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1 Molecular Beam Scattering from Flat Jets of Liquid 2 Dodecane and Water

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10 **ABSTRACT**

11 Molecular beam experiments in which gas molecules are scattered from liquids provide detailed,
12 microscopic perspectives on the gas–liquid interface. Extending these methods to volatile liquids while
13 maintaining the ability to measure product energy and angular distributions presents a significant
14 challenge. The incorporation of flat liquid jets into molecular beam scattering experiments in our
15 laboratory has allowed us to demonstrate their utility in uncovering dynamics in this complex chemical
16 environment. Here, we summarize recent work on the evaporation and scattering of Ne, CD₄, ND₃, and
17 D₂O from a dodecane flat liquid jet and present first results on the evaporation and scattering of Ar from
18 a cold salty water jet. In the evaporation experiments, Maxwell–Boltzmann flux distributions with a $\cos\theta$
19 angular distribution are observed. Scattering experiments reveal both impulsive scattering and trapping
20 followed by thermal desorption. Super-specular scattering is observed for all four species scattered from
21 dodecane and is attributed to anisotropic momentum transfer to the liquid surface. In the impulsive
22 scattering channel, rotational excitation of the polyatomic scatterers is a significant energy sink, and
23 these species accommodate more readily on the dodecane surface compared to Ne. Our preliminary
24 results on cold salty water jets suggest that Ar atoms undergo vapor-phase collisions when evaporating
25 from the liquid surface. Initial scattering experiments characterize the mechanisms of Ar interacting with
26 an aqueous jet, allowing for comparison to dodecane systems.

27 **Key Points**

- 28 • Molecular beam scattering from flat liquid jets is a powerful technique to elucidate mechanistic
29 detail at the gas–liquid interface.
- 30 • Previous dodecane scattering experiments have uncovered angularly-resolved TD fractions and
31 energy transfer at the interface for several small molecule scatterers.
- 32 • Preliminary results on scattering from cold salty water reveal mechanisms of interaction between
33 argon and an aqueous jet.

34 **KEYWORDS**

35 Water interface, flat liquid jets, molecular beam scattering, interfacial dynamics, energy transfer,
36 kinematic modeling

37 I. INTRODUCTION

38 The gas–liquid interface is a chemical environment that governs many key processes essential for
39 everyday life. Notable examples include the adsorption of O₂ and the desorption of CO₂ at the air–lung
40 interface,^{1,2} controlling air–fuel mixing in internal combustion engines³ and the treatment of amine
41 gases,⁴ and the formation of acid rain and modulation of atmospheric ozone.^{5–9} Extracting information on
42 molecular-level structure, kinetics, and dynamics at the gas–liquid interface requires methods
43 specifically geared toward surface studies.^{10–12} Novel spectroscopic and kinetics techniques have been
44 developed to address this challenge.^{13–15} Deep ultraviolet electronic sum frequency generation
45 spectroscopy has revealed charge-transfer-to-solvent transitions in anions at the air–water interface^{16–19}
46 and vibrational spectroscopy has been used to interrogate formic acid orientation with angstrom-level
47 depth resolution.²⁰ Additionally, thin film and microdroplet studies have uncovered augmented chemical
48 reaction rates compared to their bulk counterparts.^{21–24} This paper focuses on molecular beam
49 experiments that probe the gas–liquid interface.

50 Fundamental interactions between particles in the gas and liquid phases underlie both structural
51 characteristics and dynamical phenomena at the interface. Molecular beam scattering experiments offer
52 an effective means of probing these interactions, building on the knowledge developed through
53 molecular beam scattering from solid surfaces to probe nonreactive^{25–28} and reactive^{27,29} processes.
54 Enabled by developments of the liquid microjet by Faubel^{30–32} and the wetted wheel by Fenn³³ and
55 Siegbahn,³⁴ Nathanson, Minton, and others have paved the way for molecular beam experiments on the
56 gas–liquid interface.^{35–44} These experiments have elucidated an unprecedented level of mechanistic detail
57 behind gas–liquid interactions.^{45,46}

58 The advent of microfluidic chips that generate flat liquid jets⁴⁷ led us to perform angle-resolved
59 molecular beam scattering experiments on the vacuum–dodecane interface. In this paper, we highlight

60 our previous results⁴⁸⁻⁵⁰ scattering select species from a dodecane flat liquid jet, where we compared how
61 the dodecane surface differs from other hydrocarbon surfaces such as squalane.^{35,51} We also present new
62 results on the evaporation and scattering of Ar from a cold salty water jet. The experiments performed in
63 our group show how molecular beam scattering coupled with flat liquid jets provides a powerful
64 approach to understanding interfacial behavior.

65 Evaporation and scattering experiments require maintaining a clean liquid surface and, to be
66 compatible with a vacuum environment, the chosen liquids must have a low vapor pressure to minimize
67 the contribution of collisions with the vapor jacket surrounding the surface of the jet. The flat liquid jet
68 satisfies these conditions by introducing a continuously flowing liquid into the vacuum chamber as well
69 as granting access to more volatile solvents than those compatible with the wetted wheel approach (*cf.*
70 $\sim 10^{-2}$ and $< 10^{-3}$ Torr, respectively). Compared to cylindrical jets, a flat jet offers a larger target (~ 1
71 mm versus $\sim 30 \mu\text{m}$) for molecular beam scattering, leading to substantially higher scattering signal.
72 Additionally, a flat jet has a well-defined surface normal, thereby enabling angularly-resolved
73 measurements.⁴⁶

74 In our prior work on dodecane flat jets ($P_{\text{vap}} = 1.5 \times 10^{-2}$ Torr at 275 K), we characterized the liquid
75 interface by measuring the angular and translational energy distributions of Ne, CD₄, ND₃, and D₂O
76 evaporating and scattering from dodecane.⁴⁸⁻⁵⁰ Through evaporation of these species from the jet, we
77 deduced that conditions were present for nascent scattering to take place. We then considered two
78 limiting nonreactive scattering mechanisms at the gas-liquid interface. Impulsive scattering (IS) arises
79 when incident gas molecules undergo inelastic collisions with the surface, while thermal desorption
80 (TD) takes place when trapping leads to residence times at the surface that are long enough for
81 thermalization.^{26,45} Based on previous angularly-resolved measurements, the IS pathway is expected to
82 lead to specular scattering, or detection of scattered particles at angles determined by the initial energy
83 and incident trajectory, whereas TD yields $\cos\theta$ angular distributions with respect to the surface

