Supporting Information for:

# Gold-Catalyzed C-H Bond Functionalization of Metallocenes: Synthesis of Densely Functionalized Ferrocene Derivatives

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#### 1. General Considerations.

All reactions were carried out under nitrogen using standard Schlenck techniques. Dichloromethane and 1,2-dichlorethane were distilled from CaH<sub>2</sub>. The solvents used in column chromatography, hexane and ethyl acetate, were obtained from commercial supplier and used without further purification. TLC was performed on aluminum-backed plates coated with silica gel 60 with F<sub>254</sub> indicator. Flash column chromatography was carried out on silica gel (230-240 mesh). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300, 400 MHz) and <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75.5 and 100 MHz) spectra were recorded at room temperature in CDCl<sub>3</sub> on a Bruker DPX-300, or Bruker AVANCE-300 MHz and 400 MHz instruments. Chemical shifts are given in ppm relative to TMS (<sup>1</sup>H, 0.0 ppm) or CDCl<sub>3</sub> (<sup>13</sup>C, 77.0 ppm). Carbon multiplicities were assigned by DEPT techniques. 2D NMR experiments were recorded on a Bruker AVANCE-400 MHz. Elemental analyses were carried out on a Perkin-Elmer 240-B microanalyzer. This study was carried out using vinyldiazoacetates 1a-f and metallocenes 2 and 4 (Figure S1). Vinyldiazoacetates 1a-f were prepared according to well-known procedures previously described in the literature. [Au(IPr)(CH<sub>3</sub>CN)]SbF<sub>6</sub> and deuterated ferrocene were prepared according to literature procedures. All other reagents used in this work were of the best commercial grade available and used without further purification.

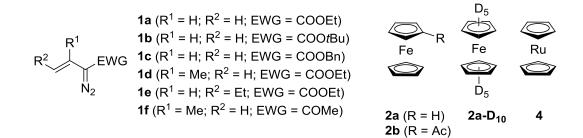
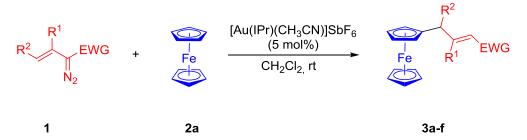


Figure S1. Starting materials used in this work

#### 2. General Procedure for the Synthesis of Compounds 3a-f



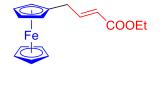
[Au(IPr)(CH<sub>3</sub>CN)]SbF<sub>6</sub> (21.6 mg, 0.025 mmol, 5 mol%) was added to a solution of vinyldiazo compound **1** (0.5 mmol) and ferrocene (**2a**) (370 mg, 2 mmol) in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (5 mL). The mixture was stirred at room temperature until the disappearance of the starting diazo compound (monitored by TLC: 4-12 h). The solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the resulting residue was purified by flash chromatography. Elution with hexanes/ethyl acetate (10:1) produced 2 major fractions. The first fraction was unreacted ferrocene and the second fraction was found to be pure functionalized ferrocene derivatives **3**. In some cases a third purple fraction was observed and found to correspond to the oxidation product **6** (see Section 6 of this Supporting Information).

In the case of vinyldiazo compound **1e** (EWG = COOEt,  $R^1 = H$ ,  $R^2 = Et$ ) the reaction was conducted in DCE (5 mL) at 50 °C.

#### 3. Characterization Data of Compounds 3a-f.

#### Ethyl (E)-4-ferrocenylbut-2-enoate (3a)

The general procedure was followed using vinyldiazoacetate **1a** (70.1 mg). Final chromatographic purification afforded compound **3a** (112 mg, 75%).

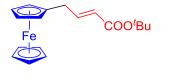


3a

<sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz): 1.31 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 3H), 3.23 (dd, J = 6.9 and 1.5 Hz, 2H), 4.08-4.09 (m, 2H), 4.12-4.13 (m, 2H), 4.16 (s, 5H), 4.22 (q, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 5.82 (dt, J = 15.6 and 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.12 (dt, J = 15.6 and 6.9 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (75 MHz): 14.7 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 32.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 60.6 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 68.1 (CH), 68.6 (CH), 69.0 (CH), 85.1 (C), 122.0 (CH), 147.8 (CH), 167.0 (C); Anal. Calc. for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>18</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub>: C 64.45, H 6.09. Found: C 64.81, H 6.13.

#### *tert*-Butyl (*E*)-4-ferrocenylbut-2-enoate (3b)

The general procedure was followed using vinyldiazoacetate **1b** (84.1 mg). Final chromatographic purification afforded compund **3b** (76.7 mg, 47%).

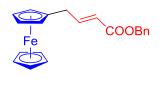


3b

<sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz): 1.51 (s, 9H), 3.20 (dd, J = 6.6 and 1.5 Hz, 2H), 4.09-4.10 (m, 2H), 4.12-4.13 (m, 2H), 4.16 (s, 5H), 5.74 (dt, J = 15.6 and 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.02 (dt, J = 15.6 and 6.6 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (75 MHz): 28.2 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 32.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 67.7 (CH), 68.3 (CH), 68.6 (CH), 80.2 (C), 85.1 (C), 123.3 (CH), 146.2 (CH), 166.0 (C); Anal. Calc. for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>22</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub>: C 66.27, H 6.80. Found: C 66.04, H 6.82.

#### Benzyl (E)-4-ferrocenylbut-2-enoate (3c)

The general procedure was followed using vinyldiazoacetate **1c** (101.1 mg). Final chromatographic purification afforded compound **3c** (108.1 mg, 60%).

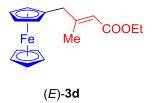




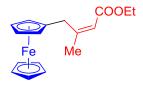
<sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz): 3.27 (dd, J = 6.9 and 1.5 Hz, 2H), 4.10-4.12 (m, 2H), 4.15-4.16 (m, 2H), 4.18 (s, 5H), 5.24 (s, 2H), 5.91 (dt, J = 15.3 and 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.22 (dt, J = 15.3 and 6.9 Hz, 1H), 7.35-7.43 (m, 5H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (75 MHz): 32.2 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 66.2 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 67.8 (CH), 68.3 (CH), 68.7 (CH), 84.6 (C), 121.3 (CH), 128.3 (CH), 128.6 (CH), 136.1 (C), 148.2 (CH), 166.4 (C); Anal. Calc. for  $C_{21}H_{20}FeO_2$ : C 70.02, H 5.60. Found: C 70.27, H 5.44.

