

Supporting Information

Squaramide-Catalyzed Enantioselective Michael Addition of Nitromethane to 2-Enoylazaarenes: Synthesis of Chiral Azaarene-Containing γ -Nitroktones

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1. Experimental section

1.1. General experimental details

All reagents were purchased from commercial suppliers and used without further purification. All solvents were purified by standard operating method. The crude products were subjected to column chromatography using silica gel (200-300 mesh). The specific rotation was measured by Yimai IP-digi300/8 automatic digital polarimeter (Shanghai, China): The length of the polariscope tube was 0.5 dm, the wavelength was 589.44 nm, and the temperature was 20 °C. NMR spectra were obtained on a Bruker Avance III (400 MHz or 500 MHz, Switzerland) spectrometer. Chemical shifts were published as parts per million (ppm) in δ units with tetramethylsilane (TMS, δ = 0.00 ppm) as the referenced standard. The enantiomeric excesses (*e.e.*) of chiral products were determined by chiral HPLC analysis employing a Shimadzu LC-20AT instrument (Japan) with Daicel Chiralcel AD-H, OD-H, IC or IA column (0.46 cm diameter \times 25 cm length) in comparison with racemic samples and n-hexane/i-PrOH as the eluent. Bifunctional catalysts **R1-R3**,¹ **Q4-CN7**,^{2,3} and substrates⁴⁻¹⁰ from (*E*)-**1a** to (*E*)-**1w** were prepared according to the literature procedures. The absolute configuration of the products was assigned by comparing HPLC and optical rotation with the literature data or by analogy to other compounds.

1.2. Experimental methods

General procedure: 2-Enoylazaarenes **1a-1w** (0.10 mmol), nitromethane (1 mL) and catalyst **Q4** (10 mol%, 0.01 mmol) were added to an 8 mL glassware bottle and the mixture was stirred in an oil bath at 25°C. After the reaction finished (monitored by TLC), the solvent was removed under vacuum on rotary evaporator, and the crude mixture was subjected to flash chromatography on silica gel (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 8:1) to obtain the corresponding products **2a-2w**.

Physical and spectral data of the products **2a-2w** are listed as following:

(*R*)-(+)4-Nitro-3-phenyl-1-(pyridin-2-yl)butan-1-one (**2a**)¹¹⁻¹³

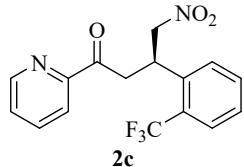
2a 98% yield, white solid, 98% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel AD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 95/5, 30 °C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 22.9 \text{ min}$, $t_{\text{major}} = 24.9 \text{ min}$. $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +44.8$ (c 0.50, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.67 (ddd, $J = 4.7, 1.8, 0.9 \text{ Hz}$, 1H), 7.99 (dt, $J = 7.9, 1.1 \text{ Hz}$, 1H), 7.83 (td, $J = 7.7, 1.7 \text{ Hz}$, 1H), 7.48 (ddd, $J = 7.6, 4.8, 1.3 \text{ Hz}$, 1H), 7.34-7.21 (m, 5H), 4.79 (dd, $J = 12.4, 6.8 \text{ Hz}$, 1H), 4.68 (dd, $J = 12.4, 8.2 \text{ Hz}$, 1H), 4.30-4.21 (m, 1H), 3.84 (dd, $J = 18.2, 7.1 \text{ Hz}$, 1H), 3.63 (dd, $J = 18.2, 7.2 \text{ Hz}$, 1H).

(*R*)-(+)3-(2-Fluorophenyl)-4-nitro-1-(pyridin-2-yl)butan-1-one (**2b**)¹²

2b 97% yield, white solid, 98% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel AD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 90/10, 30 °C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 13.6 \text{ min}$, $t_{\text{major}} = 14.5 \text{ min}$. $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +32.9$ (c 0.51, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.66

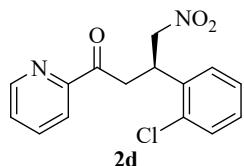
(ddd, $J = 4.7, 1.7, 0.9$ Hz, 1H), 7.99 (dt, $J = 7.9, 1.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.82 (td, $J = 7.7, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 7.48 (ddd, $J = 7.5, 4.7, 1.2$ Hz, 1H), 7.31 (td, $J = 7.6, 1.8$ Hz, 1H), 7.26-7.21 (m, 1H), 7.13-6.98 (m, 2H), 4.82 (qd, $J = 12.7, 7.3$ Hz, 2H), 4.43 (p, $J = 7.1$ Hz, 1H), 3.86 (dd, $J = 18.5, 6.9$ Hz, 1H), 3.81-3.63 (m, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 198.56, 161.99, 160.03, 152.68, 149.05, 137.04, 130.06, 130.02, 129.52, 129.45, 127.60, 126.07, 125.97, 124.55, 124.53, 121.89, 116.15, 115.98, 78.15, 78.13, 39.57, 39.56, 34.72.

(R)-(+)-4-Nitro-1-(pyridin-2-yl)-3-(2-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl)butan-1-one (2c)¹²



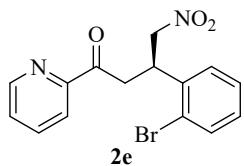
95% yield, white solid, 98% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel AD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 98/2, 30 °C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 25.3$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 27.7$ min. $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +29.6$ (c 0.52, CH_2Cl_2). ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 8.65 (ddd, $J = 4.8, 1.7, 0.9$ Hz, 1H), 8.01 (dt, $J = 7.9, 1.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.83 (td, $J = 7.8, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 7.70 (dd, $J = 8.0, 1.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.60-7.43 (m, 3H), 7.43-7.33 (m, 1H), 4.81 (qd, $J = 12.5, 6.9$ Hz, 2H), 4.71-4.63 (m, 1H), 3.86-3.72 (m, 2H). ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 198.16, 152.60, 149.01, 138.15, 137.08, 132.40, 128.87, 128.64, 127.74, 127.66, 126.85, 126.80, 126.75, 126.71, 125.29, 123.11, 121.95, 78.71, 40.95, 34.58, 34.57.

(R)-(+)-3-(2-Chlorophenyl)-4-nitro-1-(pyridin-2-yl)butan-1-one (2d)¹¹



98% yield, white solid, 97% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel OD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 85/15, 30 °C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 13.9$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 17.0$ min. $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +46.2$ (c 0.52, CH_2Cl_2). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 8.67 (ddd, $J = 4.7, 1.7, 0.9$ Hz, 1H), 8.00 (dt, $J = 7.9, 1.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.83 (td, $J = 7.7, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 7.49 (ddd, $J = 7.6, 4.7, 1.2$ Hz, 1H), 7.39 (dd, $J = 7.5, 1.8$ Hz, 1H), 7.34 (dd, $J = 7.5, 2.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.25-7.17 (m, 2H), 4.88-4.81 (m, 2H), 4.78-4.68 (m, 1H), 3.88 (dd, $J = 18.6, 6.5$ Hz, 1H), 3.77 (dd, $J = 18.6, 7.5$ Hz, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 198.54, 152.69, 149.05, 137.06, 136.47, 133.97, 130.34, 128.89, 128.43, 127.63, 127.34, 121.92, 77.89, 39.44, 35.92.

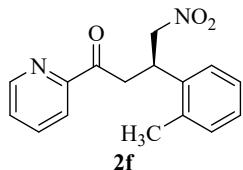
(R)-(+)-3-(2-Bromophenyl)-4-nitro-1-(pyridin-2-yl)butan-1-one (2e)¹²



96% yield, white solid, 98% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel AD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 95/5, 30 °C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 20.5$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 22.1$ min. $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +50.8$ (c 0.52, CH_2Cl_2). ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 8.67

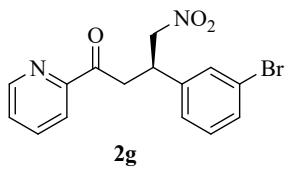
(ddd, $J = 4.8, 1.7, 0.9$ Hz, 1H), 8.00 (dt, $J = 7.8, 1.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.83 (td, $J = 7.7, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 7.59 (dd, $J = 7.9, 1.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.49 (ddd, $J = 7.6, 4.7, 1.2$ Hz, 1H), 7.33-7.27 (m, 2H), 7.12 (ddd, $J = 8.9, 7.3, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 4.85-4.78 (m, 2H), 4.76-4.69 (m, 1H), 3.87 (dd, $J = 18.5, 6.4$ Hz, 1H), 3.77 (dd, $J = 18.5, 7.5$ Hz, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 198.49, 152.69, 149.04, 138.10, 137.06, 133.69, 129.15, 128.16, 127.97, 127.62, 124.67, 121.93, 77.98, 39.62, 38.13.

(R)-(+)-4-Nitro-1-(pyridin-2-yl)-3-(*o*-tolyl)butan-1-one (2f)¹²



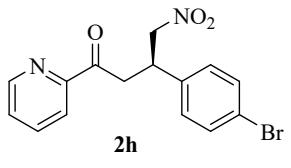
97% yield, white solid, 97% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel AD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 95/5, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 15.2$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 16.3$ min. $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +53.8$ (c 0.52, CH_2Cl_2). ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 8.66 (ddd, $J = 4.8, 1.8, 0.9$ Hz, 1H), 7.97 (dt, $J = 7.8, 1.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.81 (td, $J = 7.7, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 7.47 (ddd, $J = 7.6, 4.7, 1.2$ Hz, 1H), 7.25-7.21 (m, 1H), 7.19-7.09 (m, 3H), 4.78-4.62 (m, 2H), 4.55 (p, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 1H), 3.85 (dd, $J = 18.1, 7.1$ Hz, 1H), 3.57 (dd, $J = 18.0, 7.0$ Hz, 1H), 2.49 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 198.77, 152.75, 148.99, 137.54, 137.03, 136.57, 131.05, 127.55, 127.39, 126.55, 125.62, 121.90, 79.34, 40.98, 34.44, 19.59.

(R)-(+)-3-(3-Bromophenyl)-4-nitro-1-(pyridin-2-yl)butan-1-one (2g)^{11, 12}



96% yield, white solid, 98% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel IC, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 97/3, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{major}} = 33.0$ min, $t_{\text{minor}} = 36.4$ min. $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +39.2$ (c 0.50, CH_2Cl_2). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 8.67 (dt, $J = 4.8, 1.4$ Hz, 1H), 7.99 (dt, $J = 7.9, 1.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.83 (td, $J = 7.8, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 7.54-7.44 (m, 2H), 7.38 (dt, $J = 7.8, 1.4$ Hz, 1H), 7.26 (dt, $J = 7.9, 1.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.19 (t, $J = 7.8$ Hz, 1H), 4.86-4.59 (m, 2H), 4.22 (m, 1H), 3.81 (dd, $J = 18.3, 7.0$ Hz, 1H), 3.61 (dd, $J = 18.3, 7.2$ Hz, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 198.24, 152.58, 149.05, 141.63, 137.10, 130.98, 130.71, 130.51, 127.71, 126.43, 122.97, 121.97, 79.45, 40.62, 38.92.

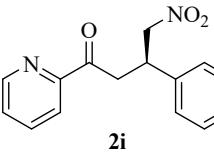
(R)-(+)-3-(4-Bromophenyl)-4-nitro-1-(pyridin-2-yl)butan-1-one (2h)^{11, 12}



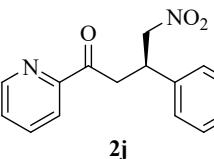
98% yield, white solid, 98% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel AD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 90/10, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 18.9$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 21.7$ min. $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +35.6$ (c 0.50, CH_2Cl_2). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 8.66 (dt, $J = 4.7, 1.2$ Hz, 1H), 7.99 (d, $J = 7.8$ Hz, 1H), 7.83 (td, $J = 7.7, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 7.49 (ddd, $J = 7.6, 4.7, 1.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.47-7.41 (m, 2H), 7.25-7.14 (m, 2H), 4.82-4.60 (m, 2H), 4.28-4.16 (m, 1H), 3.81 (dd, $J = 18.2, 7.3$ Hz, 1H), 3.59 (dd, $J = 18.2, 6.9$ Hz, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 198.30,

152.61, 149.04, 138.29, 137.10, 132.09, 129.37, 127.68, 121.95, 121.71, 79.56, 40.57, 38.82.

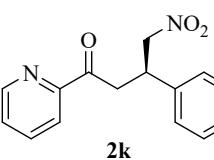
(R)-(+)-3-(4-Chlorophenyl)-4-nitro-1-(pyridin-2-yl)butan-1-one (2i)^{11, 12}

 97% yield, white solid, 98% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel IA, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 95/5, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 27.5$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 29.8$ min. $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +52.0$ (c 0.50, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.66 (ddd, $J = 4.8, 1.8, 0.9$ Hz, 1H), 7.98 (dt, $J = 8.0, 1.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.82 (td, $J = 7.7, 1.8$ Hz, 1H), 7.48 (ddd, $J = 7.6, 4.8, 1.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.30-7.24 (m, 4H), 4.82-4.61 (m, 2H), 4.28-4.19 (m, 1H), 3.80 (dd, $J = 18.2, 7.3$ Hz, 1H), 3.59 (dd, $J = 18.2, 7.0$ Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 198.34, 152.61, 149.04, 137.74, 137.10, 133.60, 129.14, 129.02, 127.69, 121.95, 79.65, 40.62, 38.75.

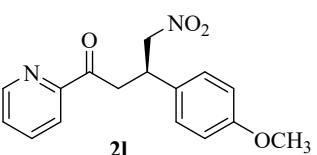
(R)-(+)-4-Nitro-3-(4-nitrophenyl)-1-(pyridin-2-yl)butan-1-one (2j)¹¹

 96% yield, white solid, 97% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel AD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 75/25, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 17.8$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 23.7$ min. $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +47.2$ (c 0.50, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.67 (dt, $J = 4.7, 1.2$ Hz, 1H), 8.29-8.07 (m, 2H), 8.06-7.96 (m, 1H), 7.92-7.78 (m, 1H), 7.67-7.40 (m, 3H), 4.92-4.67 (m, 2H), 4.46-4.34 (m, 1H), 3.87 (dd, $J = 18.4, 7.5$ Hz, 1H), 3.66 (dd, $J = 18.4, 6.7$ Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 197.88, 152.37, 149.11, 147.46, 146.76, 137.20, 128.77, 127.90, 124.16, 121.99, 79.06, 40.42, 39.06.

(R)-(+)-4-Nitro-1-(pyridin-2-yl)-3-(*p*-tolyl)butan-1-one (2k)¹²

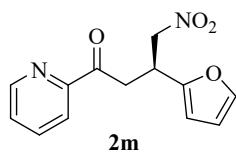
 97% yield, white solid, 96% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel AD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 95/5, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 19.5$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 22.3$ min. $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +52.9$ (c 0.51, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.66 (ddd, $J = 4.9, 1.8, 0.9$ Hz, 1H), 7.98 (dt, $J = 7.8, 1.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.81 (td, $J = 7.7, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 7.48 (ddd, $J = 7.6, 4.7, 1.2$ Hz, 1H), 7.23-7.16 (m, 2H), 7.12 (d, $J = 7.9$ Hz, 2H), 4.76 (dd, $J = 12.4, 6.8$ Hz, 1H), 4.65 (dd, $J = 12.4, 8.3$ Hz, 1H), 4.30-4.11 (m, 1H), 3.81 (dd, $J = 18.2, 7.2$ Hz, 1H), 3.61 (dd, $J = 18.2, 7.1$ Hz, 1H), 2.29 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 198.70, 152.80, 149.00, 137.40, 137.01, 136.20, 129.63, 127.53, 127.44, 121.92, 80.06, 40.82, 38.97, 21.05.

(R)-(+)-3-(4-Methoxyphenyl)-4-nitro-1-(pyridin-2-yl)butan-1-one (2l)^{11, 12}

 90% yield, white solid, 97% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel S6

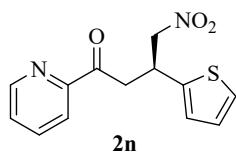
AD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 90/10, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 21.5$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 23.6$ min. $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +44.6$ (c 0.52, CH_2Cl_2). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 8.66 (ddd, $J = 4.8, 1.7, 1.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.98 (dt, $J = 7.9, 1.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.81 (td, $J = 7.7, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 7.47 (ddd, $J = 7.6, 4.8, 1.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.25-7.18 (m, 2H), 6.88-6.77 (m, 2H), 4.80-4.59 (m, 2H), 4.25-4.15 (m, 1H), 3.80 (dd, $J = 18.1, 7.3$ Hz, 1H), 3.76 (s, 3H), 3.58 (dd, $J = 18.1, 7.1$ Hz, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 198.72, 159.00, 152.79, 149.00, 137.03, 131.17, 128.64, 127.54, 121.92, 114.32, 80.17, 55.23, 40.86, 38.64.

(S)-(+)-3-(Furan-2-yl)-4-nitro-1-(pyridin-2-yl)butan-1-one (2m)^{11, 12}



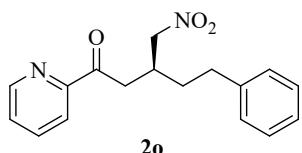
80% yield, white solid, 97% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel OD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 85/15, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 10.8$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 12.0$ min $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +26.7$ (c 0.54, CH_2Cl_2). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 8.68 (ddd, $J = 4.8, 1.7, 0.9$ Hz, 1H), 8.03 (dt, $J = 8.0, 1.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.85 (td, $J = 7.7, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 7.50 (ddd, $J = 7.6, 4.8, 1.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.33 (dd, $J = 1.8, 0.8$ Hz, 1H), 6.35-6.15 (m, 2H), 4.77 (d, $J = 6.9$ Hz, 2H), 4.41-4.31 (m, 1H), 3.84 (dd, $J = 18.4, 6.7$ Hz, 1H), 3.64 (dd, $J = 18.4, 7.2$ Hz, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 198.34, 152.65, 152.16, 149.08, 142.26, 137.06, 127.64, 121.94, 110.42, 107.12, 77.47, 38.47, 33.16.

(S)-(+)-4-Nitro-1-(pyridin-2-yl)-3-(thiophen-2-yl)butan-1-one (2n)^{11, 12}



87% yield, white solid, 96% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel OD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 85/15, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 15.5$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 18.7$ min $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +55.6$ (c 0.50, CH_2Cl_2). ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 8.68 (ddd, $J = 4.8, 1.7, 0.9$ Hz, 1H), 8.03 (dt, $J = 8.0, 1.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.85 (td, $J = 7.7, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 7.50 (ddd, $J = 7.6, 4.8, 1.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.33 (dd, $J = 1.8, 0.8$ Hz, 1H), 6.28 (dd, $J = 3.3, 1.9$ Hz, 1H), 6.20 (dt, $J = 3.2, 0.8$ Hz, 1H), 4.77 (d, $J = 6.9$ Hz, 2H), 4.41-4.31 (m, 1H), 3.84 (dd, $J = 18.4, 6.7$ Hz, 1H), 3.64 (dd, $J = 18.4, 7.2$ Hz, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 198.22, 152.64, 149.07, 142.10, 137.06, 127.66, 127.07, 125.55, 124.65, 121.97, 80.17, 77.25, 41.67, 34.74.

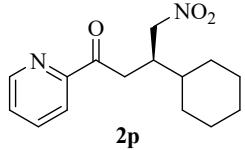
(S)-(+)-3-(Nitromethyl)-5-phenyl-1-(pyridin-2-yl)pentan-1-one (2o)



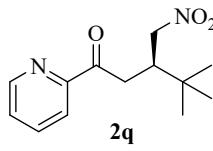
97% yield, colourless oil, 97% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel IA, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 98/2, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 24.4$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 25.8$ min. $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +8.6$ (c 0.35, CH_2Cl_2). ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 8.68 (dt, $J = 4.8, 1.4$ Hz, 1H), 8.05 (dt, $J = 7.8, 1.2$ Hz, 1H), 7.86 (td, $J = 7.7, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 7.50 (ddd, $J = 7.6, 4.8, 1.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.32-7.25 (m, 2H), 7.18 (ddd, $J = 8.5, 7.1, 1.6$ Hz, 3H), 4.68-4.49 (m, 2H), 3.45

(d, $J = 6.5$ Hz, 2H), 2.97-2.89 (m, 1H), 2.74 (ddd, $J = 10.7, 6.3, 2.8$ Hz, 2H), 1.90-1.77 (m, 2H). ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 199.76, 152.94, 149.03, 141.00, 137.07, 128.54, 128.32, 127.55, 126.17, 121.86, 78.69, 38.88, 33.53, 33.08, 32.88.

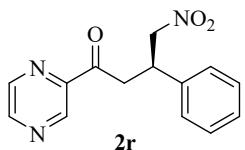
(R)-(+)-3-Cyclohexyl-4-nitro-1-(pyridin-2-yl)butan-1-one (2p)¹⁴

 90% yield, colourless oil, 95% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel AD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 85/15, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 6.8$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 7.6$ min. $[\alpha]_D^0 = +9.6$ (c 0.31, CH_2Cl_2). ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 8.68 (d, $J = 4.7$ Hz, 1H), 8.04 (d, $J = 7.8$ Hz, 1H), 7.86 (td, $J = 7.7, 1.7$ Hz, 1H), 7.50 (dd, $J = 7.5, 4.8$ Hz, 1H), 4.52 (d, $J = 6.7$ Hz, 2H), 3.48 (dd, $J = 18.4, 5.0$ Hz, 1H), 3.27 (dd, $J = 18.4, 7.9$ Hz, 1H), 2.97-2.72 (m, 1H), 1.80-1.73 (m, 4H), 1.70-1.64 (m, 1H), 1.51 (m, 1H), 1.30-1.02 (m, 5H).

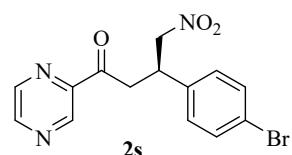
(R)-(+)-4,4-Dimethyl-3-(nitromethyl)-1-(pyridin-2-yl)pentan-1-one (2q)¹¹

 30% yield, colourless oil, 91% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel AD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 98/2, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 13.5$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 14.3$ min. $[\alpha]_D^0 = +8.8$ (c 0.14, CH_2Cl_2). ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 8.68 (ddd, $J = 4.7, 1.8, 0.9$ Hz, 1H), 8.04 (dt, $J = 7.9, 1.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.84 (td, $J = 7.7, 1.8$ Hz, 1H), 7.49 (ddd, $J = 7.6, 4.8, 1.2$ Hz, 1H), 4.60 (dd, $J = 12.6, 4.6$ Hz, 1H), 4.35 (dd, $J = 12.6, 8.0$ Hz, 1H), 3.59 (dd, $J = 18.3, 4.4$ Hz, 1H), 3.24 (dd, $J = 18.3, 7.5$ Hz, 1H), 3.07-2.91 (m, 1H), 1.00 (s, 9H).

(R)-(+)-4-Nitro-3-phenyl-1-(pyrazin-2-yl)butan-1-one (2r)¹⁴

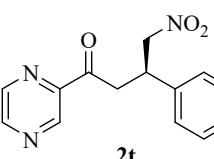
 97% yield, white solid, 96% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel AD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 85/15, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 15.9$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 17.2$ min. $[\alpha]_D^0 = +27.9$ (c 0.51, CH_2Cl_2). ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 9.17 (d, $J = 1.5$ Hz, 1H), 8.77 (d, $J = 2.5$ Hz, 1H), 8.63 (dd, $J = 2.5, 1.5$ Hz, 1H), 7.42-7.15 (m, 5H), 4.86-4.61 (m, 2H), 4.25 (m, 1H), 3.82 (dd, $J = 18.3, 7.4$ Hz, 1H), 3.60 (dd, $J = 18.3, 6.8$ Hz, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 198.25, 152.54, 149.06, 141.66, 137.13, 130.96, 130.72, 130.53, 127.75, 126.44, 122.94, 121.97, 79.45, 40.62, 38.90.

(R)-(+)-3-(4-Bromophenyl)-4-nitro-1-(pyrazin-2-yl)butan-1-one (2s)

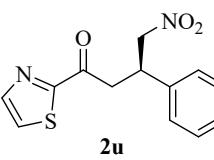


97% yield, white solid, 97% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel AD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 70/30, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 11.7$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 13.9$ min. $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +12.4$ (c 0.58, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 9.18 (d, $J = 1.5$ Hz, 1H), 8.78 (d, $J = 2.4$ Hz, 1H), 8.63 (t, $J = 2.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.54-7.40 (m, 2H), 7.26-7.14 (m, 2H), 4.89-4.57 (m, 2H), 4.22 (t, $J = 7.3$ Hz, 1H), 3.79 (dd, $J = 18.4, 7.5$ Hz, 1H), 3.57 (dd, $J = 18.4, 6.6$ Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 197.80, 148.42, 146.75, 143.72, 143.60, 137.80, 132.23, 129.31, 121.94, 79.39, 40.58, 38.51.

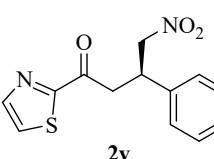
(R)-(+)-4-Nitro-1-(pyrazin-2-yl)-3-(*p*-tolyl)butan-1-one(2t)

 96% yield, white solid, 96% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel AD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 70/30, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 10.2$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 11.6$ min. $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +54.8$ (c 0.46, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 9.18 (s, 1H), 8.77 (s, 1H), 8.64 (s, 1H), 7.22-7.08 (m, 4H), 4.83-4.62 (m, 2H), 4.25-4.17 (m, 1H), 3.80 (dd, $J = 18.2, 7.5$ Hz, 1H), 3.57 (dd, $J = 18.2, 6.7$ Hz, 1H), 2.30 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 198.21, 148.22, 146.97, 143.69, 143.61, 137.67, 135.70, 129.74, 127.39, 79.90, 40.82, 38.73, 21.08.

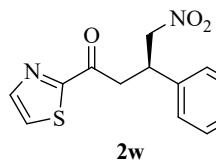
(R)-(+)-4-Nitro-3-phenyl-1-(thiazol-2-yl)butan-1-one (2u)¹⁴

 98% yield, white solid, 96% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel OD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 80/20, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{major}} = 19.3$ min, $t_{\text{minor}} = 21.7$ min. $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +9.8$ (c 0.51, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.00 (d, $J = 3.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.69 (d, $J = 3.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.37-7.24 (m, 5H), 4.83-4.66 (m, 2H), 4.31-4.22 (m, 1H), 3.77 (dd, $J = 17.8, 7.3$ Hz, 1H), 3.58 (dd, $J = 17.8, 7.0$ Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl₃): 190.62, 166.22, 144.87, 138.58, 129.08, 127.98, 127.55, 126.90, 79.61, 41.49, 39.18.

(R)-(+)-3-(4-Bromophenyl)-4-nitro-1-(thiazol-2-yl)butan-1-one (2v)¹⁴

 98% yield, white solid, 96% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel AD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 95/05, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{minor}} = 40.0$ min, $t_{\text{major}} = 43.5$ min. $[\alpha]_D^{20} = +2.4$ (c 0.58, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.00 (d, $J = 3.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.71 (d, $J = 3.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.52-7.39 (m, 2H), 7.24-7.13 (m, 2H), 4.86-4.59 (m, 2H), 4.22 (p, $J = 7.1$ Hz, 1H), 3.74 (dd, $J = 17.8, 7.6$ Hz, 1H), 3.54 (dd, $J = 17.8, 6.9$ Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 190.32, 165.99, 144.93, 137.61, 132.21, 129.33, 127.11, 121.95, 79.28, 41.25, 38.67.

(R)-(+)-4-Nitro-1-(thiazol-2-yl)-3-(*p*-tolyl)butan-1-one (2w)

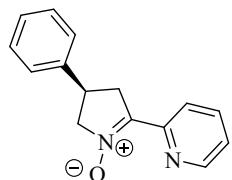


97% yield, white solid, 96% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel OD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 90/10, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{major}} = 24.9$ min, $t_{\text{minor}} = 31.7$ min. $[\alpha]_D^0 = +5.6$ (c 0.58, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.00 (d, $J = 3.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.69 (d, $J = 3.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.21-7.10 (m, 4H), 4.89-4.58 (m, 2H), 4.27-4.18 (m, 1H), 3.75 (dd, $J = 17.7, 7.4$ Hz, 1H), 3.56 (dd, $J = 17.7, 7.0$ Hz, 1H), 2.30 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 190.70, 166.28, 144.85, 137.69, 135.49, 129.75, 127.38, 126.85, 79.79, 41.52, 38.84, 21.09.

Synthesis of 3a ¹⁵⁻¹⁸

A solution of **2a** (1.11 g, 4.1 mmol) and Zn dust (533 mg, 8.2 mmol) in THF/saturated NH₄Cl (v/v 1:1, 12 mL) was stirred at room temperature for 2.5 h. The resulting mixture was extracted with ethyl acetate and dried over MgSO₄. Purification by silica gel column chromatography (PE/EA = 1/1) furnished the product **3a** as an oil (350 mg, 1.47 mmol).

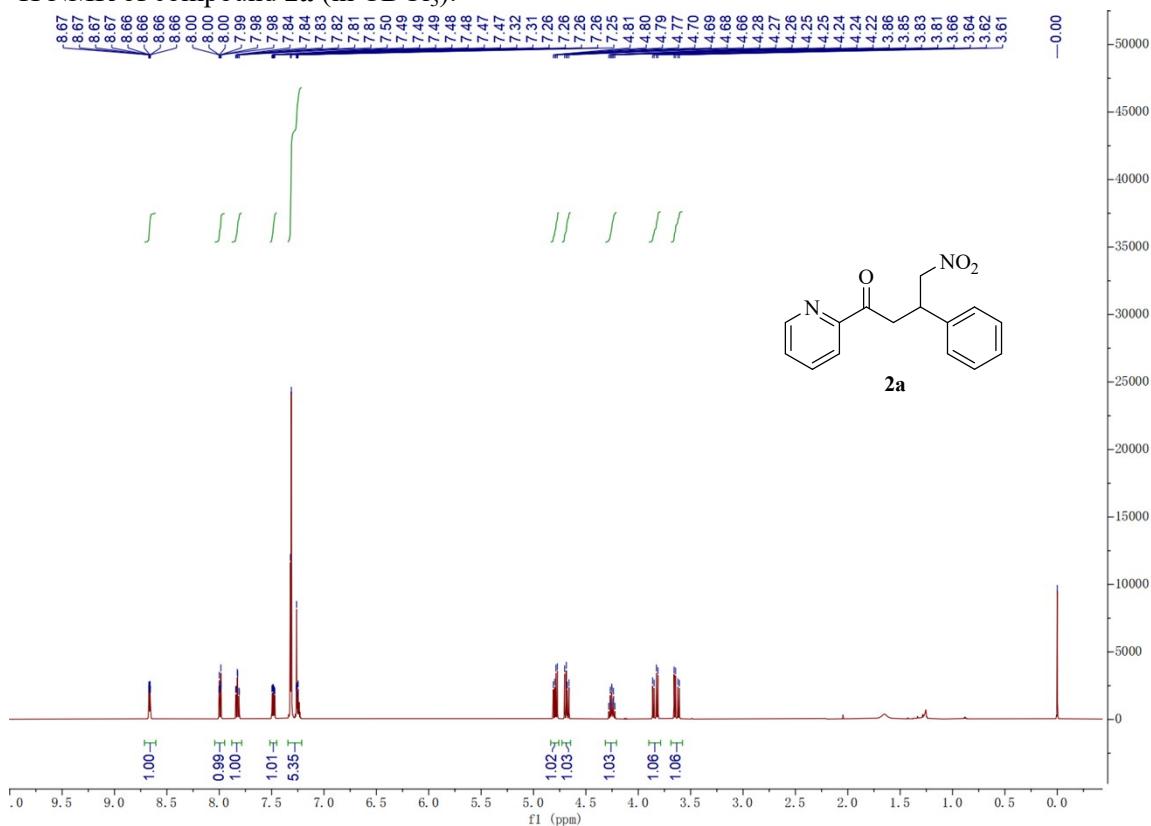
(R)-(-)-2-(3-Phenyl-3,4-dihydro-2*H*-pyrrol-5-yl)pyridine *N*-oxide (3a)



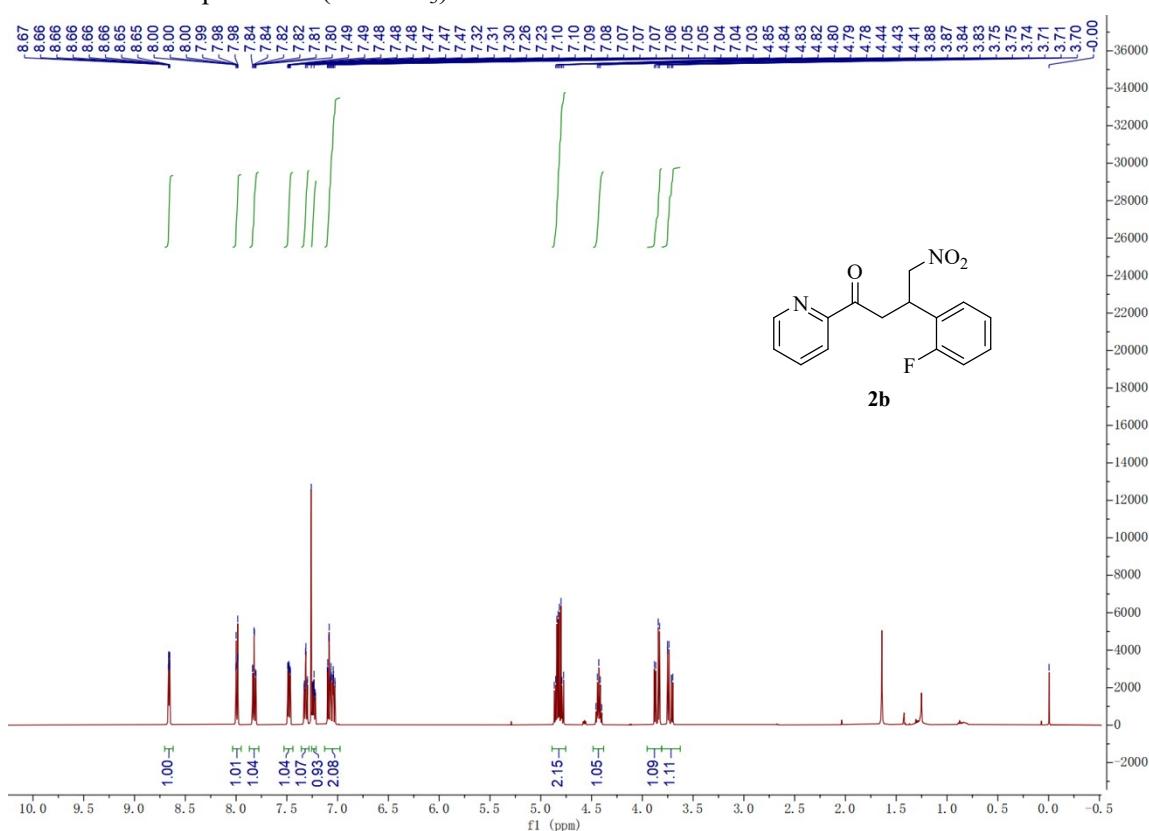
36% yield, colourless oil, 98% ee determined by HPLC (Daicel Chiralcel AD-H, n-hexane/i-PrOH = 90/10, 30°C, flow rate 1.0 mL/min, UV detection at 254 nm): $t_{\text{major}} = 22.1$ min, $t_{\text{minor}} = 24.8$ min. $[\alpha]_D^0 = -63.0$ (c 0.34, CH₂Cl₂). ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 9.32 (dd, $J = 8.1, 1.2$ Hz, 1H), 8.66 (ddd, $J = 4.8, 1.8, 1.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.84 (td, $J = 7.9, 1.8$ Hz, 1H), 7.41-7.27 (m, 6H), 4.69-4.61 (m, 1H), 4.42 (ddt, $J = 14.1, 7.6, 2.2$ Hz, 1H), 3.93-3.76 (m, 2H), 3.49-3.41 (m, 1H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 149.37, 147.93, 142.33, 141.74, 136.70, 129.08, 127.33, 126.73, 124.53, 123.46, 72.02, 39.02, 36.00. MS (ESI): *m/z* [M+H]⁺ 239.1; [M+Na]⁺ 261.1.

