Concentration Effects and Ion Properties Controlling the Fractionation of Halides during Aerosol Formation

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Supporting Information

ABSTRACT: During the aerosolization process at the sea surface, halides are incorporated into aerosol droplets, where they may play an important role in tropospheric ozone chemistry. Although this process may significantly contribute to the formation of reactive gas phase molecular halogens, little is known about the environmental factors that control how halides selectively accumulate at the air–water interface. In this study, the production of sea spray aerosol is simulated using electrospray ionization (ESI) of 100 nM equimolar solutions of NaCl, NaBr, NaI, NaNO₃, NaNO₂, NaClO₄, and NaN₃. The microdroplets generated are analyzed by mass spectrometry to study the comparative enrichment of anions ($f_{X^-}$) and their correlation with ion properties. Although no correlation exists between $f_{X^-}$ and the limiting equivalent ionic conductivity, the correlation coefficient of the linear fit with the size of the anions $R_{X^-}$ dehydration free-energy $\Delta G_{dehyd}$ and polarizability $\alpha$, follows the order: $R_{Br^-} > R_{I^-} > R_{Cl^-} > R_{X^-} > \Delta G_{dehyd} > \alpha$. The same pure physical process is observed in H₂O and D₂O. The factor $f_{X^-}$ does not change with pH (6.8–8.6), counterion (Li⁺, Na⁺, K⁺, and Cs⁺) substitution effects, or solvent polarity changes in methanol−ethanol−water mixtures (0 < x_H2O < 1). Sodium polysorbate 20 surfactant is used to modify the structure of the interface. Despite the observed enrichment of I− on the air−water interface of equimolar solutions, our results of seawater mimic samples agree with a model in which the interfacial composition is increasingly enriched in I− < Br− < Cl− over the oceanic boundary layer due to concentration effects in sea spray aerosol formation.

INTRODUCTION

The fractionation of species occurring at the air−water interface of the ocean is an intriguing problem and the focus of continuous experimental and theoretical studies that aim to understand the fundamental role of aerosols and their effect in radiative forcing. The process of seawater aerosolization during bubble bursting generates negatively charged droplets (for diameters between 0.2 and 2.5 μm) and establishes a negative current of ions into the atmospheric boundary layer. Many key processes related to the transfer of anions such as halides (e.g., sea salt formation) and activation of inert halide ions (e.g., Br−) into molecular halogens (e.g., Br₂ and IO₂) and reactive halogen species, RHS (e.g., Br₂, BrO, and IO). Once generated, RHS deplete ozone (O₃) over the oceanic boundary layer to ~0 ppbv. A 2-fold important unsolved question is how are salts transferred from the ocean and then oxidized to become RHS in the air. The air−water interface enables unique reaction pathways that might be altered due to the high surface area available as compared to the bulk. It has been proposed that the affinity of larger anions toward the air−water interface results from their rejection by the medium via collective dispersive interactions. Recently, a new theory that takes into account all the moments of the ionic charge distribution, and not just the dipole, predicted that larger anions are adsorbed at the interface, while the metal cations are repelled from it. Simulations at higher concentrations can be interpreted in terms of ion−specific ionic surface and ion−ion excluded volume correlations. Computational methods coupled with experimental results showed that, for dilute bulk concentrations, soft, polarizable monovalent anions such as I− have a tendency to be present at the interface due to the dipole−induced dipole interaction. Recently, electrospray ionization (ESI) mass spectrometry (MS) in the negative mode was proven to be a useful technique to study the accommodation of anions at the interface, and chemical reactions occurring during the formation of aerosol mimics. Studies for >100 μM solutions described the size dependent fractionation of the outermost layers of aerosolized droplets using an ESI probe, for ions with mass to charge detection limit m/z > 50 amu. In consequence, smaller anions such as chloride and nitrate have not been studied so far. Several mechanisms have been

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proposed to control the selective enrichment of anions at the air–water interface. The mechanisms are not independent and include factors such as (1) ion size, (2) ion polarizability, and (3) ion dehydration free energy.

