

# The Microstructure of Polar Ice. Part II: State of the Art<sup>☆</sup>

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## Abstract

Besides the obvious relevance of glaciers and ice sheets for climate-related issues, another important feature of natural ice is its ability to creep on geological time scales and low deviatoric stresses at temperatures very close to its melting point, without losing its polycrystalline character. This fact, together with its strong mechanical anisotropy and other notable properties, makes natural ice an interesting model material for studying the high-temperature creep and recrystallization of rocks in Earth's interior. After having reviewed the major contributions of deep ice coring to the research on natural ice microstructures in Part I of this work (Faria et al., this issue), here in Part II we present an up-to-date view of the modern understanding of natural ice microstructures and the deformation processes that may produce them. In particular, we analyse a large body of evidence that reveals fundamental flaws in the widely accepted *tripartite paradigm* of polar ice

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<sup>☆</sup>Dedicated to Sepp Kipfstuhl on occasion of his 60th birthday.

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microstructure (also known as the “three-stage model,” cf. Part I). These results prove that grain growth in ice sheets is *dynamic*, in the sense that it occurs during deformation and is seriously affected by the stored strain energy, as well as by air inclusions and other impurities. The strong plastic anisotropy of the ice lattice gives rise to *high internal stresses* and *concentrated strain heterogeneities* in the polycrystal, which demand large amounts of strain accommodation. From the microstructural analyses of ice cores, we conclude that the formation of many and diverse subgrain boundaries and the splitting of grains by *rotation recrystallization* are the most fundamental mechanisms of dynamic recovery and strain accommodation in polar ice. Additionally, in fine-grained, high-impurity ice layers (e.g. cloudy bands), strain may sometimes be accommodated by *diffusional flow* (at low temperatures and stresses) or *microscopic grain boundary sliding via microshear* (in anisotropic ice sheared at high temperatures). Grain boundaries bulged by *migration recrystallization* and subgrain boundaries are endemic and very frequent at almost all depths in ice sheets. Evidence of the *nucleation of new grains* is also observed at various depths, provided that the local concentration of strain energy is high enough (which is not seldom the case). As a substitute for the tripartite paradigm, we propose a novel *dynamic recrystallization diagram* in the three-dimensional state space of strain rate, temperature, and mean grain size, which summarizes the various competing recrystallization processes that contribute to the evolution of the polar ice microstructure.

*Keywords:* ice, glacier, ice sheet, mechanics, creep, recrystallization, grain growth, microstructure, fabric, texture

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## 1. Introduction

An essential feature of Earth's dynamics is the hot deformation of large rock masses in a slow and continuous flow regime called *creep*. The study of creeping rocks is complicated by various factors; among them *diversity* and *inaccessibility*. The former means that rocks are seldom monomineral; rather, they are usually made of complex and variable compositions of minerals with distinct properties. The latter expresses the fact that field observations of creeping rocks are often very difficult or even impossible to perform, because most high-temperature deformation processes occur in Earth's interior.

For these reasons (not to mention other well-known reasons stemming from climatology; Lemke et al., 2007), the creep of ice turns out to be very interesting for geologists and geoscientists (Hudleston, 1977; Wilson, 1979, 1982; Burg et al., 1986; Kirby et al., 1991; Zhang and Wilson, 1997; for a deeper discussion see Wilson et al., this issue). The abundance, purity, and low melting point of natural ice make the field study of creeping glaciers and ice sheets a feasible task. Polar ice sheets over Greenland and Antarctica are particularly appealing in these respects, because of their immense mass ( $2.7$  and  $22.6 \times 10^{18}$  kg, respectively; Lemke et al., 2007) and purity (polar ice typically has an impurity content in the ppb range; Legrand and Mayewski, 1997), as well as their relatively simple and steady flow, when compared to smaller ice bodies like glaciers and ice caps (Paterson, 1994).

Evidently, the investigation of creep and recrystallization of polar ice sheets has also its shortcomings, mainly related to the complex logistics and drilling technology necessary for retrieving old ice samples from several kilometres of depth. A brief review of the difficulties and advances in deep ice core drilling in Antarc-

26 tica and Greenland has been presented in the first part of this work (Faria et al.,  
27 this issue) —from now on called *Part I*— together with the major contributions  
28 of deep ice coring to the research on natural ice microstructures. Through that  
29 historical synopsis we could appreciate how the current paradigm of natural ice  
30 microstructures has emerged, and also how it started being challenged in recent  
31 times.

32 Here in *Part II* we discuss in detail these recent challenges and show how they  
33 may reveal to us a new perspective of the mechanics and microstructure of natural  
34 ice. To achieve this aim, we carefully reconsider several aspects of our current  
35 understanding about natural ice microstructures and the deformation processes  
36 that may have produced them, including strain-induced anisotropy, grain growth,  
37 and dynamic recrystallization, among others. The whole review ends with a new  
38 paradigm for the microstructure evolution of natural ice. For convenience, the key  
39 concepts invoked in this work are summarized in a glossary in Appendix A.

40 As it will become evident in the next pages, in spite of many insightful stud-  
41 ies of natural ice microstructures and deformation mechanisms, our knowledge  
42 about this subject is still imperfect and incomplete. On the other hand, we do  
43 have enough information to propose novel plausible models, which together with  
44 modern technologies are helping to make this field of research more promising  
45 and exciting than ever.

## 46 **2. Crystalline structure and dislocations**

47 Under natural conditions on Earth's surface, ice occurs in the ordinary hexagonal  
48 form of ice *Ih*. This should not be confused with its closely related cubic variant,  
49 ice *Ic*, which presents a similar tetrahedral coordination of oxygen atoms, but

50 is metastable at all temperatures (Bartels-Rausch et al., 2012). Ordinary ice Ih  
51 has a rather open lattice, with an atomic packing factor of less than 34%, which  
52 accounts not only for its abnormally low density compared to liquid water, but  
53 also for the pressure-induced reduction of its melting point at high temperatures  
54 (Schulson and Duval, 2009).

55 Oxygen ions build the essence of the ice lattice (from now on the term “ice”  
56 refers to ordinary hexagonal ice Ih, except when explicitly mentioned otherwise).  
57 They are arranged in a structure which resembles that of wurtzite or high-tridymite  
58 (Hobbs, 1974; Evans, 1976; Poirier, 1985), viz. layers of puckered hexagonal  
59 rings piled in an alternate sequence of mirror images normal to the *c*-axis (Fig. C.1).  
60 Hydrogen nuclei (protons) remain statistically distributed in the oxygen lattice,  
61 building covalent and hydrogen bonds along the lines joining pairs of oxygens  
62 (Pauling, 1935). This *proton disorder* is however not completely arbitrary: it  
63 must conform with the *Bernal–Fowler rules* (also called “ice rules”), which re-  
64 quire that two protons should be close to any oxygen, with only one proton per  
65 bond (Bernal and Fowler, 1933). Hence, each oxygen is involved in two covalent  
66 and two hydrogen bonds.

67 The violation of the ice rules, either by an excess or a deficiency of protons,  
68 gives rise to particular point defects in the crystalline structure, known as *ioniza-*  
69 *tion* and *Bjerrum defects*. These point defects, together with more conventional  
70 molecular defects (*vacancies* and *interstitials*) play a fundamental role in the me-  
71 chanics of ice, as they influence the motion of the main agents of deformation in  
72 ice: *dislocations* (Glen, 1968; Goodman et al., 1981; Okada et al., 1999; Petrenko  
73 and Whitworth, 1999; Louchet, 2004).

74 *2.1. Slip systems and plastic anisotropy*

75 According to the fundamentals of dislocation theory (Hirth and Lothe, 1992;  
76 Weertman and Weertman, 1992), possible slip systems in ice can in principle be  
77 found on the basal, prismatic, and pyramidal planes, as described in Table D.1 and  
78 Fig. C.2.

79 Experience shows, however, that the plasticity of monocrystalline ice is strongly  
80 anisotropic (Duval et al., 1983): single crystals of ice deform very readily when  
81 the shear stress acts on the basal plane, as epitomized more than a century ago  
82 by McConnel’s (1890) “deck of cards” metaphor. This phenomenon was later  
83 beautifully illustrated in Nakaya’s (1958) experiments, through the use of shadow  
84 photography for revealing *slip bands* (Appendix A) in deformed monocrystalline  
85 ice bars. Not long after, Bryant and Mason (1960) found grouped etch pits and  
86 channels along slip bands in formvar replicas of deformed ice monocrystals, cor-  
87 roborating the hypothesis that slip bands consist of a high density of dislocations.  
88 In polar ice, the optical observation of slip bands turns out to be much more dif-  
89 ficult, because of the very low strain rates characteristic of ice sheet flow. Nev-  
90 ertheless, advanced digital methods of optical microscopy could show (Fig. C.3)  
91 that slip bands are also a common feature of polar ice (Wang et al., 2003; Faria  
92 and Kipfstuhl, 2004; Kipfstuhl et al., 2006).

93 The modern explanation for the strong plastic anisotropy of hexagonal ice  
94 is that the energy of a stacking fault on the basal plane is so low that perfect  
95 basal dislocations may dissociate into Shockley partial dislocations separated by  
96 a stacking fault (Fukuda et al., 1987; Hondoh, 2000). Thus, recalling that the  
97 self-energy of a dislocation is proportional to the square of its Burgers vector, it  
98 follows that a perfect basal dislocation in ice with Burgers vector  $\mathbf{b}$  is expected

99 to stabilize into a ribbon-like structure (Fig. C.4) consisting of a stacking fault  
 100 delimited by two partial dislocations with Burgers vectors  $\mathbf{b}_1$  and  $\mathbf{b}_2 = \mathbf{b} - \mathbf{b}_1$ ,  
 101 provided that

$$b^2 > b_1^2 + b_2^2, \quad \text{with} \quad b_i^2 := \mathbf{b}_i \cdot \mathbf{b}_i \quad (i = 1, 2, \emptyset), \quad (1)$$

102 and the energy of the stacking fault created by this dissociation is sufficiently low  
 103 to preserve the inequality (1).

104 The reason for the low stacking fault energy of ordinary ice is the small energy  
 105 difference between hexagonal ice Ih and cubic ice Ic (Bartels-Rausch et al., 2012).  
 106 This leads to the conclusion that the stacking fault between the two partial dislo-  
 107 cations should possess cubic structure (Hondoh, 2000). Actually, the width of the  
 108 resulting stacking fault is expected to be rather large, ranging from one to two  
 109 orders of magnitude larger than the lattice spacing (Fukuda et al., 1987). As a re-  
 110 sult, cross-slip and climb of such widely extended dislocations should be strongly  
 111 suppressed, seeing that the stress required to constrict extended dislocations, al-  
 112 lowing them to move on non-basal planes, is considerably large (Gilra, 1974; the  
 113 need of full constriction for cross-slip has been objected by Duesbery, 1998, pro-  
 114 vided that the driving stress on the cross-slip plane is large enough). Another  
 115 consequence of the dissociation of basal dislocations is that a dislocation with an  
 116 initially arbitrary shape soon evolves into a combination of long basal and short  
 117 non-basal segments (Fig. C.4a), owing to the strong tendency of basal segments to  
 118 elongate (Hondoh, 2000). In fact, theory and experiments suggest that non-basal  
 119 segments should be one to two orders of magnitude shorter than basal segments  
 120 (Fukuda et al., 1987; Ahmad and Whitworth, 1988; Hondoh, 2000). Therefore,  
 121 non-basal dislocation segments are generally too short to significantly contribute  
 122 to *macroscopic* deformation (Petrenko and Whitworth, 1999).

123 To sum up, the dissociation of basal dislocations into partials and its many  
124 consequences are essential for explaining the extreme plastic anisotropy of ice.

## 125 2.2. *Heterogeneous strain and non-basal slip*

126 Non-basal slip in high-quality ice single crystals has often been observed by X-  
127 ray topography (Fukuda et al., 1987; Ahmad and Whitworth, 1988; Higashi et al.,  
128 1988; Hondoh et al., 1990; Shearwood and Whitworth, 1991). These studies re-  
129 vealed an interesting feature of ice plasticity, namely the rapid motion of short  
130 edge dislocation segments on non-basal planes. While such fast-moving short  
131 segments are not expected to significantly contribute to macroscopic deformation,  
132 they provide mechanisms for the multiplication of basal dislocations (e.g. as mov-  
133 ing Frank–Read sources; Petrenko and Whitworth, 1999) and for accommodation  
134 of heterogeneous strain.

135 Although the study of individual dislocations in carefully prepared ice single  
136 crystals, deformed under precisely controlled conditions, yields invaluable infor-  
137 mation about the fundamental properties of dislocations in ice, it is evident that the  
138 deformation processes naturally occurring in polycrystalline ice are much more  
139 complex. Hondoh and Higashi (1983) and Liu et al. (1993, 1995) used X-ray to-  
140 pography to study the interactions between dislocations and grain boundaries in  
141 ice bicrystals and polycrystalline ice, respectively. They could demonstrate that  
142 the regions surrounding grain boundaries (viz. the “mantle” of the grain, after  
143 Gifkins, 1976) generally deform before the grain interiors (viz. the “core” of the  
144 grain). Dislocations are emitted from stress concentrations at grain boundaries,  
145 caused by strain misfits and/or grain boundary sliding, and this process completely  
146 overwhelms any lattice dislocation generation mechanism. Depending on the rel-  
147 ative configuration of grain boundaries and applied stress, not only basal disloca-



148 tions but also fast non-basal edge segments can be emitted by grain boundaries,  
149 trailing screw segments behind them.

150 These findings are in close agreement with the results from microscopic obser-  
151 vations of natural ice microstructures in fresh ice core samples (Wang et al., 2003;  
152 Faria and Kipfstuhl, 2004, 2005; Kipfstuhl et al., 2006, 2009; Weikusat et al.,  
153 2009a,b), where abundant evidences of heterogeneous strain and internal stresses  
154 can be found in form of multiple subgrain boundaries and dislocation walls, bent  
155 slip bands, pinned and bulged grain boundaries (cf. Sect. 4). In particular, the  
156 large amount of subgrain boundaries and dislocation walls in regions surrounding  
157 grain boundaries clearly indicates the tendency of polar ice grains to develop in-  
158 tracrySTALLINE strain gradients and high internal stresses in their “mantle” region,  
159 while preserving their “cores.” Additionally, it is not uncommon to observe the  
160 manifestation of internal stress concentrations through bulged or cuspidate grain  
161 boundaries with radiating subgrain boundaries and dislocation walls (examples  
162 can be found in almost all micrographs shown here, e.g. Fig. C.5; see also Kipfs-  
163 tuhl et al., 2006; Faria et al., 2009, 2010; Weikusat et al., 2009b). In fact, accord-  
164 ing to recent statistical studies on subgrain boundaries in polar ice (Weikusat et al.,  
165 2010, 2011; see Sect. 4.1), internal stresses are high enough to produce a consid-  
166 erable amount of non-basal dislocations, as revealed by the significant fraction  
167 of tilt boundaries on basal planes, which are formed by geometrically necessary  
168 non-basal edge dislocations.

169 Recalling the fact that the strong plastic anisotropy of ice has been known for  
170 more than a century (McConnel and Kidd, 1888; McConnel, 1890), the findings  
171 described above should seem unsurprising: large internal stresses and heteroge-  
172 neous strains that vary in space with a wavelength comparable to the grain size are

173 actually expected in a polycrystalline material made of such remarkably anisotropic  
174 grains (Remark 1).

175 **Remark 1.** The homogeneous deformation by dislocation glide of an incom-  
176 pressible polycrystal into an arbitrary shape requires the activity of at least five in-  
177 dependent slip systems, in order to avoid geometric incompatibilities between the  
178 grains (Taylor, 1938). If the condition of homogeneous strain is waived, then only  
179 four independent systems are necessary, provided that the strain gradients result-  
180 ing from geometric incompatibilities are balanced by internal stresses (Hutchin-  
181 son, 1976). In the case of ice, the basal plane provides only two independent  
182 slip systems: further two systems must be active by slip or climb on prismatic  
183 and/or pyramidal planes. Notwithstanding, non-basal deformation of ice requires  
184 stresses at least 60 times larger than those for basal slip at the same strain rate, so  
185 that large internal stresses are expected in ice undergoing dislocation creep (Duval  
186 et al., 1983; Wilson and Zhang, 1996).

187 Despite their fundamental importance for the mechanics of glaciers and ice  
188 sheets, internal stresses and heterogeneous strain phenomena have been largely  
189 ignored (or treated as a secondary issue) in models of the microstructure evolu-  
190 tion of natural ice. For instance, recrystallization models based on an average  
191 dislocation density (e.g. De la Chapelle et al., 1998; Montagnat and Duval, 2000)  
192 are often invoked in support of the *tripartite paradigm* of polar ice microstruc-  
193 ture (also called “three-stage model”; see Sect. 3.3 of Part I). From the results  
194 discussed here, and extended in Sects. 4 and 5, it turns out that such models are  
195 not appropriate for describing the microstructure evolution of polar ice, because  
196 they seriously underestimate recrystallization processes, which are very sensitive

197 to internal stress concentrations and localized values of dislocation density close  
198 to grain boundaries.

199 Recently, the small-scale modelling of the effects of internal stresses and het-  
200 erogeneous strains on the evolution of ice microstructures has become a very ac-  
201 tive research topic, as reviewed in this Issue (Montagnat et al., 2013). On the  
202 other hand, on the much larger scale of ice sheet dynamics, this problem becomes  
203 particularly difficult, because a *multiscale* continuum model is needed. To our  
204 knowledge, there is only one theory currently capable of dealing simultaneously  
205 with large scale ice sheet flow and dynamic recrystallization, taking into account  
206 the effects of strain heterogeneities and internal stresses (Faria, 2006a,b; Faria  
207 et al., 2006b). It models the polycrystal as a heterogeneous structured medium  
208 within the framework of the general theory of *Mixtures with Continuous Diversity*  
209 (MCD; Faria, 2001; Faria et al., 2003). As pointed out by Placidi et al. (2004)  
210 and Faria and Kipfstuhl (2004), internal stresses are modeled by the orientational  
211 couple-stress tensor  $\varpi^*$  (sometimes also called “polygonization tensor”), which  
212 describes the action of localized bending stresses acting on the ice lattice. Het-  
213 erogeneous strain is modelled by a set of  $N$  scalar-, vector-, or tensor-valued dis-  
214 location parameters  $\mathbf{B}_\varkappa^*$  (with  $\varkappa = 1, 2, \dots, N$ ), which characterize the spatial  
215 arrangement of dislocations in the polycrystal (Faria et al., 2006b).

216 At this point it should be clear that, in order to improve large-scale glacier and  
217 ice sheet models, we have first to find out realistic, explicit expressions for abstract  
218 concepts like the “orientational couple-stress tensor” and the set of “dislocation  
219 arrangement parameters,” which require information from detailed investigations  
220 of the type described in this section, as well as results from models on the small  
221 polycrystalline scale, as those reviewed elsewhere in this Issue (Montagnat et al.,

222 2013).

### 223 **3. Creep of glacier ice**

224 Section 2 of Part I warned about the potential injustice of naming milestones  
225 for defining decisive moments in scientific research. In the case of ice mechan-  
226 ics, however, the period 1947–1952 is widely acknowledged for establishing a  
227 paradigm shift that irreversibly changed the glaciologists’ attitude to the mechan-  
228 ics of glaciers and ice sheets (Sharp, 1954; Waddington, 2010). Its milestone is  
229 Glen’s (1952) article on mechanical tests showing that the secondary creep of  
230 ice could be described by a power law (of the type proposed by Norton, 1929,  
231 in metallurgy), therefore confirming a conjecture about the non-Newtonian creep  
232 behavior of ice (Perutz, 1949, 1950; cf. Sect. 2.1 of Part I). Glen’s (1952) pre-  
233 liminary study was soon complemented by Glen and Perutz (1954), Steinemann  
234 (1954), Glen (1955) and others, including the corroboration of the suitability of  
235 such a power law for modeling glacier flow (Nye, 1953, 1957).

#### 236 *3.1. The creep curve*

237 Isotropic polycrystalline ice (viz. homogeneous polycrystalline ice with no lat-  
238 tice preferred orientation; cf. Appendix A) exhibits a creep curve typical of many  
239 polycrystalline materials undergoing high-temperature creep (Fig. C.6). It is char-  
240 acterized by a preliminary “instantaneous” Hookean elastic strain (cf. Remark 2),  
241 followed by three creep stages. Natural ice in glaciers and ice sheets is expected  
242 to undergo all these creep stages in situ, even when subjected to polar conditions  
243 (viz. stresses lower than 0.1 MPa, temperatures down to  $-50^{\circ}\text{C}$ , strain rates about  
244  $10^{-12}\text{s}^{-1}$ , and total shear strains exceeding 1000%).

245 **Remark 2.** Budd and Jacka (1989) report that the Hookean elastic strain of isotropic  
246 polycrystalline ice reaches 0.024% at 0.2 MPa octahedral stress, and has little de-  
247 pendence on temperature. Indeed, according to Gammon et al. (1983), the vari-  
248 ation in the elastic properties of isotropic polycrystalline ice in the temperature  
249 range between  $-50^{\circ}\text{C}$  and close to the melting point should lie below 10%, al-  
250 though they may vary considerably with the impurity content of ice.

251 The achievement of all three creep stages in laboratory tests simulating polar  
252 conditions is clearly impossible, since this would require thousands of years of  
253 uninterrupted straining under carefully controlled conditions. Therefore, the creep  
254 behavior of natural ice is usually extrapolated from mechanical tests performed at  
255 higher temperatures or stresses (e.g. Steinemann, 1954; Glen, 1955; Lile, 1978;  
256 Jacka, 1984; Jacka and Li, 2000), and then compared with field measurements of  
257 glacier flow or the deformation of glacial tunnels and deep boreholes (e.g. Nye,  
258 1953; Paterson, 1977; Fischer and Koerner, 1986; Talalay and Hooke, 2007).

259 During the first creep stage, usually called *transient* or *primary creep*, the  
260 strain rate decreases rapidly. This deceleration is due to work hardening mainly  
261 produced by the load transfer from easy-glide to hard-glide systems and the in-  
262 creasing strain incompatibilities between the grains, which build up internal stresses  
263 and localized heterogeneous strains (Wilson, 1986; Petrenko and Whitworth, 1999;  
264 Schulson and Duval, 2009; cf. Sect. 2.2), both clearly identified by the forma-  
265 tion of the first dislocation walls and subgrain boundaries (Hamann et al., 2007;  
266 Sect. 4.1). Primary creep in ice extends to about 1% of strain, irrespective of  
267 temperature or stress (Budd and Jacka, 1989), and a considerable fraction of it  
268 consists of a recoverable “delayed-elastic” strain (sometimes also called “anelas-  
269 tic” strain), implying that part of the deformation is recovered after the load is

270 removed, in a relaxation process that can take several hours (Duval, 1978). Budd  
271 and Jacka (1989) report primary recoverable strains of 0.15% and 0.30% for  
272 isotropic polycrystalline ice at  $-10^{\circ}\text{C}$  compressed at 0.2 MPa and 1.0 MPa oc-  
273 tahedral stress, respectively. It is believed that the delayed elasticity of ice is  
274 mainly caused by the relaxation of internal stresses by dislocation back-gliding  
275 (Glen, 1975; Cole, 2004; Schulson and Duval, 2009).

276 The primary creep of ice ends with the inception of *secondary creep*. In con-  
277 trast to other materials, a steady-state regime has not been observed in the sec-  
278 ondary creep of ice at any temperature down to  $-50^{\circ}\text{C}$ , *or* at stresses as low as  
279 22 kPa octahedral (Budd and Jacka, 1989; Remark 3).

280 **Remark 3.** We emphasized above the conjunction “or” in order to make clear that  
281 the minimum strain rate could not be achieved so far in any single test combining  
282 the lowest temperature and stress just mentioned. Jacka and Li (2000) report  
283 minimum strain rates attained in some extreme compression tests, including one  
284 ran during more than five years at  $-45^{\circ}\text{C}$  and 550 kPa octahedral stress, as well as  
285 another one executed at  $-19^{\circ}\text{C}$  and 100 kPa octahedral. Russell-Head and Budd  
286 (1979) describe a sequence of strain rate minima attained in a shear test performed  
287 at 22 kPa octahedral stress and an initial temperature of  $-2^{\circ}\text{C}$ , with subsequent  
288 temperature drops to  $-5^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $-10^{\circ}\text{C}$  after each strain rate minimum.