2. NMR spectra of products 2a-2w and 3a

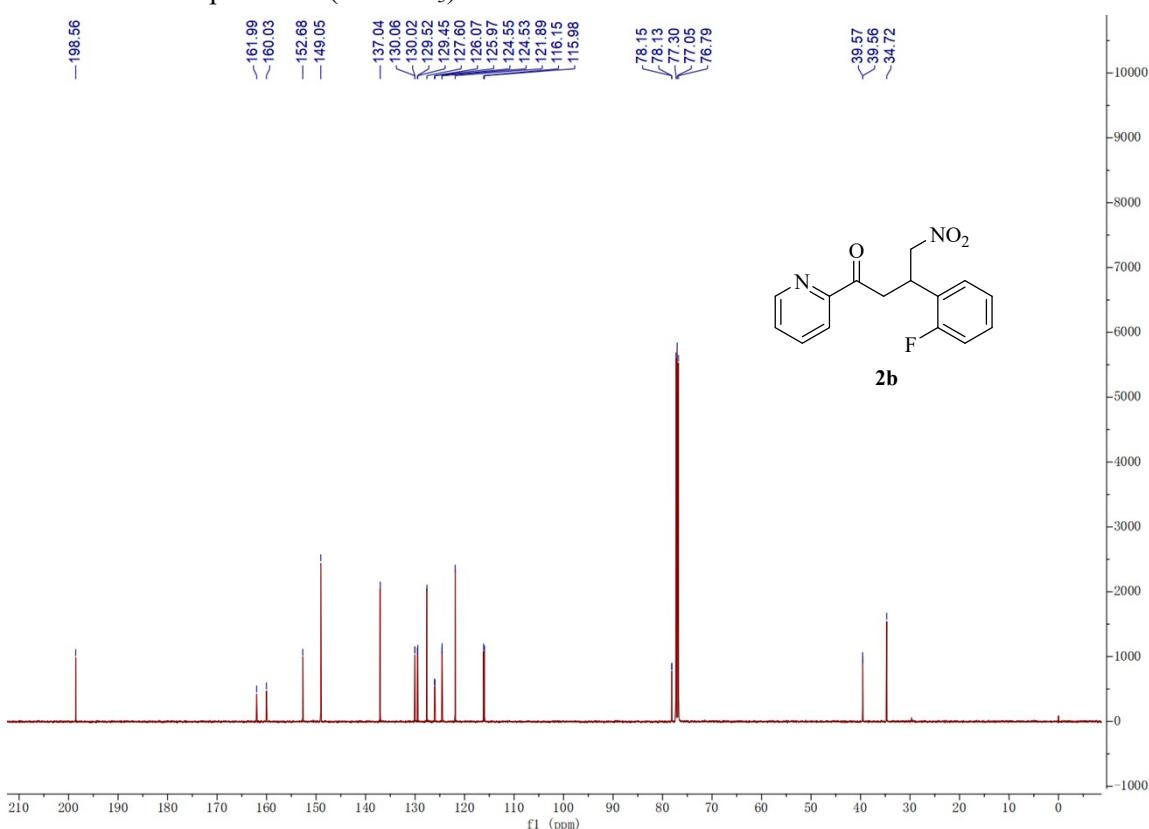
¹H NMR of compound 2a (in CDCl₃):



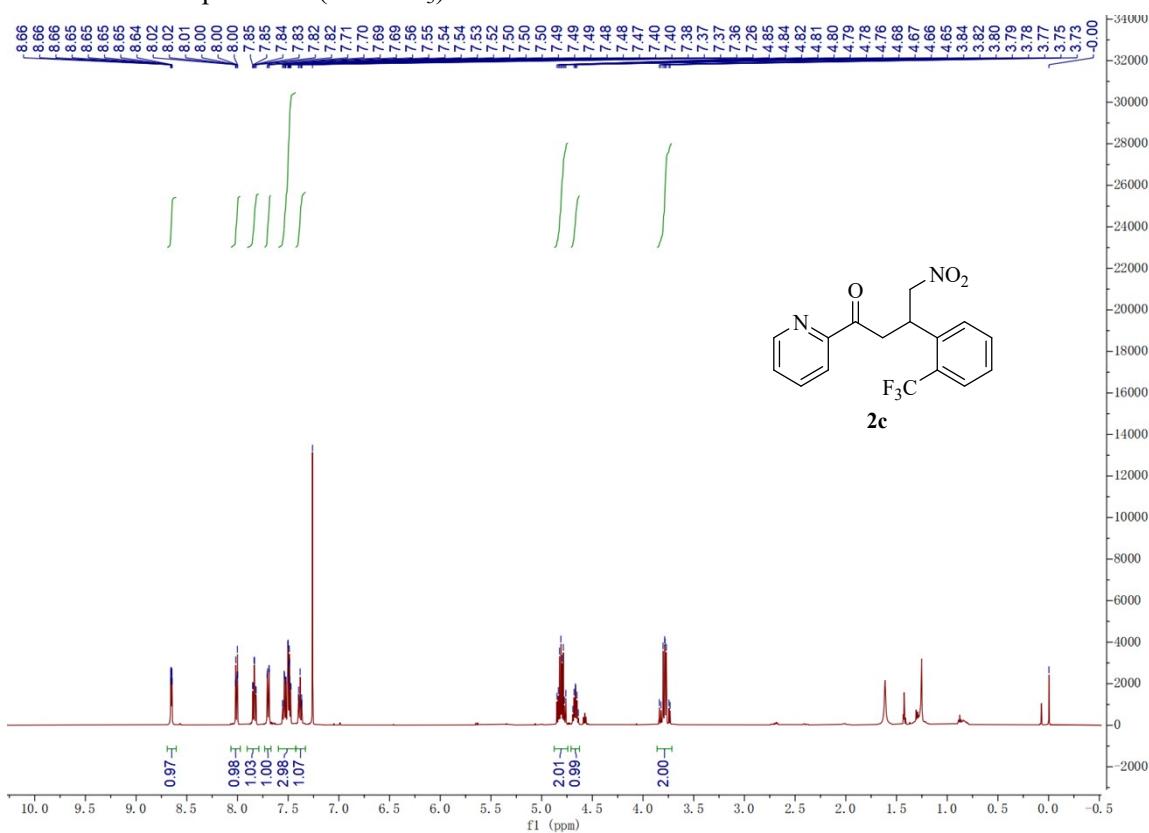
¹H NMR of compound **2b** (in CDCl₃):



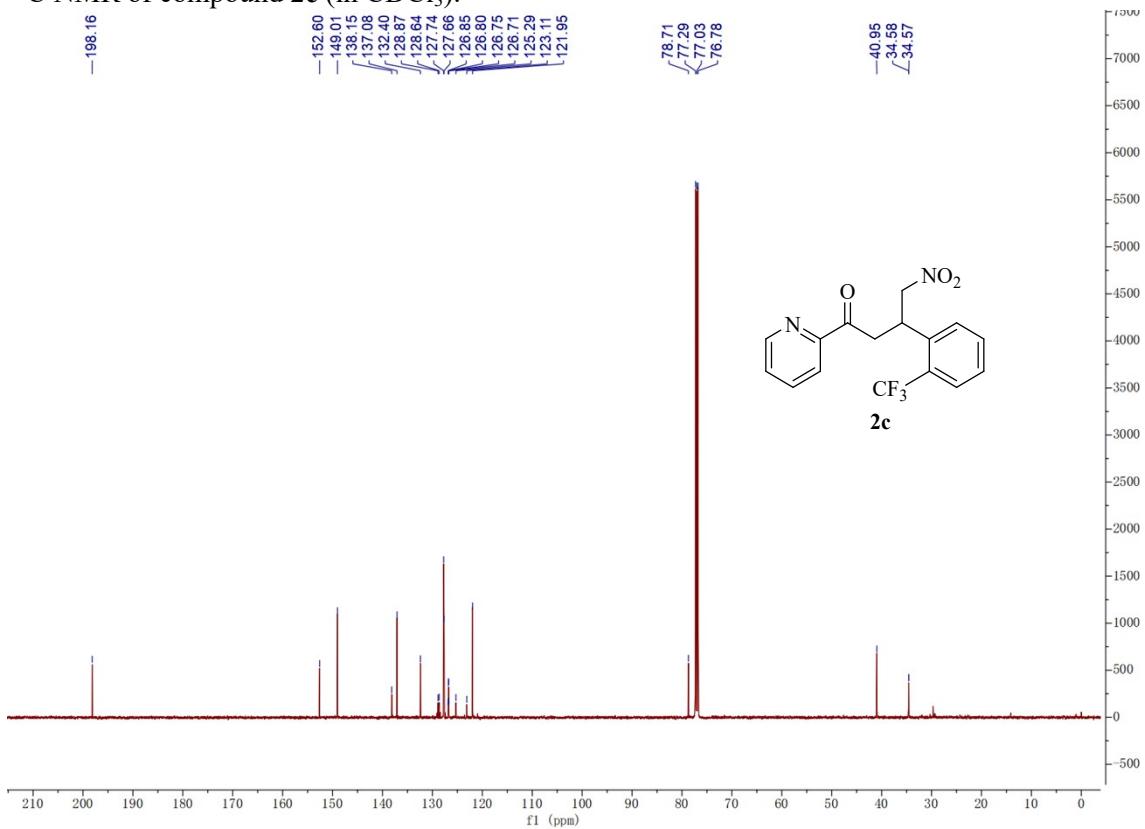
¹³C NMR of compound **2b** (in CDCl₃):



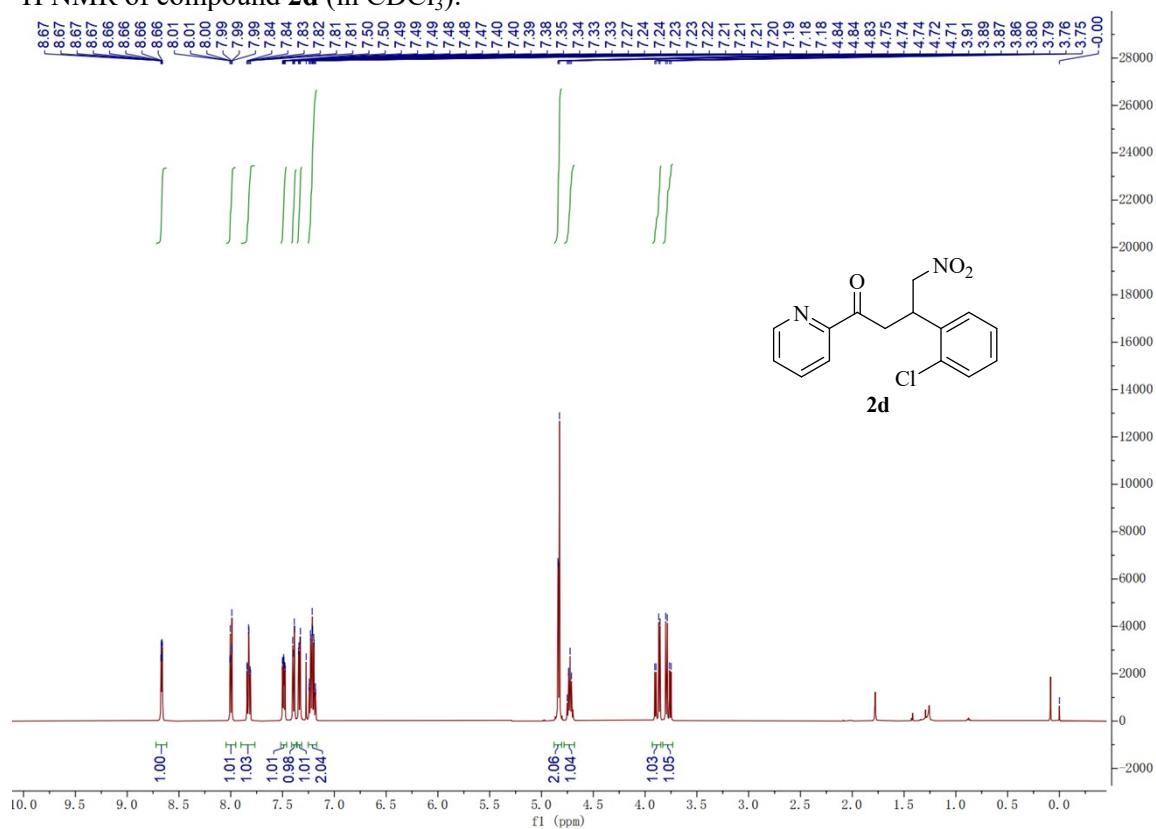
¹H NMR of compound **2c** (in CDCl₃):



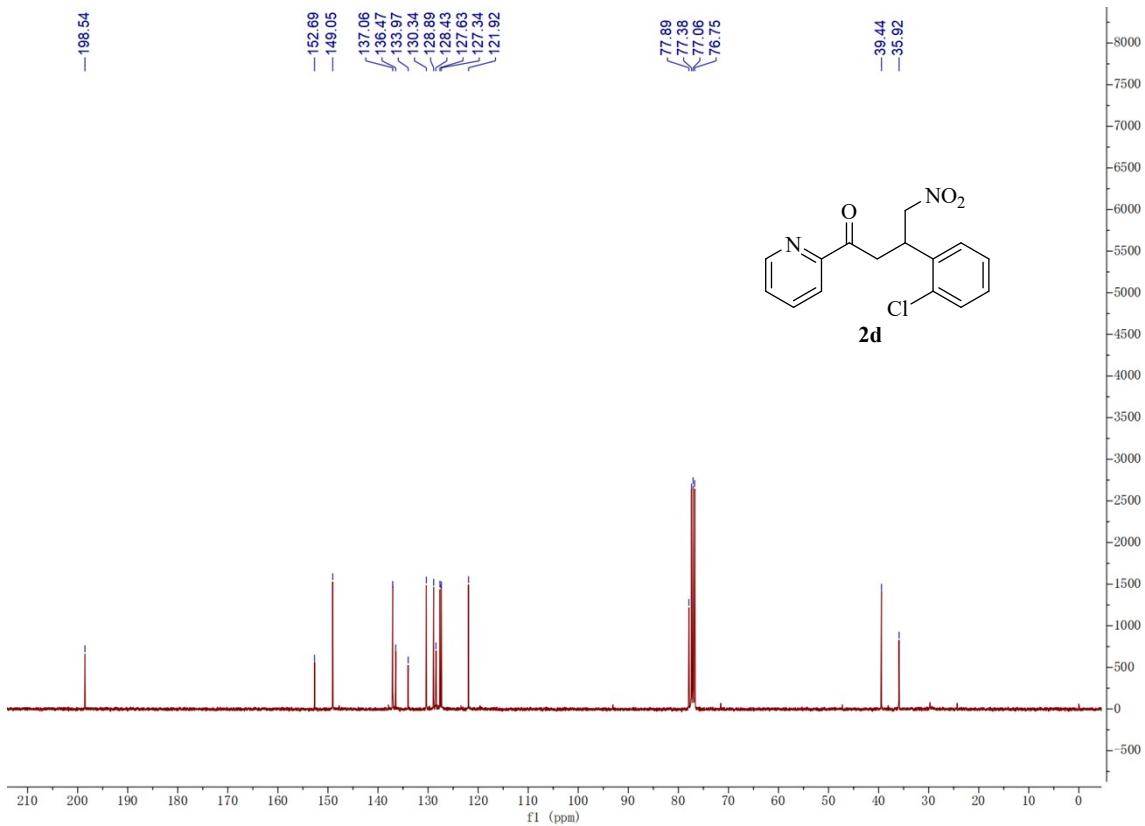
¹³C NMR of compound **2c** (in CDCl₃):



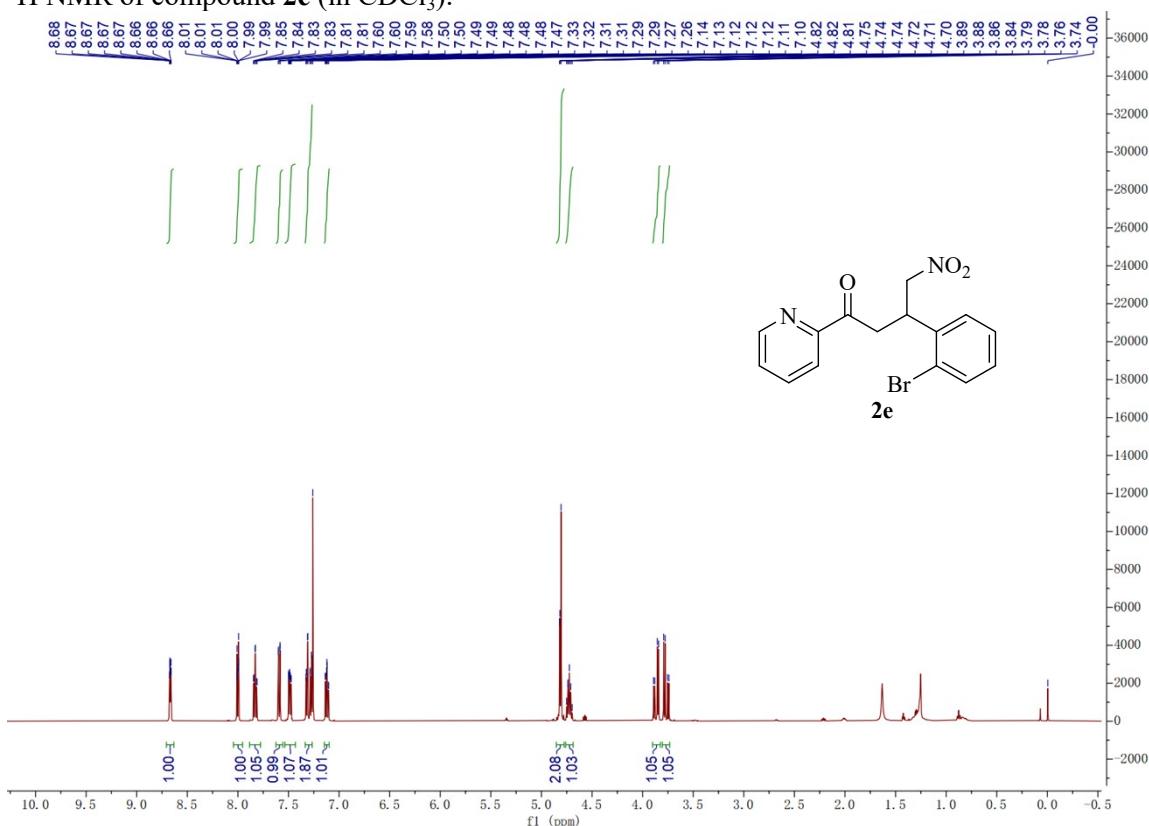
¹H NMR of compound **2d** (in CDCl₃):



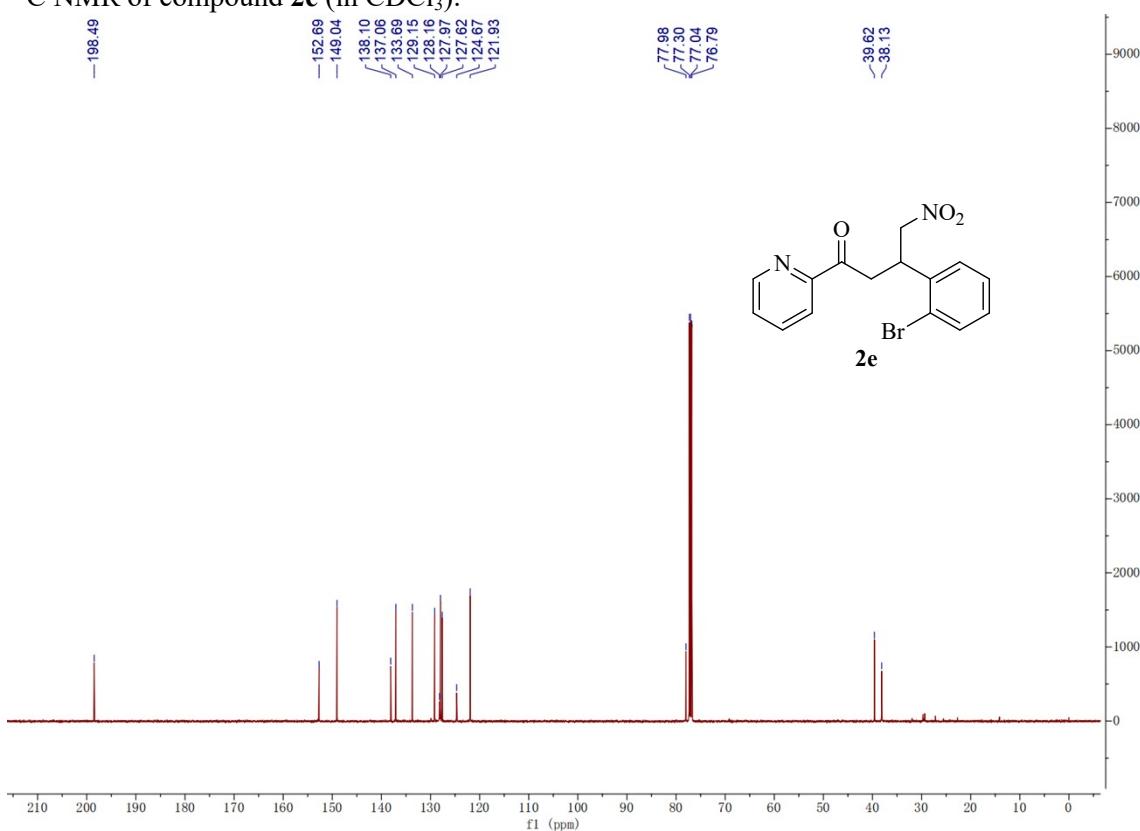
¹³C NMR of compound **2d** (in CDCl₃):



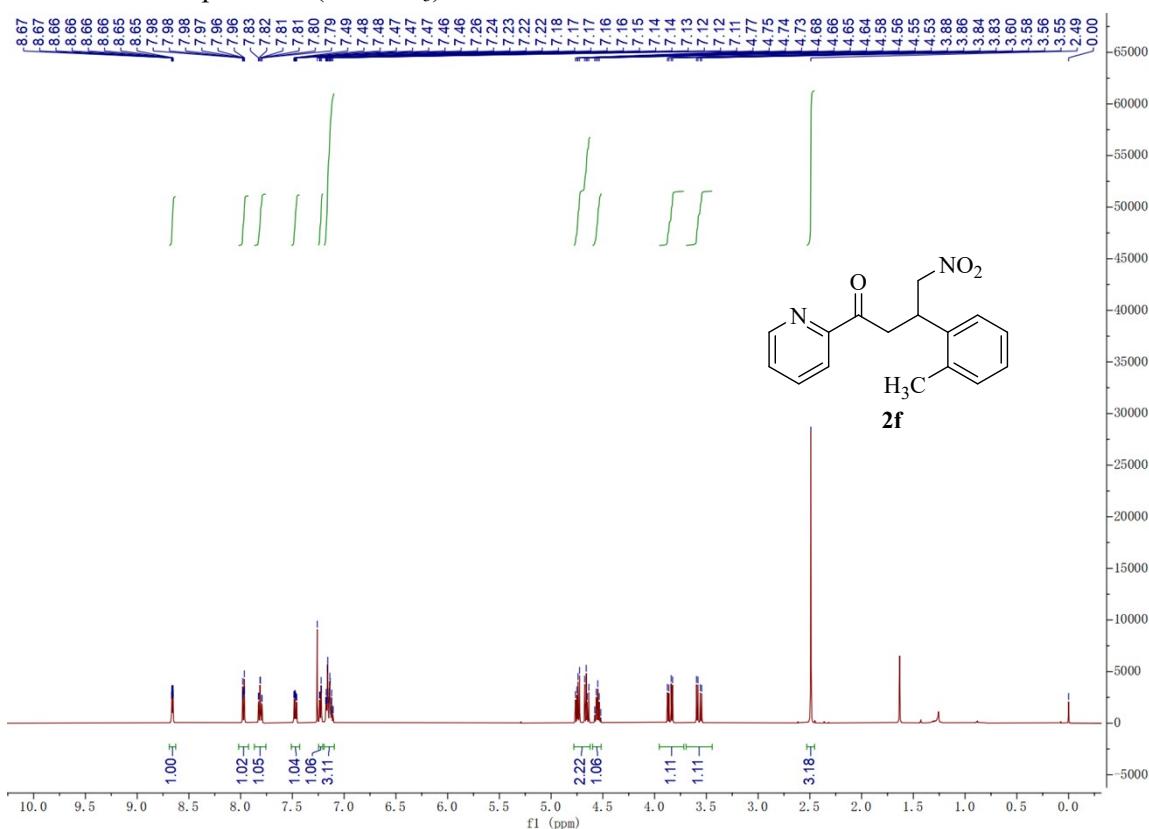
¹H NMR of compound **2e** (in CDCl₃):



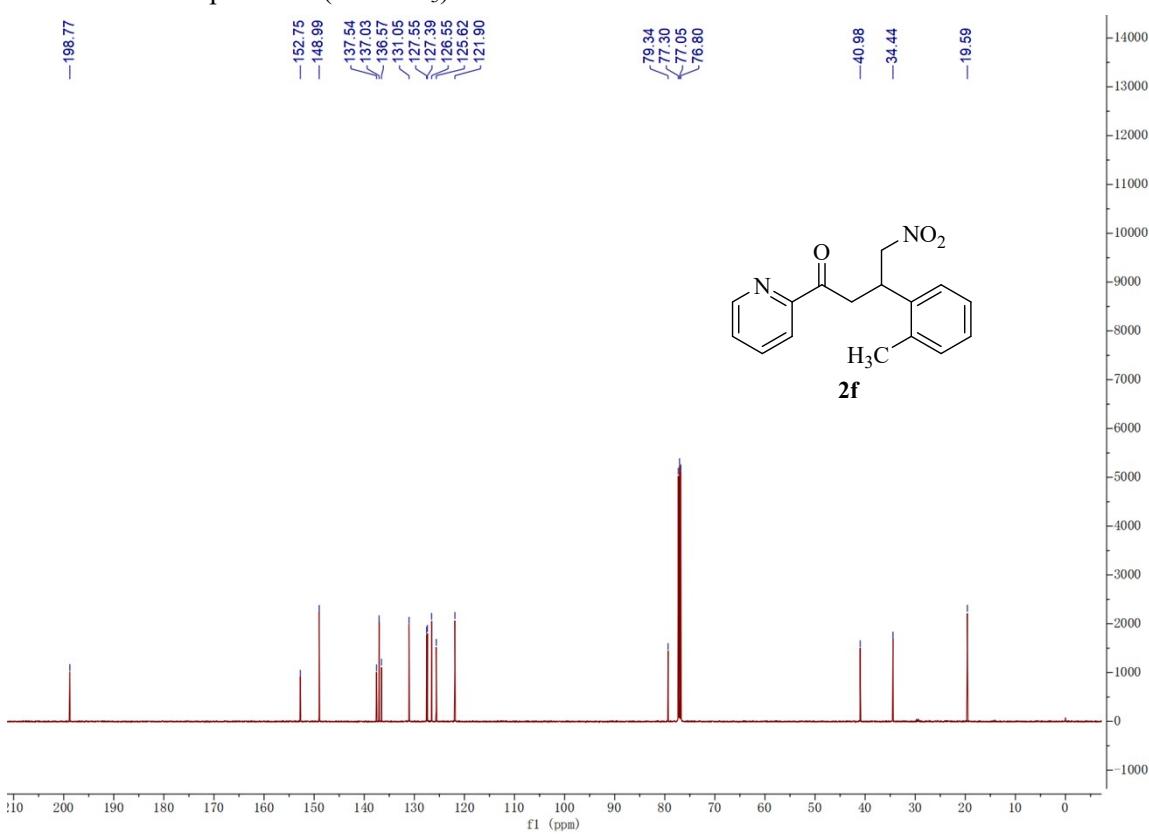
¹³C NMR of compound **2e** (in CDCl₃):



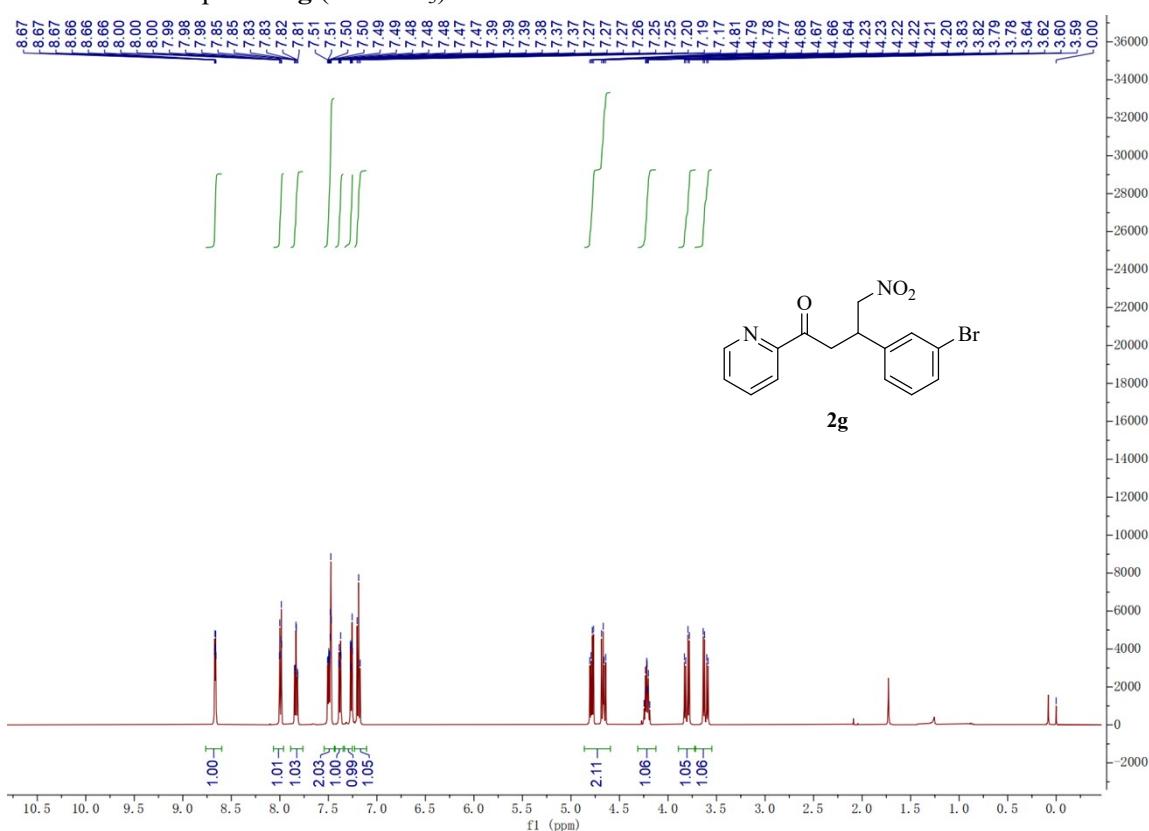
¹H NMR of compound **2f** (in CDCl₃):



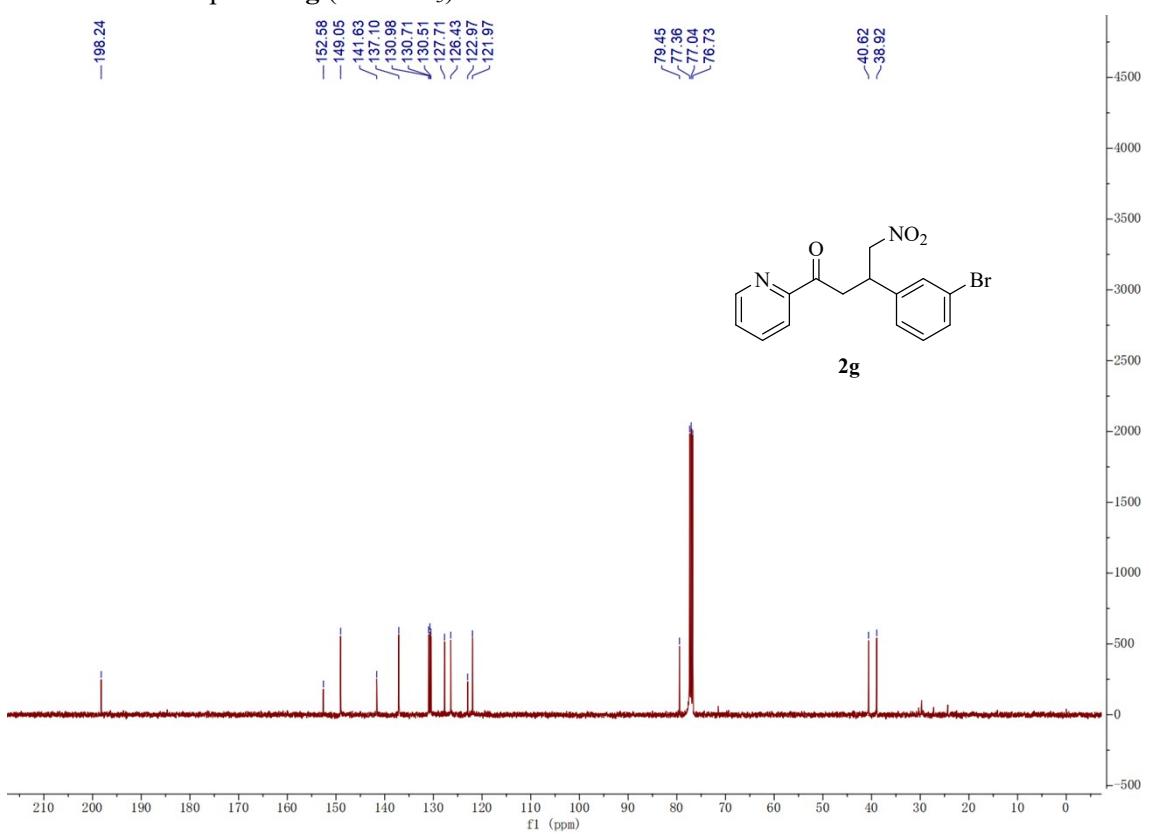
¹³C NMR of compound **2f** (in CDCl₃):



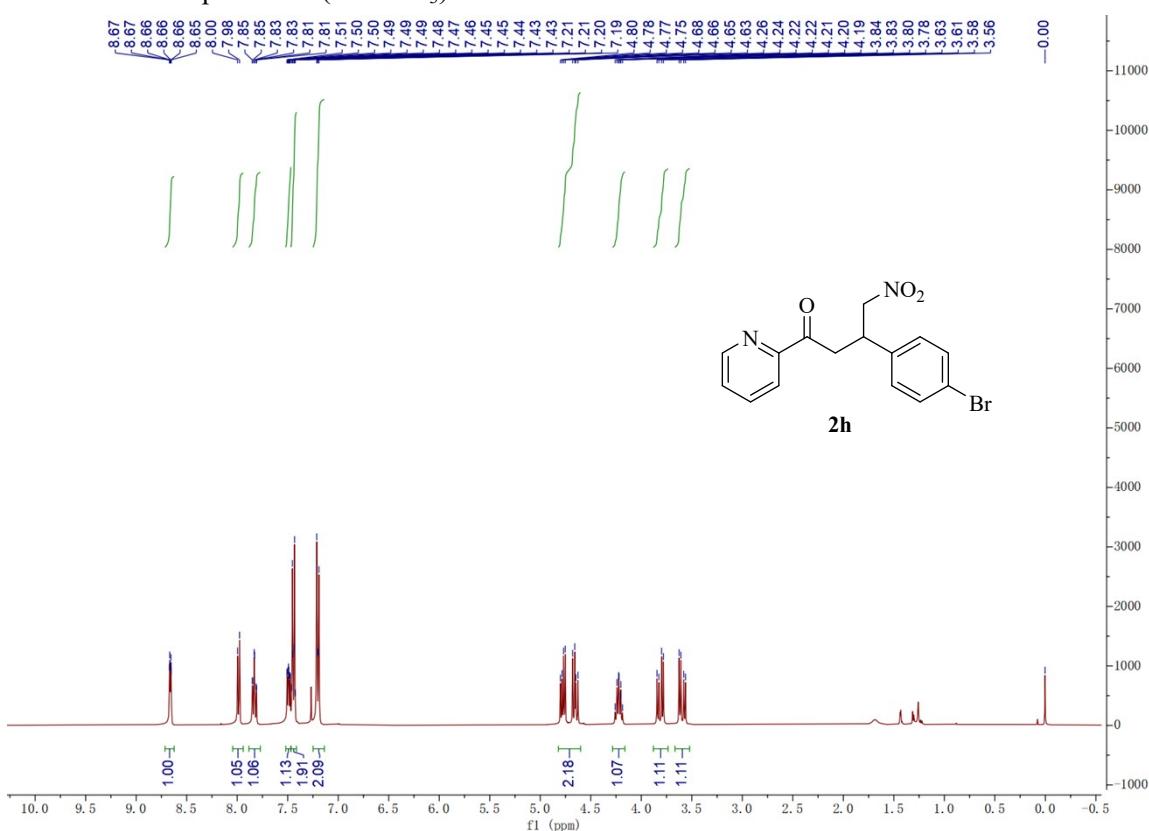
¹H NMR of compound **2g** (in CDCl₃):



