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Final Report

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PHOTODISOCIATION OF CO$_2$ AND QUENCHING OF METASTABLES

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SUMMARY

Work under this contract was conducted to further our understanding of the chemistry of the atmospheres of Mars and Venus. Investigations in four different areas have been carried out. These investigations, and the results obtained, are summarized briefly below.

- CO$_2$ photodissociation quantum yields were determined in the 1300-1500 Å spectral region by measuring both CO and oxygen atoms. Contrary to earlier studies, which we now believe were affected by heterogeneous processes, the photodissociation yields appear to be unity at wavelengths below 1500 Å.

- The O($^1S$) quantum yield was determined for CO$_2$ photodissociation in the 1060-1175 Å spectral region. The measurement resolves the differences between two earlier experiments, and demonstrates that the O($^1S$) yield is unity throughout most of the measured region. An anomaly was discovered at 1089 Å, the location of a strong Rydberg transition, where the oxygen atom is produced in the $^1D$ state.

- The pathways for the quenching of O($^1S$) by N$_2$O, CO$_2$, H$_2$O, and NO were investigated. Distinction was made between deactivation to O($^1D$), to O($^3P$), and reaction. The only clear-cut case of reaction was with H$_2$O; the other quenchers gave various mixtures of O($^1D$) and O($^3P$). This experiment demonstrates for the first time that O($^1S$) reactions differ markedly from O($^1D$) reaction not only in terms of quenching rate coefficients, but also in terms of the products formed.

- The source of the Venus nightglow detected by Venera 9 and 10, was investigated. We followed the observations of Lawrence et al.,
who found that a He-O₂ discharge with added CO₂ produced the emission (the \( \Sigma_u^+ \rightarrow \Sigma_g^+ \)) transition. We were able not only to duplicate their results, but also to show that oxygen atom recombination is the \( \Sigma_u^+ \) source, that CO₂ is not an essential ingredient (N₂ is an effective), and that \( \Sigma_u^+ \) is quenched primarily by \( \Sigma_u^+ \) in our system. We believe that the difference in the \( \Sigma_u^+ \) recombination spectra in the terrestrial and Venusian atmospheres is merely a consequence of the difference in \([M][\Sigma_u^+]\) at the altitude of emission. We have also found what appears to be a new \( \Sigma_u^+ \) band system, although the identity of the transition is not yet evident.
BACKGROUND

Photodissociation of CO₂ is a primary process in the atmospheres of Mars and Venus, and a major goal of the research was to settle some of the ambiguities existing in the literature on this subject. The issue of a photodissociation quantum yield that varied with wavelength, in the wavelength region below 1670 Å, has caused concern for the last several years. We had contributed to those observations by confirming and expanding two earlier studies by other investigators. However, there were enough contradictory measurements to make us believe that further resolution of the problem was needed, so we have conducted an additional study in which, for the first time, both CO and oxygen atoms were measured, in real time.

In the high absorption cross-section spectral region below 1200 Å, CO₂ photodissociation can lead to O(^1S) production, and hence is an important source of the 2972 Å ^1S → ^3P emission line in the Mariner spectra of Mars. Previous work, by Lawrence and by Koyano et al., had indicated high O(^1S) yields at 1100-1140 Å, but those studies produced markedly different results above and below this wavelength region. To resolve these discrepancies, and to ascertain the O(^1S) yield from CO₂ at 1067 Å, which is needed for the work on the O(^1S) product channels, we investigated the 1060-1175 Å region. Our results agree with parts of each of the two previous studies. However, neither of those studies reported that at the strong absorption band at 1089 Å, which is an intense Rydberg transition, CO₂ dissociates via a CO + O(^1D) pathway; this is an abrupt change from the CO + O(^1S) pathway found elsewhere.