289 Instead of reaching a steady state, the secondary creep of ice seems to be es-  
290 sentially a transition zone between 0.5% and 2% strain that connects the deceler-  
291 ating primary creep to the accelerating tertiary creep. Its main characteristic is the  
292 inflection point in the creep curve, which occurs at about 1% strain, irrespective  
293 of temperature or stress, and defines the minimum strain rate for the whole creep

294 process. As demonstrated by Jacka (1984), this minimum is best visualized in a  
295 log–log plot of strain rate versus strain (Fig. C.6), which has since then become a  
296 standard in the ice mechanics literature.

297 In spite of not being identified as a true steady state, the secondary creep of  
298 ice has a fundamental physical meaning: its minimum strain rate defines the point  
299 where hardening caused by evolving internal stresses is counterbalanced by the  
300 softening produced by dynamic recovery and recrystallization, e.g. through the  
301 re-arrangement of geometrically necessary dislocations into low-energy structures  
302 (subgrain boundaries, dislocation walls, etc.) and the obliteration of localized  
303 internal stresses by strain-induced grain boundary migration (SIBM), among other  
304 processes (Remark 4 and Sects. 4 and 5).

305 **Remark 4.** The above explanation of the physical meaning of the secondary creep  
306 of ice holds for the ductile regime only, which is the focus of this review. At high  
307 stresses and/or low temperatures, ice becomes brittle and the characteristic soft-  
308 ening of secondary and tertiary creep regimes (if they can be achieved prior to  
309 material failure) is mainly caused by crack formation, which eventually leads to  
310 the fracture of the ice specimen (Petrenko and Whitworth, 1999; Schulson and  
311 Duval, 2009).

312 The creep response of ice following the minimum strain rate is somewhat more  
313 complicate. In most mechanical tests, performed at temperatures above  $-15^{\circ}\text{C}$   
314 and stresses higher than 0.3 MPa (corresponding to minimum strain rates about  
315  $10^{-8}\text{s}^{-1}$ ), the secondary creep gives way to accelerating *tertiary creep* after 1–  
316 2% of strain, which eventually reaches a stable, steady-state regime after ca. 10%  
317 strain (Budd and Jacka, 1989). The accelerating part of tertiary creep is accompa-  
318 nied by the development of lattice preferred orientations (LPOs) and an increase

319 in the mean grain size. The latter eventually reaches a tertiary steady-state size,  
320 which can be roughly predicted by the relation (Jacka and Li, 1994)

$$D_{ss}^2 = \frac{\varphi}{\sigma^3}, \quad (2)$$

321 where  $D_{ss}$  is the linear dimension of the mean grain size in the tertiary steady-  
322 state stage,  $\sigma$  is the applied stress, and  $\varphi$  is a dimensional factor with negligible  
323 temperature dependence. It should be noticed that the rapid LPO formation in  
324 such “fast” experiments is not caused by slip-driven lattice rotation, since strains  
325 of only a few percent are not sufficient to produce noticeable LPOs by lattice rota-  
326 tion alone (Azuma and Higashi, 1985; Jacka and Li, 2000). Rather, this early LPO  
327 formation must be related to the nucleation of new grains (SIBM-N; Appendix A).

328 Steinemann (1958) was the first to suggest that, for a given temperature and  
329 stress regime, the ratio between the tertiary maximum and the secondary minimum  
330 strain rates (nowadays called *strain-rate enhancement*) could be expressed as a  
331 function of the minimum strain rate, that is

$$\frac{\dot{\epsilon}_{\max}}{\dot{\epsilon}_{\min}} = f(\dot{\epsilon}_{\min}), \quad (T = \text{const.}) \quad (3)$$

332 where  $\dot{\epsilon}_{\max}$  and  $\dot{\epsilon}_{\min}$  denote the tertiary maximum and the secondary minimum  
333 strain rates, respectively, while  $f$  is an increasing function of the minimum strain  
334 rate. Indeed, at lower temperatures and stresses (corresponding to minimum strain  
335 rates of about  $10^{-9}\text{s}^{-1}$ ), the strain-rate enhancement abates and the LPO devel-  
336 opment slows down. As remarked by Steinemann (1958), this reflects the fact  
337 that nucleation recrystallization (SIBM-N) is no longer effective, being gradually  
338 replaced by migration recrystallization (SIBM-O) and rotation recrystallization  
339 (RRX; cf. Sects. 4, 5, and Appendix A).



340 At even lower temperatures and stresses (e.g. 0.1 MPa at  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$ , or any equiv-  
 341 alent stress–temperature combination resulting in minimum strain rates about  $10^{-10}\text{s}^{-1}$ ),  
 342 observations are inconclusive. Secondary minimum strain rates could be achieved  
 343 at 1% strain in a few tests after several years of continual deformation (e.g. Jacka  
 344 and Li, 2000), but many more years would be necessary in order to investigate  
 345 tertiary creep under such slow conditions.

### 346 3.2. Creep laws

347 Glen (1955) and Barnes et al. (1971) have shown that the creep of ice up to the  
 348 minimum strain rate (that is, including the primary and early stages of secondary  
 349 creep, prior to acceleration), is reasonably well fitted with *Andrade’s Law* (An-  
 350 drade, 1910) in the form (from now on, the creep regimes in which a given equa-  
 351 tion is valid will be expressed by the acronyms PC, SC and TC within square  
 352 brackets, denoting primary, secondary and tertiary creep, respectively)

$$\begin{aligned} \varepsilon &= \varepsilon_0 + \ln\left(1 + \beta t^{1/m}\right) + \kappa t && \text{[PC, SC] (4)} \\ &\approx \varepsilon_0 + \beta t^{1/m} + \kappa t, \end{aligned}$$

353 with  $m = 3$ , where the approximation is valid for small strains, such that  $\beta t^{1/m} \ll 1$   
 354 and  $\varepsilon \lesssim 1\%$ . In (4),  $\varepsilon$  and  $\varepsilon_0$  are the true (logarithmic) and instantaneous elastic  
 355 strains, respectively,  $t$  denotes time, while  $\beta$  and  $\kappa$  are parameters depending on the  
 356 applied stress and temperature. It is not difficult to recognize that  $\beta$  describes the  
 357 material response at the onset of primary creep, while  $\kappa$  represents the secondary  
 358 asymptotic “steady-state” strain rate, which would be reached if the accelerating  
 359 tertiary creep had not occurred. Consequently,  $\beta t^{1/m}$  is sometimes called the tran-  
 360 sient creep term, while  $\kappa t$  is the secondary “steady-state” creep term.

361 For temperatures and stresses usually considered in ice creep tests, experience

362 shows that the early stage of transient creep ( $\varepsilon \lesssim 0.01\%$ ; Budd and Jacka, 1989)  
 363 is characterized by a roughly linear relation between stress  $\sigma$  and strain  $\varepsilon$  within  
 364 a fixed time interval, therefore implying that  $\beta \propto \sigma$ . On the other hand, Glen  
 365 (1955) attempted to use (4) for deriving the stress dependence of the asymptotic  
 366 secondary minimum strain rate  $\kappa$  from creep tests, but the accuracy of the method  
 367 was impaired by the onset of recrystallization and the difficulty to identify the end  
 368 of the transient creep. From tests performed at  $-0.02^\circ\text{C}$  between 0.15–0.90 MPa,  
 369 he found  $\kappa \propto \sigma^n$  with  $n = 4.2$ .

370 An independent determination of the secondary minimum strain rate was pur-  
 371 sued by Glen (1952, 1955), by determining a power-law relation between the min-  
 372 imum strain rate actually observed in experiments and the stress required to pro-  
 373 duce it. In its most popular version (due to Nye, 1953), the power law that would  
 374 soon be known as *Glen's Flow Law* takes the form

$$\dot{\varepsilon} = A\sigma^n \quad [\text{SC}] \quad (5)$$

375 (cf. Remark 5), or in tensorial formulation (cf. Hutter, 1983; Paterson, 1994;  
 376 Hooke, 2005)

$$\dot{\boldsymbol{\varepsilon}} = A\sigma^{n-1}\boldsymbol{\sigma}, \quad [\text{SC}] \quad (6)$$

with

$$\boldsymbol{\sigma} = \boldsymbol{\sigma}^\top, \quad \dot{\boldsymbol{\varepsilon}} = \dot{\boldsymbol{\varepsilon}}^\top, \quad \text{tr}(\boldsymbol{\sigma}) = \text{tr}(\dot{\boldsymbol{\varepsilon}}) = 0, \quad (7)$$

$$\dot{\varepsilon} := \sqrt{\frac{1}{2} \text{tr}(\dot{\boldsymbol{\varepsilon}}^2)} \quad \text{and} \quad \sigma := \sqrt{\frac{1}{2} \text{tr}(\boldsymbol{\sigma}^2)}. \quad (8)$$

377 **Remark 5.** Power-law relations similar to (5) were introduced in fluid dynamics  
 378 in 1923 by de Weale and Ostwald (cf. Ostwald, 1929) and some years later in  
 379 metallurgy by Norton (1929).

380 In the above equations,  $(\cdot)^T$  denotes the transpose and  $\text{tr}(\cdot)$  the trace of the re-  
 381 spective tensor. The tensors  $\boldsymbol{\sigma}$  and  $\dot{\boldsymbol{\epsilon}}$  describe the deviatoric (traceless) Cauchy  
 382 stress and the strain rate, respectively. The non-negative scalars  $\sigma$  and  $\dot{\epsilon}$  are the  
 383 square roots of the deviatoric second invariants of  $\boldsymbol{\sigma}$  and  $\dot{\boldsymbol{\epsilon}}$ , and consequently cor-  
 384 respond to  $\sqrt{3/2}$  times the octahedral shear stress and strain rate. At temperatures  
 385 below circa  $-10^\circ\text{C}$ , the flow parameter  $A$  is assumed to depend on temperature  $T$   
 386 and hydrostatic pressure  $p$  according to an Arrhenius-like equation (Remark 6)

$$A = \alpha e^{-(Q+pV)/k_B T} \approx \alpha e^{-Q/k_B \vartheta} \approx \alpha e^{-Q/k_B T}, \quad (9)$$

387 where  $Q$  and  $V$  are the activation energy and volume for creep,  $k_B$  is the Boltzmann  
 388 constant, and the parameter  $\alpha$  is usually regarded as a constant, although it may  
 389 also depend on such factors as grain size, impurity and/or water content (Alley,  
 390 1992; Paterson, 1994).

391 **Remark 6.** Above  $-10^\circ\text{C}$  the increase of the minimum strain rate with tempera-  
 392 ture is enhanced and the Arrhenius law breaks down (Glen, 1955, 1975; Hooke,  
 393 1981; Budd and Jacka, 1989). It is believed that grain boundary sliding and the  
 394 presence of water within the grain boundaries may be the main causes of this creep  
 395 enhancement (Barnes et al., 1971). Due to the lack of a more realistic alternative,  
 396 an empirical Arrhenius-like equation similar to (9) is frequently used to model the  
 397 temperature dependence of ice creep above  $-10^\circ\text{C}$ , including an apparent (and in  
 398 fact temperature-dependent) activation energy with no physical meaning (Mellor  
 399 and Testa, 1969b; Budd and Jacka, 1989; Paterson, 1994).

400 Rigsby (1958a) asserted that the effect of the activation volume of ice is in  
 401 most cases negligibly small ( $-55 \lesssim V \lesssim 32 \text{ cm}^3/\text{mol}$ , according to Jones and

402 Chew, 1983) and can be accounted for in (9) by using the pressure-dependent  
403 temperature relative to the melting point

$$\vartheta := T + Bp, \quad (10)$$

404 with  $B = 98 \text{ K/GPa}$  (Lliboutry, 1976; Remark 7).

405 **Remark 7.** It should be noticed that the value of the constant  $B$ , which is appro-  
406 priate for natural ice, does not coincide with the theoretical value of the relation  
407 between pressure and melting temperature of pure ice (Clausius–Clapeyron rela-  
408 tion)  $-dT_m/dp = 74 \text{ K/GPa}$ . As explained by Glen (1974) and Lliboutry (1976),  
409 this discrepancy is mainly due to the natural saturation of air in water.

410 Values of the exponent  $n$  in (5) and (6) derived from experiments and field  
411 measurements range from 1 to 4, with a general consensus for using  $n = 3$  (Hobbs,  
412 1974; Hooke, 1981; Weertman, 1983; Budd and Jacka, 1989; Alley, 1992; Pater-  
413 son, 1994; Petrenko and Whitworth, 1999; Schulson and Duval, 2009). In his  
414 pioneering work, Glen (1952) found  $n = 4$ . After extending his preliminary re-  
415 sults, he came to  $n = 3.2$  (Glen, 1955). In a later review, Glen (1975) eventually  
416 suggested  $n = 3.5$  for stresses above about 0.1 MPa, with its value falling off with  
417 decreasing stress towards (but not necessarily reaching) unity. A similar fall-off of  
418 the exponent  $n$  at sufficiently low stresses has been observed and/or suggested by  
419 a number of authors, based on field and laboratory results (e.g. Mellor and Testa,  
420 1969a; Hooke, 1973; Goodman et al., 1981; Doake and Wolff, 1985; Pimienta  
421 and Duval, 1987; Goldsby and Kohlstedt, 1997; Azuma et al., 2000; Peltier et al.,  
422 2000; Cole and Durrell, 2001; Durham et al., 2001; Goldsby and Kohlstedt, 2001,  
423 2002; Marshall et al., 2002; Song, 2008). The case  $n \approx 2$  is usually associated

424 to grain boundary sliding, while  $n \rightarrow 1$  is believed to be caused by diffusional  
 425 flow or Harper–Dorn creep (Goodman et al., 1981; Duval et al., 1983; Weertman,  
 426 1983; Alley, 1992; Goldsby and Kohlstedt, 2001).

427 From the mathematical point of view, a power-law exponent  $n \rightarrow 1$  at van-  
 428 ishing stresses would also be welcomed by modelers (see e.g. Thompson, 1979;  
 429 Hutter, 1982, 1983; Fowler, 2001). The case  $n > 1$  when  $\sigma \rightarrow 0$  leads to an infinite  
 430 effective viscosity  $d\sigma/d\dot{\epsilon}$ , and consequently to some pathological singularities in  
 431 the modeling of ice-sheet flow (e.g. an infinite surface curvature on the ice divide  
 432 and infinite slope at the ice-sheet margin). Owing to this, simple generalizations  
 433 of (5) have been proposed, like

$$\dot{\epsilon} = A_I \sigma + A_{II} \sigma^n \quad [\text{SC}] \quad (11)$$

434 with  $n$  non-integer, or alternatively the polynomial form

$$\dot{\epsilon} = \sum_{i=1}^N A_i \sigma^i \quad [\text{SC}] \quad (12)$$

435 with  $i$  integer (e.g. Meier, 1958, 1960; Lliboutry, 1969; Colbeck and Evans, 1973;  
 436 Thompson, 1979; Hutter, 1980, 1981; Hutter et al., 1981; Smith and Morland,  
 437 1981; Pettit and Waddington, 2003). The parameters  $A_I$ ,  $A_{II}$  and  $A_i$  are usually as-  
 438 sumed to be functions of temperature, and possibly also of other factors, like grain  
 439 size, water/impurity content, etc. (Remark 8). More sophisticated generalizations  
 440 of (5), based e.g. on the Garofalo or the Prandtl–Eyring models, are discussed by  
 441 Barnes et al. (1971) and Hutter (1983).

442 **Remark 8.** Flow law generalizations like (11) or (12) are not necessarily mathe-  
 443 matical artifices to overcome numerical singularities: they may in fact represent

444 the competition of several deformation mechanisms. For instance, Azuma et al.  
445 (1999, 2000) proposed a combination of dislocation creep ( $n = 3$ ) and diffusional  
446 flow ( $n = 1$ ) to explain the weaker  $c$ -axis clustering observed in fine-grained,  
447 high-impurity ice layers (viz. cloudy bands) at low temperatures and stresses in  
448 the Dome Fuji deep ice core.

449 Compared to secondary creep, the tertiary creep of ice has been much less  
450 studied, in spite of its widespread occurrence in nature. The reason is, as already  
451 mentioned in Sect. 3.1, the extremely long period necessary to reach tertiary creep  
452 in deformation tests under the low temperatures and stresses typically found in  
453 glaciers and ice sheets.

454 From a series of tests at  $-11.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ ,  $-4.8^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $-1.9^{\circ}\text{C}$ , with stresses ranging  
455 from 0.3 to 1.6 MPa (corresponding to strain rates between  $10^{-8}$  and  $10^{-5}\text{s}^{-1}$ ),  
456 Steinemann (1958) derived the following power law, valid for the secondary and  
457 tertiary regimes

$$\dot{\epsilon} = A\sigma^n, \quad n = n_0 + P(\sigma, T), \quad [\text{SC, TC}] \quad (13)$$

458 where  $A(T)$  is still given by (9),  $n_0 = \text{const.}$ , and  $P$  is a polynomial function of  
459  $\sigma$  and  $T$ , such that  $n = n_0$  during secondary creep. During tertiary creep,  $n$  may  
460 reach quite large values, depending on the applied stress and temperature, e.g.  
461  $n \geq 10$  for  $\sigma = 1.6$  MPa and  $T = -1.9^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

462 More recently, it became customary in glaciology to follow an alternative ap-  
463 proach, in which the power-law exponent is kept constant, e.g.  $n = n_0 = 3$  in  
464 (13), and all microstructural changes characteristic of tertiary creep are subsumed  
465 into the flow parameter  $A$ . The usual procedure is to introduce a dimensionless

466 *enhancement factor*  $E$ , such that

$$\dot{\epsilon} = EA\sigma^n, \quad n = n_0, \quad [\text{SC, TC}] \quad (14)$$

467 where  $A(T)$  is still given by (9),  $n_0 = \text{const.}$ , and the enhancement factor  $E$  satisfies  
468 the compatibility condition

$$E|_{\dot{\epsilon}_{\min}} = 1, \quad [\text{SC}] \quad (15)$$

469 which ensures that (14) is equivalent to (5) during the secondary creep of isotropic  
470 ice. By extending Steinemann's (1958) results summarized in (3), Jacka and Li  
471 (2000) could show that, for a given stress regime,

$$\max(E) = \frac{\dot{\epsilon}_{\max}}{\dot{\epsilon}_{\min}} = E_{\max}(\dot{\epsilon}_{\min}, T), \quad (16)$$

472 where  $E_{\max}$  is an increasing function of temperature and secondary minimum  
473 strain rate. In particular, for uniaxial compression at high stresses and temper-  
474 atures, they found the upper bound  $E_{\max} = 3$ . Likewise, for simple shear at high  
475 temperatures and stresses Budd and Jacka (1989) report the upper bound  $E_{\max} = 8$ .  
476 These upper-bound values are believed to be the result of the symmetry superposi-  
477 tion of the applied stress on fully developed Lattice Preferred Orientations (LPOs)  
478 through Curie's principle (Rosen, 1995, 2005).

479 In the case of natural ice, the enhancement factor  $E$  is either derived from  
480 direct observation (Shoji and Langway, Jr., 1984; Dahl-Jensen, 1985; Wang et al.,  
481 2002) or modeled as a function (or functional) of a suitable set of variables that  
482 satisfactorily describe the microstructural evolution of ice during tertiary creep  
483 (Lile, 1978; Azuma, 1995; Placidi et al., 2010). It is believed that the main cause  
484 of enhancement is the strain-induced anisotropy due to LPOs, but other factors

485 may play also an important role, like *impurities* or *grain stereology* (i.e. grain  
486 sizes, shapes, and arrangement, see Appendix A).

487 **Remark 9.** It is important to have in mind that only those effects emerging in  
488 the tertiary creep should enter in the definition of the enhancement factor  $E$ . For  
489 instance, the effect of hardening provoked by the interaction of dislocations with  
490 dispersed fine particles (Ashby, 1966) is already active during secondary creep  
491 and consequently should not be included in  $E$ , but rather in the factor  $\alpha$  of (9).

492 Unfortunately, it is a formidable task to study the enhancement of tertiary  
493 creep by impurities and/or grain stereology in deformation tests at the low temper-  
494 atures, stresses, and impurity concentrations typical of glaciers and ice sheets. On  
495 the other hand, such an enhancement is frequently observed in the field through  
496 ice-core and borehole studies (Gundestrup and Hansen, 1984; Fischer and Ko-  
497 rner, 1986; Dahl-Jensen and Gundestrup, 1987; Etheridge, 1989; Paterson, 1991;  
498 Cuffey et al., 2000a,b), but in such cases it is very difficult to identify the real  
499 agent of the effect because, as explained in detail in Part I, anisotropy, grain size  
500 and shape, soluble and insoluble impurity concentrations all correlate generally  
501 well with climate signals. Be that as it may, a clear example of tertiary creep en-  
502 hancement by impurities and/or grain size and shape is offered by the study of a  
503 “soft ice” layer discovered at the EDML drilling site in Antarctica (Faria et al.,  
504 2006a, 2009, in preparation; see also Part I): microstructural analyses revealed the  
505 occurrence of strain accommodation by *microscopic grain boundary sliding via*  
506 *microshear* (cf. Drury and Humphreys, 1988; Bons and Jessell, 1999). Evidences  
507 suggest that this phenomenon is triggered by a combination of high impurity con-  
508 tent and temperature with small grain sizes and a suitable LPO, which facilitates



509 the sliding of grain boundaries and leads the microstructure to recrystallize into a  
510 characteristic “brick wall” pattern that promotes further microshear.

511 Sophisticated tensorial models that explore the anisotropy of natural ice LPOs  
512 have also been proposed (Azuma, 1994; Gödert and Hutter, 1998; Morland and  
513 Staroszczyk, 1998; Gillet-Chaulet et al., 2005; Faria, 2006b; Placidi and Hutter,  
514 2006), although their use in large scale computer models has been greatly ham-  
515 pered by their intrinsic mathematical complexities (Montagnat et al., 2013). They  
516 are generally characterized by a fourth-rank tensor-valued fluidity  $\mathbf{F}$  (or its recip-  
517 rocal, the viscosity  $\boldsymbol{\mu} = \mathbf{F}^{-1}$ ) such that

$$\dot{\boldsymbol{\epsilon}} = \mathbf{F}\boldsymbol{\sigma} . \quad [\text{SC, TC}] \quad (17)$$

518 The fluidity tensor  $\mathbf{F}$  is usually a function or functional of the stress, tempera-  
519 ture, and a set of time-dependent vector- and/or tensor-valued variables used to  
520 describe the LPO symmetry. In some models the fluidity tensor may also depend  
521 on additional factors already mentioned, like grain size, impurity concentration or  
522 water content (Faria, 2006b).

### 523 *3.3. Flow–structure interplay and the tripartite paradigm*

524 From the discussions in Sects. 3.1 and 3.2 it turns out that the regimes of strain,  
525 stress, strain rate and temperature typically found in polar ice sheets cannot be  
526 simultaneously achieved in laboratory. Extrapolations of the results of extreme  
527 creep tests (e.g. Russell-Head and Budd, 1979; Pimienta and Duval, 1987; Jacka  
528 and Li, 2000; Goldsby and Kohlstedt, 2001) do not converge to a unified con-  
529 clusion, leaving open the possibility that several mechanisms of deformation, re-  
530 crystallization and recovery may be coincidentally active in polar ice. Therefore,

531 in order to acquire a better understanding of the interplay between flow and mi-  
532 crostructure in ice sheets, we must resort to indirect approaches. The most ef-  
533 fective of them is undoubtedly the microstructural analysis of ice core samples,  
534 which is reviewed in the ensuing sections. Before embarking on such a review,  
535 however, it may be interesting to approach the interplay issue from the standpoint  
536 of large-scale ice-sheet mechanics.

537 For several decades, the *tripartite paradigm* (also called “three-stage model”;  
538 cf. Sect. 3.3 of Part I) has defined the status quo in regard to our general under-  
539 standing of polar ice microstructures. It has set the framework for interpreting  
540 the evolution of grain sizes (Stephenson, 1967; Gow, 1969; Alley et al., 1986a,b;  
541 Durand et al., 2006) and lattice preferred orientations (Alley, 1992; Alley et al.,  
542 1995; Thorsteinsson et al., 1997), as well as the onset of dynamic recrystallization  
543 (Duval and Castelnau, 1995). It has also established the basis for polycrystalline  
544 ice models (De la Chapelle et al., 1998; Montagnat and Duval, 2000; Faria et al.,  
545 2002; Ktitarev et al., 2002) and provided arguments in disputes about deforma-  
546 tion mechanisms in polar ice (Pimienta and Duval, 1987; Duval and Montagnat,  
547 2002).

