

Preparation and characterisation of an equatorial *para*-adduct of (PhCH₂)HC₇₀ from the reaction of C₇₀²⁻ with benzyl bromide and H₂O: addition effects in the polar and equatorial regions of C₇₀[†]

Ling Ni, Weiwei Chang, Hui-Lei Hou, Zong-Jun Li and Xiang Gao*

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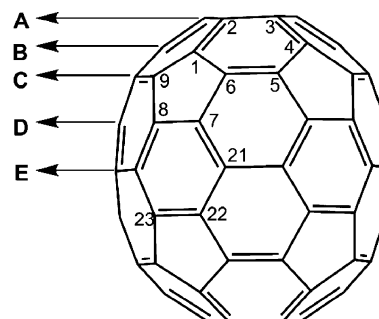
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Benzyl(hydro)[70]fullerene regioisomers with the addends in both the equatorial and polar regions of C₇₀ have been prepared *via* the reaction of dianionic C₇₀ with benzyl bromide and H₂O. HRMS, UV-vis, ¹H, ¹³C, HMQC (heteronuclear multiple quantum coherence) and HMBC (heteronuclear multiple bond coherence) NMR characterisations have shown that the addition in the equatorial region of C₇₀ affords a new (PhCH₂)HC₇₀ regioisomer with *para*-positioned addends across a six-membered ring, which is different from the “polar” regioisomers where the addends have an *ortho*-addition pattern. ¹H NMR characterisations have shown a much stronger shielding effect for the addends in the equatorial region with respect to the counterparts in the polar region of C₇₀, while cyclic voltammetry study has shown a surprising positive shift for the first reduction potential of the equatorial regioisomer with respect to those of the polar regioisomer and pristine C₇₀, suggesting that the equatorial region of C₇₀ is rather electropositive than electronegative. D₂O experiment has shown a significant difference of the deuterated product distribution between the equatorial and polar regioisomers, which can be justified by the different acidity of the (PhCH₂)HC₇₀ regioisomers. Computational calculations have been carried out to rationalize the formation of the C₇₀HR regioisomers.

Introduction

Among the family of fullerenes, C₇₀ is the second most abundant member and is the only fullerene in addition to C₆₀ that can be obtained in macroscopic quantity for routine chemical and physical study.¹ Although both C₆₀ and C₇₀ have similar electronic structures by showing almost identical electrochemical properties,² and are capable of undergoing similar reactions,³ the chemistry of C₇₀ is much more complicated by the presence of five types of carbon atoms (Scheme 1) due to the low symmetry of the molecule,^{3–5} and has still remained quite challenging. Notably, the organo[70]fullerenes have demonstrated a better performance as organic electronic materials than the C₆₀ counterparts⁶ probably due to the inherent difference of electronic structures, it is therefore of importance to explore more of the chemistry of C₇₀.

Previous work has shown that both C₆₀ and C₇₀ are readily reduced to anionic species by either electrochemical⁷ or chemical



Scheme 1 Illustrated diagram of C₇₀. Partial numbering is taken from ref. 5. A, B, C, D, and E represent five different types of carbon atoms.

methods,^{8,9} which can be used to react with organic halides for further functionalizations.^{7,8,9b} We have recently reported the reaction of C₆₀²⁻ with organic halides and H₂O, where 1,2-organo(hydro)[60]fullerenes are the major products instead of 1,4-diorgano[60]fullerenes,¹⁰ which are usually the predominant products when H₂O is not involved in the reaction.^{8,10} However, the reaction of C₇₀²⁻ with organic halides and H₂O has not been examined up to date. Herein, we report the reaction of C₇₀²⁻ with benzyl bromide and H₂O, where a novel (PhCH₂)HC₇₀ product with the *para*-addends in the equatorial region was isolated in addition to the previously reported (PhCH₂)HC₇₀ and (PhCH₂)₂C₇₀ products.^{7b,11} Interestingly, the ¹H NMR has shown

State Key Laboratory of Electroanalytical Chemistry, Changchun Institute of Applied Chemistry, Graduate School of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Chinese Academy of Sciences, 5625 Renmin Street, Changchun, Jilin, 130022, China. E-mail: xgao@ciac.jl.cn

[†] Electronic supplementary information (ESI) available: ¹H and ¹³C NMR, MS, and HPLC of H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ regioisomers and 7,23-(PhCH₂)₂C₇₀, cyclic voltammograms of C₇₀ and 7,23-(PhCH₂)₂C₇₀, and Cartesian coordinates, total energies and lowest frequencies of the reported stationary points for 1-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻, 2-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻, 5-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻, 7-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻, 21-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻ intermediates and **2**, **4**, **5**, **6**, **7** obtained at B3LYP/6-31G level. See DOI: 10.1039/c1ob05809f

a much stronger shielding effect for the fullereryl proton in the equatorial region with respect to that in the polar region of C_{70} , while the cyclic voltammetry has shown a positive-shifted reduction potential for the equatorial regioisomer with respect to the polar regioisomers and pristine C_{70} , suggesting a significant inherent difference between the equatorial and the polar regions of C_{70} .

Results and discussion

Synthesis and characterisation of 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀

The reaction for the synthesis of 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ was carried out in moisture DMF around 15 °C, and the procedures were similar to those reported previously for the synthesis of organo(hydro)[60]fullerenes.¹⁰ At higher temperature, the compound was found to be unstable. Fig. 1 shows the HPLC trace of the crude products, where four fractions labeled as **P1** to **P4** were obtained along with unreacted C_{70} .

