

Influence of redox environment on UV organic synthesis

W. KAWADE¹, X. ZANG¹, Y. UENO^{1,2}

¹Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, Tokyo Institute of Technology, Tokyo, 152-8551, Japan.
(kawade.w.aa@m.titech.ac.jp)

²Earth-Life Science Institute (WPI-ELSI), Tokyo Institute of Technology, Tokyo, 152-8550, Japan

UV synthesis of organic compounds in atmosphere of Earth-like planet is important for origins of life. Prebiotic synthesis experiments have suggested that CO₂ atmosphere is oxidizing and thus unfavorable for organic synthesis compared to more reducing conditions. However, it is still poorly understood how the wide range of redox environment affects production of organic compounds. The redox state is not only controlled by chemistry of atmosphere but also buffered by ocean chemistry including Fe(II) or other metal ions from hydrothermal input. We have conducted UV synthesis experiments of C-H-O systems under various redox condition with a presence of liquid water for simulating ocean-atmosphere system. The results of our experiment showed that formaldehyde, acetaldehyde, formate, acetate, propionate, and normal alkanes are synthesized under CO- and CH₄-bearing atmosphere, whereas all these compounds are not detectable under CO₂-atmosphere. Nonetheless, formaldehyde, formate, acetate is formed even when the gas phase is pure CO₂ when liquid-phase contains Fe(II). When irradiating UV under the presence of Fe(II)-bearing water, the production rate of formate is about three times faster than the CO₂-H₂O system with 10 times smaller Fe(II)-bearing water. These results suggest that the production rate and speciation of organic matter depends on the availability of H₂O as well as total redox state of the whole atmosphere and ocean system. Based on the results, we have modeled the reaction pathway and estimate the flux of each organic compounds supplied to early ocean with considering redox state and UV flux of the earth.