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Threshold photodetachment spectroscopy of the I + HI transition state region

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Abstract

High resolution threshold photodetachment spectroscopy of IHI⁻ shows transitions to metastable symmetric stretch levels of the [IHI] complex which were not resolved in earlier work. The observed transitions are as narrow as 30 cm⁻¹, providing definitive evidence for the existence of relatively long-lived states of the [IHI] complex. These metastable states are responsible for the reactive resonances seen in scattering calculations on the I + HI reaction. In addition, photodetachment is enhanced near the thresholds for several I + HI(v= 0, j) asymptotic states with j>11. This is interpreted in terms of enhanced reactivity for rotationally excited HI in the I + HI reaction.

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Introduction

During the last three years, we have developed a method for probing the transition state region of a neutral bimolecular reaction via photodetachment of a stable negative ion similar in structure to the neutral transition state.^{1,2} In several cases, we have found that the photoelectron spectrum of the hydrogen-bonded anion AHB^- exhibits resolved vibrational structure which can be assigned to an unstable $[AHB]$ complex located near the transition state for the hydrogen transfer reaction $A + HB \rightarrow HA + B$. The results described previously were obtained with a fixed-frequency negative ion photoelectron spectrometer. Here we report considerably higher resolution results for IHI^- obtained on a recently constructed threshold photodetachment spectrometer.³ In this experiment, mass-selected ions are photodetached with a tunable pulsed laser, and only those photoelectrons produced with nearly zero kinetic energy are detected as a function of laser wavelength. The threshold photodetachment spectrum of IHI^- shows considerably more structure than was observed in the lower resolution photoelectron spectrum. In particular, we observe narrow (30 cm^{-1}) peaks due to long-lived states of the $[IHI]$ complex which lie well above the $I + HI(v=0)$ asymptote.

Experimental

The high resolution threshold photodetachment spectrometer has been described in detail previously.⁴ IHI^- anions are generated by expanding a 10% mixture of HI in either helium or argon through the 0.030" diameter orifice of a pulsed molecular beam valve. Just outside the valve orifice, the molecular beam is crossed with a 1 keV, 250 μ A electron beam. Negative ions are

formed in the continuum flow region of the free jet expansion and internally cool as the expansion progresses; we have measured a rotational temperature of 75-100 K for SH^- generated in this source. The ions are accelerated coaxially to 500 eV and mass-selected with a beam-modulated time-of-flight mass spectrometer.⁵

The mass-selected IHI^- anions are photodetached using an excimer-pumped frequency-doubled tunable dye laser operating at 50 Hz. Rhodamine 590, 610 and 640 laser dyes were used and doubled with either KDP or BBO resulting in 3-5 mJ/pulse. The wavelength scale was calibrated using the optogalvanic effect in a hollow cathode neon discharge.

Our photoelectron detection scheme is based on the design of Schlag and coworkers⁶ for threshold photoionization of neutrals. A delay of 180 ns subsequent to photodetachment allows the more energetic electrons and the threshold electrons to separate. A weak field is applied along the ion beam axis to extract the photoelectrons. Electrons produced with nearly zero kinetic energy are selectively detected using a combination of spatial and temporal filtering. Although the ultimate resolution of the instrument is 0.3 meV, the resolution under the operating conditions used in these measurements was between 1-2 meV. The electron signal is normalized to the laser power and the total ion signal. Typical data collection times are 5000 laser shots per point for the spectra shown below.

Results and discussion

The new results will be discussed in the context of the IHI^- photoelectron spectrum shown in Figure 1 which was obtained previously on our fixed-

frequency spectrometer.³ In this spectrum, the ions were photodetached using the 4th harmonic of a Nd:YAG laser (266 nm or 4.66 eV). The resolution of the instrument is 8 meV for 0.65 eV electrons and degrades as $E^{3/2}$ at higher electron kinetic energy. Three peaks of varying widths were observed; these were assigned to transitions to the $v_3' = 0, 2,$ and 4 antisymmetric stretch levels of the [IHI] complex. All three peaks appear to lie above the $I + HI(v=0)$ asymptote (which occurs at an electron kinetic energy of 0.86 ± 0.13 eV) and therefore correspond to levels of the [IHI] complex with sufficient energy to dissociate. The spacing between the peaks is substantially less than the vibrational frequency in diatomic HI (0.286 eV⁸), indicating that photodetachment of IHI^- accesses the transition state region of the $I + HI$ potential energy surface where the H atom is interacting strongly with the two iodine atoms.