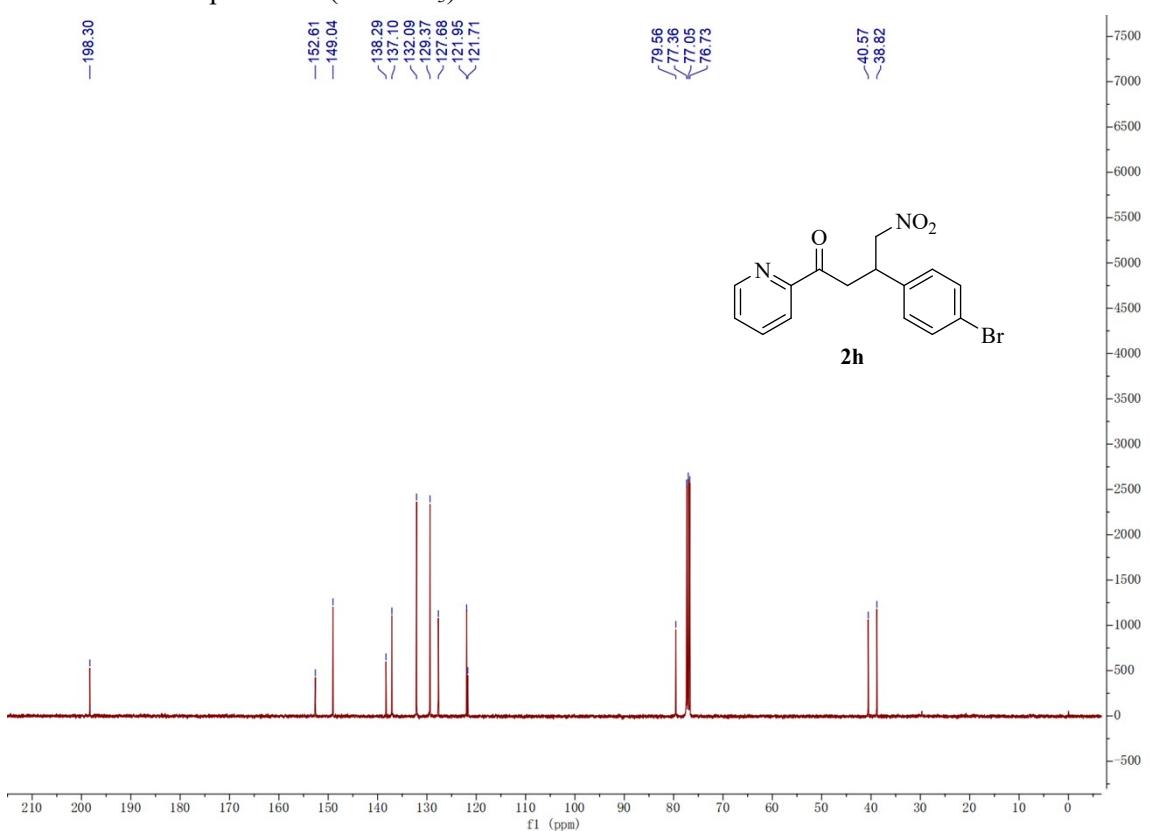
¹³C NMR of compound **2g** (in CDCl₃):



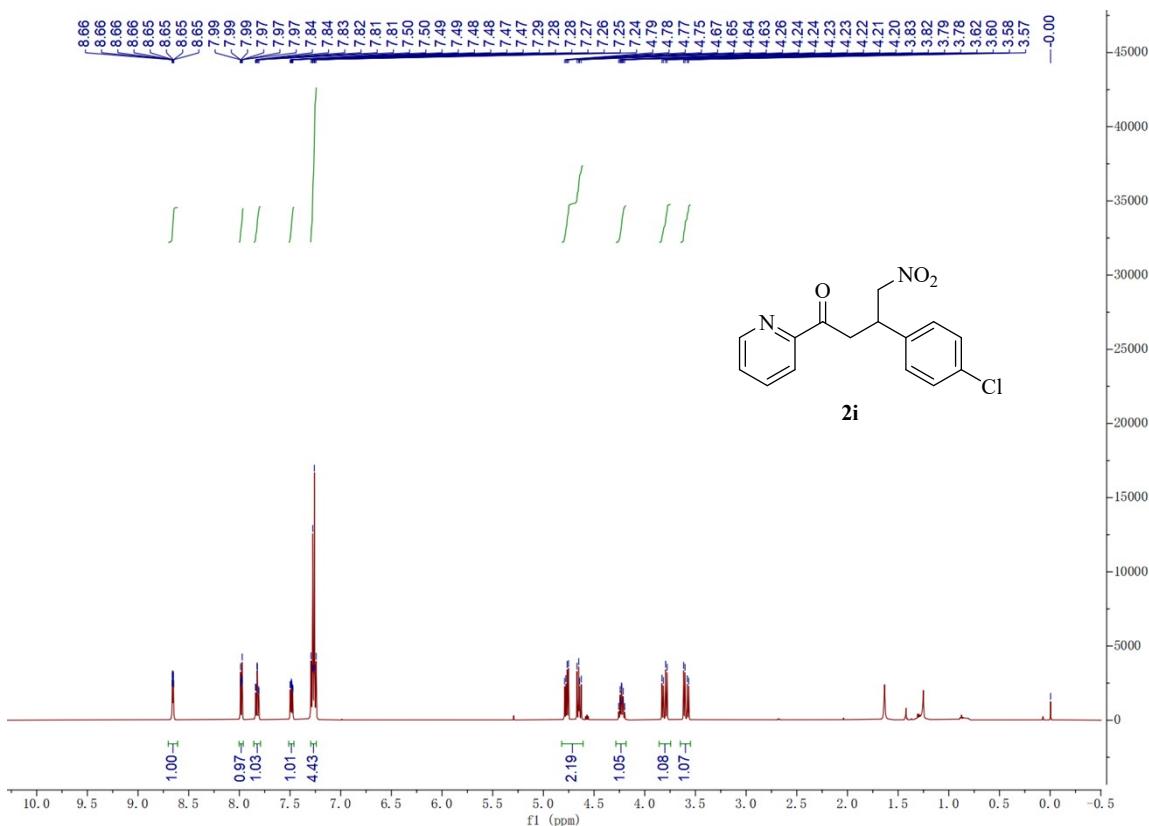
¹H NMR of compound **2h** (in CDCl₃):



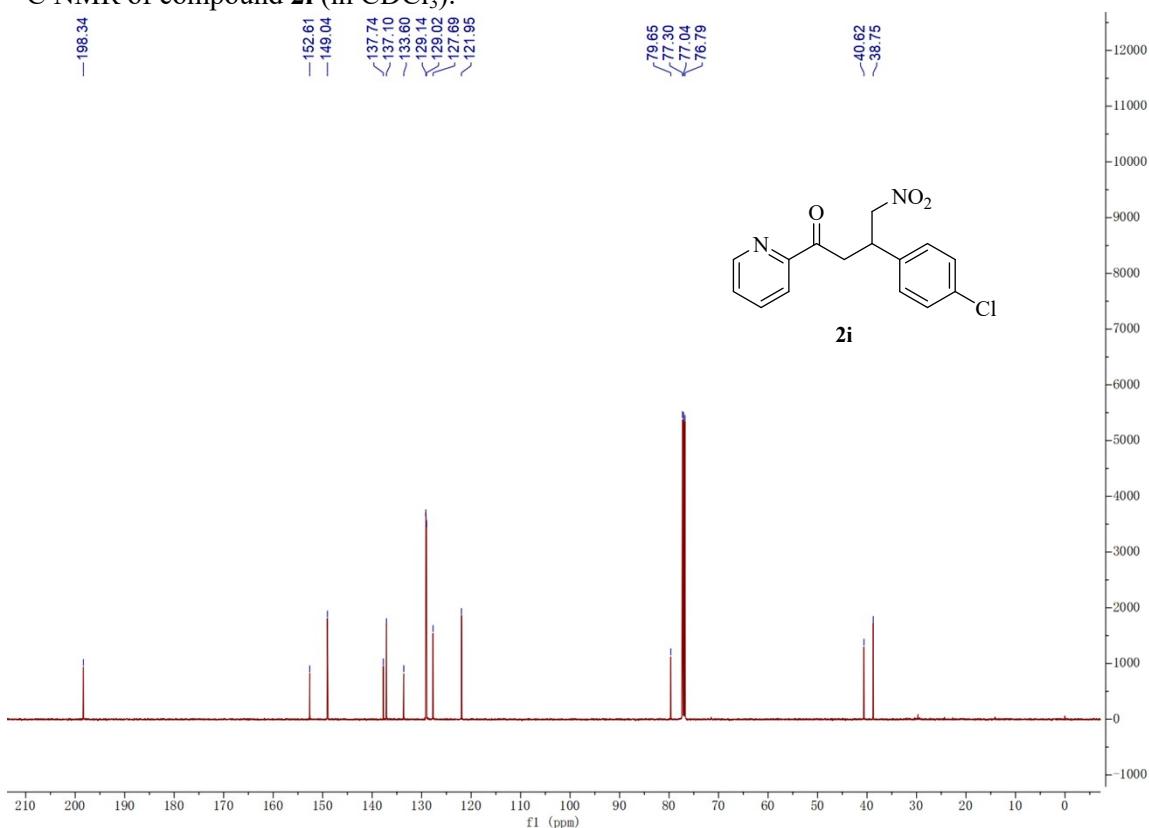
¹³C NMR of compound **2h** (in CDCl₃):



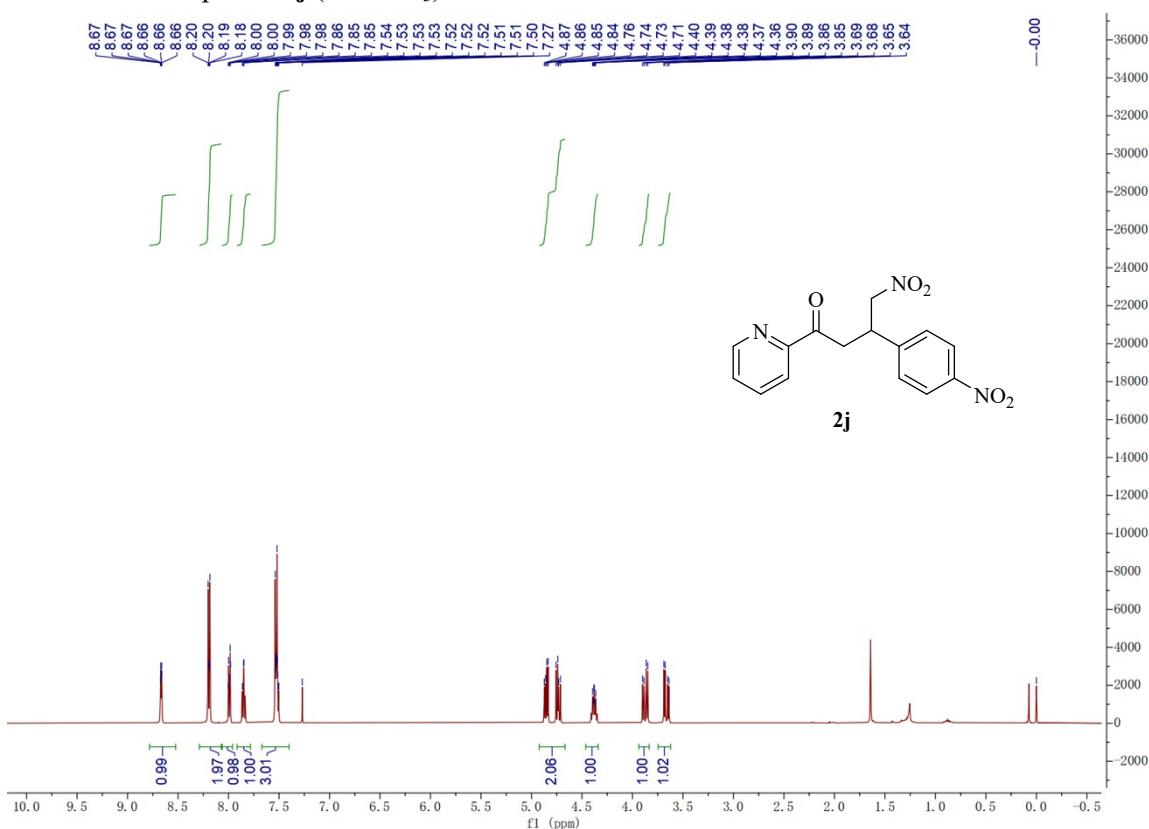
¹H NMR of compound **2i** (in CDCl₃):



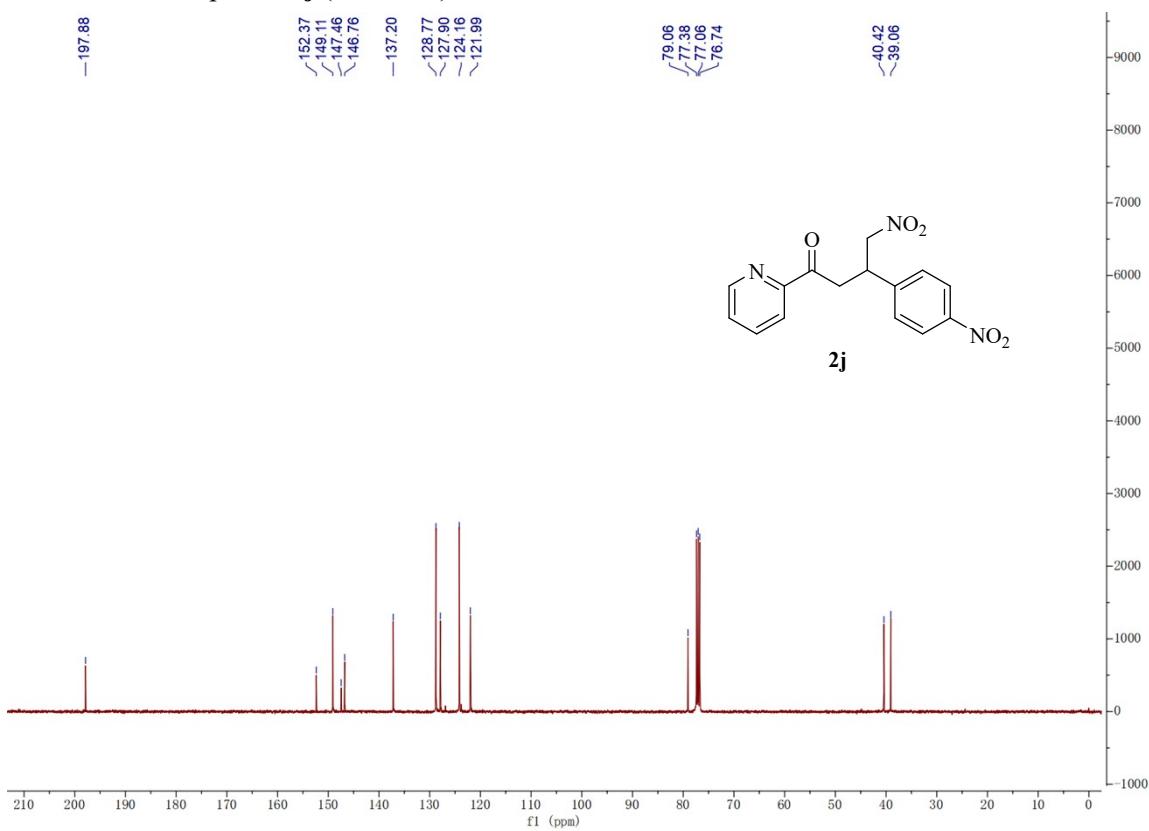
¹³C NMR of compound **2i** (in CDCl₃):



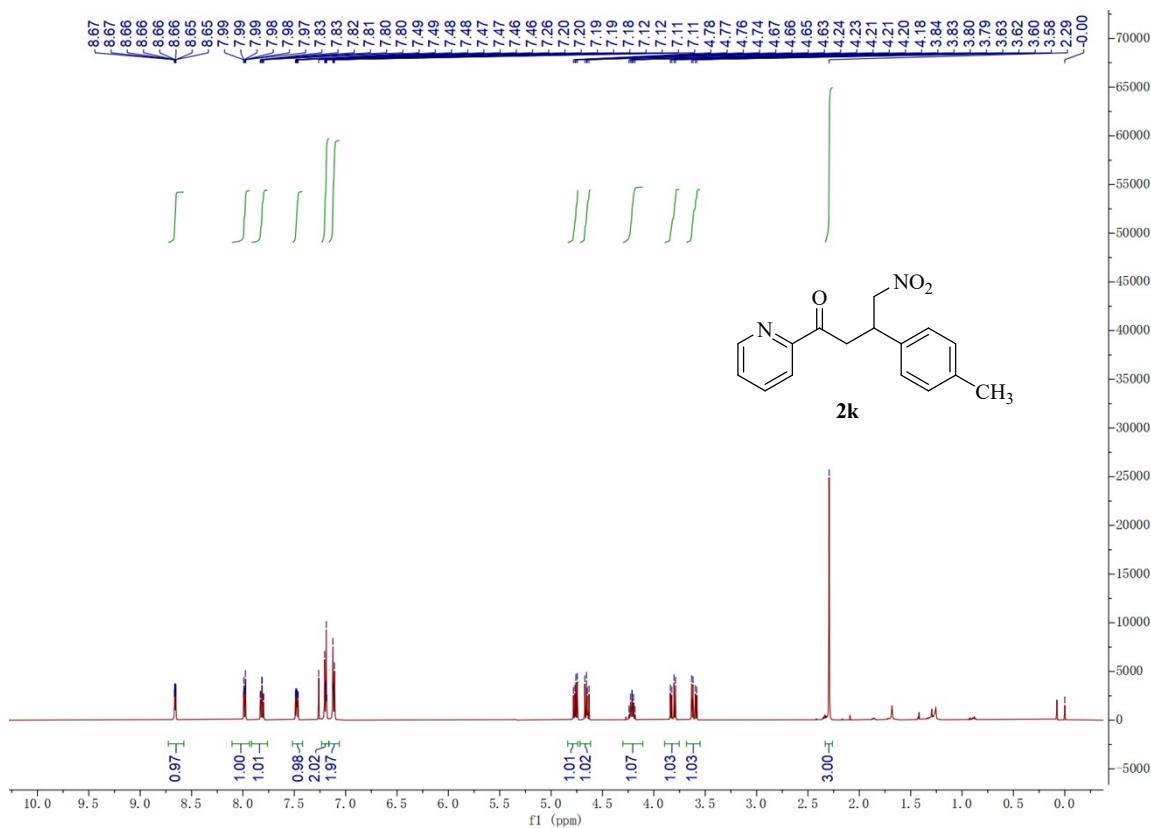
¹H NMR of compound **2j** (in CDCl₃):



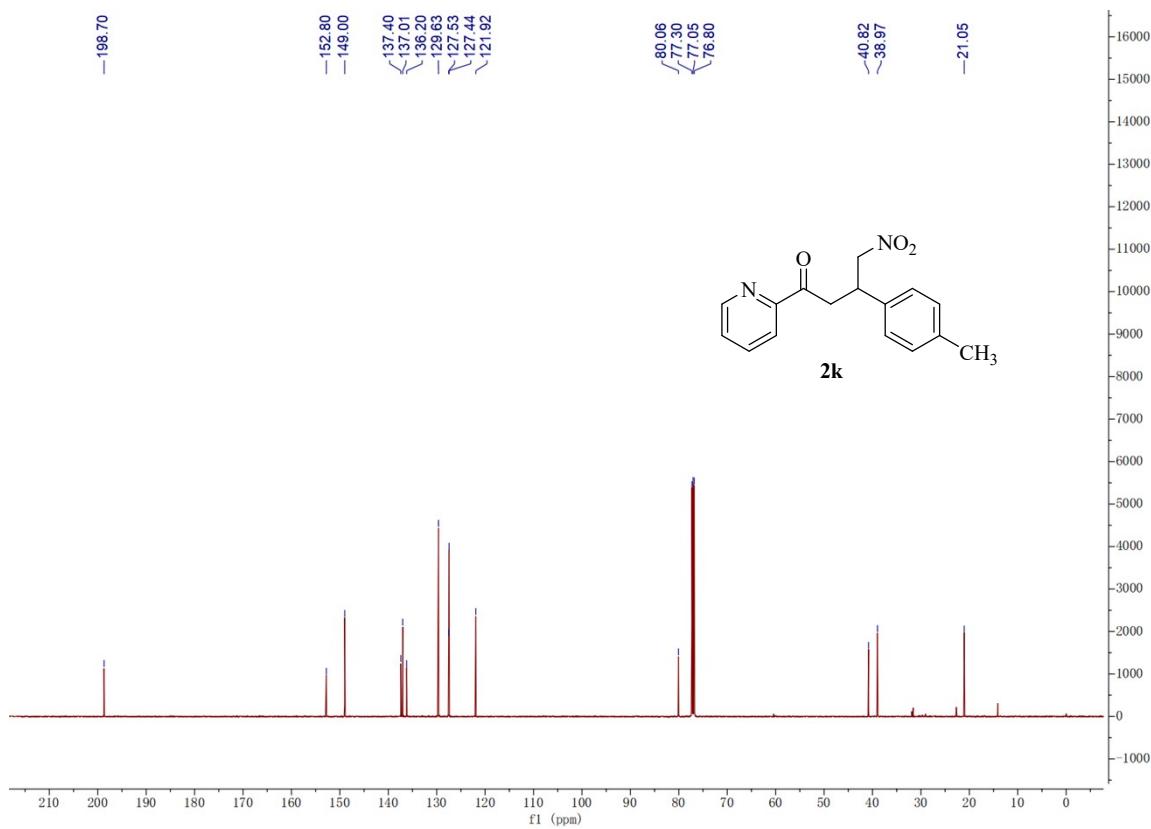
¹³C NMR of compound **2j** (in CDCl₃):



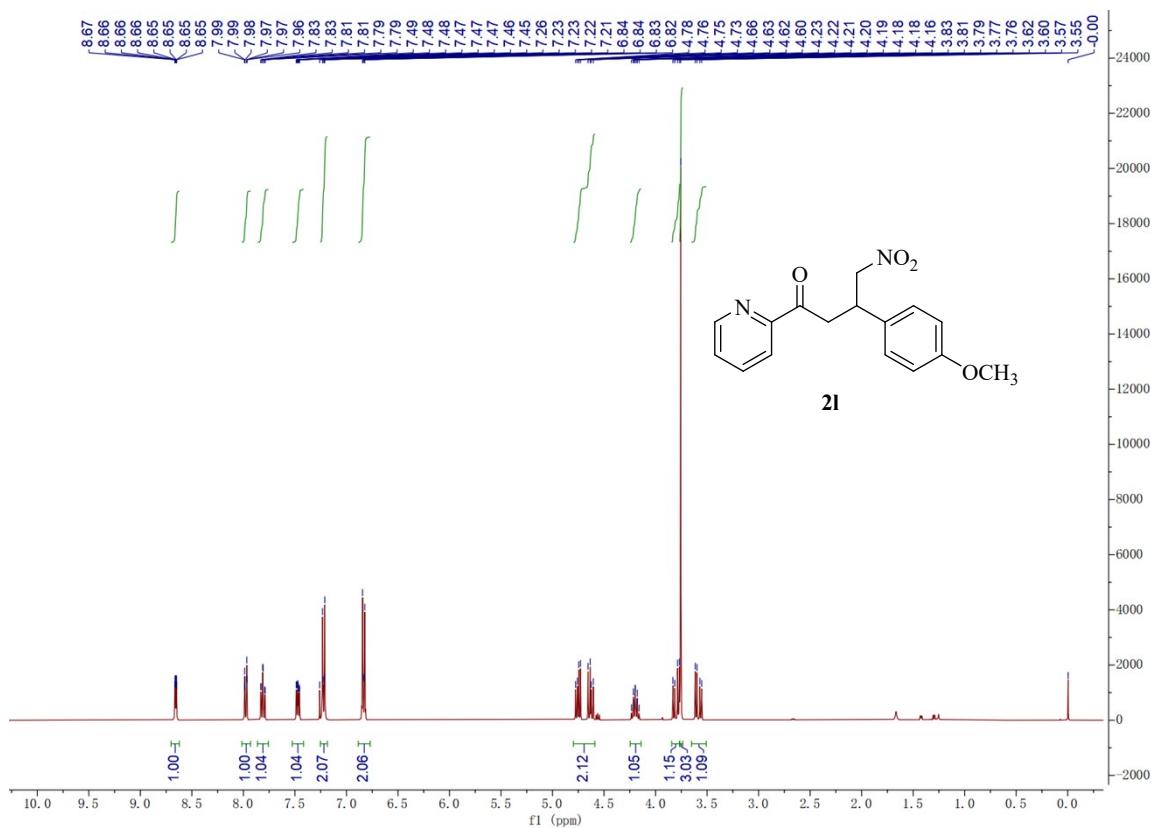
¹H NMR of compound **2k** (in CDCl₃):



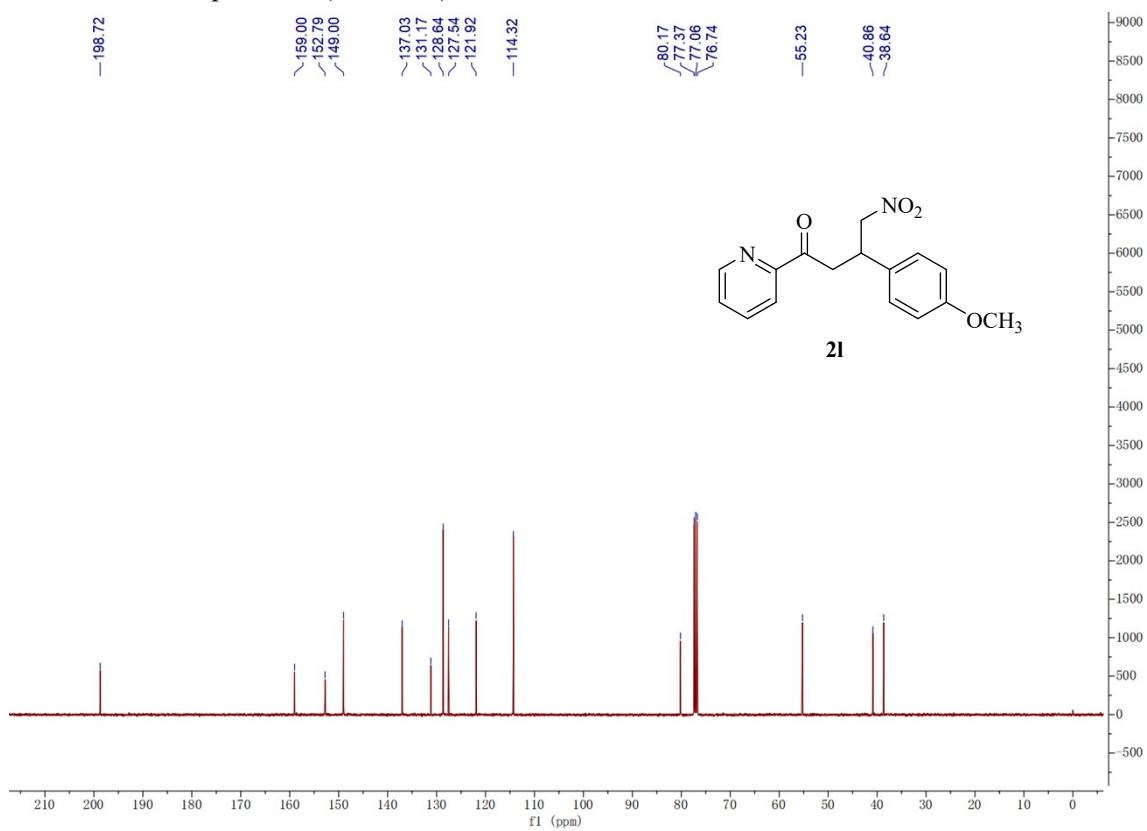
¹³C NMR of compound **2k** (in CDCl₃):



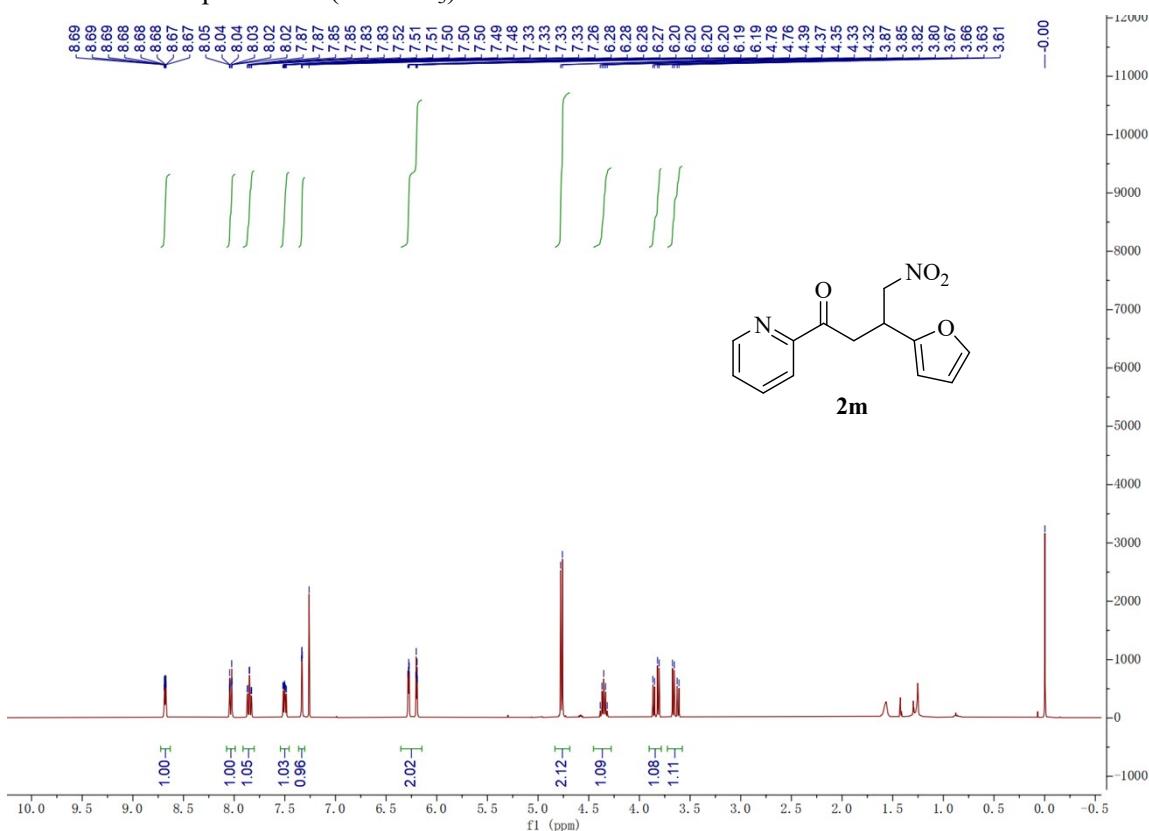
¹H NMR of compound **2l** (in CDCl₃):



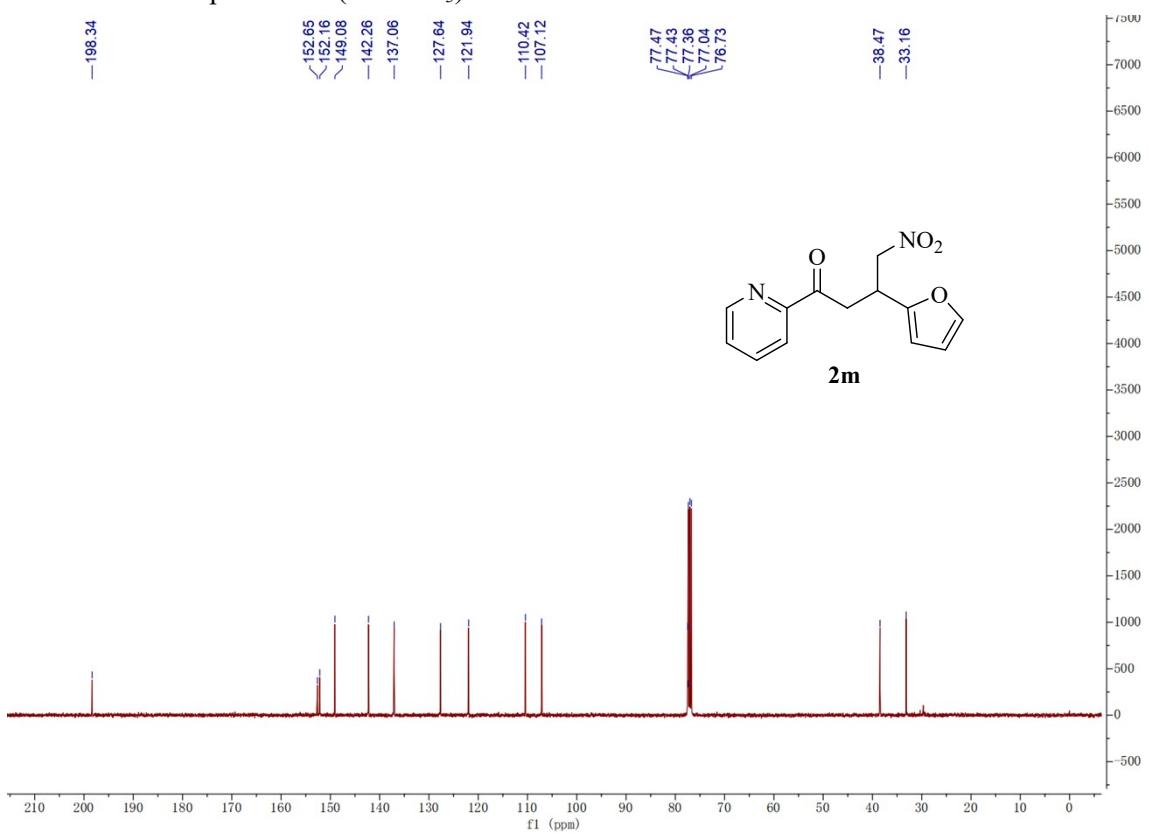
¹³C NMR of compound **2l** (in CDCl₃):



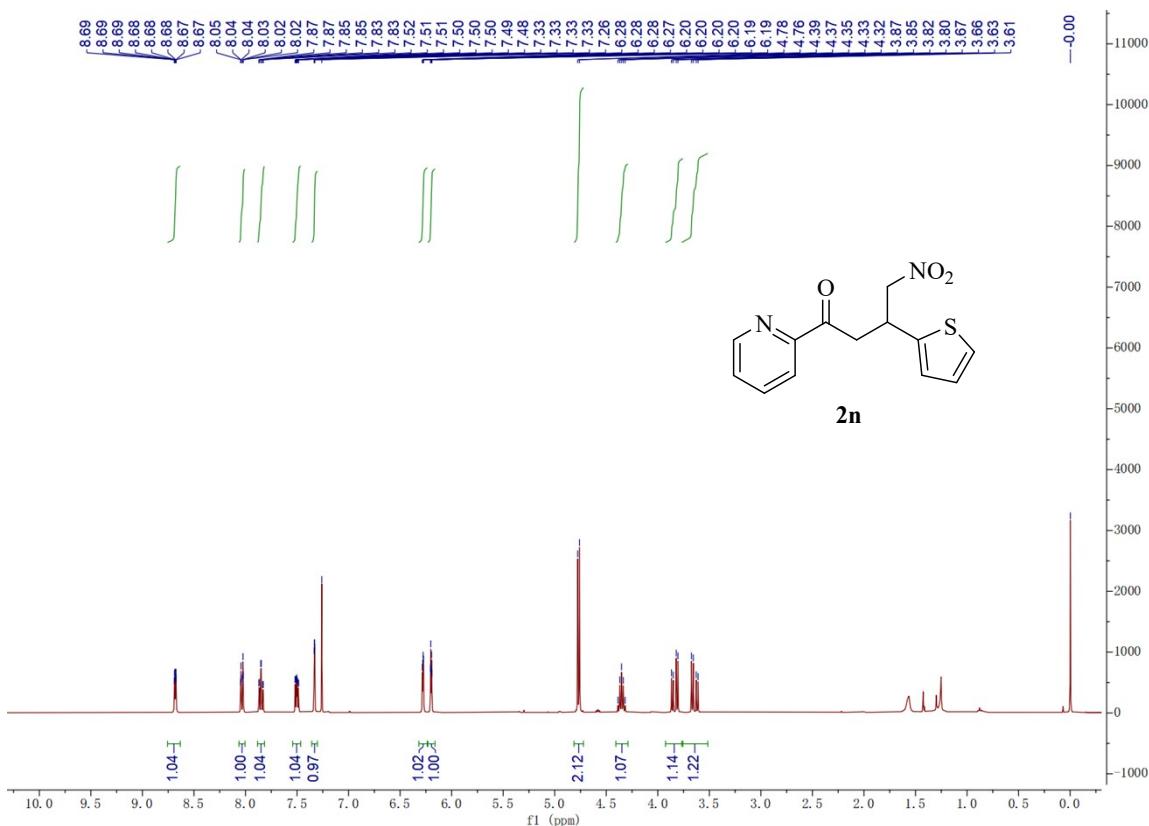
¹H NMR of compound **2m** (in CDCl₃):



