Pergamon

Tetrahedron Letters 40 (1999) 4563–4566

TETRAHEDRON LETTERS

Divergent Behavior of Cobalt-Complexed Enyne Having a Leaving Group

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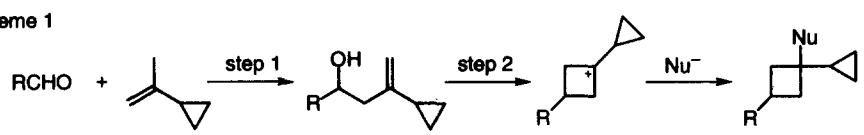
Received 22 January 1999; revised 13 April 1999; accepted 16 April 1999

Abstract: Behavior of the compounds **2** with a Co-complexed enyne moiety was examined. When R in **2** was a *prim*-alkyl group, the cyclization to give a cyclobutane proceeded in high yield, whereas, when R was bulkier, an interesting substitution involving a 1,2-shift was observed.

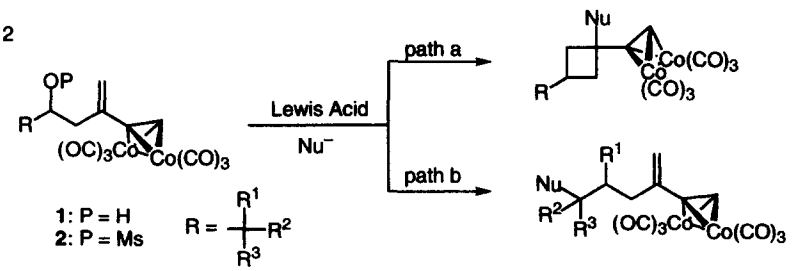
We previously reported a [3+1] synthetic route to cyclobutane derivatives via two steps, *i.e.*, (1) the carbonyl-ene reaction, (2) the cyclobutane cyclization (Scheme 1).[1] Both of these processes are facilitated by the presence of a cyclopropyl group, which strongly promotes the development of the α-cation.[2] By the analogy that a Co-complexed alkynyl group also exhibits a similar strong cation-stabilizing ability,[3, 4] we became interested in applying the same chemistry to a cobalt-complexed conjugated enynyl system.

Scheme 1



The outcome for the step 1 has been already described:[5] [2-methyl-1-buten-3-yne]dicobalt hexacarbonyl serves as a good ene donor in the Me_2AlCl-promoted carbonyl-ene reaction to give alcohol **1**. The behavior of the derived mesylate **2** under Lewis acidic conditions was then studied, which is described in this communication. The results are summarized in Scheme 2. When R in **2** was a *prim*-alkyl group, the cyclobutane cyclization proceeded in high yield (path a) in the same manner as that of the cyclopropyl case (vide supra), whereas, when R was bulkier, an interesting substitution reaction involving a 1,2-shift was observed (path b).

Scheme 2



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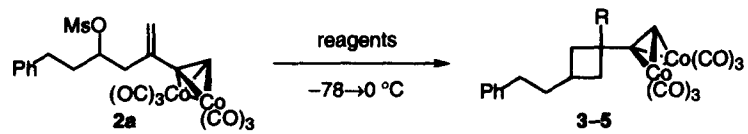
PII: S0040-4039(99)00791-1

The primary case: When R was a *prim*-alkyl group, the Lewis acid-promoted cyclobutane cyclization proceeded in high yield (Table 1).[6, 7] Treatment of the mesylate **2a** with Me_3Al (toluene, –78 °C → 0 °C, 40 min) gave cyclobutane **3** as a diastereomeric mixture[8, 9] via the sequential cyclization and methylation (run 1). Similarly, the reaction of **2a** with allylsilane (run 2) or triethylsilane (run 3) in the presence of $TiCl_4$ gave the cyclobutanes **4** and **5**, respectively.[8]

Table 1

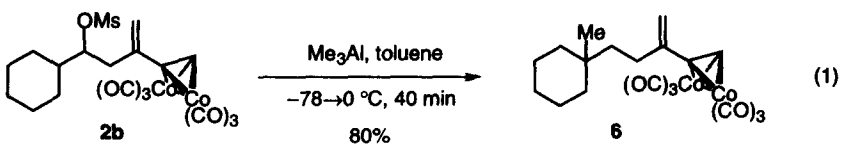


2a **3–5**

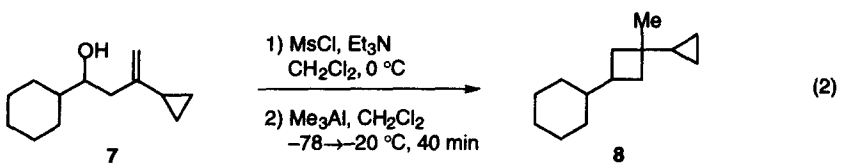
Run	Reagents	Conditions	Product	R	Yield/% (*trans*/*cis*)
1	Me_3Al	toluene, 40 min	**3**	Me	86 (71/29)[a]
2	$SiMe_3$, $TiCl_4$	CH_2Cl_2, 2 h	**4**		84 (61/39)[b]
3	Et_3SiH, $TiCl_4$	CH_2Cl_2, 2 h	**5**	H	59 (60/40)[a]

a) For structure assignment, see ref. 9; b) Relative configuration unassigned; the ratio may be reversed.

