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PII: S0040-4039(15)30288-4  
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tetlet.2015.10.091>  
Reference: TETL 46920

To appear in: *Tetrahedron Letters*

Received Date: 7 September 2015  
Revised Date: 19 October 2015  
Accepted Date: 27 October 2015

Please cite this article as: Mikhaylov, A.A., Dilman, A.D., Novikov, R.A., Khoroshutina, Y.A., Struchkova, M.I., Arkhipov, D.E., Nelyubina, Y.V., Tabolin, A.A., Ioffe, S.L., Tandem Pd-catalyzed C-C coupling/recyclization of 2-(2-bromoaryl)cyclopropane-1,1-dicarboxylates with primary nitro alkanes, *Tetrahedron Letters* (2015), doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tetlet.2015.10.091>

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## Tandem Pd-catalyzed C-C coupling/recyclization of 2-(2-bromoaryl)cyclopropane-1,1-dicarboxylates with primary nitro alkanes

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received

Received in revised form

Accepted

Available online

#### Keywords:

Palladium-catalysis

Cross-coupling reactions

Tandem reactions

Nitroalkanes

Donor-acceptor cyclopropanes

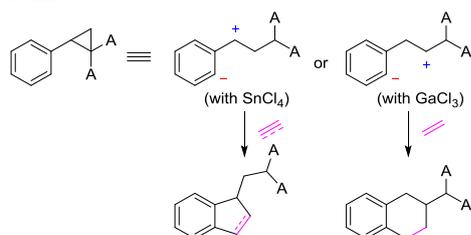
### ABSTRACT

The first successful synthesis of 1*H*-2,3-benzoxazine 3-oxides has been described. The efficiency of the approach is provided by the C-C-coupling of 2-(2-bromoaryl)cyclopropane-1,1-dicarboxylates with primary nitroalkanes catalyzed by Pd(dba)<sub>2</sub>/JohnPhos system followed by *in situ* recyclization of the intermediates. Several representative transformations allowing selective modification of the nitronate as well as malonate functionalities in the resulting compounds are demonstrated.

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### 1. Introduction

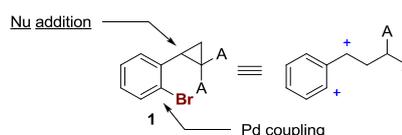
One of the most promising recent advances in the chemistry of ring-strain molecules is associated with donor-acceptor (DA) cyclopropanes.<sup>1-5</sup> The weak and polarized endocyclic bond in these substrates provides various opportunities for nucleophilic ring opening,<sup>1,2</sup> isomerizations,<sup>11g</sup> Lewis acid mediated cycloadditions,<sup>1e,3</sup> annulations<sup>4</sup> and cyclodimerizations.<sup>1h,5</sup> When the aryl substituent plays the role of donor fragment, additional possibilities for ring formation *via* Friedel-Crafts annulation onto the *ortho*-position of the arene moiety arise depending on the choice of Lewis acid used for activation of the cyclopropane fragment (Scheme 1). Thus, SnCl<sub>4</sub> catalyzes the generation of formal 1,3-dipoles and their condensation with alkenes<sup>4a,5a</sup> or alkynes,<sup>4b</sup> resulting in an indane fragment. At the same time GaCl<sub>3</sub> generates formal 1,4-dipoles, which can be transformed into various tetralins.<sup>5b</sup>



**Scheme 1.** Annulations with aryl-substituted DA cyclopropanes.

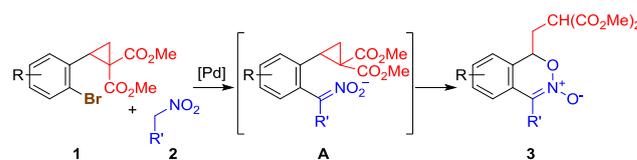
In this manuscript we suggest another approach for benzannulation based on (2-bromoaryl)cyclopropanes **1** (Figure 1). The latter could be regarded as 1,3-dicationic synthons with

two entirely different electrophilic centers. In this context, an appropriate binucleophilic partner for substrates **1** is required. As the most promising reagent of this kind, primary nitroalkanes **2** were chosen due to their ability to behave as *C*- and *O*-nucleophiles.<sup>6</sup>



