Electronic Supplementary Information

Remote C-H Bond Cooperation Strategy Enabled Silver Catalyzed Borrowing Hydrogen Reactions

Zhe Chen, Laofeng Ouyang, Ning Wang, Weikang Li, and Zhuofeng Ke*

*School of Materials Science and Engineering, PCFM Lab, the Key Laboratory of Low-carbon Chemistry & Energy Conservation of Guangdong Province, Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, 510006, P. R. China. *E-mail: kezhf3@mail.sysu.edu.cn

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I. General Information

Unless otherwise stated, all manipulations were carried out under dry argon and dry nitrogen using conventional Schlenk or glove box techniques. All experiments involving catalysts were carried out under dark circumstances. Non-halogenated solvents were dried over sodium benzophenone ketyl and halogenated solvents over CaH₂. All other reagents were purchased from commercial sources and used without further purification. **TLC** was performed on silica gel GF254 (layer thickness 0.20-0.25 mm) and components were located by observation under UV light. Column chromatography was performed on silica gel (300-400 mesh) using 5% ethyl acetate/hexane (petroleum ether) as eluent. NMR spectra were recorded using a Bruker 400 MHz spectrometer, and chemical shifts were reported relative to TMS. GC analyses were recorded in a Shimadzu GC-2014C device equipped with a Wondacap 1 column.

II. Preparation of Ligands and Silver Complexes



Synthesis of 3, 3'-methylenebis(1-methyl-1H-imidazol-3-ium) bromide (L6)¹

Following the general method using 1-methylimidazole (1.59 mL, 20 mmol) and dibromomethane (0.7 mL, 10 mmol) in a sealed tube, gave L6 as a white solid. Yield: 3.04 g (90%). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 9.46 (s, - CH, 1H), 8.02 (s, =CH, 1H), 7.81 (s, =CH, 1H), 6.71 (s, -CH₂, 1H), 3.91 (s, -CH₃, 3H) ppm.



Figure S1. The ¹H NMR spectra of L6 in DMSO- d_6 .



Synthesis of 2,3-dimethyl-1-[(3-methyl-1H-imidazol-3-ium-1-yl)methyl]-1H-imidazol-3-ium iodide chloride (L7)

The 1-(chloromethyl)-3-methyl-1H-imidazol-3-ium iodide was synthesized following the general methods². Then, 1-(chloromethyl)-3-methyl-1H-imidazol-3-ium iodide (207.2 mg, 0.8 mmol) and 1,2-dimethyl-1H imidazole (76.7 mg, 0.8 mmol) in THF (15 mL) were added in a sealed tube. The reaction was allowed to stir at 110 °C overnight. The white product (L7) was filtered and washed with ethyl acetate. The product was dried in vacuum. Yield: 200 mg (71%). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 9.67 (s, -CH, 1H), 8.16 – 8.07 (m, =CH, 2H), 7.81 (m, =CH, 1H), 7.75 (m, =CH, 1H), 6.76 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 3.90 (s, -CH₃, 3H), 3.78 (s, -CH₃, 3H), 2.79 (s, -CH₃, 3H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ = 10.57, 35.55, 36.66, 57.42, 121.36, 122.55, 123.69, 124.68, 138.47, 147.18 ppm. HRMS m/z: Calcd. for C₁₀H₁₆N₄²⁺: 96.0682, Found: 96.0678.



Figure S2a. The ¹H NMR spectra of L7 in DMSO- d_6 .





Synthesis of 3-methyl-1-(pyridin-2-yl)-1H-imidazol-3-ium bromide (L8)¹

2-bromopyridine (0.82 g, 10 mmol) and 1-methyl-1H-imidazole (1.58 g 10 mmol) were added in a sealed tube. The reaction was allowed to stir at 160 °C for 2 days. The solvent was evaporated to dryness and the corresponding crude was purified by column chromatography with silica gel (dichloromethane/methanol). The volatile solvent was removed to obtain the brown product. The product was dried under vacuum. Yield: 1.25 g (52 %). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 10.10 (s, -CH, 1H), 8.66 (s, =CH, 1H), 8.53 (s, =CH, 1H), 8.23 (s, =CH, 1H), 8.05 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, =CH, 1H), 7.99 (s, =CH, 1H), 7.65 (s, =CH, 1H), 4.00 (s, -CH₃, 3H).



Figure S3. The ¹H NMR spectra of L8 in DMSO- d_6 .

Synthesis of C1³



In a flask (50 mL), imidazolium salts L1 (0.099 g, 0.75 mmol), Ag₂O (0.23 g, 1.0 mmol) and 10 mL CH₃CN were added in order. The mixture was stirred at R.T. for 2 days under dark circumstances. The slurry was filtered through a Celite pad. The volatile solvent was removed to obtain the brown product. The product was dried under vacuum. Yield: 108 mg (65%). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 7.42 (s, =CH, 1H), 3.83 (s, -CH₃, 3H). The single crystal suitable for X-ray diffraction analysis was obtained from slow diffusion of diethyl ether into an acetonitrile solution of C1 at room temperature.



Figure S4-a. The ¹H NMR spectra of C1 in DMSO- d_6 .



Figure S4-b. Crystal structure of C1. (CCDC 2343004)

Synthesis of NHC-Ag^{4,5}



In a flask (50 mL), imidazolium salts L6 (0.606 g, 2 mmol), Ag₂O (1.16 g, 5 mmol) and 10 mL H₂O were added in order. The mixture was stirred at R.T. for 15 minutes under dark circumstances. The slurry was filtered through a Celite pad. NH₄PF₆ (326mg, 2mmol) was added into the filtrate to precipitate NHC-Ag as white solid that was collected by filtration. The product was dried under vacuum. Yield: 836 mg (97%). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆)

 δ 7.89 (d, J = 1.8 Hz, =CH, 2H), 7.55 (d, J = 1.8 Hz, =CH, 2H), 6.69 (d, =CH, 2H), 3.87 (s, -CH₃, 6H) ppm. The single crystal suitable for X-ray diffraction analysis was obtained from slow diffusion of diethyl ether into an ace-tonitrile solution of **NHC-Ag** at room temperature.



Figure S5-a. The ¹H NMR spectra of NHC-Ag in DMSO-*d*₆.



Figure S5-b. Crystal structure of NHC-Ag. (CCDC 2343003)

- III. N-alkylation of Amines with Alcohols
- 1. GC analysis method for the condition optimization

1.1 GC analysis method

Injector: Mode: Split, Temp.: 330 °C, Gas: N2 Pressure: 1.34 bar, Split ratio: 39:1, Split flow: 67.6 mL/min.

Column: Wondacap 1 column Capillary column (30 m \times 0.25 mm), Nominal film thickness: 0.250 μ m, Temperature program: Initial temperature 100 °C, heat to 120 °C with 5 °C/min, then heat to 200 °C with 50 °C/min, hold for 5 min.

Initial Flow: 1.62 mL/min, Average velocity: 39.4 cm/sec, Pressure: 1.34 bar. Detector (FID): Temp.: 330 °C, Hydrogen flow: 40.0 mL/min, Air flow: 400.0 mL/min. Preparation of GC sample:

Dilute the crude reaction mixture with 2 mL CH₃OH, 5 mL EtOAc, and 113 uL dodecane in order, filtered through the syringe filter, and collected in GC vials for analysis.

