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Centre de recherche sur
les matériaux renouvelables

The Power of Confocal Raman Microscopy in Coating Analysis

Véronic Landry, Full Professor, Université Laval
September 27
Greensboro, NC
Wood Coatings and Substrates Conference

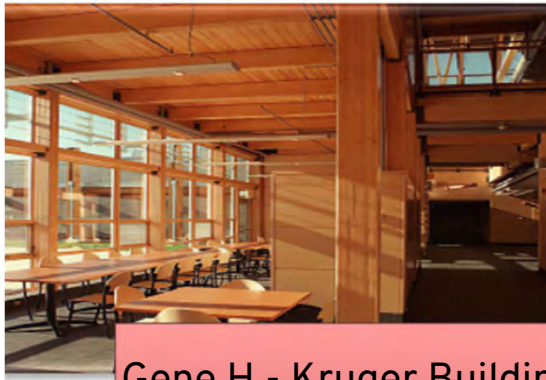
Coauthors: Dr. Ingrid Calvez, Dr. Jérémy Winniger, Vahideh Akbary, Solène Pellerin, Marie Soula, Dr. Aurélien Hermann, Dr. Juliette Triquet, Rémi Cadieux-Lynch, Assira Keralta



Wood coatings, adhesives and modification research at UL



Québec City

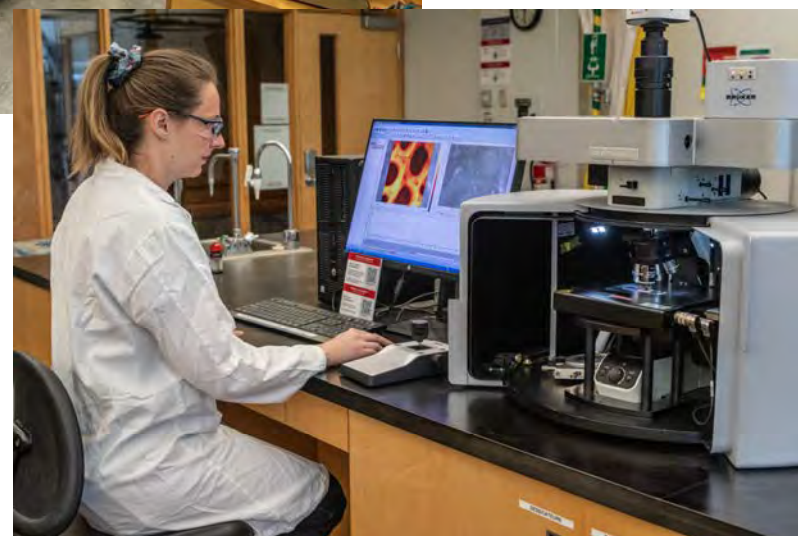


Gene H.- Kruger Building



Landry's research group, september 2024

Wood coatings, adhesives and modification research



Wood coatings, adhesives and modification research at UL

Ongoing Research Projects

Coatings

- Terpene-based latex
- Lignin-based coatings
- Polyelectrolyte complexes for fire retardancy
- Antibacterial coatings
- Anti-fingerprint coatings

Adhesives

- Protein-based adhesive
- Tannin-based adhesives
- Saccharides-based adhesives
- Lignin-based adhesives

Wood modification

- Wood dimensional stabilization using whey ultrafiltration permeate
- Hardening using Michael addition reaction

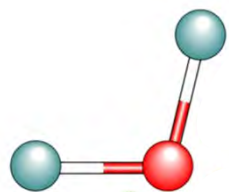
August 2024 Gene H.-Kruger Building



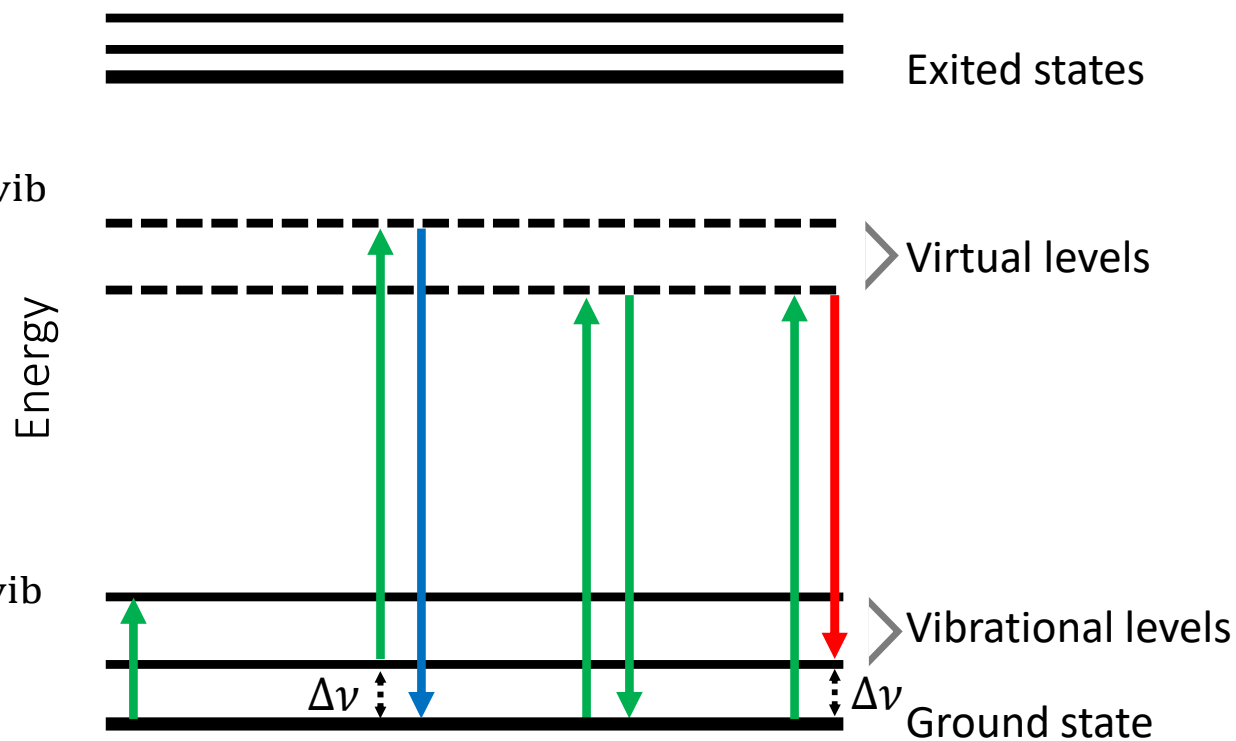
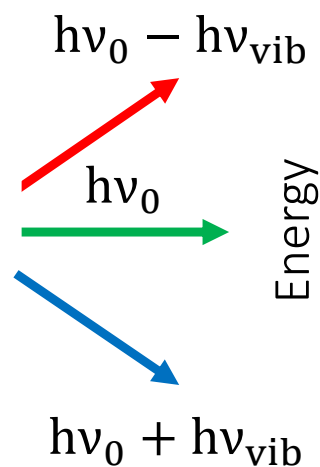
Presentation plan

- ① Theory on Confocal Raman Microscopy
- ② Confocal Raman Microscopy for Coatings Research
 - *Free radical UV-curable coatings*
 - *Radical/Cationic UV-curable coatings*
- ③ Confocal Raman Microscopy for Wood Modification Research

Theory – Raman diffusion (sorry !)



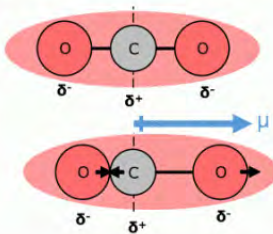
Inelastic vibration



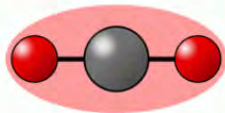
Infrared Raman diffusion (anti-Stokes) Rayleigh diffusion Raman diffusion (Stokes)

Theory – Raman vs IR spectroscopy

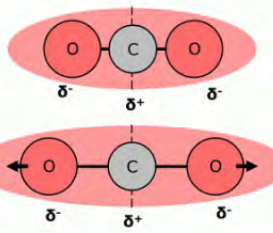
Asymmetrical Stretch



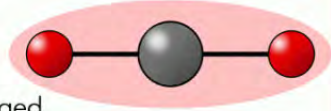
- Dipole moment changed during vibration
- **IR active**
- Polarisability unchanged
- Raman inactive



Symmetrical Stretch



- Polarisability changed during vibration
- **Raman active**
- Dipole moment unchanged
- IR inactive



Raman

Analysis of **scattered light** of vibrating molecules

Vibration is Raman active if it causes a change in the polarizability

Water can be used as a solvent

No need for specific sample preparation

Expensive instrumentation

IR

Analysis of **absorption** of the vibrating molecules

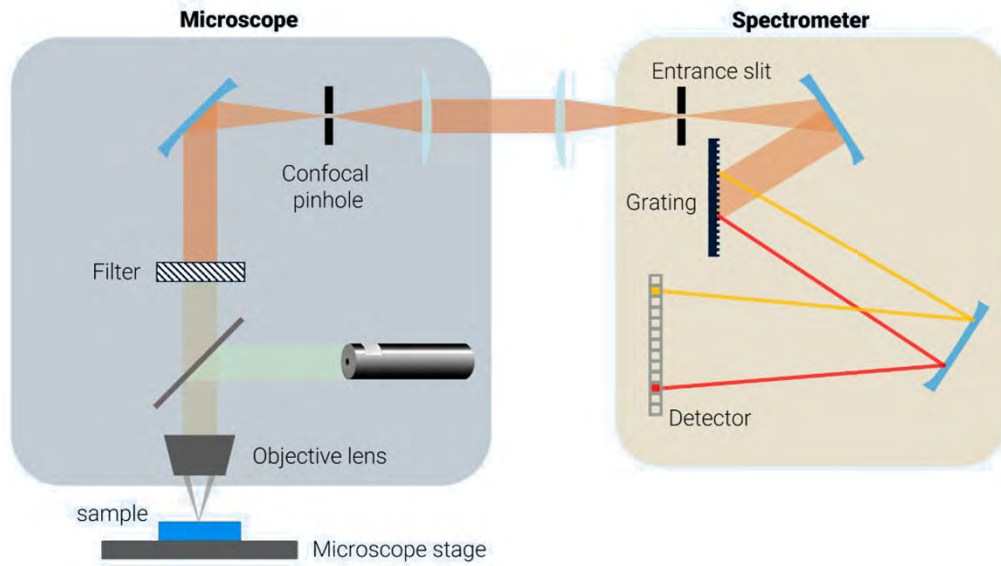
IR active if a change in the dipole moment during the vibration occurs

Water cannot be used as a solvent

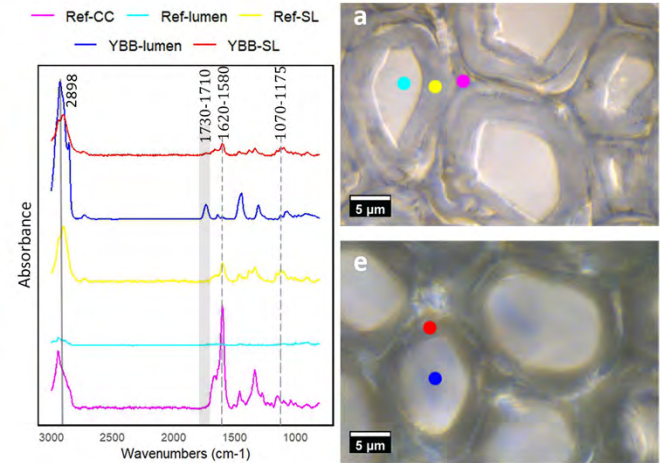
Requires specific sample preparation

Relatively inexpensive

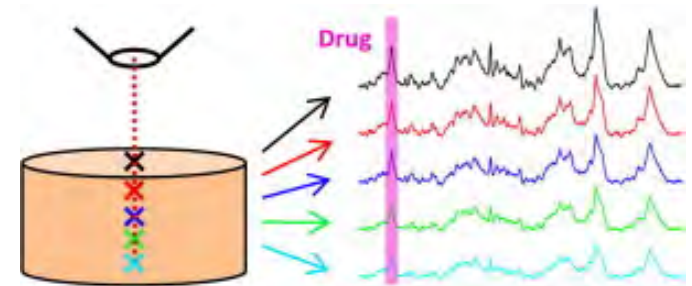
Theory – Raman spectroscopy + Optical Microscopy



Optical Microscopy Coupled with Raman Spectroscopy

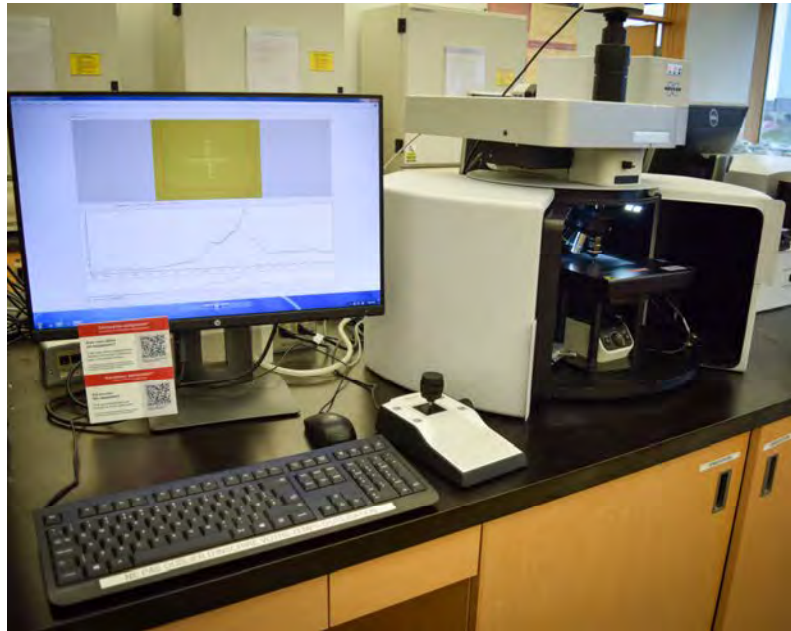


Microscopy Coupled with Spectroscopy (X-Y)



Depth Profiling

Our system – SENTERRA II (Bruker)



Raman Microscope SENTERRA II (Bruker Optics Inc., Billerica, USA), equipped with a motorized stage and a confocal microscope (with x20, x50, and x100 objectives).

