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Infrared spectroscopy quantification of functional carbon groups in kerogens and coals: A calibration procedure

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ABSTRACT

The determination of the abundances of the CH_x , $\text{C}=\text{O}$ and aromatic groups in chondritic Insoluble Organic Matter (IOM) and coals by Infrared (IR) spectroscopy is a challenging issue, due to insufficient knowledge on the absorption cross-sections and their sensitivity to the molecular environment. Here, we report on a calibration approach based on a ^{13}C synthetic model material, whose composition was unambiguously determined by Direct-Pulse/Magic Angle Spinning Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (DP/MAS NMR). Ratios of the cross-sections of the CH_x , $\text{C}=\text{O}$ and aromatic groups have been determined, and the method has been applied to IOM samples extracted from four chondrites as Orgueil (CI), Murchison (CM), Tagish Lake (C2-ungrouped) and EET 92042 (CR), and to a series of coals. The estimate of the aliphatic to aromatic carbon ratio ($n_{\text{CH}_x}/n_{\text{Aro}}$) in IOM samples from Orgueil, Murchison and Tagish Lake chondrites is in good agreement with Single-Pulse/NMR estimates earlier published, and is lower by a factor 1.3 in the case of the CR chondrite EET 92042 (but error bars overlap). In contrast, the aliphatic to carbonyl ratio ($n_{\text{CH}_x}/n_{\text{C}=\text{O}}$) is overestimated for the four chondrites. These discrepancies are likely due to the control of the absorption cross-section of the $\text{C}=\text{O}$ and $\text{C}=\text{C}$ bonds by the local molecular environment. Regarding coals, the use of published NMR analyses has brought to light that the integrated cross-section ratio $A_{\text{CH}_x}/A_{\text{Aro}}$ varies with the vitrinite reflectance over an order of magnitude. Here as well, the local oxygen speciation plays a critical control on A_{Aro} , which decreases with increasing the vitrinite reflectance. We provide an analytical law that links $A_{\text{CH}_x}/A_{\text{Aro}}$ and vitrinite reflectance, which will allow the determination of $n_{\text{CH}_x}/n_{\text{Aro}}$ for any coal sample, provided its vitrinite reflectance is known.

Keywords: Infrared spectroscopy, Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR), Kerogens, Coals, Insoluble Organic Matter, Chondrites, Composition

60 1. INTRODUCTION

61 Infra-Red (IR) spectroscopy is a non-destructive technique well suited to characterize
62 complex insoluble organic compounds in meteorites and coals. It provides an estimation of
63 organic composition based on the integrated absorbance of the main functional groups (e.g.,
64 alkyl CH, CH₂ and CH₃, aromatic C=C and C-H, carbonyl/carboxylic C=O, hydroxyl -OH) and
65 tracers of the chemical and structural evolution during diagenesis and catagenesis (Li et al.,
66 2016; Lis et al., 2005a; Painter et al., 1981; Petersen et al., 2008; Sun, 2005; Chen et al., 2012;
67 Xueqiu et al., 2017). In addition, micro-FTIR, and more recently, Atomic force microscopy-
68 based infrared spectroscopy (AFM-IR), has offered new perspectives to collect spatially
69 resolved IR spectra, thereby identifying chemical heterogeneities at the submicrometric scale
70 (Yang et al., 2017; Jakob et al., 2019; Abarghani et al., 2020; Jubb et al., 2020). These techniques
71 have been proved valuable for the characterization of precious extraterrestrial micrometric
72 grains, like Interplanetary Dust Particles (IDPs), Antarctic micro-meteorites and matrix grains
73 extracted from rare primitive chondrites (Battandier et al., 2018; Beck et al., 2010; Dartois et
74 al., 2004; Kebukawa et al., 2018; Mathurin et al., 2019; Orthous-Daunay et al., 2013; Quirico
75 et al., 2018; Quirico et al., 2014). Although the assignment of the main vibration bands has
76 reached a consensus, quantifying the exact proportions of functional groups based on IR signal
77 remains difficult (Painter et al., 1981; delaRosa et al., 1992). Indeed, only a few absorption
78 cross-sections have been published so far (Sandford et al., 1991; Dartois et al., 2004; Russell et
79 al., 2009; Takahama et al., 2013). In addition, due to the complex structure of kerogens and
80 coals, a given chemical group exists within different molecular environments, and is difficult to
81 reside in various frequency shifts, inhomogeneous broadening and variability of the absorption
82 cross-section values (Craddock et al., 2015).

83 Here, we report the determination of the absorption cross-sections of the alkyl (CH_x),
84 carbonyl (C=O) and aromatic (C=C) groups based on a H¹³CO synthetic kerogen analogue
85 (named H¹³CO-tholins), whose composition is unambiguously determined by DP/MAS (Direct
86 Polarization/Magic Angle Spinning) Nuclear Magnetic Resonance and XANES (X-ray
87 Absorption at Near-Edge Spectroscopy) at the C K-edge. The use of a ¹³C sample (e.g.
88 synthesized H¹³CO-tholins) overcomes the critical bias of undetected carbons encountered in
89 solid-state ¹³C NMR analysis. These absorption cross-sections have been applied to a series of
90 infrared spectra of kerogens extracted from primitive chondrites, and to a series of coals ranging
91 a broad range of maturity. As the relative abundances of C=O, C=C and CH_x groups in these
92 samples are reported in several publications, the calibration protocol could be tested, and we
93 further discuss the dependency of the cross-sections with the chemical structure.

94

95 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

96 2.1 Sample selection and preparation

97 2.1.1 Production of IOM analogues from HCO-tholins

HCO-tholins samples are polymeric disordered carbonaceous materials that were synthesized in the PAMPRE experimental reactor located at LATMOS (Guyancourt, France) (Alcouffe et al., 2010; Szopa et al., 2006). This setup consists in a radio-frequency capacitively coupled plasma (RF CCP) confined within a cylindrical cage, filled with an initial gaseous mixture made of 7% of CH₄, 3% of CO and 90% of Ar gas, with a 3 sccm flux under the total pressure of 0.43 mbar. Two types of H¹²CO and H¹³CO tholins were produced from natural ¹²C-rich and ¹³C-rich gases (purity > 99.5%), provided by Eurisotop (Saclay, France). The power delivered by the generator was maintained within 11–12 W. Grains were formed within the plasma and kept under electrostatic levitation, and grew up until they deposited into a glass vessel surrounding the confining cage of the plasma. Experiments were run daily (8–10 h) during working hours for safety. The temperature of the electrode was 21°C when starting the discharge, and 45°C when switching it off in the evening. At total, about 30 mg of H¹³CO-tholins were obtained in 63 hours, and 130 mg of H¹²CO-tholins in 98 hours. The production yield, 0.50 to 1.3 mg.hour⁻¹, was much lower compared to tholins formed from N₂ : CH₄ mixtures (Sciamma-O'Brien et al., 2010). The H¹³CO-tholin was composed of a dominant yellow, fine-grained powder and a less abundant population of dark platelets (Fig. S-1). In comparison, the H¹²CO-tholins did not contain any dark grains. The black platelets were constituted by direct deposition on the grid, which eventually fell and mixed with the dusty tholins. Infrared spectroscopy has shown that these two populations were chemically similar (Fig. S-2). Finally, the differences in the color of the grains are probably due to the larger thickness of the platelets.

