

Accepted Manuscript

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PII: S0955-2219(17)30599-X
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jeurceramsoc.2017.09.011>
Reference: JECS 11446

To appear in: *Journal of the European Ceramic Society*

Received date: 16-3-2017
Revised date: 9-9-2017
Accepted date: 10-9-2017

Please cite this article as: Seo Yu-Kwang, Eom Jung-Hye, Kim Young-Wook. Process-tolerant pressureless-sintered silicon carbide ceramics with alumina-yttria-calcia-strontia. *Journal of The European Ceramic Society* <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jeurceramsoc.2017.09.011>

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Process-tolerant pressureless-sintered silicon carbide ceramics with alumina-yttria-calcia-strontia

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Abstract

Process-tolerant SiC ceramics were prepared by pressureless sintering at 1850-1950°C for 2 h in an argon atmosphere with a new quaternary additive (Al₂O₃-Y₂O₃-CaO-SrO). The SiC ceramics can be sintered to a >94% theoretical density at 1800-1950°C by pressureless sintering. Toughened microstructures consisting of relatively large platelet grains and small equiaxed grains were obtained when SiC ceramics were sintered at 1850-1950°C. The presently fabricated SiC ceramics showed little variability of the microstructure and mechanical properties with sintering within the temperature range of 1850-1950°C, demonstrating process-tolerant behavior. The thermal conductivity of the SiC ceramics increased with increasing sintering temperature from 1800°C to 1900°C due to decreases of the lattice oxygen content of the SiC grains and residual porosity. The flexural strength, fracture toughness, and thermal conductivity of the SiC ceramics sintered at 1850-1950°C were in the ranges of 444-457 MPa, 4.9-5.0 MPa·m^{1/2}, and 76-82 Wm⁻¹K⁻¹, respectively.

Keywords: Silicon carbide; Mechanical properties; Thermal conductivity; Microstructure; Process-tolerant behavior

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1. Introduction

The market for advanced ceramics is continuously growing due to their excellent performance, multifunctional properties, and high energy efficiency [1]. However, the lower yields for ceramics than for those of other materials such as metals and polymers could be a

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