

## Self Condensation of $\beta$ -Acylpyruvates and *in situ* Complexation with Some Amine Bases

Jae Nyoung Kim,\* Hong Jung Lee, Ka Young Lee, Hyoung Rae Kim,<sup>†</sup> and Eung K. Ryu<sup>†</sup>

Department of Chemistry, Chonnam National University, Kwangju 500-757, Korea

<sup>†</sup>Bioorganic Science Division, Korea Research Institute of Chemical Technology,

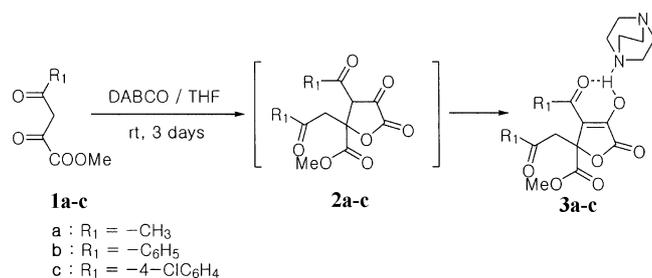
P. O. Box 107, Yusong, Taejeon 305-606, Korea

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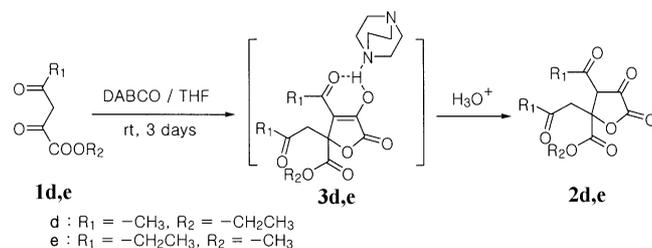
Recently we have reported the self-condensation reaction of methyl acetylpyruvate (**1a**) in the presence of 1,4-diazabicyclo[2.2.2]octane (DABCO).<sup>1</sup> In the reaction, self condensation of **1a** followed by intramolecular esterification afforded **2a** as reported.<sup>1</sup> The initially formed product, 4,5,5-trisubstituted tetrahydrofuran-2,3-dione **2a**, has acidic proton at the 4-position and forms 1 : 1 acid-base complex with DABCO to give **3a** as an isolable solid.

As a continuous study of previous report, we describe here further results on the reaction of some  $\beta$ -acylpyruvates in the presence of DABCO or similar amine bases. In the reactions of **1b** and **1c**, we could obtain the similar complex **3b** and **3c** in 39% and 59% respectively. In addition, we could detect acetophenone (from **1b**) or 4'-chloroacetophenone (from **1c**) in trace amounts (<5%) which might be generated *via* the DABCO catalyzed demethoxycarbonylation and decarbonylation.<sup>2</sup>

However, isolation of DABCO complex **3d** and **3e** as solids was not successful in the cases of **1d** and **1e** (Scheme 2). The reason seems to be the increased solubility of the complex in tetrahydrofuran and contamination of some side products (*vide infra*). Thus, in these cases we isolated the corresponding DABCO-free tetrahydrofuran-2,3-dione derivatives **2d** and **2e** in 74% and 97% respectively by simply treating the reaction mixture with aqueous HCl as shown in



Scheme 1

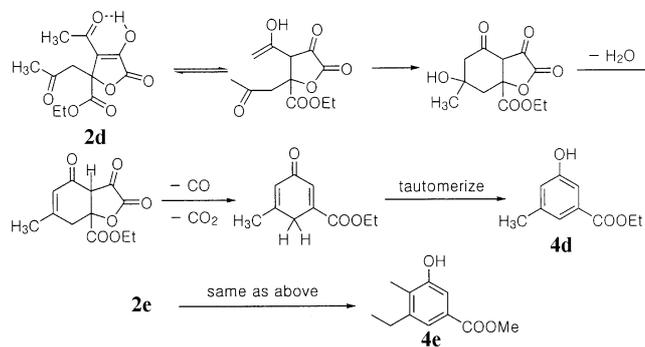


Scheme 2

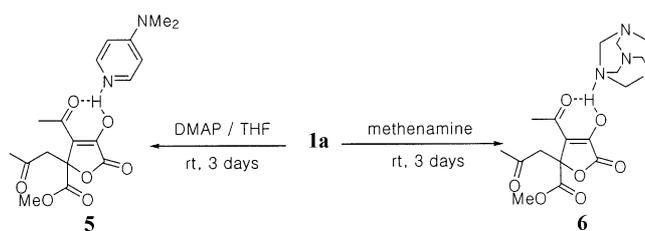
Scheme 2. In the reactions of **1d** and **1e**, some phenol derivatives **4d** and **4e** (3-5%) were obtained.<sup>3</sup> These compounds **4d** and **4e** might be generated from **2d** and **2e** *via* consecutive aldol reaction, dehydration, decarboxylation, decarbonylation, and finally tautomerization as shown in Scheme 3.

