

Retention of Configuration and E/Z Stereoselectivity in the Photolysis of *cis*- and *trans*-Tetraalkyl-4-methylene-1-pyrazolines^{1,2)}

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The isomeric 4-methylene-1-pyrazolines cis- and trans-2 are synthesized by a Wittig reaction from the pyrazolin-4-ones cisand trans-1, respectively. Direct irradiation with 350-nm light of cis-2 affords the alkylidenecyclopropanes cis-8, (E)- and (Z)-9 (64:17:19) besides molecular nitrogen and small amounts of the 4-methylenepyrazolidine cis-7 as a result of photoreduction. Under the same conditions, trans-2 is converted into trans-8 as well as (E)- and (Z)-9 (64:14:22). The configurations of cis- and trans-8 have been established by means of a 1,3dipolar cycloadducts from cis-8, e.g. cis-14A and B, but only one cycloadduct from trans-8, viz. trans-14. The configurations of (E)- and (Z)-9 have been assigned on the basis of homoallylic ¹H, ¹H coupling constants and nuclear Overhauser

For a long time, stereochemical evidence has contributed significantly to the elucidation of chemical reaction pathways³⁾. In particular, the extent of retention of configuration has served as a demanding criterion for the distinction of one-step from two-step cycloaddition and cycloreversion reactions. Retention of configuration has been associated with either concertedness or two-step reactions via intermediates which cyclize very fast compared to the rate of bond rotation⁴⁾. Van Auken and Rinehart, Jr., were the first to apply this criterion to the photoextrusion of molecular nitrogen from cis/trans-isomeric 1-pyrazolines and observed a preference for retention of configuration in the cyclopropane products⁵). Bartlett and Porter studied the stereochemical consequences of the photoextrusion of an azo group from a six-membered ring⁶. An excellent review by Givens summarizes the stereochemical results of the photoextrusion of small molecules⁷. No attention, however, has been paid as yet to the steric course of ring closure following the loss of molecular nitrogen from 4-alkylidene-1-pyrazolines. This is all the more surprising as their thermolysis and photolysis have been thoroughly studied in numerous investigations⁸⁻¹²) which have received additional impetus from the interest in trimethylenemethane diradicals¹³⁾. We now report that the photolysis of diastereomeric 4-methylene-1-pyrazolines (cis- and trans-2) yields methylenecyclopropanes (i.e. the least-motion products¹⁴ cis- and trans-8, respectively) with retention of configuration, while alkylidenecycloproexperiments. The results demonstrate that, on the least-motion paths leading to *cis*- and *trans*-8, the configuration of the ring substituents in *cis*- and *trans*-2 is completely retained. Of the non-least-motion products (*E*)- and (*Z*)-9 the latter is favoured regardless of the configuration of the precursors *cis*- and *trans*-2 though the *extent* of (*Z*) selectivity depends on that configuration. The results are interpreted in terms of bis-orthogonal trimethylenemethane diradicals as *primary* intermediates from which *irreversible* paths bifurcate. Cyclization yields *cis*-8 (from *cis*-2) or *trans*-8 (from *trans*-2) and 90°-bond rotations afford two diastereomeric mono-orthogonal trimethylenemethane diradicals [(*E*)- and (*Z*)-18] which eventually cyclize to the corresponding non-least-motion products (*E*)-9 and (*Z*)-9.

panes [viz. the non-least-motion products (E)-9 and (Z)-9] are formed with different preferences for the (Z) diastereomer, depending on the configuration of the starting material.



Synthesis of *cis*- and *trans*-Tetraalkyl-4-methylene-1-pyrazolines

The major obstacle to a stereochemical study of the nitrogen extrusion from 4-methylene-1-pyrazolines was recently overcome by the synthesis of both diastereomeric pyrazolinones *cis*-1 and *trans*-1 in satisfactory quantities with a diastereomeric excess of at least 99%¹⁵. While the *tetramethyl*-4-methylene-1-pyrazoline 3 could be obtained conveniently by a Wittig reaction from the corresponding ketone¹⁶⁻¹⁸, the *diethyldimethyl*pyrazolinones *cis*- and *trans*-1 reacted too sluggishly under the same conditions. Even prolonged heating with an excess of the phosphorus ylide in ether in sealed tubes to temperatures as high as 100°C did

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not result in complete conversions. Eventually, the goal was achieved by a change to refluxing toluene as solvent. Thus, the 4-methylene-1-pyrazolines cis- and trans-2 were obtained in 74 and 68% yield, respectively, as colourless liquids which were characterized by analytical and spectroscopic methods (Tables 2 and 3). The ethyl protons of both cis- and trans-2 constitute ABX₃ spin systems which give spectra of higher order even at a spectrometer frequency of 400 MHz (Table 2).

