

Manganese-Catalyzed Anti-Markovnikov Hydroamination of Allyl Alcohols via Hydrogen-Borrowing Catalysis

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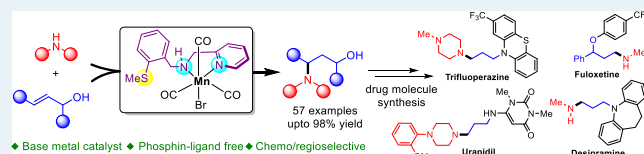
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ABSTRACT: Controlling the selectivity in a hydroamination reaction is an extremely challenging yet highly desirable task for the diversification of amines. In this article, a selective formal anti-Markovnikov hydroamination of allyl alcohols is presented. It enables the versatile synthesis of valuable γ -amino alcohol building blocks. A phosphine-free Earth's abundant manganese(I) complex catalyzed the reaction under hydrogen-borrowing conditions. A vast range of aliphatic, aromatic amines, drug molecules, and natural product derivatives underwent successful hydroamination with primary and secondary allylic alcohols with excellent functional group tolerance (57 examples). The catalysis could be performed on a gram scale and has been applied for the synthesis of drug molecules. The mechanistic studies revealed the metal–ligand bifunctionality as well as hemilability of the ligand backbone as the key design principle for the success of this catalysis.

KEYWORDS: γ -amino alcohol, borrowing hydrogen catalysis, hydroamination, manganese, phosphine-free



Hydroamination of unsaturated C–C bonds offers the homologation of valuable amine building blocks to higher congeners.¹ However, the core issues of concern lie in the selective formation of either Markovnikov or anti-Markovnikov adducts. In this regard, hydroamination of terminal alkene mostly delivers Markovnikov products, thanks to the innate stereoelectronics of the reacting alkene and amine substrates.^{1a–c,2} The anti-Markovnikov hydroamination, on the other hand, is highly challenging and mostly driven either by modulating the substrates and catalytic conditions or by multistep formal synthesis.^{1c,2a–h,3} In particular, the anti-Markovnikov hydroaminations of readily available allyl alcohols, which allowed the synthesis of γ -amino alcohols, are rare.⁴

γ -Amino alcohols are versatile synthetic intermediates for many pharmaceuticals and bioactive molecules (some of them are exemplified in Scheme 1a).⁵ Traditional procedures for their synthesis include hydroamination of α,β -unsaturated carbonyl compounds, followed by hydrogenation, reduction of preformed β -amino carbonyls,⁶ and C–H amination of allylic and benzylic structural motifs.⁷ However, most multistep syntheses required stoichiometric hydride-transfer agents and suffered from poor atom economy and copious waste generation.⁸

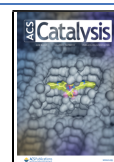
The development of methodology exigencies the sustainable and greener way of developing the synthetic strategy to valuable commercial feedstocks. The hydrogen-borrowing (BH) catalysis, which cascades the dehydrogenation and rehydrogenation processes, adds considerable interest since it is atom-efficient and environmentally amicable.⁹ In this context, the anti-Markovnikov functionalizations of allylic alcohols leading to γ -functionalized alcohols *via* BH catalysis

have attained enormous attention (Scheme 1b). Williams¹⁰ and Rodriguez¹¹ had independently developed such a reaction using carbon nucleophiles. The anti-Markovnikov hydroamination of allyl alcohols was pioneered by Oe employing a ruthenium catalyst.¹² Subsequently, Wang and coworkers reported an alkyl phosphine-based iron catalyst for the anti-Markovnikov amino functionalization of allylic alcohols.¹³ Recently, Xing¹⁴ and Wang¹⁵ groups independently reported asymmetric hydroamination of aryl vinyl alcohols utilizing ruthenium catalysts. While preparing this article, Beller and coworkers reported alkyl phosphine-derived manganese complex-catalyzed formal hydroamination of allyl alcohols using pyrophoric sodium triethylborohydride as the catalyst activator.¹⁶ Although the developed methods are promising, most of them used noble metals as catalysts and external additives as catalyst activators and offered limited scope. On the other hand, the modern era of organometallic synthesis demands the development of catalysts based on the Earth's abundant transition metals due to easy accessibility, low cost, and less toxicity.¹⁷ Moreover, the reported protocols used phosphine-based ligands, which are comparatively expensive and prone to undergo degradation under aerial conditions such that the beneficial effect of the cheap metal catalysts is often forfeited. Hence, a combination of a 3d-transition metal and a

