

# Reactions of platinum clusters $\text{Pt}_n^\pm$ , $n = 1\text{--}21$ , with $\text{CH}_4$ : to react or not to react

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Received (in Cambridge, UK) 22nd March 2006, Accepted 19th April 2006

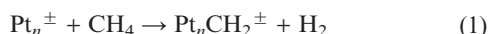
First published as an Advance Article on the web 15th May 2006

DOI: 10.1039/b604207d

The relative reactivity of any given neutral platinum cluster falls in-between that of the corresponding anion and cation.

One fascinating aspect of cluster chemistry is how reactivity and other properties vary with cluster size. Knowledge about size–reactivity relationships for different metals has become even more topical with the recent advent of practical techniques for soft-landing size-selected metal clusters on surfaces, eventually to be used as catalysts.<sup>1</sup> Platinum remains one of the most remarkable catalytic elements—in particular in connection with C–H activation—and deserves particular attention. We report the results of gas phase reactions between methane and platinum clusters ( $\text{Pt}_n^\pm$ ,  $n = 1\text{--}21$ ), both positively and negatively charged. Until now, this reaction has only been studied for cationic<sup>2–4</sup> clusters and anionic clusters with  $n \leq 9$ , in addition to a study of neutral clusters with  $n \leq 25$ .<sup>5</sup> Reactions were performed in the cell of an FT-ICR mass spectrometer.<sup>†</sup> The use of monoisotopic  $^{195}\text{Pt}$  facilitated detection of larger clusters.

Fig. 1 is illustrative of the reactivity of the platinum clusters. Dehydrogenation is the only primary reaction observed.



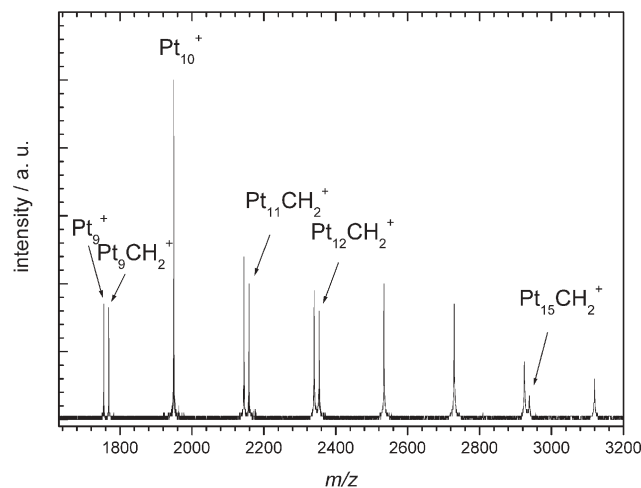
However, it is most noticeable that the reaction is either very efficient (for some clusters) or completely absent (for others). A majority of the cationic clusters with  $n < 16$  reacts efficiently, and the same applies for the smaller anionic clusters ( $n < 7$ ). Fig. 2 shows the relative reaction rates as a function of the number of atoms. In some cases ( $n = 5\text{--}9$  and 11), a secondary reaction according to



was also observed for the cations.

The anionic trimer deserves special mention. The reaction between  $\text{Pt}_3^-$  and methane does not proceed to completion. Our analysis of the kinetic data, in addition to ion isolation experiments, clearly demonstrates the existence of two electronic/geometric isomeric forms; one reactive (20%) and one unreactive.

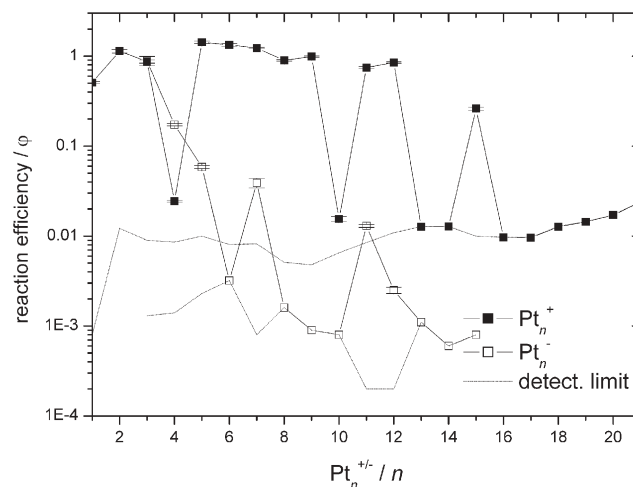
All reactions were clean, unambiguous, free of branching products, and there was no evidence for products of methane addition (for  $n = 1\text{--}21$ ). Slow formation of adducts with background  $\text{O}_2$  was observed for  $n > 10$ , demonstrating significant oxygen affinity and also indicating that the cluster ions are



