

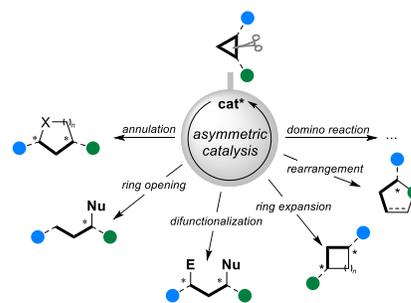
Catalytic Enantioselective Ring-Opening Reactions of Cyclopropanes

Vincent Pirene,[†] Bastian Muriel[†] and Jerome Waser*^{*}

[†]These authors contributed equally to this work.

Laboratory of Catalysis and Organic Synthesis, Institute of Chemical Sciences and Engineering, Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, EPFL SB ISIC LCSO, BCH 4306, 1015 Lausanne, Switzerland.

ABSTRACT: This review describes the development of enantioselective methods for the ring-opening of cyclopropanes. Both approaches based on reaction of non-chiral cyclopropanes and (dynamic) kinetic resolutions and asymmetric transformations of chiral substrates are presented. The review is organized according to substrate classes, starting by the more mature field of Donor-Acceptor cyclopropanes. Emerging methods for enantioselective ring-opening of Acceptor- or Donor-only cyclopropanes are then presented. The last part of the review describes the ring-opening of more reactive three-membered rings substituted with unsaturations, with a particular focus on vinylcyclopropanes, alkylidenecyclopropanes and vinylidenecyclopropanes. In the last two decades, the field has grown from a proof of concept stage to a broad range of methods for accessing enantio-enriched building blocks, and further extensive developments can be expected in the future.



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1. Introduction

Cyclopropanes, as smallest carbocycles, have always attracted the attention of chemists. The presence of torsional and angle strain for a total of about 115 KJ mol⁻¹ sets the stage for ring-opening reaction to access functionalized chiral building blocks.¹ Even with the presence of ring-strain, the carbon-carbon bonds remain stable, so that catalysts were developed to achieve ring-opening under mild conditions. This synthetic strategy is attractive, as many methods are now available for accessing cyclopropanes stereoselectively. Therefore, the most common approach for accessing enantioenriched building blocks from cyclopropanes is through their stereospecific (enantio- and/or diastereospecific) ring-opening.² An alternative approach is the enantioselective ring-opening of cyclopropanes, which has been extensively investigated since 2005, and is having therefore an increasing impact in synthetic

chemistry. Nevertheless, to the best of our knowledge, this topic has never been described in a single dedicated review. Only the specific case of enantioselective ring opening of Donor-Acceptor cyclopropanes has been recently covered.³

From the point of view of enantioinduction, two strategies can be followed (Figure 1A):

- 1) Starting from non-chiral cyclopropane (Class I), either simple substrates with substituents on a single carbon or more complex meso-compounds.
- 2) Using more complex multi-substituted cyclopropanes, which are themselves chiral (Class II). In this case, kinetic resolutions or asymmetric transformations can be used to access enantiopure ring-opening products starting from racemic cyclopropanes. Nevertheless, the theoretical maximal yield of such transformations is only 50%. Major efforts have been consequently invested in the last decades to develop dynamic processes, allowing to convert the starting material completely to the desired product.

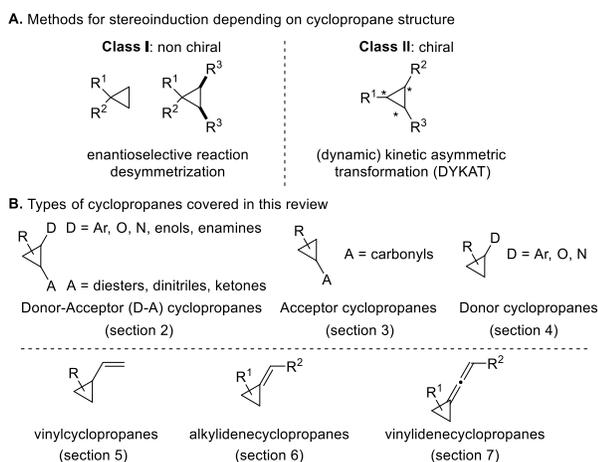


Figure 1. Methods for stereoinduction (A) and types of cyclopropanes covered in this review (B).

The choice of chiral catalyst and activation principle is highly dependent on the structure of the cyclopropanes. Therefore, this review has been organized along the most important classes of three-membered rings (Figure 1B). It will start with **Donor-Acceptor (D-A) cyclopropanes** (section 2). The inherent push-pull system in vicinal D-A cyclopropanes polarizes the C-C bond and strongly facilitates the ring-opening process. Upon activation, a formal 1,3-dipole is formed and can react with a nucleophile, an electrophile or a dipolarophile leading to acyclic or cyclic products. This exceptional reactivity has been widely used in synthetic chemistry and has been covered by numerous reviews,⁴ with only one dedicated to enantioselective transformations.³ The most frequently used acceptor is by far a diester group, although ketones, nitriles and nitro groups have been used in some instance. The donors are most frequently (hetero)aryls and heteroatoms, with some examples of enolates or enamines. Alkyl groups are only weakly electron-donating and have not been considered as donors for this review. Section 3 and 4 will be dedicated to **Acceptor** and **Donor-only-activated cyclopropanes** respectively. These classes of substrates are more difficult to activate and have been less investigated, but recent exciting progress has been realized, especially based on transition metal catalysis⁵ or the formation of reactive intermediates, such as radicals⁶ or carbocations.

Enantioselective methods have just started to emerge in this case. Again, carbonyl groups were most frequently used as acceptors, whereas heteroatoms dominate as donors. Finally, the last three sections will discuss special classes of cyclopropanes substituted with C-C unsaturations: **Vinylcyclopropanes** (section 5), **alkylidenecyclopropanes** (section 6) and **vinylidenecyclopropanes** (section 7). The presence of the more reactive π systems opens the way for other types of transition metal-based activations, which has been described in dedicated reviews,⁷ none of them specific to asymmetric transformations however. Cyclopropanes have been only rarely used in asymmetric ring-opening transformations and are not covered in this review.⁸

2. Donor-Acceptor cyclopropanes

Due to the presence of a highly polarized bond, catalytic activation of D-A cyclopropanes is easy and has been extensively investigated.^{3,4} Ring-opening is usually triggered by a LUMO-lowering Lewis acid catalyst through coordination of the electron-withdrawing substituent, very often via chelation to a diester, facilitating attack by a nucleophile. In contrast, the HOMO-raising approach (activation of the electron-donating group) is less frequent and has been mostly achieved via enamine/enolate formation or Umpolung of carbonyls with a carbene catalyst. In this section, enantioselective reactions using D-A cyclopropanes will be discussed, classified according to the chemical transformation: annulations, ring-opening reactions, domino reactions and rearrangements.

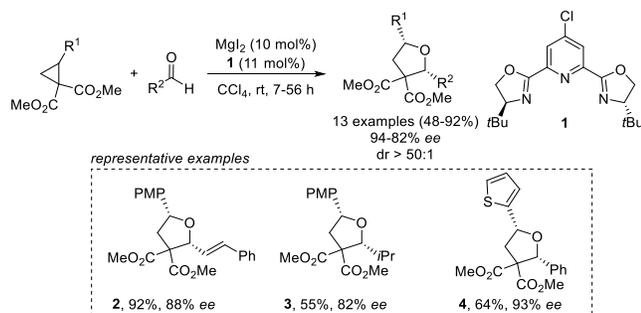
2.1. Annulation reactions

D-A cyclopropanes have been widely used in annulation reactions for which enantioselective versions were first developed as compared to ring-opening reactions. Due to the importance of five-membered carbocycles and heterocycles, studies have focused on enantioselective (3+2) annulations with different π -systems such as silyl enol ethers, carbonyl compounds or imines. Enantioselective (3+3) annulations have also been investigated with nitrones or azomethine imines. Finally, less common annulations, such as (4+3) or (2+2) processes, were also reported.

2.1.1. (3+2) Annulations

Enantioselective annulation reactions with an achiral cyclopropane system (acceptor-activated cyclopropane) was first described in 2005 by Sibi and co-workers (*vide infra*). Following this pioneering work, an important breakthrough was accomplished by the group of Johnson with chiral D-A cyclopropanes. Johnson and Parsons reported in 2009 the enantioselective synthesis of tetrahydrofurans derivatives through a dynamic kinetic asymmetric (3+2) annulation of racemic D-A cyclopropanes and aldehydes (Scheme 1).⁹ The development of this DYKAT strategy was later highlighted in a Perspective.¹⁰ Initial studies revealed that the *p*-methoxyphenyl substituted diester cyclopropane was best suitable for a DYKAT as it undergoes fast ring opening under Lewis acid coordination. After examination of several pyBOX ligands with MgI₂ as catalyst, **1** provided the tetrahydrofuran derivatives with the highest enantiopurity. Electron-rich, cinnamyl and aliphatic aldehydes undergo the cycloaddition reaction with activated cyclopropanes such as *p*-methoxyphenyl and 2-thienyl substituted cyclopropanes furnishing cycloadducts such as **2-4** in good yield and enantioselectivity.

Scheme 1. Dynamic kinetic asymmetric (3+2) cycloaddition of racemic D-A cyclopropanes and aldehydes reported by Johnson and co-workers.



Racemization/epimerization of the starting material or a reaction intermediate is needed for a DYKAT process. The phenyl-substituted D-A cyclopropane ($R^1 = \text{Ph}$) is not reactive enough to allow racemization and is therefore suitable only for a kinetic resolution. Reaction on the racemic phenyl-substituted D-A cyclopropane revealed that the (*S*)-enantiomer reacts faster. Based on this observation and the stereochemistry of the product, the authors proposed a stereochemical model based on a magnesium-cyclopropane chelate complex displaying octahedral geometry (Figure 2). Even though steric interactions might occur between the *t*Bu and the aryl group in the complex formed by the *S* enantiomer (complex **I**), the aldehyde's approach suffers from unfavorable steric interactions with the aryl group in the complex formed by the *R* substrate (complex **II**), leading to slower reaction.

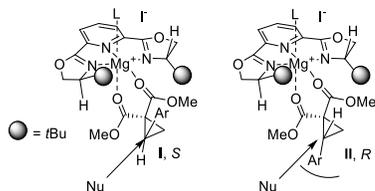
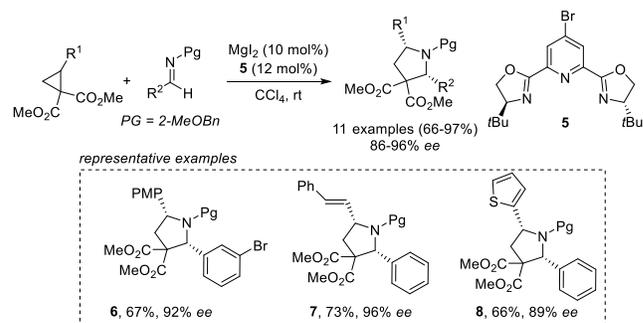


Figure 2. Proposed stereochemical model.

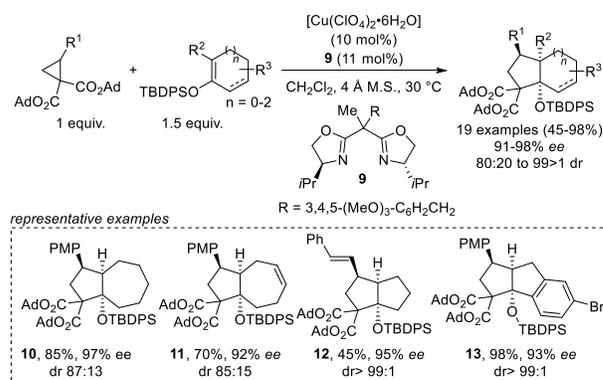
The same group applied the DYKAT to the synthesis of 2,5-*cis*-substituted pyrrolidines from racemic cyclopropanes and (*E*)-aldimines (Scheme 2).¹¹ Previous observations by Kerr and Tang showed that an *N*-benzyl protecting group for aldimines favors a *cis* selectivity.¹² Using the previous conditions (MgI_2 and **1**) and alkoxy-substituted benzyl protecting groups, high yields and enantioselectivities were obtained. Finally, by screening various 4-*X*-*t*BupyBOX ligands, 4-*Br*-*t*BupyBOX (**5**) was selected as it furnished the pyrrolidine from challenging electron-rich aldimines with high yield and enantioselectivity. Yields and enantioselectivities were high with electron-rich and -neutral aryl aldimines to give pyrrolidines such as **6-8**. However, electron-poor aryl, alkenyl and aliphatic aldimines were not successful in this transformation.

Scheme 2. Asymmetric (3+2) annulation of D-A cyclopropanes with aldimines reported by Johnson and co-workers.



The breakthrough of Johnson's work served as inspiration for many other reports. The initially developed Mg-PyBox catalytic system was improved and other metals as well as other BOX ligands have been used. Tang and co-workers developed a copper-catalyzed enantioselective and diastereoselective annulation reaction of cyclic enol ethers with racemic D-A cyclopropanes allowing the synthesis of [n.3.0] carbocycles (Scheme 3).¹³ This reaction was exemplified with five-, six-, and seven-membered silyl enol ethers with *para*-methoxyphenyl- (PMP), 2-thiophenyl-, 3,4,5-trimethoxyphenyl- (TMP), and alkenyl-substituted D-A cyclopropanes to give carbocycles such as **10-12**. This work was also extended to benzene-fused silyl enol ethers furnishing cyclic products such as **13** with high yield and diastereoselectivities (>99:1). In addition to set the bicyclic skeleton, this method installs a tertiary alcohol at the ring junction and at least two stereocenters in one-step with good to excellent yield and high enantiomeric excess. Key for high enantiomeric excess was the introduction of a bulky aryl sidearm group (*R*) at the bridging carbon atom of the BOX ligand (**9**) combined with adamantyl ester groups on the cyclopropanes. It is worth mentioning that kinetic resolution can be applied with less reactive cyclopropanes (*e.g.* phenyl-substituted).

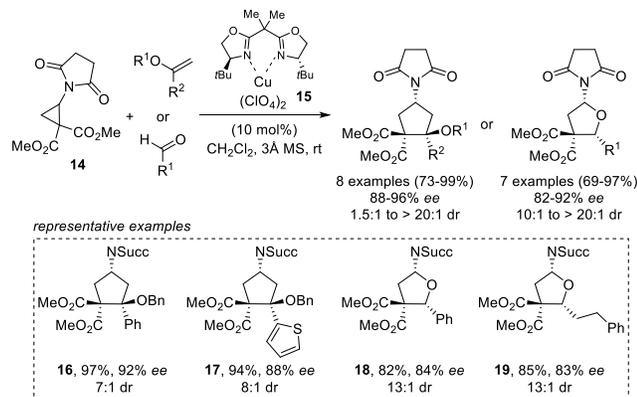
Scheme 3. Copper-catalysed (3+2) cycloaddition of cyclic silyl enol ethers with D-A cyclopropanes reported by Tang and co-workers.



Our group described the first example of a copper-catalyzed (3+2) annulation reaction of aminocyclopropane **14** with enol ethers and aldehydes through a DYKAT process (Scheme 4).¹⁴ The same copper catalyst bearing a *t*BuBOX ligand (**15**), is used

both for the synthesis of cyclopentanes and tetrahydrofurans. The stereoselectivity and the efficiency of the reaction were improved by modifying the substituent on the nitrogen of the cyclopropane, by increasing the steric hindrance of the substituent on the ligand and finally by changing the counterion of the metal catalyst. Thus, the combination of succinimide, *t*BuBOX ligand and Cu(ClO₄)₂ as the copper source furnished cyclopentylamines, such as **16** or **17**, and tetrahydrofuran derivatives, such as **18** or **19**, with excellent yields and good enantio- and diastereoselectivities.

Scheme 4. Dynamic kinetic asymmetric (3+2) annulation of aminocyclopropane **14 with enol ethers and aldehydes reported by Waser and co-workers.**



A speculative stereochemical model, disclosed in Figure 3, was also proposed: the nucleophile attack is faster in the complex formed by the *R* enantiomer of cyclopropane **14** (complex **I**) whereas attack of the nucleophile is blocked by the *tert*-butyl substituents of the ligand in the complex formed by the *S* enantiomer (complex **II**).

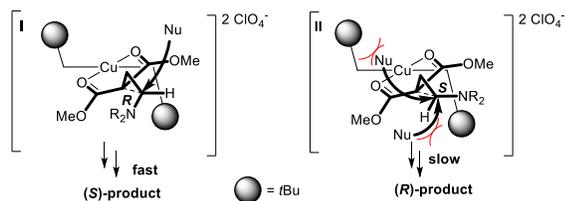
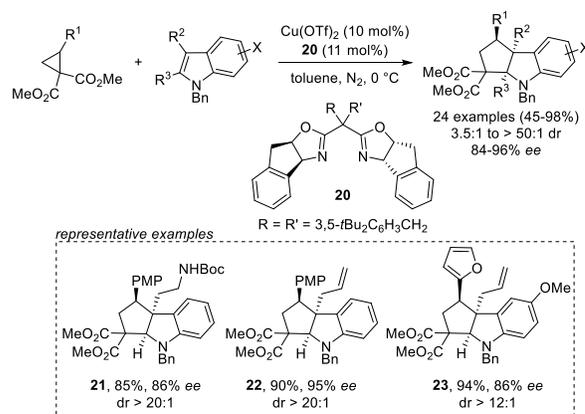


Figure 3. Proposed speculative stereochemical model for the (3+2) annulation reaction of aminocyclopropanes.

As illustrated above classical π -systems (carbonyl, imines and olefins) were successfully used in enantioselective (3+2) annulation reactions with D-A cyclopropanes. More challenging dearomatization reactions were also studied with indoles and benzazoles. The group of Tang described a copper-catalysed asymmetric (3+2) annulation of indoles with D-A cyclopropanes leading to enantioenriched C2,C3-fused indoline products such as **21-23** with excellent yields and diastereoselectivities (Scheme 5).¹⁵ Again, the modification of the side-arm group (R = Me and R' = benzyl) allowed them to improve the catalyst activity as well as the enantioselectivity. The cage-like BOX ligand **20** with two *tert*-butyl groups at the *meta* position of the pendant benzyl groups was identified as the best ligand. The reaction tolerated substitutions on the indole motif and functionalized alkyl chains at the C3 position (R¹) without major erosion of the enantioselectivity. The scope was

extended to heteroaryl-, alkenyl-, and vinyl-substituted D-A cyclopropanes with good yields and enantioselectivities.

Scheme 5. Copper-catalyzed asymmetric (3+2) annulation of indoles with D-A cyclopropanes reported by Tang and co-workers.



The authors also proposed a tentative stereochemical model based on the square-planar geometry of bisoxazoline copper complexes (Figure 4). The enantioinduction was explained by the favored approach of the *Si* face of the indole to the (*R*)-cyclopropane in complex **I**, thus avoiding steric interactions present in the complex **II** formed by the *S* enantiomer.

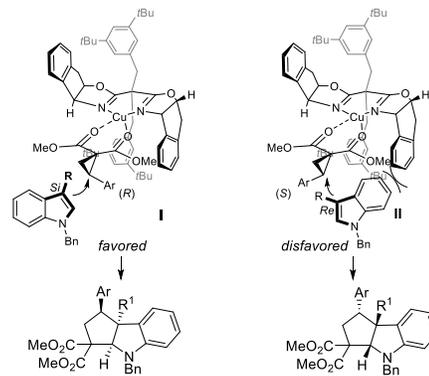
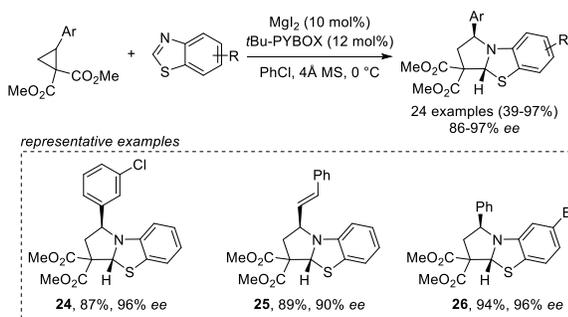


Figure 4. Proposed stereochemical model.

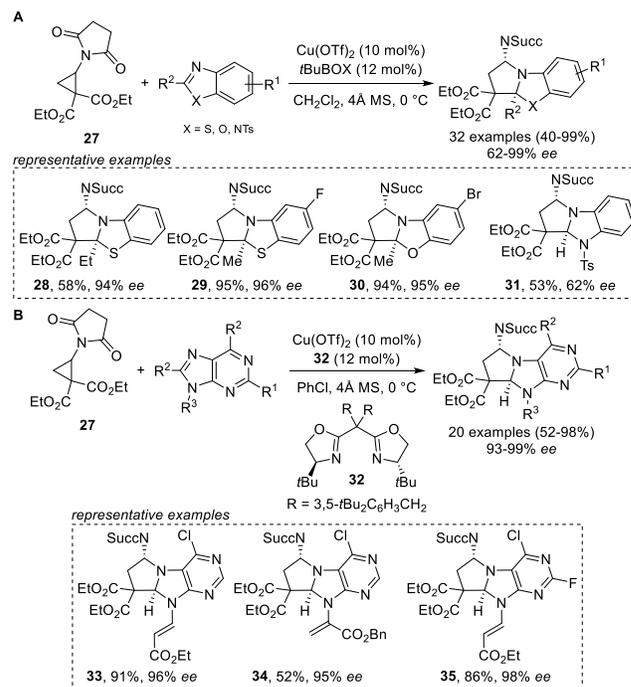
Enantioselective dearomative (3+2) annulations of benzothiazoles with D-A cyclopropanes were described by You and co-workers (Scheme 6).¹⁶ Here also, the DYKAT strategy was successfully applied leading to enantioenriched hydropryrrolo-thiazoles. The *t*Bu-PYBOX ligand combined with MgI₂ gave the best enantioselectivity when the reaction was performed at 0 °C in chlorobenzene. Overall, excellent yields and good *ee* values were obtained for electron-rich or electron-deficient aryl cyclopropanes and benzothiazoles to give products such as **24-26**. The authors also applied the same catalytic system in a kinetic resolution process.

Scheme 6. Dearomative (3+2) annulations of D-A cyclopropanes with benzothiazoles reported by You and co-workers.



The same group published later a dearomative (3+2) cycloaddition reaction of benzazoles with aminocyclopropanes (Scheme 7A).¹⁷ Enantioenriched hydropyrrolo-benzazoles containing quaternary stereocenters were obtained via a kinetic resolution using Cu(OTf)₂ as the copper source and the *t*BuBOX ligand. The use of succinimidyl cyclopropane **27** in excess (4 equiv.) was crucial to reach good yields and excellent enantioselectivities. Concerning the scope, benzothiazoles and benzoxazoles were suitable substrates giving dearomatization products such as **28-30** in high yield and enantioselectivity. Benzimidazoles showed some limitations, giving products such as **31** in only moderate yield and enantioselectivity. This catalytic asymmetric dearomatization (CADA) reaction was also applied by Guo and co-workers to purines generating enantioenriched dearomatized purine frameworks such as **33-35** (Scheme 7B).¹⁸ This (3+2) cycloaddition was also found to be chemoselective when N9-alkenyl-substituted purines were used. The annulation products on the C=C double bond at the N9-position were not observed.

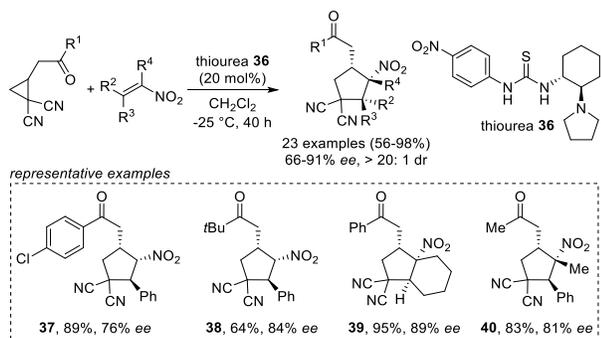
Scheme 7. Enantioselective dearomative (3+2) annulations of benzazoles reported by You and co-workers (A) and of purines by Guo and co-workers (B) with aminocyclopropane **27.**



In addition, Baneerje and Verma attempted to apply their racemic (3+2) annulation of D-A cyclopropanes with enamines to a dynamic kinetic asymmetric version.¹⁹ Unfortunately, low enantio- and diastereoselectivity were obtained.

