

# Influence of Peroxynitrite in Gliding Arc Discharge Treatment of Alizarin Red S and Postdischarge Effects

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**ABSTRACT:** The gliding arc discharge is a cheap and efficient nonthermal plasma technique able to degrade organic compounds dispersed in water at atmospheric pressure. Alizarin Red Sulfonate (ARS) is selected as a stable quinonic dye. Exposure of the dye solution to the discharge in a batch reactor induces two successive reaction steps according to the treatment conditions. Direct exposure of the solution to the discharge induces simultaneous bleaching and COD evolution. In postdischarge conditions, that is, after the discharge is switched off, the reactions keep on developing. This study thus underlines two key features: the ability of gliding arc discharges to degrade recalcitrant molecules and the low cost of the process which requires short exposure times. A model mechanism involves peroxynitrite as a likely active species formed in the discharge and involved in postdischarge phenomena in aqueous solutions and suggests short exposure times and much longer postdischarge times for optimized pollutant abatement.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Aqueous effluents from textile industries carry away numerous molecules belonging to various families of dyes (e.g., azo, quinonic, etc.) which may be difficult and expensive to degrade.<sup>1</sup> Anthraquinonic dyes are involved in polyamide, leather, and wool dyeing<sup>2,3</sup> and therefore are the most important ones after azo dyes for commercial reasons. They are classified as recalcitrant compounds which remain in aquatic ecosystems,<sup>4,5</sup> and their degradation is considered in several papers.<sup>6–8</sup> Alizarin Red Sulfonate (ARS) is an anthracene-like synthetic dye. It has a three-ring aromatic structure in the central part of its molecule plus various substituents.<sup>9</sup> It is widely used in the textile industry and for histochemical analyses<sup>10,11</sup> so that new techniques have to be proposed for its degradation.

The usual techniques<sup>12</sup> for treating liquid wastewaters, such as coagulation/flocculation, adsorption and biodegradation, activated carbon, reverse osmosis, ultrafiltration, etc., are not well adapted to this family of dyes, because of the high number of benzene ring which stabilize the molecule.<sup>13,14</sup> More efficient and less energy consuming processes must be developed to eliminate these pollutants or lower their harmful character. The newly developed advanced oxidation processes (AOPs) generate active hydroxyl radicals  $\cdot\text{OH}$  which are claimed to degrade numerous organic compounds.<sup>15–17</sup> Some nonthermal plasma techniques, such as corona,<sup>18,19</sup> dielectric barrier discharge (DBD),<sup>20</sup> or gliding arc discharges (GAD) belong to these AOPs: they burn at atmospheric pressure in conditions halfway from thermal and nonthermal plasmas, since electrons and heavy particles are not fully thermalized as they are in thermal plasmas. Thus the macroscopic temperature remains close to room. The GAD is actually “quenched” plasma with a composition close to a thermal plasma and therefore a thermal effect of only few degrees. Compared with other plasma

techniques, the GAD is considered as a promising technique well adapted to the pollutant abatement of aqueous effluents, and several examples relevant to the elimination of biorecalcitrant organic compounds found in domestic and industrial wastewaters illustrate this assertion: (i) degradation of various dyes, for example, azo dyes such as Orange II, yellow supranol 4 GL, Red Nylosane F3 GL, Eryochrome Black T, Orange G, Methylorange; triphenylmethane dyes such as Malachite Green, Crystal Violet, Bromothymol Blue; and anthraquinonic dyes such as Acid Green 25, ARS,<sup>5,21–26</sup> (ii) degradation of polymers rejected by industry,<sup>27</sup> degradation of two polluted textile wastewaters<sup>28</sup> eliminating organic waste solutes,<sup>29</sup> destruction of nicotine;<sup>30</sup> (iii) mineralization of the tributylphosphate present in the nuclear industry rejects;<sup>31</sup> trilaurylamine for nuclear industry processes<sup>32</sup> degradation of phenol,<sup>33</sup> Bisphenol A in solution.<sup>34</sup>

The gliding arc discharge involves higher quantities of energy than other cold discharges at atmospheric pressure and thus presents several advantages; for example, it generates a larger population of active species, without the need of incorporated reagent and mainly favors the occurrence of postdischarge phenomena (i.e., a self-development of the chemical reactions in the solution after the discharge is switched off) which are of significant interest for industrial applications by lowering the running cost of the process.

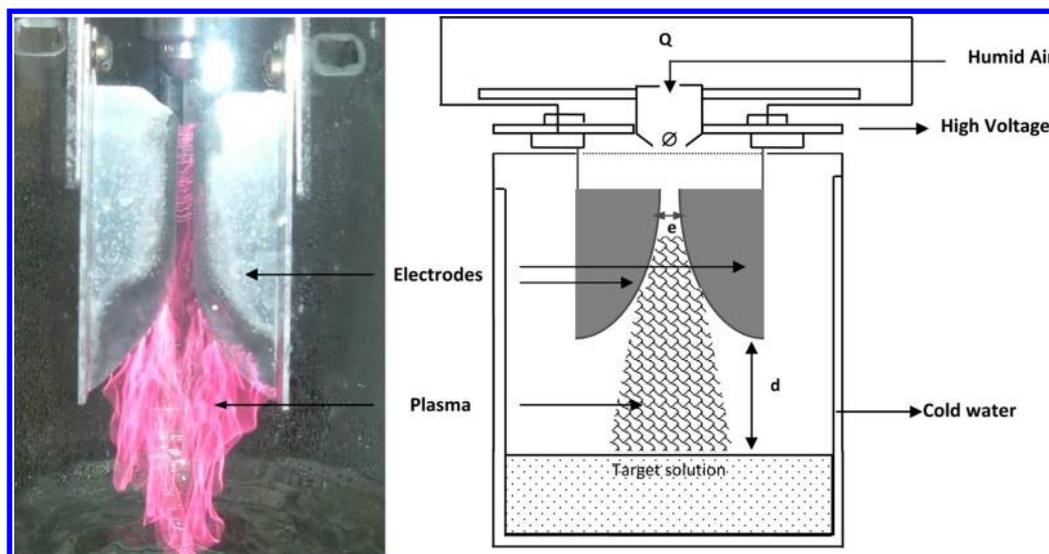
The GAD treatment of aqueous solutions consists of exposing the target solution to the discharge burning in air over the liquid in a batch or a circulating reactor. The discharge