Because O(^1S) is an important metastable species in the atmospheres of the CO₂ planets, we attempted to ascertain the products of its quenching
by CO$_2$. If the interaction were found to be reactive, an additional source of CO and O$_2$ would exist. The best laboratory source for O(1S) was found to be the 1302-1306 $\lambda$ photolysis of N$_2$O$^7$. In the course of the study, we also measured the O(1S) quenching products from N$_2$O, H$_2$O, and NO, in all cases differentiating between physical quenching and chemical reaction. These are the first such measurements for O(1S), although by now there is an extensive literature on the O(1D) reactions, subsequent to our initial measurements of ten years ago.$^8$

The Venus nightglow observations were unexpected in the astronomy community, since it was considered unlikely that an O$_2$ system would be the only feature in the visible spectral region, particularly one almost totally unknown in the laboratory. Moreover, the Russians had twice misidentified the emission, first calling it a CO$_2$ system,$^9$ and then the CO fourth-positive bands.$^{10}$ Lawrence et al.,$^{11}$ identified the emission as the O$_2$ (c$^{1\Sigma_u^-} \rightarrow X^{3\Sigma_g^-}$) system and were able to produce it in the laboratory.

We have now extended this work and have obtained information on the O$_2$ (c$^{1\Sigma_u^-}$) production mechanism, and loss channel. On the basis of these data, we are able to present a possible explanation for the difference in the O$_2$ recombination spectra observed in the Venusian and terrestrial atmospheres.
RESULTS

The work on CO$_2$ photodissociation and on the O($^1$S) product channels has either been published$^{12}$ or is about to be published, in the *Journal of Chemical Physics*. Abstracts of these papers are presented in the Appendix. Thus, only the work on the Venus nightglow will be discussed here.

The emission observed from Venera 9 and 10 is the 0-v'' progression of the O$_2$(c-X) transition.$^9$ The spectra are far clearer than had ever been seen in the laboratory, the only previous emission spectra having been reported by Degen.$^{13}$ He saw only two very weak bands, and 100 hours was required to record them on film. This emission in the Venus nightglow was unexpected, particularly because it appears to emanate in a region where the CO$_2$ pressure is $\sim$ 1 torr. The estimated O$_2$(c $^1$Sigma$^-$) radiative lifetime is $> 100$ sec,$^{14}$ a time equivalent to $5 \times 10^8$ CO$_2$ collisions.

Lawrence et al.$^{11}$ were able to produce a clean O$_2$(c-X) spectrum by discharging 0.3% O$_2$ in He, followed by addition of CO$_2$ downstream. They concluded that the role of CO$_2$ was unique, and that, even though oxygen atom recombination was assumed to be the source of the O$_2$(c $^1$Sigma$^-$) excitation energy, the CO$_2$ acted in a "chemical" way, resulting in specific O$_2$(c) production. To support this argument, they pointed out that oxygen atom recombination in the terrestrial atmosphere, where the CO$_2$ concentration is negligible, results in production of the A $^3$Sigma$^+$ state of O$_2$,$^{15}$ not the c $^1$Sigma$^-$ state.

We have performed experiments in a discharge flow apparatus in which it was possible to observe products in two different flow regimes--in fast flow, with discharge-to-viewing-region times of $\sim$ 3 ms, and in a slow flow, with an aging time of $\sim$ 0.5 sec. Titration ports were
incorporated in the system so that $O(3^3P)$ atoms could be produced by means other than $O_2$ dissociation. The reaction cell was viewed by a high speed transmission grating image tube spectrograph, enabling us to obtain complete spectra in the 4000-8000 Å region in 30 seconds to 4 minutes. Absolute measurements of $O(3^3P)$ densities were obtained by $NO_2$ titration.