#### Ethyl 4-ferrocenyl-3-methylbut-2-enoate (3d)

The general procedure was followed using vinyldiazoacetate **1d** (77.1 mg). Final chromatographic purification afforded compounds (*E*)-**3d** (65.5 mg, 42%) and (*Z*)-**3d** (32.8 mg, 21%).



<sup>1</sup>H-NMR (400 MHz): 1.25 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H), 2.12 (s, 3H), 3.19 (s, 2H), 4.09-4.14 (m, 11H), 5.55 (s, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (100 MHz): 14.3 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 18.8 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 41.3 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 59.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 67.8 (CH), 68.7 (CH), 69.1 (CH), 84.4 (C), 115.9 (CH), 159.0 (C), 166.9 (C); Anal. Calc. for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>20</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub>: C 65.40, H 6.46. Found: C 65.12, H 6.37.



(Z)-3d

<sup>1</sup>H-NMR (400 MHz): 1.31 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 3H), 1.78 (s, 3H), 3.74 (s, 2H), 4.057-4.061 (m, 2H), 4.14-4.20 (m, 9H), 5.60 (s, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (100 MHz): 14.4 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 24.7 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 33.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 59.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 67.4 (CH), 68.7 (CH), 69.0 (CH), 86.0 (C), 115.7 (CH), 158.6 (C), 166.4 (C); Anal. Calc. for  $C_{17}H_{20}FeO_2$ : C 65.40, H 6.46. Found: C 65.23, H 6.45.

# Ethyl (E)-4-ferrocenylhex-2-enoate (3e)

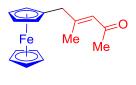
The general procedure was followed using vinyldiazoacetate **1e** (84.1 mg). Final chromatographic purification afforded compound **3e** (19.6 mg, 12%).



<sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz): 0.92 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 3H), 1.34 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 3H), 1.50-1.82 (m, 2H), 2.98-3.06 (m, 1H), 4.04-4.07 (m, 2H), 4.12-4.13 (m, 2H), 4.14 (s, 5H), 4.20 (q, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 5.85 (d, J = 15.6 Hz, 1H), 7.05 (dd, J = 15.6 and 9.0 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (100 MHz): 12.2 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 14.3 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 28.6 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 43.8 (CH), 60.3 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 66.4 (CH), 67.2 (CH), 67.3 (CH), 67.6 (CH), 68.6 (CH), 90.5 (C), 120.5 (CH), 151.5 (CH), 166.8 (C); Anal. Calc. for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>22</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub>: C 66.27, H 6.80. Found: C 66.65, H 7.12.

#### (E)-5-Ferrocenyl-4-methyl-3-penten-2-one (3f)

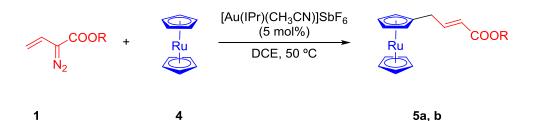
The general procedure was followed using vinyldiazoacetate **1f** (62.1 mg). Final chromatographic purification afforded compound **3f** (70.5 mg, 50%).



(E)-**3f** 

<sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz): 2.10 (s, 3H), 2.14 (s, 3H), 3.20 (s, 2H), 4.10 (br s, 2H), 4.14 (br s, 7H), 5.94 (s, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (75 MHz): 19.4 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 31.8 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 41.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 67.8 (CH), 68.7 (CH), 69.1 (CH), 84.4 (C), 123.6 (CH), 157.5 (C), 199.1 (C); Anal. Calc. for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>18</sub>FeO: C 68.11, H 6.43. Found: C 68.22, H 6.46.

#### 4. General Procedure for the Synthesis of Ruthenocene Derivatives 5a,b

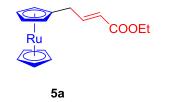


[Au(IPr)(CH<sub>3</sub>CN)]SbF<sub>6</sub> (21.6 mg, 0.025 mmol, 5 mol%) was added to a solution of vinyldiazo compound **1** (0.5 mmol) and ruthenocene (**4**) (460 mg, 2 mmol) in DCE (5 mL). The mixture was stirred at 50 °C until the disappearance of the starting diazo compound (monitored by TLC: 10 h). The solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the resulting residue was purified by flash chromatography (SiO<sub>2</sub>, hexane/ethyl acetate 20:1) to yield functionalized ruthenocene derivatives **5a**, **b**.

# 5. Characterization Data of Compounds 5a, b

#### Ethyl (E)-4-ruthenocenylbut-2-enoate (5a)

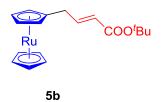
The general procedure was followed using vinyldiazoacetate **1a** (70.1 mg). Final chromatographic purification afforded compound **5a** (42.9 mg, 25%).



<sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz): 1.32 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 3H), 3.09 (dd, J = 7.2 and 1.5 Hz, 2H), 4.22 (q, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 4.50 (s, 4H), 4.57 (s, 5H), 5.80 (dt, J = 15.6 and 1.5 Hz, 1H), 6.95 (dt, J = 15.6 and 6.9 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (75 MHz): 14.3 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 31.6 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 60.2 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 69.9 (CH), 70.7 (CH), 71.0 (CH), 88.2 (C), 121.1 (CH), 148.0 (CH), 166.7 (C); Anal. Calc. for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>18</sub>O<sub>2</sub>Ru: C 55.96, H 5.28. Found: C 56.13, H 5.27.

# tert-Butyl (E)-4-ruthenocenylbut-2-enoate (5b)

The general procedure was followed using vinyldiazoacetate **1b** (84.1 mg). Final chromatographic purification afforded compound **5b** (81.7 mg, 44%).



<sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz): 1.51 (s, 9H), 3.05 (dd, J = 6.9 and 1.8 Hz, 2H), 4.49-4.51 (m, 4H), 4.57 (s, 5H), 5.72 (dt, J = 15.6 and 1.5 Hz, 1H), 6.84 (dt, J = 15.6 and 6.9 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (75 MHz): 28.2 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 31.4 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 69.8 (CH), 70.7 (CH), 71.0 (CH), 80.1 (C), 88.5 (C), 122.8 (CH), 146.8 (CH), 166.0 (C); Anal. Calc. for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>22</sub>O<sub>2</sub>Ru: C 58.21, H 5.97. Found: C 58.33, H 5.80.

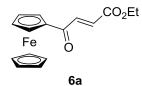
#### 6. General Procedure for the Synthesis of Ferrocene Derivatives 6a-c

To a solution of the corresponding ferrocene derivative **3** (0.1 mmol) in a few mL of  $CH_2Cl_2$  was added silica gel (1.8 g). The resulting suspension was stirred at room temperature for a while and then the solvent was evaporated under reduced pressure to dryness. The schlenk flask was then charged with oxygen and allow to stand at room temperature. After 3 days  $CH_2Cl_2$ was added (10 mL) and the silica gel was removed by filtration and the crude product was purified by flash chromatography (SiO<sub>2</sub>, hexane/ethyl acetate 5:1) to afford ferrocene derivatives **6**.

# 7. Characterization Data of Compounds 6a-c

#### Ethyl (E)-4-oxo-4-ferrocenylbut-2-enoate (6a)

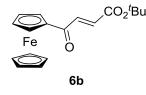
The general procedure was followed using ferrocene derivative **3a** (29.8 mg). Final chromatographic purification afforded compound **6a** (15.9 mg, 51%).



<sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz): 1.38 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H), 4.25 (s, 5H), 4.33 (q, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 4.68-4.69 (m, 2H), 4.90-4.91 (m, 2H), 6.93 (d, *J* = 15.6, 1H), 7.50 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (75 MHz): 14.2 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 61.2 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 70.0 (CH), 70.4 (CH), 73.7 (CH), 79.7 (C), 129.2 (CH), 137.3 (CH), 166.2 (C), 191.8 (C); Anal. Calc. for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>16</sub>FeO<sub>3</sub>: C 61.57, H 5.17. Found: C 61.19, H 5.14.

#### tert-Butyl (E)-4-oxo-4-ferrocenylbut-2-enoate (6b)

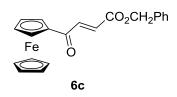
The general procedure was followed using ferrocene derivative **3b** (32.6 mg). Final chromatographic purification afforded compound **6b** (12.2 mg, 36%).



<sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz): 1.57 (s, 9H), 4.24 (s, 5H), 4.66-4.68 (m, 2H), 4.89-4.90 (m, 2H), 6.86 (d, J = 15.3 Hz, 1H), 7.43 (d, J = 15.3 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (75 MHz): 28.1 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 70.0 (CH), 70.3 (CH), 73.6 (CH), 79.7 (C), 81.7 (C), 131.3 (CH), 136.5 (CH), 165.4 (C), 192.1 (C); Anal. Calc. for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>20</sub>FeO<sub>3</sub>: C 63.55, H 5.93. Found: C 63.84, H 5.87.

# Benzyl (E)-4-oxo-4-ferrocenylbut-2-enoate (6c)

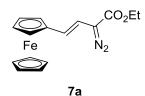
The general procedure was followed using ferrocene derivative **3c** (36.0 mg). Final chromatographic purification afforded compound **6c** (8.6 mg, 23%).



<sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz): 4.24 (s, 5H), 4.68-4.70 (m, 2H), 4.89-4.90 (m, 2H), 5.31 (s, 2H), 6.98 (d, J = 15.0 Hz, 1H), 7.38-7.46 (m, 5H), 7.53 (d, J = 15.0 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (75 MHz): 67.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 70.0 (CH), 70.4 (CH), 73.8 (CH), 79.6 (C), 128.3 (CH), 128.5 (CH), 128.7 (CH), 128.8 (CH), 135.5 (C), 137.8 (CH), 166.0 (C), 191.7 (C); Anal. Calc. for C<sub>21</sub>H<sub>18</sub>FeO<sub>3</sub>: C 67.40, H 4.85. Found: C 67.21, H 4.99.

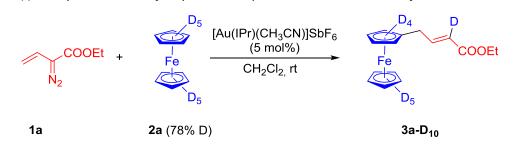
# 8. Synthesis of ethyl (E)-2-diazo-4-ferrocenylbut-3-enoate (7a)

To a solution of ethyl (*E*)-4-ferrocenylbut-2-enoate (**3a**, 149 mg, 0.5 mmol) and 4acetylbenzenesulfonyl azide (151 mg, 0.63 mmol) in acetonitrile (5 mL) at 0 °C was added dropwise DBU (90  $\mu$ L, 0.63 mmol). The resulting solution was stirred for 30 min at 0 °C and allowed to warm to room temperature. The reaction mixture was hydrolyzed and extracted with ether. The organic layer was dried over Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, filtered, and concentrated in vacuo. The crude material was subjected to flash chromatography (SiO<sub>2</sub>, hexane/ethyl acetate 10:1) to afford the diazo compound **7a** as a orange oil (100.5 mg, 62%).