**Received:** October 31, 2012

**Revised:** December 12, 2012

**Accepted:** December 24, 2012

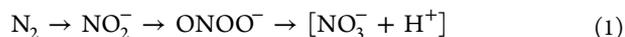
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**Figure 1.** Experimental setup of the gliding arc plasma device with humid air feeding gas. The pink color of the plasma cloud is due to oxygen.

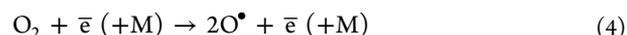
generates an active oxidizing species; some of them are long life water-soluble moieties and are responsible for temporal postdischarge reactions (TPDR) which develop in the liquid phase.<sup>35</sup>

Several examples of TPDR are reported in the literature, for example, as follows: (i) The gliding arc oxidation of ferric ions develops in two steps. The first step is rapid, associated with the exposure time to the discharge and would be attributed to  $\cdot\text{OH}$  at the liquid surface; the second step is a slow TPDR, due to  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  and other dissolved species.<sup>36</sup> (ii) TPDR was also evidenced for nucleophilic substitutions by corona discharge treatment in  $\text{CO}$ .<sup>37</sup> (iii) Bacterial inactivation in postdischarge conditions;<sup>38</sup> the authors underline the economical advantage of the plasmachemical bacterial inactivation without extra energy or reagent input. (iv) Moussa et al.<sup>35</sup> evidenced TPDR in the plasmachemical treatment of methyl orange and attribute the degradation to the species  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  and  $\text{HNO}_2$  formed in the discharge. (v) Brisset et al.<sup>39</sup> considered the influence of peroxyxynitrite  $\text{ONOO}^-$  and its matching acid which are soluble in water, able to dissociate into  $\cdot\text{OH}$  and  $\text{ONO}^-$  and to induce oxidizing, nitrating, and nitrosing postdischarge effects on solutes. (vi) The GAD treatment of surface waters<sup>40</sup> induced an increase in the BOD abatement after switching off the discharge, and this feature was attributed to the oxidizing power of peroxyxynitrous acid  $\text{ONOOH}$ . The formation of transient nitrite ions was evidenced which is the source of peroxyxynitrite  $\text{ONOO}^-$ , i.e., a transient precursor to nitrate,<sup>41</sup> according to the following sequence:



The GAD (or glidarc) was first proposed by Lesueur et al.<sup>42</sup> and developed by Czernichowski<sup>43</sup> for the decontamination of gases. The technique is based on the production of quenched nonthermal plasma generated by an electrical arc often burning in air. The efficacy of the treatment results from the presence in the plasma cloud of active chemical species, radicals, excited molecules, and ions, such as  $\cdot\text{OH}$ ,  $\cdot\text{NO}$ ,  $\text{O}^\bullet$ ,  $\text{O}_2$ ,  $\text{HO}_2^\bullet$ ,  $\text{H}^\bullet$ ,  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ ,  $\text{O}_3$ ,  $\text{O}_2^+$ ,  $\text{N}_2^+$ ,  $\text{O}^+$ ,  $\text{N}^+$ , etc. The most reactive species are the hydroxyl radicals  $\cdot\text{OH}$  due to their high standard oxidation potential  $E^\circ(\cdot\text{OH}/\text{H}_2\text{O}) = 2.8 \text{ V/SHE}$  which is among the

strongest known oxidizing potentials. Emission spectra analysis<sup>44</sup> of the gliding arc discharge in humid air shows the occurrence of  $\cdot\text{OH}$  and  $\cdot\text{NO}$ , and allows quantifying the population of the formed species.  $\cdot\text{OH}$  results from the dissociation of water molecules by electron (or/and photon) impact, while the endothermal formation of  $\cdot\text{NO}$  (according to the Birkeland process) requires the occurrence of an electric arc. The main relevant reactions are given below (reactions 2–7):



The hydroxyl radical and nitric oxide are the precursors of derivatives that react at the liquid surface and/or in the solution provided they are soluble.

This work is devoted to the systematic investigation of the behavior of an anthraquinonic dye (ARS) under discharge and, for the first time, postdischarge conditions. Peroxyxynitrite ( $\text{ONOO}^-$ ), that is, oxoperoxonitrate(-1) according to the official quoting, is a derivative of  $\text{NO}$  and  $\text{NO}_2$  formed at the liquid surface, soluble in water, and the precursor of isomer forming reaction yielding nitric acid. This active specie formed in the discharge is involved in postdischarge phenomena in aqueous solutions.

