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Authors: Dong-Jin Jang, Sukhyun Lee, Juyeol Lee, Dohyun Moon, and Young Ho Rhee

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## Palladium-Catalyzed Asymmetric Decarboxylative Addition of $\beta$ -Keto Acids to Heteroatom-substituted Allenes

Dong-Jin Jang, <sup>[a]<sup>†</sup></sup> Sukhyun Lee, <sup>[a]<sup>†</sup></sup> Juyeol Lee, <sup>[a]</sup> Dohyun Moon<sup>[b]</sup> and Young Ho Rhee<sup>\*[a]</sup>

[a] D.-J. Jang, S. Lee, J. Lee, Prof. Y. H. Rhee Department of Chemistry Pohang University of Science and Technology Cheongam-ro 77, Nam-gu, Pohang, Gyeongbuk 37673, Republic of Korea E-mail: <u>yhrhee@postech.ac.kr</u> <sup>†</sup>These authors contributed equally to the manuscript
[b] Dr. D. Moon Beamline Department Pohang Accelerator Laboratory 80 Jigokro-127-beongil, Nam-gu, Pohang, Gyeongbuk 37673, Republic of Korea

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**Abstract:** Pd-catalyzed asymmetric addition reaction of  $\beta$ -keto acids to heteroatom-substituted allene is reported. This reaction generates  $\beta$ -substituted ketones in an asymmetric manner by way of a branch-selective decarboxylative allylation pathway. The reaction accommodates various alkoxyallenes as well as amidoallenes.

Over the last decades, metal-catalyzed asymmetric allylic alkylation (AAA) has become one of the most powerful carboncarbon bond forming reactions.<sup>[1]</sup> Traditionally, the reaction accomodates structurally diverse soft carbon nucleophiles. In recent years, however, some examples of unactivated carbonyl compounds have been reported. Decarboxylative allylation reaction has emerged as a new and highly useful variant of the AAA reaction utilizing carbonyl groups as nucleophiles.<sup>[2,3]</sup> In general, this method employs allylic  $\beta$ -keto esters<sup>[4]</sup> or enol allyl carbonates<sup>[5]</sup> as the substrates, which needs to be prepared in separate steps prior to the desired reaction (Scheme 1). In this regard, a more direct protocol would be to initiate the reaction with the addition of  $\beta$ -keto acid to allene precursors. Moreover, the use of substituted allene offers potential to introduce a stereogenic center via branch-selecive C-C bond formation. Despite intriguing features of this method discussed above, development of an asymmetric reaction is limited, particularly with carbon-substituted allenes.<sup>[6,7]</sup> This is presumably due to the complicated kinetic behavior of m-allyl complexes associated with the generation and utilization of the allylic  $\beta$ -keto ester intermediates.

Since the seminal work of Trost, numerous asymmetric Pdcatalyzed hydrofunctionalization reactions of alkoxyallene have been developed.<sup>[8,9]</sup> Within this context, we reported asymmetric addition reaction of heteroatom nucleophiles to alkoxyallene, which emerged as a unique *de novo* glycosylation method.<sup>[10]</sup> Here, we disclose an unprecedented Pd-catalyzed asymmetric decarboxylative addition reaction of  $\beta$ -keto acid to hetereoatomsubstituted allenes such as alkoxy- and amido-allenes.<sup>[11-13]</sup> The latter is noteworthy because asymmetric hydrofunctionalization of amidoallene is rare. Extensive mechanistic studies established the initial hydrocarboxylation as the key event (Scheme 1), which facilitates the subsequent asymmetric decarboxylative allylation. From a synthetic viewpoint, the proposed reaction produces highly functionalized  $\gamma$ , $\delta$ - unsaturated ketones possessing stereogenic heteroatom substituents at the  $\beta$ -position.

- Metal-catalyzed decarboxylative allylic alkylation







$$R^{\text{I}} \xrightarrow{I}_{OH} + \stackrel{*}{\longrightarrow} = \xrightarrow{Pq}_{\text{chiral } L^{*}} \left[ \begin{array}{c} I \\ R \xrightarrow{I}_{O} \\ highly labile \end{array} \right] \xrightarrow{r}_{R} \xrightarrow{I}_{V} + \stackrel{*}{\longrightarrow}$$

significance:

i) asymmetric addition reaction of unactivated ketone to heteroatom-substituted allenes
 ii) first asymmetric branch-selective hydrofunctionalization of amidoallene

- precedents: asymmetric hydrofunctionalization of alkoxyallene

$$\stackrel{\text{RO}}{\longleftarrow} + H - \text{Nu} \xrightarrow{\text{Pd}}_{\text{chiral } L^*} \stackrel{\text{Pd}}{\longrightarrow} \left| \begin{array}{c} & & \\$$

Scheme 1. Basic concept of the research

In a preliminary reaction using  $\beta$ -keto acid 1 and allene 2a at -15°C in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> along with Pd<sub>2</sub>(dba)<sub>3</sub> (2.5 mol%), standard Trosttype ligand L<sub>1</sub> (5 mol%) and triethylamine (3 eq), the desired product 3a was obtained in low 34% yield but with significant 53% ee (entry 1, Table 1). Switching the ligand to L<sub>2</sub> improved the yield of 3a to 61% with 91% ee (entry 2). Further increase of the yield (91%) and ee (97%) arose when L<sub>3</sub> was employed (entry 3). Employing more polar solvents such as THF and acetonitrile as well as using benzyloxyallene 2b dropped the conversion with slight decrease of ee (entries 4-6). <sup>[14]</sup> Notably, no linear isomer was observed, as with the other hydrofunctionalization of alkoxyallenes.

