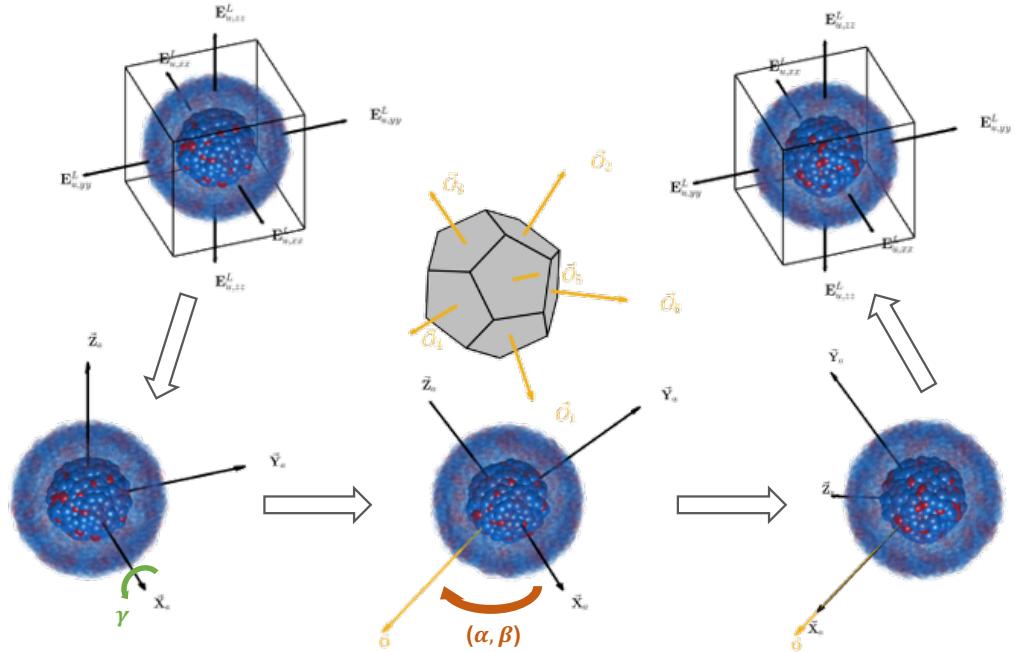


# Graphical Abstract

## Predicting Plastic Events and Quantifying the Local Yield Surface in 3D Model Glasses

Dihui Ruan, Sylvain Patinet, Michael L. Falk



## Highlights

### **Predicting Plastic Events and Quantifying the Local Yield Surface in 3D Model Glasses**

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- The local yield stress method is proven to be predictive to the plasticity in 3D glasses, and at the meanwhile, to be scalable to much larger samples compared to other computational predictors.
- The optimal probing region size of the local yield stress method is approached by optimization on the predictivity in plasticity as well as the extreme value distribution indicating the size of shear transformation zones.
- Quantifying The local yield surface in 3D opens up the window for studying the anisotropy of the local plasticity intriguing to the community of solid mechanics.

# Predicting Plastic Events and Quantifying the Local Yield Surface in 3D Model Glasses

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## Abstract

By applying the local yield stress (LYS) method to probe local regions of three-dimensional computational glass models, we confirm high correlations between the measured local yield stress ( $\Delta\tau_c$ ) and the plastic events when the parameterization of the method is properly optimized. The optimal probing region for this system is found to be  $\sim 5\sigma$  in radius, where  $\sigma$  represents the Lennard-Jones length scale, approximately the atomic size. The averaged correlation remains positive through the first 200 identified plastic events or 1/3 of the yielding strain ( $\sim 7\%$ ). Here we apply only the local probing that aligns perfectly with the loading on the boundary. The LYS measurements converge to a Weibull distribution with a minimum  $\Delta\tau_c$  indistinguishable from zero at larger probing region radii. Analysis of the data in light of an assumption that  $\Delta\tau_c$  is a local quantity that obeys extreme value statistics above a critical length scale bounds the exponent of the underlying distribution of  $\Delta\tau_c$  to lie between 1.26 and 1.71. A thorough investigation of the anisotropy of the local yield surface at the location of the first plastic event indicates that the first triggered region does not align perfectly with the loading on the boundary, but is well-predicted by projecting the shear applied at the boundary onto the local yield surface. This implies that the

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\*Authors have no competing interests, and MLF is the corresponding author.

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correlation between the local yield stress prediction and the resulting plasticity may be enhanced by performing a more complete assessment of the local yield surface at each sample point.

*Keywords:* Plasticity, Local Yield Stress, Shear Transformation Zone, Amorphous Solids, Athermal Quasi-static Method

*PACS:* 0000, 1111

*2000 MSC:* 0000, 1111

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## **1. Introduction**

The detailed micro-mechanism of the mechanical response under an elasto-plastic deformation in amorphous materials remains poorly characterized relative to their crystalline counterparts in which dislocations can be well specified.[1, 2, 3, 4]. Falk and Langer[5] postulated a shear transformation zone (STZ) model in which preexisting defects corresponding to local clusters of atoms/molecules rearrange cooperatively and irreversibly during plastic flow. This STZ concept has been incorporated into constitutive equations for describing elastoplastic behaviors [6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14] as well as into discrete models of amorphous plastic response[15, 16]. The existence of such defects in amorphous solids has been supported by experimental studies[17, 18, 19, 20] and atomic simulations[21, 22, 23, 24] in various types of glasses.

Researchers have been keenly interested in how one might accurately locate and characterize such 'flow-defects', and in doing so have measured the correlation of plastic events with a variety of proposed structurally derived predictors.[25] These predictors range from trivial structural parameters such as local density[26], atomic potential energy[22, 13], and short-range order[23, 27, 28], through more complex metrics obtained via machine learning[29, 30], quantification of local excitations induced by linear[31, 32, 33, 34] or nonlinear[35, 36] vibrational modes, by probing activation via the minimal energy path[37, 38], and by measurement of local elastic moduli[39, 40, 41]. Such simulations require a sample sufficiently large to resolve multiple individual STZs. Most of these investigations considered two-dimensional glasses consisting of  $\sim 10,000$  atoms. Few analyses in three-dimensional glasses have been performed at comparable length scales, as this requires million-atom simulations prepared by quenching a liquid sufficiently slowly to produce a glass stable enough to compare with

29 experiments.[27, 28, 34, 29, 30]

30 In the context of the above indicators, Patinet *et al.* [42, 43] developed  
31 the local yield stress (LYS) method in which local regions are sheared at  
32 a particular length scale and loading orientation until yielding is triggered.  
33 By measuring the incremental stress to yield, the LYS method provides a  
34 direct measurement of elastoplastic response. High correlations have been  
35 observed between low local yield stresses and the sites where plastic events  
36 are observed during subsequent shear simulations of the material as a whole.  
37 A recent comparison found that this method ranks highly among a large  
38 number of structural indicators in 2D glassy samples, and performs best  
39 amongst these comparators in deeply quenched glasses, those modeled sam-  
40 ples most comparable to as-quenched glasses produced in laboratory and  
41 industrial processes.[25] The LYS framework also quantifies atomistic data  
42 in ways that clearly relate to the yield surface, a continuum concept criti-  
43 cal for understanding plasticity at the macro-scale [44, 45]. Characterizing  
44 larger 3D glasses has presented a challenge for diagonalization-based methods  
45 such as the identification of 'soft' spots in Reference [33]. Recent advances  
46 have provided more efficient ways to explore low-frequency modes to locate  
47 STZs, but comprehensive characterization of a material using such methods  
48 remains a challenge [46]. The computational expense for the LYS method  
49 scales with the system size as  $\mathcal{O}(N)$  making it applicable to these larger  
50 three-dimensional systems.

51 Here we apply the LYS method to measure spatial variations in the in-  
52 cremental stress to yield ( $\Delta\tau_c$ ) along a single local probing determined by  
53 a strain tensor. The resulting measurements of  $\Delta\tau_c$  exhibit a correlation  
54 with the locations of the local plastic events produced by a similarly oriented  
55 strain applied at the boundary. The correlation persists until about 1/3 of  
56 the yielding strain when undertaken at the optimal length scale,  $\sim 5\sigma$ (atomic  
57 diameters) in radius.

58 Variation in the local probing strain is also examined at the location of  
59 the first identified plastic event. These data indicate that the triaxiality,  
60 orientation, rotation, and sign of the resulting plastic event aligns well with  
61 what one would infer from the measured local yield surface, but does not  
62 exactly correspond with the strain applied at the boundary. This suggests  
63 that the correlation of  $\Delta\tau_c$  with the observed plastic events would improve if  
64 the entire local yield stress surface, rather than only the value of  $\Delta\tau_c$  along  
65 the direction of the applied shear, were to be characterized throughout the  
66 material.

67 **2. Sample Preparation**

68 We perform molecular dynamics (MD) simulations to prepare three inde-  
69 pendent Kob-Andersen (KA)[47] binary Lennard-Jones (LJ) glasses within  
70 the Large-scale Atomic/Molecular Massively Parallel Simulator (LAMMPS)  
71 environment[48]. In each sample, 1,000,000 atoms are simulated in a cubic  
72 simulation box with periodic boundary conditions along the x, y and z axes.  
73 The system is comprised of 80% large atoms (A) and 20% small atoms (B).  
74 We apply a smoothed 6-12 Lennard-Jones(LJ) potential[49] field to quantify  
75 the interatomic interactions.

