

Contents

Preface XV

List of Contributors XVII

1	Semi-solid Forming of Aluminium and Steel – Introduction and Overview	1
	<i>Gerhard Hirt, Liudmila Khizhnyakova, René Baadjou, Frederik Knauf, and Reiner Kopp</i>	
1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	Early Work on Flow Behaviour and Technology Development	4
1.2.1	Basic Findings Concerning the Rheology of Metals in the Semi-solid Condition	4
1.2.2	First Steps Towards a Semi-solid Metal-forming Technology	6
1.3	Today's Technologies of Semi-solid Metal Forming	7
1.3.1	Preparation of Billets for Semi-solid Forming	9
1.3.1.1	Direct Chill Casting	9
1.3.1.2	Thermomechanical Treatment	10
1.3.2	Reheating of Billets and Alternative Slurry Production	10
1.3.2.1	Heating Furnaces and Strategies	10
1.3.2.2	Control of the Billet Condition During and After Reheating	13
1.3.3	Alternative Routes for Slurry Preparation	14
1.3.3.1	The UBE New Rheocasting Process	14
1.3.3.2	The Cooling Slope Method	15
1.3.3.3	Low Superheat Casting	15
1.3.3.4	Single Slug Production Method (SSP Method)	15
1.3.3.5	The Continuous Rheoconversion Process (CRP)	15
1.3.3.6	The SEED Process	16
1.3.3.7	Low Superheat Pouring with a Shear Field (LSPSF)	16
1.3.3.8	The Gas Bubbles Technique	16
1.3.3.9	Method of Billet Production Directly Using Liquid Electrolysed Aluminium	16
1.3.4	Process Alternatives for Semi-solid Forming	17
1.3.5	Industrial Application Potential	18
1.3.5.1	AlSi7Mg (A356, A357)	18

1.3.5.2	Other Aluminium Alloys	19
1.3.5.3	High Melting Point Alloys (<i>i.e.</i> Steels)	21
	References	25

Part One Material Fundamentals of Metal Forming in the Semi-solid State 29

2 Metallurgical Aspects of SSM Processing 31

Peter J. Uggowitzer and Dirk I. Uhlenhaut

2.1	Introduction	31
2.2	Temperature Sensitivity S^* and Solid–Liquid Fraction	32
2.3	Slurry Formation in the Rheo- and Thixo-routes	34
2.4	Proneness to Segregation and Hot Tearing	36
2.5	Impact of Variations in Alloy Composition	40
2.6	Conclusion	41
	References	42

3 Material Aspects of Steel Thixoforming 43

Wolfgang Bleck, Sebastian Dziallach, Heike Meuser, Wolfgang Püttgen, and Peter J. Uggowitzer

3.1	Introduction	43
3.2	Background	44
3.2.1	Material Prerequisites for the Thixoforming of Steel	44
3.2.1.1	Rheological Behaviour of Thixotropic Metal Suspensions	45
3.2.1.2	The Sponge Effect	47
3.2.1.3	Temperature Interval Size and Temperature Sensitivity	48
3.2.1.4	Microstructure in the Partial Liquid State	51
3.2.2	Structural Examination	54
3.2.2.1	Structural Parameters	54
3.3	Alloying Systems	61
3.3.1	Tool Steel X210CrW12	62
3.3.2	Roller-Bearing Steel 100Cr6	64
3.4	Structural Parameter Development and Material Selection	67
3.4.1	Development of the Structural Parameters of Steel X210CrW12	67
3.4.1.1	Metallographic Analysis of Quenched Specimens from the Three-Phase Area	69
3.4.1.2	Metallographic Analysis of Quenched Specimens from the Two-Phase Area	71
3.4.1.3	Microprobe Examinations of the Quenched X210CrW12 Specimens	72
3.4.1.4	EBSD-Measurements of Quenched X210CrW12 Specimens	76
3.4.2	Determination of the Structural Parameters of Steel 100Cr6	77
3.4.2.1	Metallographic Analysis of Quenched Specimens of Steel 100Cr6	78
3.4.2.2	Microprobe Examination of the Quenched 100Cr6 Samples	79
3.4.2.3	EBSD Measurements of Quenched 100Cr6 Specimens	80
3.4.3	Concluding Assessment of the Microstructure Parameter Determination	81

