



Tandem nitrosation/cycloaddition of heterocyclic enamines using nitrolic acids

Cevher Altuğ^{a,b}, Yasar Dürüst^{b,*}, Mark C. Elliott^{a,*}, Benson M. Kariuki^a

^aSchool of Chemistry, Cardiff University, Park Place, Cardiff CF10 3AT, UK

^bDepartment of Chemistry, Abant İzzet Baysal University, TR-14280 Bolu, Turkey

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ABSTRACT

The reaction of alkylidenepyrrolidines with nitrolic acids gives rise to the formation of novel 3,7a-disubstituted (1,2,4-oxadiazol-5-yl)-5,6,7,7a-tetrahydropyrrolo[1,2-d][1,2,4]oxadiazoles. A plausible mechanism for this reaction is proposed, which features nitrosation of the enamine by the nitrous acid that is liberated from the nitrolic acid.

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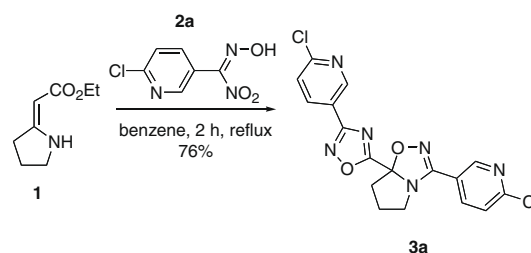
Nitrile oxides are versatile 1,3-dipoles, undergoing cycloaddition reactions with a wide range of alkenes and alkynes.¹ They are generally prepared by treatment of hydroxamic acid chlorides with base, or by oxidation of aldoximes. Elimination of HNO₂ from nitrolic acids has also been reported as a route to nitrile oxides, which were subsequently trapped in cycloaddition reactions with alkenes,² although this method has not seen widespread application. In particular, reactions of nitrolic acids with electron-rich alkenes such as enamines remain unexplored. The Elliott group has a long-standing interest in the chemistry of alkylidenepyrrolidines,³ and the Dürüst group in dipolar cycloaddition chemistry,⁴ and as such we decided to investigate the reactions of nitrile oxides with this class of alkene.

Reaction of nitrolic acid **2a**, prepared by nitration of the corresponding aldoxime, with alkylidenepyrrolidine **1** gave a single product in high yield. The structure of the product was eventually elucidated by single crystal X-ray diffraction (Fig. 1), with the structure **3a** (Scheme 1) being entirely supported by ¹H and ¹³C NMR data as well as infrared spectroscopy and mass spectrometry.⁵

This transformation is extremely intriguing. The alkylidenepyrrolidine ester appears to have undergone hydrolysis/decarboxylation, which is unusual under such mild conditions. Two equivalents of the nitrolic acid have been incorporated, with one of them appearing to retain the nitrogen of the nitro group. Although we are unable to give a definitive mechanism, the following (Scheme 2) is plausible, and is supported by some experimental data (vide infra). The nitrous acid which is lost upon heating compound **2a** is trapped by the alkylidenepyrrolidine, giving nitrosoalkene **4** or its oxime tautomer **5**. The decarboxylation of oximinocarboxylic acid has precedent, albeit on the corresponding

O-acyl compounds.⁶ Presumably the presence of the oxime will render the ester more susceptible to hydrolysis, so that while the details are unclear, formation of nitrile **6** is not unreasonable (ester hydrolysis/decarboxylation to give the aldoxime, followed by nitrile oxide cycloaddition/dehydration is also a possibility⁷). From this point, cycloaddition of the nitrile oxide **7** involving the nitrile⁸ and imine⁹ bonds will give the observed product.

We sought to explore the generality of this process, and also to provide support for the above mechanism. Three other nitrolic acids were used in the above reaction. In all cases, the reactions were more sluggish, but could be accelerated by microwave heat-



Scheme 1.

