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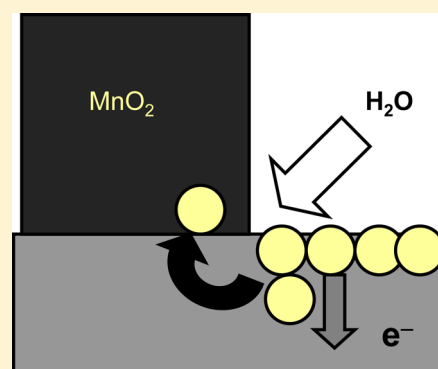
# Electrochemical Analysis of Catalytic and Oxygen Interfacial Transfer Effects on MnO<sub>2</sub> Deposited on Gold Electrodes

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**ABSTRACT:** A theoretical model for obtaining thermochemical and kinetic information on oxygen interfacial transfer in metal oxides deposited on gold electrodes, based in the voltammetry of immobilized particle methodology, is presented. It is applied to MnO<sub>2</sub> microparticulate deposits on gold in contact with aqueous NaOH solution using the voltammetric signals for the oxidation of gold to gold oxide monolayer and its subsequent desorptive reduction. Assuming reversibility, voltammetric peak potentials permit to estimate a variation of Gibbs free energy of interfacial oxygen transfer of  $-32 \pm 3 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$ . Analysis of peak current data based on the Sharp–Hancock formalism of solid-state kinetics was consistent with the diffusive nature of the transfer process and permitted the separation between this effect and the catalytic effect exerted by MnO<sub>2</sub> on the electrochemical oxidation of gold.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

The movement of chemical species adsorbed or formed on the outer surface of an oxide is a general phenomenon closely related to the ability of these materials to act on catalysis.<sup>1</sup> In particular, the observed spillover phenomenon in metal/oxide-based catalysts (i.e., Pt/TiO<sub>2</sub>), which consists of the spreading of chemical species through the oxidic support after being activated by a metal, as well as the spreading toward the metal (back-spillover) has pushed the researchers to study this effect carefully under different perspectives,<sup>2–4</sup> in particular, the electrochemical promotion of catalytic reactions by means of solid electrolytes interfaced with noble metal electrodes studied by Vayenas, Toghan, and Imbihl et al.<sup>5–7</sup>

In this context, different research groups proved the existence of a phase change by oxygen on Pt/CeO<sub>2</sub> and Mn<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>–Na<sub>2</sub>WO<sub>4</sub>/SiO<sub>2</sub> by FT-Raman, electron spin resonance spectroscopy, electron paramagnetic resonance, and X-ray absorption near-edge structure.<sup>8,9</sup> Along with these techniques, electrochemical methodologies have also been applied to study the interfacial movement of chemical species on metal oxides (MOs). Among them, preliminary attempts to show the catalytic role of Pt/TiO<sub>2</sub> in the dynamic oxygen effusion by a potential dynamic sweep method must be highlighted.<sup>10</sup>

Following this work, Jaksic et al.<sup>11–13</sup> showed that water molecules underwent spontaneous dissociative adsorption on 43 high-valent-modified MO electrodes (i.e., titania, tungsten, 44 niobia, and tantalum oxides). Then, a sharp increase in the 45 dissociation of water molecules was observed in the presence of 46 metal nanoparticles (showing a catalytic role of the latter in the 47 process) together with hydroxyl transference (OH<sup>–</sup>) from one 48 phase to another. In this case, potentiodynamic evidence for 49 this event could be obtained.<sup>14,15</sup> In these cases, the

electrochemical systems were based on MOs associated to Au 50 and Pt electrodes: from plasma discharge-assisted metal-coating 51 on pressed MO cylinders<sup>16</sup> to sol–gel MO deposition onto Pt 52 electrodes<sup>10–12</sup> and impregnation of an MO deposit with 53 H<sub>2</sub>PtCl<sub>6</sub>,<sup>10</sup> providing qualitative and semiquantitative monitoring- 54 of these processes. 55

With these precedents and in our aim to electrochemically 56 identify oxygen-transfer effects on materials with a remarkable 57 lattice oxygen release ability on cryptomelane-type MnO<sub>2</sub>,<sup>17–27</sup> 58 we have conducted a study of oxygen spillover effects using 59 voltammetry of immobilized particle (VIMP) methodology on 60 gold electrodes. This technique, developed by Scholz et al.,<sup>28,29</sup> 61 provides analytical information on a variety of sparingly soluble 62 solids upon attachment of micro or submicrosamples of the 63 same to inert electrodes in contact with suitable electrolytes.<sup>30</sup> 64

Then, MnO<sub>2</sub>-modified gold electrodes were prepared by 65 drop-casting method on microcrystalline gold electrodes,<sup>31,32</sup> 66 differing but in close analogy to classic impregnation methods 67 for preparing metal-based catalysts.<sup>11,33</sup> Following the VIMP 68 methodology, the MO forms a microparticulate deposit on the 69 base gold electrode. As discussed below, this procedure avoids 70 barrier effects associated to the more or less thick deposition of 71 Pt and Au and provides a homogeneous distribution of the MO 72 particles onto the electrode surface.<sup>31,32</sup> 73

These experiments will show that peak current ratios 74 determined at different potential scan rates and switching 75 potentials for the metal oxidation and their subsequent 76 desorptive reduction can in principle be used to measure the 77

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78 extent of the interfacial oxygen-transfer effect from the gold  
79 electrode to the oxide (and vice versa) from simple  
80 voltammetric experiments. Theoretical modeling for electron-  
81 transfer processes on microparticulate deposits will be  
82 presented, following previous guidelines from VIMP,<sup>34</sup> to  
83 obtain thermodynamic and mechanistic information using,  
84 exclusively, an analysis of voltammetric parameters. Finally, on  
85 the bases of the electrochemical monitoring of MnO<sub>2</sub>-modified  
86 gold electrodes and in the search for representative kinetics of  
87 this oxygen migration phenomenon, we have obtained linear  
88 graphs whose slope was consistent with a diffusion-controlled  
89 mechanism.