3.5	Melting Behaviour	82
3.5.1	Thermodynamic Preliminary Considerations and Microstructural Examinations Concerning the Structural Regulation of Steel 100Cr6 by Means of TiN Particles	82
3.5.2	Concluding Appraisal of TiN Doping	86
3.6	Microstructure Analysis and Material Properties	86
3.6.1	Structural Changes and Properties of the Tool Steel X210CrW12	86
3.6.1.1	Thermodynamic Preliminary Considerations and Microstructural Examinations	87
3.6.1.2	Examinations Concerning Long-Term Heat Resistance	96
3.6.2	Structural Changes and the Properties of the Hypo-eutectic Steel 100Cr6	98
3.6.3	Final Evaluation of the Heat-treatment Strategies	98
3.7	Conclusions	100
	References	101
4	Design of Al and Al–Li Alloys for Thixoforming	105
	<i>Bernd Friedrich, Alexander Arnold, Roger Sauermann, and Tony Noll</i>	
4.1	Production of Raw Material for Thixoforming Processes	105
4.2	Chemical Grain Refinement of Commercial Thixoalloys	108
4.2.1	Methodology for Tuning of Commercial Alloys for Semi-solid Processing by Means of Grain Refinement	108
4.2.2	Adaptation of the Chemical Composition	110
4.2.3	Influence on the Form Factor of the Primary Phase	111
4.2.4	Modification of the Eutectic Structure	113
4.2.5	Influencing the Semi-solid Temperature Interval	114
4.2.6	Characteristics of the Raw Material	114
4.3	Fundamentals of Aluminium–Lithium Alloys	116
4.3.1	State of the Art	116
4.3.2	The System Al–Li–Cu	118
4.3.3	The System Al–Li–Mg	119
4.3.4	The System Al–Li–Cu–Mg	119
4.3.5	The System Al–Li–Cu–Mg–Ag	119
4.3.6	Effects of Alkali Metal Contaminants	120
4.4	Development of Aluminium–Lithium-Alloys for Semi-solid Processing	121
4.4.1	Thermochemical Modelling	121
4.4.2	Choice of a Suitable Basis System	123
4.4.3	Fine Tuning of the Grain Refinement for Al–Li Alloys	124
4.4.4	Assessment of the Raw Material Development Programme	125
4.5	Consideration of the Forming Pressure on Thixoalloy Development	126
4.5.1	Experimental	127
4.5.2	Results of High-pressure DTA	128
4.5.3	Effect of the Solidification Pressure on the Microstructure	130
4.5.4	Possible Impacts of High Pressure for the Thixoforming Process	131
4.6	Preparation of Principle Components from Al–Li Thixoalloys	132

4.6.1	Thixocasting	132
4.6.2	Rheocasting	134
4.7	Production of Al–Li Demonstrators by Rheocasting	137
4.8	Recycling of Aluminium–Lithium Alloys from Thixoforming Processes	139
4.8.1	State of the Art	139
4.8.2	Thermochemical Metal–Salt Equilibria	139
4.8.3	Experimental Validation of the Thermochemical Calculations	140
	References	143

5 Thermochemical Simulation of Phase Formation 147

Bengt Hallstedt and Jochen M. Schneider

5.1	Methods and Objectives	147
5.1.1	General	147
5.1.2	Equilibrium Calculations	149
5.1.3	Scheil–Gulliver Calculations	149
5.1.4	Diffusion Simulations with DICTRA	150
5.2	Calculations for the Tool Steel X210CrW12	150
5.2.1	Phase Diagram	150
5.2.2	Solidification	151
5.2.3	Determination of Liquid Fraction	152
5.2.4	Origins and Consequences of Compositional Variations	153
5.2.5	Enthalpy and Heat Capacity	155
5.2.6	Density	156
5.2.7	Melting	156
5.2.8	Suitability for Semi-solid Processing	158
5.3	Calculations for the Bearing Steel 100Cr6	159
5.3.1	Phase Diagram	159
5.3.2	Solidification	159
5.3.3	Compositional Variations	160
5.3.4	Enthalpy, Heat Capacity and Density	161
5.3.5	Suitability for Semi-solid Processing	161
5.4	Calculations for the High-speed Steel HS6-5-2	163
	References	165

