Theoretical and Experimental Analysis of SiO₂ - a Proof of Hartman Perdok Method

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In the present paper is done a comparison between simulation of the growth form of quartz crystal using attachment energies and SEM and AFM analysis. This comparison is done to make a complete analysis of quartz crystal. This analysis from theory to experiment and to applications for α-SiO₂ presents a complete study of how are the results from simulations of growth forms of quartz crystals and which are the proofs given by SEM and AFM analysis that the obtained crystals are like in the simulations.

Keywords: quartz crystal, SEM, AFM, α-SiO₂

In the present paper is done a comparison between simulation of the growth form of quartz crystal using attachment energies including the Coulomb interaction energies, van der Waals attraction and Born repulsion and experimental results for obtaining quartz crystals with SEM and AFM analysis to make a complete analysis from theory to experiment and to applications for α-SiO₂.

The crystal structure determines the surface related energies, e.g., specific surface energy, attachment energy and slice energy, the growth rates of F faces are directly proportional to attachment energies [1]. Calculations of attachment energies enable to construct the theoretical growth forms. Hartman [2,3] derived these forms for quartz by calculating the Coulomb interaction energies in an electrostatic point charge model. In the present paper we use the Space Group P3₁2₁ with the hexagonal unit cell constants of: a = b = 0.4921 nm and c = 0.5163 nm [4, 5].

The present paper is presented a method of crystals analysis based on the point charge model which is fully validated in the present paper by the proofs of obtained crystals and SEM and AFM analysis. This method is robust and it is fitting for the purposes of prediction of growing and equilibrium form of the crystals. The significance, novelty and wider societal impact of the work reported in this article is height because can be applied to fields of healthcare and pharmaceuticals, environmental and forensic analysis, agricultural science and food products too.

Computations of Energies

The surface related energies are calculated in a point charge model. These calculations take only into consideration the Coulomb interactions. Recently, the contributions by van der Waals interaction energies and Born energies can also be computed. Since the partly covalent character of the ionic bond can be compensated by decreasing the effective point charge, the energy calculations in the point charge model must now be more reliable.

The attachment energy, $E_a$ is the energy released per mole, when a new slice of a thickness $d_{(hkl)}$ crystallizes on an already existing crystal face (hkl) [6, 7].

Matsui approximates in his model the potential energy as an approximation of the sum of pair wise interactions between atoms [8]:

$$E_{att} = -\frac{q_iq_j}{r_{ij}} - \frac{C_{ij}q_iq_j}{r_{ij}^6} + f[B_i + B_j] \exp \left[\left(\frac{A_i + A_j - r_{ij}}{B_i + B_j}\right)^2\right]$$

where the terms represent Coulomb, van der Waals and Born repulsions, respectively. Here $r_{ij}$ is the interatomic distance between atoms $i$ and $j$, $f = 4.184$ kJ A⁻¹mol⁻¹, and $q_i$ are the net charges $A_i$, $B_i$, and $C_i$ are repulsive radii $\phi$ softness parameters and van der Waals coefficients of the ion $\phi$.

All the results in computation depends on charges of $Si$ and $O$.

The Charges used in simulations for the energy are for $Si$: $q_{Si} = +4$ |e| and for $O$: $q_{O} = -2$ |e|.

When we compute corrections for the attachment energies we take into account the contributions Si-Si, Si-O and O-O for the total total attachment energies in the case of van der Waals attractions and Born repulsions. We can say in all the cases that the contribution of O-O is bigger almost 20 times the Si-Si contribution to the total attachment energy in the case of van der Waals attractions, and the contribution of Si-O this energy has an intermediate value. But for Born repulsion O-O contribution to the attachment energy is almost 1000 times bigger then Si-Si and 50.000 higher then Si-O.

The attachment energies including only Coulomb interactions are listed in table 1. Hartman made calculations for attachment energies, but he used in his calculation only Coulomb interactions and the orientation for the unit cell that he used was 60° than usual [1,2]. He has the next values: for prism m 248.06 kcal/mol for the rhombohedra: r: 303.27 kcal/mol and for rhombohedra: z: 275.88 kcal/mol.

We can see from table 1 in column 3 the correction for the energy using Born repulsion are always positive and corrections for the attachment energy using van der Waals attraction (column 4 in table 2) are always negative. We can obtained the attachment energy corrected with those two values using Born and van der Waals energies and we can obtained the value listed in column 5 of table 1.

