

The Reaction of Germanium Atoms with Organic Halides

Kunio MOCHIDA* and Kumiko TASHIRO

Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Sciences, Gakushuin University,
1-5-1 Mejiro, Tokyo 171

Co-condensation of thermally evaporated germanium vapor with organic halides yields a mixture of trihalogermeryl derivatives and tetrahalogermenes as major products. The nature of these reactions is discussed.

While the composition and physical properties of germanium atom have been amply investigated, the chemical properties of germanium atom have little been studied.¹⁻⁶⁾ On the other hand, the study of carbon and silicon atoms as homologue of germanium atom has been relatively investigated and been demonstrated to be useful for synthetic chemistry and reaction mechanism.⁷⁾ Germanium atoms are also useful for preparation of various organogermanium compounds which are unobtainable by other methods, or which can be only in low yields. We now wish to report on reactions of thermally evaporated germanium vapor (atom) with organic halides (polyhaloalkanes and alkyl iodides). The present study is valuable for understanding not only of the chemical properties of germanium atoms but also of reactive intermediates in solutions.

A typical reaction of germanium atoms with organic halides by co-condensation under vacuum (5×10^{-3} Torr, 1 Torr=133.322 Pa) of thermally evaporated germanium vapor and a large excess of organic halides at 77 K is described. Germanium metal (0.5 g, 6.9 mmol) was evaporated using a resistively heated, alumina-coated tungsten spiral crucible for 1 h, while a large excess of organic halide (15-20 cm³) was co-condensed on the walls of a quartz reaction flask containing the tungsten crucible and a perforated inlet tube through which the organic halide was introduced. The crucible was maintained at 1250-1350 °C and the reaction flask immersed in liquid nitrogen during germanium evaporation and introduction of the or-

ganic halide. After germanium evaporation and introduction of the organic halides, the reaction flask was warmed to room temperature and allowed to stand for 1.5 h. After removal of the reaction flask from a vacuum line, the products were identified by comparing their GC-MASS and retention times on GLC with those of authentic and similar samples.^{6,8)}

Reactions of germanium atoms with polyhaloalkanes and alkyl iodides were examined. Germanium-containing products are summarized in Table 1. The reaction of germanium atoms with CCl_4 afforded GeCl_4 (ca. 50%), $\text{CCl}_3\text{GeCl}_3$ (7.0%), CCl_3CCl_3 (trace), and high-boiling products excluding germanium. McGlinchey and Tan found no GeCl_4 from the co-condensation of germanium atoms with CCl_4 .⁴⁾ The compound GeCl_4 presumably arises by abstraction of four chlorine atoms from CCl_4 by germanium atoms in a stepwise manner. Other process could occur such as abstraction of two chlorine atoms from CCl_4 by germanium atoms to give GeCl_2 followed by decomposition into GeCl_4 and germanium monochloride.⁹⁾ However, the latter process would be thermally unfavorable under these co-condensation conditions. The compound $\text{CCl}_3\text{GeCl}_3$ probably is formed by C-Cl insertion of CCl_4 by germanium atoms to give ClGeCCl_3 followed by abstraction of two chlorine atoms from CCl_4 . Other process could occur such as abstraction of two chlorine atoms from CCl_4 by germanium atoms to give GeCl_2 followed by C-Cl insertion of CCl_4 . However, the former process is favored, since it has been reported that GeCl_2 does not insert into C-Cl of CCl_4 to give $\text{CCl}_3\text{GeCl}_3$.¹⁰⁾ When CFCl_3 and CHCl_3 were used as substrate, the trihalo-germyl compounds formed were $\text{CFCl}_2\text{GeCl}_3$ and $\text{CHCl}_2\text{GeCl}_3$, respectively. These germanium products indicate that no C-F and C-H insertion or abstraction by germanium atoms or germylenes occur. This may be a reflection of C-H, C-F, and C-Cl bond strengths. With BrCCl_3 germanium atoms inserted selectively into C-Br bond of BrCCl_3 . Taking above results into consideration, the order of decreasing reactivity towards carbon-halogen insertion by germanium atoms is C-Br > C-Cl >> C-F. Germanium atoms reacted with dihalomethanes and alkyl iodides similarly to produce tetrahalo-germanes and trihalo-germyl derivatives predominantly. Me_2GeI_2 was also produced as a minor product in the co-condensation of germanium atoms with MeI.

Blank experiments were carried out under identical conditions. As a result, the products shown in Table 1 were attributable to the interaction of germanium atoms with starting organic halides.

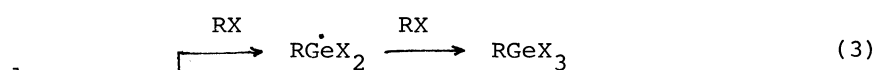
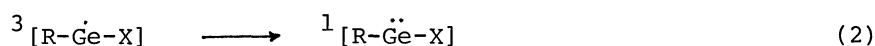
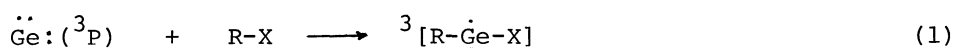
A probable pathway for products shown in Table 1 is outlined in Scheme 1.

Table 1. The Reaction of Germanium Atoms with Organic Halides^{a)}

Substrate	Products (Yield/% ^{b)})
CCl ₄	GeCl ₄ (ca. 50), CCl ₃ GeCl ₃ (7.0)
CFCl ₃	GeCl ₄ (0.6), CFCl ₂ GeCl ₃ (1.6)
BrCCl ₃	GeCl ₄ (5.8), GeBrCl ₃ (1.1), GeBr ₃ Cl (0.6), GeBr ₄ (0.7), CCl ₃ GeBrCl ₂ (0.6), CCl ₃ GeBr ₃ (7.8)
CHCl ₃	GeCl ₄ (15.0), CHCl ₂ GeCl ₃ (8.0)
CH ₂ Cl ₂	GeCl ₄ (1.6), CH ₂ ClGeCl ₃ (0.3)
CH ₂ Br ₂	GeBr ₄ (2.0), CH ₂ BrGeBr ₃ (0.7)
MeI	GeI ₄ (14.0), MeGeI ₃ (11.0), Me ₂ GeI ₂ (0.5)
EtI	GeI ₄ (17.0), EtGeI ₃ (2.8)
n-PrI	GeI ₄ (3.0), n-PrGeI ₃ (2.7)
i-PrI	GeI ₄ (5.1), i-PrGeI ₃ (5.3)

a) Reactions were performed at room temperature for 1.5 h. b) Yields of products were determined on the basis of the amount of the consumed germanium metal on the assumption that all of the vaporized germanium metal completely reacted with organic halides.

Thermally evaporated germanium atoms possess ³P ground state. ³P germanium atoms inserted into carbon-halogen bonds of organic halides to form triplet divalent species (germylenes) (Eq. 1). The initially formed triplet germylenes rapidly relax to its singlet state (Eq. 2). Because the ground state of R₂Ge (R=H, Me) and GeI₂ has shown to be a singlet by quantum chemical calculations and chemical reactions 11-13) The singlet germylenes abstract halogens from organic halides in a step-wise manner characteristic of germyl radicals (Eq. 3). The halogen abstraction has also been reported for singlet germylenes.¹⁴⁾



Scheme 1.

On the other hand, the singlet germylenes also undergo double insertions (Eq. 4). The carbon-halogen insertion and halogen abstraction by germanium atoms and germylenes presumably reflect the bond strength of carbon-halogen bonds.

Tetrahalogermanes arise by abstraction of four halogen atoms from organic halides by germanium atoms in a stepwise manner.

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