

Supporting Information

Approaching a "Naked" Boryl Anion: Amide Metathesis as a Route to Calcium, Strontium, and Potassium Boryl Complexes

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Supporting Information

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1. General methods and instrumentation

All manipulations were carried out using standard Schlenk line or dry-box techniques under an atmosphere of argon or dinitrogen. Solvents were degassed by sparging with dinitrogen and dried by passing through a column of the appropriate drying agent. THF and $Et₂O$ were refluxed over sodium-potassium alloy, distilled and stored over sodium mirror. NMR spectra were measured in C_6D_6 which was dried over potassium, distilled under reduced pressure and stored under dinitrogen in Teflon valve ampoules. NMR samples were prepared under dinitrogen in 5 mm Wilmad 507-PP tubes fitted with J. Young Teflon valves. ¹H, ¹³C{¹H} and ${}^{11}B\{{}^{1}H\}$ NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker Avance III HD nanobay (400 MHz) and referenced internally to residual protio-solvent $({}^{1}H)$ or solvent $({}^{13}C)$ resonances and are reported relative to tetramethylsilane ($\delta = 0$ ppm), while ¹¹B NMR spectra were referenced to external BF₃OEt₂. Assignments were confirmed using two dimensional ${}^{1}H-{}^{1}H$ and ${}^{13}C-{}^{1}H$ NMR correlation experiments. Chemical shifts are quoted in δ (ppm) and coupling constants in Hz. Starting materials $M\{N(SiMe_3)_2\}\text{2}(thf)_2$ (M = Ca, Sr, Ba) were prepared from MBr₂ (M $=$ Ca, Sr) or Ba(OTf)₂ by salt metathesis with K{N(SiMe₃)₂} in thf and recrystallised from hexane;^{s1} Li{B(NDippCH)₂}(thf)₂ (I)^{s2} was prepared by the literature procedure.^{s2}

2. Syntheses of novel compounds

Reaction of Mg{N(SiMe3)2}² with I. *NMR scale test reaction*: Unsolvated Mg{N(SiMe3)2}² (0.022 g, 0.064 mmol) was dissolved in C_6D_6 (0.5 mL) showing two ¹H NMR signals (0.44 and 0.36 ppm). To this solution solid $Li{B(NDippCH)_2}(thf)_2$ (**I**) (0.026 g, 0.048 mmol) was added forming single new boryl species with CH backbone signal at 6.44 ppm (δ ¹¹B) 35.1 ppm), which showed no sign of decomposition upon storage at room temperature for several days. *Attempted synthesis of [Mg{B(NDippCH)2}{N(SiMe3)2}(thf)]*: Benzene (10 mL) was added to a mixture of $Li{B(NDippCH)_2}(thf)_2$ (**I**) (0.202 g, 0.37 mmol) and $Mg{N(SiMe_3)_2}_2$ (0.128 g, 0.37 mmol) at room temperature; the mixture was stirred until the reagents had dissolved producing light yellow solution. The solvent was removed *in vacuo* leaving semicrystalline material, which was dissolved in minimal amount of pentane and the solution was stored overnight at -30 °C yielding a lump of colourless crystalline product characterised by X -ray diffraction as co-crystal $[Mg{B(NDiopCH)_2}{N(SiMe_3)_2}(thf)$]·[Li{N(SiMe3)2} (thf)]2. Repeated crystallisation did not produce Li-free product.