76 According to a prior study by Shi and Falk[24], shear bands only arise  
77 during deformation in KA glasses prepared with relatively low quenching  
78 rates. To focus on KA glasses susceptible to strain localization, we follow the  
79 same preparation procedure to melt and equilibrate the initial configuration  
80 at a reservoir temperature  $T = 0.87\epsilon/k_B$  under an external pressure  $P =$   
81  $8.5\epsilon/\sigma^3$ , and we then cool this melt to  $T = 0.03\epsilon/k_B$  while releasing the  
82 pressure to  $P = 0\epsilon/\sigma^3$  linearly over a duration of  $2000t_0$  using a Nose-Hoover  
83 thermostat[50, 51] and Parrinello-Rahman barostat[52]. We verify that the  
84 difference in the potential energy per atom at the as-quenched state between  
85 our samples and the corresponding KA glasses in Reference [24] results from  
86 our choice of the smoothed LJ potential and the difference in the aspect ratio  
87 of the box dimension. Minimization of the energy via a conjugate gradient  
88 scheme[53] under zero pressure conditions is undertaken until achieving the  
89 convergence of the total force norm of the whole system. This is followed  
90 by a second force minimization with constrained volume for studying the  
91 athermal mechanical response at zero temperature. The final box dimension  
92 of these three KA glasses is approximately  $93.4\sigma \times 93.4\sigma \times 93.4\sigma$ , where x and  
93 y dimensions are comparable to those of the 2D systems previously studied  
94 by the local yield stress method[43, 42]. The configurations of all 3 glasses  
95 can be found on Johns Hopkins University Data Archive[54].

96 **3. Three-Dimensional Local Yield Stresses**

97 *3.1. 3D Local Yield Stress Method*

98 Patinet *et al.* developed the local yield stress (LYS) method in Reference  
99 [42] based upon the assumption that plastic events in amorphous solids occur  
100 as localized rearrangements located at STZs[5]. In the LYS method, local  
101 regions of atoms are sheared to the point of mechanical instability identified

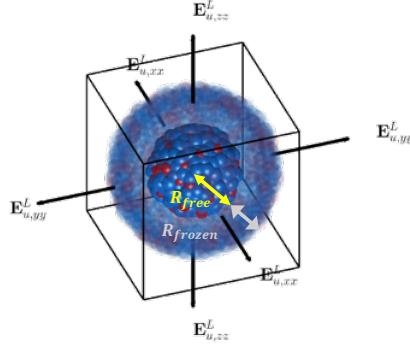


Figure 1: Schematics of a spherical region of atoms cut from the simulation box for local probing in a 3D binary glass with large (blue) and small (red) particles. The atoms in transparency form a shell of the core atoms shown in solid color.  $R_{free}$  and  $R_{frozen}$  are labeled by arrows in yellow and grey respectively. The black arrows denote the loading on the local boundary in Eq.6.

102 by a stress drop, and the incremental stress required to reach the yielding  
 103 point is recorded as the local yield stress ( $\Delta\tau_c$ ). A low value of  $\Delta\tau_c$  indicates  
 104 relative high susceptibility to plasticity. In our three-dimensional LYS anal-  
 105 yses, spherical regions of atoms within a radius  $R_{free} + R_{frozen}$  are probed  
 106 by the athermal quasi-static (AQS) method[55, 56, 39, 57, 58, 59] within  
 107 the Large-scale Atomic/Molecular Massively Parallel Simulator (LAMMPS)  
 108 environment[48]. The atoms in the inner core with radius  $R_{free}$  are referred  
 109 to as the 'free' atoms, and the atoms in the outer shell with thickness  $R_{frozen}$   
 110 are referred to as the 'frozen' atoms, as is shown in Figure 1. At each incre-  
 111 ment of loading, the 'frozen' atoms are deformed affinely with respect to the  
 112 probing strain, and the 'free' atoms bounded by the 'frozen' shell undergo  
 113 static relaxation into the nearest mechanically stable configuration using a  
 114 conjugate gradient method[53].  $R_{frozen}$  is set to be  $5\sigma$ , twice the smoothed  
 115 LJ potential cutoff radius  $r_{out} = 2.5\sigma$ , to include all relevant neighbor atoms  
 116 for the 'free' atoms.

117 An increment of local loading  $\Delta\mathbf{E}^L$  with a constant volume can be written  
 118 in terms of a strain step magnitude  $\Delta e^L$  multiplied by a unit local strain  
 119 tensor  $\mathbf{E}_u^L$  as

$$\Delta\mathbf{E}^L = \Delta e^L \mathbf{E}_u^L. \quad (1)$$

120 The projected stress  $\tau_p$  is defined as

$$\tau_p = \mathbf{S}^L : \mathbf{E}_u^L, \quad (2)$$

121 where  $\mathbf{S}^L$  is the stress tensor of the local 'free' region. In the athermal  
122 limit[60, 61, 62, 63], the virial contribution of atom  $i$  can be computed as a  
123 tensor

$$\Phi_i = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{j \neq i}^{N_p} \left( \vec{r}_{ij} \otimes \vec{f}_{ij} \right), \quad (3)$$

124 in which atom  $j$  is one of  $N_p$  atoms within the pairwise potential cutoff radius  
125 from atom  $i$ . The displacement vector  $\vec{r}_{ij} = \vec{r}_j - \vec{r}_i$  represents the interatomic  
126 displacement, and  $\vec{f}_{ij}$  represents the force exerted on atom  $i$  from atom  $j$ .  
127  $\mathbf{S}^L$  can then be estimated by dividing the sum of the virial contributions  $\Phi_i$   
128 from the  $N_{free}$  atoms in the free region by its volume as

$$\mathbf{S}^L \approx \frac{3}{4\pi R_{free}^3} \sum_{i=1}^{N_{free}} \Phi_i. \quad (4)$$

129 The projected stress  $\tau_p$  is used to identify whether the response to an incre-  
130 mental strain is elastic or if, rather, an instability has been triggered. The  
131 stress tensor at the point when a stress drop is detected will be referred to as  
132 the onset stress  $\mathbf{S}_{onset}^L$ . This stress is used to calculate the local yield stress  
133  $\Delta\tau_c$  given by

$$\Delta\tau_c = (\mathbf{S}_{onset}^L - \mathbf{S}_0^L) : \mathbf{E}_u^L, \quad (5)$$

134 where  $\mathbf{S}_0^L$  is the initial stress state of the local region before any probing. It  
135 is important to note that due to the residual stresses present in glasses, the  
136 elements in tensor  $\mathbf{S}_0^L$  are typically not equal to zero. Since undertaking the  
137 local yield stress analysis in 3D is computationally demanding, we initially  
138 limit our investigation to the case where  $\mathbf{E}_u^L$  is chosen to be a pure shear  
139 loading as

$$\mathbf{E}_u^L = \frac{\sqrt{2}}{2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}. \quad (6)$$

140 To impose strain, equal tension and compression are applied along the x axis  
141 and the y axis while zero strain is imposed along the z axis, as illustrated in  
142 Figure 1. This plane strain boundary condition is comparable to the prior  
143 study on the 2D local yield stress method in Reference [42] and [43].

Table 1: Table of initial force tolerance  $F_{tol}^0$ , strain step  $\Delta e^L$ , and final force tolerance  $F_{tol}$  settings at each  $R_{free}$ . \*:  $\Delta e^L$  ( $10^{-6}$ ) is the smallest strain step achievable computationally given the available resources.

$R_{free}(\sigma)$	$F_{tol}^0(\epsilon/\sigma)$	$\Delta e^L$	$F_{tol}(\epsilon/\sigma)$
2.5	$2 \times 10^{-11}$	$10^{-4}$	$10^{-6}$
3.75	$3 \times 10^{-11}$	$10^{-4}$	$10^{-6}$
5	$4 \times 10^{-11}$	$10^{-5}$	$10^{-6}$
7.5	$8 \times 10^{-11}$	$10^{-6}*_{}$	$10^{-6}$
10	$2 \times 10^{-10}$	$10^{-6}*_{}$	$10^{-6}$

144 *3.2. Parameterization*

145 The LYS method involves probing local regions with respect to a local  
 146 unit strain tensor  $\mathbf{E}_u^L$  and measuring the incremental stress required to induce  
 147 a local instability. There are three parameters playing important roles in  
 148 computing the local yield stress  $\Delta\tau_c$ : the force tolerance  $F_{tol}$  that sets the  
 149 accuracy of force minimization when relaxing the 'free' atoms, the strain  
 150 step  $\Delta e^L$  that controls the magnitude of each increment of loading, and the  
 151 characteristic length  $R_{free}$  that determines the size of locally probed regions.  
 152 The optimal values of these three parameters are not independent of each  
 153 other. For instance, for larger  $R_{free}$  values, more atoms may participate  
 154 in the plastic rearrangement, and the higher number of degrees of freedom  
 155 necessitates a smaller strain step  $\Delta e^L$ .[58]

156 In Table 1, we list the parameters that are obtained from a series of  
 157 convergence studies that we have undertaken to optimize the parameters. All  
 158 the convergence studies are executed on sampling regions centered on evenly  
 159 spaced  $2 \times 2 \times 2$  grids extracted from the binary LJ glass samples described  
 160 in **Materials and Methods**. For each listed  $R_{free}$  between  $2.5\sigma$  and  $10\sigma$ ,  
 161 an initial force tolerance  $F_{tol}^0$  is chosen by sampling the convergence of the  
 162 force norm when probing a very small strain  $10^{-7}$ . Local yields stresses ( $\Delta\tau_c$ )  
 163 are computed at various strain steps  $\Delta e^L$ , and these results are compared  
 164 with the results using the smallest  $\Delta e^L$  ( $10^{-6}$ ) we could achieve within our  
 165 computational limitations. We choose the largest strain step  $\Delta e^L$  that results  
 166 in a relative difference in  $\Delta\tau_c \leq 1\%$  or we choose  $10^{-6}$ , as noted in Table  
 167 1. With  $\Delta e^L$  set, we raise the values of  $F_{tol}$  to enhance the computational  
 168 efficiency in the 3D LYS method. The final  $F_{tol}$  settings are determined by  
 169 converging the computed  $\Delta\tau_c$  with various  $F_{tol}$  values to be within  $\leq 1\%$  of

170 the results using  $F_{tol}^0$ . We are able to raise the final  $F_{tol}$  values to  $10^{-6}$  among  
 171 all the  $R_{free}$  values without significantly affecting the results.

