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Non-propagating fatigue cracks in austenitic steels with a micro-notch: Effects of dynamic strain aging, martensitic transformation, and microstructural hardness heterogeneity

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Abstract

The non-propagation limit of a microstructurally small fatigue crack was investigated with respect to dynamic strain aging (DSA), martensitic transformation, and microstructural hardness heterogeneity. In this study, we selected four model alloys: Fe-19Cr-8Ni-0.05C, Fe-19Cr-8Ni-0.14C, Fe-23Mn-0.5C, and as-hot-rolled Fe-30Mn-3Si-3Al steels. Transformation-induced cyclic hardening results in the most significant improvement of the non-propagation limit, i.e., in the case of the Fe-19Cr-8Ni-0.05C steel. Within different contexts, DSA, transformation-induced crack closure, and hardness-heterogeneity-enhanced plasticity-induced crack closure could also realize superior non-propagation limits. The effects of DSA and hardness heterogeneity can be combined with the effects of transformation, which is expected to create a new venue of material design and selection in terms of the crack non-propagation limit.

Keywords: Non-propagating fatigue crack; austenitic steel; high cycle fatigue; martensitic transformation; dynamic strain aging

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