Table I. EPR Parameters for trans. (3) and cis.N. Alkylcarbamoyl (4) Radicals,^a Their Percentage Yields,^a and the Percentage of Trans (1) and Cis (2) Conformers of the Parent N. Alkylformamides

	N-alkylcarbamoyl radicals								parent N·alkylformamide	
RNHĊO	conformer	<i>T</i> , K	g	a ^N , G	a ^H (NH), G	a ^{other} , G	%	conformer	%b	
CH₃NHĊO	3°	208	2.0015	24.0	0.9	0.9 (3 H)	93.6	1	92 ^{4,15}	
	4		2.0015	21.2	25.1	đ	6.4	2	84,15	
CH₃CH₂NHĊO	3	219	2.0018	22.4	е	е	84	1	88 ^{4,15}	
	4		2.0017	20.2	25.3	0.7 (2 H)	16	2	124,15	
CH₃(CH₂)₃NHĊO	3	217	2.0018	22.6	е	e	89	1	8615	
	4		2.0018	20.5	25.5	0.7 (2 H)	11	2	1415	
(CH₃)₃CNHĊO	3	214	2.0017	20.6	0.9	0.9 (9 H)	79	1	82,4 7815, g	
						151.9 (1 C) ^f				
	4		2.0017	18.5	25.7	0.3 (9 H) 150.5 (1 C) ^f	21	2	18,4 22 ¹⁵ ,8	

 a These data were obtained in toluene as solvent and were indistinguishable from the results obtained in cyclopropane as solvent. There was no significant change with temperature in the hfs or in the relative concentrations of 3 and 4 with temperature. ^b Note that the precision of these NMR derived population ratios is generally purported to be ca. $\pm 1\%$. ^c The EPR parameters for this radical are in satisfactory agree-ment with those reported previously, viz., g = 2.00182, $a^{N} = 22.2$ G, $a^{H}(NH) = 2.0$ G, $a^{H}(3 H) = 1.0$ G; ⁹g = 2.0017, $a^{N} = 23.78$ G, $a^{H}(3 H) = 1.02$ G.¹⁰ ^d Not resolved. ^e An incompletely resolved complex multiplet was observed with hfs in the range 0.9–1.2 G. ^f Derived from measurements on (CH₃)₃CNH¹³CO. ^g Reference 14 gives relative concentrations of 1 and 2 of 70 and 30, respectively, for this formamide. These values must be in error.



these isomeric radicals, which will have a σ electronic structure, should not interconvert (on the EPR time scale) since the electronic effects which produce high barriers in amides³ will not be (appreciably) changed in these radicals. In addition, the relative yields of 3 and 4 should not differ significantly from the relative concentrations of 1 and 2 in the starting *N*-alkylformamide.

On searching the literature, we were surprised to find that the only N-alkylcarbamoyl radical for which an EPR spectrum has been reported is CH₃NHCO and that although this radical has been observed by three separate groups of workers⁸⁻¹⁰ only the trans isomer had been detected. We have therefore photolyzed solutions containing four different N-alkylformamides and ditert-butyl peroxide in toluene and cyclopropane as solvents, directly in the cavity of a Varian E-104 EPR spectrometer. We were not surprised to see two N-alkylcarbamoyl radicals from each Nalkylformamide.¹¹ No other radicals were formed, i.e., there was no abstraction of the amide hydrogen¹² nor was there abstraction from the R group.

The EPR parameters for these carbamoyl radicals and their relative concentrations¹³ in toluene are summarized in Table I. Within experimental error the hyperfine splittings (h.f.s.) for the individual radicals and the relative concentrations of each pair of carbamoyl radicals did not vary over the temperature range studied (ca. 210-300 K). The percentage yields of the trans and cis radical isomers are in excellent agreement with the NMR derived percentage concentrations of their individual parents as reported in the literature.^{4,14,15} Since the trans and cis radicals are sterically nonhindered and are of identical molecular weight, they will decay (i.e., undergo their bimolecular self-reactions) at the same rates.¹⁶ Their relative concentrations will therefore be determined only by their relative rates of formation. Since their relative concentration are equal to the relative concentrations of

- (11) Neither of these two radicals can be the corresponding formamidyl, RNCHO, since we have found¹² that such radicals have g values in the range 2.0044-2.0056 and a^N values of 13-16 G.
- (12) Sutcliffe, R.; Ingold, K. U. J. Am. Chem. Soc., preceding paper in this issue.

(13) Obtained by double integration of appropriate lines in the spectra. (14) Walter, W.; Maerton, G. Liebigs Ann. Chem. 1968, 712, 58-66.

their individual parents, the rate constants for the reactions

 $(CH_3)_3CO + trans-RNHCHO \rightarrow (CH_3)_3COH + 3$

$$(CH_3)_3CO + cis-RNHCHO \rightarrow (CH_3)_3COH + 4$$

must be equal.

