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The enantioselective Diels–Alder reaction of 1,2-dihydropyridines with α-acyloxyacroleins catalyzed by chiral primary ammonium salt†

Kazuaki Ishihara,*ab Hiroki Yamadaa and Matsujiro Akakurabc

The first enantioselective Diels–Alder reaction of 1,2-dihydropyridines with α-acyloxyacroleins catalyzed by chiral primary ammonium salt has been developed and offers more efficient routes to key synthetic intermediates of alkaloids, for which the direct preparations were unavailable before. The asymmetric induction can be understood through the optimized geometry of iminium salt aqua complex derived from the catalyst and the dienophile.

The isoquinuclidine skeleton is found in a wide range of alkaloids, and optically active functionalized isoquinuclidines, as chiral synths, can be transformed to versatile alkaloids. The enantioselective Diels–Alder reaction of 1,2-dihydropyridines with acryloyl derivatives is one of the most straightforward methods for the construction of optically active isoquinuclidines.

For example, in 1980, Wender et al. achieved the total synthesis of (±)-reserpine from (±)-endo-Diels–Alder adduct 1 of N-methoxycarbonyl-1,2-dihydropyridine with methyl α-acetoxyacrylate (Scheme 1). In 1990, Mariano et al. achieved the formal total synthesis of (±)-deserpidine from (±)-Diels–Alder adduct 2 of N-(2,2,2-trichloroethoxycarbonyl)-1,2-dihydropyridine with α-acetoxyacrylonitrile. However, these Diels–Alder reactions were very slow and the endo-selectivity was low (Scheme 1).

In 2006, Doris et al. reported the formal synthesis of (±)-catharanthine using optically active isoquinuclidine 4 as a key intermediate, which was derived from N-benzoxycarbonyl-L-serine (3) in 7% overall yield over 12 steps (Scheme 2).

In 2002, Rawal et al. reported the first catalytic enantioselective Diels–Alder reaction of 1,2-dihydropyridine with N-acryloyloxazolidinone. Since then, Nakano et al. have intensively studied on the development of an asymmetric catalysis. In 2005, Fukuyama et al. reported that MacMillan’s catalyst was also effective for the enantioselective Diels–Alder reaction of N-benzoxycarbonyl-1,2-dihydropyridine with acrolein to give...
optically active isoquinuclidine, and achieved the total synthesis of
(−)-oseltamivir phosphate from the isoquinoline.\textsuperscript{3}

\begin{equation}
\text{HO} \quad \text{CO}_{2}H \quad \text{NH} \quad \text{12 steps} \quad \text{7% overall}
\end{equation}

\text{yield}

\begin{equation}
\rightarrow \text{MeO} \quad \text{NH} \quad \text{ref. 5} \quad \text{HO} \quad \text{CO}_{2}H
\end{equation}

\text{ref. 5}

\begin{equation}
\rightarrow \text{HO} \quad \text{CO}_{2}H \quad \text{NH}
\end{equation}

\text{Scheme 2 Doris’s Formal Total Synthesis of (+)-Catharanthine.}\textsuperscript{4}

Against this background, we expected that we could prepare optically active synthons 1, 2 and 4 through the enantioselective Diels–Alder reaction of 1,2-dihydropyridines with α-acloyxycroehelines as a key step. However, there have been no reports on the highly enantioselective Diels–Alder reaction of dihydropyridines with α-substituted acryloyl derivatives.\textsuperscript{9} Along these lines, we have developed the enantioselective Diels–Alder reaction of simple dienes with α-heterosubstituted acroleins catalyzed by chiral primary ammonium salts.\textsuperscript{10} In this report we describe the enantioselective Diels–Alder reaction of 1,2-dihydropyridines with α-acloyxycroehelines catalyzed by 6•2.75CF\textsubscript{3}SO\textsubscript{2}H, and derivatization of Diels–Alder adducts to enanto-1, 7, 4, and 5 (Scheme 3).

\begin{equation}
\text{Scheme 3 This work.}
\end{equation}

First, the Diels–Alder reaction of N-phenoxycarboxy-1,2-
dihydropyridine (8a, 0.11 mmol) with α-(benzoyloxy)acrolein (9a, 0.1 mmol) was examined in the presence of 10 mol% of 6•2.75CF\textsubscript{3}SO\textsubscript{2}H in nitroethane. The reaction temperature was gradually increased from −78 °C to 0 °C, and the reaction mixture was further stirred at 0 °C for 3 days. The desired isoquinuclidine 10aa was obtained in 58% yield with >95% endo-selectivity. The enantioselectivity of endo-10aa was 88% ee (entry 1). Since a hydrogen-bonding interaction between an α-acly moiety of 9 and an ammonium proton of the catalyst was expected, α-(p-methoxybenzoyloxy)acrolein (9b) was examined as a dienophile under the same conditions. Interestingly, 9b was much more reactive than 9a. Endo-10ab was obtained in 88% yield with 91% ee (entry 2). When the reaction was started at 0 °C, the enantioselectivity was reduced to 69% ee (entry 3). Actually, the reaction proceeded slowly even at −20 °C, and the enantioselectivity was 95% ee (entry 4). The reaction of 8a with 9b was scalable, and could be increased up to 2.4 mmol scale without reducing chemical yield and enantioselectivity of 10ab (entry 5).

