

Hydrogen Combustion

Basics and specific features

A peculiar fuel

- Chemistry is (fairly) simple:** 8 species (plus NO_x)
- Diffusion** is much faster than for other fuels (Small molecule) => modelling issues for laminar and turbulent flames.
- Highly reactive:** fast flame; large flammability limits; flame very hard to quench; transition to detonation
- Thermo-diffusive instability** => flame wrinkling and acceleration
- Invisible flame:** no light in visible spectra!
- Energy density

Hydrogen kinetics

8 species and 21 reactions

<http://web.eng.ucsd.edu/mae/groups/combustion/mechanism.html>

| Reaction | A^a | n | E^a |
|--|-----------------------|------|-------|
| $\text{H} + \text{O}_2 \rightleftharpoons \text{OH} + \text{O}$ | 3.52×10^{16} | -0.7 | 71.42 |
| $\text{H}_2 + \text{O} \rightleftharpoons \text{OH} + \text{H}$ | 5.06×10^4 | 2.67 | 26.32 |
| $\text{H}_2 + \text{OH} \rightleftharpoons \text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{H}$ | 1.17×10^9 | 1.3 | 15.21 |
| $\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{O} \rightleftharpoons 2\text{OH}$ | 7.06×10^0 | 3.84 | 53.47 |
| $2\text{H} + \text{M} \rightleftharpoons \text{H}_2 + \text{M}^b$ | 1.30×10^{18} | -1.0 | 0.0 |
| $\text{H} + \text{OH} + \text{M} \rightleftharpoons \text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{M}^b$ | 4.00×10^{22} | -2.0 | 0.0 |
| $2\text{O} + \text{M} \rightleftharpoons \text{O}_2 + \text{M}^b$ | 6.17×10^{15} | -0.5 | 0.0 |
| $\text{H} + \text{O} + \text{M} \rightleftharpoons \text{OH} + \text{M}^b$ | 4.71×10^{18} | -1.0 | 0.0 |
| $\text{O} + \text{OH} + \text{M} \rightleftharpoons \text{HO}_2 + \text{M}^b$ | 8.30×10^{14} | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| $\text{H} + \text{O}_2 + \text{M} \rightleftharpoons \text{HO}_2 + \text{M}^c$ | 5.75×10^{19} | -1.4 | 0.0 |
| | k_0 | | |
| | k_∞ | | |
| $\text{HO}_2 + \text{H} \rightleftharpoons 2\text{OH}$ | 7.08×10^{13} | 0.0 | 1.23 |
| $\text{HO}_2 + \text{H} \rightleftharpoons \text{H}_2 + \text{O}_2$ | 1.66×10^{13} | 0.0 | 3.44 |
| $\text{HO}_2 + \text{H} \rightleftharpoons \text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{O}$ | 3.10×10^{13} | 0.0 | 7.20 |
| $\text{HO}_2 + \text{O} \rightleftharpoons \text{OH} + \text{O}_2$ | 2.00×10^{13} | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| $\text{HO}_2 + \text{OH} \rightleftharpoons \text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{O}_2$ | 2.89×10^{13} | 0.0 | -2.08 |
| $2\text{OH} + \text{M} \rightleftharpoons \text{H}_2\text{O}_2 + \text{M}^d$ | 2.30×10^{18} | -0.9 | -7.12 |
| | k_0 | | |
| | k_∞ | | |
| $2\text{HO}_2 \rightleftharpoons \text{H}_2\text{O}_2 + \text{O}_2$ | 3.02×10^{12} | 0.0 | 5.8 |
| $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2 + \text{H} \rightleftharpoons \text{HO}_2 + \text{H}_2$ | 4.79×10^{13} | 0.0 | 33.3 |
| $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2 + \text{H} \rightleftharpoons \text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{OH}$ | 1.00×10^{13} | 0.0 | 15.0 |
| $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2 + \text{OH} \rightleftharpoons \text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{HO}_2$ | 7.08×10^{12} | 0.0 | 6.0 |
| $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2 + \text{O} \rightleftharpoons \text{HO}_2 + \text{OH}$ | 9.63×10^6 | 2.0 | 16.7 |

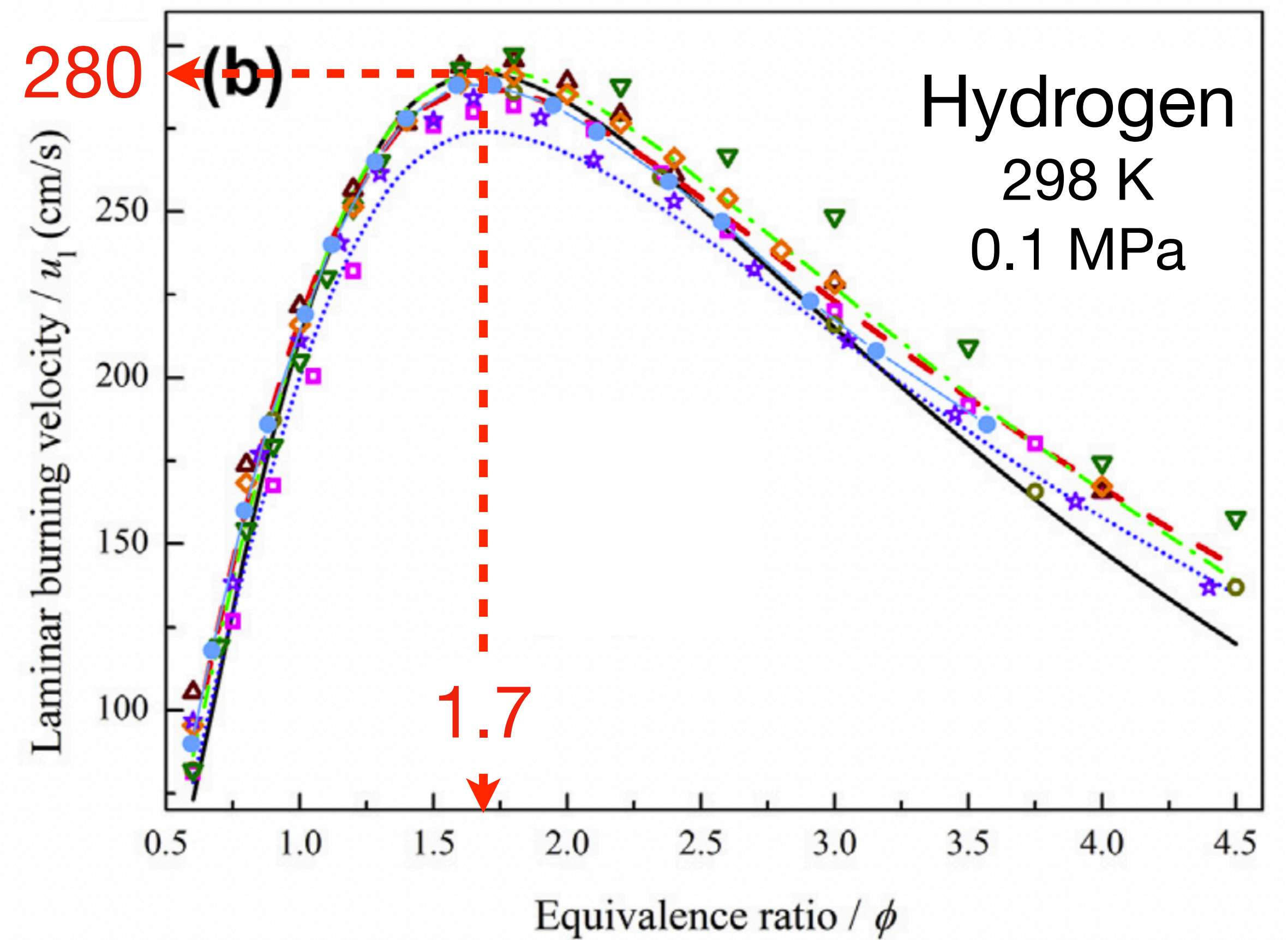
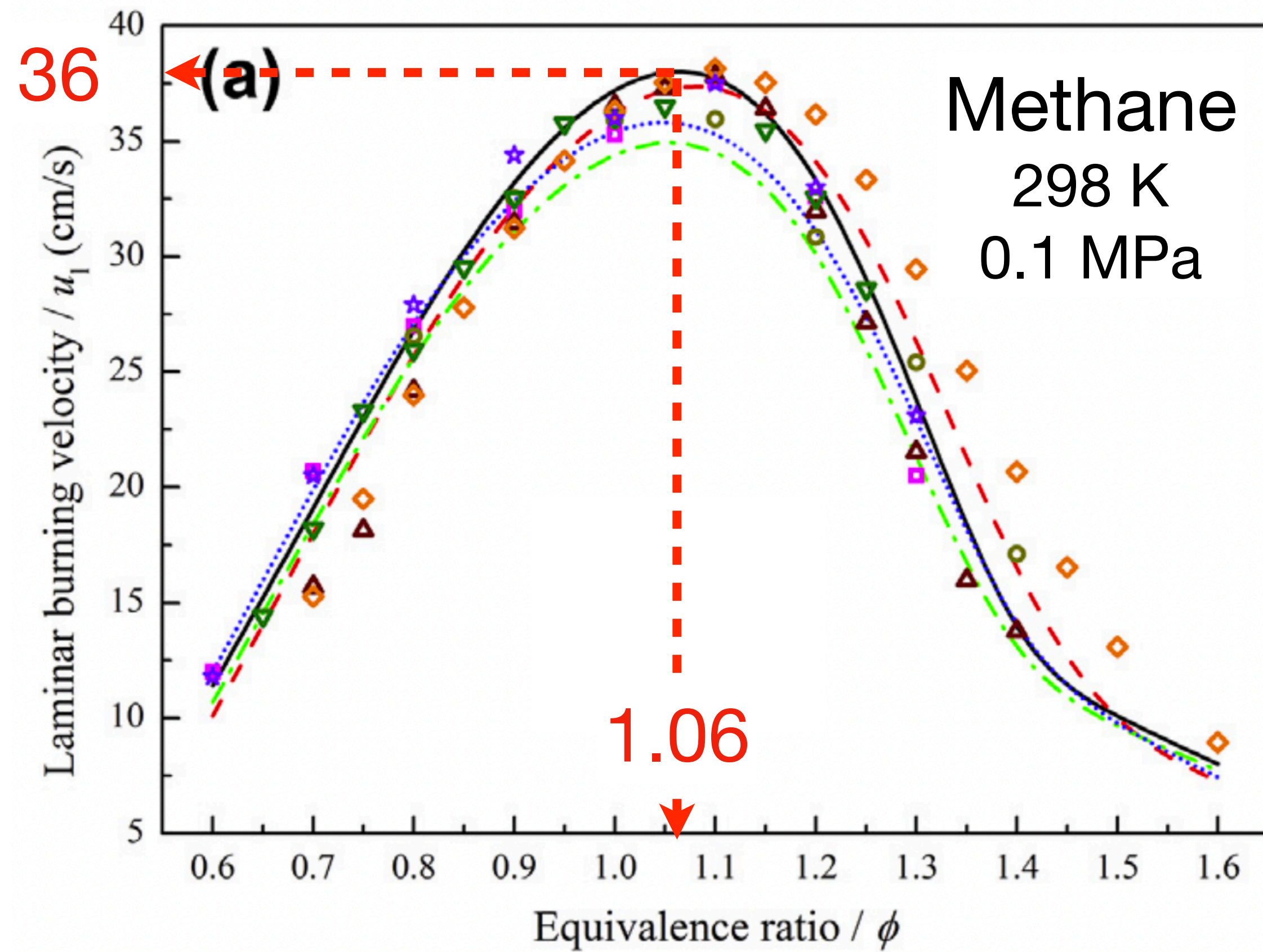
A peculiar fuel

