ESI

# Morphological Control and Highly Efficient Catalytic Degradation

## Performance of Lanthanide Ferrocyanides toward Organic Dyes

## under Dark Ambient Conditions

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### **Experimental part:**

### Materials

Ethanol, cerium nitrate hexahydrate, potassium ferrocyanide trihydrate, sodium dodecyl sulfate (SDS), sodium acetate (NaAc), polyvinyl pyrrolidone (PVP), hydrogen peroxide solution ( $H_2O_2$ , 30 wt. % in  $H_2O$ ) were purchased from Aladdin Corporation. Methylene blue (MB), Rhodamine B (RhB), Methyl orange(MO) was purchased from Solarbio Corporation. All chemicals were of analytical grade and used without further purification.

### Measurements

The CHN elemental analyses (%) in the solid samples were performed on a VarioEL analyzer. Energy Disperse Thermogravimetric and differential thermal analysis (TG-DTA) data were collected with a Thermal Analysis Instrument (SDT 2960, TA Instruments, New Castle, DE) at a heating rate of 10 °C/ min under air atmosphere in the Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> crucible. Fourier-transform (FT)-IR spectra (KBr pellets) were recorded on a Nicolet 7600 FT-IR spectrophotometer in the range of 4000-500 cm<sup>-1</sup>. Powder X-ray diffraction (XRD) patterns were studied on a Bruker D8 Focus diffractometer at 40 kV and 40 mA, using Cu K $\alpha$  radiation Field-emission ( $\lambda = 0.15405$  nm, increment = 0.02°). All UV-Vis absorption spectra were recorded using a UV spectrophotometer (UV, 3101PC, Shimadzu, Japan) at room temperature. Scanning electron microscopy (SEM) images were taken on Hitachi TM-3000 and Hitachi SU70 at an acceleration voltage of 5.0 kV. The chemical component was investigated by Energy Dispersive Spectrometer using EDAX analyzer. X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS) was recorded on a Thermo Fisher Scientific corporation Escalab 250Xi instrument

### Syntheses of CePBA from CePBA-1 to CePBA-10 with different morphology.

A typical procedure is as follows. A solution of cerium nitrate hexahydrate (32.6 mg, 0.1 mmol) in 5 mL water was added dropwise to a solution of potassium ferrocyanide trihydrate (42.2 mg, 0.1 mmol) in 5 mL water under magnetic stirring. The mixture solution was further stirred for 2h. The white precipitation was centrifuged and washed several times with distilled water and absolute ethanol, and then dried at 60 °C overnight, the obtained white precipitation is labeled as

#### CePBA-1.

Second, when other reactive condition and order of addition keep similar as CePBA-1 except that double amount of raw material of cerium nitrate hexahydrate (65.2 mg, 0.2 mmol) and potassium ferrocyanide trihydrate (84.4 mg, 0.2 mmol) were used, he obtained white precipitation is labeled as **CePBA-2**.

Third, when the solution of cerium nitrate hexahydrate (32.6 mg, 0.1 mmol) in 5 mL water was directly poured into the solution of potassium ferrocyanide trihydrate (42.2 mg, 0.1 mmol) in 5 mL water under magnetic stirring. The mixture solution was further stirred for 2h. The obtained white precipitation is labeled as **CePBA-3**.

Fourth, when the pure aqueous solution of cerium nitrate hexahydrate (32.6 mg, 0.1 mmol) were replaced by mixed solvent system of water and ethanol with  $V_{\text{H2O}}/V_{\text{ethanol}} = 1:1$ , other reactive conditions are similar to CePBA-3, the obtained white precipitation is labeled as CePBA-4.

Five, when pure ethanol solution of cerium nitrate hexahydrate (32.6 mg, 0.1 mmol) was used, the white precipitation, labeled as **CePBA-5**, was synthesized instead of CePBA-4.

Six, when PVP was introduced to the synthetic process of CePBA-3, CePBA-4, and CePBA-5, respectively, the other three white precipitations were obtained, labeled as **CePBA-6**, **CePBA-7**, and **CePBA-8**, respectively. Take the synthesis of CePBA-7 as an example, the detailed process is as follows. Typically, 0.1 mmol (42.2 mg) potassium ferrocyanide trihydrate and 250 mg polyvinyl pyrrolidone (PVP) were firstly dispersed into deionized water (DIW) (5 mL) to form a transparent solution (denoted as solution A). Then, 0.1 mmol (32.6 mg) of cerium nitrate hexahydrate was dispersed into absolute ethanol (5 mL) to form a homogeneous solution (denoted as solution B). Solution B was then poured to solution A under continuous stirring and the mixture solution was stirred for another 2 h. The precipitation was centrifuged and washed several times with distilled water and absolute ethanol respectively, and then dried at 60 °C overnight.

