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A Stereoselective Synthesis of α-(1-Hydroxyalkyl)-β-Substituted Acrylic Acid Esters

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Abstract—Nucleophilic substitution of vinylic iodide of methyl 2-(1-hydroxyalkyl)-3-iodo prop-2-enoates 8 in the presence of magnesium dialkyl cuprates generated in situ provided a stereoselective methodology for the synthesis of infrequent β -substituted Baylis–Hillman products. © 2000 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

Since their first synthesis in 1972, α -(1-hydroxyalkyl) acrylic acid derivatives **1** commonly called Baylis–Hillman products¹ have been used by numerous researchers as particularly useful intermediates.² Although the α -hydroxymethylated analogues **2**³ (R=H) have recently been described, the α -substitution of 2-alkenoic esters providing β -branched Baylis–Hillman adducts **3**⁴ is difficult to obtain and has serious limitations. To overcome this problem several chemical solutions have been reported, most of them involving the generation of α -carbanion of α -silvl their derivatives,⁸ Tantalum-acetylenic complex⁹ and Reformatsky-type reaction¹⁰ using Cerium metal, have also been reported. As part of our research program on the synthesis and the reactivity of α -functional acrylic substrates **1**, we have recently reported the first examples of successful tandem: bromination–formylation–hydrolysis of readily available Baylis–Hillman products **1** giving rise to the preparation of (*E*)-2-(hydroxymethyl) alk-2-enoates **4**¹¹ and (*E*,*Z*)-2-(hydroxymethyl) alk-2-enenitriles **5**^{11,12} in good yields (Scheme 1).



Scheme 1.

t-butyl alk-2-enoates⁵ or substituted acetylenic esters⁶ by conjugated addition of mixed alkyl cuprates followed by addition of appropriate electrophiles (aldehyde or ketone). Some analogous α -(1-hydroxyalkyl) acrylic acid esters **1** have been obtained from the reaction coupling of reactive α , β -unsaturated vinyl moieties⁷ which can be generated from hydroalumination of α , β -acetylenic esters or ketones with carbonyl compounds. Alternatively, attempts to use vinyl carbanions derived from acrylic esters and

To complete this series, it was therefore of interest to find a new synthetic way for the preparation of α -(1-hydroxyalkyl)- β -substituted acrylic esters **3**. As reported in the literature, nucleophilic substitution of vinylic halide using organometallic species¹³ is a useful pathway for C–C bond formation. In this area, it occurred to us that the Baylis– Hillman derivatives **5** are ideal candidates for this target but our procedure which serves to prepare dialkyl (*E*)-2-bromomethylene glutarates **7**,¹⁴ failed and yielded epoxides **9**¹⁵ when applied to esters **1** (Scheme 2).

As alternative method, we have applied Lu's technique¹⁶ in which low-valent zirconium (derived from $ZrCl_4$ as Lewis acid) mediates conjugated addition of halide ion to the C–C

Keywords: Baylis-Hillman products; cuprates; nucleophilic substitution; stereoselectivity.

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Scheme 2.

triple bond of methyl propiolate. The arised vinyl anion was trapped with varied aldehydes or ketones as electrophiles leading to a stereoselective synthesis of methyl (Z,E)-2-(1-hydroxyalkyl)-3-iodo acrylates **10** (Table 1, Scheme 3).



Scheme 3.

Table 1. Synthesis of methyl 2-(1-hydroxyalkyl)-3-iodo acrylates 10

Entry	R ³	\mathbb{R}^4	Product 10 ¹⁷	Yield (%) ^a	Ratio Z:E ^b
1	<i>n</i> -pentyl	Н	10a	80	72:28
2	<i>i</i> -propyl	Н	10b	78	78:22
3	Methyl	Н	10c	47	70:30
4	Methyl	Methyl	10d	43	100:0

^a Isolated yields of products **8a–d** after column chromatography (silica gel, 2% AcOEt in hexane).