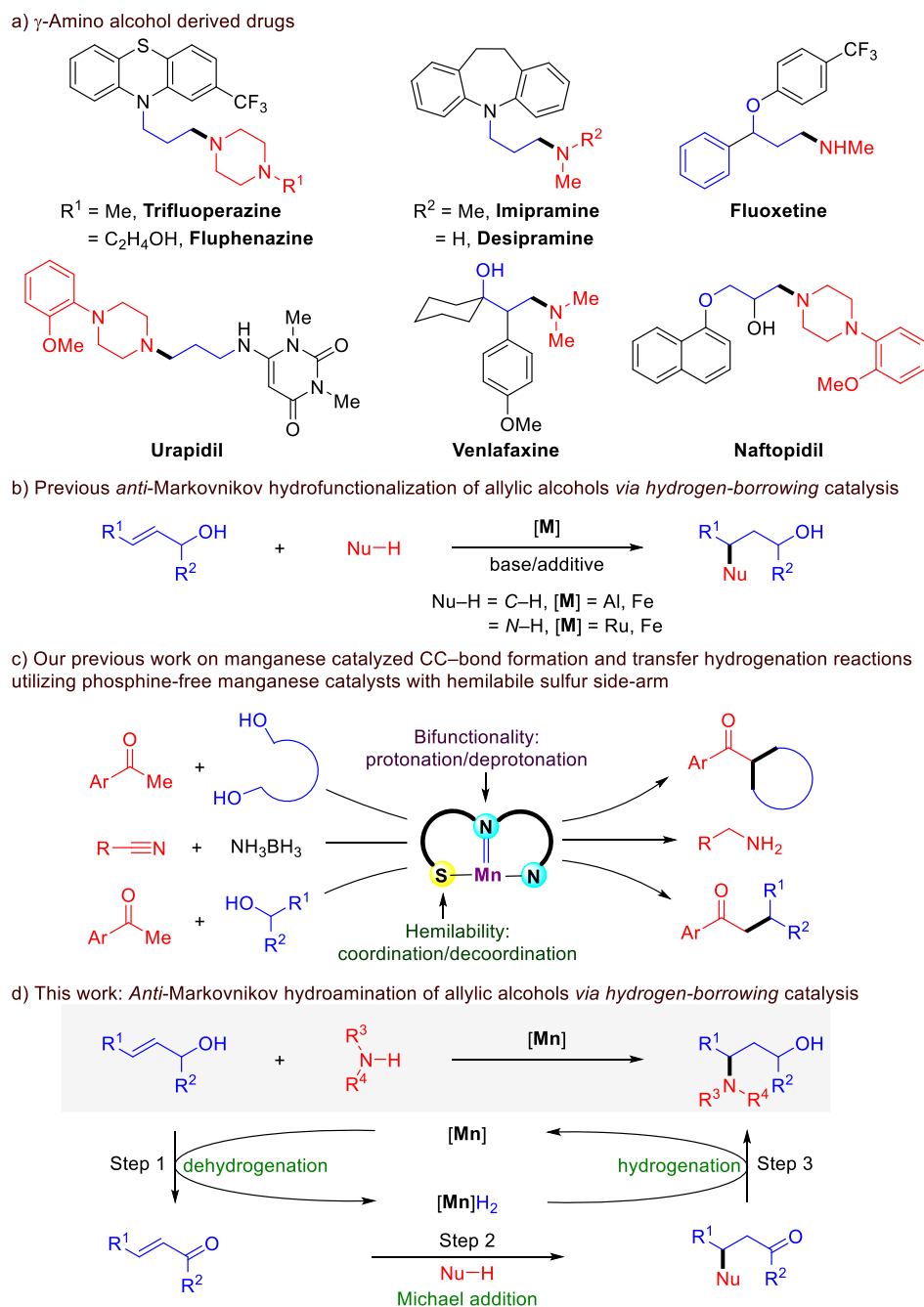
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Scheme 1. a) Drug Molecules Prepared from γ -Amino Alcohols; (b) Previous Anti-Markovnikov Hydrofunctionalization of Allylic Alcohol; (c) Our Previous Work on Manganese Catalysis with Hemilabile Ligands; (d) This Work: Manganese-Catalyzed Anti-Markovnikov Hydroamination of Allyl Alcohol

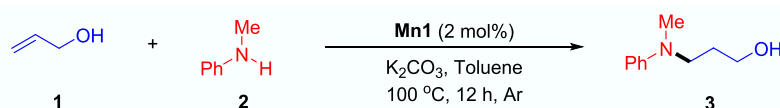


readily available bench-stable ligand is highly appreciable at present for the anti-Markovnikov hydroamination of allylic alcohols for the synthesis of valuable γ -amino alcohols.