Retention times: Benzaldehyde: 2.79 min, Aniline: 2.87 min, Benzyl alcohol: 3.33 min, *N*-1-diphenylme-thanimine: 8.66 min, *N*, *N*-benzyl phenylamine: 9.05 min.

2. The N-alkylation of amines with alcohols by silver complex

2.1 The general method for screening the reaction conditions

To a 10 mL seal tube charged with a stirring bar in a glovebox, was added aniline (**2a**), benzyl alcohol (**1a**), base, Ag catalyst, and 1 mL solvent. Then the tube was sealed with a Teflon plug and removed from the glovebox. The reaction mixture was stirred for 24 h at 150 °C. After cooling to R.T., the crude reaction mixture was diluted with 2 mL CH₃OH, 5 mL EtOAc, and 113 uL dodecane in order, filtered through a syringe filter, and collected in GC vials for analysis.

Entry	1a/2a	Cat. (mol%)	Т	Base (eq.)	Solvent	Time	3a Yield
			(°C)		(1 mL)	(h)	(%)
1	2.0	5.0	150	KO ^t Bu (0.7)	1,4-dioxane	24	95
2	2.0	$Ag_{2}O(2.5) + L1$ (10.0)	150	KO'Bu (0.7)	1,4-dioxane	24	30
3	1.5	5.0	150	KO'Bu (0.5)	1,4-dioxane	24	78
4	1.5	5.0	150	NaO ^t Bu (0.5)	1,4-dioxane	24	72
5	1.5	5.0	150	$Cs_2CO_3(0.5)$	1,4-dioxane	24	trace
6	1.5	5.0	150	KOH (0.5)	1,4-dioxane	24	trace
7		5.0	150	KO ^t Bu (0.5)	neat	24	16
8	1.5	5.0	150	KO ^t Bu (0.5)	toluene	24	68
9	1.5	5.0	150	KO ^t Bu (0.5)	xylene	24	65
10	2.0	5.0	150	KO ^t Bu (0.5)	1,4-dioxane	24	89
11	3.0	5.0	150	KO ^t Bu (0.5)	1,4-dioxane	24	85
12	1.5	5.0	150	KO ^t Bu (0.7)	1,4-dioxane	24	89
13	1.5	5.0	150	KO ^t Bu (0.9)	1,4-dioxane	24	47
14	2.0	2.5	150	KO'Bu (0.7)	1,4-dioxane	24	94(90)
15	2.0	1.0	150	KO ^t Bu (0.7)	1,4-dioxane	24	88
16	2.0	2.5	140	KO'Bu (0.7)	1,4-dioxane	24	66
17	2.0	2.5	120	KO'Bu (0.7)	1,4-dioxane	24	36
18	2.0	2.5	100	KO ^t Bu (0.7)	1,4-dioxane	24	14
19	2.0		150	KO'Bu (0.7)	1,4-dioxane	24	trace
20	2.0	Ag ₂ O (2.5)	150	KO ^t Bu (0.7)	1,4-dioxane	24	trace
21	2.0	L6 (5.0)	150	KO ^t Bu (0.7)	1,4-dioxane	24	trace

Table S1. Optimization of reaction conditions

22 2.0
$$\frac{\text{Ag}_2\text{O}(2.5) + \text{L6}}{(5.0)}$$
 150 KO'Bu (0.7) 1,4-dioxane 24 74

2.2 The general method for the substrate screenings

To a 10 mL seal tube in a glovebox, added amines (2, 0.5 mmol), alcohols (1, 1.0 mmol), KO'Bu (0.7 equiv.), NHC-Ag (2.5 mol%) and 1,4-dioxane (1 mL). Then the tube was sealed with a Teflon plug and removed from the glove box. The reaction mixture was stirred for 24 h at 150 °C. After cooling to R.T., the crude reaction mixture was diluted with 2 mL CH₃OH and 5 mL EtOAc in order. The solvent was evaporated to dryness and the corresponding amine was purified by column chromatography with silica gel. The yields were calculated based on isolated products. Characterization data for products

N-benzyl-4-methoxyaniline (3aa).⁶

The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 95 % isolated yield, 87 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.49 – 7.41 (m, -C₆H₅, 4H), 7.40 – 7.34 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.29 – 7.23 (t, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.86 – 6.78 (t, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.76 – 6.69 (d, -C₆H₅, 2H), 4.41 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.09 (s, -NH, 1H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 48.47, 112.98, 117.70, 127.37, 127.65, 128.77, 129.40, 139.58, 148.30 ppm.



Figure S6-1a. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3aa in Chloroform-d.



N-benzyl-4-methoxyaniline (**3ab**).⁶

H₃CO

The compound was prepared as described in the general method (colorless oil, 92 % isolated yield, 98 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.45 – 7.33 (m, -C₆H₅, 4H), 7.33 – 7.26 (t, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.85 – 6.77 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.68 – 6.60 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 4.32 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 3.77 (s, -OCH₃, 3H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 49.26, 55.83, 114.13, 114.90, 127.21, 127.59, 128.63, 139.67, 142.43, 152.19 ppm.



Figure S6-2b. The ¹³C NMR spectra of **3ab** in Chloroform-*d*.

N-benzyl-3-methoxyaniline (**3ac**).⁷

OCH3

The compound was prepared as described in the general method (colorless oil, 83 % isolated yield, 88 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.47 – 7.38 (m, -C₆H₅, 4H), 7.38 – 7.30 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.15 (t, *J* = 8.1 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.35 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.27 (t, *J* = 2.3 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 4.37 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.10 (s, -NH, 1H), 3.81 (s, -OCH₃, 3H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 48.38, 55.11, 98.99, 102.79, 106.07, 127.29, 127.58, 128.69, 130.06, 139.45, 149.66, 160.93 ppm.



Figure S6-3a. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3ac in Chloroform-d.



N-benzyl-2-methoxyaniline (3ad).⁸



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 87 % isolated yield, 93 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.49 – 7.37 (m, -C₆H₅, 4H), 7.37 – 7.30 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.91 – 6.83 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.75 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.67 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 4.70 (s, -NH, 1H), 4.42 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 3.91 (s, -OCH₃, 3H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 48.06, 55.45, 109.41, 110.12, 116.69, 121.33, 127.19, 127.58, 128.65, 138.17, 139.64, 146.83 ppm.



N-benzyl-4-methylaniline (**3ae**).⁶

The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 86 % isolated yield, 85 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.46 – 7.38 (m, -C₆H₅, 4H), 7.36 – 7.29 (t, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.05 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.66 – 6.59 (d, -C₆H₅, 2H), 4.37 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 3.96 (s, -NH, 1H), 2.30 (s, -CH₃, 3H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 20.48, 48.67, 113.09, 126.79, 127.22, 127.56, 128.66, 129.81, 139.71, 145.97 ppm.



Figure S6-5a. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3ae in Chloroform-d.



N-benzyl-3-methylaniline (**3af**).⁸



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 76 % isolated yield, 75 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.43 – 7.34 (m, -C₆H₅, 4H), 7.33 – 7.29 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.10 (t, *J* = 7.7 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.58 (d, *J* = 7.5 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.53 – 6.46 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 4.35 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.00 (s, -NH, 1H), 2.30 (s, -CH₃, 3H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 21.67, 48.36, 109.95, 113.62, 118.54, 127.23, 127.56, 128.65, 129.18, 139.09, 139.55, 148.23 ppm.



N-benzyl-2-methylaniline (**3ag**).⁶

K.