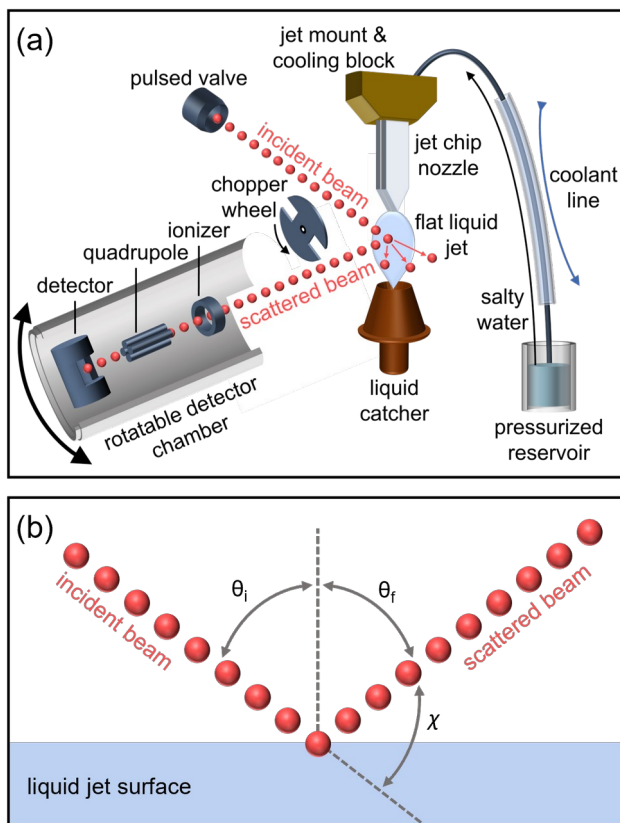
84 normal.^{26,52} Note that while the simple partitioning between IS and TD is a useful framework for
85 interpreting experimental observations, in reality scattering is a much more complicated process.⁵³

86 In our prior scattering experiments, we examined the partitioning between these two mechanistic
87 pathways and found that interfacial behavior is largely dictated by scatterer identity. We also measured
88 TD fractions and the degree of energy transfer in the IS channel at multiple deflection angles. Super-
89 specular scattering was observed for all four scatterers. We compared our findings to those of Saecker
90 and Nathanson, where Ne, CH₄, D₂O, and NH₃ were scattered from a squalane ($P_{\text{vap}} = 10^{-7}$ Torr at 295
91 K) wetted wheel at a single deflection angle.⁵¹ In that same study, a glycerol surface was also
92 interrogated, and it was found that squalane presents a rougher and softer surface than glycerol, leading
93 to a higher likelihood of trapping scatterers at the interface.

94 More complex and volatile liquids have been studied since, such as surfactant-coated
95 NaBr/glycerol,^{41,43} concentrated aqueous LiBr and LiCl solutions,^{38,40} and surfactant-coated aqueous LiBr
96 solutions.⁵⁴ Studies on these aqueous systems have been crucial in understanding the air–water interface
97 at a fundamental level but are limited by the usage of cylindrical microjets which do not provide angular
98 resolution. Thus, we demonstrate the first angularly-resolved experiments reporting mechanistic detail at
99 the gas–water interface through the evaporation and scattering of Ar from a cold aqueous 8 molal LiBr
100 flat jet ($P_{\text{vap}} = 5.2 \times 10^{-2}$ Torr at 225 K). Preliminary results show that evaporation of Ar from the jet can
101 be well-described by a Maxwell–Boltzmann flux distribution. Additionally, TD fractions at select
102 scattering angles suggest that cold salty water is a more accommodating surface than dodecane for rare
103 gases. Given the angular specificity of the flat liquid jet and that the deflection angle can alter
104 mechanistic partitioning so drastically, these first results lay the foundation for investigating angular-
105 dependent reactivity at the water surface.

106 **II. EXPERIMENTAL APPARATUS**

107 All experiments are performed in a crossed molecular beam instrument^{55,56} adapted for gas-liquid
108 scattering as described in detail previously.⁴⁸ The apparatus comprises three vacuum chambers housing
109 the pulsed molecular beam source, collision region, and rotatable detector, all evacuated by
110 turbomolecular pumps.



111

112 **Figure 1.** (a) Schematic diagram of the scattering setup for a cold salty water jet. All components are
113 situated inside the collision chamber (not shown). The chopper wheel can be translated perpendicular to
114 the detector axis. (b) Definition of the incidence angle θ_i , scattering angle θ_f , and deflection angle
115 $\chi = 180^\circ - (\theta_i + \theta_f)$.

116 A schematic diagram of the entire scattering setup is shown in Fig. 1. The pulsed molecular beam is
117 generated within the source chamber and interacts with the flat liquid jet in the collision chamber. A
118 large-area, liquid nitrogen-cooled copper wall within the scattering chamber yields a very high pumping
119 speed for vapor from the jet. Scattered products then enter the triply-differentially pumped rotatable
120 detector chamber that comprises an electron impact ionizer (80 eV electron kinetic energy), quadrupole

121 mass filter, and ion detection assembly. Fig. 1 defines the incidence angle θ_i , scattering angle θ_f , and
122 deflection angle $\chi = 180^\circ - (\theta_i + \theta_f)$. For the dodecane studies, θ_i is chosen to be 45, 60, or 80°, enabled
123 by rotation of the chip holder. Due to geometrical constraints of the scattering apparatus, outgoing
124 angles θ_f are restricted to a range between $90^\circ - \theta_i$ and 90° . For scattering from salty water, θ_i is chosen
125 to be 60°.

126 As in prior work, a piezoelectric valve (MassSpecpecD BV, Enschede)^{57,58} generates the pulsed
127 molecular beams used herein. Ne, CD₄, ND₃, and D₂O supersonic beams are seeded in helium at
128 respective compositions of 10, 0.75, 1.5, and ~0.5 %.^{49,50} The Ar beam is prepared similarly by seeding
129 ~10 % Ar in He, and stagnation conditions are typically 293 K and 3000 Torr. Note that a dimer ratio of
130 5 % is present for D₂O, but no dimers were detected for either CD₄ or ND₃. The velocities of the
131 molecular beams are characterized by time-of-flight (TOF) measurements with a rotating (200 Hz)
132 chopper wheel (two slits, 14 μ s open time). This results in beam velocities of 1562 ± 165 , 1732 ± 185 ,
133 1730 ± 205 , 1791 ± 347 , and 1454 ± 208 m s⁻¹ (FWHM), with mean translational energies of 23.7, 29.3,
134 28.8, 33.4, and 41.5 kJ mol⁻¹ for Ne, CD₄, ND₃, D₂O, and Ar, respectively.

135 Within the collision chamber, flat liquid jets are formed using a microfluidic chip.⁴⁷ As described
136 previously for the dodecane jet, an HPLC pump is employed to deliver the solvent through a pre-cooling
137 stage to the jet nozzle at a flow rate of 3.5 mL min⁻¹ and a flow velocity of 10 m s⁻¹, leading to a detector
138 viewing time of ~600 μ s. Typical dimensions of the first flat jet sheet are 1.5 × 4.5 mm² (W × H),
139 measured via calibrated images captured by a high-resolution camera, with a thickness estimated to be
140 ~1.5 μ m at its center.³² For the cold salty water jet, a 2.3 L glass cylinder containing 8 m LiBr dissolved
141 in H₂O (Milli-Q®, MilliporeSigma) is housed in a pressurized stainless steel reservoir. This aqueous
142 solution was chosen due to its relatively low freezing point, suppressing the vapor pressure of water, and
143 extensive studies having been performed on molecular beam scattering from this liquid.^{38,40,42,59} To
144 operate the jet at a flow rate of ~2 mL min⁻¹ at a temperature of ~226 K at the jet nozzle, the reservoir

145 is pressurized to 85 bar. This leads to a flow velocity of 7 m s^{-1} and a detector viewing time of $\sim 500 \mu\text{s}$
146 ($\sim 4 \text{ mm}$ at the interaction region with the detector gate valve opened to a 2 mm circular aperture).

