

# Highly Effective and Diastereoselective Synthesis of Axially Chiral Bis-sulfoxide Ligands via Oxidative Aryl Coupling

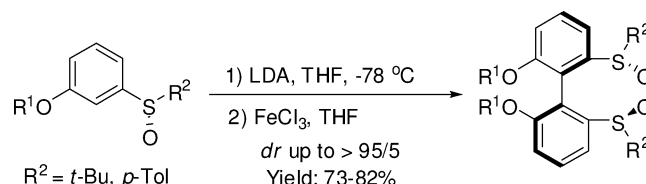
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Received January 26, 2010

## ABSTRACT



A series of axially chiral bis-sulfoxide ligands have been efficiently synthesized via oxidative coupling with high diastereoselectivities. The axial chirality is well controlled by the *tert*-butylsulfinyl or the *p*-tolylsulfinyl group. These axially chiral bis-sulfoxides proved to be remarkably efficient ligands for the rhodium-catalyzed asymmetric 1,4-addition of arylboronic acids to 2-cyclohexenone with 99% ee.

In the past decade, considerable efforts have been undertaken for using enantiopure sulfinyl groups as efficient chiral auxiliaries in asymmetric C–C and C–X bond formations.<sup>1</sup> The success and effectiveness of the sulfinyl group as a chiral controller lie in three basic factors: (i) its high optical stability, (ii) its efficiency as a carrier of the chiral information, and (iii) its accessibility in both

enantiomeric forms. Therefore, much progress has been achieved in asymmetric synthesis employing enantiopure sulfoxides as chiral ligands.<sup>1d,j,k,2</sup> Despite the fact that axially chiral ligands are most commonly used for asymmetric transformations, limited optically pure sulfoxide ligands bearing axial chirality have hitherto been described.<sup>3</sup> Recently, Dorta et al. disclosed that axially chiral bis-sulfoxides, synthesized from racemic axial dibromides, can

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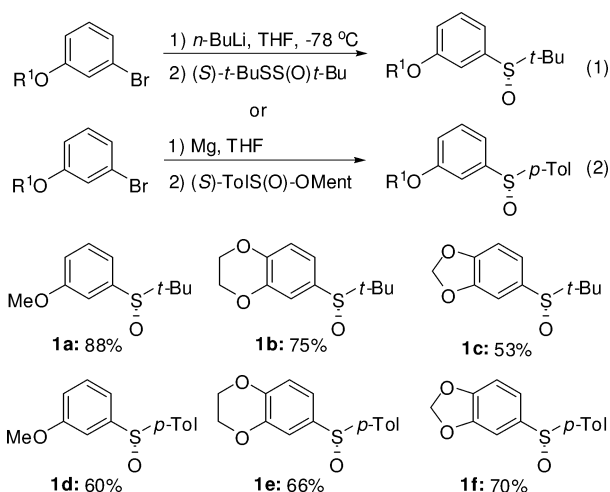
(1) (a) Reggelin, M.; Zur, C. *Synthesis* **2000**, 1. (b) Ellman, J. A.; Owens, T. D.; Tang, T. P. *Acc. Chem. Res.* **2002**, *35*, 984. (c) Ellman, J. A. *Pure Appl. Chem.* **2003**, *75*, 39. (d) Fernández, I.; Khiar, N. *Chem. Rev.* **2003**, *103*, 3651. (e) Zhou, P.; Chen, B. C.; Davis, F. A. *Tetrahedron* **2004**, *60*, 8003. (f) Senanayake, C. H.; Krishnamurthy, D.; Lu, Z. H.; Han, Z. X.; Gallou, I. *Aldrichimica Acta* **2005**, *38*, 93. (g) Morton, D.; Stockman, R. A. *Tetrahedron* **2006**, *62*, 8869. (h) Pellissier, H. *Tetrahedron* **2006**, *62*, 5559. (i) Davis, F. A. *J. Org. Chem.* **2006**, *71*, 8993. (j) Pellissier, H. *Tetrahedron* **2007**, *63*, 1297. (k) Carreño, M. C.; Hernández-Torres, G.; Ribagorda, M.; Urbano, A. *Chem. Commun.* **2009**, 6129. (l) Ferreira, F.; Botuha, C.; Chemla, F.; Pérez-Luna, A. *Chem. Soc. Rev.* **2009**, *38*, 1162. (m) Mellah, M.; Voitriez, A.; Schulz, E. *Chem. Rev.* **2007**, *107*, 5133.

