

Direct Preparation of Lanthanoid Ester Homoenoates from 3-Halo Esters and Lanthanoid Metals: Their Homo-Reformatsky-Type Reaction with Carbonyl Compounds

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The direct reaction of ethyl 3-bromopropionate (**2a**) or 3-iodopropionate (**2b**) with lanthanoid metals (La, Ce, Nd, Sm) in tetrahydrofuran produces lanthanoid ester homoenoates (**3**), which react with ketones to give γ -lactones in good yields under mild conditions. The isolation of 3-phenylseleno (**8a**), 3-phenyltelluro (**8b**), and 3-tri-*n*-butylstannyl esters (**10**) from the reaction with diphenyl diselenide (**7a**), ditelluride (**7b**), and tri-*n*-butyltin iodide (**9**), respectively, suggests the formation of the lanthanoid ester homoenoate.

Lanthanoid compounds have been of interest in the area of synthetic organic chemistry for the last decade, and some characteristic reactions have been developed.¹ Organolanthanoid σ -complexes are among the most efficient reagents for high regio- and stereoselective carbon-carbon bond formation, and they have been applied to natural products synthesis.² Special characteristics of organolanthanoids include high oxophilicity and strong nucleophilicity, but weak basicity for a carbonyl group. Existing examples, however, seem to be relatively limited to date because organolanthanoid σ -complexes are not easily prepared from readily available organic bromides, and some organolanthanoid compounds do not undergo carbon-carbon bond formation with organic compounds.³ On the other hand, inorganic lanthanoid salts such as samarium(II) diiodide⁴ and lanthanoid(III) trihalides⁵ are intensively employed in organic synthesis. Generally, organolanthanoid σ -complexes are easily prepared by the direct reaction of organic iodide with lanthanoid metals,⁶ by transmetalation of organolithium reagents with lanthanoid halides,⁷ and also from organomercury compounds by oxidative-reductive transmetalation with lanthanoid metals.⁸

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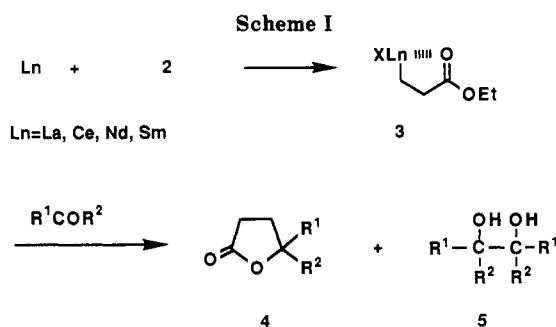


Table I. Reactions of 3-Halo Ester (**2**) with Acetophenone Mediated by Lanthanoid Metals^a

entry	3-halo ester	Ln	product and isolated yield, %	
			4	5 ^b
1	2a	La	68	20
2		Ce	70	21
3 ^c		Ce	52	25
4 ^d		Ce	50	23
5 ^e		Ce	55	29
6 ^f		Ce	55	19
7		Nd	68	20
8		Sm	71	22
9		La	68	10
10	2b	Ce	71	5
11		Nd	61	9
12		Sm	0	63
13 ^g		Sm	57	30 ^h

^a **2** (4 mmol), acetophenone (4 mmol), Ln (4 mmol), THF (10 mL); room temperature, 2 h. ^b Determined by GLC. ^c HMPA (1 mL) was added. ^d TMEDA (1 mL) was added. ^e TEGDME (1 mL) was added. ^f 18-Crown-6 (1 mL) was added. ^g Acetophenone was added to the organosamarium reagent at -78 °C.

