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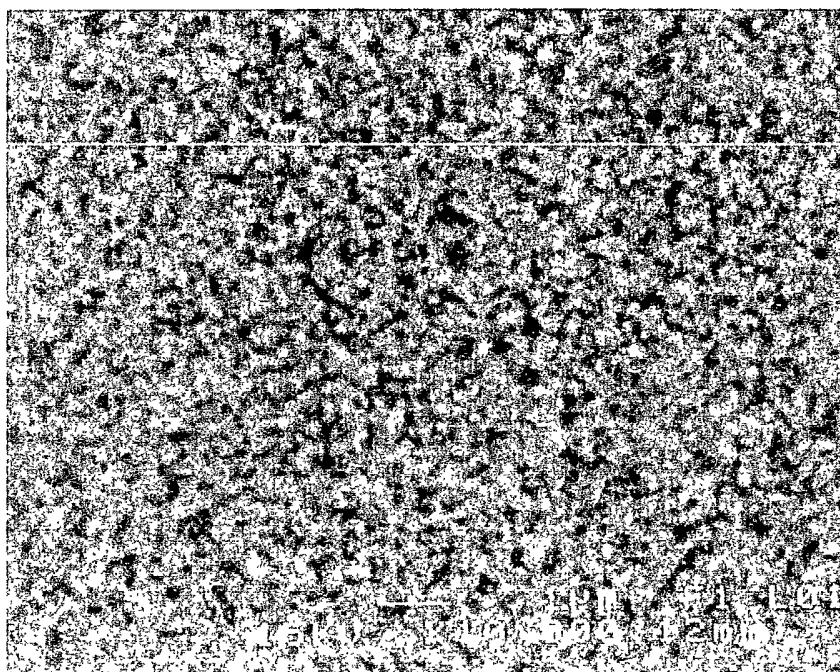
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(54) Title: ALUMINA-YTTRIA-ZIRCONIUM OXIDE/HAFNIUM OXIDE MATERIALS, AND METHODS OF MAKING AND USING THE SAME



(57) Abstract: $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\text{-Y}_2\text{O}_3\text{-ZrO}_2\text{I/HfO}_2$ ceramics (including glasses, crystalline ceramics, and glass-ceramics) and methods of making the same. Ceramics according to the present invention can be made, formed as, or converted into glass beads, articles (e.g., plates), fibers, particles, and thin coatings. The particles and fibers are useful, for example, as thermal insulation, filler, or reinforcing material in composites (e.g., ceramic, metal, or polymeric matrix composites). The thin coatings can be useful, for example, as protective coatings in applications involving wear, as well as for thermal management. Certain ceramic particles according to the present invention can be particularly useful as abrasive particles.

Al₂O₃-Y₂O₃-ZrO₂/HfO₂ MATERIALS,**AND METHODS OF MAKING AND USING THE SAME****Field of the Invention**

5 The present invention relates to Al₂O₃-Y₂O₃-ZrO₂/HfO₂ amorphous and/or ceramic materials (including glasses, crystalline ceramics, and glass-ceramics) and methods of
10 making the same.

Description of Related Art

15 A large number of amorphous (including glass) and glass-ceramic compositions are known. The majority of oxide glass systems utilize well-known glass-formers such as SiO₂, B₂O₃, P₂O₅, GeO₂, TeO₂, As₂O₃, and V₂O₅ to aid in the formation of the glass. Some of the glass compositions formed with these glass-formers can be heat-treated to form glass-ceramics. The upper use temperature of glasses and glass-ceramics formed from such glass formers is generally less than 1200°C, typically about 700-800°C. The glass-ceramics tend to be more temperature resistant than the glass from which they are formed.

20 In addition, many properties of known glasses and glass-ceramics are limited by the intrinsic properties of glass-formers. For example, for SiO₂, B₂O₃, and P₂O₅-based glasses and glass-ceramics, the Young's modulus, hardness, and strength are limited by such glass-formers. Such glass and glass-ceramics generally have inferior mechanical properties as compared, for example, to Al₂O₃ or ZrO₂. Glass-ceramics having any
25 mechanical properties similar to that of Al₂O₃ or ZrO₂ would be desirable.

30 Although some non-conventional glasses such as glasses based on rare earth oxide-aluminum oxide (see, e.g., PCT application having publication No. WO 01/27046 A1, published April 19, 2001, and Japanese Document No. JP 2000-045129, published February 15, 2000) are known, additional novel glasses and glass-ceramic, as well as use for both known and novel glasses and glass-ceramics is desired.

In another aspect, a variety of abrasive particles (e.g., diamond particles, cubic boron nitride particles, fused abrasive particles, and sintered, ceramic abrasive particles

(including sol-gel-derived abrasive particles) known in the art. In some abrading applications, the abrasive particles are used in loose form, while in others the particles are incorporated into abrasive products (e.g., coated abrasive products, bonded abrasive products, non-woven abrasive products, and abrasive brushes). Criteria used in selecting 5 abrasive particles used for a particular abrading application include: abrading life, rate of cut, substrate surface finish, grinding efficiency, and product cost.

From about 1900 to about the mid-1980's, the premier abrasive particles for abrading applications such as those utilizing coated and bonded abrasive products were typically fused abrasive particles. There are two general types of fused abrasive particles: 10 (1) fused alpha alumina abrasive particles (see, e.g., U.S. Pat. Nos. 1,161,620 (Coulter), 1,192,709 (Tone), 1,247,337 (Saunders et al.), 1,268,533 (Allen), and 2,424,645 (Baumann et al.)) and (2) fused (sometimes also referred to as "co-fused") alumina-zirconia abrasive particles (see, e.g., U.S. Pat. Nos. 3,891,408 (Rowse et al.), 3,781,172 (Pett et al.), 3,893,826 (Quinan et al.), 4,126,429 (Watson), 4,457,767 (Poon et al.), and 15 5,143,522 (Gibson et al.))(also see, e.g., U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,023,212 (Dubots et. al) and 5,336,280 (Dubots et. al) which report the certain fused oxynitride abrasive particles). Fused alumina abrasive particles are typically made by charging a furnace with an alumina source such as aluminum ore or bauxite, as well as other desired additives, heating the material above its melting point, cooling the melt to provide a solidified mass, crushing the 20 solidified mass into particles, and then screening and grading the particles to provide the desired abrasive particle size distribution. Fused alumina-zirconia abrasive particles are typically made in a similar manner, except the furnace is charged with both an alumina source and a zirconia source, and the melt is more rapidly cooled than the melt used to make fused alumina abrasive particles. For fused alumina-zirconia abrasive particles, the 25 amount of alumina source is typically about 50-80 percent by weight, and the amount of zirconia, 50-20 percent by weight zirconia. The processes for making the fused alumina and fused alumina abrasive particles may include removal of impurities from the melt prior to the cooling step.

Although fused alpha alumina abrasive particles and fused alumina-zirconia 30 abrasive particles are still widely used in abrading applications (including those utilizing coated and bonded abrasive products, the premier abrasive particles for many abrading

applications since about the mid-1980's are sol-gel-derived alpha alumina particles (see, e.g., U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,314,827 (Leitheiser et al.), 4,518,397 (Leitheiser et al.), 4,623,364 (Cottringer et al.), 4,744,802 (Schwabel), 4,770,671 (Monroe et al.), 4,881,951 (Wood et al.), 4,960,441 (Pellow et al.), 5,139,978 (Wood), 5,201,916 (Berg et al.), 5,366,523 5 (Rowenhorst et al.), 5,429,647 (Larmie), 5,547,479 (Conwell et al.), 5,498,269 (Larmie), 5,551,963 (Larmie), and 5,725,162 (Garg et al.)).

The sol-gel-derived alpha alumina abrasive particles may have a microstructure made up of very fine alpha alumina crystallites, with or without the presence of secondary phases added. The grinding performance of the sol-gel derived abrasive particles on metal, 10 as measured, for example, by life of abrasive products made with the abrasive particles was dramatically longer than such products made from conventional fused alumina abrasive particles.

Typically, the processes for making sol-gel-derived abrasive particles are more complicated and expensive than the processes for making conventional fused abrasive 15 particles. In general, sol-gel-derived abrasive particles are typically made by preparing a dispersion or sol comprising water, alumina monohydrate (boehmite), and optionally peptizing agent (e.g., an acid such as nitric acid), gelling the dispersion, drying the gelled dispersion, crushing the dried dispersion into particles, screening the particles to provide the desired sized particles, calcining the particles to remove volatiles, sintering the 20 calcined particles at a temperature below the melting point of alumina, and screening and grading the particles to provide the desired abrasive particle size distribution. Frequently a metal oxide modifier(s) is incorporated into the sintered abrasive particles to alter or otherwise modify the physical properties and/or microstructure of the sintered abrasive particles.

25 There are a variety of abrasive products (also referred to "abrasive articles") known in the art. Typically, abrasive products include binder and abrasive particles secured within the abrasive product by the binder. Examples of abrasive products include: coated abrasive products, bonded abrasive products, nonwoven abrasive products, and abrasive brushes.

30 Examples of bonded abrasive products include: grinding wheels, cutoff wheels, and honing stones. The main types of bonding systems used to make bonded abrasive

products are: resinoid, vitrified, and metal. Resinoid bonded abrasives utilize an organic binder system (e.g., phenolic binder systems) to bond the abrasive particles together to form the shaped mass (see, e.g., U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,741,743 (Narayanan et al.), 4,800,685 (Haynes et al.), 5,037,453 (Narayanan et al.), and 5,110,332 (Narayanan et al.)). Another 5 major type are vitrified wheels in which a glass binder system is used to bond the abrasive particles together mass (see, e.g., U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,543,107 (Rue), 4,898,587 (Hay et al.), 4,997,461 (Markhoff-Matheny et al.), and 5,863,308 (Qi et al.)). These glass bonds are usually matured at temperatures between 900°C to 1300°C. Today vitrified wheels utilize 10 both fused alumina and sol-gel-derived abrasive particles. However, fused alumina-zirconia is generally not incorporated into vitrified wheels due in part to the thermal stability of alumina-zirconia. At the elevated temperatures at which the glass bonds are matured, the physical properties of alumina-zirconia degrade, leading to a significant decrease in their abrading performance. Metal bonded abrasive products typically utilize sintered or plated metal to bond the abrasive particles.

15 The abrasive industry continues to desire abrasive particles and abrasive products that are easier to make, cheaper to make, and/or provide performance advantage(s) over conventional abrasive particles and products.

Summary of the Invention

20 The present invention provides amorphous (including glasses) and/or ceramic (including glass, crystalline ceramic, glass-ceramic) materials comprising (on a theoretical oxide basis; e.g., may be present as a reaction product (e.g., $Y_3Al_5O_{12}$)), Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , including glass, crystalline ceramic (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $Al_2O_3 \bullet Y_2O_3$) and/or ZrO_2), and glass-ceramic 25 materials, wherein in amorphous materials not having a T_g , certain preferred embodiments have x, y, and z dimensions each perpendicular to each other, and wherein each of the x, y, and z dimensions is at least 5mm (in some embodiments at least 10mm), the x, y, and z dimensions is at least 30 micrometers, 35 micrometers, 40 micrometers, 45 micrometers, 50 micrometers, 75 micrometers, 100 micrometers, 150 micrometers, 200 micrometers, 30 250 micrometers, 500 micrometers, 1000 micrometers, 2000 micrometers, 2500 micrometers, 1mm, 5 mm, or even at least 10 mm. The x, y, and z dimensions of a

material are determined either visually or using microscopy, depending on the magnitude of the dimensions. The reported z dimension is, for example, the diameter of a sphere, the thickness of a coating, or the longest length of a prismatic shape. Some embodiments of ceramic materials according to the present invention may comprise, for example, less than 5 40 (35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 3, 2, 1, or even zero) percent by weight traditional glass formers such as SiO_2 , As_2O_3 , B_2O_3 , P_2O_5 , GeO_2 , TeO_2 , V_2O_5 , and/or combinations thereof, based on the total weight of the ceramic. Ceramics according to the present invention may comprise, for example, at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, or even 100 percent by volume amorphous material. Some 10 embodiments of ceramics according to the present invention may comprise, for example, at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume crystalline ceramic, based on the total volume of the ceramic.

Typically, ceramics according to the present invention comprises at least 30 percent 15 by weight of the Al_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the ceramic. More typically, ceramics according to the present invention comprise at least 30 (desirably, in a range of about 30 to about 60) percent by weight Al_2O_3 , at least 20 (about 20 to about 65) percent by weight Y_2O_3 , and at least 5 (about 5 to about 30) percent by weight ZrO_2 and/or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the ceramic. The weight ratio of $\text{ZrO}_2:\text{HfO}_2$ can range of 1:zero (i.e., all 20 ZrO_2 ; no HfO_2) to zero:1, as well as, for example, at least about 99, 98, 97, 96, 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 20, 15, 10, and 5 parts (by weight) ZrO_2 and a corresponding amount of HfO_2 (e.g., at least about 99 parts (by weight) ZrO_2 and not greater than about 1 part HfO_2) and at least about 99, 98, 97, 96, 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 20, 15, 10, and 5 parts HfO_2 and a corresponding amount 25 of ZrO_2 . Optionally, ceramics according to the present invention further comprise REO.

For ceramics according to the present invention comprising crystalline ceramic, some embodiments include those wherein, the ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \bullet \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer 30 (typically, less than 500 nanometers, even less than 300, 200, or 150 nanometers; and in some embodiments, less than 100, 75, 50, 25, or 20 nanometers), and (b) is free of at least

one of eutectic microstructure features (i.e., is free of colonies and lamellar structure) or a non-cellular microstructure. It is also within the scope of the present invention for some embodiments to have at least one crystalline phase within a specified average crystallite value and at least one (different) crystalline phase outside of a specified average crystallite value.

5 Some embodiments of the present invention include amorphous material comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 (85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the amorphous material collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of 10 the amorphous material .

10 Some embodiments of the present invention include amorphous material comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 (65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the amorphous material collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 15 (preferably, less than 15,10, 5,or even 0) percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 (preferably, less than 15,10, 5,or even 0) percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the amorphous material.

20 Some embodiments of the present invention include provides amorphous material comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 (65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the amorphous material collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 (preferably, less than 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5,or even 0) percent by weight collectively 25 SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the amorphous material.

30 Some embodiments of the present invention include ceramic comprising amorphous material (e.g., at least 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume amorphous material), the amorphous material comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 (85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the amorphous material collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the amorphous material.

Some embodiments of the present invention include ceramic comprising amorphous material (e.g., at least 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume amorphous material), the amorphous material comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at 5 least 60 (65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the amorphous material collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 (preferably, less than 15, 10, 5, or even 0) percent by weight SiO_2 , and less than 20 percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the amorphous material. The ceramic may further comprise crystalline ceramic (e.g., at least 95, 90, 85, 10 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 3, 2, or 1 percent by volume crystalline ceramic).

Some embodiments of the present invention include ceramic comprising amorphous material (e.g., at least 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume amorphous material), the 15 amorphous material comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 (65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the amorphous material collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the amorphous material. The ceramic may further comprise crystalline 20 ceramic (e.g., at least 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 3, 2, or 1 percent by volume crystalline ceramic).

Some embodiments of the present invention include glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 (85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the glass-ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , 25 Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass-ceramic. The glass-ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, or 95 percent by volume glass. The glass-ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 99, 98, 97, 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, or 5 percent by volume crystalline ceramic.

30 Some embodiments of the present invention include glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 (65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90,

95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the glass-ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 (preferably, less than 15, 10, 5, or even 0) percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 (preferably, less than 15, 10, 5, or even 0) percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the glass-ceramic. The 5 glass-ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, or 95 percent by volume glass. The glass-ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 99, 98, 97, 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, or 5 percent by volume crystalline ceramic.

Some embodiments of the present invention include glass-ceramic comprising 10 Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 (65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the glass-ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the glass-ceramic. The glass-ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 15 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, percent by volume amorphous material. The glass-ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 99, 98, 97, 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, or 5 percent by volume crystalline ceramic.

Some embodiments of the present invention include glass-ceramic comprising 20 Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \bullet \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer (typically, less than 500 nanometers, or even less than 300, 220, or 150 nanometers; and in some embodiments, less than 100, 75, 50, 25, or 20 nanometers), and (b) is free of eutectic microstructure features. Some embodiments of the present invention 25 include glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a non-cellular microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \bullet \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer (typically, less than 500 nanometers, even less than 300, 200, or 150 nanometers; and in some embodiments, less than 100, 75, 50, 25, or 20 nanometers). The glass-ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, percent by volume 30

amorphous material. The glass-ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 99, 98, 97, 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, or 5 percent by volume crystalline ceramic. It is also within the scope of the present invention for some 5 embodiments to have at least one crystalline phase within a specified average crystallite value and at least one (different) crystalline phase outside of a specified average crystallite value.

