

Pd-Catalyzed Sequential C–C Bond Formation and Cleavage: Evidence for an Unexpected Generation of Arylpalladium(II) Species

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S Supporting Information

ABSTRACT: A Pd(II)-catalyzed reaction engaging alkenyl β -keto esters is reported that leads to the formation of 1-naphthols and an unexpected generation of arylpalladium(II) species. Interception of the in situ generated arylpalladium(II) species in a Mizoroki–Heck reaction, together with additional mechanistic studies, provided strong evidence in support of the first *aromatization-driven* β -carbon elimination process. A single Pd catalyst served to promote a series of both C–C bond forming and cleavage events in an unprecedented manner.

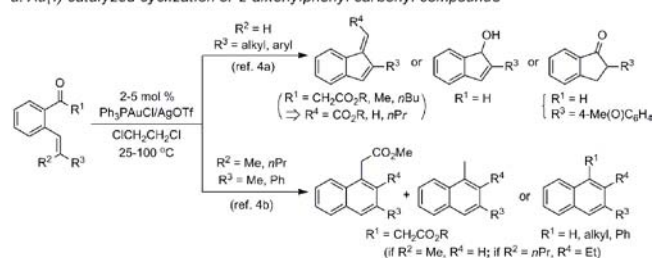
Transition-metal-catalyzed transformations involving the cleavage of chemically inert C–H¹ and C–C^{2,3} bonds have received widespread recent attention from the synthetic community. The latter transformations, generally more challenging, have been achieved primarily through oxidative insertion of a transition metal into the C–C bond or β -carbon elimination³ of a carbon–metal (i.e., M–C–C) or heteroatom–metal species (e.g., M–O–C–C). β -Hydride elimination is often a preferred competing pathway over β -carbon elimination, where the driving force to facilitate the latter process usually invokes the release of ring strain or the formation of a relatively more stable intermediate (such as a π -allylmetal intermediate). As such, programmed β -carbon elimination and its potential in organic synthesis remain a challenging area yet to be explored.

As part of our continued interest in transition-metal-mediated C–C bond-forming processes, we recently disclosed a Au(I)-catalyzed cyclization of 2-alkenylphenyl carbonyl compounds to afford a variety of indenes, indenols, indanones, and naphthalenes (Scheme 1a).⁴ Early on, we systematically examined various transition metals, and much to our surprise, an unexpected formation of 1-naphthol **2a** was observed when 2-alkenylphenyl β -keto ester **1aa** was exposed to a catalytic amount of Pd(II) under oxidative conditions (Scheme 1b).^{5–7} Indeed, on cursory inspection of the skeletal framework of the substrate (**1aa**) and the observed 1-naphthol product (**2a**), we realized the pendent phenyl group of the stilbene starting material had been cleaved during this process. Recognizing the novelty of this process in generating 1-naphthol derivatives, and more intriguingly, the origin of the unexpected C–C bond scission, here we report the findings of our methodological and mechanistic investigations.

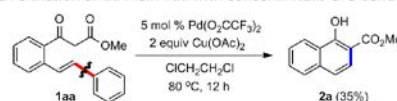
We began using **1aa** as the test substrate and soon identified Pd(O₂CCF₃)₂–Cu(OAc)₂ as the most effective Pd(II)–oxidant combination; no reaction was observed in the absence

Scheme 1. Transition-Metal-Mediated Cyclization of 2-Alkenylphenyl Carbonyl Compounds

a. Au(I)-catalyzed cyclization of 2-alkenylphenyl carbonyl compounds



b. Unexpected formation of **2a** from **1aa** with concomitant C–C bond cleavage