Methods

The diastereomeric purity of *cis*- and *trans*-2 as well as the photolysis products was checked by NMR spectroscopy and by gas chromatography on a very efficient column. When the retention times differed too little to allow the detection of traces of the minor diastereomer, a singlet of the latter in the proton spectrum was compared to the carbon-13 satellites of the corresponding singlet of the major isomer. Thus, the limits of detection by proton spectroscopy (<0.5%) approached that of gas chromatography in the present study. For example, diastereomeric excesses of at least 99% were confirmed by NMR for both diastereomers *cis*- and *trans*-2, which corresponded to the diastereomeric purities of the starting ketones *cis*- and *trans*-1 as expected.

Carefully degassed solutions of the 4-methylene-1-pyrazolines cis- and trans-2 in $[D_6]$ benzene or $[D_{12}]$ cyclohexane, sealed in NMR sample tubes, were kept at 20-25 °C and irradiated through a 345-nm cut-off filter with a focussed high-pressure mercury lamp. The course of the photolyses was monitored by proton spectra which were complemented by carbon-13 spectra and gas chromatograms after termination of the irradiation. Proton spectroscopy and gas chromatography furnished virtually identical results (Table 1), except that gas chromatography found the amounts of photoreduction products (cis- and trans-7, see below) somewhat too low, most likely because of peak tailing and the neglect of differences in the response factors. The signals in the carbon-13 spectra were assigned on the basis of DEPT spectra. When several components were present in similar proportions as in the case of irradiated or thermally equilibrated samples, ¹H, ¹H decoupling experiments and ¹H, ¹³C COSY spectra allowed an unequivocal assignment of the signals to a particular compound.

Results

The irradiated solutions remained clear and colourless in all experiments, even till the photolyses had gone virtually to completion. The results, compiled in Table 1, were obtained after ten (for $[D_6]$ benzene solutions) or thirty hours of irradiation (for $[D_{12}]$ cyclohexane solutions), when almost quantitative (>98%) conversions were observed. While the amounts of both substrates, *cis*- and *trans*-2, decreased steadily during irradiation, their diastereomeric purity remained unchanged. There were no observable photochemical *cis* \rightleftharpoons *trans* conversions, neither between *cis*- and *trans*-2 nor between the diastereomeric pairs of the products, viz. *cis*- and *trans*-8 as well as (*E*)- and (*Z*)-9.

In a reinvestigation of the tetramethyl-4-methylene-1-pyrazoline 3^{18} , the novel photoreduction product 6 was detected besides the known alkylidenecyclopropanes 4 and $5^{10,12,17}$ provided that molecular oxygen was rigorously excluded and hydrogen donor solvents were employed. Therefore, formation of small amounts of the photoreduction products cis- and trans-7 could be expected under the experimental conditions used in the present study. In fact, singlets of low intensity between $\delta = 4.5$ and 4.7 in the proton spectra from irradiated solutions of cis-2 and trans-2 could be assigned to such photoreduction products by a comparison with the tetramethyl compound 6^{18} . However, rigorous proof of the structure and configuration of those minor products has not been attempted. Nevertheless, it seems safe to assume that the configurations of the precursors have not been inverted in the photoreduction process. The ratios of the nitrogen extrusion products and the photoreduction products are compiled in Table 1.

A recent study of the photolysis of 3 has uncovered traces of an isomer of type 11 (four methyl groups as substituents) which were interpreted in terms of a turnaround isomerization of 3 via diazenylallyl diradicals. The experimental result, claimed to solve the intriguing problem of one-bond versus two-bond cleavage in the photolysis of 3^{12} , not only met with scepticism¹⁹, but could not be confirmed¹⁸, unfortunately. Nevertheless, the proton spectra and gas chromatograms recorded after irradiation of cis- and trans-2 were scrutinized for traces of the hypothetical isomers (E)and (Z)-11, but without success.

The photoextrusion of molecular nitrogen from each diastereomer, *cis*- and *trans*-2, yields three products. The major product of *cis*-2 differs from that of *trans*-2, but the two minor products, albeit being formed in somewhat different ratios, are the same for both precursors. A cursory inspection of the NMR spectra immediately revealed the methylenecyclopropane structure 8 for the major products and the alkylidenecyclopropane structure 9 for both minor products (Tables 2 and 3). Thus, the least-motion path affording 8 is followed with very high diastereospecificity whereas, on the non-least-motion path leading to 9, different stereoselectivities are observed favouring the formation of the same diastereomer from *cis*- and *trans*-2 as well.