Analogues of kerogens and coals were obtained from the carbonization of H¹³CO-tholins with the elemental composition revealed in Table S-1 (Supporting Information). To select optimal conditions to get the good analogues, preliminary heating experiments were run at 200 °C, 300 °C, 350 °C, 400 °C, 450 °C, 500 °C and 550 °C, with a tubular furnace maintained under secondary vacuum (~ 10⁻⁶ mbar). Small grains of samples were selected and pressed between two diamond windows and put into a ceramic crucible that was placed at the middle of the tube. For each experiment, the setting temperature was maintained during 1h, and the tube was then let cool down freely for 3–6 hours, depending on the initial temperature setting. Infrared spectra of the heated samples were collected and compared to spectra of Insoluble Organic Matter (IOM) samples extracted from primitive chondrites (Fig. S-2). Finally, we select a temperature of 400°C (for extensive details on the procedure, see Supporting Information). The final carbonization of HCO-tholins was then operated with this set temperature, using a ceramic crucible filled with 5–10 mg of the powdered samples. We used an anti-static gun (Zerostat, Sigma-Aldrich) to limit sample loss due to static electricity.

2.1.2 Coal and IOM samples

A suite of coal samples with a mean maximum vitrinite reflectance (R_o) ranging 0.33–2.8% were purchased from the Penn State University coal sample Bank (<http://www.energy.psu.edu>) (Table S-2). The IR spectra of IOMs extracted from primitive chondrites have been earlier published in Orthous-Daunay et al. (2013), including IOMs from Orgueil (CI1), Murchison (CM2), EET92042 (CR2) and Tagish Lake (C2-ung), while the IR spectra of coals were collected by using Bruker Vertex 70v spectrometer.

2.2 Analytical methods

2.2.1 FTIR measurements

The FTIR instrument used was a Bruker Hyperion 3000 infrared microscope, equipped with liquid nitrogen cooled–mercury cadmium telluride (MCT) detector. *Micro*-FTIR spectra were collected in the range of 4000 – 700 cm^{-1} with a spectral resolution of 4 cm^{-1} . No samples required more than 200 scans (5 min) to get a satisfying signal-to-noise ratio. All measurements were done using an environmental cell with an optical path through two ZnS windows and pumped to $\sim 10^{-6}$ mbar (Beck et al., 2010). The sample (e.g., tholins, coal) was deposited onto a type IIa synthetic diamond window (3 mm diameter, 500 μm thick) and crushed with a similar window to have a thin and flat sample. The diamond window holding the crushed sample was inserted in the cell, pumped, and the window was heated at 80 °C to remove efficiently adsorbed water. Background spectra were collected on a location next to the sample just before measuring the sample.

FTIR spectra of bulk coals and HCO-tholins samples were collected on KBr pellets. Pellets were prepared using 300 mg of a KBr powder previously heated at 300 °C under vacuum during 3 h. The sample (1 ± 0.1 mg) was ground and mixed with 300 mg KBr with a MM200 Retsch grinder equipped with an agate mortar filled with a single ball (30 Hz; 30 minutes). Finally, 13 mm diameter pellets were prepared using a press AtlasTM Manuelles (Eurolabo), under 400 bars and the gentle heating at 60 °C during 1h (cooling down during 30 minutes). Infrared spectra were collected under vacuum condition with a Bruker Vertex 70v spectrometer, in the range 4000 – 400 cm^{-1} with 200 scans and a 4 cm^{-1} spectral resolution.

2.2.2 Solid-state Nuclear Magnetic Resonance

The H^{13}CO - tholins material was characterized by solid NMR using an AVANCE 750 MHz wide-bore spectrometer (BrukerTM) operating at MAS rate of 60 kHz designed for 1.3 mm outside diameter (OD) zirconia rotors (closed with vespel caps). About 1 – 5 mg of materials was put inside the rotor. Under those conditions (188.62 MHz and 60kHz spinning speed), any rotational sideband was thrown out of the spectral region of interest. This allows a proper deconvolution of spectra. Proton decoupling during acquisition was obtained by using SPINAL-64 at a 200 kHz ^1H RF field (Fung et al., 2000). All spectra were collected within a 250kHz spectral windows (1325.3ppm) and 16324 acquisition time domains. To get undistorted lineshapes and filter out background probes signal, the quantitative Direct Polarization (DP) was performed using a speed synchronized spin-echo (Hahn, 1950; Vieira et al., 2016; Lucherelli et al., 2019), pulse sequence $\text{P}_{90}-\tau-\text{P}_{180}-\tau$, with the following conditions: 2.75 μs and 5.5° s for P_{90}° and P_{180}° pulses, and echo time being set to 33.6 μs (2 rotation periods). Under such conditions, baseline problems and first order phasing are fixed, which is a prerequisite for quantitative analysis. T_1 (spin-lattice relaxation time) were measured following inversion-recovery method (Kingsley, 1999) and led us to set up DP experiments with recycling delays equal to 30s. NMR spectra were processed with the Topspin software (phase and baseline, LB=25 applied). The interpretation of 1D ^{13}C NMR spectra presents a significant difficulty due to signal overlap.

Therefore, the spectral decomposition of the spectra was performed with the DMFIT Software developed by Massiot et al. (2002) and previously used for biomass and biochar using Gaussian profiles (Le Brech et al., 2016). The decomposition was repeated three times for the 400 °C H¹³CO- tholins to estimate the uncertainty on the derived composition due to the processing.