147 For the dodecane jet, a stainless-steel chip holder is used, and the temperature of the jet is recorded
148 using a thermocouple attached to the holder. The temperature difference $T_{\text{holder}} - T_{\text{liq}}$ (the true liquid
149 temperature at the interaction region) is estimated to be less than $0.5 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ owing to the high isobaric heat
150 capacity and low vapor pressure of dodecane.^{60,61} This results in liquid temperatures T_{liq} of 283, 273, 269,
151 and 274 K for dodecane doped with Ne, CD_4 , ND_3 , and D_2O , respectively, for the evaporation
152 experiments. $T_{\text{liq}} = 269 \text{ K}$ for all dodecane scattering experiments. The temperature gradient across the
153 jet surface is expected to be small due to the high isobaric heat capacity and low vapor pressure of
154 dodecane, suppressing evaporative cooling effects.^{60,61} The samples were prepared through a process that
155 has been described previously for Ne, CD_4 , ND_3 , and D_2O in dodecane ($n\text{-C}_{12}\text{H}_{26}$, TCI America
156 #D0968).⁴⁸⁻⁵⁰ For the scattering experiments, pure dodecane is used after vacuum-degassing with pure
157 He.

158 Multiple modifications have been implemented to operate a cold salty water jet. Marine-grade 464
159 brass rather than stainless steel is used for part of the chip holder assembly due to its increased corrosion
160 resistance. To achieve significantly lower jet temperatures, a commercial marine utility pump (Xylem
161 Rule iL280P) circulates an ethanol bath held at 233 K through an in-line stainless-steel counter-current
162 pre-cooling stage that surrounds the solvent delivery line. The salty water flows through this stage for
163 $\sim 1 \text{ m}$ prior to entering the collision chamber. For additional cooling, flexible Cu braids are attached to a
164 solid Cu extrusion from the cryogenically cooled Cu wall inside of the collision chamber. These braids
165 connect to the chip holder with temperature T_{holder} recorded by a thermocouple. The temperature
166 difference $T_{\text{holder}} - T_{\text{liq}}$ is estimated to be less than $3 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ for the salty water jet due to its relatively low
167 vapor pressure.^{40,46} For both evaporation and scattering experiments, T_{holder} was measured to be 226 K .

168 The salty water sample is prepared by dissolving Ar in 8 m aqueous LiBr by vacuum-degassing the
169 liquid. For scattering from salty water, 8 m LiBr is used after vacuum-degassing with pure N₂.

170 The translational energy distribution of evaporated and scattered species is determined by time-of-
171 flight (TOF) measurements. In the evaporation experiments, time zero is set by the chopper wheel
172 positioned between the jet and the detector. Detector angles θ_f range from 0 to 90° with respect to the
173 surface normal. In scattering experiments, the chopper wheel is translated away from the detector axis,
174 and the moment when the most intense part of the pulsed molecular beam reaches the interaction region
175 defines time zero at the interaction region. As a result, the temporal resolution of the scattering TOF
176 measurements is limited by the quality of the pulsed beam profiles. For Ne, CD₄, ND₃, D₂O, and Ar, the
177 valve opening time is set to 15, 15, 12, 30, and 13 μ s, respectively. Temporal widths measured at the
178 detector were 28, 26, 27, 43, and 40 μ s, respectively. The “beam-off” data is subtracted from “beam-on”
179 data to achieve background-subtracted scattering spectra. To ensure that systematic error is limited
180 throughout, angular distributions are measured in a back-and-forth manner as described prior.⁴⁸⁻⁵⁰
181 Acquisition times for dodecane are typically between 5 and 10 minutes for a single spectrum, while this
182 is extended to 20 minutes for salty water.

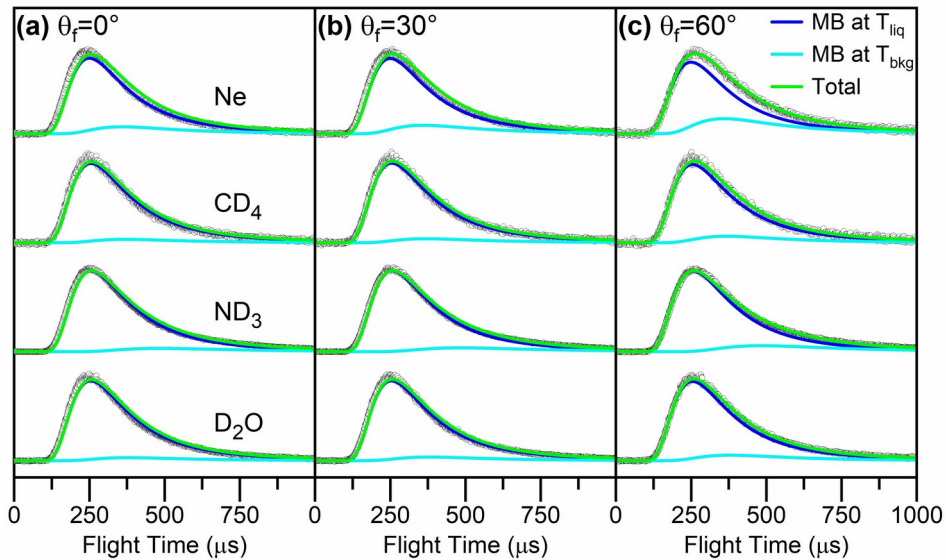
183 III. RESULTS OF EVAPORATION EXPERIMENTS ON DODECANE

184 To isolate TD and determine that conditions for nascent scattering exist, evaporation TOF spectra
185 were taken for doped dodecane jets. Ne, CD₄, ND₃, and D₂O evaporation from their respective doped
186 dodecane jets are shown in Fig. 2(a–c) for $\theta_f = 0, 30, \text{ and } 60^\circ$. Since these solutes are at thermal
187 equilibrium with the liquid surface prior to evaporation, the product flux f can be described by a
188 Maxwell–Boltzmann (MB) flux distribution⁶²

$$189 \quad f_{MB}(v) \propto S_0(v, \theta) v^3 \exp\left(\frac{-m v^2}{2 R T_{liq}}\right) \quad (1)$$

190 where v and m are the velocity and molecular mass of the evaporating molecule and R is the universal
191 gas constant. $S_0(v, \theta)$ is the velocity- and angle-dependent sticking coefficient.

