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Palladium-Catalyzed Deaminative Phenanthridinone Synthesis from Aniline *via* C-H bond Activation

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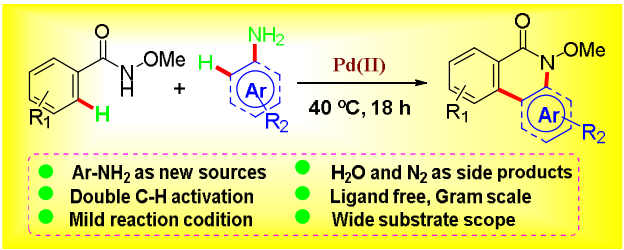
ABSTRACT: This work reports palladium catalyzed phenanthridinone synthesis using coupling of aniline and amide by formation of C-C and C-N bonds in one pot fashion *via* dual C-H bond activation. It involves simultaneous cleavage of four bonds and the formation of two new bonds. Present protocol is ligand-free and takes place under mild reaction conditions. The present protocol is environmentally benign as nitrogen gas and water are the only side products. This transformation demonstrates a broad range of aniline and amide substrates with different functional groups and has been scaled up to gram level.

TOC Graphic

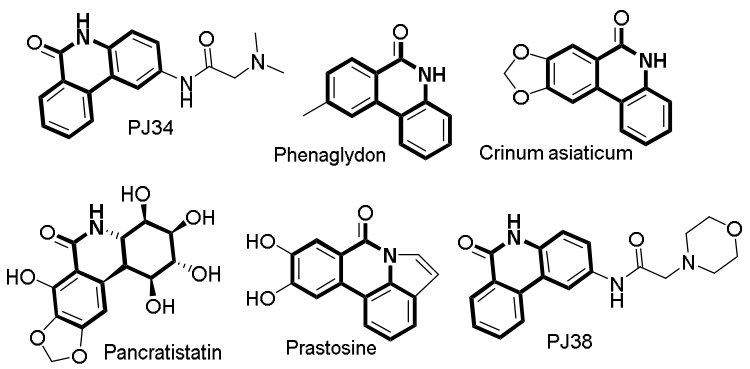


INTRODUCTION

Phenanthridinone is an important building block which is found in various biologically active molecules and natural products.[1] Interestingly, these are also important scaffolds in anticancer drugs and treatment of nerve diseases (Scheme 1).[2] Despite several methods for the synthesis of phenanthridinone derivatives,[3] versatile and flexible methodologies to construct phenanthridinones are still desirable.

The methodology involving C-H activation has gained great prominence in organic synthesis.[4] It is very important to use inexpensive and readily available starting materials to enhance sustainability through non-reactive C-H bond activation.[5] Usually, C-H bond activation has been brought about successfully by transition metal based catalytic systems.[6]

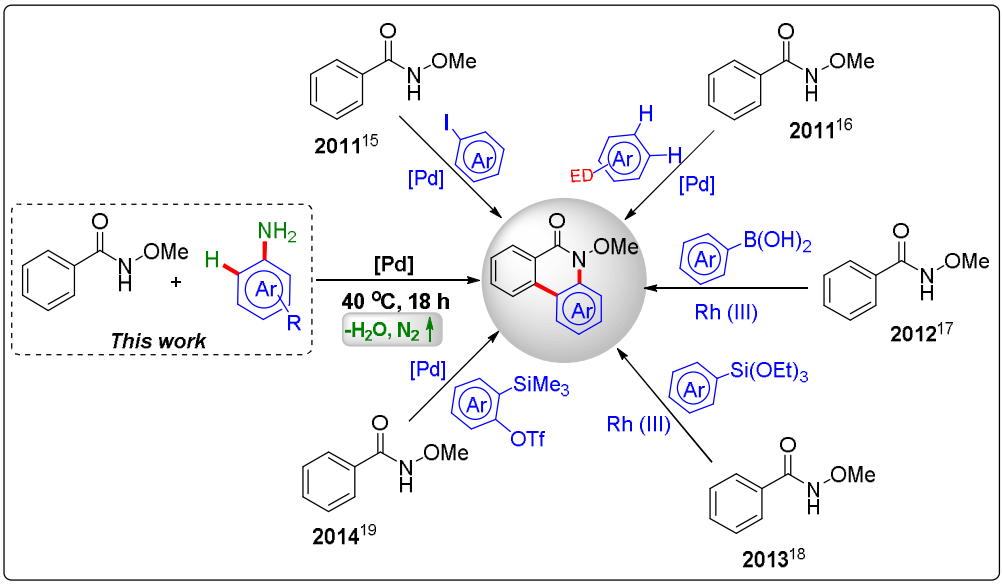
Scheme 1. Examples of Molecules Containing Phenanthridinones Skeleton.



The most developed strategy is to obtain selective C-H bond activation by the use of a neighbouring directing group (DG) that pre-complexes with the metal and directs to the desired position.[7] With the help of C-H bond activation, construction of C-C and C-N bonds have been achieved.[8] Analogous to C-H bond activation and coupling reactions, the activation of functional groups has also been achieved.[9] Such a combination of C-H bond activation and functional group

activation has a great advantage in the form of reducing synthetic steps in pharmaceutical and drug synthesis, thus making the process cost effective. Recently, several groups have employed aryldiazonium salts as aryl surrogates for the construction of C-C and C-N bond.[10] The C-N_2^+ bond is a weak bond having the dissociation energy (~130 KJ·mol^{-1}) which allows the oxidative addition to palladium under mild conditions.[11] However, compared to externally prepare diazonium salts, the *in situ* prepared diazonium salts avoid wastage and handling of large quantities of solvents required for the purification of the crystalline form. The important utility of aromatic amine/arene diazonium salts is that, they have been established in classical methods for functional group transformations. Furthermore, *in situ* synthesis of diazonium salts have been applied widely in various named reactions such as Suzuki coupling, Heck coupling and Sonogashira coupling reactions having aniline as an aryl source.[12] Moreover, Beller's group and Wu's group have reported carbonylative Sonogashira coupling reactions for synthesis of alkynones from aniline.[13]

Scheme 2. Synthetic Approach for Phenanthridinones.



This work is to develop a deaminative C-C bond coupling along with *ortho* C-H bond activation of aniline. The literature survey shows that *in situ* generated diazonium salt has been employed only in deaminative coupling reactions. To the best of our knowledge, there is no report on the deaminative C-C coupling with *ortho* C-H bond activation of aniline for the synthesis of phenanthridinone.

Traditionally, preparation of phenanthridinones needs more number of synthetic steps and the overall yields observed are lower.[14] In 2011, the group of Li and other groups reported palladium-catalyzed coupling of *ortho* X/H (X= I) benzamides with aromatic halides.[15] This reported protocol has some disadvantages like high temperature and longer reaction time. In the same year, Chen's group reported electron rich arenes for the phenanthridinone synthesis.[16] The same group also reported Rh(III) catalyzed boronic acid coupling for phenanthridinone synthesis.[17] Subsequently, phenanthridinones were also synthesized by coupling of benzamides with aryltriethoxysilanes in the presence of Rh(III) catalyst.[18] This work also suffers from the use of expensive starting materials and Rh(III) catalyst. Recently, Jeganmohan's group has also reported an alternate protocol for the synthesis of phenanthridinones by coupling of benzamide with externally prepared benzyne generating source (Scheme 2).[19]

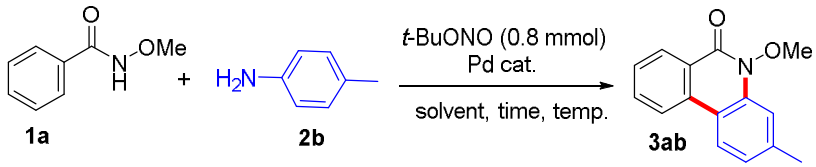
Considering the importance of phenanthridinones,[1,2] herein we report deaminative C-C and C-N bond coupling *via ortho* C-H bond activation of aniline to give phenanthridinones under mild reaction conditions. This developed methodology has number of advantages: (i) Three steps in one pot reaction *i.e.,* involves four bond cleavage and two bond formations simultaneously, (ii) it does not require the isolation of diazonium crystalline salts, (iii) the diazonium salt is generated *in situ* during the progress of reaction, (iv) only non-toxic byproducts such as N_2, H_2O and *t*-

BuOH were generated, (v) the catalytic system is ligand-free and (vi) the reaction could be completed at mild reaction temperature. The results of our studies are described herein.