## 2. EXPERIMENTAL SECTION

90 Electrochemical experiments were performed at microparticu-  
91 late deposits of MnO<sub>2</sub> deposited onto Au electrodes in contact  
92 with 1.0 M NaOH aqueous solutions, optionally deaerated by  
93 bubbling Ar for 10 min. Drop-casting conditioning of the  
94 working electrode was performed by evaporating 50 μL of a  
95 suspension of the solid material in ethanol (1 mg mL<sup>-1</sup>) on the  
96 surface of the Au electrode. The electrode was previously  
97 polished with alumina slurry and rinsed with water and ethanol  
98 and sonicated in water for 10 min. Voltammetric measurements  
99 were performed in a conventional electrochemical cell using Au  
100 working electrodes (BAS MF 2012, geometrical area 0.018  
101 cm<sup>2</sup>), a Pt mesh auxiliary electrode, and a Pt wire  
102 pseudoreference electrode using a CH I660 potentiostat. The  
103 potentials are referred to Ag/AgCl via calibration of the Pt  
104 pseudoreference electrode in 1.0 mM K<sub>4</sub>Fe(CN)<sub>6</sub> solution in  
105 0.10 M KCl.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

106 **3.1. Voltammetric Pattern.** Figure 1 depicts the initial  
107 anodic scan cyclic voltammograms (three successive scans)

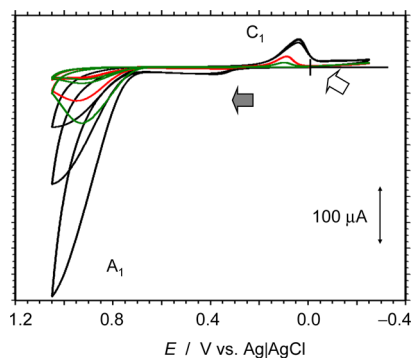
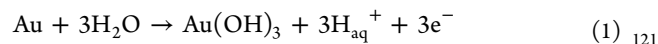


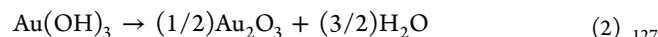
Figure 1. Cyclic voltammograms (three successive scans) of the Au electrode in 1.0 M NaOH. Potential scan initiated at 0.0 V (white arrow) in the positive direction (gray arrow); switching potential of 1.05 V; and sweep rate of 20 (red), 50 (green), and 200 (black) mV s<sup>-1</sup>.

108 recorded at the Au electrode in 1.0 M NaOH at a switching  
109 potential of 1.05 V and varying potential scan rate (*v*) between  
110 20 and 200 mV s<sup>-1</sup>. In the anodic scan, an oxidation wave ca.  
111 1.0 V versus Ag/AgCl (A<sub>1</sub>) was recorded followed, in the  
112 subsequent cathodic scan, by a tall reduction peak (C<sub>1</sub>) at ca.  
113 +0.10 V. Under these experimental conditions, the oxygen  
114 evolution reaction (OER) appears as a rising current at the  
115 extreme of positive potentials ca. +1.5 V.

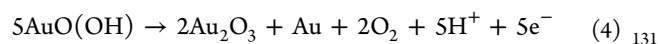
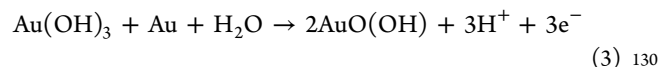
The process A<sub>1</sub>, in agreement with abundant literature on Pt  
and Au electrochemistry,<sup>35–44</sup> can be described in terms of the  
formation of an adsorptive primary oxide layer and its  
subsequent cathodic desorption. For simplicity, the formation  
of the primary oxide monolayer can be represented as<sup>42</sup>



The cathodic process C<sub>1</sub> involves the reduction of oxidized  
gold species to gold metal. The large potential separation  
between the processes A<sub>1</sub> and C<sub>1</sub> has received different  
interpretations. By the one hand, the oxide monolayer can be  
dehydrated to form Au<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>43</sup>



and can experience successive electrochemical reactions at  
more positive potentials<sup>43</sup>



The last process can be viewed as producing a catalytic effect  
on OER, already seen as involving intermediate hydroperoxy  
species.<sup>42,43</sup> As a result, the process C<sub>1</sub> would correspond to the  
reduction of Au<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> to Au<sup>41–43</sup>

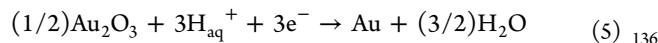


Figure 2 compares the voltammetric response of an  
unmodified Au electrode with that of the same electrode  
modified with a microparticulate deposit of MnO<sub>2</sub> in contact  
with 1.0 M NaOH. On comparing such voltammograms, the  
more remarkable features are the increase of the intensity of the  
A<sub>1</sub> signal (*i<sub>p</sub>*(A<sub>1</sub>)) relative to the signal C<sub>1</sub> (*i<sub>p</sub>*(C<sub>1</sub>)) occurring on  
the MnO<sub>2</sub>-modified electrode relative to the unmodified gold

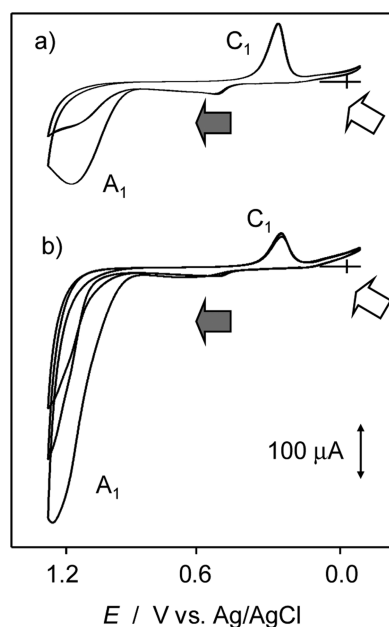


Figure 2. Cyclic voltammograms (two or three successive scans) of (a) unmodified Au and (b) MnO<sub>2</sub>-modified Au electrodes immersed into 1.0 M NaOH. Potential scan initiated at 0.0 V (white arrow) in the positive direction (gray arrow); potential scan rate 50 mV s<sup>-1</sup>; and switching potential 1.05 V.

