

Stereocontrolled Access to Polyenol Ethers by Conjugate Elimination/Ring Fission Reactions.

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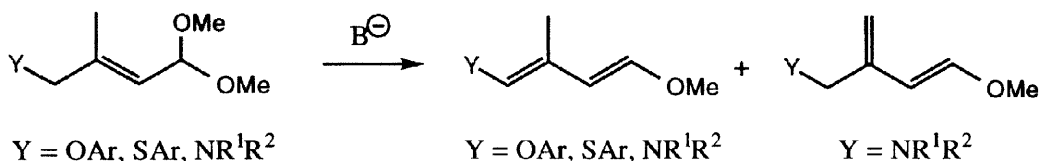
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Received 10 December 1997; accepted 19 January 1998

Abstract: Conjugate elimination reactions are able to transform dienic acetals into the corresponding trienol diethers and efficiently convert γ -alkoxy α,β -unsaturated epoxides into hydroxy dienol ethers.

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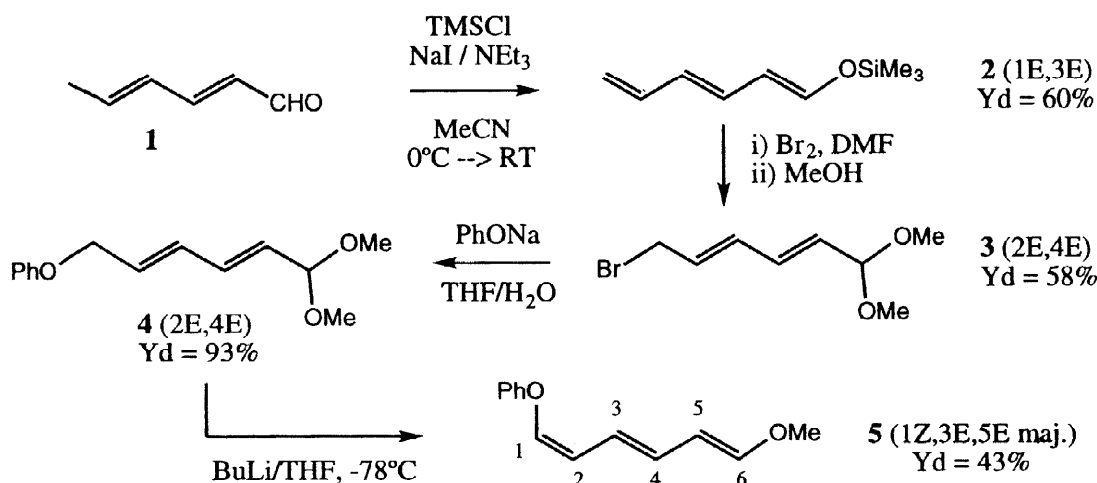
Their occurrence in many natural products of biological interest¹ as well as in organic conductors exhibiting non-linear optical properties² places trienic compounds at the heart of converging attentions. Functionalizing these compounds with such sensitive groups as enol ethers or enamines remains however a challenging goal in synthesis because of the extreme fragility of the polyenic systems obtained. The long-lasting interest of our laboratory in terpenoid and polyethylenic chemistry³ has led us to propose a general method relying on a base-triggered conjugate elimination reaction⁴ on α,β -unsaturated γ -functionalized acetals to prepare 1,4-disubstituted 1,3-dienes (Scheme 1).⁵



Scheme 1.

