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SERIES OF THEORETICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL FRONTIERS OF  
NONFERROUS METALS

# 中空结构无机功能材料

INORGANIC FUNCTIONAL MATERIALS WITH HOLLOW INTERIORS

刘小鹤 马仁志 李星国 著  
Liu Xiaohe Ma Renzhi Li Xingguo



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# Introduction

This book aims to present some recent advances in the exciting research field of inorganic functional materials with hollow interiors as well as the insight into the morphological and structural evolution among them. We have selected our related publications dedicated to the subject covering layered hydroxide and oxide nanocones, inorganic nanotubes, cobalt and nickel oxide nanorings, rare-earth oxide and oxysulfate hollow spheres, transition-metal oxide and chalcogenides hollow spheres, ferrite and metallic and polypyrrole hollow spheres. It surely will be a great relief and pleasure for us if this book provides a candid glimpse to the active and exciting research area of inorganic functional materials with hollow interiors. We sincerely hope that this book may be available for reference to established scientists and scholars.

## About the Authors

**Liu Xiaohe** received his Ph. D from the Central South University in 2005, Changsha. He became an Associate Professor and then Full Professor at the School of Resources Processing and Bioengineering of Central South University in 2007 and 2012, and distinguished professor of the Shenghua Scholar Program of Central South University in 2011. He joined the School of Materials Science and Engineering of Central South University in 2014. His research interests focus on, layer-structured materials, novel unilamellar nanosheets, and hollow structure of nanomaterials, as well as clarifying the close relationship between the microstructure of as-prepared products and their properties. He has already published more than 70 papers in SCI journals, such as *Advance Materials*, *Angewandte Chemie International Edition*, *ACS Nano*, *Advanced Functional Materials*, *Journal of the American Chemical Society*, etc. which have been cited more than 1600 times, and H-index has reached 26. He has received Hunan Province Natural Science Award (2010) and Outstanding Youth Fund in Hunan Province (2013).

**Ma Renzhi** received his B. S. and Ph. D both from Tsinghua University in 1995 and 2000, Beijing. He has been a principal researcher at the National Institute for Material Science (Japan). He joined the School of Materials Science and Engineering of Central South University in 2014. He has accomplished a series of international cutting-edge research work, especially the systematic research on the intercalation/exfoliation chemistry of inorganic layered compounds, single-layer nanosheets and hollow structure of nanomaterials. He has already published more than 130 papers and have been cited for more than 7000 times. The H-index of his citations is 45. He co-holds 22 authorized Japan patents. He was selected as an Innovative Talent offered by Recruitment Program of Global Experts (One-Thousand-Talents Plan) in China. He received 2009 Award for Distinguished Lectureship at Asian International Forum for Young Scientists of the Chemical Society of Japan, and “Chemical Physics Letter” 2003—2007 Most Cited Paper Award.

**Li Xingguo** received his Ph. D from Tohoku university in 1990, Japan. He is the Professor and Director of New Energy and Nano Materials Laboratory, Chairman of the Inorganic Chemistry Institute at Peking University. He is also a Guest Professor of Hiroshima University (Japan). He is an editor for the *Chinese Journal of Inorganic Materials*, *the Chinese Journal of Inorganic Chemistry*, *the Chinese Journal of Process Engineering*, *Journal of Chinese Rare Earth Society*, *Journal of Rare Earth*, *Journal of Applied Chemistry* and *the Chinese Journal of Functional Materials*. His research interests focus on hydrogen storage materials, hydrogen generation and purification, battery electrode materials and nano materials. He has already published more than 250 papers and contributed chapters to three books published by Nova Science Publishers, Inc. and American Scientific Publishers. He has received the National Distinguished Young Investigator Fund (2000), Lectureship Award of Japan Research Institute of Material Technology (2002) and GM Foundation Science & Technology Achievement Award (2005).

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# Preface

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## Preface

Nowadays, nonferrous metals have become the important material basis for the development of national economic, science and technology, national defense and so on, and are the key strategic resources for enhancing the comprehensive national strength and national security. As a nonferrous metals production superpower, the nonferrous metals research field in China has made great progress, particularly in the development and utilization of complex and low-grade nonferrous metals resources.

The nonferrous metals industry in China has developed rapidly in the recent 30 years. The production has been the maximal in the world year after year. The science and technology of nonferrous metals is playing an increasingly important role in the national economic construction and the modernization of national defense. At the same time, the contradiction between the shortage of nonferrous metals resources and the economic development is increasingly serious. The dependence on foreign resources has been increasing year by year, which seriously affects the healthy development of our national economy.

With the economic development, high-quality mineral resources have proven to be nearly depleted. This makes China face the crisis of critical shortage of the total supply of nonferrous metals. Furthermore, when the complex and low-grade mineral resources or secondary raw materials, which have the characteristics of difficult exploration, difficult mining, difficult processing and difficult metallurgy, gradually become the main resources, a huge challenge will be exerted on the traditional science and technology, such as geology, mining,

mineral processing, metallurgy, materials, processing, and environment. The nonferrous metals industry and related industries are facing the competition for the survival of the crisis due to low-quality resources. The development of nonferrous metals industry urgently needs new theories and new technologies to adapt to the characteristics of the resources. The publication of nonferrous metals books that own complete system, leading level and mutual integration will improve the independent innovation ability of the nonferrous metals industry and promote the application of new theories and new technologies of high-efficiency, low consumption, non-pollution and comprehensive utilization of the nonferrous metals resources. It will play a vital role in ensuring the sustainable development of the nonferrous metals industry in China.