A vital question in the interpretation of this spectrum is whether the peak widths in Figure 1 are determined solely by the lifetime of the various [IHI] v_3 levels or are instead envelopes for unresolved fine structure. Using a model potential energy surface⁹ for the $I + HI$ reaction, our simulation³ of the IHI^- photoelectron spectrum and more sophisticated simulations by Schatz^{10,11} and Bowman¹² have suggested that higher resolution studies of the $v_3' = 2$ and 4 peaks in Figure 1 might reveal progressions of closely spaced metastable symmetric stretch levels of the [IHI] complex. These levels are of considerable interest since they are responsible for the sharp resonance structure seen in scattering calculations on heavy + light-heavy reactions.¹³⁻¹⁶

The threshold photodetachment spectra of the three peaks in Figure 1

are shown in Figures 2-4. The horizontal axis at the bottom of each plot shows the photodetachment wavelength λ in nanometers. For ease of comparison with Figure 1, the top axis shows the corresponding electron kinetic energy (eKE), in electron volts, that would result in a photoelectron spectrum at 266 nm; the two axes are related by $eKE = 1240(1/266 - 1/\lambda)$.

The threshold photodetachment spectrum of the $v_3' = 2$ peak (Figure 2) reveals three partially resolved peaks spaced by approximately 100 cm^{-1} (12.4 meV). This frequency is in the range expected for symmetric stretch levels of the [IHI] complex. In fact, simulations of transitions to the $v_3' = 2$ level of [IHI] are quite similar in appearance to the experimental result; they also show a symmetric stretch progression of three peaks decreasing in intensity towards lower wavelength.^{3,10,12} The experimental peak widths of approximately 100 cm^{-1} (12.4 meV) are considerably broader than the predicted resonance widths of 16 cm^{-1} (2 meV).¹⁰ Nonetheless, the correspondence between the experimental and simulated spectra strongly suggests we are seeing a progression in quasi-bound [IHI] symmetric stretch states.

Further evidence for this comes from Figure 3 which shows the threshold photodetachment spectrum to $v_3'=4$ levels of [IHI]. Four well-resolved peaks are evident in this spectrum. The peaks are substantially narrower than those in Figure 2; peaks A and a are 30 cm^{-1} wide, and peak B is 45 cm^{-1} wide. Peaks A and a are separated by $134 \pm 5 \text{ cm}^{-1}$, peaks a and b by $130 \pm 5 \text{ cm}^{-1}$, and peaks A and B by $93 \pm 5 \text{ cm}^{-1}$. This pattern suggests that peaks b, a, and A form one progression, and peaks A and B form a second.

The intensities of peaks a and b are sensitive to the ion source operating

conditions. Combination bands in matrix isolation studies of IHI^- have yielded values of 130 cm^{-1} and 126 cm^{-1} for the $0 \rightarrow 1$ and $1 \rightarrow 2$ symmetric stretch transitions in the ion.¹⁷ We therefore assign peaks a and b to hot band transitions originating from the $v_1'' = 1$ and $v_1'' = 2$ symmetric stretch levels of the ion and terminating in the same level of the neutral as peak A, while peak A originates from the $v_1'' = 0$ level of the ion. The a/A intensity ratio yields a vibrational temperature of 100 K for the IHI^- ions.

Peaks A and B are assigned to transitions between the $v_1'' = 0$ level of the ion and two different symmetric stretch levels of the $[\text{IHI}]$ complex. This assignment is consistent with the noticeably different peak widths which imply that the transitions are to two distinct levels of the complex with different lifetimes. The widths yield lower bounds of 180 and 120 fs for the upper state lifetimes of A and B, respectively. Since the symmetric stretch vibration of $[\text{IHI}]$ is strongly coupled to the dissociation coordinate of the complex, it seems reasonable that the higher lying symmetric stretch level of the complex (peak B) should have a shorter lifetime. Similar trends have been observed in collinear scattering calculations on the $\text{Cl} + \text{HCl}$ ¹⁸ and $\text{F} + \text{DBr}$ reactions.¹⁹ Note that a substantial portion of the width of peak A is due to the experimental resolution, so the upper state lifetime for this transition may be considerably longer.

