Organocatalytic Dimerization of Ketoketenes

Supporting information

Ahmad A. Ibrahim, Gero D. Harzmann, and Nessan J. Kerrigan^{*}

Department of Chemistry, Oakland University, 2200 N. Squirrel Rd., Rochester, Michigan 48309, USA.

Table of contents:

General Information Method A for dimerization of ketoketenes	S2 S3
Method B for dimerization of ketoketenes	S 3
Experimental procedure for 4a	S 3
Experimental procedure for 4b	S4
Experimental procedure for (-)-4b	S4
Experimental procedure for 4c	S4
Experimental procedure for 4d	S4
Experimental procedure for 4e	S 5
Experimental procedure for 4f	S5
Experimental procedure for 4g	S5
Experimental procedure for 4h	S 6
Experimental procedure for 7	S 6
Experimental procedure for 8	S 7
Experimental procedure for 9	S 8
Experimental procedure for 10	S 9
Experimental procedure for 5a	S 10
¹ H NMR of 4a	S12
¹³ C NMR of 4a	S 13

¹ H NMR of 4b	S14
13 C NMR of 4b	S15
¹ H NMR of 4c	S 16
¹³ C NMR of 4c	S17
¹ H NMR of 4d	S18
¹³ C NMR of 4d	S19
¹ H NMR of 4e	S20
¹³ C NMR of 4e	S21
¹ H NMR of 4f	S22
¹³ C NMR of 4f	S23
¹ H NMR of 4g	S24
¹³ C NMR of 4g	S25
¹ H NMR of 4h	S26
¹³ C NMR of 4h	S27
¹ H NMR of 7	S28
¹³ C NMR of 7	S29
¹ H NMR of 8	S 30
¹³ C NMR of 8	S 31
¹ H NMR of 9	S32
¹³ C NMR of 9	S33
¹ H NMR of 10	S34
¹³ C NMR of 10	S35

General Information.

Unless otherwise stated all reactions were carried out in flame dried glassware under a nitrogen atmosphere using standard inert atmosphere techniques. Diethyl ether and THF were dried using sodium benzophenone stills, CH₂Cl₂ and toluene were dried using calcium hydride stills, methanol was dried using a magnesium methoxide still, and N,N-dimethylethylamine was distilled from potassium hydroxide under nitrogen.¹ Tri-n-butylphosphine, trimethylphosphine (1.0 M solution in toluene), lithium iodide, n-butyl lithium (2.5 M in hexane), LiAlH₄ (1.0 M in Et₂O) and 2-hydroxypyridine were purchased from Aldrich Chemical Co. and used as received. Iatrobeads (Bioscan, 6RS-8060, 60µM particle size), and TLC plates (Sorbent Technologies, UV254, 250µM) were used as received. Methylphenylketene, methyl-p-tolylketene, ethylphenylketene, diphenylketene, 6methoxy-naphthalenylmethylketene, isobutylphenylketene, ethyl-2thiophenylketene, and cyclopentylphenylketene were prepared according to literature procedures.²⁻⁴

NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker DPX Avance 200 spectrometer (200 MHz for ¹H and 50 MHz for ¹³C). NMR chemical shifts were reported relative to TMS (0 ppm) for ¹H and to CDCl₃ (77.23 ppm) for ¹³C spectra.

High resolution mass spectra were obtained from the College of Sciences Major Instrumentation Cluster at Old Dominion University. Low resolution mass spectra were recorded on a GC/MS Hewlett Packard HP 6890 GC instrument with a 5973 mass selective detector. IR spectra were recorded on a Bio Rad FTS-175C spectrometer.

Analytical high performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) was performed using a diode array detector (deuterium lamp, 190-600 nm) using a Daicel Chiralpak AD column (25x 0.46 cm) (Daicel chemical Ind., Ltd.) on a Perkin Elmer 235C instrument, with HPLC-grade isopropanol and hexanes as the eluting solvents.

¹ Armarego, W. L. F.; Perrin, D. D. Purification of Laboratory Chemicals, 4th ed., Butterworth Heinemann, 2002.

² Hodous, B. L.; Fu, G. C. J. Am. Chem. Soc. **2002**, 124, 10006-10007.

³ Wiskur, S. L.; Fu, G. C. J. Am. Chem. Soc. **2005**, 127, 6176-6177.