Part Two Modelling the Flow Behaviour of Semi-solid Metal Alloys 167

6 Modelling the Flow Behaviour of Semi-solid Metal Alloys 169

Michael Modigell, Lars Pape, Ksenija Vasilić, Markus Hufschmidt, Gerhard Hirt, Hideki Shimahara, René Baadjou, Andreas Bührig-Polaczek, Carsten Afrath, Reiner Kopp, Mahmoud Ahmadein, and Matthias Bünck

6.1	Empirical Analysis of the Flow Behaviour	169
6.1.1	Structural Phenomena Influencing the Flow Behaviour	170
6.1.2	Mathematical Modelling of the Flow Behaviour	172

6.1.2.1	Approach from Fluid Mechanics	172
6.1.3	Approach from Solid-state Mechanics	174
6.1.4	Experimental Investigations to Determine Model Parameters	175
6.1.5	Experimental Setups	175
6.1.5.1	Rotational Rheometer	175
6.1.5.2	Capillary Rheometer	177
6.1.5.3	Vertical Capillary Rheometer	178
6.1.5.4	Horizontal Capillary Rheometer	179
6.1.5.5	Compression Test	182
6.1.6	Experimental Results and Modelling	183
6.1.6.1	Rotational Rheometer	183
6.1.6.2	Capillary Rheometer	189
6.1.6.3	Compression Tests	193
6.2	Numerical Modelling of Flow Behaviour	196
6.2.1	Motivation	196
6.2.2	Numerical Models Used	197
6.2.2.1	Material Models	197
6.2.2.2	Discretization Methods (Numerical Solution Techniques)	199
6.2.3	Software Packages Used	200
6.2.4	Numerical Examples	201
6.2.4.1	One-phase, Finite Difference, Based on Flow-3d	201
6.2.4.2	Two-phase, Finite Element Based on PETERA	202
6.2.5	Summary	208
6.3	Simulation of Cooling Channel	208
6.3.1	Model Description	209
6.3.2	Determination of Grain Nucleation Parameters	209
6.3.3	Process Simulation	210
6.3.4	Summary	215
	References	217
7	A Physical and Micromechanical Model for Semi-solid Behaviour	221
	<i>Véronique Favier, Régis Bigot, and Pierre Cézard</i>	
7.1	Introduction	221
7.2	Basic Concepts of Micromechanics and Homogenization	222
7.3	Modelling Semi-solid Behaviour	223
7.3.1	Definition of the Representative Volume Element	223
7.3.1.1	Morphological Pattern	223
7.3.1.2	Internal Variable	225
7.3.1.3	Local Behaviours	226
7.3.2	Homogenized Estimate of the Semi-solid Viscosity: Concentration and Homogenization Steps	227
7.3.2.1	Step a	227
7.3.2.2	Step b	229
7.4	Results and Discussion	229
7.4.1	Isothermal Steady-state Behaviour	229

7.4.2	Isothermal Non-steady-state Behaviour	232
7.4.3	Non-isothermal and Non-steady-state Behaviour	234
7.5	Conclusion	235
	References	237