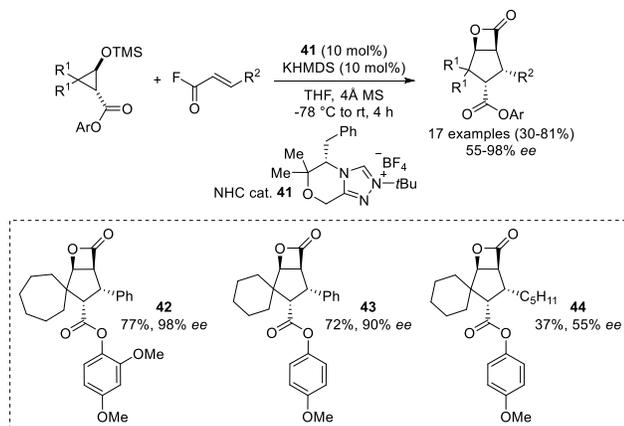
All the examples above consist in the activation of the cyclopropane by a LUMO-lowering catalyst using a chiral metal complex. In (3+2) cycloaddition reactions, only two reports described the HOMO-raising activation of cyclopropanes through organocatalysis. First, a remarkable enantioselective organocatalytic (3+2) cycloaddition of racemic D-A cyclopropylketones with nitroolefins was described by Jørgensen and co-workers based on a new nucleophilic activation mode of D-A cyclopropanes combined with electrophilic activation of the nitroolefins using bifunctional urea-amine catalyst **36** (Scheme 8).²⁰ Racemic di-cyano cyclopropylketones were activated by the basic pyrrolidine in **36**, whereas the thiourea lowered the LUMO of the nitroolefin. From bifunctional derivatives obtained by varying the tertiary amine and the electronic properties of the aromatic ring on the urea, the *para*-NO₂-substituted thiourea **36** delivered cycloadducts such as **37-40** in best yields and *ee* values, ranging from 66 to 91%, which can be improved to 99% by recrystallization. The electron-withdrawing ability of the NO₂ benzene substituent had a crucial role in increasing the hydrogen-donor character of the thiourea, leading to enhanced reactivity.

Scheme 8. Brønsted base catalyzed (3+2) annulation of D-A cyclopropylketones with nitroolefins reported by Jørgensen and co-workers.



An enantioselective (3+2) annulation between racemic D-A cyclopropanes and α,β -unsaturated acyl fluoride catalyzed by a chiral NHC organocatalyst was described by Lupton and co-workers (Scheme 9).²¹ This reaction was proposed to occur via a α,β -unsaturated acyl azolium intermediate generated through the reaction of the NHC catalyst with the acyl fluoride, at the same time releasing a fluoride anion, which activates the cyclopropane nucleophilically by desilylation. The chiral triazolylidene NHC catalyst **41** afforded the highest enantioselectivity. In terms of catalytic activity, the authors observed that electron-rich substituents on the nitrogen (*e.g.* alkyl or aryl) gave the expected product, while strong electron-poor substituents (*e.g.* C_6F_5) gave an inactive catalyst. The catalyst **41** with a *tert*-butyl group on the nitrogen was therefore selected. Tricyclic products such as **42** and **43** were obtained with high enantioselectivity. Erosion of the *ee* values was observed with β -alkyl α,β -unsaturated acyl fluoride (product **44**) and cinnamoyl fluorides bearing electron-poor substituents.

Scheme 9. NHC-catalyzed (3+2) annulation of racemic D-A cyclopropanes with α,β -unsaturated acyl fluorides reported by Lupton and co-workers.

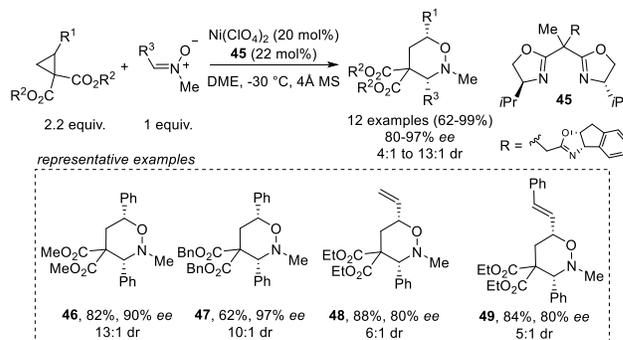


2.1.2. (3+3) Annulations

Inspired by the work of Sibi on the enantioselective (3+3) annulation of non-chiral cyclopropane diesters with nitrones (*vide infra*), Tang and co-workers published in 2007 an enantioselective and diastereoselective (3+3) cycloaddition of racemic D-A cyclopropanes with nitrones (Scheme 10).²² Application of their previously developed pseudo- C_3 -symmetric trisoxazoline (TOX) ligands²³ with $Ni(ClO_4)_2$

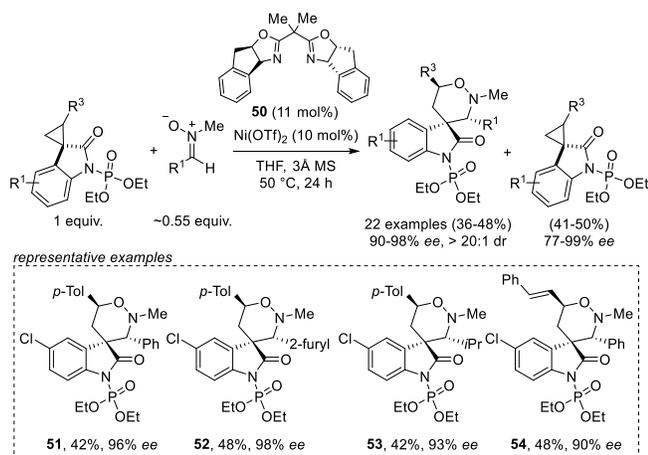
provided tetrahydro-1,2-oxazine derivatives in good yields but low enantiomeric excess. Finally, trisoxazoline **45** possessing an improved sidearm group gave good yields, d.r. and *ee* values. Methyl ester groups on the cyclopropane (product such as **46**) gave lower enantioselectivities than benzyl ester groups (products such as **47**). Vinyl- and styryl-substituted cyclopropanes could also be used in the reaction to give products such as **48** and **49**. This catalyst system could be applied for a kinetic resolution by reversing the cyclopropane/nitron ratio. This provided an access to enantioenriched D-A cyclopropanes.

Scheme 10. Enantioselective (3+3) annulation of D-A cyclopropanes with nitrones reported by Tang and co-workers.



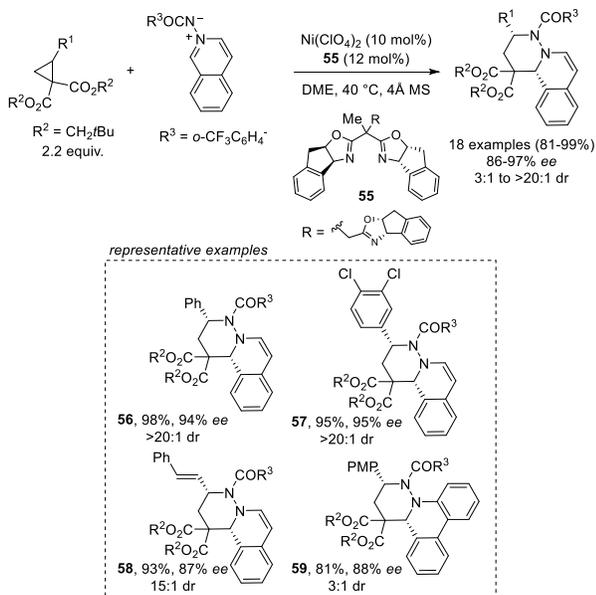
Zhou and co-workers reported the synthesis of optically active spirocyclic compounds (Scheme 11).²⁴ Spirocyclopropyl oxindoles were opened through an enantioselective (3+3) cycloaddition with aldonitrones and ketonitrones with a BOX (**50**)/ $Ni(OTf)_2$ chiral complex through a kinetic resolution. Amongst the screened protecting groups for the spirocyclopropyl oxindole, *N*-diethoxyphosphoryl led to the highest activity and diastereoselectivity. Spirocyclic products such as **51-54** were formed with high *ee* values, the starting cyclopropanes being recovered in good enantiopurity in most cases. Acetophenone-derived ketonitrones were also used giving spirocyclic oxindoles with an adjacent all-carbon quaternary stereocenter. A stepwise annulation mechanism was proposed to explain the observed diastereoselectivity, involving the *O*-attack of the nitron to the cyclopropane coordinated by the chiral Lewis acid, followed by an intramolecular Mannich cyclisation.

Scheme 11. Enantioselective (3+3) annulation of spirocyclopropyl oxindoles with aldonitrones and ketonitrones reported by Zhou and co-workers.



In their continuous research for enantioselective transformations based on the modification of BOX ligands using the sidearm strategy, the group of Tang also reported an enantioselective (3+3) cycloaddition of aromatic azomethine imines with D-A cyclopropanes (Scheme 12).²⁵ After screening several ligands focusing on side-arm optimization and fine-tuning of the substrate, the TOX (trisoxazoline) ligand **55** combined with a sterically hindered neopentyl ester group on the cyclopropane gave highest *ee* values. Aryl, heterocyclic, styryl and vinyl donor groups (R^2) were well tolerated in this transformation leading to 6,6,6-tricyclic dihydroisoquinoline derivatives such as **56-59** in high yields and enantioselectivities and good diastereomeric ratios.

Scheme 12. Enantioselective (3+3) annulation of aromatic azomethine imines with D-A cyclopropanes reported by Tang and co-workers.



Based on DFT calculations, a six-coordinated Ni^{II} complex was proposed to rationalize stereoinduction (Figure 5). It involved the coordination of one molecule of azomethine imine acting as

a ligand (L). The complex formed with the *S* enantiomer was favored by 1.7 $\text{kcal}\cdot\text{mol}^{-1}$ and displayed also a lower activation energy for attack by the nucleophile. In the transition state, the aryl group of the cyclopropane is placed above the Ni-*N,N* plan to avoid steric interactions with a second ligated isoquinoline azomethine imine (L). From the calculations, a π - π stacking interaction was also revealed between the indane group of the sidearm and the phenyl group of the cyclopropane.

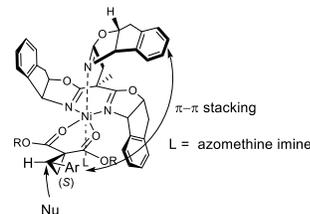
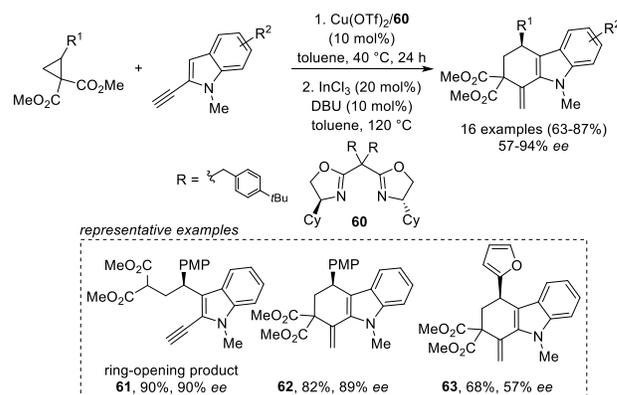


Figure 5. Proposed stereoinduction model.

The same group described the *one-pot* enantioselective (3+3) annulation of 2-alkynylindoles and D-A cyclopropanes furnishing optically active tetrahydrocarbazoles (Scheme 13).²⁶ They started their optimization with the asymmetric ring-opening reaction. BOX ligand **60** with copper(II) triflate was found to give good enantioinduction for product such as **61**. Next, the *one-pot* (3+3) annulation reaction was accomplished by treating the ring-opening product with indium(III) chloride and DBU as additive. Tetrahydrocarbazoles such as **62** and **63** were obtained in good yields and moderate to good enantioselectivities. Similar to the asymmetric induction model disclosed in Figure 4, the authors suggested that the side arm groups block the upper and lower sides of the Cu center and that the cyclohexyl groups hinder the top-left and low-right corners. Therefore, the discrimination of *S* and *R* cyclopropanes would arise from steric repulsions between the sterically hindered indole and the cyclohexyl substituent of the ligand (see complex I in Figure 4).

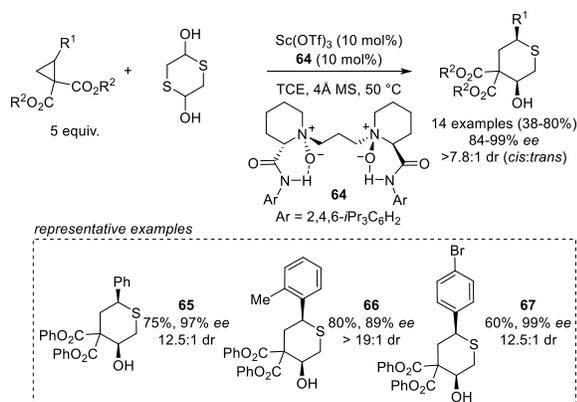
Scheme 13. One-pot stepwise enantioselective (3+3) annulation of 2-alkynylindoles and D-A cyclopropanes reported by Tang and co-workers.



Feng and co-workers developed an enantioselective (3+3) annulation reaction of D-A cyclopropanes with mercaptoacetaldehyde in the presence of *N,N'*-dioxide ligand **64** and $\text{Sc}(\text{OTf})_3$ (Scheme 14).²⁷ Tetrahydrothiopyranols such as **65-67** were formed with moderate yield and excellent enantiomeric excess starting from aryl-substituted D-A cyclopropanes. However, vinyl-substituted cyclopropanes were

not successful in this reaction. The enantioselectivity was drastically improved by using sterically hindered aryl substituents on the amide groups of the *N,N'*-dioxide.

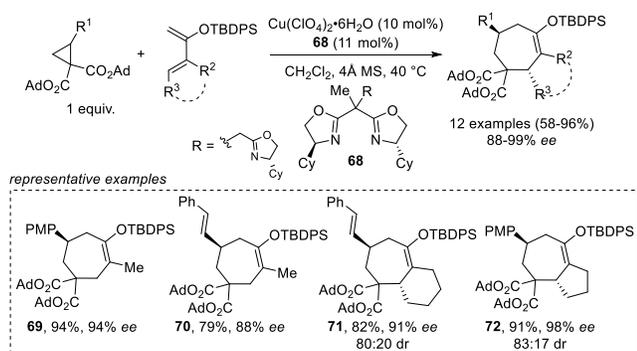
Scheme 14. Enantioselective (3+3) annulation of D-A cyclopropanes with mercaptoacetaldehyde reported by Feng and co-workers.



2.1.3. Other annulations

The group of Tang described an enantioselective copper-catalysed (4+3) cycloaddition of D-A cyclopropanes with dienolsilyl ethers using a chiral trisoxazoline ligand (Scheme 15).²⁸ This transformation is particularly challenging as the (3+2) cycloaddition product is usually obtained. Cycloheptenes and [n,5,0]carbocycles such as **69-72** were produced selectively in good yields and good enantioselectivities in presence of TOX ligand **68**. NMR studies revealed a stepwise mechanism starting by a kinetically driven (3+2) annulation, which is followed by a ring opening of the cyclopentane product and an intramolecular cyclization to afford the more thermodynamically stable (4+3) cycloadduct.

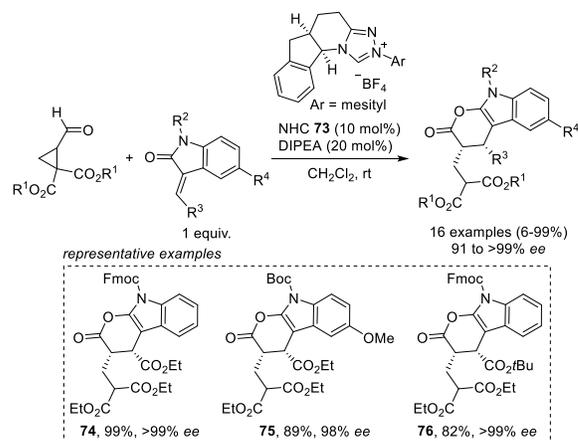
Scheme 15. Enantioselective copper-catalysed (4+3) annulation of D-A cyclopropanes with dienolsilyl ethers reported by Tang and co-workers.



Vicario and co-workers described an enantioselective (4+2) annulation of alkylideneoxindoles with formyl cyclopropanes upon activation with a chiral *N*-heterocyclic carbene catalyst via a less common Umpolung approach (Scheme 16).²⁹ The addition of NHC catalyst **73** on the aldehyde group of the cyclopropane followed by formation of the Breslow intermediate leads to a ring-opening event resulting in a bis-nucleophilic synthon. The Breslow intermediate then reacts in a (4+2) annulation with the alkylideneoxindole to give tetrahydropyrano[2,3-*b*]indoles such as **74-76** in excellent

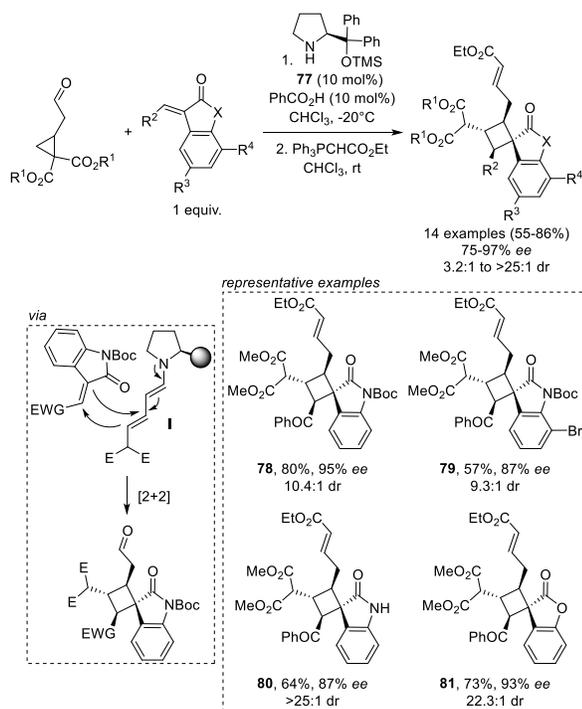
enantiomeric excess and good yield. β,γ -Unsaturated- α -keto esters were also applied successfully as Michael acceptors in this cycloaddition.

Scheme 16. NHC-catalysed (4+2) annulation of alkylideneoxindoles with formyl cyclopropanes reported by Vicario and co-workers.



Jørgensen and co-workers reported an unexpected (2+2) cycloaddition based on enamine activation of cyclopropylacetaldehyde (Scheme 17).³⁰ The authors observed that the *in situ* formed enamine-diester D-A cyclopropane is functionalized at the usually inert unsubstituted position to form spirocyclobutaneoxindoles such as **78-80** and spirocyclobutanebenzofuranones such as **81** in good yields and excellent enantioselectivities in the presence of chiral aminocatalyst **77**. For practical reasons, a Wittig reaction was performed after the organocatalytic reaction. This unexpected transformation was rationalized through a stepwise mechanism leading to the formal (2+2) cycloaddition product, starting with the formation of dienamine **I**, followed by a (2+2) annulation with the alkene of the oxindole.

Scheme 17. (2+2) annulation of cyclopropylacetaldehydes with alkenyl oxindoles and benzofuranones reported by Jørgensen and co-workers.



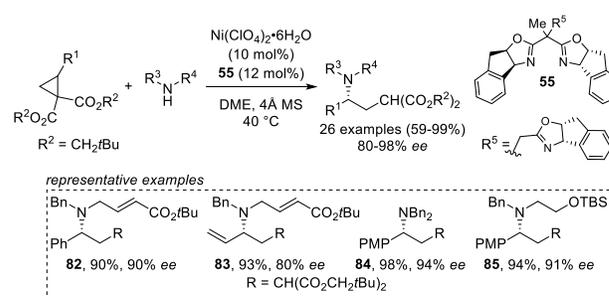
2.2. Ring-opening reactions

Enantioselective ring-opening reactions of D-A cyclopropanes have been studied using heteroatom nucleophiles. Secondary and even primary amines have been successfully applied in the synthesis of enantioenriched γ -aminobutyric acid (GABA) derivatives. The other nucleophiles include alcohols, water and thiols. D-A cyclopropanes have been also used in Friedel-Crafts alkylations of indoles and naphthols. The last example of ring-opening reactions is an enantioselective desymmetrizing fragmentation of *meso*-cyclopropanes.

2.2.1. Addition of heteroatom nucleophiles

Based on the sidearm strategy, Tang and co-workers developed an enantioselective ring-opening reaction of D-A cyclopropanes with aliphatic amines leading to γ -substituted γ -aminobutyric acid (GABA) derivatives (Scheme 18).³¹ To overcome the complexation of the amine with the Lewis acid, a pendant coordination group was installed on the BOX ligand. It was found that the indane trisoxazoline (In-TOX, **55**) improved both the reaction rate and the enantiocontrol. Several GABA derivatives such as **82-85** were produced in excellent yields and enantioselectivities from aliphatic amines and aryl-, thienyl-, alkenyl- and vinyl- cyclopropanes. The catalytic system was also found to be efficient for a kinetic resolution process.

Scheme 18. Ni-catalyzed asymmetric ring opening reaction of D-A cyclopropanes with aliphatic amines reported by Tang and co-workers.



A model was proposed for asymmetric induction and was in agreement with an X-ray structure of a similar Ni complex. In this model (Figure 6), the *S* enantiomer of the racemic cyclopropane binds selectively to the catalyst avoiding steric repulsions between the phenyl group and the indanyl moiety (Complex **I**). According to the authors, the sidearm group could enhance this preference. In order to investigate the role of the chiral sidearm, the reaction was further studied with other types of trisoxazoline and bisthiazoline ligands in which the chirality was installed on the sidearm and not on the parent framework. However, although these new ligands promoted the ring-opening reaction, the GABA derivatives were obtained with only modest enantioselectivities.³²

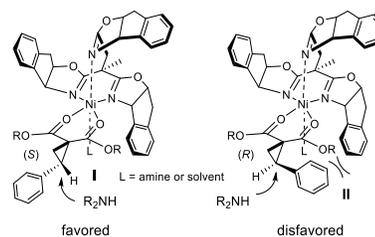
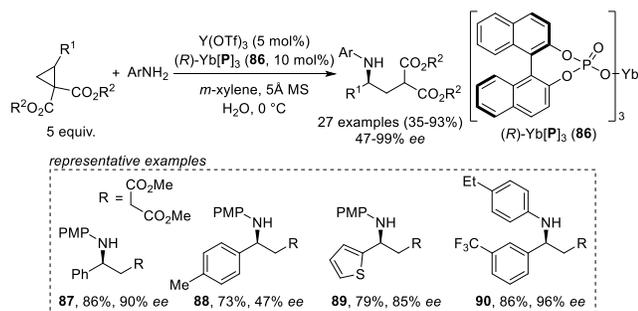


Figure 6. Proposed model for stereochemical induction.