(2) Recent works: (a) Tokunoh, R.; Sodeoka, M.; Aoe, K.-I.; Shibasaki, M. *Tetrahedron Lett.* **1995**, *36*, 8035. (b) Kobayashi, S.; Ogawa, C.; Konishi, H.; Sugiura, M. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2003**, *125*, 6610. (c) Massa, A.; Malkov, A. V.; Kočovský, P.; Scettri, A. *Tetrahedron Lett.* **2003**, *44*, 7179. (d) Rowlands, G. J.; Barnes, W. K. *Chem. Commun.* **2003**, 2712. (e) Fernández, I.; Valdivia, V.; Gori, B.; Alcudia, F.; Álvarez, E.; Khiar, N. *Org. Lett.* **2005**, *7*, 1307. (f) García-Flores, F.; Flores-Michel, L. S.; Juaristi, E. *Tetrahedron Lett.* **2006**, *47*, 8235. (g) Fernández, I.; Valdivia, V.; Leal, M. P.; Khiar, N. *Org. Lett.* **2007**, *9*, 2215. (h) Chen, J. M.; Li, D.; Ma, H. F.; Cun, L. F.; Zhu, J.; Deng, J. G.; Liao, J. *Tetrahedron Lett.* **2008**, *49*, 6921. (i) Fulton, J. R.; Kamara, L. M.; Morton, S. C.; Rowlands, G. J. *Tetrahedron* **2009**, *65*, 9134. (j) Massa, A.; Acocella, M. R.; De Sio, V.; Villano, R.; Scettri, A. *Tetrahedron: Asymmetry* **2009**, *20*, 202. (k) Wang, P.; Chen, J. M.; Cun, L. F.; Deng, J. G.; Zhu, J.; Liao, J. *Org. Biomol. Chem.* **2009**, *7*, 3741.

be used successfully as ligands in the rhodium-catalyzed asymmetric 1,4-addition of arylboronic acids to enones with excellent enantioselectivities.<sup>3a,b</sup> Thus, development of a simple and efficient method for the synthesis of optically pure axially chiral sulfoxide ligands is highly desirable. Herein, we report an efficient and highly diastereoselective synthesis of axially chiral bis-sulfoxide ligands via oxidative coupling.

On the basis of the preparation of chiral atropisomeric biaryl diphosphines through oxidative coupling with iron(III) chloride,<sup>4</sup> enantiopure sulfoxides **1** were first synthesized according to the literature procedure (Scheme 1).<sup>2h</sup> Standard

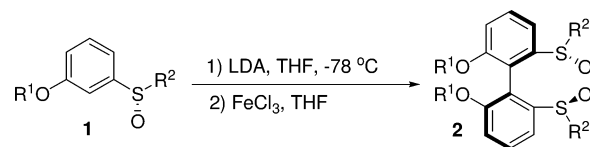
**Scheme 1.** Synthesis of Enantiopure Sulfoxides **1**



bromo–lithium exchange of bromo-arene derivatives proceeded at low temperature. After quench by thiosulfate that is commercially available, the desired products **1a–1c** were obtained in moderate to high yields (53–88% yields, eq 1). The reaction of Grignard reagents (derived from aryl bromides) with enantiopure (*S<sub>S</sub>*)-menthyl *p*-toluenesulfinate delivered their corresponding enantiopure sulfoxides **1d–1f** in good yields (60–70% yields, eq 2).

Next, we studied the oxidative homocoupling reactions of enantiopure sulfoxides **1** using FeCl<sub>3</sub> as the oxidant (Table 1). Deprotonation of **1a** with LDA generated the ortholithi-

**Table 1.** Atropo-diastereoselective Oxidative Coupling Reaction with a *tert*-Butyl and a *p*-Tolylsulfinyl Group as Chiral Auxiliary



entry	<b>1</b>	product <b>2</b>	yield (%) <sup>a</sup>	dl <sup>b</sup>
1	<b>1a</b>		76 ( <b>2a</b> ) <i>t</i> -Bu-MeO-BipheSO	> 95:5 ( <i>M,S,S</i> ) <sup>c</sup>
2	<b>1b</b>		76 ( <b>2b</b> ) <i>t</i> -Bu-MeO-SynSO	94:6
3	<b>1c</b>		78 ( <b>2c</b> ) <i>t</i> -Bu-MeO-SegSO	> 95:5
4	<b>1d</b>		73 ( <b>2d</b> ) <i>p</i> -Tol-MeO-BipheSO	92:8
5	<b>1e</b>		81 ( <b>2e</b> ) <i>p</i> -Tol-MeO-SynSO	> 95:5
6	<b>1f</b>		82 ( <b>2f</b> ) <i>p</i> -Tol-MeO-SegSO	> 95:5

