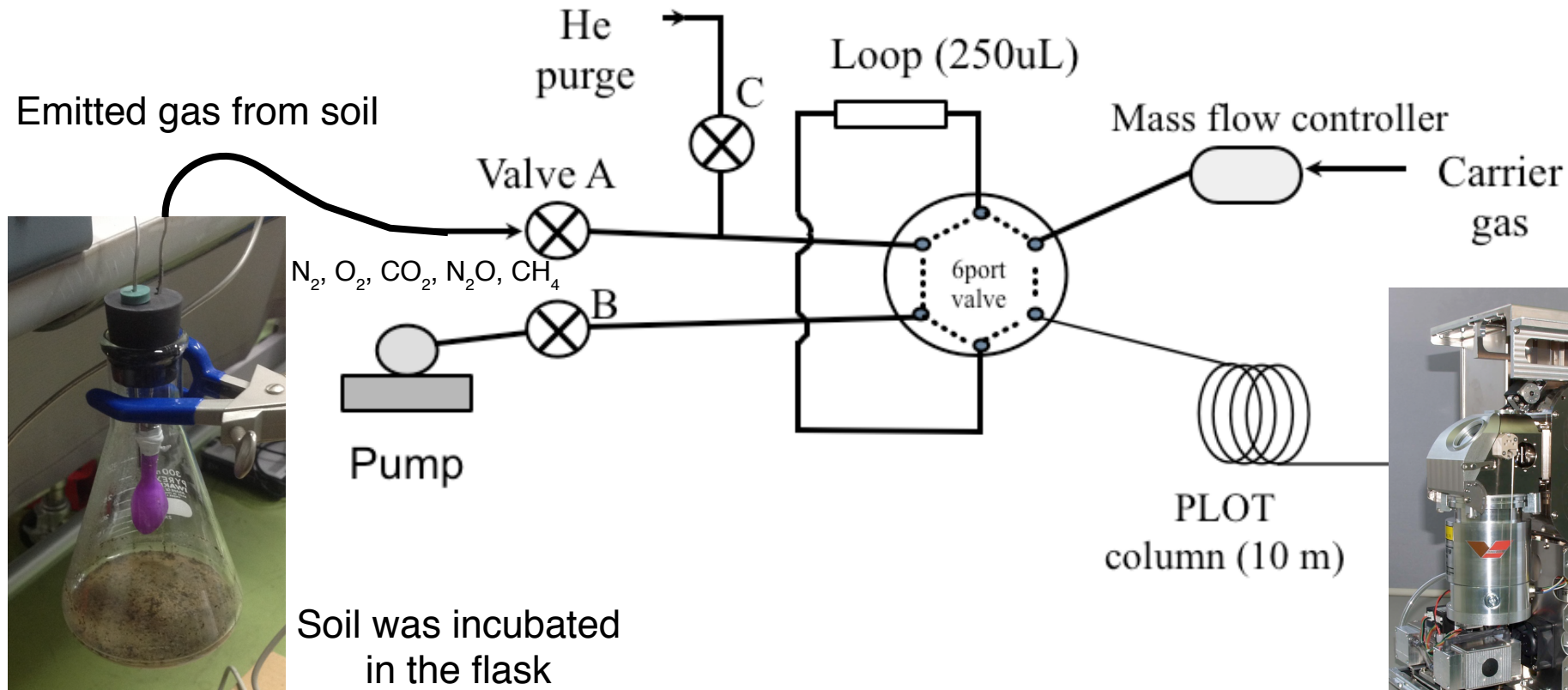




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Miniaturized high-resolution TOF mass spectrometer "MULTUM-S II"

**Real time monitoring of gases emitted from soils using the Multi-turn  
Time-of-Flight Mass Spectrometer “MULTUM-S II”**

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## 1 **Abstract**

2           Many miniaturized mass spectrometers used for on-site analysis have been  
3 designed and developed recently utilizing a broad range of analyzer platforms. These  
4 instruments are expected to have widespread applications covering many fields of  
5 interest. In our laboratory, a miniaturized multi-turn time-of-flight (TOF) mass  
6 spectrometer “MULTUM-S II” was designed and constructed. The size and weight of  
7 the developed “MULTUM-S II” is 45 cm × 23 cm × 64 cm and 36 kg. Irrespective of  
8 this small platform, it still boasts a high mass resolution capability of more than 30000.  
9 In this study, we attempted to carry out real-time monitoring of gaseous compounds  
10 such as N<sub>2</sub>, O<sub>2</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O and CH<sub>4</sub>. Using conventional miniaturized mass  
11 spectrometers, CO<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O cannot be detected simultaneously due to the low mass  
12 resolution inherent to these established analyzer designs. Using a new method,  
13 “GC/high resolution mass spectrometry” described in this paper, real time monitoring of  
14 gases emitted from soils can be achieved. In a soil incubation experiment, CO<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O  
15 started to increase just after water supplement and these gases varied similarly during  
16 the experiment, thus showing that this improved gas analyzing system could monitor  
17 short time response of gaseous production in soil.

## 18 **1. Introduction**

19 In recent years, the increase in greenhouse gases (CO<sub>2</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O and CH<sub>4</sub>) emitted  
20 from soils is becoming a global problem. It is known that these gases as well as N<sub>2</sub>, are  
21 generated by soil microbial activities [1]. In particular, N<sub>2</sub>O is known as one of the most  
22 serious greenhouse gases, and is also involved in depressing the stratospheric ozone  
23 layer [2]. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [3], warming  
24 effects of N<sub>2</sub>O and CH<sub>4</sub> are 298 and 25 times, “respectively” greater than that of CO<sub>2</sub>.  
25 The emissions of gases are affected by the influence of fertilizer N application and  
26 environmental factors (precipitation, temperature, wind speed, etc.). In the conventional  
27 method of gas sampling and measurement, gases are collected from a sampling chamber,  
28 taken to the laboratory, and measured by using gas analyzers [4]. It takes several hours  
29 to collect gas samples at the field and measure gas concentrations in the laboratory, so  
30 that frequent sampling of the gases to understand production and emission of gases has  
31 been labor intensive and difficult. Therefore, on-site gas sampling and fast analysis have  
32 been required to elucidate generating mechanisms and determine possible reduction  
33 procedures of gases produced from agricultural soils. Conventionally, concentration of  
34 N<sub>2</sub>O in collected samples is analyzed using a gas chromatograph with an electron

35 capture detector (ECD) [5]. It is difficult to apply gas chromatography using an ECD on  
36 the agricultural field because radioisotopes (e.g.  $^{63}\text{Ni}$ ) are used in these detectors.  
37 Current methods utilize an infrared (IR) analyzer to monitor concentration of  $\text{CO}_2$  [6]  
38 and concentration of  $\text{CH}_4$  is measured by a gas chromatograph with a flame ionization  
39 detector (FID) [7]. Thus, it is impossible to detect these gases simultaneously in a single  
40 analyzer. Due to the varied analyzers and conditions of this measurement technique,  
41 complicated systematic errors are an inherent problem. Gas chromatography/mass  
42 spectrometry (GC/MS) has the powerful potential to measure a large variety of gases in  
43 the agricultural field. In the conventional method of gas analysis, using a gas  
44 chromatograph-mass spectrometer [8, 9], the main components of air (e.g.  $\text{N}_2$ ,  $\text{O}_2$  and  
45  $\text{Ar}$ ),  $\text{CH}_4$ ,  $\text{CO}_2$  and  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  are separated using a PLOT (porous layer open tubular) column  
46 and detected by the mass spectrometer. The schematic illustration of a chromatogram is  
47 shown in Fig.1A. Analysis times on a scale of several minutes to detect  $\text{CH}_4$ ,  $\text{CO}_2$  and  
48  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  are a definite disadvantage of this method. In contrast, soil microbial activities are  
49 influenced by sudden changes in the environmental conditions, therefore; a higher gas  
50 sampling rate is essential. For a chromatographic separation, retention time is directly  
51 proportional to the length of a column. We attempted to shorten the measurement time

