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### Separation and Column Performance of Certain Radiotracers Using a Chromatographic Column of Celite Loaded with Adogen-381 and Selected Eluents

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SEPARATION AND COLUMN PERFORMANCE OF CERTAIN  
RADIOTRACERS USING A CHROMATOGRAPHIC COLUMN  
OF CELITE LOADED WITH ADOGEN-381 AND SELECTED  
ELUENTS

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ABSTRACT

The radiotracers Mo(VI), Sc(III), Ce(III), Eu(III), Tm(III), Fe(III), Hg(II), Cd(II), Zn(II), Cu(II) and Co(II) could be separated from each others using a hydrophobic celite column coated with Adogen-381 together with the mobile phases hydrochloric acid, nitric acid, potassium thiocyanate, ammonium acetate or water. The elution behaviour was satisfactorily interpreted. The effect of the flow rate (50-300 ul/min) and temperature (26-70°C) on the column performance of Co(II) was also studied.

INTRODUCTION

Amines and quaternary ammonium salts found many applications in column chromatography (1-6). Different classes of amines were utilized for the separation of many elements using a variety of supporting agents and different mobile phases. In this contribution, the

system comprising the commercially available tertiary amine Adogen-381 together with stationary phase, hydrophobic celite and selected mobile phases of HCl, HNO<sub>3</sub>, KSCN, CH<sub>3</sub>COONH<sub>4</sub> or H<sub>2</sub>O was employed to isolate eleven radiotracers from each others. Considering the importance of the flow rate and temperature on the column performance (7, 8) these parameters were also studied.

### EXPERIMENTAL

#### Chemicals and radiotracers

Adogen-381 of average molecular weight 360 was delivered from Archer-Daniels Midland Company, USA. Commercial diatomaceous earth celite No. 560 was supplied from John Manville, USA. The radiotracers : Sc-46, Ce-141, Eu(152+154), Tm-170, Fe-59, Co-60, Cu-64, Zn-65, Cd-115, Hg-203, and Mo-99 were prepared by neutron activation, and their radiochemical purity exceeded 99%. All other chemicals and reagents were of A.R. grade and obtained from B.D.H. or Merck.

#### Chromatographic Procedure

The stationary phase, celite, was dried at 105°C over night and made hydrophobic by the addition of 50 cm<sup>3</sup> of 5% silane-ethanol with thorough mixing. The mixture was left in a dessicator under slight vacuum to remove excess silane and ethanol. The hydrophobic celite was washed with distilled water to remove any chloride ions followed by oven drying at 105°C. The Adogen-381 was loaded on the hydrophobic celite by mixing 5.0 g with 100 cm<sup>3</sup> 5% Adogen solution in acetone. Excess acetone was removed by evaporation with interrupted stirring at 80°C. A 0.5 cm i.d. x 10 cm

borosilicate glass column with platinum calibrated tip to produce 25  $\mu$ l drop size was used. This column was loaded with 1.6 celite coated with Adogen-381 according to the procedure previously reported (9), to give a bed height of 9 cm. In all cases, the column was preconditioned with 5.0  $\text{cm}^3$  of the first eluent employed and the radiotracers were loaded on the column from a 50  $\mu$ l syringe. Unless otherwise stated, the eluent solutions were allowed to percolate with a flow rate of 75  $\mu$ l/min. Known volume fractions of the eluent were collected for radiometric assay using an ORTEC-Scintillation counter.

The effects of the flow rate and temperature on column performance were studied using Co-60 and 2M HCl solution as eluent.

From the elution curve, the distribution coefficient,  $D$ , was determined using the relation (10) ;

$$D = (V_{\max} - v) / w$$

where  $V_{\max}$  is the eluent volume to the elution maximum,  $v$  is the free column and  $w$  is the weight of the stationary phase. The number of theoretical plates,  $N$ , was calculated by means of the equation (11) :

$$N = 8 (V_{\max} / \beta)^2$$

where  $\beta$  is the band width of the elution peak at  $1/e$  of the maximum elution concentration. Dividing the height of the column by  $N$ , the height equivalent to theoretical plate, HETP, was obtained.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The radiochemical separation procedures developed in this work are based on the expected extraction behaviour of Adogen-381 and the types of the species of the different radiotracers in the different solutions used