In this article, we study the distribution of seven monovalent anions upon ESI aerosolization, for 100 nM equimolar solutions, what is 1000 times more diluted than previously tested, as well as in mixtures that mimic their actual composition in seawater. The fractionation of the environmental relevant and small Cl\(^-\) and NO\(_3^\)- ions is monitored for the first time simultaneously with Br\(^-\), NO\(_3^\)-, I\(^-\), ClO\(_4^\)-, and IO\(_4^\)-. The process is studied at the interface of water, D\(_2\)O, water–methanol, and water–ethanol mixtures, which are largely covered by –OH, –OD, –CH\(_2\) and \(-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\) groups, respectively. The use of nonionic polysorbate 20 surfactant provides direct physical insight to understand the effect of polarizability (\(\alpha\)) above the critical micelle concentration (CMC). We show that anion fractionation in micrometer size droplets depends on the actual concentration ratios of the species present in surface ocean waters. This work also suggests that the reciprocal square of ion radius can be used as a better predictor for the enrichment of anions and that the process at relevant salts molar ratio is still dependent on ion size.

**EXPERIMENTAL SECTION**

**Chemicals.** Sodium salts were chosen to study the fractionation of anions at the air–liquid interface during the aerosolization process: NaCl (99%), NaI (99.99%), and NaNO\(_3\) (99%, all from Fisher Scientific); NaIO\(_4\) (99%) and NaBr (99.5%, both from Acros Organics); and NaNO\(_3\) (99%) and NaClO\(_4\) (99.8%, both from MP Biomedicals). In addition, potassium, lithium, and cesium halide salts were used to study the effect of cation substitution during aerosolization: KCl (99%), LiI (99%), and CsCl (99%), all from MP Biomedicals); LiCl (>98%) and LiBr (99%, both from Alfa Aesar), CsBr (99.9%) and CsI (99.9%, both from Acros Organics); KBr (99%, Aldrich); and KI (99%, BDH Chemicals).

**Preparation of Solutions.** A 1.00 mM stock solution of each salt was freshly prepared by direct weighing and dissolution in a calibrated volumetric flask. The stock solutions were used to prepare 400 nM equimolar mixtures that underwent a 4 time dilution during infusion to a final concentration of 100 nM in each anion (unless indicated otherwise). Solutions were prepared in ultrapure water provided by an Elga Purelab flex (Veolia) water-polishing system (18.2 M\(\Omega\) cm, <5 ppb organics (TOC), <1 CFU/mL), D\(_2\)O (99.9%, Cambride Isotope), methanol (99.9%, Fisher Optima), and ethanol (99.5%, Sigma Aldrich).

Equimolar solutions in water were used to study the dependence of fractionation on (1) concentration, (2) acidity (6.8 \(\leq p\text{H} \leq 8.6\)), (3) solvent polarity with alcohol mixtures (0 \(\leq x\text{H}_2\text{O} \leq 1\)), and (4) the presence of \(10^{-2}\)–\(10^{-3}\) M polysorbate 20 (100%, Sigma Aldrich) as a nonionic surfactant. Samples at representative concentration of monovalent anions in surface seawater were prepared.

The pH of a 1 L solution in water, with 100 nmoles of each sodium halide studied, initially at 5.96, was adjusted by the addition of \(1.000 \times 10^{-1}\) M NaOH (Acros Organics) and measured with a pH meter (Mettler Toledo) calibrated at pH 4.01 and 7.00 or 7.00 and 10.01 with buffer solutions (Orion).