The NMR arguments for the gross structures were corroborated by the results of equilibration experiments. To this end, the irradiated solutions were heated to 180.0 \pm 0.2°C till the proportions of the components did not change anymore. As could be expected from the thermal equilibration of 4 and 5 which resulted in an equilibrium concentration for 4 of only 0.16 \pm 0.02% at 180.15°C¹⁷⁾ both major photoproducts (cis- and trans-8) were almost quantitatively converted into a mixture of the minor (but thermodynamically more stable) products [(E)- and (Z)-9] of the photolysis. Only traces of the predominant photoproducts were detected in the thermally equilibrated solutions. In addition, the ratio of the minor photoproducts, being different at the beginning of the thermal equilibration because cis- or trans-2 was irradiated (Table 1), eventually attained the value of one. Taken together, these results left no room for any doubts concerning the gross structures of the photolysis products.



The assignment of the configurations to the diastereomeric methylenecyclopropanes 8 presented a non-trivial problem which could not be solved unequivocally on the basis of NMR spectra, at least not those recorded in achiral solvents as in the present study. The addition of a reagent to the double bond of *trans*-8 would produce a *single* (racemic) product, however, while *two diastereomeric* products are to be expected from *cis*-8. Because both *cis*- and *trans*-8 were available only in solutions together with the alkylidenecyclopropanes (*E*)- and (*Z*)-9, a reagent was required

Solvent	(8 + 9): 7 = Extrusion of N ₂ / Photoreduction ^{a)}	8:9	cis- 8 : trans-8	(E)-9 : (Z)-9	Method of Analysis			
Photolysis of trans-2								
C ₆ D ₆	99 : 1 (99.4 : 0.6)	64 : 36 65 : 35	1:99	39 : 61 39 : 61	NMR GC			
C ₆ D ₁₂	93 : 7 (94 : 6)	63 : 37 64 : 36	1 : 9 9	39 : 61 39 : 61	NMR GC			
Photolysis of cis-2								
C ₆ D ₆	99 : 1 (99.3 : 0.7)	63 : 37 64 : 36	99:1	47 : 53 48 : 52	NMR GC			
C ₆ D ₁₂	95 : 5 (97 : 3)	64 : 36 65 : 35	99:1	48 : 52 48 : 52	NMR GC			

^{a)} The ratios given in brackets are regarded as less reliable, because the photoreduction products *cis*- and *trans*-7 exhibited peak tailing in the gas chromatograms which was detrimental to the precision of the electronic integrations. Furthermore, differences in the response factors were neglected.

which would react rapidly in a well-defined manner and selectively with the (less substituted) double bond of the methylenecyclopropanes 8. In addition, the products would have to be sufficiently stable and to allow ready identification by NMR spectroscopy. These requirements could not be expected to be met by most of the reagents which have hitherto been added to the double bond of methylenecyclo $propanes^{20-23}$. For example, more complex proton spectra can be predicted for many products. The 1,3-dipolar cycloaddition of phenyl azide to the parent methylenecyclopropane is highly regioselective but requires several months²¹⁾, and the cycloaddition of nitrones is neither reasonably regioselective²²⁾ nor affords cycloadducts having simple proton spectra. Therefore, we turned to nitrile oxides as 1,3-dipoles, the [3 + 2] cycloaddition of which to the parent methylenecyclopropane has been reported to be sufficiently fast and highly regioselective²³⁾. In addition, several nitrile oxides, for example mesityl nitrile oxide (12), exist as moderately stable, ready-to-use reagents^{24,25)}. In fact, the 1,3dipolar cycloaddition of 12 to the methylenecyclopropane 4 proceeded smoothly at temperatures as low as 20-80 °C affording a single product in virtually quantitative yield, viz. the spirocyclic isoxazoline 13, which formed colourless crystals melting at 53-54 °C. The expected²³ structure 13 was confirmed by analytical and spectroscopic techniques (Tables 2 and 3). Most significantly, the singlet of the methylene protons appeared at rather low field ($\delta = 2.67$ in $[D_6]$ benzene, 2.88 in $[D_{12}]$ cyclohexane), and was, therefore, well separated from the resonance lines of the methyl and ethyl groups attached to a cyclopropane ring or a carboncarbon double bond as in (E)- and (Z)-9. Thus, the signals of the isoxazoline ring protons offer an excellent criterion for an unequivocal assignment of the configurations to the least-motion photoproducts of cis- and trans-2.