52 by using a very short column. However, the insufficient chromatographic separation  
53 might give rise to overlap of the peaks of CO<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O, O (the fragment of O<sub>2</sub>) and CH<sub>4</sub>  
54 (Fig.1B). Conventional miniaturized mass spectrometers, such as quadrupole mass  
55 spectrometers or ion trap mass spectrometers cannot separate these doublets (mass  
56 resolution <500), because the nominal mass of N<sub>2</sub>O and CO<sub>2</sub> are the same. To separate  
57 these gases in the field, it is necessary to introduce a miniaturized mass spectrometer,  
58 which has high mass resolving power. Required mass resolution to separate CO<sub>2</sub> and  
59 N<sub>2</sub>O doublet is larger than 8000 and resolution for doublet O and CH<sub>4</sub> is larger than  
60 1500. Therefore a mass spectrometer with high mass resolving power will provide a  
61 significantly reduced measurement time to separate components having the same  
62 nominal mass (Fig.1C). In this case, GC separation could still be necessary, because the  
63 target gases such as CO<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O, (whose concentrations are small), are separated from  
64 the main components of air (N<sub>2</sub>, O<sub>2</sub>) to avoid ion suppression in the EI ion source. In  
65 our laboratory, the miniaturized multi-turn time-of-flight (TOF) mass spectrometer with  
66 high mass resolving power 'MULTUM-S II' has been developed [10]. In previous work,  
67 a combination of a multi-turn TOF mass spectrometer and a gas chromatograph was  
68 applied to environmental research [11], and 1 ppb heptachlorinated biphenyl was



69 detected at a resolution of 10000. Using GC-high resolution TOF mass spectrometer, 66  
70 PCB (polychlorinated biphenyl) congeners were detected within 5 min [12]. In this  
71 paper, the preliminary results of monitoring gas emitted from soils by using a  
72 GC-multi-turn TOF mass spectrometer is reported.

73

## 74 **2. Instrumentation**

### 75 **Multi-turn TOF mass spectrometer (MULTUM)**

76 A photograph of MULTUM-S II is shown in Fig.2. The MULTUM-S II consists  
77 of an ion source, a multi-turn mass analyzer, a detector, a vacuum system, and an  
78 electronic circuit/ control unit. The total size and weight of a MULTUM-S II is 45 cm  
79 × 25 cm × 64 cm and 36 kg, respectively. The equipped ionization source is a  
80 two-stage acceleration ion source of electron ionization (EI) type introduced by Wiley  
81 and McLaren [13]. The mass resolution of the TOF mass spectrometer is proportional to  
82 its total flight path length. In order to obtain a long flight path, it is necessary to place  
83 the ions in a closed orbit and to pass the ions around the same orbit many times  
84 (multi-turn). Our multi-turn system is capable of high mass resolution because of its  
85 infinite flight path utilizing perfect space and time focused closed flight orbit [14]. It has

86 high mass resolution capability of (>30000) and high mass accuracy (<2.6 ppm). The  
87 detailed discussion about MULTUM-S II was described elsewhere [10].

88

### 89 **Gas sampling system**

90 We developed a simple automatic gas sampling system. Figure 3(A) shows a  
91 scheme of the gas sampling system to inject a pre-determined amount of gas into the  
92 MULTUM-S II periodically. This system consists of a 6-port valve (AU-CF-6, GL  
93 Science Inc., Tokyo, Japan), solenoid valves (USB 3-6-1, CKD Corporation, Aichi,  
94 Japan), a mass flow controller (SEC-E40, HORIBA STEC, Kyoto, Japan), a 250  $\mu$ L  
95 sampling loop, a diaphragm pump (N84.3ANDC, KNF Neuberger Inc., Trenton, NJ)  
96 and a short PLOT column (GS-CARBONPLOT, Agilent Technologies). A certain  
97 amount of the gas was injected into the MULTUM-S II by this sampling system and the  
98 loss of sample gas was kept to a minimum. Timing of switching for the valves and the  
99 pump was controlled using a digital I/O device (USB-6501, National Instruments, TX,  
100 USA). The timing chart of gas sampling is shown in Fig.3(B). Before measurements,  
101 the solenoid valve B was opened and the sampling loop was evacuated using the  
102 diaphragm pump. After closing the solenoid valve B, the solenoid valve A was opened.

103 Then, the sampling loop was filled with sample gas, the solenoid valve C was opened  
104 and purged with high purity He gas (99.9995 %, NERIKI, Hyogo, Japan) to prevent  
105 atmospheric contamination. The pressure of purged high purity He gas was  $1.02 \times 10^5$   
106 Pa. After gas sampling, the 6-port valve was switched to flow the sample to the PLOT  
107 column. Ultrapure He gas (99.99995 %, NERIKI, Hyogo, Japan) was used as a carrier  
108 gas of the gas chromatograph. The mass flow controller was used to regulate the flow.

109

#### 110 **Measurement of gas emission from soil**

111 In this study, soil gas emissions were monitored using the gas sampling system. Soil  
112 for incubation experiment was collected in a cornfield in Shinhidaka, Hokkaido, Japan.  
113 Soil type is classified as Andisol, and its pH, total carbon, total nitrogen, C:N ratio and  
114 texture are 5.9, 5.22 %, 0.44 %, 11.9 and sandy clay loam, respectively. Concentrations  
115 of ammonium and nitrate are 4.75 mgN/kg, and 76.0 mgN/kg, respectively. In the  
116 experiment, 3 g of air-dried soil in the 200 mL Erlenmeyer flask is incubated at an  
117 aerobic condition. After 24.5 hours incubation, 2.1 mL water was added to the soils to  
118 change the water condition drastically and enhance N<sub>2</sub>O and CO<sub>2</sub> production. Using the  
119 GC-MULTUM, we performed long term gas monitoring to detect changes of gas

120 concentrations ( $N_2$ ,  $O_2$ ,  $CO_2$  and  $N_2O$ ) emitted from soils. The total duration of  
121 measurement was 3 days (before adding water; 1 day, after adding water; 2 days).  
122 Before adding water, gas sampling and measurement was carried out every 4 hours.  
123 Between 30 min before adding water and 90 min after adding water, gas sampling and  
124 measurement was carried out every 5 min. After that, the periodical sampling and  
125 measurement was performed (27, 28, 29, 32, 36, 48, 52, 56, 60 and 75 hours). As the  
126 headspace gas was taken, the pressure in the headspace was reduced. To maintain  
127 constant atmospheric pressure in the headspace, air was injected into the flask. The  
128 sample gas was replaced by an equal amount of the air.

129

### 130 **Operation of MULTUM-S II**

131 The mass spectrometer 'MULTUM-S II' was used in the 'multi-turn mode' with  
132 electron ionization. The block diagram of the timing chart of operation of the  
133 MULTUM-S II is shown in Fig.3(C). Ions are injected into the orbiting trajectory by  
134 applying voltage to the Injection Electrode, and then the applied voltage to the Injection  
135 Electrode is turned off after all ions are injected into the orbiting trajectory. When  
136 voltage is applied to the Ejection Electrode, ions exit the orbiting trajectory and are

137 detected by the detector. The switching timing of the Ejection Electrode controls the  
138 number of cycles.

139

#### 140 **GC-MS analysis**

141 The conditions of GC were (i) ion source temperature: 200 °C, (ii) GC interface  
142 temperature: 40 °C, (iii) flow rate of He gas: 7.0 cc/min (at constant flow) and (iv)  
143 PLOT column: 10 m × 0.32 mm i.d. ; film thickness 3.00 μm.

144

### 145 **3. Results and Discussion**

#### 146 **Separation of CO<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O, O and CH<sub>4</sub>**

147 In this experiment, separating the doublets of <sup>12</sup>C<sup>16</sup>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> and <sup>14</sup>N<sub>2</sub><sup>16</sup>O<sup>+</sup>, <sup>16</sup>O<sup>+</sup> and  
148 <sup>12</sup>CH<sub>4</sub><sup>+</sup> was carried out by using the MULTUM-S II. The mixture of CO<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O  
149 (49.4 %: 50.6 %) was purchased from DAIHO SANGYO Inc. (Tokyo, Japan). The gas  
150 was introduced into the EI ion source via a needle valve. Figure 4 shows mass spectra of  
151 the doublet of CO<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O by changing the number of cycles. Since both CO<sub>2</sub> and  
152 N<sub>2</sub>O have same nominal mass of *m/z* 44, CO<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O were detected as one peak after  
153 2 cycles (Fig.4(A)). In this cycle, the doublet peak could not be separated due to the low

154 mass resolution ( $< 400$ ). After 50 cycles,  $\text{CO}_2$  and  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  peaks were separated  
155 completely (Fig.4(B)). A mass resolution of 15000 was achieved. The signal intensity at  
156 50 cycles was decreased to 10 % of 2 cycles. Figure 4(C) shows the mass spectrum at  
157  $m/z$  16 after 10 cycles. In this spectrum, the peak of  $^{12}\text{CH}_4^+$  was separated from the peak  
158 of  $^{16}\text{O}^+$ . A mass resolution greater than 2000 was achieved, hence using this TOF mass  
159 spectrometer with high mass resolving power 'MULTUM-S II',  $\text{CO}_2^+$ ,  $\text{N}_2\text{O}^+$ ,  $^{16}\text{O}^+$  and  
160  $\text{CH}_4^+$  can be separated.

