

Copper – Silicon – Zinc

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Introduction

[1906Gui, 1912Car, 1930Gou, 1930Vad1, 1930Vad2, 1931Vad1, 1931Vad2, 1942Mas, 1945Smi, 1974Smi] investigated the Cu rich part of the Cu-Si-Zn system containing up to 40 mass% Zn and 6 mass% Si. The boundaries of the (Cu) field have been determined at 800°C by [1930Gou], at 750°C by [1930Vad1, 1930Vad2] and at 400, 600, 800°C by [1945Smi]. [1974Smi] shows the variation of the limiting solubility of the (Cu) region as a function of the composition at 0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 (mass%) Zn and up to 5 mass% Si and temperature from 1050 to 300°C. At 800°C, the boundaries of the $\alpha + \beta$ and β phase fields have also been determined [1930Gou]. These authors report lower solubility of Si in the Cu-Zn alloys than in later investigations [1957Mim, 1962Pop, 1964Pop1]. A part of the Cu-Si-Zn diagram, up to 30 at.% Si and 90 at.% Zn, has been investigated in detail by [1956Mim, 1957Mim, 1960Mim1, 1960Mim2, 1964Mim1, 1964Mim2]; another part, up to 20 at.% Si and 50 at.% Zn, has been studied by [1962Pop, 1964Pop1]. The projection of the liquidus surface has been constructed by [1956Mim]. The range near η solid solution has been investigated by [1960Mim1, 1960Mim2] in detail. Isothermal sections at 700, 600, 400°C were constructed by [1957Mim, 1960Mim1, 1960Mim2] and by [1962Pop, 1964Pop1] at 847, 760, 600 and 482°C. [1985Far] quotes a ternary eutectic between “Cu₄Si and two unidentified ternary phases” at 19 mass% Zn, 7 mass% Si and 765°C. This is very near to the quasibinary peritectic minimum $L + \beta \rightleftharpoons \gamma$ found by [1957Mim] at 21.5 mass% Zn, 6.9 mass% Si and 775°C, which contains only two solid solution phases β and γ . [1969Gue, 1979Dri, 1979Cha] give the review of the Cu-Si-Zn system. [2003Bor] used the thermodynamic calculation for construction of isothermal sections at 670, 720, and 760°C in the composition range up to 60 mass% Zn and 10 mass% Si and vertical section at 1 mass% Si. Phase diagram information from [1964Pop1] and the personal experimental data were used by [2003Bor] in optimization. Experimental methods used in different works are summarized in Table 1.

Binary Systems

The binary systems Cu-Zn, Cu-Si and Si-Zn are accepted from [2006Leb], [2002Leb] and [1996Jac] respectively. The δ , γ , and ϵ phases of the Cu-Si binary system [2002Leb] are designated here as δ_1 , γ_1 , and ϵ_1 , respectively.

Solid Phases

Ternary phases do not form. The β phase of the binary Cu-Si and Cu-Zn systems forms continuous series of solid solutions at high temperatures [1956Mim, 1957Mim, 1962Pop, 1964Pop1]. Reported by [1956Mim, 1957Mim, 1964Pop1] the formation of the continuous solid solution between γ phase of Cu-Zn system and high temperature δ_1 phase of Cu-Si system is not accepted, because they have different crystal structure. The γ phase has very wide homogeneity range towards Cu-Si system up to alloy with the composition of 1.7 at.% Zn and 17.3 at.% Si in equilibrium with δ_1 phase at 760°C. The solubility of Zn in the κ phase is significant; it reaches ~16 at.% Zn at 700°C. The solubility of Zn in the η phase is 2.9 at.% at the eutectic temperature, 530°C. In the ϵ_1 and γ_1 phases it is about 2 at.% Zn. The data on the solid phases are summarized in Table 2.

Quasibinary Systems

Based on metallographic and thermal analyses, [1956Mim] established that along the γ - Si section at 721°C, 58 mass% Zn and 3.7 mass% Si, a eutectic $L \rightleftharpoons \gamma + (\text{Si})$ occurs. However this section can not be considered as quasibinary because γ phase forms by peritectic reaction.

Invariant Equilibria

Four four-phase and one three-phase invariant equilibria (E_2 , U_6 , U_{10} , U_{14} , e_4) with the participation of liquid have been found by [1956Mim]. The quasibinary peritectic minimum $L + \beta \rightleftharpoons \gamma$ at 775°C determined by [1956Mim] is doubtful, because the γ and δ_1 phases do not form a continuous solid solution. One can suppose that there is the transaction reaction $L + \beta \rightleftharpoons \gamma + \delta_1(U_1)$ at 775°C instead of the peritectic minimum. According to [1985Far] in this point exist three phases: Cu_4Si and two unidentified ternary phases. The composition of Cu_4Si phase is close to δ_1 phase. One of the ternary phases can be β ternary solid solution and another - γ phase with dissolved Si. Moreover five hypothetical invariant equilibria with the participation of the δ_1 phase (U_2 , U_3 , U_4 , U_5 , E_1) were given by us supplementary. In solid state seven invariant equilibria have been established by [1957Mim]. However, two of them contradict with the isothermal sections [1964Pop1]. A four-phase reaction $\kappa + \beta \rightleftharpoons (Cu) + \gamma$ after [1957Mim] occurs at 625°C, whereas after [1962Pop, 1964Pop1] this reaction is below the isothermal section given for 600°C. To obtain the three-phase equilibria [1962Pop, 1964Pop1] at 482°C three four-phase reactions are necessary between 600 and 482°C, whereas the section given by [1957Mim] for 400°C, showing the three-phase equilibria $(Cu) + \gamma_1 + \gamma$ and $\varepsilon_1 + \gamma_1 + \gamma$, implies only one four-phase equilibrium in this range. Invariant reactions in points U_7 , U_9 , U_4 and E_5 are given according to the phase equilibria after [1964Pop1] at the temperatures 600°C and below. The reaction scheme is given in Fig. 1. The hypothetical invariant equilibria are shown by dashes lines. Determined by [1956Mim] eutectic (E_4) and transition (U_6 , U_{10}) reaction temperatures as 559, 667, 598°C, were corrected according to accepted binary Cu–Zn system [2002Leb] as ~548, ~665 and ~574°C. The compositions of the phases are given in Table 3. The compositions of the liquid phase in the invariant equilibria at 597 and 424°C have been corrected to a non-zero Si content, which was neglected by [1956Mim]. At 600, 500, and 480°C [1960Mim1, 1960Mim2] reported identical compositions for η and η' or η' and η'' . This contradicts the rules of heterogeneous equilibria and therefore it is tentatively corrected in Table 3.