as eluents. Thus, a- the tertiary amine Adogen-381 is expected to extract both neutral and anionic species(12), b- the lanthanide elements are hardly complexed from hydrochloric or nitric acid solutions up to 8 molar (13), c- in aqueous HCl solution of concentrations higher than 8M, iron(III) is present in neutral or anionic chloride forms (14) and at lower HCl molarities, cationic iron chloride complexes are predominating, d- molybdate is extracted by tertiary amines from all hydrochloric acid concentrations and unextracted from all nitric acid concentrations (15), e- in HCl solutions, copper is present as the chloride complex, while from thiocyanate solutions it is poorly extracted by the tertiary amines due to the competition of  $\text{SCN}^-$  anion to the amine solution (15,16), f- zinc forms strong chloride and thiocyanate complexes which are extracted by tertiary amines, When zinc is slightly complexed from hydrochloric acid solution, water was found quite suitable to bring it to the free cationic state and thus be eluted. In presence of HCl and KSCN, water was found not enough to elute zinc in a suitable volume. Therefore, 1M  $\text{NH}_4\text{CH}_3\text{COO}$  eluted zinc, most probably as the strong cationic ammino complex (16),  $[\text{Zn}(\text{NH}_3)_n]^{2+}$ , g-cadmium is highly complexed by chloride ions and extracted by tertiary amine from HCl solution of different concentrations. Cadmium nitrate complexes are hardly present in nitric acid medium and the elution of Cd(II) using nitric acid was found convenient, h- mercury forms chloride and thiocyanate complexes, therefore, its uptake from these solutions is expected (16). Elution from high  $\text{SCN}^-$  solution is mainly related to the replacement of the  $\text{SCN}^-$  anion with the mercury complex.

In figures 1, and 2, the elution profiles of the eight radiochemical separation procedures developed are

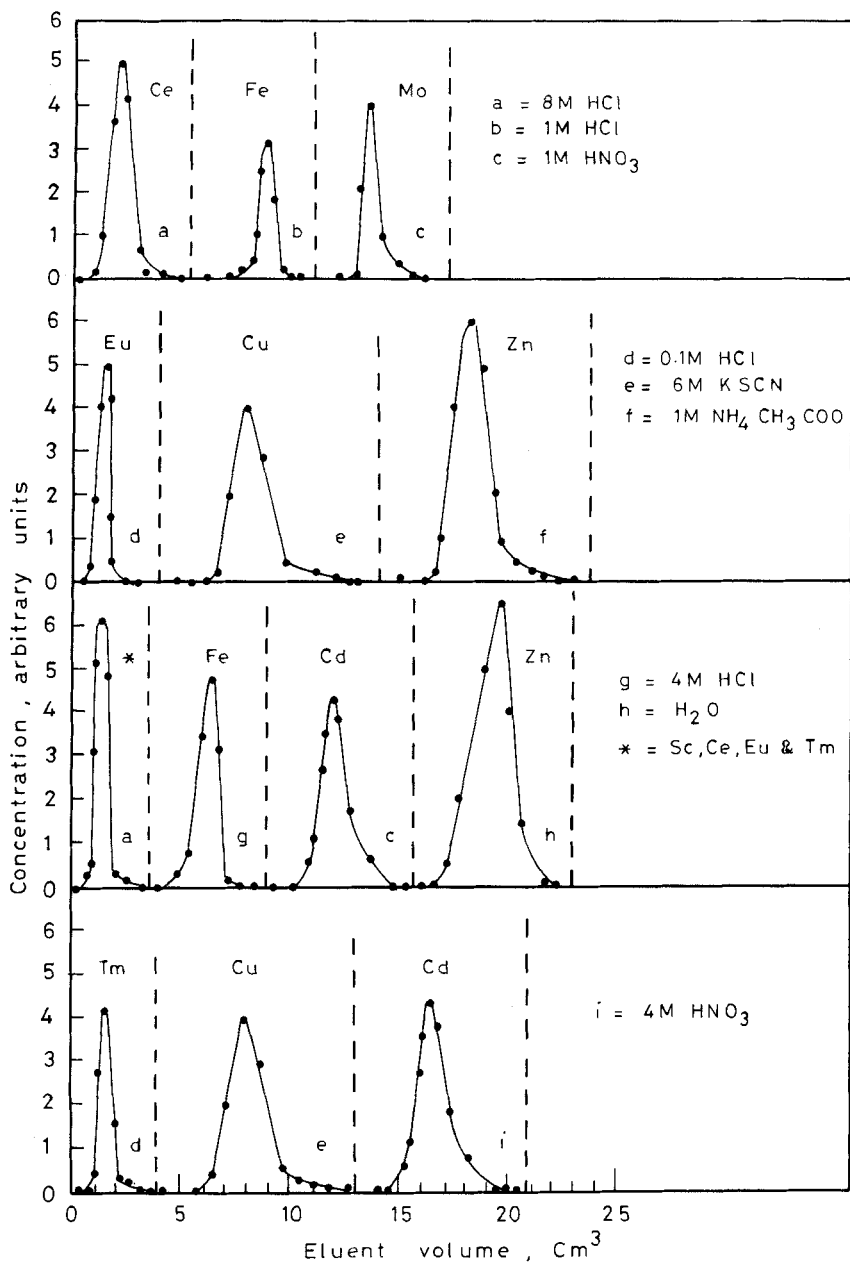


Figure 1 Elution profile : Ce(III), Fe(III), Mo(VI), Eu(III), Cu(II), Zn(II), (Sc(III), Ce(III), Eu(III) & Tm(III)), Tm(III) and Cd(II).

