

Alkane Oxidation Catalysis by Homogeneous and Heterogeneous Catalysts

A thesis presented to
The University of Sydney
in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

By
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August 2005

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor Associate Professor James K. Beattie and co-supervisor Associate Professor Anthony F. Masters for their tireless enthusiasm, dedication, patience, guidance, strong support and friendship during the course of this work, and for their excellence choice of this research project.

I would like also to thank Professor Wim Buijs from DSM Research, The Netherlands, for his kindness, friendship, guidance, great organisation and support for the catalysis testing. Thanks also to Professor Thomas Maschmeyer from Delft ChemTech, Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands (now at the School of Chemistry, University of Sydney), for his support of this project and the catalytic testing.

Thanks to Dr Paul Humphrey, for his pre-reading and cooperation in the testing of the oxidation of toluene. Thanks also to Dr Ruby F. M. J. Parton and Mr. Harry Wolters from DSM Research, The Netherlands, and Dr Peter Waller from Delft ChemTech, Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands, for their help and friendship during the course of the catalysis testing. Thanks to Associate Professor Brendan J. Kennedy and his group for their kindness and help.

I would also to thank all members in Professor Beattie's and Master's group, especially, Dr Alexander Djerdjev, Dr John Klepetko and Dr Ahmed Amin Dezaye (now Assistant Professor in The University of Salahaddin, Iraqi Kurdistan) for their kind help and sharing chemicals and equipment. Thanks to all staff and members of the School of Chemistry, University of Sydney, for providing the nice and safe environment and also for their support.

I am also grateful to DSM Research B.V., The Netherlands, Faculty of Applied Sciences of The Technische Universiteit Delft, The Netherlands, and School of Chemistry, The University of Sydney to provision of the "DSM-TU Delft research scholarship in oxidation catalysts" and the financial support.

Without the help from the following people, it would have been impossible to complete this work:

Dr Elizabeth Carter (for the excellent Raman spectra)

Dr Jeffrey Shi from School of Chemical Engineering (for ICP)

Dr Tom Savage from School of Geosciences (for ICP)

Associate Professor Peter Turner (for crystal structures)

Dr Ian Kaplin, and Mr. Tony Romeo from Electron Microscopy Unit (for SEM)

Mr Fernando Barasoain from fourth floor service room (for the ordering)

Finally, I would like to thank my wife Rosa Dai and my lovely daughter Penny Guo, for all their love and support. In memory of my father.

Chris D. Y. Guo

August 2005

Abstract

Cobalt-based complexes are widely used in industry and organic synthesis as catalysts for the oxidation of hydrocarbons. The Co/Mn/Br (known as “CAB system”) catalyst system is effective for the oxidation of toluene. The Co/Mn/Br/Zr catalyst system is powerful for the oxidation of *p*-xylene, but not for the oxidation of toluene. $[\text{Co}_3\text{O}(\text{OAc})_5(\text{OH})(\text{py})_3][\text{PF}_6]$ (Co³⁺ trimer 5) is more effective than $[\text{Co}_3\text{O}(\text{OAc})_6(\text{py})_3][\text{PF}_6]$ (Co³⁺ trimer 6) as a catalyst in the CAB catalyst system. Higher temperatures favour the oxidation of toluene. Zr⁴⁺ does not enhance the oxidation of toluene. Zr⁴⁺ could inhibit the oxidation of toluene in the combination of Co/Br/Zr, Co/Mn/Zr or Co/Zr. NHPI enhances the formation of benzyl alcohol, but the formation of other by-products is a problem for industrial processes. Complex(es) between cobalt, manganese and zirconium might be formed during the catalytic reaction. However, attempts at the preparation of complexes consisting of Co/Zr or Mn/Zr or Co₃ZrP or Co₈Zr₄ clusters failed.

