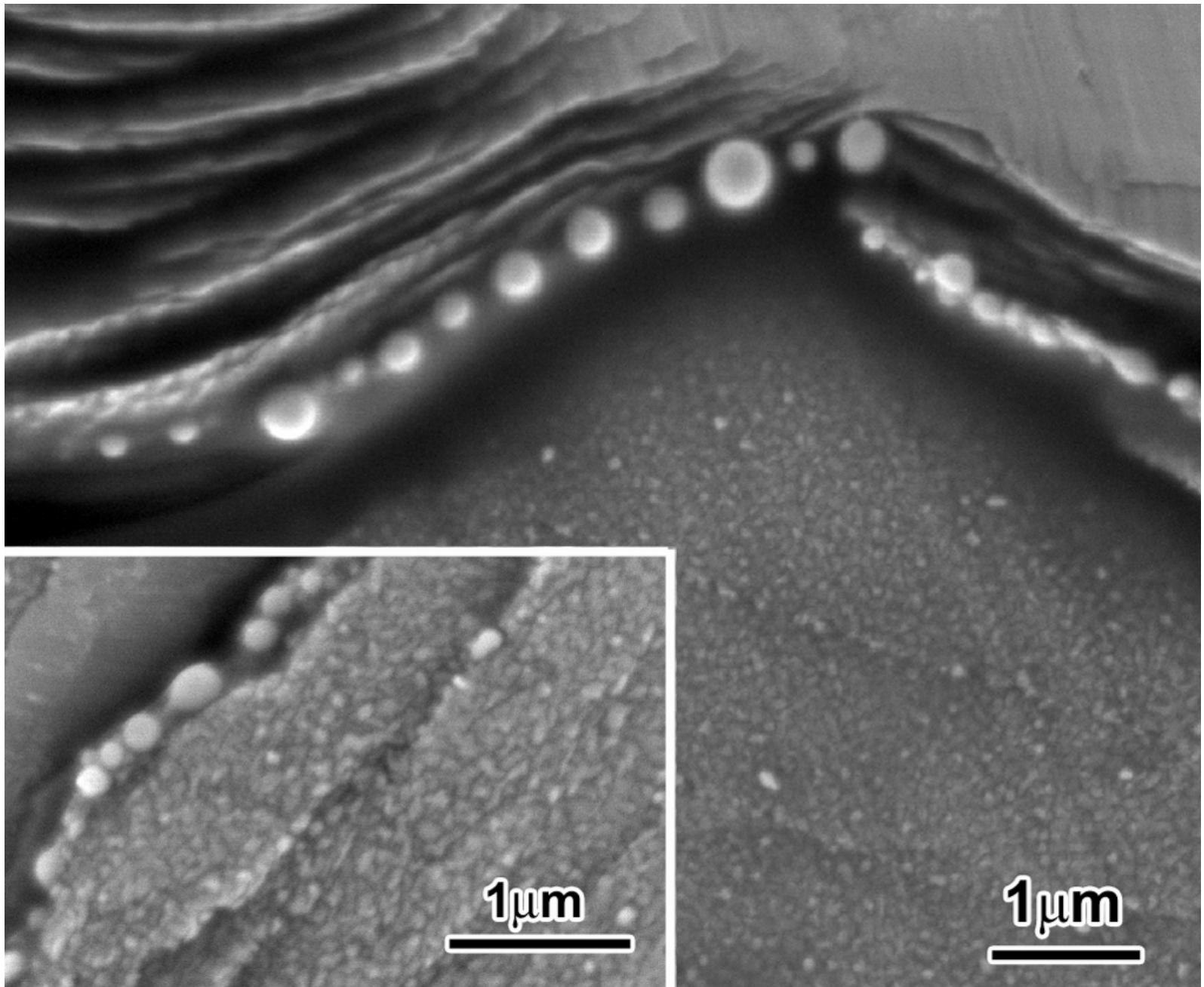


The operation of a shear band in a BMG generates a hot plane and melts the coating (of tin). The total work done by shear is proportional to the offset δ .

Test of method on **Vitreloy 1** ($\text{Zr}_{41.25}\text{Ti}_{13.75}\text{Ni}_{10}\text{Cu}_{12.5}\text{Be}_{22.5}$)

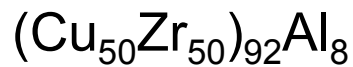
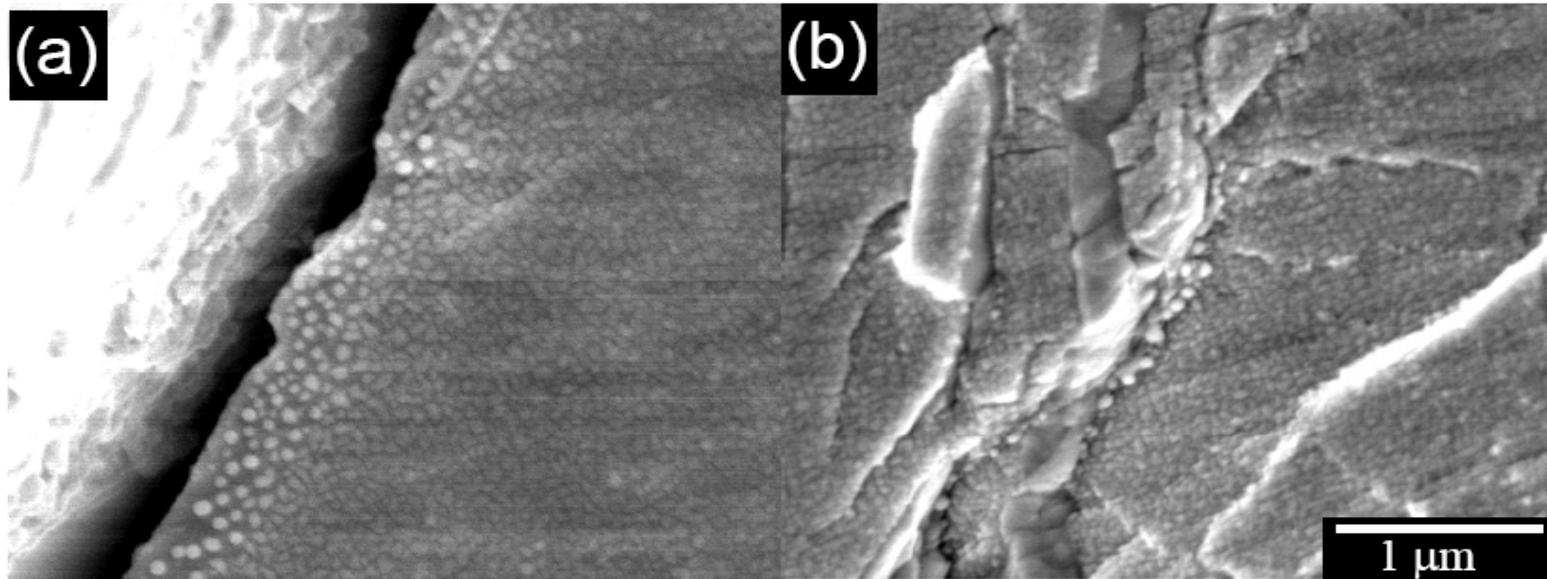


J.J. Lewandowski & A.L. Greer

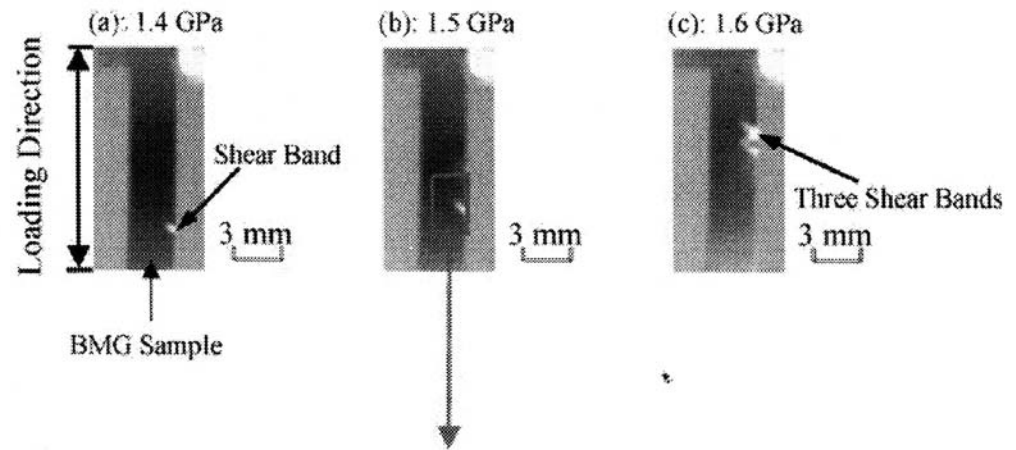


J.J. Lewandowski & A.L. Greer: *Nature Materials* **5** (2006) 15.

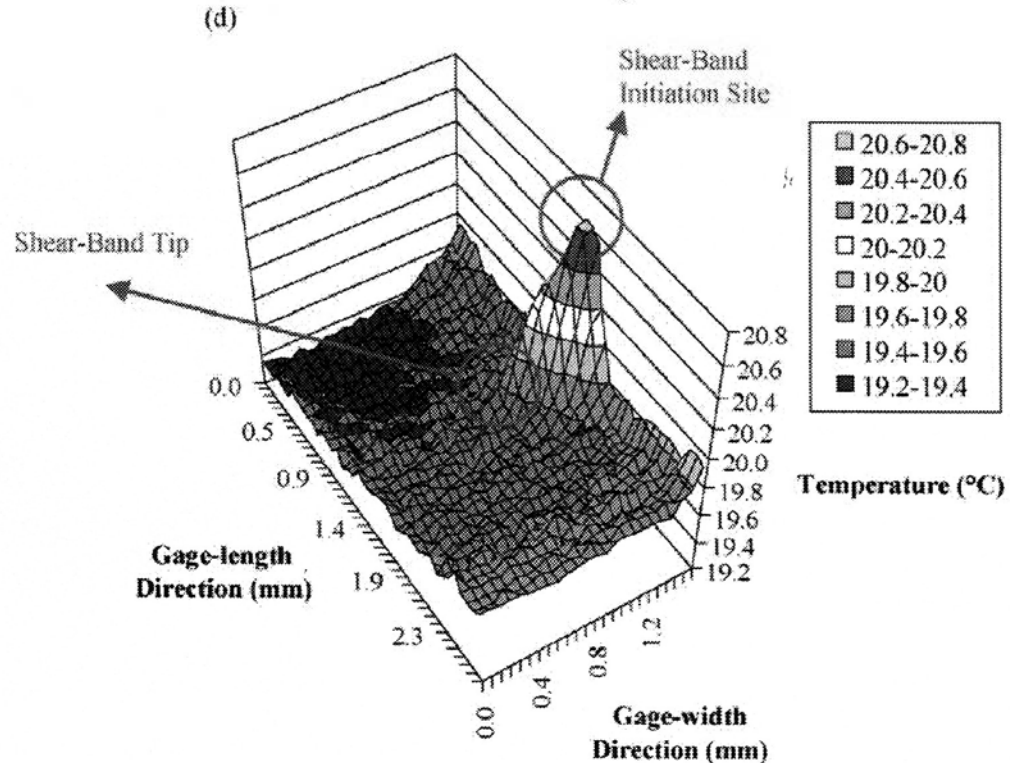
Local melting of a tin coating at shear bands in other BMGs



Y. Zhang, N.A. Stelmashenko, Z.H. Barber, W.H. Wang, J.J. Lewandowski & A.L. Greer: “Local temperature rises during mechanical testing of metallic glasses”, *J. Mater. Res.* **22** (2007) 417.



Average measured temperature rise in shear bands = 0.4 K (for observed width of 0.15 mm)



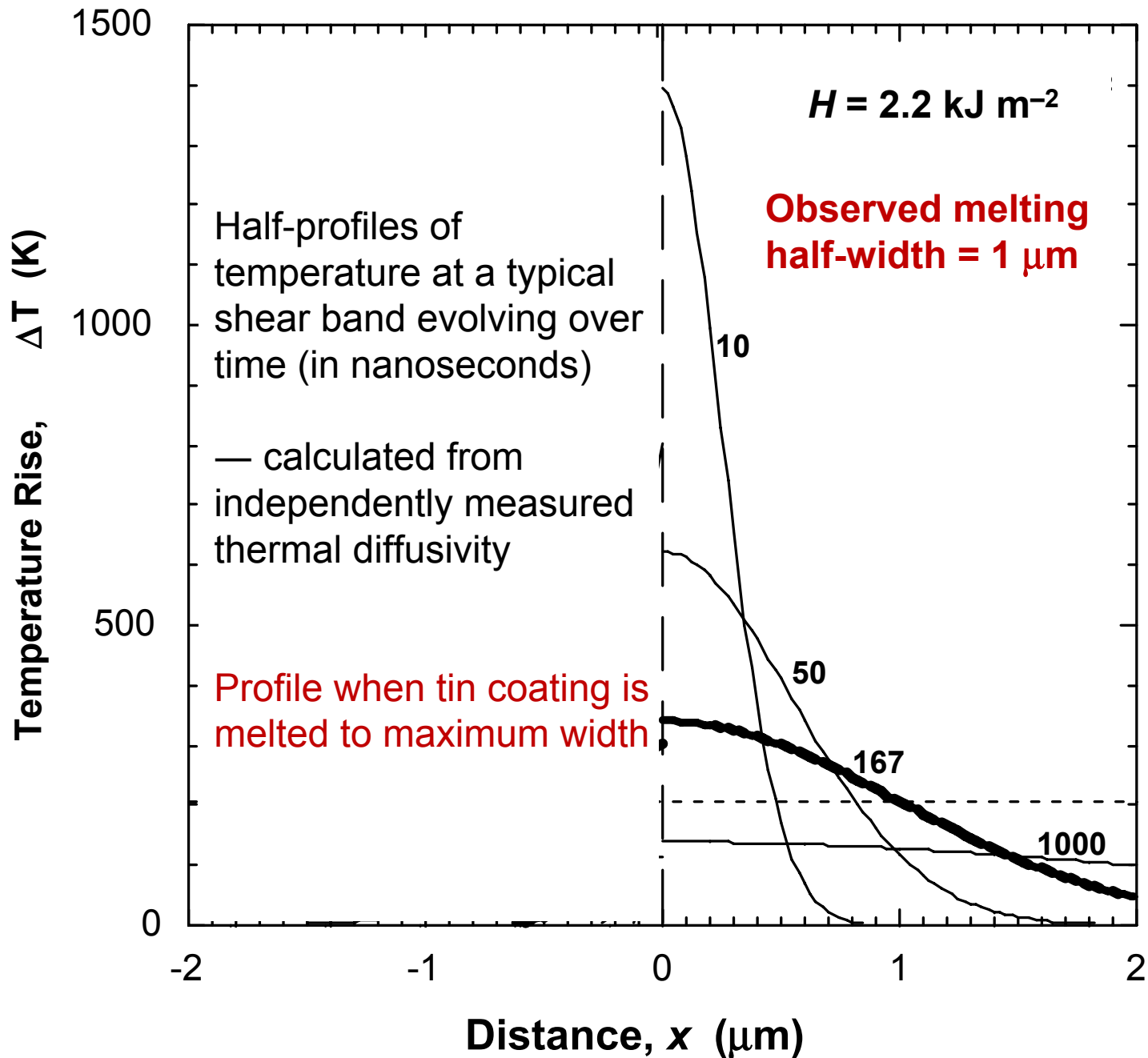
B. Yang, P.K. Liaw, G. Wang, M. Morrison, C.T. Liu, R.A. Buchanan & Y. Yokoyama: "In-situ thermographic observation of mechanical damage in bulk-metallic glasses during fatigue and tensile experiments", *Intermetallics* **12** (2004) 1265.

Resolution of the fusible-coating method

- temporal resolution \approx thermal diffusion time for coating thickness including latent heat of melting, the resolution \approx **30 ps**
- spatial resolution \approx scale of islands \approx **100 nm**

In contrast for direct infrared measurements the best reported resolution combinations are —

- for imaging **1.4 ms** **$\sim 11 \mu\text{m}$**
- for single detector **$\sim 10 \mu\text{s}$** **100 μm**

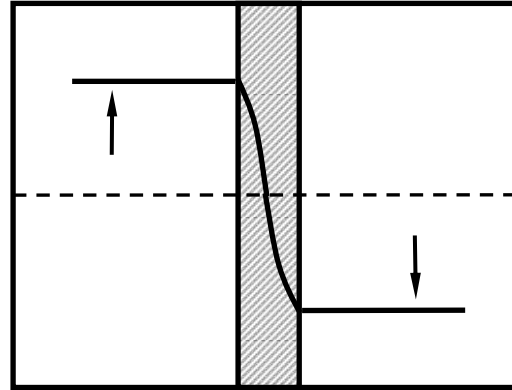


Length scales and times associated with shear-band heating

observed half-width of melted zone	200 nm	1 μm
calculated heat content of shear band, H (J m^{-2})	0.4	2.2
time at melting limit (ns)	7	167
shear offset calculated from H and τ_y (μm)	0.8	4.3
[assumed shear velocity = 206 m s^{-1} ($\sim 10\%$ transverse sound veloc.)]		
lower-bound estimate of shear duration, δt (ns)	3.9	20.9
upper-bound estimate of temperature rise at shear-band centre (K)	743	1990
thermal diffusion length at end of shear (nm)	500	1000

[measured (from TEM) thickness of shear band = **10 to 20 nm**]

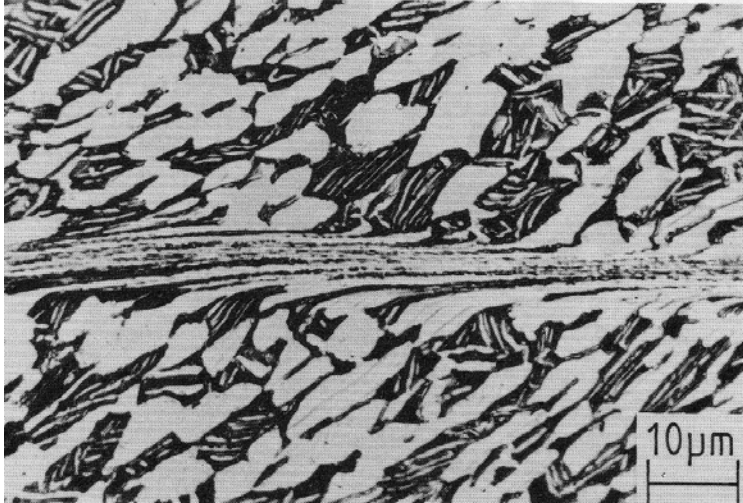
How to understand the thickness of shear bands?



TEM studies consistently suggest a shear-band thickness of ~ 10 nm

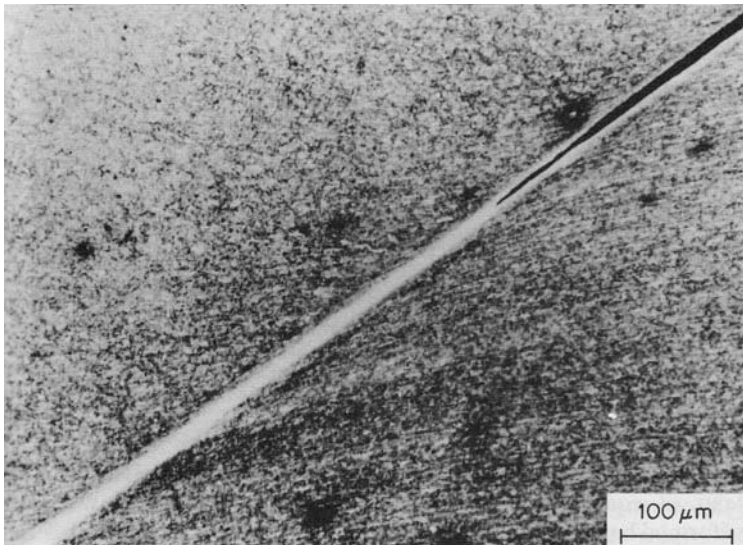
Y. Zhang & A.L. Greer: "Thickness of shear bands in metallic glasses", *Appl. Phys. Lett.* **89** (2006) 071907.

