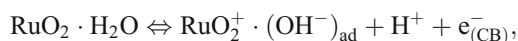


# On the charge storage mechanism at RuO<sub>2</sub>/0.5 M H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> interface

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**Abstract** Comparative study of capacitive properties of RuO<sub>2</sub>/0.5 M H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> and Ru/0.5 M H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> interfaces has been performed with a view to find out the nature of electrochemical processes involved in the charge storage mechanism of ruthenium (IV) oxide. The methods of cyclic voltammetry and scanning electron microscopy (SEM) were employed for the investigation of electrochemical behavior and surface morphology of RuO<sub>2</sub> electrodes. It has been suggested that supercapacitor behavior of RuO<sub>2</sub> phase in the potential *E* range between 0.4 and 1.4 V vs reference hydrogen electrode (RHE) should be attributed to double-layer-type capacitance, related to non-faradaic highly reversible process of RuO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> · (OH<sup>-</sup>)<sub>ad</sub> ionic pair formation and annihilation at RuO<sub>2</sub>/electrolyte interface as described by following summary equation:

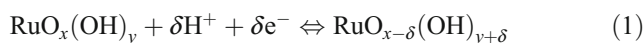


where RuO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> and e<sup>-</sup><sub>(CB)</sub> represent holes and electrons in valence and conduction bands, respectively. The pseudocapacitance of interface under investigation is related to partial reduction of RuO<sub>2</sub> layer at *E* < 0.2 V and its subsequent recovery during the anodic process.

**Keywords** RuO<sub>2</sub> · Electrochemical supercapacitors · Charge storage mechanism

## Introduction

Hydrous ruthenium dioxide, RuO<sub>2</sub>·*x*H<sub>2</sub>O, represents promising material to be employed in electrochemical capacitors or the so-called supercapacitors. It has been reported that specific capacitance *C*<sup>sp</sup> of nano/micro-metric layers of RuO<sub>2</sub> coated on the conducting inert substrate with large specific surface, e.g., activated carbon, exceeds thousands of farads per 1 g of RuO<sub>2</sub> [1, 2]. Generally, the overall capacitance of electrochemical capacitors is supposed to consist of double-layer capacitance, *C*<sub>DL</sub>, arising from charge separation at the electrode/electrolyte interface, and pseudocapacitance, *C*<sub>PC</sub>, determined by faradaic redox processes taking place at the electrode surface. In the case of RuO<sub>2</sub>·*x*H<sub>2</sub>O, pseudocapacitance is considered to play predominant role in charging process [3–5], and the charge storage mechanism is described by the following equation:



proposed by Trasatti and Buzzanca [6]. It is believed that highly reversible redox transitions between Ru(II)/Ru(III), Ru(III)/Ru(IV) [3], and Ru(IV)/Ru(VI) [2] taking place within RuO<sub>2</sub>·*x*H<sub>2</sub>O phase are involved in pseudocapacitive charging and discharging mechanism. According to Eq. 1, RuO<sub>2</sub>·*x*H<sub>2</sub>O should behave like mixed electron/proton conductor, and effective electron and proton transport pathways are necessary for the efficient charge storage. The former ones are predetermined by electronic conductivity of RuO<sub>2</sub>·*x*H<sub>2</sub>O [7], whereas the latter ones are provided by the presence of structural water. The influence of structural H<sub>2</sub>O on the capacitive properties of hydrous ruthenium oxide should be particularly emphasized. Firstly, it is known that anhydrous crystalline RuO<sub>2</sub> is good electronic conductor, but poor capacitor, whereas amorphous hydrous RuO<sub>2</sub>·*x*H<sub>2</sub>O is good capacitor with lower

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electronic, yet better ionic conductivity [8]. Moreover, nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectroscopic study [9] has shown that dependence of  $\text{RuO}_2 \cdot x\text{H}_2\text{O}$  specific capacitance on the structural water content,  $x$ , goes through a maximum at  $x \approx 0.85$ , i.e., at the point where the nominal composition of the oxide approaches  $\text{RuO}_2 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$ . Practically, the same result was obtained independently by Zheng et al. [10] on the basis of electrochemical measurements performed with sol–gel-derived  $\text{RuO}_2 \cdot x\text{H}_2\text{O}$  powders annealed at various temperatures. Naturally, structural water content and, hence, the specific capacitance of  $\text{RuO}_2 \cdot x\text{H}_2\text{O}$  should be strongly dependent on ruthenium oxide synthesis method and electrode pretreatment conditions. Therefore, it is not surprising that  $C^{\text{sp}}$  values reported in literature for various  $\text{RuO}_2 \cdot x\text{H}_2\text{O}$  samples differ significantly [1, 2, 8, 9, 11].