Figure s1: ¹H NMR spectrum of Mg{N(SiMe₃)₂}₂ + **I** in C₆D₆

[Ca{B(NDippCH)2}{N(SiMe3)2}(thf)2] (1): *NMR scale reaction*: Solid Li{B(NDippCH)₂}(thf)₂ (**I**) (0.017 g, 0.032 mmol) was added to a solution of $Ca\{N(SiMe₃)₂\}\2$ (thf)₂ (0.018 g, 0.035 mmol) in C₆D₆ (0.5 mL). ¹H NMR spectrum showed formation of single new boryl species with CH backbone signal at 6.44 ppm $({\mathcal{X}}^{11}B)$ 41.6 ppm), which decomposed by more than 50% overnight at room temperature. *Bulk synthesis of 1*: Diethyl ether (10 mL) was added to a mixture of Li{B(NDippCH)₂}(thf)₂ (I) (0.220 g, 0.41 mmol) and $Ca\{N(SiMe_3)_2\}\text{2}(thf)_2$ (0.205 g, 0.41 mmol) at -30 °C; the mixture was stirred until the reagents had dissolved completely (ca. 30 min). The solvent was removed *in vacuo* leaving yellow semi-crystalline honey-like material. The residue was dissolved in pentane (ca. 10 mL) and the solution was concentrated *in vacuo* until crystallisation started. Storing the solution overnight at -30 °C yielded large pale yellow blocks of 1 (0.130 g, 0.18) mmol, 43%). **1** decomposes in benzene solution at room temperature over a period of 12-24 h to give HB(NDippCH)₂ and Ph B(NDippCH)₂. ¹H NMR (C₆D₆): δ 7.22 (m, 6H, *m*- and *p*-H of Ar), 6.47 (s, 2H, NCH), 3.69 (sept, ${}^{3}J = 6.9$ Hz, 4H, CHMe₂), 3.22 (m, 8H, α-CH₂ of thf), 1.38 (d, ${}^{3}J$ = 6.9 Hz, 12H, CHMe₂), 1.30 (d, ${}^{3}J$ = 6.9 Hz, 12H, CHMe₂), 1.19 (m, 8H, β-CH₂ of thf), 0.12 (s, 18H, SiMe₃). ¹³C NMR (C₆D₆): δ 147.0 (o -C of Ar), 146.2 (*ipso*-C of Ar), 126.0 (*p*-CH of Ar), 123.1 (*m*-CH of Ar), 120.0 (NCH), 68.2 (α-CH² of thf), 28.5 (*C*HMe2), 25.6 (CHMe₂), 25.0 (β-CH₂ of thf), 24.5 (CHMe₂), 5.8 (s, SiMe₃). ¹¹B NMR (C₆D₆): δ 41.2 (br).

Figure s2: ¹H NMR spectrum of Ca{N(SiMe₃)₂}₂(thf)₂ + **I** in C₆D₆

Figure s3: ¹H NMR spectrum of **1** in C_6D_6

Figure s4: ¹¹B NMR spectrum of **1** in C_6D_6

Figure s5: Decomposition of 1 in C_6D_6 followed by ¹H NMR spectra at 298 K

Sr{B(NDippCH)2}{N(SiMe3)2}(thf)³ (**2):** *NMR scale reaction*: Solid Li{B(NDippCH)₂}(thf)₂ (**I**) $(0.021 \text{ g}, 0.039 \text{ mmol})$ was added to a solution of $Sr(N(SiMe₃)₂$ ₂(thf)₂ (0.022 g, 0.040 mmol) in C₆D₆ (0.5 mL). ¹H NMR spectrum showed formation of one major new boryl species with CH backbone signal at 6.48 ppm $(\delta^{11}B)$ 45.7 ppm), which decomposed completely at room temperature overnight. *Bulk synthesis of 2*: Diethyl ether (0.5 mL) was vacuum-transferred to a mixture of $Li\{B(NDippCH)_2\}$ (thf)₂ (**I**) (21 mg, 0.040 mmol) and $Sr{N(SiMe₃)₂}$ ₂(thf)₂ (22 mg, 0.040 mmol) in a two-section tube at -196 °C (liquid N₂); the mixture was briefly warmed up to room temperature and shaken by hand until the reagents had dissolved completely. All volatiles were removed *in vacuo*, pentane (0.5 mL) was added by vacuum transfer and the tube was sealed. The orange-yellow solution was concentrated to a drop of oil and the tube was stored at -30 °C for three days yielding pale yellow blocks of **2** suitable for X-ray diffraction (15 mg, ca. 40%). **2** decomposes in benzene solution at room temperature over a period of 3-6 h to give HB(NDippCH)₂ and PhB(NDippCH)₂. ¹H NMR (C₆D₆): δ 7.22 (m, 6H, *m*- and *p*-H of Ar), 6.49 (s, 2H, NCH), 3.73 (sept, ${}^{3}J$ = 6.9 Hz, 4H, CHMe₂), 3.51 (m, 8H, α -CH₂ of thf), 1.39 (d, ³ $J = 6.9$ Hz, 12H, CH*Me*₂), 1.31 (d, ³ $J = 6.9$ Hz, 12H, CH*Me*₂), 1.30 (m, 8H, β-CH₂ of thf), 0.14 (s, 18H, SiMe₃). ¹¹B NMR (C₆D₆): δ 45.1 (br).

