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$ZrCl_4$ mediated cross-cyclization between epoxides and homoallylic alcohols: synthesis of 4-chlorotetrahydropyran derivatives☆

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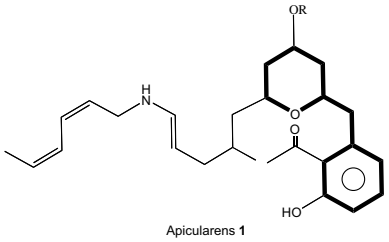
Abstract—Epoxides undergo cross-cyclization with homoallylic alcohols in the presence of zirconium tetrachloride under mild conditions to afford the corresponding tetrahydropyran derivatives in excellent yields.

The benzyl tetrahydropyran fragment is a common core structure in a number of natural products such as the apicularens[1] **1**. The apicularens possess highly cytotoxic activity and are potent inhibitors of human tumour cell lines such as those originating from kidney, lung and cervia. They are particularly interesting therapeutic leads since they are extremely specific for a novel target, selectively toxic towards cancer cells and are highly amenable to chemical modification. Despite their wide range of pharmacological activities, the synthesis of benzyl substituted tetrahydropyrans has received little attention. The synthesis of tetrahydropyran derivatives by various methods has been reported in the literature.[2] However, the development of an efficient and versatile catalytic method for the construction of the benzyl tetrahydropyran core structure would still be useful. $ZrCl_4$ has been used for various epoxide ring-opening reactions giving the products in good yield.[3] Herein, we describe zirconium tetrachloride mediated cross-cyclization between aryl-substituted epoxides and homoallylic alcohols for the formation of tetrahydropyran derivatives.

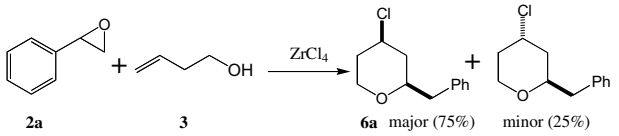


Apicularens **1**

The required epoxides were prepared by epoxidation of the corresponding olefins.[4] When a mixture of styrene epoxide and 3-buten-1-ol was stirred with zirconium tetrachloride in dry methylene chloride at room temperature, the disappearance of the starting materials was observed by TLC over 2 h. After work-up, the crude product was separated by column chromatography over silica gel. The ^1H NMR spectrum showed clean formation of the two isomers of benzyl tetrahydropyran derivative **6a**. By comparing the spectroscopic data with the literature values, the major product was shown to have the *cis* stereochemistry[2] (Scheme 1).

The formation of *trans*-2,3,4-trisubstituted tetrahydropyrans **7** and *cis*-2,3,4-trisubstituted tetrahydropyrans **8** was achieved by the reaction of epoxides with the corresponding *E*/*Z*-homoallylic alcohols in the presence of $ZrCl_4$ (Scheme 2).

Similarly, various epoxides reacted smoothly with homoallylic alcohols to give the tetrahydropyran derivatives in high yields ranging from 80% to 95% (Table 1). Treatment of epoxides with *cis*-3-nonen-1-ol afforded



2a **3** **6a** major (75%) minor (25%)

Scheme 1.

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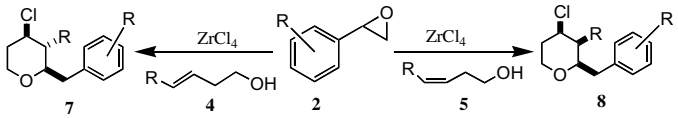
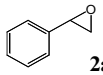
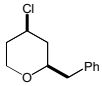
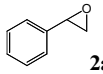
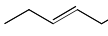
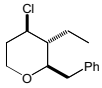
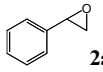
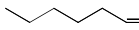
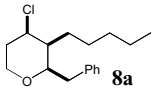
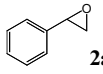
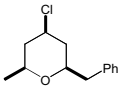
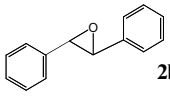
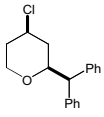
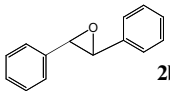
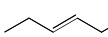
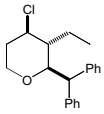
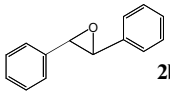
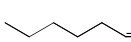
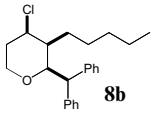
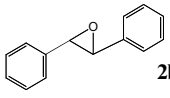
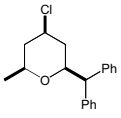
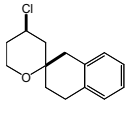
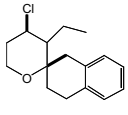
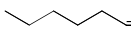
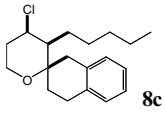
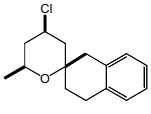


Scheme 2.

the corresponding 2,3,4-trisubstituted tetrahydropyran with the *cis–cis* configuration, as the major product, whereas *trans*-3-hexen-1-ol gave the 2,3,4-trisubstituted tetrahydropyran with the *trans–trans* configuration as

Table 1. Zirconium tetrachloride mediated cross-cyclization of epoxides and homoallylic alcohols

Entry	Epoxide	Alcohol	Products[a]	Yield (%)[b,c]
a	 **2a**	 **3**	 **6a** (*cis*/*trans* 3:1)	95
b	 **2a**	 **4a**	 **7a**	90
c	 **2a**	 **5a**	 **8a**	82
d	 **2a**	 **3a**	 **9a**	95
e	 **2b**	 **3**	 **6b**	87
f	 **2b**	 **4a**	 **7b**	92
g	 **2b**	 **5a**	 **8b**	80
h	 **2b**	 **3a**	 **9b**	90
i	 **2c**	 **3**	 **6c**	92
j	 **2c**	 **4a**	 **7c**	87
k	 **2c**	 **5a**	 **8c**	84
l	 **2c**	 **3a**	 **9c**	92

[a] All the products were characterized by ^{1}H NMR, IR and mass spectroscopy.
[b] Isolated and optimized yields.
[c] The minor isomers of trisubstituted THP products were not isolated.