Examination of the EPR data shows that within experimental error both radical conformers have the same g values. For the minor radical the value of $a^{H}(NH)$ is always much larger than the value for the major radical. By analogy with other σ radicals (such as, for example, vinyl¹⁷) this serves to confirm that the minor radical has the cis structure, 4 with the NH hydrogen located trans to the orbital containing the unpaired electron. The value of a^N is about 10% smaller for 4 than for 3 which we considered might be due to differences in the hybridization or spin density¹⁸ of the acyl carbons. With the hope of throwing some light on the origin of this difference in a^N values we therefore measured $a^{^{13}C}\alpha$ for the two isomeric radicals derived from (CH₃)₃CNH¹³CHO (using 90% ¹³C enriched material). However, the ¹³C hfs obtained were within 1% of each other (see Table I) which implies that any changes in hybridization and spin density are either very small or mutually compensating with respect to a¹³

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Stereospecific Reactions of Dichloroketene with Vinyl Sulfoxides: A New Type of Polar Cycloaddition

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The vinyl sulfide and sulfoxide functionalities have assumed an increasingly important role in synthetic chemistry.¹ During the course of our investigations on new methods for synthesizing α -methylene- γ -butyrolactone natural products, we sought a process

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⁽⁹⁾ Yonezawa, T.; Noda, I.; Kawamura, T. Bull. Chem. Soc. Jpn. 1969, 42.650-657.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Hefter, H.; Fischer, H. Chem. Ber. 1970, 74, 493-500.

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⁽¹⁸⁾ Structure 4 might be expected to have a lower spin density on the acyl carbon because of the increased delocalization of the unpaired electron on to the NH hydrogen.

⁽¹⁾ For a general review, see: Block, E. "Reactions of Organosulfur Compounds"; Academic Press: New York, 1980. For a recent synthetic application, see: Danishefsky, S.; Harayama, T.; Singh, R. K. J. Am. Chem. Soc. 1979, 101, 7008.

whereby a stereocontrolled addition of a functionalized acetic acid unit to a vinyl sulfoxide could be effected. While there are several literature examples of Michael-type additions of stabilized carbanions to simple phenyl vinyl sulfoxides,² there are no reports of an intramolecular process that involves the initial activation of the sulfoxide group. In this communication, we wish to report a new type of polar cyclization of dichloroketene and simple vinyl sulfoxides to stereospecifically yield functionalized $cis-\gamma$ -butyrolactones of general structure 1.



While the chemistry of ketenes and dichloroketene in particular has been investigated extensively,³ no reports of their reactions with vinyl sulfoxides have come to our attention. This report focuses on the two most common methods for generating dichloroketene: (1) dehydrochlorination of dichloroacetyl chloride with triethylamine⁴ and (2) reductive elimination of chlorine from trichloroacetyl chloride by activated zinc.⁵ We have found that the generation of dichloroketene in the presence of a phenyl vinyl sulfoxide (2) results in the formation of α -dichloro- γ -(phenylthio)- γ -butyrolactone (5). The reactions of dichloroketene with trans-(3) and cis-phenyl styryl sulfoxide (4) yield different diastereomeric lactones 6 and 7, respectively.⁶,



A variety of reaction conditions were examined in order to maximize the yields of the butyrolactones. We found that the highest yields (50-95%) of lactones were obtained when the zinc method of generating dichloroketene was used in refluxing ether.⁵ In contrast to most [2 + 2] ketone cycloadditions,⁴ the vinyl sulfoxide is not used in excess in these reactions. Generation of dichloroketene via triethylamine dehydrochlorinations routinely

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(3) For some recent reviews, see: Patai, S. "The Chemistry of Allenes, Ketenes and Related Compounds"; Wiley: New York, 1980. Brady, W. T.

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(6) All new compounds (5, 6, 8, 10–12, 14) gave satisfactory combustion analyses and had IR, ¹H, and ¹³C NMR spectra consistent with the assigned structures.

(7) The J_{values} for the ring protons of 5 and 6 were 10 Hz and 4 Hz, respectively, making structure assignments possible. For analogous cases, see: Savostianoff, D.; Pfau, M. Bull. Soc. Chim. Fr. 1967, 4162.