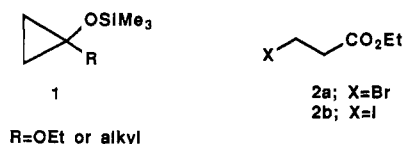
The chemistry of metal homoenoates (β -metal-substituted carbonyl compounds) has been rapidly advanced, especially aiming at their use in organic synthesis, leading to the design of several synthetic equivalents.⁹ The ring opening of a siloxycyclopropane (**1**)¹⁰ is one of the most

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efficient methods for preparation of a metal homoenoate, but direct reaction of 3-halo carbonyl compounds and a metal would be preferable. The direct synthesis of β -



lithiopropionate from 3-bromopropionic acid and lithium naphthalenide has been reported.¹¹ The lithium homoenoate reacts with carbonyl compounds at $-70\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ to give γ -lactones in moderate yields. Zinc ester homoenoates have recently been prepared by the direct reaction of ethyl 3-iodopropionate (**2b**) with zinc-copper couple in benzene-dimethylformamide or dimethylacetamide, and their reaction with carbonyl compounds in the presence of a metal complex catalyst has been studied.¹² In a preliminary communication, we have reported the lanthanoid metal mediated reaction of 3-bromo ester (**2a**) with ketones leading to a facile γ -lactone synthesis, where a lanthanoid ester homoenoate was assumed to be an intermediate.¹³ We describe here the details of the formation of lanthanoid ester homoenoates by the direct reaction of 3-halo esters (**2**) with lanthanoid metals.

Results and Discussion

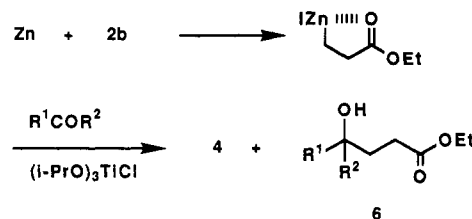
The reaction of ethyl 3-bromopropionate (**2a**) with cerium metal in tetrahydrofuran (THF) proceeded smoothly in the presence of a trace of iodine with a slight temperature rise to give a dark brown homogeneous solution,¹⁴ even though cerium metal has been reported to be unreactive toward alkyl bromides.^{6a} Treatment of acetophenone with the resulting solution at room temperature for 2 h afforded 4-methyl-4-phenyl- γ -butyrolactone (**4**; $R^1 = \text{Ph}$, $R^2 = \text{Me}$) as the major product (70%), contaminated by a pinacol-coupled product (**5**) (18–20%) (Scheme I). The cerium ester homoenoate (**3**; $\text{Ln} = \text{Ce}$, $\text{X} = \text{Br}$) was thought to be a likely intermediate in the reaction. Similar results were obtained when lanthanum, neodymium, or samarium¹⁵ was employed as a lanthanoid metal in the place of cerium. The results of the reaction of acetophenone with **2** in the presence of lanthanoid metals are summarized in Table I. To improve the yield of the γ -lactone and suppress the formation of the pinacol, some additives such as hexamethylphosphoric triamide (HMPA), tetramethylethylenediamine (TMEDA), tetraethylene glycol dimethyl ether (TEGDME), and 18-crown-6 were tested (entries 3–6). The results however, were disappointing; these additives were not effective for the reaction and rather spoiled the γ -lactone synthesis. 3-Iodo ester (**2b**) reacted more rapidly with lanthanoid

Table II. Reaction of 3-Halo Ester (**2**) with Various Carbonyl Compounds Mediated by Cerium^a

entry	3-halo ester	carbonyl compound	product and isolated yield, %	
			4	5^b
1	2a	acetophenone	70	20
2		benzophenone	46	— ^c
3		diethyl ketone	51	20
4		2-octanone	61	20
5		cyclohexanone	55	32
6		cycloheptanone	60	— ^c
7		cyclododecanone	40	— ^c
8		5-hexen-2-one	69	— ^c
9		benzaldehyde	0	— ^c
10		isobutyraldehyde	0	— ^c
11	2b	acetophenone	71	5
12		benzophenone	32	— ^c
13		diethyl ketone	49	10
14		2-octanone	65	8
15		cyclohexanone	60	11
16		5-hexen-2-one	71	— ^c
17		benzaldehyde	0	— ^c
18		hexanal	0	— ^c

^a **2** (4 mmol), carbonyl compound (4 mmol), cerium (4 mmol), THF (10 mL); the reaction was carried out at room temperature, 2 h. ^b Determined by GLC. ^c Not determined.