Seven, when SDS was utilized instead of PVP, other reactive conditions are similar to the ones of CePBA-3, as follows. 0.1 mmol (42.2 mg) potassium ferrocyanide trihydrate and 200 mg sodium dodecyl sulfate (SDS) were first dispersed into deionized water (DIW) (5 mL) to form a transparent solution (denoted as solution A). Then, 0.1 mmol (32.6 mg) of cerium nitrate hexahydrate was dispersed into DIW (5 mL) to form a homogeneous solution (denoted as solution B). Solution B was then poured into solution A directly under continuous stirring. White turbidity gradually generated and the mixture solution was further stirred for another 2h. The precipitation was centrifuged and washed several times with distilled water and absolute ethanol respectively, and then dried at 60 °C overnight. The obtained sample is labeled as **CePBA-9**.

Last, when sodium acetate (NaAC) was adopted instead of SDS, the other NaAC regulated CePBAs, labeled as **CePBA-10**, were synthesized. Its synthesized process is similar to the one of CePBA-9. Just, to investigate the influence of NaAc's concentration on the morphology of the samples, NaAc aqueous solutions with different concentration (10mg, 50mg, 100mg, 200mg, 500mg) are used in experiments.

All synthesized processes have systematically concluded in Table S1 in detail.

#### Dye degradation experiments.

All catalytic experiments were monitored under dark condition at room temperature. The pH value was not adjusted when the reaction was conducted. The procedure was as follows: Firstly, CePBA of 5 mg was added into 200 mL MB (20mg/L), MO (20mg/L), RhB (20mg/L) aqueous solution,

respectively, and agitation for 30 min to achieve an adsorption/desorption equilibrium between the photocatalyst and dye molecules. Then 2 mL H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> solution (30 wt. %) was added into the solution. At certain time intervals, 3 mL of suspension were collected and centrifuged within 1 min to remove the catalyst. The dye value of the absorbance at the wavelength of 664 nm for MB, 553 nm for RhB, and 462 nm for MO was measured by a TU-1901 spectrometer (Beijing Purkinje General Instrument) immediately after centrifugation. The degradation efficiency was evaluated by dividing  $C/C_0$ , where C is the remained dye concentration and  $C_0$  is the starting dye concentration. For the degradation of mixed dye solution with MB (20 mg/L) and RhB (40 mg/L), the other experimental processes are similar to above experiment procedure of degradation of single dye solution, except that catalyst of 5 mg was added into mixed dye aqueous solution of 100 mL with MB (20 mg/L) and RhB (40 mg/L).

Samples	Solution A:	Surfac	Solution B: Ce(NO <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>3</sub>	mixing	Figure
	$K_4[Fe(CN)_6]$	tant	(mmol)/ solvent	rate	
	(mmol)/solvent				
CePBA-1	$0.1 \ / \ 5 \ mL \ H_2O$		0.1 / 5 mL H <sub>2</sub> O	dropwise	Fig. 1a
CePBA-2	0.2 / 5 mL H <sub>2</sub> O		0.2 / 5 mL H <sub>2</sub> O	dropwise	Fig. 1b
CePBA-3	0.1 / 5 mL H <sub>2</sub> O		0.1 / 5 mL H <sub>2</sub> O	pour	Fig. 1c,
					Fig. S1
CePBA-4	0.1/ 5 mL H <sub>2</sub> O		0.1 / 2.5 mL H <sub>2</sub> O +	pour	Fig. 1d,
			2.5 mL ethanol		Fig. S2
CePBA-5	0.1 / 5 mL H <sub>2</sub> O		0.1 / 5 mL ethanol	pour	Fig. 1e,
					Fig. S3
CePBA-6	0.1 / 5 mL H <sub>2</sub> O	PVP	0.1 / 5 mL H <sub>2</sub> O	pour	Fig. 1f,
					Fig. S4
CePBA-7	$0.1/5 \text{ mL H}_2\text{O}$	PVP	0.1 / 2.5 mL H <sub>2</sub> O +	pour	Fig. 1g,
			2.5 mL ethanol		Fig. S5
CePBA-8	0.1 / 5 mL H <sub>2</sub> O	PVP	0.1 / 5 mL ethanol	pour	Fig. 1h,
					Fig. S6
CePBA-9	0.1 / 5 mL H <sub>2</sub> O	SDS	0.1 / 5 mL H <sub>2</sub> O	pour	Fig. S7
CePBA-10	0.1 / 5 mL H <sub>2</sub> O	NaAC	0.1 / 5 mL H <sub>2</sub> O	pour	Fig. S8