161

### 162 **Evaluation of gas monitoring system GC-MULTUM**

163 In this experiment, we performed fast GC-high resolution MS to evaluate  
164 measurement of  $\text{CO}_2$  and  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  in the air. The atmospheric concentrations of  $\text{CO}_2$  and  
165  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  were 380 ppm and 314 ppb, respectively. The conditions of MULTUM-S II were  
166 (i) electron energy; 23 eV, (ii) filament current; 3.6 A, (iii) applied voltage to the  
167 detector (ETP secondary electron multiplier 14880, SGE Analytical Science Pty Ltd,  
168 Victoria, Australia); 2700 V and (iv) the number of cycles of ion packets; 50. The  
169 obtained chromatograms and mass spectrum are shown in Fig.5. In the averaged mass  
170 spectrum at the retention time of 36 to 39 sec,  $\text{CO}_2$  and  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  were separated by the mass

171 spectrometer with high mass resolving power. Furthermore, mass chromatograms were  
172 extracted using a mass window of  $\pm 0.0005$  u. In this system, CO<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O were  
173 detected within 1 min. We found fast GC-high resolution MS could be performed. The  
174 limit of detection (LOD) of N<sub>2</sub>O was less than 300 ppb with a signal to noise ratio > 2.  
175 The linear signal response was evaluated by the measurement of the diluent gas of N<sub>2</sub>O.  
176 The standard gas of 30 ppm N<sub>2</sub>O was purchased from DAIHO SANGYO Inc. The  
177 standard gas was diluted in high purity helium from 0.3 ppm to 30 ppm (300 ppb, 3  
178 ppm, 10 ppm and 30 ppm). A sample gas of 250  $\mu$ L was measured by using the  
179 GC-MULTUM. Figure 6 shows the concentration dependence of the peak intensities of  
180 N<sub>2</sub>O. The linear signal response for MULTUM-S II was shown using diluted N<sub>2</sub>O gases.  
181 Peak intensities were plotted as a function of the concentration. The linear signal  
182 response was  $R^2=0.999$ . The coefficient of variation (CV) for the standard gas of 30  
183 ppm N<sub>2</sub>O was less than 2.3 % (the number of measurements: 30).

184

#### 185 **Monitoring of gases emitted from soils**

186 Gases emitted from soils were measured to evaluate our developed system for  
187 environmental monitoring. The conditions of the MULTUM-S II were (i) electron

188 energy; 60 eV, (ii) filament current 3.6 A ( $N_2$  and  $O_2$ ) and 4.2 A ( $CO_2$  and  $N_2O$ ), (iii)  
189 applied voltage to the detector; 2700V ( $N_2$  and  $O_2$ ) and 3300 V ( $CO_2$  and  $N_2O$ ) and (iv)  
190 the number of cycles of the MULTUM; 2 ( $N_2$  and  $O_2$ ) and 50 ( $CO_2$  and  $N_2O$ ). Figure 7  
191 shows temporal changes in  $N_2$ ,  $O_2$ ,  $CO_2$  and  $N_2O$  concentrations. We found steep and  
192 large reduction of  $N_2$  and  $O_2$  concentrations after the addition of water (Fig.7(A)). These  
193 reductions may be due to dissolution into the water, but a more detailed experiment  
194 should be required to understand this variation. The concentrations of  $N_2$  and  $O_2$   
195 decreased and returned to an atmospheric level at 75 hours, indicating the headspace of  
196 the incubation system sustained an aerobic condition. The concentration of  $N_2O$   
197 increased with increasing the concentration of  $CO_2$  after the water application, reaching  
198 a maximum at a concentration of 17 ppm. This result suggests that water is a trigger of  
199  $CO_2$  production and  $N_2O$  is affected by  $CO_2$  production. Rewetting of dry soil often  
200 induces  $CO_2$  and  $N_2O$  flush from soil [16]. Both organic matter decomposition and  
201 denitrification emit  $CO_2$  as a result of microbial aerobic and/or anaerobic respiration.  
202 Similar change of  $CO_2$  and  $N_2O$  concentrations just after adding water, therefore,  
203 showed that  $CO_2$  production on rewetting process was closely linked with that of  $N_2O$   
204 production even in aerobic condition. Because  $N_2O$  production in the process of



205 denitrification requires organic C as an electron donor, N<sub>2</sub>O production by  
206 denitrification is often correlated with CO<sub>2</sub> production in soil [17]. Thus, our monitoring  
207 system could measure the response of CO<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O production induced by water  
208 supply on a short-time scale. In the future our monitoring system, combined with some  
209 closed chamber method or other gas sampling system, could be used for detailed  
210 analysis of gas production and emission, especially in the field where the use of  
211 large-scale equipment would be prohibitive. This will enable us to more easily  
212 understand the mechanisms of material dynamics in environment. Furthermore this  
213 methodology could be used to investigate other areas of interest like carbon  
214 sequestration. We could envision using our system in a future trial to monitor CO<sub>2</sub>  
215 levels on the grounds of a carbon sequestration by plant to analyze this greenhouse gas  
216 during specific periods of growing and non-growing seasons. This method could be  
217 used to detail photosynthetic efficiency of plant, by comparing the quantities of gas  
218 being absorbed and rereleased into the atmosphere during the day. There are many other  
219 potential applications including, (but not limited to) monitoring the release of methane  
220 from hydrates during deep sea drilling and potential bio photosynthetic monitoring.

221

#### 222 4. Conclusion

223 Using a gas chromatograph-MULTUM-S II, we have demonstrated the ability of  
224 simultaneous quantification of the gaseous compounds (CO<sub>2</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O) within 1 minute.  
225 Using this monitoring system, we achieved real-time monitoring of N<sub>2</sub>O, CO<sub>2</sub>, N<sub>2</sub> and  
226 O<sub>2</sub> emitted from soils. The results indicate this newly developed system can be helpful  
227 for elucidating the generating mechanism. In the future, it will be possible to achieve  
228 on-site analysis of gaseous compounds using our methodology.

229

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237

238

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294 **Figure captions**

295 **Fig.1** The schematic of chromatogram. (A) Conventional GC-MS (low mass  
296 resolution), (B) fast-GC-MS (low mass resolution), (C) fast-GC-MS (high mass  
297 resolution).

298 **Fig.2** (A) Photograph of MULTUM-S II. (B) Schematic of multi-turn part of  
299 MULTUM-S II

300 **Fig.3** The schematic of developed gas sampling system(A). Timing charts of gas  
301 sampling (B) and mass spectrometer (C).

302 **Fig.4** Mass spectrum of  $^{12}\text{C}^{16}\text{O}_2$  and  $^{14}\text{N}_2^{16}\text{O}$  doublet after (A) 2 cycles and (B) 50  
303 cycles. Mass spectrum of  $^{16}\text{O}$  and  $^{12}\text{CH}_4$  doublet after 10 cycles (C).

304 **Fig.5** The total ion current chromatogram and mass chromatograms of  $\text{CO}_2$  and  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  in  
305 the air (A) and the averaged mass spectrum at the retention time of 36 to 39 sec  
306 (B).

307 **Fig.6** The signal response curve of  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  from 0.3 ppm to 30 ppm.

308 **Fig.7** Temporal changes in  $\text{N}_2$  and  $\text{O}_2$  (A),  $\text{CO}_2$  (B) and  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  (C) concentrations emitted  
309 from soils for 3 days. After 24.5 hours incubation, 2.1 mL water was added to the  
310 soils.