172 *3.3. Distribution and Scaling*

173 In order to uniformly sample the material response, local yield stresses  
 174 ( $\Delta\tau_c$ ) are computed in probing regions centered on evenly spaced grid points  
 175 throughout the simulation box instead of probing regions centered on each  
 176 atom as had been done in prior 2D studies[42]. The distance between grid  
 177 points  $d_{sample}$  is chosen as  $\sim 10\sigma$  to approach a set of  $10 \times 10 \times 10$  samples  
 178 in each Kob-Anderson (KA)[47] glass. From these samples, we are able to  
 179 compute the distribution of  $\Delta\tau_c$  in a representative manner. The distribu-  
 180 tions of local yield stress ( $\Delta\tau_c$ ) with  $R_{free}$  from  $2.5\sigma$  to  $10\sigma$  are plotted in  
 181 the inset of Figure 2(a). As was observed in the prior 2D studies[42, 43],  
 182 increasing  $R_{free}$  results in more sampling regions yielding at lower  $\Delta\tau_c$ , and  
 183 the peaks of these probability density functions ( $P_d$ ) shift toward lower  $\Delta\tau_c$   
 184 values with heavier low-end tails. This is consistent with our expectation  
 185 that yielding behavior is controlled by the easiest to yield STZ in the sam-  
 186 pling region. If we consider yield to be a local phenomenon, such that STZs  
 187 are independent above a critical length scale ( $R_{free}^c$ ), larger regions are ex-  
 188 pected to incorporate more STZs, and their  $\Delta\tau_c$  should be lower on average  
 189 than that of smaller regions that contain fewer STZs. If we assume that the  
 190 observed yield stress is determined by the STZ with the lowest yield stress  
 191 in the region,  $\Delta\tau_c$  of a larger region is the minimum  $\Delta\tau_c$  of all the included  
 192 regions.

193 To test this assumption of 'isolated' local yield regions, we compare these  
 194 distributions to the 'Extreme Value Distribution' (EVD)[64], which catego-  
 195 rizes the distribution of maxima or minima of random variables. Since  $\Delta\tau_c$   
 196 is defined to be non-negative, minima of sampled  $\Delta\tau_c$  values are expected to  
 197 result in a Weibull distribution when sampled at a length scale sufficiently  
 198 larger than the scale on which distinct sub-regions would be independent.[65]  
 199 For sufficiently large sampling regions, the probability density function ( $P_d$ )  
 200 and cumulative distribution function ( $P_c$ ) are therefore expected to be given  
 201 by

$$P_d(\Delta\tau_c|a, b) = \frac{b}{a} \left( \frac{\Delta\tau_c}{a} \right)^{b-1} \exp \left[ - \left( \frac{\Delta\tau_c}{a} \right)^b \right], \quad (7)$$

202 and

$$P_c(\Delta\tau_c|a,b) = 1 - \exp\left[-\left(\frac{\Delta\tau_c}{a}\right)^b\right], \quad (8)$$

203 where  $a$  is the scale parameter, and  $b$  is the shape parameter. As is presented  
204 in Figure 2(c), the scale parameter  $a$  is observed to decrease with increasing  
205  $R_{free}$  corresponding to a lower mean when a larger local region is probed.  
206 Here, the shape parameter  $b > 1$  indicates that the instantaneous 'yield rate'

$$M(\Delta\tau_c|a,b) = \frac{P_d(\Delta\tau_c)}{1 - P_c(\Delta\tau_c)} = \frac{b}{a} \left(\frac{\Delta\tau_c}{a}\right)^{b-1}, \quad (9)$$

207 the number of yield events per unit stress, increases with  $\Delta\tau_c$ .[66]

208 The fitted Weibull distributions are plotted as dot-dashed lines on top of  
209 the measured  $\Delta\tau_c$  distributions in the main plot of Figure 2(a). Also, the  
210 corresponding cumulative distributions ( $P_c$ ) of  $\Delta\tau_c$  are presented in the inset  
211 of Figure 2(b). In the main plot of Figure 2(b), the cumulative distributions  
212 of  $\Delta\tau_c$  are normalized by the two fitting parameters  $a$  and  $b$  in terms of  
213  $\ln[-\ln(1 - P_c)]/b + \ln a$  and are then plotted versus  $\ln\tau_y$  after being shifted  
214 by the corresponding mode. Combining the above plots, we notice that  
215 the distributions of  $\Delta\tau_c$  align with the Weibull distribution for larger  $R_{free}$   
216 values. More specifically, the density distribution functions in Figure 2(a)  
217 with  $R_{free} = 7.5\sigma$  and  $10\sigma$  are significantly Weibull-like. Therefore, the  
218 underlying distribution of  $\Delta\tau_c$  at some critical length with  $R_{free}^c$  under  $7.5\sigma$   
219 is inferred to behave like a power-law distribution in the limit of  $\Delta\tau_c \rightarrow 0$ .[67]

220 Close inspection of the data taken with  $R_{free}$  from  $2.5\sigma$  to  $3.75\sigma$ , reveals  
221 that the lower-value tails in their probability density functions are heavier  
222 than what would be expected in an underlying distribution that would lead  
223 to a Weibull distribution. These distributions discontinuously drop to zero  
224 below a relatively high threshold, as shown in the main plot of Figure 2(a).  
225 We believe this indicates that lower  $\Delta\tau_c$  values can't be accurately mea-  
226 sured due to the limitations that the boundary constraints impose on local  
227 rearrangements within smaller regions. In comparison, the smooth  $\Delta\tau_c$  dis-  
228 tribution at  $R_{free} = 5\sigma$  behaves like a power-law distribution as  $\Delta\tau_c \rightarrow 0$ .  
229 As we should expect, this distribution doesn't converge to a Weibull distri-  
230 bution since each probing region is too small to include a statistical number  
231 of independent STZs. We expect the characteristic length  $R_{free}^c$  of the un-  
232 derlying distribution is between  $3.75\sigma$  and  $5\sigma$ , and that  $5\sigma$  is the closest to  
233  $R_{free}^c$  among all the  $R_{free}$  values measured here. By this reasoning, we can

234 bound  $b^*$ , the exponent of the power law of the underlying  $\Delta\tau_c$  distribution  
 235 at  $R_{free}^c$  when  $\Delta\tau_c \rightarrow 0$ , to be greater than 1.26 as shown by the slope of  
 236 the log-log distribution at the lower end when  $R_{free} = 5\sigma$  in Figure 2(a). If  
 237 we could measure larger and larger  $R_{free}$  values, the shape parameter  $b$  used  
 238 to fit the Weibull distribution to the data in Figure 2(d) should converge to  
 239  $b^*$ . [67] Since the value of  $b^*$  is expected to be lower than the  $b$  from the fitted  
 240 Weibull distribution with  $R_{free} = 10\sigma$ , we can bound  $b^*$  to be less than 1.71  
 241 according to Figure 2(d).

242 Based on the derivation of the extreme value statistics, the mean  $\Delta\tau_c$   
 243 when probing larger regions whose size is far above the critical length  $R_{free}^c$   
 244 can be related to the cumulative distribution  $P_c^*$  in terms of  $N$ , the number  
 245 of STZs in the probing region as [67]

$$\langle \Delta\tau_c \rangle = P_c^{*-1} \left( \frac{1}{N+1} \right). \quad (10)$$

246 If we suppose  $R_{free}^c$  to be  $5\sigma$ ,  $N(R_{free} = 7.5\sigma) \approx 11$  and  $N(R_{free} = 10\sigma) \approx 47$   
 247 accordingly. While we intuitively expect that  $N \propto R_{free}^3$ , this is not consis-  
 248 tent with the above two  $R_{free}$  values, indicating that we are not at sufficiently  
 249 large  $R_{free}$  values to have fully converged to the Weibull distribution, or that  
 250 the distribution at  $5\sigma$  is not sufficiently close to the underlying distribution  
 251 for this analysis to be viable.