Adiabatic shear bands in conventional (polycrystalline) engineering alloys



α - β titanium alloy

S.P. Timothy & I.M. Hutchings (1984)



martensitic steel

R. Dorneval (1987)

- in conventional adiabatic localization: **the harder the material, the thinner the shear band**
- in the absence of any hardening as in BMGs, we expect the shear-band thickness to fall to an **absolute minimum**

Shear Localization in Powders and Soils

- powders and soils can show unstable **dilatation** and **softening** under shear
- no thermal effects
- studies of shear bands in rounded sands show thicknesses $\approx 10 \times$ average particle diameter

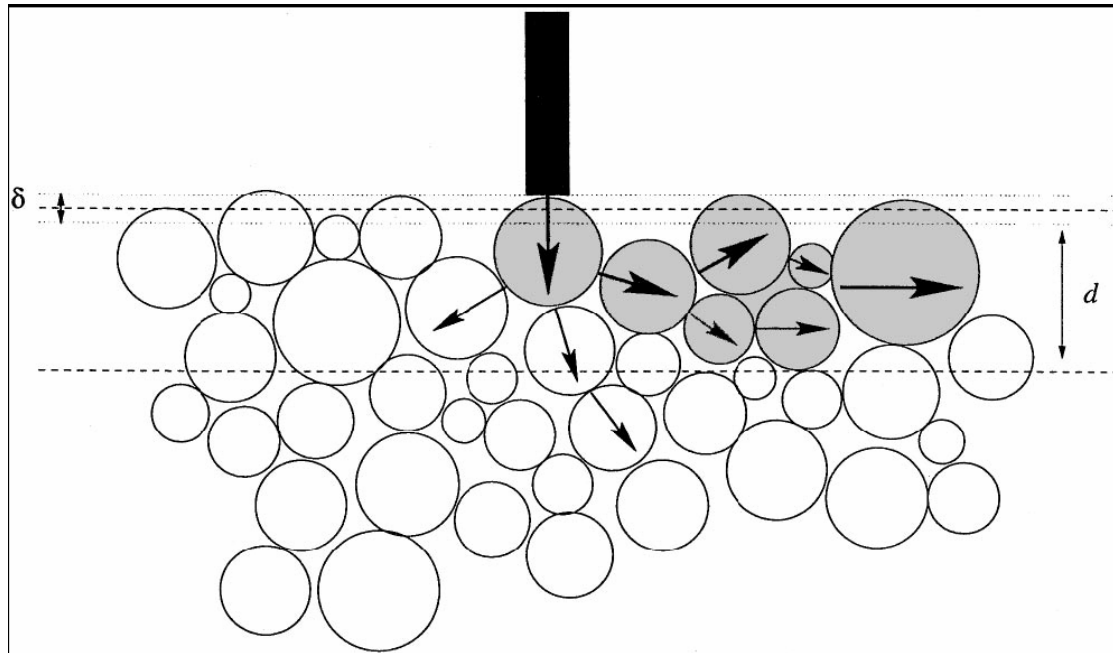
[K. H. Roscoe, *Géotechn.* **20** (1970) 129]

[X. B. Lu et al., *Int. J. Numer. Anal. Meth. Geomech.* **28** (2004) 1533]

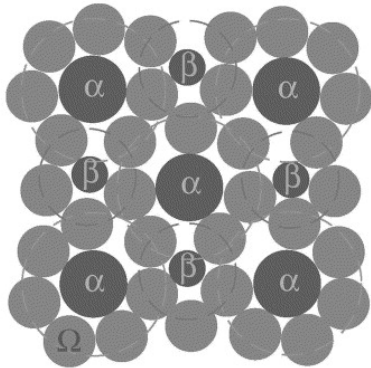
In Metallic Glasses?

- $d_{Zr} = 0.31$ nm, so predicted shear-band thickness is 3.1 nm
- actual thicknesses are 10 to 20 nm, so perhaps we should consider **stable clusters**

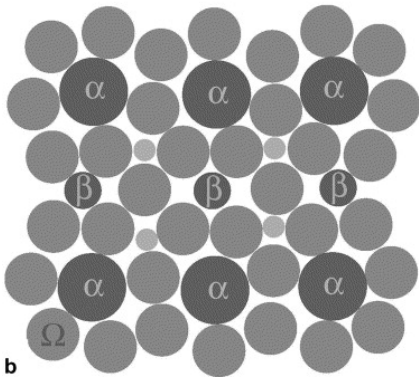
The finite thickness of shear bands can be analysed in terms of the chain of particle contacts necessary to generate dilatation.



B. Francois, F. Lacombe & H.J. Herrmann, *Phys. Rev. E* **65** (2002) 031311.



a

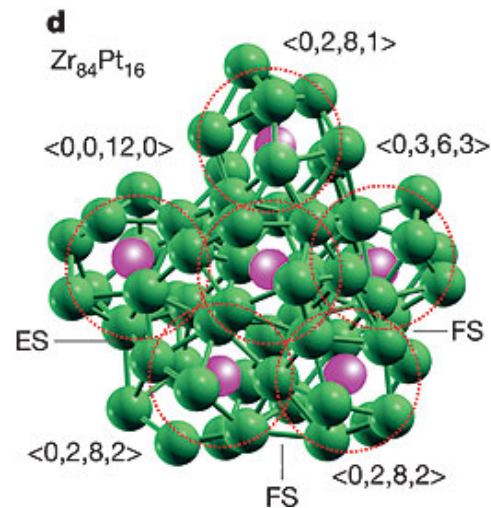
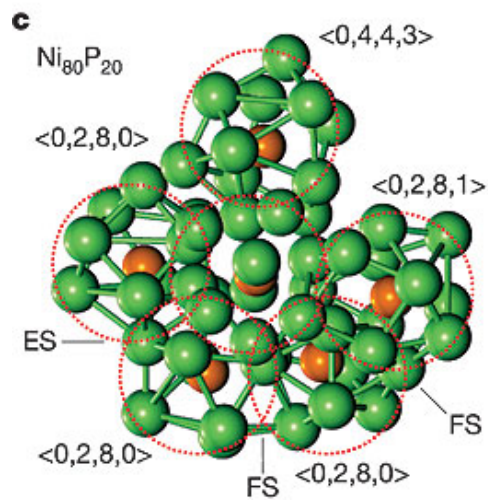
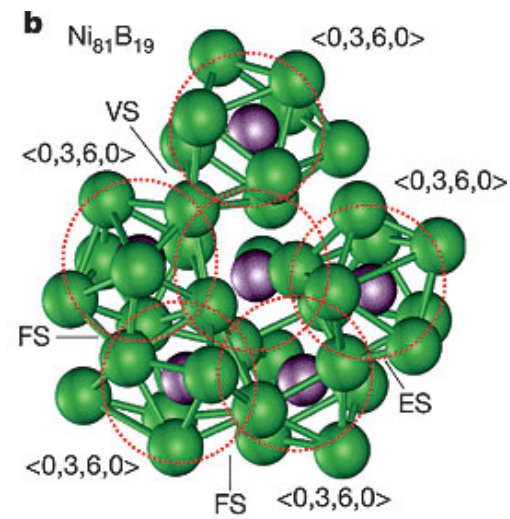
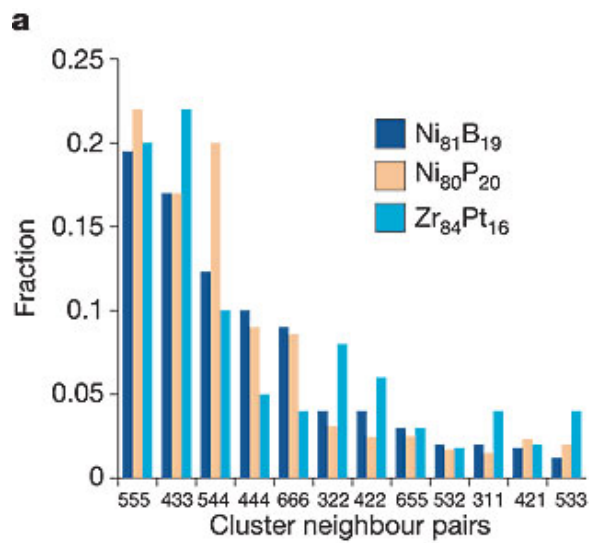


b



Interpenetrating clusters in the **efficient cluster packing model** of Miracle et al.

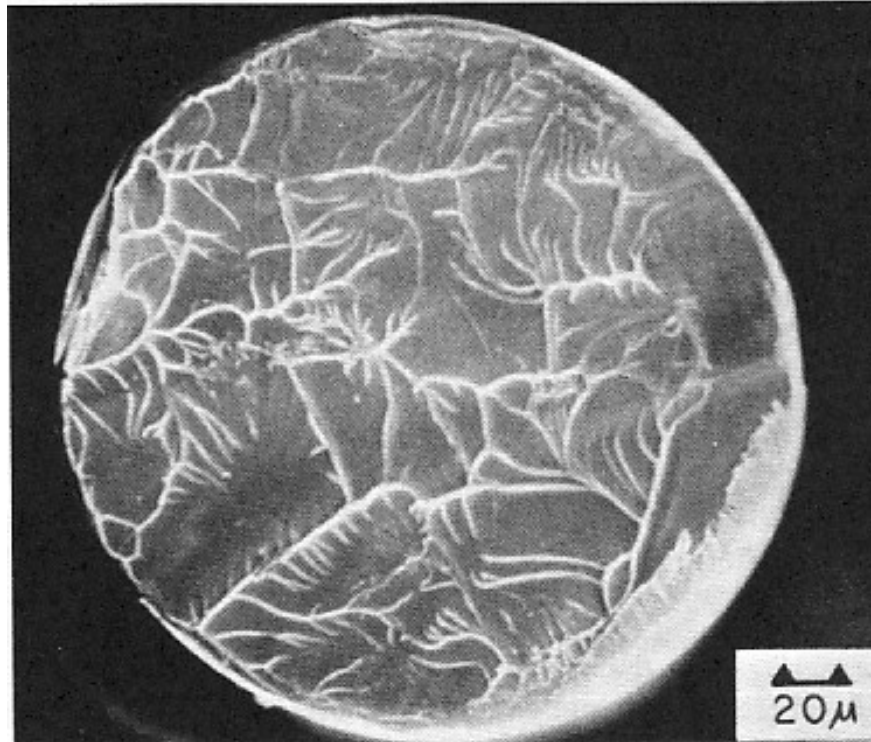
D B. Miracle, *Acta Mater.* 54 (2006) 4317.



Short-to-medium-range order in metallic glasses.

H.W. Sheng, W.K. Luo, F.M. Alamgir, J.M. Bai & E. Ma, *Nature* **439** (2006) 419.

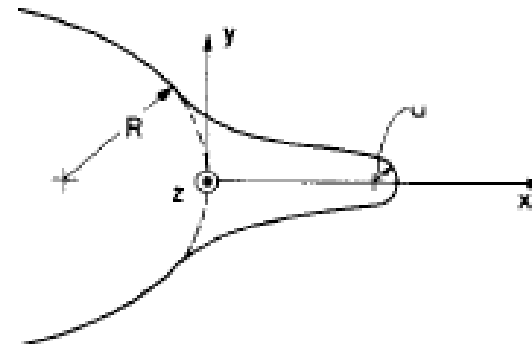
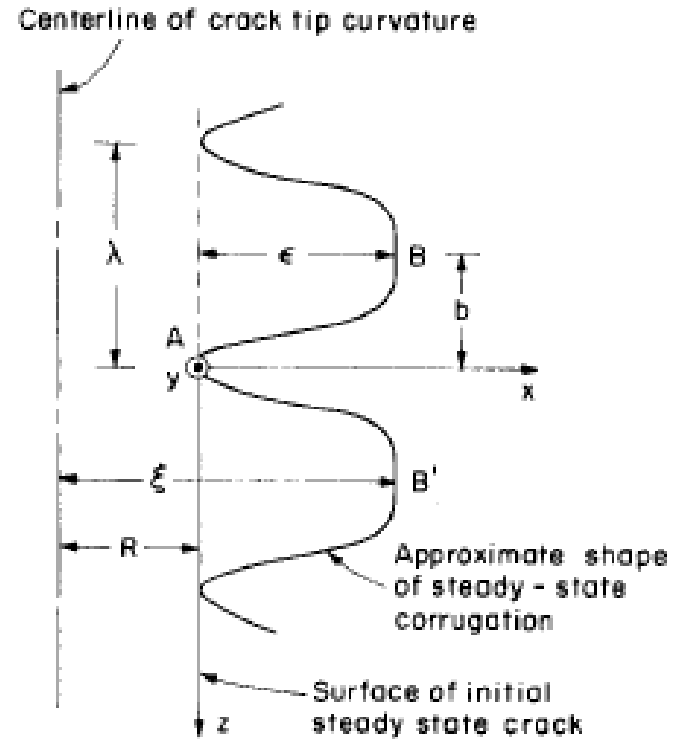
Fracture surface of $\text{Pd}_{77.5}\text{Cu}_6\text{Si}_{16.5}$ — characteristic vein pattern, formed by Saffman-Taylor fingering in a liquid-like layer.

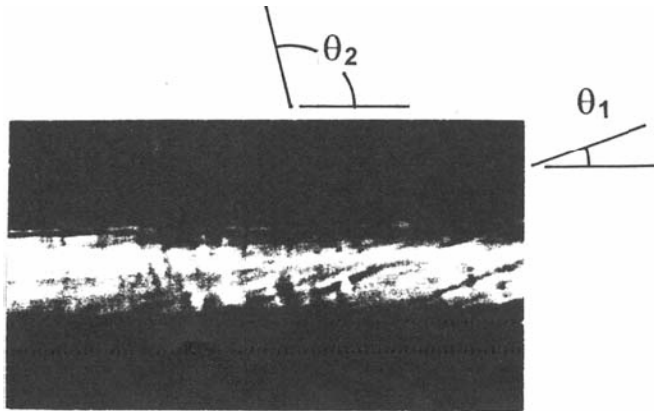


L.A. Davis & S. Kavesh, *J. Mater. Sci.* **10** (1975) 453.

The thickness of the liquid-like layer must be at least several μm .

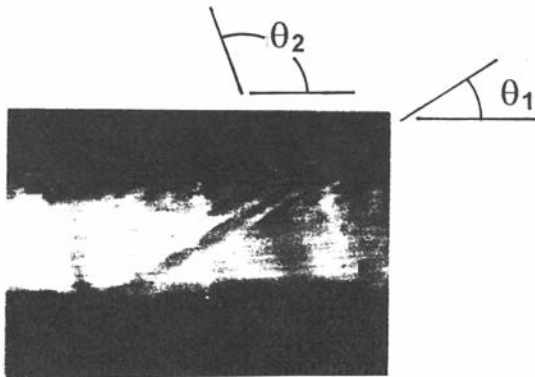
The vein pattern is formed by Saffman-Taylor fingering of air into a liquid-like layer of thickness 2-20 times the vein spacing.





5P4E, $p=275\text{MPa}$, $T=38^\circ\text{C}$

Shear bands can be found even in liquids – for example in liquid lubricants at high pressure, seen here in high-molecular weight organic liquids.



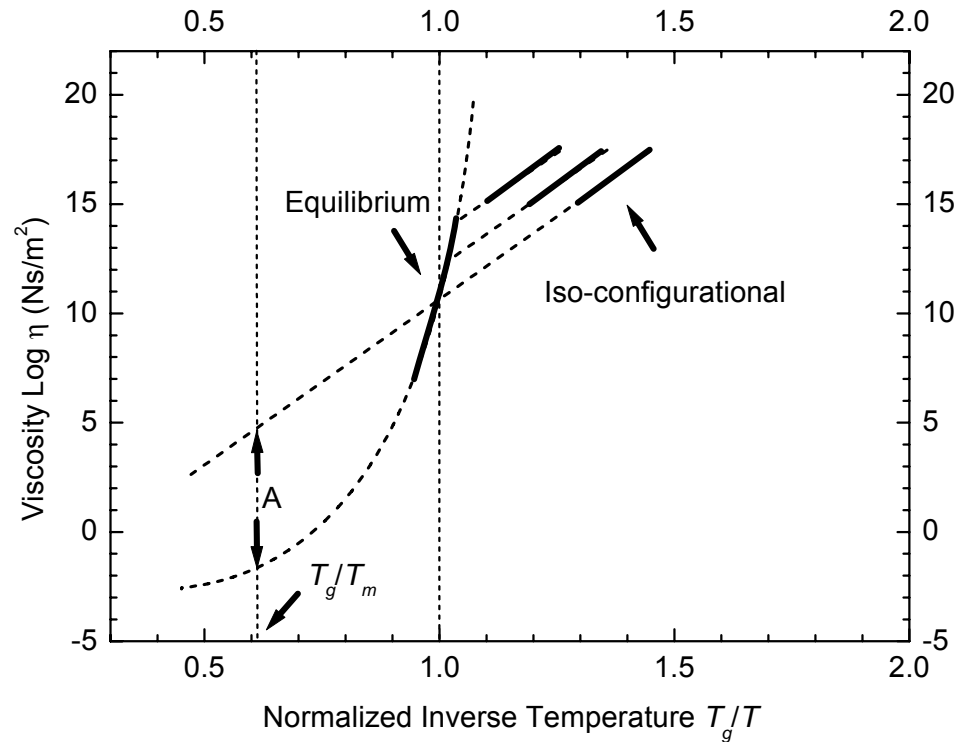
MCS1218, $p=241\text{MPa}$, $T=16^\circ\text{C}$

S. Bair & C. McCabe: “A study of mechanical shear bands in liquids at high pressures”, *Tribology Int.* **37** (2004) 783.

Formation of a liquid-like zone at a shear band

Rapid heating is **isoconfigurational**, and the viscosity is not lowered to the equilibrium value.

Data on Pd-Cu-Si and Pd-Si glasses from A.I. Taub & F. Spaepen, *Acta Metall.* **28** (1980) 1781. Isoconfigurational heating shown by C.A. Volkert & F. Spaepen, *Acta Metall.* **37** (1989) 1355.

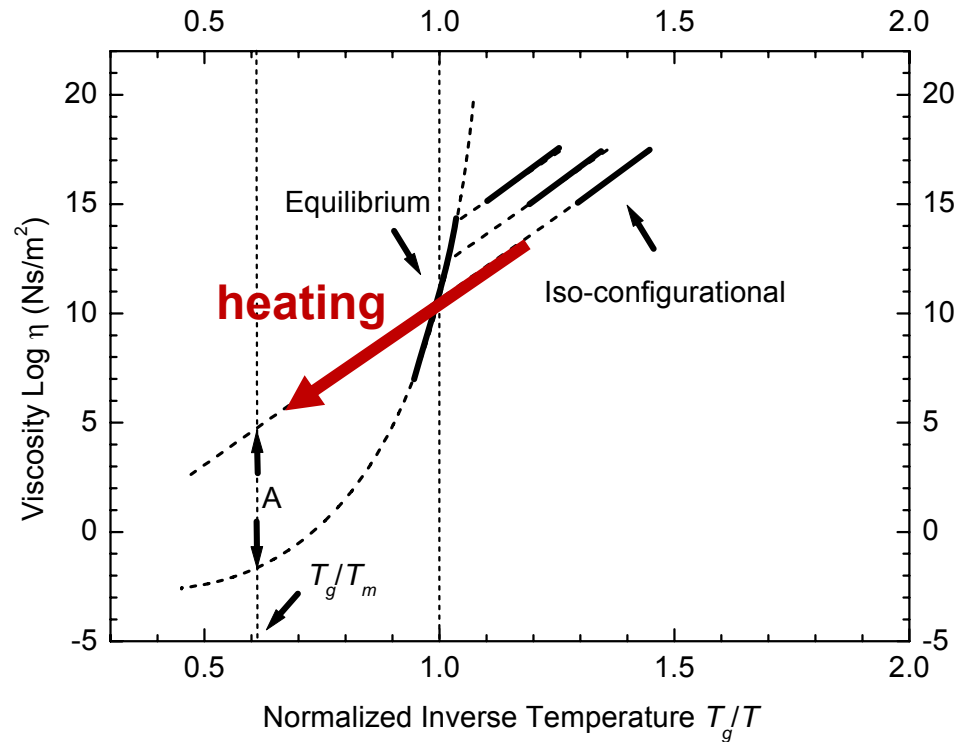


Y. Zhang & A.L. Greer: “Thickness of shear bands in metallic glasses”, *Appl. Phys. Lett.* **89** (2006) 071907.

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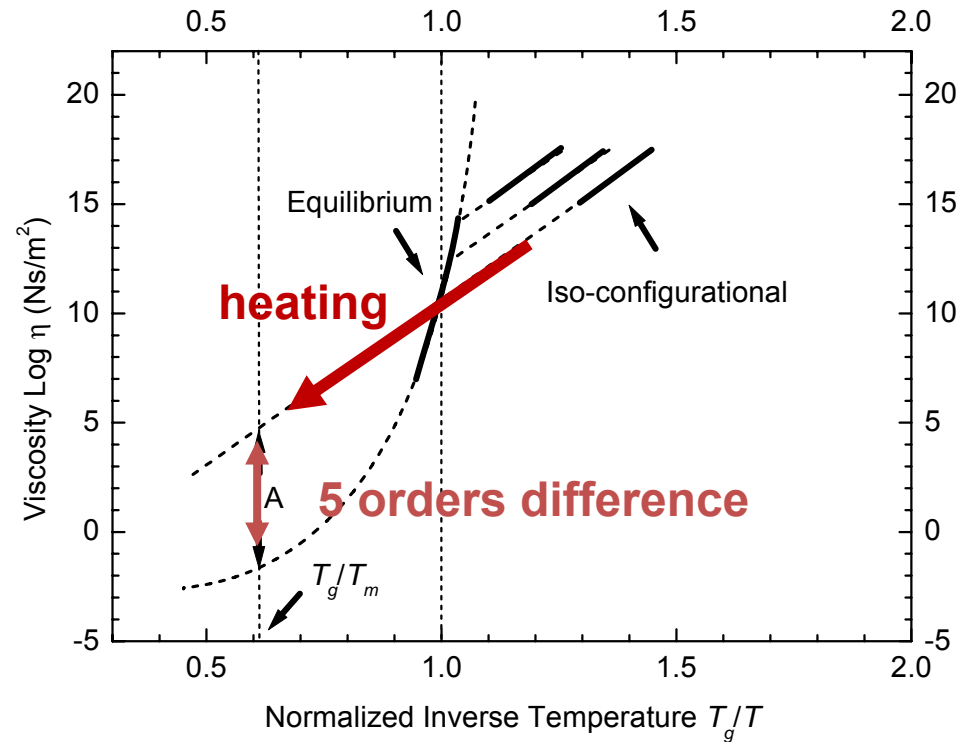
Y. Zhang & A.L. Greer: "Thickness of shear bands in metallic glasses", *Appl. Phys. Lett.* **89** (2006) 071907.