^b All the assigned structures have been confirmed by spectroscopic data

The interesting paper of Guigen Li¹⁷ and co-workers which have investigated a new stereoselective synthesis of compounds **3** via the formation of vinyl anion of β -substituted propiolate using drastic conditions (DIBAH, HMPA, *n*-Bu₂BOTf as catalyst in THF at -78° C), prompts us to report here a convenient method to accomplish a one step synthesis of β -substituted allylic alcohols **3** in high yields involving conjugate addition of organocuprates prepared in situ in THF at low temperature to α -functional- β -iodo acrylic esters **10** (Scheme 4, Table 2).

 β -Halo- α -substituted vinylic systems undergo cuprous salt promoted conjugated addition of Grignard reagents and lithium dialkyl cuprates. Analogue compounds β -substituted by an halogen as a leaving group and bearing α , α -disubstituted strongly electron withdrawing groups like adducts **3** are ambident electrophiles and their reactivity toward nucleophilic reagents has also been documented.¹⁸ In this context, preliminary experiments involved the treatment of functional iodo vinylic products **10** with lithium dialkyl cuprates in varying equivalents. The best results were obtained when cuprates are generated in situ from Grignard reagents (2.2 to 2.7 equiv.) in the presence of LiCuBr₂ as catalyst (3%). As reported in Table 2, the substitution reactions provided α , β -unsaturated esters **3** in high (*Z*)-stereoselectivity (% *Z*/*E*: 55–88/45–12) when applied to a mixture of 3-iodo acrylic esters **10**-(*Z*/*E*) while the substitution of pure **10**-(*Z*) or **10**-(*E*) was stereospecificly leading respectively to **3**-(*Z*) or **3**-(*E*) isomers.

In conclusion, we have demonstrated that Grignard reagents in the presence of 0.1 equiv. of LiCuBr₂ undergo facile reaction with β -iodo- α -functional acrylic esters **10** to provide a substitute method for the hitherto resistant Baylis–Hillman reaction of β -substituted acrylic acid esters.

Experimental

All reactions involving anhydrous conditions were conducted in dry glassware under a nitrogen atmosphere. Solvents were distilled under nitrogen immediately prior to use. Grignard reagents were prepared by the known procedures and stored under inert atmosphere. They were titrated prior to use,¹⁹ i.e. with 1 M solution of benzyl alcohol in toluene and 2,2'-biquinoline as indicator. Reactions were monitored with an Intersmat 20 M gas chromatograph using a 3 m column packed with 10% SE 30 and by TLC on silica gel plates (Fluka Kieselgel 60 F_{254}). For column chromatography, Fluka Kieselgel 70-230 mesh was used. The infrared (IR) spectra were determined on a Perkin–Elmer Paragon 1000 PC spectrophotometer. ¹H and ¹³C NMR (fully decoupled) and spectra were recorded on Bruker AMX 300 in CDCl₃ as solvent and TMS as the internal. GC-MS spectra were obtained using a HP 5890 chromatograph fitted with HP 1 (0.33 μ ×12 m) and HP 5889A quadripolar spectrometer in Electronic Impact (70 eV) or in Chemical Ionization (500 eV) with NH₃ gas. The fragmentation peaks are given in relative intensity (%).



 $Table 2. Synthesis of \alpha - (1-hydroxyalkyl) - \alpha, \beta - unsaturated esters 3 (all reactions were carried out in 10 mmol scale of methyl 2-(1-hydroxalkyl) - 3-iodo prop-2-iodo p$ enoates 10)