(8) Representative experimental procedure: (E)- β -styrl phenyl sulfoxide (134 mg, 0.6 mmol) was dissolved in 30 mL of ether and 0.8 g (12 mg-atom) of zinc¹¹ was added. The resulting suspension was heated to reflux under nitrogen. A solution of 0.35 mL (3 mmol) of freshly distilled trichloroacetyl chloride in 20 mL of ether was added dropwise to the refluxing zinc suspension over a period of 15 min. After the addition was complete, reflux was continued over 15 min. The reaction mixture was cooled to room temperature, filtered through Celite, and poured into 50 mL of cold NaHCO₃ (aqueous). The two-phase mixture that formed was stirred for 15 min at room temperature while a white precipitate formed. The aqueous layer was separated and extracted once with ether. The organic portions were combined, dried with $MgSO_4$, and evaporated. The solid residue was recrystallized from cyclohexane to give 108 mg of *trans*-2,2-dichloro-3-phenyl-4-(phenylthio)-y-butyrolactone, mp 114-115 °C (55%). Another 10% yield of product was isolated from flash chromatography of the mother liquors with 9:1 petroleum ether/ether on silica.

Table J



^a Method A: 20 equiv of Zn to 5 equiv of Cl₃CCOCL See ref 8 for details. Method B: 5-10 equiv of Et₃N/Cl₂CHCOCl. ^b Stereochemical assignments made on the basis of ¹³C and 360-MHz ¹H NMR spectra. ^c Isolated yields from flash chromato-graphy or direct crystallization. ^d A 1:1 mixture of diastereomers. ^e Product 12 is a 1:1 mixture of diastereomers. Product 12a is the pure α isomer with regard to the OTBDMS group and the lactone ring, while 12b is the pure β isomer. ^f HPLC analyses of reaction mixtures indicated that 11a yielded a 90:10 ratio of 12a/ 12b, while 11b yielded a 95:5 ratio of 12b/12a.



led to lower yields of lactones (10-30%) and resulted in the isolation of the deoxygenated vinyl sulfides. A summary of the vinyl sulfoxide reactions is given in Table I.

The results of the reactions of cis- and trans-styryl sulfoxides indicated that the cyclization process was probably intramolecular. Further evidence for a highly ordered transition state for the reaction can be obtained from the results of the reactions of the pure diastercomers 11a and 11b. These examples reveal a relationship between the sulfoxide group and the tert-butyldimethylsilyoxy (TBDMS) group. While it is not possible to rigorously assign the structures of 11a and 11b from spectral data, it is quite clear from the 360 ¹H NMR spectra of 12a and 12b that the TBDMS-oxy group is cis and trans to the lactone ring, respectively. Further confirmation of the cis-lactone stereochemistry was obtained from the complete reduction of products 10, 12a, and 12b with Raney nickel. This transformation yielded the known cis-butyrolactone 13 and the isomeric lactones 14a and 14b.



On the basis of the stereoselectivity of this new cyclization process, we propose the following polar mechanism as shown in Scheme I. The highly electrophilic ketene molecule is sufficiently reactive to acylate the sulfoxide oxygen atom to generate the zwitterion 15. Through a highly ordered transition state, we envisage a rearrangement initiated by the carbanion of 15 leading to a Pummerer-type⁹ intermediate 16. This latter species can be intramolecularly trapped by the carboxylate anion to produce the observed lactone products.¹⁰ We believe that the rearrangement of zwitterion 15 to the lactones is the first example of an intramolecular and stereoselective addition of a carbanion to a vinyloxysulfonium cation. The lower yields of lactones using the triethylamine method B can be rationalized by the fact that the byproduct triethylammonium chloride protonates 15 and prevents the formation of 16. The greater solubility of ammonium chlorides in methylene chloride also explains why ether is a better solvent for the reaction.

The utilization of vinylacyloxysulfonium intermediates in stereocontrolled formation of carbon-carbon bonds offers new strategies in the synthetic chemistry of vinyl sulfoxides and their precursors, vinyl sulfides. We are currently exploring the generality of this rearrangement/cycloaddition process and its applications to natural products synthesis.

(10) Scheme I only represents a simplified picture of the bond-forming process from $15 \rightarrow 16 \rightarrow$ lactone products. For Scheme I to apply, 16 must cyclize faster than it rotates about a carbon-carbon bond.

(11) Brady, W. T. Synthesis 1977, 155.

Azocyclopropane

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The stability of trans-azoalkanes toward loss of nitrogen depends primarily on the nature of the incipient alkyl radicals.¹ Although the same factor is prominent in cis-azoalkane chemistry, the cis-trans energy difference, which is a function of alkyl group size, is known to be equally important. When only poor alkyl radicals can be formed, cis-azoalkanes isomerize to trans at a rate determined by alkyl group size.²

The small size of cyclopropyl groups coupled with their high reactivity as free radicals^{3,4} suggest that azocyclopropane (1) ought to be especially stable. We report here the first preparation of both the trans (1t) and the cis (1c) isomers of this simple but unusual azoalkane.⁵ Tautomerism to the hydrazone (2), a

Table I. Properties of trans- and cis-Azocyclopropane

compd bp (mp), °C	λ _{max} , nm	е	ΔH^{\ddagger} , kcal mol ⁻¹ a	$\Delta S^{\dagger},^{a}$ eu
lt 139	335	50	39.7 ± 0.7	-1.1 ± 1.4
1c (38-39.5)	345	279	36.2 ± 0.5	-3.3 ± 1.1
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·				

^a In hexadecane.

troublesome side reaction in many azoalkanes, is not observed in 1 because of the high strain energy of methylenecyclopropanes⁸ and presumably of iminocyclopropanes.