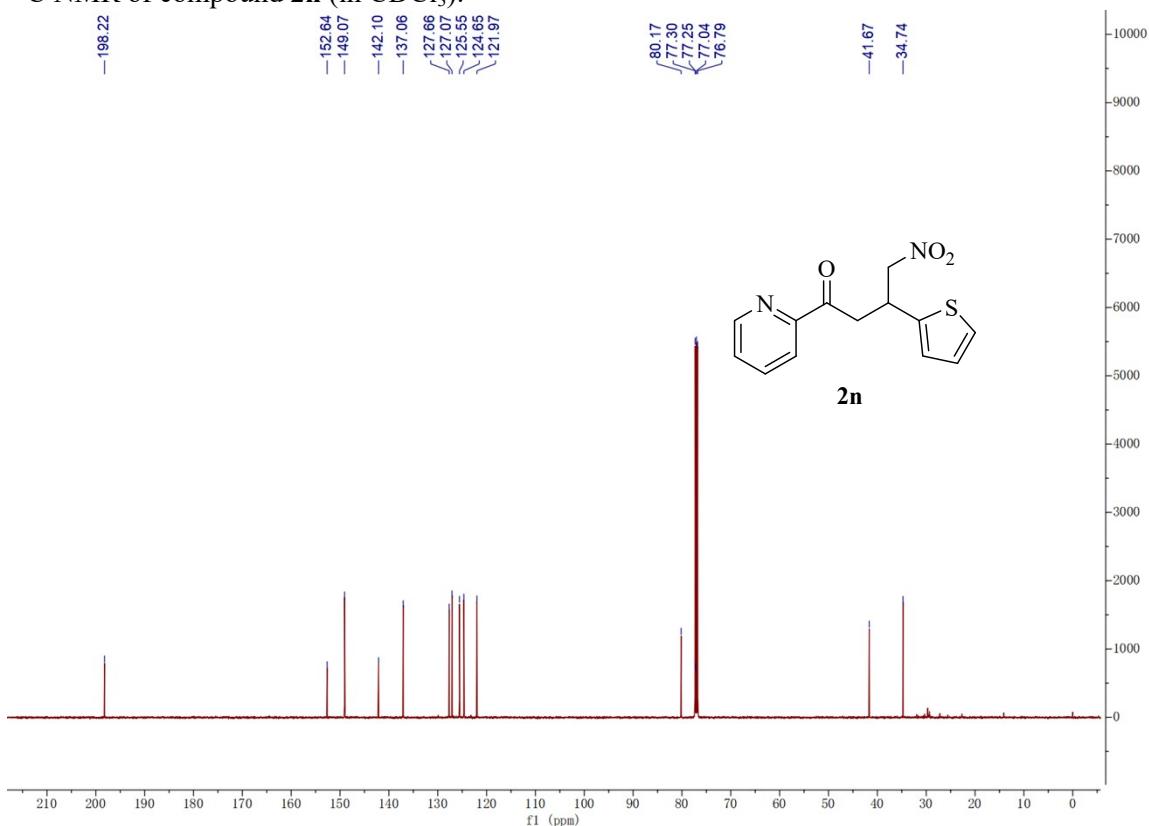
¹³C NMR of compound **2m** (in CDCl₃):



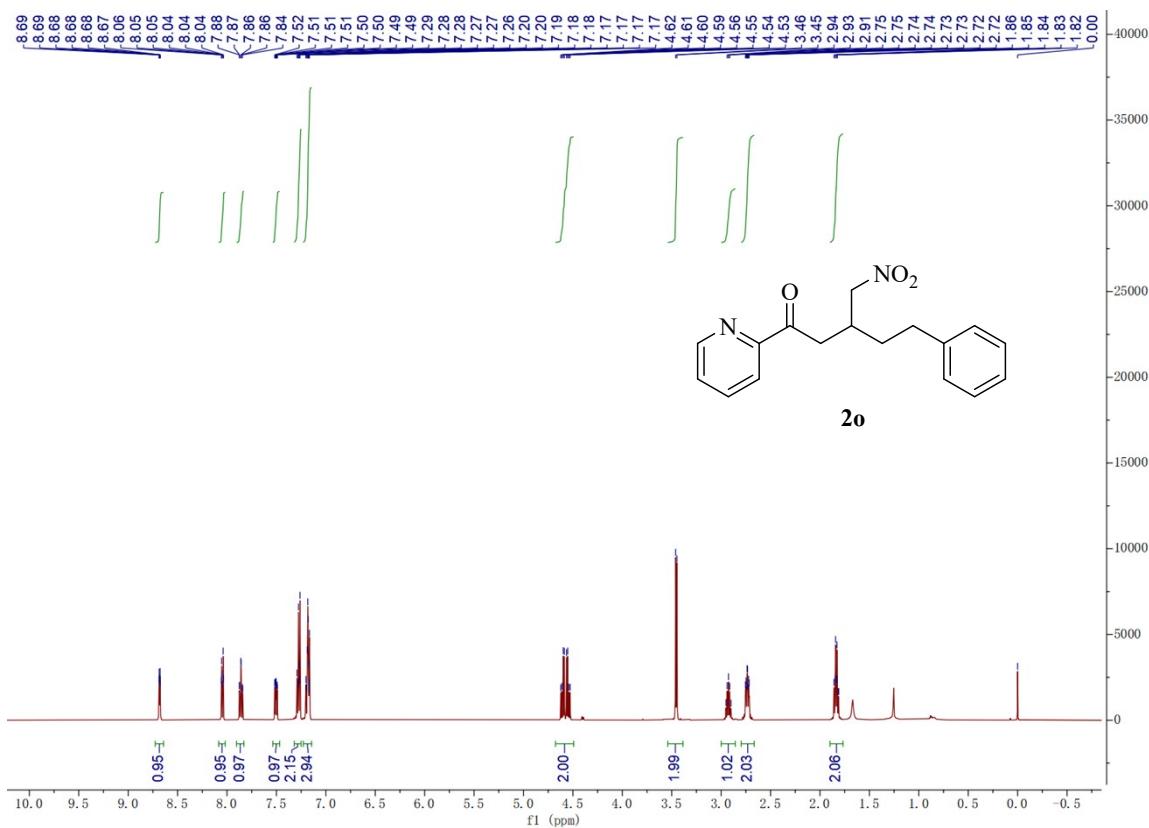
¹H NMR of compound **2n** (in CDCl₃):



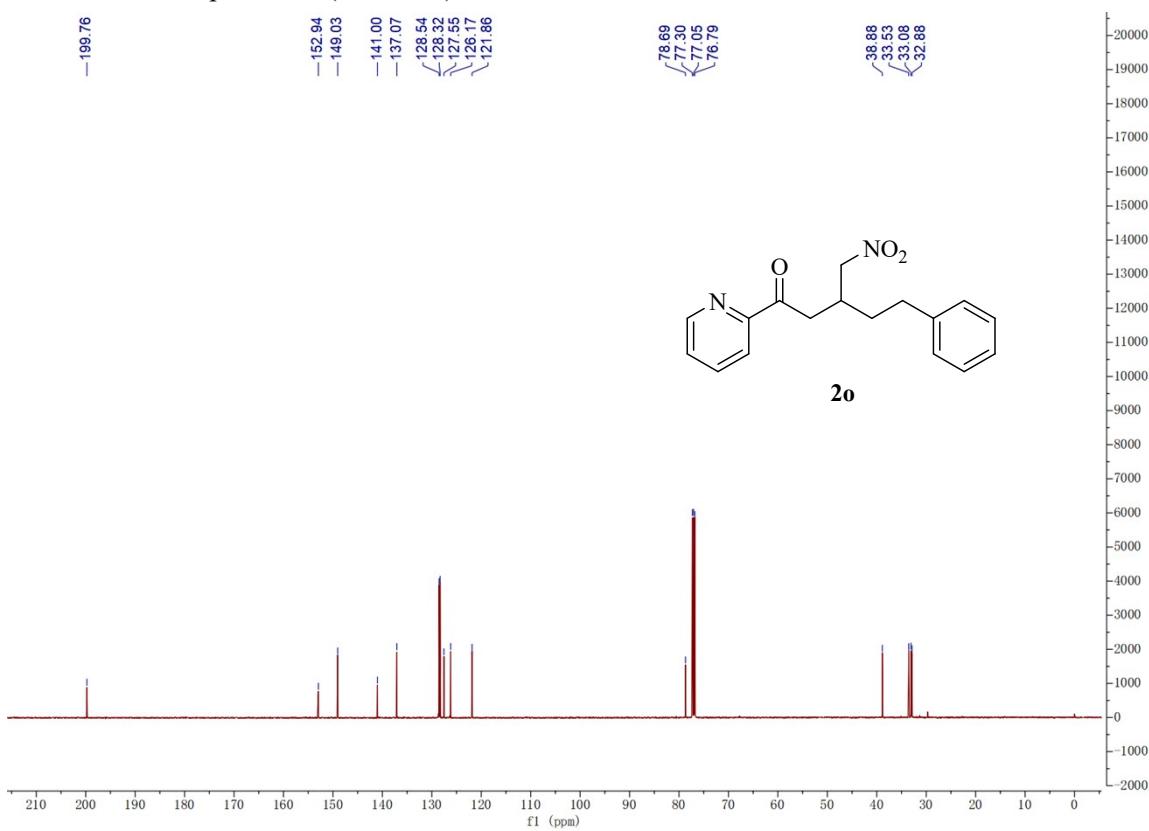
¹³C NMR of compound **2n** (in CDCl₃):



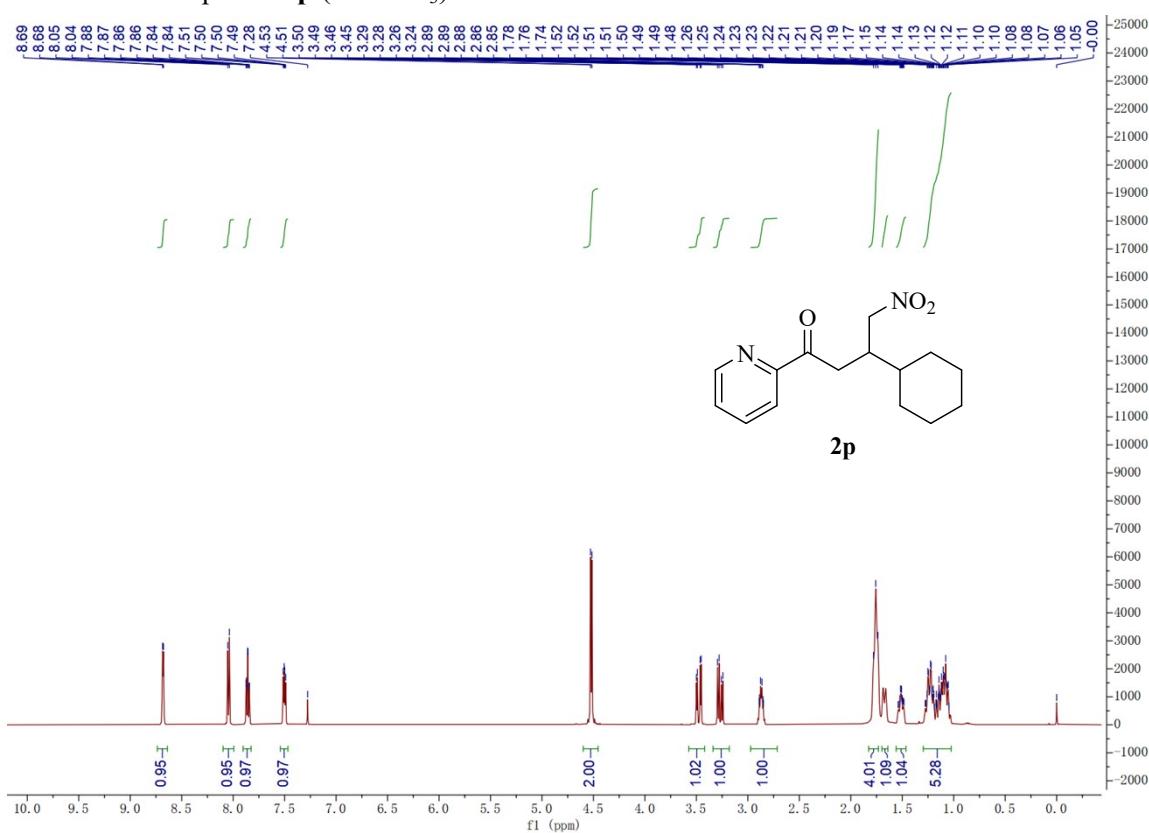
¹H NMR of compound **2o** (in CDCl₃):



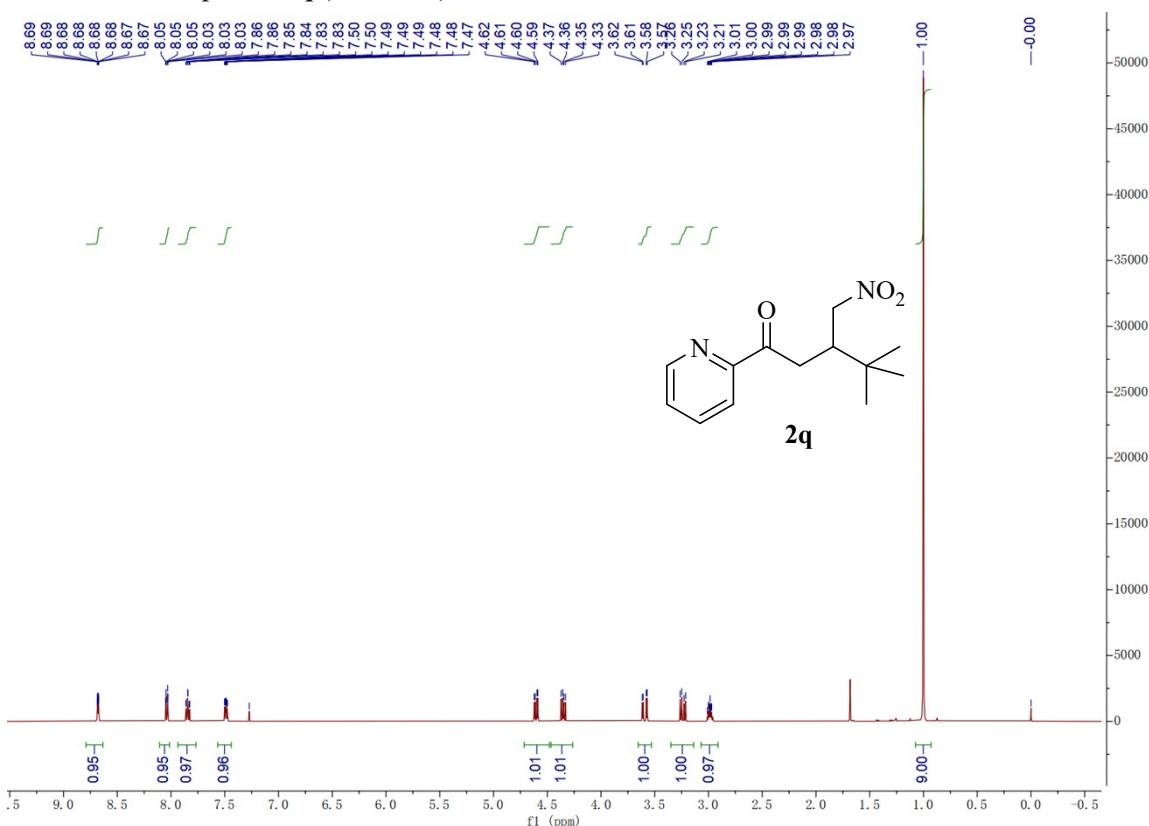
¹³C NMR of compound **2o** (in CDCl₃):



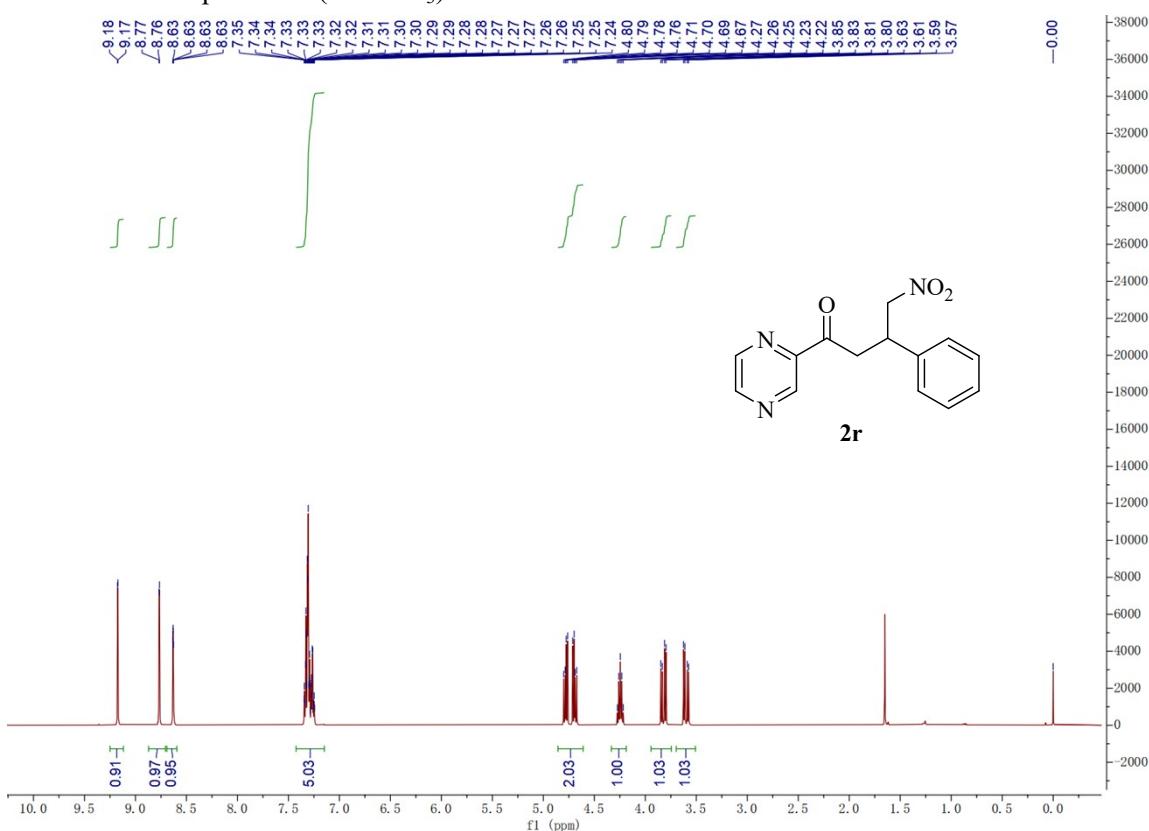
¹H NMR of compound **2p** (in CDCl₃):



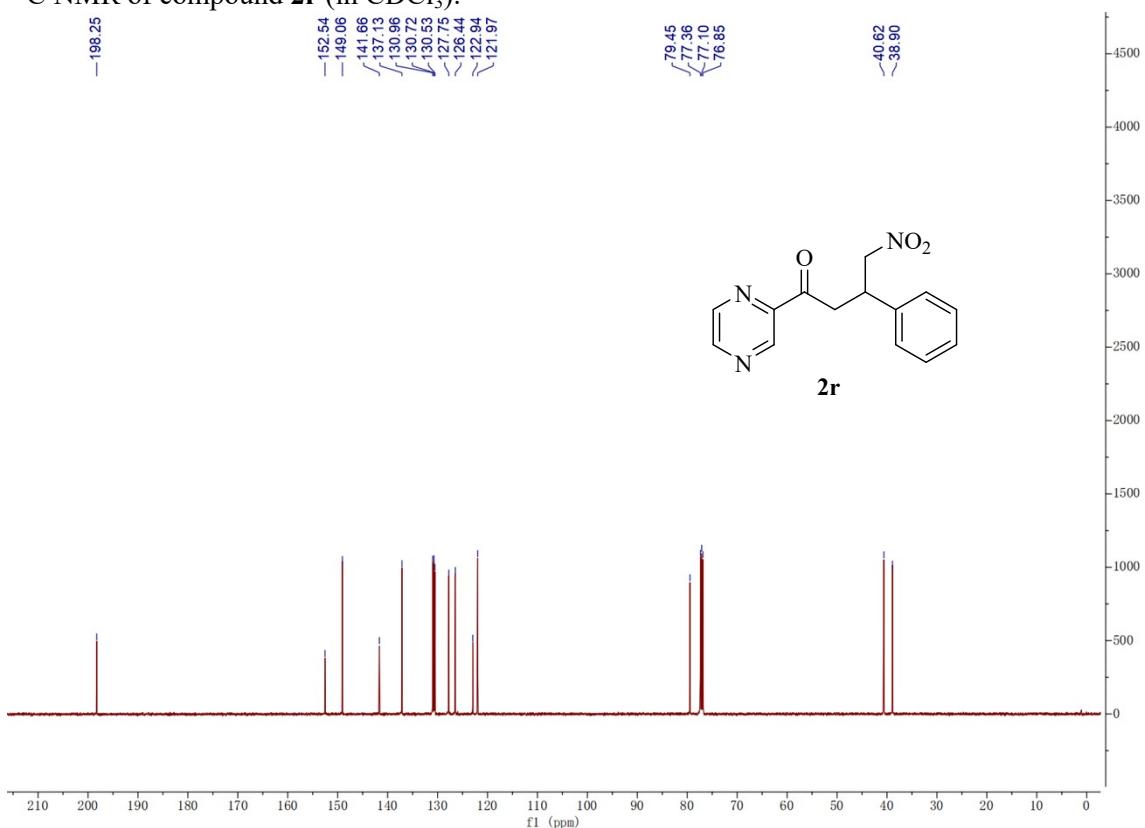
¹H NMR of compound **2q** (in CDCl₃):



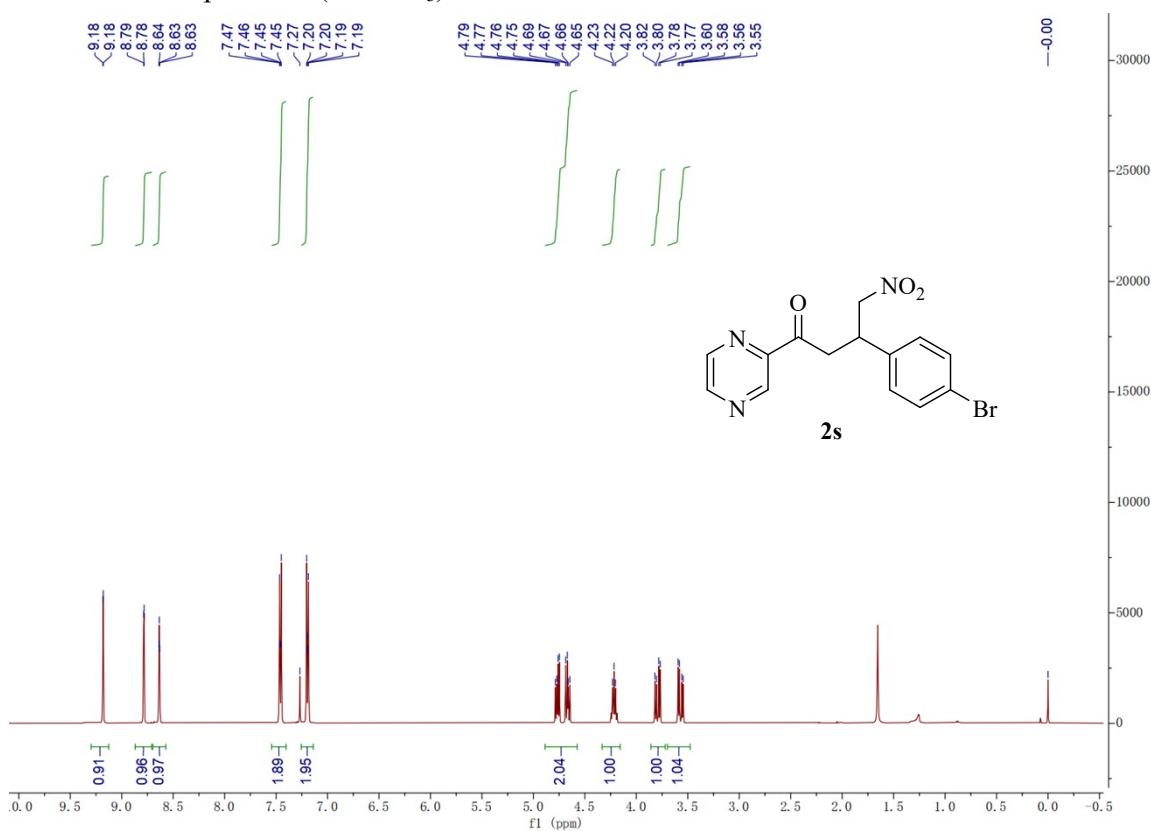
¹H NMR of compound **2r** (in CDCl₃):



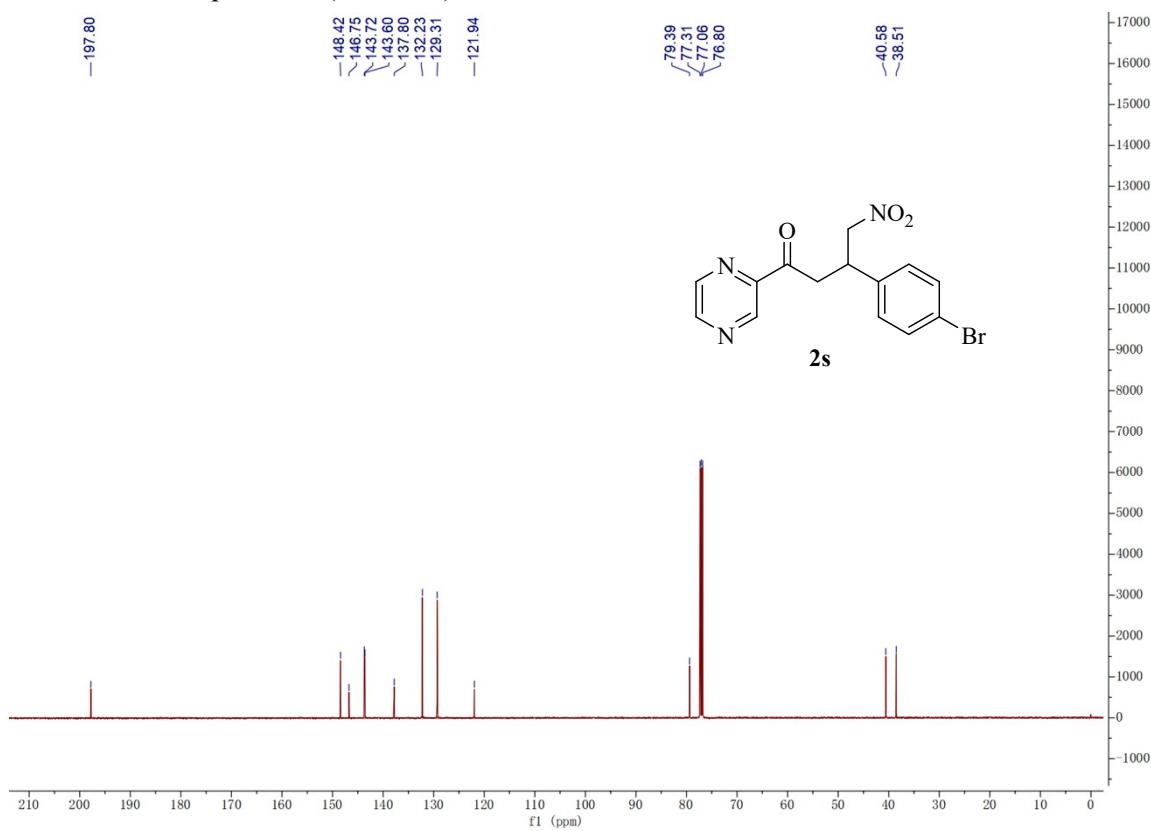
¹³C NMR of compound **2r** (in CDCl₃):



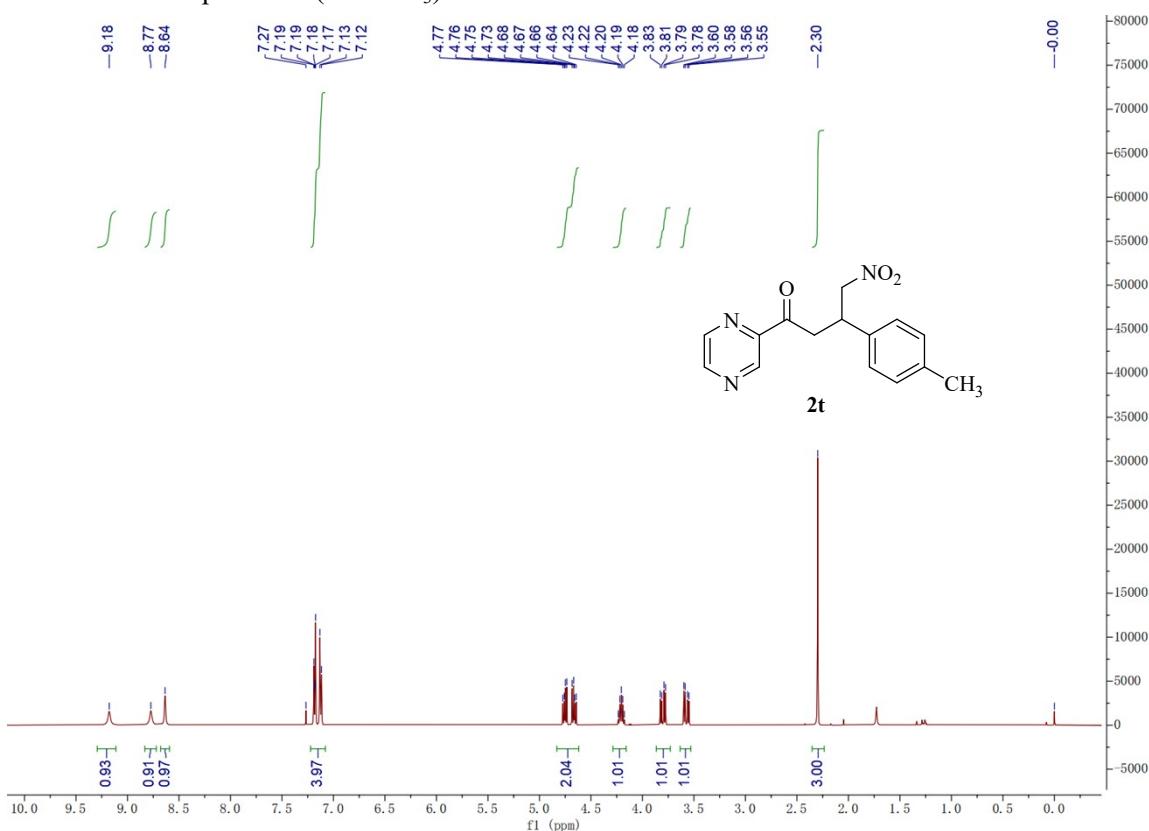
¹H NMR of compound **2s** (in CDCl₃):



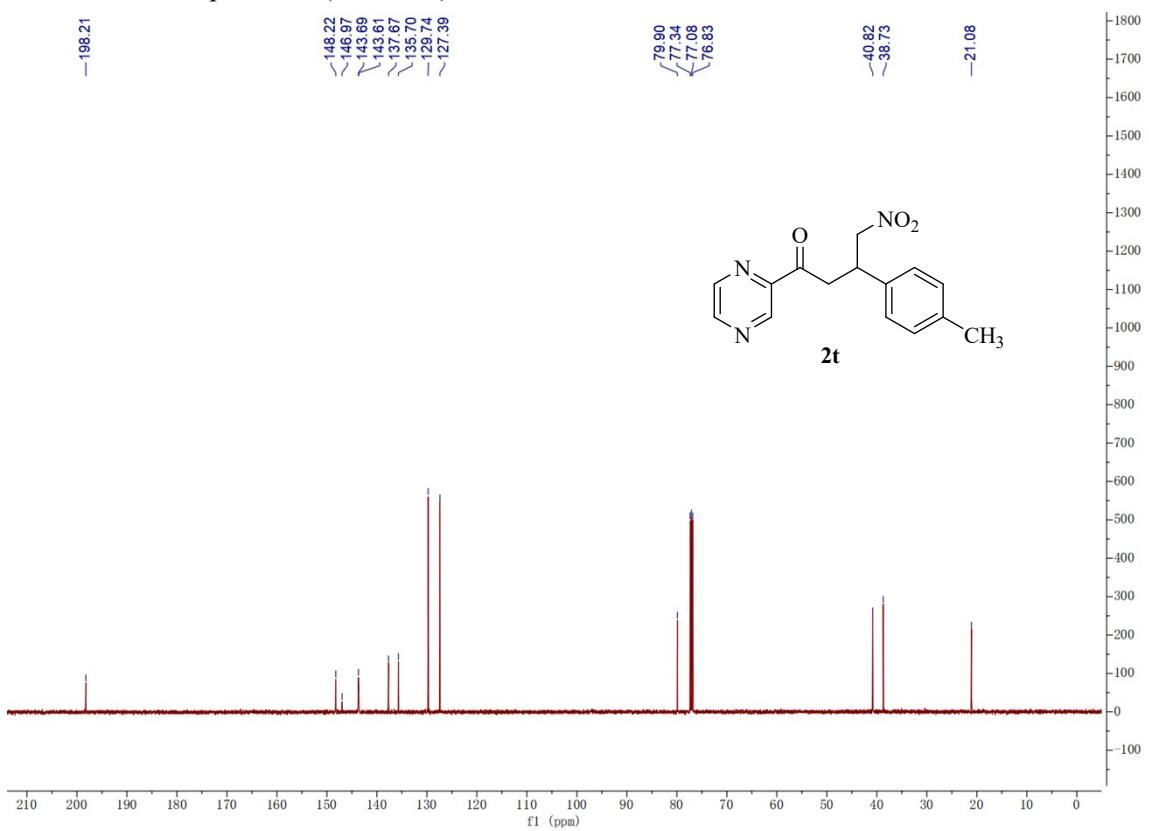
¹³C NMR of compound **2s** (in CDCl₃):



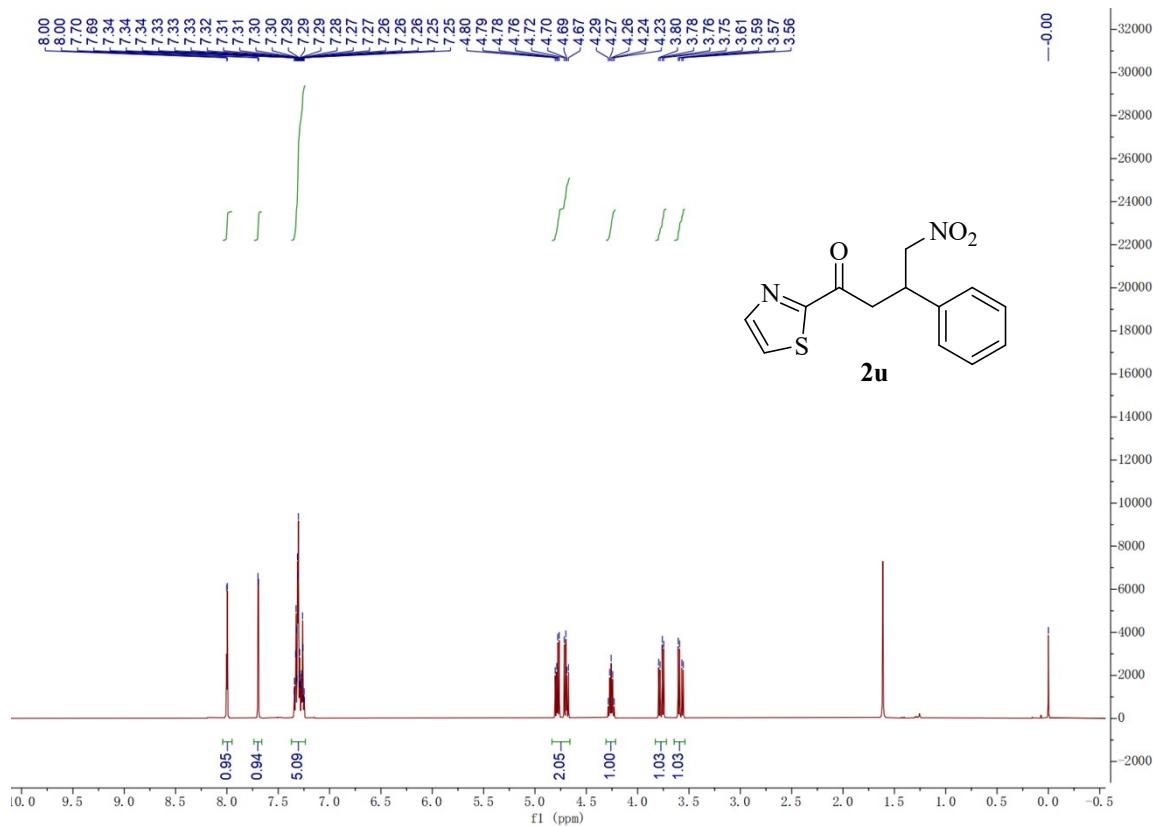
¹H NMR of compound **2t** (in CDCl₃):



