

Reaction of TiCl_4 with Diethyl Ether. Experimental and Quantum-Chemical Study

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Abstract—The reaction of titanium tetrachloride with diethyl ether at various ratios of components and temperatures was studied by the NMR and mass spectrometry methods. The $\text{TiCl}_4 \cdot 2\text{Et}_2\text{O}$ complex does not pass in the gas phase. Formation of ethoxytrichlorotitanium among reaction products was established by the X-ray structure analysis. The model of conversion from initial components to titanium dioxide was suggested on the basis of the obtained experimental data and quantum-chemical calculations (B3LYP/def2-SVP level of theory).

Keywords: titanium tetrachloride, diethyl ether, donor-acceptor complexes, ethoxytrichlorotitanium, titanium dioxide

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The use of titanium complexes as Ziegler–Natta catalysts [1–3], reagents for a number of organic syntheses [4–6], and precursors for obtaining titanium dioxide [7–10] has attracted much interest to their behavior at elevated temperatures.

Titanium tetrachloride, being a typical Lewis acid, forms 1 : 1 and 1 : 2 complexes with N- and O-containing bases (amines, ethers, ketones, and haloketones) [11–15]. Their vaporization is defined by a competition between ruptures of intra- and intermolecular bonds [11]. Three types of reactions of these compounds proceeding on heating can be distinguished:

- (1) vaporization of complexes in the gas phase (possible for saturated molecular structures with strong donor–acceptor bonds);
- (2) stepwise or complete dissociation with donor–acceptor bond rupture;
- (3) decomposition similar to hydrolysis or ammonolysis with evolution of hydrogen chloride or organochlorine compounds.

Titanium tetrachloride forms donor–acceptor complexes with dimethyl and diethyl ethers [6, 16–25]. It

was shown by the NMR method (a solution in SO_2 , -84°C) that 1 : 1 and 1 : 2 complexes (*cis*- and *trans*-isomers) are formed in the case of dimethyl ether [18]. In a CH_2Cl_2 – CD_2Cl_2 solution at 175 K only the *cis*-form of the 1 : 2 complex with Me_2O was detected by the methods of vibrational spectroscopy (Raman and IR) and NMR spectroscopy [19, 20].

With diethyl ether TiCl_4 forms the complex $\text{TiCl}_4 \cdot 2\text{Et}_2\text{O}$ of *cis*-structure, unstable at room temperature [6, 17, 21–23, 25].

On the basis of the data of UV photoelectronic spectroscopy (UVPES) and electron energy loss spectroscopy (EELS) [21] it was found that the 1 : 2 complex is formed in the gas phase at 70°C . At the ratios of components TiCl_4 – Et_2O 1 : 1 and 2 : 1 only the signals corresponding to titanium tetrachloride were recorded, which testifies that no forms of gaseous complexes other than $\text{TiCl}_4 \cdot 2\text{Et}_2\text{O}$ are present. It was shown in [2] that the reaction of TiCl_4 with diethyl ether leads to the formation of the 1 : 1 complex.

To refine the composition of complex compounds formed in the TiCl_4 – Et_2O system and to make clear their thermal behavior, in the present work we have studied the reaction of TiCl_4 with diethyl ether.

Table 1. Chemical shifts of signals in ^1H and ^{13}C NMR spectra of Et_2O and $\text{TiCl}_4\cdot 2\text{Et}_2\text{O}$

Substance	δ_{H} , ppm	$\Delta\delta$, ppm	δ_{C} , ppm	$\Delta\delta$, ppm
Et_2O	3.46 q (2H, CH_2 , $J = 7.1$ Hz), 1.17 t (3H, CH_3 , $J = 7.1$ Hz)	–	66.2 (CH_2) 15.6 (CH_3)	–
$\text{TiCl}_4\cdot 2\text{Et}_2\text{O}$	3.74 q (2H, CH_2 , $J = 7.0$ Hz), 1.28 t (3H, CH_3 , $J = 7.0$ Hz)	0.28 0.11	67.5 (CH_2) 15.3 (CH_3)	1.3 –0.3

Reaction products were studied by the mass spectrometry, NMR spectroscopy, and X-ray structure analysis methods. Thermodynamic characteristics of the processes occurring in the titanium tetrachloride-diethyl ether system were calculated by a quantum-chemical method.

