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Breathing Pt nanoparticle imaged using *in situ* BCDI

C. Atlan^{1, 2, 3}, C. Chatelier^{1, 2}, I. Martens², M. Dupraz^{1, 2}, S. Leake², M.-I. Richard^{1, 2}, A. Viola³, F. Maillard³

¹ Université Grenoble Alpes, CEA Grenoble, IRIG, MEM, NRS, 17 rue des Martyrs, F-38000 Grenoble, France. mrichard@esrf.fr

² ESRF - The European Synchrotron, 71 Avenue des Martyrs, F-38000 Grenoble, France. leake@esrf.fr

³ Univ. Grenoble Alpes, Univ. Savoie Mont Blanc, CNRS, Grenoble INP, LEPMI, 38000 Grenoble, France. frederic.maillard@grenoble-inp.fr

The relationship between surface strain and the rate of a (electro-)catalytic reaction was unveiled by Hammer and Nørskov using density functional theory (DFT) calculations [1,2]. They proposed that the rate of the sluggish oxygen reduction reaction (ORR) would be enhanced on Pt-based catalysts binding *OH species *ca.* 0.10 - 0.15 eV more weakly than Pt(111), [1, 2] later experimentally verified using a Pt₃Ni(111)-skin surface.^[3] Nevertheless these predictions did not translate to Pt-based nanocatalysts, in part because these feature present multiple catalytic sites with a range of binding energies. Also, DFT calculations consider catalytic surfaces in vacuum, *i.e.* in the absence of water molecules and electric field. Hence, an *in situ* picture of how strain is distributed on Pt-based surfaces is still lacking.

In this contribution, we took benefit of recent advances in Bragg Coherent Diffraction Imaging (BCDI)^[4, 5] and of the fourth generation Extremely Brilliant Source of the European Synchrotron (ESRF-EBS, Grenoble, France) to map strain over Pt nanoparticles in electrochemical environment. Our results reveal that strain is heterogeneously distributed between highly- and weakly-coordinated surface atoms, and propagates from the surface to the bulk of the Pt nanoparticle as (bi)sulphates anions adsorb on the surface.

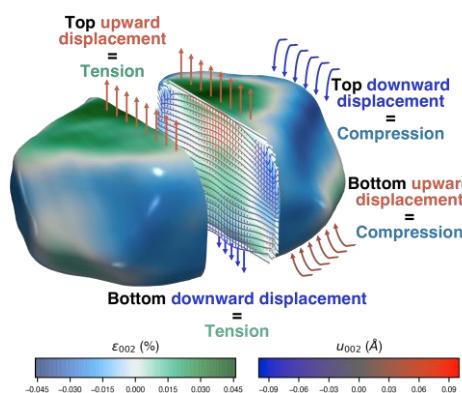


Figure 1: Representation of the strain distribution observed on a Pt nanoparticle under potential control. 0.05 M H₂SO₄.

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