548 The cornerstone of the tripartite paradigm is the assumption that Normal Grain  
549 Growth (NGG) dominates the evolution of the polar ice microstructure in the up-  
550 per hundreds of meters of the ice sheet, including the firn layer, according to the  
551 parabolic law

$$D^2 - D_0^2 = K t , \quad (18)$$

552 where  $D^2$  is the mean grain cross-sectional area at time  $t$ ,  $D_0^2$  is its extrapolated  
553 initial value, and  $K$  is the grain growth rate (Stephenson, 1967; Gow, 1969; Alley  
554 et al., 1986a; Paterson, 1994; De la Chapelle et al., 1998). This assumption has

555 recently been challenged by Kipfstuhl et al. (2006, 2009) through a detailed mi-  
556 crostructure study of Antarctic ice and firn from the EDC and EDML sites. These  
557 authors found clear evidence of migration and rotation recrystallization (RRX) al-  
558 ready at very shallow depths (a few tens of meters at EDML) and identified them  
559 as one of the dominant mechanisms of microstructure evolution in deep firn and  
560 bubbly ice (Figs. C.7 and C.8). Laboratory experiments and computer simulations  
561 of normal grain growth (Roessiger et al., 2011, 2013; Azuma et al., 2012) have  
562 also cast doubts on the tripartite paradigm, by showing that the microstructure of  
563 shallow polar ice seems to be affected by processes other than NGG.

564       Based on these recent results and the information discussed in the previous  
565 sections, we can now investigate the reasons for the failure of the tripartite paradigm.  
566 In the pioneering work of Gow (1969), which established the notion of NGG in  
567 polar ice, mean grain size was derived from the cross-sectional areas of the 50  
568 largest grains in a sample. Clearly, this method is fast and practical, but it ignores  
569 (i.e. it cuts off) most of the grain size distribution and is therefore inappropriate  
570 (Remark 10).

571 **Remark 10.** Gow (1969) justified this approach by his observation of a certain  
572 uniformity in the size of grains disaggregated from specific snow layers. Such  
573 uniformity is however questionable and has not been observed in modern studies.  
574 It has possibly been caused by a bias towards larger grains, which is introduced  
575 during the process of disaggregation of the fragile snow and firn.

576       As discussed in Part I, despite its shortcomings the 50-largest-grains method  
577 has been used for determining the mean grain sizes of several firn and ice cores, in-  
578 cluding GISP2. More elaborated methods, like the linear intercept (Dye 3, GRIP,

579 GISP2), the counting of grains within a given area (Camp Century, Byrd, Vos-  
580 tok) or the modern Automatic Fabric Analysis, AFA (NGRIP, EDC, Dome F)  
581 share a common limitation: they are all based on thickness-integrated images of  
582 the ice sample, so that the resolution of the method is limited by the thickness  
583 of the thin section under analysis (usually around 0.3–0.5 mm). Grains or grain-  
584 boundary features smaller than the section thickness cannot be identified, and very  
585 inclined boundaries give rise to large experimental errors. This limitation imposes  
586 a serious cut-off in the grain size distribution, which handicaps interpretations of  
587 microstructure evolution in natural ice.

588 To date, the best solution for improving the resolution of ice microstructure  
589 analyses is actually based on the old, pioneering work of Seligman (1949), illus-  
590 trated in Fig. C.9: we simply record the the grain-boundary grooves on the ice  
591 surface, which are naturally produced by thermal etching. Today it is no longer  
592 necessary to cover the ice sample with a sheet of paper and rub it with a pencil,  
593 in order to record its microstructure. We can simply photograph the thermally  
594 etched ice surface with a high-resolution digital camera. This is the physical prin-  
595 ciple of the *Microstructure Mapping* method ( $\mu$ SM), proposed by Kipfstuhl et al.  
596 (2006). If the thermal etching is well done, the resolution of the  $\mu$ SM method is  
597 limited mainly by the resolution of the optical equipment and the digital image  
598 analysis software. Current set-ups work with resolutions in the range 3–65  $\mu$ m  
599 (Kipfstuhl et al., 2006, 2009). Another promising option, with even higher reso-  
600 lution than  $\mu$ SM, is *Electron Backscatter Diffraction* (EBSD; Iliescu et al., 2004;  
601 Piazzolo et al., 2008; Weikusat et al., 2010; Prior et al., 2012). The use of EBSD  
602 on ice is technically very difficult and is still in its infancy, but rapid technological  
603 and methodological developments suggest that it may become a powerful tool for

604 future studies of ice microstructure.

605 In the sequel, we investigate the validity of the tripartite paradigm in the  
606 EDML site. The reason for selecting this site is twofold: first, it provides the  
607 most detailed and up-to-date information about polar firn and ice microstructures;  
608 second, it offers one of the best examples of “typical” Antarctic ice, because the  
609 EDML drilling site is representative of the Antarctic plateau without being located  
610 at such an unusual place like an ice dome (e.g. EDC, Dome F) or above a large  
611 subglacial lake (viz. Vostok).

612 The increase of grain size with depth in EDML polar firn was studied by Kipf-  
613 stuhl et al. (2009) at three distinct “resolutions,” viz. average grain area of the 100  
614 largest grains, of the 500 largest grains, and of all grains in each firn section. These  
615 three “resolutions” were chosen in order to investigate how the afore-mentioned  
616 cut-off of the grain size distribution affects our perception of grain growth. From  
617 the results of that study, we can now calculate the grain growth rate  $K$  appear-  
618 ing in (18) for each of the three cut-offs. We find  $K_{100} = 3.3 \times 10^{-3} \text{mm}^2/\text{a}$  for  
619 the 100 largest grains,  $K_{500} = 2.0 \times 10^{-3} \text{mm}^2/\text{a}$  for the 500 largest grains, and  
620  $K_{\text{all}} = 1.5 \times 10^{-4} \text{mm}^2/\text{a}$  when all grains in the sample are taken into account.  
621 These values can be compared with Paterson’s empirical curve relating growth  
622 rate and temperature, derived from a compilation of field measurements of grain  
623 growth rates in firn from various polar locations (Fig. 2.5 of Paterson, 1994). For  
624 the EDML site, where the mean temperature in firn and shallow ice is ca.  $-45^\circ\text{C}$   
625 (Table B.1 of Part I), Paterson’s curve predicts a grain growth rate in the range  
626  $2(\pm 1) \times 10^{-3} \text{mm}^2/\text{a}$ . Clearly, the EDML values of  $K_{100}$  and  $K_{500}$  are compatible  
627 with Paterson’s empirical prediction, while the most reliable of them,  $K_{\text{all}}$ , is too  
628 low by one order of magnitude.

629 The cause of this serious discrepancy is related to the different cut-offs of the  
630 grain size distributions. The flawed rates  $K_{100}$  and  $K_{500}$  describe solely the kinetics  
631 of the larger grains, that is, of truncated grain size distributions. In this manner,  
632 they systematically ignore the formation, existence, and kinetics of smaller grains.  
633 It is evident that it makes no sense to use such inaccurate growth rates as basis for a  
634 theory of NGG in polar ice. Unfortunately, the limited resolution of most methods  
635 of polar ice microstructure analysis imply that the great majority of grain growth  
636 rates reported in the literature of polar firm and shallow ice may be impaired by  
637 such shortcomings.

638 Furthermore, the sheer fact that grain size data can be fitted with a parabolic  
639 growth law is by no means a corroboration of the occurrence of NGG (especially if  
640 the growth rates are flawed): Strain-Induced Grain Boundary Migration (SIBM)  
641 does not preclude a linear increase of the mean grain cross-sectional area with  
642 time, in a regime that may be called *Dynamic Grain Growth* (DGG, cf. Appendix  
643 A). SIBM-driven grain growth data can sometimes be fitted with a NGG law, but  
644 in this case the law parameters (activation energy, growth rate, etc.) have no real  
645 physical meaning. This explains the low value found for the most reliable grain  
646 growth rate,  $K_{all}$ : it does not describe the real velocity of grain boundaries in the  
647 NGG regime, simply because NGG cannot control the microstructure evolution  
648 of a material undergoing deformation, like polar firm.

649 As pointed out by Azuma et al. (2012) and Roessiger et al. (2011, 2013), the  
650 motion of grain boundaries in firm and bubbly ice is strongly affected by a number  
651 of influences, including some extraneous to NGG, like stored strain energy and a  
652 non-steady-state configuration of the grain-boundary network. Indeed, according  
653 to Azuma et al. (2012), the grain boundary migration rate of pure, bubble-free

654 ice undergoing true NGG at  $-45^{\circ}\text{C}$  should be  $K_{\text{free}} = 1.6 \times 10^{-1}\text{mm}^2/\text{a}$ , which  
655 is several orders of magnitude larger than the rates predicted by Paterson (1994)  
656 or measured by Kipfstuhl et al. (2009). The reason for the much slower growth  
657 rate observed in polar firn cannot be attributed just to pinning by bubbles and  
658 other impurities: complex strain-induced boundary motions (SIBM-O) and the  
659 formation of new grains by dynamic recrystallization (RRX and SIBM-N) spoil  
660 NGG and disguise the real migration rate of the boundaries.

661 An important corollary of the tripartite paradigm is the assumption that grain  
662 boundary migration during NGG (i.e. migration driven by the free energy of the  
663 grain boundaries) is an efficient softening mechanism that accommodates basal  
664 slip deformation. As explained by Pimienta and Duval (1987):

665 In conclusion, grainboundary migration associated with [normal] grain  
666 growth is an efficient accommodation process for dislocation glide in  
667 fine-grained ices. In consequence the usual transient creep cannot oc-  
668 cur and strain energy is always small compared with the driving force  
669 for [normal] grain growth.

670 The fact that grain boundary migration is an important recovery mechanism  
671 in natural ice is obvious and beyond doubt. On the other hand, considering the  
672 fact that grain boundary migration is not a deformation mechanism, its role in  
673 the accommodation of deformation is per se controversial (Kocks, 1970; Means  
674 and Jessell, 1986; Goldsby and Kohlstedt, 2002; Cahn and Taylor, 2004) and be-  
675 comes highly questionable in the case of NGG, seeing that migrating boundaries  
676 in the NGG regime should, by definition, move free from the influence of internal  
677 stresses and strain heterogeneities.

678 In the case of EDML firn, it is not difficult to show that NGG does not dictate

679 the microstructure evolution and that grain boundary migration, if it can be an  
680 accommodation mechanism in the first place, is not sufficient to suppress dynamic  
681 recrystallization. From Ruth et al. (2007) we calculate two bound estimates for  
682 the vertical strain rate (“layer thinning”) of EDML firn at 50 m depth:  $\dot{\epsilon}_{\text{total}} \approx$   
683  $3.2 \times 10^{-11} \text{s}^{-1}$  and  $\dot{\epsilon}_{\text{i.eq.}} \approx 7.4 \times 10^{-12} \text{s}^{-1}$ , see Appendix B. The former ( $\dot{\epsilon}_{\text{total}}$ )  
684 describes the total thinning of the firn layers, including pore-space compression.  
685 In contrast,  $\dot{\epsilon}_{\text{i.eq.}}$  is based on the ice-equivalent depth and consequently excludes  
686 any contribution of the pore space. As discussed in Appendix B, the average real  
687 strain rate locally experienced by the ice grains in firn,  $\dot{\epsilon}_{\text{real}}$ , is very difficult to  
688 determine with precision, since it depends on the highly variable contribution of  
689 the pore space to the strain accommodation. In any case, it should lie between  
690 these two extreme strain-rate averages, viz.  $\dot{\epsilon}_{\text{total}} \geq \dot{\epsilon}_{\text{real}} \geq \dot{\epsilon}_{\text{i.eq.}}$ .

691 In addition to strain rates, in Appendix B we also compute the total vertical  
692 strain and the water-equivalent strain at 50 m depth, respectively,  $\epsilon_{\text{total}} \approx -30\%$   
693 and  $\epsilon_{\text{i.eq.}} \approx -7\%$ . Thus, from these estimates we conclude that EDML firn at  
694 ca. 50 m depth is already deforming in the tertiary creep regime (cf. Sect. 3.1) and  
695 should be undergoing dynamic recrystallization (Fig. C.7). These conclusions are  
696 in accordance with the experimental observation of dynamic recrystallization in  
697 EDML firn by Kipfstuhl et al. (2009).

#### 698 **4. Grain and subgrain boundaries**

699 As any other polycrystalline material, polar ice consists of connected regions of  
700 uninterrupted crystalline lattice known as *grains*, which are bounded together by  
701 *grain boundaries*. Such crystalline regions are not perfect, though. Localized dis-  
702 tortions of the lattice are caused by defects, especially dislocations (Sect. 2), which



703 can sometimes arrange themselves in stable structures called *subgrain boundaries*.  
704 By gradually increasing the lattice misorientation across a subgrain boundary,  
705 the latter may evolve to a new grain boundary. For this reason, grain and sub-  
706 grain boundaries are also named high-angle and low-angle boundaries, respec-  
707 tively. These names make evident that the grain-/subgrain-boundary dichotomy  
708 is a conceptual simplification, since the transition from low to high misorienta-  
709 tion is in fact continuous. As such, the critical misorientation angle that distin-  
710 guishes between grain and subgrain boundaries is to some extent a matter of con-  
711 vention, which depends on the boundary properties under consideration. In this  
712 work we follow Weikusat et al. (2011) by assuming that the lattice misorientation  
713 across subgrain boundaries in polar ice is not larger than ca.  $5^\circ$ , a result consistent  
714 with observations in other minerals (Drury and Urai, 1990; Passchier and Trouw,  
715 2005).

#### 716 4.1. *Subgrain boundaries*

717 Subgrain boundaries are essential features of the ice microstructure, as they are  
718 indisputable evidences of heterogeneous strains, intercrystalline incompatibilities,  
719 internal stresses and high concentration of geometrically necessary dislocations.  
720 They have been observed in ice for at least a century (Tarr and Rich, 1912). By  
721 analysing thin sections of bent ice samples, Matsuyama (1920) reported “faint but  
722 distinct straight lines” developed within some grains with zigzag boundaries, and  
723 the straight lines were observed to sometimes “start from the angular points of  
724 these zigzag boundaries.”

725 Nakaya (1958) later recognized that such straight lines were actually subgrain  
726 boundaries made up of *geometrically necessary dislocations*. He performed bend-  
727 ing experiments in single crystals with *c*-axes parallel to the bending load and ob-

728 served the formation of slip bands (cf. Appendix A), which would initially bend  
729 with the crystal. This bending of slip bands is the precursor of a particular type of  
730 subgrain boundary, by accumulating edge dislocations along several basal-gliding  
731 layers in a dislocation wall perpendicular to the slip bands. At already  $\ll 1^\circ$  of  
732 crystal bending, subgrain boundaries can be seen, typically emerging from the  
733 high curvature part of slip bands, transforming them into a kink structure, if mis-  
734 orientation further increases with ongoing deformation. In the glaciological liter-  
735 ature, this process is often called “polygonization” (Alley et al., 1995).

736 The particular type of subgrain boundary described above is known as a *basal*  
737 *tilt boundary*. In the ideal case it bisects the angle formed by the tilted basal  
738 plane and is made up exclusively of basal edge dislocations with Burgers vector  
739  $\mathbf{b} = \mathbf{a}$  (Table D.2). In ice, tilted basal planes or c-axes can be measured using  
740 an Automatic Fabric Analyzer (AFA; Wilson et al., 2007) or the formvar etch-pit  
741 method (Matsuda, 1979; Barrette and Sinha, 1994; Hamann et al., 2007). Actu-  
742 ally, most studies of subgrain boundaries in ice are performed on experimentally  
743 deformed specimens (Wilson et al., 1986, this issue; Barrette and Sinha, 1994;  
744 Hamann et al., 2007). In the case of naturally deformed ice, as in polar ice sheets  
745 or glaciers, the occurrence of subgrain boundaries has often been determined indi-  
746 rectly from neighbouring grain misorientation statistics (Alley et al., 1995; Wang  
747 et al., 2003; Durand et al., 2008). Only recently, new microscopy methods have  
748 allowed the direct and extensive (statistically relevant) observation of subgrain  
749 boundaries in naturally deformed ice, e.g. through Microstructure Mapping ( $\mu$ SM;  
750 Kipfstuhl et al., 2006). These studies have revealed that, in addition to the clas-  
751 sical tilt boundaries characteristic of “polygonization,” other subgrain boundary  
752 configurations are also very common in both, naturally and artificially deformed

753 ice (Hamann et al., 2007; Weikusat et al., 2009a,b). These configurations (ar-  
754 rangements) include boundaries parallel and normal to the basal planes, as well as  
755 zigzag combinations of them (Fig. C.10).

756 The observation of such detailed subgrain boundary configurations is only  
757 possible because thermal etching (sublimation) is highly sensitive to boundaries  
758 with very low-misorientation ( $\ll 0.5^\circ$ ), as proven directly by high-resolution crys-  
759 tal orientation measurements, such as X-ray Laue diffraction (Miyamoto et al.,  
760 2011; Weikusat et al., 2011) and Electron Backscatter Diffraction (EBSD; Weikusat  
761 et al., 2010). These two methods enable complete determination of the crystalline  
762 lattice misorientation across the boundary, including both *c*- and *a*-axes. A de-  
763 tailed knowledge of subgrain boundary misorientation and configuration allows  
764 to identify the possible slip systems of its constituent dislocations (Trepied et al.,  
765 1980; Prior et al., 1999, 2002; Piazzolo et al., 2008). Following this approach,  
766 Weikusat et al. (2011) combined  $\mu$ SM with X-ray Laue diffraction to obtain first  
767 statistical data about subgrain boundaries and their constituent dislocations in po-  
768 lar ice (Table D.2).

769 By recalling the consequences of the low stacking fault energy on the basal  
770 plane of hexagonal ice (Sect. 2.1), it may seem paradoxical at first to see in Ta-  
771 ble D.2 that almost 30% of all subgrain boundaries in polar ice are composed  
772 of non-basal dislocations. The solution of this apparent paradox lies in the high  
773 temperatures and low strain rates typical of natural ice deformation, which turn  
774 dynamic recovery effective enough to allow the rearrangement of basal and non-  
775 basal geometrically necessary dislocations in complex dislocation walls and sub-  
776 grain boundaries. Indeed, from the microstructural features observed in polar ice,  
777 we conclude that dynamic recovery through the formation of a variety of sub-

778 grain boundaries by *grain subdivision* (cf. Appendix A), as well as the splitting  
779 of grains by *rotation recrystallization* (Sect. 5.1), are fundamental mechanisms  
780 of strain accommodation in natural ice. Thus, it follows that geometrically nec-  
781 essary dislocations play a decisive role in the accommodation of deformation in  
782 polar ice.

#### 783 4.2. *Grain boundaries*

784 The structure of grain boundaries plays an essential role in the mechanics, re-  
785 crystallization, and molecular diffusion of ice, since it determines the energetics,  
786 mobility, cohesion, and permeability of grain boundaries. While the structure of  
787 low-angle grain boundaries (i.e. subgrain boundaries) in ice is well described by  
788 the theory of dislocation arrays (Read and Shockley, 1950; Higashi and Sakai,  
789 1961; Suzuki and Kuroiwa, 1972), little is actually known about the structure of  
790 high-angle grain boundaries (Higashi, 1978; Hondoh and Higashi, 1978; Petrenko  
791 and Whitworth, 1999). For this reason, classical views from metallurgy (Sutton  
792 and Balluffi, 1995) are commonly adopted for ice (Goodman et al., 1981; Frost  
793 and Ashby, 1982), in particular that the excess volume of grain boundaries ren-  
794 der them favourable diffusion paths for interstitials and solutes, in such a manner  
795 that the activation energy for diffusion of self-interstitials is expected to be lower  
796 within grain boundaries (grain-boundary self-diffusion) than through the ice lat-  
797 tice (lattice self-diffusion).

798 Notwithstanding, the density anomaly of water poses an interesting prospect  
799 for the structure of grain boundaries in ice: in contrast to metals, water molecules  
800 in the grain boundaries of polycrystalline ice could be packed more closely than  
801 in the ice lattice (i.e. a negative excess volume), in a sort of amorphous or quasi-  
802 liquid state (Clifford, 1967; Kondo et al., 2007). This conjecture is consistent with

803 the high molecular disorganization expected within grain boundaries and near free  
804 surfaces due to proton disorder (Petrenko and Whitworth, 1999; cf. Sect. 2), as  
805 well as with the observation of liquid water veins at the corners and edges of  
806 grain boundaries in polycrystalline ice at temperatures close to the melting point  
807 (Steinemann, 1958; Barnes et al., 1971; Nye and Frank, 1973; Mader, 1992). An  
808 important corollary of such a “dense grain boundary” conjecture is that the be-  
809 haviour of grain boundaries in ice could be very sensitive to temperature and im-  
810 purity content, causing grain boundaries to possess either a more “liquid” or more  
811 “glassy” structure.

812 Unfortunately, direct observation of the molecular structure of ice grain bound-  
813 aries has not been possible so far, and grain-boundary diffusion experiments in ice  
814 are also very difficult to accomplish. Consequently, grain-boundary migration ex-  
815 periments are still regarded as the simplest means of obtaining valuable insights  
816 into the structure of ice grain boundaries, seeing that, like the phenomenon of  
817 self-diffusion, the migration of grain boundaries involves the jumping of water  
818 molecules between lattice and grain-boundary sites, as well as their movement  
819 inside the grain boundary.

820 As reviewed in Sect. 3.3 (see also Sect. 3.3 of Part I) the tripartite paradigm  
821 states that grain-boundary migration in the upper hundreds of meters of polar ice  
822 sheets should occur via Normal Grain Growth (NGG) according to the parabolic  
823 law (18). Thus, if the tripartite paradigm were true, the temperature dependence  
824 of the grain growth rate  $K$  of polar ice could be estimated from grain size versus  
825 age data of ice cores extracted from different polar sites. The activation energy of  
826 grain growth derived from such analyses (40–50 kJ/mol) has been accepted and  
827 widely applied in glaciology. It happens, however, that polar ice is under con-

828 tinual deformation and contains many air bubbles. In the past, it was assumed  
829 that air bubbles and pores should not significantly affect the migration of grain  
830 boundaries (Duval, 1985; Alley et al., 1986b), but recent computer simulations  
831 (Roessiger et al., 2013), field observations (Kipfstuhl et al., 2006, 2009) and lab-  
832 oratory experiments (Azuma et al., 2012) have proven the contrary. Furthermore,  
833 it has been shown that the stored strain energy in polar ice sheets is sufficient  
834 not only to keep the ice microstructure out of the quasi-stationary state required  
835 for NGG (Faria and Kipfstuhl, 2005; Roessiger et al., 2011), but also to trigger  
836 rotation and migration recrystallization in firn and shallow ice (Kipfstuhl et al.,  
837 2006, 2009; Faria et al., 2009; Weikusat et al., 2009a,b). Therefore, the tripartite  
838 paradigm is generally not valid and the activation energy derived from ice-core  
839 grain-size data cannot be the true activation energy of NGG in ice.

840 By using a new technique for producing pure, bubble-free ice, derived from a  
841 method introduced by Stern et al. (1997), Azuma et al. (2012) could study the tem-  
842 perature dependence of the true NGG rate  $K$  of ice. They found that  $K$  in bubble-  
843 free ice is approximately three orders of magnitude larger than that estimated from  
844 ice-core data (Paterson, 1994; cf. Sect. 3.3). Furthermore, an activation energy for  
845 NGG of about 110–120 kJ/mol was observed in bubble-free ice at temperatures  
846 between  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $-5^{\circ}\text{C}$ . In contrast, the activation energy for NGG of bubbly  
847 ice under the same conditions is circa 40–70 kJ/mol. The similarity between the  
848 values of activation energy for grain growth derived from ice-core data and exper-  
849 imentally measured in bubbly ice is evident. This fact compared with the apparent  
850 activation energy of 50 kJ/mol calculated by Azuma et al. (2012) for the migration  
851 of air bubbles in ice, suggest that the slow grain growth observed in polar ice cores  
852 is significantly affected by the *migration velocity of air bubbles*.

