



Oxidative cyclization of 1,4-dienes to yield 2,3,5-trisubstituted tetrahydrofuran-diols

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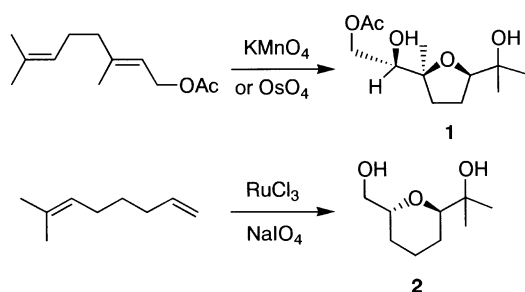
Abstract—KMnO₄ and OsO₄ catalyze the oxidative cyclization of 1,4-dienes to provide 2,3,5-trisubstituted tetrahydrofuran-diols in 30% yield. This reaction proceeds stereoselectively via a proposed [3+2] cycloaddition. Competing oxidative pathways are the major non-productive processes that reduce the yield of the reaction; however, four stereogenic centers are established in one-step. © 2001 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

The development of methodologies to prepare substituted tetrahydrofurans (THFs) stereoselectively has become an area of great interest due to the increasing reports of their biological activity in areas such as polyether antibiotics and *Annonaceous* acetogenins.^{1,2} An intriguing approach for the synthesis of these types of molecules is the oxidative cyclization of 1,5-dienes to prepare 2,5-disubstituted THF ring **1** (Scheme 1). This 1,5-diene oxidative cyclization has been reported with KMnO₄^{3–6} or OsO₄^{7–9} as oxidants and is believed to proceed through a [3+2] cycloaddition. The reaction generally provides the desired THF products in 40–60% yield with excellent stereoselectivity. A similar methodology has recently been reported for 1,6-dienes¹⁰ in which RuCl₃ mediated oxidation stereoselectively pre-

pares 2,6-disubstituted tetrahydropyran-diols such as **2** (Scheme 1).

We are interested in studying the biological significance of 2,3,5-trisubstituted tetrahydrofuran-diols (THF-diols) derived from the oxidative metabolism of arachidonic acid (Scheme 2).¹¹ This has led us to investigate the feasibility of securing these structural motifs by the oxidative cyclization of 1,4-dienes. Herein, we report the results of subjecting 1,4-dienes to various oxidative conditions in an attempt to access 2,3,5-trisubstituted THF-diols.

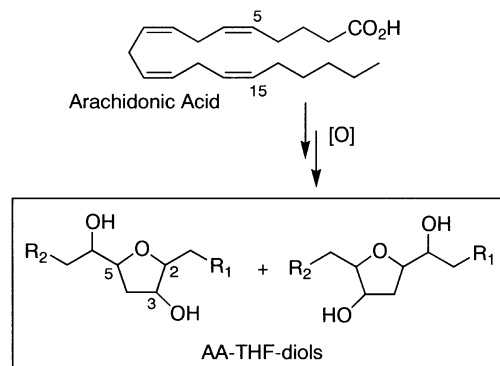
Initial experiments began with the oxidative cyclization of methyl linoleate (**3**), using KMnO₄ in aqueous ace-



Scheme 1. Oxidative cyclization of 1,5- and 1,6-diene reactions.

Keywords: oxidative cyclization; OsO₄; 1,4-dienes; 2,3,5-trisubstituted THF-diols; Oxone®.

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R₁ = C₂H₄CO₂H R₁ = C₅H₈CO₂H R₁ = C₈H₁₂CO₂H
R₂ = C₉H₁₄CH₃ R₂ = C₆H₁₀CH₃ R₂ = C₃H₆CH₃

Scheme 2. 2,3,5-Trisubstituted THF-diols derived from arachidonic acid.

tone. This provided the desired 2,3,5-trisubstituted THF-diols (**4** and **5**) as a 1:1 regioisomeric mixture in a very modest 20% yield (Table 1). Analysis of ^1H , ^{13}C , HMQC, and COSY NMR identified the products as **4** and **5**,¹² and the peracetylated compounds **4a** and **5a**¹³ allowed the relative ring stereochemistry to be defined as 2-*trans*-3,5-*cis*. Similar to other 2,3,5-trisubstituted THF-diol stereoisomers obtained from linoleic acid oxidation and cyclization reported previously, these compounds were also inseparable using standard chromatographic techniques.¹⁴ Attempts to increase the yield in this system were unsuccessful on all fronts including both acidic and basic conditions, and using different solvents.