The matching acid  $\text{ONOOH}$  is weak ( $\text{p}K_a = 6.8$ ) but granted with strong oxidizing properties ( $E^\circ(\text{ONO}_2\text{H}/\text{NO}_2) = 2.02 \text{ V/SHE}$ ). The acid–base system is involved in discharge and postdischarge reactions.<sup>35,39,45</sup>

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

**2.1. Reagents and Plasma-Reactor.** Alizarine Red Sulfonate, ARS ( $\text{C}_{14}\text{H}_7\text{NaO}_7\text{S}$ , also referred to as 1,2-dihydroxy-9,10-anthraquinonesulfonic acid sodium salt or Mordant Red 3; C.I. 58005; molecular weight: 342.28g) is a

commercial dye (analytical grade) purchased from Acro Organics.

Distilled water was used to prepare dye solutions of suitable concentration. ARS is a triacid of H<sub>3</sub>I type: the first acidity is strong; the two others are medium or weak  $pK_a$  ( $H_2I^-/HI^{2-}$ ) = 5.5 and  $pK_a$  ( $HI^{2-}/I^{3-}$ ) = 10.8. The relevant colors are colorless (H<sub>3</sub>I), yellow (H<sub>2</sub>I<sup>-</sup>), red (HI<sup>2-</sup>) and purple (I<sup>3-</sup>). Natural ASR solutions absorb at 430 nm and their pH is 6.5.

The experimental apparatus of the GAD used is shown in Figure 1. Compressed gas is led through a bubbling water flask to get water-saturated. The gas flow then passes between two semielliptic electrodes connected to a 220 V/9 kV high voltage Aupem Sefli transformer. It produces an alternative potential difference of 9000 V and a current intensity of 100 mA in open (and 600 V/160 mA in working) conditions. The delivered power is close to 100 W, which considerably lowers the running cost of the process.

An electrical arc forms between two diverging electrodes raised to a convenient voltage difference at the minimum gap. The arc is pushed away from the ignition point by the feeding gas flow and sweeps along the electrodes to the maximum electrode gap where it breaks into a large plasma plume. A new arc then appears and develops according to the same procedure. The length of the electric channel increases so that the plasma temperature falls before breaking. The resulting plasma is actually a quenched plasma at atmospheric pressure and quasi-ambient temperature. The diffusion process in the liquid is improved by conversion in the liquid phase due to the airflow and magnetic stirring.

The treatment is performed in batch mode with the working parameters: the gas flow is fixed at  $Q = 700 \text{ L h}^{-1}$ , the electrode gap  $e = 2 \text{ mm}$ , the nozzle diameter is 1 mm, and the distance between the electrodes and the liquid surface  $d = 3 \text{ cm}$ . The solution temperature is thermostatted at  $20 \pm 2 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$  by circulating water in a jacket.

**2.2. Plasma Treatments of ARS Samples.** *2.2.1. Direct Exposure of ARS Solutions to the Discharge.* ARS aqueous samples (100 and 335  $\mu\text{M}$ ) were poured in the 500 mL pyrex vessel. The evolution of the treatment of the dye solution under plasma treatment in batch mode was followed for various exposure times  $t^*$  (0, 10, 20, 30, 60 min) and analyzed immediately after sampling ("snapshot analysis").

*2.2.2. Postdischarge Experiments.* The sample solutions were exposed to the discharge in the same conditions as for direct exposure experiments, that is, for  $t^* = 1, 2, 5, 10, 15, 30,$  and 60 min before being abandoned outside the reactor for various postdischarge times  $t_{\text{TPDR}}$  before the analyses were performed. A preliminary set of experiments was performed on 100  $\mu\text{M}$  ARS solutions and involved  $t_{\text{TPDR}} = 0.25, 0.5, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6,$  and 24 h postdischarge delays. The second set of experiments concerned 335  $\mu\text{M}$  ARS solutions and longer postdischarge times:  $t_{\text{TPDR}} = 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 24, 48 \text{ h}, 5, 7,$  and 30 days.

Analyses were performed by measuring absorbance  $A$  at 430 nm (with Optizen UV-vis spectrophotometer) and COD by the potassium dichromate standard method.<sup>46</sup> COD and bleaching rates were calculated as follows:

$$\text{degradation (\%)} = \frac{(\text{COD}_0 - \text{COD}_i)}{\text{COD}_0} 100$$

where  $\text{COD}_0$  and  $\text{COD}_i$  refer to the COD values before and after treatment, respectively, and

$$\text{bleaching (\%)} = \frac{(A_0 - A_i)}{A_0} 100$$

Where  $A$  is the absorbance value at the absorbance peak in the visible wavelength range;  $A_0$  and  $A_i$  are the absorbance values before and after treatment, respectively.

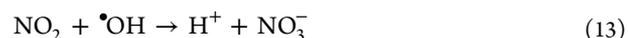
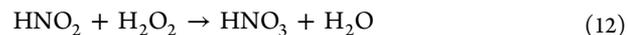
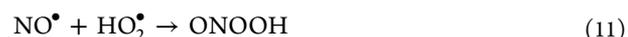
### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. Preliminary Treatment: Direct Exposure of ARS to the Glidarc.