Figure s6: ¹H NMR spectrum of Sr{N(SiMe₃)₂}₂(thf)₂ + **I** in C₆D₆

Figure s7: ¹H NMR spectrum: decomposition of 2 in C_6D_6

Figure s8: ¹¹B NMR spectrum: decomposition of 2 in C₆D₆

Reaction of Ba{N(SiMe₃)₂}₂(thf)₂ with I. Solid Li{B(NDippCH)₂}(thf)₂ (I) (0.032 g, 0.059 mmol) was added to the solution of Ba{N(SiMe₃₎₂}₂(thf)₂ (0.036 g, 0.059 mmol) in C₆D₆ (0.5 mL). 1 H NMR spectrum showed only formation of decomposition products with CH backbone signals at 6.25 (PhB(NDippCH)₂) and 6.18 ppm (HB(NDippCH)₂).

Figure s4: ¹H NMR spectrum of Ba{N(SiMe₃)₂}₂(thf)₂ + **I** in C₆D₆

[K{B(NDippCH)2}]² (3): Hexane (0.5 mL) was vacuum-transferred to a mixture of Li{B(NDippCH)₂}(thf)₂ (**I**) (33 mg, 0.061 mmol) and $K\{N(SiMe₃)₂\}$ (13 mg, 0.065 mmol) in a two-section tube at -196 °C (liquid N₂) and the tube was sealed; the mixture was briefly warmed up to room temperature and sonicated until the reagents had dissolved completely. The tube was immediately cooled to -30 °C, the orange-yellow solution was concentrated to $\frac{1}{2}$ volume (by applying dry ice to the empty part) and the tube was stored at -30 °C for two days yielding deep yellow blocks (larger crystals look orange) of $[K\{B(NDiopCH)_2\}]_2$ suitable for X-ray diffraction (13 mg, MW = 426.50 (monomer), 0.030 mmol, 50%). Dissolving in C_6D_6 gave a deep yellow solution, which started darkening immediately and turned red after ¹H and ¹¹B NMR spectra have been measured $(\sim 10 \text{ min})$. **3** also decomposes in the solid state over a period of 48 h at room temperature. Accordingly, clean NMR and microanalytical data on **3** could not be obtained. Its composition is supported, however, by the isolation and characterization of **4** (vide infra), the product of its decomposition by intramolecular C-H insertion.

1 h (2) (peak at 6.69 ppm is assigned to remaining **3** while peaks at 6.18 and 6.25 ppm correspond to $HB(NDippCH)_2$ and $PhB(NDippCH)_2$, respectively)

Figure s11: ¹¹B NMR spectrum: decomposition of **3** in C_6D_6 (broad peak at 48.3 ppm is assigned to remaining **3**)