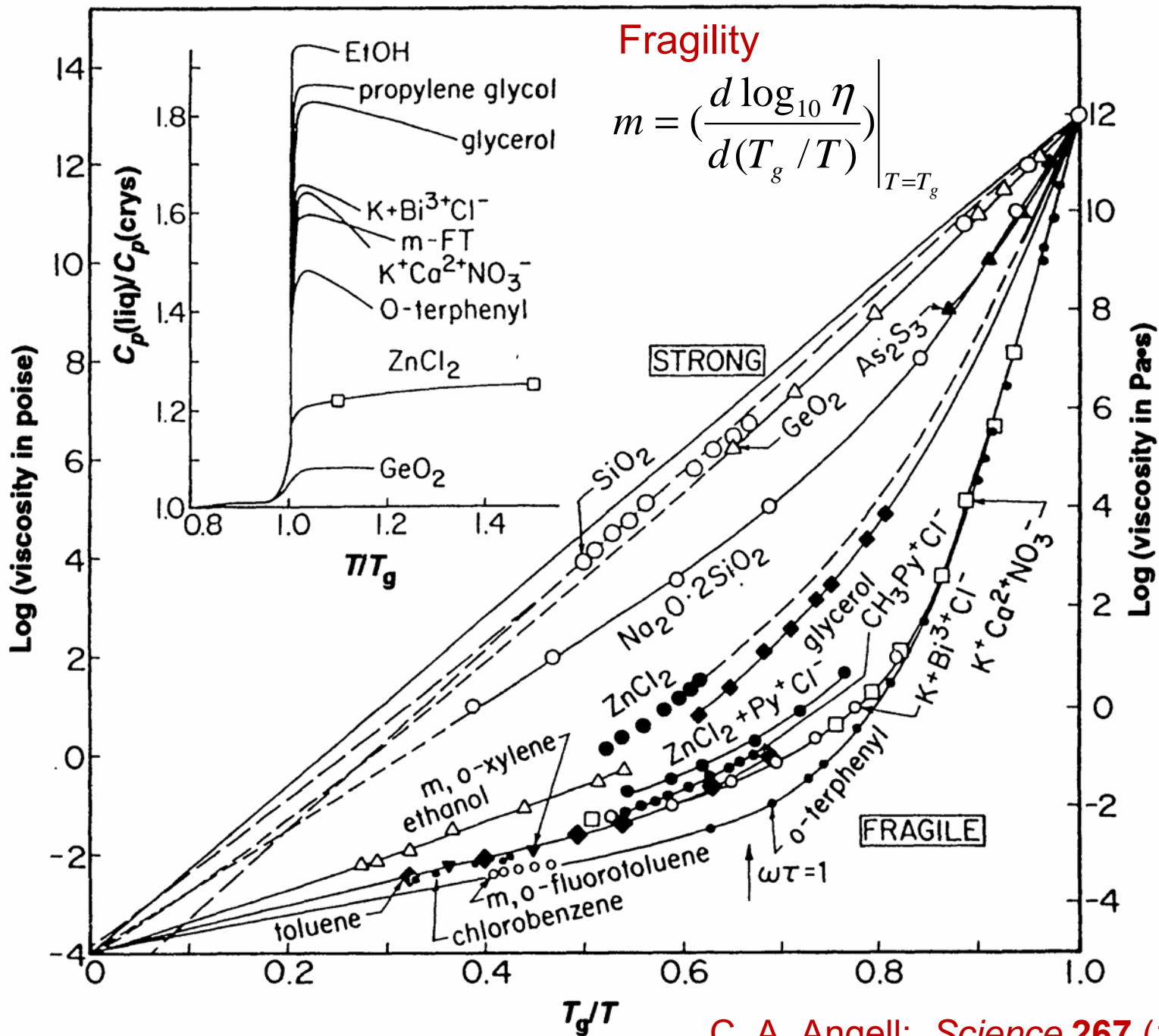
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Y. Zhang & A.L. Greer: "Thickness of shear bands in metallic glasses", *Appl. Phys. Lett.* **89** (2006) 071907.



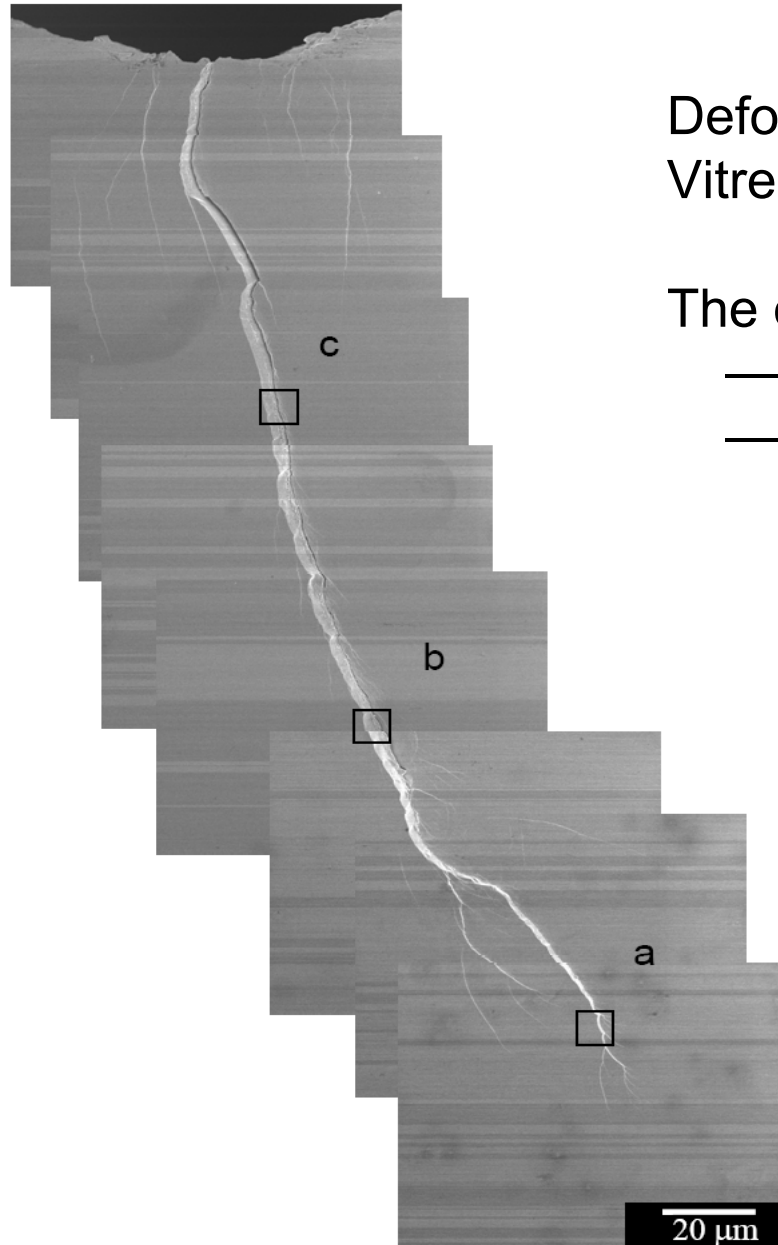


Deformation and fracture at a notch in Vitreloy 1.

The offset δ at shear bands

— varies

— is largest near the notch



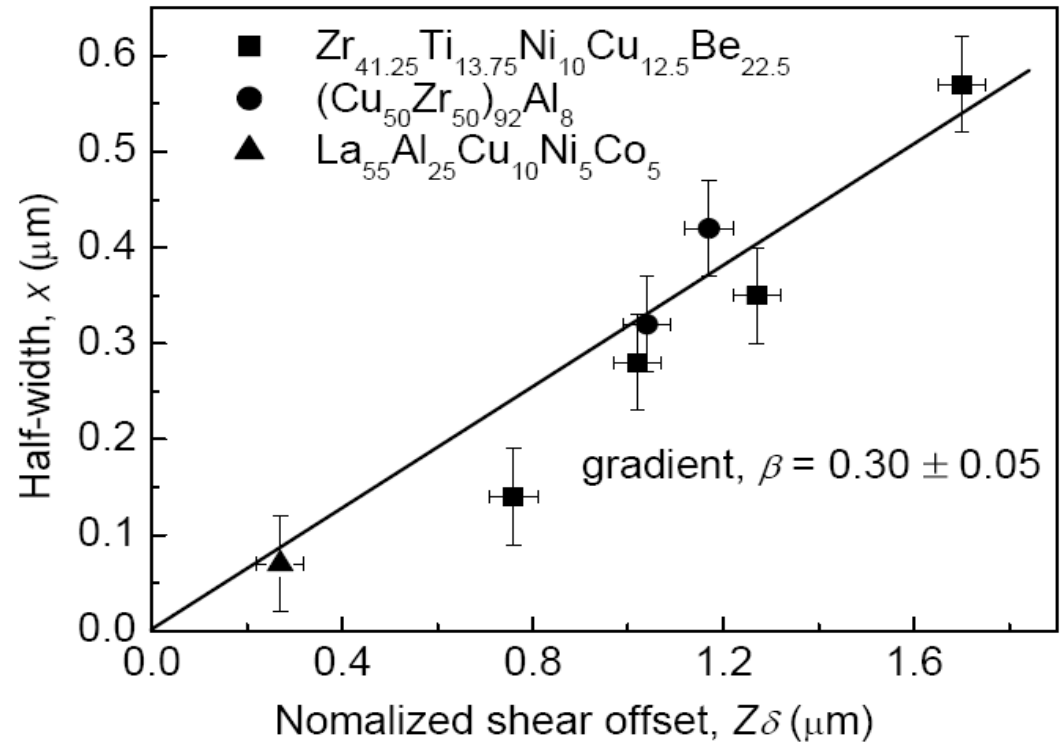
Y. Zhang et al. “Local temperature rises during mechanical testing of metallic glasses”, *J. Mater. Res.* **22** (2007) 417.

Half-width of hot zone

$$x = \beta Z \delta$$

If work done corresponds to the yield stress of the BMG acting on the shear band throughout its operation, β would be 0.5. Measurement suggests $\beta = 0.3$

$$Z = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi e \Delta T_{\max}^{\text{crit}}}} \left(\frac{\sigma_y}{\rho C} \right)$$



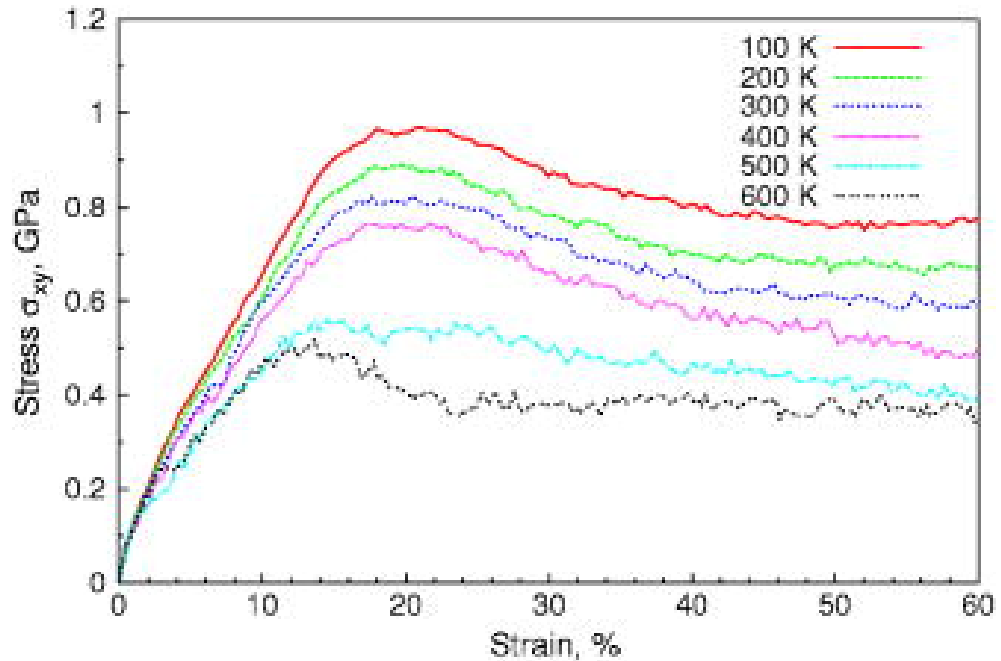
From this correlation, it seems that the shear stress acting on a shear band during its operation is 50-70% of the value corresponding to the onset of macroscopic yielding.

Molecular-dynamics simulations

simulated $\text{Cu}_{64}\text{Zr}_{36}$

up to 288 000 atoms

cooled at $4 \times 10^{12} \text{ K s}^{-1}$



Q.-K. Li & M. Li: “Atomic scale characterization of shear bands in an amorphous metal”, *Appl. Phys. Lett.* **88** (2006) 241903

How fast are shear bands?

Estimates of the time of shear vary enormously —

— **as short as 0.2 ns**

(estimated from the offset and the speed of sound)

— **as long as 100 ms**

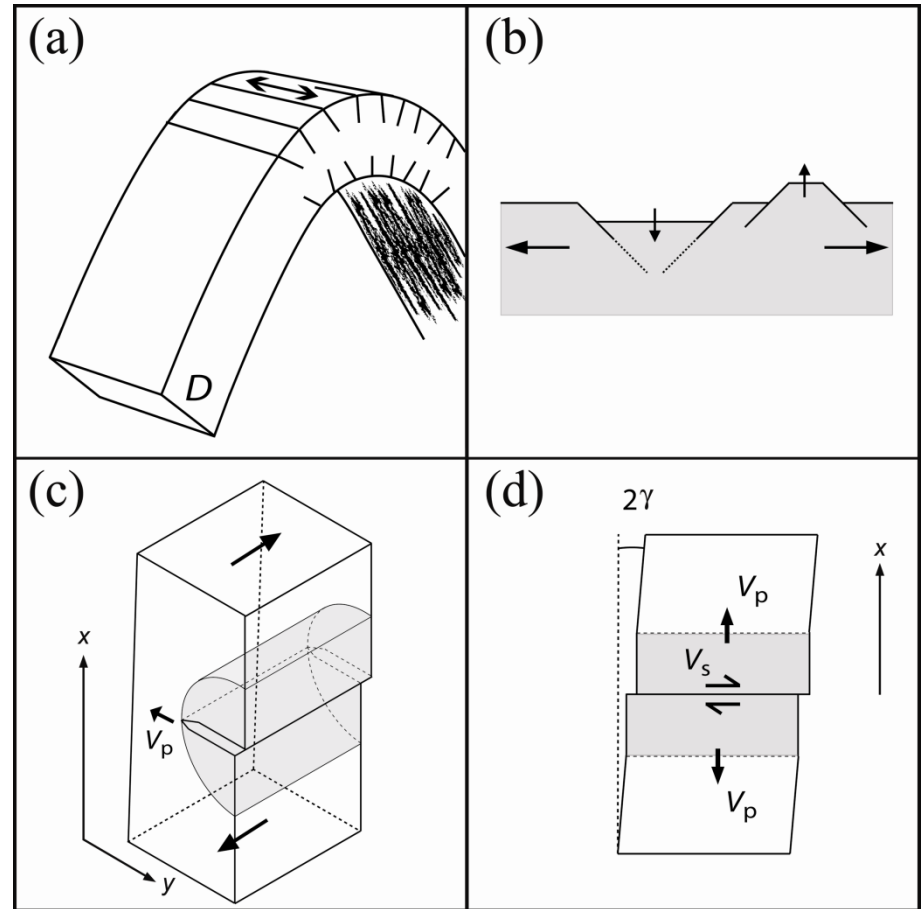
(estimated from serrations on stress-strain curves)

Mode III Shear

velocity of propagation V_p
(velocity of the shear-band front)
 $\leq 90\%$ of transverse sound speed

shear velocity V_s
(does work and sets local shear time) $V_s = 4\gamma V_p$

$\gamma = 0.0267$ (Johnson & Samwer)
 $V_s = 0.107 V_p$



**Velocities less than ~50% of the maximum
would be insufficient to melt tin coatings**

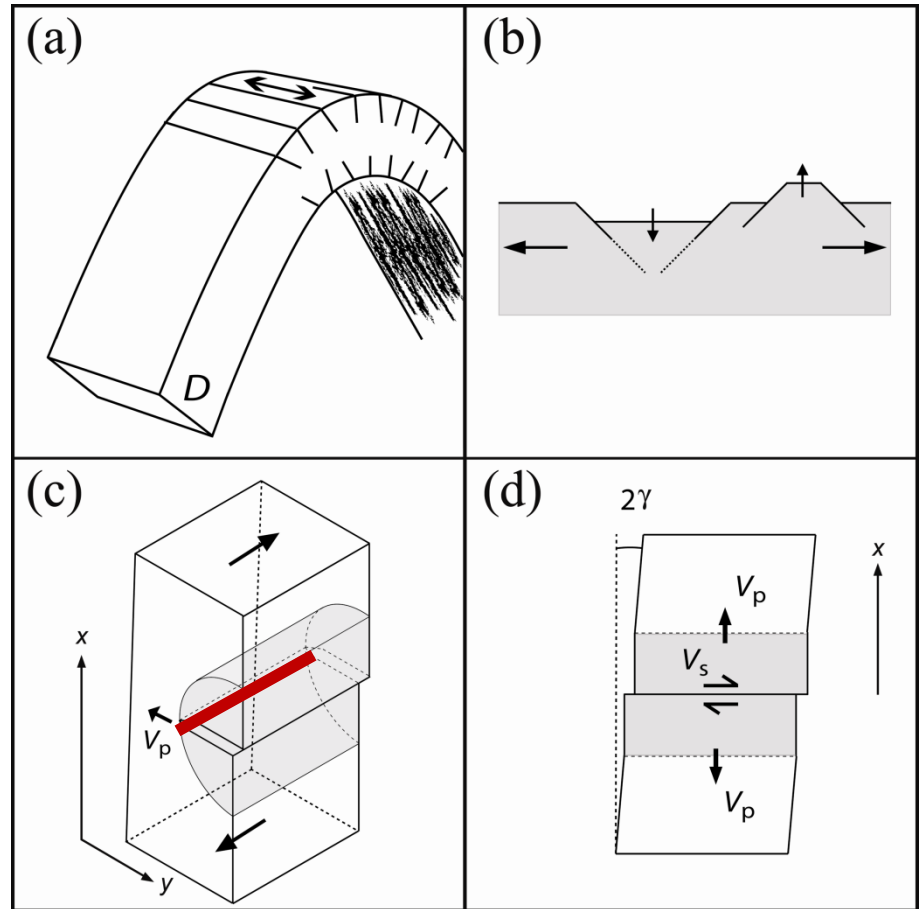
DB Miracle, A Concustell, Y Zhang, AR Yavari & AL Greer:
Thermal profiles around shear bands in metallic glasses

