

## Why does dislocation climb makes thin films harder?

***Citation for published version (APA):***

Ayas, C., Deshpande, V. S., & Geers, M. G. D. (2010). *Why does dislocation climb makes thin films harder?*. Poster session presented at Mate Poster Award 2010 : 15th Annual Poster Contest, .

***Document status and date:***

Published: 01/01/2010

***Document Version:***

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of Record (includes final page, issue and volume numbers)

***Please check the document version of this publication:***

- A submitted manuscript is the version of the article upon submission and before peer-review. There can be important differences between the submitted version and the official published version of record. People interested in the research are advised to contact the author for the final version of the publication, or visit the DOI to the publisher's website.
- The final author version and the galley proof are versions of the publication after peer review.
- The final published version features the final layout of the paper including the volume, issue and page numbers.

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# Why does dislocation climb makes thin films harder?

C. Ayas, V. Deshpande, M.G.D. Geers



## 1. Introduction

Metallic thin films on the order of (sub)-micrometers are one of the main building blocks of various small electronic devices. Their reliability is intimately tied to the mechanical properties at this length scale. Discrete Dislocation Dynamics (DDD) framework in contrast to conventional continuum theories is an accurate modelling tool on the order of micrometers to study plastic deformation by way of individually taking dislocations into consideration. In this study we incorporate the dislocation climb mechanism to DDD framework and investigate climb assisted dislocation glide. This allows to study complex time-dependent processes in precipitation-hardened thin Al-Cu films.

## 2. Problem Description

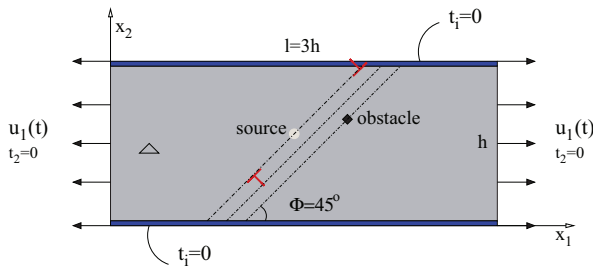


Figure 1: Schematic illustration of 2D plane strain problem. Single crystal is stretched in uniaxial tension.

Passivation layers are present at the top and bottom, where friction stress  $\tau_f$  is counteracting on the resolved shear stress  $\tau^\phi$  which drives dislocation motion. Dislocation  $l$  gets stuck at the interface until  $\tau^{(l)} \geq \tau_f$ .

## 3. Stress vs. Strain Response

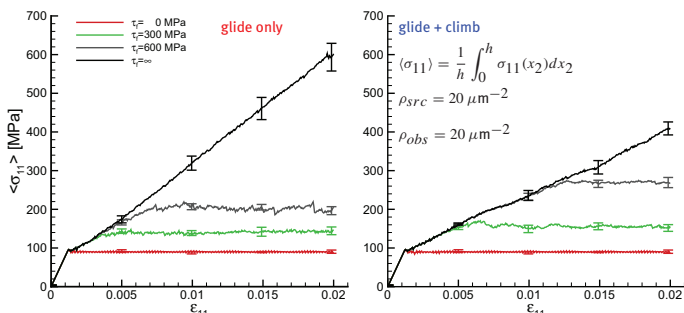


Figure 2 : Stress strain curves for  $h = 0.5 \mu m$ .

## 4. Dislocation Structure & Stress

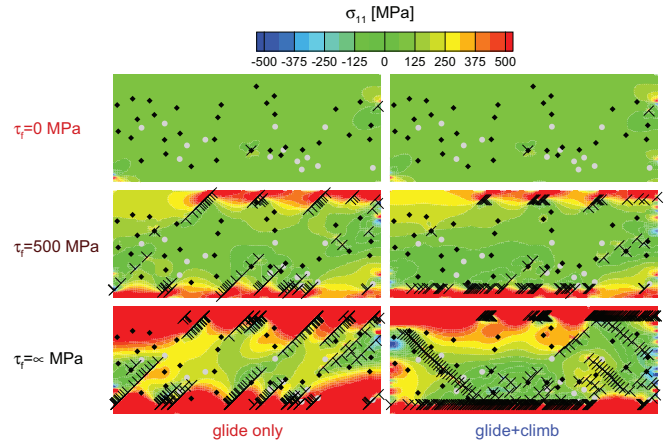
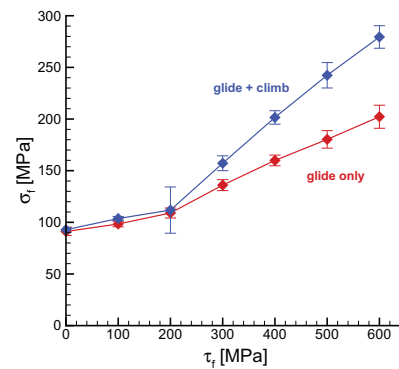


Figure 2:  $\sigma_{11}$  distribution across the film and superimposed dislocation structure.

- In climb assisted glide dislocations do not form pile-ups at hard boundaries but instead spread out of their original slip plane. Dislocation walls are formed.
- When climb mechanism is present at a finite  $\tau_f$ , few dislocations can exit from the surface due to lower local stress at the interface.



## 5. Conclusion

For self passivated thin films (e.g. Al-Cu), climb assisted glide gives a harder stress response, i.e. higher  $\sigma_f$  when compared to glide only cases. The effect of film thickness  $h$  on climb assisted glide is the focus of our ongoing research.