853 It must be noticed that the true activation energy for NGG in pure, bubble-free  
854 ice is approximately twice the activation energy for lattice self-diffusion (Ram-  
855 seier, 1967). In the absence of reliable measurements of grain-boundary self-  
856 diffusion in ice, and recalling that grain-boundary migration and diffusion involve  
857 akin molecular processes (for a deeper discussion see Azuma et al., 2012), we  
858 come to the conclusion that the activation energy for grain-boundary diffusion  
859 may also be considerably larger than that for lattice diffusion. This result adds  
860 support to the dense-grain-boundary conjecture, as suggested by Azuma et al.  
861 (2012): when grains grow, the total grain-boundary area must decrease. This  
862 leads to fluxes of water molecules across and along the grain boundaries. If the  
863 grain boundaries have some sort of “semi-glassy” structure, the activation ener-  
864 gies for grain-boundary migration and diffusion must be high, because the water  
865 molecules are jammed inside the grain boundaries. On the other hand, if the  
866 grain boundaries have a kind of “quasi-liquid” structure, the activation energies  
867 for grain-boundary migration and diffusion may be high if the water molecules  
868 are aggregated in clusters that must be either thermally activated as a group or  
869 broken down to allow self-diffusion (Mott, 1948; Merkle and Thompson, 1973).

870 As a closing remark, it should be noticed that even if the activation energies for  
871 grain-boundary migration and diffusion are larger than previously expected, so is  
872 also the growth rate  $K$ , and consequently the grain boundary mobility, within the  
873 temperature range typical of ice sheets (between  $-80^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $0^{\circ}\text{C}$ ). Consequently,  
874 grain boundaries in polar ice are very mobile and the grain size evolution turns  
875 out to be controlled by second-phase dragging and dynamic recrystallization in a  
876 process called *Dynamic Grain Growth* (DGG; Appendix A). These effects give  
877 rise to the well-known apparent correlation of grain size with climate proxies (see

878 Part I).

## 879 **5. Dynamic recrystallization**

880 In the old glaciological literature, the word “recrystallization” was loosely used in  
881 reference to nucleation and growth of new grains favourably oriented for defor-  
882 mation; a definition that still can be found in more recent works (Paterson, 1994).  
883 Here we adopt a more precise and comprehensive definition of recrystallization  
884 as “any reorientation of the lattice caused by grain boundary migration and/or for-  
885 mation of new grain boundaries” (cf. Appendix A), which is consistent with its  
886 modern meaning in geology (Urai et al., 1986; Drury and Urai, 1990; Passchier  
887 and Trouw, 2005).

888 It is worth noticing that metallurgists use a concept of recrystallization simi-  
889 lar to the one adopted here, although they often exclude processes driven by the  
890 grain boundary energy (Doherty et al., 1997; Humphreys and Hatherly, 2004).  
891 This minor difference in terminology reflects the slightly distinct focuses of these  
892 two research fields. Metallurgists are frequently concerned with static annealing  
893 phenomena, in which recrystallization processes driven by grain boundary energy  
894 (usually called “grain growth/coarsening” in metallurgy) occur *after* the stored  
895 strain energy has been consumed by previous static recovery and recrystallization.  
896 In contrast, geologists are mostly concerned with dynamic recrystallization pro-  
897 cesses, in which strain energy is continually produced *during* deformation (cf. Re-  
898 mark 11). In particular, in the case of natural ice, the increase in mean grain size  
899 with age observed in ice cores (see Part I) is clearly influenced by the stored strain  
900 energy in a process of Dynamic Grain Growth (DGG; cf. Sect. 4.2 and Appendix  
901 A).



902 **Remark 11.** The common etymology of the metallurgical and geological termi-  
903 nologies mentioned above may help us to understand their subtle (but consequen-  
904 tial) distinction. In the primordial times of research in recrystallization, Alterthum  
905 (1922a,b) coined the terms “Bearbeitungsrekristallisation” and “Oberflächen-Rekristallisation,”  
906 meaning respectively “work-recrystallization” (namely, driven by the stored strain  
907 energy) and “surface-recrystallization” (i.e. driven by the grain boundary energy).  
908 It is interesting to perceive how the modern metallurgical terminology evolved  
909 giving emphasis on the distinguishing prefixes “work-” and “surface-,” whereas  
910 the current geological terminology emphasizes the common suffix “-recrystallization.”  
911 It seems that Alterthum himself had a preference for emphasizing the common  
912 suffix, seeing that he considered also the situation when both driving forces (viz. stored  
913 strain and grain boundary energies) act together, in a process he named “gemischte  
914 Rekristallisation,” that is “mixed recrystallization.”

#### 915 *5.1. Rotation recrystallization (RRX)*

916 By definition, the formation of a subgrain boundary is related to a slight rotation  
917 of the crystalline lattice of a certain portion of the grain, called the *subgrain*. Such  
918 a localized rotation is usually driven by local distortions of the lattice caused  
919 by internal stresses and intercrystalline misfits (cf. Sect. 2.2), which are accom-  
920 modated by the subgrain rotation and the resulting concentration of the lattice  
921 distortion (i.e. geometrically necessary dislocations) along the subgrain bound-  
922 ary (Sect. 4.1). If the driving force for rotation persists, the lattice misorientation  
923 across the subgrain boundary increases until the subgrain divides from the parent  
924 grain to become a grain in its own. Alternatively, the misorientation across the  
925 subgrain boundary may increase by subgrain growth and consumption of neigh-  
926 bouring subgrain boundaries in a region with monotonic lattice misorientation

927 gradient. In any case, it is the last step of the process, namely the splitting of the  
928 parent grain into two or more grains, that we name here *rotation recrystallization*  
929 (RRX; Appendix A).

930 Not all subgrain boundaries evolve to grain boundaries, though. In order to  
931 accomplish the creation of a new grain boundary via RRX, the internal stresses  
932 causing the subgrain rotation and growth must persist unchanged for a period long  
933 enough, and this is often not the case. Instead of developing a single high-angle  
934 boundary, the stressed grain often accommodates the internal stresses through  
935 the creation of several subgrain boundaries, which offer smoother but more com-  
936 plex geometrical possibilities of strain accommodation than a single large-angle  
937 boundary could provide (e.g. Figs. C.3, C.7b, C.8b–f and C.10).

938 It is actually not trivial to identify the transformation of a subgrain boundary  
939 into a grain boundary via RRX in naturally deformed ice, since natural ice sam-  
940 ples provide just a static snapshot of the microstructure evolution. Experience and  
941 good sense help in the direct identification of the most conspicuous examples, but  
942 direct inspection of grain boundary shapes is not a reliable method for quantify-  
943 ing RRX. In the past, RRX has been estimated indirectly from the stabilization of  
944 mean grain size (cf. ice-core reviews in Sects. 3.3, 4.2, 4.3, and 5.2 of Part I). This  
945 was relatively simple under the assumption of the tripartite paradigm (Sect. 3.3 of  
946 Part I; see also Sect. 3.3), since in this case RRX could be inferred from the devi-  
947 ation of the observed grain growth data from the theoretical predictions of normal  
948 grain growth (NGG) theory (Montagnat and Duval, 2000; Faria et al., 2002; Math-  
949 iesen et al., 2004; Placidi et al., 2004). However, if the tripartite paradigm is not  
950 valid, as proposed here, then the indirect quantification of RRX from grain size  
951 data becomes more difficult, due to the more complex motion of grain boundaries

952 during strain-induced boundary migration (SIBM-O), compared to NGG.

953 Alley et al. (1995) have proposed the most reliable method to date for quanti-  
954 fying RRX in natural ice. It involves an ingenious analysis of grain boundary mis-  
955 orientations, based on the assumption that a grain newly formed by RRX should  
956 have a lattice orientation closely related to that of its neighbouring sibling grain.  
957 Considering the fact that only *c*-axes can currently be measured extensively (us-  
958 ing an Automatic Fabric Analyzer, AFA; Wilson et al., 2007; see also Sect. 4.3  
959 of Part I), this method tends to underestimate RRX. Nevertheless, this underesti-  
960 mation may be tolerable, seeing that the fraction of grains formed by RRX about  
961 the *c*-axis is expected to be less than 10%, according to Weikusat et al. (2011),  
962 cf. Table D.2.

963 It should be remarked that RRX in ice can start already at very early stages  
964 of deformation. As explained in Sect. 3.1, during primary creep ( $\varepsilon \lesssim 1\%$ ) there  
965 occurs the load transfer from easy-glide to hard-glide systems, together with the  
966 build up of internal stresses and strain incompatibilities between the grains. All  
967 these processes promote the generation of the geometrically necessary disloca-  
968 tions needed for subgrain boundary formation and evolution.

## 969 5.2. *Nucleation and migration recrystallization*

970 An important contribution of glaciology to geology has been the study of deforma-  
971 tion and/or recrystallization of thin polycrystalline sections via transmitted light  
972 microscopy. The use of this technique in glaciology can be traced back to the first  
973 decades of 20th century (Tammann and Dreyer, 1929; Steinemann, 1958; Rigsby,  
974 1960; Wakahama, 1964), and later it found widespread application in structural  
975 geology through the use of a number of mineral-analogue materials, including  
976 magnesium, camphor, sodium chlorate, and octachloropropane (Burrows et al.,

977 1979; Urai et al., 1980; Jessell, 1986; Means, 1989; den Brok et al., 1998).

978 By using this kind of technique, Tammann and Dreyer (1929) managed to  
979 monitor the real-time static recrystallization of polycrystalline ice cold-rolled from  
980 snow, therefore providing first estimates of two-dimensional grain-boundary mi-  
981 gration rates in the temperature range between  $-2^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $-6^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Additionally, they  
982 observed grain coalescence and nucleation, and even embarked on an unsuccess-  
983 ful attempt of explaining the growth of ice grains during static recrystallization.

984 As mentioned in Sect. 2.1 of Part I, Seligman (1941) accredited to Perutz the  
985 interpretation of grain growth in ice during recrystallization as a consequence of  
986 grains well-oriented for basal slip having a lower free energy than badly-oriented  
987 grains, so that the former should grow at the expenses of those grains that can-  
988 not yield to the imposed stresses. This thermodynamic interpretation was subse-  
989 quently extended to the nucleation of new grains and tested in experiments and  
990 field investigations of recrystallization in temperate and polar (frozen) ice (e.g.  
991 Bader, 1951; Rigsby, 1951; Steinemann, 1958; Shoumsky, 1958; Rigsby, 1958b;  
992 Kamb, 1959; Rigsby, 1960; Gow, 1963; Kamb, 1964; Wakahama, 1964; Rigsby,  
993 1968; Kizaki, 1969; Budd, 1972; Kamb, 1972; Matsuda and Wakahama, 1978).  
994 These studies provided a wealth of data, but results were not always fully accor-  
995 dant (Remark 12). It became a general consensus that recrystallized ice grains  
996 tend to develop irregular shapes (as previously observed by Perutz and Seligman,  
997 1939; cf. Sect. 2.1 of Faria et al., this issue) combined with lattice preferred orien-  
998 tations (LPOs) that maximize the resolved shear stress on the basal planes. While  
999 the LPOs produced by recrystallization in uniaxial compression and extension  
1000 seemed compatible with Perutz' thermodynamic interpretation (viz. large/small  
1001 girdles centred around the axis of extension/compression; Kamb, 1972), those

1002 produced by simple shear appeared much less intuitive and defied simple expla-  
1003 nation. Therefore, owing to the importance of simple shear for the flow of glaciers  
1004 and ice sheets, during the 1950–1980’s much attention was dedicated to the un-  
1005 derstanding of dynamic recrystallization of ice under simple shear.

1006 **Remark 12.** The reader revising the literature from the second half of 20th cen-  
1007 tury should keep in mind that many glaciologists used to employ the term “recrys-  
1008 tallization” in a loose manner, often in reference to recrystallization with nucle-  
1009 ation only. Less frequently, the term also included ordinary migration recrystal-  
1010 lization without nucleation (SIBM-O, cf. Appendix A). Rotation recrystallization  
1011 (RRX) was often ignored in pre-1980 studies.

1012 Rigsby (1958b, 1960) observed much slower recrystallization rates in ice rich  
1013 in small air bubbles, and no evidence of mechanical twinning. He reported dif-  
1014 ferent LPOs in polar (frozen) and temperate ice: in the case of simple shear the  
1015 former exhibited a single maximum perpendicular to the shear plane, while the  
1016 latter showed multiple maxima. He interpreted the multiple maxima as the result  
1017 of migration recrystallization in a “nearly stress-free environment.” Steinemann  
1018 (1958) also found no evidence of mechanical twinning and emphasized the dis-  
1019 tinction between the LPOs produced by dynamic and static recrystallization. In  
1020 his torsion-simple-shear experiments (420 and 660 kPa at  $-1.9^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) he reported that  
1021 dynamic recrystallization generated multiple maxima, while subsequent static re-  
1022 crystallization transformed them into a single maximum perpendicular to the shear  
1023 plane (these observations were subsequently criticized and re-analysed by Kamb,  
1024 1959).

1025 By compiling results from other researchers and from his own investigations,  
1026 Kamb (1959, 1964, 1972) concluded that the typical LPOs produced in simple-

1027 shear tests at high temperatures (ca.  $-5^{\circ}\text{C}$  and above) had a single maximum  
1028 perpendicular to the shear plane, sometimes accompanied by a secondary, tran-  
1029 sient maximum rotated away from the first in the reverse shear direction. In con-  
1030 trast, LPOs found in glacier ice, which was supposedly deforming under simple-  
1031 shear conditions similar to those applied to the simple-shear tests, where charac-  
1032 terized by four maxima about the normal to the shear plane, ideally forming a  
1033 cross/diamond pattern with monoclinic symmetry. Kamb attributed the discrep-  
1034 ancy between laboratory and natural deformation to the vast difference in time  
1035 scales, so that some sort of lattice-orientation controlling mechanism should be-  
1036 come operative at very large strains ( $\epsilon \lesssim 100\%$ ). In contrast to Rigsby's obser-  
1037 vations, Kamb (1972) found in his experiments and observations no detectable  
1038 influence of air bubbles on recrystallization.

1039 Kizaki (1969) and Budd (1972) proposed that LPOs with multiple maxima  
1040 could be produced by ordinary migration recrystallization (SIBM-O, cf. Appendix  
1041 A) during dynamic grain growth, so that  $c$ -axis distributions with multiple max-  
1042 ima should be characteristic of ice with coarse irregular grains, while the  $c$ -axes  
1043 of fine-grained ice should be either weakly-oriented or clustered in a single max-  
1044 imum. Finally, by analysing  $c$ - and  $a$ -axis orientations in recrystallized ice with  
1045 multiple maxima, Matsuda and Wakahama (1978) discovered a common coincident-  
1046 lattice relationship between neighbouring grains and speculated that the multiple  
1047 maxima could be the result of nucleation via *mechanical twinning* under a high  
1048 shear stress. Such a conjecture was later challenged by Parameswaran (1982)  
1049 on the basis of a dislocation model, and by Wilson (1986) through the fact that  
1050 twinning as a deformation mechanism has never been observed in ice: rather,  
1051 coincident-lattice relationships could be the result of boundary migration during

1052 the impingement of growing grains.

1053 Even if mechanical twinning is ruled out as a mechanism of nucleation recrystallization in ice, at least two other nucleation hypotheses are generally considered  
1054 by glaciologists. They are named here *classical* (or *spontaneous*) *nucleation* and  
1055 *pseudo-nucleation* (cf. the entry “nucleation” in Appendix A). During classical  
1056 nucleation a cluster of water molecules spontaneously form a new embryo, which  
1057 evolves to a nucleus that grows as a new strain-free grain. In contrast, during  
1058 pseudo-nucleation a microscopic portion of the parent grain undergoes a combination of elementary recovery and recrystallization processes (e.g. boundary  
1059 migration, subgrain rotation and growth, etc.; cf. SIBM-N in Appendix A), which  
1060 lead to the formation of a little strain-free new grain, called *pseudo-nucleus* (the  
1061 prefix “pseudo-” is used here to emphasize that this nucleus may be larger than  
1062 a classical nucleus, but still small enough to undergo complete recovery and become strain-free). Despite recurrent considerations of classical nucleation in the  
1063 glaciological literature, it has long been recognized that spontaneous nucleation  
1064 as a recrystallization mechanism in single-phase polycrystals is energetically unfavourable (Cahn, 1970; Urai et al., 1986; Drury and Urai, 1990; Humphreys and  
1065 Hatherly, 2004) and there is no evidence that this should be different for ice (Glen, 1974; Wilson, 1986; Kipfstuhl et al., 2009).

1071 During the 1970’s and 1980’s it became increasingly clear that the unsteady  
1072 flow of glaciers most likely affected their LPO evolution, making the analysis of  
1073 recrystallization structures rather difficult. Therefore, attention slowly turned to  
1074 the microstructures of polar ice sheets, which seemed simpler to interpret and were  
1075 produced under much more stable flow conditions. A decisive step in this regard  
1076 was made by Azuma and Higashi (1985), who empirically discovered that, under

1077 common natural conditions, the strain in an ice grain is generally proportional to  
1078 the resolved shear stress on its basal plane. Based on this result, they derived  
1079 the first successful theoretical model of LPO evolution by lattice rotation in polar  
1080 ice (subsequently extended by Frujita et al., 1987; Alley, 1988; Lipenkov et al.,  
1081 1989). Later, this model would serve as basis for Azuma's ice flow model (Azuma,  
1082 1994, 1995; Azuma and Goto-Azuma, 1996), which is still today one of the most  
1083 popular approaches for describing the anisotropic flow of glaciers and ice sheets.

1084 Finally, by combining Azuma and Higashi's (1985) lattice rotation model  
1085 and Kamb's (1972) extension of Perutz' thermodynamic interpretation of recrystallization,  
1086 Alley (1988, 1992) managed to merge several ideas about polar ice  
1087 microstructure evolution, which were emerging in the ice-core community during  
1088 the 1970's and 1980's, into the simple and self-consistent version of the tripartite  
1089 paradigm (cf. Sect. 3.3 of Part I) that many glaciologists still adopt today  
1090 (when consulting the works by Alley, 1988, 1992, the reader should have  
1091 in mind that he used the terms "recrystallization" and "polygonization" as loose  
1092 synonyms for "nucleation" and "rotation recrystallization," respectively). The  
1093 establishment of this paradigm brought order to what was a rather chaotic topic,  
1094 providing the framework for the development of models of microstructure evolution  
1095 and anisotropic flow of ice sheets (Van der Veen and Whillans, 1994; Azuma  
1096 and Goto-Azuma, 1996; Gödert and Hutter, 1998; Montagnat and Duval, 2000;  
1097 Staroszczyk and Morland, 2001; Faria et al., 2002; Thorsteinsson, 2002).

1098 In spite of being as welcome and needed as it was, today we know that the  
1099 tripartite paradigm is fundamentally wrong. Besides the arguments put forward  
1100 in Sect. 3.3, recent observations have shown that rotation recrystallization (RRX)  
1101 and migration recrystallization with and without nucleation (SIBM-N and SIBM-



1102 O, respectively, cf. Appendix A) are widespread phenomena in polar ice sheets  
1103 and take place already in firn (e.g. Figs. C.5, C.7, C.8 and C.11; Kipfstuhl et al.,  
1104 2006, 2009; Faria et al., 2009, 2010; Weikusat et al., 2009a,b, 2011). Nucleation  
1105 is not predominant in polar ice, but newly nucleated grains can be found regularly  
1106 in ice-core samples from any depth, and are specially frequent in samples from the  
1107 lower firn. Nucleation occurs via SIBM-N through the formation of pseudo-nuclei  
1108 (cf. Appendix A) at localized sites characterized by high internal stresses and large  
1109 misorientation gradients, like e.g. at grain boundaries, triple junctions, and simi-  
1110 lar regions characterized by high concentrations of dislocation walls and subgrain  
1111 boundaries. Most frequently the newly nucleated grain seems to grow from the  
1112 boundary towards the inside of the parent grain, but nuclei formed at grain bound-  
1113 ary bulges or corners that grow over the neighbouring grains are also common  
1114 (e.g. Figs. C.3, C.5, and C.8a,b). Much more rare are nucleated islands, which  
1115 are new grains or subgrains formed inside a very distorted parent grain, character-  
1116 ized by an entangled network of dislocation walls and subgrain boundaries, which  
1117 combine to form the boundaries of the new nucleus (Figs. C.5 and C.11).

1118 Ordinary migration recrystallization (SIBM-O; i.e. strain-induced boundary  
1119 migration without nucleation of new grains, cf. Appendix A) and grain boundary  
1120 pinning are ubiquitous in polar ice. In micrographs, the migration direction of a  
1121 moving grain boundary can often be easily identified by the curved shape of the  
1122 boundary and the presence of subgrain boundaries and dislocation walls, which  
1123 are predominantly found at the convex side of the moving boundary (Figs. C.5,  
1124 C.8, and C.11). Polar ice grains are generally irregular in shape, evidencing the  
1125 essential role of stored strain energy on the microstructure evolution at all depths.  
1126 Pinning is most frequently caused by subgrain boundaries, air hydrates, air bub-

1127 bles and firm pores. Particularly interesting is the pinning by microinclusions: in  
 1128 the upper ice, where the temperature is below ca.  $-10^{\circ}\text{C}$ , it is difficult to find  
 1129 evidence of pinning by individual microinclusions, except occasionally in some  
 1130 grain boundaries in the strongest cloudy bands. Consequently, the explanation for  
 1131 the typical fine-grained structure of cloudy bands (cf. Fig. A.4 of Part I) remains  
 1132 uncertain. In contrast, as the temperature rises above  $-10^{\circ}\text{C}$  in deep ice, most  
 1133 microinclusions can be found at grain boundaries and at the interfaces between  
 1134 ice and air hydrates (Fig. C.12). Possible causes of these intriguing phenomena  
 1135 are analysed in detail by Faria et al. (2010).

### 1136 5.3. *The dynamic recrystallization diagram*

1137 As a substitute for the old tripartite paradigm, we propose the dynamic recrystallization  
 1138 diagram in Fig. C.13, which summarizes the various recrystallization  
 1139 processes that contribute to the microstructure evolution of polar ice, as regions  
 1140 in the three-dimensional state space  $\mathcal{S} = \{\dot{\epsilon}, T, D\}$  of strain rate  $\dot{\epsilon}$ , temperature  $T$ ,  
 1141 and mean grain size  $D$ .

1142 The main feature of this diagram is the attractor surface  $D = D_{\text{ss}}(\dot{\epsilon}, T)$ , which  
 1143 describes the grain size at steady state,  $D_{\text{ss}}$ , as a function of  $T$  and  $\dot{\epsilon}$ . This attractor  
 1144 surface works as follows: in a general situation, the mean grain size  $D$  of a piece  
 1145 of ice evolves according to the kinetic function  $D = \chi(\dot{\epsilon}, T, t)$ . Thus, for fixed  
 1146 conditions of temperature and strain rate, the mean grain size may evolve in time  
 1147 by recrystallization, provided that

$$\frac{\partial D}{\partial t} = \frac{\partial}{\partial t} \chi(\dot{\epsilon}, T, t) \neq 0 . \quad (19)$$

1148 The explicit form of the kinetic function  $\chi$  depends on the active recrystallization  
 1149 processes and cannot be easily determined. However, one thing we know about

1150 (19), namely

$$\frac{\partial D}{\partial t} \begin{cases} > 0 \text{ (grain growth)} & \text{if } D < D_{ss} , \\ < 0 \text{ (grain reduction)} & \text{if } D > D_{ss} , \\ = 0 \text{ (steady state)} & \text{if } D = D_{ss} . \end{cases} \quad (20)$$

1151 Thus,  $D_{ss}$  defines an attractor surface in the state space  $\mathcal{S}$  which reduces the kinetic  
 1152 function  $D = \chi(\dot{\epsilon}, T, t)$  to the steady state relation  $D = D_{ss}(\dot{\epsilon}, T)$  when the mean  
 1153 grain size achieves its steady-state value.

1154 The derivation of the explicit form of  $D_{ss}(\dot{\epsilon}, T)$  is really straightforward. First  
 1155 we recall that  $D_{ss}$  should obey the empirical relation (2). Second, we combine  
 1156 this relation with Glen's flow law (5), setting  $n = 3$  as usual. Finally, using the  
 1157 Arrhenius-like equation (9) we obtain

$$D_{ss}(\dot{\epsilon}, T) = \left( \frac{\alpha\varphi}{\dot{\epsilon}} \right)^{\frac{1}{2}} e^{-Q/2k_B T} . \quad (21)$$

1158 For the sake of illustration, let us consider the case of a hypothetical ice  
 1159 core, whose mean grain size evolves with depth as depicted by the green-and-red  
 1160 curves in Fig. C.13. If the conditions of temperature and strain rate were constant  
 1161 throughout the core, the mean-grain-size path in  $\mathcal{S}$  would be a straight, vertical  
 1162 line hitting the attractor surface  $D_{ss}$  and stopping there. This would correspond  
 1163 to grain growth until the steady-state grain size  $D_{ss}$  is achieved. However, in this  
 1164 hypothetical core we assume that the temperature increases with depth (which  
 1165 is the expected physical behaviour within an ice sheet) whereas, for simplicity,  
 1166 the strain rate remains nearly constant. As a consequence, the mean-grain-size  
 1167 path in  $\mathcal{S}$  follows not only upwards, but also sideways, in the direction of higher  
 1168 temperatures (green part of the curve). Once it hits the attractor surface  $D_{ss}$ , it  
 1169 continues its trajectory towards higher temperatures, without moving away from

1170 the surface (red part of the curve). Thus, after the mean grain size achieves its  
1171 steady-state value, further grain growth with depth is caused by the increase of  
1172  $D_{ss}$  with temperature, as described by (21).