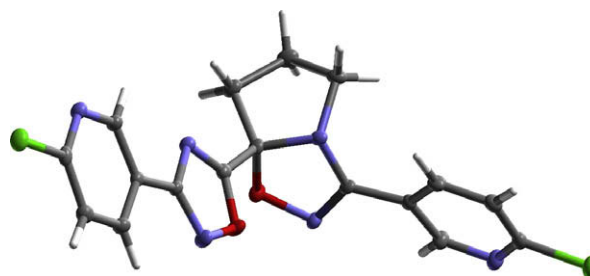
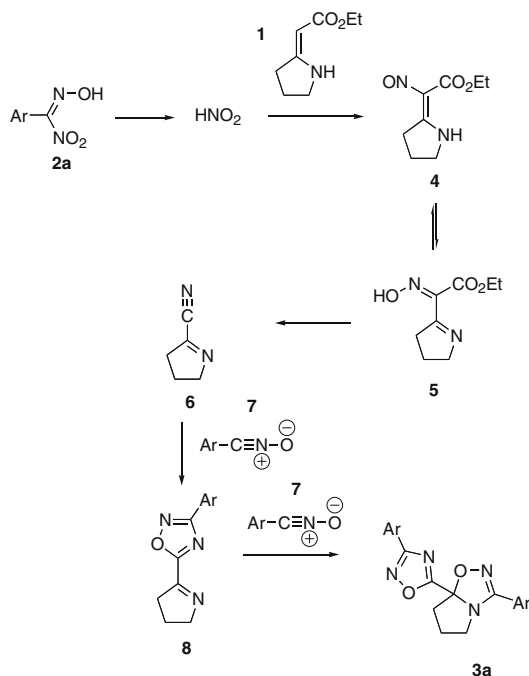


Figure 1. Structure of compound **3a** from single crystal X-ray data.

* Corresponding authors. Tel.: +90 374 2541243; fax: +90 374 2534642 (Y.D.); tel.: +44 29 20874686; fax: +44 29 20874030 (M.C.E.)

E-mail addresses: yasardurust@ibu.edu.tr (Y. Dürüst), elliottmc@cardiff.ac.uk (M.C. Elliott).



Scheme 2.

ing to provide similar products in good yields (Table 1). In all cases, complete consumption of the alkylidenepyrrrolidine reagent **1** was observed.

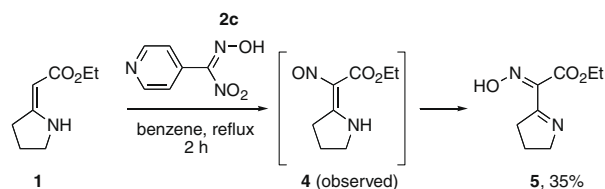
Variable amounts of a by-product were observed in the ¹H NMR data of the crude reaction mixtures. Under milder conditions than those shown in Table 1, this became a significant side-product, and appeared to be consistent with either structure **4** or **5**. Upon chromatography, compound **5** was obtained (¹H NMR, ¹³C NMR, IR, MS).¹⁰ This was similar, but not identical to the compound that we had observed in the crude reaction mixtures, which we would therefore attribute to compound **4** (Scheme 3). In particular, the oxime carbon in compound **5** resonates at 143.2 ppm, whereas the corresponding carbon in alkylidenepyrrrolidine **1** resonates at 76.5 ppm. Nitrosation of the alkene, as in compound **4**, is unlikely to lead to such a dramatic increase, whereas related α-oximinoesters show almost identical chemical shifts.¹¹ Reaction of phenylnitric acid only gave compounds **4/5**, with compound **3** not observed even under forcing conditions.

This reaction represents, to the best of our knowledge, the first example of the chemical trapping of nitrous acid liberated from a nitrolic acid, although there are reports of biological studies in which nitrolic acids are used as NO₂/NO sources.¹² The electron-

Table 1
Formation of adducts **3**

Compound	R	Conditions	Yield (%)
3a	6-Chloro-3-pyridyl	Benzene, reflux, 2 h	76
3b	3-Pyridyl	110 °C, 100 W, 10 min ^a	66
3c	4-Pyridyl	110 °C, 100 W, 10 min ^a	58
3d	Me	Toluene, reflux, 2 h	65

^a CEM discover microwave reactor.



Scheme 3.

rich double-bond of the alkylidenepyrrrolidine clearly renders this a 'special case', although we would anticipate many other instances in which the nitrous acid would be trapped. This may therefore limit the applicability of nitrolic acids as nitrile oxide precursors.