The oxidation of cyclohexane to cyclohexanone and cyclohexanol is of great industrial significance. For the homogeneous catalysis at 50 °C and 3 bar N₂ pressure, the activity order is: $\text{Mn}(\text{OAc})_3 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O} > \text{Mn}_{12}\text{O}_{12}$ cluster $> \text{Co}^{3+}$ trimer 6 $> [\text{Co}_3\text{O}(\text{OAc})_3(\text{OH})_2(\text{py})_5][\text{PF}_6]_2$ (Co³⁺ trimer 3) $> \text{Co}^{3+}$ trimer 5 $> \text{Co}(\text{OAc})_2 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O} > [\text{Co}_2(\text{OAc})_3(\text{OH})_2(\text{py})_4][\text{PF}_6]_{\text{-asym}}$ (Co dimer_{asym}) $> [\text{Co}_2(\text{OAc})_3(\text{OH})_2(\text{py})_4][\text{PF}_6]_{\text{-sym}}$ (Co dimer_{sym}); whereas $[\text{Mn}_2\text{CoO}(\text{OAc})_6(\text{py})_3] \cdot \text{HOAc}$ (Mn₂Co complex) and zirconium(IV) acetate hydroxide showed almost no activity under these conditions. But at 120 °C and 3 bar N₂ pressure, the activity order is changed to: Co dimer_{asym} $> \text{Co}(\text{OAc})_2 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O} > \text{Co}$ trimer 3 and $\text{Mn}(\text{OAc})_3 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O} > \text{Co}^{3+}$ trimer 6 $> \text{Mn}_2\text{Co}$ complex $> \text{Co}^{3+}$ trimer 5 $> \text{Co}$ dimer_{sym} $> \text{Mn}_{12}\text{O}_{12}$ cluster. The molar ratio of the products was close to cyclohexanol/cyclohexanone=2/1. Mn(II) acetate and zirconium(IV) acetate hydroxide showed almost no activity under these conditions. Among those cobalt dimers and trimers, only the cobalt dimer_{asym} survived after the stability tests, this means that $[\text{Co}_2(\text{OAc})_3(\text{OH})_2(\text{py})_4][\text{PF}_6]_{\text{-asym}}$ might be the active form for cobalt(II) acetate in the CAB system.

Metal-substituted (silico)aluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves (MeAPO-5 and MeSAPO-5) are important heterogeneous catalysts for the oxidation of cyclohexane. The preparation of MeAPO-5 and MeSAPO-5 and their catalytic activities were studied. Pure MeAPO-5 and MeSAPO-5 are obtained and characterised. Four new pairs of bimetal-substituted MeAPO-5 and MeSAPO-5 (CoZr, MnZr, CrZr and MnCo) were prepared successfully. Two novel trimetal-substituted MeAPO-5 and MeSAPO-5 (MnCoZr) are reported here. Improved methods for the preparation of four monometal-substituted MeAPO-5 (Cr, Co, Mn and Zr) and for CoCe(S)APO-5 and CrCe(S)APO-5 are reported. Novel combinational mixing conditions for the formation of gel mixtures for Me(S)APO-5 syntheses have been developed.

For the oxidation of cyclohexane by TBHP catalysed by MeAPO-5 and MeSAPO-5 materials, CrZrSAPO-5 is the only active MeSAPO-5 catalyst among those materials tested under conditions of refluxing in cyclohexane. Of the MeAPO-5 materials tested, whereas CrCeSAPO-5 has very little activity, CrZrAPO-5 and CrCeAPO-5 are very active catalysts under conditions of refluxing in cyclohexane. MnCoAPO-5, MnZrAPO-5 and CrAPO-5 are also active. When Cr is in the catalyst system, the product distribution is always cyclohexanone/cyclohexanol=(2-3)/1, compared with 1/2 for other catalysts. For MeAPO-5, the activity at 150 °C and 10 bar N₂ pressure is: CrZrAPO-5 > CrCeAPO-5 > CoZrAPO-5. For MeAPO-5 and MeSAPO-5, at 150 °C and 13 bar N₂ pressure, the selectivity towards cyclohexanone is: CrZrAPO-5 > CrZrSAPO-5 > CrCeAPO-5 > CrAPO-5 > MnCoAPO-5 > MnZrAPO-5; and the selectivity towards cyclohexanol is: MnZrAPO-5 > CrZrAPO-5 > MnCoAPO-5 > CrZrSAPO-5 > CrCeAPO-5 > CrAPO-5. Overall the selectivity towards the oxidation of cyclohexane is: CrZrAPO-5 > CrZrSAPO-5 > CrCeAPO-5 > CrAPO-5 > MnCoAPO-5 > MnZrAPO-5. The amount of water in the system can affect the performance of CrCeAPO-5, but has almost no effect on CrZrAPO-5. Metal leaching is another concern in potential industrial applications of MeAPO-5 and MeSAPO-5 catalysts. The heterogeneous catalysts prepared in the present work showed very little metal leaching. This feature, coupled with the good selectivities and effectivities, makes them potentially very useful.