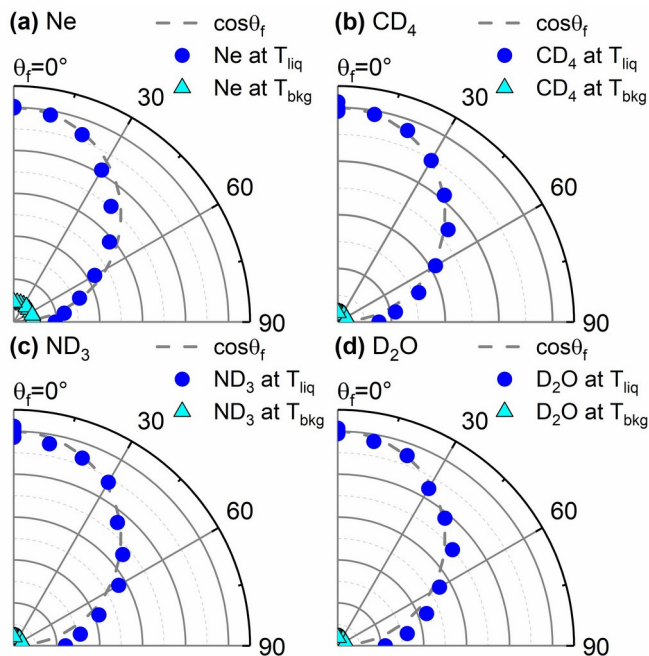
192 At $\theta_f = 0^\circ$, Maxwellian behavior of the evaporating particles is observed; as θ_f approaches 60° , the
193 TOF profiles for all four species broaden toward longer arrival times. This broadening, or sub-
194 Maxwellian behavior, is from an isotropic background due to molecular desorption from the
195 cryogenically cooled Cu wall that persists even if the jet is moved out of the viewing angle of the
196 detector.^{49,50,63} Thus, the TOF spectra are fitted by a linear combination of MB distributions at T_{liq} and
197 T_{bkg} .



198

199 **Figure 2.** Normalized evaporation TOF spectra of Ne, CD₄, ND₃, and D₂O from doped liquid dodecane
200 flat jets at (a) $\theta_f = 0^\circ$, (b) $\theta_f = 30^\circ$, and (c) $\theta_f = 60^\circ$. TOF distributions are fitted with a combination of
201 Maxwell–Boltzmann velocity distributions at $T_{\text{liq}} = 283, 273, 269,$ and 274 K (blue traces) and at
202 $T_{\text{bkg}} = 137, 131, 75,$ and 123 K (light blue traces), respectively. The absolute intensity of the T_{bkg}
203 component is kept constant for all angles. The sum of the two contributions is shown by the green traces.

204



205 **Figure 3.** Angular plots created from the integrated, non-normalized intensities of the Maxwell–
 206 Boltzmann simulations at T_{liq} and T_{bkg} (blue circles and cyan triangles, respectively) of (a) Ne, (b) CD_4 ,
 207 (c) ND_3 , and (d) D_2O evaporation data at various detector angles. The cosine function representing the
 208 expected angular distribution for evaporation is indicated by the dashed gray curve.

209 Integrating the fitted TOF spectra results in angular distributions where the total evaporative flux is
 210 plotted as a function of θ_f in Fig. 3 for Ne, CD_4 , ND_3 , and D_2O . As expected for an evaporative process
 211 from a flat surface and provided that detailed balance holds,^{62,64} the contributions at T_{liq} follow a $\cos\theta_f$
 212 distribution.^{65,66} Given that all four species exhibit both Maxwellian translational energy distributions
 213 and $\cos\theta_f$ angular distributions after accounting for background signal, our results indicate that the
 214 sticking coefficient $S_0(v, \theta)$ in Eq. 1 can be assumed to be unity⁶² and that the evaporating species do not
 215 interact measurably with the vapor sheath around the jet. The latter observation implies that vapor sheath
 216 interactions will also be insignificant in scattering experiments.

217 IV. RESULTS OF SCATTERING EXPERIMENTS ON DODECANE

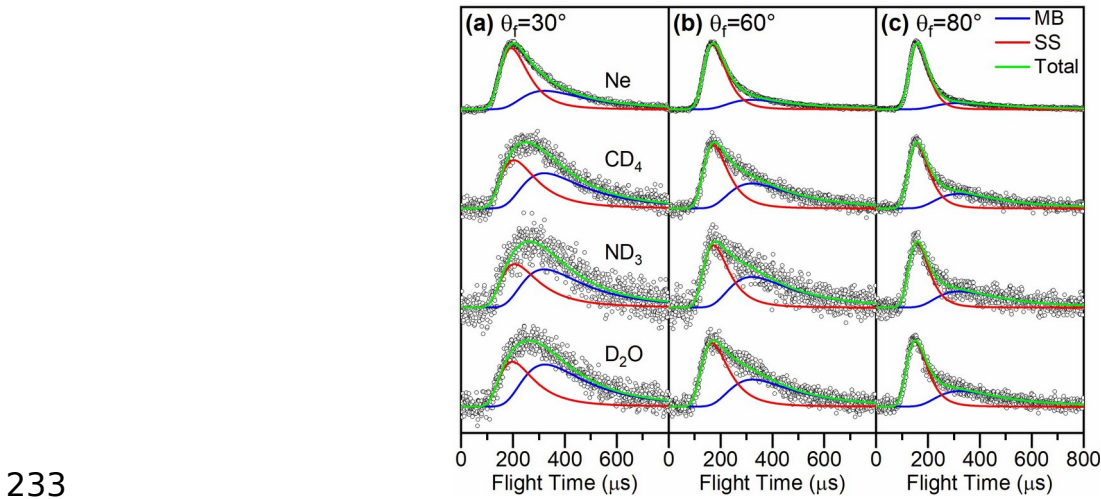
218 TOF spectra of Ne, CD_4 , ND_3 , and D_2O scattered from a dodecane jet are shown in Fig. 4(a–c) for
 219 $\theta_i = 60^\circ$ and detector angles $\theta_f = 30, 60, \text{ and } 80^\circ$. Overall, comparing TOF profiles at the same θ_f reveals
 220 faster arrival times and narrower TOF distributions for scattered Ne compared to the polyatomic

221 scatterers. The polyatomic scatterers behave similarly with only slight differences in the scattering
 222 profiles, though the ND_3 and D_2O distributions extend to longer arrival times compared to CD_4 . As
 223 θ_f increases, the TOF profiles shift toward earlier arrival times. This trend is also observed for incidence
 224 angles of 45 and 80°.

225 The TOF distributions are fitted using two contributions—one assigned to a faster component from IS
 226 and the other a slower one from TD. The IS component is fitted to the flux distribution for a supersonic
 227 (SS) molecular beam in Eq. 2^{67,68}

$$228 \quad f_{\text{SS}}(v) \propto v^3 \exp\left(\frac{-m(v-v_{\text{SS}})^2}{2RT_{\text{SS}}}\right) \quad (2)$$

229 with average flow velocity v_{SS} and average temperature T_{SS} . The fits to the TOF spectra with a linear
 230 combination of SS and MB distributions representing the two scattering channels are also shown in Fig.
 231 4.^{45,69} Note that the fitting procedure involves convolution with the full molecular beam temporal
 232 profiles.

