

# A Theoretical Study of Surface Reduction Mechanisms of CeO<sub>2</sub>(111) and (110) by H<sub>2</sub>

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Reaction mechanisms for the interactions between CeO<sub>2</sub>(111) and (110) surfaces are investigated using periodic density functional theory (DFT) calculations. Both standard DFT and DFT+U calculations to examine the effect of the localization of Ce 4f states on the redox chemistry of H<sub>2</sub>-CeO<sub>2</sub> interactions are described. For mechanistic studies, molecular and dissociative local minima are initially located by placing an H<sub>2</sub> molecule at various active sites of the CeO<sub>2</sub> surfaces. The binding energies of physisorbed species optimized using the DFT and DFT+U methods are very weak. The dissociative adsorption reactions producing hydroxylated surfaces are all exothermic; exothermicities at the DFT level range from 4.1 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup> for the (111) to 26.5 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup> for the (110) surface, while those at the DFT+U level are between 65.0 kcal

mol<sup>-1</sup> for the (111) and 81.8 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup> for the (110) surface. Predicted vibrational frequencies of adsorbed OH and H<sub>2</sub>O species on the surfaces are in line with available experimental and theoretical results. Potential energy profiles are constructed by connecting molecularly adsorbed and dissociatively adsorbed intermediates on each CeO<sub>2</sub> surface with tight transition states using the nudged elastic band (NEB) method. It is found that the U correction method plays a significant role in energetics, especially for the intermediates of the exit channels and products that are partially reduced. The surface reduction reaction on CeO<sub>2</sub>(110) is energetically much more favorable. Accordingly, oxygen vacancies are more easily formed on the (110) surface than on the (111) surface.

## 1. Introduction

Ceria (CeO<sub>2</sub>) is an important catalyst in various industrial and environmental applications such as a three-way automotive exhaust catalyst (TWC),<sup>[1]</sup> oxygen storage,<sup>[2]</sup> the oxidation of hydrocarbons<sup>[3]</sup> and CO,<sup>[4]</sup> and the decomposition of alcohols<sup>[5]</sup> and aldehydes.<sup>[6]</sup> Moreover, rare-earth-doped CeO<sub>2</sub>, such as gadolinia-doped ceria (GDC), has also been used as an electrolyte for low-temperature solid oxide fuel cells (SOFCs).<sup>[7]</sup> To understand the catalytic properties of both pure CeO<sub>2</sub> and metal/CeO<sub>2</sub> materials, it is imperative to examine the redox surface chemistry. Although many studies regarding the defect chemistry of CeO<sub>2</sub> have been conducted,<sup>[8]</sup> its reduction processes have been scarcely examined. In particular, the defect chemistry of CeO<sub>2</sub> under H<sub>2</sub> atmosphere has been studied by various experimental techniques, such as temperature-programmed reduction (TPR)<sup>[9–11]</sup> and NMR.<sup>[12]</sup> On the basis of experimental results obtained by using TPR and temperature programmed desorption mass spectrometry (TPD-MS), Bernal and coworkers<sup>[13]</sup> reported that H<sub>2</sub>-CeO<sub>2</sub> interactions are a surface process rather than the hydroxylation and incorporation of hydrogen into the bulk, as proposed by Bruce and coworkers.<sup>[10]</sup> Although numerous theoretical investigations on bulk CeO<sub>2</sub>, its surfaces (including reduced ceria),<sup>[14–20]</sup> and the interactions of atomic H with CeO<sub>2</sub>(111) and (110)<sup>[18]</sup> have been reported, to the best of our knowledge, the mechanisms of H<sub>2</sub>-CeO<sub>2</sub> interactions have not been adequately addressed. In this study, we report the reduction mechanisms of CeO<sub>2</sub>(111) and (110) surfaces by H<sub>2</sub> using periodic density functional theory (DFT) methods. In particular, to properly characterize the electronic structure of CeO<sub>2</sub>, the DFT+U method<sup>[15, 20–23]</sup> was ap-

plied. Detailed potential-energy surfaces for all low-lying reaction pathways are reported.

