

## Synthesis of Monodentate Chiral Spiro Phosphonites and the Electronic Effect of Ligand in Asymmetric Hydrogenation

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**Abstract:** New monodentate chiral phosphonites were synthesized from enantiomerically pure 1,1'-spirobiindane-7,7'-diol. The phosphonites **2** were efficient ligands for the Rh-catalyzed asymmetric hydrogenation of  $\alpha$ - and  $\beta$ -dehydroamino acid derivatives, providing the amino acids in high enantioselectivities. The study of electronic effect showed that the electron-withdrawing substitutent on the *P*-phenyl ring of the phosphonite ligand dramatically decreased both the reactivity and enantioselectivity of the ligand.

The design and synthesis of new chiral ligands is the key to developing highly efficient enantioselective transition-metal-catalyzed reactions. In the past three decades, a tremendous amount of chelating diphosphane ligands have been prepared and applied in asymmetric hydrogenation with excellent enantioselectivities.<sup>1</sup> In contrast, the development of monodentate chiral phosphorus ligands for asymmetric hydrogenation has not attracted much attention, although the earliest chiral ligands used by Knowles and Horner were monophosphines.<sup>2</sup> Recently, the potential of chiral monodentate phosphorus ligands was rediscovered,<sup>3</sup> and several efficient chiral monophosphorus phorus compounds, such as phospholane,<sup>4</sup> phosphonites,<sup>5</sup> phosphites,<sup>6</sup> and phosphoamidites,<sup>7</sup> were successfully

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FIGURE 1. Chiral spiro monophosphorus ligands.

applied in asymmetric hydrogenation of functionalized olefins with good to excellent enantioselectivities. We demonstrated that the chiral spiro phosphoramidite (SIPHOS, 1) derived from 1,1'-spirobiindane-7,7'-diol was highly enantioselective for Rh-catalyzed asymmetric hydrogenation of  $\alpha$ -dehydroamino acid derivatives and  $\alpha$ -arylenamides (Figure 1).<sup>8</sup>

In the design of a chiral ligand applied in asymmetric catalyzed reaction, most considerations are based on the steric effect.<sup>1c</sup> By contrast, the electronic effect of ligands has been less explored.<sup>9</sup> In the optimization of SIPHOS ligands for Rh-catalyzed hydrogenation, we found that the ligand with smaller N-alkyl groups provided a higher enantioselectivity.<sup>8b,10</sup> However, when the substituents possessing different electronic properties were introduced into the rings of the spirobiindane backbone of SIPHOS ligands, only a weak electronic effect was observed in the Rh-catalyzed hydrogenations.<sup>11</sup> The weakness of the electronic effect might be attributed to the fact that the rings of spirobiindane in SIPHOS ligands are not directly connected to the *P*-atom and the electronic property of the substituents could not be efficiently transferred to the P-atom. To study the real electronic effect of monodentate phosphorus ligand in asymmetric hydrogenation, we herein describe the synthesis of chiral spiro phosphonite ligands 2 and the investigation on their behaviors in the enantioselective Rh-catalyzed hydrogenations of  $\alpha$ - and  $\beta$ -dehydroamino acid derivatives.

The phosphonites **2** were easily prepared by the reaction of optically pure 1,1'-spirobiindane-7,7'-diol and the corresponding dichloroarylphosphine (ArPCl<sub>2</sub>) in the presence of Et<sub>3</sub>N (Scheme 1) at room temperature in 56–81% yields. To minimize the influence of steric hindrance, the substituents were introduced into the para position of the *P*-phenyl group.

The Rh-catalyzed hydrogenation of methyl (Z)-2-acetaminocinnamate, which is a standard reaction to test

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SCHEME 1.