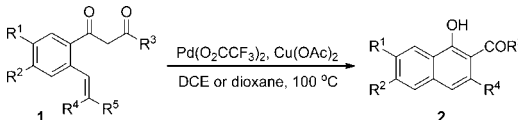


of either one of these reagents.⁸ The use of base or ligand as additives did not improve the production of **2a**, and the addition of BHT or ascorbic acid had no deleterious effect on the reaction, which excludes the presence of propagating radical species. Ultimately, the use of 5 mol % Pd(O₂CCF₃)₂ and 2 equiv of Cu(OAc)₂ in ClCH₂CH₂Cl (or dioxane) at 100 °C was identified as the optimal reaction protocol, and the reaction could be performed without strict exclusion of moisture and air. The established reaction parameters proved generally effective for a wide variety of substrates, as shown in Table 1. Substrates bearing substituted phenyl rings at R₅ were well-tolerated, with little electronic dependence, whereas R₅ = alkyl afforded only trace amount of the 1-naphthol product (entries 1–10). β -Keto esters bearing alkoxy substituents (entries 12–15) and 1,3-diketones (entries 16 and 17) were all competent substrates, apart from diaryl 1,3-diketone **1ha**. Allylic substrates **11b** and **1ma** also cyclized smoothly to afford 1-naphthols **2l** and **2m**, respectively (entries 24 and 25), but trisubstituted stilbene **1la** was unsuccessful in this reaction (entry 23).

Having established a workable condition for the conversion of 2-alkenylphenyl β -keto esters (and 1,3-diketones) to the 1-naphthol products, we next pursued in earnest the investigation of the unexpected C–C bond cleavage. As an entry point to this study, and because the conversion from **1** to **2** was generally modest, we set out to account for the mass balance through a series of detailed ¹H NMR and GC–MS analyses, together with the isolation of side products. We identified

Received: February 17, 2012

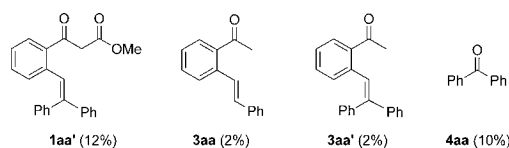
Published: June 21, 2012

Table 1. Pd-Catalyzed Synthesis of Various 1-Naphthols 2 from Alkenyl 1,3-Dicarbonyl Compounds 1^a


entry	substrate	time (h)	product	yield (%) ^b
1 ^c		7		68
2 ^c		4		62
3 ^d		6		67
4 ^c		1		63
5 ^d		10		64
6 ^c		12		67
7 ^c		17		65
8 ^c		4		62
9 ^c		24		trace
10 ^c		24		trace
11 ^d		8		51
12 ^c		8		54
13 ^c		8		56
14 ^c		6		55
15 ^c		5		40
16 ^c		6		64
17 ^c		6		62
18 ^c		24		0
19 ^d		2		52
20 ^d		2		56
21 ^c		7		68
22 ^c		4		64
23 ^c		24		0
24 ^d		4		64
25 ^c		23		64

^aReaction conditions: **1** (1 equiv), Pd(O₂CCF₃)₂ (5 mol %), and Cu(OAc)₂ (2 equiv) in ClCH₂CH₂Cl or dioxane at 100 °C. ^bIsolated yields. ^cIn ClCH₂CH₂Cl (0.025 M). ^dIn dioxane (0.1 M).

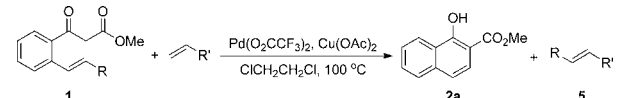
compounds **1aa'**, **3aa**, **3aa'**, and **4aa** as the principal byproducts in the reaction of **1aa** (Figure 1). **1aa'** and **3aa'** (and **4aa**, *vide infra*) were of particular interest due to the incorporation of an additional phenyl group (similar results were obtained for reactions with **1ae**, **1af**, and **1ag**⁸).

**Figure 1.** Major side products observed in the reaction of **1aa**.

While a clear mechanistic picture was elusive at this juncture, we hypothesized the incorporation of an additional phenyl group could invoke the participation of an Ar–M species generated in the reaction mixture. We further questioned if this Ar–M species could be intercepted with the introduction of a suitable electrophile. To our delight, when methyl acrylate was introduced to our standard reaction conditions using **1aa** as the substrate, cinnamate **5aa** was obtained in 58% yield, alongside the previously described **2aa** (63%, Table 2, entry 1). Depending on the 2-alkenylphenyl β -keto ester substrate, different substituted methyl cinnamates could be obtained in respectable yields (entries 1–12). Methyl acrylate could also be replaced with a diverse array of activated olefins (entries 13–21) and styrenes (entries 22–27).