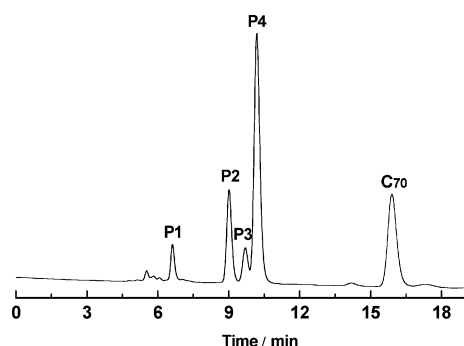


Fig. 1 HPLC trace of the crude reaction mixture of C_{70}^{2-} with benzyl bromide and H_2O in moisture DMF. The mixture was eluted with toluene over a semi-preparative Buckyprep column (20 × 250 mm) at a flow rate of 4.0 mL min⁻¹ with detector wavelength set at 380 nm.

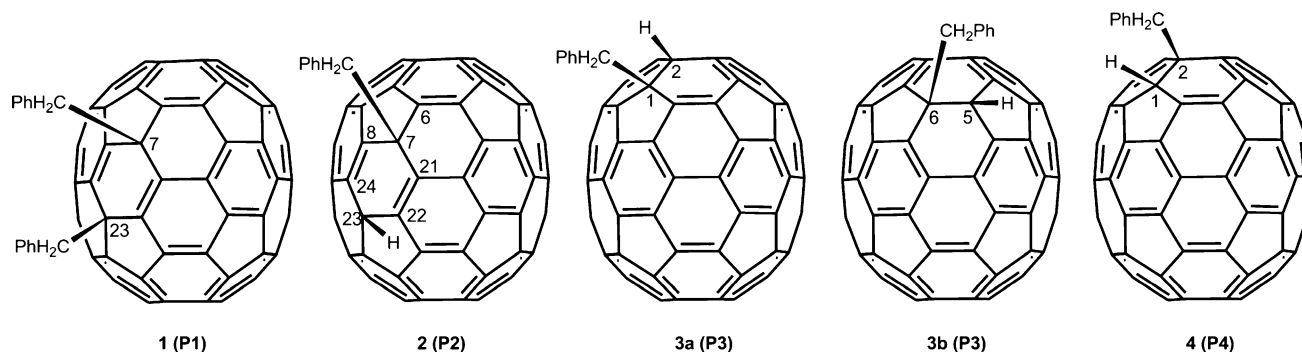
The structural identifications for **P1**–**P4** are achieved with the UV-vis, HRMS, and NMR characterisations. It is noteworthy that a considerable amount of toluene residue, which is from the HPLC purification of the products, is present in the NMR spectra of the products (see ESI for the NMR spectra†) even though the compounds were dried under vacuum for one or two days prior to the NMR measurements, suggesting the existence of strong interactions between the C_{70} derivatives and toluene, similar to the case reported recently for the singly bonded PhCH₂C₆₀–

C_{60} CH₂Ph dimer.¹² On the basis of the spectral characterisations (see ESI†) and comparison with the literature results,^{7b,11} it shows that fraction **P1** is 7,23-(PhCH₂)₂C₇₀ (**1**), **P3** consists of a mixture of 1,2-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ (**3a**) and 5,6-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ (**3b**), and **P4** corresponds to 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ (**4**) as shown in Scheme 2. It is interesting to find that fraction **P2** consists of a novel product, in which the benzyl and H-atom are placed at the 7,23-positions. C_{70} derivatives with such an addition pattern have been reported in literature,¹³ however, to the best of our knowledge, the compound is the first example of C_{70} monoadduct with the H-atom and the organo group positioned with a *para*-addition pattern. Such a *para*-addition involving a small hydrogen atom has been previously observed for 1,4-H(*t*-Bu) C_{60} , however, the compound is very unstable and transformed into 1,2-H(*t*-Bu) C_{60} quickly.¹⁴ Stable fullerene derivatives with the *para*-addition of hydrogen atom are reported for multiple-adducts such as hydrogenated diaryldihydropyridazine C_{60} ¹⁵ and $C_{70}H_8$,^{9a} and the stability of such configuration in fullerene multiple adducts is likely due to the cooperative effects of the multiple addends.

The negative ESI FT-ICR MS (electrospray ionization Fourier transform ion cyclotron resonance mass spectrometry) of **P2** shows the monoisotopic $[M - H]^-$ at 931.05629, which agrees well with the theoretical value of 931.05478, indicating that the compound has a formula of H(PhCH₂) C_{70} . The UV-vis spectrum of **P2** is essentially the same as that of **P1** (see Figure S1†), indicating that **P2** has the same addition pattern as that of 7,23-(PhCH₂)₂C₇₀, since the UV-vis absorptions of C_{70} adducts are more characteristic of the addition patterns rather than the variance of the addition appendages.^{9b,11b,16} Therefore, **P2** is tentatively identified as 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ based on the HRMS and UV-vis spectroscopy.

The structure of **P2** is further characterized with NMR spectroscopy (recorded in CS₂ with acetone-*d*₆ as the external lock, see Figure S2†). The ¹H NMR of the compound shows an AB quartet centered at 2.96 ppm (ABq, $\Delta\nu_{AB} = 94$ Hz, $J_{AB} = 12.6$ Hz) due to the methylene protons, and a singlet at 2.79 ppm arising from the fullereryl proton. Resonances in the aromatic region are also observed, confirming the presence of the benzyl group in the molecule. The appearance of an AB quartet indicates that the methylene protons are diastereotopic to each other, implying that the added benzyl groups are not in the symmetry plane of the molecule.¹⁷

The ¹³C NMR of **P2** (recorded in CS₂ with DMSO-*d*₆) exhibits three sp³ resonances at 56.88, 46.46 and 44.66 ppm. The DEPT (distortionless enhancement by polarization transfer) HMQC



Scheme 2 Illustrated structures of C_{70} derivatives obtained from the reaction of C_{70}^{2-} with benzyl bromide and water in DMF.

