

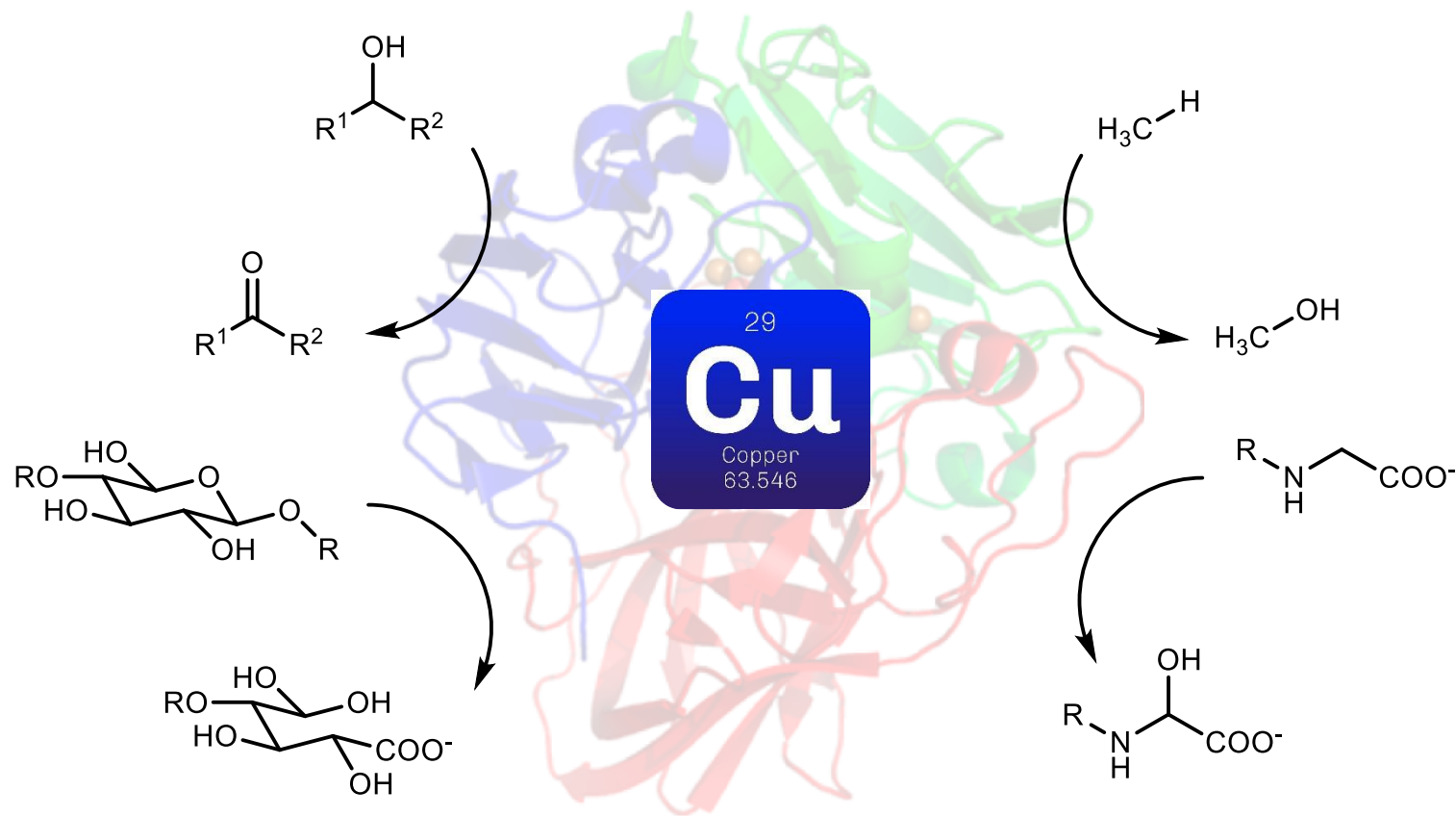
XU GROUP
Department of Chemistry, Peking University

Selected Weekly Literature Presentations

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Copper Catalyzed Hydroxylation of C(sp³)-H Bonds: Biochemistry and Small Molecule Emulations



Presenter: Xiuan Chen

Advisor: Prof. Yan Xu

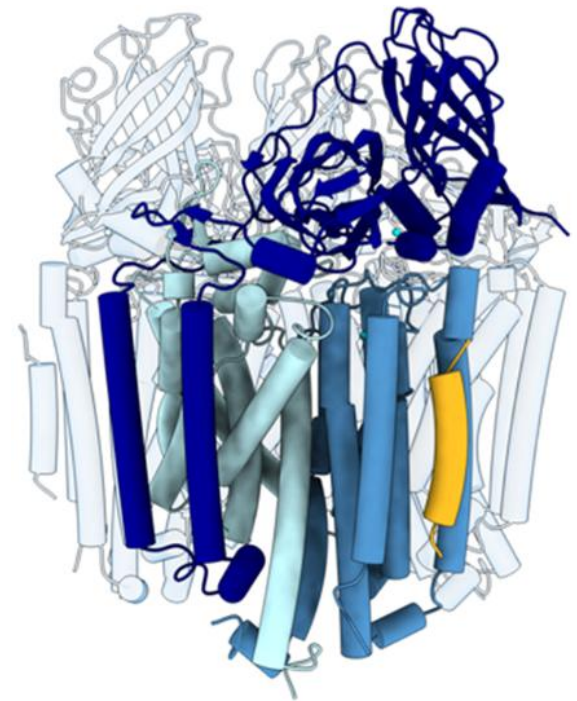
2026.4.18

Outline

- Introduction: Cu in biology
- Copper-dependent monooxygenases: case studies on two enzymes
- Small molecule emulation
- Application

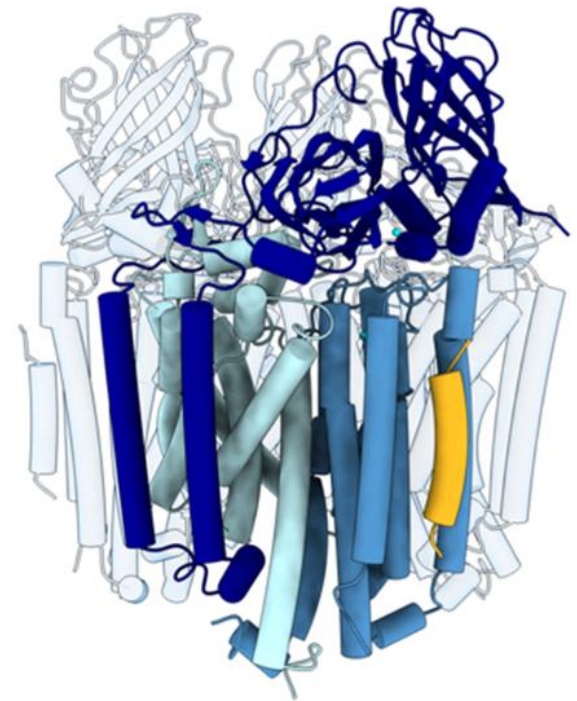
What will NOT be covered

- Radical relay chemistry
- Fenton-like reactions



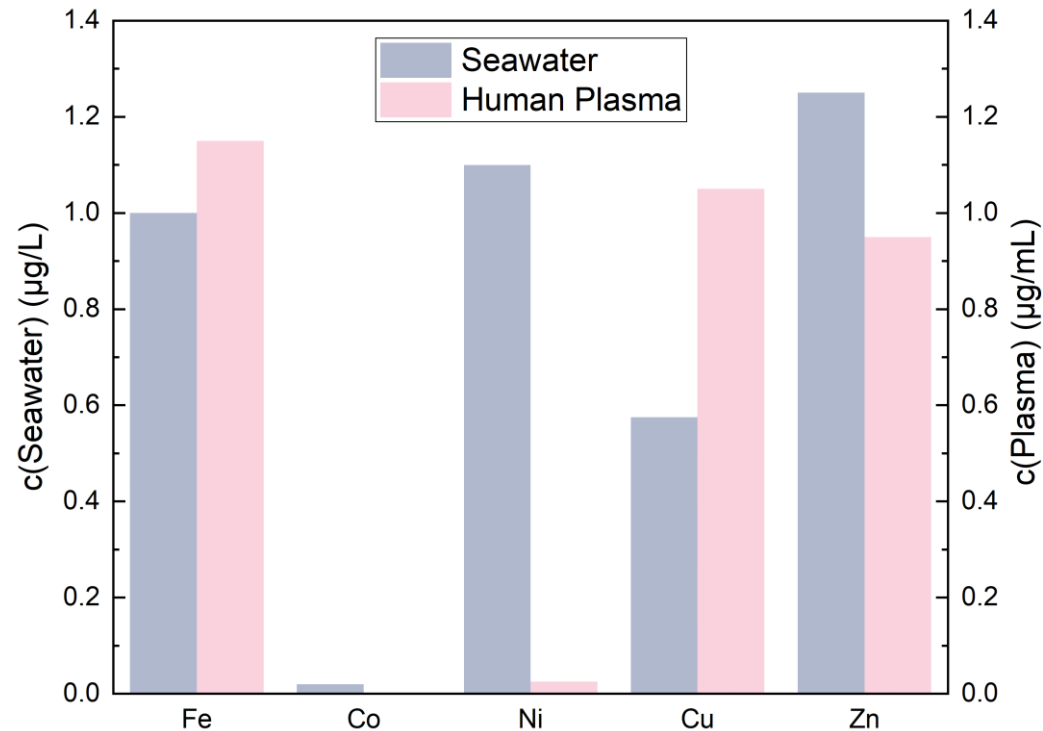
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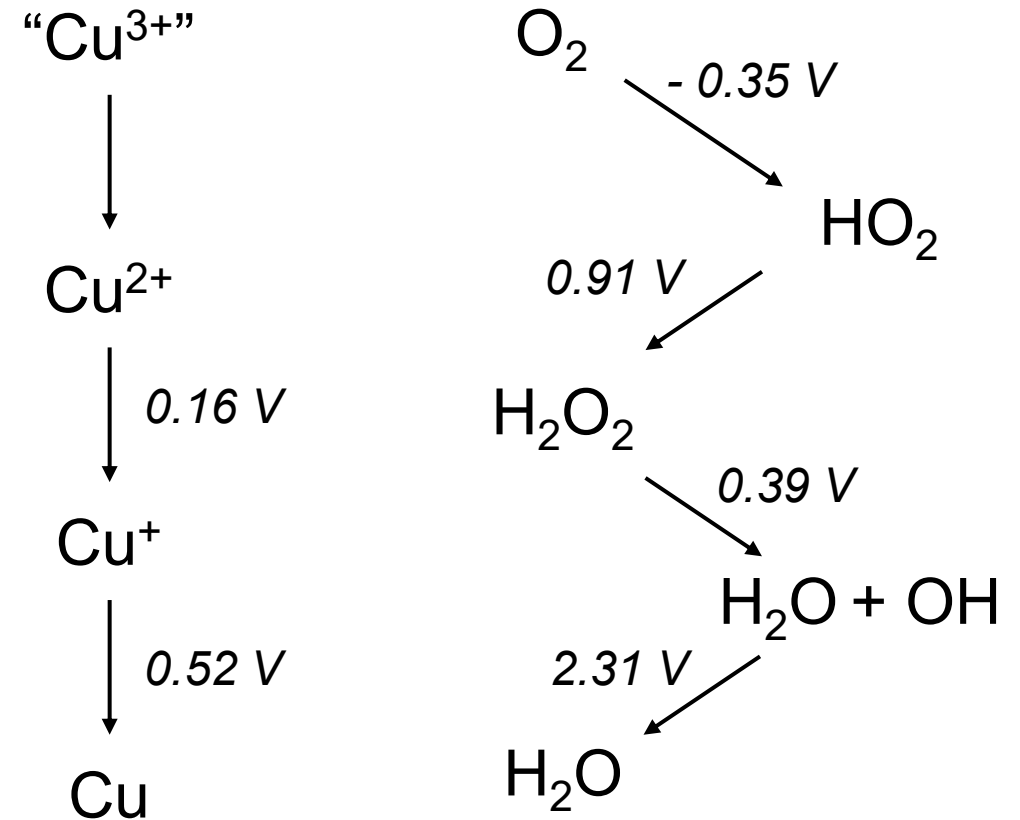


