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Alternative simple and effective synthesis of (di)benzoxanthones and their functions toward fluorescent dyes





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ABSTRACT

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(Di)benzoxanthones possessing additional benzene units on one or both sides of xanthone were prepared via dehydration of the corresponding dihydroxybenzophenone, where a catalytic amount of K₂CO₃ dramatically increased the yields. Chemical transformations of the versatile carbonyl groups of (di) benzoxanthones could derive fluorescent materials.

1. Introduction

Xanthone skeletons, which commonly occur in natural products,¹ exhibit various pharmacological activities (e.g., anti-cancer and anti-bacterial properties)² and in the medicinal chemistry field, are frequently valued as effective pharmacophores.³ Additionally, xanthone skeletons frequently display fluorescent responses, which have facilitated the development of fluorescent dyes derived from xanthone as a key fragment.⁴ Consequently, much effort has been devoted to effectively synthesize xanthones. Larock et al. have constructed various xanthones though arynes and C–H activation.⁵ Recently, xanthones have been constructed under mild conditions using palladium-catalyzed oxidative double C-H carbonylation of biarylethers.⁶ Although many synthetic routes have been reported, cyclization from the benzophenone possessing the proper functional groups on the scaffolding 2,2'-positions remains the most common.

Xanthone synthetic routes are classified roughly into two groups according to the functional groups on the 2,2'-positions: (1) cyclization from 2-hydroxy-2'-halogen or alkoxy benzophenones under basic conditions though *ipso*-substitution⁷ and (2) dehydrative cyclization from 2,2'-dihydroxybenzophenones under (mainly) harsh conditions. The latter route is further divided according to the reaction conditions. Dehydrative cyclization has been reported to occur under neutral conditions at high temperature in water using a sealed tube⁸ or SiO₂ as a dehydration reagent,⁹ as well as under acidic conditions using a catalytic amount of $H_2SO_4{}^{10}$ or melting pyridinium hydrochloride.^{4d,8b} Additionally, there are a few cases where dehydrative cyclization occurs under basic conditions using ethanolic KOH or a large excess of sodium acetate.11

On the other hand, our research focuses on colorimetric molecular recognition based on phenolphthalein with two crown loops. To date, we have successfully visualized features of guest molecules, such as chirality, shape, and size.¹² In particular, our work has targeted spermidine and spermine, which are biogenic polyamines, to develop a practical method to determine the spermidine level in living cells.¹³ We aim to change our molecular recognition system from a color-response type to a fluorescentresponse type. We recently reported the exhaustive syntheses of naphthofluoresceins possessing additional benzene units on one or both sides of fluorescein, and revealed that some naphthofluoresceins exhibit fluorescent emissions in the near infrared region (>700 nm) with large Stokes shifts and humble quantum yields.14

To improve the quantum yields of the derivatives, we selected (di)benzoxanthone skeletons as key intermediates due to the versatility of the carbonyl groups of (di)benzoxanthones. These carbonyl groups can be converted into other functional groups through Wittig reactions, organometallic reagents, etc. to afford a variety of fluorescent molecules within a few reaction steps.⁴

Herein, we describe the exhaustive syntheses of nine (di)benzoxanthones from their corresponding 2,2'-dihydroxybenzophenones in the presence of a catalytic amount of K₂CO₃, as well as their optical properties.



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2. Results and discussion

Scheme 1 shows the synthesis of dibenzoxanthone **7a**. Bromonaphthalene **1a**¹⁴ was lithiated by *n*-BuLi and trapped with DMF to afford aldehyde **2a** in 81% yield. The corresponding coupling partner **3a** was treated with *n*-BuLi and allowed to react with aldehyde **2a** to give **4a** in 93% yield. Dibenzylic alcohol **4a** was oxidized by MnO₂ in 72% yield. HCl in dioxane was then used to remove the four MOM groups in compound **5a**, producing cyclization precursor **6a** in 96% yield. The other precursors were synthesized by the same procedure in moderate to good total yields (see Supplementary data). Table 1 shows the results of different reaction conditions on the intramolecular dehydration from precursor **6a** to dibenzoxanthone **7a**.



Scheme 1. Synthetic route for dibenzoxanthone 7a. (a) *n*-BuLi, DMF, 81% yield; (b) *n*-BuLi, 2a, 93% yield; (c) MnO₂, 72% yield; (d) HCl in dioxane, 96% yield.

