# Novel bifunctional chiral thiourea catalyzed highly enantioselective aza-Henry reaction

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# **General information**

Flame-dried (under vacuum) glassware was used for all reactions. All reagents and solvents werecommercial grade and purified prior to use when necessary. NMR spectra were acquired on either a Bruker AMX-300 or Varian 400 MHz instrumental. Chemical shifts are measured relative to residual solvent peaks as an internal standard set to  $\delta$  7.26 and  $\delta$  77.1 (CDCl<sub>3</sub>). Specific rotations were measured on a Perkin-Elmer 341MC polarimeter. Enantiomeric excesses were determined on a HP-1100 instrument (chiral column; mobile phase: Hexane/*i*-PrOH). Elemental analyses were conducted on a Yanaco CHN Corder MT-3 automatic analyzer. Melting points were determined on a T-4 melting point apparatus. All temperatures were uncorrected. Glucosyl isothiocyanate 3,<sup>[1]</sup> (*R*,*R*)-*N*,*N*-Dimethyl cyclohexane-1,2-diamine 4<sup>[2]</sup> and *N*-protected imines<sup>[3]</sup> were prepared according to the literature procedure.

## Preparation of the title chiral thiourea compound



To a solution of (1R,2R)-N,N-dimethylcyclohexane-1,2-diamine (1.10 g, 7.7 mmol) in methylene chloride (10 mL) was added dropwise a solution of the corresponding sugar-derived isothiocyanate (7.0 mmol) in methylene chloride (25 mL) under a nitrogen atmosphere. The resulting mixture was stirred at room temperature until total consumption of the isothiocyanate (monitored by TLC). After removal of solvent, the residue was purified through column chromatography on silica gel (200–300 msch alutad with athyl asottad (200–300

mesh, eluted with ethyl acetate / petroleum ether: 1/2) to give the thiourea catalyst as a white solid. AcO



OAc (+)-2a: 79% yield, m.p 105–106 °C,  $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$  +18.0 (c 1.0, CHCl<sub>3</sub>). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta = 0.95-1.24$  (m, 5 H, 2 CH<sub>2</sub> and one proton of CH<sub>2</sub>), 1.61–1.83 (m, 3 H, CH<sub>2</sub> and one proton of CH<sub>2</sub>), 1.95 (s, 3 H, COCH<sub>3</sub>), 1.97 (s, 3 H, COCH<sub>3</sub>), 1.99 (s, 3 H, COCH<sub>3</sub>), 2.02 (s, 3 H, COCH<sub>3</sub>), 2.11–2.50 (m, 3 H, 3 NCH), 2.16 (s, 6 H, 2 NCH<sub>3</sub>), 3.77–3.81 (m, 1)

H, OCH), 4.02–4.07 (m, 1 H, OCH), 4.28 (dd, 1 H, *J* = 9.3, 4.2 Hz, OCH), 4.91 (t, 1 H, *J* = 9.6 Hz, OCH), 5.01 (t, 1 H, *J* = 9.6 Hz, OCH), 5.25–5.31 (m, 1 H, OCH), 5.70 (br. s, 1 H, NH), 6.65 (br. s, 1

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H, NH). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75.0 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta = 20.58$ , 20.73, 21.61, 24.49, 24.90, 32.65, 33.95, 39.95, 55.80, 61.76, 66.81, 68.31, 71.04, 73.06, 73.29, 76.72, 77.15, 77.57, 82.90, 100.00, 169.60, 169.83, 170.60, 170.96, 183.48. IR (KBr): v 3358, 2938, 1754, 1541, 1370, 1228, 1038, 908, 758, 600 cm<sup>-1</sup>. HMS (ESI) *m*/z calc'd for C<sub>23</sub>H<sub>37</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O<sub>9</sub>S [M+H]<sup>+</sup>: 532.2323, found 532.2320.