The symmetric stretch levels of the $[\text{IHI}]$ complex with $v_3' = 4$ lie 0.49 eV above the $\text{I} + \text{HI}$ ($v = 0$) asymptote compared to 0.30 eV for the levels with $v_3' = 2$. The peak widths in Figures 2 and 3, however, indicate that the lifetimes

of the $v_3' = 4$ levels are considerably longer than the $v_3' = 2$ levels. Although this result may seem surprising, the v_3 antisymmetric stretch vibration is expected to be poorly coupled to the dissociation coordinate of the [IHI] complex.²³ In fact, on the I + HI surface used in the simulations, the vibrationally adiabatic potential for the $v_3 = 4$ level of [IHI] has a deeper well than the adiabatic potential for the $v_3 = 2$ level,^{3,20} suggesting that states of the complex with $v_3 = 4$ are more effectively 'trapped' in the transition state region. In his three-dimensional simulations of the IDI^- photoelectron spectrum, Schatz²¹ found that transitions to [IDI] symmetric stretch levels with $v_3' = 4$ were indeed narrower than those with $v_3' = 2$.

The threshold photodetachment spectrum for the transition to $v_3'=0$ is shown in Figure 4. It consists of a progression of broad peaks spaced by an interval that increases from 160 cm^{-1} to 200 cm^{-1} towards lower laser wavelength. This is quite different from the 100 cm^{-1} interval seen in the other spectra. In contrast to the $v_3' = 2$ and 4 states of [IHI], photodetachment to $v_3' = 0$ is expected to primarily access I + HI direct scattering wavefunctions rather than quasi-bound resonances.^{10,11,12} (The [IHI] bound states which have been predicted in several calculations²²⁻²⁴ are believed to be an artifact due to inaccuracies in the potential energy surface.) In light of this, the observation of any structure in the photodetachment spectrum is interesting. A possible explanation, suggested by Schatz's IHI⁻ simulation¹¹, arises from the correspondence between the peak positions in Figure 4 and the energetic thresholds for the asymptotic levels I + HI($v=0, j=11-16$). The threshold for these asymptotic states line up reasonably well with the peaks in the

photodetachment spectrum as indicated in Figure 4. This assumes the threshold for $I + HI(v=0, j=0)$ is at 3.79 eV (327.14 nm), well within the uncertainty of the experimental value of 3.80 ± 0.13 eV (see reference 7). Our results therefore indicate that photodetachment to the $v_3' = 0$ level of $[IHI]$ is enhanced near thresholds for formation of $HI(v=0)$ in high rotational states.

Schatz's simulation¹¹ of the $[IHI]^-$ spectrum also shows transitions to the $v_3' = 0$ level of $[IHI]$ which approximately correspond to asymptotic $I + HI$ rotational energy levels. However, his calculation shows significant intensity down to the $I + HI(j=0)$ level. The apparent drop in signal for $j < 11$ in our spectrum may indicate that on the real $I + HI$ potential energy surface, the scattering wavefunctions which asymptotically correlate to $I + HI (v=0, j<11)$ do not have much amplitude in the region of the surface probed by photodetachment. This lack of penetration into the transition state region might be expected if relatively few $I + HI(v=0, j<11)$ collisions lead to reaction. Our results may therefore provide an indication of the reactivity of HI rotational states.

Classical trajectory²⁵ and quantum scattering calculations²⁶ on several model $Cl + HCl$ potential energy surfaces show that the dependence of the reaction cross section on reactant rotation is very sensitive to the bend potential in the transition state region. Surfaces with 'looser' bend potentials show very low reactivity for $HCl (v=0, j=0)$ and greatly enhanced reactivity for rotationally excited HCl , while surfaces with tighter bend potentials show high reactivity for $HCl (v=0, j=0)$. Our interpretation of the $v_3' = 0$ peaks suggests that a surface with a looser bend potential than the model surface in Ref. 9 is

more appropriate for the I + HI reaction.

Summary

The high resolution threshold photodetachment spectra of IHI^- reveals progressions in closely-spaced symmetric stretch levels of the $[\text{IHI}]$ complex which lie well above $\text{I} + \text{HI}(v=0)$. The narrow peaks observed in the spectra demonstrate the existence of the relatively long-lived metastable levels of the $[\text{IHI}]$ complex which lead to resonances in the $\text{I} + \text{HI}$ reaction. We also observe structure associated with $\text{I} + \text{HI}(v=0, j)$ asymptotic levels for $j > 11$ which may indicate enhanced reactivity for rotationally excited states of $\text{HI}(v=0)$. The spectra presented here represent a significant step towards the spectroscopic characterization of the transition state region in a chemical reaction. We plan to obtain threshold photodetachment spectra of IDI^- and other bihalides to see if these, too, reveal structure that was not observed in earlier photoelectron spectroscopy studies.