*3.1.1. Diffusion of Active Species in the Solution: Effects of pH and Conductivity.* Exposing ARS (100  $\mu\text{M}$ ) solutions to the discharge in humid air induces increases in acidity and matching conductivity. pH falls from 6.5 to 3.5 within 1 min and trends to 1.55 for 1 h exposure time while conductivity increases from 20 to 5290  $\mu\text{S cm}^{-1}$  for  $t^* = 1 \text{ h}$ .

Analyses of distilled water exposed to the discharge in the same conditions evidenced the formation of nitrite and nitrate up to 202 and 607  $\text{mg L}^{-1}$ , respectively.

Humid air plasma treatment of solutions involves that formed active species are water-soluble enough to enter the solution and get dissolved, in particular,  $\text{H}_3\text{O}^+$ ,  $\text{NO}_2^-$ , and  $\text{NO}_3^-$  which are involved in the pH lowering process via the formation of nitrous and nitric acids (reactions 12–14).<sup>47</sup> A reaction scheme was recently proposed (reactions 8–15).<sup>48</sup>



The charge balance was not observed in most experiments<sup>49–51</sup> which consider only protons and nitrate ions after direct exposure and must be completed. For example for 1 h postdischarge, pH is measured as 1.55, which means  $\text{C}_{\text{H}^+} = 10^{-\text{pH}} = 28.2 \text{ mM}$  and the resulting molar conductivity is:

$$\lambda_{\text{H}^+} \times \text{C}_{\text{H}^+} = 349.8 \times 28.2 = 9.86 \text{ mS cm}^{-1}$$

that is, a value higher than the measured conductivity of the solution, 5.23  $\text{mS cm}^{-1}$ , which involves the conductivities of all the identified anions, such as nitrite and nitrate, whose molar conductivities are both close to 71.4  $\text{S mol}^{-1} \text{ cm}^2$ .

*3.1.2. Influence of the Reactive Nitrogen Species (RNS) on ARS Bleaching.* This work aims to underline the determining influence of nitrogen containing species (or Reactive Nitrogen Species), such as nitrite  $\text{ONO}^-$ , peroxyxynitrite  $\text{ONOO}^-$ , and nitrate  $\text{NO}_3^-$  in the bleaching process of ARS. The structure of peroxyxynitrite is linear, isomeric of nitrate, and a transient intermediate in the oxidation of nitrite to nitrate.<sup>35,45</sup>

Previously published works on  $\text{ONOO}^-$  synthesis gather the reactions involving  $\text{NO}_2^-$ ,  $\text{NO}_3^-$  and oxygen donor species, such as O, O<sub>3</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>, etc.<sup>52</sup> Starting from either NO<sub>2</sub> or NO<sub>2</sub><sup>-</sup>:

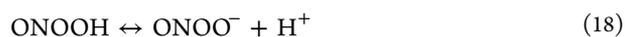


Table 1. Bleaching of ARS Directly Exposed to the Gliding Discharge in Air, with and without Sulphamic Acid (SA)

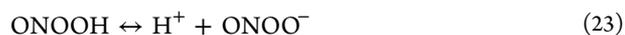
time $t^*$ (min):	%R <sub>bleaching</sub>									
	0	0.5	1	2	3	5	15	30	45	60
without SA	0.00	0	3.5	6.7	9.5	11.5	22.4	41.0	53.4	67.2
with SA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.6	3.3	4.7	73

Table 2. Bleaching Ratio of 100 mM ARS Solutions Exposed for  $t^*$  (min) to the Discharge without and with (*bold italics*) Incorporated SA

$t_{TPDR}$ (min)	$t^*$ (min):	%R <sub>bleaching</sub>											
		0	<b>0</b>	1	<b>1</b>	2	<b>2</b>	3	<b>3</b>	5	<b>5</b>	15	<b>15</b>
0	0	0.00	0	3.52	0.00	6.74	0.00	9.54	0.00	11.52	0.00	22.37	0.61
15	0	0.00	0	3.96	0.00	7.39	0.00	10.20	0.00	12.61	0.00	24.34	0.61
30	0	0.00	0	4.18	0.00	10.65	0.00	16.05	0.00	17.39	0.00	31.58	0.61
60	0	1.09	0	7.25	0.00	16.52	0.00	20.61	0.00	28.70	0.00	38.60	1.84
120	0	1.31	0	15.82	0.00	26.30	0.00	29.93	0.00	33.26	0.83	45.39	3.47
180	0	1.53	0	35.60	0.00	35.00	0.00	38.18	0.00	41.30	1.03	45.39	3.67
240	0	2.18	0	36.70	0.00	42.17	0.00	45.34	0.41	50.87	1.86	51.75	4.08
300	0	3.06	0	36.70	0.00	49.57	0.62	51.41	1.03	52.39	1.86	55.92	4.29
360	0	3.28	0	44.62	0.00	50.87	0.62	53.15	1.24	53.26	1.86	62.94	4.29
1440	0	3.93	0	81.54	0.83	85.65	1.65	86.98	2.06	87.83	2.89	88.82	4.29



or from  $\text{NO}_3^{-53}$

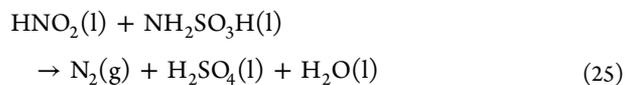


We can incidentally point out that nitrite anions are thermodynamically unstable for  $\text{pH} < 6$ , due to the disproportionation of  $\text{NO}_2^-$  into  $\text{NO}_3^-$  and  $\text{NO}$ :



as considered elsewhere.<sup>39,48</sup>

A clear evidence of the essential role of the RNS in ARS bleaching process results from treatments of the dye with and without a reducer of the nitrites,<sup>54</sup> such as sulphamic acid  $\text{NH}_2\text{SO}_3\text{H}$  according to



which shows that nitrous acid is reduced into nitrogen. Thus incorporating sulphamic acid (SA) to the reactor prevents nitrite and RNS formation; it remains to check the changes induced in solution by the plasma treatment and to compare the results with and without  $\text{NH}_2\text{SO}_3\text{H}$ .