144 electrode and the slight variation in the position of the  $C_1$   
145 signal.

146 Another interesting contrast between modified and un-  
147 modified Au electrodes was observed on comparing the peak  
148 current for the anodic peak  $A_1$  in first and second potential  
149 scans [ $i_p(A_1)$  and  $i_{p2}(A_1)$ , respectively]. In the case of  
150 unmodified Au (Figures 1 and 2a), the  $i_{p2}(A_1)/i_p(A_1)$  ratio is  
151 clearly lower than the corresponding ratio at  $MnO_2$ -modified  
152 electrodes (Figure 2b).

153 Another potentially interesting feature can be observed on  
154 comparing the significant differences in the  $i_p(C_1)/i_p(A_1)$  ratio.  
155 Figure 3 depicts the variation of the above peak current ratio on

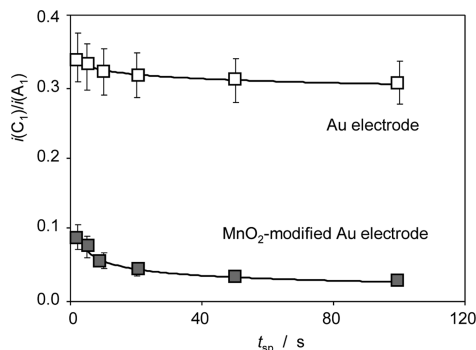
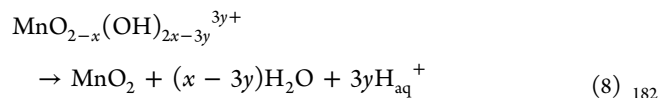
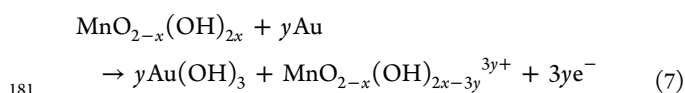
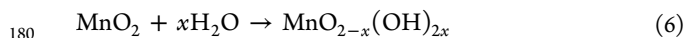


Figure 3. Variation of the  $i_p(C_1)/i_p(A_1)$  ratio on the spillover time,  $t_{sp}$ , determined for unmodified and  $MnO_2$ -modified gold electrodes in contact with 1.0 M NaOH. Potential scan initiated at 0.0 V in the positive direction and switching potential 1.15 V.

156 the time associated to the spillover processes,  $t_{sp}$ , calculated as  
157 the ratio between the peak potential difference between peaks  
158  $A_1$  and  $C_1$  and the potential scan rate  $\nu$ . Data for sweep rates  
159 between 10 and 500  $mV s^{-1}$  provided a slow decrease of the  
160 ratio on the  $i_p(C_1)/i_p(A_1)$  ratio with  $t_{sp}$ . As will be discussed in  
161 the following sections, these electrochemical parameters can in  
162 principle be used to measure the extent of the spillover effect  
163 from simple voltammetric experiments.

### 3.2. Catalytic and Interfacial Oxygen-Transfer Effects.

165 The observed voltammetric features can be rationalized on  
166 considering that the microparticulate deposit of the catalyst  
167 forms a discontinuous film of the Au electrode so that, as  
168 described in the models for the electrochemistry of ion-  
169 insertion solids: in both "direct" electrochemical<sup>45–49</sup> and  
170 electrocatalytic<sup>50,51</sup> processes, the electrochemical response is  
171 associated to the coupled charge transfer of electrons and  
172 charge-balancing electrolyte ions occurring at the particle/base  
173 electrode/electrolyte three-phase junction. Then, the voltam-  
174 metric response of the catalyst-modified electrodes in the  
175 potential region where the  $A_1/C_1$  processes occur is  
176 representative of the response of the uncovered fraction of  
177 Au electrode plus the response of the microparticulate system.  
178 Here, an interaction mechanism similar to that proposed for  
179 tungsten oxides can be hypothesized<sup>12,52</sup>



183 occurring at the  $MnO_2$  particle/gold electrode/electrolyte  
184 three-phase junction. Notice that the sum of the above  
185 processes yields the reaction described by eq 1. In this scheme,  
186 eq 7 can be viewed as an oxidative  $OH^-$  transfer yielding the  
187 gold oxide monolayer, subsequently experiencing competing  
188 processes described by eqs 3 and 4. Accordingly, the presence  
189 of  $MnO_2$  determines a catalytic enhancement of the  $A_1$  process  
190 of gold oxidation and OER, as observed on comparing Figure  
2a,b. 191

192 Coupled to these processes, oxygen transfer and back-  
193 transfer effects can be represented, mimicking the scheme  
194 proposed by Lin,<sup>11</sup> in terms of oxygen migration within the  
195  $MnO_2$  lattice occupying interstitial positions (see schematics in

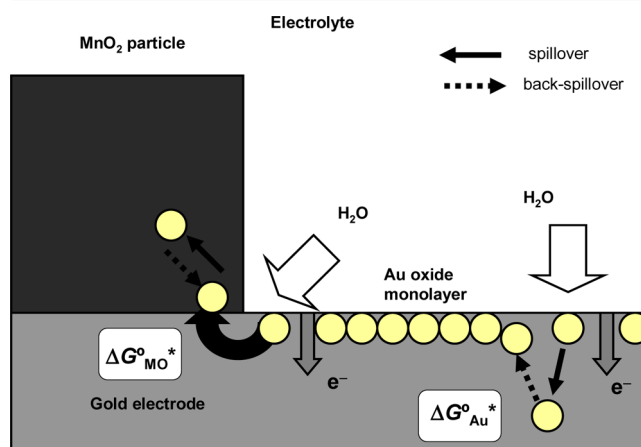
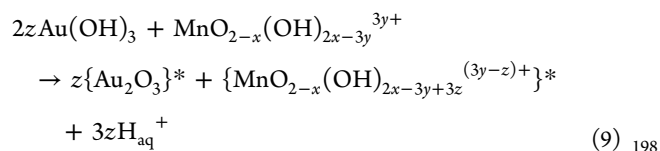
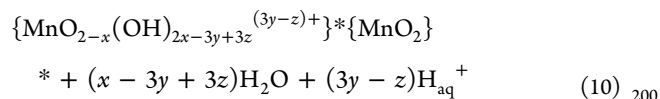


Figure 4. Simplified schematics for the electron-transfer and spillover (black arrows) and back-spillover processes occurring at  $MnO_2$ -modified Au electrodes in contact with an alkaline electrolyte.