To elucidate the composition of complexes forming in the $\text{TiCl}_4\text{--Et}_2\text{O}$ system, reactions were carried out in a vacuum at various ratios of components: almost twofold excess of the ether (1.00 : 1.98, 1.00 : 1.92), equimolar ratio (1.00 : 1.02), and at tetrachloride excess (1.00 : 0.62). At the 1.00 : 1.98 and 1.00 : 1.92 ratios of the $\text{TiCl}_4\text{--Et}_2\text{O}$ components right after mixing reagents the crystalline complex $\text{TiCl}_4\cdot 2\text{Et}_2\text{O}$ is formed, which, as it is known [17, 22], is unstable at room temperature. Therefore, to avoid decomposition, the substance was stored at a low temperature (-30°C). At the ratio of $\text{TiCl}_4\text{--Et}_2\text{O}$ components 1.00 : 1.02 a two-phase liquid system consisting of solid complex $\text{TiCl}_4\cdot 2\text{Et}_2\text{O}$ and its solution in titanium tetrachloride is formed. In the case of the synthesis in the tetrachloride excess with the ratio $\text{TiCl}_4 : \text{Et}_2\text{O} = 1.00 : 0.62$ a homogeneous yellow solution of the $\text{TiCl}_4\cdot 2\text{Et}_2\text{O}$ complex in TiCl_4 was obtained. Thus at any ratio of components the crystalline product of the synthesis was the 1 : 2 adduct.

When studying the $\text{TiCl}_4\cdot 2\text{Et}_2\text{O}$ complex by the NMR spectroscopy and mass spectrometry methods, spectra were measured directly after synthesis in order to avoid its decomposition. The general view of the ^1H NMR spectrum of the adduct is the same as for the non-coordinated ether, but signals are shifted downfield, which is characteristic of complex formation [19, 20, 24, 25]. The displacement of the group CH_2 chemical shift is 2.5 times greater than that of the CH_3 group.

The signal of the CH_2 group in the ^{13}C NMR spectrum of the complex is shifted downfield, whereas the position of the CH_3 group signal practically does not change with respect to the pure ether, i.e., as in the case of the ^1H NMR spectra, the coordination affects the CH_2 group much more strongly than the CH_3 group. Values of chemical shifts of the ether and complex are presented in Table 1 together with $\Delta\delta = \delta_{\text{complex}} - \delta_{\text{ligand}}$ values. The $\Delta\delta$ values are smaller than the published data [25]. These distinctions are connected with the fact that measurements in [25] were carried out in a titanium tetrachloride excess, which suppresses dissociation of the complex.

Mass spectra of vapor over $\text{TiCl}_4\cdot 2\text{Et}_2\text{O}$ taken in the temperature interval 120–380°C in the range of $m/z = 26\text{--}430$ are presented in Fig. 1.¹ In the mass spectrum of vapor over the $\text{TiCl}_4\cdot 2\text{Et}_2\text{O}$ complex there are no peaks of molecular and fragmental ions of 1 : 1 and 1 : 2 complexes containing a Ti–O bond.

Comparison of the mass spectra of vapor over the $\text{TiCl}_4\cdot 2\text{Et}_2\text{O}$ complex with the mass spectra of the pure components, and also of chlorine derivatives and alcohols as most probable products of the thermal decomposition shows that at 120°C peaks of ions characteristic of diethyl ether ($m/z = 31, 47, 74$) and peaks of the ions related to titanium tetrachloride are present in the spectra. Furthermore, characteristic peaks of chloroethane EtCl ($m/z = 64, 66$) are observed in the spectrum. Their intensity decreases as temperature increases: at 220°C the peak of EtCl is absent in the spectrum. The peak with $m/z = 28$ corresponding to the C_2H_4^+ ion,² which appears either as a result of proceeding reactions or as a result of dissociative ionization of organic compounds, has the maximum intensity at 120°C. Its intensity decreases with temperature increase. Ethanol signals are absent in the spectrum.