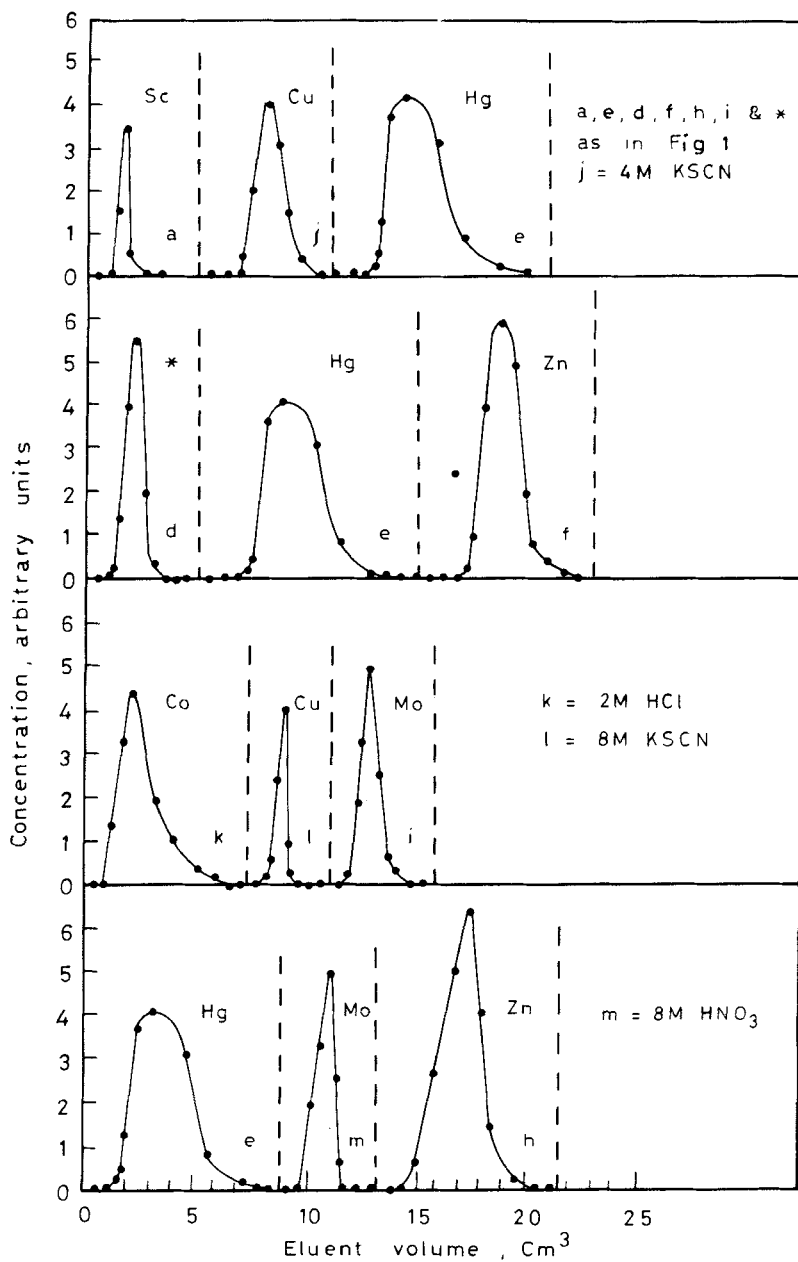


Figure 2 Elution profile : Sc(III), Cu(II), Hg(II), (Sc(III), Ce(III), Eu(III) & Tm(III) ), Zn(II), Co(II) and Mo(VI).

TABLE 1

Effect of Flow Rate on the Elution Profile(Co(II))

Flow rate ul/min.	Distribution coeffi- cient.	Band width cm <sup>3</sup>	Number of theoreti- cal plates.	Plate height (HETP) mm
50	0.42	0.58	60.50	1.49
75	0.42	0.89	26.60	3.38
150	0.42	1.00	20.50	4.39
225	0.42	1.30	12.51	7.19
300	0.42	1.45	9.70	9.28

given. In all cases, the investigations were carried out at  $26 \pm 1^\circ\text{C}$ . The total concentration of the radiotracers did not exceeded  $10^{-4}\text{M}$  (equimolar amounts of each tracer). The radiochemical purity of each separated fraction was more than 98%.