## Computational Methods

We performed DFT plane-wave calculations using the Vienna ab initio simulation package (VASP)<sup>[24]</sup> with the projector-augmented wave method (PAW).<sup>[25]</sup> The exchange–correlation function was treated with the generalized gradient approximation (GGA) of the Perdew–Wang (PW91) functional, which has been shown to work well for bulk and surface properties of CeO<sub>2</sub>.<sup>[22, 26]</sup> A 400 eV cut-off energy that allows convergence to be 0.01 eV in the total energy was used. The Brillouin zone was sampled with the (6×6×6) and (6×6×1) Monkhorst–Pack<sup>[27]</sup> mesh **k**-points for bulk and surface calculations, respectively. To avoid interactions between slabs, all

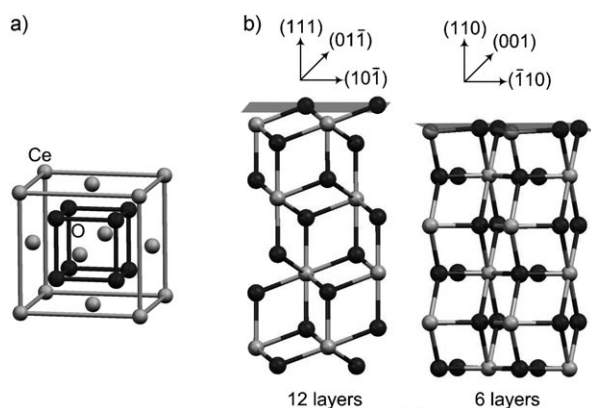
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slabs were separated by a vacuum space greater than 15 Å. As depicted in Figure 1a, CeO<sub>2</sub> has a fluorite structure in which each cerium cation is surrounded by eight equivalent oxygen ions, while each oxygen ion is surrounded by a tetrahedron of four



**Figure 1.** a) The fluorite structure of CeO<sub>2</sub>. b) Slab models for cubic CeO<sub>2</sub>(111) and (110) surfaces.

equivalent cerium ions.<sup>[28]</sup> The CeO<sub>2</sub>(111) and (110) surfaces were modeled as periodically repeated slabs consisting of twelve and six atomic layers, respectively, which represent  $p(\sqrt{3}\times 1)$  and  $p(1\times 2)$  lateral cells, respectively (Figure 1b). The bottom six and three atomic layers of the CeO<sub>2</sub>(111) and (110) surfaces, respectively, were unrelaxed and set to the estimated bulk parameters, while the remaining layers were fully relaxed. In this study, the DFT and DFT+U methods<sup>[29]</sup> were performed in order to accurately correct the strong on-site Coulomb repulsion of Ce 4f states on reduced ceria surfaces.<sup>[15,20,22,23]</sup> For the DFT+U calculations, a series of bulk calculations were carried out by varying the U value from 0.0 to 7.0 eV. As Jiang and coworkers<sup>[15]</sup> reported, we found the optimal values of U and J are 7.0 and 0.7 eV, respectively. In this study, we calculated adsorption energies according to Equation (1):

$$\Delta E_{\text{ads}} = E[\text{slab} + \text{adsorbate}] - (E[\text{slab}] + E[\text{adsorbate}]) \quad (1)$$

where  $E[\text{slab} + \text{adsorbate}]$ ,  $E[\text{slab}]$ , and  $E[\text{adsorbate}]$  are the calculated electronic energies of adsorbed species on a ceria surface, a bare ceria surface, and a gas-phase H<sub>2</sub> molecule, respectively. The nudged elastic band (NEB) method<sup>[30]</sup> was applied to locate transition states, and potential energy surfaces (PESs) were constructed accordingly. All transition states were identified by the number of imaginary frequencies (NIMG) with NIMG=1.

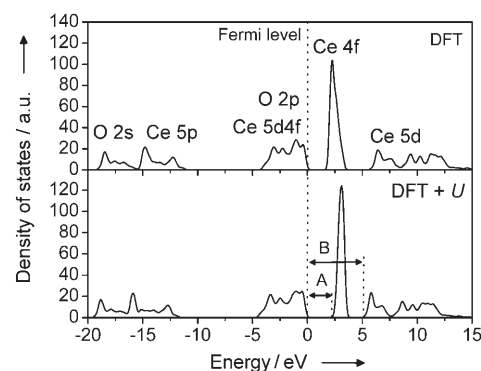
## 2. Results and Discussion

### 2.1. Bulk and Clean Surfaces of CeO<sub>2</sub> and Gas-Phase H<sub>2</sub>, OH, and H<sub>2</sub>O Molecules

To ensure the validity of the surface models displayed in Figure 1b, we first compared our lattice parameters, total density of states, and formation energy of an oxygen vacancy with literature values. As compiled in Table 1, the calculated lattice parameters of bulk CeO<sub>2</sub> using the DFT and DFT+U methods are in very good agreement with the experimental value of 5.411 Å.<sup>[33]</sup> Shown in Figure 2 is the calculated total density of states for bulk CeO<sub>2</sub>. While the calculated energy gaps of O 2p→Ce 4f and O 2p→Ce 5d at the DFT level are 1.8 eV and