- Chemistry is (fairly) simple: 8 species (plus NOx)
- Diffusion** is much faster than for other fuels (Small molecule) => modelling issues for laminar and turbulent flames (cf. Talk by Thierry Poinsot).
- Highly reactive: fast flame; large flammability limits; flame very hard to quench; transition to detonation
- Thermo-diffusive instability => flame wrinkling and acceleration
- Invisible flame: no light in visible spectra!
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Flame speed

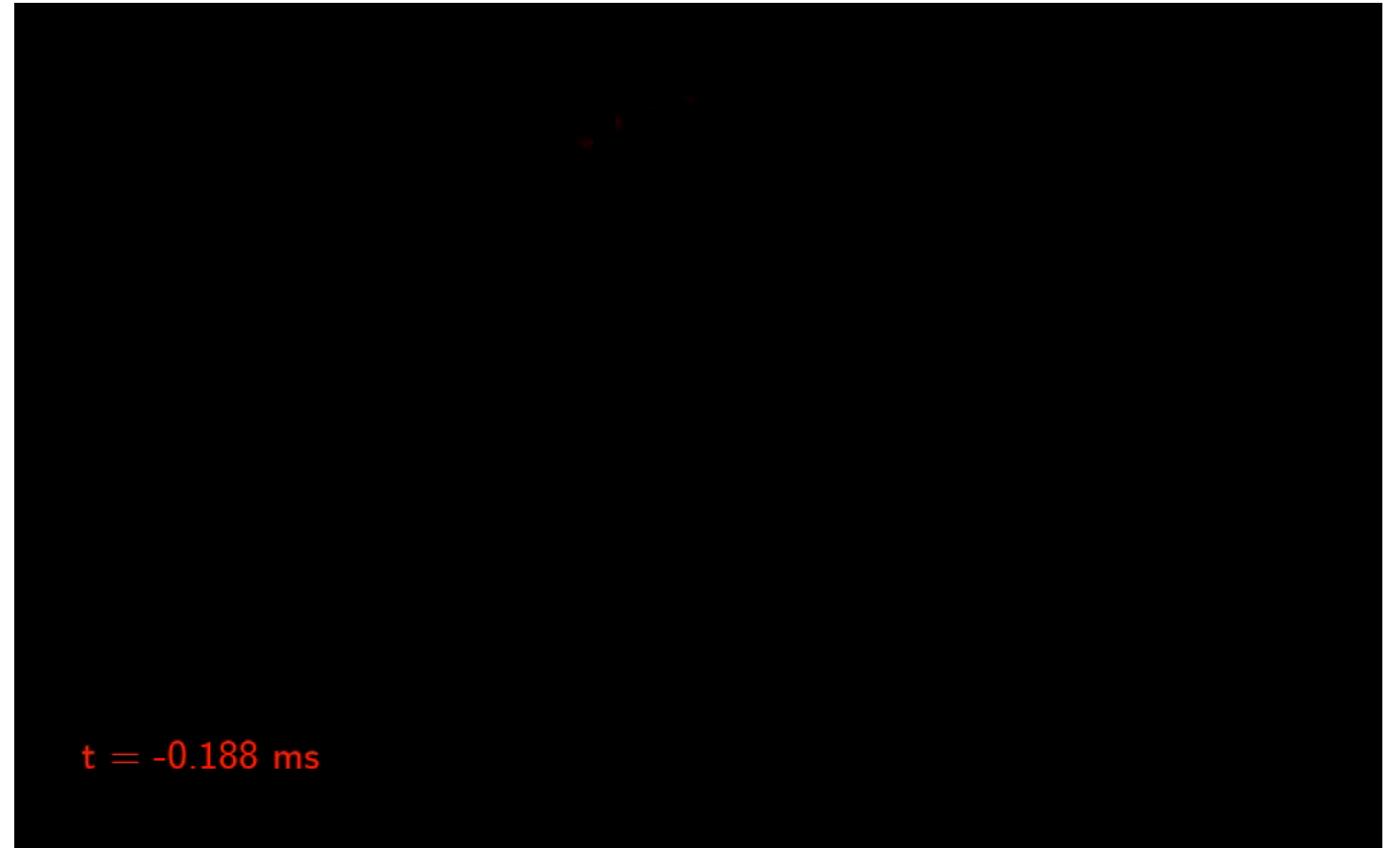
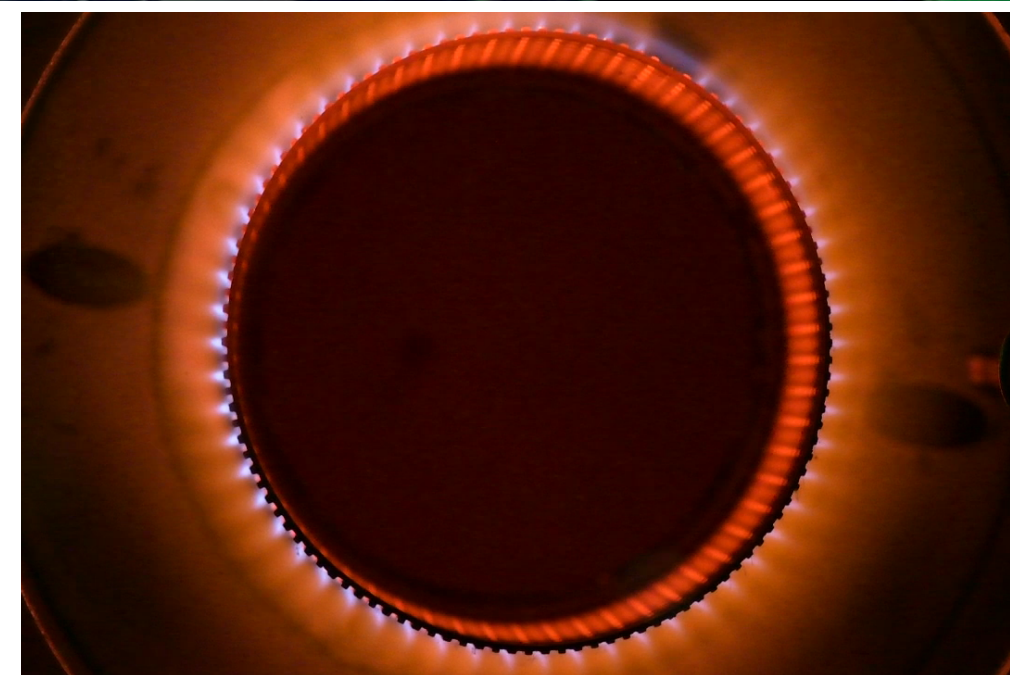
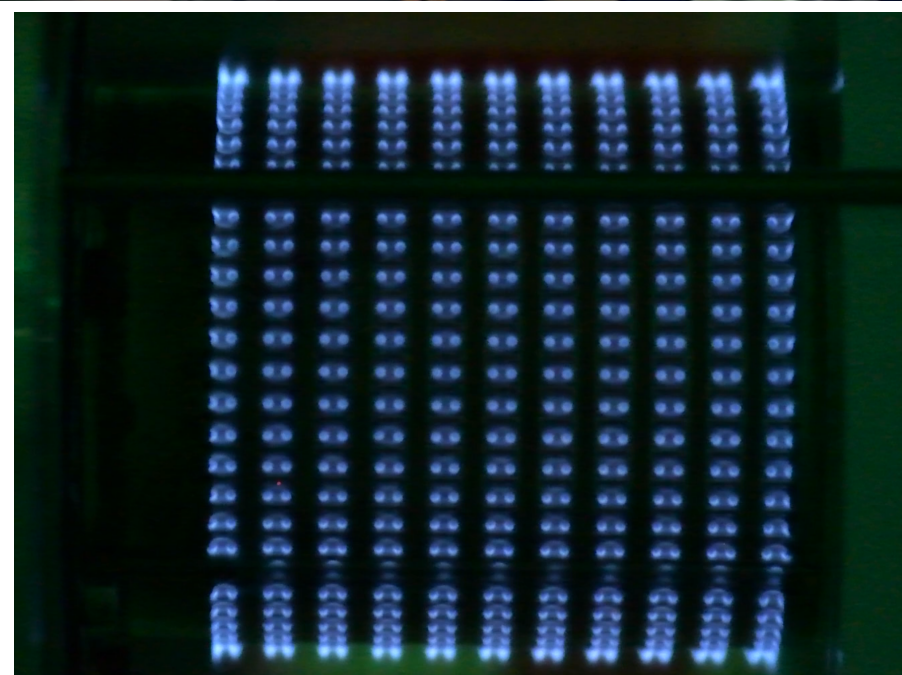
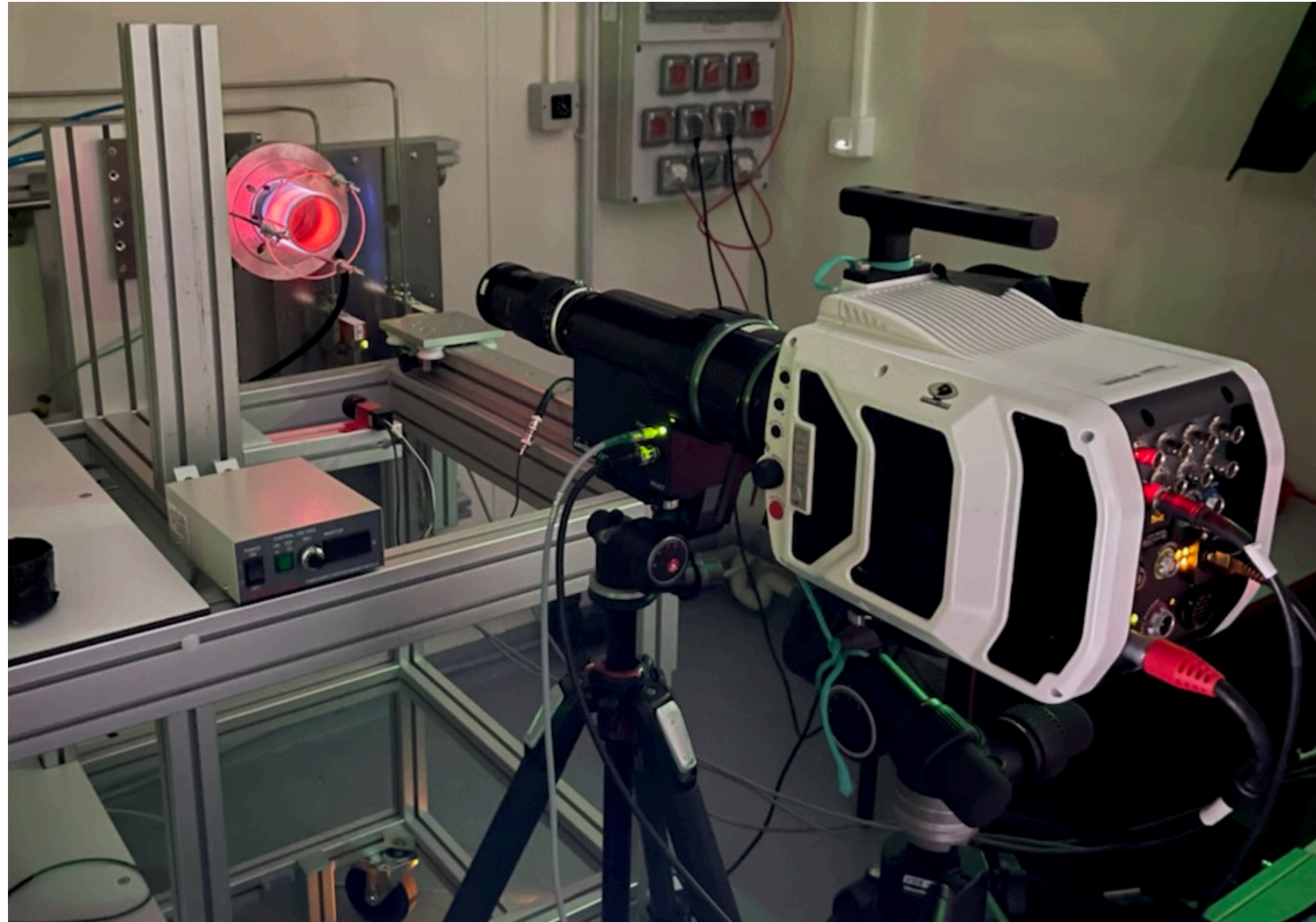