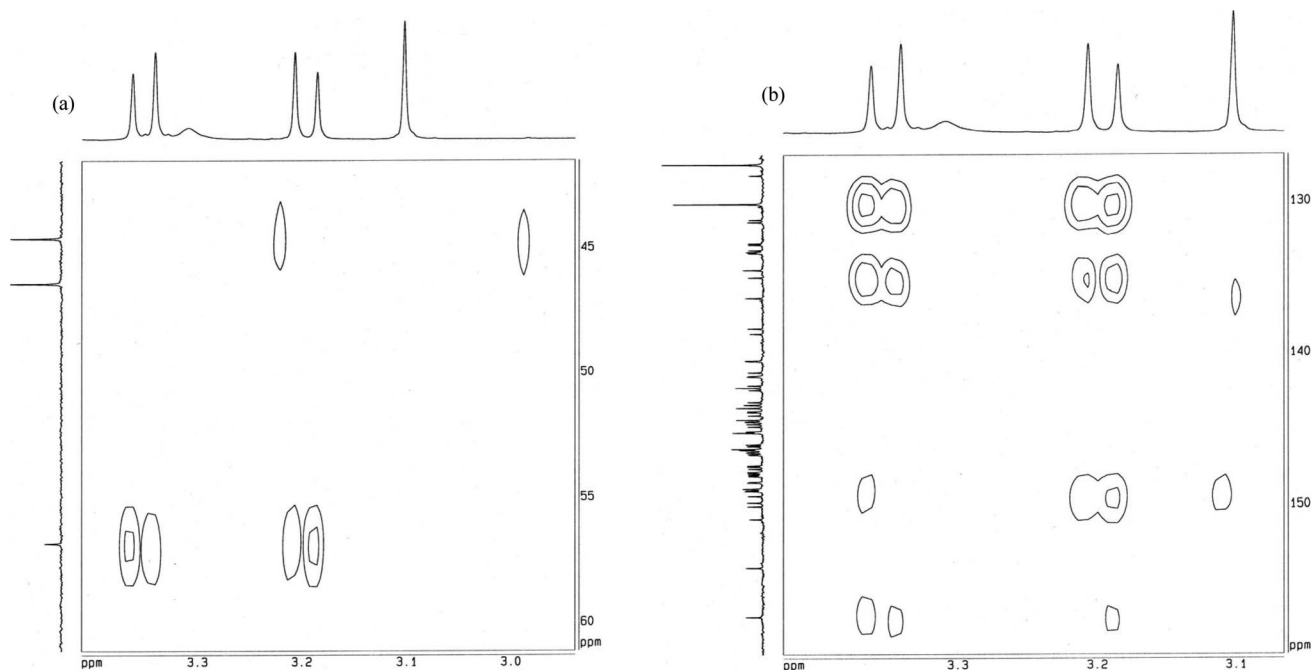


Fig. 2 Expanded HMBC NMR spectrum of **P2** recorded in CS_2 with $\text{DMSO-}d_6$ as the external lock. (a) Correlations with the sp^3 carbon atoms. (b) Correlations with the sp^2 carbon atoms.

NMR spectrum shows two cross peaks, one is between the fullereryl proton and the carbon resonance at 44.66 ppm and the other is between the methylene quartet and the carbon resonance at 46.46 ppm. The results show unambiguously that the resonance at 46.46 ppm is due to the benzylic carbon atom, while the resonances at 56.88 and 44.66 ppm correspond to the C_{70} carbon atoms bonded to the benzyl group and the fullereryl hydrogen respectively. As for the sp^2 region, it shows a total of 63 C_{70} carbon atoms from 157.4 to 131.2 ppm, along with four resonances from 134.6 to 126.6 ppm for the phenyl carbons. The result confirms that **P2** is a C_{70} monoadduct with C_1 symmetry. Further structural assignment is obtained with the HMBC NMR, since it is possible to identify the connectivity of the C_{70} carbon atoms adjacent to the appendages by showing the two-bond and three-bond hydrogen-carbon ($^2J_{\text{CH}}$ and $^3J_{\text{CH}}$) correlations.¹⁸

Fig. 2 shows the expanded HMBC spectrum of **P2** recorded in CS_2 with $\text{DMSO-}d_6$ as the external lock, and several important features are revealed. First, in the sp^3 carbon region (Fig. 2a), there is no correlation between the methylene protons (AB quartet) and the fullereryl carbon atom (44.66 ppm), and neither is there a correlation between the fullereryl proton and the sp^3 C_{70} carbon atom bonded to the benzyl group (56.88 ppm), indicating the missing of the $^2J_{\text{CH}}$ couplings between the fullereryl proton and the sp^3 C_{70} carbon atom bonded to the benzyl group, and also the absence of the $^3J_{\text{CH}}$ couplings between the benzylic protons and the fullereryl carbon atom.^{18,19} This provides important information that the two addends are not positioned adjacently with the *ortho*-position. The exhibited correlation between the AB quartet and the carbon resonance at 56.88 ppm is due to the $^2J_{\text{CH}}$ couplings between the methylene protons and the C_{70} carbon atom bonded to the benzyl group, consistent with the formation of the $\text{C}_{70}\text{-CH}_2\text{Ph}$ bond. Notably, the cross peaks involving the carbon atom at 44.66 ppm do not line up with any protons, and they are likely due to the artifacts.

