

## Stereocontrolled Synthesis of the Taxol C-13 Side Chain: Methyl (2*R*,3*S*)-3-Benzoylamino-2-hydroxy-3-phenylpropanoate

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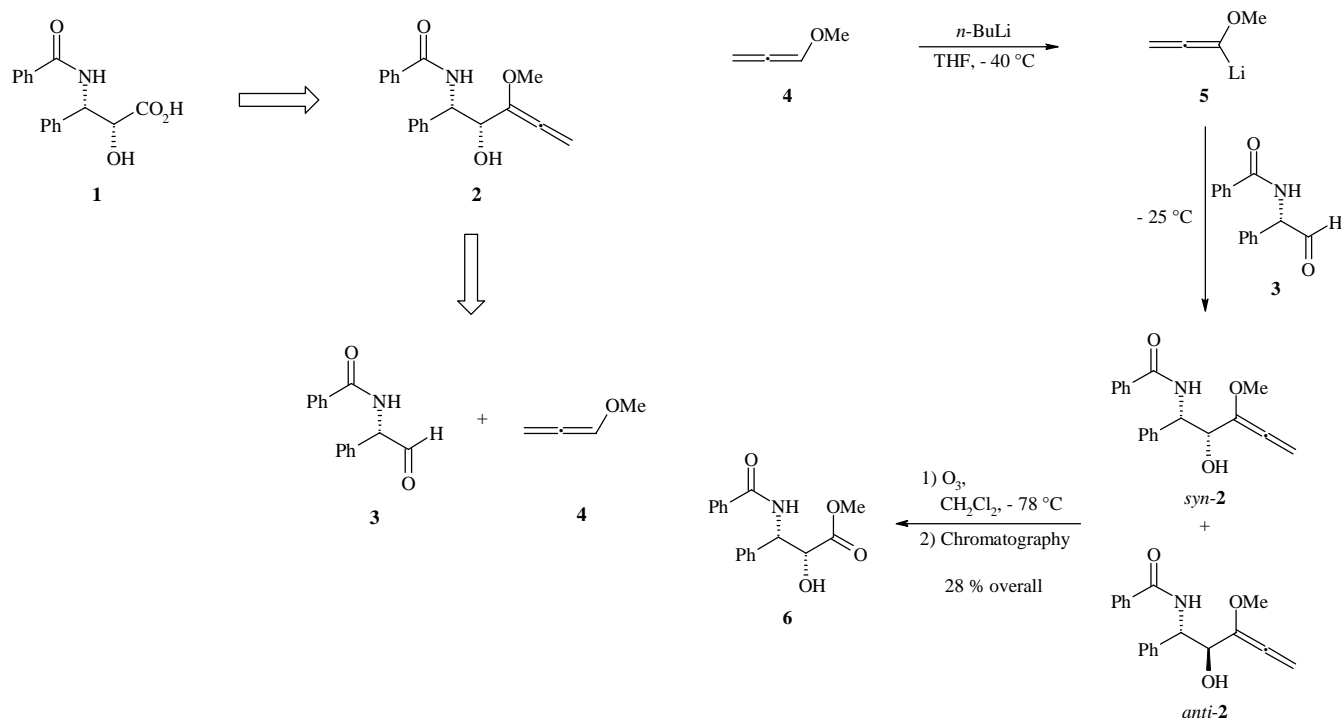
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**Abstract:** Addition of lithiated methoxyallene **5** to literature-known amino aldehyde **3** followed by ozonolysis provided *syn*-configured  $\alpha$ -hydroxy- $\beta$ -amino ester **6** in moderate

overall yield and with an *ee* of 90%. The predominant formation of *syn*-compounds may be due to a chelate controlled addition step.

$\alpha$ -Hydroxy- $\beta$ -amino acids are present in a number of biologically active compounds and therefore their stereoselective syntheses were object of many recent investigations [1]. We have already described preparation of several *anti*-(2*S*,3*S*)- $\alpha$ -hydroxy- $\beta$ -amino esters by stereoselective addition of lithiated methoxyallene to optically active *N*-benzyl-BOC-protected amino aldehydes followed by ozonolysis [2]. We anticipated that a modification of the *N*-protecting group could lead to predominant *syn*-configured products and therefore we envisaged a synthesis of (2*R*,3*S*)-3-benzoylamino-2-hydroxy-3-phenylpropanoic acid (**1**) – the C-13 side chain of the important antitumor drugs Taxol and Taxotere™ [3]. The methyl ester of **1** should be available by ozonolysis of **2** which may arise from literature-known amino aldehyde **3** [4] and methoxyallene **4** [5].