**Fig. 1** Mass spectrum recorded for an intermediate mass range of cationic platinum clusters during reaction with methane. The binary reactivity pattern (on–off) is clearly recognized. Partial pressure of methane was  $2 \times 10^{-8}$  mbar, and reaction time was 3 s.

translationally cold. Our estimates based on the voltage settings of the cell, suggest that clusters with  $n > 4$  have negligible translational energy. A minor contribution to the over-all energy (typically less than  $30 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$ ) should, however, be accounted for in the case of  $2 < n \leq 4$ . The monomer was cooled by pulsed argon.

The extremely poor reactivity of  $\text{Pt}_n^+$  for  $n = 4, 10$  and 15 parallels the behaviour found by Beyer *et al.* for the reaction with  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$ .<sup>6</sup> Fig. 2 shows that the anionic and cationic reactivity towards

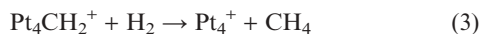


**Fig. 2** Size dependent reaction efficiency.

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methane are quite different. However, the gross features of  $\text{Pt}_n^-$  reactivity towards  $\text{CH}_4$  and  $\text{N}_2\text{O}^6$  are the same, although we note that in general methane reacts somewhat slower. As mentioned above, there already exists a study on the reactivity of neutral platinum clusters towards methane up to  $n = 24$ .<sup>5</sup> In that study, the conditions were significantly different from the present study (much higher pressure, much shorter reaction time). In addition, ion-induced dipole forces affect absolute rates for charged clusters. Despite these differences, we are highly satisfied in noticing that the line describing the relative neutral cluster reactivity–size relationship falls nicely in-between the corresponding cationic and anionic lines (not illustrated here). In particular, the magic number  $n = 10$  represents the minimum in reactivity, and reactivity is in general low or very low for  $n \geq 14$ , but increasing slowly with increasing  $n$ .

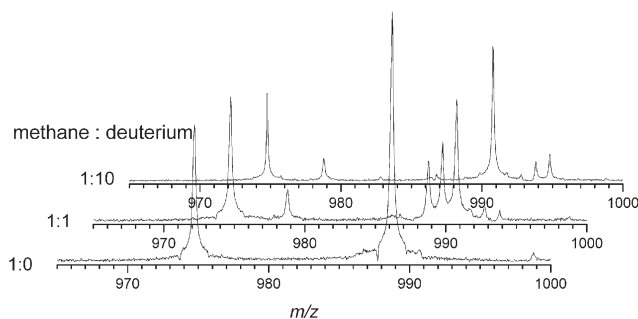
We will be careful in speculating on how the reactivity of the different clusters relates to their thermochemical stability and molecular and electronic structures, since energy differences in the range 10–20  $\text{kJ mol}^{-1}$  may account for the observed differences. Despite these considerations, it is clear that in the likely case that  $\text{CH}_2$  binds in the form of methylene, platinum must accommodate orbitals of fitting symmetry and energy to form a strong  $\text{Pt}=\text{C}$  double bond (in the case methylene binds to one single platinum atom). Armentrout *et al.* have suggested that in the case of  $\text{Pt}^+$ , promotion to the low lying  $6s^1d^8$  electronic configuration is necessary.<sup>7</sup> It should be mentioned that quantum chemical studies indicate that while platinum clusters typically have layered structures, the unreactive 10-atom Pt cluster has a tetrahedral structure and is relatively more stable than the other clusters.<sup>8</sup> The reaction enthalpy for the reaction,  $\text{CH}_4 \rightarrow \text{CH}_2 + \text{H}_2$  is 461.3  $\text{kJ mol}^{-1}$  (NIST), and must be compensated by binding the  $\text{CH}_2$  unit by at least the same amount, a severe requirement. This fine balance is nicely illustrated by Schwarz and co-workers who observed that the reaction of the tetramer is essentially reversible.



