

# Acid-Catalyzed Hydrolysis of Ketene Dithioacetals and Trithioorthocarboxylates. Effects of $\beta$ -Methyl Substitution

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Hydrolysis rates of  $\beta$ -methyl-substituted ketene dithioacetals were measured.  $\beta$ -Monomethyl and  $\beta,\beta$ -dimethyl substitutions reduced the reactivity of the parent acetal by factors of 26 and  $6.7 \times 10^5$ , respectively. Similar methyl substitutions of trithioorthocarboxylate, however, enhanced the hydrolysis reactivity by 3 and 23 times. The reversibility of protonation of ketene dithioacetal during hydrolysis was slightly increased by a  $\beta$ -methyl group, but dimethyl substitution seemed to inhibit reversibility by raising the potential barrier to protonation.

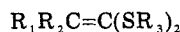
Recent investigations in our laboratories have demonstrated that a ketene dithioacetal undergoes acid-catalyzed hydrolysis through partially reversible protonation of the double bond<sup>1a</sup> (eq 1). A  $\beta$ -phenyl substitution of the

$$\text{CH}_2=\text{C}(\text{SMe})_2 + \text{H}_3\text{O}^+ \rightleftharpoons \text{CH}_3\text{C}^+(\text{SMe})_2 \rightleftharpoons \text{CH}_3\text{C}(\text{OH})(\text{SMe})_2 \rightarrow \text{CH}_3\text{COSMe} \quad (1)$$

1a 2a 3a 4a

ketene dithioacetal enhanced greatly the reversibility of the protonation.<sup>1b</sup> This is caused by the stabilization of the olefinic linkage of the reactant by the phenyl conjugation, which lowers the barrier against deprotonation of the intermediate carbocation while little affecting the barrier against hydration of the cation.

In the present study, we have examined the effects of  $\beta$ -methyl substitution on the reversibility of the protonation. The ketene dithioacetals studied include  $\beta$ -methyl (1b and 1d) and  $\beta,\beta$ -dimethyl (1c) derivatives. The di-



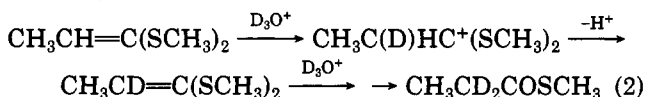
- 1a,  $\text{R}_1 = \text{R}_2 = \text{H}$ ;  $\text{R}_3 = \text{CH}_3$   
 b,  $\text{R}_1 = \text{H}$ ;  $\text{R}_2 = \text{R}_3 = \text{CH}_3$   
 c,  $\text{R}_1 = \text{R}_2 = \text{R}_3 = \text{CH}_3$   
 d,  $\text{R}_1 = \text{H}$ ;  $\text{R}_2 = \text{CH}_3$ ;  $\text{R}_3 = \text{C}_2\text{H}_5$

methylketene derivative 1c was found to be extremely unreactive. For the sake of comparison of reactivity, hydrolysis of the corresponding trithio ortho esters 5a-c was also investigated (Scheme I).

## Results

**Hydrolysis of Ketene Dithioacetals 1.** Hydrolysis products obtained from the reaction of 1b in 80 vol %  $\text{CH}_3\text{CN}-\text{H}_2\text{O}$  (0.02 M HCl) were examined by  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectroscopy. The spectrum was consistent with *S*-methyl thiopropionate 4b contaminated by a small amount ( $\sim 1/6$ ) of trithioorthopropionate 5b. The latter product must come from the reaction of the intermediate carbocation 2b with methanethiol liberated on the formation of 4b.

