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Efficient asymmetric synthesis of spiro-2(3*H*)-furanones *via* phase-transfer-catalyzed alkynylation†

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Efficient asymmetric synthesis of spiro-2(3*H*)-furanones was achieved *via* phase-transfer-catalyzed highly enantioselective alkynylation of cyclic β-keto esters with hypervalent iodine reagents.

Introduction

The development of efficient asymmetric methods for the synthesis of chiral spirocyclic compounds has attracted much attention in recent years,[1] because such structures are found in many important biologically active natural products.[2] Among these spirocyclic compounds, chiral spirolactones are one of the most important targets in synthetic organic chemistry.[2f] Although several examples of asymmetric synthesis of spirolactones have recently been reported,[3] efficient methods for the enantioselective synthesis of spiro-2(3*H*)-furanones possessing an all-carbon quaternary center are still very limited,[4] despite the importance of these compounds in natural product chemistry and medicinal chemistry (Fig. 1).[5] In this context, we are interested in the development of efficient asymmetric synthesis of spiro-2(3*H*)-furanones.

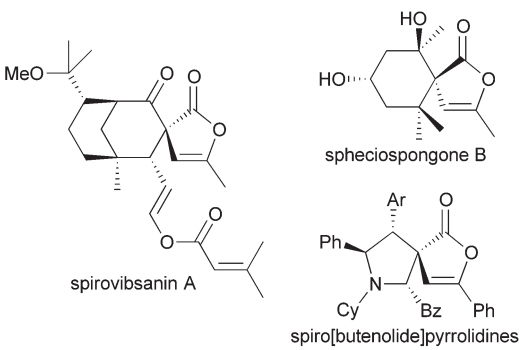
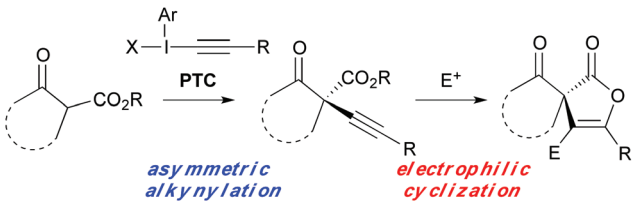


Fig. 1 Natural products and biologically active compounds possessing the spiro-2(3*H*)-furanone structure.



Scheme 1 Synthetic strategy.

Our key strategy for the enantioselective synthesis of spiro-2(3*H*)-furanones involves asymmetric alkynylation of cyclic β-keto esters with hypervalent iodine reagents[6] under phase-transfer conditions (Scheme 1).[7–9] Subsequent intramolecular electrophilic cyclization of the alkynylation product gave a spiro-2(3*H*)-furanone.[10,11] Herein we report an efficient, highly enantioselective synthesis of spiro-2(3*H*)-furanones *via* phase-transfer-catalyzed alkynylation of cyclic β-keto esters with alkynylbenziodoxoles.

Results and discussion

We first performed the asymmetric alkynylation of 2-oxocyclopentanecarboxylate with hypervalent iodine reagents **3** under the influence of binaphthyl-modified chiral quaternary ammonium salts (*S*,*S*)-**1**[12] and (*S*)-**2**[13] as reliable phase-transfer catalysts (Table 1). Although related asymmetric alkynylations have already been reported by Waser,[8b] the enantioselectivity of the products was moderate at best (<79% ee) and the scope of alkynylation reagents was limited to trialkylsilylacetylene derivatives. To improve the enantioselectivity of the reaction, we investigated the effect of several hypervalent iodine reagents **3**. When the asymmetric alkynylation was performed with the iodonium salt **3a**, the alkynylation product **4a** was obtained in good yields with no asymmetric inductions

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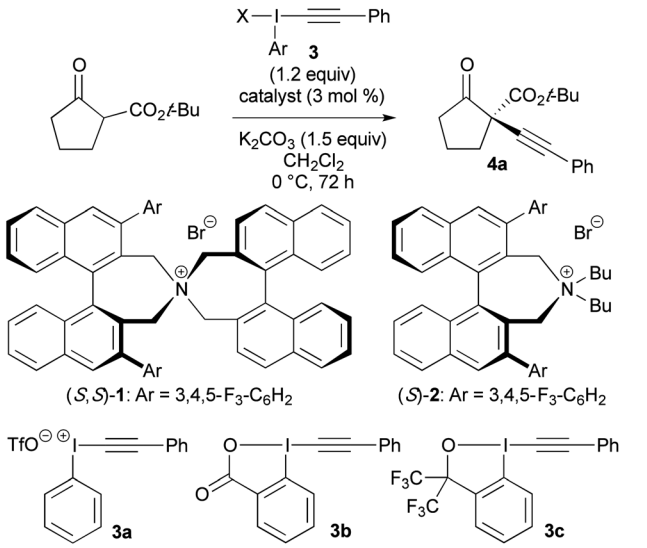
Table 1 Optimization of the reaction conditions[a]

