

## **FORMATION OF LOW ATOMIC GOLD CLUSTERS AND DETERMINATION OF THEIR BINDING ENERGIES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Complexes of atomic gold with a variety of ligands have been formed by passing helium nanodroplets (HNDs) through two pickup cells containing gold vapor and the vapor of another dopant, namely a rare gas, a diatomic molecule ( $H_2$ ,  $N_2$ ,  $O_2$ ,  $I_2$ ,  $P_2$ ), or various polyatomic molecules ( $H_2O$ ,  $CO_2$ ,  $SF_6$ ,  $C_6H_6$ , adamantane, imidazole, dicyclopentadiene, and fullerene).*

**Key words:** gold complexes, clusters, ligands, mass spectrometry

### **АННОТАЦИЯ**

*Комплексы атомарного золота с различными лигандами были образованы путем пропускания наноккапель гелия (ГНД) через две пикап-ячейки, содержащие пары золота и пары другой легирующей примеси, а именно инертного газа, двухатомной молекулы ( $H_2$ ,  $N_2$ ,  $O_2$ ,  $I_2$ ,  $P_2$ ), или различные многоатомные молекулы ( $H_2O$ ,  $CO_2$ ,  $SF_6$ ,  $C_6H_6$ , адамантан, имидазол, дициклопентадиен и фуллерен).*

**Ключевые слова:** комплексы золота, кластеры, лиганды, масс-спектрометрия.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Gold has fascinated mankind for several thousand years . In its bulk form it exhibits a distinct yellow color which is considerably different from most other metals that reflect the complete visible range of light and have a shiny white appearance. This yellow color is the result of a relativistic contraction of the 6s orbital . This also leads to an exceptionally high atomic ionization energy for a metal of 9.225 eV , a large electron affinity of 2.3 eV] and it explains the shorter and stronger covalent bonds of gold which makes it often behave like a heavy hydrogen atom.

### **DISCUSSION AND RESULTS**

A pronounced maximum at  $n = 12$  was explained by the completion of an icosahedral shell and a local maximum at  $n = 14$  by another stable structure where

two additional helium atoms can be squeezed into the first shell, similar to  $\text{He}_2\text{Kr}^+$ , where also  $n = 14$  turned out to be magic [38]. Pronounced magic numbers were also reported in a subsequent study where HNDs were doped with gold vapor and another rare gas Rg (Rg = Ne, Ar, Kr or Xe) [14]. For all four noble gases, the intensity of  $\text{Rg}_2\text{Au}^+$  exhibits a local maximum which agrees in the case of Ar, Kr and Xe with a covalent character of the bonding [6]. In the case of He and Ne, intensity anomalies at  $n = 12$  indicate an icosahedral shell closure and weak physical bonding. A clear intensity drop at  $\text{Ar}_6\text{Au}^+$  suggests the closure of an octahedral solvation shell. Goulart et al. studied mixed cluster ions of gold and  $\text{C}_{60}$  [13]. For both polarities ions of the form  $(\text{C}_{60})_2\text{Au}^\pm$  are particularly abundant. Density functional theory calculations suggest a sandwich like structure similar to  $\text{LAuL}^\pm$  ions previously reported for several smaller ligands L. In the present study, we extend these ligand switching reactions to heavy rare gases and molecules including the diatomic species  $\text{H}_2$ ,  $\text{N}_2$ ,  $\text{O}_2$ ,  $\text{P}_2$ , and  $\text{I}_2$ , the molecules  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ,  $\text{CO}_2$ , and  $\text{SF}_6$ , and the carbonaceous species  $\text{C}_6\text{H}_6$ ,  $\text{C}_3\text{H}_4\text{N}_2$ ,  $\text{C}_5\text{H}_6$  (and its dimeric form),  $\text{C}_{10}\text{H}_{16}$ , and  $\text{C}_{60}$ . In the case of adamantane, benzene and  $\text{C}_{60}$ , anionic complexes with gold were also investigated.

## CONCLUSION

The subsequent chemical reactivity of gold atoms or the cations might be unexpected for a metal that does not exhibit corrosion. In the low-pressure regime of a Fourier transform ion cyclotron resonance mass spectrometer, radiative association between  $\text{Au}^+$  and  $\text{C}_6\text{F}_6$  leads to a weakly bound complex that was used by Schröder et al. as a precursor to generate other complexes by ligand-exchange reactions. In combined experimental and theoretical studies, they determined the binding energy of  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  to  $\text{Au}^+$  with 1.56 eV and benzene with 3.04 eV. Besides pristine gold cluster ions  $\text{Au}_m^+$ , binary cluster ions of the form  $\text{He}_n\text{Au}_m^+$  were also observed.

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