With the successful identification of cinnamate and stilbene derivatives **5**, the involvement of an Ar–M species seems highly plausible. The presence of an Ar–M species (M = Pd) was deemed most likely, since its participation in the Mizoroki–Heck-type cross-coupling⁹ with various activated and non-activated olefins is well-precedented. A plausible mechanistic proposal is presented in Scheme 2. We speculate that the O,O'-bound complex **A**, formed initially upon treatment of **1** with Pd(II), first undergoes rearrangement to afford the alkene-coordinated C-bound tautomer **B**,¹⁰ which then engages in a *syn* carbopalladation across the stilbene olefin to generate transient intermediate **C** with concomitant C–C bond formation (B→C). At this point, intermediate **C**, with *syn*-orientated Pd and Ar substituents, is poised to undergo β -carbon elimination, leading to the generation of arylpalladium species **D**. We also speculate that, further to the prerequisite *syn* stereochemical arrangement of the Pd and Ar substituents in **C**, the formation of 1-naphthol (**2**) through *aromatization* provides an *additional and essential* driving force to facilitate the β -carbon elimination.¹¹ Carbopalladation of the external olefin with the newly generated arylpalladium species **D** in a Mizoroki–Heck manner affords the cross-coupling product **5**, where the so-liberated Pd(0) is reoxidized to Pd(II) with the aid of Cu(OAc)₂.

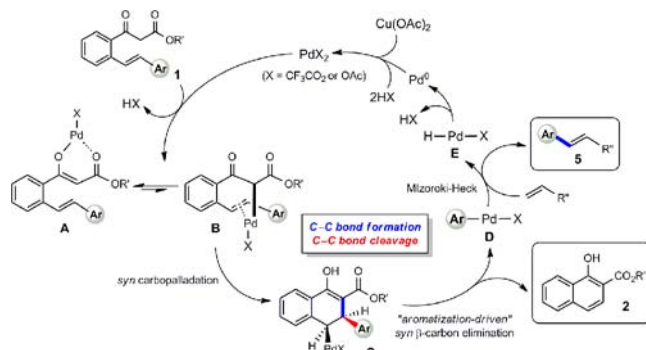
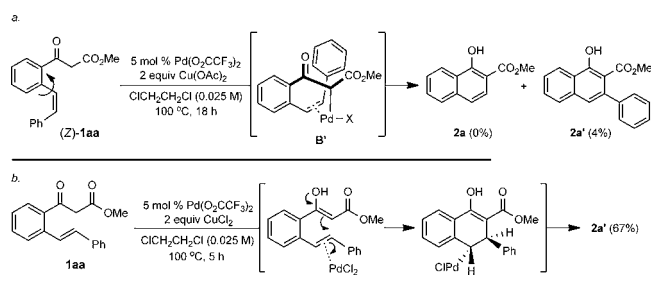
Several additional experiments and analysis provided further support for this mechanistic proposal. First, with the speculated arylpalladium species **D** in mind, several attempts to intercept and subsequently isolate the arylpalladium complex by the addition of amino or phosphino ligands proved unrewarding. Reaction of (*Z*)-**1aa** under the same reaction conditions failed to deliver any product **2a**. Although **2a'** could be speculated as the possible product resulting from the alternative β -hydride elimination pathway, we believe there is a significant energy barrier that prevents the *cis*-stilbene olefin from being in close enough proximity for the reaction to take place (**B'**, Scheme

Table 2. Pd-Catalyzed Reactions of Aryl-Substituted Alkenyl β -Keto Esters **1 with Olefins^a**