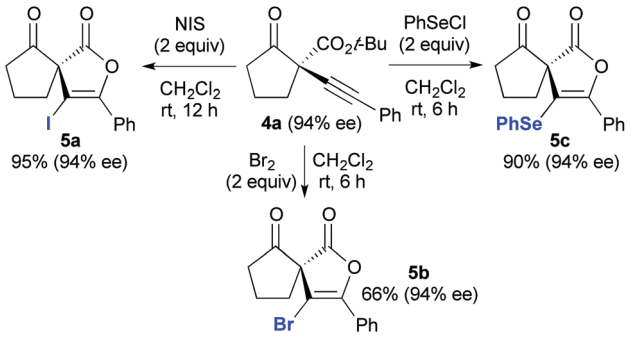


Entry	Catalyst	3	Yield[b] (%)	ee[c] (%)
1	(*S*,*S*)-**1**	**3a**	82	0
2	(*S*)-**2**	**3a**	85	0
3	(*S*,*S*)-**1**	**3b**	56	26
4	(*S*)-**2**	**3b**	88	11
5	(*S*,*S*)-**1**	**3c**	Trace	—
6	(*S*)-**2**	**3c**	78	83
7[d]	(*S*)-**2**	**3c**	76	94

[a] Reaction conditions: *tert*-butyl 2-oxocyclopentanecarboxylate (0.025 mmol), **3** (0.030 mmol), and K_2CO_3 (0.038 mmol) in the presence of the catalyst (3 mol%) in dichloromethane (2 mL) at 0 °C for 72 h. [b] The yield of the isolated product. [c] Determined by chiral HPLC analysis. [d] Toluene was used as the solvent.

(entries 1 and 2). The reactions with the alkynylbenziodoxolone reagent **3b** gave the product **4a** in moderate to good yields with low enantioselectivities (11–26% ee, entries 3 and 4). These results are in agreement with previous observations on the importance of employing cyclic hypervalent iodine reagents for asymmetric induction.[8b,c,14] Based on these observations, we next performed the alkynylation with alkynylbenziodoxole **3c**. Although the reaction using the catalyst (*S*,*S*)-**1** was very sluggish (entry 5), the catalyst (*S*)-**2** promoted the alkynylation with the reagent **3c** to give the alkynylation product **4a** in good yield with good enantioselectivity (83% ee, entry 6). Changing the solvent to toluene improved the enantioselectivity and **4a** was obtained with high enantioselectivity (94% ee, entry 7), representing the first example of highly enantioselective alkynylation reported to date using a hypervalent iodine reagent.

The obtained alkynylation product **4a** was readily cyclized by treatment with appropriate electrophiles to give spiro-2(3*H*)-furanones **5** (Scheme 2).[11,15] For example, treatment of **4a** with *N*-iodosuccinimide or bromine in dichloromethane at room temperature for 6–12 h gave the corresponding halogenated spiro-2(3*H*)-furanones **5a** and **5b** in good to high yields without any loss of stereo information. Furthermore, phenylselenyl

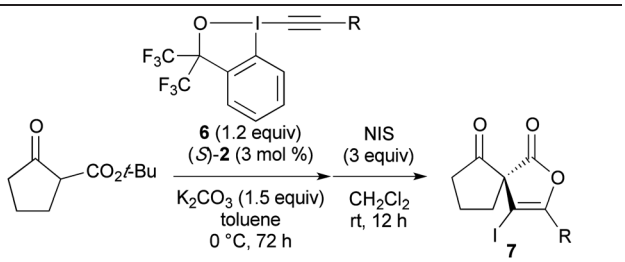


Scheme 2 Electrophilic cyclization of the alkynylation product **4a**.

chloride could be employed in the cyclization to give spiro-2(3*H*)-furanone **5c** in high yield.

