

ChE 430

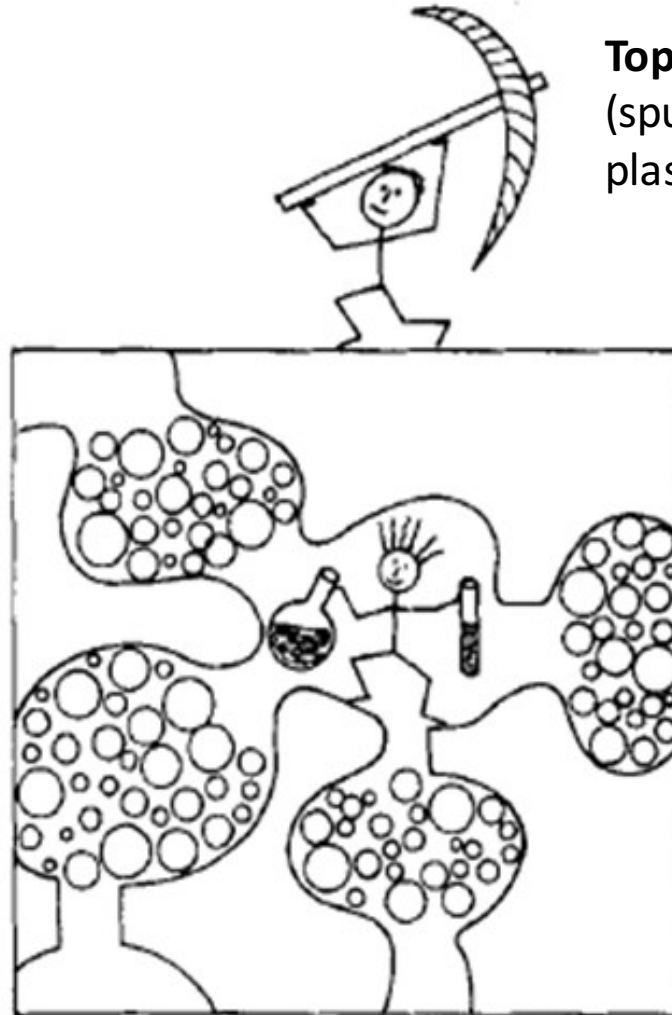
Colloidal synthesis of nanoparticles and their energy applications

MODULE 3: Nucleation and Growth

- 3.1. Introduction
- 3.2. The Classical Nucleation and Growth Theory
- 3.3. The Non-Classical Nucleation and Growth Theory
- 3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms
- 3.5. In-situ studies

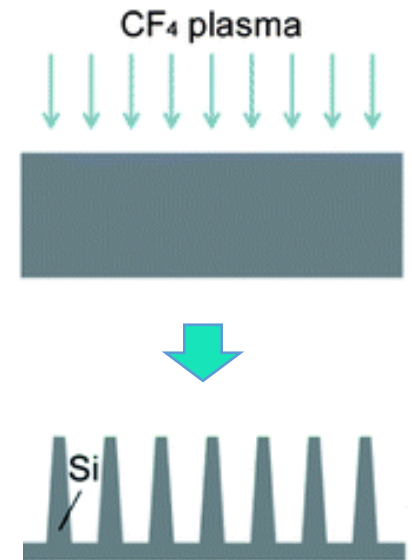
3.1. Introduction

Top-down and bottom-up



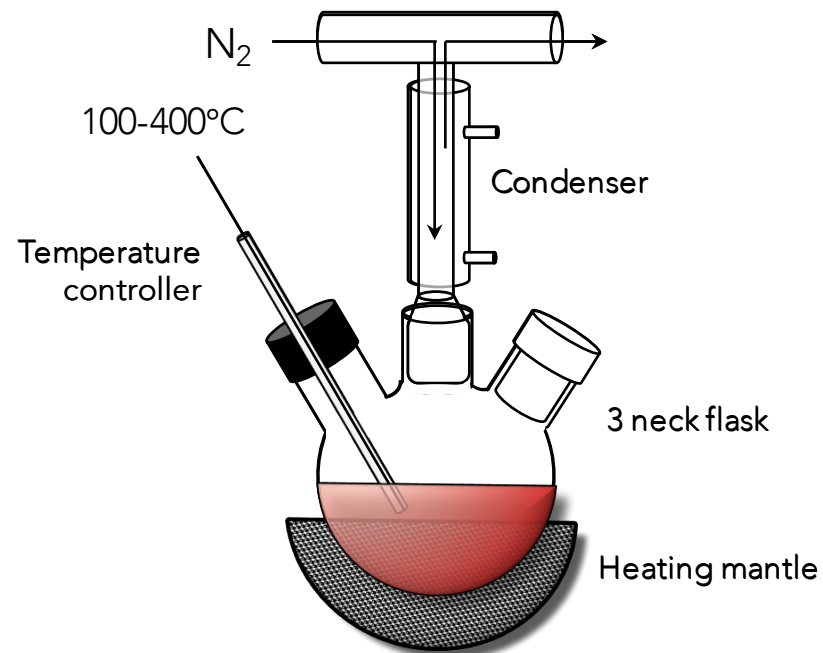
Bottom-up approaches
(chemical vapor deposition,
laser pyrolysis, chemical
synthesis)

Top-down approaches
(sputtering, lithography,
plasma etching)



3.1. Introduction

Colloidal synthesis

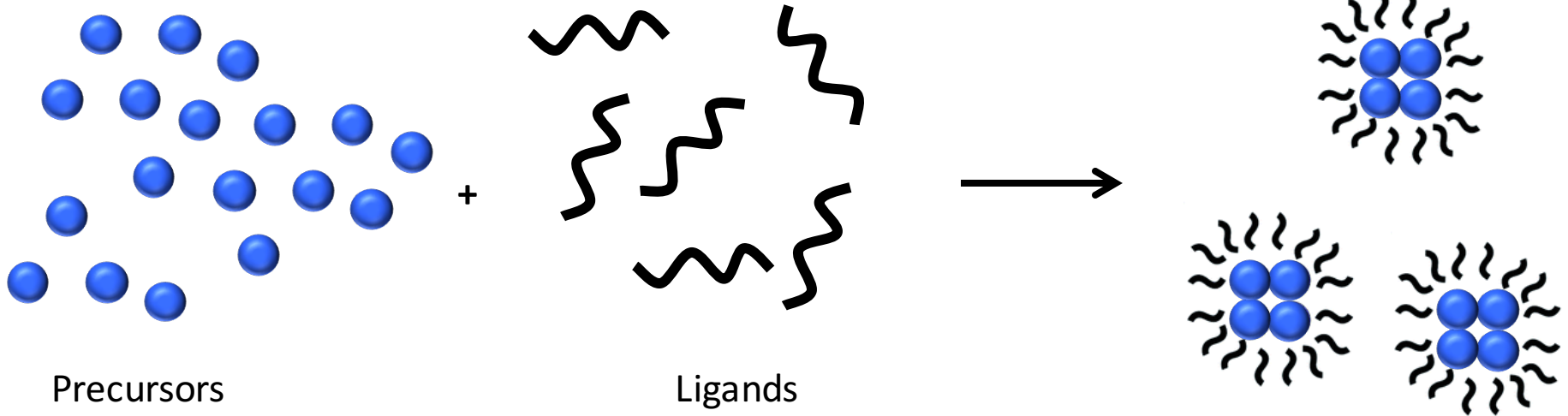


Reaction parameters:

- Ligands/Precursors reactivity
- Reaction temperature
- Reaction time
- Concentration

3.1. Introduction

Building nanocrystals from atoms



Precursors

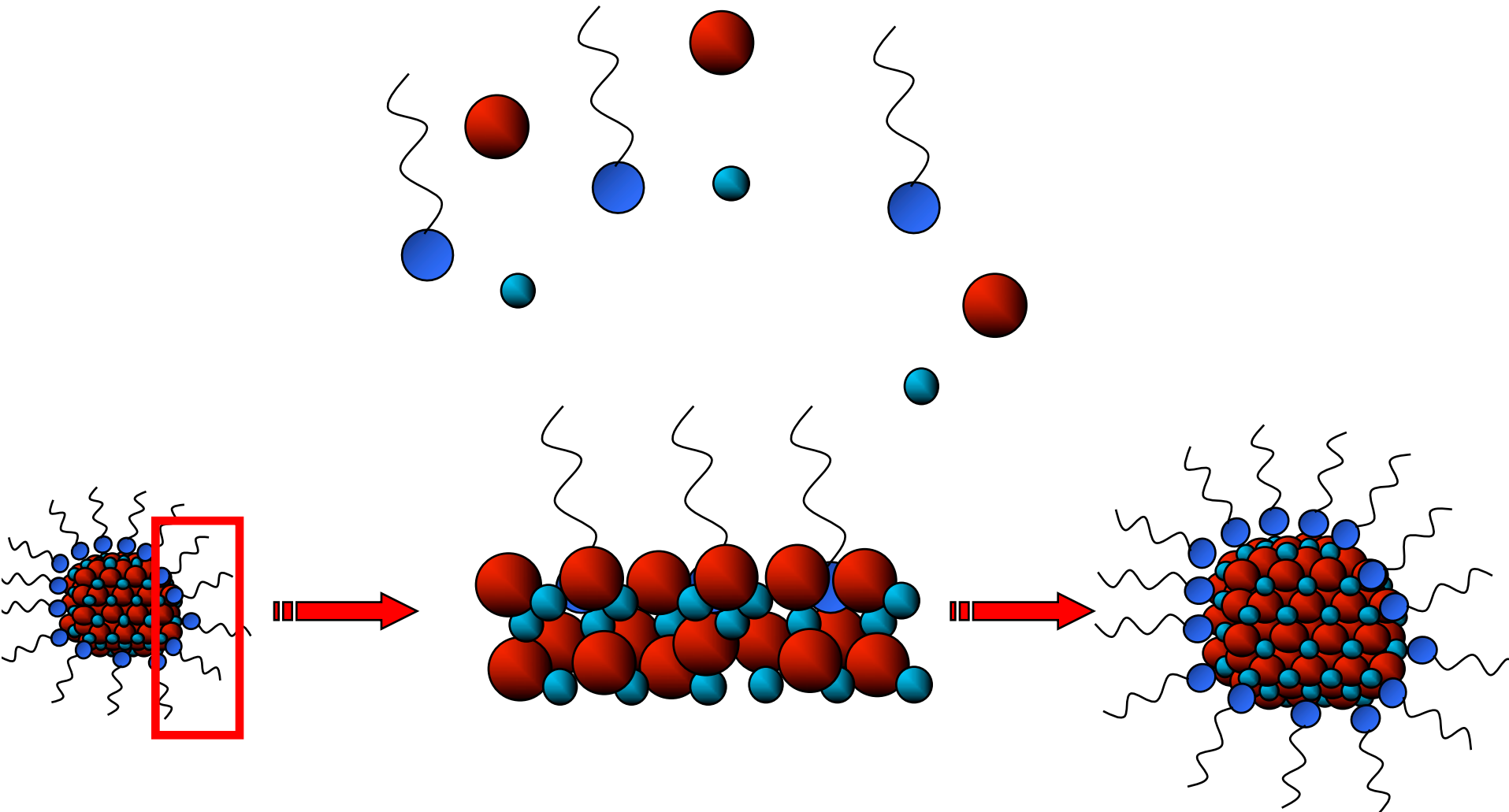
- salts
- organometallic complexes
- elemental compounds

Ligands

- carboxylic acids
- amines
- thiols
- phosphonic acids
- phosphines

3.1. Introduction

Ligands are in dynamic equilibrium between NC surface and the growth solution



3.1. Introduction

“..the current state of nanocrystal synthesis is comparable to that of organic synthesis a century ago”

(Buhro et al. Chem. Mater. 2014)

“While organic reactions that underpin molecular total synthesis can be applied rationally in a by-design manner, the rules and guidelines for constructing high-order hybrid nanoparticles are poorly understood and far from mature”

(Schaak et al. J. Am. Chem. Soc. 2015)

3.1. Introduction

Nucleation: The process whereby nuclei (seeds) act as templates for crystal growth.

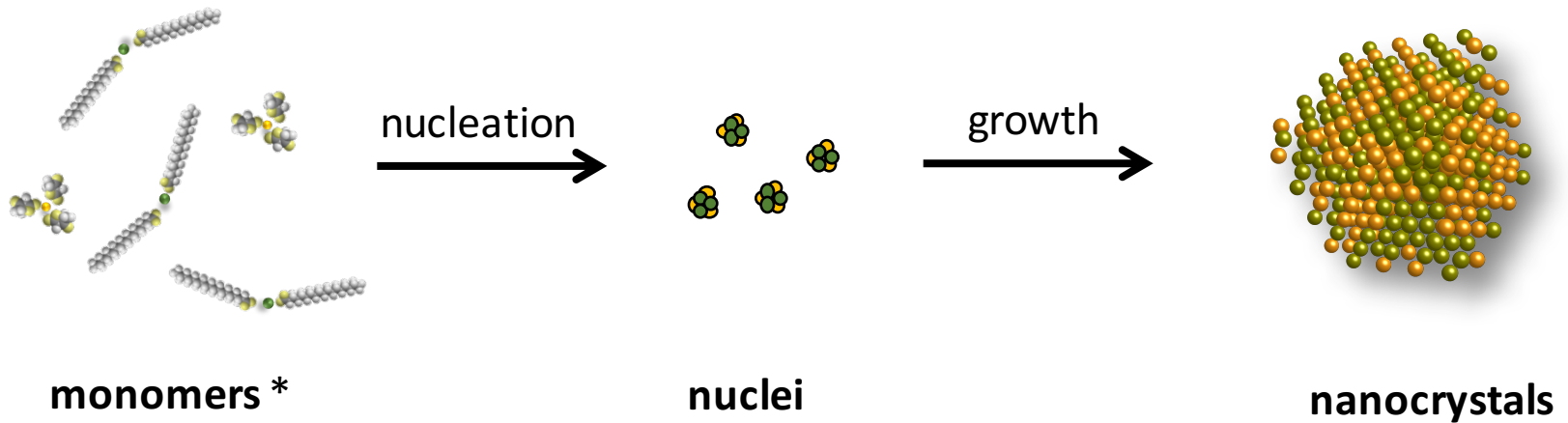
Homogeneous Nucleation: it occurs when nuclei form uniformly throughout the parent phase

Heterogeneous Nucleation: it occurs when nuclei form on a pre-existing surface (container surface, impurities, nanocrystal seeds)

2.2. The Classical Nucleation and Growth Theory

2.3. The Non-classical Nucleation and Growth Theory

3.2. The Classical Nucleation Theory



The growth proceeds through addition of monomers to the nuclei

*Monomers might be different from the precursors injected in the flask

3.2. The Classical Nucleation Theory

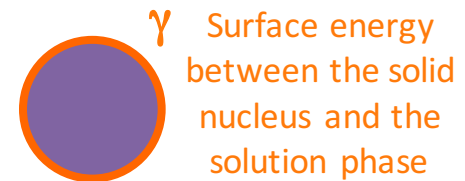
Free energy of nuclei formation

$$\Delta G_N = 4\pi r^2 \gamma + \frac{4}{3}\pi r^3 \Delta G_V$$

$$\Delta G_V = \frac{-k_B T \ln(S)}{V_m}$$

k_B is the Boltzmann's constant
 T is the temperature
 S is the supersaturation of the solution
 V_m is the molar volume

Surface energy: energetic penalty to pay in order to establish an interface between the new solid phase and the pre-existing solution phase.



Bulk energy: energetic gain from the formation of a new spherical nucleus

3.2. The Classical Nucleation Theory

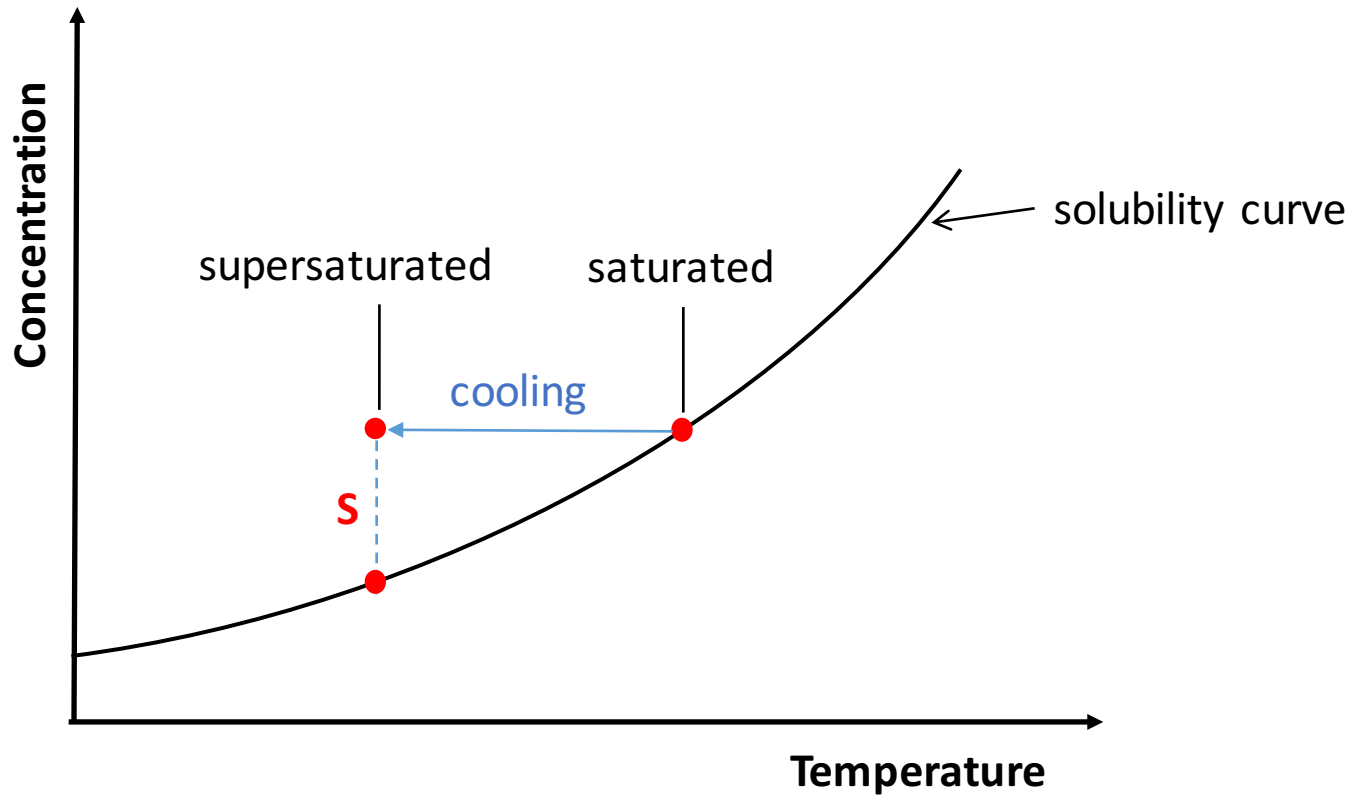
QUESTION: are you familiar with the definition of unsaturated, saturated and supersaturated solution?