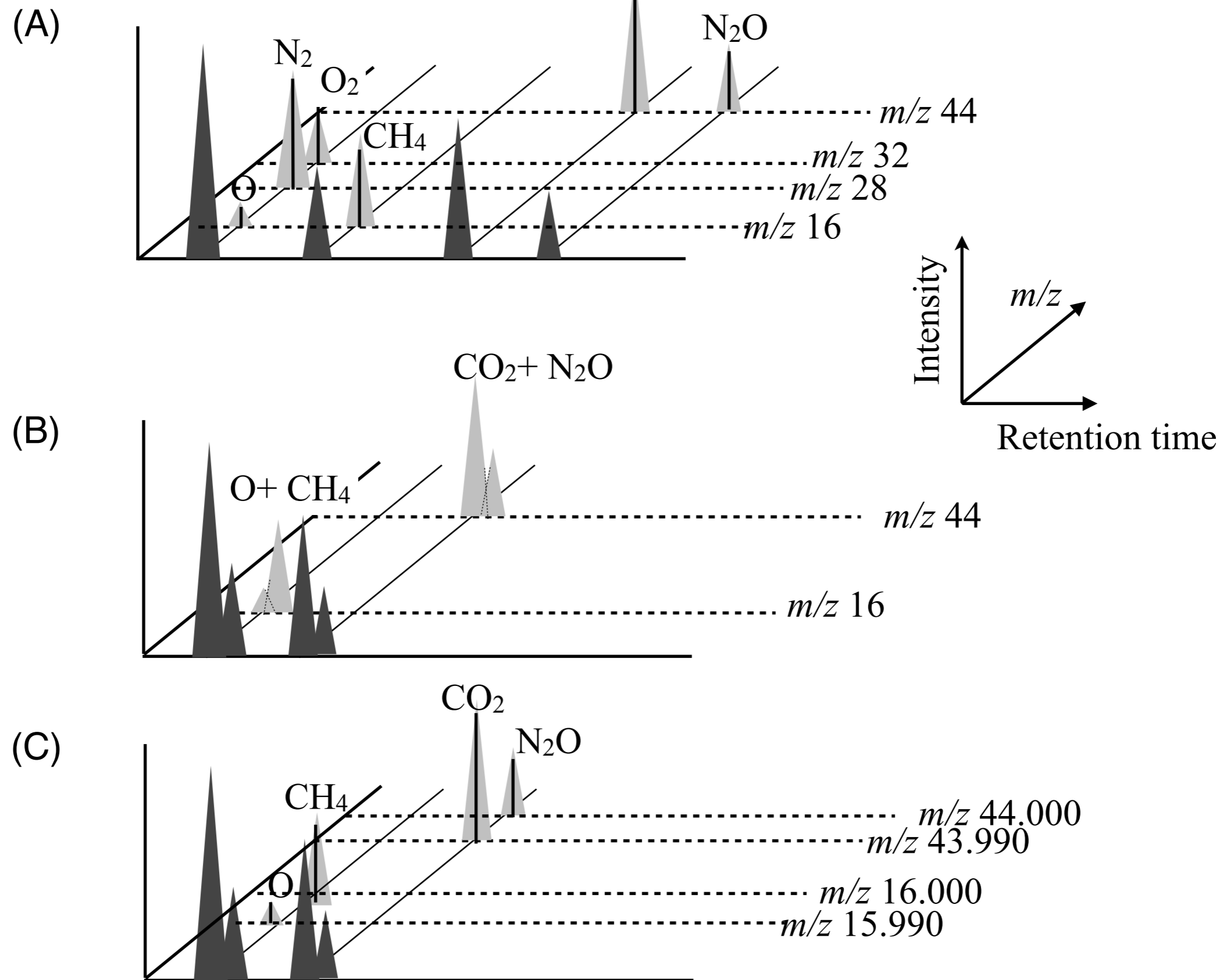


Fig. 1 Anan et al.