This is the pair potential approximation, which assumes that the potentials depends only on inter atomic distance and has no angular dependence. In systems where this is not true, three - body forces can be used to represent quadrupolar effects partially. We consider Born models of solids which consists only the pair wise additive interactions describes above.

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Growth Form of SiO₂ Simulations

Using calculations for attachment energies and taking into account that the rate of growth form of the face (hkl) is direct proportional to the attachment energy, we can construct the growth form of quartz crystal.

Using the values of the column 2 and 5 from the table 2 we can obtained the growth form of quartz as is shown in figure 1a and 1b.

In figure 1a we can see a growth form of quartz when we take into account only coulomb interaction and formal charges. We can see here very well the major rhombohedra r{10-11}, the minor rhombohedra z{10-11} and the prism m{10-10}. All those forms were predicted by PBC theory and were obtained in the Hartman Theory analysis as F(Flat) forms. Figure 1b shows the image of the growth form of a crystal when we take into account van der Waals attractions and Born repulsions as corrections for the attachment energy.

All those growth forms are simulated at the same volume V=109 Å³ [3].

In those cases where the volume obtained in simulations are not the same as 109 we applied a correction for the volume and in this situation the growth form of the quartz for all the figures 1a and b in have the same volume.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>hkl</th>
<th>Eet</th>
<th>Born</th>
<th>van der Waals</th>
<th>Eₜₐ₉₉</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1010)</td>
<td>-1043</td>
<td>+97.3</td>
<td>-88.2</td>
<td>-1033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1011)</td>
<td>-1279</td>
<td>+101.2</td>
<td>-98.5</td>
<td>-1274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0111)</td>
<td>-1162</td>
<td>+88.4</td>
<td>-97.7</td>
<td>-1171</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Fig. 1. Growth form of α-SiO₂. a) Coulomb interactions only, b) Including Born and van der Waals](image)

Experimental part

Materials and methods

Raw materials

The reagents (analytical grade): NaNO₃, Al(NO₃)₃·9H₂O, (C₂H₅O)₄Si, (C₂H₅O)₄Si were provided by Merck and Sigma-Aldrich (Germany).

Preparation of compositions & materials

This method depends on one or more of the constituents forming a gel structure, the remaining non-gel forming constituents presumably held within the framework of the gel. The product of drying and then firing the gel at temperatures below 1000°C is a fine grained powder that shows no bi-refringent material under the microscope and gives no X-ray diffraction pattern. This dried, decomposed and fired material is known as GEL [16-18]. This method is not recommended for the preparation of compositions with volatile constituents because of processes at high-temperature [18].

It is better to analyze gels to test their homogeneity rather than to determine their absolute composition. The method of gel preparation employs only weightings of pure chemicals, the bulk chemical compositions depends only on the accuracy of weighing and purity of the chemicals and reagents used in the preparation. It is known what was added and if the gels are shown to be homogeneous then they must be on composition [18].

Two sources of SiO₂ are available. One is Tetraethyl Orthosilicate (T.E.O.S) and another is an ammonia-stabilized colloidal solution (LUDOX). In the experiment was used TEOS.

Hydrothermal Experiment

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{NaNO}_3 + \text{Al(NO}_3)_3\cdot9\text{H}_2\text{O} + (\text{C}_2\text{H}_5\text{O})_4\text{Si} + (\text{C}_2\text{H}_5\text{O})_4\text{Si} \\
\rightarrow \text{gel} \rightarrow H_2O \uparrow + NH_3 \uparrow + NH_4NO_3 \downarrow + \text{NaO}_4 + \text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 + \text{SiO}_2 \downarrow \\
\downarrow \rightarrow \text{SiO}_2 + \text{NaAl}4\text{Si}_4\text{O}_10
\end{align*}
\]

where:

- is gelling process by adding excess of NH₄OH (15 mL of solution 25%)
- is drying process to 110°C
- is heating process to 800°C in Ar/H₂ atmosphere
- is HPT (height pressure and temperature) experiment at a pressure of p=3 kbar, temperature of t=700°C and for different period for example T = 7 days.