RESULTS AND DISCUS SION

To optimize the reaction conditions, *N*-methoxybenzamide **1a** and *p*-toluidine **2b** were chosen as model substrates for the phenanthridinone synthesis. A series of experiments were carried out to study the effect of various reaction parameters such as Pd-catalyst precursors, oxidants, solvents, time and temperature. The results are displayed in Table 1. Initially, $Pd(OAc)_2$ (5 mol %), *p*-toluidine **2b** (0.7 mmol), *N*-methoxybenzamide **1a** (0.50 mmol) and $K_2S_2O_8$ (1 mmol) were added to a solution of 5 mL acetic acid under nitrogen atmosphere. The system was degassed four to five times by vacuum pump. To the resulting suspension, 0.8 mmol of *t*-BuONO (*tert*-butyl nitrite) was added by syringe. The mixture was heated at 40 °C for 12 h to obtain a 58% yield of product **3ab** (Table 1, entry 1). Next, various palladium precursors such as $PdCl_2$, $Pd(Ph_3P)_4$ and $PdCl_2(CH_3CN)_2$ catalysts were screened. $Pd(OAc)_2$ was found to be the best catalyst, as it provided a good yield of the desired product **3ab** and other Pd catalysts provide moderate to poor yields (Table 1, entries 2-4). No formation of product **3ab** was observed when the reaction was performed in the absence of Pd-catalyst (Table 1, entry 5). Increasing the amount of oxidant ($K_2S_2O_8$) to 2 equiv. did not show any significant effect on the yield of **3ab** (Table 1, entry 6). With our desire to increase the yield of product **3ab**, the catalyst loading was increased up to 10 mol %. Unfortunately, no significant change in the yield of product **3ab** was noted (Table 1, entry 7). In the next set of experiments, other Ag containing oxidants such as AgOAc, AgOTf, Ag_2O Ag_2CO_3 and $AgNO_3$ were screened and we were delighted to observe that Ag_2O provided a very good yield of **3ab** (Table 1, entries 8-12).

Table 1. Optimization of Reaction Conditions[a]



1a 2b 3ab

entry	catalyst (mol %)	Oxidant	Solvent	time (h)	T (°C)	yield (%)[b]
1	$Pd(OAc)_2$ (5)	$K_2S_2O_8$(1)	AcOH	24	40	58
2	$PdCl_2$ (5)	$K_2S_2O_8$(1)	AcOH	24	40	23
3	$Pd(Ph_3P)_4$ (5)	$K_2S_2O_8$(1)	AcOH	24	40	Trace
4	$PdCl_2(CH_3CN)_2$ (5)	$K_2S_2O_8$(1)	AcOH	24	40	Trace
5	-	$K_2S_2O_8$(1)	AcOH	24	40	00
6	$Pd(OAc)_2$(5)	$K_2S_2O_8$(2)	AcOH	24	40	61
7	$Pd(OAc)_2$(10)	$K_2S_2O_8$(1)	AcOH	24	40	57
8	$Pd(OAc)_2$(5)	AgOAc(1)	AcOH	24	40	64
9	$Pd(OAc)_2$(5)	AgOTf(1)	AcOH	24	40	27
10	$Pd(OAc)_2$(5)	Ag_2O(1)	AcOH	24	40	90
11	$Pd(OAc)_2$(5)	Ag_2CO_3(1)	AcOH	24	40	81
12	$Pd(OAc)_2$(5)	$AgNO_3$(1)	AcOH	24	40	Trace
13	$Pd(OAc)_2$(5)	Ag_2O(1)	HCOOH	24	40	00
14	$Pd(OAc)_2$(5)	Ag_2O(1)	CF_3COOH	24	40	00
15	$Pd(OAc)_2$(5)	Ag_2O(1)	$MeSO_3H$	24	40	00
16	**$Pd(OAc)_2$(5)**	**Ag_2O(1)**	**AcOH**	**18**	**40**	**90**
17	$Pd(OAc)_2$(5)	Ag_2O(1)	AcOH	17	40	89
18	$Pd(OAc)_2$(5)	Ag_2O(1)	AcOH	18	50	76
19	$Pd(OAc)_2$(5)	Ag_2O(1)	AcOH	18	32 (rt)	61
20	$Pd(OAc)_2$(7)	Ag_2O(1)	AcOH	18	40	90
21	$Pd(OAc)_2$(3)	Ag_2O(1)	AcOH	18	40	71
22	$Pd(OAc)_2$(5)	Ag_2O(0.5)	AcOH	18	40	61
23	$Pd(OAc)_2$(5)	Ag_2O(1.5)	AcOH	18	40	90

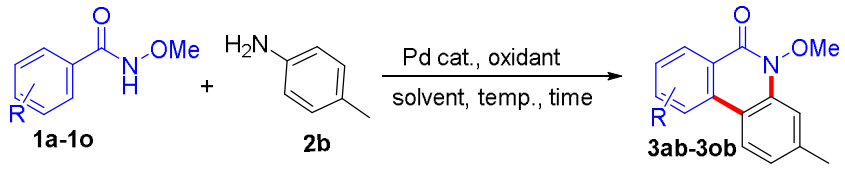
[a] Reaction conditions: *N*-methoxybenzamide (**1a**, 0.5 mmol), *p*-toluidine (**2b**, 0.7 mmol), Pd source, Oxidant, Solvent (5 mL), time , temp. [b] G.C. yield, rt = Room temperature.

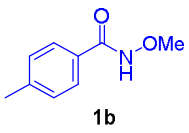
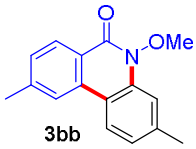
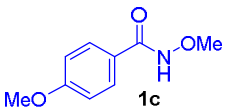
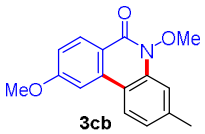
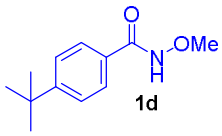
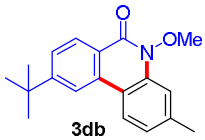
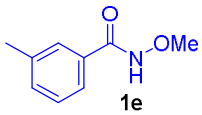
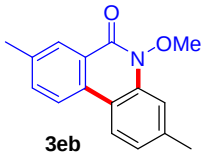
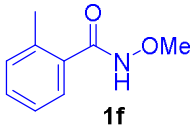
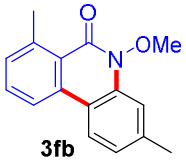
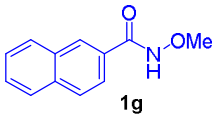
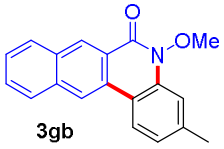
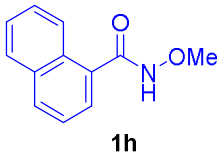
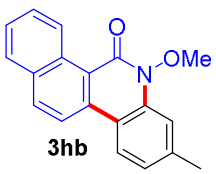
Moreover, when the reaction was performed in CF_3COOH and HCOOH no formation of product **3ab** was observed (Table 1, entries 13 and 14). Also, no product was observed when the reaction was performed in $MeSO_3H$ (Table 1, entry 15). Next, the reaction time was studied (Table 1, entries 16-17).