[What does supersaturation mean?](#)

[How do we get out of supersaturation?](#)

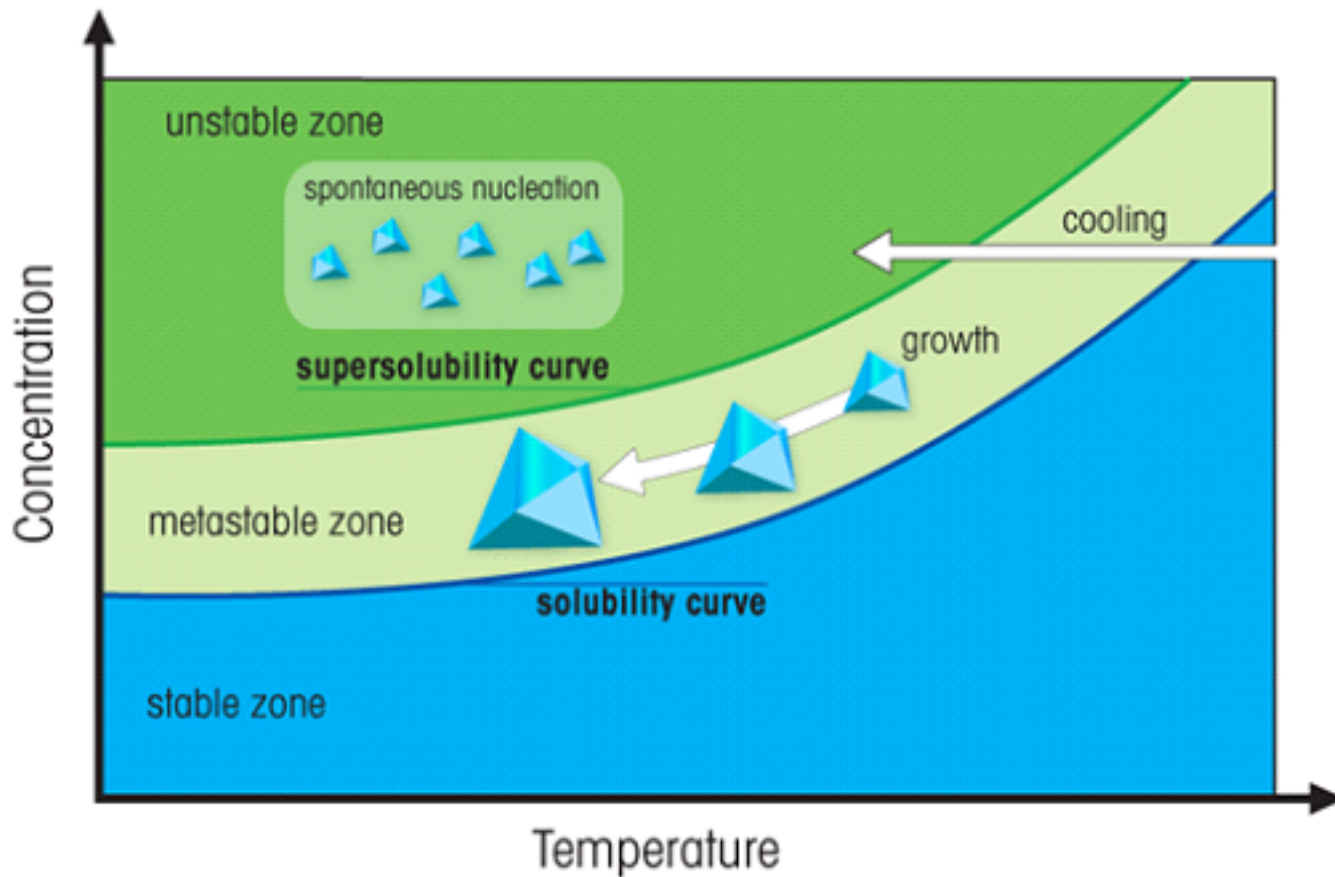
3.2. The Classical Nucleation Theory

Supersaturation (S): The difference between the actual concentration and the solubility concentration at a given temperature



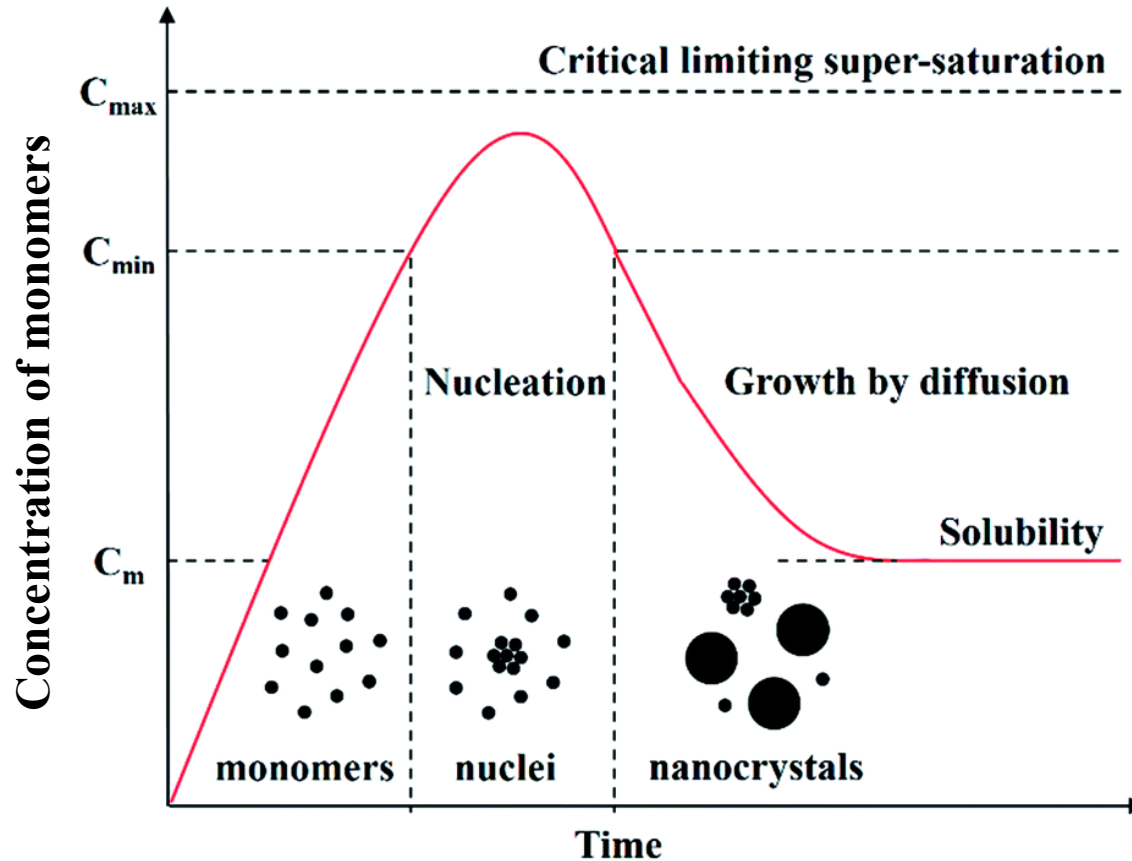
3.2. The Classical Nucleation Theory

Supersaturation: The difference between the actual concentration and the solubility concentration at a given temperature



3.2. The Classical Nucleation Theory

La Mer diagram

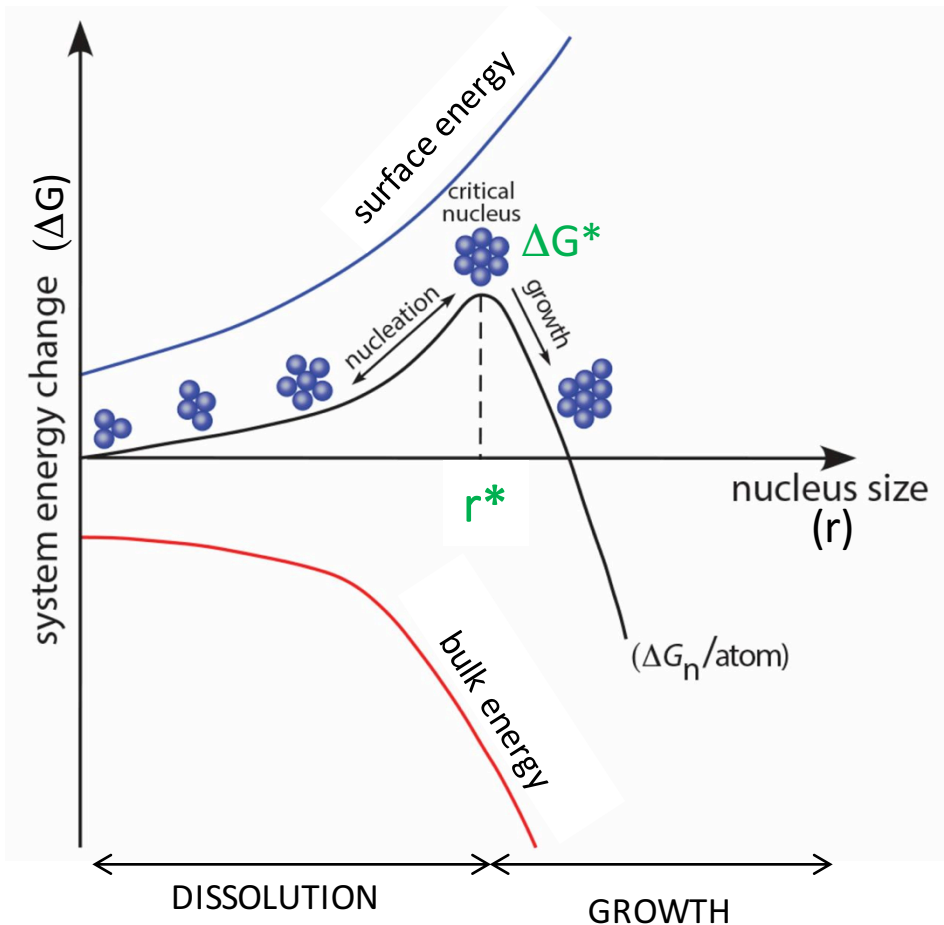


The goal is to achieve supersaturation which will lead to one brief outburst of nucleation. Above the critical limiting super-saturation, only spontaneous nucleation and no growth will occur.

3.2. The Classical Nucleation Theory

Free energy of nuclei formation

$$\Delta G_N = 4\pi r^2 \gamma - \frac{4}{3} \pi r^3 \frac{k_B T \ln(S)}{V_m}$$



$$\Delta G^* = \frac{4}{3} \pi \gamma (r^*)^3 \quad \text{from } \frac{d\Delta G}{dr} = 0$$

$$r^* = \frac{2\gamma V_m}{RT \ln S} \quad \text{from } \Delta G = \Delta G^*$$

$r < r^*$ nuclei form but redissolve (Gibbs-Thomson effect)
 $r > r^*$ nuclei form and grow

(The **critical-nucleus size** is in the range of tens to hundreds of atoms, 1-3 nm)

3.2. The Classical Nucleation Theory

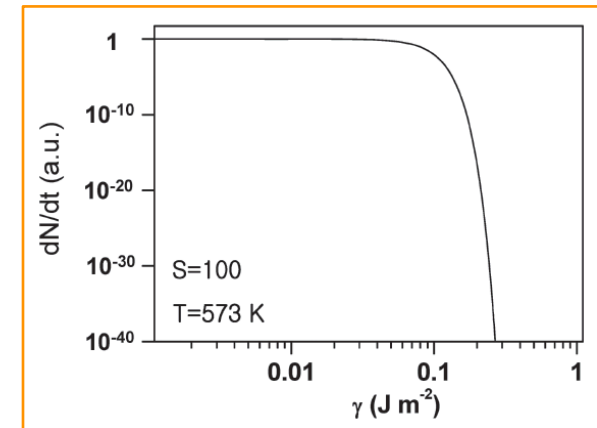
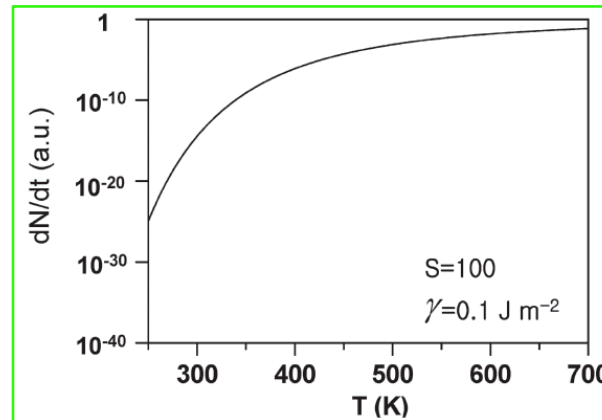
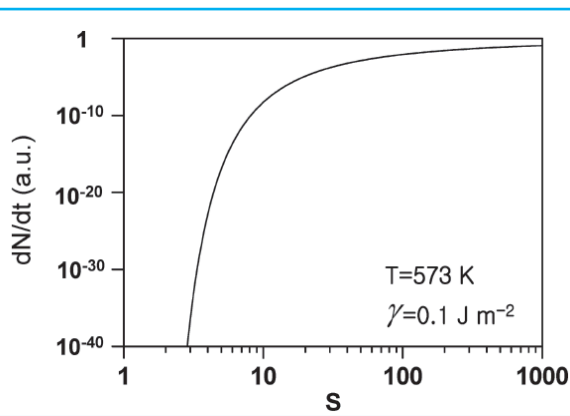
The **rate of nucleation of N particles** during time t can be described using an Arrhenius type equation:

$$\frac{dN}{dt} = A \exp \left[\frac{-\Delta G_N}{k_B T} \right]$$

$$= A \exp \left[-\frac{16 \pi \gamma^3 V_m^2}{3 k_B^3 T^3 N_A^2 (\ln S)^2} \right]$$

Experimentally controllable parameters influencing the nucleation rate:

1. saturation
2. temperature
3. surface free energy

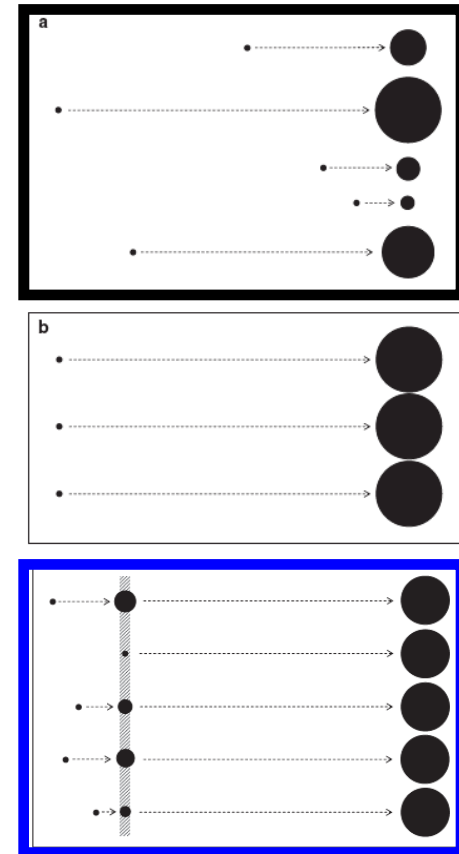


As the level of supersaturation is increased from $S = 2$ to 4, the nucleation rate is increased by $\approx 10^{70}$ times

3.2. The Classical Nucleation Theory

Size distribution is largely dependent on the time over which nuclei are formed:

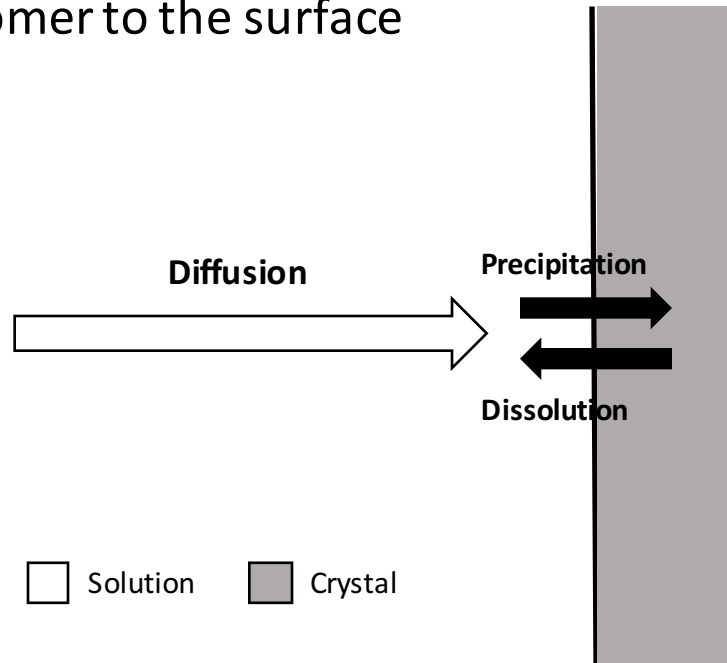
- A narrow time window for nucleation leads to **monodisperse nanocrystals** (assuming we are in a focusing regime)
- A wider time window for nucleation leads to **polydisperse nanocrystals**



ideal conditions

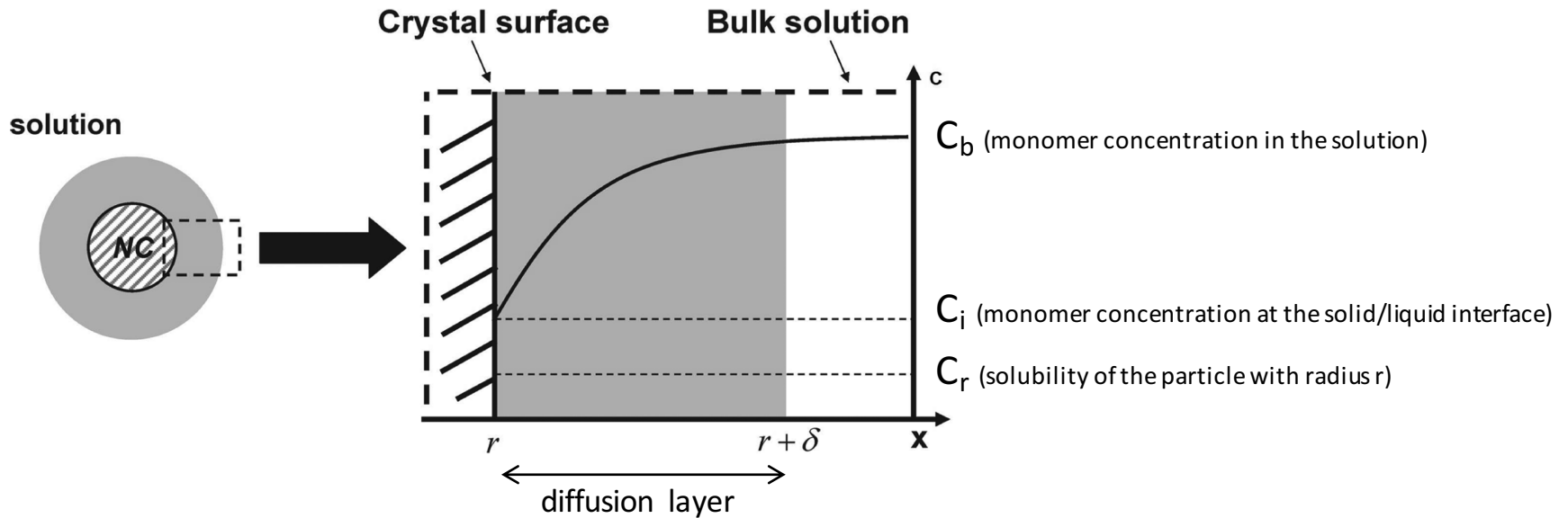
3.2. The Classical Nucleation Theory

1. Diffusion of monomer to the surface
2. Surface reaction



We can model the growth using the Fick's Law (ChE-204)

3.2. The Classical Nucleation Theory



ASSUMPTION: steady-state ($J = \text{const}$)

$$J = 4\pi x^2 D \frac{dC}{dx}$$

J is the total flux of monomers
 x is the radius of the spherical plane
 D is the diffusion coefficient
 C is the concentration at distance x

3.2. The Classical Nucleation Theory

By integrating $C(x)$ between r and $r + \delta$, we obtain:

$$J = \frac{4\pi D r (r + \delta)}{\delta} (C_b - C_i)$$

The consumption rate of monomers at the surface is:
(ChE-204, exercise 4.6)

$$J = 4\pi r^2 k_d (C_i - C_r)$$

K is the rate constant of a simple first order deposition reaction

We can write the growth rate as

$$\frac{dr}{dt} = \frac{J V_m}{4\pi r^2}$$

$$\frac{dV}{dt} = \frac{d}{dt} \left(\frac{4}{3} \pi r^3 \right) = \frac{4}{3} \pi \frac{d}{dt} (r^3) = \frac{4}{3} \pi (3r^2) \frac{dr}{dt} = 4\pi r^2 \frac{dr}{dt}$$

$$\frac{dV}{dt} = J V_m \quad V_m \text{ is molar volume}$$

3.2. The Classical Nucleation Theory

$$\frac{dr}{dt} = \frac{\frac{D}{r} \left(1 + \frac{r}{\delta}\right) V_m (c_b - c_r)}{1 + \frac{D}{k_d r \left(1 + \frac{r}{\delta}\right)}}$$

From Gibbs-Thompson equation:

$$c_r = c_\infty \exp\left(\frac{2\sigma V_m}{rRT}\right) \approx c_\infty \left(1 + \frac{2\sigma V_m}{rRT}\right)$$

$$c_b = c_\infty \exp\left(\frac{2\sigma V_m}{r^*RT}\right) \approx c_\infty \left(1 + \frac{2\sigma V_m}{r^*RT}\right)$$

c_∞ is the solubility of the bulk material
 σ is the interfacial energy
 V_m is the molar volume
 R is the universal gas constant

Since the diffusion layer δ is usually of the orders of microns, we can assume $r \ll \delta$ and derive:

$$\frac{dr}{dt} = \frac{2\sigma V_m^2 c_\infty}{RT(1/D + 1/k_d r)} \frac{(1/r^* - 1/r)}{r}$$

3.2. The Classical Nucleation Theory

Lifshitz-Slyozov-Wagner (LSW) Theory (1950)

If the growth is DIFFUSION-LIMITED, $D \ll K_D$

$$\frac{dr}{dt} = \frac{2\sigma D V_m^2 c_\infty}{RT} \frac{(r/r^* - 1)}{r^2} = K_D (r/r^* - 1)/r^2$$

ASSUMPTIONS:

- Spherical particles in a supersaturated solution
- Processes such as nucleation and aggregation that introduce new particles are negligible

3.2. The Classical Nucleation Theory

If the growth is DIFFUSION-LIMITED,

$$\frac{dr}{dt} = \frac{K_D}{r} \left(\frac{1}{r^*} - \frac{1}{r} \right)$$

size distribution

$$\frac{d(\Delta r)}{dt} = \frac{K_D \Delta r}{\bar{r}^2} \left(\frac{2}{\bar{r}} - \frac{1}{r^*} \right)$$

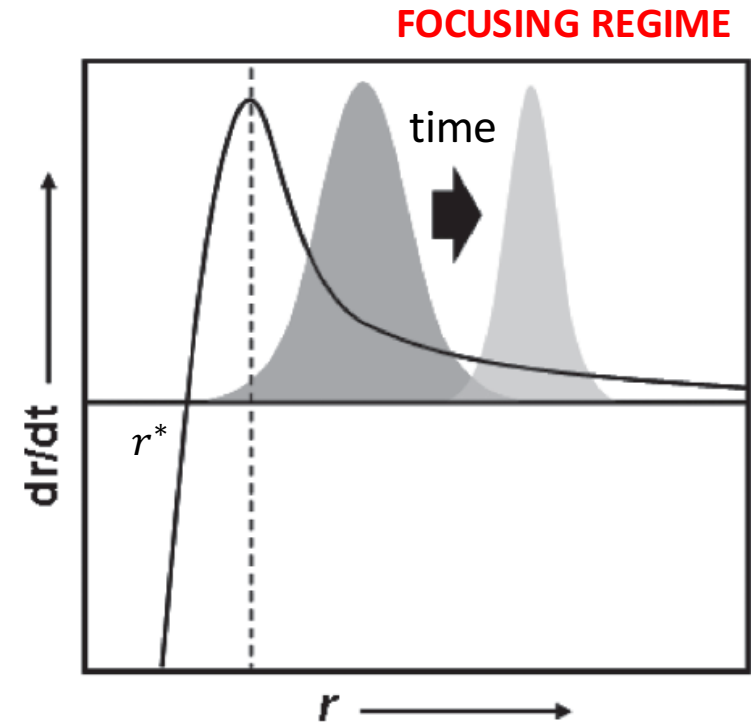
$$\frac{\bar{r}}{r^*} \geq 2 \quad \frac{d(\Delta r)}{dt} \leq 0$$

The size distribution will be self-sharpening over time

$$\frac{\bar{r}}{r^*} < 2 \quad \frac{d(\Delta r)}{dt} > 0$$

The size distribution will become broader over time

Uncommon because in the earlier growth stages S is high, thus r^* is small



3.2. The Classical Nucleation Theory

If the growth is REACTION-LIMITED, $D \gg K_D$

$$\frac{dr}{dt} = K_D \left(\frac{1}{r^*} - \frac{1}{r} \right) \longrightarrow \frac{d(\Delta r)}{dt} = \frac{K_D \Delta r}{\bar{r}^2}$$

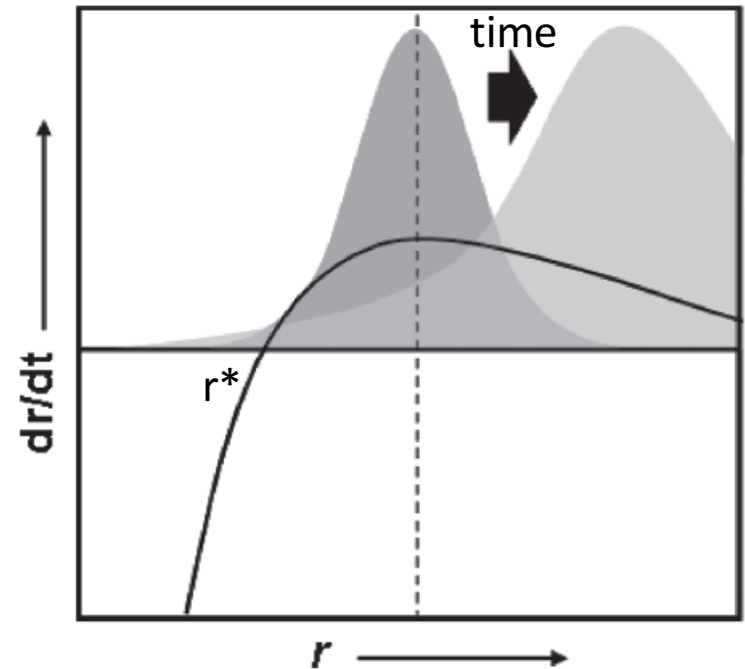
DEFOCUSING REGIME

$$r = r^* \quad \frac{dr}{dt} = 0$$

$$r < r^* \quad \frac{dr}{dt} < 0 \quad \text{The particle will dissolve}$$

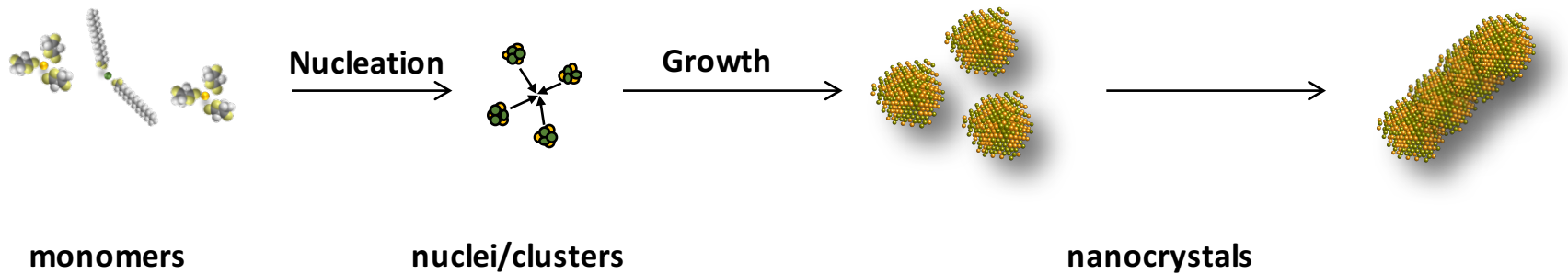
$$r > r^* \quad \frac{dr}{dt} > 0 \quad \text{The particle will grow}$$

$$\text{For any } \bar{r} \quad \frac{d(\Delta r)}{dt} > 0$$



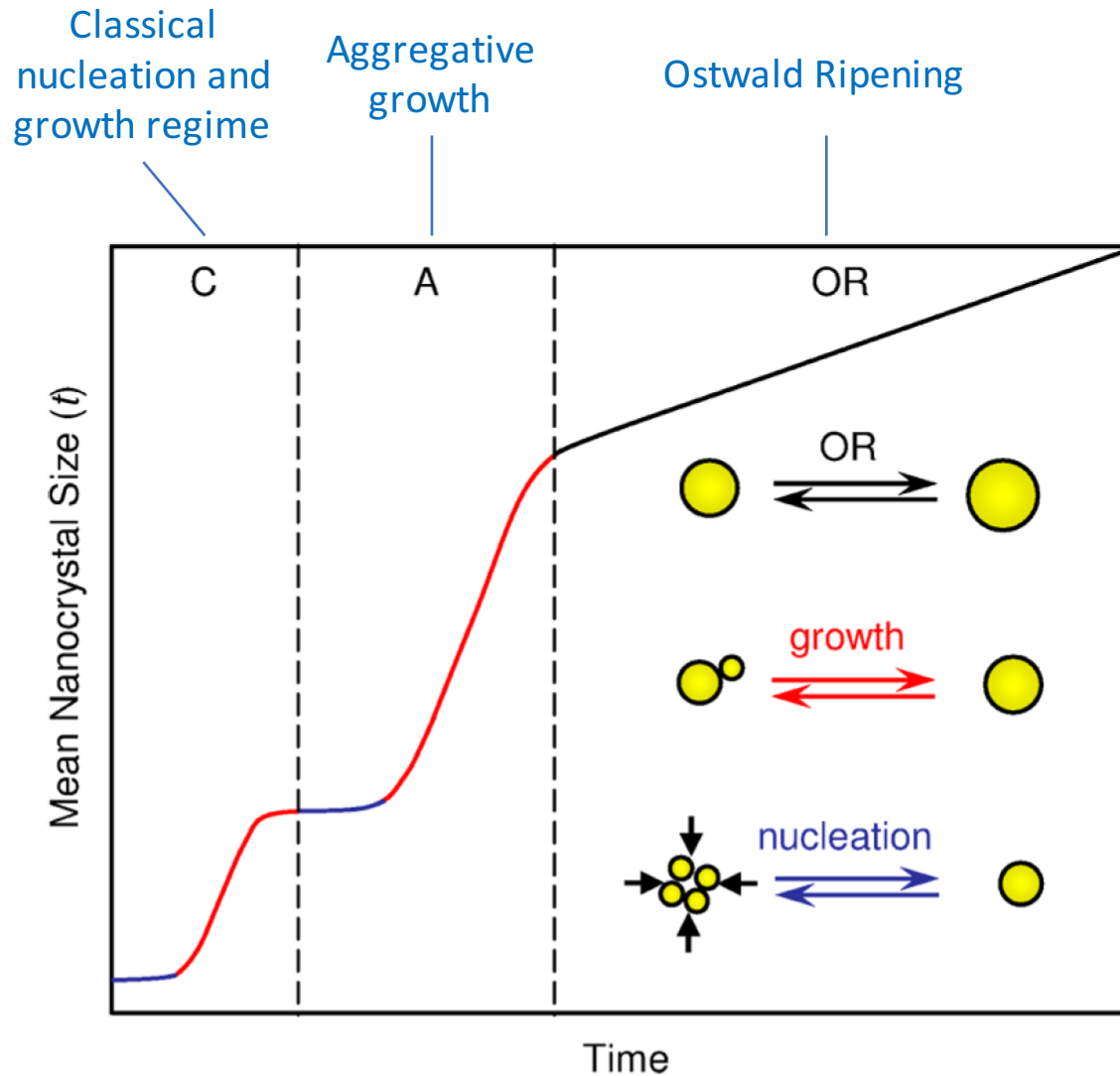
Bigger particles will grow faster than smaller particles (Ostwald Ripening)

3.3. The Non-Classical Nucleation Theory (or Aggregative Nanocrystal Growth)



The growth proceeds by coalescence of nuclei

3.3. The Non-Classical Nucleation Theory



3.3. The Non-Classical Nucleation Theory

DRIVING FORCES FOR COALESCENCE:

- Van der Waals forces
- Hydrophobic attractions
- Charge-charge interactions
- Dipolar interactions

