

## AN IMPROVED SYNTHESIS OF AN INTERMEDIATE FOR THIENAMYCIN SYNTHESIS

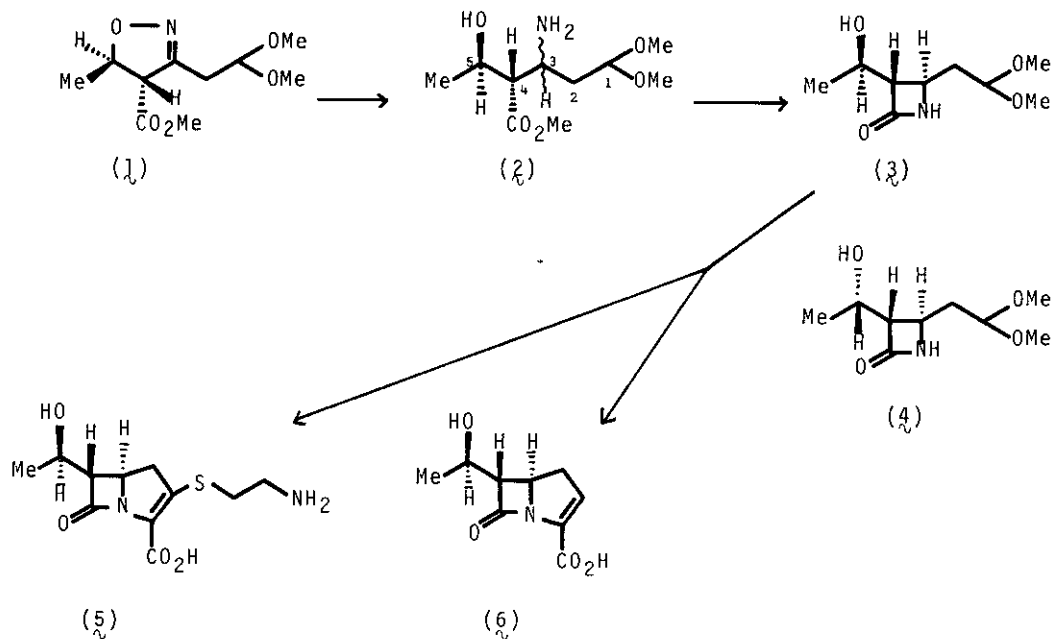
Tetsuji Kametani\*, Takayasu Nagahara, Yukio Suzuki, Shuichi Yokohama,  
Shyh-Pyng Huang, and Masataka Ihara

Pharmaceutical Institute, Tohoku University, Aobayama, Sendai 980,  
Japan

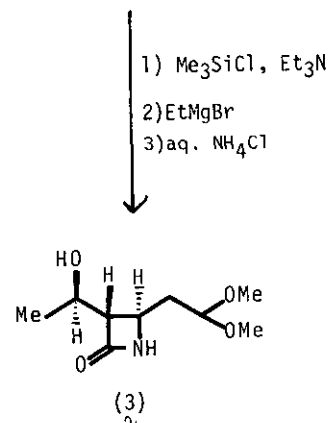
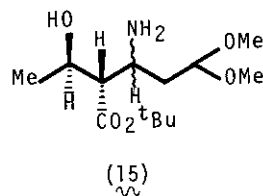
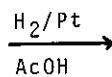
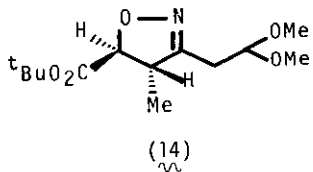
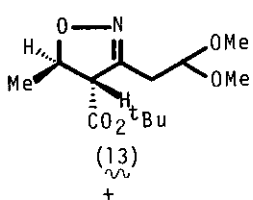
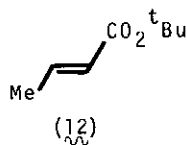
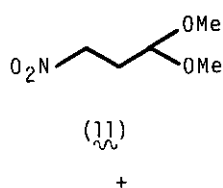
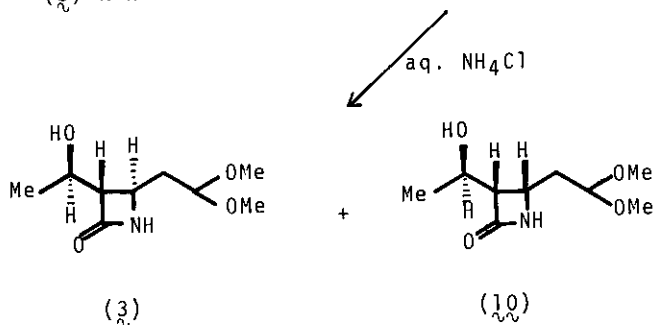
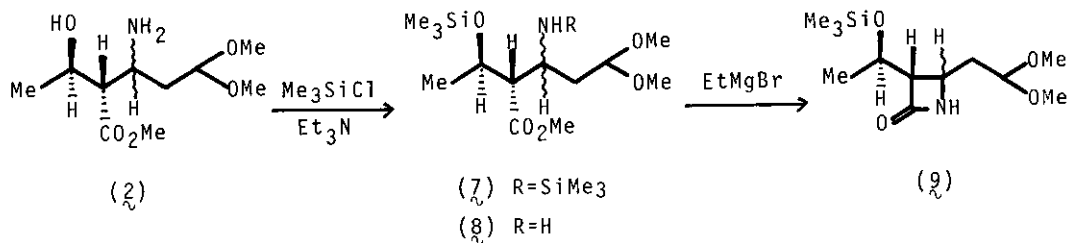
**Abstract** — Methyl 3-amino-5-hydroxy-1,1-dimethoxyhexane-4-carboxylate (2) was converted into trans- and cis-azetidinones (3 and 4) by sequential trimethylsilylation, cyclisation with Grignard reagent, and deblocking. The corresponding tert-butyl ester (5), prepared via the isoxazoline derivative (6), was selectively transformed into the trans- $\beta$ -lactam (3), a synthetic intermediate of thienamycin, by the same reaction sequence.