Products from the reaction of 1b in a deuterium medium (80 vol %  $\text{CH}_3\text{CN}-\text{D}_2\text{O}$ , 0.02 M DCl) were also analyzed in the same way. The NMR spectrum showed formation of 4b as well as 5b. However, the methylene signal for 4b (2.5 ppm) was only slightly perceived, and the methyl triplet collapsed into poorly separated multiplet (1.1-1.2 ppm). This indicates extensive H-D isotope exchange occurring during the reaction (eq 2). Similar examinations



## Scheme I

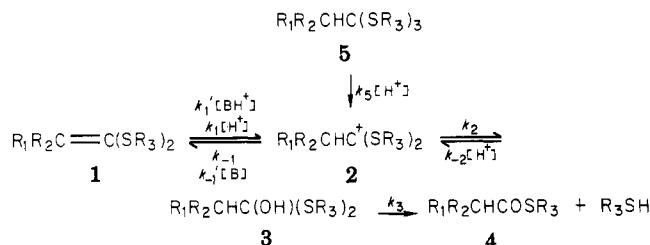


Table I. Rate Constants for the Hydrolysis of 1 and 5<sup>a</sup>

substrate	$k_{\text{H}^+}$ , $\text{M}^{-1} \text{s}^{-1}$	rel rate	$k_2/k_{-1}$	$k_1$ , $\text{M}^{-1} \text{s}^{-1}$
1a <sup>b</sup>	33.4	1.0	3.13	35.6
1b	1.28	$3.8 \times 10^{-2}$	2.0	1.9
1c	$5.01 \times 10^{-5}$ <sup>c</sup>	$1.5 \times 10^{-6}$		
1d	$2.41 \times 10^{-1}$	$7.2 \times 10^{-3}$	1.1	0.46
5a	$6.0 \times 10^{-3}$	1.0		
5b	$1.8 \times 10^{-2}$	3.0		
5c	$1.4 \times 10^{-1}$	23		

<sup>a</sup> Measured at 30 °C in aqueous HCl solutions containing 10 vol %  $\text{CH}_3\text{CN}$  ( $\mu = 0.45$ ) and 0.3-1 vol %  $\text{CH}_3\text{CN}$  ( $\mu = 0.5$ ) for 1 and 5, respectively. <sup>b</sup> Reference 1a. <sup>c</sup> Obtained in  $\text{HClO}_4$  solutions;  $k_{\text{obsd}} = k_{\text{H}^+} 10^{-\text{H}_0}$ .

were also undertaken with 1d. Although the overlap of signals for the propionyl and *S*-ethyl groups of the product thiopropionate, coupled with the contamination of ortho thio ester, made the analysis qualitative, the collapse of the methyl triplet (1.16 ppm) for the propionyl group indicates extensive isotope exchange occurring at the methylene group of the thiopropionate.

The reaction was spectrophotometrically monitored as a function of time. At low acidities ( $\text{pH} > 0$ ), an absorption due to 1b,d ( $\lambda_{\text{max}}$  250 nm) was found to disappear simultaneously with the formation of an absorption at 233 nm, which is due to the thiol ester product 4, an isosbestic point being observed at  $\sim 240$  nm. In strong acid ( $\text{H}_0 < -1$ ), however, instantaneous disappearance of 1 and simultaneous development of an absorption at 310 nm (2)<sup>2</sup> were followed by a slower decrease in this absorption, which was accompanied by formation of the thiol ester absorption (233 nm).

In the case of 1c, the overall reaction was very slow, and accumulation of any intermediate was hardly observed even at  $\text{H}_0 = -2$  ( $[\text{HClO}_4] = 4.7 \text{ M}$ ). Below  $\text{H}_0 -2.7$  ( $[\text{HClO}_4] = 5.9 \text{ M}$ ), both formation and decay of the cation 2c (310 nm) could be followed. Since the decay of 2c had an isosbestic point at 263 nm, the disappearance of 1c was

(1) (a) Okuyama, T.; Kawao, S.; Fueno, T. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1983**, *105*, 3220-3226. (b) Okuyama, T.; Fueno, T. *Ibid.* **1980**, *102*, 6590-6591; **1983**, *105*, 4390-4395.

(2) Cation 2 could be isolated as a perchlorate by the reaction of 1 or 5 with perchloric acid in acetic anhydride and had an absorption maximum at 310 nm in  $\text{CH}_3\text{CN}$  solution and  $^1\text{H}$  and  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectra consistent with the structure.

