

# Modification of Both the Electrophilic Center and Substituents on the Nonleaving Group in Pyridinolysis of *O*-4-Nitrophenyl Benzoate and Thionobenzoates

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Received August 13, 2006



A kinetic study is reported for reactions of 4-nitrophenyl benzoate (1c) and *O*-4-nitrophenyl X-substituted thionobenzoates (2a-e) with a series of pyridines in 80 mol % H<sub>2</sub>O/20 mol % dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) at 25.0 ± 0.1 °C. *O*-4-Nitrophenyl thionobenzoate (2c) is more reactive than its oxygen analogue 1c toward all the pyridines studied. The Brønsted-type plot is linear with  $\beta_{nuc} = 1.06$  for reactions of 1c but curved for the corresponding reactions of 2c with  $\beta_{nuc}$  decreasing from 1.38 to 0.38 as the pyridine basicity increases, indicating that the reaction mechanism is also influenced on changing the electrophilic center from C=O to C=S. The curvature center of the substituent X in the nonleaving group. The Hammett plot for reactions of 2a-e with 4-aminopyridine is nonlinear, i.e., the substrates having an electron-donating substituent exhibit negative deviations from the Hammett plot. However, the Yukawa–Tsuno plot for the same reactions exhibits good linear correlation, indicating that the negative deviations shown by these substrates arise from stabilization of the ground state through resonance interaction between the electron-donating substituent X and the C=S bond.

#### Introduction

Acyl group transfer reactions have been the subject of extensive experimental and theoretical studies due to their importance in biological processes as well as utility in synthetic applications.<sup>1–9</sup> Reactions of carboxylic esters with amines have generally been understood to proceed through a zwitterionic tetrahedral intermediate (T<sup>±</sup> as shown in Scheme 1); curved Brønsted-type plots have often been observed for reactions of esters that contain a good leaving group, and this behavior has

### SCHEME 1

been taken to be diagnostic of a change in the rate-determining step (RDS).<sup>1–5</sup> Recent computational studies also favor a

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stepwise mechanism over a concerted pathway, although some studies failed to identify the transition state and  $T^\pm$  for aminolysis of various carboxylic esters. $^{6-9}$ 

The curvature center of curved Brønsted plots indicates a change in RDS, and this center was defined as  $pK_a^{\circ}$ .<sup>10-12</sup> Gresser and Jencks reported that the  $pK_a^{o}$  increases as the substituent in the nonleaving group changes from an electron-donating group (EDG) to an electron-withdrawing group (EWG) for reactions of diaryl carbonates with a series of quinuclidines.<sup>10</sup> This has been rationalized on the basis that departure of the amine from  $T^{\pm}$  (i.e.,  $k_{-1}$  step; Scheme 1) is favored, over that of the leaving group (i.e.,  $k_2$  step; Scheme 1), as the substituent in the nonleaving group becomes a stronger EWG.10 Castro et al. found a comparable result in pyridinolysis of 2,4-dinitrophenyl X-substituted benzoates; hence,  $pK_a^{o} = 9.5$  when X = H but  $pK_{a^{0}} > 9.5$  when X = 4-Cl, 4-CN, or 4-NO<sub>2</sub><sup>11</sup> and similarly for S-2,4-dinitrophenyl X-substituted thiobenzoates in aqueous ethanol, where  $pK_a^{o}$  increases from 8.5 to 8.9 and 9.9 as X is changed from 4-CH<sub>3</sub> to H and 4-NO<sub>2</sub>, in turn.<sup>12</sup> Thus, it has been concluded that changing the substituent in the nonleaving group from an EDG to an EWG results in an increase in p $K_a^{o}$  by decreasing the  $k_2/k_{-1}$  ratio.<sup>10-12</sup>

However, we have shown that the  $pK_a^o$  value is independent of the electronic nature of the substituent X in the nonleaving group for aminolysis of 2,4-dinitrophenyl X-substituted benzoates and benzenesulfonates.<sup>13,14</sup> A similar result has recently been found for reactions of Y-substituted phenyl X-substituted benzoates with piperidine.<sup>15</sup> Further, we have shown that the