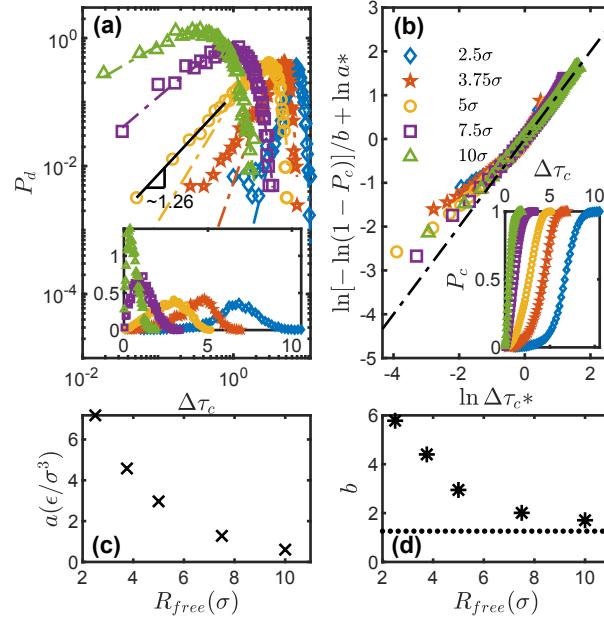


Figure 2: Local yield stress ( $\Delta\tau_c$ ) distributions with  $R_{free}=2.5\sigma(\diamond)$ ,  $3.75\sigma(\star)$ ,  $5\sigma(\circ)$ ,  $7.5\sigma(\square)$ , and  $10\sigma(\triangle)$ . (a) Log-log plot of  $\Delta\tau_c$  probability density function ( $P_d$ ). Dot-dashed lines denote Weibull distribution fits (Eq.7). The black solid line denotes the slope of the log-log distribution at  $\Delta\tau_c \rightarrow 0$  with  $R_{free} = 5\sigma$ . Inset: linear-linear plot of the probability density function of  $\Delta\tau_c$ . (b) Scaled plot of the normalized cumulative distribution function of  $\Delta\tau_c$ , where the dot-dashed line denotes for a linear guideline extrapolated from  $\Delta\tau_c$  distribution with  $R_{free} = 10\sigma$ . \*: The curves are shifted by their corresponding modes. Inset: the cumulative distribution of  $\Delta\tau_c$ . Plot of (c) the scale parameter  $a$  ( $\times$ ) and (d) the shape parameter  $b$  ( $*$ ) from the Weibull distribution fits in Figure 2 versus  $R_{free}$ . The dotted line in (d) denotes the lower bound for  $b$  to converge with extremely large  $R_{free}$ . The original data in this figure can be found on Johns Hopkins University Data Archive[54].

252 4. Locating Plastic Events

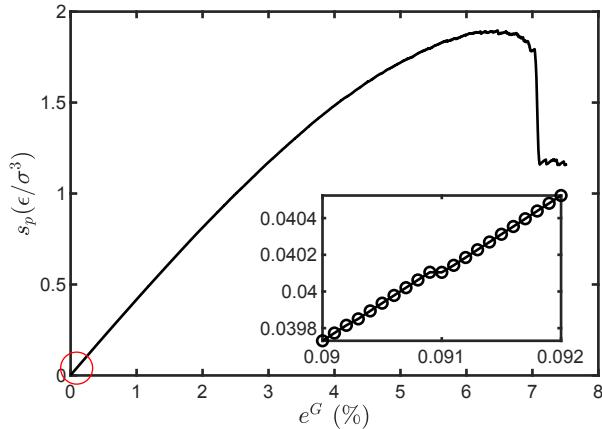


Figure 3: Stress-strain response for the AQS deformation with a strain step  $\Delta e^G = 10^{-6}$  on one KA glass. The inset is the zoom-in view of the circled region in the main plot, where the first plastic event is identified. The original data of the stress-strain response for all 3 independent glasses can be found on Johns Hopkins University Data Archive[54].

253 To identify the series of plastic events that arise during loading, the sim-  
 254 ulation box is deformed via the AQS method within the LAMMPS environ-  
 255 ment. The AQS method affinely deforms the simulation box as all atoms  
 256 are statically relaxed to a mechanically equilibrated state at each strain step.  
 257 Here, the conjugate gradient method is deployed to minimize the forces dur-  
 258 ing the relaxation. The load on the boundary is applied in the same manner  
 259 as the locally-probed deformation described by Eq.6. At each strain step  
 260 applied on the boundary ( $\Delta e^G$ ), a projected stress for the simulation box  
 261 ( $s_p$ ) is recorded to characterize the stress-strain response,

$$s_p = \mathbf{S}^G : \mathbf{E}_u^G, \quad (11)$$

262 where  $\mathbf{E}_u^G$  denotes the unit global strain tensor. The stress tensor of the  
 263 system  $\mathbf{S}^G = \frac{1}{V} \sum_{i=1}^N \Phi_i$ , where  $V$  is the volume of the simulation box and  
 264  $N$  is the total number of atoms in the system. A plastic event is identi-  
 265 fied by each instance in which the stress (i.e.,  $s_p$ ) decreases. These 3D KA  
 266 glasses exhibit a discontinuous drop in the stress due to strain localization

267 at approximately 7% strain with strain step  $10^{-6}$ , as is indicated in Figure 3.  
268 Due to the relatively large size of these 3D systems, many plastic events are  
269 triggered during deformation. This makes the serrations difficult to resolve  
270 by eye, in contrast to the obvious fluctuations in some previously studied  
271 2D glasses[43]. The inset presents the first identified plastic event with a  
272 stress drop of  $\sim 5.30 \times 10^{-7} \epsilon/\sigma^3$  and a triggering strain of  $\sim 0.091\%$ . As was  
273 noted in Reference [68], the identified plastic events depend on the strain  
274 step. This means that smaller and smaller plastic events are observed to  
275 occur at smaller and smaller strain as the strain step is decreased. Due to  
276 computational limitations, it is not possible to converge  $\Delta e^G$  to determine  
277 if there is a 'true' first plastic event in our prepared glasses with 1,000,000  
278 atoms, and answering that question is not the objective of this work. Rather  
279 we assume that the strain step determines the resolution at which we are able  
280 to sample plastic rearrangements during deformation of the simulation box.  
281 We apply the loading on the boundary with the smallest strain step which  
282 is computationally affordable ( $10^{-7}$ ) until the first stress drop in an effort  
283 to characterize the smallest length scale at which 3D Hooke's law behavior  
284 is recovered. For testing the predictivity of the LYS method, consecutive  
285 plastic events are sampled every  $10^{-6}$  strain.

## 286 5. Deviation from Hooke's Law

287 In determining the the region size set by  $R_{free}$ , the local yield stress  
288 method assumes that Hooke's law is valid at this length scale. An evaluation  
289 of the consistency of local material response with Hooke's law should thus  
290 set a lower bound on  $R_{free}$  in computing the local yield stresses ( $\Delta\tau_c$ ). Here,  
291 we adopt the methodology developed by Tsamados *et al.*[39] to estimate the  
292 deviation from linear elasticity at a given length scale. The whole simulation  
293 box is deformed in increments of  $10^{-7}$  strain. The virial contribution at each  
294 atom (Eq.3) is computed both at the initial as-quenched state ( $\Phi_{i,0}^G$ ) and  
295 at the first onset of instability ( $\Phi_{i,y}^G$ ), defined as the configuration prior to  
296 the first stress drop (at  $0.012 \pm 0.007\%$ ). Instead of applying a Gaussian  
297 windowing function as in Reference [39], we sum these local contributions  
298 from  $N_H$  atoms within the sampling radius  $R_H$ , to remain consistent with  
299 the uniform contributions from the 'free' atoms when computing the local

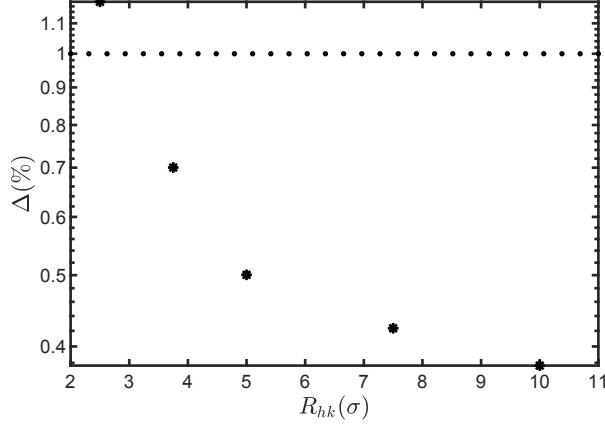


Figure 4: Log-linear plot of deviation from 3D Hooke's law versus averaging radius  $R_H$ . The standard errors are negligible compared with the size of the markers. The dotted line is the guideline for 1%.

