## **Comparative Mechanistic Study of the Reactions of Benzophenone with** *n*-BuMgBr and *n*-BuLi

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Substituent effects on reactivity and product distribution (addition vs reduction) were determined for the reactions of benzophenones with n-BuMgBr and n-BuLi at 0 °C. In case of the reaction with n-BuMgBr, metaand para-substituted benzophenones gave a reasonably linear Hammett plot, from which the  $\rho$  value of 1.45 was calculated, while ortho-substituted derivatives deviated downward from the correlation line. In contrast, the reaction with n-BuLi exhibited very small substituent effects on reactivity. The product distribution is highly dependent on substituents in the n-BuMgBr reaction, whereas it is essentially independent of substituents in the n-BuLi reaction. Mechanistic differences between the reactions of these two reagents are discussed on the basis of these experimental results.

The mechanism of additions of organomagnesium and organolithium reagents to ketones has been extensively studied, and the reactions are now considered to go through a single electron transfer (SET) mechanism.<sup>1-3</sup> However, there appears to be distinct mechanistic differences between the two kinds of reagents, as shown by the magnitude of the carbonyl carbon kinetic isotope effect (KIE) and the substituent effect on reactivity; the addition of MeMgI to benzophenone gave a large <sup>14</sup>C KIE, a medium-sized  $\rho$  value, and large steric rate retardation; the addition of MeLi to benzophenone showed no KIE, a very small  $\rho$  value, and little steric effect on reactivity.<sup>2,3</sup> The former reaction was then concluded to proceed via initial SET followed by the slow rate-determining C-C bond formation.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the rate-determining step of the latter reaction was assigned SET.<sup>3</sup>

Reactions of ketones with the organometallic reagents bearing  $\beta$  hydrogens are known to give reduction products together with normal addition products. However, in contrast to the large number of investigations on the additions of the organometallic reagents to ketones, mechanistic studies on the reductions of ketones by these reagents are limited.<sup>1b,4</sup> In the present paper, we report the results of substituent effects on reactivity and product distribution for the reactions of substituted benzophenones with *n*-BuMgBr and *n*-BuLi, in which both addition and reduction occur competitively (eq 1). The mechanistic difference for *n*-BuMgBr and *n*-BuLi will be discussed on the basis of the results.

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The reactions with n-BuMgBr in diethyl ether and n-BuLi in hexane were carried out at  $0.0 \pm 0.1$  °C. The

Table I. Product Ratios in the Reactions of Substituted Benzophenones with *n*-BuMgBr and *n*-BuLi<sup>a</sup>

	addition/reduction		
substituent	n-BuMgBr	n-BuLi	
o,p-Me <sub>2</sub>	2/98	65/35	
p-MeO	62/38	77'/23	
p-Me	40/60	73/27	
m-Me	39/61	72/28	
o-Me	6/94	71/29	
Н	33/67	73/27	
p-F	32/68	71/29	
p-Cl	10/90	73/27	
o-Cl	4/96	67,/33	
m-CF <sub>3</sub>	13/87	72'/28	
o-CF <sub>3</sub>	3/97	77/23	
•	•	•	

<sup>a</sup> Reactions were carried out at  $0.0 \pm 0.1$  <sup>o</sup>C with 0.067 M ketone and 0.14 M n-BuMgBr, or 0.08 M ketone and 0.12 M n-BuLi. Listed values are in percent and are averages of two runs. Errors are less than 3%.

Table II. Effect of Concentration on Product Ratio<sup>a</sup>

	addition/reduction <sup>4</sup>					
х	0.170, 0.083	3 0.140	, 0.067	0.095, 0.047	0.058, 0.031	
H	37/63	26	/74	24/76	18/82	
<i>о-</i> Ме <i>m-</i> Ме	8/92 37/63	6 32	/94 /68	5/95 30/70	5/95 26/74	
p-Me	40/60	38	/62	32/68	29/71	
	addition/reduction <sup>c</sup>					
х	0.19, 0.095	0.17, 0.086	0.14 0.07	4, 0.10, 1 0.052	0.062, 0.034	
H o-Me m-Me p-Me	67/33 68/32 68/32 68/32	65/35 65/35 68/32 67/33	65/3 68/3 65/3 67/3	35         69/31           32         70/30           35         66/34           33         68/32	65/35 72/28 63/37 67/33	

<sup>a</sup>Reactions were carried out at 0.0 = 0.1 °C. <sup>b</sup>n-BuMgBr (M).  $X-C_6H_4COC_6H_5$  (M). <sup>c</sup> n-BuLi (M),  $X-C_6H_4COC_6H_5$  (M).

relative reactivities of substituted benzophenones with these reagents were determined by the competition experiments as described previously.<sup>3a</sup> In Figures 1 and 2 are shown the Hammett plots of these reactions. Both reactions gave reasonably good straight lines for meta- and para-substituted derivatives.<sup>5</sup> The two sets of plots in

<sup>(1)</sup> For review articles on the Grignard reaction, see: (a) Ashby, E. C. Pure Appl. Chem. 1980, 52, 545. (b) Holm, T. Acta Chem. Scand. 1983, B37, 567.