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{entry} & \textbf{9} & \textbf{conditions} & \textbf{10} \\
\hline
1 & 9a & −78 °C, 5 min to 0 °C, 3 days & 10aa, 58 88 \\
2 & 9b & −78 °C, 5 min to 0 °C, 1.5 days & 10ab, 88 91 \\
3 & 9b & 0 °C, 12 h & 10ab, 61 95 \\
4 & 9b & −78 °C, 5 min to −20 °C, 4 days & 10ab, 91 88 \\
5 & 9b & −20 °C, 5 min to 0 °C, 2.5 days & 10ab, 81 92 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Enantioselective Diels–Alder Reaction of 8a with 9b}
\end{table}

\textit{Endo-10ab} was transformed to 12 in 56% yield under basic oxidation conditions (Scheme 4). This is a one-pot 3-step sequence of the three different functional groups.\textsuperscript{11} Deprotection of the p-methoxybenzoyl group of 10ab was promoted by the adjacent oxanion (Step 1).\textsuperscript{12} The generation of 11 was detected by \textit{H} NMR analysis. The subsequent acetylation of 12 gave endo-1 in 88% yield.

\begin{equation}
\text{Scheme 4 Derivatization of endo-10ab to endo-1.}
\end{equation}

Endo-adduct 10ab (91% ee) was converted to a key synthetic intermediate 4 of (+)-catharanthine in good yield by selective reduction of the formyl group of 10ab, selective methanalysis of the ester moiety of 13, oxidative cleavage of the vicinal diol moiety of 7, and acetalization of 14 (Scheme 5).\textsuperscript{13} The absolute configuration of 4 was determined to be (−)-(1R,4R) by comparison of its optical rotation (91% ee, \textit{[\alpha]}\textsubscript{D}\textsuperscript{26} = −65 (c = 0.4, MeOH).\textsuperscript{5} Spirocetal 4 can be transformed to 2-(2-(1H-indol-3-yl)acetyl)-2-
aza bicyclo[2.2.2]oct-7-en-6-one (5) by Doris’s synthetic method (Scheme 2).\textsuperscript{4} Thus, (+)-(1R,4R)-5 can be synthesized from 7 in 49% yield over 5 steps.
Scheme 5 Derivatization of Endo-10ab to (–)-4.

As a new and more concise synthetic route to (+)-(1R,4R)-5, we developed a 4-step sequence from diol 7 which included the acetalization of 7, the N-deprotection/acylation of 15, the hydrolysis of 16, and the oxidative cleavage of 17 (Scheme 6). The overall yield of (+)-5 (91% ee, [α]D24 = +88 (c = 1.2, CHCl3) from 7 was 65%.14

Scheme 6 Derivatization of 7 to (+)-5.

The substrate scope of the Diels–Alder reaction of 4-substituted N-phenoxycarbonyl-1,2-dihydropyridines (8b–e) with 9b was investigated under the optimized conditions (entry 2 in Table 1). The results are shown in Table 2. The reactions proceeded smoothly at –20 ~ 0 °C to give desired endo-adducts 10 in good to high yield with high enantioselectivity.

Table 2 Enantioselective Diels–Alder reaction of 8 with 9b

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>entry</th>
<th>8 (R)</th>
<th>yield (%)</th>
<th>ee (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1b</td>
<td>8b (Me)</td>
<td>10bb, 95</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8c (i-Pr)</td>
<td>10cb, 86</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>8d (OCOC6H4(OMe)-p)</td>
<td>10db, 84</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4c</td>
<td>8d</td>
<td>10db, 81</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5c</td>
<td>8e (CH2OSi-t-BuMe2)</td>
<td>10eb, 82</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See the experimental section in detail. †2.2 equiv of 8 was used. ‡The reaction was carried out at –20 °C for 3 days.

To understand the reaction mechanism, the optimized geometry of iminium salt 18 prepared from 6·3C6F5SO3H and 9a was calculated using B3LYP/6-31G(d).14,15 However, no reasonable geometries that could explain the enantioface selectivity were obtained. When a key intermediate was postulated to be an aqua complex 18·H2O, the desired optimized geometry was obtained as shown in Fig. 1. One water molecule stabilizes the (Z)-iminium geometry through three hydrogen bonds. In this geometry, the re-face of the dienophile is effectively shielded by the benzyl moiety of 6·3C6F5SO3H. Thus, 1,2-dihydropyridine can approach the si-face of the dienophile to give (1R,4R)-adduct enantioselectively. While this mechanism is plausible, it is not supported by any experimental evidence. Nevertheless, some water molecules may contribute to the construction of key intermediates or transition-state assemblies. Further mechanistic studies are in progress and will be reported in the near future.

Fig. 1 Optimized geometry (B3LYP/6-31G(d)) of iminium salt 18·H2O prepared from 6·3C6F5SO3H and 9a in situ.

In summary, we have developed the first example of a catalytic and highly enantioselective Diels–Alder reaction of 1,2-dihydropyridines with α-acyloxyacroleins catalyzed by 6·2.75C6F5SO3H, and their derivatization to some key synthetic intermediates of biologically active compounds. Furthermore, a plausible mechanism via an aqua complex such as 18·H2O can explain all previous results with the use of 6·2C6F5SO3H.16

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Notes and references

1a Graduate School of Engineering, Nagoya University, B2-3(611), Furocho, Chikusa, Nagoya 464-8603, Japan. E-mail: ishihara@cc.nagoya-u.ac.jp; Fax: +81-52-789-3222
According to ref. 6a, Rawal et al. obtained endo-adduct in 89% yield with 67% ee through the enantioselective Diels–Alder reaction of N-phenylxycarbonyldihydropyridine with methacrolein catalyzed by chiral Cr(III) Lewis acid.

Graphical abstract
The enantioselective Diels–Alder reaction of 1,2-dihydropyridines with \( \alpha \)-acyloxyacroleins catalyzed by chiral primary ammonium salt has been developed.