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**SCHEME 2** 



 $\begin{array}{l} X = 3\text{-}CI \ (a), \ 3\text{-}MeO \ (b), \ H \ (c), \ 4\text{-}Me \ (d), \ 4\text{-}MeO \ (e) \\ Y = O \ (1), \ S \ (2) \\ Z = 4\text{-}O^{-}, \ 4\text{-}MMe_{2}, \ 4\text{-}MH_{2}, \ 3\text{,}4\text{-}Me_{2}, \ 4\text{-}Me, \ 3\text{-}Me \end{array}$ 

 $pK_{a^{0}}$  and the  $k_{2}/k_{-1}$  ratio both remain nearly constant even as the substituent X in the benzoyl moiety is progressively modified from an EWG to an EDG.<sup>13–15</sup> The explanation is as follows. The electronic nature of the substituent X in the nonleaving group would be anticipated to influence both the  $k_{2}$  and  $k_{-1}$ values, i.e., an EWG in the nonleaving group would retard the departure of the leaving group (decrease  $k_{2}$ ) as well as the amine (also decrease  $k_{-1}$ ) from T<sup>±</sup>, while an EDG in the nonleaving group would accelerate both  $k_{2}$  and  $k_{-1}$  processes since the nucleofuge departs with the bonding electron pair from T<sup>±</sup>. Accordingly, one can predict that the  $k_{2}/k_{-1}$  ratio should be independent of the substituent X in the nonleaving group. This argument is consistent with our finding that  $pK_{a^{0}}$  and the  $k_{2}/k_{-1}$  ratio remain nearly constant on changing the electronic nature of the substituent X for the reactions mentioned above.

To obtain further information about the  $pK_a^{\circ}$ , we extended our study to reactions of 4-nitrophenyl benzoate (1c) and *O*-4nitrophenyl X-substituted thionobenzoates (2a-e) using a series of pyridines whose  $pK_a$  values range from 5.09 to 11.30 (Scheme 2). Replacement of O by a polarizable S atom in the carbonyl bond of 1c should provide insights into both the reactivity and the comparative reaction mechanism. We probed the effect of modification of the electrophilic center (C=O to C=S) on reactivity, reaction mechanism, and, notably,  $pK_a^{\circ}$  and report the kinetic results herein. In addition to our Brønsted analysis we analyzed the substituent effects according to the dualparameter Yukawa–Tsuno equation. This combined approach has previously proven effective in elucidating mechanistic ambiguities in acyl group transfer reactions.

# **Results and Discussion**

Reactions of *O*-4-nitrophenyl X-substituted thionobenzoates with pyridines proceeded with quantitative liberation of 4-nitrophenoxide (and/or its conjugate acid). The reactions were followed by monitoring the appearance of 4-nitrophenoxide at 410 nm. Kinetic study was performed under pseudo-first-order conditions; the pyridine concentration was always in excess over that of substrate. All reactions obeyed first-order kinetics over 90% of the total reaction. Pseudo-first-order rate constants ( $k_{obsd}$ ) were determined from the equation  $\ln(A_{\infty} - A_t) = -k_{obsd}t + C$ . The plots of  $k_{obsd}$  vs the pyridine concentration showed excellent linearity (see Supporting Information for detailed kinetic data). The plots had only small intercept values, indicating that the contribution of H<sub>2</sub>O or OH<sup>-</sup> ion from the hydrolysis of pyridines

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TABLE 1. Summary of Second-Order Rate Constants for Reactions of 4-Nitrophenyl Benzoate, 1c (X = H), and O-4-Nitrophenyl X-Substituted Thionobenzoates, 2a (X = 3-Cl), 2c (X = H), and 2e (X = 4-MeO), with Pyridines in 20 mol % DMSO at 25.0  $\pm$  0.1 °C

			$k_{ m N}/{ m M}^{-1}{ m s}^{-1}$				
	Z-pyridine	$pK_a$	1c	2a	2c	2e	
1	$Z = 4 - 0^{-1}$	11.30	32.7	942	296.0	70.4	
2	Z = 4-NMe <sub>2</sub>	9.12	0.347	67.1	19.2	3.61	
3	$Z = 4-NH_2$	8.93	0.193	26.3	9.23	1.68	
4	$Z = 3, 4 - Me_2$	5.78	$8.36 \times 10^{-5}$	$1.91 \times 10^{-3}$	$7.45 \times 10^{-4}$	$1.82 \times 10^{-4}$	
5	Z = 4-Me	5.53	$4.19 \times 10^{-5}$	$9.03 \times 10^{-4}$	$3.50 \times 10^{-4}$	$5.58 \times 10^{-5}$	
6	Z = 3-Me	5.09	$8.98 \times 10^{-6}$	$1.66 \times 10^{-4}$	$7.66 \times 10^{-5}$	$1.50 \times 10^{-5}$	

