

1 **Revision 1**

2 **Extraterrestrial, shock-formed, cage-like nanostructured carbonaceous materials**

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11 **ABSTRACT**

12 Shock caused by impacts can convert carbonaceous material to diamond. During this transition, new
13 materials can form that depend on the structure of the starting carbonaceous materials and the shock
14 conditions. Here we report the discovery of cage-like nanostructured carbonaceous materials, including
15 carbon nano-onions and bucky-diamonds, formed through extraterrestrial impacts in the Gujba (CB_a)
16 meteorite. The nano-onions are fullerene-type materials and range from 5 to 20 nm; the majority shows
17 a graphitic core-shell structure, and some are characterized by fully curved, onion-like graphitic shells.
18 The core is either filled with carbonaceous material or empty. We show the first, natural, 4-nm-sized
19 bucky-diamond, which is a type of carbon nano-onion consisting of multilayer graphitic shells
20 surrounding a diamond core. We propose that the nano-onions formed during shock metamorphism,
21 either the shock or the release wave, of the pre-existing primitive carbonaceous material that included
22 nanodiamonds, poorly-ordered graphitic material, and amorphous carbonaceous nanospheres. Bucky-
23 diamonds could have formed either through the high-pressure transformation of nano-onions, or as an
24 intermediate material in the high-temperature transformation of nanodiamond to nano-onion. Impact
25 processing of planetary materials was and is a common process in our Solar System, and by extension,
26 throughout extrasolar planetary bodies. Together with our previous discovery of interstratified graphite-
27 diamond in Gujba, our new findings extend the range of nano-structured carbonaceous materials
28 formed in nature. Shock-formed nano-onions and bucky-diamonds are fullerene-type structures, and as
29 such could contribute to the astronomical 217.5 nm absorption feature.

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INTRODUCTION

32

33 Shock metamorphism resulting from hypervelocity impacts is a fundamental process in our Solar
34 System (Sharp and DeCarli 2006). It plays a major role in planetary evolution and is evidenced by
35 shock-induced modifications in minerals and formation of high-pressure and high-temperature phases
36 (e.g., Chen et al. 1996; El Goresy et al. 2008). The nature of these modifications strongly depends on
37 the material and the shock conditions (Sharp and DeCarli 2006). Since shock metamorphism is a rapid
38 event, during which pressure equilibration can be completed within nano- or microseconds after
39 impact, novel materials may form and be quenched (Chao et al. 1962; Chen et al. 1996; Sharp et al.
40 1997, 1999). There has been considerable interest in shock compression of carbonaceous material, of
41 which the formation of diamond from graphitic material has been widely described (e.g., DeCarli and
42 Jamieson 1961; Erskine and Nellis 1991; Yamada and Tanabe 2002; LeGuillou et al. 2010). In addition
43 to diamond, a range of sp^2 - and sp^3 -bonded structures have been reported including defective and
44 stacking disordered diamond (Németh et al. 2014; Németh et al. 2015; Ohfuji et al. 2015; Murri et al.
45 2019), interstratified graphite-diamond (Garvie et al. 2014), amorphous- (Kis et al. 2016), and onion-
46 like carbons (Shumilova et al. 2014).

47 Carbonaceous chondrite meteorites contain a wide range of nano-structured materials encompassing
48 sp^3 -bonded structures, dominated by nanodiamonds, and sp^2 -bonded materials. Nanodiamonds are
49 present in the matrix of all unmetamorphosed carbonaceous chondrites, with matrix-normalized values
50 of ca. 700 to 1500 ppm (Huss and Lewis, 1995). Their small sizes, typically ~ 2 nm, and high
51 abundances, imply large numbers, on the order of 3×10^{17} nanodiamonds, per gram of matrix. The total
52 C content of unmetamorphosed carbonaceous chondrites varies from ~ 5 wt% in the CIs (Orgueil 4.88
53 wt%) to ~ 2 wt% for the CM2 (e.g., Murchison, 2.25 wt%) chondrites (Pearson et al. 2006). Much of
54 this C occurs as sp^2 -bonded carbonaceous material, also called macromolecular carbon (Garvie and
55 Buseck, 2006). In HRTEM images, this material presents itself as poorly-ordered “graphitic material”
56 that typically has a crumpled tissue-like texture, with poorly ordered, small, irregularly-shaped regions