Liquidus Surface

The projection of the liquidus surface presented in Fig. 2 is based on [1956Mim] and on the assumption of the existence of the primary crystallization field of the δ_1 phase. Nine fields of primary crystallization, of the (Cu), β , γ , δ_1 , δ , ε , η , (Si) and (Zn) phases, are separated from each other by the lines of monovariant equilibria. The hypothetical monovariant equilibria are shown by dashed lines.

Isothermal Sections

The isothermal sections constructed by [1957Mim] at 600°C and below disagree with those of [1962Pop, 1964Pop1]. [1962Pop, 1964Pop1] identified the phases by micrography and X-ray diffraction, whereas [1957Mim] used only micrography, which is less secure for the identification of phases than X-ray diffraction. Therefore, the results by [1962Pop, 1964Pop1] are preferential. Five isothermal sections constructed at 847, 760°C by [1964Pop1], at 700 by [1957Mim] and 600, 482°C by [1964Pop1] are displayed in Figs. 3 to 7. They are corrected to satisfy the accepted binary systems [2002Leb, 2006Leb]. Some details, not given by [1957Mim] or [1964Pop1] but following from the reaction scheme and the liquidus surface, are given by dashed lines.

Temperature – Composition Sections

A vertical section from Cu + 20 mass% Zn to Cu + 10 mass% Si has been constructed by [1942Mas]. However, this section disagrees with the binary Cu–Zn [2006Leb] and ternary systems [1957Mim, 1962Pop, 1964Pop1]. Several vertical sections at constant content of Si (2 and 4 mass%) and constant content of Zn (5 and 20 mass%) were constructed by [1957Mim]. Only one section with 2 mass% Si agrees with phase equilibria obtained by [1962Pop, 1964Pop1]. This section constructed in at.% is shown on Fig. 8. Some correction was made in solid state according to the isothermal sections [1964Pop1]. Also, the temperatures of invariant reactions on this section were corrected according to the reaction scheme (Fig. 1). Other vertical sections contradicted isothermal sections at temperatures 600°C and below obtained in [1962Pop,

[1964Pop1] and are not shown in the present assessment. The vertical section at 1 mass% Si calculated by [2003Bor] is not accepted here. It shows the increase the temperature of peritectic reaction from Cu-Zn system when Si is added, whereas this temperature must be lower according to the liquidus surface.

Notes on Materials Properties and Applications

[1930Gou] studied the effect of Si on the hardness of ternary Cu-Si-Zn alloys in the composition range from ~13 to ~15 mass% Zn and 3.9; 5.1 mass% Si and in the composition range from ~37 to 40 mass% Zn and 0.8 mass% Si. The hardness of alloys was measured after casting and after quenching at 850°C followed by annealing at 750, 600, 550, 500, 450, 350 and 250°C.

[1956Fre] made review of copper-base alloys most commonly used for making castings in UK. The constitution and the effect of composition and structure on properties are discussed.

Mechanical properties for sand-casting, chill-casting, extruded into rods and annealed at different temperatures of Cu-Si-Zn alloys were studied in many works [1930Vad1, 1930Vad2, 1931Vad1, 1931Vad2, 1942Mas, 1974Smi, 2003Ois]. These alloys with high silicon content, especially when it is all retained in solid solution, have valuable properties. They can be worked hot as well as cold.

[1972Wie, 1974Sol, 1977Wie, 1984Mur] investigated the shape memory behavior in the β phase region of ternary Cu-Si-Zn alloys containing from 33.4 to 35.9 at.% Zn and from 0.1 to 2.2 at.% Si.

Miscellaneous

[1964Mim1, 1964Mim2] using thermal analysis, microscopic examination and also partially X-ray diffraction and resistivity measurements studied the influence of Si on the $\beta \rightleftharpoons \beta'$ and $\gamma \rightleftharpoons \gamma_1$ transformations. The $\beta \rightleftharpoons \beta'$ transformation temperature depends only slightly on the additions of Si. The $\gamma \rightleftharpoons \gamma_1$ transformation temperature is lowered by Si or Cu additions. This transformation proceeds by a diffusionless martensitic mechanism. The twin-like figure which appears in the γ_1 phase of the slowly cooled specimens is attributed to the transformation from γ to γ_1 .

[1970Mim] investigated the phase transformation in high strength brass containing 35-40 mass% Zn, 1-5 mass% Si and about 2 mass% Mn by DTA, electron probe X-ray micro-analysis, microscopic examination. Four phases were observed in the specimens slowly cooled from 850 to 550°C and quenched into ice water, that is (Cu), β , (Mn, Si)-intermetallic compound and Si-bearing Cu-Zn solid solution.

The morphology and the structure of martensite phases have been examined by [1967Pop, 1968Pop, 1974Cor, 1976Gil, 1980Fuk, 1982Gar]. The investigations were carried out on alloys with 33 to 36 at.% Zn and from 0.6 to 2.2 at.% Si. The martensitic phases are composed of a lamellar mixture of two close-packed structures (orthorhombic and cubic) with different stacking sequence. The martensitic transformation temperature depends on the composition and the temperature of quenching. The mechanism of stabilization of Cu-Si-Zn martensite has been studied by [1991Dut, 1993Dut]. Cu-Si-Zn alloys show a significant tendency to martensite stabilization after ageing at room temperature. After continuous heating (20 K·min⁻¹) of stabilized Cu-Si-Zn martensite to 300°C no significant structural changes were found.