The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 82 % isolated yield, 81 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.46 – 7.37 (m, -C₆H₅, 4H), 7.36 – 7.30 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.19 – 7.09 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.72 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.66 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 4.42 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 3.91 (s, -NH, 1H), 2.21 (s, -CH₃, 3H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 17.63, 48.33, 109.98, 117.20, 121.96, 127.20, 127.30, 127.59, 128.71, 130.10, 139.51, 146.08 ppm.



Figure S6-7a. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3ag in Chloroform-d.



N-benzyl-4-(tert-butyl)aniline (3ah).⁹

The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 98 % isolated yield, 117 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.49 – 7.38 (m, -C₆H₅, 4H), 7.38 – 7.34 (t, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.32 – 7.26 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.71 – 6.65 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 4.38 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.00 (s, -NH, 1H), 1.36 (s, -C(CH₃)₃, 9H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 31.60, 33.88, 48.70, 112.64, 126.07, 127.22, 127.61, 128.64, 139.79, 140.40, 145.94 ppm.



Figure S6-8b. The ¹³C NMR spectra of **3ah** in Chloroform-*d*.

N-benzyl-2-(tert-butyl)aniline (3ai).⁶



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 60 % isolated yield, 72 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.42 – 7.27 (m, -C₆H₅, 6H), 7.10 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.75 – 6.63 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 4.41 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.28 (s, -NH, 1H), 1.44 (s, -C(CH₃)₃, 9H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 29.98, 34.22, 48.88, 111.96, 117.26, 126.23, 127.22, 127.52, 128.74, 133.29, 139.68, 146.17 ppm.



Figure S6-9a. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3ai in Chloroform-d.



N-benzyl-3-vinylaniline (3aj).⁶



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 64 % isolated yield, 67 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.41 – 7.27 (m, -C₆H₅, 5H), 7.12 (t, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.79 (d, J = 7.5 Hz, =CH, 1H), 6.71 – 6.50 (m, -C₆H₅, 3H), 5.67 (d, J = 17.5 Hz, =CH₂, 1H), 5.19 (d, J = 10.9 Hz, =CH₂, 1H), 4.34 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.03 (s, -NH, 1H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 48.42, 110.21, 110.65, 112.59, 113.55, 115.94, 117.40, 127.33, 127.59, 128.71, 129.45, 137.33, 138.64, 139.43, 148.40 ppm.



Figure S6-10b. The ¹³C NMR spectra of **3aj** in Chloroform-d.

N-benzyl-4-(methylthio)aniline (**3ak**).⁶



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 83 % isolated yield, 96 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.42 – 7.28 (m, -C₆H₅, 5H), 7.28 – 7.20 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.65 – 6.58 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 4.34 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.17 (s, -NH, 1H), 2.43 (s, -SCH₃, 3H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 21.91, 48.33, 110.84, 113.51, 127.35, 127.49, 128.70, 131.47, 139.07, 147.87 ppm.



Figure S6-11a. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3ak in Chloroform-d.



Figure S6-11b. The ¹³C NMR spectra of **3ak** in Chloroform-d.

N-benzyl-3-(trifluoromethyl)aniline (3al).⁸



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 86 % isolated yield, 108 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.42 – 7.23 (m, -C₆H₅, 6H), 6.98 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.88 (s, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.78 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 4.38 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.24 (s, -NH, 1H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 48.16, 109.08, 113.95, 115.72, 127.52, 128.78, 129.66, 138.59, 148.24 ppm.



 N^{l} , N^{2} -dibenzylbenzene-1,2-diamine (**3am**).¹⁰



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 64 % isolated yield, 92 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.48 – 7.30 (m, -C₆H₅, 10H), 6.90 – 6.74 (m, -C₆H₅, 4H), 4.38 (s, -CH₂, 4H), 3.74 (s, -NH, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 48.87, 112.89, 119.52, 127.27, 127.84, 128.62, 137.97 ppm.



Figure S6-13a. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3am in Chloroform-d.



Figure S6-13b. The ¹³C NMR spectra of 3am in Chloroform-d.

N-benzylnaphthalen-2-amine (3an).⁶



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 85 % isolated yield, 100 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.75 – 7.59 (m, -C₆H₅, 3H), 7.46 (d, *J* = 7.0 Hz, -C₆H₅, 2H), 7.44 – 7.37 (m, -C₆H₅, 3H), 7.37 – 7.31 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.29 – 7.20 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.96 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.89 (d, *J* = 2.4 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 4.48 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.22 (s, -NH, 1H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 48.41, 104.73, 117.87, 122.09, 126.03, 126.35, 127.36, 127.65, 128.72, 128.99, 135.22, 139.22, 145.81 ppm.



Figure S6-14b. The ¹³C NMR spectra of **3an** in Chloroform-*d*.

N-benzylnaphthalen-1-amine (**3ao**).⁶

The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 92 % isolated yield, 107 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.89 – 7.80 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 7.54 – 7.24 (m, -C₆H₅, 9H), 6.67 (d, *J* = 7.4 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 4.72 (s, -NH, 1H), 4.54 (s, -CH₂, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 48.66, 104.77, 117.66, 119.89, 123.42, 124.76, 125.75, 126.61, 127.41, 127.75, 128.71, 128.74, 134.33, 139.13, 143.24 ppm.



Figure S6-15a. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3ao in Chloroform-d.



N-benzylquinolin-8-amine (3ap).⁶



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (colorless oil, 81 % isolated yield, 95 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 8.76 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 8.10 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.52 – 7.44 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 7.44 – 7.23 (m, -C₆H₅, 5H), 7.10 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.67 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 4.60 (d, *J* = 5.8 Hz, -CH₂, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 47.77, 105.19, 114.19, 121.44, 127.18, 127.47, 127.82, 128.66, 128.71, 136.04, 138.31, 139.31, 144.67, 146.94 ppm.



Figure S6-16b. The ¹³C NMR spectra of **3ap** in Chloroform-*d*.

N-benzylpyridin-3-amine (**3aq**).⁶

The compound was prepared as described in the general method (solid, 90 % isolated yield, 83 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 8.07 (d, *J* = 2.9 Hz, =CH, 1H), 7.96 (m, =CH, 1H), 7.48 – 7.26 (m, -C₆H₅, 5H), 7.06 (m, =CH, 1H), 6.88 (m, =CH, 1H), 4.59 (s, -NH, 1H), 4.34 (s, -CH₂, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 47.89, 118.64, 123.74, 127.42, 127.51, 128.78, 136.13, 138.54, 138.81, 144.10 ppm.



Figure S6-17a. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3aq in Chloroform-d.



N-benzyl-9H-fluoren-2-amine (3ar).⁶



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (colorless oil, 50 % isolated yield, 68 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.63 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.58 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.32 (m, -C₆H₅, 6H), 7.23 – 7.11 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.68 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.45 (d, *J* = 2.2 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 4.32 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.09 (s, -NH, 1H), 3.24 – 2.99 (m, -CH₂, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 40.37, 48.44, 109.24, 112.31, 118.39, 120.61, 124.49, 124.79, 126.30, 127.01, 128.25, 129.63, 139.37, 140.07, 141.40, 145.92, 147.48, 148.74 ppm.