TABLE 2. Summary of Microscopic Rate Constants for Reactions of O-4-Nitrophenyl X-Substituted Thionobenzoates, 2a (X = 3-Cl), 2c (X = H), and 2e (X = 4-MeO), with Pyridines in 20 mol % DMSO at  $25.0 \pm 0.1$  °C

			$k_2/k_{-1}$		$k_1/M^{-1} s^{-1}$		
	Z-pyridine	2a	2c	2e	2a	2c	2e
1	$Z = 4 - 0^{-1}$	110	100	115	951	299	71
2	Z = 4-NMe <sub>2</sub>	0.655	0.661	0.653	170	48.3	9.14
3	$Z = 4 - NH_2$	0.419	0.427	0.416	89.0	30.9	5.72
4	$Z = 3, 4 - Me_2$	$2.57 \times 10^{-4}$	$3.02 \times 10^{-4}$	$2.37 \times 10^{-4}$	7.44	2.47	0.769
5	Z = 4-Me	$1.43 \times 10^{-4}$	$1.70 \times 10^{-4}$	$1.31 \times 10^{-4}$	6.33	2.06	0.426
6	Z = 3-Me	$5.08 \times 10^{-5}$	$6.17 \times 10^{-5}$	$4.61 \times 10^{-5}$	3.27	1.24	0.325

TABLE 3. Summary of Second-Order Rate Constants ( $k_N$ ) for Reactions of *O*-4-Nitrophenyl X-Substituted Thionobenzoates (2a–e) with 4-Aminopyridine in 20 mol % DMSO at 25.0 ± 0.1 °C

1.7		
entry	Х	$k_{\rm N}/{ m M}^{-1}~{ m s}^{-1}$
2a	3-Cl	26.3
2b	3-MeO	11.5
2c	Н	9.23
2d	4-Me	4.07
2e	4-MeO	1.68

to  $k_{obsd}$  is negligible. The second-order rate constants ( $k_N$ ) were determined from the slope of these linear plots. Generally five different pyridine concentrations were used to determine  $k_N$  values. It is estimated from replicate runs that the uncertainty in the rate constants is less than 3%. Kinetic data are summarized in Tables 1–3.

One of the initial products (i.e., 1-thionobenzoylpyridinium ion or its oxygen analogue) was not isolated but hydrolyzed to yield thiobenzoate (or benzoate for reactions of **1c**). Similar pyridinium intermediates have been reported in pyridinolyses of 2,4-dinitrophenyl methyl thionocarbonate, methyl chloroformate, and acetic anhydride.<sup>16,17</sup> Since the pyridinium intermediate in the current reactions does not absorb at 410 nm, where the reactions were monitored, the  $k_N$  values obtained are the rate constants for formation of the intermediate and 4-nitrophenoxide ion.

Effect of Replacing C=O by C=S on Reactivity and Mechanism. Table 1 shows that *O*-4-nitrophenyl thionobenzoate (2c) is more reactive than its oxygen analogue 1c. One might expect that replacement of the O atom in the C=O bond of 1c by a polarizable S atom would enhance the electrophilicity of the reactive center by increasing polarizability. This argument is supported by <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectra as well as the difference in the bond energy between C=O and C=S bonds. Hence, the chemical shift for the carbon atom of the C=O and C=S bonds in compounds **1c** and **2c** has been reported to be 163.8 and 209.8 ppm, respectively.<sup>18</sup> Such a large downfield shift suggests that the carbon atom of the C=S bond bears greater positive charge than that of the C=O bond. Besides, it is well known that the overlap between 2p and 3p orbitals that make up the  $\pi$ -bond component of the C=S bond is weaker than that between 2p orbitals in a C=O bond.<sup>19</sup> Thus, the fact that **2c** is more reactive than **1c** is consistent with the argument that the former would be more electrophilic than the latter.

