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In situ X-Ray Reflectivity measurements during Sputtering of Vanadium Carbide thin films

M.Kaufholz[1], B. Krause[1], S. Kotapati [1], M.Stüber[2], S.Ulrich[2] and T. Baumbach[1,3]

[1] **Institut für Synchrotronstrahlung**, Karlsruher Institut für Technologie (KIT), [2] **Institut für Angewandte Materialien - Angewandte Werkstoffphysik,** Karlsruher Institut für Technologie (KIT), [3] **ANKA**, Karlsruher Institut für Technologie (KIT)

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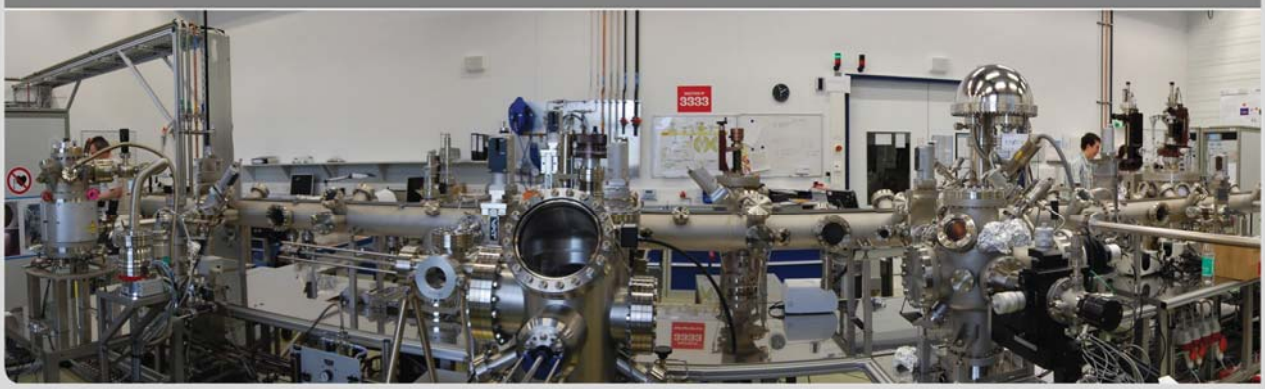

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- *In situ* X-Ray Reflectivity
- Three Examples:
  - *In situ* XRR @ T=125°C
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- Summary & Outlook

Motivation

Vanadium Carbide (VC_{1-x})

- Growth of thin films by Sputtering
- Hard coating material for tools

deposition conditions →microstructure formation

→ mechanical properties

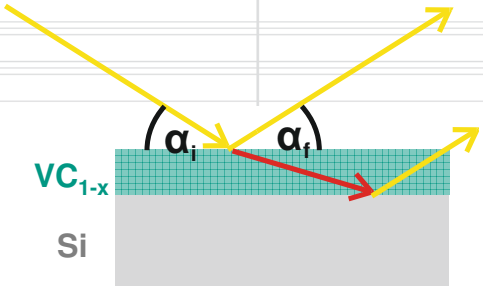
→ **Understand growth process depending on sputtering conditions**

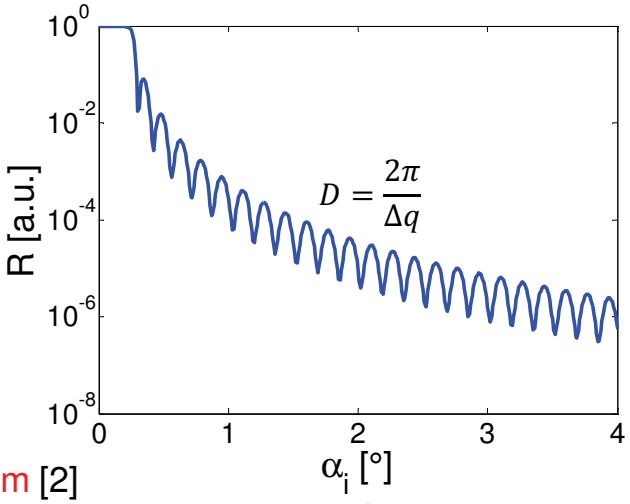
→ **Investigation needs suitable methods**

- **nondestructive** monitoring of growth process
- resolution in **sub-nanometer scale**
- compatibility with the **gas atmosphere**
- investigation of
  - **polycrystalline** material
  - **high deposition rates** (0.22 nm/s @ DC Power 200 W)