Table 1Dehydration from 6a to 7a

Entry	Solvent	Additive (equiv)	Temp (°C)	Time (h)	Yield of 7a (%)
1 ⁸	H ₂ O	_	150 ^a	9	0.3 ^b
2 ⁹	_	SiO ₂	40	21	No reaction
3 ^{10,14}	MeSO ₃ H	_	50	3.5	Decomposed
4 ^{11b,c}	EtOH	KOH (1.0)	Reflux	9	Mixture
5 ^{11e}	CH ₃ CN	K ₂ CO ₃ (3.0)	Reflux	9	Mixture
6 ^{4d,8b}	Py · HCl ^c	_	150	9	61
7 ^{11d}	H ₂ O	AcONa (10)	Reflux	9	21
8	H ₂ O	$K_2CO_3(0.1)$	Reflux	9	62
9	H ₂ O	$K_2CO_3(0.1)$	150 ^a	9	99
10	H ₂ O	$Li_2CO_3(0.1)$	150 ^a	9	93
11	H ₂ O	Na ₂ CO ₃ (0.1)	150 ^a	9	99
12	H ₂ O	$Rb_2CO_3(0.1)$	150 ^a	9	96
13	H ₂ O	$Cs_2CO_3(0.1)$	150 ^a	9	96
14	H_2O	(ⁿ Bu) ₄ NOH (0.1)	150 ^a	9	85

^a Sealed tube condition.

^b Yield of **7a** calculated based on the integral intensity of ¹H NMR.

^c Pyridinium hydrochloride.

Dehydration in a sealed tube with neutral water and high temperature (150 °C),⁸ which are the standard conditions to form the xanthone skeleton, did not proceed, and only a small amount of desired **7a** was detected by NMR (estimated in ca. 0.3% yield, entry 1). Similarly, the reaction did not occur using SiO₂ treatments (entry 2),⁹

and cyclization under acidic conditions was not fruitful because several fragmental products, such as 2,7-dihydroxynaphthalene (8% yield) and 1,6-dihydroxy-naphthalene-2-carboxylic acid (17% yield) were obtained instead of desired compound **7a**, (entry 3).^{10,14} These data indicate that in the case of compound **6a**. a retro Friedel–Crafts reaction predominantly occurs instead of the desired cyclization under acidic conditions. It is interesting to note that in the case of cyclization of compound **6d**, which is a structural isomer of **6a**, these reactions proceed smoothly under identical conditions to give corresponding dibenzoxanthone **7d** in quantitative yield. In entries 4^{11b,c} and 5,^{11e} which are from the literature, cyclization under basic conditions in an organic solvent was applied to give an inseparable and complicated compound mixture. In contrast, reactions under basic conditions in water^{11d} or molten pyridinium hydrochloride^{4d,8b} produced desired **7a** in moderate yields (entries 6 and 7). Because a promising result was obtained in the presence of K_2CO_3 (0.1 equiv) in water (entry 8), we modified the reaction conditions. Thus, the reaction was performed at 150 °C using a sealed tube, which increased the yield of 7a to 99% (entry 9). Almost no influences of the counter cations (including guaternary ammonium cation) were observed (entries 9-14). Based on these observations, we estimate the conditions in entry 9 (0.1 equiv of K₂CO₃, water, 150 °C) are the most appropriate. It is especially noteworthy that the product was easily isolated from the reaction mixture; filtration isolated cyclized dibenzoxanthone 7a from an acidified aqueous solution in an extremely pure form without chromatographic purification.

With the optimal reaction conditions in hand, we then studied the generality of substrates for the reaction using other dihydrox-ybenzophenones 6b-i (Fig. 1). Intramolecular dehydration



Fig. 1. Syntheses of (di)benzoxanthones 7b-i.

occurred smoothly and afforded (di)benzoxanthones **7b**-**i** in good to excellent yields after filtration.

With respect to cyclization under basic conditions, we propose the following reaction mechanism (Fig. 2). K_2CO_3 acts as a weak base to generate a monoanion of 2,2'-dihydroxybenzophenone, which forms a pseudo-eight-membered ring via an intramolecular hydrogen bond. Then nucleophilic cyclization occurs through this conformation in a 6-*exo-trig* fashion. Finally, the hydroxy anion leaves, which re-aromatizes the ring and leads to a xanthone. The HOMO and LUMO of the eight-membered monoanion (DFT/B3LYP/6-31+G (d, p)) may support the plausible mechanism (see Supplementary data).¹⁵



Fig. 2. Plausible mechanism for base catalyzed cyclization. (a) Optimized structure of the monoanionic benzophenone with (b) HOMO and (c) LUMO obtained by DFT calculations at the B3LYP/6-31+G (d, p) level.