To this end, the mixtures of photoproducts obtained from cis-2 and trans-2 were allowed to react with mesityl nitrile

oxide (12). In $[D_6]$ benzene solutions at room temperature and in $[D_{12}]$ cyclohexane solutions at 50°C, the methylenecyclopropanes cis- and trans-8 slowly turned into products which exhibited proton signals in the same range as did the spirocyclic isoxazoline 13 ($\delta = 2.6 - 2.9$). When the sequence of events had started from cis-2, two singlets (ratio 63: 37 in both solvents) appeared which were assigned to the diastereomeric [3 + 2] cycloadducts cis-14A and cis-14B. Most probably, the major isomer possesses structure cis-14A because the methyl groups at the cyclopropane ring of cis-8 encumber the approach of the 1,3-dipole less than the ethyl groups do. The formation of two products was also shown by the carbon-13 spectrum. On the other hand, trans-2 vielded in the same sequence of reactions only a single product. The AB pattern observed in its proton spectrum proved the non-equivalence of the ring methylene protons and hence the structure trans-14. The carbon-13 spectrum confirmed that only one product had been formed in the 1,3dipolar cycloaddition reaction with mesityl nitrile oxide. Though isolation of the spirocyclic isoxazolines cis-14A, cis-14B and trans-14 in a pure state was not attempted, their structures could be established by the proton and carbon-13 spectra (Tables 2 and 3). These results prove beyond any doubt that, on photoextrusion of molecular nitrogen, cis-2 affords only cis-8, and trans-2 yields only trans-8. Thus, product formation occurs on the least-motion path with retention of configuration. If there is any stereo-randomization, it certainly amounts to less than 1%.





The configurations of the diastereomeric alkylidenecyclopropanes 9 are derived by means of long-range effects observed in the proton spectra. The isopropylidenecyclopropane 5 could serve as a reference since its spectrum had recently been reinvestigated under conditions of high resolution¹⁸⁾. The analysis of the proton spectrum of 5 had revealed a small difference in the cisoid and transoid homoallylic coupling constants which were hitherto either not resolved or regarded as identical²⁶, or not assigned in similar alkylidenecyclopropanes²⁷⁾. Such differences in the *cisoid* and transoid homoallylic coupling constants are well known from the cyclopropanimines 15^{28} and (E)- and (Z)- 16^{29} . According to the useful rule that ${}^{5}J_{transoid}$ is larger than ${}^{5}J_{cisoid}{}^{30)}$, the multiplet of the allylic methyl protons, exhibiting the larger homoallylic coupling constant, was assigned to (E)-9 and the other multiplet was attributed to (Z)-9. This assignment was corroborated by nuclear Overhauser enhancement experiments³¹⁾ which showed small but significant effects as in the study of 5¹⁸⁾. Hence, the predominant alkylidenecyclopropane formed by photoextrusion of molecular nitrogen from both cis-2 and trans-2 is (Z)-9 and the minor isomer is (E)-9 (Table 1).

Discussion

The direct irradiation of *cis*-2 and *trans*-2 results predominantly in the extrusion of molecular nitrogen. Photore-

duction is only a minor pathway. The regioselectivities of product formation, viz. the ratios of 8 and 9, are somewhat larger than that observed in the photolysis of 3, i.e. $4:5 = 57:43^{17}$, $52:48^{10}$, $(55 \pm 1):(45 \mp 1)^{18}$. This comparison shows that an increase in the size of the *ring* substituents of 4-*methylene*-1-pyrazolines favours the least-motion product regardless of the relative configuration of the ring substituents. This conclusion is in accordance with the trend in the photolysis of 4-*alkylidene*-tetramethyl-1-pyrazolines which favours the least-motion products when the number or the size of the substituents *at the double bond* is increased¹⁰.

The most important result of the present study is the retention of configuration of the substrates cis-2 and trans-2 in the methylenecyclopropanes cis-8 and trans-8. Formation of the latter from the mono-orthogonal trimethylenemethanes 18 cannot be expected to be stereoselective let alone completely stereoselective. This argument excludes the mono-orthogonal trimethylenemethanes 18 as possible precursors. It is in perfect agreement with the working hypothesis involving primary formation of bis-orthogonal trimethylenemethane diradicals as invoked by Bushby and coworkers¹⁰ (i.e. cis-17 and trans-17) but argues against an equilibration between bis-orthogonal and mono-orthogonal trimethylenemethanes [viz. (E)-18 and (Z)-18]. Rather, the 90° bond rotations of the former yielding the latter must be irreversible, probably because the 90° rotation of the methylene group and ring closure to the thermodynamically favoured alkylidenecyclopropanes (E)-9 and (Z)-9 are fast events. Therefore, the observed ratio of least-motion to nonleast-motion products can be related directly to the relative propensities for cyclization and 90° bond rotation in the bisorthogonal trimethylenemethanes.

The non-least-motion products (E)-9 and (Z)-9 are formed with modest degrees of diastereoselectivity which are different as *cis*-2 and *trans*-2 was photolyzed. This difference is, of course, not compatible with an equilibrium between the mono-orthogonal trimethylenemethanes (E)- and (Z)-18.