2.2.3 STXM-XANES analysis

Synchrotron-based scanning transmission X-ray microscope (STXM) analyses were performed on heated H¹²CO- and H¹³CO-tholins to document the carbon speciation using the HERMES STXM beamline at the synchrotron SOLEIL (Saint-Aubin, France) (Belkhou et al., 2015; Swaraj et al., 2017). Samples were prepared either by cryo-ultramicrotomy (H¹³CO-tholins) or by depositing the powder on a Si₃N₄ membrane (H¹²CO-tholin). Energy calibration was done using the well-resolved 3p Rydberg peak of gaseous CO₂ at 294.96 eV (Swaraj et al., 2017). XANES hypercube data (stacks) over the carbon absorption range (250 – 350 eV) were collected with a spatial resolution of 35 nm at energy increments of 0.1 eV over the 283 – 291.5 eV region, with a dwell time of less than 1 ms per pixel to prevent irradiation damage (Wang et al., 2009). Stack alignments and extraction of XANES spectra were done using the aXis2000 software (ver2.1n). Normalization of data and quantification of the concentrations of functional groups were done using the QUANTORXS freeware (<https://github.com/CorentinLG/QuantORXS/>) described in Le Guillou et al. (2018). Note that although this quantification procedure provides consistent results for aromatic, ketone\phenol and carboxylic\ester groups, it remains difficult to estimate the concentration of aliphatic groups precisely.

2.2.4 Raman setup

Raman measurements were collected with a HORIBA JOBIN-YVON LaRam spectrometer, equipped with a 600 gr.mm⁻¹ groove and operating at 532 nm (INSU national Facility at ENS-Lyon, France). The laser beam was focused through a ×100 objective. The power onto the sample was 380 μW, and acquisition time was 5×20s. The configuration used yields a lateral resolution of ≈ 1 μm.

2.2.5 Analysis of infrared spectra

For each spectrum, a baseline correction was done using spline functions, and the peak absorbance of the C=C band at 1540 cm⁻¹ was set to 1. The C=O and C=C bands in H¹³CO-tholin spectra at 1656 and 1540 cm⁻¹, respectively, were fitted with Gaussian profiles (using the multi-fit peak functions of the Igor 8 software, Wavemetrics) (Fig.1).

The integrated cross-section is defined by:

$$A = \int_{\nu_1}^{\nu_2} \sigma d\nu = \int_{\nu_1}^{\nu_2} \ln(10) \frac{a(\nu) \times S}{n} d\nu \text{ (cm/group) (Equation 1)}$$

where $a(\nu) = -\log(\frac{I}{I_0})$ is the absorbance, with I and I_0 are the intensity of the infrared beam after and before the sample, respectively; n is the number of molecular oscillators and σ is the absorption cross-section (cm^2), with ν the wavenumber, ν_1 and ν_2 the edges of the spectral range of the spectral component, and S is the probed area (cm^2).

Finally, the ratio of the absorption cross-section of two chemical groups X_1 and X_2 is:

$$\frac{A_{X1}}{A_{X2}} = \frac{a_{X1}}{a_{X2}} \times \frac{n_{X2}}{n_{X1}} \quad (\text{Equation 2})$$

where a_x refers to the integrated absorbance of a chemical group X as aliphatic CH_x , $\text{C}=\text{O}$ or aromatic species (Aro). a_{CH_x} was calculated from the integration of the alkyl band between 2750 and 3000 cm^{-1} , while a_{CO} and a_{Aro} were obtained from a Gaussian fit of the bands at 1656 and 1540 cm^{-1} , respectively. The integrated cross-section ratios of the CH_x , $\text{C}=\text{O}$ and Aro molecular oscillators, $A_{\text{CH}_x}/A_{\text{Aro}}$, $A_{\text{CH}_x}/A_{\text{C}=\text{O}}$ or $A_{\text{Aro}}/A_{\text{C}=\text{O}}$ were finally calculated with Equation 2, using estimates from NMR measurements on the 400 °C H^{13}CO -tholin. No estimation of individual A_x cross-sections was made, because NMR measurements provided ratios of chemical groups abundances.

Strictly speaking, IR spectroscopy probes normal modes and not bonds. In the case of the CH_x groups, the mass difference between H and C atoms is large and decouples their respective motions. Thus, the corresponding bands are controlled by hydrogen vibration around a single carbon atom. For the terminating carbonyl group, environmental effects from neighboring chemical groups are present, leading to a moderate frequency shift and variations of the absorption coefficient by up to a factor of 2. But for both CH_x and $\text{C}=\text{O}$, the number of bonds or molecular groups is equal to the number of carbon atoms and a straightforward comparison with ^{13}C -NMR is possible. Things get harder in the case of aromatic species. A benzene single ring (C_6H_6), in the gas or as a molecular crystal has a vibration mode at $\sim 1500 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ that involves all carbon atoms (6). Small polycyclic hydrocarbons (1-4 rings) display a sharp narrow band in the range 1700-1500 cm^{-1} , but the number of $\text{C}\cdots\text{C}$ bonds does not equal the number of C atoms. For instance, naphthalene units have 10 C atoms and 11 $\text{C}\cdots\text{C}$ bonds, anthracene and phenanthrene have 14 C atoms and 16 $\text{C}\cdots\text{C}$ bonds, and pyrene 16 C atoms and 19 $\text{C}\cdots\text{C}$ bonds. In the case of larger polycyclic aromatics, theoretical calculations point to a broad feature peaking around 1600 cm^{-1} , which is due to the E_{2g} normal mode that involves all carbon atoms and phonon propagation (Mapelli et al., 1999). Immature kerogens and coals contain small (1-4 rings) polycyclic aromatics inserted in a macromolecular network and display a similar broad band at 1600 cm^{-1} . Altogether, the infrared absorption at 1600 cm^{-1} results from the motion of all carbon atoms, but in contrast no clear connection can be established with a number of $\text{C}=\text{C}$ bonds, nor a number of rings. In this respect, the terms “aromatic ring stretch” or “ $\text{C}=\text{C}$ ” used in literature are somewhat misleading, and we have used the term “Aro”. As such, A_{Aro} is controlled by the number of carbon atoms, allowing a direct comparison with ^{13}C -NMR. In the details, we expect significant variations of A_{Aro} with the size and local environment of the polyaromatic specie, for instance $-\text{OH}$ groups (see discussion below).