(+)-**2b**: 67% yield, m.p 94–95 °C,  $[\alpha]_D^{20}$  +22.9 (c 1.02, CHCl<sub>3</sub>). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ = 0.96–1.28 (m, 5 H, 2 CH<sub>2</sub> and one proton of CH<sub>2</sub>), 1.62–1.83 (m, 3 H, CH<sub>2</sub> and one proton of CH<sub>2</sub>), 1.92 (s, 3 H, COCH<sub>3</sub>), 1.97 (s, 3 H, COCH<sub>3</sub>), 2.01 (s, 3 H, COCH<sub>3</sub>), 2.08 (s, 3 H, COCH<sub>3</sub>), 2.17 (s, 6 H, 2 NCH<sub>3</sub>), 2.34–2.41 (m, 2 H, 2 NCH), 3.58–3.59 (m, 1 H, NCH), 3.98–4.07 (m, 3 H, OCH), 5.05–5.14 (m, 2 H, 2 OCH), 5.38 (d, 1 H, 1.6 Hz, OCH), 5.63 (br. s, 1 H, NH), 6.69 (br. s, 1 H, NH). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75.0 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 19.54, 19.61, 19.69, 19.81, 20.66, 23.57, 23.99, 31.66, 38.90, 54.81, 60.10, 65.70, 66.37, 70.12, 71.10, 75.88, 76.31, 76.73, 82.30, 168.77, 168.99, 169.38, 170.16, 182.38. IR (KBr): v 3360, 2936, 1751, 1541, 1370, 1228, 1050, 954, 915, 761, 600 cm<sup>-1</sup>. HRMS (ESI) *m/z* calc'd for C<sub>23</sub>H<sub>37</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O<sub>9</sub>S [M+H]<sup>+</sup>: 532.2323, found 532.2333.



(-)-2c: 64% yield, m.p 118–120 °C,  $[\alpha]_{10}^{20}$ -1.12 (c 0.98, CHCl<sub>3</sub>). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta = 1.10-1.20$  (m, 4 H, 2 CH<sub>2</sub>), 1.60–1.81 (m, 4 H, 2 CH<sub>2</sub>), 1.89 (s, 3 H, COCH<sub>3</sub>), 1.97 (s, 9 H, 3 COCH<sub>3</sub>), 1.99 (s, 3 H, COCH<sub>3</sub>), 2.04 (s, 3 H, COCH<sub>3</sub>), 2.08 (s, 3 H, COCH<sub>3</sub>), 2.15 (s, 6 H, 2 NCH<sub>3</sub>), 2.28–2.40 (m, 2 H, 2 NCH), 3.69–3.84 (m, 4 H), 3.99–4.12 (m, 4 H, OCH), 4.38 (d, 1 H, *J* = 11.6 Hz), 4.42 (d, 1 H, *J* = 11.6 Hz), 4.81 (t, 1 H, *J* = 9.6 Hz), 5.03 (dd, 1 H, *J* = 8.0, 10.4 Hz), 5.22–5.28 (m, 2 H, OCH and NH), 5.59 (br. s, 1 H, NH). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100.6 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  20.36, 20.47, 20.60, 20.67, 20.76, 21.64, 24.43, 24.86, 32.53, 39.85, 55.71, 60.83, 62.08, 66.68, 68.99, 70.54, 70.93, 71.25, 72.85, 74.16, 75.99, 76.84, 77.27, 77.47, 77.70, 82.54, 100.58, 168.82, 169.31, 169.89, 170.02, 170.21, 170.86, 183.45. <u>IR (KBr): v 3362, 2938, 1754, 1541, 1370, 1229, 1047, 952, 904, 759, 602 cm<sup>-1</sup>. HRMS *m*/<sub>2</sub> (ESI) calc'd for C<sub>35</sub>H<sub>53</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O<sub>17</sub>S [M+H]<sup>+</sup>: 820.3169, found 820.3168.</u>

# General Procedure for the 2 catalyzed enantioselective aza-Henry reaction

To A solution of imine (0.5 mmol), thiourea catalyst (40 mg, 0.075 mmol) in methylene chloride was added nitromethane (270  $\mu$ L, 5 mmol) in one portion at the temperature as depicted in the text. The resulting mixture was stirred at the same temperature and monitored by TLC. The solution was concentrated and purified by column chromatography on silica gel (200–300 mesh, eluted with ethyl acetate / petroleum ether: 1/12) to furnish the desired products as white solid. Enantiomeric excess was determined by chiral HPLC analysis.