In the mass spectrum taken at 120°C a high intensity of peaks of titanium-containing ions is observed, which sharply decreases on keeping the complex at this temperature within 10 min. As temperature increases, intensity of peaks of these ions increases, and at 330°C starts to decrease again. In the range $m/z = 184\text{--}192$ at 120°C peaks of $\text{TiCl}_3\text{OCH}_2^+$

¹ In Fig. 1 the m/z range is presented up to 240, because there are no peaks in the region of higher values.

² The elemental composition of the ion with $m/z = 28$ was found by measuring the exact weight in a high voltage mode.

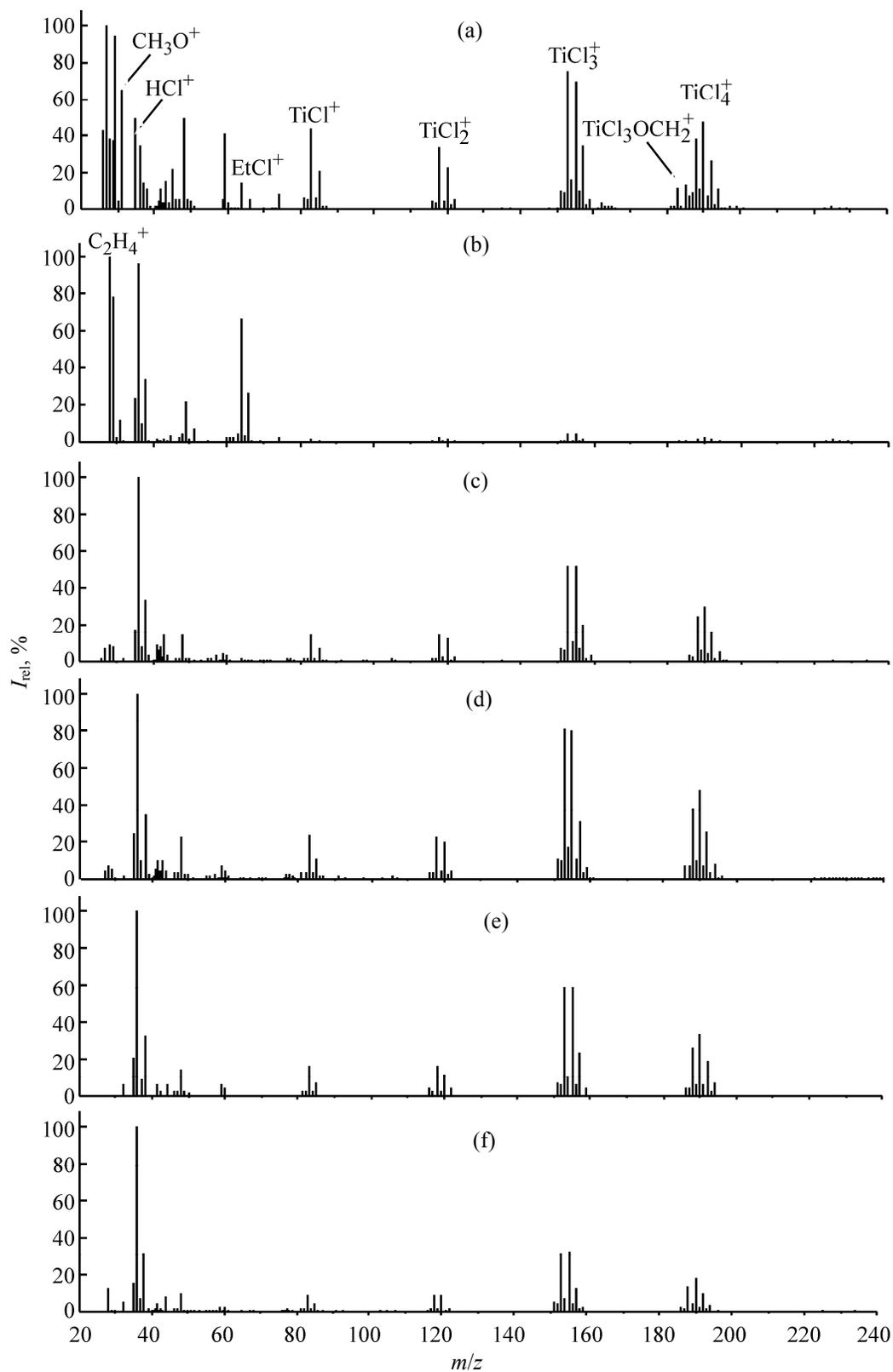


Fig. 1. Mass spectra of vapor over $\text{TiCl}_4 \cdot 2\text{Et}_2\text{O}$ taken at temperature: 120 (a) at once; (b) 10 min later, (c) 220, (d) 270, (e) 330, and (f) 380°C.

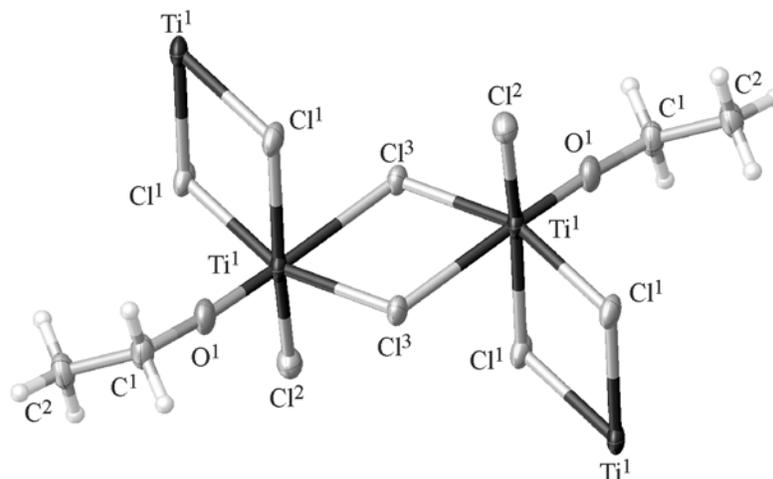


Fig. 2. General view of the TiCl_3OEt molecule.

(titanium is detected by the isotope distribution) are observed in addition to TiCl_4 .

Relative intensities of peaks of ions corresponding to titanium tetrachloride and chloroethane agree well with experimental data for titanium tetrachloride and with published data for pure EtCl [26].

To study thermal behavior of the complex in more detail, we have fulfilled an experiment with time exposure (100 min), normalizing mass spectra by a standard substance $(\text{C}_4\text{F}_9)_3\text{N}$. In the region of the initial temperature increase (up to 120°C) peaks of ions corresponding to Et_2O , TiCl_4 , C_2H_4 , EtCl , and HCl ionization were detected in the mass spectrum. Their intensity quickly decreases to background level on exposure within 35 min. At further temperature rise up to 170°C the intensities of peaks of the ions corresponding to TiCl_4 , C_2H_4 , and HCl increase. Exposure at this temperature within 10 min also leads to the decrease in the intensity of peaks of ions to the background value. At 220 and 270°C only peaks of ions corresponding to titanium tetrachloride and hydrogen chloride are present in the spectrum, their intensity decreasing to the background level on keeping the sample at 220° within 10 min and at 270°C within 15 min.

Thus, we can conclude that the $\text{TiCl}_4 \cdot 2\text{Et}_2\text{O}$ complex decomposes on heating to liberate diethyl ether, titanium tetrachloride, chloroethane, and ethylene. Moreover, this process begins even at room temperature, as demonstrated by the NMR data.

