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Evidence for a Transition State Model Compound of In-Plane Vinylic S_N2 Reaction

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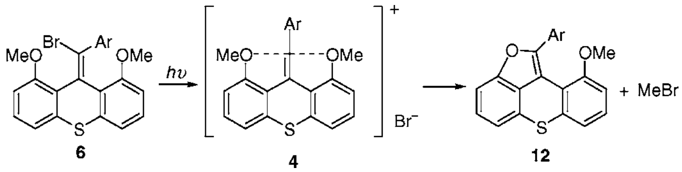
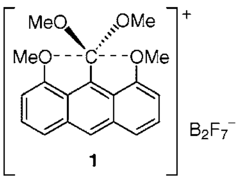
ABSTRACT

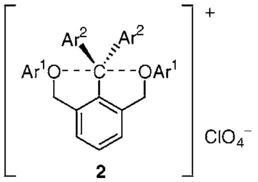


To isolate a transition state model compound of an in-plane vinylic S_N2 reaction, vinyl bromide 6 bearing a newly synthesized tridentate ligand derived from 1,8-dimethoxythioxanthen-9-one (5) was prepared as a precursor. Although irradiation of 6 gave demethylated benzofuran 12, a transient broad peak which indicates formation of the desired transition state model compound was observed in the laser flash photolytic study.

A bimolecular nucleophilic substitution (S_N2) reaction at an sp^3 carbon atom proceeds via a five-coordinate carbon compound as a transition state.[1] Recently, we reported the synthesis and crystal structure of hypervalent pentacoodinate carbon compounds bearing a sterically rigid anthracene ligand **1**[2] or a flexible van Koten type ligand **2**[3] as a transition state model compound of the S_N2 reaction.



1



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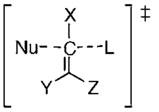
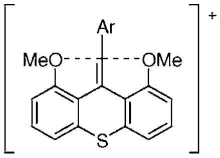
An example of an in-plane S_N2 reaction at an sp^2 vinylic carbon atom, which proceeds with complete inversion of the reaction center, has been reported by Ochiai et al.[4] Recently, Okuyama et al. concluded that the transition state of this reaction should be a four-coordinate carbon compound **3** based on detailed analysis of the kinetics.[5] However, the four-coordinate carbon compound as the transition state model of the in-plane vinylic S_N2 reaction has not been detected or isolated. Herein, we report the observation of the transition state model compound **4** using laser flash photolysis although the lifetime is very short (several hundreds microseconds).



3

Nu : nucleophile
L : leaving group



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To isolate the transition state model compound, we synthesized 1,8-dimethoxythioxanthen-9-one (**5**) first as shown in Scheme 1.

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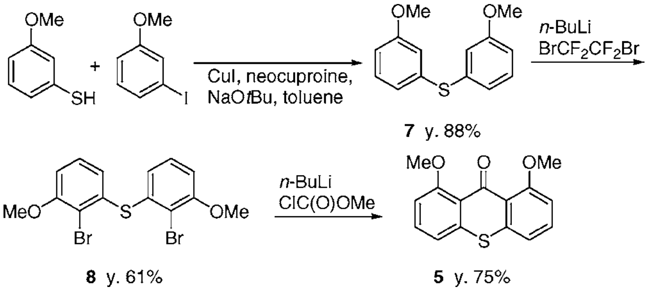
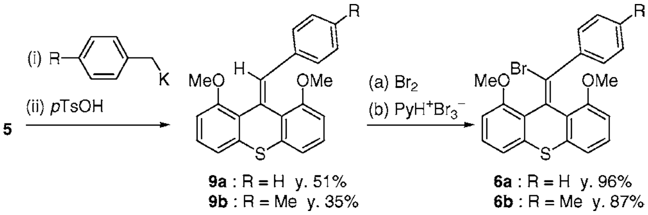
Scheme 1



Bis(3-methoxyphenyl) sulfide (**7**) was synthesized by a copper-catalyzed coupling reaction[6] of commercially available 3-iodoanisole and 3-methoxybenzenthiol. The sulfide **7** was selectively dilithiated by refluxing in *n*-hexane, and bis(2-bromo-3-methoxyphenyl) sulfide (**8**) was obtained after treatment with 1,2-dibromotetrafluoroethane. The sulfide **8** was then converted to **5** via dilithiation followed by treatment with methyl chloroformate.

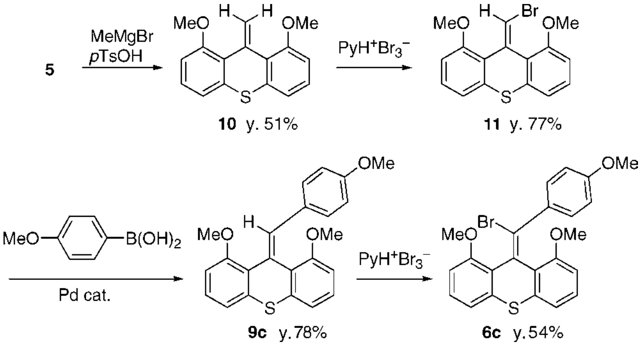
Because it was known that a vinyl halide affords a vinyl cation by photolysis,[7] we synthesized vinyl bromide **6** as a precursor as shown in Scheme 2.