Copper in biology

Element Abundance of Selected TM



Redox potential under physiological conditions

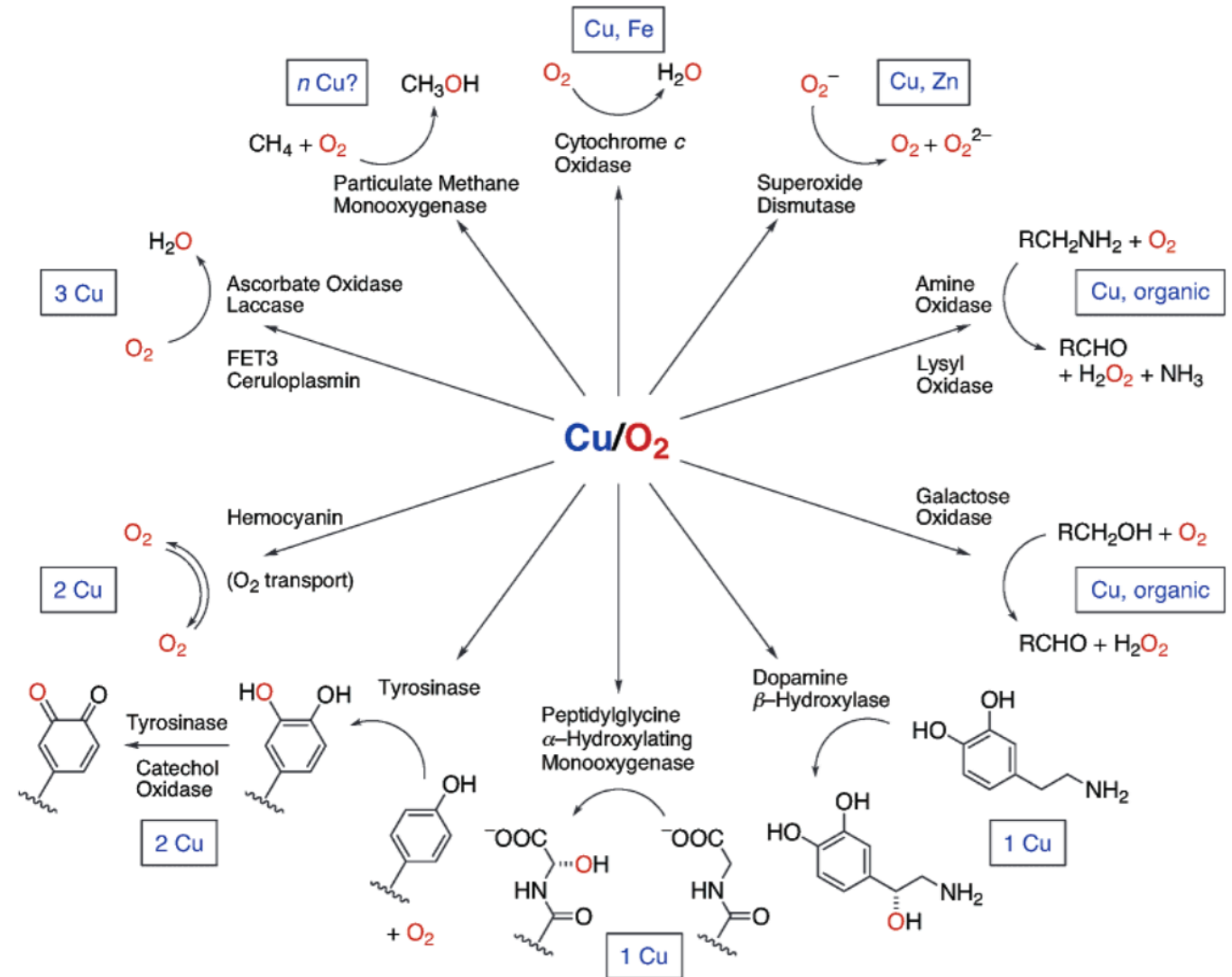


Copper in biology

rich redox behavior of Cu & Cu clusters

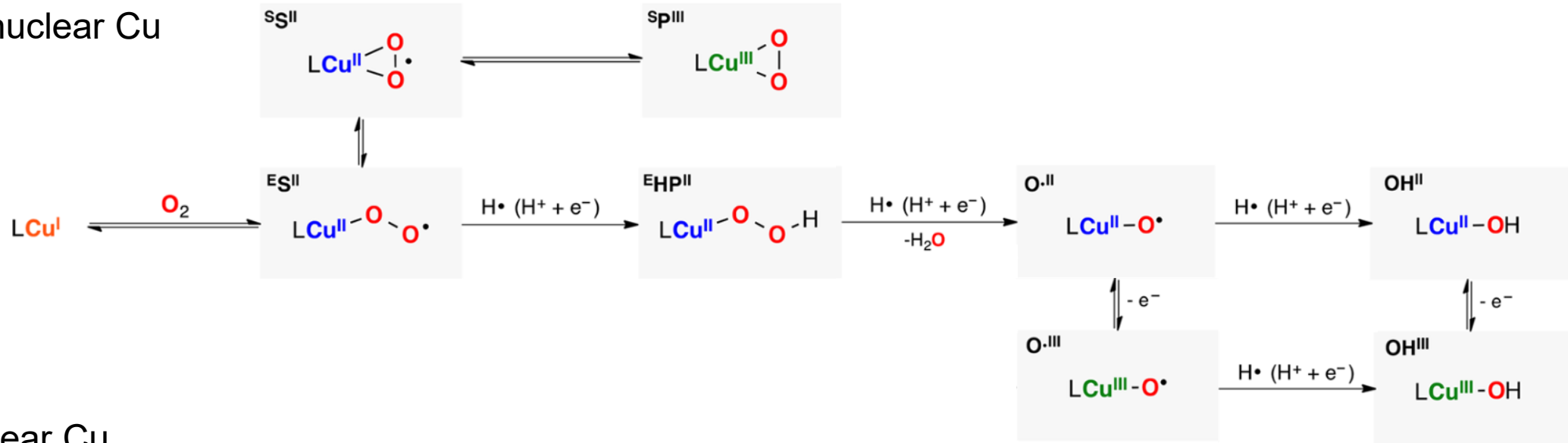


necessity of metal for O₂ activation

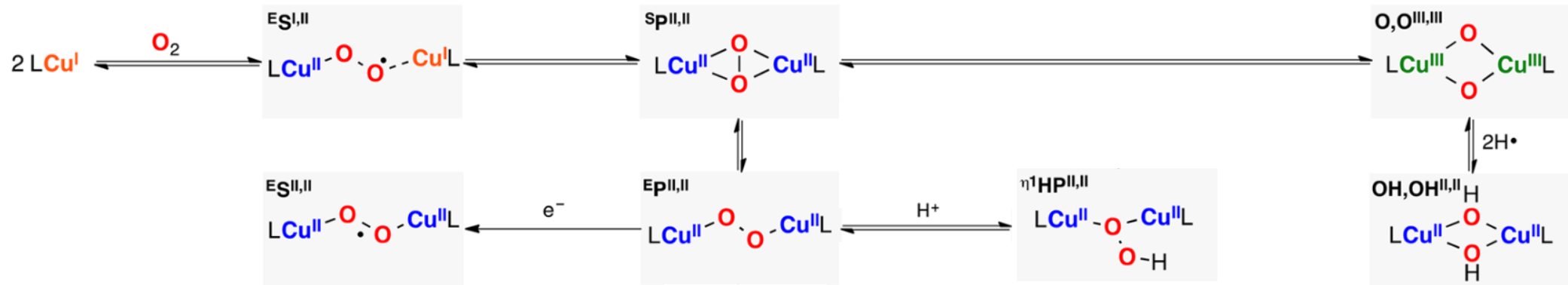


Cu-O₂ interactions

- Mononuclear Cu

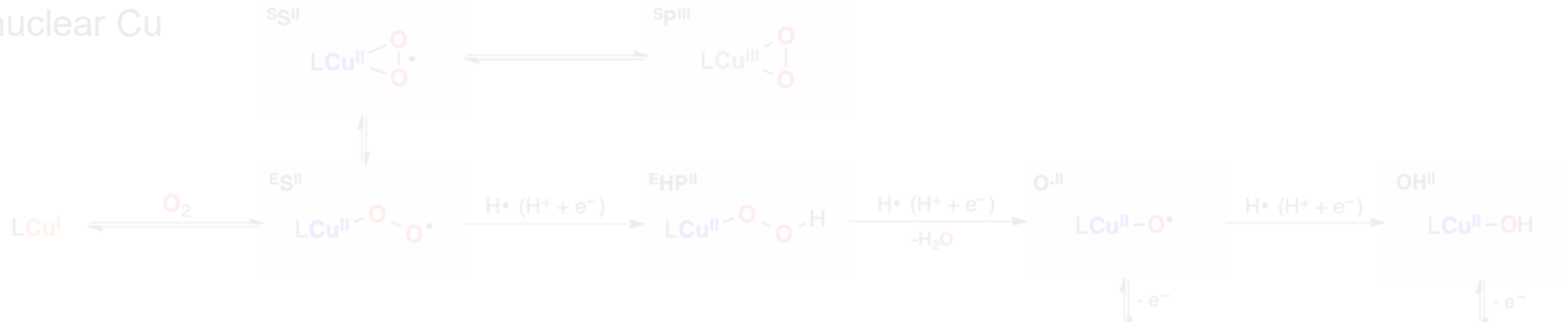


- Dinuclear Cu



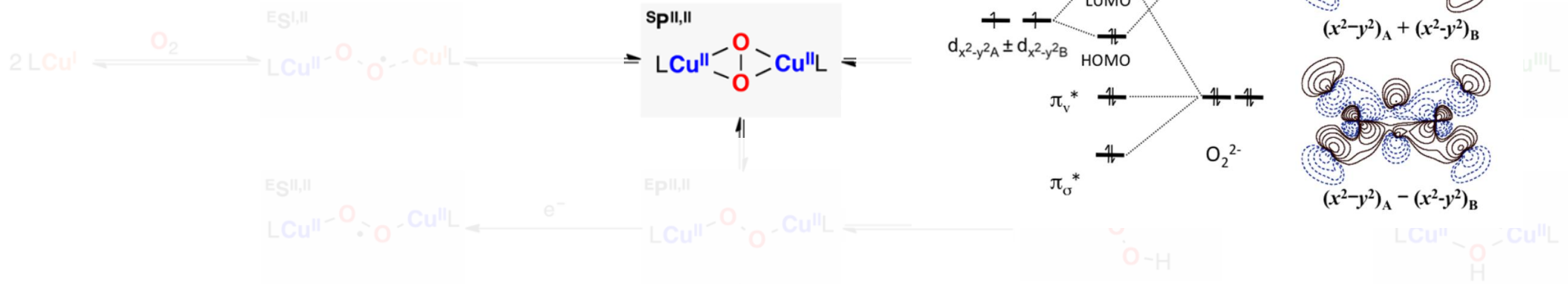
Cu-O₂ interactions

- Mononuclear Cu



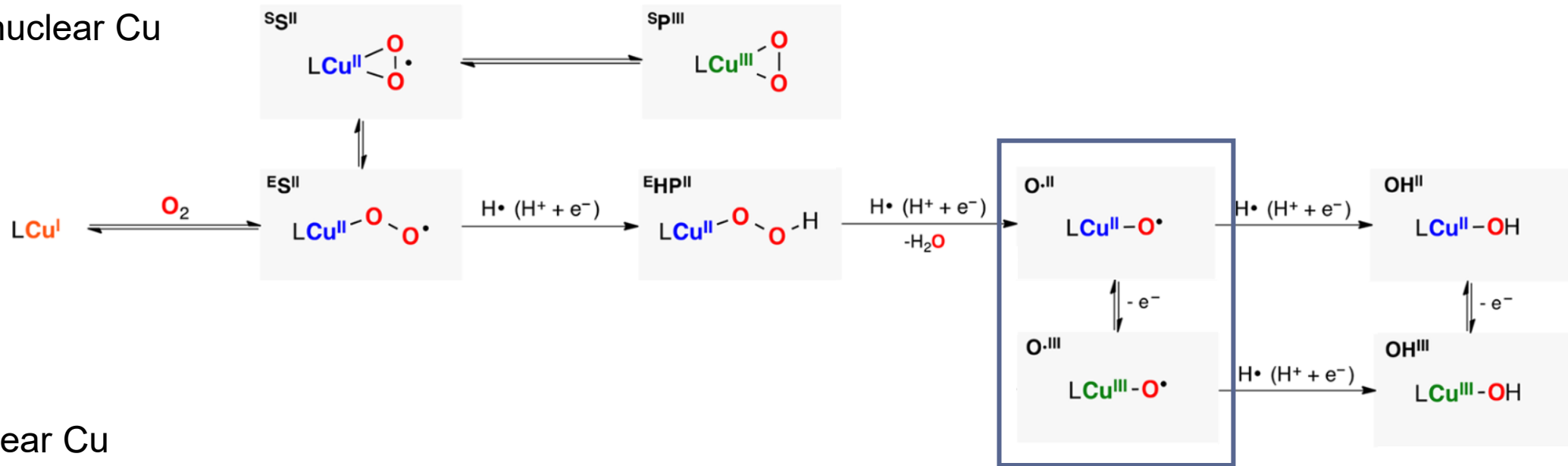
- Dinuclear Cu

EPR silent
Strong Antiferromagnetic Coupling

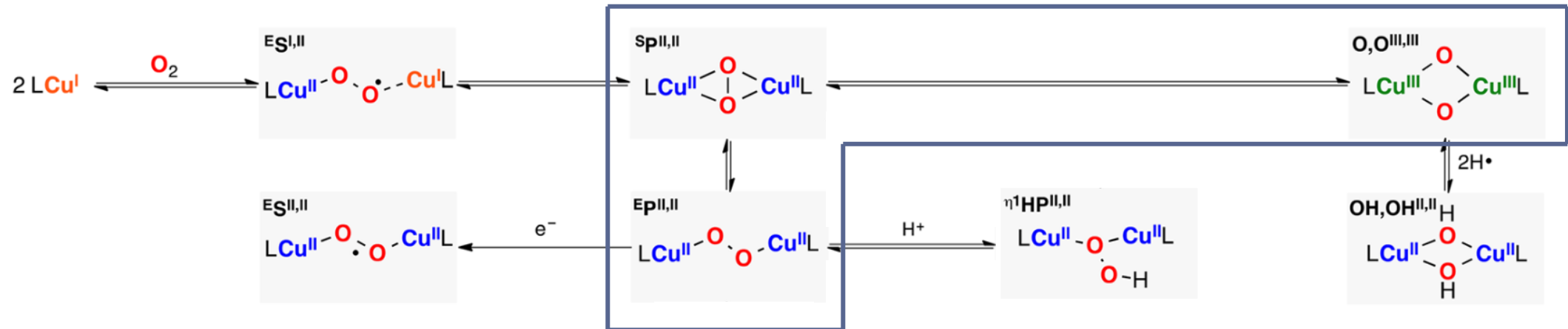


Cu-O₂ interactions

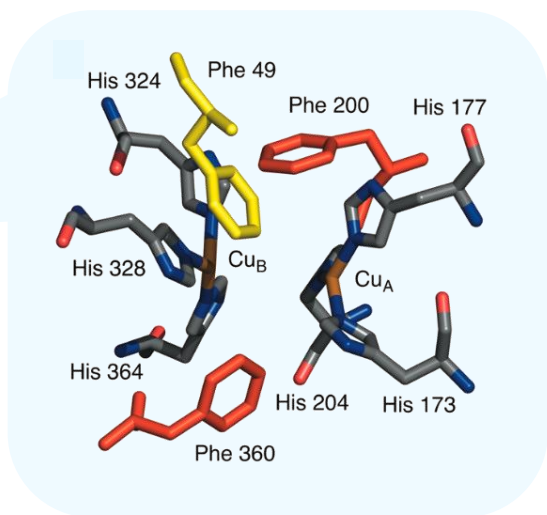
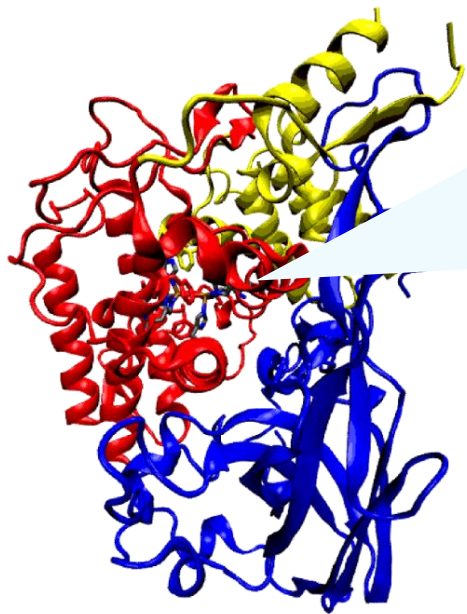
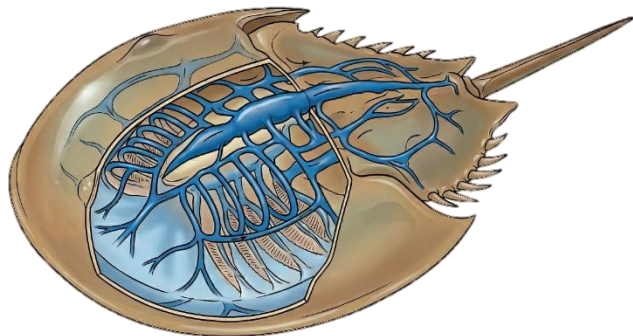
- Mononuclear Cu



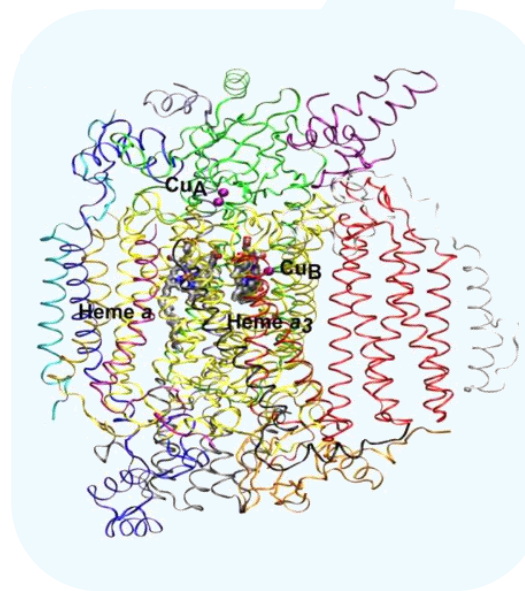
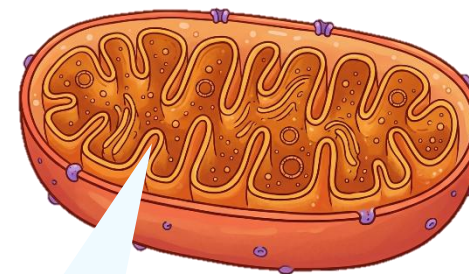
- Dinuclear Cu



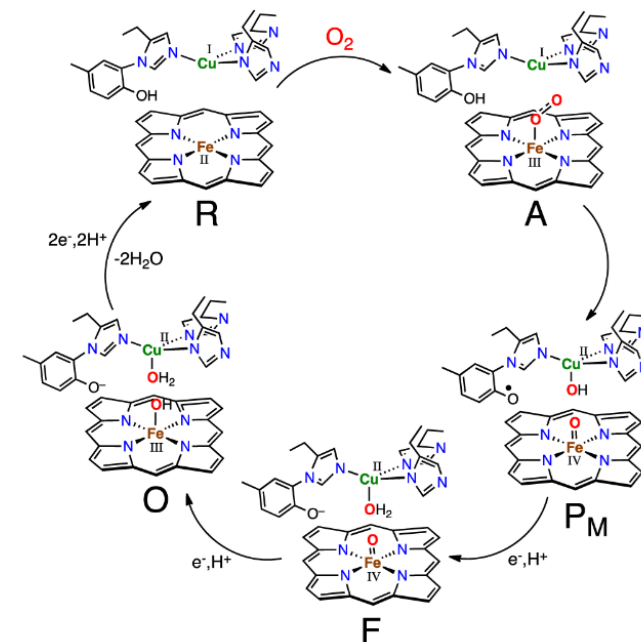
Copper in biology



Hemocyanin from *Limulus polyphemus*



Cytochrome C oxidase (Complex IV)

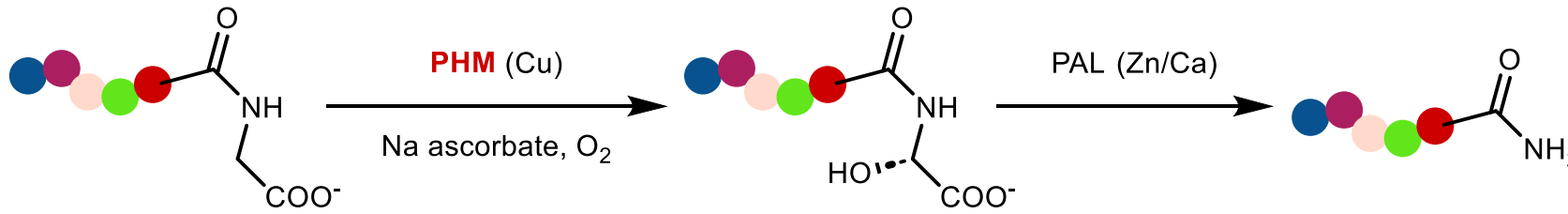


Outline

- Introduction: Cu in biology
- Copper-dependent monooxygenases: case studies on two enzymes
 - *Peptidylglycine Monooxygenase (PHM)*
 - *particulate Methane Monooxygenase (pMMO)*
- Small molecule emulation
- Application

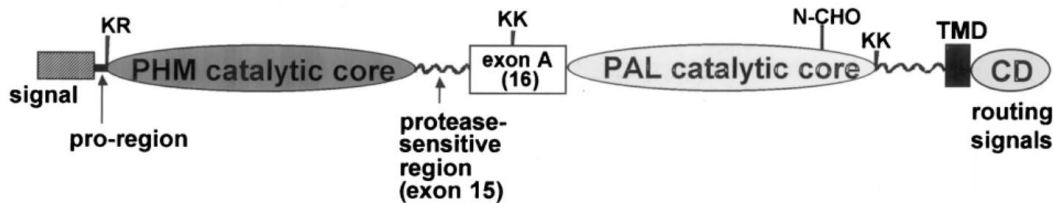
Peptidylglycine Monooxygenase

- **C-terminal amidation** of peptides for normal biological function

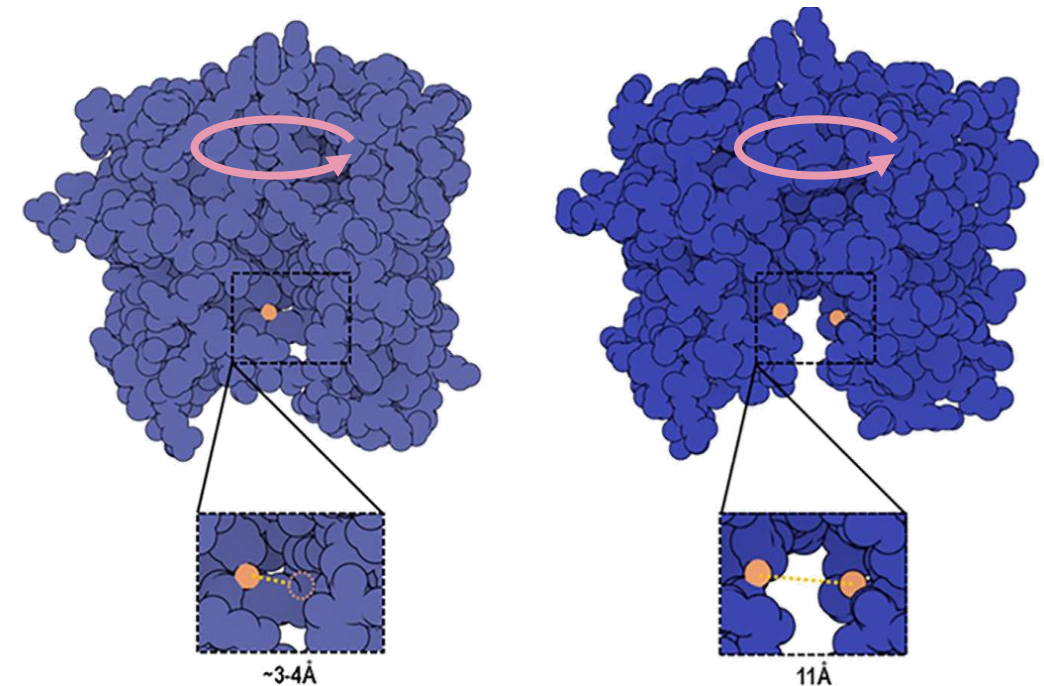


Dysfunction causes:
altered behavior
abnormal neurotransmission
inability of temp. stabilization

*both enzymes translated onto one peptide chain
 then proteolyzed during PTM*

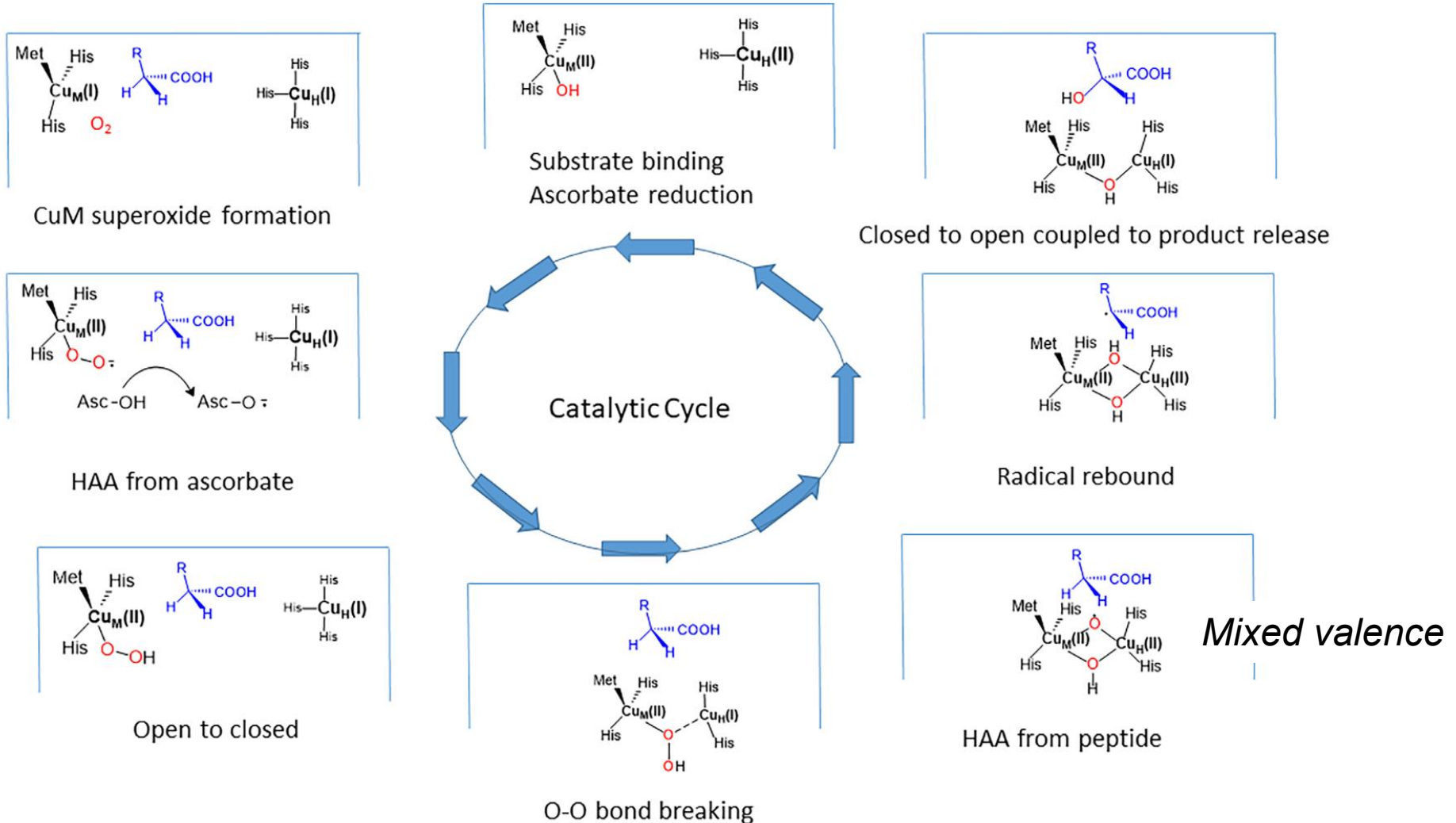


close-open transformation of PHM



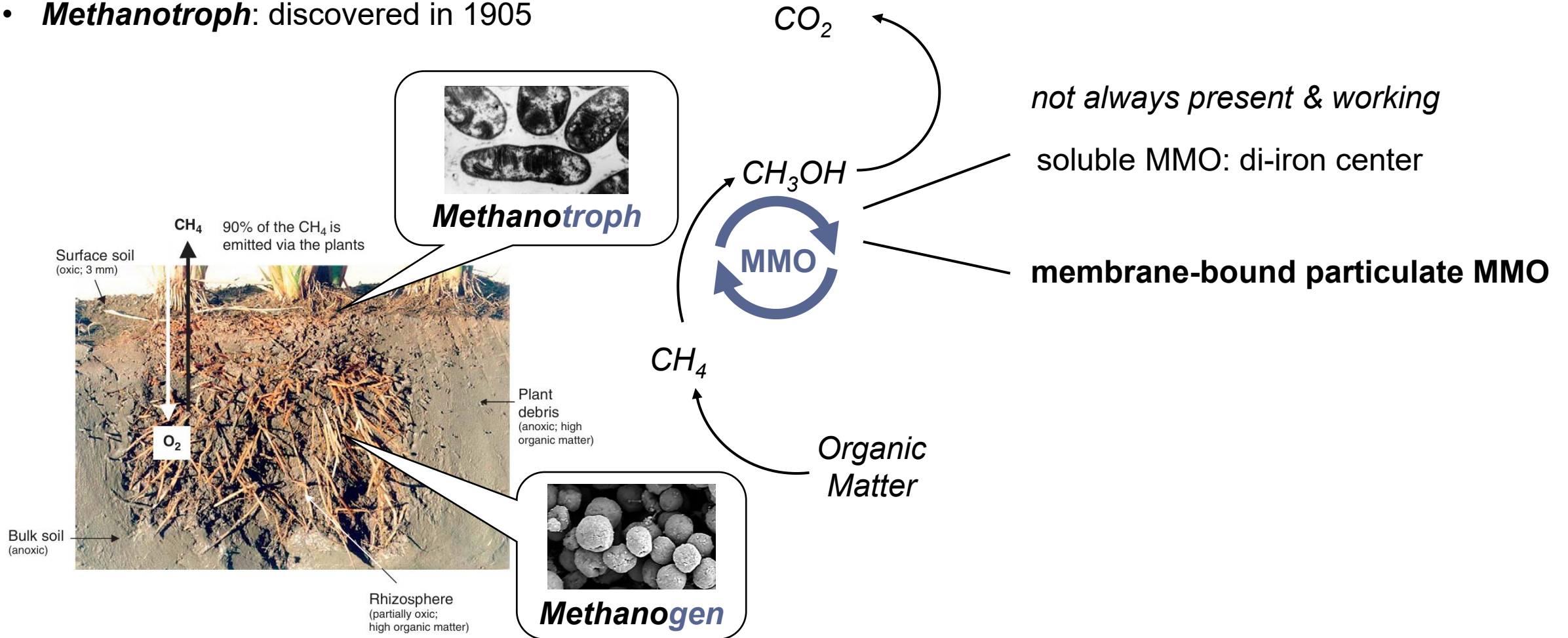
Peptidylglycine Monooxygenase

- Proposed mechanism



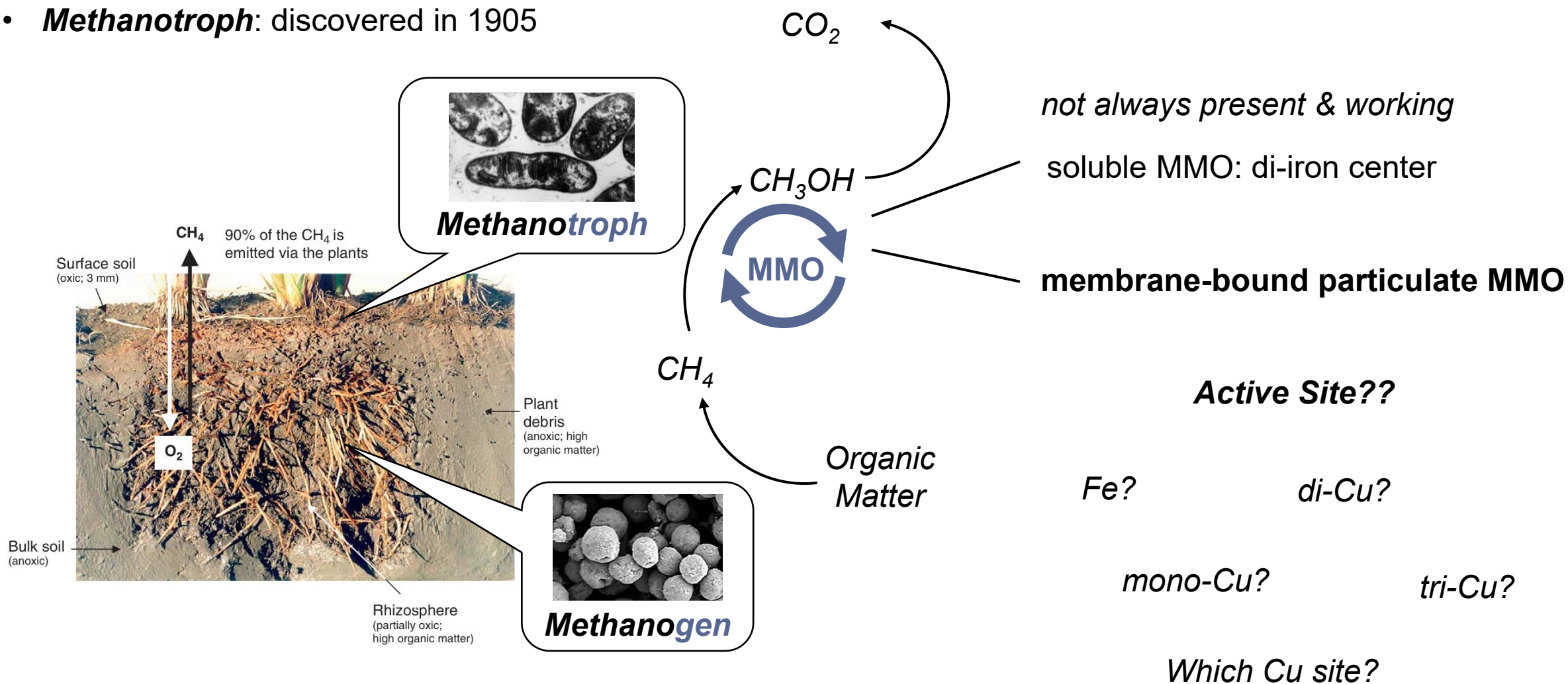
particulate Methane Monooxygenase

- **Methanotroph**: discovered in 1905



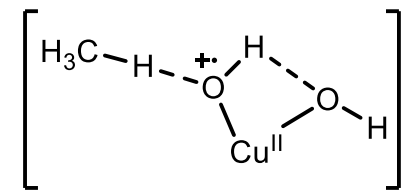
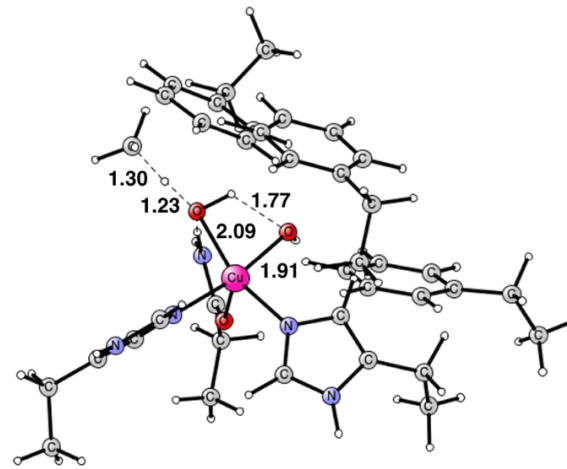
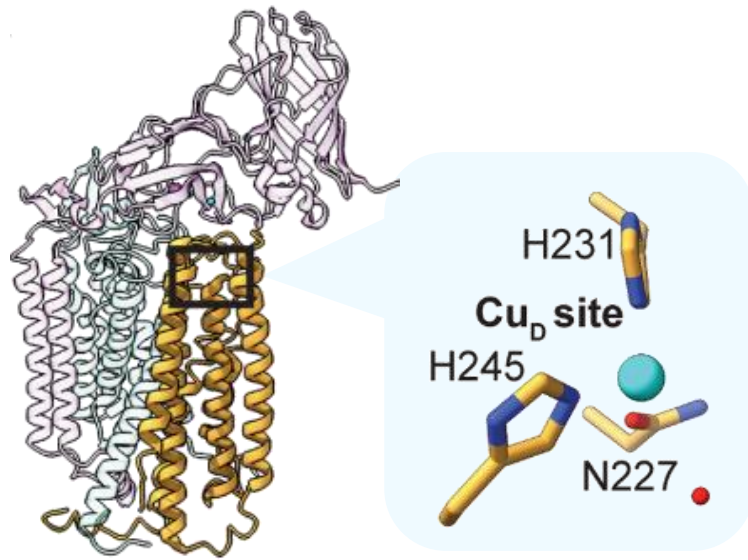
particulate Methane Monooxygenase