Substrate 10	R ³	\mathbb{R}^4	R ⁵ MgX (equiv.)	Time (min)	Product 3a-g	Ratio $(Z:E)^a$	Yield (%) ^b
10a-Z,E	n-Pentyl	Н	i-PrMgCl (2.2)	10	n-C ₅ H ₁₁ H 3a- <i>Z</i> , <i>E</i>	77:23 D ₂ Me	93
10a-Z	n-Pentyl	Н	<i>i</i> -PrMgCl (2.2)	10		100:0 D ₂ Me	94
10a-E	n-Pentyl	Н	i-PrMgCl (2.2)	10		0:100 O ₂ Me	94
10b-Z,E	i-Propyl	Н	n-PrMgCl (2.7)	15		88:12 Me	93
10b-Z,E	<i>i</i> -Propyl	Н	<i>n</i> -C ₆ H ₁₃ MgBr (2.5)	15		86:14 / e	95
10b-Z	<i>i</i> -Propyl	Н	<i>n</i> -BuMgBr (2.5)	15		100:0 9	93
10b-Z	<i>i</i> -Propyl	Н	<i>c</i> -C ₆ H ₁₁ MgCl (2.6)	15		100:0 1e	96
10c- <i>Z</i> , <i>E</i>	Methyl	Н	i-BuMgBr (2.5)	15		55:45 e	86
10d-Z	Methyl	Me	<i>i</i> -BuMgBr (2.7)	30	OH CH ₃ CH ₃ CH ₃ CH ₃ CH ₃ CH ₃ CH ₃ CH ₃ CH ₃	100:0 e	88

^a Stereochemistry of products was refered to the pure corresponding 3-iodo vinylic ester **10**-*Z* or **10**-*E* previously separated from the mixture. ^b Yields of isolated alcohols **3a**-**g** after silica gel chromatography (10% AcOEt in hexane).

Synthesis of methyl (*Z*,*E*)-2-(1-hydroxyalkyl)-3-iodo prop-2-enoates 10

Typical procedure. To a mixture of methyl propiolate (0.84 g, 10 mmol), hexanal (1.2 g, 12 mmol) and Bu₄NI (4 g, 11 mmol) in anhydrous CH₂Cl₂ (50 mL) was added ZrCl₄ (2.8 g, 12 mmol) at 0°C. After stirring at 0°C under N₂ for 5 h, the reaction was complete as monitored by TLC. Water (5 mL) was then added and followed by extraction with CH₂Cl₂ (3×50 mL). The combined organic layers were dried (MgSO₄) and evaporated under reduced pressure. The resulting residue was separated by chromatography on silca gel (2% AcOEt in hexane) to give **10a**-*Z*,*E* (80%). IR (neat): 1210, 1590, 1720, 3448 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) $\delta_{\rm H}$ 0.90 (t, 3H, *J*=7.1 Hz, *CH*₃(CH₂)₄); 1.2–1.6 (m, 8H, CH₃(CH₂)₄); 3.6 (br, 1H); 3.80 (s, 3H, OCH₃); 4.36 (m, 1H); 7.10 (s, 1H). *m/z* (C.I.) 313 (M⁺-OH, 4%); 241 (100).

Synthesis of methyl 2-(1-hydroxyalkyl) alk-2-enoates 3

General procedure. An ether or THF solution of alkylmagnesium halide RMgX (2.2 to 2.7 equiv.) was added dropwise over a period of 15–20 min to a mixture of 2-(1-hydroxyalkyl)-3-iodo acrylate *10* (10 mmol) and LiCuBr₂ (0.3 mL) in dry THF (40 mL) at -30° C under N₂. After a few minutes (TLC) at -30° C, the reaction mixture was quenched with a saturated NH₄Cl solution (20 mL), extracted with ether (3×30 mL) and subjected to standard workup. The crude methyl 2-(1-hydroxyalkyl) alk-2-enoates *3* were chromatographed on silica gel with 10% ethyl acetate in hexane as eluent.

Methyl (*Z*,*E*)-2-(1-hydroxyhexyl)-4-methyl pent-2-enoate 3a-*Z*,*E*. IR (neat): 1642, 1709, 3448 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) $\delta_{\rm H}$ 0.88 (t, 3H, *J*=6.6 Hz, *CH*₃CH₂); 1.10 (m, 6H, (*CH*₃)₂CH); 1.28 (m, 6H, CH₃(*CH*₂)₃CH₂); 1.59 (m, 2H, CH₂CH₂CHOH); 2.70 (s br, 1H, OH); 3.07 (m, 1H, =CHCH(CH₃)₂); 3.77 (s, 3H, CH₃O); 4.19 (t, 1H, *J*=6.7 Hz, CH₂CHOH); 5.87 (d, 1H, *J*=9.9 Hz, CHCH=C, *Z*); 6.56 (d, 1H, *J*=10.4 Hz, CHCH=C, *E*). ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) $\delta_{\rm C}$ 13.9 (*C*H₃CH₂); 22.2, 22.4 (CH₃CH₂); 22.5 (*C*H₃)₂CH); 25.5, 25.7 (*C*H₂CH₂CH₃); 27.2, 28.3 (*C*H₂CH₂CHOH); 31.4, 31.5 (*C*H₃O); 36.4, 37.1 (CH₂CH₂CHOH); 51.2 (*C*HC=C); 69.0, 74.0 (*C*HOH); 130.6, 131.8 (HC=*C*); 148.2, 150.2 (*C*H=C); 168.1 (COO). *m*/*z* (C.I.) 157 (M⁺-*n*-C₅H₁₁, 58%); 125 (100).