Starting from both methylenepyrazolines, formation of (Z)-9 is somewhat preferred over that of (E)-9. For *trans*-2, possessing C_2 symmetry, the (Z) preference can be traced back to subtle differences between the 1,3-interactions in (E)- and (Z)-18. In the case of *cis*-2, the influence of the intrinsic relative stabilities of (E)- and (Z)-18 is modified by the stronger propensity of the ethyl groups, being at the same side in *cis*-17, to rotate away from each other.

In summary, the results of the present study allow to draw the mechanistic pictograph for product formation in the photolysis of 4-methylene-1-pyrazolines with more precision than has hitherto been possible. For the sake of simplicity, the most plausible working hypothesis is exemplified for the tetramethyl-4-methylene-1-pyrazoline 3. As strongly advocated by Bushby and coworkers¹⁰, the bis-orthogonal trimethylenemethane **19** is the key intermediate from which the least-motion path and the non-least-motion path bifurcate. There is no equilibrium between the diastereomeric trimethylenemethanes **19** and **20** nor is the least-motion product **4** formed from the latter. Thus, the observed ratio of **4** to **5** simply reflects the relative rates of cyclization and bond rotation in the bis-orthogonal trimethylenemethane **19**.



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Experimental

Results of the photolysis experiments: Table 1; ¹H NMR: Table 2; ¹³C NMR: Table 3. – Melting points: Sealed capillary tubes, Büchi apparatus. – NMR: Bruker WM 400 spectrometer, PFT mode (pulse angle $20-35^{\circ}$). The deuterium solvent signal was used as an internal lock. The spectral windows were carefully chosen to ensure that folding did not obscure the spectral region of interest, while at the same time giving a digital resolution in the frequency domain of better than 0.08 Hz. Zero-filling to 64 K data points was carried out before the Fourier transformation³². In order to achieve

Table 2. Chemical shifts (δ values relative to internal tetramethylsilane) and absolute values of coupling constants [Hz] in 400-MHz proton spectra. The signals are singlets unless specified otherwise

Cpd.	=CH ₂		CH ₃	(dq) CH	l ₂ -	— CH3 (t)	2 _J	3J	a)
cis-2	4.628		1.196	1.534 1.763		0.849	14.0	7.5	В
	4.840		1.269	1.621 1.850)	0.895	13.9	7.5	с
trans-2	4.622		1.231	1.462 1.881	2	0.700	13.9	7.5	В
	4.844		1.286	1.586 1.950	5	0.751	13.9	7.5	с
cis-7 ^{b)}	4.561								В
	4.675								С
trans-7 ^{b)}	4.568								B
	4.689								С
cis- 8	5.278		1.131	1.460 1.487	5	0.968	14.0	7.5	В
	5.117		1.123	1.473	jc)	0.964		7.4	с
trans-8	5.266		1.138	1.428 1.510	}	0.950	14.0	7.4	В
	5.099		1.130	1. 42 1 1. 49 8	3	0.962	14.2	7.4	С
	$> CH_2$	(m)	CH ₃	- c - c	:H ₂	— Сн	3 (t)		
(Z)- 9 ^{d)}	0.73 - (0.84 - (),77), 88	1.141	1.29	- 1.5	7 0.9	00	7.4	В
	0.64 - (0.73 - () .68).77	1.113	1.28	- 1.5	6 0.8	89	7.4	С
(E)- 9 ^{d)}	0.84 - (0.9 2 - () .88).96	1.147	1.29	- 1.5	7 0.9	25	7.4	В
	0.73 - (0.82 - ().79).86	1.109	1.28	- 1.5	6 0.9	08	7.4	С
	^{4}J	5 _J	(tt) CH3	- c - c	CH2	—— Сн	3 (t)		
(Z)- 9	0.4	1.5	1.820	2.	141 ^e) 1.0	59	7.5	В
	0.4	1.5	1.738	2.	113°) 1.0	28	7.5	С
(E)- 9	0.4	1.8	1.791	2.	177°	1.0	90	7.5	B
	0.4	1.8	1.749	2.	113 ^{ej}) 1.0	39	7.5	С
	Cyclop	yl Group ^l	D						
	CH3	(m)	CH ₂ ^{g)}	CH3 (t)	3 _J	H ₂ C(7)	CH₃	СН	
12							1.944 1.893	6.379	в
							2.332 2.230	6.800	с
13	0.825 1.260					2.670 (s)	2.152 2.112	6.712	B
	0.978 1.159					2.884	2.167 2.218	6.770	С
cis-14 ^{h)}	0.832 1.237	1.1 1.7	11 - 1.21 72 - 1.80	1.017 0.878	7.4 7.4	2.664 (s) 2.705 (s)	2.165 2.114 2.180	6.712	В
	0.969 1.133	$1.1 \\ 1.6$	15 - 1.32 50 - 1.70	0.956	7.4	2.873 (s) 2.900 (s)	2.165 2.207	6.762 6.753	С
trans-14	0.986 1.175	1.1 1.4	12 - 1.43 16 - 1.70	0.941 0.952	7.4 7.4	2.851 ⁱ⁾ 2.890	2.150 2.202	6.781	С
trans-14	0.986 1.175	1.1 1.4	12 - 1.43 16 - 1.70	0.941 0.952	7.4 7.4	2.851 ⁱ⁾ 2.890	2.150 2.202	6.781	