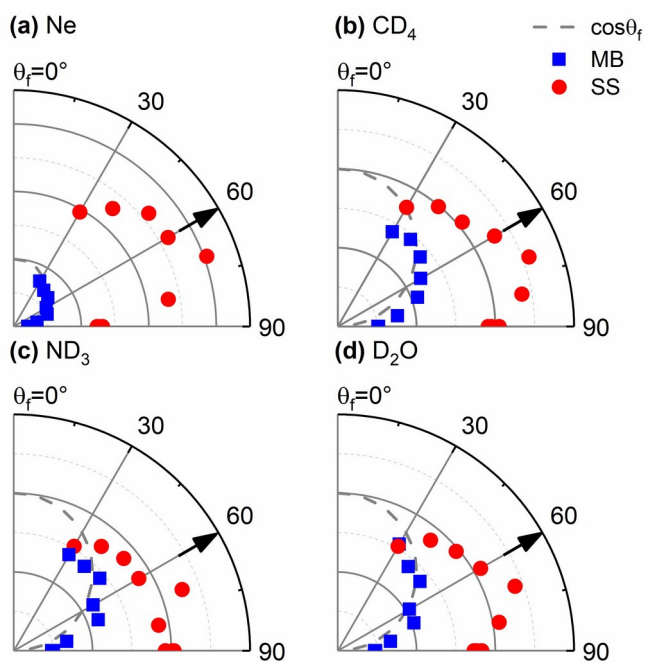


233
 234 **Figure 4.** Normalized TOF spectra of Ne, CD_4 , ND_3 , and D_2O scattering from a dodecane flat jet with
 235 $\theta_i = 60^\circ$ at (a) $\theta_f = 30^\circ$, (b) $\theta_f = 60^\circ$, and (c) $\theta_f = 80^\circ$. The data are fitted by the sum (green traces) of an
 236 SS distribution (red traces) and an MB distribution (blue traces) at the liquid jet temperature. Mean
 237 translational energies E_i for Ne, CD_4 , ND_3 , and D_2O are 23.7, 29.3, 28.8, and 33.4 kJ mol^{-1} , respectively.

238 For all four species, the TD contribution drops as θ_f increases, resulting in narrower, faster TOF
 239 spectra. This result reflects the $\cos\theta_f$ angular distribution for TD, leading to less TD at higher θ_f . From
 240 the fitted TOF profiles, the polyatomic scatterers exhibit considerably more TD than Ne, especially at
 241 values of θ_f approaching the surface normal. It is also observed that the TD fractions for Ne are smaller
 242 than those for the polyatomic scatterers at all deflection angles. The TD fractions for the polyatomic
 243 species are similar, but overall, the trend manifests as $\text{ND}_3 > \text{D}_2\text{O} \approx \text{CD}_4 > \text{Ne}$. This trend is discussed in
 244 more detail in Section IVb.

245 Angular distributions from integrating the fitted TOF profiles are shown in Fig. 5(a–d) for the four
 246 scatterers at $\theta_i = 60^\circ$. For the TD channel, the integrated intensities closely follow a $\cos\theta_f$ angular
 247 distribution, consistent with our evaporation results, indicating that these particles have equilibrated at
 248 T_{liq} prior to desorbing. Although one might expect to observe specular scattering in the angular
 249 distributions of the IS channel, we observe super-specular scattering for all four systems, where the
 250 maximum IS intensity is found at $\theta_f > \theta_i$; for these systems, the angular distribution peaks at $\theta_f = 70^\circ$.
 251 This result is attributed to collisions that favor momentum transfer along the surface normal.^{70,71}

252



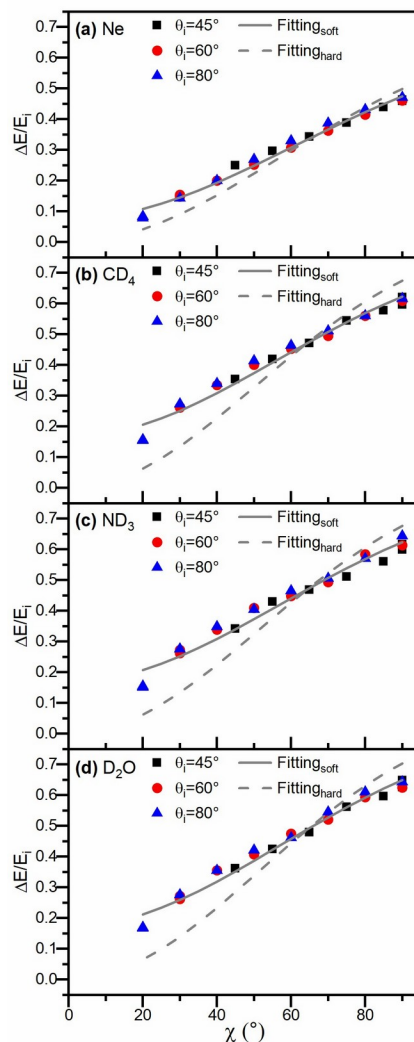
253 **Figure 5.** Angular plots created from the integrated, non-normalized intensities of scattering at $\theta_i = 60^\circ$
 254 for (a) Ne, (b) CD₄, and (c) ND₃, and (d) D₂O. Blue squares represent the TD (MB distribution) and red
 255 circles the IS (SS distribution) contributions to the TOF fits. The cosine function representing the
 256 expected angular distribution for evaporation is indicated by the dashed, gray curve. Arrows indicate the
 257 specular angle.

258 IVa. DISCUSSION OF IMPULSIVE SCATTERING FROM DODECANE

259 The scattering TOF profiles provide energetic information in the form of changes to the translational
 260 energies of the scattered molecular beams. Specifically, analyzing the IS channel within the scattering
 261 TOF profiles through established kinematic models reveals key findings on energy transfer at the gas–
 262 liquid interface. The soft-sphere kinematic model, previously applied to other scattering studies,^{72,73}
 263 describes the average fractional energy loss as a function of deflection angle. The model is given by Eq.
 264 3:^{72,74,75}

$$265 \quad \left(\frac{\Delta E}{E_i} \right) \approx \frac{2\mu}{(1+\mu)^2} \dot{\zeta}$$

266 where the absolute change in translational energy is $\Delta E = E_i - \langle E_{IS} \rangle$, with incident translational energy E_i
 267 and average energy in the IS channel $\langle E_{IS} \rangle$. The mass ratio $\mu = m_{\text{gas}}/m_{\text{eff}}$ between the gas molecule and the
 268 effective surface mass, the total internal excitation of both the scatterer and surface E_{int} , the liquid
 269 temperature T_{liq} , and the well depth of the gas–surface interaction potential V are also included. The
 270 scattering geometry is represented by the deflection angle $\chi = 180^\circ - (\theta_i + \theta_f)$. In essence, this is a
 271 modified line-of-centers model where internal excitation is allowed. The V/E_i and $-2RT_{\text{liq}}/E_i$ terms
 272 account for the effects of the interaction potential and thermal surface motions on $\Delta E/E_i$, respectively.⁷⁵
 273 In prior studies, similar models have related microscopic quantities like collisional energy transfer to
 274 macroscopic properties such as bulk densities.^{51,76}