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<sup>(5)</sup> The log  $(k_{\rm X}/k_{\rm H})$  values for the ortho derivatives were plotted against the corresponding  $\sigma_p$  constants and are indicated by closed circles. The point for the *p*-CH<sub>3</sub>O substituent in Figure 1 deviates downward, but this is a rather general phenomenon for reactions of benzophenones with RMgX and other organometallic reagents in diethyl ether or THF.<sup>2.3.6</sup> This is probably due to inadequacy of using the standard  $\sigma$  constant for the hydrogen-bond accepting substituent in ethereal solvent.<sup>6</sup>



Figure 1. Variations of reactivity with  $\sigma$  values for the reactions of substituted benzophenones with *n*-BuMgBr. Closed circles denote ortho substituents.



Figure 2. Variations of reactivity with  $\sigma$  values for the reactions of substituted benzophenones with *n*-BuLi. Closed circles denote ortho substituents.

Figures 1 and 2 show difference patterns, indicating that the mechanism is different in these two reactions. Product ratios (addition vs reduction) were determined by GLC and are collected in Tables I and II.

*n***-BuMgBr.** Benzhydrol is the major product in the reaction of benzophenone with *n*-BuMgBr. However, the product ratio is highly dependent on the substituent. Two points are apparent in Table I: (1) a larger amount of the reduction product was obtained for a ketone with a more electron-withdrawing substituent (the same trend was previously noted by Holm in the reaction of *i*-BuMgBr with substituted benzophenones);<sup>1b</sup> (2) ortho-substituted benzophenones afforded the reduction product almost exclusively. This reflects smaller steric hindrance in the reduction transition state (TS) compared to the addition TS.

Although the overall reaction is a composite of the two reaction pathways and therefore the reactivity should not necessarily follow a simple Hammett relationship, it gives a reasonably good linear plot as shown Figure 1. We have previously reported the carbonyl-carbon kinetic isotope effect and the substituent effect in the reaction of benzophenone with MeMgI, in which only addition takes place.<sup>2</sup> The results allowed us to conclude that the ratedetermining step of the addition reaction is alkyl transfer, which follows the initial electron transfer (ET) step (path a in eq 2). Since it is reasonable to assume that the addition reaction of n-BuMgBr proceeds via the same mechanism as that of MeMgI, the overall reaction mechanism for *n*-BuMgBr can be most simply represented by eq 2; there is an ET preequilibrium, which is followed by



the two competitive rate-determining steps a (for addition) and b (for reduction).

It is interesting here to compare the substituent effects for the two reagents, *n*-BuMgBr and MeMgI. Although the effects are similar in a qualitative sense, two points of difference are apparent quantitatively. First, the overall Hammett  $\rho$  value is larger for *n*-BuMgBr (1.45) than for MeMgI (0.54), and second the rate retardation due to ortho substituents compared to their para counterparts is smaller for *n*-BuMgBr (e.g.,  $k_{o\text{-Me}}/k_{p\text{-Me}} = 0.41$ ) than for MeMgI (e.g.,  $k_{o\text{-Me}}/k_{p\text{-Me}} = 0.044$ ).

The larger  $\rho$  value for *n*-BuMgBr is consistent with the competitive reaction scheme in eq 2, since the experimental results by Holm indicate a larger  $\rho$  value for reduction than for addition;<sup>1b</sup> the  $\rho$  value is larger for *n*-BuMgBr because of the concurrence of reduction with addition. The observed trend of a greater amount of the reduction product for benzophenone bearing a more electron-withdrawing substituent is another manifestation of a larger  $\rho$  value for reduction. Thus the substituent effect on reactivity correlates well with the substituent effect on product distribution.

The effects of ortho substituents on rate and product distribution also correlate with each other. The rate-retardation effects by ortho substituents are smaller for n-BuMgBr than for MeMgI because of a smaller steric hindrance for reduction, which at the same time brings about a larger amount of the reduction product for ortho-substituted derivatives.

