



On the Origin of the Dark Material on Japetus

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On the basis of the earlier Voyager and the recent Cassini images it is suggested that the dark material on the surface of Japetus is methane that was thrown out by geyser like plumes of about 700 km high lined up along the 13 000 km long compressional ridge. The thin methane coating was darkened by the ultraviolet light of the Sun - like in the elongated patches on the polar cap of Triton.