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ASSESSMENT OF ADSORPTION PROPERTIES OF SOLID HYDROCARBONS OBTAINED BY PYROLYSIS OF GAS- CHEMICAL COMPLEX TAR PRODUCTS

Qurbonaliyev Komronbek Azamat ugli

Fergana State University, PhD Researcher

<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-5438-3956>

komronqurbonaliyev@gmail.com

UDC: 665.637.5:541.183

Abstract. *This article examines the adsorption characteristics of solid pyrolytic carbon materials derived from tar waste of gas-chemical complexes, with a specific focus on their mesoporous structure. International and Uzbek scientific findings on pyrolysis-derived char, activated carbon, and carbon black are reviewed. Surface area, pore size distribution, and adsorptive capacity for organic and inorganic pollutants are analyzed based on real experimental data from the current literature.*

Keywords: *pyrolysis; tar; mesoporous adsorbent; gas-chemical complex; activated carbon.*

Introduction. Large-scale gas-chemical processing generates significant volumes of tar as a by-product — a dense, polycyclic aromatic mixture that poses both environmental disposal challenges and potential economic value if valorized into functional materials. One of the most promising valorization routes is controlled pyrolysis of tar fractions, yielding solid carbonaceous residues with developed porous structures suitable for use as adsorbents.

The concept of converting low-value petroleum or coal-derived tars into mesoporous carbon has gained traction over the past two decades. Mesoporous

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materials, defined by pore diameters in the 2–50 nm range according to IUPAC classification, are particularly attractive because their pore channels are wide enough to accommodate medium and large molecules — organic dyes, heavy metal ions, aromatic contaminants — while still providing a substantial internal surface area. Bandosz (2006), in her foundational edited volume *Activated Carbon Surfaces in Environmental Remediation*, established that the surface chemistry of tar-derived carbons is strongly governed by pyrolysis temperature, residence time, and feedstock composition, and that these parameters collectively determine both BET surface area and mesopore volume [1:38].

In Uzbekistan, the Ustyurt Gas-Chemical Complex (Qo‘ng‘irot) and the Shurtan Gas-Chemical Complex produce condensate fractions and tar-type residues whose carbonization potential remains largely unexplored for adsorbent manufacturing. This research gap motivates the present review.

Methodology. A systematic search of peer-reviewed literature was conducted using Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, using keywords including “pyrolysis tar mesoporous carbon”, “tar-derived activated carbon adsorption”, “char pore structure BET”, and “gas-chemical waste carbonization”. Studies from 2005 to 2024 were screened, and those providing quantitative pore characterization data (BET surface area, pore size distribution, mesopore fraction, and adsorption capacity) were prioritized. Six primary sources were selected for detailed analysis. The IMRAT structure was applied to synthesize evidence systematically.

RESULTS: LITERATURE ANALYSIS

Pyrolysis of Tar Fractions and Pore Development. The relationship between pyrolysis temperature and pore structure has been studied extensively. Lua and Yang (2004) demonstrated that pyrolysis of oil-palm shell at 500–900°C yielded activated chars with BET surface areas ranging from 37 to 1007 m²/g, with mesopore volumes increasing sharply above 700°C [2:255]. At

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lower temperatures (below 600°C), micropores dominated, whereas higher temperatures caused micropore coalescence and promoted mesopore formation. This temperature-driven pore evolution is particularly relevant for tar-based feedstocks, because tars are richer in polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) whose graphitization at high temperature contributes to ordered mesopore walls.

Gregg and Sing (1982) in their classic monograph Adsorption, Surface Area and Porosity defined the physical basis for interpreting nitrogen adsorption isotherms — including the BET equation and BJH pore distribution analysis — which remain the standard tools for characterizing mesoporous adsorbents derived from carbonization processes [3:111]. Their framework continues to underpin virtually all modern pore analysis work on tar-derived chars.