[1991Udo] investigated structure of diffusion layer which is formed during thermochemical treatment of Cu-39 mass% Zn alloy at 800 - 860°C for 4 h in powder mixture containing Si. [1991Udo] shown that wear rate and friction coefficient are depended from structure of surface layer. Porous layer has better properties.

[2002Yos] investigated season cracking susceptibility of Cu-1Si-30Zn (mass%) alloy after exposure in ammonical environment using optical micrographs, SEM and tensile testing methods.

[2003Ois] determined the grain size of specimens Cu-10 mass% Zn-(0.3 to 2.07) mass% Si using the intercept method with optical micrographs and showed that the grain size of these specimens becomes smaller with increasing silicon concentration.

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Table 1: Investigations of the Cu-Si-Zn Phase Relations, Structures and Thermodynamics

Reference	Method/Experimental Technique	Temperature/Composition/Phase Range Studied
[1912Car]	Microscopic examination. Melting from copper-silicon, copper and zinc	51.05 mass% Cu, 47.70 mass% Zn, 1.19 mass% Si
[1930Gou]	Microscopic examination, hardness test. Melting in gas-fired crucible furnace, annealing at 725 to 825°C for 1 to 12 h and slowly cooling in the furnace	Alloys: 85 mass% Cu-15 mass% Zn up to 10 mass% Si and 60 mass% Cu-40 mass% Zn -up to 10 mass% Si. Annealing at 825°C and quenched in ice brine mixture. Phase boundaries (Cu)/(Cu) + β/β at 800°C. Hardness after annealing at 750, 650, 550, 450, 350 and 250°C

Reference	Method/Experimental Technique	Temperature/Composition/Phase Range Studied
[1930Vad1] [1930Vad2] [1931Vad1] [1931Vad2]	Microscopic examination, tensile testing. Melting in a high frequency induction furnace, annealing at 750°C for 8 h and slowly cooling in the furnace	Alloys up to 70-90 mass% Cu, up to mass 5% Si, Zn to balance. Phase boundary of (Cu) at 750°C. Density, melting points. Tensile strength, elongation, Brinell hardness for sand-cast, chill-cast, extruded into rods and annealed at 600, 700, 750°C alloys.
[1942Mas]	Thermal, microscopic, X-ray analyses	The vertical section between alloys 80 mass% Cu-20 mass% Zn and 90 mass% Cu-10 mass% Si
[1945Smi] [1974Smi]	Thermal, microscopic analyses, hardness and electrical resistivity. Tensile testing, hardness. Heat treatment at 400 - 800°C for 12 to 240 h in atmosphere of nitrogen	Alloys up to 30 mass% Zn, up to 5 mass% Si, Cu to balance. Phase boundaries of (Cu) 400, 600 and 800°C. Region of (Cu) in Cu-Si-Zn as a function of the composition and temperature. Mechanical properties.
[1956Mim]	Thermal and microscopic analyses. Melting in electric furnace	Cu-Zn alloys with up to 20 mass% Si. Liquidus surface. Compositions and temperatures of invariant reactions
[1957Mim]	Thermal and microscopic analyses. Melting in electric furnace	Vertical sections at 5 and 20 mass% Zn. Isothermal sections at 400, 600, 700°C. Mono- and invariant reactions in liquid and solid states
[1960Mim1] [1960Mim2]	Thermal and microscopic analyses, measurement of electrical resistance. Melting in electric furnace	Alloys in the range near η phase. Projection of transformation of $\eta \rightleftharpoons \eta'$ and $\eta' \rightleftharpoons \eta''$
[1964Mim1] [1964Mim2]	Thermal and microscopic analyses, electrical resistance measurements. Melting in electric furnace. Homogenizing treatment at 650°C	Alloys in the range near γ phase. Annealing at 400°C for 12 h and 300°C for 24 h, air-cooling on water quenching. Transformation of γ phase and order-disorder transformation of β solid solution
[1962Pop] [1964Pop1]	X-ray diffraction and microscopic observations. Melting, homogenization in helium filled quartz tubes at 760°C for 10 days	Cu corner in the range up to 50 mass% Zn and 20 mass% Si Annealing at 847, 760, 600, 482°C for 1, 5, 10, 25 days, respectively. Then quenching in to an ice-brine solution. Isothermal sections at 847, 760, 600, 482°C and vertical section through the β phase field.
[1964Pop2]	X-ray method. Melting and casting under reduced pressures of helium in quartz capsules. Homogenization at 760°C for 10 days.	70 to 80 at.% Cu, 2 to 30 at.% Zn, 1,5 to 11 at.% Si. Lattice parameters values for (Cu) phase
[1985Far]	DTA, EMA, calculation. Melting in induction furnace	Measurement and calculation of eutectic composition, temperature, heat of fusion
[2003Bor]	X-ray spectroscopy analyses, thermodynamic calculation. Melting in high-frequency induction furnace, homogenization treatment at 760°C for 4 days	66 to 72 mass% Cu, 0.7 to 1.8 mass% Si, Zn to balance. Calculation of isothermal sections at 670, 720, 760°C

