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Experimental IR study and ab initio modelling of ethylene adsorption in a MFI - type host zeolite

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Experimental IR study and *ab initio* modelling of ethylene adsorption in a MFI - type host zeolite.

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Different *ab initio* methods and experimental results are used to investigate the effect of the adsorption of one ethylene molecule on silicalite-1, a MFI type zeolite. We used simplified models to simulate a portion of a straight or sinusoidal channel of silicalite-1 at a quantum level. The calculated absorption spectra of the models are qualitatively in good agreement with the experimental FTIR spectrum of silicalite-1. Additionally we simulate the FTIR spectrum of the isolated ethylene molecule and that of an ethylene molecule in interaction with the above-mentioned zeolite models. Results are discussed depending on the method and specific basis set and compared with experiments and previous molecular dynamics simulations.

 $\mathit{Keywords:}$ Ab initio, FTIR spectroscopy, Modelling, Vibrational analysis.

1 Introduction

Zeolites are adsorbents that belong to a class of microporous aluminosilicates with an open framework structure. They are built based on a three-dimensional framework of TO_4 (T = Al, Si) tetrahedra, each oxygen atom being shared between two tetrahedra. The assemblage of these tetrahedra creates a porous structure with regular arrays of openings, channels and/or cavities in which molecules of various sizes can be trapped. Their catalytic and adsorption properties are the basis of the use of zeolites in gas separation [1], catalysis [2–4], and environmental protection [5, 6]. Many experimental and theoretical investigations

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were carried out to study physicochemical properties of zeolites [7–27].

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Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) spectroscopy is a powerful technique to investigate adsorption processes and particularly the state of physisorbed molecules [8, 9, 18, 28, 29]. Modifications of the spectra of both the adsorbent and the adsorbate are observed experimentally during physisorption processes. The interpretation of these modifications is still challenging and needs a theoretical support. Infrared experimental and molecular dynamics (MD) simulation studies were previously jointly performed to characterize the interaction of ethylene on silicalite-1 at room temperature [5, 8, 29]. The three main results are: (i) a good agreement between experiment and simulation, (ii) the vibrational response accounts for a global interaction between the whole structure of the zeolite and ethylene, indicating that the adsorbed ethylene molecule is not localized on a preferable silicalite site and (iii) the ν_{12} vibrational band of ethylene exhibits a small split at high loading attributed to a condensation effect of the adsorbed phase. It can be underlined that at very low temperature or/and using cumbersome adsorbates, molecules can be preferentially located at specific sites. In these cases, contrary to what occurs with ethylene, the spectroscopic response will be the signature of the specific interaction between a site and the molecule.

In this paper we report the experimental results of ethylene adsorption on silicalite-1 obtained by means of a new FTIR chamber. Additionally, we extended our studies to a quantum approach that is supposed to give a better description of infrared spectra compared to classical MD simulation. However, *ab initio* quantum calculations are computationally expensive for systems including a lot of electrons as it is for a unit cell of zeolite. As a consequence, authors considered only a part of a zeolite unit cell representative of the geometric and electronic environment [30].

In this study a double ring (based on 20 T atoms with oxygen atoms linking two single rings to form a double ring) and a hydrogenated fragment of it were chosen as models. Previous *ab initio* calculations on different types of zeolites have used smaller fragments than double rings to model the framework [14, 18, 19, 21–28]. Different levels of theory are used in this study: RHF (Restricted Hartree Fock), DFT (Density Functional Theory) and MP2 (Second order Møller-Plesset) methods and compared to experimental and MD data. Section 2 is dedicated to the experimental technique. Section 3 deals with the *ab*

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initio calculating methods and results are discussed in Section 4.

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2 Experiment

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2.1 Material

Silicalite-1, the aluminium-free end number of the MFI type zeolites was used. It was prepared using tetrapropylammonium bromide as template in fluoride medium at low temperature (< 373 K) by the Institut de Sciences des Matériaux de Mulhouse (France). As-synthesized, the zeolite was calcined in air at 873 K for 6 hours to ensure that the template was removed and therefore, that the microporous structure was opened up. Nitrogen adsorption performed on the calcined sample characterized a micropore volume of 0.19 cm³.g⁻¹. Silicalite-1 crystals exhibit plate-like coffin shape morphologies of homogeneous size of around 7x3.5x0.05 μ m³. Ethylene N35 quality gas was purchased from Air Liquide/Alphagaz Company and used as adsorptive without further purification.

2.2 Apparatus and procedures

A home built infrared cell was used to investigate in situ the interaction of ethylene with silicalite-1. This stainless steel cell is operating at room temperature and for pressures ranging from 10^{-5} up to 10^3 hPa. It is composed of two main parts: (i) an optical chamber equipped with two KBr windows and (ii) a heat chamber where the sample can be activated up to 573 K under vacuum (10^{-5} hPa). A linear vertical transfer allows the transport of the sample held in the sample holder from the heat chamber to the optical cell. The cell was mounted inside a BRUKER Equinox 55 Fourier transform infrared spectrometer equipped with a Globar light source, a KBr beam splitter and a DTGS detector. All FTIR absorption spectra were collected at room temperature over the wavenumber range 400-4000 cm⁻¹ and were recorded by averaging of 100 scans with a resolution of 4 cm⁻¹.

Infrared spectra of the adsorbent (silicalite-1) were performed using both the KBr and self-supporting wafer techniques in order to characterize accurately strong and weak lattice zeolite vibrational bands, respectively. All sample and background (collected without zeolite sample) spectra were recorded at room

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temperature and pressure.