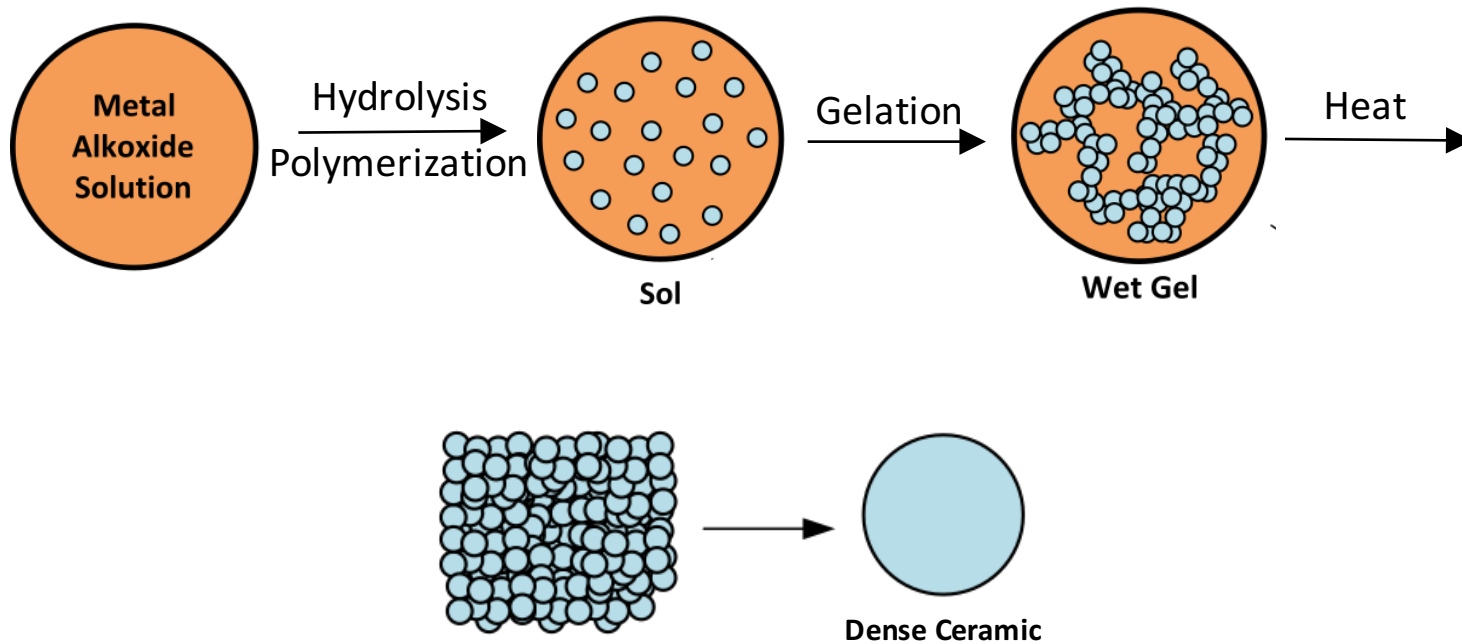
DRIVING FORCE FOR ALIGNMENT:

The thermodynamic driving force for the reduction of the defect-free energy becomes significant at the nanoscale, where it induces the rotational motion of the primary particles and the lattice reconstruction.

3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

3.4.1 Metal Oxides (MO)

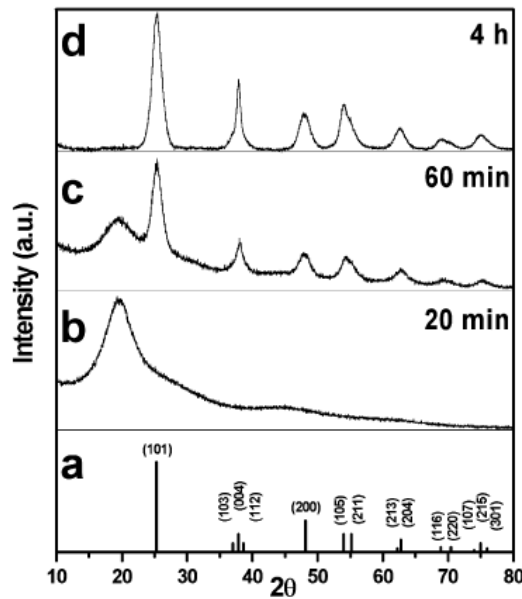
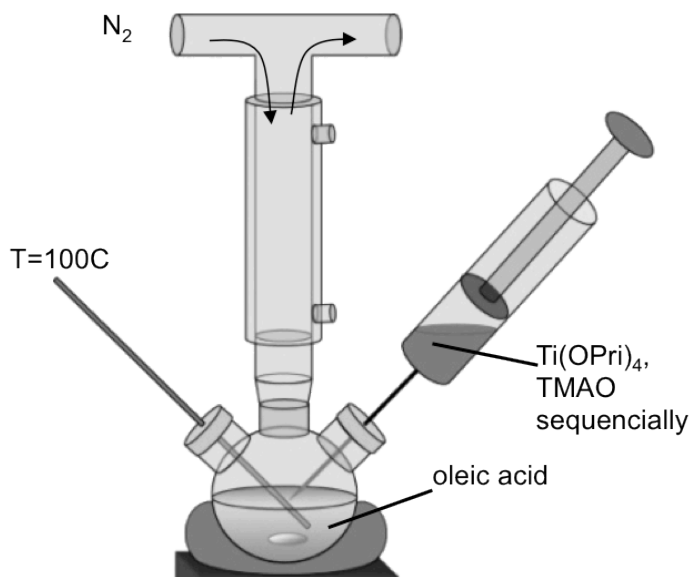
Sol-gel synthesis of MO thin films: Hydrolysis-Condensation Reaction



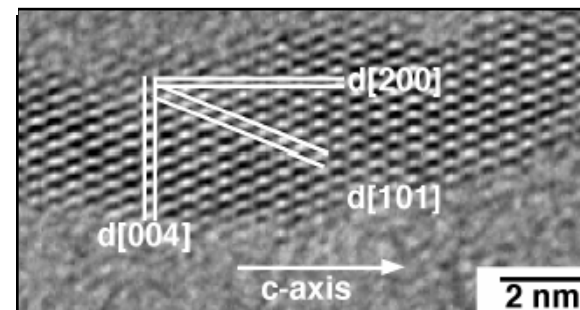
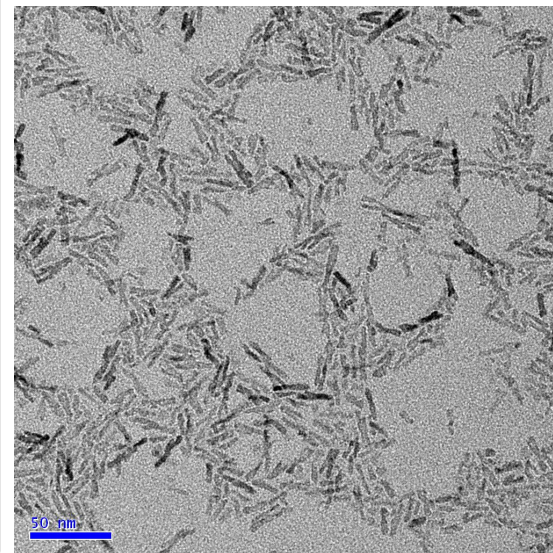
3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

3.4.1 Metal Oxides (MO)

Synthesis of anatase TiO₂ nanorods



To note the sharper (004) peak



REAGENTS

Titanium tetraisopropoxide: Ti precursor

Trimethylamino-*N*-oxide (TMAO: base to catalyze hydrolysis)

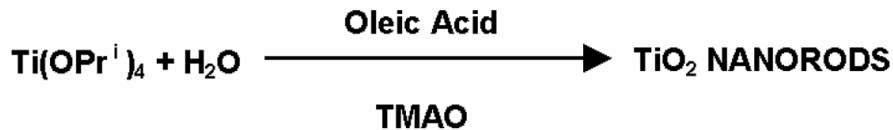
Oleic acid: ligand

Ethanol: non-solvent for clean-up

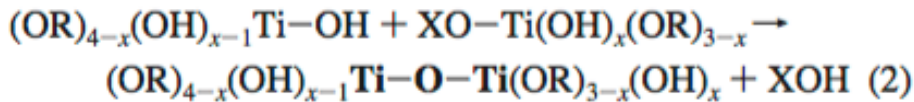
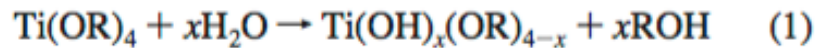
Hexane: solvent

3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

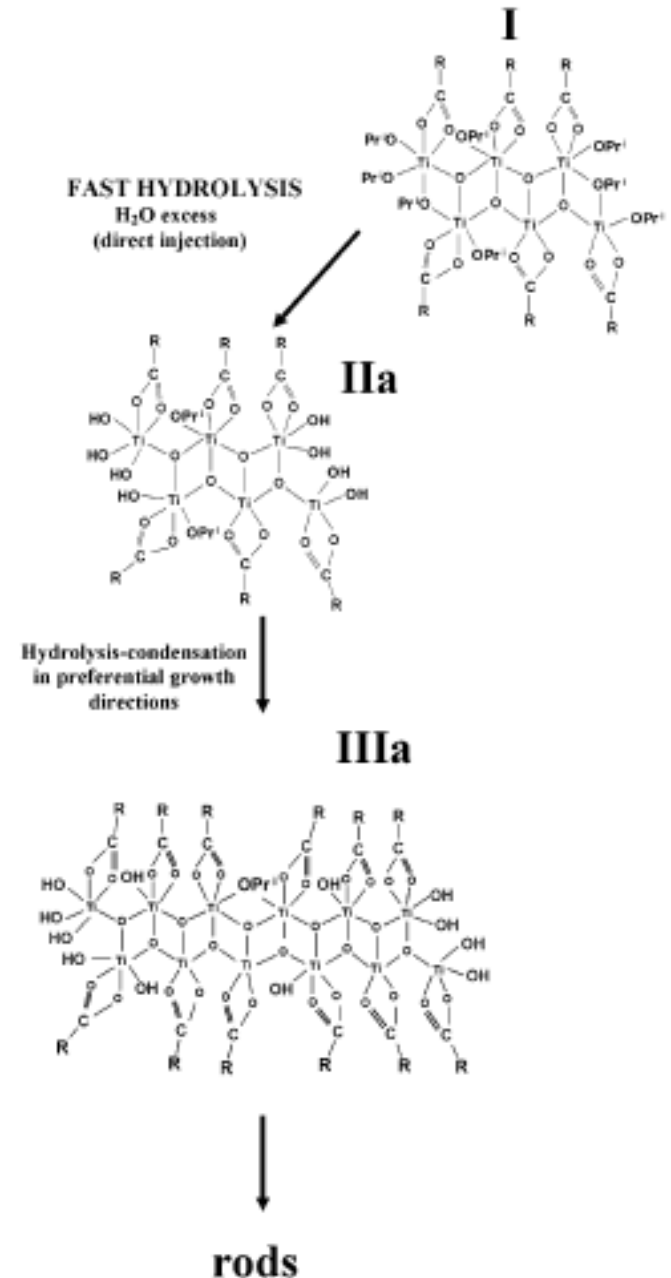
3.4.1 Metal Oxides (MO)



Hydrolysis/condensation with Oleic Acid as ligand



where R = -CH(CH₃)₂; X = H, R.



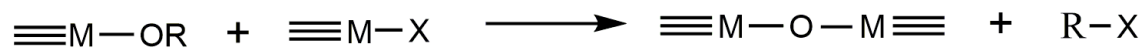
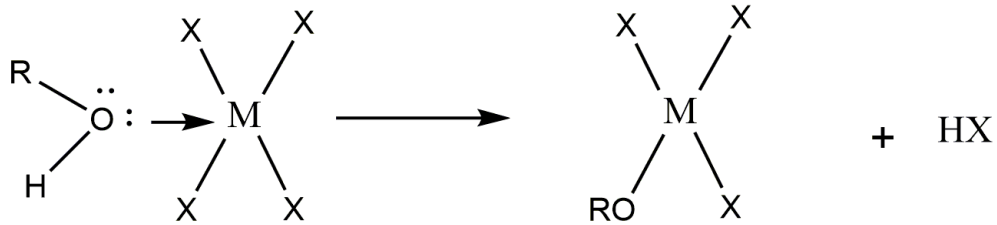
3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

3.4.1 Metal Oxides (MO)

Some typical reactions for the synthesis of metal oxide nanocrystals

➤ **Alcoholysis:**

- Metal halides and alcohols



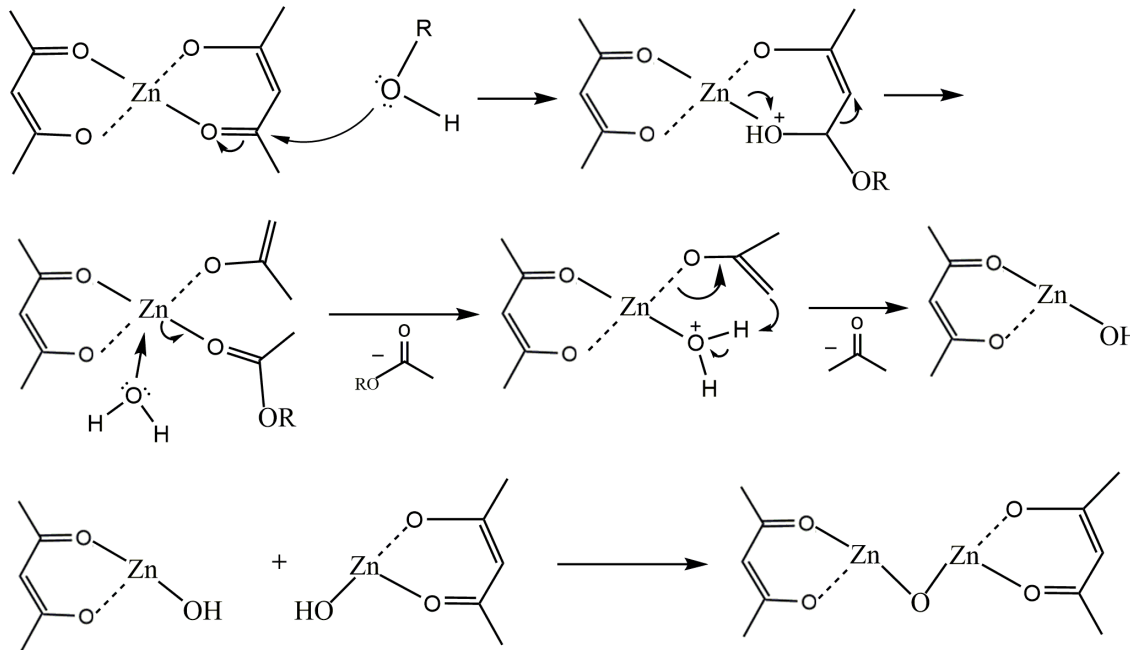
3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

3.4.1 Metal Oxides (MO)

Some typical reactions for the synthesis of metal oxide nanocrystals

➤ **Alcoholysis:**

- Metal acetylacetonates and alcohols



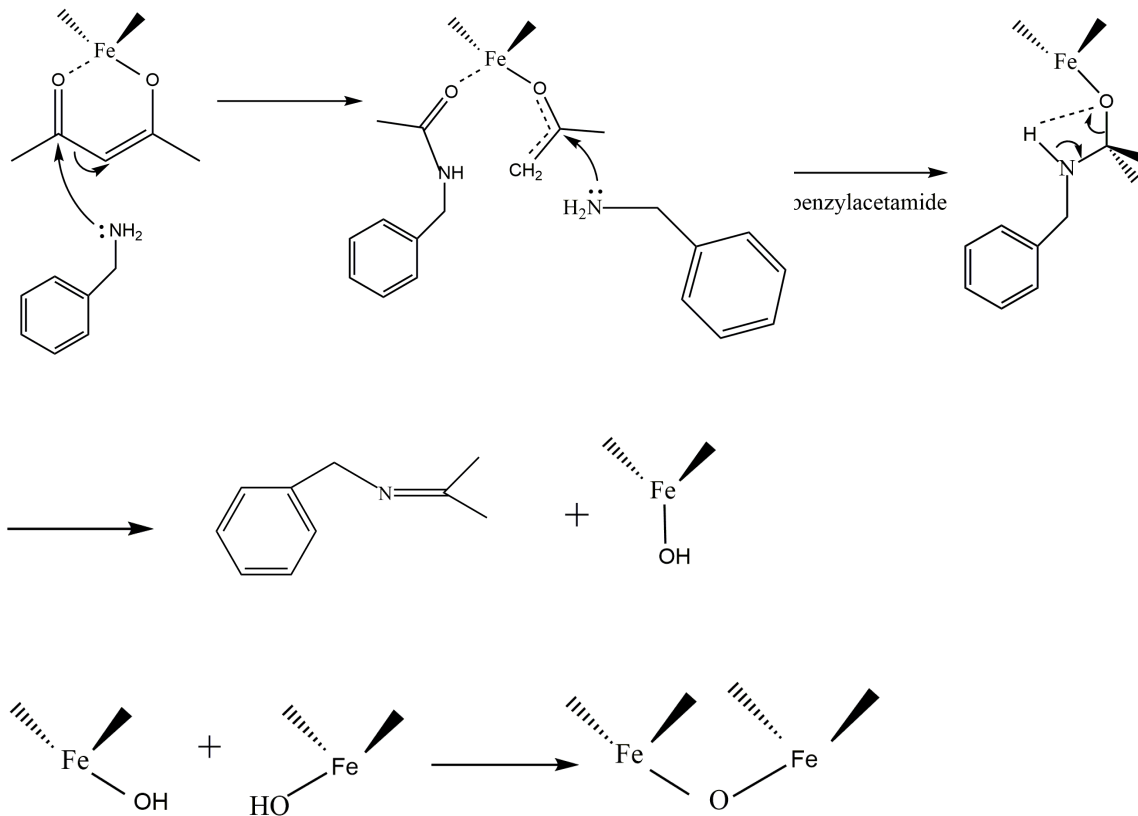
3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