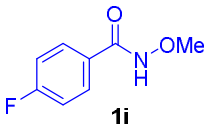
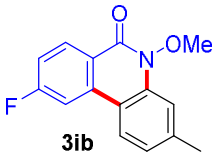
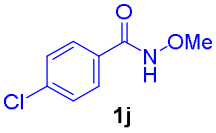
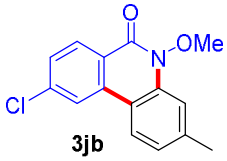
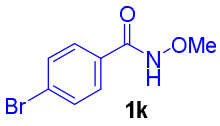
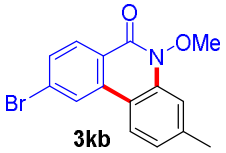
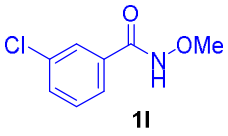
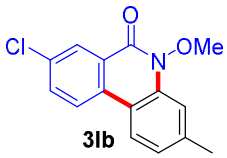
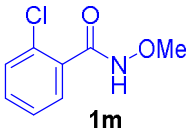
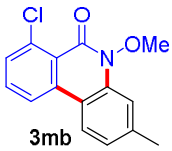
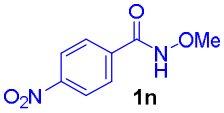
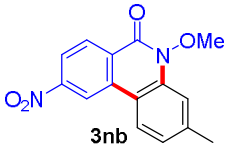
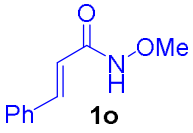
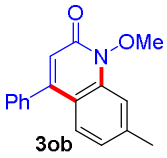
The reaction time can be reduced to 18 h providing 90% yield of **3ab** (Table 1, entry 16). Further, decreasing the reaction duration to 17 h resulted in a considerable decrease in the yield of the desired product **3ab** (Table 1, entry 17). Increasing the reaction temperature above 40 °C or decreasing the reaction temperature below 40 °C led to a significant decrease in the yield of **3ab** (Table 1, entries 18 and 19). The increase in $Pd(OAc)_2$ loading to 7 mol % did not show any effect on the yield of **3ab** (Table 1, entry 20). However, the decrease in the $Pd(OAc)_2$ loading led to a drastic decrease in the yield of **3ab** (Table 1, entry 21). 1.0 equiv. of Ag_2O was found to be effective for this transformation, further decreasing the amount Ag_2O to 0.5 equiv. provided lower yield of **3ab** (Table 1, entry 22). On the other hand, no significant change in the yield of **3ab** was found when the reaction was performed with 1.5 equiv. of Ag_2O (Table 1, entry 23).

Hence, we have established the optimized reaction conditions in hand and this developed methodology was explored for the scope and limitation of the substrates. As shown in table 2, all the examined substrates provided good to excellent yields. The effect of electron donating and withdrawing groups on *N*-methoxybenzamide was studied. It was found that electron donating groups such as -Me, -OMe and -*t*-butyl produced corresponding products **3bb**-**3fb** in good to excellent yields (Table 2, entries 1-5). The *para* substituted *N*-methoxybenzamides **1b**-**1d** provided excellent yields of **3bb**-**3db**, whereas *meta* substituted *N*-methoxybenzamide **1e** offered a good yield of **3eb** regioselectively. Hindered *ortho* methyl-*N*-methoxybenzamide furnished lower yield of product **3fb**. Interestingly, β and α -*N*-methoxybenzamide could also be transformed into corresponding products **3gb** and **3hb** selectively (Table 2, entries 6 and 7). Next, *N*-methoxybenzamide bearing weakly electron withdrawing groups such as -F, -Cl and -Br at the *para* position were explored and furnished respective products **3ib**-**3kb** in good to excellent yields (Table 2, entries 8-10).

Table 2. Palladium Catalyzed Phenanthridinone Synthesis from *p*-toluidine with Various *N*-methoxybenzamide.[a]



Entry	amide	Aniline	Product	yield (%)[b]
1	 1b	**2b**	 3bb	91
2	 1c	**2b**	 3cb	87
3	 1d	**2b**	 3db	87
4	 1e	**2b**	 3eb	86
5	 1f	**2b**	 3fb	71
6	 1g	**2b**	 3gb	86
7	 1h	**2b**	 3hb	89

8	 1i	**2b**	 3ib	87
9	 1j	**2b**	 3jb	81
10	 1k	**2b**	 3kb	78
11	 1l	**2b**	 3lb	83
12	 1m	**2b**	 3mb	63
13	 1n	**2b**	 3nb	57
14	 1o	**2b**	 3ob	73

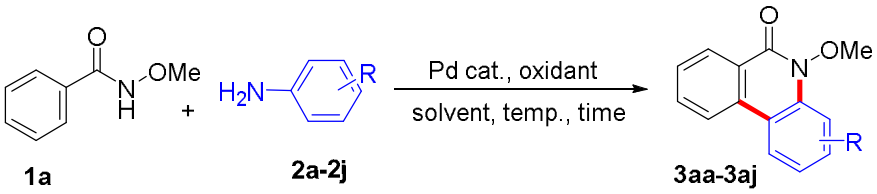
[a] Reaction conditions: Amide (**1a-1o**) (0.5 mmol), *p*-toluidine (**2b**, 0.7 mmol), *t*-BuONO (0.8 mmol) $Pd(OAc)_2$ (5.0 mol %), Ag_2O (1.0 mmol), AcOH (5 mL) at 40 ^oC for 18 h, [b] Yield.

The *meta* chloro substituted *N*-methoxybenzamide provided an excellent yield of **3lb** and *ortho* chloro *N*-methoxybenzamide provided the low yield of **3mb**, this may be due to steric hindrance (Table 2, entries 11 and 12). The *N*-methoxy-4-nitrobenzamide was also tolerated to give **3nb** in

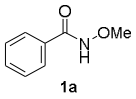
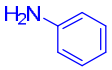
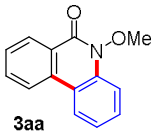
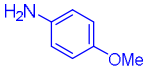
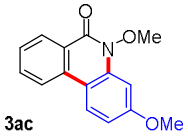
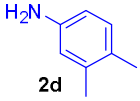
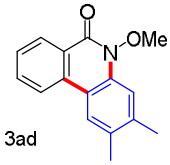
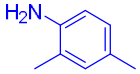
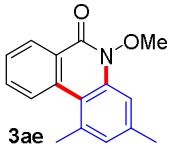
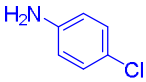
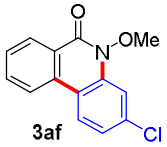
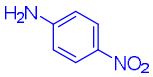
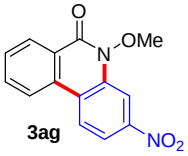
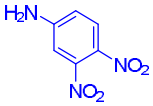
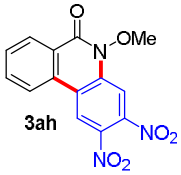
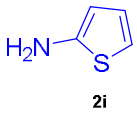
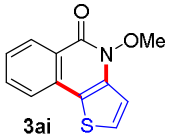
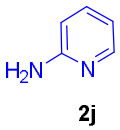
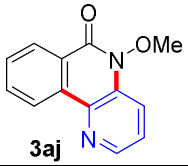
57% yield (Table 2, entry 13). To our delight, the amide containing external double bond could also be transformed into the corresponding product **3ob** (Table 2, entry 14).

Having showed the viability of the mild catalytic system in efficient phenanthridinone synthesis from amide, we turned our attention to other aniline substrates (Table 3). In general, **2a** reacts with **1a** to give **3aa** in 89% yield (Table 3, entry 1). It was observed that the reactions of aniline having electron donating substituents such as -CH_3 and -OCH_3 offer good yields of **3ac-3ae** (Table 3, entries 2-4). The weak electron withdrawing group such as chloro furnished good yield of product **3af** (Table 3, entry 5). Aniline having -NO_2 group such as **2g** and **2h** were studied. Only **2g** could be converted into the desired product **3ag** however, **3h** could not be transformed into the desired product **3ah** (Table 3, entries 6 and 7). Unfortunately, heteroatom containing aniline such as **2i** and **2j** did not give the corresponding products **3ai** and **3aj** (Table 3, entries 8 and 9).