Ethyl 2-nitro-1-phenylethylcarbamate: White solid, m.p. 118-120 °C,  $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$ -19.4 (c 1.32, CHCl<sub>3</sub>), 85.8% ee. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta_{1.25}$  (t, 3 H, J = 7.2 Hz,  $\overline{CH_3}$ ), 4.14(q, 2 H, J = 7.2 Hz, CH<sub>2</sub>), 4.69–4.75 (m, 1 H, CH), 4.85 (br. s, 1 H, NH), 5.40–5.44 (m, 2 H, CH<sub>2</sub>), 7.29–7.42 (m, 5 Haorm). HPLC analysis (Chiralpak AD-H column, Hexane:2-Propanol = 85:15, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, wavelength = 254 nm): Rt = 15.36 (minor) and 17.55 min (major).

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F tert-Butyl (*R*)-1-(3-fluorophenyl)-2-nitroethylcarbamate (**6e**): White solid, m.p 109–110 °C,  $[α]_D^{20}$  –12.9 (c 1.08, CHCl<sub>3</sub>), 99.8% ee. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 1.44 (s, 9 H, <sup>1</sup>Bu), 4.70 (d, 1 H, *J* = 10.8 Hz, CH), 4.83 (br. s, 1 H, NH), 5.37 (s, 2 H, CH<sub>2</sub>), 7.02–7.05 (m, 2 Harom), 7.09 (d, 1 Harom, *J* = 7.6 Hz), 7.33–7.39 (m, 1 Harom). Elemental analysis (%) calcd for C<sub>13</sub>H<sub>17</sub>FN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>: C 54.92, H 6.03, N 9.85; Found: C 54.74, H 5.91, N 9.77. HPLC <u>analysis</u>: AD-H column, <u>Hexane</u>:2-<u>Propanol</u> = 85:15, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, wavelength = 254 nm): *R*t = 7.16 (minor) and 8.20 min (major).



F tert-Butyl (*R*)-1-(4-fluorophenyl)-2-nitroethylcarbamate (**6f**): White solid, m.p 122–123 °C,  $[α]_{D}^{20}$ –19.3 (c 1.00, CHCl<sub>3</sub>), 99.5% ee. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 1.44 (s, 9 H, <sup>1</sup>Bu), 4.66–4.69 (m, 1 H, CH), 4.84 (br. s, 1 H, NH), 5.28–5.34 (m, 2 H, CH<sub>2</sub>), 7.05–7.09 (m, 2 Harom), 7.28–7.31 (m, 2 Harom). Elemental analysis (%) calcd for C<sub>13</sub>H<sub>17</sub>FN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>: C 54.92, H 6.03, N 9.85; Found: C 54.83, H 5.88, N 9.72. HPLC analysis (Chiralpak AD-H column, Hexane:2-Propanol = 85:15, wavelength = 254 nm): flow rate 1.0 mL/min, Rt = 9.83 (major) and 10.81 min (minor).



*tert*-Butyl (*R*)-1-(2-chlorophenyl)-2-nitroethylcarbamate (**6g**): White solid, m.p 106–107 °C,  $[\alpha]_D^{20}$  –2.03 (c 1.04, CHCl<sub>3</sub>), 92.2% ee. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  1.43 (s, 9 H, <sup>t</sup>Bu), 4.78–4.87 (m, 2 H, CH and NH), 5.71–5.75 (m, 2 H, CH<sub>2</sub>), 7.28–7.42 (m, 4 Harom). Elemental analysis (%) calcd for C<sub>13</sub>H<sub>17</sub>ClN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>: C 51.92, H 5.70, N 9.31; Found: C 51.79, H 5.56, N 9.15. HPLC analysis (Chiralpak, AD-H column, <u>Hexane</u>:2-<u>Propanol</u> = 90:10, flow rate = 0.8 mL/min, wavelength = 254 nm): Rt = 12.05 (major) and 18.75 min (minor).