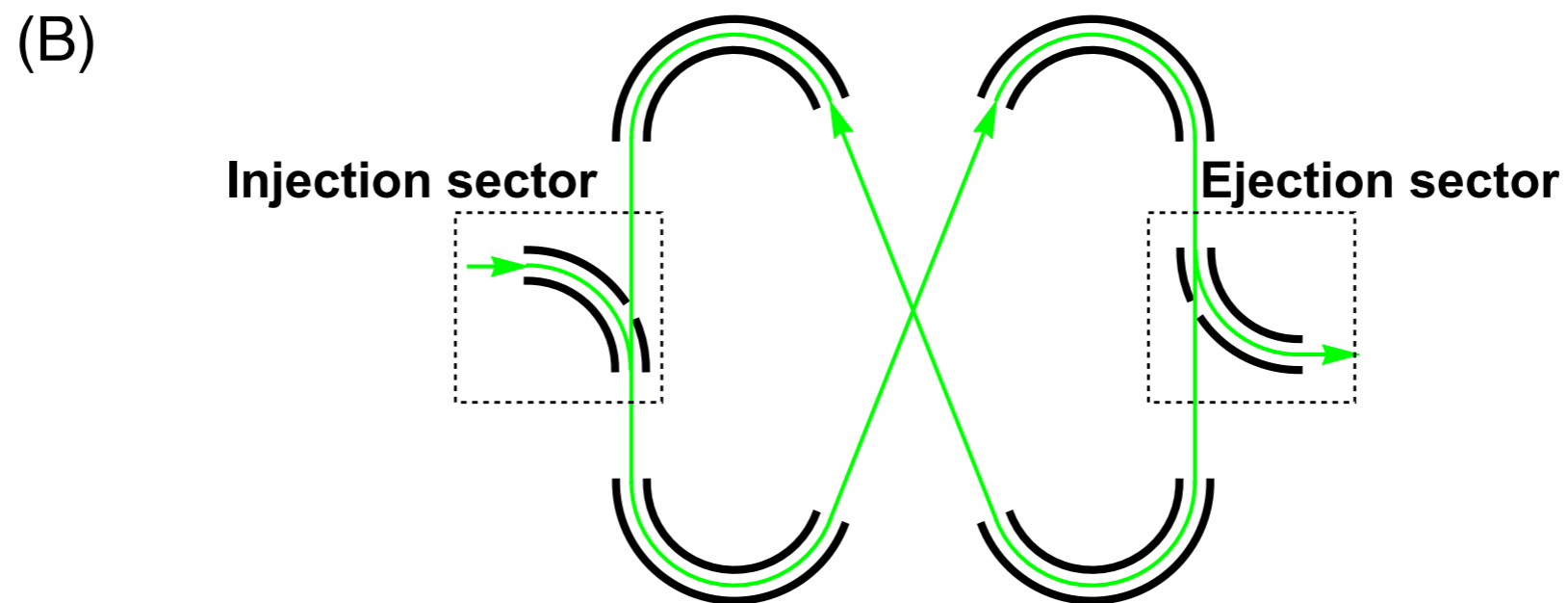
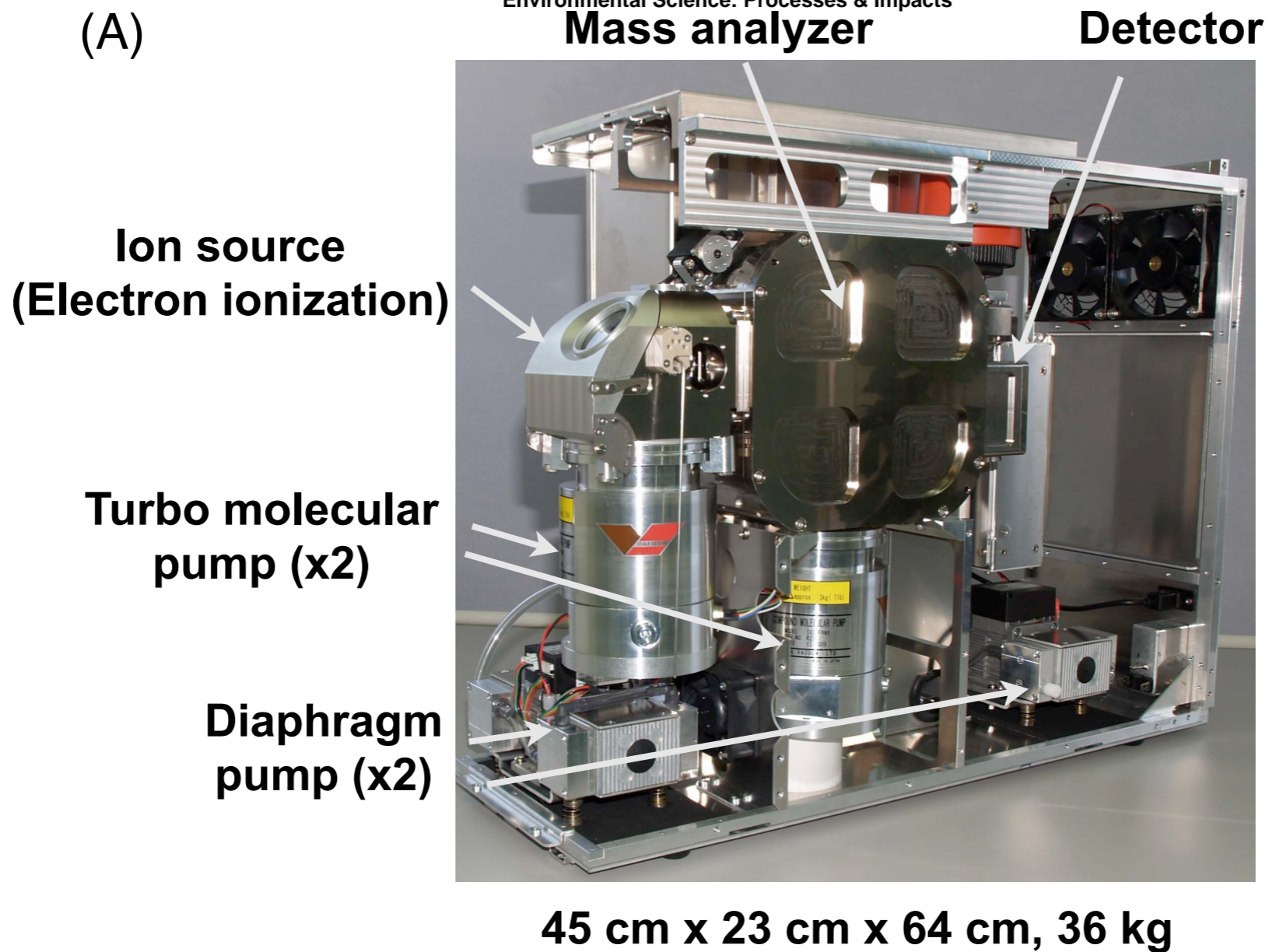
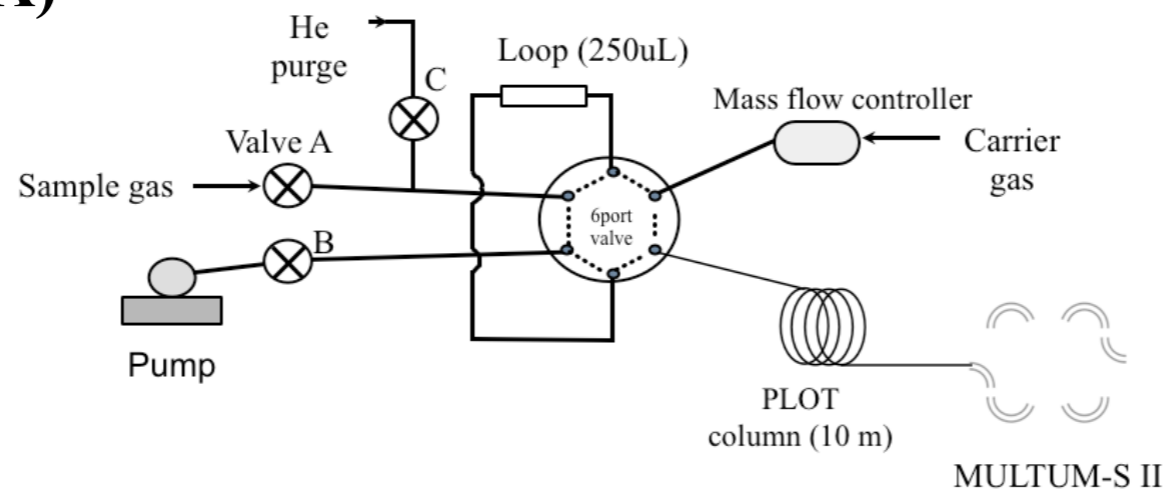
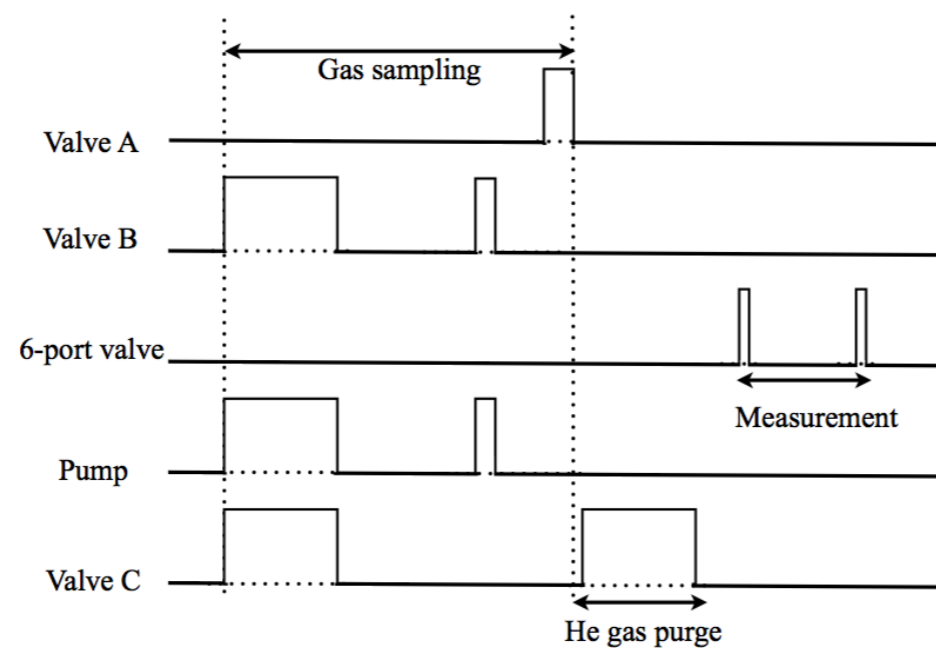


Fig. 2 Anan et al.

(A)



(B)



(C)

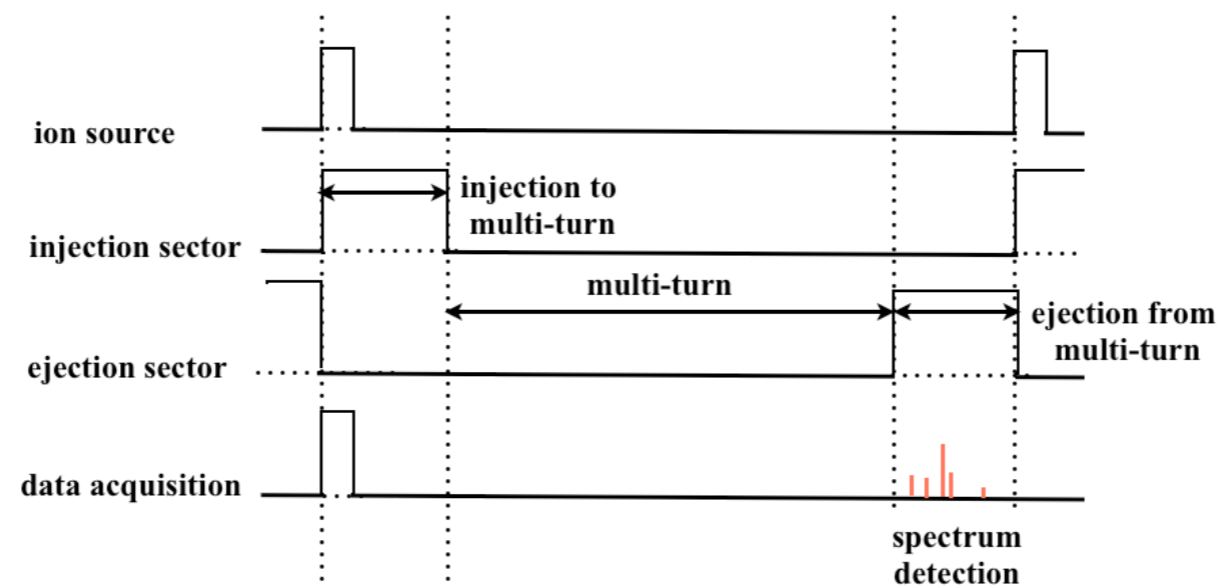


Fig. 3 Anan et al.