Scheme II



metals to form the lanthanoid ester homoenoate, which also reacted with acetophenone to give the γ -lactone in equal yields to those utilizing **2a**. In the case of **2b**, the formation of a pinacol **5** was suppressed except using samarium. These results are also shown in Table I (entries 9–12).

Table II shows the reaction of various ketones with **2** by using cerium as a lanthanoid component. For both aliphatic and aromatic ketones, the γ -lactones were produced in good yields from either **2a** or **2b**. From the olefinic ketone, 5-hexen-2-one, the olefinic γ -lactone derivative was obtained without any side reactions, e.g. intramolecular cyclization (entry 8). Unfortunately in the case of aldehydes such as benzaldehyde and hexanal, γ -lactones could not be obtained even at lower temperatures (-78 to $0\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$).¹⁶

On the other hand, the use of magnesium instead of lanthanoid metals did not give any γ -lactones even under ultrasonic irradiation or on heating, and instead resulted in the recovery of unreacted metal and starting organic compounds. The zinc ester homoenoate, which reacts with carbonyl compounds in the presence of a titanium(IV) complex to give γ -lactones and/or γ -hydroxy esters, has recently been prepared by the direct reaction of zinc-copper couple with **2b** (Scheme II).^{12d} We confirmed that zinc did not react with **2a** and that the use of **2b** was always required for the direct preparation of the zinc ester homoenoate.

The characteristics of the lanthanoid-mediated reaction of 3-halo esters with ketones may be concluded as follows.

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(14) We occasionally had difficulties to initiate the reaction. In this case, the reaction mixture was gently warmed at $35\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$, and then the reaction started within 10 min.

(15) The reaction solution was deep green before the addition of a ketone, indicating the presence of divalent samarium.^{6a} When the reaction with a ketone was carried out at room temperature, the major product was a pinacol coupling product. The reaction must be carried out at lower temperature ($-78\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$). Namy, J. L.; Soupe, J.; Kagan, H. B. *Tetrahedron Lett.* 1983, 24, 765.

niques for air-sensitive materials. The following example provides a general procedure for the reaction of **2** with carbonyl compounds mediated by lanthanoid metal. Cerium powder (0.56 g, 4 mmol) and a trace of iodine (10 mg, 0.04 mmol) were placed in a 50-mL two-neck round-bottom flask equipped with a magnetic stirring bar. The flask was flushed with nitrogen several times. **2a** (0.72 g, 4 mmol) in THF (2 mL) was added to cerium through a rubber septum with a syringe. The mild exothermic reaction started in a few minutes, and then acetophenone (0.48 g, 4 mmol) in 3 mL of THF was injected into the solution. The mild exothermic reaction continued, and additional THF (5 mL) was introduced. The resulting solution was stirred at room temperature for 2 h, during which time the cerium powder was consumed almost completely and a fine black precipitate was formed. The mixture was treated with dilute HCl and extracted with diethyl ether (30 mL \times 3). The extract was washed with brine and dried over MgSO₄. GLC analysis of the ethereal solution revealed the presence of γ -lactone (**4**; R¹ = Ph, R² = Me) and the pinacol coupled product (**5**; R¹ = Ph, R² = Me).

The solvent was removed by evaporation, and the γ -lactone was isolated by column chromatography on silica gel (hexane-diethyl ether, 1:1).

4-Methyl-4-phenyl- γ -butyrolactone: yield 0.50 g, 70%; ¹H NMR δ 1.58 (s, 3 H), 2.30 (br s, 4 H), 7.14 (br s, 5 H); IR $\nu_{\text{C=O}}$ 1787 cm⁻¹. Anal. Calcd for C₁₁H₁₂O₂: C, 74.97; H, 6.86. Found: C, 74.83; H, 5.71.