We thus achieved two sets of plasma treatments of ARS with and without SA. The relevant results (Table 1) show bleaching rates of 53.4% and 4.7% with and without sulphamic quencher respectively for  $t^* = 45$  min exposure. For longer  $t^*$  exposures (e.g., 1 h or longer), the bleaching rates are not largely different (67.2% and 73%, respectively). Such results are apparently conflicting but they can however be simply explained:

incorporating an excess of sulphamic acid at the beginning of the treatment allowed for a reduction of all the nitrites already formed. For long exposure times the incorporated  $\text{NH}_2\text{SO}_3\text{H}$  molecules are no longer in excess because of their action on nitrite ions or because they have been degraded by the plasma formed oxidizers.

Iya-sou et al.<sup>55</sup> recently considered the action of long life species such as nitrogen oxides “formed over the solution by a gliding arc discharge in air in the degradation of model pollutants as phenol in direct exposure mode and in postdischarge conditions”. In the case of moderately soluble phenol, the authors assume that the main mechanism for removal involves the action of  $\bullet\text{NO}_2$  radicals formed in the liquid phase from the dissociation of soluble  $\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$ . Unfortunately no author has detected  $\bullet\text{NO}_2$  or its dimer in the gas phase,  $\bullet\text{NO}$  readily oxidized to  $\bullet\text{NO}_2$  by numerous oxygen donor species, as mentioned above. Also,  $\bullet\text{NO}_2$  easily fixes an electron  $E'^{\circ}(\bullet\text{NO}_2/\text{NO}_2^-) = 0.99$  V/SHE at  $\text{pH} 7$  (i.e., in an acidity range where the nitrite ion is thermodynamically unstable). It may be incidentally pointed out that nitronium ion  $\text{NO}_2^+$  and nitrosonium  $\text{NO}^+$  are the oxidized forms of  $\bullet\text{NO}_2$  and  $\bullet\text{NO}$ , respectively:  $[E^{\circ}(\text{NO}_2^+/\bullet\text{NO}_2) = 1.6$  V/SHE and  $E^{\circ}(\text{NO}^+/\bullet\text{NO}) = 1.21$  V/SHE] and are probably present in limited concentrations in the discharge cloud.

However, it is likely that among the RNS, peroxyxynitrite is one of the most efficient ones, due to its ability to react both as a strong oxidizer and as a source of nitrating/nitrosating agent. In the case of ARS degradation, the influence of RNS is essential.

Direct exposure of organic compounds to humid air plasma in batch conditions usually requires long treatment times. To save time and energy, the direct exposure time  $t^*$  was deliberately shortened in the scope of our investigation of TPDR.

**3.1.3. Postdischarge Degradation of ARS (100  $\mu\text{M}$ ) in the Presence and Absence of Sulphamic Acid SA.** This part of the study is devoted to show evidence of the determining role of the plasma generated RNS in the degradation of the dye with special emphasize on peroxyxynitrite<sup>35,39</sup> since the short lifetime of  $\bullet\text{OH}$  (few hundred nanoseconds) discards them from direct occurrence in the bleaching postdischarge process.<sup>56</sup>



Table 3. Examples of Bleaching and Degradation Rates for Various Exposure Times  $t^*$ 

$t_{\text{TPDR}}$	$t^* \text{ (min)} = 1$		$t^* \text{ (min)} = 5$		$t^* \text{ (min)} = 15$	
	$\%R_{\text{bleaching}}$	$\%R_{\text{degradation}}$	$\%R_{\text{bleaching}}$	$\%R_{\text{degradation}}$	$\%R_{\text{bleaching}}$	$\%R_{\text{degradation}}$
$t_{\text{TPDR}} 0 \text{ min}$	5	0	7	4.6	19.3	19.3
$t_{\text{TPDR}} 48 \text{ h}$	66.6	36.1	82.1	59.5	57.3	42.6
$t_{\text{TPDR}} 7 \text{ days}$	80.7	51.1	87.3	66.7	60.9	43.7

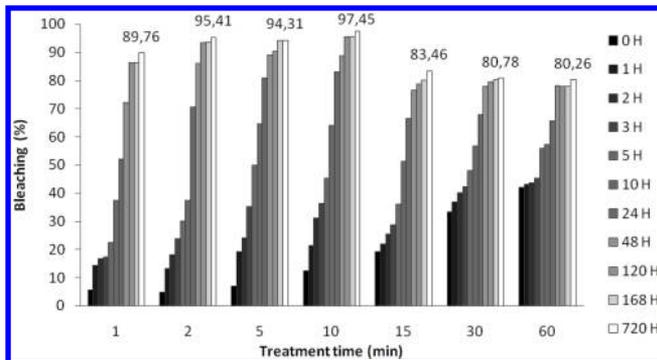


Figure 4. ARS Bleaching evolution during the postdischarge.