57 having fringes with 0.34–0.38 nm spacings and locally 0.21 nm cross-fringes. Also present are solid or
58 hollow carbon nanospheres: HRTEM images of these nanospheres are typically devoid of fringes
59 revealing their amorphous character (Garvie and Buseck, 2004; 2006). Well-crystallized graphitic
60 material is also present in the CC meteorites, but is less common.

61 Here we report the discovery of cage-like nanostructured carbonaceous materials, including carbon
62 nano-onions and bucky-diamonds from the Gujba (CB_a) meteorite. Carbon nano-onions are fullerene-
63 like structures consisting of spherical carbon shells (Ugarte 1992), whereas bucky-diamonds are
64 nanoparticles containing a nanodiamond covered by fullerene-like shells (Raty et al. 2003). Carbon
65 nano-onions are well-known from syntheses (Ugarte 1992; Kuznetsov et al. 1994a, b; Qin and Iijima
66 1996; Sano et al. 2001; Xiao et al. 2014), and although onion-like structures have previously been
67 described from the Murchison (Bernatowitz et al. 1996) and the martian meteorite Allan Hills 84001
68 (Steele et al. 2012) as well as from Popigai impact materials (Shumilova et al. 2014), those resembling
69 large multilayered fullerenes (Ugarte 1992; Xiao et al. 2014) have not been reported from natural
70 materials. Although, Smith and Buseck (1981) showed a nano-onion from Allende meteorite, the
71 authors argued that it might have been an artifact of the sample preparation. Our report is also the first
72 description of natural bucky-diamonds. We studied these nanocarbons with a view of shedding light on
73 their possible formation conditions and draw attention to their characteristic absorption feature at the
74 wavelength of 217.5 nm, which matches that of interstellar dust (Stecher 1965; Wright 1988;
75 Chhowalla et al. 2003; Bradley et al. 2005).

76

77 *Gujba meteorite*

78 Gujba belongs to a group of metal-rich meteorites called CB chondrites, and currently comprises 21
79 meteorites. Gujba belongs to the CB_a subgroup and is characterized by ~60 vol% metal and cm-sized
80 chondrules separated by a sparse, often dark-colored, matrix (Weisberg and Kimura 2010). While the
81 origin of the CB chondrules has generated significant debate, it is generally accepted that they (and

82 similarly CH and CH/CB chondrites) are the end result of a combination of events that was initiated by
83 the glancing blow impact of two planetesimals (Asphaug et al. 2011), condensation of materials
84 including the metal spheres in the dense impact-formed metal-rich gas, followed by reaccrion on the
85 impacted parent body (Morris et al., 2015). Such a scenario was explored in detail for the Isheyev
86 (CH/CB_b) meteorite (Morris et al. 2015; Garvie et al. 2017). Chondrules within the CB meteorites
87 Gujba are dated at 4562 Myr (Krot et al. 2005), which is ~5.5 Myr after the formation of the calcium-
88 aluminum-rich inclusions (CAIs) of 4568.2 Myr (Bouvier and Wadhwa 2010) and 4567.3 Myr
89 (Connelly et al., 2017). However, the CB parent body also underwent a later major impact at ~4200
90 Myr (Marty et al. 2010); evidence for this impact is a suite of high-pressure minerals (Garvie et al.
91 2011; Garvie et al, 2014; Weisberg and Kimura 2010; Weisberg et al. 2006).