TABLE 1. Asymmetric Hydrogenation of Methyl

(Z)-2-Acetamidocinnamate Using Rh/(S)-2 Catalysts<sup>a</sup>

CO<sub>2</sub>Me CO<sub>2</sub>Me 1 mol% Rh complex Ρń 10 bar H<sub>2</sub>, r.t. Ρh NHAc NHAc solvent time<sup>b</sup> (h)  $ee^{c}$  (%) ligand (S)-2a MeOH 744  $\mathbf{2}$ (S)-2a  $CH_2Cl_2$ 91 (S)-2a 4 acetone 81 (S)-2a THF 3 95  $\mathbf{2}$ (S)-2a EtOAc 96 3 (S)-2a 98 toluene 3 97 (S)-2b toluene  $\mathbf{2}$ 99 (S)-2ctoluene 10 (S)-2d toluene 93 (S)-2e toluene 2482 (S)-1toluene 4 97

<sup>a</sup> Rh(COD)<sub>2</sub>BF<sub>4</sub>/**2**/substrate = 1:2:100. <sup>b</sup> Time for 100% conversion. Quantitative yields were obtained in all reactions. <sup>c</sup> Determined by chiral GC using a Varian Chiralsil-L-Val column. The absolute configurations of product were S.

the efficiency of new phosphorus ligands, was chosen to study the electronic effect in ligands 2. The reaction was carried out in different solvents, and the toluene was found to be the best choice. In toluene, the hydrogenation product was obtained in quantitative yield and 98% ee by using ligand **2a** under 10 bar H<sub>2</sub> at room temperature for 3 h (Table 1). This result is slightly better than that obtained by using phosphoramidite ligand SIPHOS (97% ee in 4 h). The spiro phosphonite ligands with different substituents were compared in toluene. The ligand 2c bearing an electron-donating *p*-methoxy group was found to have slightly higher reactivity and enantioselectivity than its parent ligand **2a**, producing the hydrogenation product in 99% ee. However, the ligands 2d and 2e, which contained electron-withdrawing substituents on the P-phenyl group, had much lower reactivities and enantioselectivities.

Using ligand **2c**, a variety of  $\alpha$ -dehydroamino acid derivatives were hydrogenated in quantitative yield with excellent enantioselectivities (97-99% ee). The electronic and steric nature of a substituent on the phenyl ring of substrate had little influence on the enantioselectivity of the reaction (Table 2).

Catalytic asymmetric hydrogenation of  $\beta$ -(acylamino)acrylate derivatives provides a convenient method for the synthesis of  $\beta$ -amino acid derivatives and has attracted much attention. Among the ligands used in the Rhcatalyzed hydrogenation of  $\beta$ -(acylamino)acrylate derivatives, the diphosphines have been most effective.<sup>12</sup> Recently, monophosphoramidites were also successfully employed in the Rh-catalyzed asymmetric hydrogenation of  $\beta$ -(acylamino) acrylates, giving excellent enantioselec-

## TABLE 2. Hydrogenation of α-Dehydroamino Acid Derivatives with Ligand (S)-2c<sup>a</sup>

Ar NHAc	1 mol% Rh/(S)- <b>2c</b> 10 bar H <sub>2</sub> Toluene, r.t.	Ar NHAc	
substrate (Ar)	$\mathrm{e}\mathrm{e}^{b}\left(\% ight)$	config	
$\begin{array}{c} C_{6}H_{5} \\ 4-MeC_{6}H_{4} \\ 4-MeC_{6}H_{4} \\ 2-ClC_{6}H_{4} \\ 3-ClC_{6}H_{4} \\ 4-ClC_{6}H_{4} \\ 2-NO_{2}C_{6}H_{4} \\ 3-NO_{2}C_{6}H_{4} \\ 4-NO_{2}C_{6}H_{4} \end{array}$	99 99 98 99 99 98 97 99 99 98	S S S S S S S S	

<sup>a</sup> Rh(COD)<sub>2</sub>BF<sub>4</sub>/(S)-2c/substrate = 1:2:100, 6 h, 100% conversions and quantitative yields were obtained in all reactions. <sup>b</sup> Determined by chiral GC using Varian Chiralsil-L-Val column or by chiral HPLC using a Chiralcel OJ or OD column.

tivities.<sup>10</sup> However, for most of these catalytic systems, high enantioselectivity can only be obtained when pure Z- or E-isomers of  $\beta$ -(acylamino)acrylate substrates are used in the hydrogenation. Very few catalysts have been reported to be efficient for the hydrogenation of Z/Emixtures of  $\beta$ -(acylamino)acrylates.<sup>12a,13</sup> Since the  $\beta$ -(acylamino) acrylates are normally formed as a mixture of Zand E-isomers, the development of a new efficient catalyst that can hydrogenate the mixture of two isomers is significantly important.