Acknowledgements

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- 3-(6-Chloropyridin-3-yl)-7a-[3-(6-chloropyridin-3-yl)-1,2,4-oxadiazole-5-yl]-5,6,7,7a-tetrahydropyrrolo[1,2-d][1,2,4]oxadiazole (**3a**). 6-Chloropyridin-3-nitrolic acid (**2a**) (2.0 equiv, 201 mg, 1.0 mmol) was added to ethyl (2-pyrrolidin-2-ylidene acetate) (**1**) (77.5 mg, 0.5 mmol) in dry benzene (10 mL) and the mixture was heated at reflux for 2 h. The reaction mixture was concentrated in vacuo, and the crude residue was purified by flash column chromatography (1: 1 petroleum ether–ethyl acetate) to give the title compound (154 mg, 76%) as a yellow solid, m.p. 162–163 °C; ν_{\max} (Nujol) 1582, 1555, 1141, 1114, 967, 933, 893, 838, 722 cm⁻¹; δ_H (400 MHz; CDCl₃) 9.03 (1H, d, *J* 1.8 Hz), 8.71 (1H, d, *J* 1.8 Hz), 8.27 (1H, dd, 8.3, 2.4 Hz), 8.02 (1H, dd, *J* 8.4, 2.4 Hz), 7.41–7.36 (2H, m), 3.43–3.40 (2H, m), 2.88 (1H, ddd, *J* 14.2, 10.7, 6.9 Hz), 2.72 (1H, ddd, *J* 14.2, 7.1, 3.3 Hz), 2.15–2.07 (1H, m), 2.05–1.98 (1H, m); δ_C (100 MHz; CDCl₃) 178.2 (C), 166.3 (C), 156.8 (C), 154.7 (C), 154.5 (C), 149.3 (CH), 149.2 (CH), 138.3 (CH), 137.9 (CH), 125.2 (CH), 125.1 (CH), 122.0 (C), 121.1 (C), 104.4 (C), 54.1 (CH₂), 37.7 (CH₂), 25.6 (CH₂); *m/z* (TOF ES⁺) 444.1 (MH⁺ + CH₃CN, 100%), 405.0 (M⁺, 16), 403.0 (M⁺, 25). Selected crystallographic data: C₁₇H₁₂Cl₂N₆O₂, FW = 403.23, *T* = 150(2) K, λ = 0.71073 Å, monoclinic, *P*2₁/c, *a* = 6.8900(3) Å, *b* = 13.7810(5) Å, *c* = 18.1120(9) Å, β = 94.5030(10)°, *V* = 1714.45(13) Å³, *Z* = 4, ρ_{calc} = 1.562 Mg/m³, crystal size = 0.50 × 0.12 × 0.12 mm³, reflections collected = 6624, independent reflections = 3885, *R*_{int} = 0.0569, parameters = 244, *R*₁ [*I* > 2σ(*I*)] = 0.085, *wR*₂ [*I* > 2σ(*I*)] = 0.19, *R*₁ (all data) = 0.12, *wR*₂ (all data) = 0.21. Full crystallographic data for this compound have been deposited with the CCDC, reference number 731459, and can be obtained free of charge via http://www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/data_request/cif.
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10. Ethyl 2-(3,4-dihydro-2H-pyrrol-5-yl)-2-(hydroxyimino)acetate (**5**). Pyridin-4-nitrolic acid (**2c**) (334 mg, 2 mmol) was added to ethyl (2-pyrrolidin-2-ylidene acetate (**1**) (155 mg, 1 mmol) in dry benzene (10 mL) and the mixture was heated to reflux for 2 h. The reaction mixture was concentrated in vacuo, and the crude residue was purified by flash column chromatography (2:1 petroleum ether–ethyl acetate) to give the *title compound* (65 mg, 35%) as a yellow oil; ν_{max} (Nujol) 3000, 1740, 1609, 1473, 1380, 1206 cm^{-1} ; δ_{H} (400 MHz; CDCl_3) 4.33 (2H, q, J 7.1 Hz, OCH_2), 3.89 (2H, t, J 7.7 Hz, NCH_2), 3.14 (2H, t, J 8.1 Hz, CH_2), 1.97 (2H, app. quintet, J 7.9 Hz, CH_2), 1.33 (3H, t, J 7.1 Hz, CH_3); δ_{C} (100 MHz; CDCl_3) 167.9 (C), 164.7 (C), 143.2 (C), 61.4 (CH_2), 54.6 (CH_2), 36.1 (CH_2), 19.7 (CH_2), 14.3 (CH_3); m/z (TOF AP⁺) 185.1 (MH^+ , 100%), 152.1 (38).
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