➡ ***In situ* X-Ray Reflectivity**

Basics of X-Ray Reflectivity





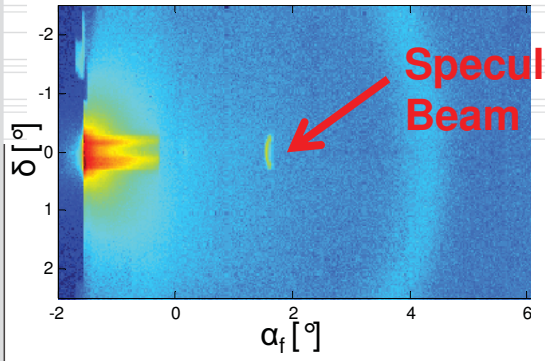
- Electron density (‘Critical Angle’)
- Thickness (‘Kiessig fringes’)
- Roughness (‘Slope’) [1]
- Description by Parratt-Algorithm [2]
  - Fully dynamical description of XRR

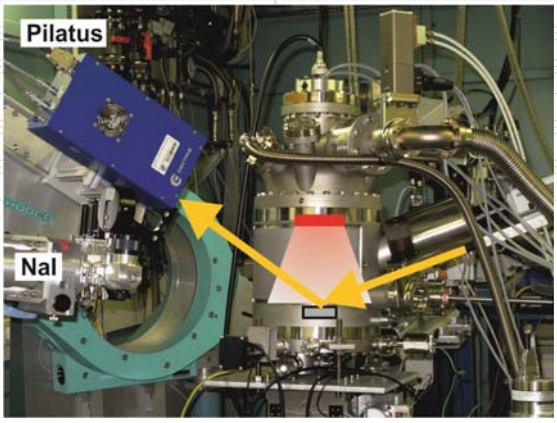
➡ **Two options** to measure *in situ* XRR

1. Full angular range XRR
2. XRR at a fixed angular position

[1] Pietsch, Holy, Baumbach, *High Resolution X-Ray Scattering from thin films and lateral Nanostructures*, Springer 2004
[4] Parratt, *Phys. Rev. 95*, **2**, p. 359-369,(1954)

Experimental Setup



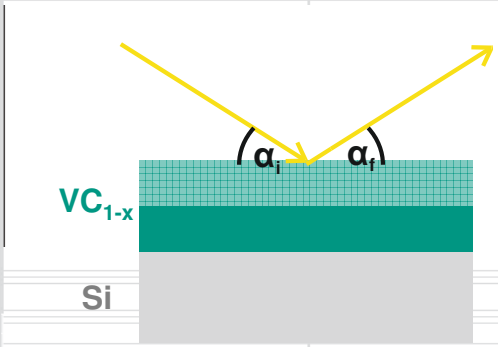


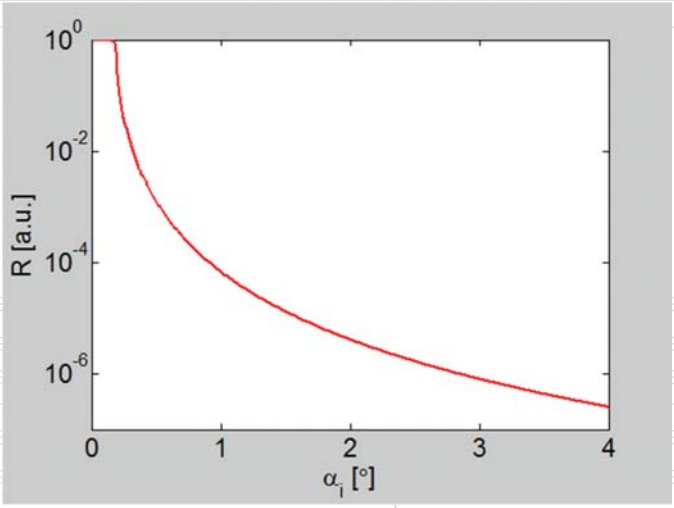
- **Setup @ MPI-Beamline:**
  - Energy: 10 keV
  - Beamsize: 300µm x 200µm
  - Optics
    - Resolution in q_z: ~ 0.005 $Å^{-1}$
  - Detector: Pilatus 1000K
    - Resolution in time: ~1.1-2.3 s
- **Sputter conditions** [1]:
  - Target: VC_{1-x}
  - Substrate: Si(100) with natural oxide
  - Target-substrate Distance: 10 cm
  - Argon Pressure: 2 x 10^{-3} mbar
  - Deposition rate 0.22 nm/s@ 200 W

[1] Krause et al., J. Synchrotron Rad. (2012),**19**, 216-222

In situ X-Ray Reflectivity: "full angular range"