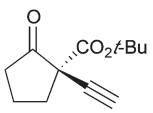
With an efficient synthetic route to chiral spiro-2(3*H*)-furanones in hand, we further explored the substrate generality in the enantioselective alkynylation of 2-oxocyclopentanecarboxylate with various alkynylbenziodoxoles **6** (Table 2). In this study, it was found that the alkynylation product of type **4**, without isolation, could be treated with *N*-iodosuccinimide to give spiro-2(3*H*)-furanones **7** directly, thereby further improving the efficiency of this transformation. The reactions with arylacetylene derivatives **6** (R = Ar) that contain various aromatic and heteroaromatic groups gave the corresponding

Table 2 Efficient asymmetric synthesis of spiro-2(3*H*)-furanones **7**[a]



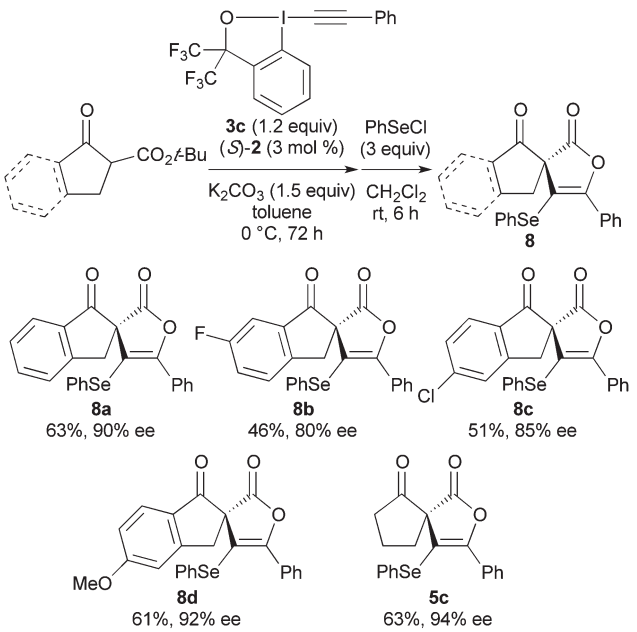
Entry	R of reagent **6**	Yield[b] (%)	ee[c] (%)
1	Ph (**3c**)	60 (**5a**)	94
2	4-MeO-C_6H_4 (**6a**)	63 (**7a**)	95
3	4-F-C_6H_4 (**6b**)	41 (**7b**)	90
4[d]	2-Thienyl (**6c**)	53 (**7c**)	93
5	Me (**6d**)	~0 (**7d**)	—
6[e]	Me_3Si (**6e**)	80 (**4e**)[f]	93

[a] Reaction conditions: 1st step: *tert*-butyl 2-oxocyclopentanecarboxylate (0.025 mmol), **3c** or **6** (0.030 mmol), and K_2CO_3 (0.038 mmol) in the presence of the catalyst (*S*)-**2** (3 mol%) in toluene (2 mL) at 0 °C for 72 h. 2nd step: the crude alkynylation compound **4** and *N*-iodosuccinimide (0.075 mmol) in dichloromethane (1 mL) at room temperature for 12 h. [b] The yield of isolated products. [c] Determined by chiral HPLC analysis. [d] The reaction time for the 2nd step = 24 h. [e] KF (1.5 equiv.) was used instead of K_2CO_3. [f] The 2nd cyclization step did not proceed. The yield corresponds to the alkynylation product **4e**.

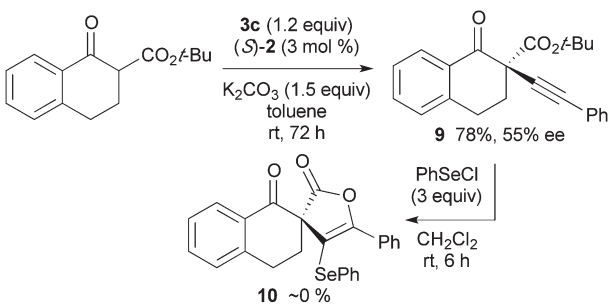


spiro-2(3*H*)-furanones **5a** and **7a–c** in moderate overall yields with high enantioselectivities (90–95% ee, entries 1–4). Unfortunately, the reaction with the methylacetylene substituted iodine reagent **6d** did not afford the target product (entry 5). The trimethylsilylacetylene derivative **6e** was also employed in this reaction. Although the second cyclization step did not proceed, the acetylation product **4e** was obtained with high enantioselectivity (93% ee, entry 6).

Other cyclic β-keto esters were also examined for the asymmetric synthesis of spiro-2(3*H*)-furanones **8** (Scheme 3). Various 1-oxo-2-indanecarboxylates could be employed for this reaction to give spirocyclic compounds **8a–d** in good to high enantioselectivities (80–92% ee). The reactions with 1-oxo-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphthalene-2-carboxylate were also examined (Scheme 4). Although asymmetric alkynylation with **3c** was promoted by the catalyst (*S*)-**2** to give the product **9** with moderate enantioselectivity (55% ee), the second cyclization was not successful. The absolute configuration of the products was determined by X-ray diffraction analysis of **8a** (Fig. 2).[16,17]



Scheme 3 Efficient asymmetric synthesis of spiro-2(3*H*)-furanones **8**.