entry	R	R'	time (h)	yield (%) ^b	
				2a	5
1	Ph (1aa)	CO ₂ Me	8	63	58 (5aa)
2 ^c	4-MeC ₆ H ₄ (1ab)	CO ₂ Me	2	64	65 (5ab)
3 ^c	4-MeOC ₆ H ₄ (1ac)	CO ₂ Me	2	63	38 (5ac)
4	4-AcOC ₆ H ₄ (1ad)	CO ₂ Me	1	69	53 (5ad)
5	4-ClC ₆ H ₄ (1ae)	CO ₂ Me	2	62	59 (5ae)
6 ^d	4-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1af)	CO ₂ Me	4	69	63 (5af)
7 ^d	4-NO ₂ C ₆ H ₄ (1ag)	CO ₂ Me	5	66	68 (5ag)
8	3-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1al)	CO ₂ Me	2	69	69 (5ah)
9	2-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1am)	CO ₂ Me	3	65	64 (5ai)
10 ^e	4-PhC ₆ H ₄ (1an)	CO ₂ Me	5	63	42 (5aj)
11 ^{e,f}	1-naphthyl (1ao)	CO ₂ Me	6	62	59 (5ak)
12 ^c	C ₆ F ₅ (1ap)	CO ₂ Me	4	50	45 (5al)
13	4-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1af)	CO ₂ Et	2	75	65 (5ba)
14	4-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1af)	CO ₂ nBu	2	71	69 (5bb)
15	4-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1af)	CO ₂ tBu	2	71	65 (5bc)
16	4-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1af)	CONMe ₂	6	60	63 (5bd)
17	4-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1af)	COMe	2	57	64 (5be)
18 ^{e,f}	4-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1af)	SO ₂ Ph	6	57	34 (5bf)
19 ^{e,f}	4-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1af)	PO(OEt) ₂	6	63	54 (5bg)
20 ^f	4-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1af)		5	61	45 ^g (5bh)
21 ^f	4-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1af)		5	68	48 ^h (5bi)
22	4-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1af)	Ph	2	62	63 (5ca)
23	4-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1af)	4-MeC ₆ H ₄	2	70	66 (5cb)
24 ^c	4-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1af)	4-MeOC ₆ H ₄	8	56 ⁱ	61 ⁱ (5cc)
25 ^c	4-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1af)	4-ClC ₆ H ₄	2	67	66 (5cd)
26	4-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1af)	4-NO ₂ C ₆ H ₄	2	70	68 (5ce)
27 ^{e,f}	4-CF ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1af)	1-naphthyl	6	67	51 (5cf)

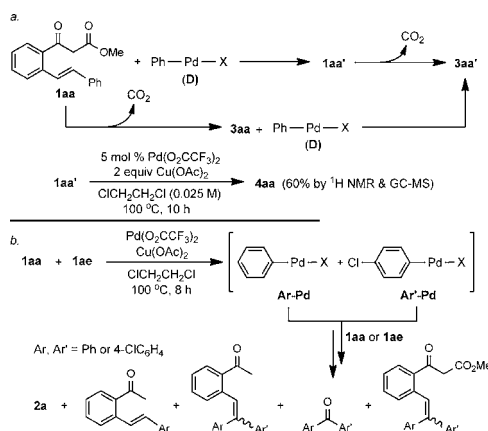
^aReaction conditions: **1** (1 equiv), olefin (2 equiv), Pd(O₂CCF₃)₂ (5 mol %), and Cu(OAc)₂ (2 equiv) in ClCH₂CH₂Cl (0.05 M) at 100 °C. ^bIsolated yields. ^c3 equiv of olefin. ^d1.5 equiv of olefin. ^e10 mol % Pd(O₂CCF₃)₂. ^f5 equiv of olefin. ^gInternal olefin and the corresponding *exo* olefin isomer were obtained in 28% and 17% yields, respectively. ^hThe inseparable mixture of internal olefin and the corresponding *exo* olefin isomer was obtained in 48% yield and a ratio of 42:58, determined by ¹H NMR. ⁱ**2a** and **5cc** were not separable; therefore, each yield was calculated from both the weight of the purified mixture of **2a** and **5cc** and their ratio, determined by ¹H NMR.