The confocal microscope, coupled with the spectrometer, reduces the analysis area and allows for "microanalysis" conditions (Raman microspectrometry), offering spatial resolution on the order of micrometers (μm).

Lasers available : 532 nm, 633 nm and 785 nm

Using Raman Confocal for UV-curable coatings

1

Reducing Oxygen
Inhibition of UV-
curable acrylate
coatings (radical
polymerization)

2

Hybrid free
radical/cationic
phase-
separated UV-
curable system

Using Raman Confocal for UV-curable coatings

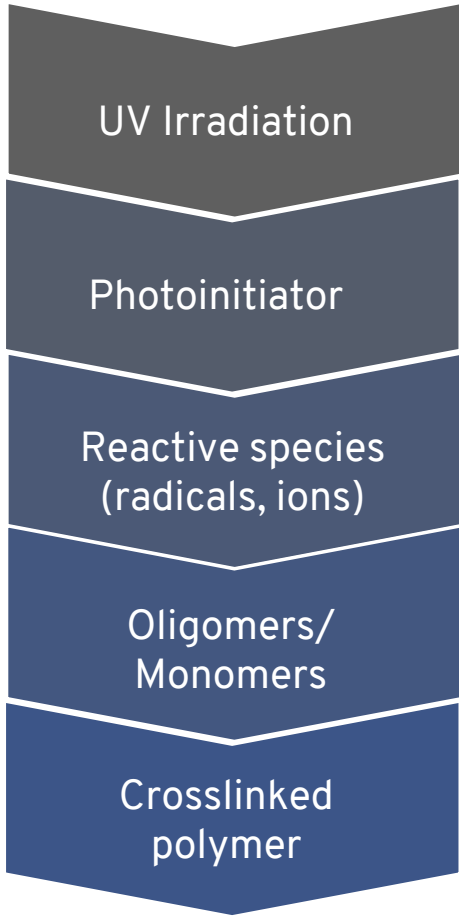
1

Reducing Oxygen
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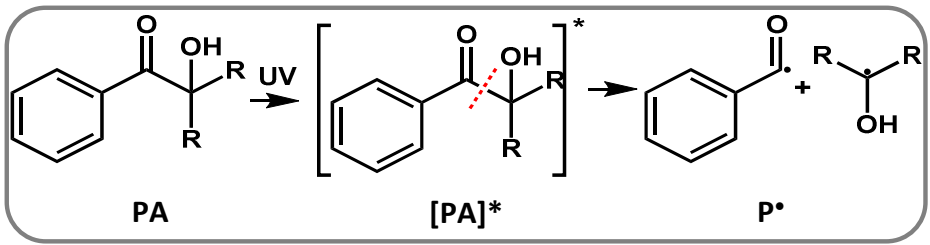
2

Hybrid free
radical/cationic
phase-
separated UV-
curable system

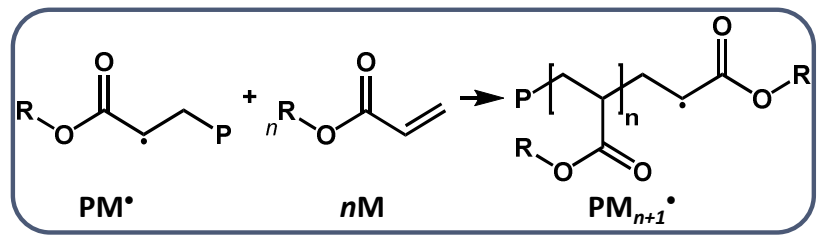
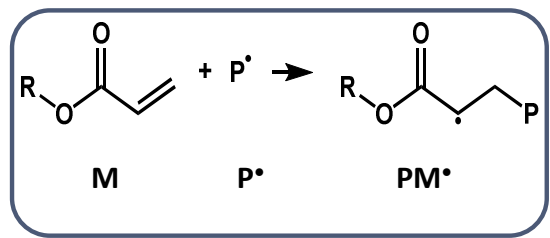
Free radical UV-curable coatings



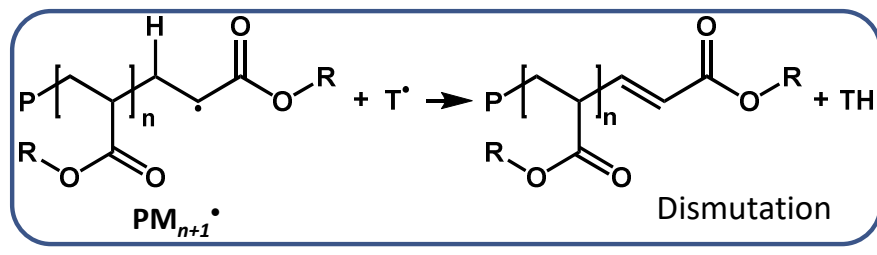
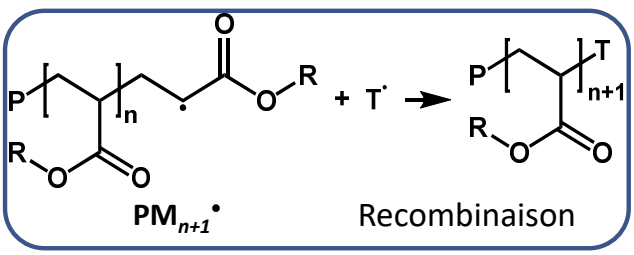
(1) Initiation



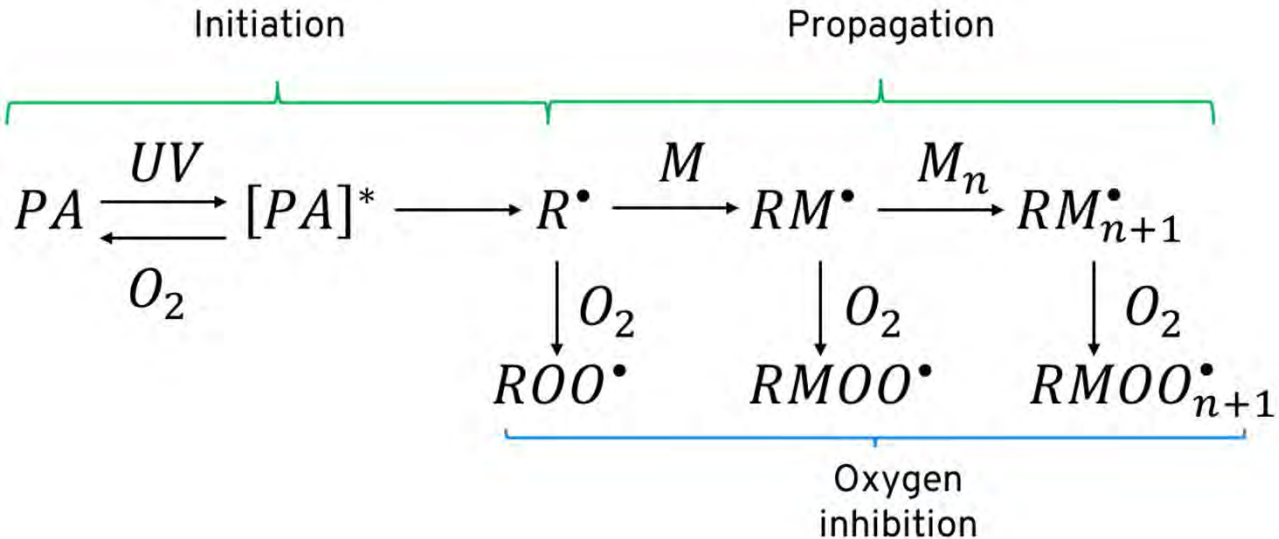
(2) Propagation



(3) Terminaison



Oxygen inhibition of free radical UV-curable coatings



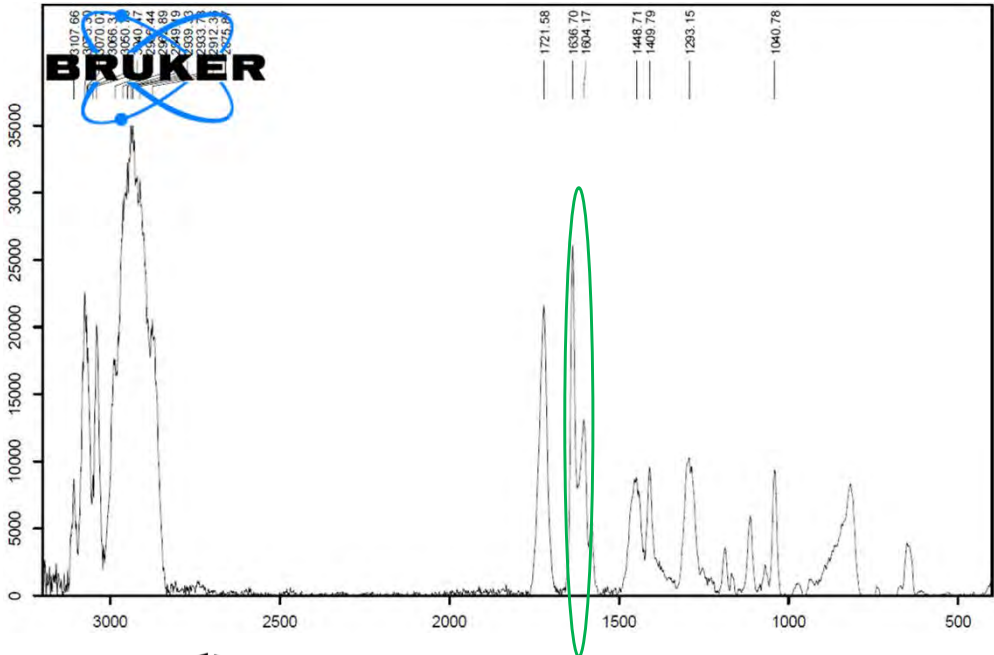
Impact of oxygen inhibition

- Low conversion of acrylates in surface
- Hardness decrease
- Higher residual monomer concentration
- Sticky surfaces
- Possible modification of optical properties



Using CRM to study oxygen inhibition

Objective in using CRM : Depth profiling of acrylate conversion (double bond conversion, DBC)



Wavenumber (cm ⁻¹)	Attribution
810	CH=CH ₂ , twisting
1190	C-O, stretching
1405	CH ₂ , scissor deformation
1636	CH=CH ₂ , stretching
1720	C=O, stretching

$$DBC = \left(1 - \frac{I_z}{I_0}\right) * 100$$

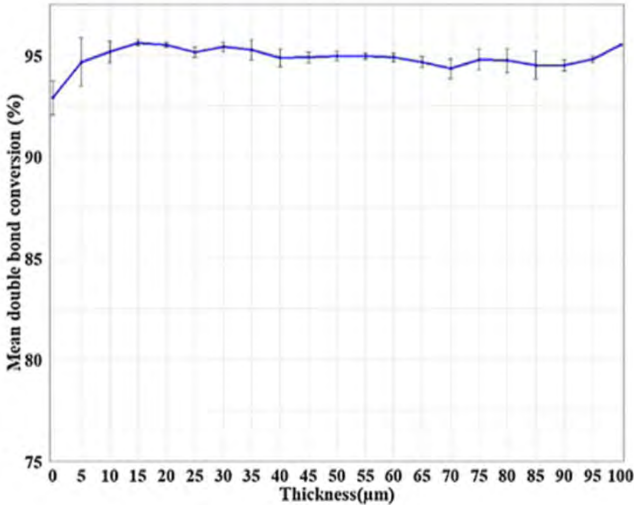
$$Mean\ Raman\ DBC = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n (DBC)$$

Using CRM to study oxygen inhibition

- Distinct analysis of each layer
- Calculation of the average conversion across the thickness



Measurements of the DBC every 5 μm of 100 μm films



Reference
formulation –
No additive

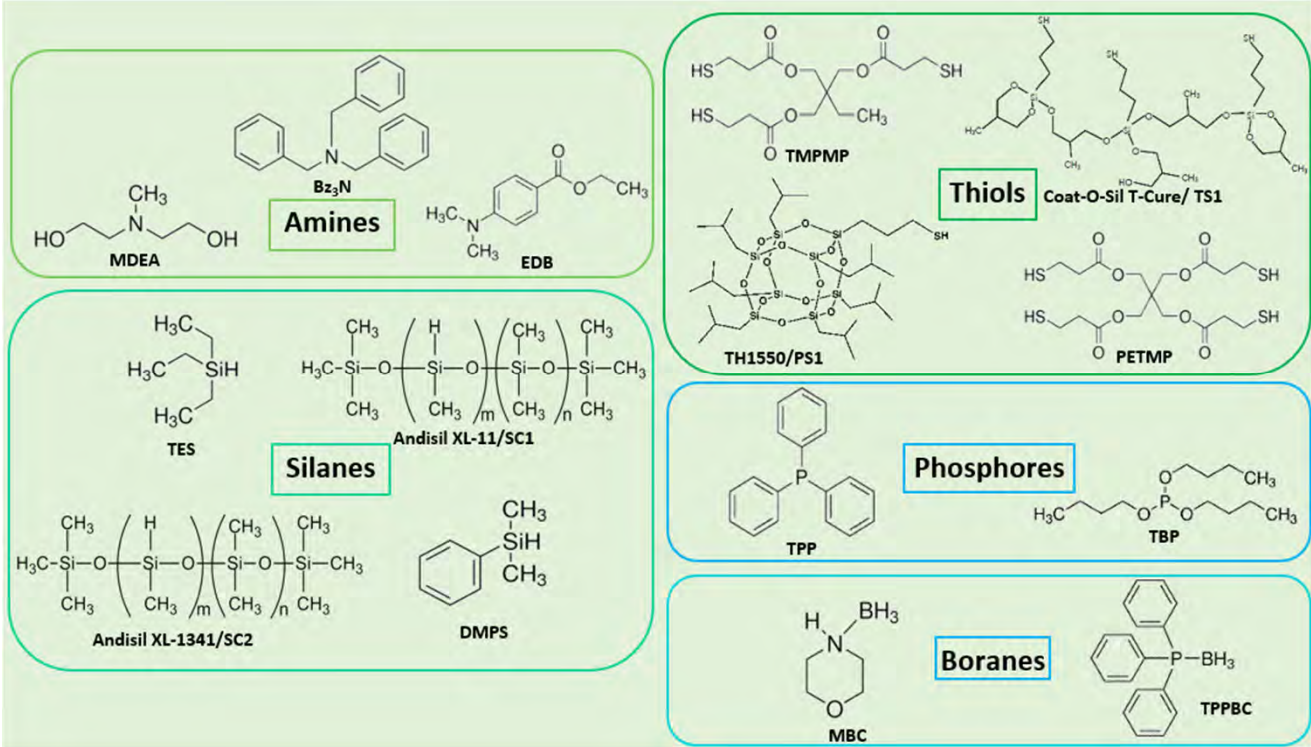
Using CRM to study oxygen inhibition – Additives tested