On the basis of potential scan rate,  $\nu$  dependence of nanoparticulate  $\text{RuO}_2$  capacitance, Sugimoto et al. [12, 13] have deconvoluted the overall  $C$  into  $\nu$ -independent  $C_{\text{DL}}$  and pseudocapacitance  $C_{\text{PC}}$  related to reversible and irreversible faradaic redox processes. In the case of anhydrous  $\text{RuO}_2$ , it has been found [12] that pseudocapacitance makes  $\sim 60\%$  of the overall  $C$  at scan rates as low as  $0.5 \text{ mV s}^{-1}$ , whereas at  $500 \text{ mV s}^{-1}$ , it is just about  $10\%$  of the overall  $C$ , which means that  $C_{\text{DL}}$  constitutes the major part of the overall capacitance. In the case of hydrous  $\text{RuO}_2$  with nominal composition of  $\text{RuO}_2 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$ , the portion of  $C_{\text{PC}}$  at low scan rate increased up to  $\sim 70\%$  [13]. The authors, however, gave no concrete suggestion regarding the nature of the processes involved in double layer and pseudocapacitive charging. It is known that anhydrous  $\text{RuO}_2$ , which forms on ruthenium electrode at  $E > 0.8 \text{ V}$  and passivates the surface, is hardly reducible even at  $E < 0 \text{ V}$  [14]. Thus, it is unclear how the aforementioned highly reversible redox transitions between various Ru oxidation states can occur within the  $\text{RuO}_2$  phase.

In the present study, the mechanism of faradaic and non-faradaic charging processes at  $\text{RuO}_2/0.5 \text{ M H}_2\text{SO}_4$  interface has been analyzed in the case of electrochemically and thermally formed layers of  $\text{RuO}_2$  on Ti and Au substrates with a view to find out the nature of these processes. The electrochemical behavior of metallic ruthenium electrode prepared in form of Ru electroplate has been also studied.

## Experimental

The equipment used for voltammetric measurements is described in detail elsewhere [15].

To produce working electrodes, ruthenium coating ( $\sim 1 \mu\text{m}$  thick) was deposited electrochemically from acid  $\text{RuOHCl}_3$  electrolyte either directly on titanium ( $\sim 99.9\%$ ) wire ( $\varnothing = 4 \text{ mm}$ ) activated chemically in diluted  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  (1:1) at  $353 \text{ K}$  for 2–3 min or on gold-plated titanium substrate. Thickness of gold underlayer was  $0.1\text{--}0.2 \mu\text{m}$ .

Electrochemical formation of  $\text{RuO}_2$  layer was performed as follows:  $\sim 1\text{-}\mu\text{m}$  thick ruthenium coating on Ti substrate was anodized at  $1.45 \text{ V}$ , i.e., in  $\text{O}_2$  evolution region in the solution of  $0.5 \text{ M H}_2\text{SO}_4$  for 30 min. The formation of brown  $\text{RuO}_2$  layer could be seen visibly.

To prepare the  $\text{RuO}_2$  electrode thermally, four to six layers of  $\text{RuOHCl}_3$  solution were painted onto Au substrate, with each layer heated preliminary at  $673 \text{ K}$  for 10 to 15 min to ensure the adhesion, and then heated additionally for 1 h at  $673 \text{ K}$ . The amount of  $\text{RuO}_2$  deposited on the electrode was about  $0.45 \text{ mg cm}^{-2}$ , which corresponds to oxide layer thickness of  $\sim 0.6 \mu\text{m}$ .

A conventional three-compartment glass cell was used for the measurements. Pure Pt (99.99%) plate served as a counter electrode. Hydrogen electrode in a working solution (RHE) was used as reference. Current and charge density values in the text refer to apparent surface area of the electrode.

Sulfuric acid of analytical grade and triply distilled water were used to prepare the solutions. All electrochemical measurements were carried out in inert argon atmosphere at room temperature ( $293 \text{ K}$ ).