300 yield stress ( $\Delta\tau_c$ ). The stress change in this region is then approximated by

$$\mathbf{S}_{i,R_H}^G = \frac{3}{4\pi R_H^3} \sum_j^{N_H} (\Phi_{j,y}^G - \Phi_{j,0}^G). \quad (12)$$

301 By comparing the above two configurations, the atomic strain tensor cen-  
 302 tered at each atom is calculated with varying cutoff radii  $R_H$  according to  
 303 References [5] and [69] using the OVITO open visualization tool[70]. A de-  
 304 formation gradient tensor  $\mathbf{F}_i$  is computed by minimizing

$$\sum_{j=1}^{N_H} |\vec{r}_{ij,0} \mathbf{F}_i - \vec{r}_{ij,y}|^2, \quad (13)$$

305 where  $\vec{r}_{ij,0}$  and  $\vec{r}_{ij,y}$  are displacement vectors between atom  $j$  and  $i$  in the  
 306 unstrained state and at the onset of instability respectively.[69] It follows  
 307 that

$$\mathbf{F}_i = \left( \sum_{j=1}^{N_H} \vec{r}_{ij,0} \otimes \vec{r}_{ij,0} \right)^{-1} \left( \sum_{j=1}^{N_H} \vec{r}_{ij,0} \otimes \vec{r}_{ij,y} \right). \quad (14)$$

308 The resulting atomic strain tensor centered at atom  $i$  is then calculated as

$$\mathbf{E}_{i,R_H}^G = \frac{1}{2} (\mathbf{F}_i^T \mathbf{F}_i - \mathbf{I}). \quad (15)$$

309 Consider the generalized 3D Hooke's law in Voigt notation

$$\tilde{\mathbf{S}} = \tilde{\mathbf{C}} \tilde{\mathbf{E}} \quad (16)$$

310 where, for instance,  $s_{xx}$  in  $\tilde{\mathbf{S}}$  and  $e_{xx}$  in  $\tilde{\mathbf{E}}$  represent for the stress and strain  
 311 components along x direction on the yz plane, and  $c_{ijkl}$  in  $\tilde{\mathbf{C}}$  denotes one of  
 312 the 21 nonzero elastic constants from a 4th order elastic-moduli tensor. To  
 313 solve for these 21 unknowns in the stiffness matrix, 21 linear equations must  
 314 be generated from 4 independent deformations. The resulting solution is, in  
 315 general, overdetermined. We apply the least-squares method[71] to optimize  
 316 the 21 elastic moduli numerically. Preset bounds on the solutions are applied  
 317 with regards to the bulk stiffness matrix of the whole system computed from  
 318 LAMMPS.

319 We then perform 11 independent deformations on the simulation box with  
 320 the unit strain tensor

$$\mathbf{E}_u^G = \frac{\sqrt{2\psi^2 - 4\psi + 8}}{\psi^2 - 2\psi + 4} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \frac{\psi}{2} - 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -\frac{\psi}{2} \end{bmatrix}, \quad (17)$$

321 in which triaxiality  $\psi = 0, 0.1, 0.2, 0.3, \dots, 1$ . For an atom  $i$ , the deformations  
 322 with  $\psi$  ranging from 0.1 to 1 overdetermine the elastic constants in Eq.16.  
 323 The length scale dependence of the overdetermined elastic constants is as-  
 324 sessed by varying  $R_H$  from 2.5 to  $10\sigma$ . At  $\psi = 0$ , an estimated stress tensor  
 325  $\tilde{\mathbf{S}}_{i,R_H}^{G'}$  (in Voigt notation) is calculated by substituting the solved stiffness  
 326 matrix and the strain tensor into Eq.16. Then  $\tilde{\mathbf{S}}_{i,R_H}^{G'}$  is compared with the  
 327 directly computed stress tensor  $\tilde{\mathbf{S}}_{i,R_H}^G$  (in Voigt notation) from LAMMPS  
 328 and its deviation is quantified by the relative root mean square as

$$\Delta_{i,R_H} = \sqrt{\frac{\|\tilde{\mathbf{S}}_{i,R_H}^{G'} - \tilde{\mathbf{S}}_{i,R_H}^G\|^2}{6 \|\tilde{\mathbf{S}}_{i,R_H}^G\|^2}}. \quad (18)$$

329 In Figure 4, the mean deviation averaged among all the atoms are plotted  
 330 against the averaging radius  $R_H$ . If we choose the threshold for elastic be-  
 331 havior to be  $\leq 1\%$  as in Reference [39], then the 3D Hooke's law is valid at a  
 332 length scale  $R_H$  above  $2.5\sigma$ , which can thus serve as the lower limit of  $R_{free}$   
 333 for the local yield stress method in the 3D glasses.

334 **6. Correlation between  $\Delta\tau_c$  and Plastic Events**

335 Next, we would like to assess the degree of correlation of the localized  
 336 plasticity with the local yield stress, and in doing so determine an optimal  
 337 length scale for  $R_{free}$ . We consider multiple plastic events obtained by shear-  
 338 ing with strain steps  $\Delta e^G = 10^{-6}$ . Each plastic event is identified by a stress  
 339 ( $s_p$ ) drop, and the yield point is recorded as the last configuration prior to  
 340 instability. Considering two consecutive events, the end of the former event  
 341 also serves as the reference point of the subsequent event, which is identified  
 342 as the last configuration prior to a stress ( $s_p$ ) increase after a relaxation.  
 343 We locate the triggered plastic rearrangement and characterize its nature by  
 344 comparing the configuration after relaxation to the configuration at the yield  
 345 point. These two configurations are denoted by subscripts  $e$ , for end, and  
 346  $y$ , for yield, respectively. At each atom, the deviation from affinity  $D_{min}^2$  is  
 347 calculated as

$$D_{min,i}^2 = \sum_{j=1}^{N_{cut}} |\vec{r}_{ij,y} \mathbf{F}_i - \vec{r}_{ij,e}|^2, \quad (19)$$

348 where, we solve for  $\mathbf{F}_i$  as described in Eq.14.  $N_{cut}$  is the number of neighbor  
 349 atoms within a cutoff radius  $2.5\sigma$ [5] to the center atom  $i$ . At the  $N$ th plastic  
 350 event, the local yield stress  $\Delta\tau_c$  is computed centered at atom  $a_N$  with the  
 351 maximum value of  $D_{min}^2$  in the as-quenched configuration, and then this  
 352  $\Delta\tau_{c,a_N}$  is compared with the distribution of  $\Delta\tau_c$  above. To be consistent with  
 353 the prior studies in the 2D LYS method[43, 42], we quantify the correlation  
 354 as

$$C_N = 1 - 2P_c(\Delta\tau_{c,a_N}), \quad (20)$$

355 where  $P_c$  is the cumulative distribution function of  $\Delta\tau_c$ .

356 For the first 200 identified plastic events, the correlation averaged over  
 357 every 20 plastic events in 3 independent KA glasses is plotted against the  
 358 number of the plastic event in Figure 5(a). The corresponding total average  
 359 with each  $R_{free}$  is presented in Figure 5(b). The local yield stress ( $\Delta\tau_c$ )  
 360 computed for  $R_{free} = 5\sigma$  exhibits the highest total averaged correlation with  
 361 the plastic events. The mean correlation with  $R_{free} = 5\sigma$  remains positive  
 362 through  $\sim 2.5\%$  strain, about  $1/3$  of the yielding strain. The correlation of  
 363 the first plastic event is shown separately by the solid markers in Figure 5(a),  
 364 and these correlations decay rapidly with the number of plastic events with  
 365 larger  $R_{free}$  values. The predictivity of the local yield stress method in 3D  
 366 appears reasonably good in this preliminary study in which we consider only

367 the local probing that perfectly aligns with the deformation imposed at the  
368 box boundary. This optimal  $R_{free} \sim 5\sigma$  is consistent with the length scale of  
369 the prior study in the 2D LYS method[43, 42], but the corresponding volume  
370 is significantly more substantial with  $600 \sim 700$  atoms in each probing region  
371 in 3D.

372 We note that there exist some negative correlations in Figure 5(a) and  
373 (b). As discussed in the previous 2D LYS studies[43], the LYS measurements  
374 using larger values of  $R_{free}$  fail to account for the secondary STZs because  
375 their signature is obscured by other nearby low yield-stress STZs. In other  
376 words, spatial resolution is lost by increasing local patch size. This leads to  
377 rapid decay in the correlation at higher strains. The fact that off-axis rear-  
378 rangements were not probed is also expected to result in the over-estimation  
379 on the local yield stress ( $\Delta\tau_c$ ).

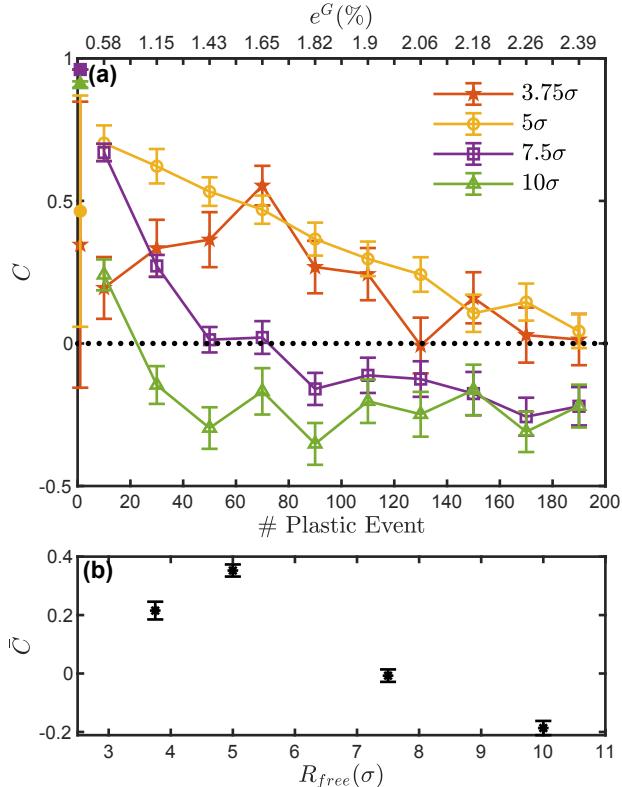


Figure 5: (a) Plot of correlation from Eq.20 versus the  $N$ th plastic event with  $3.75\sigma(\star)$ ,  $5\sigma(\circ)$ ,  $7.5\sigma(\square)$ , and  $10\sigma(\triangle)$ . The hollow markers denote data points averaged over every 20 plastic events for 3 independent KA glasses. The 4 solid markers denote the mean correlation over the 3 glasses at the 1st plastic event. The standard errors are presented by the errorbars. The upper x-axis marks the corresponding triggering strain for each averaged correlation. The dotted line works as a guidance for  $C = 0$ . (b) Plot of the correlation averaged over all the plastic events in Subplot (a) versus  $R_{free}$ , with standard errors denoted by errorbars. The correlation with  $R_{free}=2.5\sigma$  is excluded due to its relatively large deviation from Hooke's law (see Figure 4).