Acknowledgments

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Figure Captions

Figure 1: The fixed-frequency (at 4.66 eV, 266 nm) photoelectron spectrum of IHI^- reveals a progression in the antisymmetric stretch mode of the $[\text{IHI}]$ complex. The $v_3'=0, 2, 4$ estimated peak positions (widths) are: 0.734 eV (0.074 eV), 0.560 eV (0.023 eV), 0.369 eV (0.050 eV), respectively.³

Figure 2: The threshold photodetachment spectrum of the $v_3'=2$ peak in Figure 1. The axes are defined in the text. The spacing between points is 0.1 nm (approximately 10 cm^{-1}). The positions of the peaks labelled A, B, and C, are 301.97 nm, 301.02 nm, and 299.95 nm respectively. Peak A has a width of approximately 120 cm^{-1} .

Figure 3: Threshold photodetachment spectrum of the $v_3'=4$ peak of the $[\text{IHI}]$ complex. Peak positions are A (288.39 nm), B (287.63 nm), a (289.51 nm) and b (290.60 nm). The spacing between points is 0.1 nm.

Figure 4: Threshold photodetachment spectrum of the $v_3'=0$ peak in Figure 1. Peak positions from left to right in the figure are 309.56 nm, 311.67 nm, 313.73 nm, 315.10 nm, and 316.75 nm. The energetic thresholds for the asymptotic levels $\text{I} + \text{HI}(v=0, j=11-16)$ are indicated. The spacing between points is 0.1 nm.