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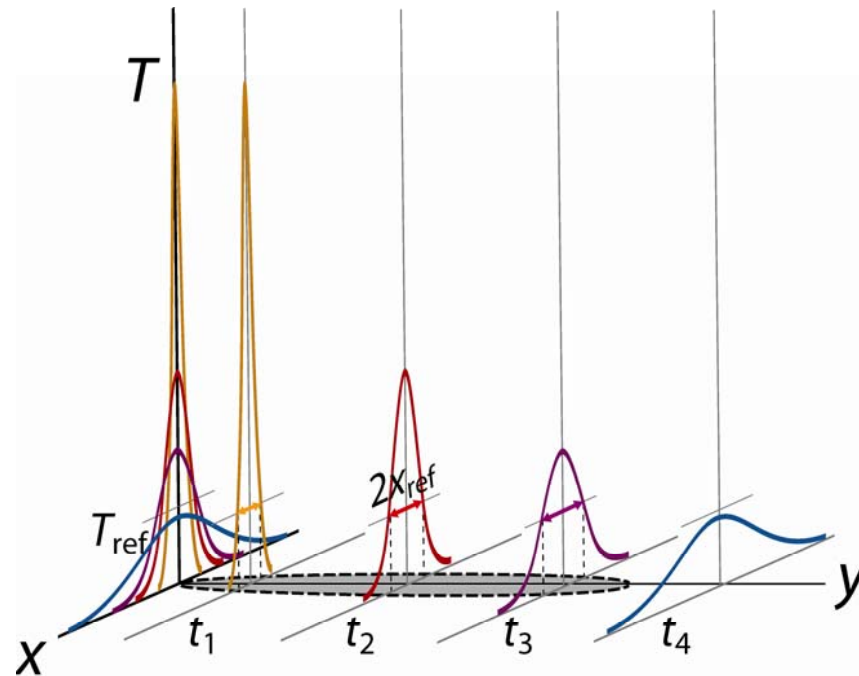
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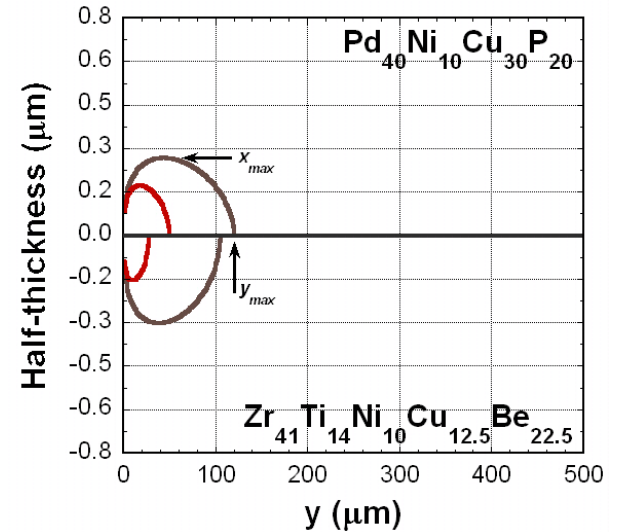
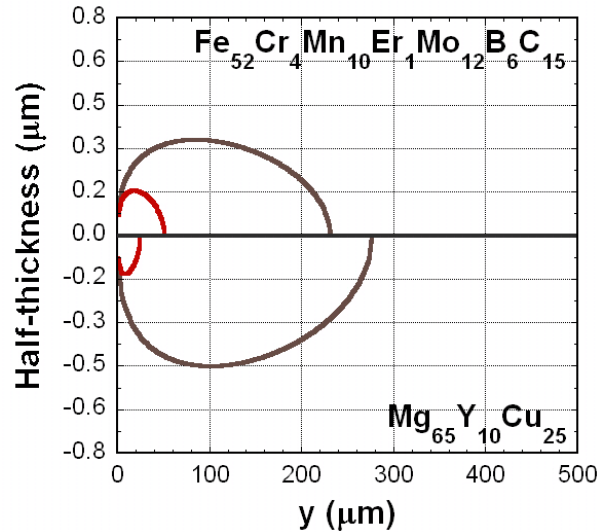
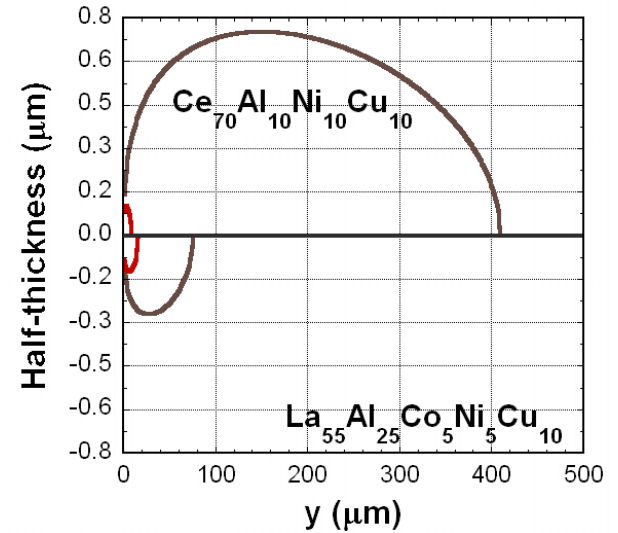
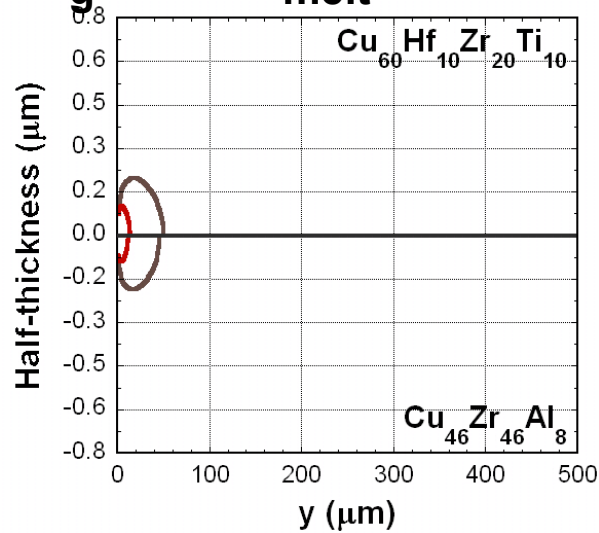


DB Miracle, A Concustell, Y Zhang, AR Yavari & AL Greer:
Thermal profiles around shear bands in metallic glasses

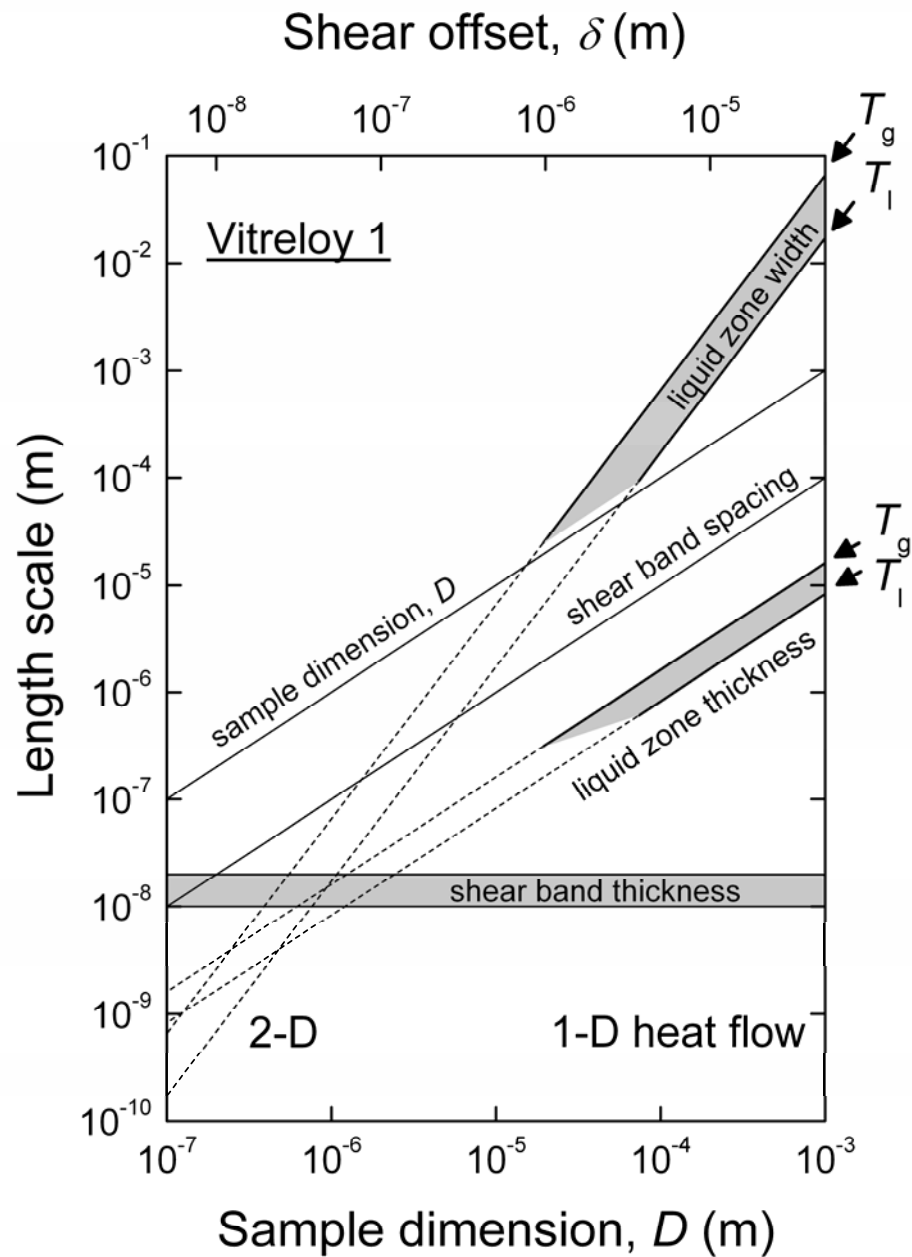
Shapes of thermal profiles

— contours of T_g and T_{melt}

constant
shear offset
= $2 \mu\text{m}$



DB Miracle, A Concustell, Y Zhang, AR Yavari & AL Greer:
Thermal profiles around shear bands in metallic glasses



DB Miracle, A Concustell, Y Zhang, AR Yavari & AL Greer:
Thermal profiles around shear bands in metallic glasses

Shear Band Spacing vs. Sample Dimension Metallic Glass Ribbons, Wires, Strips and Plates

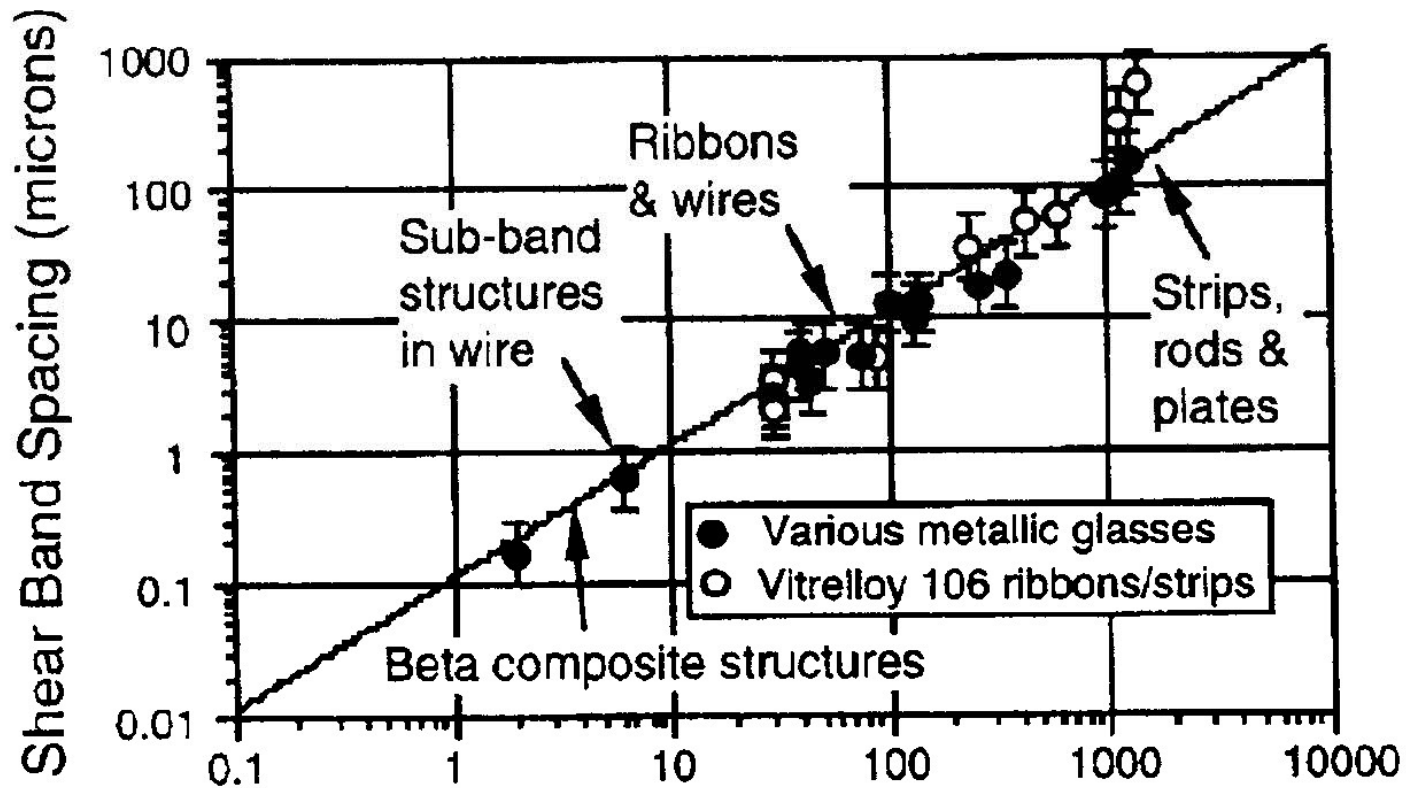


FIG. 3. Shear band spacing as a function of sample size (plate thickness or wire diameter) at the point of fracture for various metallic glasses and Vitrelloy 106. The shear band spacing is shown to scale linearly with the sample size. Conner *et al.*¹¹

R.D. Conner, W.L. Johnson, N.E. Paton & W.D. Nix: "Shear bands and cracking of metallic glass plates in bending", *J. Appl. Phys.* **94** (2003) 904.

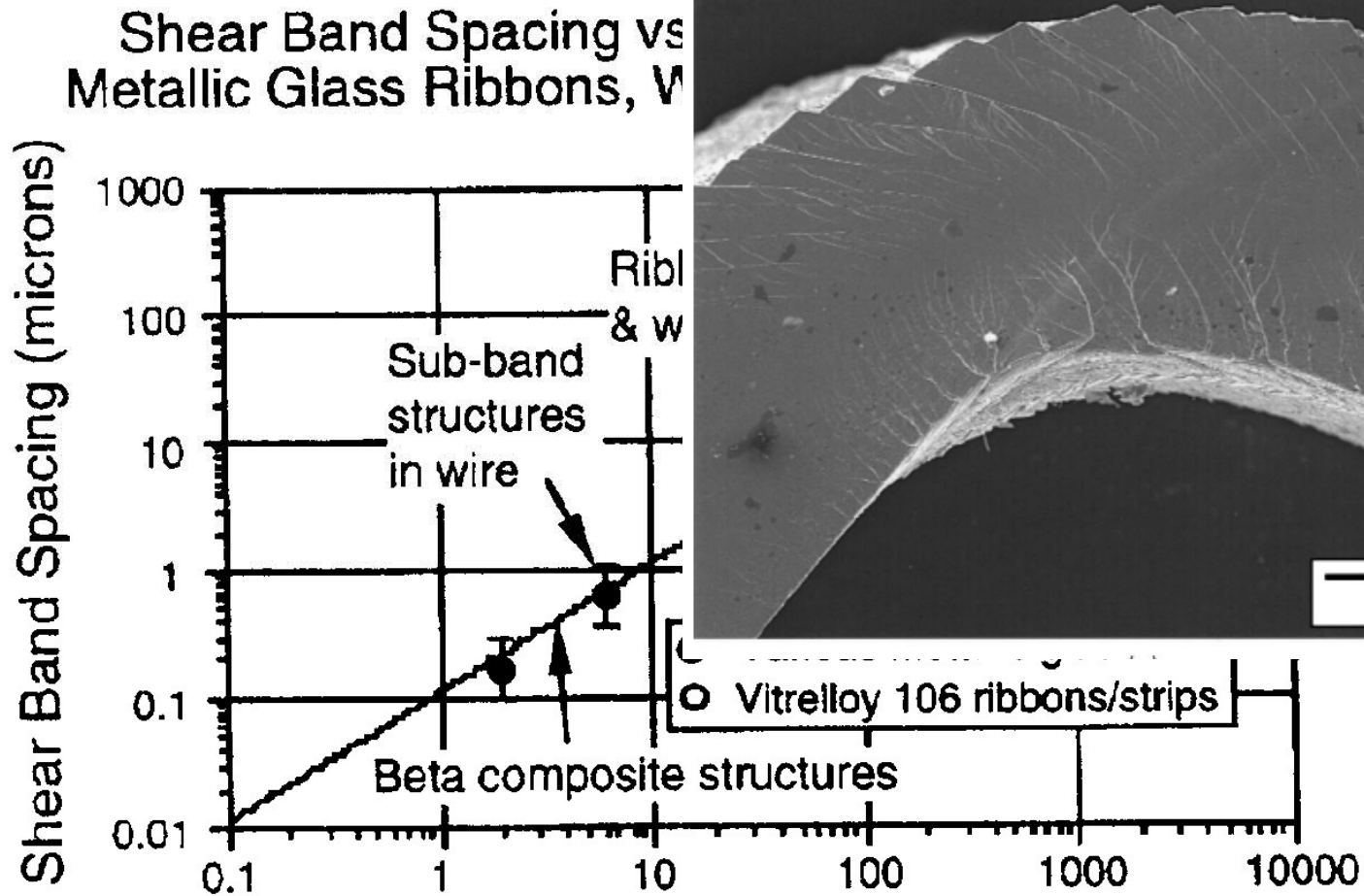
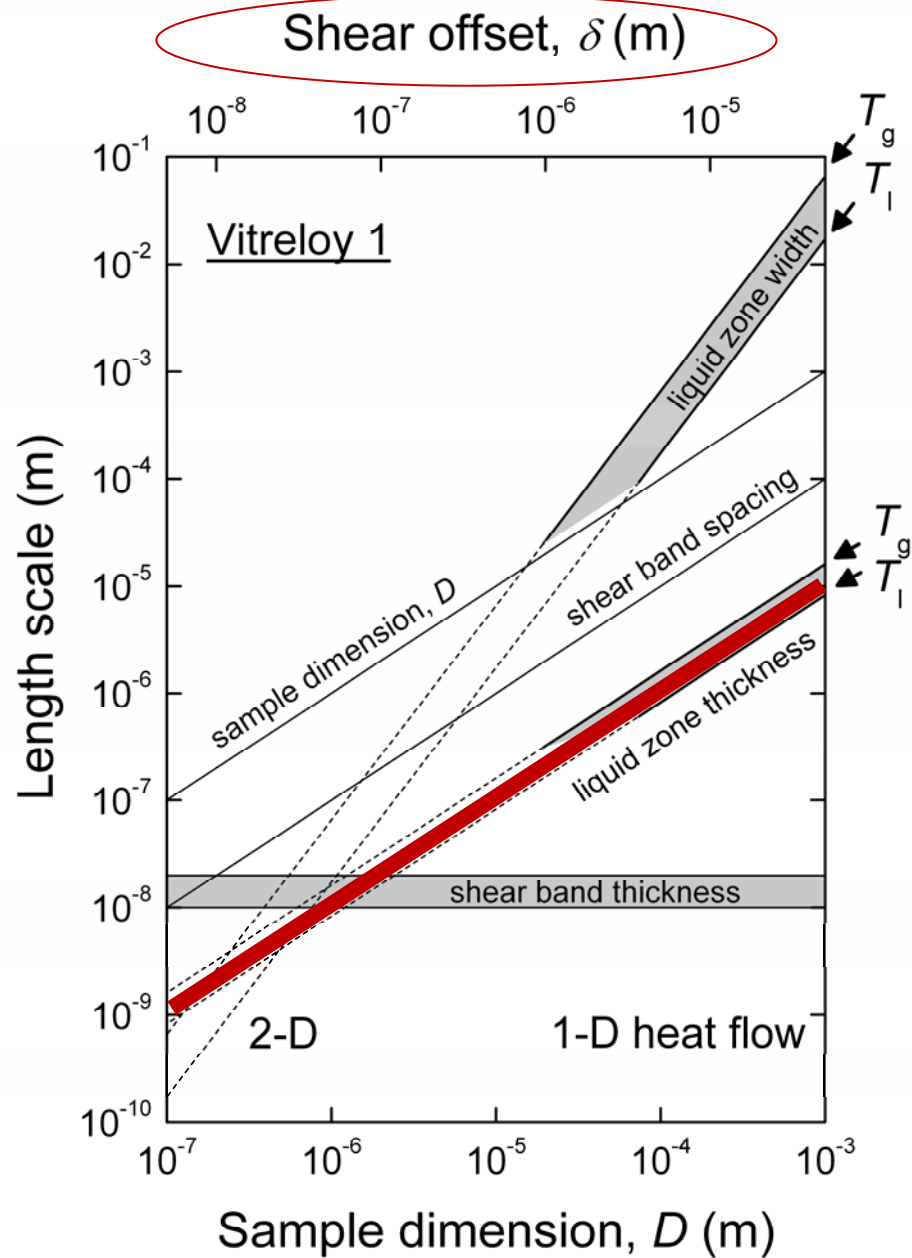
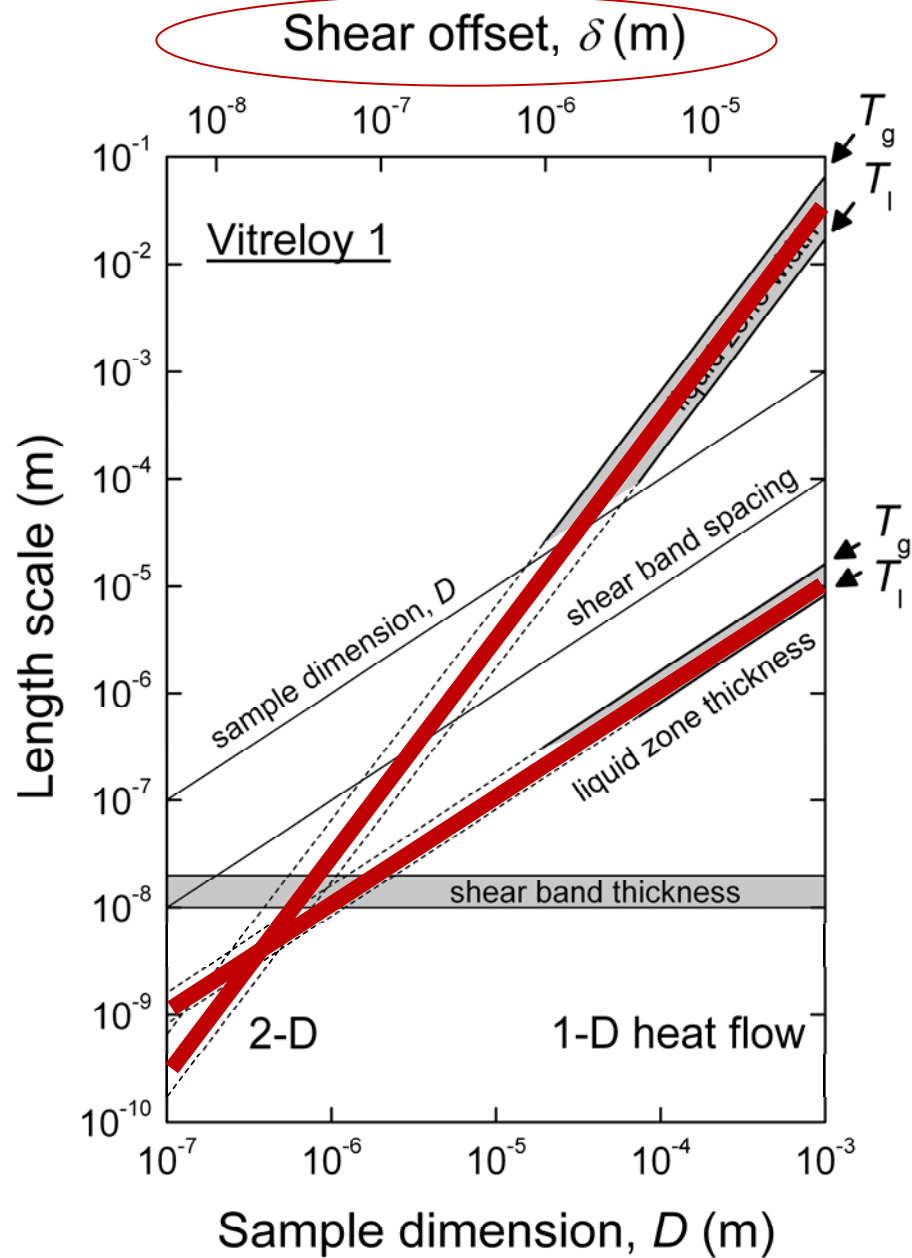