This type of self condensation of  $\beta$ -acylpyruvates occurred in the presence of other amine bases such as hexamethylenetetramine (methenamine) or *N,N*-dimethylaminopyridine (DMAP). As an example, in the case of methyl acetylpyruvate (**1a**), DMAP or methenamine gave the corresponding complex **5** and **6** as solids effectively in 68% and 32% respectively as shown in Scheme 4. The results are summarized in Table 1.

In summary, 4,5,5-trisubstituted tetrahydrofuran-2,3-dione



Scheme 3



Scheme 4

Table 1. Self condensation of  $\beta$ -acylpyruvates and *in situ* complexation

entry	$\beta$ -acylpyruvate	amine base	product	yield (%)
1	<b>1b</b>	DABCO	<b>3b</b>	39
2	<b>1c</b>	DABCO	<b>3c</b>	59
3 <sup>a</sup>	<b>1d</b>	DABCO	<b>2d</b>	74
4 <sup>a</sup>	<b>1e</b>	DABCO	<b>2e</b>	97
5	<b>1a</b>	DMAP	<b>5</b>	68
6	<b>1a</b>	methenamine	<b>6</b>	32

<sup>a</sup>The yield represent DABCO free self condensed product.

derivatives could be generated from  $\beta$ -acylpyruvates via the self condensation-cyclization process with the aid of amine bases. The products could form insoluble acid-base complex in tetrahydrofuran in certain cases.

### Experimental Section

The starting materials **1a-e** were prepared from the reaction of diethyl oxalate and acetone, acetophenone, 4'-chloroacetophenone, or 2-butanone in the presence of sodium methoxide or sodium ethoxide according to the literature method.<sup>4</sup>

**Synthesis of DABCO complex 3b and 3c.** To a stirred solution of **1b** and **1c** (10 mmol) in dry tetrahydrofuran (10 mL) was added DABCO (560 mg, 5 mmol) and stirred at room temperature for 3 days. The solids thus formed were filtered and washed with small amounts of tetrahydrofuran to give analytically pure **3b** and **3c**.

**3b:** 960 mg (39%); <sup>1</sup>H NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  3.00 (s, 12H, DABCO), 3.69 (s, 3H), 3.94 (d,  $J = 17.5$  Hz, 1H), 4.19 (d,  $J = 17.5$  Hz, 1H), 7.15-7.90 (m, 10H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  40.50, 44.99 (DABCO), 52.94, 83.77, 114.78, 127.22, 128.11, 128.41, 129.26, 131.07, 132.94, 137.38, 139.27, 158.97, 170.40, 173.98, 189.06, 196.49; Mass (70 eV)  $m/z$  (rel intensity) 77 (63), 105 (100), 112 (7, DABCO), 229 (22), 306 (13), 334 (2), 380 (M<sup>+</sup>, 1).

**3c:** 1.65 g (59%) <sup>1</sup>H NMR (DMSO-d<sub>6</sub>)  $\delta$  3.09 (s, 12H, DABCO), 3.60 (s, 3H), 3.86 (d,  $J = 16.0$  Hz, 1H), 3.94 (d,  $J = 16.0$  Hz, 1H), 7.30 (d,  $J = 8.5$  Hz, 2H), 7.47 (d,  $J = 8.6$  Hz, 2H), 7.60 (d,  $J = 8.5$  Hz, 2H), 7.82 (d,  $J = 8.6$  Hz, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  40.39, 44.93 (DABCO), 53.06, 83.77, 114.28, 127.46, 128.78, 129.62, 130.84, 135.72, 137.12, 137.50, 139.49, 159.34, 170.25, 173.83, 187.48, 195.38; Mass (70 eV)  $m/z$  (rel intensity) 70 (40), 111 (38), 113 (46), 139 (100), 141 (30), 448 (M<sup>+</sup>, 1).

**Synthesis of DABCO-free 2d and 2e.** To a stirred solution of **1d** and **1e** (10 mmol) in dry tetrahydrofuran (10 mL) was added DABCO (560 mg, 5 mmol) and stirred at room temperature for 3 days. To the reaction mixture was added dilute aqueous hydrochloric acid (30 mL), and extracted with ether (2  $\times$  30 mL). The organic layers were dried, and the pure products **2d** and **2e** were obtained by flash column chromatography (ethyl acetate/ethyl alcohol, 40 : 1).