- **Methanotroph**: discovered in 1905

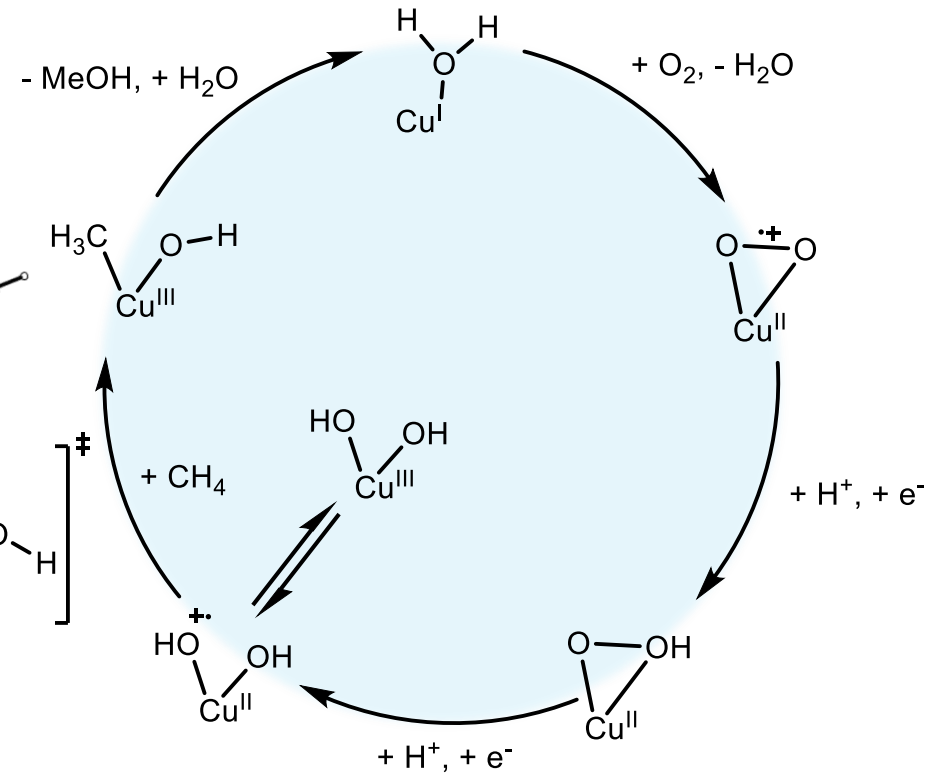


particulate Methane Monooxygenase

- A monocopper mechanism at Cu_D site



$BDE (CH_3-H) = 105 \text{ kJ/mol}$

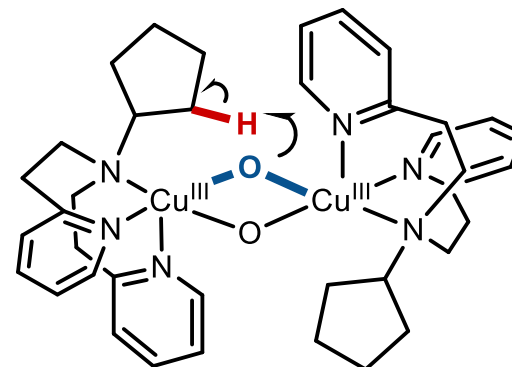
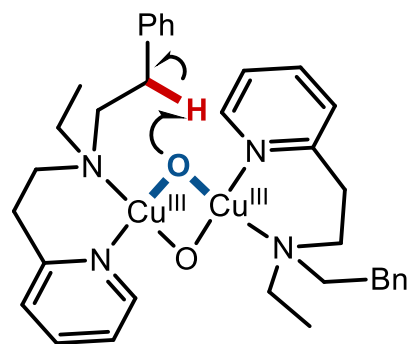
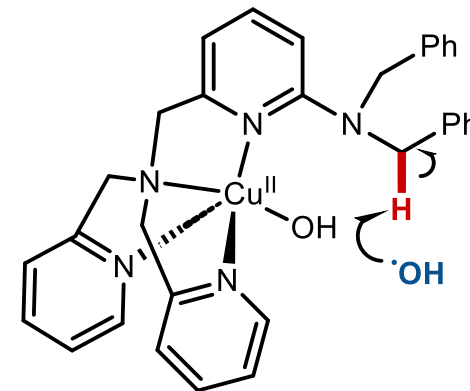
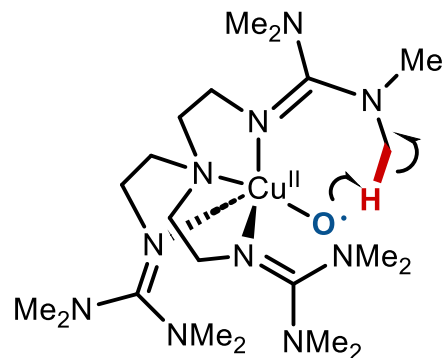
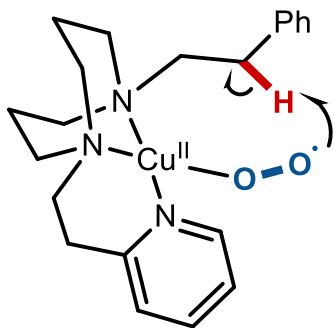


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Ligand Oxidation on Cu Complexes

Mononuclear complexes



Dinuclear complexes

Karlin, K. D. *et al.* *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2008**, 47 (1), 82–85.

Itoh, S. *et al.* *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2009**, 131 (8), 2788–2789.

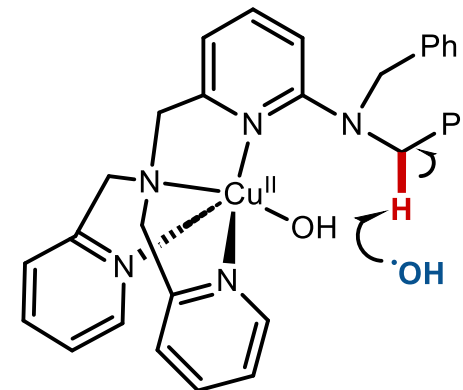
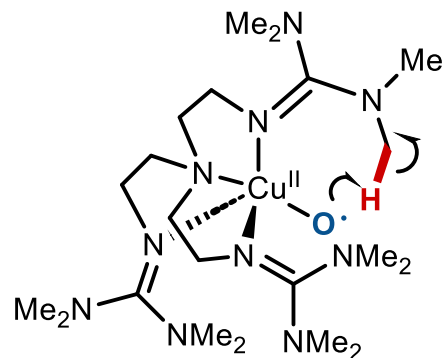
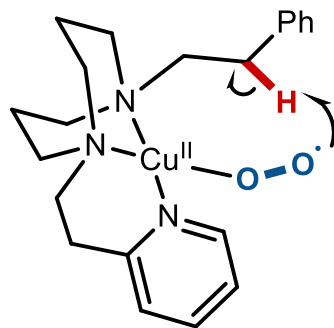
Réglier, M. *et al.* *Eur. J. Inorg. Chem.* **2000**, 2000 (2), 393–398.

Fukuzumi, S. *et al.* *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2000**, 39 (2), 398–400.

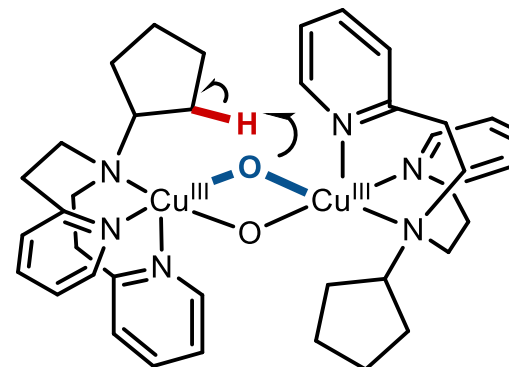
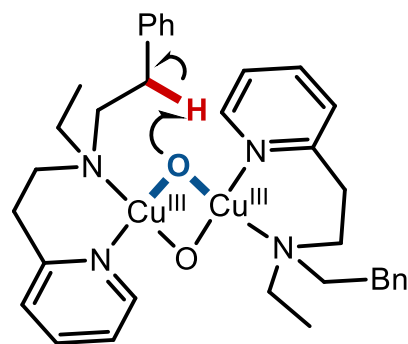
Fukuzumi, S. *et al.* *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1998**, 120 (12), 2890–2899.

Ligand Oxidation on Cu Complexes

Mononuclear complexes



C-H hydroxylated products not readily cleavable from ligand/DG



Dinuclear complexes

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Itoh, S. *et al.* *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2009**, 131 (8), 2788–2789.

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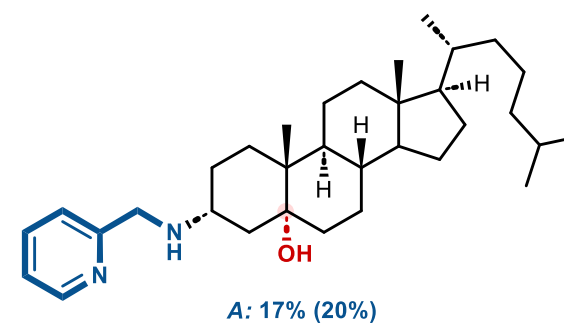
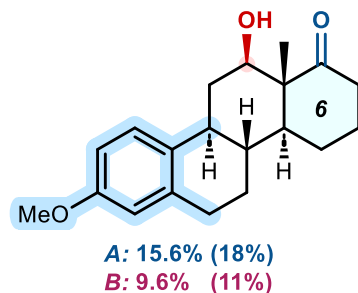
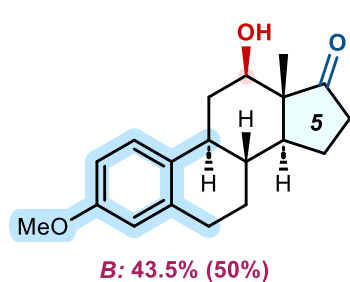
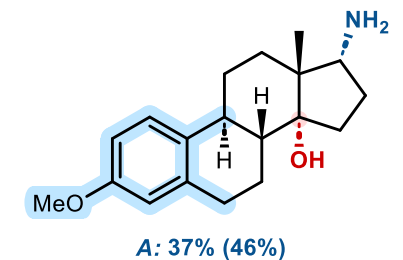
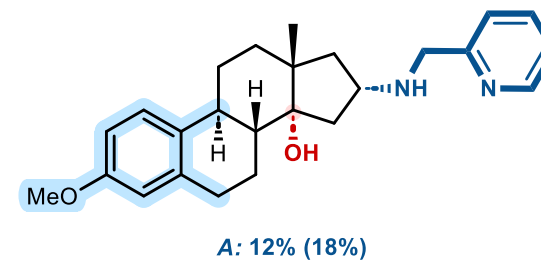
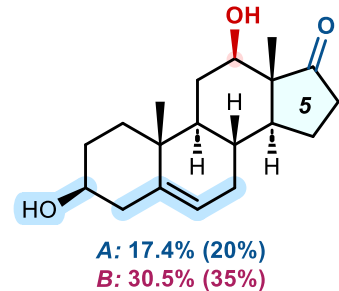
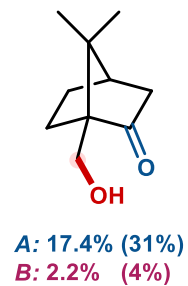
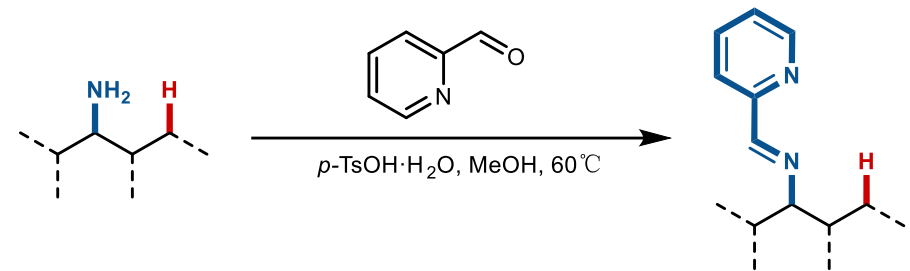
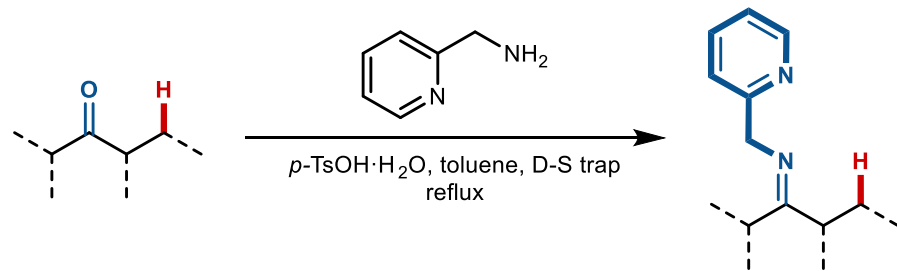
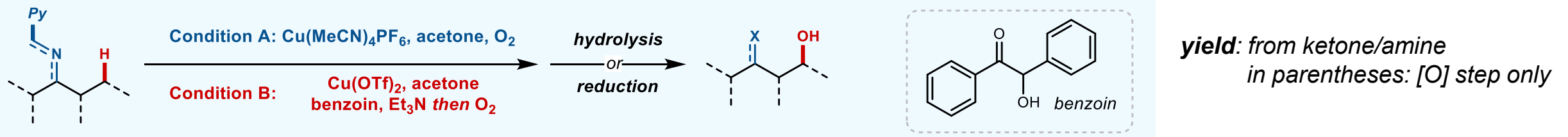
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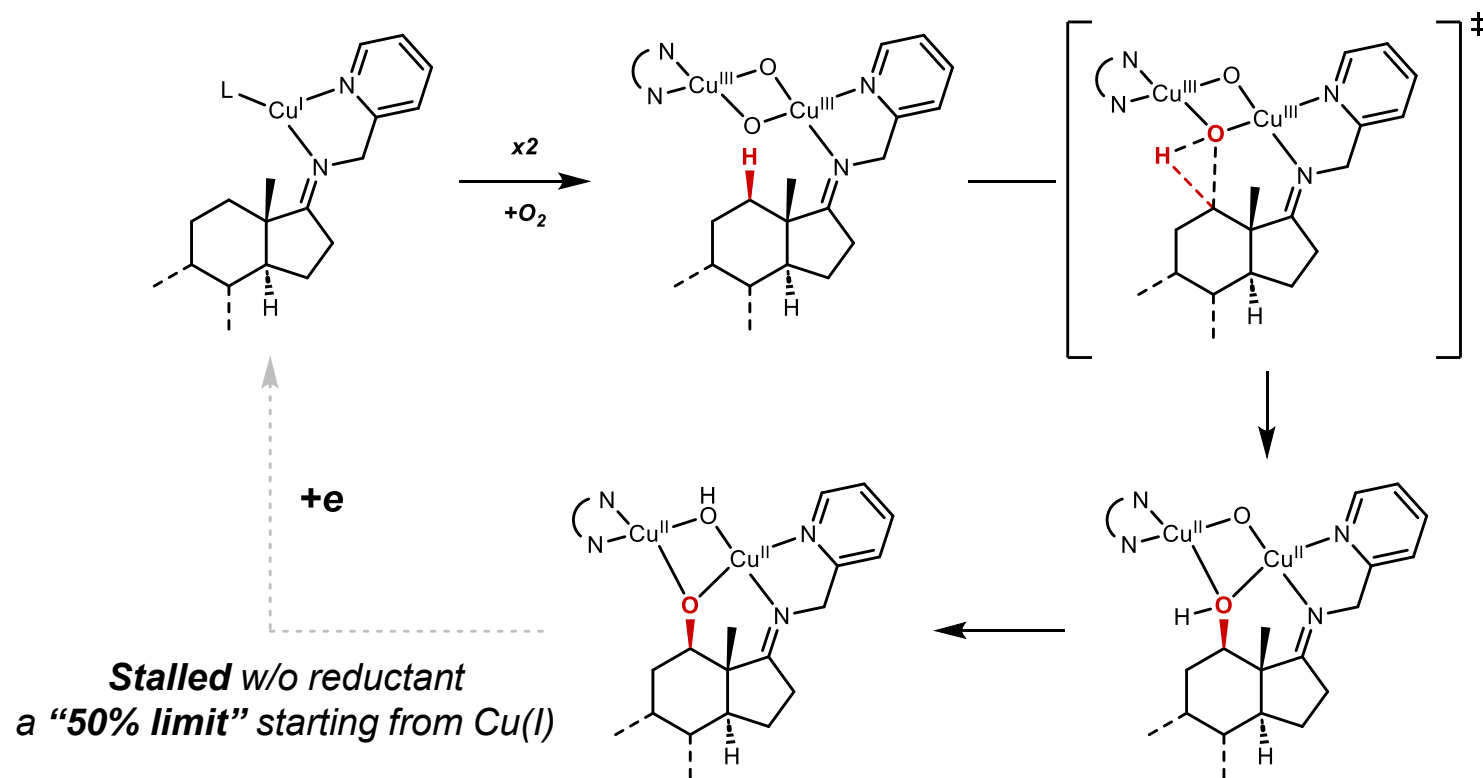
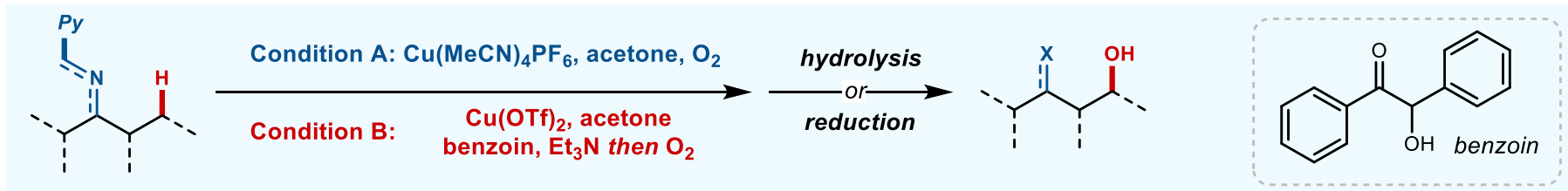
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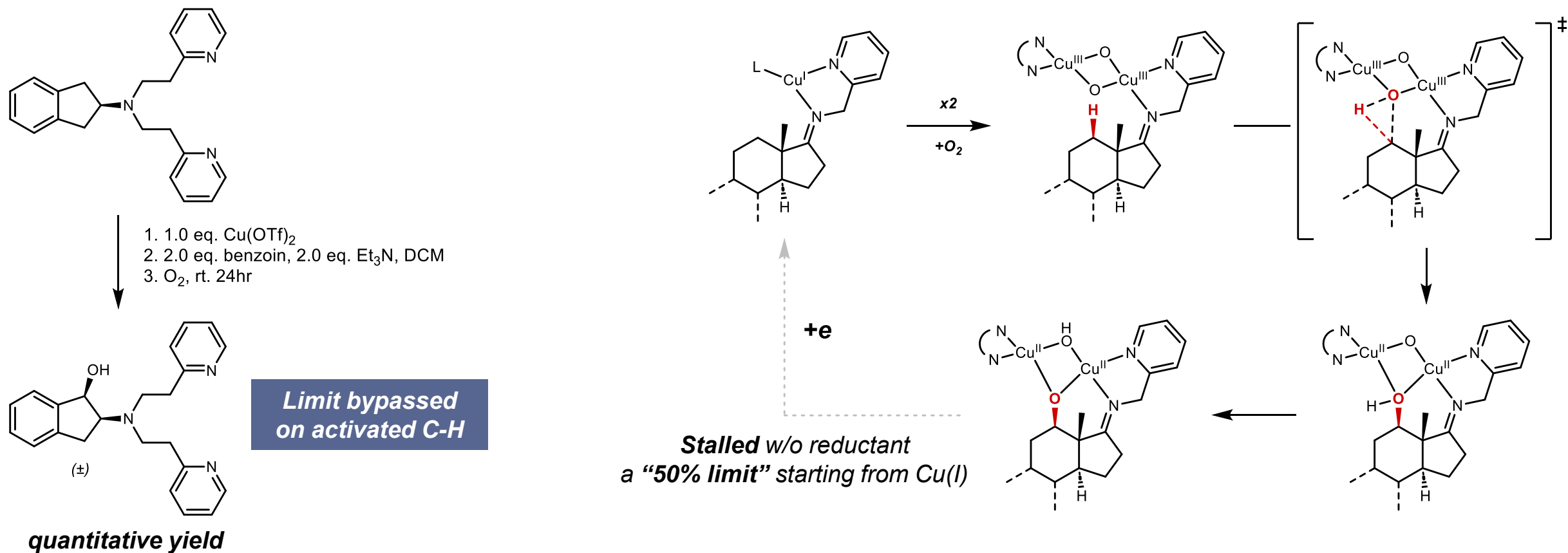
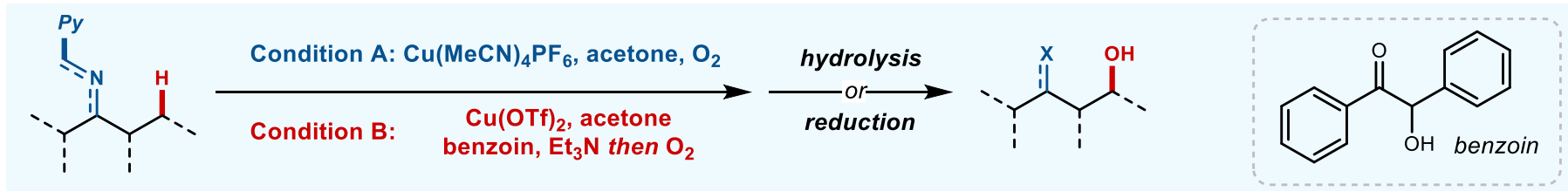
Discovery