Comparison with methane

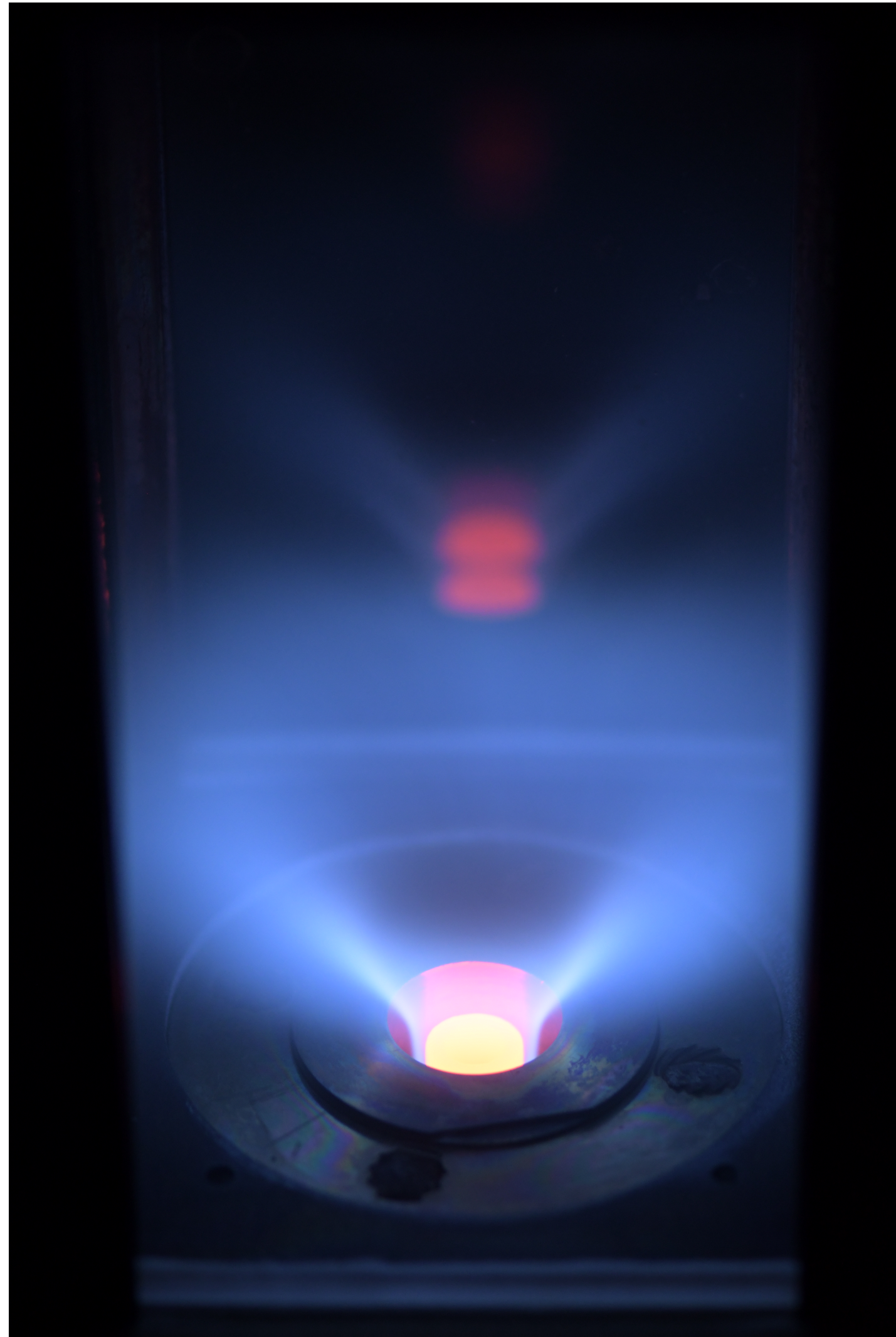
Table 1 – Physical properties of hydrogen and natural gas (293.15 K/101.325 kPa).

| Parameter | Hydrogen | Natural gas (85%/CH ₄) |
|------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------|
| Density (STP, g/L) | 0.089 | 0.717 |
| MIE (in air, mJ) | 0.017 | 0.31 |
| Flammable limits (in air, %) | 4–75 | 5–15 |
| Energy density (LHV, MJ/kg) | 119.96 | 50.07 |
| Boiling point (°C) | –253 | –162 |
| Ignition temperature (°C) | 574 | 650 |
| Burning velocity (m/s) | 2.65–3.25 | 0.38 |