⁴Allen, A. D.; Baigrie, L. M.; Gong, L.; Tidwell, T. T. Can. J. Chem. **1991**, 69, 138-145.

Method A for dimerization of ketoketenes: Ketoketene (1.39 mmol, 1.0 equiv.) was dissolved in CH₂Cl₂ (1.4 mL). LiI (0.42 mmol, 0.3 equiv.) was dissolved in Et₂O (1.4 mL) and was then transferred to the flask containing the ketoketene solution and the resulting solution (0.5 M of ketoketene in solvent) was cooled to 0° C. Tri-*n*-butylphosphine (0.14 mmol, 0.1 equiv.) was added in one portion, and stirred for the indicated time at the indicated temperature. The reaction was then diluted with CH₂Cl₂ (5 mL) and guenched by adding deionized water (10 mL). The layers were separated, the aqueous layer was extracted with CH_2Cl_2 (2 × 5 mL), and the combined organics were dried over anhydrous sodium sulphate. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure to provide the crude product for ¹H NMR/GCMS analysis. 10% EtOAc/hexane (20 mL) and dichloromethane (5 mL) were added to the crude residue, which was passed through a plug column of neutral silica (iatrobeads, 2 × 2 cm, 10 g) and was eluted with 10% EtOAc/Hexane (100 mL). Finally solvent was removed under reduced pressure to yield the desired ketoketene dimer in high purity ($\geq 95\%$), in most cases, as determined by GCMS and HPLC analysis, and confirmed by ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectroscopy.

Method B for dimerization of ketoketenes: To a solution of ketoketene in CH_2Cl_2 (0.5 M), the indicated phosphine (with indicated equivalents) was added at 0 °C or -78 °C. The reaction was stirred at the indicated temperature for the indicated time. The reaction was typically opened to air and stirred for 10 minutes before the solvent was removed under reduced pressure, and the crude product was purified as detailed below.

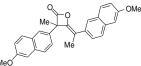
^{Ph} $_{Me}$ ^{Ph}**3-Methyl-3-phenyl-4-(1-phenyl-ethylidene)-oxetan-2-one (4a): (Method A)** Methylphenylketene (197 mg, 1.48 mmol), stirred for 1 hour at 0°C, and was isolated as a colorless oil (152 mg, 78%). The *Z*:*E* ratio was determined to be >16:1 by ¹H NMR analysis; IR (thin film) 1881, 1844, 1699, 1140 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃, TMS): δ 7.52-7.16 (m, 10H), 1.92 (s, 3H), 1.86 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (50 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 171.4, 146.9, 136.2, 135.2, 129.4, 128.6, 128.6, 127.6, 127.4, 126.3, 108.6, 64.4, 19.6, 15.6; MS (EI 70 eV): m/z 264, 132, 104, 78; (M⁺+Na) HRMS m/z calcd for C₁₈H₁₆O₂Na: 287.1043; found: 287.1039.

O Et Ph

^{Ph'} E_{I} **3-Ethyl-3-phenyl-4-(1-phenyl-propylidene)-oxetan-2-one (4b): (Method A)** Ethylphenylketene (709 mg, 4.85 mmol), stirred for 4 hours at 0 °C, was isolated as a colorless oil (546 mg, 77%). The *Z*:*E* ratio was determined to be 37:1 by HPLC analysis; IR (thin film): 1857, 1699, 1140cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃, TMS): δ 7.42-7.20 (m, 10H), 2.38-2.02 (m, 4H), 1.15 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 3H), 0.83 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (50 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 170.9, 143.9, 135.4, 134.7, 129.3, 128.6, 128.2, 127.6, 126.5, 116.5, 70.1, 26.3, 22.9, 12.8, 10.0; (EI 70 eV): m/z 292, 146, 117, 103, 91, 77; MS (M⁺+Na) HRMS m/z calcd for C₂₀H₂₀O₂Na: 315.1355; found: 315.1351.