**Figure 1.** (2-Bromoaryl)cyclopropanes as 1,3-dicationic synthons.

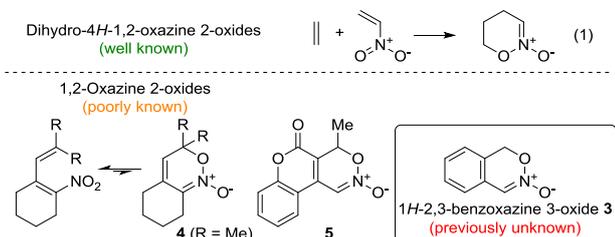
Given that the recently developed palladium catalyzed cross-coupling reactions of nitro compounds with aryl halogenides exclusively provides *C*-arylation products,<sup>7</sup> further cyclopropane ring opening by the nitronate oxygen in intermediate **A** could lead to previously unknown 1*H*-2,3-benzoxazines 3-oxides **3** (Scheme 2).



**Scheme 2.** Our strategy for the synthesis of nitronates **3**.

Compounds **3** belong to a scarcely known class of 1,2-oxazine-2-oxides. While common six-membered cyclic nitronates (5,6-dihydro-4*H*-1,2-oxazine-2-oxides) are readily available *via* the hetero Diels-Alder reaction of nitroalkenes with olefins (Figure 2, (1)),<sup>8,9</sup> the synthesis of unsaturated six-

membered cyclic nitronates is much more complicated. In fact, only two examples of these compounds are present in the literature (Figure 2, compounds **4** and **5**).<sup>10,11</sup> 6*H*-1,2-Oxazine-2-oxides exist in equilibrium with nitrodienes with the latter generally being thermodynamically preferred.<sup>10</sup> Fusion with an aromatic ring makes these compounds much more stable, however only coumarin derivative **5** has been described.<sup>11</sup>



**Figure 2.** Benzoxazine *N*-oxides and related compounds.

Herein we propose a general approach for the synthesis of benzannulated nitronates **3** which could significantly broaden the scope of available oxazine-*N*-oxides.<sup>12</sup>

## 2. Results and discussion

Starting (2-bromoaryl)cyclopropanes **1** were easily available either by Corey-Chaykovsky cyclopropanation of the corresponding arylidenemalonates or by the reaction of 2-bromostyrenes with diazomalonnate.<sup>13</sup>

**Table 1.** Optimization of the reaction conditions<sup>a</sup>

entry	"Pd" source	ligand <b>L</b>	base	yield <b>3aa</b> (%) <sup>b</sup>
1	Pd(OAc) <sub>2</sub> (2.5 mol%)	XantPhos <sup>c</sup> (5 mol%)	<i>t</i> BuOK (1.3 equiv)	– (<5)
2	Pd(OAc) <sub>2</sub> (2.5 mol%)	JohnPhos <sup>d</sup> (7.5 mol%)	<i>t</i> BuOK (1.3 equiv)	5 (10)
3	Pd( <i>dba</i> ) <sub>2</sub> (2.5 mol%)	JohnPhos (5 mol%)	<i>t</i> BuOK (1.3 equiv)	10 (15)
4	Pd( <i>dba</i> ) <sub>2</sub> (5 mol%)	JohnPhos (10 mol%)	<i>t</i> BuOK (1.3 equiv)	25 (27)
5	Pd( <i>dba</i> ) <sub>2</sub> (5 mol%)	JohnPhos (10 mol%)	<i>t</i> BuOK (2.0 equiv)	30 (31)
6	Pd( <i>dba</i> ) <sub>2</sub> (5 mol%)	JohnPhos (10 mol%)	Cs <sub>2</sub> CO <sub>3</sub> (2.0 equiv)	45 (52)
7	Pd( <i>dba</i> ) <sub>2</sub> (10 mol%)	JohnPhos (20 mol%)	Cs <sub>2</sub> CO <sub>3</sub> (2.0 equiv)	76 (100)
8	Pd <sub>2</sub> ( <i>dba</i> ) <sub>3</sub> <sup>e</sup> (5 mol%)	JohnPhos (20 mol%)	Cs <sub>2</sub> CO <sub>3</sub> (2.0 equiv)	74 (100)