Scheme 2



The reaction of thioxanthone **5** with benzylpotassium[8] afforded an alcohol which was treated with *p*-toluenesulfonic acid to give olefin **9**. Subsequent bromination of **9a** proceeded using Br_2, and the desired vinyl bromide **6a** was obtained (Scheme 2). In the case of **9b**, bromination using Br_2 afforded a byproduct, but it proceeded cleanly using pyridinium hydrobromide perbromide, and **6b** was obtained. However *p*-methoxybenzylpotassium could not be generated by similar procedures, so *p*-methoxy derivative **6c** was synthesized by another route (Scheme 3). Thioxanthone **5** was converted to **10** via treatment with MeMgBr and *p*-toluenesulfonic acid, followed by bromination with pyridinium hydrobromide perbromide. A Pd-catalyzed cross-coupling reaction of **11** with *p*-methoxyphenylboronic acid and subsequent bromination with pyridinium hydrobromide perbromide afforded **6c**. Colorless crystals suitable for X-ray analysis of **6c** were obtained by recrystallization from *n*-hexane/CH_2Cl_2, and the X-ray structure is shown in Figure 1. Daylight irradiation of vinyl bromide **6a** was carried out in chloroform-*d*. Analysis of the ^1H NMR spectroscopic data of the reaction mixture indicated the formation of benzofuran

Scheme 3



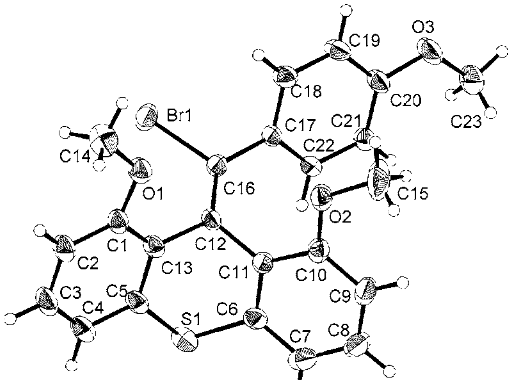
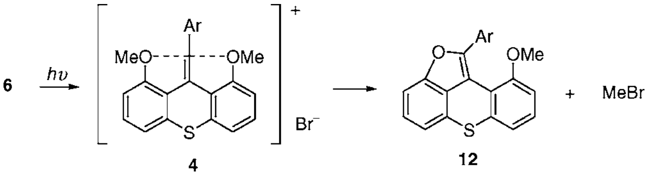


Figure 1. Crystal structure (30% thermal ellipsolids) of **6c**.

Scheme 4



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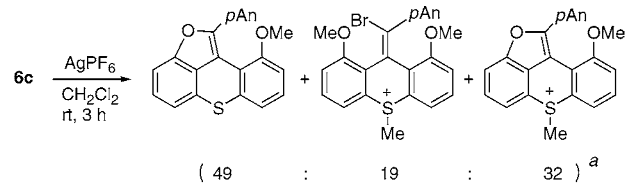
12a and MeBr (Scheme 4). In the photolysis by 266 nm laser light in CD_2Cl_2, the formation of **12a** was also observed.

To exchange the counteranion, we attempted reaction of **6** with $AgPF_6$,[9] but the reaction gave the mixture shown in Scheme 5.

Scheme 5



[a] estimated by ^1H NMR spectra.

Therefore, to detect the transient species in the photolysis of **6**, a laser flash photolytic study[10] was carried out. Figure 2 shows the transient absorption spectra of **6a** and non-methoxy derivative **13** recorded after 266 nm pulse laser irradiation (8 ns fwhm). The spectrum recorded in dichloromethane solution (Figure 2a) at a 0.4 μs delay time has a broad peak at ca. 400−650 nm which includes two components. One component appears at 400−500 nm and has a lifetime of less than 10 μs (**A**). Another has a spectrum widely spread over 400−650 nm and a lifetime of several hundreds μs (**B**). In the presence of oxygen, **B** is still present but **A** is absent (Figure 2b). Because the lifetime of **B** is hardly affected by O_2 bubbling, this peak should not be derived from either a radical species or a triplet state which should be quenched in the presence of O_2. The results strongly suggest that the spectrum of 400−650 nm observed after a 10 μs delay time should be assigned to a cation species. In our study on the hypervalent pentacoodinate carbon compound of **2**, a similar broad peak at 500−800 nm, which was considered to be derived from a charge transfer (CT) between apical aryloxy groups and the central carbocation, was observed.[3] Based on the formation of **12a** after photolysis of **6**, the intermediate should be the desired cation **4**, and the broad peak at ca. 400−650 nm should be derived from CT between ambilateral methoxy groups to the vinyl cation center. Consistent with the discussion, non-methoxy derivative **13** did not show a similar broad peak during the laser photolytic study (Figure 2c). In addition, the optimized structure of **4a** with the hybrid density functional theory (DFT) at the B3PW91/6-31G(d) level[11] using the Gaussian 98 program[12] showed that the symmetrically coordinated structure is the energy minimum (Figure 3). The two C−O distance are almost identical (2.292