Surface morphology of  $\text{RuO}_2$  electrodes was investigated using Scanning Electron Microscope EVO 50 EP (Carl Zeiss SMT AG, Germany).

## Results and discussion

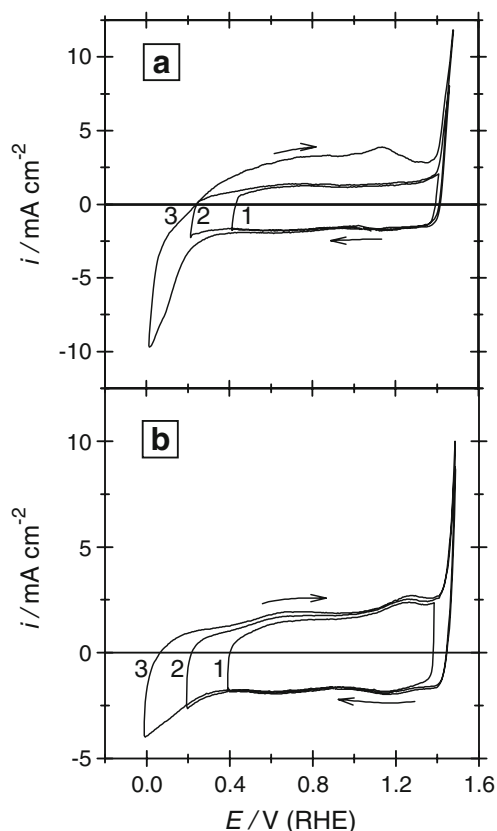
Figure 1a displays cyclic voltammograms of  $\text{RuO}_2$  layer formed electrochemically on Ru-plated titanium substrate in the solution of  $0.5 \text{ M H}_2\text{SO}_4$ . Cycle 1 in Fig. 1a illustrates the well-known rectangular-shaped voltammetric response, where anodic and cathodic current density  $i$  is practically independent of potential  $E$  over the range from  $\sim 0.6$  to  $\sim 1.4 \text{ V}$ . Figure 2a illustrates the dependence of electrochemically formed  $\text{RuO}_2$  electrode capacitance on potential scan rate within  $0.4 \text{ V} < E < 1.2 \text{ V}$ . One can see that within  $0.6 \text{ V} < E < 1.2 \text{ V}$ ,  $C$  is practically independent of  $E$  and  $\nu$ , as the latter changes from 10 to  $100 \text{ mV s}^{-1}$ . Such behavior is not typical for faradaic electrochemical processes. The electrode in this case behaves like electrochemical double-layer capacitor with almost constant capacitance in accordance with well-known equation:

$$C = i_{\text{cap}}/\nu, \quad (2)$$

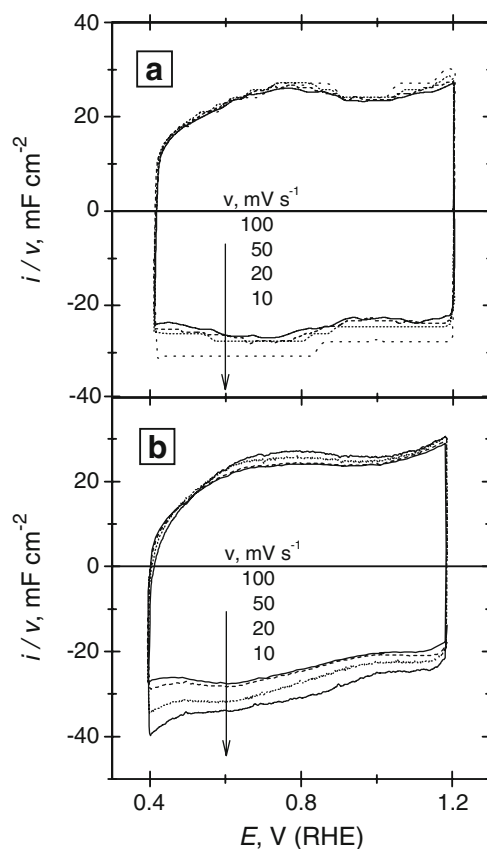
where  $i_{\text{cap}}$  is capacitive current and  $\nu$  is potential scan rate. Extension of potential cycling range in cycles 2 and 3 of Fig. 1a reveals the beginning of oxygen evolution at  $E > 1.4 \text{ V}$  and also the beginning of  $\text{RuO}_2$  layer reduction/destruction process at  $E < 0.4 \text{ V}$ . This process gains momentum at more cathodic potentials, i.e., at  $E < 0.2 \text{ V}$ , as evident from the negative going scan of cycle 3 (Fig. 1a).