The singlet with chemical shift of 1.25 ppm corresponding to the CH_2 group is the most intensive in the ^1H NMR spectrum of decomposition products of

the complex. Signals at 1.48 and 3.61 ppm point to the formation of chloroethane [27]. The range of chemical shifts from 4.90 to 5.82 ppm is characteristic of alkenes [27]. A weak signal in the region of $\delta \sim 5$ ppm is present in this spectrum, which is attributable to the presence of alkenes in the adduct decomposition products. Hence, even at room temperature, reactions leading to the occurrence of chloroethane, unsaturated hydrocarbons, and also products of their polymerization proceed in the system.

On keeping an evacuated ampule with a solution of the complex in titanium tetrachloride at room temperature within several months colorless crystals of ethoxytrichlorotitanium TiCl_3OEt were grown. Its structure was confirmed by X-ray structure analysis (Fig. 2).

The obtained alkoxide is a polymer, where titanium atoms are in a pseudo-octahedral environment formed by the ethoxy-group oxygen and four bridging and one terminal chlorine atoms. As it is seen from Table 2 bridging $\text{Ti}^1\text{-Cl}^1$ and $\text{Ti}^1\text{-Cl}^3$ bonds are longer than terminal $\text{Ti}^1\text{-Cl}^2$ bonds, but they both are much longer than the Ti-Cl distance in the TiCl_4 molecule (2.19 Å [28]). The $\text{Ti}^1\text{O}^1\text{C}^1$ angle is almost right (Table 3). Our data, as seen from Tables 2 and 3, agree well with structural characteristics of $[\text{TiCl}_3\text{OEt}]_n$ available in the literature [29]. However ethoxytrichlorotitanium in [29] was obtained by the reaction of $\text{Ti}(\text{OEt})_4$ with SiCl_4 , whereas we obtained it by the decomposition of the ether complex of titanium tetrachloride. The association of TiCl_3OEt molecules proceeds with participation of chlorine atoms instead of oxygen atoms of alkoxy group, as in similar $\text{TiCl}_2(\text{OR})_2$ and $\text{TiCl}(\text{OR})_3$ dimers [30–37].

Table 2. Bond lengths in the TiCl₃OEt molecule

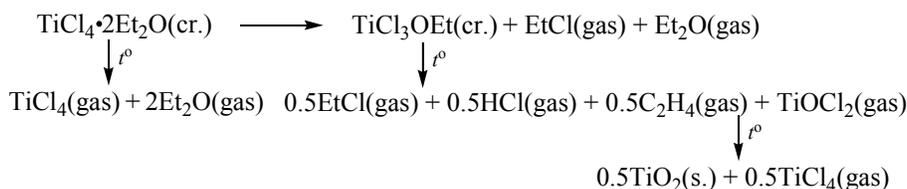
Bond	$d, \text{Å}$		Bond	$d, \text{Å}$	
	experiment	published data [29]		experiment	published data [29]
Ti ¹ -O ¹	1.709(3)	1.704(7)	Ti ¹ -Cl ³	2.3689(14)	2.361(4)
Ti ¹ -Cl ¹	2.4062(14)	2.406(4)	Ti ¹ -Cl ³	2.6096(13)	2.602(3)
Ti ¹ -Cl ¹	2.5211(13)	2.522(3)	O ¹ -C ¹	1.425(6)	1.43(1)
Ti ¹ -Cl ²	2.2346(13)	2.235(3)	C ¹ -C ²	1.497(7)	1.51(2)