The hydrogenation of methyl (Z/E)- $\beta$ -(acetamino)cinnamate (Z/E = 88:12) was used to optimize reaction conditions. Screening of solvents showed that the CH<sub>2</sub>-Cl<sub>2</sub> was the suitable solvent for obtaining high enantioselectivity. The comparison of ligand was performed in  $CH_2Cl_2$  under 100 bar  $H_2$  at room temperature. The results are summarized in Table 3. The reactivities of ligands 2a and 2b were similar to those of ligand SIPHOS, while their enantioselectivities (92% ee) were higher than that of ligand SIPHOS (90% ee). By introducing an electron-donating *p*-methoxy group, ligand **2c** slightly increased the enantioselectivity to 93% ee. But ligands 2d and 2e, with electron-withdrawing groups, gave incomplete reactions and much lower enantioselectivities.

Different (Z/E)- $\beta$ -aryl- $\beta$ -(acetamino)acrylates (Z/E = 98): 2-50:50) were hydrogenated by the rhodium complex of 2c (Table 3). The electronic property of a substituent also has a significant influence on the reaction rate and enantioselectivity. The substrates with an electron-

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TABLE 3. Hydrogenation of Methyl  $\beta$ -Aryl- $\beta$ -(acetamino)acrylates<sup>a</sup>

NHAc		1 mol% Rh complex		NHAc	
Ar	∽CO₂Me ¯	100 bar H <sub>2</sub>		Ar CH <sub>2</sub> CO <sub>2</sub> Me	
$CH_2CI_2, r.t.$					
		<i>(</i> <b>)</b> )		1 ( 00 )	( ~ )
ligand	substrate (Ar)		time (h)	$\operatorname{conv}^{o}(\%)$	$ee^{c}$ (%)
(S)-1	$\mathbf{Ph}$		40	100	90
(S)-2a	Ph		40	100	92
(S)-2b	Ph		40	100	92
(S)-2c	Ph		40	100	93
(S)-2d	$\mathbf{Ph}$		48	70	87
(S)-2e	$\mathbf{Ph}$		48	30	40
(S)-2c	$4-CH_3P$	n	36	100	94
(S)-2c	$2-CH_3O$	Ph	36	100	95
(S)-2c	$4-CH_3O$	Ph	36	100	98
(S)-2c	4-ClPh		48	100	90
(S)-2c	3-BrPh		48	100	85
(S)-2c	4-BrPh		48	100	91

<sup>*a*</sup> Rh(COD)<sub>2</sub>BF<sub>4</sub>/ligand/substrate = 1:2:100. <sup>*b*</sup> Determined by GC. Quantitative yields were obtained unless mentioned otherwise. <sup>*c*</sup> Determined by chiral GC using a Varian Chiralsil-L-Val column or chiral HPLC using a Chiralcel OD-H column. The absolute configurations were R.

donating substituent afforded faster reaction and higher enantioselectivity. The highest enantioselectivity (98% ee) was achieved in the hydrogenation of methyl  $\beta$ -(4-methoxyphenyl)- $\beta$ -(acetamino)acrylate. However, the substrates with electron-withdrawing substituents had lower reaction rates and enantioselectivities. Methyl  $\beta$ -(2-boromophenyl)- $\beta$ -(acetamino)acrylate cannot be hydrogenated at the same conditions.

