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ARTICLE TYPE

Gold-Catalyzed 1,2-Acyloxy Migration/Intramolecular Cyclopropanation/Ring Enlargement Cascade: Syntheses of Medium-Sized Heterocycles

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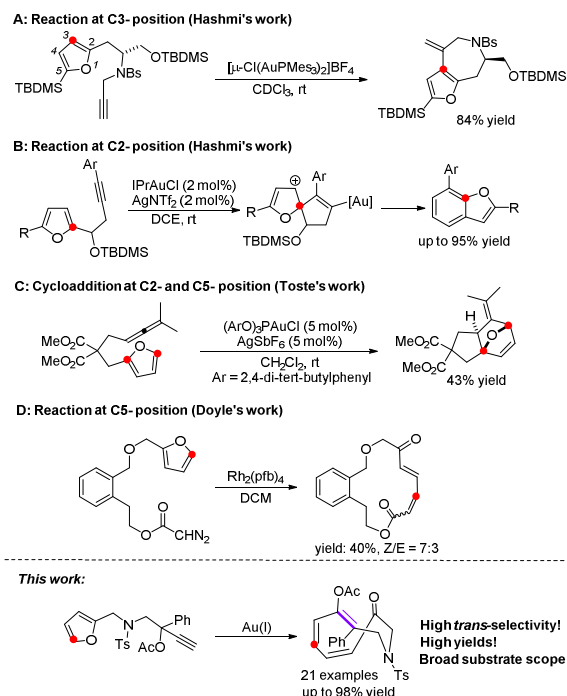
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The synthesis of medium-sized heterocycles possessing a *trans* double bond is still a challenge. Herein, a gold(I)-catalyzed 1,2-acyloxy migration/intramolecular cyclopropanation/ring enlargement cascade reaction of furans has been developed, providing a highly efficient access to ten- and eleven-membered heterocycles with broad substrate scope under mild reaction conditions. The reaction outcome features high chemoselectivity at the C5-position of furan. Moreover, a *trans*-double bond was embodied into the medium ring system.

Medium-sized heterocycles possessing *trans* double bonds are prevalent structure in a large number of biologically active natural products, for example Herbarumin, Abyssomicin and Madangamine.^[1] However, efficient synthetic access to install such ring systems remains a big challenge.^[2] Thus far, very limited methods have been accomplished. The ring-closing metathesis (RCM) is the most versatile and efficient method to construct *cis*-C-C double bonds, but there are only a few examples for the synthesis of cyclic *trans*-alkenes.^[3,4] The Yamaguchi macrolactonization offers another excellent solution, however, stoichiometric chloride and base are required.^[5] In recent years, gold catalysis has witnessed intensive advancements.^[6] Alternatively, gold catalyzed cycloadditions and cycloisomerizations have served as a powerful tool-box to build medium ring systems.^[7] For example, She's group has developed a facile protocol to construct medium-sized ring catalyzed by gold(I) catalysis.^[7e] Nevertheless, formation of *cis*-alkenes is still unavoidable. Thus, the development of a new strategy with atom efficiency and practical simplicity to construct medium sized heterocycles, especially those with *trans* double bonds, is still highly demanded.

Furan rings are valuable five-membered aromatic heterocycles due to the unique diversity of their chemical transformations under gold catalysis. The intramolecular reactions of furan are particularly attractive due to its versatile reactivities in the presence of gold(I) complex, providing easy access to heterocycles.^[8] Accordingly, there are several types of intramolecular reactions of furan with other functional groups: nucleophilic attack from C3- or C2-position^[9d] of furan (Scheme 1, A and B),^[9] and cycloaddition taking place at both C2- and C5-positions (Scheme 1, C) under gold catalysis.^[10]



Scheme 1. Different reaction patterns on furan ring.

Surprisingly, reactions specifically occur at furan's C5-position are extremely rare. As reported by Doyle, the tandem cyclopropanation and ring-opening process gave a 14-membered ring compound as a *Z/E* isomeric mixture in only 40% yield (Scheme 1, D).^[11] Herein, we reported an intramolecular reaction of furan-ring at C5-position under gold catalysis, affording ten or eleven-membered heterocycles with a *trans*-double bond in high chemoselectivity and regioselectivity in up to 98% yield.