Table 2 summarizes the optical properties of the (di)benzoxanthones 7a-i (λ_{max} and ε of the absorbance, emission wavelengths, quantum yields (Φ), and Stokes shifts). The maximum absorption wavelengths for (di)benzoxanthones 7a-i were distributed within a narrow area between 352 nm (7g) and 380 nm (7d). However, these compounds can be roughly divided into four groups based on the maximum emission wavelength (λ_{em}) : (1) compounds **7f** and **7i**^{4d} (400 nm $<\lambda_{em}<$ 440 nm), (2) compounds **7a**, **b**, and **7g** (440 nm $<\lambda_{em}<$ 480 nm), (3) compounds **7c**, **7e**, and **7h** (480 nm $<\lambda_{em}<$ 520 nm), and (4) compound **7d** (520 nm $<\lambda_{em}<$ 560 nm). The properties of this series of (di) benzoxanthones 7a-i are suitable for multi-color system applications with a single wavelength excitation in the chemical biology field. For example, the combination of compounds 7f, 7a, 7e, and 7d, whose maximum emission wavelengths are in ca. 40 nm increments, is expected for multi-color fluorescence sensing (Fig. 3).

Table 2			
Optical properties	of compounds	7a—i in	methanol ^a

Compound	$\lambda_{Abs\ max}\ (nm)$	$\epsilon (\lambda_{Abs max})$	$\lambda_{em} \left(nm \right)$	Φ (%) ^b	Stokes shift (nm)
7a	367	16,000	475	4	105
7b	356	18,000	478	0.4	98
7c	374	22,000	507	2	133
7d	380	15,000	528	7	154
7e	358	21,000	494	46	134
7f	368	11,000	420	18	58
7g	352	15,000	480	5	122
7h	353	21,000	493	48	138
7i ^{4d}	357	10,000	413	28	53

^a UV and FL spectra of compounds **7a**–**i**, see Supplementary data.

^b Fluorescence quantum yields of **7a**–**i** (Φ) determined using a solution of quinine sulfate in 1 N H₂SO₄ as a reference standard (Φ =0.546).



Fig. 3. FL spectra of 7a, 7d, 7e, and 7f in methanol and picture of FL under UV light (365 nm).

The quantum yields (Φ) dramatically decreased for compounds **7a**, **7b**, **7c**, and **7g**, which all possess at least one benzene ring fused on the same side of the central carbonyl group. On the other hand, compounds **7e** and **7h** displayed emissions near 490 nm with large quantum yields (Φ). The same tendencies have been observed in a series of naphthofluoresceins in a previous study.¹⁴

Finally, the diversity of products obtained from MOM-protected dibenzoxanthone **8**, which was prepared from **7e** in 90% yield, was demonstrated (Scheme 2). Phenyllithium easily reacted with **7e** at -78 °C in dry THF to give triarylalcohol **9** in 98%. The Wittig reaction using methyltriphenylphosphonium bromide and *n*-BuLi afforded *exo* methylene compound **10** in 47% yield. Additionally, the carbonyl group on **7e** was removed easily, giving **11** in 65% yield.^{8b} These products could be further converted into more useful compounds for fluorescent dyes.



Scheme 2. Transformation from dibenzoxanthone 8. (a) NaH, MOMCl, 90% yield; (b) PhLi, -78 °C, 98% yield; (c) Ph₃PMeBr, *n*-BuLi, 47% yield; (d) BH₃-THF, 65% yield.

3. Conclusions

We successfully constructed (di)benzoxanthones via dehydration of the corresponding dihydroxybenzophenones. We synthesized all types of (di)benzoxanthones **7a**–**i**, and indicated the possibility that a combination of compounds is expected for multicolor fluorescence sensing (e.g., **7a**, **7d**, **7e**, and **7f**). Merits of this reaction include simplicity, usefulness, and good atom economy. Moreover, this reaction is environmentally benign because the solvent is water and column purification is not employed. Currently we are synthesizing various derivatives through (di)benzoxanthones as the key intermediates for new fluorescent materials.