3.4.1 Metal Oxides (MO)

Some typical reactions for the synthesis of metal oxide nanocrystals

➤ Aminolysis:

- Metal acetylacetonates and amines

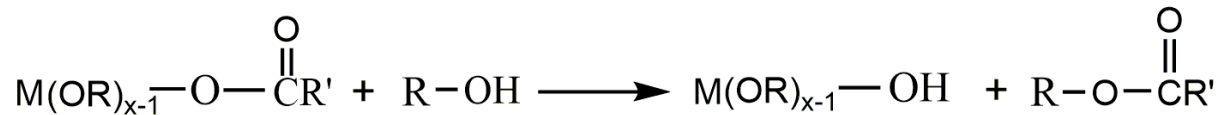
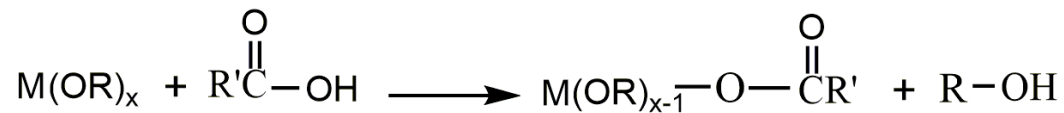
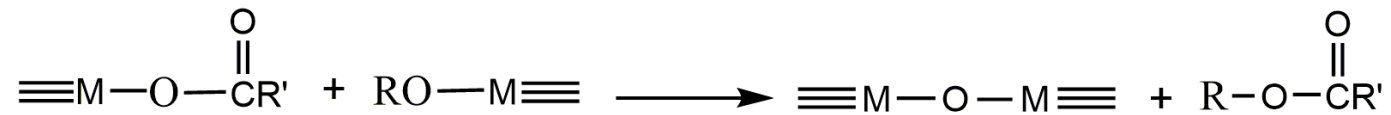


3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

3.4.1 Metal Oxides (MO)

Some typical reactions for the synthesis of metal oxide nanocrystals

➤ Ester Elimination:

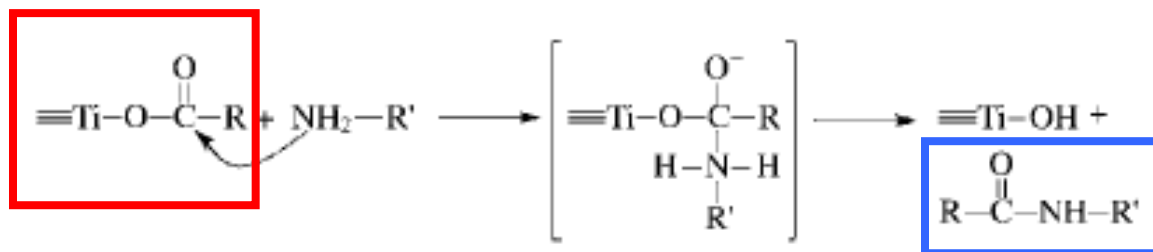
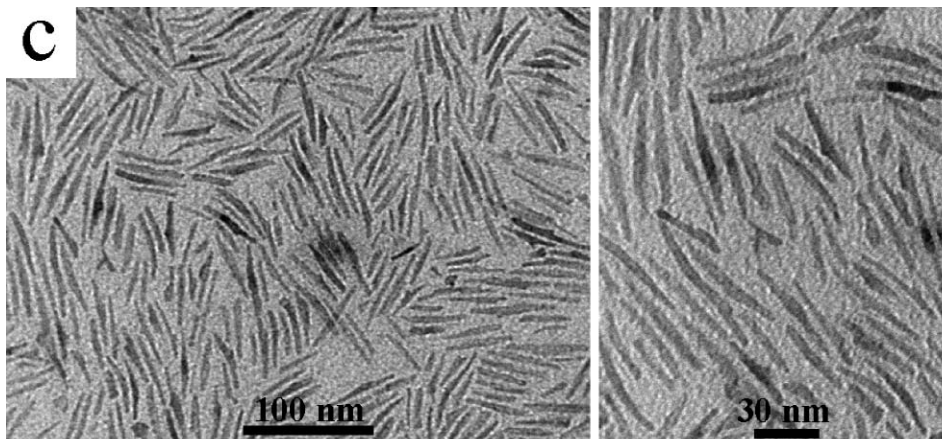
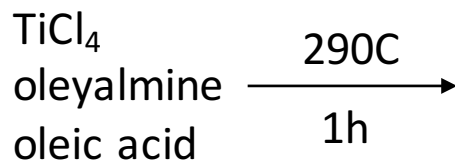


3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

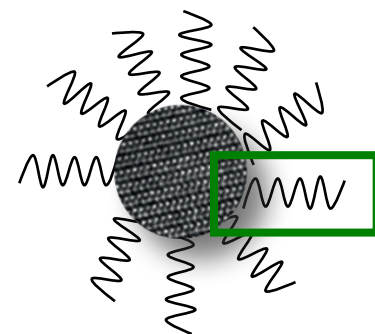
3.4.1 Metal Oxides (MO)

Synthesis of brookite TiO₂ nanorods

REAGENTS



aminolysis of Ti-oleate complex at 280C



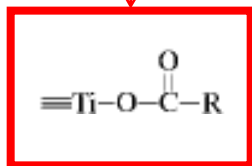
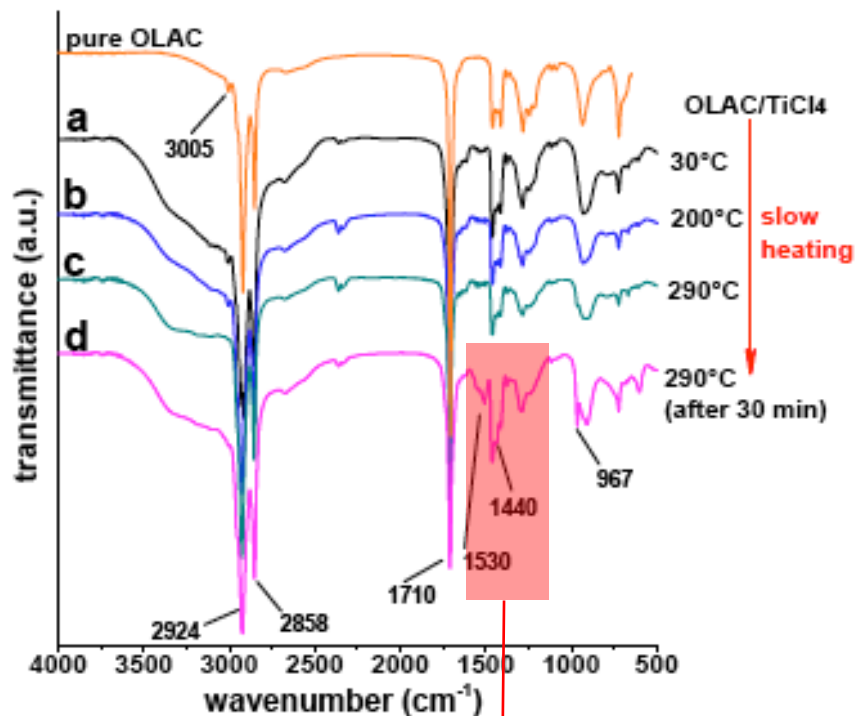
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3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

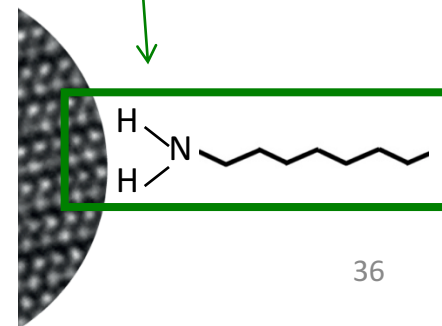
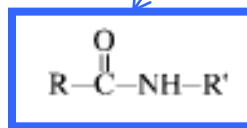
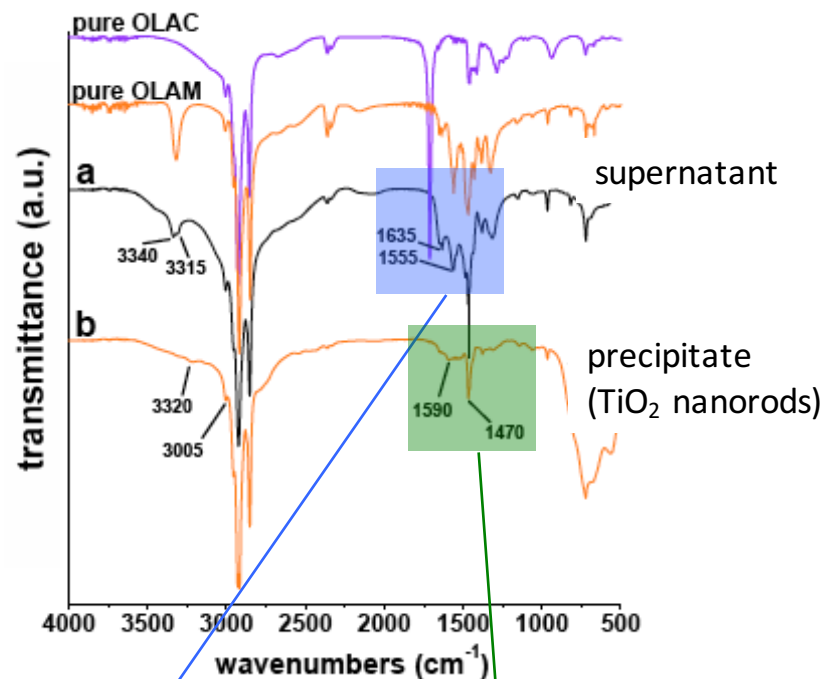
3.4.1 Metal Oxides (MO)

Synthesis of brookite TiO₂ nanorods

FTIR on RCOOH+TiCl₄ mixture



FTIR on RCOOH+RNH₂+TiCl₄ mixture



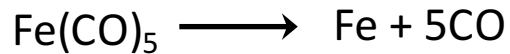
3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

3.4.1 Metal Oxides (MO)

Some typical reactions for the synthesis of metal oxide nanocrystals

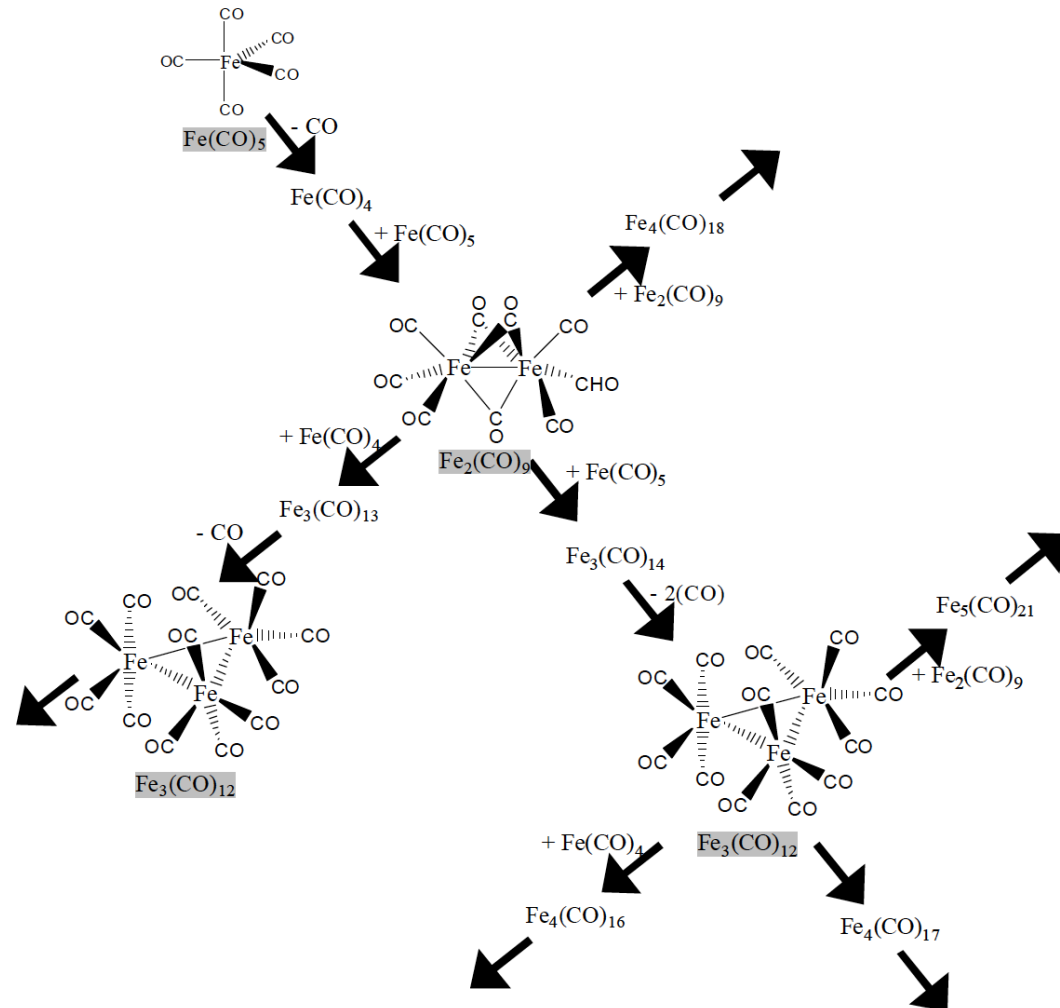
➤ Thermal Decomposition:

Organo-metallic precursor:



Typical solvent: octadecene

Typical ligand: oleic acid



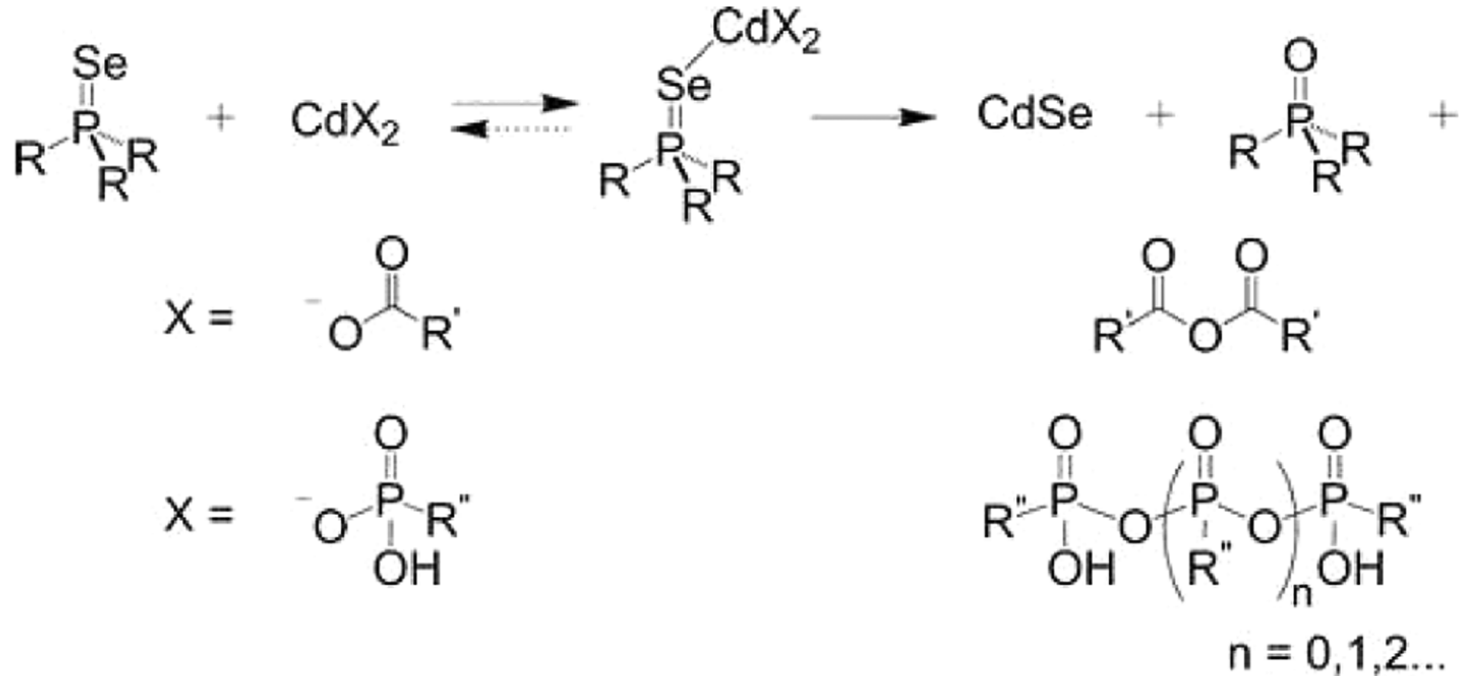
3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

3.4.2 Semiconductors (II-VI, III-V, IV-VI)

It usually occurs by thermal decomposition of highly reactive precursors

Typical [synthesis for CdSe quantum dots](#):

(i.e. TOP-Se)



3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

3.4.2 Semiconductors (II-VI, III-V, IV-VI)

Other examples of synthesis for CdSe QDs

Method 1: ^[23, 117] Dimethylcadmium^a (CdMe_2) and selenium powder were co-dissolved in a tri-alkyl phosphine solvent (-butyl or -octyl) in a glove box (stock solution: 20 g TBP or TOP, 0.197 g Se, 0.534 g CdMe_2). This solution (2 ml) was injected in one shot using a glass syringe into hot (340-360°C) TOPO (6 g) under Argon flow (previously evacuated for 1 hour at 100°C and few mbars). The temperature dropped to 270°C. Nucleation occurred rapidly followed by growth at 280-300°C. The reaction time depended on the size required and can vary from 1 second to several hours. At the end of the reaction, the solution was quickly cooled down by removing the heating mantle and blowing air on the flask, and the NCs were precipitated from solution by adding methanol, isolated by centrifugation and redispersed in toluene, chloroform or hexane.