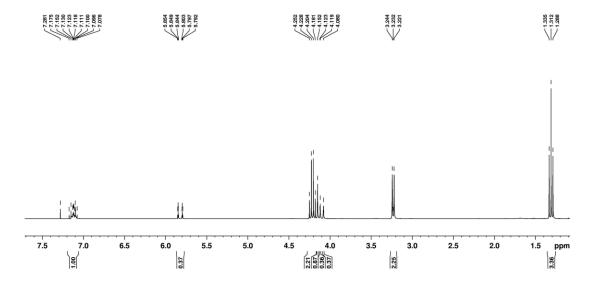
<sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz): 1.34 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H), 4.13 (s, 5H), 4.24-4.25 (m, 2H), 4.31 (q, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 4.36-4.37 (m, 2H), 5.96 (d, *J* = 16.2 Hz, 1H), 6.03 (d, *J* = 16.2 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (75 MHz): 14.5 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 61.2 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 66.3 (CH), 68.8 (CH), 69.3 (CH), 83.5 (C), 107.6 (CH), 121.4 (CH), 165.5 (C).

#### 9. Some additional mechanistic experimental data

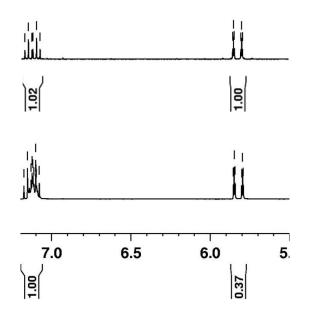


A) Gold(I)-catalyzed reaction of vinyldiazo compound 1a with deuterated ferrocene

[Au(IPr)(CH<sub>3</sub>CN)]SbF<sub>6</sub> (21.6 mg, 0.025 mmol, 5 mol%) was added to a solution of vinyldiazo compound **1a** (70.1 mg, 0.5 mmol) and partially deuterated ferrocene (78% deuterium content) (392.2 mg, 2 mmol) in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (5 mL). The mixture was stirred at room temperature until the disappearance of the starting diazo compound (monitored by TLC: 4 h). The solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the resulting residue was purified by flash chromatography. The <sup>1</sup>H-NMR spectrum (Figures S2 and S3) is consistent with a 63% deuterium incorporation at the  $\alpha$ -position of the resulting ferrocene derivative.

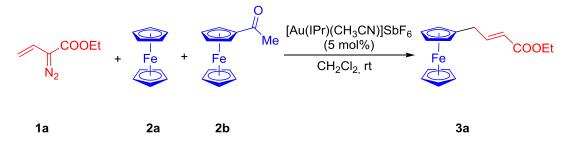


**Figure S2**. <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz) spectrum of the ferrocene derivative resulting from the reaction of vinyldiazo compound **1a** and deuterated ferrocene.

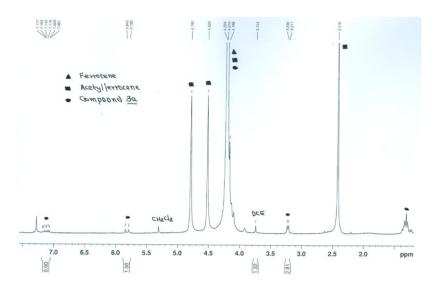


**Figure S3**. <sup>1</sup>H-NMR spectra (olefinic region) of the functionalized ferrocene derivatives resulting from the reaction of vinyldiazo compound **1a** and ferrocene (top) and partially deuterated ferrocene (botton).

B) Competition experiment between ferrocene (2a) and acetylferrocene (2b)

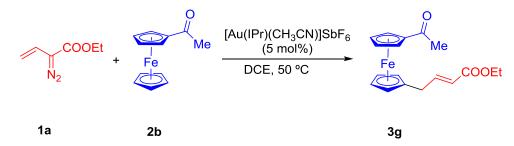


[Au(IPr)(CH<sub>3</sub>CN)]SbF<sub>6</sub> (21.6 mg, 0.025 mmol, 5 mol%) was added to a solution of vinyldiazo compound **1a** (70.1 mg, 0.5 mmol), ferrocene (**2a**) (370 mg, 2 mmol), and acetylferrocene (**2b**) (456.1 mg, 2 mmol) in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (5 mL). The mixture was stirred at room temperature until the disappearance of the starting diazo compound (monitored by TLC: 4 h). The solvent was removed under reduced pressure. The <sup>1</sup>H-NMR of the crude mixture revealed the presence of unreacted ferrocene, unreacted acetylferrocene and ferrocene derivative **3a** (Figure S4). The crude mixture was purified by flash chromatography (SiO<sub>2</sub>, hexane/ethyl acetate 10:1) to afford ferrocene derivative **3a** (83.5 mg, 56 %).



**Figure S4**. Competition experiment between ferrocene (**2a**) and acetylferrocene (**2b**): <sup>1</sup>H-NMR spectrum of the crude reaction mixture.

C) Gold(I)-catalyzed reaction of vinyldiazo compound 1a with acetylferrocene (2b)



[Au(IPr)(CH<sub>3</sub>CN)]SbF<sub>6</sub> (21.6 mg, 0.025 mmol, 5 mol%) was added to a solution of vinyldiazo compound **1a** (70.1 mg, 0.5 mmol) and acetylferrocene (**2b**) (456.1 mg, 2 mmol) in DCE (5 mL). The mixture was stirred for 36 hours at 50 °C. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the resulting residue was purified by flash chromatography (SiO<sub>2</sub>, hexane/ethyl acetate 10:1) to yield ferrocene derivative **3g** (12 mg, 7 %). <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz): 1.30 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H), 2.40 (s, 3H), 3.16 (dd, *J* = 6.6 and 1.5 Hz, 2H), 4.10-4.12 (m, 2H), 4.17-4.22 (m, 4H), 4.49-4.51 (m, 2H), 4.75-4.76 (m, 2H), 5.78 (dt, *J* = 15.6 and 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.02 (dt, *J* = 15.6 and 6.6 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (75 MHz): 14.3 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 27.5 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 31.2 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 60.4 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 69.5 (CH), 69.8 (CH), 70.2 (CH), 73.1 (CH), 79.7 (C), 86.3 (C), 122.1 (CH), 146.6 (CH), 166.5 (C), 201.9 (C). [NOTE: The <sup>1</sup>H-NMR spectra of compound **3g** reveal the presence of a minor unknown byproduct. The <sup>1</sup>H-NMR spectrum of this byproduct shows signals clearly assignable to the IPr ligand (doublets between 1.0 and 1.5 ppm, a multiplet about 2.5 ppm and some signals in the aromatic region) and to a disubstitued ferrocene derivative (singlet at 2.4 ppm, a double doublet at 3.27 ppm

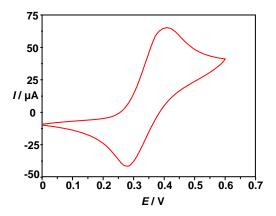
and some olefinic signals overlapped with that corresponding to compound **3**g). Although the structure of this byproduct remains uncertain, complexation of the gold catalyst to ferrocene derivative **3**g can be tentatively proposed.]