275

276 **Figure 6.** Average fractional energy loss as a function of deflection angle for impulsively scattered (a)
 277 Ne, (b) CD₄, (c) ND₃, and (d) D₂O from a dodecane flat jet. Incident translational energies are 23.7, 29.3,
 278 28.8, and 33.4 kJ mol⁻¹, respectively. The solid curves give predictions for the soft-sphere model, where
 279 the incident particle interacts with a localized region of the surface with an effective mass, m_{eff} , and this
 280 region may increase its internal energy, E_{int} , during collisions. The dashed curves give predictions for the
 281 hard-sphere model where internal excitation has been set to zero. The fitting results for Ne, CD₄, ND₃,
 282 and D₂O with the soft-sphere model are $m_{\text{eff}} = 61, 52, 55,$ and 54 amu and $E_{\text{int}} = 2.1, 5.3, 5.1,$ and
 283 5.8 kJ mol⁻¹, respectively, whereas the hard-sphere model predicts $m_{\text{eff}} = 48, 34, 36,$ and 35 amu,
 284 respectively.

285 Fig. 6(a–d) shows the measured fractional translational energy loss plotted against deflection angle for
 286 scattering of Ne, CD₄, ND₃, and D₂O. The fractional energy loss increases with χ regardless of incidence
 287 angle for all four scatterers, consistent with observations made prior in the literature for other liquid
 288 surfaces.^{35,72} For Ne, the fractional energy loss ranges from 0.15 to 0.46 between $\chi = 30^\circ$ and 90° . For the
 289 polyatomic scatterers, D₂O energy loss increases from 0.27 to 0.64, while CD₄ and ND₃ behave

290 similarly, with values ranging from 0.27 to 0.61 for both species. This trend of larger fractional energy
291 losses for the polyatomic species compared to Ne at all values of χ is also present for the other two
292 incidence angles chosen in this study.

293 The results of fitting the soft-sphere kinematic model to the fractional energy loss values are also
294 shown in Fig. 6 alongside the hard-sphere model fits, where E_{int} is set to be zero. Note that this model
295 assumes the scatterer and surface to be individual spheres, whereas molecular dynamics simulations find
296 the structure of the dodecane–vacuum interface to be much more complex.⁷⁷ The free-fit parameters are
297 m_{eff} and E_{int} where applicable, and V is set to a fixed value given by the well depths of the Lennard-Jones
298 potential⁷⁸⁻⁸¹ between the scatterers and dodecane. For both kinematic models, values of V for Ne, CD₄,
299 ND₃, and D₂O are 0.9, 1.9, 2.8, and 3.6 kJ mol⁻¹, respectively. If V is also set to be zero, assuming a
300 completely noninteracting system, the best-fitted curves do not change to a significant degree. Inspecting
301 the best-fit curves for the two models, the fractional energy loss behavior in the IS channel is best
302 described by the soft-sphere kinematic model for all four scatterers. Due to the small value for E_{int} in the
303 case of Ne, the hard-sphere and soft-sphere fits are more similar to one another compared to the fits for
304 the polyatomic scatterers.

305 Comparing these fractional energy loss values to literature values from squalane experiments at a fixed
306 deflection angle of $\chi = 90^\circ$,⁵¹ we observe that the relative behavior between the four scatterers is similar
307 for dodecane and squalane. The energy loss ordering for scattering from dodecane is Ne < CD₄ < ND₃ <
308 D₂O, which agrees with the reported ordering of Ne < CH₄ < NH₃ < D₂O for scattering from squalane.
309 These values can be found in Table 1.

310 At $\chi = 45$ and 90° , we observe fractional energy loss values of 0.25 and 0.46, respectively, for Ne
311 scattered from dodecane. In a comparable study performed on a squalane surface,³⁵ fractional energy
312 loss values of 0.36 and 0.58 were reported. Given that the incident beam energies were similar (*cf.*
313 23.7 kJ mol⁻¹ in this work, 32 kJ mol⁻¹ in ref. ³⁵), it is plausible that more internal modes within the

314 squalane surface contribute to collision events compared to the dodecane surface, leading to the
315 reduction in fractional energy loss. Thus, we conclude that squalane is a “softer,” less rigid surface than
316 dodecane. Further discussion on the relative rigidity between these two surfaces can be found in Section
317 IVb.

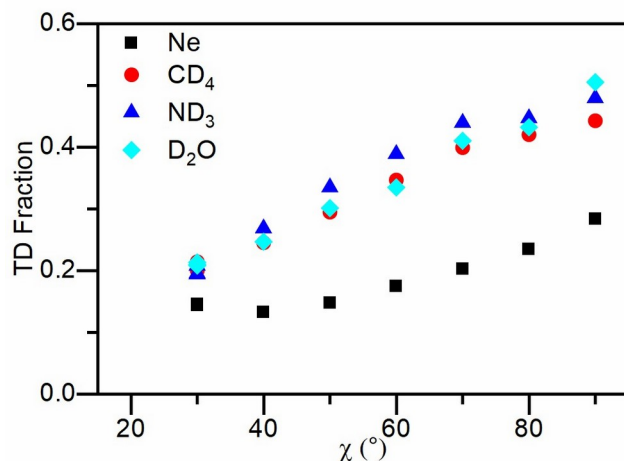
318 The best-fit soft sphere curves result in recovered values for m_{eff} and E_{int} in the scattering of Ne, CD₄,
319 ND₃, and D₂O, shown in Table 1. Given that the molecular mass of dodecane is ~ 170 amu, these results
320 suggest that only four CH₂/CH₃ groups within any dodecane molecule contributes to fractional energy
321 loss in the IS channel, as the effective surface masses are about one-third of the dodecane mass. The
322 polyatomic scatterers all exhibit similar values of E_{int} , contrasting with the smaller value for Ne
323 scattering.

324 Examining the fitted values for the total internal excitation and considering that all four species have
325 nearly identical masses and initial energies, the larger values for E_{int} that arise from molecular scattering
326 compared to Ne scattering are likely due to the presence of internal degrees of freedom. It is plausible
327 that rotational and vibrational modes may be excited, seen previously in gas–solid scattering.^{82,83}
328 However, we conclude that only rotational degrees of freedom contribute to the extracted values of E_{int}
329 based on the relatively low values of E_i for all four beams and the maximum values of fractional energy
330 loss occurring at $\chi = 90^\circ$. As a result, the lowest lying vibrational modes⁸⁴ for CD₄, ND₃, and D₂O, ν_4
331 (11.9 kJ mol⁻¹), ν_2 (8.95 kJ mol⁻¹), and ν_2 (14.1 kJ mol⁻¹), respectively, are unlikely to be populated to a
332 significant degree. It then follows that the differences in internal excitation values between Ne and CD₄,
333 ND₃, and D₂O, 3.2, 3.0, and 3.7 kJ mol⁻¹, respectively, correspond to the rotational energies of the
334 scattered molecules.