However, 2c has been reported to be less reactive than 1c toward strongly basic OH<sup>-</sup> and EtO<sup>-</sup> ions.<sup>18,20</sup> Similarly, Castro et al. reported that 4-nitrophenyl chlorothionoformate and bis-(4-nitrophenyl) thionocarbonate are less reactive than their oxygen analogues toward aryloxides and alicyclic secondary amines, respectively,<sup>21</sup> indicating that the reactivity of thiono compounds is, at least partly, dependent on the nature of nucleophiles. The contrasting reactivity order is consistent with a hard and soft acids and bases (HSAB) analysis<sup>22</sup> since the softer thiocarbonyl group (relative to carbonyl) would exhibit lower reactivity toward hard bases such as OH<sup>-</sup>, EtO<sup>-</sup>, ArO<sup>-</sup>, and alicyclic secondary amines. On the contrary, pyridines have been suggested to be relatively soft nucleophiles compared to isobasic alicyclic secondary amines.16a Thus, the current result that 2c is more reactive than 1c toward pyridines is also in accordance with the HSAB principle.

As shown in Table 1, the  $k_{\rm N}$  value for reactions of **2c** with pyridines decreases as the basicity of pyridines decreases, i.e., it decreases from 296 to 9.23 and 7.66 × 10<sup>-5</sup> M<sup>-1</sup> s<sup>-1</sup> as the  $pK_a$  of the conjugate acid of pyridines decreases from 11.30 to 8.93 and 5.09. A similar result has been shown for the

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**FIGURE 1.** Brønsted plots for reactions of *O*-4-nitrophenyl thionobenzoate (**2c**,  $\bigcirc$ ) and 4-nitrophenyl benzoate (**1c**,  $\blacksquare$ ) with pyridines in 20 mol % DMSO at 25.0 ± 0.1 °C. The assignment of numbers is given in Table 1.

corresponding reactions of **1c**. The effect of pyridine basicity on reactivity has been illustrated in Figure 1. The Brønsted plot for reactions of **2c** is curved. Such a nonlinear Brønsted plot is typical for reactions which proceed through a stepwise mechanism with a change in the RDS.<sup>1–5</sup> Thus, one can suggest that the pyridinolysis of **2c** proceeds through a zwitterionic tetrahedral intermediate (T<sup>±</sup>) in which the RDS is dependent on the basicity of pyridines as shown in Scheme 2. On the other hand, the Brønsted plot for the corresponding reactions of **1c** is linear with a  $\beta_{nuc}$  value of 1.06. Such a linear Brønsted plot with a large  $\beta_{nuc}$  value indicates that the pyridinolysis of **1c** proceeds through an addition intermediate (T<sup>±</sup>) with its breakdown being the RDS.

The RDS for aminolyses of carboxylic esters has been reported to change from breakdown of  $T^{\pm}$  (the  $k_2$  step) to its formation (the  $k_1$  step) as the amine nucleophile becomes more basic than the leaving group by 4–5 p $K_a$  units.<sup>1–5</sup> Given that the p $K_a$  of 4-nitrophenol in 20 mol % DMSO has been reported to be ca. 7.8,<sup>23</sup> the p $K_a^{\circ}$  for the pyridinolysis of **1c** would be expected to occur at a p $K_a$  value between 11.8 and 12.8. Lack of such a strongly basic pyridine precludes observation of a curved Brønsted-type plot for reactions of **1c** with pyridines. On the other hand, the p $K_a^{\circ}$  found here in the pyridinolysis of **2c** is 9.3 (Figure 1), only 1.5 p $K_a$  units more basic than the leaving 4-nitrophenoxide ion. Clearly, the generalization that an amine nucleophile be 4–5 p $K_a$  units more basic than the leaving group to effect a change in RDS must be revised for aminolysis of thionobenzoate esters.

