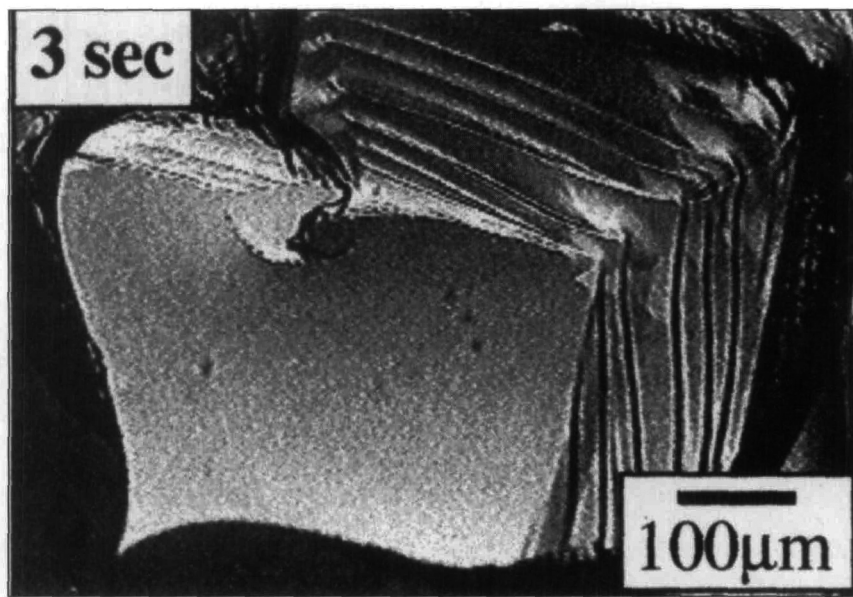


## EDITOR'S CHOICE

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How many times over the past decade have we been told that high-temperature cuprate superconductors are the best thing since sliced bread? Well as incredible as that claim may have seemed, this month's EDITOR'S CHOICE brings us clear evidence that they can at least look like sliced bread. The particular loaf pictured here was baked up by D.K. Aswal et al. who divulge their recipe in *J. Crystal Growth* 193 (1998) p. 61, and a rather unusual recipe it is. They place their mixture of ingredients ( $\text{NdBa}_2\text{Cu}_3\text{O}_x$  and  $\text{Ba}_3\text{Cu}_{10}\text{O}_{13}$  in just the right proportions) on a single crystal  $\text{MgO}$  baking plate and insert it into an infrared radiative  $1200^\circ\text{C}$   $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  crucible oven for 20 minutes. After letting the oven cool at  $5^\circ\text{C}$  per minute, not only does the baked loaf appear, but it appears already sliced. In point of fact, this stacked single crystal of Nd-123 superconductor that grew from the melt is not safe for human consumption. But that's no great loss given that the length scale marker shows us that this morsel could hardly satisfy a healthy appetite.

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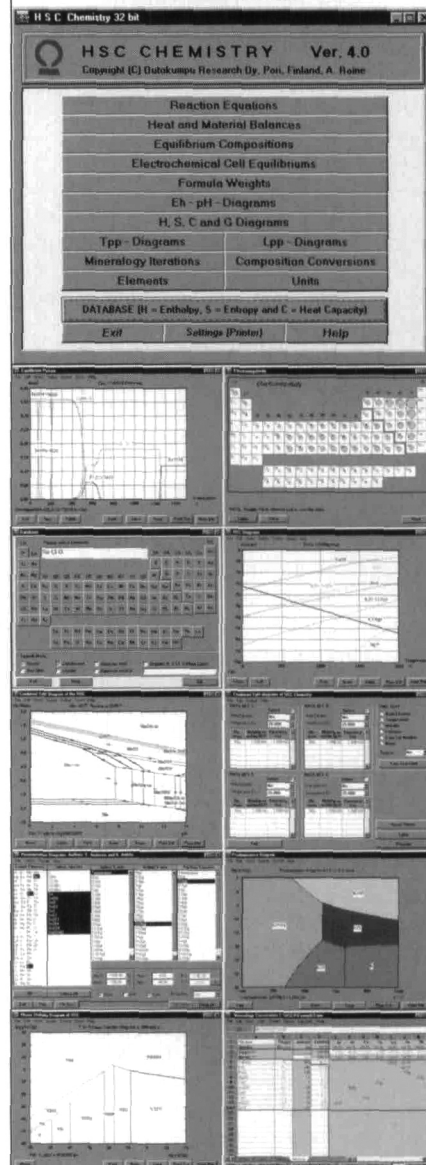
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