Hydrogen donors

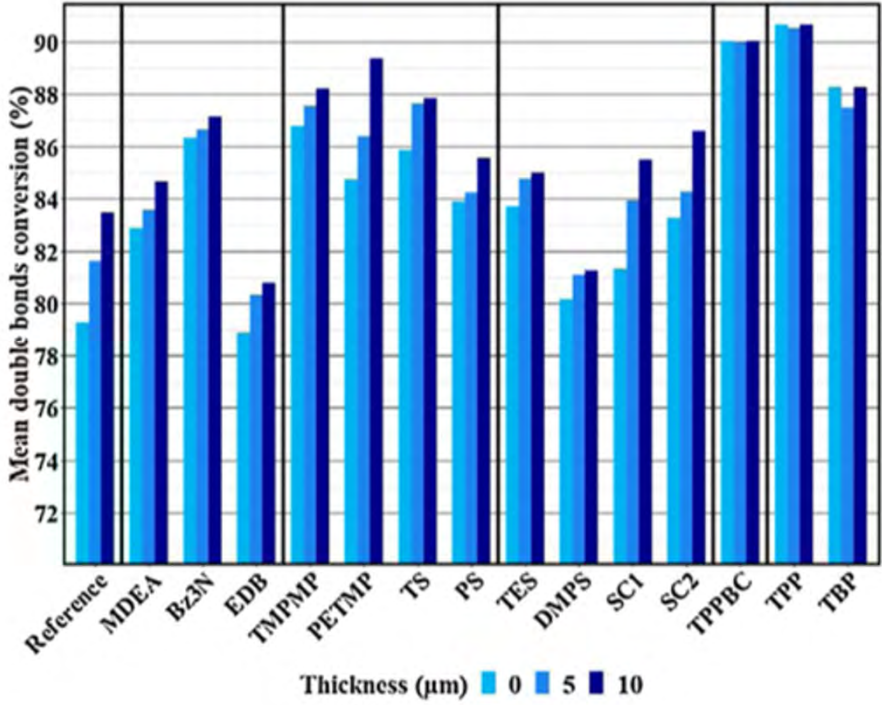
- Amine
- Thiols
- Silanes

Reducers

- Borane
- Phosphine
- Phosphite



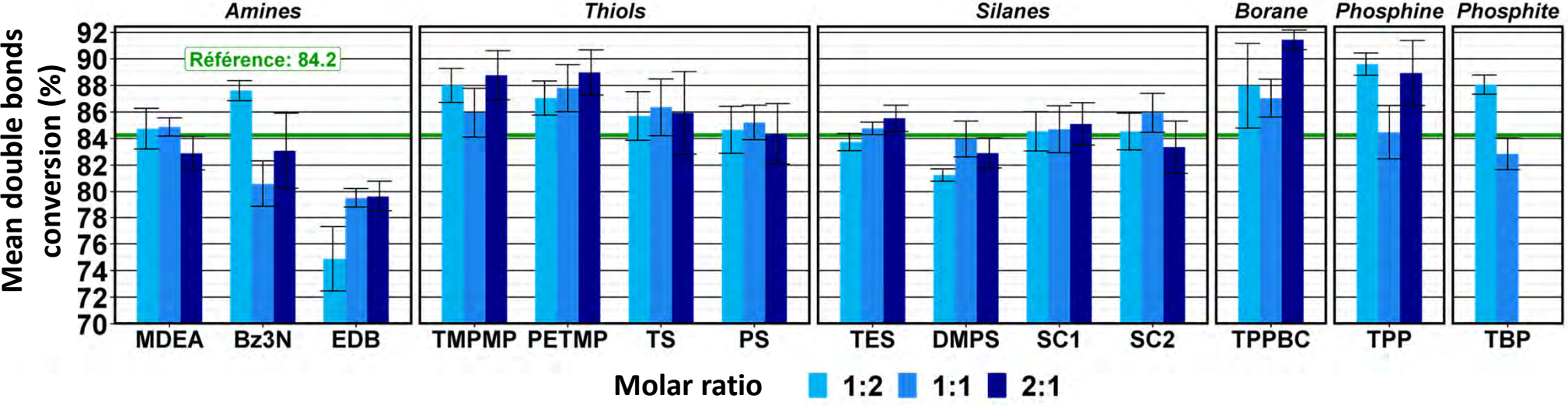
Using CRM to study oxygen inhibition



Double bonds conversion of the first 10 μm for each formulation at 01:02 ratio UV-cured at 5 m/min

- DBC conversion increase from 0 to 10 μm for most additives
- Phosphorus-based compounds lead to higher DBC.

Using CRM to study oxygen inhibition



Impact of coinitiator addition on conversion at 5 m/min, film thickness: 100 μm

- Borane complex and phosphine give access to good improvements
- Thiols are the product family with the best conversions

Using CRM to study oxygen inhibition

Table 4-6: Impact of the addition of coinitiator summarized

Tests / Coinitiator	Dispersion	Conversion (Photo-DSC)	T _{induction}	Maximum photo- polymerization rate	Double bonds conversion	Pendulum Hardness	Abrasion resistance
Reference	/	+	+	++	+	+	-
MDEA	++	-	+	+	+	-	-
Bz ₃ N	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
EDB	++	-	-	+	-	-	+
TMPMP	+	-	+	+	++	--	++
PETMP	+	--	+	-	++	--	++
TS	+	-	+	-	+	--	-
PS	-	-	+	-	+	+	+
TES	++	+	++	+	+	-	-

Using Raman Confocal for UV-curable coatings

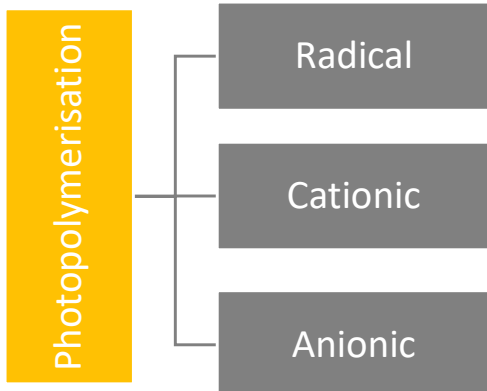
1

Reducing Oxygen
Inhibition of UV-
curable acrylate
coatings (radical
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2

Hybrid free
radical/cationic
phase-
separated UV-
curable system

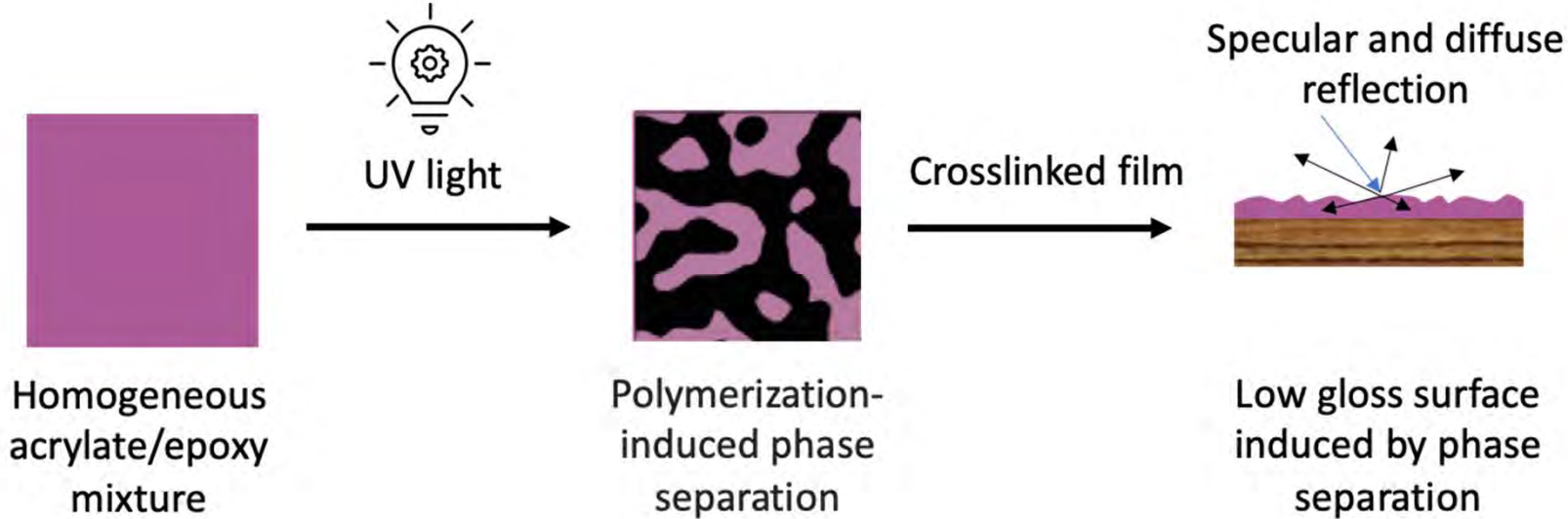
Types of UV-curable coatings chemistry



	Free radical system	Cationic system
Lifetimes of reactive species	Short	Long (Dark Cure)
Kinetic speed	Rapid	Moderate to rapid
Humidity/oxygen sensitivity	Humidity: No Oxygen: Yes	Humidity: Yes Oxygen: No
Thermal post-cure	Limited	Yes
Shrinkage	Significant	Not significant
Choice of resins and initiators	Important	Limited

Free radical/Cationic Hybrid System

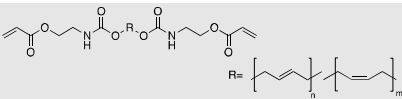
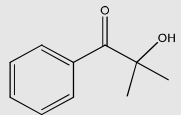
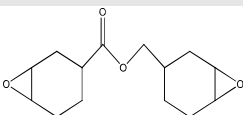
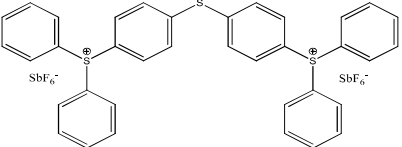
Objective of the project : decreasing gloss without using any additives
Objective in using CRM : depth profiling and phase identification



Free radical/Cationic Hybrid System

Acrylate part (A)

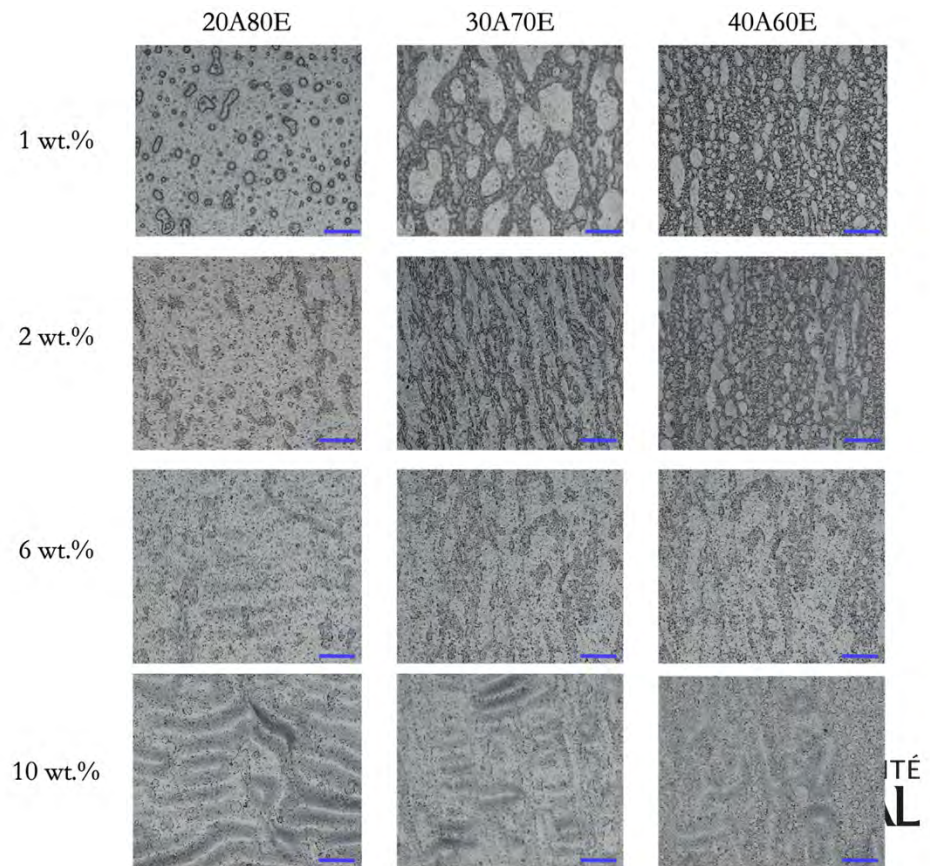
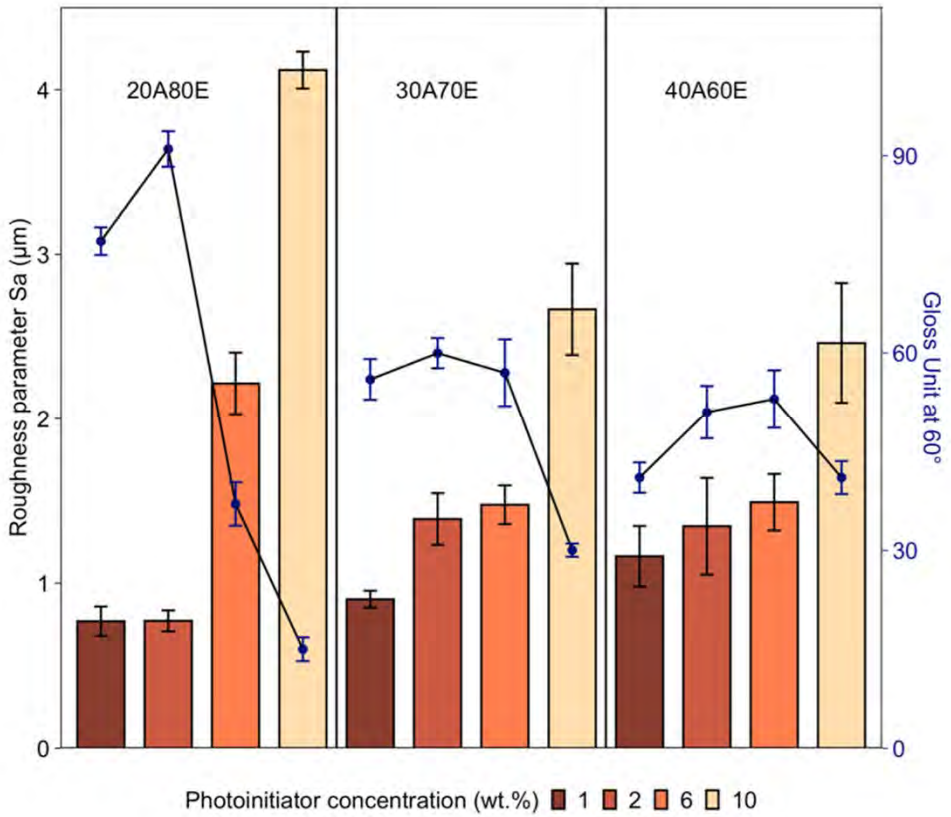
Epoxy part (E)