Recently, we¹⁸ and others¹⁹ have established the proficiency of phosphine-free manganese(I) catalysts to carry out waste-free hydrogen-transfer reactions.²⁰ Manganese is the third most abundant transition metal in the Earth's crust, less toxic, and omnipresent in several biological processes. Not long ago, in addition to protonation/deprotonation metal–ligand bifunctionality, we have exhibited the hemilability of a soft sulfur donor side-arm, which (de)coordinates on-demand, as a crucial design principle for the Mn(I)-catalyzed synthesis of $(n + 1)$ -membered cycloalkanes,^{18f} β -branched carbonyl

compounds,^{18d} and primary and secondary amines (Scheme 1c).^{18g} Presently, we become interested in developing phosphine-ligand-free Mn catalysts for the anti-Markovnikov hydroamination of allyl alcohols to synthesize valuable γ -amino alcohols *via* BH catalysis (Scheme 1d). Notably, the catalyst is needed to be highly chemoselective for catalyzing the anti-Markovnikov hydroamination reaction, avoiding competing reduction of C = X (X = C and N) bonds,²¹ allylic substitution,^{5s,22} and allylic isomerization.²³

Pursuing this aim, herein, we report a phosphine-free Mn(I) catalyst **Mn1** bearing a soft sulfur donor side-arm in the ligand backbone for the highly regioselective synthesis of γ -amino alcohols (Scheme 1d).^{18g} Encouragingly, the catalyst operated

Table 1. Key Reaction Optimization^a

entry	deviations from the above	yield of 3 (%)
1	None	92 (90)
2	Mn2	78
3	Mn3	<5
4	cyclohexane is used as the solvent	90
5	THF, dioxane, DMF, and CH ₃ CN are used as solvents	up to 57
6	K ₂ CO ₃ (70 mol %)	93 (92)
7	K ₂ CO ₃ (40 mol %)	56
8	Na ₂ CO ₃ , Cs ₂ CO ₃ , KHCO ₃ , K ₂ HPO ₄ , and <i>t</i> -BuOK are used as bases	up to 80
9	without Mn1 or K ₂ CO ₃	<5

Mn1

Mn2

Mn3

^aReaction conditions: **1** (0.4 mmol), **2** (0.1 mmol), **Mn1** (2 mol %), K₂CO₃ (0.1 mmol), toluene (0.25 M), 100 °C, 12 h. Yields were determined by ¹H NMR using 1,3,5-trimethoxybenzene as the internal standard. Isolated yields are in the parenthesis.

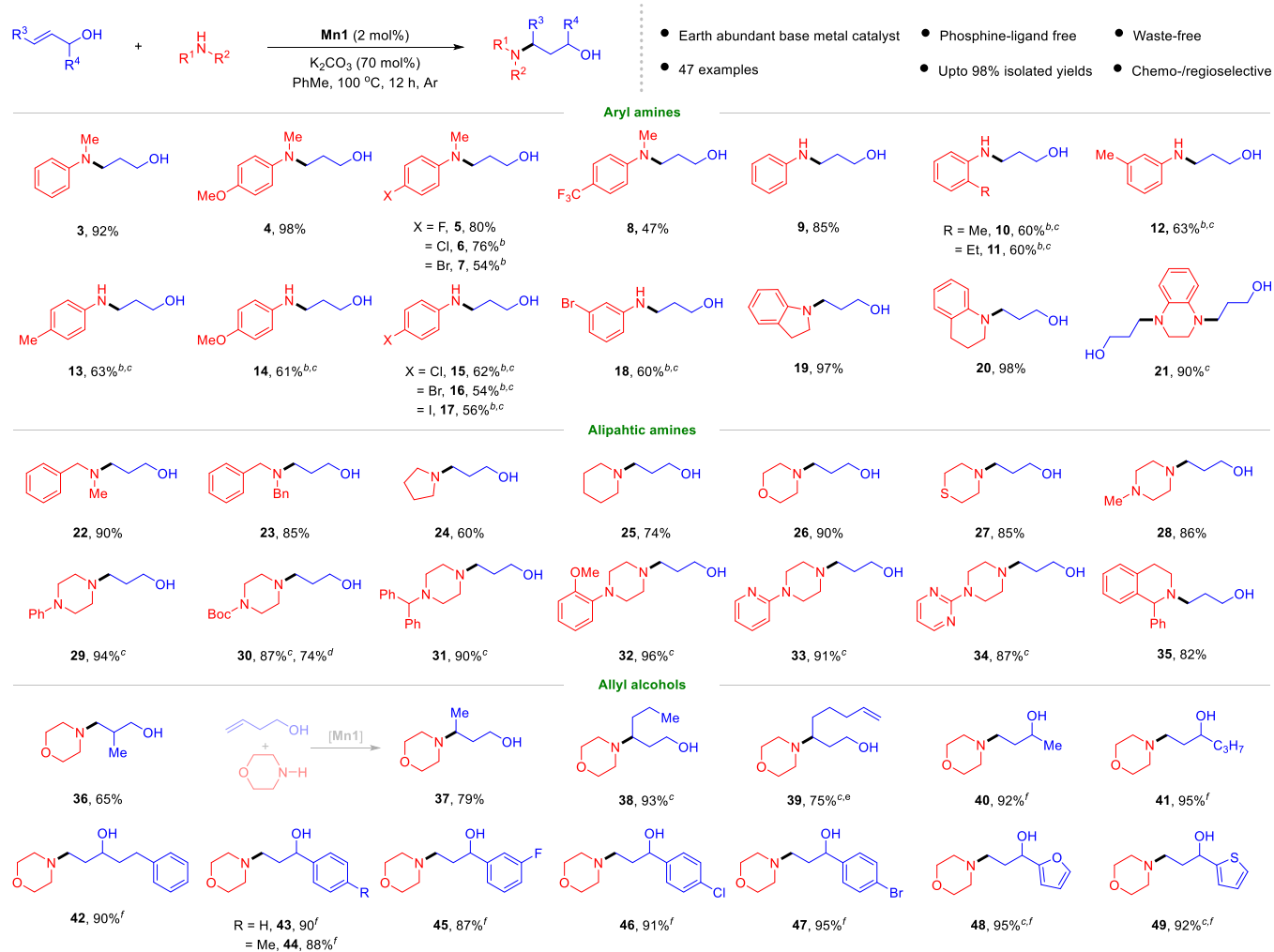
at low loading, tolerated a large variety of amines and allylic alcohol substrates, and can be applied for the diversification of bioactive molecules and the synthesis of drug molecules. The beneficial role of the soft sulfur donor in the ligand's side-arm has been outlined by equating the activities of **Mn1** with its oxygen analogue and via control experiments. To the best of our knowledge, phosphine-free base-metal complexes for the formal anti-Markovnikov hydroamination of allyl alcohols have not been developed thus far.