Infrared spectrum of the gas adsorptive was collected after 218 hPa of ethylene was introduced in the cell previously evacuated under 10^{-5} hPa at room temperature. The pressure value was chosen in order to measure a well defined, unsaturated spectrum within the wavenumber range 400-4000 cm⁻¹. The infrared spectrum of ethylene was ratioed with a reference spectrum of the empty, evacuated optical cell.

Infrared spectra of zeolite in contact with ethylene were performed in the cell using powder sample pressed into thin self-supporting wafers. Before adsorption, the zeolite sample held in the sample holder was degassed under vacuum (10^{-5} hPa) at room temperature. Adsorption (and desorption) measurements were carried out by exposing the dehydrated sample to increasing (or decreasing) equilibrium pressures of ethylene from 15 to 10^3 hPa (or inversely), at room temperature. The amounts of ethylene adsorbed at a given pressure, at the equilibrium, were determined from the sorption isotherm obtained by thermogravimetry. All spectra of the zeolite in equilibrium with gaseous ethylene at a given pressure were ratioed to background spectra of the cell without sample at the same pressure. The schematic diagram of the experimental set-up is shown in the Figure 1.

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

3 Computational Procedures

All *ab initio* calculations were performed using the Gaussian03 package [31] on a Linux system. We performed three different types of calculations.

• The RHF method with a split-valence $3-21G^{**}$ basis set, that includes -d and -p polarization functions, was applied to a Si₂₀O₅₀ cluster of silicalite. This method has been shown to produce good results for silicate structures [32]. The compromise between the reliability of the results and the computational cost is optimized with this basis set. It is important to notice that quantum chemical calculations at this level of theory overestimate the strength of the chemical bonds. Therefore, a scaling factor is commonly applied 17:50

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to correct the calculated vibrational harmonic wavenumbers [33]. This method was successfully applied in the development of the *ab initio* force field for aluminosilicate structures [20]. In our study we consider a $Si_{20}O_{50}$ cluster consisting in two $Si_{10}O_{20}$ rings linked by oxygen atoms. The geometry of the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ structure was fully optimized in the C_1 point group without any constraint. This is a simplified representation of a portion of a straight or sinusoidal channel of silicalite-1. The normal modes of the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ cluster were obtained from vibrational harmonic analysis (anharmonicity correction is negligible for these atoms). This structure was used to simulate the adsorption of ethylene within the zeolite framework.

• In the case of ethylene interaction with silicalite-1, adsorption is mainly due to van der Waals dispersion interactions. The use of Post-Hartree-Fock levels of theory that account for electron correlation leads to more accurate *ab initio* calculations. The choice of the basis sets is also important. Møller-Plesset perturbation theory (MP2 - MP4) and coupled-cluster methods with all single and double excitations followed by a perturbative treatment of triple excitations (CCSD(T)) are known to be appropriate for studying van der Waals complexes and molecular systems. But it should be noticed that these methods require significant computational resources for large systems. They are presently intractable for the double ring system. Therefore, the second order Møller-Plesset perturbation theory MP2 and a more extended split-valence 6-31++G(2d) basis set with diffusion functions on heavy and hydrogen atoms and polarization functions on heavy atoms was applied to only a small part of the Si₂₀O₅₀ model, namely, Si₄O₁₂H₈ (hydrogen atoms are added to saturate the dangling bonds).

• Density Functional Theory (DFT) methods with a hybrid functional in which the exchange energy is combined with the exact energy from Hartree-Fock theory, provide a reasonable alternative to *ab initio* methods in predicting geometries, frequencies and energies of van der Waals systems. For zeolites, DFT methods produce ground state interaction energies that are often correct. The following DFT methods have been used in our study for the Si₄O₁₂H₈ fragment: B3LYP/6-31++G(2d), MPW1PW91/6-31++G(2d), PBE1PBE/6-31++G(2d) with three, one and without any parameters ("*ab initio*" functional), that define the hybrid functional, respectively. One of the Generalized Gradient Approximation methods where the energy functional depends not only on the electron density but also on its gradient, namely TPSS, have June 24, 2009

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 been also used. The optimization of the $Si_4O_{12}H_8$ structure has been performed at these levels of theory. The potential energy as a function of the distance R between this fragment and the ethylene molecule was also examined and the results were compared with calculations performed at the MP2/6-31++G(2d) level of theory.

Ab initio calculations were also performed for the ethylene molecule alone. The harmonic and anharmonic wavenumbers, overtones and combination bands were calculated by $RHF/3-21G^{**}$, RHF/6-31++G(2d) and MP2/6-31++G(2d) methods.

The relative intensities of vibrational bands calculated at harmonic level using the Gaussian03 package have been applied for all simulated spectra presented below.

4 Results and discussion

Geometry optimization and frequency calculations were performed for the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ and $Si_4O_{12}H_8$ models. The comparison between frequency analysis based on *ab initio* calculations and experimental infrared spectroscopy allows to test the validity of the different quantum models and approaches. This is a starting point of a more general investigation concerning the physisorption of a non polar molecule on a microporous solid.

4.1 Silicalite-1 framework modelling

The structure of silicalite-1 is based on two interlinked channel systems formed by ten oxygen rings with sinusoidal channels (free circular cross section diameter of 0.54 nm) running in the (010) plane and straight channels (free elliptic cross section of $0.575 \times 0.515 \text{ nm}^2$) running in the [010] direction [10, 34]. The minimal and maximal distances between two opposite oxygen atoms of the ten-membered rings are ranging from 0.7985 nm to 0.8406 nm for straight channels and from 0.8061 to 0.8308 nm for sinusoidal channels [10, 34]. The two different channels are perpendicular to each other and generate intersection areas, which have a diameter of around 0.9 nm. In the orthorhombic framework geometry (Pnma) of silicalite-1 [10, 34], each silicon atom is surrounded by four oxygen atoms in a tetrahedral conformation; the Si-O bond lengths

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are on average of about 0.1587 nm and the Si-O-Si and O-Si-O bending angles are ranging from 145.7 to 177.7° and from 107.1 to 111.5°, respectively. In the present study, a double ring model with 20 Si atoms and 50 O atoms (20T) is first chosen to represent a portion of a straight or sinusoidal channel of silicalite-1 (Figure 2).