Table 3. Bond angles in the TiCl₃OEt molecule

Angle	$\bar{\omega}, \text{deg}$		Angle	$\bar{\omega}, \text{deg}$	
	experiment	published data [29]		experiment	published data [29]
Cl ¹ Ti ¹ O ¹	98.24(12)	97.7(3)	Cl ² Ti ¹ O ¹	98.69(12)	98.6(3)
Cl ¹ Ti ¹ O ¹	90.32(12)	90.0(3)	Cl ² Ti ¹ Cl ³	88.00(4)	88.2(1)
Cl ¹ Ti ¹ Cl ¹	80.85(4)	80.8(1)	Cl ² Ti ¹ Cl ³	97.96(5)	98.2(1)
Cl ¹ Ti ¹ Cl ²	92.61(5)	92.3(1)	Cl ³ Ti ¹ O ¹	95.74(12)	95.2(3)
Cl ¹ Ti ¹ Cl ²	169.57(5)	169.7(1)	Cl ³ Ti ¹ O ¹	172.80(12)	172.8(3)
Cl ¹ Ti ¹ Cl ³	160.99(5)	161.9(1)	Cl ³ Ti ¹ Cl ³	80.61(4)	81.3(1)
Cl ¹ Ti ¹ Cl ³	84.03(4)	84.4(1)	Ti ¹ O ¹ C ¹	174.9(3)	176.3(7)
Cl ¹ Ti ¹ Cl ³	86.27(4)	86.5(1)	Ti ¹ Cl ¹ Ti ¹	99.15(4)	99.2(1)
Cl ¹ Ti ¹ Cl ³	83.28(4)	83.5(1)	Ti ¹ Cl ³ Ti ¹	99.39(5)	99.2(1)

A peak of the fragment ion TiCl₃OCH₂⁺ is observed in the mass spectrum of vapor over ethoxytrichlorotitanium (Fig. 3) at 120–170°C. Its relative intensity is 16% at 120°C, which points to the fact that in the gas phase the alkoxide exists as a monomer. At 170–270°C peaks of chloroethane, hydrogen chloride, and ethylene ions are detected in the spectra. The peaks of ions corresponding to titanium tetrachloride appear in insignificant quantities only at 270°C. It is connected with the fact that alkoxide seems to convert to nonvolatile titanium oxochloride on heating, which disproportionates on the further temperature increase to form titanium tetrachloride and dioxide.

On the basis of published data and experimental results of the present work, we have simulated the processes proceeding in the TiCl₄-Et₂O system on heating. The 1 : 2 complexes, easily formed in the condensed phase, are unstable even at room temperature. The mass spectrometry data allow us to conclude that the dissociation into components and the HCl elimination proceed in parallel on heating. It results in the formation of ethoxytrichlorotitanium, which decomposes to form chloroethane, hydrogen chloride, ethylene, and titanium oxochloride. TiOCl₂ disproportionates into highly volatile titanium tetrachloride and poorly volatile titanium dioxide [38, 39].



To check the offered model, we have fulfilled quantum-chemical calculations of competing homogeneous gas-phase reactions of the complex decomposition into components or up to ethoxytrichlorotitanium with its subsequent decomposition to titanium oxochloride and dioxide.

The calculations of thermodynamics of the gas-phase processes were carried out by the B3LYP/def2-SVP method. Quantum-chemical calculations are successfully applied to predict the energy of titanium tetrachloride complex formation and to interpret the mechanism of transition from TiCl₄ to TiO₂ [40–44].