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Gold-catalyzed 1,2-acyloxy migration of propargylic esters to form a gold vinyl carbenoid species has been widely reported.^[12-14]

It is well known that such electrophilic carbenes can readily accept nucleophilic attack. We thus envisage that if the chain between furan and carbene center is long enough, the reaction of gold carbene with furan would take place at C5-position, and the only challenge may rely on the competitive reaction which takes place at the alkene part of vinyly gold carbene.

Initially, the ester **1a** was selected as substrate to screen the reaction conditions (Table 1). Pleasingly, using IPrAuCl/AgSbF₆ as catalyst, **2a**^[15] was isolated in 30% yield, along 3-phenyl-1-tosyl-1H-pyrrole **3**^[15,16] in 31% yield (entry 1). Among various phosphine ligands, Me₄BuXphos turned out to be the most effective with 70% isolated yield of **2a** (Table 1, entries 2 and 3). Me₄BuXphosAu(MeCN)OTf was chosen as the best catalyst, affording **2a** in 91% yield (Table 1, entry 4). We were pleased to find that if cut the loading of catalyst to 2.5 mol% and 1 mol%, **2a** was isolated in 95% and 96% yields, respectively (entries 5 and 6) (see Table SI-1 for more information).

Table 1. Screening of the conditions of this reaction.

| entry ^a | catalyst | solvent | yield (%) ^b |
|--------------------|---|---------|------------------------|
| 1 ^c | IPrAuCl/AgSbF ₆ | DCE | 30 |
| 2 | ^t BuXPhosAu(MeCN)SbF ₆ | DCE | 58 |
| 3 | Me ₄ BuXPhosAu(MeCN)SbF ₆ | DCE | 70 |
| 4 | Me ₄ BuXPhosAu(MeCN)OTf | DCE | 91 |
| 5 ^d | Me ₄ BuXPhosAu(MeCN)OTf | DCE | 95 |
| 6 ^e | Me ₄ BuXPhosAu(MeCN)OTf | DCE | 96 |

^a The reaction was carried out on a 0.1 mmol scale in solvents (1.0 mL). ^b Isolated yield.

^c 3-phenyl-1-tosyl-1H-pyrrole **3** was found under this condition. ^d 2.5 mol% of Au catalyst was added. ^e 1 mol% Au of catalyst was added.

With the optimized reaction conditions in hand, we set out to define the scope of this cascade reaction (Table 2). Other propargyl esters (OPiv and OBz) were suitable for this cyclization, with the formation of **2b** and **2c** in 72% and 81% yields, respectively (Table 2, entries 1 and 2). It was found that R² could be various aryl rings. When either electron-withdrawing or electron-donor groups were introduced on the benzene ring of R², the reactions proceeded smoothly to give the corresponding products **2d-2h** in moderate to excellent yields (Table 2, entries 3-7). When R² were 1-naphthalenyl and 2-chlorophenyl groups, the reactions produced the desired products **2i** and **2j** in 20% and 45% yields, and the relatively low yields were probably due to the increased steric hindrance (Table 2, entries 8 and 9). Other sulfonyl groups (R³), such as PhSO₂, Ms, 2-ClC₆H₄SO₂, Bs and 2-MeC₆H₄SO₂ were well tolerated under the standard reaction conditions, furnishing **2k-2o** in 81-94% yields (Table 2, entries 10-14). However, treatment of N-phenyl group (R³) protected substrate under gold catalysis, the reaction became complex, presumably due to this phenyl ring could also take part in the reaction as that of furan ring (Table 2, entry 15). When substrate **1q** with Me group on its C3-position of furan ring was employed, the reaction gave product **2q** in 96% yield successfully (Table 2, entry 16). Notably, when all carbon chain tethered substrate, such as **1r**, was treated under the standard reaction conditions, the reaction worked very well to give ten-membered rings **2r** in 82% yield (Table 2, entry 17).

Table 2. Gold-catalyzed reaction for formation of ten-membered rings.