*tert*-Butyl (*R*)-1-(1-naphthyl)-2-nitroethylcarbamate (**6h**): White solid, m.p 176–177 °C,  $[\alpha]_D^{20}$  –5.99 (c 1.02, CHCl<sub>3</sub>), 99.8% ee. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  1.44 (s, 9 H, <sup>1</sup>Bu), 4.90 (d, 2 H, *J* = 7.6 Hz, CH<sub>2</sub>), 5.28 (br. s, 1 H, NH), 6.24–6.31 (m, 1 H, CH), 7.45–7.47 (m, 2 Harom), 7.53–7.65 (m, 2 Harom), 7.84–7.92 (m, 2 Harom), 8.12 (d, 1 Harom, *J* = 8.4 Hz). HPLC analysis: AD-H column, Hexane: 2-Propanol = 85:15, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min, wavelength = 254 nm): *R*t = 7.71 (minor) and 10.66 min (major).

<sup>1</sup>C *tert*-Butyl (*R*)-1-(1-furyl)-2-nitroethylcarbamate (**6i**): White solid, m.p. 59–60 <sup>o</sup>C,  $[\alpha]_{D}^{20}$  –25.0 (c 1.10, CHCl<sub>3</sub>), 99.7% ee. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta_{1.46}$  (s, 9 H, <sup>1</sup>Bu), 4.73 (dd, 1 H, *J* = 12.9, 6.0 Hz, CH), 4.85 (br. s, 1 H, NH), <u>5.28 (br. s, 1 H, one proton of CH<sub>2</sub>), 5.43–5.50 (m,</u> 1 H, one proton of CH<sub>2</sub>), 6.31–6.36 (m, 2 Harom), 7.38 (m, 1 Harom). HPLC analysis (Chiralpak AD-

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F tert-Butyl (1*R*)-1-(3-fluorophenyl)-2-nitropropylcarbamate (**7b**): White solid, m.p 134–136 °C,  $[\alpha]_D^{20}$ –13.95 (c 0.70, CHCl<sub>3</sub>), dr (*syn/anti*): 1.2/1, 95.3% ee (*anti*), *syn-isomer* is inseparable under this condition. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 1.43 (s, 9 H, <sup>1</sup>Bu), 1.53 (d, 1.36 H, J = 6.4 Hz, CH<sub>3</sub> of *anti*-isomer), 1.59 (d, 1.65 H, CH<sub>3</sub> of *syn-isomer*), 4.88–4.96 (m, 1 H, CH), 5.08– 5.12 (m, 0.54 H, CH of *syn-isomer*), 5.17–5.21 (m, 0.46 H, CH of *anti-isomer*), 5.31–5.35 (m, 0.53 H, NH of *syn-isomer*), 5.61–5.64 (m, 0.44 H, NH of *anti-isomer*), 6.94–7.05 (m, 3 Harom), 7.31–7.36 (m, 1 Harom). HPLC <u>analysis (Chiralpak AD-H column, Hexane: 2-Propanol = 95:5</u>, flow rate <u>= 1.0</u> mL/min, <u>wavelength = 254 nm</u>): *R*t = 17.87 (minor of *anti-isomer*) and 20.26 min (major of *anti-isomer*).

#### References

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# 3. HRMS and IR spectra of the prepared thiourea catalysts 2a-c







#### 4. Copies of HPLC data Injection Date : 1/23/2008 8:29:14 PM Sample Name Location : Vial 1 : Acq. Operator Acq. Method : Acq. Operator : Acq. Method : D:\HPCHEM\1\METHODS\07-3.M Last changed : 1/23/2008 8:30:15 PM (modified after loading) Analysis Method : D:\HPCHEM\1\METHODS\07-3.M Last changed : 1/23/2008 8:51:53 PM (modified after loading) VWD1A, Wavelength=254 nm (ZZH-08\WCG-W51.D) mAU 25 15.350 20 17.728 15 10 5 0 -5 16 10 12 14 18 min Area Percent Report Sorted By Signal : : 1.0000 Multiplier Dilution . 1.0000 Use Multiplier & Dilution Factor with ISTDs Signal 1: VWD1 A, Wavelength=254 nm Peak RetTime Type Width Area Height Area Totals : 854.06296 29.99452 Results obtained with enhanced integrator!

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# Novel bifunctional chiral thiourea catalyzed highly enantioselective aza-Henry reaction<sup>+</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

![](_page_52_Figure_7.jpeg)

A novel bifunctional chiral thiourea organocatalyst bearing a glycosyl scaffold and a tertiary amino group was synthesized starting from readily available alpha-D-glucose. This thiourea was proven to be an effective organocatalyst for the asymmetric aza-Henry reaction between *N*-Boc imines and nitromethane. The corresponding adducts were obtained in good to excellent yields with excellent enantioselectivities (up to 99.8% ee). In addition, the reaction of nitroethane also proceeded smoothly with excellent enantioselectivity, albeit with low to good diastereoselectivities.