Table S1 Syntheses of CePBA under various conditions.



Fig. S1 SEM images of CePBA-3 at different magnifications.



Fig. S2 SEM images of CePBA-4 at different magnifications.



Fig. S3 SEM images of CePBA-5 at different magnifications.



Fig. S4 SEM images of CePBA-6 at different magnifications.



Fig. S5 SEM images of CePBA-7 at different magnifications.



Fig. S6 SEM images of CePBA-8 at different magnifications.



Fig. S7 SEM images of CePBA-9.



**Fig. S8** SEM images of **CePBA-10** with different amount of NaAC (a for 10mg, b for 50mg, c for 100mg, d for 200mg, e for 500mg) added.





Fig. S9. The PXRD patterns of various CePBA samples based on different synthesized processes.



Fig. S10 PXRD pattern of CePBA we synthesized and KCeFe(CN)<sub>6</sub>·4H<sub>2</sub>O (PDF#83-2292).



Fig. S11 FT-IR spectra of various CePBA samples.





Fig. S12 (a) EDX spectrum and results of CePBA. (b) XPS results (atomic%) with 44.7% for C, 34.43% for N, 6.61% for K, 8.15% for Fe, and 6.05% for Ce.





As shown in Fig. S13, the TGA curve of CePBA exhibits two main weight losses. The first weight loss of 15.04% at 25-212 °C, corresponding to the loss of four water molecules per unit cell (calcd. 15%) for the formula KCeFe(CN)<sub>6</sub>·4H<sub>2</sub>O. The desolvated framework of KCeFe(CN)<sub>6</sub> shows a long platform, demonstrating that it is still stable up to 695 °C. Then, its framework begins to

collapse. The total weight loss at 976 °C is 63.4%, which is more close to the result of the mixture of CeFeO<sub>3</sub> and  $K_2O_2$  with calculated value (64.5%) than the mixture of CeO<sub>2</sub>, Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> and  $K_2O_2$ , with the calculated value (66.3%).



Fig. S14 The images of CePBA sample (left, freshly prepared) and CePBA sample (right, after exposure in air for 1 week).



(c)

Fig. S15 Time-dependent UV-vis absorption spectra of CePBA for degrading of RhB (a), and MO (b) in the dark environment. (c) UV-vis absorption spectra of CePBA aqueous solution with  $H_2O_2$  and after degrading MB with  $H_2O_2$ .



Fig. S16 The degradation of MB solution (20 mg/L, 200 mL) in the presence of individual CePBA (5 mg) or  $H_2O_2$  (2 mL), respectively.



Fig. S17 The catalytic performance of CePBA-8 toward mixed dye aqueous solution of MB (20 mg/L) and RhB (40 mg/L).





(b)

Fig. S18 (a) UV-vis spectra of aqueous solutions of MB dye with different concentrations, as well as the absorbed intensity (black dots) of MB dyes in different concentrations ( $C_0 = mg/L$ ). The black solidline are the best linear fit. (b) The image of aqueous solution of MB of 150 mg/L.