**ESI-MS Description.** The process of ESI has been efficiently used for many years as a mechanism of aerosolization of nonvolatile molecules such as highly polar, ionic, and macromolecular analytes, into the gas-phase region of a mass spectrometer. In our ESI system (Scheme 1), the dissolved ionic compounds start their journey to the surface in a liquid solution (H\(_2\)O, D\(_2\)O, H\(_2\)O/CH\(_3\)OH, or H\(_2\)O/CH\(_3\)CH\(_2\)OH mixtures) that is nebulized into an atmospheric pressure ion source region. Pneumatically assisted electrospray converts the solution into small droplets by the combination of a strong electric potential (1.5 kV) between needle (a stainless steel capillary with 127 \(\mu\)m ID and 230 \(\mu\)m OD) and counter electrode and a high-flow of N\(_2\) nebulizing gas (\(P = 70\) psi, flow = 12 L \(\text{min}^{-1}\)). The capillary carrying the sample and solvent molecules is surrounded by two concentric tubes carrying the nebulizing gas; the first one (330 \(\mu\)m ID) assists in the desolvation process of the liquid jet. The larger velocity of the N\(_2\) nebulizing gas (\(\nu_{\text{gas}} = 3.12 \times 10^4 \text{ cm s}^{-1}\)) over the liquid forming the plume of droplets (\(\nu_{\text{liquid}} = 26.3 \text{ cm s}^{-1}\)) contributes to the formation of fine aerosol droplets. The operation of the ESI probe in the negative-ion mode generates small negatively charged parent droplets with radius \(r_d\), which subsequently form a plume of solvated molecular ions that travel between the needle and the entrance cone that acts as a counter electrode. Neutral solvent molecules undergo evapo-
ration from the surface of the charged droplets, causing the droplets to shrink in size, shortening the distance of the negative charges at the surface of the newly formed smaller droplets. Thus, the ions are sputtered off the surface as the charge builds up, making the experiment surface sensitive. The first generation daughter droplets of smaller size with a radius \( R_m \) experience charge crowding on the surface that generates repulsion forces that overcome the surface tension of the liquid. In consequence, the parent droplets disintegrate into daughter microdroplets that are 10 times smaller as indicated by the ratio \( R_m / R_i < 0.1 \). The ionized species are attracted toward the lower pressure orifice of the entrance cone set to \(-80 \text{ V}\), that as a counter electrode also attracts the ions. The ions travel into the first vacuum stage through the entrance capillary, where the majority of desolvation takes place and, finally, to a quadrupole mass analyzer (accurate to 0.17 amu), where they are detected at specific \( m/z \) ratios. The overall time from the formation of original droplets until ion detection is \(<1 \text{ ms}\). The extracted ion count at the specific \( m/z \) of interest showed a direct correlation with concentration. However, converting the ion count into a fractionation ratio yields a concentration independent variable that reports the behavior of the ions on the interface rather than in the bulk of the solution.

The nebulizer voltage of the ESI probe was optimized to 1.5 kV for maximum ion count, within a range that showed the same fractionation behavior for all the ions. The cone voltage, capable of producing collisional induced dissociation (CID) of the ions, was optimized to \(-80 \text{ V}\) to obtain the highest ion count for all the ions of interest; although \( \text{IO}_4^- \) could be converted to \( \text{IO}_3^- \) at this voltage, its \(<5\%\) loss is considered minor. In summary, the experimental conditions were (unless indicated otherwise in a figure) drying gas temperature, \( 250 \text{ °C}\); nebulizer voltage, \(-1.5 \text{ kV}\); cone voltage, \(-80 \text{ V}\); and nebulizer pressure, \(70 \text{ psi}\). Mass spectra were acquired between 30 and 197 amu. The exclusion of ions \(<5\%\) of interest showed a dependence on ion radius (equation 1).

\[
R_m \propto \frac{\lambda_m}{kT}
\]

where \( R_m \) is the radius of the droplets, \( \lambda_m \) is the mean free path of the gas molecules, \( k \) is the Boltzmann constant, and \( T \) is the temperature. The implication is that the size of the droplets should depend on the arrangement of the ions in the interface, it is useful to classify the dominant mechanism for the selective enrichment and depression of anions in the interface. In order to classify the dominant mechanism for the selective enrichment and depression of anions in the interface, it is useful to explore how the different ion properties affect the efficiency of ionization and to determine if the enrichment is due to the concentration of anions at the air-water interface or if it is due to the size of the anions. The enrichment is not similar for each ion, as expected at the air-water interface, and the fractionation pattern is specifically affected by the addition of surfactants.

The flow of a solvent pump (Lab Alliance) at 150 \( \mu \text{L/min}\), stabilized with a back pressure regulator, was mixed through a T connector with a 50 \( \mu \text{L/min}\) flow of the sample in a syringe pump (Harvard Apparatus, Elite Series) and directed to the ESI-MS (Thermo Scientific, MSQ Plus). The solvent background was subtracted from the mass spectrum of the sample acquired at fixed time intervals of at least two minutes. Reported data are the average of duplicate experiments.