^{a)} Solvent B: $[D_6]$ benzene, C: $[D_{12}]$ cyclohexane. — ^{b)} cis- and trans-7 were available only as minor components in mixtures with cisand trans-8, respectively, and (E)- and (Z)-9. Because of extensive overlap, only the signals of the exocyclic methylene protons could be identified. — ^{c)} The diastereotopic methylene protons resonate at the same frequency. $-^{d_1}$ Mixtures of the diastereomers (*E*)- and (*Z*)-9. The ABX₃ spectra of the ethyl groups at the cyclopropane rings could not be analysed completely because of overlap of the AB parts. $-^{e_1}$ The quartet shows further but poorly resolved splittings by long-range couplings. $-^{b_1}$ Some signals of the mesityl group could not be identified because of signal overlap. The numbers given in the first place refer to the more intense signal. $-^{g_1}$ The ABX₃ spectra of the ethyl groups at the cyclopropane rings could not be analysed completely because of overlap of the AB parts with signals of (*E*)- and (*Z*)-9. $-^{h_1}$ Mixtures of *cis*-14A (= major isomer) and *cis*-14B. The numbers given in the first place refer to the more intense signal. $-^{i_1}$ The diastereotopic protons constitute an AB spin system, ${}^2J_{AB} = 17.3$ Hz.

resolution of very close signals and of small long-range couplings, we carried out a Lorentzian-to-Gaussian line-shape transformation³²⁾. Spectra of higher order were analysed by standard methods³³⁾ and simulated with the help of the program RACOON³⁴⁾. The samples used in the NOE experiments were carefully degassed by several freeze-pump-thaw cycles and sealed under high vacuum (10⁻⁵ Torr). - IR: Perkin-Elmer 1420 spectrometer. - Low-resolution 70-eV MS: Finnigan MAT 8200, connected to an SS 200 data system. — The exact mass of 13 was determined by means of a Finnigan MAT 90 high-resolution mass spectrometer and perfluorokerosine calibration. - Gas chromatography: Packard model 436 chromatograph, equipped with a Shimadzu Chromatopac C-R6A integrator. A 50 \times 0.0001 m fused-silica column having 425 500 theoretical plates was employed, which was coated with 0.12 µm silicon oil CP Sil 5CB; 4.0 bar N₂ pressure, split injection 1:50, column temperature $C = 100^{\circ}$ C, $t_{\rm R}[{\rm min}] = 32.56$ (cis-2), 32.75 (trans-2), separation factor $\alpha = 1.006$; C: 20 min at 150 °C, with 5°C/min to 180°C, $t_{\rm R}[{\rm min}] = 13.23$ (cis- and trans-8), 13.58 [(E)-9], 13.93 [(Z)-9], 28.20 (cis-2), 28.28 (trans-2), 30.83 (cis- and trans-7).

Toluene was distilled under argon (99.998%) from sodium hydride. A sample of 1,1,2,2-tetramethyl-3-methylenecyclopropane (4)³⁵⁾ was a gift by Prof. P. Binger, Max-Planck-Institut für Kohlenforschung, Mülheim an der Ruhr. Mesityl nitrile oxide (12)^{25,36)} was donated by Prof. M. Christl, University of Würzburg. Recrystallization from methanol²⁵⁾ afforded beige needles, m.p. $110-111^{\circ}$ C (ref.²⁵⁾ $110-112^{\circ}$ C). The pyrazolinones cis- and trans-1 were prepared as described previously¹⁵⁾.

r-3,c-5-Diethyl-3,5-dihydro-t-3,t-5-dimethyl-4-methylene-4H-pyrazole (cis-2): A suspension of 7.14 g (20 mmol) of methyltriphenylphosphonium bromide and 2.10 g (54 mmol) of sodium amide in 25 ml of toluene was stirred under argon for 24 h and filtered. The solid was washed with toluene. To the orange-coloured filtrate was added 840 mg (5.0 mmol) of cis-1 whereupon the mixture turned turbid and acquired an orange-brown colour. The suspension was heated under reflux for 10 h while the conversion was monitored by gas chromatography. The mixture was poured into 200 ml of water. The solid was filtered and washed with pentane. The aqueous layer was extracted with pentane (3 \times 25 ml). After drying of the combined extracts with sodium sulfate and distillation of the solvent and the residue at 30 and 16 Torr we obtained 610 mg (74%) of a colourless liquid, b.p. 75°C/16 Torr, d.e. 99% by a comparison of the methyl singlet of trans-2 with the carbon-13 satellites of the methyl singlet of cis-2 in the proton spectrum. – IR (film): $\tilde{v} =$ 3070 cm⁻¹ (=CH), 1665 (C=C), 1550 (N=N). - MS: m/z (%) = 167 (0.4) $[M^+ + 1]$, 138 (5), 123 (14), 81 (61), 67 (100), 55 (27), 41 (36), 39 (17).