Lithiation of methoxyallene **4** was performed under standard conditions [6] in THF, and to the resulting solution of **5** freshly prepared aldehyde **3** was added to give a mixture of *syn*-**2** (major) and *anti*-**2** (minor). The best yield, highest ratio of diastereomers (85:15), and purity were obtained by reaction of 8 equivalents of **5** with **3** at  $-25\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Lower or higher temperatures and addition of cerium trichloride or diethylaluminum chloride as Lewis acids did not improve the result. Also, an attempt to generate a cuprate from **5** [7] was unsuccessful giving only an intractable product mixture after reaction with aldehyde **3**. The crude product *syn*-**2**/*anti*-**2** could not be purified, but after ozonolysis under standard conditions a mixture of methyl esters was obtained from which the desired *syn*-**6** could be isolated in pure crystalline form in 28% overall yield. The optical rotation of **6** could be com-



pared with a literature value and it indicates an *ee* of 90%. Since aldehyde **3** has a relatively high tendency to racemize it is possible that this process had occurred during reaction of **5** with **3** [8]. The predominant formation of *syn*-**2** can be interpreted with the model of chelate control [9].

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## Experimental

Starting materials: **3**[4], **4**[5]. For general informations see [10].

(*1S,2R*)- and (*1S,2S*)-*N*-(2-hydroxy-3-methoxy-1-phenylpent-3,4-dienyl)benzamide (*syn*-**2**) and (*anti*-**2**)

Lithiated methoxyallene **5** was generated under an atmosphere of dry argon by treating a solution of 0.492 g (7.00 mmol) of **4** in 20 ml of THF at  $-40\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$  with 2.7 ml (6.25 mmol) of *n*-BuLi (2.5M in hexane). After warming the solution to  $-25\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ , a solution of 0.168 g (0.70 mmol) of **3** in 10 ml of THF was added over a period of 10 min. The mixture was quenched after 20 min with 5 ml of ice water. Warming to  $10\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$  was followed by extraction with diethyl ether ( $3 \times 10\text{ ml}$ ) and drying of the combined extracts with  $\text{MgSO}_4$ . Removal of solvents and volatile components *in vacuo* yielded 0.181 g (75%) of crude **2** (*syn* : *anti* = 85 : 15) as a brownish oil which was not purified. –  $^1\text{H NMR}$  ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ , 300 MHz):  $\delta/\text{ppm} = 7.80\text{--}7.70$ ,  $7.50\text{--}7.10$  (2 m, 2H, 8H, Ph), 5.53 (d,  $J = 2.3\text{ Hz}$ , 2H, 5-H), 4.52 ( $s_{\text{broad}}$ , 1H, NH), 3.40 (s, 3H, OMe) unambiguous assignment of the missing signals of *syn*-**2** and those of *anti*-**2** was not possible with this crude product sample. –  $^{13}\text{C NMR}$  ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ , 75.5 MHz), *syn*-**2**:  $\delta/\text{ppm} = 197.0$  (s, C-4), 167.2 (s, C=O), 139.7 (s, C-3), 134.5, 134.2 (2s, Ph), 131.3 (d, Ph), 128.4–126.7 (several d, Ph), 93.6 (t, C-5), 73.3 (d, C-2), 56.7 (q, OMe), 55.9 (d, C-1); *anti*-**2**:  $\delta/\text{ppm} = 197.2$  (s, C-4), 166.8 (s, C=O), 139.4 (s, C-3), 93.4 (t, C-5), 72.7 (d, C-2); other signals could not be assigned due to overlap with signals of the major isomer.

Methyl (*2R,3S*)-3-benzoylamino-2-hydroxy-3-phenylpropanoate (**6**)

A solution of crude *syn/anti*-**2** (0.181 g; 0.58 mmol) in  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  was cooled to  $-78\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$  and ozone was bubbled through the mixture until a blue colour persisted. Excess of ozone was purged out with oxygen, and the mixture was allowed to warm up to  $-20\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Ice-water (20 ml) was added, the organic layer was separated, and the aqueous layer was extracted with  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  ( $2 \times 30\text{ ml}$ ). Drying of the combined organic phases with  $\text{MgSO}_4$  and evaporation of the solvent *in vacuo* afforded crude **6** (*syn*: *anti*  $\approx$  85 : 15) as a brownish oil. After filtration through alumina (III, hexane/EtOAc = 7 : 3) the crude product was further purified by MPLC on alumina (III, hexane/EtOAc = 8.5 : 1.5) providing 0.060 g (28% overall) of pure **6** as colourless crystals. –  $[\alpha] = -43^{\circ}$  ( $c = 1.0$ ,  $\text{CH}_3\text{OH}$ ), [11] :  $[\alpha] = -48^{\circ}$  ( $c = 0.92$ ,  $\text{CH}_3\text{OH}$ ). –  $^1\text{H NMR}$  ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ,

300 MHz):  $\delta/\text{ppm} = 7.78\text{--}7.76$ ,  $7.53\text{--}7.30$  (2 m, 2H, 8H, Ph), 6.97 ( $d_{\text{broad}}$ ,  $J \approx 9\text{ Hz}$ , 1H, NH), 5.75 (dd,  $J = 2.0, 9.0\text{ Hz}$ , 1H, 3-H), 4.64 ( $t_{\text{broad}}$ ,  $J \approx 3.0\text{ Hz}$ , 1H, 2-H), 3.85 (s, 3H, OMe), 3.30 (d,  $J = 3.9\text{ Hz}$ , 1H, OH).

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