380 7. Variation in Orientation, Rotation and Triaxiality

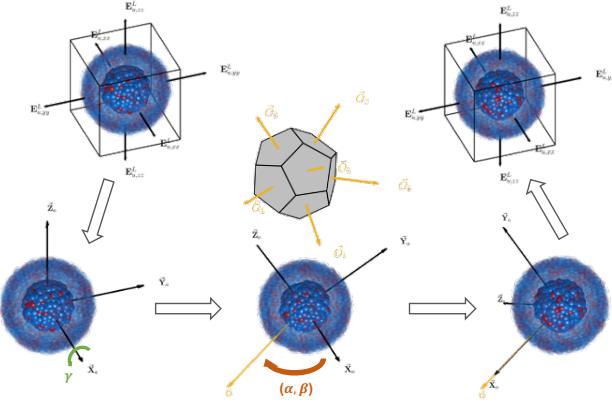


Figure 6: Schematics of rotating and probing a local region. The 'frozen' atoms in transparency form a shell of the core 'free' atoms shown in solid color. The black arrows on the local boundary denote the loading given by  $E_u^L$  in Eq.22 before (upper left) and after (upper right) the rotation.  $(\vec{X}_a, \vec{Y}_a, \vec{Z}_a)$  represents for the coordinate system of the atoms rotating about  $\vec{X}_a$  counter-clockwise with angle  $\gamma$  (green arrows) and then aligning  $\vec{X}_a$  with a direction  $\vec{O}$  (yellow arrows).  $\vec{O}$  (yellow arrows) is sampled with respect to the face norms in a regular dodecahedron in the middle.

381 We expect that the local yield stress ( $\Delta\tau_c$ ) is anisotropic in glasses. To ex-  
 382 plore this anisotropy, we vary the local probing and explore the  $\Delta\tau_c$  yield sur-  
 383 face in a representative and efficient way. For this purpose, we transform  $\mathbf{E}_u^L$   
 384 to a rotated unit strain  $\mathbf{E}_u^{L*}$  by applying the rotation matrix  $\mathbf{R}(\vec{O}(\alpha, \beta), \gamma)$

$$\mathbf{E}_u^{L*} = \mathbf{R}^T(\vec{O}(\alpha, \beta), \gamma) \mathbf{E}_u^L \mathbf{R}(\vec{O}(\alpha, \beta), \gamma). \quad (21)$$

385 In order to maintain an orthogonal simulation box, we rotate the atoms in  
 386 the local region such that the principal axes of  $\mathbf{E}_u^L$  align with the basis vec-  
 387 tors that define the simulation box, illustrated in Figure 6.  $\mathbf{R}(\vec{O}(\alpha, \beta), \gamma)$   
 388 represents the general rotation tensor expressed as a function of  $\vec{O}$ , an arbi-  
 389 trary unit vector with which the x axis is brought into alignment, specified  
 390 in terms of  $(\alpha, \beta)$ , a polar and an azimuthal angle respectively, and  $\gamma$ , an  
 391 angle that describes a prior rotation about the x axis. To sample  $\vec{O}$  evenly  
 392 in 3D, we utilize the face norms of a regular dodecahedron. The resulting

393 rotation is illustrated in Figure 6. The atoms within the cut-out sphere are  
 394 first rotated by an angle  $\gamma$  counterclockwise about  $\vec{X}_a$  that is then rotated  
 395 to align with a direction  $\vec{O}$ . After the rotation operation is applied on the  
 396 atoms, a loading  $\mathbf{E}_u^L$  is imposed on the local boundary. The deformation  
 397 imposed on the principal axes may be expressed in terms of triaxiality  $\psi$  as

$$\mathbf{E}_u^L = \frac{\omega \sqrt{2\psi^2 - 4\psi + 8}}{\psi^2 - 2\psi + 4} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \frac{\psi}{2} - 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -\frac{\psi}{2} \end{bmatrix}, \quad (22)$$

398 where,  $\omega = -1$  (compression) or  $+1$  (tension).  $\psi$  ranges from 0 to 1 inclusively,  
 399 and in doing so determines the symmetry of the loading. If  $\psi = 0$ ,

$$\mathbf{E}_u^L = \frac{\omega \sqrt{2}}{2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}, \quad (23)$$

400 and a uniaxial loading strain is thus applied. With zero strain along z axis,  
 401 this plane strain deformation recovers the local probing studied in the prior  
 402 work regarding the two-dimensional LYS method[42, 43]. As  $\psi$  increases to  
 403 1,

$$\mathbf{E}_u^L = \frac{\omega \sqrt{6}}{2} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & -\frac{1}{2} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -\frac{1}{2} \end{bmatrix}, \quad (24)$$

404 resulting in a biaxial loading that is symmetric about the x axis.

405 For the sake of a preliminary study regarding the anisotropy of the local  
 406 yield stress ( $\Delta\tau_c$ ), we focus on the region centered around the single atom  
 407 with the most dramatic plastic rearrangement as characterized by  $D_{min}^2$  from  
 408 Eq.19 applied to the first plastic event identified in Figure 3 during the  
 409 deformation of a 3D KA glass. When computing  $\Delta\tau_c$ , we choose  $R_{free} = 5\sigma$   
 410 as the optimal length scale in the LYS method. Then we systematically vary  
 411 the triaxiality  $\psi$  to take the values 0, 0.2, 0.4, 0.6, 0.8, and 1.0. At each  
 412  $\psi$ , we consider 6 orientation directions of  $\vec{O}(\alpha, \beta)$  as shown in the middle of  
 413 Figure 6. For each  $\vec{O}(\alpha, \beta)$ , the rotation angle  $\gamma$  is set to be  $0^\circ$ ,  $30^\circ$ ,  $60^\circ$ ,  $90^\circ$ ,  
 414  $120^\circ$ , and  $150^\circ$ .

415 In Figure 7, the calculated local yield stresses ( $\Delta\tau_c$ ) are presented in a  
 416 series of 2D plots with variation in rotation ( $\gamma$ ), orientation ( $\vec{O}$ ), triaxiality  
 417 ( $\psi$ ) and loading direction ( $\omega$ ). Each plot corresponds to a chosen set of  $\psi$   
 418 and  $\vec{O}$ , and the resulting  $\Delta\tau_c$  from both compressive and tensile loadings is  
 419 plotted for each value of  $\gamma$ . As expected, the projection must be a circle when  
 420  $\psi = 1$  since  $\mathbf{E}_u^L$  in Eq.24 is symmetric about the x axis. As  $\psi$  decreases to 0  
 421 (from right to left),  $\Delta\tau_c$  loses this symmetry. The resulting  $\Delta\tau_c$  projections  
 422 from both loading directions ( $\omega = -1, +1$ ) are consistent in their elongation,  
 423 and it is generally the case that the compressive  $\Delta\tau_c$  is slightly larger in  
 424 magnitude than its corresponding tensile  $\Delta\tau_c$ , particularly for larger values  
 425 of  $\psi$ .

426 In previous sections, the deformation on the box boundary given by  $\mathbf{E}_u^G$   
 427 is identical to the shear of the local probing used to analyze the local value of  
 428  $\Delta\tau_c$  given by  $\mathbf{E}_u^L$ . Here, we are able to cross-compare the propensity for the  
 429 applied global loading to trigger the local yield stresses ( $\Delta\tau_c$ ) measured along  
 430 multiple probing directions, projecting each  $\Delta\tau_c$  along the applied loading  
 431 direction by calculating

$$432 \quad f_p^2 = \mathbf{E}_u^{L*} : \mathbf{E}_u^G, \quad (25)$$

$$433 \quad p_f = \frac{f_p^2}{|f_p^2|} \sqrt{|f_p^2|}, \quad (26)$$

434 such that the projected local yield stress is expressed as

$$435 \quad \Delta\tau_y = \frac{\Delta\tau_c}{p_f}. \quad (27)$$

436 If  $\mathbf{E}_u^{L*} = \mathbf{E}_u^G$ , then  $p_f = 1$  and the deformation on the box boundary aligns  
 437 perfectly with the local probing when computing  $\Delta\tau_c$ . This is the case for  
 438 our results in the previous sections. If  $0 < p_f < 1$ , the stress along  $\mathbf{E}_u^G$  must  
 439 be greater than  $\Delta\tau_c$  itself in order to trigger the same local rearrangement  
 440 probed by  $\mathbf{E}_u^{L*}$ . If  $p_f < 0$ , it indicates that the loading via  $\mathbf{E}_u^G$  contributes  
 441 in the opposite direction as that applied during the local probing  $\mathbf{E}_u^{L*}$ . This  
 442 should indicate that it is impossible to trigger such a rearrangement by ap-  
 443 pllying this  $\mathbf{E}_u^G$ .