Figure 4) occurring in parallel to the processes described by eqs 196 f4  
6–8. 197



199 followed by the  $MnO_2$  formation analogue to eq 8



201 where the asterisk denotes the species after spillover trans-  
202 ference of oxygens. Such processes provide a second way to  
203 form  $Au_2O_3$  alternative to that described by eqs 1–4 occurring  
204 at unmodified gold electrodes.

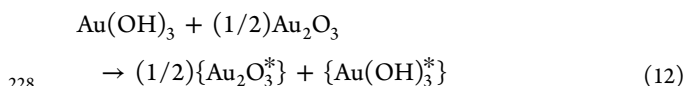
205 **3.3. Thermochemical calculations.** At the unmodified  
206 gold electrode, the Gibbs free energy in standard conditions  
207 associated to the anodic process described by eq 1,  $\Delta G_{A1}^\circ$ , can  
208 be calculated from the (apparent) equilibrium potential ( $E_{A1}^\circ$ )  
209 using the Nernst equation as  $\Delta G_{A1} = 3FE_{A1}^\circ$ . In turn, the Gibbs  
210 free energy under identical conditions for the oxidation process

211  $C_1$ ,  $\Delta G_{C1}$ , described by eq 5, will be  $\Delta G_{C1} = -3FE_{C1}^{\circ}$ ,  $E_{C1}^{\circ}$  being  
212 the corresponding equilibrium potential.

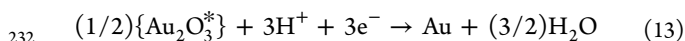
213 In cyclic voltammetric experiments at relatively high  
214 potential scan rates ( $\nu$ ) and/or at switching potentials ( $E_{lim}$ )  
215 close to the peak  $A_1$ , one can assume that there is no significant  
216 oxygen diffusion beyond the oxide monolayer. Then, assuming  
217 electrochemical reversibility, the potential separation between  
218 the processes  $A_1$  and  $C_1$  will permit to calculate the Gibbs free  
219 energy for the conversion of the gold oxide monolayer into  
220 gold oxide without spillover, described by eq 2,  $\Delta G_2^{\circ}$ , as

$$221 \quad \Delta G_2^{\circ} = -\Delta G_{A1}^{\circ} - \Delta G_{C1}^{\circ} = 3F(E_{C1}^{\circ} - E_{A1}^{\circ})_{\nu \rightarrow \infty} \quad (11)$$

222 Assuming that the potential range is confined to a region  
223 where the processes described by eqs 3 and 4 do not occur, in  
224 the voltammograms recorded at low scan rates and/or high  
225 switching potentials, spillover operates. This can be formally  
226 represented in terms of the conversion of  $Au_2O_3$  into an O-  
227 intercalated form,  $\{Au_2O_3^*\}$ , formally represented as



229 this process being a Gibbs energy change of  $\Delta G_2^{\circ*}$ . Then, the  
230 reduction of the  $\{Au_2O_3^*\}$  form to Au metal under these  
231 conditions



233 will occur at a potential differing from that recorded at high  
234 scan rates, in which no oxygen transport occurs. Accordingly, as  
235 schematized in the thermochemical cycle depicted in Figure 5,

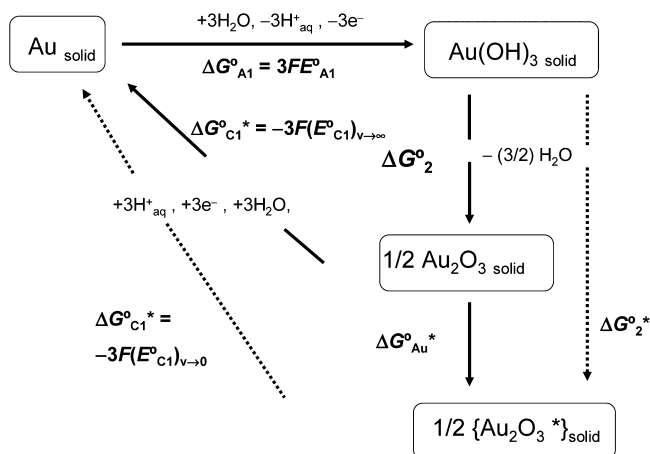


Figure 5. Thermochemical cycle corresponding to the oxygen transport associated to the electrochemical oxidation/reduction of Au electrodes in contact with aqueous alkaline media.

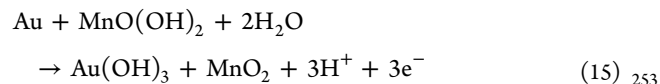
236 the difference  $E_{C1} - E_{A1}$  should tend to a different limiting  
237 value  $(E_{C1} - E_{A1})_{\nu \rightarrow 0}$  corresponding to a Gibbs free energy  
238  $\Delta G_2^{\circ*}$

$$239 \quad \Delta G_2^{\circ*} = 3F(E_{C1}^{\circ} - E_{A1}^{\circ})_{\nu \rightarrow 0} \quad (14)$$

240 so that the free energy for oxygen transference (see scheme in  
241 Figure 4),  $\Delta G_{Au}^{\circ*}$ , can be calculated as the difference between  
242  $\Delta G_2^{\circ*}$  and  $\Delta G_2^{\circ}$ .