<sup>a</sup> Dimethyl 2-(2-bromophenyl)-1,1-cyclopropanedicarboxylate **1a** (1.0 equiv), nitroethane **2a** (2.0 equiv), **L**, base, dioxane (0.3 M), 65–75 °C, 2–24 h. For details see ESI;

<sup>b</sup> determined by NMR with an internal standard, in parentheses – conversion of the initial cyclopropane **1a**;

<sup>c</sup> 4,5-bis(diphenylphosphino)-9,9-dimethylxanthene;

<sup>d</sup> (2-biphenyl)di-*tert*-butylphosphine;

<sup>e</sup> Pd<sub>2</sub>(*dba*)<sub>3</sub>•CHCl<sub>3</sub>.

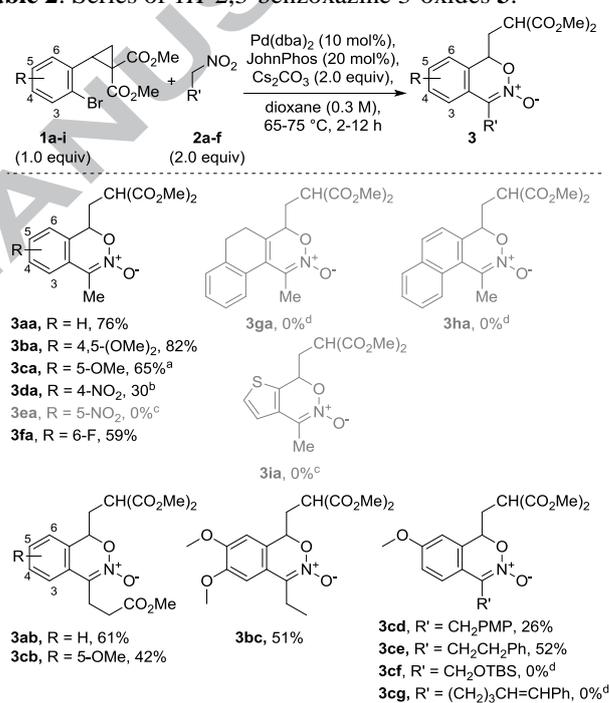
In preliminary experiments we found that 2-bromophenyl-substituted substrate **1a** and nitroethane **2a** could be coupled in the presence of a palladium catalyst, affording benzoxazine *N*-oxide **3aa** (Table 1). Optimization of the reaction conditions showed that JohnPhos was an optimal ligand and not less than 5 mol% of [Pd] was necessary for reasonable conversions of the initial cyclopropane **1a** (Table 1, cf. entries 1–4). Pd(*dba*)<sub>2</sub> was found to be the precatalyst of choice, which was in accordance with literature data.<sup>7</sup> Surprisingly, the reaction was very sensitive to the selection of base, with the best results being obtained with 2.0 equiv of Cs<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>. The addition of 10 mol% of [Pd] was

required for full conversion of the initial bromocyclopropane **1a** (entries 7–8) and gave nitronate **3aa** in 76% and 74% yield with Pd(*dba*)<sub>2</sub> or Pd<sub>2</sub>(*dba*)<sub>3</sub>•CHCl<sub>3</sub>, respectively. The necessity for high catalyst loadings could be associated with the steric hindrance of the α-cyclopropyl moiety, which makes the oxidative addition step challenging.