The nucleophilic addition of nitroalkanes to the C=N bond of imines, known as the aza-Henry (or nitro-Mannich) reaction, is a useful carbon-carbon bondforming process in organic synthesis.<sup>1</sup> The resulting βnitroamine derivatives can be readily transformed into valuable building blocks or biologically active compounds, such as vicinal diamines via reduction of the nitro group<sup>2</sup> and  $\alpha$ -amino acids by means of the Nef reaction.<sup>2g,3</sup> As a result, much attention has been paid tothe aza-Henry reaction, especially for the catalytic asymmetric version of this reaction, during the past several years.4,5 In 1999, Shibasaki reported the first example of a catalytic asymmetric aza-Henry reaction using a heterobimetallic catalyst [YbK<sub>3</sub>(binaphthoxide)<sub>3</sub>], in which up to 91% ee was obtained.4a Thereafter, significant progress has been witnessed for chiral metallic catalyst promoted enantioselective aza-Henry reaction.<sup>4</sup> However, besides these metal-catalyzed variants, the organocatalytic version remainined unexplored until two reports of enantioselective organocatalytic aza-Henry reaction appeared in 2004. Takemoto has developed a bifunctional thiourea catalyst that resulted in moderate

stereoselectivity in the addition of nitromethane to a variety of aromatic *N*-phosphinoyl imines, <sup>5a</sup> and Johnston has documented a chiral bisamidine triflate salt that provides up to 95% ee in the diastereo- and enantioselective addition of nitroethane to a range of N-Boc imines.<sup>[5f]</sup> Although only moderate ee values were observed for the thiourea 1a catalyzed reaction between *N*-phosphinoyl imines and nitromethane,<sup>5a</sup> high stereoselectivity (up to 98% ee) was obtained when N-Boc imines were employed instead of N-phosphinoyl imines as the substrates.<sup>5b</sup> Using thiourea **1b**, Jacobsen developed another variation of the aza-Henry reaction of N-Boc imines, in which moderate de values and excellent ee values were attained.5c Most recently, Ricci5d and Schaus<sup>5e</sup> independently screened a variety of cinchonabased thiourea organocatalysts to catalyze the addition of nitromethane to acyl imines, in which satisfactory yields and enantiomeric excesses were provided. In addition, chiral proton catalysis,5g chiral urea catalysis 5h and chiral phase-transfer catalysis51, based on quinine or cinchonidine derived quaternary ammonium salts effecting the asymmetric aza-Henry reaction have also 删除的内容: Dedicated to professor Chuchi Tang on the occasion of his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.

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been described, and gave rise to good diastereo- and enantioselectivities. As aforementioned, bifunctional thioureas have proven to be an efficient type of organocatalyst for the asymmetric aza-Henry reaction. Therefore, the development of new bifunctional thiourea catalysts is still in great demand. Carbohydrates are in general very attractive scaffolds because of their availability and well dedined stereocenters. Hence, a novel type of bifunctional thiourea 2 bearing a <u>saccharide</u>scaffold and a tertiary amino group was synthesized and employed as the catalyst in the asymmetric aza-Henry reaction. Herein, we report the discovery that thioureas 2a efficiently promotes the aza-Henry reaction of nitromethane with N-Boc imines with excellent levels of enantioselectivity.

![](_page_53_Figure_1.jpeg)

![](_page_53_Figure_2.jpeg)

Starting from commercially available α-Dglucopyranose, glucosyl isothiocyanate 3 was prepared via acetylation, bromination and nucleophilic substitution reactions.<sup>6</sup> (R,R)-N,N-Dimethyl cyclohexane-1,2-diamine 4 was synthesized through mono amino-protection with phthalic anhydride, N.N-dimethylation and subsequently deprotection starting from (R,R)-cyclohexane-1,2-diamine. Consequently, coupling of 3 and 4 afforded the desired bifunctional thiourea catalyst 2a in good yield. Following the same procedure, thiourea catalysts 2b and 2c were also synthesized from galactose and lactose, respectively (in a yield of 67% for 2b and 73% for 2c).

