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Publisher *Taylor & Francis*

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Organic Preparations and Procedures International

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t902189982>

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To cite this Article Land, Helena B. and Frasca, Adolfo R.(1970) 'ARSENIC TRICHLORIDE AS HALOGENATING AGENT. THE TRANSFORMATION OF HYDROXYMETHYL TO METHYL GROUP', *Organic Preparations and Procedures International*, 2: 3, 189 – 191

To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/00304947009458656

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00304947009458656>

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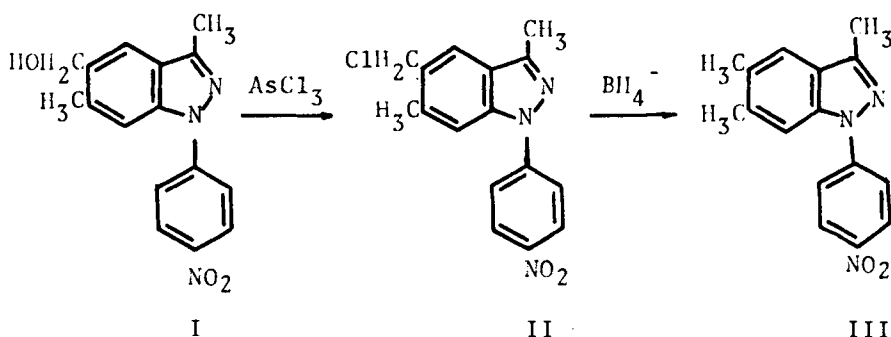
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ARSENIC TRICHLORIDE AS HALOGENATING AGENT.
THE TRANSFORMATION OF HYDROXYMETHYL TO METHYL GROUP

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Hydroxymethyl indazoles obtained during our study of photochemical reactions of heterocyclic compounds^{2,3} have been transformed into the corresponding methyl indazole via a two-step reaction sequence. In the first reaction, 1-(p-nitrophenyl)-3,6-dimethyl-5-hydroxymethyl indazole (I) was converted into the chloromethyl derivative (II) by treatment with AsCl_3 . Arsenic trichloride was found to be a convenient reagent and solvent for unstable hydroxymethyl indazoles. Very little is recorded in the literature on the use of AsCl_3 in organic chemistry. Recently, the chlorination of nucleosides was reported⁴ using a mixture of AsCl_3 - $\text{HCON}(\text{Me})_2$ (where the active intermediate is $(\text{CH}_3)_2\text{N}=\text{CHCl}^+ \text{Cl}^-$). This mixture was previously employed as formylating agent. We know of no example where AsCl_3 is used alone to carry out the chlorination of alcohols.

The second step of our transformation was the selective reduction of the chloro compound II to indazole III without affecting the nitro group present. For this purpose, we used NaBH_4 in dioxane-water solution.⁵

Experimental

1-(p-Nitrophenyl)-3,6-dimethyl-5-chloromethyl indazole (II).

Compound I (105 mg) was dissolved in arsenic trichloride (2 ml) and the solution was heated at 70° for 2 hrs. After that time, water was added and the organic compound was extracted with chloroform. The residue obtained after removing the solvent was taken up in methylene chloride and filtered through a short silica-gel column (1 x 5 cm) using the same solvent as eluent. The filtrate was evaporated to give 76 mg (68%) of a product which was recrystallized from benzene, yellow needles m.p. 229-231°.

nmr (AsCl_3) 3- CH_3 δ 2.70; 6- CH_3 δ 3.05; CH_2 δ 4.85; H_4 δ 8.10; H_7 δ 7.65; $\text{H}_{2,-6}$ δ 8.08; $\text{H}_{3,-5}$ δ 8.58

uv (CHCl_3) λ_{max} . (nm) 360 (log ϵ 4.33); 241 (4.52).

Anal. Calcd. for $\text{C}_{16}\text{H}_{14}\text{ClN}_3\text{O}_2$: C, 60.96; H, 4.48; Cl, 11.25; N, 13.33. Found: C, 60.79; H, 4.63; Cl, 11.12; N, 13.26.

1-(p-Nitrophenyl)-3,5,6-trimethyl indazole (III).

To a solution of compound II (42 mg.) in a mixture of dioxane (50 ml.) and water (5 ml.) NaBH_4 (150 mg.) was added and the reaction was kept at 70° for 20 min. After dilution with water the product was extracted with CHCl_3 and the extracts were evaporated. The indazole (41 mg.) was purified by chromatography on a silica-gel column (solvent, light petroleum 100-ethyl acetate 2) and recrystallization from ethanol, yielding 20 mg. (54%) of yellow prisms, mp. 204-205°.

nmr (AsCl_3) 3- CH_3 δ 2.97; 5- CH_3 δ 2.50; 6- CH_3 δ 2.47; H_4 δ 7.71; H_7 δ 7.48; $\text{H}_{2,-6}$ δ 7.91; $\text{H}_{3,-5}$ δ 8.47.

uv (CHCl_3) λ_{max} . (nm) 368 (log ϵ 4.29); sh 300 (3.58); sh 265 (3.98).

Anal. Calcd. for $\text{C}_{16}\text{H}_{15}\text{N}_3\text{O}_2$: C, 68.30; H, 5.37; N, 14.94. Found: C, 68.15; H, 5.67; N, 14.72.

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(Received March 17, 1970)