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EXPERIMENTAL METHODS

94 Transmission electron microscopy (TEM) samples were prepared from the carbonaceous residue
95 obtained from fragments of the Gujba meteorite interstitial to the metal following the protocol
96 described by Garvie et al. (2014). High-resolution TEM (HRTEM) images were acquired with a Tecnai
97 F20 (200 kV; Schottky field-emission gun, side-entry, double-tilt stage; point resolution = 0.24 nm), a
98 Topcon 002B (200 keV, LaB₆ filament, side entry, C_s = 0.4 mm, point resolution = 0.19 nm), and a
99 JEOL JEM 4000EX (400 kV; LaB₆ filament, top-entry, double-tilt stage; C_s = 1 mm; point resolution =
100 0.17 nm) electron microscope. Fast Fourier transforms (FFTs) obtained from the HRTEM images were
101 calculated using Gatan Digital Micrograph 3.6.1 software. Background-filtered images were calculated
102 by applying a mask filter on graphite and diamond reflections using the same software.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

105 HRTEM images of the Gujba acid residue reveal the structural diversity of carbonaceous particles
106 including amorphous to poorly graphitized carbon, ordered graphitic material, interstratified graphite-

107 diamond (Garvie et al. 2014), nanodiamonds, and cage-like nanostructured carbonaceous grains. The
108 nanodiamonds are small (2-3-nm) and typically aggregated (Fig. 1a), consistent with those found in un-
109 shocked carbonaceous chondrites (Garvie 2006; Daulton et al. 1996). Carbonaceous objects with
110 rounded morphology occur in the residue. In particular, compact (Fig. 1b) and hollow nanospheres
111 (Fig. 1c) occur, and they are similar in shape, size, and structure to those reported from a range of
112 carbonaceous chondrites (Nakamura-Messenger et al. 2006; Garvie 2005; Garvie and Buseck 2006).
113 Their size ranges between 20- and 200-nm, and according to Garvie (2006) their HRTEM and EELS
114 data are consistent with an essentially amorphous material, although regions with poorly ordered
115 graphite can also be detected (Figs. 1b and 1c). They are dominated by carbon and contain minor
116 amounts of sulfur, nitrogen and oxygen (Garvie 2006) and possibly some hydrogen (Naraoka et al.
117 2004).

118 In addition to the afore-mentioned carbonaceous materials, we discovered nano-sized cage-like
119 nanostructured carbonaceous materials in the residue. These cage-like materials are prominent in the
120 HRTEM images, and are visible as individual particles composed of concentric graphitic shells.
121 Approximately 40 nano-onions were imaged and their sizes ranged from 5 and 20 nm (Fig. 2). They
122 have similar morphologies to synthetic nano-onions (Ugarte 1992; Xiao et al. 2014). Many of the nano-
123 onions are attached to or spatially associated with grains of interstratified graphite-diamond.

124 The nano-onions are characterized by concentric graphitic shells with 0.34-0.35 nm spacing around
125 a hollow or filled core. The continuity of these spacings around the core is consistent with a nested
126 shell-like with structure of graphitic shells. Most nano-onions showed between 5 and 10 graphitic
127 shells, and the largest contained 30 shells (Fig. 2a). The nano-onions are either hollow (Figs. 2a, 2b, 2c,
128 and 2d) or filled (Figs. 2e and 2f). According to literature reports (Terrones and Terrones, 1997), the
129 cores could be crystalline or amorphous, although in our sample we only identified crystalline core
130 materials. Some HRTEM images show cores with 0.21-nm spacings, consistent with both graphite and
131 diamond (Figs. 2e and 2f). The d-spacing of graphite {100} is 0.212 nm and that of diamond {111} is

132 0.206 nm. The experimental error of the d-value measurements from HRTEM images is ~ 2-5 %,
133 therefore, distinguishing between graphite and diamond based on one set of 0.21-nm fringes alone is
134 not possible. However, graphite and diamond can be identified by the 60° and 71° 0.21-nm cross-
135 fringes, respectively.

136 One nano-onion was found fortuitously oriented so that its central part showed fringes consistent
137 with graphite projected along $\langle 001 \rangle$ (Fig. 3). Since an HRTEM image is a 2D projection of a 3D
138 object, this graphite could be in the core of a nano-onion or part of its shell occurring on the top or the
139 bottom of the onion. If it occurred inside the onion, it would be a new type, the first graphite-filled
140 nano-onion.