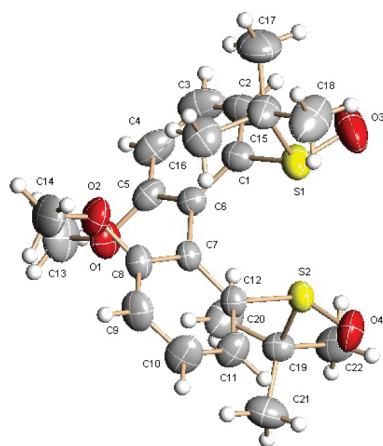
<sup>a</sup> Mixture of both diastereomers. <sup>b</sup> Determined by <sup>1</sup>H NMR on the crude mixture. <sup>c</sup> The absolute configuration of major diastereomer of **2a** was determined by X-ray analysis. Other products' absolute configurations were assigned as (*M,S,S*) by analogy to **2a**.

ated intermediate, which could be oxidized by FeCl<sub>3</sub> to provide bis-sulfoxide **2a** with high diastereoselectivity (>95:5) and good yield (76%, entry 1). Recrystallization from EtOAc and CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> gave optically pure **2a** as a colorless crystalline solid, and its absolute configuration was assigned as (*M,S,S*) by X-ray crystallographic analysis (Figure 1).

The oxidative coupling reaction was quite general. Several aryl sulfoxides **1** bearing *tert*-butyl or *p*-tolyl sulfinyl group all delivered their corresponding axially chiral bis-sulfoxides **2b–2f** in good yields with excellent diastereoselectivities (entries 2–5). Fortunately, the minor diastereomer (*P,S,S*)-**2d** was obtained after repeated recrystallization from mother liquor of **2d**. Following the nomenclature for MeO-Biphep, ligand **2a** was named as *t*-Bu-MeO-BipheSO [2,2'-dimethoxy-6,6'-bis(*tert*-butylsulfinyl)biphenyl].

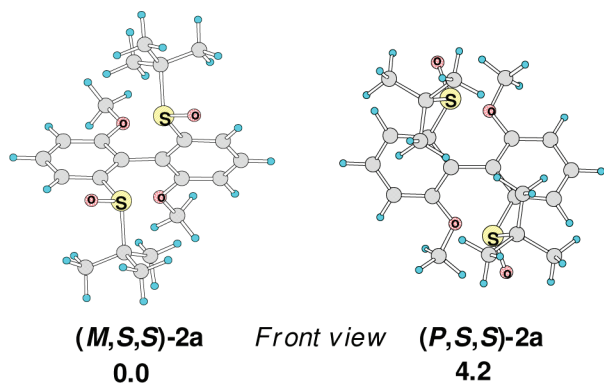
To further understand the origin of the high diastereoselectivities during the oxidative coupling, a computational

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**Figure 1.** X-ray structure of chiral compound (*M,S,S*)-**2a**.

study concerning two diastereomers of **2a** was performed at the B3LYP/6-311+G\*\* level (Figure 2). The calculation

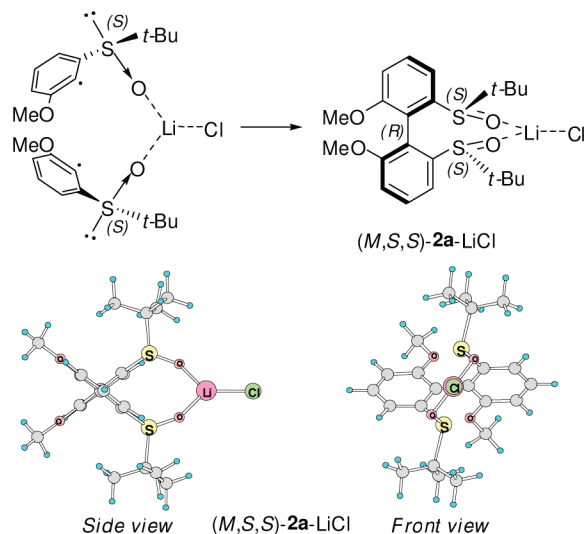


**Figure 2.** Optimized structures of (*M,S,S*)-**2a** and (*P,S,S*)-**2a**. The calculations have been performed at the B3LYP/6-311+G\*\* level, and the relative free energies  $\Delta G$  (298 K) are in kcal/mol.

results indicate that the major diastereomer (*M,S,S*)-**2a** is more stable than (*P,S,S*)-**2a** owing to the absence of the repulsion between two *tert*-butyl groups observed in (*P,S,S*)-**2a**.