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#### Table 1. Optimization of the reaction of alkoxyallene



entry	ligand	allene	solvent	Yield <sup>[a]</sup> (%)	ee <sup>[b]</sup> (%)
1	L1	2a	$CH_2CI_2$	34	53
2	L <sub>2</sub>	2a	$CH_2CI_2$	61	91
3	L <sub>3</sub>	2a	$CH_2CI_2$	91	97
4	L <sub>3</sub>	2a	THF	55	89
5	L <sub>3</sub>	2a	CH₃CN	37	74
6	L <sub>3</sub>	2b	$CH_2CI_2$	42	87

<sup>[a]</sup> Isolated yield. <sup>[b]</sup> Determined by HPLC analysis

With the optimized condition described (entry 3, Table 1) in hand, we explored the scope of this reaction. Varying the *para*-substituents of the phenyl ring provided the products **4** and **5** in comparable yield and ee to that of **3a**. In addition,  $\beta$ -keto acids containing bulkier naphthyl and heterocyclic thiophenyl group were well accommodated into the reaction, as demonstrated by the high yield and ee of **6** and **7** (Scheme 2).



 $^{[a]}$  Method A: acid (1 eq), allene (1 eq), Pd<sub>2</sub>(dba)<sub>3</sub> (2.5 mol%), ligand L<sub>3</sub> (5 mol%) and Et<sub>3</sub>N (3 eq) was reacted in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>(0.1M)

Scheme 2. Scope of nucleophiles with alkoxyallene 2a

Encouraged by this promising result with the alkoxyallene, we then decided to explore oxazolidinone-allene **8**. After further modification, the reaction of **8** (1 eq), acid **1** (1 eq), Pd<sub>2</sub>(dba)<sub>3</sub> (2.5 mol%) and ligand **L**<sub>2</sub> (5 mol%) in THF generated the desired product **9** in 95% yield and 87% ee with no formation of the linear isomer (Scheme 3). Interestingly, addition of 5 mol% trifluoroacetic acid slightly improved the ee to 93%. Under this new condition, a number of  $\beta$ -keto acids bearing aryl groups worked well to provide the corresponding  $\beta$ -amido-arylketones **10~15** in high yield and ee. In addition,  $\beta$ -amido-alkylketone **16** was also obtained in significant 86% yield and 89% ee. <sup>[14]</sup> The absolute configuration of **14** verified by the X-ray crystallographic analysis (CCDC deposition No. 2084084) proved consistent with  $\beta$ -alkoxyketone **3a** (For the detailed analysis, see the SI). Meanwhile, the reaction of acylic

amidoallene **17** was slower than **8**. Full conversion required higher loading of  $Pd_2(dba)_3$  (5 mol%) and the use of excess  $\beta$ -keto acids (2 eq). Nevertheless, the corresponding  $\beta$ -amido-ketones **18~22** were obtained in high yield and enantioselectivity.<sup>[15]</sup> Interestingly, small amount linear isomer was obtained, presumably due to the increased steric effect of the amide substituents on **17**.



 18 (73%, b:l = 5:1
 19: X = OMe (64%, b:l = 20:1, 95% ee)
 21: X = OMe (67%, b:l = 12:1, 94% ee)

 93% ee)
 20: X = Me (65%, b:l = 21:1, 95% ee)
 22: X = Br (66%, b:l = 4:1, 95% ee)

 $^{[a]}$  Method B: acid (1 eq), allene (1 eq), Pd<sub>2</sub>(dba)<sub>3</sub> (2.5 mol%), ligand L<sub>2</sub> (5 mol%) and CF<sub>3</sub>CO<sub>2</sub>H (5 mol%) was reacted in THF(0.1M) at -15°C for 3-24h/ Method C: acid (2 eq), allene (1 eq), Pd<sub>2</sub>(dba)<sub>3</sub> (5 mol%), ligand L<sub>2</sub> (10 mol%) and Et<sub>3</sub>N (0.1 eq) was reacted in toluene(0.2M) at -15°C for 18 h  $^{[b]}$  CF<sub>3</sub>CO<sub>2</sub>H was not used