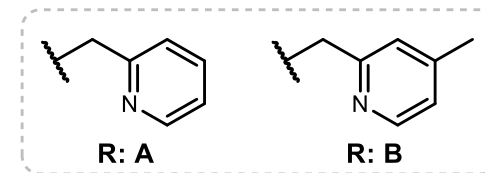
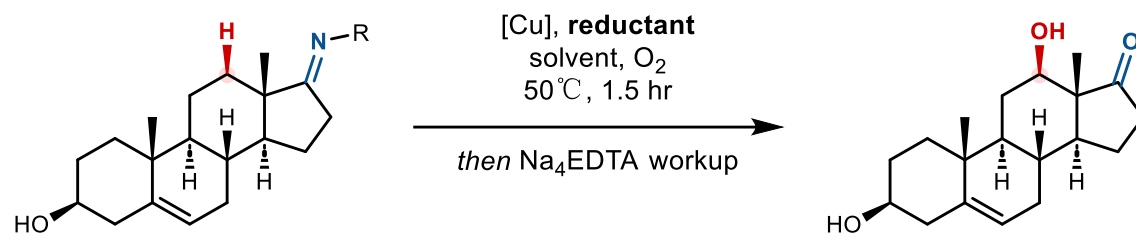
Mechanism postulation



Mechanism postulation



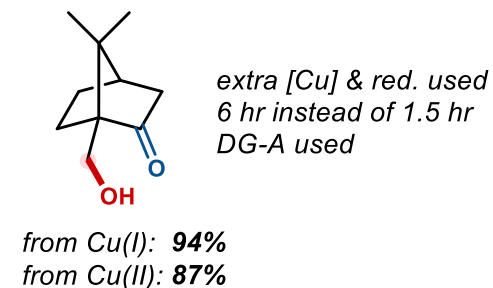
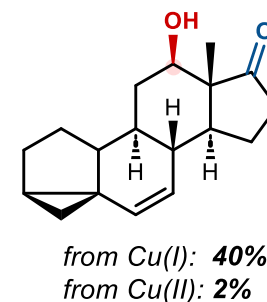
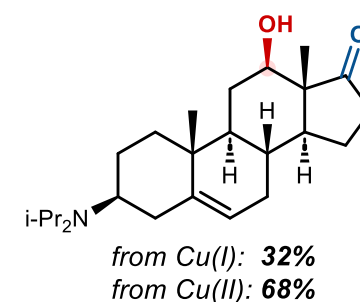
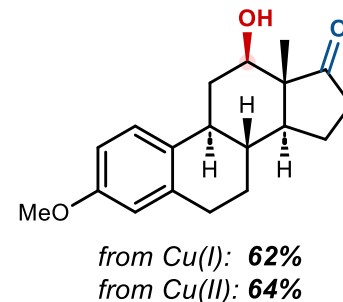
Baran's modification



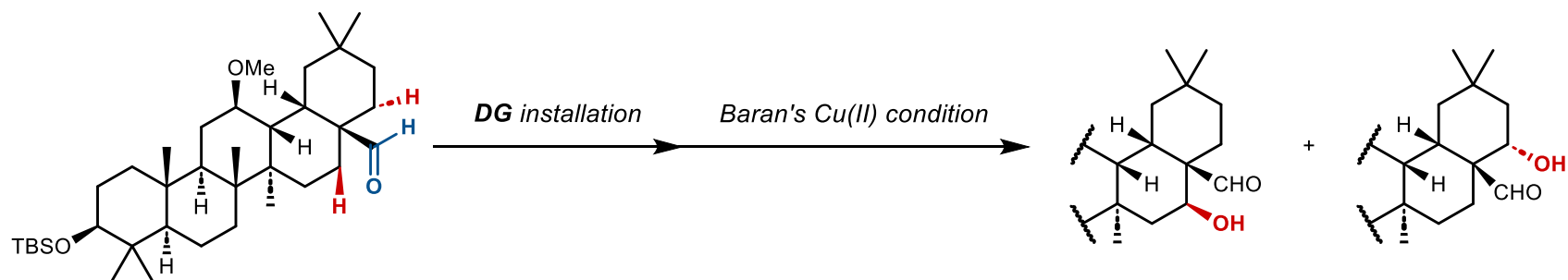
All yields here starting from imine

[Cu]	Red.	Solv.	R	Yield%
Cu(I)	None	0.02 M acetone	A	45%
Cu(I)	benzoin/Et ₃ N	0.02 M acetone	A	21%
Cu(I)	Na ascorbate	0.02 M acetone	A	67%
Cu(I)	Na ascorbate	0.15 M ace/MeOH 1:1	A	66%
Cu(I)	Na ascorbate	0.15 M ace/MeOH 1:1	B	90%
Cu(II)	Na ascorbate	0.15 M ace/MeOH 1:1	B	68%

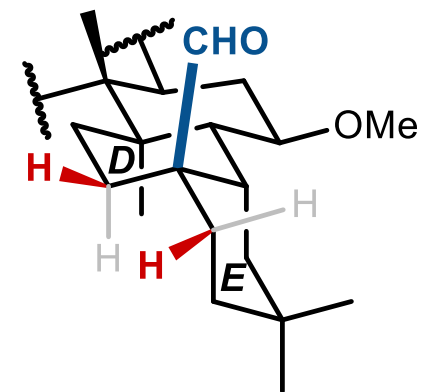
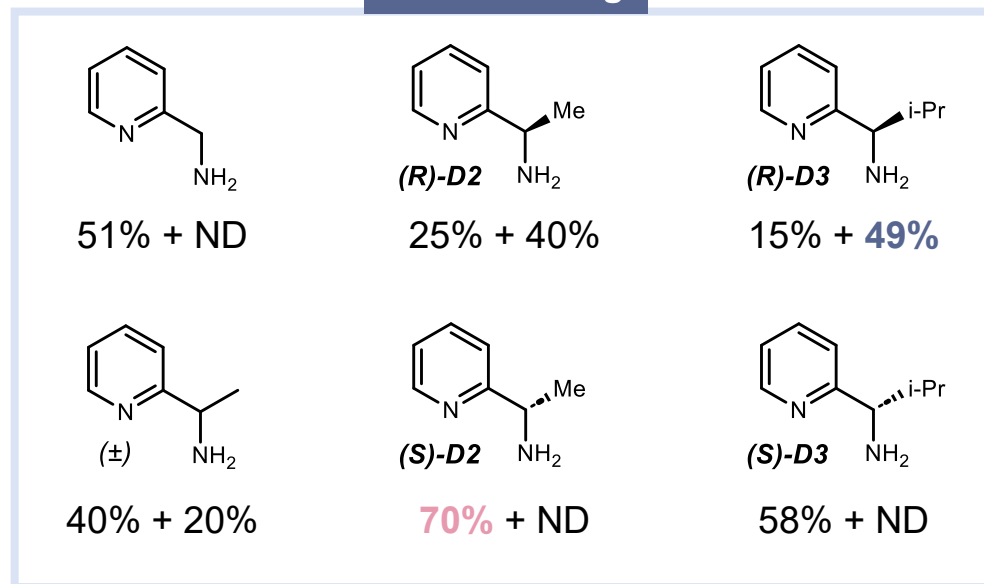
Cu(I) = Cu(MeCN)₄PF₆; Cu(II) = Cu(OTf)₂, 2.0 eq. reductant



Local desymmetrization through DG design

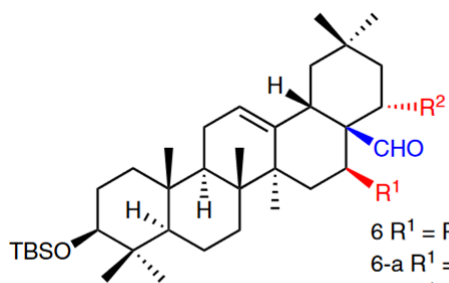


DG screening



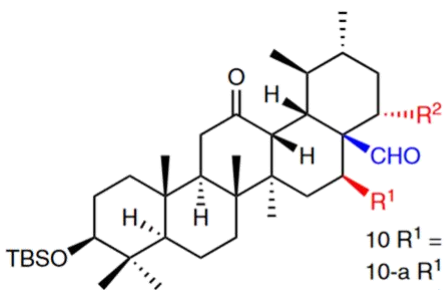
Local desymmetrization through DG design

- Selected Scope (*brsm* yield in parentheses)



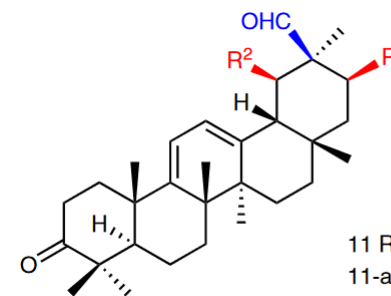
6 R¹ = R² = H
6-a R¹ = OH, R² = H
6-b R¹ = H, R² = OH

Entry	DG	6-a	6-b
1a	D2(R)	N.D.	47% (83%)
1b	D2(S)	65%	N.D.
1c	D3(R)	N.D.	53% (90%)
1d	D3(S)	92%	N.D.



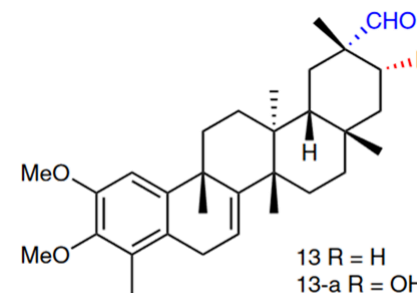
10 R¹ = R² = H
10-a R¹ = OH, R² = H
10-b R¹ = H, R² = OH

Entry	DG	10-a	10-b
5a	D2(R)	N.D.	65%
5b	D2(S)	75%	N.D.
5c	D3(R)	N.D.	94%
5d	D3(S)	73%	N.D.



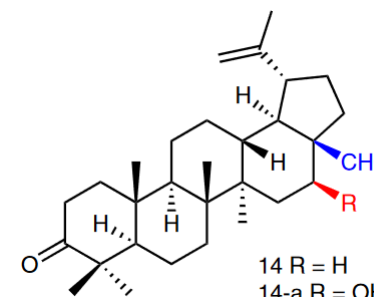
11 R¹ = R² = H
11-a R¹ = OH, R² = H
11-b R¹ = H, R² = OH

Entry	DG	11-a [X-ray]	11-b [X-ray]
6a	D2(R)	N.D.	42%
6b	D2(S)	71%	N.D.
6c	D3(R)	N.D.	46%
6d	D3(S)	89%	N.D.



13 R = H
13-a R = OH

Entry	DG	13-a
8a	D2(R)	47%
8b	D2(S)	69%
8c	D3(R)	47%
8d	D3(S)	80%



14 R = H
14-a R = OH

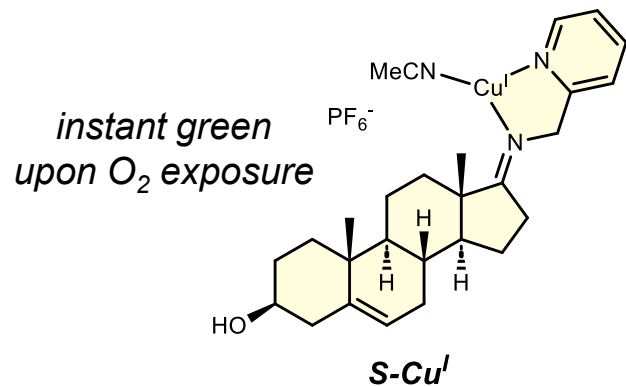
Entry	DG	14-a
9a	D2(R)	53%
9b	D2(S)	96%
9c	D3(R)	75%
9d	D3(S)	98%

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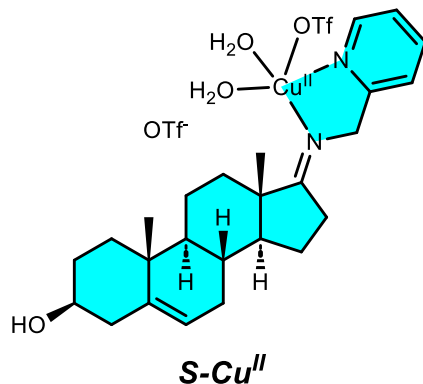
Is it *really* through $[\text{Cu}_2\text{O}_2]$?

- Reaction of well-defined complexes under **extremely dilute** conditions ($[\text{Cu}] = 4\text{mM}$)



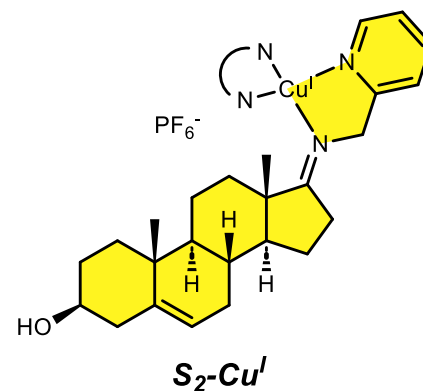
[O]	Temp	Time	Yield%
O ₂	0 °C	6 h	46%
O ₂	20 °C	6 h	57%
O ₂	50 °C	6 h	77%
5 eq. H₂O₂	20 °C	0.5 h	66%

50% limit can be surpassed w/o reductant

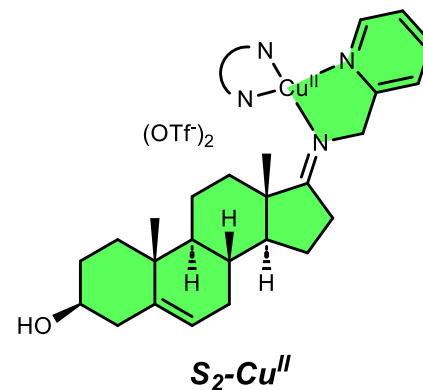


[O]	Temp	Time	Yield%
O ₂	50 °C	6 h	2%
5 eq. H ₂ O ₂	20 °C	0.5 h	43%

Cu(II) inactive towards O₂ but active towards H₂O₂



[O]	Temp	Time	Yield%
O ₂	20 °C	6 h	0%
O ₂	50 °C	6 h	0%
5 eq. H ₂ O ₂	20 °C	0.5 h	38%

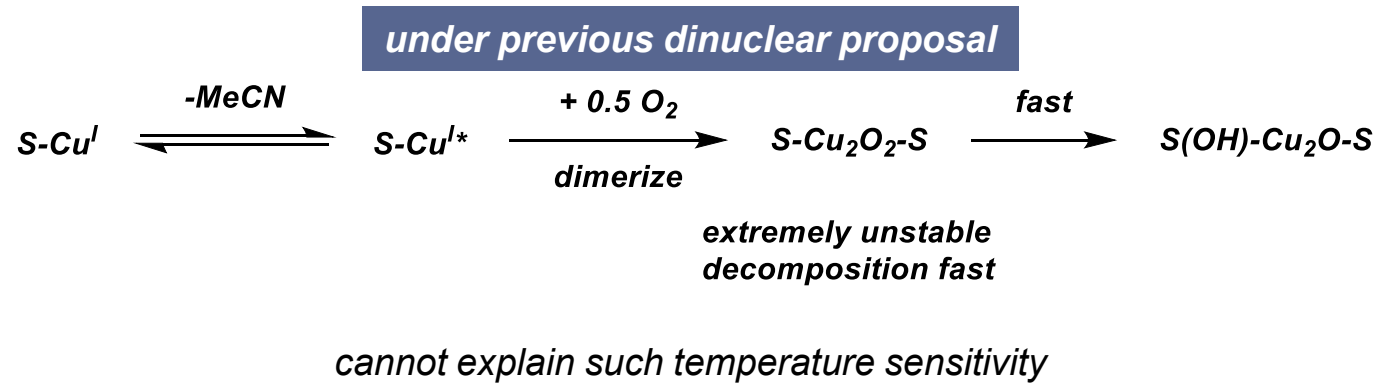
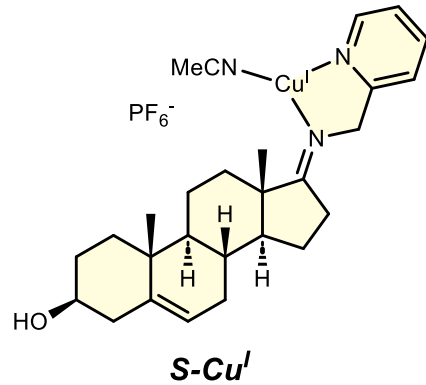


[O]	Temp	Time	Yield%
O ₂	50 °C	6 h	10%
5 eq. H ₂ O ₂	20 °C	0.5 h	53%

L₂Cu not active

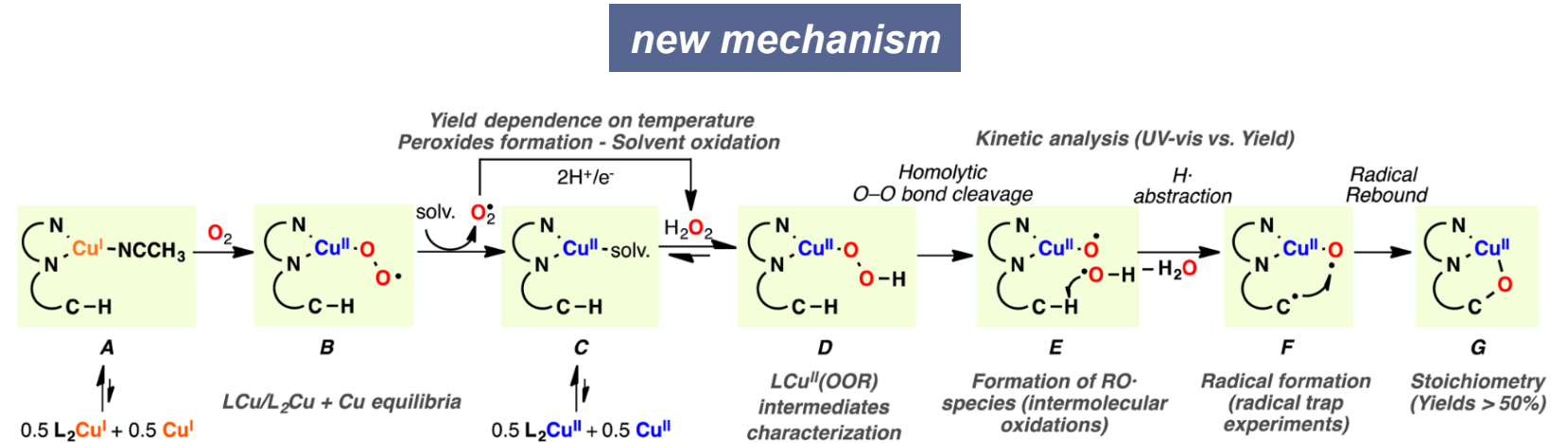
Is it *really* through $[\text{Cu}_2\text{O}_2]$?

- Reaction of well-defined complexes under **extremely dilute** conditions ($[\text{Cu}] = 4\text{mM}$)

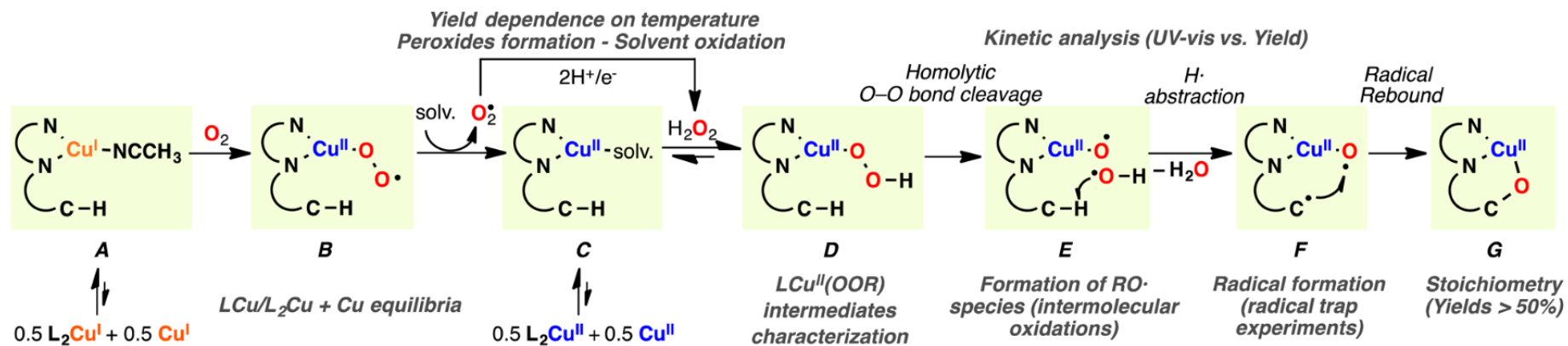


[O]	Temp	Time	Yield%
O ₂	0 °C	6 h	46%
O ₂	20 °C	6 h	57%
O ₂	50 °C	6 h	77%

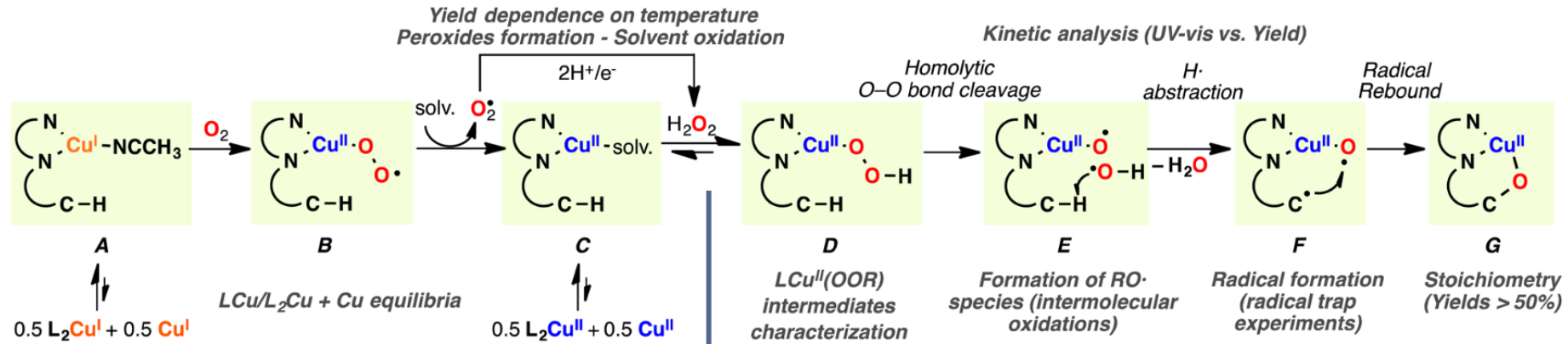
*yield sensitive to temperature
under long reaction time*