Some embodiments of the present invention include ceramic comprising crystalline ceramic (e.g., at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume crystalline ceramic), the crystalline 10 ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 (85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the crystalline ceramic 15 collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the crystalline ceramic. Some desirable embodiments include those wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites 20 of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer (typically, less than 500 nanometers, or even less than 300, 200, or 150 nanometers; and in some embodiments, less than 100, 75, 50, 25, or 20 nanometers), and (b) is free of eutectic microstructure features. Some embodiments of 25 the present invention include those wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a non-cellular microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size of less than 1 30 micrometer (typically, less than 500 nanometers, even less than 300, 200, or 150 nanometers; and in some embodiments, less than 100, 75, 50, 25, or 20 nanometers). The ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 99, 98, 97, 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 3, 2, or 1 percent by volume amorphous material. It is also within the scope of the present invention for some embodiments to have at least one 35 crystalline phase within a specified average crystallite value and at least one (different) crystalline phase outside of a specified average crystallite value.

Some embodiments of the present invention include ceramic comprising crystalline 30 ceramic (e.g., at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume crystalline ceramic), the crystalline

ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 (65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the crystalline ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 (preferably, less than 15, 10, 5, or even 0) percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 (preferably, less than 15, 10, 5, or even 0) percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the crystalline ceramic. Some desirable embodiments include those wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer (typically, less than 500 nanometers, or even less than 300, 10 200, or 150 nanometers; and in some embodiments, less than 100, 75, 50, 25, or 20 nanometers), and (b) is free of eutectic microstructure features. Some embodiments of the present invention include those wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a non-cellular microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size of less than 1 15 micrometer (typically, less than 500 nanometers, even less than 300, 200, or 150 nanometers; and in some embodiments, less than 100, 75, 50, 25, or 20 nanometers). The ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 99, 98, 97, 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 3, 2, or 1 percent by volume amorphous material. It is also within the scope of the present invention for some embodiments to have at least one 20 crystalline phase within a specified average crystallite value and at least one (different) crystalline phase outside of a specified average crystallite value.

Some embodiments of the present invention include ceramic comprising crystalline ceramic (e.g., at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume crystalline ceramic), the crystalline ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 (65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the crystalline ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the crystalline ceramic. Some desirable embodiments include those wherein the ceramic 25 (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size of

less than 1 micrometer (typically, less than 500 nanometers, or even less than less than 300, 200, or 150 nanometers; and in some embodiments, less than 100, 75, 50, 25, or 20 nanometers), and (b) is free of eutectic microstructure features. Some embodiments of the present invention include those wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a non-cellular

5 microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer (typically, less than 500 nanometers, even less than 300, 200, or 150 nanometers; and in some embodiments, less than 100, 75, 50, 25, or 20 nanometers). The ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 99, 98, 97, 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55,

10 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 3, 2, or 1 percent by volume amorphous material. It is also within the scope of the present invention for some embodiments to have at least one crystalline phase within a specified average crystallite value and at least one (different) crystalline phase outside of a specified average crystallite value.

Some embodiments of the present invention include ceramic comprising crystalline

15 ceramic (e.g., at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume crystalline ceramic), the ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 . Some desirable embodiments include those wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2)

20 having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer (typically, less than 500 nanometers, or even less than 300, 200, or 150 nanometers; and in some embodiments, less than 100, 75, 50, 25, or 20 nanometers), and (b) is free of eutectic microstructure features. Some embodiments of the present invention include those wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a non-cellular microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a

25 complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer (typically, less than 500 nanometers, even less than 300, 200, or 150 nanometers; and in some embodiments, less than 100, 75, 50, 25, or 20 nanometers). The ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 99, 98, 97, 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 3, 2, or 1 percent by volume

30 glass. It is also within the scope of the present invention for some embodiments to have at

least one crystalline phase within a specified average crystallite value and at least one (different) crystalline phase outside of a specified average crystallite value.

Some embodiments of the present invention include ceramic comprising crystalline ceramic (e.g., at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume crystalline ceramic), the ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 (85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the ceramic. Some desirable embodiments include those wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure 5 comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex Al_2O_3 Y_2O_3) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer (typically, less than 500 nanometers, or even less than 300, 200, or 150 nanometers; and in some embodiments, less than 100, 75, 50, 25, or 20 nanometers), and (b) is free of eutectic 10 microstructure features. Some embodiments of the present invention include those comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex Al_2O_3 Y_2O_3) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer (typically, less than 500 nanometers, even less than 300, 200, or 150 nanometers; and in some embodiments, less than 100, 75, 50, 25, or 20 nanometers). The ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 99, 98, 97, 95, 15 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 3, 2, or 1 percent by volume glass. It is also within the scope of the present invention for some embodiments to have at least one crystalline phase within a specified average crystallite value and at least 20 one (different) crystalline phase outside of a specified average crystallite value.

Some embodiments of the present invention include ceramic comprising crystalline 25 ceramic (e.g., at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume crystalline ceramic), the ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 (65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the ceramic collectively 30 comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 (preferably, less than 15, 10, 5, or even 0) percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 (preferably, less than 15, 10, 5, or even 0) percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the ceramic.

Some desirable embodiments include those wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer (typically, less than 500 nanometers, or even less than 300, 200, or 150 nanometers; and in some embodiments, less than 100, 75, 50, 25, or 20 nanometers), and (b) is free of eutectic microstructure features. Some embodiments of the present invention include those wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a non-cellular microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer (typically, less than 500 nanometers, even less than 300, 200, or 150 nanometers; and in some embodiments, less than 100, 75, 50, 25, or 20 nanometers). The ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 99, 98, 97, 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 3, 2, or 1 percent by volume glass. It is also within the scope of the present invention for some embodiments to have at least one crystalline phase within a specified average crystallite value and at least one (different) crystalline phase outside of a specified average crystallite value.

Some embodiments of the present invention include ceramic comprising crystalline ceramic (e.g., at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume crystalline ceramic), the ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 (65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the ceramic. Some desirable embodiments include those wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer (typically, less than 500 nanometers, or even less than 300, 200, or 150 nanometers; and in some embodiments, less than 100, 75, 50, 25, or 20 nanometers), and (b) is free of eutectic microstructure features. Some embodiments of the present invention include those wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a non-cellular microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having

an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer (typically, less than 500 nanometers, even less than 300, 200, or 150 nanometers; and in some embodiments, less than 100, 75, 50, 25, or 20 nanometers). The ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 99, 98, 97, 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 3, 2, or 1 percent by 5 volume glass. It is also within the scope of the present invention for some embodiments to have at least one crystalline phase within a specified average crystallite value and at least one (different) crystalline phase outside of a specified average crystallite value.

Some embodiments of the present invention include glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a 10 microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size of less than 200 nanometers (150 nanometers, 100 nanometers, 75 nanometers, or even 50 nanometers) and (b) has a density of at least 90% (95%, 96%, 97%, 98%, 99%, 99.5%, or 100%) of theoretical density. Some embodiments can be free of at least one of eutectic 15 microstructure features or a non-cellular microstructure. It is also within the scope of the present invention for some embodiments to have at least one crystalline phase within a specified average crystallite value and at least one (different) crystalline phase outside of a specified average crystallite value.

Some embodiments of the present invention include glass-ceramic comprising 20 Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , herein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2), wherein none of the crystallites are greater than 200 25 nanometers (150 nanometers, 100 nanometers, 75 nanometers, or even 50 nanometers) in size and (b) has a density of at least 90% (95%, 96%, 97%, 98%, 99%, 99.5%, or 100%) of theoretical density. Some embodiments can be free of at least one of eutectic microstructure features or a non-cellular microstructure. It is also within the scope of the present invention for some embodiments to have at least one crystalline phase within a specified crystallite value and at least one (different) crystalline phase outside of a specified crystallite value.

30 Some embodiments of the present invention include glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a

microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2), wherein at least a portion of the crystallites are not greater than 150 nanometers (100 nanometers, 75 nanometers, or even 50 nanometers) in size and (b) has a density of at least 90% (95%, 96%, 97%, 98%, 99%, 99.5%, or 100%) of

5 theoretical density. Some embodiments can be free of at least one of eutectic microstructure features or a non-cellular microstructure. It is also within the scope of the present invention for some embodiments to have at least one crystalline phase within a specified crystallite value and at least one (different) crystalline phase outside of a specified crystallite value.

10 Some embodiments of the present invention include fully crystallized glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size not greater than 1 micrometer (500 nanometers, 300 nanometers, 200 nanometers, 150 nanometers, 100 nanometers, 75 nanometers, or even 50 nanometers) in size and (b) has a density of at least 90% (95%, 96%, 97%, 98%, 99%, 99.5%, or 100%) of theoretical density. Some embodiments can be free of at least one of eutectic microstructure features or a non-cellular microstructure. It is also within the scope of the present invention for some embodiments to have at least one crystalline phase within a specified average crystallite value and at least one (different) crystalline phase outside of a specified average crystallite value.

15 For ceramics according to the present invention comprising crystalline ceramic, some embodiments include those wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size of less than 200 nanometers (150 nanometers, 100 nanometers, 75 nanometers, or even 50 nanometers) and (b) has a density of at least 90% (95%, 96%, 97%, 98%, 99%, 99.5%, or 100%) of theoretical density. Some embodiments can be free of at least one of eutectic microstructure features or a non-cellular microstructure. It is also within the scope of the present invention for 20 some embodiments to have at least one crystalline phase within a specified average crystallite value.

crystallite value and at least one (different) crystalline phase outside of a specified average crystallite value.

For ceramics according to the present invention comprising crystalline ceramic, some embodiments include those comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2), wherein none of the crystallites are greater than 200 nanometers (150 nanometers, 100 nanometers, 75 nanometers, or even 50 nanometers) in size and (b) has a density of at least 90% (95%, 96%, 97%, 98%, 99%, 99.5%, or 100%) of theoretical density. Some 10 embodiments can be free of at least one of eutectic microstructure features or a non-cellular microstructure. It is also within the scope of the present invention for some embodiments to have at least one crystalline phase within a specified crystallite value and at least one (different) crystalline phase outside of a specified crystallite value.

For ceramics according to the present invention comprising crystalline ceramic, 15 some embodiments include those comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2), wherein at least a portion of the crystallites are not greater than 150 nanometers (100 nanometers, 75 nanometers, or even 50 nanometers) in size and (b) has a density of at least 20 90% (95%, 96%, 97%, 98%, 99%, 99.5%, or 100%) of theoretical density. Some embodiments can be free of at least one of eutectic microstructure features or a non-cellular microstructure. It is also within the scope of the present invention for some embodiments to have at least one crystalline phase within a specified crystallite value and at least one (different) crystalline phase outside of a specified crystallite value.

For ceramics according to the present invention comprising crystalline ceramic, 25 some embodiments include those comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites (e.g., crystallites of a complex metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot \text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$) and/or ZrO_2) having an average crystallite size not greater than 1 micrometer (500 nanometers, 300 nanometers, 30 200 nanometers, 150 nanometers, 100 nanometers, 75 nanometers, or even 50 nanometers) in size and (b) has a density of at least 90% (95%, 96%, 97%, 98%, 99%, 99.5%, or 100%)

of theoretical density. Some embodiments can be free of at least one of eutectic microstructure features or a non-cellular microstructure. It is also within the scope of the present invention for some embodiments to have at least one crystalline phase within a specified crystallite value and at least one (different) crystalline phase outside of a 5 specified average value.

Some embodiments of the present invention include a glass-ceramic comprising alpha Al_2O_3 , crystalline ZrO_2 , and a first complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, wherein at least one of the alpha Al_2O_3 , the crystalline ZrO_2 , or the first complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$ has an average crystal size not greater than 200 nanometers (in some embodiments preferably, not greater than 75 10 nanometers, or even not greater than 50 nanometers), and wherein the abrasive particles have a density of at least 90 (in some embodiments at least 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 99.5, or even 100) percent of theoretical density. In some embodiments, preferably at least 75 (80, 85, 90, 95, 97, or even at least 99) percent by number of the crystal sizes are not greater than 200 nanometers. In some embodiments preferably, the glass-ceramic further 15 comprises a second, different complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$. In some embodiments preferably, the glass-ceramic further comprises a complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{REO}$.

Some embodiments of the present invention a glass-ceramic comprising a first complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, a second, different complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, and crystalline ZrO_2 , wherein for at least one of the first complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, the second complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, 20 or the crystalline ZrO_2 , at least 90 (in some embodiments preferably, 95, or even 100) percent by number of the crystal sizes thereof are not greater than 200 nanometers (in some embodiments preferably, not greater than 100 nanometers, not greater than 75 nanometers, or even not greater than 50 nanometers), and wherein the abrasive particles have a density of at least 90 (in some embodiments at least 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 99.5, or even 100) percent of theoretical density. In some embodiments preferably, the glass- 25 ceramic further comprises a second, different complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$. In some embodiments preferably, the glass-ceramic particles further comprises a complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{REO}$.

Some embodiments of the present invention include a glass-ceramic comprising a first complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, a second, different complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, and crystalline ZrO_2 , 30 wherein at least one of the first complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, the second, different complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, or the crystalline ZrO_2 has an average crystal size not greater than 100

nanometers (in some embodiments preferably, not greater than 75 nanometers, or even not greater than 50 nanometers), and wherein the abrasive particles have a density of at least 90 (in some embodiments at least 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 99.5, or even 100) percent of theoretical density. In some embodiments, preferably at least 75 (80, 85, 90, 95, 97, or even at least 99) percent by number of the crystal sizes are not greater than 200 nanometers. In some embodiments preferably, the glass-ceramic further comprises a second, different complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$. In some embodiments preferably, the glass-ceramic further comprises a complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{REO}$.

Some embodiments of the present invention include a glass-ceramic comprising a first complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, a second, different complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, and crystalline ZrO_2 , wherein for at least one of the first complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, the second, different complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, or the crystalline ZrO_2 , at least 90 (in some embodiments preferably, 95, or even 100) percent by number of the crystal sizes thereof are not greater than 200 nanometers (in some embodiments preferably, not greater than 100 nanometers, not greater than 75 nanometers, or even not greater 50 nanometers), and wherein the abrasive particles have a density of at least 90 (in some embodiments at least 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 99.5, or even 100) percent of theoretical density. In some embodiments preferably, the glass-ceramic further comprises a complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{REO}$.

In another aspect, the present invention provides methods for making ceramics according to the present invention. For example, the present invention provides a method for making ceramic according to the present invention comprising material (e.g., glass, or glass and crystalline ceramic(including glass-ceramic)), the method comprising:

melting sources of at least Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 to provide a melt; and

cooling the melt to provide ceramic comprising material.

It is also within the scope of the present invention to heat-treat certain amorphous material or ceramics comprising amorphous material described herein to a ceramic comprising crystalline ceramic (including glass-ceramic) (i.e., such that at least a portion of the amorphous material is converted to a glass-ceramic).

In this application:

“amorphous material” refers to material derived from a melt and/or a vapor phase that lacks any long range crystal structure as determined by X-ray diffraction and/or has an exothermic peak corresponding to the crystallization of the amorphous material as 5 determined by a DTA (differential thermal analysis) as determined by the test described herein entitled “Differential Thermal Analysis”;

“ceramic” includes glass, crystalline ceramic, glass-ceramic, and combinations thereof;

“complex metal oxide” refers to a metal oxide comprising two or more different 10 metal elements and oxygen (e.g., CeAl₁₁O₁₈, Dy₃Al₅O₁₂, MgAl₂O₄, and Y₃Al₅O₁₂);

“complex Al₂O₃ · metal oxide” refers to a complex metal oxide comprising, on a theoretical oxide basis, Al₂O₃ and one or more metal elements other than Al (e.g., CeAl₁₁O₁₈, Dy₃Al₅O₁₂, MgAl₂O₄, and Y₃Al₅O₁₂);

“complex Al₂O₃ · Y₂O₃” refers to a complex metal oxide comprising, on a 15 theoretical oxide basis, Al₂O₃ and Y₂O₃ (e.g., Y₃Al₅O₁₂);

“complex Al₂O₃ · REO” refers to a complex metal oxide comprising, on a theoretical oxide basis, Al₂O₃ and rare earth oxide (e.g., CeAl₁₁O₁₈ and Dy₃Al₅O₁₂);

“glass” refers to amorphous material exhibiting a glass transition temperature;

“glass-ceramic” refers to ceramics comprising crystals formed by heat-treating 20 amorphous material;

“T_g” refers to the glass transition temperature as determined by the test described herein entitled “Differential Thermal Analysis”;

“T_x” refers to the crystallization temperature as determined by the test described herein entitled “Differential Thermal Analysis”;

“rare earth oxides” refers to cerium oxide (e.g., CeO₂), dysprosium oxide (e.g., 25 Dy₂O₃), erbium oxide (e.g., Er₂O₃), europium oxide (e.g., Eu₂O₃), gadolinium (e.g., Gd₂O₃), holmium oxide (e.g., Ho₂O₃), lanthanum oxide (e.g., La₂O₃), lutetium oxide (e.g., Lu₂O₃), neodymium oxide (e.g., Nd₂O₃), praseodymium oxide (e.g., Pr₆O₁₁), samarium oxide (e.g., Sm₂O₃), terbium (e.g., Tb₂O₃), thorium oxide (e.g., Th₄O₇), thulium (e.g., 30 Tm₂O₃), and ytterbium oxide (e.g., Yb₂O₃), and combinations thereof;

“REO” refers to rare earth oxide(s).