The products of cathodic reduction are oxidized in subsequent anodic scan, as revealed by anodic current wave spanning the whole  $E$  range up to oxygen evolution reaction. It is noteworthy that after such treatment, the shape of the cathodic part of the voltammogram remains essentially the same, indicating that  $\text{RuO}_2$  layer has been completely recovered.

Very similar results, in terms of voltammetric and capacitive behavior, were obtained in the case of thermally formed  $\text{RuO}_2$  layer on Au substrate (Figs. 1b and 2b). Heated at 673 K,  $\text{RuO}_2$  is considered to be anhydrous [10], although certain rehydration of the  $\text{RuO}_2$  layer surface in 0.5 M  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  cannot be excluded, as demonstrated recently in the EQCM study [16]. One can see that voltammograms in Fig. 1b reveal better-pronounced, compared to Fig. 1a, anodic and cathodic current waves at 0.4–0.9 and 0.9–1.2 V, which can be related to the aforementioned faradaic redox processes between  $\text{Ru(III)/Ru(IV)}$  or  $\text{Ru(IV)/Ru(VI)}$ , respectively. This can also be seen in Fig. 2b, where the dependence of capacitance on potential scan rate is also more vivid than in Fig. 2a, pointing to a larger contribution of pseudocapacitance, although the amount of charge corresponding to these faradaic processes and, consequently to  $C_{\text{PC}}$ , is insignificant. Such behavior may be due to the presence of small amounts of metallic



**Fig. 1** Cyclic voltammograms of **a** electrochemically and **b** thermally formed  $\text{RuO}_2$  electrodes in 0.5 M  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ ,  $v=50 \text{ mV s}^{-1}$ , 293 K



**Fig. 2** Capacitance ( $C=i/v$ ) of **a** electrochemically and **b** thermally formed  $\text{RuO}_2$  electrodes at various scan rates in 0.5 M  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ , 293 K

ruthenium in  $\text{RuO}_2$  phase, which can form in the course of thermal decomposition of  $\text{RuOHCl}_3$ , as demonstrated recently in Santos et al. [17]. The specific capacitance,  $C^{\text{sp}}$ , of thermally formed  $\text{RuO}_2$  electrode (Fig. 2b), was found to be  $\sim 50 \text{ F g}^{-1}$  ( $20 \text{ mF cm}^{-2}/0.4 \text{ mg cm}^{-2}$ ), considering that the whole load of  $\text{RuO}_2$  takes part in the charging process.

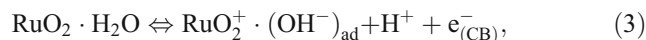
As can be seen from Fig. 2a and b, the average value of capacitance of electrochemically and thermally formed  $\text{RuO}_2$  electrodes within the  $E$  region of interest ranges between 20 and 25  $\text{mF cm}^{-2}$ . Presuming that the electrode behaves like double-layer capacitor and assuming that double layer charge of ideal crystalline  $\text{RuO}_2$  surface makes 40–80  $\mu\text{F}$  (real  $\text{cm}^{-2}$ ; [4, 12, 18]), the ratio of true to apparent surface area or the surface roughness factor  $f$  of electrochemically and thermally formed  $\text{RuO}_2$  electrode would be in the range of roughly 300 to 600, and consequently, the specific area of the electrodes would range between 75 to 150  $\text{m}^2 \text{ g}^{-1}$  (300 or 600/0.4  $\text{mg cm}^{-2}$ ). This, however, makes just a small portion, about 5%, of the maximum theoretically possible surface area of  $\text{RuO}_2$ , which can be imagined as the area of whole load of 0.4 mg  $\text{RuO}_2$  spread to a monolayer thickness. It follows, therefore, that to enhance the charge storage efficiency of  $\text{RuO}_2$ , thin  $\text{RuO}_2$  layers should be deposited on the substrates with large surface area, which is already being

done in practice by using electrodes with large specific surface area [1, 2].