Flashback



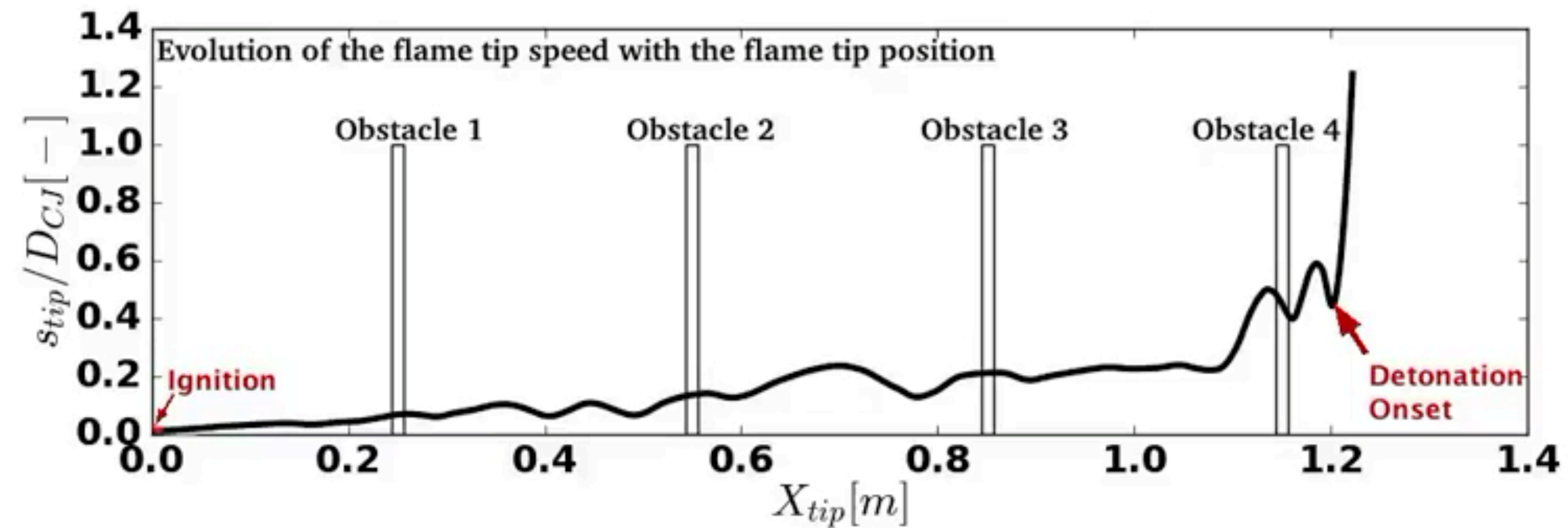
Heat fluxes



Transition to detonation



https://youtu.be/s_unWtCE_Jo

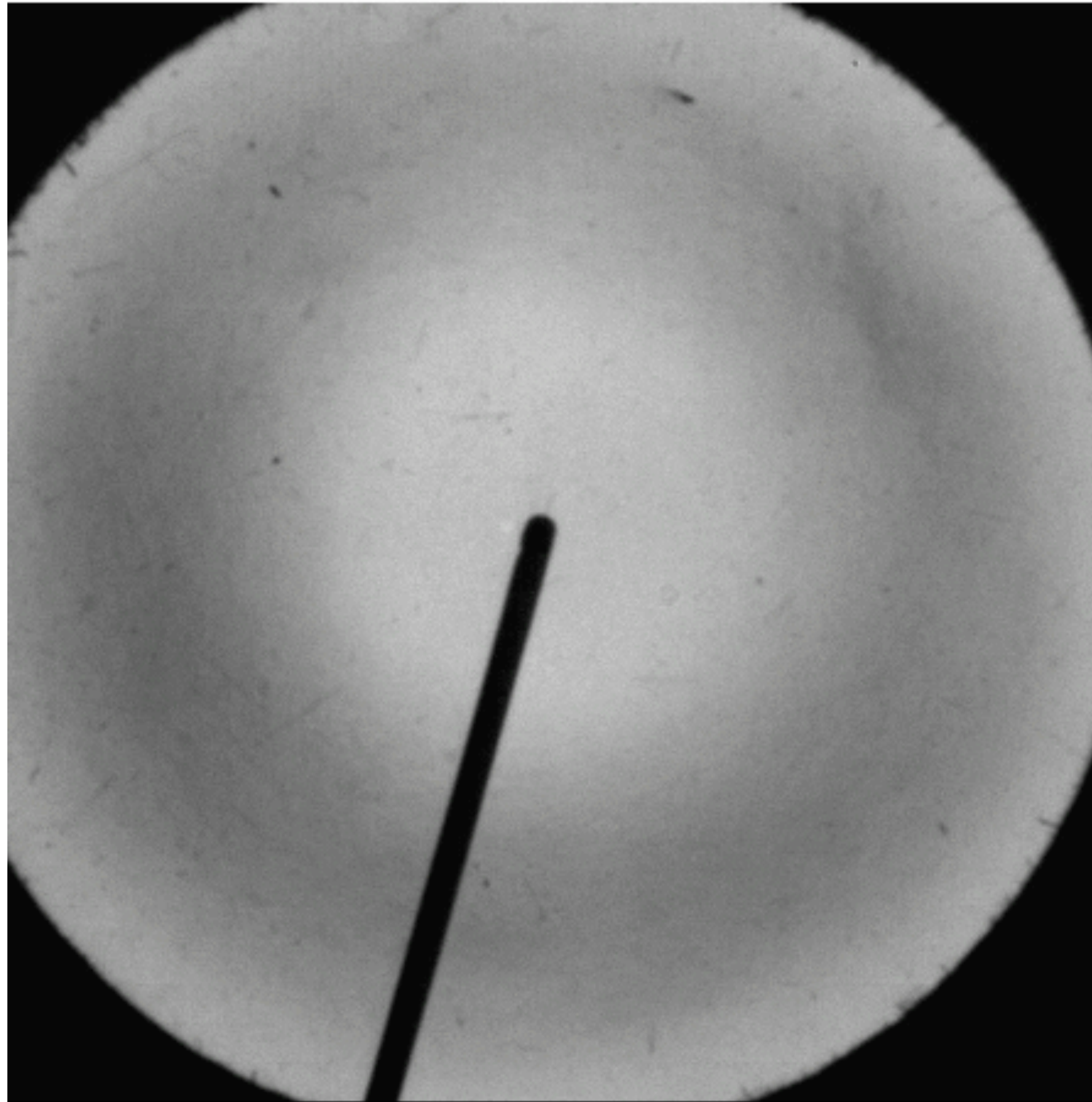


A peculiar fuel

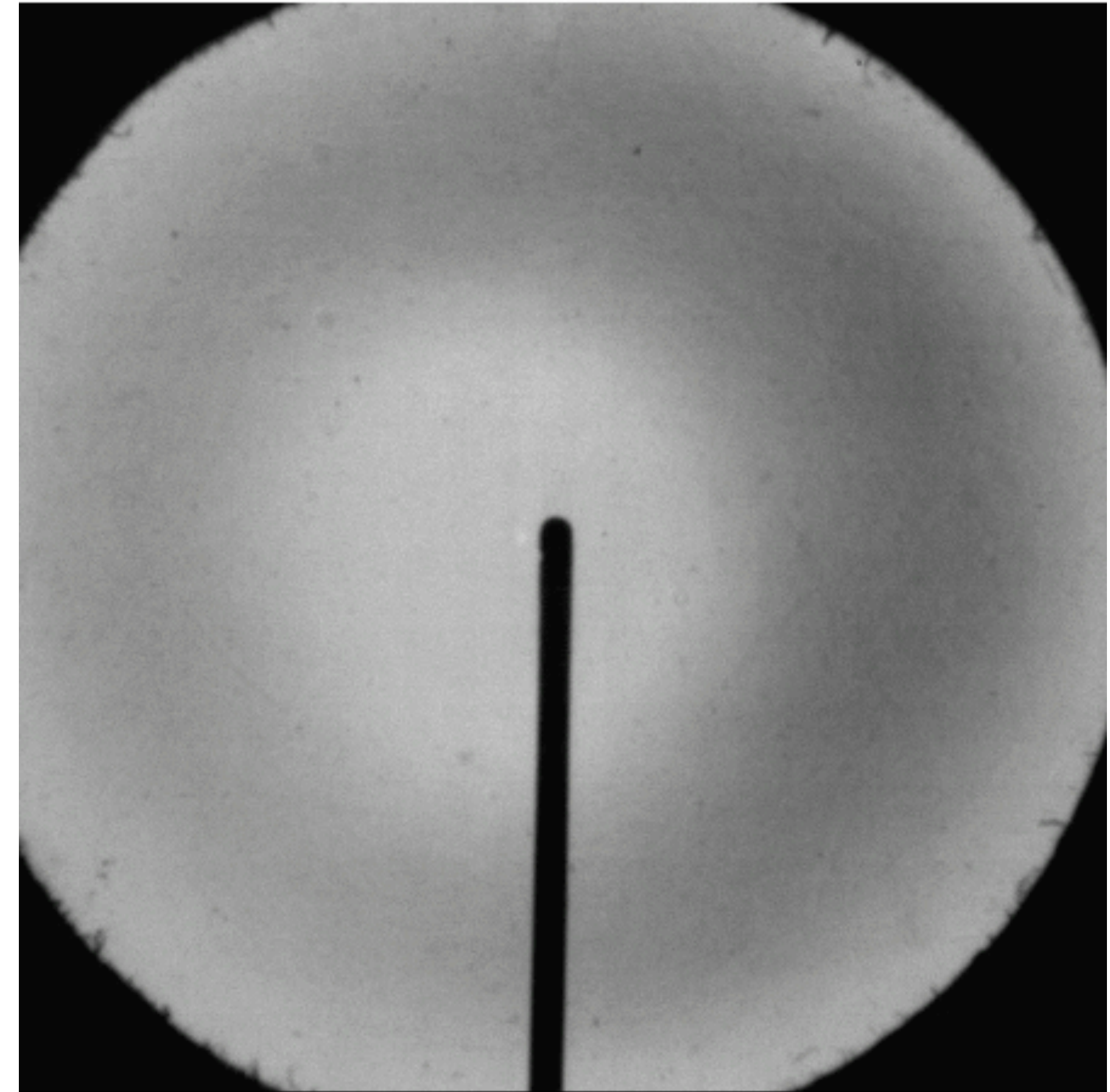
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Thermodiffusive instabilities

CH₄ @ $\phi = 0.8$ - Duration 30 ms

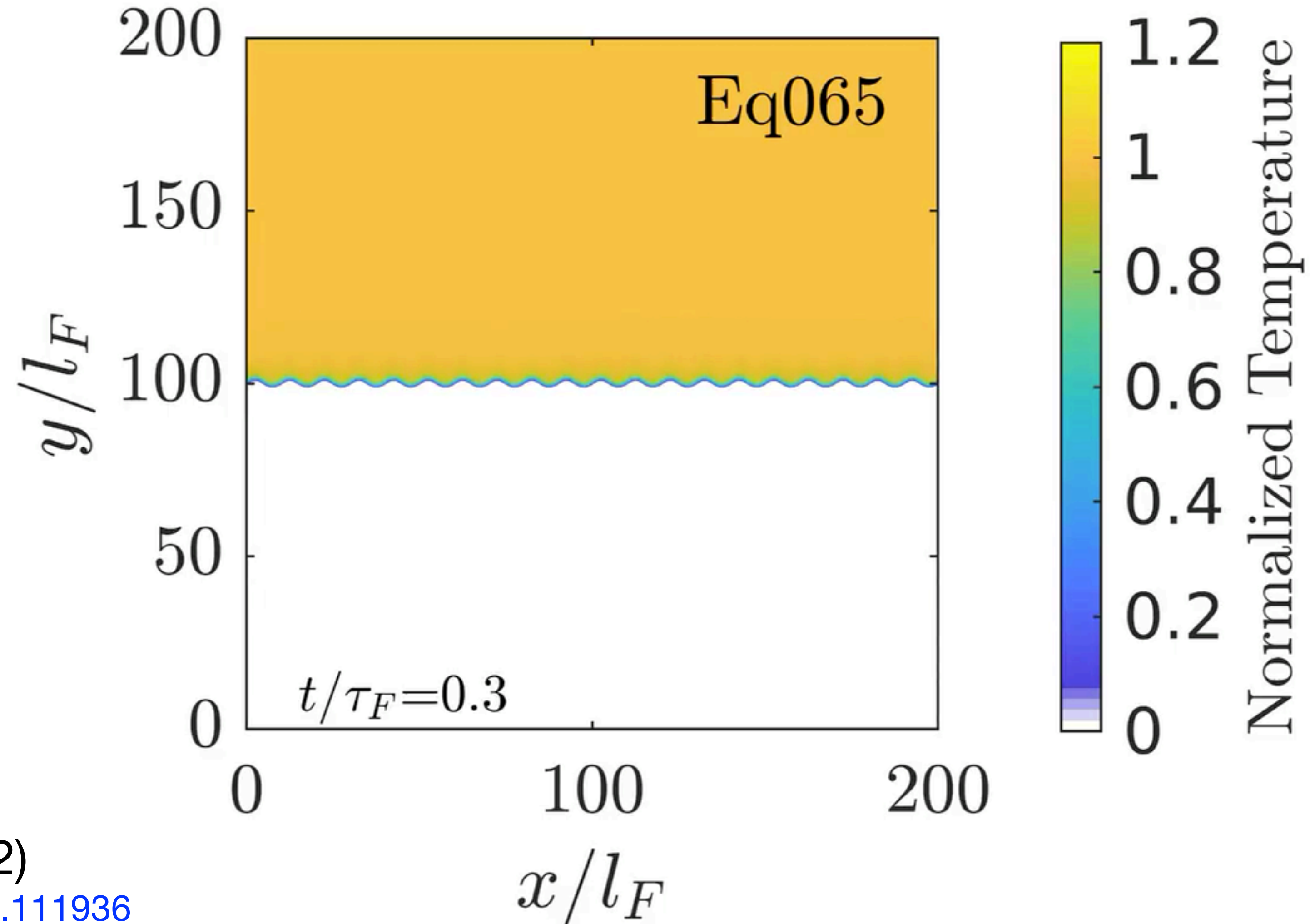


H₂ @ $\phi = 0.6$ - Duration 4 ms



Movies courtesy of H. Pitsch: Beeckmann et al. (2017) ([10.1016/j.proci.2016.06.194](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.proci.2016.06.194))