[Insert Figure 2 about here.]

The geometry optimization has been performed using the RHF/3-21G^{**} level of theory. The structure optimization of the silicalite model was done without any constraints (C_1 symmetry) and for the equilibrium geometry (S_e), i.e. at the minimum potential energy surface, without vibrational average structure (S_z). The thermal vibration of the atoms might give a deviation from the equilibrium (S_e) structure. The calculated R(Si-O) bond lengths are ranged between 0.161 and 0.162 nm: these values are close to the experimental average Si-O bond length [10, 34]. The calculated O-Si-O bending angles are 112.5° and 115.8° and are slightly higher than the ones observed by van Koningsveld et al.[10, 34]. The calculated Si-O-Si bending angles are 137.2° (angle within the ten-membered rings) and 174.0° (angle between the two ten-membered rings): these values are also not so far to the ones given in Refs. [10, 34]. The distances between two opposite oxygen atoms of the ten-membered rings equal 0.869 nm. This value is a little higher than the experimental value given in Refs. [10, 34]. The distance between neighbour Si atoms of a single ring is 0.301 nm, that is close to published values ([10, 34]). It is the same for the distance between two opposite oxygen atoms of the double ring that is 0.427 nm. The differences may be ascribed to the optimization method for the structure of the silicalite model. As a remark, the DFT method was not used on the Si₂₀O₅₀ cluster because of a convergence problem.

4.2 IR spectra of the unloaded MFI zeolite

Vibrations of the zeolite framework give rise to characteristic bands in the mid and far infrared regions. The infrared spectrum of silicalite-1 obtained from self-supporting and KBr pellet techniques exhibited fundamental bands assigned, according to the classification of Flanigen [35], to: (i) the stretching vibraJune 24, 2009

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tional bands ν_{as} (O-Si-O), ν_{as} (Si-O-Si), ν_{s} (Si-O-Si) and the bending vibrational band δ (O-Si-O) located at

1240, 1089, 806 and 442 $\rm cm^{-1}$, respectively, (ii) two overtones of fundamental bands located at 2023 and 1892 cm^{-1} , and (iii) a system of complex bands located at 686, 629, 588, 569 and 548 cm⁻¹. Figure 3 shows the experimental infrared spectrum of silicalite-1 in comparison with the simulated spectrum of the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ zeolite model based on the *ab initio* calculations. The calculated wavenumbers give the position of six vibrational band centers. The first three band centers located at 1129, 839 and 391 cm⁻¹ correspond to ν_{as} (Si-O-Si), the ν_s (Si-O-Si) and δ (O-Si-O), respectively. The three others located at 710, 654 and 563 $\rm cm^{-1}$ correspond to vibrations of the ten-membered double ring of the framework structure. The first two bands are of very weak intensity. Normal mode vibrational analysis performed in the harmonic approximation gives only the positions of fundamental wavenumbers. Overtones cannot be obtained at this level of theory. The ν_{as} (O-Si-O) fundamental asymmetrical stretching vibrational band is nevertheless not reproduced by this model, may be owing to the fact that it belongs to an other part of the zeolite framework and it will be interesting to check it using more high level of theory. However, additional bands in particular one located at 1017 cm^{-1} , of rather low intensities in comparison with those of the four strongest vibrational bands located at 1129, 839, 563 and 391 cm⁻¹ (Table 1), are observed for the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ cluster. The simulated spectrum is in rather good agreement, with respect to the vibrational band positions, with the experimental spectrum (Figure 3). Nevertheless, it shows: (i) a blue-shift by 33 and 40 $\rm cm^{-1}$ of the ν (Si-O-Si) symmetric and ν_{as} (Si-O-Si) asymmetric stretching vibrational bands, respectively, and (ii) a red-shift by 51 cm⁻¹ of the δ (O-Si-O) bending vibrational band (Table 1). Such a change in position of vibrational bands was also observed from MD simulation calculations [8] (Table 1). However, although calculations may be improved to get better absolute results, what is important to consider is the qualitative spectrum differences between the unloaded zeolite and the zeolite containing an amount of adsorbed ethylene. We assume that the shifts do not qualitatively modify the overall evolution of the system.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

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[Insert Figure 3 about here]

From these results, we estimated that the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ double ring model can be used to reproduce qualitatively the main vibrational band positions of silicalite-1.