They concluded from the rates of the reverse reaction, that the reaction is almost thermoneutral for  $n = 4$  and that the low reactivity in the case of  $\text{Pt}_4^+$  was due to a lack of thermodynamic driving force.<sup>2</sup> The same applies to  $\text{Pt}^+$ , for which DFT calculations from Armentrout's lab demonstrate that there is hardly any barrier for the almost thermoneutral transformation, which is in agreement with their own guided beam measurements.<sup>7</sup>

In order to probe this matter even further, we did experiments where both methane and  $\text{D}_2$  were allowed into the cell simultaneously. Fig. 3 illustrates a typical situation. Neither of the reactant or product clusters with  $n \leq 4$ , were very susceptible to the presence of  $\text{D}_2$ . However, for  $n \geq 5$  efficient hydrogen–deuterium exchange is observed. This coincides with our own observation for the reaction of  $\text{Pt}_n^+$  clusters with molecular hydrogen, where efficient physisorption or chemisorption under FT-ICR conditions is only observed for  $n \geq 5$ .<sup>9</sup>

A characteristic number of hydrogen–deuterium exchanges can serve as a probe for particular structures of gaseous metal hydrocarbon clusters, such as the fivefold exchange of a rhodium allyl hydride,<sup>10</sup> or the four fold exchange for  $\text{Rh}_5\text{C}_2\text{H}_4^+$ .<sup>11</sup> Along these lines, we interpret the twofold hydrogen–deuterium exchanges with an intact  $\text{CH}_2$  unit which is bound to either one



**Fig. 3** The portion of the mass spectrum, which displays  $\text{Pt}_5^+$  ( $m/z = 975$ ),  $\text{Pt}_5\text{CH}_2^+$  ( $m/z = 989$ ) and deuterium exchange products.

or two platinum atoms. This interpretation is also consistent with the observed reversibility of  $\text{H}_2$  loss for  $\text{Pt}_4^+$ .<sup>2</sup> The hydrogen–deuterium exchange must also be associative, since we were not able to observe any exchange for  $n = 1$ –4, for which the clusters do not appear to adsorb molecular hydrogen under FT-ICR conditions.

We thank Dr M. K. Beyer (TU Berlin) for helpful and valuable comments and the NFR (Norwegian Research Council) for financial support through the KOSK program for a postdoctoral fellowship for CA.

## Notes and references

† The experiments were performed using a Fourier transform ion cyclotron resonance (FT-ICR) mass spectrometer, Bruker Apex 47e (Bruker Daltonics, MA, USA), with a laser ablation metal cluster source chamber with additional pumping attached to the standard source chamber. The experimental set-up is of the same design as used by Berg and co-workers, and has been described.<sup>12</sup> A detailed description of our experimental procedures has recently been given, including details of the chemicals used, gas handling, and pressure calibration.<sup>11,13</sup> In the present experiment we used isotopically enriched  $^{195}\text{Pt}$  (97.3%, Oak Ridge National Laboratories). Approximate methane–deuterium mixtures were prepared *in situ* by introducing the pure gases through two independent leak valves.

The uncertainty in absolute reaction rates is typically  $\pm 40\%$ , but relative rates are very precise. Errors are given at the 95% confidence level. Reactions were observed until  $>95\%$  consumption of the parent ions. Exceptions were the slow reactions for  $\text{Pt}_4^+$  and  $\text{Pt}_{10}^+$ , as well as  $\text{Pt}_3^-$  for which a biexponential behaviour was observed. Reaction efficiencies  $\phi$  are given relative to theoretical collisional rates obtained by the parameterised model of Su and Chesnavich.<sup>14</sup>

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