Effect of Substituent X on  $pK_a^\circ$ . To investigate the effect of the substituent X in the thionobenzoyl moiety on  $pK_a^\circ$ , Brønsted-type plots have been constructed for reactions of 2a (X = 3-Cl), 2c (X = H), and 2e (X = 4-MeO) with pyridines. Figure 2 shows that all the Brønsted plots are curved with a similar shape. The curved Brønsted plots have been analyzed



**FIGURE 2.** Brønsted plots for reactions of *O*-4-nitrophenyl X-substituted thionobenzoates,  $2a (\blacksquare)$ ,  $2c (\bigcirc)$ , and  $2e(\bullet)$ , with pyridines in 20 mol % DMSO at 25.0  $\pm$  0.1 °C. The assignment of numbers is given in Table 1.

using a semiempirical equation (eq 1)<sup>10,24</sup> on the basis of the proposed mechanism shown in Scheme 2. The parameters  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$  represent the slope of the curved Brønsted plots in Figure 2 for reactions with strongly basic and weakly basic pyridines, respectively. Here  $k_N$  refers to the  $k_N$  value at  $pK_a$  where  $k_2/k_{-1} = 1$ .

$$\log(k_{\rm N}/k_{\rm N}^{\circ}) = \beta_2(pK_{\rm a} - pK_{\rm a}^{\circ}) - \log(1 + \alpha)/2$$

where

$$\log \alpha = (\beta_2 - \beta_1)(pK_a - pK_a^{\circ}) \tag{1}$$

The  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$  values determined for reactions of **2a**, **2c**, and **2e** are shown in Figure 2. Note that the  $pK_a^{\circ}$  determined is 9.3 *regardless of the nature of the substituent X in the thionobenzoyl moiety*, indicating that the electronic character of the substituent X in the nonleaving group does not influence the  $pK_a^{\circ}$  value. This contrasts with the finding of Jencks and Castro that an EWG in the nonleaving group increases the  $pK_a^{\circ}$  value for aminolyses of various esters.<sup>10–12</sup> However, the current result is consistent with our previous report that the  $pK_a^{\circ}$  and  $k_2/k_{-1}$  ratio are independent of the nature of the substituent X in the nonleaving group for aminolysis of aryl X-substituted benzoates and benzenesulfonates.<sup>13,14</sup>

The  $k_N$  values for reactions of **2a**, **2c**, and **2e** have been dissected into their microscopic rate constants to further support the argument that the  $k_2/k_{-1}$  ratio is independent of the nature of the substituent X. The apparent second-order rate constant  $k_N$  can be expressed as eq 2 by applying the steady-state conditions to the intermediate on the basis of the proposed mechanism shown in Scheme 2.

$$k_{\rm N} = k_1 k_2 / (k_{-1} + k_2) \tag{2}$$

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The  $k_2/k_{-1}$  ratios associated with the pyridinolysis of **2a**, **2c**, and **2e** have been determined using eqs 3–8. Equation 2 can be simplified to eq 3 or 4. Then,  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$  can be expressed as eqs 5 and 6, respectively.

$$k_{\rm N} = k_1 k_2 / k_{-1}$$
, when  $k_2 \ll k_{-1}$  (3)

$$k_{\rm N} = k_1, \text{ when } k_2 \gg k_{-1} \tag{4}$$

$$\beta_1 = d(\log k_1)/d(pK_a) \tag{5}$$

$$\beta_2 = d(\log k_1 k_2 / k_{-1}) / d(pK_a) = \beta_1 + d(\log k_2 / k_{-1}) / d(pK_a)$$
(6)

Equation 6 can be rearranged as eq 7. Integration of eq 7 from  $pK_{a^{\circ}}$  results in eq 8. Since  $k_2 = k_{-1}$  at  $pK_{a^{\circ}}$ , the term (log  $k_2/k_{-1}$ )<sub> $pKa^{\circ}$ </sub> is zero. Therefore, one can calculate the  $k_2/k_{-1}$  ratios for the pyridinolysis of **2a**, **2c**, and **2e** from eq 8 using  $pK_{a^{\circ}} = 9.3$ ,  $\beta_1 = 0.39$ , 0.38, and 0.36, and  $\beta_2 = 1.41$ , 1.38, and 1.39, respectively.

$$\beta_2 - \beta_1 = d(\log k_2/k_{-1})/d(pK_a)$$
 (7)

$$(\log k_2/k_{-1})_{pKa} = (\beta_2 - \beta_1)(pK_a - pK_a^{\circ})$$
(8)

The  $k_1$  values have been determined from eq 9 using the  $k_N$  values in Table 1 and the  $k_2/k_{-1}$  ratios determined above. The  $k_2/k_{-1}$  ratios and  $k_1$  values derived are summarized in Table 2.

$$k_{\rm N} = k_1 k_2 / (k_{-1} + k_2) = k_1 / (k_{-1} / k_2 + 1)$$
(9)