Further, it is understood herein that unless it is stated that a metal oxide (e.g., Al₂O₃, complex Al₂O₃·metal oxide, etc.) is crystalline, for example, in a glass-ceramic, it may be amorphous, crystalline, or portions amorphous and portions crystalline. For example if a glass-ceramic comprises Al₂O₃ and ZrO₂, the Al₂O₃ and ZrO₂ may each be in an amorphous state, crystalline state, or portions in an amorphous state and portions in a crystalline state, or even as a reaction product with another metal oxide(s) (e.g., unless it is stated that, for example, Al₂O₃ is present as crystalline Al₂O₃ or a specific crystalline phase of Al₂O₃ (e.g., alpha Al₂O₃), it may be present as crystalline Al₂O₃ and/or as part of one or more crystalline complex Al₂O₃·metal oxides.

10 Further, it is understood that glass-ceramics formed by heating amorphous material not exhibiting a T_g may not actually comprise glass, but rather may comprise the crystals and amorphous material that does not exhibiting a T_g.

15 Ceramics articles according to the present invention can be made, formed as, or converted into glass beads (e.g., beads having diameters of at least 1 micrometers, 5 micrometers, 10 micrometers, 25 micrometers, 50 micrometers, 100 micrometers, 150 micrometers, 250 micrometers, 500 micrometers, 750 micrometers, 1 mm, 5 mm, or even at least 10 mm), plates, fibers, particles, and coatings (e.g., thin coatings). The glass beads can be useful, for example, in reflective devices such as retroreflective sheeting, alphanumeric plates, and pavement markings. The particles and fibers are useful, for 20 example, as thermal insulation, filler, or reinforcing material in composites (e.g., ceramic, metal, or polymeric matrix composites). The thin coatings can be useful, for example, as protective coatings in applications involving wear, as well as for thermal management. Examples of articles according of the present invention include kitchenware (e.g., plates), dental brackets, and reinforcing fibers, cutting tool inserts, abrasive materials, and 25 structural components of gas engines, (e.g., valves and bearings). Other articles include those having a protective coating of ceramic on the outer surface of a body or other substrate. Certain ceramic particles according to the present invention can be particularly useful as abrasive particles. The abrasive particles can be incorporated into an abrasive article, or used in loose form.

30 Abrasive articles according to the present invention comprise binder and a plurality of abrasive particles, wherein at least a portion of the abrasive particles are the abrasive

particles according to the present invention. Exemplary abrasive products include coated abrasive articles, bonded abrasive articles (e.g., wheels), non-woven abrasive articles, and abrasive brushes. Coated abrasive articles typically comprise a backing having first and second, opposed major surfaces, and wherein the binder and the plurality of abrasive particles form an abrasive layer on at least a portion of the first major surface.

5 In some embodiments, preferably, at least 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, or even 100 percent by weight of the abrasive particles in an abrasive article are the abrasive particles according to the present invention, based on the total weight of the abrasive particles in the abrasive article.

10 Abrasive particles are usually graded to a given particle size distribution before use. Such distributions typically have a range of particle sizes, from coarse particles fine particles. In the abrasive art this range is sometimes referred to as a “coarse”, “control” and “fine” fractions. Abrasive particles graded according to industry accepted grading standards specify the particle size distribution for each nominal grade within numerical 15 limits. Such industry accepted grading standards (i.e., specified nominal grades) include those known as the American National Standards Institute, Inc. (ANSI) standards, Federation of European Producers of Abrasive Products (FEPA) standards, and Japanese Industrial Standard (JIS) standards. In one aspect, the present invention provides a plurality of abrasive particles having a specified nominal grade, wherein at least a portion 20 of the plurality of abrasive particles are abrasive particles according to the present invention. In some embodiments, preferably, at least 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, or even 100 percent by weight of the plurality of abrasive particles are the abrasive particles according to the present invention, based on the total weight of the plurality of abrasive particles.

25 The present invention also provides a method of abrading a surface, the method comprising:

contacting abrasive particles according to the present invention with a surface of a workpiece; and

30 moving at least one of the abrasive particles according to the present invention or the contacted surface to abrade at least a portion of the surface with at least one of the abrasive particles according to the present invention.

Brief Description of the Drawing

FIG. 1 is a SEM photomicrograph of polished cross-sections of heat-treated Example 1 material;

5 FIG. 2 is a DTA curve of Example 1 material;

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary cross-sectional schematic view of a coated abrasive article including abrasive particles according to the present invention;

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of a bonded abrasive article including abrasive particles according to the present invention; and

10 FIG. 5 is an enlarged schematic view of a nonwoven abrasive article including abrasive particles according to the present invention;

Detailed Description

In general, ceramics according to the present invention can be made by heating 15 (including in a flame) the appropriate metal oxide sources to form a melt, desirably a homogenous melt, and then rapidly cooling the melt to provide amorphous materials or ceramic comprising amorphous materials. Amorphous materials and ceramics comprising amorphous materials according to the present invention can be made, for example, by heating (including in a flame) the appropriate metal oxide sources to form a melt, desirably 20 a homogenous melt, and then rapidly cooling the melt to provide amorphous material.

Some embodiments of amorphous materials can be made, for example, by melting the metal oxide sources in any suitable furnace (e.g., an inductive heated furnace, a gas-fired furnace, or an electrical furnace), or, for example, in a plasma. The resulting melt is cooled (e.g., discharging the melt into a cooling media (e.g., high velocity air jets, liquids, 25 metal plates (including chilled metal plates), metal rolls (including chilled metal rolls), metal balls (including chilled metal balls), and the like)).

In one method, amorphous materials and ceramic comprising amorphous materials according to the present invention can be made utilizing flame fusion as disclosed, for example, in U.S. Pat. No. 6,254,981 (Castle). In this method, the metal oxide sources 30 materials are fed (e.g., in the form of particles, sometimes referred to as "feed particles") directly into a burner (e.g., a methane-air burner, an acetylene-oxygen burner, a hydrogen-

oxygen burner, and like), and then quenched, for example, in water, cooling oil, air, or the like. Feed particles can be formed, for example, by grinding, agglomerating (e.g., spray-drying), melting, or sintering the metal oxide sources. The size of feed particles fed into the flame generally determine the size of the resulting amorphous material comprising particles.

5 Some embodiments of amorphous materials can also be obtained by other techniques, such as: laser spin melt with free fall cooling, Taylor wire technique, plasmatron technique, hammer and anvil technique, centrifugal quenching, air gun splat cooling, single roller and twin roller quenching, roller-plate quenching and pendant drop 10 melt extraction (see, e.g., Rapid Solidification of Ceramics, Brockway et. al, Metals And Ceramics Information Center, A Department of Defense Information Analysis Center, Columbus, OH, January, 1984). Some embodiments of amorphous materials may also be obtained by other techniques, such as: thermal (including flame or laser or plasma-assisted) pyrolysis of suitable precursors, physical vapor synthesis (PVS) of metal 15 precursors and mechanochemical processing.

Useful Al_2O_3 - Y_2O_3 - ZrO_2 / HfO_2 formulations include those at or near a eutectic composition(s) (e.g., ternary eutectic compositions). In addition to Al_2O_3 - Y_2O_3 - ZrO_2 / HfO_2 compositions disclosed herein, other such compositions, including quaternary and other higher order eutectic compositions, may be apparent to those skilled in the art 20 after reviewing the present disclosure.

Sources, including commercial sources, of (on a theoretical oxide basis) Al_2O_3 include bauxite (including both natural occurring bauxite and synthetically produced bauxite), calcined bauxite, hydrated aluminas (e.g., boehmite, and gibbsite), aluminum, Bayer process alumina, aluminum ore, gamma alumina, alpha alumina, aluminum salts, 25 aluminum nitrates, and combinations thereof. The Al_2O_3 source may contain, or only provide, Al_2O_3 . Alternatively, the Al_2O_3 source may contain, or provide Al_2O_3 , as well as one or more metal oxides other than Al_2O_3 (including materials of or containing complex Al_2O_3 •metal oxides (e.g., $\text{Dy}_3\text{Al}_5\text{O}_{12}$, $\text{Y}_3\text{Al}_5\text{O}_{12}$, $\text{CeAl}_{11}\text{O}_{18}$, etc.)).

Sources, including commercial sources, of (on a theoretical oxide basis) Y_2O_3 30 include yttrium oxide powders, yttrium, yttrium-containing ores, and yttrium salts (e.g., yttrium carbonates, nitrates, chlorides, hydroxides, and combinations thereof). The Y_2O_3

source may contain, or only provide, Y_2O_3 . Alternatively, the Y_2O_3 source may contain, or provide Y_2O_3 , as well as one or more metal oxides other than Y_2O_3 (including materials of or containing complex Y_2O_3 •metal oxides (e.g., $Y_3Al_5O_{12}$)).

Sources, including commercial sources, of (on a theoretical oxide basis) ZrO_2

5 include zirconium oxide powders, zircon sand, zirconium, zirconium-containing ores, and zirconium salts (e.g., zirconium carbonates, acetates, nitrates, chlorides, hydroxides, and combinations thereof). In addition, or alternatively, the ZrO_2 source may contain, or provide ZrO_2 , as well as other metal oxides such as hafnia. Sources, including commercial sources, of (on a theoretical oxide basis) HfO_2 include hafnium oxide powders, hafnium, hafnium-containing ores, and hafnium salts. In addition, or alternatively, the HfO_2 source 10 may contain, or provide HfO_2 , as well as other metal oxides such as ZrO_2 .

15 Optionally, ceramics according to the present invention further comprise other oxide metal oxides (i.e., metal oxides other than Al_2O_3 , rare earth oxide(s), and ZrO_2/HfO_2). Other useful metal oxide may also include, on a theoretical oxide basis, BaO , CaO , Cr_2O_3 , CoO , Fe_2O_3 , GeO_2 , Li_2O , MgO , MnO , NiO , Na_2O , Sc_2O_3 , SrO , TiO_2 , ZnO , and combinations thereof. Sources, including commercial sources, include the oxides themselves, complex oxides, ores, carbonates, acetates, nitrates, chlorides, hydroxides, etc. These metal oxides are added to modify a physical property of the resulting ceramic and/or improve processing. These metal oxides are typically are added anywhere from 0 to 50% 20 by weight, in some embodiments preferably 0 to 25% by weight and more preferably 0 to 50% by weight of the ceramic material depending, for example, upon the desired property.

25 In some embodiments, it may be advantageous for at least a portion of a metal oxide source (in some embodiments, preferably, 10 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, or even 50, percent by weight) to be obtained by adding particulate, metallic material comprising at least one of a metal (e.g., Al , Ca , Cu , Cr , Fe , Li , Mg , Ni , Ag , Ti , Zr , and combinations thereof), M , that has a negative enthalpy of oxide formation or an alloy thereof to the melt, or otherwise metal them with the other raw materials. Although not wanting to be bound by theory, it is believed that the heat resulting from the exothermic reaction associated 30 with the oxidation of the metal is beneficial in the formation of a homogeneous melt and resulting amorphous material. For example, it is believed that the additional heat generated by the oxidation reaction within the raw material eliminates or minimizes

insufficient heat transfer, and hence facilitates formation and homogeneity of the melt, particularly when forming amorphous particles with x, y, and z dimensions over 150 micrometers. It is also believed that the availability of the additional heat aids in driving various chemical reactions and physical processes (e.g., densification, and spherodization) 5 to completion. Further, it is believed for some embodiments, the presence of the additional heat generated by the oxidation reaction actually enables the formation of a melt, which otherwise is difficult or otherwise not practical due to high melting point of the materials. Further, the presence of the additional heat generated by the oxidation reaction actually enables the formation of amorphous material that otherwise could not be 10 made, or could not be made in the desired size range. Another advantage of the invention include, in forming the amorphous materials, that many of the chemical and physical processes such as melting, densification and spherodizing can be achieved in a short time, so that very high quench rates be can achieved. For additional details, see copending 15 application having U.S. Serial No. _____ (Attorney Docket No. 56931US007), filed the same date as the instant application.

The addition of certain metal oxides may alter the properties and/or crystalline structure or microstructure of ceramics according to the present invention, as well as the processing of the raw materials and intermediates in making the ceramic. For example, oxide additions such as MgO, CaO, Li₂O, and Na₂O have been observed to alter both the 20 T_g and T_x (wherein T_x is the crystallization temperature) of glass. Although not wishing to be bound by theory, it is believed that such additions influence glass formation. Further, for example, such oxide additions may decrease the melting temperature of the overall system (i.e., drive the system toward lower melting eutectic), and ease of glass-formation. Complex eutectics in multi component systems (quaternary, etc.) may result in better 25 glass-forming ability. The viscosity of the liquid melt and viscosity of the glass in its' "working" range may also be affected by the addition of metal oxides other than Al₂O₃, Y₂O₃, and ZrO₂/HfO₂ (such as MgO, CaO, Li₂O, and Na₂O).

Typically, amorphous materials and the glass-ceramics according to the present invention have x, y, and z dimensions each perpendicular to each other, and wherein each 30 of the x, y, and z dimensions is at least 10 micrometers. In some embodiments, the x, y, and z dimensions is at least 30 micrometers, 35 micrometers, 40 micrometers, 45

micrometers, 50 micrometers, 75 micrometers, 100 micrometers, 150 micrometers, 200 micrometers, 250 micrometers, 500 micrometers, 1000 micrometers, 2000 micrometers, 2500 micrometers, 1mm, 5 mm, or even at least 10 mm. The x, y, and z dimensions of a material are determined either visually or using microscopy, depending on the magnitude 5 of the dimensions. The reported z dimension is, for example, the diameter of a sphere, the thickness of a coating, or the longest length of a prismatic shape. Crystallization of amorphous material and ceramic comprising the amorphous material to form glass-ceramics may also be affected by the additions of materials. For example, certain metals, metal oxides (e.g., titanates and zirconates), and fluorides, for example, may act as 10 nucleation agents resulting in beneficial heterogeneous nucleation of crystals. Also, addition of some oxides may change nature of metastable phases devitrifying from the glass upon reheating. In another aspect, for ceramics according to the present invention comprising crystalline ZrO₂, it may be desirable to add metal oxides (e.g., TiO₂, CaO, and MgO) that are known to stabilize tetragonal/cubic form of ZrO₂. Y₂O₃ is also known to 15 stabilize tetragonal/cubic form of ZrO₂.

The particular selection of metal oxide sources and other additives for making ceramics according to the present invention typically takes into account, for example, the desired composition and microstructure of the resulting crystalline containing ceramics, the desired degree of crystallinity, if any, the desired physical properties (e.g., hardness or 20 toughness) of the resulting ceramics, avoiding or minimizing the presence of undesirable impurities, the desired characteristics of the resulting ceramics, and/or the particular process (including equipment and any purification of the raw materials before and/or during fusion and/or solidification) being used to prepare the ceramics.

In some instances, it may be preferred to incorporate limited amounts of metal 25 oxides selected from the group consisting of: Na₂O, P₂O₅, SiO₂, TeO₂, V₂O₃, and combinations thereof. Sources, including commercial sources, include the oxides themselves, complex oxides, ores, carbonates, acetates, nitrates, chlorides, hydroxides, etc. These metal oxides may be added, for example, to modify a physical property of the resulting abrasive particles and/or improve processing. These metal oxides when used are 30 typically added from greater than 0 to 20% by weight, preferably greater than 0 to 5%

by weight and more preferably greater than 0 to 2% by weight of the glass-ceramic depending, for example, upon the desired property.

The metal oxide sources and other additives can be in any form suitable to the process and equipment being used to make ceramics according to the present invention.

5 The raw materials can be melted and quenched using techniques and equipment known in the art for making oxide glasses and amorphous metals. Desirable cooling rates include those of 50K/s and greater. Cooling techniques known in the art include roll-chilling. Roll-chilling can be carried out, for example, by melting the metal oxide sources at a temperature typically 20-200°C higher than the melting point, and cooling/quenching the

10 melt by spraying it under high pressure (e.g., using a gas such as air, argon, nitrogen or the like) onto a high-speed rotary roll(s). Typically, the rolls are made of metal and are water cooled. Metal book molds may also be useful for cooling/quenching the melt.

Other techniques for forming melts, cooling/quenching melts, and/or otherwise forming glass include vapor phase quenching, plasma spraying, melt-extraction, and gas or centrifugal atomization. Vapor phase quenching can be carried out, for example, by sputtering, wherein the metal alloys or metal oxide sources are formed into a sputtering target(s) which are used. The target is fixed at a predetermined position in a sputtering apparatus, and a substrate(s) to be coated is placed at a position opposing the target(s). Typical pressures of 10^{-3} torr of oxygen gas and Ar gas, discharge is generated between the target(s) and a substrate(s), and Ar or oxygen ions collide against the target to start reaction sputtering, thereby depositing a film of composition on the substrate. For additional details regarding plasma spraying, see, for example, copending application having U.S. Serial No. _____ (Attorney Docket No. 57980US002), filed the same date as the instant application.

25 Gas atomization involves melting feed particles to convert them to melt. A thin stream of such melt is atomized through contact with a disruptive air jet (i.e., the stream is divided into fine droplets). The resulting substantially discrete, generally ellipsoidal glass particles (e.g., beads) are then recovered. Examples of bead sizes include those having a diameter in a range of about 5 micrometers to about 3 mm. Melt-extraction can be carried

30 out, for example, as disclosed in U.S. Pat. 5,605,870 (Strom-Olsen et al.). Containerless glass forming techniques utilizing laser beam heating as disclosed, for example, in PCT

application having Publication No. WO 01/27046 A1, published April 4, 2001, may also be useful in making glass according to the present invention.