Methyl (*Z*)-2-(1-hydroxyhexyl)-4-methyl pent-2-enoate 3a-Z. IR (neat): 1646, 1712, 3447 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) $\delta_{\rm H}$ 0.88 (t, 3H, *J*=6.8 Hz, *CH*₃CH₂); 1.01 (2d, 6H, *J*=6.6 Hz, (*CH*₃)₂CH); 1.28 (m, 6H, CH₃(*CH*₂)₃CH₂); 1.59 (m, 2H, CH₂CH₂CHOH); 2.70 (s br, 1H, O*H*); 3.07 (m, 1H, =CHC*H*(CH₃)₂); 3.77 (s, 3H, CH₃O); 4.19 (t, 1H, *J*=6.7 Hz, CH₂CHOH); 5.87 (d, 1H, *J*=9.9 Hz, CHC*H*=C). ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) $\delta_{\rm C}$ 13.7 (*CH*₃CH₂); 22.2 (CH₃CH₂); 22.3 (*CH*₃)₂CH; 25.5 (*CH*₂CH₂CH₃); 28.3 (*CH*₂CH₂CHOH); 31.4 (*CH*₃O); 36.4 (*CH*₂CHOH); 51.2 (*CH*C=C); 74.0 (*C*HOH); 131.8 (HC=C); 148.2 (*C*H=C); 168.1 (*C*OO). *m*/*z* (C.I.) 157 (M⁺-*n*-C₅H₁₁, 58%); 125 (100).

Methyl (*E*)-2-(1-hydroxyhexyl)-4-methyl pent-2-enoate 3a-*E*. IR (neat): 1642, 1712, 3448 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) $\delta_{\rm H}$ 0.88 (t, 3H, *J*=6.7 Hz, *CH*₃CH₂); 1.05 (2d, 6H, *J*=10.2 Hz, (*CH*₃)₂CH); 1.26–1.51 (m, 8H, CH₃(*CH*₂)₄); 1.84 (s br, 1H, CHO*H*); 2.75 (m, 1H, =CHC*H*(CH₃)₂); 3.75 (s, 3H, *CH*₃O); 4.19 (t, 1H, *J*=6.7 Hz, CH₂CHOH); 6.56 (d, 1H, *J*=10.5 Hz, CHC*H*=C). ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) $\delta_{\rm C}$ 13.9 (*C*H₃CH₂); 22.1 (CH₃CH₂), 22.5 ((*C*H₃)₂CH); 25.7 (*C*H₂CH₂CH₃); 27.2 (*C*H₂CH₂CHOH); 31.5 (*C*H₃O); 37.1 (*C*H₂CHOH); 51.2 (*C*HC=C); 69.0 (*C*HOH); 130.6 (HC=*C*); 150.2 (*C*H=C); 168.1 (*C*OO). *m*/*z* (C.I.) 157 (M⁺-*n*-C₅H₁₁, 57%); 125 (100).

