
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Jinlong Yang received his PhD in Materials Science and Engineering from University of Tsinghua in 1996. He is currently a Professor in the Department of Materials Science and Engineering, Tsinghua University, Beijing, PR of China. His current research topics include colloidal forming, ceramic foam, laser machining of green body of ceramic and ceramic microbeads for pens.

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Ceramics, glasses, polymers and metals constitute a major part of materials nowadays used in various areas. The aim of this special issue of *International Journal of Materials and Product Technology* is to outline the state-of-the-art in some recent major advances in these materials, for instance structural and functional materials, novel processing methods and new techniques for material characterisations. Moreover, with the advent of nanoscience and nanotechnology, nanostructured materials have drawn significant attention to their potential applications, and thus are included in this special issue.

The specific topics included in this special issue are properties of nano-Si₃N₄/silicon nitride ceramic nanocomposites (Yingge Dong and Jinlong Yang), properties of laminated ZrB₂/SiC ceramic composites (Chang-An Wang et al.), processing and properties of ceramic microbeads prepared by colloidal injection moulding (Ming Yue et al.), a new method for preparing porous ceramics (Jinlong Yang et al.), preparation of nano-sized beta-tricalcium phosphate (Chunjie Xia et al.), preparation of pure α -LiAlO₂ nanosheets (Zilong Tang et al.), preparation of chitosan/HA composite scaffolds (Qingfeng Zan et al.), properties of coloured Li₂O-Al₂O₃-SiO₂ (LAS) glass ceramic (Hui Yang and Xingzhong Guo), ceramic ball pen and its mathematical moulding (Ke Zeng et al.), preparation of nano-sized MgAl₂O₄ powder by sol-gel process (Wei Liu et al.), preparation and properties of oriented ZnO nanosheet films (Hong Lin et al.), experiment and finite element analysis on the failure of joints in device packaging (Leila J. Ladani), determination of residual strain by combining electron back-scatter diffraction and digital image correlation techniques (Jui-Chao Kuo and Han-Hong Wang), preparation and properties of ultrafine fibrous PVP/PLCL membranes for controlled release (Bin Sun et al.), mechanical properties of halogen-free flame-retarded polypropylene (Zhengping Fang et al.), interfacial interaction of nylon 6/high-density polyethylene/clay nanocomposites (Yan Zhu et al.), mechanical properties of glass fibre reinforced polymer composites based on a novel bismaleimide-triazine resin (Hong-qiang Yan et al.) and interfacial analysis of polypropylene/CaCO₃ composites (Jizhao Liang).

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