Table 1. Experimental and calculated lattice parameters for CeO <sub>2</sub> .	
Methods	Lattice parameters [Å]
this work	5.419, <sup>[a]</sup> 5.436 <sup>[b]</sup>
GGA-DFT	5.480, <sup>[31]</sup> 5.470 <sup>[16]</sup>
LDA-DFT	5.390, <sup>[31]</sup> 5.370 <sup>[16]</sup>
HF	5.385, <sup>[14]</sup> 5.546 <sup>[33]</sup>
Experimental	5.411

[a] Calculated at the DFT level. [b] Calculated at the DFT+U level.



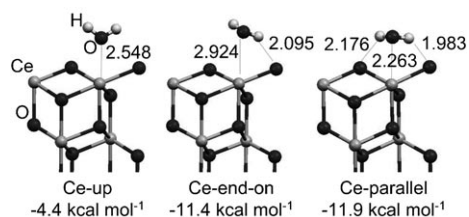
**Figure 2.** Total density of states of bulk CeO<sub>2</sub> calculated at the DFT and DFT+U levels. A and B correspond to the calculated energy gaps for O 2p→Ce 4f and O 2p→Ce 5d, respectively.

5.5 eV, respectively, those by the DFT+U method with the values of U and J of 7.0 and 0.7 eV, respectively, are 2.3 eV and 5.1 eV (see Table S1 in the Supporting Information). It is known that the O 2p→Ce 5d band gap is less important compared to the O 2p→Ce 4f band gap.<sup>[15]</sup> Similar to previous studies,<sup>[19]</sup> the formation energy of an oxygen vacancy within the bulk was also estimated based on the reaction  $\text{CeO}_2 \rightarrow \text{CeO}_{2-x} + 1/2 \text{O}_2(\text{g})$ . The vacancy energy from the DFT method is 114.1 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>, whereas that from DFT+U is 92.9 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>, providing a better agreement with the experimental value of 94.5 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>.<sup>[34]</sup> Shown in Table S2 (see the Supporting Information) are the surface energies of CeO<sub>2</sub>(111) and (110) surfaces estimated in units of J m<sup>-2</sup> according to Equation (2):<sup>[19]</sup>

$$E_{\text{surf}} = \frac{1}{2S} (E_{\text{slab}} - E_{\text{bulk}}) \quad (2)$$

where  $E_{\text{surf}}$ ,  $S$ ,  $E_{\text{slab}}$ , and  $E_{\text{bulk}}$  represent the surface energy, the surface area, and the calculated electronic energies of the slab and the bulk, respectively. Thus, a lower surface energy corresponds to a more stable surface. As summarized in Table S2, our predicted relaxed surface energies for the (111) and (110) surfaces are 0.60 and 0.96 J m<sup>-2</sup>, respectively, which are in line with other DFT results.<sup>[16,19]</sup> In addition, it is consistent with the experimental data by Lyons et al.,<sup>[35]</sup> who verified that the (111) facet of CeO<sub>2</sub> is the most stable. As Jiang et al.<sup>[15]</sup> reported, the surface-energy difference calculated by the DFT and DFT+U methods for perfect CeO<sub>2</sub> is negligible. Furthermore, we estimated the adsorption energies of H<sub>2</sub>O–CeO<sub>2</sub>(111) interactions with various adsorption configurations similar to those of Hen-

derson et al.,<sup>[38]</sup> as shown in Figure 3, since the experimental data of H<sub>2</sub>O–CeO<sub>2</sub> interactions are well-established in the literature.<sup>[39]</sup> As displayed in Figure 3, our calculated adsorption energies from DFT vary from  $-4.4$  to  $-11.9$  kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>. Notably,



**Figure 3.** Optimized geometries and adsorption energies for H<sub>2</sub>O adsorption on the CeO<sub>2</sub>(111) surface at the DFT level.