Our results differ significantly from those of Lawrence et al. in several ways. We find that it is not necessary to have $CO_2$ present in order to see the $O_3(e-X)$ transition. This transition is clear and strong in the afterglow of an He-$O_2$ discharge (20 torr He, 30 mtorr $O_2$). Addition of $CO_2$ enhances the emission somewhat, and makes the spectrum cleaner by removing emissions from other sources, but the $O_2(e-X)$ band system is present at all times. This observation is quite surprising, since Begen required very long exposures to obtain sufficient intensities for analysis, and Lawrence et al. were unable to observe any $e-X$ bands without $CO_2$ addition. We, on the other hand, are able to obtain spectra (on film) with 30-second exposures, using the image tube instrument. A spectrum is presented in Fig. 1, which shows the 5000-8000 Å region. The background continuum is the $NO_2^*$ emission that results from the conversion of trace $N_2$ impurities to NO in the discharge, and subsequent reaction of this NO with $O(3^3P)$. The upper spectrum was obtained in the absence of $CO_2$, whereas the lower spectrum was obtained with 7 torr $CO_2$. The most prominent feature in the upper spectrum is the $O_2(b^1Σ^+_g \rightarrow X^3Σ^+_g)$ band at 7618 Å, also generated by $O(3^3P)$ recombination.

The $O_3(e-X)$ bands are prominent in both spectra, but the spectrum taken without $CO_2$ shows additional features—the OH Meinel system, and three other bands, occurring at $300 \pm 10$ cm$^{-1}$ to the long wavelength side of the three $e-X$ bands. Even after $CO_2$ addition, traces of these three new bands remain, but the $O_2(b-X)$ band and the OH Meinel bands are completely extinguished. Spectra taken of the 4500-5500 Å region show a fourth unknown band, at $5212 \pm 3$ Å.
Figure 1  Microdensitometer traces of afterglow spectrum, fast-flow system, 20 torr He, 30 mtorr O₂, wavelength range 5300-8000 Å. A. No CO₂. B. 7 torr CO₂.
From the variety of ways in which we have been able to generate the new bands, it is clear that they belong to an O₂ system and are formed by atom recombination. No transitions of the common impurities (CO, CN, C₂, CH, OH, NO) correlate with them. If recombination is the mechanism, then the A^3Σ_u^+, c^1Σ_u^−, and c^3Δ_u states are the only likely candidates for the upper state, and c^1Σ_u^− (v=0) is excluded because the ratio of intensities of the new system to the c-X 0-v' system is not constant. Table I gives the observed wavelengths, along with two conceivable identifications for the system.

Table I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Bandheads</th>
<th>A^3Σ_u^+ → X^3Σ_u^−</th>
<th>A^3Σ_u^+ → b^1Σ_u^+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5212 ± 3 Å</td>
<td>0-11 5230 Å</td>
<td>0-2 5234 Å</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5604 ± 2 Å</td>
<td>0-12 5602 Å</td>
<td>0-3 5632 Å</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6055 ± 2 Å</td>
<td>0-13 6035 Å</td>
<td>0-4 6085 Å</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6572 ± 5 Å</td>
<td>0-14 6531 Å</td>
<td>0-5 6603 Å</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the 0-12 and perhaps 0-11 A-X bands look like good identifications, the others do not, and as the bands appear to have a constant intensity ratio, it is likely that they have the same upper state and vibrational level. The constant displacement from the c-X bands suggests that the four new bands have a common upper level and the same lower level as their c-X neighbors. This implies a new O₂ state, lying 300 cm⁻¹ below the c^1Σ_u^− state, a hypothesis difficult to explain on theoretical grounds.

More experimentation is required to identify the system.

The two spectra in Fig. 2 show the 4100-4600 Å region, taken in the second order of the transmission grating. It may be seen that the c-X bands are now partially rotationally resolved; the 0-7 band, the same one analyzed by Segen, can be followed out to K = 23. Again, in the absence
Figure 2: Microdensitometer traces of afterglow spectrum, fast-flow system, 20 torr He, 30 torr O₂, wavelength range 4100-4600 Å. A. No CO₂.
B. 7 torr CO₂.
of CO₂ the c-X bands are clearly present, and the \( A^3\Sigma_u^+ - X^3\Sigma_g^- \) system is also observed. CO₂ addition quenches the A-X system and also reduces the background NO₂ continuum.