Fig. 2b shows the HMBC spectrum with the correlations in the sp^2 region. The most important feature is that both the benzylic protons and the fullereryl proton are correlated with the same carbon atoms resonating around 150 ppm, which provides the key evidence that the benzyl and H-atom are positioned across a six-membered ring of C_{70} with a *para*-position, since both C8 and C21 (Scheme 2) can be simultaneously correlated with the methylene and fullereryl protons *via* $^3J_{\text{CH}}$ couplings. In addition, it is noteworthy that the most downfield carbon atom is correlated with the methylene protons, which is likely due to the $^3J_{\text{CH}}$ couplings between C6 (Scheme 2) and the methylene protons, consistent with the previous results on C_{60} derivatives that the sp^2 fullerene carbon atoms located immediately adjacent to the fullerene sp^3 carbons are the ones with the most downfield resonance.²⁰

^1H NMR of $\text{H}(\text{PhCH}_2)\text{C}_{70}$ regioisomers and strong shielding in the equatorial region

The ^1H NMR chemical shifts of the addends can be used as an external probe for the local aromaticity and ring currents of fullerenes and fullerene hexaanions.²¹ The availability of 7,23- $(\text{PhCH}_2)\text{HC}_{70}$ is of interest since it is possible to compare the ^1H NMR resonances of the equatorial and polar regioisomers of $\text{H}(\text{PhCH}_2)\text{C}_{70}$, which may reveal the regional difference over the C_{70} molecule surface. Table 1 lists the chemical shifts for the fullereryl and methylene protons of the obtained $\text{H}(\text{PhCH}_2)\text{C}_{70}$ regioisomers recorded in $\text{CS}_2/\text{CDCl}_3$, along with literature values recorded in the same solvent.

As is shown in Table 1, an increased shielding effect is observed for the fullereryl hydrogen and the benzylic protons as the addends move from the polar to the equatorial region of C_{70} . Generally, the fullereryl proton is more deshielded than the benzylic protons as shown by the three 2,1-, 1,2- and 5,

Table 1 Chemical shifts for the fullereryl and methylene protons of H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ regioisomers recorded in CS₂/CDCl₃

δ (ppm)	H(PhCH ₂)C ₇₀ Regioisomers			
	2,1-H(PhCH ₂)C ₇₀	1,2-H(PhCH ₂)C ₇₀	5,6-H(PhCH ₂)C ₇₀	7,23-(PhCH ₂)HC ₇₀
H-C ₇₀ ^a	5.01	4.50	4.65	3.40
H-C ₇₀ ^b	5.06	4.56		
H ₂ -CPh ^a	3.77	4.07	3.72	3.55
H ₂ -CPh ^b	3.82	4.12		

^a This work. ^b Taken from ref. 11b.

6-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ regioisomers, probably due to the greater electron-withdrawing effect experienced by the fullereryl proton since it is directly bonded to the fullerene cage. It is however noteworthy that for 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀, not only are the fullereryl and benzylic hydrogens more shielded with respect to those of the other three regioisomers, but also the fullereryl hydrogen is even more shielded than the benzylic protons (3.40 ppm vs. 3.55 ppm), implying that the equatorial region of C₇₀ is rather electron-donating than electron-withdrawing. The observed strong shielding in the equatorial region is in agreement with the more aromatic nature of the equatorial hexagons,²² and is consistent with recent ¹H NMR characterisations on an equatorial C₇₁H₂ product.²³

Cyclic voltammetry of 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ and 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀

The electrochemistry of organofullerene regioisomers has been a subject of intense interest since it may show pure addition effect on the electronic structural changes of fullerenes.^{17,24} Fig. 3 shows the cyclic voltammograms of 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ and 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ recorded in PhCN containing 0.1 M TBAP (tetra-*n*-butylammonium perchlorate) with a scan rate of 0.1 V/s. Four reduction peaks with $E_{1/2}$ at -0.57, -0.96, -1.34, and -1.79 V vs. SCE are observed in the cyclic voltammogram of 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀. However, only the first three reductions are likely associated with the 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀, since the oxidation wave at $E_{pa} = -0.53$ V corresponding to 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀⁻/1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ is missing when the scan is reversed from the fourth reduction. Previous work on the electrochemistry of fullerene hydrides has shown that the fullereryl proton can be removed when the compound is reduced.^{12,25} It is therefore likely that the

observed redox wave at -1.79 V is associated with 2-PhCH₂C₇₀³⁻/2-PhCH₂C₇₀⁴⁻. Compared with the reduction potentials of C₇₀ under the same conditions ($E_{1/2}$: -0.45, -0.85, -1.30, and -1.72 V vs. SCE, Figure S26†), a negative potential shift is observed for the reduction of 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀, which is consistent with the general behaviors observed for fullerene adducts due to the cleavage of the electronegative π -electron conjugation of fullerenes.²⁶

The cyclic voltammogram of 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ indicates that the anionic species of the compound is quite unstable, and it starts to decompose after it acquires one electron. The compound exhibits an irreversible first redox process with the E_{pc} at -0.41 V, and three subsequent quasi-reversible redox processes with $E_{1/2}$ at -0.94, -1.40, and -1.89 V vs. SCE, which are likely to be related to the intermediate of anionic 7-PhCH₂C₇₀ species due to the reductive loss of H.^{12,25}

It is noteworthy that the reduction potential of 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ is not only positively shifted with respect to that of 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀, but also even more positive than that of the parent C₇₀ ($E_{pc}^{1st} = -0.49$ V, Figure S26†), which is in the contrary to the typical cathodic shift observed for the reduction potentials of fullerene derivatives with respect to those of pristine fullerenes, due to the cleavage of the electron-withdrawing π -conjugations.²⁶ The results therefore suggest that the equatorial region of C₇₀ is rather electropositive than electronegative. The addition of the addends in the equatorial region cleaves the electropositive π -electron conjugation, and may thus increase the overall electronegativity of the molecule, causing a positive shift of the reduction potential. The observed electropositive property in the equatorial region of C₇₀ from electrochemical measurement is consistent with the ¹H