Hydroamination of feedstock allyl alcohol (**1**) with *N*-methyl aniline (**2**) was chosen as the model reaction (Table 1). Pleasingly, the phosphine-free Mn(I) catalyst **Mn1**, having a thiomethoxy side-arm,^{18g} at a 2 mol % loading, efficiently catalyzed the reaction when the reaction was performed in toluene (0.25 M) at 100 °C in the presence of a mild base K₂CO₃ (entry 1). The desired γ -amino alcohol product **3** was obtained in 92% yield with exclusive anti-Markovnikov selectivity. When the reaction was performed with the Mn(I) complex **Mn2**, having a thiophene side-arm,^{18f} 78% yield of **3** was noticed (entry 2). On the other hand, more rigid hydrazone-ligand-derived Mn(I) complex **Mn3**, which efficiently catalyzed the C-alkylations of nitriles,^{18b} fails to catalyze the hydroamination reaction (entry 3), indicating the need for the flexible NNS-ligand framework. Among the solvents tested, cyclohexane did not alter the reaction outcome (entry 4). However, polar solvents hampered the reaction (entry 5). The K₂CO₃ loading could be reduced to 70 mol % without affecting the yield (entry 6). Further reduction gave inferior results (entry 7). Lower yields of the product were also noticed when other bases were used (entry 8). The control experiments demonstrated that the product did not form in the absence of **Mn1** or K₂CO₃ (entry 9). Further details of the reaction optimizations are tabulated in Tables S1-S4.

We then set to explore the scope of the anti-Markovnikov hydroamination reaction (Table 2). We were pleased to find that a vast range of aromatic and aliphatic amines underwent a smooth hydroamination reaction with both primary and

secondary allylic alcohols while tolerating several functional groups. Notably, in all cases, the γ -amino alcohols were isolated in exclusive selectivities. The *N*-alkyl anilines (products 3–8) exhibited higher reactivity over anilines (products 9–18) due to their higher nucleophilicity from the alkyl substituent presence on nitrogen. The same is also evident from the effect of substituents at the aryl ring of the amine substrates. An electron-donating methoxy group at the *p*-position leads to the 98% yield of the γ -amino alcohol **4**. Moderately electronic-biased halogen substituents furnished the products 5–7 in moderate to good yields. In comparison, strongly electron-withdrawing trifluoromethyl substituents at the *p*-position displayed poor reactivity and yielded 47% of **8**. On the other hand, the reaction was not affected by the sterics of the aryl substituents as the alkyl substituents present at the *o*-, *m*-, and *p*-position of the aniline substrates reacted at equal efficiencies (products 10–13). The halogen-functionalized anilines also responded equally, furnishing the desired products 15–18 in moderate yields. Notably, the halogen substituents, including the *p*-iodo group, were completely retained under these mild conditions, thus providing a handle for further derivatizations. Pleasingly, partially reduced heterocyclic arylamines reacted smoothly under these conditions delivering the products **19** and **20** in high 97 and 98% yields, respectively. Even double hydroamination could be performed, and the product **21** was isolated in 90% yield after 24 h.