Recently, we reported the formal total synthesis of thienamycin (5) and descysteaminylthienamycin (6) through the isoxazoline derivative (6)<sup>1,2</sup>. Since the main reduction product of 1 was the undesired stereoisomer, the required trans-azetidinone (3), synthesised from the resultant amino ester mixture (2) by lactam formation on the derived amino acid using N,N'-dicyclohexylcarbodiimide, was contaminated with its epimer (4), which was unseparable from 3. On the other hand, treatment of 2 with Grignard reagent selectively produced 3 in about 10 % yield. We therefore looked for a more effective synthesis of 3 and here report the improved results.

Firstly, cyclization of 2 using trialkylaluminium<sup>3</sup> was examined, but the yield of 3 was not improved. Consequently it was decided to determine whether protection of the hydroxyl group in 2 would enable a more efficient conversion to 3. Thus, treatment of 2 with excess trimethylsilyl chloride, in the presence of triethylamine in benzene at room temperature, afforded an N,O-disilylated product (7). When the reaction was carried out for a shorter period, using a limited amount of the reagents, a stable trimethylsilyl ether (8) was obtained. On treatment with excess ethylmagnesium bromide<sup>4</sup> in tetrahydrofuran at room temperature, both



compounds (7 and 8) were converted into a mixture of trans- and cis-azetidinones (9),  $m/e$  276 ( $M^+ + 1$ ), in 63 ~ 78.5 % yield. The ir spectrum ( $\text{CHCl}_3$ ) of this product showed NH group absorption at  $3425 \text{ cm}^{-1}$  and carbonyl group absorption at  $1758 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ . The trimethylsilyl group was observed as a singlet (9H) at 0.1 ppm in the nmr spectrum ( $\text{CCl}_4$ ). Deprotection using aqueous ammonium chloride gave the trans- and cis- $\beta$ -lactams (3 and 10), which were separated by silica gel column chromatography. By this route the trans- $\beta$ -lactam (3) was synthesised in 20.6 % yield from the isoxazoline (1), while 10 was produced in 38.2 % yield. It was anticipated that reduction of an isoxazoline bearing a bulkier ester group would lead to a higher proportion of the desired amino ester. tert-Butyl ester (13) was therefore prepared by reaction of the nitro acetal (11) and tert-butyl crotonate (12)<sup>5</sup> in the presence of phenyl isocyanate and triethylamine.<sup>6</sup> Thus 4-tert-butoxycarbonylisoxazoline (13) was obtained in 58 % yield along with the separable isomer (14) in 14 % yield. Catalytic reduction of 13 using 5% atoms of hydrogen and Adams catalyst in acetic acid quantitatively yielded an epimeric mixture of the amino ester (15) in the ratio 1 : 1. Interestingly, this mixture 15 afforded only the trans-azetidinone (3) by the aforementioned sequential reaction procedure; silylation, cyclisation with ethylmagnesium bromide, and



deprotection. The undesired isomer in the amino ester (15) reacted with ethylmagnesium bromide to give ether-soluble unidentified products. Purification of the  $\beta$ -lactam (3) was readily achieved by utilizing its high water-solubility. According to this method the thienamycin synthetic intermediate (3)<sup>1,2</sup> was obtained in 41.2 % yield from the isoxazoline (13).

## REFERENCES

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