A second way in which our results differ from those of Lawrence et al. is our finding that while CO₂ does enhance the c-X emission, it is not unique in this behavior. We find that N₂ has a similar effect, although it is less effective in decreasing other emissions, so that c-X bands do not appear as isolated as when CO₂ is used. Lawrence et al. have tried to explain what they considered the unique behavior of CO₂ in terms of a chemical effect between the recombinating \( O(3P) \) atoms and the CO₂ third body. We conclude that there is no such effect, and that the choice of a third body is arbitrary. From the spectra in Figs. 1 and 2, we have obtained a measure of the effect of CO₂ addition on the \( O-\alpha \) and \( \omega -\alpha \) band intensities, shown in Fig. 3. A doubling of the intensities is observed over the CO₂ pressure range used, which is just the increase to be expected if the addition of CO₂ merely speeds up the \( O(3P) \) recombination rate. This increase requires that CO₂ be three times as effective a third body as He [typical for several \( O(3P) \) recombination systems], and that CO₂ be a poor quencher for \( O_2(c^{1\Sigma_u^-}) \), which follows from the appearance of the \( O_2(c-X) \) systems at the CO₂ pressures in the Venus atmosphere and in the laboratory. Note that at the CO₂ pressure used in Fig. 1, the \( O_2(b^{1\Sigma_g^+}) \) state is entirely quenched. As the rate coefficient for this reaction is a moderate \( 4 \times 10^{-13} \text{ cm mole}^{-1} \text{ sec}^{-1} \), and this state is probably produced at a comparable rate to the \( O_2(c^{1\Sigma_u^-}) \) state, the quenching of \( O_2(c^{1\Sigma_u^-}) \) by CO₂ is clearly inefficient.

A critical test to demonstrate that \( O(3\Sigma_u^-) \) production is a recombination process \([O(3P) + O(3P) + \text{M} \rightarrow O_2(c^{1\Sigma_u^-}) + \text{M}] \) is to make \( O(3P) \) in the absence of \( O_2 \). The classical way is to titrate the \( N(4S) \) atoms from a \( N_2 \) discharge with NO, converting the N atoms to \( O(3P) \). Lawrence et al. did not do this, as they believed they had evidence that \( N_2 \)
Figure 3  $O_2(\Sigma^1_u^- - \Sigma^3_u^-)$ 0-6 and 0-7 band emission intensities as a function of added CO$_2$, fast-flow system, 20 torr He, 30 mtorr O$_2^-$.
destroyed \( O_2 (e^{1} \Sigma_u^{-}) \). Once we had shown that this is not the case, we attempted to make \( O_2 (e^{1} \Sigma_u^{-}) \) by the above titration technique, and were completely successful. The same spectrum was observed, including the four new bands (even with 20 torr \( N_2 \)). Thus, it is clear that \( O(3\,\Pi) \) recombination is involved, and that the bands do not come directly from ambient \( O_2 \). The titrated \( N_2 \) source is advantageous in that it is possible to add just enough \( N_2 \) to convert all the \( N(4\,\Sigma) \), without any excess, which alleviates the problem of the \( N(4\,\Sigma) \) background found in the \( O_2 \) spectra. On the other hand, \( N(4\,\Sigma) \) bands may appear if mixing is poor.

In order to understand the \( O_2 (e^{1} \Sigma_u^{-}) \) loss process in our system, measurements have been made on the dependence of the \( O_2 (\nu=5) \) intensities on the \( O(3\,\Pi) \) concentration. We have obtained the relationship between the \( O_2 (\nu=5) \) intensities and the background \( O_2 \) continuum intensities, as shown in Fig. 4. The dependence for each of the four bands is clearly quadratic; that is, the continuum intensity is proportional to the square of the \( \nu=5 \) intensity. It is to be expected, and our results so indicate, that the continuum intensity is also proportional to the square of the \( O(3\,\Pi) \) density. This is because the \( O(3\,\Pi) \) formation rate in the discharge is presumably proportional to the rate of the reaction making \( N_2 \), so that doubling the \( O(3\,\Pi) \) production rate quadruples the \( N(4\,\Sigma) \) production rate.