In conclusion, we have developed novel chiral monodentate phosphonite ligands with spirobiindane as a backbone, which are highly effective for the Rh-catalyzed asymmetric hydrogenations of  $\alpha$ - and  $\beta$ -dehydroamino acid derivatives. The enantioselectivities achieved in hydrogenation of (Z/E)- $\beta$ -aryl- $\beta$ -(acetamino)acrylates represent the highest level of enantiocontrol in the hydrogenation of Z/E mixtures of  $\beta$ -dehydroamino acid derivatives by using monophosphorus ligands. We also demonstrated that the electron-donating substituents on the *P*-phenyl ring of phosphonite ligands **2** have a limited influence on the enantioselectivity of ligand, while the electron-withdrawing substituents resulted in a significant decrease in both reactivity and enantioselectivity of ligand. To probe whether this detrimental effect was caused by the electronic effect of ligand on the catalyst or by the less efficiency of electron-poor ligand in the coordination, we compared the coordinative behavior of ligands 2a, 2c and 2e to rhodium. The coordinations of all these three ligands to rhodium were complete in 5 min at the reaction conditions,<sup>14</sup> which indicated that the lower reaction rates and enantioselectivities of ligands with electron-withdrawing substituents were mainly attributed to the electronic effect of ligand on the catalyst.

## **Experimental Section**

General Methods. All reactions and manipulations were performed in an argon atmosphere using standard Schlenk techniques. Anhydrous toluene and THF were distilled from sodium benzophenone ketyl. Anhydrous EtOAc, acetone, and CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> were distilled from calcium hydride. Anhydrous MeOH was distilled from magnesium. SPINOL,<sup>15</sup>  $\alpha$ -dehydroamino esters,<sup>16</sup> and  $\beta$ -dehydroamino esters<sup>17</sup> were prepared by reported methods.

General Procedure for Synthesis of Spiro Phosphonite Ligands. To a stirred solution of (S)-SPINOL (250 mg, 1.0 mmol) and  $Et_3N$  (0.5 mL) in 5 mL of THF was added  $ArPCl_2$  (1.2 mmol) slowly at room temperature. The reaction mixture was stirred at rt for 1 h, and the product was purified by flash chromatography on a silica gel column using petroleum/EtOAc as eluent.

(S)-O,O'-[7,7'-(1,1'-Spirobiindan)]phenylphosphonite (2a): oil; 77% yield;  $[\alpha]^{20}_{\rm D} = -132$  (c 0.5, CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>); <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  1.98–2.12 (m, 2H), 2.21–3.33 (m, 2H), 2.84–2.92 (m, 2H), 3.01–3.16 (m, 2H), 5.76 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 6.68 (t, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 6.91 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 7.00 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 7.10 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 7.23–7.32 (m, 5H), 7.38–7.42 (m, 1H); <sup>31</sup>P NMR (121 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  154.11; <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  30.8, 31.2, 37.6, 38.2, 38.8, 59.2, 114.5, 117.9, 120.8, 121.0, 121.7, 122.2, 127.4, 128.6, 128.7, 129.1, 130.9, 131.2, 135.0, 140.8, 142.1, 142.6, 145.1, 145.7; IR (KBr) 2950, 2848, 1609, 1584, 1464, 1435, 1323, 1233, 1221, 1162, 1131, 1102, 1063, 1014, 992, 953, 922 cm<sup>-1</sup>; HRMS (EI) for C<sub>22</sub>H<sub>19</sub>O<sub>2</sub>P calcd 358.1122, found 358.1114.

(S)-O,O'-[7,7'-(1,1'-Spirobiindan)]-4-methylphenylphosphonite (2b): oil; 81% yield;  $[\alpha]^{20}_{\rm D} = -120$  (c 0.5, CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>); <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  1.98–2.16 (m, 2H), 2.22–3.34 (m, 5H), 2.84–2.92 (m, 2H), 3.01–3.18 (m, 2H), 5.80 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 6.68–6.74 (m, 2H), 6.88–7.26 (m, 7H); <sup>31</sup>P NMR (121 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  156.2; <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  30.8, 31.2, 38.2, 38.8, 59.3, 120.9, 121.8, 122.1, 127.4, 127.9, 128.0, 129.2, 130.8, 131.1, 131.7, 137.8, 138.2, 140.8, 142.6, 145.1, 145.7, 145.9, 149.; IR (KBr) 2950, 2849, 1584, 1464, 1233, 1221, 1162, 1102, 1014, 992, 922 cm<sup>-1</sup>; HRMS (FAB) for C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>21</sub>O<sub>2</sub>P + H<sup>+</sup> calcd 373.1352, found 373.1352.