4,4-Diphenyl- γ -butyrolactone: yield 0.44 g, 46%; ¹H NMR δ 2.32 (m, AA'BB', 2 H), 2.80 (m, AA'BB' < sp, 2 H), 6.8–7.4 (m, 5 H); IR $\nu_{\text{C=O}}$ 1782 cm⁻¹. Anal. Calcd for C₁₆H₁₄O₂: C, 80.65; H, 5.92. Found: C, 80.39; H, 5.71.

4,4-Diethyl- γ -butyrolactone: yield 0.29 g, 51%; ¹H NMR δ 0.85 (t, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 3 H), 1.53 (q, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2 H), 1.86 (m, AA'BB', 2 H), 2.39 (m, AA'BB', 2 H); IR $\nu_{\text{C=O}}$ 1782 cm⁻¹. Anal. Calcd for C₈H₁₄O₂: C, 67.57; H, 9.93. Found: C, 67.05; H, 9.88.

4-Hexyl-4-methyl- γ -butyrolactone: yield 0.45 g, 61%; ¹H NMR δ 0.89 (t, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 3 H), 1.37 (s, 3 H), 1.1–1.7 (m, 10 H), 2.00 (m, AA'BB', 2 H), 2.62 (m, AA'BB', 2 H); IR $\nu_{\text{C=O}}$ 1783 cm⁻¹. Anal. Calcd for C₁₁H₂₀O₂: C, 71.70; H, 10.94. Found: C, 71.04; H, 11.07.

1-Oxaspiro[4.5]decan-2-one: yield 0.34 g, 55%; ¹H NMR δ 1.2–1.8 (m, 10 H), 2.01 (m, AA'BB', 2 H), 2.53 (m, AA'BB', 2 H); IR $\nu_{\text{C=O}}$ 1779 cm⁻¹. Anal. Calcd for C₉H₁₄O₂: C, 70.09; H, 9.15. Found: C, 70.56; H, 9.69.

1-Oxaspiro[4.6]undecan-2-one: yield 0.40 g, 60%; ¹H NMR δ 0.8–1.5 (m, 12 H), 1.61 (m, AA'BB', 2 H), 1.95 (m, AA'BB', 2 H); IR $\nu_{\text{C=O}}$ 1741, 1760 cm⁻¹. Anal. Calcd for C₁₀H₁₆O₂: C, 71.39; H, 9.59. Found: C, 70.86; H, 9.85.

1-Oxaspiro[4.11]hexadecan-2-one: yield 0.38 g, 40%; mp 84–85 °C; ¹H NMR δ 0.9–1.3 (m, 12 H), 1.60 (m, AA'BB', 2 H), 2.01 (m, AA'BB', 2 H); IR $\nu_{\text{C=O}}$ 1705, 1762 cm⁻¹. Anal. Calcd for C₁₅H₂₆O₂: C, 75.58; H, 10.99. Found: C, 75.18; H, 11.24.

4-(1'-Butenyl)-4-methyl- γ -butyrolactone: yield 0.43 g, 69%; ¹H NMR δ 1.41 (s, 3 H), 1.5–2.7 (m, 8 H), 5.1–5.2 (m, 2 H), 5.8–6.4 (m, 1 H); IR $\nu_{\text{C=O}}$ 1776 cm⁻¹. Anal. Calcd for C₉H₁₄O₂: C, 70.09; H, 9.21. Found: C, 70.68; H, 9.85.

Reaction of Diphenyl Diselenide (7a) or Ditelluride (7b) with the Cerium Ester Homoenoate. A THF (2 mL) solution of **2a** (181 mg, 1 mmol) was added to cerium powder (170 mg, 1.2 mmol) treated with a trace of iodine under nitrogen at room

temperature with stirring. The mild exothermic reaction started in a few minutes, and the stirring was continued for 30 min. Then the reaction mixture was gently warmed at 35 °C to complete the reaction and stirred for another 30 min. To the resulting dark brown homogeneous solution was added **7a** (312 mg, 1 mmol) in one portion, and the solution was stirred at 25–35 °C for 5 h.