The sec- and tert-cases: When R in **2** was bulkier (R = *sec*- or *tert*-alkyl), totally different results were obtained. Treatment of **2b** with Me_3Al gave a single product (eq. 1), which, amazingly, proved to be **6**[7] *possessing a methyl group on the cyclohexane ring!*[10] This outcome could be rationalized by (1) departure of the mesylate facilitated by Me_3Al,[6] (2) 1,2-shift of a hydride on the cyclohexane ring, and (3) trapping of the *tert*-cationic center by Me_3Al.



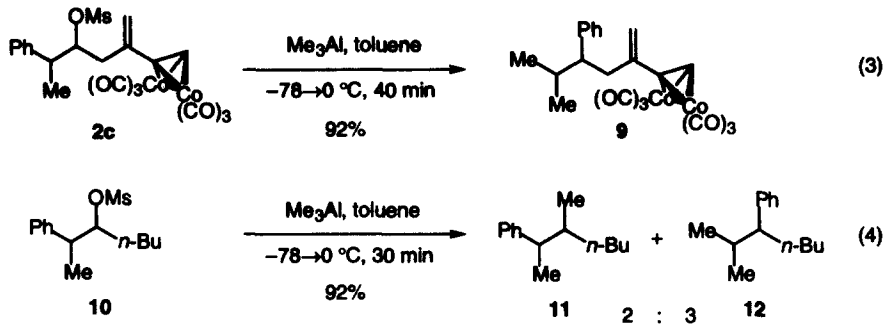
2b **6** (1)



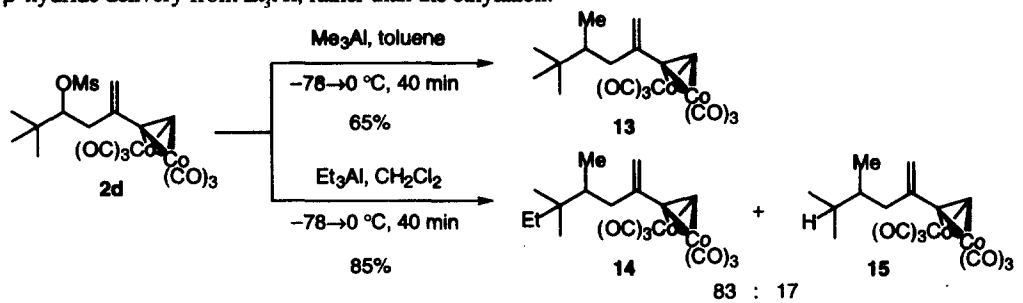
7 **8** (2)

In sharp contrast, the corresponding cyclopropyl compound **7**, upon conversion to the mesylate and the treatment with Me_3Al, gave the cyclobutane **8** as shown in eq. 2 (N.B. Although our previous report has dealt with the *prim*-substrates, the cyclization turned out to be the sole event observed also for a *sec*-substrate).

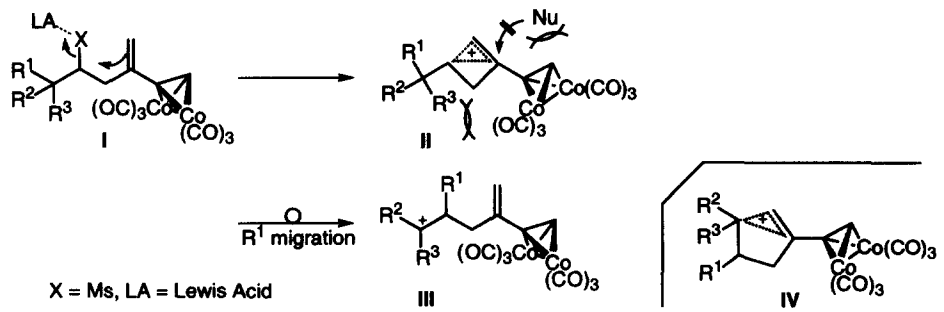
In further study on other related Co-complexes, the migration–alkylation was observed. For example, **2c** that has an even better migrating group (phenyl) was converted to the product **9** (eq. 3).[7, 11] A characteristic feature common to the processes (eqs. 1 and 3) is that the attack of an external nucleophile occurs only *after* the 1,2-shift. It was not clear at this stage whether the Co-containing moiety was essential for such a reaction course to be followed. However, it has been proven necessary, since the reaction of the substrate **10** lacking such a group only gave a mixture of **11** and **12**, arising from the methylation with/without the 1,2-shift (eq. 4).