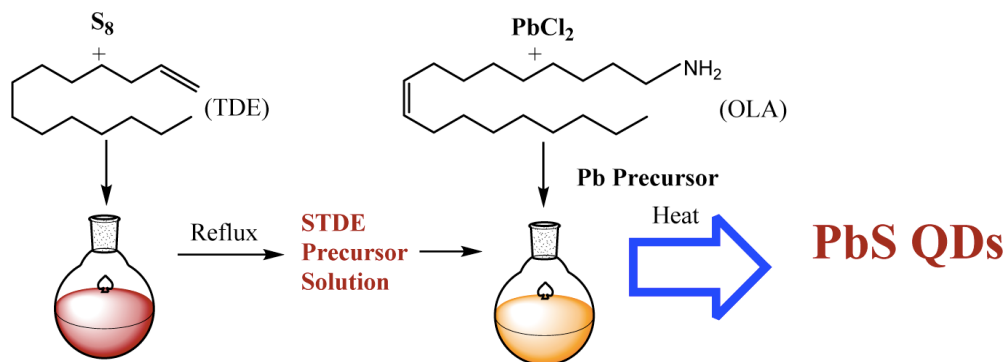
TBP = tributylphosphine

TOP = trioctylphosphine

TOPO = trioctylphosphine oxide

3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

3.4.2 Semiconductors (II-VI, III-V, IV-VI) Synthesis of PbS QDs



Noninjection Synthesis

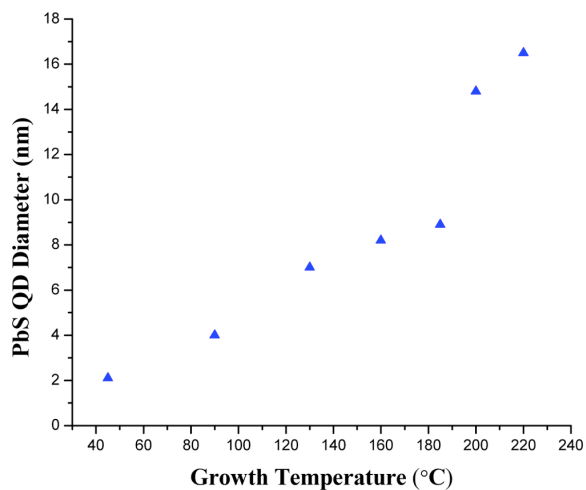


Table 1. Synthesis Conditions and Results of the Noninjection Syntheses of PbS QDs^a

Sample No.	Heating Rate (°C/min)	Growth Temperature (°C)	Sample Size (Diameter) (nm)	σ	Band Gap (eV)
QD-1	3.0	45	2.1	8.6%	1.83
QD-2	14.2	90	4.0	6.9%	1.06
QD-3	13.5	130	7.0	6.9%	0.72
QD-4	16.5	160	8.2	7.1%	0.66
QD-5	16.3	185	8.9	6.8%	0.63
QD-6	18.5	200	14.8	7.3%	0.51
QD-7	19.3	220	16.5	7.0%	0.50

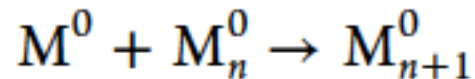
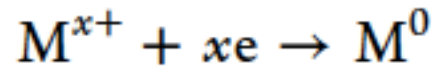
^aPb-to-S feed mole ratio is 1:2, and OLA-to-Pb mole ratio is 26:1.

3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

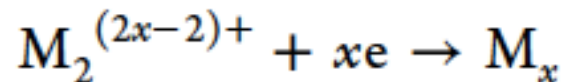
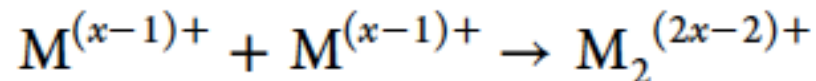
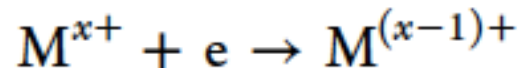
3.4.3 Metals

Representative chemical reduction schematics for metallic nanoparticles

Pathway 1: reduction followed by bonding of atoms



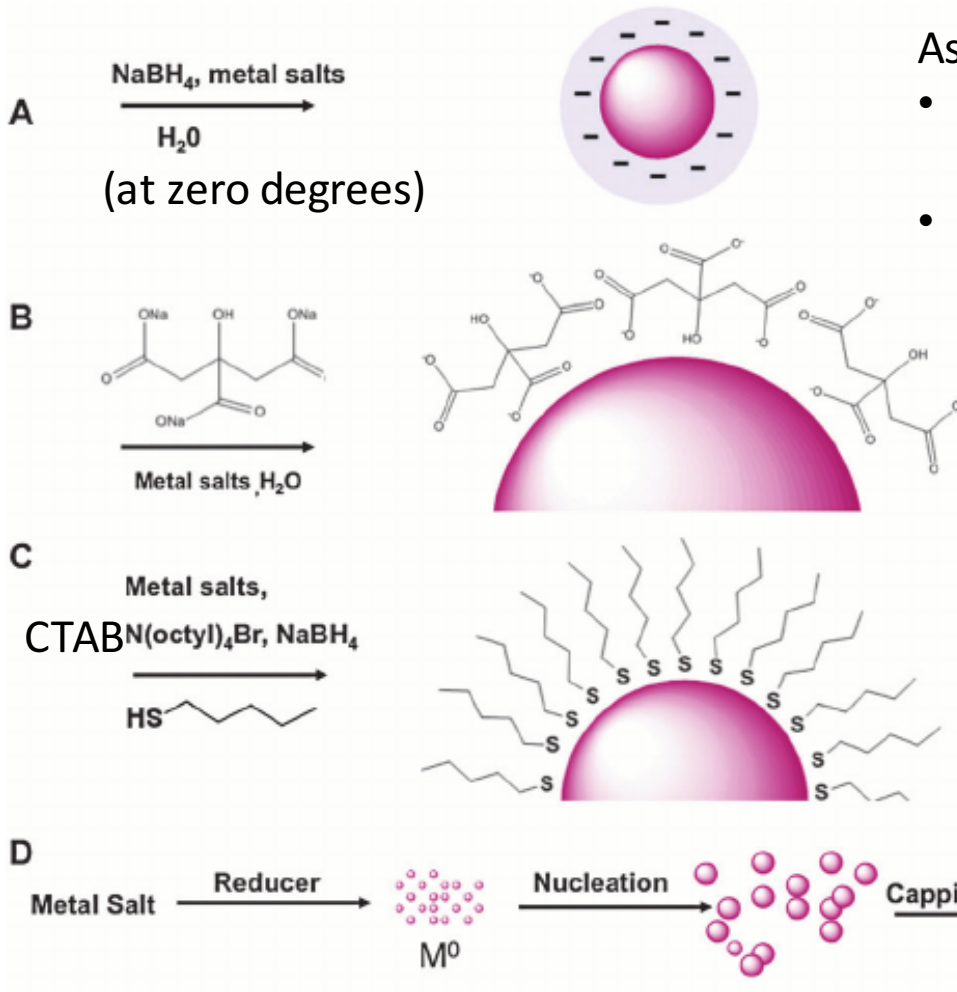
Pathway 2: bonding of atoms as ions followed by reduction



3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

3.4.3 Metals

Representative chemical reduction schematics for metallic nanoparticles



As general rules:

- the stronger the reducing agent is, the smaller the particles are
- the stronger the reducing agent is, the lower the temperature for nucleation is

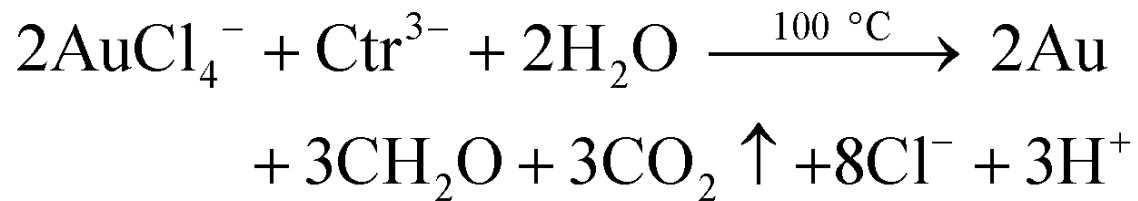
For Au: The Turkevich Method

For Au: The Brust Method

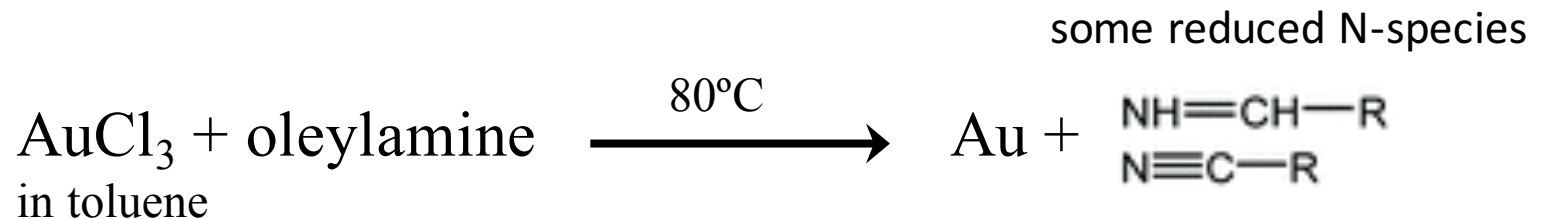
3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

3.4.3 Metals Synthesis of gold nanoparticles

- **the Turkevich Method** (1951, reduction of tetrachloroaurate by trisodium citrate)



- **Reduction of gold chloride by oleylamine**

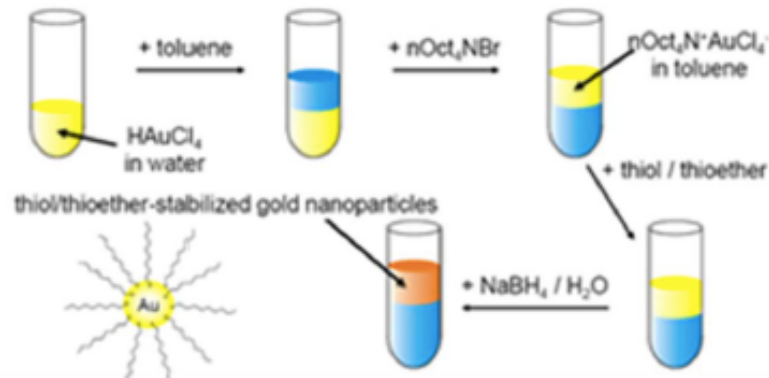


3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

3.4.3 Metals Synthesis of gold nanoparticles

Brust method

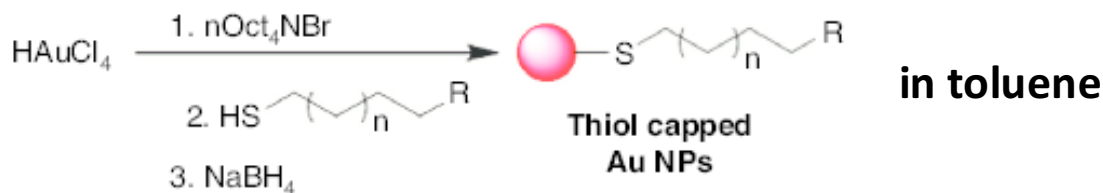
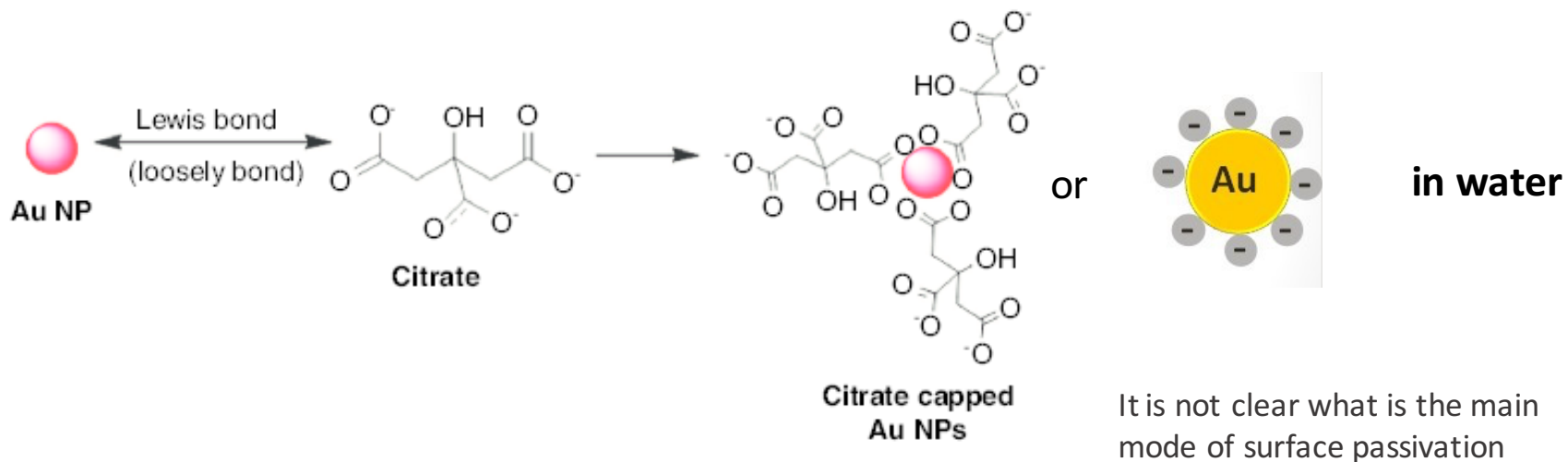
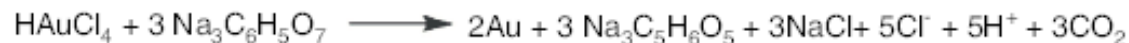
- This method was discovered by Brust and Schiffrin in early 1990s, and can be used to produce gold nanoparticles in organic liquids that are normally not miscible with water (like toluene). It involves the reaction of a chlorauric acid solution with tetraoctylammonium bromide (TOAB) solution in toluene and sodium borohydride as an anti-coagulant and a reducing agent, respectively.
- Here, the gold nanoparticles will be 2 to 6 nm in diameter. NaBH_4 is the reducing agent, and TOAB is both the phase transfer catalyst and the stabilizing agent.



3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

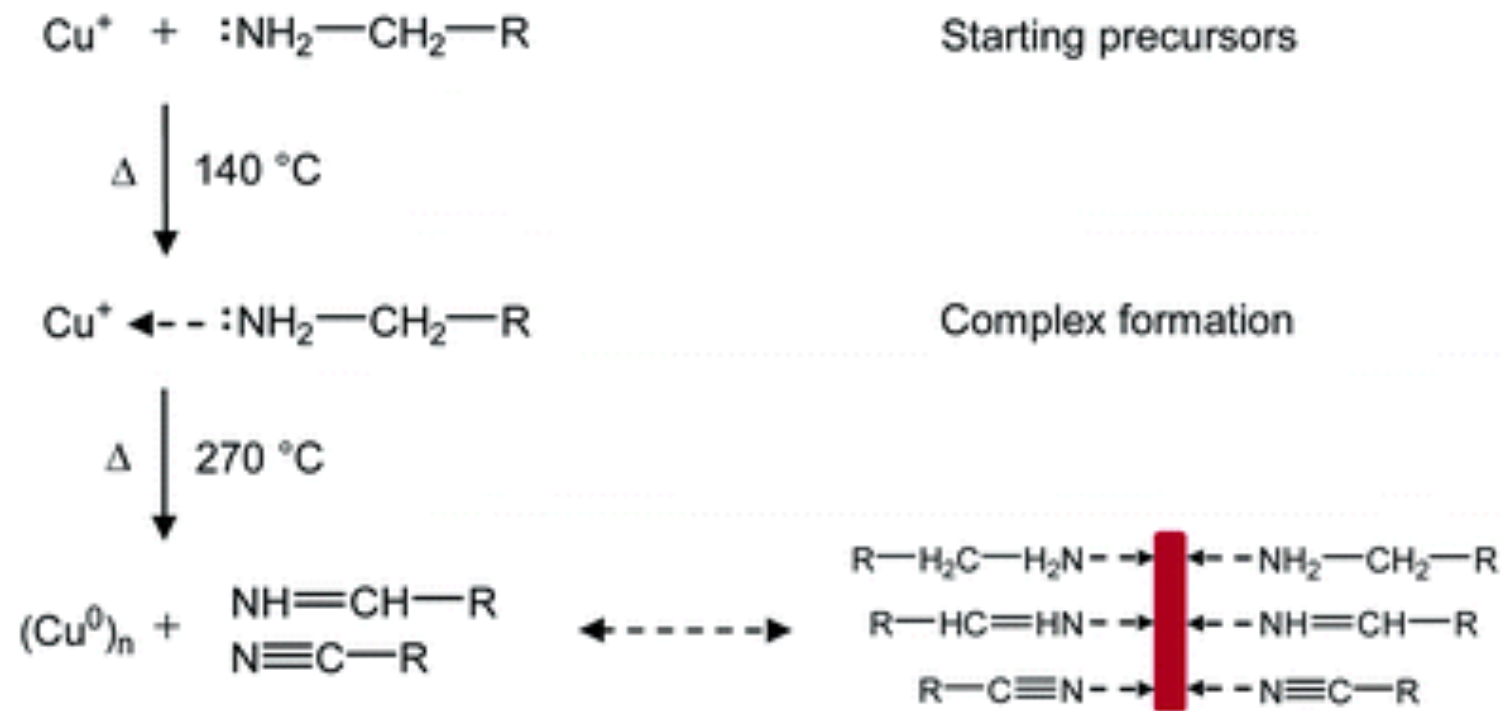
3.4.3 Metals Synthesis of gold nanoparticles