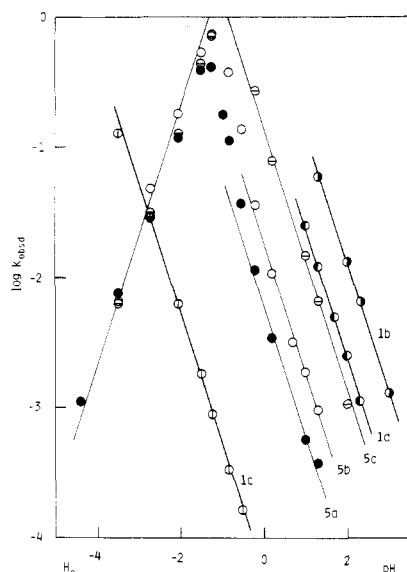


Figure 1.  $\text{pH}(H_0) - \log k_{\text{obsd}}$  profiles for the hydrolyses of 1b (○), 1c (circle with vertical bar), 1d (●), 5a (●), 5b (○), and 5c (⊖).

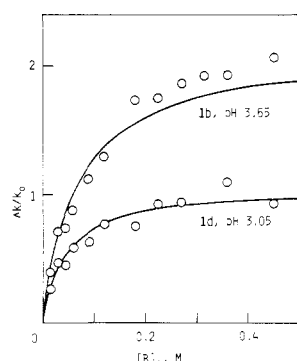


Figure 2. Buffer effects on the hydrolysis rates of 1b (upper line,  $\text{pH } 3.65 \pm 0.05$ ) and 1d (lower line,  $\text{pH } 3.05 \pm 0.10$ ) in formate buffer solutions. Solid curves are calculated from eq 4 by using parameters given in Table II.

monitored at this wavelength.

Pseudo-first-order rate constants  $k_{\text{obsd}}$  for the disappearance of 1b and 1d are proportional to the acid concentration in the range  $[\text{HCl}] = 0.001\text{--}0.1\text{ M}$  (Figure 1). Catalytic constants  $k_{\text{H}^+}$  are given in Table I. Rate constants for the disappearance of 1c obtained in aqueous  $\text{HClO}_4$  solutions (1.46–7.03 M) are logarithmically correlated with the  $H_0$  acidity function<sup>3</sup> with a slope of  $-1$ . The catalytic constant  $k_{\text{H}^+}$  is calculated by eq 3. Rate constants

$$k_{\text{obsd}} = k_{\text{H}^+} 10^{-H_0} \quad (3)$$

for the decay of the carbocation 2c in strong acid were identical with those obtained in the hydrolysis of 5c.

In formate buffer solutions, rates of hydrolyses of 1b and 1d increased with buffer concentration  $[\text{B}]_t$ , following a saturation curve (eq 4) as shown in Figure 2. In eq 4  $\Delta k$

$$\Delta k/k_0 = (\Delta k_{\text{max}}/k_0)[\text{B}]_t/(K_{\text{app}} + [\text{B}]_t) \quad (4)$$

$= k_{\text{obsd}} - k_0$ ,  $\Delta k_{\text{max}} = k_{\text{max}} - k_0$ , and  $k_0$  and  $k_{\text{max}}$  are limiting rate constants at zero and infinite buffer concentrations, respectively. The parameter  $K_{\text{app}}$  is equal to  $[\text{B}]_t$  when  $k_{\text{obsd}}$  attains a half-maximum increase (i.e.,  $\Delta k = \Delta k_{\text{max}}/2$ ). The curves were analyzed in the same way as before<sup>1</sup> on

