

PREFACE

The 8th International Symposium on fracture mechanics of ceramics was held on the campus of the University of Houston, Houston, TX, USA, on February 25-28, 2003. This marks three decades of progress in the science and technology development in ceramics since the first meeting of this group, held at the Pennsylvania State University in 1973, which was published in Volumes 1 and 2 of this series. The meetings continued over approximately four year intervals, held subsequently in Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Japan Fine Ceramics Center, Nagoya, Japan, and Kernforschungszentrum, Karlsruhe, Germany.

With the natural maturing of the fields of structural ceramics, the present symposium has focused on nano-scale materials, composites, thin films and coatings as well as glass. The symposium also addressed new issues on fundamentals of fracture mechanics and contact mechanics, and a session on reliability and standardization.

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