

Asymmetric Synthesis of the Both Enantiomers of α -Hydroxy Acids
by the Diastereoselective Reduction of Chiral α -Keto Amides
with (Complex) Metal Hydrides in the Presence of Metallic Salt

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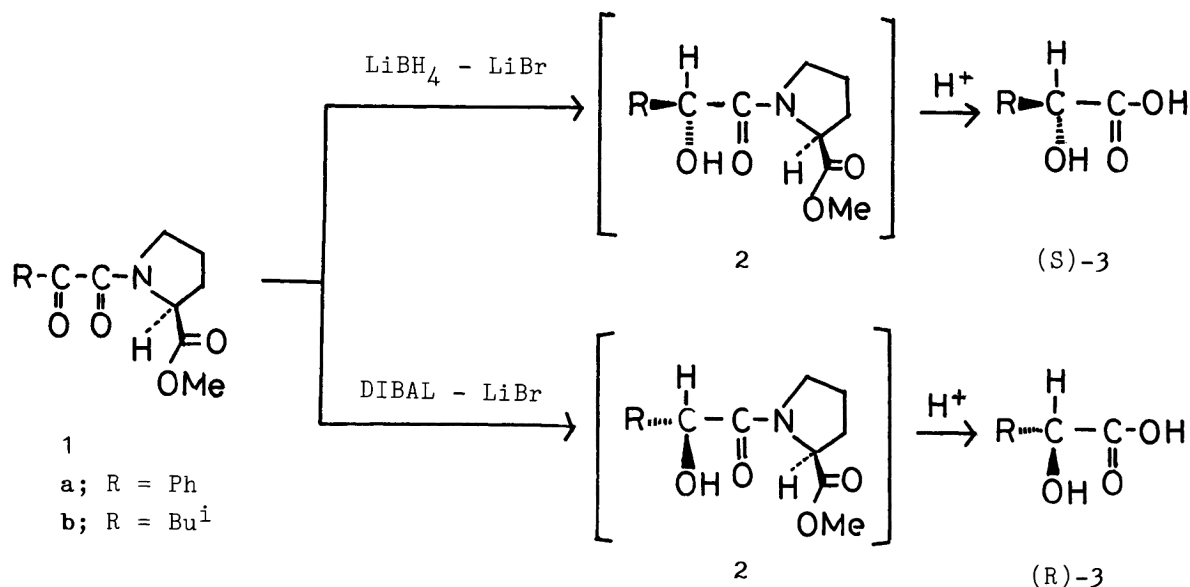
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Effects of the metallic salts and the reducing reagents in the diastereoselective reduction of chiral α -keto amides derived from (S)-proline methyl ester were examined. Lithium borohydride afforded (S)- α -hydroxy acids, whereas diisobutylaluminum hydride afforded (R)-isomers. In the presence of lithium bromide, reduction with LiBH_4 afforded (S)-mandelic acid in over 80% e.e.

Although the diastereoselective reduction of chiral α -keto esters has been well documented, only little study has been reported on the diastereoselective reduction of chiral α -keto amides with (complex) metal hydride.^{1,2)} Diastereoselective reduction of chiral α -keto amides with sodium borohydride (NaBH_4) shows only low to moderate asymmetric induction {44% diastereomeric excess(d.e.)}.^{2c)} During our continuing study on asymmetric reductions,³⁾ we recently reported the effect of mixed solvent on the diastereoselective reduction of α -keto amides with NaBH_4 (up to 69% d.e.).⁴⁾

We wish to report the effects of (complex) metal hydride and metallic salts in the diastereoselective reduction of chiral α -keto amides (**1**) derived from (S)-proline methyl ester. Reduction of **1a** with various (complex) metal hydrides, and the subsequent hydrolysis of the resulting compound (**2a**) afforded mandelic acid (**3a**). Enantiomeric excesses(e.e.'s) of **3a** were determined by the optical rotation (and GLC analyses of the corresponding MTPA esters).⁵⁾ The results are summarized in Table 1.