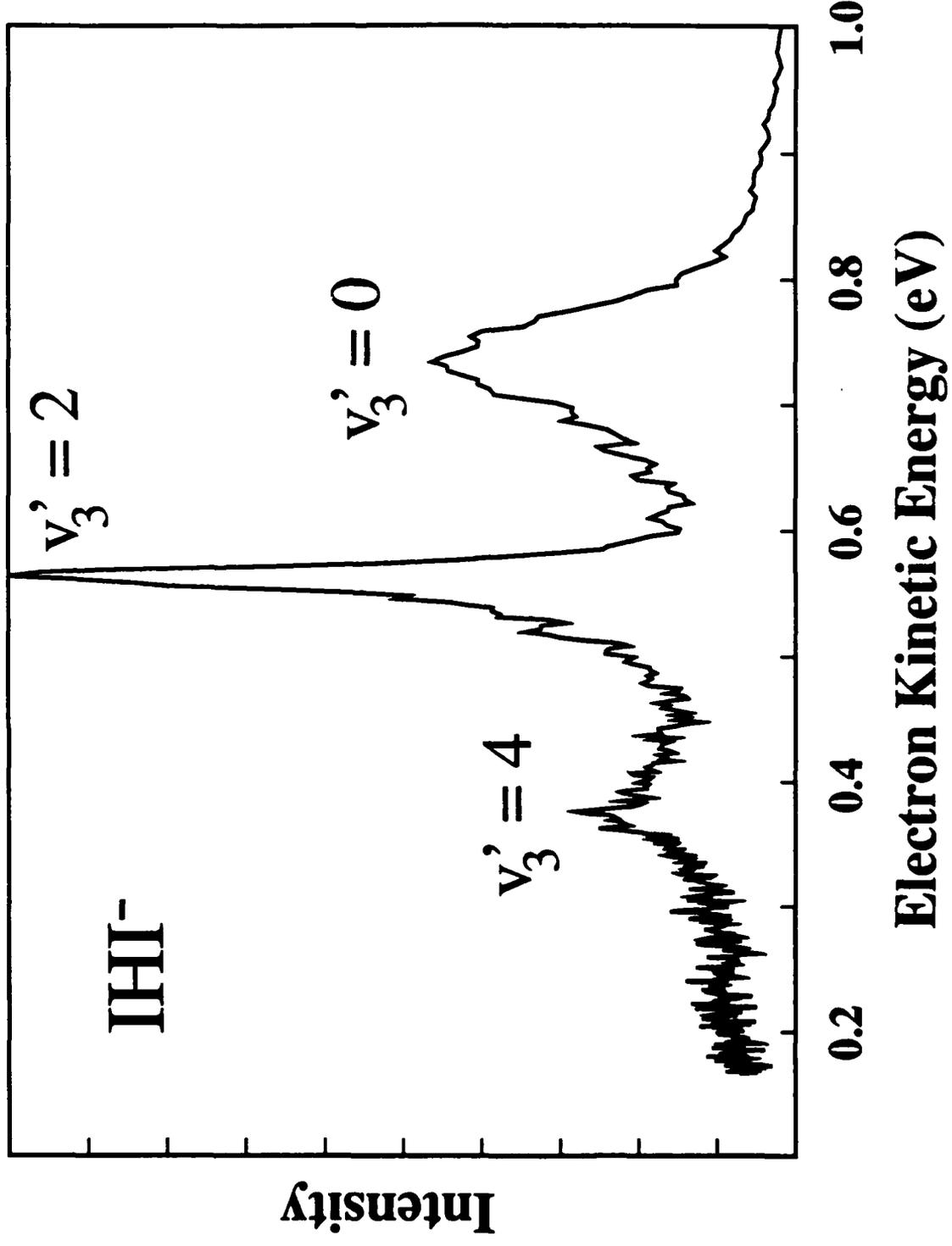


Fig. 1