4. Experimental

4.1. Compound 2a

A solution of n-BuLi (1.62 M n-hexane solution; 0.68 ml, 1.11 mmol) was added dropwise to a solution of $1a^{14}$ (330 mg, 1.01 mmol) in dry THF (5 ml) under N₂ atmosphere at -78 °C. After 1 h stirring, dry DMF (109 µl) was added dropwise to the solution. The resultant solution was stirred at -78 °C for 1 h, and then allowed to warm to room temperature. The reaction mixture was poured into the mixed solvent of ethyl acetate and 0.1 M ag HCl. The organic layer was separated and washed successively with water and brine, dried over Na₂SO₄, filtered, and concentrated under reduced pressure to dryness. The residue was purified by column chromatography (SiO₂; *n*-hexane/EtOAc=8/1) to afford **2a** (225.3 mg, 81% yield) as a pale yellow powder. Mp 53.5–54.0 °C; IR (KBr) 2881, 1676, 1626, 1471, 1240, 1157, 1009, 904 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (270 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.46 (s, 1H, Ar–CHO), 8.16 (d, *J*=8.9 Hz, 1H), 7.84 (d, J=8.9 Hz, 1H), 7.56 (d, J=8.9 Hz, 1H), 7.41 (d, J=2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.30 (dd, J=8.9, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 5.33 (s, 2H, -CH₂OCH₃), 5.27 (s, 2H, -CH₂OCH₃), 3.66 (s, 3H, -CH₂OCH₃), 3.53 (s, 3H, -CH₂OCH₃); ¹³C NMR (68 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 189.7, 159.4, 157.7, 139.6, 125.3, 124.1, 123.9, 123.4, 123.4, 119.5, 110.2, 101.9, 94.2, 58.2, 56.3; MS (EI⁺) m/z (rel int.) 276 (M⁺, 63), 230 (100), 201 (21), 115 (27), 102 (18), 75 (8); HRMS (EI⁺) calcd for $C_{15}H_{16}O_5$ (M⁺): 276.0998. Found: 276.0997. Anal. Calcd for C15H16O5: C, 65.21; H, 5.84. Found: C, 65.22; H, 5.87.

4.2. Compound 4a

A solution of *n*-BuLi (1.59 M *n*-hexane solution; 1.42 ml, 2.26 mmol) was added dropwise to a solution of $3a^{14}$ (677.4 mg, 2.07 mmol) in dry THF (15 ml) under N₂ atmosphere at -78 °C. After 1 h stirring, a solution of 2a (520 mg, 1.88 mmol) in THF (5 ml) was added dropwise to the solution at -78 °C. The resultant solution was allowed to warm to room temperature with stirring for 5 h. The reaction mixture was poured into the mixed solvent of ethyl acetate and 0.1 M aq HCl. The organic layer was successively washed with water and brine, dried over Na₂SO₄, filtered, and concentrated under reduced pressure to dryness. The residue was purified by column chromatography (SiO₂; *n*-hexane/EtOAc=4/1) to afford 4a (915.3 mg, 93% yield) as pale yellow oil. IR (film) 3500, 1626, 1514, 1236, 1151, 999, 831 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (270 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.09 (d, *J*=8.9 Hz, 1H), 7.86 (d, *J*=2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.73 (d, *J*=8.9 Hz, 1H), 7.70 (d, *J*=8.9 Hz, 1H), 7.36–7.30 (m, 4H), 7.23 (dd, *J*=8.9, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.15 (d, J=7.3 Hz, 1H, Ar₂CHOH), 7.10 (dd, J=8.9, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 5.32–5.24 (m, 6H, -CH₂OCH₃), 5.19 (ABq, Δν=25.7 Hz, J_{AB}=6.5 Hz, 2H, -CH2OCH3), 4.82 (d, J=7.3 Hz, 1H, Ar2CHOH), 3.74 (s, 3H, -CH₂OCH₃), 3.50 (s, 3H, -CH₂OCH₃), 3.46 (s, 3H, -CH₂OCH₃), 3.40 (s, 3H, -CH₂OCH₃); ¹³C NMR (68 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 155.2, 155.1, 152.9, 151.3, 135.6, 133.4, 130.7, 129.7, 129.3, 126.4, 126.0, 124.3, 124.0, 123.4, 122.8, 118.8, 116.8, 113.9, 109.8, 107.6, 100.8, 95.1, 94.3, 94.3, 67.3, 57.8, 56.5, 56.1, 56.0; MS (EI⁺) *m*/*z* (rel int.) 524 (M⁺, 5), 476 (5), 401 (100), 357 (40), 313 (19), 216 (42), 169 (15), 115 (29), 69 (25); HRMS (EI⁺) calcd for C₂₉H₃₂O₉ (M⁺): 524.2046. Found: 524.2048. Anal. Calcd for C₂₉H₃₂O₉: C, 66.40; H, 6.15. Found: C, 66.56; H, 6.01.