Last, the Artificial Bees algorithm was used from the ESA Package PYGMO (<https://esa.github.io/pygmo/>) and tested two fit models: one based on 7 Gaussian and one on 7

pseudo-Voigt components. Each group comprised 50 simulations and the fit quality was estimated with a χ^2 function. A 20000 bees' population over 50 generations was used. For each of the 200 numerical simulations to get the good fit in term of χ^2 value.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Solid-state ^{13}C DP/MAS NMR analysis

Solid-state ^{13}C DP/MAS NMR spectra of the pristine and heated H^{13}CO -tholins are presented in Fig. 2a and the band assignment is given in Table 1, following the fitting results in Fig. 2b and 1c for the initial and 400 °C H^{13}CO tholins, respectively. We observe two intense features at 100–160 ppm and 0 – 100 ppm in the spectra of both samples, which are assigned to sp^2 and sp^3 carbon atoms, respectively. The range 0–45 ppm usually points to C atoms in alkyl chains, while the range of 45-90 ppm points to oxygenated aliphatic carbons, e.g. alcoholic, carboxylic or ether groups (Pretsch et al., 2000). It is, however, challenging to separate the respective contribution of these two groups of carbon atoms accurately. sp^2 carbons in the 100-160 ppm range can be assigned to olefinic chains (conjugated and unconjugated alkenes) and aromatic or polyaromatic species. We cannot distinguish these two types of speciation. The broad and weak signal which peaks at 170 ppm points to C=O groups in esters or carboxylic groups, and that at 210 ppm indicates to C=O in ketones or aldehydes. The effect of heating results in a steady increase of unsaturated versus saturated carbons, and a dramatic drop of labile oxygenated groups (Fig. 2a). This is in full agreement with the carbonization process that promotes hydrogen loss, carbonyl loss and aromatization.

The relative abundances F_x , of the different carbon groups, was derived through a decomposition procedure using a fit model based on Gaussian components (Fig. b-c; Table 1) (Massiot et al., 2002, Le Brech et al., 2016). The unheated H^{13}CO - tholins appears to be mainly composed of $-\text{CH}_x$ ($x=1$ to 3) groups ($F_{\text{ali}} = \sim 61\%$), olefinic carbons ($F_{\text{aro}} = \sim 32.5\%$) and a lower content of C=O groups ($F_{\text{co}} = 5.1\%$). The ^{13}C NMR spectrum of the 400 °C heated H^{13}CO -tholins is dominated by aromatic carbons ($F_{\text{aro}} = \sim 64\%$) and contains less aliphatic-CH groups ($F_{\text{ali}} = \sim 32\%$) and C=O groups ($F_{\text{co}} = 4.1\%$) (Table 1).

3.2 Raman Analysis

The Raman spectrum of the unheated H^{13}CO -tholin is dominated by a strong fluorescence background, with no detectable vibrational bands. The spectra of the heated H^{13}CO -tholin display the first-order carbon bands superimposed onto a high fluorescence background. The spectral contrast (i.e. the intensity of the G and D bands with respect to the fluorescence intensity) is low, leading to poor quality of the reduced spectra after subtraction of a linear baseline (Fig. S-3). The use of a Lorentzian-Breit-Wigner-Fano fit model was complicated, due to the poor spectral quality at the edge of the G and D bands. Despite these troubles, these data point a G band peak position at $\sim 1537\text{ cm}^{-1}$ and a FWHM of $\sim 80\text{ cm}^{-1}$. For comparison with published data, the peak position of a ^{12}C -bearing sample can be estimated through $\omega_{12}=\omega_{13}(\mu_{12}/\mu_{13})$, with ω the peak position and μ the reduced mass. We obtain $\omega_{12}=1593\text{ cm}^{-1}$, which points to a nano-graphitic structure in terms of sp^2 structure and is entirely consistent

with a kerogen structure as found in chondritic IOM, coals and terrestrial kerogens (Ferrari & Robertson, 2001; Quirico et al., 2018). These data support that most of the unsaturated carbon atoms are present in small-sized polyaromatic units, with negligible olefinic carbon bonds.

3.3 XANES analysis

STXM-based XANES data revealed that the H^{13}CO -tholins heated at 400 °C is homogeneous at the submicrometric level. The prominent feature at 285 – 285.5 eV of the XANES spectra indicate that more than half of the carbon atoms (56%) are involved in aromatic/olefinic groups ($\text{C}=\text{C}$ groups) (Fig. 3a, Table 2). A shoulder is observed at 287.7 eV, which can be assigned to the aliphatic carbons ($-\text{CH}_x$) (~ 30% of the C atoms). Additional broad features at 286.2 eV and 288.5 eV are assigned to ketone/phenols ($\text{C}=\text{O}$ and $\text{C}_{\text{Ar}}-\text{OH}$, ~ 14 % of the C atoms) and carboxylic/ester ($\text{R}-\text{COOH}, \text{R}'$; ~ 4 % of the C atoms). These estimates are consistent with NMR results. The absorption around 286.5 eV could also be assigned to the nitrile functional group, but its presence is discarded by the low elemental N/C ratio (0.01) (Table S-1). Even if our measurements do not report such heterogeneity in H^{13}CO -tholins, we cannot exclude the presence of such tiny inclusions.

To validate their XANES quantification method, Le Guillou et al. (2018) applied both XANES and DP/MAS NMR techniques to fresh lignin and lignin heated at 300 °C and 350 °C given by Le Brech et al. (2016). This work suggested that XANES and NMR quantification methods provide consistent results for aromatic groups, ketone/phenol groups and carboxylic/ester groups. However, the aliphatic groups of lignin samples appeared overestimated by about 15%. In the case of the heated H^{13}CO -tholins, there is a reasonable agreement between XANES and NMR for the aliphatic and the carboxylic groups (Fig. 3b). In contrast, the aromatic groups' abundances determined from XANES are lower than that obtained from DP/MAS NMR, as 55 ± 4 % and 64 ± 1 %, respectively.

3.4 Infrared spectroscopy

The infrared spectra of the initial and 400 °C H^{12}CO and H^{13}CO -tholins are presented in Fig. 4. The heterogeneity of the 400 °C H^{13}CO -tholins was checked in both the KBr pellet and Micro-FTIR spectra (Supporting Information, Fig. S-4). The broadband at 3600 – 3100 cm^{-1} corresponds to the stretching mode of $-\text{OH}$ groups in alcohols, carboxylic groups or phenol ($\text{C}_{\text{aro}}-\text{OH}$). The peak at 3100 – 3000 cm^{-1} is assigned to aromatic C-H. The region of 2800–3000 cm^{-1} displays four main peaks, including the antisymmetric and symmetric stretching modes of methyl (CH_3) and methylene (CH_2) groups and possibly of the CH group, as a component centered at ~ 2900 cm^{-1} . However, this spectral range is highly congested and more components are present (see below). The spectral region 1800 – 1500 cm^{-1} displays bands at 1656 and 1540 cm^{-1} , and 1708 cm^{-1} and 1608 cm^{-1} for the H^{13}CO and H^{12}CO -tholins, respectively. These features (e.g., 1656 and 1540 cm^{-1}) are assigned to the stretching modes of the carbonyl ($\text{C}=\text{O}$) and aromatic ($\text{C}=\text{C}$), respectively (Painter et al., 1981). In the region 1500 – 900 cm^{-1} , bending, deformation and out-of-plane modes of CH_2 , CH_3 and C-O bonds are present at 1450, 1375 and 1300 cm^{-1} . We will follow here Painter et al. (1981) which state that the broad feature peaking

at $\sim 1200\text{ cm}^{-1}$ does not provide any significant compositional information, in particular on the abundance of ether groups ($-\text{C}-\text{O}-\text{C}-$).