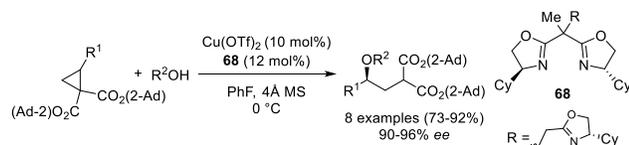
In the study of Tang and co-workers, only secondary amines were used. The use of primary amines in ring-opening reactions of D-A cyclopropanes is challenging, as the obtained secondary amines can react further. Recently, Wang and co-workers described a ring-opening reaction with primary arylamines by using a chiral heterobimetallic catalyst (Scheme 19).³³ Enantioenriched γ -amino acid derivatives such as **87-90** were produced in good yields by combining Y(OTf)₃ and the metal binaphthyl phosphate catalyst (*R*)-Yb[P]₃ (**86**). Only traces of the ring-opened products were obtained in the presence of Y(OTf)₃ or (*R*)-Yb[P]₃ alone, showing the unique activity of this bimetallic system. X-ray diffraction studies on the Yb(OTf)₃-Yb[P]₃ adduct revealed a symmetrical binuclear metal complex in which two metals share four bridged phosphate ligands. Finally, experimental and computational studies suggested that this ring-opening reaction is a kinetic resolution involving an S_N2-like mechanism. The calculations indicated that the binding of the *R* cyclopropane to the Yb site is favored by 3-6 kcal mol⁻¹ over the *S* enantiomer, leading to ring-opening of the former.

Scheme 19. Asymmetric ring-opening reaction of D-A cyclopropanes with primary amines catalyzed by a chiral heterobimetallic complex reported by Wang and co-workers.



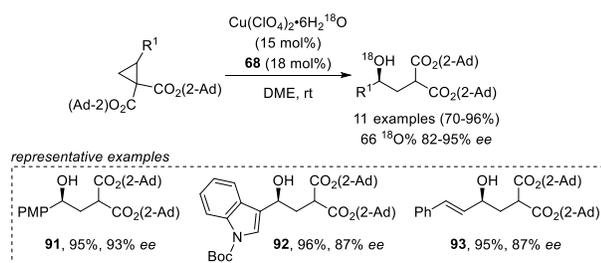
The group of Tang also extended their method to the synthesis of optically active γ -substituted γ -hydroxybutyric acid (GHB) derivatives with benzyl alcohols as nucleophiles by employing the Cy-TOX (**68**)/Cu(II) catalyst system (Scheme 20).³⁴ This ring-opening reaction led to GHB products with good yields and high enantioselectivities.

Scheme 20. Cu-catalysed asymmetric ring-opening reaction of D-A cyclopropanes with alcohols reported by Tang and co-workers.



They then developed a direct approach for the synthesis of GHB derivatives using water as nucleophile (Scheme 21). The development of an asymmetric ring-opening reaction of D-A cyclopropanes with water is particularly challenging as it can poison the catalyst and the formed alcohol product might cause competing ring-opening reactions. Key to the success was the use of a copper hydrate source which acts both as a Lewis acid and a reservoir of water for the ring-opening reaction. The reaction was also run with $\text{Cu}(\text{ClO}_4)_2 \cdot 6\text{H}_2\text{O}$ furnishing isotopic labelled GHB derivatives such as **91-93** with high enantiopurity.

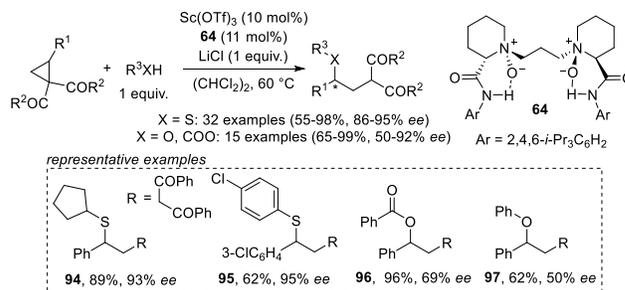
Scheme 21. Enantioselective ring-opening reaction of D-A cyclopropanes with water reported by Tang and co-workers.



Feng and co-workers developed an asymmetric ring-opening reaction with several nucleophiles using a chiral N,N' -dioxide (**64**)/scandium (III) catalyst (Scheme 22).³⁵ A series of thiols, carboxylic acids and alcohols gave opened products such as **94-**

97 with good yields and generally high enantiomeric excess with a single catalytic system. The enantioselectivity was moderate for carboxylic acids (product **96**) and dropped considerably with phenols (product **97**).

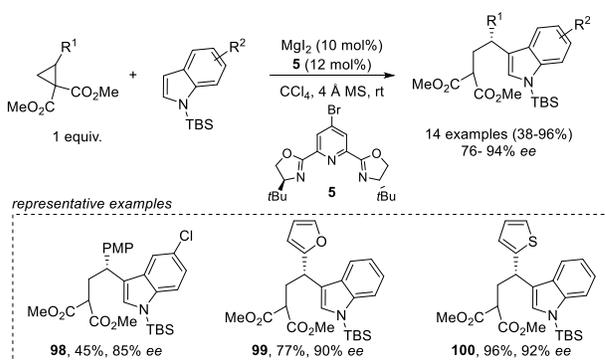
Scheme 22. Asymmetric ring-opening of D-A cyclopropanes with thiols, alcohols and carboxylic acids reported by Feng and co-workers.



2.2.2. Friedel-Crafts alkylations

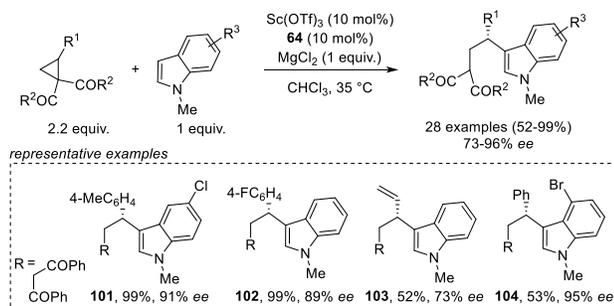
Johnson and co-workers developed in 2013 an asymmetric Friedel-Crafts alkylation reaction of indoles with D-A cyclopropanes via a DYKAT process (Scheme 23).³⁶ The more sterically encumbered TBS-protected indoles furnished the homo-Michael adduct with the best yields and enantiomeric ratios in the presence of pyBOX ligand **5**. A series of indoles with diverse substituents as well as thienyl-, furanyl- and styrenyl-substituted D-A cyclopropanes were tolerated providing enantioenriched alkylated products such as **98-100** in good yields. However, D-A cyclopropanes bearing a 2-OMePh or a phthalimide group were not successful. In contrast, the less reactive phenyl-substituted cyclopropane was suitable for a kinetic resolution.

Scheme 23. Enantioselective Friedel-Crafts alkylation of indoles with D-A cyclopropanes reported by Johnson and co-workers.



The group of Feng applied their catalytic scandium system to the same Friedel-Crafts reaction via a kinetic resolution (Scheme 24).³⁷ The chiral N,N' -dioxide (**64**)/scandium (III) catalyst in the presence of MgCl_2 could be used for various substituted N -methylindoles to give alkylated products such as **101-104** in moderate to excellent yield and good enantiomeric excess. The influence of MgCl_2 in the reactivity, as well as the stereoselectivity, were rationalized by a counterion effect.

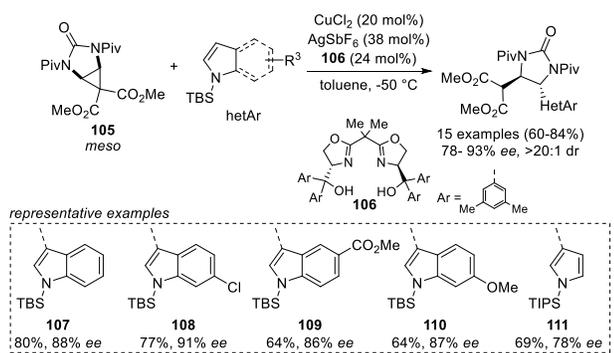
Scheme 24. Enantioselective Friedel-Crafts alkylation of indoles reported by Feng and co-workers.



The chiral N,N' -dioxide (**64**)/scandium (III) complex was also applied to the alkylation of 2-naphthols by the same group.³⁸ Here, the conditions required higher temperatures and longer reaction times due to the lower nucleophilicity of 2-naphthols.

A copper-catalyzed enantioselective Friedel-Crafts alkylation of indoles was described by our group via a desymmetrization of *meso*-diaminocyclopropane **105** (Scheme 25).³⁹ The development of novel N -substituted *meso*-cyclopropane **105** as well as the new BOX ligand **106**, bearing bulky diaryl-methanol groups, was essential to achieve high enantioselectivity. The free hydroxy group of **106** led to enhanced reactivity, allowing running the reaction at low temperature (-50 °C). Enantioenriched urea products such as **107-111** were thus obtained in good yields and excellent diastereoselectivities. Indoles bearing electron-withdrawing or electron donating substituents and a TIPS-protected pyrrole (product **111**) were successful in this transformation.

Scheme 25. Friedel-Crafts alkylation of indoles through desymmetrisation of aminocyclopropanes reported by Waser and co-workers.



Based on the absolute configuration of the Friedel-Crafts products and the activating effect of the hydroxy group, a highly speculative stereochemical model was proposed (Figure 7). In this model, the *tert*-butyl of the pivaloyl moieties orientates in an opposite direction to the aryl groups of the ligand and may act as a relay for stereoinduction. One of the electrophilic carbon atoms of the cyclopropane is then blocked with a *tert*-butyl group.

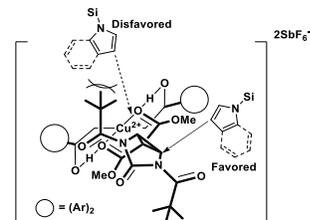
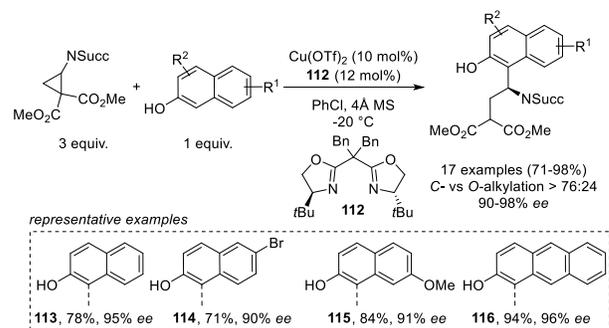


Figure 7. Proposed stereochemical model.

D-A aminocyclopropanes have also been used by Guo and co-workers in the copper-catalyzed asymmetric Friedel-Crafts alkylation of β -naphthols using bisoxazoline ligand **112** (Scheme 26).⁴⁰ In contrast to the alkylation of naphthols with aryl-substituted cyclopropanes reported by Feng and co-workers, both *C*- and *O*-alkylations were observed with aminocyclopropanes with a chemoselectivity in favor of the *C*-alkylation. A range of γ -aryl GABA derivatives such as **113-116** was produced in good yields and high *ee*. The minor *O*-alkylation products were also produced in high enantiomeric excess. Additionally, 1-methylindole reacted also to give the alkylation product in good yield and enantioselectivity.

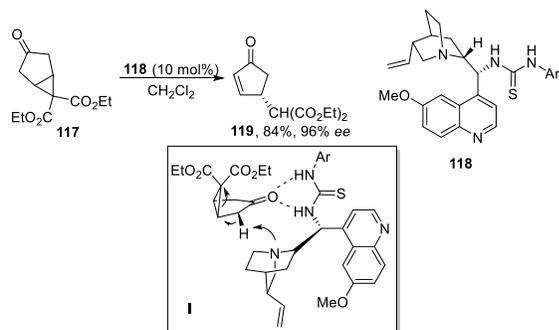
Scheme 26. Friedel-Crafts alkylation of β -naphthols with aminocyclopropanes reported by Guo and co-workers.



2.2.3. Base-mediated fragmentation

Jørgensen and co-workers published in 2009 an enantioselective organocatalytic desymmetrization of *meso*-cyclopropane **117** through a chiral base-mediated fragmentation (Scheme 27).⁴¹ The bifunctional quinuclidine-derived thiourea catalyst **118** induces a selective E1cb elimination to give the optically active elimination product **119**. The proposed mechanism, illustrated in Scheme 27 (transition state **D**), involves hydrogen bonding between the carbonyl and the thiourea, which increases the acidity of the α -hydrogen atom and promote the stereoselective deprotonation by the quinuclidine base.

Scheme 27. Enantioselective desymmetrization of *meso*-cyclopropane **117 through a chiral base-mediated fragmentation reported by Jørgensen and co-workers.**



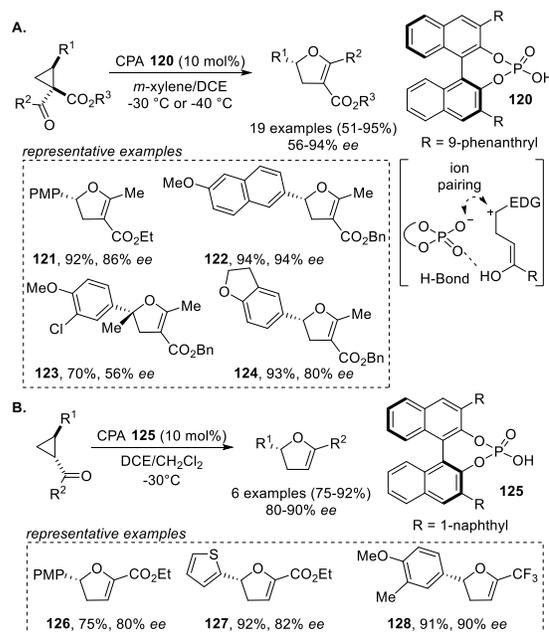
2.3. Domino reactions

Enantioselective domino reactions of D-A cyclopropanes besides simple annulation processes have mainly involved the use of primary amines and bis-nucleophiles. This type of transformations allows multiple bond formation and therefore a fast access into molecular complexity.

2.3.1. Cloke-Wilson rearrangement

Amongst the rearrangement of cyclopropanes, the Cloke-Wilson rearrangement converts a strained cyclopropyl ketone to a more stable dihydrofuran under thermal conditions.⁴² In other words, this domino process occurs without the addition of an external nucleophile and involves ring-opening/closing events. Recently, Vicario and co-workers described the first catalytic enantioselective Cloke-Wilson rearrangement of racemic D-A cyclopropanes bearing ester-substituted cyclopropyl ketones based on the use of chiral phosphoric acid **120** (Scheme 28A).⁴³ The latter protonates the ketone leading to a carbocationic intermediate that undergoes cyclization. Hydrogen bonding and ion-pairing interactions between the phosphate and this intermediate are believed to be responsible for stereoselection. Computational and experimental studies supported this hypothesis and confirmed that this rearrangement occurred via a DYKAT process. Dihydrofurans such as **121-124** were obtained with excellent yields and good enantiomeric ratios. The scope was then extended to cyclopropyl ketones with only one electron-withdrawing group using chiral phosphoric acid **125** (Scheme 28B, products **126-128**).

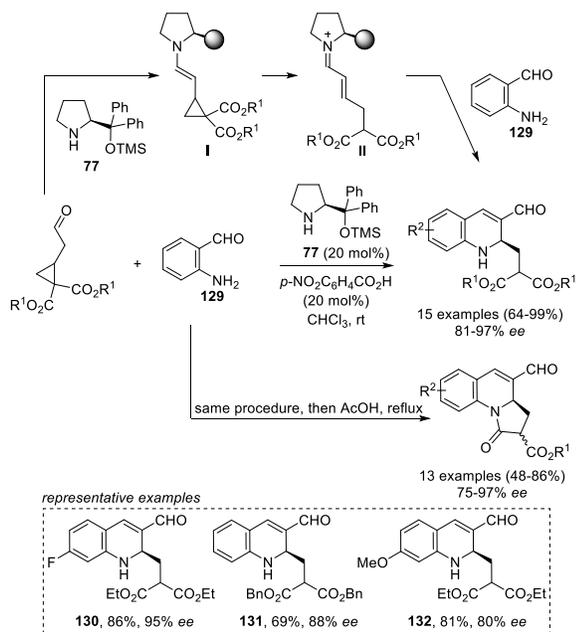
Scheme 28. Catalytic enantioselective Cloke-Wilson rearrangement of racemic D-A cyclopropanes reported by Vicario and co-workers.



2.3.2. Via enamine catalysis

The synthesis of enantioenriched pyrrolo[1,2-a]quinolines was described by Vicario and co-workers through a domino cyclopropane ring opening/aza-Michael/aldol condensation sequence followed by acid-promoted lactamization (Scheme 29).⁴⁴ Activation of the cyclopropylacetaldehyde by silylated prolinol **77** produces a D-A cyclopropane **I** that undergoes a ring-opening reaction. The formed α,β -unsaturated iminium ion **II** then reacts in a domino process with *o*-aminobenzaldehyde (**129**) with transfer of chirality from the amine catalyst. Dihydroquinolines such as **130-132** were produced in high yields and enantioselectivities. The corresponding pyrroloquinolines were also synthesized using a *one-pot* procedure adding a lactamization step to the domino sequence.

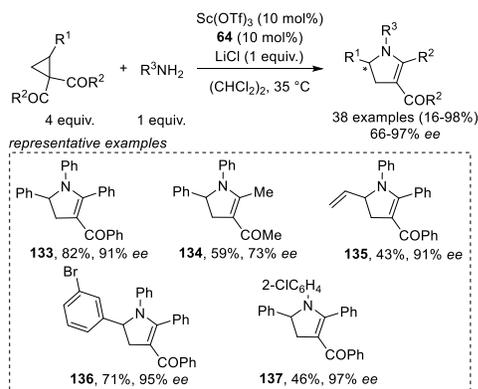
Scheme 29. Enantioselective synthesis of pyrroloquinolines from cyclopropylacetaldehydes via enamine catalysis reported by Vicario and co-workers.



2.3.3. Ring opening/cyclization with primary amines

Feng and co-workers described the enantioselective synthesis of dihydropyrroles through a ring opening/cyclization sequence using primary amines (Scheme 30).⁴⁵ The N,N' -dioxide (**64**)/Sc(III) catalyst system provided an access to enantioenriched 2,4,5-trisubstituted 2,3-dihydropyrroles such as **133-137** with good yields. The scope is broad, including various aryl- and vinyl-substituted cyclopropanes as well as substituted aryl amines. Aliphatic amines were not successful except for cyclopropyl amine.

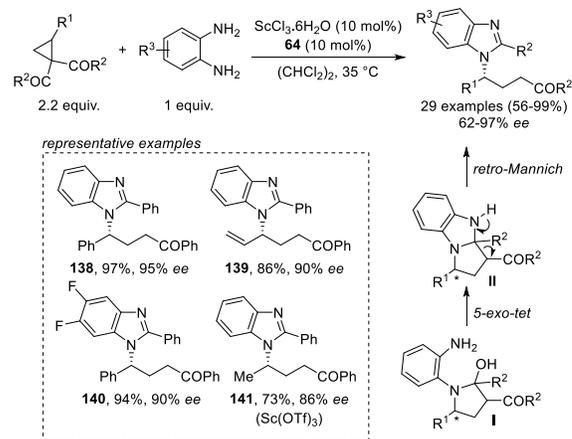
Scheme 30. Asymmetric ring-opening/cyclization of D-A cyclopropanes with primary amines reported by Feng and co-workers.



An asymmetric ring-opening/cyclization/retro-Mannich reaction of D-A cyclopropanes with aryl 1,2-diamines was also developed by the same group (Scheme 31).⁴⁶ Once the hemiaminal **I** is produced, the second primary amine reacts through a 5-*exo*-tet cyclisation to give aminal **II**, which is followed by a retro-Mannich reaction delivering benzimidazole derivatives

such as **138-141**. Here, Scandium(III) chloride hydrate combined with N,N' -dioxide ligand **64** gave the best yield and enantioselectivities. Sc(OTf)₃ showed better result with the less reactive methyl-substituted cyclopropyl ketone.

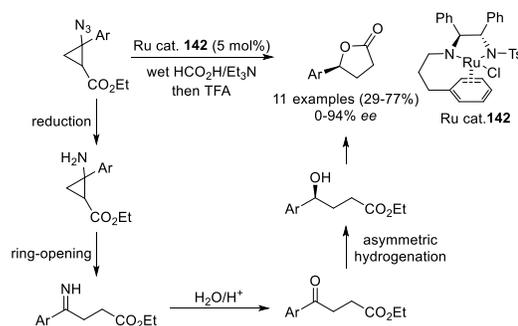
Scheme 31. Asymmetric ring-opening/cyclization/retro-Mannich reaction of D-A cyclopropanes with aryl 1,2-diamines reported by Feng and co-workers.



2.3.4. Other

Gu and co-workers reported the synthesis of enantioenriched γ -lactones from racemic β -azidocyclopropanes through a catalytic asymmetric transfer hydrogenation (Scheme 32).⁴⁷ Mechanistically, reduction of the azido group is followed by a ring-opening reaction to give an oxo-ester after hydrolysis of the zwitterionic intermediate. Asymmetric hydrogenation of the oxo-ester then provides an enantioenriched γ -hydroxybutyrate, which is converted into the corresponding γ -lactone under acidic conditions in a *one-pot* process. Ru catalyst **142** gave the desired γ -lactones with good yield and high level of enantioselectivity in the presence of a HCO₂H/Et₃N mixture as reductant. Low to moderate yields were obtained depending on the electronic properties of the aryl substituent with good *ee* values except for aryl groups bearing electron-rich substituents.

Scheme 32. Asymmetric transfer hydrogenation of racemic β -azidocyclopropanes reported by Gu and co-workers.



3. Acceptor-activated cyclopropanes

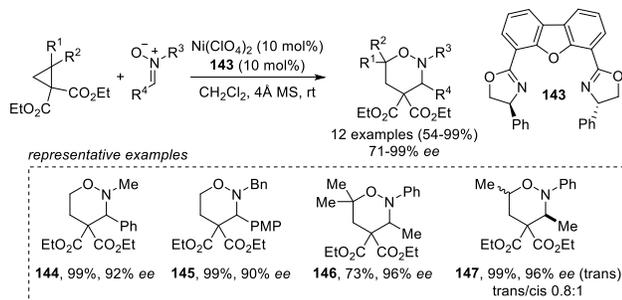
Compared to D-A cyclopropanes, acceptor-activated cyclopropanes often require the formation of a more reactive intermediate (*e.g.* iminium or ketyl radical) to promote a ring-opening reaction. Radical methodologies using photoredox catalysis have been mostly used for annulation processes, whereas iminium catalysis from cyclopropyl carbaldehydes is

the most common approach for simple ring-opening reactions. Nevertheless, transition metal based activation by oxidative addition, simple Lewis acid activation or base catalysis have also been reported. Concerning types of transformations, (3+2) annulation reactions and 1,3-difunctionalisations have been mostly studied.

3.1. Annulation reactions

The activation of cyclopropane diesters by a chiral nickel Lewis acid for the enantioselective (3+3) annulation with nitrones was described by Sibi and co-workers as early as 2005 (Scheme 33).⁴⁸ Initially, ytterbium triflate and various pyBOX ligands were screened but the tetrahydro-1,2-oxazine products were obtained in low enantiomeric excess. Finally, the chiral ligand **143** developed by Kanemasa⁴⁹ was efficient with nickel perchlorate as the Lewis acid. With the optimized conditions, a variety of tetrahydro-1,2-oxazines such as **144-147** was obtained from EWG-activated substituted cyclopropanes with excellent yields and high enantioselectivities. However, very low diastereoselectivities were observed when different substituents ($R^1 \neq R^2$) were present on the cyclopropane (products such as **147**).

Scheme 33. Enantioselective (3+3) annulation of nitrones with cyclopropane diesters reported by Sibi and co-workers.

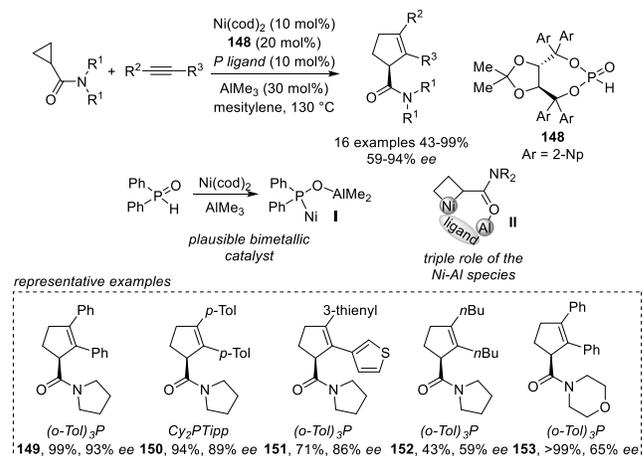


In the example of Sibi, the coordination of the nickel catalyst with the diester group is enough to activate the cyclopropane towards a nucleophilic attack. However, cyclopropanes lacking the diester group cannot be activated by a Lewis acid only. Therefore, this approach remains limited to very few acceptor-only substituted cyclopropanes. In the following examples, transition metal based redox activation and photoredox catalysis were used in (3+2) annulations of cyclopropyl amides and cyclopropyl ketones with unsaturated carbon partners.