4.3. Compound 5a

To a solution of 4a (890 mg, 1.70 mmol) in CH₂Cl₂ (50 ml), manganese dioxide (8.9 g) was added. The suspension was stirred

at room temperature for 12 h. The solid materials were filtered through Celite, and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure to dryness. The residue was purified by column chromatography (SiO₂; *n*-hexane/EtOAc=5/1) to afford **5a** (636.3 mg, 72% yield) as a yellow oil. IR (film) 2956, 1664, 1622, 1512, 1240, 1151, 995, 829 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.37 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.84 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.76 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.52 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.40 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.34 (d, *J*=2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.31 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.29 (d, J=2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.27 (dd, J=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.15 (dd. J=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 5.31 (s, 2H, -CH₂OCH₃), 5.14 (s, 2H, -CH₂OCH₃), 5.12 (s, 2H, -CH₂OCH₃), 5.04 (s, 2H, -CH₂OCH₃), 3.52 (s, 3H, -CH₂OCH₃), 3.46 (s, 3H, -CH₂OCH₃), 3.37 (s, 3H, -CH₂OCH₃), 3.22 (s, 3H, -CH₂OCH₃); ¹³C NMR (68 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 196.2, 157.2, 156.2, 155.5, 152.7, 138.3, 132.8, 131.0, 129.6, 127.9, 126.5, 125.7, 125.4, 124.7, 124.5, 122.5, 119.3, 117.3, 113.4, 109.3, 106.9, 102.0, 94.6, 94.4, 94.2, 57.7, 56.3, 56.2, 56.1; MS (EI⁺) *m*/*z* (rel int.) 522 (M⁺, 6), 461 (9), 445 (26), 429 (97), 385 (43), 341 (26), 292 (26), 216 (100), 186 (21), 71 (7); HRMS (EI⁺) calcd for C₂₉H₃₀O₉ (M⁺): 522.1890. Found: 522.1887. Anal. Calcd for C₂₉H₃₀O₉: C, 66.66; H, 5.79. Found: C, 66.54; H, 5.70.

4.4. Compound 6a

A solution of 4 M hydrogen chloride in 1,4-dioxane (17.9 ml) was added dropwise to a solution of 5a (1.88 g, 3.60 mmol) in 1,4dioxane (15 ml) and stirred for 10 h at room temperature. The solvent was evaporated in vacuo to afford crude **6a** as brown foam (1.20 g. 96% vield). Crude **6a** was directly used for the next step without further purification. IR (KBr) 3261, 1628, 1581, 1473, 1240. 831 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 8.36 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.75 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.67 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.10 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.03 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 6.99 (s, 1H), 6.98 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 6.91 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 6.88 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 6.73 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 204.8, 164.6, 161.1, 157.7, 153.5, 141.8, 134.7, 132.2, 130.9, 129.2, 127.4, 124.4, 120.0, 118.8, 118.6, 118.2, 116.7, 115.5, 114.4, 110.5, 106.3; MS (FAB⁺) m/z (rel int.) 347 (M+H⁺, 7), 241 (15), 185 (58), 149 (51), 93 (100), 75 (78), 57 (43), 45 (26); HRMS (FAB⁺) calcd for $C_{21}H_{14}O_5$ (M⁺): 346.0841. Found: 346.0841. Anal. Calcd for C₂₁H₁₄O₅: C, 72.83; H, 4.07. Found: C, 72.54; H, 4.10.

4.5. General procedure for the preparation of xanthones 7a-i

The preparation of **7a** is typical. A suspension of **6a** (50 mg, 0.144 mmol), K_2CO_3 (2.0 mg, 0.014 mmol) in water (8.0 ml) in a pressure tube was stirred for 9 h at 150 °C. To the reaction mixture, 1 M aq HCl was added and the insoluble matter was collected by filtration to afford **7a** (47.1.9 mg, 99% yield) as a pale gray powder.

