Giant positive magnetoresistance of Bi nanowire arrays in high magnetic fields

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We have studied the magnetoresistance of electrodeposited Bi wires with diameters between 200 nm and 2 μm in magnetic fields up to \( B = 55 \) T. In zero field, the resistance increases with decreasing temperature, indicating that the mean free path is strongly influenced by the nanowire geometry. The high-field magnetoresistance shows strong dependence on field orientation; typically 200% for \( B \) parallel to the wires, and 600%–800% for \( B \) perpendicular to the wires. The perpendicular magnetoresistance is well described by a modified two-current model which suggests that the highest quantum noise of the arrays is fairly insensitive to the wire diameter, and is dominated by bulk properties of Bi. © 1999 American Institute of Physics. [S0021-8979(99)69908-X]

Recently, giant magnetoresistance (GMR) has attracted much interest because of its intricate physics and applications in nonvolatile memory and field-sensing devices.\(^1\) In GMR, spin-dependent charge transport in heterogeneous magnetic materials results in a large change of resistance upon the application of a magnetic field. In nonmagnetic materials, the magnetoresistance of semiconductors such as bismuth (Bi) has long been a subject of interest because of the unusual properties of their charge carriers.

Crystalline Bi exhibits anisotropic magnetoresistance which depends on the direction of the applied field with respect to the crystal axes.\(^2\) This is due to its complex Fermi surface, which has elongated pockets of both holes and electrons with different effective masses. Since the carriers of Bi have a very long Fermi wavelength \( \lambda_F \approx 40 \) nm, it is particularly interesting to study thin films and wires with physical sizes approaching \( \lambda_F \). In low-dimensional systems, phenomena such as quantum size effects have been observed.\(^3\) Usually, thin films of Bi have been obtained by vacuum deposition techniques such as thermal evaporation and sputtering. One of the drawbacks of these films is that they tend to have very small grain sizes,\(^5\) and the magnetoresistance is in general very small. Recently, electrodeposition using nanoporous templates has provided an enticing means of fabricating arrays of narrow wires composed of a variety of metals.\(^6\) This method has enabled us to obtain Bi nanowires with large grains.\(^7\) In this paper, we report the first magnetoresistance measurements of electrodeposited Bi nanowires under very high magnetic fields up to \( B = 55 \) T.

Bi wires with diameters \( d = 200 \) nm, \( 400 \) nm, \( 1 \) μm, and 2 μm were made by electrodeposition into pores produced by nuclear particle track etching in polycarbonate membranes. The membranes are approximately 10 μm thick with pore density \( \sim 10^7 \) cm\(^{-2}\). The pores are nominally parallel with some spread in angles as large as 15° from the normal to the plane of the membranes. Transmission electron microscopy (TEM) and electron diffraction have shown that the wires are polycrystalline, with grain sizes up to \( \sim 2–4 \) times the pore diameters with no preferred orientation.\(^7\) Electrical contacts were made on both sides of the membranes with vacuum-deposited Au layers and silver epoxy. The temperature dependence of the resistance at zero field was measured at \( T = 4.2–290 \) K. High-field magnetoresistance was measured in fields up to \( B = 55 \) T using a pulsed magnet at various temperatures between \( T = 4.2 \) K and 290 K in both longitudinal (\( B \parallel \) wires) and transverse (\( B \perp \) wires) orientations.

The temperature dependence of the resistance \( R(T)/R(290 \) K) for arrays of Bi wires with diameters 200 nm, 400 nm, 1 μm, and 2 μm is shown in Fig. 1. In all the arrays, \( R(T) \) increases monotonically as the temperature decreases, and there is generally a larger change in \( R(T) \) as the wire size is reduced. In Bi, the resistance is determined by a fairly delicate balance between the carrier concentration \( n(T) \), which decreases with decreasing \( T \), and the mobility \( \mu(T) \), which generally increases with decreasing \( T \) as the mean free path \( \langle l(T) \rangle \) grows. In bulk single crystal samples, \( \langle l(T) \rangle \) grows from \( \sim 0.2 \) to 0.3 μm at room temperature to as

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FIG. 1. Temperature dependence of zero-field resistance \( R(T)/R(290 \) K) of Bi nanowires with \( d = 200 \) nm, \( 400 \) nm, 1 μm, and 2 μm. The lines are guides to the eye.
large as \(-100 \mu m\) at \(T=4.2 K\), and the resistance decreases with decreasing \(T\). In thin films, however, \(l(T)\) has less temperature dependence so that \(n(T)\) has a larger effect on \(R(T)\).

In our nanowire arrays, the increase of resistance at low temperatures shown in Fig. 1 indicates that \(l(T)\) is cut off in the wires as well, that \(n(T)\) also determines \(R(T)\) in our samples.

The high-field resistance \(R(B)\) for a 200 nm wire sample at several fixed temperatures between \(T=4.2 K\) and 290 K is shown in Fig. 2 for both the perpendicular (solid lines) and parallel (dashed lines) field orientations. There is clearly a dramatic difference between the two orientations, with the parallel resistance \(R_1\) saturating near \(B=20 T\) as the temperature is reduced, and the perpendicular resistance \(R_2\) continuing to rise at the highest field measured. In both orientations, there is a strong temperature dependence in \(R(B)\) down to \(T=100 K\), but little temperature dependence below \(T=50 K\). The small spikes visible on some of the traces are due to electronic noise, and are not intrinsic to the samples.

These data are representative of the behavior of \(R\) in all the samples measured, as will be discussed in more detail below. There is somewhat more variability in \(R_1\) in all the samples, as compared to \(R_2\). In all the samples \(R_1\) shows most of its change with field below \(B=20 T\) at low temperatures, but in some samples it continues to rise slowly at higher fields.

The solid lines in Fig. 3 are examples of these fits. The agreement with the data is excellent even at the lowest fields where the agreement is still very good.

The parameters derived from fitting data of five samples with varying wire diameter are shown in Fig. 4. The self-consistency of all parameters lend credence to the generalization of the model formula. The two “mobilities” are effectively independent of both temperature and wire size, with values \(\mu_1 \sim 0.12 m^2/V s\) and \(\mu_2 \sim 0.03 m^2/V s\). This lack of variation with \(T\) is consistent with the picture of a temperature-independent mobility (or mean free path) restricted by the wire geometry and/or size. The two values of \(\mu_1\) and \(\mu_2\) differing by about a factor of 4 suggests that there are two different species of carriers.

The ratio \(R_1/R_2\) indicates the relative importance of the two species of carriers. As shown in Fig. 4(c), the ratio \(R_1/R_2\) displays a remarkable similarity for all the samples measured, increasing from roughly 0.2 to 0.5 with decreasing \(T\). This reflects the growth in importance of the high-mobility term, \(\mu_1\), at low temperatures which is responsible for the faster rise of the MR in the low-\(T\) data.

In summary, we have reported the first high-field magnetoresistance measurements of bismuth nanowire arrays. The dependence of MR on temperature and magnetic field can be well described by the generalization of the model formula with two mobilities which are essentially temperature inde-
dependent due to constraints imposed by the wires. Further experiments, including measurements on thin films, are clearly necessary to elucidate the high-field behavior of electrodeposited bismuth.

This work was supported by NSF MRSEC Program No. 96-32526.