Ye and co-workers reported a Ni-Al bimetallic catalyst enabling the enantioselective (3+2) annulation of cyclopropyl carboxamides with alkynes based on transition metal oxidative addition (Scheme 34).⁵⁰ Initially, the reaction was examined in a racemic version. During the optimization, the phosphine oxide $\text{Ph}_2\text{P}(\text{O})\text{H}$ was identified as an excellent ligand and high yields were obtained by using additional PPh_3 . The combination of AlMe_3 and nickel with the phosphine ligand is believed to generate a bimetallic species **I** that may be involved in the activation of the cyclopropane via oxidative addition and stabilization of the *in situ* formed nickellacycle **II**. The asymmetric version was successfully performed with a taddol-derived chiral phosphine oxide ligand **148**. The use of different additional phosphine ligands was required to obtain cyclopentenyl carboxamides such as **149-151** in good yields as well as good *ee* values. Limitations occurred when

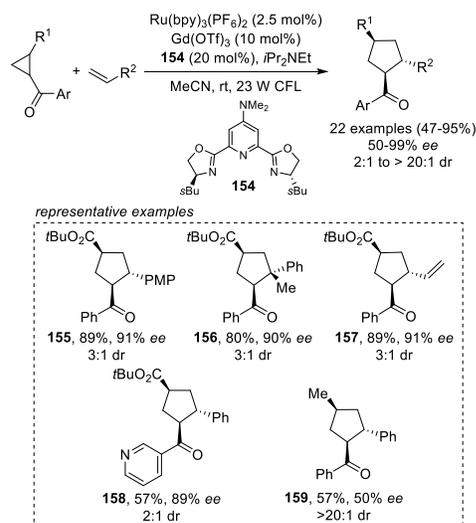
dialkylalkynes and unsymmetrical alkynes were used, leading to low yields or low enantiomeric excess for products such as **152**. A detrimental effect on the enantioselectivity was also observed when the pyrrolidinyl moiety was replaced by other amine groups (product **153**).

Scheme 34. Ni-Al bimetallic catalyzed enantioselective (3+2) annulation of cyclopropyl carboxamides with alkynes reported by Ye and co-workers.



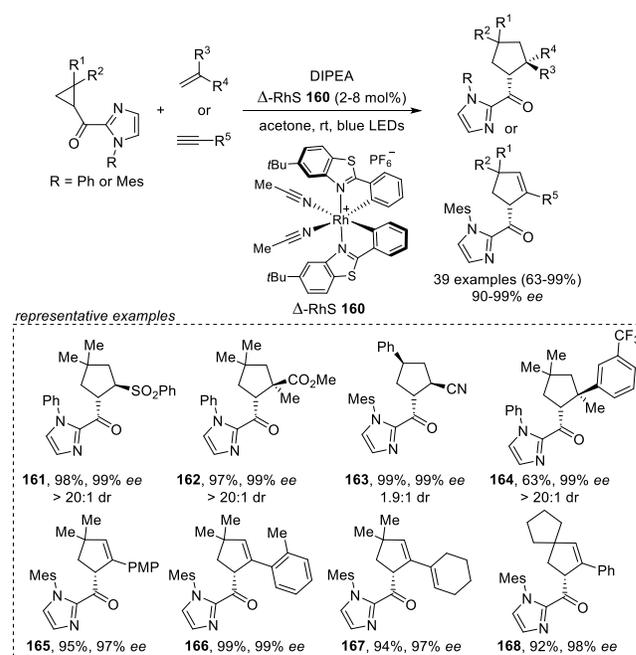
In 2016, the group of Yoon described an enantioselective (3+2) photoannulation of aryl cyclopropyl ketones with alkenes using a dual catalyst system based on photoredox/Lewis acid activation (Scheme 35).⁵¹ This report is an asymmetric intermolecular version of their previously reported intramolecular photocatalytic (3+2) annulation in which the activation of an aryl cyclopropyl ketone by a Lewis acid allows its one electron reduction to form a ketyl radical.⁵² Ring fragmentation of the ketyl radical then provides an enolate radical intermediate that adds onto the π -bond, followed by a stereocontrolled radical cyclization to give optically active cyclopentanes. With a ruthenium photocatalyst and $\text{Gd}(\text{III})$ -pyBOX (**154**) as Lewis acid, electronically diverse styrene derivatives and dienes gave cyclopentanes such as **155-158** with good yield and excellent enantioselectivity, but low diastereoselectivity. In contrast, aliphatic alkenes and internal olefins were unreactive. Concerning the substituent at the 2-position (R^1), esters and ketones were well tolerated, but a methyl substituent had a detrimental effect on the yield and the enantioselectivity (product **159**).

Scheme 35. Enantioselective (3+2) photoannulation of aryl cyclopropyl ketones with styrene derivatives reported by Yoon and co-workers.



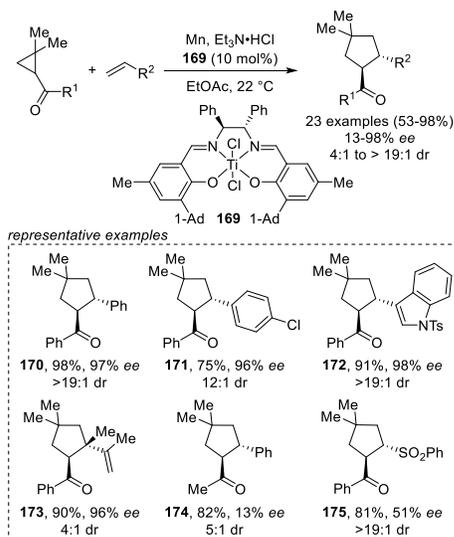
Later, Meggers and co-workers developed an asymmetric (3+2) photoannulation of cyclopropanes with alkenes catalyzed by a single chiral-at-metal rhodium complex **160** (Scheme 36).⁵³ Here, the rhodium catalyst plays a dual role: Lewis acid coordination lowers the reduction potential of the cyclopropane and enables a direct photoexcitation of the visible-light-absorbing catalyst-substrate complex. The corresponding excited state of this complex is ultimately reduced into an enolate radical intermediate promoting the radical process. Chiral cyclopentanes were produced in excellent yields and very high enantioselectivities. Diastereoselectivities were also high except for cyclopropanes bearing two different substituents ($R^1 \neq R^2$). Various Michael acceptors (products such as **161-163**) and styrenes (products such as **164**) were suitable substrates for the (3+2) annulation with substituted cyclopropanes. Furthermore, cyclopentanes containing an all-carbon quaternary stereocenter were also produced with excellent yields and enantioselectivities (products **162** and **164**). The scope was extended to alkynes furnishing enantioenriched cyclopentenes such as **165-168** with high yields and enantioselectivities.

Scheme 36. Rhodium-catalysed asymmetric (3+2) photoannulation of cyclopropanes with alkenes and alkynes reported by Meggers and co-workers.



Stereoselective radical (3+2) annulations were also studied by Lin and co-workers based on a radical redox relay strategy using Ti complexes (Scheme 37).⁵⁴ This strategy was initially reported through a formal (3+2) cycloaddition of *N*-acylaziridines and alkenes to provide substituted pyrrolidine derivatives.⁵⁵ By analogy, cyclopropyl ketones were supposed to be suitable substrates in these tandem radical redox process promoted by Ti^{III} complexes. Indeed, the stepwise (3+2) annulation of cyclopropyl ketones with alkenes was successfully developed in an enantioselective manner using chiral Ti(salen) complex **169**. Substituted cyclopentanes such as **170-172** were obtained in high yields and generally excellent diastereoselectivities and enantioselectivities from a variety of styrene derivatives. Furthermore, 1,1-disubstituted alkenes were also suitable substrates, leading to the formation of a quaternary stereocenter (products such as **173**). However, the cyclopropane scope was mostly limited to 2,2-dimethylcyclopropyl phenyl ketone. Indeed, methyl dimethylcyclopropyl ketone provided cyclopentane **174** in good yield but very low enantiomeric excess. The enantioselectivity was also found to decrease considerably with electron-deficient alkenes (e.g. vinyl sulfone, product **175**).

Scheme 37. Stereoselective radical (3+2) annulation of cyclopropyl ketones with alkenes catalyzed by chiral Ti(salen) complex **169 reported by Lin and co-workers.**



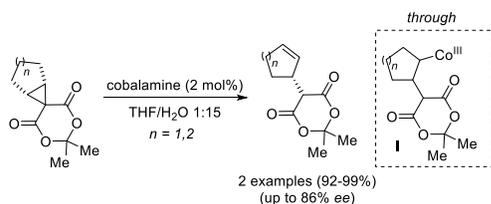
3.2. Ring-opening reactions

Ring-opening reactions of acceptor-activated cyclopropanes have been accomplished through the desymmetrization of spirocyclopropanes and cyclopropyl carbaldehydes via nucleophile catalysis and enamine catalysis respectively.

3.2.1. Via nucleophile/base catalysis

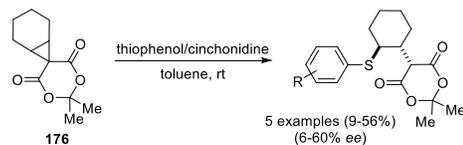
An enantioselective cob(I)alamin-catalysed desymmetrization of spiro-cyclopropanes was reported by Scheffold and Troxler through nucleophilic catalysis (Scheme 38).⁵⁶ Enantioenriched (*R*)-(cycloalk-2-enyl)-Meldrum's acids were formed through the nucleophilic attack of the chiral cobalamin (Vitamin B₁₂) to give intermediate **I**, followed by reductive elimination of the cobalt(III) intermediate. This unique way to desymmetrize *meso*-cyclopropanes has however not found broad application, as only two examples were reported.

Scheme 38. Cob(I)alamin-catalyzed desymmetrization of spiro-cyclopropanes reported by Scheffold and Troxler.



Müller and Riegert described the desymmetrization of spirocyclopropane **176** through the nucleophilic addition of thiophenol in the presence of cinchonidine (Scheme 39).⁵⁷ Modest *ee* values were obtained. The formation of a chiral ion pair by deprotonation of thiophenol with cinchonidine was proposed to rationalize these results.

Scheme 39. Desymmetrization of spiro-cyclopropane **176 by ring-opening with thiols in presence of cinchonidine reported by Müller and Riegert.**

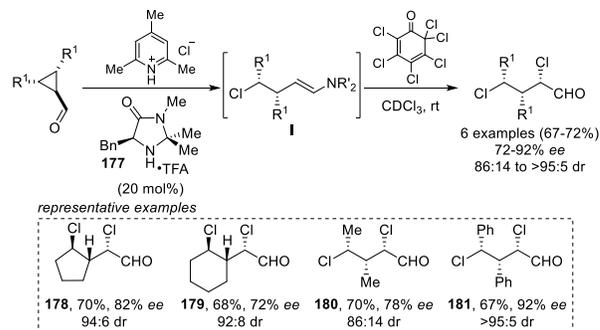


3.2.2. Via enamine catalysis

The desymmetrization of *meso*-cyclopropyl carbaldehydes was performed via iminium-enamine catalysis often leading to 1,3-difunctionalized acyclic products. In the presence of a chiral amine catalyst, the formation of an iminium facilitates cyclopropane ring-opening, generating an enamine that is ultimately intercepted by an electrophile.

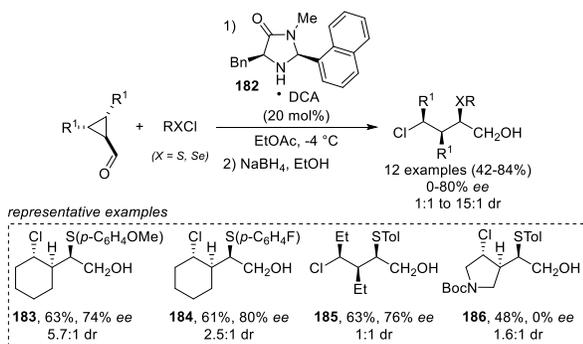
Gilmour and Sparr described first the desymmetrization of *meso*-cyclopropanecarbaldehydes through an amine-catalyzed enantioselective synthesis of 1,3-dichlorides (Scheme 40).⁵⁸ Activation of the cyclopropylcarbaldehyde with MacMillan-type imidazolidinone **177** via the transient cyclopropyl iminium ion allowed the nucleophilic addition of a chlorine atom in an enantioselective manner. The formed enamine **I** reacted further with an electrophilic chlorinating reagent to give α - γ -dichlorinated aldehydes such as **178-181** with good yields and good *ee* values.

Scheme 40. Enantioselective 1,3-difunctionalization of *meso*-cyclopropanes through iminium-enamine catalysis reported by Gilmour and Sparr.



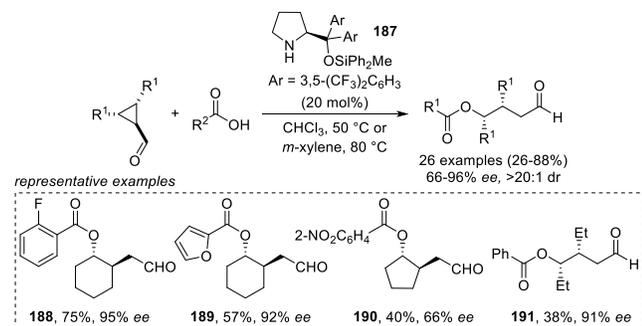
Using this strategy, Werz and co-workers developed an enantioselective 1,3-chlorochalcogenation of cyclopropyl carbaldehydes (Scheme 41).⁵⁹ Structure modifications of the chiral imidazolidinone organocatalyst was crucial to improve the enantioselectivity. Best results were obtained with naphthyl-substituted imidazolidinone **182**. Various substituted aryl sulfonyl chlorides as well as sterically demanding alkyl sulfonyl chlorides gave 1,3-chlorosulfonation products such as **183-185** with moderate yields and moderate to good enantiomeric excesses and diastereoselectivities. Limitations occurred when a protected pyrrolidine-derived cyclopropyl carbaldehyde was used, leading to no enantioselectivity for product **186**.

Scheme 41. Enantioselective 1,3-chlorochalcogenation of cyclopropyl carbaldehydes reported by Werz and co-workers.



Vicario and co-workers then reported a desymmetrization of *meso*-formylcyclopropanes using carboxylic acids as nucleophiles (Scheme 42).⁶⁰ Whereas the MacMillan-type imidazolidinones have shown efficient enantioinduction in the two previous examples, proline-derived catalyst **187** containing a bulky silyl group (SiPh₂Me) improved considerably the enantioselectivity in this case. γ -Acyloxy-substituted aldehydes such as **188-191** were obtained in moderate to high yields and enantioselectivities starting from various carboxylic acids (benzoic or aliphatic) and cyclic or acyclic formylcyclopropanes.

Scheme 42. Enantioselective ring opening of formylcyclopropanes with carboxylic acids under iminium ion catalysis reported by Vicario and co-workers.



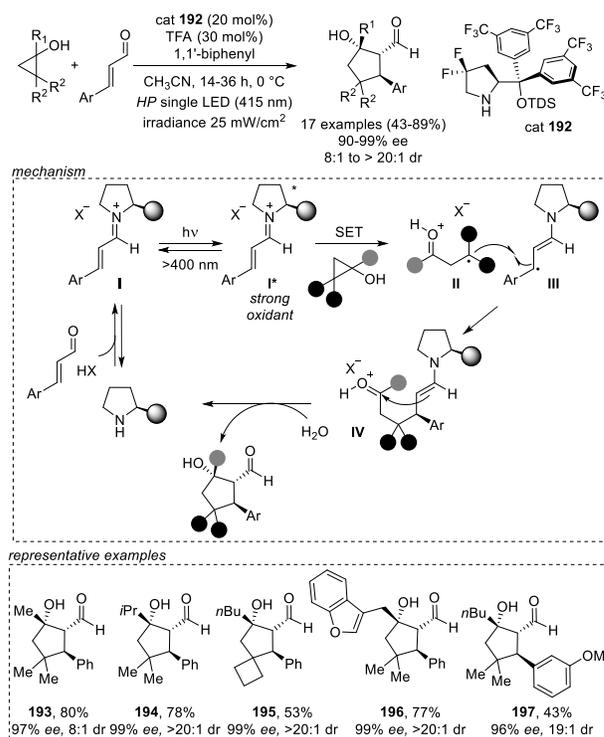
4. Donor-activated cyclopropanes

Donor-only-activated cyclopropanes have been less described in stereoselective ring-opening reactions. In particular, oxidative ring-opening and electrophilic addition strategies using metal and organocatalysis were applied to aromatic substituted cyclopropanes, cyclopropanols and aminocyclopropanes owing to their electron-rich character.

With regards to annulation reactions, the group of Melchiorre described an organocatalyzed enantioselective photochemical cascade process converting racemic cyclopropanols and α,β -unsaturated aldehydes into cyclopentanol (Scheme 43).⁶¹ In contrast to iminium-based methods seen so far, the annulation partner is activated instead of the cyclopropane. After condensation of the chiral amine catalyst **192** with cinnamaldehyde, selective excitation of the chiral iminium ion gives electronically excited state **I**^{*}, which acts as a strong oxidant towards the cyclopropanol. Upon SET oxidation, the cyclopropanol is converted into an unstable oxycyclopropyl

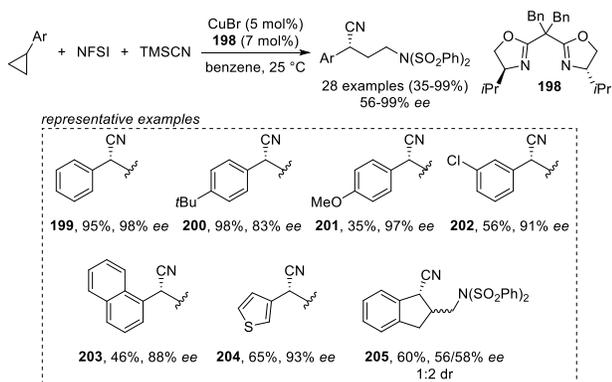
radical cation, which undergoes a fast ring-opening leading to non-chiral β -keto radical cation **II**. Radical coupling of the latter with the chiral β -enaminy radical **III** sets the first stereogenic center. Finally, aldol cyclization of **IV** affords the cyclopentanol. Complex cyclopentanol products with three stereocenters such as **193-197** were obtained in good yield and excellent *ee* and *dr* from cyclopropanols bearing alkyl, benzyl and heterocyclic substituents. With respect to the α,β -unsaturated aldehydes, electronic-diverse β -aromatic moieties were well tolerated but β -alkyl fragment were unreactive. The high stereoselectivity observed in this transformation was attributed to good facial selectivity in the recombination of radicals **II** and **III** controlled by chiral catalyst **192**.

Scheme 43. Enantioselective photochemical organocascade converting cyclopropanols into cyclopentanol reported by Melchiorre and co-workers.



In ring-opening reactions, donor-activated cyclopropanes have been used after oxidation as formal 1,3-dielectrophilic carbon intermediates, so that two nucleophiles can be incorporated. Oxidation of electron-rich cyclopropanes leads to ring fragmentation to form a radical cation, followed by addition of a nucleophile. The new formed radical then can be further functionalized either through a radical trapping or through transition metal catalysis allowing the incorporation of a second nucleophile. Recently, a copper-catalysed enantioselective aminocyanation of arylcyclopropanes was reported by Zhang and co-workers (Scheme 44).⁶² Mechanistically, the reaction occurs through a cyclopropyl radical cation intermediate leading to a stable benzylic radical after nucleophilic addition of the amine. The benzylic radical then recombines with the chiral copper catalyst to give the enantioenriched γ -aminonitriles after reductive elimination. The scope was carried out with the BOX ligand **198**. γ -Aminonitriles such as **199-205** were obtained in general with excellent yields and enantioselectivities from various substituted arylcyclopropanes.

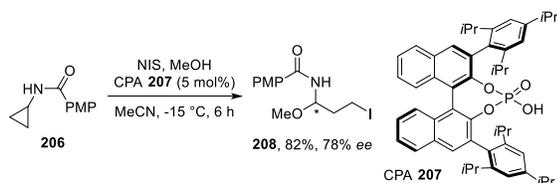
Scheme 44. Copper-catalyzed enantioselective aminocyanation of arylcyclopropanes reported by Zhang and co-workers.



An enantioselective difluorination of arylcyclopropanes was also attempted by Jacobsen and co-workers through the 1,3-oxidation of cyclopropanes using a chiral hypervalent iodine catalyst, but very low levels of enantiocontrol were observed.⁶³

The use of cyclopropanes as 1,3-dielectrophilic carbon intermediates was also described by our group in the ring-opening reaction of protected aminocyclopropanes leading to 1,3-difunctionalized propylamines.⁶⁴ Although this reaction was studied in its racemic version, asymmetric induction was shown using chiral phosphoric acid **207** as catalyst for the ring-opening of aminocyclopropane **206** to give *N,O*-acetal **208** (Scheme 45). In this case, *in situ* formation of the iodo imine followed by acid-catalyzed enantioselective addition of methanol has been proposed.

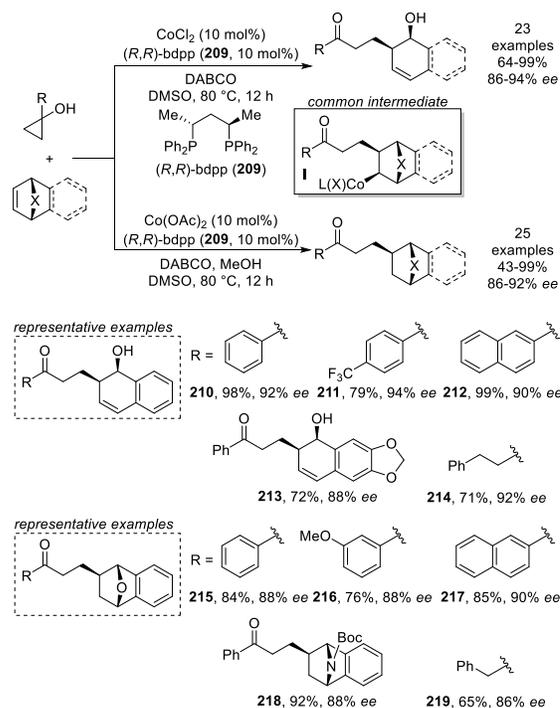
Scheme 45. Enantioselective synthesis of 1,3-difunctionalized propylamine **208 through the ring-opening of aminocyclopropane **206** reported by Waser and co-workers.**



Cyclopropanols were also used as masked homoenolates in the stereoselective addition onto unsaturated systems. Yoshikai and co-workers described a cobalt-catalyzed enantioselective and chemodivergent addition of cyclopropanols to oxabicyclic alkenes (Scheme 46).⁶⁵ In presence of DABCO, a combination of the cyclopropanol and the Co(II) species produced a cobalt(II) cyclopropoxide, which delivers the corresponding cobalt(II) homoenolate after ring opening. Then, the reaction proceeds through the carbocobaltation of this homoenolate to the oxabicyclic alkene leading to an alkylcobalt species **I**. From this common intermediate two pathways were possible in dependence of the counterion on the cobalt catalyst. Alkylative ring-opening products were formed with cobalt(II) chloride and chiral diphosphine **209**, whereas hydroalkylation products were obtained with cobalt(II) acetate and the same diphosphine ligand **209** in the presence of methanol. Various aryl cyclopropanols participated in both processes. Electron withdrawing- as well as electron donating-substituents on the

aryl moiety were well tolerated, furnishing products such as **210-213** or **215-217** in good yields and enantioselectivities. Notably, azabenzonorbornadiene also gave hydroalkylation product **218**. The desired products **214** and **219** were also obtained with phenyl-ethyl- and benzyl- substituted cyclopropanols.