(-)-3-Ethyl-3-phenyl-4-(1-phenyl-propylidene)-oxetan-2-one ((-)-4b): (Method **B**): Ethylphenylketene (57 mg, 0.39 mmol) was dissolved in CH₂Cl₂ (0.35 mL) and was cooled to -78 °C. (R,R)-Binaphane (27 mg, 0.04 mmol) was dissolved in CH_2Cl_2 (0.35 mL) and cooled to -78 °C. The phosphepine solution was then transferred via syringe to the flask containing the ketoketene solution. The reaction was stirred at -78°C for 48 hours, after which the solvent was removed under reduced pressure. The crude product was treated with dry isopropanol (3) mL) to dissolve the crude ketoketene dimer and precipitate the phosphepine. The mixture was filtered under nitrogen using a Schlenk filter stick. The precipitate was washed with dry isopropanol $(2 \times 3 \text{ mL})$, the phosphine was recovered, and the solvent was removed from the filtrate under reduced pressure. The crude product was then dissolved in 5% EtOAc/hexane (6 mL) and CH₂Cl₂ (1.5 mL), before being passed through a plug of neutral silica (3.3 g). Elution with 5% EtOAc/hexane (60 mL), followed by solvent removal under reduced pressure yielded a colorless oil (36 mg, 65%). The Z:E ratio was determined to be >37:1 by HPLC analysis. HPLC analysis of the purified compound on a Daicel Chiralpak AD column (25 x 0.46 cm), eluted with hexane: isopropanol (98:2), showed that (-)-**4b** was afforded in 80% e.e. ($R_{t1} = 4.1 \text{ min}$, $R_{t2} = 4.9 \text{ min}$ with a ratio 9.5: 83.2); $[\alpha]_{D}$ =-25.2°; IR (thin film): 1857, 1699, 1140cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃, TMS): δ 7.42- 7.20 (m, 10H), 2.38-2.02 (m, 4H), 1.15 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 3H), 0.83 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 3H); 13 C NMR (50 MHz, CDCl₃); δ 170.9, 143.9, 135.4, 134.7, 129.3, 128.6, 128.2, 127.6, 126.5, 116.5, 70.1, 26.3, 22.9, 12.8, 10.0; (EI 70 eV): m/z 292, 146, 117, 103, 91, 77; MS (M^+ +Na) HRMS m/z calcd for C₂₀H₂₀O₂Na: 315.1355; found: 315.1351.

3-Methyl-3-p-tolyl-4-(1-p-tolyl-ethylidene)-oxetan-2-one (4c): (Method A) Methyl-*p*-tolylketene (552 mg, 3.78 mmol), stirred for 3 hours at 0 °C, and was isolated as a colorless oil (498 mg, 90%). The *Z*:*E* ratio was determined to be 39:1 by HPLC analysis; IR (thin film): 1880, 1845, 1698, 1140 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃, TMS): δ 7.24-7.09 (m, 8H), 2.27 (s, 6H), 1.87 (s, 3H), 1.81 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (50 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 171.7, 146.6, 138.4, 137.3, 133.3, 132.3, 130.0, 129.2, 127.2, 126.1, 108.3, 64.1, 21.3, 21.2, 19.5, 15.5; MS (EI 70 eV) m/z 292, 146, 118, 91; (M⁺+Na) HRMS m/z calcd for C₂₀H₂₀O₂Na: 315.1355; found: 315.1354.



3-(6-Methoxy-naphthalen-2-yl)-4-[1-(6-methoxy-

naphthalen-2-yl)-ethylidene]-3-methyl-oxetan-2-one (4d): (Method A) 6-Methoxy-naphthylmethyl ketene (266 mg, 1.25 mmol), was stirred for 2 hours at 0 °C, and isolated as an off-white solid (164 mg, 62%). The Z:E ratio was determined to be >16:1 by HPLC analysis; mp 179-184 °C; IR (thin film): 1880, 1699cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃, TMS): δ 7.91-7.57 (m, 9H), 7.19-7.12 (m, 3H), 3.91 (s, 3H), 3.90 (s, 3H), 2.10 (s, 3H), 2.04 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (50 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 171.7, 158.4, 158.2, 147.1, 134.4, 133.9, 131.6, 130.3, 129.9, 129.9, 128.9, 128.1, 126.9, 126.1, 125.9, 125.1, 124.5, 119.7, 119.3, 108.6, 105.7, 64.6, 55.5, 29.9, 19.4, 15.5, 14.4; MS (EI 70 eV) m/z 424, 378, 212, 184; (M⁺+Na) HRMS m/z calcd for $C_{28}H_{24}O_4$ Na: 447.1567; found: 447.1564.