After acid hydrolysis of the solution with diluted HCl, the product was extracted with diethyl ether (30 mL \times 2), washed with aqueous Na₂S₂O₃, and dried (MgSO₄). Evaporation of the solvent left a yellow oil, which was subjected to column chromatography; petroleum ether–diethyl ether (5:1) eluted the recovered **7a** (198 mg, 0.63 mmol) (first fraction) and **8a** (second fraction).

Ethyl 3-(Phenylseleno)propionate (8a): pale yellow oil; yield 196 mg, 0.76 mmol, 76%; *R_f* = 0.65 (silica gel, petroleum ether–diethyl ether, 5:1); ¹H NMR δ 1.18 (t, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 3 H), 2.60–2.95 (m, 4 H), 4.07 (q, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2 H), 7.1–7.7 (m, 5 H); ¹³C NMR δ 15.5 (q, CH₃), 23.1 (t, SeCH₂), 36.7 (t, CH₂CO), 62.0 (t, OCH₂), 128.6 (d), 130.5 (d), 130.7 (s), 134.6 (d), 173.5 (s, C=O); IR (neat) $\nu_{\text{C=O}}$ 1728 cm⁻¹. Anal. Calcd for C₁₁H₁₄O₂Se: C, 51.37; H, 5.49. Found: C, 51.44; H, 5.54.

Ethyl 3-(Phenyltelluro)propionate (8b): yellow oil; yield 237 mg, 0.78 mmol, 78%; *R_f* = 0.65 (silica gel, petroleum ether–diethyl ether, 5:1); ¹H NMR δ 1.18 (t, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 3 H), 2.92 (t, *J* = 4.5 Hz, 4 H), 4.07 (q, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2 H), 7.2–7.4 (m, 3 H), 7.7–7.9 (m, 2 H); ¹³C NMR δ 1.9 (t, TeCH₂), 15.5 (q, CH₃), 38.1 (t, CH₂CO), 61.9 (t, OCH₂), 112.9 (s), 129.0 (d), 130.5 (d), 140.0 (d), 174.2 (s, C=O); IR (neat) $\nu_{\text{C=O}}$ 1725 cm⁻¹. Anal. Calcd for C₁₁H₁₄O₂Te: C, 43.20; H, 4.61. Found: C, 43.38; H, 4.53. Recovered **7b**, 158 mg, 0.38 mmol.

Reaction of Tri-*n*-butyltin Iodide (9) with Cerium Ester Homoenoate. The dark brown homogeneous solution of **3** (Ln = Ce, X = Br) prepared from cerium (1.4 g, 10 mmol) and **2a** (1.81 g, 10 mmol) in THF (20 mL) as described above was treated with **9** (2.1 g, 5 mmol) at 0 °C. To complete the reaction, the mixture was allowed to warm to room temperature and stirred for 10 h. The solution was diluted with 50 mL of diethyl ether, and the precipitate was removed by filtration through a Celite pad. The filtrate was treated with aqueous NaHCO₃ (50 mL \times 2) and dried (MgSO₄). Evaporation of the solvent left a yellow oil, which was subjected to column chromatography on silica gel; hexane–ethyl acetate (50:1) eluted ethyl 3-(tri-*n*-butylstannyl)propionate (**10**). Kugelrohr distillation (oven temperature 180 °C/5 mmHg) gave pure **10** as a colorless oil (630 mg, 1.7 mmol, 34% yield based on **9**): ¹H NMR δ 0.6–1.7 (m, 32 H including t, *J* = 7.7 Hz at 1.25 ppm), 2.47 (t, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 2 H), 4.12 (q, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2 H); ¹³C NMR δ 4.7 (t, SnCH₂CH₂CO₂), 10.2 (t, SnCH₂), 15.0 (q), 15.6 (q, OCH₂CH₃), 28.7 (t), 30.5 (t), 32.8 (t, CH₂CO₂), 61.6 (t, OCH₂), 176.7 (s, C=O); IR (neat) $\nu_{\text{C=O}}$ 1735 cm⁻¹. Anal. Calcd for C₁₇H₃₆O₂Sn: C, 52.20; H, 9.27. Found: C, 52.46; H, 9.51.

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