

Preface

We present to you this special issue of *Catalysis Today*, containing 18 communications, 17 of which are the reports of a concerted research launched in 1997, funded jointly by the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) and the SINOPEC, and coordinated by Enze Min. The program has been carried out in a number of major Chinese laboratories of catalysis, aiming at the development of environmentally benign petrochemical processes and at catalytic chemistry and reaction engineering of these processes. The other one is a timely review on the application of ionic liquids in catalysis written by Professor Yuan Kou and his associates, a project which belongs to another state key program advised also by Dr. Min.

The development of the economy and society in China places a heavy demand on the energy and petrochemicals production, and the more environmentally benign process technologies. SINOPEC has been involved in upgrading its petrochemical technologies in recent years, with emphasis on developing new environmentally benign catalysts and processes. The NSFC has contributed much to these research activities. However, a joint fund from these two organizations for a concerted research in catalysis with the participation of both industrial and academic institutions is the first one in China. As you will have noticed from the papers in this issue and the other publications from these participating groups, this program has been very fruitful.

With the support of our Chinese and international colleagues, we have been doing our best in recent years to introduce the catalysis research in China to the

international catalysis community [1,2]. We are satisfied with the progress of our fundamental catalysis-related-research. We sincerely hope that our catalysis academy will soon become an active and fruitful part of the world science. We also hope that you will find this issue a valuable addition to the catalysis literature.

We should like to take this opportunity to express our special gratefulness to our international colleagues who have refereed the manuscripts for this issue with a great patience and with a kind wish to the development of Chinese catalysis science, to Professor Julian Ross and Mrs. Huub Manten-Werker for their continued support to our science, and to the NSFC and the SINOPEC for their financial and spiritual support. Finally, we should thank the authors of the papers included in this issue for their work, and their patience and cooperation in revision of the manuscripts according to the suggestions of the referees.

References

- [1] Y. Li, *Catal. Today* 30 (1996) 1.
- [2] Y. Li, L. Chang, E. Xue, J.R.H. Ross, *Catal. Today* 51 (1999) 1.

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