Ph

^{ph} P_{Pn}^{h} **4-Benzhydrylidene-3,3-diphenyl-oxetan-2-one** (4e): (Method B) Diphenylketene (269 mg, 1.38 mmol) and Me₃P (1.0 M in toluene, 277 µL, 0.28 mmol), stirred for 3 days at room temperature. The crude product was triturated with isopropanol to afford an off-white solid (210 mg, 78%); mp 140-144 °C; IR (thin film): 1859, 1671, 1167 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃, TMS): δ 7.25-6.68 (m, 20H). ¹³C NMR (50 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 169.8, 148.0, 136.8, 135.9, 130.8, 129.5, 128.9, 128.6, 128.4, 128.2, 128.0, 127.9, 126.5, 118.7, 74.5; MS (EI 70 eV): m/z 388, 194, 165, 105; (M⁺+Na) HRMS m/z calcd for $C_{28}H_{20}O_2Na$: 411.1355; found: 411.1346.

^{1BU Ph} **3-Isobutyl-4-(3-methyl-1-phenyl-butylidene)-3-phenyl-oxetan-2-one** (**4f**): (Method B) Isobutylphenylketene (185 mg, 1.06 mmol) and tri-*n*butylphosphine (27 µL, 0.11 mmol), stirred for 4 hours at room temperature, purified through a plug of iatrobeads eluted with 10% EtOAc/hexane, solvent was removed under reduced pressure, was isolated as a colorless oil (155 mg, 84%) which was composed of an inseparable mixture of **4f**:2,4-isobutyl-2,4phenylcyclobutanedione isomer in the ratio 7:1. The *Z*:*E* ratio of **4f** was determined to be 28:1 by GCMS analysis; IR (thin film): 1870, 1699, 1190 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃, TMS): δ 7.52-7.22 (m, 10H), 2.33-1.96 (m, 4H), 1.62-1.41 (m, 2H), 1.07 (d, *J* = 3.8 Hz, 3H), 1.04 (d, *J* = 3.8 Hz, 3H), 0.77 (d, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 3H), 0.45 (d, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (50 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 171.5, 136.2, 135.2, 129.1, 128.4, 128.3, 127.5, 126.5, 126.3, 114.6, 68.2, 41.5, 38.1, 26.2, 25.8, 24.4, 23.6, 22.9, 21.6; MS (EI 70 eV): m/z 174, 131, 103; (M⁺+Na) HRMS calcd for C₂₄H₂₈O₂Na: 371.1981; found: 371.1980.

3-Ethyl-3-thiophen-3-yl-4-(1-thiophen-3-yl-propylidene)-oxetan-2one (4g): (Method A) Ethyl(2-thiophenyl)ketene (162 mg, 1.06 mmol), was stirred for 7 hours at 0 °C, isolated as a colorless oil (127 mg, 78%). The *Z*:*E* ratio was determined to be 20:1 by HPLC analysis; IR (thin film): 1859, 1695, 1411 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃, TMS) δ 7.30-7.16 (m, 4H), 7.05-7.02 (m, 2H), 2.39-2.01 (m, 4H), 1.09 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 3H), 0.92 (m, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (50 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 170.1, 144.5, 136, 135.4, 127.4, 127.1, 126.1, 125.5, 122.6, 122.4, 111.3, 67.5, 26.1, 22.6, 13.5, 9.7; MS (EI 70 eV): m/z 152, 123, 97; (M⁺+Na) HRMS m/z calcd for C₁₆H₁₆O₂S₂Na: 327.0484; found: 327.0485.

2-Cyclopentyl-3-(cyclopentyl-phenyl-methylene)-2-phenylcyclobutanone (4h): (Method B) Cyclopentylphenylketene (223 mg, 1.20 mmol), Me₃P (1.0 M in toluene, 240 µL, 0.24 mmol), stirred for 2 days at room temperature, purified by column chromatography over neutral silica (iatrobeads) with gradient elution 0.5-0.75% EtOAc/hexane, and the solvent was removed under reduced pressure to yield **4h** as a colorless oil (135 mg, 60%), isolated as an inseparable mixture of diastereomers. The *Z*:*E* ratio was determined to be 3:1 by GCMS analysis; IR (thin film): 1850, 1702, 1118, 1034 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃, TMS) for the mixture of diastereomers: δ 7.48-7.02 (m, 10H), 2.95-2.13 (m, 2H), 2.07-0.80 (m, 10H); ¹³C NMR (50 MHz, CDCl₃) for major diastereomer: δ 170.7, 145.7, 135.9, 134.2, 130.3, 129.1, 128.8, 128.6, 128.2, 127.7, 127.6, 126.9, 118.5, 71.3, 43.0, 41.2, 30.8, 30.5, 29.7, 28.6, 25.7, 25.6, 25.4, 25.1; MS (EI 70 eV): m/z 186, 129, 115, 91, 77; (M⁺+Na) HRMS m/z calcd for C₂₆H₂₈O₂Na: 395.1982; found: 395.1978.