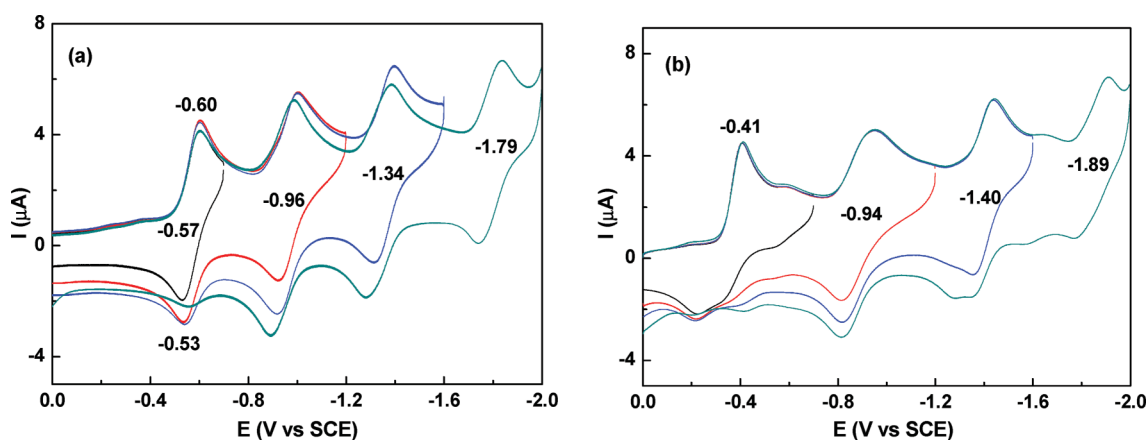


Fig. 3 Cyclic voltammograms of (a) 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀, and (b) 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀. Measurements were performed in benzonitrile solution containing 0.1 M TBAP at a scan rate of 0.1 V/s.

NMR data, where the fullereryl proton in the equatorial region is even more shielded than the benzylic protons as shown in Table 1.

Origin of the fullereryl hydrogen and different D₂O effects on the formation of 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ and 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀

Previous work on the formation of organo(hydro)[60]fullerenes has shown that the fullereryl proton may originate from the H₂O residue in the reaction system.^{10,27} It is therefore rational to assume that the fullereryl hydrogen atoms for the obtained (PhCH₂)HC₇₀ regioisomers are also from H₂O due to the similar reactivity of C₆₀²⁻ and C₇₀²⁻. The reaction of C₇₀²⁻ with benzyl bromide leads to the formation of a series of (PhCH₂)₂C₇₀ regioisomers in dry PhCN solvent,^{7b} while (PhCH₂)HC₇₀ regioisomers were produced as shown in the HPLC after adding a small amount of water to freshly distilled PhCN (Figure S25[†]), confirming that the fullereryl hydrogen is from water as the case for 1,2-(PhCH₂)HC₆₀.¹⁰

Further experiment with the addition of D₂O confirms the source of fullereryl proton is H₂O, and it shows a different H/D effect on the formation of 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ and 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀. Fig. 4 shows the ¹H NMR of the 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ and 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ obtained from the deuterated reaction, which was carried out in 50 mL of freshly distilled DMF solution, into which 100 μL of D₂O was added.

The integration area ratio of fullereryl proton to methylene protons is 1:2 as expected for the product obtained in routine DMF (Figure S10[†]), while the ratio goes to 0.56:2 for the fraction obtained from D₂O-containing DMF, indicating that about 44% of the fullereryl hydrogen is replaced by deuterium, which is comparable to the result obtained for 1,2-(PhCH₂)HC₆₀ under similar conditions,¹⁰ demonstrating a reactivity similarity between the C₇₀ polar region and C₆₀. However, the situation is quite different for 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀. The integration area ratio of the fullereryl hydrogen to the methylene protons is 0.94:2 as shown in the ¹H NMR of 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ obtained from routine DMF (Figure S2[†]), while it changes to 0.81:2 as shown in Fig. 4b for the fraction of 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ obtained from D₂O-containing DMF. The result shows a roughly only 15% intensity decrease of the fullereryl hydrogen resonance for 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ due to the deuterium replacement, which is significantly lower than that for 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀. Such a difference is likely due to the

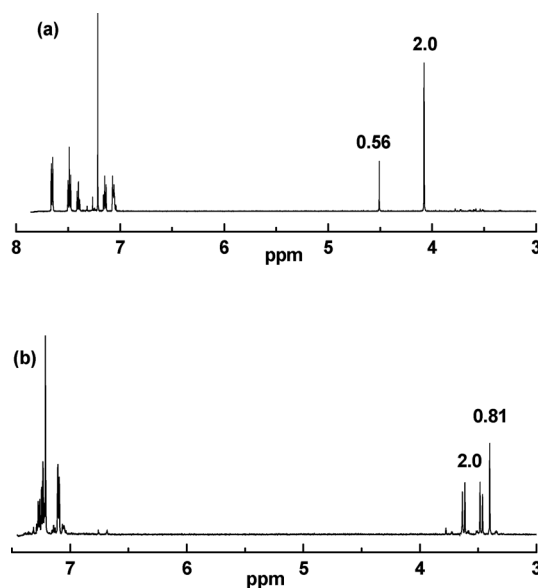


Fig. 4 ¹H NMR spectra of partially deuterated (a) 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀, and (b) 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ obtained from the reaction of C₇₀²⁻ with PhCH₂Br in D₂O-containing DMF solution. The spectra were recorded in CS₂/CDCl₃. The number in the spectra refers to the relative integration area.

acidity difference of the H-C₇₀ between the 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ and 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ regioisomers. The pK_a of the two isomers were therefore evaluated with the electrochemical methods, which have been shown to be effective for measuring the acidity of fullerene hydrides,²⁸ to rationalize the difference of the D₂O experiment.