N-benzylbenzo[d][1,3]dioxol-5-amine (**3as**).¹¹


The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 60 % isolated yield, 68 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.39 (s, -C₆H₅, 5H), 6.69 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.30 (d, *J* = 2.3 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.11 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 5.88 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.29 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 3.87 (s, -NH, 1H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 49.29, 96.04, 100.58, 104.46, 108.65, 127.26, 127.54, 128.65, 139.46, 139.74, 143.99, 148.37 ppm.



Figure S6-19a. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3as in Chloroform-d.



N-benzylpyridin-2-amine (3at).⁶



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (solid, 79% isolated yield, 73 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 8.17 – 8.12 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.47 – 7.27 (m, -C₆H₅, 6H), 6.62 (t, *J* = 6.2 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.40 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 4.91 (s, -NH, 1H), 4.53 (s, -CH₂, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 43.89, 107.78, 114.50, 127.29, 127.42, 128.68, 137.57, 140.44, 147.67, 160.23 ppm.



N-(4-methoxybenzyl)aniline (**3ba**).⁶



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 97% isolated yield, 103 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.43 – 7.09 (m, -C₆H₅, 4H), 6.91 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.74 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.67 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, -C₆H₅, 2H), 4.28 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.11 (s, -NH, 1H), 3.83 (s, -OCH₃, 3H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 47.85, 54.33, 112.89, 114.60, 117.19, 128.86, 129.28, 131.33, 146.30, 160.84 ppm.



Figure S6-21a. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3ba in Chloroform-d.



N-(3-methoxybenzyl)aniline (**3ca**).¹²



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 86% isolated yield, 92 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.30 – 7.15 (m, -C₆H₅, 3H), 7.03 – 6.94 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.84 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.74 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.70 – 6.63 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 4.34 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.09 (s, -NH, 1H), 3.83 (s, -OCH₃, 3H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 48.38, 55.22, 112.69, 112.91, 113.06, 117.65, 119.76, 129.26, 129.65, 141.16, 148.12, 159.95 ppm.



N-(2-methoxybenzyl)aniline (3da).¹³



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 86% isolated yield, 92 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.45 – 7.17 (m, -C₆H₅, 4H), 7.01 – 6.91 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.79 – 6.68 (m, -C₆H₅, 3H), 4.40 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.16 (s, -NH, 1H), 3.91 (s, -OCH₃, 3H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 43.50, 55.33, 110.31, 113.11, 117.37, 120.56, 127.41, 128.31, 128.94, 129.19, 148.47, 157.44 ppm.



Figure S6-23a. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3da in Chloroform-d.



N-(4-methylbenzyl)aniline (3ea).⁶



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 89% isolated yield, 88 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.45 – 7.04 (m, -C₆H₅, 6H), 6.85 – 6.55 (m, -C₆H₅, 3H), 4.31 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.12 (s, -NH, 1H), 2.37 (s, -CH₃, 3H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 21.14, 48.12, 112.88, 117.56, 127.56, 129.28, 129.33, 136.29, 136.92, 148.15 ppm.



N-(3-methylbenzyl) aniline (3fa).⁶



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 82% isolated yield, 81 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.27 – 7.04 (m, -C₆H₅, 6H), 6.78 – 6.64 (m, -C₆H₅, 3H), 4.31 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.11 (s, -NH, 1H), 2.38 (s, -CH₃, 3H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 22.60, 47.79, 113.26, 117.93, 124.61, 128.02, 128.33, 128.56, 129.27, 136.79, 138.01, 148.66 ppm.



Figure S6-25a. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3fa in Chloroform-d.



Figure S6-25b. The ¹³C NMR spectra of 3fa in Chloroform-d.

N-(2-methylbenzyl)aniline (**3ga**).⁶



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 89 % isolated yield, 88 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.38 – 7.33 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.25 – 7.17 (m, -C₆H₅, 5H), 6.79 – 6.61 (m, -C₆H₅, 3H), 4.30 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 3.89 (s, -NH, 1H), 2.40 (s, -CH₃, 3H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 20.17, 48.00, 113.57, 119.23, 126.18, 126.98, 127.86, 129.30, 131.71, 136.56, 137.42, 147.34 ppm.



Figure S6-26b. The ¹³C NMR spectra of 3ga in Chloroform-d.

N-(3-(trifluoromethyl)benzyl)aniline (**3ha**).⁸

CF₃

The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 80 % isolated yield, 101 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.69 (s, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.66 – 7.59 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 7.59 – 7.43 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.31 – 7.19 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.80 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.67 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, -C₆H₅, 2H), 4.44 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.13 (s, -NH, 1H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 47.96, 112.98, 118.05, 124.10, 129.11, 129.37, 130.66, 140.70, 147.78 ppm.



Figure S6-27a. The ¹H NMR spectra of **3ha** in Chloroform-*d*.



N-(cyclohexylmethyl)aniline (**3ia**).¹³



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 65 % isolated yield, 61 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.20 (t, *J* = 7.7 Hz, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.71 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.63 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, -C₆H₅, 2H), 3.73 (s, -NH, 1H), 2.98 (d, -CH₂, 2H), 2.07 – 0.80 (m, -CH₂, 11H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 26.01, 26.61, 31.34, 37.58, 50.62, 112.63, 116.89, 129.24, 148.66 ppm.



N-(4-(methylthio)benzyl)aniline (**3ja**).⁶



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 94 % isolated yield, 108 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 7.32 – 7.22 (m, -C₆H₅, 4H), 7.20 – 7.12 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.71 (t, J = 7.3 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.65 – 6.58 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 4.28 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 3.99 (s, -NH, 1H), 2.47 (s, -SCH₃, 3H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 16.11, 47.92, 112.93, 117.69, 127.08, 128.08, 129.33, 136.48, 137.23, 148.10 ppm.



Figure S6-29a. The ¹H NMR spectra of **3**ja in Chloroform-*d*.



N-(thiophen-2-ylmethyl)aniline (3ka).⁸



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 82 % isolated yield, 77 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.26 – 7.16 (m, =CH, 3H), 7.08 – 6.97 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.78 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.74 – 6.66 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 4.55 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.10 (m, -NH, 1H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 43.54, 113.22, 118.15, 124.65, 125.10, 126.93, 129.35, 143.02, 147.67 ppm.



N-(thiophen-3-ylmethyl)aniline (**3la**).⁸

N H

The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 89 % isolated yield, 84 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.34 (m, =CH, 1H), 7.26 – 7.18 (m, -C₆H₅, =CH, 3H), 7.11 (d, *J* = 5.0 Hz, =CH, 1H), 6.76 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.69 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, -C₆H₅, 2H), 4.37 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.01 (s, -NH, 1H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 43.80, 112.96, 117.74, 121.73, 126.15, 127.17, 129.29, 140.50, 148.06 ppm.



Figure S6-31a. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3la in Chloroform-d.



N-(pyridin-3-ylmethyl)aniline (3ma).⁸



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (solid, 88 % isolated yield, 81 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 8.66 (d, *J* = 2.3 Hz, =CH, 1H), 8.55 (m, =CH, 1H), 7.72 (m, =CH, 1H), 7.33 – 7.25 (m, =CH, 1H), 7.24 – 7.16 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.81 – 6.73 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.69 – 6.62 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 4.39 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.16 (s, -NH, 1H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 45.85, 112.99, 118.09, 123.54, 129.36, 135.09, 147.64, 148.76, 149.21 ppm.