Scheme 46. Cobalt-catalyzed enantioselective and chemodivergent addition of cyclopropanols to oxabicyclic alkenes reported by Yoshikai and co-workers.



5. Vinylcyclopropanes

Vinylcyclopropanes (VCPs) stand as a special type of donor-acceptor cyclopropanes. In the presence of transition metals, the vinyl substituent serves as a coordinating group, facilitating the opening of the three membered ring to give different types of intermediates, such as π -allyl complexes or carbocations. Successful applications in the field of asymmetric catalysis were reported with palladium, rhodium, iridium and gold complexes, allowing the development of annulations, ring expansions, as well as electrophilic and nucleophilic ring openings of VCPs. The ring opening of VCPs can also be triggered by the addition of an appropriate radical onto its vinyl substituent. Using thiyl or trifluoromethyl radicals, enantioselective cycloadditions and a 1,5-difunctionalization were reported.

5.1. (3+2) annulations

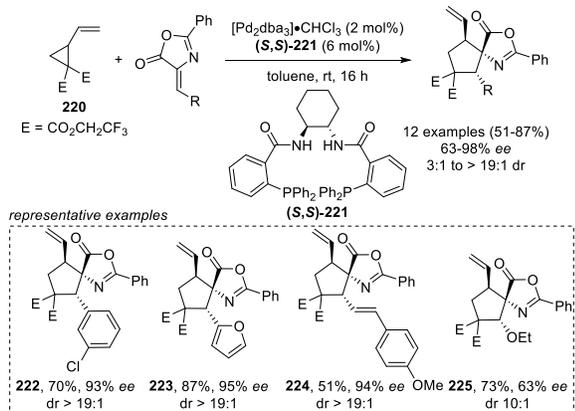
The (3+2) annulation is the most studied transformation involving VCPs in the context of asymmetric catalysis. This type of transformations provides a straightforward access to highly functionalized and stereodefined five membered rings.

5.1.1. Palladium catalysis

The coordination of a palladium catalyst to the vinyl substituent of a VCP activated by one or several electron-withdrawing groups triggers a ring opening leading to a zwitterionic π -allyl complex, that can then react with an appropriate dipolarophile.

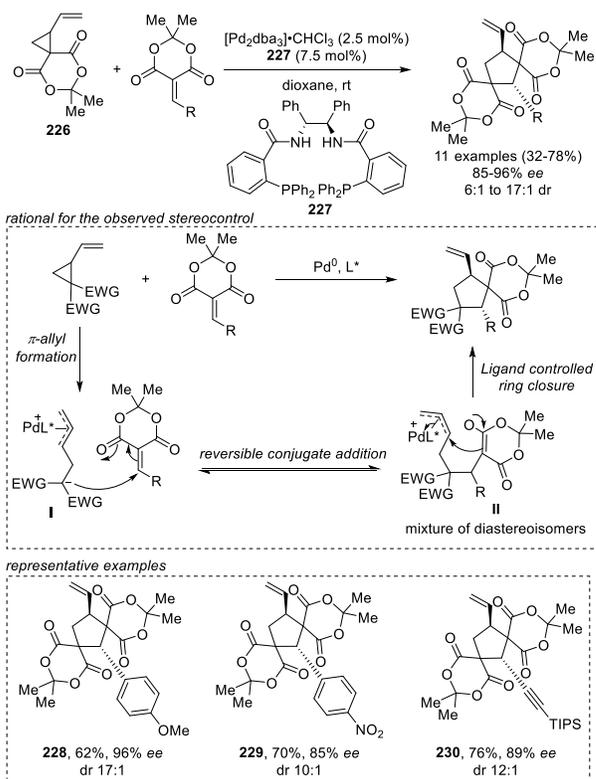
In 2011, building upon the seminal work of Tsuji and co-workers,⁶⁶ Trost and co-workers described the first enantioselective synthesis of substituted cyclopentanes by a palladium-catalyzed (3+2) annulation of VCPs (Scheme 47).⁶⁷ With alkylidene azlactones as acceptors and VCP **220**, this method provides an expedient access to enantioenriched amino acid derivatives bearing three stereogenic centers. Cycloadducts such as **222-225** could be obtained in high diastereo- and enantioselectivities by employing the diphenylphosphino benzoic acid (DPPBA) based ligand (*S,S*)-**221** combined with a Pd(0) catalyst. While the transformation tolerated various substitution on the Michael acceptor, the use of bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)malonate VCP **220** was necessary to ensure higher yields and selectivities.

Scheme 47. Palladium-catalyzed asymmetric (3+2) annulation of VCP **220 with alkylidene azlactones reported by Trost and co-workers.**



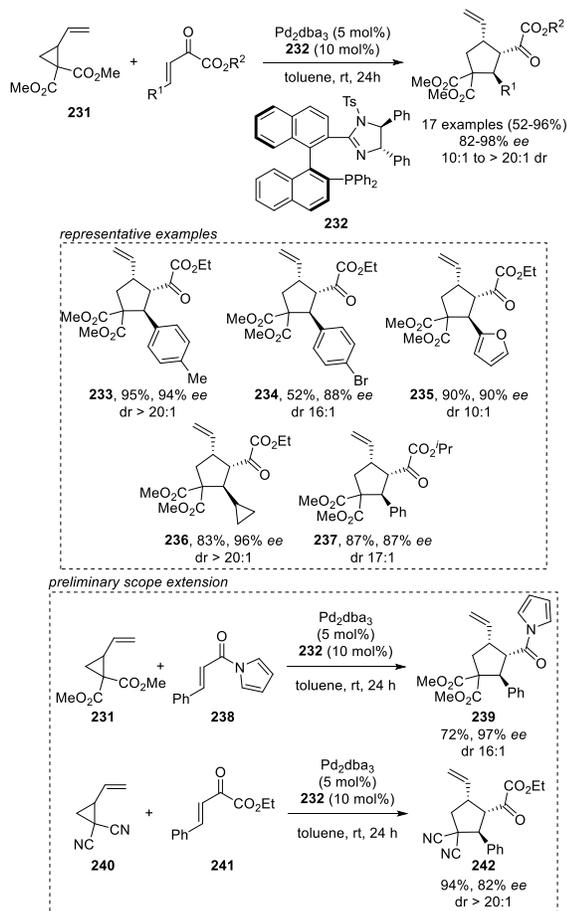
A year later, the same group reported an enantioselective (3+2) annulation between Meldrum's acid substituted alkylidenes and VCP **226** (Scheme 48).⁶⁸ For this new type of two carbon partners, Meldrum's acid-substituted VCP **226** was found to give higher level of diastereo- and enantiocontrol than VCP **220**. Best results were obtained with bisphosphine **227** as ligand and dioxane as solvent. Under these conditions, a range of aryl-, heteroaryl- and alkynylsubstituted alkylidenes furnished cycloadducts such as **228-230** with good level of enantio- and diastereocontrols. Interestingly, the two Meldrum's acid moieties could be chemoselectively modified to access highly functionalized cyclopentanes. Due to the distance between the chiral pocket around the formed π -allyl complex and the first bond forming event, the high stereocontrol observed is difficult to rationalize. As shown in scheme 48, Trost and co-workers have proposed an explanation based on the Curtin-Hammett principle: A reversible conjugate addition of zwitterionic intermediate **I** on the Michael acceptor results in two diastereomeric complexes **II**, with one of the two able to undergo a ligand controlled ring closure faster than the other.

Scheme 48. Palladium-catalyzed asymmetric (3+2) annulation of substituted VCPs with Meldrum's acid alkylidenes reported by Trost and co-workers.



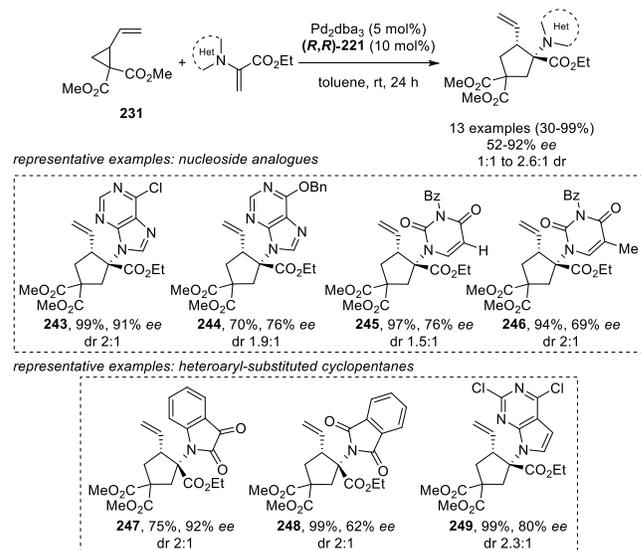
β,γ -unsaturated α -keto esters were also shown by Shi and co-workers to be suitable dipolarophiles for palladium-catalyzed asymmetric (3+2) annulations with VCPs (Scheme 49).⁶⁹ For this transformation, they reported a new catalytic system involving N,P chiral ligand **232** with a 1,1'-binaphthalene scaffold. A variety of electronically and sterically different β,γ -unsaturated α -keto esters afforded enantioenriched cyclopentanes such as **233-237**, with a decrease in yield and enantioselectivity observed when R² was an electron poor aromatic substituent (product **234**). They further reported the use of α,β -unsaturated *N*-acyl pyrrole **238** and dicyano-substituted VCP **240** to give the corresponding cyclopentanes **239** and **242** in good to excellent yield and enantioselectivity.

Scheme 49. Palladium-catalyzed asymmetric (3+2) annulation of VCPs with β,γ -unsaturated α -keto esters and acyl pyrroles reported by Shi and co-workers.



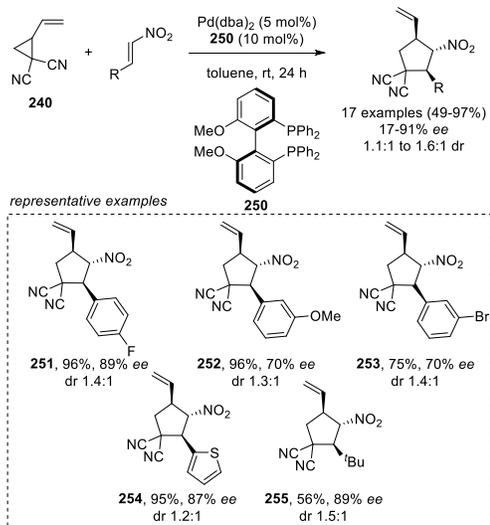
This type of annulation could also be successfully extended to α -nucleobase substituted acrylates, giving a fast access to enantioenriched carbocyclic nucleoside analogues (Scheme 50).⁷⁰ Employing Trost ligand (*R,R*)-**221** good enantioselectivity and yield could be obtained albeit with low diastereoselectivity. The latter could not be significantly improved in spite of a thorough screening of substituents on both reaction partners. With VCP **231**, various α -purine, thymine or uracil ethyl acrylates gave products such as **243-246**. In addition, other heterocycles were also tolerated to form products such as **247-249**.

Scheme 50. Palladium-catalyzed enantioselective (3+2) annulation of VCP 231 with α -heterocycle substituted acrylates reported by Guo and co-workers.



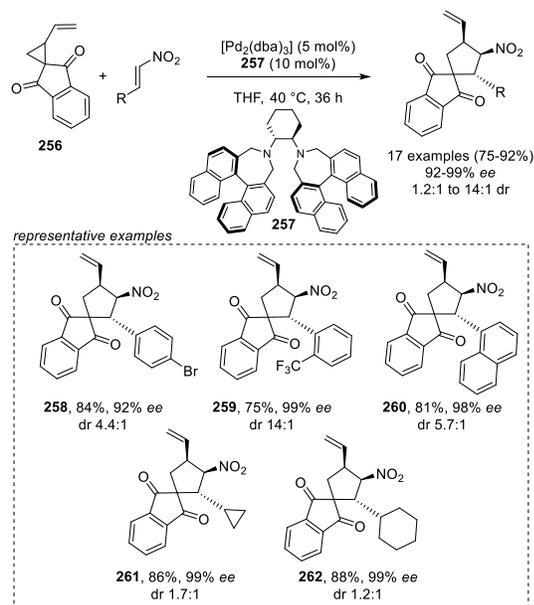
In 2015, two groups reported the enantioselective palladium catalyzed (3+2) annulation of VCPs with nitroolefins to give nitrocyclopentanes, which can be easily converted to cyclopentylamines, an important motif found in various bioactive compounds (Schemes 51 and 52). The group of Q. Z. Liu found vinylcyclopropane dicarbonitrile **240** to be the best partner for this cycloaddition, as for instance diester-substituted VCP **231** led to poor yields and enantioselectivities (Scheme 51).⁷¹ Performed in the presence of 5 mol% of Pd(dba)₂ combined with 10 mol% of chiral biphosphine **250** as ligand, cycloadducts such as **251-255** were obtained in good yields and enantioselectivities, albeit in low diastereoselectivities. While aryl as well as heteroaryl substituted nitroolefins were generally well tolerated in the transformation, the authors also report one example of an alkyl-substituted nitroolefin, leading to cycloadduct **255** with a slightly lower yield but good enantioselectivity.

Scheme 51. Enantioselective palladium-catalyzed (3+2) annulation of VCP 240 with nitroolefins reported by Q. Z. Liu and co-workers.



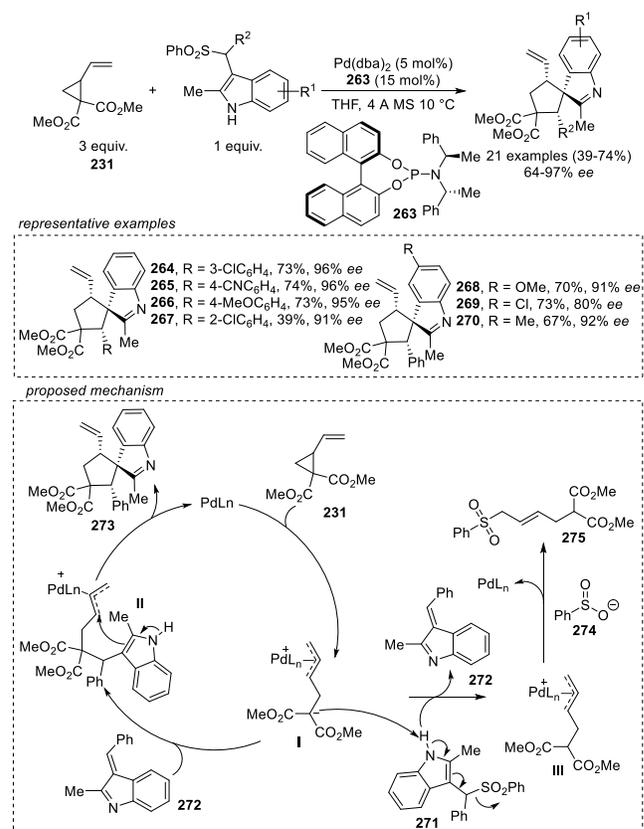
The group of L. Liu independently reported the use of 1,3-indanedione substituted VCP **256** in an asymmetric palladium-catalyzed (3+2) annulation with nitroolefins (Scheme 52).⁷² Proceeding in THF at slightly higher temperature and longer reaction time, this process led to high yields and enantioselectivities for cycloadducts such as **258-262**, as well as a slightly improved diastereoselectivity. This was achieved by the use of the bulky and strongly coordinating *N,N*-ligand **257** associated with [Pd₂(dba)₃]. Both electron-withdrawing and -donating groups were well tolerated on the aryl moiety of the nitroolefin, as well as heteroaryl and alkyl substituents.

Scheme 52. Palladium-catalyzed asymmetric (3+2) annulation of 1,3-indanedione derived VCP **256 with nitroolefins reported by L. Liu and co-workers.**



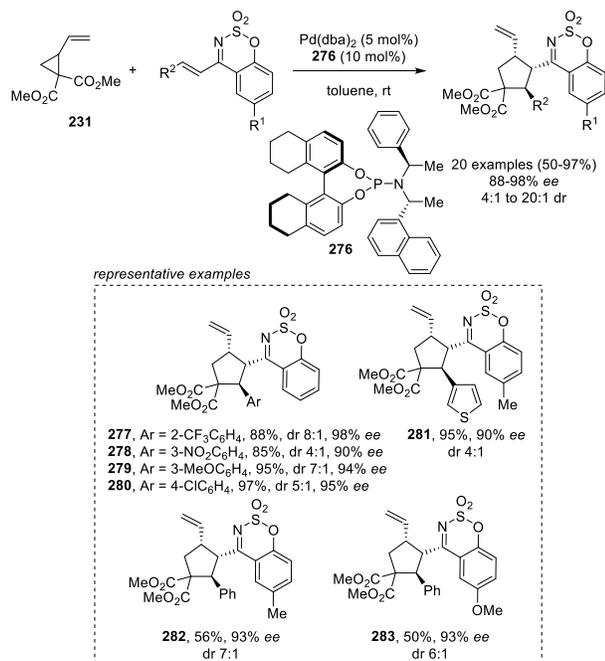
In 2015, Q. Z. Liu and co-workers also reported the use of α,β -unsaturated imines as dipolarophiles, generated in situ from sulfonyl indoles (Scheme 53).⁷³ This palladium-catalyzed (3+2) annulation with VCP **231** leads to enantiomerically enriched spiroindolenines. At 10 °C, using Pd(dba)₂ and phosphoramidite ligand **263** in THF, various spiroindolenines such as **264-270** could be obtained in good yields and enantioselectivities. Interestingly an excess of VCP **231** was necessary for the reaction to proceed in satisfying yields. It was proposed that the carbanion of the 1,3-dipole **I** formed by oxidative addition with palladium would act as a base to generate in situ the α,β -unsaturated imine **272** from sulfonyl indole **271**, in addition to participating in annulation with **272** to give intermediate **II** leading to product **273**. Therefore, a second equivalent of **231** is needed. This postulate was corroborated by the isolation of compound **275** resulting from the reaction of benzenesulfinate (**274**) with π -allyl complex **III**.

Scheme 53. Palladium-catalyzed enantioselective (3+2) annulation of VCP **231 with in situ generated unsaturated imines reported by Q. Z. Liu and co-workers.**



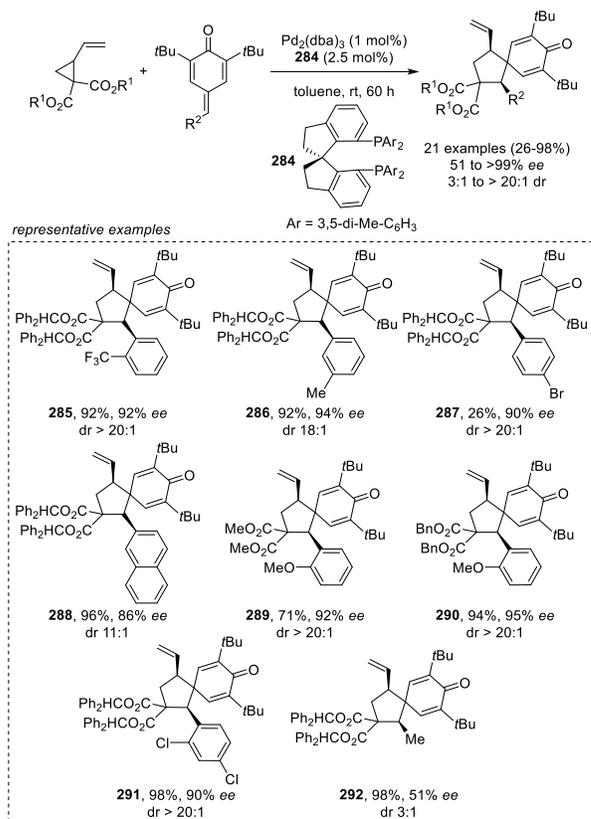
The same group investigated also cyclic 1-azadienes as annulation partners (Scheme 54).⁷⁴ With this time phosphoramidite **276** as ligand, they could access in high yields diverse enantioenriched substituted cyclopentanes such as **277-283** with moderate to good diastereoisomeric ratios. The 1,2,3-oxathiazine 2,2-dioxide motif of the obtained products could be opened by treatment with Red-Al, affording the corresponding products without loss of enantiopurity.

Scheme 54. Palladium-catalyzed asymmetric (3+2) annulation of VCP 231 with cyclic 1-azadienes reported by Q. Z. Liu and co-workers.



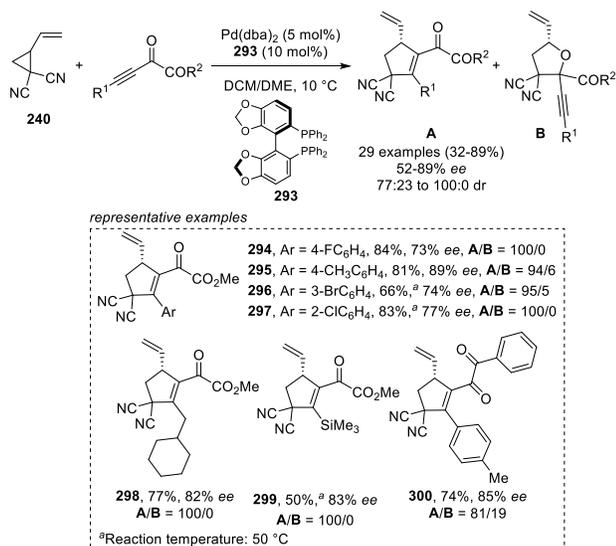
A palladium catalyzed asymmetric (3+2) annulation of VCPs with *para*-quinone methides was reported by Zhao and co-workers (Scheme 55).⁷⁵ Proceeding through a 1,6-conjugate addition/annulation, this transformation provides an efficient access to enantioenriched (2-oxa)spiro[4.5]decanes such as **285-292**, a scaffold found in several bioactive compounds. With chiral biphosphine ligand **284**, the highest levels of stereocontrol were obtained for *ortho*-substituted phenyl groups on the dipolarophile combined with bulky ester groups on the VCP. Different ester groups on the VCP were also tolerated. However, the use of a methyl substituted *para*-quinone methide led to an important decrease in stereoselectivity.

Scheme 55. Enantioselective palladium-catalyzed (3+2) annulation of VCPs with *para*-quinone methides reported by Zhao and co-workers.



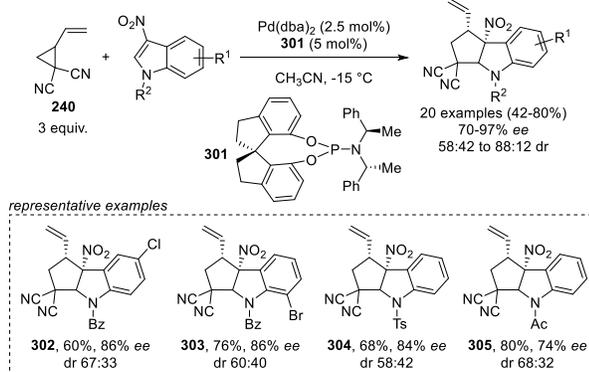
Functionalized cyclopentenes could also be accessed by an asymmetric palladium catalyzed (3+2) annulation between VCP **240** and electron deficient alkynes, as reported by Hou and co-workers (Scheme 56).⁷⁶ Fine-tuning of the ligand, solvent and temperature were required to achieve good results in terms of yields, enantioselectivity and chemoselectivity. Indeed, in addition to the all-carbon cycloadduct (**A**), a competitive reaction with the ketone of the dipolarophile furnished the corresponding tetrahydrofuran derivative (**B**). Using Segphos ligand **293**, a broad range of alkynyl α -ketoesters and alkynyl 1,2-diones gave cyclopentene derivatives such as **294-300** in good yield and enantioselectivities. In the case of a less reactive silyl substituted acrylate, mild heating was required to give cyclopentene **299** in moderate yield.