Scheme 3. Reaction of the amidoallenes 8 and 17

Next, we tested malonic acid monoester to further broaden the scope of the reaction (Scheme 4). Initial attempts to use tertbutyl ester 23 with alkoxyallene 2a failed to provide the desired  $\beta$ -alkoxy ester 24. Notably, switching to phenyl ester 25 produced 26 in significant 72% yield and 91% ee. Also, an analogous reaction of 25 and 8 performed with ligand L<sub>4</sub> at 40°C in THF furnished  $\beta$ -amido ester **27** in 92% vield and 87% ee with ~14:1 branch selectivity. Thus, the proposed reaction could be used in preparation of new functionalized *β*-amino acid derivatives. [16] We also tested ene-alkoxyallenes 28 and 30 to explore the synthesis of cyclic ethers. The reaction of allene 28 with 1 under the method A followed by the ring-closingmetathesis reaction using 2<sup>nd</sup>-generation Hoveyda-Grubbs catalyst (10 mol%) provided enantioenriched dihydrofuran 29 in 58% yield (over two steps) and 93% ee. Analogously, dihydropyran 31 was prepared in 62% yield and 93% ee from 30. Based upon these results, the current method may find further use in the total synthesis of various bioactive C-glycoside natural products.<sup>[17]</sup>

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Scheme 4. Synthetic applications

From a mechanistic viewpoint, the initial hydrocarboxylation seems crucial for the desired transformation.[18] This is highlighted by the competition reaction of methyl ester 32 with amidoallene 8. Under the method B, 32 showed no reactivity towards formation of 33 (Scheme 5), which strongly suggests that the ion pair 34 could not be formed. We also conducted <sup>1</sup>H NMR monitoring studies for the reaction of 1 and 2a. In this case, only 37 was observed with no detection of adduct 35 nor 36. Interestingly, the reaction of tert-butyl ester 23 and 2a described scheme 4 showed formation of analogous adducts 38 and 39. We further tested the addition of benzoic acid to allene 2a to determine the regioselectivity of the initial hydrocarboxylation step. Under the method A, this reaction quickly generated unstable branch adduct 40 as the major regioisomer, which migrated to the more stable 41.<sup>[19]</sup> Based upon these results, it is reasonable to assume that branch adduct such as 35 is formed as the kinetic product in the proposed reaction. To gain further insight into the C-C bond formation, we tested (E)-36, which could be readily prepared by alternative route (For the details, see the supporting information). This experiment generated 3a in 30% yield and 63% ee. Interestingly, (Z)-36 provided the same enantiomer 3a in comparable yield and ee. This enantioconvergent result reasonably excludes a potentially competing concerted migration pathway from 36.[20] Furthermore, it confirms that the rapid equilibration of kinetically formed  $\pi$ -allyl intermediates generated from 36 precedes the C-C bond formation.<sup>[19]</sup> This hypothesis is further supported by the reaction of 41 with 1, which again exhibited comparable yield and ee. Interestingly, ee of 3a from (E)-36 could be improved by the use of additional amount of 1. Moreover, crossover experiment using 37 as the exogeneous nucleophile generated a mixture of the product 3a and 4 possessing the identical absolute stereochemistry as that from the reaction of alkoxyallene depicted in Scheme 2.

Based upon the experimental results and a related working model,<sup>[21]</sup> a plausible mechanism is proposed (Scheme 6). Pd-H species (generated by the oxidative addition of Pd(0) into carboxylic acids) adds to the allene to form thermodynamically favorable syn- $\pi$  allyl complex A, which is in rapid equilibrium with the adduct B. The subsequent intramolecular C-C bond formation via enol Pd-carboxylate complex C is likely to be the enantio-determining (and rate-determining) event, which generates D by way of inner-sphere mechanism. This picture is consistent with a related study<sup>[22]</sup> and our own report.<sup>[10d,23]</sup>

product. Finally, maintaining a tight ion pair between the Pd complex and carboxylate counteranion ( $A^-$  in Scheme 6) is crucial in achieving high enantioselection.



Scheme 5. Mechanistic studies

In summary, we developed a Pd-catalyzed asymmetric decarboxylative addition of  $\beta$ -keto acids to alkoxy- and amidoallenes, which enabled hydrocarboxylation-induced decarboxylative allylation. This reaction significantly broadens the scope of asymmetric hydrofunctionalization of heteroatom-substituted allenes. Currently, we are working on expanding the scope of the reaction as well as applying this method into the total synthesis of complex bioactive natural products.

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Scheme 6. Proposed catalytic cycle

## **Keywords:** Allene • Addition • Palladium • Catalysis • Decarboxylation

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### **Entry for the Table of Contents**

Pd chiral L -CO2 X = OR (alkoxyallene) 22 examples A = aryl, akyl, -OPh X = NRZ (amidoallene) 63 ~ 95% yield, 87 ~ 97% ee

We report here an asymmetric decarboxylative allylation reaction initiated by the hydrocarboxylation reaction of heteroatomsubstituted allene. The reaction works particularly well with heteroatom-substituted allenes such as alkoxyallenes and amidoallenes. A number of aryl and alkyl  $\beta$ -keto acids as well as malonic acid mono-phenyl ester participates in the reaction to generate  $\gamma$ , $\delta$ unsaturated carbonyl compounds possessing stereogenic heteroatom substituents at the  $\beta$ -position.

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