4.3 Infrared spectra of ethylene molecule

The theoretical study of the infrared spectrum of an isolated ethylene molecule was carried out using different *ab initio* methods as described in section 3. A large number of theoretical and experimental studies including high quality *ab initio* calculations have been already performed on the subject [36–43]. All known vibrational energies in C_2H_4 (X¹A_q) were reported in Ref. [43]. These data were deduced from high resolution investigations including the rotational structure. Our objective is to explain the experimental low resolution infrared spectrum of the ethylene molecule when it is adsorbed in the micropores and on the external surface of silicalite-1. Therefore, the fundamental, combination and overtone vibrational band wavenumbers were first calculated at the MP2/6-31++G(2d) level of theory. The effect of anharmonicity was taken into account by the method suggested by Barone that is implemented in Gaussian03 program [6]. Computed harmonic ω and anharmonic ν wavenumbers are given in Table 2 together with the experimental data obtained by Duncan et al. [37, 38] and Georges et al. [43]. It should be noticed that only ν_7 , ν_9 , ν_{10} , ν_{11} and ν_{12} vibrational modes are IR active for the ethylene molecule. The averaged absolute deviation (AAD) between the calculated ω_{calc} harmonic wavenumbers and experimental ones [37, 38] is about 14 cm⁻¹ and averaged deviation (AD) is $+11 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ (Table 2). The AAD between the calculated and experimental [43] anharmonic wavenumbers is found to be about 15 $\rm cm^{-1}$ and the AD is about +3 cm⁻¹. These results show an overestimation of both ω and ν by the MP2 method for most of the vibrational modes (Table 2). The deviations with respect to the experimental values do not exceed 23 cm^{-1} except for the ν_{11} vibrational mode that is largely red shifted by 63 cm⁻¹ (Table 2). Therefore, we can conclude that the calculated values are in good agreement with the experimental ones. However, anharmonic correction for ν_{11} is rather overestimated at this level of theory that results in a quite big 17:50 Molecular Physics

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red-shift with respect to the experimental value (Table 2). The calculated and experimental [43] values of the combination and overtone wavenumbers are reported in Table 3. The AAD is about 34 cm^{-1} and the AD is -4 cm^{-1} . However, most of vibrational band positions are overestimated. As far as the ethylene molecule is concerned, we note that this level of theory gives the position of vibrational bands with an accuracy that is not adapted to high resolution spectroscopy, but it can provide correct shifts between isolated and adsorbed molecules.

[Insert Table 2 about here]

[Insert Table 3 about here]

The infrared spectrum of ethylene simulated by the MP2 method is shown in Figure 4 along with the experimental spectrum obtained under a pressure of 218 hPa at room temperature. The assignment and location of ethylene vibrational bands are reported in Table 4, in comparison with previous molecular dynamics results [8]. Both quantum and classical calculations show deviations from experimental data, depending on the vibrational modes. In general the values of the calculated wavenumbers are slightly higher (blue-shifts) than the experimental ones. However, we considered that the simulated spectrum is in rather good agreement with the experimental one. Concerning MD simulation, it is worth to notice that the method is not suited to obtain combination bands.

[Insert Figure 4 about here]

[Insert Table 4 about here]

4.4 Infrared spectra of ethylene adsorbed in silicalite

For the $Si_{20}O_{50} / C_2H_4$ system

In a first approach, we modelled the effect of the adsorption of one ethylene molecule on the vibrational

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bands of the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ zeolite fragment using the *ab initio* RHF/3-21G^{**} method. The optimization of the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ / C_2H_4 structure based on minimization of energy at 0 K, was carried out for a relaxed ethylene molecule and a rigid zeolite framework. The optimized configuration is shown in Figure 5. In this case the molecule is localized at the center of the channel and the CC bond axis is oriented along the channel axis. As represented in Figure 5, the distance between the mass center of the molecule and the surface of the double ring amounts to 0.455 nm. This result is in agreement with molecular dynamics simulation calculations [8].

[Insert Figure 5 about here]

The calculated wavenumbers and intensities of the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ zeolite cluster and the $Si_{20}O_{50} / C_2H_4$ system were introduced in the XTDS software program [44] to further simulate the corresponding vibrational spectra at room temperature. The comparison of the simulated spectra shows that the adsorption of one molecule in the double ring induces a red-shift of about 1 or 2 cm⁻¹ and a very small decrease in intensity of the zeolite vibrational bands, over the wavenumber range 250-1500 cm⁻¹ (Figure 6). Such an evolution is in agreement with the experimental results insofar as a red-shift of the fundamental zeolite vibrational bands is also observed during micropore filling (Figure 7). It can be noticed that the vibrational bands of silicalite-1 at zero loading are slightly shifted compared to Figure 3 because of different constraints for the two sample preparations.

[Insert Figure 6 about here]

[Insert Figure 7 about here]

Additional information about the vibrational bands of the ethylene adsorbed in silicalite-1 were obtained from the simulation. The adsorption induces a red-shift from 3 to 10 cm⁻¹ for the stretching and rocking vibrational bands and a blue-shift from 2 to 17 cm⁻¹ for the bending vibrational bands (except for the ω_3 and ω_6 vibrational bands) (Table 5). The interaction of the ethylene molecule with the Si₂₀O₅₀ cluster induces the splitting of the cluster vibrational band located at 1017 cm⁻¹ (Table 1) into two components at 1011 and 1016 cm⁻¹. The contribution at 1011 cm⁻¹ is due to a collective mode of the cluster and ω_7 ethylene vibrations. It is interesting to note that the calculated red-shifts for the ν_9 and ν_{11} vibrational

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bands (we assume that $\Delta \omega$ is the same as $\Delta \nu$ in the first approximation) are in good agreement with the ones experimentally observed (Figure 8). The position of the ν_9 and ν_{11} vibrational bands does not change with loading up to 8.5 molecules per unit cell (uc). As a remark, the Si₂₀O₅₀ / C₂H₄ system can be compared with silicalite-1 containing about 8 molecules per unit cell. For the ν_{12} in plane bending vibrational band the simulated band is blue-shifted by 4 cm⁻¹ whereas the experimental one is red-shifted by 8 cm⁻¹ (Figure 9). Such a discrepancy may be corrected by using methods including electron correlation. The ν_7 vibrational band of the adsorbed phase is also experimentally observed during micropore filling. However, the evolution of this band is not analysed in the present study because it appears as a shoulder of the strongest vibrational bands of silicalite located at 1089 and 1240 cm⁻¹ (Figure 7). Indeed, these two bands cannot be observed because of detector saturation.