Table 2: Crystallographic Data of Solid Phases

Phase/ Temperature Range [°C]	Pearson Symbol/ Space Group/ Prototype	Lattice Parameters [pm]	Comments/References
(Cu) < 1084.62	<i>cF4</i> <i>Fm$\bar{3}m$</i> Cu	$a = 361.46$ $a = 369.612$ $a = 365.49$ to 365.90 $a = 363.05$ to 363.30 $a = 364.06$ to 364.21 $a = 368.47$	Dissolves up to 11.25 at.% Si at 842°C [2002Leb] and up to 38.27 at.% Zn at 454°C [2002Leb], pure Cu, 25°C [Mas2] at 35.84 at.% Zn and 300°C [2006Leb] at 17.5 at.% Zn and from 2 to 6.5 at.% Si [1964Pop2] at 5 at.% Zn and from 6 to 11 at.% Si [1964Pop2] at 10 at.% Zn and from 5 to 7 at.% Si [1964Pop2] at 30 at.% Zn, 1.5 at.% Si, 68.5 at.% Cu [1964Pop2]
(Si) < 1414	<i>cF8</i> <i>Fm$\bar{3}m$</i> C (diamond)	$a = 543.06$	pure Si, 25°C [Mas2]
(Zn) < 419.58	<i>hP2</i> <i>P6₃/mmc</i> Mg	$a = 266.50$ $c = 494.70$	pure Zn, 25°C [Mas2]
β , Cu _{10+7x} Zn _{10-10x} Si _{3x}	<i>cI2</i> <i>Im$\bar{3}m$</i> W		$0 < x < 1$ 36.1 to 55.8 at.% Zn [2006Leb] 14.2 to 16.2 at.% Si [2002Leb]
CuZn(h) < 930 - 454		$a = 259.39$	at 47.5 at.% Zn [2006Leb]
\sim Cu ₆ Si 853 - 787		$a = 285.4$	at 14.9 at.% Si [2002Leb]
β' , CuZn(r) < 468	<i>cP2</i> <i>Pm$\bar{3}m$</i> CsCl	$a = 295.9$	at 49.5 at.% Zn [2006Leb]
γ , Cu ₅ Zn ₈ < 835	<i>cI52</i> <i>I$\bar{4}3m$</i> Cu ₅ Zn ₈	$a = 886.9$	57 to 70 at.% Zn [2006Leb]
δ , CuZn ₃ 700 - 560	<i>hP3</i> - CuZn ₃	$a = 427.5$ $c = 259.0$	72.45 to 76 at.% Zn [2006Leb] at 600°C, Cu _{0.7} Zn ₂ [2006Leb]

Phase/ Temperature Range [°C]	Pearson Symbol/ Space Group/ Prototype	Lattice Parameters [pm]	Comments/References
ϵ , CuZn ₄ < 574	<i>hP2</i> <i>P6₃/mmc</i> Mg	$a = 274.18$ $c = 429.39$	78 to 88 at.% Zn [2006Leb]
η , Cu ₃ Si(h ₂) 859 - 558	<i>hR*</i> or <i>t**</i> <i>R$\bar{3}m$</i>	$a = 247$ $\alpha = 109.74^\circ$ $a = 726.7$ $c = 789.2$	23.4 to 24.9 at.% Si [2002Leb]
η' , Cu ₃ Si(h ₁) 620 - 467	<i>hR*</i> <i>R$\bar{3}$</i>	$a = 472$ $\alpha = 95.72^\circ$	23.2 to 25.2 at.% Si [2002Leb]
η'' , CuSi ₃ (r) < 570	<i>o**</i>	$a = 7676$ $b = 700$ $c = 2194$	23.3 to 24.9 at.% Si [2002Leb]
ϵ_1 , Cu ₁₅ Si ₄ < 800	<i>cI76</i> <i>I$\bar{4}3d$</i> Cu ₁₅ Si ₄	$a = 961.5$	at 21.2 at.% Si [2002Leb]
κ , Cu ₇ Si 842 - 552	<i>hP2</i> <i>P6₃/mmc</i> Mg	$a = 256.05$ $c = 418.46$	11.05 to 14.5 at.% Si at 12.75 at.% Si [2002Leb]
δ_1 , Cu ₅ Si(h) 824 - 711	<i>t**</i>	$a = 881.5$ $c = 790.3$	17.6 to 19.6 at.% Si annealing at 700°C [2002Leb]
γ_1 , Cu ₅ Si(r) < 729	<i>cP20</i> <i>P4₁32</i> β Mn	$a = 619.8$	17.15 to 17.6 at.% Si [2002Leb]

Table 3: Invariant Equilibria

Reaction	T [°C]	Type	Phase	Composition (at.%)		
				Cu	Si	Zn
$L + \beta \rightleftharpoons \gamma + \delta_1$	775	U ₁	L	66.2	14.5	19.3
$L \rightleftharpoons \gamma + (\text{Si})$	721	e ₄	L	37.2	8.1	54.7
			γ	39.4	2.7	57.9
			(Si)	0	100.0	0
$L \rightleftharpoons \gamma + \eta + (\text{Si})$	683	E ₂	L	41.0	18.4	20.6
			γ	60.5	14.8	24.7
			η	72.8	22.1	5.1
			(Si)	0	100.0	0

Reaction	T [°C]	Type	Phase	Composition (at.%)		
				Cu	Si	Zn
$L + \gamma \rightleftharpoons \delta + (\text{Si})$	~665	U_6	L	19.6	0.7	79.7
			γ	31.2	0.7	68.1
			δ	27.6	0	72.4
			(Si)	0	100.0	0
$\varepsilon_1 + \eta \rightleftharpoons \gamma + \eta'$	600	U_9	ε_1	78.7	20.4	0.9
			η	76.3	22.4	1.3
			γ	68.3	15.2	16.5
			η'	76.7	22.0	1.3
$L + \delta \rightleftharpoons \varepsilon + (\text{Si})$	~574	U_{10}	L	~11.5	0.7	87.8
			δ	24.0	0	76.0
			ε	22.0	0	78.0
			(Si)	0	100.0	0
$\eta \rightleftharpoons \eta' + \gamma + (\text{Si})$	530	E_4	η	73.5	23.6	2.9
			η'	73.9	23.6	2.5
			γ	84.8	12.4	2.8
			(Si)	0	100.0	0
$\gamma_1 + \eta' \rightleftharpoons \eta'' + (\text{Si})$	480	U_{13}	γ_1	57.6	11.1	31.3
			η'	73.3	23.9	2.8
			η''	73.6	23.6	2.8
			(Si)	0	100.0	0
$L + \varepsilon \rightleftharpoons (\text{Zn}) + (\text{Si})$	424	U_{14}	L	1.5	~0.7	97.8
			ε	12.8	~0	87.2
			(Zn)	2.8	~0	97.2
			(Si)	0	100.0	0