As a major national publication project, the *Series of Theoretical and Technological Frontiers of Nonferrous Metals* plan to publish 100 kinds of books, which cover materials, metallurgy, mining, earth science, mechanical and electrical engineering and so on. The authors of these books include academicians who work in the field of nonferrous metals, chief scientists of major national research projects, Yangtze River Scholars, winners of China National Funds for Distinguished Young Scientists, winners of the National Excellent Doctoral Dissertation, talented persons selected by major national talent programs, leading experts in large-scale research institutes of nonferrous metals and key enterprises.

The National Publication Foundation established by the state is to encourage and support the publication of outstanding public service works that represent the highest level of the national academic publication. The *Series of Theoretical and Technological Frontiers of Nonferrous Metals* will aim at the frontiers of nonferrous metals and grasp the latest development of nonferrous metals at home and abroad. They will comprehensively, promptly and accurately reflect the new

theories, new technologies and new applications of nonferrous metals, and explore and capture the highly valuable research achievements, thus owning high academic values.

The Central South University Press has devoted long-term effort to publishing books of nonferrous metals. A lot of very effective work has been done in the course of publishing the *Series of Theoretical and Technological Frontiers of Nonferrous Metals*. This will vigorously promote the publication of outstanding scientific and technological works in the nonferrous metals industry, and play a direct and significant role in cultivating personnel of the nonferrous metals disciplines in the universities, research institutes and enterprises of China.

王淀佐

Wang Dianzuo

Dec 2010

## Foreword

This book aims to present some recent advances in the exciting research field of nanotubes, especially the designed synthesis of various functional materials with hollow interiors as well as the insight into the morphological and structural evolution among them. It is generally believed that, for any inorganic functional material with a layered structure, nanotubes could be formed under appropriate conditions ( chemical vapor deposition, hydrothermal synthesis, etc. ). In fact, many kinds of inorganic nanotubes made of carbon, boron nitride ( BN ), transition-metal halides, oxides, and chalcogenides, all possessing natural or artificial layered structures, have successfully been produced based on a “rolling-up” mechanism, analogous to a paper scroll.

Compared with the layered counterparts, the formation of nanotubes from nonlayered materials requires much more effort to assemble atoms or small particles into a tubular structure during crystallization. As a result, the preparation of nanotubes from nonlayered materials is often subjected to the use of sacrificial templates such as nanotubes, nanowires, nanorods, and porous membranes. Although the sacrificial templating method has been proved to be a facile and efficient approach for the growth of tubular structures, sometimes the final product might be disrupted during the templates removing processes.

In addition to cylindrical nanotubes, layered materials might be able to form conical structures with hollow interiors by the same

rolling-up mechanism. Derived from the peculiar conical feature, nanocones exhibit special electronic, mechanical, and field-emission properties. However, apart from carbon and boron nitride systems, there are few reports focusing on conical structures originating from the rolling-up of layered materials. On the other hand, a large variety of layered materials could be exfoliated/delaminated into single-layer nanosheets by controlling layer-to-layer interaction through soft chemical procedures. Even nanotubes can be unwrapped/unravelling into individual sheets under a similar scenario. For example, carbon nanotubes could be unzipped/exfoliated to fabricate graphene sheets or ribbons. In general, layered oxide and hydroxide crystals adopt a lamellar or plate-like morphology. The question arises as to, besides carbon and boron nitride (BN), whether conical structures can be formed by the rolling-up of layered oxides and hydroxides, and if the nanocones can be further unwrapped/exfoliated into single-layer nanosheets. The pursuit of the answer to this intriguing question will be very important in revealing the formation mechanism of nanocones as well as the energy balance between nanocones and nanosheets.

Another interesting morphology for inorganic materials, hollow spheres with nanometer or micrometer dimensions, are attractive in various fields, such as controlled release capsules, artificial cells, selective catalysis, chemical storage and sensors, photonic crystals, biomedical diagnosis and therapy. Numerous chemical and physicochemical strategies such as the kirkendall diffusion effect, spray pyrolysis, ostwald ripening, template-assisted synthesis and chemically induced self-transformation have been employed for the design and controlled fabrication of various micro/nanospheres with hollow interiors. Traditionally, template-assisted synthetic strategies including hard and soft templates have been demonstrated to be the most effective and versatile approach. In this regard, various templates, such as hard ones (e. g., silica, polymer, and carbon

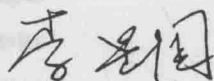
spheres) and soft ones (e. g., vesicles, emulsions, and surfactant), have been extensively utilized to fabricate hollow spheres. In a typical procedure, the surfaces of the hard templates are coated with a designed material (or its precursor) to form core-shell structures. Subsequent removal of the core templates via calcination at elevated temperatures in air or selective etching in an appropriate solvent generates hollow spheres. The procedures are somewhat technically complicated, which to some extent limits their wide application prospects. More recently, biomolecules, as life's basic building blocks inherent with special structures and fascinating functions for assembling purpose, have also been generally utilized as templates for the design and synthesis of various micro/nano hollow spheres.