Attempts to cyclize **3** with catalytic OsO_4 and NaIO_4 did provide **4** and **5**, but again in only 20% yield. Oxidative cyclization with catalytic RuCl_3 and NaIO_4 was also an inefficient process,¹⁰ only providing a 12% yield of **4** and **5** (Table 1).

As expected, we found 1,2-diols (**6**) or tetraols (**7**) in the crude reaction mixture. These alcoholic byproducts could have come from a competitive hydrolytic pathway of the intervening osmate ester. Aldehydes (**8**) were also found in both KMnO_4 and NaIO_4 reactions. These reagents are known to oxidatively cleave compounds such as **6** to yield the aldehydic products.^{15,16}

In an attempt to hinder the hydrolysis of the intermediate osmate ester, numerous anhydrous solvents were used with OsO_4 and different co-oxidants. With only a few exceptions, compounds **4** and **5** were formed to no appreciable degree. To summarize these results, using standard conditions (**3**, NaIO_4 , OsO_4 1:4:0.05), no product was observed with CH_2Cl_2 , toluene, ethyl acetate, diethyl ether, *t*BuOH, and hexanes. In all cases starting material was recovered with trace amounts of diols also being produced. THF and acetonitrile, respectively, yielded 8 and 10% of the desired products **4** and **5**. Notably, DMF provided compounds **4** and **5** in an improved yield of 30%. It is possible that with the

more polar solvents such as acetonitrile, THF, and DMF there is a charge stabilizing effect if the mechanism involves a charged species (Scheme 4). The higher yield could also be due to better solvation of the reagents in more polar solvents.

Attempts to vary the co-oxidant (Table 2) showed that only a few of these provided the desired compound in greater than 10% yield. Primarily, the products obtained were diols and/or aldehydes. The co-oxidants that did yield product were KClO_3 , 2-iodoxybenzoic acid (IBX), KIO_4 , and Oxone[®].

Interestingly, Oxone[®], a mono potassium peroxysulfate salt, was unique not only because it did provide a 20% yield, which was comparable to the initial KMnO_4 and $\text{OsO}_4/\text{NaIO}_4$ systems, but also this reaction had fewer number of byproducts making the work-up more facile. With DMF as the solvent, Oxone[®] based reactions also yielded 30% of the desired oxidatively cyclized product.

Lowering the temperature in hopes of reducing the rates of competing reactions and to increase the yield of the desired products **4** and **5** did not result in any improvements. Experiments at both 0 and -40°C actually lowered the yield of **4** and **5** providing 20 and 12%, respectively. Elevating the temperature to 50°C was also ineffective and lowered the yield to 13%. The rate of addition of the co-oxidant was also varied from the standard one portion addition. This was achieved by dissolving the co-oxidant in an appropriate solvent and slowly adding the solution via syringe pump over the course of 10 h. These attempts had absolutely no effect on the yield of the isolated product which remained at 20%.

While the results of our optimization studies did not increase the isolated yield, we still find this to be an intriguing reaction since it sets four stereocenters in a simple one pot reaction. This prompted us to see if the reaction was scalable. Using our best reaction conditions for the oxidative cyclization, i.e. Oxone[®] (4 equiv.) and OsO_4 (0.05 equiv., 2.5% in *t*BuOH) in DMF (0.1 M), we scaled the reaction up to 5 mmol (1.5 g) of **3**. This did indeed provide **4** and **5** in 30% yield.¹⁷ Detailed analysis of the reaction byproducts showed no diol or aldehyde products. Instead this reaction