#### **10. Electrochemical measurements**

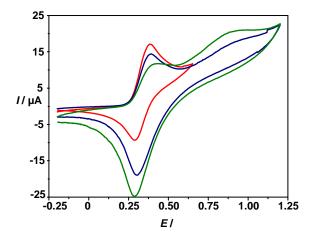
Cyclic voltammetric studies were performed using a  $\mu$ -AutoLab type II equipped with a GPES 4.9 software (EcoChemie, The Netherlands). All measurements were carried out using a conventional three electrode system in phosphate saline buffer (pH 7.4). A modified carbon paste acted as the working electrode and a Pt wire as a counter electrode. All potentials were referred to a Ag|AgCl|KCl<sub>(sat)</sub> reference electrode.

#### Preparation of the modified electrode

Unmodified carbon paste was prepared by thorough mixing 1 g of spectroscopy grade graphite powder (Ultra Carbon, Dicoex, Spain) and 0.323 g of silicone high vacuum grease. The ferrocene derivative **3a** was solubilized in the minimum volume of dichloromethane and transferred to a mortar where the solvent was evaporated before adding the carbon paste to avoid the deleterious effect of organic solvents on the quality of the electrode material. After thorough mixing the resulting modified carbon paste containing a 3% of the compound was packed into the well of the working electrode (d= 3 mm) made of a Teflon body and a stainless steel contact. Finally, the electrode surface was smoothed against a filter paper.

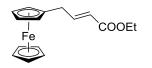


**Figure S5**. Cyclic voltammogram obtained with the carbon paste modified with ferrocene derivative **3a** in PBS at a scan rate of 100 mV/s.

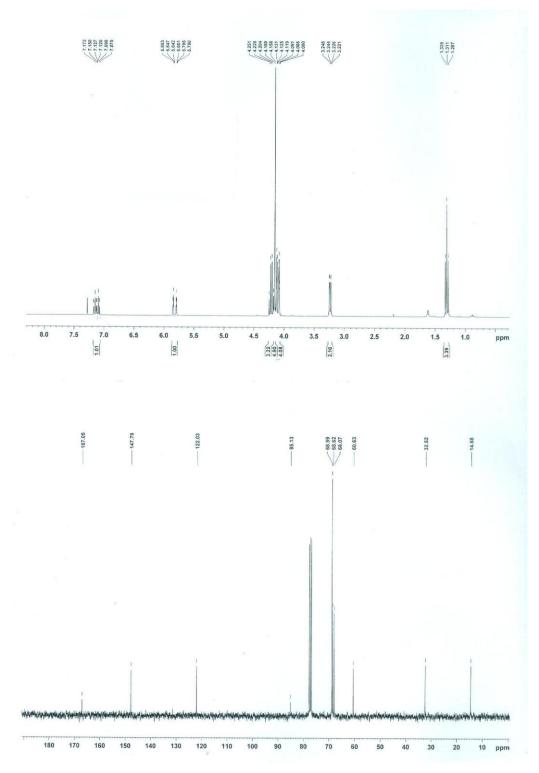


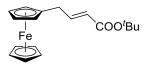
**Figure S6.** Cyclic voltammogram obtained with the modified carbon paste electrode in PBS at a scan rate of 10 mV/s, before oxidation at high potentials (red), first cycle of oxidation up to 1.2 V (blue) and second cycle (green).