444 The projected local yield stresses ( $\Delta\tau_y$ ) along  $\mathbf{E}_u^G$  in Eq.11 are mapped in  
 445 Figure 8 with the same presentation as in Figure 7. Due to the fact that  $\Delta\tau_y$   
 446 varies over a very large range, from  $-20\epsilon/\sigma^3$  to  $20\epsilon/\sigma^3$  after being scaled by  
 447  $p_f$  in Eq.27, we only present the resultant  $\Delta\tau_c$  with  $\vec{O}_1$  corresponding to the

446 1st row in Figure 7, which are found to be generally lower in magnitude than  
 447 those in other orientation directions. With all negative  $\Delta\tau_y$  values neglected,  
 448 all subplots are scaled to a radius of  $5\epsilon/\sigma^3$ . The minimum positive  $\Delta\tau_y$  along  
 449 all other  $\vec{O}$  orientations is indicated by black dotted circles as a reference in  
 450 each plot. The black crosses label the five smallest positive  $\Delta\tau_y$  values. The  
 451  $\Delta\tau_y$  locally probed with  $\mathbf{E}_u^L$  in Eq.6 ranks as the 4th least in its value. This  
 452  $\mathbf{E}_u^L$  aligns perfectly with  $\mathbf{E}_u^G$  in the prior section, and the difference from the  
 453 lowest  $\Delta\tau_y$  is  $\sim 8\%$  and is small in comparison to the highest level of the  $\Delta\tau_y$   
 454 scale,  $20\epsilon/\sigma^3$ . This indicates that the easiest-to-trigger local rearrangement  
 455 doesn't necessarily align with the loading imposed at the boundary, and the  
 456 difference between the two appears to predominantly associated with the  
 457 triaxiality  $\psi$ .

458 We are also curious to compare the triaxiality  $\psi$  of the corresponding  
 459 local rearrangement centered at this targeted atom when applying  $\mathbf{E}_u^G$  on the  
 460 boundary. The atomic strain with averaging radius  $5\sigma$  is computed according  
 461 to Eq.15 by comparing the yielding configuration with the initial state. This  
 462 strain tensor is an 'average' over the probing region, and this can be compared  
 463 to the local probing presented by the effective unit strain tensor  $\mathbf{E}_u^{L*}$  in Eq.21  
 464 after normalization. Accordingly, the eigenvalues of the normalized atomic  
 465 strain tensor are then compared to  $\mathbf{E}_u^L$  in Eq.22 and the resulting value of  
 466  $\psi$  is 0.465. This value falls between  $\psi = 0.4$  and  $\psi = 0.6$  which correspond  
 467 to the 2nd and the 1st lowest  $\Delta\tau_y$  marked in Figure 8. In addition, the  
 468  $p_f$  between the probing  $\mathbf{E}_u^{L*}$  and the above averaged atomic strain yields  
 469  $\sim 0.938$  for the minimal  $\Delta\tau_y$  higher than  $p_f \sim 0.896$  found for the  $\Delta\tau_y$   
 470 when the local regions are probed aligning perfectly with the loading on the  
 471 boundary (the 4th lowest). This high degree of correspondence indicates  
 472 that the triggered local plastic event isn't necessarily in alignment with the  
 473 loading on the boundary, but, rather the local arrangement could be well  
 474 predicted by the minimum  $\Delta\tau_y$  from the local yield surface. The correlation  
 475 might be improved if a more complete range of local probing were undertaken  
 476 at each sampling point, particularly with respect to the triaxiality  $\psi$ .

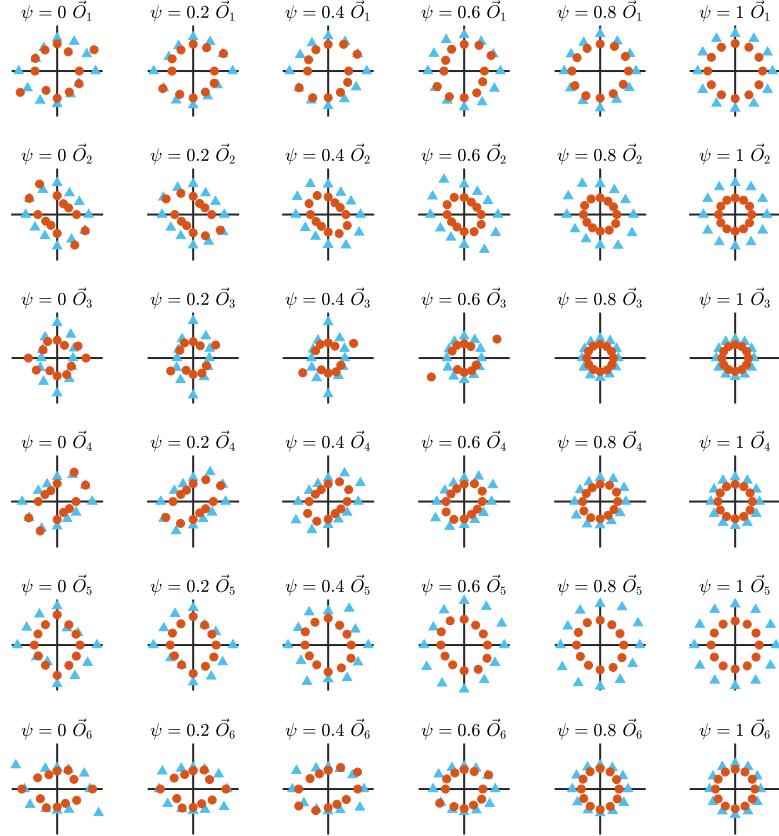


Figure 7:  $\Delta\tau_c$  with variation in triaxiality  $\psi$  horizontally and orientation  $\vec{O}$  vertically. In each subplot, rotation angle  $\gamma$  is plotted as the angle counterclockwise from the horizontal axis pointing to the right, and the magnitude of  $\Delta\tau_c$  is represented by the distance from the origin. Blue  $\triangle$  and red  $\circ$  denote the results for  $\omega = -1$  and  $+1$  in Eq.22 respectively. All subplots are scaled with the limits of the axes as  $5\epsilon/\sigma^3$ . The original data can be found on Johns Hopkins University Data Archive[54].

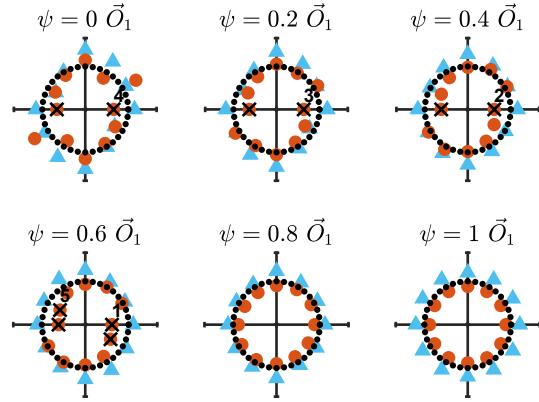


Figure 8: Projected local yield stress ( $\Delta\tau_y$ ) calculated by Eq.25 to 27 with  $\mathbf{E}_u^G$  in Eq.11. Only  $\Delta\tau_y$  with  $\vec{O}_1$  is plotted corresponding to the 1st row in Figure 7. Black crosses mark the five lowest values of  $\Delta\tau_y$ s with labeling 1 next to the smallest value. The black dotted circle labels the magnitude of the minimum  $\Delta\tau_y$  among all other  $\vec{O}$  orientations as a reference in each plot. All subplots are scaled with the limits of the axes as  $5\epsilon/\sigma^3$ . The original data can be found on Johns Hopkins University Data Archive[54].

477 **8. Conclusions**

478 By applying the local yield stress (LYS) method to a computational model  
479 of a three-dimensional glass and varying the local probing over a range of  
480 triaxialities ( $\psi$ ), orientations ( $\vec{O}(\alpha, \beta)$ ), rotations ( $\gamma$ ), and directions ( $\omega$ ), we  
481 are able to obtain a sense of the complexity of the response of the glass  
482 microstructure when subjected to shear. We note that the optimal length  
483 scale for this analysis (approximately 5 atomic diameters in radius) is just  
484 above the smallest length scale at which the 3D Hooke's law remains valid,  
485 as was the case in 2D, although significantly more atoms reside within the  
486 resulting probing region (600-700 atoms) due to the higher dimensionality.  
487 When we are limited to probing at a shear identical to the loading on the  
488 boundary, the mean correlation after noise reduction persists through the  
489 first 200 identified plastic events or 1/3 the yielding strain ( $\sim 7\%$ ). The  
490 local yield stress surface is significantly anisotropic. And the projected local  
491 yield stresses ( $\Delta\tau_y$ ) with respect to the loading on the boundary does a very  
492 good job of predicting the sense of the shear at the first yield event. It is  
493 thus anticipated that the correlation of the yield stress analysis might be  
494 improved by characterizing the entire yield surface, rather than only the  
495 shear commensurate with that applied at the boundary, on each sampling  
496 point.

497 **9. Acknowledgements**

498 We would like to dedicate this work to Dr. Mark O. Robbins for his  
499 valuable advice and his mentorship over many, many years. Although Mark  
500 is no longer with us, his wisdom and passion towards scientific research will  
501 continue to inspire people who have known and communicated with him.  
502 We also would like to thank Dr. Bin Xu for sharing his experiences on the  
503 parameterization for the computational predictors and the presentations of  
504 multi-dimensional data. All the computations in this paper were performed  
505 at the Maryland Advanced Research Computing Center (MARCC). This  
506 project is supported by National Science Foundation(NSF) under Award No.  
507 DMR-1910066/1909733.