To further expand the scope of this reaction, a large variety of aliphatic amines were made to react with allyl alcohol **1**. Aliphatic, acyclic amines furnished the amino alcohols **22** and **23** in 85 and 90% yields, respectively, and cyclic amines such as pyrrolidine, piperidine, morpholine, and thiomorpholine lead to complete conversion to γ -amino alcohols **24–27**. However, due to the volatility, the isolated yields for pyrrolidine and piperidine amino alcohol derivatives (products **24** and **25**) were found to be moderate. Interestingly, the piperazine derivatives possessing more than one nitrogen atom, which are important building units in several bioactive molecules, were

Table 2. Scope for the Manganese-Catalyzed Hydroamination of Allyl Alcohols with Amines^a

^aReaction conditions: Allyl alcohol (1 mmol), amine (0.25 mmol), **Mn1** (2 mol %), K₂CO₃ (70 mol %), PhMe (1 mL), 100 °C, 12 h. Isolated yields. ^bK₂CO₃ (100 mol %). ^cReaction time 24 h. ^dAmine (5.37 mmol, 1 g). ^e**Mn1** (4 mol %) and K₂CO₃ (100 mol %). ^fToluene: 2-PrOH (1:3).

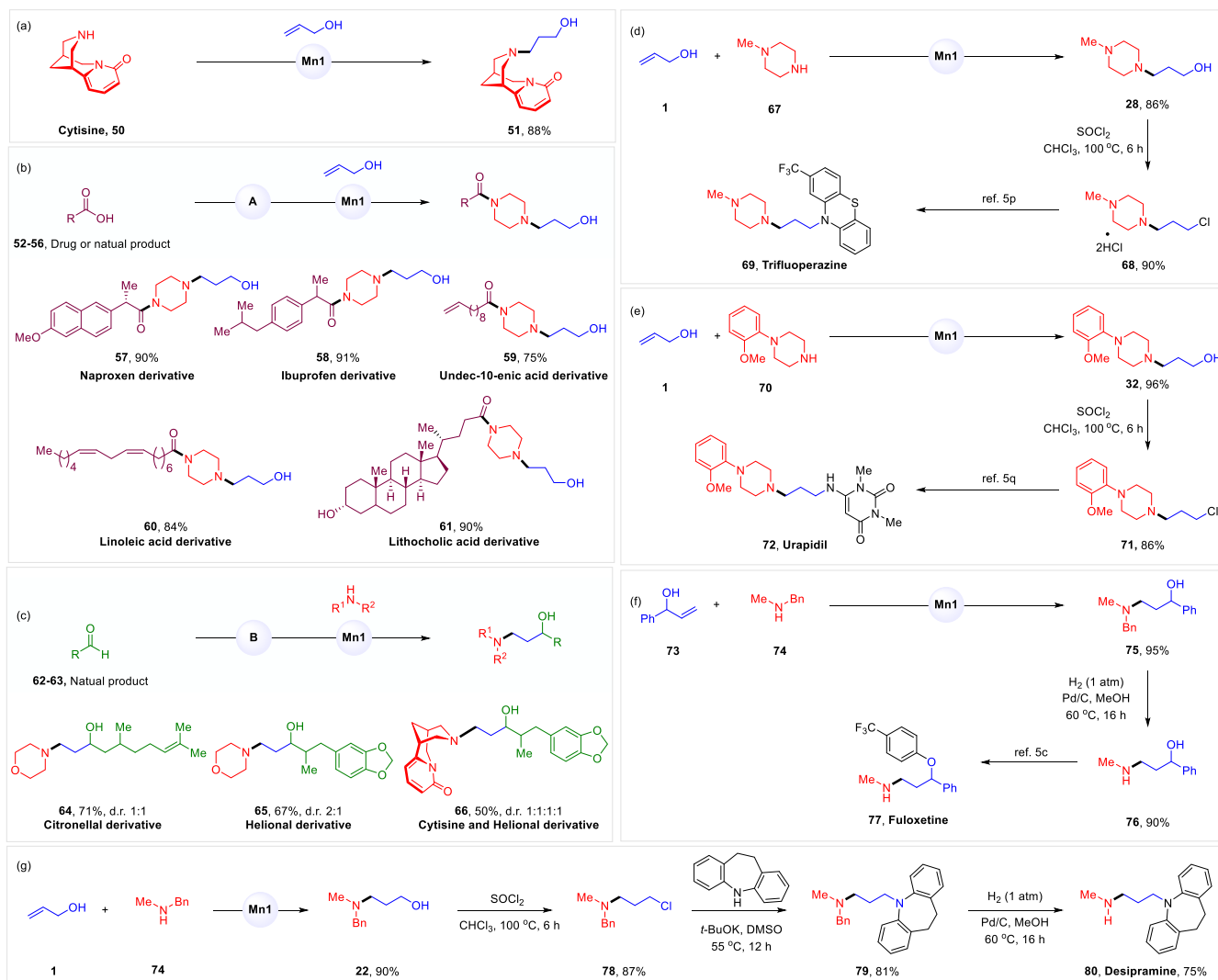
well-tolerated without decreasing the reaction efficiency as the desired products **28–34** were isolated in high 86–96% yields. The γ -amino alcohol **30** could also be synthesized on a gram scale without significantly affecting the reaction outcome (0.97 g, 74% yield). Piperazines bearing heterocyclic moieties such as pyridine and pyrimidine rings also tolerated furnishing the desired products (**33** and **34**) in 91 and 87% yields, respectively. 1-Phenylisoquinoline also underwent a smooth hydroamination reaction delivering the product **35** in 82% yield.