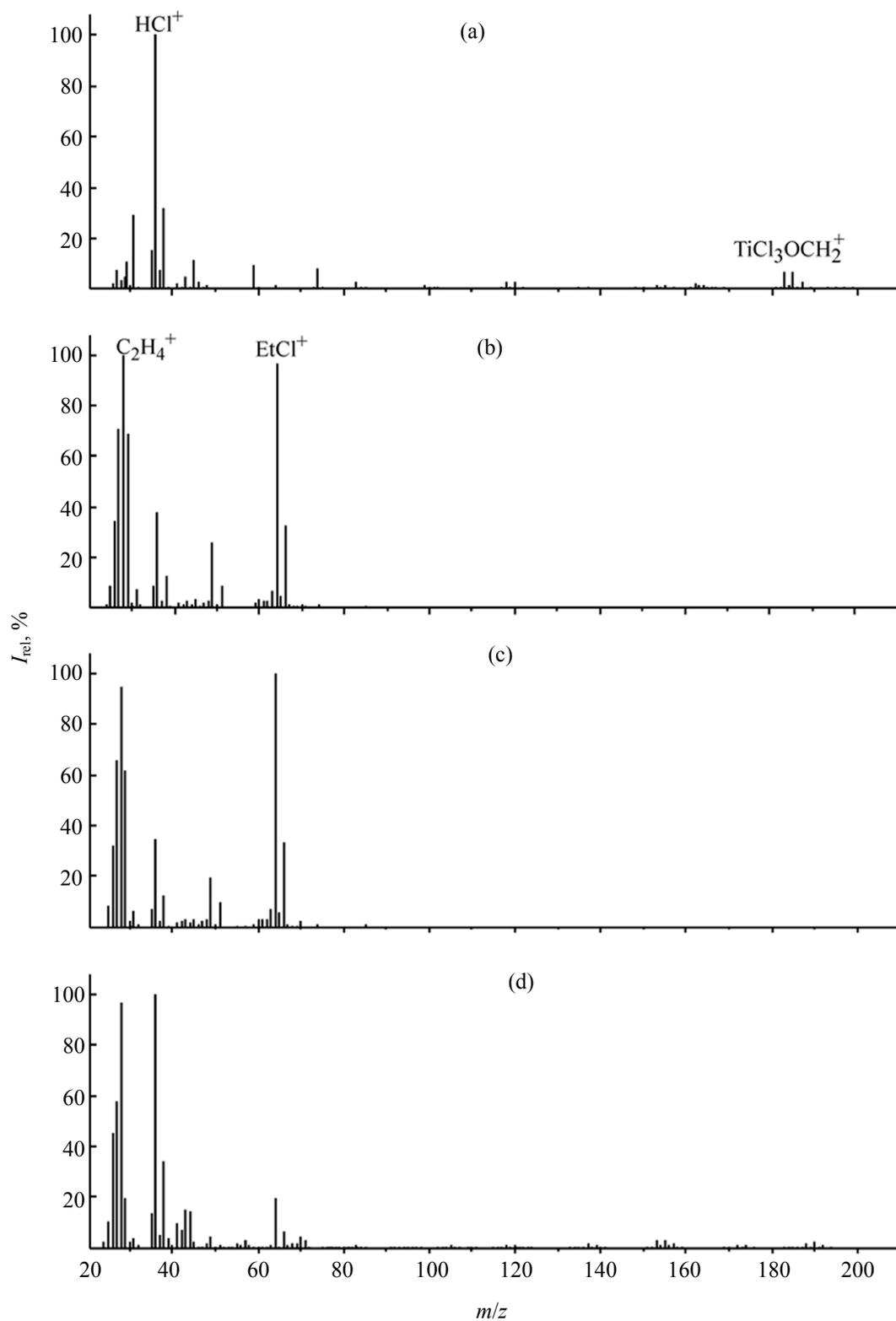


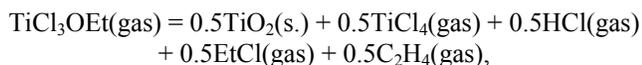
Fig. 3. Mass spectra of vapor over $TiCl_3OEt$ taken at temperatures: (a) 120, (b) 170, (c) 220, and (d) 270°C.

Table 4. Energy and thermodynamic characteristics of gas-phase processes (B3LYP/def2-SVP)

Process no.	Process	ΔE^0 , kJ/mol	ΔH_{298}^0 , kJ/mol	ΔS_{298}^0 , J mol ⁻¹ K ⁻¹	ΔG_{298}^0 , kJ/mol	ΔG_{573}^0 , kJ/mol
1	<i>cis</i> -TiCl ₄ ·2Et ₂ O = TiCl ₄ + 2Et ₂ O	49	34	341	-68	-162
2	<i>cis</i> -TiCl ₄ ·2Et ₂ O = TiCl ₃ OEt + EtCl + Et ₂ O	18	1	392	-116	-223
3	TiCl ₃ OEt = TiOCl ₂ + 0.5EtCl + 0.5HCl + 0.5C ₂ H ₄	296	280	219	205	135
4	TiCl ₃ OEt = 0.5TiO ₂ + 0.5TiCl ₄ + 0.5EtCl + 0.5HCl + 0.5C ₂ H ₄	360	344	189	278	217

Results of the fulfilled calculations are presented in Table 4.