335 **IVb. DISCUSSION OF THERMAL DESORPTION FROM DODECANE**

336 The TD fraction derived from the $\theta_i = 60^\circ$ scattering angular distributions, defined as TD/(TD+IS), is
337 plotted in Fig. 7 for Ne, CD₄, ND₃, and D₂O as a function of deflection angle. All four scatterers exhibit

338 increasing TD fractions as χ increases, except for a slight deviation in the case of Ne scattering at $\chi =$
339 30° . It is observed that Ne scattering results in the smallest TD fractions at all values of χ while, for the
340 most part, the polyatomic molecules behave similarly.



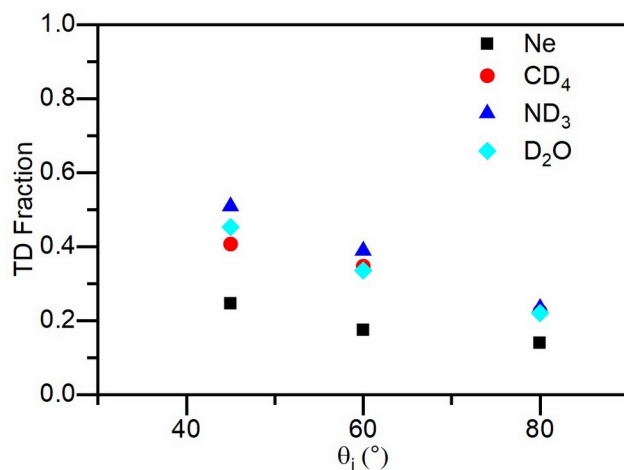
341

342 **Figure 7.** TD fraction as a function of deflection angle for Ne, CD₄, ND₃, and D₂O scattered from a
343 dodecane flat jet at $\theta_i = 60^\circ$.

344 At a fixed incidence angle, the increasing TD fraction with increasing deflection angle is expected
345 since a larger value of χ corresponds to collisions where more momentum normal to the surface has been
346 lost from the projectile. This trend is also seen for both $\theta_i = 45$ and 80° . Additional factors must be
347 considered to explain why the Ne trend is so different than that of the polyatomic scatterers. For
348 example, the uptake of incidence energy in internal degrees of freedom may correlate with χ or the
349 trapping well depth for Ne may be significantly smaller than for the polyatomic scatterers.

350 Overall, the observed TD fraction trend of ND₃ > D₂O \approx CD₄ > Ne follows that which has been
351 reported for scattering from squalane at similar beam energies at a single deflection angle $\chi = 90^\circ$.⁵¹ As
352 has been previously pointed out for scattering from squalane, the TD fraction correlates with the
353 projectiles' free energies of solvation ($\Delta G_{solv}^\circ = -RT \ln K_H$).⁵¹ In comparing the TD fraction values for
354 CD₄ (0.40), ND₃ (0.49), and D₂O (0.48) scattered from dodecane with the analogous values for CH₄
355 (0.49), NH₃ (0.59), and D₂O (0.57) scattered from squalane (interpolated from ref. ⁵¹ on the basis of
356 beam energy), we see that scattering from dodecane leads to TD fractions ca. 17% smaller than those for

357 squalane scattering. Thus, collisions undergone by these polyatomic scatterers are harder with dodecane,
358 indicating that it is a more rigid surface.



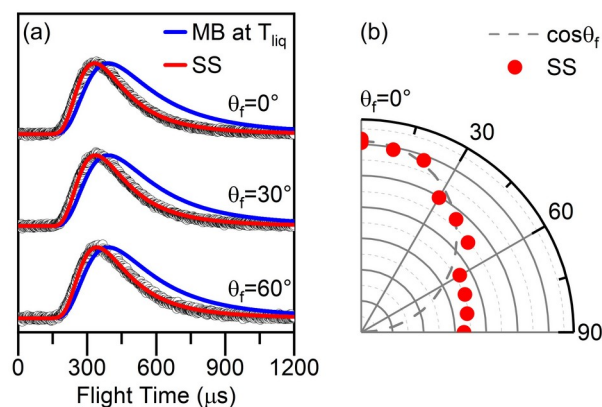
359

360 **Figure 8.** TD fraction at $\theta_f = 60^\circ$ as a function of incidence angle for Ne, CD₄, ND₃, and D₂O scattered
361 from a dodecane flat jet.

362 The dependence of TD fraction on incidence angle is shown in Fig. 8 for the four scatterers. Here, the
363 TD fraction trend of ND₃ > D₂O \approx CD₄ > Ne is seen again. The TD fraction decreases as θ_i increases, as
364 has been seen in other gas–liquid scattering experiments.^{35,85,86} Interestingly, this trend is opposite to that
365 observed in single crystal gas–solid scattering experiments.⁸⁷⁻⁹⁰ Nesbitt⁸⁶ has attributed this difference to
366 the increased roughness and corrugation of a liquid surface compared to a single crystal solid surface,
367 leading to the conversion of incident kinetic energy in high θ_i collisions into translational motion away
368 from the liquid surface, and thus the breakdown of normal energy scaling arguments, as the normal
369 energy component scales according to $E_i \cos^2(\theta_i)$.

370 V. EVAPORATION AND SCATTERING FROM COLD SALTY WATER

371 Initial experiments have been performed on the evaporation and scattering of Ar ($E_i = 41.5 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$)
372 from a flat jet of cold salty water, using the instrument shown in Fig. 1. Using a similar strategy to that
373 described above for dodecane, we first characterized the TD channel by observing the evaporation of Ar
374 from an Ar-doped salty water jet. Fig. 9 (a) shows the resultant TOF spectra at $\theta_f = 0, 30, \text{ and } 60^\circ$.

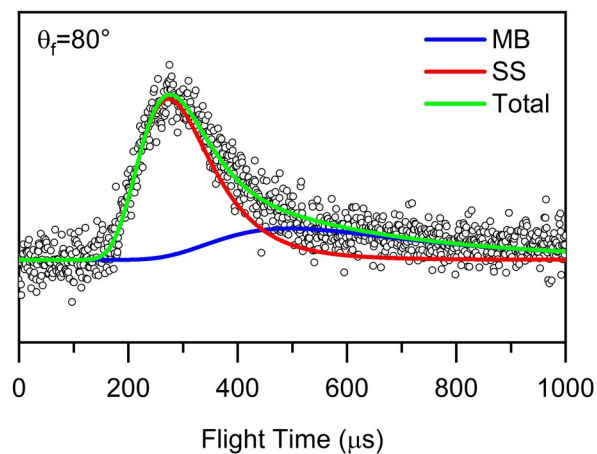


375

376 **Figure 9.** (a) Normalized evaporation TOF spectra of Ar from an Ar-doped aqueous LiBr flat jet at
 377 $\theta_f = 0, 30,$ and 60° . TOF distributions are fitted by an SS distribution (red traces); an MB distribution
 378 (blue traces) at $T_{liq} = 226$ K is shown for comparison. (b) Angular plot created from the integrated, non-
 379 normalized intensities of the SS simulations (red circles) at various detector angles. The cosine function
 380 representing the expected angular distribution for evaporation is indicated by the dashed gray curve.