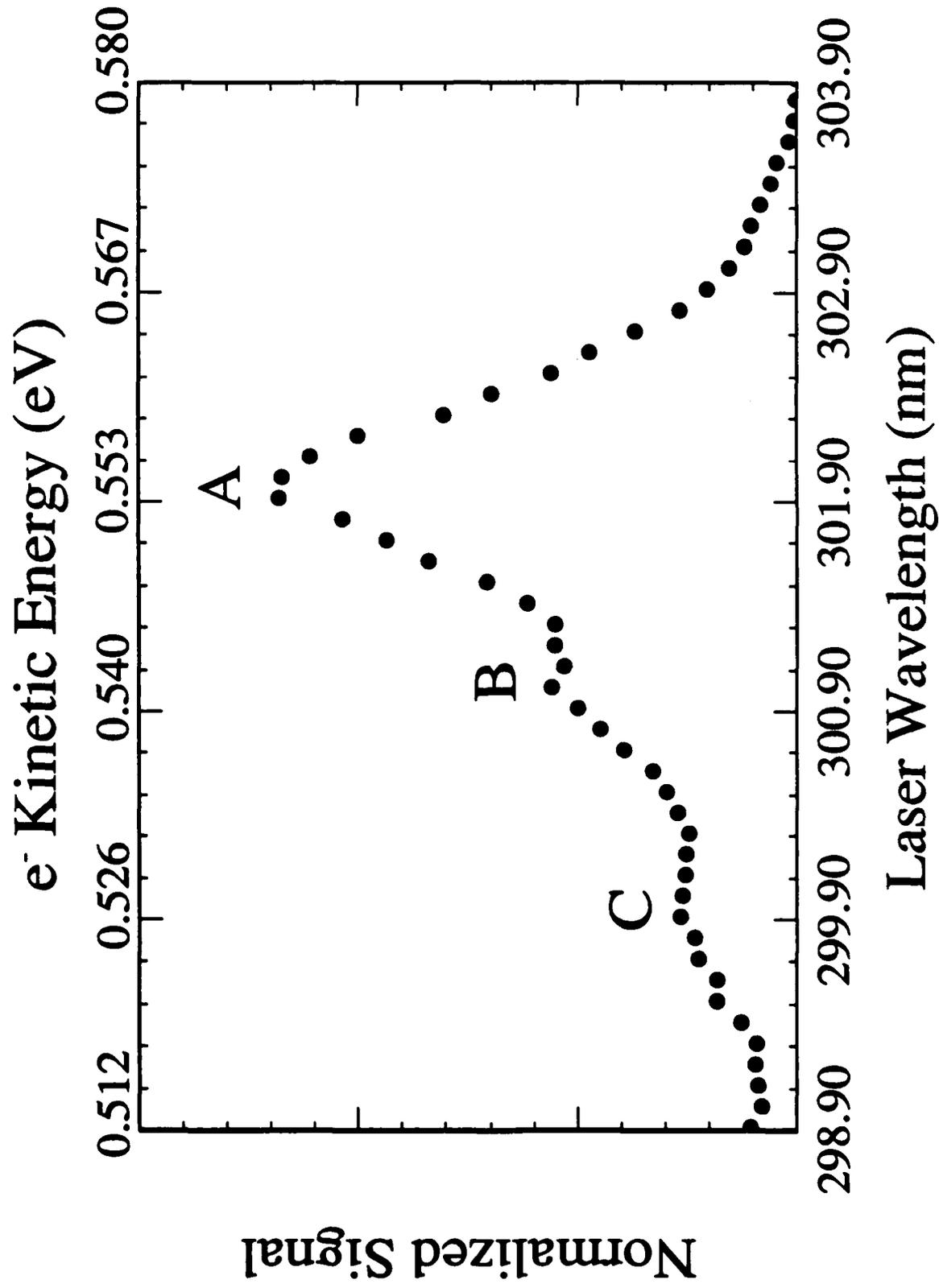


Fig. 2

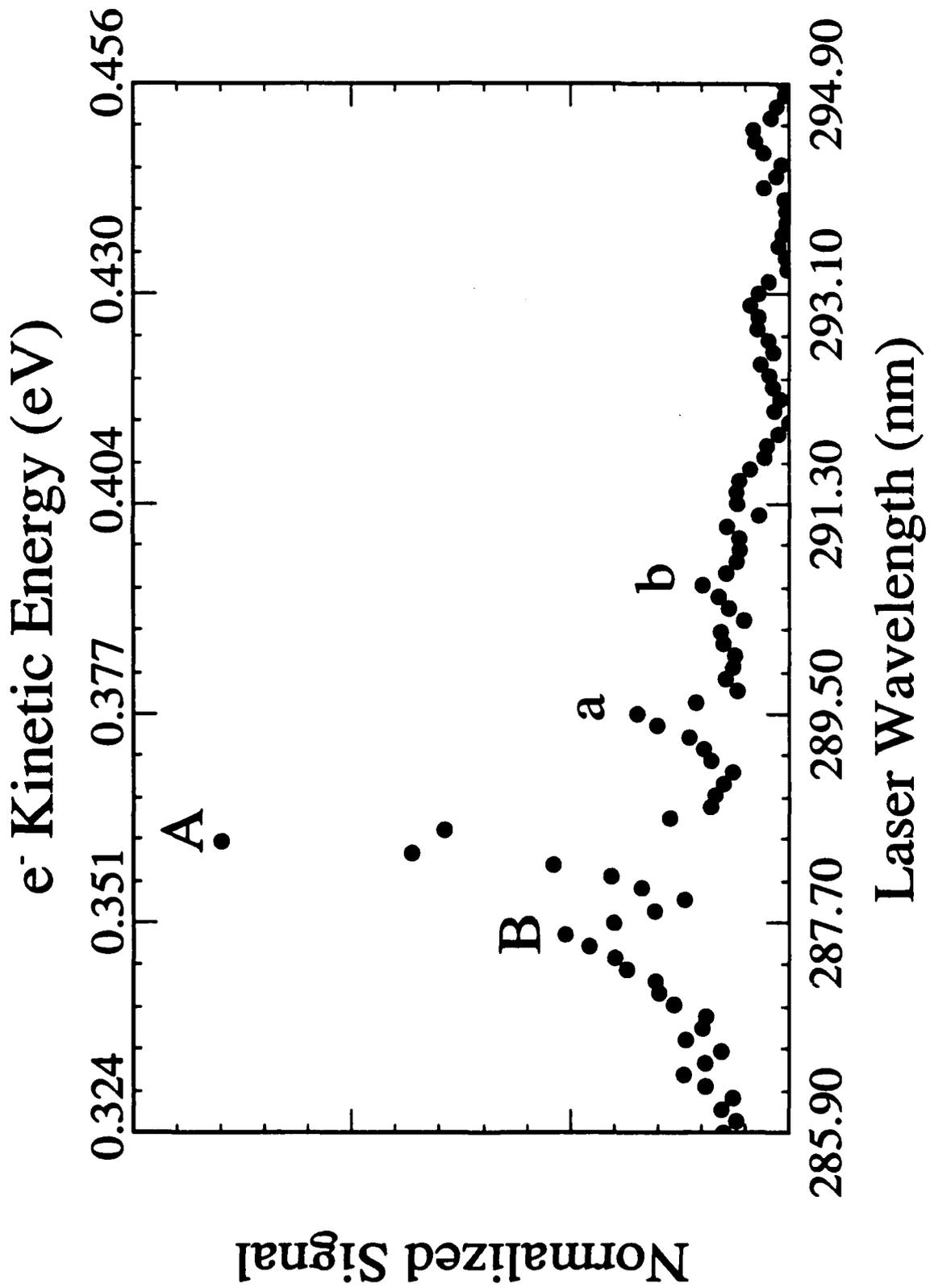


