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The Excited State Dynamics of Ethylene: A new theoretical model

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The excited state dynamics of ethylene following excitation into the energetically lowest lying absorption band, nominally understood as arising from the $\pi\pi^*$ and $\pi 3s$ states, have been the focus of numerous theoretical and computational studies for many decades. Here, we present new quantum dynamics computations and spectroscopic simulations that indicate the non-adiabatic population dynamics can be better understood as arising from strong vibronic coupling between the $\sigma\pi^*$ and $\pi\pi^*$, and separately, between the $\sigma 3s$ and $\pi 3s$ electronic states. This model is shown to offer a clear explanation for previously unassigned bands in the UV absorption spectrum and is the basis for the interpretation of recent time-resolved photo-electron spectroscopic results.

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