N-(pyridin-2-ylmethyl)aniline (3na).⁶



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 60 % isolated yield, 55 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 8.64 – 8.58 (m, =CH, 1H), 7.66 (m, =CH, 1H), 7.44 – 7.00 (m, -C₆H₅, =CH, 4H), 6.87 – 6.35 (m, -C₆H₅, 3H), 4.77 (s, -NH, 1H), 4.49 (s, -CH₂, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 49.35, 113.09, 117.63, 121.60, 122.09, 129.26, 136.61, 147.93, 149.24, 158.57 ppm.



Figure S6-33a. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3na in Chloroform-d.



N-(naphthalen-2-ylmethyl)aniline (30a).⁶



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 67 % isolated yield, 78 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.92 – 7.83 (m, -C₆H₅, 4H), 7.53 (m, -C₆H₅, 3H), 7.26 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.77 (m, -C₆H₅, 3H), 4.54 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.16 (s, -NH, 1H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 48.57, 113.01, 117.71, 125.78, 125.97, 126.20, 127.75, 127.81, 128.42, 129.34, 132.84, 133.57, 137.03, 148.24 ppm.



Figure S6-34b. The ¹³C NMR spectra of **30a** in Chloroform-*d*.

N-(naphthalen-1-ylmethyl)aniline (**3pa**).⁶



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 85 % isolated yield, 99 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 8.15 – 8.07 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.96 – 7.89 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.84 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.56 (m, -C₆H₅, 3H), 7.46 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.29 – 7.20 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.83 – 6.70 (m, -C₆H₅, 3H), 4.78 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.08 (s, -NH, 1H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 45.95, 113.71, 117.65, 123.58, 125.54, 125.84, 126.09, 126.34, 128.20, 128.77, 129.33, 131.57, 133.91, 134.91, 147.14 ppm.



Figure S6-35a. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3pa in Chloroform-d.



N-([1,1'-biphenyl]-4-ylmethyl)aniline (3qa).⁶



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (soild, 82 % isolated yield, 107 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.71 – 7.58 (m, -C₆H₅, 4H), 7.48 (m, -C₆H₅, 4H), 7.42 – 7.34 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 7.27 – 7.19 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.77 (m, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.73 – 6.67 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 4.42 (s, -CH₂, 2H), 4.11 (s, -NH, 1H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 48.02, 112.89, 117.65, 127.10, 127.30, 127.42, 127.95, 128.82, 129.33, 138.54, 140.24, 140.87, 148.14 ppm.



Figure S6-36b. The ¹³C NMR spectra of 3qa in Chloroform-d.

N-(3,7-dimethyloct-6-en-1-yl)aniline (**3ra**).¹²

The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 78 % isolated yield, 90 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.26 – 7.13 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.73 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, -C₆H₅, 1H), 6.68 – 6.62 (m, -C₆H₅, 2H), 5.15 (m, =CH, 1H), 3.58 (s, -NH, 1H), 3.17 (m, -CH₂, 2H), 2.15 – 1.95 (m, -CH₂, 2H), 1.74 (d, *J* = 1.6 Hz, -CH₃, 3H), 1.70 – 1.60 (m, -CH₂, 5H), 1.53 – 1.17 (m, -CH₃, 3H), 1.05 – 0.87 (m, -CH₃, 3H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ = 17.68, 19.63, 25.51, 25.73, 30.48, 36.76, 37.13, 41.98, 112.73, 117.12, 124.70, 129.23, 131.32, 148.60 ppm.



Figure S6-37a. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3ra in Chloroform-d.



Figure S6-37b. The ¹³C NMR spectra of 3ra in Chloroform-d.

4-((3-(trifluoromethyl)benzyl)amino)benzonitrile (3sa).



The compound was prepared as described in the general method (oil, 61 % isolated yield, 84 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 7.52 (m, -C₆H₅, 4H), 7.42 (d, -C₆H₅, 2H), 6.59 (d, J = 8.3 Hz, -C₆H₅, 2H), 4.73 (s, -NH, 1H), 4.45 (d, J = 4.7 Hz, -CH₂, 2H) ppm. ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 47.12, 99.76, 112.59, 120.23, 123.95, 124.62, 129.43, 130.50, 133.84, 139.06, 150.82 ppm.



Figure S6-38b. The ¹H NMR spectra of 3sa in Chloroform-d.

IV. Mechanism Details

The bis-NHC achieving silver-catalyzed transformation stimulates us to further investigate the silver (de)hydrogenation reaction mechanism. To gain more insights, preliminary control experiments were conducted. Three drops of Hg were added to the reaction under optimal conditions. The reaction still resulted in a satisfactory yield (83%), indicating the homogenous nature of this NHC-Ag catalysis (Figure 3B, entry 1). A radical process could be ruled out with the observation of a high yield (85% and 84%) in the presence of stoichiometric amounts of the radical scavengers, TEMPO and BHT (Figure 3B, entry 2), respectively. To further illustrate the existence of silverhydride species in the N-alkylation reaction, verification experiments were performed. A significant concentration of hydrogen gas was detected during the reaction by GC analysis, produced by the silver-hydride species (Figure S7). The hydrogen-deuterium exchange was observed for the *N*-alkylation between 1a-D and 2a under the optimal reaction conditions. The **3aa**, **3aa**-d₁, and **3aa**-d₂ ratios were calculated based on the detected ¹H NMR spectra (14:42:44, Figure 3B, entry 3, and Figure S8). Furthermore, the kinetic isotope effect (KIE = 2.15) was measured by using benzyl alcohol- α -d₂ (1a-D), which indicated that the (de)hydrogenation of alcohols was probably involved in the rate-determining step (RDS) along the catalytic cycle. Meanwhile, substrate 1b, benzaldehydes 4a, and 2a were added in a molar ratio of 1:1:1 under optimal reaction conditions. The yields of 28% for **3aa** and 36% for **3ba** were detected by GC, which further confirmed the realization of silver-catalyzed BH/HA reaction (Figure 3B, entry 4). Ensuring the silver achieved the BH/HA process, the kinetics of the silver catalytic system were carried out to establish a catalytic model (Figure 3C). The reaction was found to be 0.5 order concerning NHC-Ag, indicating the dissociation of di-nuclear NHC-Ag in the reaction cycle. Meanwhile, the reaction order of ligand L2 was found to be one, which confirmed that one bis-NHC ligand was involved in the catalytic cycle (Figure S9-3b). Combined together, these results revealed the final mechanism study model in which the catalytic species was likely composed of only one silver center and one bis-NHC ligand.

1. Detection of hydrogen gas

To a 15 mL reaction tube in a glovebox, was added aniline (**2a**, 0.5 mmol), benzyl alcohol (**1a**, 1.0 mmol), 'BuOK (0.7 equiv.), **NHC-Ag** (2.5 mol%), and 1,4-dioxane (1 mL). Then the tube was closed with a rubber stopper sealed with iron wire and removed from the glovebox. The reaction mixture was stirred for 2 h at 150 °C. The head gas was collected by a gas-tight syringe and analyzed by GC. Hydrogen gas was detected.



Figure S7. Detection of hydrogen gas by GC. GC parameters: injection temperature = 200 °C, column temperature = 60 °C, detector temperature = 150 °C. 5 Å molecular sieves column was used, and the carrier gas was N₂. The retention time for H₂ was 1.687 min.