4.5.1. Compound **7a**. Mp >300 °C; IR (KBr) 3136, 1635, 1597, 1577, 1442, 1219, 1159, 1022, 827 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 10.47 (s, 1H, ArOH), 10.24 (s, 1H, ArOH), 9.48 (d, *J*=2.4 Hz, 1H), 8.58 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.27 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.11 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.95 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.72 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.69 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.33 (dd, *J*=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.32 (d, *J*=2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.19 (dd, *J*=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.32 (d, *J*=2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.19 (dd, *J*=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 177.2, 159.1, 157.4, 151.9, 138.2, 136.4, 132.6, 130.6, 124.7, 124.6, 123.3, 121.6, 119.4, 117.8, 116.8, 116.8, 114.5, 113.4, 110.3, 109.5 (one peak overlapped); MS (FAB⁺) *m/z* (rel int.) 329 (M+H⁺, 36), 185 (54), 149 (45), 93 (100), 75 (73), 57 (43), 45 (29); HRMS (FAB⁺) calcd for C₂₁H₁₃O₄ (M+H⁺): 329.0814. Found: 329.0812. Anal. Calcd for C₂₁H₁₂O₄·1/4H₂O: C, 75.78; H, 3.79. Found: C, 75.88; H, 3.67.

4.5.2. Compound **7b**. Yield 100%; pale gray powder; mp >300 °C; IR (KBr) 3325, 1633, 1591, 1533, 1444, 1257, 1242, 1217, 823 cm⁻¹; ¹H

NMR (270 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 10.21 (s, 2H, ArOH), 9.49 (s, 2H), 8.23 (d, *J*=8.6 Hz, 2H), 7.95 (d, *J*=8.6 Hz, 2H), 7.51 (d, *J*=8.6 Hz, 2H), 7.20 (d, *J*=8.6 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (68 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 179.3, 158.7, 155.8, 136.0, 132.1, 130.4, 124.4, 117.4, 114.2, 113.6, 109.3; MS (EI⁺) *m/z* (rel int.) 328 (M⁺, 19), 256 (7), 232 (31), 193 (41), 178 (100), 177 (100), 135 (88), 97 (100), 91 (87); HRMS (EI⁺) calcd for C₂₁H₁₂O₄ (M⁺): 328.0736. Found: 328.0738. Anal. Calcd for C₂₁H₁₂O₄ · 1/4H₂O: C, 75.78; H, 3.79. Found: C, 75.82; H, 3.75.

4.5.3. *Compound* **7c.** Yield 86%; gray powder; mp >300 °C; IR (KBr) 3255, 1699, 1618, 1535, 1483, 1437, 1360, 1221, 1186, 849 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 10.38 (s, 1H, ArOH), 10.27 (s, 1H, ArOH), 9.40 (d, *J*=2.4 Hz, 1H), 8.79 (s, 1H), 8.23 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.12 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.91 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.90 (s, 1H), 7.44 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.24 (d, *J*=2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.16 (dd, *J*=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 178.2, 159.4, 158.5, 158.3, 151.4, 138.3, 137.3, 132.9, 131.9, 130.7, 127.5, 125.0, 124.3, 119.9, 119.8, 117.4, 114.5, 111.9, 110.7, 109.5, 107.4; MS (FAB⁺) *m/z* (rel int.) 329 (M+H⁺, 23), 241 (17), 185 (60), 149 (51), 117 (29), 93 (100), 75 (76), 57 (52), 45 (35); HRMS (FAB⁺) calcd for C₂₁H₁₃O₄ (M+H⁺): 329.0814. Found: 329.0811. Anal. Calcd for C₂₁H₁₂O₄·1/3H₂O: C, 75.44; H, 3.82. Found: C, 75.84; H, 3.66.

4.5.4. *Compound* **7d**. Yield 85%; pale gray powder; mp >300 °C; IR (KBr) 3269, 1624, 1610, 1469, 1356, 1180 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 10.42 (s, 2H, ArOH), 8.77 (s, 2H), 8.10 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.80 (s, 2H), 7.22 (d, *J*=2.4 Hz, 2H), 7.13 (dd, *J*=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 176.8, 158.5, 152.5, 138.9, 131.8, 127.9, 124.1, 119.1, 117.8, 110.3, 107.2; MS (FAB⁺) *m/z* (rel int.) 329 (M+H⁺, 5), 241 (12), 207 (18), 185 (51), 149 (49), 115 (54), 93 (100), 75 (82), 57 (47); HRMS (FAB⁺) calcd for C₂₁H₁₃O₄ (M+H⁺): 329.0814. Found: 329.0821.

4.5.5. *Compound* **7e**. Yield 98%; gray powder; mp >300 °C; IR (KBr) 3398, 3107, 1647, 1622, 1597, 1481, 1390, 1365, 1259, 1173, 850 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 10.53 (s, 1H, ArOH), 10.42 (s, 1H, ArOH), 8.77 (s, 1H), 8.56 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.13 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.07 (s, 1H), 8.02 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.64 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.33 (dd, *J*=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.30 (d, *J*=2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.27 (d, *J*=2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.17 (dd, *J*=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 176.1, 159.4, 158.5, 154.0, 152.2, 138.9, 138.5, 132.0, 127.3, 125.0, 125.0, 122.4, 121.7, 119.9, 119.4, 118.8, 117.1, 114.1, 111.5, 110.4, 107.5; MS (EI⁺) *m/z* (rel int.) 328 (M⁺,14), 313 (29), 247 (20), 231 (50), 149 (100), 83 (37); HRMS (EI⁺) calcd for C₂₁H₁₂O₄ (M⁺): 328.0736. Found: 328.0738.

