

CHEMISTRY & BIOLOGY INTERFACE

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Chemo-, Regio- and Stereoselectivity of Acyl Transfer Agents: A Brief Review

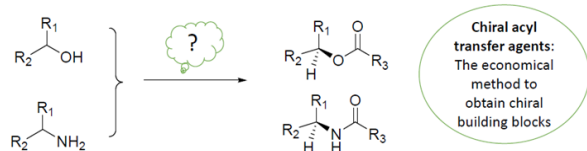
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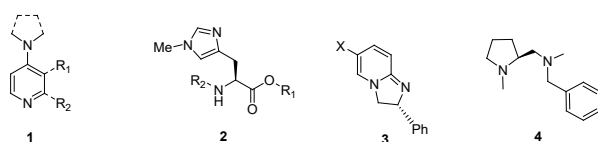
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Abstract: Acyl transfer agents are recently widely utilized for chemo-, regio- and stereoselective acylation. This review gives information about the combination of acyl transfer agent and substrate which could provide desired selectivity especially enantioselectivity in transfer acylation reaction with some emphasis on S-nucleophilic acyl transfer agents. The brief review covers information of acyl transfer agents published till year 2019.

Figure 1. N-nucleophilic acyl transfer agents.



Most of the reported chiral acyl transfer agents could be grouped as N-nucleophilic, P-nucleophilic, C-nucleophilic and O-nucleophilic. N-nucleophilic acyl transfer agents comprises the largest family of chiral acyl transfer agents which could be further subdivided in DMAP and its derivatives, N-alkyl imidazole, amidines, and vicinal diamines. (Fig. 1)



First chiral DMAP derivative was introduced by Vedejs and Chen^{2,3} (5, Fig. 2), and these were further developed by Fu, Spivey, Johansen, Gotor, Levacher and Yamada.⁸ Fu and co-workers introduced ferrocene based chiral DMAP derivatives (6, Fig. 2).^{4,5} Fuji and Kawabata catalysts were based on chiral modification of 4-pyrrolidino core of 4-pyrrolidino substituted DMAP (PPY)⁶ which were used in resolution of cycloalkane-1, 2-diol and their derivatives (7).⁷

Spivey group created axially chiral DMAP derivatives,⁸ while, Yamada group developed DMAP catalyst which switched the conformation on formation of acylium cation.⁹ In general, substrate scope of DMAP based catalyst is limited to resolution of alcohol containing aromatic or unsaturated moieties.

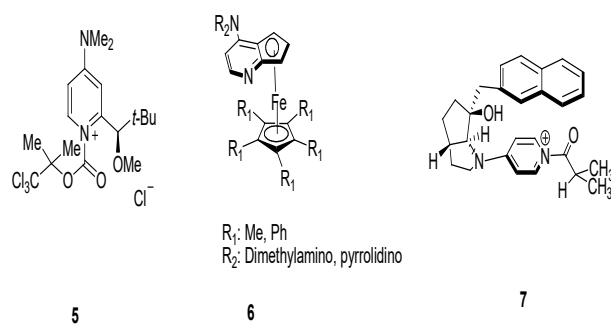


Figure 2. Chiral DMAP derivatives.

Miller and co-workers introduced peptide-based catalysts which were found effective in resolving saturated alkyl alcohols having basic Bronsted site at α -position. These peptide-based catalysts possess N-methylimidazole instead of DMAP as catalytic site.¹⁰ Millers group incorporated catalytic N-methylimidazole in β -hairpin peptide structures (8, Fig. 3), while Schreiner et al. used γ -aminoadamantane carboxylic acid to introduce β -turn in their peptide catalysts (9, Fig. 3).¹¹ Shinisha¹² and recently Liao and Homo group¹³ explained computationally the stereoselection of N-alkyl imidazole incorporating peptide catalyst. Ishihara¹⁴ and Quo¹⁵ studied catalyst where N-alkylimidazole moiety was incorporated on non-peptidic scaffold (10, Fig. 3).