FIG. 3. Shear band spacing as a function of sample size (plate thickness or wire diameter) at the point of fracture for various metallic glasses and Vitrelloy 106. The shear band spacing is shown to scale linearly with the sample size. Conner *et al.*¹¹

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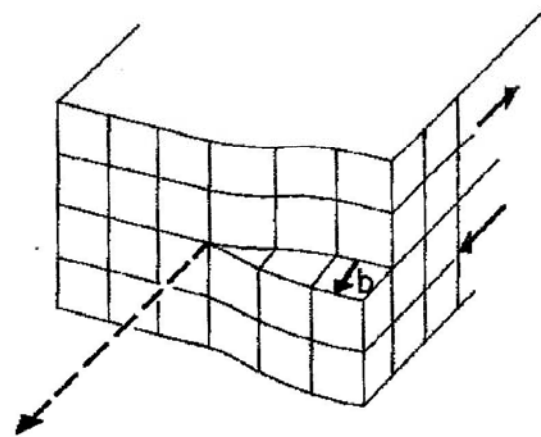
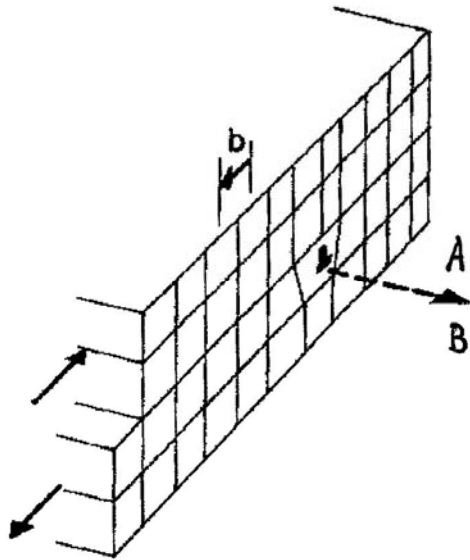
DB Miracle, A Concustell, Y Zhang, AR Yavari & AL Greer:
Thermal profiles around shear bands in metallic glasses



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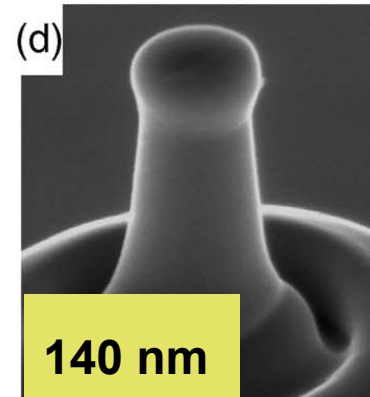
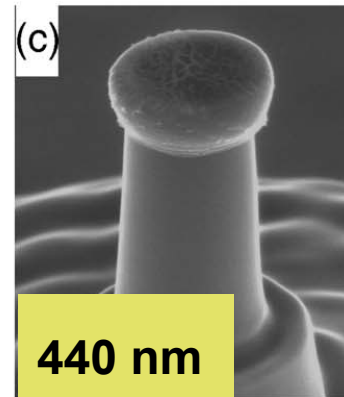
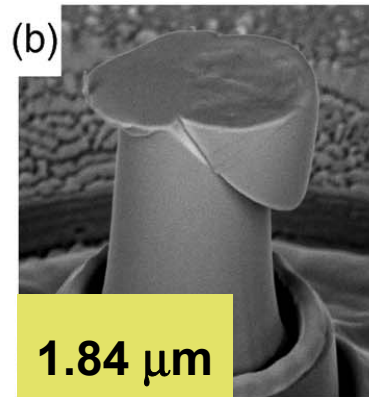
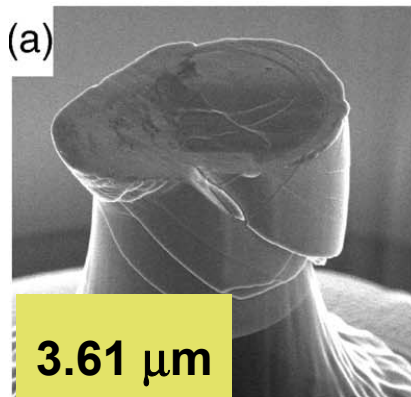
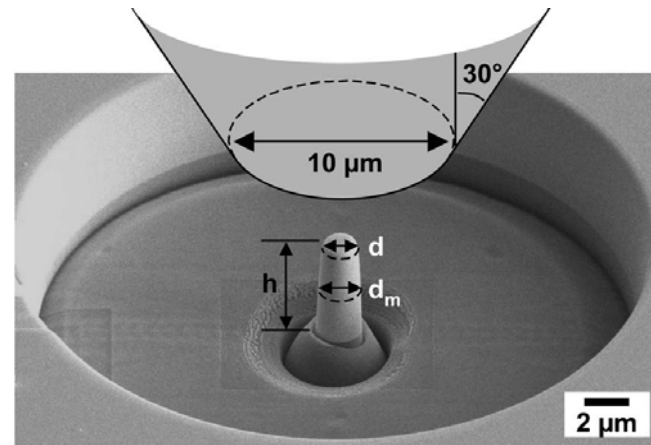
Line Sources of Heat

— moving dislocations and crack tips



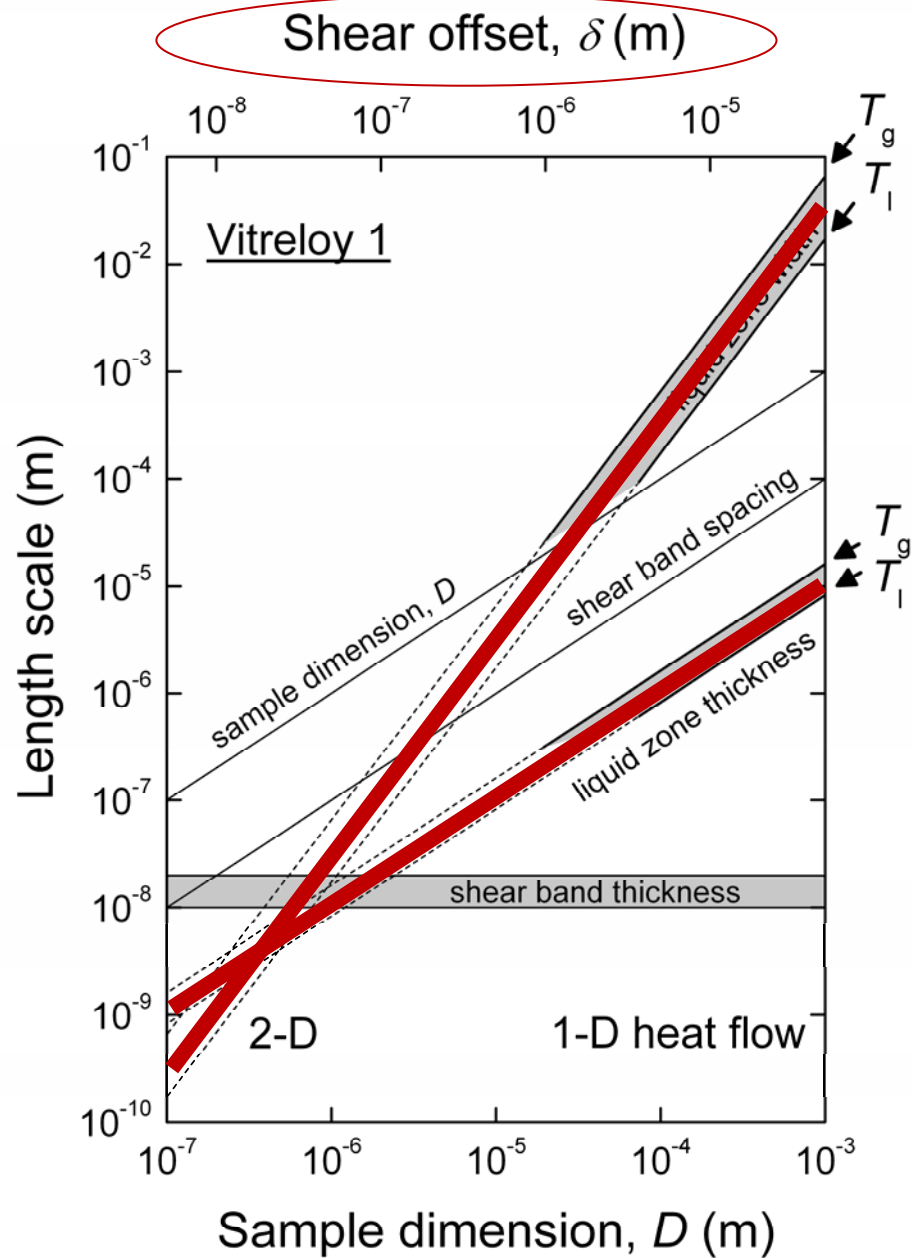
Possibility that shear bands do not operate in small samples

— no bands seen in columns of diameter < 400 nm

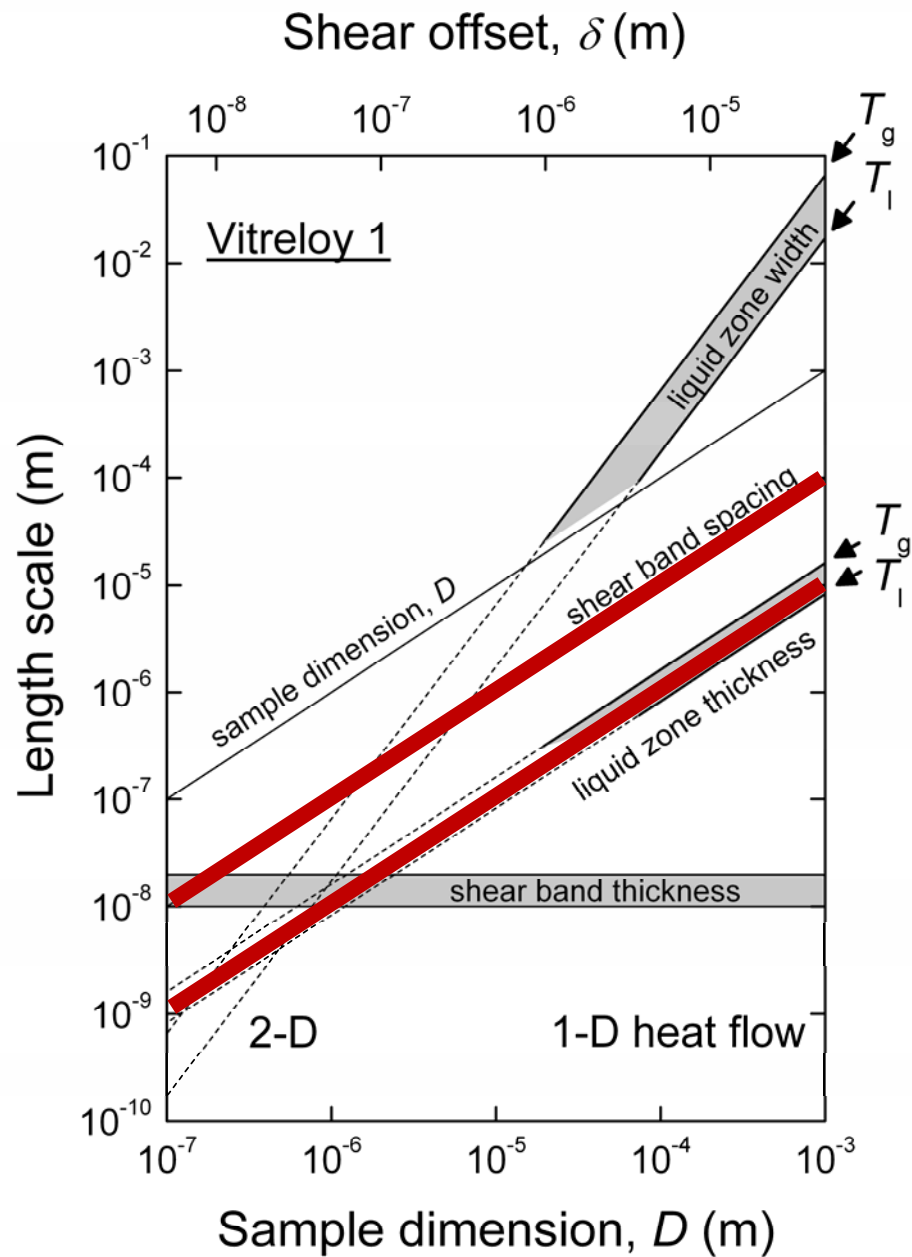


— *still controversial!*

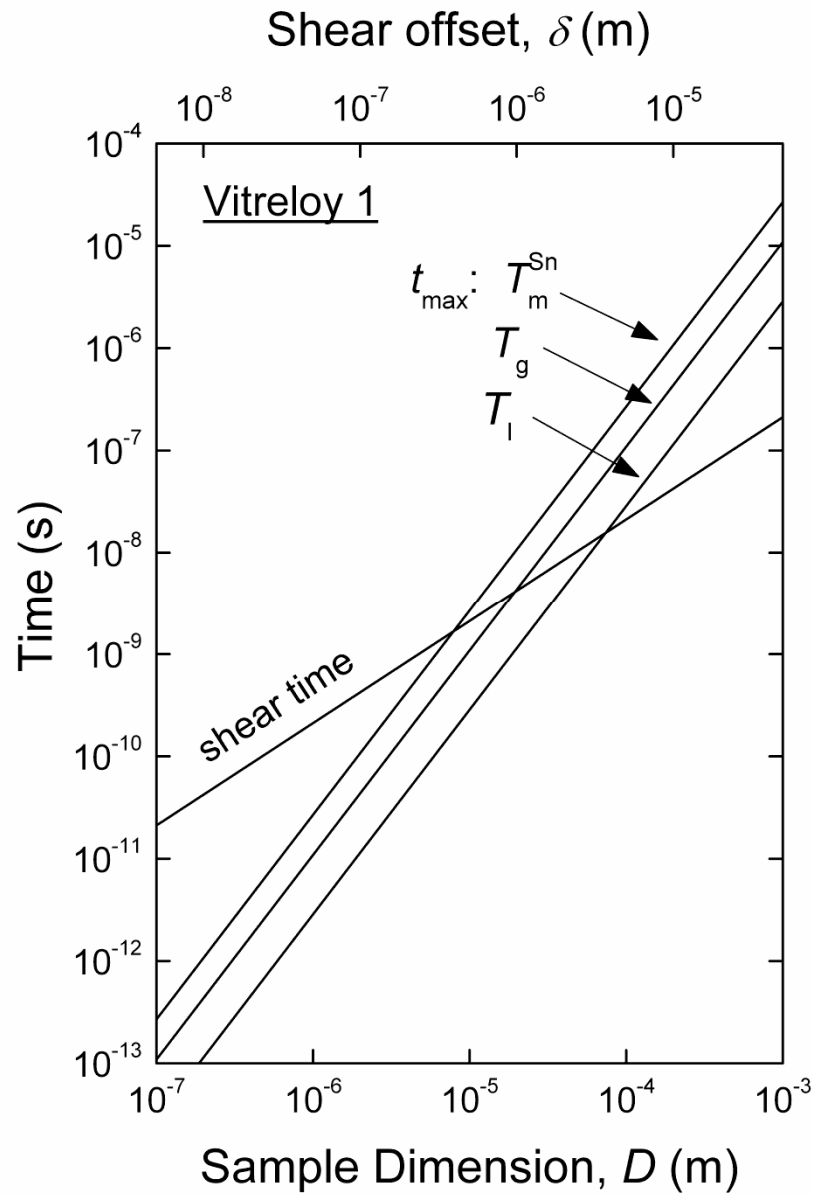
CA Volkert, A Donohoe & F Spaepen:
“Effect of sample size on deformation in amorphous metals”
J. Appl. Phys. **103** (2008) 083539.



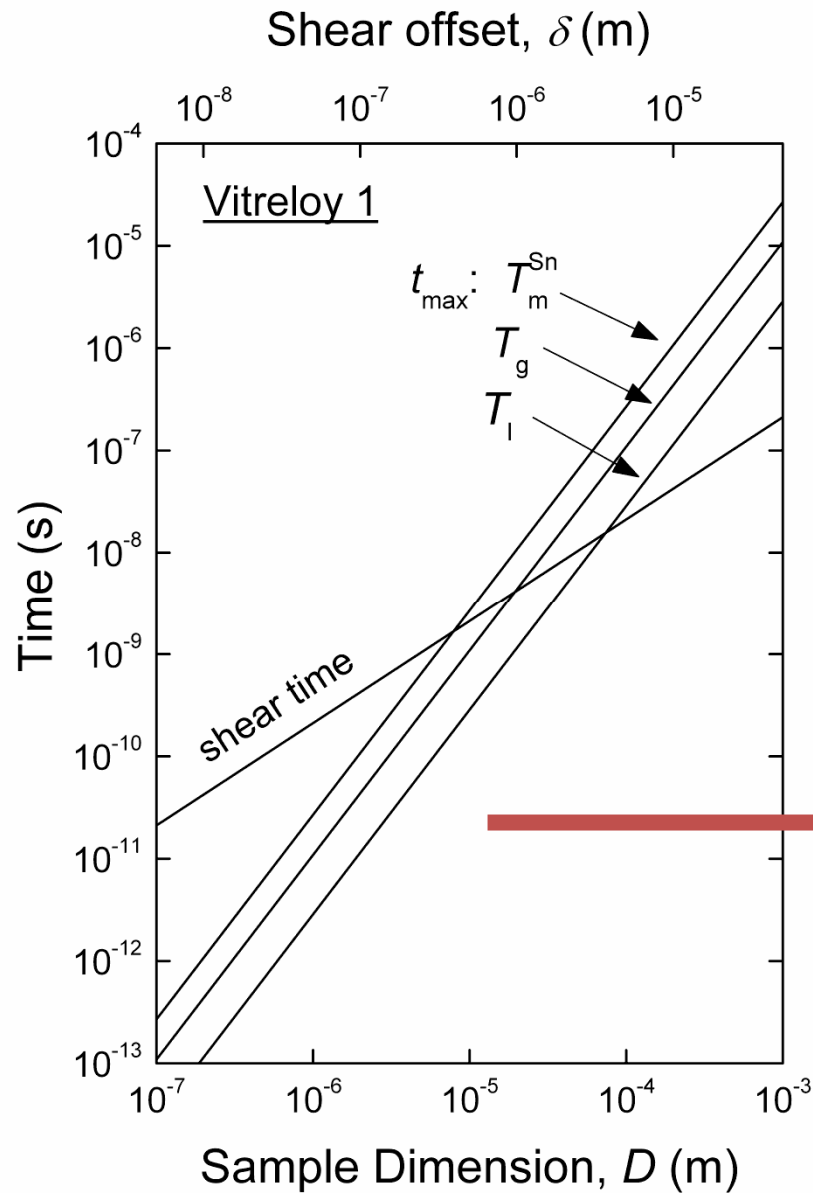
DB Miracle, A Concustell, Y Zhang, AR Yavari & AL Greer:
Thermal profiles around shear bands in metallic glasses



DB Miracle, A Concustell, Y Zhang, AR Yavari & AL Greer:
Thermal profiles around shear bands in metallic glasses