Table II. Buffer Effects on the Hydrolysis Rates of 1b and 1d in 10 vol %  $\text{CH}_3\text{CN-H}_2\text{O}$  ( $\mu = 0.45$ ) at  $30^\circ\text{C}$

substrate	buffer	pH	$K_{\text{app}}$	$\Delta k_{\text{max}}/k_0$
1b	formate	$3.07 \pm 0.05$	$0.168 \pm 0.029$	$1.80 \pm 0.22$
1b	formate	$3.65 \pm 0.05$	$0.068 \pm 0.009$	$2.14 \pm 0.17$
1d	chloroacetate	$2.88 \pm 0.05$	$0.057 \pm 0.021$	$1.16 \pm 0.25$
1d	formate	$3.05 \pm 0.10$	$0.045 \pm 0.007$	$1.06 \pm 0.09$

the basis of the mechanism given in Scheme I. The rate-determining step changes with buffer concentration. Kinetic parameters, which were obtained by the least-squares treatment of  $k_0/\Delta k$  vs.  $1/[\text{B}]_t$ , using calculated values for  $k_0 (=k_{\text{H}^+}[\text{H}^+])$ , are summarized in Table II. The  $\Delta k_{\text{max}}/k_0$  values are equal to  $k_2/k_{-1}$  and are given as such in Table I.

Effects of added 2-mercaptoethanol on the rates of disappearance of 1b and 1d were also examined in HCl solutions and found to be small. The rate constants for 1b and 1d increased respectively about 13% and 35% in the presence of 0.5 M of the thiol, but further examinations were not undertaken.

Hydrolysis of 1b and 1d was also followed in deuterium media ( $[\text{DCl}] = 0.05\text{ M}$ ). The first-order plots curved as in the case of a phenylketene dithioacetal.<sup>1b</sup> Approximate initial and ultimate slopes of the plots gave rate constants of  $1.7 \times 10^{-2}$  and  $2.2 \times 10^{-2}\text{ M}^{-1}\text{ s}^{-1}$  for 1b and of  $4.2 \times 10^{-3}$  and  $5.6 \times 10^{-3}\text{ M}^{-1}\text{ s}^{-1}$  for 1d, respectively. Initial rate constants give roughly the isotope effects  $k_{\text{H}^+}/k_{\text{D}^+} = 3.4$  and 2.8 for 1b and 1d, respectively.

Hydrolysis of trithio ortho esters 5 leads to the thiol ester 4 through the carbocation intermediate 2. The reaction was monitored by following formation of 4 (233 nm). The decay of 2 (310 nm) was also followed at high acidities. Both the formation of 4 and the decay of 2 gave the identical rate constants when measured. Rate constants  $k_{\text{obsd}}$  are logarithmically plotted against  $\text{pH}(H_0)$  in Figure 1. Plots are linear with a slope of  $-1$  above  $\text{pH } 0$  and become steeper (deviations upward from the line) with increasing acidity. At still higher acidities ( $H_0 < -1.5$ ), the rates decrease with acidity, the slope being nearly unity. Catalytic constants  $k_{\text{H}^+}$  were evaluated from the linear plots at lower acidities and are given in Table I.

Products obtained from the reaction of 5c in 80 vol %  $\text{CH}_3\text{CN-D}_2\text{O}$  were analyzed by  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectroscopy. Formation of the thiol ester 4c was confirmed, and it was found to be contaminated only by unreacted 5c. No sign of H-D isotope exchange at the product methyne group nor of formation of the ketene dithioacetal 1c was detected.

## Discussion

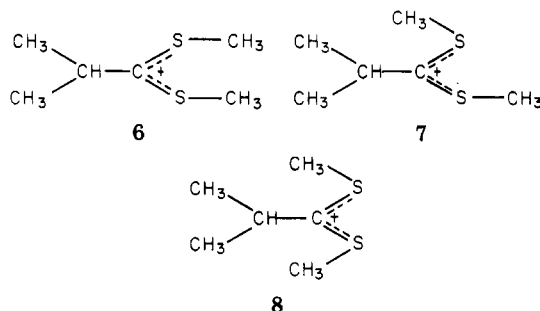
**Reaction Mechanism.** Hydrolysis of ketene dithioacetals 1 takes place stepwise as shown in Scheme I; the rate-determining step of the reaction depends on the structure of the substrate and the reaction conditions. A simple ketene dithioacetal, 1a, undergoes hydrolysis through a mainly rate-determining protonation ( $k_2/k_{-1} = 3.13$ ) above  $\text{pH } 2$ , but the hydration of the carbocation 2 becomes the slow step in buffer solutions as buffer concentration increases.<sup>1a</sup> This arises from the fact that hydration of 2 is slow and is hardly subject to buffer catalysis.