Fig. 5 shows the differential pulse voltammetry (DPV) measurements of the 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ and 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ regioisomers without and with the addition of sodium acetate (NaAc). As is shown in Fig. 5, the addition of 1.3 equivalent of acetate to 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ resulted in a significant decrease of its first reduction peak, implying that 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ is more acidic than acetic acid (pK_a = 4.75 in aqueous solution), which are quite typical for many C₆₀ hydrides;²⁸ however, the addition of 1.3 equivalent of acetate into 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ does not cause any significant decrease of its first reduction peak, suggesting that 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ is much less acidic than acetic acid. The results

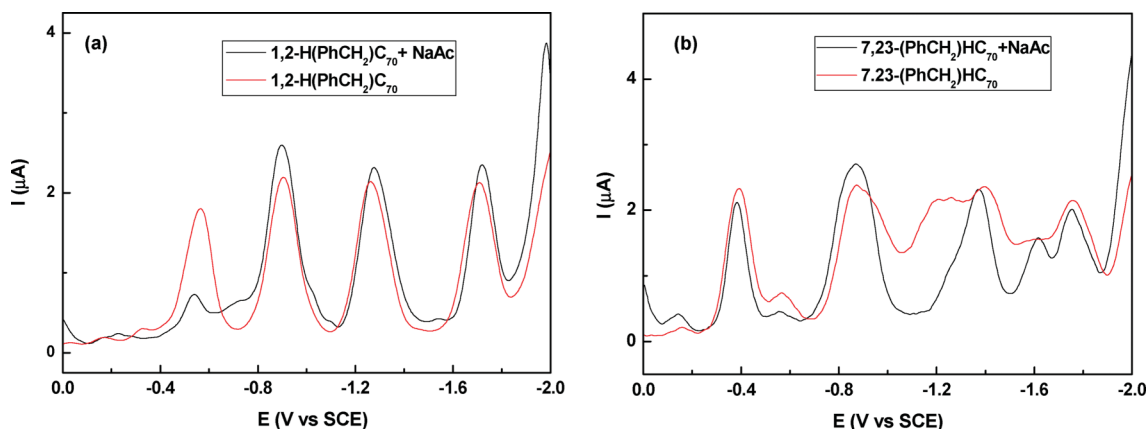


Fig. 5 DPV of (a) 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ and (b) 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ in *o*-DCB (*o*-dichlorobenzene) containing 0.1 M TBAP. Red line: without addition of NaAc; Black line: with the addition of 1.3 equivalent of NaAc dissolved in DMSO.

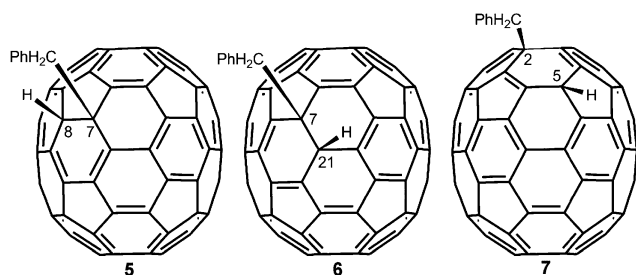
therefore demonstrate that 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ is much more acidic than 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀, which may lead to different D₂O effect on the formation of the two regioisomers.

Theoretical and mechanistic considerations

Previous work has shown that C₆₀²⁻ and C₇₀²⁻ react with organic halides in a stepwise manner.^{7b,8,10} The intermediates of RC₆₀⁻ and RC₇₀⁻ are produced during the first step *via* the radical couplings of C_{2n}^{•-} (n = 30 or 35) with R[•], which are formed by single electron transfer from C_{2n}²⁻ to the RX.^{7b,8} RC_{2n}⁻ can then be utilized to prepare RHC_{2n} by quenching with suitable proton donors.^{10,11b,29} It indicates that under the current experimental conditions, 2-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻ and 7-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻ intermediates should be favorably formed first before the protonation with water.

Density functional theory (DFT) calculations with the Gaussian 03 program³⁰ at the B3LYP/6-31G level³¹ were carried out to rationalize the favorable formation of the 2-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻ and 7-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻ intermediates in the first step. The calculations predict that the energies are -2937.6019, -2937.6136, -2937.6069, -2937.6095 and -2937.5831 a.u. (1 a.u. = 627.5 kcal mol⁻¹) for the optimized structures of 1-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻, 2-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻, 5-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻, 7-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻ and 21-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻ respectively, indicating that the 2-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻ and 7-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻ are the most stable intermediates, with an energy of 19.1 and 16.6 kcal mol⁻¹ lower than that of the most unfavorable 21-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻ intermediate.

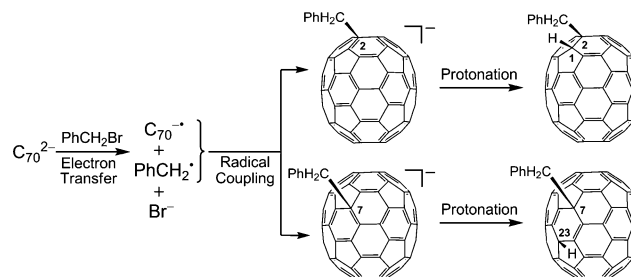
The next question is why the subsequent protonation prefers to occur at the C23 for 7-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻ and C1 for 2-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻. Scheme 3 shows the other possible regioisomers (5–7) that might be formed from the protonation of 7-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻ and 2-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻ intermediates.



Scheme 3 Illustrated structures of possible (PhCH₂)HC₇₀ regioisomers from the *ortho*-addition of 7-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻ and *para*-addition of 2-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻.