[Insert Table 5 about here]

[Insert Figure 8 about here]

[Insert Figure 9 about here]

For the $Si_4O_{12}H_8 / C_2H_4$ system

In a second approach, MP2 calculations were performed in order to include the effects of electron correlations. The MP2 method is known to well describe van der Waals dispersion interactions but calculations are in practice too expensive to be applied to large systems. Therefore, the $Si_4O_{12}H_8$ fragment (Figure 10) was chosen to calculate the interaction potential energy of the fragment with one ethylene molecule. The $Si_4O_{12}H_8$ and the ethylene molecule structures were separately optimized at the MP2/6-31++G(2d) level of theory. The optimized structure is shown in Figure 11, the obtained values of the bonds lengths and angles are close to those of the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ cluster. As we observed for the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ cluster, the carbon-carbon double bond of the ethylene molecule is parallel to the plane built by the four silicon atoms of the $Si_4O_{12}H_8$ fragment. The curve of interaction potential energy versus the distance R between the fragment and the

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ethylene molecule shows a pronounced energy minimum ($D_e = 12.56 \text{ kJ}.\text{mol}^{-1}$) at R = 0.455 nm (Figure 12). R is defined as the distance between the middle of the carbon-carbon double bond of ethylene and the middle of the plane built by the four silicon atoms. It may be surprising that its value is the same as the one calculated at the RHF/3-21G^{**} level of theory for the Si₂₀O₅₀ cluster. However, it is not worth to put emphasis on this result, which is a coincidence. The distance dependence of the interaction potential energy can be well fitted by one-dimensional Esposti-Werner function or Lennard-Jones potential (see Appendix) as is shown in Figure 12. This is in agreement with the classical MD simulation results, where no electrostatic potential was used because ethylene molecule is a nonpolar molecule and the Lennard-Jones type of potential was applied, that is well suited to simulate this kind of system [8]. On the other hand, the energy curves calculated by the DFT methods do not show any potential minimum and as a consequence, these methods are not suited to investigate physisorption of non polar molecules.

[Insert Figure 10 about here]

[Insert Figure 11 about here]

[Insert Figure 12 about here]

Wavenumber calculations and analyses were then carried out only for the Si₄O₁₂H₈ / C₂H₄ system at the MP2/6-31++G(2d) level of theory. Calculated data are given in Table 5. The adsorption process induces modifications of some ethylene molecule vibrational bands: (i) the intensity of the ν_7 vibrational band is two times decreased, (ii) the appearance of ν_4 and ν_8 vibrational bands which are not infrared active in the gas phase, (iii) the ν_{10} and ν_{12} vibrational bands are red shifted by 6 cm⁻¹ whereas the other vibrational bands are slightly or not red shifted. It is interesting to note that the red shift calculated for ν_{12} vibrational band is very close to the one experimentally observed (8 cm⁻¹) and to the value calculated by MD simulation (4 cm⁻¹). Concerning the appearance of ν_4 and ν_8 vibrational bands, we can notice that these bands are not experimentally observed. This result indicates that the Si₄O₁₂H₈ fragment,

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which is a part of the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ cluster, is not well suited to reproduce all interactions that occur during the adsorption of ethylene in silicalite. On the other hand, the ν_9 and ν_{11} stretching modes were almost not changed, meaning that chemical bonds are weakly perturbed by the presence of the $Si_4O_{12}H_8$ fragment. Concerning the effect of ethylene adsorption on the vibrational bands of the $Si_4O_{12}H_8$ structure, the wavenumbers are also shifted to lower values and the intensities are slightly modified in agreement with experimental results (Table 6).

[Insert Table 5 about here]

[Insert Table 6 about here]

5 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate by infrared spectroscopy the interaction of ethylene with an hydrophobic zeolite, silicalite-1. This study was carried out using quantum calculations at different levels of theory (RHF, MP2, DFT/B3LYP-PBE1PBE-MPW1PW91) conjointly to infrared experiments at room temperature. Calculations were performed considering a part of a straight or sinusoidal channel of silicalite-1, either a $Si_{20}O_{50}$ cluster or an hydrogenated fragment of it, $Si_4O_{12}H_8$. Particularly, we focussed on the evolution of the infrared spectra of: (i) ethylene from the gaseous phase to the adsorbed phase and (ii) the adsorbent from the unloaded to a loaded state. The first step of this work was to choose the appropriate *ab initio* method that accounts for the infrared spectrum of ethylene and that of the cluster free of adsorbate. For the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ cluster, calculations were carried out using only the RHF/3-21G** level of theory. In this case, the calculated infrared spectrum is in a rather good agreement, with respect to the position of vibrational bands, with the experimental infrared spectrum of the unloaded zeolite. Considering the ethylene molecule, *ab initio* calculations were performed by using different methods. The best agreement between the calculated and experimental spectra is obtained with the MP2 method. The second step of

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this work was to calculate the infrared spectrum of the zeolite in interaction with one ethylene molecule in order to account for the experimental modifications of the vibrational bands of both the adsorbent and the adsorbate. In the case of the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ cluster (RHF/3-21G^{**}), the adsorption induces a red-shift by 8 and 10 cm⁻¹ for the ν_{11} and ν_9 ethylene vibrational bands, respectively. These red-shifts are due to a weakening of the CH bonds and are close to the experimental values that are 12 and 11 $\rm cm^{-1}$, respectively. However, for the ν_{12} in plane bending vibrational mode, the simulated band is blue-shifted whereas the experimental one is red-shifted. By using the MP2/6-31++G(2d) method for the $Si_4O_{12}H_8$ fragment this discrepancy is corrected to a red-shift. However, with this reduced cluster, the ν_{11} and ν_9 stretching modes of the ethylene molecule are not modified by the adsorption process. These results show the importance of the choice of both the zeolite model and the level of theory on the spectroscopic response. Concerning the choice of the level of theory, it should be noticed that the potential energy curve calculated by the MP2 method, contrary to RHF and DFT methods, shows a pronounced minimum potential due to van der Waals interactions. As a consequence, this method is suited to study physisorption of ethylene that is a non polar molecule. At this step of the study, the quantum calculations give new insight in the understanding of the spectroscopic response due to adsorption phenomena. However, to be more realistic, additional calculations should be done by exploring in the future the following new ideas:

– the MP2 level of theory should be used for (i) the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ cluster and (ii) a cluster representative of the intersections of straight and sinusoidal channels. This last point is important since the structure of intersections is different from that of the channels. Moreover, it contributes to one third of all adsorption sites.

- experimentally, silicalite-1 can adsorb up to around 11 molecules per unit cell. Therefore, at high loading, intermolecular interactions between ethylene molecules play a significant role. This key point means that we should simulate the adsorption of two or more ethylene molecules.

from MD simulations we have shown that the ethylene molecules [8] are not trapped on specific sites at
298 K. They are very mobile: the self-diffusion coefficient is of the same order of magnitude as in the liquid.
Moreover, they exhibit a wide distribution of orientations, however, narrower than in the liquid because

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of the porous texture. As a consequence, *ab initio* calculations should be done on different orientations to account for the adsorption process of ethylene on silicalite-1 at room temperature.

Acknowledgments

We acknowledge C. Adamo and L. Joubert for useful discussion and for the computer equipment support of the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Chimie de Paris (ENSCP, UMR 7575 - Laboratoire d'Electrochimie, chimie des interfaces et modélisation pour l'énergie). We also thank L. Manceron for constructive discussions (LADIR, Paris). Support from the Région Bourgogne for the computer equipment of the Institut Carnot de Bourgogne is gratefully acknowledged. We also wish to thank the GDR 3152 "SpecMo" and the GDR 2997 "COMOVI" of the CNRS.

Appendix : Analytical representation of the $\rm Si_4O_{12}H_8/C_2H_4$ potential

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The interaction potential between the ethylene molecule and the $Si_4O_{12}H_8$ fragment is plotted in Figure 12 as a function of R that is the distance between the mass centers of C_2H_4 and $Si_4O_{12}H_8$. Ab initio data were fitted first to one-dimensional function of Esposti-Werner type [45]:

$$V(R) = [G(R)\exp(-a_1R - a_2) - T(R)\sum_{i=3}^{8} \left(\frac{C_i}{R^i}\right)]$$

where

$$G(R) = \sum_{i=0}^{8} \left(g_i R^i \right)$$

and

$$T(R) = \frac{1}{2}[1 + \tanh(1 + tR)]$$

is a switching function. The parameters a_i, g_i, t, C_i are fitted using the modified Levenberg-Marquardt algorithm from the MIN-PACK set of routines for nonlinear least-square fitting. The quality of the onedimensional fit is very good. In our potential the position of minimum is $R_e = 0.455$ nm with a well depth (D_e) of 1049 cm⁻¹ (12.56 KJ/mol).

Ab initio points were also fitted to function of Lennard-Jones potential with a very good agreement: $V(R) = 4\epsilon \left[\left(\frac{\sigma}{R}\right)^{12} - \left(\frac{\sigma}{R}\right)^{6} \right]$

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where ϵ and σ are the depth of the potential well and effective interaction diameter (the distance at which the potential is zero), respectively. The fitted parameters are $\sigma = 0.3967$ nm and $\epsilon = 12.7$ kJ/mol $(D_e).$

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Figure captions

Figure 1. Schematic diagram of the experimental set-up: 1 - Sample handler; 2 - Oven; 3 - KBr window; 4 - Indium o-ring; 5 - Sample holder; 6 - Sample; 7 - Thermocouple.

Figure 2. $RHF/3-21G^{**}$ optimized geometry of the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ double ring cluster representative of a portion of a straight or sinusoidal channel of silicalite-1 (red: oxygen atoms; yellow: silicon atoms).

Figure 3. Experimental infrared spectrum of Silicalite-1 (KBr-supported sample wafer) recorded under ambient conditions (continuous curve). Comparison with the infrared spectrum of the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ cluster calculated at the RHF/3-21G** level of theory (dotted lines).

Figure 4. Experimental infrared spectrum of ethylene recorded under a pressure of 218 hPa at room temperature (continuous curve). Comparison with the spectrum of ethylene calculated at MP2/6-31++G(2d) level of theory.

Figure 5. RHF/3-21G^{**} optimized geometry of the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ /C₂H₄ structure (red: oxygen atoms; yellow: silicon atoms; grey: carbon atoms; pale grey: hydrogen atoms).

Figure 6. Infrared spectra of the $Si_{20}O_{50}$ cluster free of adsorbate (solid curve) and with one adsorbed ethylene molecule (dotted curve), calculated at the RHF/3-21G** level of theory.

Figure 7. Dependence of the experimental infrared spectrum of silicalite-1 (self-supported sample wafer) on ethylene loading: (from bottom to top) 0.0, 4.3 and 8.5 molecules / uc, at room temperature. In italic also reported the position of two weak vibrational bands of silicalite-1 and their dependence on loading (values from top to bottom).

Figure 8. Dependence of the experimental of the \u03c6₁₁ and \u03c6₉ vibrational bands of ethylene adsorbed on silicalite-1 on loading: (from top to bottom) 0.7, 3.4, 4.3, 5.1, 6.1, 7.3 and 8.5 molecules / uc (left), the corresponding equilibrium pressure in hPa (right). Comparison with the experimental gas ethylene spectrum (dotted curve).