- Measure **full angular** range



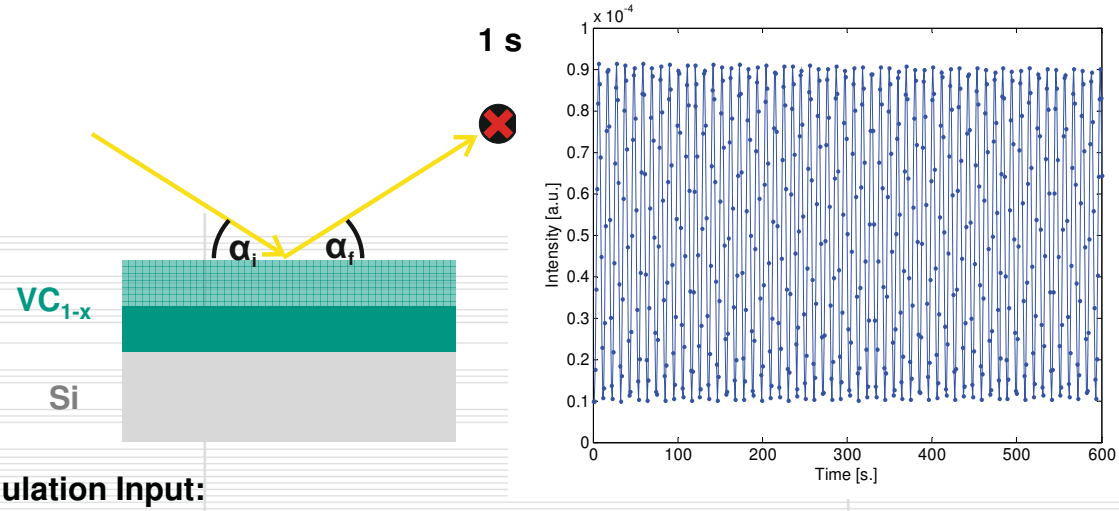


- High deposition rate of 0.22 nm @ 200 W → ~90nm deposition/XRR
- Possible electron density and roughness changes

→ Interpretation of XRR curve difficult

In situ X-Ray Reflectivity: "fixed angular position"

- Detector and sample are at a **fixed angular position** ($\alpha_i = 1.6°$)
- Measuring Pre- and Post-growth full angular range XRR



Simulation Input:
DC Power: 200 W → Deposition Rate: 0.217 nm/s
$\alpha_i = 1.6°$

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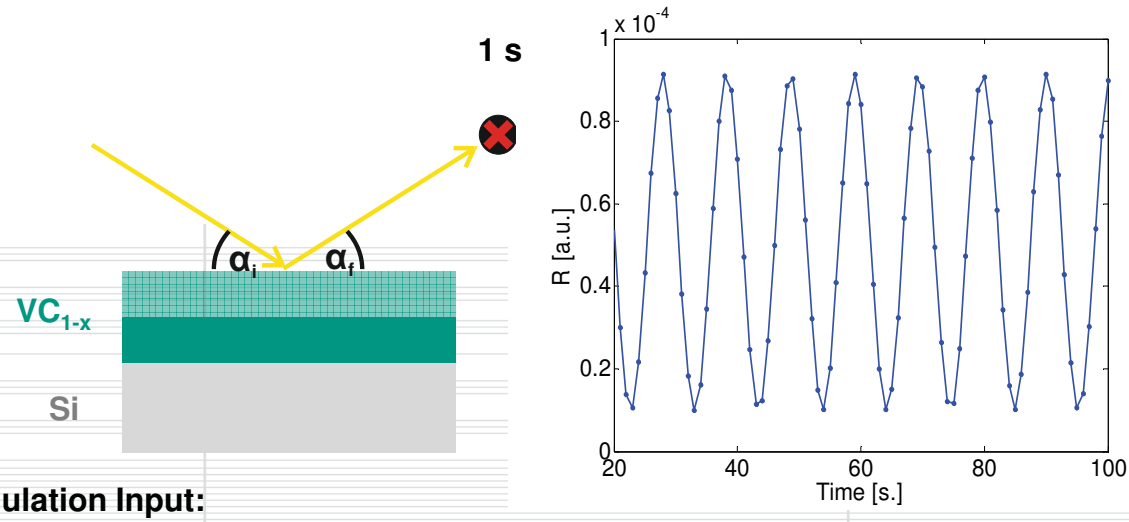