243 At  $MnO_2$ -modified gold electrodes and high scan rates, one  
244 can assume that the peak  $A_1$  reflects mainly the oxidative  
245 process yielding the gold oxide monolayer described by eqs

6–8, which in principle will be equivalent, under conditions of 246  
thermodynamic control, to that described by eq 2. At low scan 247  
rates, however, the processes represented by eqs 9 and 10 248  
operate and  $Au_2O_3$  will be formed. A simplified view can be 249  
obtained on assuming that, at high scan rates and/or low 250  
switching potentials, the process  $A_1$  corresponds to the  $MnO_2$ - 251  
assisted oxidation of gold preceded by the process 6, as 252



which is followed by the formation of  $Au_2O_3$ , subsequently 254  
reduced through the process  $C_1$  (eq 5), formally regenerating 255  
the hydrated  $MnO_2$  form as schematized in Figure 6 with a 256

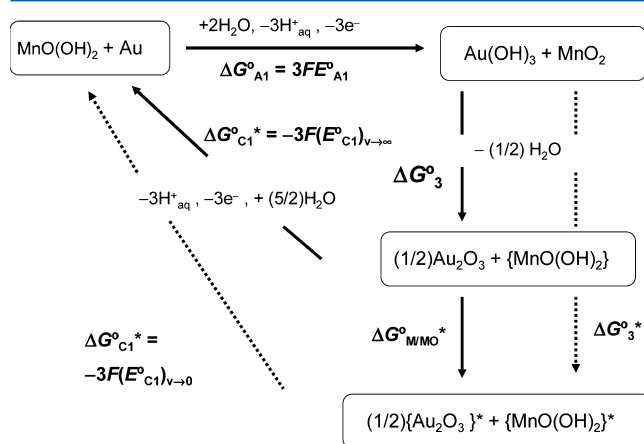
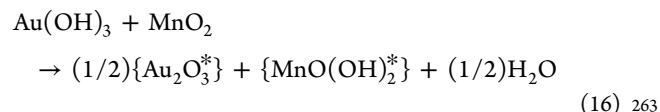
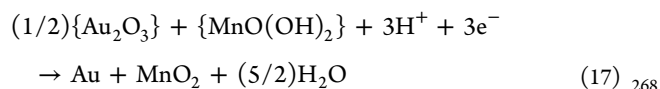


Figure 6. Thermochemical cycle for describing interfacial oxygen transport associated to the electrochemical oxidation/reduction of  $MnO_2$ -modified Au electrodes in contact with aqueous alkaline media.

change in the Gibbs free energy  $\Delta G_3^{\circ}$ . In the limiting case of 257  
low scan rates and/or high switching potentials, there will be 258  
reaction completion for processes 9 and 10 and there is 259  
interfacial O transport between the  $Au(OH)_3$  monolayer and 260  
manganese oxide (see Figure 4). This process can be ideally 261  
represented as 262



whose variation of the Gibbs free energy will be  $\Delta G_3^{\circ*}$ . Again, 264  
the subsequent electrochemical oxidation of the  $Au_2O_3$  and 265  
 $\{Au_2O_3^*\}$  forms to Au via the process  $C_1$ , formally regenerating 266  
 $MnO_2$  267

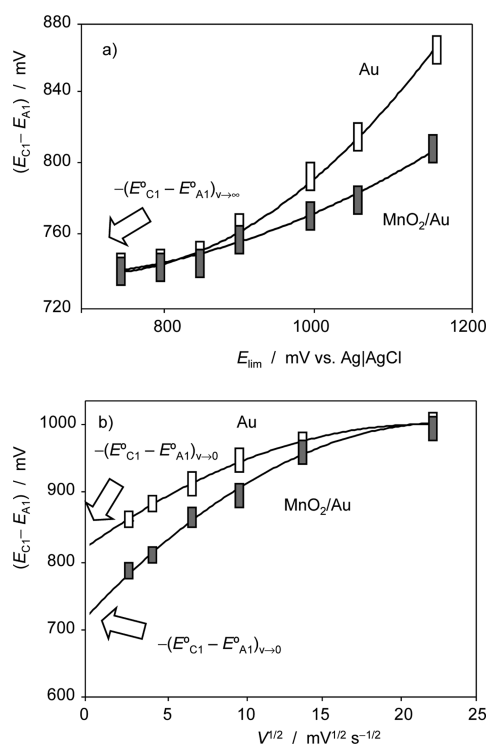


will differ at high scan rates, where there is no interfacial O 269  
transfer (and  $Au_2O_3$  is formed), at high scan rates, where 270  
spillover occurs and  $\{Au_2O_3^*\}$  is formed. Then, the difference 271  
between  $\Delta G_3^{\circ}$  and  $\Delta G_3^{\circ*}$  can be viewed as a measure of the 272  
variation of the Gibbs free energy associated to oxygen 273  
transfer/diffusion through the manganese oxide/gold oxide 274  
monolayer interface described by eq 16. Accordingly, the 275  
differences between the formal electrode potentials correspond- 276  
ing to the electrochemical processes  $C_1$  and  $A_1$  at low and high 277  
scan rates (and/or at very positive and slightly positive 278

279 switching potentials) can be viewed as representative of the  
280 variation of the Gibbs energy associated to interfacial O  
281 transport,  $\Delta G_{M/MO}^{\circ}$ . This quantity can be calculated from the  
282 measured electrode potentials as

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta G_{M/MO}^{\circ} &= \Delta G_3^{\circ*} - \Delta G_3^{\circ} \\ &= 3F[(E_{C1}^{\circ} - E_{A1}^{\circ})_{\nu \rightarrow 0} - (E_{C1}^{\circ} - E_{A1}^{\circ})_{\nu \rightarrow \infty}] \end{aligned} \quad (18)$$

283  
284 **Figure 7a** depicts the variation of the peak potential  
285 difference ( $E_{C1} - E_{A1}$ ) on the switching potential for