The excellency of the developed methodology induced us to further extend the scope for primary and secondary allyl alcohols. Primary allylic alcohols bearing alkyl substituents at the β - and γ -positions furnished the γ -amino alcohols **36–39** in 65–93% yields. The homoallylic alcohol, but-3-en-1-ol, underwent exclusive hydroamination at the γ -position, and the product **37** was isolated in 79% yield. Notably, a terminal alkene group in the allyl alcohol partner was retained in the product alcohol **39** under these hydrogen-transfer conditions.

Secondary allylic alcohols could also be utilized as the coupling partners under the optimized reaction conditions in Table 1 using toluene and 2-propanol (1:3) as the solvents (Table 2). The latter is used as an additional hydrogen source

that allowed the selective formation of γ -amino alcohol. The alkyl secondary allylic alcohols with different alkyl chains resulted in high 90–95% yields of the γ -amino alcohol products **40–42**. Similarly, the aryl secondary allylic alcohols with different electronic substituents reacted smoothly, and the desired γ -amino alcohols **43–47** were isolated in 87–95% yields. Again, the halogen functional groups were retained under these conditions. Additionally, heteroaromatic furan (**48**) and thiophene (**49**) containing secondary allylic alcohols were also hydroaminated in excellent 95 and 92% yields, respectively.

To further explore the applicability of the BH methodology, we carried out the functionalization of naturally occurring alkaloid, cytosine **50**, that delivers the diversified product **51** in 88% isolated yield (Scheme 2a). The derivatives of the anti-inflammatory drugs naproxen (**52**)²⁴ and ibuprofen (**53**)²⁵ and the natural products such as undec-10-enoic acid (**54**), linoleic acid (**55**), and lithocholic acid (**56**) could efficiently be diversified, furnishing the γ -amino alcohols **57–61** in 75–91% yields (Scheme 2b). Additionally, the allyl alcohols, synthesized from the monoterpene citronellal (**62**) and the commercially used fragrant helional (**63**), could also be functionalized under the manganese-catalyzed hydroamination

Scheme 2. Synthetic Application of the Manganese-Catalyzed Anti-Markovnikov Hydroamination Reaction^{a,b}

^a(a-c) Diversification of Natural Products and Drug Molecules. (d-g) Synthesis of Drug Molecules. ^bReaction conditions: **Mn1**: Table 1, entry 6; **A**: (i) **52-56** (1 mmol), *N*-Boc piperazine (1 mmol), DMAP (10 mol%), DCC (1.2 mmol), CH₂Cl₂ (3 mL), r.t., 8 h. (ii) TFA (1 mL), CH₂Cl₂ (2 mL), r.t., 16 h; **B**: **62-63** (5 mmol), vinyl magnesium bromide (6 mL, 1 M in THF), THF (10 mL), 0 °C to r.t., 6–8 h.

conditions, and the products **64** and **65**, respectively, were isolated in high yields and moderate diastereoselectivities (Scheme 2c). Additionally, cytosine **50** could be hydroaminated with the allyl alcohol derived from helional (**63**), yielding the conjugate **66** in moderate 50% yield.