Figure 9. Dependence of the experimental of the ν_{12} vibrational band of ethylene adsorbed on silicalite-1 on loading: (from top to bottom) 0.7, 3.4, 4.3, 5.1, 6.1, 7.3 and 8.5 molecules / uc (left), the corresponding equilibrium pressure in hPa (right). Comparison with the experimental gas ethylene spectrum (dotted curve).

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	22 FIGURES
1	Figure 10. $MP2/6-31++G(2d)$ optimized geometry of the $Si_4O_{12}H_8$ fragment (red: oxygen atoms; yellow: silicon atoms; pale grey:
2	hydrograp atoms)
3	nydrogen atoms).
4	Figure 11 Computer of the Si Ω_{c} H ₂ / C ₂ H ₄ structure at the energy minimum calculated at the MP2/6 31++C(2d) level of theory
5	Figure 11. Geometry of the 514012118 / 02114 structure at the energy minimum calculated at the $M12/0-51++O(24)$ level of theory
6	(red: oxygen atoms; yellow: silicon atoms; grey: carbon atoms; pale grey: hydrogen atoms).
7	
8	
9	Figure 12. Interaction potential between ethylene molecule and $Si_4O_{12}H_8$ fragment as a function of the distance between the
10	geometric centers. Comparison between different calculated models.
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FIGURES

Fig. 3





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Table 1. Positions of silicalite vibration bands in cm⁻¹: experimental (Exp.) measurements and comparison with Molecular Dynamics (MD) and Restricted Hartee-Fock (RHF/3-21G**) calculations

(Calc.)	with	scaling	factor.

Vibr. type [*]	Overtones bands	$\nu_{as.}(ext{O-Si-O})$	$\nu_{as.}(\text{Si-O-Si})$	$\delta(\text{O-Si-O})/(\text{Si-O})_{edge}$	$\nu_{s.}(\text{Si-O-Si})$	Complex bands	$\delta(\text{O-Si-O})$	
Fun (this month)	2022 1202	1940	1020		206	696 600 599 560 549	449	_
Exp. (this work) Calc. (RHF/ $3-21G^{**}$)	2023 1892	1240	1089	- 1017 ^{weak}	839	$710 \ 654 \ 563$	442 391	TABLES
Calc. (MD)		1203	1203	8	815	582	499	
* - According to the classificati	on of Flanigen [35].			0	5,			-

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TABLES

Table 2. Harmonic (ω_i) and anharmonic (ν_i) wavenumbers in cm⁻¹ and calculated related intensities I_i in km/mol (in parentheses) cof the ethylene molecule: RHF/6-31++G(2d) and Møller-Plesset (MP2/6-31++G(2d)) calculations (Calc.) and comparison with experimental (Exp.) measurements.

		RHF/6-31++G(2d)	MP2/6-31++G(2d)	Exp.
Mode	Symmetry	$\omega_i \; ({ m I}_i) / u_i$	$\omega_i \; (\mathrm{I}_i) / u_i$	$\omega_i \; [37] / \omega_i \; [38] / \nu_i \; [43]$
1	A_g symm. CH stretch	3277 (0)/3160	3156(0)/3024	3153/3156/3022
2	A_g CC stretch	1821 (0)/1792	1678(0)/1617	1655/1656/1625
3	A_g symm. HCH bend	1480 (0)/1456	1390(0)/1362	1370/1372/1344
4	$A_u H_2 C - C H_2$ twist	1136/(0) 1113	1065(0)/1042	1044/1045/1026
5	B_{3g} CH trans. stretch	3332 (0)/3213	3230(0)/3094	3232/3207/3083
6	B_{3g} HCH anti. wag.	1342 (0)/1320	1261(0)/1236	1245/1249/1222
7	B_{3u} sym. HCH bend out of plane	1072 (123)/1055	985(118)/962	969/968/949
8	B_{2g} anti. HCH bend out of plane	$1077 \ (0)/1056$	945(0)/938	959/960/940
9	B_{2u} cis CH stretch	$3362 \ (25)/3234$	3257(10)/3118	3234/3239/3105
10	B_{2u} sym. HCH in plane	889~(0)/888	844(1)/839	843/844/826
11	B_{1u} anti. CH stretch	$3254\ (19)/3126$	3139(7)/2926	3147/3130/2989
12	B_{1u} anti. HCH bend in plane	1593 (9)/1559	1484(10)/1448	1473/1472/1443

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TABLES

Table 3. Position of $(\nu_i + \nu_j)$ combination and $2\nu_i$ overtones bands in cm⁻¹ for the ethylene molecule: Møller-Plesset (MP2/6-31++G(2d)) calculations (Calc.) and comparison with experimental (Exp.) measurements.