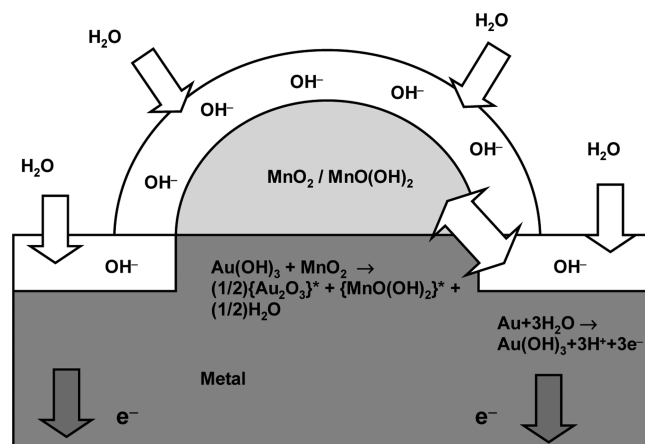


**Figure 7.** Variation of the peak potential difference ( $E_{A1} - E_{C1}$ ) on: (a) the switching potential and (b) the potential scan rate for unmodified and  $\text{MnO}_2$ -modified gold electrodes in contact with 1.0 M NaOH. (a) Potential scan rate of  $50 \text{ mV s}^{-1}$  and (b)  $E_{\text{lim}} = 1.15 \text{ V}$  vs Ag/AgCl.

286 unmodified and  $\text{MnO}_2$ -modified gold electrodes in contact  
287 with 1.0 M NaOH at the potential scan rate of  $50 \text{ mV s}^{-1}$ .  
288 Consistent with the foregoing set of considerations, at low  $E_{\text{lim}}$   
289 values, the peak potential difference tends to a common  
290 limiting value for both electrodes [which can be taken as a  
291 measure of  $(E_{C1}^{\circ} - E_{A1}^{\circ})_{\nu \rightarrow \infty}$ ], whereas at high  $E_{\text{lim}}$  values, the  
292 peak potential difference measured at Au and  $\text{MnO}_2$ -Au  
293 electrodes diverges.

294 For estimating  $(E_{C1}^{\circ} - E_{A1}^{\circ})_{\nu \rightarrow 0}$ , the values of the peak  
295 potential difference measured at a fixed  $E_{\text{lim}}$  (positive enough  
296 for producing a significant spillover effect) were plotted versus  
297 the potential scan rate, as described by Scholz et al. on studying  
298 tungsten bronze electrodes.<sup>53</sup> The corresponding representa-  
299 tion can be seen in **Figure 7b**, where for smoothing the curved  
300 path of the graph, the square root of the scan rate was used as  
301 the  $x$ -axis. One can see in this figure that different values of  $(E_{C1}^{\circ}$   
302  $- E_{A1}^{\circ})_{\nu \rightarrow 0}$  can be approximated at  $\nu = 0$  for Au and  $\text{MnO}_2$ -Au  
303 electrodes. A small difference between  $(E_{C1}^{\circ} - E_{A1}^{\circ})_{\nu \rightarrow 0}$  and  $(E_{C1}^{\circ}$   
304  $- E_{A1}^{\circ})_{\nu \rightarrow \infty}$  determined for unmodified Au electrodes ( $10 \pm 10$   
305 mV) can in principle be attributed to the appearance of the

gold-localized spillover. This “internal spillover” can be  
associated to the diffusion of oxygen atoms within the gold  
matrix and would compete with the process described by eq 2.  
As expected, the difference between  $(E_{C1}^{\circ} - E_{A1}^{\circ})_{\nu \rightarrow 0}$  and  $(E_{C1}^{\circ} -$   
 $E_{A1}^{\circ})_{\nu \rightarrow \infty}$  was clearly lower than that obtained for  $\text{MnO}_2$ -Au  
electrodes,  $110 \pm 10 \text{ mV}$ , which permits to estimate  $\Delta G_{M/MO}^{\circ} =$   
 $-32 \pm 3 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$ . This value is clearly lower than those  
estimated for the activation energy for cation vacancy diffusion  
of Mn(II) in MnO ( $90$ – $150 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$ )<sup>54</sup> and oxygen ion  
diffusion in  $\text{SrCe}_{0.95}\text{Yb}_{0.05}\text{O}_3$  ( $92$ – $109 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$ ),<sup>55</sup> but this  
discrepancy can in principle be explained by the occurrence of  
the oxygen-transfer process through the highly hydrated  
double-layer region formed at the metal– $\text{MnO}_2$  interface  
boundary, as schematized in **Figure 8**.



**Figure 8.** Schematics for the  $\text{MnO}_2$ -assisted electrochemical oxidation of gold in contact with an alkaline aqueous solution.

It is pertinent to note that this treatment is only a rough  
approximation by two main reasons: (i) the evaluation of  
thermochemical parameters requires strict electrochemical  
reversibility and (ii) the above treatment implies that the  
spillover process is not entirely reversed during the entire  
potential cycle. In spite of these limitations, the precedent  
treatment is able to compare the thermochemistry of spillover  
of different materials, of interest in the study of the catalytic  
performance of the same relative to selected chemical  
processes. Additionally, it is convenient to note that the  
systems studied here involve a solid–solid–liquid three-phase  
system differing from solid–solid–gas systems where spillover  
phenomena usually operate. Then, there is a variety of  
possibilities, for instance, processes involving low-concentration  
solution intermediates, requiring alternative formulations, in  
particular those leading to diffusion control.