Chemical name	Commercial name	Chemical structure	Viscosity (mPa.s ⁻¹)	Tg (°C)
Aliphatic polybutadiene urethane acrylate	Dymax BR-640D		6000 at 60°C	33
2-Hydroxy-2-methyl-phenyl-propane-1-one	Darocure 1173 (HMPP)			
Cycloaliphatic epoxy	Omnilane 1005		220-250 at 25°C	145
Triarylsulfonium hexafluoroantimonate salts	Omicat 320 TAS			

Mixture	Name	HMPP (%wt)	TAS (%wt)
100A0E	100A0E	1	2
80A20E	80A20E	1	2
50A50E	50A50E	1	2
40A60E	E3005	0,5	1
	E301	1	2
	E303	3	6
	E305	5	10
30A70E	E2005	0,5	1
	E201	1	2
	E203	3	6
	E205	5	10
20A80E	E005	0,5	1
	E01	1	2
	E03	3	6
	E05	5	10
0A100E	0A100E	1	2

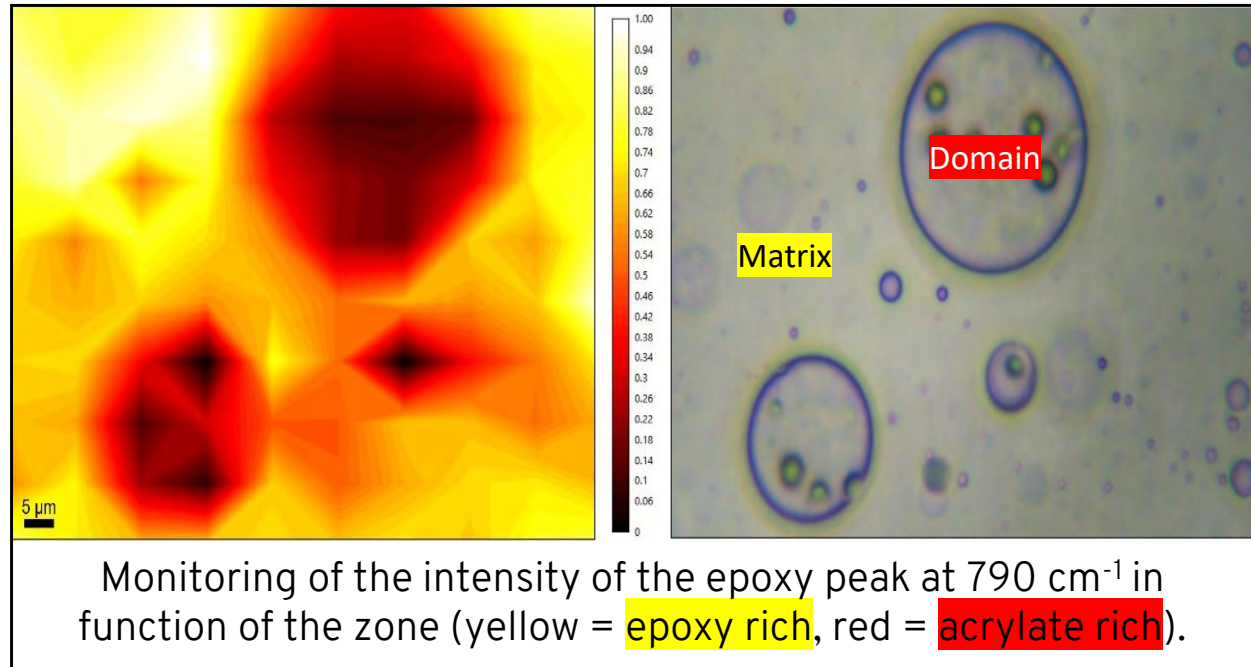
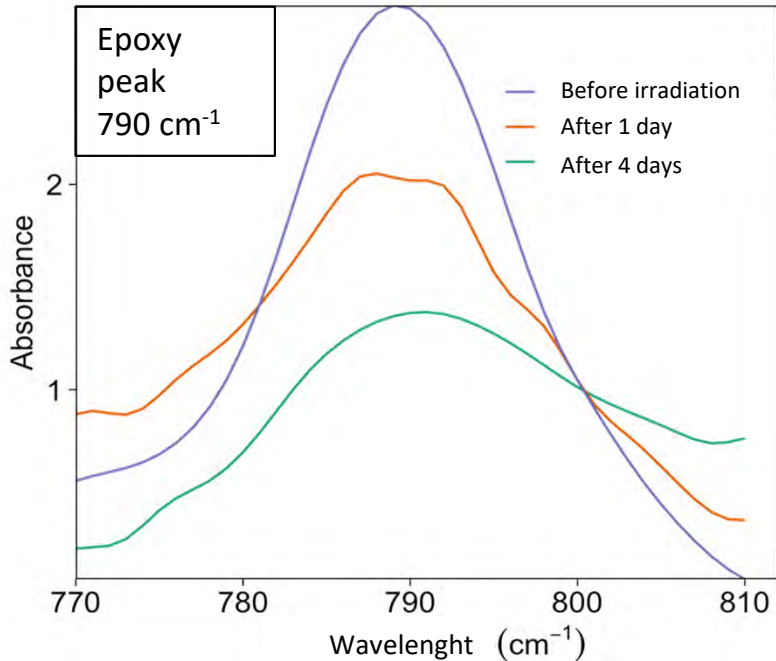
Free radical/Cationic Hybrid System

Impact of **photoinitiator concentration** and **acrylate/epoxy ratio** on **surface average roughness (S_a)**, **gloss** and **morphology** for 20A80E, 30A70E, 40A60E ratios



Free radical/Cationic Hybrid System – *Impact of photoinitiator*

Monitoring of cationic polymerization after 1 day and 4 days (dark polymerization).



- Film thickness: 50 μm on aluminum panels.
- UV light intensity : 500 mW/cm² at 5 m/min.

CRMR

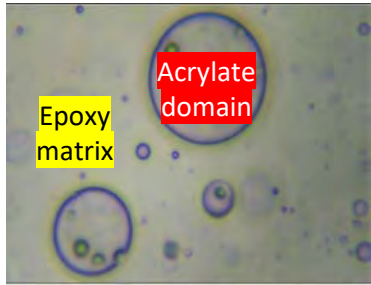
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Calvez, I., Szczepanski, C. R., & Landry, V. (2022). Hybrid free-radical/cationic phase-separated UV-curable system: impact of photoinitiator content and monomer fraction on surface morphologies and gloss appearance. *Macromolecules*, 55(8), 3129-3139.

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LAVAL

Free radical/Cationic Hybrid System – *Impact of photoinitiator*

		EPOXY PART				ACRYLATE PART	
		Day 1		Day 4		Day 1	
		Domain	Matrix	Domain	Matrix	Domain	Matrix
20A80E	E005	37 ± 1	50 ± 1	54 ± 0	58 ± 0	93 ± 2	96 ± 3
	E01	42 ± 2	55 ± 1	59 ± 2	69 ± 1	95 ± 1	96 ± 1
	E03	50 ± 1	57 ± 1	63 ± 3	77 ± 5	90 ± 2	96 ± 1
	E05	62 ± 1	64 ± 2	71 ± 0	78 ± 1	91 ± 2	96 ± 1
30A70E	E2005	41 ± 1	44 ± 1	53 ± 1	54 ± 1	95 ± 3	96 ± 2
	E201	42 ± 3	49 ± 1	59 ± 2	69 ± 2	92 ± 2	95 ± 2
	E203	58 ± 3	65 ± 1	74 ± 2	82 ± 3	93 ± 2	98 ± 1
	E205	67 ± 1	70 ± 1	78 ± 1	90 ± 5	92 ± 3	95 ± 2
40A60E	E3005	27 ± 1	34 ± 1	39 ± 1	43 ± 1	95 ± 3	98 ± 2
	E301	37 ± 3	44 ± 1	61 ± 1	70 ± 1	94 ± 1	98 ± 1
	E303	55 ± 1	59 ± 1	71 ± 3	74 ± 2	94 ± 2	96 ± 3
	E305	69 ± 1	74 ± 1	79 ± 1	89 ± 1	92 ± 3	96 ± 2

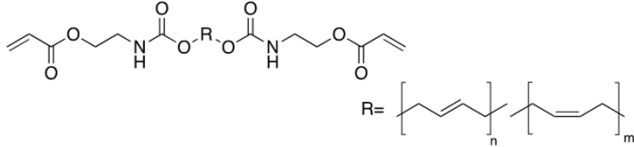
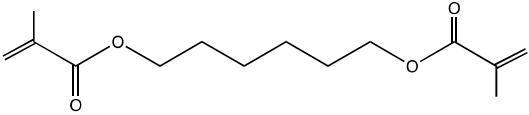
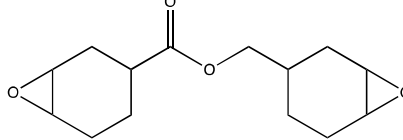
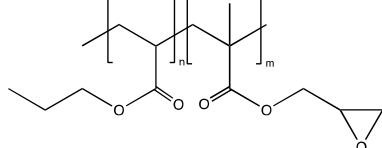


After polymerization (Day 1), the conversions for both the acrylate and epoxy parts were higher in the matrix than in the domain → **The viscosity of the acrylate component limited the diffusion of reactive species.**

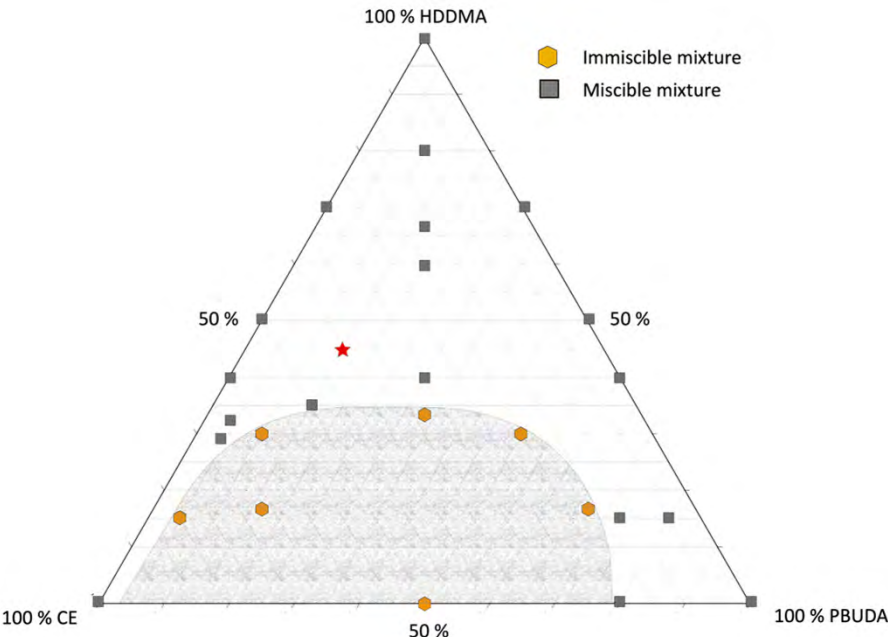
The conversion increased with photoinitiator content for both the epoxy and acrylate parts.

For the epoxy part, conversion continued to increase after 4 days of dark polymerization.