141 A single caged nano-onion was discovered that shows a distinct diamond core (Fig. 4) containing
142 $\{111\}$ diamond reflections in $\langle 110 \rangle$ projection. Visible are the 0.206-nm spacings of the $\{111\}$ planes
143 with 71° cross fringes. This caged-nanostructure is a special type of nano-onion referred as bucky-
144 diamond (Barnard et al. 2003; Raty et al. 2003).

145 The carbonaceous materials in Gujba reflect the diversity of structures acquired and formed under a
146 range of environments including, unmodified materials primarily from the impactor, formation and
147 modification in the impact plume during cooling and condensation, reaccrion on the planetesimal,
148 and finally modification by post-accretion shock events. The similarities in mineral and O isotopic
149 compositions of the CB ($\Delta^{17}\text{O} \sim -2\%$) and CR ($\Delta^{17}\text{O} = -4\%$ to 0%) chondrites suggest a common
150 nebular reservoir (Krot et al. 2006). Hence the precursor carbonaceous materials were likely similar to
151 those found in primitive, unmetamorphosed carbonaceous chondrites, such as CM2 and CR2
152 chondrites. We propose that both nanodiamonds (Fig. 1a) and the poorly-ordered, amorphous
153 nanospheres (Figs. 1b and 1c) of the Gujba meteorite are the precursor materials for the cage-like
154 nanostructured carbonaceous materials (Figs. 2, 3, and 4).

155 The close association of many of the nano-onions with grains of interstratified graphite-diamond is
156 consistent with contemporaneous formation of both during the same shock event. The materials could

157 have formed during the initial shock wave or during the release wave following the initial shock
158 compression, when the local structures were placed under tension. The Gujba peak shock conditions
159 are estimated to be 2273 K and 19 GPa based on a suite of minerals formed at high pressure and
160 temperature including majorite garnet, wadsleyite, coesite, and stishovite (Weisberg and Kimura 2004;
161 Weisberg et al. 2006, Garvie et al. 2014). However, the complex and heterogeneous structure of the
162 Gujba meteorite would have produced significant mm-scale pressure and temperature variations.
163 Structurally, the Gujba meteorite is characterized by millimeter-sized metal spheres separated by
164 silicate clasts and dark interstitial matrix (Rubin et al. 2003). The metal has higher shock impedance
165 than the surrounding silicate-rich material, which would have produced significant differences in the
166 shock conditions of the metal globules and surrounding material. Different shock velocities between
167 metal and silicates could result in irregular shock front propagating through Gujba. In addition, the
168 shock fronts can be refracted at the metal/silicate boundary producing localized, millimeter- to
169 micrometer-scale, pressure spikes of nanoseconds duration in the low-impedance material. The peak
170 pressures and temperature associated can vary by over an order of magnitude over short spatial
171 distances, with pressure equilibration within a microsecond and temperature equilibration within
172 seconds (Sharp and DeCarli, 2006). These small spatial-scale shock heterogeneities explain the
173 observed association of unshocked carbonaceous materials, such as poorly ordered graphite,
174 amorphous nanospheres and nanodiamonds, together with the shock-formed cage-like nanostructured
175 carbonaceous materials.

176 Carbon nano-onions were first produced by intense electron irradiation of carbon soot in a
177 TEM (Ugarte 1992). They were later found in detonation soot (Kuznetsov et al. 1994b) and were
178 synthesized via a variety of methods including arc discharge of graphite in liquids (Sano et al. 2001)
179 and combustion of naphthalene (Choucair and Stride 2012). Nano-onions can be prepared from
180 nanodiamonds through heat treatment (Kuznetsov et al. 1994a), electron irradiation (Qin, L-C. and
181 Iijima 1996), and at high pressures (Blank et al. 2007, 2018). Nano-onions can also be formed directly