Note that the reaction proceeded quickly, and generally was complete within 2–4 hours at 65–75 °C. After this period no further conversion of the initial cyclopropane **1a** occurred. In the reaction mixture even traces of intermediate **A** (see Scheme 2) or its protonated form arising from primary palladium coupling could not be detected. Evidently, the recyclization of the cyclopropane moiety proceeds faster than cross-coupling.

Reactions conducted with aged palladium precatalyst lacked reproducibility, so only fresh Pd(*dba*)<sub>2</sub> should be utilized in this process. However, in several cases, the catalytic activity for old samples of Pd(*dba*)<sub>2</sub> could be reinstated after its conversion into Pd<sub>2</sub>(*dba*)<sub>3</sub>•CHCl<sub>3</sub>.

**Table 2.** Series of 1*H*-2,3-benzoxazine 3-oxides **3**.



<sup>a</sup> 5% Pd<sub>2</sub>(*dba*)<sub>3</sub>•CHCl<sub>3</sub> was used instead of Pd(*dba*)<sub>2</sub>;

<sup>b</sup> yield according to <sup>1</sup>H NMR using CHCl<sub>3</sub>=CCl<sub>2</sub> as the internal standard;

<sup>c</sup> complex mixture of products;

<sup>d</sup> 15% Pd(*dba*)<sub>2</sub>, 30% JohnPhos were used, conversion <5% after 8–12 hours.

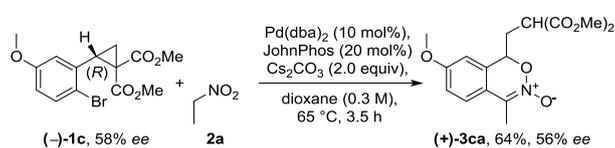
The reaction scope was briefly examined under the optimized conditions (Table 2). Cyclopropanes **1b–f**, with various substituents on the phenyl ring, and nitroethane **2a** were initially studied in this process. Substrates with electron-donating methoxy-groups **1b** (4,5-di-OMe) and **1c** (5-OMe) reacted faster than unsubstituted cyclopropane **1a** and gave the corresponding nitronates **3ba** and **3bc** in good yields. For nitro-substituted cyclopropanes **1d** (4-NO<sub>2</sub>) and **1e** (5-NO<sub>2</sub>) the transformation proceeded in a more complex manner. Though the formation of nitronate **3da** was observed in 30% yield, its isolation was complicated by decomposition on silica gel. For cyclopropane **1e** bearing a nitro group *para* to bromine, a complex mixture of products was formed which did not include target nitronate **3ea**. Probably, this could be attributed to the increased stability of the palladated species, thus resulting in the possibility of different side reactions. 6-Fluorosubstituted cyclopropane **1f** gave the

corresponding nitronate **3fa** in 59% yield without additional problems.

Surprisingly, 2-(1-bromonaphthyl)-, 2-(1-bromodihydro-naphthyl)- and 1-(2-bromothieryl)-substituted cyclopropanes **1g-i** did not give the expected target products even with higher catalyst loadings and prolonged reaction times, presumably, due to steric hindrance.

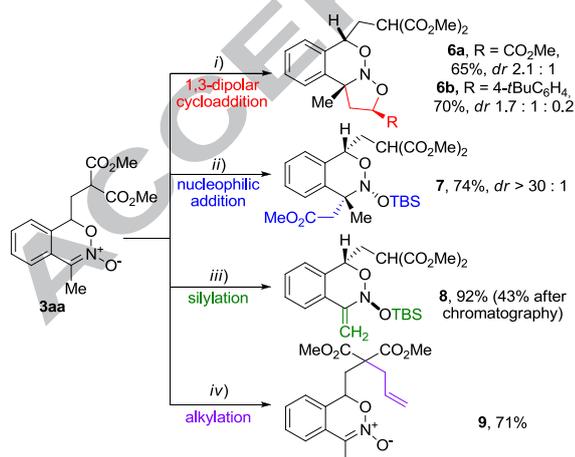
Various nitroalkanes **2b-f** were next introduced to the above-mentioned reaction (Table 2). Although most reacted with bromides **1a-c**, the yields of the corresponding nitronates **3** were lower than that for nitroethane. Probably, the reaction was highly dependent on the steric hindrance of the nitro compound.