Methyl (Z,E)-2-[(1-hydroxy-2-methyl) propyl] hex-2-enoate **3b-Z,E.** IR (neat): 1638, 1709, 3448 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR $(300 \text{ MHz}, \text{ CDCl}_3) \delta_H 0.93-1.08 \text{ (m, 9H, (CH_3)_2CH,}$ CH₃CH₂); 1.45 (m, 2H, CH₃CH₂CH₂); 1.81 (m, 1H, $(CH_3)_2CHCHOH);$ 2.37 (td, 2H, J=7.4, 7.4 Hz, $CH_2CH_2CH=$); 3.00 (s br, 1H, OH); 3.76 (s, 3H, CH₃O); 3.88 (d, 1H, J=7.4 Hz, (CH₃)₂CHCHOH); 6.07 (t, 1H, J=7.4 Hz, CH₂CH=C, Z); 6.87 (t, 1H, J=7.4 Hz, CH₂CH=C, E). ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ_C 13.6 (CH₃CH₂); 18.0, 19.3 ((CH₃)₂CH); 22.3 (CH₂CH₂CH₃); 32.8 31.2 (*C*H₃O); (CHCHOH); 51.1, 51.4 (C=CHCH₂CH₂); 79.7, 80.6 (CHOH); 131.8, 133.2 (HC=C); 142.5, 144.9 (CH=C); 168.1 (COO). m/z (C.I.) 157 (M^+ -*i*-C₃H₇, 57%); 125 (100).

Methyl (Z,E)-2-[(1-hydroxy-2-methyl) propyl] non-2-enoate **3c-Z,E.** IR (neat): 1638, 1708, 3467 cm^{-1} . ¹H NMR $(300 \text{ MHz}, \text{ CDCl}_3) \delta_H 0.74-0.87 \text{ (m, 9H, (CH_3)_2CH,}$ CH₃CH₂); 1.19 (m, 6H, CH₃(CH₂)₃CH₂); 1.34 (m, 2H, CH₂CH₂CH₂); 1.74 (m, 1H, (CH₃)₂CHCHOH); 2.31 (td, 2H, J=7.2, 7.2 Hz, CH₂CH₂CH=); 3.15 (s br, 1H, OH); 3.69 (s, 3H, CH₃O); 3.82 (d, 1H, J=7.2 Hz, CHCHOH); 6.00 (t, 1H, J=7.5 Hz, CH₂CH=C, Z); 6.75 (t, 1H, J=7.5 Hz, CH₂CH=C, E). ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) $\delta_{\rm C}$ (*C*H₃(CH₂)₅); 17.7, 19.2 ((*C*H₃)₂CH); 13.7 22.3(CH₂CH₂CH₃); 29.0, 29.1, 29.3 ((CH₂(CH₂)₃CH₂); 31.3 (CH₃O); 32.7 (CHCHOH); 50.8, 51.2 (C=CHCH₂); 79.2, 80.5 (CHOH); 131.6, 133.1 (HC=C); 142.3, 145.0 (CH=C); 168.0 (COO). m/z (C.I.) 199 (M⁺-*i*-C₃H₇, 81%); 167 (100).

Methyl (*Z*)-2-[(1-hydroxy-2-methyl) propyl] hept-2-enoate 3d-Z. IR (neat): 1642, 1709, 3448 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) $\delta_{\rm H}$ 0.82–0.96 (m, 9H, (*CH*₃)₂CH, *CH*₃CH₂); 1.30–1.42 (m, 4H, CH₃(*CH*₂)₂CH₂); 1.82 (m, 1H, (*CH*₃)₂*CHCHOH*); 2.40 (td, 2H, *J*=7.1, 7.1 Hz, *CH*₂*CH*₂CH=); 3.09 (s br, 1H, OH); 3.75 (s, 3H, *CH*₃O); 3.89 (d, 1H, *J*=7.3 Hz, CHCHOH); 6.08 (t, 1H, *J*=7.5 Hz, *CH*₂*CH*=C). ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) $\delta_{\rm C}$ 13.6 (*CH*₃CH₂); 17.9, 19.3 ((*CH*₃)₂CH); 22.1 (*CH*₂CH₃); 28.9 (*CH*₂CH₂CH₃); 31.1 (*CH*₃O); 32.8 (*C*HCHOH); 51.0 (C=CHCH₂); 79.6 (*C*HOH); 133.0 (HC=*C*); 142.5 (*C*H=C); 168.1 (*C*OO). *m*/*z* (C.I.) 171 (M⁺-*i*-C₃H₇, 60%); 139 (100).