**3.4. Electrochemical Monitoring of Kinetic Aspects.**  
Let us consider the cyclic voltammetric response such as in  
**Figures 1** and **2**. The peak current for gold oxidation  $A_1$  (eq 2)  
can be considered as proportional to the number of  
electrochemically accessible gold sites,  $n_o$

$$i_a \approx \epsilon_a n_o \quad (19)$$

$\epsilon_a$  being an electrochemical constant depending on the  
switching potential, scan rate, and so forth. In the subsequent  
cathodic scan, the peak current for the reduction of the gold  
oxide (eq 5) previously formed will be considered as  
proportional to the number of active sites of gold oxide  
resulting from the sequence of processes described by eqs 3 and

348 4. Assuming that during the electrochemical cycle some oxygen  
349 diffuses internally so that a certain fraction of gold oxidized in  
350 the process  $A_1$  becomes inactive ("internal diffusion"), one can  
351 write

$$352 \quad i_c \approx \varepsilon_c(n_o - n_{SAu}) \quad (20)$$

353 where  $\varepsilon_c$  is the corresponding electrochemical constant for the  
354 process  $C_1$  and  $n_{SAu}$  denotes the number of gold sites  
355 deactivated as a result of internal oxygen diffusion. Assuming  
356 that this process advances with time during the voltammetric  
357 experiment, the  $i_c/i_a$  ratio for the bare gold electrode at a time  $t$   
358 after generating the gold oxide monolayer will be

$$359 \quad \left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{Au}^t \approx \frac{\varepsilon_c(n_o - n_{SAu})}{\varepsilon_a n_o} = \left(\frac{\varepsilon_c}{\varepsilon_a}\right) \left(1 - \frac{n_{SAu}}{n_o}\right) \quad (21)$$

360 Accordingly, the fraction of gold sites undergoing internal  
361 diffusion at a time  $t$  can be approximated by

$$362 \quad \left(\frac{n_{SAu}}{n_o}\right)_t = 1 - \left(\frac{\varepsilon_a}{\varepsilon_c}\right) \left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{Au}^t \quad (22)$$

363 Extrapolating at time zero (i.e., in the limiting case of  
364 voltammetric experiments when no internal diffusion can  
365 occur),  $n_{SAu} \rightarrow 0$ , so that  $i_c \approx \varepsilon_c n_o$  and then

$$366 \quad \left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{Au}^{t=0} = \left(\frac{\varepsilon_c}{\varepsilon_a}\right) \quad (23)$$

367 Accordingly, the  $n_{SAu}/n_o$  ratio can be calculated from peak  
368 current measurements as

$$369 \quad \left(\frac{n_{SAu}}{n_o}\right)_t = 1 - \frac{\left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{Au}^t}{\left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{Au}^{t=0}} \quad (24)$$

370 Now, let us consider the cyclic voltammetric response at  
371  $MnO_2$ -modified gold electrodes. Now, the current for gold  
372 oxidation is increased relative to that recorded at unmodified  
373 gold. Because, under our experimental conditions,  $MnO_2$  forms  
374 a discontinuous particulate deposit onto the Au surface, the  
375 corresponding peak current can be written as the sum of that  
376 due to uncovered gold (eq 1) and that due to the catalytic effect  
377 exerted by  $MnO_2$  (eq 7). Taking  $n_{MO}$  as the number of  
378 accessible gold sites for  $MnO_2$ -mediated oxidation of gold  
379 (representative of the electrocatalytic effect exerted by  $MnO_2$  in  
380 this process), the peak current for the  $A_1$  process will be

$$381 \quad i_a \approx \varepsilon_a n_o + \varepsilon_{cat} n_{MO} \quad (25)$$

382 In the subsequent cathodic scan, the peak current for the  
383 reduction of the gold oxide previously formed will be  
384 considered as proportional to the number of active sites of  
385  $Au_2O_3$  remaining after  $Au/MnO_2$  interfacial transfer and  
386 internal oxygen diffusion on gold.

$$387 \quad i_c \approx \varepsilon_c(n_o + n_{MO} - n_{SAu} - n_{SMO}) \quad (26)$$

388  $n_{SMO}$  being the number of active gold sites which remain  
389 associated to oxygen diffused into  $MnO_2$  (eqs 9 and 10). Then,  
390 the  $i_c/i_a$  ratio for the  $MnO_2$ -modified gold electrode at a time  $t$   
391 after generating the gold oxide monolayer will be

$$\begin{aligned} \left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{AuMO}^t &\approx \frac{\varepsilon_c(n_o + n_{MO} - n_{SAu} - n_{SMO})}{\varepsilon_a n_o + \varepsilon_{cat} n_{MO}} \\ &= \left(\frac{\varepsilon_c}{\varepsilon_a}\right) \left(\frac{1 + n_{MO}/n_o - n_{SAu}/n_o - n_{SMO}/n_o}{1 + (\varepsilon_{cat}/\varepsilon_a)(n_{MO}/n_o)}\right) \end{aligned} \quad (27) \quad 392$$

Assuming, as before, that at time zero there is no spillover,  
the  $i_c/i_a$  ratio will be

$$\begin{aligned} \left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{AuMO}^{t=0} &\approx \frac{\varepsilon_c(n_o + n_{MO})}{\varepsilon_a n_o + \varepsilon_{cat} n_{MO}} \\ &= \left(\frac{\varepsilon_c}{\varepsilon_a}\right) \left(\frac{1 + n_{MO}/n_o}{1 + (\varepsilon_{cat}/\varepsilon_a)(n_{MO}/n_o)}\right) \end{aligned} \quad (28) \quad 393$$

As a result, eq 27 can be rewritten as

$$\begin{aligned} \left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{AuMO}^t &= \left(\frac{1 + n_{MO}/n_o - n_{SAu}/n_o - n_{SMO}/n_o}{1 + n_{MO}/n_o}\right) \\ &\quad \left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{AuMO}^{t=0} \end{aligned} \quad (29) \quad 394$$

Assuming that the amount of  $MnO_2$  deposited onto the  
electrode surface is clearly lower than  $n_o$ , a condition that  
applies when a thin layer of MO was deposited onto the gold  
electrode surface, one can approximate  $n_{MO}/n_o \ll 1$ . Then

$$\left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{AuMO}^t \approx [1 - n_{SAu}/n_o - n_{SMO}/n_o] \left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{AuMO}^{t=0} \quad (30) \quad 395$$