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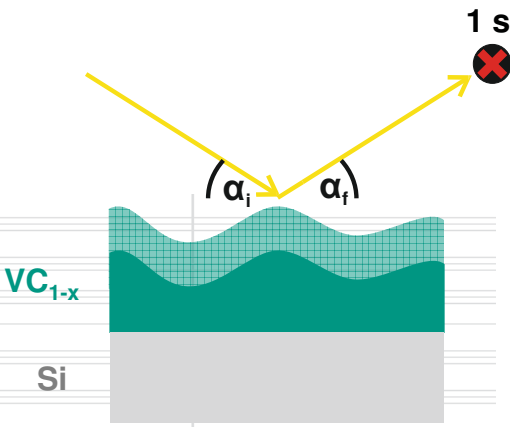

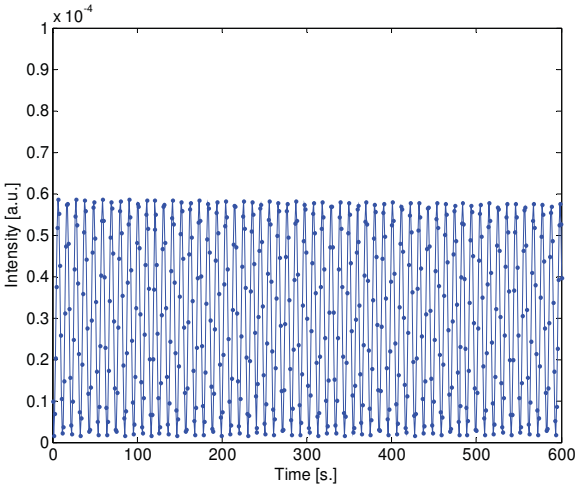

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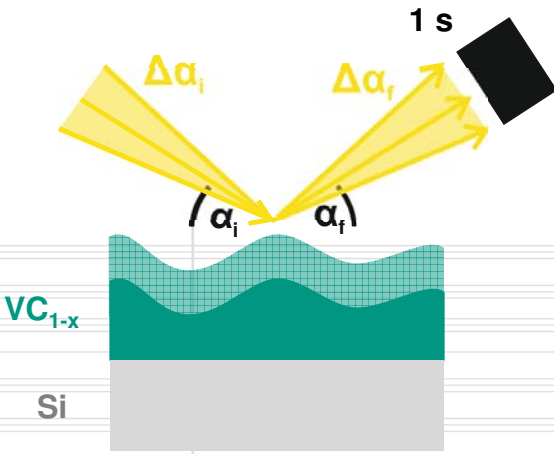

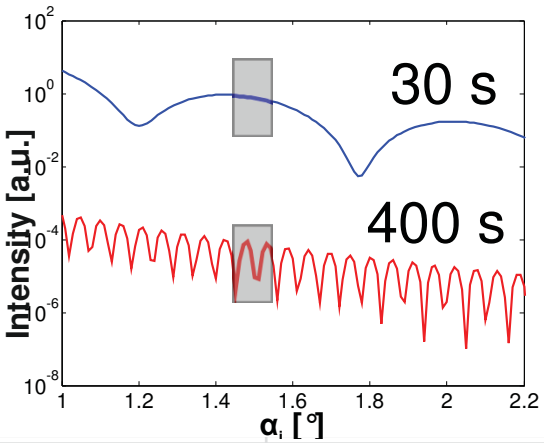

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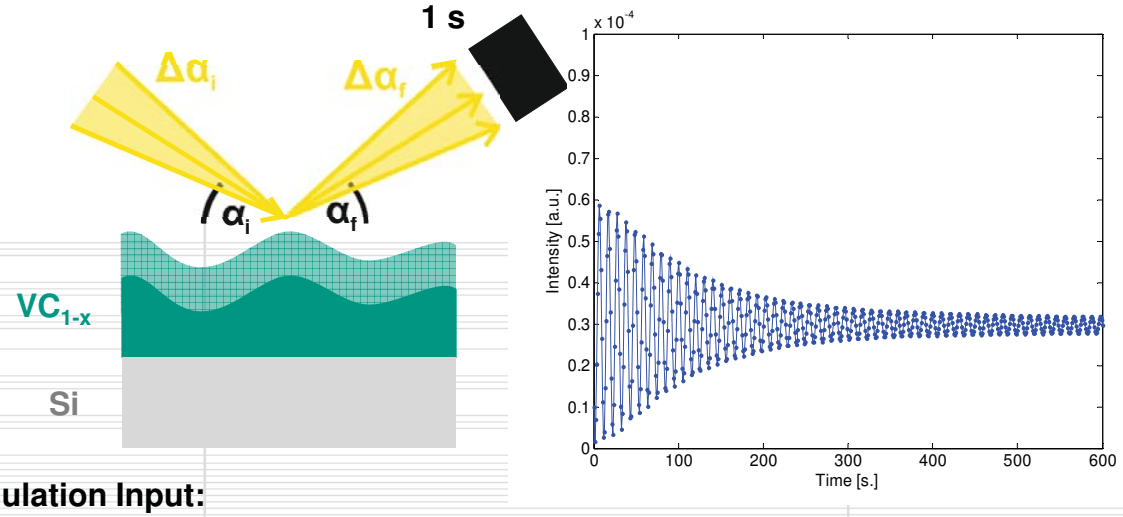