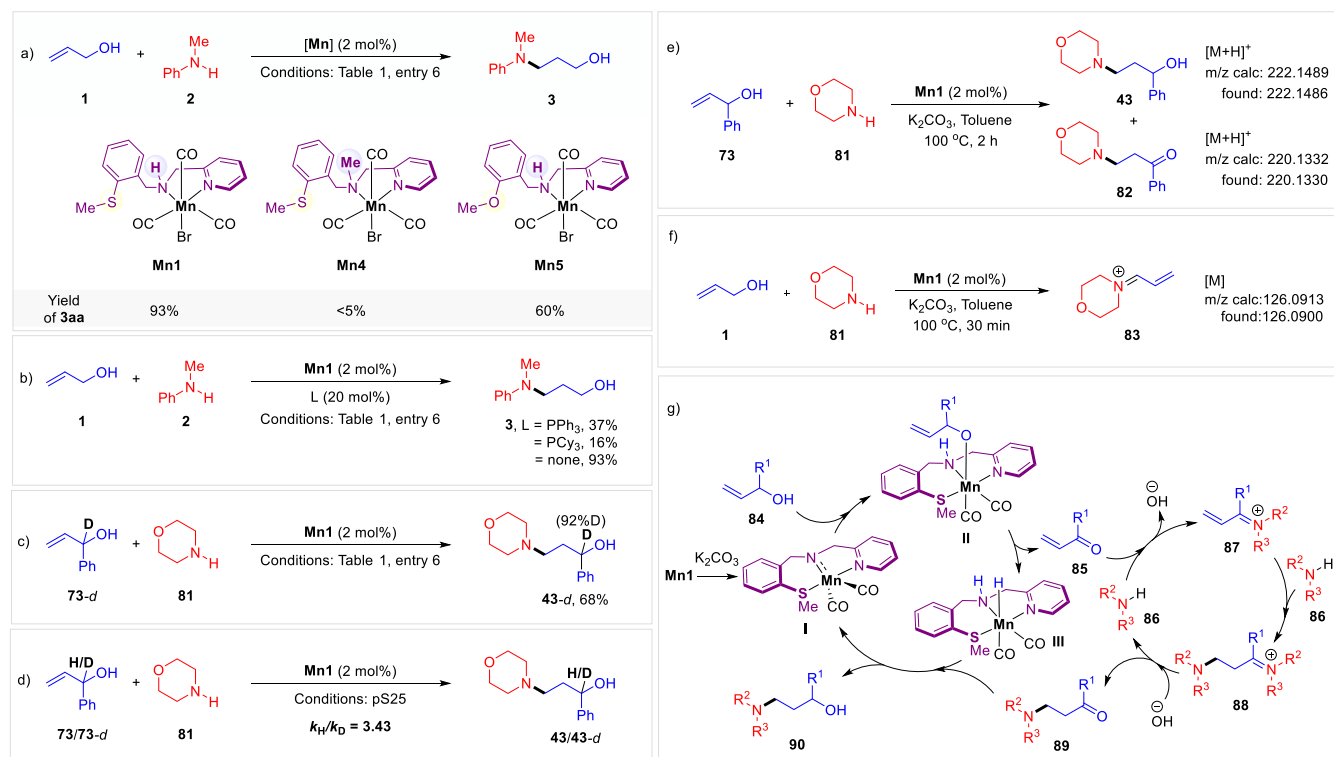
To further demonstrate the synthetic utility of the developed anti-Markovnikov hydroamination reaction, we have synthesized the amino alcohols **28** and **32**, which could be applied for the formal synthesis of antipsychotic drug trifluoperazine (**69**)²⁶ and antihypertensive drug urapidil (**72**),²⁷ respectively (Scheme 2d,e). Besides, the precursor **75** of the antidepressant drug fluoxetine (**77**)²⁸ could also be synthesized in excellent 95% yield (Scheme 2f). Additionally, to further showcase the synthetic utility of the developed protocol, we have performed the total synthesis of the tricyclic antidepressant desipramine **80** (Scheme 2g).²⁹ Thus, the precursor **22**, synthesized in 90% yield under the manganese catalysis, was converted to the chloro derivative **78** in 87% yield. Then, the treatment with iminodibenzyl, and debenzilation delivered the antidepressant

drug molecule desipramine **80** in 61% combined yields over two steps.

The working hypothesis for the formal anti-Markovnikov hydroamination reaction is outlined in Schemes 1d and 3. A set of mechanistic and kinetic experiments was then performed to probe BH catalysis and to delineate the salient feature in the ligand design (Scheme 3). It is anticipated from the concept of metal–ligand bifunctionality that the base-mediated dehydrobromination to ease the alcohol activation will be hampered by substituting the N–H proton by N–Me functionality.^{18f} Supportively, the use of the Mn(I) complex **Mn4**, having an N–Me group in the ligand backbone, as a catalyst resulted in a trace amount of product formation (Scheme 3a).