The cooling rate is believed to affect the properties of the quenched amorphous material. For instance, glass transition temperature, density and other properties of glass 5 typically change with cooling rates.

Rapid cooling may also be conducted under controlled atmospheres, such as a reducing, neutral, or oxidizing environment to maintain and/or influence the desired oxidation states, etc. during cooling. The atmosphere can also influence glass formation by influencing crystallization kinetics from undercooled liquid. For example, larger 10 undercooling of Al_2O_3 melts without crystallization has been reported in argon atmosphere as compared to that in air.

The microstructure or phase composition (glassy/amorphous/crystalline) of a material can be determined in a number of ways. Various information can be obtained 15 using optical microscopy, electron microscopy, differential thermal analysis (DTA), and x-ray diffraction (XRD), for example.

Using optical microscopy, amorphous material is typically predominantly transparent due to the lack of light scattering centers such as crystal boundaries, while crystalline material shows a crystalline structure and is opaque due to light scattering effects.

20 A percent amorphous yield can be calculated for beads using a -100+120 mesh size fraction (i.e., the fraction collected between 150-micrometer opening size and 125-micrometer opening size screens). The measurements are done in the following manner. A single layer of beads is spread out upon a glass slide. The beads are observed using an optical microscope. Using the crosshairs in the optical microscope eyepiece as a guide, 25 beads that lay along a straight line are counted either amorphous or crystalline depending on their optical clarity. A total of 500 beads are counted and a percent amorphous yield is determined by the amount of amorphous beads divided by total beads counted.

Using DTA, the material is classified as amorphous if the corresponding DTA trace 30 of the material contains an exothermic crystallization event (T_x). If the same trace also contains an endothermic event (T_g) at a temperature lower than T_x it is considered to

consist of a glass phase. If the DTA trace of the material contains no such events, it is considered to contain crystalline phases.

Differential thermal analysis (DTA) can be conducted using the following method. DTA runs can be made (using an instrument such as that obtained from Netzsch 5 Instruments, Selb, Germany under the trade designation “NETZSCH STA 409 DTA/TGA”) using a -140+170 mesh size fraction (i.e., the fraction collected between 105-micrometer opening size and 90-micrometer opening size screens). An amount of each screened sample (typically about 400 milligrams (mg)) is placed in a 100-microliter Al₂O₃ sample holder. Each sample is heated in static air at a rate of 10°C/minute from room 10 temperature (about 25°C) to 1100°C.

Using powder x-ray diffraction, XRD, (using an x-ray diffractometer such as that obtained under the trade designation “PHILLIPS XRG 3100” from Phillips, Mahwah, NJ, with copper K α 1 radiation of 1.54050 Angstrom) the phases present in a material can be determined by comparing the peaks present in the XRD trace of the crystallized material to 15 XRD patterns of crystalline phases provided in JCPDS (Joint Committee on Powder Diffraction Standards) databases, published by International Center for Diffraction Data. Furthermore, an XRD can be used qualitatively to determine types of phases. The presence of a broad diffused intensity peak is taken as an indication of the amorphous nature of a material. The existence of both a broad peak and well-defined peaks is taken as 20 an indication of existence of crystalline matter within an amorphous matrix. The initially formed amorphous material or ceramic (including glass prior to crystallization) may be larger in size than that desired. The amorphous material or ceramic can be converted into smaller pieces using crushing and/or comminuting techniques known in the art, including roll crushing, canary milling, jaw crushing, hammer milling, ball milling, jet milling, 25 impact crushing, and the like. In some instances, it is desired to have two or multiple crushing steps. For example, after the ceramic is formed (solidified), it may be in the form of larger than desired. The first crushing step may involve crushing these relatively large masses or “chunks” to form smaller pieces. This crushing of these chunks may be accomplished with a hammer mill, impact crusher or jaw crusher. These smaller pieces 30 may then be subsequently crushed to produce the desired particle size distribution. In order to produce the desired particle size distribution (sometimes referred to as grit size or

grade), it may be necessary to perform multiple crushing steps. In general the crushing conditions are optimized to achieve the desired particle shape(s) and particle size distribution. Resulting particles that are of the desired size may be recrushed if they are too large, or “recycled” and used as a raw material for re-melting if they are too small.

5 The shape of particles can depend, for example, on the composition and/or microstructure of the ceramic, the geometry in which it was cooled, and the manner in which the ceramic is crushed (i.e., the crushing technique used). In general, where a “blocky” shape is preferred, more energy may be employed to achieve this shape. Conversely, where a “sharp” shape is preferred, less energy may be employed to achieve 10 this shape. The crushing technique may also be changed to achieve different desired shapes. For some abrasive particle an average aspect ratio ranging from 1:1 to 5:1 is typically desired, and in some embodiments 1.25:1 to 3:1, or even 1.5:1 to 2.5:1.

15 It is also within the scope of the present invention, for example, to directly form articles in desired shapes. For example, desired articles may be formed (including molded) by pouring or forming the melt into a mold.

Surprisingly, it was found that ceramics of present invention could be obtained without limitations in dimensions. This was found to be possible through a coalescing step performed at temperatures above glass transition temperature. This coalescing step in essence forms a larger sized body from two or more smaller particles. For instance, as 20 evident from FIG. 2, glass of present invention undergoes glass transition (T_g) before significant crystallization occurs (T_x) as evidenced by the existence of endotherm (T_g) at lower temperature than exotherm (T_x). For example, ceramic (including glass prior to crystallization), may also be provided by heating, for example, particles comprising the amorphous material, and/or fibers, etc. above the T_g such that the particles, etc. coalesce 25 to form a shape and cooling the coalesced shape. The temperature and pressure used for coalescing may depend, for example, upon composition of the amorphous material and the desired density of the resulting material. The temperature should be below glass crystallization temperature, and for glasses, greater than the glass transition temperature. In certain embodiments, the heating is conducted at at least one temperature in a range of 30 about 850°C to about 1100°C (in some embodiments, preferably 900°C to 1000°C). Typically, the amorphous material is under pressure (e.g., greater than zero to 1 GPa or

more) during coalescence to aid the coalescence of the amorphous material. In one embodiment, a charge of the particles, etc. is placed into a die and hot-pressing is performed at temperatures above glass transition where viscous flow of glass leads to coalescence into a relatively large part. Examples of typical coalescing techniques 5 include hot pressing, hot isostatic pressure, hot extrusion and the like. For example, amorphous material comprising particles (obtained, for example, by crushing) (including beads and microspheres), fibers, etc. may be formed into a larger particle size. Typically, it is generally preferred to cool the resulting coalesced body before further heat treatment. After heat treatment if so desired, the coalesced body may be crushed to smaller particle 10 sizes or a desired particle size distribution.

It is also within the scope of the present invention to conduct additional heat-treatment to further improve desirable properties of the material. For example, hot-isostatic pressing may be conducted (e.g., at temperatures from about 900°C to about 15 1400°C) to remove residual porosity, increasing the density of the material. Optionally, the resulting, coalesced article can be heat-treated to provide glass-ceramic, crystalline ceramic, or ceramic otherwise comprising crystalline ceramic.

Coalescing of the amorphous material and/or glass-ceramic (e.g., particles) may also be accomplished by a variety of methods, including pressureless or pressure sintering 20 (e.g., sintering, plasma assisted sintering, hot pressing, HIPing, hot forging, hot extrusion, etc.).

Heat-treatment can be carried out in any of a variety of ways, including those known in the art for heat-treating glass to provide glass-ceramics. For example, heat-treatment can be conducted in batches, for example, using resistive, inductively or gas 25 heated furnaces. Alternatively, for example, heat-treatment can be conducted continuously, for example, using rotary kilns. In the case of a rotary kiln, the material is fed directly into a kiln operating at the elevated temperature. The time at the elevated temperature may range from a few seconds (in some embodiments even less than 5 seconds) to a few minutes to several hours. The temperature may range anywhere from 30 900°C to 1600°C, typically between 1200°C to 1500°C. It is also within the scope of the present invention to perform some of the heat-treatment in batches (e.g., for the nucleation

step) and another continuously (e.g., for the crystal growth step and to achieve the desired density). For the nucleation step, the temperature typically ranges between about 900°C to about 1100°C, in some embodiments, preferably in a range from about 925°C to about 1050°C. Likewise for the density step, the temperature typically is in a range from about 5 1100°C to about 1600°C, in some embodiments, preferably in a range from about 1200°C to about 1500°C. This heat treatment may occur, for example, by feeding the material directly into a furnace at the elevated temperature. Alternatively, for example, the material may be feed into a furnace at a much lower temperature (e.g., room temperature) and then heated to desired temperature at a predetermined heating rate. It is within the scope of the 10 present invention to conduct heat-treatment in an atmosphere other than air. In some cases it might be even desirable to heat-treat in a reducing atmosphere(s). Also, for, example, it may be desirable to heat-treat under gas pressure as in, for example, hot-isostatic press, or in gas pressure furnace. It is within the scope of the present invention to convert (e.g., crush) the resulting article or heat-treated article to provide particles (e.g., abrasive 15 particles).

The amorphous material is heat-treated to at least partially crystallize the amorphous material to provide glass-ceramic. The heat-treatment of certain glasses to form glass-ceramics is well known in the art. The heating conditions to nucleate and grow glass-ceramics are known for a variety of glasses. Alternatively, one skilled in the art can 20 determine the appropriate conditions from a Time-Temperature-Transformation (TTT) study of the glass using techniques known in the art. One skilled in the art, after reading the disclosure of the present invention should be able to provide TTT curves for glasses according to the present invention, determine the appropriate nucleation and/or crystal growth conditions to provide glass-ceramics according to the present invention.

25 Typically, glass-ceramics are stronger than the amorphous materials from which they are formed. Hence, the strength of the material may be adjusted, for example, by the degree to which the amorphous material is converted to crystalline ceramic phase(s). Alternatively, or in addition, the strength of the material may also be affected, for example, by the number of nucleation sites created, which may in turn be used to affect the number, 30 and in turn the size of the crystals of the crystalline phase(s). For additional details

regarding forming glass-ceramics, see, for example Glass-Ceramics, P.W. McMillan, Academic Press, Inc., 2nd edition, 1979.

For example, during heat-treatment of some exemplary amorphous materials for making glass-ceramics according to present invention, formation of phases such as 5 $\text{La}_2\text{Zr}_2\text{O}_7$, and, if ZrO_2 is present, cubic/tetragonal ZrO_2 , in some cases monoclinic ZrO_2 , have been observed at temperatures above about 900°C. Although not wanting to be bound by theory, it is believed that zirconia-related phases are the first phases to nucleate from the amorphous material. Formation of Al_2O_3 , ReAlO_3 (wherein Re is at least one rare earth cation), $\text{ReAl}_{11}\text{O}_{18}$, $\text{Re}_3\text{Al}_5\text{O}_{12}$, $\text{Y}_3\text{Al}_5\text{O}_{12}$, etc. phases are believed to generally 10 occur at temperatures above about 925°C. Typically, crystallite size during this nucleation step is on order of nanometers. For example, crystals as small as 10-15 nanometers have been observed. For at least some embodiments, heat-treatment at about 1300°C for about 15 1 hour provides a full crystallization. In generally, heat-treatment times for each of the nucleation and crystal growth steps may range of a few seconds (in some embodiments even less than 5 seconds) to several minutes to an hour or more.

Examples of crystalline phases which may be present in ceramics according to the present invention include: complex Al_2O_3 •metal oxide(s) (e.g., complex Al_2O_3 •REO (e.g., ReAlO_3 (e.g., GdAlO_3 LaAlO_3), $\text{ReAl}_{11}\text{O}_{18}$ (e.g., $\text{LaAl}_{11}\text{O}_{18}$), and $\text{Re}_3\text{Al}_5\text{O}_{12}$ (e.g., $\text{Dy}_3\text{Al}_5\text{O}_{12}$)), complex Al_2O_3 • Y_2O_3 (e.g., $\text{Y}_3\text{Al}_5\text{O}_{12}$), and complex ZrO_2 •REO (e.g., 20 $\text{La}_2\text{Zr}_2\text{O}_7$)), Al_2O_3 (e.g., α - Al_2O_3), and ZrO_2 (e.g., cubic ZrO_2 and tetragonal ZrO_2).

It is also within the scope of the present invention to substitute a portion of the yttrium and/or aluminum cations in a complex Al_2O_3 •metal oxide (e.g., complex 25 Al_2O_3 • Y_2O_3 (e.g., yttrium aluminate exhibiting a garnet crystal structure)) with other cations. For example, a portion of the Al cations in a complex Al_2O_3 • Y_2O_3 may be substituted with at least one cation of an element selected from the group consisting of: Cr, Ti, Sc, Fe, Mg, Ca, Si, Co, and combinations thereof. For example, a portion of the Y cations in a complex Al_2O_3 • Y_2O_3 may be substituted with at least one cation of an element selected from the group consisting of: Ce, Dy, Er, Eu, Gd, Ho, La, Lu, Nd, Pr, Sm, Th, Tm, Yb, Fe, Ti, Mn, V, Cr, Co, Ni, Cu, Mg, Ca, Sr, and combinations thereof. Similarly, 30 it is also within the scope of the present invention to substitute a portion of the aluminum cations in alumina. For example, Cr, Ti, Sc, Fe, Mg, Ca, Si, and Co can substitute for

aluminum in the alumina. The substitution of cations as described above may affect the properties (e.g. hardness, toughness, strength, thermal conductivity, etc.) of the fused material.

It is also within the scope of the present invention to substitute a portion of the rare earth and/or aluminum cations in a complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\text{-metal oxide}$ (e.g., complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\text{-REO}$) with other cations. For example, a portion of the Al cations in a complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\text{-REO}$ may be substituted with at least one cation of an element selected from the group consisting of: Cr, Ti, Sc, Fe, Mg, Ca, Si, Co, and combinations thereof. For example, a portion of the Y cations in a complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\text{-REO}$ may be substituted with at least one cation of an element selected from the group consisting of: Y, Fe, Ti, Mn, V, Cr, Co, Ni, Cu, Mg, Ca, Sr, and combinations thereof. Similarly, it is also within the scope of the present invention to substitute a portion of the aluminum cations in alumina. For example, Cr, Ti, Sc, Fe, Mg, Ca, Si, and Co can substitute for aluminum in the alumina. The substitution of cations as described above may affect the properties (e.g. hardness, toughness, strength, thermal conductivity, etc.) of the fused material.

The average crystal size can be determined by the line intercept method according to the ASTM standard E 112-96 "Standard Test Methods for Determining Average Grain Size". The sample is mounted in mounting resin (such as that obtained under the trade designation "TRANSOPTIC POWDER" from Buehler, Lake Bluff, IL) typically in a cylinder of resin about 2.5 cm in diameter and about 1.9 cm high. The mounted section is prepared using conventional polishing techniques using a polisher (such as that obtained from Buehler, Lake Bluff, IL under the trade designation "ECOMET 3"). The sample is polished for about 3 minutes with a diamond wheel, followed by 5 minutes of polishing with each of 45, 30, 15, 9, 3, and 1-micrometer slurries. The mounted and polished sample is sputtered with a thin layer of gold-palladium and viewed using a scanning electron microscopy (such as the JEOL SEM Model JSM 840A). A typical back-scattered electron (BSE) micrograph of the microstructure found in the sample is used to determine the average crystal size as follows. The number of crystals that intersect per unit length (N_L) of a random straight line drawn across the micrograph are counted. The average crystal size is determined from this number using the following equation.

$$\text{Average Crystal Size} = \frac{1.5}{N_L M}$$

Where N_L is the number of crystals intersected per unit length and M is the magnification of the micrograph. In another aspect, ceramics (including glass-ceramics) according to the present invention may comprise at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 5 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume crystallites, wherein the crystallites have an average size of less than 1 micrometer. In another aspect, ceramics (including glass-ceramics) according to the present invention may comprise less than at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume crystallites, wherein the 10 crystallites have an average size of less than 0.5 micrometer. In another aspect, ceramics (including glass-ceramics) according to the present invention may comprise less than at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume crystallites, wherein the crystallites have an average 15 size of less than 0.3 micrometer. In another aspect, ceramics (including glass-ceramics) according to the present invention may comprise less than at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume crystallites, wherein the crystallites have an average size of less than 0.15 micrometer.

Crystalline phases that may be present in ceramics according to the present 20 invention include alumina (e.g., alpha and transition aluminas), Y_2O_3 , HfO_2 , ZrO_2 , as well as, for example, one or more other metal oxides such as BaO , CaO , Cr_2O_3 , CoO , Fe_2O_3 , GeO_2 , Li_2O , MgO , MnO , NiO , Na_2O , P_2O_5 , REO , Sc_2O_3 , SiO_2 , SrO , TeO_2 , TiO_2 , V_2O_3 , ZnO , “complex metal oxides” (including “complex Al_2O_3 · metal oxide (e.g., complex Al_2O_3 · Y_2O_3)), and combinations thereof.

25 Some embodiments of the present invention also include glass comprising Al_2O_3 , at least one of REO or Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 (85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , at least one of REO or Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass.