1173 Finally, one could imagine a situation where the attractor surface  $D_{ss}$  is shifted  
1174 by a sudden change in strain rate or temperature (or impurity content, if we allow  
1175  $\alpha$  to depend on it). This situation is not illustrated in the example, but it is not  
1176 difficult to realize that in this case the microstructure would turn into a non-steady  
1177 state and would start once again to pursue the attractor surface  $D_{ss}$ , through a  
1178 suitable growth or reduction of grain size.

1179 The zones of influence in  $\mathcal{S}$  of the different recrystallization mechanisms are  
1180 illustrated in Fig. C.14. Owing to the difficulty in visualizing and portraying such  
1181 zones in three dimensions, we present here only three cross sections of  $\mathcal{S}$ . De-  
1182 picted are the regions in the state space where a particular process dominates. It  
1183 is important to notice, however, that these zones have no sharp boundaries and  
1184 they do overlap in most part of  $\mathcal{S}$ . In fact, the typical situation is that various  
1185 processes occur simultaneously and compete with or complement each other. The  
1186 only exception is Normal Grain Growth (NGG), which is possible only on the  
1187 plane  $\mathcal{S}_{NGG} = \{\dot{\epsilon} = 0, T, D\}$ .

## 1188 **6. Conclusion**

1189 Compared to glaciers and other natural ice bodies, polar ice sheets offer many  
1190 advantages for the study of natural ice microstructure evolution. In particular,  
1191 the history of stress and temperature conditions experienced by a piece of po-  
1192 lar ice is generally much longer, simpler and more steady than it would be in a  
1193 glacier. This facilitates considerably the interpretation of deformation and recryst-

1194 tallization microstructures. Therefore, polar ice cores have become instrumental  
1195 in microstructure investigations of natural ice.

1196 In this work we reviewed our current knowledge of the mechanics and mi-  
1197 crostructure of natural ice. The main conclusions can be summarized as follows:

- 1198 • Almost a half-century ago the *tripartite paradigm* of polar ice microstruc-  
1199 ture started to take form (also known as the “three-stage model”; Sect. 3.3  
1200 of Part I and Sect. 3.3). It would soon turn into the main cornerstone of our  
1201 understanding of natural ice microstructures, establishing a concrete and  
1202 sought-after research program on structural glaciology that is still pursued  
1203 today. Notwithstanding, in spite of being as welcome and needed as it was, a  
1204 large body of evidence has accumulated over the last decade, which reveals  
1205 fundamental flaws in that paradigm.
- 1206 • One fundamental premise of the tripartite paradigm that has to be critically  
1207 reconsidered is the belief that only normal grain growth (NGG) can lead to  
1208 grain coarsening. As discussed here and in Part I, a typical feature of polar  
1209 ice cores is indeed the tendency towards an increase of the mean grain size  
1210 with depth and age of the ice (modulated by climate changes). However,  
1211 as we learn that microstructures characteristic of dynamic recrystallization  
1212 abound in polar ice, we have to face the fact that dynamic recrystallization  
1213 can also lead to grain coarsening, through a set of processes collectively  
1214 named *dynamic grain growth* (cf. Appendix A).
- 1215 • The growth rates and activation energy for grain growth extracted directly  
1216 from ice-core data agree well with the rates and energy obtained in grain  
1217 growth experiments with bubbly ice, but are in clear disagreement with the

1218 real values of these quantities, recently measured in controlled experiments  
1219 of normal grain growth in pure, unstrained, bubble-free ice. These conclu-  
1220 sions, together with independent results of recent numerical simulations of  
1221 normal grain growth in ice, corroborate the *dynamic* nature of grain growth  
1222 in ice sheets, in the sense that it occurs during deformation and is seriously  
1223 affected by the stored strain energy, as well as by air inclusions and other  
1224 impurities.

1225 • The strong plastic anisotropy of the ice lattice gives rise to *high internal*  
1226 *stresses* and *concentrated strain heterogeneities* in the polycrystal, which  
1227 demand large amounts of strain accommodation. From the microstructural  
1228 analyses of ice cores, we conclude that the formation of many and diverse  
1229 subgrain boundaries and the splitting of grains by *rotation recrystalliza-*  
1230 *tion* are the most fundamental mechanisms of dynamic recovery and strain  
1231 accommodation in polar ice. Subgrain boundaries are endemic and very  
1232 frequent at almost all depths in polar ice sheets.

1233 • In addition to subgrain formation (i.e. grain subdivision) and rotation recryst-  
1234 tallization, microstructural analyses of polar ice cores suggest that strain in  
1235 fine-grained, high-impurity ice layers (e.g. cloudy bands) can sometimes be  
1236 accommodated by *diffusional flow* (at low temperatures and stresses) or *mi-*  
1237 *croscopic grain boundary sliding via microshear* (in anisotropic ice sheared  
1238 at high temperatures).

1239 • Evidence of recrystallization with *nucleation of new grains* is observed at  
1240 various depths in the ice sheet, provided that the concentration of strain en-  
1241 ergy is high enough (which is not seldom the case). Nucleation seems par-

1242 ticularly frequent in the lower firn layers, where the pore space is still large  
1243 enough to weaken the ice matrix, but already small enough to allow consid-  
1244 erable interaction between incompatible grains. As in other polycrystalline  
1245 materials, nucleation does not happen in the classical sense of spontaneous  
1246 embryo formation, but rather through a combination of recovery and re-  
1247 crystallization processes (grain boundary migration, subgrain rotation and  
1248 growth, etc.) within very localized regions with large misorientation gradi-  
1249 ents. For this reason, we call this process *nucleated migration recrystalliza-*  
1250 *tion* (SIBM-N; cf. Appendix A).

- 1251 • As a substitute for the tripartite paradigm, we propose a novel *dynamic re-*  
1252 *crystallization diagram* in the three-dimensional state space of strain rate,  
1253 temperature, and mean grain size (Figs. C.13 and C.14). This diagram sum-  
1254 marizes the various competing recrystallization processes that contribute to  
1255 the evolution of the polar ice microstructure.

1256 *Afterword.* We dedicate this work to the 60th birthday of Sepp Kipfstuhl, whose  
1257 views have inspired many ideas introduced here. Sepp has been a key personal-  
1258 ity of European glaciology in the last 30 years, having participated in more than  
1259 25 polar expeditions to date (authors' conservative estimate), including the First  
1260 West-German Antarctic Research Overwintering (Georg von Neumeyer Station,  
1261 Ekström Ice Shelf, 1981–83) and all European deep-drilling projects in Greenland  
1262 and Antarctica since GRIP (cf. Table B.1 of Part I). In the early 1990s he played  
1263 a decisive role in the partnership between European GRIP and U.S. GISP2 scien-  
1264 tists (Sect. 4.2 of Part I) and since then he has investigated the physical properties  
1265 of ice cores, often as the scientist in charge. Through his ingenious approach to

1266 observation and legendary devotion to ice, Sepp continues to inspire generations  
1267 of scientists and to make ground-breaking findings about the microstructure of  
1268 polar ice and firn.

## 1269 **Appendix A. Glossary**

1270 Below we summarize the main concepts and definitions used in this work for  
1271 discussing ice mechanics and microstructure. They are based on the definitions  
1272 put forward by Faria et al. (2009) and are partially inspired by the terms used in  
1273 geology and materials science by Poirier (1985), Drury and Urai (1990), Bunge  
1274 and Schwarzer (2001), Humphreys and Hatherly (2004), and Passchier and Trouw  
1275 (2005).

1276 **Clathrate hydrate:** Crystalline compound containing guest molecules enclosed in cage-  
1277 like structures made up of hydrogen-bonded water molecules. When the guest mol-  
1278 ecules form gas under standard conditions, such compounds are also named *gas hy-*  
1279 *drates*. In particular, *air hydrates* are formed by atmospheric gases (viz. mainly O<sub>2</sub>  
1280 and N<sub>2</sub>). In natural ice, air hydrates are formed below a critical depth, which is fun-  
1281 damentally a function of the overburden pressure and temperature.

1282 **Cloudy band:** Ice stratum with turbid appearance due to a high concentration of microin-  
1283 clusions. Experience shows a strong correlation between high impurity concentration  
1284 and small grain sizes in cloudy-band ice.

1285 **Crystallite:** See *grain*.

1286 **Deformation-related structures:** Structural features produced and/or affected by defor-  
1287 mation, e.g. dislocations, subgrain boundaries, slip bands, stratigraphic folds, etc.

1288 **Diffusion creep:** See *diffusional flow*.

1289 **Diffusional flow:** Strain caused by diffusional flux of matter through the material. In



1290 polycrystals, diffusional flow may involve mass transport through or around the grains.  
1291 The former is named *lattice diffusion creep* (or *Nabarro–Herring creep*), while the  
1292 latter is called *grain-boundary diffusion creep* (or *Coble creep*).

1293 **Dislocation wall:** Deformation-related structure consisting of dislocations arranged in a  
1294 two dimensional framework; the precursor of a *subgrain boundary* (cf. id.).

1295 **DML:** Dronning Maud Land, Antarctica.

1296 **Dynamic grain growth (DGG):** Class of phenomenological processes of grain coarsen-  
1297 ing in polycrystals *during deformation*. Several recovery and recrystallization pro-  
1298 cesses may be simultaneously active during DGG, all competing for the minimization  
1299 of both, the stored strain energy and the grain-boundary energy. The essential fea-  
1300 ture of DGG (in comparison to other recrystallization processes) is the monotonic  
1301 increase of the mean grain size with time. Owing to its dynamic nature, however, the  
1302 diversified kinetics of DGG can generally not be compared with the simple kinetics  
1303 predicted for *normal grain growth (NGG)*, cf. id.).

1304 **Dynamic recrystallization:** See *recrystallization*.

1305 **EDC:** EPICA Dome C (a deep-drilling site in Antarctica).

1306 **EDML:** EPICA DML (a deep-drilling site in Antarctica).

1307 **Elementary structural process:** The fundamental operation of structural change via re-  
1308 covery or recrystallization, e.g. grain boundary migration or subgrain rotation. Sev-  
1309 eral elementary processes may combine in a number of ways to produce a variety of  
1310 *phenomenological structural processes* (cf. id.).

1311 *Note A.1:* Recovery and recrystallization are complex physical phenomena that are  
1312 better understood if decomposed in a hierarchy of structural processes or mecha-  
1313 nisms, here qualified as “elementary” and “phenomenological.” A somewhat sim-  
1314 ilar hierarchical scheme for recrystallization has formerly been proposed by Drury

1315 and Urai (1990), but with the expressions “elementary/phenomenological process” re-  
1316 placed respectively by “basic process” and “mechanism”. We favor here the qualifiers  
1317 “elementary/phenomenological” (against the “process/mechanism” scheme) because  
1318 these qualifiers facilitate the visualization of the hierarchy and leave us free to use the  
1319 terms “process” and “mechanism” as synonyms.

1320 **EPF:** Expéditions Polaires Françaises.

1321 **EPICA:** European Project for Ice Coring in Antarctica.

1322 **Fabric:** See *Lattice Preferred Orientation (LPO)*.

1323 **Firn:** Sintered snow that has outlasted at least one summer.

1324 **GBS:** See *grain boundary sliding*.

1325 **GISP2:** Greenland Ice Sheet Project 2 (a deep-drilling site in Greenland).

1326 **Grain:** Connected region in a polycrystalline solid composed of an uninterrupted (al-  
1327 though possibly imperfect) crystalline lattice and bounded to other grains by *grain*  
1328 *boundaries*. Also loosely called *crystallite*. It should be noticed the difference be-  
1329 tween grains of polycrystalline solids (e.g. ice) and the loose particles of crystalline  
1330 granular media (e.g. snow).

1331 **Grain Boundary Sliding (GBS):** Relative slide of a pair of grains by a shear movement  
1332 at their common interface. The shear may be completely confined to the boundary, or  
1333 occur within a zone immediately adjacent to it.

1334 **Grain stereology:** Spatial arrangement of grains in a polycrystal, including their sizes  
1335 and shapes (cf. *orientation stereology* and *lattice preferred orientation*).

1336 **Grain subdivision:** Phenomenological recovery process of formation of new *subgrain*  
1337 *boundaries*. It involves the progressive rotation of certain portions of the grain, called  
1338 *subgrains* (cf. id.), as well as the strengthening of dislocation walls through dislo-  
1339 cation rearrangement and migration in regions with strong lattice curvature. If the

1340 misorientation across the new subgrain boundary increases with time, grain subdivi-  
1341 sion may give rise to *rotation recrystallization* (cf. id.).

1342 **GRIP:** Greenland Ice-core Project (a deep-drilling site in Greenland).

1343 **Inclusion:** Localized deposit of undissolved chemical impurities observed in polar ice,  
1344 like air bubbles, clathrate hydrates, or brine pockets. Inclusions not larger than a few  
1345 micrometers are often called *microinclusions* (e.g. dust particles, microbubbles, etc.).

1346 **Isotropic ice:** In full *isotropic polycrystalline ice*. Ice with isotropic and homogeneous  
1347 *orientation stereology* (cf. id.). In other words, homogeneous polycrystalline ice with  
1348 no *LPO* (cf. id.).

1349 **JIRP:** Juneau Ice Field Research Project.

1350 **Lattice Preferred Orientation (LPO):** Statistically preferred orientation of the crystalline  
1351 lattices of a population of grains. In plural (LPOs): the directional pattern of lattice  
1352 orientations in a polycrystalline region (cf. *orientation stereology*). In the glaciologi-  
1353 cal literature, LPOs are often called *fabric* (Paterson, 1994), while in materials science  
1354 they are frequently termed *texture* (Humphreys and Hatherly, 2004). In particular, a  
1355 polycrystalline region with a random distribution of lattice orientations is said to have  
1356 no LPO (viz. texture-free, random fabric).

1357 **LPO:** See *lattice preferred orientation*.

1358 **Microbubble:** Air bubble not larger than a critical diameter of ca. 100 $\mu$ m in shallow ice.  
1359 The critical diameter is usually defined by the typically bimodal size distribution of air  
1360 bubbles in natural ice. For deeper ice, the critical diameter reduces with the increasing  
1361 overburden pressure. See also *inclusion*.

1362 **Microinclusion:** See *inclusion*.

1363 **Microshear:** Strong, localized shear across a grain that experiences a highly inhom-  
1364 geneous shear deformation. It culminates with the formation of a new, flat subgrain

1365 boundary parallel to the shear plane, called *microshear boundary* (cf. *slip bands*).

1366 Microshear is often triggered by *grain boundary sliding* (cf. id.).

1367 **Microstructure:** Collection of all microscopic deformation-related structures, inclusions,  
1368 and the orientation stereology of a polycrystal.

1369 **Migration recrystallization:** In full *strain-induced migration recrystallization*. Class of  
1370 phenomenological recrystallization processes based on the elementary *SIBM* mecha-  
1371 nism (cf. id.). If *nucleation* (cf. id.) is involved in the process, we may call it *nucleated*  
1372 *migration recrystallization* (SIBM-N), where the suffix “-N” stands for “new grain”.  
1373 Otherwise, i.e. if the migration of boundaries occurs without formation of new grains,  
1374 we may call it *ordinary migration recrystallization* (SIBM-O), where the suffix “-O”  
1375 stands for “old grain”.

1376 *Note A.2:* The definition adopted here is based on the concept of “grain-boundary mi-  
1377 gration recrystallization” originally described in the pioneering work by Beck and  
1378 Sperry (1950). Notice that this definition is not identical to that used by Poirier  
1379 (1985) or Humphreys and Hatherly (2004), and it is also quite distinct from some  
1380 loose connotations invoked in the glaciological literature. The terms SIBM-N and  
1381 SIBM-O are not standard in the literature, but they are nevertheless adopted here be-  
1382 cause they describe quite precisely the kind of information obtained from microscopic  
1383 analyses of ice core sections. There is unfortunately no one-to-one relation between  
1384 SIBM-N/SIBM-O and the expressions “multiple/single subgrain SIBM” used e.g. by  
1385 Humphreys and Hatherly (2004).

1386 **NBSAE:** Norwegian–British–Swedish Antarctic Expedition.

1387 **NGRIP:** North-Greenland Ice-Core Project, also abbreviated as *NorthGRIP* (a deep-  
1388 drilling site in Greenland).

1389 **Normal grain growth (NGG):** Phenomenological recrystallization process of grain coars-  
1390 ening in polycrystals, resulting from “the interaction between the topological require-

1391 ments of space-filling and the geometrical needs of (grain-boundary) surface-tension  
1392 equilibrium” (Smith, 1952). By definition, grain coarsening during NGG is *statisti-*  
1393 *cally uniform* and *self-similar*, grain-boundary migration is *exclusively* driven by min-  
1394 imization of the grain-boundary area (and associated free energy), and the grain stere-  
1395 ology is close to a configuration of “surface-tension equilibrium” (so-called “foam-  
1396 like structure”). Owing to these essential features, NGG is generally regarded as a  
1397 static recrystallization process (cf. *recrystallization*) taking place before/after defor-  
1398 mation (cf. *dynamic grain growth*). Mathematical and physical arguments strongly  
1399 suggest that the kinetics of NGG is parabolic with respect to the mean grain radius.

1400 *Note A.3:* As discussed by Smith (1952), the interest in NGG comes from the fact  
1401 that its kinetics depends solely on the properties of the migrating boundaries and is  
1402 otherwise independent of the medium or its deformation history. This means that the  
1403 theory underlying the NGG kinetics is not restricted to polycrystals: similar coars-  
1404 ening phenomena are also observed in foams, some tissues, and many other cellular  
1405 media.

1406 **Nucleation:** Class of phenomenological recrystallization processes involving the forma-  
1407 tion of new *nuclei* (viz. tiny strain-free new grains). Two types of nucleation mech-  
1408 anisms can be identified, here called “pseudo-” and “classical nucleation”. During  
1409 *classical nucleation* a cluster of atoms/molecules spontaneously form a new embryo  
1410 (the precursor of a nucleus) under the action of high internal stresses and thermally-  
1411 activated fluctuations. Despite persistent consideration of this mechanism in the glacio-  
1412 logical literature, it is currently acknowledged that it is certainly not relevant for polar  
1413 ice (see Note A.4 below). During *pseudo-nucleation* a special combination of ele-  
1414 mentary recrystallization processes (e.g. SIBM, subgrain rotation and growth) takes  
1415 place *within a small crystalline region* with high stored strain energy, giving rise to  
1416 a little strain-free new grain called *pseudo-nucleus* (see Note A.5 below). If pseudo-  
1417 nucleation occurs naturally in polar ice, it most likely happens at grain boundaries and

1418 other zones of high stored strain energy, e.g. at air bubbles and solid inclusions.

1419 *Note A.4:* Calculations show (Cahn, 1970; Humphreys and Hatherly, 2004) that clas-  
1420 sical nucleation recrystallization is extremely unlikely to occur in single-phase poly-  
1421 crystals, owing to the high energies required for the creation and growth of classical  
1422 nuclei, except if strong chemical driving forces are present, which is clearly not the  
1423 case for polar ice.

1424 *Note A.5:* The prefix “pseudo-” is used here to emphasize that this nucleus is usually  
1425 much larger than the nucleus formed by classical nucleation, but still small enough  
1426 to be strain-free. It should be noticed that the distinction between pseudo-nucleation  
1427 and a combination of SIBM-O with rotation recrystallization is basically a matter of  
1428 scale: in the latter case the new crystallite is large enough to inherit a considerable  
1429 amount of internal structures from the parent grain.

1430 **Orientation stereology:** Spatial arrangement of lattice orientations in a polycrystal, i.e.  
1431 the combination of *grain stereology* and *LPO*.

1432 **Phenomenological structural process:** Any combination of elementary structural pro-  
1433 cesses that gives rise to general changes in the structure of the polycrystal (cf. *ele-*  
1434 *mentary structural process*). Examples of phenomenological processes are nucleation  
1435 and grain subdivision.

1436 **Polygonization:** Special type of recovery mechanism for the formation of *tilt bound-*  
1437 *aries*. It is a particular case of *grain subdivision* (cf. id.), by restricting it to tilting  
1438 (bending) of crystallographic planes. In ice, polygonization is often used in reference  
1439 to the bending of basal planes.

1440 **Pseudo-nucleus:** See *nucleation*.

1441 **Recovery:** Release of the stored strain energy by any thermomechanical process of mi-  
1442 crostructural change other than recrystallization. The qualifiers *dynamic* and *static* de-  
1443 note recovery phenomena occurring *during* and *prior/after* deformation, respectively.

1444 Frequently (especially under dynamic conditions), recovery and recrystallization co-  
1445 exist and may even be complementary (e.g. during rotation recrystallization), so that  
1446 the distinction between them is sometimes very difficult.

1447 **Recrystallization:** Any re-orientation of the lattice caused by grain boundary migration  
1448 and/or formation of new grain boundaries, therefore including SIBM, RRX, DGG  
1449 and NGG (cf. recovery and Note A.6 below). The qualifiers *dynamic* and *static*  
1450 denote recrystallization phenomena occurring *during* and *prior/after* deformation, re-  
1451 spectively. Further classification schemes often invoked in the literature include the  
1452 qualifiers *continuous/discontinuous* and *continual/discontinual*, used to specify, re-  
1453 spectively, the spatial homogeneity and temporal continuity of the recrystallization  
1454 process. These classifications are, however, not always unique and are therefore of  
1455 limited use.

1456 *Note A.6:* In contrast to the definition adopted here, some authors reserve the term “re-  
1457 crystallization” solely for those processes driven by the stored strain energy, therefore  
1458 excluding e.g. normal grain growth (NGG, cf. id.) from its definition. Other authors  
1459 (especially in the older literature) loosely use “recrystallization” as a synonym for  
1460 SIBM-N (cf. migration recrystallization).

1461 **Rotation recrystallization (RRX):** Phenomenological recrystallization process respon-  
1462 sible for the formation of new *grain boundaries*. It proceeds from the mechanism of  
1463 *grain subdivision*, and as such it involves the progressive rotation of subgrains as well  
1464 as the migration of subgrain boundaries through regions with lattice curvature. Notice  
1465 that this recrystallization process does not require significant migration of pre-existing  
1466 grain boundaries, in contrast to migration recrystallization.

1467 **SIBM:** See *strain-induced boundary migration*.

1468 **SIBM-N/SIBM-O:** See *migration recrystallization*.

1469 **Slip bands:** Series of parallel layers of intense slip activity and high amount of intracrys-

1470 talline lattice defects (especially dislocations). Slip bands in ice appear always in  
1471 groups parallel to the basal planes and are indicative of a nearly homogeneous shear  
1472 deformation of the respective grain (cf. *microshear*).

1473 **Static recrystallization:** See *recrystallization*.

1474 **Stored strain energy:** Fraction of the mechanical energy expended during deformation  
1475 that is stored in the material in diverse types of intracrystalline lattice defects, e.g.  
1476 dislocations, stacking faults, subgrain boundaries, etc.

1477 **Strain-induced boundary migration (SIBM):** Elementary recrystallization process of  
1478 grain boundary motion driven by minimization of the stored strain energy. It involves  
1479 the migration of a grain boundary towards a region of high stored strain energy. The  
1480 migrating boundary heals the highly energetic lattice defects in that region, therefore  
1481 promoting a net reduction in the total stored strain energy of the polycrystal. See also  
1482 *migration recrystallization*.

1483 **Subglacial structure:** Any structural feature underneath the ice, ranging from till and  
1484 rocks to channels and lakes.

1485 **Subgrain:** Sub-domain of a grain, delimited by a *subgrain boundary* and characterized  
1486 by a lattice orientation that is similar, but not identical, to that of the rest of the grain.  
1487 In ice, the lattice misorientation across a subgrain boundary is limited to a few degrees  
1488 (ca.  $< 5^\circ$  for ice; (Suzuki, 1970; Weikusat et al., 2011)).

1489 **Texture:** See *Lattice Preferred Orientation (LPO)*.