SEM images of electrochemically formed  $\text{RuO}_2$  electrode are presented in Fig. 3. SEM of thermally formed  $\text{RuO}_2$  specimen have disclosed typical, cracked-mud-looking surface [19] and are not shown here. Figure 3a reveals the surface covered with spherical particles having size distribution from  $\sim 0.5$  to  $\sim 2$   $\mu\text{m}$  and separated in places by cracks of about 0.2  $\mu\text{m}$  width. The surface area of these spheres cannot account for the above-indicated value of surface roughness factor. A closer look into this structure (Fig. 3b) shows that the surface of spherical particles is rugged, i.e., it has its own nano/microstructure. The issue of “inner” and “outer” active surface of  $\text{RuO}_2$  electrodes has been widely discussed in Ardizzone et al. [20].

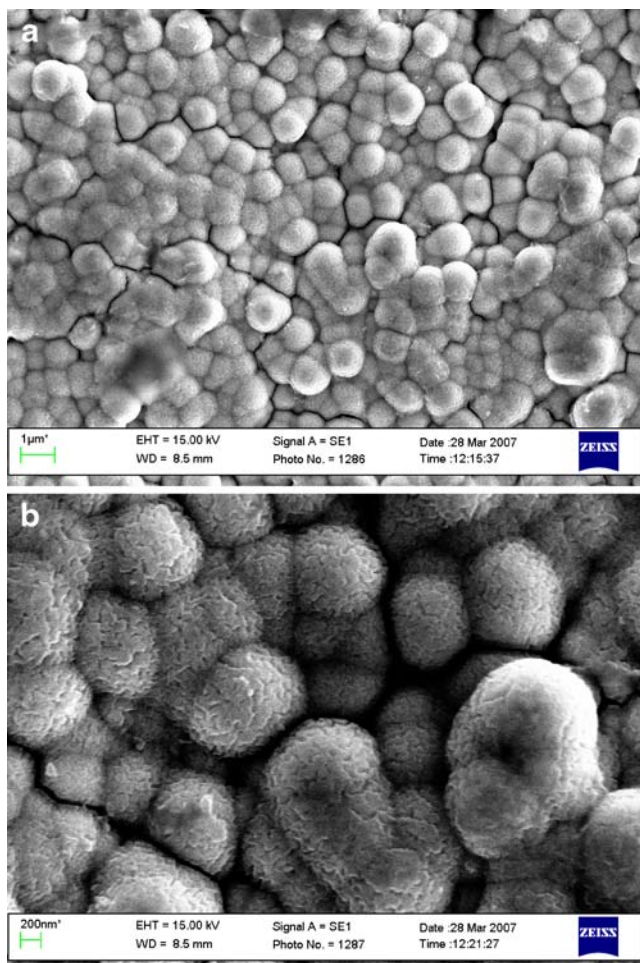
In our recent study [16], it has been suggested that in the case of electrochemically or thermally formed  $\text{RuO}_2$  electrodes in 0.5 M  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ , non-faradaic capacitive current represents the main component of the anodic and

cathodic current within  $E$  range between 0.6 and 1.2 V. This current has been ascribed to reversible adsorption/desorption of  $\text{OH}^-$  ions on the surface of  $\text{RuO}_2$  phase. It is well known that the structural unit of rutile-type  $\text{RuO}_2$  is  $\text{RuO}_6$  octahedron [8]. In the basal plane of this octahedron,  $\text{Ru}^{4+}$  ion is surrounded by four  $\text{O}^{2-}$  ions. When such plane is situated at the electrode/solution interface,  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  molecule can occupy the axial position of octahedron above the  $\text{Ru}^{4+}$  center. In the course of anodic polarization within  $E$  range between 0.4 and 1.4 V,  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  can be replaced by adsorbed  $\text{OH}^-$  ions, thus forming the  $\text{RuO}_2^+ \cdot (\text{OH}^-)_{\text{ad}}$  ionic pair as described by the following equation:

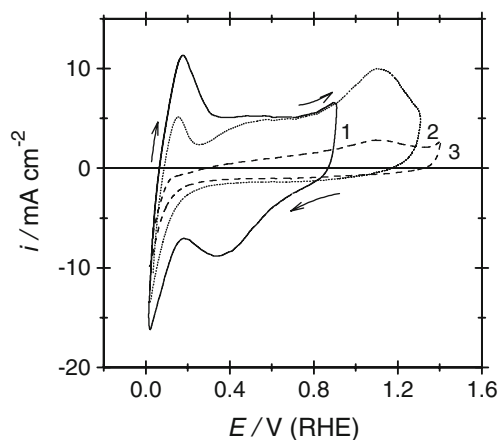


where  $\text{RuO}_2^+$  and  $e_{(\text{CB})}^-$  represent holes and electrons in valence and conduction bands, respectively. This presumption is based on the literature data evidencing the p-type semiconductive nature of  $\text{RuO}_2$  oxide [21–24]. According to Chueh et al. [23] and De Almeida and Ahuja [24], there is a small energy gap between oxygen 2p and metal d bands in  $\text{RuO}_2$ ; thus, the generation of  $\text{RuO}_2^+$  holes should be possible under conditions of anodic polarization. The positive charge of  $\text{RuO}_2^+$  holes can be compensated by adsorption of  $\text{OH}^-$  ions, which is the result of dissociation of adsorbed  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  molecules (Eq. 3). One can see that Eq. 3 is consistent with the stability of  $\text{RuO}_2$  phase within the potential range from 0.4 to 1.4 V, as reaction 3 takes place only on the surface of  $\text{RuO}_2$  phase and not in the bulk of it as predicted by Eq. 1. On the basis of Eq. 3, it is also easy to understand the above-discussed influence of structural water content on the capacitance of  $\text{RuO}_2 \cdot x\text{H}_2\text{O}$  and also the high reversibility of the process taking place on  $\text{RuO}_2$  electrodes within 0.4–1.4 V. The latter is due to the fact that the process of interest involves potential-dependent electrostatic adsorption of  $\text{OH}^-$  ions and not the faradaic charge transfer through the interface. Faradaic oxidation of  $(\text{OH}^-)_{\text{ad}}$  ions with formation of molecular oxygen begins at  $\sim 1.4$  V [25], as already mentioned. Moreover, it can be shown that charge equivalent to the monolayer of  $(\text{OH}^-)_{\text{ad}}$  ions on ideal  $\text{RuO}_2$  surface (i.e., with  $f=1$ ) is  $\sim 0.05$   $\text{mC cm}^{-2}$ . Considering the fact that the process of interest (Eq. 3) takes place within  $E$  range of  $\sim 1$  V, i.e., from 0.4 to 1.4 V, the resulting capacitance of the  $\text{RuO}_2$ /electrolyte interface would be  $\sim 50$   $\mu\text{F cm}^{-2}$ , which falls into the range of  $C$  values typical for double-layer charging process, as indicated above [4, 12, 18].

The pseudocapacitance,  $C_{\text{PC}}$ , manifests itself in the charge storage mechanism of  $\text{RuO}_2$  electrodes when the potential range is extended to cover the region where  $\text{RuO}_2$  can be partly reduced to metallic ruthenium, which, in turn, can be subsequently oxidized during the anodic scan as in Fig. 1a, cycle 3.

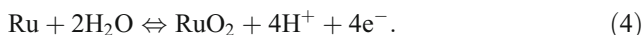


**Fig. 3** SEM images of electrochemically formed  $\text{RuO}_2$  electrode. **a** General view of surface morphology. **b** Closer view of nano/microstructure of spherical particles



**Fig. 4** Cyclic voltammograms of ruthenium coating on Ti substrate in 0.5 M H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>,  $\nu=50 \text{ mV s}^{-1}$ , 293 K

Figure 4 shows selected cyclic voltammograms of ruthenium electrode prepared in the form of Ru coating on Ti substrate in 0.5 M H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>. The curves in Fig. 4 demonstrate clearly the transition from active to passivated state of ruthenium electrode surface. The active state of metallic ruthenium electrode (Fig. 4, cycle 1) is characterized by distinct H<sub>ad</sub> oxidation peak at ~0.2 V on the positive-going part of the curve [26]. This peak overlaps the first anodic current wave at 0.2 V < E < 0.8 V, which represents the process of ruthenium anodic oxidation to Ru(OH)<sub>3</sub> possibly through the intermediate stage of Ru(OH)<sub>2</sub> formation [16]. Cathodic part of the cycle displays current peak centered at ~0.4 V, reflecting the reduction of Ru(OH)<sub>3</sub> to Ru and the beginning of H<sup>+</sup> reduction to H<sub>ad</sub> at E < 0.2 V. Cycle 2 in Fig. 4 encompasses the range of hardly reducible RuO<sub>2</sub> surface oxide formation at 0.8 V < E < 1.3 V [14, 27] according to the following overall reaction:



With formation of this oxide, passivation of ruthenium surface occurs, what is reflected by the shift of cathodic reduction process to more negative E values compared with cycle 1 and also the suppression of H<sub>ad</sub> oxidation peak at ~0.2 V. The reduction of the surface oxides in cycle 3 is even more difficult and continues also after the reversal of potential scan at 0 V; no peak attributable to H<sub>ad</sub> oxidation can be discerned in cycle 3, whereas anodic peak at ~1.1 V becomes significantly suppressed as well. Note that the latter peak corresponds to the anodic wave observed in the voltammogram of RuO<sub>2</sub> electrode in the vicinity of 1.2 V in cycle 3 of Fig. 1a. The comparison of cycle 3 in Fig. 4 and cycle 3 in Fig. 1a shows that the latter one reflects irreversible partial reduction of RuO<sub>2</sub> to metallic ruthenium at E < 0.2 V [27] and subsequent oxidation of Ru back to RuO<sub>2</sub> through the stage of Ru(OH)<sub>3</sub> formation.

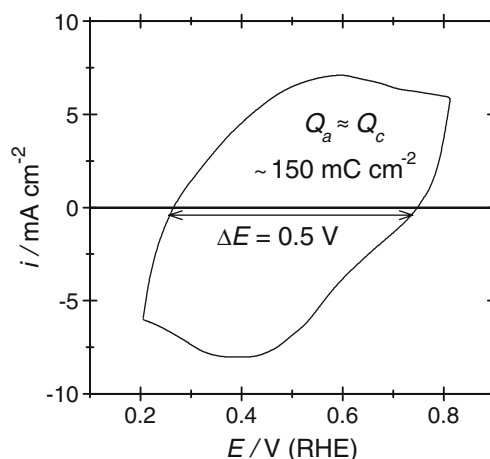
Thus, from the above discussion, it becomes evident that once the surface of ruthenium electrode is passivated with

the layer of RuO<sub>2</sub>, potential cycling within 0.4–1.4 V produces no further changes, i.e., no faradaic processes occur to a greater extent, and RuO<sub>2</sub>/0.5 M H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> interface behaves like double-layer capacitor. However, if the potential cycling range is extended to more cathodic potentials, i.e., E < 0.4 V, which is the case often reported in literature [1, 2, 10–13, 18], cathodic reduction of RuO<sub>2</sub> layer sets in. This leads to partial activation of the RuO<sub>2</sub> electrode and subsequent repassivation at E > 1.1 V during the anodic process. These faradaic redox processes are mainly responsible for the contribution of pseudocapacitance in the overall capacitance of RuO<sub>2</sub> electrode in 0.5 M H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>.

The pseudocapacitance, C<sub>PC</sub>, depends on the nature of electrochemical processes taking place on the electrode surface, whereas the specific pseudocapacitance, C<sub>PC</sub><sup>sp</sup>, is dependent also on the amount of ruthenium compounds, m, taking part in these processes. However, if the contribution of pseudocapacitance in the overall capacitance of RuO<sub>2</sub>·xH<sub>2</sub>O electrodes is limited, and only a certain part of RuO<sub>2</sub>·xH<sub>2</sub>O is electrochemically active, as discussed above, the use of whole mass of RuO<sub>2</sub>·xH<sub>2</sub>O load for the calculation of C<sub>PC</sub><sup>sp</sup> is unjustified. The formula generally used in literature for the evaluation of the theoretic value of RuO<sub>2</sub>·xH<sub>2</sub>O specific pseudocapacitance is as follows:

$$C_{\text{PC}}^{\text{sp}} = Q / \Delta E m = C_{\text{PC}} / m = nF / M_{\text{RuO}_x} \Delta E, \quad (5)$$

where n stands for number of electrons exchanged in the redox process, F is Faraday constant, M<sub>RuO<sub>x</sub></sub> is molecular weight of RuO<sub>2</sub>·xH<sub>2</sub>O, and ΔE is the potential window [1, 2, 10]. The ambiguity of such calculations stems also from the uncertainty regarding the redox processes involved in pseudocapacitive charging: n is usually taken to be 2 or 4 [1, 10], presuming the redox process to be transition between Ru(II)/Ru(IV) or Ru(II)/Ru(VI), respectively. Moreover, the values of stoichiometric coefficients x and



**Fig. 5** Cyclic voltammogram of ruthenium coating on Au underlayer in 0.5 M H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>,  $\nu=20 \text{ mV s}^{-1}$ , 293 K

$n$  in  $\text{RuO}_x \cdot n\text{H}_2\text{O}$  for the calculation of  $M_{\text{RuO}_x}$  are usually taken arbitrarily [1, 2].