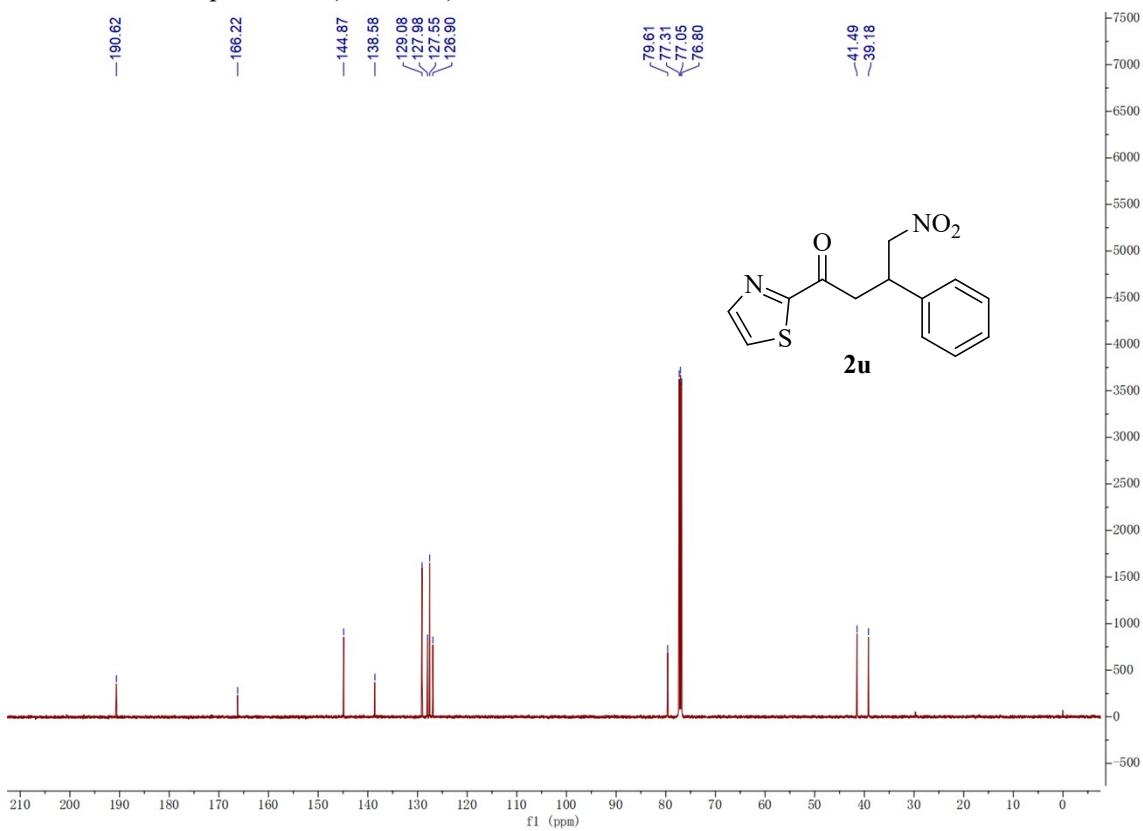
¹³C NMR of compound **2t** (in CDCl₃):



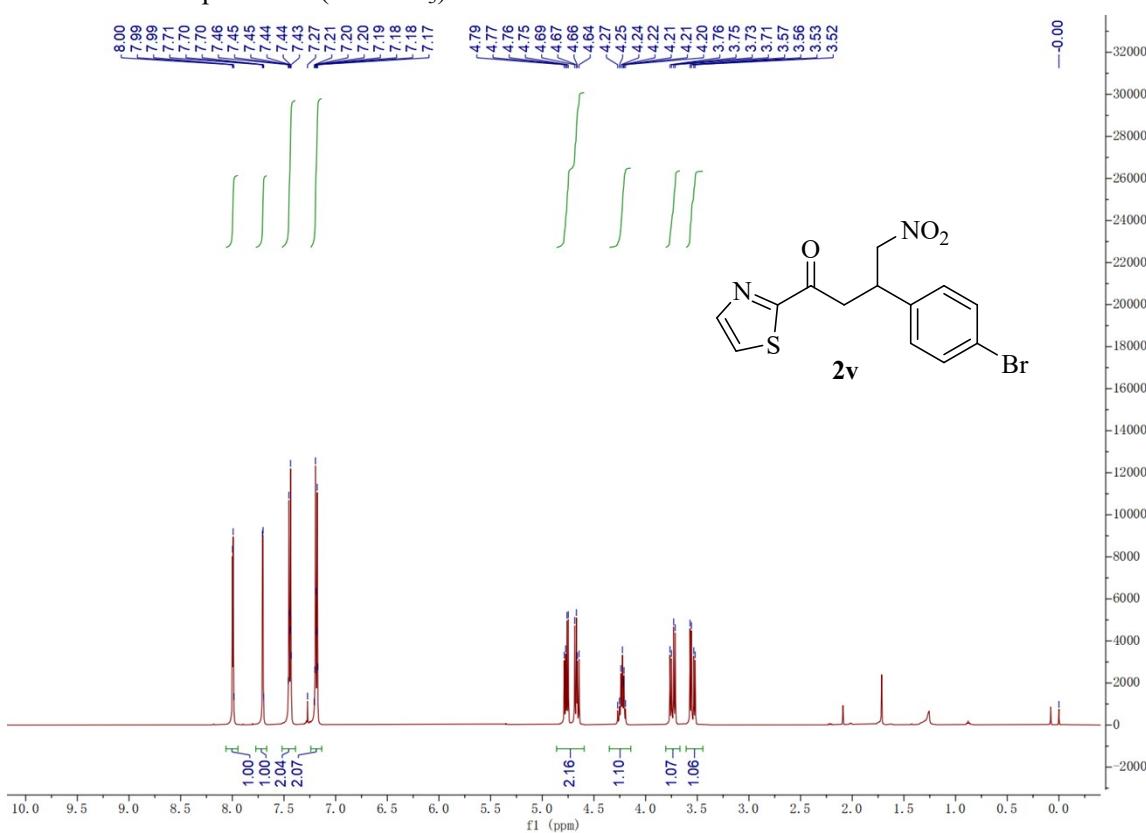
¹H NMR of compound **2u** (in CDCl₃):



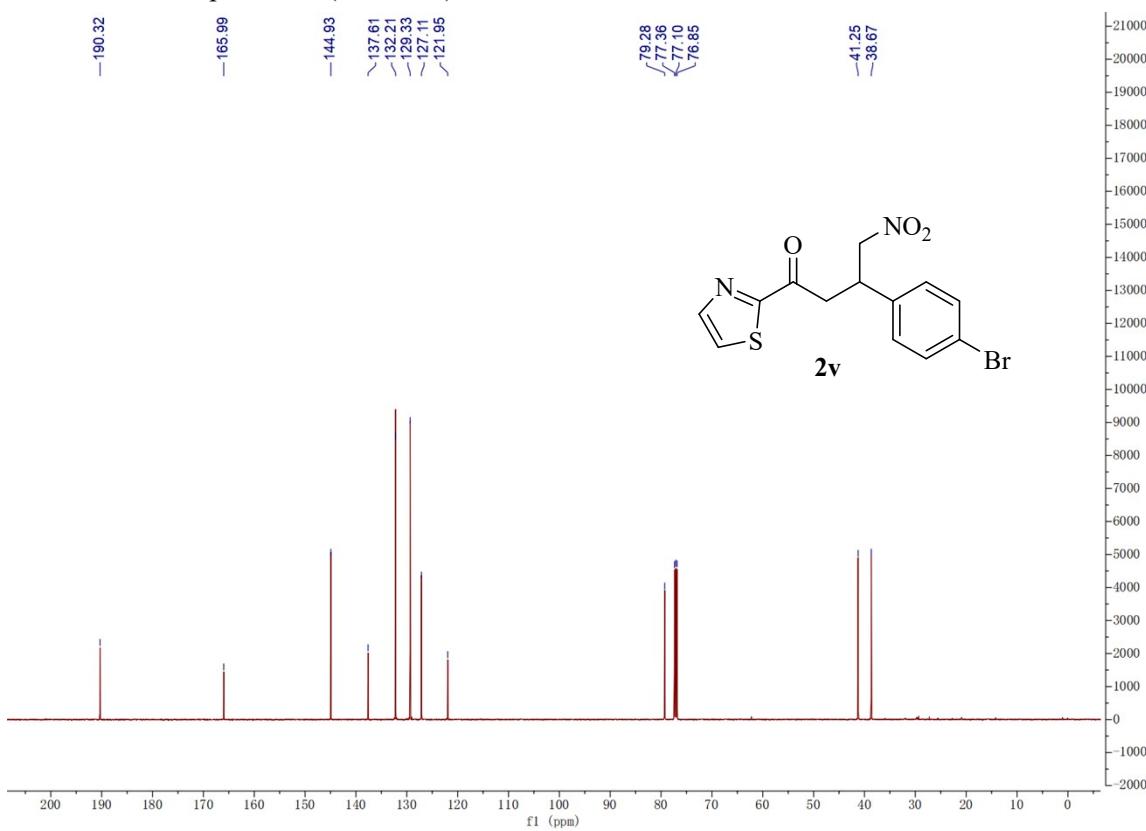
¹³C NMR of compound **2u** (in CDCl₃):



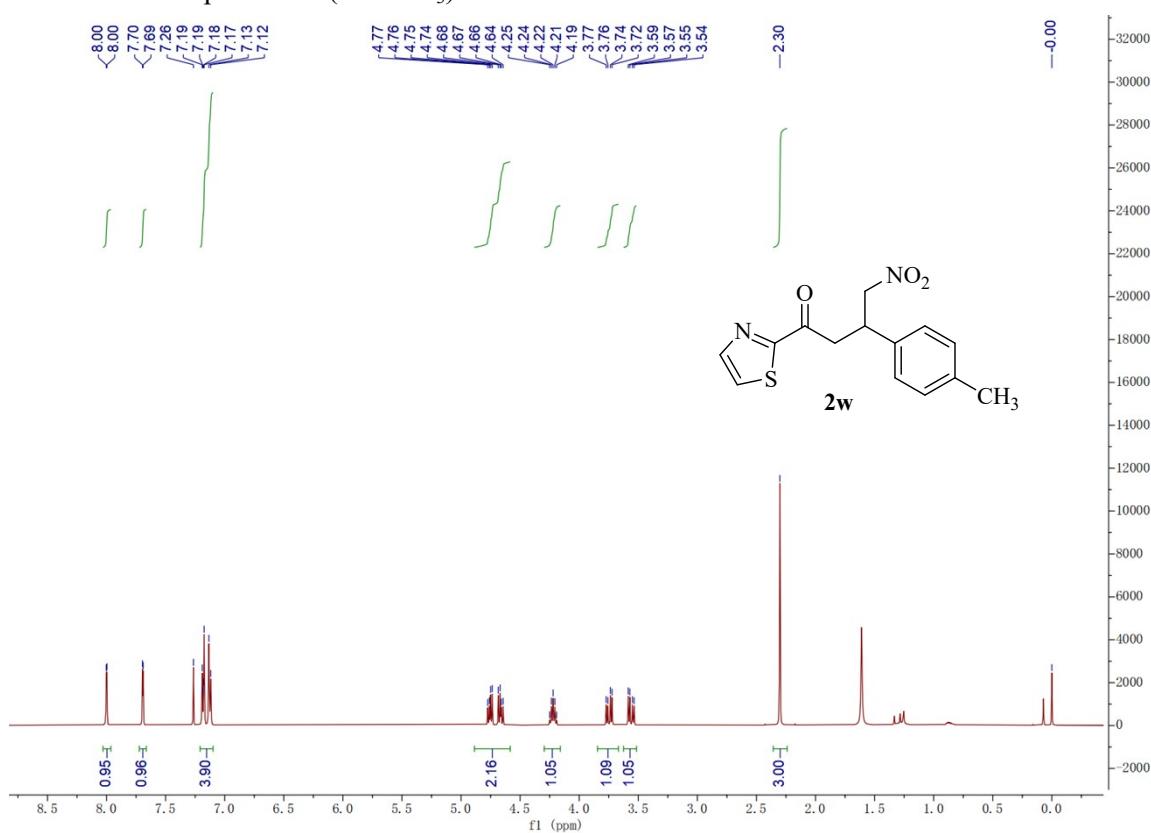
¹H NMR of compound **2v** (in CDCl₃):



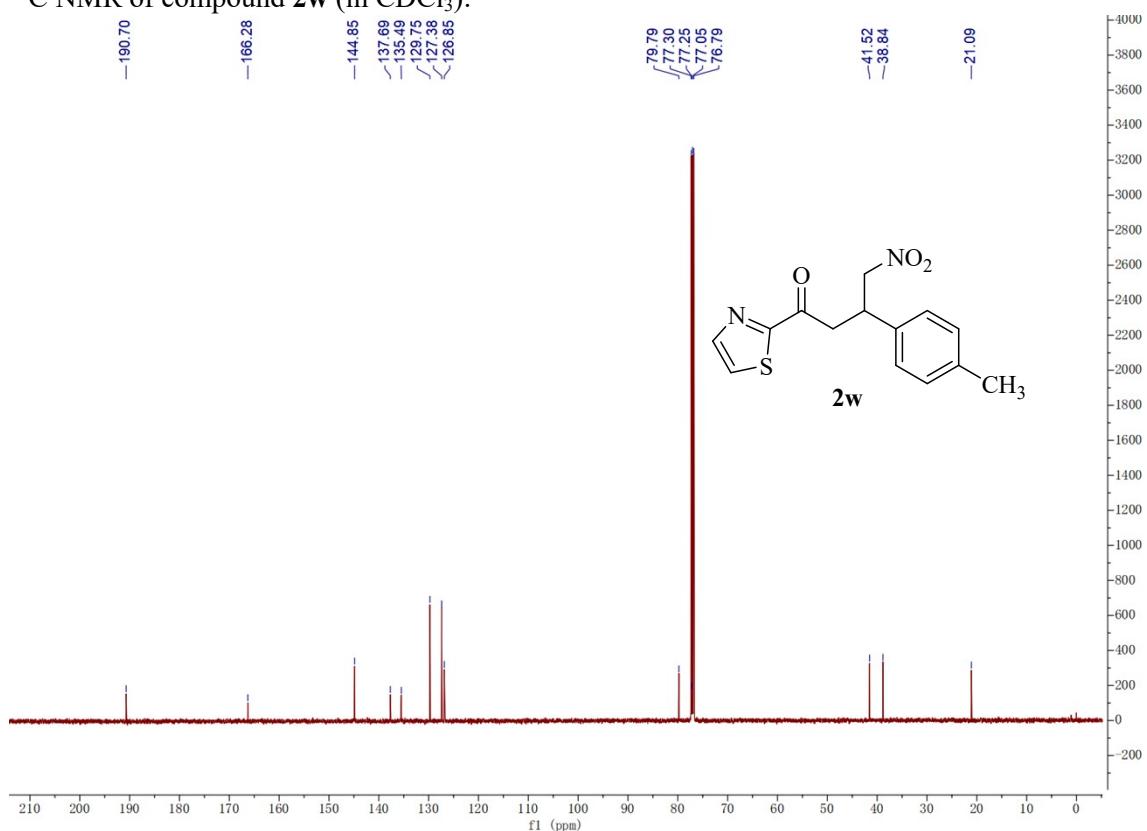
¹³C NMR of compound **2v** (in CDCl₃):



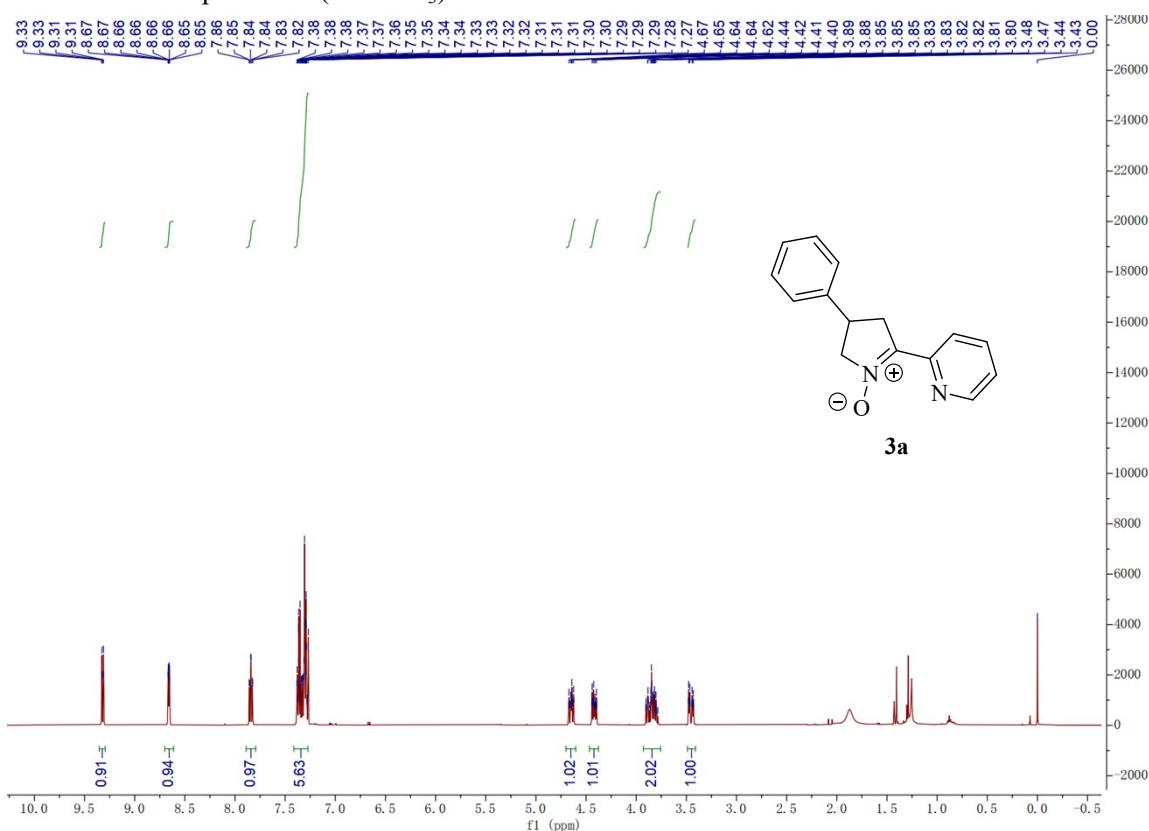
¹H NMR of compound **2w** (in CDCl₃):



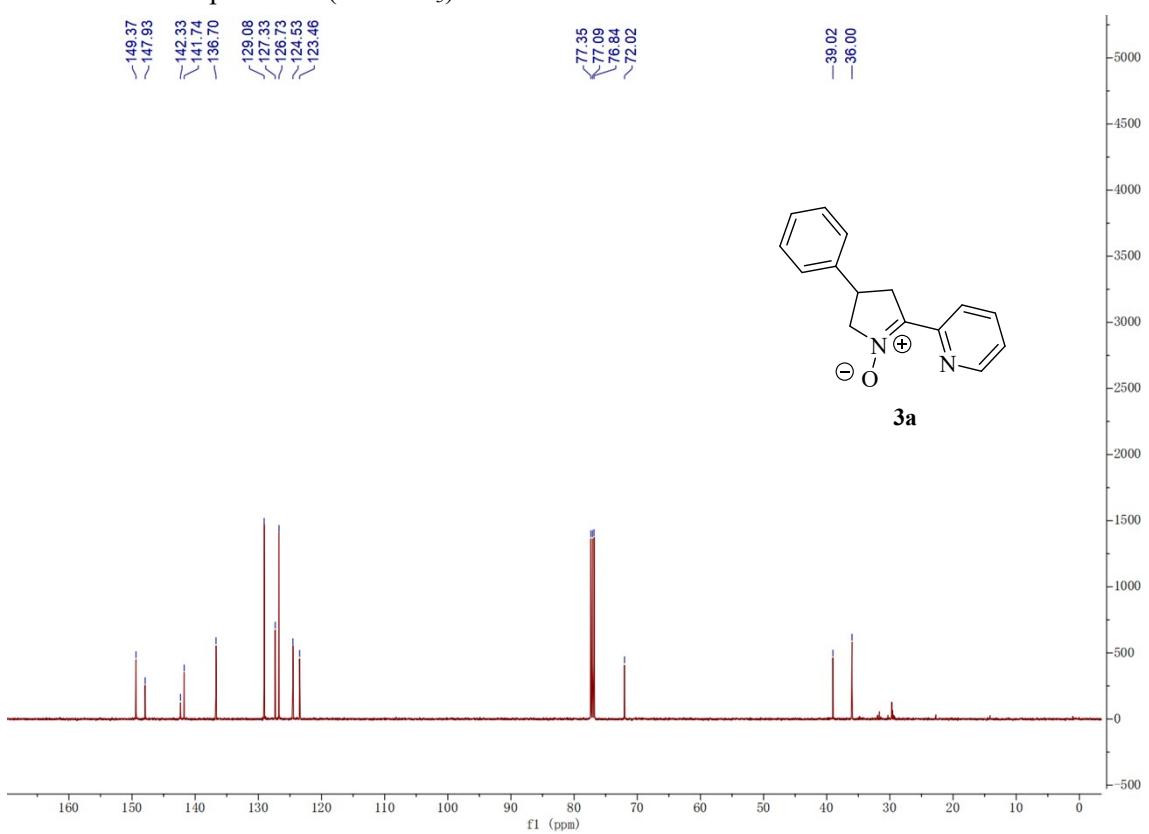
¹³C NMR of compound **2w** (in CDCl₃):



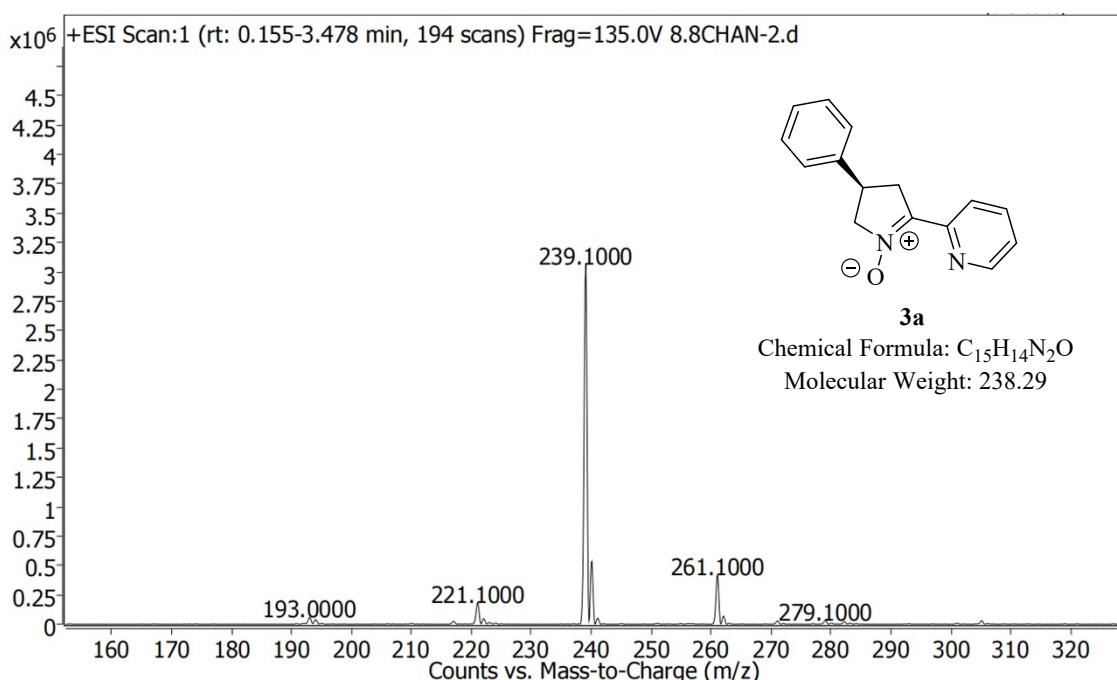
¹H NMR of compound **3a** (in CDCl₃):



¹³C NMR of compound **3a** (in CDCl₃):

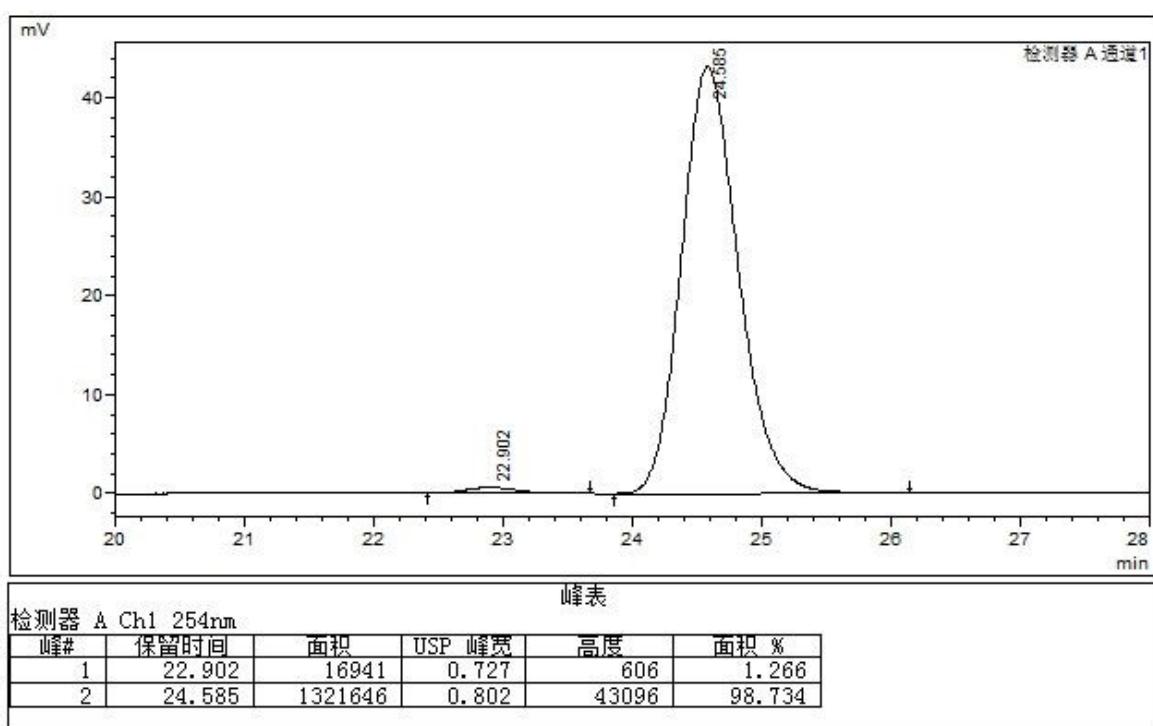
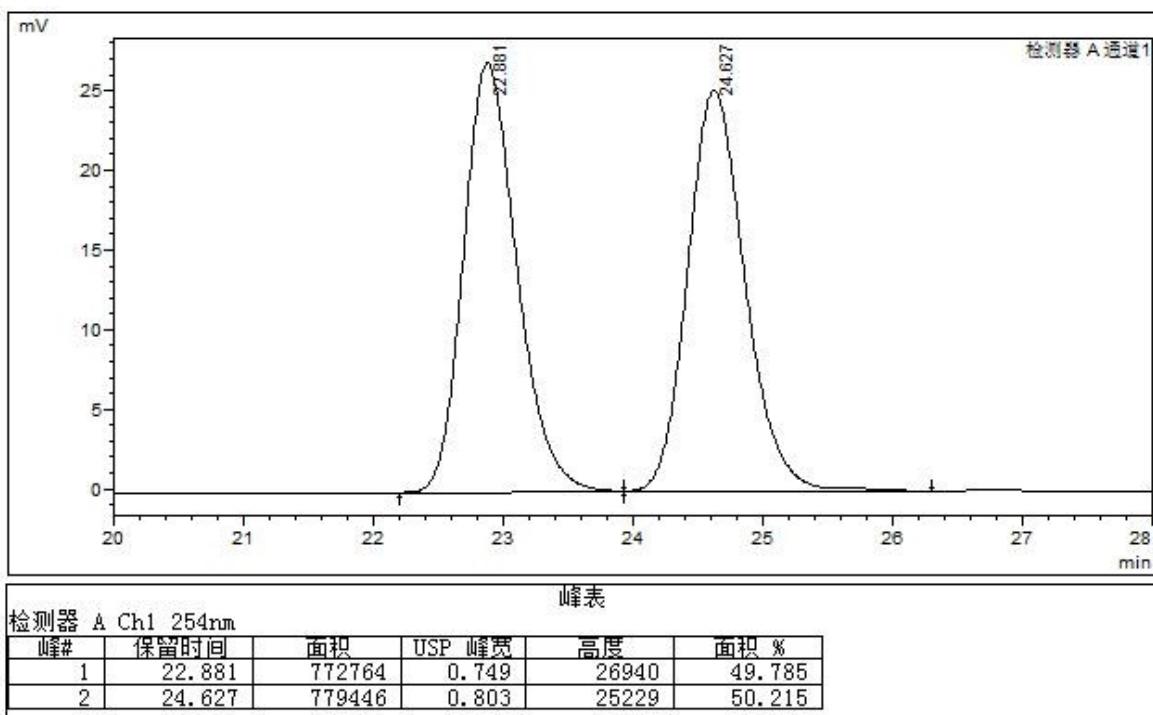
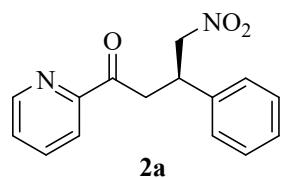


Mass spectrum of compound **3a**:

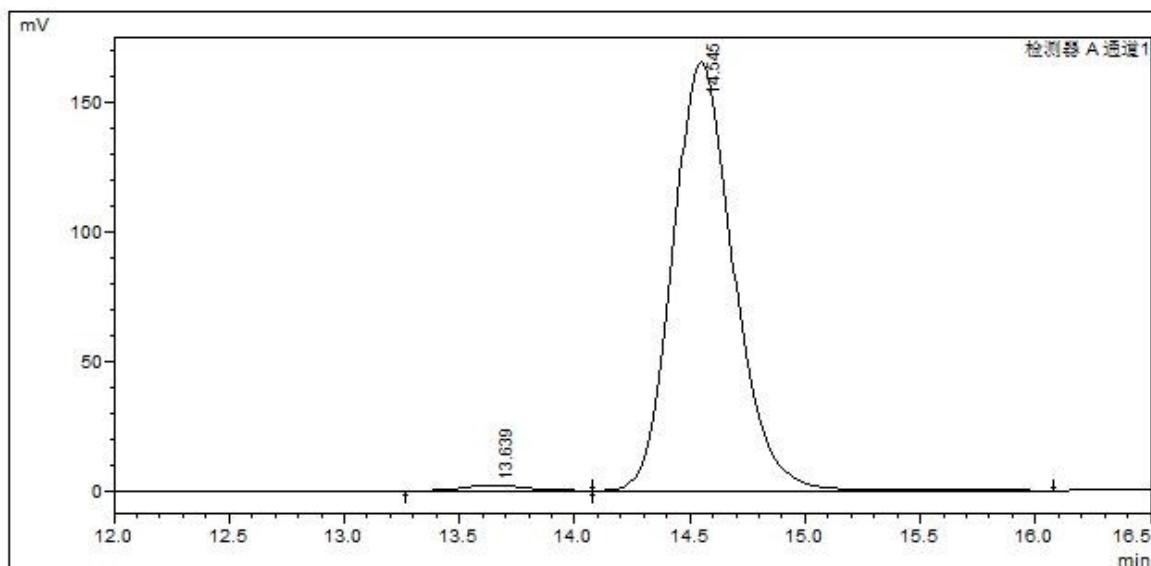
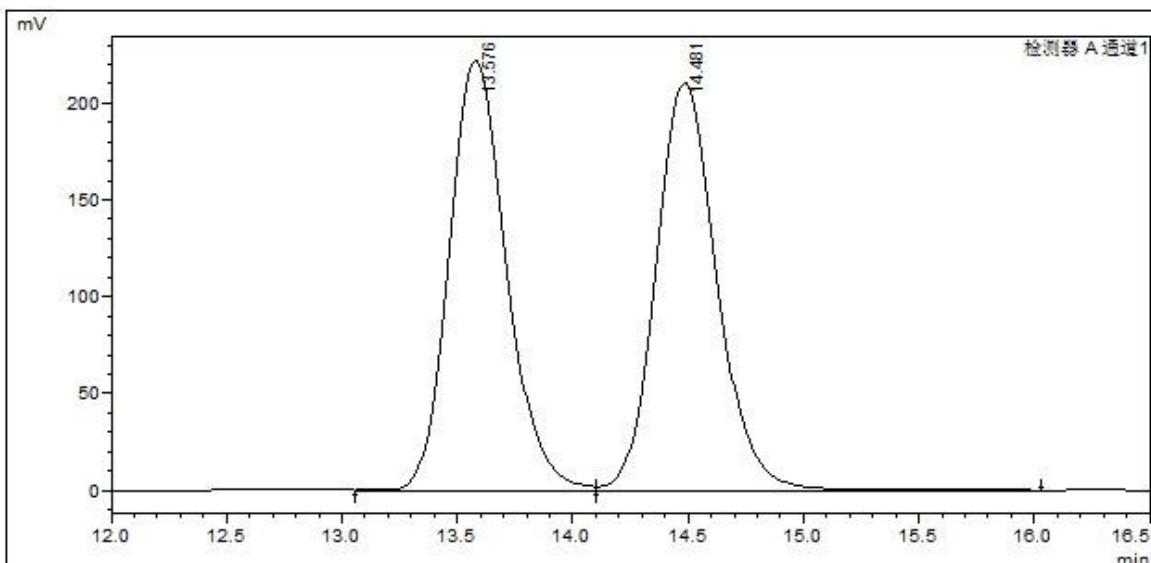
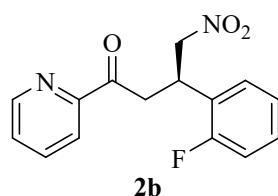


3. HPLC traces of racemic and chiral products 2a-2w and 3a

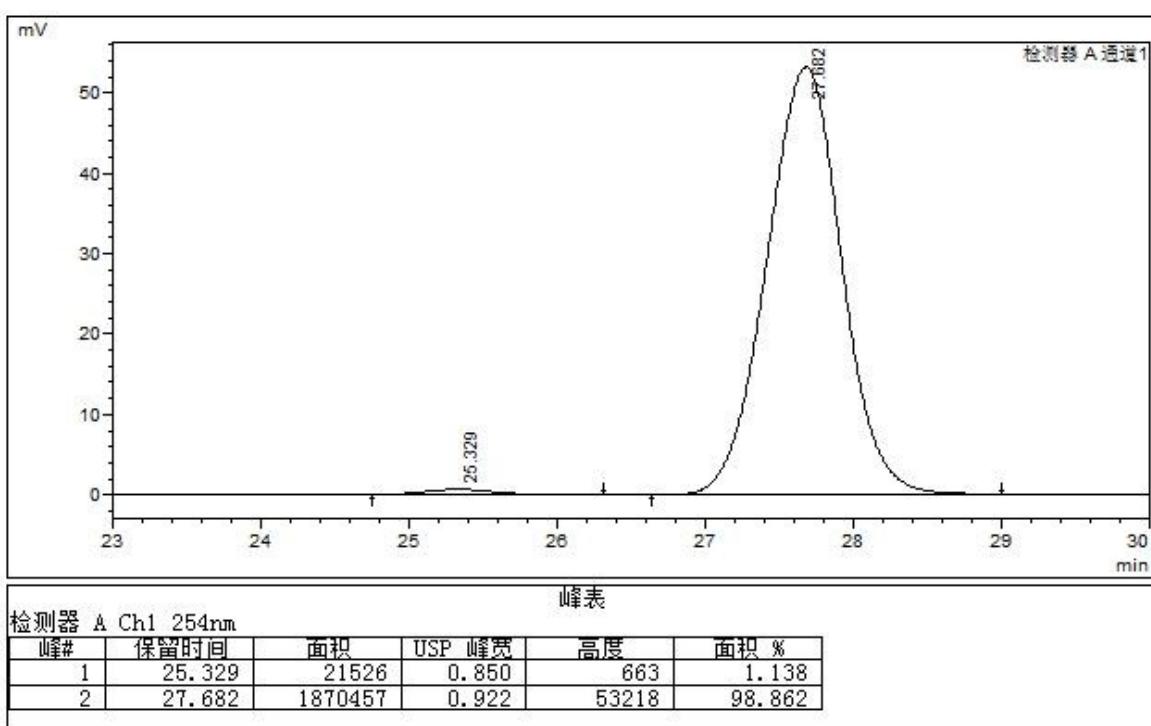
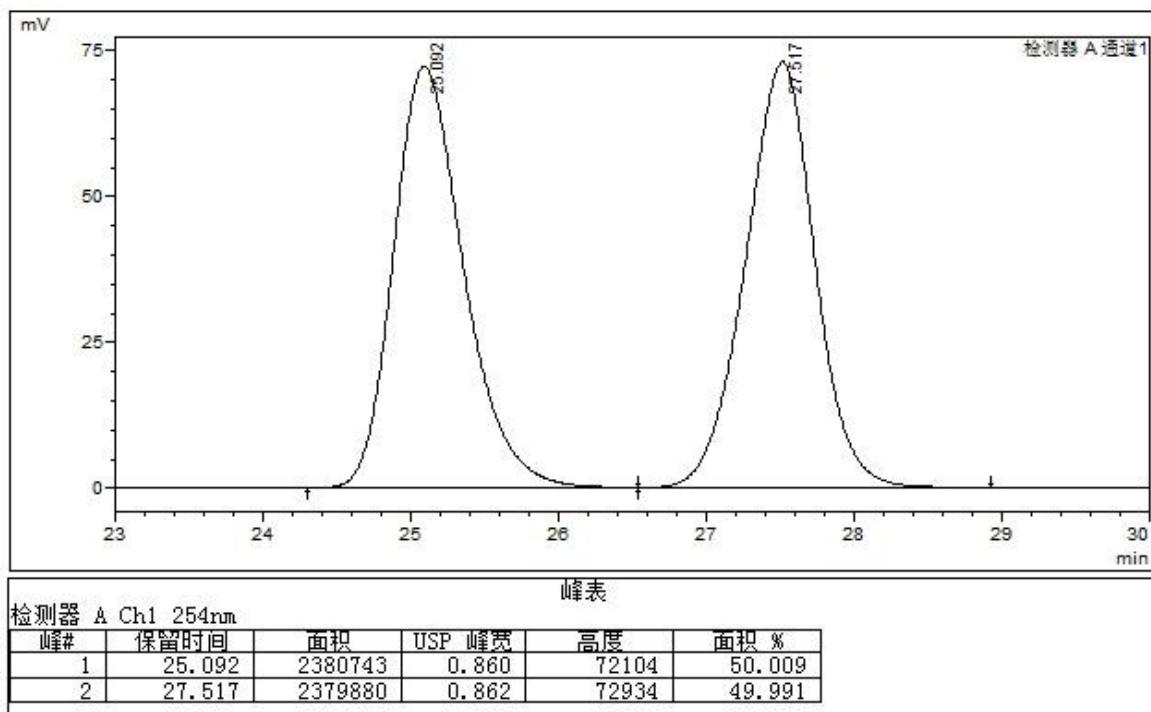
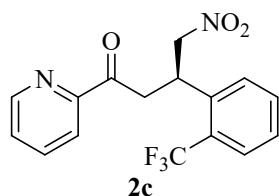
HPLC spectra of compound **2a** (racemic and chiral product):