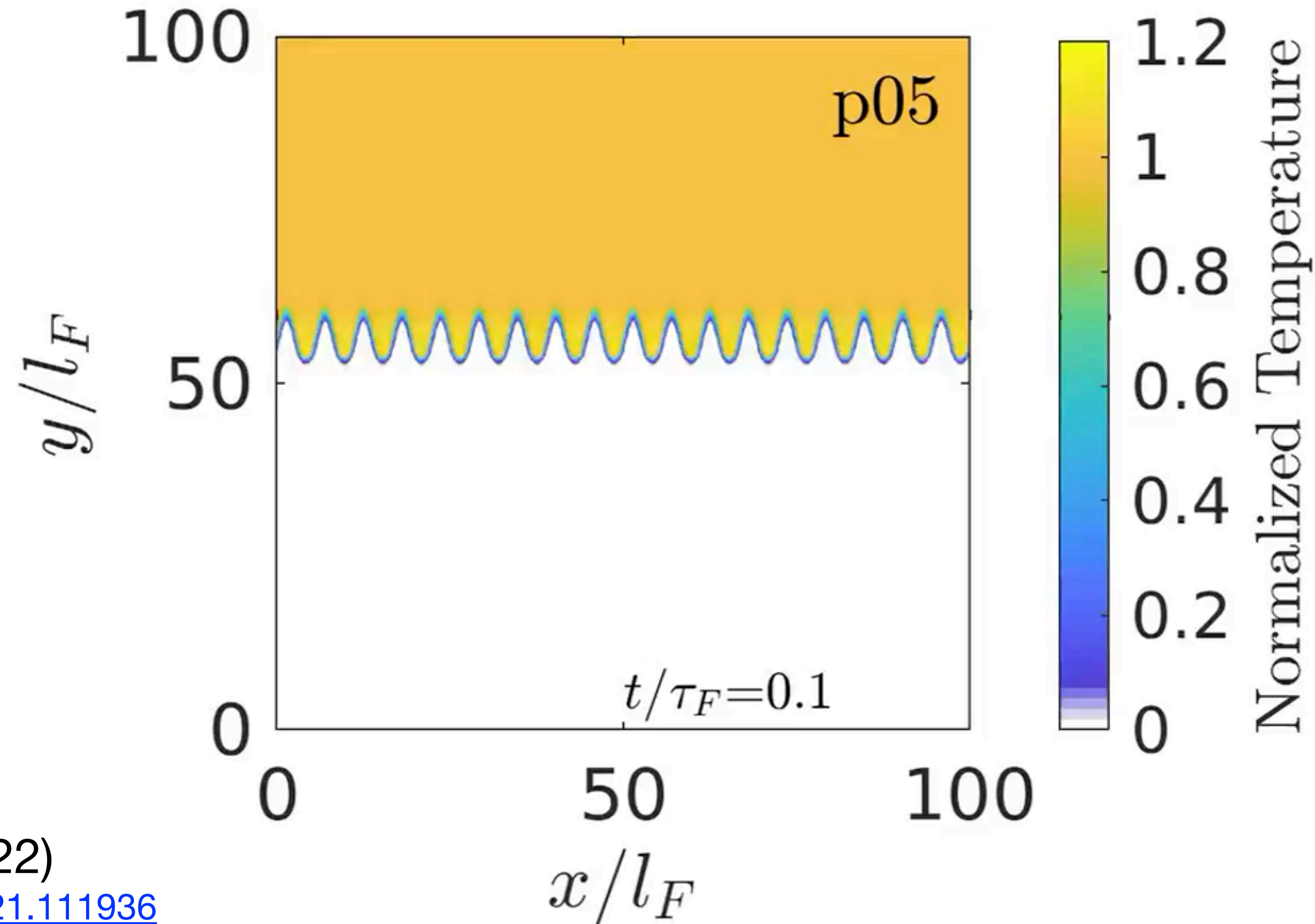
Thermodiffusive instabilities



Berger et al. (2022)

[10.1016/j.combustflame.2021.111936](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.combustflame.2021.111936)

Thermodiffusive instabilities



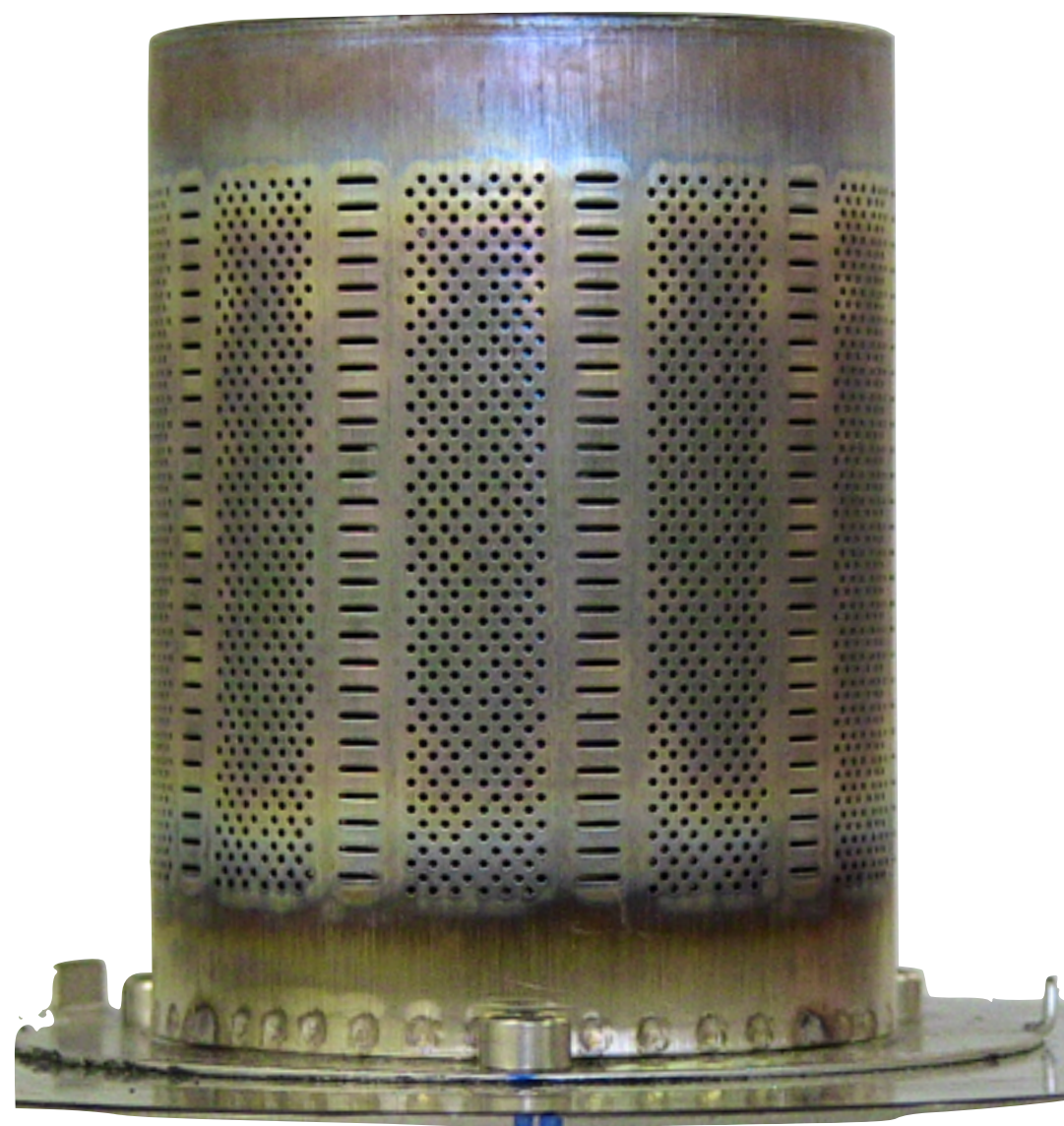
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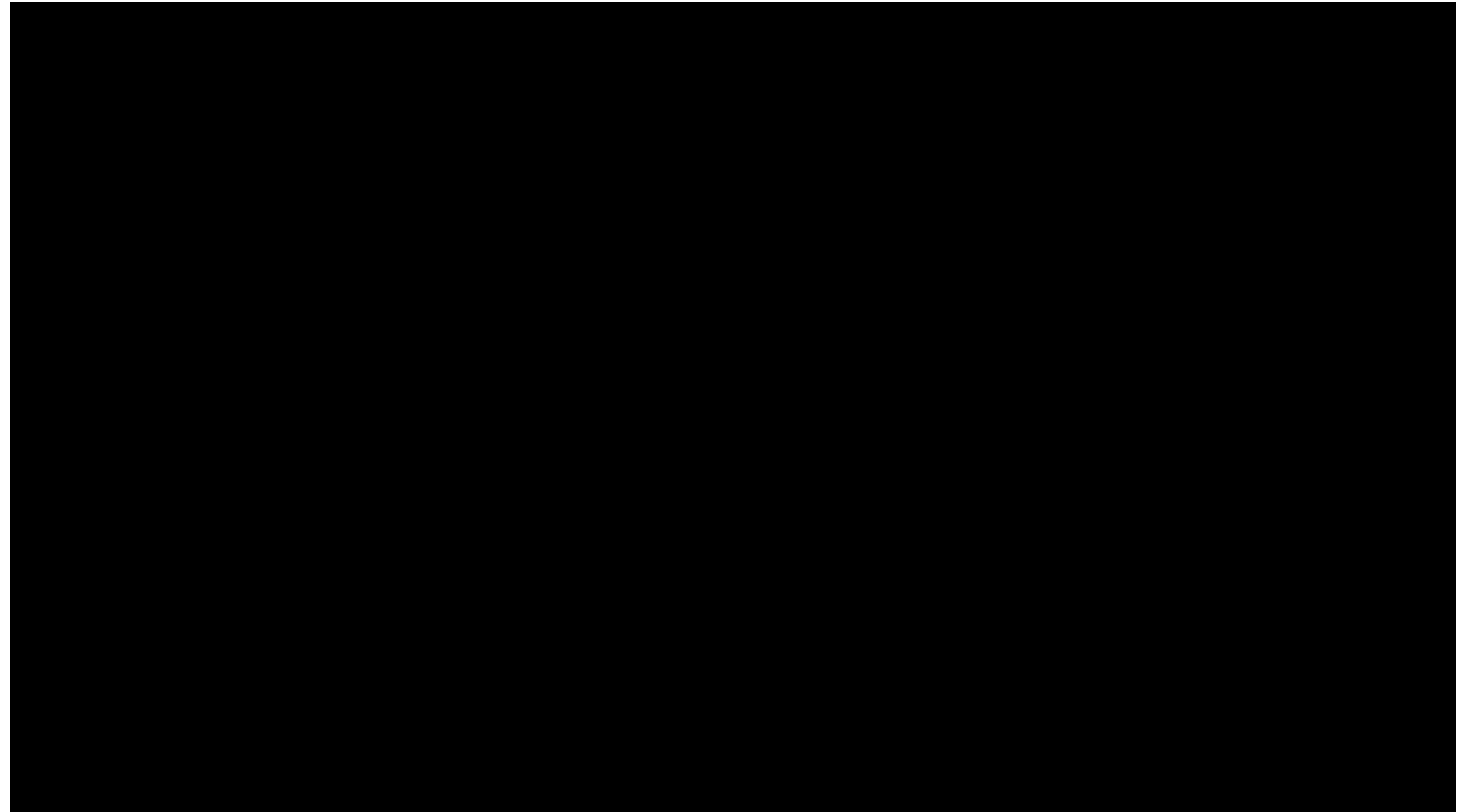
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Light emission