Thiols have a stronger interaction with the surface of gold, so the colloidal stability is better



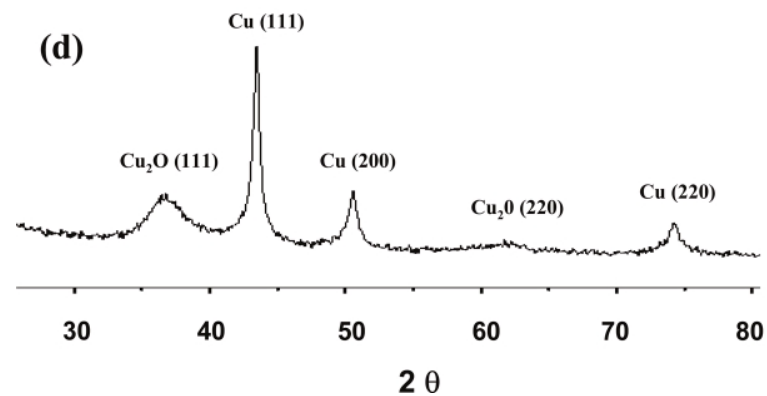
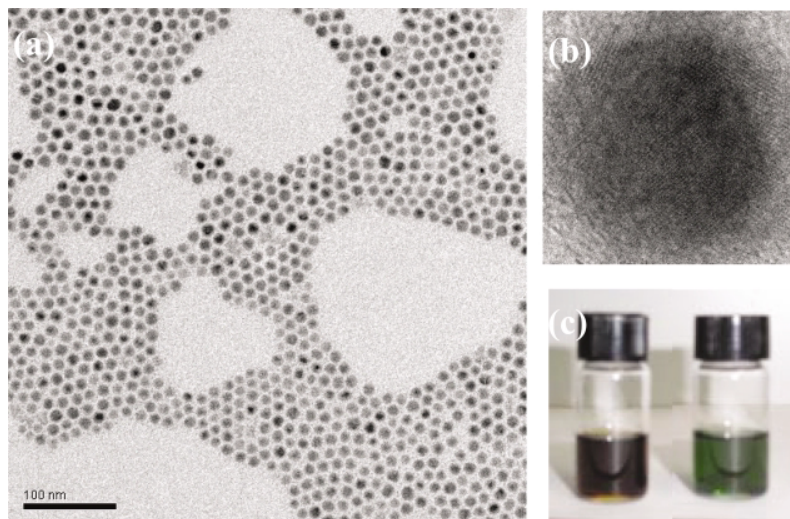
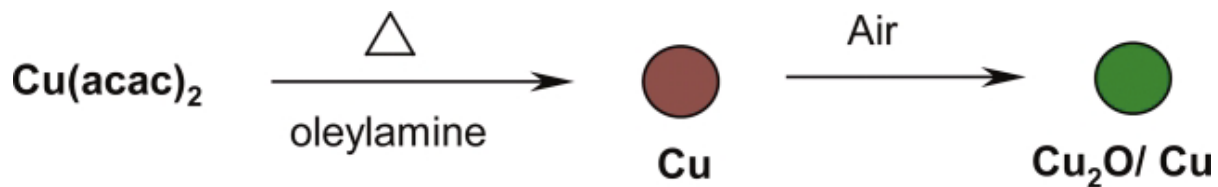
3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

3.4.3 Metals Synthesis of copper nanoparticles



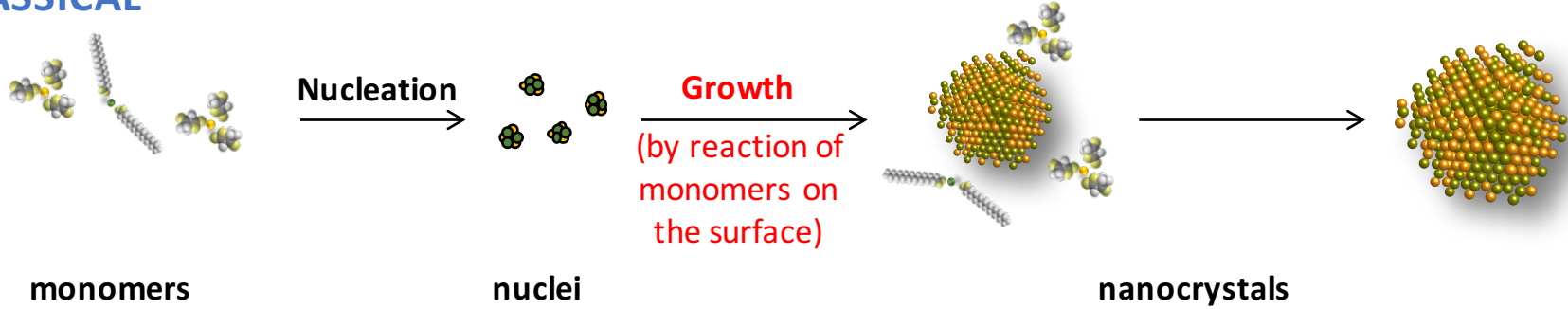
3.4. Chemical reaction mechanisms

3.4.3 Metals Synthesis of copper nanoparticles

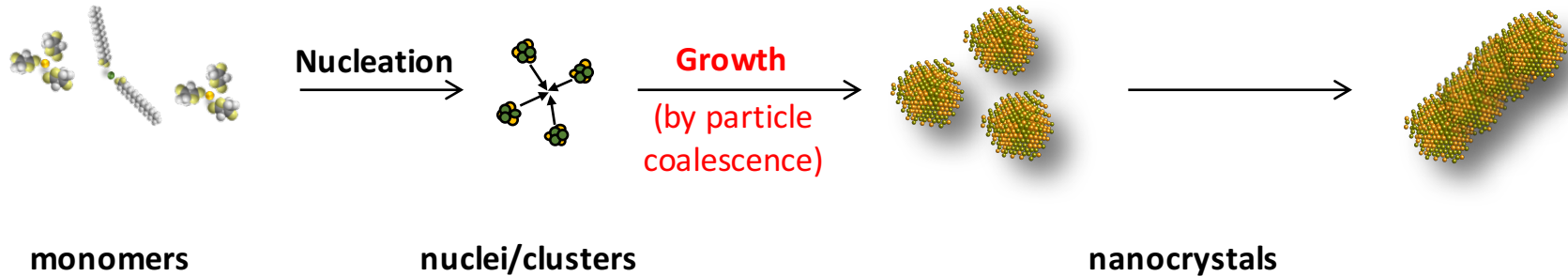


3.5. In-situ studies

CLASSICAL



NON-CLASSICAL



Chemical reactions

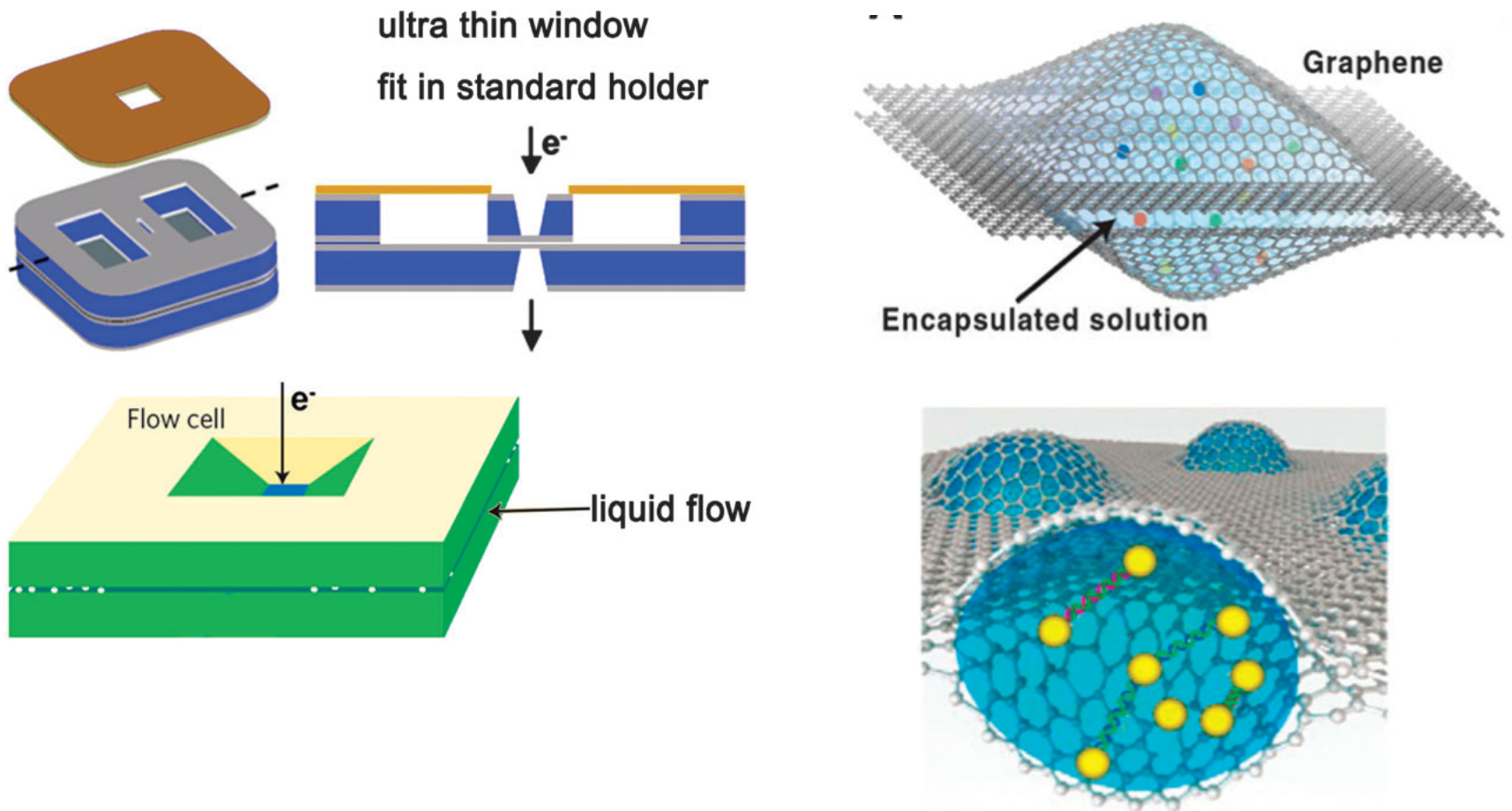
- ✓ FT-IR
- ✓ NMR
- ✓ X-Ray Absorption

Nucleation and growth

- ✓ UV-Vis
- ✓ **TEM**
- ✓ XRD
- ✓ X-Ray Absorption

3.5. In-situ studies

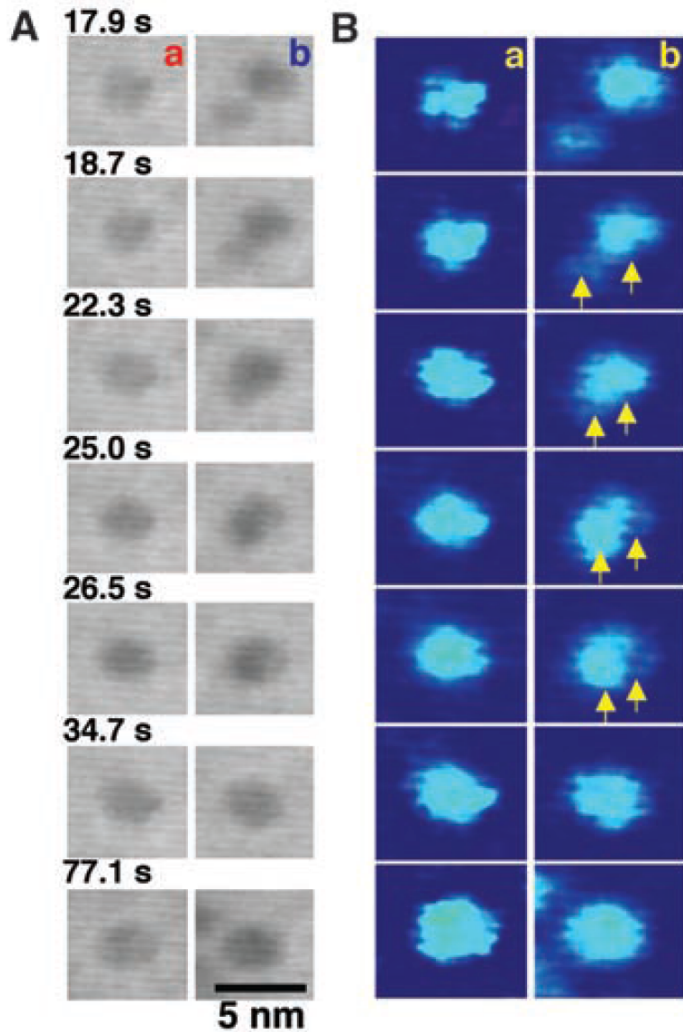
3.5.1. In-situ transmission electron microscopy



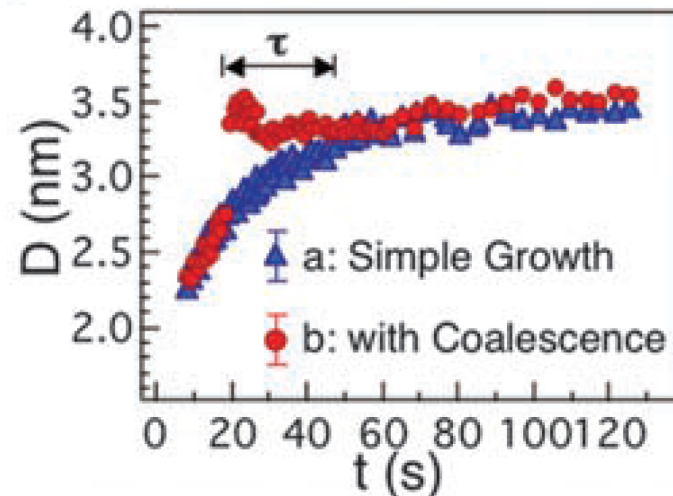
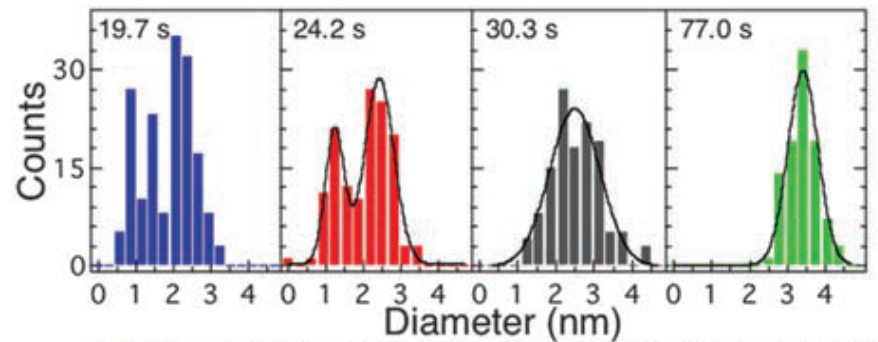
3.5. In-situ studies

3.5.1. In-situ transmission electron microscopy

CORROBORATING THE NON-CLASSICAL GROWTH



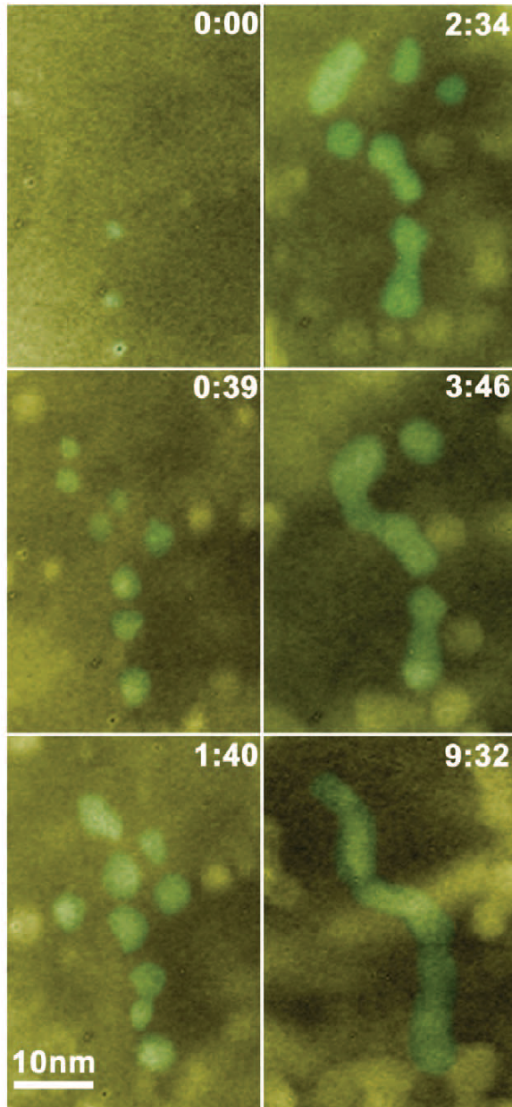
A. Growth of Pt nanoparticles by monomer addition
B. Growth of Pt nanoparticles by coalescence