4.5.6. *Compound* **7f**. Yield 74%; yellow powder; mp >300 °C; IR (KBr) 3114, 1618, 1473, 1248, 858, 777, 733 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (270 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 10.60 (s, 2H, ArOH), 8.84 (d, *J*=8.6 Hz, 2H), 8.06 (d, *J*=8.6 Hz, 2H), 7.74 (d, *J*=8.6 Hz, 2H), 7.41 (dd, *J*=8.6, 2.2 Hz, 2H), 7.37 (d, *J*=2.2 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.0, 159.3, 153.0, 138.4, 124.9, 123.5, 121.3, 119.7, 117.3, 115.6, 110.3; MS (FAB⁺) *m/z* (rel int.) 329 (M+H⁺, 4), 279 (7), 241 (11), 207 (22), 185 (50), 149 (51), 115 (75), 93 (100), 75 (86), 57 (50); HRMS (FAB⁺) calcd for C₂₁H₁₃O₄ (M+H⁺): 329.0814. Found: 329.0814.

4.5.7. *Compound* **7g**. Yield 98%; yellow powder; 280 °C (decomp.); IR (KBr) 3398, 1618, 1473, 1396, 1238, 1194, 781 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 10.90 (br s, 1H, ArOH), 10.19 (s, 1H, ArOH), 9.41 (d, *J*=2.4 Hz, 1H), 8.18 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.11 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.90 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.42 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.14 (dd, *J*=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 6.94 (dd, *J*=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 6.91 (d, *J*=2.4 Hz, 1H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 176.9, 163.3, 159.1, 157.9, 156.2, 136.5, 132.7, 130.6, 128.1, 124.5, 117.6, 115.9, 114.5, 114.4, 112.6, 109.4, 101.8; MS (FAB⁺) *m*/*z* (rel int.) 279 (M+H⁺, 21), 241 (16), 185 (56), 149 (53), 117 (30), 93 (100), 75 (83), 57 (48); HRMS (FAB⁺) calcd for $C_{17}H_{11}O_4$ (M+H⁺): 279.0657. Found: 279.0661.

4.5.8. Compound **7h**. Yield 72%; gray powder; mp >300 °C; IR (KBr) 3423, 3170, 1606, 1489, 1267, 1163, 850 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 10.96 (s, 1H, ArOH), 10.35 (s, 1H, ArOH), 8.69 (s, 1H), 8.08 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.04 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.80 (s, 1H), 7.20 (d, *J*=2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.12 (dd, *J*=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 6.86 (dd, *J*=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 6.83 (d, *J*=2.4 Hz, 1H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 175.5, 164.4, 158.4, 158.2, 152.6, 138.6, 131.9, 128.5, 127.6, 124.6, 119.6, 118.5, 113.7, 113.6, 111.0, 107.4, 102.3; MS (FAB⁺) *m/z* (rel int.) 279 (M+H⁺, 22), 185 (50), 149 (29), 93 (100), 75 (59), 57 (40); HRMS (FAB⁺) calcd for C₁₇H₁₀O₄·1/3H₂O: C, 71.83; H, 3.78. Found: C, 72.03; H, 3.57.

4.5.9. *Compound* **7i**. Yield 78%; yellow powder; mp >300 °C; IR (KBr) 3375, 1630, 1616, 1570, 1394, 1254, 1194, 845 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 10.94 (s, 1H, ArOH), 10.44 (s, 1H, ArOH), 8.52 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.06 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.98 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.65 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.30 (dd, *J*=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.29 (d, *J*=2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.09 (d, *J*=2.4 Hz, 1H), 6.95 (dd, *J*=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 174.6, 163.6, 159.1, 157.3, 153.5, 138.4, 127.8, 124.8, 122.8, 121.5, 119.4, 117.1, 114.9, 114.7, 114.6, 110.2, 102.7; MS (FAB⁺) *m*/*z* (rel int.) 279 (M+H⁺, 17), 241 (15), 185 (56), 149 (50), 117 (27), 93 (100), 75 (81), 57 (46); HRMS (FAB⁺) calcd for C₁₇H₁₀O₄·2/3H₂O: C, 70.34; H, 3.94. Found: C, 70.60; H, 3.78.