Scheme 56. Palladium-catalyzed asymmetric (3+2) annulation of VCP 240 with electron-deficient alkynes reported by Hou and co-workers.



Shi and co-workers applied the annulation process to an enantioselective dearomatization of electron-deficient indoles (Scheme 57).⁷⁷ The use of Pd(dba)₂ with phosphoramidite ligand **301** in acetonitrile at -15 °C gave a variety of cyclopenta[*b*]indoline derivatives such as **302-305** in good yields, high enantioselectivities and moderate diastereoselectivities. While limited to dicyano VCP **240**, a broad range of 3-nitroindoles bearing different substituents on the benzene ring of the indole as well as various electron-withdrawing *N*-substituents could be successfully engaged in the transformation.

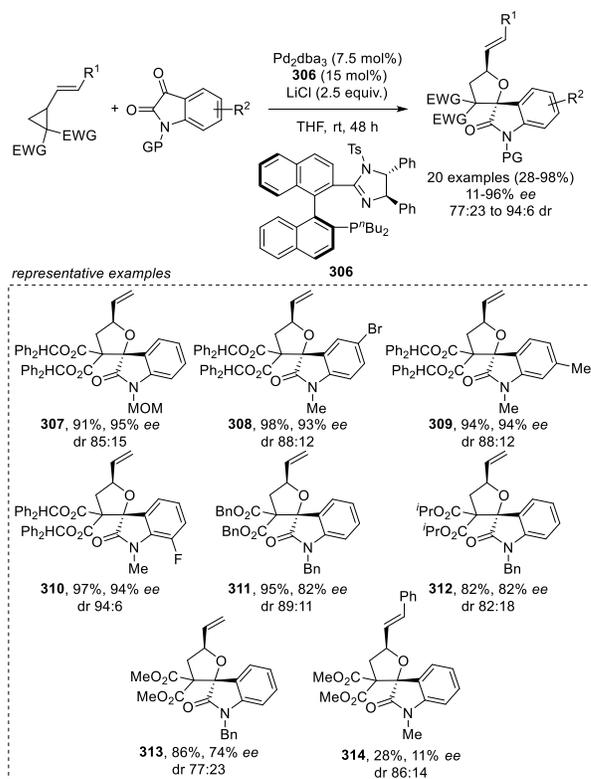
Scheme 57. Enantioselective palladium-catalyzed dearomative (3+2) annulation of VCP 240 with 3-nitroindoles reported by Shi and co-workers.



Heteroatom-containing dipolarophiles, such as carbonyl compounds, imines and diazo compounds, could also be used in the palladium catalyzed annulation. Shi and co-workers developed an asymmetric (3+2) annulation between isatins and VCPs, leading to oxindole-fused spirotetrahydrofurans such as **307-314** (Scheme 58).⁷⁸ Employing imidazoline-phosphine ligand **306**, they found that addition of lithium chloride as additive improved the diastereoselectivity. Variation of the isatin partner was well tolerated, and VCP substituted with different diester groups could be used in the transformation.

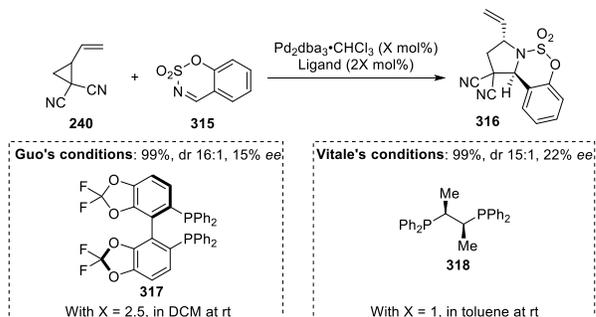
However, substitution on the terminal position of the alkene diminished both the yield and enantioselectivity (product **314**).

Scheme 58. Enantioselective palladium-catalyzed (3+2) annulation of VCPs and isatins reported by Shi and co-workers.



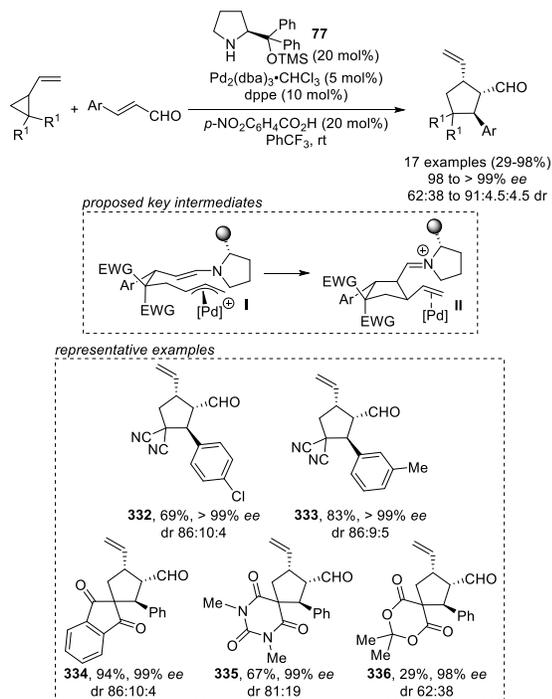
Imines have proven to be more challenging partners in the asymmetric palladium catalyzed (3+2) annulation with VCPs. The first promising results were reported by the groups of Guo⁷⁹ and Vitale (Scheme 59).⁸⁰ Employing dicyano-substituted VCP **240** and cyclic sulfonylimine **315**, only low levels of enantiocontrol were observed with diphosphine ligands **317** and **318**, despite extensive screening.

Scheme 59. First reports of asymmetric induction in the palladium-catalyzed (3+2) annulation of VCP 240 with imine 315 reported by the groups of Guo and Vitale.



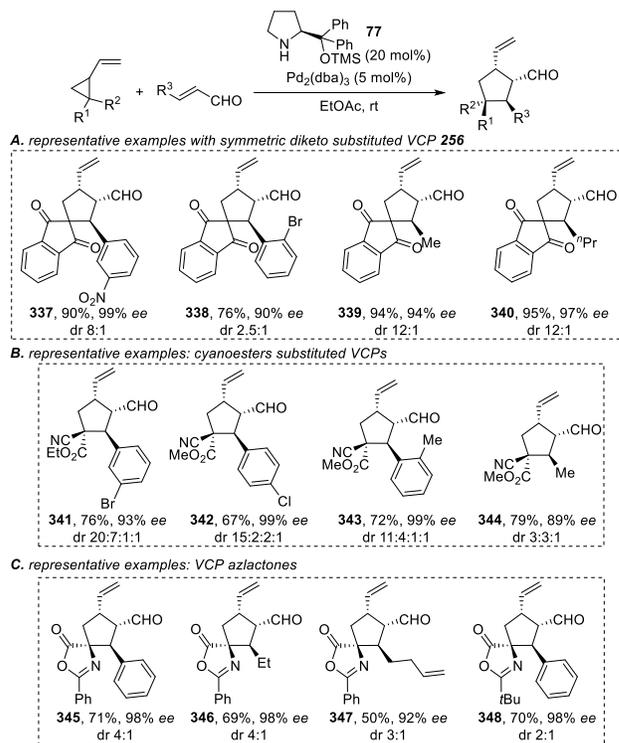
It is only in 2019 that the group of Q. Z. Liu could develop an efficient enantioselective version of the transformation (Scheme 60).⁸¹ With diester-substituted VCPs combined with phosphoramidite ligand **319** or **323**, a range of isatin-derived ketimines as well as different aromatic aldimines delivered the

Scheme 62. Asymmetric (3+2) annulation of VCPs with enals using synergistic palladium-amine catalysis reported by Vitale and co-workers.



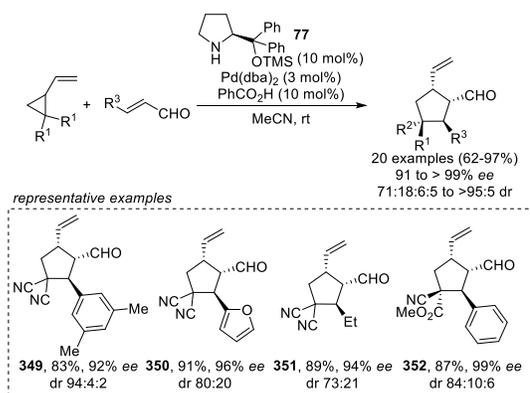
Employing a closely related catalytic system, a similar transformation was reported by Wang and co-workers using diester substituted VCPs.⁸⁴ In these two first examples, the addition of diphosphine ligands led to an improved yield and diastereoselectivity. In contrast, Rios and co-workers showed that employing diketo substituted VCP **256** did not require any ligand on the palladium to deliver cyclopentanes such as **337-340** in good yields and enantioselectivities (Scheme 63A).⁸⁵ At room temperature in ethyl acetate, a variety of aromatic and aliphatic enals could be successfully engaged in the transformation. A year later the same group further expanded this transformation to cyanoesters substituted VCPs, leading to enantioenriched cyclopentanes such as **341-344** bearing four contiguous stereocenters (Scheme 63B).⁸⁶ In 2019, Veselý and co-workers reported the successful extension of this catalytic system to vinylcyclopropane azlactones, providing an efficient access to spirocyclic cyclopentanes such as **345-348** in good yields, high enantioselectivities and moderate diastereoselectivities (Scheme 63C).⁸⁷

Scheme 63. Enantioselective (3+2) annulation of VCPs with enals using synergistic palladium-amine catalysis reported by the groups of Rios and Veselý.



Jørgensen and co-workers reported the asymmetric (3+2) annulation between VCPs and α,β -unsaturated aldehydes using the same strategy (Scheme 64).⁸⁸ Both dicyano- and cyanoester substituted VCPs could be used under the same optimized conditions, delivering cycloadducts such as **349-352** in high enantioselectivity and moderate diastereoselectivity.

Scheme 64. Enantioselective (3+2) annulation of VCPs with enals using synergistic palladium-amine catalysis reported by Jørgensen and co-workers.

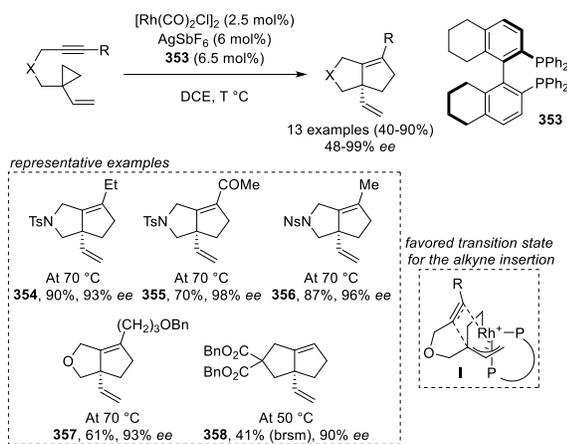


5.1.3. Rhodium catalysis

While the use of VCPs as three carbon partners in (3+2) cycloadditions has been extensively studied with palladium, examples involving other transition metals remain scarce. Indeed, a single example of rhodium-catalyzed asymmetric (3+2) annulation involving VCPs was reported by Yu and co-workers in 2012 (Scheme 65).⁸⁹ In general, (5+2) annulations are favored with rhodium catalysis (See section 5.2).

Employing 1-yne-VCPs, this process led to various enantioenriched carbo- and heterobicyclo[3.3.0] products such as **354-358** in good yields in the presence of $[\text{Rh}(\text{CO})_2\text{Cl}]_2$ and H_8 -BINAP (**353**). In contrast to palladium catalysis, on one hand only intramolecular cases were reported, but on the other hand no activating electron-withdrawing groups were needed on the cyclopropane. Bulkier substituents on the alkyne were found to increase the enantioselectivity. DFT studies highlighted that the alkyne insertion step is stereodetermining and governed by steric repulsion between the BINAP backbone and the substituent on the alkyne (transition state **I**). The authors also disclosed that the desired product could not be observed in the case of longer tethers between the cyclopropyl and the alkyne, and in the case of 1-ene-VCPs.

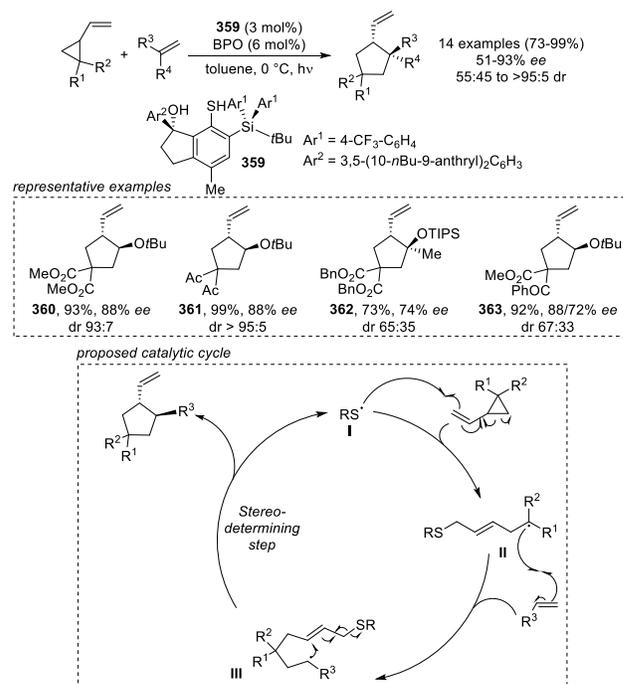
Scheme 65. Enantioselective rhodium-catalyzed intramolecular (3+2) annulation of 1-yne-VCPs reported by Yu and co-workers.



5.1.4. Thiyl radical catalysis

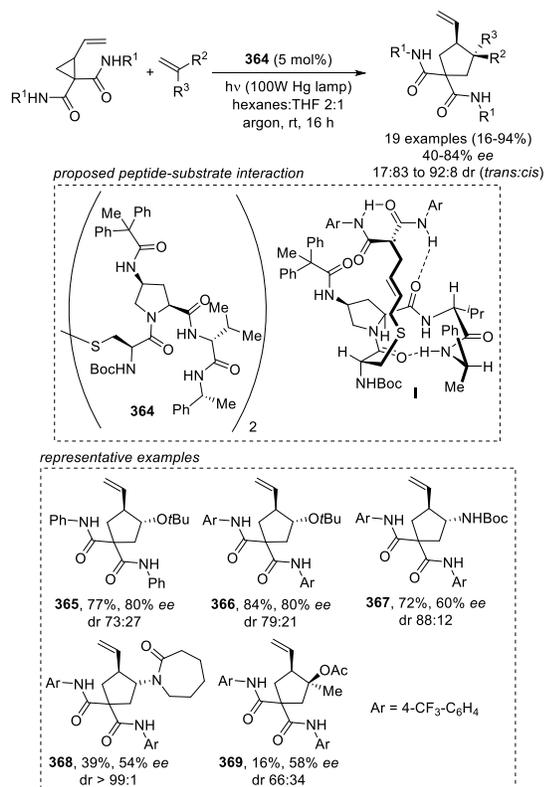
In addition to transition metals, radical chemistry was also successfully applied to the development of catalytic asymmetric ring opening reactions of VCPs. Upon radical addition onto the alkene double bond and formation of an alkyl radical next to the three-membered ring, VCPs undergo ring opening to form homoallylic radicals that can be readily engaged in (3+2) annulations. This process was first exploited in the context of asymmetric catalysis by Maruoka and co-workers in 2014, with the use of chiral thiol catalyst **359** (Scheme 66).⁹⁰ The active thiylradical **I** is first generated by oxidation and then reacts with the VCP to generate radical **II**. The latter then add to the olefin to generate alkyl radical **III**. In case of $\text{R}^1 = \text{R}^2$, both absolute and relative stereochemistry are set in the second C-C bond forming event to form the product. During this step, thiyl radical **I** is also released. The transformation was shown to tolerate various VCPs, and delivered functionalized cyclopentanes such as **360-363** in high yields, diastereo- and enantioselectivities. Concerning the alkene partners, the reaction was limited to vinyl ethers and one single example of ene-carbamate that led to a significant decrease in stereoselectivity.

Scheme 66. Thiyl radical catalyzed enantioselective (3+2) annulation of VCPs with electron-rich alkenes reported by Maruoka and co-workers.



Building upon this work, Miller and co-workers reported the enantioselective (3+2) annulation of VCPs with activated alkenes catalyzed by disulfide-bridged peptide **364** (Scheme 67).⁹¹ The thiyl radical is generated by homolytic cleavage of the disulfide bond upon exposure to UV light. Fine-tuning of the substitution on the proline of the peptide was key to reach high stereocontrol. Amide-substituted VCPs led to the highest level of enantiocontrol, due to a possible H-bonding interaction with the peptide (intermediate **I**). Diverse heteroatom-substituted olefins were suitable partners in the radical mediated cycloaddition to give cyclopentanes such as **365-369**. However 1,1-disubstituted alkenes were found to be less reactive, and other types of olefins did not deliver the desired products.

Scheme 67. Disulfide-bridged peptide-catalyzed asymmetric (3+2) annulation of VCPs with activated alkenes reported by Miller and co-workers.

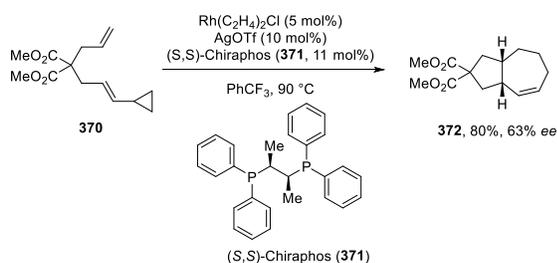


5.2. (5+2) Annulations

Besides their extensive use in (3+2) annulations, VCPs were also exploited as five carbons synthons in asymmetric intramolecular processes. The most successful catalyst in this case is rhodium. In contrast to palladium catalysis, no activating electron-withdrawing groups are needed on the cyclopropane.

After studying the racemic rhodium-catalyzed intramolecular (5+2) annulation of VCPs with alkynes and alkenes,⁹² Wender and co-workers reported the first enantioselective example in 1998 (Scheme 68).⁹³ Starting from VCP **370** bearing a tethered alkene, they could form cycloadduct **372** in 80% yield and 63% *ee* using a combination of Rh(C₂H₄)₂Cl and (*S,S*)-Chiraphos (**371**) as catalyst.

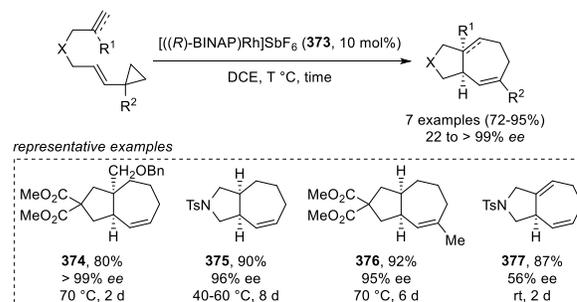
Scheme 68. First example of asymmetric induction in an intramolecular rhodium-catalyzed (5+2) annulation of VCP **370 reported by Wender and co-workers.**



The same group further studied this transformation and reported in 2006 an optimized system using [((*R*)-BINAP)Rh]SbF₆ (**373**) as catalyst (Scheme 69).⁹⁴ Different substitutions and tethers incorporating nitrogen or malonates were tolerated

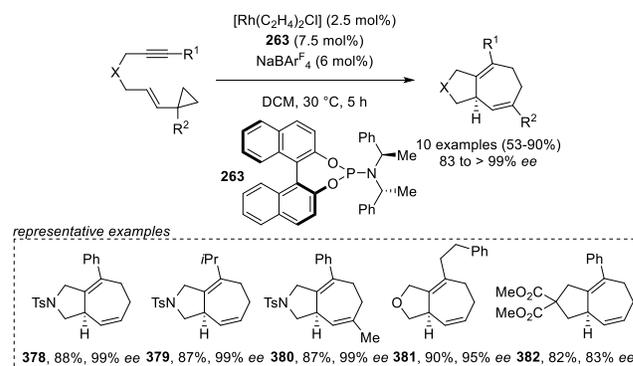
under the reaction conditions to give annulation products such as **374-376**. However, long reaction times and higher temperatures were required for certain substrates. In addition to alkenes, VCPs bearing tethered alkynes also gave bicyclic compounds such as **377**, albeit in lower enantioselectivities.

Scheme 69. Asymmetric rhodium-catalyzed intramolecular (5+2) annulation of VCPs reported by Wender and co-workers.



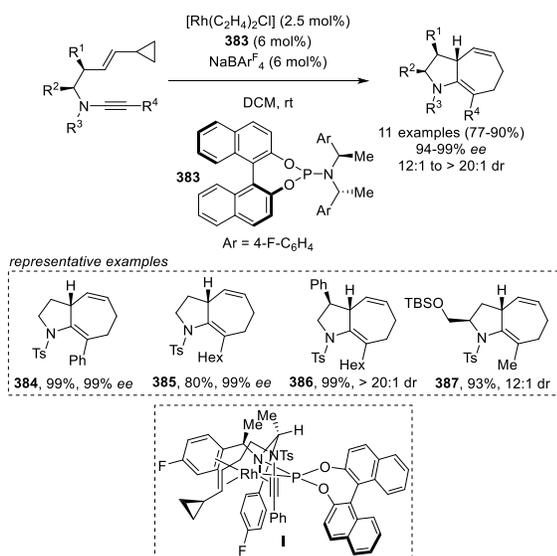
Hayashi and co-workers reported an efficient asymmetric (5+2) annulation for VCPs bearing tethered alkynes (Scheme 70).⁹⁵ Both aryl and alkyl substituents were tolerated on the alkyne, as well as different types of tethers on the VCP substrates under optimized conditions with [Rh(C₂H₄)₂Cl]₂ as catalyst and phosphoramidite ligand **263** to give cycloadducts such as **378-382** with high yields and enantioselectivities.

Scheme 70. Rhodium-catalyzed enantioselective intramolecular (5+2) annulation of VCPs reported by Hayashi and co-workers.



Ynamide tethered VCPs were reported by Anderson and co-workers to be also suitable substrates in intramolecular asymmetric (5+2) annulations (Scheme 71).⁹⁶ DFT calculations showed that the oxidative coupling was the rate-limiting and enantiodetermining step, and **I** was found to be the lowest energy transition state for this step. This model, along with experimental observations, helped to optimize the phosphoramidite ligand, with **383** giving the highest level of enantiocontrol with [Rh(C₂H₄)₂Cl] as catalyst. Under these conditions, ynamide tethered VCPs gave [5.3.0] azabicycles such as **384** and **385** in high yields and enantioselectivities. In addition, enantioenriched substrates were engaged in the transformation and furnished products such as **386** or **387** in high diastereoselectivity thanks to a matched substrate-catalyst system.

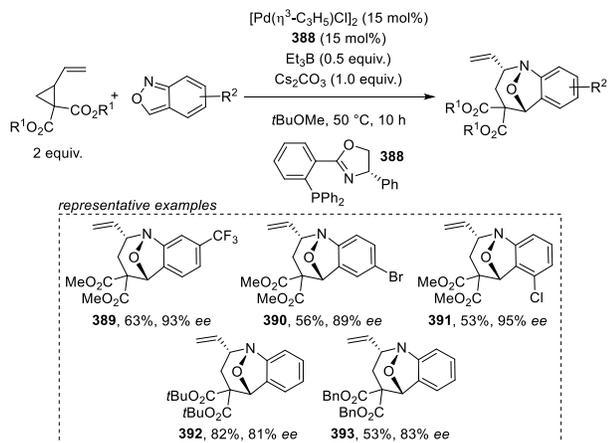
Scheme 71. Rhodium-catalyzed enantioselective intramolecular (5+2) annulation of ynamide tethered VCPs reported by Anderson and co-workers.



5.3. (4+3) Annulations

A palladium catalyzed enantioselective dearomatization of anthranils by (4+3) annulation with VCPs was reported by You and co-workers (Scheme 72).⁹⁷ The addition of triethylborane as a co-activating Lewis acid was crucial to achieve satisfying yields. Using PHOX ligand **388**, excellent diastereoselectivities (16:1 to >20:1 dr) and high enantioselectivities were observed for annulation products such as **389-393**. Various substituents on the phenyl rings of the anthranil partner were tolerated, as well as different ester groups on the VCP.