For the 7-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻ intermediate, two possible regioisomers **5** and **6** can be formed *via* the subsequent protonation at C8 and C21 with *ortho*-addition. Similarly, there is also possibility to form regioisomer **7** from 2-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻ intermediate *via* the protonation at C5 with *para*-addition. In fact, C₇₀ derivatives with the configurations of **5** and **6** have been reported for the benzyne adducts,²² while derivatives with peroxide addends have been shown to have the configuration of **7**.^{13a} The calculated total energies for **2**, **5** and **6** are -2938.1227, -2938.1173, and -2938.1031 a.u. respectively, predicting that **5** and **6** are less stable by 3.4 and 12.3 kcal mol⁻¹ with respect to 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ (**2**, Scheme 2). For **4** and **7**, the calculated energies are -2938.1340 and -2938.1212 a.u. respectively, predicting that **7** is less stable

than 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ (**4**, Scheme 2) by 8.0 kcal/mol. The results indicate that the formation of the (PhCH₂)HC₇₀ regioisomers are thermodynamically controlled, and imply that the *ortho*-addition pattern is preferred for the addition in the polar region of C₇₀, similar to the addition preference of C₆₀. But for the addition in the equatorial region of C₇₀, a *para*-addition is more preferable over an *ortho*-addition due to the unique electronic structure of C₇₀. The reaction mechanism for the formation of 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ and 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ is proposed and illustrated in Scheme 4.



Scheme 4 Proposed reaction mechanism for the formation of 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ and 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ regioisomers.

Conclusion

A novel equatorial organo(hydro)[70]fullerene product with the appendages positioned in *para*-manner is obtained *via* the reaction of C₇₀²⁻ with benzyl bromide and H₂O. The preferable formation of such a regioisomer is rationalized by theoretical calculations. ¹H NMR, D₂O experiment, and cyclic voltammetry have all demonstrated different properties between 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ and 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀, indicating a significant structural difference between the equatorial and polar regions of C₇₀. More surprisingly, the equatorial regioisomer exhibits a positively shifted reduction potential with respect to those of the polar adduct and even the pristine C₇₀, suggesting that the equatorial region of C₇₀ is rather electropositive than electronegative.

Experimental

Chemicals and instrumentation

C₇₀ (99%) was purchased and used without further purification. Electrochemical grade TBAP was recrystallized from absolute ethanol and dried in vacuum at 298 K prior to use. Benzonitrile (PhCN, 99.9%) was purchased and distilled over P₂O₅ under vacuum at 305 K prior to use. All other chemicals were commercially available and used as received. The amount of water residue in freshly distilled PhCN and commercial available DMF is about 90 and 2000 ppm measured using the Karl Fischer titration method.

Controlled-potential bulk electrolysis was carried out with a potentiostat/galvanostat. NMR spectra were measured on a Bruker AV 600 instrument. HRMS experiments were performed on a FT-ICR MS equipped with a 7.0 T actively shielded superconducting magnet. MALDI MS was acquired on a Bruker Autoflex III TOF/TOF instrument. Uv-vis spectra were recorded on a PerkinElmer Lambda 900 UV-Vis-NIR spectrophotometer.

Synthesis of H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ regioisomers

Typically, 50 mg (59.5 μmol) of C₇₀ was electrolyzed at -1.0 V vs. SCE in 50 mL of DMF solution containing 0.1 M TBAP under an argon atmosphere at about 15 °C. The potentiostat was switched off after the electrolytic formation of C₇₀²⁻ was complete, and a 30-fold excess of PhCH₂Br was added to the solution under inert atmosphere. The reaction was allowed to proceed for about 4 h with stirring. The mixture was dried with a rotary evaporator under reduced pressure, and the residue was washed with methanol to remove TBAP and excessive PhCH₂Br. The obtained crude mixture was put into toluene and sonicated for 10 min, and the soluble part was further purified by HPLC over a semi-preparative Buckyprep column with toluene as the eluent. Isolated yields are about 5%, 10%, 5%, 25%, and 15% for **P1** (7,23-(PhCH₂)₂C₇₀), **P2** (7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀), **P3** (mixture of 2,1- and 5,6-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀), **P4** (1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀), and **P5** (unreacted C₇₀) respectively.

Synthesis of partially deuterated H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ regioisomers

The processes for the synthesis of deuterated regioisomers are similar to those mentioned above, except that 100 μL of D₂O was added into the freshly distilled DMF solvent (50 mL) before electrolysis.

Synthesis of H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ regioisomers in PhCN

The procedures for the synthesis of H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ regioisomers in PhCN solution are similar to those in DMF solution, except that 200 μL of H₂O was added into 50 mL of freshly distilled PhCN after the reaction between C₇₀²⁻ with 30-fold benzyl bromide underwent for 5 min.

Electrochemistry of 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ and 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀

Measurements were performed in a 0.1 M TBAP benzonitrile solution with the use of a homemade cell equipped with a glassy carbon working electrode, platinum counter electrode and SCE (saturated calomel electrode) as a reference electrode. Scan rate was 0.1 V/s. The SCE was separated from the solution by a fritted-glass bridge of low porosity which contained the solvent/supporting electrolyte mixture.

Evaluation of the pK_as for 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ and 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀ with DPV

About 1 mg of individual compound was dissolved in 2 mL *o*-DCB solution containing 0.1 M TBAP. The solution was purged with argon for 10 min prior to DPV measurement. Then 1.3 equivalent of sodium acetate, which was dissolved in DMSO, was added into the individual H(PhCH₂)C₇₀ regioisomer *o*-DCB solution, and the DPV was measured.