With the continuum intensity proportional to \( [O(3\,\Pi)]^2 \), and also to the square of the \( \nu=5 \) intensity, then it follows that the \( \nu=5 \) intensity is proportional to the first power of \( [O(3\,\Pi)] \). This indicates that the primary loss mechanism of \( O_2 (e^{1} \Sigma_u^{-}) \) in our system is by \( O(3\,\Pi) \) quenching \( O_2 \) quenching is a less likely possibility), since the production rate (recombination) is proportional to \( [O(3\,\Pi)] \), and the steady state \( \nu=5 \) intensity is proportional to (production) \( [O(3\,\Pi)] \). A confirmation of this conclusion comes from spectra taken at different discharge power levels (and thus different \( O(3\,\Pi) \) densities), which show that the clearest \( O_2 (\nu=5) \) spectra are those taken at minimum \( [O(3\,\Pi)] \), demonstrating that the \( O_2 (\nu=5) \) dependence on \( O(3\,\Pi) \) is of a lower order than that of the other emissions.
Figure 4  $O_2(c \sum_u^1 - X \Sigma_g^1)$ 0-6, 0-7, 0-10, and 0-11 band emission intensities as a function of $(NO_2$ continuum intensity)$^{1/4}$, resulting from varying discharge microwave power.
In the $O_2(A-X)$ system, on the other hand, the intensity is proportional to $[O(3P)]^2$, an indication that $O(3P)$ quenching is not the major loss of $O_2(A^3\Sigma_u^+)$. We also find this to be true for the new band system.
CONCLUSIONS

Our conclusions concerning the source of $O_2(c^1\Sigma_u^-)$ in an $O(3P)$ afterglow system can be summarized as follows:

1. $O_2(c^1\Sigma_u^-)$ is generated by $O(3P)$ recombination, and its emissions can be seen in any system where the recombination rate is sufficiently high; with our detection system the combination of $[O(3P)] > 3$ mtorr and $P > 15$ torr is sufficient.

2. The identity of the third body is not very important, but the use of CO results in a clean spectrum.

3. It appears that CO$_2$ and N$_2$ are very ineffective quenchers of $O_2(c^1\Sigma_u^-)$, and that quenching in our system is controlled by $O(3P)$.

It is now difficult to understand why the $O_2(c-X)$ system had not been studied and characterized decades ago. We have produced it in a fast-flow system, in a slow-flow system, from $O(3P)$ atoms, from titrated N atoms, in an He buffer, in an Ar buffer, and in pure N$_2$. It is, in fact, easier to produce than the well-known $O_2(A-X)$ system.

The visible region also contains what appears to be a new band system, probably in O$_2$, although we have not yet been able to specify the transition.

The total absence of the $O_2(c-X)$ emission in the terrestrial airglow, and its presence in the Venus atmosphere can be explained by the difference in pressures. In the respective emitting regions, the $O(3P)$ densities are similar, on the order of $10^{11}$ atoms cm$^{-3}$. However, the total pressure in the Venus atmosphere is $\sim 1$ torr CO$_2$, whereas in the earth's atmosphere it is close to 1 torr, mainly N$_2$. Thus, the ratio $[M]/[O(3P)]$ is $\sim 10^2$ in the terrestrial atmosphere at the emission peak (100 km), and $\sim 10^5$ in the Venus atmosphere.
The differences in the two systems can most likely be explained on the basis of laboratory observations. In atom recombination, a molecule is stabilized by removal of small increments of energy by a third body. Thus, molecules in high vibrational levels are initially formed. This is abundantly clear in the atmospheric spectra of the $\text{O}_2(A-X)$ emission, where only high vibrational levels are detected, and also in the laboratory spectra, where even at pressures of ~ 10 torr $\text{O}_2$ or $\text{N}_2$, high levels still predominate. On the other hand, both in the Venus atmosphere and in the laboratory, only $v' = 0$ levels of the $\text{O}_2(c^1\Sigma_u^-)$ state are seen. Since the state is initially formed in high vibrational levels, vibrational relaxation must be very rapid. However, in the earth's atmosphere, the $\text{N}_2$ pressure is quite low, and in any case, $\text{N}_2$ may not be a very good vibrational deactivator for $\text{O}_2(c^1\Sigma_u^-)$, compared to $\text{CO}_2$. Furthermore, the $[\text{M}] / [\text{O}(^3\text{P})]$ ratio is relatively low, so that if $\text{O}_2(c^1\Sigma_u^-)$ is rapidly quenched by $\text{O}(^3\text{P})$, as our results indicate, it is likely that $\text{O}(^3\text{P})$ quenching predominates over $\text{N}_2$ vibrational relaxation. Thus, one cannot see emission from $\text{O}_2(c^1\Sigma_u^-)$ in the 4000-6500 Å region in the terrestrial atmosphere (as in the Venus atmosphere) because the molecule has little chance of getting down to $v' = 0$. Emission from higher vibrational levels, which occurs in the 3000-4000 Å region, is not prevented, but then it is intermingled with the $\text{O}_2(A-X)$ emission.

