Higher-order cycloaddition reactions in natural product synthesis

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Abstract: Metal-template has been effectively utilized to obviate the problems encountered in higher-order cycloaddition reactions. Highly functionalized bicyclic systems can be assembled using this methodology and as many as five contiguous stereogenic centers can be readily accessed. This technology has been used to prepare the frameworks of naturally occurring anatoxin a and cerorubenol.

Higher-order cycloaddition reactions (1), e.g. $6\pi+4\pi$, $4\pi+4\pi$ and $6\pi+2\pi$ combinations, proceed with high levels of diastereoselectivity. The reactions of these extended $\pi$-arrays, however, are usually not well-behaved and the lack of peri-selectivity often translates into poor chemical efficiency. Employing a transition-metal template, that would precomplex with the reacting partners, is an appealing idea. The process would then be rendered temporarily intramolecular and follow a more efficient pathway (eq 1) (2).

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\begin{align*}
\text{Initial studies that focused on the behavior of the parent cycloheptatriene chromium complex with electron-rich dienes in a photochemical environment led to the formation of [6+4] cycloadducts. In each case, only one product was formed that displayed endo-stereochemistry (eq 2). The dramatic scope of this methodology was illustrated by attenuating the electronics of the 4\pi addend. Thus 1 gives [6+4] adducts upon reaction with the very electron-rich diacetoxybutadiene, a hydrocarbon diene as well as the very electron-deficient dimethyl muconate (eq 3). These reactions, therefore, override the electronic constraints that normal cycloadditions are subject to (3).}
\end{align*}
\]

(1)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{1) OR} \\
\text{2) P(OMe)₃}
\end{align*}
\]

(2)

(3)

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A comparative study was also undertaken to probe the efficacy of employing the other members of the group VI triad, viz. Mo and W and we observed that whereas Cr presented the most efficient means of bringing about this transformation, Mo was less effective and, to date, W has not yielded any desirable results (eq 4). Whereas Mo seems to be too labile, W appears to be too robust for the purposes of accessing the cycloadditive route.

\[
\text{M} = \text{Cr}: \text{R} = \text{OTMS}, 68%; \text{R} = \text{Me}, 69% \\
\text{M} = \text{Mo}: \text{R} = \text{OTMS}, 51%; \text{R} = \text{Me}, 32% \\
\text{M} = \text{W}: \text{R} = \text{OTMS}, 0%; \text{R} = \text{Me} 0%
\]  

(4)

To explore the feasibility of transferring relative stereochemistry from the 7-position of cycloheptatriene to the product, both the 7-endo-methoxy complex 8 and the 7-exo-11 were treated with isoprene. In each case only one product was obtained, showing clearly that the stereochemical outcome on the bridging carbon of the cycloadduct can be controlled by judicious choice of the starting metal complex (eq 5).

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{OMe} & \quad \text{Cr(CO)}_3 \\
\text{8} & \quad \text{1) Me} - \text{CO}_2\text{Me} \\
\text{9} (66\%) & \quad \text{2) P(OMe)}_3 \\
\text{10} (60\%) & \quad \text{11} \\
\text{11} & \quad \text{1) Me} - \text{CO}_2\text{Me} \\
& \quad \text{2) P(OMe)}_3
\end{align*}
\]  

(5)

A reaction that serves to further broaden the scope of this methodology is illustrated in eq 6. Thus, treatment of the 7-substituted 12 with methyl sorbate provided cycloadduct 13 demonstrating the creation of five contiguous stereogenic centers, with predictable stereocontrol, in one step.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Me} & \quad \text{Cr(CO)}_3 \\
\text{12} & \quad \text{1) Me} - \text{CO}_2\text{Me} \\
& \quad \text{2) P(OMe)}_3 \\
\text{13} (64\%) & \quad \text{11}
\end{align*}
\]  

(6)

Since the well-established thermal [6+4] cycloadditions of tropone proceed via the exo-transition state (4), it was relevant to probe the possibility of accessing the endo-[6+4]-cycloadducts of tropone. Thus the ketal complex 14 was allowed to cycloadd to pipyrene. Cycloaddition, followed by sequential decomplexation and hydrolysis of the ketal led to the keto product 15. The endo [6+4] adducts of tropone are now within reach. For comparison purposes, an authentic sample of the known exo-adduct was also prepared. These experiments demonstrated the stereocomplementarity of the two processes (eq 7).