Present experiments are also supported by confirming the lack of any kind of correlation between the current applied to the ESI capillary and the fractionation process observed. According to Kohlraush’s law, each ion in the 100 nM equimolar (dilute) solution carries its portion of the total conductivity without being affected by any of the other ions. No dependence is observed between the fractionation and the identity of the ions present in the solution. The nebulizer gas temperature, \(350 \text{ °C}\); nebulizer voltage, \(3 \text{ kV}\); cone voltage, \(75 \text{ V}\); and nebulizer pressure, \(70 \text{ psi}\). The mass spectra recorded reflect the composition of ions that belong to the interface layers of the ESI jet at the time it is aerodynamically sheared by the nebulizer gas. Previous related studies characterized the outermost layers of aerosolized droplets using a grounded capillary (electrode) ESI probe. However, it was shown that the behavior of conducting and nonconducting electrospray capillaries produced similar results. The experimental results presented in the next section are validated by showing that the abundance of the seven anions, as reflected by their MS ion count, quantified from equimolar solutions follows a normal Hofmeister sequence. Therefore, the enrichment is not similar for each ion, as expected at the air-water interface, and the fractionation pattern is specifically affected by the addition of surfactants.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### Experiments with Equimolar Solutions.

The mass spectrum of a 100 nM equimolar solution of NaCl, NaNO3, NaBr, NaNO2, NaI, NaClO4, and NaIO4 in water is shown in Figure 1A, relative to the ion intensity of \( \text{IO}_4^- \). The negative ions present in the solution do not display uniformity in the data. The cone voltage, 70 psi; and nebulizer pressure, 70 psi. The ratios of the mass spectrum of Figure 1A, relative to the ion intensity of \( \text{IO}_4^- \) is shown in Figure 1A, relative to the ion intensity of \( \text{IO}_4^- \). The negative ions present in the solution do not display uniformity in the data. The cone voltage, 70 psi; and nebulizer pressure, 70 psi.

![Figure 1A](image-url)

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a plot of ln f_X vs R_X$^{-2}$. Herein, we show that our experiments are better correlated with R_X$^{-2}$, what indicates that the enrichment of anions at the interface also depends on the Coulomb interactions among ions. When considering ion polarizability ($\alpha$), a direct increase of f_X is expected.\textsuperscript{31} In the case of anion dehydration free energy ($\Delta G_{dehyd}$),\textsuperscript{18,28} (Table 1), and given the inverse proportionality $\Delta G_{dehyd} \propto R_X^{-1}$,\textsuperscript{42} the best correlation expected should linearly link a decrease of ln f_X with $\Delta G_{dehyd}$.

The fact that the largest and more polarizable IO$_4^-$ (R$_{IO_4^-} = 249$ pm; $\alpha = 7.69 \times 10^{-30}$ m$^3$)\textsuperscript{42} is the most abundant ion at the interface suggests a correlation between enrichment with anion radius (R_X) and polarizability ($\alpha$). This observation agrees with the smallest and less polarizable Cl$^-$ (R$_{Cl^-} = 181$ pm; $\alpha = 3.42 \times 10^{-30}$ m$^3$)\textsuperscript{42} being the less enriched ion at the interface or, in other words, the most enriched ion in the solvent bulk. However, the Coulombic repulsion among anions is the controlling factor during bubble fission. Figure 1B shows the linear relationship of ln f_X vs the square of the reciprocal of anion radius (R_X$^{-2}$) for solutions in pure H$_2$O, D$_2$O, CH$_3$OH, and CH$_3$CH$_2$OH, respectively. The correlation of ln f_X with R_X (0.90) is smaller than with R_X$^{-2}$ (0.95) or R_X$^{-1}$ (0.93) (Figures 1 and S2, Supporting Information). Indeed, the best fitting corresponds to R_X$^{-2}$. These results reflect that the fractionation process observed is due to the Coulomb fission of microdroplets with excess negative charge and many-anion repulsion. The correlation of ln f_X with R_X$^{-2}$ and R_X$^{-1}$, indicate a dependence on Coulomb’s energy and dehydration free energy (to be discussed below), respectively. It is apparent that the ratios of the linear regression slopes in Figure 1B, $m_{H_2O}/m_{D_2O} = -4.46 \times 10^5$ pm$^{-2}$/$-4.49 \times 10^5$ pm$^{-2} = 0.993$ and $m_{CH_3OH}/m_{CH_3CH_2OH} = -4.26 \times 10^5$ pm$^{-2}$/$-4.27 \times 10^5$ pm$^{-2} = 0.998$, as well as the correlation coefficients ratios $r_{H_2O/D_2O} = 0.948/0.948 = 1.00$ and $r_{CH_3OH/CH_3CH_2OH} = 0.923/0.942 = 0.980$, are practically identical within experimental error. The previous observations also indicate the lack of any isotopic effect when substituting H$_2$O for D$_2$O, which is a demonstration that we are dealing with a pure physical fractionation process, where no chemical reaction is taking place, as expected in solutions of these electrolytes.