Table 1. Oxidative cyclization of **3** to **4** and **5**

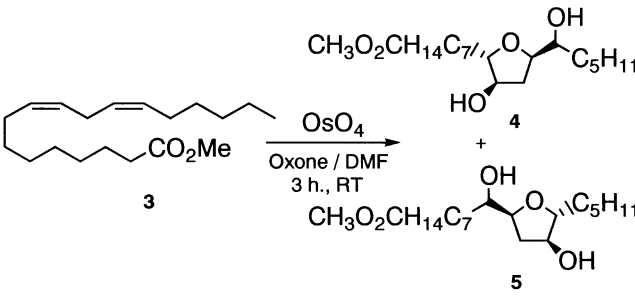
			
Oxidant (equiv.)	Co-oxidant	Solvent	Yield (%)
KMnO_4 (6)	—	Acetone/ H_2O	20
OsO_4 (0.05)	NaIO_4	Acetone/ H_2O	20
RuCl_3 (0.05)	NaIO_4	EtOAc/ACN/ H_2O	12

Table 2. Co-oxidant effects on the cyclization of **3**^a

Co-oxidant	Yield (4 and 5) (%)	Co-oxidant	Yield (4 and 5) (%)
NMO	0 ^b	IBX	5 ^b
KIO_3	0 ^b	KClO_3	8 ^b
<i>t</i> -BuOOH	0 ^b	Oxone [®]	20 ^d
H_2O_2	0 ^c	KIO_4	20 ^b
DMP	0 ^c	Oxone [®]	30 ^e

^a All reactions were performed using OsO_4 (0.1 equiv., 4% in H_2O) with co-oxidant (4 equiv.) in aqueous acetone.

^b 1,2-Diol products were observed.

^c Products were not identifiable.

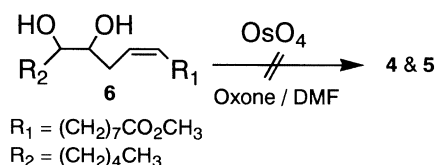
^d C9 and C7 carboxylic acid products were observed.

^e DMF was the solvent.

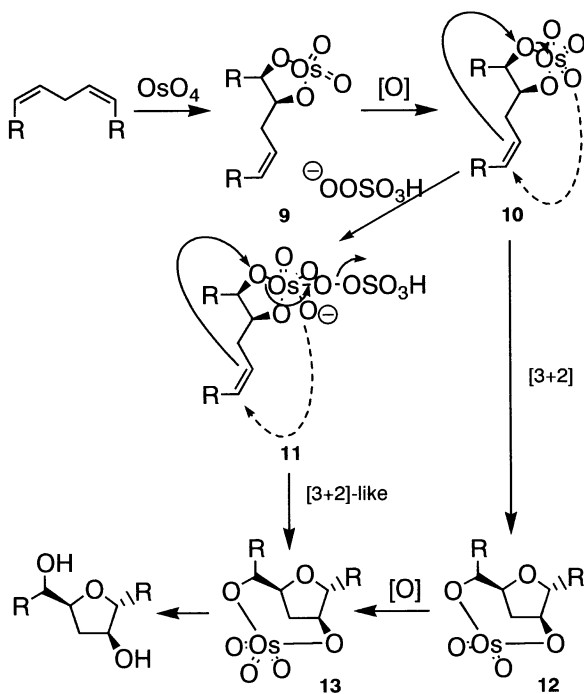
revealed only the formation of carboxylic acids from oxidatively cleaved olefins.

We believe that the carboxylic acid byproducts formed in our reactions are produced via an OsO_4 assisted cleavage of the olefins to aldehydes. The aldehydes are then further oxidized with Oxone[®] independently to carboxylic acids.^{18,19} This competition occurs with comparable rates to that of the oxidative cyclization of 1,4-dienes. Further work in this area is forthcoming.

Walba²⁰ has reported a similar method of oxidative cyclization using a Cr(VI) compound to prepare 2,5-disubstituted THF rings from 5,6-dihydroxyalkenes. We thought that diol **6** might be a possible intermediate so it was independently synthesized from the corresponding mono epoxide. While Walba's mechanism with Cr(VI) might be an alternative explanation for the observed cyclization in our systems, treatment of **6** with conditions that yield oxidative cyclization did not produce any THF-diol product. This suggests that the diol is not involved as a possible reaction intermediate (Scheme 3).