Part Three Tool Technologies for Forming of Semi-solid Metals 239

8	Tool Technologies for Forming of Semi-solid Metals	241
	<i>Kirsten Bobzin, Erich Lugscheider, Jochen M. Schneider, Rainer Telle, Philipp Immich, David Hajas, and Simon Münstermann</i>	
8.1	Introduction – Suitable Tool Concepts for the Thixoforming Process	241
8.2	Thin-Film PVD/PECVD Coating Concepts for Die Materials	247
8.3	PVD and PECVD Coating Technologies	249
8.4	Multifunctional PVD Composites for Thixoforming Moulds	251
8.4.1	Deposition Process Development of Crystalline PVD Al_2O_3	254
8.4.1.1	Experimental Details for the Development of $\gamma\text{-Al}_2\text{O}_3$	255
8.4.1.2	Results and Discussion	255
8.4.1.3	Summary of the Development of the $\text{TiAlN-}\gamma\text{-Al}_2\text{O}_3$ Bilayer System	256
8.4.1.4	Upscaling $\gamma\text{-Al}_2\text{O}_3$ from a Laboratory-scale Unit to an Industrial Coating Unit	257
8.4.1.5	Experimental Details for the Development of $\gamma\text{-Al}_2\text{O}_3$ on an Industrial Coating Unit	257
8.4.1.6	Results of the Deposition of $\gamma\text{-Al}_2\text{O}_3$ on an Industrial Coating Unit	258
8.4.2	Deposition Process Development of Crystalline PVD ZrO_2	260
8.4.2.1	Experimental Details for the Development of t-ZrO_2	260
8.4.2.2	Results and Discussion	260
8.4.2.3	Summary for the Development of t-ZrO_2	263
8.4.2.4	Experimental Details on the Development of t-ZrO_2 on an Industrial Coating Unit	263
8.4.2.5	Results of the Deposition of t-ZrO_2 on an Industrial Coating Unit	263
8.4.3	Model and Near Application Tests	265
8.4.4	Applicability of PVD-Coated Dies in Steel Thixoforming	267
8.4.5	Perspectives for the Application of PVD-Coated Dies in Steel Thixoforming	268
8.5	Developing Al_2O_3 PECVD Coatings for Thixoforming Moulds	269
8.5.1	Experimental Procedure	270
8.5.2	Results and Discussion	272
8.5.2.1	Chemical Composition and Constitution	272
8.5.2.2	Film Morphology and Porosity	275
8.5.2.3	Mechanical Properties	277
8.5.3	Conclusions	280
8.6	Bulk Ceramic Forming Tools	281

8.6.1	Candidate Die Materials	281
8.6.2	Ceramic Die Concepts for Steel Thixoforming	283
8.6.3	Conventionally Heated Tools	285
8.6.3.1	Characteristic Load Profile and Die Material Selection	285
8.6.3.2	Corrosion Experiments and Forming Series	286
8.6.3.3	Corrosion Mechanisms and Forming Performance	288
8.6.3.4	Applicability of Silicon Nitride Dies in Steel Thixoforming	292
8.6.4	Self-heating Dies	294
8.6.4.1	Die Materials and Tool Characteristics	294
8.6.4.2	Tool Design and Construction	296
8.6.4.3	Forming Performance and Wear Resistance	298
8.6.4.4	Applicability of Self-heating Ceramic Dies for Steel Thixoforming	299
8.6.5	Perspectives for the Application of Bulk Ceramic Dies in Steel Thixoforming	300
8.7	Conclusions and Perspectives	301
	References	303

Part Four Forming of Semi-solid Metals 309

9	Rheocasting of Aluminium Alloys and Thixocasting of Steels	311
	<i>Matthias Bünck, Fabian Kütke, and Andreas Bührig-Polaczek</i>	
9.1	Casting of Semi-solid Slurries	311
9.2	SSM Casting Processes	312
9.2.1	Developmental History of the Part Liquid Aluminium Processing	314
9.3	Thixocasting of Steel Alloys	319
9.3.1	Inductive Heating for Steels: Adaptation and Process Control	319
9.3.2	Casting Technology and Systems	323
9.3.2.1	Systems Engineering for Thixo- and Rheoprocesses	323
9.3.2.2	Process-adapted Shot Chamber System	323
9.3.2.3	Technological Design Layout	325
9.3.3	Model Tests	326
9.3.3.1	Investigations on Mould Filling Behaviour (Step Die)	327
9.3.3.2	Determination of Flow Length Capabilities (Meander Die)	328
9.3.3.3	Examinations of the Wear Behaviour of the Form Tools	330
9.3.4	Demonstrators and Real Parts	335
9.3.4.1	Impeller	335
9.3.4.2	Kitchen and Diving Knives	337
9.4	Rheoroute	342
9.4.1	Cooling Channel Process	343
9.4.1.1	Parameters: Seed Crystal Multiplication on the Cooling Channel	344
9.4.1.2	Parameters: Cooling to the Process Temperature	349