**Polarizability.** Figure 2 shows the ln f_X vs polarizability of the ions ($\alpha_X$), which reflects the relationship between fractionation and the ability of the electronic shells of the ions to undergo deformation in an electric field.\textsuperscript{42} The poor correlation coefficient between ln f_X and $\alpha_X (\langle\alpha_X\rangle = 0.679)$ is closer to the correlation between $\alpha_X$ and R_X (r$_{\alpha_R}$ = 0.592) also shown in Figure 2 but considerably smaller than those observed with R_X$^{-2}$ in Figure 1B. Indeed, the minor contribution of polarizability to the fractionation process can be explained by its own dependence on ion radius.

**Effect of Surfactant.** The effect of polysorbate 20 on anion fractionation, as nonionic surfactant, seems negligible for surfactant concentrations below 10$^{-5}$ mol L$^{-1}$ (Figure 3). The addition of the surfactant below the critical micelle concentration (CMC)\textsuperscript{43} to the electrolyte solution decreases the total ion count\textsuperscript{12} (the ion count for Cl$^-$ at even low bulk concentrations. The surfactant occupies the interface in an oriented fashion and forms micelles in the bulk phase at the CMC = 8.0 $\times$ 10$^{-5}$ M of polysorbate 20.\textsuperscript{20}

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**Table 1. Ion Properties and Fractionation of Anions at the Air–Water Interface**\textsuperscript{a}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$X^-$</th>
<th>R_X (pm)</th>
<th>$\alpha$ (10$^{-30}$ m$^3$)</th>
<th>$\Delta G_{dehyd}$ (kJ mol$^{-1}$)</th>
<th>$\lambda^2$ (10$^{-48}$ m$^5$ S mol$^{-1}$)</th>
<th>$I_X^+$ (equimolar)</th>
<th>f_X (equimolar)</th>
<th>f_X/($\alpha^d$) (seawater)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cl$^-$</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>1.19 $\times$ 10$^{-3}$</td>
<td>6.36 $\times$ 10$^{-4}$</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO$_3^-$</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>6.65 $\times$ 10$^{-3}$</td>
<td>3.54 $\times$ 10$^{-3}$</td>
<td>1.93 $\times$ 10$^{-4}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Br$^-$</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>78.1</td>
<td>4.39 $\times$ 10$^{-2}$</td>
<td>2.34 $\times$ 10$^{-2}$</td>
<td>9.12 $\times$ 10$^{-2}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO$_2^-$</td>
<td>206$^b$</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>71.5</td>
<td>3.63 $\times$ 10$^{-2}$</td>
<td>1.93 $\times$ 10$^{-2}$</td>
<td>9.40 $\times$ 10$^{-3}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I$^-$</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>7.51</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>0.240</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td>2.96 $\times$ 10$^{-3}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ClO$_4^-$</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>67.4</td>
<td>0.549</td>
<td>0.292</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IO$_4^-$</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>7.69</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.533</td>
<td>1.37 $\times$ 10$^{-3}$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{a}Experiments were carried out in H$_2$O. Key: $X^-$, anion; R_X, radius; $\alpha$, polarizability; $\Delta G_{dehyd}$, dehydration free energy; $\lambda^2$, limiting equivalent ionic conductivity; $I_X^+$, normalized ion count; f_X, fractionation factor. R_X, $\alpha$, $\Delta G_{dehyd}$ and $\lambda^2$ values are from ref 42. This value corresponds to the equatorial radius. \textsuperscript{b}Equimolar concentration data for H$_2$O in Figure 1. \textsuperscript{c}Seawater molar ratio. n.a., data not available.\textsuperscript{d}Below the detection limit.
3 shows that, at low surfactant concentration, $f_{\text{ClO}_4^{-}}$, $f_{\text{IO}_4^{-}}$, and $f_{\text{NO}_3^{-}}$ are close to their values in water, $f(0)_{\text{ClO}_4^{-}}$, $f(0)_{\text{IO}_4^{-}}$, and $f(0)_{\text{NO}_3^{-}}$, while $f_{\text{Cl}}$ and $f_{\text{Br}}$ are depressed. Considerable changes are only observed for $[\text{polysorbate 20}] > 10^{-5}$ M. At higher polysorbate 20 concentration, there is an interfacial enrichment in the population of $\text{NO}_3^{-} > \text{NO}_2^{-} > \text{Br}^{-} > \text{ClO}_4^{-}$ in the surface layer and a fast decrease of the largest and more polarizable $\text{IO}_4^{-}$, that together with $\Gamma^{-}$ disturb the stability of the surface active layer. In the presence of 1 mM surfactant, the strong correlation of $\ln f_X$ with $R_X^{-2}$ drops to $r^2 = 0.580$. Although the total population of ions (or its density) occupying the air–water interface region decreases in the presence of surfactants, the fractionation of anions that have a planar molecular geometry $f_{\text{NO}_3^{-}}$ and $f_{\text{NO}_2^{-}}$ is enhanced at the air–water interface with surfactant as compared to pure water $f_{\text{NO}_3^{-}}(0)$ and $f_{\text{NO}_2^{-}}(0)$. Other ions that show opposite behaviors at $[\text{polysorbate 20}] = 10^{-5}$ M are $\text{ClO}_4^{-}$ (enhanced) and $\text{IO}_4^{-}$ (depressed) in the total number of ions still present at the interface. The opposite trend of $\text{ClO}_4^{-}$ and $\text{IO}_4^{-}$ is explained below.