The synthesis of 1t⁹ was achieved by Si₂Cl₆ reduction¹⁰ of the known azoxycyclopropane.¹¹ Irradiation of 1t at 313 nm gave partial conversion to 1c,12 the mixtures being conveniently analyzed by HPLC on silica gel. After purification by chromatography on alumina (CH₂Cl₂/hexane), 1c proved to be a solid (cf. Table I), not a very surprising result in view of the high dipole moment of cis-azoalkanes.¹³ The UV spectrum of both isomers was unusual in that λ_{max} was lower than that of any previously reported azoalkanes; moreover, the difference between the isomers was only 10 nm, even smaller than the 16-nm separation between cis- and trans-azomethane. Since this UV band is normally attributed to an n, π^* transition, the cyclopropyl groups must stabilize the n orbital or raise the π^* energy. These possibilities are being evaluated by photoelectron spectroscopy.14

The most striking property of both isomers of 1 is their extraordinarily high thermal stability. The kinetics for disappearance of 1t and 1c were monitored by UV spectroscopy at five temperatures between 200 and 235 °C, giving the activation parameters shown in Table I.¹⁵ While rearrangement of 1t was a clean first-order process, disappearance of 1c was treated as sequential first-order reactions with allowance for strongly overlapping UV absorption bands of the two isomers. A nonlinear least-squares computer program and the known rate constants for 1t were used to extract rate constants for 1c. Nitrogen evolution was not observed from 1c, the exclusive reaction being isomerization to 1t. The even more unreactive trans isomer underwent a vinylcyclopropane rearrangement to 4¹⁶ in strong preference to deazatization (<1%). 1,1'-Diphenylazocyclopropane exhibits the same behavior but at a lower temperature ($\Delta \hat{H}^* = 31.6 \text{ kcal mol}^{-1}, \Delta S^*$ = -5.5 eu).⁴ The observed 8.1 kcal mol⁻¹ stabilization by phenyl is consistent with, but of course does not prove, a diradical mechanism for the rearrangement.¹⁷ Because the observed ΔH^*

(9) Properties of 1t: NMR (CDCl₃) δ 1.08 (m, 2 H), 1.26 (m, 2 H) 3.38 (m, 1 H); MS, *m/e* (relintensity) 110 (1), 109 (2), 68 (8), 54 (19), 41 (90), 40 (46), 39 (89), 38 (43), 28 (50), 27 (100), 26 (45). Anal. Calcd for C₆H₁N₂: 110.0844. Found: 110.0845.

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(12) Properties of 1c: NMR (CDCl₃) δ 1.08 (m, 2 H), 1.28 (m, 2 H), 3.60 (12) Properties of 16: NMR (CDC_{13}) 61.08 (m, 2 H), 1.28 (m, 2 H), 5.00 (m, 1 H). MS, m/e (rel intensity) 110 (1), 109 (3), 68 (15), 54 (30), 41 (90), 40 (91), 39 (100), 38 (73), 27 (57), 26 (60). (13) Stevens, J. F.; Curl, R. F.; Engel, P. S. J. Phys. Chem. 1979, 83, 1432. (14) Houk, K. N.; Rozeboom, M. L.; Engel, P. S., work in progress. (15) Rate data for azocyclopropane, temperature (°C), 10⁵k (1t \rightarrow 4, s⁻¹), 10⁵k (1c \rightarrow 1t, s⁻¹): 200.16, 0.264, 3.43; 209.95, 0.654, 7.97; 219.56, 1.51, 17.4; 230.04, 3.30, 36.3; 235.52, 555, 54.0.

(16) Properties of 4: NMR (CDCl₃) δ 0.65 (m, 4 H), 2.1 (m, 1 H), 2.60 (distorted t, 2 H), 3.05 (distorted t, 2 H), 6.80 (m, 1 H); IR (CDCl₃) 3090, 3015, 2920, 2850, 1580 (C=N), 1020 cm⁻¹; MS, m/e (rel intensity) 110 (7), 109 (6), 83 (26), 68 (29), 55 (44), 54 (59), 41 (87), 40 (59), 39 (85), 28 (29), 56 (29), 55 (29), 56 (29), 57 (29), 58 (29) 27 (100), 26 (72). Anal. Calcd for C₆H₁₀N₂: 110.0844. Found: 110.0845.

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