182 from graphite in a diamond anvil (>20 GPa) under shear deformation at room temperature (Blank et al.,
183 2007), with nano-onion size increasing with increase of pressure and shear values. At higher pressures,
184 >55GPa, diamond also transforms to onion-like structure (Blank et al. 2018). According to Blank et al.
185 (2009), the formation of onions appears to be a “dead-end branch of high-pressure graphite
186 transformations”. However, Xiao et al. (2014) showed that during energetic irradiation, it is possible to
187 convert nanodiamonds to nano-onions, which upon further irradiation can convert back to nano-onions.
188 The reversible transition occurs via the bucky-diamond intermediary phase.

189 The structural and textural complexity of the starting carbonaceous material in the Gujba meteorite,
190 together with the wide range of P and T conditions present during the shock, suggests several
191 mechanisms and starting materials in their formation. Firstly, the nano-onions and bucky-diamonds
192 may have formed through the shock processing of the pre-existing nanodiamonds. The small sizes of
193 some of the cage-like onions are consistent with their formation from a nanodiamonds precursor (e.g.,
194 Figs. 2d, 2e, 2f, 3, and 4). It is possible that some of the larger, i.e., 10 to 20 nm nano-onions (Figs. 2a,
195 2b, and 2c) formed directly from the high-pressure transformation of the compact nanospheres.
196 Alternatively, the close association of some nano-onions with the interstratified diamond-graphite
197 particles suggests a common precursor material for both. The interstratified diamond-graphite
198 represents the incomplete formation of diamond from graphitic material and forms short stubby grains
199 to a few tens of nanometer in length (Garvie et al. 2014). These stubby grains likely formed from the
200 shock-transformation of the poorly ordered graphitic material that is common in carbonaceous
201 chondrites of low petrologic grade. This poorly ordered carbon forms ribbons with short flat regions
202 and curved morphologies. We suggest that the interstratified diamond-graphite formed within the flat
203 areas of the ribbons and the nano-onions along the curved areas.

204 **IMPLICATIONS**

205 *Nano-onions, bucky-diamonds and the interstellar 217.5 nm absorption feature*

206 A prominent feature of the interstellar dust ultraviolet absorption spectrum is a broad bump at 217.5
207 nm (Stecher 1965, Wright 1988; Bradley et al. 2005). Understanding the origin of this feature is still a
208 major issue in astronomy. The feature is peculiar as the central wavelength is spatially invariant, but its
209 bandwidth varies from one line to another, suggesting multiple carriers or a single carrier with variable
210 properties. Bradley et al. (2005) associated the astronomical feature with organic carbon and
211 amorphous silicates found in interplanetary dust particles, based on the spectral similarities of these
212 materials. According to literature reports, the feature could match that of carbon nano-onions (Wright
213 1988; Chhowalla et al. 2003) and presumably bucky-diamonds since they also contain fullerene-type
214 structure. However, extraterrestrial onion-like objects have so far only been reported from the martian
215 meteorite Allan Hills 84001 (Steele et al. 2012). This report shows the finding of nano-onions and
216 bucky-diamonds from Gujba meteorite and proposes that fullerene-type materials could form from the
217 primitive carbonaceous material during impact, a fundamental geological process in the universe. Thus,
218 we suggest that carbonaceous onion-type objects could be common in the Solar System and a
219 component of the 217.5 nm astronomical feature.

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Figures

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378 Figure 1. Un-shocked carbonaceous materials from the Gujba meteorite. **a)** A cluster of 2-3-nm-sized
379 nanodiamonds. White lines mark diamond {111} spacings (0.206-nm). **b)** Compact amorphous
380 carbonaceous nanosphere. **c)** Hollow carbonaceous nanosphere. Black arrows point to 0.34-nm
381 spacings indicative for graphitic material.