# 11. <sup>1</sup>H- and <sup>13</sup>C-NMR spectra for new compounds

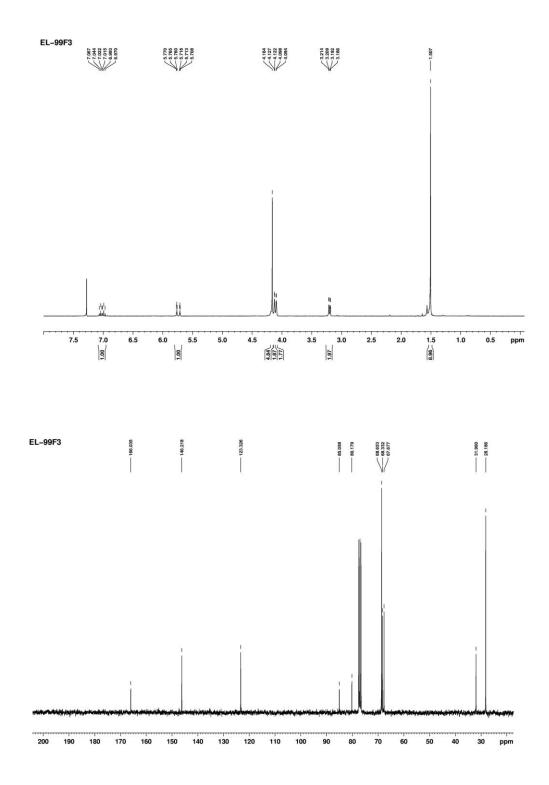


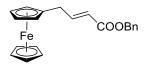


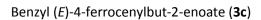


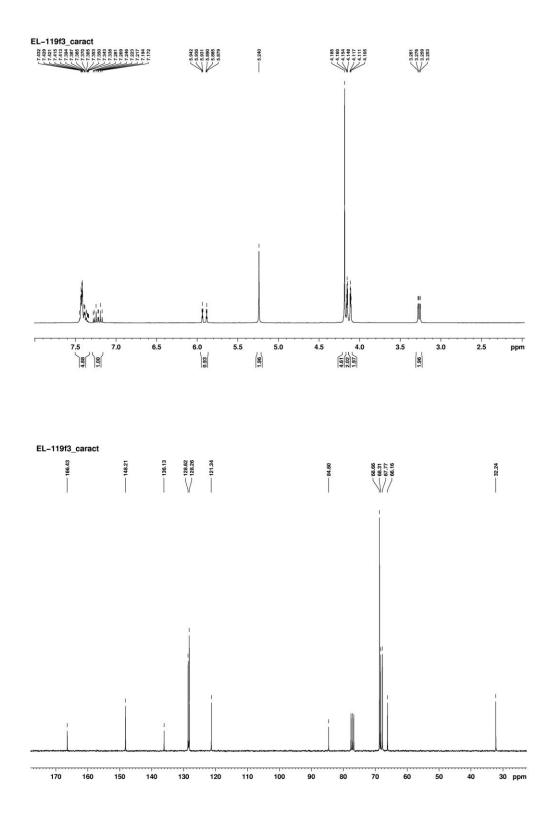


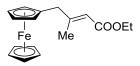
tert-Butyl (E)-4-ferrocenylbut-2-enoate (3b)



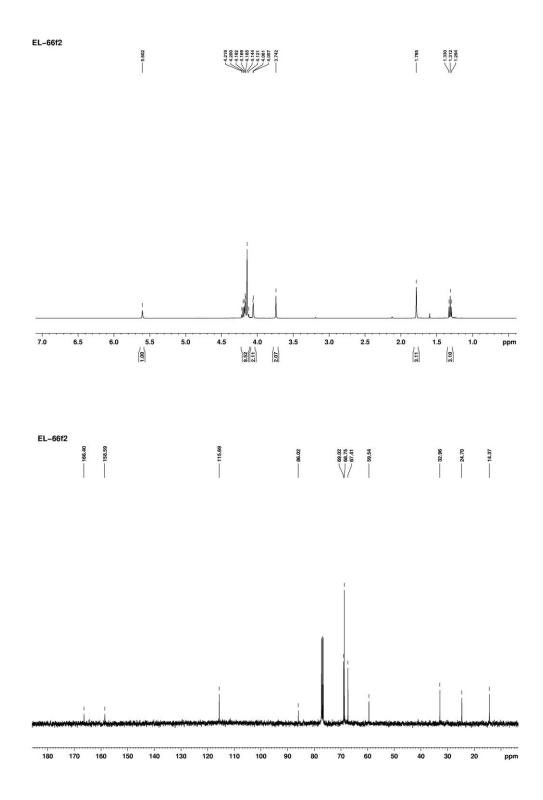


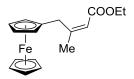




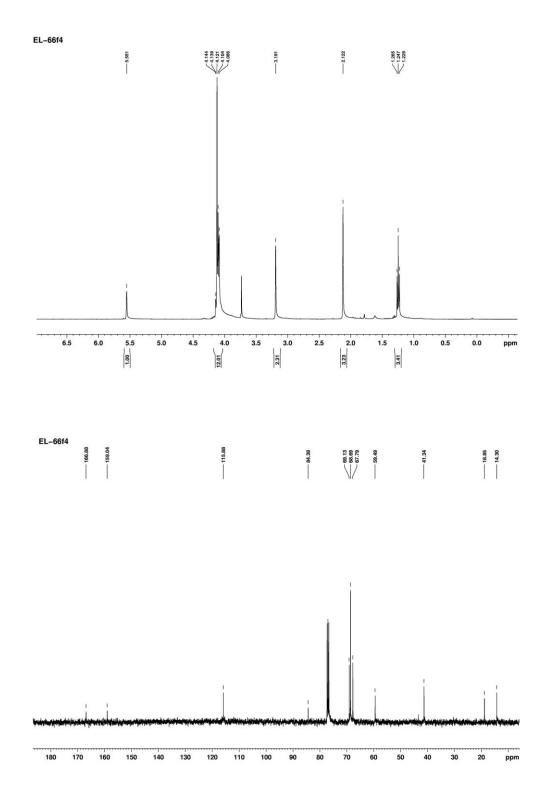


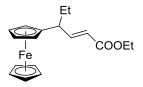
Ethyl (*E*)-4-ferrocenyl-3-methylbut-2-enoate (**3d**)

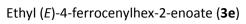


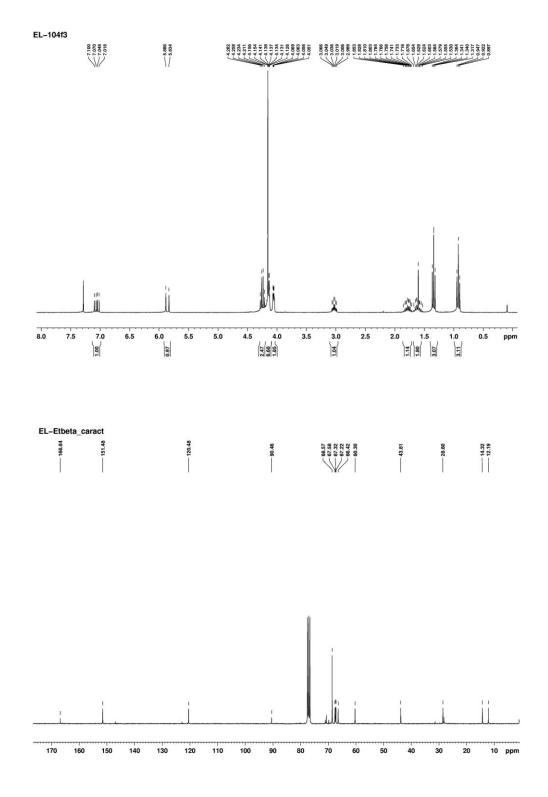


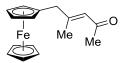
Ethyl (Z)-4-ferrocenyl-3-methylbut-2-enoate (3d)



