



HAL
open science

PECULIAR COMETS EJECTED EARLY IN SOLAR SYSTEM FORMATION

Sarah E Anderson, Jean-Marc C. Petit, B. Noyelles, Olivier Mousis, Philippe Rousselot

► **To cite this version:**

Sarah E Anderson, Jean-Marc C. Petit, B. Noyelles, Olivier Mousis, Philippe Rousselot. PECULIAR COMETS EJECTED EARLY IN SOLAR SYSTEM FORMATION. 53rd Lunar and Planetary Science Conference, Mar 2022, The Woodlands, TX, United States. hal-03853412

HAL Id: hal-03853412

<https://hal.science/hal-03853412v1>

Submitted on 15 Nov 2022

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

PECULIAR COMETS EJECTED EARLY IN SOLAR SYSTEM FORMATION. S.E. Anderson¹, J.-M. Petit¹, B. Noyelles¹, O. Mousis², and P. Rousselot¹, ¹ Institut UTINAM UMR 6213, CNRS, Univ. Bourgogne Franche-Comté, OSU THETA, BP 1615, 25010 Besançon Cedex, France (sarah.anderson@univ-fcomte.fr), ²Aix Marseille Univ, CNRS, CNES, LAM, Marseille, France.

Introduction: Radio observations of the long period comet C/2016 R2 (PanSTARRS), hereafter R2, revealed that it was a CO-rich comet remarkably depleted in water [1]. Further, the spectrum was dominated by bands of CO⁺ as well as N₂⁺, the latter of which never being seen in such abundance in comets before [2][3]. This CO and N₂-rich and water-poor composition, along with none of the usual neutrals seen in most cometary spectra, makes R2 a unique and intriguing specimen. Understanding the dynamical history of this comet is thus of essential importance to understanding the timeline of planetesimal formation in our solar system. However, tracking such a small object backward with any degree of certainty is made impossible by the inherent chaotic nature of its motion due to frequent close encounters with the gas giants. Alternative measures must be employed in order to determine where this unique comet originated from.

Two studies have independently estimated the possible origin of this comet from building blocks formed in a peculiar region in the protoplanetary disk, near the ice line of CO and N₂. By evaluating the radial transport of volatiles in the Protoplanetary Disk (PPD), Mousis (2021) [4] found that R2's peculiar N₂/CO ratio could be replicated by agglomeration from particles near the N₂ and CO icelines, i.e. within the 10-15 au region. Meanwhile, the CO/H₂O ratio would remain deeply depleted inward of the CO iceline (see Figure 1). Similarly, Price (2021) [5] model the effect of drifting solid material in the PPD and find that the ideal location for the objects to form is beyond CO iceline. However, this would indicate that more CO rich comets should exist than have previously been observed.

Methods: Here we explore the potential fates of comets formed from these building blocks using a numerical simulation of early solar system formation and tracking the dynamics of these objects in the Jumping Neptune scenario Nesvorny (2015) [6]. We start with five planets: Jupiter, Saturn, and three ice giants, as described by Deienno et al (2017) [7]. The planetary evolutions are selected to meet criteria of similarity with the solar system today, among which having four planets and Jupiter and Saturn having suffered a rapid separation of their orbits due to an instability while crossing a mean motion resonance.

We fill the disk between 4 au to avoid the inner solar system, and 50 au with massless comet facsimiles or 'clones'. We then use a modified SWIFT numerical

integrator which uses a pre-recorded evolution of the giant planets [8] and evolve our system over 100 Myr.

Our simulations count a clone as lost if it reaches beyond 10,000 au as we don't have the ability to estimate the effects of the galactic tidal forces. We will also count a clone as ejected if the eccentricity exceeds 1—while beyond the influence of the giant planets—as this is when it is deemed hyperbolic and assumed to have left the system. Realistically, this clone could equally be integrated into the Oort cloud. Finally, if a clone moves under 0.5 au from the sun, it is also removed from the integration.

We do this for 5 different initial conditions of the planets in the disk. For each initial condition we generate and run 1000 clones 50 times, for a total of 50000 clones per set.