Scheme 3.



Scheme 4. Proposed mechanistic pathways for the 1,4-diene oxidative cyclization.

Analysis of our results shows a scaleable reaction with both a solvent and temperature dependence. These insights made us reevaluate the conventional [3+2] cycloaddition mechanistic viewpoint.

Piccialli and co-workers propose a concerted [3+2] cycloaddition to form the THF core which is consistent with the observed relative stereochemistry of both 1,5-dienes reported previously,⁸ and the 1,4-diene reported here (Scheme 4). The first step involves formation of an osmate ester **9**, followed by oxidation to the osmate **10**. It is postulated that this intermediate undergoes a [3+2] cycloaddition to yield **12**, followed again by oxidation of the osmate ester. Finally, hydrolysis of the osmium complex **13** yields the cyclized product and regenerates OsO_4 . An alternate mechanism where intermediate **10** is further activated by the co-oxidant Oxone[®] is also plausible (Scheme 4). Compound **11** can undergo a [3+2]-like cycloaddition in which the last step is the expulsion of bisulfate. The intermediacy of **11** may be responsible for the apparent solvent dependence of the reaction.

Alternatively, a [2+2] cycloaddition of OsO_4 followed by a second [2+2] intramolecular cycloaddition of the osmaoxetane with the remaining olefin can be envisioned. The putative bis-osmaoxetane can rearrange to yield intermediate **12**, as first described by Walba and co-workers.^{21,22} Although the [2+2] mechanism is plausible,²³ recent experimental and theoretical calculations by Houk, Sharpless, and Singleton favor the [3+2] cycloaddition of OsO_4 to olefins, and find that the [2+2] formation of the osmaoxetane and the subsequent ring expansion are prohibitively high energy processes (~ 42 kcal/mol and ~ 30 kcal/mol, respectively).²⁴

Fig. 1 illustrates a three-dimensional representation of the two reactive intermediates obtained from 1,5-diene (**14**) and 1,4-diene (**10**). The approach of the olefinic carbon to the osmate ester oxygen which will eventually become the THF ring oxygen is hindered by the neighboring alkyl group. This is not the case with the 1,5-diene in which the neighboring group is a methylene and does not pose a bulky presence. In the 1,5-diene case there is good overlap between the olefin and both oxygen atoms that are incorporated into the 2,5-THF-

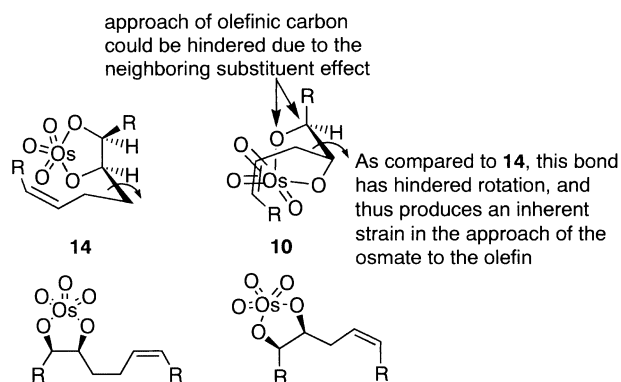
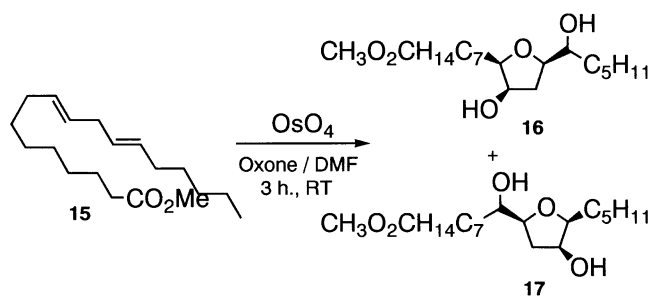


Figure 1. Standard and 3-D projections of reactive intermediates **14** and **10**.