3.4.1 Spectral decomposition of the CH_x stretching region

The region between $3000 - 2750\text{ cm}^{-1}$ results from the contribution of symmetric and antisymmetric stretching modes of CH_2 , CH_3 , possibly of $-\text{CH}$, and contains information on the abundance of alkyl groups and the ratio of CH_2 and CH_3 groups. However, the spectral congestion makes it difficult to identify the exact number of components, spectral profiles and physical interpretation. Pure alkanes at a low temperature usually display several components ascribed to the d^- antisymmetric stretch of chain CH_2 , the symmetric stretch of terminal CH_2 ($d^+\omega$) and two components arising from a Fermi resonance between the symmetric stretch of chain CH_2 and the overtone of the $\text{H}-\text{C}-\text{H}$ bending mode, reported as d^+ and d^+_{FR} (the first being dominating by the fundamental mode) (Fig. 5) (MacPhail et al., 1984); other components are the r_a and r_b in-plane and out-of-plane asymmetric stretch of $-\text{CH}_3$, and the symmetric stretch in Fermi resonance with the first overtone of the CH_3 bending mode, named r^+ and r^+_{FR} . Pure alkanes measured at low-temperature display peaks and shoulders in agreement with this assignment. However, the different components cannot be guessed for a similar compound in the liquid state at room temperature (Fig. 5). Even more, critical issues arise in the case of natural complex mixtures or solids, such as broader components, spectral shapes changes and peak position shifts. In the case of coals and chondritic IOM, the presence of oxygen as ether or carbonyl groups likely modifies the spectral distribution, making uncertain the spectral decomposition of the bands (Orthous-Daunay et al., 2013; Quirico et al., 2018).

To explore more quantitatively this congestion issue, we ran optimization simulations of the fit of the alkyl band of an IOM sample extracted from the Orgueil (CI1) chondrite (Orthous-Daunay et al., 2013). We used the Artificial Bees algorithm from the ESA Package PYGMO (<https://esa.github.io/pygmo/>) and tested two fit models: one based on 7 Gaussian and one on seven pseudo-Voigt components. Two components aimed to fit the small features at ~ 3000 and 2790 cm^{-1} , due to the aromatic $\text{C}-\text{H}$ stretch and a combination mode from fundamental modes in the fingerprint region (Fig. 6). The fit model of the aliphatic bands then consisted of five components, as usually reported in the literature (Dartois et al., 2007, 2004; Orthous-Daunay et al., 2013). We ran two groups of simulations: one keeping constant the Full Width at Half Maximum FWHM of 35 cm^{-1} for all the components, and another one where FWHM is let free within the range $20\text{-}40\text{ cm}^{-1}$. Each group comprised 50 simulations, and the fit quality was estimated with a χ^2 function. A 20000 bees' population over 50 generations were used. For each of the 200 numerical simulations, the resulting fit was excellent in terms of χ^2 value (Fig. 6a). The results are summarized in Fig. 6b-c. Two parameters are of particular interest: (1) the ratio of the integrated absorbance of the antisymmetric stretching components of CH_2 and CH_3 ($a_{\text{CH}_2}/a_{\text{CH}_3}$) and (2) the sum of these values. The first estimates the ratio of the number of CH_2 over CH_3 groups, while the second is a measure of the alkyl content ($a_{\text{CH}_2}+a_{\text{CH}_3}$). Note, however, that for this latter the abundance of the CH group is not measured regarding the assignment of the central component peaking at $\sim 2900\text{ cm}^{-1}$ to the overtone of a bending mode in Fermi resonance with a fundamental $\text{C}-\text{H}$ stretch (Dartois et al., 2007; 2004). In the case of FWHM

forced to 35 cm^{-1} , we obtain 1.36 ± 0.07 and 1.52 ± 0.28 for $a_{\text{CH}_2}/a_{\text{CH}_3}$ and 57.0 ± 1.8 and 59.0 ± 2.7 for $a_{\text{CH}_2}+a_{\text{CH}_3}$, for the Gaussian and pseudo-Voigt models, respectively (Fig. 6b). If FWHM is let free within $20\text{--}40\text{ cm}^{-1}$, we obtain 1.37 ± 0.79 and 1.66 ± 0.90 for $a_{\text{CH}_2}/a_{\text{CH}_3}$ and 50.4 ± 6.3 and 52.8 ± 7 for $a_{\text{CH}_2}+a_{\text{CH}_3}$, for the Gaussian and pseudo-Voigt models, respectively. The dispersion is much larger, and the absolute values of the sum are also significantly different from those obtained by forcing FWHM. To make things clear on the impact in terms of chemical information, we can estimate the $n_{\text{CH}_2}/n_{\text{CH}_3}$ of Orgueil IOM, using the A_{CH_2} and A_{CH_3} values from Dartois et al. (2007). We find that $n_{\text{CH}_2}/n_{\text{CH}_3}$ ranges between 0.5 and 4.5, while NMR measurements provide a value ranging 1.9-2.6 (Gardinier et al. 2000; assuming that ether bridges are $\text{CH}_3\text{-O-CH}_2\text{:CH}_2\text{-O-CH}_2=1:1$ or $\text{CH}_2\text{-O-CH}_2$, respectively. This result is basically of little value. In practice, things may not be as worse, provided that the fit model is similar to that used to derive the absorption cross-sections. Finally, due to the sensitivity of the fit models on derived parameters, and to propose an easy procedure allowing cross-comparison of data collected by independent groups, we prefer to use the integrated absorbance of the whole alkyl band, in place of $a_{\text{CH}_2}+a_{\text{CH}_3}$. The calibration presented below will lose accuracy when the $n_{\text{CH}_2}/n_{\text{CH}_3}$ ratio departs from that of the alkane's standards, but as discussed below, the impact is very limited.

3.4.2 Determining the $CH_x/A_{C=C}$ and $A_{CH_x}/A_{C=O}$ ratios

The ratio of the absorption cross-section of two chemical groups X_1 and X_2 is calculated from the Equation 1. The term n_{X_2}/n_{X_1} is provided by the NMR analysis, and the integrated absorbances of the alkyl, carbonyl and aromatic groups are measured in the spectra of the 400°C H^{13}CO -tholins. The uncertainty values were estimated by considering fit uncertainties, the baseline correction, sample heterogeneity (Fig. S-4) and the uncertainty on NMR values of the relative abundance of the three chemical groups. We finally obtain the ratio values of integrated cross-section: $A_{\text{CH}_x}/A_{\text{Aro}} = 1.578 \pm 0.183$ and $A_{\text{CH}_x}/A_{C=O} = 0.116 \pm 0.006$ (Table 3).