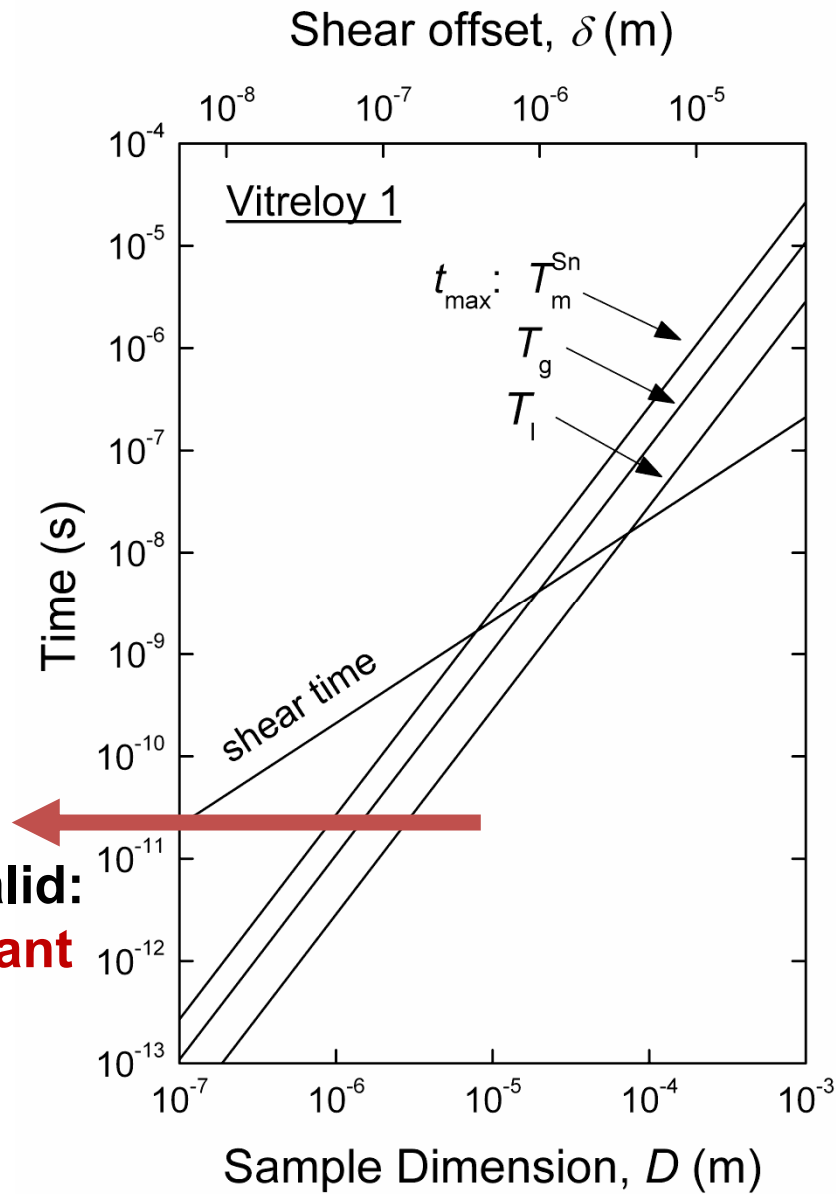


DB Miracle, A Concustell, Y Zhang, AR Yavari & AL Greer:
Thermal profiles around shear bands in metallic glasses



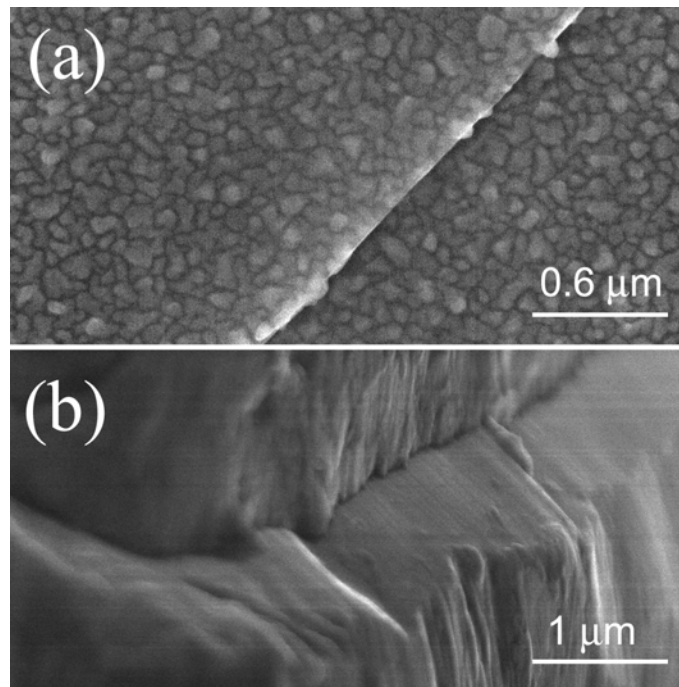
**1D heat-flow
calculation is valid**

DB Miracle, A Concustell, Y Zhang, AR Yavari & AL Greer:
Thermal profiles around shear bands in metallic glasses



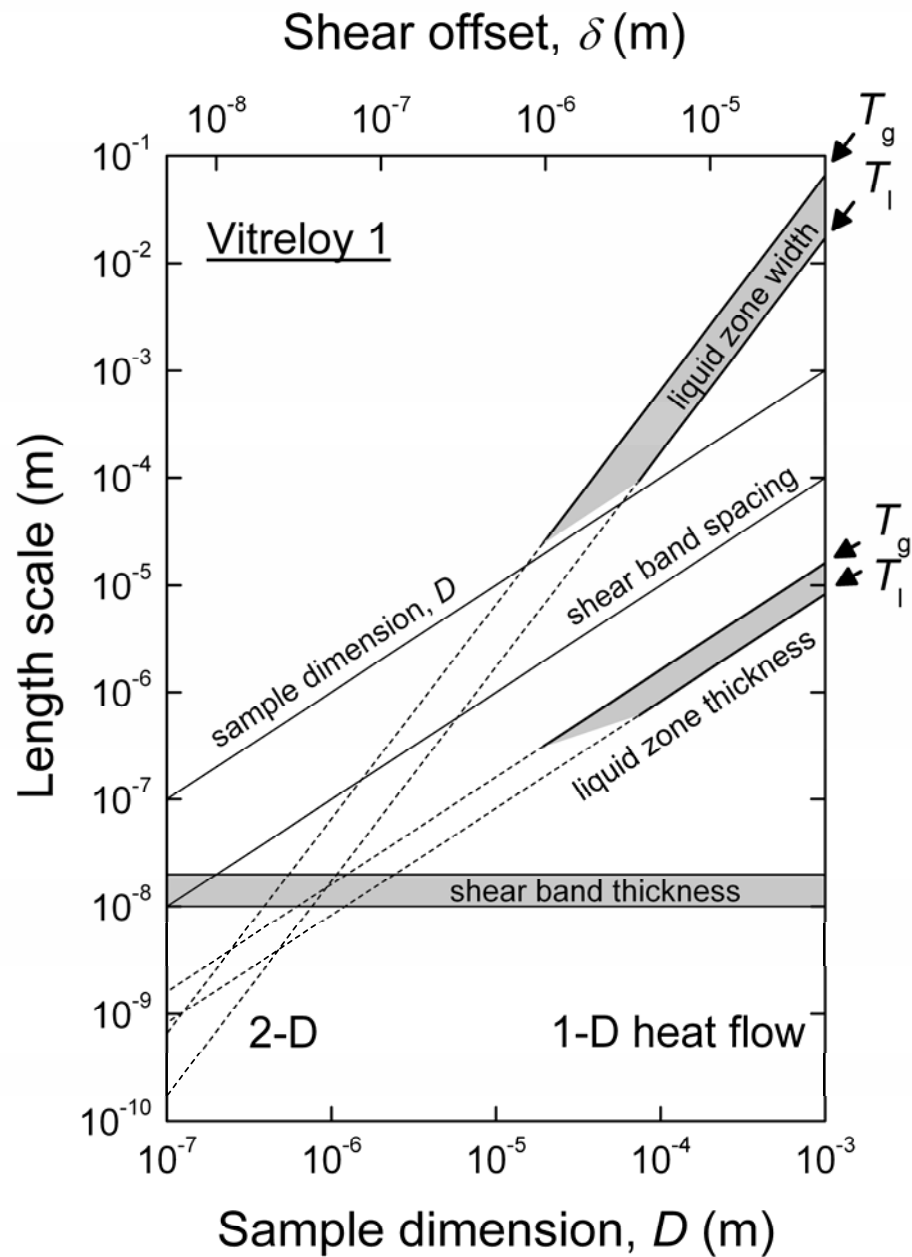
calculation not valid:
heating insignificant

DB Miracle, A Concustell, Y Zhang, AR Yavari & AL Greer:
 Thermal profiles around shear bands in metallic glasses

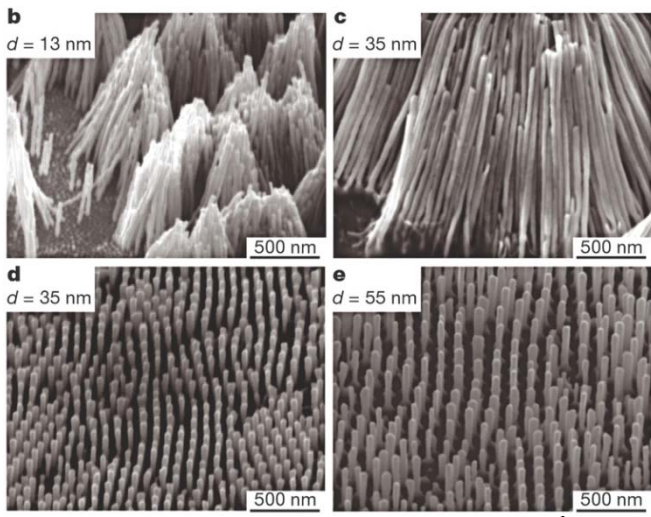


Zr₆₅Cu₁₅Ni₁₀Al₁₀ metallic glass deformed by 4-point bending
— a small shear offset of <1 μm shows no evidence of heating
or liquid-like flow.

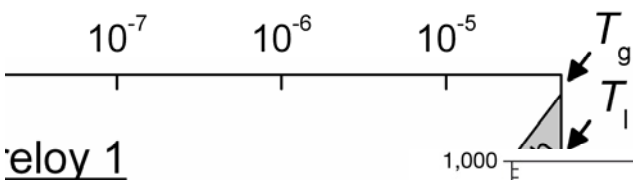
DB Miracle, A Concustell, Y Zhang, AR Yavari & AL Greer:
Thermal profiles around shear bands in metallic glasses



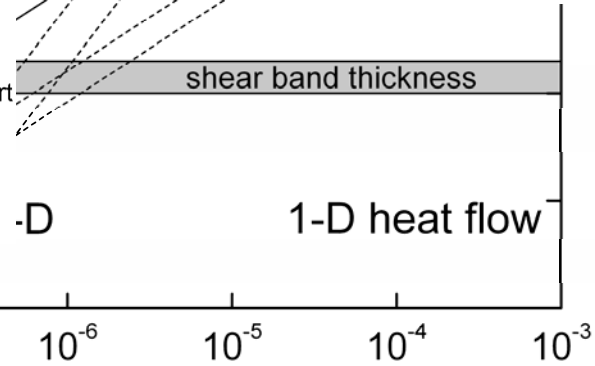
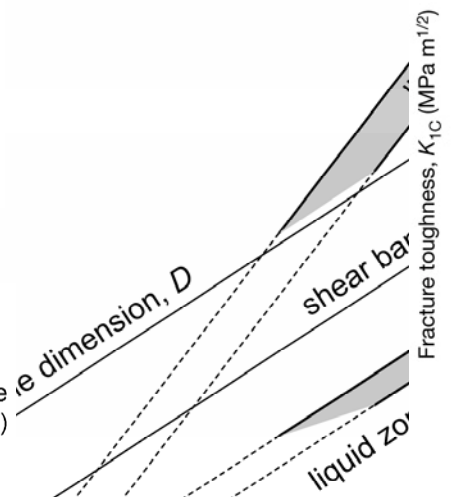
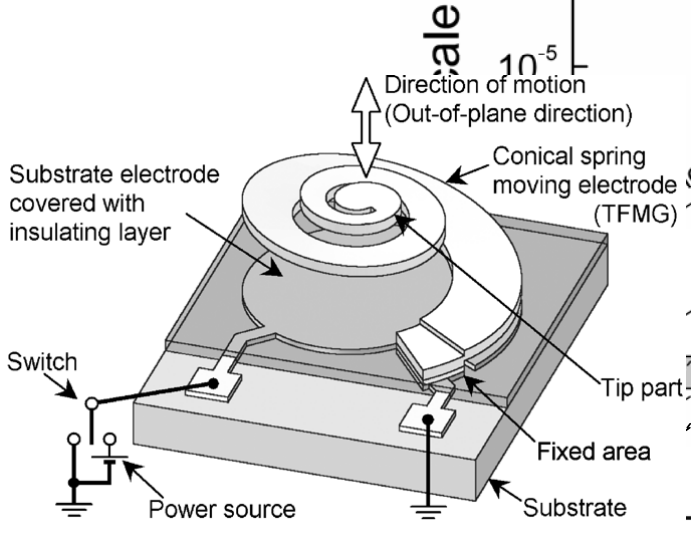
DB Miracle, A Concustell, Y Zhang, AR Yavari & AL Greer:
Thermal profiles around shear bands in metallic glasses



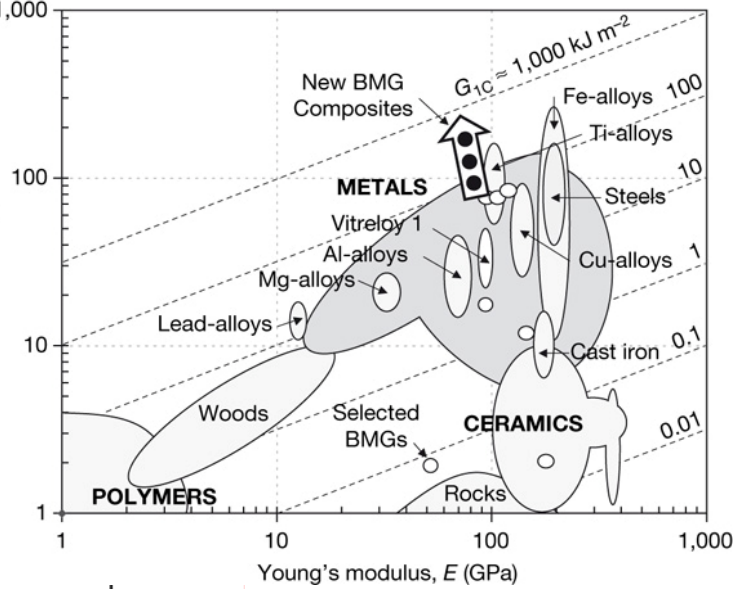
Shear offset, δ (m)



Vitreloy 1

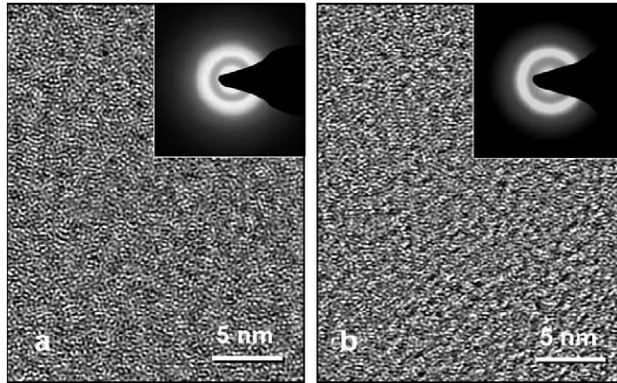


Sample dimension, D (m)



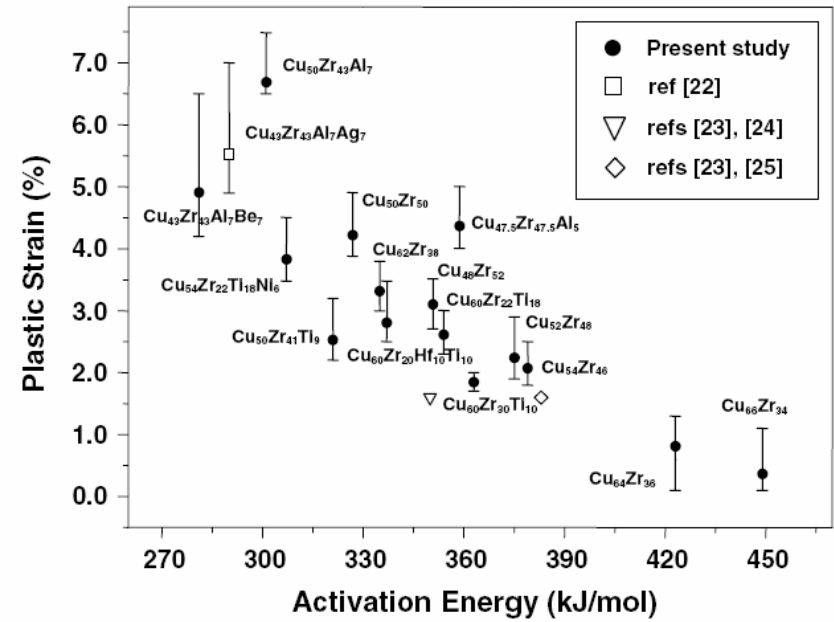
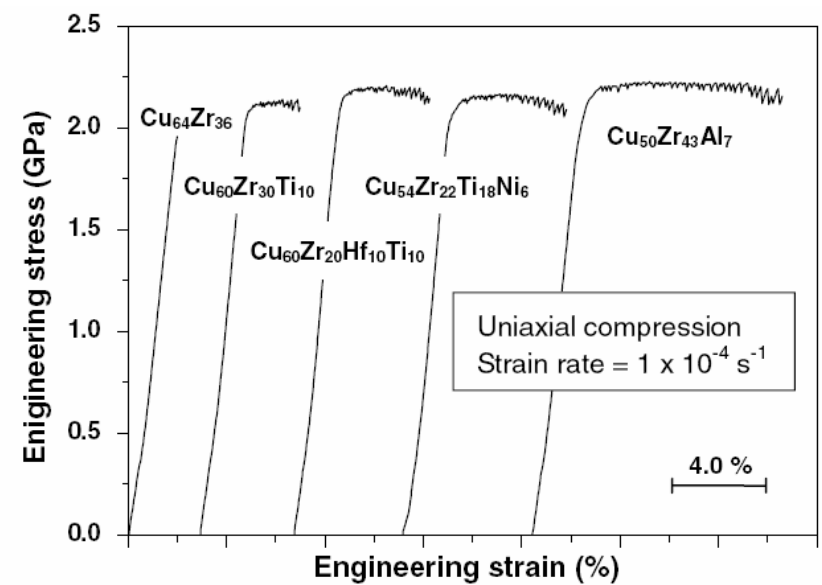
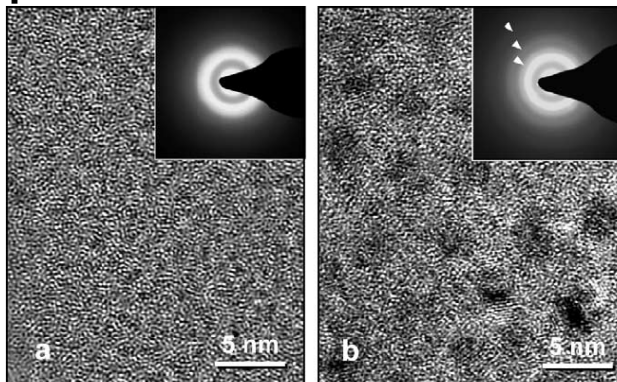
DB Miracle, A Concustell, Y Zhang, AR Yavari & AL Greer: Thermal profiles around shear bands in metallic glasses