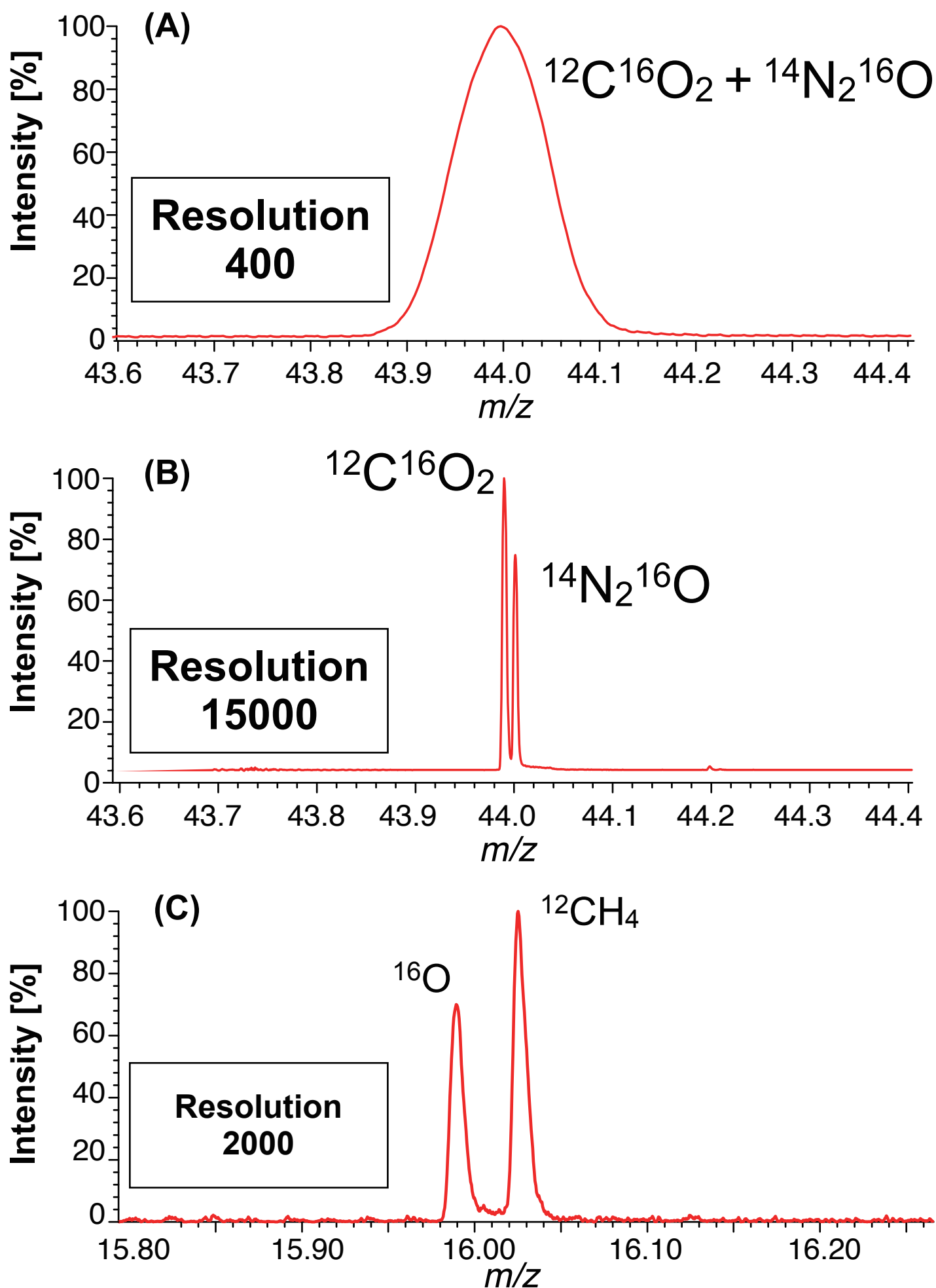


Fig. 4 Anan et al.

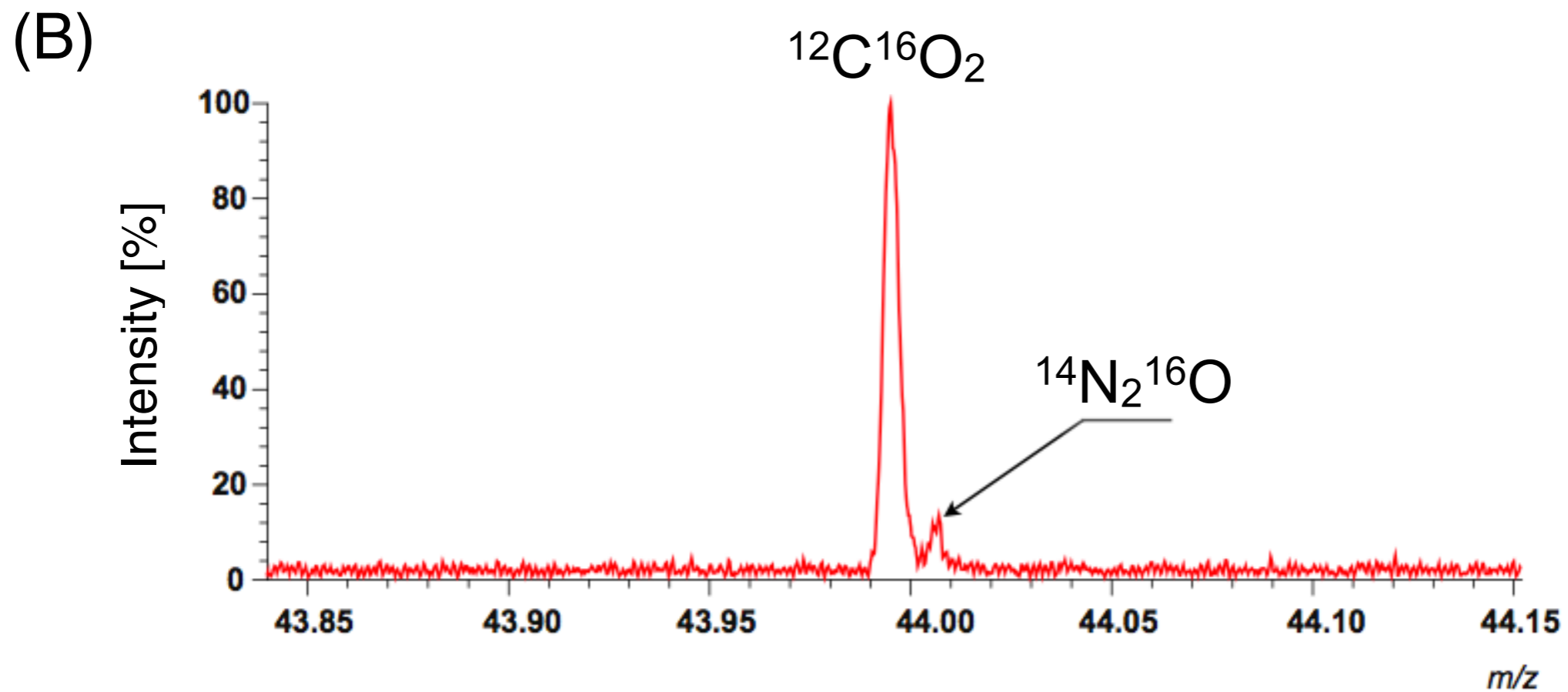
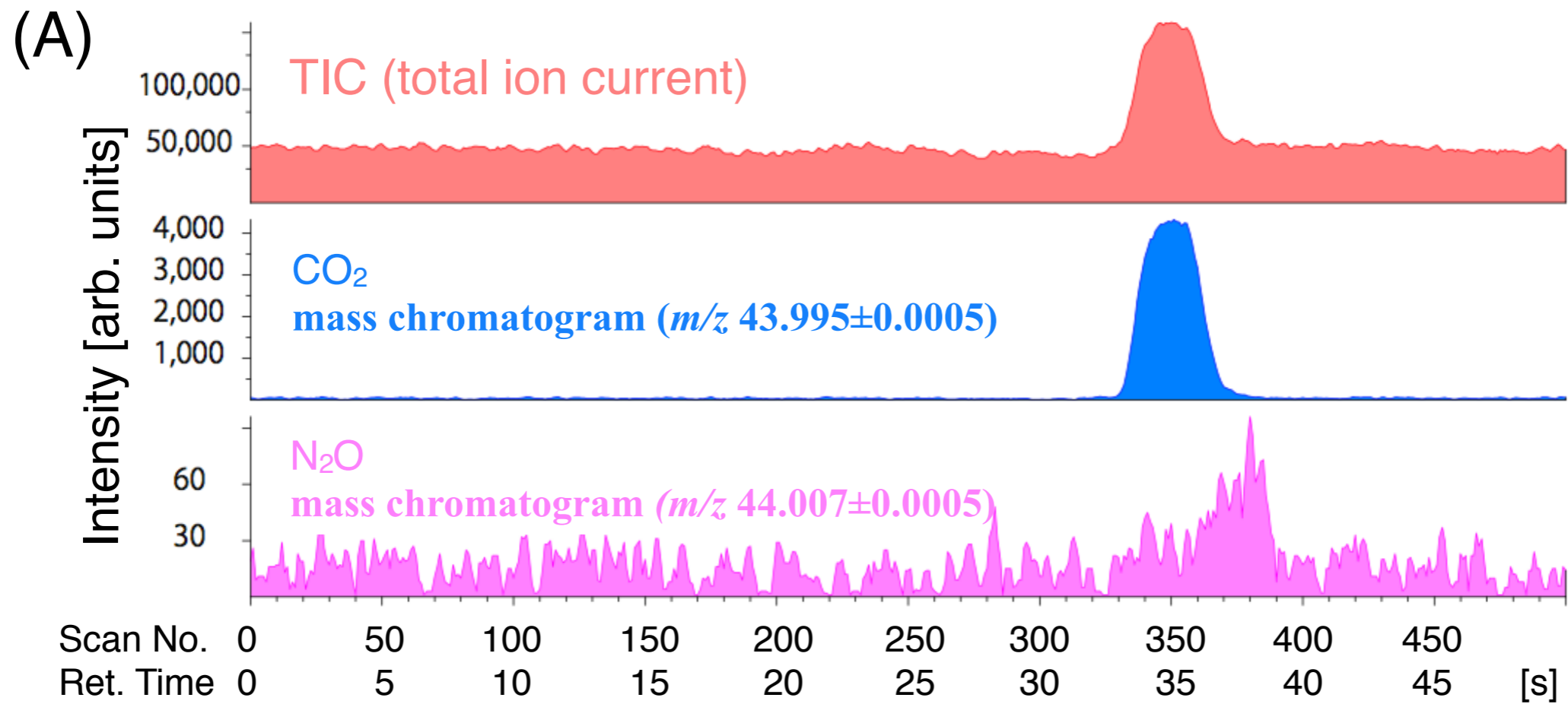