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Achievements and limitations

The composition of the H^{13}CO -tholin determined by NMR is very reliable for the aliphatic and aromatic contents, due to intense DP/MAS features at 38 and 130 ppm that are unambiguously assigned to alkyl and conjugated carbons. Unlike CP/MAS data, these spectra do not suffer from selective signal enhancement and are suitable for quantification. The assignment is also robust for oxygen-bearing groups, but the features at 169 and 200 ppm are weak and suffer from a higher uncertainty in their relative abundances. The new calibration of H^{13}CO -tholin allows determining the absorption cross-section ratios of the CH_x , C=O and Aro groups.

Nevertheless, the calibration derived from the H^{13}CO -tholins suffers from limitations and biases that are intrinsic to infrared spectroscopy. First, as we estimate the alkyl abundance through the integration of all the alkyl bands (CH_x stretching in the range of $3000\text{--}2800\text{ cm}^{-1}$),

the validity of the H¹³CO-tholins as a calibration standard relies on a similar distribution of the alkyl groups in the kerogen and coal samples that are analyzed. Hence, the absorption cross-section of CH₂ and CH₃ are not identical, e.g. for the anti-symmetric stretching modes $A_{CH_3} = (11.8 \pm 0.76) \times 10^{-18}$ and $A_{CH_2} = (7.7 \pm 1.5) \times 10^{-18}$ cm/group (Dartois et al., 2007; Sandford et al., 1991). Considering a variation range of 1.5 – 3.0 for n_{CH_2}/n_{CH_3} that is observed in chondritic IOM (Orthous-Daunay et al., 2013), we can calculate the variation of the sum of the integrated absorbance of the anti-symmetric stretching modes of CH₂ and CH₃, $a = a_{CH_2} + a_{CH_3}$, as:

$$\frac{a_{1.5}}{a_3} = \frac{1 + \frac{1}{1.5} \frac{A_{CH_3}}{A_{CH_2}}}{1 + \frac{1}{3} \frac{A_{CH_3}}{A_{CH_2}}} = 1.18$$

This means that n_{CH_2}/n_{CH_3} estimates on IOM from thermally processed chondrites obtained with our calibration are underestimated by 20% at maximum. Second, a critical issue with the 1600 cm⁻¹ band is the sensitivity of its absorption cross-section to the oxygen molecular environment, in particular the phenolic (-OH) and possibly the ether (C-O-C) groups (Painter et al., 1981). This means that the kerogen to be analyzed should be as similar as possible to the calibration standard in terms of oxygen speciation around aromatic carbons. In this respect, the 400°C H¹³CO-tholins do not fit mature samples that have large polyaromatic units, and which are known to have a lower aromatic cross-section. This issue is probably more critical for coals, due to the large O/C variations upon maturity.

4.2 IOM composition of primitive chondrites

A way to test our calibration is to apply our method to samples whose composition has been previously determined by NMR. We report here the composition ($n_{CH_x}/n_{C=O}$ and $n_{CH_x}/n_{C=C}$) of the IOMs from the Orgueil, Murchison, EET 92042 and Tagish Lake chondrites, derived from the spectra published by Orthous-Daunay et al. (2013) (Fig. S-5). These compositions are compared with the NMR estimates of Cody & Alexander, (2005) and Gardinier et al. (2000) (Fig. 7). It is first necessary to discuss those NMR data, which display some inconsistencies between them.

Two types of NMR measurements are presented in these publications: Single-pulse (SP) MAS and Cross Polarized (CP) MAS. Single-pulse (SP) MAS NMR is usually presented as suitable for quantification (Baccile et al., 2014), but in the case of natural samples (¹³C/¹²C ~ 1%), the signal is low, long acquisition time is required, and eventually the spectra still contain significant noise. In the case of broad features, band distortion can happen due to dephasing processes before spectrum acquisition, leading to significant errors in the quantification of band integral. In addition, the baseline may depart from an ideal flat line, thereby perturbing the profile of broad features. Altogether, these artifacts may lead to significant errors. These issues can be fixed, at least partly, by using spin echo DP/MAS experimental configuration, as done here on the standard samples. By applying two subsequent pulses (P₉₀-τ-P₁₈₀-τ, with τ being a multiple of the MAS frequency), a rephasing of the signal is obtained, and broad features are not anymore distorted (Hahn, 1950; Vieira et al., 2016; Lucherelli et al., 2019). Cross polarization Magic Angle Spinning (CP/MAS) analysis is based on the magnetization transfer

from hydrogen to carbon atoms. It provides spectra with an improved signal-to-noise ratio, but the quantification is not straightforward (Baccile et al., 2014; dela Rosa et al., 1992). Thus, the intensity of the signal arising from a carbon atom depends on its hydrogen environment, and the signal depends on the contact time. It requires an estimate of the fraction of undetected carbon atoms through calculations constrained by the elemental composition of the sample. The CP/MAS estimation is then much less direct than DP/MAS, and may suffer from error propagation on speciation quantitation and elemental composition, as well as a non-comprehensive identification of all involved carbon speciation.

Cody and Alexander, (2005) and Gardinier et al. (2000) both report CP/MAS NMR data that provide quantitative estimates of the composition of IOM from Orgueil and Murchison. In the case of the Murchison chondrite, the ratio of aliphatic to aromatic carbon atoms $F_{\text{ali}}/F_{\text{aro}}$ estimated by Gardinier et al. (2000) is slightly higher than that of Cody and Alexander (2005) but it lies within the error bars (Fig. 8). In the case of Orgueil, the $F_{\text{ali}}/F_{\text{aro}}$ ratio from is lower than that of Cody and Alexander (2005), but the error bars also overlap (Fig. 8). In contrast, there is some significant disagreement regarding carbon atoms in oxygenated functions, in particular for Orgueil (Fig. 8). These differences may be due to different experimental procedures. Gardinier et al. (2000) investigated the spectral dependence upon contact time, applied a correction accounting for undetected carbon atoms based on the bulk H/C ratio, determined from the combustion experiment. The abundance of undetected aromatic carbon was found significant, ranging from 20 – 29%. We note that the H/C value (0.7 in their study is higher than that measured by Alexander et al. (2007, 2013) (0.588 ± 0.016 and 0.618 , respectively), which may have an impact on the derived abundances. Cody and Alexander (2005) did not run systematic measurements as a function of contact time, but this latter was set to 4.5 ms to fit with SP/MAS spectra. This quantitative interpretation of CP/MAS spectra without investigations at variable contact time is not usual, and estimates might suffer from biases (S. Derenne, personal communication; see also). In fact, in the details, the estimates derived by Cody and Alexander (2005) from SP/MAS and CP/MAS show significant differences. Due to these complex issues with CP/MAS, we have restricted to the SP/MAS data from Cody and Alexander (2005) for comparison with our FTIR data.