Table 3. Palladium Catalyzed Phenanthridinone Synthesis with Various Aniline Derivatives.[a]

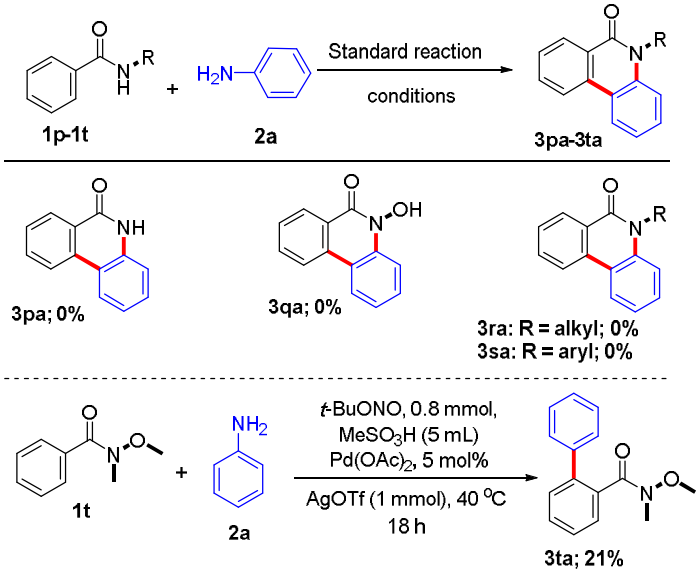


1a 2a-2j 3aa-3aj

entry	amide	aniline	product	yield (%)[b]
1	 1a	 2a	 3aa	89
2	**1a**	 2c	 3ac	85
3	**1a**	 2d	 3ad	90
4	**1a**	 2e	 3ae	73
5	**1a**	 3af	 3af	76
6	**1a**	 2g	 3ag	53
7	**1a**	 2h	 3ah	00
8	**1a**	 2i	 3ai	00
9	**1a**	 2j	 3aj	00

[a] Reaction conditions: *N*-methoxybenzamide (**1a)** (0.5 mmol), aniline derivatives (**2a-2j**) (0.7 mmol), *t*-BuONO (0.8 mmol), $Pd(OAc)_2$ (5.0 mol %), Ag_2O (1.0 mmol), AcOH (5 mL) at 40 ^oC for 18 h, [b] Yield.

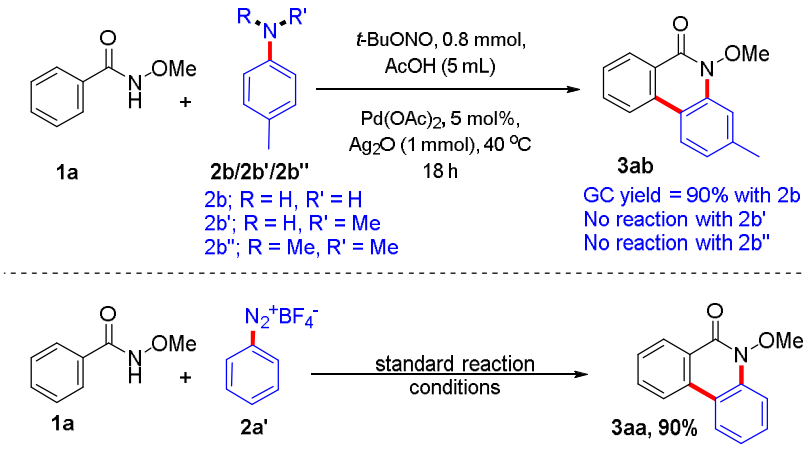
Scheme 3. Reaction of *N*-substituted Benzamide Derivatives



After the substrate study of various *N*-methoxy amides and aromatic amines, we moved towards screening of *N*-substituted amides (Scheme 3). Benzamide, *N*-hydroxybenzamide and *N*-alkyl/*N*-arylbenzamide were inactive for synthesis of phenanthridinone products **3pa**, **3qa**, **3ra**, **3sa**. Further, the reactivity of *N*-methoxy-*N*-methyl benzamide **1t** was tested and no conversion of **3ta** was observed at standard reaction conditions. However, in the presence of $MeSO_3H$ solvent and AgOTf oxidant, the formation of product **3ta** was observed with a 21% yield

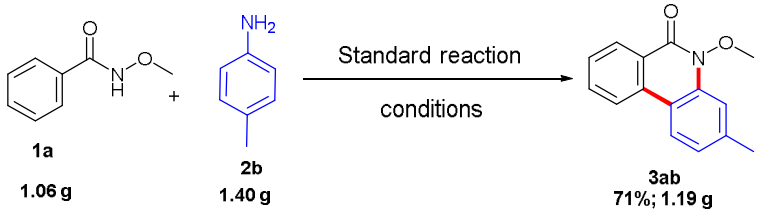
In order to understand the chemoselectivity and mechanism of this transformation, some control experiments were conducted. Notably, no formation of product **3ab** was observed when *N*-methyltoluidine **2b'** and *N*,*N*-dimethyltoludine **2b''** were employed (Scheme 4). This is possible because there is no generation of azo salts with **2b'** and **2b''** under the given reaction conditions. The excellent yield of product **3aa** was observed in the presence of externally prepared diazonium salt.

Scheme 4. Controlled experiments



To demonstrate the synthetic utility of this developed protocol, gram scale phenanthridinone synthesis was carried out by employing *p*-toluidine **2b** (9.4 mmol, 1.40 mg), 1.06 g (7 mmol) of *N*-methoxybenzamide **1a** under the standard reaction condition (Scheme 5). This transformation proceeded smoothly to afford 1.19 g (71%) of product **3ab**.

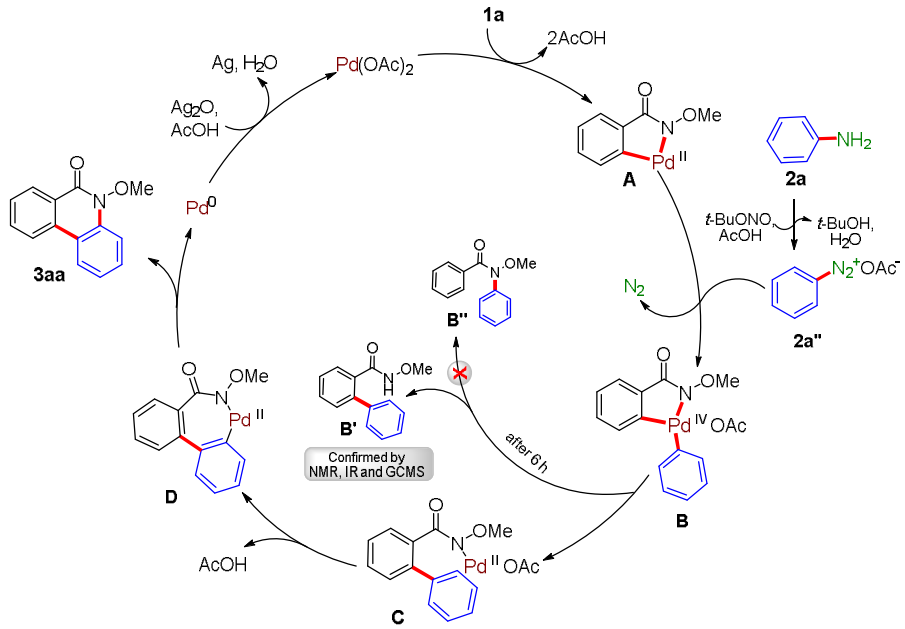
Scheme 5. Gram Scale Phenanthridinone Synthesis



On the basis of known Pd(II)/Ag(I) catalyzed directing-group assisted C-H bond activation reactions[20] and obtained results, a plausible mechanism for the reaction of **1a** with **2a** to give **3aa** has been proposed in Scheme 6. The arylation of *N*-methoxybenzamide using aniline most likely proceeds through a pathway similar to the *para*-selective arylation of amides with aryl halide.[21] The initial step involves the coordination of **1a** to a Pd^{II} species, and is followed by an *ortho* C-H bond activation to form a five membered palladacycle **A**,[15,16,19,20c,22] and the release of protons.