OH O

Et Ph Et 3-Hydroxymethyl-3,5-diphenyl-heptan-4-one (7): 4b (133.6 mg, 0.46 mmol) was dissolved in THF (0.92 mL) and the solution (0.5M) was cooled to -78°C. After five minutes, LiAlH₄ (1M in Et₂O, 0.46 mL, 0.46 mmol) was added at -78°C. The reaction was stirred for 50 min until TLC showed complete consumption of reactant and then the reaction was quenched with MeOH (0.3 mL) at -78 °C. The reaction was worked up with CH₂Cl₂ (10 mL) and HCl (1M, 10 mL). Aqueous saturated NaCl solution was added to aid separation of the phases. The aqueous phase was extracted with CH_2Cl_2 (3 × 4 mL), and the combined organic layers were dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure. The resulting crude product was purified on a plug of neutral silica (iatrobeads) using a gradient of solvents from 10% EtOAc/hexane to 20% EtOAc/hexane to afford 7 as a white solid (98.3 mg, 74%), isolated as an inseparable mixture of diastereomers, with a d.r. = 1:1 as determined by GCMS analysis; IR (thin film): 3460, 1697, 1030 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃, TMS) for the mixture of diastereomers: δ 6.83-7.21 (m, 10H), 4.22 (d, J = 11.8 Hz, 1H), 3.83 (d, J = 11.8 Hz, 1H), 3.51 (dd, J = 6.6, 8.4 Hz, 1H), 2.24-2.15 (m, 2H), 1.8 -1.71 (m, 2H), 0.91 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 3H), 0.59 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (50 MHz, CDCl₃) for the mixture of diastereomers: δ 213.4, 139.4, 137.9, 128.8, 128.5, 128.0, 127.9, 127.5, 126.8, 63.7, 61.8, 56.1, 28.5, 23.5, 12.1, 8.6; MS (EI 70 eV):

m/z 266, 147, 119, 91, 77; (M⁺+Na) HRMS m/z calcd for $C_{20}H_{24}O_2Na$: 319.1669; found: 319.1662.

 $H_{3}CO$ Ph Ph **2-Methyl-3-oxo-2,4-diphenyl-pentanoic acid methyl ester (8):** *n*-(2.06 mmol, 83 µL) in THF (1.85 mL) at 0 °C and stirred for 10 min. Compound 4a (136.0 mg, 0.51 mmol) was dissolved in THF (5 mL) and the solution was now added dropwise to the solution of MeOLi at 0 °C. The reaction was stirred for 85 min until TLC showed complete consumption of reactant. Then the reaction was quenched with HCl (1M, 10 mL) and the layers were separated. The aqueous layer was extracted with CH_2Cl_2 (3 × 10 mL), and the combined organics were dried over Na₂SO₄. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure. The resulting product 8 was obtained quantitatively as a colorless oil, isolated as an inseparable mixture of diastereomers, with a d.r. = 1.6:1.0 as determined by GCMS analysis; IR (thin film): 1716, 1251, 1208 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃, TMS) for the mixture of diastereomers: δ 7.26-6.99 (m, 8H), 6.83-6.78 (m, 2H), 3.95 (q, J = 7Hz, 1H), 3.85 (q, J = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 3.71 (s, 3H), 3.42 (s, 3H), 1.66 (s, 3H), 1.61 (s, 3H), 1.31 (d, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H), 1.24 (d, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (50 MHz, CDCl₃) for the mixture of diastereomers: δ 208.2, 207.5, 172.9, 172.3, 141.4, 138.3, 137.5, 128.6, 128.5, 128.1, 128.0, 128.0, 127.5, 127.0, 126.7, 65.5, 65.4, 52.7, 52.5, 49.7, 49.5, 29.9, 22.4, 22.2, 21.9, 21.5; MS (EI 70 eV): m/z 296, 164, 132, 105, 77; (M^++Na) HRMS m/z calcd for C₁₉H₂₀O₃Na: 319.1305; found: 319.1298.