Scheme 5.

diol product. However, the strain of the 1,4-diene (**10**) hinders the approach of the olefinic carbon towards the osmate ester oxygen, and thus could prevent a good overlap of the atoms participating in the cycloaddition (Fig. 1). The relatively hindered approach and overcoming steric congestion in the case of 1,4-dienes could very well be the cause for the reaction to proceed, but only in modest yields.

Based on the aforementioned [3+2] cycloaddition pathway, and the observed stereoselectivity in the oxidative cyclization of **3** we predicted that under the same reaction conditions *trans*-methyl lineolate, **15**, would produce **16** and **17** with an all *cis* relative stereochemistry. This reaction did unambiguously provided the known all-*cis* THF-diol **16** and **17**¹⁴ in a comparable 30% yield (Scheme 5).

In summary, the oxidative cyclization of 1,4-dienes is a feasible reaction and proceeds stereoselectively through a predictable [3+2] cycloaddition. Currently, only a 30% yield has been obtained which has been attributed to the strain of proposed intermediate **10**, and the competing oxidative pathways, notably, the oxidative cleavage of the olefins and the hydroxylations yielding diols and tetraols. The reaction is amenable to scale up with the oxidative cyclization of **3** (1.5 g, 5 mmol) providing a 30% yield of **4** and **5**. Efforts to further increase the yield and induce chirality are ongoing.

Acknowledgements

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- Compound **4** and **5**: ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 4.05 (m, 1H), 3.98 (m, 1H), 3.93 (m, 1H), 3.78 (m, 1H), 3.63 (s, 3H), 2.26 (t, 2H, *J*=7.4 Hz), 2.21–2.12 (m, 1H), 1.83 (bd, 1H, *J*=3.9 Hz), 1.59–1.22 (b, 20H), 0.85 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 174.2, 87.3, 80.2, 74.5, 71.9, 51.3, 33.9, 33.3, 32.9, 32.6, 31.6, 29.2, 29.0, 28.9, 25.8, 25.6, 24.7, 22.4, 13.9. HRMS (CI) calcd for C₁₉H₃₆O₅: 345.2641 *m/z* (M+H). Observed: 345.2638 *m/z*.
- Compound **4a** and **5a**: ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 4.99–4.95 (m, 1H), 4.88–4.85 (m, 1H), 3.98–3.89 (m, 2H), 3.63 (s, 3H), 2.36–2.23 (m, 1H and t, 2H, *J*=7.5 Hz), 2.02 (s, 6H), 1.82–1.80 (m, 1H), 1.79–1.25 (b, 20H), 0.84 (t, 3H, *J*=1 Hz); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ 174.2, 170.8, 170.5, 83.3, 78.1, 77.8, 74.6, 51.4, 33.9, 33.4, 32.7, 31.6, 30.9, 29.2, 29.0, 28.9, 25.4, 25.2, 25.0, 24.8, 22.4, 21.1, 13.9. HRMS (CI) calcd for C₂₃H₄₀O₇: 429.2844 *m/z* (M+H). Observed: 429.2849 *m/z*.
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- General procedure for oxidative cyclization: **3** (1.5 g, 5.01 mmol, 1 equiv.) was dissolved in DMF (50 mL). OsO₄ (2.5% in *t*BuOH, 0.0085 mmol, 0.05 equiv.) was added and stirred for 5 min. Oxone® (20.0 mmol, 4 equiv.) was added in one portion and stirred for an additional 3 h. The reaction was quenched with Na₂SO₃ (9 g) and stirred for a further 1 h. The reaction was diluted with EtOAc (150 mL) and filtered through Celite to remove the salts. The filter cake was rinsed with EtOAc (3×25 mL). The combined organics were washed with H₂O (2×200 mL), 1N HCl (1×200 mL) and brine (1×200 mL). The organic layer was dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄, filtered and evaporated under reduced pressure to provide a crude brown oil. Silica gel flash chromatography (30% EtOAc/Hexanes) provided products **4** and **5** (535 mg) in 30% yield as a clear colorless oil.

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