The relative rate constants  $k_2/k_{-1}$  were evaluated for 1b and 1d by the analyses of nonlinear dependences of rates on buffer concentrations:  $k_2/k_{-1} = 2.0$  for 1b and 1.1 for 1d. Both the  $k_1$  and  $k_2$  steps contribute partially to the rate determination. This was also confirmed by small but definite effects of added thiol exerted on the rate. The thiol can compete with water in the nucleophilic reaction

(3) (a) Rochester, C. H. "Acidity Functions"; Academic Press: London and New York, 1970. (b) Kresge, A. J.; Chen, H. J.; Capen, G. L.; Powell, M. F. *Can. J. Chem.* 1983, 61, 249–256.



$10^5$ .<sup>10</sup> These differences are much greater than those found with alkyl vinyl ethers.<sup>11</sup> The large effects observed with ketene acetals were rationalized by the steric interference of positive charge delocalization in the transition state.<sup>10</sup> If this were also the case with the sulfur analogues, acid-catalyzed hydrolysis of the corresponding trithio ortho esters **5** would have shown similar reactivity differences. Contrary to this expectation,  $\beta$ -methyl groups enhanced the hydrolysis rate of the ortho thio ester **5a** (Table I). The dithio carbocation intermediate **2c** formed by protonation of ketene dithioacetal **1c** or in the rate-determining step of hydrolysis of ortho thio ester **5c** may have conformational structures like **6–8**. For the oxygen analogue, any



similar structures were considered to be sterically strained by the interference between two methyl groups.<sup>10</sup> Such strains may not be so serious for the sulfur analogues **6–8** owing to a longer C–S bond. Steric strains may be operating in the tetrahedral substrate **5c** rather than the planar intermediate **2c** or the planar substrate **1c**. This strain in the reactant, which may be relieved on reaction, would explain the enhanced reactivity of  $\beta$ -methyl-substituted ortho thio esters **5**. The reduced reactivity of the dithioacetal **1c** remains unexplained, but this does not seem to be particular of ketene dithioacetal **1**. A  $\beta$ -methyl substitution of a vinyl sulfide reduces the reactivity by a factor of 21–37,<sup>12</sup> the magnitude being similar to that found for **1**. Steric hindrance against the protonation and/or steric inhibition of solvation of the carbocationic transition state may be possible causes for the reduced reactivity.

Finally, we point out that the methylthio substrate **1b** is 5.3-fold more reactive than the ethylthio derivative **1d**. This is similar to the reactivity of alkyl vinyl sulfides,<sup>12</sup> but the opposite is the case for alkyl vinyl ethers.<sup>13</sup>

## Experimental Section

**Materials.** Trithioorthocarboxylates **5a–c** were prepared from

methanethiol and appropriate acid chlorides:<sup>14</sup> **5a**, bp 95 °C (10 mmHg) [lit.<sup>15</sup> bp 98.5–100 °C (11 mmHg)]; **5b**, bp 95–96.5 °C (4 mmHg); **5c**, bp 115 °C (5 mmHg). Ketene dithioacetals **1b–d** were synthesized from the corresponding trithio ortho esters **5** as before.<sup>1,14</sup> **1b**: bp 71–73 °C (15 mmHg); <sup>1</sup>H NMR (CCl<sub>4</sub>)  $\delta$  1.86 (d, 3 H), 2.21 (s, 3 H), 2.25 (s, 3 H), 5.93 (q, 1 H). **1c**: bp 94 °C (15 mmHg); <sup>1</sup>H NMR (CCl<sub>4</sub>)  $\delta$  2.02 (s), 2.18 (s). **1d**: bp 62–63 °C (5 mmHg) [lit.<sup>14</sup> bp 60–60.2 °C (4 mmHg)]; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (CCl<sub>4</sub>)  $\delta$  1.10 (t, 6 H), 1.96 (d, 3 H), 2.70 (q, 4 H), 6.19 (q, 1 H).