Fig. 5 Anan et al.

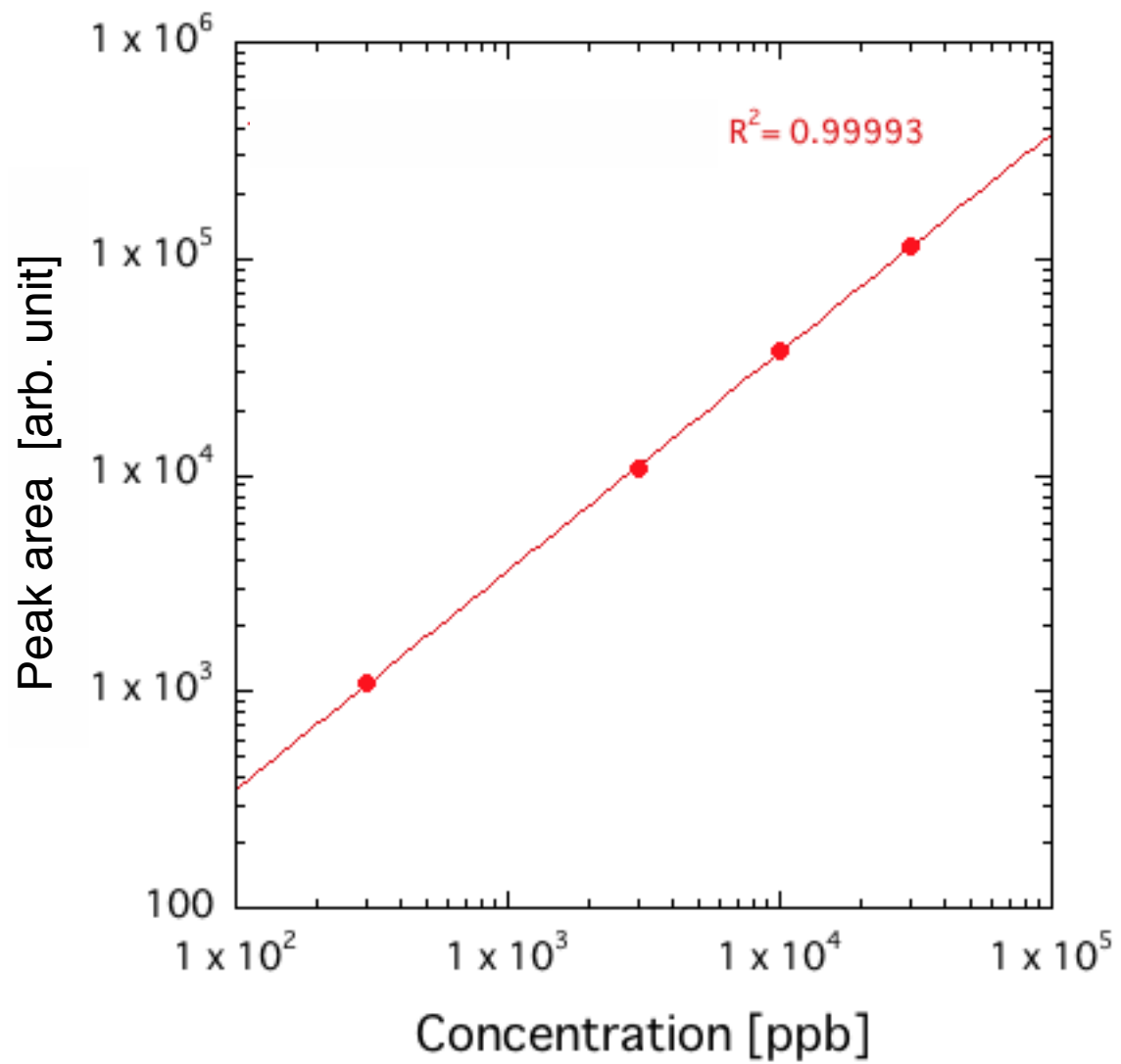


Fig. 6 Anan et al.