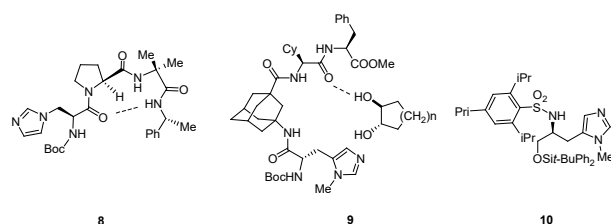


Figure 3. Peptide based catalysts.

Birman et al. developed much used amidine based chiral acyl transfer agents. He started by creating an etramisol based catalyst, which were later evolved to benzotetraamisol (BTM, 11, Fig. 4) and found very efficient in kinetic

resolution of aryl alkyl, allyl alkyl alcohol.¹⁶

Oriyama and co-workers reported vicinal diamine-based catalyst (12, Fig. 4). These are good in resolution of cyclic diols and cyclic β -hydroxy sulfides.¹⁷ Cinchona based alkaloid was used in kinetic resolution of racemic aryl alkyl thiol.¹⁸

Vedejs et al. introduced P-nucleophilic acyl transfer catalyst. The bicyclic chiral phosphines were found highly effective in resolution of aryl alkyl alcohol (13, Fig. 4).¹⁹ Suzuki²⁰ and Maruoka et al.²¹ are credited with development of C-nucleophilic N-heterocyclic carbene based chiral acyl transfer catalyst (14, Fig. 4). Tarek Samakia's group introduced serene protease inspired O-nucleophilic acyl transfer catalyst (15, Fig. 4).²²

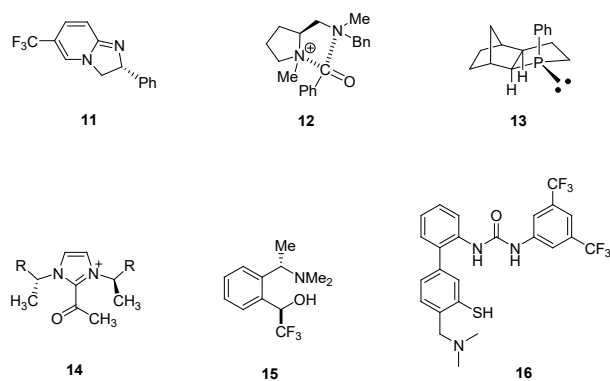


Figure 4: Acyl transfer agents based on different nucleophilic sites.

A thorough literature search about S-nucleophilic catalyst revealed that activated thioester (S-arylate dcystein) were used in site specific N-acylation of glucosamine²³ and peptide cyclization,²⁴ respectively. Diacyldisulfide activated by DMAP was used in chemoselective acylation of phenol,²⁵ and thioacids activated by photocatalysis²⁶ and Cu-salt²⁷ was used in chemoselective acylation of amines. Activated thioester or thioester (used as acyl donor)

activated by catalyst were used in regio- and chemoselective acylation, but these cannot be regarded as acyl transfer agent or catalyst which transfer acyl group from acyl donor to nucleophilic site. The catalyst which could be classified as S-nucleophilic acyl transfer agent is recently reported by Arora²⁸ et al. (16, Fig. 4), but no example of thioester based chiral acyl transfer agent (or S-nucleophilic acyl transfer agents working through thioester mode) was reported in literature to the best of our knowledge. Interestingly, the catalyst reported by Arora et al. is similar to small molecule model of cysteine protease developed by R. S. Brown group.²⁹

In summary, the N-, P-nucleophilic acyl transfer agents work through cationic acylium ion intermediate having an electron deficient carbonyl group. However, O-, S-nucleophilic acyl transfer (mimicking enzymes like cysteine protease, histone acyl transferase, serine protease etc.) agents involves neutral and activated ester intermediate. Though we are aware something about substrate scope of O-nucleophilic chiral acyl transfer agents, but no study is done on S-nucleophilic chiral acyl transfer agents. Development of sulfur atom-based chiral acyl transfer agents may provide a very different substrate scope and there is a need of exploration in this area.

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