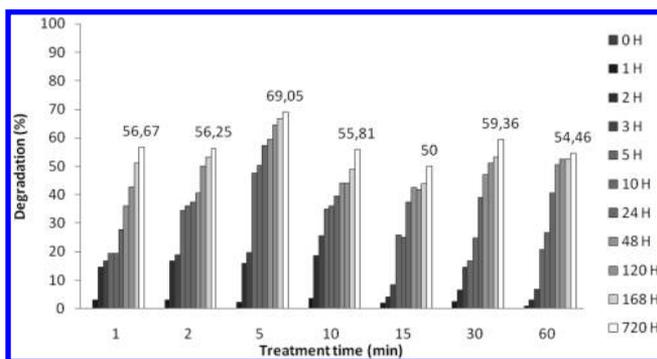
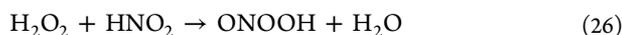


Figure 5. ARS COD abatement during the postdischarge.

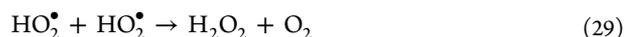
species (i.e., peroxyntrite) directly correlated with the quantity of organic solute to be degraded. For short exposures, the concentration of  $\text{ONOO}^-$  increases with  $t^*$ , before the degradation kinetics becomes significant. This means that a system of opposite reactions takes place involving the incorporation of peroxyntrite and its disappearance through its reaction with the solute. The occurrence of a maximum in the pollutant abatement as a function of  $t_{\text{TPDR}}$  for given  $t^*$  and pollutant concentration introduces the idea of dose as a function of waste concentration and exposure time which is otherwise suggested by microbial inactivation by glidar process.

Peroxyntrite (peroxynitrous acid) is formed in the presence of hydrogen peroxide and nitrous acid (reactions 26 and 27):



Both of  $\text{HNO}_2$  and  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  are considered strong oxidizing agents, with redox potentials of ( $E^\circ(\text{HNO}_2/\text{NO}) = 0.983 \text{ V/SHE}$ ;  $E^\circ(\text{HNO}_2/\text{N}_2\text{O}) = 1.297 \text{ V/SHE}$ ;  $E^\circ(\text{H}_2\text{O}_2/\text{H}_2\text{O}) = 1.776 \text{ V/SHE}$ ).<sup>33</sup>

In treated solution,  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  is formed by recombination of hydroperoxyls and hydroxyl radicals (reactions 29 and 30). It usually occurs in slow reactions.<sup>35</sup>



while nitrous acid is produced due to  $\text{NO}$  diffusion at the beginning of treatment. According to literature<sup>57,58</sup>  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ ,  $\text{NO}$ , and their derivatives as peroxyntrite are responsible of postdischarge phenomena. Some authors<sup>59</sup> suggest that the formation of peroxynitrous acid and peroxyntrite may be related to the synergetic effect of acidified nitrites by  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  and nitrates.

Peroxyntrite may be formed according to Figure 6 from humid air as plasma gas. An applied electric discharge to humid

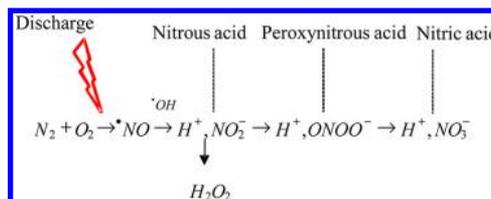


Figure 6. Peroxyntrite plasma humid air formation.

air generates initially  $\text{NO}$  and  $\text{OH}^\bullet$  which subsequently form nitrous acid. The reaction of  $\text{HNO}_2$  with  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  results in peroxyntrite which isomerizes to give nitric acid.



Peroxyntrite, nitrous, and nitric acid can be formed in different ways due to the large number of reactive species present in plasma humid air.

**3.3. Kinetics Study.** The bleaching kinetics of ARS were studied using zero-, first-, and second-order reaction kinetics. The statistical data calculation was based within the reaction period from 0 to 48 h. The expressions were presented as below (eqs 32–34):

Zero-order reaction kinetics:

$$\frac{dC}{dt_{\text{TPDR}}} = -k_0 \quad (32)$$

First-order reaction kinetics:

$$\frac{dC}{dt_{\text{TPDR}}} = -k_1 C \quad (33)$$

Second-order reaction kinetics:

$$\frac{dC}{dt_{\text{TPDR}}} = -k_2 C^2 \quad (34)$$

where  $C$  is the concentration of ARS;  $k_0$ ,  $k_1$ , and  $k_2$  represent the apparent kinetic rate constants of zero-, first- and second-order reaction kinetics, respectively;  $t$  is the postdischarge time.

Integrating the eqs 32–34 leads to the following equation:

$$\frac{C_0}{C} = k_0 t_{\text{TPDR}} \quad (35)$$

$$\ln\left(\frac{C_0}{C}\right) = k_1 t_{\text{TPDR}} \quad (36)$$

$$\frac{1}{C} - \frac{1}{C_0} = k_2 t_{\text{TPDR}} \quad (37)$$

The linearized expressions are given by eqs 35–37 were used to draw Figures 7 panels a, b, and c which show the relationship between  $C_0/C$ ,  $\ln(C_0/C)$ , and  $1/C - 1/C_0$  and postdischarge time.