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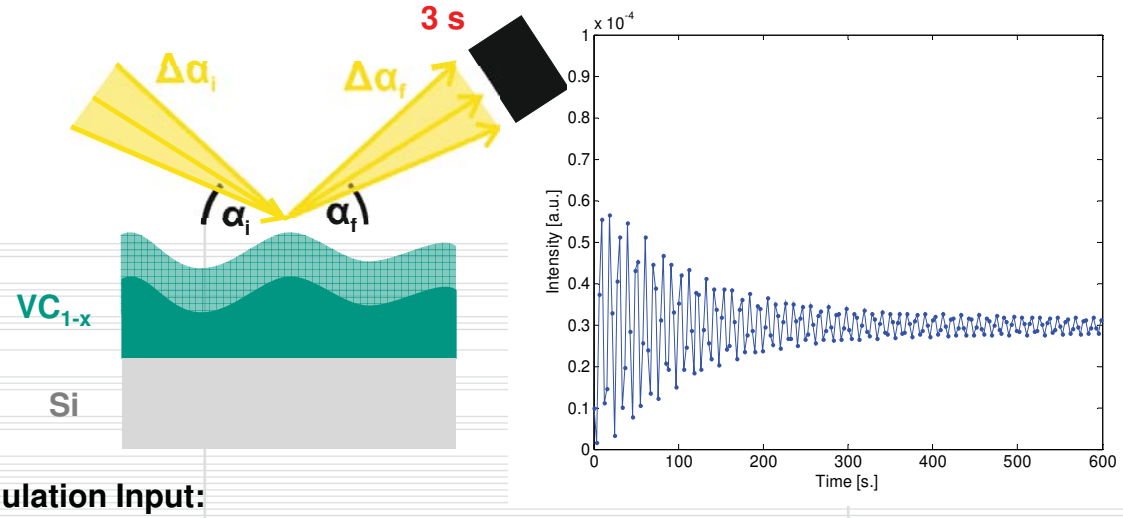
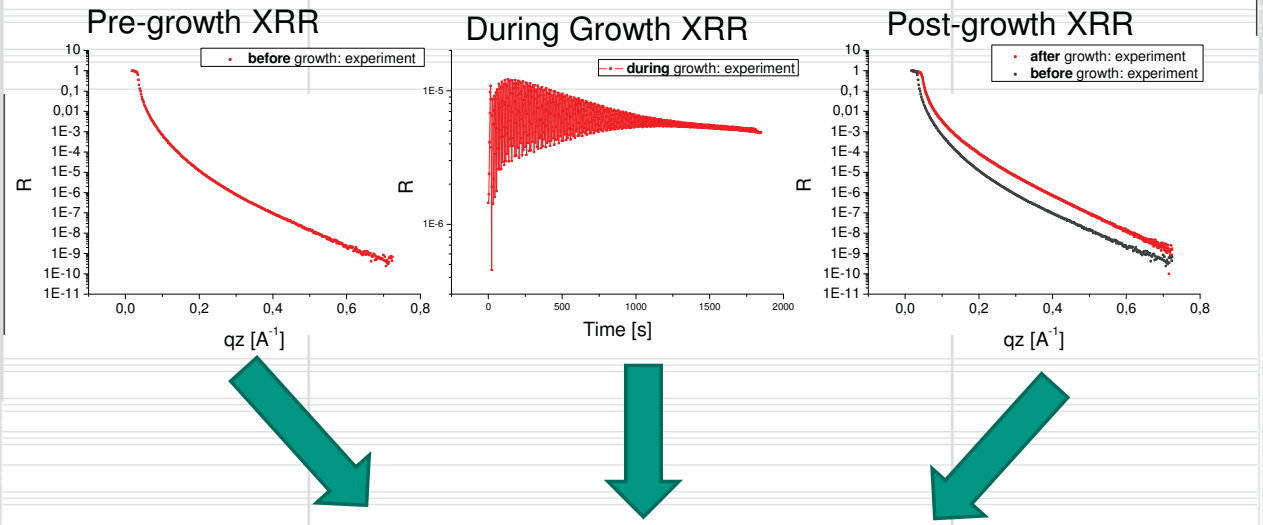