382

383 Figure 2. Representative HRTEM images of cage-like nanostructured carbonaceous materials. Black
384 arrows point to 0.34-nm spacings of graphite. **a)** A hollow 20-nm-sized nano-onion. **b)** A hollow 14-
385 nm-sized nano-onion. **c)** A deformed 20-nm-sized hollow nano-onion. **d)** A 7-nm-sized hollow nano-
386 onion. White arrow points to nanodiamond outside the nano-onion. Visible are the 0.21-nm spacings of
387 diamond {111}. **e)** An 8-nm-sized nano-onion with a core showing 0.21-nm spacings (white lines). The
388 onion is attached to an incompletely transformed graphite-diamond particle (white arrow). **f)** An 8-nm-
389 sized nano-onion with a core having 0.21-nm spacings (white lines).

390

391 Figure 3. HRTEM lattice-fringe image of a nano-onion containing graphite. **a)** A 10-nm-sized nano-
392 onion with graphite in its central part. Black arrows point to 0.34-nm spacings of graphite.
393 **b)** The FFT, calculated from the area marked by white corners of **a)**, shows hexagonally arranged
394 reflections with 0.21-nm spacings consistent with graphite projected along $\langle 001 \rangle$. **c)** Background
395 filtered image, calculated from **a)** by selecting the reflections of **b)** enhances the visibility of graphite
396 cross-fringes. White arrows mark {100} planes of graphite with 0.212-nm spacings.

397

398 Figure 4. HRTEM lattice-fringe image of a 10-nm-sized bucky-diamond. The FFT (lower right corner)
399 shows {111} diamond reflections in $\langle 110 \rangle$ projections. White arrows mark {111} planes of diamond
400 with 0.206-nm spacings on the background filtered image (upper right corner).