(S)-O,O'-[7,7'-(1,1'-Spirobiindan)]-4-methoxyphenylphosphonite (2c): oil; 77% yield;  $[\alpha]^{20}_{D} = -160$  (c 0.5, CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>); <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  1.98–2.12 (m, 2H), 2.20–3.32 (m, 2H), 2.83–2.91 (m, 2H), 3.01–3.16 (m, 2H), 2.80 (s, 3H), 5.79 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 6.70–6.79 (m, 3H), 6.91–7.00 (m, 2H), 7.08–7.27 (m, 4H); <sup>31</sup>P NMR (121 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  155.48; <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  30.8, 31.3, 38.2, 38.9, 55.4, 59.3, 113.4, 120.8, 121.3, 121.7, 122.3, 127.5, 129.2, 129.4, 129.8, 132.7, 133.1, 140.9, 142.6, 145.1, 145.7, 145.9, 150.1, 162.5; IR (KBr) 2949, 2844, 1594, 1500, 1464, 1293, 1253, 1222, 1179, 1162, 1132, 1105, 1014, 991, 921 cm<sup>-1</sup>; HRMS (FAB) for C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>21</sub>O<sub>3</sub>P + H<sup>+</sup> calcd 389.1301, found 389.1301.

(S)-O,O'-[7,7'-(1,1'-spirobiindan)]-4-chlorophenylphosphonite (2d): oil; 76% yield;  $[\alpha]^{20}_{\rm D} = -120$  (*c* 0.5, CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>); <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  1.98–2.14 (m, 2H), 2.21–3.33 (m, 2H), 2.84–2.92 (m, 2H), 3.02–3.18 (m, 2H), 5.78 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 6.74 (t, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 6.93 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 6.99 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 7.11 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 7.18–7.28 (m, 5H); <sup>31</sup>P NMR (121 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  151.2; <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  30.8, 31.2, 38.2, 38.9, 59.3, 114.5, 117.9, 120.9, 121.1, 122.0, 127.6, 128.3, 129.1, 132.2, 132.6, 136.3, 136.7, 138.0, 140.7, 142.5, 145.8, 149.6; IR (KBr) 2948, 2846, 1918, 1609, 1581, 1464, 1386, 1319, 1300, 1233, 1221, 1161, 1132, 1086, 1012, 991, 952, 921 cm<sup>-1</sup>; HRMS (EI) for C<sub>23</sub>H<sub>18</sub>ClO<sub>2</sub>P, calcd 392.0733, found 392.0737.

(S)-O,O'-[7,7'-(1,1'-Spirobiindan)]-4-trifluoromethylphenylphosphonite (2e): oil; 56% yield;  $[\alpha]^{20}_{D} = -108 (c \ 0.5, CH_2-Cl_2)$ ; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  1.98–2.12 (m, 2H), 2.21– 3.34 (m, 2H), 2.84–2.93 (m, 2H), 3.04–3.18 (m, 2H), 5.74 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 6.69 (t, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 6.92 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 7.00 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 7.13 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 7.25–7.29 (m, 1H),

<sup>(14) &</sup>lt;sup>31</sup>P NMR: [Rh(**2a**)(COD)]BF<sub>4</sub>  $\delta$  140.7 (d,  $J_{\text{Rh-P}}$  = 208.8 Hz); [Rh(**2c**)(COD)BF<sub>4</sub>]  $\delta$  141.0 (d,  $J_{\text{Rh-P}}$  = 197.1 Hz); Rh(**2e**)(COD)BF<sub>4</sub>]  $\delta$  137.7 (d,  $J_{\text{Rh-P}}$  = 210.9 Hz).