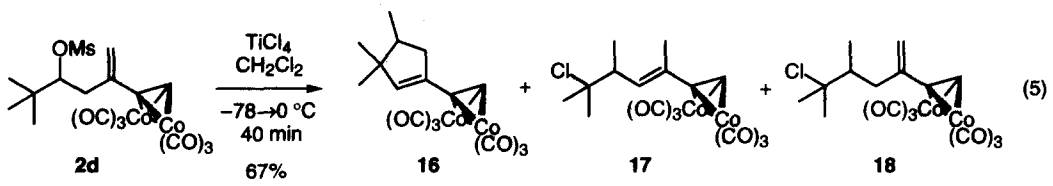
The reaction pattern was valid also for a more substituted system, even provoking an alkyl migration. The reaction of *t*-butyl substrate **2d** with Me_3Al gave the product **13**,[7] although it was not evident whether a 1,2-shift occurred or not. However, the reaction with Et_3Al clearly showed that the 1,2-shift was involved, as the product was **14**,[7] arising from a sequence of the 1,2-shift of a methyl group and the ethylation. The minor product **15**[7] with a terminal *i*-propyl group should share the mechanism with **14**, except for the final stage, *i.e.*, the β-hydride delivery from Et_3Al, rather than the ethylation.



A plausible rationale for this migratory alkylation follows. Although the departure of the mesylate is assisted by the neighboring group participation to form a delocalized cationic species as **II**, which, however, could not undergo the direct trapping by a nucleophile because of the high steric constraint around the four-membered ring posed by the two large substituents (cf. eq. 2; a smaller steric demand of a cyclopropyl in comparison with a Co-complexed alkynyl). Thus, instead, the species **II** undergoes a 1,2-shift of R^1 to generate the cationic species **III** (maybe better drawn as a delocalized form **IV**), which eventually undergoes the trapping by a nucleophile.



An interesting relevant observation was made when we employed $TiCl_4$, a Lewis acid without alkylation ability. Treatment of **2d** with $TiCl_4$ gave the *cyclopentene* **16** as the major product along with the olefins **17**[12] and **18** (eq. 5).[7] It should be noted that formation of all these products is explained by the 1,2-shift of a methyl group. The cyclization to a five-membered ring suggests the contribution of such a species as **IV**, at least partially.



Typical procedure is described for the synthesis of **6**: To a solution of **2b** (62.3 mg, 0.115 mmol) in toluene (2 mL) was slowly added a solution of Me_3Al in hexane (1.0 M, 0.18 mL, 0.18 mmol) at –78 °C. The reaction mixture was warmed to 0 °C during 40 min with stirring. The reaction was quenched by adding saturated aqueous Na_2SO_4. The products were extracted with EtOAc (×3), and the combined extracts were washed with brine and dried over anhydrous Na_2SO_4. Purification with preparative TLC (hexane) gave **6**[10] (42.3 mg, 80%) as a dark brown oil.

Acknowledgments: We thank Prof. Steven V. Ley for helpful discussion and Dr. T. Nagasawa for his early contribution. Partial financial support from Toray Science Foundation is gratefully acknowledged. MK is grateful to JSPS for a predoctoral fellowship.

References and Notes

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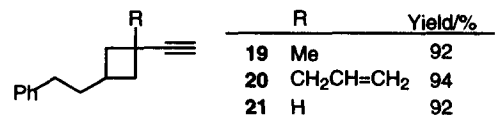
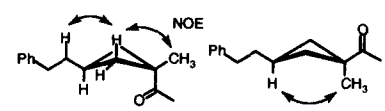
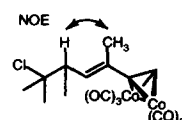
6. For the activation of sulfonate esters with R_3Al, see Maruoka, K.; Miyazaki, T.; Ando, M.; Matsumura, Y.; Sakane, S.; Hattori, K.; Yamamoto, H. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1983**, *105*, 2831; Suzuki, K.; Tomooka, K.; Katayama, E.; Matsumoto, T.; Tsuchihashi, G. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1986**, *108*, 5221.
7. All new compounds were fully characterized by ^1H NMR, ^{13}C NMR, IR, and HRMS and/or combustion analysis.
8. Oxidative decomplexation of **3**–**5** (CAN, MeOH, room temperature) gave the corresponding alkynes **19**–**21** in high yields.
9. The relative configuration of **3** was assigned by the NOE experiments, after conversion to methyl ketone **22** (**19**→**22**: HgO, aq. H_2SO_4). The stereochemistry of **5** was similarly assigned.
10. The structure of **6** was determined by the analysis of ^1H NMR, ^{13}C NMR, DEPT, H-H COSY, HMQC and HMBC.
11. The diastereomers of **2c**, separable by silica-gel preparative TLC, showed essentially the same reactivities in this reaction. Unfortunately, their relative configurations could not be assigned.
12. Formation of **17** could be rationalized by the isomerization of **18** caused by the protic acid produced by the formation of **16**. The (*E*)-geometry was assigned by the NOE experiment.



	R	Yield/%
19	Me	92
20	$CH_2CH{=}CH_2$	94
21	H	92



major **22** *trans* minor **22** *cis*



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