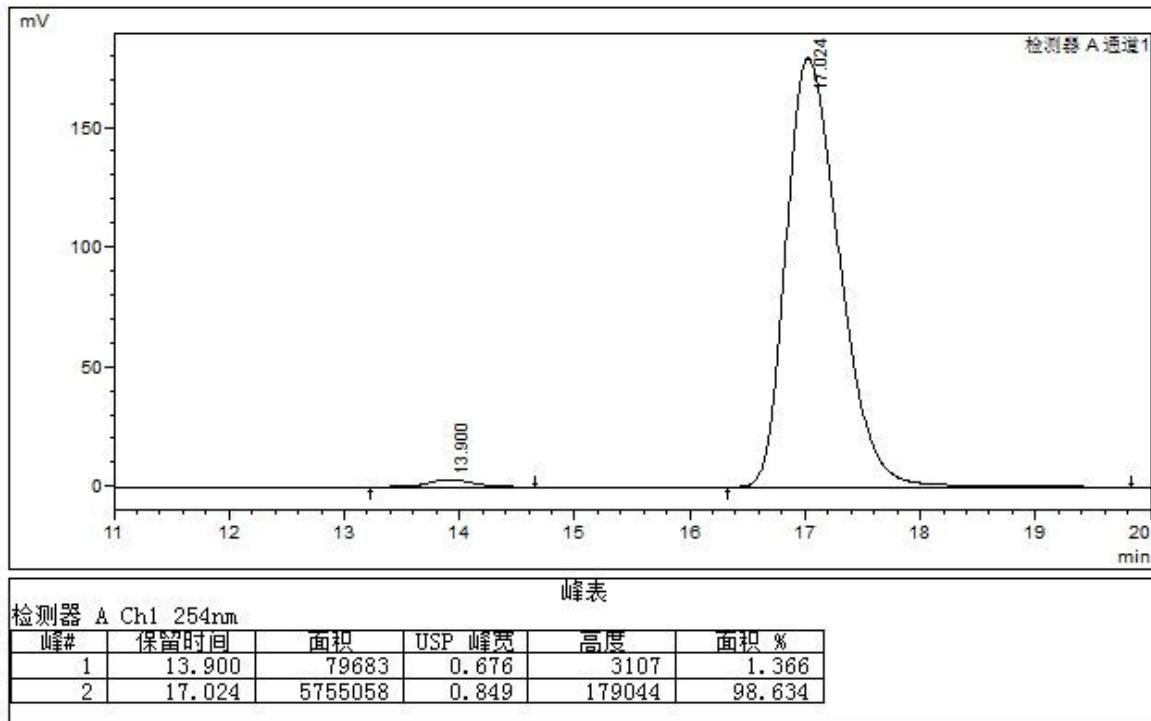
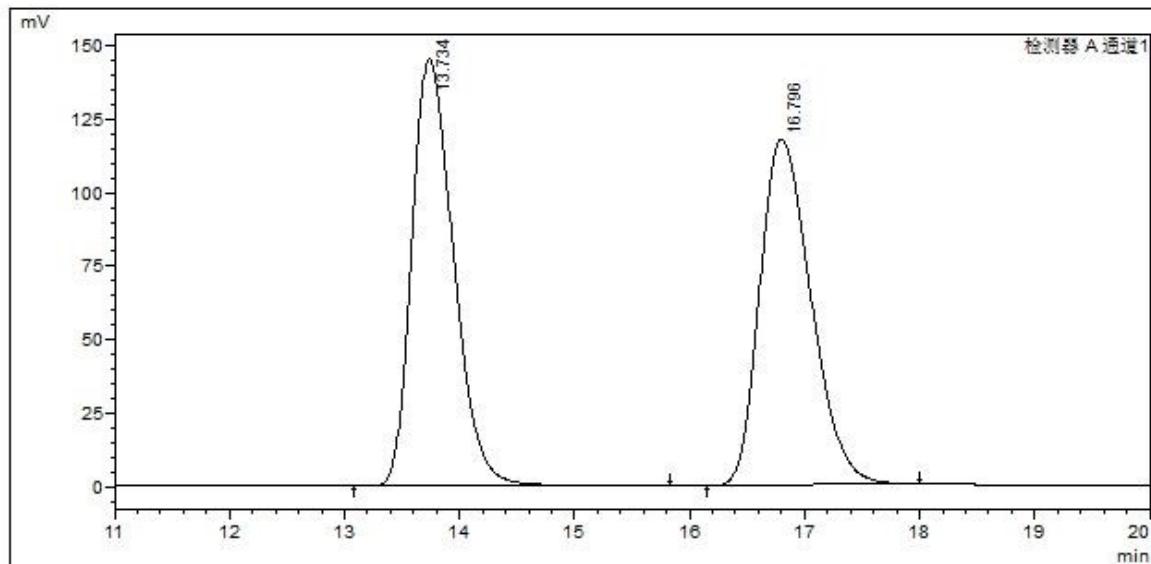
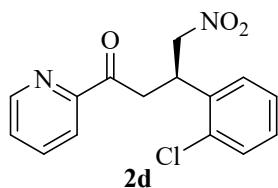
HPLC spectra of compound **2b** (racemic and chiral product):



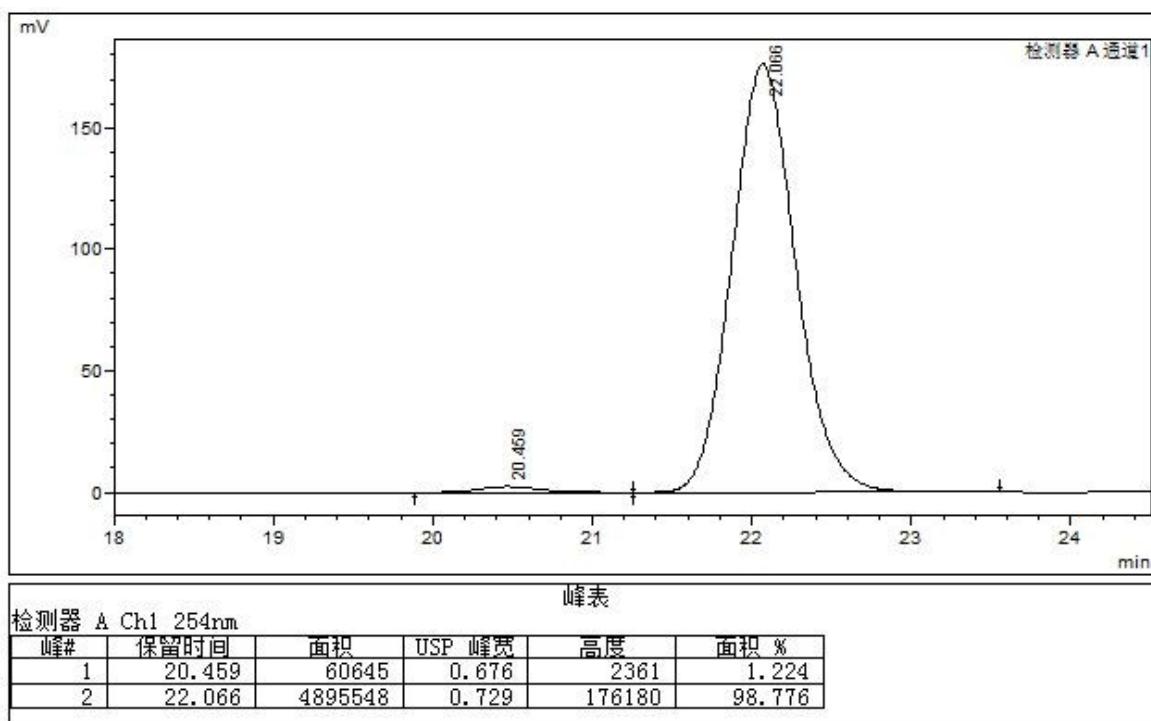
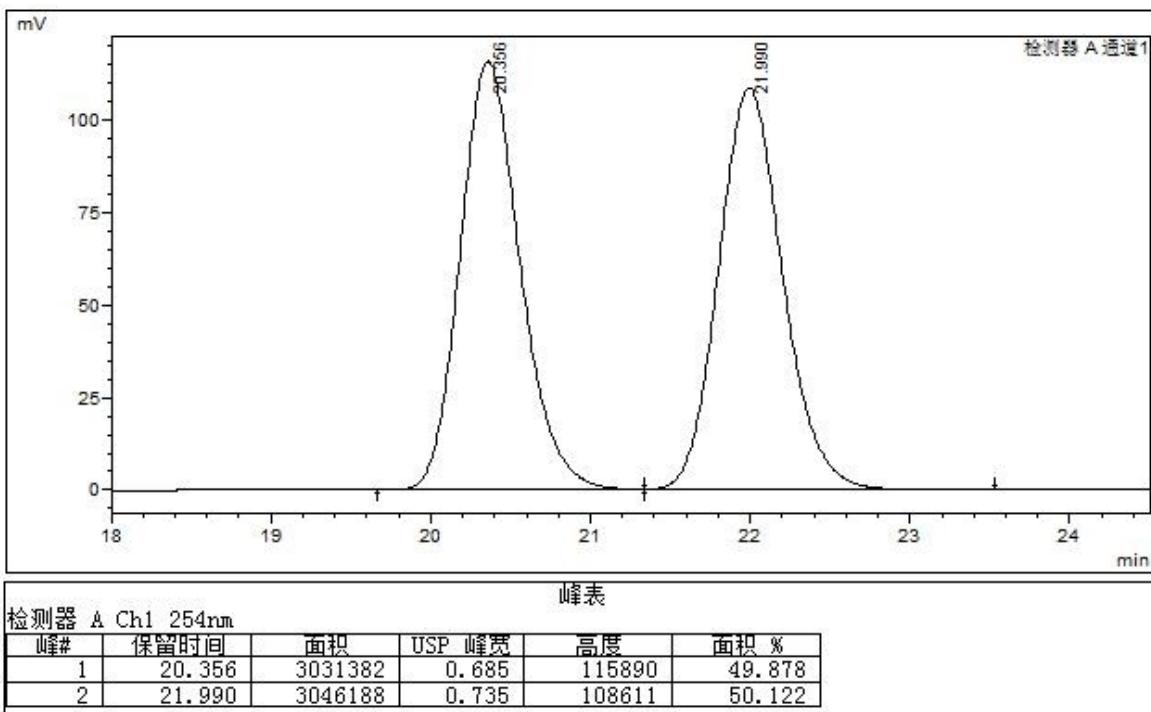
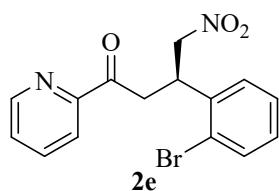
HPLC spectra of compound **2c** (racemic and chiral product):



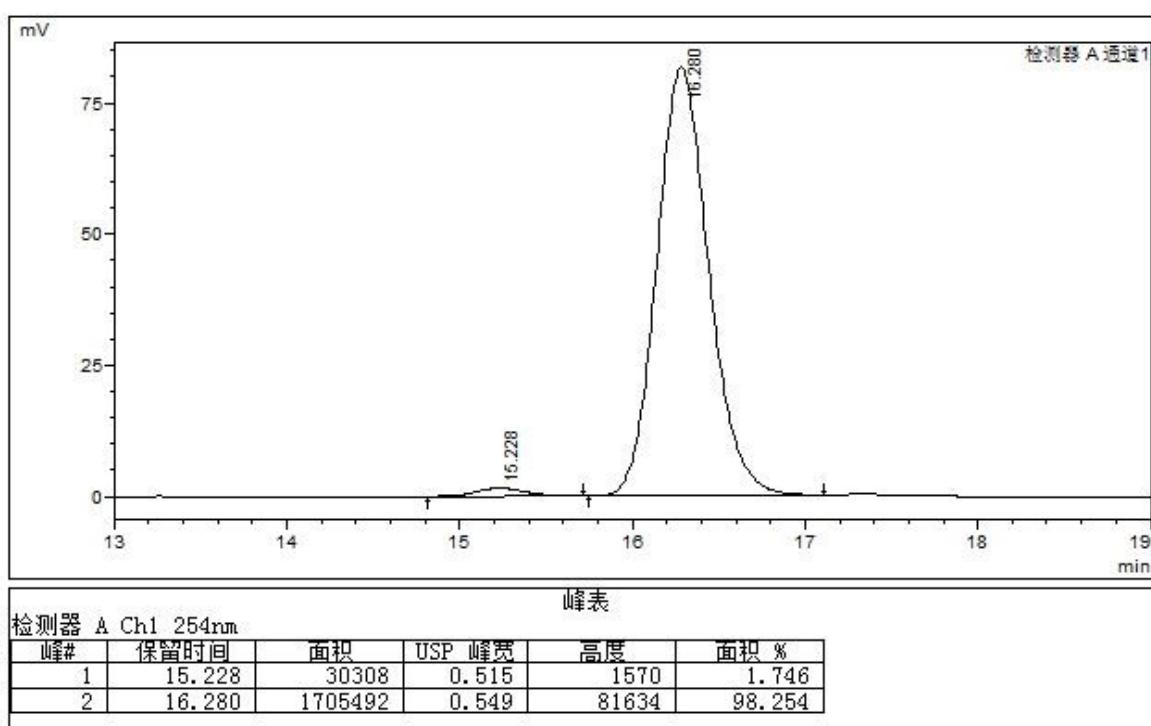
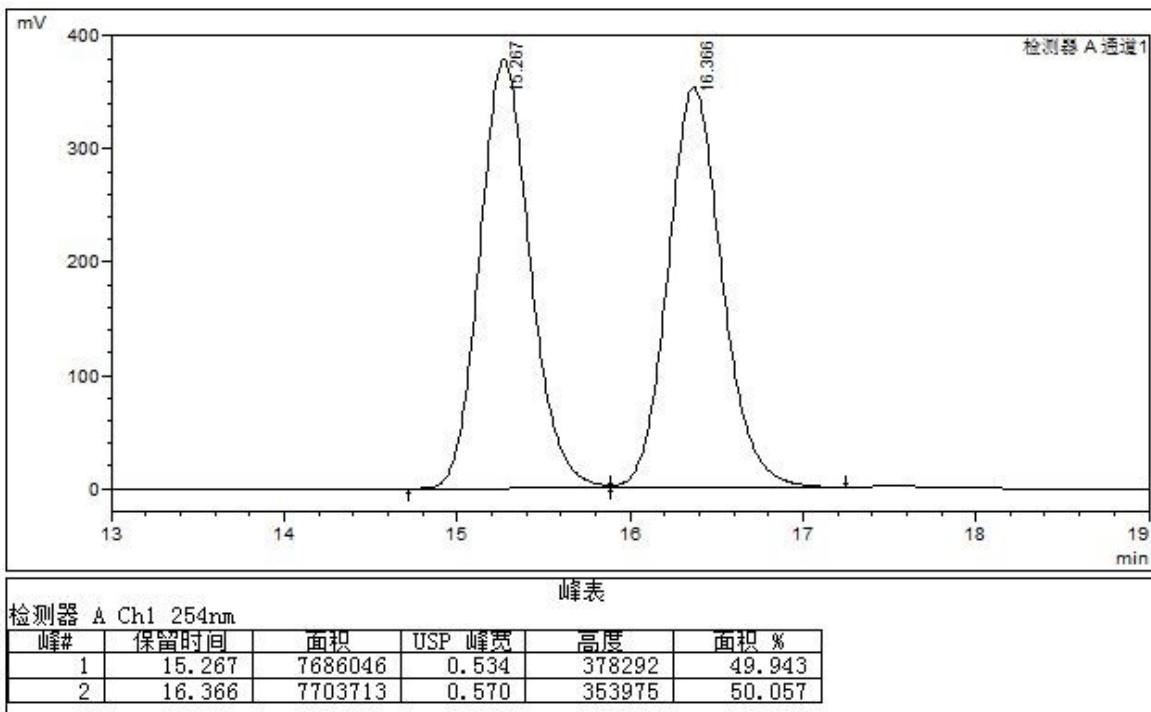
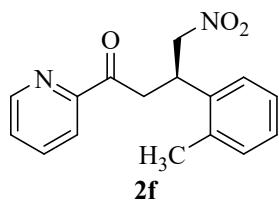
HPLC spectra of compound **2d** (racemic and chiral product):



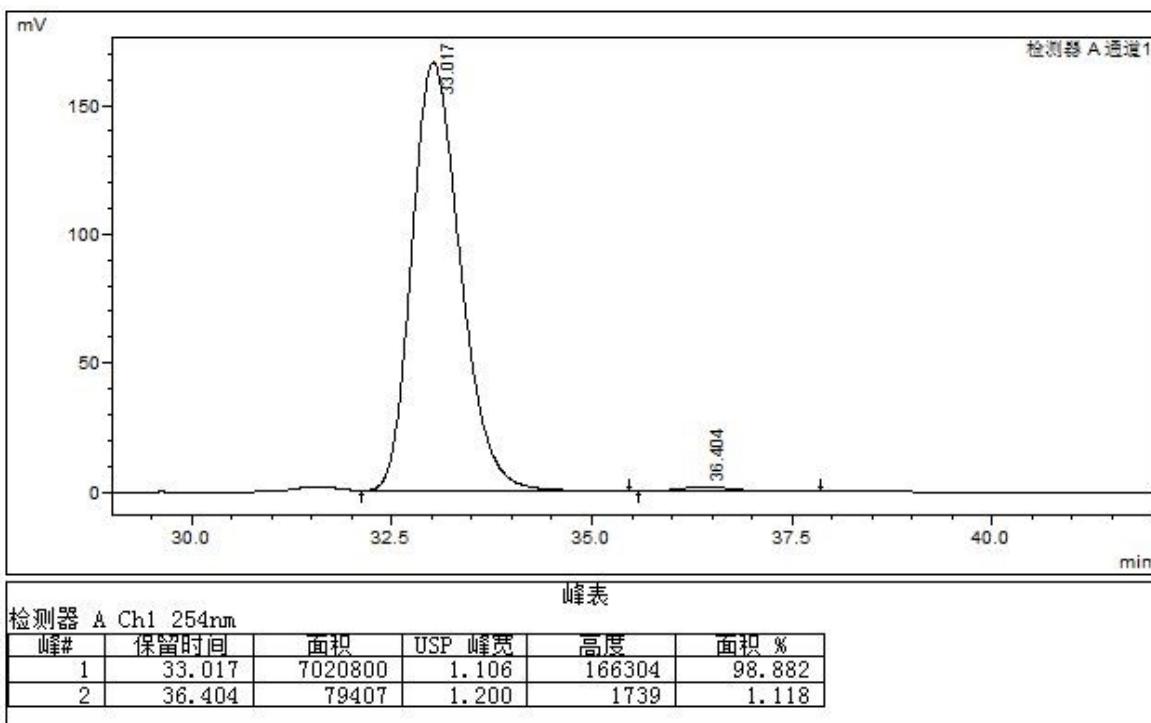
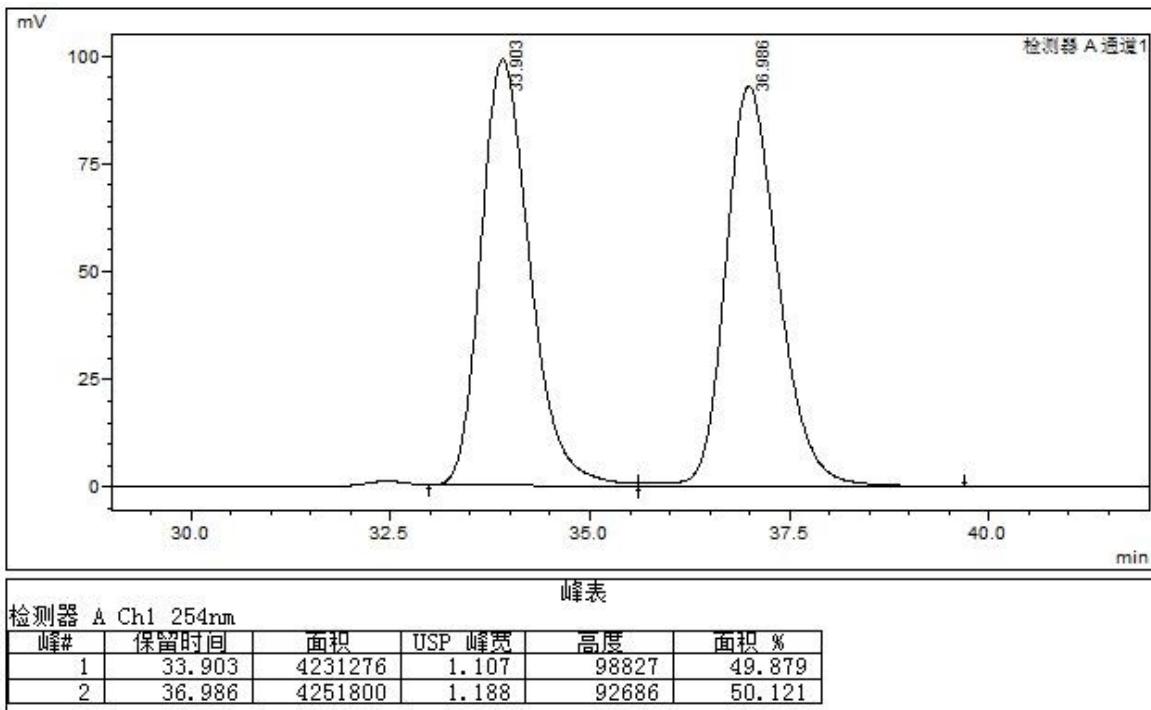
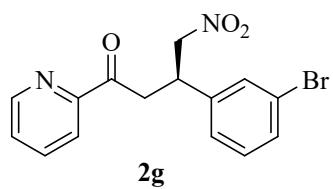
HPLC spectra of compound **2e** (racemic and chiral product):



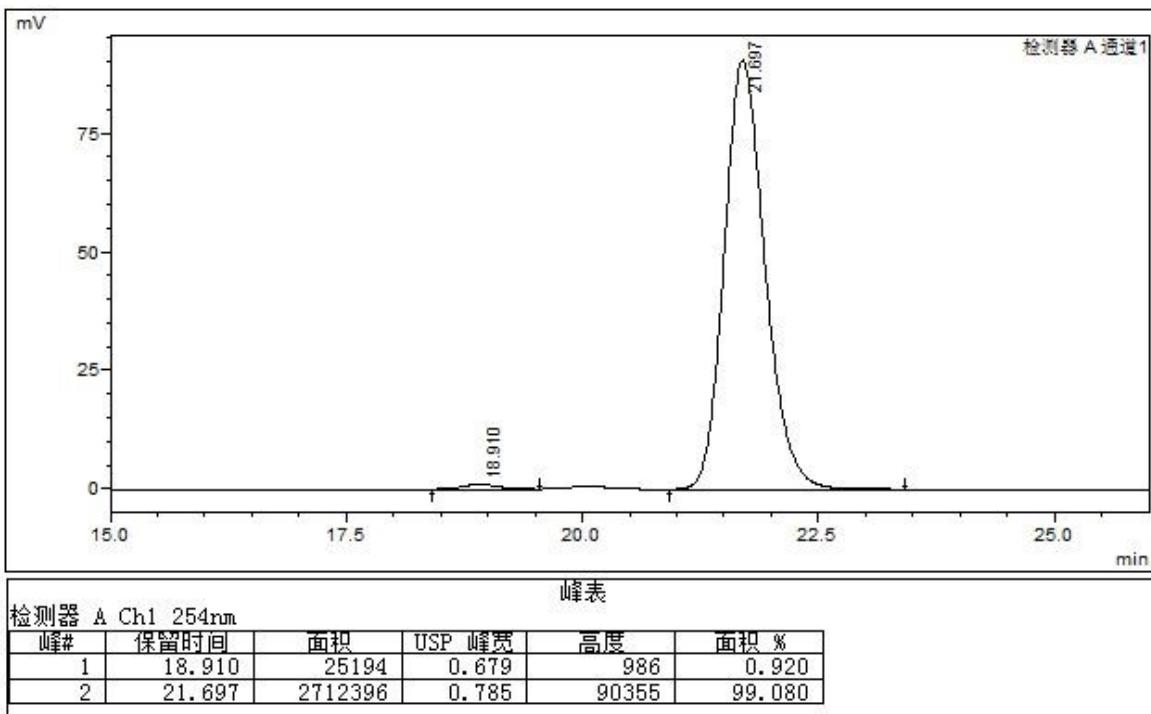
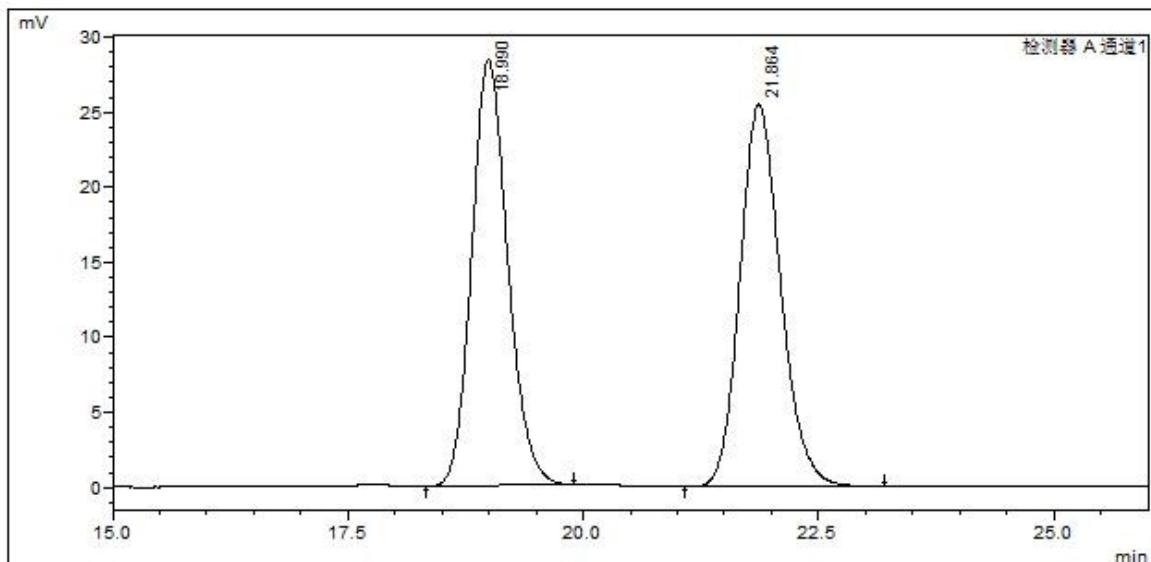
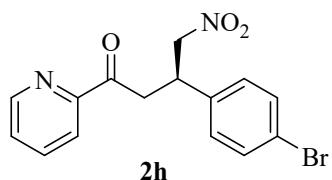
HPLC spectra of compound **2f** (racemic and chiral product):



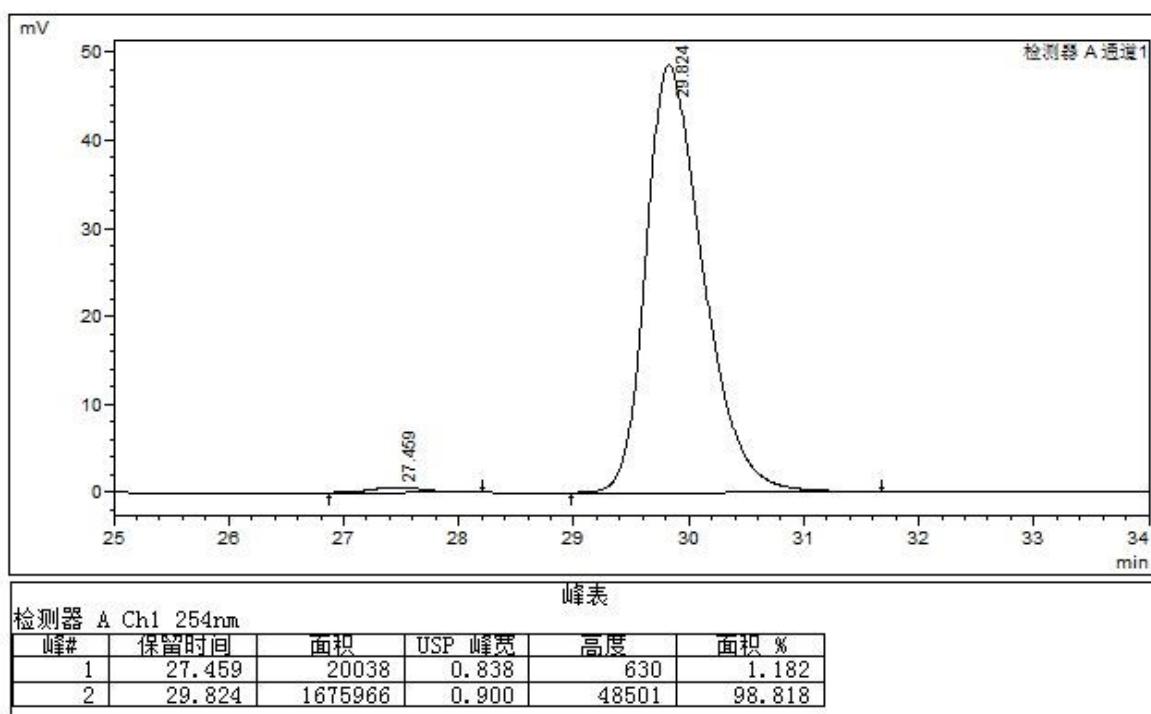
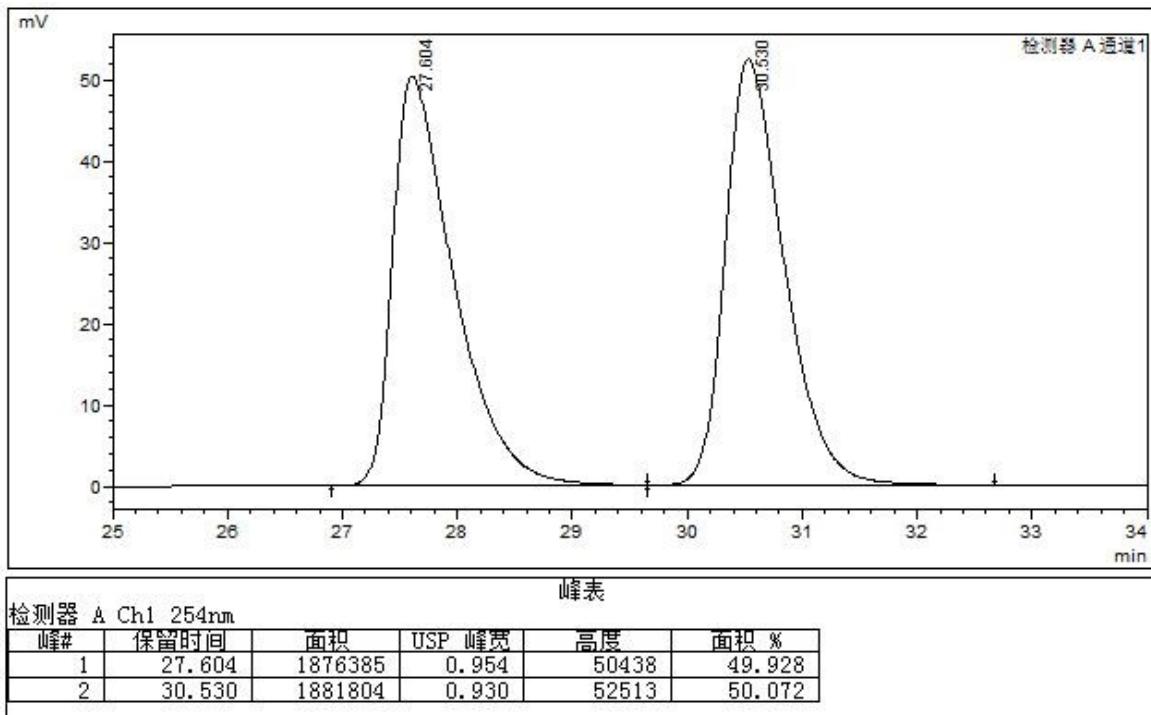
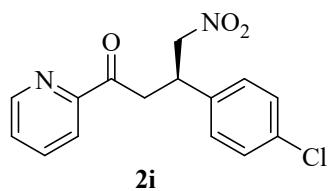
HPLC spectra of compound **2g** (racemic and chiral product):



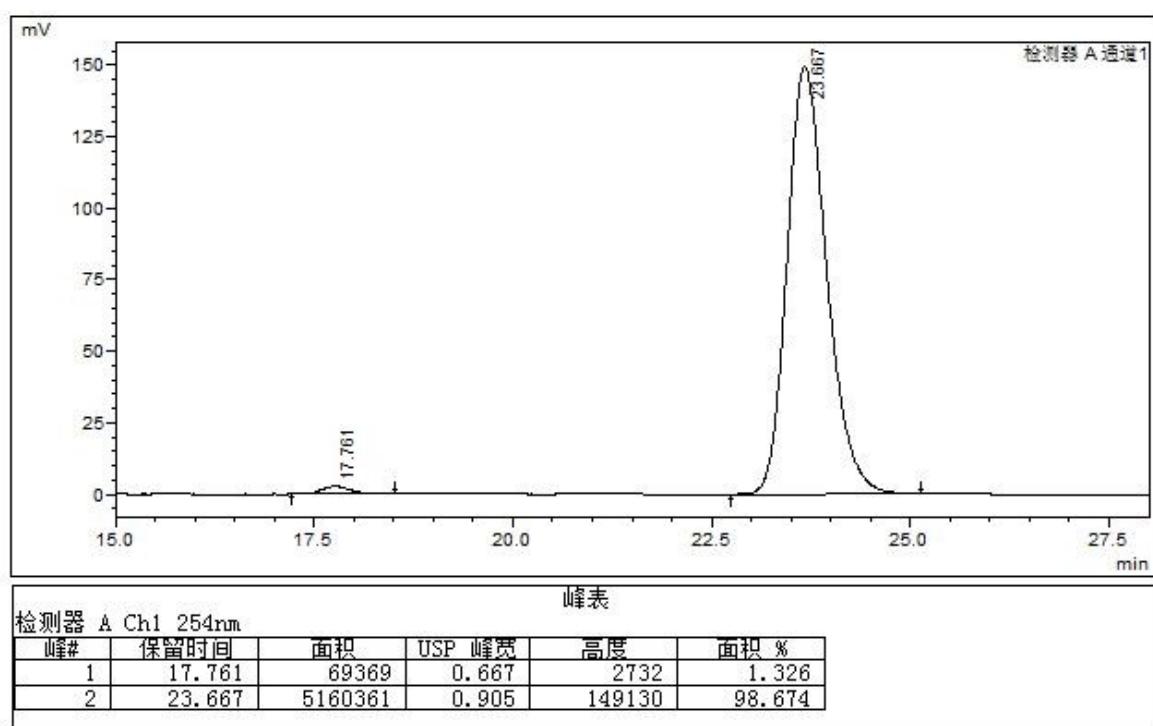
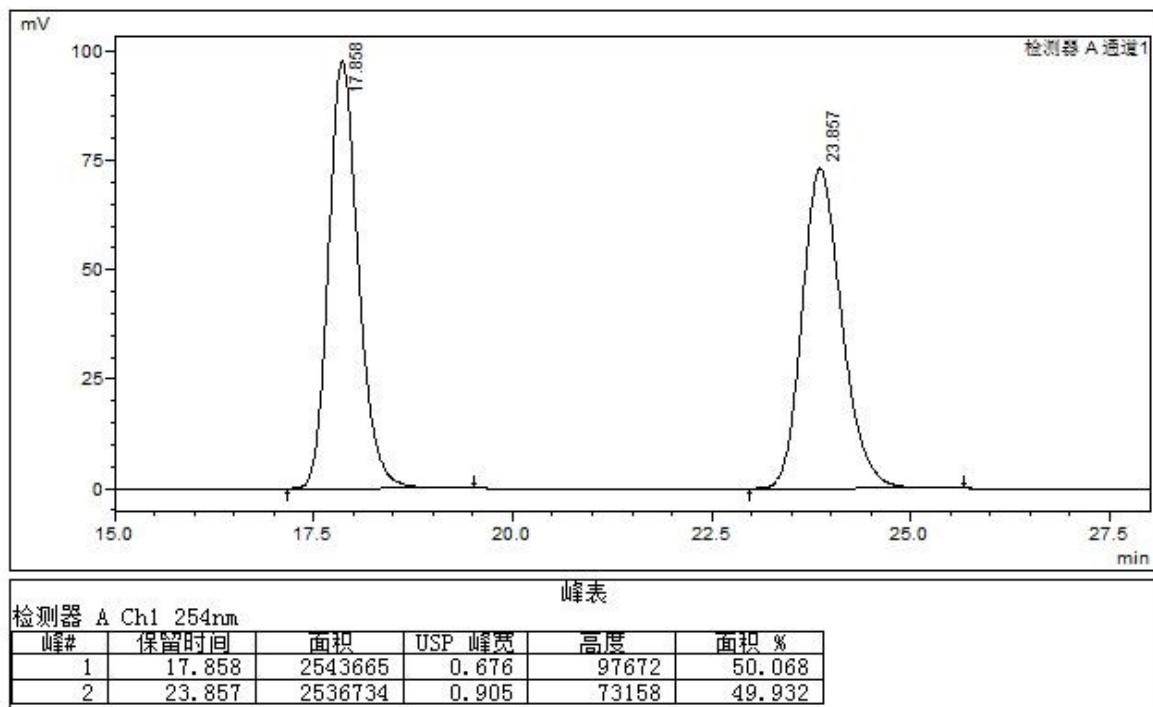
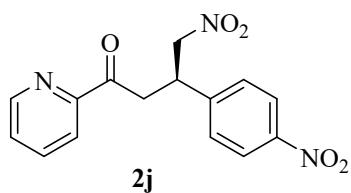
HPLC spectra of compound **2h** (racemic and chiral product):