Some embodiments of the present invention also include glass comprising Al_2O_3 , at least one of REO or Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 (65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , at least one of REO or Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and 5 less than 20 (preferably, less than 15, 10, 5, or even 0) percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 (preferably, less than 15, 10, 5, or even 0) percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the glass.

Some embodiments of the present invention also include provides glass comprising Al_2O_3 , at least one of REO or Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 (65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , at least one of REO or Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 (preferably, less than 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, or even 0) percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the glass.

Some embodiments of the present invention also include ceramic comprising glass 15 (e.g., at least 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume glass), the glass comprising Al_2O_3 , at least one of REO or Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 (85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , at least one of REO or Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass.

Some embodiments of the present invention also include ceramic comprising glass 20 (e.g., at least 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume glass), the glass comprising Al_2O_3 , at least one of REO or Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 (65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , at 25 least one of REO or Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 (preferably, less than 15, 10, 5, or even 0) percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 (preferably, less than 15, 10, 5, or even 0) percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the glass. The ceramic may further comprise crystalline ceramic (e.g., at least 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 3, 2, or 1 percent by volume crystalline 30 ceramic).

Some embodiments of the present invention also include ceramic comprising glass (e.g., at least 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100 percent by volume glass), the glass comprising Al_2O_3 , at least one of REO or Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 (65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , at least one of REO or Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the glass. The ceramic may further comprise crystalline ceramic (e.g., at least 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 3, 2, or 1 percent by volume crystalline ceramic).

Some embodiments of the present invention also include glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , at least one of REO or Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 (85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the glass-ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , at least one of REO or Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass-ceramic. The glass-ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, or 95 percent by volume glass. The glass-ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 99, 98, 97, 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, or 5 percent by volume crystalline ceramic.

Some embodiments of the present invention also include glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , at least one of REO or Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 (65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the glass-ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , at least one of REO or Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 (preferably, less than 15, 10, 5, or even 0) percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 (preferably, less than 15, 10, 5, or even 0) percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the glass-ceramic. The glass-ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, or 95 percent by volume glass. The glass-ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 99, 98, 97, 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, or 5 percent by volume crystalline ceramic.

Some embodiments of the present invention also include glass-ceramic comprising Al₂O₃, at least one of REO or Y₂O₃, and at least one of ZrO₂ or HfO₂, wherein at least 60 (65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, or even 100) percent by weight of the glass-ceramic collectively comprises the Al₂O₃, at least one of REO or Y₂O₃, and at least one of ZrO₂ or HfO₂, and less than 40 percent by weight collectively SiO₂, B₂O₃, and P₂O₅, based on the total weight of the glass-ceramic. The glass-ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, percent by volume glass. The glass-ceramic may comprise, for example, at least 99, 98, 97, 95, 90, 85, 80, 75, 70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45, 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, or 5 percent by volume crystalline ceramic.

Additional details regarding ceramics comprising Al₂O₃, REO, and at least one of ZrO₂ or HfO₂, including making, using, and properties, can be found in application having U.S. Serial Nos. 09/922,526, 09/922,527, and 09/922,526, filed August 2, 2001, and U.S. Serial Nos. _____ (Attorney Docket Nos. 56931US005, 56931US006, 56931US007, 15 56931US008, 56931US009, 56931US010, 57980US002, and 57981US002, filed the same date as the instant application.

Crystals formed by heat-treating amorphous to provide embodiments of glass-ceramics according to the present invention may be, for example, equiaxed, columnar, or flattened splat-like features.

20 Although an amorphous material, glass-ceramic, etc. according to the present invention may be in the form of a bulk material, it is also within the scope of the present invention to provide composites comprising an amorphous material, glass-ceramic, etc. according to the present invention. Such a composite may comprise, for example, a phase or fibers (continuous or discontinuous) or particles (including whiskers) (e.g., metal oxide particles, boride particles, carbide particles, nitride particles, diamond particles, metallic particles, glass particles, and combinations thereof) dispersed in an amorphous material, glass-ceramic, etc. according to the present invention, invention or a layered-composite structure (e.g., a gradient of glass-ceramic to amorphous material used to make the glass-ceramic and/or layers of different compositions of glass-ceramics).

30 Certain glasses according to the present invention may have, for example, a T_g in a range of about 810°C to about 890°C.

The average hardness of the material of the present invention can be determined as follows. Sections of the material are mounted in mounting resin (obtained under the trade designation "TRANSOPTIC POWDER" from Buehler, Lake Bluff, IL) typically in a cylinder of resin about 2.5 cm in diameter and about 1.9 cm high. The mounted section is 5 prepared using conventional polishing techniques using a polisher (such as that obtained from Buehler, Lake Bluff, IL under the trade designation "ECOMET 3"). The sample is polished for about 3 minutes with a diamond wheel, followed by 5 minutes of polishing with each of 45, 30, 15, 9, 3, and 1-micrometer slurries. The microhardness measurements are made using a conventional microhardness tester (such as that obtained under the trade 10 designation "MITUTOYO MVK-VL" from Mitutoyo Corporation, Tokyo, Japan) fitted with a Vickers indenter using a 100-gram indent load. The microhardness measurements are made according to the guidelines stated in ASTM Test Method E384 Test Methods for Microhardness of Materials (1991).

Certain glasses according to the present invention may have, for example, an 15 average hardness of at least 5 GPa (more desirably, at least 6 GPa, 7 GPa, 8 GPa, or 9 GPa; typically in a range of about 5 GPa to about 10 GPa), crystalline ceramics according to the present invention at least 5 GPa (more desirably, at least 6 GPa, 7 GPa, 8 GPa, 9 GPa, 10 GPa, 11 GPa, 12 GPa, 13 GPa, 14 GPa, 15 GPa, 16 GPa, 17 GPa, or 18 GPa (or 20 more); typically in a range of about 2 GPa to about 18 GPa), and glass-ceramics according to the present invention or ceramics according to the present invention comprising glass and crystalline ceramic at least 5 GPa (more desirably, at least 6 GPa, 7 GPa, 8 GPa, 9 GPa, 10 GPa, 11 GPa, 12 GPa, 13 GPa, 14 GPa, 15 GPa, 16 GPa, 17 GPa, 18 GPa, or 19 GPa; typically in a range of about 5 GPa to about 18 GPa). Abrasive particles according to 25 the present invention have an average hardness of at least 15 GPa, in some embodiments, preferably, at least 16 GPa, at least 17 GPa, or even at least 18 GPa.

Typically, and desirably, the (true) density, sometimes referred to as specific gravity, of ceramic according to the present invention is typically at least 70% of theoretical density. More desirably, the (true) density of ceramic according to the present invention is at least 75%, 80%, 85%, 90%, 95%, 96%, 97%, 98%, 99%, 99.5% or 100% of 30 theoretical density. Abrasive particles according to the present invention have densities of

at least 85%, 90%, 92%, 95%, 96%, 97%, 98%, 99%, 99.5% or even 100% of theoretical density.

Articles can be made using ceramics according to the present invention, for example, as a filler, reinforcement material, and/or matrix material. For example, ceramic 5 according to the present invention can be in the form of particles and/or fibers suitable for use as reinforcing materials in composites (e.g., ceramic, metal, or polymeric (thermosetting or thermoplastic). The particles and/or fibers may, for example, increase the modulus, heat resistance, wear resistance, and/or strength of the matrix material. Although the size, shape, and amount of the particles and/or fibers used to make a 10 composite may depend, for example, on the particular matrix material and use of the composite, the size of the reinforcing particles typically range about 0.1 to 1500 micrometers, more typically 1 to 500 micrometers, and desirably between 2 to 100 micrometers. The amount of particles for polymeric applications is typically about 0.5 percent to about 75 percent by weight, more typically about 1 to about 50 percent by 15 weight. Examples of thermosetting polymers include: phenolic, melamine, urea formaldehyde, acrylate, epoxy, urethane polymers, and the like. Examples of thermoplastic polymers include: nylon, polyethylene, polypropylene, polyurethane, polyester, polyamides, and the like.

Examples of uses for reinforced polymeric materials (i.e., reinforcing particles 20 according to the present invention dispersed in a polymer) include protective coatings, for example, for concrete, furniture, floors, roadways, wood, wood-like materials, ceramics, and the like, as well as, anti-skid coatings and injection molded plastic parts and components.

Further, for example, ceramic according to the present invention can be used as a 25 matrix material. For example, ceramics according to the present invention can be used as a binder for ceramic materials and the like such as diamond, cubic-BN, Al_2O_3 , ZrO_2 , Si_3N_4 , and SiC . Examples of useful articles comprising such materials include composite substrate coatings, cutting tool inserts abrasive agglomerates, and bonded abrasive articles such as vitrified wheels. The use of ceramics according to the present invention can be 30 used as binders may, for example, increase the modulus, heat resistance, wear resistance, and/or strength of the composite article.

Abrasive particles according to the present invention generally comprise crystalline ceramic (e.g., at least 75, 80, 85, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 99.5, or even 100 percent by volume) crystalline ceramic. In another aspect, the present invention provides a plurality of particles having a particle size distribution ranging from fine to coarse,

5 wherein at least a portion of the plurality of particles are abrasive particles according to the present invention. In another aspect, embodiments of abrasive particles according to the present invention generally comprise (e.g., at least 75, 80, 85, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 99.5, or even 100 percent by volume) glass-ceramic according to the present invention.

10 Abrasive particles according to the present invention can be screened and graded using techniques well known in the art, including the use of industry recognized grading standards such as ANSI (American National Standard Institute), FEPA (Federation Europeenne des Fabricants de Products Abrasifs), and JIS (Japanese Industrial Standard). Abrasive particles according to the present invention may be used in a wide range of 15 particle sizes, typically ranging in size from about 0.1 to about 5000 micrometers, more typically from about 1 to about 2000 micrometers; desirably from about 5 to about 1500 micrometers, more desirably from about 100 to about 1500 micrometers.

20 In a given particle size distribution, there will be a range of particle sizes, from coarse particles fine particles. In the abrasive art this range is sometimes referred to as a “coarse”, “control” and “fine” fractions. Abrasive particles graded according to industry accepted grading standards specify the particle size distribution for each nominal grade within numerical limits. Such industry accepted grading standards include those known as the American National Standards Institute, Inc. (ANSI) standards, Federation of European Producers of Abrasive Products (FEPA) standards, and Japanese Industrial Standard (JIS) 25 standards. ANSI grade designations (i.e., specified nominal grades) include: ANSI 4, ANSI 6, ANSI 8, ANSI 16, ANSI 24, ANSI 36, ANSI 40, ANSI 50, ANSI 60, ANSI 80, ANSI 100, ANSI 120, ANSI 150, ANSI 180, ANSI 220, ANSI 240, ANSI 280, ANSI 320, ANSI 360, ANSI 400, and ANSI 600. Preferred ANSI grades comprising abrasive particles according to the present invention are ANSI 8-220. FEPA grade designations 30 include P8, P12, P16, P24, P36, P40, P50, P60, P80, P100, P120, P150, P180, P220, P320, P400, P500, P600, P800, P1000, and P1200. Preferred FEPA grades comprising abrasive

particles according to the present invention are P12-P220. JIS grade designations include JIS8, JIS12, JIS16, JIS24, JIS36, JIS46, JIS54, JIS60, JIS80, JIS100, JIS150, JIS180, JIS220, JIS240, JIS280, JIS320, JIS360, JIS400, JIS400, JIS600, JIS800, JIS1000, JIS1500, JIS2500, JIS4000, JIS6000, JIS8000, and JIS10,000. Preferred JIS grades comprising abrasive particles according to the present invention are JIS8-220.

After crushing and screening, there will typically be a multitude of different abrasive particle size distributions or grades. These multitudes of grades may not match a manufacturer's or supplier's needs at that particular time. To minimize inventory, it is possible to recycle the off demand grades back into melt to form glass. This recycling may occur after the crushing step, where the particles are in large chunks or smaller pieces (sometimes referred to as "fines") that have not been screened to a particular distribution.

In another aspect, the present invention provides a method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising heat-treating glass particles or glass-containing particles according to the present invention to provide abrasive particles comprising a glass-ceramic according to the present invention. Alternatively, for example, the present invention provides a method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising heat-treating glass according to the present invention, and crushing the resulting heat-treated material to provide abrasive particles comprising a glass-ceramic according to the present invention. When crushed, glass tends to provide sharper particles than crushing significantly crystallized glass-ceramics or crystalline material.

In another aspect, the present invention provides agglomerate abrasive grains each comprising a plurality of abrasive particles according to the present invention bonded together via a binder. In another aspect, the present invention provides an abrasive article (e.g., coated abrasive articles, bonded abrasive articles (including vitrified, resinoid, and metal bonded grinding wheels, cutoff wheels, mounted points, and honing stones), nonwoven abrasive articles, and abrasive brushes) comprising a binder and a plurality of abrasive particles, wherein at least a portion of the abrasive particles are abrasive particles (including where the abrasive particles are agglomerated) according to the present invention. Methods of making such abrasive articles and using abrasive articles are well known to those skilled in the art. Furthermore, abrasive particles according to the present invention can be used in abrasive applications that utilize abrasive particles, such as

slurries of abrading compounds (e.g., polishing compounds), milling media, shot blast media, vibratory mill media, and the like.

Coated abrasive articles generally include a backing, abrasive particles, and at least one binder to hold the abrasive particles onto the backing. The backing can be any suitable material, including cloth, polymeric film, fibre, nonwoven webs, paper, combinations thereof, and treated versions thereof. The binder can be any suitable binder, including an inorganic or organic binder (including thermally curable resins and radiation curable resins). The abrasive particles can be present in one layer or in two layers of the coated abrasive article.

An example of a coated abrasive article is depicted in FIG. 3. Referring to this figure, coated abrasive article 1 has a backing (substrate) 2 and abrasive layer 3. Abrasive layer 3 includes abrasive particles according to the present invention 4 secured to a major surface of backing 2 by make coat 5 and size coat 6. In some instances, a supersize coat (not shown) is used.

Bonded abrasive articles typically include a shaped mass of abrasive particles held together by an organic, metallic, or vitrified binder. Such shaped mass can be, for example, in the form of a wheel, such as a grinding wheel or cutoff wheel. The diameter of grinding wheels typically is about 1 cm to over 1 meter; the diameter of cut off wheels about 1 cm to over 80 cm (more typically 3 cm to about 50 cm). The cut off wheel thickness is typically about 0.5 mm to about 5 cm, more typically about 0.5 mm to about 2 cm. The shaped mass can also be in the form, for example, of a honing stone, segment, mounted point, disc (e.g. double disc grinder) or other conventional bonded abrasive shape. Bonded abrasive articles typically comprise about 3-50% by volume bond material, about 30-90% by volume abrasive particles (or abrasive particle blends), up to 50% by volume additives (including grinding aids), and up to 70% by volume pores, based on the total volume of the bonded abrasive article.

A preferred form is a grinding wheel. Referring to FIG. 4, grinding wheel 10 is depicted, which includes abrasive particles according to the present invention 11, molded in a wheel and mounted on hub 12.

Nonwoven abrasive articles typically include an open porous lofty polymer filament structure having abrasive particles according to the present invention distributed

throughout the structure and adherently bonded therein by an organic binder. Examples of filaments include polyester fibers, polyamide fibers, and polyaramid fibers. In FIG. 5, a schematic depiction, enlarged about 100x, of a typical nonwoven abrasive article is provided. Such a nonwoven abrasive article comprises fibrous mat 50 as a substrate, onto 5 which abrasive particles according to the present invention 52 are adhered by binder 54.

Useful abrasive brushes include those having a plurality of bristles unitary with a backing (see, e.g., U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,427,595 (Pihl et al.), 5,443,906 (Pihl et al.), 5,679,067 (Johnson et al.), and 5,903,951 (Ionta et al.). Desirably, such brushes are made by injection molding a mixture of polymer and abrasive particles.

10 Suitable organic binders for making abrasive articles include thermosetting organic polymers. Examples of suitable thermosetting organic polymers include phenolic resins, urea-formaldehyde resins, melamine-formaldehyde resins, urethane resins, acrylate resins, polyester resins, aminoplast resins having pendant α,β -unsaturated carbonyl groups, epoxy resins, acrylated urethane, acrylated epoxies, and combinations thereof. The binder and/or 15 abrasive article may also include additives such as fibers, lubricants, wetting agents, thixotropic materials, surfactants, pigments, dyes, antistatic agents (e.g., carbon black, vanadium oxide, graphite, etc.), coupling agents (e.g., silanes, titanates, zircoaluminates, etc.), plasticizers, suspending agents, and the like. The amounts of these optional additives are selected to provide the desired properties. The coupling agents can improve adhesion 20 to the abrasive particles and/or filler. The binder chemistry may thermally cured, radiation cured or combinations thereof. Additional details on binder chemistry may be found in U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,588,419 (Caul et al.), 4,751,138 (Tumey et al.), and 5,436,063 (Follett et al.).

25 More specifically with regard to vitrified bonded abrasives, vitreous bonding materials, which exhibit an amorphous structure and are typically hard, are well known in the art. In some cases, the vitreous bonding material includes crystalline phases. Bonded, vitrified abrasive articles according to the present invention may be in the shape of a wheel (including cut off wheels), honing stone, mounted pointed or other conventional bonded abrasive shape. A preferred vitrified bonded abrasive article according to the present 30 invention is a grinding wheel.