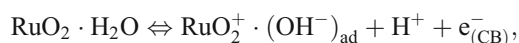
Precise evaluation of  $C_{\text{PC}}$  and  $C_{\text{PC}}^{\text{sp}}$ , eliminating the above flaws, can be done for the faradaic process of ruthenium anodic oxidation to  $\text{Ru}(\text{OH})_3$  and its reversible reduction as shown in Fig. 5, where the voltammogram of ruthenium electroplated on gold substrate in 0.5 M  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  is presented. This particular range of potentials, i.e., from 0.2 to 0.8 V, has been chosen because it corresponds mainly to redox transition  $\text{Ru} \Leftrightarrow \text{Ru}(\text{OH})_3$  as expressed by:



At  $E < 0.2$  V, reduction of  $\text{H}_3\text{O}^+$  sets in, whereas at  $E > 0.8$  V, formation of passivating  $\text{RuO}_2$  layer begins as discussed above (see Fig. 4). The passivation of Ru electrode may be also caused by interaction with oxygen from the air, and that is why measurements depicted in Fig. 5 were carried out in inert atmosphere. The presence of  $\text{Ru}^{3+}$  at 0.4 V and  $\text{Ru}^{4+}$  at 1.2 V has been confirmed by X-ray absorption measurements in [28]. Analysis of the cycle in Fig. 5 shows that both the anodic or cathodic charge, which makes  $\sim 150 \text{ mC cm}^{-2}$ , brings the anodic or cathodic shift in Ru electrode potential of about 0.5 V. Consequently,  $C_{\text{PC}} = 150 \text{ mC cm}^{-2} / 0.5 \text{ V} = 300 \text{ mF cm}^{-2}$ . In accordance with Eq. 5, the specific pseudocapacitance of this process is  $3.8 \cdot 10^3 \text{ F g}^{-1}$ . The latter value is about 75 times higher when compared with  $C^{\text{sp}} \approx 50 \text{ F g}^{-1}$  obtained for thermally prepared  $\text{RuO}_2$  electrode (Fig. 1b). The highest experimentally determined values of the overall specific capacitance  $C^{\text{sp}}$  of  $\text{RuO}_2 \cdot x\text{H}_2\text{O}$  electrodes reported in literature are 1,340 and 1,580  $\text{F g}^{-1}$  [1, 2]. They were obtained using nanostructured and microporous electrodes with large specific surface area. These values result from the superposition of faradaic and non-faradaic charging processes in proportions dependent on the experimental conditions and the actual state of the electrode surface.

## Conclusions

1. It has been suggested that double-layer-type capacitance of  $\text{RuO}_2/0.5 \text{ M H}_2\text{SO}_4$  interface within  $E$  range between  $\sim 0.4$  and  $\sim 1.4$  V is related mainly to highly reversible non-faradaic process of  $\text{RuO}_2^+ \cdot (\text{OH}^-)_{\text{ad}}$  ionic pair formation and annihilation as expressed by summary equation:

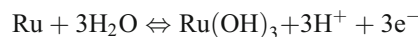


where  $\text{RuO}_2^+$  and  $\text{e}^-_{(\text{CB})}$  represent holes and electrons in valence and conduction bands, respectively.

2. In the case when  $\text{RuO}_2$  layer is partly reduced at  $E < 0.2$  V, the contribution of pseudocapacitance in the

charge storage mechanism of  $\text{RuO}_2$  electrodes increases due to faradaic processes related to partial destruction and recovery of the oxide layer.

3. Pseudocapacitance  $C_{\text{PC}}$  of electrochemically active Ru/0.5 M  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  interface within  $E$  range between  $\sim 0.2$  and  $\sim 0.8$  V is determined by reversible faradaic process as follows:



with theoretic specific pseudocapacitance value  $C_{\text{PC}}^{\text{sp}} = 3.8 \cdot 10^3 \text{ F g}^{-1}$ .

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