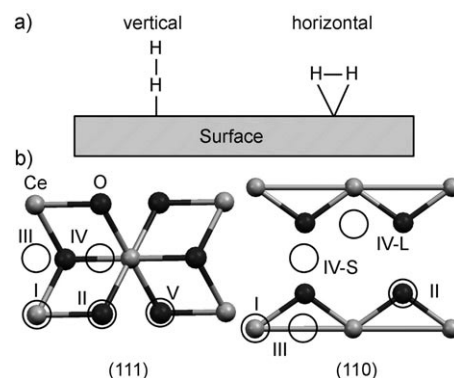
the ab initio adsorption energies of the stable Ce-end-on and Ce-parallel configurations ( $-11.4$  and  $-11.9$  kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>, respectively) are consistent with that of  $-12.2$  kcal mol<sup>-1</sup> reported by Henderson et al.<sup>[38]</sup> and are slightly different from the values of  $-13.1$ – $-14.1$  kcal mol<sup>-1</sup> measured by Prin et al.<sup>[39]</sup> In addition, the adsorption energies of the Ce-end-on and Ce-parallel configurations are in line with recent theoretical results of  $-12.9$  and  $-13.4$  kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>, respectively, by Kumar and Schelling.<sup>[40]</sup> As summarized in Table 2, predicted geometrical parameters and vibrational frequencies of gas-phase H<sub>2</sub>, OH, and H<sub>2</sub>O in a 15 Å cubic box are in line with available experimental and theoretical data.

**Table 2.** Geometrical parameters and vibrational frequencies of gas-phase H<sub>2</sub>, OH, and H<sub>2</sub>O calculated by the DFT method.

Symmetry	H <sub>2</sub>		OH		H <sub>2</sub> O	
	Calcd	Exptl <sup>[41]</sup>	Calcd	Exptl <sup>[42]</sup>	Calcd	Exptl <sup>[43,44]</sup>
$r(\text{O–H or H–H})$ [Å]	0.743	0.740	0.986	0.970	0.957	0.972
$\theta(\text{H–O–H})$ [°]	–	–	–	–	104.5	104.7
$\nu_{\text{asym}}$ [cm <sup>-1</sup> ]	–	–	3642	3738	3856	3738
$\nu_{\text{sym}}$ [cm <sup>-1</sup> ]	4435	4400	–	–	3741	3436
$\nu_{\text{bend}}$ [cm <sup>-1</sup> ]	–	–	–	–	1585	1392

## 2.2. Location of Surface Intermediates

In order to initially locate possible intermediates, an H<sub>2</sub> molecule was placed on various CeO<sub>2</sub> surface sites as shown in Figure 4, where I and II correspond to the atop site of Ce and O atoms, respectively, while III and IV represent the bridging sites of Ce–Ce and O–O bonds, respectively. The atop site on a sublayer oxygen atom is represented by V. For the CeO<sub>2</sub>(110) surface, IV-S and IV-L correspond to the short and long O–O bond-bridging sites, respectively. Furthermore, the H<sub>2</sub> molecule was placed both vertically and horizontally (Figure 4a) on each CeO<sub>2</sub> surface site—except the V conformation on CeO<sub>2</sub>(111)—corresponding to v and h, respectively. Figures S1 and S2 (in the Supporting Information) display various adsorbed H<sub>2</sub> spe-

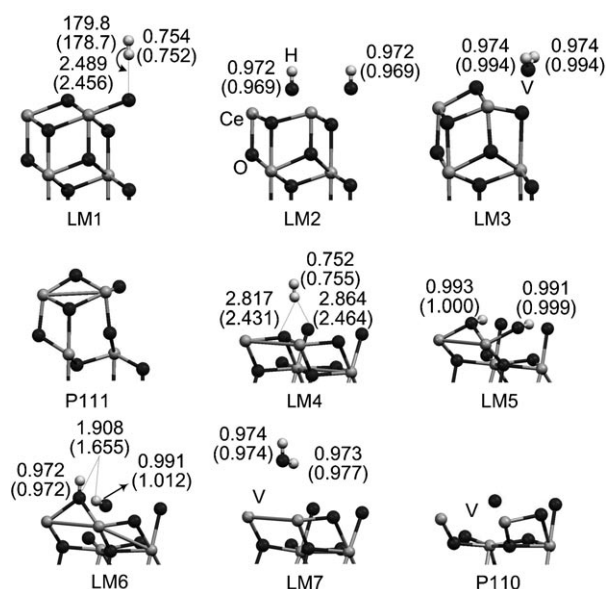


**Figure 4.** a) Schematics of vertical and horizontal configurations of H<sub>2</sub> on CeO<sub>2</sub> surfaces. b) Top views of active sites on the CeO<sub>2</sub>(111) and (110) surfaces (see text for details).