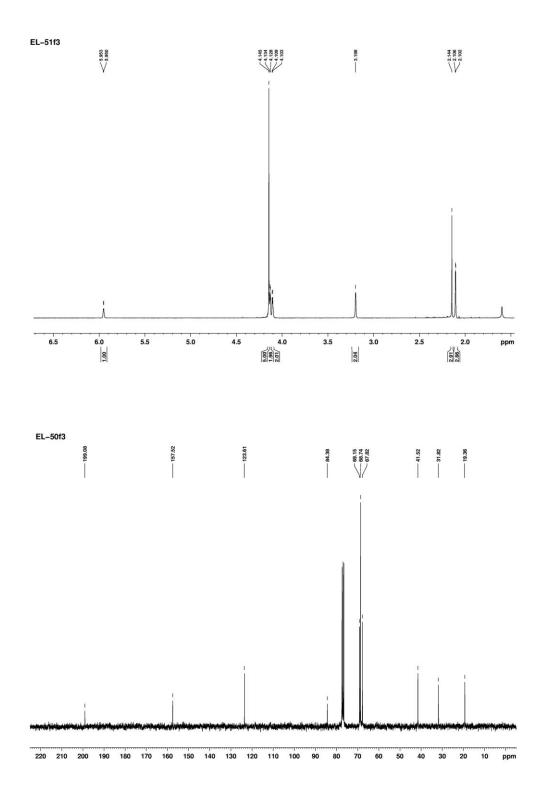


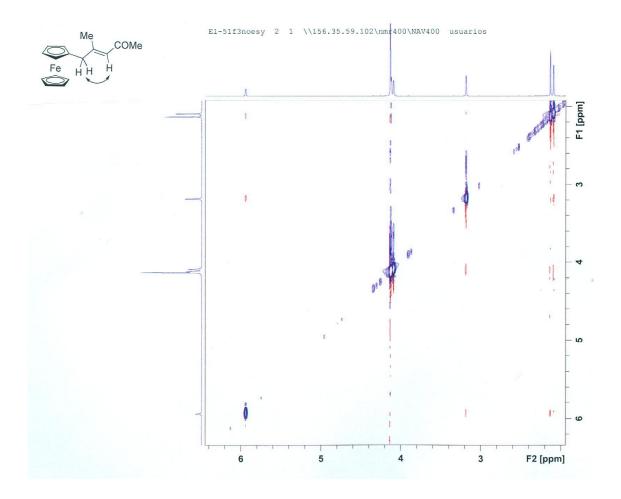


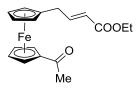




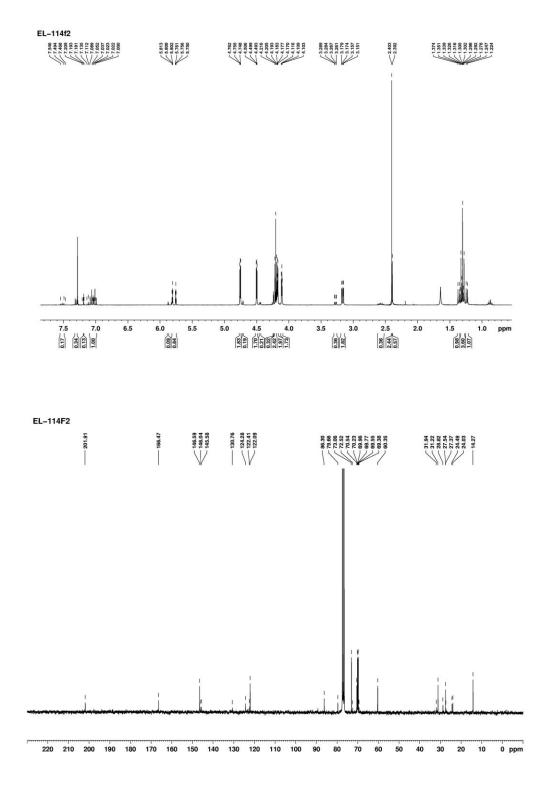
(E)-5-Ferrocenyl-4-methyl-3-penten-2-one (**3f**)

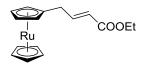


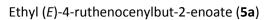


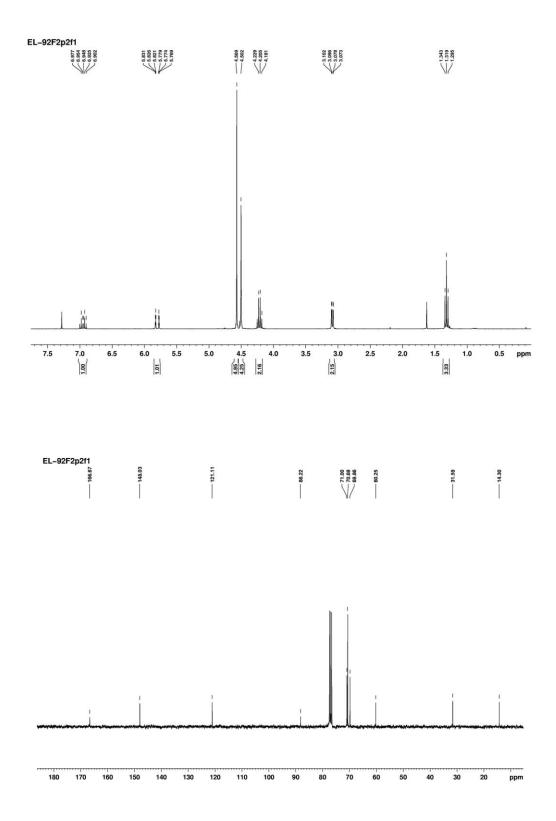


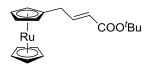
Ethyl (E)-4-(1´-acetylferrocen-1-yl)but-2-enoate (3g)