The Monocopper Mechanism



Experimental & spectral validation



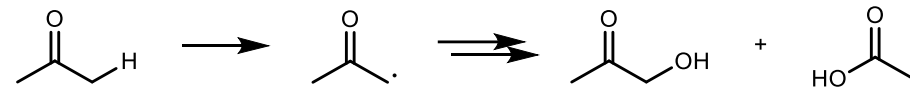
Question: main species in solution

Determined via NMR to be mononuclear

Question: source of H_2O_2

Low temp: disproportionation, $2HO_2 = H_2O_2 + O_2$

High temp: solvent oxidation by HO_2



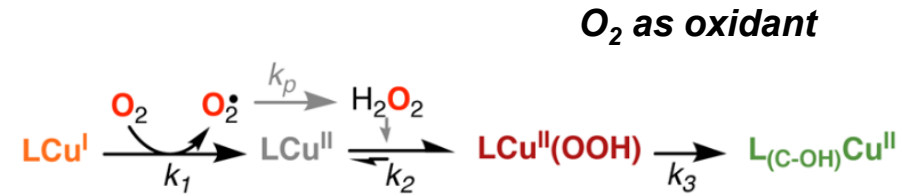
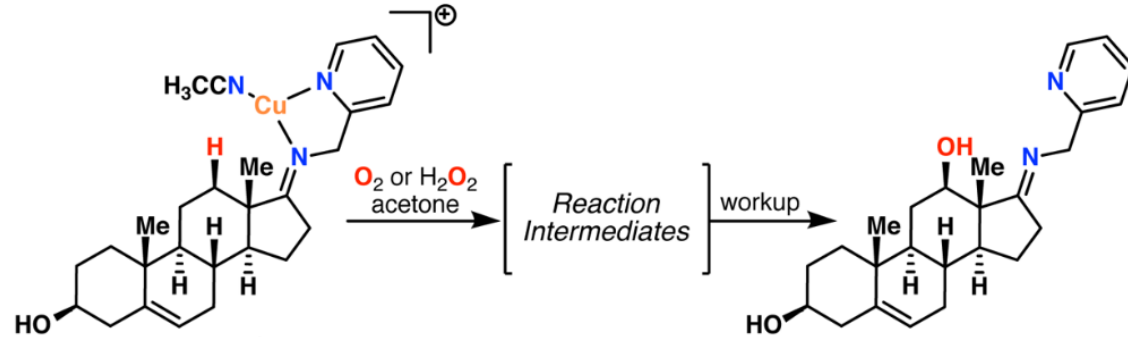
pdts confirmed by GC-MS

solvents prone to peroxidation give higher yields

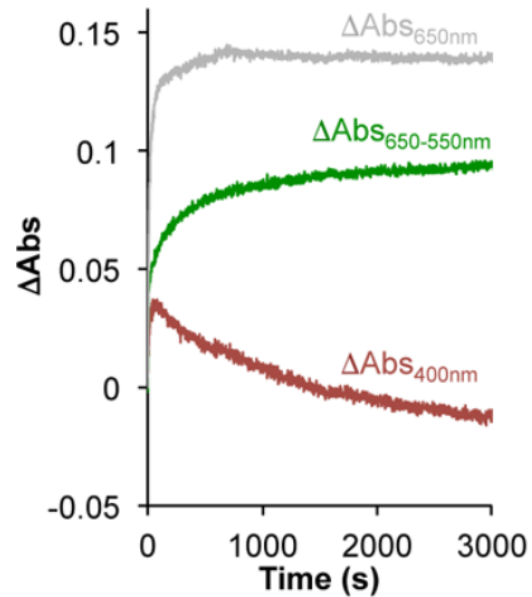
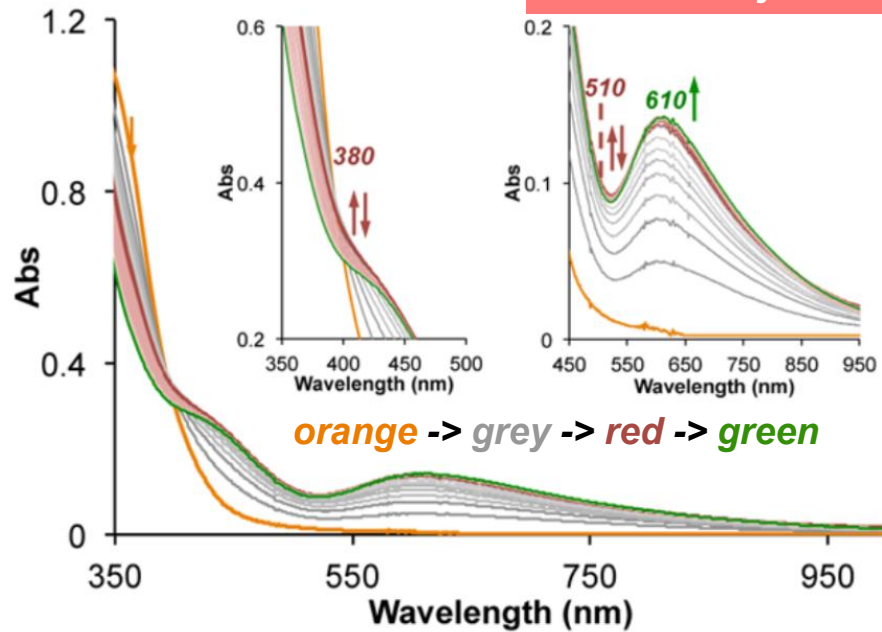
toluene/benzene low yield due to sequestering

Experimental & spectral validation

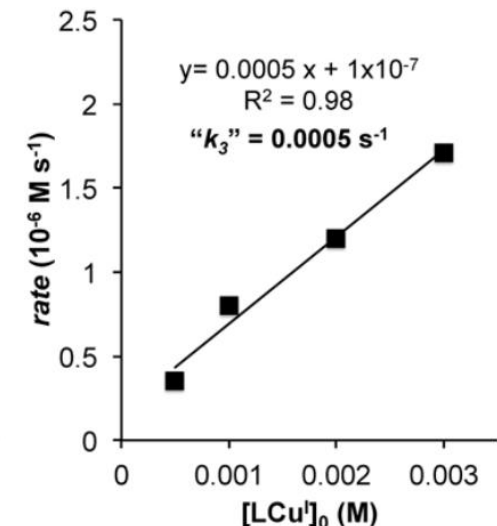
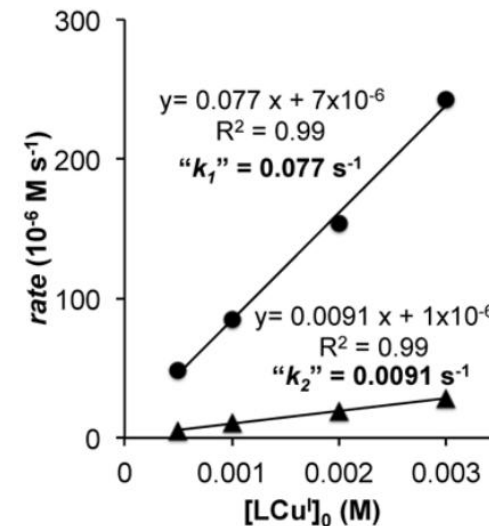
Question: prove intermediacy of Cu(II)-OOH



Intermediacy of 2 species

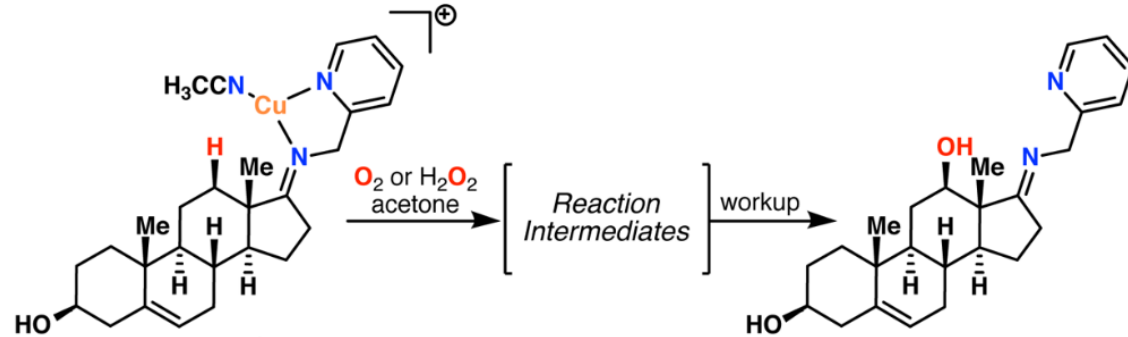


1st order wrt. [Cu]



Experimental & spectral validation

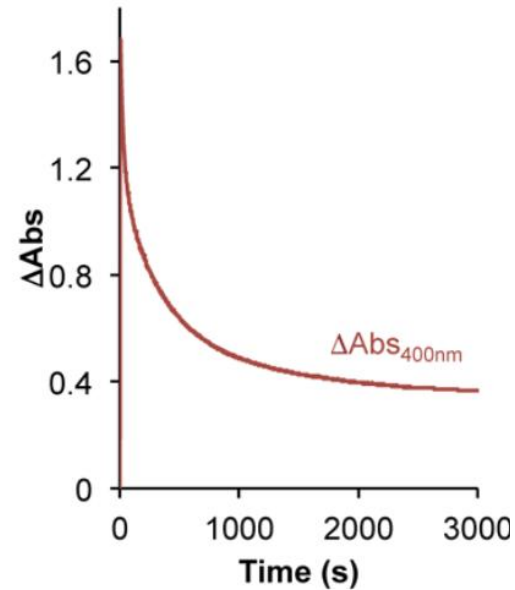
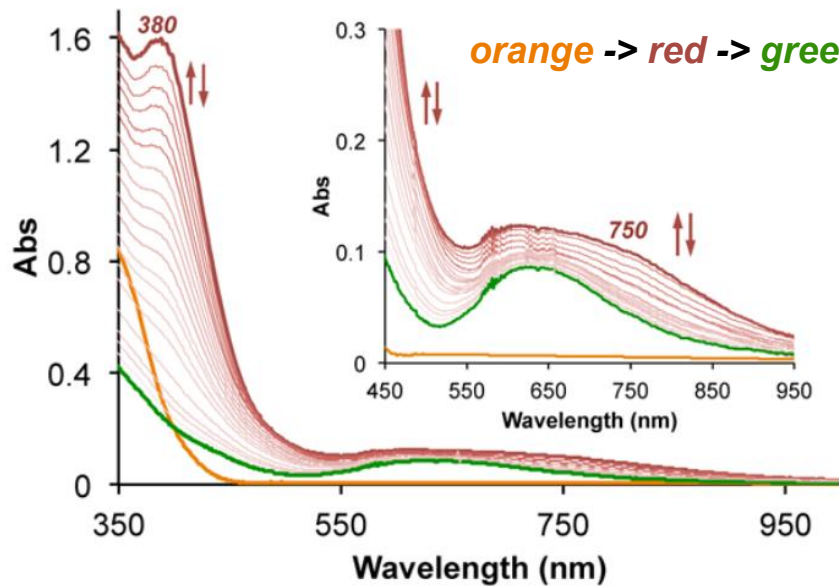
Question: prove intermediacy of Cu(II)-OOH



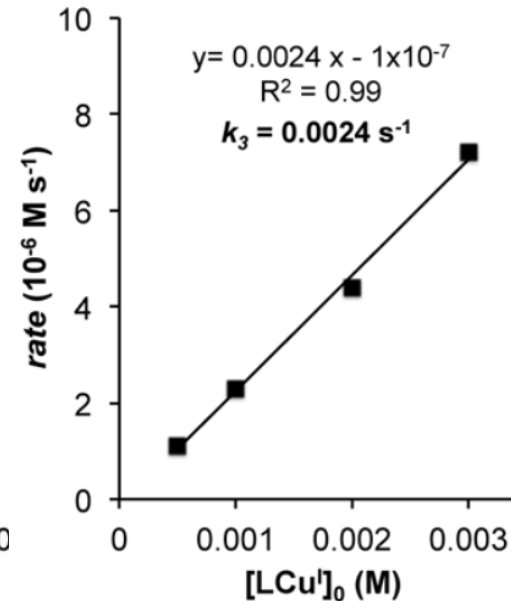
large excess H_2O_2 as oxidant



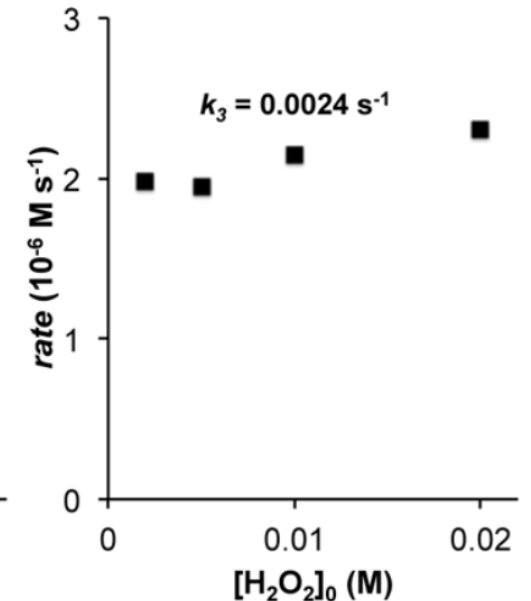
Intermediacy of 2 species



1st order wrt. [Cu]



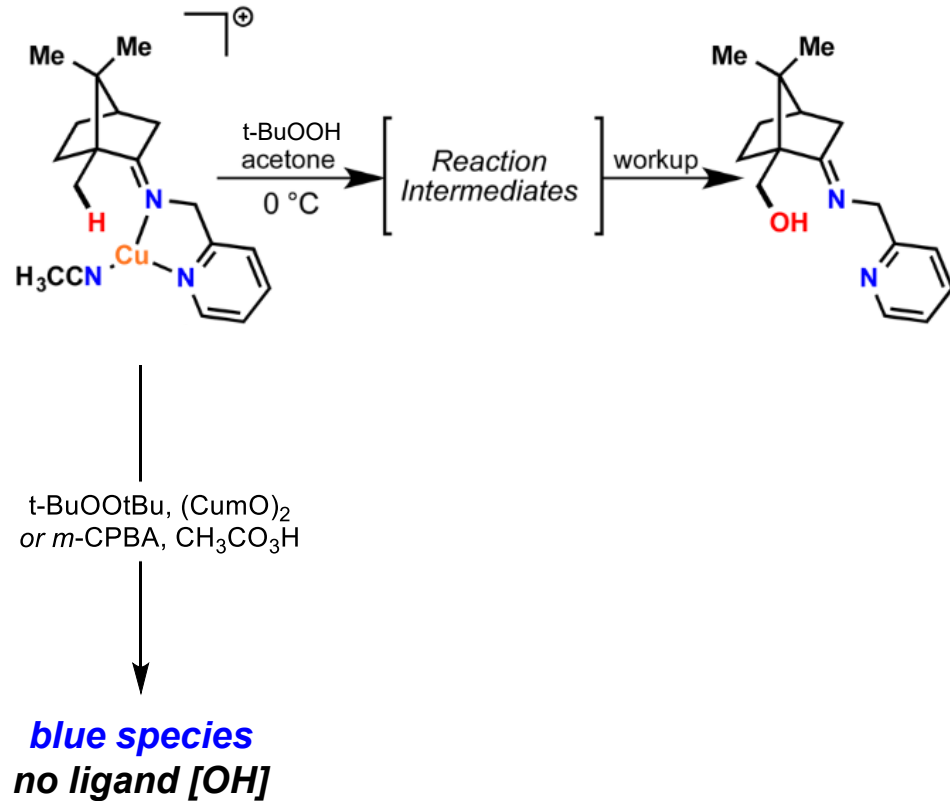
0th order wrt. [H_2O_2]



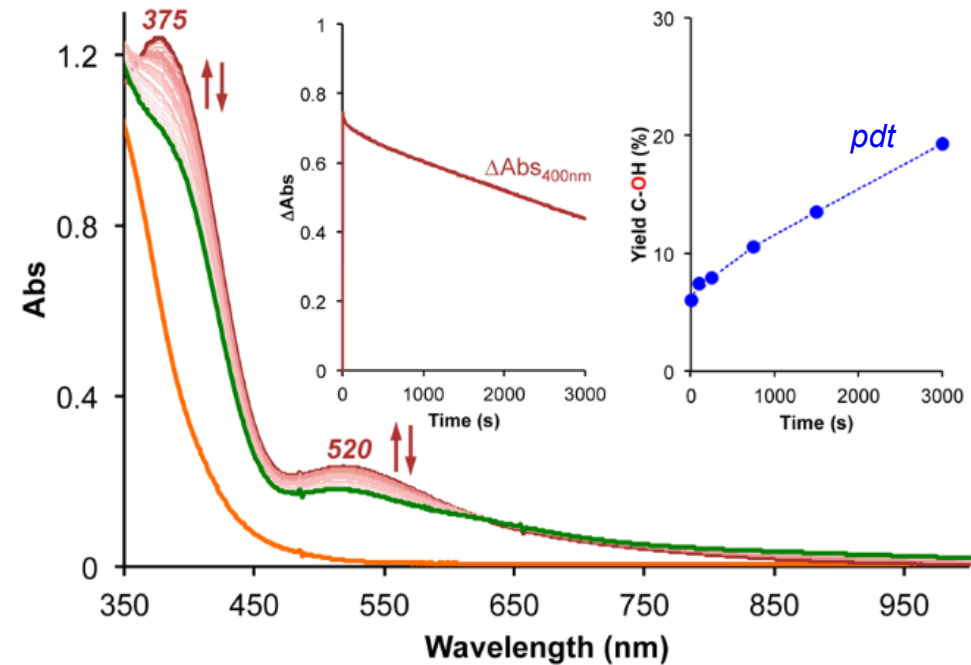
Experimental & spectral validation

Question: prove intermediacy of Cu(II)-OOH

- Additional experiment: ROOH as oxidant



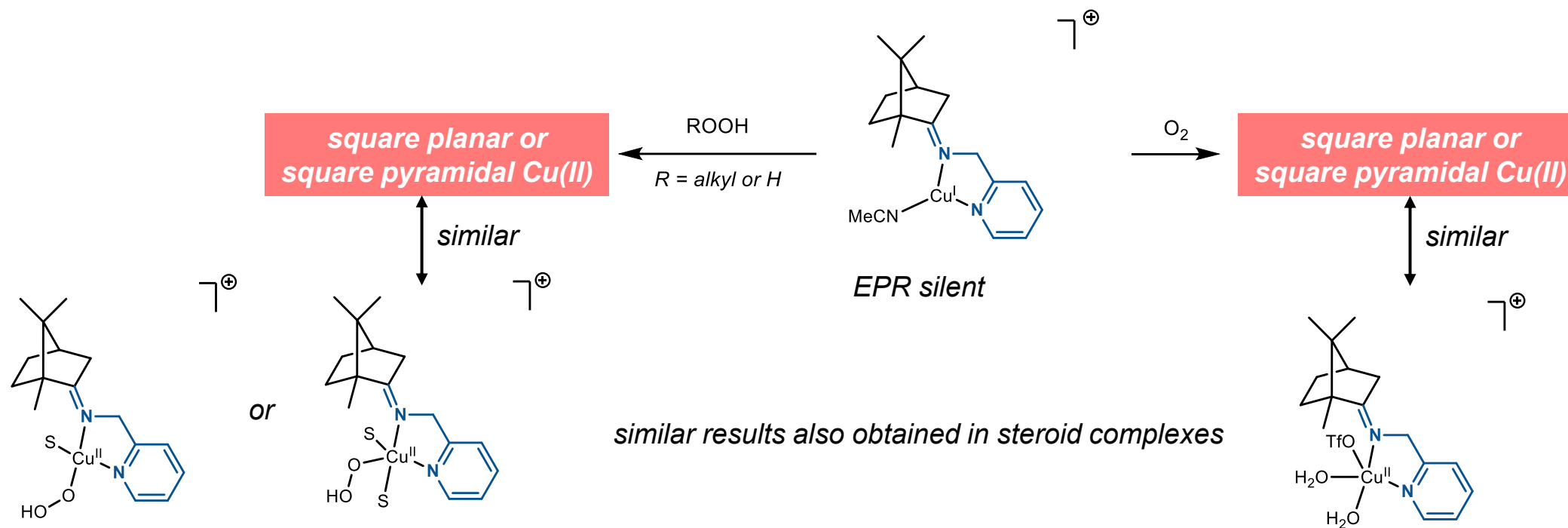
Similar spectra shift w/ H₂O₂ and O₂ cases



Experimental & spectral validation

Question: prove intermediacy of Cu(II)-OOH

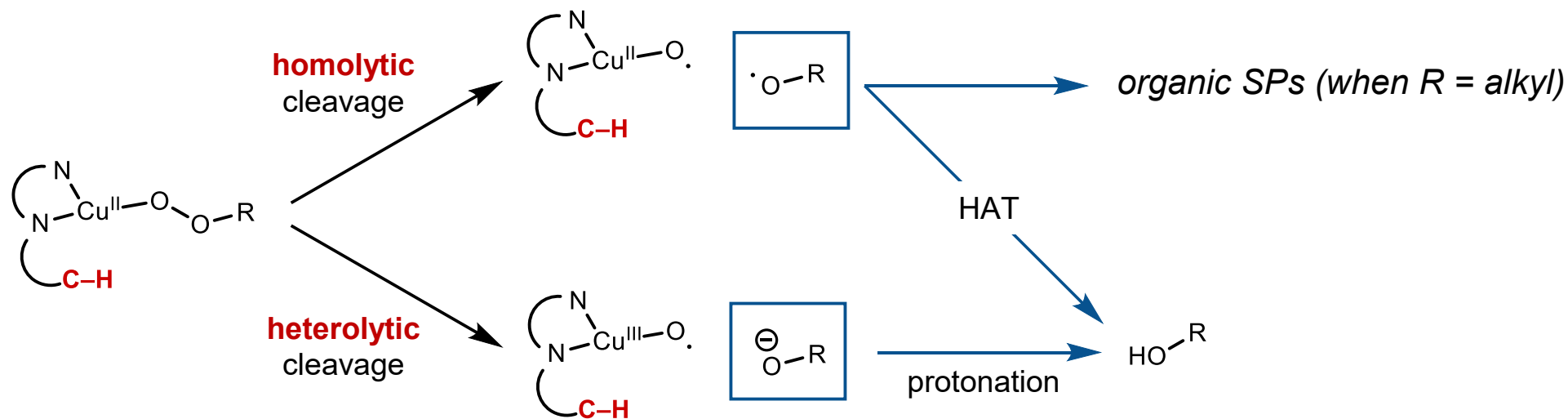
- EPR to confirm presence of relevant Cu species



Experimental & spectral validation

Question: O-O cleavage mechanism & the HAT species

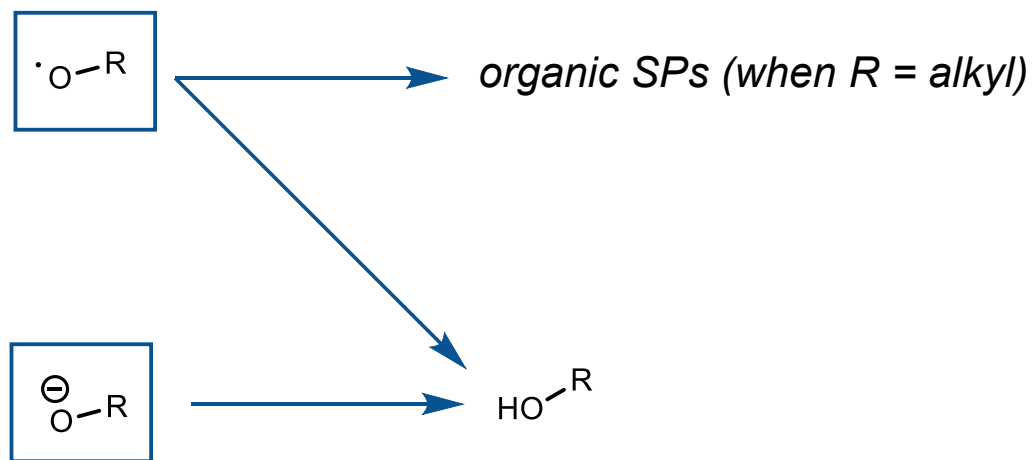
- ROOH with **different HAT capabilities**