Free radical/Cationic Hybrid System

Chemical and commercial name	Chemical structure
Polybutadiene urethane diacrylate (PBUDA) - Dymax BR-640D	
1,6-hexanediol dimethacrylate (HDDMA) - Miwon Miramer M201	
Epoxycyclohexylmethyl 3,4-epoxycyclohexanecarboxylate (CE) - Omnilane 1005	
Poly(butyl acrylate-co-glycidyl methacrylate) (PBGMA)	

Free radical/Cationic Hybrid System

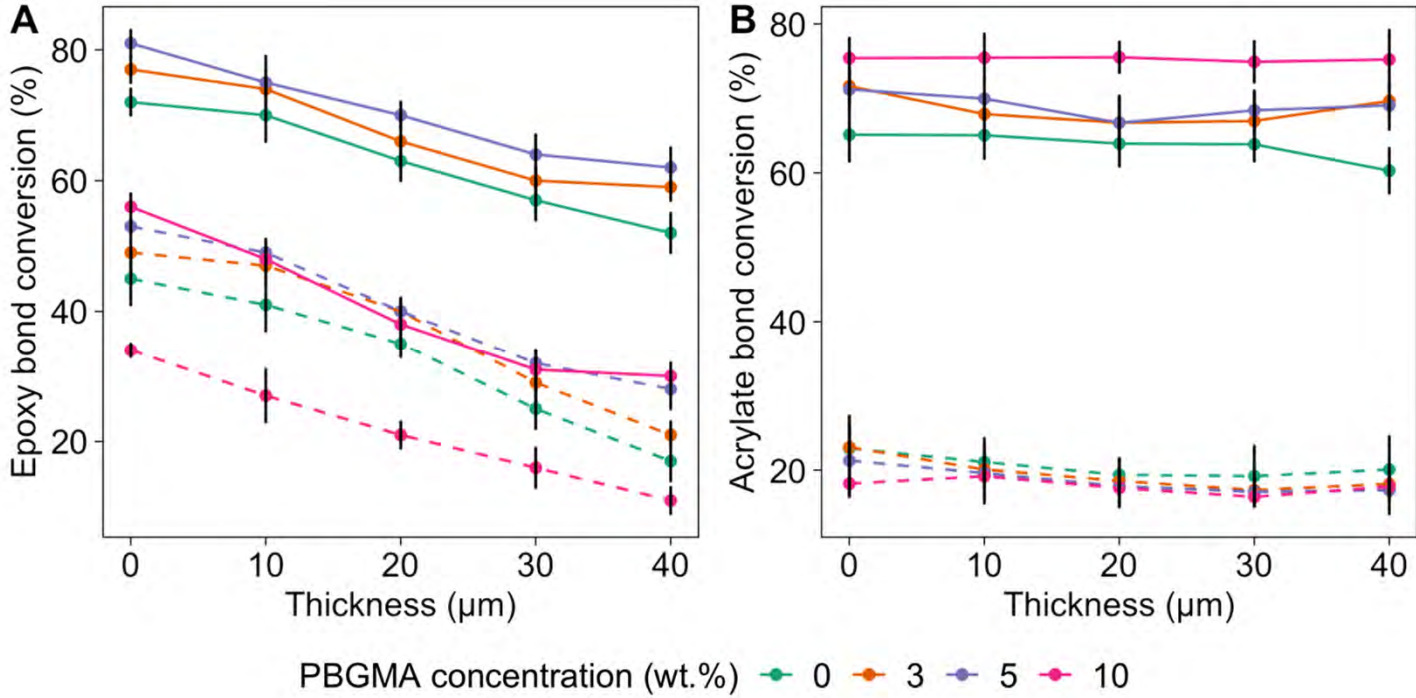


Ternary phase diagram of CE/PBUDA/HDDMA in a liquid state at 25°C, The shaded region indicates immiscibility, and the star represents the experimental composition selected for further analysis in this study.

	Reference (★) *			Mixture						
	Part E	Part A	HDDMA	PBGMA						
Composition (%wt)	40	15	45	0	1	2	3	5	7	10
Viscosity (cP) at 25 °C	180-450	6000 at 60 °C	1-10	51 ± 2	59 ± 1	76 ± 5	104 ± 6	139 ± 3	207 ± 4	234 ± 5

* With 1% m HMPP and 3% m iodonium salt.

Free radical/Cationic Hybrid System



Conversion of (A) the epoxy part and (B) the acrylate part as a function of depth and PBGMA concentration.

Raman spectra were recorded every 10 μm in depth.

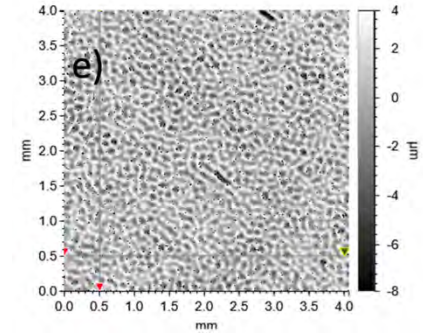
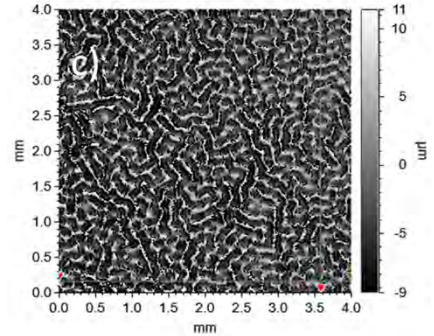
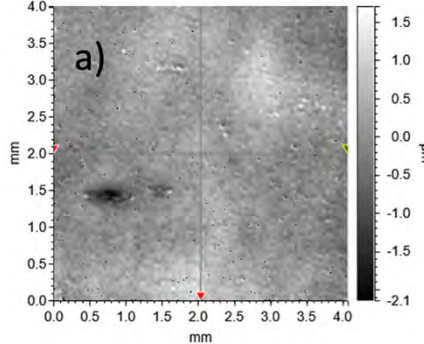
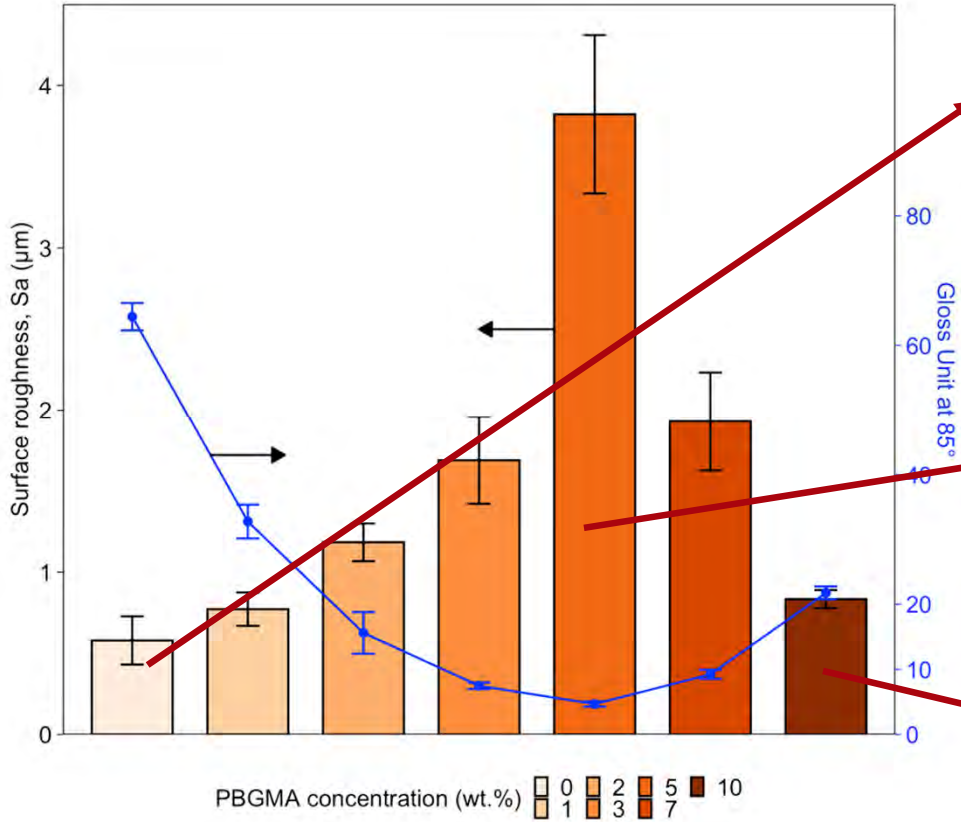
The dash lines correspond to the conversion after a first pass under UV light at 800 mWcm^{-2} and the solid lines to the conversion after a second pass under UV light at 1200 mWcm^{-2} .



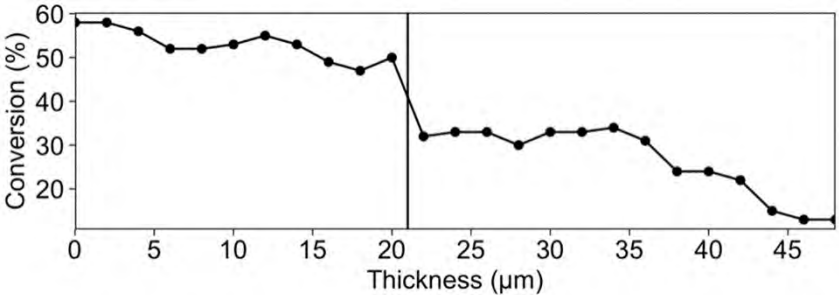
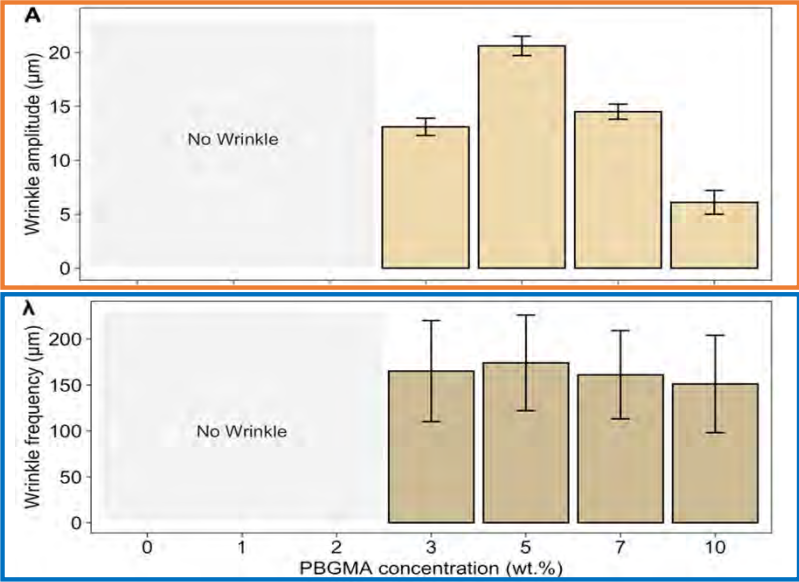
Calvez, I., Szczepanski, C. R., & Landry, V. (2022). Effect of copolymer on the wrinkle structure formation and gloss of a phase-separated ternary free-radical/cationic hybrid system for the application of self-matting coatings. *Polymers*, 14(12), 2371.



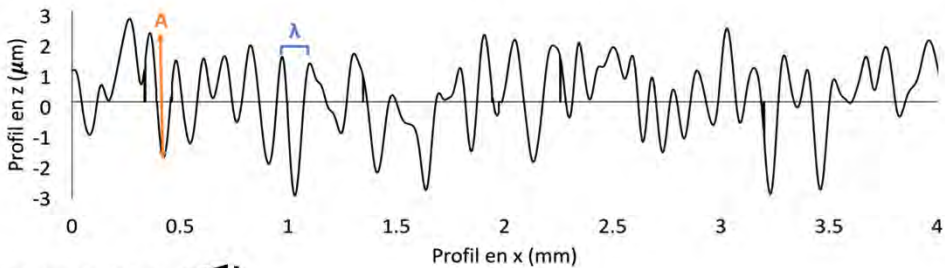
Free radical/Cationic Hybrid System



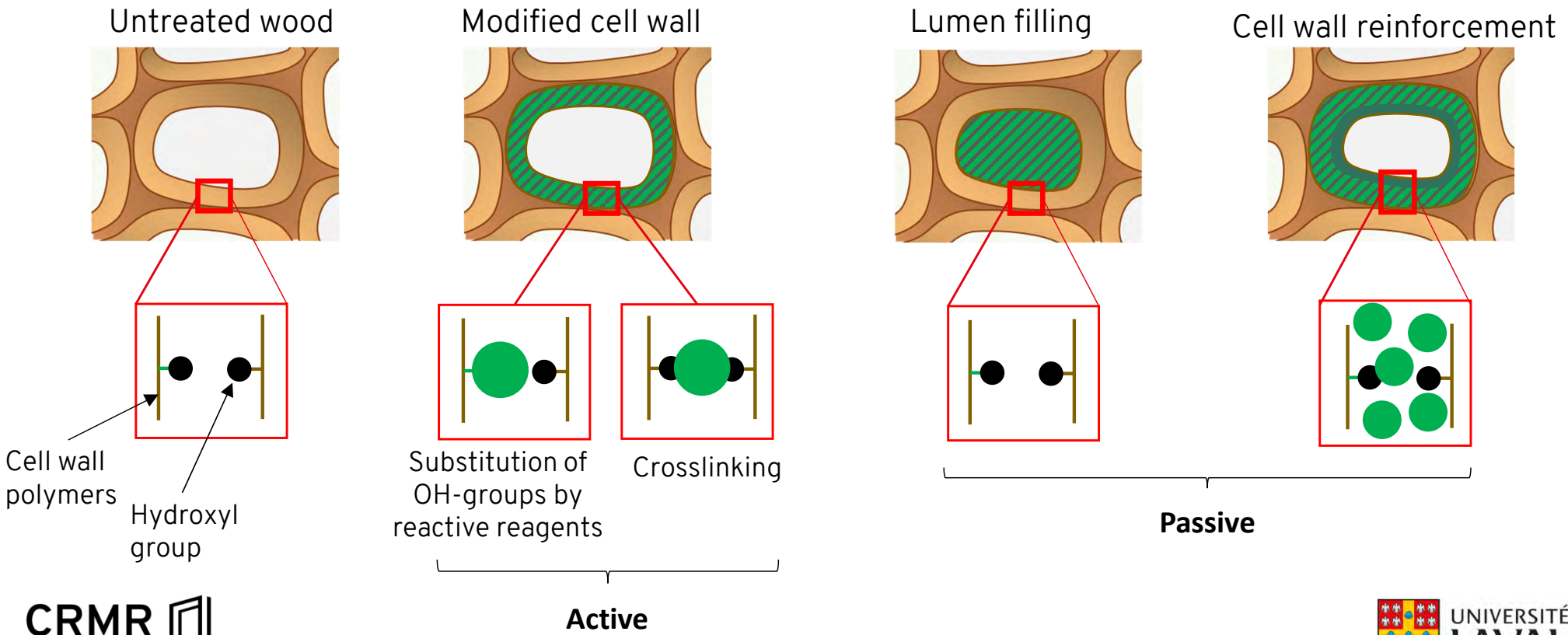
Free radical/Cationic Hybrid System



CRM analysis of conversion as a function of depth for 5 wt.% PBGMA system
 → This technique allows to obtain the thickness of the cured film by measuring the conversion in function of the thickness, and incremental measurements of 2 μm were made.



