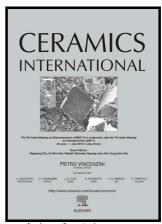
### Author's Accepted Manuscript

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#### **ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT**

# Porous fibrous ZrO<sub>2</sub>-mullite ceramics prepared via tert-butyl alcohol-based gel-casting

Xinghui Hou, Zhenli Liu, Zongquan Liu, Lei Yuan\*, Jingkun Yu\*
School of Metallurgy, Northeastern University

NO. 3-11, Wenhua Road, Heping District, Shenyang, 110819, PR China.

\* Corresponding author: yuanl@smm.neu.edu.cn (L Yuan); yujk@smm.neu.edu.cn (J Yu)

#### **Abstract**

Mullite fiber was used to fabricate ZrO<sub>2</sub>-mullite based porous ceramic via tert-butyl alcohol (TBA)-based gel-casting process using zirconite and bauxite as raw materials. Phase compositions, microstructure, pore size distribution, linear shrinkage, bulk density, apparent porosity, thermal conductivity, and compressive strength were analyzed to investigate influences of mullite fiber content and added Y<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> on prepared porous ceramics. Results show that bird nest-like three-dimensional fibrous reticular skeleton structure was constructed with mullite fibers that evenly enwrapped rod-like mullite and ZrO<sub>2</sub> grains. Prepared porous fibrous ZrO<sub>2</sub>-mullite ceramics had narrow pore size distribution that consisted of mullite and m-ZrO<sub>2</sub>. With an increase in mullite fiber content, linear shrinkage and bulk density decreased, apparent porosity increased, and relatively good thermal conductivity was obtained. In addition, added Y<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> reacted with Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> and SiO<sub>2</sub> to form Y-Al-Si-O glass phase, which promoted sintering and densification of the ceramic, thus improving its compressive strength.

**Keywords**: Mullite fiber; ZrO<sub>2</sub>; Porous ceramic; Gel-casting process; Y<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> additive

#### 1. Introduction

Porous ceramics with high area ratio and good heat insulation have been widely used for filtration and catalysis in chemical industry, metallurgy, pharmaceuticals, aeronautics, and astronautics. Many methods, such as organic foam impregnation, foaming, pore-forming agents and freeze-drying, have been used to prepare porous ceramics with different pore parameters. For example, the pore size of porous

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