Spectral characterisation of 1,2-H(PhCH₂)C₇₀

The spectral data are consistent with previous results.^{11b} Negative ESI FT-ICR MS: m/z [M - H]⁻ calcd 931.05478, found 931.05324; ¹H NMR (600 MHz, CS₂/CDCl₃) δ 4.07 (s, 2H), 4.50 (s, 1H), 7.64 (d, 2H), 7.48 (t, 2H), 7.39 (t, 1H); ¹³C NMR (150 MHz, CS₂/CDCl₃) δ 158.15 (2C), 155.05 (2C), 151.05 (2C), 150.99 (4C), 150.87 (2C), 150.47 (2C), 150.40 (2C), 149.60 (2C), 149.41 (2C),

149.26 (2C), 149.17 (2C), 148.89 (2C), 148.67 (2C), 148.57 (2C), 147.23 (2C), 147.02 (2C), 146.85 (2C), 146.75 (1C), 146.43 (2C), 146.08 (2C), 145.61 (2C), 145.34 (3C), 142.87 (2C), 142.65 (2C), 142.58 (2C), 142.26 (2C), 140.51 (2C), 140.03 (2C), 137.72 (2C), 133.64 (2C), 133.58 (2C), 130.89 (2C), 130.78 (2C), 135.11 (1C, Ph), 130.89 (2C, Ph), 128.62 (2C, Ph), 127.56 (1C, Ph), 57.3 (1C, sp³, C-CH₂), 52.4 (1C, sp³, C-H), 51.5 (1C, sp³, CH₂).

Spectral characterisation of 7,23-(PhCH₂)HC₇₀

Negative ESI FT-ICR MS: m/z [M - H]⁻ calcd 931.05478, found 931.05629; ¹H NMR (600 MHz, CS₂/acetone-*d*₆) δ 6.68–6.50 (m, 5H), 2.96 (ABq, Δ v_{AB} = 94 Hz, J_{AB} = 12.6 Hz, 2H), 2.79 (s, 1H); ¹H NMR (600 MHz, CS₂/CDCl₃) δ 7.27–7.05 (m, 5H), 3.55 (ABq, Δ v_{AB} = 92 Hz, J_{AB} = 12.6 Hz, 2H), 3.40 (s, 1H); ¹H NMR (600 MHz, CS₂/DMSO-*d*₆) δ 7.00–6.81 (m, 5H), 3.27 (ABq, Δ v_{AB} = 93 Hz, J_{AB} = 13.2 Hz, 2H), 3.10 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (150 MHz, CS₂/DMSO-*d*₆) δ 157.41 (1C), 154.18 (1C), 150.97 (1C), 150.13 (1C), 149.88 (1C), 149.47 (1C), 149.15 (1C), 149.08 (1C), 148.99 (1C), 148.97 (1C), 148.56 (1C), 148.52 (1C), 148.14 (1C), 148.07 (1C), 147.99 (1C), 147.91 (1C), 147.87 (1C), 147.67 (1C), 147.52 (1C), 147.45 (1C), 146.74 (1C), 146.69 (1C), 146.60 (1C), 146.56 (1C), 146.43 (1C), 146.36 (2C), 146.18 (1C), 146.08 (1C), 145.30 (2C), 145.25 (1C), 145.21 (1C), 144.89 (1C), 144.71 (1C), 144.58 (1C), 144.55 (1C), 144.44 (2C), 144.16 (1C), 143.93 (1C), 143.88 (1C), 143.66 (2C), 143.47 (1C), 143.45 (1C), 143.28 (1C), 142.50 (1C), 142.35 (2C), 142.19 (1C), 141.60 (1C), 141.55 (1C), 141.31 (1C), 140.57 (1C), 140.54 (1C), 138.77 (1C), 138.42 (1C), 136.41 (1C), 135.04 (1C, Ph), 134.56 (1C), 133.45 (1C), 133.41 (1C), 133.36 (1C), 133.25 (1C), 132.88 (1C), 132.80 (1C), 131.40 (1C), 131.24 (1C), 130.20 (2C, Ph), 127.60 (2C, Ph), 126.62 (1C, Ph), 56.88 (1C, sp³, C-CH₂), 46.46 (1C, sp³, CH₂), 44.66 (1C, sp³, C-H).

Spectral characterisation of 7,23-(PhCH₂)₂C₇₀

The spectral data are consistent with previous results.^{11a} Positive MALDI MS: m/z [M+H]⁺ calcd 1023.1, found 1023.1; ¹H NMR (600 MHz, CS₂/CDCl₃) δ 7.27–7.20 (m, 10H), 3.62 (ABq, Δ v_{AB} = 22 Hz, J_{AB} = 13.2 Hz, 4H); ¹³C NMR (150 MHz, CS₂/CDCl₃) δ 157.90 (2C), 150.68 (2C), 150.22 (2C), 150.15 (2C), 149.38 (2C), 148.49 (2C), 148.41 (2C), 148.28 (2C), 148.06 (2C), 147.96 (2C), 147.05 (2C), 146.94 (2C), 146.73 (2C), 146.66 (2C), 146.53 (2C), 145.77 (2C), 145.56 (2C), 145.02 (2C), 144.92 (2C), 144.85 (2C), 144.49 (2C), 144.19 (2C), 143.98 (2C), 143.31 (2C), 142.53 (2C), 142.15 (2C), 141.75 (2C), 140.81 (2C), 139.70 (2C), 139.01 (2C), 135.26 (1C, Ph), 133.80 (2C), 133.74 (2C), 133.27 (2C), 131.75 (2C), 130.24 (2C, Ph), 128.05 (2C, Ph), 127.28 (1C, Ph), 57.04 (2C, C-CH₂), 49.61 (2C, CH₂).

Quantum computational methods

The Gaussian full geometry optimizations of 1-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻, 2-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻, 5-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻, 7-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻, 21-PhCH₂C₇₀⁻ intermediates and **2**, **4**, **5**, **6**, **7** were performed by using the B3LYP functional and 6-31G basis set in the Gaussian 03 program package, followed by harmonic frequency calculations at the same level to confirm them as the energy minima.

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