1490 **Tilt boundary:** Special type of subgrain boundary in which the misorientation axis is  
1491 tangential to the boundary interface.

1492 **Twist boundary:** Special type of subgrain boundary in which the misorientation axis is  
1493 orthogonal to the boundary interface.



## 1494 **Appendix B. Deformation of EDML firn**

1495 It is a common misconception that the firn zone is one of the least stressed parts of  
1496 an ice sheet. In fact, rather the contrary is true. Although the overburden pressure  
1497 on firn is much less than on deep ice, it is still large enough to promote the slow  
1498 but relentless compaction of the delicate porous structure. Besides, the firn layer is  
1499 continually stretched by the flowing ice underneath. These two processes combine  
1500 to generate strain rates in firn that are much larger than in bulky ice.

1501 In the snow and shallow firn zones, the dominant metamorphic process is  
1502 the rearrangement and packing of old snow particles via boundary sliding (Al-  
1503 ley, 1987). As the firn approaches a mass density of ca.  $550 \text{ kg/m}^3$  (which cor-  
1504 responds to a packing fraction of  $\phi = 0.6$ , very close to that of the maximally  
1505 random jammed state,  $\phi_{\text{MRJ}} \approx 0.63$ ; Kansal et al., 2002), the dominant sintering  
1506 mechanism changes to plastic deformation of the consolidated porous material via  
1507 intracrystalline creep (Anderson and Benson, 1963; Maeno and Ebinuma, 1983).  
1508 At the EDML site, this critical mass density is reached at around 20 m depth  
1509 (Kipfstuhl et al., 2009), although recent computer tomographic analyses suggest  
1510 that this transition could start already at 10 m depth, where the firn has an average  
1511 mass density of only  $475 \text{ kg/m}^3$  (Freitag et al., 2008). The creep of firn proceeds  
1512 this way for hundreds of years, so that, in the lower half of the firn zone, typical  
1513 values of the total vertical strain lie in the range of several tens percent.

1514 From the supplementary material accompanying the work by Ruth et al. (2007),  
1515 we estimate that the total vertical strain of the lower firn in the EDML site ranges  
1516 between  $-20\%$  and  $-50\%$ . It is evident that most of this thinning is actually  
1517 caused by the compression of the pore space. This compression, however, cannot  
1518 occur without plastic deformation of the ice matrix. It is very difficult to determine

1519 with precision the contribution to total vertical strain due to plastic deformation of  
 1520 the ice matrix alone. In the case of EDML, one possibility is to combine the true  
 1521 annual layer thickness with the ice-equivalent layer thickness and the estimated  
 1522 age of the layer (all data provided by Ruth et al., 2007) as follows

$$\varepsilon = \ln(1 + \varepsilon_e) , \quad \varepsilon_e = \frac{y_0 - y}{y} , \quad (\text{B.1})$$

1523 where  $\varepsilon$  and  $\varepsilon_e$  are respectively the natural vertical strain and the engineering  
 1524 vertical strain of the layer, while  $y$  and  $y_0$  denote the number of years enclosed in  
 1525 the strained layer and in the reference layer, respectively. Using these formulas we  
 1526 conclude that the polycrystalline ice skeleton of the lower firm at EDML is already  
 1527 in the tertiary creep regime (cf. Sect. 3.1), and consequently it could be undergoing  
 1528 dynamic recrystallization. Indeed, even if we make a very conservative choice for  
 1529 the reference depth, by assuming that the ice matrix starts to creep only below  
 1530 20 m depth, we still get  $\varepsilon_{i,\text{eq.}} \approx -7\%$  for the ice-equivalent vertical strain at only  
 1531 50 m depth. For comparison, the total vertical strain of firm at this depth (i.e.,  
 1532 including pore-space compression) is around  $\varepsilon_{\text{total}} \approx -30\%$ . Recalling that it  
 1533 takes about 300 years for the EDML ice to traverse the depth interval 20–50 m,  
 1534 we conclude that the average ice-equivalent vertical strain rate should be about  
 1535  $\dot{\varepsilon}_{i,\text{eq.}} \approx 7.4 \times 10^{-12} \text{s}^{-1}$ . Likewise, the average total strain rate of the firm layer,  
 1536 including pore-space compaction, should be around  $\dot{\varepsilon}_{\text{total}} \approx 3.2 \times 10^{-11} \text{s}^{-1}$ .

1537 Admittedly, these are very crude estimates. However, it should be noticed that  
 1538 almost all the above inaccuracies can be blamed for being too conservative, that is,  
 1539 for introducing bias *against* dynamic recrystallization in polar firm. For instance:

- 1540 • The reference depth is likely to be shallower than the one selected here.
- 1541 More realistic estimates point to 10–12 m.

- 1542 • In practice, the shallow firn above the reference depth may also experience a  
1543 certain amount of intracrystalline deformation, even though boundary slid-  
1544 ing is the dominant deformation mechanism in that zone.
- 1545 • The ice-equivalent estimates do not take into account the contribution of the  
1546 pore space to strain accommodation.
- 1547 • The deformation of firn is known to be extremely inhomogeneous. It is char-  
1548 acterized by large strain variability with depth and intense stress concentra-  
1549 tions, both influenced by the intricate geometry of the pore space. There-  
1550 fore, the stored strain energy is likely to be very high in particular regions  
1551 of the ice skeleton, where rotation and migration recrystallization may start  
1552 very early.

1553 Thus, we conclude that the *real* strain rate  $\dot{\epsilon}_{\text{real}}$  experienced by the ice grains  
1554 in firn should be  $\dot{\epsilon}_{\text{total}} \geq \dot{\epsilon}_{\text{real}} \geq \dot{\epsilon}_{\text{i.eq.}}$ .

1555 The last item above explains also why the *c*-axis distributions in lower firn are  
1556 generally random, with no evident preferred orientations: the stress field within  
1557 the ice skeleton is rather complex, with a high spatial variability controlled by  
1558 the geometry of the pore space. Therefore, the stresses perceived by the ice on  
1559 the grain scale are generally very distinct from the applied macroscopic stress.  
1560 Even if preferred orientations are formed on the scale of several grains, the spatial  
1561 variability of stress and strain are sufficient to mask any preferred orientations  
1562 on the macroscale. Evidently, dynamic recrystallization with nucleation of new  
1563 grains can also contribute to suppress the formation of preferred orientations in  
1564 firn.

1565 Thus, the fact that the above estimates do support the occurrence of dynamic

1566 recrystallization in firn, in spite of all the bias against such a conclusion, just  
1567 makes the arguments presented here stronger. Finally, we remark that these con-  
1568 clusions are coherent with the experimental observations of dynamic recrystal-  
1569 lization in firn by Kipfstuhl et al. (2009).

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2200 **Appendix C. FIGURE CAPTIONS**

Figure C.1: The crystalline lattice of ice Ih. Red and white spheres represent oxygen and hydrogen atoms, respectively, while grey rods symbolize hydrogen bonds. *Top*: view along the  $c$ -axis. *Bottom*: view along an  $a$ -axis. The hexagonal symmetry of the lattice is highlighted by the yellow dashed line (after Faria and Hutter, 2001).

Figure C.2: Schematic representation of possible slip systems in ice (after Hondoh, 2000; Faria, 2003). Cf. Table D.1.

Figure C.3: Mosaic image showing examples of several microstructural features in a sublimated sample of Antarctic ice (EDML, 1656 m depth). Recognizable are slip bands (SB), grain boundaries (GB), subgrain boundaries (sGB), and [decomposed] air hydrates ([d]AH). Sublimation polishes the ice sample surface through thermal etching, forming as by-product observable etch grooves at points where grain or subgrain boundaries meet the surface (Kipfstuhl et al., 2006). In contrast, slip bands are volume features, which appear as series of parallel fringes that are only observable in sections with a certain thickness (several hundreds of micrometers), when the  $c$ -axis of the sheared grain lies nearly parallel to the sample surface plane (within a few degrees of misorientation). Air hydrates inside the sample appear as bright inclusions. If they lie on the surface, however, they decompose and appear dark, because they are not stable at atmospheric pressure and high temperatures. Completely unfocused structures are sublimation-etched features at the bottom side of the sample, visible through the transparent ice matrix. The dark circular object on the top right is a deposit or imperfection on the surface, while the curved shadow at the right border is part of a bubble in the silicone oil that preserves the ice surface.

Figure C.4: Schematic representation of extended basal dislocations combined with non-basal dislocation segments in ice. (a) A dislocation with an initially arbitrary shape soon evolves into the more stable “terraced” configuration illustrated here, which combines long basal and short non-basal segments. (b) Glissile screw dislocation dipole with Burgers vector  $\mathbf{a} = (1/3) \langle 11\bar{2}0 \rangle$  led by a glissile non-basal edge segment. (c) Sessile edge dislocation dipole with Burgers vector  $\mathbf{c} = \langle 0001 \rangle$  or  $\mathbf{a} + \mathbf{c} = (1/3) \langle 11\bar{2}3 \rangle$  led by a glissile non-basal screw segment. After Hondoh (2000).

Figure C.5: Typical manifestations of internal stresses and heterogeneous strains in an Antarctic EDML sample from 556 m depth (bubbly ice). Air bubbles appear black. Width of each micrograph: 2.5 mm. *Top left*: Classical example of migration recrystallization (SIBM-O; cf. Appendix A). Many subgrain boundaries and dislocation walls irradiating from a bulged grain boundary, which is migrating to the left towards the region with high stored strain energy. The illumination is especially favourable in this image for revealing the 3D-shape of the bulging grain boundary: one can identify the bulged shadow produced by the grain boundary groove at the bottom surface of the sample, as well as a grain boundary edge emanating from the triple junction on the left towards the bottom of the sample. *Top right*: Another classical example of SIBM-O (centre), as well as of grain subdivision (top left). Notice the elongated (sub-)grain island (centre top) nucleated in the region of high stored strain energy. *Centre left*: Well-developed subgrain island (left) in a region of highly heterogeneous strain, characterised by many entangled dislocation walls and subgrain boundaries. *Centre right*: Bending of a large grain and simultaneous consumption of the irregular tilt boundary by a smaller grain (bottom right). Again, the 3D-shape of the smaller grain can be visualized by the defocused curve/shadow produced by the groove at the bottom surface of the sample (notice the cusp pointing in the direction of the “tilt boundary”). From the visible slip bands, the misorientation across the irregular tilt boundary is  $\gtrsim 7^\circ$ . *Bottom left*: Large, well-developed subgrain island (bottom) near a jagged subgrain boundary. Notice also the tiny subgrain island at the centre top. *Bottom right*: Classical examples of nucleated migration recrystallization (SIBM-N; cf. Appendix A). A newly nucleated grain (top right) grows into the highly strained region in the centre, characterized by numerous subgrain boundaries and dislocation walls. At the same time, the bulge on the top left seems to be in the process of becoming a new grain by rotating itself with respect to its parent grain, as indicated by the roughly vertical subgrain boundaries at the top left. The unfocused shadows on the left are grain boundary grooves on the bottom surface of the sample.

Figure C.6: Typical creep curves obtained in laboratory tests for initially isotropic (black) and optimal anisotropic (blue) ice. The evolution of the LPOs in the case of unconfined vertical compression is also outlined. Capital letters delimit the various deformation stages. AB: “instantaneous” elastic strain. BC: transient primary creep ( $\dot{\epsilon} < 0$ ). CD: minimum secondary creep ( $\dot{\epsilon} = 0$ ). DE: accelerating tertiary creep ( $\dot{\epsilon} > 0$ ). EF: steady tertiary creep ( $\dot{\epsilon} = 0$ ). For initially isotropic ice (black), the strain rate first decelerates to a minimum value ( $\dot{\epsilon}_{\min}$  at  $\epsilon_{\min} \approx 1\%$ ) prior to accelerating to the stable tertiary creep rate ( $\dot{\epsilon}_{\max}$  at  $\epsilon_{\max} \approx 10\%$ ). In contrast, the optimal anisotropic ice (blue) decelerates much less and reaches the stable tertiary creep rate already at the end of secondary creep ( $\epsilon_{\min} = \epsilon_{\max} \approx 1\%$ ), without passing through the phase of accelerating tertiary creep, because it already has fully developed LPOs compatible with the stress regime. (based on Budd and Jacka, 1989; Treverrow et al., 2012).

Figure C.7: Dynamic recrystallization of polar firn. Dark patches depict the pore space, while dark lines are grain boundary grooves on the sample surface. Some straight vertical lines are remaining scratches from microtoming (sublimation of firn samples must be performed with moderation, in order to preserve the original geometry of the pore space). Scale bars: 1 mm. *Left*: EDML firn sample from 40 m depth. Grain boundaries seem straight and smooth, although some subgrain boundaries (faint lines) are visible, indicating some points of internal stress concentration. Notice also how much pore space exists for accommodating strain incompatibilities. *Right*: EDML firn sample from 70 m depth. Grain interaction is much stronger at this depth, causing heterogeneous strains and high internal stresses that manifest themselves in the forms of grain subdivision (subgrain boundaries), rotation recrystallization (RRX), migration recrystallization (SIBM-O) and nucleation (SIBM-N); cf. Appendix A.

Figure C.8: Dynamic recrystallization in the bubbly-ice zone of various ice cores. In these examples we can identify bulged and cuspidate grain boundaries (SIBM-O; cf. Appendix A), subgrain boundaries, nucleated grains (SIBM-N) at triple junctions or at grain boundaries as two-sided grains. Grain boundary pinning by air bubbles or subgrain boundaries is also evident. Scale bars: 1 mm. *Top*: Two examples from Dome F core, 175 m depth. *Centre*: Two examples from EDML core, 304 m depth. *Bottom*: Two examples from EDC core, 685 m depth.

Figure C.9: Evolution of techniques for displaying the microstructure of natural ice. *From left to right*: Seligman's pencil rubbing on paper (Seligman, 1949, scale bar: 5 cm); thin section between crossed polarizers (scale bar: 1 cm); digital mosaic trend representation of the azimuth (color) and colatitude (brightness) of  $c$ -axes in a thin section, produced by a modern Automatic Fabric Analyzer (AFA; see e.g. Wilen et al., 2003; Wilson et al., 2003, scale bar: 1 cm); digital mosaic image of a thick section consisting of ca. 1500 high-resolution micrographs, produced by the method of Microstructure Mapping ( $\mu$ SM; see e.g. Kipfstuhl et al., 2006, scale bar: 1 cm). Notice that the first and last methods do not reveal  $c$ -axis orientations, but reproduce the precise shape of grain boundaries as they meet the ice surface. In contrast, the two intermediate methods do display  $c$ -axis orientations, but show only the depth-integrated shape of grain boundaries across the thickness of the sample.

Figure C.10: Mosaic image of an Antarctic ice sample (EDML, 2176 m depth) produced via Microstructure Mapping ( $\mu$ SM; Kipfstuhl et al., 2006). Abbreviation as in Fig. C.3. Grain and subgrain boundaries appear as dark and grey lines, respectively. Polygonal or dash-shaped objects are post-drilling relaxation voids called plate-like inclusions (PLI). Blue arrows show examples of different types of subgrain boundaries: p=parallel to basal planes, n=normal to basal planes (Nakaya type) and z=zigzag type.

Figure C.11: Dynamic recrystallization in the bubble-free-ice zone of various ice cores. In these examples we can identify bulged and cuspidate grain boundaries (SIBM-O; cf. Appendix A), subgrain boundaries, nucleated grains (SIBM-N) at triple junctions or at grain boundaries as two-sided grains. Grain boundary pinning by air hydrates or subgrain boundaries is also evident. *Top*: Two examples from EDML core, 1885 m depth (scale bars: 1 mm). Notice the pinning by air hydrates in both images. Whether the isolate pearl-shaped grain in the left image is a true grain island (cf. Fig. C.5) or just the cross section of a protruded grain is not clear. *Centre*: Two examples from EDC core, 2061 m depth (scale bars: left 1 mm, right 2 mm). A large two-sided grain can be seen in the left image. The fact that it does not show internal structures and is bulging towards a region rich in dislocation walls and subgrain boundaries suggests that it has nucleated via SIBM-N (cf. Appendix A). In the right image, complex subgrain boundary formations and severe bulging and pinning of grain boundaries are evident. *Bottom*: Grain subdivision, rotation recrystallization (RRX), migration recrystallization (SIBM-O) and nucleation (SIBM-N) in Antarctic ice samples from EDC core (left; 2061 m depth) and EDML core (right; 1885 m depth). Scale bars: 2 mm. In particular, notice the small, two-sided, square-shaped grain at the top of the right image, which seems to have just nucleated via SIBM-N.

Figure C.12: Microinclusions (tiny black dots) accumulated at a grain boundary of deep Antarctic ice (EDML core, 2656 m depth; scale bar: 3 mm). By moving the focal point into the sample, the focused microinclusions reveal the 3D shape of the grain boundary, which penetrates the sample in a slope towards the bottom of the image.

Figure C.13: State space for the dynamic recrystallization diagram. The blue surface  $D_{SS}$  represents the steady-state region of constant grain size, for a given strain rate and temperature. Below this surface there is the zone of grain growth, while above the surface there is the zone of grain reduction. The small panel on the right illustrates the case of a hypothetical deep ice core: the green curve describes the increase of mean grain size with depth up to the steady state size  $D_{SS}$ . Further grain-size increase with depth is caused by the higher temperatures at the bottom of the ice sheet, and is represented by the red line that follows the  $D_{SS}$  surface towards higher values of temperature. For more information, see the description in the main text.

Figure C.14: Cross sections of the dynamic recrystallization diagram shown in Fig. C.13, including the zones of major influence of different recrystallization mechanisms (cf. Appendix A): rotation recrystallization (RRX), migration recrystallization without nucleation (SIBM-O), migration recrystallization with nucleation (SIBM-N) and normal grain growth (NGG). The latter occurs only when  $\dot{\epsilon} = 0$ .



2201 **Appendix D. TABLES**

Table D.1: Possible slip systems in ice. After Hondoh (2009).

slip plane	slip system
basal	$(0001) \langle 11\bar{2}0 \rangle$
primary prismatic	$\{1\bar{1}00\} \langle 11\bar{2}0 \rangle$
	$\{1\bar{1}00\} \langle 0001 \rangle$
	$\{1\bar{1}00\} \langle 11\bar{2}3 \rangle$
secondary prismatic	$\{\bar{1}120\} \langle 0001 \rangle$
primary pyramidal	$\{\bar{1}011\} \langle 11\bar{2}0 \rangle$
	$\{\bar{1}011\} \langle 11\bar{2}3 \rangle$
secondary pyramidal	$\{\bar{1}122\} \langle 11\bar{2}3 \rangle$

Table D.2: Subgrain boundaries in polar ice. The vectors  $\mathbf{a}$  and  $\mathbf{c}$  denote the translation vectors of the ice unit cell. Dislocation data from Hondoh (2000) and subgrain boundary statistics from Weikusat et al. (2011).

subgrain boundary			component dislocation		
type	misorient. axis	frequency	type	Burgers vector $\mathbf{b}$	length $b$
basal tilt	$\mathbf{a}$	39%	edge	$\mathbf{a} = (1/3) \langle 11\bar{2}0 \rangle$	4.52 Å
non-basal tilt	$\mathbf{a}$	27%	edge	$\mathbf{c} = \langle 0001 \rangle$ $\mathbf{a} + \mathbf{c} = (1/3) \langle 11\bar{2}3 \rangle$	7.36 Å 8.63 Å
basal twist	$\mathbf{c}$	7%	screw	$\mathbf{a} = (1/3) \langle 11\bar{2}0 \rangle$	4.52 Å
other	arbitrary	27%		diverse and mixed	

Figure 1  
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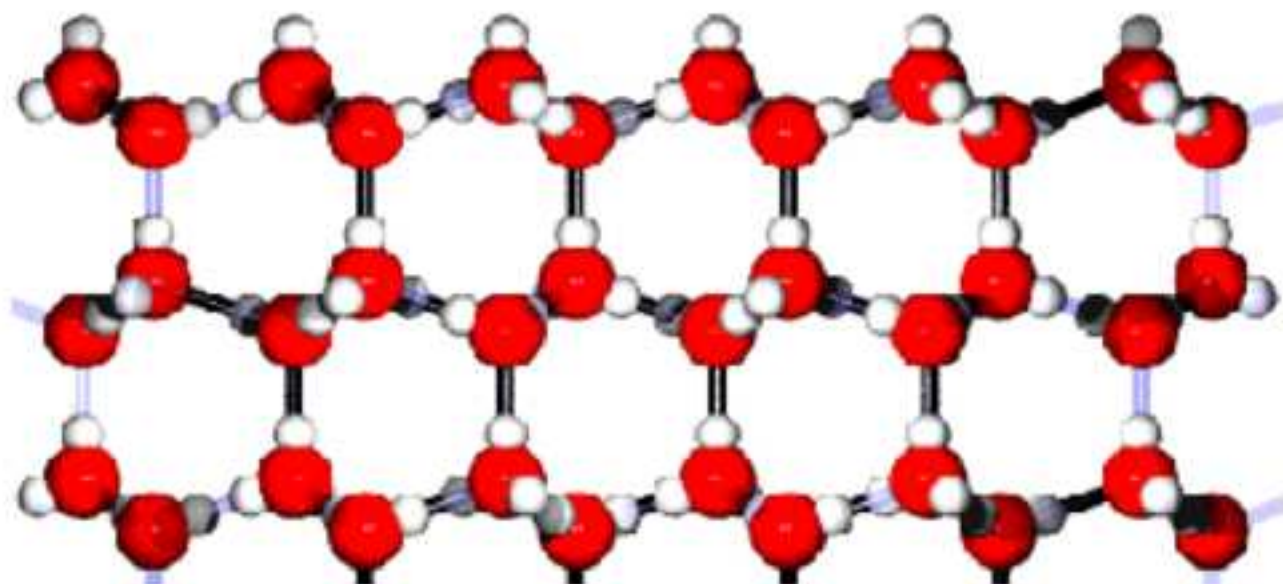
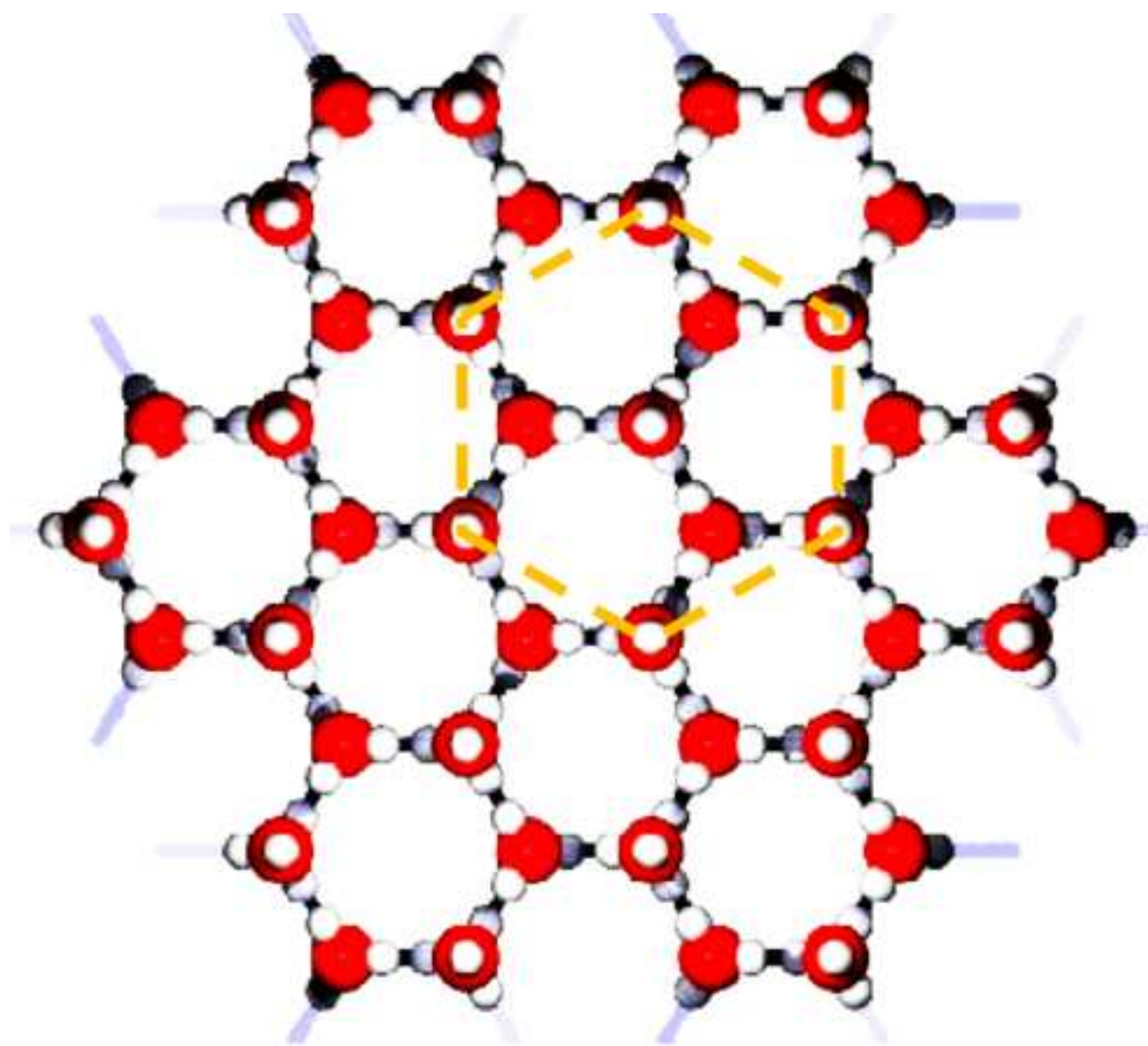