On the other hand, in the Venus atmosphere, with a much higher $[\text{M}] / [\text{O}(^3\text{P})]$ ratio, vibrational relaxation of $\text{O}_2(c^1\Sigma_u^-)$ is faster than $\text{O}(^3\text{P})$ quenching (the $\text{CO}_2$ pressure is within an order of magnitude of that in our laboratory measurements), so that the molecules are driven down to $v' = 0$. Furthermore, Fig. 2 indicates that $\text{O}_2(A^3\Sigma_u^-)$ is quenched by $\text{CO}_2$, although no systematic measurements on this point exist; thus, it is to be expected that $\text{O}_2(A-X)$ emission will not be observed on Venus.

We feel that the different $[\text{M}] / [\text{O}(^3\text{P})]$ ratio in the two atmospheres is the predominant reason for the difference in the recombination emissions. Detailed kinetics measurements are still needed to prove our arguments.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX

Abstracts of Publications Resulting from Contract NASW-2849
CO$_2$ PHOTODISSOCIATION, 1060-1175 Å

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ABSTRACT

The relative O($^1S$) quantum yield from CO$_2$ photolysis between 1060 Å and 1175 Å has been measured, to sort out the discrepancies between two prior publications on the subject. Whereas the yield is near unity over a considerable portion of the spectral region, there is an abrupt dip to $\Phi(O^1S) \approx 0.15$, centered at 1089 Å. As this wavelength is also the location of a very strong Rydberg transition in CO$_2$, it appears that the low quantum yield is associated with excitation of the upper level of this transition, the $^1\Pi_u$ state. The O($^1D$) yield at this wavelength was found to have a minimum value of 0.65 ± 0.1. In conjunction with the lack of any observable fluorescence it is concluded that dissociation on the O($^1S$) + CO and O($^1D$) + CO surfaces probably accounts for all the input energy.
O\(^1\)S) INTERACTIONS--THE PRODUCT CHANNELS

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ABSTRACT

The first measurements are reported of the reaction pathways for the interaction between oxygen atoms in the 4.19 eV \(^1\)S state, and four molecules, N\(_2\)O, CO\(_2\), H\(_2\)O, and NO. Distinction is made between three possible paths--quenching to O\(^1\)D, quenching to O\(^3\)P, and chemical reaction. With N\(_2\)O, the most reasonable interpretation of the data indicates that there is no reaction, in sharp contrast with the interaction between O\(^1\)D and N\(_2\)O, which proceeds entirely by reaction. Similarly, there is no reaction with CO\(_2\). With H\(_2\)O, the reactive pathway is the dominant one, although electronic quenching is not negligible. With NO, O\(^1\)D is the preferred product.
CO$_2$ PHOTOLYSIS REVISITED

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ABSTRACT

Measurements have been made of the absolute oxygen atom yields from CO$_2$ photolysis at 1470 Å and 1302-06 Å; in both cases the yield is unity. The CO generation rates have also been measured in these two wavelength regions, and they are proportional to the oxygen atom generation rates; by implication, the CO quantum yields are thus also unity. The CO deficiencies observed in earlier work on this subject are probably caused by heterogeneous processes.