

Electron induced reactivity of molecular cations: from mechanisms to new state-to-state cross sections and rate coefficients

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Electron-impact dissociative recombination, rovibrational (de)excitation and dissociative excitation of molecular cations are at the heart of molecular reactivity in the interstellar media and early Universe [1], being a major charge destruction path, and producing often atomic species in metastable states un-accessible through optical excitations.

These processes involve super-excited molecular states undergoing predissociation and autoionization, having thus strong resonant character. We use methods based on the Multichannel Quantum Defect Theory [2] and R-matrix theory [3], capable to account for the strong mixing between ionization and dissociative channels, open - direct mechanism - and closed - indirect mechanism, via capture into prominent Rydberg resonances [3] correlating to the ground and excited ionic states, and for rotational effects. These features will be illustrated and extensive data will be shown for several cations of high astrophysical and planetary relevance such as H₂⁺ and HD⁺[4], CO⁺ [5], SH⁺ [6], CH⁺ [2,7], N₂⁺ [8], ArH⁺[9], and polyatomic systems like HCO⁺, N₂H⁺ [2], CH₂NH₂⁺ [10] and NH₂CH₂O⁺ [11]. Comparisons with other existing theoretical and experimental results will be given, and perspectives on the advancement in the theoretical treatment - addressing polyatomic systems, predicting branching ratios - will be outlined.

References

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