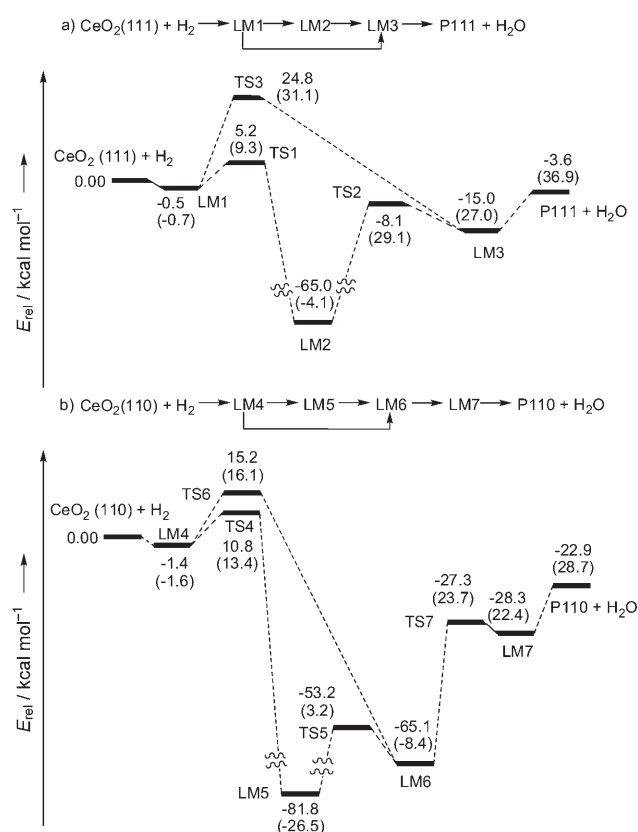
cies on CeO<sub>2</sub>(111) and (110). As compiled in Table S3, the adsorption energies of these adsorbed H<sub>2</sub> species on the (111) and (110) surfaces at the DFT and DFT+U levels are small, and the energy difference between the DFT and DFT+U methods for the stoichiometric surfaces is insignificant ( $<0.3$  kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>). In particular, because the calculated energies are within the average bond-energy errors of the GGA method ( $\approx 2.0$  kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>)<sup>[45]</sup> and to ensure the existence of initial intermediates for mechanistic studies on CeO<sub>2</sub>(111) and (110), we carried out additional minimum-energy path (MEP) calculations at the DFT+U level using II-v-(111) and IV-S-v-(110) configurations with the lowest adsorption energy among intermediate states optimized on the (111) and (110) surfaces, respectively. Shown in Figure S3 are shallow wells with adsorption energies of approximately  $-0.5$  and  $-1.4$  kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>, indicating that the II-v-(111) and IV-S-v-(110) configurations are van der Waals intermediates. It should be noted that the DFT method used in this study may not be suitable to describe long-range dispersion interactions (van der Waals interactions),<sup>[46]</sup> and to the best of our knowledge, van der Waals complexes for H<sub>2</sub>–CeO<sub>2</sub> interactions have not been experimentally reported. However, we assume that these complexes are physisorbed intermediates,<sup>[47]</sup> which are adsorbed by molecular adsorption and connectable to chemisorbed local minima. These minima are related to dissociative adsorption processes, giving rise to LM2 and LM3 and LM5 and LM6 in Figures 5 and 6, to be discussed in the following section. Furthermore, to test the coverage effects of H<sub>2</sub>–surface interactions, we compared 0.5- and 1.0-monolayer coverage using the II-v-(111) (LM1) configuration; the adsorption energy difference is negligible ( $\approx 0.1$  kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>).

## 2.3. Reaction Mechanisms

The decomposition of H<sub>2</sub> on CeO<sub>2</sub> may occur via a stepwise reaction mechanism, in which H<sub>2</sub> first adsorbs at a favorable active Ce<sup>4+</sup> or O<sup>2-</sup> site. Then, the adsorbed H<sub>2</sub> species directly dissociates, followed by the formation of OH species. Surface OH species can further diffuse on the reduced CeO<sub>2</sub> surface and interact with each other to produce H<sub>2</sub>O, which is accom-



**Figure 5.** Optimized geometries with selected bond lengths [Å] and angles [°] of intermediates, transition states and products for the  $\text{H}_2$ - $\text{CeO}_2$  interactions. The values in parentheses are calculated by the DFT method; otherwise the values are from the DFT+U level.