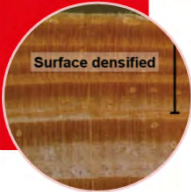
Types of wood modification



Projects on wood modification

- Free radical polymerization of acrylates using electron beam
- Using Michael addition reaction for wood hardening

Wood hardening



- Impregnation and polymerization of phosphorylated acrylates in North American Wood Species

Fire retardancy



- Valorization of whey ultrafiltration permeate for wood stabilization

Wood stabilization



J Mater Sci (2022) 57:6656–6668

Composites & nanocomposites

Chemical surface densification of hardwood through lateral monomer impregnation and in situ EB polymerization, Part II: effect of irradiation dose on hardness, wood chemistry and polymer conversion

Juliette Triquet^{1,2}, Pierre Blanchet^{1,2,3}, and Véronic Landry^{1,2,3,*}

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ORIGINAL

Chemical surface densification of sugar maple through Michael addition reaction

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From waste to building material: How whey ultrafiltration permeate can increase wood stability

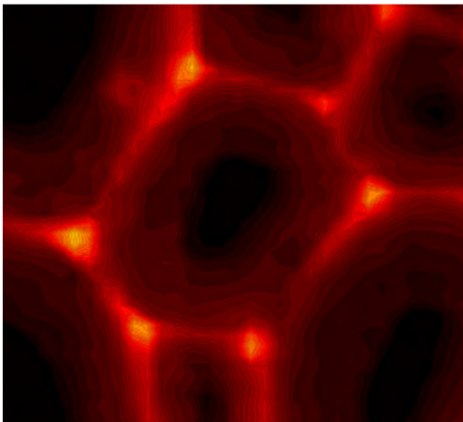
Rémi Cadieux-Lynch^a, Emma Leroux^a, Aurélien Hermann^a, Solène Pellerin^a, Assira Keralta^a, Maude Blouin^d, Jules Larouche^d, Jacopo Profili^{b,c}, Julien Chamberland^d, Véronic Landry^a ✉

Using CRM to study wood modification

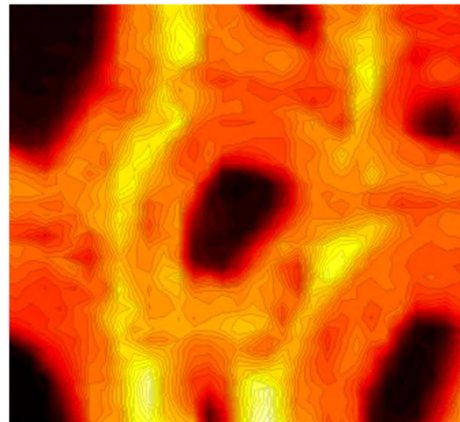
Wood regions are distinguished by characteristic peaks of cellulose (1175–1070 cm^{-1}) and lignin (1620–1580 cm^{-1}).

Acrylic polymers can be identified by specific peaks related to the C=C bond, detected at 1636 cm^{-1} , 1420 cm^{-1} , and 810 cm^{-1} . These markers allow for the analysis of wood components and polymers.

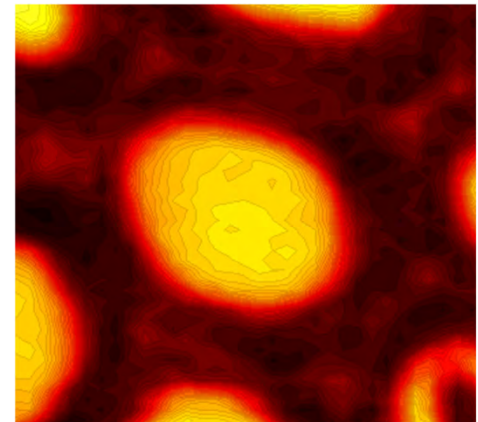
Lignin



Cellulose

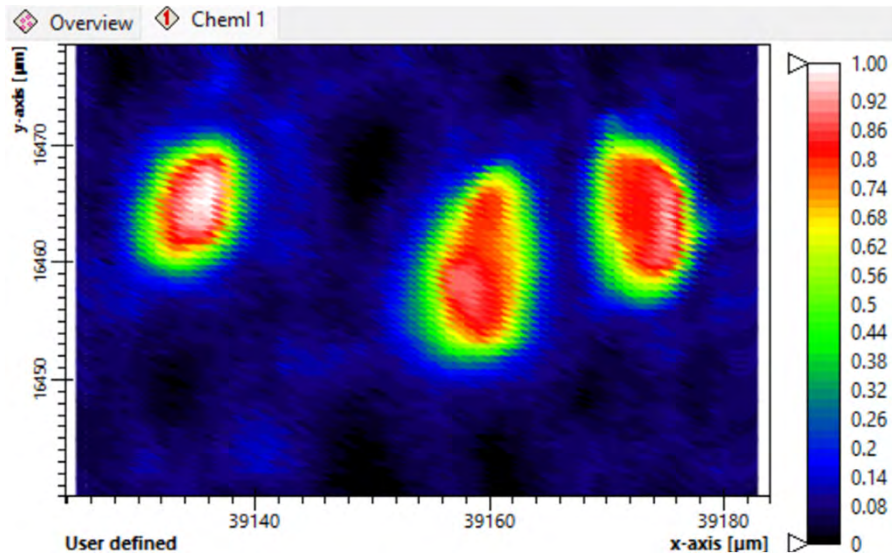


C=C of acrylic groups



Using CRM to study wood modification

To detect the presence of chemicals in wood, **chemical mapping** can be used.

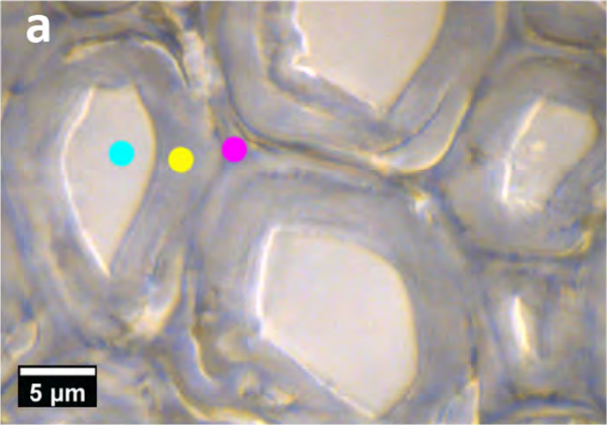
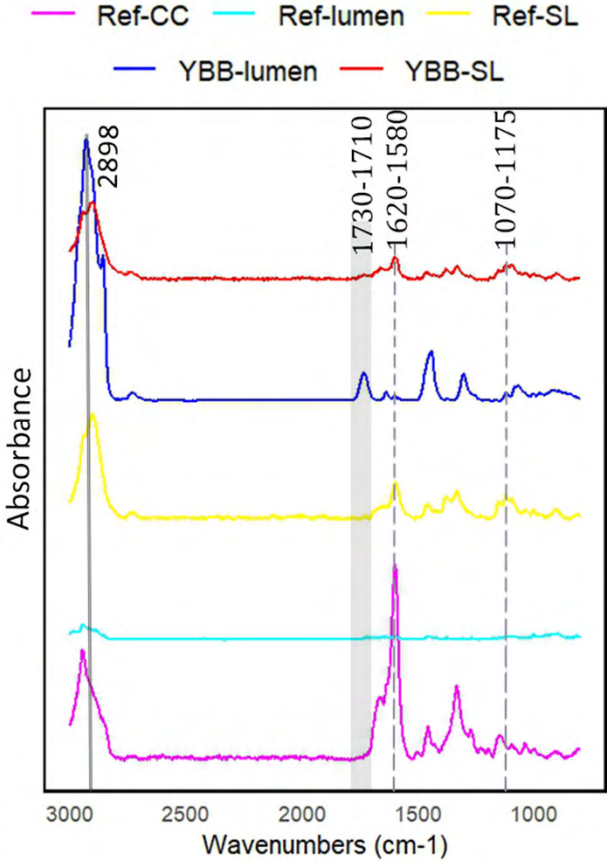


Chemical mapping allows for visualizing the spatial distribution of the chemical composition of a sample by collecting Raman spectra at each point during analysis.

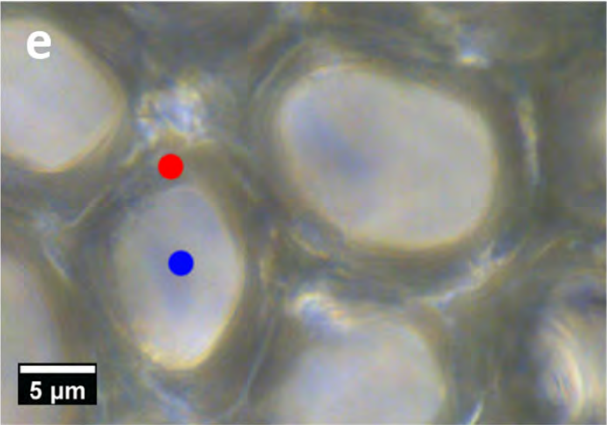
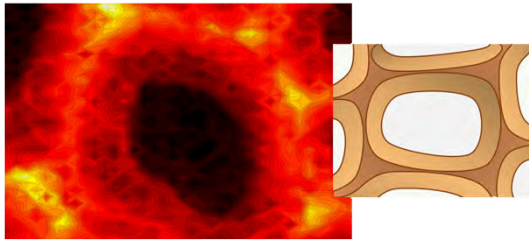
By analyzing specific Raman peaks, the technique generates a map showing the distribution of different chemical species or functional groups within the sample.

Chemical densification – Passive modification (lumen)

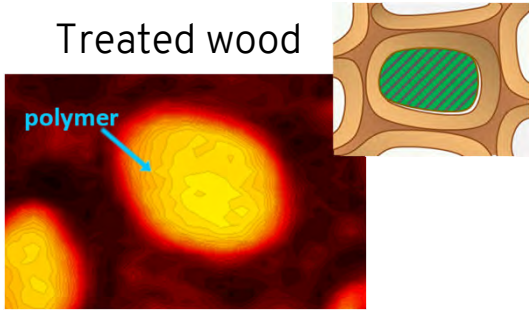
Surface impregnation of yellow birch by acrylate monomers polymerized by electron beam



Untreated wood

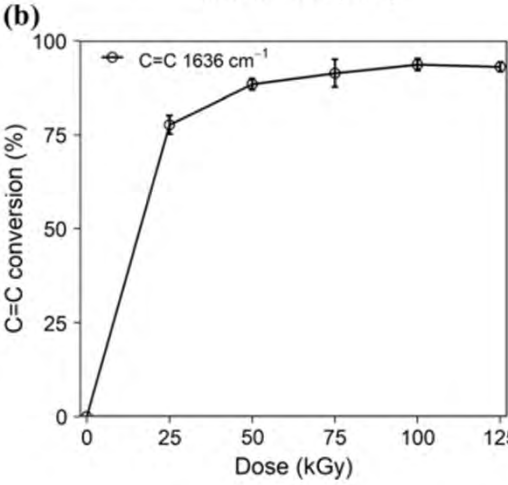
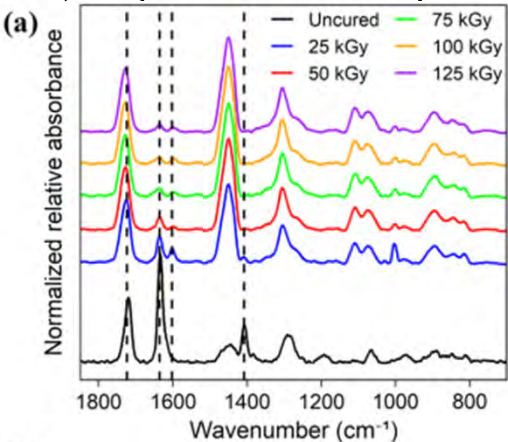
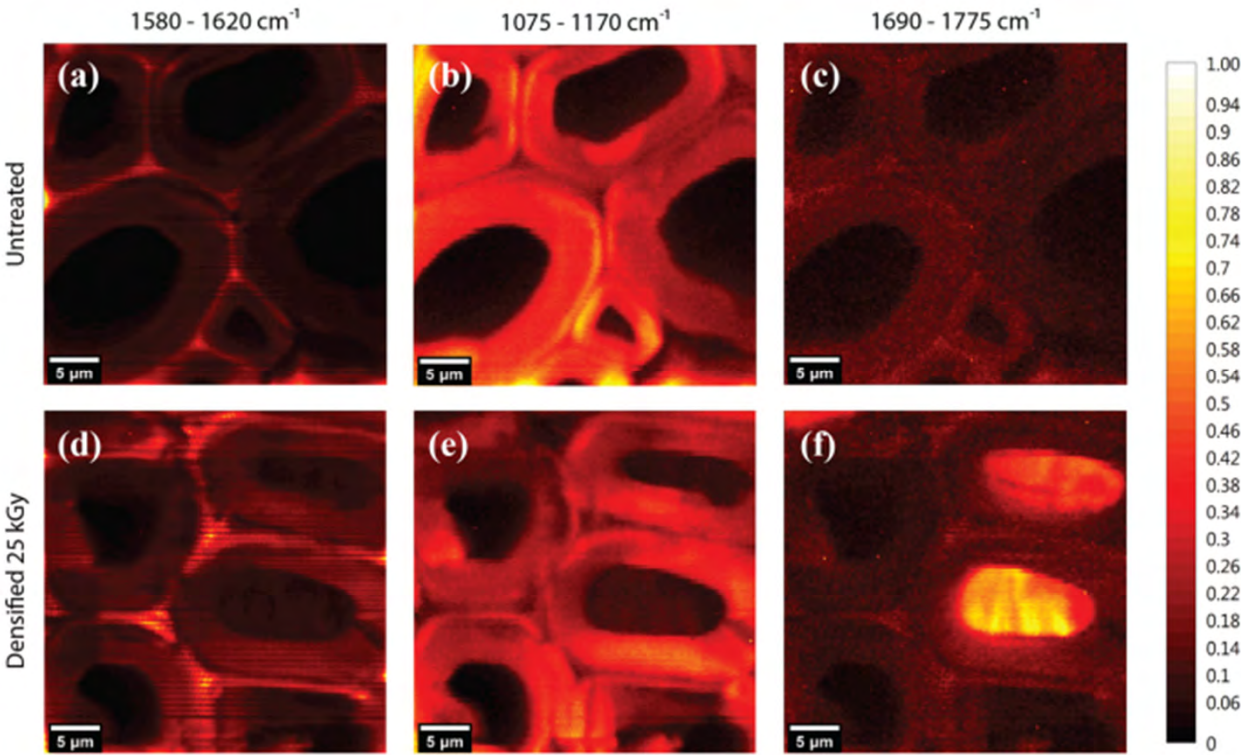


