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## Effects on nitrogen-acetone ice induced by energetic heavy ion collisions

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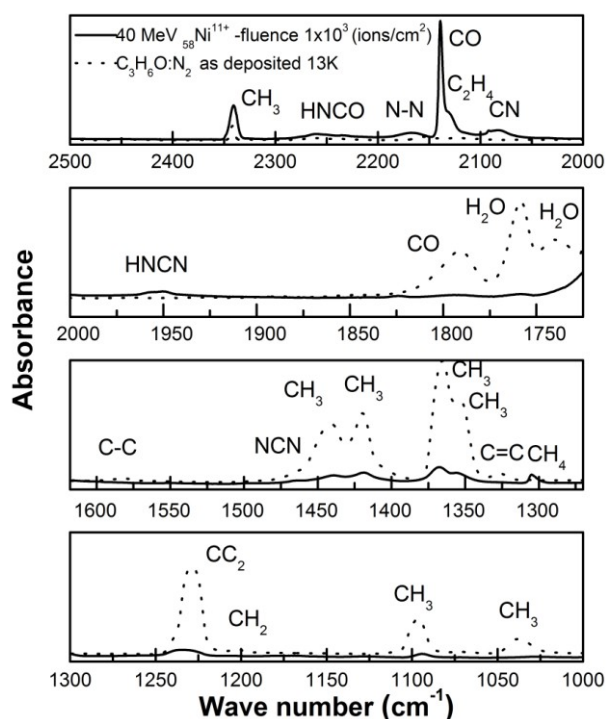
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**Synopsis** The radiolysis of a mixture of acetone and nitrogen condensed at 13 K by 40-MeV  $^{58}\text{Ni}^{11+}$  ions was studied. The bombardment with heavy ions is highly efficient for inducing chemical reactions in ices. The dissociation rate of acetone mixed with nitrogen as a function of the fluence is determined from a sequence of infrared spectra. The formation of new molecular species due to the irradiation is investigated and their cross-sections are calculated

The  $\text{N}_2$  molecule, formed by one of the most abundant elements in the Universe, is the most common constituent of Earth's modern atmosphere. It is also a major component of the atmosphere of Saturn's moon Titan and has been detected in trace amounts in the atmospheres of Venus and Mars. In acetone ( $\text{CH}_3\text{COCH}_3$ ) the C=O link, which also occurs in several molecules of biological interest, is present. The mixture of these two molecular species,  $\text{N}_2:\text{CH}_3\text{COCH}_3$ , causes asymmetries in the nitrogen molecule, which enhances the IR absorption and allows its study by FTIR spectroscopy. Moreover, the cosmic ray - ice interaction can be simulated and analyzed by irradiating the  $\text{N}_2:\text{CH}_3\text{COCH}_3$  ice in laboratory [1].

Therefore,  $\text{N}_2:\text{CH}_3\text{COCH}_3$  ice (1:1) was irradiated with 40 MeV  $^{58}\text{Ni}^{11+}$  ions, and FTIR spectra were obtained at certain fluences. Figure 1 shows spectra of  $\text{N}_2:\text{CH}_3\text{COCH}_3$  before (dotted line) and after (solid line) irradiation. Daughter molecules resulting from the induced chemical reactions were identified; from the dependence of the molecular abundance, the evolution with fluence of destruction and compaction cross sections of the ice was determined. The average value of  $2.2 \pm 0.4 \times 10^{-13} \text{ cm}^2$  was obtained for the average destruction cross-section determined via seven IR bands. At the beginning of irradiation, associated with ice compaction, the presence of  $\text{N}_2$  accelerates the process of acetone destruction. However, for high fluences, the structural rearrangement caused by  $\text{N}_2$  reduces the radiolysis rate compared to pure acetone [2].



**Figure 1.** FTIR spectra of  $\text{N}_2:\text{CH}_3\text{COCH}_3$  before (dotted line) and after (solid line) irradiation. Some corresponding vibrational modes are indicated.

### References

- [1] A. L. F de Barros *et al* 2014 *MNRAS* **438**, 2026–2035
- [2] Diana P. P. Andrade *et al* 2014 *MNRAS* **444**, 3792–3801

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