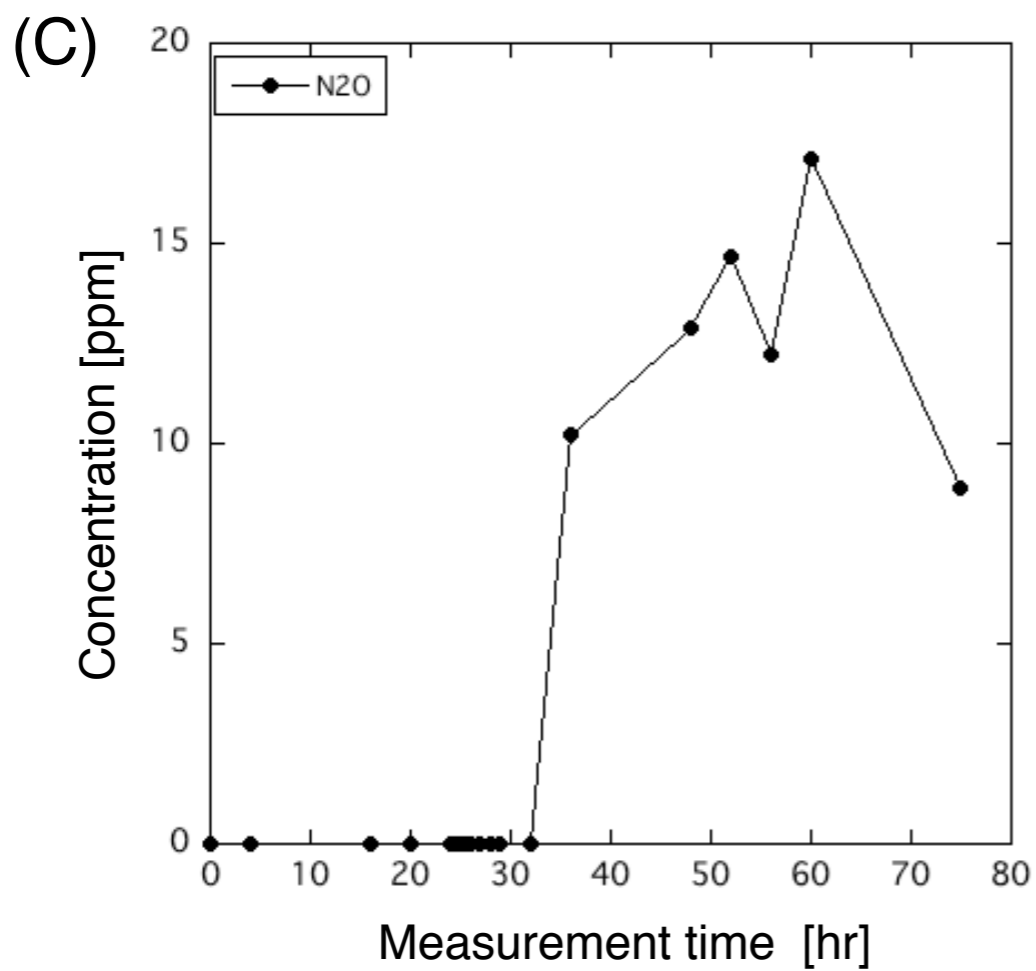
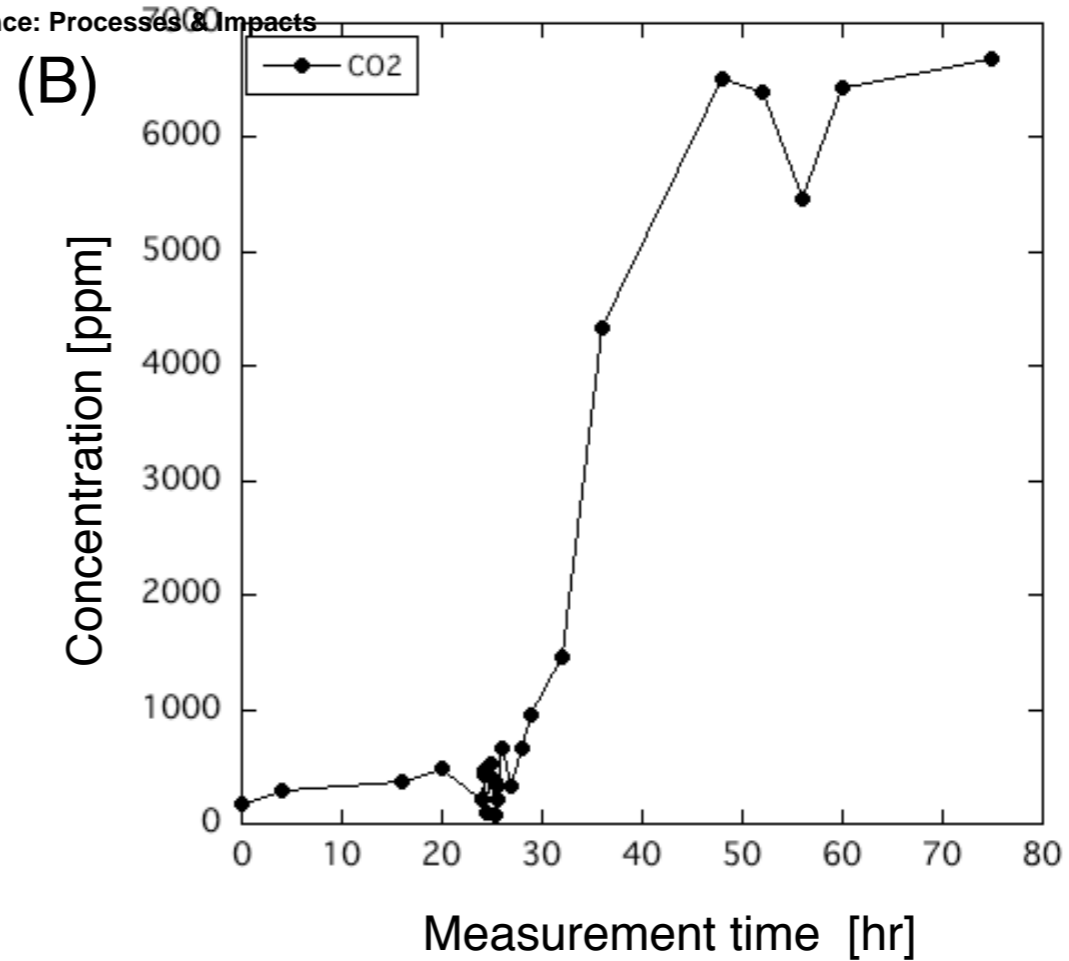
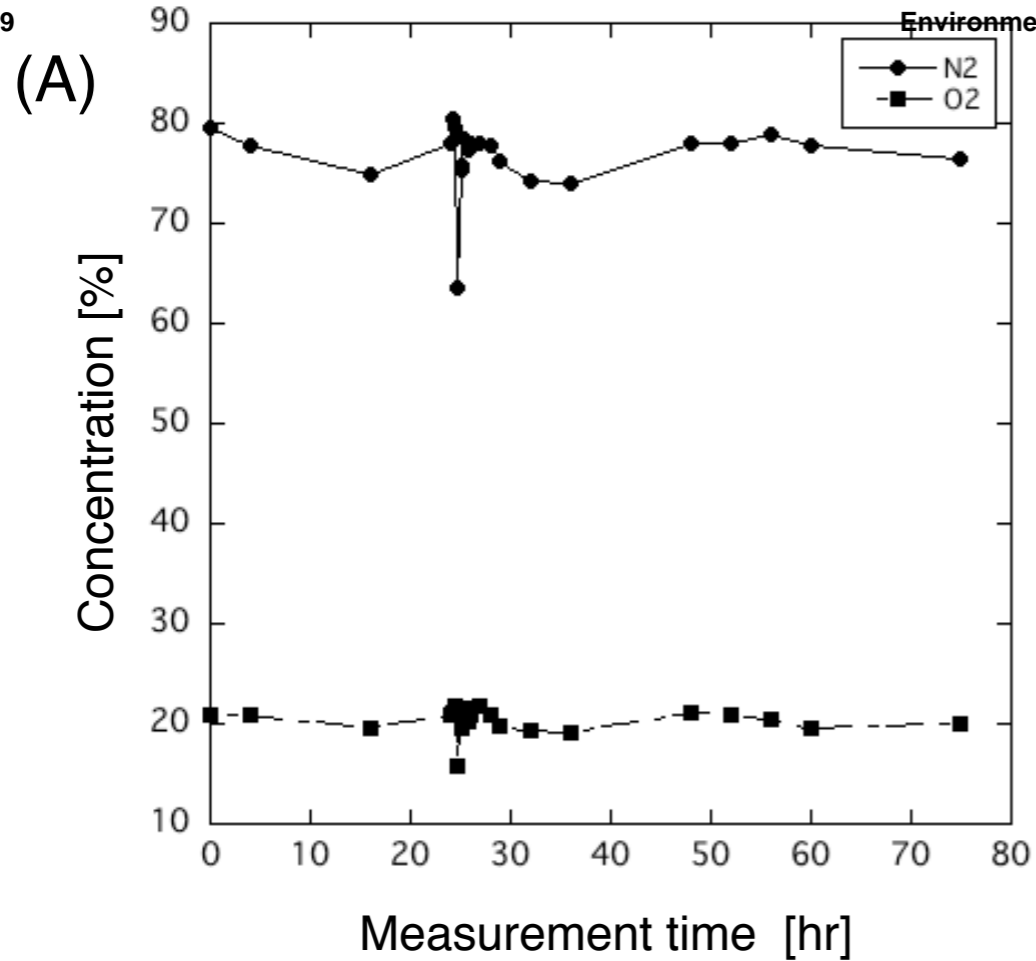


Fig. 7 Anan et al.