| entry ^a | substrate | product | yield (%) ^b |
|--------------------|--|-----------|------------------------|
| 1 | 1b : R = Piv | 2b | 72 |
| 2 | 1c : R = Bz | 2c | 81 |
| 3 | 1d : Ar = 4-OMeC ₆ H ₄ | 2d | 56 |
| 4 | 1e : Ar = 4-BrC ₆ H ₄ | 2e | 88 |
| 5 | 1f : Ar = 3-BrC ₆ H ₄ | 2f | 91 |
| 6 | 1g : Ar = 4-MeC ₆ H ₄ | 2g | 83 |
| 7 | 1h : Ar = 3,4-Cl ₂ C ₆ H ₃ | 2h | 81 |
| 8 | 1i : Ar = 1-Naphthyl | 2i | 20 |
| 9 | 1j : Ar = 2-ClC ₆ H ₄ | 2j | 45 |
| 10 | 1k : R = PhSO ₂ | 2k | 91 |
| 11 | 1l : R = MeSO ₂ | 2l | 81 |
| 12 | 1m : R = 2-ClC ₆ H ₄ SO ₂ | 2m | 89 |
| 13 | 1n : R = Bs | 2n | 93 |
| 14 | 1o : R = 2-MeC ₆ H ₄ SO ₂ | 2o | 94 |
| 15 | 1p : R = Ph | - | complex |
| 16 | 1q | 2q | 96 |
| 17 | 1r | 2r | 82 |

^a The reaction was carried out on a 0.2 mmol scale with 2.5 mol% catalyst in solvent (2.0 mL). ^b Isolated yield.

Table 3. Gold-catalyzed reaction for construction of eleven-membered-ring compounds.

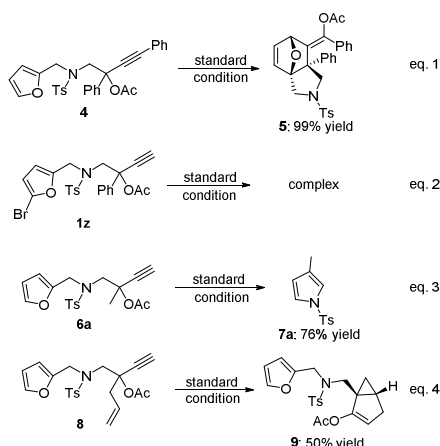
| entry | substrates | products | yield (%) ^b |
|----------------|--|-----------|------------------------|
| n = 1, m = 2 | | | |
| 1 | 1s : Ar = Ph | 2s | 98 |
| 2 | 1t : Ar = 4-MeC ₆ H ₄ | 2t | 98 |
| 3 | 1u : Ar = 4-BrC ₆ H ₄ | 2u | 80 |
| n = 2, m = 1 | | | |
| 4 | 1v : X = NTS | 2v | 97 |
| 5 | 1w : X = O | 2w | 78 |
| 6 ^c | 1x : n = 2, m = 2 1y : n = 3, m = 1 | - | complex |

^a The reaction was carried out on a 0.2 mmol scale with 2.5 mol% catalyst in solvent (2.0 mL). ^b Isolated yield. ^c Both reaction became complexed.

Moreover, the reaction could also be extended to synthesize eleven-membered-ring system. As shown in Table 3, for substrates **1s-1u**, in which n = 1, m = 2, the reactions gave the corresponding eleven-membered heterocycles **2s-2u** in 80-98% yields (Table 3, entries 1-3).^[15] While, when n = 2, m = 1, the reactions of **1v** and **1w** went on smoothly to furnish the desired products **2v** and **2w** in 78% and 97% yields, respectively (Table 3, entries 4 and 5). The nitrogen tether could also be replaced by oxygen; as for substrate **1u**, the corresponding eleven-membered cyclic ether was obtained in 78% yield (Table 3, entry 5). The

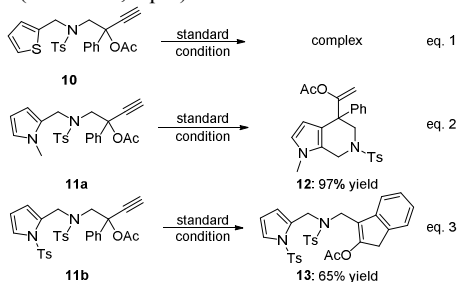
reaction failed in the syntheses of twelve-membered cyclic amines; as for substrates **1x** and **1y** with longer chain, the reactions gave complex product mixtures (Table 3, entry 6).

To further define the substrate scope of this reaction, some different types of substrates were synthesized and new reaction patterns were observed (Scheme 3).^[17] As for non-terminal propargyl ester **4**, a formal [4 + 2] cycloaddition reaction took place to form oxo-bridged bicyclic compound **5**^[17] in 99% yield (Scheme 3, eq. 1). When furan **1z** with its C5-position being blocked by Br atom was employed as substrate, the reaction became complex (Scheme 3, eq. 2). When R² was replaced by alkyl (Me) groups, fragmentation was observed and 3-methyl pyrrole was obtained in 76% yield (Scheme 3, eq. 3 and more information is included in Table SI-2). Interestingly, if R² was an allyl group, the reaction of **8** delivered **9** in 50% yield via cyclopropanation (Scheme 3, eq. 4).^[13c,13h] The structure of **9** was assigned by ¹H NMR, ¹³C NMR and 2D NMR spectroscopic experiments (see SI for the details). These results suggested that the terminal alkyne and aryl substituent of R² were two critical factors for the desired ring synthesis.