Band	MP2/6 - 31 + +G(2d)	Exp.[43]	Band	MP2/6 - 31 + +G(2d)	Exp.[43]
$\nu_8 + \nu_{10}$	1776	1767	$2\nu_{10}$	1702	1662
$\nu_7 + \nu_{10}$	1806	1781	$2\nu_8$	1893	1881
$ u_4 + \nu_{10} $	1882	1854	$2\nu_7$	1923	1900
$\nu_7 + \nu_8$	1897	1889	$2\nu_4$	2082	2046
$\nu_4 + \nu_8$	1976	1958	$2\nu_3$	2721	2685
$\nu_4 + \nu_7$	1996	1965	$2\nu_{12}$	2891	2877
$ u_6 + \nu_{10} $	2067	2048	$2\nu_2$	3231	3239
$ u_3 + u_{10} $	2202	2173	$2\nu_{11}$	5826	5939
$\nu_3 + \nu_7$	2321	2292	$2\nu_9$	6205	6197
$ u_2 + \nu_{10} $	2418	2439	$\nu_5 + \nu_6$	4329	4310
$\nu_2 + \nu_7$	2572	2571	$\nu_6 + \nu_9$	4347	4322
$\nu_2 + \nu_3$	2970	2962	$\nu_3 + \nu_{11}$	4282	4329
$\nu_2 + \nu_{12}$	3146	3079	$ u_{11} + u_{12} $	4278	4408
$ u_{10} + u_{11} $	3761	3809	$\nu_3 + \nu_9$	4472	4440
$ u_1 + u_{10} $	3860	3842	$\nu_1 + \nu_{12}$	4470	4460
$ u_8 + u_{11} $	3856	3921	$\nu_5 + \nu_{12}$	4531	4515
$ u_9 + u_{10} $	3954	3928	$\nu_2 + \nu_{11}$	4451	4597
$ u_7 + u_{11} $	3883	3931	$\nu_1 + \nu_2$	4622	4632
$\nu_1 + \nu_8$	3955	3954	$\nu_2 + \nu_9$	4733	4730
$\nu_7 + \nu_9$	4071	4047	$\nu_1 + \nu_{11}$	5898	5995
$ u_6 + u_{11} $	4156 URL: http	://mt207ani	uscriptcent	tral.com/taရီຟ≸/tmph	6151

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Table 4. Assignment and position of fundamental and combination vibration bands in cm^{-1} for ethylene: Møller-Plesset (MP2/6-31++G(2d)) and Molecular Dynamics (MD) calculations (Calc.) comparison with experimental (Exp.) data for the gas phase at 218 hPa.

Vibration modes	MP2/6-31++G(2d)	Exp. (this work)	MD[8]	
	0			
$ u_7$	962	950	981	
$\nu_7 + \nu_8$	1897	1888	_	
$\nu_6 + \nu_{10}$	2067	2047	_	
$ u_9$	3118	3106	3129	
$ u_{10}$	839	778 (P -branch)	_	
ν_{11}	2926	2987	3020	
ν_{12}	1448	1444	1467	

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TABLES

Table 5. Harmonic(ω_{ads}) wavenumbers in cm⁻¹, harmonic ($\Delta\omega = \omega_{ads} - \omega_{gas}$) wavenumber shifts in cm⁻¹ and related intensities in km/mol (in parentheses) for the ethylene molecule adsorbed (ads) in the Si₂₀O₅₀ cluster and the ethylene molecule alone (gas), calculated at the RHF level of theory using the 3-21G^{**} basis set (with scaling factor), and for the ethylene molecule adsorbed on the Si₄O₁₂H₈ fragment and the molecule ethylene alone (gas), calculated at the MP2 level of theory using 6-31++G(2d) basis set.

			RHF/3-21G**			MP2/6-31G++G(2d)	
			$\mathrm{Si}_{20}\mathrm{O}_{50}$			$\mathrm{Si}_4\mathrm{O}_{12}\mathrm{H}_8$	
Mode	Sym.	ω_{ads}	$\Delta \omega_{calc} / \Delta u_{exp}$	$\mathbf{I}_{gas}~(\mathbf{I}_{ads})$	ω_{ads}	$\Delta \omega_{calc} / \Delta \nu_{exp}$	$\mathrm{I}_{gas}\;(\mathrm{I}_{ads})$
1	A_g	3075	-8	0(0)	3156	0	0(0)
2	A_g	1650	-10	0(0)	1673	-5	0(0)
3	A_g	1360	-6	0(0)	1386	-4	0(0)
4	A_u	1056	2	0(0)	1066	-1	0(136)
5	B_{3g}	3123	-10	0(2)	3231	0.5	0(0)
6	B_{3g}	1228	-7	0(0)	1256	-5	0(0)
7	B_{3u}	1022	17	116(81)	984	-1	118(46)
8	B_{2g}	1042	12	0(0)	941	-4	0(129)
9	B_{2u}	3150	-10/-12	29(29)	3258	1/-12	10(8)
10	B_{2u}	836	-3	1(779)	838	-6	1(4)
11	B_{1u}	3056	-8/-11	13(2)	3139	0/-11	7(6)
12	B_{1u}	1466	4/-8	10(9)	1478	-6/-8	10(10)

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Mode	$\omega({ m Si}_4{ m O}_{12}{ m H}_8)$	$\omega(\mathrm{Si}_4\mathrm{O}_{12}\mathrm{H}_8 + \mathrm{C}_2\mathrm{H}_4)$
	1000(1150)	1000(1000)
0-S1-O(asym.)	1092(1150)	1089(1088)
O-Si-O(sym.)	1051(219)	1051(212)
O-Si-O(asym.)	1044(161)	1042(103)
O-Si-O(asym.)	1018(319)	1017(314)
O-Si-O(asym.)	928(157)	926(150)
O-Si-O(sym.)	808(8)	808(12)
Si-O-Si(sym.)	777(93)	776(107)
O Si O bond	280(112)	380(102)
	369(112)	339(102)
O-Si-O bend.	400(87)	396(72)
O-Si-O bend.	415(87)	413(109)
O-Si-O bend.	424(44)	424(41)
O-Si-O bend.	437(58)	436(66))
Ring	667(121)	667(119)
Ring	662(91)	662(89)
Ring	590(18)	589(16)
Ring	508(94)	499(73)
Ring	472(48)	472(44)





 $\begin{array}{c}1\\2\\3\\4\\5\\6\\7\\8\\9\\10\\11\\12\\13\\14\\15\end{array}$









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