Parallel *in-situ* diazotization of the aniline **2a** takes place in the presence of *t*-BuONO and acid to form a diazonium salt **2a''** with the release of water and *t*-BuOH. The oxidative addition of diazonium salt[10-13,23] in palladacycle **A** with simultaneous expulsion of nitrogen forms intermediate **B** with Pd^{IV}.

Scheme 6. Plausible Reaction Mechanism



Then, reductive elimination of **B** gives *ortho*-arylated amide intermediate **C.**[16] The reaction goes through intermediate **C** was observed by stopping the reaction after 6 h and **B'** was isolated and characterized by IR and NMR. In the IR spectrum, the band at 3221 cm^{-1} corresponds to the N-H stretch of **1a,** whereas the band at 3195 cm^{-1} corresponds to the N-H stretch of the isolated intermediate **B'**. This was also confirmed by ^1H NMR, in which a broad singlet of N-H is observed at δ 8.17 ppm. Hence, it can be concluded that, the reaction proceeds through the *ortho*-arylated intermediate **B'** which is subsequently followed by C-N coupling and not through C-N coupling intermediate **B''** followed by *ortho*-arylation. Subsequently, the release of proton gives the seven membered palladacycle **D**.[15,16] The C-N bond forming reductive elimination from **D**

affords **3ab** and Pd^0, which is oxidized by Ag_2O regenerates Pd^{II} catalyst for the next catalytic cycle.

In conclusion, we have shown for the first time, the synthesis of phenanthridinone from *N*-methoxybenzamide and aniline as novel surrogates using $Pd(OAc)_2$ as an efficient catalyst. The developed methodology is ligand free and proceeds *via ortho* C-H bond activation of *N*-methoxybenzamide under mild reaction conditions. The elimination of the purification step of the *in situ* generated diazonium salt and formation of only non-toxic byproducts such as N_2, H_2O and *t*-BuOH makes this protocol greener. Interestingly, it involves simultaneous four bond cleavage and two bond formation, i.e., three steps in one pot. A series of phenanthridinones were synthesized containing electron withdrawing and donating groups in good to excellent yields. The use of inexpensive and easily available aniline has made this protocol potentially viable for commercial and academic applications. This reaction can also be scaled up to gram level.

EXPERIMENTAL SECTION

All reactions were carried out in oven-dried glassware. All derivatives of aniline, palladium and silver precursor were purchased from commercial sources. Analytical TLC was performed with silica gel plates (0.25 mm thickness). Column chromatography was performed with silica gel (40-200 mesh). NMR spectra were recorded with an (^{1}H NMR at 500 MHz, ^{13}C NMR at 125 MHz) spectrometer. The chemical shifts are reported in ppm relative to tetramethylsilane as an internal standard and the coupling constant *J* in Hz. The reaction was monitored by GC and the products were analyzed by GC-MS and IR. HRMS were recorded on a micro-mass ESI TOF (time of flight) mass spectrometer.

General Procedure for the Synthesis of *N*-methoxybenzamides

Following a modified procedure by Glorious *et al.*[24] in a 50 mL single neck round-bottom flask, O-methylhydroxylamine (301.0 mg, 3.6 mmol, 1.2 equiv.) and K_2CO_3 (829.0 mg, 6.0 mmol, 2.0 equiv.) were combined in a 2:1 mixture of EtOAc (24 mL) and H_2O (12 mL). The flask was capped with rubber cap and the mixture was cooled in an ice bath. The acid chloride (1.0 mmol, 1.0 equiv.) was added drop wise and the mixture was stirred at room temperature over 16 h to 18 h. The reaction mixture was then diluted with EtOAc and washed twice with water and brine. Consequently, the ethyl acetate layer was washed with 5% aqueous solution of 25 to 30 mL sodium bicarbonate. The organic layers were dried over Na_2SO_4, filtered and concentrated. The pure products were obtained without any further purification and it was confirmed by GC-MS.

Experimental Procedure for Phenanthridionone Synthesis from *p*-toluidine

In 15 mL Schlenktube, a solution of 5 mL acetic acid, $Pd(OAc)_2$, (5 mol %, 11.2 mg), *p*-toluidine **2b** (0.7 mmol, 0.74 mg), *N*-methoxybenzamide **1a** (0.50 mmol, 76 mg) and Ag_2O (1 mmol, 223 mg) were added under nitrogen atmosphere. The system was degassed four to five times by vacuum pump. To the resulting suspension a *tert*-butyl nitrite (0.8 mmol, 85 mg) was added by syringe. The reaction mixture was stirred at 40 °C, the total time indicated in table 1. After completion of the reaction, the reaction mixture was cooled to room temperature. All volatiles were removed under vacuum. The product was extracted with 20 mL of ethyl acetate and the organic layer was dried over Na_2SO_4 and the solvent was removed under vacuum. The colorless solid phenanthridionone product **3ab** was purified by column chromatography (silica gel, 40-200 mesh).

5-methoxy-3-methylphenanthridin-6(5H)-one (3ab)[16]

The typical procedure was applied to *N*-methoxybenzamide **1a** (0.50 mmol, 76 mg), *p*-toluidine **2b** (0.70 mmol, 74 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent:petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3ab** afforded as a colorless solid (106 mg, 89% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_H/ppm 8.55 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 8.24 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 8.15 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.82 – 7.73 (m, 1H), 7.57 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.49 (s, 1H), 7.18 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 4.15 (s, 3H), 2.54 (s, 3H). **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_C/ppm 157.5, 140.6, 135.7, 133.1, 132.6, 128.5, 127.6, 125.9, 124.4, 123.1, 121.7, 116.2, 112.7, 62.7, 21.9; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 239.00 (0.06), 209.05 (40), 165.05 (44.18), 111.60 (5.73); **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2920, 1644 and 1607.

5-methoxy-3,9-dimethylphenanthridin-6(5*H*)-one (3bb)[16]

The typical procedure was applied to *N*-methoxy-4-methylbenzamide **1b** (0.50 mmol, 83 mg), *p*-toluidine **2b** (0.70 mmol, 74 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent:petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3bb** afforded as a colorless solid (115 mg, 91% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$):** δ_H/ppm 8.42 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 8.13 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 8.01 (s, 1H), 7.47 (s, 1H), 7.38 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.15 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 4.13 (s, 3H), 2.56 (s, 3H), 2.53 (s, 3H). **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$):** δ_C/ppm 157.5, 143.1, 140.4, 135.8, 133.1, 129.0, 128.4, 124.3, 123.5, 123.1, 121.7, 116.1, 112.7, 62.7, 22.1, 21.9; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 253.10 (53.94), 194.10 (55.29), 165.10 (14.91), 96.60 (13.21); **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2920, 1651 and 1614.

5,9-dimethoxy-3-methylphenanthridin-6(5*H*)-one (3cb)[16]

The typical procedure was applied to *N*,4-dimethoxybenzamide **1c** (0.50 mmol, 91 mg), *p*-toluidine **2b** (0.70 mmol, 74 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3cb** afforded as a colorless solid (117 mg, 87% yield). **^{1}H NMR**

(500 MHz, $CDCl_3$): δ_H/ppm 8.46 (d, *J* = 8.9 Hz, 1H), 8.06 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.58 (s, 1H), 7.46 (s, 1H), 7.13 (t, *J* = 9.1 Hz, 2H), 4.12 (s, 3H), 3.98 (s, 3H), 2.53 (s, 3H); **$^{13}C\{^1H\}$NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_C/ppm 163.1, 157.3, 140.7, 136.1, 135.0, 130.6, 124.6, 123.1, 119.4, 115.5, 112.7, 104.6, 62.7, 55.6, 21.9; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 269.05 (42.93), 239.05 (40), 201.05 (34.93), 167.05 (20.00), 103.60 (6.88); **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2939, 1657 and 1612.