Examples of metal oxides that are used to form vitreous bonding materials include: silica, silicates, alumina, soda, calcia, potassia, titania, iron oxide, zinc oxide, lithium oxide, magnesia, boria, aluminum silicate, borosilicate glass, lithium aluminum silicate, combinations thereof, and the like. Typically, vitreous bonding materials can be formed 5 from composition comprising from 10 to 100% glass frit, although more typically the composition comprises 20% to 80% glass frit, or 30% to 70% glass frit. The remaining portion of the vitreous bonding material can be a non- frit material. Alternatively, the vitreous bond may be derived from a non-frit containing composition. Vitreous bonding materials are typically matured at a temperature(s) in a range of about 700°C to about 10 1500°C, usually in a range of about 800°C to about 1300°C, sometimes in a range of about 900°C to about 1200°C, or even in a range of about 950°C to about 1100°C. The actual temperature at which the bond is matured depends, for example, on the particular bond chemistry.

Preferred vitrified bonding materials may include those comprising silica, alumina 15 (desirably, at least 10 percent by weight alumina), and boria (desirably, at least 10 percent by weight boria). In most cases the vitrified bonding material further comprise alkali metal oxide(s) (e.g., Na₂O and K₂O) (in some cases at least 10 percent by weight alkali metal oxide(s)).

Binder materials may also contain filler materials or grinding aids, typically in the 20 form of a particulate material. Typically, the particulate materials are inorganic materials. Examples of useful fillers for this invention include: metal carbonates (e.g., calcium carbonate (e.g., chalk, calcite, marl, travertine, marble and limestone), calcium magnesium carbonate, sodium carbonate, magnesium carbonate), silica (e.g., quartz, glass beads, glass bubbles and glass fibers) silicates (e.g., talc, clays, (montmorillonite) feldspar, mica, 25 calcium silicate, calcium metasilicate, sodium aluminosilicate, sodium silicate) metal sulfates (e.g., calcium sulfate, barium sulfate, sodium sulfate, aluminum sodium sulfate, aluminum sulfate), gypsum, vermiculite, wood flour, aluminum trihydrate, carbon black, metal oxides (e.g., calcium oxide (lime), aluminum oxide, titanium dioxide), and metal sulfites (e.g., calcium sulfite).

30 In general, the addition of a grinding aid increases the useful life of the abrasive article. A grinding aid is a material that has a significant effect on the chemical and

physical processes of abrading, which results in improved performance. Although not wanting to be bound by theory, it is believed that a grinding aid(s) will (a) decrease the friction between the abrasive particles and the workpiece being abraded, (b) prevent the abrasive particles from "capping" (i.e., prevent metal particles from becoming welded to the tops of the abrasive particles), or at least reduce the tendency of abrasive particles to cap, (c) decrease the interface temperature between the abrasive particles and the workpiece, or (d) decreases the grinding forces.

Grinding aids encompass a wide variety of different materials and can be inorganic or organic based. Examples of chemical groups of grinding aids include waxes, organic halide compounds, halide salts and metals and their alloys. The organic halide compounds will typically break down during abrading and release a halogen acid or a gaseous halide compound. Examples of such materials include chlorinated waxes like tetrachloronaphthalene, pentachloronaphthalene, and polyvinyl chloride. Examples of halide salts include sodium chloride, potassium cryolite, sodium cryolite, ammonium cryolite, potassium tetrafluoroboate, sodium tetrafluoroborate, silicon fluorides, potassium chloride, and magnesium chloride. Examples of metals include, tin, lead, bismuth, cobalt, antimony, cadmium, and iron titanium. Other miscellaneous grinding aids include sulfur, organic sulfur compounds, graphite, and metallic sulfides. It is also within the scope of the present invention to use a combination of different grinding aids, and in some instances this may produce a synergistic effect. The preferred grinding aid is cryolite; the most preferred grinding aid is potassium tetrafluoroborate.

Grinding aids can be particularly useful in coated abrasive and bonded abrasive articles. In coated abrasive articles, grinding aid is typically used in the supersize coat, which is applied over the surface of the abrasive particles. Sometimes, however, the grinding aid is added to the size coat. Typically, the amount of grinding aid incorporated into coated abrasive articles are about 50-300 g/m² (desirably, about 80-160 g/m²). In vitrified bonded abrasive articles grinding aid is typically impregnated into the pores of the article.

The abrasive articles can contain 100% abrasive particles according to the present invention, or blends of such abrasive particles with other abrasive particles and/or diluent particles. However, at least about 2% by weight, desirably at least about 5% by weight,

and more desirably about 30-100% by weight, of the abrasive particles in the abrasive articles should be abrasive particles according to the present invention. In some instances, the abrasive particles according the present invention may be blended with another abrasive particles and/or diluent particles at a ratio between 5 to 75% by weight, about 25 to 75% by weight about 40 to 60% by weight, or about 50% to 50% by weight (i.e., in equal amounts by weight). Examples of suitable conventional abrasive particles include fused aluminum oxide (including white fused alumina, heat-treated aluminum oxide and brown aluminum oxide), silicon carbide, boron carbide, titanium carbide, diamond, cubic boron nitride, garnet, fused alumina-zirconia, and sol-gel-derived abrasive particles, and the like. The sol-gel-derived abrasive particles may be seeded or non-seeded. Likewise, the sol-gel-derived abrasive particles may be randomly shaped or have a shape associated with them, such as a rod or a triangle. Examples of sol gel abrasive particles include those described U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,314,827 (Leitheiser et al.), 4,518,397 (Leitheiser et al.), 4,623,364 (Cottringer et al.), 4,744,802 (Schwabel), 4,770,671 (Monroe et al.), 4,881,951 (Wood et al.), 5,011,508 (Wald et al.), 5,090,968 (Pellow), 5,139,978 (Wood), 5,201,916 (Berg et al.), 5,227,104 (Bauer), 5,366,523 (Rowenhorst et al.), 5,429,647 (Larmie), 5,498,269 (Larmie), and 5,551,963 (Larmie). Additional details concerning sintered alumina abrasive particles made by using alumina powders as a raw material source can also be found, for example, in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,259,147 (Falz), 5,593,467 (Monroe), and 5,665,127 (Moltgen). Additional details concerning fused abrasive particles, can be found, for example, in U.S. Pat. Nos. 1,161,620 (Coulter), 1,192,709 (Tone), 1,247,337 (Saunders et al.), 1,268,533 (Allen), and 2,424,645 (Baumann et al.) 3,891,408 (Rowse et al.), 3,781,172 (Pett et al.), 3,893,826 (Quinan et al.), 4,126,429 (Watson), 4,457,767 (Poon et al.), 5,023,212 (Dubots et. al), 5,143,522 (Gibson et al.), and 5,336,280 (Dubots et. al), and applications having U.S. Serial Nos. 09,495,978, 09/496,422, 09/496,638, and 09/496,713, each filed on February 2, 2000, and, 09/618,876, 09/618,879, 09/619,106, 09/619,191, 09/619,192, 09/619,215, 09/619,289, 09/619,563, 09/619,729, 09/619,744, and 09/620,262, each filed on July 19, 2000, and 09/772,730, filed January 30, 2001. In some instances, blends of abrasive particles may result in an abrasive article that exhibits improved grinding performance in comparison with abrasive articles comprising 100% of either type of abrasive particle.

If there is a blend of abrasive particles, the abrasive particle types forming the blend may be of the same size. Alternatively, the abrasive particle types may be of different particle sizes. For example, the larger sized abrasive particles may be abrasive particles according to the present invention, with the smaller sized particles being another 5 abrasive particle type. Conversely, for example, the smaller sized abrasive particles may be abrasive particles according to the present invention, with the larger sized particles being another abrasive particle type.

Examples of suitable diluent particles include marble, gypsum, flint, silica, iron oxide, aluminum silicate, glass (including glass bubbles and glass beads), alumina bubbles, 10 alumina beads and diluent agglomerates. Abrasive particles according to the present invention can also be combined in or with abrasive agglomerates. Abrasive agglomerate particles typically comprise a plurality of abrasive particles, a binder, and optional additives. The binder may be organic and/or inorganic. Abrasive agglomerates may be randomly shape or have a predetermined shape associated with them. The shape may be a 15 block, cylinder, pyramid, coin, square, or the like. Abrasive agglomerate particles typically have particle sizes ranging from about 100 to about 5000 micrometers, typically about 250 to about 2500 micrometers. Additional details regarding abrasive agglomerate particles may be found, for example, in U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,311,489 (Kressner), 4,652,275 (Bloecher et al.), 4,799,939 (Bloecher et al.), 5,549,962 (Holmes et al.), and 5,975,988 20 (Christianson), and applications having U.S. Serial Nos. 09/688,444 and 09/688,484, filed October 16, 2001.

The abrasive particles may be uniformly distributed in the abrasive article or concentrated in selected areas or portions of the abrasive article. For example, in a coated abrasive, there may be two layers of abrasive particles. The first layer comprises abrasive 25 particles other than abrasive particles according to the present invention, and the second (outermost) layer comprises abrasive particles according to the present invention. Likewise in a bonded abrasive, there may be two distinct sections of the grinding wheel. The outermost section may comprise abrasive particles according to the present invention, whereas the innermost section does not. Alternatively, abrasive particles according to the 30 present invention may be uniformly distributed throughout the bonded abrasive article.

Further details regarding coated abrasive articles can be found, for example, in U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,734,104 (Broberg), 4,737,163 (Larkey), 5,203,884 (Buchanan et al.), 5,152,917 (Pieper et al.), 5,378,251 (Culler et al.), 5,417,726 (Stout et al.), 5,436,063 (Follett et al.), 5,496,386 (Broberg et al.), 5,609,706 (Benedict et al.), 5,520,711 (Helmin), 5,954,844 (Law et al.), 5,961,674 (Gagliardi et al.), and 5,975,988 (Christinason). Further details regarding bonded abrasive articles can be found, for example, in U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,543,107 (Rue), 4,741,743 (Narayanan et al.), 4,800,685 (Haynes et al.), 4,898,597 (Hay et al.), 4,997,461 (Markhoff-Matheny et al.), 5,037,453 (Narayanan et al.), 5,110,332 (Narayanan et al.), and 5,863,308 (Qi et al.). Further details regarding vitreous bonded abrasives can be found, for example, in U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,543,107 (Rue), 4,898,597 (Hay et al.), 4,997,461 (Markhoff-Matheny et al.), 5,094,672 (Giles Jr. et al.), 5,118,326 (Sheldon et al.), 5,131,926 (Sheldon et al.), 5,203,886 (Sheldon et al.), 5,282,875 (Wood et al.), 5,738,696 (Wu et al.), and 5,863,308 (Qi). Further details regarding nonwoven abrasive articles can be found, for example, in U.S. Pat. No. 2,958,593 (Hoover et al.)

The present invention provides a method of abrading a surface, the method comprising contacting at least one abrasive particle according to the present invention, with a surface of a workpiece; and moving at least one the abrasive particle or the contacted surface to abrade at least a portion of said surface with the abrasive particle. Methods for abrading with abrasive particles according to the present invention range of snagging (i.e., high pressure high stock removal) to polishing (e.g., polishing medical implants with coated abrasive belts), wherein the latter is typically done with finer grades (e.g., less ANSI 220 and finer) of abrasive particles. The abrasive particle may also be used in precision abrading applications, such as grinding cam shafts with vitrified bonded wheels. The size of the abrasive particles used for a particular abrading application will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

Abrading with abrasive particles according to the present invention may be done dry or wet. For wet abrading, the liquid may be introduced supplied in the form of a light mist to complete flood. Examples of commonly used liquids include: water, water-soluble oil, organic lubricant, and emulsions. The liquid may serve to reduce the heat associated with abrading and/or act as a lubricant. The liquid may contain minor amounts of additives such as bactericide, antifoaming agents, and the like.

Abrasive particles according to the present invention may be used to abrade workpieces such as aluminum metal, carbon steels, mild steels, tool steels, stainless steel, hardened steel, titanium, glass, ceramics, wood, wood like materials, paint, painted surfaces, organic coated surfaces and the like. The applied force during abrading typically 5 ranges from about 1 to about 100 kilograms.

Advantages and embodiments of this invention are further illustrated by the following examples, but the particular materials and amounts thereof recited in these examples, as well as other conditions and details, should not be construed to unduly limit 10 this invention. All parts and percentages are by weight unless otherwise indicated. Unless otherwise stated, all examples contained no significant amount of SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , P_2O_5 , GeO_2 , TeO_2 , As_2O_3 , and V_2O_5 .

Examples

15 Example 1

A polyethylene bottle was charged with 263.5 grams of alumina particles (obtained under the trade designation “APA-0.5” from Condea Vista, Tucson, AZ), 143.5 grams of yttrium oxide particles (obtained from H.C. Starck, Newton, MA), 93 grams of zirconium oxide particles (with a nominal composition of 100 percent by weight (wt-%) ZrO_2 (+ 20 HfO_2); obtained under the trade designation “DK-2” from Zirconia Sales, Inc. of Marietta, GA) and 300 grams of isopropyl alcohol. About 800 grams of the zirconia milling media (obtained from Tosoh Ceramics, Division of Bound Brook, NJ, under the trade designation “YTZ”) were added to the bottle, and the mixture was milled at 120 revolutions per minute (rpm) for 24 hours. After the milling, the milling media were removed and the slurry was 25 poured onto a glass (“PYREX”) pan where it was dried using a heat-gun. The dried mixture was ground with a mortar and pestle and screened through a 70-mesh screen (212-micrometer opening size screen).

After grinding and screening, some of the particles were fed into a 30 hydrogen/oxygen torch flame. The torch used to melt the particles, thereby generating melted glass beads, was a Bethlehem bench burner PM2D model B, obtained from Bethlehem Apparatus Co., Hellertown, PA, delivering hydrogen and oxygen at the

following rates. For the inner ring, the hydrogen flow rate was 8 standard liters per minute (SLPM) and the oxygen flow rate was 3 SLPM. For the outer ring, the hydrogen flow rate was 23 (SLPM) and the oxygen flow rate was 9.8 SLPM. The dried and sized particles were fed directly into the torch flame, where they were melted and transported to an 5 inclined stainless steel surface (approximately 51 centimeters (cm) (20 inches) wide with the slope angle of 45 degrees) with cold water running over (approximately 8 liters/minute) the surface to form beads.

About 50 grams of the resulting beads were placed in a graphite die and hot-pressed using a uniaxial pressing apparatus (obtained under the trade designation "HP-50", 10 Thermal Technology Inc., Brea, CA). The hot-pressing was carried out at 960°C in an argon atmosphere and 13.8 megapascals (MPa) (2000 pounds per square inch (2 ksi)) pressure. The resulting hot-pressed disk was about 48 millimeters (mm) in diameter, and about 5 mm thick.

The hot-pressed disk was heat-treated in a furnace (an electrically heated furnace 15 (obtained under the trade designation "Model KKS-666-3100" from Keith Furnaces of Pico Rivera, CA)) as follows. The disk was first heated from room temperature (about 25°C) to about 900°C at a rate of about 10°C/minutes and then held at 900°C for about 1 hour. Next, the disk was heated from about 900°C to about 1300°C at a rate of about 10°C/minute and then held at 1300°C for about 1 hour, before cooling back to room 20 temperature by turning off the furnace.

FIG. 1 is a scanning electron microscope (SEM) photomicrograph of a polished section of hot-pressed and heat-treated Example 1 material showing the fine crystalline nature of the material. The polished section was prepared using conventional mounting and polishing techniques. Polishing was done using a polisher (obtained from Buehler of 25 Lake Bluff, IL under the trade designation "ECOMET 3 TYPE POLISHER-GRINDER"). The sample was polished for about 3 minutes with a diamond wheel, followed by three minutes of polishing with each of 45, 30, 15, 9, and 3-micrometer diamond slurries. The polished sample was sputter coated with a thin layer of gold-palladium and viewed using JEOL SEM (Model JSM 840A).

30 The average microhardnesses of the material of this Example was determined as follows. Loose beads (about 125 micrometers in size) were mounted in mounting resin

(obtained under the trade designation “EPOMET” from Buehler Ltd., Lake Bluff, IL). The resulting cylinder of resin was about 2.5 cm (1 inch) in diameter and about 1.9 cm (0.75 inch) tall. The mounted samples were polished using a conventional grinder/polisher (obtained under the trade designation “EPOMET” from Buehler Ltd.) and conventional 5 diamond slurries with the final polishing step using a 1 micrometer diamond slurry (obtained under the trade designation “METADI” from Buehler Ltd.) to obtain polished cross-sections of the sample.

The microhardness measurements were made using a conventional microhardness tester (obtained under the trade designation “MITUTOYO MVK-VL” from Mitutoyo 10 Corporation, Tokyo, Japan) fitted with a Vickers indenter using a 500-gram indent load. The microhardness measurements were made according to the guidelines stated in ASTM Test Method E384 Test Methods for Microhardness of Materials (1991). The 15 microhardness values were an average of 20 measurements. The average microhardness of the material prior to heat treatment was about 8.5 GPa. The average microhardness of the material after heat-treatment (determined as described above except beads were heat-treated at 1300°C for 1hour) was 15.9 GPa.