The slopes of the kinetic plots were used to determine the rate constants  $k_0$ ,  $k_1$ , and  $k_2$  whose values are given in Table 4 with the corresponding regression coefficients.

Results show that the bleaching of the ARS samples treated by discharge at  $t^*$ : 0, 1, 2, 5, 15, 30, and 60 min followed the

second order kinetics with respect to dye concentration. The concentration is in the same order as the oxidizing species, which leads to eq 38 and eq 39.

$$-\frac{d[\text{ARS}]}{dt_{\text{TPDR}}} = k_2[\text{ARS}][\cdot\text{OH}] \quad (38)$$

$$-\frac{d[\text{ARS}]}{dt_{\text{TPDR}}} = k_2[\text{ARS}]^2 \quad (39)$$

The results obtained for the samples treated during 1, 5, and 15 min and exposed to the postdischarge at  $t_{\text{TPDR}}$  of 1, 3, 5, 10, 24, and 48 h (Figure 7) show an exponential curve.

The average regression coefficients have also been reported in Table 3 for comparison. The values are 0.8543, 0.9531, and 0.9895 for zero-, first-, and second order kinetics, respectively. The table indicates that the pseudo-second order reaction kinetics is justified.

It can be concluded that the bleaching of ARS by glidarc postdischarge fits the second-order reaction kinetic of the type

$$-r_{[\text{ARS}]} = k_1[\text{ARS}]^2 \quad (40)$$

The evolution of the rate constants indicates that the maximum value is  $5.11 \times 10^2 \text{ M}^{-1} \text{ h}^{-1}$  corresponding to  $t^* = 5$  min of glidarc discharge treatment. Beyond this time, the value of  $k_2$  decreases at  $172.4 \text{ M}^{-1} \text{ h}^{-1}$ , for  $t^* = 60$  min.

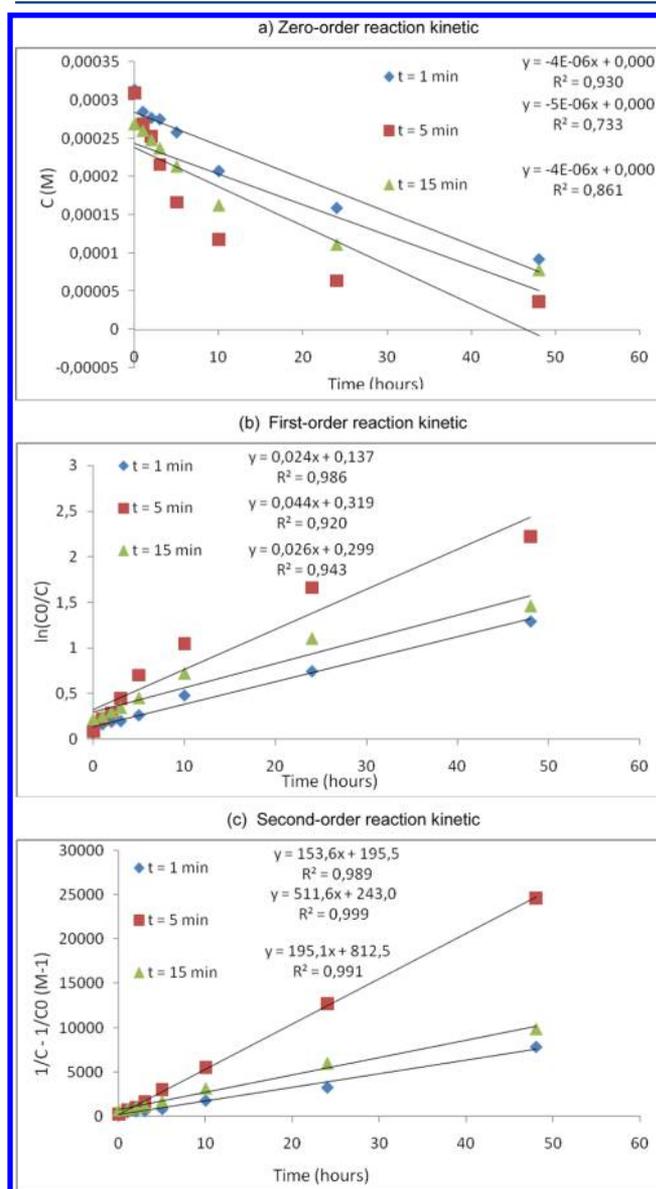
As shown in several papers, dye removal kinetics of most dyes by advanced oxidation processes can be evaluated using a pseudo-first-order rate model,<sup>3,21,25,26</sup> although in some papers a pseudo-second-order rate model was employed.<sup>60–62</sup>

S.P Sun et al. show that the decolorization kinetics of Orange G by the Fenton oxidation process followed the second-order reaction kinetics.<sup>60</sup> The apparent kinetic rate constants were found to be in the range of  $2.66 \times 10^2$  to  $3.4 \times 10^4 \text{ min}^{-1} \text{ M}^{-1}$ .

Massakul Pukdee-Asa et al.<sup>61</sup> studied the degradation of three azo dyes. (CI Reactive Black 5, CI Reactive Orange 16, and CI Reactive Blue 2) by the fluidized-bed Fenton process. The apparent-second-order rate constants were calculated and varied from  $0.7 \times 10^2$  to  $30.1 \times 10^2 \text{ (mg/L)}^{-1} \text{ (min}^{-1})$ . Dye treatment using advanced oxidation processes with  $\text{Co}^{2+}/\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  and  $\text{Co}^{2+}/\text{peroxymonosulfate}$  (PMS) systems were investigated.<sup>62</sup> The degradation of Acid Red 183 follows the second-order kinetics.