Under such a research background, we have selected our related publications dedicated to the subject covering layered hydroxide and oxide nanocones, inorganic nanotubes, cobalt and nickel oxide nanorings, rare-earth oxide and oxysulfate hollow spheres, transition-metal oxide and chalcogenides hollow spheres, ferrite and metallic and polypyrrole hollow spheres. The published information of all the original papers is listed in the end of the references and marked with asterisk. It surely will be a great relief and pleasure for us if this book provides a candid glimpse to the active and exciting research area of inorganic functional materials with hollow interiors.

The authors would like to express our sincere thanks to the many wonderful students who have contributed to the research and made the publication of this book possible. They are Ph. D students Yan Aiguo and Shi Rongrong; Master course students Zhang Ning, Wu Hongyi, Yi Ran, Zhou Huifen, Li Yongbo, Jing Jinghui, Wang Jingying, Gao Guanhua, Chen Gen, Ma Wei, Zhang Dan, Yuan Peng, Ji Deli, Zhu Yanjun, Liu Tao, Wan Hao, Chen Fashen, Wang Duo, Chen Chen, Zhong Yishun. We would also like to thank Profs. Li Junhui and Chen Limiao, and Dr. Jingling Pan (Central South University),

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We are also very grateful to Prof. Qiu Guanzhou of Central South University (Academician of Chinese Academy of Engineering), Prof. Li Yadong of Tsinghua University (Academician of Chinese Academy of Science), as well as Prof. Sasaki Takayoshi (University of Tsukuba, Fellow of National Institute for Materials Science, Japan), and Prof. Bando Yoshio (Chief Operating Officer of International Center for Materials Nanoarchitectonics, Fellow of National Institute for Materials Science, Japan).



Li Xingguo

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# Contents

<b>Chapter I Layered Hydroxide and Oxide Nanocones</b>	<b>1</b>
Layered Cobalt Hydroxide Nanocones: Microwave-Assisted Synthesis, Exfoliation and Structural Modification	3
A General Strategy to Layered Transition-Metal Hydroxide Nanocones: Tuning the Composition for High Electrochemical Performance	17
High-Yield Preparation, Versatile Structural Modification, and Properties of Layered Cobalt Hydroxide Nanocones	34
Layered Zinc Hydroxide Nanocones: Synthesis, Facile Morphological and Structural Modification, and Properties	59
<b>Chapter II Inorganic Nanotubes</b>	<b>75</b>
Selective and Controlled Synthesis of Single-Crystalline Yttrium Hydroxide/Oxide Nanosheets and Nanotubes	77
Rational Synthetic Strategy: From ZnO Nanorods to ZnS Nanotubes	96
Selective Synthesis and Magnetic Properties of Uniform CoTe and CoTe <sub>2</sub> Nanotubes	110
Shape-Controlled Synthesis and Properties of Manganese Sulfide Microcrystals via a Biomolecule-Assisted Hydrothermal Process	120
Conversion of Metal Oxide Nanosheets into Nanotubes	132



**Chapter III Cobalt and Nickel Oxide Nanorings** 147

Cobalt Hydroxide Nanosheets and Their Thermal Decomposition to Cobalt Oxide Nanorings 149

Rationally Synthetic Strategy: From Nickel Hydroxide Nanosheets to Nickel Oxide Nanorolls 166

**Chapter IV Rare-Earth Oxide and Oxysulfate Hollow Spheres** 179

Controllable Fabrication and Optical Properties of Uniform Gadolinium Oxysulfate Hollow Spheres 181

Hollow Spherical Rare-Earth-Doped Yttrium Oxysulfate: A Novel Structure for Upconversion 197

Controlled Fabrication and Optical Properties of Uniform  $\text{CeO}_2$  Hollow Spheres 213General Synthetic Strategy for High-Yield and Uniform Rare-Earth Oxysulfates ( $\text{RE}_2\text{O}_2\text{SO}_4$ , RE = La, Pr, Nd, Sm, Eu, Gd, Tb, Dy, Y, Ho, and Yb) Hollow Spheres 225**Chapter V Transition-Metal Oxide and Chalcogenides Hollow Spheres** 241

Controllable Fabrication and Magnetic Properties of Double-Shell Cobalt Oxides Hollow Particles 243

Shape-Controlled Synthesis and Characterization of Cobalt Oxides Hollow Spheres and Octahedra 257

Shape-Controlled Synthesis and Properties of Dandelion-Like Manganese Sulfide Hollow Spheres 274

Nickel Dichalcogenides Hollow Spheres: Controllable Fabrication, Structural Modification and Magnetic Properties 286

Biomolecule-Assisted Hydrothermal Synthesis and Properties of Manganese Sulfide Hollow Microspheres 300