The reaction of silylated nitroethanol **2f** ( $R' = \text{CH}_2\text{OTBS}$ ) with cyclopropane **1c** did not proceed due to a rapid  $\beta$ -elimination process. Unfortunately nitro compound **2g** [ $R' = (\text{CH}_2)_3\text{CH}=\text{CHPh}$ ] with a remote alkene function that could provide the corresponding nitronate **3cg**, which would be able to undergo subsequent intramolecular [3+2]-cycloaddition, also failed to undergo the reaction. After 8 hours under the optimized conditions only unreacted cyclopropane **1c** and several by-products from the transformation of reactant **2g** were isolated (for details see ESI, page S23).



**Scheme 3.** Synthesis of the enantioenriched nitronate (+)-**3ca**.

Additionally it seemed necessary to determine what occurred at the chiral center in the cyclopropane ring of compounds **1** during the formation of nitronates **3**. For this purpose, enantiomerically enriched cyclopropane ( $-$ )-**1c** with a (*R*)-configuration of the stereocenter was synthesized by asymmetric carbene addition to 4-methoxy-2-bromostyrene using the Cu(I)/Box system.<sup>14</sup> It was found that the enantiomeric excess of the initial cyclopropane ( $-$ )-**1c** was transferred to 2,3-benzoxazine 3-oxide (+)-**3ca** without significant racemization (58% *ee* and 56% *ee*, respectively, Scheme 3).<sup>15,16</sup>



**Scheme 4.** Chemistry of nitronates **3**. *Reagents and conditions:* i)  $\text{CH}_2=\text{CHR}$  (2-5 equiv), toluene, reflux, 5-8 h; ii)  $\text{CH}_2=\text{C}(\text{OMe})\text{OTBS}$  (1.3 equiv), TBSOTf (0.2 equiv),  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ ,  $-78^\circ\text{C}$ , 20 h; iii) TBSOTf (1.20 equiv), 2,6-lutidine (1.25 equiv),  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ ,  $-30^\circ\text{C}$ , 3 h; iv) NaH (1.0 equiv), allyl bromide (1.2 equiv), dioxane, r.t.  $\rightarrow$  reflux, 3 h.

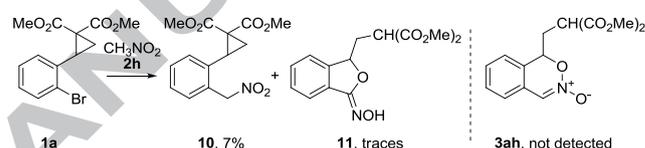
The chemistry of benzoxazine *N*-oxides **3** was briefly studied using compound **3aa** (Scheme 4). The tricyclic nitroso acetals

**6a,b** were obtained by [3+2]-cycloaddition<sup>8,9</sup> of nitronate **3aa** with methyl acrylate (65%) and *p*-*tert*-butylstyrene (70%), respectively, by heating at reflux in toluene for 5-8 hours, proceeding with excellent *exo*- but poor facial selectivity.<sup>17</sup>

Nucleophilic addition of a silyl ketene acetal, which was performed at  $-78^\circ\text{C}$ ,<sup>18</sup> to nitronate **3aa** gave rise to a silylated product **7** as a single diastereomer. Under similar conditions, but utilizing a base instead of a nucleophile,<sup>19</sup> ene-nitroso acetal **8** was obtained.

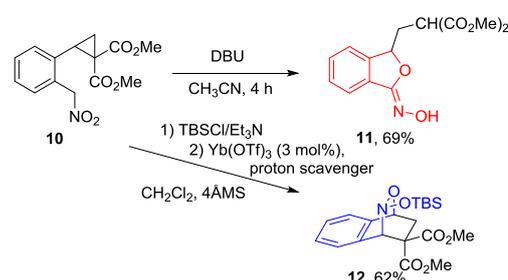
The malonate functional group could also be selectively modified. For example, functionalization of benzoxazine **3aa** with allyl bromide provided allylated benzoxazine **9** in 71% yield.