Preparation and welding of gold capsule used in the hydrothermal experiment

The gold tubes with \( \Phi_{\text{internal}} = 2.5 \text{ mm} \) and \( \Phi_{\text{external}} = 2.9 \text{ mm} \) are cut at a length \( h=2.5 \text{ mm} \). They are weight before the experiment (5 tubes of that dimensions have 4.14 g). The gold tubes are pressed and squeezed and after this begin the welding procedure of the free end of the gold tube. For welding the used electrode is from Tungsten or Carbon. The intensity of electric current is \( I = 12 \text{ A} \). The welding takes place in an Ar flow to avoid oxidation (is not obvious for gold but is recommended). After the welding the free end of the tube is close. To check this we use a stereo loupe which magnified a few times to see if the result are good or not. The material (the gel) is put inside of these gold capsules and weight the quantities of materials and the quantities of water and we can write that we know that liquid solid ration is then mL/mS is already known. We close the other free end of the gold capsule with material inside. This time the welding takes place in a place where below the gold capsule we use a glass with ice. The gold capsule with material inside (gel with water in a well known liquid-solid ratio) is put inside of a TUTTLE vessel. The volume which is not use from the vessel is filled with a steel rod. The vessel in mounted inside of a safety cabinet. We connect the water cooling system at the bottom part of the vessel, the thermocouple (Type K till 1200 °C), pressure and close the valves and leave the system 12 h to check for leakage. If everything is OK we can switch on the heating in the furnace. After 1 h we can put down the furnace, on top of the vessel and using these we can increase the temperature. In the same time we
have pressure in the vessel (furnace). The temperature in the vessel increases and for this reason pressure increases too, and we have to decrease the pressure manually to avoid excess pressure in the system. Hydrothermal experiment can be made for different pressure, temperature times, and different liquid-solid ratios calculated already. The experiment ends by taking up the furnace and cooling the system with air and after that released the pressure again. After opening the vessel and then the gold capsule, we start the experimental part of recognition of the material obtained in the experiment. First, the material is taken out using water. First, we can have an optical observation on a normal optical microscope to see if there are crystals inside of the material or not. When we looked at the microscope using polarized light, we can see very well the anisotropic crystals. We can still recognize the morphology of the crystals by using 1 polarized filter.

**SEM analysis of SiO₂**

After the hydrothermal experiment, we made a SEM analysis of the obtained sample. We can observe that in the sample we got quartz crystals with F faces as those simulated in the theoretical model.

In the sample of the we can see SiO₂ and NaAlSi₃O₈ crystals after the hydrothermal experiment. Most of them are twins. In figure 2a we see twin quartz crystals; and in figure 2b we can see together with the quartz crystals NaAlSi₃O₈ crystals which have the forms like polygonal bars.

**AFM analysis of SiO₂**

We did AFM analysis of the obtained quartz crystals and we observed that the surface of the obtained crystals is not perfectly flat. In figure 3a we can observe the surface which is flat but has irregularities in heights.

In figure 3b we can observe on the quartz surface some small inclusions.

In figure 3c are shown some small striations on the flat faces of obtained quartz crystals from the hydrothermal experiments.

In his paper from 1978 Hartman continued his work with a review of the role of super saturation and adsorption of impurities in habit change [12]. The presence of high index faces is attributed to a slow growth of steps of which the interaction energy becomes repulsive when they move closer. Here is stated again that F forms are \( m\{10\overline{1}0\}, r\{10\overline{1}1\}, z\{10\overline{1}1\} \). The absence of the basal plane and of S faces between the basal plane and the rhombohedra r and z is attributed to the fact that these faces have a K character. The absence of S faces between the prism faces is due to the fact that two neighboring faces do not contain the same PBC.

Simulations of the interatomic interactions investigate microstructures of crystals and melts, and their macroscopic, thermodynamic, and physical properties. Numerical computations are particularly useful and powerful for problems that may be inaccessible to direct experimental study, such as extremes of temperature and pressure. Work of quartz crystals have been done by Burnham (1990) and Catlow and Price (1990), Cohen (1992), Stixrude and Cohen (1995), Dovesi et al. (1992), Winkler and Dove (1992), Parker et al. (1993), Catti et al. (1994), Matsui and Price (1991, 1992) [5].

**Conclusions**

From the studies of structure we find that \{10-10\}, \{10-11\}, \{-1011\}, \{01-10\} and \{01-11\} are F faces. Quartz is a very good example that has faces which are parallel to at least 2 PBCs and are not always F faces.

From the SEM analysis we observe that the simulated growth forms of quartz is in a good agreement with the crystals obtained from the hydrothermal experiment.

The microstructure of quartz crystals observed in an AFM analysis gave us information that quartz crystals grow with striations and small inclusions on the flat faces.

In this paper a method of crystals analysis is presented which is fully validated by experimental results. This method is robust and is fitting for the purposes of prediction of growing and equilibrium form the crystals in the future. The significance, novelty and
wider societal impact of the work reported in this article is height because can be applied to fields of healthcare
and pharmaceuticals, environmental and forensic analysis, agricultural science and food products too.

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