Scheme 4 Asymmetric alkynylation of 1-oxo-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphthalene-2-carboxylate.

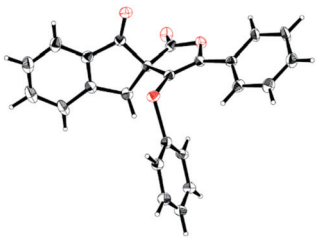


Fig. 2 X-ray crystal structure of **8a**.

Conclusions

In summary, we have successfully developed an efficient, highly enantioselective synthesis of spiro-2(3*H*)-furanones *via* phase-transfer-catalyzed alkynylation of cyclic β-keto esters with alkynylbenziodoxoles. Further studies will be directed toward expansion of the reaction scope.

Experimental

General procedure for asymmetric alkynylation of 2-oxocyclopentanecarboxylate (Table 1)

To a solution of 2-oxocyclopentanecarboxylate (0.025 mmol), iodine reagent **3** (0.030 mmol), and the chiral phase-transfer catalyst (*S*,*S*)-**1** or (*S*)-**2** (3 mol%) in dichloromethane or toluene (2 mL) was added K_2CO_3 (0.038 mmol) at 0 °C. The reaction mixture was vigorously stirred for 72 h at 0 °C. The reaction mixture was quenched with saturated aqueous NH_4Cl and extracted with ethyl acetate (3 × 5 mL). The combined extracts were dried over Na_2SO_4 and concentrated. The residue was purified by column chromatography or preparative thin layer chromatography on silica gel (ethyl acetate–hexane–dichloromethane as the eluent) to give the alkynylation product **4**.

General procedure for cyclization of the alkynylation product 4a (Scheme 2)

A solution of *N*-iodosuccinimide, bromine, or phenylselenyl chloride (0.030 mmol) in dichloromethane (1 mL) was added dropwise to a solution of the alkynylated compound **4a** (0.015 mmol) in dichloromethane (1 mL) at room temperature. The reaction mixture was stirred for 6–12 h at room temperature. The reaction mixture was quenched with saturated aqueous $Na_2S_2O_3$ (NIS and Br_2) or $NaHCO_3$ (PhSeCl) and extracted with dichloromethane (3 × 5 mL). The combined extracts were dried over Na_2SO_4 and concentrated. The residue was purified by column chromatography or preparative thin layer chromatography on silica gel (ethyl acetate–hexane–dichloromethane as the eluent) to give the cyclization product **5**.

General procedure for efficient asymmetric synthesis of spiro compounds 7 and 8 (Table 2, Scheme 3)

To a solution of β-keto ester (0.025 mmol), iodine reagent **3c** or **6** (0.030 mmol), and the chiral phase-transfer catalyst

(*S*)-**2** (3 mol%) in toluene (2 mL) was added K_2CO_3 (0.038 mmol) at 0 °C. The reaction mixture was vigorously stirred for 72 h at 0 °C. The reaction mixture was quenched with saturated aqueous NH_4Cl and extracted with ethyl acetate (3 × 5 mL). The combined extracts were dried over Na_2SO_4 and concentrated. The residue was dissolved in dichloromethane (1 mL), and to this solution was added a solution of *N*-iodosuccinimide or phenylselenyl chloride (0.075 mmol) in dichloromethane (1 mL) at room temperature. The reaction mixture was stirred for 6–12 h at room temperature. The reaction mixture was quenched with saturated aqueous $Na_2S_2O_3$ (NIS) or $NaHCO_3$ (PhSeCl) and extracted with dichloromethane (3 × 5 mL). The combined extracts were dried over Na_2SO_4 and concentrated. The residue was purified by column chromatography or preparative thin layer chromatography on silica gel (ethyl acetate–hexane–dichloromethane as the eluent) to give the cyclization product **7** or **8**.

Acknowledgements

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Notes and references

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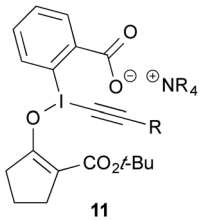
14 Based on our observations on the importance of the cyclic structure in hypervalent iodine reagents, and the report by Waser,[8b] plausible structures (**11** and **12**) for the intermediate of these reactions were proposed as shown below.



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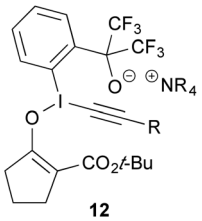

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15 The reaction mechanism of the electrophilic cyclization was discussed in ref. 11.

16 The crystal structure of **8a** has been deposited at the Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre (CCDC 986764).

17 The alkynylations with acyclic β-keto esters proceeded very sluggishly.