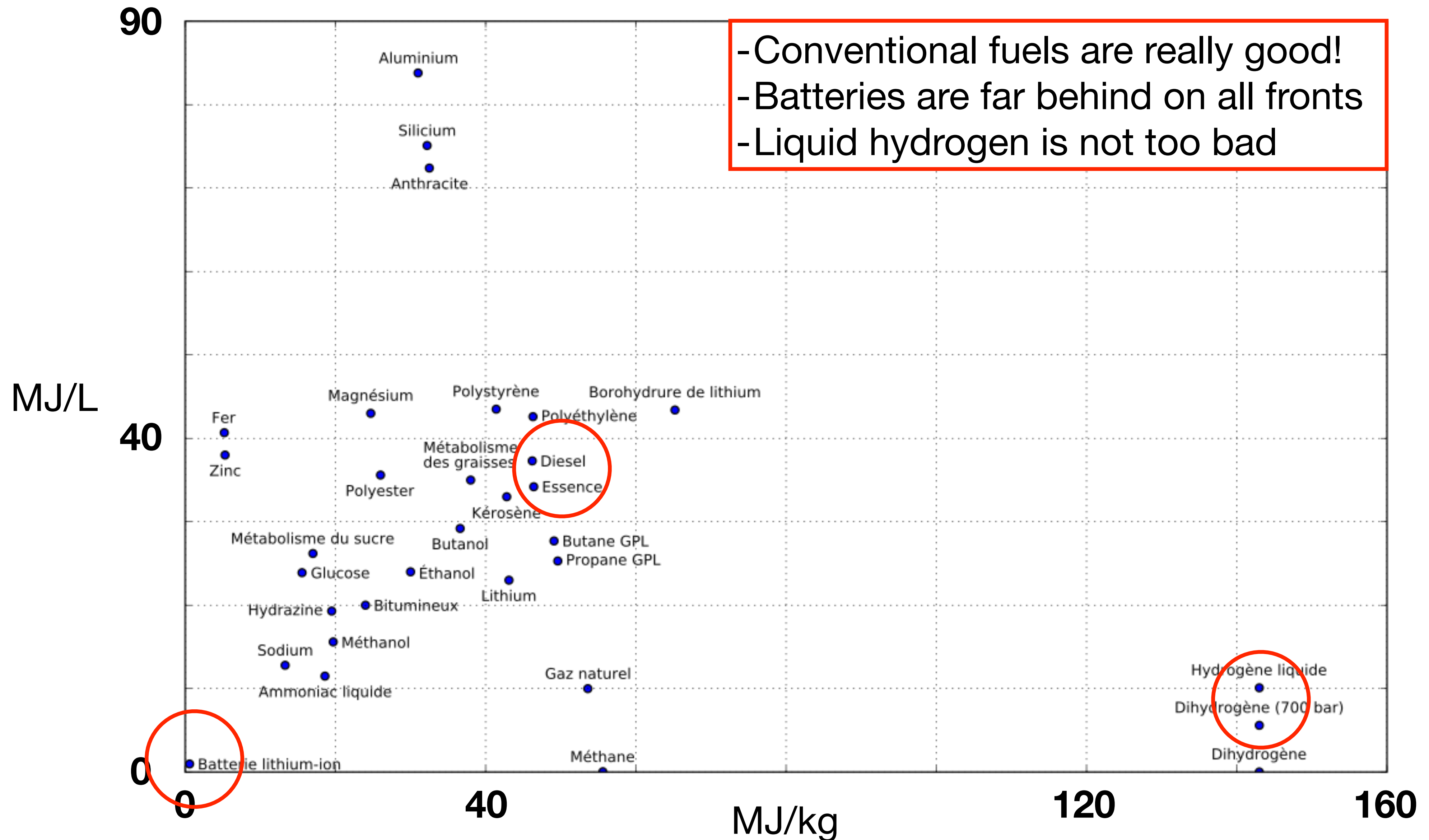
Domestic heater burner
(Furipat)

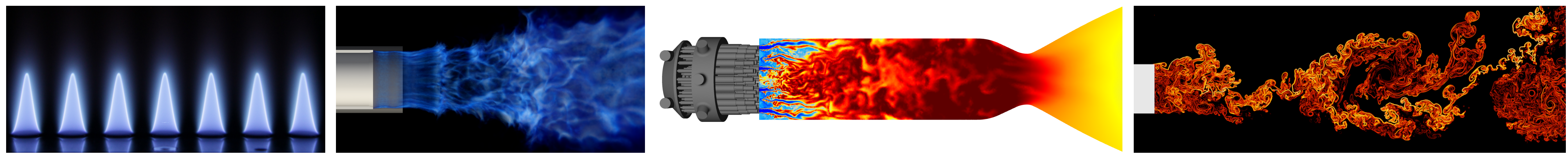


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Energy density





Hydrogen Combustion

H₂ in gas turbines

In the lab - Micromix

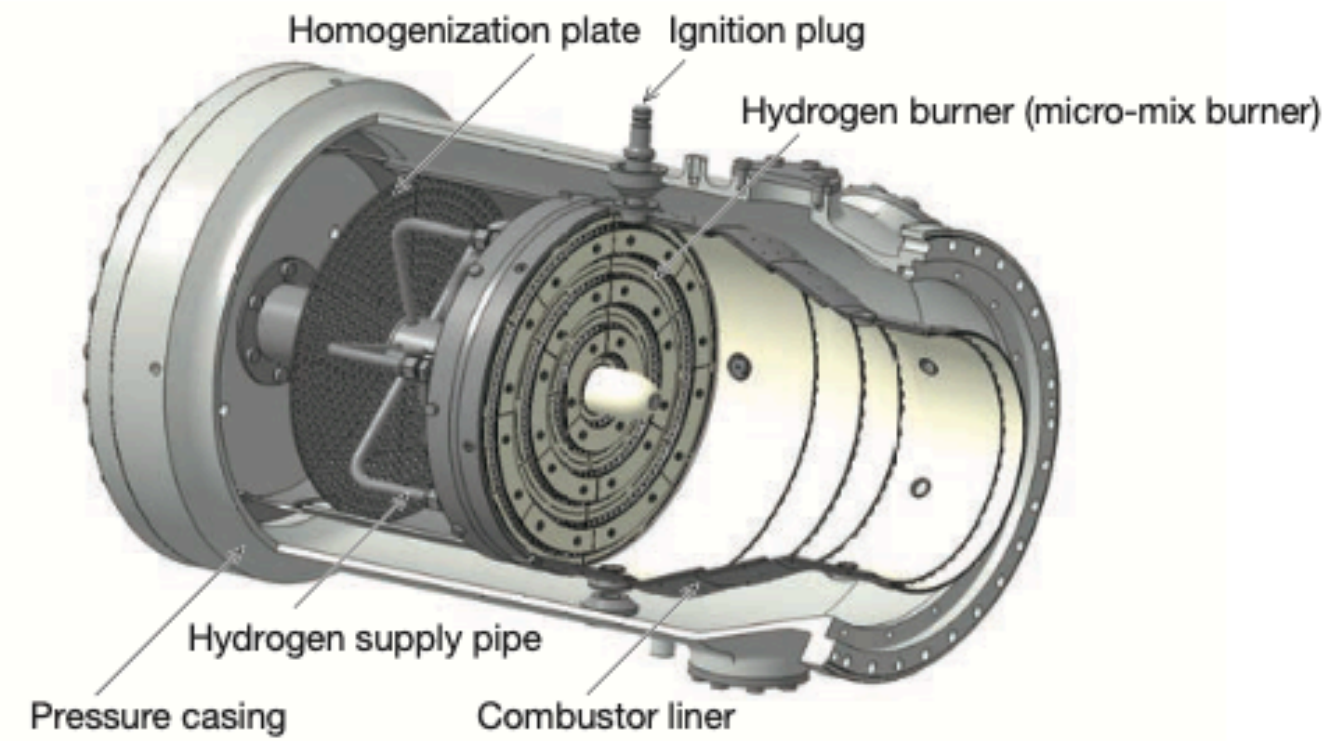
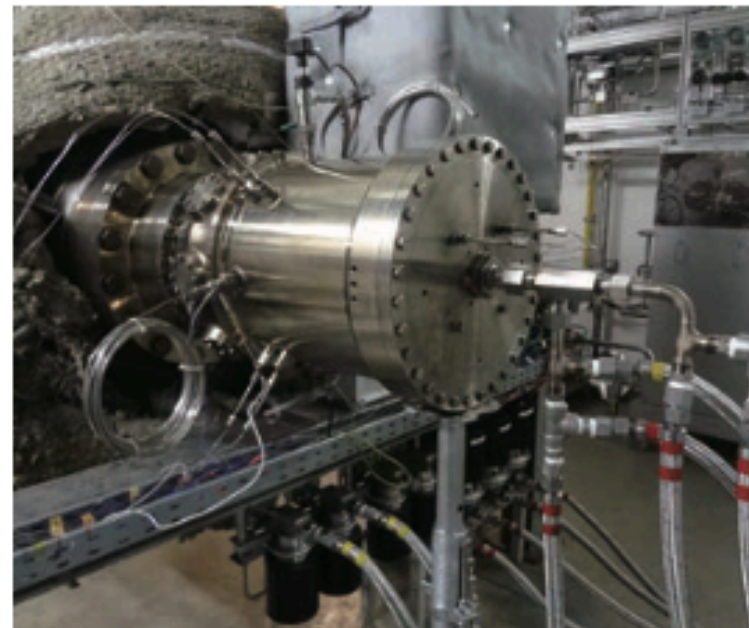