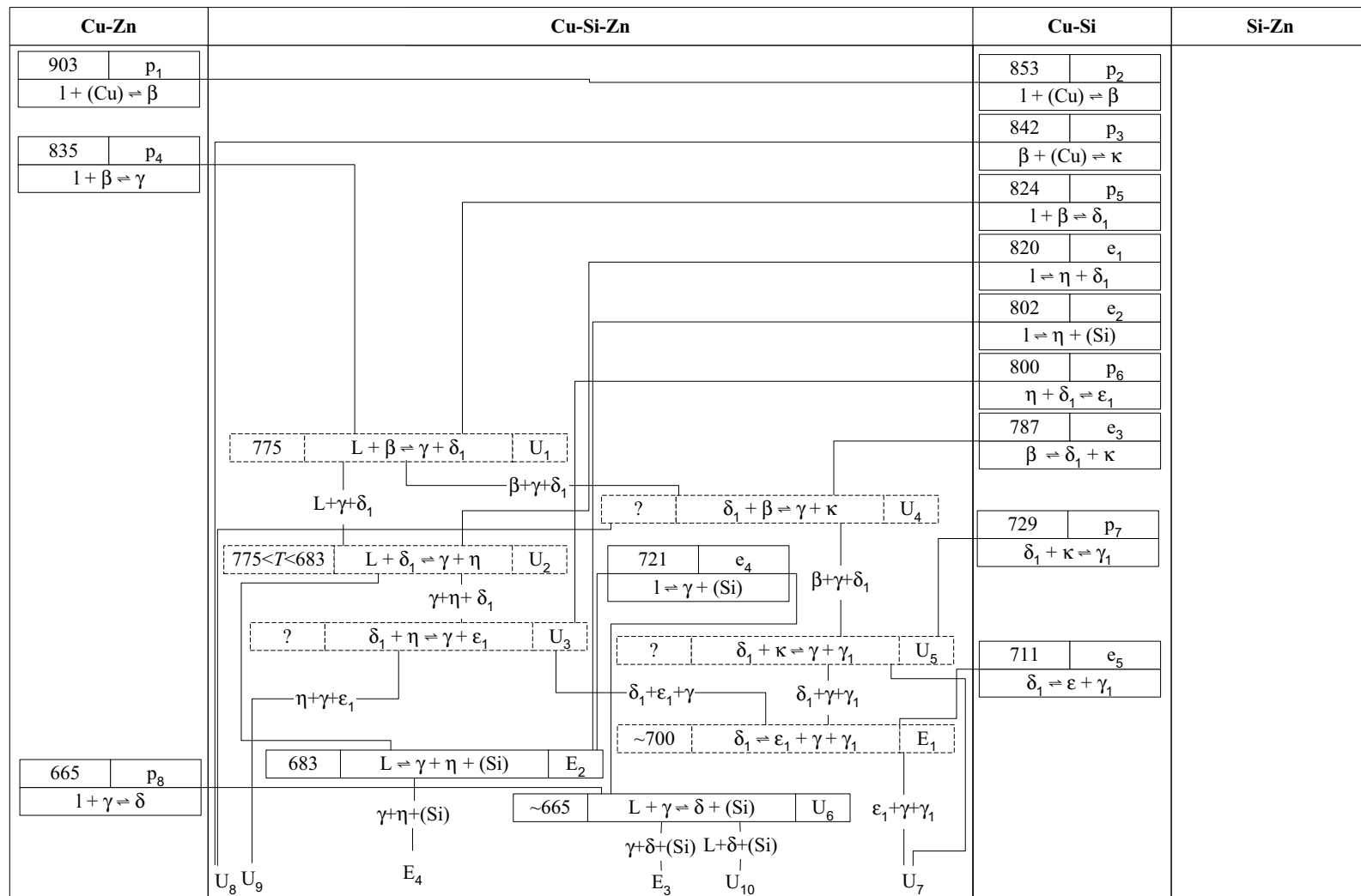


Fig. 1a: Cu-Si-Zn. Reaction scheme, part 1

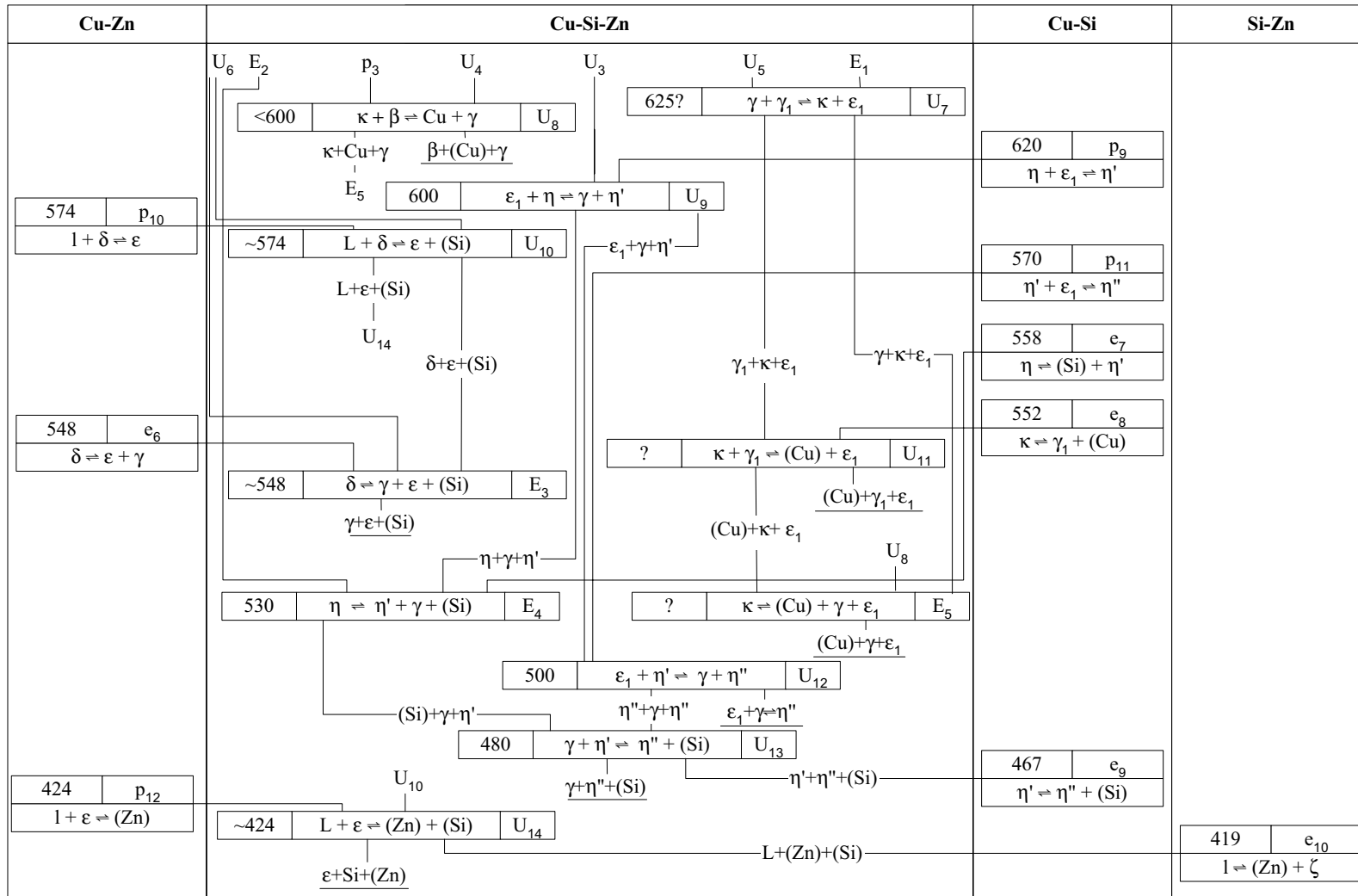


Fig. 1b: Cu-Si-Zn. Reaction scheme, part 2

Fig. 2: Cu-Si-Zn.
Liquidus surface