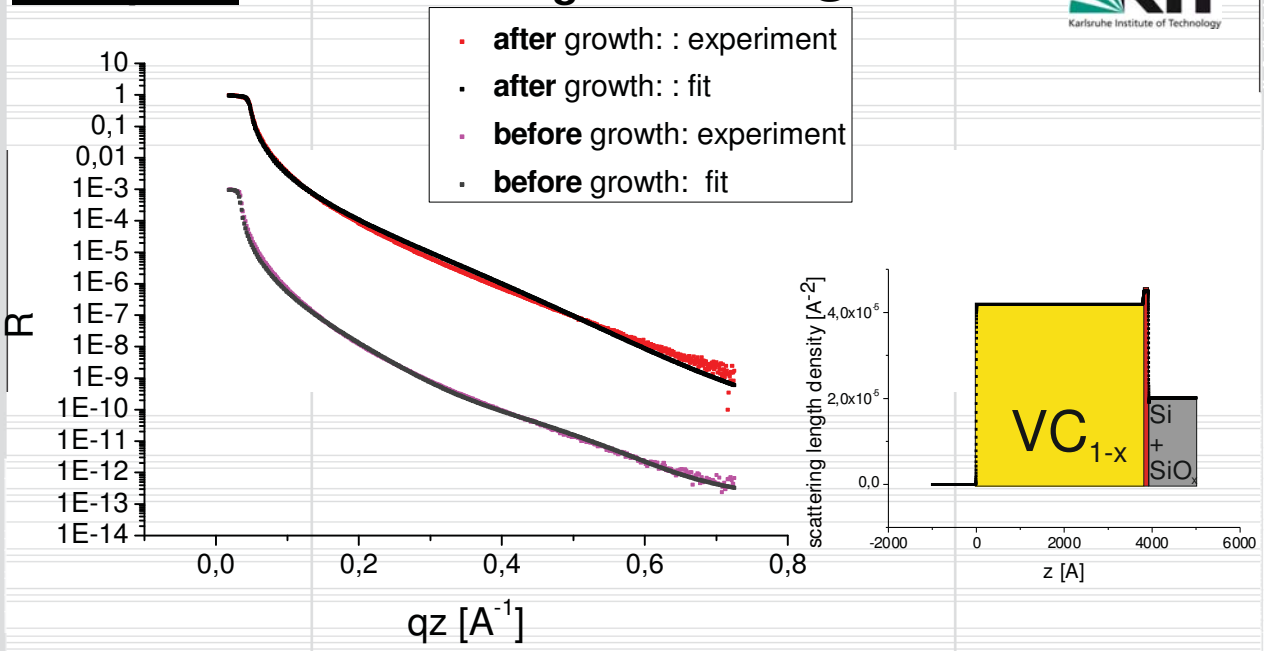
Simulation Input:
DC Power: 200 W → Deposition Rate: 0.217 nm/s
$\alpha_i = 1.6°$

