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# Development and Application of Optical Stimuli in Controlled Atmosphere Transmission Electron Microscopy

Jakob B. Wagner*[1], Filippo Cavalca[1,2], Beniamino Iandolo[1,3], Asger Barkholt Moss[1], and Thomas W. Hansen[1]

[1] *DTU Danchip, Center for Electron Nanoscopy, Technical University of Denmark, Kgs. Lyngby, Denmark*
[2]*present address: Department of Physics, AlbaNova University Center, Stockholm University, S-10691 Stockholm, Sweden*
[3]*present address: DTU Nanotech, Technical University of Denmark, Kgs. Lyngby, Denmark*
*E-mail: jakob.wagner@cen.dtu.dk

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Electron microscopy has been used extensively to characterize nanostructures for decades [1]. Adding *in situ* capabilities to electron microscopes opens for characterization of materials under more realistic working conditions. However, maintaining electron microscopy performance during *in situ* studies is challenging [2,3]. Here, we discuss the development of sample holders capable of exposing samples to optical irradiation, as well as the microscope performance during *in situ* experiments.
As an example, cuprous oxide ($Cu_2O$) has been identified as a promising catalyst for the hydrogen evolution reaction from ethanol-containing aqueous solutions. However, $Cu_2O$ suffers from photocorrosion in the presence of water. Fig. 1 shows the photoinduced degradation of $Cu_2O$ to metallic copper during *in situ* exposure to water vapor and light in the electron microscope. The oxide-to-metal transformation is investigated using complementary electron microscopy techniques [4].

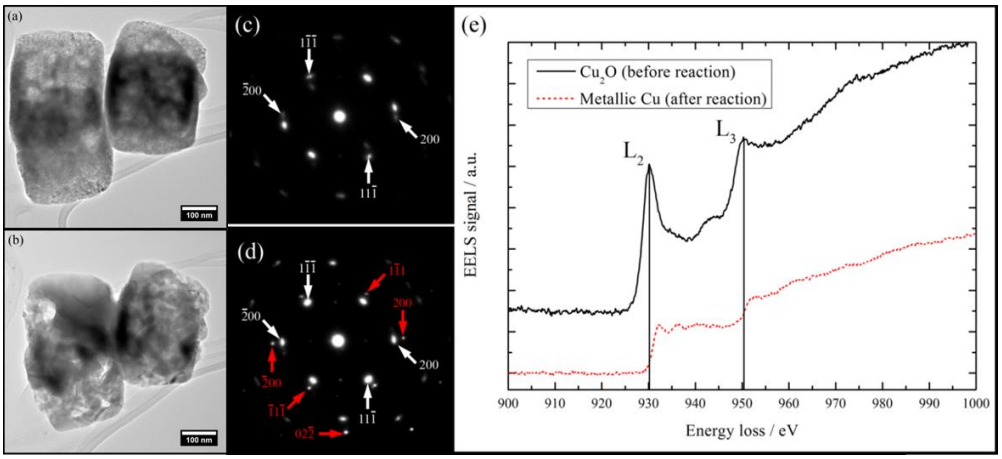


Figure 1: Bright-field images, electron diffraction and electron energy-loss spectra showing the photodegradation of $Cu_2O$ under optical illumination in an aqueous environment.

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