![](_page_53_Figure_4.jpeg)

With <u>these</u> novel catalysts in hand, we initially screened several imines with different *N*-protecting groups (PG) in the presence of **2a** (15 mol\_%) and nitromethane in methylene chloride at 0 °C (Table 1).

 Table 1
 Enantioselective aza-Henry reaction of different imines

 with nitromethane
 \$\$\$

Ph	.PG + C `H	H <sub>3</sub> NO <sub>2</sub> <u>15 n</u> CF	nol % (+)- <b>2a</b> I <sub>2</sub> Cl <sub>2</sub> , 0 °C	HN <sup>PG</sup> Ph <sup>*</sup> NO <sub>2</sub>	
entry	PG	time (h)	vield $(\%)^a$	$ee(\%)^b$	
1	Ts	4.5	79	8	
2	$Ph_2P(S)$	48	Trace		
3	$Ph_2P(O)$	48	$NR^{[c]}$		
4	Boc	16	85	90	
5	CO <sub>2</sub> Et	24	77	85	
6	CO <sub>2</sub> Bn	24	71	86	
<sup><i>a</i></sup> Yield of the isolated product after chromatography on silica gel. <sup><i>b</i></sup> Determined chiral HPLC analysis. <sup><i>c</i></sup> NR means no reaction occurred.					

Among the imines examined, *N*-alkoxycarbonyliminines tended to provide the desired adducts with good enantioselectivities compared with other imines (Table 1, entries 1–6), and the best result was obtained for *N*-Boc imine in terms of chemical yield and enantiomeric excess (Table 1, entry 4, 95% yield, 90% ee). Although *N*-tosyl imine exhibited the best reactivity, an almost racemic product was attained (Table 1, entry 1). In the case of *N*-(thio)phosphinoyl imines, the reactions were quite sluggish even after a prolonged reaction time (Table 1, entries 2 and 3).

In further experiments, other factors, such as solvent, catalyst loading and reaction temperature, <u>influencing</u> the reaction were thoroughly investigated employing 2 as the catalyst and the reaction between *tert*-butyl benzylidenecarbamate and nitromethane as the model. The results are listed in Table 2.

Table 2 Optimization of the reaction conditions

∦ Ph	∠Boc <b>+</b> `H	CH3NO2 -	x mol % (+ solvent, t °	)- <b>2</b> C	HN <sup>-Boc</sup>
entry_	2 (mol_%)	solvent	(°C)	<u>yield</u> (%) <sup>a</sup>	ee (%) <sup>b</sup> •
1	2a (15)	$CH_2Cl_2$	0	85	90
2	2a (15)	MePh	$\overline{0}$	87	85
3	2a (15)	THF	$\overline{0}$	87	67
4	2a (15)	CHCl <sub>3</sub>	$\overline{0}$	- 90	80
5	2a (15)	MeOH	$\overline{0}$	Trace	
6	2a (15)	MeCN	$\overline{0}$	88	91
7	2a (10)	CH <sub>2</sub> Cl <sub>2</sub>	$\overline{0}$	77	85
8	2a (20)	CH <sub>2</sub> Cl <sub>2</sub>	$\overline{0}$	78	87
9	<b>2b</b> (15)	CH <sub>2</sub> Cl <sub>2</sub>		89	85
10	2c (15)	$CH_2Cl_2$	$\overline{0}$	89	78
11	2a (15)	$CH_2Cl_2$	-40	87	93 🔸
12	2a (15)	CH <sub>2</sub> Cl <sub>2</sub>	-60	86	96
13	2a (15)	CH <sub>2</sub> Cl <sub>2</sub>	-78	86	>99
Field of the isolated product after chromatography on silica gel. Determined chiral HPLC analysis.					