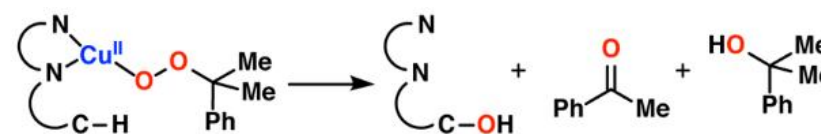
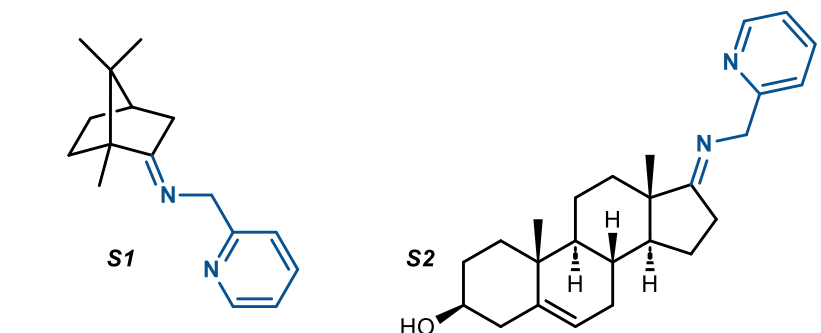
Experimental & spectral validation

Question: O-O cleavage mechanism & the HAT species

- ROOH with **different HAT capabilities**



Homolysis of O–O bond in $\text{Cu}^{\text{II}}-\text{OOR}$ involved



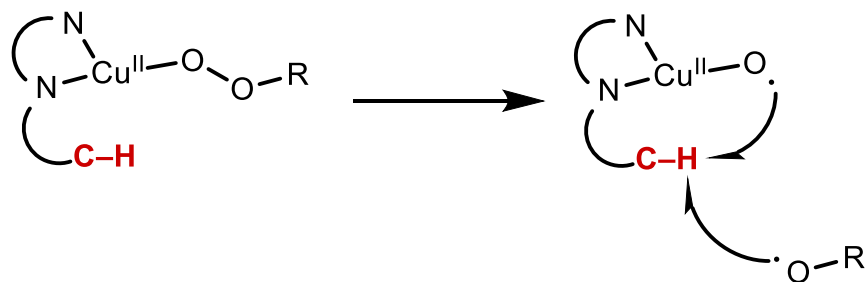
		Yield	
L = S1, 20 °C	25%	28%	72%
	0 °C	14%	83%
	-40 °C	8%	97%
L = S2, 20 °C	27%	26%	74%
	0 °C	31%	93%
	-40 °C	36%	96%

consistent observation of SPs corresponding to **radical β -scission**

Experimental & spectral validation

Question: O-O cleavage mechanism & the HAT species

- ROOH with **different HAT capabilities**

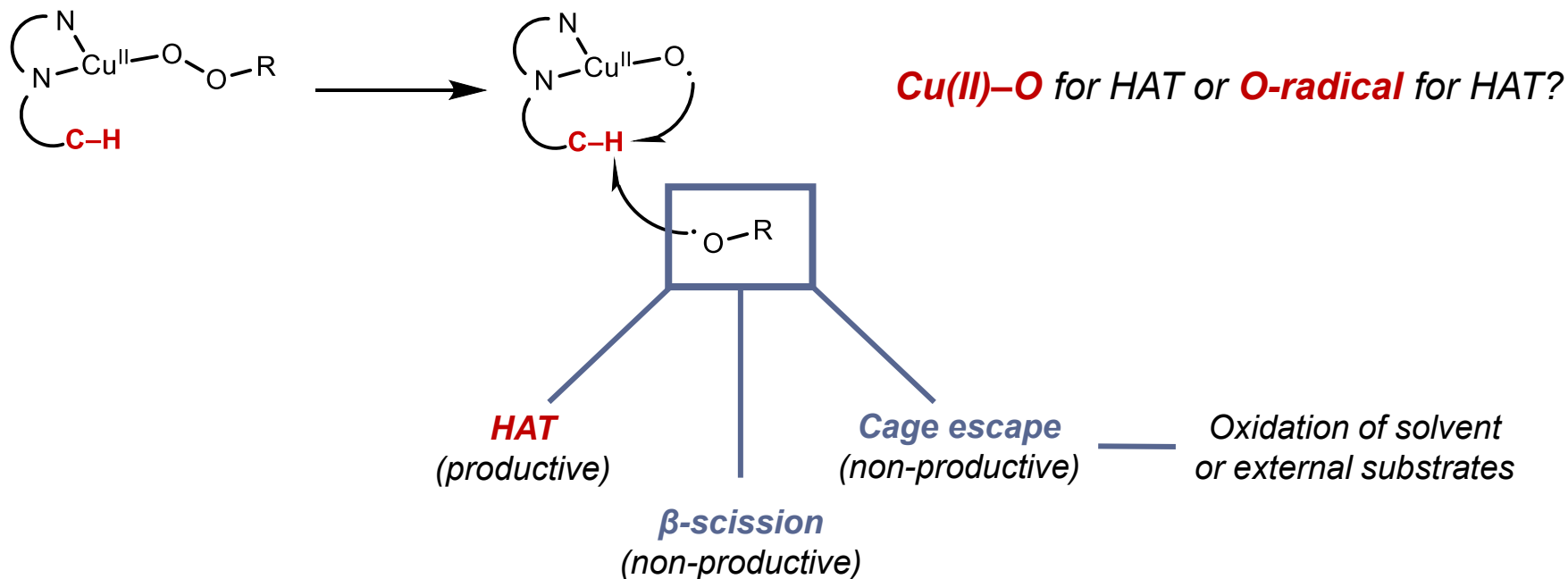


Cu(II)-O for HAT or **O-radical** for HAT?

Experimental & spectral validation

Question: O-O cleavage mechanism & the HAT species

- ROOH with **different HAT capabilities**

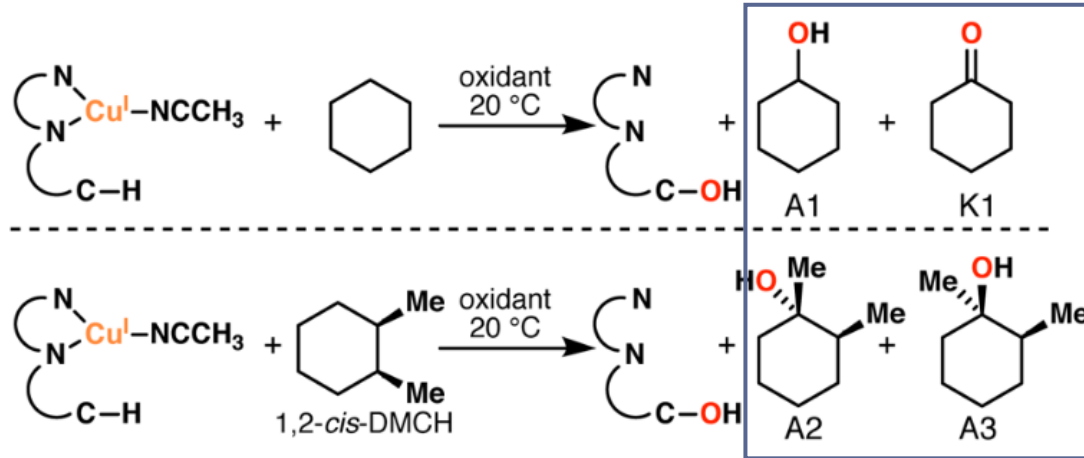


<i>Productive vs. non-productive pathways</i>	
Dependence on RO• :	Dependence on C-H:
<i>CumO•, tBuO•</i> << HO•	S1 : methyl S2 : methylene
Stronger oxidant: higher yields	Weaker C-H bond: higher yields

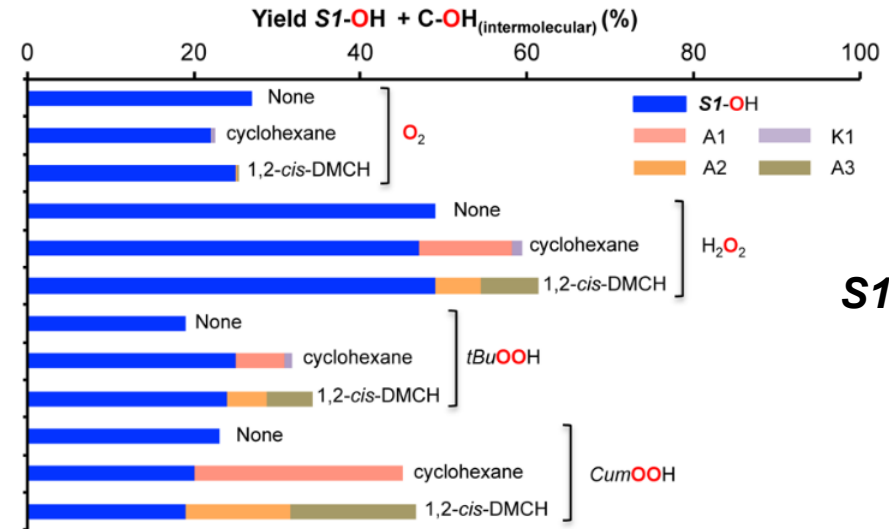
Experimental & spectral validation

Question: O-O cleavage mechanism & the HAT species

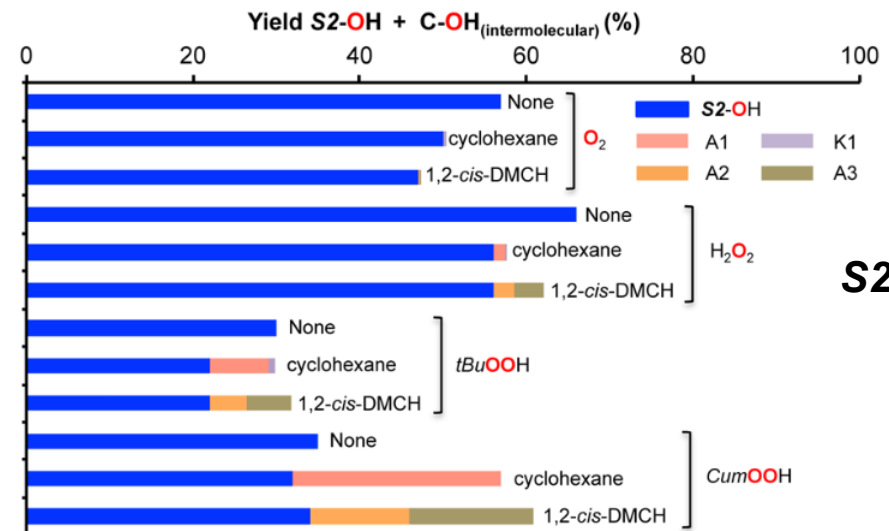
- External substrate to test cage escape of radical



formed only through escaped RO·



S1: primary C-H

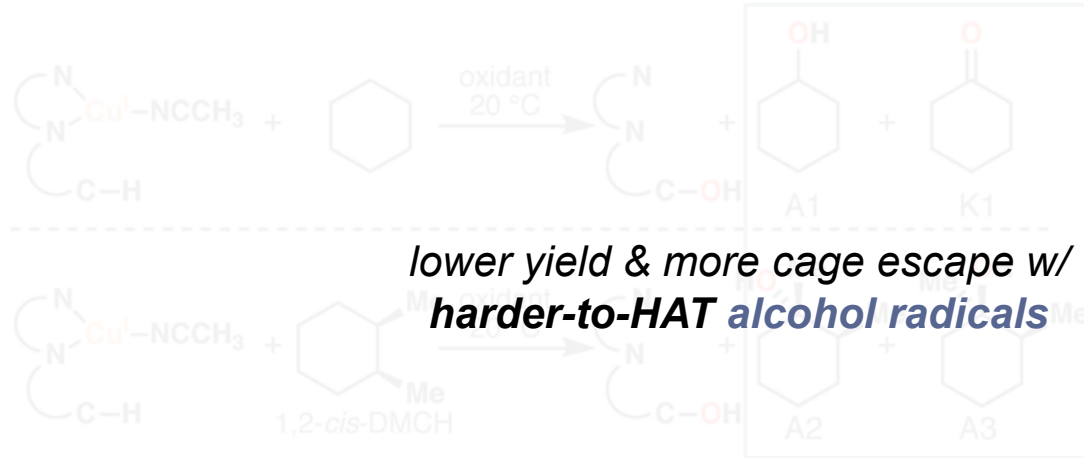


S2: secondary C-H

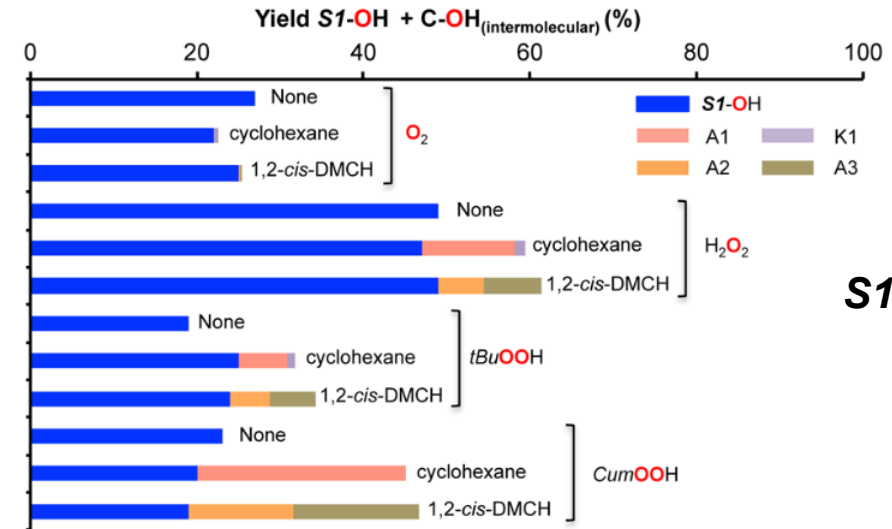
Experimental & spectral validation

Question: O-O cleavage mechanism & the HAT species

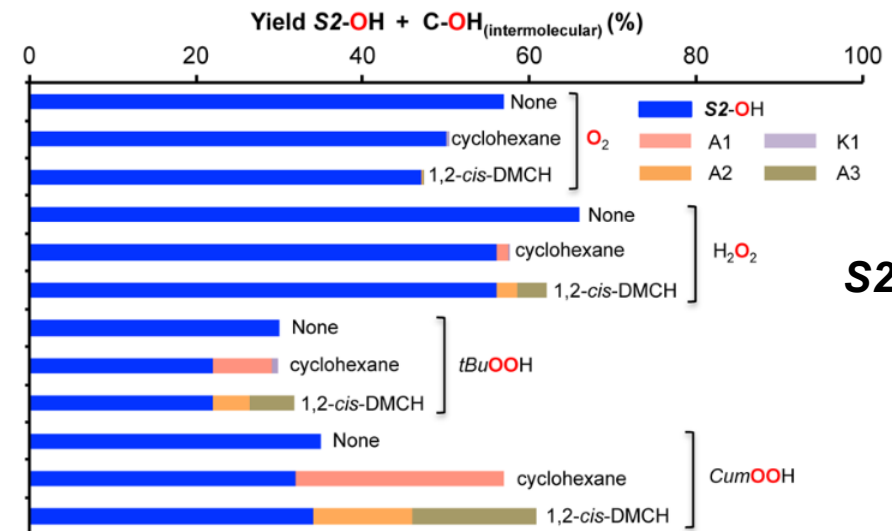
- External substrate to test cage escape of radical



formed only through escaped RO \cdot



S1: primary C-H

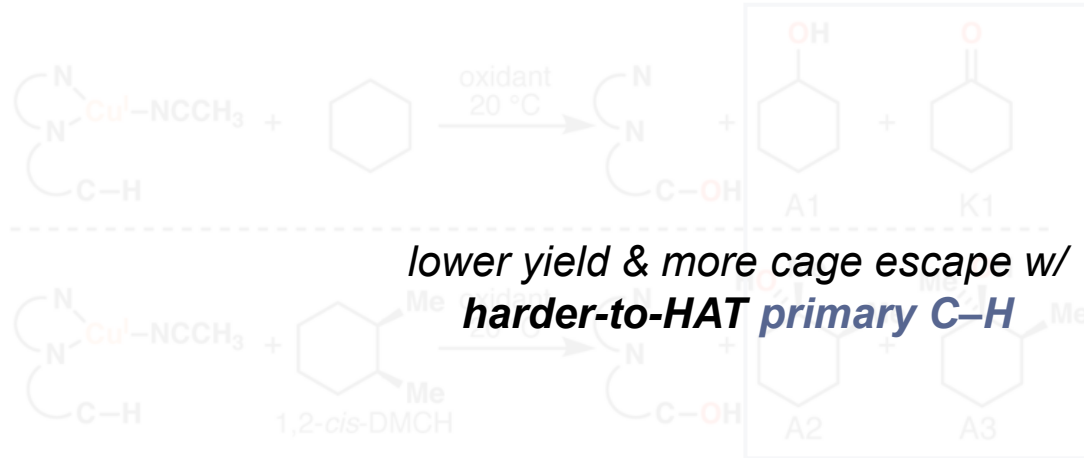


S2: secondary C-H

Experimental & spectral validation

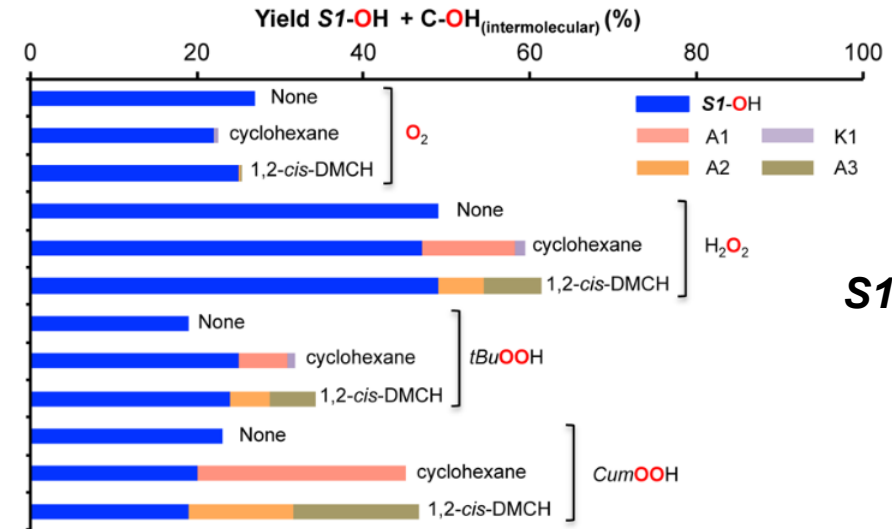
Question: O-O cleavage mechanism & the HAT species

- External substrate to test cage escape of radical

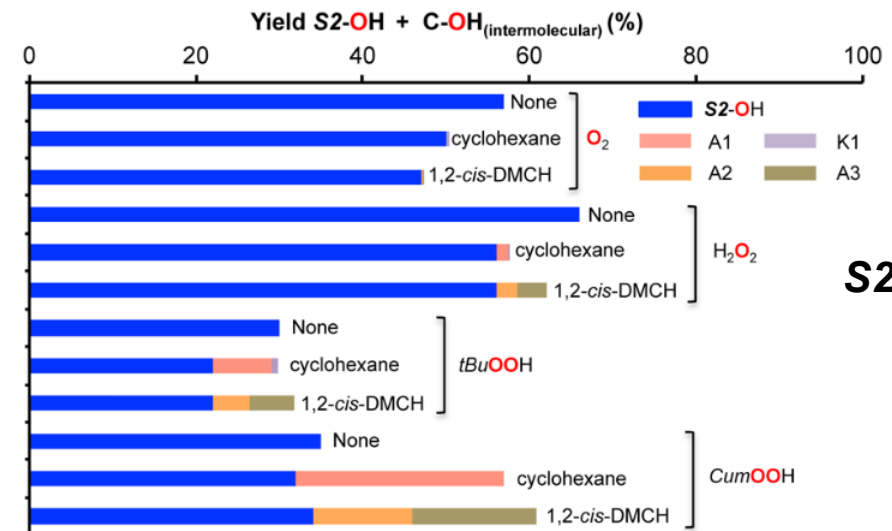


lower yield & more cage escape w/
harder-to-HAT primary C-H

formed only through escaped RO \cdot



S1: primary C-H

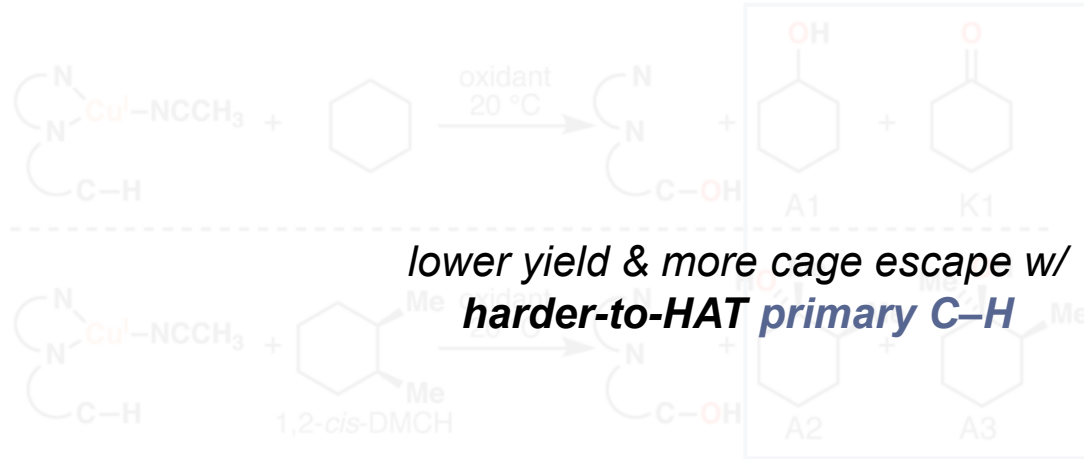


S2: secondary C-H

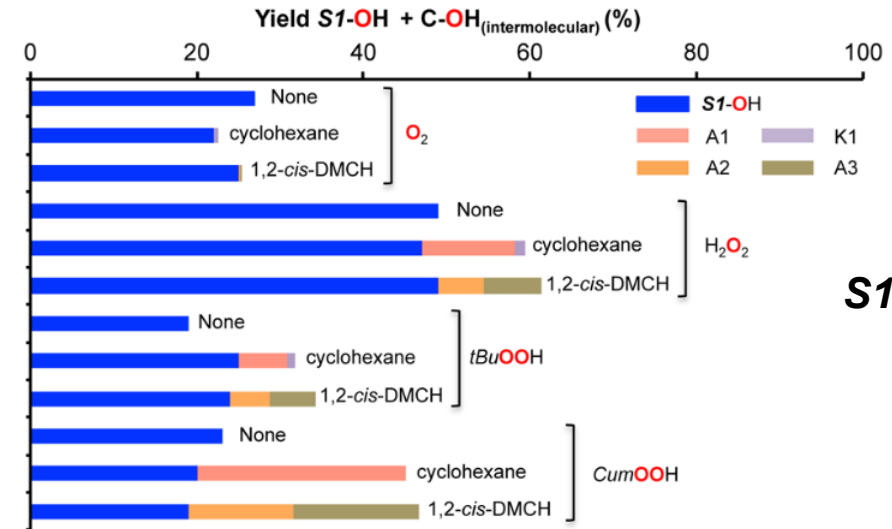
Experimental & spectral validation

Question: O-O cleavage mechanism & the HAT species

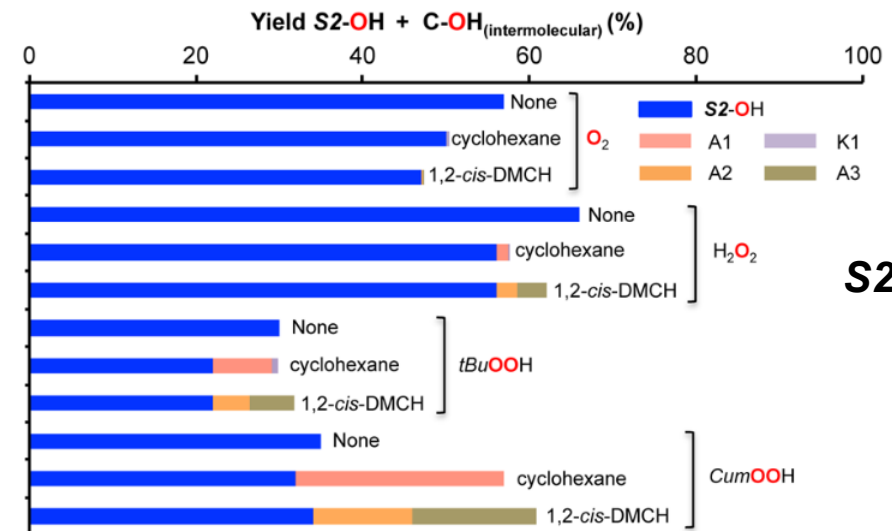
- External substrate to test cage escape of radical