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7.40–7.45 (m, 2H), 7.53 (d,  $J=8~{\rm Hz},$  2H);  $^{31}{\rm P}$  NMR (121 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  149.2;  $^{13}{\rm C}$  NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  30.6, 31.0, 38.0, 38.7, 59.1, 114.3, 117.7, 120.5, 121.0, 121.5, 121.9, 124.5, 127.4, 129.1, 130.9, 140.4, 141.9, 142.3, 131.3, 145.1, 145.4, 145.6, 149.1; IR (KBr) 2957, 2921, 2848, 1925, 1610, 1584, 1465, 1397, 1325, 1235, 1220, 1163, 1130, 1119, 1060, 1014, 991, 953, 921 cm^{-1}; HRMS (EI) for  ${\rm C}_{24}{\rm H}_{18}{\rm F}_{3}{\rm O}_{2}{\rm P}$  calcd 426.0996, found 426.0995.

General Procedure for Catalytic Asymmetric Hydrogenation of  $\alpha$ -Dehydroamino Esters. A reaction tube equipped with a stirring bar, in which 5  $\mu$ mol of Rh(COD)<sub>2</sub>BF<sub>4</sub>, 11  $\mu$ mol of ligand, and 0.5 mmol of  $\alpha$ -dehydroamino ester were added under an inert atmosphere, was put into an autoclave. After 5 mL of toluene was added, the inert atmosphere was replaced by 10 hydrogen/release cycles and the reaction mixture was left stirring under 10 bar H<sub>2</sub> pressure at room temperature for a proper time. The resulting mixture was filtered through a short silica column and submitted to analysis for conversion and ee values.

(S)-Methyl 2-acetamido-3-phenylpropionate: 99% ee, chiral GC Varian Chirasil-L-Val column, 25 m × 0.25 mm × 0.25  $\mu$ m; N<sub>2</sub>, 1.8 mL/min, 90 °C then 4 °C/min to 160 °C,  $t_R = 17.54$  min,  $t_S = 18.40$  min.

(S)-Methyl 2-acetamido-3-(4-methylphenyl)propionate: 99% ee, chiral HPLC Chiralcel OJ column, 25 cm, 'PrOH/Hex = 10:90, 1.0 mL/min,  $t_R = 9.33$  min,  $t_S = 15.34$  min.

(S)-Methyl 2-acetamido-3-(4-methoxyphenyl)propionate: 98% ee, HPLC Chiralcel OJ column, 25 cm, 'PrOH/Hex = 10: 90, 1.0 mL/min,  $t_R = 6.42$  min,  $t_S = 11.43$  min.

(S)-Methyl 2-acetamido-3-(2-chlorophenyl)propionate: 99% ee, chiral HPLC Chiralcel OJ column, 25 cm, PrOH/Hex = 10:90, 1.0 mL/min,  $t_R = 11.17$  min,  $t_S = 13.89$  min.

(S)-Methyl 2-acetamido-3-(3-chlorophenyl)propionate: 99% ee, chiral HPLC: Chiralcel OJ column, 25 cm, PrOH/Hex = 10:90, 1.0 mL/min,  $t_R$  = 19.83 min,  $t_S$  = 28.34 min.

(S)-Methyl 2-acetamido-3-(4-chlorophenyl)propionate: 98% ee, chiral HPLC Chiralcel OJ column, 25 cm, 'PrOH/Hex = 10:90, 1.0 mL/min,  $t_R = 12.86$  min,  $t_S = 17.21$  min.

(S)-Methyl 2-acetamido-3-(2-nitrophenyl)propionate: 97% ee, HPLC Chiralcel OD column, 25 cm, PrOH/Hex = 15:85, 1.0 mL/min,  $t_R = 19.92$  min,  $t_S = 29.33$  min.