projection

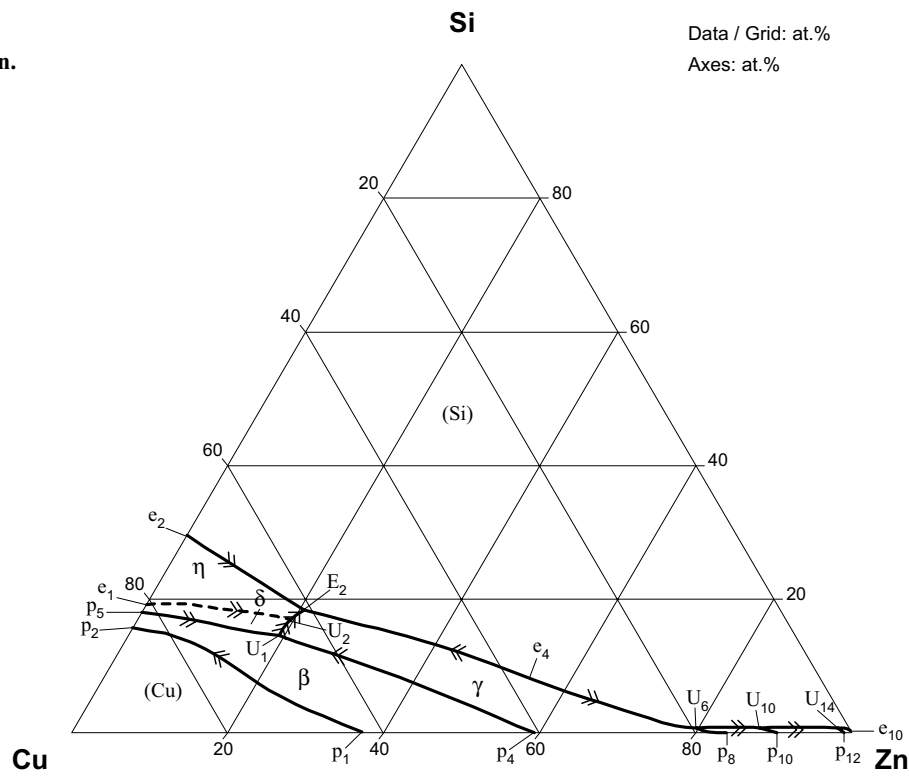


Fig. 3: Cu-Si-Zn.
Partial isothermal
section at 847°C

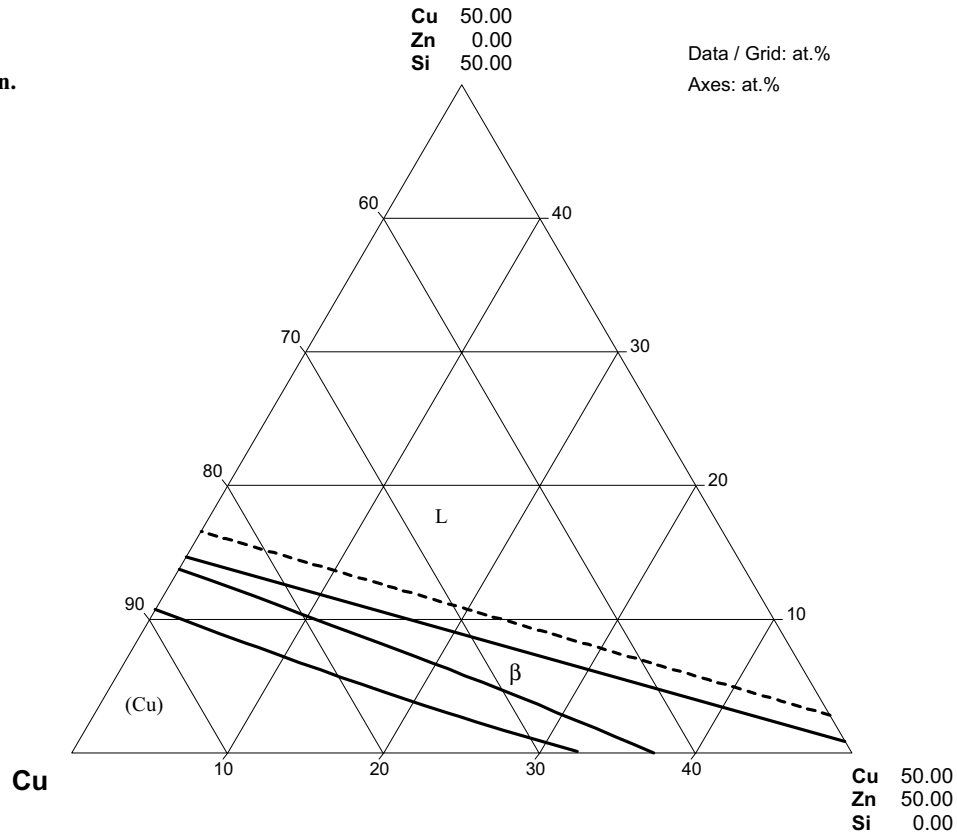


Fig. 4: Cu-Si-Zn.
Partial isothermal
section at 760°C