It was found that the presence of metallic salt increased



diastereoselectivities considerably in the reduction of **1a** with lithium borohydride (LiBH_4) and diisobutylaluminum hydride (DIBAL). Among various lithium salts examined, the highest asymmetric induction was observed in the case of lithium bromide (LiBr). Thus, the presence of LiBr afforded (S)-**3a** in over 80% e.e.'s, whereas without LiBr e.e. of (S)-**3a** dropped to 63% e.e. When the molar ratio of LiBr to **1a** was 3, e.e. of (S)-**3a** was better than when the ratio was 1. Surprisingly, opposite diastereoselectivity was observed in the case of DIBAL. Thus, (R)-**3a** of 66% e.e. was obtained in the presence of LiBr. Homogeneous reaction system was essential for the high diastereoselectivity. Thus, the reaction at $-78\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ (entry 2, homogeneous) was more stereoselective than that at $-100\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ (heterogeneous mixture). Efficiency of LiBr was consistent in both nucleophilic and electrophilic reducing reagents and in both aromatic **1a** and aliphatic **1b**.

One of the explanations of the high diastereoselectivity may be the coordination of metallic salt with oxygen atom(s) of α -keto amides (**1**) which may reduce the number of possible conformations of α -keto amide.

In a typical experiment (Table 1, entry 2), to a solution of LiBr (1.0 mmol) and **1a** (0.5 mmol) in THF (2 ml), 0.5 ml of LiBH_4 (0.5 mmol, 1.0 M THF solution) was added at $-78\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ during 10 min under an argon atmosphere. The mixture was stirred for 1 h, and was quenched with 1 M HCl (5 ml). After the aqueous layer was extracted with CH_2Cl_2 , the extract was dried over anhydrous Na_2SO_4 and was

Table 1. Diastereoselective reduction of 1 in the presence of metallic salt^{a)}

Entry	Compound (1)	Reducing reagent	Metallic salt	Temp/ °C	Time/h	Product (3)		
						Yield/%	E.e./%e.e. ^{b)}	Config.
1	a	LiBH ₄	---	-78	3	89	63	S
2	a	LiBH ₄	LiBr ^{c)}	-78	1	85	87 (81) ^{d)}	S
3	a	LiBH ₄	LiCl	-78	1	68	66	S
4	a	LiBH ₄	LiI	-78 → -40	8	80	72	S
5	a	LiBH ₄	LiClO ₄	-78 → -40	8	75	72 (71) ^{d)}	S
6	a	LiBH ₄	ZnI ₂	-78 → 0	16	77	54	S
7	a	NaBH ₄	LiBr	-78	2	47	65 (36) ^{e)}	S
8	a	Bu ⁱ ₂ AlH	LiBr	-78	3	59	66 (54) ^{e)}	R
9	b	LiBH ₄	LiBr	-78	5	85	58 (52) ^{e)}	S
10	b	Bu ⁱ ₂ AlH	LiBr	-78	3	81	10	R

a) Unless otherwise noted, molar ratio was as follows. 1 : reducing reagent : metallic salt = 1 : 1 : 1. Tetrahydrofuran (THF) was used.

b) Enantiomeric excess. Based on the reported values of the specific rotation. (S)-(+)-3a [α]_D +158 (H₂O). See Ref. 6. (S)-(-)-3b [α]_D -27.2° (c 1.5, 1 M NaOH). M. Winitz, L. B. Frakenthal, N. Izumiya, S. M. Birnbaum, C. G. Balcer, and J. P. Greenstein, J. Am. Chem. Soc., **78**, 2423 (1956).

c) Molar ratio, 1a : LiBH₄ : LiBr = 1 : 1 : 2.

d) Determined by GLC analysis of the corresponding (-)- α -methoxy- α -trifluoromethylphenyl acetic acid (MTPA) ester,⁵⁾ after 3a was converted to methyl ester with trimethylsilyldiazomethane.⁷⁾

e) Results without LiBr.

evaporated under reduced pressure. Then 5 ml of 4 M H₂SO₄ was added to the residue and the mixture was refluxed for 2 h. The mixture was extracted with ether. The solvent was dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄ and was evaporated in vacuo. Purification of the crude product by bulb-to-bulb distillation afforded (S)-3a {[α]_D +137.5°(c 1, H₂O)} in 85% yield and in 87% e.e. by optical rotation.⁶⁾ The compound was determined to be 85% e.e. as (S)-methyl mandelate^{7,8)} and 81% e.e. as MTPA ester.⁵⁾

As described, in the presence of metallic salts, chiral α -keto amides were reduced diastereoselectively. By choosing the appropriate reagent (LiBH_4 or DIBAL), the both enantiomers of α -hydroxy acids were obtained in good to high e.e.'s.⁹⁾

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