Abbreviations

AAS	atomic absorption spectra
Ac ₂ O	acetic anhydride
AIBN	2,2'-azobis(2-methylpropionitrile)
AlPO ₄	aluminophosphate molecular sieves
APO-5	aluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
APO-36	aluminophosphate-36 molecular sieves
APO-n	aluminophosphate-based molecular sieves
[asym][PF ₆]	[Co ₂ (μ-OH) ₂ (μ-OAc)(OAc) ₂ (py) ₄][PF ₆] _{-asym} (Co dimer _{asym})
atm	atmosphere
CAB system	Co/Mn/Br catalyst system
Catapal A	a <i>pseudo-boehmite</i> phase comprising 72 wt.% Al ₂ O ₃
4-CBA	4-carboxybenzaldehyde
CTAB	cetyltrimethylammonium bromide
CoAPOs	cobalt-substituted aluminophosphate molecular sieves
CoAPO-5	cobalt-substituted aluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
CoAPO-11	cobalt-substituted aluminophosphate-11 molecular sieves
CoAPO-16	cobalt-substituted aluminophosphate-16 molecular sieves
CoAPO-18	cobalt-substituted aluminophosphate-18 molecular sieves
Co ³⁺ trimer 3	[Co ₃ O(OAc) ₃ (OH) ₂ (py) ₅][PF ₆] ₂
Co ³⁺ trimer 5	[Co ₃ O(OAc) ₅ (OH)(py) ₃][PF ₆]
Co ³⁺ trimer 6	[Co ₃ O(OAc) ₆ (py) ₃][PF ₆]
CoCeAPO-5	cobalt and cerium-substituted aluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
CoCeSAPO-5	cobalt and cerium-substituted silicoaluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
CoZrAPO-5	cobalt and zirconium-substituted aluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
CoZrSAPO-5	cobalt and zirconium-substituted silicoaluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
CrAPO-5	chromium-substituted aluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
CrCeAPO-5	chromium and cerium-substituted aluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves

CrCeSAPO-5	chromium and cerium-substituted silicoaluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
CrZrAPO-5	chromium and zirconium-substituted aluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
CrZrSAPO-5	chromium and zirconium-substituted silicoaluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
CyOOH	cyclohexyl hydroperoxide
1-D	one dimension
3-D	three dimension
DAE	2-diethylaminoethanol
DEA	diethanolamine
EDAX	energy dispersive X-ray fluorescence and electron backscattered diffraction
FAB	fast atom bombardment
g	gram
GC	gas chromatography
h	hour
HOAc	acetic acid
HPLC	high performance liquid chromatography
ICP	inductively coupled plasma analysis
Ionol [®]	2,6-di- <i>tert</i> -butyl-4-methylphenol
I.R.	infrared
K	Kelvin
L	liter
M	mol L ⁻¹
mCPBA	<i>m</i> -chloroperbenzoic acid
MeAPO-n	metal-substituted aluminophosphate-n molecular sieves
MeAPO-5	metal-substituted aluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
MeSAPO-5	metal-substituted silicoaluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
min	minutes
mL	milliliter
MnAPO-5	manganese-substituted aluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
Mn ₂ Co complex	[Mn ₂ CoO(OAc) ₆ (py) ₃]•HOAc

Mn ₁₂ cluster	[Mn ₁₂ O ₁₂ (OAc) ₁₆ (H ₂ O) ₄]•2HOAc•4H ₂ O
MnCoAPO-5	manganese and cobalt-substituted aluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
MnCoSAPO-5	manganese and cobalt-substituted silicoaluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
MnCoZrAPO-5	manganese and cobalt and zirconium-substituted aluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
MnCoZrSAPO-5	manganese and cobalt and zirconium-substituted silicoaluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
MnZrAPO-5	manganese and zirconium-substituted aluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
MnZrSAPO-5	manganese and zirconium-substituted silicoaluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
NHPI	<i>N</i> -hydroxyphthalimide
NMR	nuclear magnetic resonance
OAc	acetate (CH ₃ COO ⁻)
PBS-1	sodium perborate monohydrate
PhCHO	benzaldehyde
PhCOOH	benzoic acid
ⁱ Pr	isopropyl
1,2,4-pseudocumene	1,2,4-trimethylbenzene
Pseudo-boehmite	a hydrated aluminium oxide comprising 70 wt.% Al ₂ O ₃
Pural SB	a <i>pseudo</i> -boehmite phase comprising 75.1 wt.% Al ₂ O ₃
PX	<i>para</i> -xylene
py	pyridine
pyromellitic acid	1,2,4,5-benzenetetracarboxylic acid
QN	quinuclidine
S	total spin
SAPO-5	silicoaluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves
SEM	scanning electronic microscopy
[sym][PF ₆]	[Co ₂ (μ-OH) ₂ (μ-OAc)(OAc) ₂ (py) ₄][PF ₆] _{-sym} (Co dimer _{sym})
TA	terephthalic acid
TBHP	<i>tert</i> -butyl hydroperoxide

TEA	triethylamine
TEAOH	tetraethylammonium hydroxide
TFA	trifluoroacetic acid
TMAOH	tetramethylammonium hydroxide
TS-1	titanium silicalite
TPA	tripropylamine
TPAOH	tetrapropylammonium hydroxide
μL	microliter
UV	ultraviolet
UV/Vis	ultraviolet /visible light
XRD	X-Ray powder diffraction
ZrAPO-5	zirconium-substituted aluminophosphate-5 molecular sieves

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