 $[K\{HB(CMe_2C_6H_3(CHMe_2)NCHCHNDipp)\}]$ **n** (4): The above sample of decomposed 3 was transferred to a crystallisation tube and evaporated to dryness. Addition of hexane (0.3 mL) resulted in formation of white microcrystalline solid, which was washed with a small amount of cold hexane and dried *in vacuo*. NMR spectroscopy showed that the solid was almost pure **4** (containing ~0.5 molecule of hexane per monomeric unit). Crystals suitable for X-ray diffraction were obtained from methylcyclohexane solution. Yield ca. 10 mg, 63% ¹H NMR (C₆D₆): δ 7.07-7.13 (m, 4H, CH of Ar), 6.89-6.94 (m, 2H, CH of Ar), 5.98 (d, $3J = 2.1$ Hz, 1H, NCH), 5.82 (d, $3J = 2.1$ Hz, 1H, NCH), 3.70 (br s, 2H, CHMe₂), 3.31 (sept, $3J = 6.8$ Hz, 1H, CHMe₂), 1.43 (br s, 6H, CHMe₂), 1.39 (d, ³J = 6.8 Hz, 3H, CHMe₂), 1.26 (d, ³J = 6.8 Hz, 3H, CH*Me*2), 1.23 (s, 3H, C*Me*² + CH² of hexane), 1.20 (s, 3H, C*Me*2), 1.06 (br s, 6H, CH*Me*₂), 0.88 (t, 3H, CH₃ of hexane). ¹¹B NMR (C₆D₆): δ 8.4 (br).

Figure s12: ¹H NMR spectrum of 4 in C_6D_6

Figure s13: ¹¹B NMR spectrum of 4 in C_6D_6

3. Crystallographic data

1: $C_{40}H_{70}BCaN_3O_2Si_2$, monoclinic, P_{1}/c , $M_r = 732.08$, $a = 21.8612(1)$, $b = 21.5454(1)$, $c =$ 22.0805(2) Å, \Box = 118.8134(3)^o, V = 9112.50(11) Å³, \Box _x = 1.067 Mg m⁻³, Z = 8, R₁ = 0.0678 (13231 observed reflections), $wR_2 = 0.1869$ (20666 total reflections). CCDC reference: 2021075.

2: C₄₄H₇₈BN₃O₃Si₂Sr, monoclinic, $P2_1/n$, $M_r = 851.70$, $a = 12.4841(2)$, $b = 21.2203(3)$, $c =$ 19.0889(3) Å, \Box = 94.7910(10)^o, V = 5039.29(13) Å³, \Box _x = 1.123 Mg m⁻³, Z = 4, R₁ = 0.0510 (8249 observed reflections), $wR_2 = 0.1490$ (10280 total reflections). CCDC reference: 2021078.

3: C₅₂H₇₂B₂K₂N₄, monoclinic, $P2_1/n$, $M_r = 852.95$, $a = 10.6897(2)$, $b = 18.7258(4)$, $c =$ 12.9727(3) Å, \square = 94.133(2)^o, V = 2590.03(10) Å³, \square_x = 1.094 Mg m⁻³, Z = 2, R₁ = 0.0442 (4699 observed reflections), $wR_2 = 0.1259$ (5364 total reflections). CCDC reference: 2021076.

4(2C₆H₁₁CH₃): C₆₆H₁₀₀B₂K₂N₄, monoclinic, *I*2/*a*, *M_r* = 1049.31, *a* = 14.7846(3), *b* = 21.4971(5), $c = 19.8902(4)$ \AA , $\Box = 100.010(2)$ °, $\text{V} = 6225.4(2)$ \AA^3 , $\Box_x = 1.120$ Mg m⁻³, $Z = 4$, $R_1 = 0.0459$ (4952 observed reflections), $wR_2 = 0.1322$ (6333 total reflections). CCDC reference: 2021077.

4. Computational details

The geometry optimizations were performed with the Gaussian16 (Revision C.01) programme s^3 using the PBE1PBE hybrid exchange functional s^4 and Def-TZVP basis set.^{s5} In addition, Grimme's empirical dispersion correction with Becke-Johnson damping (GD3BJ) was used as well as an ultrafine integration grid.^{s6} Full analytical frequency calculations were performed for the optimized structures to ensure the nature of the stationary points found (minima, no imaginary frequencies). Simplified model compounds **3'** and **I'** where the isopropyl groups were replaced by methyl groups were used for the QTAIM analysis (performed by the programme AIMAll, version 19.10.12) to reduce computational cost.^{57}

Xyz-coordinates of optimized compounds

5. References for supporting information

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