**Figure 6.** Reaction pathways for the reduction of a)  $\text{CeO}_2(111)$  and b)  $\text{CeO}_2(110)$  by  $\text{H}_2$  along with corresponding schematic energy profiles for the  $\text{H}_2$ - $\text{CeO}_2$  interactions at the DFT+U level. The values in parentheses are those calculated by the DFT method.

panied by the reduction of  $\text{Ce}^{4+}$  to  $\text{Ce}^{3+}$  and the formation of an oxygen vacancy when  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  desorbs.

We performed both the standard DFT and DFT+U calculations to map out the potential energy surfaces (PESs). Figure 5 and Figure S4 illustrate the geometries of optimized intermediates and products and transition states for the  $\text{H}_2$  reactions on the  $\text{CeO}_2(111)$  and (110) surfaces, respectively, using the DFT and DFT+U methods. Compiled in Table 3 are the predicted relative energies at the DFT and DFT+U levels. These results

**Table 3.** Relative energies [ $\text{kcal mol}^{-1}$ ] of the intermediates, transition states, and products of  $\text{CeO}_2 + \text{H}_2$  interactions calculated at the DFT and DFT+U levels.

Species or reaction	DFT	DFT+U
$\text{CeO}_2(111) + \text{O}_2$	0.0	0.0
LM1	-0.7	-0.5
LM2	-4.1	-65.0
LM3	27.0	-15.0
TS1	9.3	5.2
TS2	29.1	-8.1
TS3	31.1	24.8
$\text{P111} + \text{H}_2\text{O}$	36.9	-3.6
$\text{CeO}_2(110) + \text{O}_2$	0.0	0.0
LM4	-1.6	-1.4
LM5	-26.5	-81.8
LM6	-8.4	-65.1
LM7	22.4	-28.3
TS4	13.4	10.9
TS5	3.2	-53.2
TS6	16.1	15.2
TS7	23.7	-27.3
$\text{P110} + \text{H}_2\text{O}$	28.7	-22.9

show that our calculated energetics, except for the initial intermediates LM1 and LM4, are significantly influenced by the inclusion of U-J, leading to different structural relaxations during  $\text{H}_2$ -surface interactions. In particular, to examine the energy difference between DFT and DFT+U, LDOS (local density of states) calculations for adsorbed hydrogen species and Ce and O ions on the top layer of the LM2 intermediate were performed. As illustrated in Figure S5, Ce 5d and Ce 4f states above the Fermi level may be a main factor for the large energy difference between DFT and DFT+U methods for the  $\text{H}_2$ - $\text{CeO}_2$  interactions. In the following, we will discuss mechanistic details based on the DFT+U results.

### 2.3.1. $\text{CeO}_2(111)$ Reduction by $\text{H}_2$

The reduction of the  $\text{CeO}_2(111)$  surface by  $\text{H}_2$  may occur according to the reaction pathway shown in Figure 6a. The initial interaction of the hydrogen molecule approaching the metal oxide surface is a van der Waals attraction, leading to LM1,  $\text{H}\cdots\text{v}(111)$ , with a physisorption energy of  $0.5 \text{ kcal mol}^{-1}$ . In the optimized LM1 structure, the H-H distance is  $0.754 \text{ \AA}$ , and the H-O<sub>surface</sub> distance is  $2.489 \text{ \AA}$ . In the following step of the reaction, the LM1 complex has to overcome a  $5.7 \text{ kcal mol}^{-1}$  activation barrier for the dissociation process via TS1, producing the OH-containing LM2 intermediate with the equivalent O-H bonds of  $0.972 \text{ \AA}$ . At TS1, the breaking H-H bond is  $1.156 \text{ \AA}$ . The interaction of the two OH species in LM2 via TS2 with a

high reaction barrier of  $\approx 57$  kcal mol<sup>-1</sup> leads to the formation of a chemisorbed H<sub>2</sub>O molecule in LM3, with an overall endothermicity of 50.0 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>. The breaking O–H bond and forming H–O bond in **TS2** are 2.908 Å and 1.288 Å, respectively. As mentioned above, Ce<sup>4+</sup> cations can be reduced by the formation of H<sub>2</sub>O species, and subsequently generating an oxygen vacancy (**V**, see Figure 5). The LM3 intermediate can also be formed by abstracting a surface oxygen via **TS3** with a high reaction barrier of 25.3 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>, bringing about concurrent O–H bond-forming and H–H bond-breaking processes with their corresponding bond lengths of 0.981 and 1.815 Å. This pathway is less favorable than the process via **TS1** due to its higher reaction barrier. Eventually, the LM3 intermediate can barrierlessly dissociate to produce P111 (Figure 5), and a gas-phase H<sub>2</sub>O molecule with a 11.4 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup> endothermicity, leading to nonstoichiometric CeO<sub>2</sub> and an oxygen vacancy. The overall exothermicity of this process is 3.6 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup> at the DFT+U level.