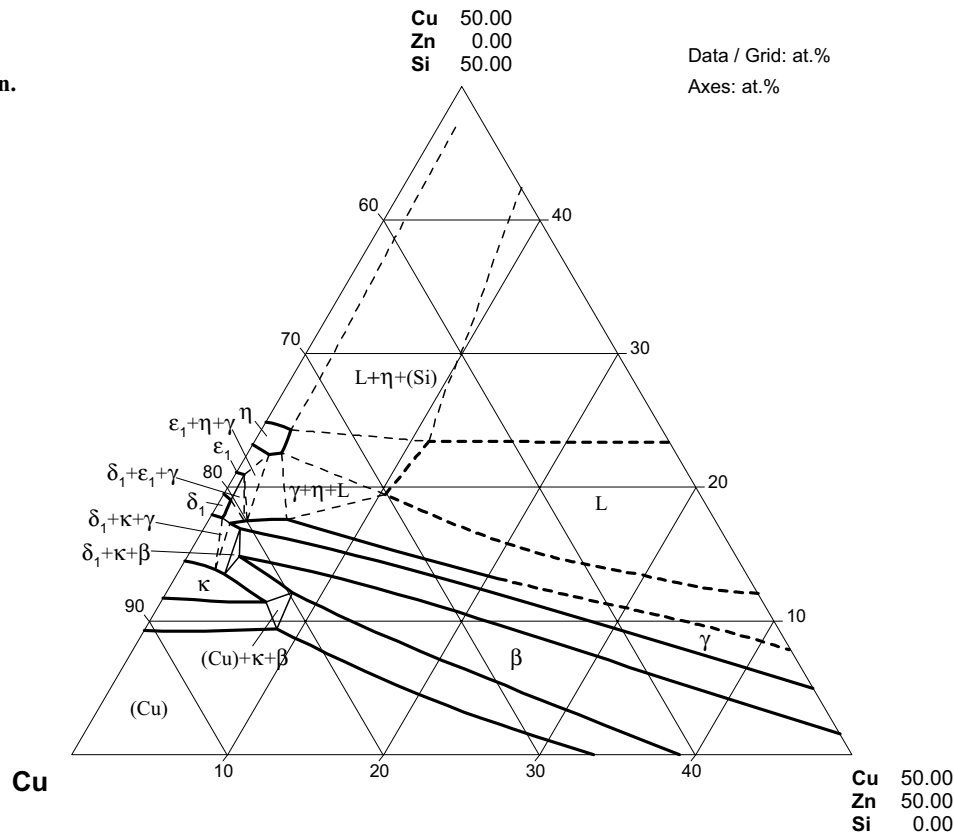


Fig. 5: Cu-Si-Zn.
Partial isothermal
section at 700°C

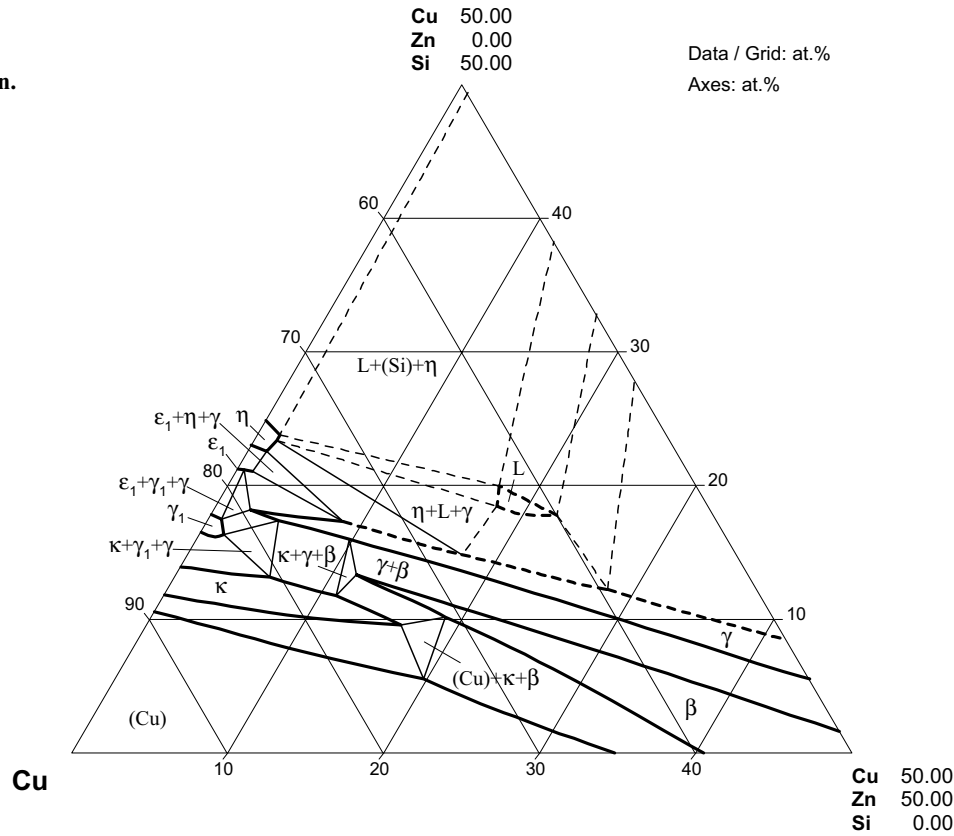


Fig. 6: Cu-Si-Zn.
Partial isothermal
section at 600°C