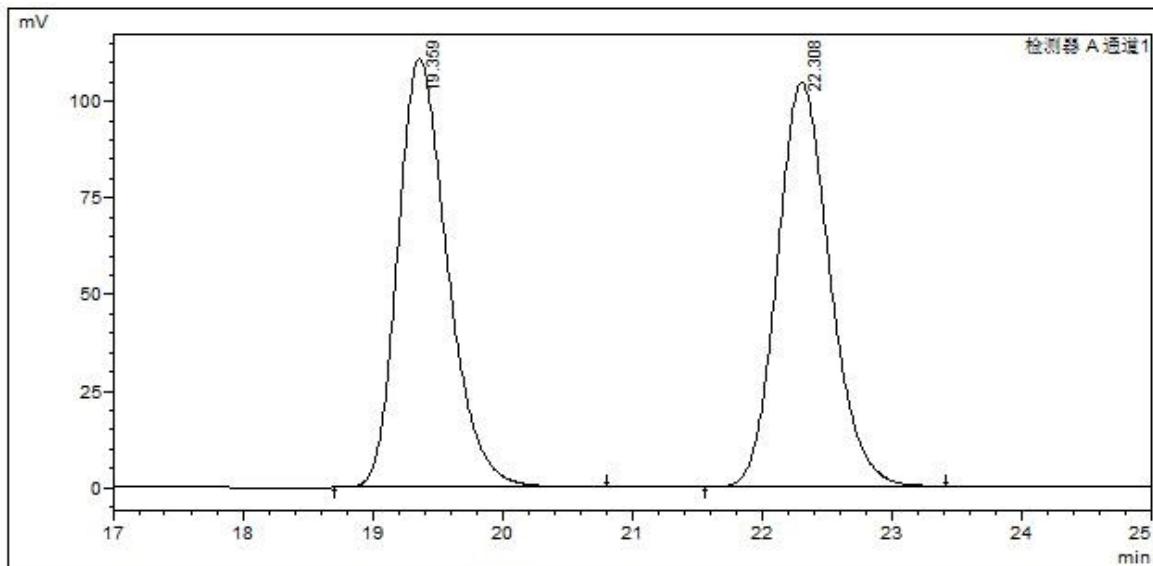
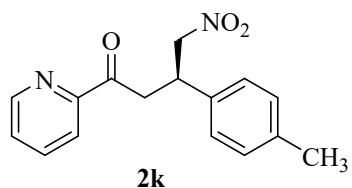
HPLC spectra of compound **2i** (racemic and chiral product):



HPLC spectra of compound **2j** (racemic and chiral product):



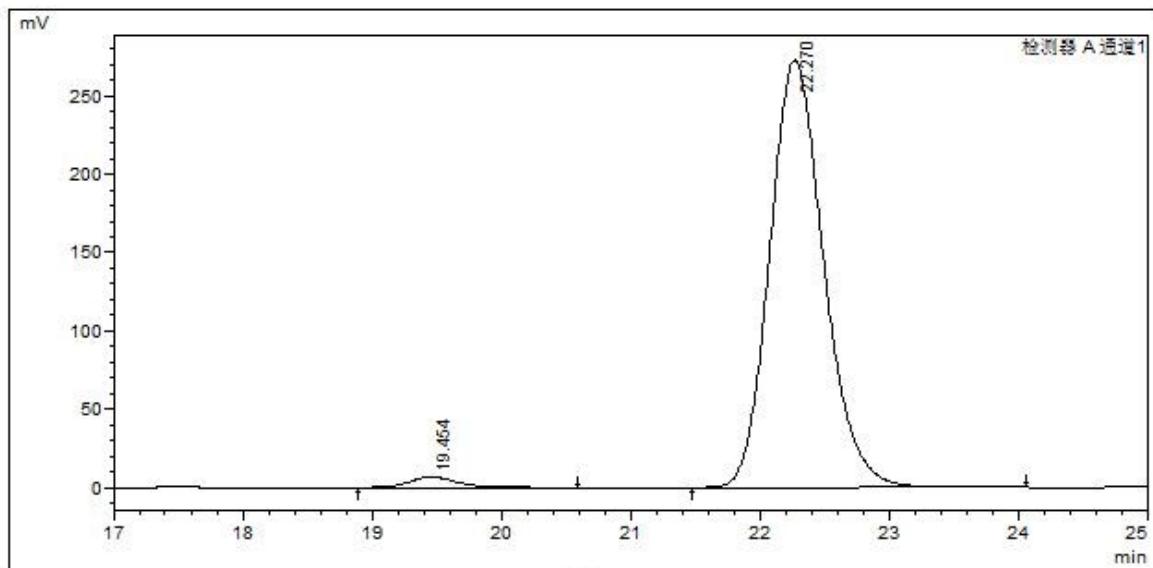
HPLC spectra of compound **2k** (racemic and chiral product):



峰表

检测器 A Ch1 254nm

峰#	保留时间	面积	USP 峰宽	高度	面积 %
1	19.359	2958926	0.697	110863	50.047
2	22.308	2953389	0.740	104780	49.953

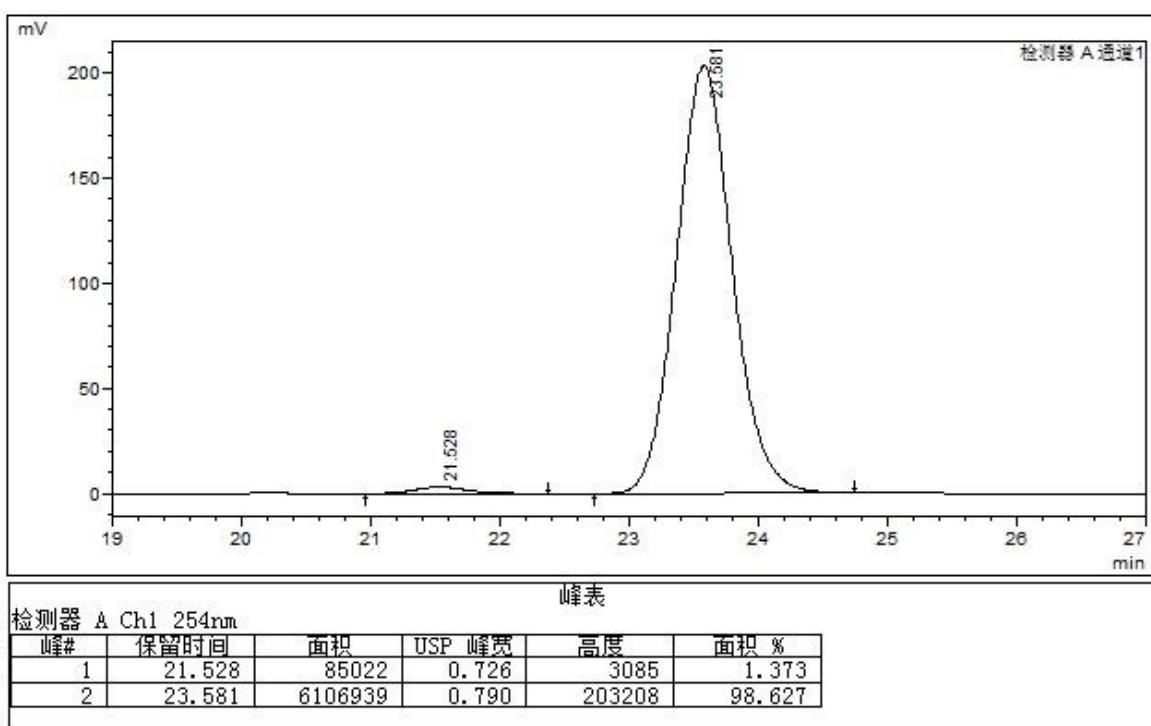
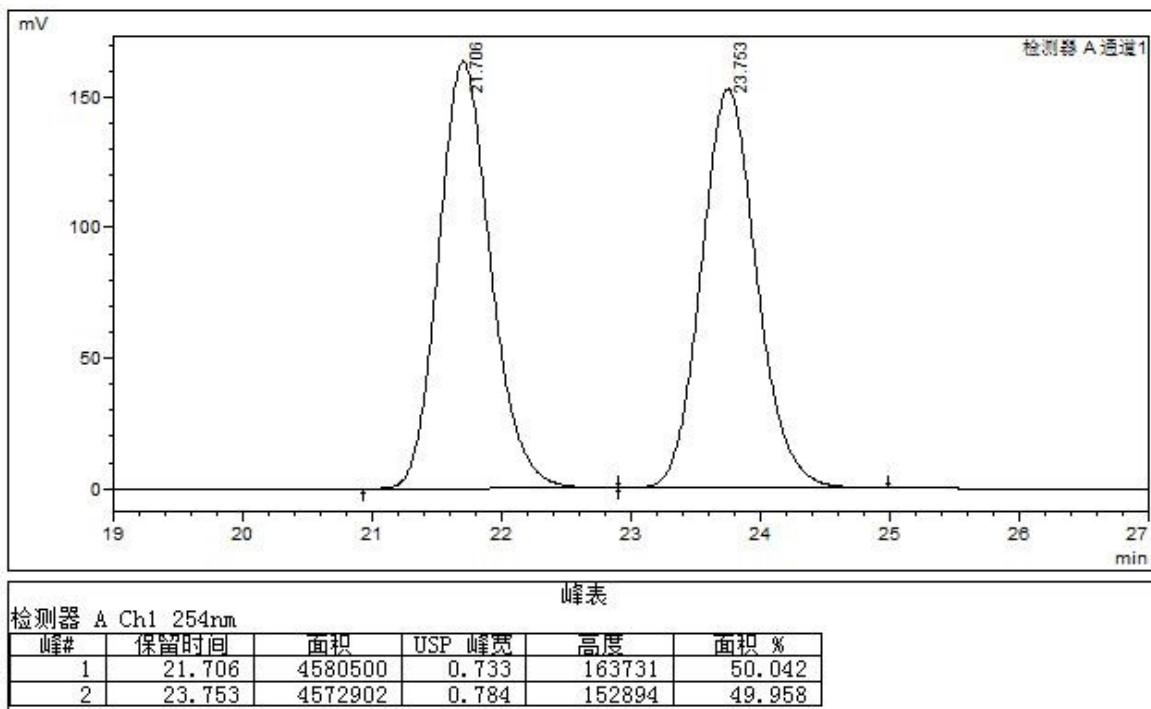
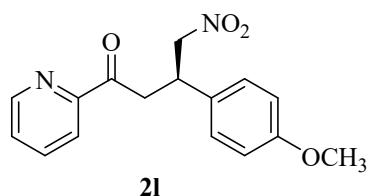


峰表

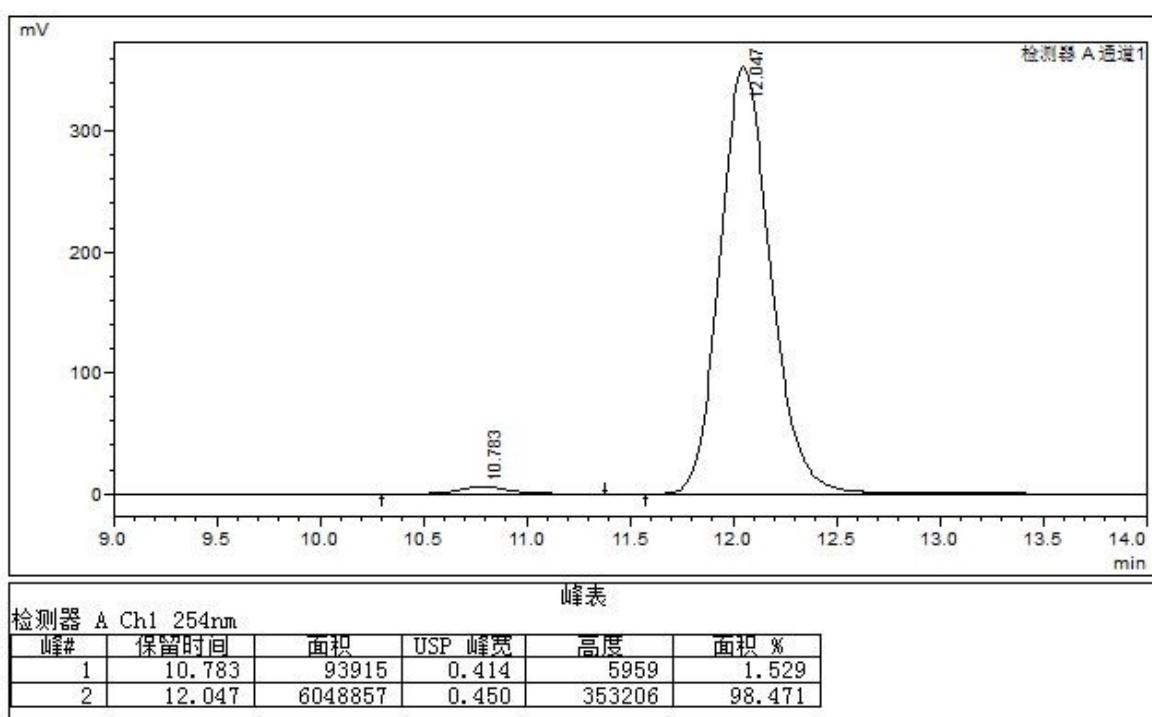
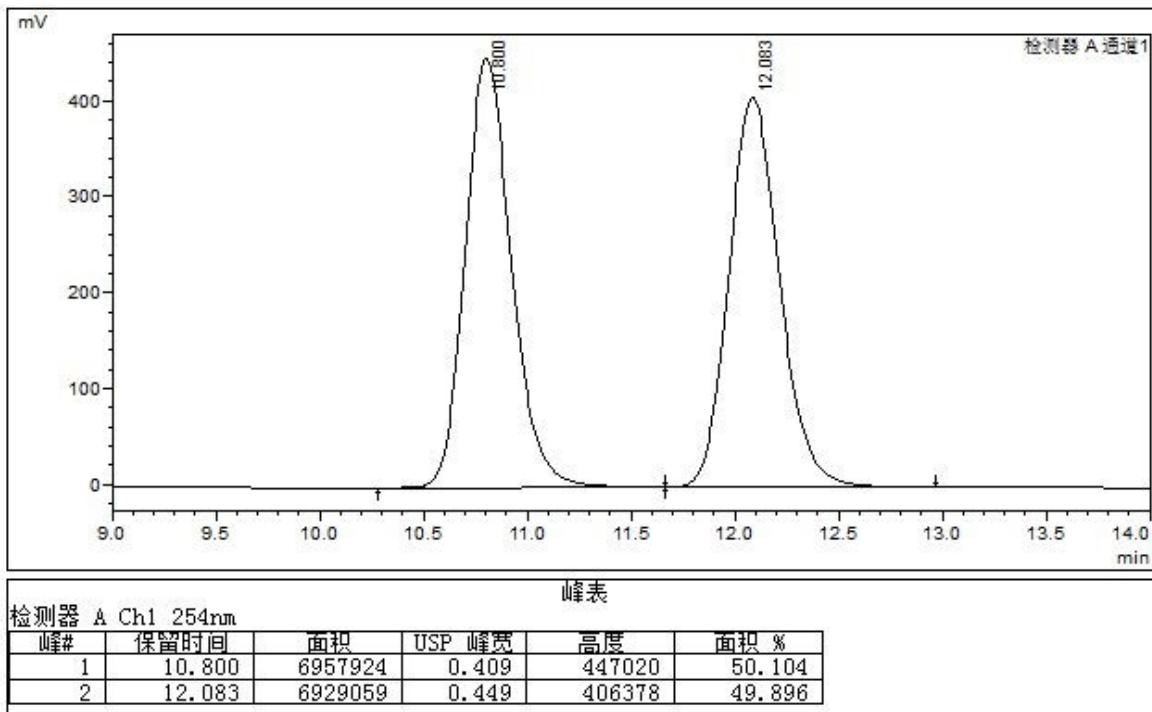
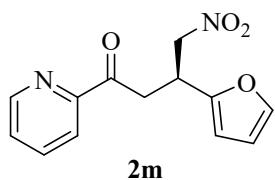
检测器 A Ch1 254nm

峰#	保留时间	面积	USP 峰宽	高度	面积 %
1	19.454	166059	0.652	6646	2.050
2	22.270	7935978	0.761	272774	97.950

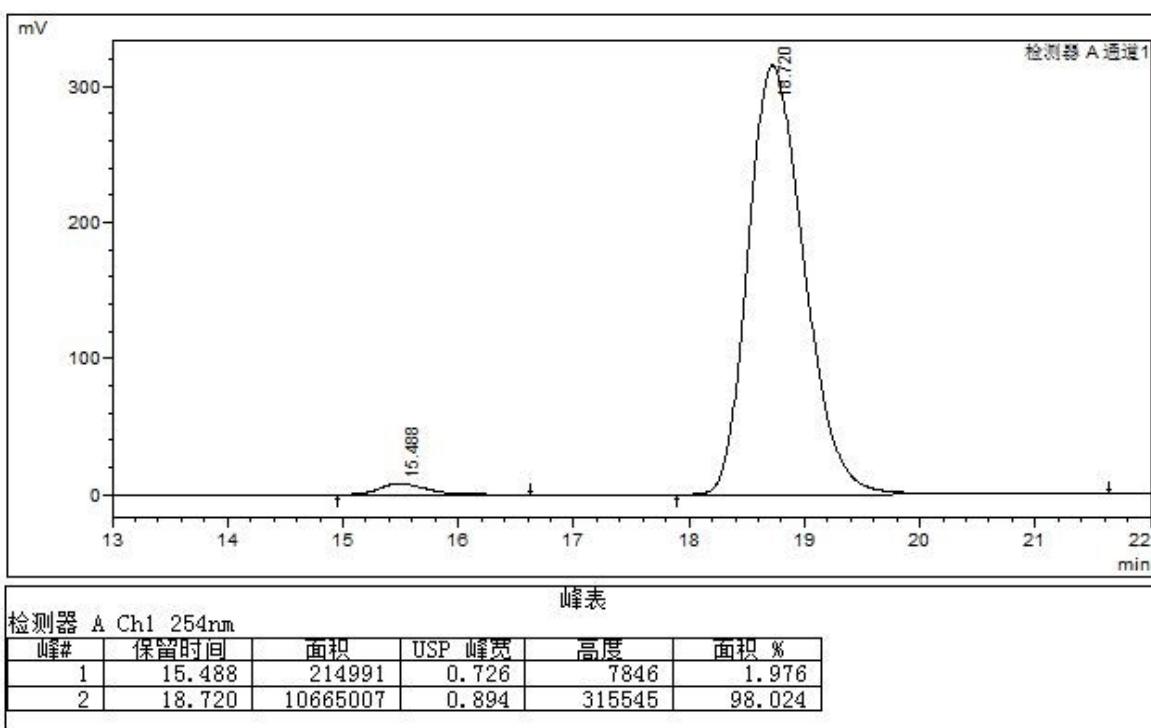
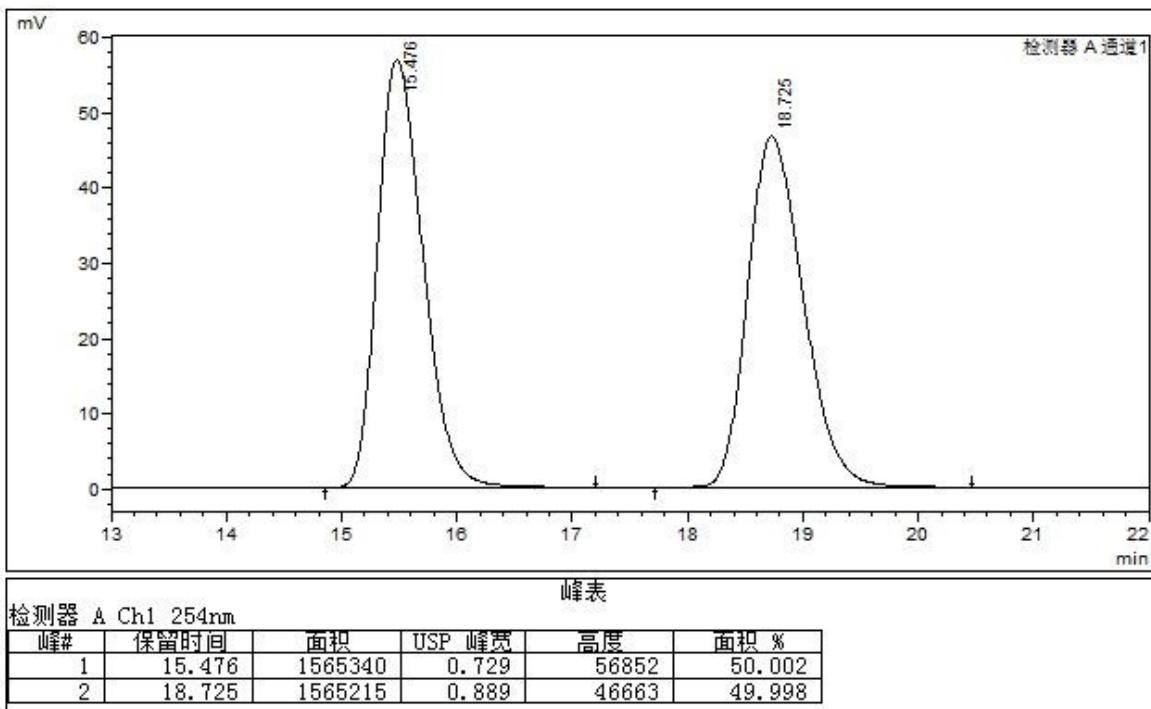
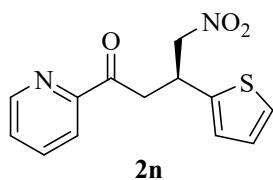
HPLC spectra of compound **2l** (racemic and chiral product):



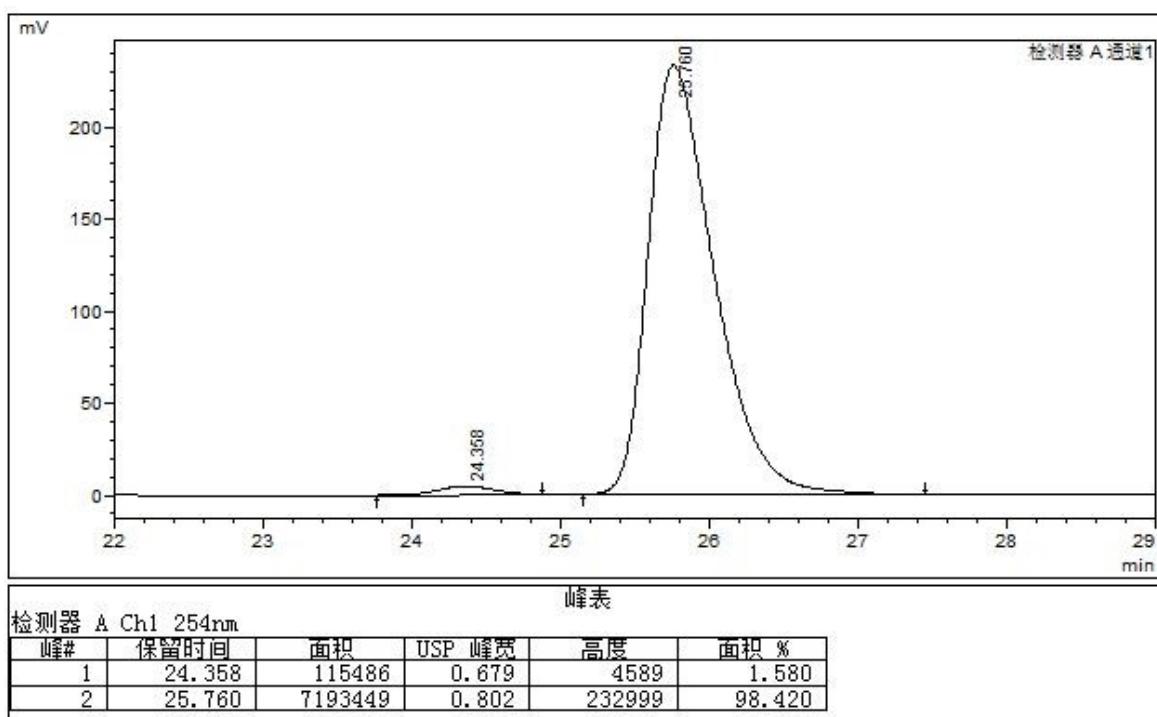
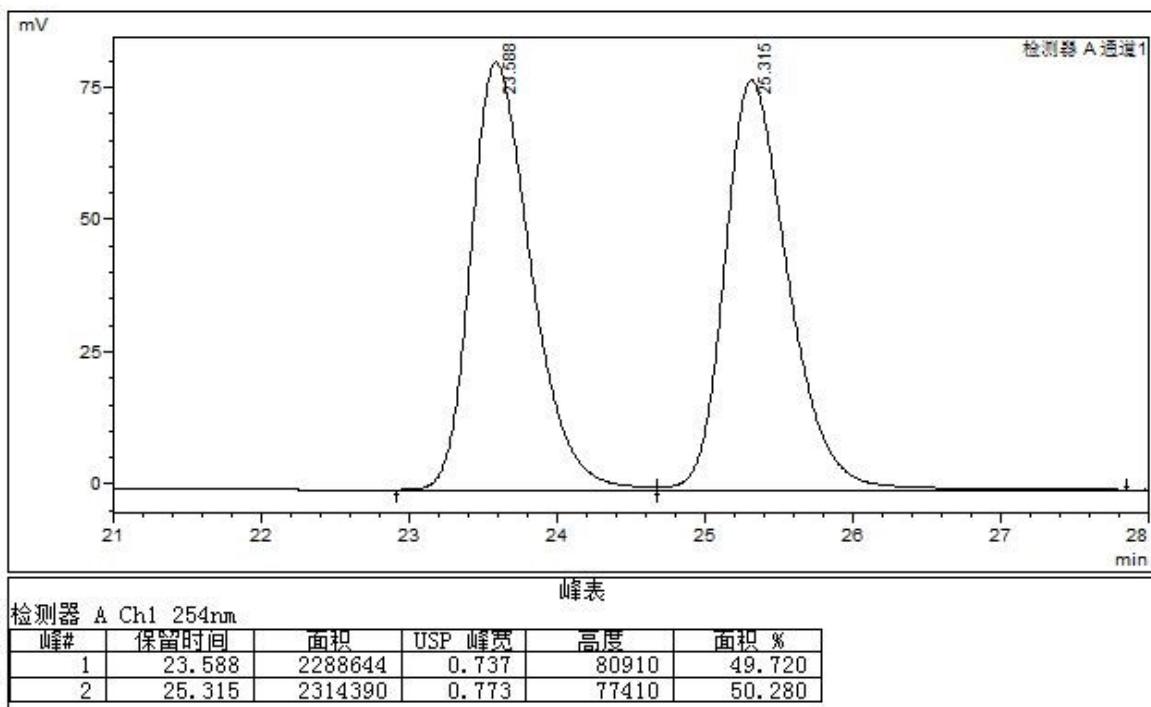
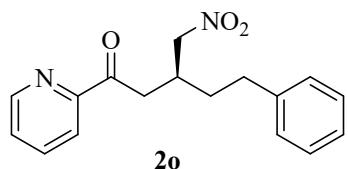
HPLC spectra of compound **2m** (racemic and chiral product):



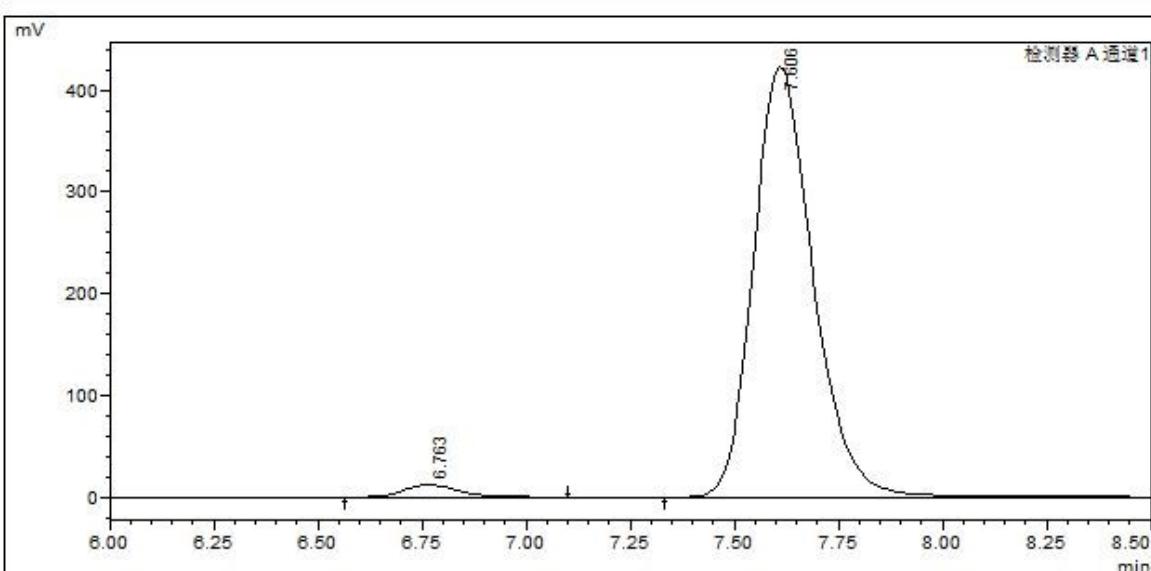
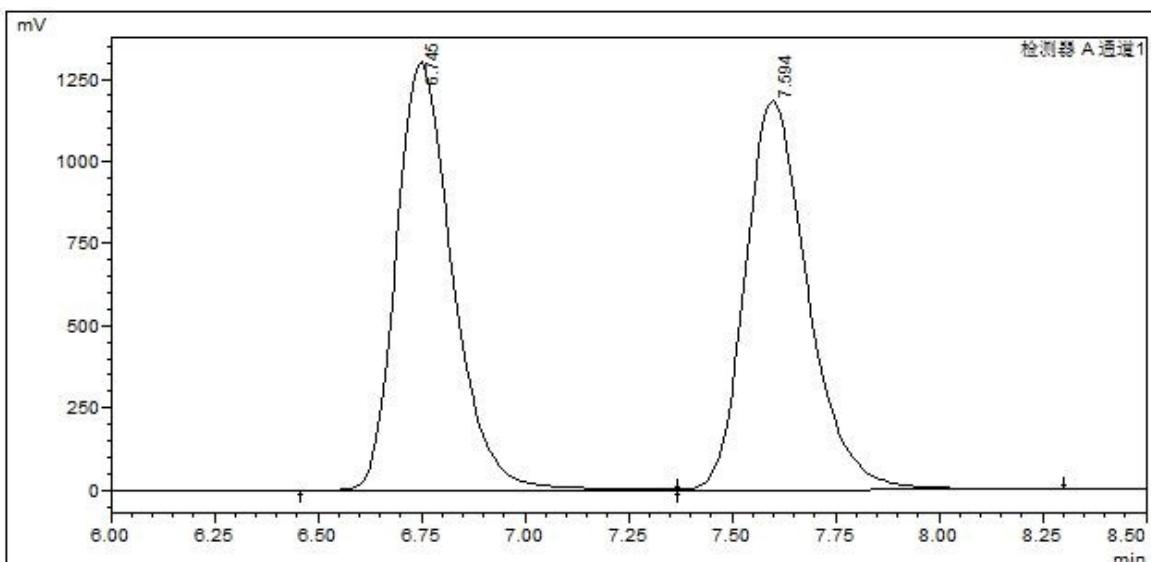
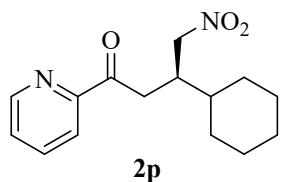
HPLC spectra of compound **2n** (racemic and chiral product):



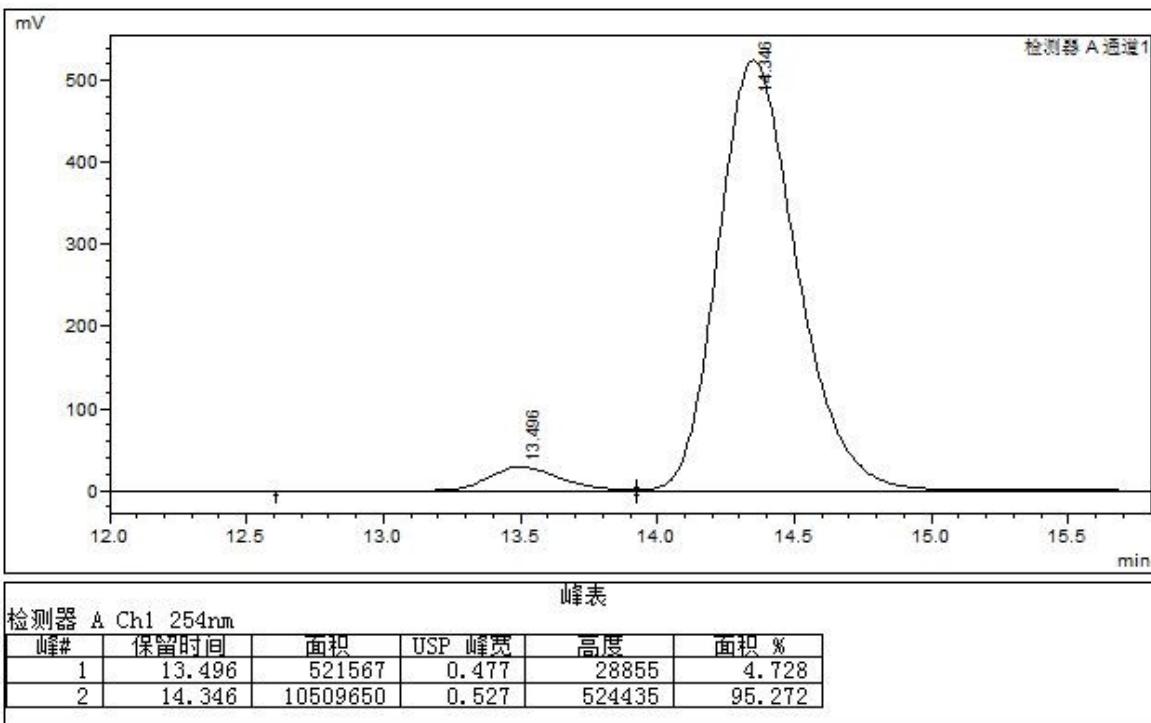
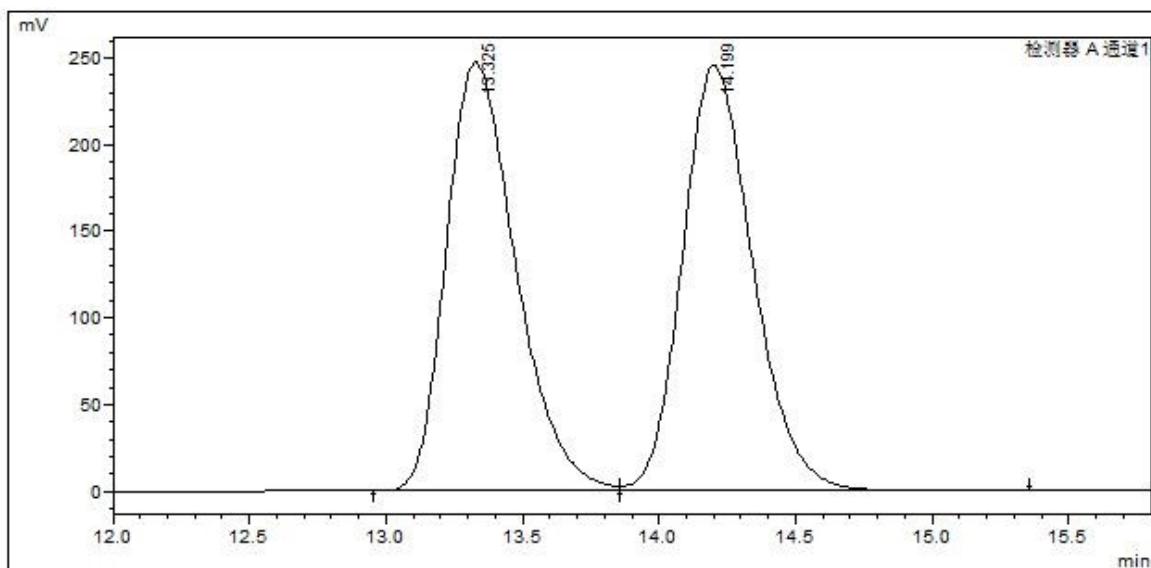
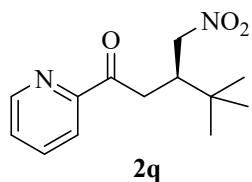
HPLC spectra of compound **2o** (racemic and chiral product):