### 2.3.2. CeO<sub>2</sub>(110) Reduction by H<sub>2</sub>

Similar to LM1 on the CeO<sub>2</sub>(111) surface, the H<sub>2</sub>–CeO<sub>2</sub>(110) complex, **IV-S-v-(110)**, (LM4) can be formed with a binding energy of 1.4 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup> (Figure 6b). In the LM4 complex, the H–H distance is 0.752 Å, and the two H–O bonds are 2.817 and 2.864 Å. As summarized in the reaction pathway in Figure 6b, there are two possible pathways to produce P110 (Figure 5) and H<sub>2</sub>O.

The surface H<sub>2</sub> species in LM4 can dissociate to generate the more stable OH-containing LM5 intermediate by overcoming an activation barrier of 12.3 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup> at **TS4**. The breaking H–H bond length in **TS4** is 0.853 Å and the two O–H bonds in LM5 are essentially the same length (0.993 Å and 0.991 Å). One of the H atoms in LM5 can migrate to a neighboring O atom via **TS5** with a 28.6 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup> barrier, thus producing LM6, which has a new O–H bond of 0.991 Å. The O–H bond lengths of LM6 (0.972 and 0.991 Å) are slightly different. The energetic difference between these two OH-containing intermediates, LM5 and LM6, stems from hydrogen bonding in these structures; there are two possibilities for hydrogen bonding with neighboring O atoms in LM5 but only one such possibility in LM6 (see Figure 5). In addition to the aforementioned reaction pathway, LM6 can also be formed directly via **TS6** with a reaction barrier of 16.6 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>. At **TS6**, the cleaving H–H bond is 0.812 Å, which is 0.06 Å longer than in LM4, indicating that **TS6** is an early transition state. The two OH groups in LM6 can interact to form LM7 through **TS7**, in which the H atom of the OH group lying parallel to the surface migrates to the OH group bonded perpendicular to the surface, generating a chemisorbed H<sub>2</sub>O molecule and an oxygen vacancy with a reaction barrier of  $\approx 38$  kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>. Finally, the weakly bound H<sub>2</sub>O species in LM7 can desorb from the surface with an endothermicity of 5.4 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>. This process takes place with an overall exothermicity of 22.9 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup> [about 19 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup> lower than that of CeO<sub>2</sub>(111)], producing P110 and H<sub>2</sub>O.

MEP calculations clearly show that the reduction mechanism of CeO<sub>2</sub> by H<sub>2</sub> occurs via a stepwise reaction, as discussed

above. The molecular-level interpretation using quantum chemical calculations supports the reaction mechanism proposed on the basis of experimental results.<sup>[9]</sup> For the reduction of CeO<sub>2</sub>(111) by H<sub>2</sub>, the predicted highest barrier, 25 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup>, is in good agreement with the 27.5 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup> activation energy reported by Al-Madfa et al.<sup>[48]</sup> A detailed rate-constant prediction based on the potential-energy profiles and experimental data will be carried out in the future.

### 2.4. Analysis of Vibrational Frequencies of Adsorbed OH and H<sub>2</sub>O Species

Compiled in Table 4 is a summary of predicted vibrational frequencies of adsorbed OH (LM2, LM5, and LM6) and H<sub>2</sub>O (LM3 and LM7) species at the DFT+U level. A variety of OH and H<sub>2</sub>O

**Table 4.** Predicted vibrational frequencies of OH or H<sub>2</sub>O species on CeO<sub>2</sub>.<sup>[a]</sup>

Surface	Intermediate	Adsorbed species	This work [cm <sup>-1</sup> ]	Literature <sup>[18]</sup> [cm <sup>-1</sup> ]
(111)	LM2	OH	3641, 3650	3627
(111)	LM3	H <sub>2</sub> O	3657, 3605, 1535	–
(110)	LM5	OH	3258, 3234	3100
(110)	LM6	OH	3636, 3266	–
(110)	LM7	H <sub>2</sub> O	3814, 3694, 1591	–

[a] Calculated by the DFT+U method.