Methyl (*Z*)-2-[(1-hydroxy-2-methyl) propyl]-3-cyclohexyl prop-2-enoate 3e-Z. IR (neat): 1638, 1718, 3448 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) $\delta_{\rm H}$ 0.83, 0.94 (2d, 6H, *J*=6.6 Hz, (CH₃)₂CH); 1.20–1.28 (m, 6H, cC₆H₁₁); 1.71 (m, 4H, cC₆H₁₁); 1.79 (m, 1H, (CH₃)₂CHCHOH); 2.72 (m, 1H, cC₆H₁₁); 2.93 (s br, 1H, OH); 3.75 (s, 3H, CH₃O); 3.85 (d,

1H, *J*=7.3 Hz, (CH₃)₂CHCHOH); 5.86 (d, 1H, *J*=9.9 Hz, c(C₆H₁₁)CH=C). ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) $\delta_{\rm C}$ 17.9, 19.3 ((CH₃)₂CH); 25.2, 25.3, 25.6, 32.4, 32.8, 51.0 (cC₆H₁₁); 32.3 (CH₃O); 38.0 (CHCHOH); 79.6 (CHOH); 133.0 (HC=C); 147.4 (CH=C); 168.2 (COO). *m*/*z* (C.I.) 197 (M⁺-*i*-C₃H₇, 59%); 165 (100).

Methyl (*Z*,*E*)-2-(1-hydroxyethyl)-5-methyl hex-2-enoate 3f-*Z*,*E*. IR (neat): 1640, 1707, 3447 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) $\delta_{\rm H}$ 0.92, 0.95 (2d, 6H, *J*=6.8 Hz, (CH₃)₂CH); 1.33, 1.39 (2d, 3H, *J*=6.4 Hz, CH₃CHOH); 1.72 (m, 1H, (CH₃)₂CHCH₂); 2.12, 2.31 (2m, 2H, CHCH₂CH=); 3.3 (s br, 1H, OH); 3.76 (s, 3H, CH₃O); 4.62, 4.71 (2q, 1H, *J*=7.2 Hz, CH₃CHOH); 6.19 (t, 1H, *J*=7.5 Hz, CH₂CH=C, *Z*); 6.74 (t, 1H, *J*=7.5 Hz, CH₂CH=C, *E*). ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) $\delta_{\rm C}$ 22.1, 22.2 (CH₃)₂CH; 22.6, 22.9 (CHCH₂CH=); 28.1, 28.4 (CH₃O); 36.6, 36.9 (CH₃CHOH); 51.0 (CH₂CH=C); 64.7, 68.6 (CHOH); 134.1, 135.9 (HC=C); 139.6, 142.1 (CH=C); 167.4, 169.9 (COO). *m*/*z* (C.I.) 171 (M⁺-CH₃, 27%); 43 (100).

Methyl (*Z*)-2-[(1-hydroxy-1-methyl) ethyl]-5-methyl hex-2-enoate 3g-Z. IR (neat): 1654, 1725, 3448 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃) $\delta_{\rm H}$ 0.9 (d, 6H, *J*=6.7 Hz, (CH₃)₂CH); 1.41 (s, 6H, (CH₃)₂COH); 1.69 (m, 1H, (CH₃)₂CHCH₂); 2.07 (dd, 2H, *J*=7.2, 7.2 Hz, CHCH₂CH=); 3.12 (s br, 1H, OH); 3.79 (s, 3H, CH₃O); 5.98 (t, 1H, *J*=7.5 Hz, CH₂CH=C). ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃) $\delta_{\rm C}$ 22.2 (CH₃)₂CH; 28.4 (CHCH₂CH=); 29.3 (CH₃O); 38.4 (CH₃)₂COH; 51.2 (CH₂CH=C); 71.6 (CHOH); 133.1 (HC=C); 140.3 (CH=C); 169.7 (COO). *m/z* (C.I.) 185 (M⁺-CH₃, 51%); 153 (100).

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