2. Deuterium-labelling experiment

Following the general method⁶ to prepare the benzylalcohol- α - d_2 (**1a-D**). To a 10 mL seal tube in a glovebox, was added aniline (**2a**, 0.5 mmol), benzyl alcohol- α - d_2 (**1a-D**, 1.0 mmol), 'BuOK (0.7 equiv.), NHC-Ag (2.5 mol%) and 1,4-dioxane (1 mL). Then the tube was sealed with a Teflon plug and removed from the glovebox. The reaction mixture was stirred for 24 h at 150 °C. After cooling to R.T., the crude reaction mixture was diluted with 2 mL CH₃OH and 5 mL EtOAc in order. The solvent was evaporated to dryness and the corresponding amine was purified by column chromatography with silica gel (ethyl acetate/petroleum ether).



Figure S8. The ¹H NMR spectra of **3aa-D** in Chloroform-*d*.

3. Kinetic isotope effect (KIE) studies

The kinetic isotope effect (KIE) studies were carried out to gain more information concerning the reaction pathway. Two parallel reactions, one with benzyl alcohol (**1a**) and another with benzyl alcohol- α - d_2 (**1a-D**), were carried out. To a 15 mL reaction tube in a glovebox, was added aniline (0.5 mmol), alcohol (1.0 mmol), KO'Bu (0.7 equiv.), **NHC-Ag** (2.5 mol%) and dodecane (113 uL) in 1,4-dioxane (1 mL). Then the tube was closed with a rubber stopper sealed with iron wire and removed from the glovebox. The reaction mixture was stirred at 150 °C, the aliquots were taken after 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 and 70 min. And yields of products were determined by GC. The calculated KIE (k_H/k_D) was 2.15.



Figure S9-1. Correlation between time and GC yield.



Figure S9-2. Correlation between time and GC yield.

4. Reaction order of silver catalyst and ligand 6

Two situ reactions, one with NHC-Ag and another with L6, were carried out. To a 15 mL reaction tube in a glovebox, was added aniline (0.5 mmol), alcohol (1.0 mmol), KO'Bu (0.7 equiv.), NHC-Ag and dodecane (113 uL) in 1,4-dioxane (1 mL). To a 15 mL reaction tube in a glovebox, was added aniline (0.5 mmol), alcohol (1.0 mmol), KO'Bu (0.7 equiv.), L6 and dodecane (113 uL) in 1,4-dioxane (1 mL). Then the tubes were closed with rubber stoppers sealed with iron wire and removed from the glovebox. The reaction mixture was stirred at 150 °C, the aliquots were taken after 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 and 70 min. And yields of products were determined by GC. The order of NHC-Ag was 0.5, and the order of L6 was 1.0.



Figure S9-3. (a) Order of NHC-Ag. (b) Order of L6.

5. Detection of the dissociative functional arm by ¹H NMR

Four experiment tests were carried out, respectively. Test 1 was the ¹H NMR of *bis*-NHC in DMSO-d₆. Test 2 was the ¹H NMR of **NHC-Ag** in DMSO-d₆. The **NHC-Ag** (0.06 mmol) and KO'Bu (0.125 mmol) were added to 1 mL 1,4-dioxane for Test 3. The solvent was removed after stirring 1 h at R.T., and the ¹H NMR in DMSO-d₆ was detected. The **NHC-Ag** (0.06 mmol), KO'Bu (0.125 mmol), and benzyl alcohol (**1a**, 0.125 mmol) were added to 1 mL 1,4-dioxane for Test 4. The solvent was removed after stirring 2 h at 150 °C under Ar atmosphere and detected the ¹H NMR in DMSO-d₆.



Figure S9-4. Detection of the dissociative functional arm by ¹H NMR.

6. Gram-scale reaction

The gram-scale reaction was carried out. To a 150 mL seal tube in a glovebox, was added aniline (8 mmol), alcohol (16 mmol), KO'Bu (0.7 equiv.), NHC-Ag (2.5 mol%) in 1,4-dioxane (16 mL). The reaction mixture was stirred for 24 h at 150 °C. After cooling to R.T., the crude reaction mixture was diluted with CH₃OH. The solvent

was evaporated to dryness and the corresponding amine was purified by column chromatography with silica gel (ethyl acetate/petroleum ether).



Figure S9-5. Gram-scale reaction.

V. Computational Details

All of the geometry optimizations and frequency calculations used the mixed basis sets with M06-L/BSI level¹⁴⁻ ¹⁷ (BSI designated the basis set combination of Lanl2DZ for Ag, and 6-31G** for other atoms) in density functional theory (DFT) calculations.¹⁸⁻²⁰ All of the reactants, intermediates and products had no imaginary frequency, and the transition states had only one imaginary frequency. Intrinsic reaction coordinate (IRC) computations were used to confirm the structure of transition states. The energetic results were then further refined by single-point calculations at M06-L/BSII level^{21,22} (BSII designated the basis set combination of SDD for Ag, and 6-311++G** for other atoms). The solvation effects of 1,4-dioxane ($\varepsilon = 2.2099$) were simulated by the SMD²³ solvent model. All 3D diagrams of the structures were generated by CYLview²⁴ and IQmol²⁵. The Multiwfn program²⁶ were employed to analyze the orbital components