The effect of surfactant on $f_X$ can be explained in terms of salting out or salting in relative to the hydrophobic groups of polysorbate 20 in water.\textsuperscript{43} Since the hydrophilic groups of the surfactant molecules are in contact with the aqueous phase in both the monomeric and micellar forms of the surfactant, while the hydrophobic groups are in contact with the aqueous phase only in the monomeric form, the fractionation of anions is affected by the addition of surfactant. The effects that electrolytes experience is close to be canceled out in the monomeric form below $[\text{polysorbate 20}] = 10^{-5}$ M. Anions with low polarizability ($\alpha \leq 5.1 \times 10^{-30} \text{ m}^3$, Table 1), such as $\text{NO}_3^{-}$, $\text{NO}_2^{-}$, $\text{Br}^{-}$, and $\text{ClO}_4^{-}$ are water structure makers. They salt out the hydrophobic groups of the surfactant close to the CMC and are enriched compared to those that salt in. Anions with large polarizability ($\alpha > 7.5 \times 10^{-30} \text{ m}^3$), $\Gamma^{-}$ and $\text{IO}_4^{-}$, are water structure breakers; they salt in the hydrophobic groups of the surfactant and are depleted above the CMC. Thus, the enrichment ratio of anions with and without surfactant, $f_X(S)/f_X(0)$, above the CMC is affected by the polarizability and geometry of anions.\textsuperscript{43}