Treated wood



Chemical densification – Passive modification (lumen)

Surface impregnation of yellow birch by acrylate monomers polymerized by electron beam (25, 50, 75, 100, 125 kGy)



Chemical densification – Passive modification (lumen)

- Michael addition reaction between malonate and acrylate;
- With and without photopolymerization

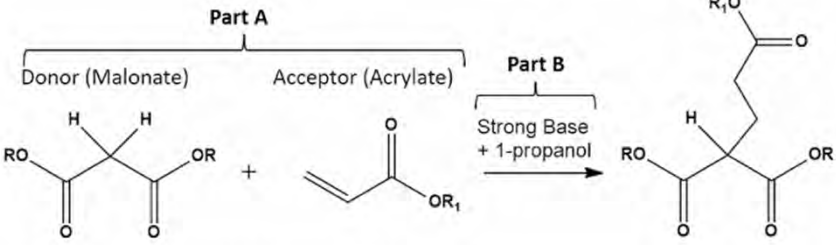
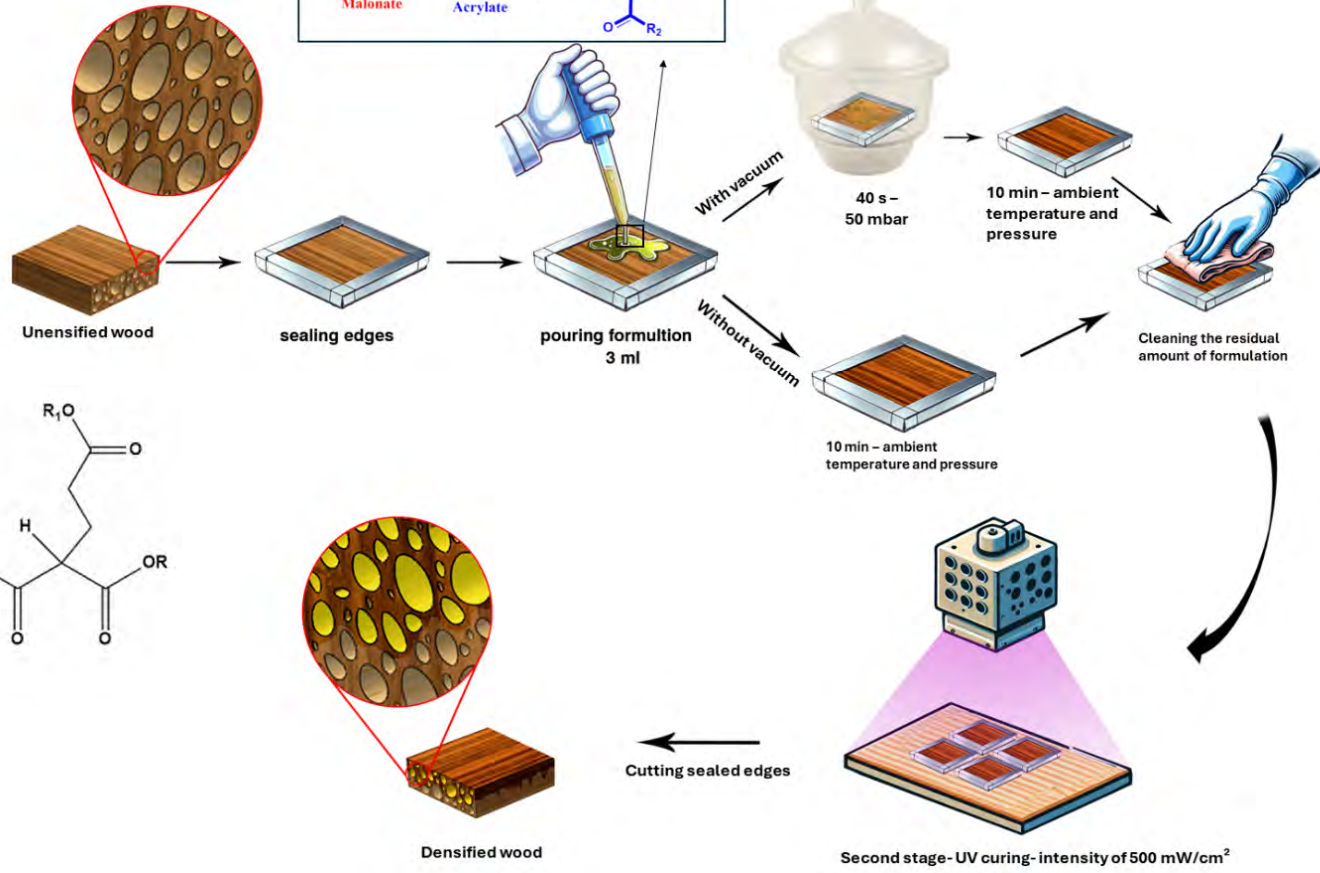
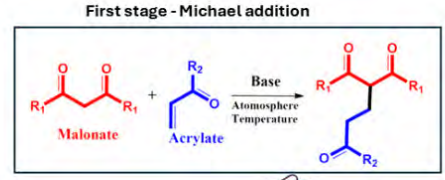


Fig. 1 Michael addition reaction between malonate and acrylate



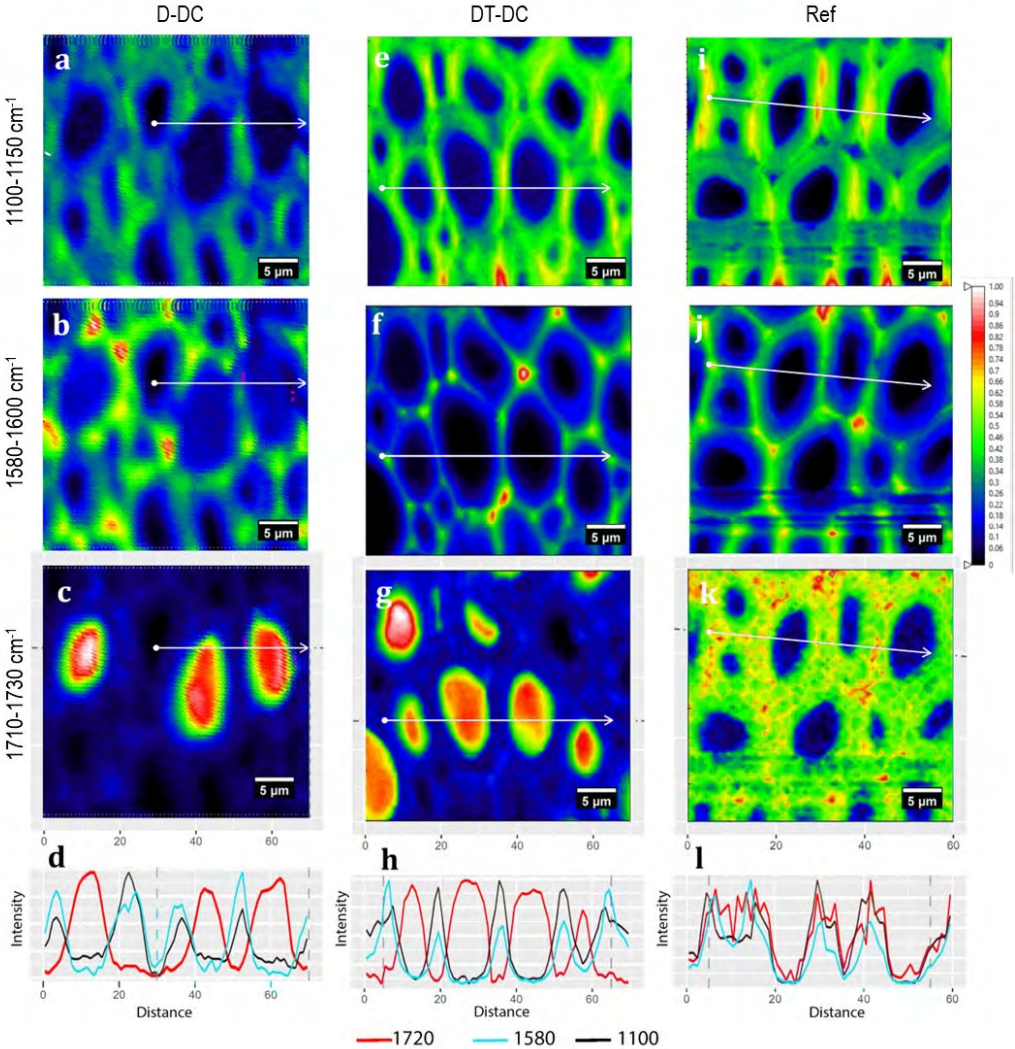
Chemical densification – Passive modification (lumen)

D-DC : single cure (Michael addition)

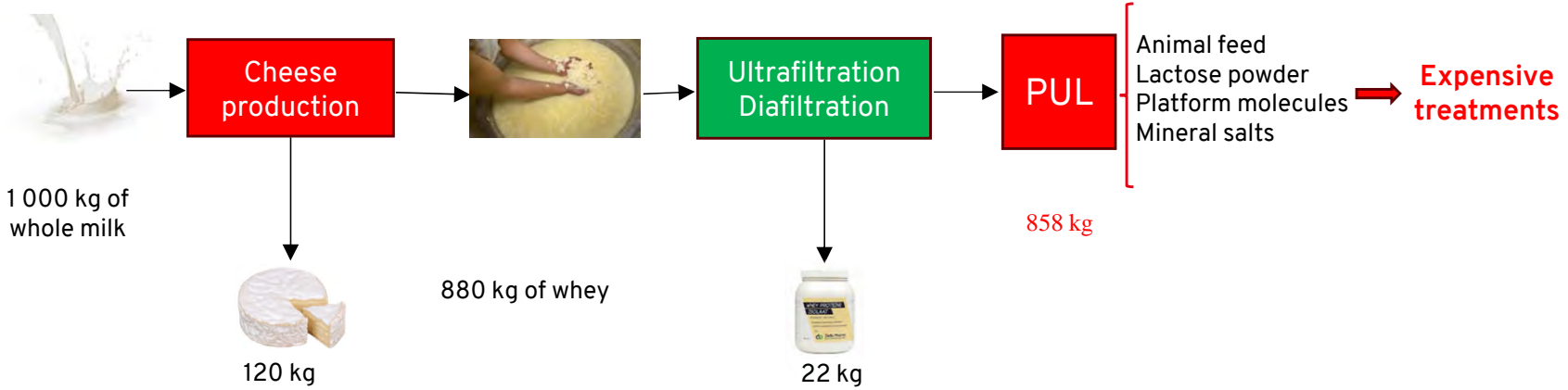
DT-DC : dual-cure (Michael addition and photopolymerization)

The images show chemical mapping based on cellulose (1075–1170 cm^{-1} : a, e, i), lignin (1580–1620 cm^{-1} : b, f, j), and carbonyls (1690–1775 cm^{-1} : c, g, k).

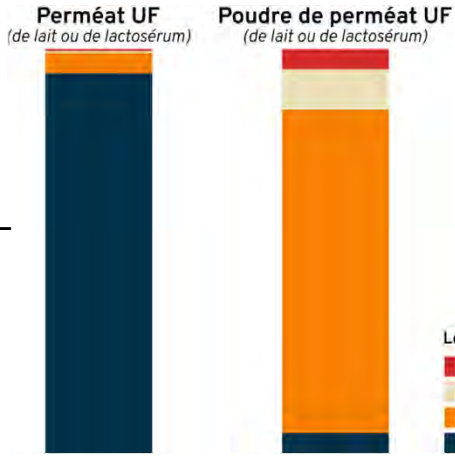
The intensity plots (d, h, l) represent the distribution along the measured distance, corresponding to the arrows indicated on each sample.