9-(*tert*-butyl)-5-methoxy-3-methylphenanthridin-6(5H)-one (3db)[16]

The typical procedure was applied to 4-(*tert*-butyl)-*N*-methoxybenzamide **1d** (0.50 mmol, 104 mg), *p*-toluidine **2b** (0.70 mmol, 74 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent:petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3db** afforded as a colorless solid (128 mg, 87% yield). **^1H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_H/ppm 8.52 – 8.40 (m, 1H), 8.24 – 8.17 (m, 2H), 7.67 – 7.60 (m, 1H), 7.48 (s, 1H), 7.17 (dd, *J* = 8.1, 0.5 Hz, 1H), 4.13 (s, 3H), 2.53 (s, 3H), 1.45 (s, 9H); **$^{13}C\{^1H\}$NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_C/ppm 157.4, 156.1, 140.3, 135.8, 132.8, 128.3, 125.6, 124.3, 123.5, 123.0, 117.8, 116.5, 112.7, 62.5, 35.5, 31.2, 21.9; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 295.10 (54.21), 265.10 (50.50), 250.05 (40), 221.10 (24.44), 111.10 (24.67), 96.60 (18.62); **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2956, 1662 and 1613.

5-methoxy-3,8-dimethylphenanthridin-6(5*H*)-one (3eb)[16]

The typical procedure was applied to *N*-methoxy-3-methylbenzamide **1e** (0.50 mmol, 83 mg), *p*-toluidine **2b** (0.70 mmol, 74 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent:petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3eb** afforded as a colorless solid (108 mg, 86% yield). **^1H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$):** δ_H/ppm 8.34 (s, 1H), 8.12 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.58 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.48 (s, 1H), 7.16 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 4.14 (d, *J* = 1.0 Hz, 3H), 2.53 (s, 3H), 2.52 (s. 3H); **$^{13}C\{^1H\}$NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$):** δ_C/ppm 157.5, 140.0, 137.8, 135.4, 133.9, 130.7, 128.2,

125.7, 124.4, 122.9, 121.7, 116.3, 112.6, 62.6, 21.9, 21.3; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 253.05 (66.89), 223.00 (40), 194.05 (88.16), 96.60 (17.12); **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2918, 1646 and 1613.

5-methoxy-3,7-dimethylphenanthridin-6(5*H*)-one (3fb)[16]

The typical procedure was applied to *N*-methoxy-2-methylbenzamide **1f** (0.50 mmol, 83 mg), *p*-toluidine **2b** (0.70 mmol, 74 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent:petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3fb** afforded as a colorless solid (89 mg, 71% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$):** δ_H/ppm 7.86 (s, 1H), 7.33 (d, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 7.20 – 7.16 (m, 3H), 3.47 (s, 3H), 2.42 (s, 3H), 2.37 (s, 3H); **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$):** δ_C/ppm 157.5, 140.0, 137.8, 135.4, 133.9, 130.6, 128.1, 125.7, 124.3, 122.9, 121.7, 116.3, 112.6, 62.6, 21.9, 21.3; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 25.00 (0.12), 223.05 (40), 194.05 (37.06), 165.05 (27.02), 96.60 (22.35); **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2918, 1646 and 1613.

5-methoxy-3-methylbenzo[j]phenanthridin-6(5*H*)-one (3gb)

The typical procedure was applied to *N*-methoxy-2-naphthamide **1g** (0.50 mmol, 40 mg), *p*-toluidine **2b** (0.70 mmol, 74 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3gb** afforded as a colorless solid (124 mg, 86% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_H/ppm 9.11 (s, 1H), 8.66 (s, 1H), 8.28 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 8.08-8.01 (m, 2H), 7.65-7.55 (m, 2H), 7.47 (s, 1H), 7.19 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 4.17 (s, 3H), 2.54 (s, 3H); **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_C/ppm 157.9, 140.3, 135.6, 135.1, 131.9, 129.8, 129.3, 129.1, 128.5, 120.0, 126.6, 124.5, 124.0, 123.3, 120.6, 116.5, 113.0, 62.7, 21.9; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 289.10 (3.55), 281.00 (30.29), 207 (64.35), 73.05 (71.51), 43.95 (40); **HRMS** (H^+) calcd for $C_{19}H_{16}NO_2$ 290.1176, found 290.1169; **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2922, 1660 and 1614.

6-methoxy-8-methylbenzo[i]phenanthridin-5(6*H*)-one (3hb)

The typical procedure was applied to *N*-methoxy-1-naphthamide **1h** (0.50 mmol, 40 mg), *p*-toluidine **2b** (0.70 mmol, 74 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3hb** afforded as a colorless solid (128 mg, 89% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_H/ppm 10.22 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.25 - 8.17 (m, 2H), 8.09 – 8.07 (m, 1H), 7.87 (d, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 7.73 (dd, *J* = 8.5, 7.1 Hz, 1H), 7.59 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 7.48 (s, 1H), 7.14 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 4.17 (s, 3H), 2.03 (s, 3H); **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_C/ppm 171.1, 158.2, 141.0, 135.9, 134.1, 133.9, 132.7, 132.3, 128.6, 128.2, 127.7, 126.7, 124.2, 123.8, 119.5, 119.3, 115.6, 112.1, 60.4, 21.0; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 289.00 (0.3), 259.05 (100), 230.05 (19.75), 202.05 (8.57), 161.10 (8.34), 128.60 (17.16), 43.00 (9.84); **HRMS** (Na^+) calcd for $C_{19}H_{15}NNaO_2$ 312.1000, found 312.0995; **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2913, 1645 and 1614.

9-fluoro-5-methoxy-3-methylphenanthridin-6(5*H*)-one (3ib)[16]

The typical procedure was applied to 4-fluoro-*N*-methoxybenzamide **1i** (0.50 mmol, 85 mg), *p*-toluidine **2b** (0.70 mmol, 74 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent:petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3ib** afforded as a colorless solid (112 mg, 87% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_H/ppm 8.60 – 8.50 (m, 1H), 8.01 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 7.83 (dd, *J* = 10.2, 1.9 Hz, 1H), 7.47 (s, 1H), 7.28 – 7.24 (m, 1H), 7.19 – 7.15 (m, 1H), 4.17 – 4.12 (m, 3H), 2.54 (s, 3H); **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_C/ppm 165.7 (d, *J* = 252.6 Hz), 156.8, 141.5, 136.1, 135.7 (d, *J* = 9.6 Hz), 131.6 (d, *J* = 10.0 Hz), 124.6, 123.4, 122.3 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz), 116.0 (d, *J* = 115.87 Hz), 115.4 (*J* = 115.37 Hz), 107.7 (d, *J* = 23.4 Hz), 62.8, 21.9; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 257.05 (52.42), 227.00 (40), 198.00 (54.40), 170.05 (12.03), 112.60 (9.15); **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2923, 1658 and 1613.

9-chloro-5-methoxy-3-methylphenanthridin-6(5*H*)-one (3jb)[16]

The typical procedure was applied to 4-chloro-*N*-methoxybenzamide **1j** (0.50 mmol, 93 mg), *p*-toluidine **2b** (0.70 mmol, 74 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent:petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3jb** afforded as a colorless solid (110 mg, 81% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_H/ppm 8.40 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 8.08 (s, 1H), 7.95 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 7.50 – 7.37 (m, 2H), 7.10 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 4.11 (s, 3H), 2.49 (s, 3H). **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$):** δ_C/ppm 156.7, 141.4, 139.3, 136.0, 134.4, 130.1, 127.9, 124.6, 124.1, 123.1, 121.6, 114.9, 112.7, 62.7, 21.9; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%):273.05 (51.63), 243 (40), 214.05 (44.01), 165.10 (20.01), 151.10 (14.51), 120.60 (10.38), 82.15 (10.75); **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2923, 1661 and 1598.