Adsorption Capacity of Pyrolytic Solid Hydrocarbons. Li et al. (2008) prepared a mesoporous carbon adsorbent from coal tar pitch using a soft-templating method and reported a BET surface area of 1120 m²/g with a mesopore volume of 0.87 cm³/g [4:7]. This material achieved methylene blue adsorption of 312 mg/g — far exceeding conventional activated carbon for bulky dye molecules — confirming that the mesoporous channel geometry allows access that microporous materials cannot provide. The adsorption mechanism combined π – π stacking between aromatic dye molecules and the graphitic carbon surface with electrostatic interactions, a dual mechanism typical of PAH-rich pyrolytic carbons [4:8].

Derylo-Marczewska et al. (2019), studying activated carbons derived from various petroleum residues, found that surface oxygen-containing functional groups — formed during mild oxidative activation — significantly enhanced heavy metal adsorption (Cd²⁺, Pb²⁺), while high mesopore fraction correlated with faster diffusion kinetics [5:14]. These findings directly support

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the value of tar-derived mesoporous carbons not only for organic pollutants but also for inorganic contaminant removal.

Comparative Structural and Adsorption Parameters

Table 1. Adsorption characteristics of pyrolytic solid hydrocarbons from different feedstocks

Feedstock	Pyrolysis T (°C)	BET surface area (m ² /g)	Mesopore volume (cm ³ /g)	Key adsorbate	Reference
Oil-palm shell	500–900	37–1007	0.21–0.74	Phenol, methylene blue	[2:255]
Coal tar pitch	700	1120	0.87	Methylene blue (312 mg/g)	[4:7]
Petroleum residue	600–850	640–980	0.45–0.68	Cd ²⁺ , Pb ²⁺	[5:14]
Heavy oil tar	500–700	300–750	0.30–0.55	Organic vapors	[1:38]

The data in Table 1 confirm that pyrolysis temperature is the dominant structural control parameter, and that coal tar and petroleum-derived tars consistently yield materials with mesopore volumes in the range 0.3–0.9 cm³/g when conditions are optimized — sufficient for effective adsorption of medium-to-large molecular species.

DISCUSSION

Taken together, the reviewed studies establish a credible pathway from gas-chemical complex tar to a functional mesoporous adsorbent. The key

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scientific challenge lies in controlling the balance between micropore and mesopore formation: too low a pyrolysis temperature produces primarily microporous char with limited access for bulky molecules, while excessively high temperatures cause pore collapse and loss of surface area. The optimal window for mesopore-dominant structure appears to lie between 650 and 800°C for most aromatic-rich tar feedstocks, consistent with the graphitization onset and the softening point behavior of heavy polyaromatic matrices [1:38][2:255].

For Uzbekistan's gas-chemical industry, the economic rationale is equally important. Converting tar waste — currently disposed of as low-value residue — into a mesoporous adsorbent usable in industrial wastewater treatment or gas purification would create direct added value from a process by-product. Derylo-Marczewska et al. (2019) specifically noted that oxidative surface modification of petroleum-derived carbons improves selectivity for heavy metal adsorption without compromising mesopore volume [5:14], suggesting that a two-step process (pyrolysis + mild activation) would be the most practical route for industrial implementation.

CONCLUSION

Pyrolysis of tar products from gas-chemical complexes yields solid hydrocarbon materials with measurable mesoporous structure, whose adsorption capacity for organic dyes, aromatic compounds, and heavy metal ions is well-documented in the international literature. BET surface areas in the range of 300–1100 m²/g and mesopore volumes of 0.3–0.9 cm³/g are achievable under controlled conditions, particularly at pyrolysis temperatures between 650 and 800°C. Future research should focus on characterizing Uzbekistan-origin tar fractions from the Ustyurt and Shurtan complexes, optimizing pyrolysis parameters for maximum mesopore development, and evaluating adsorption performance for locally relevant pollutants. This work would represent a

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significant contribution to both applied chemistry and sustainable industrial waste management in the region.

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