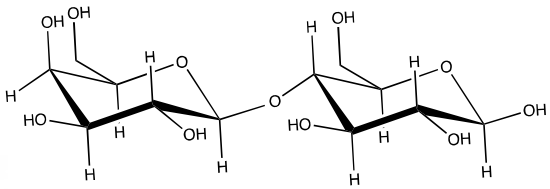
Chemical densification – Active modification (cell wall)



A solid content of ~5%
 Chemical Oxygen Demand ~ 80 g/L
 Biochemical Oxygen Demand ~ 50 g/L
 Pollution potential



> 88% of lactose (on a dry weight basis), a saccharide



- Légende**
- Substances azotées
 - Minéraux
 - Lactose
 - Eau

Chemical densification – Active modification (cell wall)

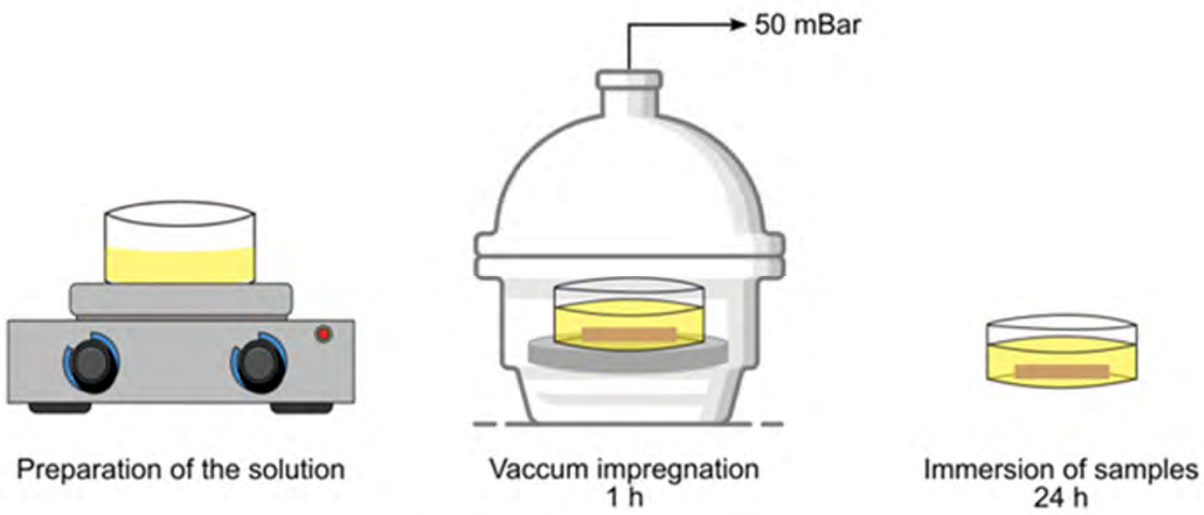
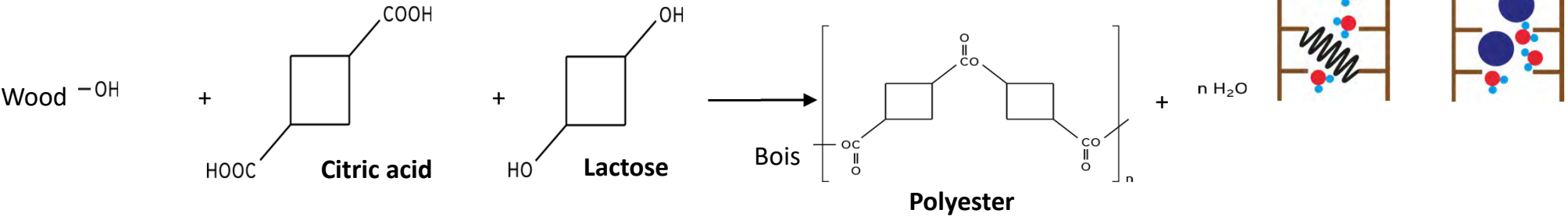
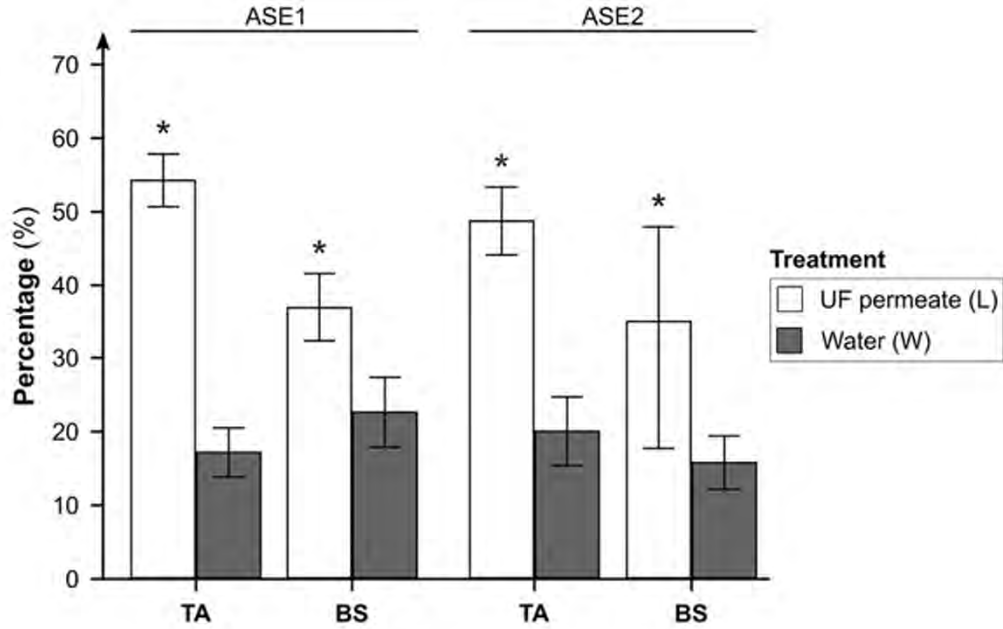
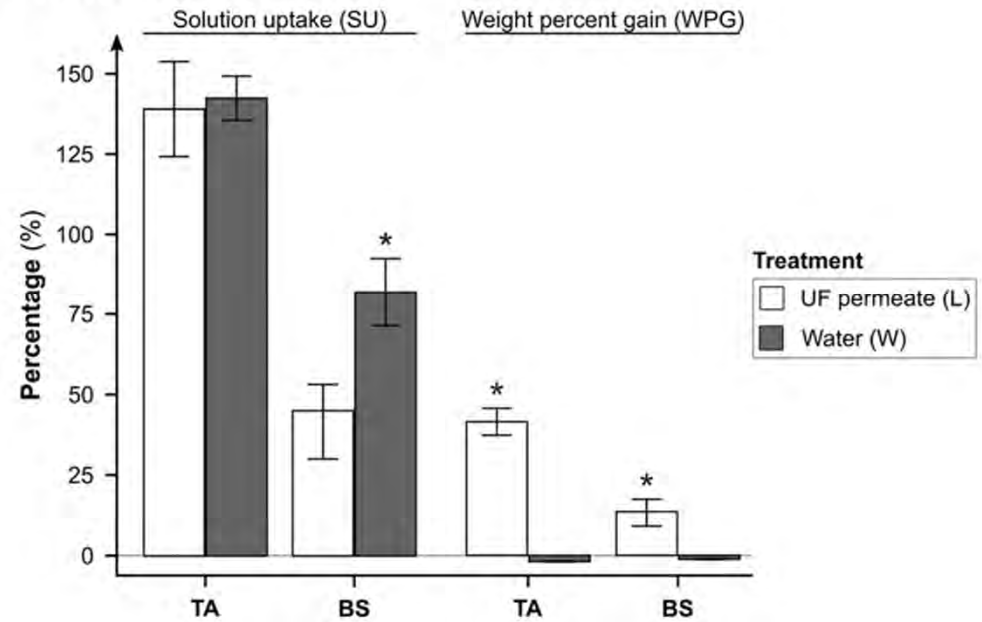


Fig. 2. Wood impregnation process.

Chemical densification – Active modification (cell wall)



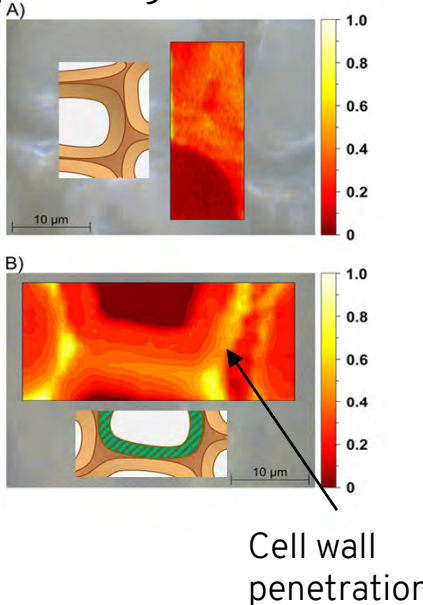
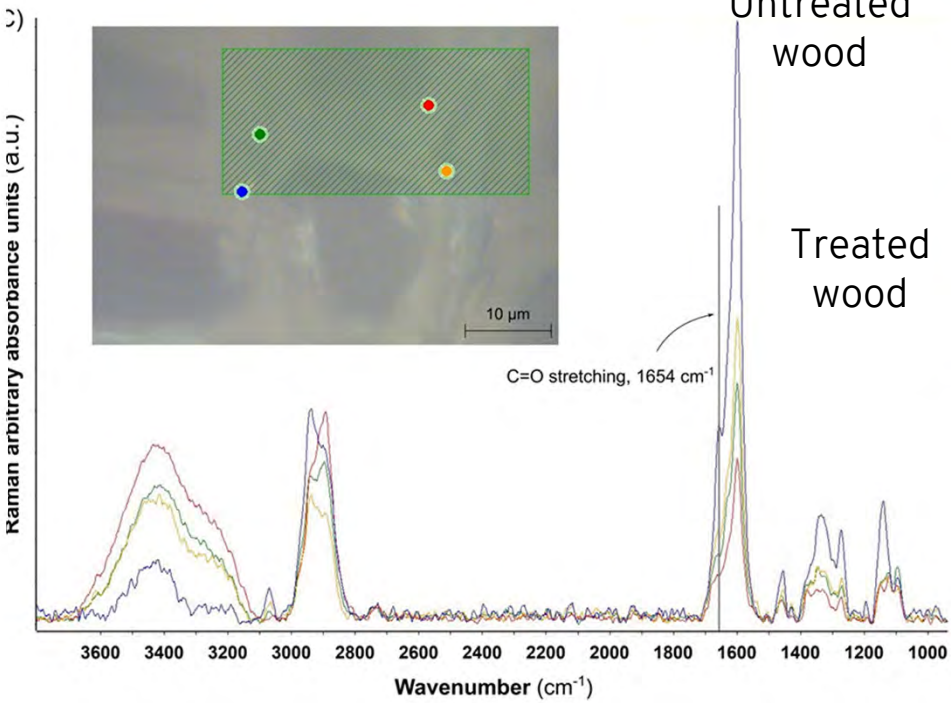
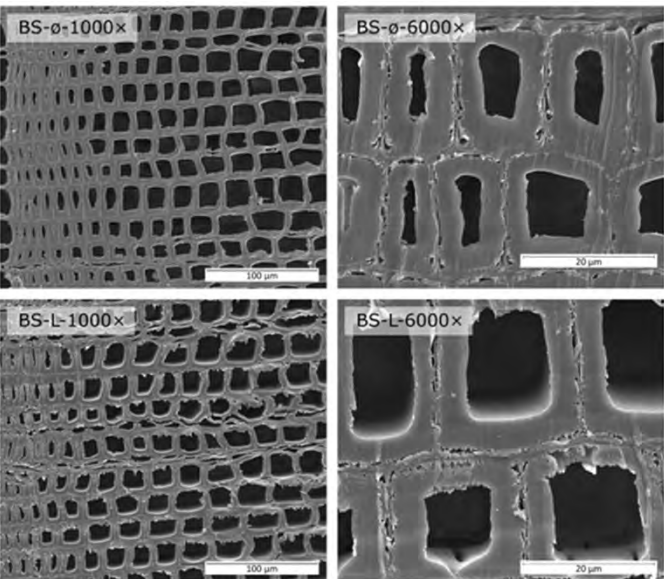
The **ASE** was calculated from the volumetric swelling coefficient (S(%)) of untreated (S_u) and treated samples (S_t)

$$ASE(\%) = \frac{S_u - S_t}{S_u} \times 100$$

$$S(\%) = \frac{V_f - V_i}{V_i} \times 100$$

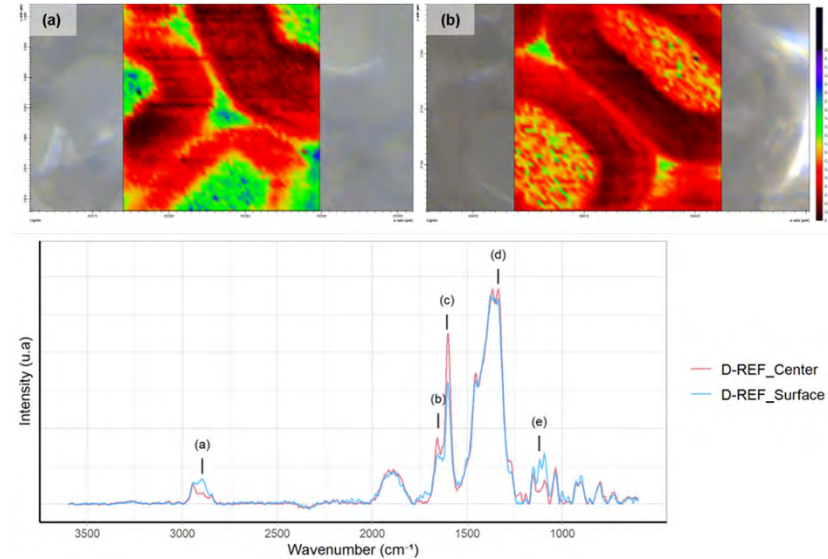
Chemical densification – Active modification (cell wall)

Chemical mapping, focused on the intensity in the 1610-1590 cm^{-1} range, corresponding to the C=O stretching vibration peak of the ester



Conclusions

- Confocal Raman microscopy is a powerful tool **for studying various gradients**.
- Its ability to combine **chemical composition analysis with high-resolution X-Y microscopy, as well as depth profiling in the Z-axis**, provides a comprehensive understanding of materials at the microscopic level.
- The versatility of this technique opens the door to a wide range of applications



Ex. : Wood delignification



Thank you !

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