Fig. 1

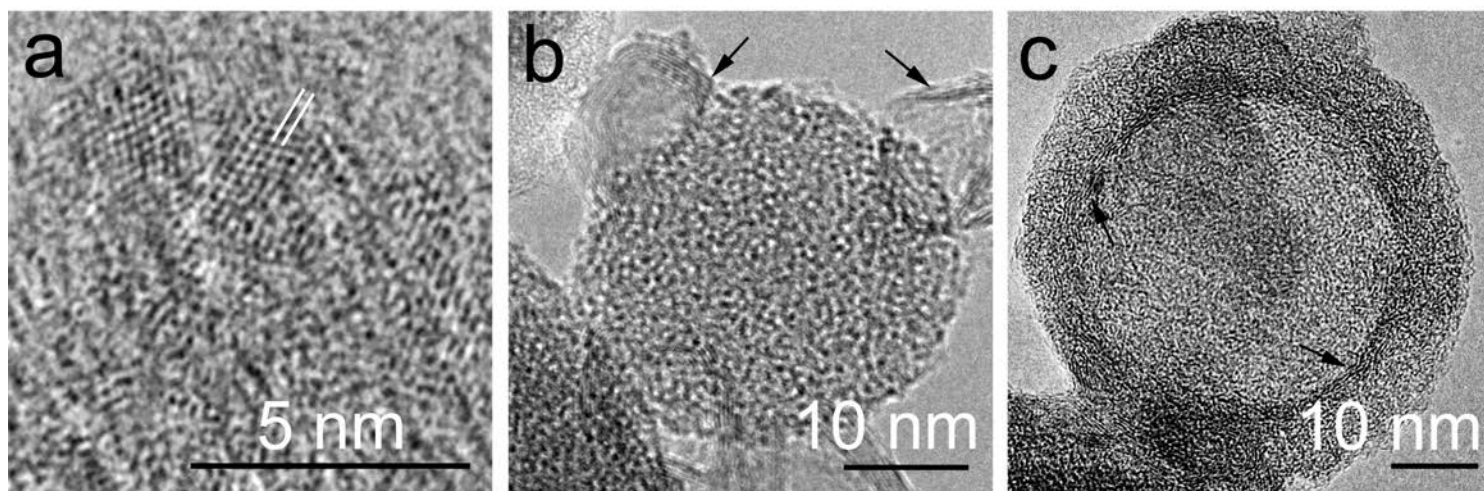


Fig. 2

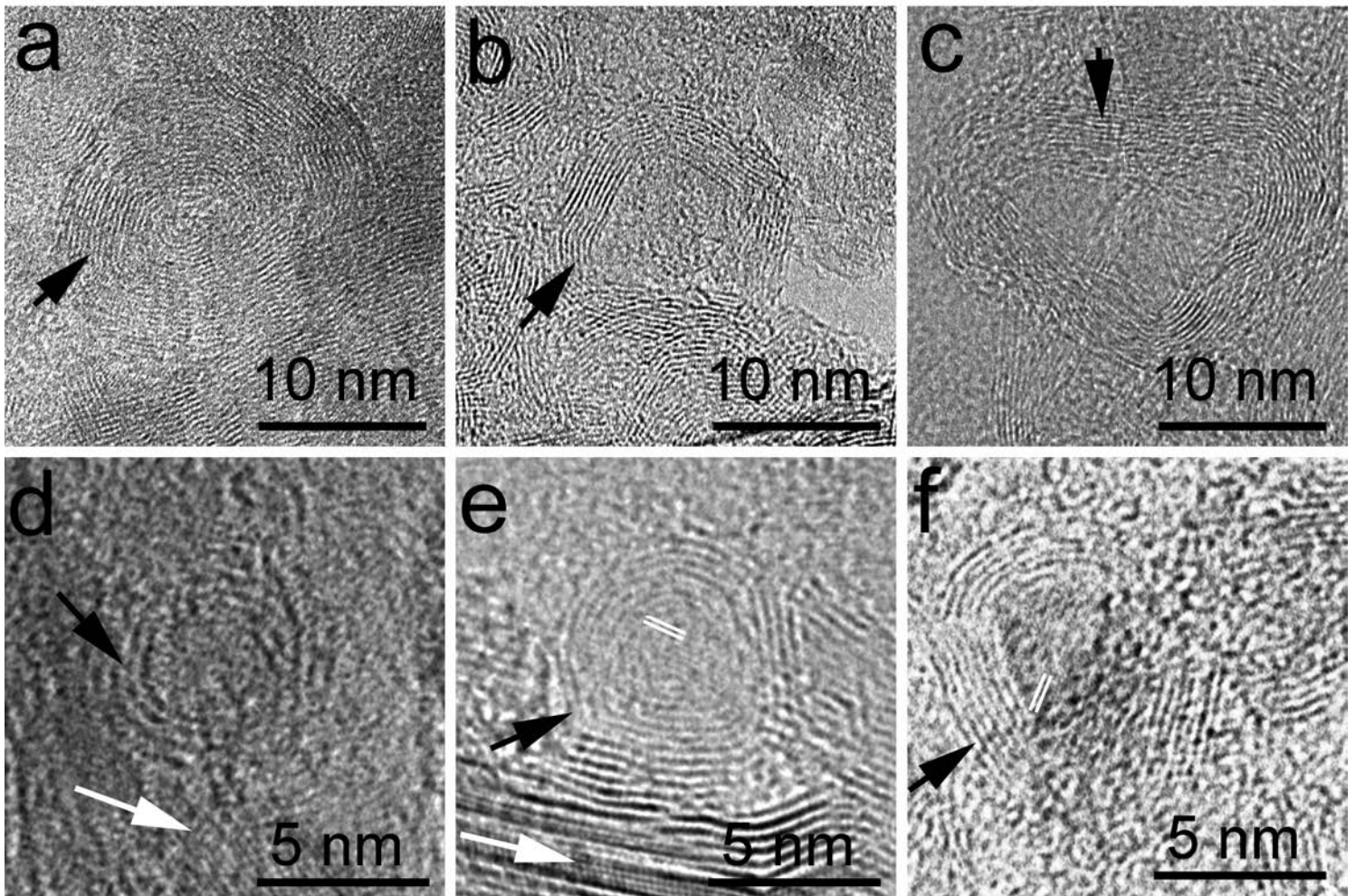


