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Development of solid-gas equilibrium propulsion system for small spacecraft

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#### ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

# Development of solid-gas equilibrium propulsion system for small spacecraft $^{\Leftrightarrow}$

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#### Abstract

A phase equilibrium propulsion system is a kind of cold gas jet, where phase equilibrium state of fuel is maintained in a tank, and its vapor is ejected when a valve is opened. One example is a gas-liquid equilibrium propulsion system that utilizes liquefied gas as fuel. It was mounted on the solar sail IKAROS and demonstrated on orbit. It is superior to high-pressure cold gas jet in higher storage efficiency and lighter configuration as the vapor pressure is comparatively lower, and suitable for small spacecraft. However, it requires a gas-liquid separation device to avoid leakage of the liquid and it makes the system complex. As another example of phase equilibrium propulsion systems, we introduce a solid-gas equilibrium propulsion system. It utilizes a sublimable substance as fuel and ejects its vapor. The vapor pressure is even lower, and it does not require such a separation device but only needs a filter to keep the solid inside the tank, and the system is much simpler and lighter. Thus it is more suitable

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