Other materials were obtained as described previously.<sup>1</sup> Glass-distilled water was used throughout.

**Product Analysis.** Reactions of **1b** were carried out in 4:1 (v/v) CH<sub>3</sub>CN–H<sub>2</sub>O (D<sub>2</sub>O) solutions containing 0.02 M HCl (DCl) for 20 h at 30 °C. Products were extracted with CCl<sub>4</sub>, and the resulting solution was subjected to NMR analysis. The detailed procedure was the same as before.<sup>1</sup> The <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of the products from CH<sub>3</sub>CN–H<sub>2</sub>O had signals at 1.17 (t), 2.22 (s), and 2.50 ppm (q) consistent with *S*-methyl thiopropionate **4b** as well as a singlet at 2.02 ppm (ca. half of the 2.22-ppm singlet in intensity), which is due to 1,1,1-tris(methylthio)propane (**5b**). Small signals for the ethyl group of the latter product seem to overlap partly on the 1.17-ppm triplet (at 1.08 ppm) and the 2.02-ppm singlet (at 1.83 ppm). The products from the reaction in the deuterium medium showed two singlets at 2.22 and 2.02 ppm in a relative intensity of about 2:1. However, a signal at 2.5 ppm was only slightly perceived, and the 1.2-ppm triplet was collapsed into a closely spaced multiplet.

The reaction of **1d** was also conducted in 4:1 (v/v) CH<sub>3</sub>CN–H<sub>2</sub>O in the same way. The product NMR spectrum showed a quartet at 2.80 ppm and a triplet at 1.24 ppm (*S*-ethyl group of **4d**) contaminated by small peaks (byproduct **5d**); the highest field peak of the 1.24-ppm triplet was overlapped with a singlet (or poorly resolved multiplet), which is due to the propionyl methyl group of **4d**.

Hydrolysis products of **5c** were also obtained from the reaction in a deuterium medium and analyzed in the same way as above. A sample of **5c** (0.15 g) was reacted in 10 mL of 4:1 (v/v) CH<sub>3</sub>CN–D<sub>2</sub>O (0.07 M DCl) for 2 h. The NMR spectrum of the CCl<sub>4</sub> extract was consistent with a mixture of *S*-methyl thioisobutyrate **4c** [ $\delta$  1.17 (d), 2.22 (s), 2.66 (septet)] and the reactant **5c** [ $\delta$  1.15 (d), 2.09 (s)]<sup>16</sup> in a ratio of about 2:1.

**Kinetic measurements** were made in the same way as before<sup>1</sup> at 30 °C by using a Shimadzu UV-200 spectrophotometer. Reaction of **1** at low acidities (pH > 0.5) was carried out in 10 vol % aqueous acetonitrile at an ionic strength of 0.45 (KCl) while reaction of **5** was undertaken in mostly aqueous solutions (0.3–1 vol % of CH<sub>3</sub>CN) at an ionic strength of 0.50 (KCl). Aqueous perchloric acid (0.3–1 vol % of CH<sub>3</sub>CN) was used without added salt for reactions at higher acidities. Hydrochloric acid solutions of 0.5 and 1 M were also used.

**Registry No.** **1a**, 51102-74-0; **1b**, 6251-15-6; **1c**, 35329-14-7; **1d**, 13879-93-1; **5a**, 6156-22-5; **5b**, 83994-43-8; **5c**, 87711-70-4.

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(16) A septet due to the isopropyl methyne of **5c**, which should appear at 2.1 ppm, was hardly recognized because of the overlap with strong signals.

(10) Kresge, A. J.; Straub, T. S. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1983**, *105*, 3957–3961.

(11) Okuyama, T.; Fueno, T.; Nakatsuji, H.; Furukawa, J. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1967**, *89*, 5826–5831. Salomaa, P.; Nissi, P. *Acta Chem. Scand.* **1967**, *21*, 1386–1389.

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(13) Ledwith, A.; Woods, H. J. *J. Chem. Soc. B* **1966**, 753–757. Kresge, A. J.; Sagatys, D. S.; Chen, H. L. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1977**, *99*, 7228–7233.