381 The TOF spectra reflect Ar velocity distributions that are slightly faster than those of a thermal
 382 distribution at the temperature of the liquid, shown as a blue trace. This super-Maxwellian character may
 383 indicate that Ar-H₂O collisions are occurring in the gas-phase above the surface, accelerating the Ar
 384 atoms in a kind of supersonic expansion. However, other explanations are possible. If the sticking
 385 probability of Ar is enhanced by incidence translational energy, for example due to a barrier associated
 386 with solvent reorganization as has been seen for He/H₂O,⁵⁹ detailed balance tells us that evaporating Ar
 387 atoms will be emitted with velocities faster than the Boltzmann expectation. For this system, this is
 388 unlikely as prior studies have shown that Ar evaporation from cold salty water is Maxwellian.⁴⁶ An
 389 angular plot of the integrated TOF fits shown in Fig. 9 (b) reveals that evaporation from the jet surface
 390 deviates from a $\cos\theta_f$ distribution (dashed gray curve). Given these observations, there likely exists a
 391 constant, isotropic background signal emanating from the cryogenically cooled Cu wall in analogy to the
 392 dodecane studies.^{49,50}

393 Exploratory measurements were performed on Ar scattering from an aqueous LiBr jet. The resultant
 394 TOF spectrum is shown in Fig. 10.



395

396 **Figure 10.** TOF spectrum of Ar scattering from a salty water flat jet with $\theta_i = 60^\circ$ at $\theta_f = 80^\circ$. The data is
 397 fitted by the sum of an SS distribution (red trace) and an MB distribution (blue trace) at the liquid jet
 398 temperature. The sum of the two contributions is shown by the green trace.

399 From the integrated fits, a TD fraction of 0.23 is extracted. In comparison to the values measured for
 400 particles scattered from dodecane at the same geometry ($\theta_i = 60^\circ$, $\theta_f = 80^\circ$, $\chi = 40^\circ$), this result suggests
 401 that Ar has a lower proclivity for impulsive scattering from cold salty water than Ne does from
 402 dodecane, but is more prone to IS than CD_4 , ND_3 , and D_2O from dodecane. While the free energy of
 403 solvation successfully describes the trend in TD fraction of the dodecane scatterers, extending this
 404 comparison to Ar scattering is nontrivial. To the best of our knowledge, $\Delta G_{\text{solv}}^\circ$ for Ar in 8 m LiBr has
 405 not been measured, and extrapolation from reference data provides only a rough estimate of ca. 39
 406 kJ mol^{-1} , which lies far outside the range of values reported for the dodecane scatterers.⁹¹ Additionally,
 407 the mean translational energy of the Ar molecular beam is between 25 and 75% larger than that of the
 408 dodecane scattering partners. This results in higher collisional energies and likely plays a role in the
 409 relative TD fractions observed for different gas–liquid systems. Further studies are currently underway
 410 to characterize and understand the scattering behavior of Ar from a cold salty water jet.

411 VI. CONCLUSIONS

412 In this work, we review recent progress in molecular scattering experiments from a volatile flat liquid
 413 jet to determine how scatterer and liquid identity affects scattering and energy transfer at the gas–liquid
 414 interface. We have reported results on the evaporation of Ne, CD_4 , ND_3 , and D_2O from doped dodecane

415 jets along with the scattering of these four species from pure dodecane jets, as well as evaporation and
416 scattering of Ar from cold salty water jets. The combination of well-defined angular distributions from
417 the flat jet and time-of-flight measurements that characterize the translational energy of the scatterers
418 provides a fundamental understanding of the gas–liquid interface from a mechanistic perspective.

419 The dodecane evaporation TOF profiles for all four species are best described by an MB flux
420 distribution at T_{liq} after background subtraction and exhibit $\cos\theta_f$ angular distributions characteristic of
421 evaporation from a flat surface and a sticking coefficient of unity. In the scattering experiments, the
422 scattering TOF spectra for all four scatterers are fitted by a linear combination of a faster IS component
423 and a slower TD component. Integrating these spectra results in super-specular scattering in the IS
424 channel, attributed to anisotropic momentum transfer at the interface, and $\cos\theta_f$ angular distributions for
425 the TD channel.

426 In the IS channel, the fractional energy loss is smallest for Ne and largest for D_2O . This trend was also
427 found in prior squalane scattering experiments, but the fractional energy loss from dodecane is smaller
428 than from squalane. This shows that squalane is a softer surface than dodecane.

429 The TD fraction is largest for collision trajectories with a larger deflection angle and smallest for
430 grazing trajectories. CD_4 , ND_3 , and D_2O scattering resulted in similar TD fractions, contrasting with Ne
431 scattering. The relative TD fractions correlate with free energies of solvation in dodecane, consistent
432 with the prior literature. These findings showcase the importance of collision geometry and scatterer
433 identity toward the likelihood of being trapped at the interface. We then applied a soft-sphere kinematic
434 model to describe energy loss in the impulsive mechanistic channel. CD_4 , ND_3 , and D_2O exhibit larger
435 values for internal excitation than Ne, attributed to rotational excitation of the polyatomic scatterers.

436 The salty water experiments indicated that Ar atoms evaporating from a jet of 8 m LiBr undergo
437 collisions with water vapor above the surface of the jet, resulting in TOF distributions that are slightly
438 super-Maxwellian. Initial results from Ar scattering experiments suggest that Ar is more likely to

439 undergo surface trapping by cold salty water than Ne is on dodecane, but less so than the molecular
440 scatterers from dodecane.

441 We have elucidated interfacial interactions by probing atomic and molecular scattering dynamics at
442 the gas–liquid interface using a flat liquid jet. This work will serve as a useful benchmark for studying
443 future volatile solvent systems including aqueous media. We plan to continue to investigate nonreactive
444 and reactive scattering from a cold salty water flat jet. Preliminary results are presented here, and further
445 experiments are currently underway, supported by the framework established in this body of work.

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512 **AUTHOR DECLARATIONS**

513 **Conflict of Interest**

514 The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

515 **DATA AVAILABILITY**

516 The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon
517 reasonable request.

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Table 1. Average fractional energy loss in the IS Channel at a deflection angle of $\chi = 90^\circ$ and soft-sphere fitted parameters for all values of χ .

Scattered Species	Fractional Energy Loss $\Delta E/E_i$		Soft-Sphere Fitted Parameters	
	Dodecane	^a Squalane	Effective Surface Mass m_{eff} (amu)	Total Internal Excitation E_{int} (kJ mol ⁻¹)
Ne	0.46	0.42	61	2.1
CD ₄	0.61	^b 0.49	52	5.3
ND ₃	0.62	^c 0.52	55	5.1
D ₂ O	0.64	0.56	54	5.8

750 ^aGas scattering from liquid squalane. Values interpolated from Fig. 4 in ref. ⁵¹ to directly compare
751 scattering at identical beam energies for each species. ^bValue reported for CH₄. ^cValue reported for NH₃.