Scheme 72. Palladium-catalyzed enantioselective (4+3) annulation of VCPs with anthranils reported by You and co-workers.

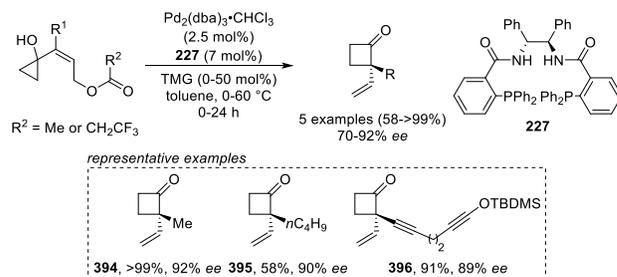


5.4. Ring expansion

The activation of the double bond of 1-vinylcyclopropan-1-ols with an electrophile (metal, proton or halogen) leads to a carbocation intermediate, which can undergo a 1,2-Wagner-Meerwein alkyl (semi-pinacol) shift to give cyclobutanones. The first catalytic asymmetric Wagner-Meerwein rearrangement was described by Trost and co-workers through the formation of a π -allyl complex, enabling the

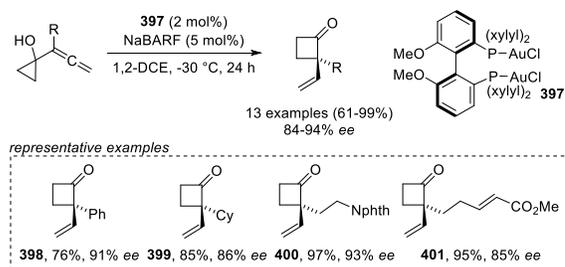
enantioselective ring expansion of vinylcyclopropanols (Scheme 73).⁹⁸ Differentiation of the two prochiral faces of the alkene was successfully achieved by the formation of a π -allylpalladium complex in the presence of chiral ligand **227**. Cyclobutanones such as **394-396** were formed in good yields and enantioselectivities. The same chemistry was applied to vinylcyclobutanols producing enantioenriched cyclopentanone products.

Scheme 73. Catalytic asymmetric Wagner-Meerwein rearrangement of vinylcyclopropanols reported by Trost and co-workers.



Another method for the enantioselective synthesis of cyclobutanones was described by Toste and Kleinbeck through the ring expansion of 1-allenylcyclopropanols catalyzed by a chiral phosphine gold(I) complex **397** (Scheme 74).⁹⁹ This ring expansion was promoted by the coordination of a gold(I) catalyst to the internal double bond of the allene leading to a Wagner-Meerwein shift. Optimization of the reaction conditions revealed that sterically hindered substituents on the phosphine as well as low temperatures were required to reach high ee values. A series of cyclobutanones bearing a vinyl-substituted quaternary stereocenter such as **398-401** were obtained in high yields and high enantioselectivities.

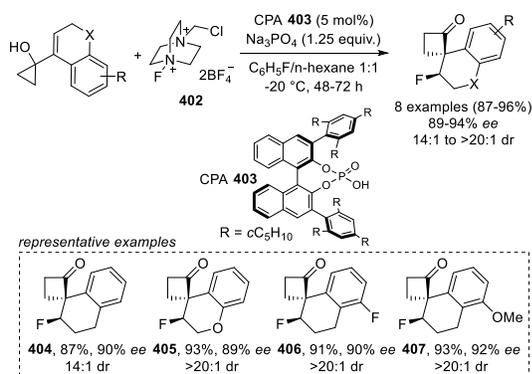
Scheme 74. Gold-catalyzed asymmetric ring expansion reaction of 1-allenylcyclopropanols reported by Toste and Kleinbeck.



The enantioselective Wagner-Meerwein rearrangement of vinylcyclopropanols was also studied by Alexakis and co-workers. Their approach relied on anionic phase transfer catalysis (PTC): the interaction of a halonium ion with a chiral anion promotes an enantioselective halogenative Wagner-Meerwein rearrangement. The fluorination of vinylcyclopropanols with Selectfluor (**402**) was first studied using phosphates as chiral anions (Scheme 75).¹⁰⁰ In a 1:1 mixture of fluorobenzene and *n*-hexane containing the highly hindered phosphoric acid **403** and Na₃PO₄ as a base, β -fluoro spirolactones such as **404-407** were obtained in good yields and with excellent enantioselectivities and diastereoselectivities. This enantioselective fluorination/ring expansion cascade was also applied to cyclobutanols to give cyclopentanones. Without

an aromatic substituent on the allylic alcohol, β -fluoro spirolactones were obtained with only moderate stereoselectivities.

Scheme 75. Organocatalytic fluorination-induced Wagner-Meerwein rearrangement of vinylcyclopropanols reported by Alexakis and co-workers.



Brominative and iodinative semi-pinacol rearrangements, as well as stereodivergent halogenations were developed by the same authors using reagents **408** and **409** together with CPA catalyst **410** (Figure 8).¹⁰¹ These halogenative phase-transfer methodologies were also discussed in a comprehensive study including scope, limitations and mechanism.¹⁰²

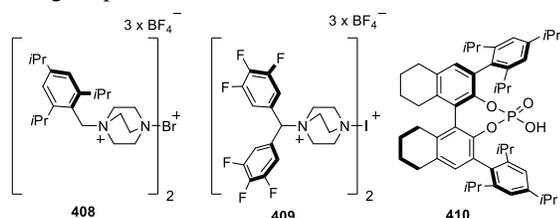
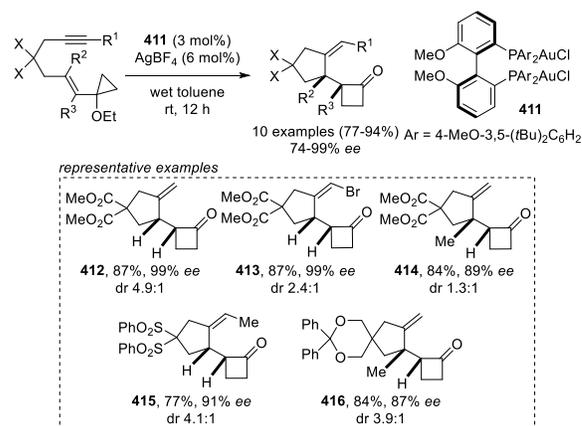


Figure 8. Asymmetric PTC systems developed by Alexakis and co-workers.

An asymmetric gold catalyzed rearrangement of cyclopropyl-1,6-enynes was reported by Voitriez and co-workers (Scheme 76).¹⁰³ The transformation proceeded efficiently in the presence of the digold precatalyst **411** in wet toluene (35 mol% H_2O), leading to enantioenriched cyclobutanone derivatives such as **412-416**. The reaction tolerated different tethers, as well as substitution on the alkyne, alkene and cyclopropyl groups, leading to the rearranged products in good yields and enantioselectivities, but moderate diastereoselectivity.

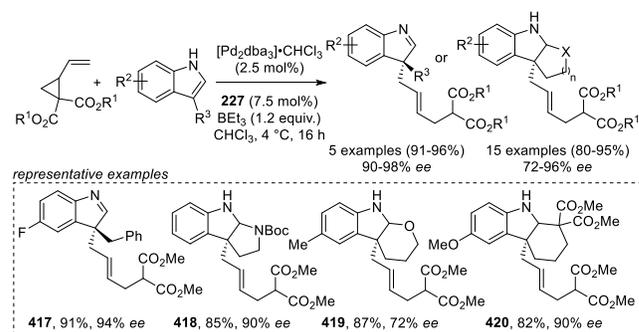
Scheme 76. Gold-catalyzed asymmetric rearrangement of enyne-substituted VCPs reported by Voitriez and co-workers.



5.5. Ring-opening reactions

In comparison to annulation and ring expansion processes, only scattered example of enantioselective ring-opening reactions have appeared. Trost and co-workers reported a palladium-catalyzed asymmetric allylic alkylation of indole derivatives with VCPs (Scheme 77).¹⁰⁴ In this transformation the π -allyl palladium complex generated from the ring opening of the VCP serves as an electrophile. The addition of triethylborane leads to an increased acidity of the indole NH bond upon complexation, inducing protonation of the malonate anion of the zwitterionic π -allyl palladium complex, which becomes only electrophilic. The enantioselectivity of the transformation was ensured by employing ligand **227** already found optimal by the Trost group in the context of the asymmetric (3+2) annulation with VCPs. In addition to the allylic alkylation of 3-substituted 1*H*-indoles to give dearomatized products such as **417**, a tandem cyclization could be achieved in the same conditions with indoles possessing a tethered nucleophile, leading to highly functionalized tricyclic scaffolds such as **418-420**.

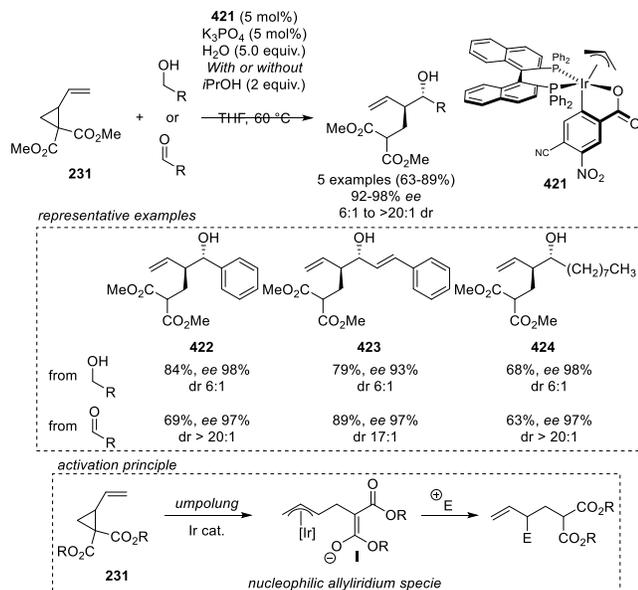
Scheme 77. Palladium-catalyzed enantioselective nucleophilic ring opening of VCPs with indoles reported by Trost and co-workers.



Inspired by the precedents in the field of asymmetric iridium-catalyzed allylation of carbonyls,^{105,106} the groups of Krische and Johnson conjointly reported the electrophilic functionalization of VCPs with carbonyl compounds (Scheme 78).¹⁰⁷ When diester-substituted VCP **231** was exposed to cyclometalated iridium catalyst **421**, a nucleophilic π -allyliridium complex **I** is formed, enabling a reductive coupling

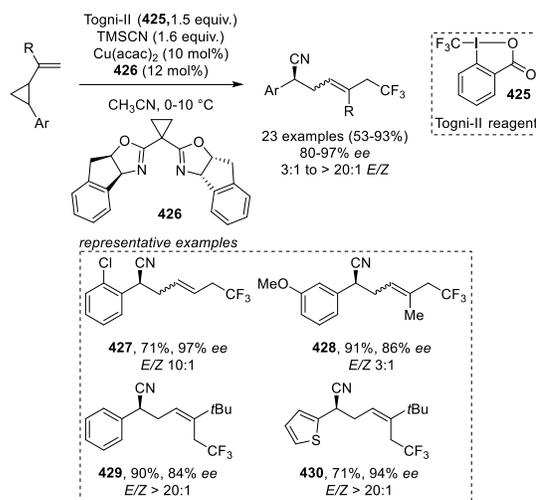
with aldehydes or alcohols. This unprecedented Umpolung of VCPs to give a 1,3-bisnucleophilic synthons led to open adducts such as **422-424** in high yields and enantioselectivities in the presence of alcohols. Aldehydes could also be used as coupling partners, with the addition of 2 equivalents of isopropanol as terminal reductant, delivering the desired products in comparable yields and enantioselectivities, but higher diastereoselectivities. When submitted to Krapcho decarboxylative conditions, the products could be converted into the corresponding *cis*-4,5-disubstituted δ -lactones.

Scheme 78. Iridium-catalyzed asymmetric electrophilic ring-opening of VCP 231 with aldehydes and alcohols reported by the groups of Johnson and Krische.



Finally, an asymmetric 1,5-difunctionalization of donor-substituted cyclopropanes could be achieved with VCPs based on a radical mechanism: Wang and co-workers reported an enantioselective copper-catalyzed 1,5-cyanotrifluoromethylation of VCPs (Scheme 79).¹⁰⁸ Using a radical relay strategy, a combination of Cu(acac)₂ with BOX ligand **426** along with a slight excess of Togni-II reagent (**425**) and TMS-CN gave access in high yields and stereocontrol to 1,5-difunctionalized products such as **427-430**. The homoallylic radical formed after ring opening of the VCP is trapped by the copper catalyst, which then delivers the cyanotrifluoromethylated product upon reductive elimination under ligand control.

Scheme 79. Copper-catalyzed enantioselective 1,5-cyanotrifluoromethylation of VCPs reported by Wang and co-workers.



6. Alkylidenecyclopropanes

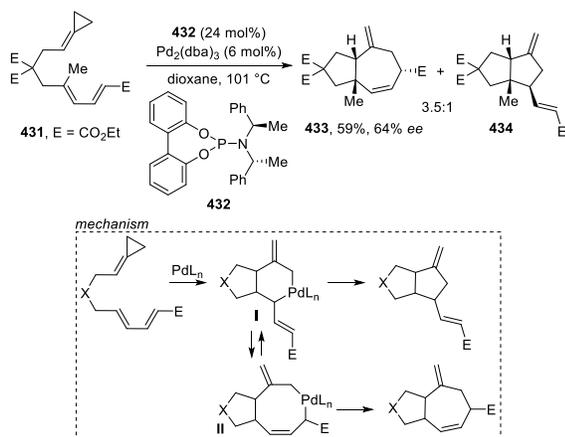
Bearing a strained exocyclic double bond, alkylidenecyclopropanes (ACPs) are an important class of three membered carbocycles for the development of enantioselective ring-opening reactions. Especially, ACPs are privileged substrates for transition metal-mediated transformations. A well-studied mode of activation is via the formation of a metallacyclobutane by oxidative addition, which then reacts in annulations with diverse partners. Another important process involves the formation of a cyclopropylmetal species, that easily undergoes a β -carbon elimination to form an homoallylic metal complex. The latter can then lead to difunctionalized linear products. Asymmetric ring expansions were also reported, proceeding through 1,2-rearrangements upon in situ activation of the *exo*-methylene group.

6.1. Annulation reactions

Only limited examples of enantioselective transition metal-catalyzed annulations with ACPs have been developed so far. Mechanistically, the reactions occur via a metallacyclobutane intermediate formed after coordination of the double bond to a metal complex, followed by migratory insertion/oxidative addition into a C-C bond of the three-membered carbocycle.

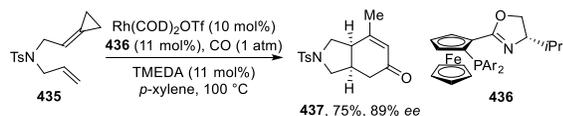
The first efforts towards an enantioselective palladium-catalyzed (4+3) intramolecular annulation of ACPs and dienes were reported in 2007 by Mascareñas and co-workers (Scheme 80).¹⁰⁹ The presence of a conjugate diene in substrate **431** was expected to favor the formation of the seven-membered cycloadduct **433** over product **434** coming from (3+2) annulation. Oxidative cyclometallation with an alkene and the ACP first give palladium complex **I**. A π -allyl rearrangement leads then to intermediate **II**, followed by reductive elimination to give the seven-membered ring product. Direct reductive elimination from **I** leads to the five-membered ring product. The seven-membered cycloadduct was obtained as the major product in an encouraging *ee* value of 64% with ligand **432**.

Scheme 80. Enantioselective palladium-catalyzed (4+3) intramolecular annulation of ACPs and dienes reported by Mascareñas and co-workers.



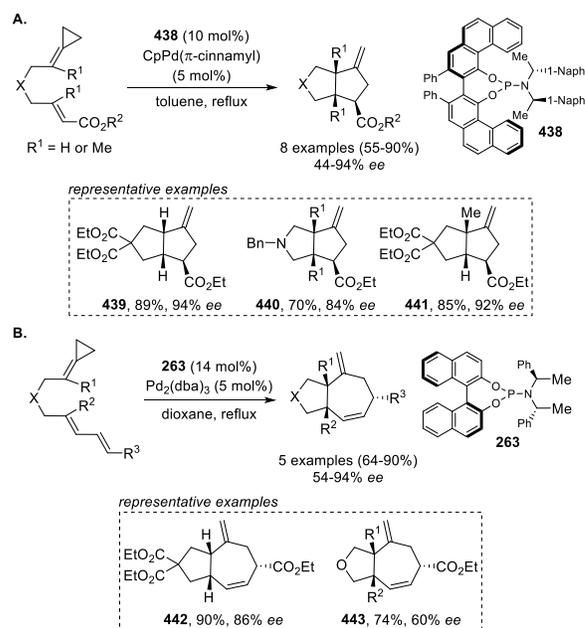
A second proof of concept for an enantioselective transition-metal-catalysed annulation with ACPs was achieved by Evans and co-workers in 2012 (Scheme 81).¹¹⁰ In this report, a [3+2+1] carbocyclization of ACP **435** with CO was performed in the presence of chiral bidentate P,N-ligand **436** and Rh(COD)₂OTf providing *cis*-fused bicyclohexenone **437** in 75% yield with 89% enantiomeric excess.

Scheme 81. Rh-catalysed [3+2+1] carbocyclization of ACPs with CO reported by Evans and co-workers.



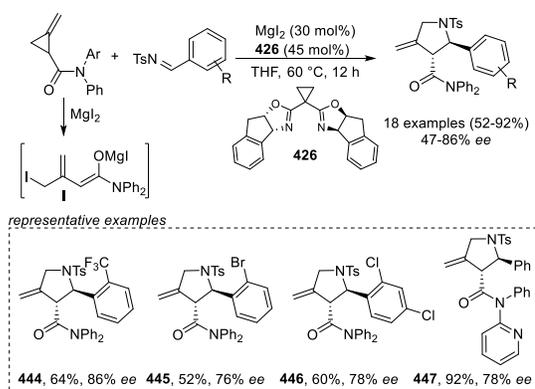
Building upon their preliminary results, Mascareñas and co-workers reported in 2018 an efficient palladium-catalyzed enantioselective (3+2) intramolecular cycloaddition of ACPs with alkenes (Scheme 82A).¹¹¹ The highly hindered Vapol-derived phosphoramidite **438** was found to be key to achieve high level of enantioinduction. Combined with CpPd(π -cinnamyl) as catalyst, a series of *cis*-fused 5,5-bicyclic adducts such as **439–441** could be obtained in good yields and enantioselectivities ranging from 44 to 94% and complete diastereoselectivity in most cases. When tethered 1,3-dienes were used instead of alkenes, the less bulky phosphoramidite ligand **263** could be used to promote the corresponding asymmetric (4+3) annulation (Scheme 82B). 5,7-Bicyclic systems such as **442** or **443** bearing up to three stereocenters could be obtained in good yields and *ee* values ranging from 54 to 94%. Regioselectivity issues were however encountered and the (3+2) adduct was also obtained in some cases.

Scheme 82. Enantioselective (3+2) and (4+3) intramolecular annulations of ACPs with alkenes and dienes reported by Mascareñas and co-workers.



The groups of Lautens reported an enantioselective ring-opening/cyclization cascade of methylenecyclopropanes (MCPs) with aldimines catalyzed by a chiral magnesium complex (Scheme 83).¹¹² Magnesium activates the cyclopropane for nucleophilic attack by iodide through coordination to the amide group to give enolate **I**. α -Alkylation of **I** with aldimines followed by cyclization affords methylene pyrrolidines. An enantioselective variant of this reaction was performed using BOX ligand **426** in a sub-stoichiometric amount. High loading (45 mol%) was required to avoid the racemic background reaction. A series of *trans*-methylenepyrrolidine derivatives such as **444–447** were formed in good yields and *ee* values ranging from 47 to 86%.

Scheme 83. Enantioselective magnesium-catalysed ring-opening/cyclization cascade of MCPs with aldimines reported by Lautens and co-workers.

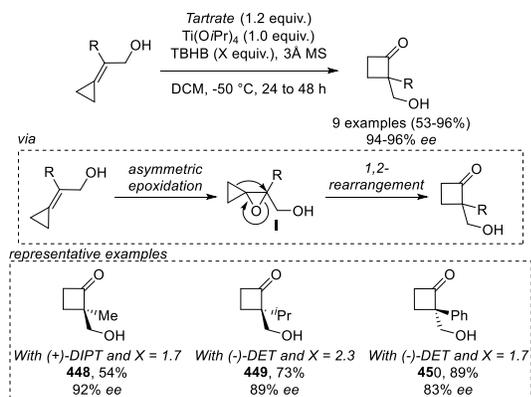


6.2. Ring expansions

Ring expansion reactions of ACPs take advantage of the reactive nature of the *exo*-methylene bond, by forming in situ a reactive intermediate that can trigger a 1,2 rearrangement. Fukumoto and co-workers reported already in 1992 a tandem

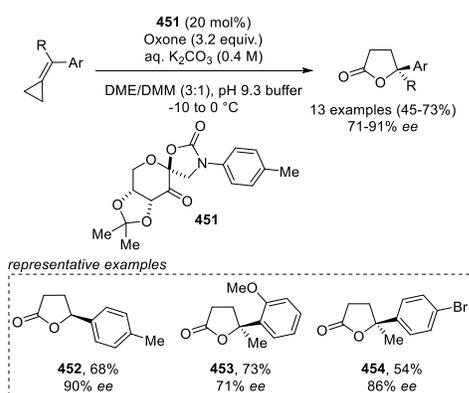
Katsuki-Sharpless asymmetric epoxidation of 2,2-disubstituted ACPs followed by an enantiospecific ring expansion through a 1,2 migration (Scheme 84).¹¹³ Depending on the choice of the tartrate used in the asymmetric epoxidation, both enantiomers of the chiral cyclobutanones products could be accessed. Alkyl- and aryl-substituted cyclopropylidene alcohols delivered cyclobutanones such as **448-450** in good yields and high enantioselectivities. The same group applied this strategy to the enantioselective total synthesis of various biologically active compounds.¹¹⁴

Scheme 84. Tandem asymmetric epoxidation / ring expansion of 2,2-disubstituted cyclopropylidene alcohols reported by Fukumoto and co-workers.



Shi and co-workers reported a cascade asymmetric epoxidation, ring expansion and Baeyer-Villiger oxidation of ACPs to access enantioenriched γ -aryl- γ -butyrolactones such as **452-454** (Scheme 85).¹¹⁵ Employing a combination of glucose-derived oxazolidinone **451** and an excess of oxone, the transformation tolerated a variety of tri- and tetrasubstituted benzylidene cyclopropanes.

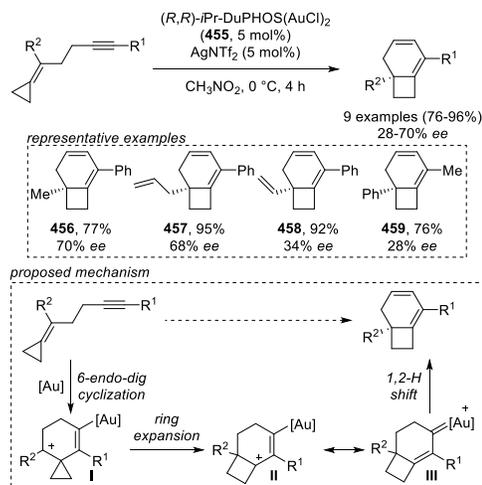
Scheme 85. Cascade asymmetric epoxidation / ring expansion / Baeyer-Villiger oxidation of ACPs reported by Shi and co-workers.