Figure 2  
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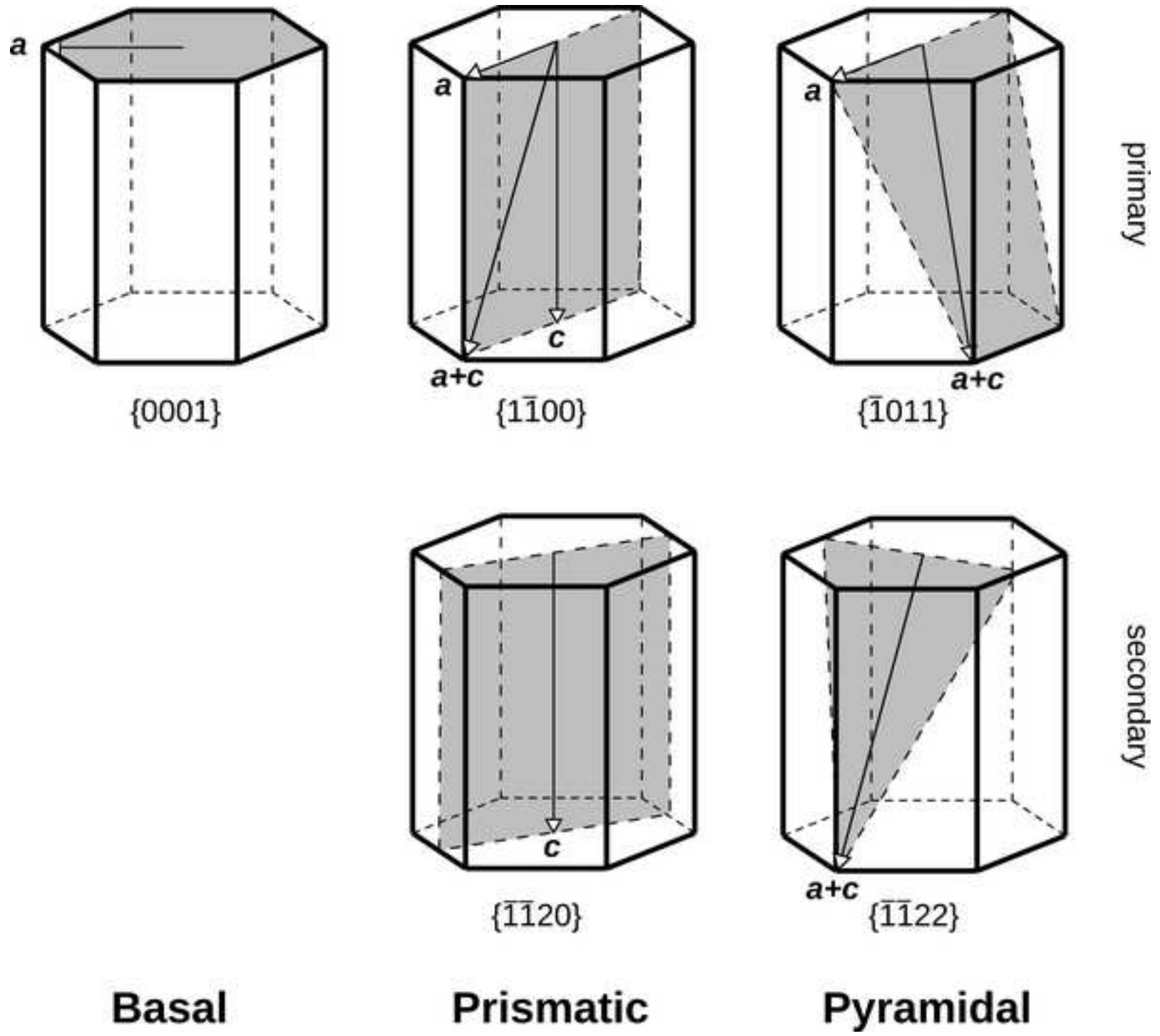


Figure 3  
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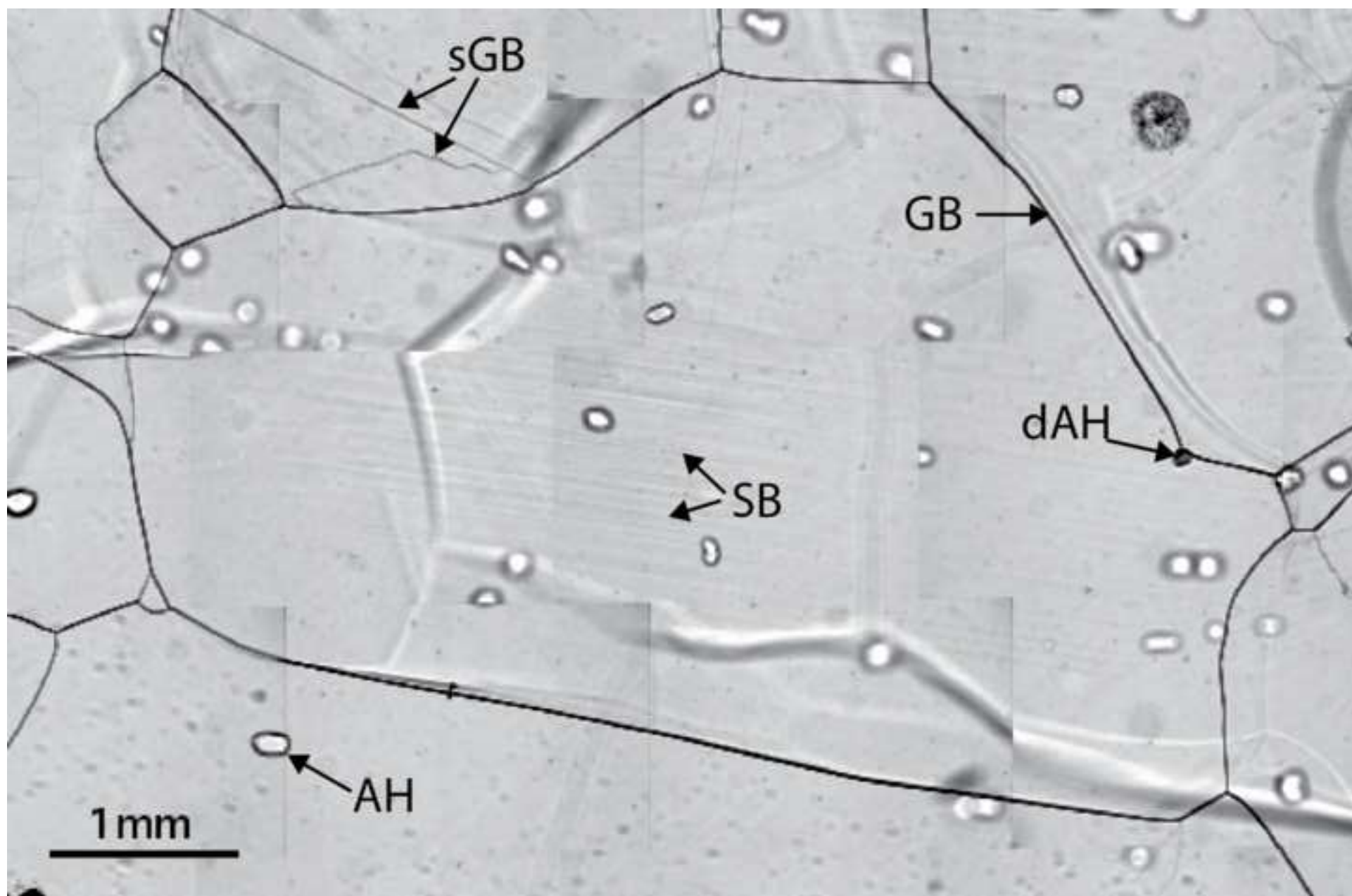


Figure 4  
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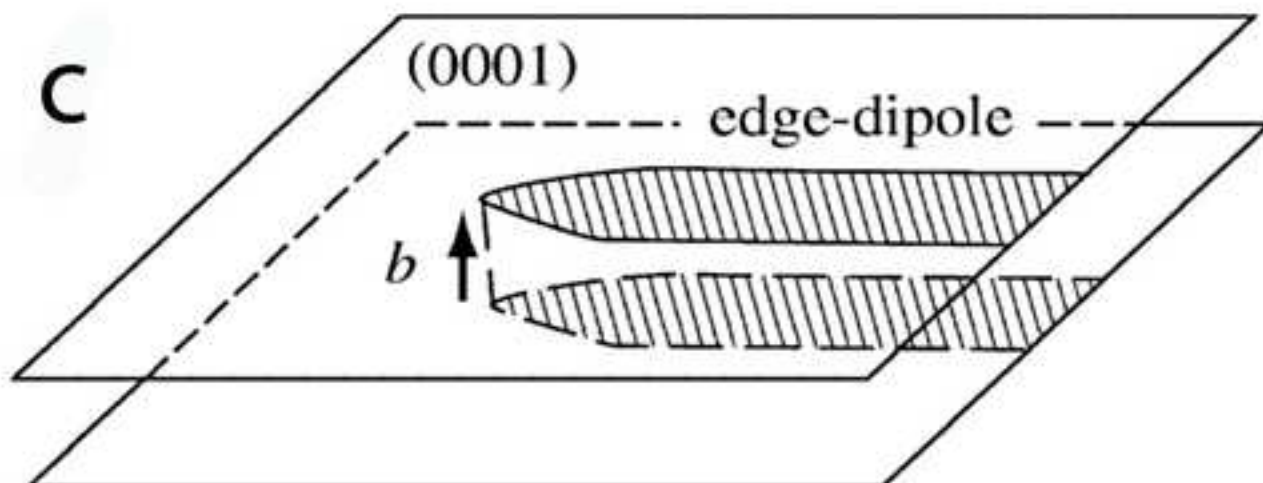
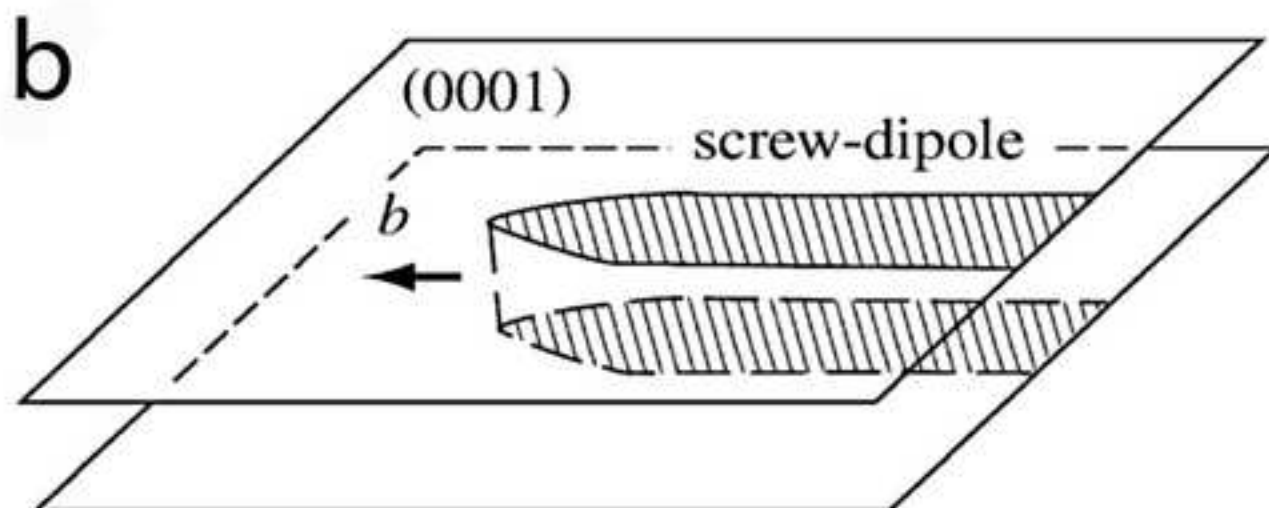
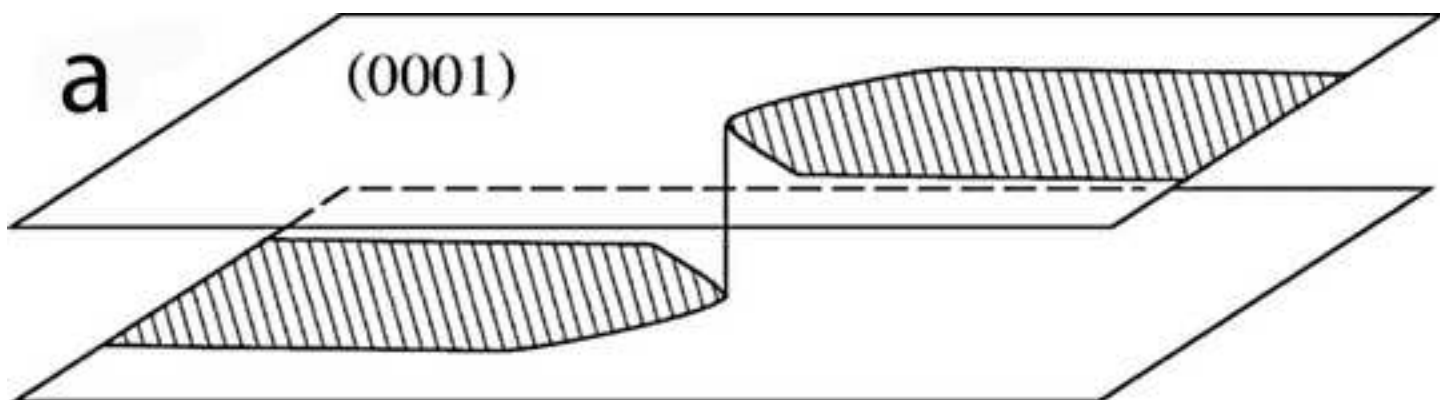




Figure 5  
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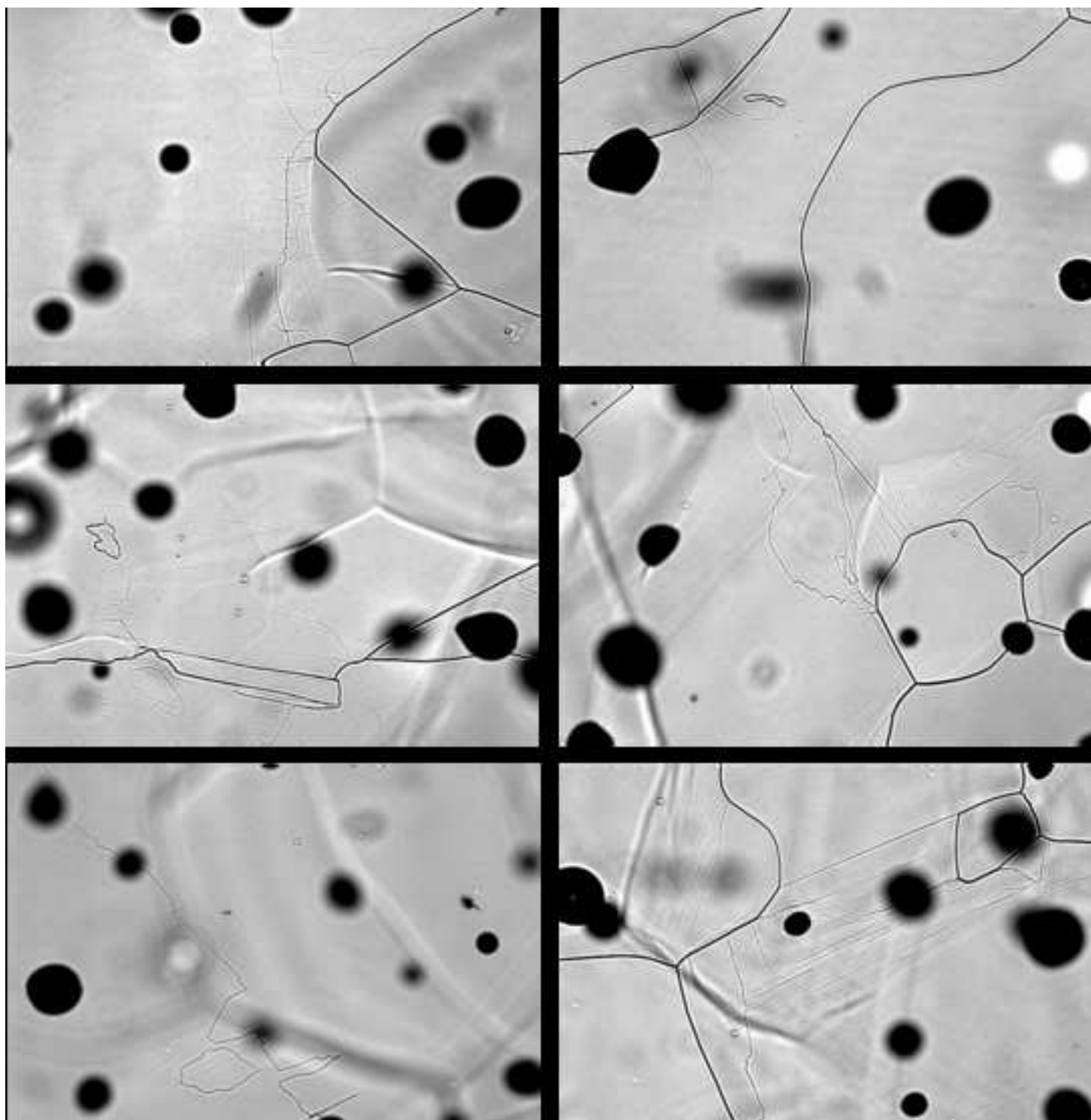


Figure 6  
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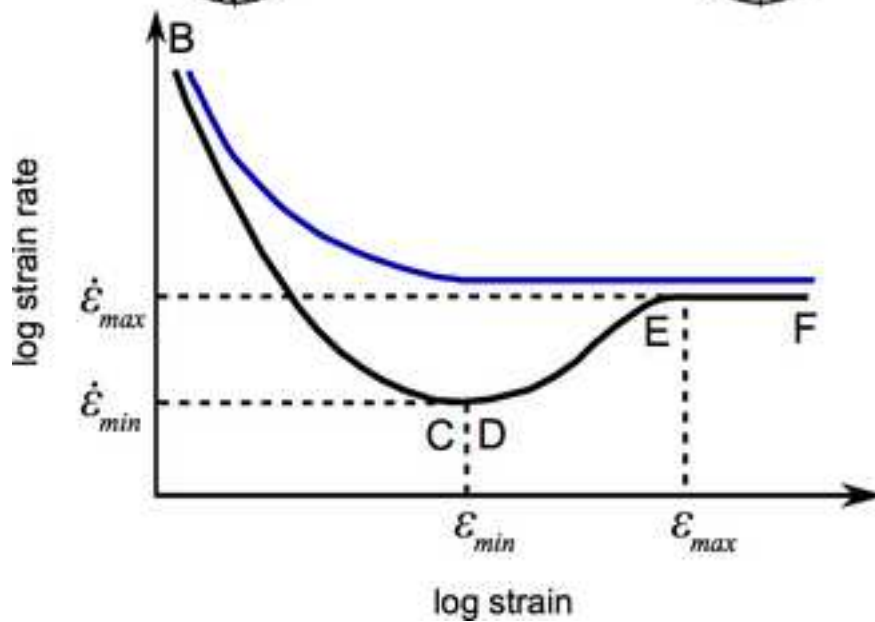
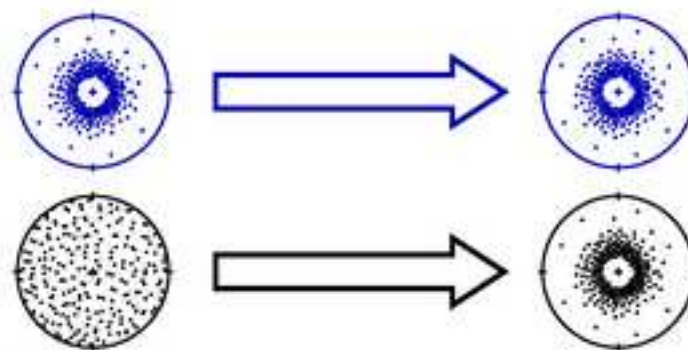
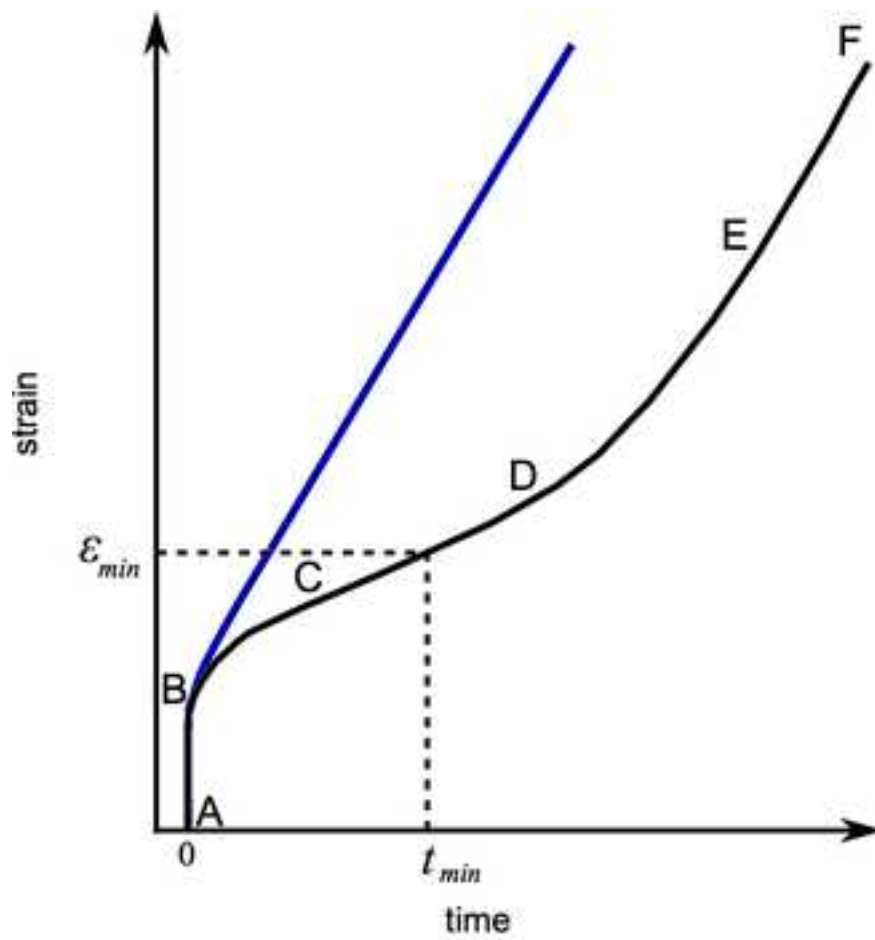