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{MeO}_2\text{O} & \quad \text{Cr(CO)}_3 \\
\text{14} & \quad \text{1) Me}\,\text{H}_2\text{O}^+ \\
& \quad \text{2) P(OMe)}_3 \\
\text{15} (56\%) & \quad \text{16} \\
\text{16} & \quad \text{Me} - \text{Me} \\
& \quad \text{H}_2\text{O}^+ \\
& \quad \text{xylene, }\Delta \\
\text{17} (61\%) & \quad \\text{O}
\end{align*}
\]  

(7)

When the [6+4] cycloaddition reaction employing transition-metal templates had been firmly established, the metal-mediated [6+2] reaction emerged as a natural extension of this methodology. The profound observation that irradiating the reaction mixture consisting of complex 1 and an acrylate results in the formation of a 1:1 adduct has opened up an efficient avenue for accessing the bicyclo[4.2.1]nonane framework (5).

One of the natural products that was targeted for the application of this methodology was anatoxin \(a\), isolated initially from the blue-green algae. The powerful neuromuscular polarizing property of...
anatoxin a (6) has stimulated vigorous synthetic activity and several preparations of this compound and its analogues have been reported in the literature (7). Our retrosynthetic analysis suggested that anatoxin a could be obtained from the [6+2] cycloadduct of an appropriately substituted azepine (eq 8). For the purpose of establishing a viable higher-order cycloaddition route to this natural product, azepine complex 18 was treated with methyl acrylate to provide adduct 19 (eq 9). This constitutes an extremely efficient synthesis of the framework of homotropane alkaloids.

Also noteworthy are the efficient [6+4] cycloaddition reactions of complex 18 with both electron-deficient and electron-rich dienes (eq 10). The structure of cycloadduct 23 was further confirmed by X-ray crystallography, which not only established the [4.4.1]undecane structure but also the endo-stereochemical disposition of the product.

Another appealing application of these reactions would be the cycloadditive entry into the eight-membered rings, which are prevalent in several natural products. Thus the [6+2] cycloadducts of heterocyclic trienes would be prepared and a simple excision of the heteroatom would then lead to the formation of cyclooctanoids and the stereochemical information created during the cycloaddition step would be transferred to the final products (eq 11).

To access the eight-membered rings adduct 24 was first hydrogenated and then treated with LiAlH₄ to provide the amino-alcohol 25 which was first treated with MeI and then with moist Ag₂O and pyrolyzed in the presence of KOH. This Hofman elimination sequence provided a 1:1 mixture of the isomeric cyclooctenes 26 and 27 in good yield (eq 12) (8).
appropriately substituted cycloheptatriene and a vinyl cyclohexene (eq 13). The preparation of the requisite diene commenced with the commercially available epimeric mixture of (+)-dihydrocarvone, 28. Separation of the diastereomers provided the optically pure compound, which was converted into the kinetic enolate and then treated with PhNTf2. Treatment of the resultant triflate with tributylvinyl tin in the presence of catalytic amounts of Pd(0) provided the 4π addend 30, which reacted with 1 to afford the tricyclic framework of cerorubenates in optically active form. This reaction was highly diastereoselective and the formation of only one product was observed. Also note that of the three contiguous stereogenic centers found in the natural products, two have the correct absolute configuration.

Acknowledgment. I wish to acknowledge Professor James H. Rigby, my post-doctoral mentor, for his foresight in envisioning the synthetic potential of metal-promoted higher-order cycloaddition reactions. It was in his laboratories that the work, described herein, was accomplished and to him I am grateful.

REFERENCES