9-bromo-5-methoxy-3-methylphenanthridin-6(5*H*)-one (3kb)[16]

The typical procedure was applied to 4-bromo-*N*-methoxybenzamide **1k** (0.50 mmol, 76 mg), *p*-toluidine **2b** (0.70 mmol, 74 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3kb** afforded as a colorless solid (123 mg, 78% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$):** δ_H/ppm 8.41 – 8.34 (m, 2H), 8.06 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 7.67 (dd, *J* = 8.5, 1.3 Hz, 1H), 7.48 (s, 1H), 7.18 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 4.14 (s, 3H), 2.54 (s, 3H); **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_C/ppm 156.9, 141.5, 136.1, 134.7, 130.8, 130.3, 128.0, 124.8, 124.7, 124.6, 123.3, 114.9, 112.8, 62.8, 21.9; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 318.95 (44.38), 316.95 (44.22), 286.95 (40), 257.95 (34.68), 179.05 (46.79), 151.10 (23.41), 82.55 (17.83); **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2920, 1662 and 1594.

8-chloro-5-methoxy-3-methylphenanthridin-6(5*H*)-one (3lb)

The typical procedure was applied to 3-chloro-*N*-methoxybenzamide **1l** (0.50 mmol, 93 mg), *p*-toluidine **2b** (0.70 mmol, 74 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl

acetate = 4/1) of the product **3lb** afforded as a colorless solid (113 mg, 83% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_H/ppm 8.52 (d, *J* = 2.3 Hz, 1H), 8.17 (d, *J* = 8.7 Hz, 1H), 8.09 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 7.71 (d, *J* = 2.3 Hz, 1H), 7.49 (s, 1H), 7.18 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 4.14 (s, 3H), 2.54 (s, 3H); **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_C/ppm 156.4, 141.0, 135.7, 133.8, 133.2, 132.9, 131.6, 128.0, 124.7, 123.4, 123.1, 115.5, 112.8, 77.2, 76.9, 76.7, 62.7, 21.9; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 273.05 (53.26), 214.05 (43.16), 179.10 (20.06), 165.10 (20.65), 82.15 (10.48); **HRMS** (Na^+) calcd 296.0449 for $C_{15}H_{12}ClNNaO_2$ found 296.0441; **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2918, 1656 and 1619.

7-chloro-5-methoxy-3-methylphenanthridin-6(5*H*)-one (3mb)[16]

The typical procedure was applied to 2-chloro-*N*-methoxybenzamide **1m** (0.50 mmol, 93 mg), *p*-toluidine **2b** (0.70 mmol, 74 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent:petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3mb** afforded as a colorless solid (86 mg, 63% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_H/ppm 7.99 (s, 1H), 7.39 (d, *J* = 4.9 Hz, 1H), 7.35 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.31 – 7.27 (m, 1H), 7.22 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 3.60 (s, 3H), 2.38 (s, 3H); **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_C/ppm 164.4, 142.3, 138.2, 135.6, 132.5, 131.8, 130.8, 129.2, 128.5, 128.3, 128.3, 126.6, 125.7, 64.1, 21.2; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 273.05 (46.39), 243.05 (40), 214.05 (42.76), 179.10 (19.69), 120.60 (8.39), 82.15 (9.00); **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2922 and 1658.

5-methoxy-3-methyl-9-nitrophenanthridin-6(5*H*)-one (3nb)

The typical procedure was applied to *N*-methoxy-4-nitrobenzamide **1n** (0.50 mmol, 98 mg), *p*-toluidine **2b**, (0.70 mmol, 74 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent:petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3nb** afforded as a colorless solid (81 mg, 57% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_H/ppm 9.09 (s, 1H), 8.71 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.32 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.21 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 7.53 (s, 1H), 7.27 (d, *J* = 5.6 Hz, 1H), 4.17 (s, 3H), 2.57 (s, 3H); **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR**

(125 MHz, $CDCl_3$): δ_C/ppm 156.0, 150.5, 142.5, 136.4, 134.3, 130.6, 129.8, 125.2, 123.6, 121.2, 117.5, 115.0, 113.1, 62.9, 22.0; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 284.00 (47.87), 254.00 (40), 208.00 (59.98), 103.05 (64.82), 57.05 (66.86); **HRMS** (H^+) calcd 285.0870 for $C_{15}H_{13}N_2O_4$, found 285.0876; **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2916, 1666 and 1602.

1-methoxy-7-methyl-4-phenylquinolin-2(1*H*)-one (3ob)

The typical procedure was applied to *N*-methoxycinnamamide **1o** (0.50 mmol, 89 mg), *p*-toluidine **2b** (0.70 mmol, 74 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3ob** afforded as a colorless oil (97 mg, 73% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_H/ppm 7.69 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.62 – 7.57 (m, 2H), 7.50 – 7.34 (m, 2H), 7.19 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 6.97 (s, 1H), 6.67 (s, 1H), 4.14 (s, 3H), 2.43 (s, 3H); **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_C/ppm 157.4, 150.8, 138.9, 138.0, 133.7, 131.1, 129.3, 128.7, 127.7, 125.4, 122.6, 121.7, 119.8, 112.0, 112.0, 62.9, 21.3; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%):265.15 (42.68), 235.10 (40), 206.10 (25.28), 178.10 (14.57), 102.20 (17.96); **HRMS** (H^+) calcd 266.1176 for $C_{17}H_{16}NO_2$, found 266.1173; **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2934, 1648 and 1588.

5-methoxyphenanthridin-6(5H)-one (3aa)[15a]

The typical procedure was applied to *N*-methoxybenzamide **1a** (0.50 mmol, 76mg), aniline **2a** (0.70 mmol, 65 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3aa** afforded as a colorless solid (40 mg, 89% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_H/ppm 8.57 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 0.9 Hz, 1H), 8.28 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 3.8 Hz, 2H), 7.82 – 7.76 (m, 1H), 7.69 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.60 (td, *J* = 8.1, 1.0 Hz, 2H), 7.40 – 7.32 (m, 1H), 4.15 (s, 3H); **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_C/ppm 157.3, 135.8, 132.9, 132.6, 129.9, 128.5, 128.1, 126.4, 123.2, 123.2, 121.9, 118.6, 112.6, 62.7; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 225.00 (57.20), 195

(40), 180.00 (34.45), 166.05 (55.58), 140.10 (23.07), 82.60 (12.43); **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2922, 1651 and 1660.

3,5-dimethoxyphenanthridin-6(5*H*)-one (3ac)[16]

The typical procedure was applied to *N*-methoxybenzamide **1a** (0.50 mmol, 76 mg), 4-methoxyaniline **2c** (0.70 mmol, 85 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3ac** afforded as a colorless solid (108 mg, 85% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl$_3$):** δ_H/ppm 8.52 – 8.42 (m, 1H), 8.08 (t, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.74 – 7.64 (m, 1H), 7.47 (dd, *J* = 7.9, 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.15 – 7.05 (m, 1H), 6.86 (dd, *J* = 9.0, 2.0 Hz, 1H), 4.11 (s, 3H), 3.91 (s, 3H); **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR (125 MHz, CDCl$_3$)**: δ_C/ppm 161.3, 157.6, 137.2, 133.1, 132.6, 128.4, 126.9, 124.9, 124.7, 121.3, 111.9, 110.6, 96.7, 62.6, 55.6.; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 255.00 (40), 225.00 (82.00), 196.00 (81.99), 153.05 (40.65), 127.10 (12.48); **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2937, 1659 and 1605.