**Effect of Alcohols.** Figure 4 shows that $f_X$ measured in water–methanol and water–ethanol mixtures is only weakly dependent on the composition of the solvent for molar fractions $0 \leq x_{\text{H}_2\text{O}} \leq 1$ ($x_{\text{R-OH}} = 1 - x_{\text{H}_2\text{O}}$). Sum-frequency generation vibrational spectroscopy measurements have shown that, for increasing $x_{\text{CH}_3\text{OH}} \geq 0.2$, the dangling $-\text{OH}$ of water gradually disappears.\textsuperscript{35} A similar behavior is expected for ethanol.\textsuperscript{36} The configuration includes the polar $-\text{OH}$ group of the alcohol pointing into the bulk phase, satisfying hydrogen bonding and minimizing dipole repulsion. Independently of the surface structure tested in our experiments by gradually substituting the interfacial hydroxyl groups of water by methyl and ethyl groups,\textsuperscript{34–37} anions selectively occupy the interface. Indeed, all anions should be oriented to minimize the distortion of the interface. Anions can repel each other and distribute in a way that provides the most gradual possible transition from the bulk solution to air. In consequence, the molecules of the...
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Figure 4. Anion fractionation factors, $f_X$, for 100 nM solution of sodium salts (top panel), interface thickness (from ref 37), and dielectric permittivity of the solvent (from ref 45), $\varepsilon$, (bottom panel) at variable (A) methanol and (B) ethanol molar fractions: (blue x) NO$_2^-$, (green filled square) NO$_3^-$, (red filled upside-down triangle) Br$^-$, (black filled diamond) ClO$_4^-$, (purple open triangle) $\Gamma^-$, (dark green filled circle) IO$_4^-$, and (blue-green filled circle) Cl$^-$.

solvent at the interface should still be oriented in a way so that their mutual interaction energy will be a maximum.$^{34}$

For the methanol hydrophobic interface (as $x_{\text{CH}_3\text{OH}} \rightarrow 1.0$), when the surface number density reaches $\sim$3 methanol molecules nm$^{-2}$, there is no possibility of water molecules interacting with anions, and the governing intermolecular forces involve methanol hydrogen bonding and ion-dipole interactions. The change in the interfacial layer thickness or thermal roughness with bulk concentration, evaluated as a function of the interface surface tension reported by Sung et al.$^{37}$ is plotted in the bottom panels of Figure 4. Both water–methanol and water–ethanol interfaces have a strongly oriented outer layer, with a hydrophobic $-\text{CH}_3$ and $-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_3$ packing structure of thinner width than the radius of the methanol and ethanol molecules, respectively.$^{34,36}$ The fractionation factor $f_X$ barely changes when the thickness of the outermost layer of the interface$^{37}$ is greater than $\sim$5 Å with increasing alcohol bulk mole fraction larger than 0.2.

At the interface, a solid spherical ion of radius $R_X$ and charge $q$ may have one of its hemispheres submerged in the liquid bulk (a continuous dielectric medium) to a depth $z$ and the other exposed to air.$^{20}$ The effective dielectric permittivity of the interfacial layer should gradually decrease from that of the hydrogen bonded solvent to air. Figure 4 (bottom panels) also presents the decrease in the dielectric permittivity of methanol and ethanol–water mixtures for increasing bulk alcohol molar fraction.$^{45}$ When considering the interfacial liquid slab, electrolytes strongly interact with the surrounding solvent molecules through ion–dipole interactions and occupy a position to decrease the dielectric permittivity of the solvent

The enrichment of anions at the air–water interface.

**CONCLUSIONS**

This study addresses the fundamental problem of the selective transfer of anions occurring during aerosol spray formation. The enrichment of anions at the air–water interface
represented by the fractionation factor shows an increasing linear correlation with ion size that follows the order $R_X^- < R_f^- < R_{f'}^-$. An explanation to the latter pattern is that the surface tension of the droplets is overcome by a series of many-body interactions among the solvated anions. These many-body interactions are stronger than the work of adhesion among solvent–solute molecules with their associated pairwise interaction energies. The series of cascade Coulombic fission that droplets undergo, and occur a posteriori of the surface sampling stage, produce a pure physical enrichment of larger and less repulsive anions at the interface. Although the ionic concentration on anion enrichment factors at the air–water interface is mainly dependent on $R_f$ concentration on anion enrichment factors at the air–water interface. For equimolar solutions, when the seawater molar ratios are fixed in the bulk solution, the aerosolized samples show that the air–water interface is 2.3 times richer in bromide than iodide. Present results reveal the relative position that anions occupy at the air–water interface and provide direct insight into the source of halides for the production of tropospheric RHS that participate in bromide explosion events in the early Arctic spring.

### ASSOCIATED CONTENT

#### Supporting Information

Additional figures S1–S5 as mentioned in the text. This material is available free of charge via the Internet at http://pubs.acs.org.

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Notes
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