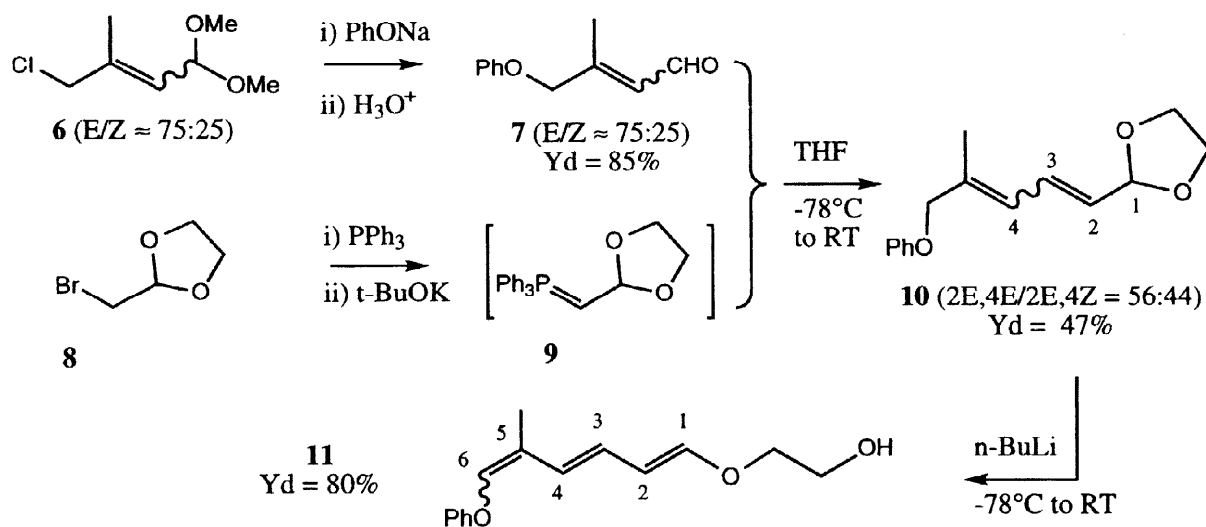
Since this reaction increases the number of double bonds in a rather simple way, its application to a diene-triene conversion could constitute an attractive route to these compounds. We have thus first considered extensions of this reaction to ω -eliminations, that would allow, through the switch of two double bonds, a direct transformation of functionalized dienic acetals into corresponding trienol ethers. A linear and a branched dienic substrates have been prepared according to Schemes 2 and 3. The linear one has been obtained converting commercial EE-sorbaldehyde **1** into its EE silyl enol ether **2**.⁶ Bromination^{6c,7} of this triene in dry DMF at -30°C followed by methanol quenching then aqueous basic work-up provides in a fair 58% yield the expected EE dienic bromoacetal **3**. The allylic bromine is easily substituted by sodium phenoxide in biphasic conditions at room temperature to give dienic acetal **4**, the first substrate for our study. Its low-temperature deprotonation by

$n\text{-BuLi}$ ⁵ followed by a rapid aqueous work-up yields trienol diether **5** as a mixture of isomers in which the 1Z,3E,5E one is by far dominant.⁸



Scheme 2.

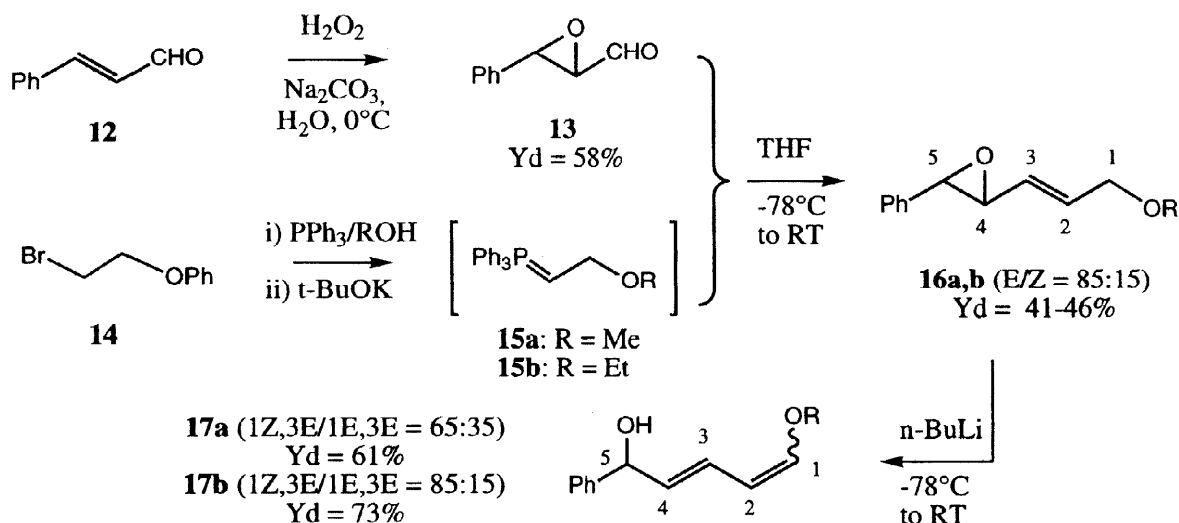
The branched acetal **10** was prepared from chloroacetal **6**⁹ by allylic chlorine substitution followed by acidic hydrolysis (Scheme 3). The phenoxy aldehyde **7** was obtained with 85% yield in a 75:25 E/Z ratio, identical to that in **6**. A Wittig reaction involving ylid **9** derived from potassium *t*-butylate deprotonation of corresponding functionalized phosphonium bromide¹⁰ gives access to dienic acetal **10**. While the newly created double bond is of pure E configuration, the 4Z relative abundance is increased with respect to that in **7**. The $n\text{-BuLi}$ induced deprotonation in THF gives access to the branched trienoether **11** in excellent yield. A ^1H NMR analysis on this product indicates that the major isomer ($\geq 80\%$) is 1E,3E¹¹, the 5,6 double bond configuration remaining to be determined.



Scheme 3.

