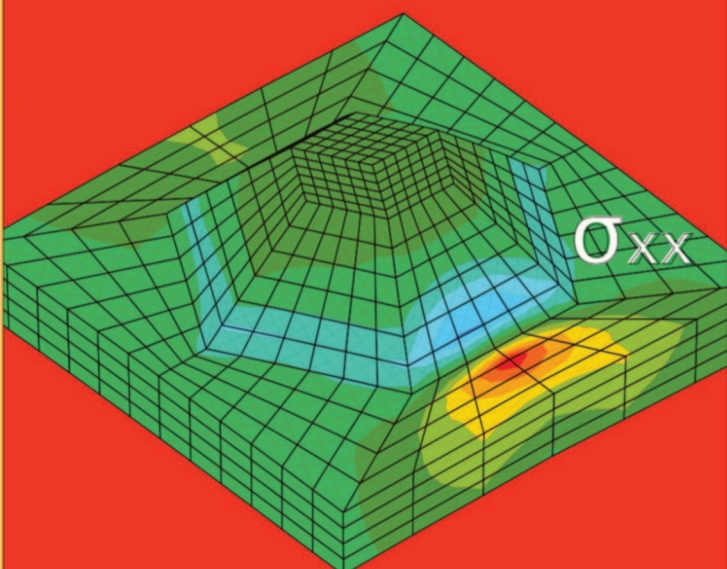
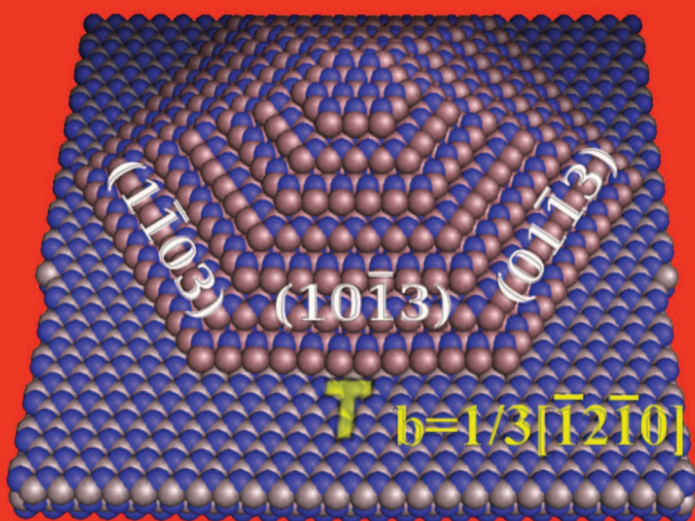


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(editors)*

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The Compressive Strength of Ceramic Open-Cell Foams with the Variability of Cell Sizes

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New aeronautic materials are obtained by liquid metal infiltration into a ceramic foam, called a preform. Ceramic preforms are produced by a new method of manufacturing of porous ceramics foams known as gelcasting. Porous ceramics fabricated by this method is characterized by a continuous network of spherical cells interconnected by circular windows. The open porosity due to the presence of windows creates good hydro-dynamical properties for liquid metals infiltration. For better understanding mechanical properties of such composites a numerical model of ceramic foam is needed, see e. g. ref. [1-4].

Geometry of ceramic foams can be generated in two steps. First, the coordinates of the center point of the spherical bubbles and its diameter are produced by PYTHON scripts. The diameters of spherical bubbles were estimated from microtomography and scanning electron microscopy images. On the other hand, the coordinates of the center points are determined in such a way that the bubbles have to intersect with each other. Finally, the intersecting bubbles are subtracted from the bulk block of any shape. Using this information, numerical foam model was proposed (Fig. 1) and good agreement between numerical model and real foam structure from microtomography was obtained.

In this work we present a numerical model of real foam of alumina with different cell sizes and discuss its mechanical properties using several examples. The numerical simulations of uniaxial compression test have been performed. The bottom surface of the sample was full constrained and the top surface of this sample was moved parallel to the z- axis. The force was resulted from the final step of displacement in simulation. As a result the compressive strength of the investigated foams with porosities changing from 60 to 95 % were determined.

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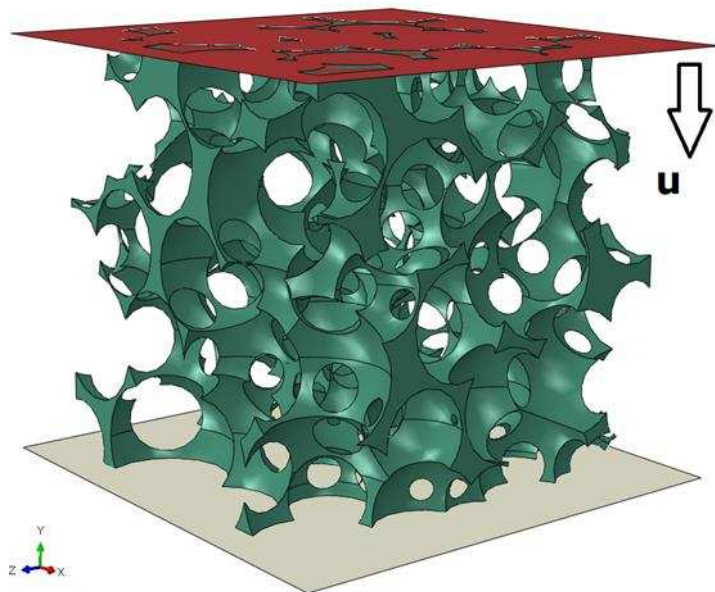


Fig.1. Example of numerical foam structure used in numerical simulations of the compression tests with 90 % porosity.