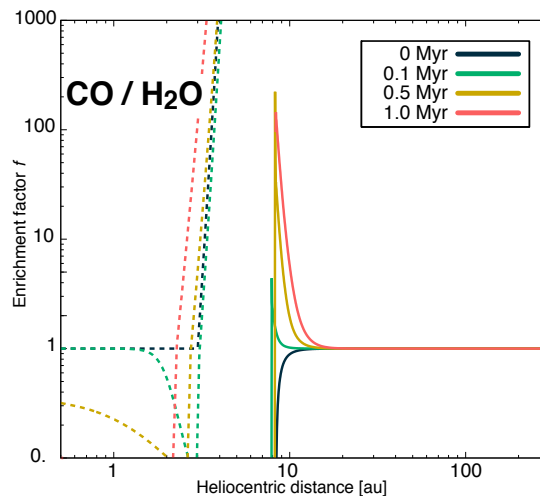


Fig.1: Radial profiles of the CO/H₂O ratio relative to its initial abundance (defined by the enrichment factor f) calculated as a function of time in the protosolar nebula for a viscosity parameters $\alpha = 10^{-4}$. Dashed and solid lines correspond to vapor and solid phases, respectively. See [4] for details.

Results: Within the first 5 Myr, over a third of all clones are 'ejected' from the solar system. This number rises to nearly half after 10 Myr and to over half after 15 Myr. The major loss of clones occurs before Jumping Neptune at ~ 12 Myr. After this time, the area around the giant planets is entirely cleared. These are shown in figure 2.

If we examine the region of clones initialized between 10 – 20 au, we find that half the clones are already ejected by 5 Myr, with two thirds of clones ejected after 15 Myr. If we narrow that region further to 10 – 15 au as suggested by [4], we find that two thirds of clones formed in this region are ejected in the first 5 Myr and three quarters after 15 Myr.

If we examine the region of clones initialized between 10 – 20 au, we find that half the clones are already ejected by 5 Myr, with two thirds of clones ejected after 15 Myr. If we narrow that region further to 10 – 15 au as suggested by [4], we find that two thirds of clones formed in this region are ejected in the first 5 Myr and three quarters after 15 Myr.

These results are coherent with our current understanding of the chronology of Oort cloud formation [9].

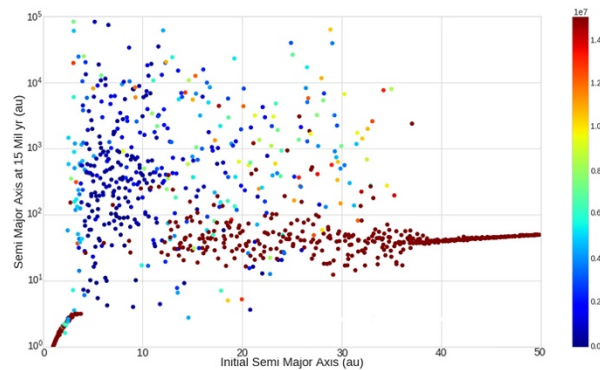


Fig 2: Semimajor axis of each clone after 20 Myr as a function of their initial semimajor axis. The colorbar represents when the clone was 'ejected', with blue being within the first Myr, and dark red being those which 'remain' within the system. These results are shown with clones generated between 1 and 50 au .

Conclusion: We find that the majority of objects formed between Saturn and the N_2 iceline are ejected early in the simulation, so that even by the time the Jumping Neptune scenario happens, the clones are already gone.

This could potentially explain the lack of comets rich in N_2 and depleted in water: they were formed in a very narrow region, and that region was unstable due to Jupiter and Saturn. Another factor would be the rapidity at which this reservoir depleted. This would similarly explain the lack of CO rich comets: while they would form near their iceline, this area empties rapidly due to the influence of giant planets.

Further numerical simulations are required in order to investigate the behavior of these comets beyond the 10,000 au cutoff. If these comets are indeed ejected

from the solar system, it would be a likely explanation for the composition of interstellar visitors, such as interstellar comet 2I/Borisov, which was measured to have CO/ H_2O between 35%-173% ([10];[11]), significantly higher than the average cometary values for the Solar System, though not as high as comet R2.

References: [1] N.Biver et al. (2018) AA 1432-0746, [2] A.L. Cochran and A.J. Mckay. (2018) ApJ 854L10C, [3] C. Opitom et al. (2019) AA A64 14, [4] O. Mousis et al. (2021) PSJ 2 72, [5] E. Price et al. (2021) ApJ 913 9P, [6] Nesvorny et al. (2015) AJ 150, 73 [7] Deienno et al. (2017) AJ, 153:153, [8] J.-M. Petit et al. (1999) Icarus 141:367 [9] S. Portegies Zwart et al. (2021) AA 652 A144, [10] M.A. Cordiner et al. (2020) Nature Astro 4 861, [11] D. Bodewits et al. (2020) Nature Astro 4 867