species were observed using Fourier transform infrared (FTIR) spectroscopy.<sup>[49]</sup> It was reported that the bands at 3710, 3660, and 3600 cm<sup>-1</sup> are attributed to one-, two- and three-coordinated configurations, respectively, of adsorbed OH species on CeO<sub>2</sub> surfaces, while those in the range of 3400–3450 cm<sup>-1</sup> are related to H-bonded OH species.<sup>[49]</sup> The bands at 3686, 3140, and 1640 cm<sup>-1</sup> and 3686, 3620, and 1595 cm<sup>-1</sup> are assigned to a H-bonded and non-H-bonded H<sub>2</sub>O species, respectively.<sup>[50]</sup> The calculated OH frequencies of LM2 (3641 and 3650 cm<sup>-1</sup>) are consistent with the experimental value of 3600 cm<sup>-1</sup> for the three-coordinated configuration of an adsorbed OH species and a theoretical result of 3627 cm<sup>-1</sup> by Vicario and et al.<sup>[18]</sup> The calculated OH frequencies of LM5 (3258, and 3234 cm<sup>-1</sup>) are slightly different from the theoretical value of 3100 cm<sup>-1</sup>,<sup>[18]</sup> assigned to an H-bonded OH species using experimental data<sup>[49]</sup> of 3400–3450 cm<sup>-1</sup>. The predicted vibrational frequencies of the O–H stretching of LM6 (3636 and 3266 cm<sup>-1</sup>) are close to those of H-bonded H<sub>2</sub>O-like species (3686 and 3140 cm<sup>-1</sup>).<sup>[50]</sup> Calculated vibrational frequencies corresponding to asymmetric, symmetric, and bending modes of the H<sub>2</sub>O-like species of LM3 (3657, 3605, 1535 cm<sup>-1</sup>, respectively) are in line with experimental values (3686, 3620, 1595 cm<sup>-1</sup>, respectively),<sup>[50]</sup> while the frequencies found for LM7 (3814, 3694, and 1591 cm<sup>-1</sup>) are close to those of a gas-phase H<sub>2</sub>O molecule (Table 2), implying that LM7 has more product character than LM3.

### 3. Conclusions

The reduction mechanisms of the CeO<sub>2</sub>(111) and (110) surfaces by H<sub>2</sub> have been elucidated using periodic DFT and DFT+U calculations. The validity of the surface models was verified by estimating various properties, such as the lattice parameters, total density of states of bulk CeO<sub>2</sub>, the formation energy of an oxygen vacancy, adsorption energies of H<sub>2</sub>O on CeO<sub>2</sub>(111), and the surface stability of CeO<sub>2</sub>(111) and (110), in line with available literature data. For the mechanistic studies, molecular and dissociative local minima were initially located by placing an H<sub>2</sub> molecule at various active sites on each CeO<sub>2</sub> surface. The adsorption energies of the DFT and DFT+U methods of these molecular adsorption intermediates are small, whereas the dissociative adsorption processes producing hydroxylated surfaces are energetically favored, with exothermicity increasing from 65.0 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup> on the (111) surface to 81.8 kcal mol<sup>-1</sup> on the (110) surface. The DFT+U methodology produced more accurate energetics, especially on the reduced ceria surfaces. The potential-energy profiles for these surface reactions have been constructed by mapping out their MEPs using the NEB method. The intermediates of the molecular and dissociative adsorption on each CeO<sub>2</sub> surface were connected by the NEB method with well-defined transition states. It was found that the reduction of the CeO<sub>2</sub> surface takes place via a stepwise mechanism: adsorption/dissociation of H<sub>2</sub> with the formation of OH species and desorption of H<sub>2</sub>O along with the reduction of Ce<sup>4+</sup> and the formation of an oxygen vacancy. According to the MEP calculations, the less stable (110) surface is energetically more favorable. Our estimated vibrational frequencies of adsorbed OH and H<sub>2</sub>O species agree well with available experimental and theoretical results.

### Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the use of CPU's from National Center for High-Performance Computing, Taiwan, supported by INER under contract No. NL 940251. M.C.L. also wants to acknowledge the support from the MOE ATP program, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. for the TSMC Distinguished Professorship and Taiwan National Science Council for the Distinguished Visiting Professorship at the Center for Interdisciplinary Molecular Science, National Chiao Tung University, Hsinchu, Taiwan. We greatly appreciate the reviewer's valuable comments and suggestions.

**Keywords:** density functional calculations · reaction mechanisms · reduction · surface chemistry · vibrational spectroscopy

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Received: September 21, 2006

Revised: February 15, 2007

Published online on March 21, 2007