Examples 2-16

Examples 2-16 beads were prepared as described in Example 1, except the raw 20 materials and the amounts of raw materials used are listed in Table 1, below, and the milling of the raw materials was carried out in 90 ml of isopropyl alcohol with 200 grams of the zirconia media (obtained from Tosoh Ceramics, Division of Bound Brook, NJ, under the trade designation “YTZ”) at 120 rpm for 24 hours. The sources of the raw materials used are listed in Table 2, below.

25

Table 1

Example	Weight percent of components	Batch amounts, g
2	Y_2O_3 : 28.08 Al_2O_3 : 58.48 ZrO_2 : 13.43	Y_2O_3 : 14.04 Al_2O_3 : 29.24 ZrO_2 : 6.72

Example	Weight percent of components	Batch amounts, g
3	Y ₂ O ₃ : 27.6 Al ₂ O ₃ : 57.5 ZrO ₂ : 14.9	Y ₂ O ₃ : 13.8 Al ₂ O ₃ : 23.75 ZrO ₂ : 7.45
4	Y ₂ O ₃ : 27.44 Al ₂ O ₃ : 57.14 ZrO ₂ : 15.43	Y ₂ O ₃ : 13.72 Al ₂ O ₃ : 28.57 ZrO ₂ : 7.71
5	Y ₂ O ₃ : 28.7 Al ₂ O ₃ : 55.7 ZrO ₂ : 15.5	Y ₂ O ₃ : 14.35 Al ₂ O ₃ : 27.85 ZrO ₂ : 7.75
6	Y ₂ O ₃ : 19 Al ₂ O ₃ : 51 ZrO ₂ : 17.9 La ₂ O ₃ : 12.1	Y ₂ O ₃ : 9.5 Al ₂ O ₃ : 25.5 ZrO ₂ : 8.95 La ₂ O ₃ : 6.05
7	Y ₂ O ₃ : 19.3 Al ₂ O ₃ : 50.5 ZrO ₂ : 17.8 Nd ₂ O ₃ : 12.4	Y ₂ O ₃ : 9.65 Al ₂ O ₃ : 25.25 ZrO ₂ : 8.9 Nd ₂ O ₃ : 6.2
8	Y ₂ O ₃ : 19.1 Al ₂ O ₃ : 50 ZrO ₂ : 17.8 Gd ₂ O ₃ : 13.1	Y ₂ O ₃ : 9.55 Al ₂ O ₃ : 25 ZrO ₂ : 8.9 Gd ₂ O ₃ : 6.55
9	Y ₂ O ₃ : 19.0 Al ₂ O ₃ : 49.7 ZrO ₂ : 17.55 Er ₂ O ₃ : 13.8	Y ₂ O ₃ : 9.5 Al ₂ O ₃ : 24.85 ZrO ₂ : 8.77 Er ₂ O ₃ : 6.9
10	Y ₂ O ₃ : 27.4 Al ₂ O ₃ : 50.3 ZrO ₂ : 17.8 Li ₂ CO ₃ : 4.5	Y ₂ O ₃ : 13.7 Al ₂ O ₃ : 25.15 ZrO ₂ : 8.9 Li ₂ CO ₃ : 2.25

Example	Weight percent of components	Batch amounts, g
11	HfO ₂ : 20.08 Al ₂ O ₃ : 46.55 Y ₂ O ₃ : 25.37	HfO ₂ : 14.04 Al ₂ O ₃ : 23.27 Y ₂ O ₃ : 12.67
12	Y ₂ O ₃ : 27.4 Al ₂ O ₃ : 50.3 ZrO ₂ : 17.8 MgO: 4.5	Y ₂ O ₃ : 13.7 Al ₂ O ₃ : 25.15 ZrO ₂ : 8.9 MgO: 2.25
13	Y ₂ O ₃ : 27.4 Al ₂ O ₃ : 50.3 ZrO ₂ : 17.8 CaO: 4.5	Y ₂ O ₃ : 13.7 Al ₂ O ₃ : 25.15 ZrO ₂ : 8.9 CaO: 2.25
14	Y ₂ O ₃ : 27.4 Al ₂ O ₃ : 50.3 ZrO ₂ : 17.8 TiO ₂ : 4.5	Y ₂ O ₃ : 13.7 Al ₂ O ₃ : 25.15 ZrO ₂ : 8.9 TiO ₂ : 2.25
15	Y ₂ O ₃ : 27.4 Al ₂ O ₃ : 50.3 ZrO ₂ : 17.8 NaHCO ₃ : 2.25	Y ₂ O ₃ : 13.7 Al ₂ O ₃ : 25.15 ZrO ₂ : 8.9 NaHCO ₃ : 2.25
16	Y ₂ O ₃ : 27.4 Al ₂ O ₃ : 50.3 ZrO ₂ : 17.8 SiO ₂ : 2.25	Y ₂ O ₃ : 13.7 Al ₂ O ₃ : 25.15 ZrO ₂ : 8.9 SiO ₂ : 2.25

Table 2

Raw Material	Source
Alumina particles (Al ₂ O ₃)	Obtained from Condea Vista, Tucson, AZ under the trade designation "APA-0.5"

Raw Material	Source
Calcium oxide particles (CaO)	Obtained from Alfa Aesar, Ward Hill, MA
Hafnium oxide particles (HfO ₂)	Obtained from Teledyne Wah Chang Albany Company, Albany, OR
Lanthanum oxide particles (La ₂ O ₃)	Obtained from Molycorp Inc., Mountain Pass, CA
Gadolinium oxide particles (Gd ₂ O ₃)	Obtained from Molycorp Inc.
Erbium oxide particles (Er ₂ O ₃)	Obtained from Aldrich Chemical Co., Milwaukee, WI
Lithium carbonate particles (Li ₂ CO ₃)	Obtained from Aldrich Chemical Co.
Magnesium oxide particles (MgO)	Obtained from Aldrich Chemical Co.
Neodymium oxide particles (Nd ₂ O ₃)	Obtained from Molycorp Inc.
Silica particles (SiO ₂)	Obtained from Alfa Aesar
Sodium bicarbonate particles (NaHCO ₃)	Obtained from Aldrich Chemical Co.
Titanium dioxide particles (TiO ₂)	Obtained from Kemira Inc., Savannah, GA
Yttria-stabilized zirconium oxide particles (Y-PSZ)	Obtained from Zirconia Sales, Inc. of Marietta, GA under the trade designation "HSY-3"

Various properties/characteristics of some Example 2-16 materials were measured as follows. Powder X-ray diffraction (using an X-ray diffractometer (obtained under the 5 trade designation "PHILLIPS XRG 3100" from Phillips, Mahwah, NJ) with copper K α 1 radiation of 1.54050 Angstrom) was used to qualitatively measure phases present in example materials. The presence of a broad diffused intensity peak was taken as an indication of the amorphous nature of a material. The existence of both a broad peak and well-defined peaks was taken as an indication of existence of crystalline matter within an 10 amorphous matrix. Phases detected in various examples are reported in Table 3, below.

Table 3

Example	Phases detected via X-ray diffraction	Color	T _g , °C	T _x , °C	Hot-pressing temp, °C
2	Amorphous* and Crystalline	Clear/milky	874	932	980
3	Amorphous* and Crystalline	Clear/milky	871	934	--
4	Amorphous* and Crystalline	Clear/milky	874	937	--
5	Amorphous* and Crystalline	Clear/milky	870	942	--
6	Amorphous*	Clear	843	938	970
7	Amorphous*	Blue/pink	848	934	970
8	Amorphous* and Crystalline	Clear/milky	880	943	
9	Amorphous* and Crystalline	Pink	876	936	
10	Amorphous*	Clear	821	927	970
11	Amorphous* and Crystalline	Clear/ Greenish	867	948	--
12	Amorphous* and Crystalline	Clear/milky	869	934	--
13	Amorphous*	Clear	845	922	970
14	Amorphous* and Crystalline	Clear/milky	870	933	
15	Amorphous*	Clear	831	916	970
16	Amorphous*	Clear	826	926	970

For differential thermal analysis (DTA), a material was screened to retain beads in
5 the 90-125 micrometer size range. DTA runs were made (using an instrument obtained

from Netzschi Instruments, Selb, Germany under the trade designation "NETZSCH STA 409 DTA/TGA"). The amount of each screened sample placed in a 100-microliter Al_2O_3 sample holder was 400 milligrams. Each sample was heated in static air at a rate of 10°C/minute from room temperature (about 25°C) to 1200°C.

5 Referring to FIG. 2, line 123 is the plotted DTA data for the Example 1 material. Referring to FIG. 2 line 123, the material exhibited an endothermic event at a temperature around 875°C, as evidenced by the downward curve of line 123. It was believed that this event was due to the glass transition (T_g) of the material. At about 941°C, an exothermic event was observed as evidenced by the sharp peak in line 123. It was believed that this 10 event was due to the crystallization (T_x) of the material. These T_g and T_x values for other examples are reported in Table 3, above.

The hot-pressing temperature at which appreciable glass flow occurred, as indicated by the displacement control unit of the hot pressing equipment described above, are reported for various examples in Table 3, above.

15 Various modifications and alterations of this invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art without departing from the scope and spirit of this invention, and it should be understood that this invention is not to be unduly limited to the illustrative embodiments set forth herein.

20

What is claimed is:

1. Glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass.

5 2. The glass according to claim 1 collectively comprising at least 80 percent by weight of the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and ZrO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass.

10 3. Ceramic comprising the glass according to claim 1.

15 4. A method for making glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass, the method comprising:

melting sources of at least Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 to provide a melt; and

cooling the melt to provide the glass.

20 5. A method for making ceramic comprising glass, wherein the glass comprises Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass, the method comprising:

25 melting sources of at least Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 to provide a melt; and

cooling the melt to provide the ceramic.

6. A method for making an article comprising glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass, the method comprising:

5 melting at least sources of Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 to provide a melt;

cooling the melt to provide glass beads comprising glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the 10 total weight of the glass, the glass having a T_g ;

heating the glass beads above the T_g such that the glass beads coalesce to form a shape; and

cooling the coalesced shape to provide the article.

15 7. A method for making an article comprising glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the glass, the method comprising:

20 melting at least sources of Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 to provide a melt;

cooling the melt to provide glass beads comprising glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight 25 of the glass, the glass having a T_g ;

heating the glass beads above the T_g such that the glass beads coalesce to form a shape; and

cooling the coalesced shape to provide the article.

8. A method for making an article comprising glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the glass,

5 the method comprising:

melting at least sources of Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 to provide a melt;

cooling the melt to provide glass beads comprising glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass

10 collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the glass, the glass having a T_g ;

heating the glass beads above the T_g such that the glass beads coalesce to form a shape; and

15 cooling the coalesced shape to provide the article.

9. A method for making an article comprising glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the

20 total weight of the glass, the method comprising:

melting at least sources of Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 to provide a melt;

cooling the melt to provide glass beads comprising glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass

25 collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass, the glass having a T_g ;

converting the glass beads to provide glass powder;

heating the glass powder above the T_g such that the glass powder coalesces to form a shape; and

30 cooling the coalesced shape to provide the article.

10. A method for making an article comprising glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight 5 of the glass, the method comprising:

melting at least sources of Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 to provide a melt;

cooling the melt to provide glass beads comprising glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass 10 collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the glass, the glass having a T_g ;

converting the glass beads to provide glass powder;

heating the glass powder above the T_g such that the glass powder coalesces 15 to form a shape; and

cooling the coalesced shape to provide the article.

11. A method for making an article comprising glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass 20 collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the glass, the method comprising:

melting at least sources of Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 to provide a melt;

cooling the melt to provide glass beads comprising glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass 25 collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the glass, the glass having a T_g ;

30 converting the glass beads to provide glass powder;

heating the glass powder above the T_g such that the glass powder coalesces to form a shape; and
cooling the coalesced shape to provide the article.

5 12. Ceramic comprising at least 75 percent by volume glass, the glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass.

10 13. The ceramic according to claim 12 wherein the glass collectively comprising at least 80 percent by weight of the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and ZrO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass.

14. Glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , 15 wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass-ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass-ceramic.

15. The glass-ceramic according to claim 14 collectively comprising at least 80 20 percent by weight of the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and ZrO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass-ceramic.

16. Glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , 25 wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass-ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the glass-ceramic.

17. The glass-ceramic according to claim 16 collectively comprising at least 60 30 percent by weight of the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and ZrO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass-ceramic.

18. Glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass-ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the glass-ceramic.

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19. The glass-ceramic according to claim 18 collectively comprising at least 60 percent by weight of the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and ZrO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass-ceramic.

10

20. Glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer, and (b) is free of eutectic microstructure features.

15 21 The glass-ceramic according to claim 20 comprising the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and
 ZrO_2 .

22. A method for making glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass-ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the 20 total weight of the glass-ceramic, the method comprising:

heat-treating glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass to provide the glass-ceramic.

25

23. A method for making glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass-ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass-ceramic, the method comprising:

30

heat-treating ceramic comprising glass, wherein the glass comprises Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass

collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass to provide the glass-ceramic.

24. A method for making glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least 5 one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass-ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the glass-ceramic, the method comprising:

heat-treating glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or 10 HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the glass to provide the glass-ceramic.

15 25. A method for making glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass-ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the glass-ceramic, the method comprising:

heat-treating ceramic comprising glass, wherein the glass comprises Al_2O_3 , 20 Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the glass to provide the glass-ceramic.

25 26. A method for making glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass-ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the 30 glass-ceramic, the method comprising:

heat-treating glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the glass to provide the glass-ceramic.

5

27. A method for making glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass-ceramic collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the glass-ceramic, the method comprising:

heat-treating ceramic comprising glass, wherein the glass comprises Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the glass to provide the glass-ceramic.

10 28. A method for making glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , the method comprising:

heat-treating glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 to provide the glass-ceramic, wherein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer, and (b) is free of eutectic microstructure features.

15 29. A method for making glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , the method comprising:

heat-treating ceramic comprising glass, wherein the glass comprises Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 to provide the glass-ceramic, wherein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer, and (b) is free of eutectic microstructure features.

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30. A method for making a glass-ceramic article, the method comprising:
converting glass to provide glass powder, the glass comprising Al_2O_3 ,
 Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass
collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the
5 total weight of the glass, the glass having a T_g ;

heating the glass powder above the T_g such that the glass powder coalesces
to form a shape;

cooling the coalesced shape to provide a glass article; and
heat-treating the glass article to provide a glass-ceramic article.

10

31. A method for making a glass-ceramic article, the method comprising:
converting glass to provide glass powder, the glass comprising Al_2O_3 ,
 Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass
collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20
15 percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight
of the glass, the glass having a T_g ;

heating the glass powder above the T_g such that the glass powder coalesces
to form a shape;

cooling the coalesced shape to provide a glass article; and
heat-treating the glass article to provide a glass-ceramic article.

20

32. A method for making a glass-ceramic article, the method comprising:
converting glass to provide glass powder, the glass comprising Al_2O_3 ,
 Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass
25 collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40
percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the glass,
the glass having a T_g ;

heating the glass powder above the T_g such that the glass powder coalesces
to form a shape;

30 cooling the coalesced shape to provide a glass article; and
heat-treating the glass article to provide a glass-ceramic article.

33. Glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites having an average crystallite size of less than 200 nanometers and (b) has a density of at least 90% of 5 theoretical density.

34. Glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites, wherein 10 none of the crystallites are greater than 200 nanometers in size and (b) has a density of at least 90% of theoretical density.

35. Glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites, wherein at 15 least a portion of the crystallites are not greater than 150 nanometers in size and (b) has a density of at least 90% of theoretical density.

36. Ceramic comprising at least 75 percent by volume crystalline ceramic, the crystalline ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the 20 ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites having an average crystallite density of less than 200 nanometers and (b) has a density of at least 90% of theoretical density.

37. Ceramic comprising at least 75 percent by volume crystalline ceramic, the crystalline ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the 25 ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites, wherein none of the crystallites are greater than 200 nanometers in size and (b) has a density of at least 90% of theoretical density.

38. Ceramic comprising at least 75 percent by volume crystalline ceramic, the 30 crystalline ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites, wherein at least a portion of

the crystallites are not greater than 150 nanometers in size and (b) has a density of at least 90% of theoretical density.

39. Ceramic comprising at least 75 percent by volume crystalline ceramic, the
5 crystalline ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the
ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites having an average crystallite
size not greater than 200 nanometer, in size and (b) has a density of at least 90% of
theoretical density.

10 40. The ceramic according to claim 39 wherein the crystalline ceramic
collectively comprising Al_2O_3 , REO , and ZrO_2 , based on the total weight of the crystalline
ceramic.

41. Abrasive particle comprising a glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and
15 at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass-ceramic
collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the
total weight of the glass-ceramic.

42. Abrasive particle comprising a glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and
20 at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass-ceramic
collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20
percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight
of the glass-ceramic.

25 43. Abrasive particle comprising a glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and
at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass-ceramic
collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40
percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the
glass-ceramic.

44. A method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising:
heat-treating glass particles comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or
 HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 ,
 Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass particles, to
5 provide glass-ceramic abrasive particles.