Catalyst	<b>Reaction conditions</b>	Degradation performance	Ref.
RGO-CeO <sub>2</sub>	Conditions: UV light, ambient	Concentration of dye: 1×10 <sup>-5</sup> M (80 mL)	1
NCs	Input oxidant: none	Efficiency: 87%	
	Catalyst loading: 30 mg	Time: 90 min	
CeO <sub>2</sub> /ZnO	Conditions: UV light, ambient	Concentration of dye: 10 mg/L (100 mL)	2
microstruct	Input oxidant: none	Efficiency: 67.4%	
ures	Catalyst loading: 10 mg	Time: 150 min	
Self-	Conditions: minimal light	Concentration of dye: 20mg/L (20 mL)	3
assembled	exposure, ambient	Efficiency: ~100%	
GO with	Input oxidant: 1.0 wt% of	Time: 4 h	
Fe-	H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub>		
aminoclay	Catalyst loading: 610 mg/L		
Fe <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> @Si	Conditions: dark, ambient	Concentration of dye: 50 mg/L (20 mL)	4
O <sub>2</sub>	Input oxidant: 18 g/L H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub>	Efficiency: 90%	
	Catalyst loading: 10 mg	Time: 7h	
ZnO <sub>2</sub> /polyp	Conditions: dark/visible	Concentration of dye: 5 ppm	5
yrrole	light/UV light, ambient	Efficiency: 83%/95%/100%	
	Input oxidant: none	Time: 20 min	
	Catalyst loading: 1.6 g/L		
Ag <sub>3</sub> PO <sub>4</sub> /Ce	Conditions: visible light/UV	Concentration of dye: 10 mg/L (80 mL)	6
O <sub>2</sub>	light, ambient	Efficiency: ~98%/98.9%	
composites	Input oxidant: none	Time: 60min/6min	
	Catalyst loading: 30 mg		
Iron-cerium	Conditions: sun light, ambient	Concentration of dye: 100 ppm (20 mL)	7
mixed	Input oxidant: none	Efficiency: 93%	
oxides	Catalyst loading: 40 mg	Time: 4 h	
CeO <sub>2</sub>	Conditions: sun light, ambient	Concentration of dye: 20 mg/L (400 mL)	8
spheres	Input oxidant: none	Efficiency: over 80%	

Table S2 Comparative details of degradation effiency and reaction coditions of reported catalysts and this work toward degradation of MB.

	Catalyst loading: 100 mg	Time: within 120 min	
Fe <sup>0</sup> -Fe <sub>3</sub> O <sub>4</sub> -	Conditions: pH=3.00, ambient	Concentration of dye: 50 mg/L	9
RGO	Input oxidant: 0.8 mmol/L	Efficiency: 98.0%	
	H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub>	Time: within 60 min	
	Catalyst loading: 100 mg/L		
Porous	Conditions: pH=6.30, ambient	Concentration of dye: 100 mg/L (50 mL)	10
nitrogen-	Input oxidant: 1.0 g/L Oxone	Efficiency: 85.0%/almost 100.0%	
doped	Catalyst loading: 5 mg	Time: 2 min/10 min	
carbon			
microspher			
es			
α-Fe <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	Conditions: visible light,	Concentration of dye: 5 mg/L (50 mL)	11
	ambient	Efficiency: 38%	
	Input oxidant: none	Time: 180 min	
	Catalyst loading: 50 mg		
(Yb,N)-	Conditions: visible light,	Concentration of dye: 10 mg/L (50 mL)	12
TiO <sub>2</sub>	ambient	Efficiency: 93.55%	
	Input oxidant: none	Time: 5h	
	Catalyst loading: 150 mg		
GO/Mn <sub>3</sub> O <sub>4</sub>	Conditions: room temperature	Concentration of dye: 50 mg/L (50 mL)	13
	Input oxidant: 5.0 wt% H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub>	Efficiency: 100%	
	Catalyst loading: 10 mg	Time: within 200 min	
BiVO <sub>4</sub> /Ag <sub>3</sub>	Conditions: visible light,	Concentration of dye: 10 mg/L (100 mL)	14
VO <sub>4</sub>	ambient	Efficiency: 64.3%	
heterojuncti	Input oxidant: none	Time: 40 min	
on	Catalyst loading: 100 mg		
WO <sub>3</sub> -ZnO	Conditions: visible light,	Concentration of dye: 10 ppm (50 mL)	15
	ambient	Efficiency: 93%	
	Input oxidant: none	Time: 120 min	
	Catalyst loading: 50 mg		
CuO	Conditions: UV light, ambient	Concentration of dye: 15 mg/L (100 mL)	16
nanoleaves	Input oxidant: none	Efficiency: 89%	
	Catalyst loading: 5 mg	Time: 180 min	
TiO <sub>2</sub> /CNS	Conditions: sun light, ambient	Concentration of dye: 10 mg/L (100 mL)	17
AC	Input oxidant: none	Efficiency: 96.35%	
	Catalyst loading: 20 mg/L	Time: 120 min	
SiO <sub>2</sub> /TiO <sub>2</sub>	Conditions: sun light, ambient	Concentration of dye: 10 mg/L	18
	Input oxidant: none	Efficiency: 97.7%	
	Catalyst loading: unknown	Time: 30 min	
Co <sub>3</sub> O <sub>4</sub> /ZnO	Conditions: UV light, ambient	Concentration of dye: 10 mg/L (50 mL)	19
NRs	Input oxidant: none	Efficiency: 100%	
	Catalyst loading: covered on	Time: 96 h	
	Ni foil		
ZnO-	Conditions: UV light, ambient	Concentration of dye: 10 mg/L (30 mL)	20