С

Η

2.99897

3.15875

-3.00796

-1.93722

-1.89400

-1.78225

Cartesian coordinates

NHC-Ao	
Inne-Ag	

HC-Ag				Н	3.63895	-3.52041	-1.17312
N	2 18559	1 52963	2 15504	Н	3.27002	-3.31260	-2.90576
N	1 59617	2.47711	0.33600	С	-1.11670	-0.10788	3.76645
N	0.12582	2.77/11	1 18451	Н	-0.88219	0.79765	3.20214
N	-0.12382	3.46477	1 17277	Н	-2.06607	0.03413	4.28842
N	-2.24830	1 21263	-1.17277	Н	-0.32618	-0.29458	4.49674
N	-1.20214	-1.21203	1.02221	С	2.70089	0.49590	3.03177
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Η	-4.17091	4.11413	-0.66806	н	-2 36211	5 32890	-2 25514
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NHC-Ag	-RC			F	-2.18238	-0.55361	-0.58149
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Ν	-1.56858	1.58229	1.54393	F	-4.88861	-2.38475	-0.60179
Ν	-0.10324	-0.26563	1.99178	F	-3.78540	-1.11868	0.98852
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Ag	0.74368	1.79651	-0.39868	Н	-2.53329	-0.63606	2.15936
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С	3.83847	1.31589	-0.97686	С	3.18438	0.37794	-2.65069
Н	3.67685	1.33718	-2.07207	Н	2.20837	0.43339	-3.12948
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Н	2.39508	1.65016	-0.57145	Н	5.09963	0.97920	0.98211
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Г Г	5.55298	-0.26662	0.27043	N	2.80800	0.02477	0.87733
Г Г	5.72643	1.62866	1.59952	C	1./5958	-0.33528	0.12576
F	6.23000	1.75340	-0.66929	C	2.92049	1.25941	1.66720
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Н	-3.74304	-3.82362	0.30258	Ν	-3.09207	1.25419	-0.54615
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Н	4.68780	-0.94016	1.26987	Н	-1.79547	0.20241	-1.76589
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Ν	-2.85469	1.58105	-0.08344	С	-4.35393	1.71409	-0.21240
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Н	-1.92155	-3.35130	-0.89490	Н	-2.49027	-3.98343	1.77712
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Н	2.25712	0.76813	-1.60213	С	-2.84175	0.95077	-0.57416
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С	3.97476	-0.03307	1.23920	С	-1.32963	2.33455	-1.57318
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С	5.10268	-0.74570	1.62887	Н	-4.94342	1.26763	-1.00896
Н	3.44561	0.62063	1.92621	С	-2.33014	3.06928	-2.19923
С	5.29963	-1.66349	-0.59145	Н	-0.27882	2.58332	-1.70953
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С	5.76859	-1.56412	0.71711	Н	-2.08080	3.91003	-2.83668
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Н	-0.97100	-3.36764	-0.05421	0	2.52736	1.60547	-1.44083
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Ag	-0.14673	-0.62609	-0.03866	Н	3.48062	0.02588	-2.36523
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Н	-5.13519	-0.65881	0.33335	С	-3.38080	-1.27288	0.27763
Н	-5.36384	1.20582	-1.76298	С	-3.62932	-0.35397	1.30466
Ν	2.67811	1.45144	0.92315	С	-4.24022	-1.29226	-0.82310
С	1.75567	2.45869	1.01515	С	-4.70632	0.52367	1.23408
С	1.27841	2.79007	2.30665	Н	-2.96927	-0.34079	2.17125
С	1.14153	3.11208	-0.08791	С	-5.32140	-0.41435	-0.90049
С	0.25699	3.70378	2.48913	Н	-4.05791	-2.00474	-1.62541
Н	1.74197	2.28665	3.15222	С	-5.55436	0.49813	0.12555
С	0.11528	4.04151	0.11143	Н	-4.89740	1.21855	2.04779
Н	1.52542	2.95818	-1.09307	С	0.81172	3.17177	-0.18490
С	-0.33994	4.33531	1.38922	С	-0.31587	3.27587	-0.93690
Н	-0.08633	3.93268	3.49495	С	4.10063	1.48396	0.54535
Н	-0.32422	4.53997	-0.75066	С	4.88707	0.61399	-0.13340
Н	-1.14077	5.05371	1.53703	Н	-0.64970	4.05368	-1.60446
С	0.51174	-0.74623	1.83893	Н	1.65207	3.83823	-0.07370
Н	0.72592	-1.17726	2.82474	Н	4.30883	2.46498	0.94334
Н	1.46426	-0.42211	1.39931	Н	5.91457	0.69236	-0.45122
Н	-0.07448	0.16344	1.98987	Н	-5.97623	-0.44777	-1.74606
Cl	-4.91180	-3.02689	0.96577	О	-6.67044	1.38931	0.05433
				С	-7.86958	0.67911	0.37458
	a a ===			Н	-8.67511	1.37366	0.49127
	ALCOTT						

NHC-Ag-RC-*p*-OCH₃

Н	-8.10034	-0.00537	-0.41481	Н	4.46877	1.85402	1.52803
Н	-7.73055	0.13761	1.28692	Н	5.91158	0.05106	-0.00524
				0	-6.83557	0.35494	-0.78751
NHC A-	TS1 - OCH			С	-6.66657	1.27312	-1.87069
NHC-Ag-	-181 <i>-p</i> -0CH ₃			Н	-6.18698	0.77617	-2.68797
Ν	3.93760	-0.76364	-0.34659	Н	-7.62358	1.63414	-2.18484
Ν	2.82233	0.62349	0.83542	Н	-6.06269	2.09606	-1.54976
Ν	0.84850	1.93514	0.47429				
Ν	-0.86123	2.23697	-0.80935	NHC Ag	DC CE		
С	2.67744	-0.47863	0.04212	NIC-Ag-	КС <i>-т</i> -СГ3		
С	1.70094	1.28660	1.46746	Ν	4.12111	-0.51372	-0.37544
Н	1.06995	0.55800	1.99091	Ν	2.87559	0.85306	0.69926
Н	2.08043	2.02657	2.17426	Ν	0.72341	1.96969	0.49563
С	-0.41212	1.53055	0.23167	Ν	-1.06158	2.13689	-0.70670
С	-2.16727	2.05529	-1.43733	С	2.87598	-0.39373	0.13036
Н	-2.08138	1.35132	-2.26770	С	1.73147	1.40859	1.38977
Н	-2.86574	1.65567	-0.70045	Н	1.24686	0.61838	1.96721
Н	-2.52439	3.01732	-1.80245	Н	2.07443	2.19099	2.06921
С	4.29486	-1.88617	-1.19938	С	-0.42896	1.35008	0.16501
Н	3.37898	-2.39121	-1.50416	С	-2.34953	1.78945	-1.30491
Н	4.82453	-1.53149	-2.08499	Н	-3.16254	2.27312	-0.76044
Н	4.92916	-2.58694	-0.65385	Н	-2.35522	2.10629	-2.34716
Н	-0.92936	0.77463	0.88457	Н	-2.47006	0.70564	-1.23803
Ag	0.72458	-1.29772	-0.31251	С	4.60616	-1.69167	-1.07663
0	-1.07903	-0.57077	1.88869	Н	3.79663	-2.41861	-1.12725
С	-1.71359	-1.36836	1.11457	Н	4.91755	-1.42578	-2.08813
Н	-1.03868	-1.54692	-0.21010	Н	5.45017	-2.12803	-0.53986
Н	-1.65219	-2.45500	1.31420	Н	-0.80387	0.31961	0.43528
С	-3.05061	-0.93576	0.57855	Ag	1.03511	-1.44442	0.02051
С	-3.68620	0.15102	1.18670	0	-1.04472	-1.26404	0.06190
С	-3.68437	-1.59793	-0.47653	С	-2.12963	-2.11137	0.31854
С	-4.93709	0.57537	0.73895	Н	-2.20399	-2.92033	-0.42768
Н	-3.19365	0.63098	2.02880	Н	-2.04441	-2.60316	1.30477
С	-4.92556	-1.16925	-0.92936	С	-3.38080	-1.27288	0.27763
Н	-3.18521	-2.43962	-0.95363	С	-3.62932	-0.35397	1.30466
С	-5.55381	-0.07825	-0.32454	С	-4.24022	-1.29226	-0.82310
Н	-5.43419	1.40887	1.22759	С	-4.70632	0.52367	1.23408
Н	-5.40925	-1.68442	-1.75418	Н	-2.96927	-0.34079	2.17125
С	1.21325	2.89928	-0.44436	С	-5.32140	-0.41435	-0.90049
С	0.13457	3.08817	-1.25036	Н	-4.05791	-2.00474	-1.62541
С	4.14828	1.01324	0.93268	С	-5.55436	0.49813	0.12555
С	4.85303	0.12791	0.18558	С	0.81172	3.17177	-0.18490
Н	-0.01400	3.75302	-2.08595	С	-0.31587	3.27587	-0.93690
Н	2.18792	3.36016	-0.44593	С	4.10063	1.48396	0.54535

С	4.88707	0.61399	-0.13340
Н	-0.64970	4.05368	-1.60446
Н	1.65207	3.83823	-0.07370
Н	4.30883	2.46498	0.94334
Н	5.91457	0.69236	-0.45122
Н	-6.75629	1.45787	0.04885
Н	-5.97623	-0.44777	-1.74606
С	-4.97704	1.50817	2.38694
F	-6.24427	1.35070	2.82494
F	-4.80667	2.77329	1.94769
F	-4.11751	1.26354	3.39880