In order to evaluate the column performance utilized, the effects of eluent flow rate and temperature on the elution profile were investigated using Co(II). It was found that, the distribution coefficient does not change with the flow rate (50-300 ul/min) whereby the band width of the eluted cobalt increased by increasing the flow rate (Table 1).

When the theoretical plate height was calculated and plotted against the flow rate, a linear relationship was obtained (Fig. 3). The effect of temperature on the distribution coefficient, elution profile and theoretical plate height of Co(II) is given in Table 2.



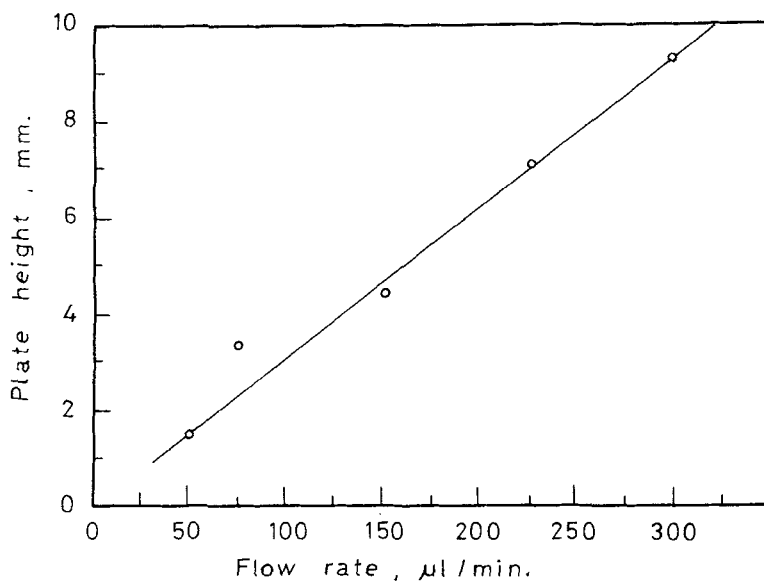


Figure 3 Effect of flow rate on the plate height for the elution of Co(II) by 2M HCl at  $26 \pm 1^\circ\text{C}$ .

TABLE 2

Effect of Temperature at 75  $\mu\text{l}/\text{min}$ .

Temperature °C	Distribution coefficient.	Band width $\text{cm}^3$	Number of theoretical plate.	Plate height (HETP), mm
26	0.42	0.89	26.6	3.38
30	0.42	0.87	28.2	3.19
44	0.42	0.75	37.7	2.39
55	0.42	0.62	55.6	1.62
70	0.42	0.37	155.3	0.58

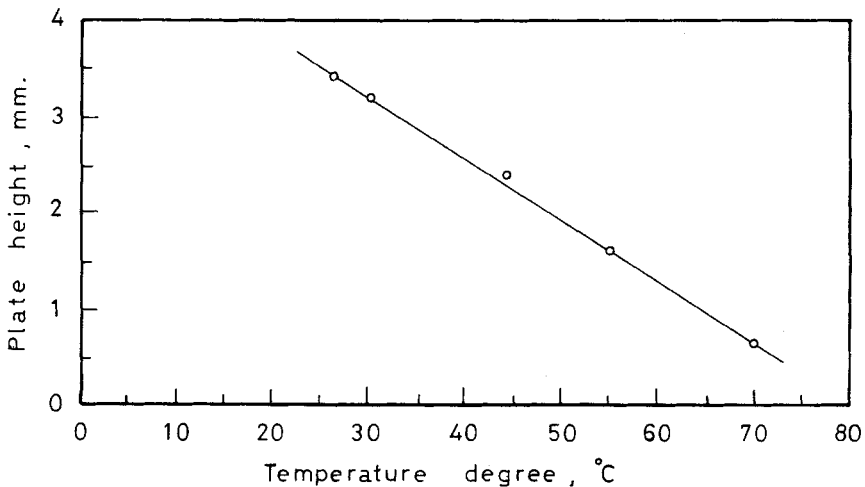


Figure 4 Effect of temperature on the plate height for the elution of Co(II) by 2M HCl at 75 ul/min.

It is clear that within the temperature range investigated (26-70°C), the D value does not change, however, the band width decreased by increasing temperature. Subsequently, the number of theoretical plates of the column increased. This is illustrated in Fig. 4, where the theoretical plate height decreased linearly by increasing temperature.

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