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Hydrogenated Amorphous Carbons evolution of interstellar carbon dust





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Observables Properties Evolution Focus on experimental studies

How are observed interstellar a-C:H ?



How are observed interstellar a-C:H ?



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Spectral signatures of aliphatic C-H vibrations

To detect interstellar a-C:H

- → high quantities of diffuse ISM
- \Rightarrow lines of sight with high visual extinction (A_v)













Comparison of observations with laboratory analogs spectra



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Interstellar a-C:H analogs: Mennella et al. (1999, 2003) Scott & Duley (1994, 1996, 1997) Schnaiter et al. (1998) Gadallah et al. (2011) From plasma: Sakata & Wada (1992, 2009) Lee & Wdowiak (1993) Furton et al. (1999) Godard et al (2010, 2011) Alata et al (2014)



Dartois et al. (2004,2005)

at low temperature

from $C_n H_m$ ices :

Comparison of observations with laboratory analogs spectra

IAS





O content : very low

 $CH_2/CH_3 \sim 2 - 2,5$

H content : $X_H > 20\%$

Pendleton & Allamandola (2002) Dartois et al. (2007)

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Abundance of interstellar a-C:H : (CH)_{aliph}/C_{cosmic} ~ 10 to 35 %

Optical properties of a-C:H

Absorption



Infrared



Band gap energy

Optical properties of a-C:H

- Absorption





Infrared

→ Emission

Visible photoluminescence (induced by UV-visible absorption)



Optical properties of a-C:H

-> Absorption



Infrared



Emission

Visible photoluminescence (induced by UV-visible absorption)



Models of a-C(:H)

optEC_(s)(a) Jones, A&A (2012, a-c) → model of the optical constants → function of the band gap → size-dependent properties

Model : Jones et al, A&A (2013) evolution of interstellar a-C(:H)

Evolution of the 3.4 µm band carriers in the interstellar medium

Diffuse interstellar medium

3.4 µm band observed

Evolution of dust due to:

Hydrogen atoms exposition UV irradiation Cosmic rays irradiation Dense interstellar medium

3.4 µm band not observed

Very low upper limit : Muñoz Caro et al. (2001)

Evolution/processing of a-C:H in interstellar medium

Exposition to H atoms

Mennella et al, ApJ (1999, 2002, 2006)



 \Rightarrow 3.4, 6.9 & 7.3 µm absorption band \nearrow

 \Rightarrow Formation of aliphatic C—H bond by exposure to H atoms flux

Formation of aliphatic C-H dust component occurs in diffuse ISM

Exposition to UV photons

Mennella et al, A&A (2001)

- \Rightarrow Dehydrogenation (3.4 µm absorption band \searrow)
- \Rightarrow C-H destruction cross section : $\sigma_{d,UV} = 10^{-19} \text{ cm}^2/\text{photon}$

Destruction of aliphatic C-H dust by interstellar radiation field in diffuse ISM, but this effect is **counteracted** by H exposure.

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- Graphitization
- Production of a new absorption band at 217,5 nm

UV-irradiated a-C:H involved in the **UV bump** at 217,5 nm ? (C abundance problem)



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Alata, Cruz-Diaz, Muñoz Caro & Dartois, A&A (2014)

- → Dehydrogenation (3.4 µm absorption band \searrow) $\sigma_{d,UV} = 3 \ 10^{-19} \ cm^2/photon$
- \Rightarrow Efficient production of H₂ molecules
- within the bulk of a-C:H
- Production of small hydrocarbons (CH₄)

Photo-processed a-C:H is a efficient source of H₂ and small hydrocarbons, at low to high T





96% of broken $C-H => H_2$

Exposition to energetic ions

A large range of ≠ ions and energies were used to simulate cosmic rays :

TANDEM accelerator (IPN Orsay)



TANDEM lons









characteristic destruction time of aliphatic C-H by cosmic rays: ~ a few 10⁸ years

 $>> 10^7$ years : lifetime of an interstellar cloud

Godard et al, A&A (2011)

Evolution of the 3.4 μ m band in interstellar medium

Interstellar Medium	Diffuse	Interface	Dense
	Bare grains	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	lee coated grains
3.4 µm band	observed		Not observed
Destruction time by cosmic ray	10 ⁸ years	10 ⁸ years	10 ⁸ years
Destruction time by UV photons	4 10 ³ years		$\gtrsim 10^7$ years
Formation time by H atoms	2 10 ³ years		inefficient
Destruction/Formation of aliphatic C-H	Efficient formation	Efficient destruction ?	Slow destruction

Godard et al, A&A (2011)

Conclusion

a-C:H are a major component of interstellar carbonaceous dust in the diffuse ISM

a-C:H dust constantly **evolve** in response to their interstellar environments

a-C:H evolution could lead to formation of other interstellar components (H2, small hydrocarbon molecules, link with PAHs, ...)

Collaborators



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