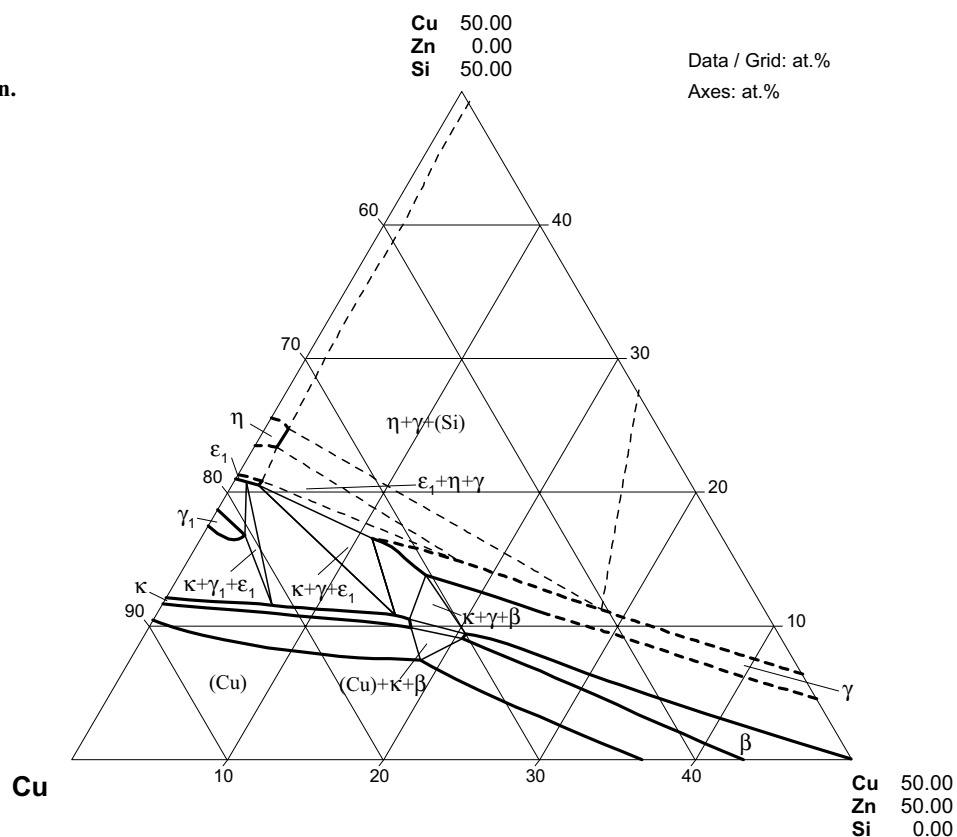


Fig. 7: Cu-Si-Zn.
Partial isothermal
section at 482°C

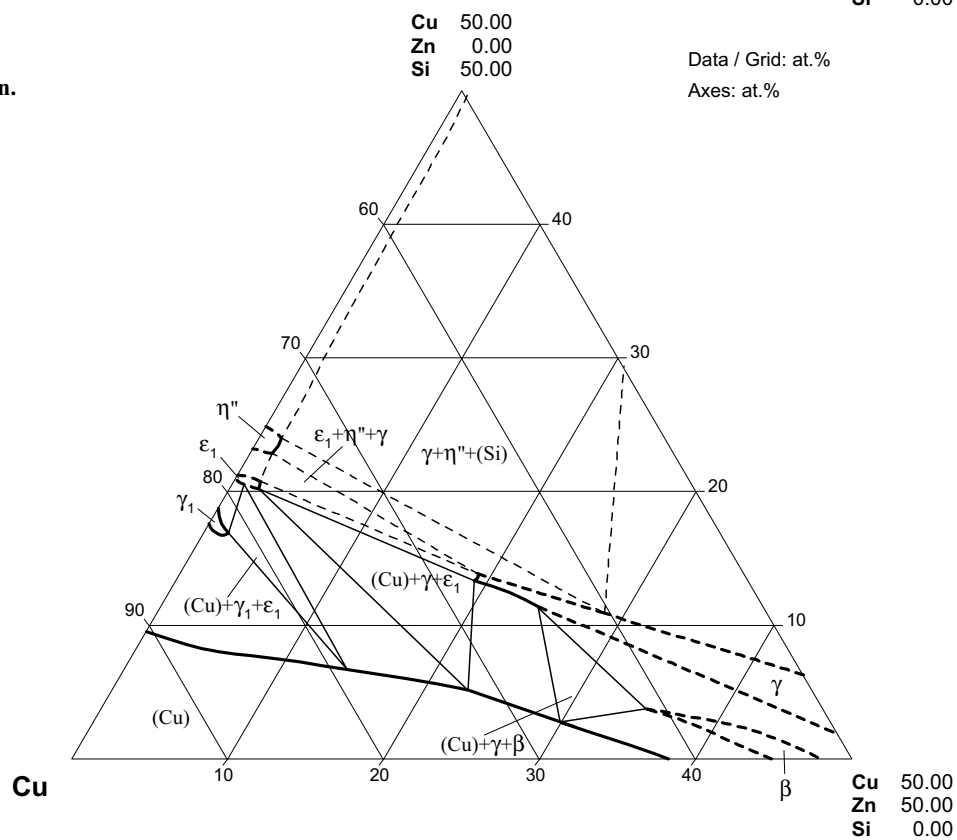


Fig. 8: Cu-Si-Zn.
Vertical section
at 2 mass% Si, plotted
in at. %