Comparison of the thermodynamics of processes 1 and 2 testifies that the decomposition of the complex with alkoxide formation (process 2) is much more favorable than the process of TiCl₄·2Et₂O dissociation into components (process 1). The decomposition of ethoxytrichlorotitanium with the formation of both gaseous TiOCl₂ (process 3) and gaseous TiO₂ (process 4) is thermodynamically unfavorable. Condensation of titanium dioxide decreases the endothermicity of this reaction. Using characteristics of titanium dioxide sublimation calculated on the basis of the reference data [45], $\Delta H^0 = 619.17$ kJ/mol and $\Delta S^0 = 205.07$ J mol⁻¹ K⁻¹, we obtain for the heterogeneous reaction



$$\Delta H_{298}^0 = 34.4 \text{ kJ/mol}, \Delta S_{298}^0 = 86.5 \text{ J mol}^{-1} \text{ K}^{-1}, \\ \Delta G_{298}^0 = 8.6 \text{ kJ/mol}, \Delta G_{573}^0 = -15.2 \text{ kJ/mol}.$$

The process is favorable thermodynamically, its exothermal effect increases as temperature increases.

Thus, our calculations point to the preferential occurring of process 2 yielding ethoxytrichlorotitanium with its further decomposition yielding titanium dioxide.

In summary it may be said that the similar model of decomposition of titanium tetrachloride ether complexes was considered for analogous systems with ethers [16, 24, 46]. For example, titanium tetrachloride complex with dimethyl ether on heating to 50–60°C converts to chloromethane and titanium methoxide, which further passes into titanium oxochloride and MeCl [24]. The synthesis of the product of diisopropyl ether addition to titanium tetrachloride completely unsuccessful, but TiCl₃[OCH(CH₃)₂] was isolated [16].

If a substituent R in compounds of the type ROTiCl₃ is a secondary or tertiary alkyl, disintegration of such compounds proceeds instantly even at low temperatures with the formation of hydrogen chloride, olefins, alkyl chlorides, and polymeric titanium oxochlorides [46].

EXPERIMENTAL

As titanium tetrachloride is easily hydrolyzed in air, all operations of purification, taking sample weights, and synthesis were carried out in vacuum-sealed glass systems completely excluding contact of substances with atmosphere. In the synthesis we used chemically-pure grade titanium tetrachloride and diethyl ether additionally dried and purified according to standard techniques.

The ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker DX 300 instrument at room temperature using CDCl₃ as a solvent. The mass spectra were taken on an MCh-1321 instrument using a system of direct sample input at ionizing energy of 70 eV in the mode of stepwise heating sample at temperatures 120–380°C.

The single-crystal X-ray structural analysis was carried out on an Oxford Diffraction Gemini Ultra diffractometer with CuK_α radiation ($\lambda = 1.54178$ Å) in the range of angles $5.19^\circ < \theta < 62.69^\circ$. The structure was solved by the direct method with the program SHELXS-97 [47]; refinements on F^2 was carried out by the least squares method using SHELXL-97 [48]. Positions of hydrogen atoms were calculated geometrically and refined in the rigid group approximation. Crystals of C₂H₅Cl₃O₂Ti are of the triclinic system, unit cell parameters at 123 K are as follows: $a = 5.9723(5)$, $b = 7.1932(8)$, $c = 8.7000(9)$ Å, $\alpha = 93.988(9)^\circ$, $\beta = 98.826(8)^\circ$, $\gamma = 110.687(10)^\circ$, $V = 342.40(7)$ Å³, $M = 199.28$, $Z = 2$, $d = 1.933$ g/cm³, space group $P-1$. The full data are deposited in the

Cambridge Crystallographic Data Center (CCDC 1407825).

Quantum-chemical calculations were carried out using GAUSSIAN 09 program package [49] by the density-functional method B3LYP with Becke exchange functional B3 [50] and Lee–Yang–Parr correlation functional [51]. A def2-SVP basic set was used for all atoms [52]. Geometrical parameters of all compounds were fully optimized with the following vibrational analysis. All structures correspond to the minima on the respective potential energy surfaces.

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