Uniaxial compression



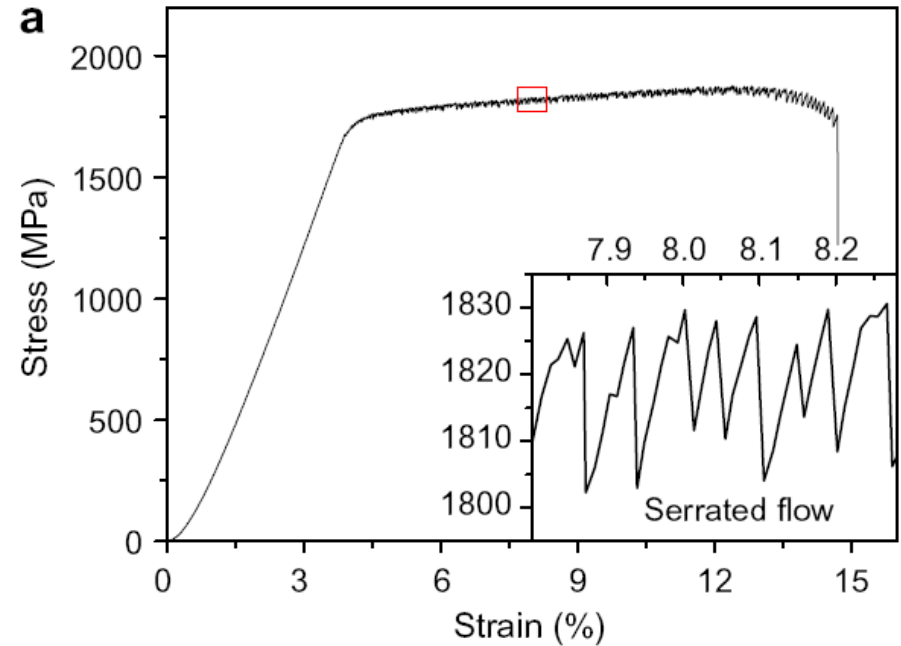
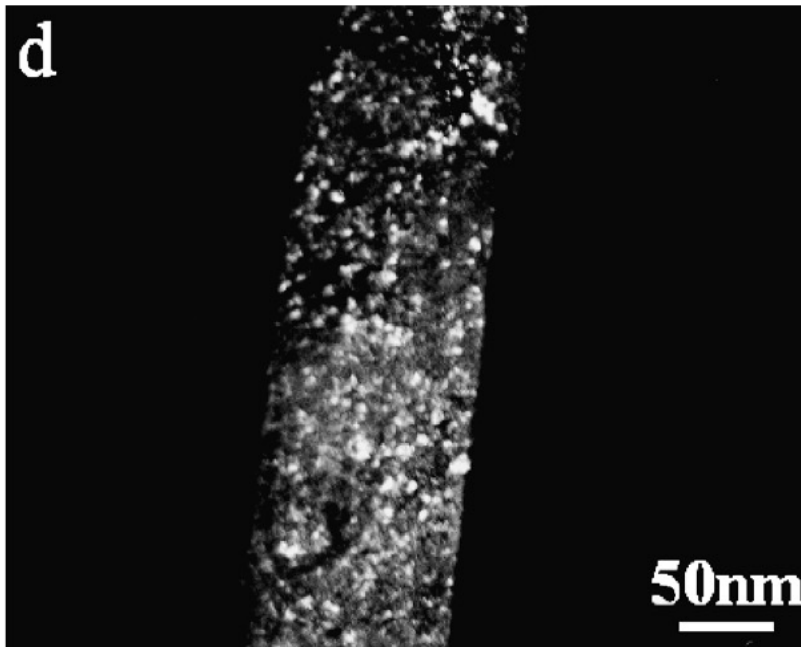
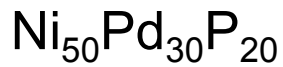
brittle

plastic



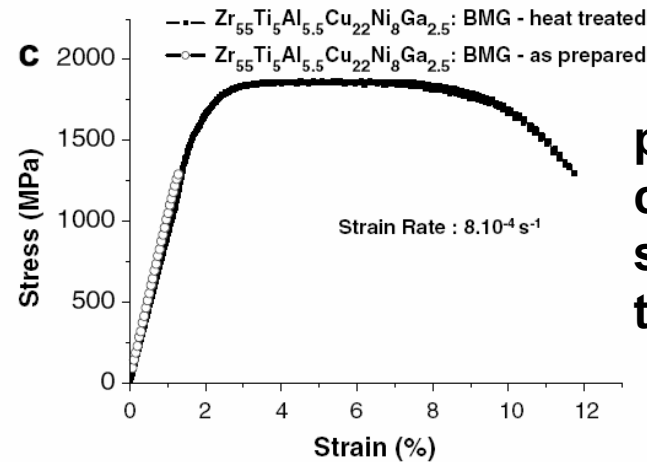
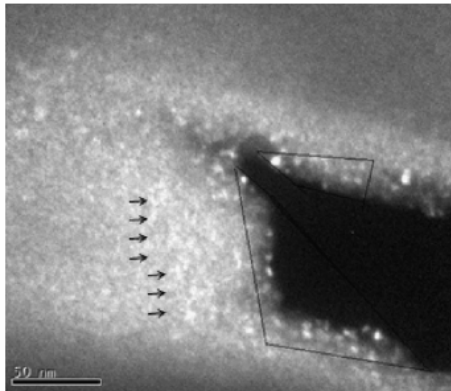
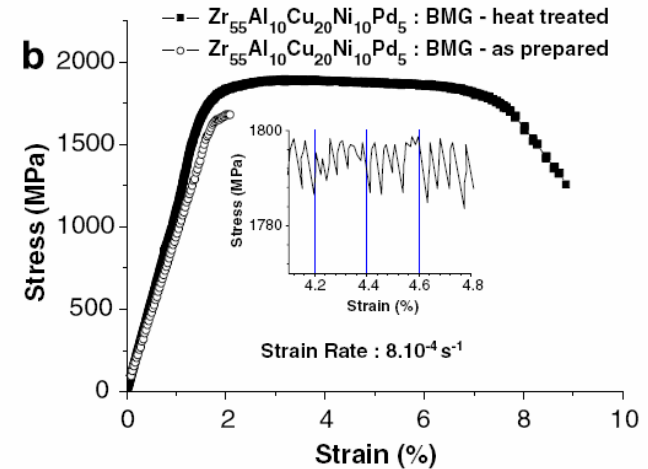
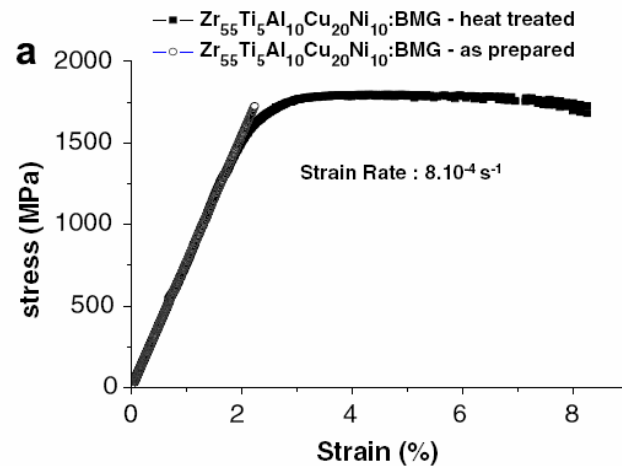
S.W. Lee, M.Y. Huh, E. Fleury & J.C. Lee, Crystallization-induced plasticity of Cu-Zr containing bulk amorphous alloys, *Acta Mater.* **54** (2006) 349.

Nanocrystallization in shear bands is a way of arresting shear bands — a possible origin of serrated flow



K. Wang, T. Fujita, Y.Q. Zeng, N. Nishiyama, A. Inoue and M.W. Chen, Micromechanisms of serrated flow in a $\text{Ni}_{50}\text{Pd}_{30}\text{P}_{20}$ bulk metallic glass with a large compression plasticity, *Acta Mater.* **56** (2008) 2834.

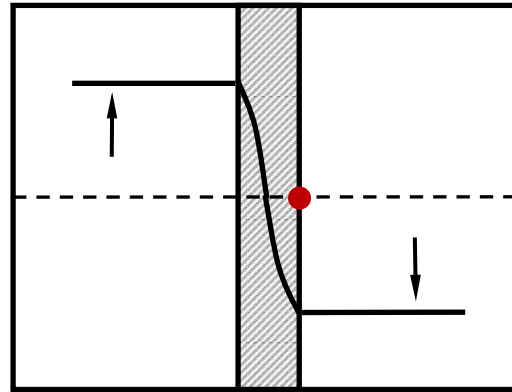
Nanocrystallization during shear may improve plasticity —



**pre-nucleation of
crystals facilitates
subsequent
transformation**

K. Hajlaoui, A.R. Yavari, A. LeMoulec, W.J. Botta, G. Vaughan, J. Das, A.L. Greer & Å. Kvick, Plasticity induced by nanoparticle dispersions in bulk metallic glasses, *J. Non-Cryst. Solids* **353** (2007) 327.

Quench rate associated with shear bands?



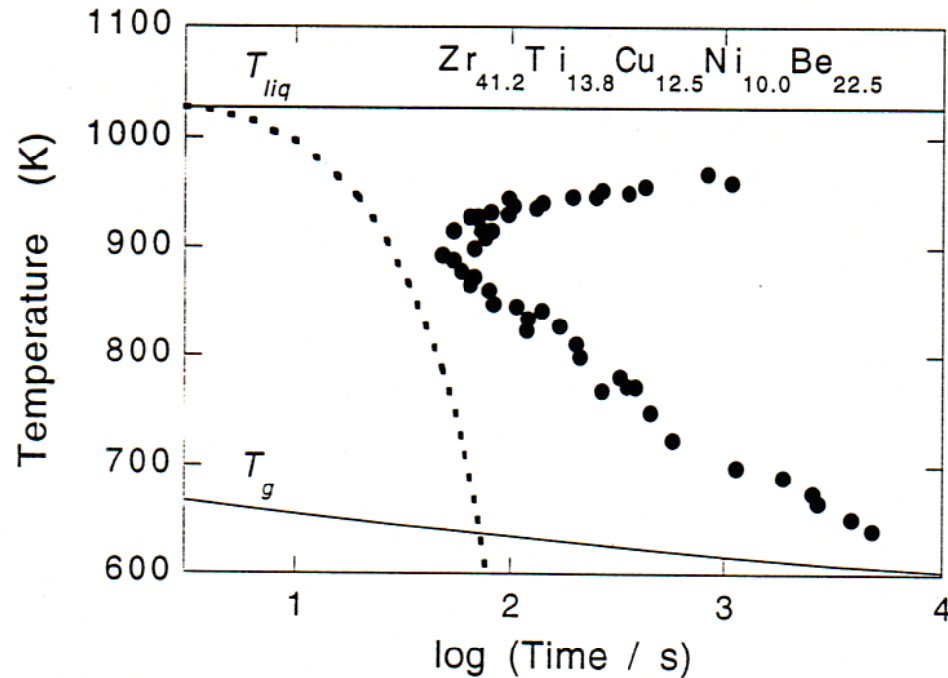
For a typical shear band in Vitreloy 1:

10 nm from centre plane

at T_g (= **613 K**) (occurs at ~ 190 ns)

→ the cooling rate is **$\sim 10^9 \text{ K s}^{-1}$**

Bulk metallic glasses

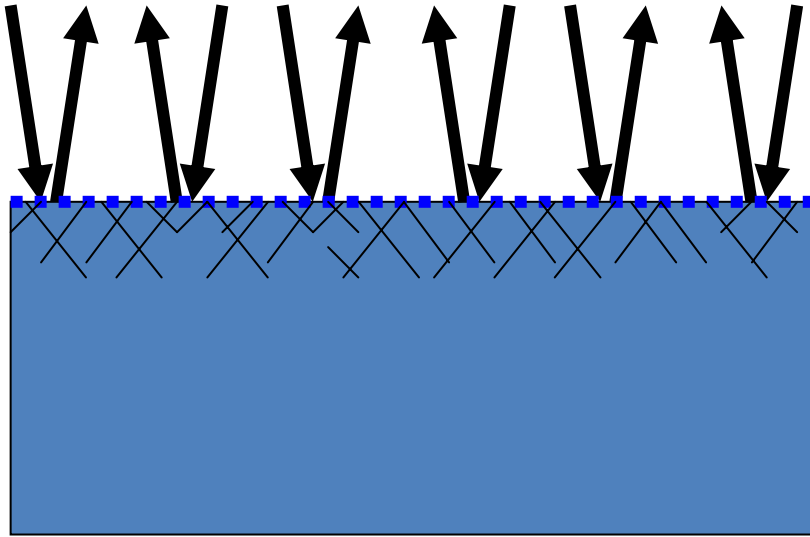


- **multicomponent** compositions aid glass formation
- the critical cooling rate is much lower ($\sim 1 \text{ K s}^{-1}$)
- glasses can be **formed in bulk**

Changes in glass structure induced by deformation

- changes in metallic glasses are difficult to detect because only a limited volume fraction is plastically deformed
- shot-peening is particularly attractive:
 - high strain, high volume fraction deformed
 - relatively low contamination
- shot-peening can induce damage or relaxation
- shot-peening can induce amorphization or crystallization

Effects of shot-peening on BMGs



- introduction of shear bands
- induce compressive residual stress in the surface
- gives improved mechanical properties
- plastic deformation also changes the glass structure

Phase changes induced by shot peening

Studies of $\text{Zr}_{55}\text{Al}_{10}\text{Cu}_{30}\text{Ni}_5$

2 mm thick plate, as-cast fully glassy

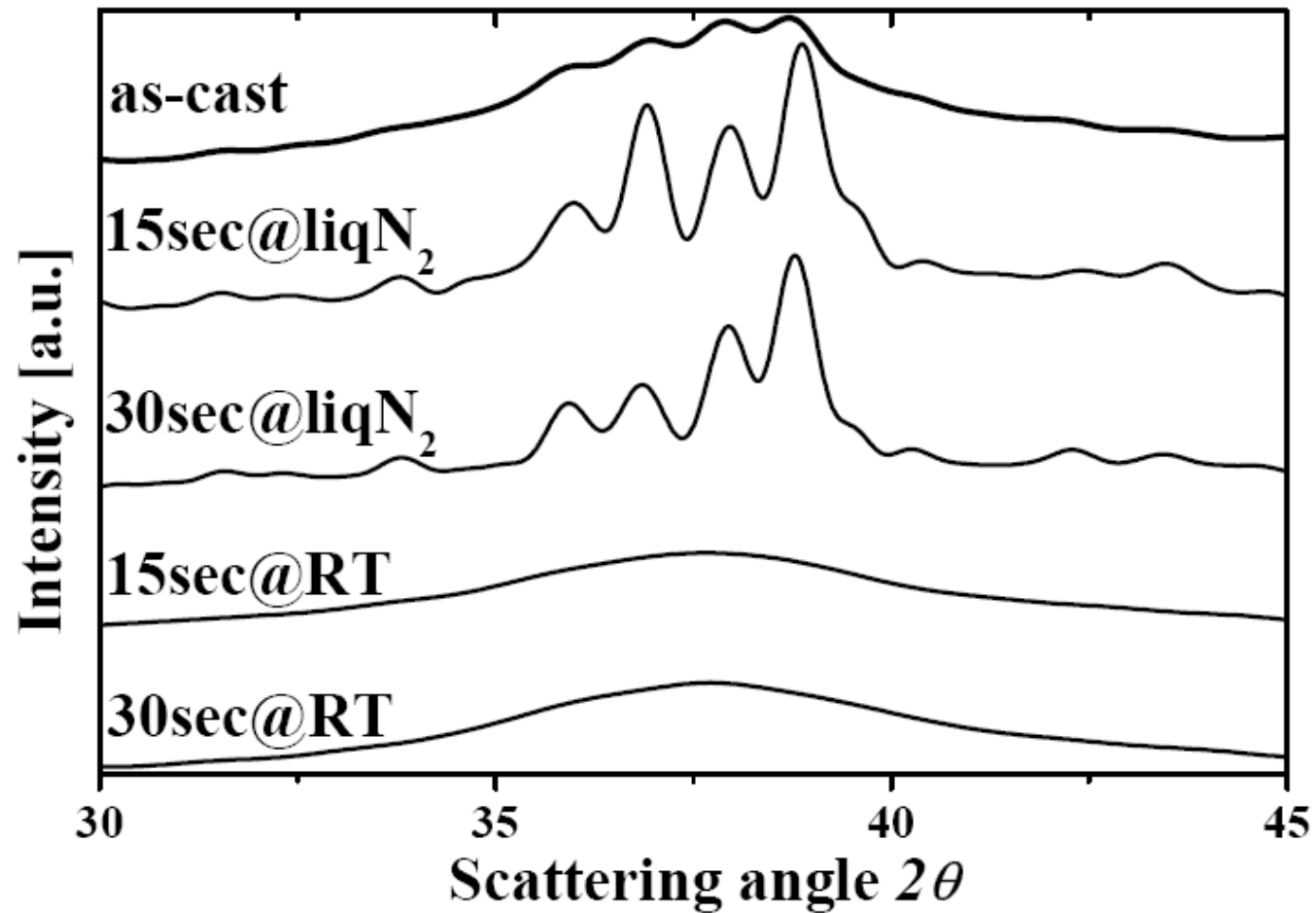
3 mm diam. rod, as-cast partially crystalline

shot-peened at

- room temperature
- liquid nitrogen temperature

— a system already studied by T. Yamamoto et al. [*J. Alloys Comp.* **430** (2007) 97]

F.O. Méar, B. Doisneau, A.R. Yavari & A.L. Greer, “Structural effects of shot-peening in bulk metallic glasses”, *J. Alloys Comp.* **483** (2009) 256–259.

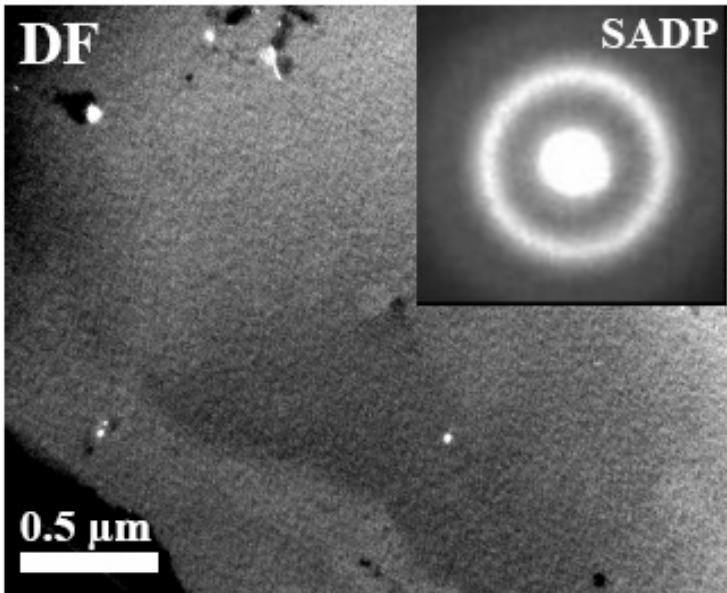
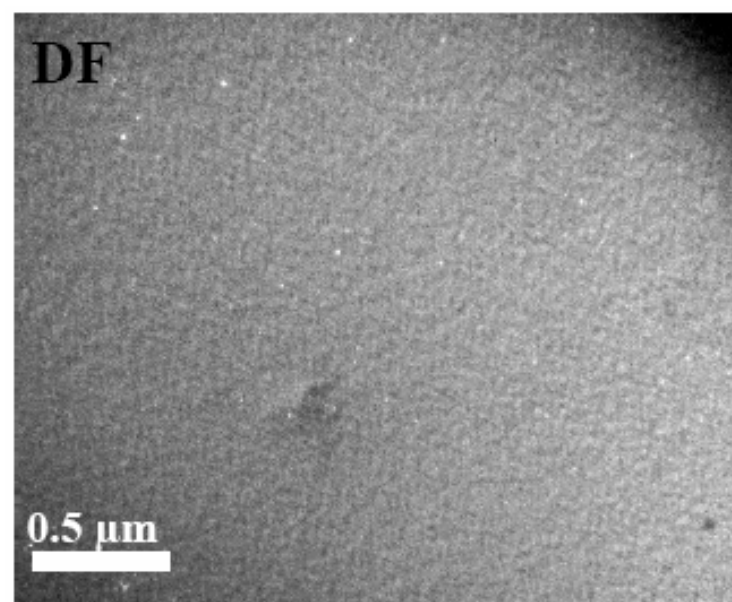
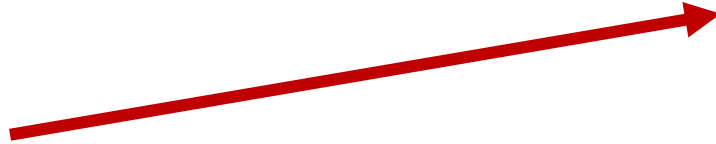


Partially crystalline as-cast samples —

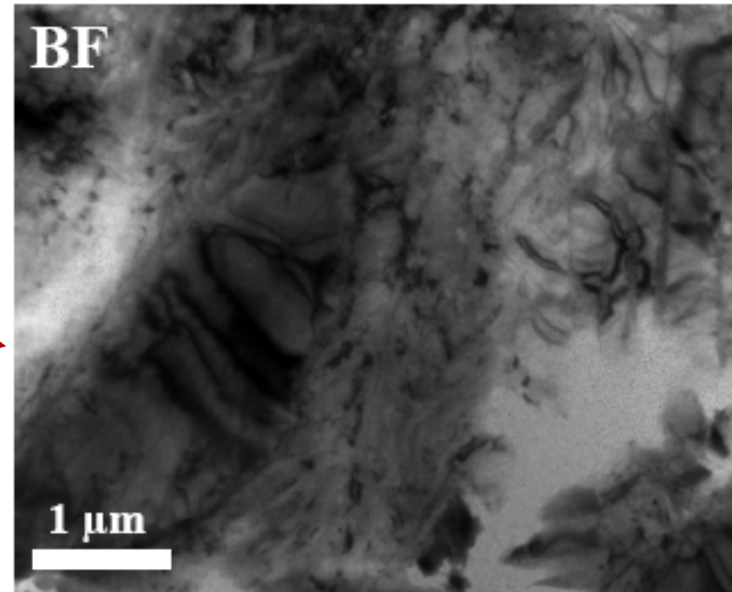
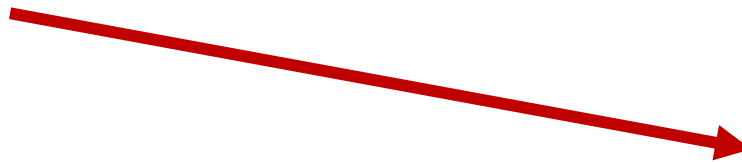
- **amorphized** by peening at **room temperature**
- **crystallized** by peening at **liq. nitrogen temperature**