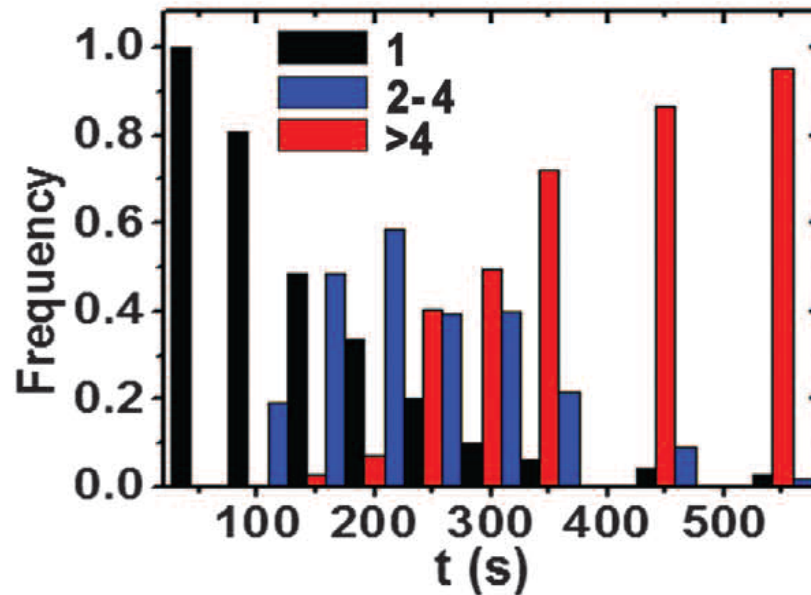
3.5. In-situ studies

3.5.1. In-situ transmission electron microscopy

CORROBORATING THE NON-CLASSICAL GROWTH



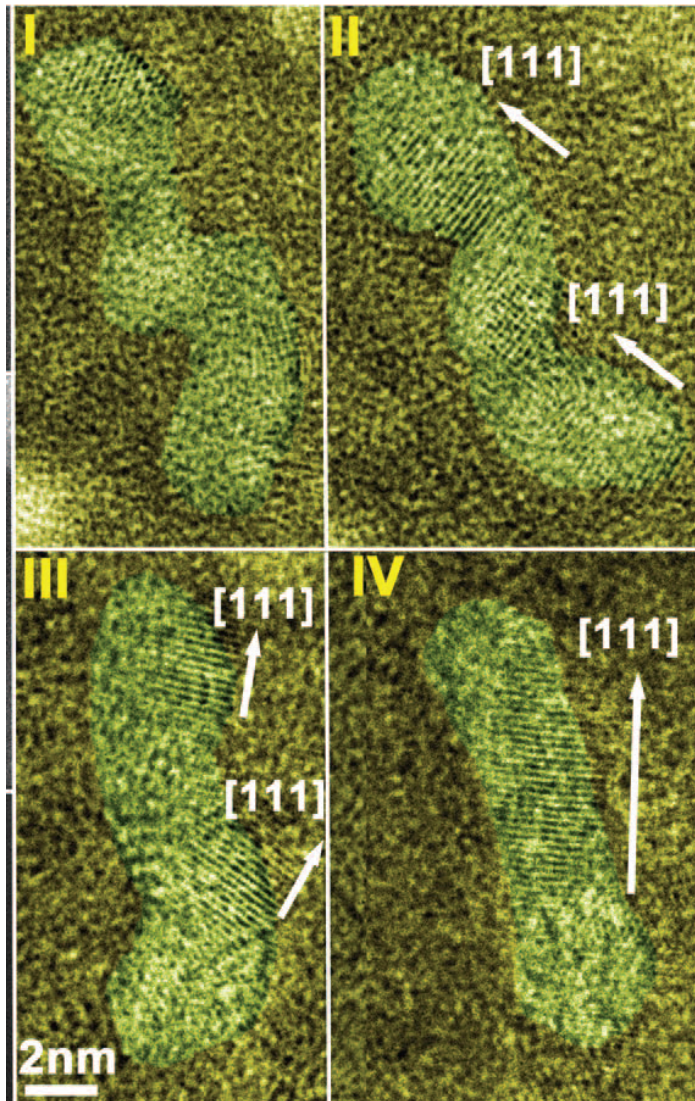
Pt₃Fe nanorods grow by coalescence of primary nanoparticles



3.5. In-situ studies

3.5.1. In-situ transmission electron microscopy

CORROBORATING THE NON-CLASSICAL GROWTH



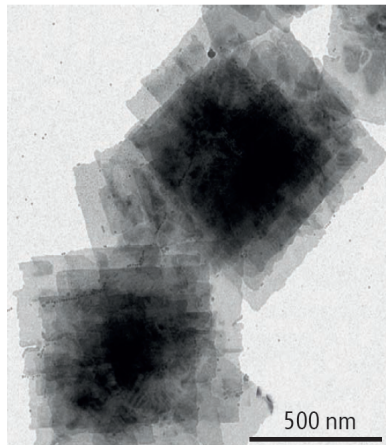
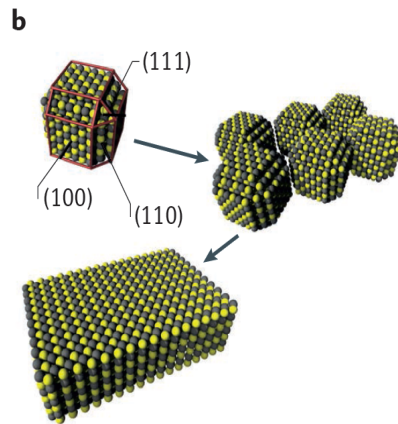
Pt₃Fe nanorods turn into single crystals and orient along the [111] direction upon crystal orientation (ORIENTED ATTACHMENT)

3.5. In-situ studies

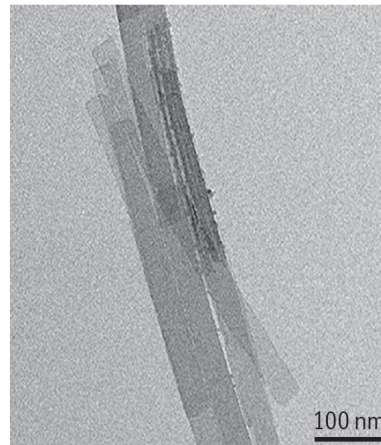
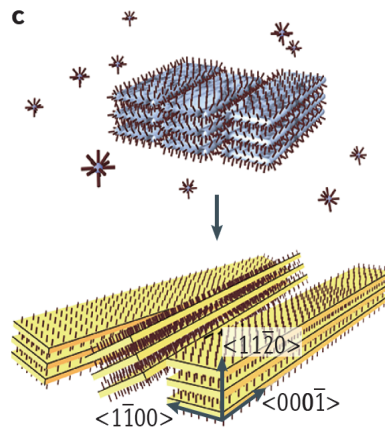
3.5.1. In-situ transmission electron microscopy

CORROBORATING THE NON-CLASSICAL GROWTH

PbS nanosheets formed
by (110) attachment of
PbS nanoparticles



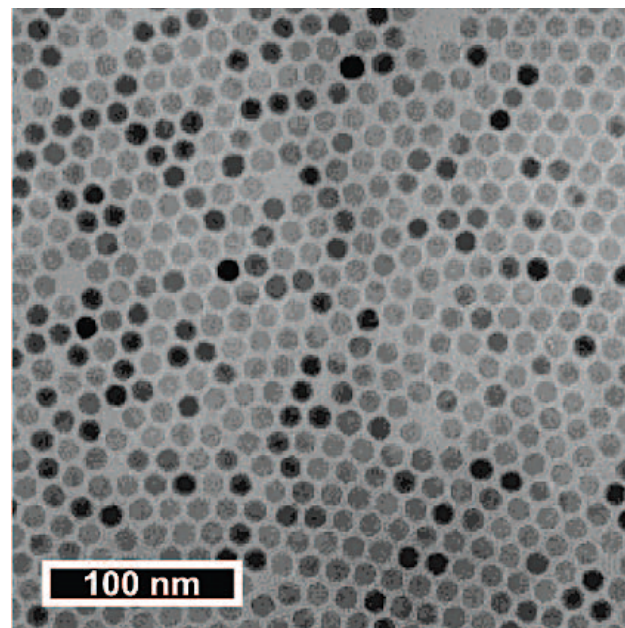
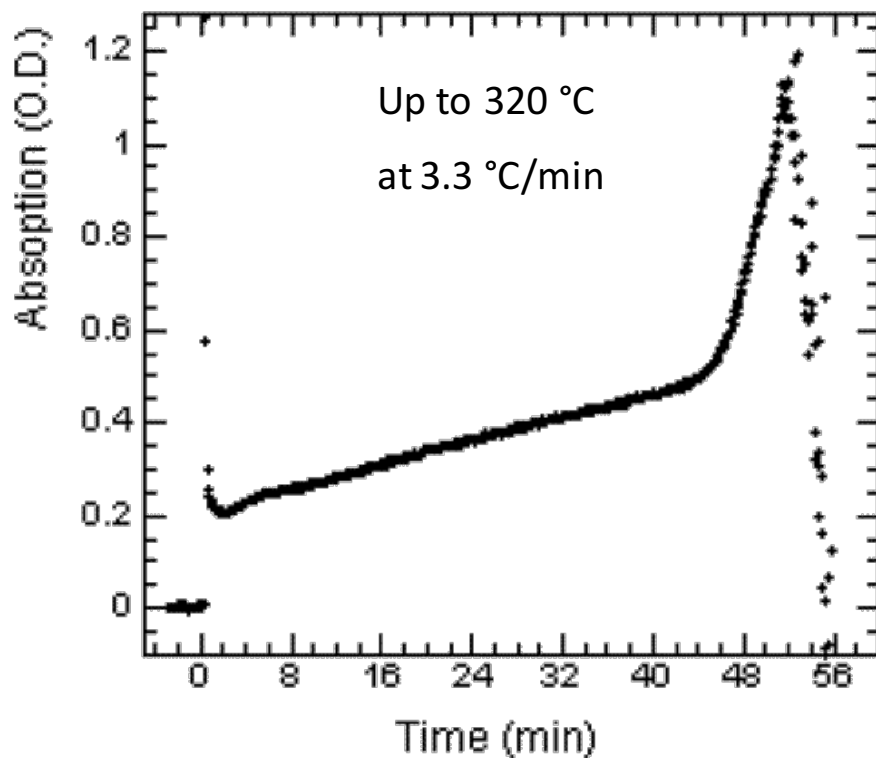
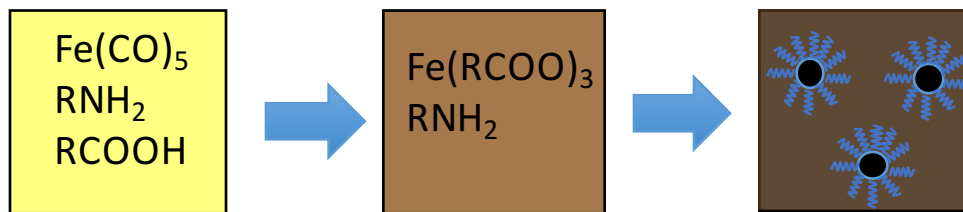
CdSe nanoribbons
formed from $(\text{CdSe})_{13}$
clusters



3.5. In-situ studies

3.5.2. In-situ infrared spectroscopy

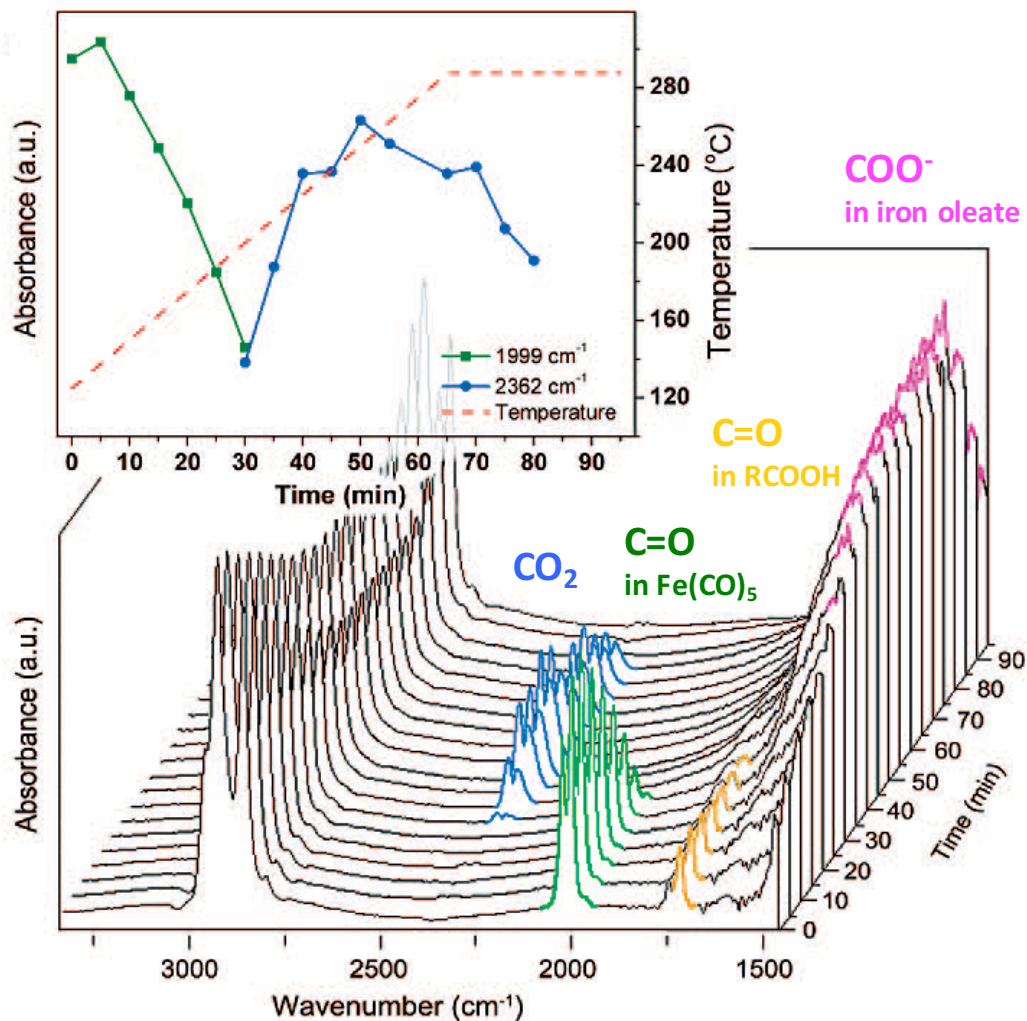
Formation and decomposition of iron oleate



3.5. In-situ studies

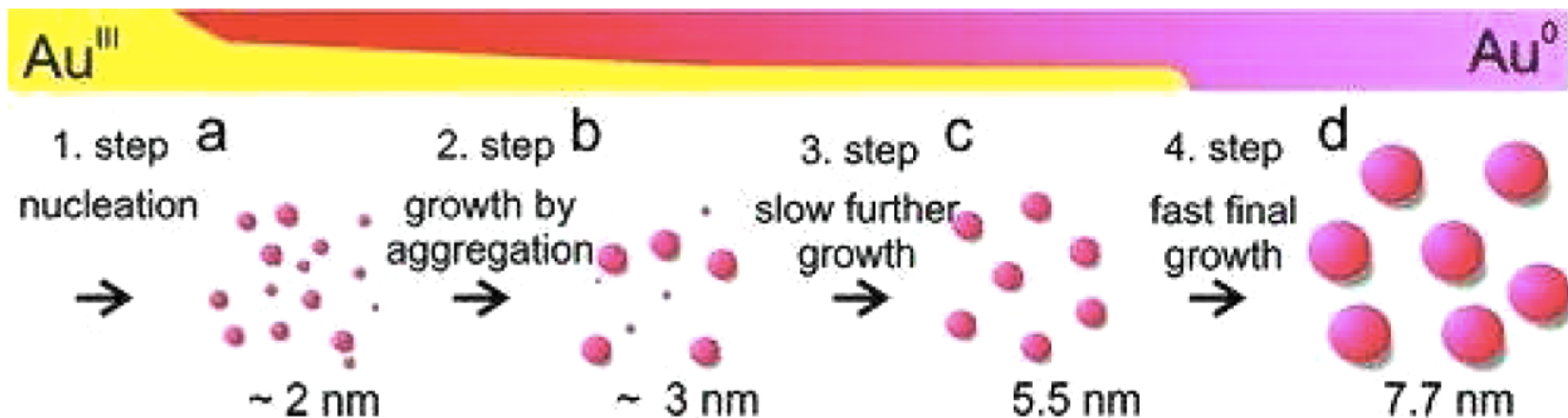
3.5.2. In-situ infrared spectroscopy

Formation and decomposition of iron oleate



3.5. In-situ studies

3.5.3. In-situ X-Ray Absorption Studies



Teacher: Dr. Michal Strach this afternoon ☺

Sorry, not for this course ;)

Main references for this module:

Buhro et al. *Chem. Mater.* **2014**, 26, 5

Hyeon et al. *Nature Review* **2016**, 1, 1

Niederberger et al. *Chem. Eur. J.* **2017**, 23, 8542

Mahiddine et al. *Chem Rev.* **2014**, 114, 7610