Gagné and co-workers reported an asymmetric gold-catalyzed ring expansion of alkyne tethered ACPs through cycloisomerization, providing an efficient access to bicyclo[4.2.0]octadienes (Scheme 86).¹¹⁶ Using (*R,R*)-*i*-Pr-DuPHOS(AuCl)₂ (**455**) as catalyst in nitromethane at 0 °C, several substituted cycloadducts such as **456-459** could be obtained in good yields, with *ee* values ranging from 28 to 70%. The reaction was proposed to proceed via alkyne activation by

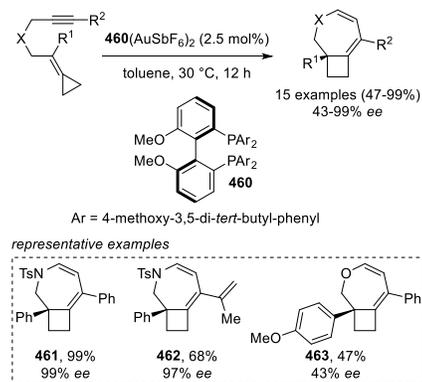
the gold catalyst followed by 6-*endo-dig* cyclization to give carbocation **I**. Wagner-Meerwein shift then gives ring-expanded intermediate **II**, which can be drawn as a gold-carbene resonance structure **III**. Finally, a 1,2-hydride shift leads to the observed diene product.

Scheme 86. Gold-catalyzed asymmetric cycloisomerization of alkyne tethered ACPs reported by Gagné and co-workers.



Building upon the work of Gagné and co-workers, the group of Yu reported the cycloisomerization of alkyne-tethered ACPs, containing one extra heteroatom in the tether to access 7-membered rings (Scheme 87).¹¹⁷ Using **460**(AuSbF₆)₂ as optimal catalyst, this process led to a variety of enantioenriched azepine-fused cyclobutanes such as **461** and **462** in high yields and enantioselectivities. The reaction could also be used for accessing oxygen-based heterocycles such as **463** in moderate yields and enantioselectivities.

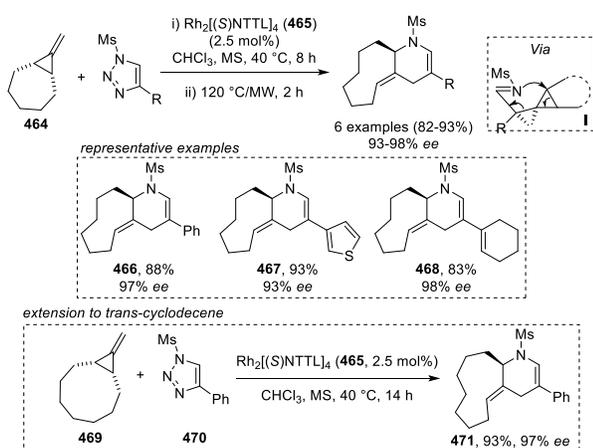
Scheme 87. Gold-catalyzed asymmetric cycloisomerization of yne-ACP reported by Yu and co-workers.



A one-pot enantioselective cyclopropanation of *meso*-MCP **464** followed by a thermally induced rearrangement to access piperidine-fused *trans*-cycloalkenes such as **466-468** was reported by Murakami and co-workers (Scheme 88).¹¹⁸ In this transformation the asymmetric cyclopropanation is catalyzed by Rh₂[(*S*)-NTTL]₄ (NTTL = *N*-naphthoyl-*tert*-leucinate) (**465**) and the required rhodium carbene intermediate is generated from a *N*-sulfonyl-1,2,3-triazole. The obtained α -imino spiro-pentane is then heated at 120 °C under microwave

irradiation to trigger a ring-opening rearrangement leading to the enantioenriched bicyclic product (transition state **I**). Different substituted triazoles were compatible with the reaction conditions. Moreover, the authors demonstrated that it was possible to start directly from terminal alkynes, by simply adding mesyl azide and 10 mol% of CuTC in the first step, without erosion of the enantioselectivity. Other bicyclic *meso*-MCPs of different ring sizes were also investigated. With nine-membered bicyclic substrate **469** and triazole **470**, the rearrangement proceeded at 40 °C without microwave irradiation and furnished the corresponding *trans*-cyclodecene **471** in 93% yield and 97% *ee*. However, using a 7-membered bicyclic MCP led to a significant decrease in yield along with a mixture of isomers.

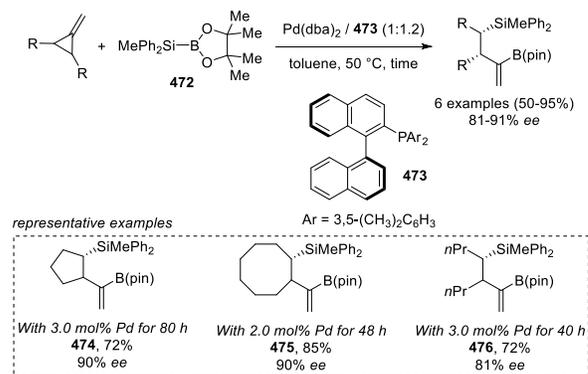
Scheme 88. One-pot enantioselective cyclopropanation of *meso*-MCPs / rearrangement for the synthesis of *trans*-cycloalkenes reported by Murakami and co-workers.



6.3. Ring-opening / difunctionalization

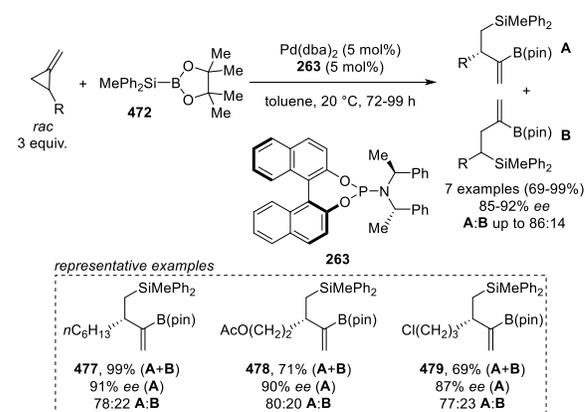
Upon regioselective migratory insertion of an appropriately substituted palladium complex onto the double bond of MCPs, a β -carbon elimination furnishes a homoallylic intermediate, which is able to deliver a difunctionalized open product after reductive elimination. In 2007, Suginome and co-workers reported a palladium-catalyzed asymmetric desymmetrization of *meso*-MCPs by silaboration (Scheme 89).¹¹⁹ They found that a combination of Pd(dba)₂ and monophosphine ligand **473** in a 1:1.2 ratio efficiently promoted the challenging proximal C-C bond cleavage of MCPs. In addition, the use of MePh₂SiB(pin) (**472**) was key to induce high levels of enantiocontrol. Under these conditions, different bicyclic *meso*-MCPs afforded desymmetrized products such as **474** or **475** in good yields and enantioselectivities, in varying reaction times (48 to 99 hours). When a non-bicyclic *meso*-MCP was used, a slight decrease in *ee* was observed for product **476**.

Scheme 89. Palladium-catalyzed enantioselective silaborative C-C cleavage of *meso*-MCPs reported by Suginome and co-workers.



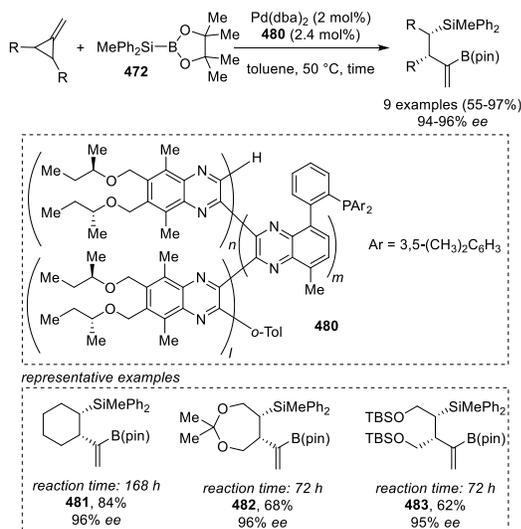
Two years later the same group reported an extension of this methodology to racemic 1-alkyl-2-MCPs, via a kinetic resolution under palladium catalysis (Scheme 90).¹²⁰ This asymmetric silaborative C-C cleavage proceeded efficiently again in the presence of MePh₂SiB(pin) (**472**), Pd(dba)₂ and this time phosphoramidite ligand **263**. However complete regioselectivity could not be achieved, as the discrimination between the two proximal C-C bonds turned out to be challenging, with a preference for breaking the less sterically hindered one. The ratio between the two regioisomers **A** and **B** could be increased up to 86:14, by using 3.0 equivalents of the racemic MCP. Alkyl chains of varying length and containing different functional groups were tolerated on the substrate, delivering products such as **477-479** in high yields and enantioselectivities.

Scheme 90. Palladium-catalyzed kinetic resolution of racemic 1-alkyl-2-MCPs via silaborative C-C cleavage reported by Suginome and co-workers.



Suginome and co-workers could also apply their polymer-based chiral phosphine ligand PQXPhos **480** to the palladium catalyzed desymmetrization of *meso*-MCPs by an asymmetric silaborative cleavage (Scheme 91).¹²¹ PQXPhos ligand **480** was shown to be superior to classical non-polymeric phosphine ligands in the case of monocyclic and oxygen containing MCPs to give products such as **481-483**. In addition, a rate enhancement of the reaction was observed with the polymer based ligands, allowing the transformation to be performed at room temperature or at lower catalyst loading.

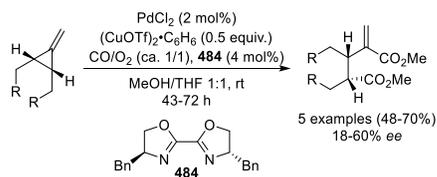
Scheme 91. Palladium-catalyzed desymmetrization of *meso*-MCPs by silaborative cleavage with PQXPho ligand **480 reported by Suginome and co-workers.**



This palladium catalyzed asymmetric silaborative ring cleavage of *meso*-MCPs was further utilized by Suginome and co-workers as a benchmark reaction to highlight the efficiency of macromolecular helical catalysts, bearing (diarylphosphino)phenyl groups on their side chains.¹²²

A desymmetrization of *meso*-MCPs was also reported by Ukaji and co-workers through a palladium-catalyzed asymmetric ring-opening/bis(alkoxycarbonylation) reaction (Scheme 92).¹²³ According to the authors, this carbonylation proceeds via the carbopalladation of a Pd-CO₂Me species followed by ring cleavage of the cyclopropane ring. Asymmetric induction with chiral bisoxazoline ligands was however disappointing, with BOX ligand **484** leading to α -methylene-glutarate product in low enantiopurity.

Scheme 92. Palladium-catalyzed asymmetric ring-opening/bis(alkoxycarbonylation) reaction through desymmetrization of *meso*-methylene cyclopropanes reported by Ukaji and co-workers.



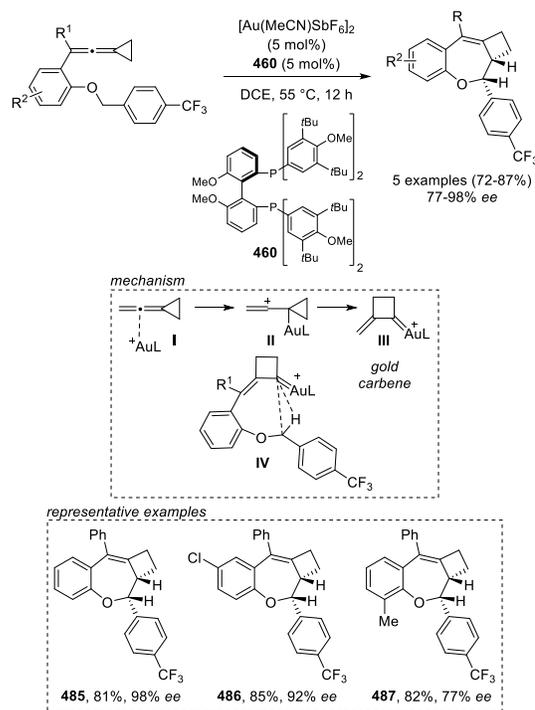
7. Vinylidenecyclopropanes

Vinylidenecyclopropanes (VDCPs) are a class of three membered ring carbocycles bearing an allene group, resulting in a high strain energy (51 kcal/mol).^{7k} With appropriate substituents, VDCPs are stable and were shown to be suitable substrates for enantioselective ring-opening transformations. Only a few examples of asymmetric catalysis have been reported so far by the group of Shi, including C(sp³)-H functionalizations, hydrofunctionalizations, cycloisomerizations and cycloadditions.

In 2016, Shi and co-workers first developed a C(sp³)-H functionalization via a gold carbene generated from

vinylidenecyclopropanes leading to benzoxepine motifs (Scheme 93).¹²⁴ Formation of the carbene starts from a gold allene complex **I**, which leads to formation of the cyclopropyl cation **II**. Wagner-Meerwein shift then gives gold carbene **III**. C-H bond insertion (**IV**) was achieved after fine tuning of the electronic properties of the benzyl ring. The 4-trifluoromethyl group at the *para*-position was optimal to get the right reactivity of the benzylic C-H bond towards C-H functionalization. The combination of chiral bisphosphine ligand **460** with [Au(MeCN)SbF₆]₂ gave the best enantioselectivities. These conditions were applied to five VDCPs leading to the benzoxepine derivatives such as **485-487** in good yields and good enantiopurity.

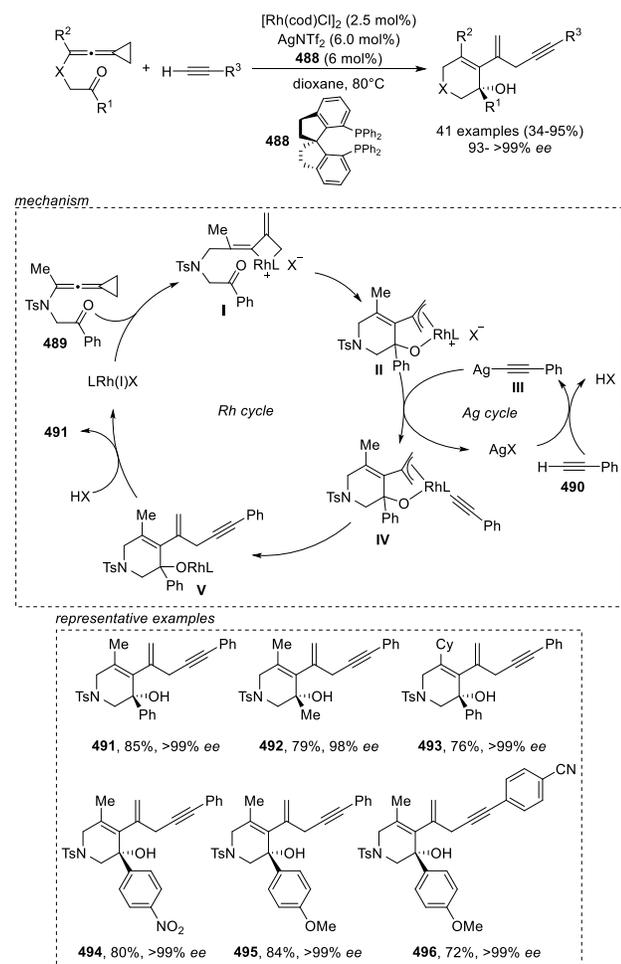
Scheme 93. Asymmetric C(sp³)-H functionalization by a gold carbene generated from vinylidenecyclopropanes reported by Shi and co-workers.



The same group reported a cycloisomerization/cross coupling of keto-VDCPs with alkynes proceeding through rhodium/silver synergistic catalysis and enabling the regioselective and enantioselective formation of tetrahydropyridin-3-ol tethered 1,4-enynes (Scheme 94).¹²⁵ Both metals are needed to activate separately the VDCP and the alkyne. The proposed mechanism starts by an oxidative addition into the weaker distal C-C bond of VDCP **489** leading to a rhoda-cyclobutene intermediate **I** after isomerization. Formation of the oxa-rhodacyclic intermediate **II** is then obtained through a carbometallation of the ketone. Transmetalation of the Ag alkynyl intermediate **III**, obtained in situ from terminal alkyne **490**, to rhodium gives intermediate **IV**, which after reductive elimination and protonolysis affords the cycloisomerization/cross coupling product **491** via **V**. Various chiral bisphosphine ligands were screened to develop an enantioselective transformation. Among biaryl and non-biaryl bisphosphines, **488** gave the best enantioselectivities while yields were improved with AgNTf₂ as silver salt. This asymmetric cycloisomerization/cross coupling reaction was

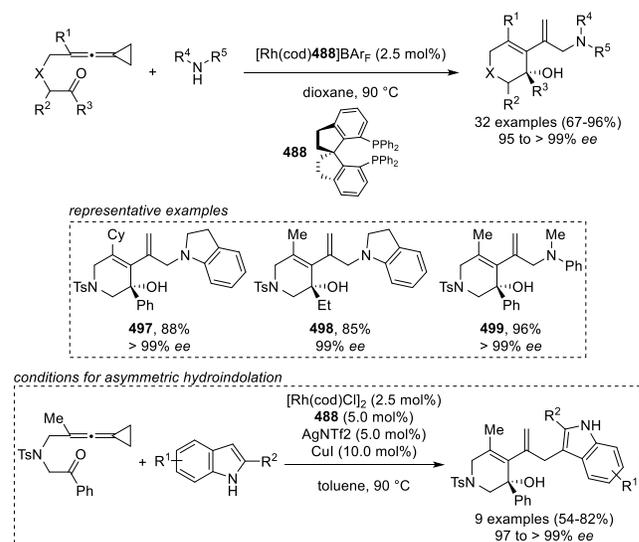
exemplified with numerous keto-VDCPs and alkynes furnishing functionalized six-membered ring systems such as **491-496** with excellent yields and very high degree of enantiopurity. The process is compatible with electron-withdrawing and -donating substituents on the benzene ring of keto-VDCPs as well as aryl- or alkyl-substituted terminal alkynes.

Scheme 94. Rhodium/silver synergistic catalysis enabling cycloisomerization/cross coupling of keto-VDCPs with alkynes reported by Shi and co-workers.



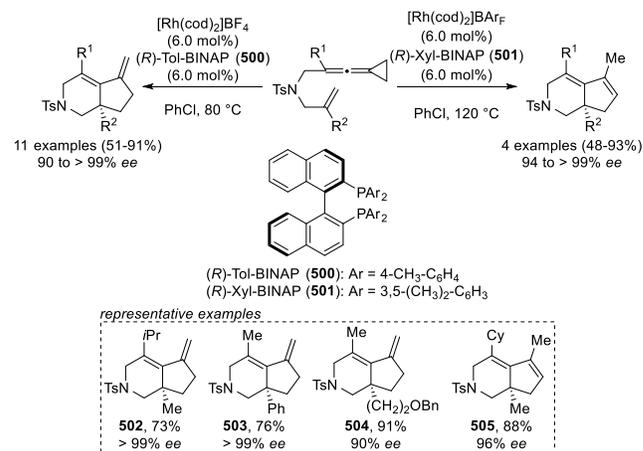
Shi and co-workers also reported an enantioselective hydroamination and hydroindolation of keto-VDCPs under rhodium catalysis following the same mechanism, with an amine or an indole replacing the alkyne nucleophile (Scheme 95).¹²⁶ [Rh(cod)**488**]BAr_F was found to be the best catalyst for the transformation, leading to high yields and enantioselectivities for allyl amine products such as **497-499**. The reaction tolerated a range of substituted keto-VDCPs and secondary amines. Indoles could also be used as nucleophiles, under reoptimized conditions, leading selectively to the C3-functionalized regioisomer.

Scheme 95. Rhodium-catalyzed enantioselective hydroamination and hydroindolation of keto-VDCPs reported by Shi and co-workers.



Finally, an asymmetric intramolecular rhodium-catalyzed annulation of ene-VDCPs was also described by the same group (Scheme 96).¹²⁷ Two products could be selectively obtained in this methodology from the same substrate. With [Rh(cod)₂]BF₄ as catalyst, when (*R*)-Tol-BINAP (**500**) was used at 80 °C, the corresponding bicycle bearing an exocyclic double bond was obtained as the major product. However, with the same catalyst at 120 °C with (*R*)-Xyl-BINAP (**501**) as chiral ligand, the product with an endocyclic double bond was obtained selectively. Under these conditions both type of products (such as **502-504** and **505**) were obtained in good yields and high enantioselectivities from diverse substituted ene-VDCPs.

Scheme 96. Rhodium-catalyzed asymmetric intramolecular annulation of ene-VDCPs reported by Shi and co-workers.



8. Conclusion and Outlook

Only a decade ago, the field of enantioselective ring-opening of cyclopropanes was in its infancy. Asymmetric transformations of Donor-Acceptor cyclopropanes was an emerging field, and

only isolated examples with other types of cyclopropanes had been reported. At the end of 2019, the situation has changed completely, with more than 100 examples of enantioselective transformations disclosed.

The field of Donor-Acceptor cyclopropanes has truly blossomed, thanks to the availability of new fine-tuned chiral ligands, such as bisoxazolines and *N*-oxides, or new modes of activation based on amine or carbene catalysis. (3+2) annulations still dominate, but a broad range of other annulations and ring-opening processes have been also developed. Less reactive donor- or acceptor-only cyclopropanes, which had been long considered as not suitable substrates for asymmetric transformations, have now also been successfully used. This has become possible thanks to new activation methods based on transition metal, photoredox or iminium/enamine catalysis.

The use of cyclopropanes bearing unsaturation has also been the focus of intensive research in asymmetric synthesis in the last decade. This field is dominated by the palladium-catalyzed (3+2) annulation of vinylcyclopropanes (VCPs), but other types of annulations, ring expansions and ring-opening reactions have also started to appear using palladium or other transition metal catalysts. Among those, the rhodium-catalyzed (5+2) annulation has been especially successful. Innovative approaches involving carbocation or radical intermediates have further enriched the chemistry of VCPs. The more strained systems with exo double-bonds present in alkylidene- and vinylidene- cyclopropanes (ACPs and VDCPs) have now also been exploited in ring-opening reactions, although the field is less mature. New examples of annulations, ring expansions and difunctionalization reactions are nevertheless promising for future developments.

In summary, enantioselective ring-opening reactions of cyclopropanes have developed tremendously over the last two decades. They have become now valuable tools to access enantioenriched building blocks for synthetic and medicinal chemistry. There is still ample room for further developments, especially using recently introduced modes of activation, such as photoredox, transition-metal or organo-catalysis.

AUTHOR INFORMATION

Corresponding Author

*E-mail: jerome.waser@epfl.ch

Author Contributions

†These authors contributed equally.

ORCID

J. Waser: 0000-0002-4570-914X

Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

Biographies

Vincent Pirenne studied chemistry at the University of Namur in Belgium, where he first obtained his Master's degree with Honors in 2014. He then moved to Bordeaux (France) for his doctoral studies in the group of Prof. Yannick Landais (at the University of Bordeaux) and graduated in 2018. His research focused on the development of tin-free radical methodologies for the total synthesis of an alkaloid natural product. Currently, Vincent is in the group of Prof. Jérôme Waser at the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) as a postdoctoral fellow where his research focuses on ring-opening reactions of D-A cyclopropanes.

Bastian Muriel studied chemistry at the University of Bordeaux in France. He conducted his master thesis in the group of Prof. Jérôme Waser at EPFL, working on the palladium-catalyzed difunctionalization of olefins. He obtained his master degree with Honors in 2016 at the University of Bordeaux, and then returned to Lausanne, where he is currently working towards his Ph.D. His research interests focus on the development of new radical-based methodologies exploiting ring strain.

Jérôme Waser was born in Sierre, Valais, Switzerland. He studied chemistry at ETH Zurich, where he obtained his PhD degree in 2006 with Prof. Erick M. Carreira. In 2006, he joined Prof. Barry M. Trost at Stanford University as a SNF postdoctoral fellow. Since October 2007 he has been professor of organic chemistry at the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), where he was promoted full professor in 2019. He is a recipient of the ERC starting grant 2013 and consolidator grant 2017, the Werner prize of the Swiss Chemical Society 2014 and the Springer Heterocyclic Chemistry Award 2016.

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