9.4.1.3	Simulation Results	350
9.4.1.4	Oxidation	355
9.4.1.5	Summary	355
9.4.2	Rheo Container Process (RCP)	355
9.4.3	Demonstrator: Tie Rod	357
9.4.3.1	Thixocasting: A356	358
9.4.3.2	Aluminium–Lithium Alloy	358
9.4.3.3	RCP: ALi2.1Mg5.5	358
9.4.3.4	Thixocasting of Tailored ALi2.1Mg5.5	360
9.4.3.5	Cooling Channel Process: A356	362
9.5	Assessment and Outlook	364
9.5.1	Rheo Processes	364
9.5.2	Thixocasting of Steels	364
	References	365

10	Thixoforging and Rheoforging of Steel and Aluminium Alloys	369
	<i>Gerhard Hirt, René Baadjou, Frederik Knauf, Ingold Seidl, Hideki Shimahara, Dirk Abel, Reiner Kopp, Rainer Gasper, and Alexander Schönbohm</i>	
10.1	Introduction	369
10.2	Forging in the Semi-solid State	371
10.3	Heating and Forming Operations	373
10.3.1	Induction Process	373
10.3.1.1	Heat Transfer Equations	375
10.3.1.2	Modelling of Inductive Heating with the Finite Difference Method (FDM)	377
10.3.1.3	Control of Inductive Heating	377
10.3.2	Thixoforging and Thixo Lateral Extrusion of Aluminium	383
10.3.3	Thixo Lateral Extrusion of Steel	385
10.3.4	Thixoforging of Steel	387
10.3.5	Thixojoining of Steel	389
10.3.6	Automated Thixoforming – Thixo Cell	391
10.3.6.1	Feedstock Magazine and Unloading Unit	391
10.3.6.2	Robot with Gripper	392
10.3.6.3	Forming Aggregates	392
10.3.6.4	Sequence Control of the Plant	392
10.3.6.5	Master Process Controller	392
10.3.6.6	Control of the Forming Process	394
10.3.7	Rheoforging of Steel	395
10.4	Simulation of the Thixoforming Process	399
10.4.1	Material Properties and Boundary Conditions	399
10.4.1.1	Radiation	399
10.4.1.2	Heat Transfer Coefficient Between Workpiece and Die	400
10.4.2	Simulation of a Thixoforged Component	401

10.5	Conclusion	405
	References	407
11	Thixoextrusion	411
	<i>Frederik Knauf, René Baadjou, Gerhard Hirt, Reiner Kopp, Simon Münstermann, and Rainer Telle</i>	
11.1	Introduction	411
11.2	State of the Art	412
11.3	Tool Concepts	416
11.3.1	Isothermal Tool Concept	416
11.3.2	Non-isothermal Tool Concept	416
11.4	Isothermal Thixoextrusion	418
11.4.1	Experimental Strategy, Tools and Process Parameters	418
11.4.2	Extrusion Performance and Bar Analysis	420
11.4.3	Upscaling of Isothermal Thixoextrusion	424
11.4.4	Summary and Discussion	427
11.5	Non-isothermal Thixoextrusion	428
11.5.1	Experimental Strategy, Tools and Process Parameters	428
11.5.2	Extrusion Performance and Evaluation for Experiments Without Cooling	429
11.5.3	Estimation of the Material Dwell Time Required in the Extrusion Channel	432
11.5.4	Extrusion Performance and Evaluation for Experiments with Cooling	433
11.5.5	Numerical Simulation of the Thixoextrusion Process	436
11.5.6	Summary and Discussion	439
11.6	Conclusion	440
	References	442
	Index	443