As shown in Table 2, the  $k_2/k_{-1}$  ratio for reactions of **2a**, **2c**, and 2e is highly sensitive to the basicity of pyridines, i.e., it decreases significantly as the basicity of pyridines decreases. However, the  $k_2/k_{-1}$  ratio is independent of the electronic nature of the substituent X in the nonleaving group, i.e., it remains nearly constant on changing the substituent X from 3-Cl (2a) to H (2c) or 4-MeO (2e) for reaction with a given pyridine. The effect of the substituent X and pyridine basicity on the  $k_2/$  $k_{-1}$  ratio is illustrated in Figure 3. The plots of log  $k_2/k_{-1}$  vs the pK<sub>a</sub> of the conjugate acid of pyridines are linear with a  $\beta_{-1}$ value of ca. 1.0, indicating that the  $k_2/k_{-1}$  ratio is highly sensitive to the pyridine basicity. Furthermore, the plots are nearly identical and the pK<sub>a</sub> where  $k_2/k_{-1} = 1$  (pK<sub>a</sub><sup>o</sup>) is 9.3 regardless of the nature of the substituent X. Thus, this result clearly supports our preceding proposal that the p $K_a^{o}$  and the  $k_2/k_{-1}$ ratio are independent of the electronic nature of the substituent X in the nonleaving group.

Table 2 and Figure 4 show that  $k_1$  increases in tandem with increases in pyridine basicity. The  $\beta_1$  value is ca. 0.38, which is much smaller than the  $\beta_{-1}$  value of ca. 1.0, indicating that  $k_1$  is much less sensitive than the  $k_2/k_{-1}$  ratio to the pyridine basicity. Also, the  $k_1$  value increases as the substituent X changes from an EDG to an EWG. This contrasts with the fact that the  $k_2/k_{-1}$  ratio remains nearly constant on changing the substituent X for the reactions with a given pyridine. Thus, one can conclude that the  $k_1$  value determines the reactivity of 2a-e toward pyridines.

Effect of Nonleaving Group Substituent on Mechanism. To investigate the effect of the substituent X in the thionobenzoyl moiety on the reaction mechanism, reactions of 2a-e with 4-aminopyridine have been performed. The  $k_N$  values determined are summarized in Table 3.

It can be seen in Table 3 that the  $k_N$  value increases as the substituent X in the thionobenzoyl group changes from an EDG



**FIGURE 3.** Plots of log  $k_2/k_{-1}$  vs  $pK_a$  for reactions of *O*-4-nitrophenyl X-substituted thionobenzoates, **2a** ( $\blacksquare$ ), **2c** ( $\bigcirc$ ), and **2e**( $\bigcirc$ ), with pyridines in 20 mol % DMSO at 25.0  $\pm$  0.1 °C. The assignment of numbers is given Table 2.



**FIGURE 4.** Brønsted plots for  $k_1$  for reactions of *O*-4-nitrophenyl X-substituted thionobenzoates, **2a** ( $\blacksquare$ ), **2c** ( $\bigcirc$ ), and **2e**( $\bullet$ ), with pyridines in 20 mol % DMSO at 25.0  $\pm$  0.1 °C. The assignment of numbers is given Table 2.

to an EWG. Recently, Neuvonen et al. reported a similar result, i.e., an EWG in the leaving or nonleaving group of aryl acetates or alkyl benzoates increases the reactivity of the esters along with upfield <sup>13</sup>C NMR chemical shifts of the carbonyl carbon and higher frequencies of the C=O stretching vibration. The increased reactivity of esters with a strong EWG, therefore, has been attributed to destabilization of the ground state due to decreased resonance stabilization of the esters as illustrated by resonance structures I  $\leftrightarrow$  II  $\leftrightarrow$  III on the basis of the upfield <sup>13</sup>C NMR chemical shifts and higher frequencies of the C=O stretching vibration.