**2d:** 1.0 g (74%) <sup>1</sup>H NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  1.26 (t,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 3H), 2.17 (s, 3H), 2.51 (s, 3H), 3.30 (d,  $J = 17.7$  Hz, 1H), 3.67 (d,  $J = 17.7$  Hz, 1H), 4.22 (q,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 2H).

**2e:** 1.38 g (97%) <sup>1</sup>H NMR (DMSO-d<sub>6</sub>)  $\delta$  0.84 (t,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 3H), 0.91 (t,  $J = 7.5$  Hz, 3H), 2.35 (qt,  $J = 7.5$  and 2.7 Hz, 2H), 2.53-2.79 (m, 2H), 3.03 (d,  $J = 16.8$  Hz, 1H), 3.55 (s, 3H), 3.57 (d,  $J = 16.8$  Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.27, 7.66, 35.80, 37.06, 43.16, 53.70, 83.22, 123.25, 148.84, 167.73, 168.31, 197.28, 206.76; Mass (70 eV)  $m/z$  (rel intensity) 57 (100), 69 (5), 84 (21), 86 (12), 151 (4), 181 (4), 183 (6), 207 (4), 284 (M<sup>+</sup>, 1).

**Synthesis of DMAP complex 5.** To a stirred solution of **1a** (1.44 g, 10 mmol) in dry tetrahydrofuran (10 mL) was added DMAP (610 mg, 5 mmol) and stirred at room temperature for 3 days. The solids thus formed were filtered and washed with small amounts of tetrahydrofuran to give analytically pure **5**.

**5:** 1.29 g (68%) <sup>1</sup>H NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  2.09 (s, 3H), 2.48 (s, 3H), 3.15 (d,  $J = 17.4$  Hz, 1H), 3.21 (s, 6H), 3.66 (s, 3H), 3.83 (d,  $J = 17.4$  Hz, 1H), 6.69 (d,  $J = 7.3$  Hz, 2H), 8.28 (d,  $J = 7.3$  Hz, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  28.93, 30.93, 39.95, 46.21, 52.71, 82.57, 106.43, 115.27, 140.47, 157.02, 161.86, 170.27, 173.40, 192.60, 204.76; Mass (70 eV)  $m/z$  (rel intensity) 43 (100), 85 (17), 121 (62), 122 (50, DMAP), 127 (23), 169 (32), 180 (18), 256 (M<sup>+</sup>, 1).

**Synthesis of hexamethylenetetramine complex 6.** To a stirred solution of **1a** (1.44 g, 10 mmol) in dry tetrahydrofuran (10 mL) was added hexamethylenetetramine (700 mg, 5 mmol) and stirred at room temperature for 3 days. The solids thus formed were filtered and washed with small amounts of tetrahydrofuran to afford analytically pure **6**.

**6:** 634 mg (32%) <sup>1</sup>H NMR (DMSO-d<sub>6</sub>)  $\delta$  1.99 (s, 3H), 2.16 (s, 3H), 2.95 (d,  $J = 16.9$  Hz, 1H), 3.51 (s, 3H), 3.61 (d,  $J = 16.9$  Hz, 1H), 4.78 (s, 12H); Mass (70 eV)  $m/z$  (rel intensity) 43 (100), 66 (56), 84 (71), 86 (23), 140 (18, hexamethylenetetramine), 169 (6), 256 (M<sup>+</sup>, 1).

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3. During isolation of **2d** and **2e**, we could isolate 3-5% yields of phenol derivatives **4d** and **4e**. Ethyl 3-hydroxy-5-methylbenzoate (**4d**) from **2d**: <sup>1</sup>H NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  1.38 (t,  $J = 8.4$  Hz, 3H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 4.35 (q,  $J = 8.4$  Hz, 2H), 6.86 (m, 1H), 7.31 (m, 1H), 7.44 (m, 1H); Mass (70 eV)  $m/z$  (rel intensity) 43 (15), 55 (12), 57 (11), 77 (29), 107 (40), 135 (100), 149 (28), 152 (25), 180 (M<sup>+</sup>, 34). Methyl 3-hydroxy-4-methyl-5-ethylbenzoate (**4e**) from **2e**: <sup>1</sup>H NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  1.21 (t,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 3H), 2.24 (s, 3H), 2.67 (q,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 2H), 3.89 (s, 3H), 5.35 (brs, 1H), 7.34 (d,  $J = 1.7$  Hz, 1H), 7.45 (d,  $J = 1.7$  Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  11.43, 14.52, 26.62, 52.03, 113.35, 121.96, 128.06, 144.34, 153.79, 167.28; Mass (70 eV)  $m/z$  (rel intensity) 91 (15), 135 (29), 163 (96), 164 (11), 179 (48), 194 (M<sup>+</sup>, 100).
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