Fig. 3

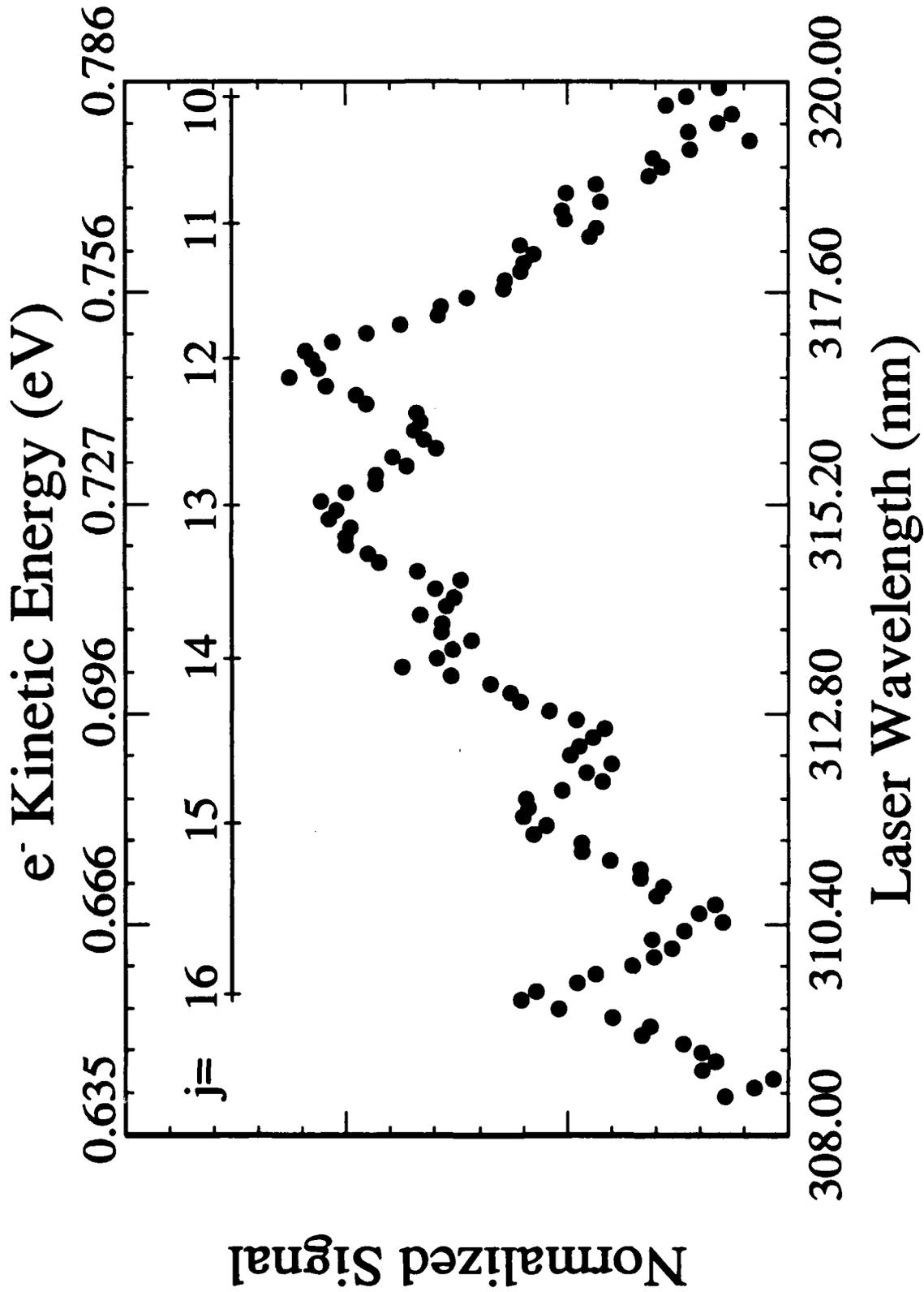


Fig. 4