Fig. 3

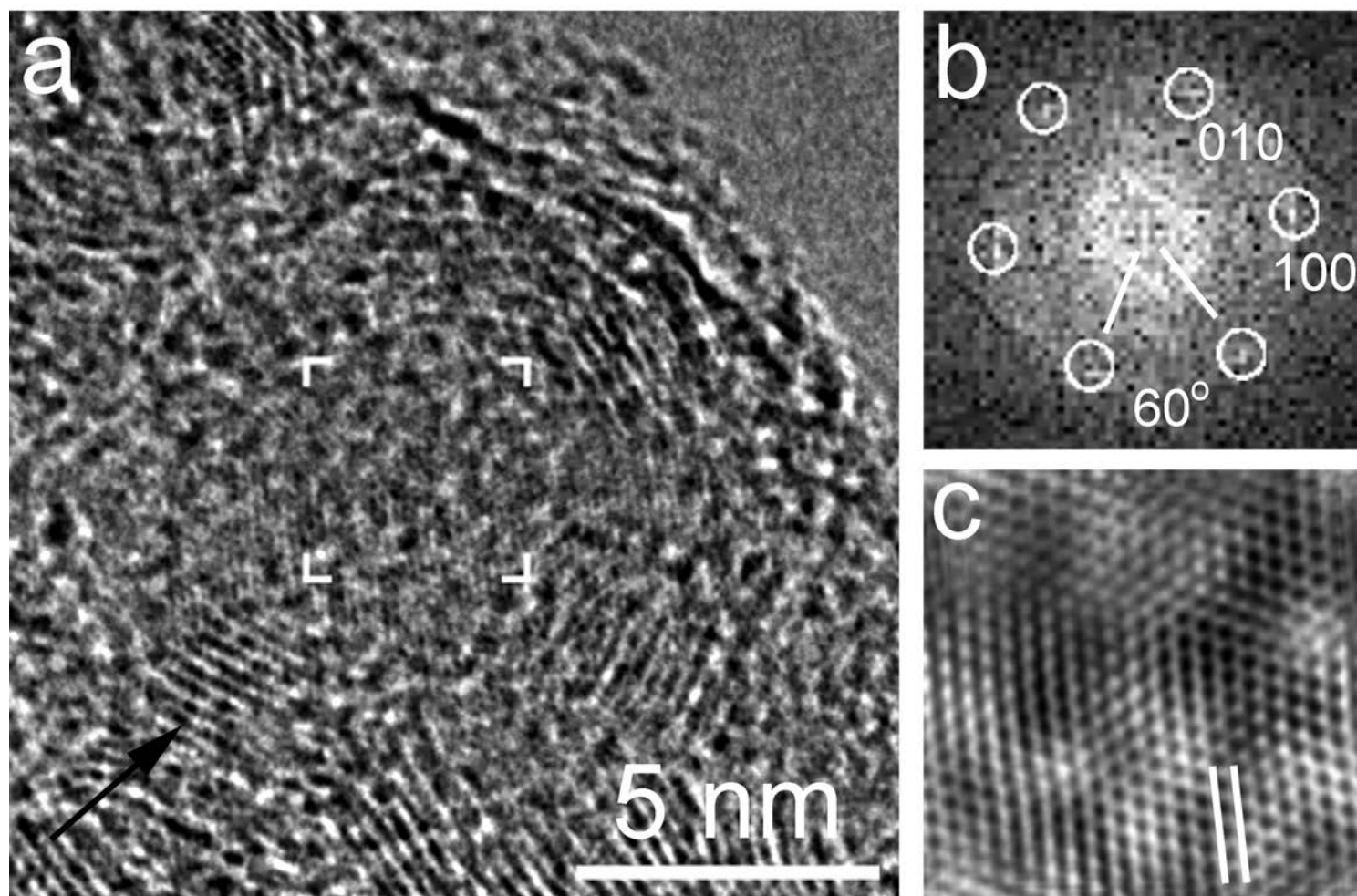


Fig. 4