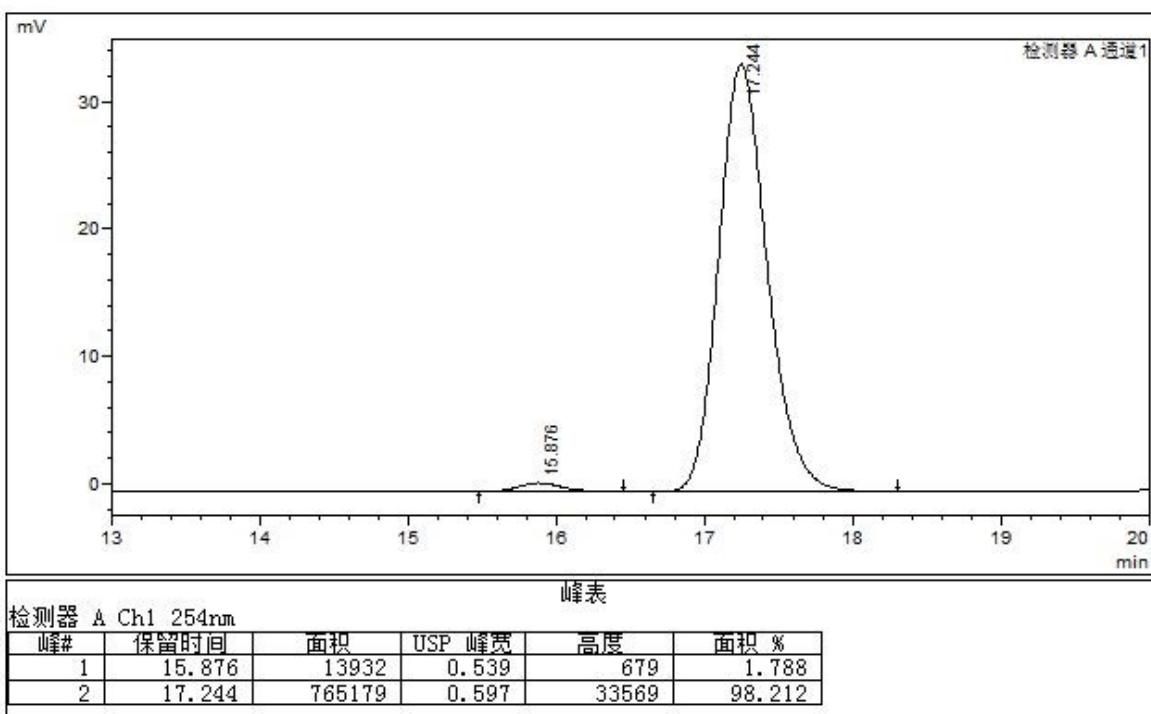
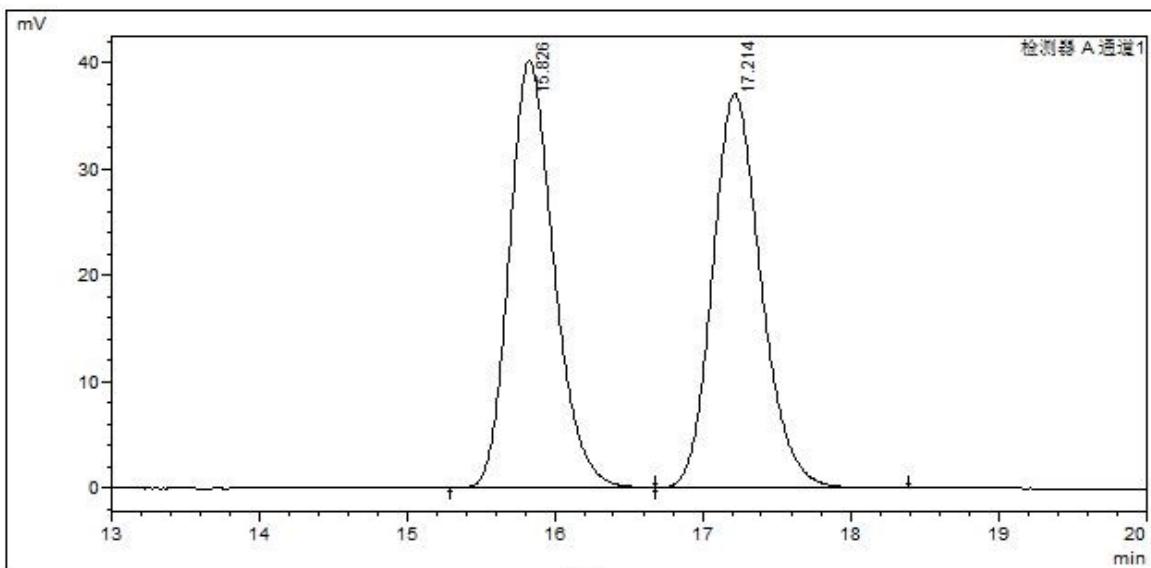
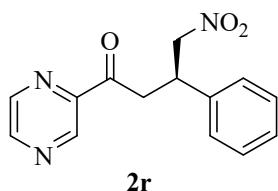
HPLC spectra of compound **2p** (racemic and chiral product):



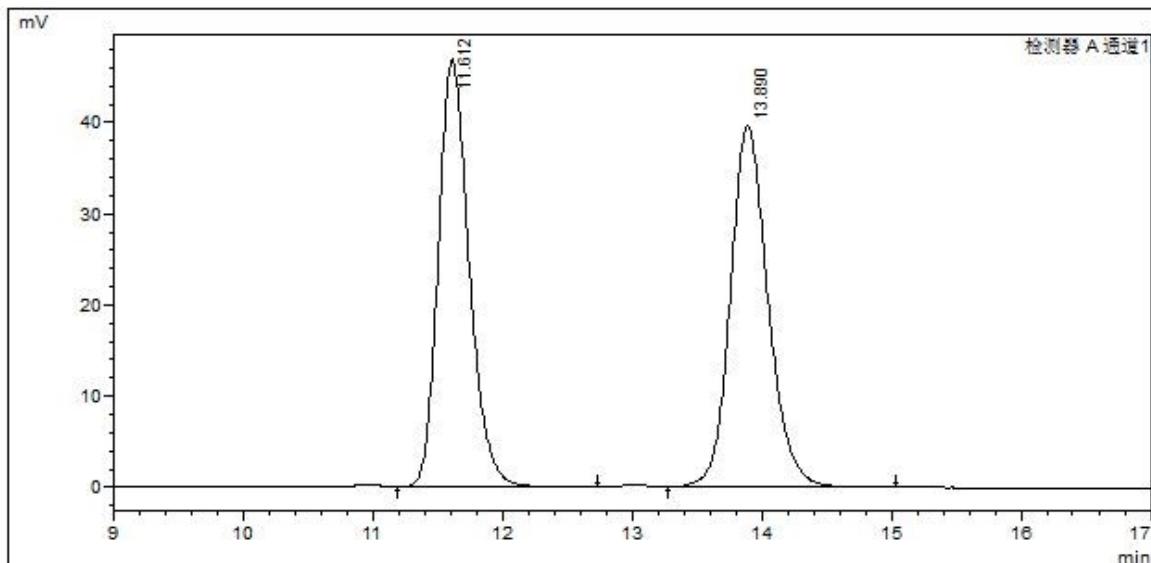
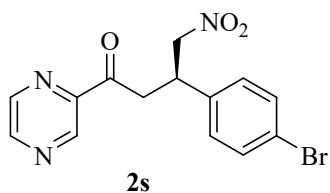
HPLC spectra of compound **2q** (racemic and chiral product):



HPLC spectra of compound **2r** (racemic and chiral product):



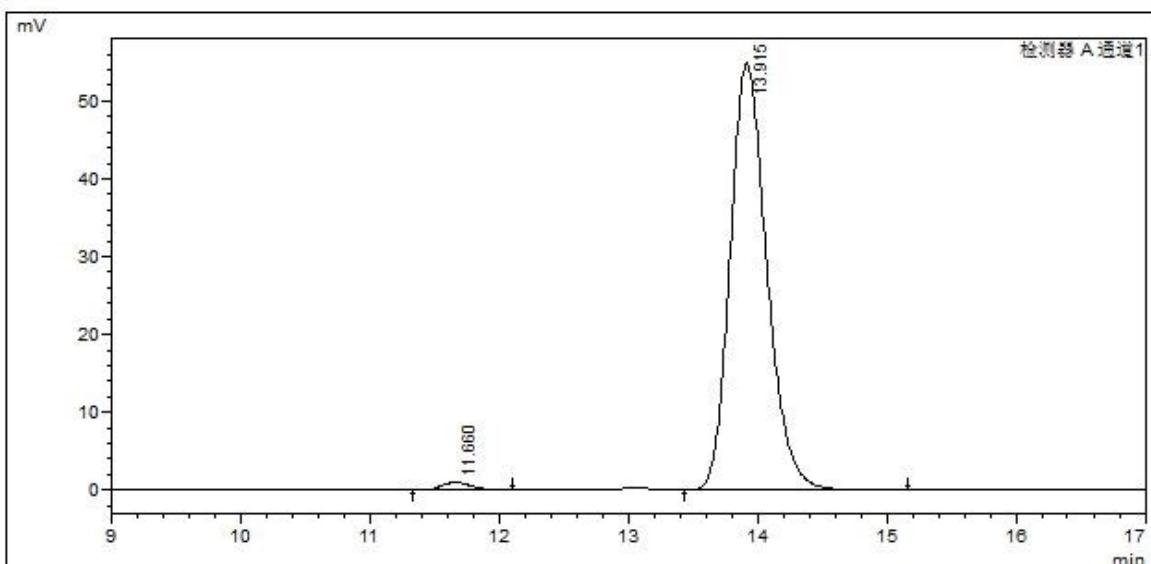
HPLC spectra of compound **2s** (racemic and chiral product):



峰表

检测器 A Ch1 254nm

峰#	保留时间	面积	USP 峰宽	高度	面积 %
1	11.612	776653	0.435	46879	49.277
2	13.890	799440	0.523	39589	50.723

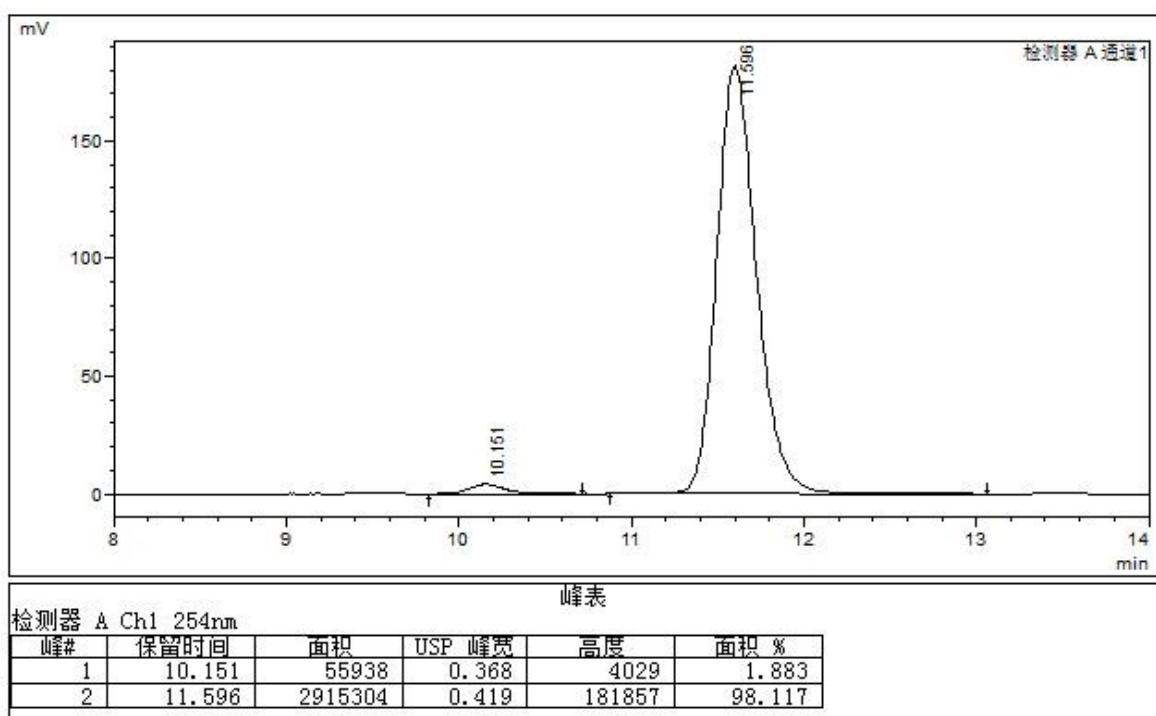
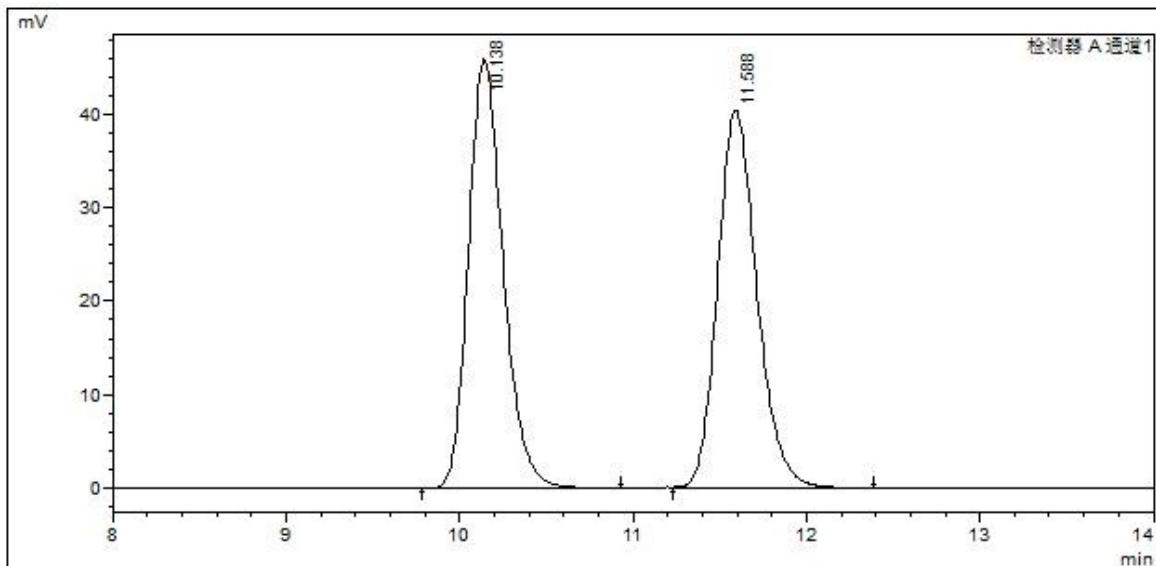
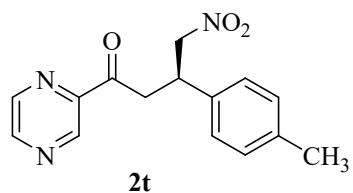


峰表

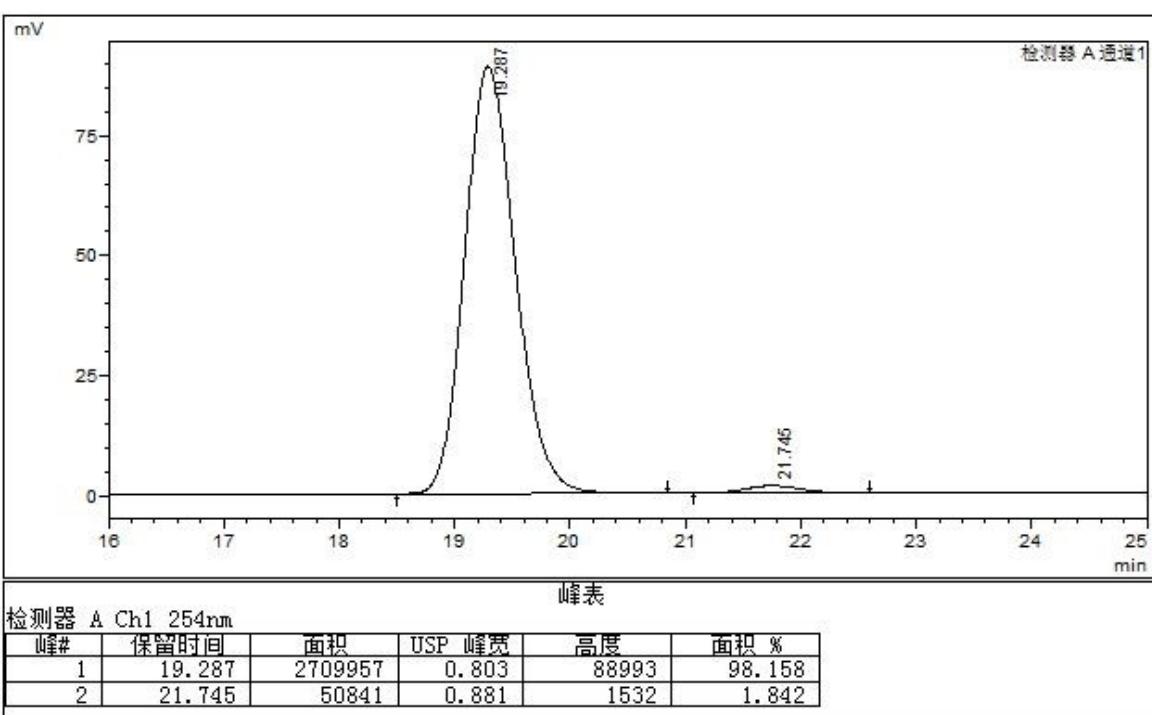
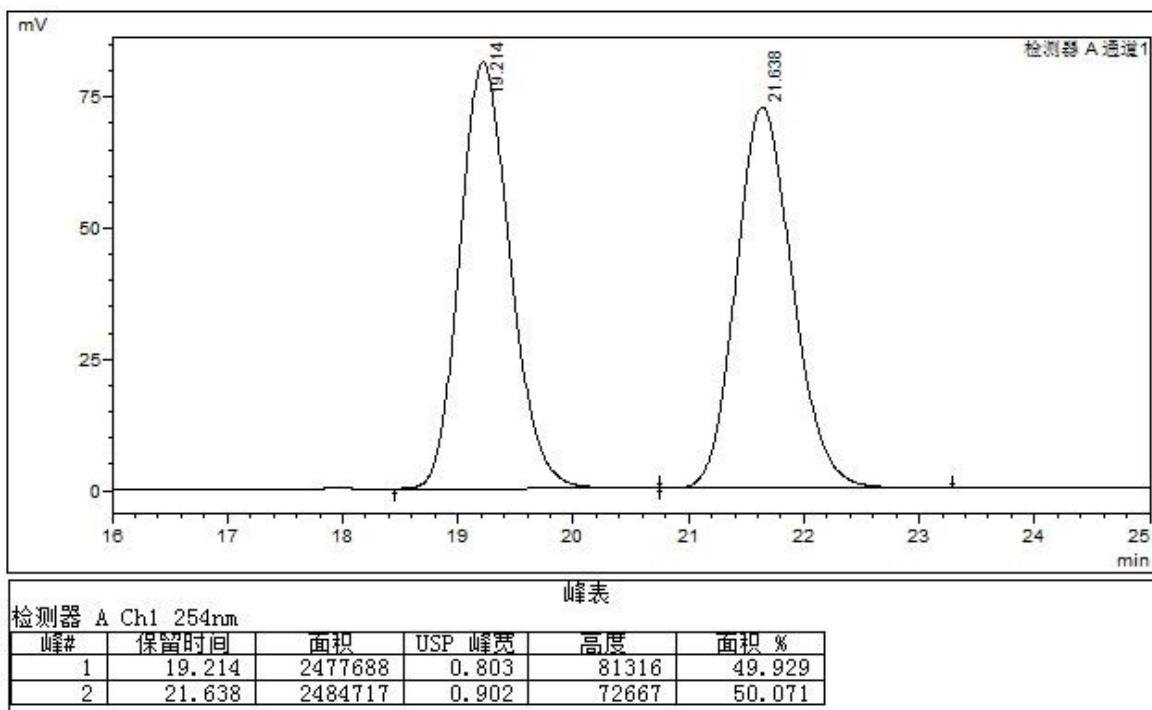
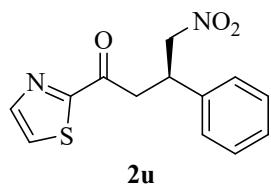
检测器 A Ch1 254nm

峰#	保留时间	面积	USP 峰宽	高度	面积 %
1	11.660	16740	0.433	1033	1.518
2	13.915	1086095	0.518	54917	98.482

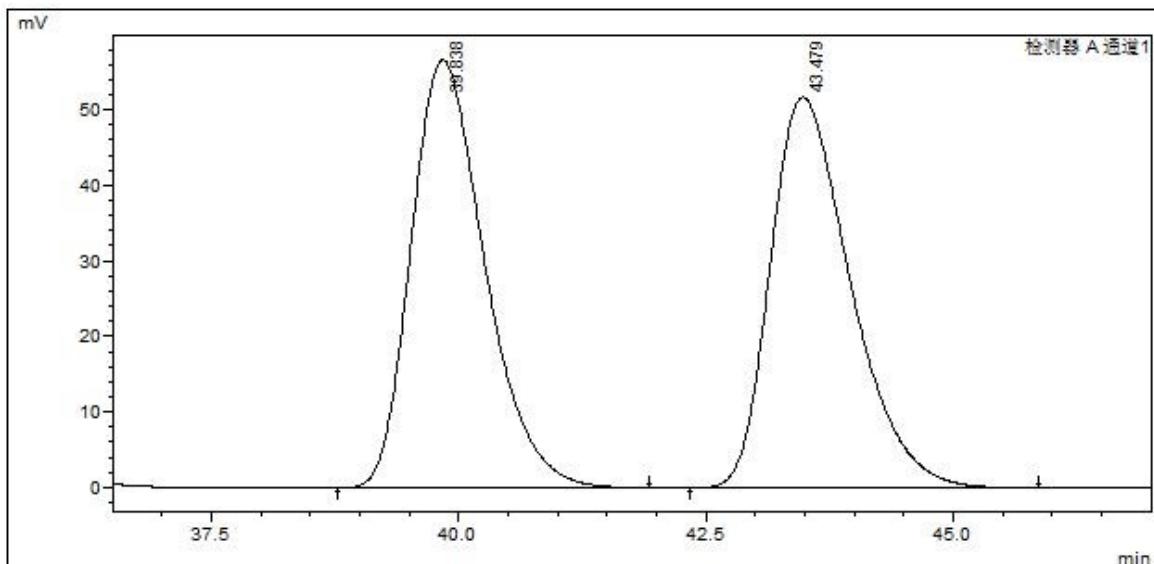
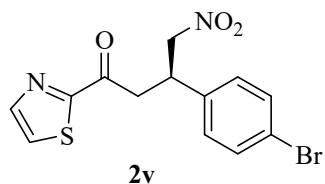
HPLC spectra of compound **2t** (racemic and chiral product):



HPLC spectra of compound **2u** (racemic and chiral product):



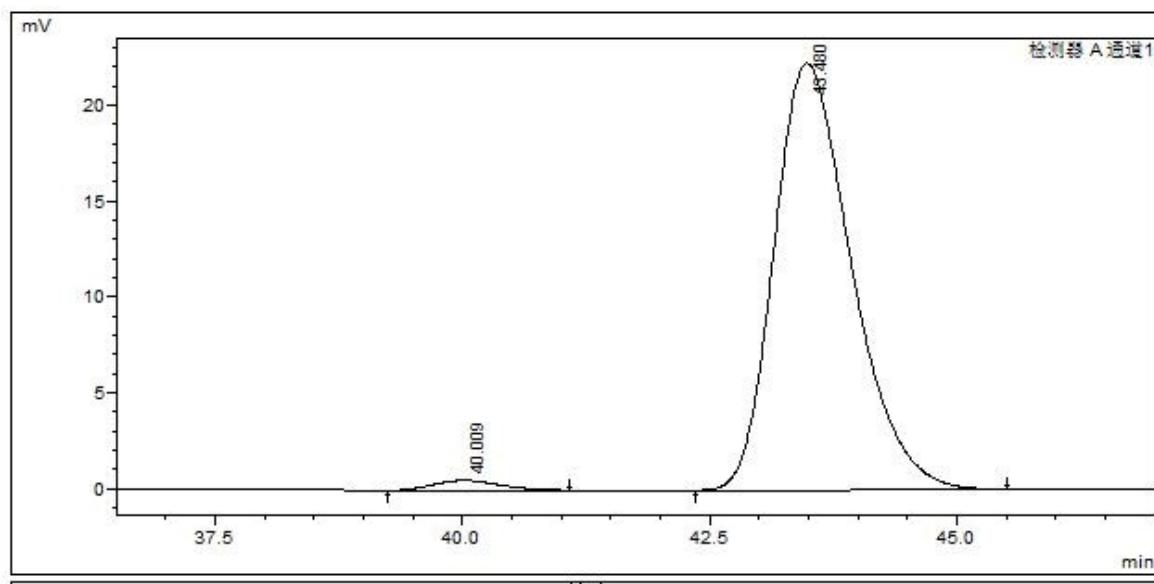
HPLC spectra of compound **2v** (racemic and chiral product):



峰表

检测器 A Ch1 254nm

峰#	保留时间	面积	USP 峰宽	高度	面积 %
1	39.838	2939685	1.357	56642	50.128
2	43.479	2924630	1.482	51718	49.872

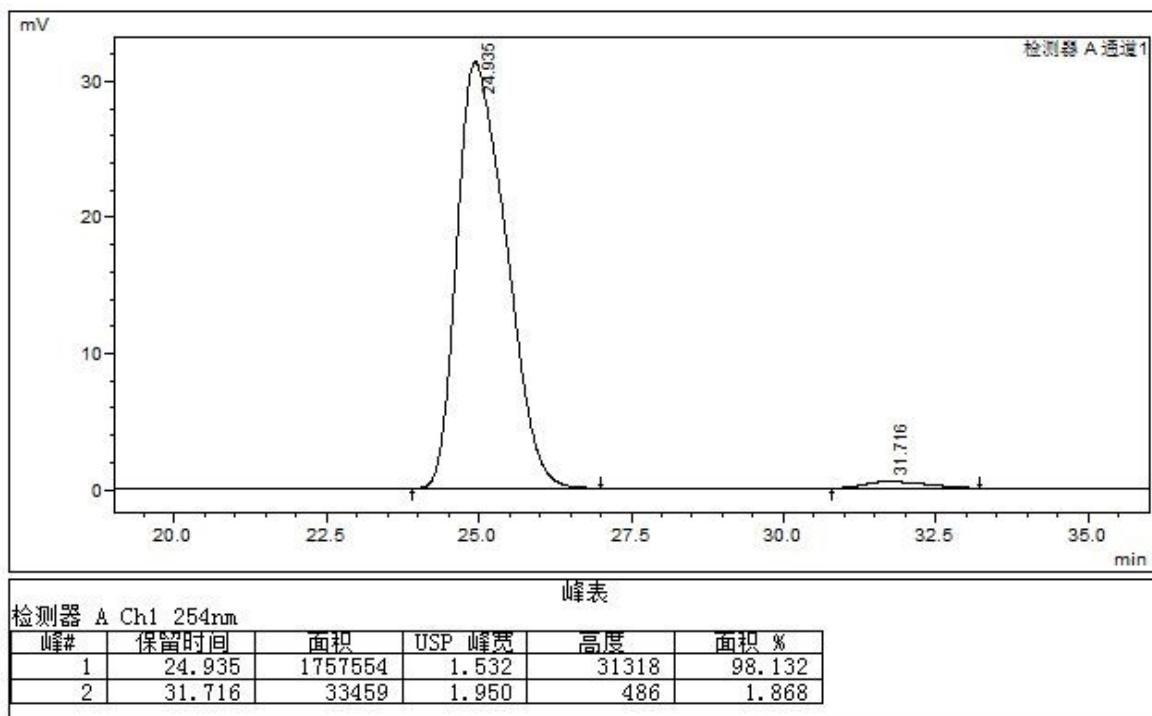
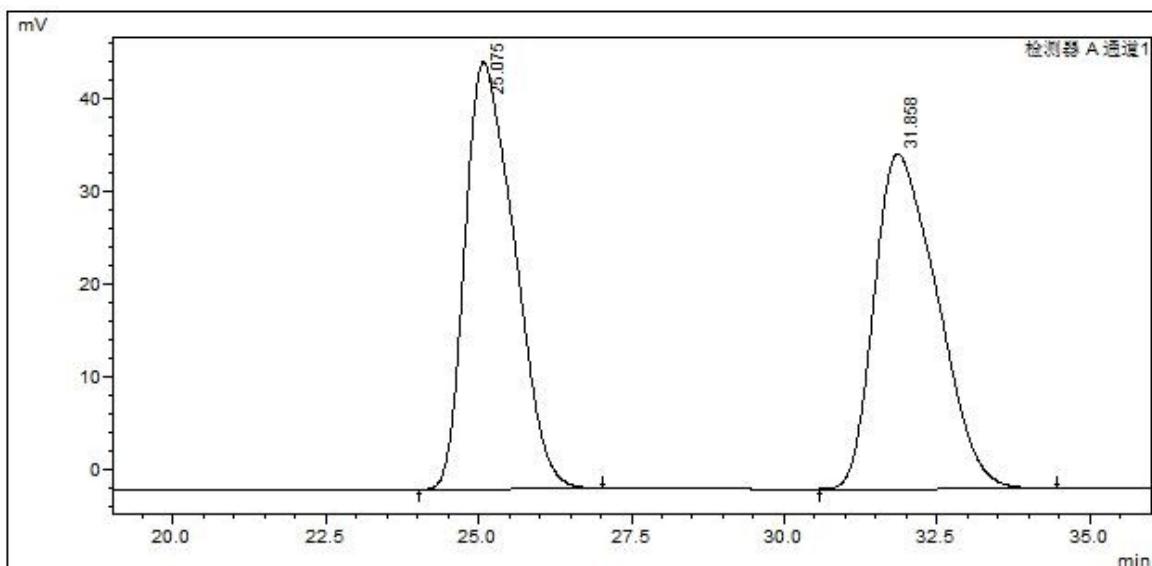
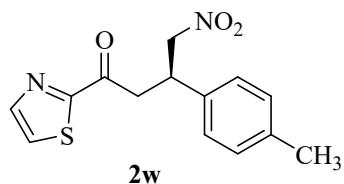


峰表

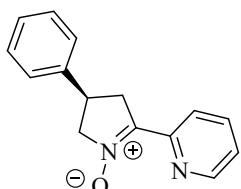
检测器 A Ch1 254nm

峰#	保留时间	面积	USP 峰宽	高度	面积 %
1	40.009	24496	1.252	522	1.975
2	43.480	1215572	1.429	22283	98.025

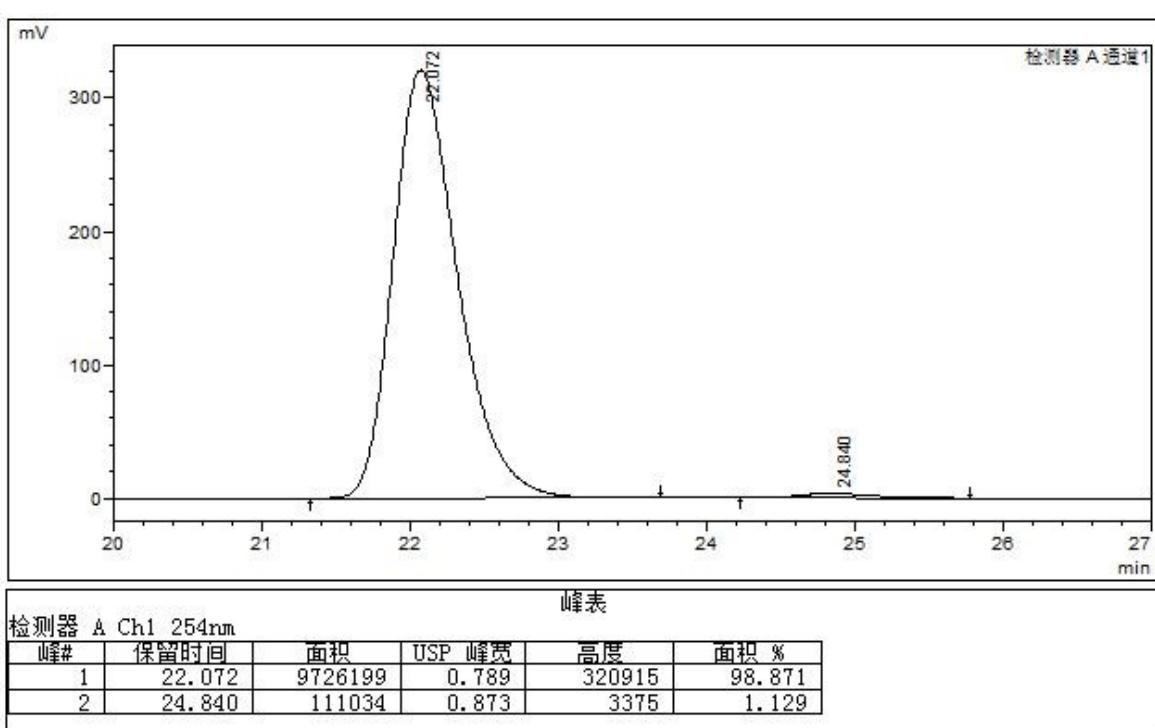
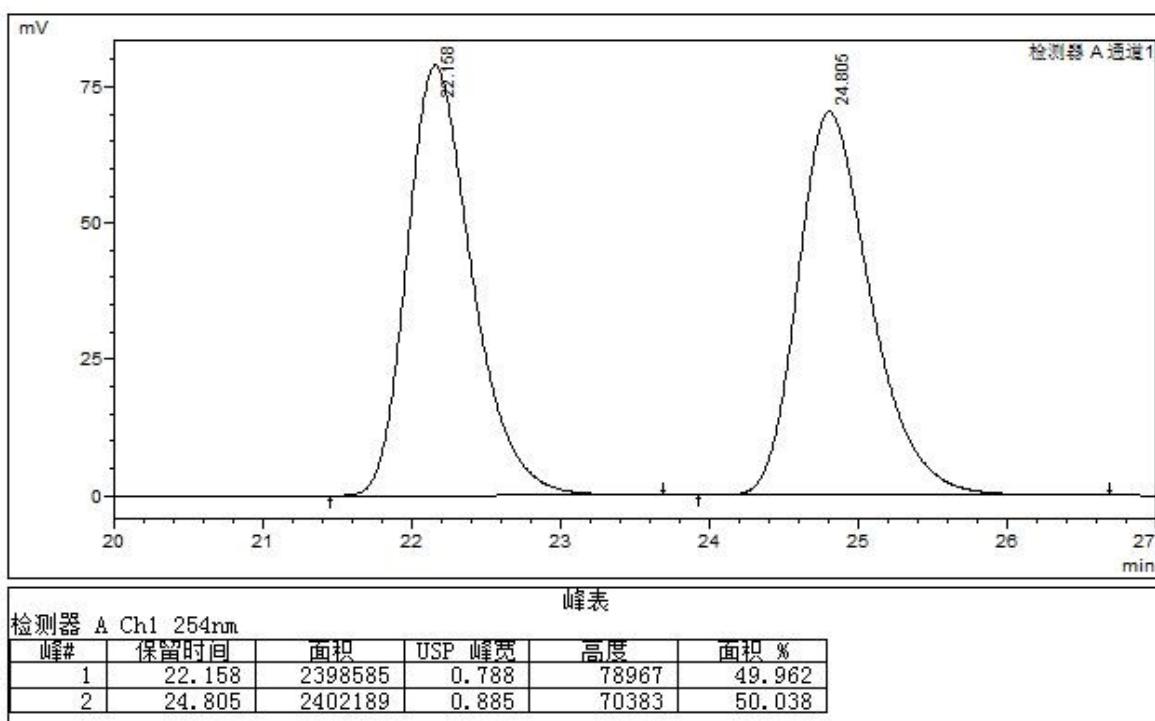
HPLC spectra of compound **2w** (racemic and chiral product):



HPLC spectra of compound **3a** (racemic and chiral product):



3a



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