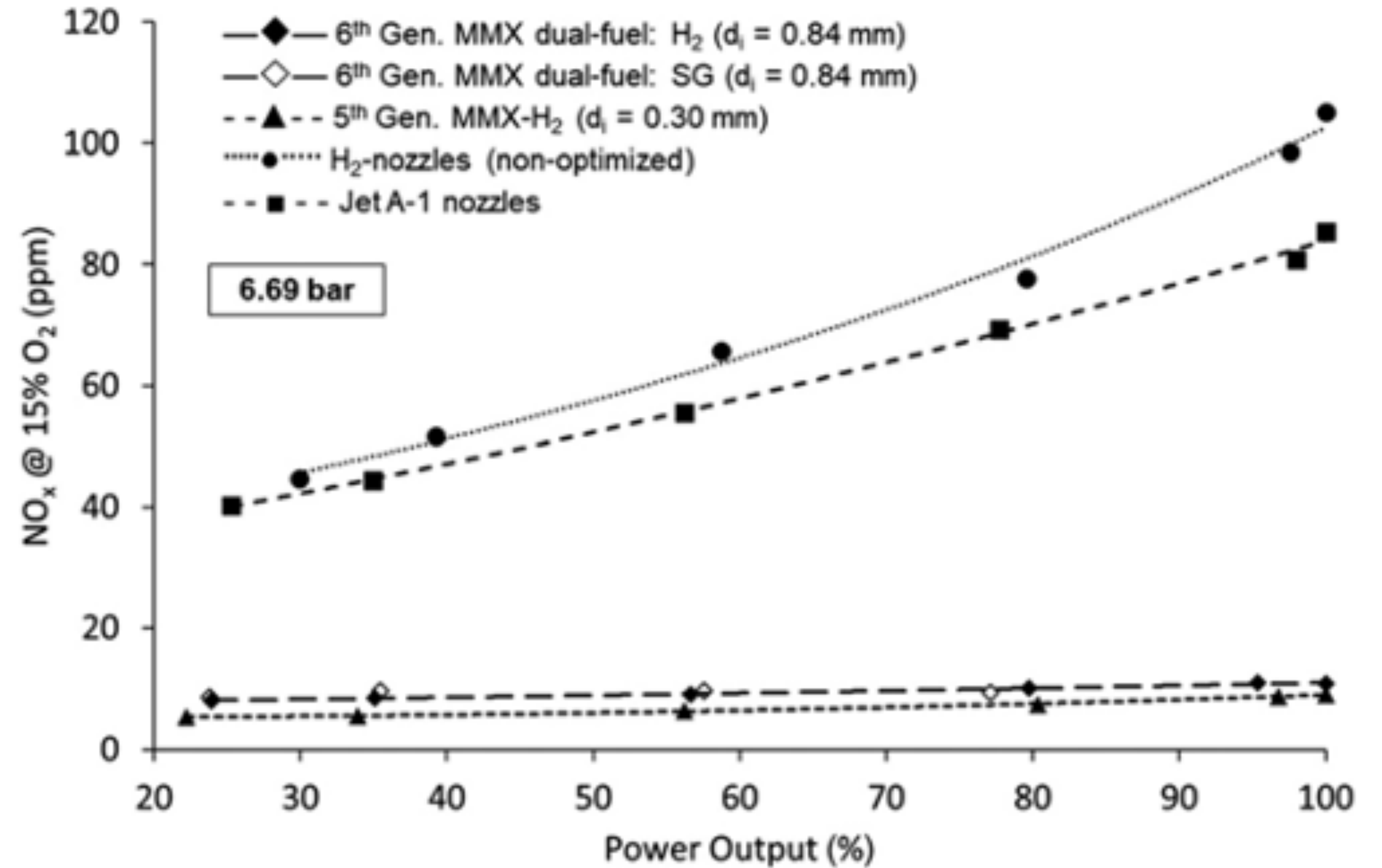
Fig. 7 Hydrogen dry low NOx combustor for 2MW class gas turbine



(a) Trial combustor



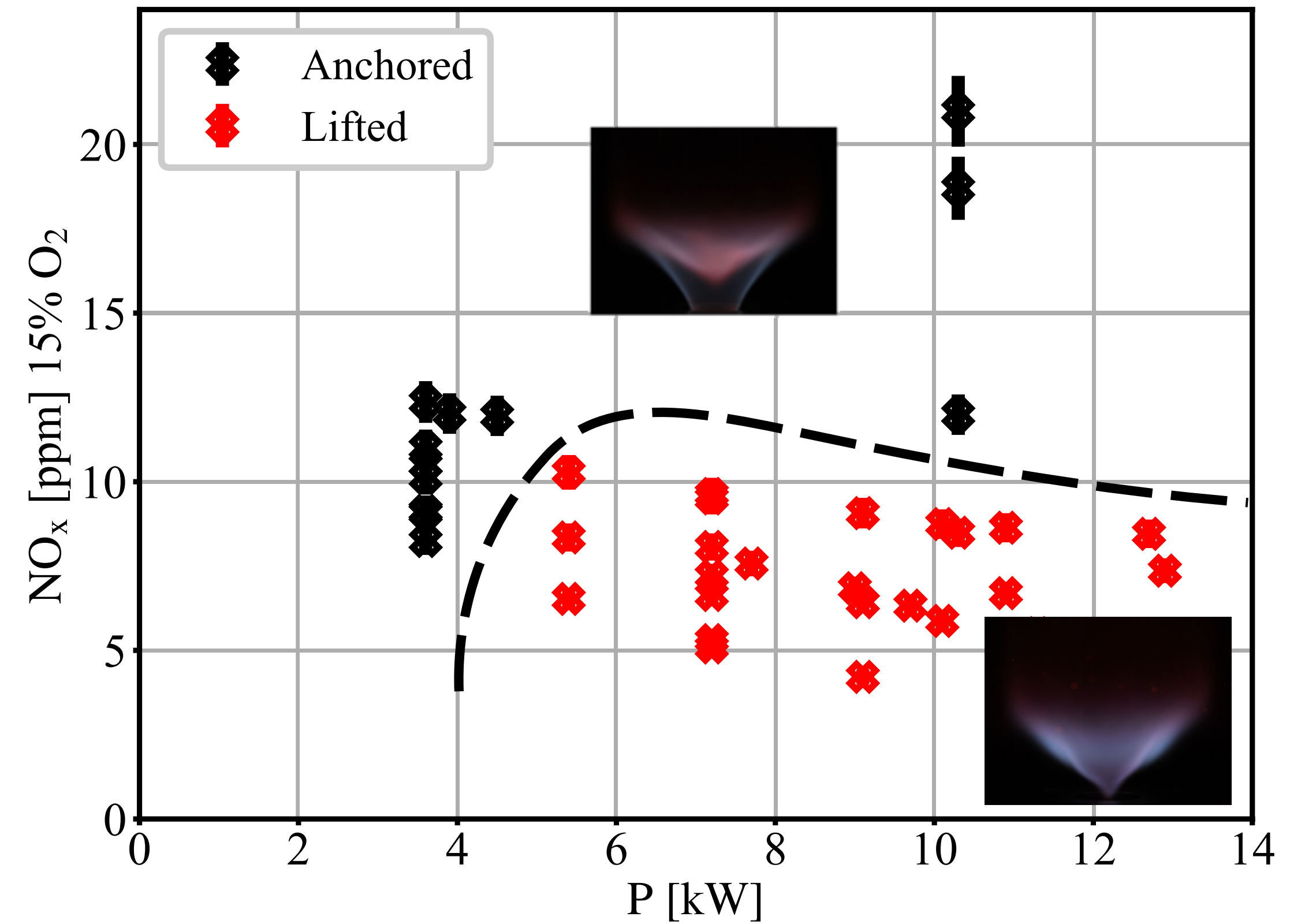
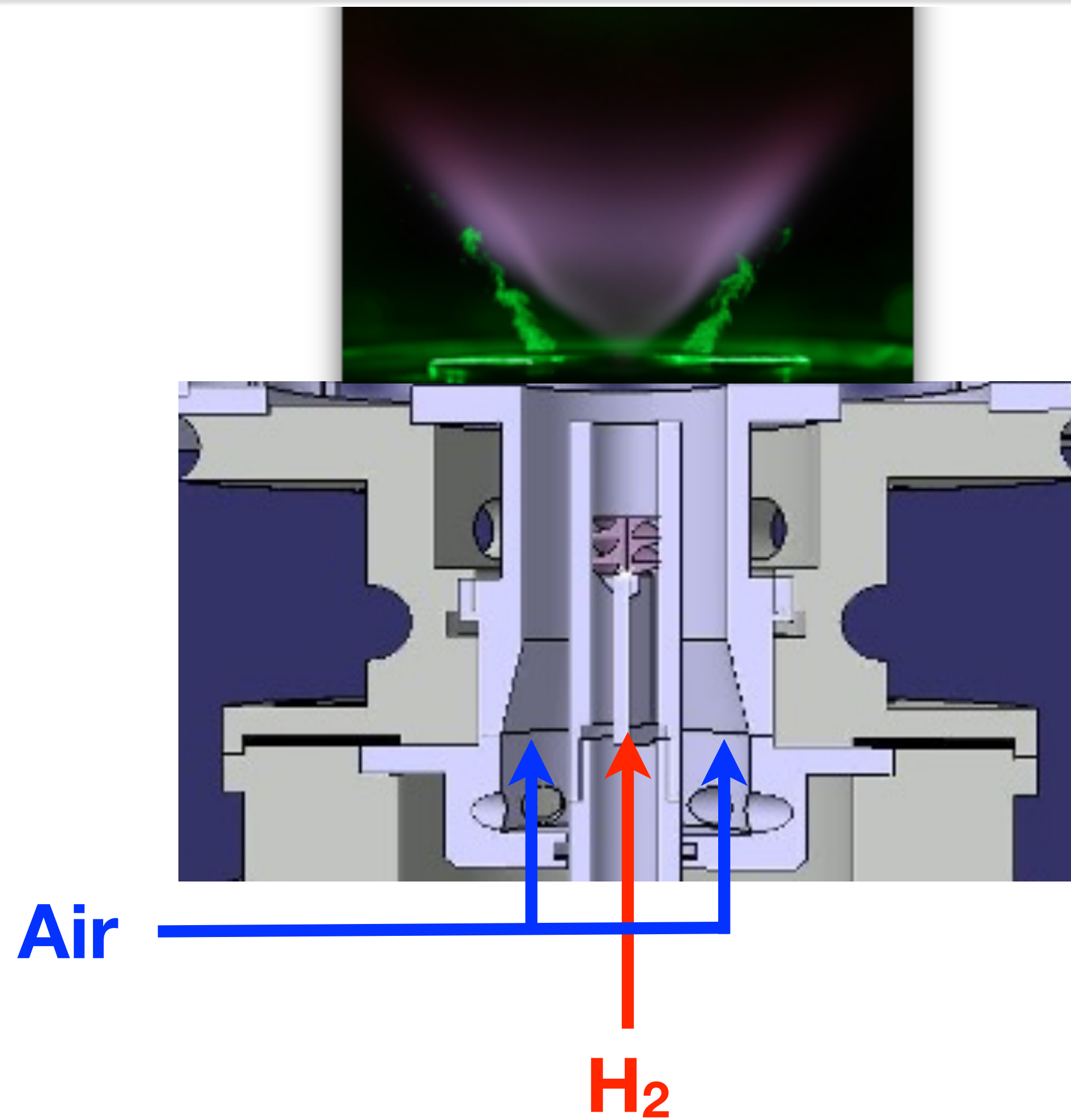
(b) Inside of combustor in design condition equivalent