NPs/RGO	Input oxidant: none	Efficiency: 99.5%	
	Catalyst loading: 10 mg	Time: 180 min	
Ag-TiO <sub>2</sub>	Conditions: UV light, ambient	Concentration of dye: 1×10 <sup>-5</sup> M (12 mL)	21
	Input oxidant: none	Efficiency: 71%	
	Catalyst loading: 2 mg	Time: 60 min	
Ag <sub>2</sub> WO <sub>4</sub> @	Conditions: simulated solar	Concentration of dye: 10 ppm (50 mL)	22
g-C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub>	light	Efficiency: 100%	
	Input oxidant: none	Time: 120 min	
	Catalyst loading: 1.25 g/L		
Fe <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> /TiO <sub>2</sub>	Conditions: UV light/visible	Concentration of dye: 25 mg/L (80 mL)	23
	light, ambient, pH=4	Efficiency: 83%/88%	
	Input oxidant: none	Time: 5 h	
	Catalyst loading: 2 g		
CoFe <sub>2</sub> O <sub>4</sub> /g-	Conditions: visible light,	Concentration of dye: 10 mg/L (80 mL)	24
C <sub>3</sub> N <sub>4</sub>	ambient	Efficiency: 97.3%	
	Input oxidant: 6.25 mL/L of	Time: 3 h	
	30% H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub>		
	Catalyst loading: 20 mg/L		
AgNPs	Conditions: UV light, ambient	Concentration of dye: 15 mg/L (70 mL)	25
	Input oxidant: none	Efficiency: 96%	
	Catalyst loading: 8 mg	Time: 80 min	
paper mill	Conditions: ambient, pH=4	Concentration of dye: 50 mg/L (100 mL)	26
sludge-	Input oxidant: 2 mL/L of 30%	Efficiency: 93.3%	
derived Fe-	H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub>	Time: 80 min	
loading	Catalyst loading: 100 mg		
nanocompo			
site			
rGO-CdO	Conditions: UV light, ambient	Concentration of dye: 1×10 <sup>-5</sup> M (50 mL)	27
	Input oxidant: none	Efficiency: 80%	
	Catalyst loading: 50 mg	Time: 110 min	
Ag <sub>3</sub> PO <sub>4</sub> /Zn	Conditions: visible light,	Concentration of dye: 5 mg/L (100 mL)	28
Fe <sub>2</sub> O <sub>4</sub>	ambient	Efficiency: 100%	
	Input oxidant: none	Time: 60 min	
	Catalyst loading:100 mg		
RGO/meso	Conditions: visible light,	Concentration of dye: 30 mg/L (70 mL)	29
-	ambient	Efficiency: almost 100%	
TiO <sub>2</sub> /AuNP	Input oxidant: none	Time: 240 min	
S	Catalyst loading: 10 mg		
3-D CuS	Conditions: dark, ambient	Concentration of dye: 3×10 <sup>-5</sup> M (10 mL)	30
caved	Input oxidant: 1 wt% H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub>	Efficiency: 96.6%	
superstruct	Catalyst loading: 10 mg	Time: 30 min	
ures			
CePBA	Conditions: dark, ambient	Concentration of dye: 120 mg/L (100	This
	Input oxidant: 0.3 wt%	mL)	work

H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub>	Efficiency: 100%	
Catalyst loading: 5 mg	Time: 30 seconds	

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Fig. S19 Reusability of CePBA as a heterogeneous catalyst toward the degradation of MB (20 mg/L).



Fig. S20 The PXRD pattern of CePBA-8 sample freshly synthesized (a) and after cycling degradation (b).



Fig. S21 The degradation performance of CePBA-3 with large particle size toward MB aqueous solution with the concentration of 20 mg/L.