NHC-Ag-TS1-m-CF₃

Ν	4.64487	-0.53270	-0.67575	F
Ν	3.50630	0.71970	0.67719	
Ν	1.53022	2.12792	0.65197	NIL
Ν	-0.23749	2.81177	-0.42931	NH
С	3.40241	-0.41429	-0.11264	Ν
С	2.39631	1.24746	1.46341	Ν
Н	1.76006	0.42580	1.81853	Ν
Н	2.79147	1.81452	2.30588	Ν
С	0.25043	1.80462	0.32693	С
С	-1.61144	2.87090	-0.96621	С
Н	-1.98706	1.85944	-1.10573	Η
Н	-2.26319	3.40429	-0.27526	Η
Н	-1.60005	3.37874	-1.92786	С
С	5.03289	-1.61513	-1.58972	С
Н	4.16618	-2.25452	-1.75045	Η
Н	5.35809	-1.20101	-2.54363	Η
Н	5.83868	-2.20378	-1.15214	Η
Н	-0.22408	0.86530	0.69234	С
Ag	1.64934	-1.61623	-0.18318	Η
0	-0.19367	-0.56975	1.59357	Η
С	-0.68910	-1.74674	1.21560	Η
Н	0.02592	-2.32682	0.06666	Η
Н	-0.48836	-2.60798	1.87116	А
С	-2.08128	-1.76662	0.62812	0
С	-2.68902	-2.95989	0.19734	С
С	-2.79197	-0.56501	0.53599	Η
С	-3.98701	-2.94714	-0.32623	Η
Н	-2.14151	-3.89473	0.26762	С
С	-4.08510	-0.55454	-0.00506	С
Н	-2.34820	0.33925	0.94033	С

С	-4.69214	-1.74046	-0.44152
Н	-5.69524	-1.72128	-0.84949
С	1.85878	3.36546	0.08985
С	0.74654	3.79457	-0.58704
С	4.78995	1.28210	0.60002
С	5.50544	0.48926	-0.25258
Н	0.57407	4.69270	-1.15015
Н	2.82236	3.82496	0.20969
Н	5.08292	2.15224	1.16046
Н	6.52798	0.55514	-0.57626
Н	-4.45052	-3.87042	-0.64836
С	-4.78363	0.74916	-0.16562
F	-6.16794	0.65579	-0.18507
F	-4.43668	1.68449	0.82858
F	-4.42415	1.39745	-1.39074

NHC-Ag-RC-*p*-CF₃

Ν	-5.03614	-0.03492	0.60048
Ν	-3.69824	1.07327	-0.64800
Ν	-1.42095	1.91391	-0.63427
Ν	0.42038	1.95569	0.49235
С	-3.83971	-0.13493	-0.01497
С	-2.53774	1.42221	-1.43772
Н	-2.18981	0.53501	-1.97207
Н	-2.81563	2.19216	-2.15977
С	-0.33966	1.18276	-0.28750
С	1.68376	1.52692	1.08804
Н	2.52557	1.99781	0.57848
Н	1.69133	1.80141	2.14289
Н	1.75944	0.44287	0.98874
С	-5.63191	-1.09276	1.40100
Н	-4.93918	-1.93263	1.43037
Н	-5.81363	-0.73805	2.41685
Н	-6.57398	-1.41704	0.95580
Н	-0.10191	0.11042	-0.53623
Ag	-2.17937	-1.45017	-0.04159
0	-0.13932	-1.59338	-0.42180
С	0.82822	-2.59927	-0.46082
Η	0.71389	-3.32970	0.35802
Н	0.77489	-3.17781	-1.40156
С	2.17716	-1.93584	-0.34925
С	2.59974	-1.07178	-1.36938
С	2.96120	-2.04700	0.79983

С	3.75261	-0.31413	-1.22982	Н	-2.52439	3.01732	-1.80245
Н	2.00206	-0.99425	-2.27526	С	4.29486	-1.88617	-1.19938
С	4.12018	-1.28728	0.95255	Н	3.37898	-2.39121	-1.50416
Н	2.65149	-2.72422	1.59267	Н	4.82453	-1.53149	-2.08499
С	4.50618	-0.40942	-0.05618	Н	4.92916	-2.58694	-0.65385
Н	4.07844	0.35364	-2.02274	Н	-0.92936	0.77463	0.88457
Н	4.71986	-1.36781	1.85367	Ag	0.72458	-1.29772	-0.31251
С	-1.33251	3.16880	-0.05835	Ο	-1.07903	-0.57077	1.88869
С	-0.17162	3.19317	0.64653	С	-1.71359	-1.36836	1.11457
С	-4.79251	1.89570	-0.42565	Н	-1.03868	-1.54692	-0.21010
С	-5.63788	1.18913	0.36272	Н	-1.65219	-2.45500	1.31420
Н	0.28378	3.97514	1.23240	С	-3.05061	-0.93576	0.57855
Н	-2.08887	3.92383	-0.20137	С	-3.68620	0.15102	1.18670
Н	-4.88388	2.88034	-0.85723	С	-3.68437	-1.59793	-0.47653
Н	-6.60817	1.44133	0.76010	С	-4.93709	0.57537	0.73895
С	5.65581	0.52620	0.13927	Н	-3.19365	0.63098	2.02880
F	6.39350	0.67030	-0.97369	С	-4.92556	-1.16925	-0.92936
F	6.46924	0.14836	1.13611	Н	-3.18521	-2.43962	-0.95363
F	5.19235	1.77044	0.45640	С	-5.55381	-0.07825	-0.32454
				С	1.21325	2.89928	-0.44436
	TS1 n CE.			С	0.13457	3.08817	-1.25036
NHC-Ag-	-151 <i>-p-</i> CF3			С	4.14828	1.01324	0.93268
Ν	3.93760	-0.76364	-0.34659	С	4.85303	0.12791	0.18558
Ν	2.82233	0.62349	0.83542	Н	-0.01400	3.75302	-2.08595
Ν	0.84850	1.93514	0.47429	Н	2.18792	3.36016	-0.44593
Ν	-0.86123	2.23697	-0.80935	Н	4.46877	1.85402	1.52803
С	2.67744	-0.47863	0.04212	Н	5.91158	0.05106	-0.00524
С	1.70094	1.28660	1.46746	Н	-5.40207	-1.67676	-1.74193
Η	1.06995	0.55800	1.99091	Н	-5.42661	1.39617	1.22014
Η	2.08043	2.02657	2.17426	С	-6.93417	0.38826	-0.82312
С	-0.41212	1.53055	0.23167	F	-7.08506	1.70449	-0.56376
С	-2.16727	2.05529	-1.43733	F	-7.90083	-0.30902	-0.18920
Η	-2.08138	1.35132	-2.26770	F	-7.02666	0.17825	-2.15348
Н	-2.86574	1.65567	-0.70045				



Figure S10. Reaction pathway of NHC-Ag, C1, C2 and C3.

Table S2. Hydride dissociation energy (HDE) of Ag-H and orbital energy (OE) of Ag-H bond for ligands (L1, L6,L7 and L8)

Ligand	¹ H NMR shift (ppm)	Catalyst	HDE ($\Delta\Delta G$ kcal/mmol)	OE (a.u.)		
L1	3.8	C1	0.0	-0.163		
L6	9.5	NHC-Ag	-38.2	-0.136		
L8	4.0	C2	-5.8	-0.148		
L7	2.8	C3	-32.9	-0.168		

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