Micromix concept: Kawasaki prototype for power generation

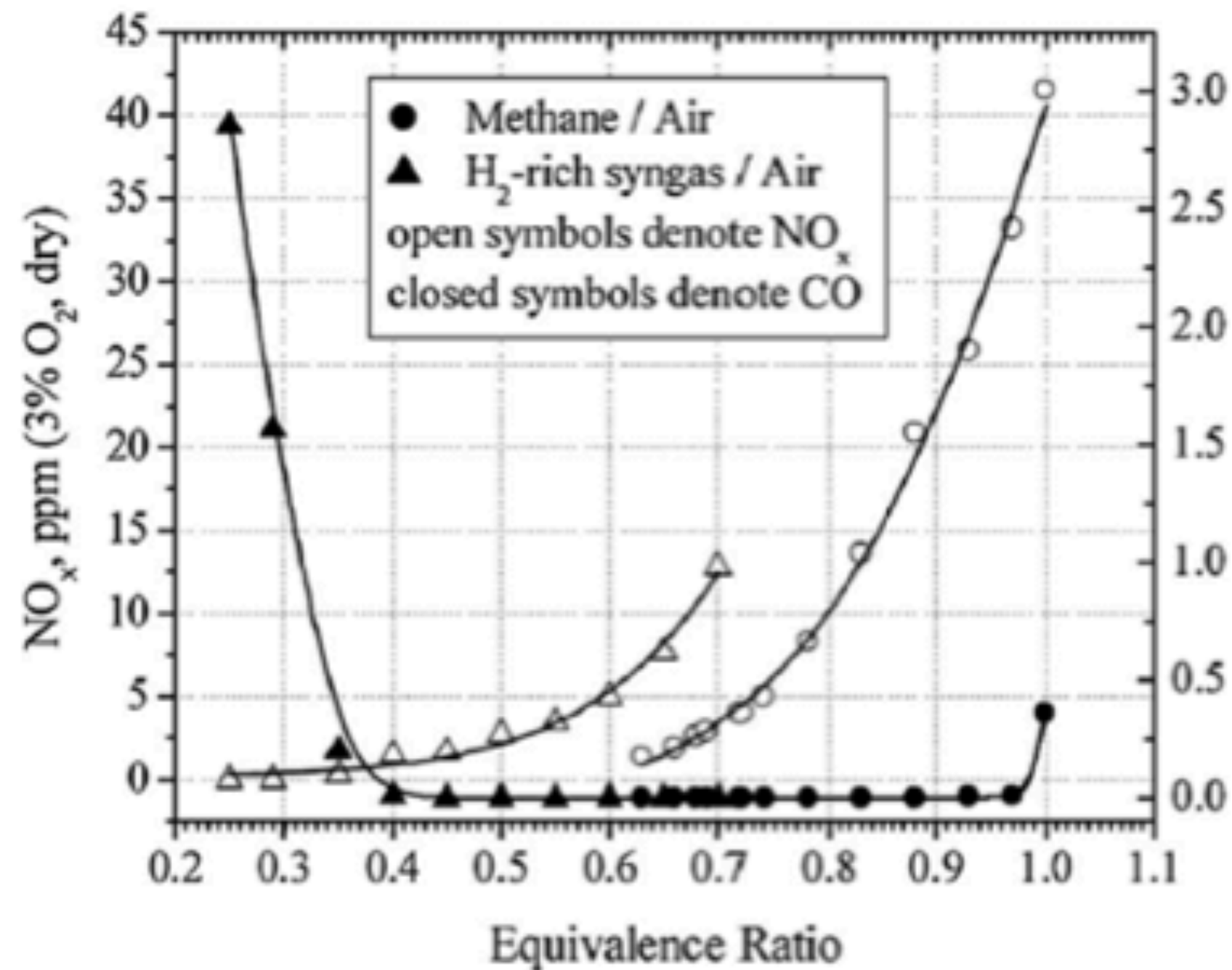
NOx < 20 ppm

In the lab - Hylon



Hylon burner developed @IMFT (Patented with Safran)

In GT - NO_x control



Generally speaking, three methods have been used to reduce NO_x emissions from gas turbine power plants:

- **premixed combustion**, including catalytic combustion,
- **fuel dilution**, mostly by **steam**, water or **nitrogen**,
- **removal** from exhaust gases.

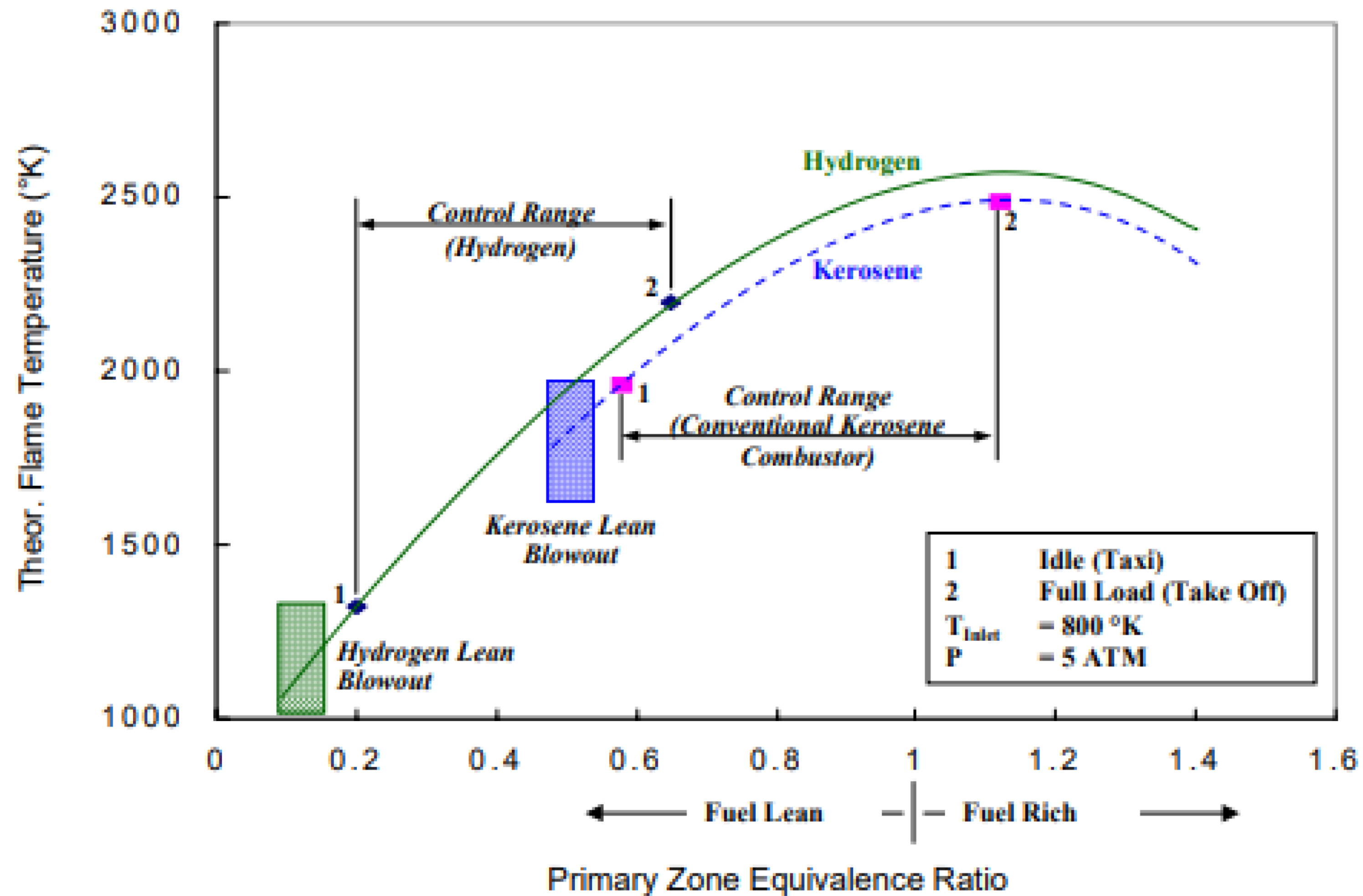
For natural gas applications, the first technique is the preferred one: at present, the “dry low-emission” combustors are proposed by manufacturers for virtually any gas turbine model. Their basic principle is to **achieve a moderate flame temperature** by forcing more air than stoichiometric in the primary zone; this is obtained by mixing air to fuel before the combustion.

In GT - Effect on turbomachinery

Compared to natural gas, **hydrogen combustion leads to a lower mass flow rate and to a different composition of the product gases**, with an higher water content that in turn influences the molecular weight and the specific heat of the mixture. The most relevant effects on the operation of a gas turbine are:

- a variation of the **enthalpy drop** in the expansion,
- a variation of the **flow rate** at the turbine inlet which, in turn, affects the turbine/compressor matching,
- a variation of the **heat-transfer** coefficient on the outer side of the turbine blades, affecting the **cooling** system performance.

In GT - Temperature



<https://doi.org/10.3390/app11093873>

Tupolev TU-155



April 15th 1988

One of the 3 Kuznetsov NK-8 engines ran on H₂ (modified version NK-88)

Production version (Tu-156): 1/3 of the cabin = H₂ tank (cf. photos)

Problem: look where the fuel was stored (cf. video)

<http://blog.privatejetfinder.com/tu-155-hydrogen/>

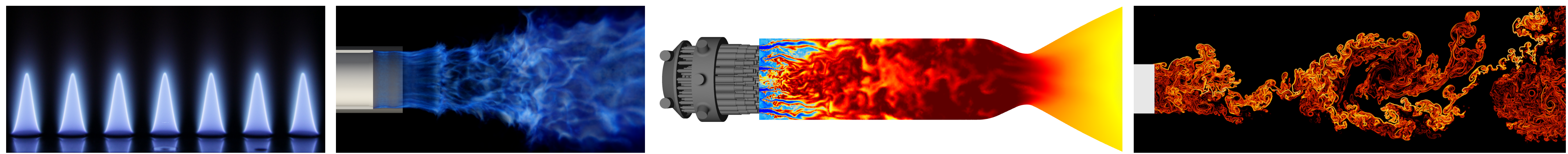
Tupolev TU-155



Rolls-Royce and EasyJet



<https://www.rolls-royce.com/media/press-releases/2022/28-11-2022-rr-and-easyjet-set-new-aviation-world-first-with-successful-hydrogen-engine-run.aspx>



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