Figure 7  
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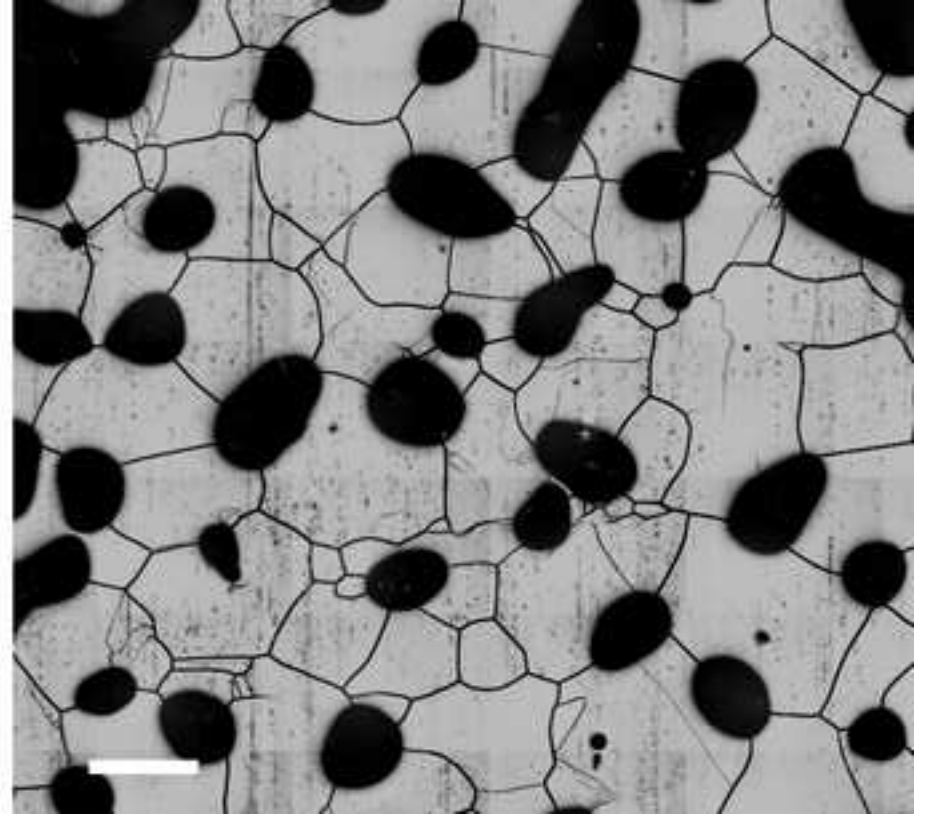
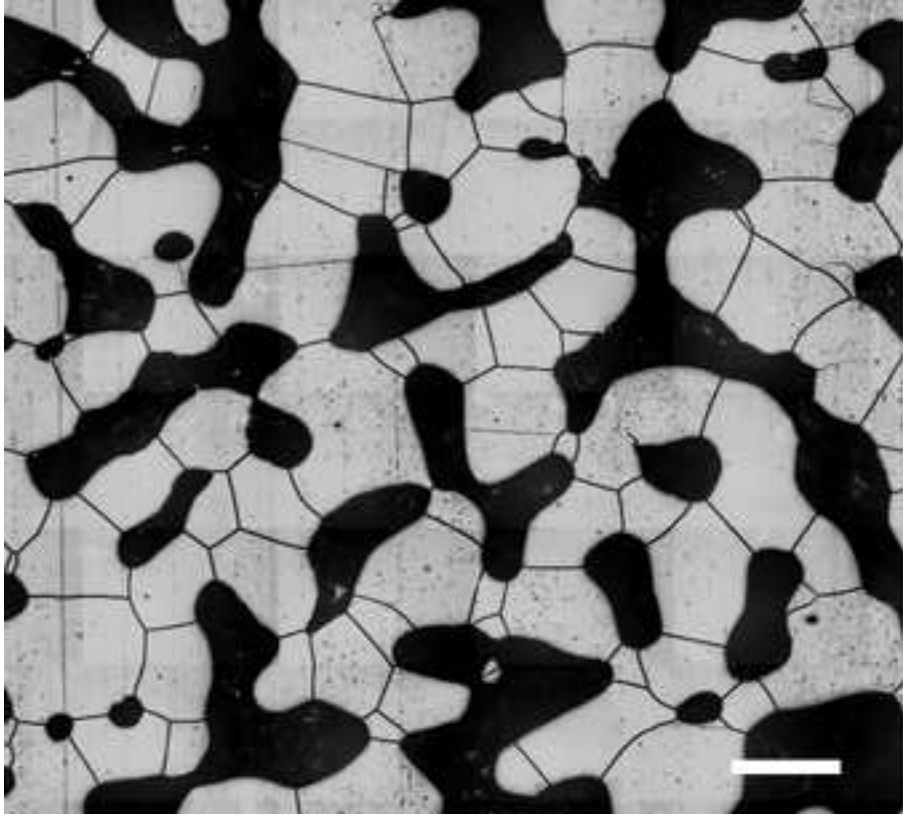


Figure 8  
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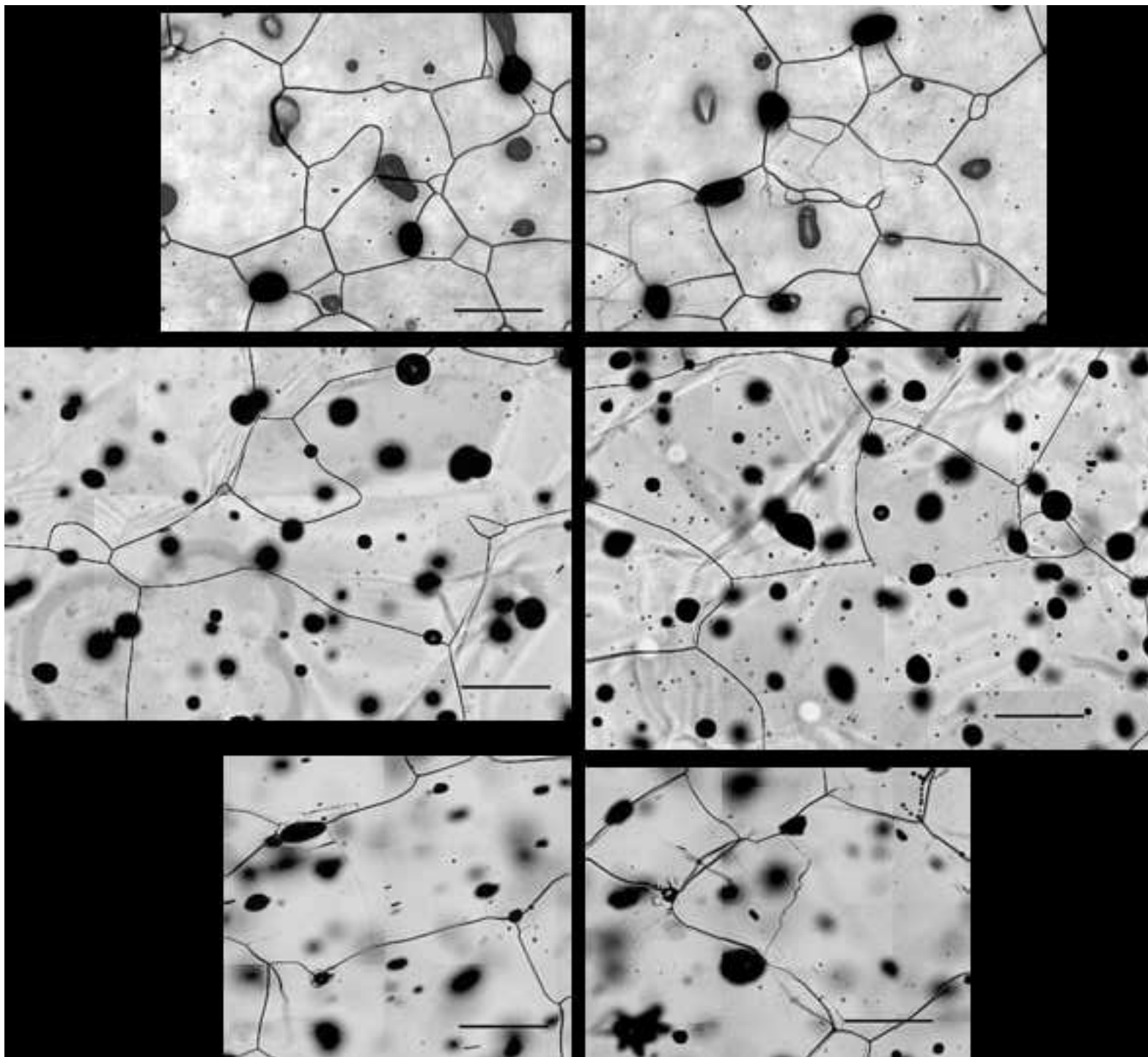




Figure 9  
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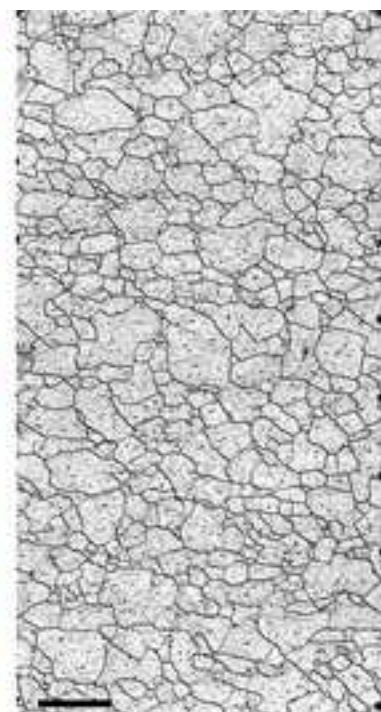
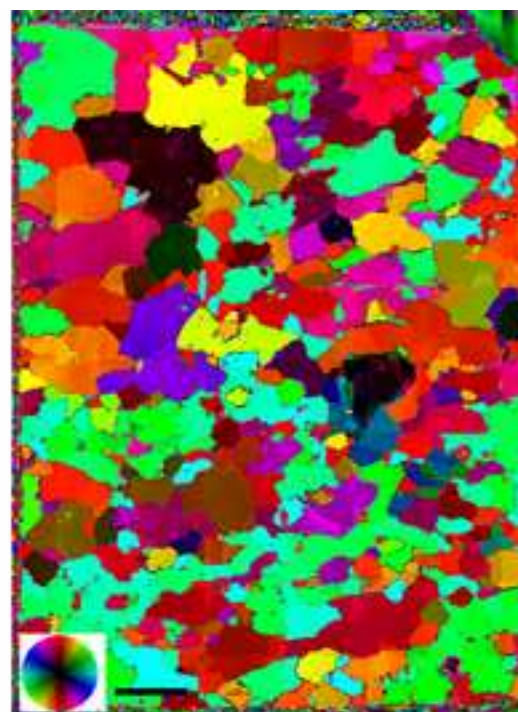


Figure 10  
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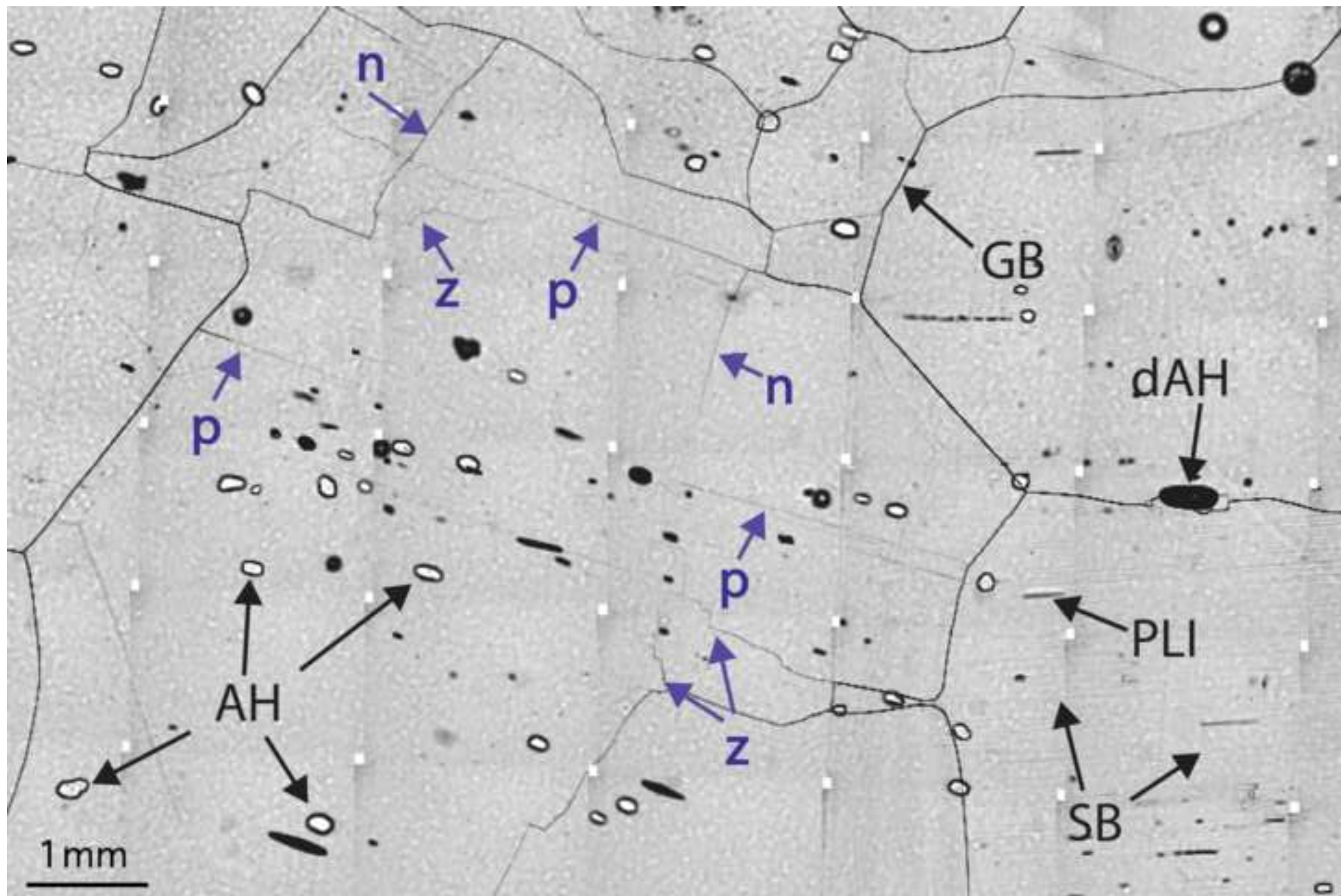




Figure 11

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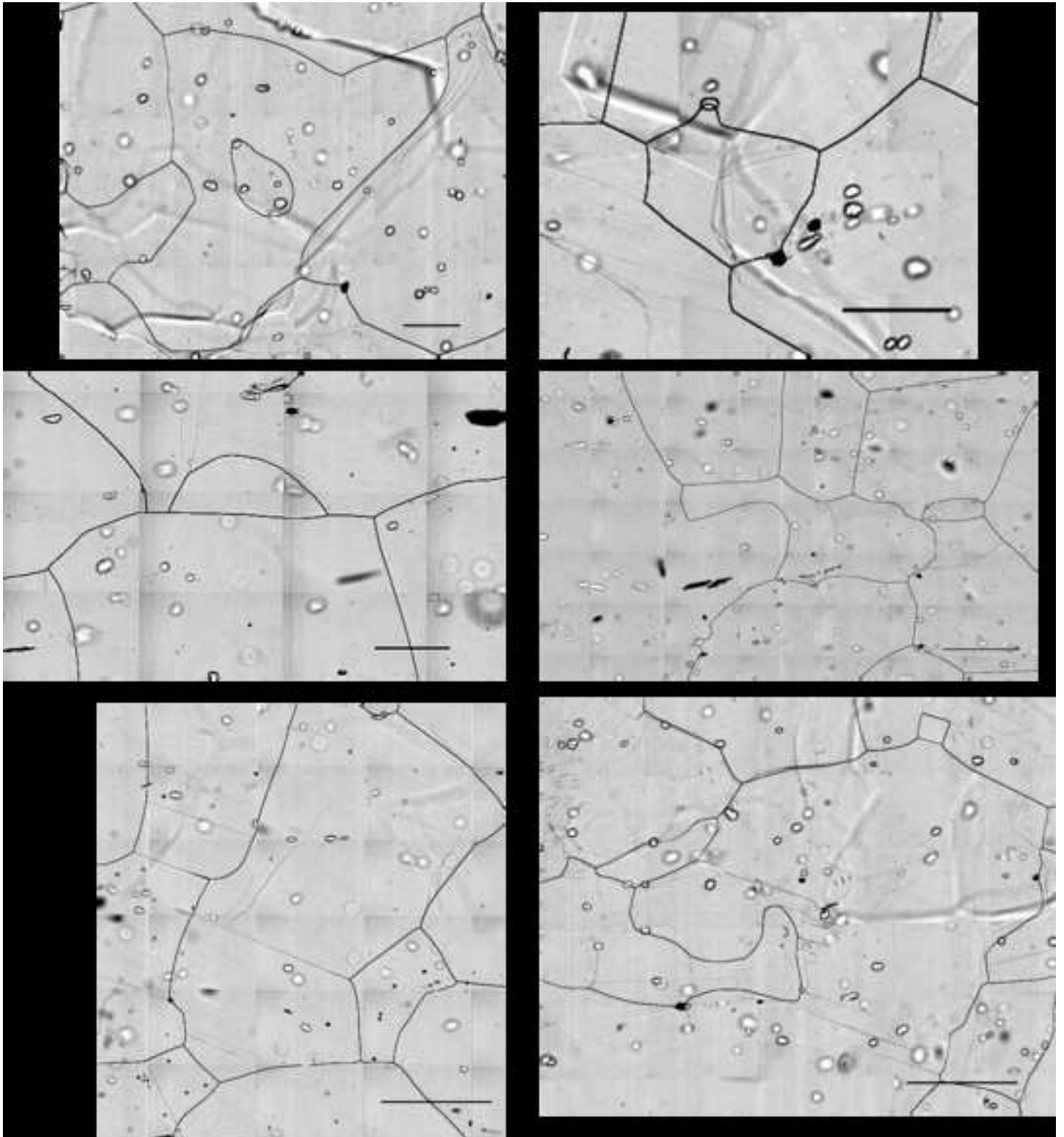


Figure 12  
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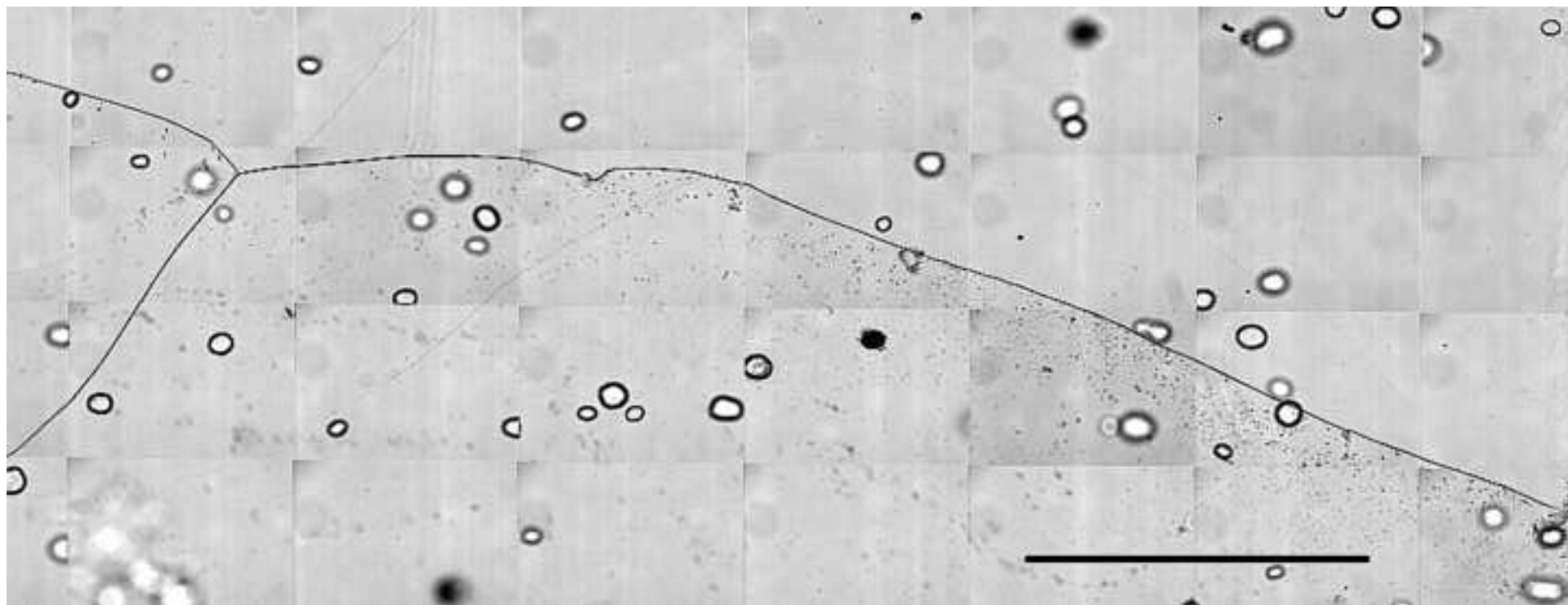


Figure 13  
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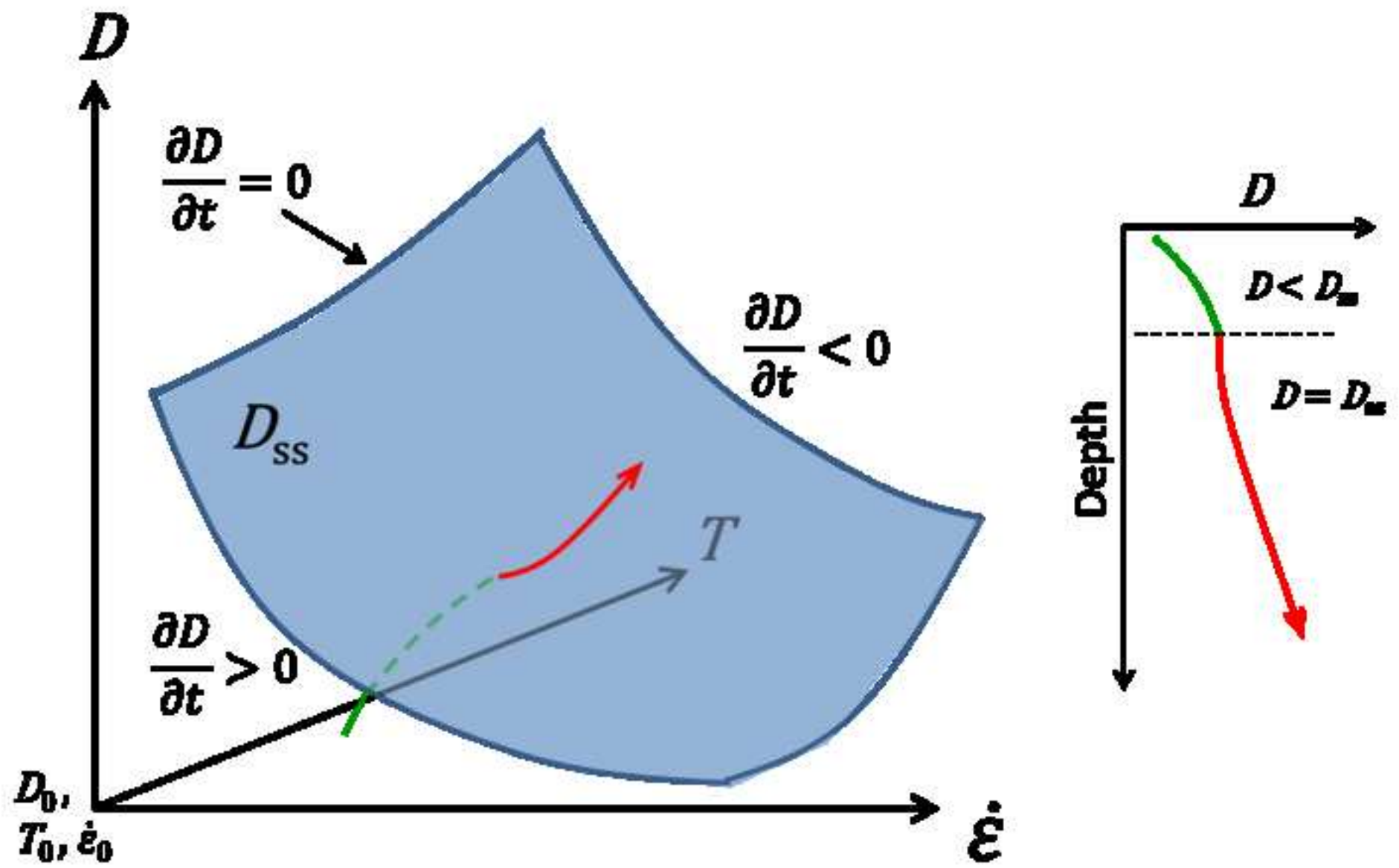


Figure 14  
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