^{H₃C, $\stackrel{0}{Ph}$ **2-Methyl-3-oxo-2,4-diphenyl-pentanoic acid methoxy-methylamide (9): 4a** (117.7 mg, 0.45 mmol) was dissolved in CH₂Cl₂ (2.23 ml, 0.2 M). After a few minutes the Weinreb amine (0.89 mmol, 65 µl) and 2-Hydroxypyridine (0.05 mmol, 4.2 mg) were added. The reaction was stirred for 4 days until TLC showed complete consumption of reactant and then the reaction was quenched with H₂O (10 mL). The layers were separated and the aqueous phase was extracted with CH₂Cl₂ (3 × 10 mL). The combined organic layers were dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄ and the solvent was removed under reduced pressure. The resulting crude product was purified by flash column chromatography on neutral} silica (iatrobeads, 12.5 g) using a gradient of solvents from 5% EtOAc/hexane to 15% EtOAc/hexane to afford **9** as a solidifying white oil (106.1 mg, 90%), isolated as an inseparable mixture of diastereomers, with a d.r. = 1.4:1.0 as determined by GCMS analysis; IR (thin film): 1714, 1652, 1180 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃, TMS) for the mixture of diastereomers: δ 7.31-6.86 (m, 10H), 4.02-3.89 (m, 1H), 3.16 (s, 3H), 3.06 (s, 1H), 3.04 (s, 1H), 2.97 (s, 1H), 1.71 (s, 3H), 1.53 (s, 3H), 1.32 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 3H), 1.30 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (50 MHz, CDCl₃) for the mixture of diastereomers: δ 207.4, 206.9, 141.7, 141.2, 139.6, 138.6, 128.7, 128.4, 128.3, 128.1, 128.1, 127.8, 127.6, 127.2, 127.0, 126.6, 64.5, 64.2, 59.9, 59.6, 50.1, 49.3, 33.6, 23.1, 21.9, 21.7, 21.5; MS (EI 70 eV): m/z 325, 193, 162, 132, 105, 77; (M⁺+Na) HRMS m/z calcd for C₂₀H₂₃NO₃Na: 348.1570; found: 348.1564.

^o ^o ^{Ph} Ph **4-Methyl-2,4-diphenyl-nonane-3,5-dione (10): 4a** (160 mg, 0.61 mmol) was added dropwise over five minutes at -78 °C, stirred for 15 min and was quenched by adding water (2 mL) at -78 °C. The reaction was then warmed up to room temperature, brine (8 mL) and CH₂Cl₂ (5 mL) were added, and the layers were separated. The aqueous layer was extracted with CH_2Cl_2 (2 × 5 mL), the combined organics were dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄ and the solvent was removed under reduced pressure to yield a colorless oil (148 mg, 93%), isolated as an inseparable mixture of diastereomers, with a d.r. = 8:1 by GCMS analysis; IR (thin film): 1712 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃,TMS) for the major diastereomer: δ 7.29-6.74 (m, 10H), 3.88 (q, J = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 2.47-2.15 (m, 2H), 1.56 (s, 3H), 1.51-1.39 (m, 2H), 1.31 (d, J = 6.8 Hz, 3H), 1.24-1.10 (m, 2H), 0.77 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (50 MHz, CDCl₃) for the major diastereomer: δ 210.8, 210.7, 141.0, 137.7, 128.9, 129.2, 128.7, 128.6, 128.1, 128.0, 127.0, 126.4, 70.6, 49.8, 39.3, 26.3, 22.4, 21.3, 19.9, 14.7; MS (EI 70 eV): m/z 322, 238, 190, 132, 105, 77; (M⁺+Na) HRMS m/z calcd for $C_{22}H_{26}O_2Na$: 345.1825; found: 345.1819.



Me^{-μ}_{Ph} **5,5-Dimethyl-2,6-bis-(1-phenyl-ethylidene)-[1,3]dioxan-4-one(5a):**¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃, TMS): δ 7.44-6.92 (m, 15H), 2.02 (s, 3H), 1.83 (s, 3H), 1.36 (s, 3H); selected signals from ¹³C NMR (50 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 168.3, 144.4, 143.7, 141.6, 139.6, 137.3, 136.2, 135.2, 128.4, 128.1, 127.6, 127.2, 126.6, 120.6, 98.1, 54.2, 25.0, 19.3, 15.0; MS (EI 70 eV): m/z 396, 221, 132, 104.