3a). The same steric argument could also account for the failure of substrate **1la** in this reaction. Interestingly, reaction of **1aa** in the presence of CuCl₂ instead of Cu(OAc)₂ gave a 3-phenyl-substituted 1-naphthol (**2a'**) as a sole product, which suggests a contrasting outer-sphere *anti* carbopalladation pathway through the in situ generated PdCl₂ (Scheme 3b).^{5c,6a,b}

Scheme 2. Proposed Mechanism**Scheme 3. Reactions of (Z)-**1aa** and **1aa** in the Presence of CuCl₂**

As alluded to earlier, reaction of **1aa** afforded **1aa'** and **3aa'** as the primary side products in addition to 1-naphthol **2a**. Mechanistically, the formation of **1aa'** and **3aa'** can now be easily rationalized through a Mizoroki–Heck reaction engaging arylpalladium species **D** and **1aa** and subsequent decarboxylation (or through decarboxylated **3aa** and its Mizoroki–Heck reaction with **D**), respectively (Scheme 4a). Crossover experiments between **1aa** and **1ae** afforded the byproduct mixture containing all the possible combinations, which further supports the generation of Ar–Pd (**D**, and Ar'–Pd) during the reaction (Scheme 4b). Pd-mediated oxidative cleavage of substituted stilbene (i.e., **1aa'** or **3aa'**) has also been reported,¹² and has been validated by us experimentally (**4aa**, Scheme 4a).

Finally, in the competition experiments between alkenyl β -keto esters with varying substituents on the departing aryl ring (**1aa**, **1ac**, **1af**, **1ag**), electron-rich substrates generally proceeded significantly faster than their electron-deficient

Scheme 4. Formation of Side Products and Crossover Experiments

counterparts (Table 3). This electronic dependence is in agreement with the migratory aptitude of the aryl group during

Table 3. Competition Experiments of 4'-Substituted Aryl-Containing Alkenyl β -Keto Esters 1

entry	1A	1B	1A (%) ^a	1B (%) ^a	2a (%) ^b	5A (%) ^a	5B (%) ^a	mass balance ^{d,e}
1 ^{d,e}	1aa	1ac	24 (1aa)	6 (1ac)	42	38 (5aa)	32 (5ac)	60.5 / 53.5
2	1aa	1af	0 (1aa)	36 (1af)	49	51 (5aa)	46 (5af)	67 / 66.5
3	1aa	1ag	0 (1aa)	36 (1ag)	40	50 (5aa)	30 (5ag)	58 / 58
4 ^f	1ac	1ag	0 (1ac)	49 (1ag)	39	32 (5ac)	11 (5ag)	66.5 / 49

^aIsolated yields of each recovered starting material (1A and 1B) and products (5A and 5B) based on amount used of 1A or 1B. ^bIsolated yield of 2a and mass balance based on total amount of 1A and 1B. ^cFirst and second mass balances based on the amount of recovered 1A/1B, byproduct (if any), and products either 2a or 5A/5B, respectively. ^dFor 6 h. ^eDecarboxylated byproduct 3aa obtained in 7% isolated yield based on the amount used of 1aa. ^fDecarboxylated byproduct 3ag obtained in 6% isolated yield based on the amount used of 1ag.

the β -carbon elimination. Furthermore, the β -carbon elimination is expected to take place much more effectively for M–C–C–C(sp²) species than M–C–C–C(sp³) species (cf. substrates 1ai and 1aj).

In summary, we have developed a novel and concurrent preparation of 1-naphthols and cinnamate/stilbene derivatives through a Pd(II)-catalyzed reaction of 2-alkenylphenyl β -keto esters and 1,3-diketones with olefins. More significantly, we have uncovered an unprecedented catalytic process that operates through a unique mode of C–C bond activation. A single catalytic system enabled intramolecular C–C bond formation through inner-sphere *syn* carbopalladation, C–C bond cleavage via a novel aromatization-driven *syn* β -carbon elimination followed by intermolecular C–C bond formation in a Mizoroki–Heck manner. These new findings may expand the current understanding of Pd(II) reactivity and present new opportunities to broaden the current lexicon of Pd(II)-catalyzed (cascade) transformations. Further investigations to expand this concept together with detailed mechanistic studies are currently underway in our laboratory.

■ ASSOCIATED CONTENT

Supporting Information

Full experimental details and characterization data. This material is available free of charge via the Internet at <http://pubs.acs.org>.

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Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

■ ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work was supported by Basic Science Research Program through the National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF) funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (Nos. 2011-0003705 and 2012-0002223). We sincerely thank Professor David Yu-Kai Chen (Department of Chemistry,

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