We observe that $n_{\text{CH}_x}/n_{\text{C}=\text{C}}$ estimated from infrared data following equation 2 fits well NMR data in the case of Orgueil, Murchison and Tagish Lake. $n_{\text{CH}_x}/n_{\text{C}=\text{C}}$ in EET 92042 is underestimated by a factor of ~ 1.3 , though the error bars overlap (Fig. 8). The first explanation of this moderate discrepancy is the chemical control of the A_{Aro} absorption cross-section by oxygenated groups (Painter et al., 1981). The O/C ratio in EET 92042 ($\text{O/C} = 16.6 \pm 0.2$) is lower than those of Murchison (18.3 ± 0.3) and Orgueil (18.1 ± 0.2). These values are quite similar. According to NMR data, the main oxygen speciation in chondritic IOM is carbonyl (ketone, ester) and ether bridges. The estimations from SP/MAS NMR spectra are challenging due to the faintness of the features and the poor signal-to-noise ratio, and they do not point to significant variations between EET 92042, and Orgueil and Murchison. Altogether, there is no evidence of a chemical control of the A_{Aro} absorption cross-section. A second tentative explanation is that the SP/MAS data are not quantitative enough, due to the biases abovementioned. The only way to firmly solve this issue would be to collect DP/MAS NMR spectra (MAS synchronized spin echoes) of IOMs from those three chondrites.

Regarding carbonylated species, we observe that $n_{CH_x}/n_{C=O}$ is systematically higher than NMR estimates, though the hierarchy Orgueil > Murchison > Tagish Lake is similar to NMR estimates (Fig. 8). The number of bonds is equal to the number of carbon atoms in the case of CH_x groups and carbonyl; therefore, the difference may be due here to different absorption cross-sections of the $C=O$ group between these IOMs and the HCO-tholin standard. As for the $C=C$ bonds, the local molecular environment plays a role in the control of the absorption cross-section of the $C=O$ stretching mode. Such variations have been observed for small molecules in the solid-state, for instance, amorphous ices of formic acid and acetaldehyde, whose carbonyl absorption cross-sections differ by a factor of 2 (Bouilloud et al., 2015; Hudson & Ferrante, 2020). Nevertheless, as mentioned in the previous section, the re-analysis of these IOM samples by DP/MAS NMR (MAS synchronized spin echoes) is required to get a firm conclusion.

To sum up, the $H^{13}CO$ -tholins standard provides a suitable calibration for estimating $n_{CH_x}/n_{C=C}$ in IOMs derived from FTIR measurement compared with SP/MAS NMR. In contrast, $n_{CH_x}/n_{C=O}$ is overestimated in all classes of chondrites compared with the SP/MAS NMR from Cody and Aleander (2005).

4.3 Composition of ligno-cellulosic coals

We report now the composition of a series of coals of varying ranks from lignite to semi-anthracite (Table S-2, Fig. S-5). The majority of coals plot within the Type III kerogen band on the “Van Krevelen” diagram (Fig. 9a). Due to spectral congestion, the fit in the region 1800-1500 cm^{-1} region is more complicated than for IOMs. We used four spectral components due to ketones/quinone, aromatic branched with phenolic -OH (or -O-), and aromatic with a carboxylic group (Chen et al., 2012; Painter et al., 1981; Petersen et al., 2008) (Fig. S-6). The abundance of aromatic groups is then estimated through the two last components, and the $C=O$ by the first two components. Our results of the evolution trends are consistent with previous estimations based on integrated abundance derived from IR spectra (Chen et al., 2012). No NMR data are available for our coals, but NMR data are available for Chinese series of coals (Wei & Tang, 2018) and for the so-called Argonne Premium coals, a subset of the Penn State Coals Data bank (dela Rosa et al., 1992). Figure 9b-c reports the FTIR and NMR CP/MAS estimates of Wei and Tang (2018) plotted against the vitrinite reflectance. We observe two opposite trends: while the NMR estimates point to a progressive decrease of $n_{CH_x}/n_{C=C}$, the FTIR estimates show an increase up to the vitrinite reflectance of 1.73% and then a decline for the semi-anthracite samples. In contrast, n_{CO}/n_{CH_x} is consistent with NMR. This situation is opposite to what he had with IOMs (Fig. 8).

The NMR estimates of Wei and Tang (2018) are, at least qualitatively, in agreement with the progressive aromatization of the coals during diagenesis and catagenesis (Chen et al., 2012). This supports the view that the ratio of the cross-section A_{CH_x}/A_{ArO} varies with the vitrinite reflectance, as previously reported (Painter et al., 1981; Dela Rosa et al., 1992). It also shows that any semi-quantitative analysis based on IR measurements leads to inaccurate estimates of the chemical evolution. NMR data collected by Wei & Tang (2018) were obtained in CP/MAS with a 3 ms contact time. The publication does not report measurements over variable time

contact, nor the acquisition of single pulse spectra. In contrast, [Dela Rosa et al. \(1992\)](#) report varying contact time CP/MAS measurements on Argonne Premium coals and one single pulse (Bloch decay) analysis of Pittsburgh n°8 that fits the corresponding CP/MAS estimate. Muntean et al. (1990) also report consistent CP/MAS and single pulse estimates in the case of Pocahontas N°3, provided that the delay time remains < 75 µs. However, the agreement between both types of measurements may be worse in the case of O-rich low-rank coals ([Dela Rosa et al., 1992](#)). We have recalculated the aromaticity of the coals from [Wei and Tang \(2018\)](#) following the definition of [Dela Rosa et al. \(1992\)](#), and found that the difference between estimates of the two sets of data does not exceed 5%.