**3.4. Comparative Study of ARS Different Treatment Methods.** The efficiency and processing time are the basic criteria for the choice of adequate treatment because it is a question of time and energy economy.<sup>63</sup> Table 5 shows the bleaching rates of ARS treated by several different methods, included ARS concentration and bleaching time maximum. We can note that plasma treatment and postdischarge increase the discoloration rates of ARS after a very short plasma treatment time despite relatively high ARS concentration. One of most plasma glidarc treatment problems is energy consumption; this is why an energy meter measuring electrical power is disposed in plasma installation. Energy consumption is evaluated to be 0.4 kWh.<sup>34</sup>

Our study reveals a higher bleaching (and degradation) rate after 5 min of electric discharge corresponding to 0.03 kWh of energy consumption. Technical cost evaluation takes into account the reagents used and electricity consumption.<sup>64</sup> In our case, no chemical product is added during plasma glidarc treatment and its postdischarge phenomena is very attractive.



**Figure 7.** Zero- (a), first- (b), and second-order (c) kinetics rate constants for the bleaching of ARS: treated by discharge  $t^* = 1, 5$ , and 15 min, treated by postdischarge  $t_{\text{TPDR}} = 0$ –48 h.

Table 4. The Zero-, First-, and Second-Order Kinetics Rate Constants for the Bleaching of ARS Treated by Postdischarge

$t^*$ (min)	postdischarge time, $t_{\text{TPDR}}$ , 0–48 h					
	zero-order ( $\text{M h}^{-1}$ )		first-order ( $\text{h}^{-1}$ )		second-order ( $\text{M}^{-1} \text{h}^{-1}$ )	
	$K_0$	$R^2$	$K_1$	$R^2$	$K_2$	$R^2$
1	$4.35 \times 10^{-6}$	0.9306	0.0246	0.9869	$1.53 \times 10^2$	0.9894
2	$5.42 \times 10^{-6}$	0.9076	0.0397	0.9876	$3.73 \times 10^2$	0.9804
5	$5.12 \times 10^{-6}$	0.7337	0.0441	0.9208	$5.11 \times 10^2$	0.9996
10	$4.90 \times 10^{-6}$	0.763	0.0432	0.9131	$4.98 \times 10^2$	0.9877
15	$4.01 \times 10^{-6}$	0.861	0.0265	0.9435	$1.95 \times 10^2$	0.9917
30	$2.96 \times 10^{-6}$	0.8841	0.0226	0.9588	$1.87 \times 10^2$	0.9963
60	$2.44 \times 10^{-6}$	0.9007	0.0198	0.9616	$1.72 \times 10^2$	0.9814

Table 5. ARS Bleaching Rates Treated by Different Methods

methods	ARS concentration ( $\text{mg L}^{-1}$ )	% bleaching	treatment time (min)
DBD discharge	$100^{20}$	100	40
glow plasma discharge	$30^{17}$	63.3	40
catalyst biomimetic process	$104.5^8$	100	180
present study: direct discharge	114	7/42.1	5/60
postdischarge	114	82.1 ( $t_{\text{TPDR}} = 0\text{--}48 \text{ h}$ )	5

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The detailed study of the behavior of an anthraquinonic dye (ARS) exposed to a gliding arc discharge is confirmed with a scarcely considered example: the activity of discharges burning in air over aqueous solutions and bleaching and degradation of the targeted dye. The bleaching mechanism is a complex process which verifies pseudo-second-order reaction ( $k_2 = 3 \times 10^2 \text{ M}^{-1} \text{ h}^{-1}$ ), that is, a feature which has not been identified up to now. Complementary experiments performed in the presence or the absence of incorporated sulphamic acid known for its ability to inhibit the formation of nitrite ions and therefore of their derivatives, support the assumption that nitrite and peroxy nitrite ions are the key agents of the degradation process.

Additionally, postdischarge evolution of the plasma-treated solution was successfully investigated. TPDR already identified in the degradation process of various organic solutes were also evidenced in that of ARS and observed for postdischarge times  $t_{\text{TPDR}}$  longer than a week, which is unusual. A detailed investigation underlined the influence of the preliminary exposure time  $t^*$  before TPDR develop and led to the conclusion that the postdischarge treatment effects presented a maximum both for bleaching and degradation for short exposure times  $t^*$ . An explanation is proposed in connection with the concept of dose which depends on the pollutant concentration: a given quantity of waste solute requires a suitable quantity of formed peroxy nitrite for its oxidizing degradation; the number of formed peroxy nitrite species is related to the burning time  $t^*$  of the arc discharge (and hence to the quantity of NO formed in given electrical conditions).

This feature is of major importance in industrial application for economy reasons, since the gliding arc treatment then requires only few minutes exposure to reach complete pollutant abatement. Incidentally, it can also be underlined that the gliding arc is probably among the most efficient discharges

burning at atmospheric pressure, mainly because it enables the formation of NO and of derivatives such as the strong oxidizing peroxy nitrite species.

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##### Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors thank the Algerian National Administration of Scientific Research (DG-RSDT) for financial support.

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