Scheme 3. Other products were observed using different substrates.

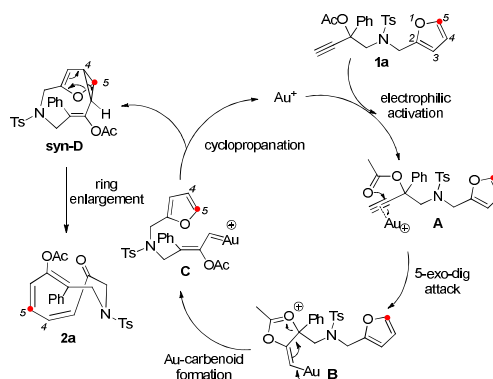
Then we tried to use other heterocyclic substrates. When using thiophene derivative **10** as substrate, the reaction became complex (Scheme 4, eq. 1). As for N-Me pyrrole **11a**, a Friedel-Crafts reaction gave product **12**^[15] in 97% yield (Scheme 4, eq. 2). If using N-Ts pyrrole **11b** as substrate, **13**^[15] was obtained in 65% yield (Scheme 4, eq. 3).



Scheme 4. Gold-catalyzed reaction using other heterocyclic substrates.

A mechanistic proposal is proposed in Scheme 5. Gold(I) catalyst activation of triple bond in **1a** gives π -complex **A**, which undergoes a 5-exo-dig attack to the activated triple bond results in intermediate **B**. Subsequent 1,2-acyloxy migration delivers gold carbene intermediate **C**.^[12] Following a cyclopropanation at C4- and C5-positions of furan delivers intermediate **syn-D** and

regenerates the catalyst.^[11] The steric hindrance of aryl groups in intermediate **C** may cause the cyclopropanation exclusively taking place at C4- and C5-positions. Finally, the ring opening process of **syn-D** provides the desired product **2a**.



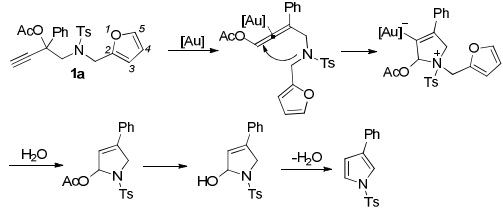
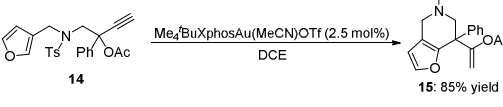
Scheme 5. Proposed Mechanisms.

In conclusion, we have developed a highly efficient procedure for the formation of ten and eleven-membered carbo- and heterocycles by gold-catalyzed cascade reaction. The appropriate distance from furan ring and the carbene center may be the key to form these medium-sized ring systems. We believe that this transformation will provide new insights into gold catalyzed intramolecular cyclization reactions and new future of furan's reaction.

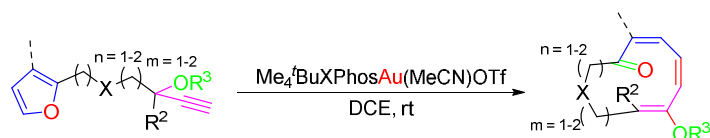
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- [15] The structures of **2a**, **3**, **2s**, **5**, **12**, **13** and **15** were determined by X-ray analyses.
- [16] Proposed mechanism for the formation of **3**.
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- [17] For the substrate **14** a Friedel-Crafts reaction has been found:
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**Gold-Catalyzed 1,2-Acyloxy Migration/Intramolecular
Cyclopropanation/Ring Enlargement Cascade: Syntheses of
Medium-Sized Heterocycles**



X = NSO₂R¹, O, CH₂;
R² = Ar;
R³ = Ac, Bz, Piv.

High regioselectivity at Furan 5C position
No reagent-derived waste
Wide reaction scope

Gold catalyzed 1,2-acyloxy migration/intramolecular cyclopropanation/ring enlargement cascade of furan substrates provides a new highly efficient procedure for the formation of ten and eleven-membered ring compounds. A new transformation type of intermolecular furan compounds catalyzed by gold catalyst was reported.

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