Finally, using those data and keeping in mind that uncertainties might be worse for the more immature coals, we have calculated the cross-section ratio $A_{CHx}/A_{C=C}$ upon the vitrinite reflectance (Fig. 9d). This curve is best fitted with a 6th order polynomial (Equation 3):

$$\frac{A_{CHx}}{A_{C=C}} = \sum_{i=0}^6 K_i (x - x_0)^i \quad (\text{Equation 3})$$

with $K_0=0.64599$; $K_1=0.23482$; $K_2=6.3733$; $K_3=-16.939$; $K_4=23.446$; $K_5=-14.846$; $K_6=3.7045$ and $X_0=0.3$. This formula applies in the range $R_o = 0.3 - 2\%$, provided that a similar fit model is used to decompose the coal infrared spectra. We observe that $A_{CHx}/A_{C=C}$ increases and $A_{C=C}$ decreases, upon increasing the vitrinite reflectance R_o , consistently with control of the absorption cross-section by oxygenated groups. The increase is quite high, around one order of magnitude, which means that semi-quantitative sets of infrared data must be imperatively corrected. However, further investigations combining DP/MAS NMR and FTIR measurements on the same series of coals should provide more accurate data.

5 CONCLUSION

We have tested a protocol for quantifying the abundance of the CH_x, C=O and C=C groups in chondritic IOMs and coals, based on a ¹³C model material characterized by DP/MAS NMR and FTIR. The ratios of the cross-sections of these groups have been determined, and the method has been applied to IOM samples extracted from CI, CM and CR chondrites, and to a series of coals. The estimate of $n_{CHx}/n_{C=C}$ in IOM from CI and CM chondrites is fair, but $n_{CHx}/n_{C=O}$ is overestimated. The estimate of $n_{CHx}/n_{C=C}$ in the CR chondrite is lower than the estimation by SP/MAS published earlier. These discrepancies are due to the control of the absorption of the C=O and C=C bonds by the local oxygenated chemical structure. In this regard, the oxygen speciation in CR chondrites may be significantly different than that of CI and CM chondrites. However, new NMR analyses of IOM from CR chondrites are necessary to test the reproducibility of existing data. Regarding coals, the use of published NMR analyses shows that the ratio $A_{CHx}/A_{C=C}$ varies with the vitrinite reflectance over an order of magnitude. Here as well, the local oxygen speciation plays a critical control on A_{Aro} , which decreases with increasing the vitrinite reflectance. We propose an analytical law for A_{CHx}/A_{Aro} , which should be helpful to determine the aromaticity of any coal sample, provided its vitrinite reflectance is known.

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Supplementary data

Supplementary data related to this article can be found at the Supporting Information part.

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 779

780 Table 1. Chemical shifts, corrected relative abundances of the different functional carbon
781 groups in the initial and heated H¹³CO-tholins derived from Figure 1b-c.

782 Table 2. The functional carbon groups concentrations given by the XANES-based
783 quantification (Le Guillou et al., 2018).

784 Table 3. Integrated cross-section ratio calculation of the 400 °C H¹³CO-tholins based on the
785 quantitative NMR and the infrared spectral decomposition.

786

787 Figure 1. (a) The unheated and heated at 400 °C H¹³CO-Tholins recorded with a sample
788 spinning rate of 60 kHz and interscan delay of 30 seconds in the comparison with the IOM
789 Murchison and Orgueil (Cody et al., 2005, 2002, Gardinier et al., 2000). Deconvolution of the
790 solid state ¹³C DP/MAS NMR spectra of (b) the initial H¹³CO-tholins (c) and the 400 °C H¹³CO-
791 tholins

792 Figure 2. Raman spectrum of the 400°C H¹³CO- tholin. The G and D bands at ~1537 cm⁻¹ and
793 ~ 1310 cm⁻¹, respectively reveal a polyaromatic structure typical of coals and kerogens. The
794 low signal-to-noise ratio and spectral artifacts at the edge are due to the high fluorescence
795 background only partly corrected by the baseline correction.

796 Figure 3. (a) Normalized XANES spectra of the 400 °C H¹³CO and H¹²CO-tholins dominated
797 by aliphatic (-CH_x), C=C and C=O functional groups and (b) XANES and NMR methods
798 correlation of the 400 °C H¹³CO-tholins with the re-produced data from Le Guillou et al. (2018)
799 and Le Brech et al. (2016).

800 Figure 4. Corrected infrared spectra of H¹²CO and H¹³CO-tholins samples. Highlighted
801 attributions (CH₃ and CH₂ anti-symmetric modes and C=O and C=C stretching modes) are
802 those used for quantitative study.

803 Figure 5. Detailed components of CH_x mode in different phases (liquid, crystalline, amorphous)
804 in an example of alkane C₂₀H₄₂ (modified from MacPhail et al., 1984).

805 Figure 6. (a) Fit of the alkyl band of an IOM extracted from the Orgueil chondrite, obtained
806 through the artificial bees' algorithm. This fit was achieved with the 7 Gaussian model and all
807 components FWHM forced to 35 cm⁻¹. (b)-(c) Illusion of uncertainty of spectral decomposition
808 methods in different scenarios: Gaussian fix a FWHM of 35 cm⁻¹ (Blue); Voigt fix a FWHM of
809 20 – 40 cm⁻¹ (Yellow); Gaussian free a FWHM range of 20 - 40 cm⁻¹ (Green), Voigt free a
810 FWHM range of 20 - 40 cm⁻¹ (Red).

811 Figure 7. Normalized spectral intensity of the organic functional groups derived from the
812 calibration of C=O and C=C and CH_x groups using the DP/MAS NMR and FTIR calibration
813 for the 400 °C H¹³CO- tholins on (a) Murchison (CM2), (b) Orgueil (CI1), (c) EET 92042 (CR2)
814 and (d) Tagish Lake (C2-ung) IOM in the comparison with the SP/MAS ¹³C NMR spectra
815 (Cody et al., 2005) and CP/MAS ¹³C NMR (Gardinier et al., 2000).

816 Figure 8. Comparisons plots between (a) n_{CH_x}/n_{C=C} and n_{CH_x}/n_{C=O} ratios (b) n_{CH_x}/n_{C=C} and
817 n_{C=O}/n_{C=C} of IOM functional C groups (Murchison (CM2), Orgueil (CI1), EET92042 (CR2)
818 and Tagish Lake (C2-ung)) derived from FTIR-NMR quantification and the previous NMR's
819 measurement (Cody & Alexander, 2005; Gardinier et al., 2000; Yabuta et al., 2005).

820 Figure 9. Comparisons plots between (a) H/C and O/C atomic ratios of studied coals (b)
821 Normalized intensity of C=O, n_{C=O} + COOH(R) vs. vitrinite reflectance, (c) n_{CH_x}/n_{C=C} vs. vitrinite
822 reflectance and (d) Calculated A_{CH_x}/A_{C=C} vs. vitrinite reflectance derived from FTIR-NMR
823 quantification and the previous NMR's measurement (Wei & Tang, 2018).