Example 1: In situ XRR Study @ T=125°C



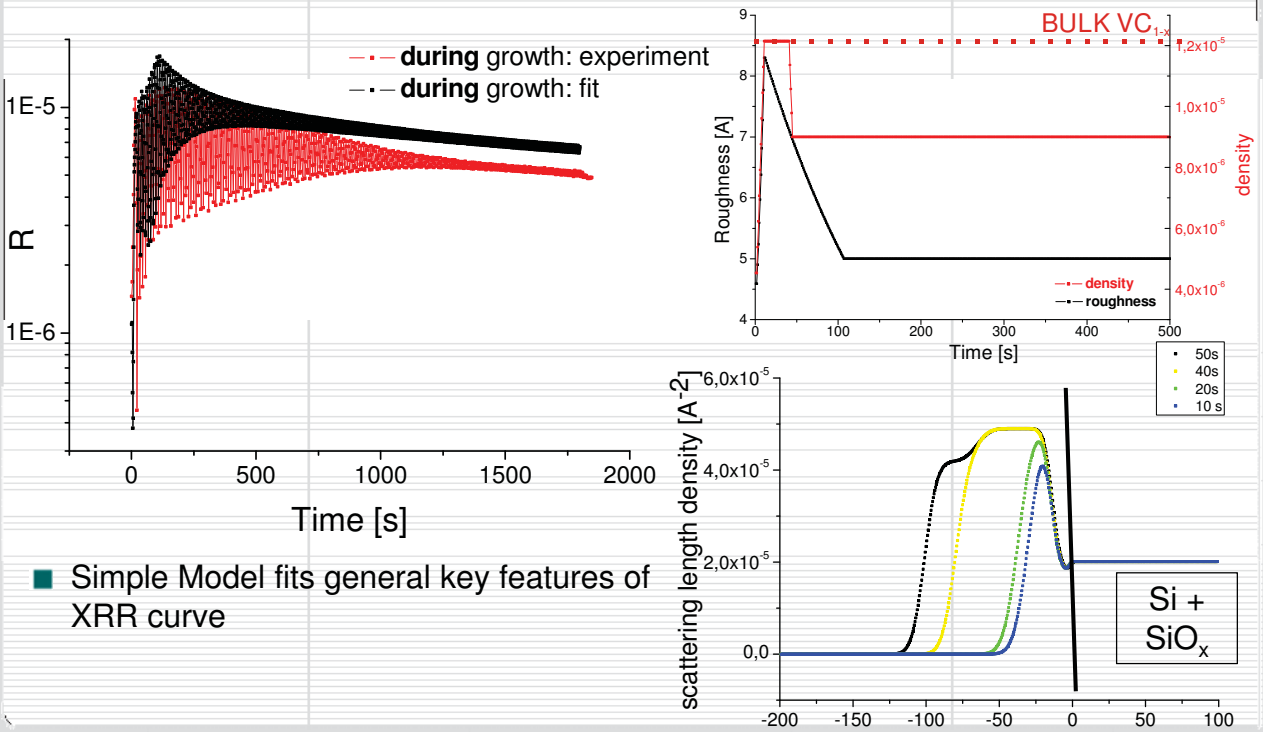
Need of **one** model, which fits **all three** curves

Example 1: Pre- and Post-growth XRR @ T=125°C



- Interface layer of ~ 6 nm: Bulk-like electron density
- ~ 3800 nm of less dense VC_{1-x} (~90%)
- **Different porosities, random and textured polycrystalline layer**

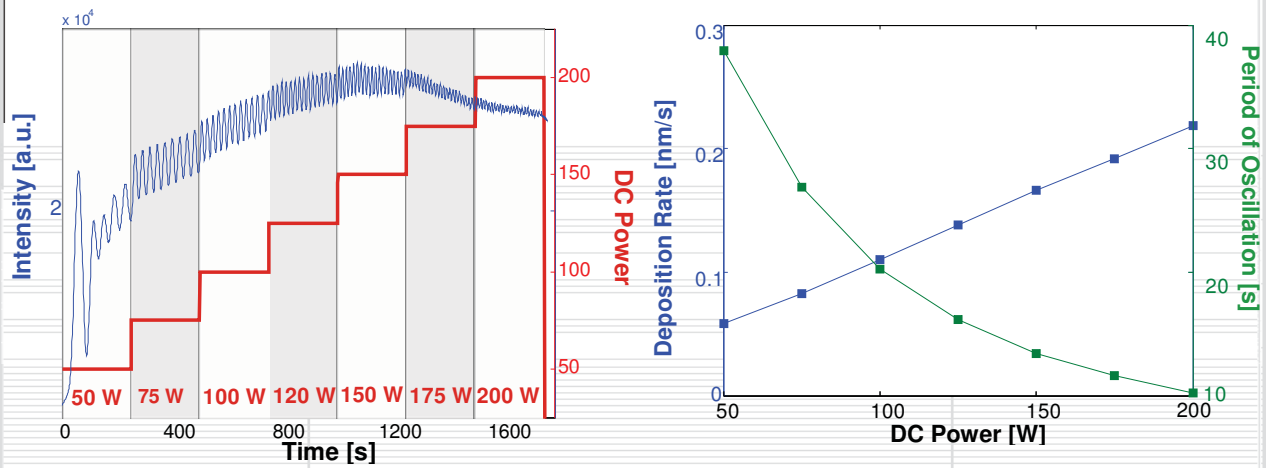
Example 1: *In situ* XRR @ T=125°C : Monitoring of Roughness and Density