**FIGURE 5.** Hammett and Yukawa–Tsuno (inset) plots for reactions of *O*-4-nitrophenyl X-substituted thionobenzoates (2a-e) with 4-aminopyridine in 20 mol % DMSO at  $25.0 \pm 0.1$  °C. The identity of points is given in Table 3.

reactivity of **2a** compared to **2e** to destabilization of the ground state of **2a** as a result of decreased resonance stabilization.

$$\begin{array}{c} O \\ R - \overset{O}{C} - OR' & \longleftrightarrow & R - \overset{O}{C} - OR' & \longleftrightarrow & R - \overset{O}{C} - \overset{O}{P} R' \\ \mathbf{I} & \mathbf{II} & \mathbf{III} \end{array}$$

To examine this interpretation, a Hammett plot was constructed for reactions of 2a-e with 4-aminopyridine. If destabilization of the ground state through decreased resonance interaction were responsible for the high reactivity shown by substrates having an EWG in the thionobenzoyl moiety (e.g., 2a and 2b), these substrates should give rise to positive deviations from the Hammett plot. As shown in Figure 5, the Hammett plot is nonlinear. Notably, substrates 2a and 2b do not exhibit positive deviations, but rather 2a, 2b, and 2c define the Hammett correlation and 2d and 2e exhibit negative deviations from this Hammett line. Moreover, the degree of the negative deviation is more significant for the substrate having a stronger EDG (i.e., 2e). This finding alone suggests that the negative deviation shown by 2d and 2e arises from stabilization of the ground state through resonance interaction between the EDG and the thiocarbonyl group as illustrated in the resonance structures IV  $\leftrightarrow$  V.



Furthermore, the above argument can be clearly supported from the linear Yukawa–Tsuno plot shown in the inset of Figure 5 for the same reactions. The r value in the Yukawa–Tsuno

equation (eq 10) represents the resonance demand of the reaction center or the extent of the resonance contribution, while the term ( $\sigma^+ - \sigma^\circ$ ) is the resonance substituent constant that measures the capacity for  $\pi$ -delocalization of a given  $\pi$ -electron donor substituent.<sup>26,27</sup>

$$\log(k^{X}/k^{H}) = \rho \left[\sigma^{\circ} + r \left(\sigma^{+} - \sigma^{\circ}\right)\right]$$
(10)

The Yukawa-Tsuno equation transforms into the Hammett equation when r = 0 or into the Brown–Okamoto equation when r = 1. Since the r value determined (i.e., 0.75) is neither 0 nor 1, the Yukawa-Tsuno plot exhibits much better linear correlation than the Hammett or the Brown-Okamoto plot in which  $\sigma$  or  $\sigma^+$  constants alone are used. The linear Yukawa-Tsuno plot shown in the inset of Figure 5 yields a relatively large r value of 0.75 which indicates that stabilization of the ground state through the resonance interactions (IV  $\leftrightarrow$  V) is responsible for the negative deviation shown by substrates 2d and 2e from the Hammett plot. Therefore, one can conclude that stabilization of the ground state by an EDG through resonance interaction is more important than destabilization of the ground state through decreased resonance interaction by an EWG in governing reactivity of esters. A similar conclusion has been drawn for solvolysis of methyl chloroformate and acetyl chloride in aqueous acetone. The former has been reported to be  $9 \times 10^3$  times less reactive than the latter.<sup>28</sup> Kevill recently concluded that ground-state stabilization through resonance interaction (e.g.,  $VI \leftrightarrow V$ ), analogous to that suggested in the current systems, is responsible for the decreased reactivity of methyl chloroformate since such resonance interaction is not possible for acetyl chloride.29



### Conclusions

The present study leads to the following conclusions. (1) Modification of the electrophilic center from C=O to C=S (1c  $\rightarrow$  2c) results in an increase in the reactivity toward pyridines but a significant decrease in the p $K_a^o$  value. (2) The  $k_2/k_{-1}$  ratio is highly sensitive to the basicity of pyridines but independent of the electronic nature of the substituent X in the nonleaving group, i.e., the  $k_2/k_{-1}$  ratio remains nearly constant on changing the substituent X for reactions with a given pyridine. Accordingly, the  $pK_a^o$  value is not influenced by the electronic nature of the substituent X in the thionobenzoyl moiety. (3) The Hammett plot for reactions of 2a-e with 4-aminopyridine is not linear, i.e., substrates bearing an EDG (e.g., 2d and 2e) exhibit negative deviations from the Hammett plot. On the other hand, the Yukawa-Tsuno plot for the same reaction exhibits

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69, 3794–3800. (b) Neuvonen, H.; Neuvonen, K.; Koch, A.; Kleinpeter,
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Neuvonen, K. J. Chem. Soc., Perkin Trans. 2 1999, 1497–1502.