508 **Appendix A. Sample Preparation**

509 In each sample, 1,000,000 atoms are simulated in a cubic simulation box  
510 with periodic boundary conditions along the x, y and z axes. The system

511 is comprised of 80% large atoms (A) and 20% small atoms (B). We apply  
 512 a smoothed 6-12 Lennard-Jones(LJ) potential to quantify the interatomic  
 513 interactions as follows[43]:

514 When  $r \leq r_{in}$ ,

$$U_{\alpha\beta}(r) = 4\epsilon_{\alpha\beta} \left[ \left( \frac{\sigma_{\alpha\beta}}{r} \right)^{12} - \left( \frac{\sigma_{\alpha\beta}}{r} \right)^6 \right] + C', \quad (\text{A.1})$$

515 When  $r_{in} < r \leq r_{out}$ ,

$$U_{\alpha\beta}(r) = C_0 + C_1(r - r_{in}) + C_2(r - r_{in})^2 + C_3(r - r_{in})^3 + C_4(r - r_{in})^4, \quad (\text{A.2})$$

516 When  $r > r_{out}$ ,

$$U_{\alpha\beta}(r) = 0, \quad (\text{A.3})$$

517 with

$$C' = C_0 - 4\epsilon_{\alpha\beta} \left[ \left( \frac{\sigma_{\alpha\beta}}{r_{in}} \right)^{12} - \left( \frac{\sigma_{\alpha\beta}}{r_{in}} \right)^6 \right], \quad (\text{A.4})$$

$$C_0 = -(r_{out} - r_{in}) [3C_1 + C_2(r_{out} - r_{in})] / 6, \quad (\text{A.5})$$

$$C_1 = 24\epsilon_{\alpha\beta}\sigma_{\alpha\beta}^6(r_{in}^6 - 2\sigma_{\alpha\beta}^6)/r_{in}^{13}, \quad (\text{A.6})$$

$$C_2 = 12\epsilon_{\alpha\beta}\sigma_{\alpha\beta}^6(26\sigma_{\alpha\beta}^6 - 7r_{in}^6)/r_{in}^{14}, \quad (\text{A.7})$$

$$C_3 = -[3C_1 + 4C_2(r_{out} - r_{in})]/[3(r_{out} - r_{in})^2], \quad (\text{A.8})$$

$$C_4 = [C_1 + C_2(r_{out} - r_{in})]/[2(r_{out} - r_{in})^3]. \quad (\text{A.9})$$

523  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  denote particle species A or B. In LJ units, all quantities are rep-  
 524 resented in terms of particle mass  $m$ , which is equivalent for both species,  
 525 interatomic distance  $\sigma$ , and interaction energy  $\epsilon$ . Consequently, time is mea-  
 526 sured in units of  $t_0 = \sigma\sqrt{m/\epsilon}$ , temperature in units of  $\epsilon/k_B$ , pressure and  
 527 stress in units of  $\epsilon/\sigma^3$ , etc. In the Kob-Aderson[47] model, the bonding en-  
 528 ergies are  $\epsilon_{AA} = 1.0\epsilon$ ,  $\epsilon_{BB} = 0.5\epsilon$ ,  $\epsilon_{AB} = \epsilon_{BA} = 1.5\epsilon$ , and the equilibrium  
 529 particle spacings are  $\sigma_{AA} = 1.0\sigma$ ,  $\sigma_{AA} = 0.88\sigma$ ,  $\sigma_{AB} = \sigma_{BA} = 0.8\sigma$ .[24] This  
 530 potential field is smoothed from  $r_{in} = 2.0\sigma$  to  $r_{out} = 2.5\sigma$  via a polynomial  
 531 function with coefficients  $C_0, C_1, C_2, C_3$  and  $C_4$  as shown in Eq.A.2, to avoid  
 532 any discontinuity in the force associated with the potential's short-ranged  
 533 cutoff.

534 **Appendix B. Deviation from Hooke's Law**

535 *Appendix B.1. Elastic Constants for the Bulk Glasses*

536 To estimate the bulk elastic constants, the simulation box is loaded inde-  
537 pendently along  $xx$ ,  $yy$ ,  $zz$ , or sheared along  $xy$ ,  $xz$ ,  $yz$  up to  $1 \times 10^{-7}$  strain  
538 using the athermal quasi-static (AQS) method [55, 56, 39, 57, 58, 59]. After  
539 strain is applied along each of the six probing directions, the elastic constants  
540 are calculated such that

$$c_{AB} = s_A/e_B \quad (B.1)$$

541 with  $A$  and  $B$  taking the values  $xx$ ,  $yy$ ,  $zz$ ,  $xy$ ,  $xz$ , or  $yz$ . For each loading,  
542 both positive and negative strain are applied and averaged. The  $c_{AB} =$   
543  $c_{BA}$  elements are symmetrized as  $(c_{AB} + c_{BA})/2$  for the off-diagonal elastic  
544 constants.

545 **Appendix C. Variation in Orientation, Rotation and Triaxiality**

546 *The Projected Local Yield Stress  $\Delta\tau_y$*

547 The patterns of the Projected Local Yield Stress  $\Delta\tau_y$  are presented in  
548 Fig. C.9. In the array of plots, triaxiality ( $\psi$ ) is varied horizontally and  
549 orientation ( $\vec{O}$ ) is varied vertically. In each plot, rotation angle ( $\gamma$ ) is the  
550 angle counterclockwise from the horizontal axis pointing to the right, and the  
551 magnitude of  $\Delta\tau_c$  is represented by the distance from the origin. Blue  $\Delta$  and  
552 red  $\circ$  denote the results for  $\omega = -1$  and  $+1$ . Black crosses mark the five lowest  
553 values of  $\Delta\tau_y$  where the label 1 indicates the smallest value. In addition, solid  
554 and hollow markers denote positive and negative sign respectively. In order  
555 to show the full range of values, each plot is scaled with the limits of the  
556 axes varied to  $\pm 5$ ,  $\pm 10$ ,  $\pm 15$ , and  $\pm 20\epsilon/\sigma^3$ , and this variation in scaling is  
557 denoted by the yellow, light green, green, and dark green backgrounds, as is  
558 shown in the bottom subplot.

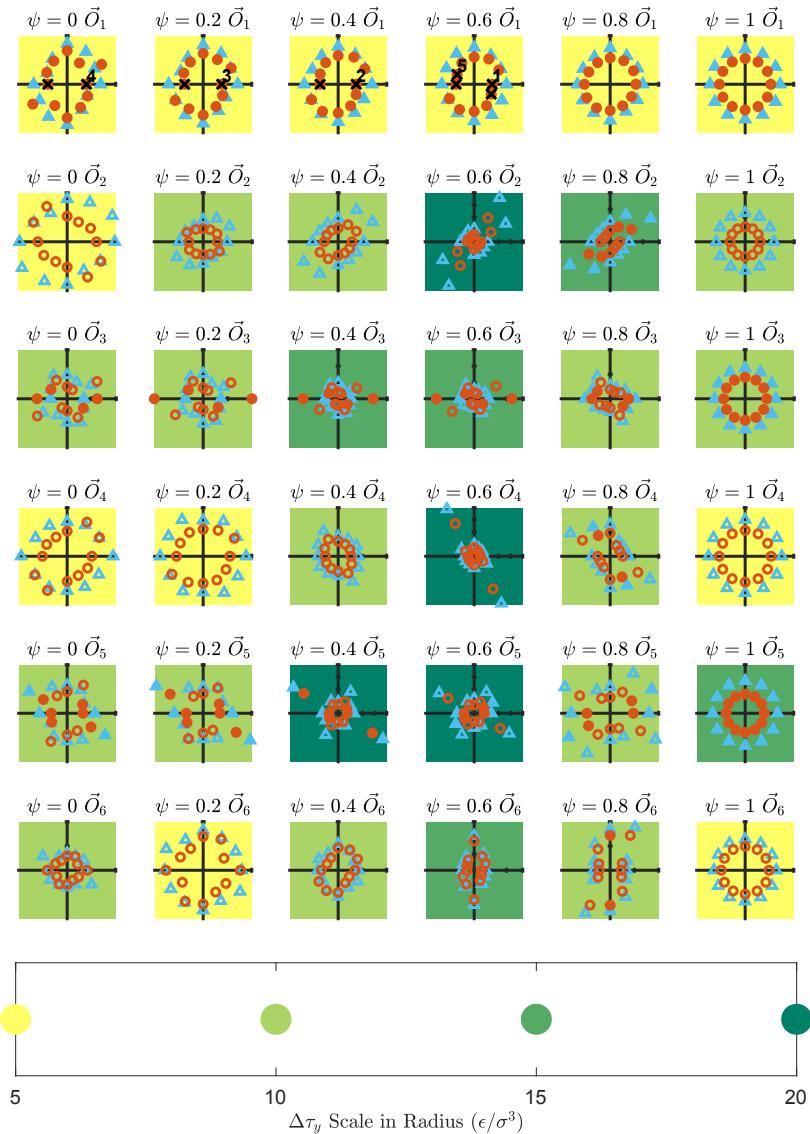


Figure C.9: Projected local yield stress ( $\Delta\tau_y$ ).

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