During the radical coupling reaction, the two *tert*-butyl groups should point in opposite directions to avoid repulsions (Figure 3). In addition, the lithium cation will coordinate with oxygen atoms of the sulfinyl groups, keeping the two S=O bonds on the same side, which may also have some effects on the chiral induction.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, the chiral induction possibly originates from the repulsion between the two *tert*-butyl groups and the coordination of metal ion with the sulfinyl groups. Product (*M,S,S*)-**2a** is a more favorable diastereoisomer with respect to both thermodynamics and kinetics according to this propose.

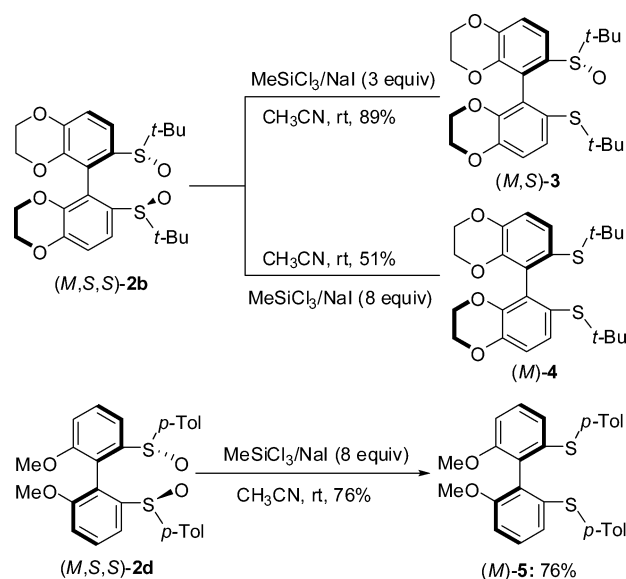
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**Figure 3.** Possible mechanism of the chiral induction.

Some potentially useful sulfur-based ligands could be readily obtained by the reduction of axially chiral bis-sulfoxides **2** (Scheme 2). The deoxygenation of sulfoxide

**Scheme 2.** Synthesis of Sulfur-Based Ligands from Chiral Bis-sulfoxides **2**



(*M,S,S*)-**2b** to the corresponding monosulfoxide (*M,S*)-**3** and disulfide (*M*)-**4** was conveniently carried out at ambient temperature by using trichloromethylsilane/sodium iodide in acetonitrile.<sup>6</sup> However, no semireduction product of (*M,S,S*)-

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**2d** was observed under the above conditions even with a reduced amount of trichloromethylsilane/sodium iodide.

With ligands **2–5** in hand, their catalytic performance in the asymmetric 1,4-addition of arylboronic acids to 2-cyclohexenone was investigated using  $[\text{Rh}(\text{C}_2\text{H}_4)_2\text{Cl}]_2$  as the metal precursor (Table 2).<sup>7,8</sup> Surprisingly, ligands (*M,S,S*)-

**3–5** were not effective (entries 8–10). After the evaluation of the ligands, the scope of asymmetric 1,4-addition of arylboronic acids to 2-cyclohexenone was explored using  $[\text{Rh}(\text{C}_2\text{H}_4)_2\text{Cl}]_2/(\textit{M,S,S})\text{-2e}$  as the catalyst. In general, arylboronic acids bearing either electron-withdrawing or electron-donating groups at the *para*-position all delivered the addition products in excellent enantioselectivities (up to >99% ee) and high yields (entries 11–13). The use of 3-methoxybenzene-boronic acid **6e** resulted in a decrease of yield (59%) but the retention of enantioselectivity (99% ee, entry 14).

In conclusion, we have developed an efficient and highly diastereoselective synthesis of axially chiral bis-sulfoxide ligands via oxidative coupling. The axial chirality is well controlled by the *tert*-butylsulfinyl or the *p*-tolylsulfinyl group. This methodology provides easy access to various potentially useful sulfur-based ligands. These axially chiral bis-sulfoxides proved to be remarkably efficient ligands for the rhodium-catalyzed asymmetric 1,4-addition of arylboronic acids to 2-cyclohexenone with up to >99% ee. Further exploration of the applications of these ligands in various asymmetric reactions is currently underway, and related results will be reported in due course.