r-3,t-5-Diethyl-3,5-dihydro-t-3,c-5-dimethyl-4-methylene-4H-pyr-azole (trans-2): The procedure for *cis-2* described above was followed exactly yielding 560 mg (68%) of a colourless liquid, b.p. $75^{\circ}C/16$ Torr, d.e. 99%. – IR (film): $\tilde{v} = 3070$ cm⁻¹ (=CH), 1662

Table 3. Chemical shifts (& values relative to internal tetramethylsilane) in 100-MHz carbon-13 spectra. The chemical shift of carbon atoms equivalent by virtue of symmetry is given only once

-											
Cpd.	H ₂ C =	— C	CH ₃ -	c	- CH ₂ -	− CH3					a)
cis-2	103.45	156.10	26.12	92.77	32.32	9.08		_			B
	103.33	157.24	26.36	92. 9 7	32.78	9.15					С
trans-2	103.50	154.96	25.03	93.32	33.35	9.05					B
	103.40	156 .08	25.12	93.53	33.83	9.13					С
cis-8	98.48	153.66	17.84	27.06	27.63	11.87					B
	98.44	153.67	17.95	26.96	28.02	11. 92					С
trans-8	98.15	154.05	17.24	26.97	28.25	11.61					B
	98.08	154.04	17.35	26.96	28.62	11.68					С
	H ₂ C-	– C (1)	CH3-	-c-	CH ₂ -	— CH₃	CH3-		- CH ₂ -	-CH3	
(Z)- 9 ^{b)}	14.74	127.14	22.15	22.07	31.09	11.06	20.31	125.08	29.97	13.15	в
	14.86	127.34	22.32	22.44	31.48	11. 07	20.11	125.38	30.24	13.22	С
(E)- 9 ^{b)}	16.15	126.73	21.38	20.05	30.9 1	11.38	20.35	125.54	29. 9 7	12.82	B
	16.23	127 .01	21.53	20.47	31.30	11. 37	20.29	125.86	30.32	12.86	С
Cyclopropane Substituents			C(1)	Isoxazoline Ring		Mesityl Group ^{c)}					
	CH ₃	CH ₂ -	- CH ₃	C(2)	C(3)	C(6)	C(7)	СН3	quartC	СН	
12 ^{d)}								20.30 21.10	111.89 141.53 140.22	128.26	В
								20.71 21.38	113.47 141.76 140.19	128.66	С
13	16.37 18.36	-	-	22.87	74.90	157.27	37.41	19.70 21.04	1 36.70 138.33	128.63	B
	16.36 18.66	-	-	23.16	74.95	156.20	37.72	19.85 21.21	128.95 136.96 138.35	128.81	С
cis-14°)	15.05 12.85	23.37 25.12	11.47 11.35	28.29 28.13	75.90 75.50	156.97 156.84	37.99 37.14	19.72 19.89 21.04	136.70 136.75 138.33	128.85 128.70	B
	15.22 12.75	23.62 25.69	11.43 11.47	28.55 28.42	75.94 75.51	156.12 155.92	38.28 37.37		136.88 138.21		с
trans-14	12.55 14.54	23.85 26.76	11.22 11.37	28.26 28.54	75.80	156.14	37.65	19.83 21.14	128.79 136.89 138.29	128.75	С

^{a)} Solvent B: $[D_6]$ benzene, C: $[D_{12}]$ cyclohexane. $-^{b)}$ Mixtures of the diastereomers (E)- and (Z)-9. The assignment of the signals to (E)- and (Z)-9 is based on the analysis of mixtures with different ratios of (E)- and (Z)-9. -c Some signals of the mesityl group could not be identified because of signal overlap. The numbers given in the first place refer to the more intense signal. $-^{d}$ The signal of the carbon atom of the functional group is missing. It can be detected in the spectrum of the ¹⁵N isotopomer³⁶. — ^{e)} Mixtures of cis-14A (= major isomer) and cis-14B. The numbers given in the first place refer to the more intense signal.