45. A method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising:
heat-treating particles comprising glass, wherein the glass comprises Al_2O_3 ,
 Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass
10 collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the
total weight of the glass particles, to provide glass-ceramic abrasive particles.

46. A method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising:
heat-treating glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or
15 HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 ,
 Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the total weight of the glass, to provide
glass-ceramic; and
converting the glass-ceramic to provide abrasive particles.

20 47. A method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising:
heat-treating ceramic comprising glass, wherein the glass comprises Al_2O_3 ,
 Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 80 percent by weight of the glass
collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , based on the
total weight of the glass, to provide glass-ceramic; and
25 converting the glass-ceramic to provide abrasive particles.

48. A method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising:
heat-treating glass particles comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 percent by weight SiO_2
5 and less than 20 percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the glass particles, to provide glass-ceramic abrasive particles.

49. A method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising:
heat-treating particles comprising glass, wherein the glass comprises Al_2O_3 ,
10 Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the glass particles, to provide glass-ceramic abrasive particles.

15 50. A method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising:
heat-treating glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the glass, to provide glass-
20 ceramic; and
converting the glass-ceramic to provide abrasive particles.

51. A method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising:
heat-treating ceramic comprising glass, wherein the glass comprises Al_2O_3 ,
25 Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 20 percent by weight SiO_2 and less than 20 percent by weight B_2O_3 , based on the total weight of the glass, to provide glass-ceramic; and
converting the glass-ceramic to provide abrasive particles.

52. A method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising:
heat-treating glass particles comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight 5 collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the glass particles, to provide glass-ceramic abrasive particles.

53. A method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising:
heat-treating particles comprising glass, wherein the glass comprises Al_2O_3 ,
10 Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight collectively SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the glass particles, to provide glass-ceramic abrasive particles.

15 54. A method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising:
heat-treating glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight collectively 20 SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the glass, to provide glass-ceramic; and
converting the glass-ceramic to provide abrasive particles.

25 55. A method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising:
heat-treating ceramic comprising glass, wherein the glass comprises Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the glass collectively comprises the Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , and less than 40 percent by weight collectively 30 SiO_2 , B_2O_3 , and P_2O_5 , based on the total weight of the glass, to provide glass-ceramic; and
converting the glass-ceramic to provide abrasive particles.

56. A method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising:
heat-treating glass particles comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 to provide the glass-ceramic abrasive particles, wherein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer, and (b) is free of eutectic microstructure features.

5 57. A method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising:
heat-treating particles comprising glass, wherein the glass comprises Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 to provide the glass-ceramic abrasive particles,
10 wherein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer, and (b) is free of eutectic microstructure features.

15 58. A method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising:
heat-treating glass comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 to provide the glass-ceramic, wherein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer, and (b) is free of eutectic microstructure features; and
converting the glass-ceramic to provide abrasive particles.

20 59. A method for making abrasive particles, the method comprising:
heat-treating ceramic comprising glass, wherein the glass comprises Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 to provide the glass-ceramic, wherein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites having an average crystallite size of less than 1 micrometer, and (b) is free of eutectic microstructure features; and
25 converting the glass-ceramic to provide abrasive particles.

30 60. Abrasive particle comprising a glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites having an average crystallite size of less than 200 nanometers and (b) a density of at least 90% of theoretical density.

61. The abrasive particle according to claim 60 comprising at least 90 percent by volume of said ceramic, based on the total volume of said abrasive particle.

5 62. Abrasive particle comprising a glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites, wherein none of the crystallites are greater than 200 nanometers in size and (b) a density of at least 90% of theoretical density.

10 63. The abrasive particle according to claim 62 comprising at least 90 percent by volume of said ceramic, based on the total volume of said abrasive particle.

15 64. Abrasive particle comprising a glass-ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the glass-ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites, wherein at least a portion of the crystallites are not greater than 150 nanometers in size and (b) a density of at least 90% of theoretical density.

65. The abrasive particle according to claim 64 comprising at least 90 percent by volume of said ceramic, based on the total volume of said abrasive particle.

20 66. Abrasive particle comprising ceramic comprising at least 75 percent by volume crystalline ceramic, the crystalline ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites having an average crystallite size of less than 200 nanometers and (b) a density of at least 90% of theoretical density.

25 67. The abrasive particle according to claim 66 comprising at least 90 percent by volume of said ceramic, based on the total volume of said abrasive particle.

68. Abrasive particle comprising ceramic comprising at least 75 percent by volume crystalline ceramic, the crystalline ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites, wherein none of the crystallites are greater than 200 nanometers in size and (b) 5 a density of at least 90% of theoretical density.

69. The abrasive particle according to claim 68 comprising at least 90 percent by volume of said ceramic, based on the total volume of said abrasive particle.

10 70. Abrasive particle comprising ceramic comprising at least 75 percent by volume crystalline ceramic, the crystalline ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites, wherein at least a portion of the crystallites are not greater than 150 nanometers in size and (b) a density of at least 90% of theoretical density.

15 71. The abrasive particle according to claim 70 comprising at least 90 percent by volume of said ceramic, based on the total volume of said abrasive particle.

20 72. Abrasive particle comprising ceramic comprising at least 75 percent by volume crystalline ceramic, the crystalline ceramic comprising Al_2O_3 , Y_2O_3 , and at least one of ZrO_2 or HfO_2 , wherein the ceramic (a) exhibits a microstructure comprising crystallites having an average crystallite size not greater than 200 nanometer, in size and (b) a density of at least 90% of theoretical density.

25 73. The abrasive particle according to claim 72 comprising at least 90 percent by volume of said ceramic, based on the total volume of said abrasive particle.

74. A plurality of abrasive particles having a specified nominal grade, wherein at least a portion of the plurality of abrasive particles comprise alpha Al₂O₃, crystalline ZrO₂, and a first complex Al₂O₃·Y₂O₃, wherein at least one of the alpha Al₂O₃, the crystalline ZrO₂, or the first complex Al₂O₃·Y₂O₃ has an average crystal size not greater than 150 nanometers, and wherein the abrasive particles of the portion have a density of at least 90 percent of theoretical density.

75. An abrasive article comprising a binder and a plurality of abrasive particles, wherein at least a portion of the abrasive particles comprise alpha Al₂O₃, crystalline ZrO₂, and a first complex Al₂O₃·Y₂O₃, and wherein at least one of the alpha Al₂O₃, the crystalline ZrO₂, or the first complex Al₂O₃·Y₂O₃ has an average crystal size not greater than 150 nanometers, and wherein the abrasive particles of the portion have a density of at least 90 percent of theoretical density.

76. A method of abrading a surface, the method comprising:
providing an abrasive article comprising a binder and a plurality of abrasive particles, wherein at least a portion of the abrasive particles comprise alpha Al₂O₃, crystalline ZrO₂, and a first complex Al₂O₃·Y₂O₃, wherein at least one of the alpha Al₂O₃, the crystalline ZrO₂, or the first complex Al₂O₃·Y₂O₃ has an average crystal size not greater than 150 nanometers, and wherein the abrasive particles of the portion have a density of at least 90 percent of theoretical density;
contacting at least one of the abrasive particles comprising the alpha Al₂O₃, the crystalline ZrO₂, and the first complex Al₂O₃·Y₂O₃ with a surface of a workpiece; and
moving at least one of the contacted abrasive particles comprising the alpha Al₂O₃, the crystalline ZrO₂, and the first complex Al₂O₃·Y₂O₃ or the contacted surface to abrade at least a portion of the surface with the contacted abrasive particle comprising the alpha Al₂O₃, the crystalline ZrO₂, and the first complex Al₂O₃·Y₂O₃.

77. A plurality of abrasive particles having a specified nominal grade, wherein at least a portion of the plurality of abrasive particles comprise a first complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, a second, different complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, and crystalline ZrO_2 , wherein for at least one of the first complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, the second complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, or the 5 crystalline ZrO_2 , at least 90 percent by number of the crystal sizes thereof are not greater than 200 nanometers, and wherein the abrasive particles of the portion have a density of at least 90 percent of theoretical density.

78. An abrasive article comprising a binder and a plurality of abrasive particles, 10 wherein at least a portion of the abrasive particles comprise a first complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, a second, different complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, and crystalline ZrO_2 , wherein in such portion, for at least one of the first complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, the second complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, or the crystalline ZrO_2 , at least 90 percent by number of the crystal sizes thereof are not greater than 200 nanometers, and wherein the abrasive particles of the portion have a density of at 15 least 90 percent of theoretical density.

79. A method of abrading a surface, the method comprising:

providing an abrasive article comprising a binder and a plurality of abrasive particles, wherein at least a portion of the abrasive particles comprise a first complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, a second, different complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, and crystalline ZrO_2 , wherein in

5 such portion, for at least one of the first complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, the second complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, or the crystalline ZrO_2 , at least 90 percent by number of the crystal sizes thereof are not greater than 200 nanometers, and wherein the abrasive particles of the portion have a density of at least 90 percent of theoretical density;

10 contacting at least one of the abrasive particles comprising the first complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, the second complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, and the crystalline ZrO_2 with a surface of a workpiece; and

15 moving at least one of the contacted abrasive particles comprising the first complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, the second complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, and the crystalline ZrO_2 or the contacted surface to abrade at least a portion of the surface with the contacted abrasive particle comprising the first complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, the second complex $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3\cdot\text{Y}_2\text{O}_3$, and the crystalline ZrO_2 .

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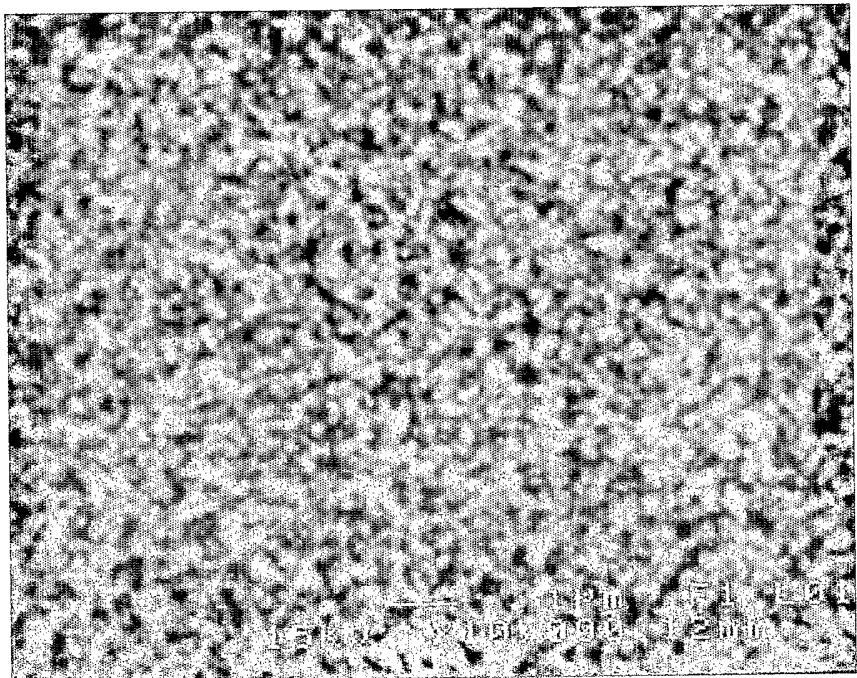


Fig. 1

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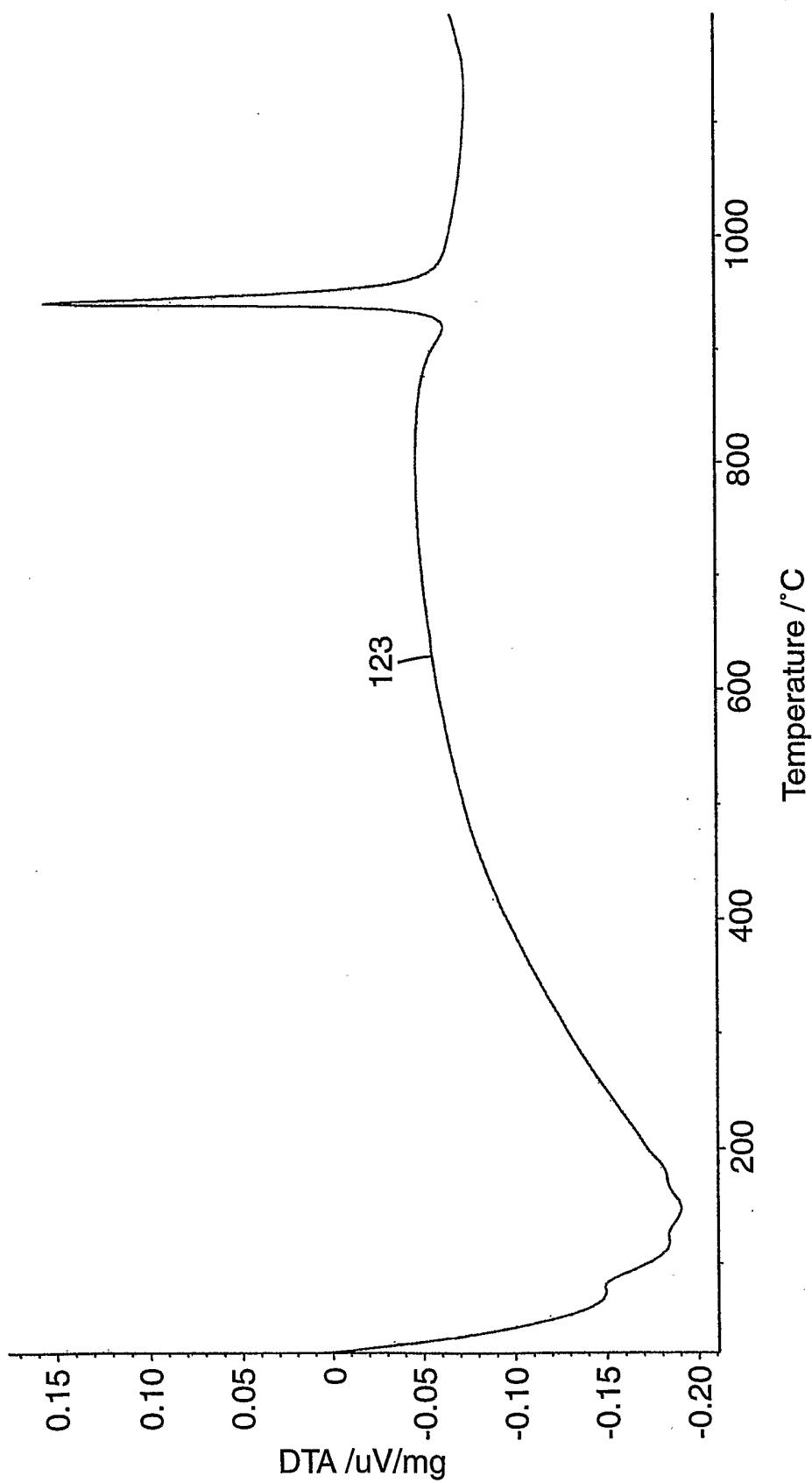


Fig. 2

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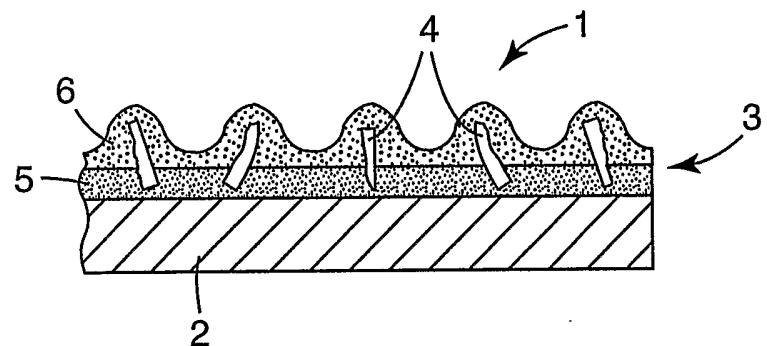


Fig. 3

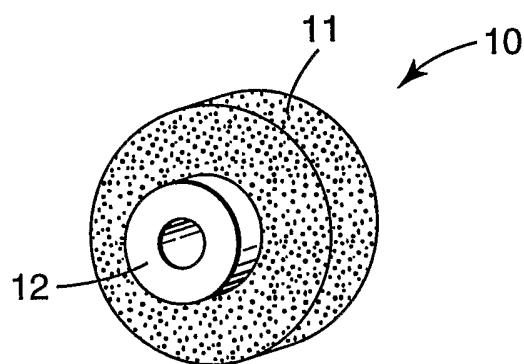


Fig. 4

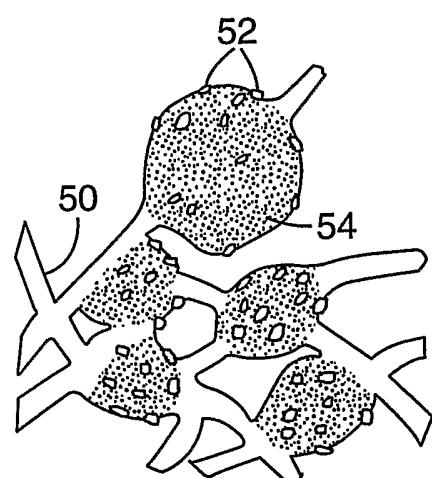


Fig. 5