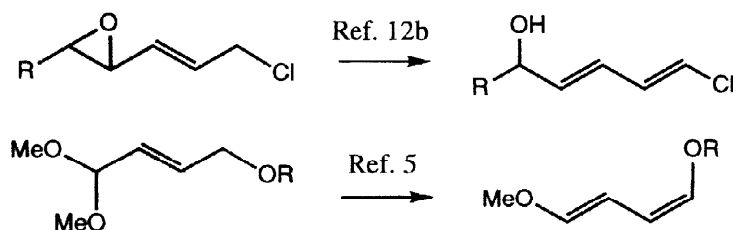
This class of reactions could also be extended to the conjugate opening of α,β -unsaturated heterocycles. The rapid ring fission undergone by homoallyl (or homobenzyl) cyclic ethers has been described^{12a} and has

been very recently applied to unsaturated epoxides and 1,3-dioxolanes.^{12b} We have decided to prepare α,β -unsaturated epoxides **16** following a strategy relying once again on a Wittig-type coupling between cinnamaldehyde epoxide¹³ **13** and phosphonium ylids **15** (Scheme 4). Those have been prepared from commercial bromophenetyl **14** and triphenylphosphine at reflux of methanol or ethanol.¹⁴ The phosphonium bromides thus obtained, that bear a methoxy or an ethoxy group, respectively, can be deprotonated by potassium *tert*-butoxide at -78°C in THF, providing the unsaturated epoxides **16** in fair yields and with a good E control of the newly formed 2,3 double bond. When treated by *n*-butyllithium in conditions identical to those mentioned above, **16** yield dienes **17** in good yields and stereocontrols depending on the nature of the alkoxy group.



Scheme 4.

Interestingly, the 3,4 double bond is pure E in both cases; but while the methoxy ether **16a** affords a relatively mediocre control of the 1,2 double bond (1Z,3E/1E,3E $\approx$ 65:35), its ethoxy counterpart **16b** improves the 1Z,3E/1E,3E ratio up to 85:15.¹⁵ The Z control of the 1,2 double bond is noteworthy as i) it is opposite to the total E selectivity reported by Yadav et al.^{12b} for a comparable reaction applied to a set of allylic chlorides; ii) it matches our own observations on deprotonation-elimination reactions on γ -alkoxy and aryloxy unsaturated acetals⁵ (Scheme 5).



Scheme 5.

The allylic ether function thus seems to play a key role in the determination of the newly created double bond configuration. Possible origins of this phenomenon will be discussed in a full paper to come.¹⁶

Acknowledgments. The authors thank Dr Lucette Duhamel for helpful discussions. We also thank Rhône-Poulenc Chimie for generous samples of chloroacetal **6**.

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- Triene **5** is very prone to hydrolysis. The precise amounts and configurations of the other isomers have not been determined yet.
- Acetal **6** is an industrial intermediate (Rhône-Poulenc Chimie) available as a $\approx$ 75:25 E/Z mixture.
- The phosphonium bromide precursor of **9** was prepared from bromodioxolane **8** according to Cresp, T. M.; Sargent, M. V.; Vogel, P. *J. Chem. Soc. Perkin Trans. I*, **1974**, 37-41.
- ^1H NMR (200MHz, CDCl_3) for **11**: δ (ppm) 1.80 (3H, s), 3.85 (4H, s), 5.71 (1H², dd, J = 12.3, 10.8Hz), 6.10 (1H³, dd, J = 10.8, 15.2Hz), 6.27 (1H⁶, s), 6.64 (1H¹, d, J = 12.3Hz), 6.68 (1H⁴, d, J = 15.2Hz), 7.02 (3H, m), 7.23 (2H, m).
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- ^1H NMR (200MHz, CDCl_3) for **17a**: 1Z,3E isomer: δ (ppm) 3.65 (3H, MeO, s), 5.05 (1H², dd, J = 5.8, 12.5Hz), 5.22 (1H⁵, d, J = 4.0Hz), 5.62 (1H⁴, dd, J = 4.5, 15.0Hz), 5.93 (1H¹, d, J = 5.8Hz), 6.64 (1H³, dd, J = 12.5, 15.0Hz), 7.35 (5H_{Ar}, m). 1E,3E isomer: δ (ppm) 3.57 (3H, MeO, s), 5.19 (1H⁵, m), 5.49 (1H², dd, J = 11.7, 12.0Hz), 5.66 (1H⁴, m), 6.15 (1H³, dd, J = 11.7, 12.0Hz), 6.61 (1H¹, d, J = 12.0Hz), 7.35 (5H_{Ar}, m). **17b**: 1Z,3E isomer: δ (ppm) 1.26 (3H_{Et}, t, J = 6.3Hz), 3.85 (2H_{Et}, q, J = 6.3Hz), 5.04 (1H², dd, J = 6.0, 10.4Hz), 5.24 (1H⁵, d, J = 7.1Hz), 5.68 (1H⁴, dd, J = 7.1, 15.5Hz), 5.99 (1H¹, d, J = 6.0Hz), 6.65 (1H³, dd, J = 15.5, 10.4Hz), 7.30 (5H_{Ar}, m).
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