5-methoxy-2,3-dimethylphenanthridin-6(5*H*)-one (3ad)[16]

The typical procedure was applied to *N*-methoxybenzamide **1a** (0.50 mmol, 76 mg), 3,4-dimethylaniline **2d** (0.70 mmol, 85 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3ad** afforded as a colorless solid (114 mg, 90% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl$_3$)**: δ_H/ppm 8.52 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 8.21 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.97 (s, 1H), 7.77 – 7.70 (m, 1H), 7.54 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.42 (s, 1H), 4.13 (s, 3H), 2.42 (s, 3H), 2.39 (s, 3H); **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR (125 MHz, CDCl$_3$)**: δ_C/ppm 157.2, 139.5, 133.9, 133.0, 132.4, 131.8, 128.4, 127.4, 126.0, 123.7, 121.6, 116.3, 113.2, 62.6, 20.4, 19.6; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 253.10 (79.72), 223.05 (86.21), 194.05 (40), 165.10 (17.67), 126.65 (10.86), 89.10 (12.16); **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2914, 1641 and 1607.

5-methoxy-1,3-dimethylphenanthridin-6(5*H*)-one (3ae)

The typical procedure was applied to *N*-methoxybenzamide **1a** (0.50 mmol, 76 mg), 2,4 dimethyl aniline **2e** (0.70 mmol, 85 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3ae** afforded as a colorless solid (92 mg, 73% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_H/ppm 8.55– 8.51 (m, 1H), 8.28 – 8.24 (m, 1H), 8.01 (s, 1H), 7.78 – 7.74 (m, 1H), 7.58 – 7.56 (m, 1H), 7.46 (s, 1H), 4.14 (s, 3H), 2.45 (s, 3H), 2.41 (s, 3H); **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_C/ppm 157.3, 139.5, 135.7, 132.5, 132.4, 131.8, 128.5, 128.4, 127.4, 123.8, 122.2, 121.6, 113.3, 62.6, 20.4, 19.6; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%):253.05 (68.01), 223.00 (40), 194.05 (91.30), 165.05 (18.76), 76.00 (9.72); **HRMS** (Na^+) calcd 276.0995 for $C_{16}H_{15}NNaO_2$ found 276.1000; **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2916, 1666 and 1554.

3-chloro-5-methoxyphenanthridin-6(5*H*)-one (3af)[16]

The typical procedure was applied to *N*-methoxybenzamide **1a** (0.50 mmol, 76 mg), 4-chloro aniline **2f**, (0.70 mmol, 89 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3af** afforded as a colorless solid (98 mg, 76% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$)** δ_H/ppm 8.56 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.23 – 8.18 (m, 2H), 7.80 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.71 – 7.59 (m, 2H), 7.36 – 7.30 (m, 1H), 4.16 (s, 3H); **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$)** δ_C/ppm 157.3, 139.3, 136.2, 132.9, 132.3, 131.14, 128.7, 128.4, 124.5, 123.5, 121.9, 114.0, 112.6, 62.9; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 258.95 (22.02), 229.95 (69.43), 103.05 (40), 57.05 (88.14); **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2916, 1663 and 1602.

5-methoxy-3-nitrophenanthridin-6(5*H*)-one (3ag)[15a]

The typical procedure was applied to *N*-methoxy-*N*-methylbenzamide **1a** (0.50 mmol, 76 mg), 4-nitro aniline **2g** (0.70 mmol, 97 mg). Silica gel chromatography (eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1) of the product **3ag** afforded as a colorless solid (71 mg, 53% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500**

MHz, $CDCl_3$): δ_H/ppm 8.62 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.53 (d, *J* = 2.3 Hz, 1H), 8.42 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.33 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 8.20 (dd, *J* = 8.8, 2.3 Hz, 1H), 7.90 – 7.87 (m, 1H), 7.75 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 4.22 (s, 3H); **$^{13}C\{^1H\}$NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$)**: δ_C/ppm 157.0, 148.5, 136.4, 133.3, 131.2, 130.1, 129.0, 127.3, 124.4, 123.5, 123.0, 117.63, 108.4, 63.3; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 270.00 (31.36), 240.00 (40), 182.00 (57.54), 103.05 (88.18), 43.95 (70.54); **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2917, 1661 and 1515.

***N*-methoxy-*N*-methyl-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-carboxamide (3ta)**[25]

In 15 mL Schlenktube, a solution of 5 mL methane sulphonic acid, $Pd(OAc)_2$, (5 mol %, 11.2 mg), aniline **2a** (0.7 mmol, 0.65 mg), *N*-methoxy-*N*-methylbenzamide **1t** (0.50 mmol, 83 mg) and AgOTf (1 mmol, 257 mg) were added under nitrogen atmosphere. The system was degassed four to five times by vacuum pump. To the resulting suspension a *tert*-butyl nitrite (0.8 mmol, 85 mg) was added by syringe. The reaction mixture was stirred at 40 °C for 18 h. After completion of the reaction, the reaction mixture was cooled to room temperature. All volatiles were removed under vacuum. The product was extracted with 20 mL of ethyl acetate and the organic layer was dried over Na_2SO_4 and the solvent was removed under vacuum. The colorless solid phenanthridionone product **3ta** was purified by column chromatography (silica gel, 40-200 mesh, eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 4/1, 25 mg, 21% yield). **^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$):** δ_H/ppm 7.69 – 7.07 (m, 9H), 3.48 (br s, 1H), 3.24 (br s, 2H), 3.08 (br s, 2H), 2.65 (br s, 1H); **$^{13}C\{^1H\}$NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$):** δ_C/ppm 172.0, 167.1, 140.5, 139.5, 139.5, 134.9, 134.8, 129.6, 129.4, 128.4, 128.3, 127.7, 127.6, 127.4, 126.8, 61.1, 59.8, 35.8, 32.4, 29.7; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 241.05 (1.73), 181.10 (40), 152.15 (40.35), 76.05 (7.34); **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 2932, 1645 and 1375.

***N*-methoxy-[1,1'-biphenyl]-2-carboxamide (B')[18]**

^{1}H NMR (500 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ_H/ppm 8.17 (s, 1H), 7.57 (s, 1H), 7.48 (td, J = 7.6, 1.4 Hz, 1H), 7.39 - 7.35 (m 7H), 3.47 (s, 3H); **^{13}C{^{1}H}NMR (125 MHz, $CDCl_3$):** δ_C/ppm 167.3, 140.1, 140.0, 139.7, 132.3, 130.6, 130.0, 129.0, 128.7, 127.9, 127.6, 63.7; **GCMS (EI, 70 eV):** *m/z* (%): 227.10 (1.10), 197.10 (39.43), 180.05 (100.00), 152.15 (55.01), 76.05 (23.17); **IR (ATR) $\tilde{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}):** 3221, 1639, 1508, 1310.

Typical procedure for the synthesis of 3ab on the gram scale

In 40 mL double neck round bottom flask, a solution of 20 mL acetic acid, $Pd(OAc)_2$, (5 mol %), *p*-toluidine **2a** (9.7 mmol, 1.40 g), *N*-methoxybenzamide **1a** (7 mmol, 1.06 g) and Ag_2O (14 mmol, 3.12 g) were added under nitrogen atmosphere. The system was degassed four to five times by vacuum pump. To the resulting suspension a *tert*-butyl nitrite (11.2 mmol, 1.5 mL) was added by syringe at room temperature. The reaction mixture was at 40 °C up to 18 h. After completion of the reaction, the reaction mixture was cooled to room temperature. All volatiles were removed under vacuum. All volatiles were removed under vacuum. The product was extracted with 20 mL of ethyl acetate and the organic layer was dried over Na_2SO_4 and the solvent was removed under vacuum. The phenanthridionone product was purified by column chromatography (silica gel, 40-200 mesh).

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The copies of ^{1}H and ^{13}C NMR spectra are available free of charge via the internet at http://pubs.acs.org

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