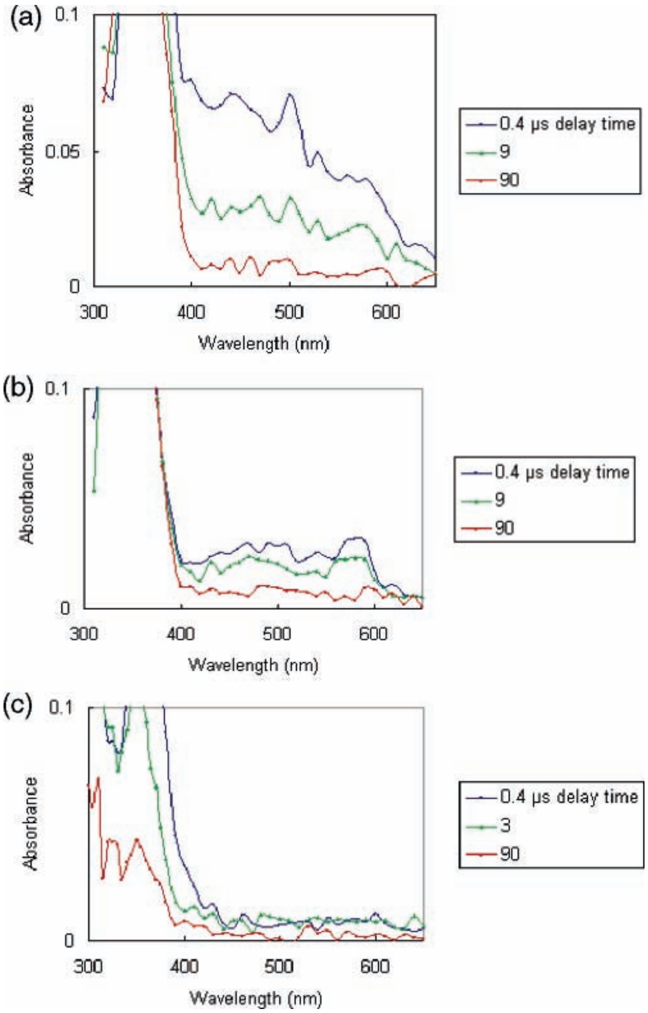


Figure 2. Transient absorption spectra of **6a** in CH_2Cl_2 in the (a) absence and (b) presence of O_2. (c) Transient absorption spectra of **13** in CH_2Cl_2.

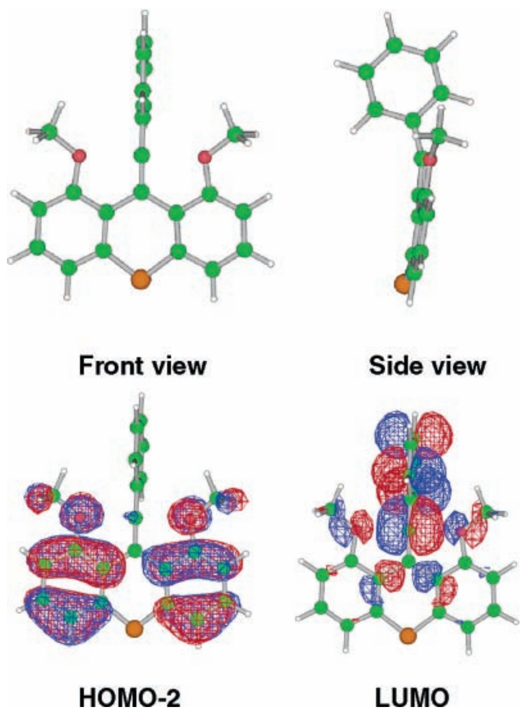


Figure 3. Optimized structure (upper) and orbitals (lower) of **4a** calculated at the B3PW91/6-31G(d) level.

and 2.313 Å). It should be noted that the calculated λ_{max} (529.1 nm: HOMO-2 to LUMO) of the optimized structure at the TD-B3PW91/6-311+G(2d, p) level is quite consistent with the observed spectra of **B**.

In conclusion, the transient species **B** should be the transition state model compound of the in-plane vinylic S_N2 reaction.

To prohibit the demethylation reaction, attempts at preparation of the compounds bearing aryloxy groups instead of the methoxy groups are in progress.

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Supporting Information Available: Experimental procedures and CIF files of **6c**. This material is available free of charge via the Internet at http://pubs.acs.org.

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