- Simple Model fits general key features of XRR curve

Example 2: Determination of Deposition Rate depending on DC Power at RT

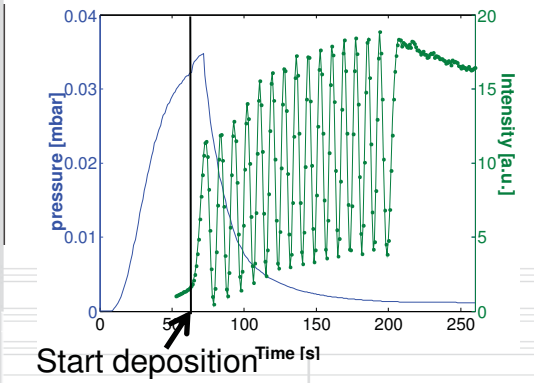
- Increase of DC Power by ΔP = 25W every 250s
- $\alpha_i = 1.6°$:
  - Error due to changes in electron density <1%
  - Sensitive to deposition rate



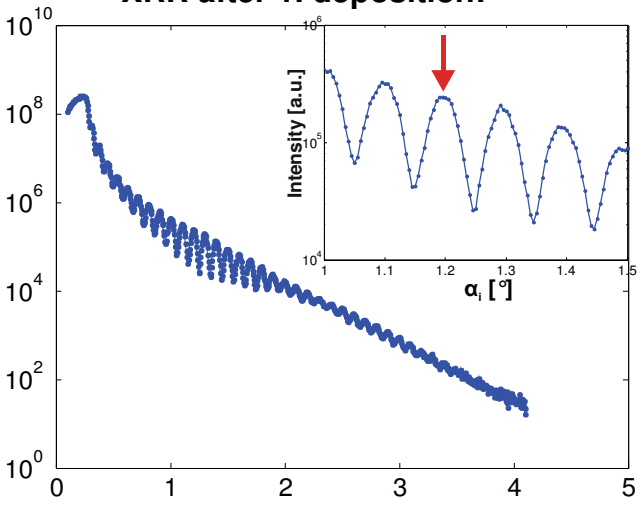
→ Deposition Rate ~ DC Power

Example 3: Different Electron Densities due to Interruption of Deposition

- Interruption of deposition after 200s @ RT and DC Power of 200 W



XRR after 1. deposition:



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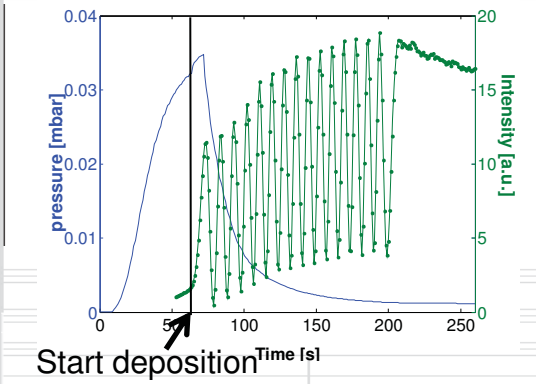
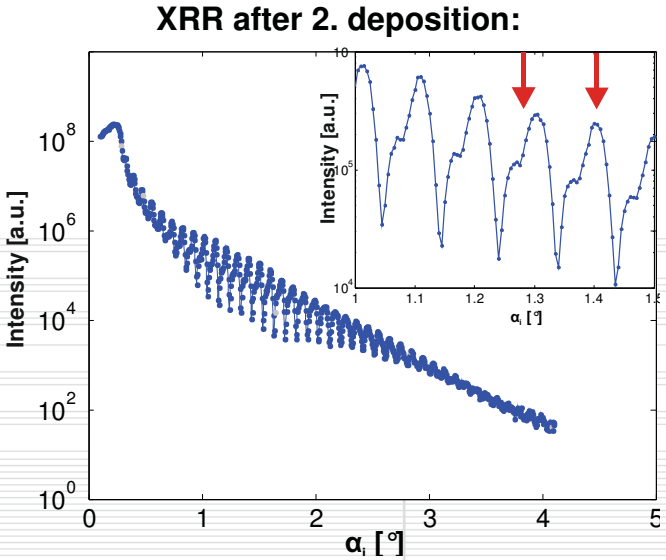


XRR after 2. deposition:



Multilayer of **one material**

Summary

- *In situ* X-Ray Reflectivity is suitable for investigation of VC_{1-x}
  - Sensitive to
    - → **Deposition Rate**
    - → **Roughness**
    - → **Density**
- Sensitive to different sputtering conditions

Outlook

- Simulation of *in situ* XRR curves
  - Growth Model (Scaling law)
  - Include diffuse scattering
  - Limits of method
- Combining with other methods for a better understanding
  - *In situ* & *ex situ* X-Ray Diffraction and Absorption Spectroscopy
  - XPS, AFM, TEM, … (in UHV conditions)
  - Measuring Hardness via Nano-/Microindentation

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Thank You for Your Attention !