Applications of neutron diffraction studies at LANSCE to environmental and energy problems

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Time-of-flight (TOF) neutron diffraction (ND) with Rietveld refinement is a powerful tool for investigating materials of interest in environmental and energy science. The high-pressure preferred orientation (HIPPO) beamline coupled with a torroidal anvil press or high-P low-T gas/liquid cells allow determination of EOS and D positions of D-bearing phases as f(P,T). Recent investigations at Los Alamos Neutron Science Center (LANSCE) have focused on a range of energy/ environmentally relevant materials.

Jarosite (KFe₃(SO₄)₂(OD)₆) structure was investigated using TOF ND from room T to its dehydroxylation T. With increasing T its c axis expands 10 times more rapidly than its a axis. Fitting of cell volumes yields $\alpha = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 T$ with $\alpha_0 =$ 1.01 x 10⁻⁴ K⁻¹ and $\alpha_1 = -1.15 \times 10^{-7}$ K⁻². H bonds holding the (001) octahedral-tetrahedral sheets together are weakened with increasing T. Near the dehyroxylation T, jarosite decomposes into yavapaiite and hematite (+ vapor).

H clathrate has potential as a H storage material. TOF ND at low T (10-300 K) and high P (1-2000 bar) show: 1) large cages of the SII clathrate structure reversibly varies from 2 to 4 D_2 molecules with decreasing T while the small cage contains a single D_2 molecule over the full T range; 2) D_2 are localized in both cages of the SII clathrate structure at low T and become delocalized in both cages at higher T; 3) there is shortening of D-D bonds in the clathrate cages, with bond lengths shorter than in metallic H.

Studies of molecular organic framework (MOF) compounds potentially useful for H₂ storage or gas separation reveal D₂ positions and crystal structures. We studied H adsorption in Cu₃[Co(CN)₆]₂, a Prussian blue analogue, at 10 MPa of D₂ from 40 to 200 K. Cell volume increases from 990.5(4) Å3 under vacuum to 993.5(3) Å3 at 10 MPa, implying incorporation of significant amounts of D₂ into the nanoporous framework. In addition, we synthesized a highly stable porous lanthanide MOF, Y(BTC)(H₂O)·4.3H₂O, and ND of the dehydrated phase revealed four distinct D₂ sites that are progressively filled within the framework.

Incomplete mixing of nucleosynthetic components in Ba isotopes of primitive chondrites

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Heterogeneous isotopic compositions observed in several elements of carbonaceous chondrites support the incomplete mixing model of some nucleosynthetic components in the early solar system. Barium is one of promising elements to address the details of nucleothentesis and presolar grain formation of the solar system [1-3]. Barium has seven stable isotopes with the mass numbers 130, 132, 134, 135, 136, 137 and 138. ¹³⁰Ba and ¹³²Ba are p-process isotopes produced by photodisintegration, ¹³⁴Ba and ¹³⁶Ba are s-only process isotopes. In addition, ¹³⁵Ba isotopic abundance may be affected by decay from presently extinct ¹³⁵Cs isotope (t_{1/2}=2.3 Ma), which can be used for Cs-Ba geochronological application [3,4].

Ba isotopic compositions of chemical leachates from eleven carbonaceous chondrites, Orgueil (CI) Mighei (CM2) Murray (CM2) Murchison (CM2) Sayama (CM2) Allende (CV3) Efremovka (CV3) Isuna (CO3) Kainsaz (CO3) Maralinga (CK4) and Karoonda (CK4) were determined by thermal ionization mass spectrometry to assess the chemical evolution in the early solar system. The barium isotopic data in most of the leachates show variable ¹³⁵Ba excesses correlated with ¹³⁷Ba excesses, suggesting the presence and heterogeneity of additional nucleosynthetic components for s- and r-processes in the solar system. The isotopic deviation treated in this study are generally small (-3< ϵ <+3). As exceptional cases, large deviations of ¹³⁵Ba (ϵ =-13.5 to -5.0) and ¹³⁷Ba (ϵ =-6.2~-1.2) observed in the acid residues from one CI and four CM meteorites show significant evidence for enrichments of sprocess isotopes derived from presolar grains. Subtraction of s- and r-isotopic components from the total Ba isotopes of CM meteorites allows us to consider the possible existence of presently extinct ¹³⁵Cs isotope in the early solar system.

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