(S)-Methyl 2-acetamido-3-(3-nitrophenyl)propionate: 99% ee, HPLC Chiralcel OD column, 25 cm, PrOH/Hex = 15:85, 1.0 mL/min,  $t_R = 13.76$  min,  $t_S = 17.20$  min.

(S)-Methyl 2-acetamido-3-(4-nitrophenyl)propionate: 98% ee, HPLC Chiralcel OD column, 25 cm, PrOH/Hex = 15:85, 1.0 mL/min,  $t_R = 17.13$  min,  $t_S = 19.74$  min.

General Procedure for Asymmetric Hydrogenation of  $\beta$ -Dehydroamino Esters. A reaction tube equipped with a stirring bar, in which  $5 \mu$ mol of Rh(COD)<sub>2</sub>BF<sub>4</sub>, 11  $\mu$ mol of ligand. and 0.5 mmol of  $\beta$ -dehydroamino ester were added under an inert atmosphere, was put into an autoclave. After 5 mL of toluene added, the inert atmosphere was replaced by 10 hydrogen/release cycles and the reaction mixture was allowed to stir under 100 bar of H<sub>2</sub> pressure at room temperature for a proper time. The resulting mixture was filtered through a short silica column and submitted to analysis for conversion and ee values.

(*R*)-Methyl 3-acetylamido-3-phenylpropionate: 93% ee, chiral GC Varian Chirasil-L-Val column,  $25 \text{ m} \times 0.25 \text{ mm} \times 0.25$   $\mu\text{m}$ ; N<sub>2</sub> 1.8 mL/min, 120 °C then 1 °C/min to 150 °C,  $t_R = 27.57$  min,  $t_S = 28.24$  min.

(*R*)-Methyl 3-acetamido-3-(4-methylphenyl)propionate: 94% ee, chiral GC Varian Chirasil-L-Val column, 25 m × 0.25 mm × 0.25  $\mu$ m; N<sub>2</sub> 2.0 mL/min, 120 °C then 1 °C/min to 160 °C,  $t_R = 33.07$  min,  $t_S = 33.97$  min.

(*R*)-Methyl 3-acetamido-3-(2-methoxylphenyl)propionate: 95% ee, chiral HPLC Chiralcel OD-H column, 25 cm, <sup>i</sup>PrOH/ Hex = 10:90, 1.0 mL/min,  $t_R = 21.91$  min,  $t_S = 33.42$  min.

(*R*)-Methyl 3-acetamido-3-(4-methoxylphenyl)propionate: 98% ee, chiral GC Varian Chirasil-L-Val column, 25 m × 0.25 mm × 0.25  $\mu$ m; N<sub>2</sub> 1.8 mL/min, 100 °C then 1 °C/min to 170 °C,  $t_R = 67.03$  min,  $t_S = 67.82$  min.

(*R*)-Methyl 3-acetamido-3-(4-chlorophenyl)propionate: 90% ee, chiral GC Varian Chirasil-L-Val column, 25 m × 0.25 mm × 0.25  $\mu$ m; N<sub>2</sub> 1.8 mL/min, 120 °C then 1 °C/min to 170 °C,  $t_R = 44.35$  min,  $t_S = 45.28$  min.

(*R*)-Methyl 3-acetamido-3-(3-bromophenyl)propionate: 85% ee, chiral GC Varian Chirasil-L-Val column, 25 m × 0.25 mm × 0.25  $\mu$ m; N<sub>2</sub> 2.0 mL/min, 120 °C then 1 °C/min to 160 °C,  $t_R = 26.28$  min,  $t_S = 26.93$  min.

(*R*)-Methyl 3-acetamido-3-(4-bromophenyl)propionate: 91% ee, chiral GC Varian Chirasil-L-Val column, 25 m × 0.25 mm × 0.25  $\mu$ m; N<sub>2</sub> 2.0 mL/min, 120 °C then 1 °C/min to 160 °C,  $t_R = 32.08$  min,  $t_S = 32.67$  min.

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