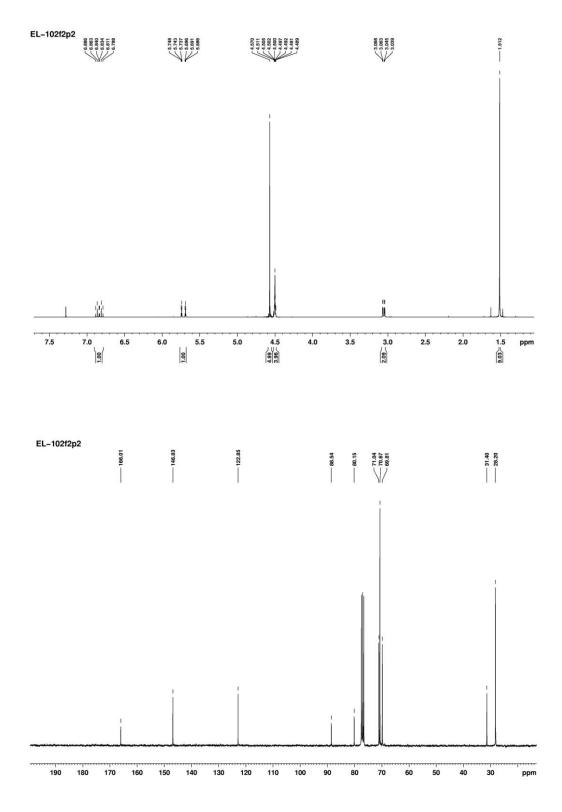


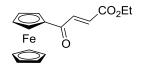




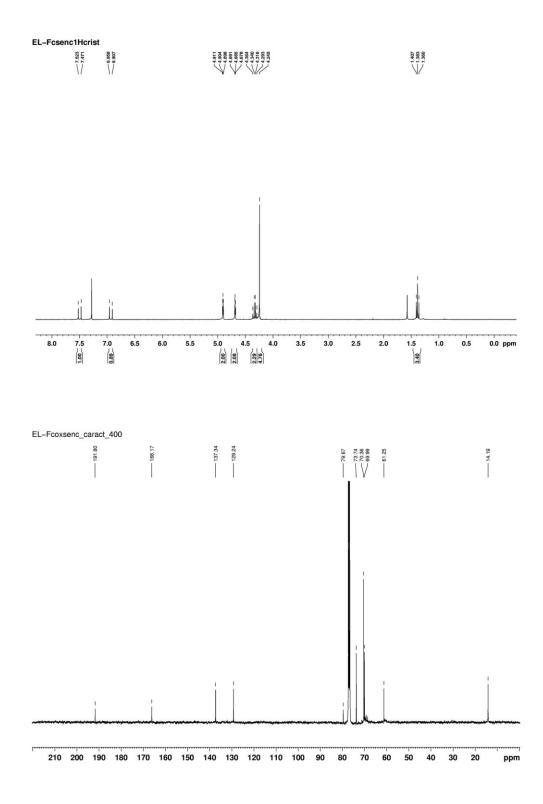


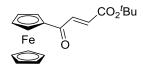
tert-Butyl (E)-4-ruthenocenylbut-2-enoate (5b)



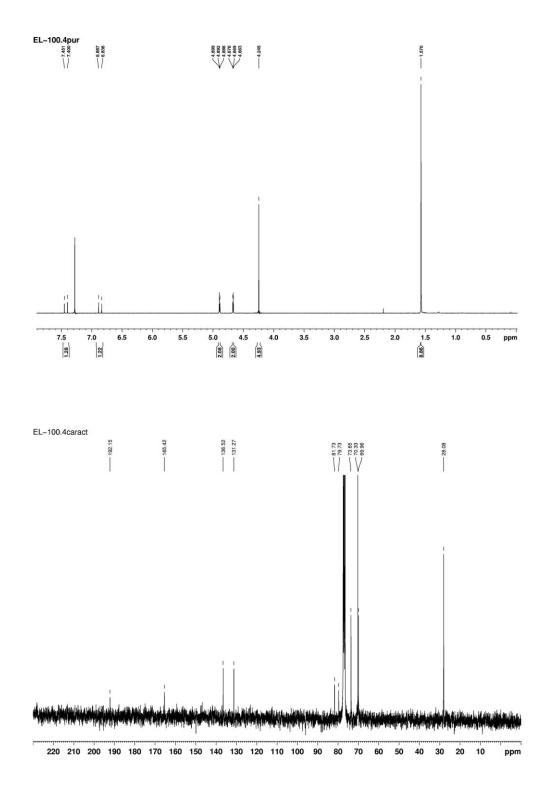


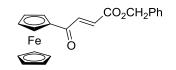
Ethyl (E)-4-oxo-4-ferrocenylbut-2-enoate (6a)



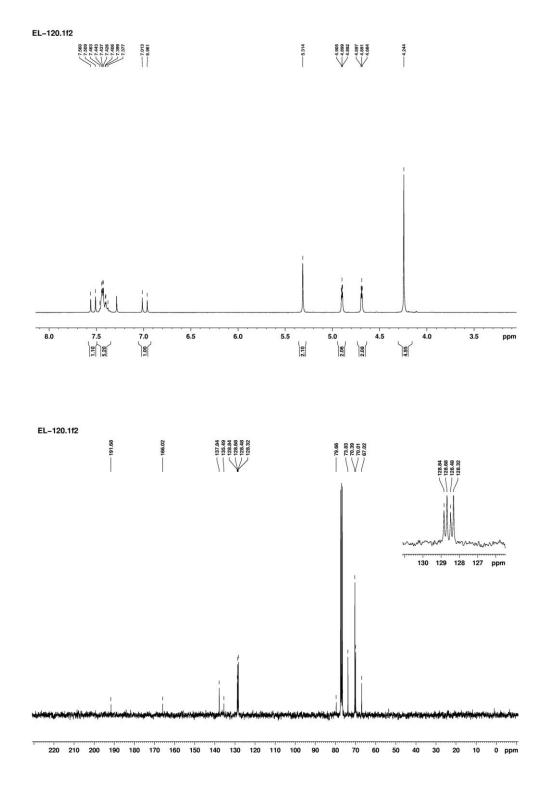


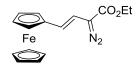
tert-Butyl (E)-4-oxo-4-ferrocenylbut-2-enoate (6b)





Benzyl (E)-4-oxo-4-ferrocenylbut-2-enoate (6c)





Ethyl (E)-2-diazo-4-ferrocenylbut-3-enoate (7a)