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Solvent evaluation revealed that all the tested solvents except for methanol, which probably inhibits hydrogenbonding interaction between nitromethane and the thiourea moiety of 2, afforded the desired product in good yield and ee values (Table 2, entries 1-6). The best results were observed when methylene chloride and acetonitrile were used (Table 2, entries 1 and 6, 90% and 91% ee, respectively). Since acetonitrile has a relatively higher freezing point (-48 °C), it is not applicable for low temperature tests, therefore, we chose methylene chloride as the favourable solvent for this reaction. Although bifunctional thiourea catalysts 2b,c can also promote this reaction, a moderate decrease in enantioselectivtiy was observed, which affords the desired adduct with 85% and 78% ee, respectively (Table 1, entries 9 and 10). Adjusting the catalyst loading demonstrated little influence on the ee value of the reaction. For example, the use of a more or less amount of thiourea organocatalyst resulted in only a slightly loss of stereo-control (Table 2, entry 8, 87% ee and entry 7, 85% ee). Moreover, the reaction temperature was found to be an essential factor to the enantioselectivity of this reaction. Generally, lowering the temperature *improved* the enantiomeric excess of the reaction (Table 2, entries 1, <u>11–13</u>). It is worth noting that almost perfect enantio-control was realized with good chemical yield when the reaction was performed at -78 <sup>o</sup>C (Table 2, entry 11, >99% ee).

With the optimal reaction conditions in hand  $(15 \text{ mol}_{-}\%)^{22}$  as the catalyst, at -78 °C in methylene chloride), we then investigated the scope and limitations of this asymmetric aza-Henry reaction. The results are summarized in Table 3.

<b>Table 3</b> Chiral thiourea $2\underline{a}$ catalyzed asymmetric addition of nitromethane to <i>N</i> -Boc imines <sup><i>a</i></sup>					
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92					
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94					
96					
<sup>a</sup> The absolute configurations of major isomer of the aza-Henry					
adducts $6$ were assigned as $R$ by comparison to the literature value of					
optical rotation in reference [5c,e,1,], the others were. "Yield of the					

As shown in Table 3, in all cases, the corresponding

aza-Henry adducts were obtained in satisfactory chemical

yields within acceptable reaction times. Excellent enantioselectivities can be obtained for the substrates bearing electron-withdrawing substituents (5d-g, 5j,k)and imine derived from 1-naphthyl aldehyde, and in most cases, almost perfect enantio-control was realized. The reaction of the electron-donating methoxy group substituted imine (5b) also proceeded smoothly to afford the desired product in excellent stereoselectivity. Although, a slight decrease in ee value was observed for methyl substituted imine (5c) and electron-rich heteroaromatic aldehyde-dervied substrate (5i), the optical purity of the product can be significantly improved via a simple recrystallization (99.7% and 97.2% ee, respectively).

In addition, aza-Henry reactions with other nitro alkanes were preliminarily investigated. Nitroethane proved to be considerably less reactive under the standard conditions, but is underwent smooth reaction at an elevated temperature (-60 °C) to provide adducts 7 in excellent eantioselectivities with low to good diastereoselectivities. For example, benzadehyde-derived imine (5a) underwent reaction with excellent enantioselectivity (97.0% ee for syn-isomer) and provided products with synthetically useful levels of diastereoselectivity (syn/anti = 9.3/1). Although a low syn/anti ratio (1.2/1) was attained in the case of 3fluorobenzaldehyde-based imine (5e), it was gratifying, high enantioselectivity was obtained for the separable anti-isomer. Reaction with the more sterically challenging 2-nitropropane did not proceed at all.

![](_page_54_Figure_7.jpeg)

![](_page_54_Figure_8.jpeg)

In conclusion, we have developed a readily available novel bifunctional chiral thiourea organocatalyst bearing a glycosyl scaffold and a tertiary amino group. The high effectiveness of this novel organocatalyst was demonstrated by catalysis of the aza-Henry reaction of nitromethane with *N*-Boc imines with excellent enantioselectivity. In addition, the reaction of nitroethane was also effective to provide the corresponding adducts with high enantioselectivities, albeit with low to good diastereoselectivities. Further investigation on the diastereoselective aza-Henry reaction and application of this novel catalyst in other asymmetric reactions are ongoing in our laboratory.

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Acknowledgment. We are grateful to the National Natural Science Foundation of China (No. 20472033, 20772058) for generous financial support for our programs.

Supporting Information Available: Experimental procedures, characterization of the catalyst and copies of <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra, chiral HPLC spectra of the aza-Henry adducts. This material is available free of charge via the Internet at http://pubs.acs.org.

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