An OH or OR radical is the HAT species. *scaped RO₂*



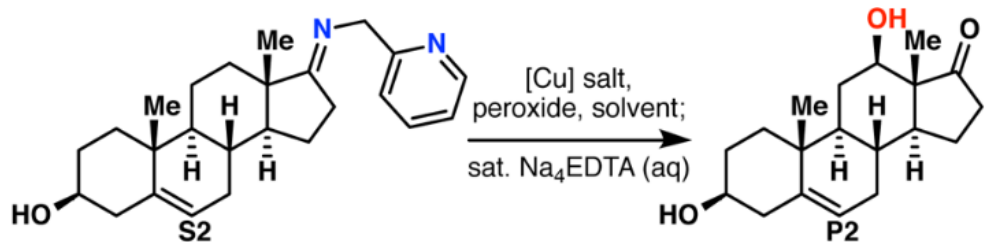
S1: primary C-H



S2: secondary C-H

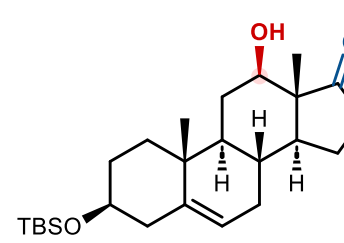
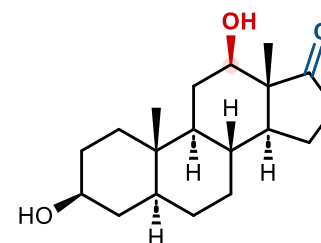
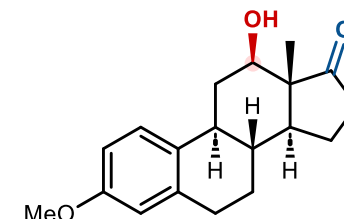
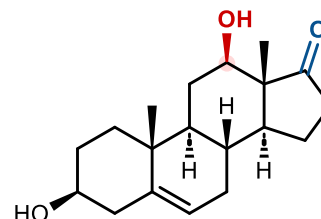
Improved condition

- Scope: isolated yield (NMR yield), previous best condition given



Entry	[Cu] salt ^b	Peroxide ^c	Solvent ^d	Time (min)	Yield (%) ^e	DHEA (%)
1	Cu(OTf) ₂	H ₂ O ₂	acetone	90	57	25
2	Cu(OAc) ₂ ·H ₂ O	H ₂ O ₂	acetone	90	25	49
3	CuCl ₂ ·2H ₂ O	H ₂ O ₂	acetone	90	0	98
4	Cu(NO ₃) ₂ ·3H ₂ O	H ₂ O ₂	acetone	90	77	9
5	Cu(NO ₃) ₂ ·3H ₂ O	TBHP	acetone	120	0	100
6	Cu(NO ₃) ₂ ·3H ₂ O	TBHP/Et ₃ N	acetone	120	3.8	64
7	Cu(NO ₃) ₂ ·3H ₂ O	lauroyl peroxide	acetone	120	0	86
8	Cu(NO ₃) ₂ ·3H ₂ O	cumyl peroxide	acetone	120	0	59
9	Cu(NO ₃) ₂ ·3H ₂ O	H ₂ O ₂	acetone/MeOH	90	87	13
10	Cu(NO ₃) ₂ ·3H ₂ O	H ₂ O ₂	CH ₂ Cl ₂	90	42	0
11	Cu(NO ₃) ₂ ·3H ₂ O	H ₂ O ₂	THF	90	99	1
12	Cu(NO ₃) ₂ ·3H ₂ O	H ₂ O ₂	1,4-dioxane	90	87	4

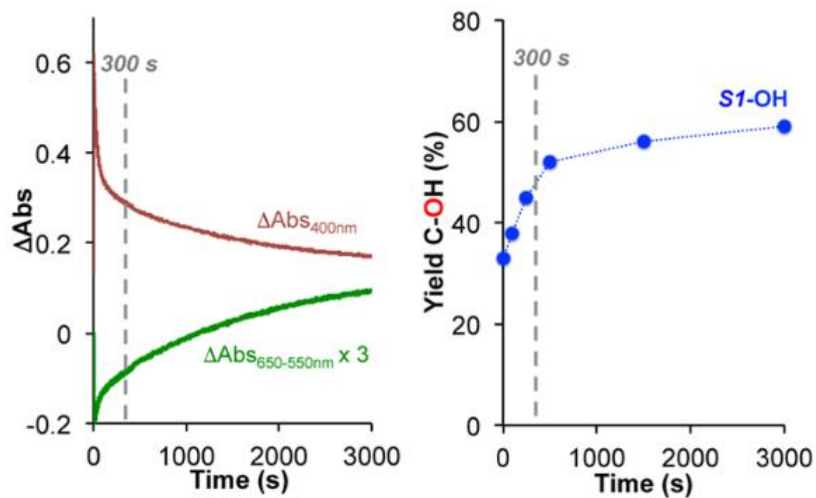
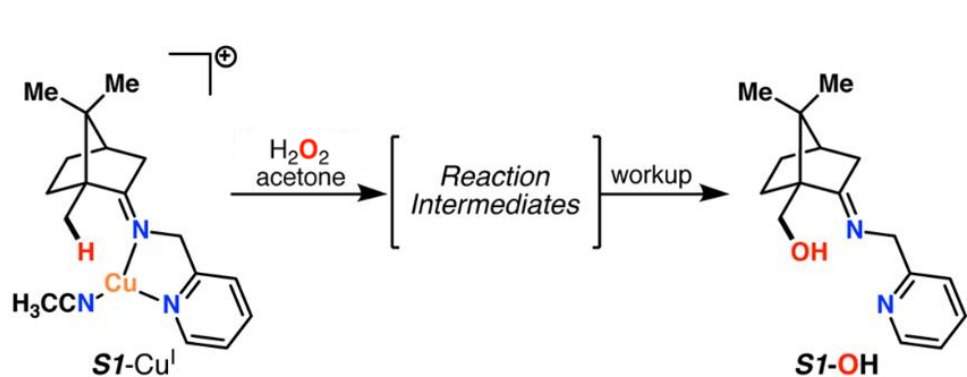
All: 1.1 eq. [Cu], 5.0 eq. [O], 0.2 M, r.t.



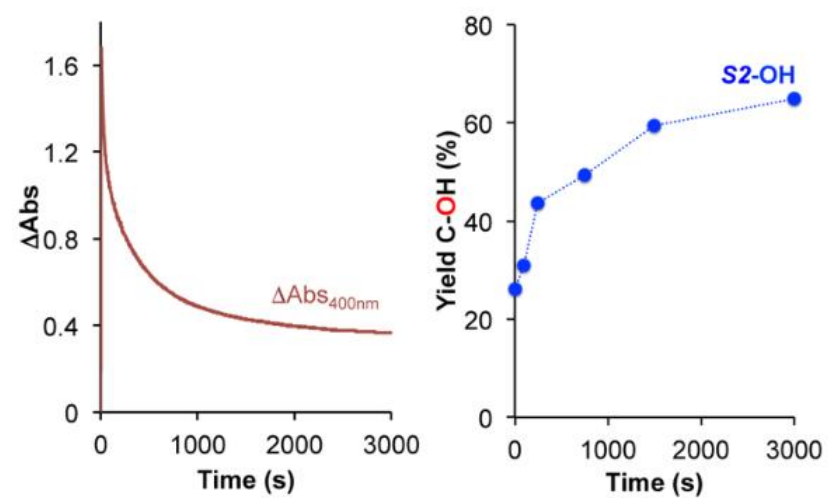
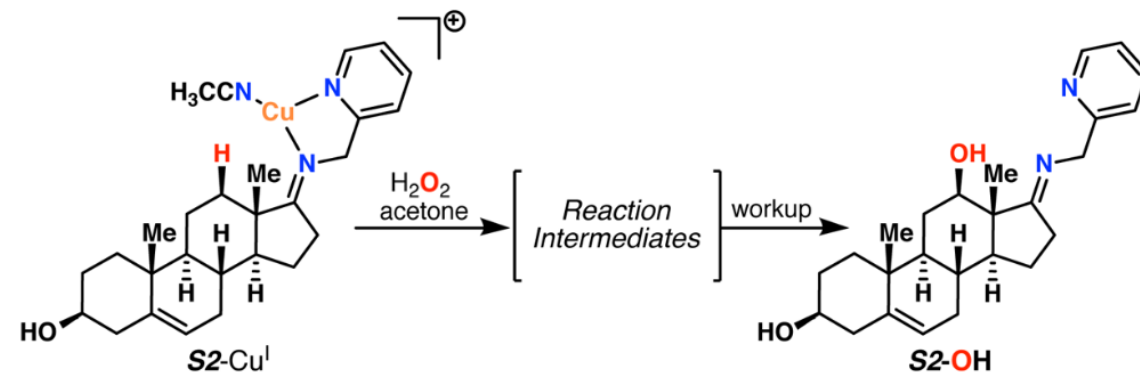
74% (81%) (extra [O] & elevated temp)
prev: 94% (Baran, Cu^I)

Or is it the whole picture?

The **'harder'** S1: reacted **at 0°C**

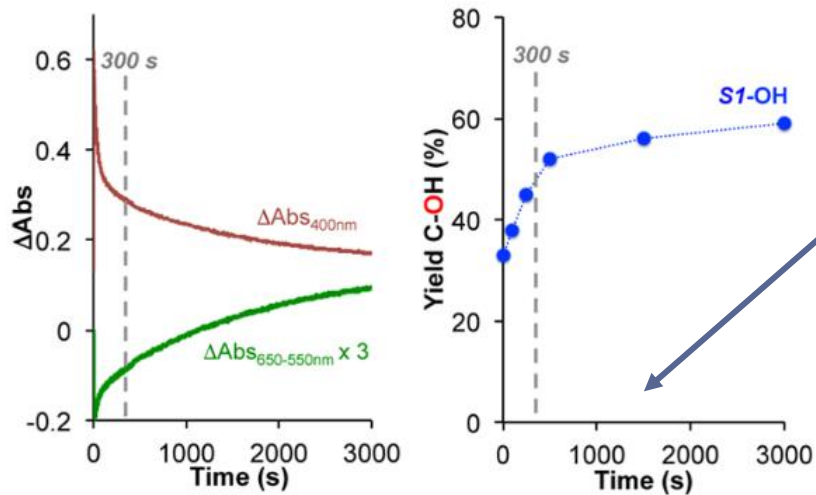
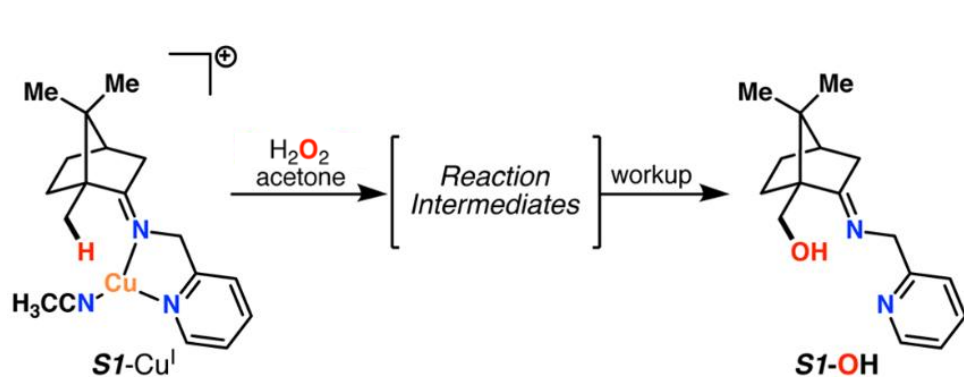


The **'easier'** S2: reacted **at -40°C**

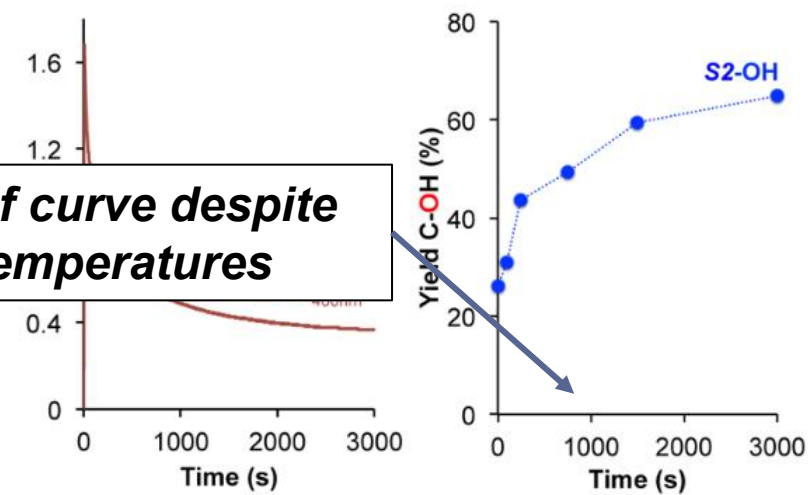
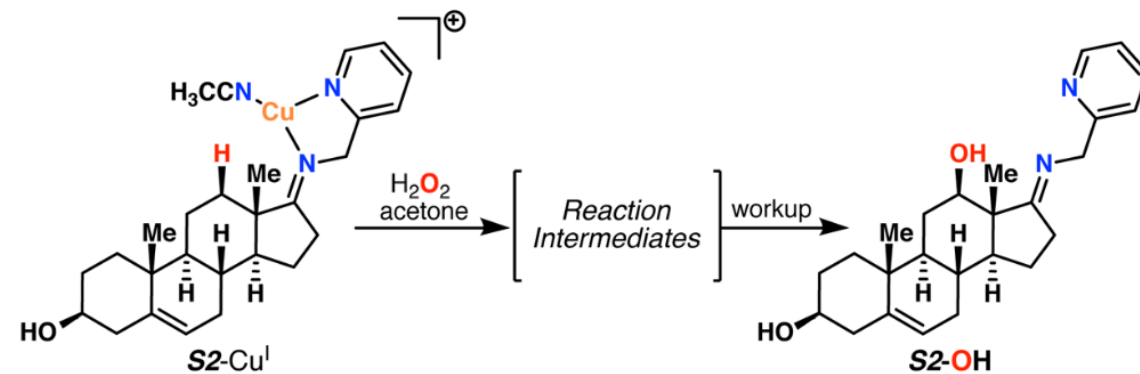


Or is it the whole picture?

The *'harder'* S1: reacted at **0°C**



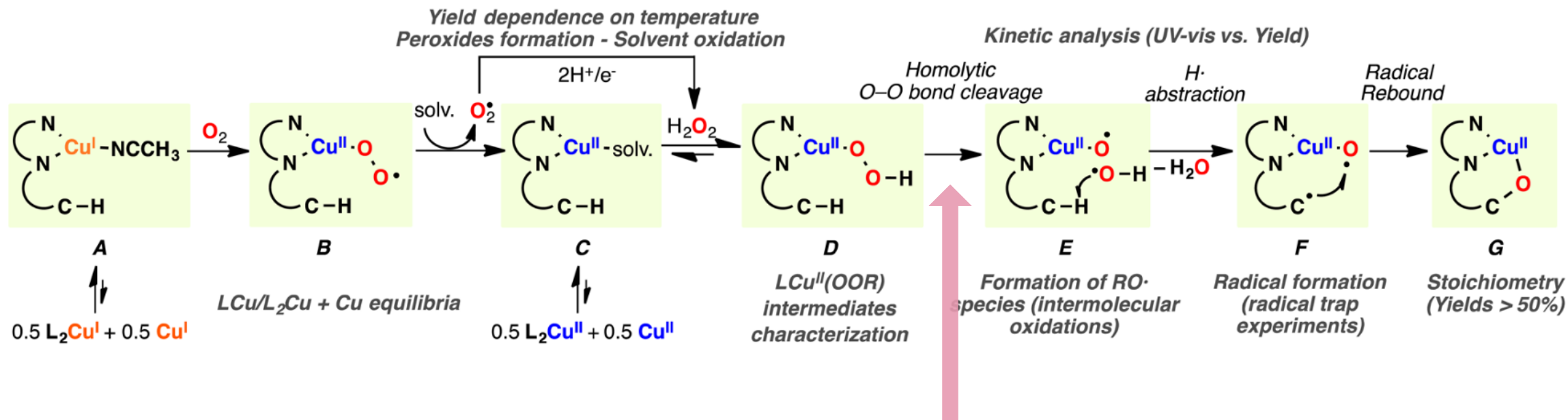
The *'easier'* S2: reacted at **-40°C**



Similar time scale of curve despite vastly different temperatures

Or is it the whole picture?

However...



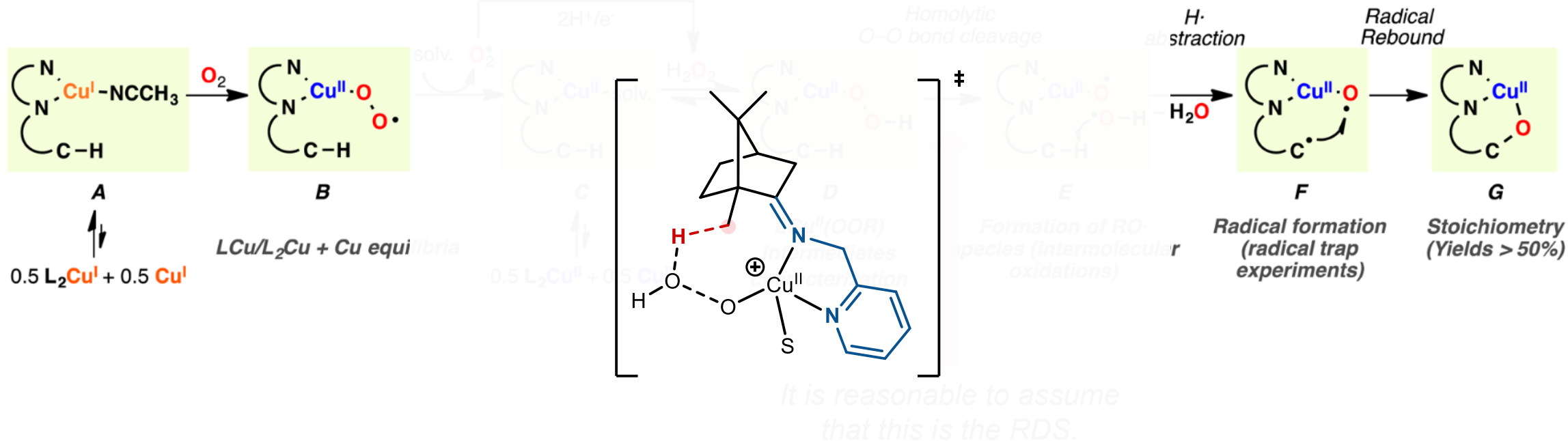
It is reasonable to assume that this is the RDS.

But the decomposition of LCu^{II}-OOH should not be so dramatically influenced by some ligand C-H bond

Or is it the whole picture?

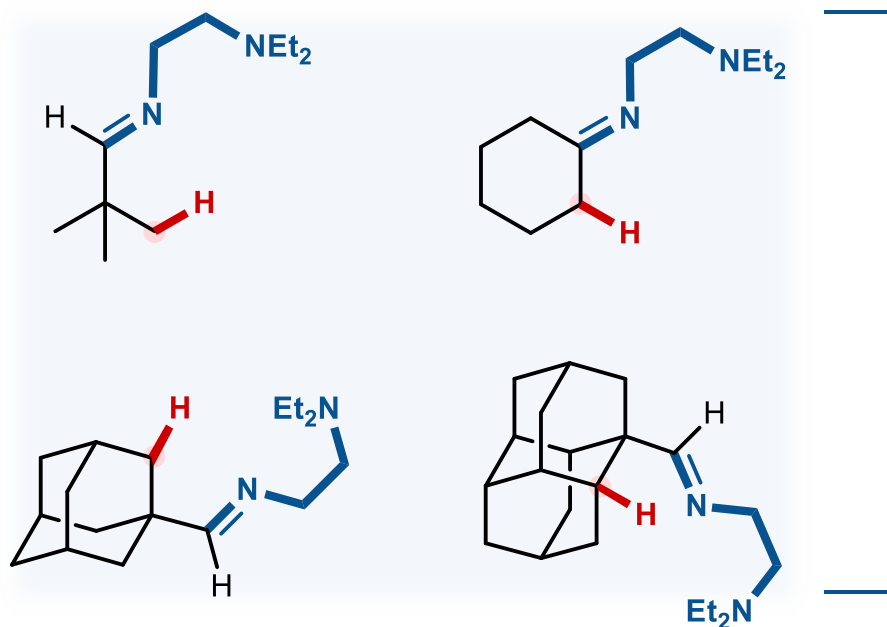
However...

So maybe also operative...