The beneficial role of the sulfur side-arm in catalyzing the reaction was then probed. We recently set forth the hemilabile coordination of the sulfur side-arm toward catalyzing the C–C bond formation^{18f} and transfer hydrogenation reactions.^{18g} Along this direction, when the catalysis was performed with **Mn5**, where the sulfur atom in the ligand backbone is replaced with a weakly polarizable oxygen atom, lacking hemilabile co-

Scheme 3. Mechanistic Studies: (a) Control Experiments to Probe Bifunctionality and Hemilability of the Ligand Framework, (b) Exogenous Ligand Effect, (c) Deuterium Labeling Studies, (d) Determination of the Kinetic Isotope Effect, (e) Probing the Formation of the β -Amino Ketone Intermediate, (f) Probing the Formation of Iminium-Ion Intermediate, and (g) Plausible Reaction Mechanism



ordination to the Mn(I) center, a lower yield of **3** was noticed (Scheme 3a). The inhibition by external strong field ligands, such as triphenylphosphine (37% yield of **3**) and tricyclohexylphosphine (16% yield of **3**), further supports the hemilabile co-ordination of the thiomethoxy side-arm (Scheme 3b).

The deuterium labeling experiment with α -deuterated allyl alcohol **73-*d*** in toluene resulted in 68% yield of the corresponding γ -amino alcohol **43-*d*** (Scheme 3c). The 92% deuterium incorporation at the α -position of the alcohol product indicates the occurrence of a BH cascade in which the deuteration takes place at the carbonyl carbon of the β -amino ketone intermediate by the Mn-D species formed by the dehydrogenation of **73-*d***. By measuring the yield of **43** at a different time interval, an initial rate ($k_H = 1.03 \times 10^{-3}$ M/min) for the reaction of **73** with **81** is determined (see the Supporting Information for details). The α -deuterated allyl alcohol **73-*d*** reacted slowly ($k_D = 3.00 \times 10^{-4}$ M/min). From the ratio, a primary kinetic isotope effect, KIE, $k_H/k_D = 3.43$ is obtained, suggesting that the alcohol dehydrogenation might be the rate-determining step (Scheme 3d). The formation of β -amino ketone intermediate **82** is also supported by the high-resolution mass spectrometry (HRMS) analysis of the crude reaction mixture where an m/z for $[82 + H]^+$ is noticed (Scheme 3e). Furthermore, the HRMS analysis of the reaction mixture of **1** and **81** indicated the formation of iminium ion **83**, thereby supporting its intermediacy in the reaction (Scheme 3f).

Based on the above-mentioned experimental findings and previous literature,^{13,14,18,20} a simplified plausible mechanism is depicted in Scheme 3g. The base-mediated dehydrobromination of **Mn1** generates the amido complex **I**,^{18f,g} which

activates allyl alcohol **84** to produce the intermediate **II**. The hemilabile sulfur arm then facilitates the alcohol dehydrogenation from **II** in a rate-limiting step, as supported by the KIE study, to liberate the hydride complex **III** and the α,β -unsaturated carbonyl compound **85**. The latter condensed with the amine **86**, generating an iminium-ion intermediate **87**, which can be detected *via* HRMS. The latter then undergoes an aza-Michael addition of another amine molecule. The hydrolysis of the formed intermediate **88** liberates the β -amino ketone **89**, which undergoes hydrogenation with **III** to afford the desired γ -amino alcohol **90** and closes the catalytic cycle.

In conclusion, we have demonstrated an efficient synthesis of γ -amino alcohols *via* the selective anti-Markovnikov hydroamination of allyl alcohols. The atom-economic reaction was catalyzed by a phosphine-free manganese(I) complex, and the reaction tolerates various functional groups and heterocyclic moieties. The derivatives of natural products such as linoleic acid, lithocholic acid, and citronellal, the drug molecules cytosine, ibuprofen, and naproxen, and commercial fragrant helional could be diversified in good to excellent yields. Besides, the reaction could also be performed on a gram scale. The precursors were applied for the formal synthesis of drug molecules trifluoperazine, urapidil, and fluoxetine and for the total synthesis of the antidepressant drug desipramine. The deuterium labeling and the kinetic studies provide evidence about the alcohol oxidation to be the rate-determining one. The mechanistic experiments revealed both M-L bifunctionality and the hemilability of the thiomethoxy side-arm to be the salient factors operating to the success of this waste-free hydrogen-transfer catalysis.

■ ASSOCIATED CONTENT

Supporting Information

The Supporting Information is available free of charge at <https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/acscatal.1c01199>.

Experimental procedures, analytical data, kinetic data, and NMR spectra of compounds and complexes (PDF)

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Author Contributions

All authors have given approval to the final version of the manuscript.

Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

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