Combining the above equation with eq 24, one obtains

$$\left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{AuMO}^t \approx \left[ \frac{\left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{Au}^t}{\left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{Au}^{t=0}} - \frac{n_{SMO}}{n_o} \right] \left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{AuMO}^{t=0} \quad (31) \quad 396$$

Accordingly, the  $n_{SMO}/n_o$  ratio at any time  $t$  can be estimated  
as

$$\frac{n_{SMO}}{n_o} \approx \frac{\left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{Au}^t}{\left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{Au}^{t=0}} - \frac{\left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{AuMO}^t}{\left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{AuMO}^{t=0}} \quad (32) \quad 397$$

It is also interesting to evaluate the electrocatalytic activity of  
 $MnO_2$  on gold oxidation (eqs 6–8). For this purpose,  
rearranging the terms in eq 29 and assuming as before that  
the amount of  $MnO_2$  deposited onto the electrode surface is  
clearly lower than  $n_o$ , the ratio  $n_{MO}/n_o$  can be determined as

$$\frac{n_{MO}}{n_o} = \frac{\left(\frac{\varepsilon_a}{\varepsilon_c}\right) \left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{AuMO}^{t=0} - 1}{1 - \left(\frac{\varepsilon_{cat}}{\varepsilon_c}\right) \left(\frac{i_c}{i_a}\right)_{AuMO}^{t=0}} \quad (33) \quad 398$$

In regard to the oxygen spillover process, the values of the  
 $n_{SMO}/n_o$  ratio given by eq 29 can be considered as  
representative of the kinetics of that process. This can in  
principle be treated in terms of solid-state reaction kinetics  
where the above ratio can be seen as equivalent to the

419 conversion fraction,  $\alpha$  ( $0 < \alpha < 1$ ), defined as the molar fraction  
 420 of the obtained product and assuming that at the end of the  
 421 reaction the reactant is quantitatively converted into the  
 422 product. From the above  $\alpha$  values, the different kinetic models  
 423 can be tested using the Sharp–Hancock formalism,<sup>56</sup>  
 424 extensively used for studying solid-state reaction kinetics.<sup>57,58</sup>  
 425 The kinetics of solid-state reactions is in general represented by  
 426 the generalized kinetic equation  $d\alpha/dt = -kf(\alpha)$ , where  $\alpha$   
 427 denotes the fraction of the solid reagent converted into product  
 428 at a time  $t$  and  $k$  represents a rate constant having  $(\text{time})^{-1}$   
 429 dimensions. The function  $f(\alpha)$ , representative of the different  
 430 types of reaction mechanisms, adopts, in several cases, a  
 431 mathematical form which can be represented as

$$432 \quad \ln[-\ln(1 - \alpha)] = m \ln k + m \ln t \quad (34)$$

433 where  $m$  is a numerical coefficient characterizing the reaction  
 434 mechanism. Consistent with the proposed treatment, plots of  
 435  $\ln[-\ln(1 - \alpha)]$  versus  $\ln t$  based on different series of  
 436 voltammetric experiments, (i) varying the potential scan rate at  
 437 fixed  $E_{\text{lim}}$  and (ii) varying  $E_{\text{lim}}$  at a fixed  $\nu$ , produced essentially  
 438 identical Sharp–Hancock plots, as can be seen in Figure 9 for

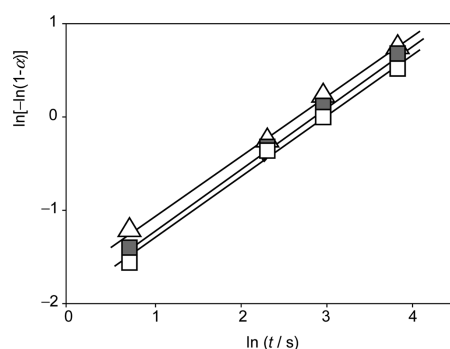


Figure 9. Sharp–Hancock representations of  $\ln[-\ln(1 - \alpha)]$  vs  $\ln t$  for  $\text{MnO}_2$ -modified gold electrodes immersed into 1.0 M NaOH aqueous solution. From voltammetric data such as in Figure 2 varying  $\nu$  between 10 and 500  $\text{mV s}^{-1}$  at  $E_{\text{lim}} = 1.15$  V (squares), 1.05 V (solid squares), and 0.95 V (triangles).

439 experiments performed by varying  $\nu$  between 10 and 500  $\text{mV}$   
 440  $\text{s}^{-1}$  at  $E_{\text{lim}} = 1.15$  V (squares), 1.05 V (solid squares), and 0.95  
 441 V (triangles). Remarkably, the slope of the Sharp–Hancock  
 442 representations was in all cases around  $0.60 \pm 0.05$ , consistent  
 443 with diffusion-controlled mechanisms,<sup>56–58</sup> providing averaged  
 444  $k$  values of  $(4.5 \pm 1.2) \times 10^{-2}$ .

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

445 Using the VIMP methodology, oxygen interfacial effects  
 446 comparable to spillover processes on solid  $\text{MnO}_2$ -modified  
 447 gold electrodes in contact with alkaline media can be  
 448 monitored. Peak potential data for the gold oxidation process  
 449 and its subsequent desorptive reduction can be used for  
 450 approximating spillover thermochemical parameters, giving a  
 451 variation of the Gibbs free energy for spillover of  $-32 \pm 3$   $\text{kJ}$   
 452  $\text{mol}^{-1}$ . Peak current ratios determined at different potential  
 453 scan rates and different switching potentials for the above gold-  
 454 localized voltammetric processes can be used to measure the  
 455 extent of the spillover effect and separate the same from the  
 456 electrocatalytic effect exerted by  $\text{MnO}_2$  on gold oxidation.  
 457 Kinetic analysis of voltammetric data for  $\text{MnO}_2$ -modified gold  
 458 electrodes using the Sharp–Hancock formalism confirmed the

diffusive nature of the spillover process and permitted to  
 evaluate kinetic parameters for this process.

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##### Notes

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