But the decomposition of $LCu^{II}-OOH$ should not be so dramatically influenced by some ligand C-H bond

(Amine, Imine) directing systems



$\text{Cu}(\text{MeCN})_4\text{OTf}$
 O_2 , acetone

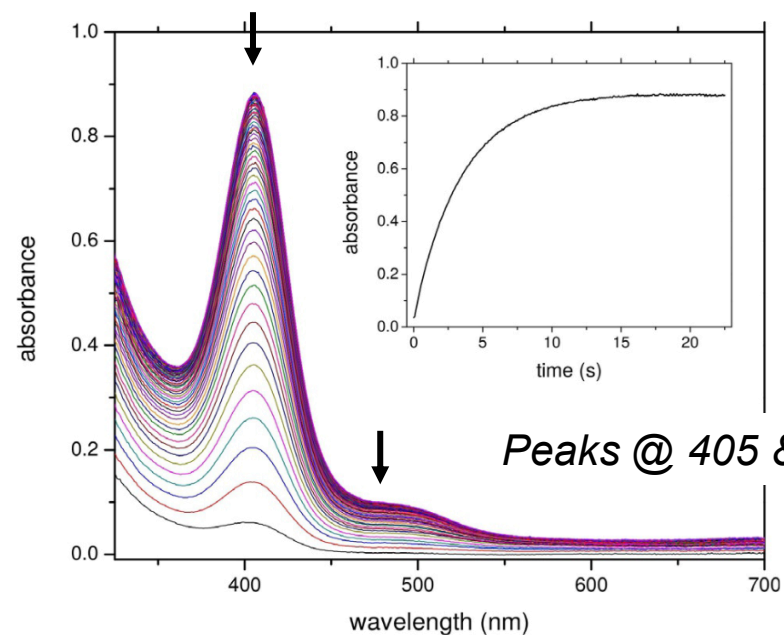
nearly 50% conversion

Cu^{I} or Cu^{II}
 H_2O_2 as oxidant

NO hydroxylation

Catalytically relevant species: $\text{Cu}^{\text{III}}_2\text{O}_2$

*in a real $[\text{Cu}_2\text{O}_2]$ case, extra reductant (ascorbate)
or $\text{Cu}^{\text{I}}/\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ systems stop working*



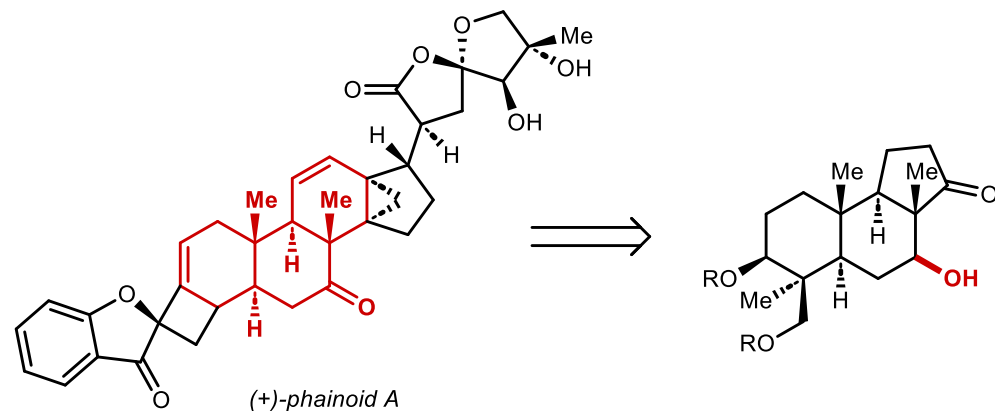
Outline

- Introduction: Cu in biology
- Copper-dependent monooxygenases: case studies on two enzymes
- Small molecule emulation

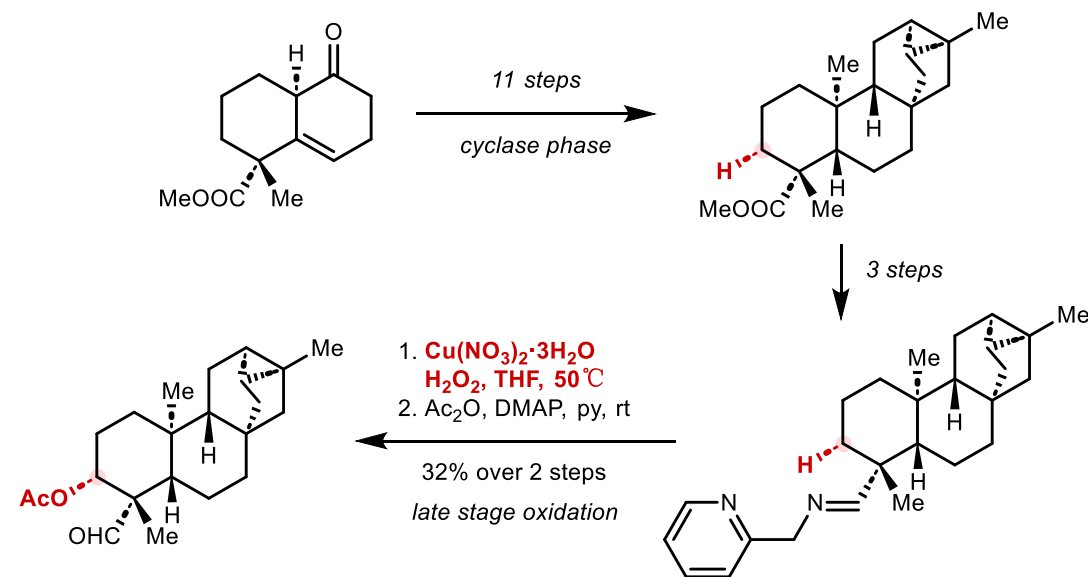
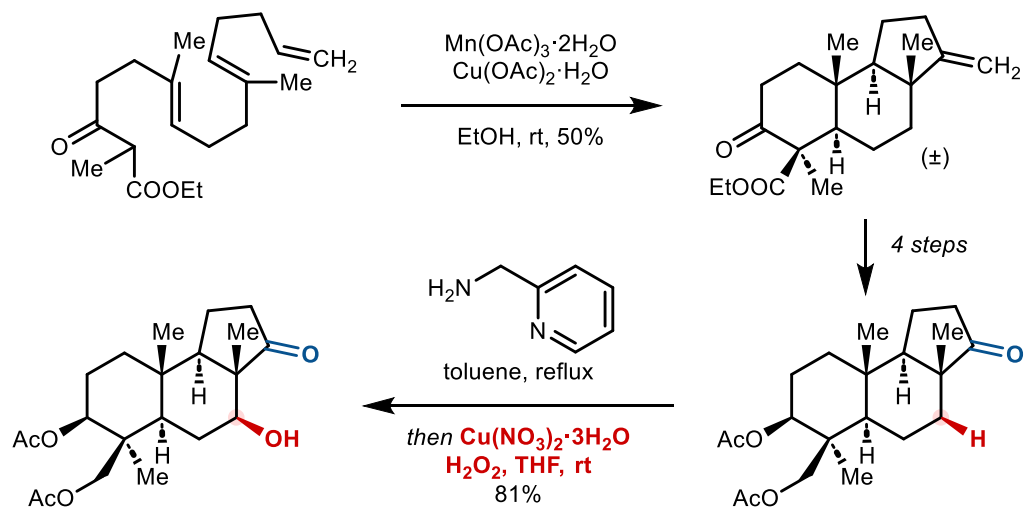
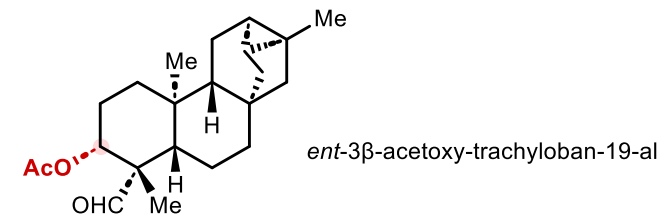
- **Application**

Selected Applications in TotSyn

- (+) phainoid A (*Dong, 2023*)



- ent*-trachylobane diterpenoids (*Magauer, 2022*)



Thank you for your attention!

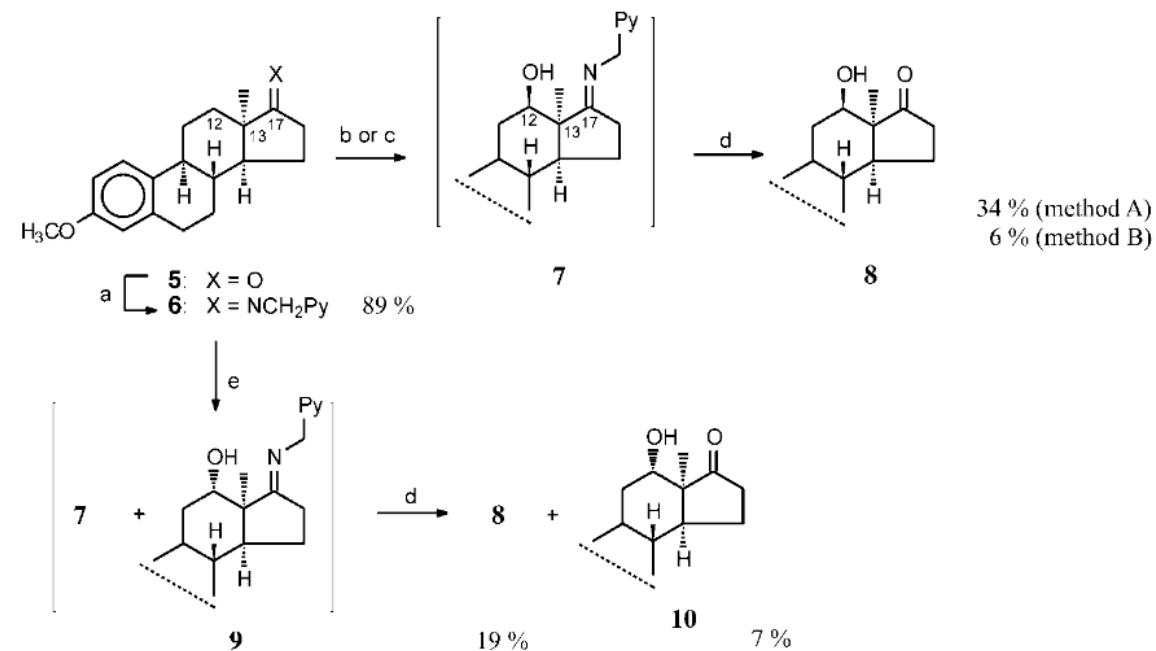
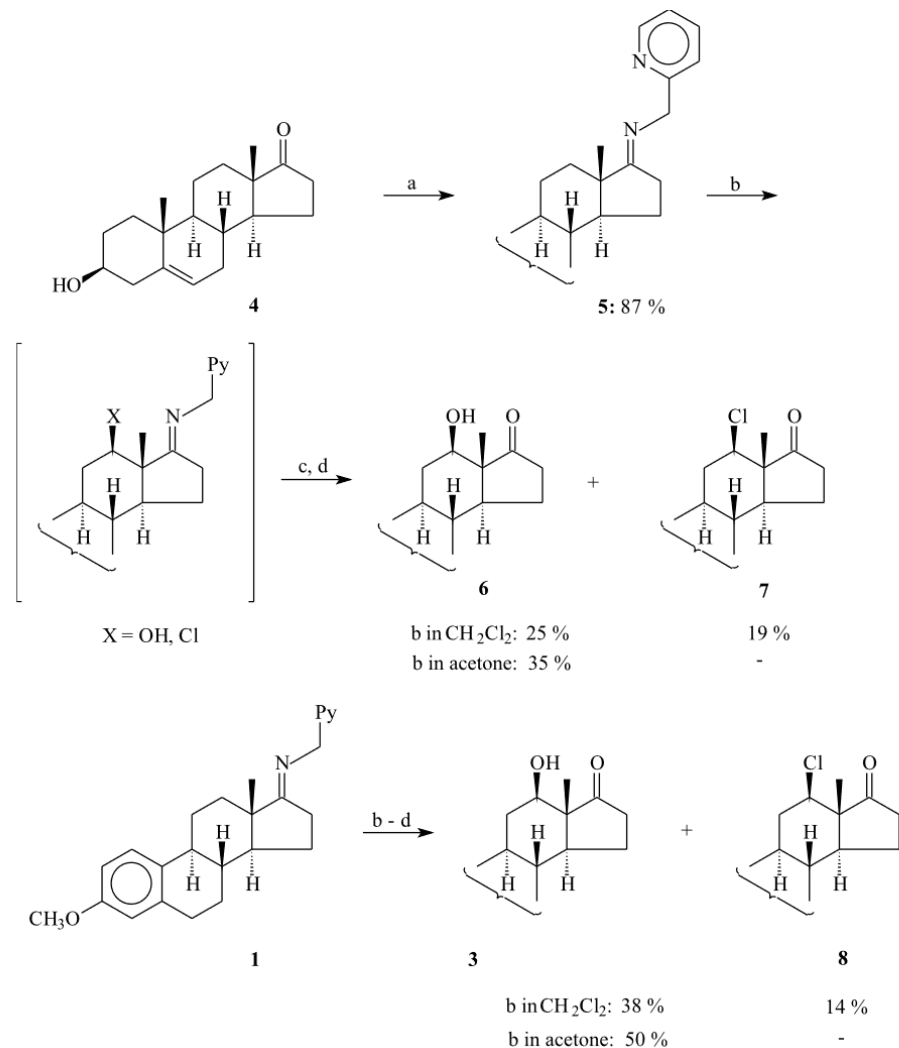
Questions are welcome

Backup Slides

Discovery

- **SP**: chlorination;
- require Cl⁻ (from basic DCM or added chloride)

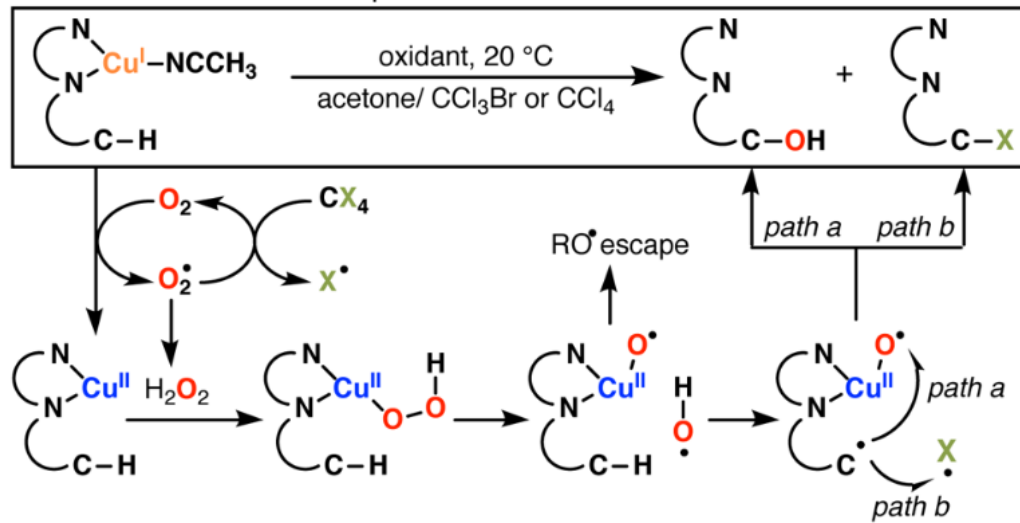
- **Additional Stereochem**
- e: using Cu(OTf)(toluene) instead of Cu(MeCN)₄PF₆



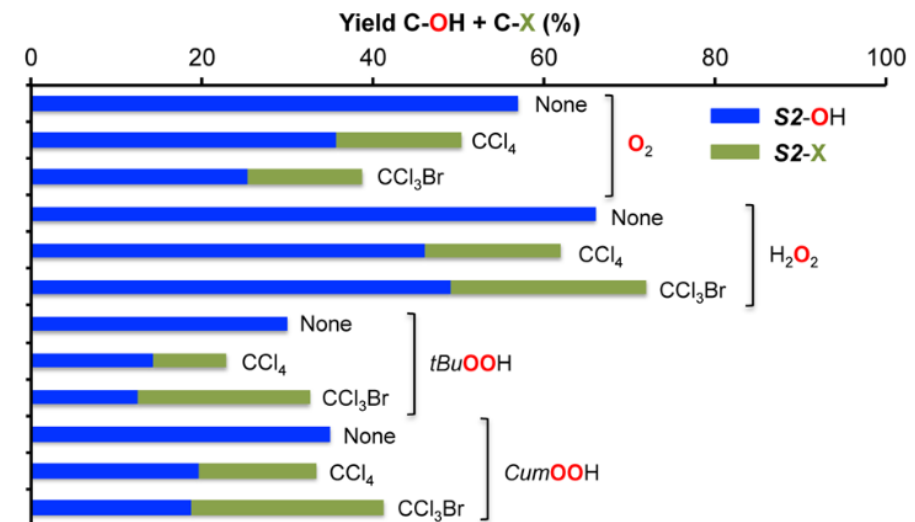
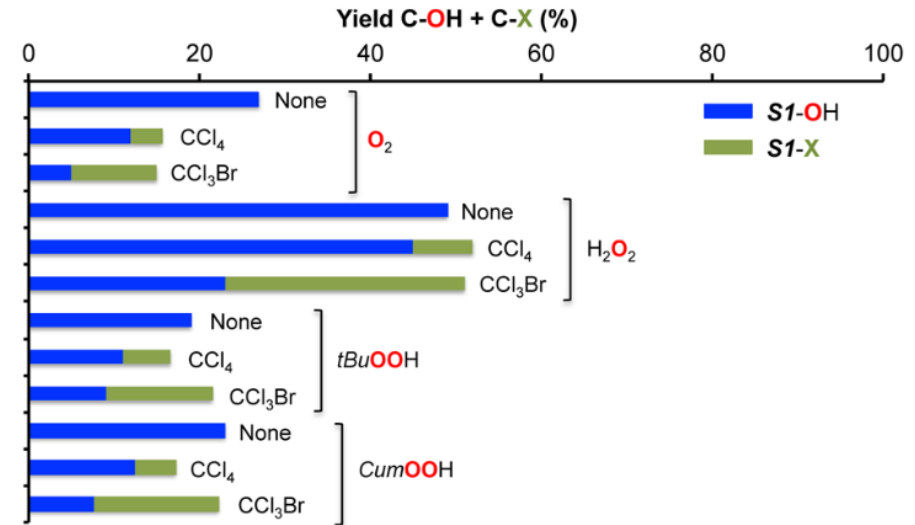
Experimental & spectral validation

Question: prove a radical mechanism

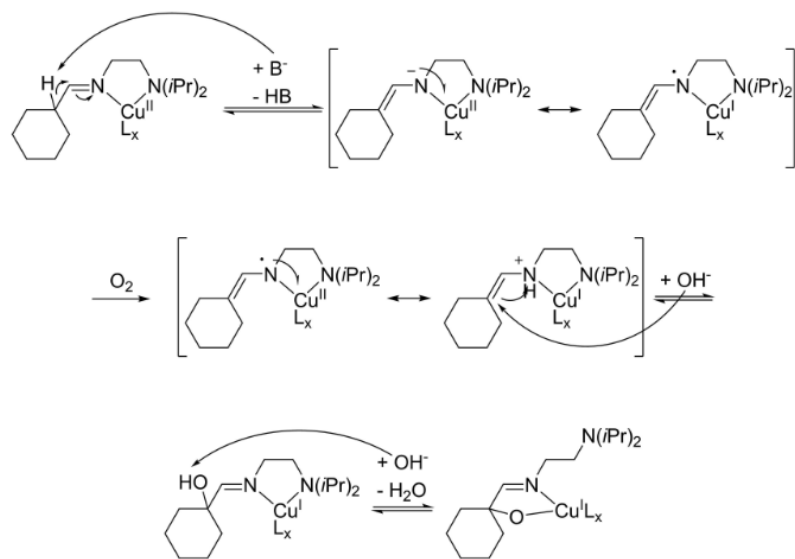
A. Fate of various radical species.



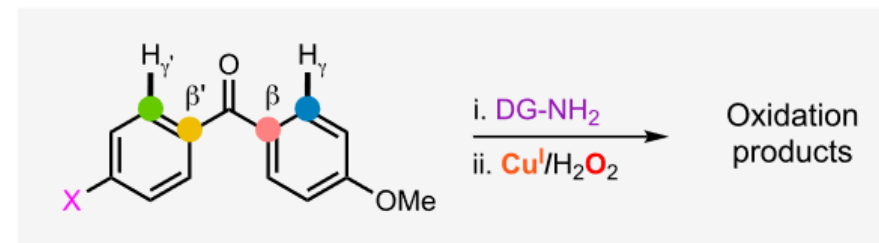
Claim: Extra halogenation w/S1 than S2 due to more peroxide undergoing cage escape and reacting with solvent



Other reactivities



Scheme 5. Proposed mechanism for β -hydroxylation of **9** with copper(II).

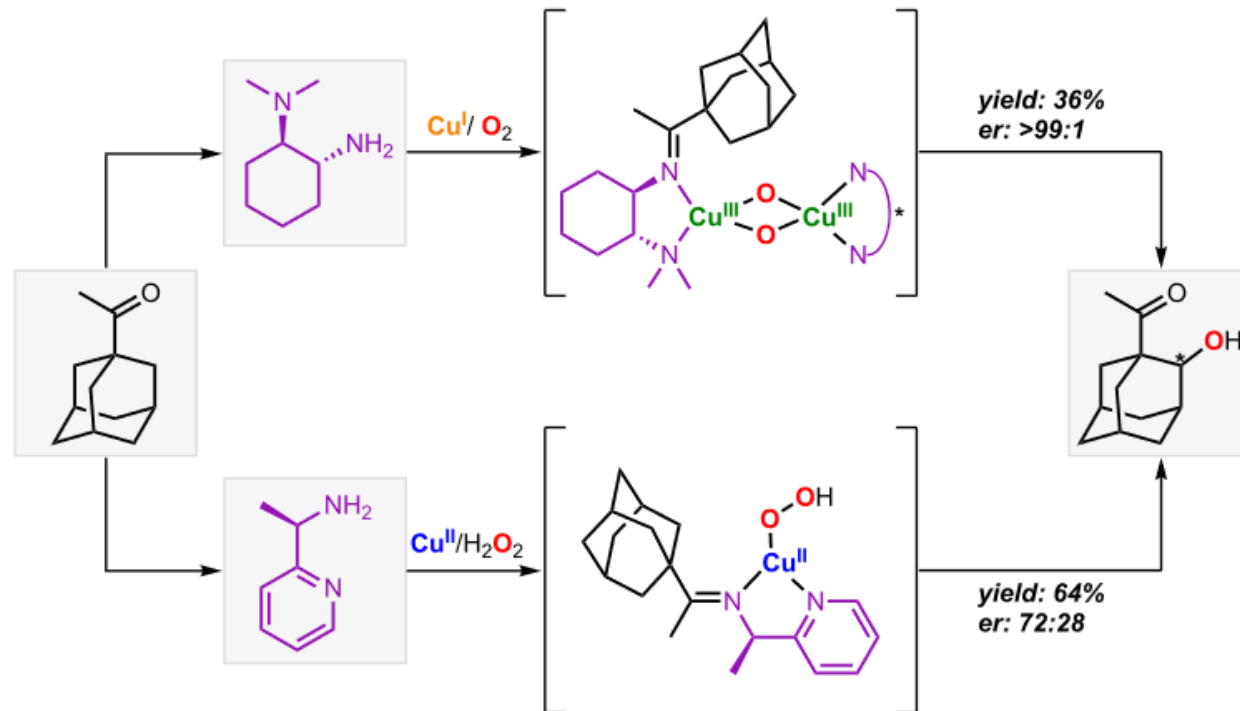
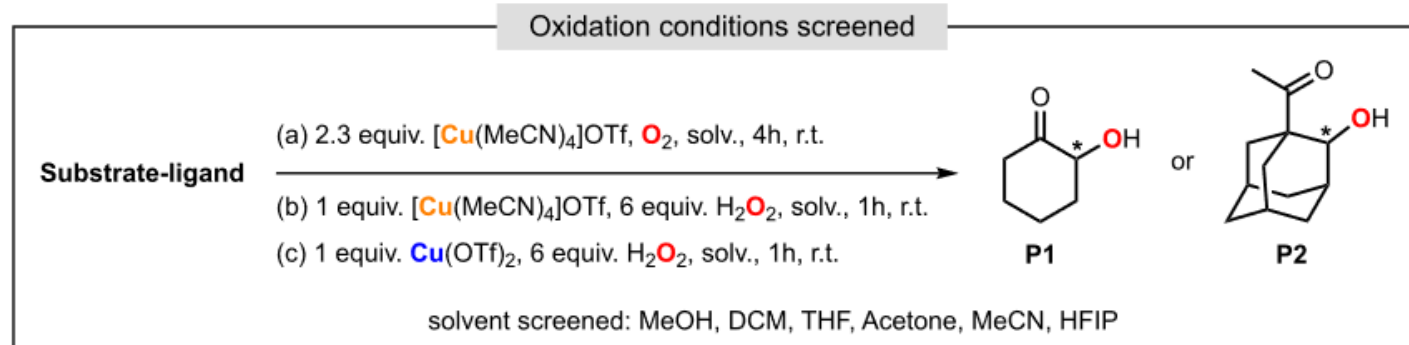


	β	γ	β'	γ'
X = Me	0	53	0	47
X = F	0	76	0	24
X = CF ₃	0	86	0	14

	β	γ	β'	γ'
	72	9	0	19
	81	7	0	12
	80	9	0	11

Figure 9. Comparison of the regioselectivity observed in the Cu-directed hydroxylation of unsymmetrical benzophenones using 2-picolylamine or 2-(2-aminoethyl)pyridine as directing groups.

Chirality



amine-imine: good er, inherently limited yield

pyridine-imine: poor er, potentially higher yield