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<sup>(27) (</sup>a) Fujio, M.; Rappoport, Z.; Uddin, M. K.; Kim, H. J.; Tsuno, Y. *Bull. Chem. Soc. Jpn.* **2003**, *76*, 163–169. (b) Nakata, K.; Fujio, M.; Nishimoto, K.; Tsuno, Y. *J. Phys. Org. Chem.* **2003**, *16*, 323–335. (c) Uddin, M. K.; Fujio, M.; Kim, H. J.; Rappoport, Z.; Tsuno, Y. *Bull. Chem. Soc. Jpn.* **2002**, *75*, 1371–1379.

<sup>(28)</sup> Ugi, I.; Beck, F. Chem. Ber. 1961, 94, 1839.

<sup>(29) (</sup>a) Kevill, D. N.; D'Souza, M. J. J. Org. Chem. **2004**, 69, 7044–7050. (b) Kevill, D. N. In *The Chemistry of the Functional Groups. The Chemistry of Acyl Halrides*; Patai, S., Ed.; Wiley: New York, 1972; Chapter 12.

excellent linear correlation with an r value of 0.75. Thus, stabilization of the ground state through resonance interaction is responsible for the negative deviation shown by 2d and 2e.

# **Experimental Section**

**Materials.** Substrates 2a-e were readily prepared from the reaction of 4-nitrophenol and X-substituted thionobenzoyl chloride in the presence of triethylamine in anhydrous ether as reported previously.<sup>5d-f,30</sup> Their purity was confirmed by their melting points and <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra. Pyridines and other chemicals were of the highest quality available and generally recrystallized or distilled before use. Due to the low solubility of 2a-e in pure H<sub>2</sub>O, aqueous DMSO was used as the reaction medium (i.e., 20 mol % DMSO/ 80 mol % H<sub>2</sub>O). Doubly glass distilled water was further boiled and cooled under nitrogen just before use.

**Kinetics.** The kinetic studies were performed at  $25.0 \pm 0.1$  °C with a UV-vis spectrophotometer equipped with a constant temperature circulating bath for slow reactions (e.g.,  $t_{1/2} \ge 10$  s) or with a stopped-flow spectrophotometer for fast reactions (e.g.,  $t_{1/2} < 10$  s). The reactions were followed by monitoring the appearance of 4-nitrophenoxide ion at 410 nm (or 4-nitrophenol at 340 nm for reactions with weakly basic pyridines). All reactions were carried out under pseudo-first-order conditions in which the pyridine concentration was at least 20 times greater than that of substrate.

(30) Campbell, P.; Lapinskas, B. A. J. Am. Chem. Soc. 1977, 99, 5378-5382.

Typically, the reaction was initiated by adding 5  $\mu$ L of a 0.02 M substrate solution in MeCN by a 10  $\mu$ L syringe into a 10 mm UV cell containing 2.50 mL of the reaction medium and pyridine. The pyridine stock solution of ca. 0.2 M was prepared in a 25.0 mL volumetric flask under nitrogen by adding 2 equiv of pyridine to 1 equiv of standardized HCl solution in order to obtain a self-buffered solution. All transfers of reaction solutions were carried out by means of gastight syringes. The kinetic conditions and results are shown in the Supporting Information.

**Products Analysis.** The amount of 4-nitrophenoxide (and/or 4-nitrophenol) was determined quantitatively by comparison of the UV–vis spectra after completion of the reactions with those of the authentic samples under the same reaction conditions. Other products, such as 1-thionobenzoylpyridinium ion, were not isolated, but its hydrolyzed product, thiobenzoate, was identified by HPLC.

Acknowledgment. This work was supported by a grant from KOSEF of Korea (R01-2004-000-10279-0). S.J.H. is also grateful for the BK 21 scholarship.

**Supporting Information Available:** Tables S1–S18 for the kinetic conditions and data for reactions of **2a**, **2c**, and **2e** with six different pyridines, Tables S19 and S20 for the kinetic data for reactions of **2b** and **2d** with 4-aminopyridine, and Table S21 for the kinetic result for the reaction of **1c** with 4-oxidopyridine. This material is available free of charge via the Internet at http://pubs.acs.org.

JO061682X