Finally, we unsuccessfully attempted the preparation of 4-unsubstituted nitronate **3ah** by coupling bromocyclopropane **1a** with nitromethane **2h** (Scheme 5). The reaction rapidly resulted in formation of a palladium mirror leaving cyclopropane **1a** mainly unconsumed, while in the mixture  $\sim 7\%$  of non-cyclized product **10** and traces of oxime **11** were detected. Presumably, rapid deactivation of the [Pd] catalyst could be associated with possible carbopalladation of oxime **11**.



**Scheme 5.** Attempted synthesis of nitronate **3ah** by Pd-coupling. *Reagents and conditions:* nitromethane **2h** (5.0 equiv), Pd(dba)<sub>2</sub> (10 mol%), JohnPhos (20 mol%), Cs<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> (2.0 equiv), dioxane,  $75^\circ\text{C}$ , 30 min; conversion of **1a**  $\sim 20\%$ .

For better understanding of the failure of this palladium catalyzed coupling, 2-nitromethylphenylcyclopropane **10** was independently synthesized by AgNO<sub>2</sub> promoted nucleophilic substitution of the known (2-bromomethylphenyl)cyclopropane.<sup>20</sup> Under basic conditions this was transformed into oxime **11** with the best result obtained using DBU (Scheme 5). For the formation of compound **11**, initial generation of nitronate **3ah** could be postulated and its further rapid rearrangement *via* a nitrile oxide (see ESI, (S34) for details).<sup>21</sup> At the same time, complex benzoxazine scaffold **12** could be assembled from nitro compound **10** by its conversion into silyl nitronate and further intramolecular formal [3+3]-cycloaddition (Scheme 6).<sup>22</sup>



**Scheme 6.** Attempted assembly of oxazine structures from 2-nitromethylphenyl-cyclopropane **10**.

In summary, we have developed a straightforward method for the synthesis of previously unknown benzannulated six-membered cyclic nitronates **3** from 2-bromoaryl substituted cyclopropanes **1** and primary aliphatic nitro compounds **2**. The tandem reaction is performed using a palladium catalyst and a bulky phosphine ligand.

## Acknowledgments

This work was supported by the Russian Science Foundation (Grant 14-50-00126).

### Supplementary Data

Crystallographic data for the structures **1b**, **1e**, (**-**)**1c**, **trans-6a** and **12** have been deposited with the Cambridge Crystallography Data Centre (CCDC# 1416098, 1416099, 1416097, 1416101 and 1416100, respectively). Supplementary data (experimental details, compound characterization, copies of NMR spectra and HPLC) associated with this article can be found in the online version at ....

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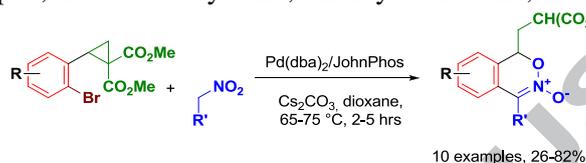
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- For the probable configuration of benzoxazine (+)-**3ca** and the origins of chirality transfer, see ESI (page S25).
- For previous attempts regarding the catalytic enantioselective synthesis of six-membered cyclic nitronates (without chiral auxiliaries), see ref. 8c and references therein.
- In contrast to the data obtained in this paper, coumarine-annulated nitronates (see ref 11) have shown excellent facial selectivity in [3+2]-cycloaddition. For discussion about the selectivity of [3+2]-cycloaddition for nitronates **3** and related compounds see ESI (page S31).
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### Tandem Pd-catalyzed C-C coupling/recyclization of 2-(2- bromoaryl)cyclopropane-1,1-dicarboxylates with primary nitro alkanes

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