*n***-BuLi.** The reaction of *n*-BuLi gave totally different results from the reaction of *n*-BuMgBr. A small  $\rho$  value and no rate retardation due to the ortho substituents were observed as in the addition reaction with MeLi.<sup>3a</sup> These results are consistent with the reaction scheme in eq 2, in which, contrary to the *n*-BuMgBr case, the initial ET step is rate determining.<sup>3</sup>

It was a surprise to us that the product ratio listed in Table I is independent of the substituent on benzophenone in the reaction with n-BuLi. Even ortho-substituted benzophenones gave similar amounts of reduction products compared to that for the parent compound. This is in sharp contrast to the reaction with *n*-BuMgBr, in which predominant amounts of reduction occur for the orthosubstituted benzophenones. This indicates that the product-determining steps for addition and reduction in the n-BuLi reaction suffer from similar steric as well as electronic effects by the substituents. However, since *n*-Bu and H are apparently different in size, the two bondforming transition states, one for C-Bu and the other for C-H formation, should have different steric requirements. A clear answer to the origin of the absence of substituent effects on the product distributions for n-BuLi must await further study, but one possibility may be that the product-determining steps are not the C-Bu and C-H bond formations, but steps that are independent of the ketone structure, such as the formations of Bu radical and H radical plus butene from the n-BuLi radical cation.

Concentration Effects. Concentration dependence of the product ratio, listed in Table II, is another feature of these reactions. In the n-BuLi reaction, the product ratio is essentially constant regardless of the concentration of the ketone and the reagent. This is consistent with the

<sup>(6)</sup> Yamataka, H.; Hanafusa, J. Org. Chem. 1988, 53, 772.

mechanism of the competitive formations of n-Bu and H radicals as noted above. In the *n*-BuMgBr reaction, on the other hand, reduction is more favored under more dilute conditions. The results suggest that the reduction takes place as a unimolecular decomposition of the ketone-Grignard reagent complex, while the addition occurs in higher order molecularity, as proposed by earlier studies.<sup>7</sup>

In conclusion, both organomagnesium and organolithium reagents react with benzophenone via an ET mechanism, but these reactions are different in the rate-determining steps and in the fates of the radical-ion pair formed via initial ET.

## **Experimental Section**

Materials. Diethyl ether was dried over LiAlH<sub>4</sub> and distilled before use. Hexane was dried over CaH<sub>2</sub> and distilled. All glassware was flame-dried, and anhydrous solutions were handled under dry nitrogen by using Schlenk tube techniques.<sup>8</sup> Substituted benzophenones were prepared as described previously.<sup>3a</sup> n-BuLi was purchased from Merck (1.6 M, hexane soln). n-BuMgBr was prepared from n-BuBr (bp 101 °C) and doubly

McGraw-Hill: New York, 1969; Chapter 7.

sublimed Mg (Ventron). These organometallic reagents were standardized by a method described in the literature.<sup>8</sup>

**Reactions.** All reactions were carried out at  $0.0 \pm 0.1$  °C. The relative reactivities of the substituted benzophenones were determined as described before.<sup>3a</sup> The concentrations of the ketone and the reagent in this experiment were 0.07 M and 0.03 M, respectively. Reactions to determine the product ratio were carried out under various concentrations as noted in footnotes to Tables I and II. All substituted tertiary alcohols (1-aryl-1-phenylpentanols) were isolated from the reaction solution by using silica gel column chromatography. Substituted benzhydrols were obtained by the reactions of substituted benzophenones with LiAlH4. The identity of these compounds was confirmed by <sup>1</sup>H NMR (Bruker-AM360) and IR (HITACHI 260-10) spectroscopy as well as melting points (where the literature values were available), and the purity was judged to be >98% by GLC (dibenzyl ether, internal standard). Product ratios were determined by GLC (PEG HT, 2 m) by calibrating detector response factors of these products. Material balance was confirmed for the parent benzophenone and found to be excellent (>98% for both reagents).

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Supplementary Material Available: Relative reactivity data of benzophenones with n-BuMgBr and n-BuLi and the NMR and IR data and spectra of the products (15 pages). Ordering information is given on any current masthead page.

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## Phenylazophenol-Quinone Phenylhydrazone Tautomerism in Chromogenic Cryptands and Corands with Inward-Facing Phenolic Units and Their **Acyclic Analogues**

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A series of 4-(4'-nitrophenol) azophenol compounds is prepared in which ether oxygen-containing substituents are attached at the 2- and 6-positions or connect the 2- and 6-positions to incorporate the chromophoric unit into corand or cryptand structures with inward-facing phenolic groups. The phenylazophenol-quinone phenylhydrazone tautomerism of these compounds, as probed by ultraviolet-visible spectroscopy, reveals a pronounced effect of the structure of the ether oxygen-containing substituents or bridging unit upon the tautomeric equilibrium. Chromogenic responses of five cryptands with inward-facing phenolic groups to sodium and potassium ions are determined and compared.

The tautomerism between p-arylazophenols 1 and pquinone arylhydrazones 2 has been investigated extensively on compounds derived from phenols, anthranols, and particularly naphthols and summarized in several reviews.<sup>3-10</sup> On the basis of the results of early investiga-



tions, compounds from the phenol series were long assumed to exist in the azo form only. Later studies by <sup>1</sup>H NMR<sup>11-13</sup> and IR<sup>14</sup> spectroscopy revealed that introduction

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