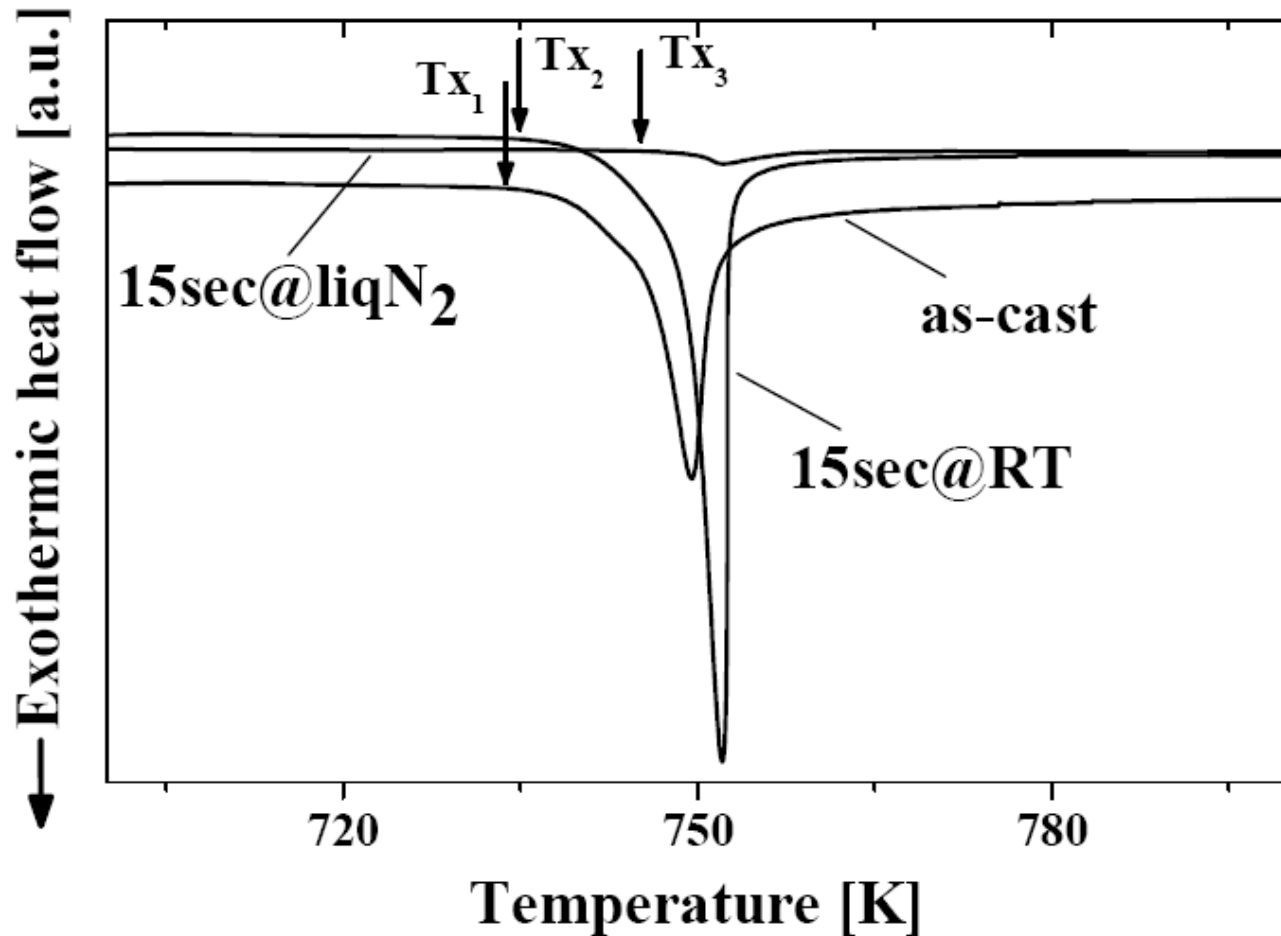
F.O. Méar, B. Doisneau, A.R. Yavari & A.L. Greer, “Structural effects of shot-peening in bulk metallic glasses”, *J. Alloys Comp.* **483** (2009) 256–259.

shot-peening at room temp.
→ AMORPHIZATION



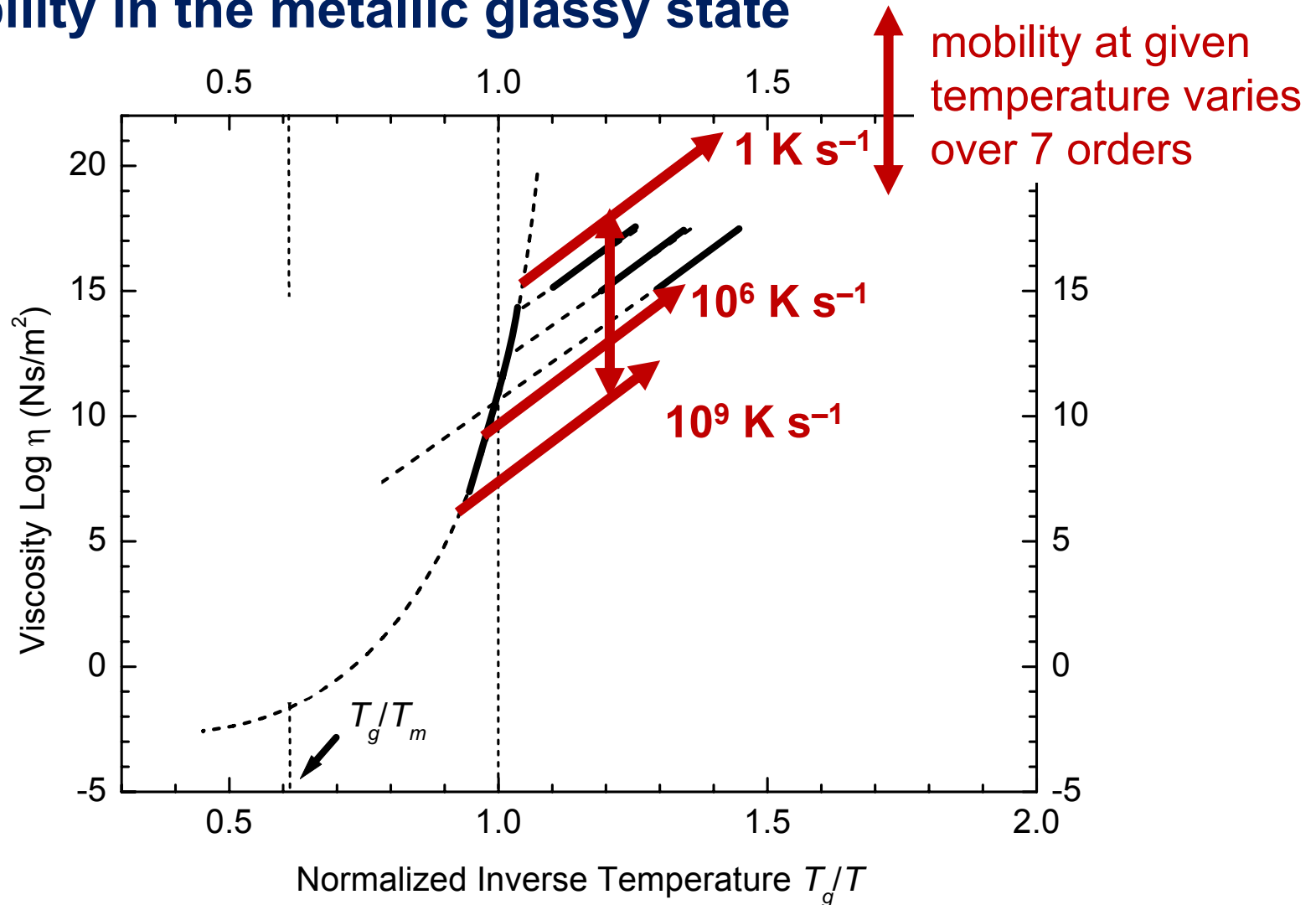
shot-peening at 77 K
→ CRYSTALLIZATION





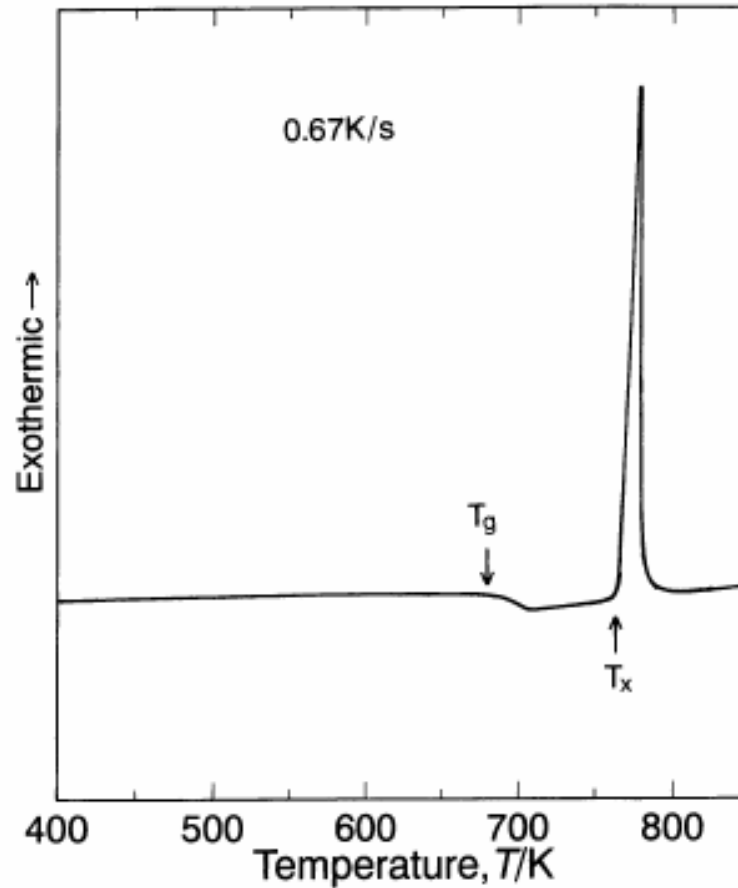
F.O. Méar, B. Doisneau, A.R. Yavari & A.L. Greer, "Structural effects of shot-peening in bulk metallic glasses", *J. Alloys Comp.* **483** (2009) 256–259.

Variability in the metallic glassy state



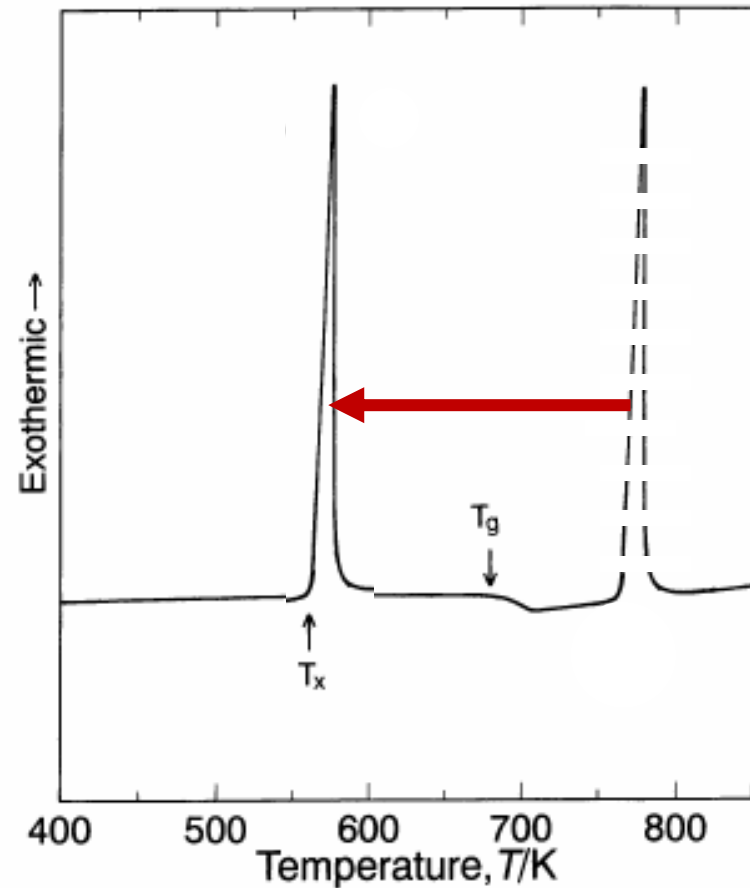
Data on Pd-Cu-Si and Pd-Si glasses from A.I. Taub & F. Spaepen, *Acta Metall.* **28** (1980) 1781. Isoconfigurational heating shown by C.A. Volkert & F. Spaepen, *Acta Metall.* **37** (1989) 1355.

DSC of $Zr_{55}Al_{10}Cu_{30}Ni_5$

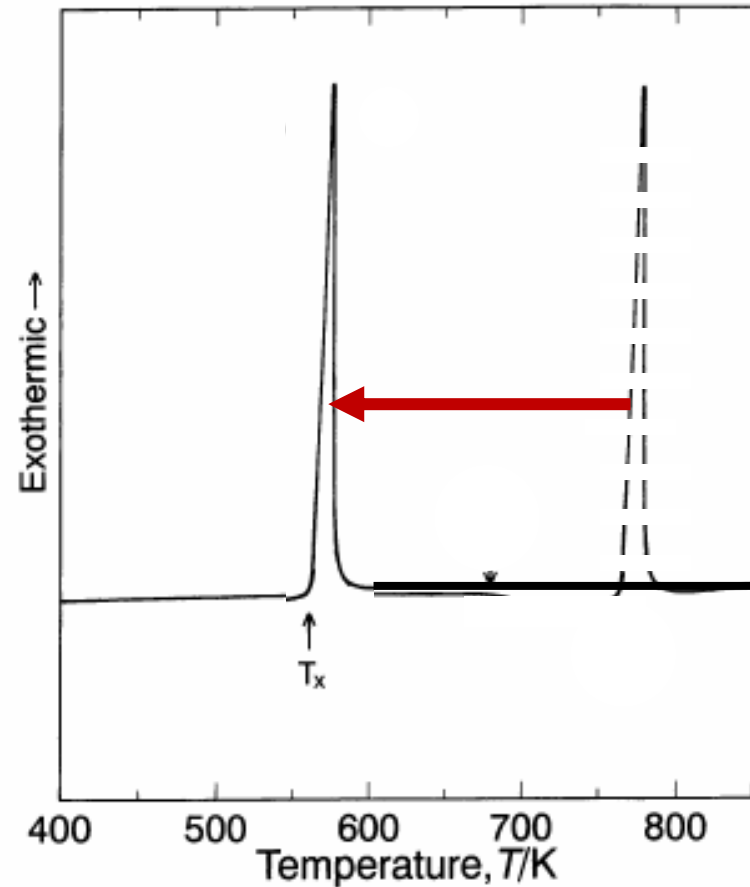


A. Inoue & T. Zhang, *Mater. Trans. JIM* **37** (1996) 185.

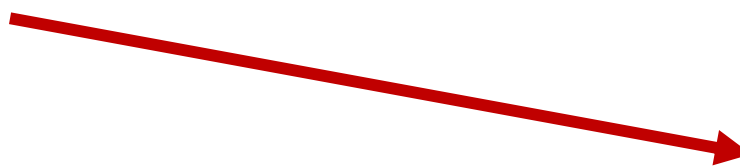
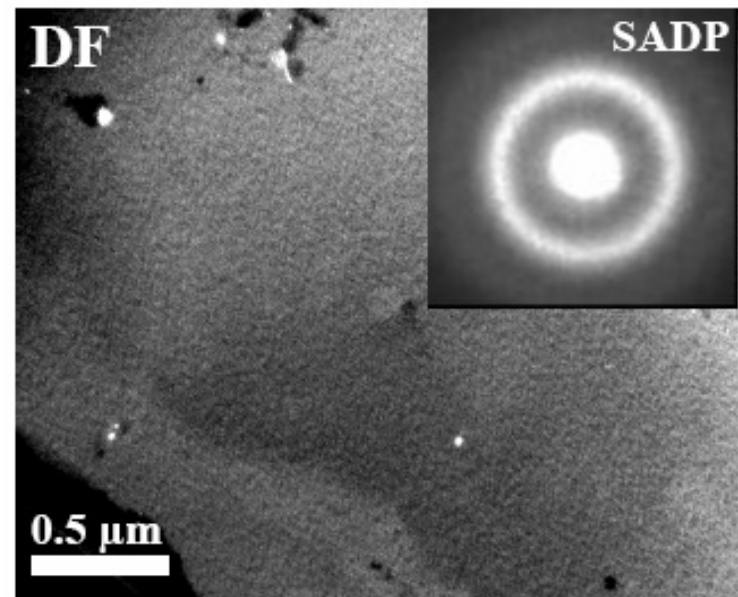
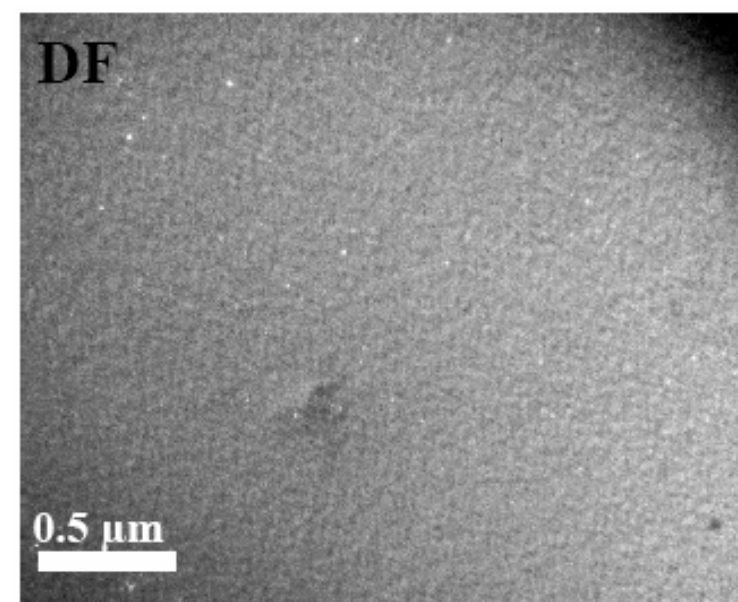
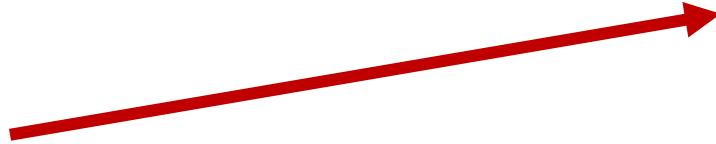
Applying a typical activation energy for crystallization, a change in mobility by a factor of 10^7 is equivalent to a temperature shift of **~200 K**



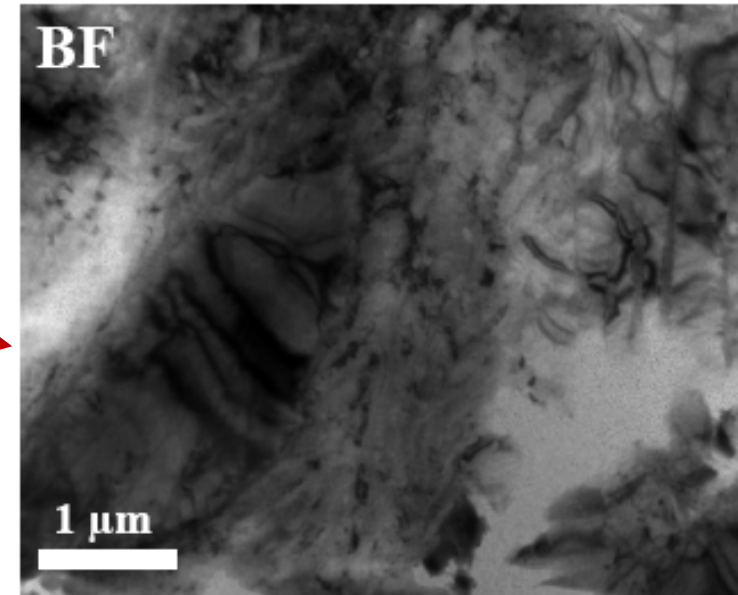
Applying a typical activation energy for crystallization, a change in mobility by a factor of 10^7 is equivalent to a temperature shift of **~200 K**



shot-peening at room temp.
→ AMORPHIZATION



shot-peening at 77 K
→ CRYSTALLIZATION



Thermal?

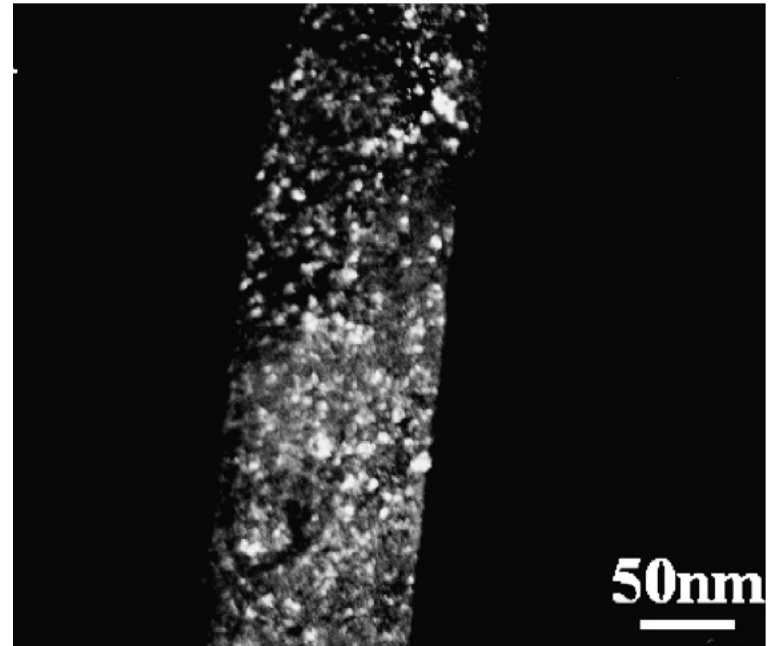
- crystallization often assumed to be thermal
- obvious heating at shear bands
- sometimes same crystals as on annealing or slow quenching
- high-temp. phases found
- observation of diffusion fields around crystals

Non-Thermal?

- often crystallization pathway is different from annealing
- crystallization at sub-ambient temperature
- different composition dependence of stability
- short thermal pulse ($\ll 1 \mu\text{s}$)
- melting on shear band: high cooling rate ($\sim 10^9 \text{ K s}^{-1}$)
- crystallization is found in, not near, shear bands

Mechanically induced crystallization

- metallic glasses show crystallization as for other glasses
- but metallic glasses can be mechanically deformed
- mechanically induced crystallization and other structural changes
- clear evidence for non-thermal effects
- evidence for crystallization well below T_g



Shear banding

— is a symptom of the **work-softening** that leads to near-zero ductility, and is the major mechanical-property impediment to wider application of metallic glasses.

Questions about shear bands:

- how thick are the shear bands?
- what is the work dissipated in shear?
- how fast is the shear?
- how large is the hot zone around a shear band?
- what is the state of the material in the bands during/after shear?
- how can shear-banding be controlled to optimize properties?