(C=C), 1550 (N=N). - MS: m/z (%) = 167 (0.4) $[M^+ + 1]$, 138 (3), 123 (11), 81 (58), 67 (100), 55 (29), 41 (42), 39 (18). C10H18N2 (166.3) Calcd. C 72.24 H 10.91 N 16.85 cis-2: Found C 72.31 H 11.01 N 16.72 trans-2: Found C 72.47 H 10.86 N 16.59

Photolysis Experiments: The NMR sample tubes containing 0.6-0.7 M solutions of *cis*-2 or *trans*-2 were carefully degassed by several freeze-pump-thaw cycles and sealed under a vacuum of 10^{-5} Torr. The samples were kept at 20-25 °C and irradiated with a 500-W high-pressure mercury lamp (Osram HBO 500 W/2) which was focussed by quartz optics. A 10-cm water filter and a 5-mm cut-off filter, type WG 345 from Schott & Gen., Mainz, were used. The proportions of starting material and products were calculated from integrations of proton signals and peak areas in gas chro-

Thermal Isomerization trans- $\mathbf{8} \rightarrow (E)$ - and (Z)- $\mathbf{9}$ and Thermal Equilibration (E)-9 \rightleftharpoons (Z)-9: A [D₆]benzene solution containing trans-8, (E)-9, and (Z)-9 (64:14:22), which was obtained by irradiation of trans-2, was heated to 180 ± 0.2 °C for 24 h. The proton spectrum and gas chromatogram revealed the presence of equal amounts of (E)-9 and (Z)-9. The solution remained unchanged when heated to 180 ± 0.2 °C for 30 d.

1,1,2,2-Tetramethyl-6-(2,4,6-trimethylphenyl)-4-oxa-5-azaspiro-[2.4]hept-5-ene (13): A mixture of 44 mg (0.4 mmol) of 4, 32 mg (0.2 mmol) of 12, and 0.2 ml of ether was sealed in an evacuated (10^{-5} Torr) thick-walled glass tube and heated to 80°C for 24 h. The solvent and the excess of 4 were distilled at 40°C/100 Torr. The oily residue was dried at $50^{\circ}C/10^{-2}$ Torr crystallized from little pentane at -30° C to afford 44 mg (81%) of colourless crystals, m.p. 53-54 °C. – MS: m/z (%) = 271 (13) [M⁺], 256 (19) [M⁺ – Me], 188 (100), 158 (36), 145 (75), 130 (90), 69 (70).

C ₁₈ H ₂₅ NO (271.4)	Calcd. C 79.66 H 9.28 N 5.16	
	Found C 79.39 H 9.12 N 5.15	
Exact mass	Calcd. 271.1936 Found 271.193	37

Diastereomeric r-1,c-2-Diethyl-t-1,t-2-dimethyl-6-(2,4,6-trimethylphenyl)-4-oxa-5-azaspiro[2.4]hept-5-enes (cis-14A and cis-14B)

a) A [D₆]benzene solution of cis-8, (E)-9 and (Z)-9 (64:17:19) was obtained by irradiation of cis-2. After addition of 32 mg (0.2 mmol) of 12, the mixture was kept at 20-25 °C while the reaction was monitored by proton and carbon-13 spectroscopy. Complete conversion of cis-8 to a mixture of cis-14A and cis-14B (63:37) was indicated after 25 d.

b) A $[D_{12}]$ cyclohexane solution of *cis*-8, (*E*)-9, (*Z*)-9 (64:17:19) and 12 prepared as described under a) was heated to 50°C. The conversion of cis-8 to a mixture of cis-14A and cis-14B (63: 37) ran to completion within 2 d.

r-1,t-2-Diethyl-t-1,c-2-dimethyl-6-(2,4,6-trimethylphenyl)-4-oxa-5-azaspiro[2.4]hept-5-ene (trans-14): A [D₁₂]cyclohexane solution of trans-8, (E)-9, (Z)-9 (64:14:22) and 12 prepared from trans-2 as described above was heated to 50°C. The conversion of trans-8 to trans-14 was complete after 2 d.

CAS Registry Numbers

cis-1: 132540-41-1 / trans-1: 132540-42-2 / cis-2: 132540-43-3 / trans-2: 132540-44-4 / 4: 54376-39-5 / cis-7: 132540-45-5 / trans-7: $\begin{array}{l} 132540-46-6 \ / \ cis-8: \ 132540-47-7 \ / \ trans-8: \ 132540-48-8 \ / \ (E)-9: \\ 132540-49-9 \ / \ (Z)-9: \ 132540-50-2 \ / \ 12: \ 2904-57-6 \ / \ 13: \ 132540-51-3 \ / \ cis-14A: \ 132540-52-4 \ / \ cis-14B: \ 132618-64-5 \ / \ trans-14: \\ 132618-65-6 \ / \ sodium amide: \ 7782-92-5 \ / \ methyltriphenylphospho-\\ \end{array}$ nium bromide: 1779-49-3

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