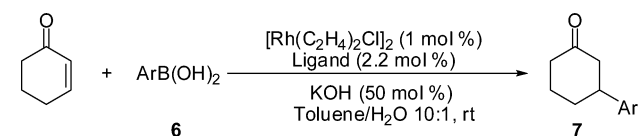
**Acknowledgment.** We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of National Natural Science Foundation of China (20921092 and 20872140), National Basic Research Program of China (2010CB833300), and Chinese Academy of Sciences.

**Supporting Information Available:** Experimental, spectroscopic, computational, and crystallographic details including CIF file. This material is available free of charge via the Internet at <http://pubs.acs.org>.

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**Table 2.** Asymmetric 1,4-Addition of Boronic Acids to 2-Cyclohexenone Catalyzed by Rhodium Complexes<sup>a</sup>



entry	Ar in <b>6</b>	ligand	yield (%) <sup>b</sup>	ee (%) <sup>c</sup>
1	Ph ( <b>6a</b> )	( <i>M,S,S</i> )- <b>2a</b>	trace	N/A
2	Ph ( <b>6a</b> )	( <i>M,S,S</i> )- <b>2b</b>	trace	N/A
3	Ph ( <b>6a</b> )	( <i>M,S,S</i> )- <b>2c</b>	trace	N/A
4	Ph ( <b>6a</b> )	( <i>M,S,S</i> )- <b>2d</b>	98	99
5	Ph ( <b>6a</b> )	( <i>M,S,S</i> )- <b>2e</b>	89	99
6	Ph ( <b>6a</b> )	( <i>M,S,S</i> )- <b>2f</b>	87	99
7	Ph ( <b>6a</b> )	( <i>P,S,S</i> )- <b>2d</b>	trace	N/A
8 <sup>d</sup>	Ph ( <b>6a</b> )	( <i>M,S</i> )- <b>3</b>	trace	N/A
9 <sup>d</sup>	Ph ( <b>6a</b> )	( <i>M</i> )- <b>4</b>	trace	N/A
10 <sup>d</sup>	Ph ( <b>6a</b> )	( <i>M,S</i> )- <b>5</b>	trace	N/A
11	4-CF <sub>3</sub> C <sub>6</sub> H <sub>4</sub> ( <b>6b</b> )	( <i>M,S,S</i> )- <b>2e</b>	96	>99
12	4-MeC <sub>6</sub> H <sub>4</sub> ( <b>6c</b> )	( <i>M,S,S</i> )- <b>2e</b>	95	97
13	4-MeOC <sub>6</sub> H <sub>4</sub> ( <b>6d</b> )	( <i>M,S,S</i> )- <b>2e</b>	82	96
14	3-MeOC <sub>6</sub> H <sub>4</sub> ( <b>6e</b> )	( <i>M,S,S</i> )- <b>2e</b>	59	99

<sup>a</sup> The reaction was carried out with 2-cyclohexenone (0.30 mmol), arylboronic acid (0.45 mmol),  $[\text{Rh}(\text{C}_2\text{H}_4)_2\text{Cl}]_2$  (0.003 mmol), ligand (0.0066 mmol, 1.1 equiv to Rh), and 0.75 M aq KOH (0.20 mL) in toluene (2.0 mL) at room temperature for 3–6 h. <sup>b</sup> Isolated yield based on 2-cyclohexenone. <sup>c</sup> Determined by HPLC analysis. <sup>d</sup> At 40 °C.

**2a**, **-2b**, and **-2c** bearing *tert*-butylsulfinyl groups showed no activity toward the enantioselective addition of phenylboronic acid **6a** to 2-cyclohexenone (entries 1–3), whereas (*M,S,S*)-**2d**, **-2e**, and **-2f** with *p*-tolylsulfinyl groups emerged as efficient ligands for this addition with respect to yields and enantioselectivities (99% ee, entries 4–6). This interesting phenomenon was probably ascribed to a mismatched binding mode of (*M,S,S*)-**2a**, **-2b**, and **-2c** with the dimeric rhodium precursor, which was supported by the inertness of (*P,S,S*)-**2d** in this reaction (entry 7).<sup>3b</sup> To our disappointment, ligands