4.6. Compound 8

To a stirred solution of 7e (260 mg, 0.79 mmol) in dry DMF (10 ml), NaH (60% dispersion in mineral oil, 76 mg, 1.90 mmol) was added portionwise at room temperature. After 30 min, MOMCl $(132.3 \mu$ l, 1.74 mmol) was added to the solution and stirred for 6.5 h at room temperature. The reaction mixture was poured into the mixed solvent of ethyl acetate and 0.1 M ag HCl. The organic layer was separated and washed successively with water and brine. After dried over sodium sulfate, the solvent was evaporated in vacuo to give a residue. The residue was purified by column chromatography $(SiO_2; n-hexane/ethyl acetate=4/1)$ to afford **8** (297.0 mg, 90% yield) as a pale yellow powder. Mp 175–176 °C; IR (KBr) 1655, 1626, 1504, 1469, 1423, 1358, 1080 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.89 (s, 1H), 8.63 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.26 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.01 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.94 (s, 1H), 7.61 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.48 (d, J=2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.46 (d, J=2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.41 (dd, J=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.25 (dd, J=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 5.37 (s, 2H, -CH₂OCH₃), 5.37 (s, 2H, -CH₂OCH₃), 3.57 (s, 3H, -CH₂OCH₃), 3.56 (s, 3H, -CH₂OCH₃); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 177.2, 158.1, 157.3, 154.1, 152.4, 138.5, 137.8, 131.4, 127.5, 126.0, 124.8, 122.6, 122.3, 119.9, 119.5, 119.1, 118.9, 115.3, 112.4, 110.4, 107.8, 94.3, 94.2, 56.3 (one peak overlapped); MS (EI⁺) *m*/*z* (rel int.) 416 (M⁺, 100), 386 (7), 242 (7); HRMS (EI⁺) calcd for C₂₅H₂₀O₆ (M⁺): 416.1260. Found: 416.1266. Anal. Calcd for C25H20O6: C, 72.11; H, 4.84. Found: C, 71.85; H, 4.97.

4.7. Compound 9

To a stirred solution of **8** (52.1 mg, 0.125 mmol) in dry THF (2 ml), phenyllithium (1.15 M in cyclohexane/diethylether, 163 μ l, 0.188 mmol) was added dropwise at -78 °C and stirred for 2 h. The reaction mixture was poured into the mixed solvent of ethyl acetate and 0.1 M aq HCl. The organic layer was separated and washed successively with water and brine. After dried over sodium sulfate, the solvent was evaporated in vacuo to give a residue. The residue was purified by column chromatography (SiO₂; *n*-hexane/ethyl acetate=5/1) to afford **9** (60.6 mg, 98% yield) as a black oil. IR (film)

3444, 1637, 1608, 1412, 1352, 1252, 1149, 1078, 1001, 752 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.51 (d, *J*=9.2 Hz, 1H), 7.88 (s, 1H), 7.68 (s, 1H), 7.65 (d, *J*=9.2 Hz, 1H), 7.47–7.45 (m, 2H), 7.40–7.34 (m, 5H), 7.28–7.25 (m, 2H), 7.17 (dd, *J*=7.2, 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.07 (dd, *J*=9.2, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 5.31 (s, 2H, $-CH_2OCH_3$), 5.30 (s, 2H, $-CH_2OCH_3$), 3.53 (s, 3H, $-CH_2OCH_3$), 3.52 (s, 3H, $-CH_2OCH_3$); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 156.0, 155.7, 148.4, 145.0, 135.2, 134.7, 129.7, 128.8, 128.0, 127.4, 126.6, 126.6, 126.1, 126.0, 123.8, 122.2, 119.4, 119.3, 118.7, 118.0, 111.0, 110.0, 108.3, 94.4, 94.3, 70.8, 56.1 (four peaks overlapped); MS (EI⁺) *m/z* (rel int.) 494 (M⁺, 0.5), 477 (100), 401 (35); HRMS (EI⁺) calcd for C₃₁H₂₆O₆ (M⁺): 494.1729. Found: 494.1715.

4.8. Compound 10

To a stirred solution of methyltriphenylphosphonium bromide (128.7 mg, 0.36 mmol) in dry toluene (6 ml), a solution of *n*-BuLi (1.57 M n-hexane solution; 236 µl, 0.37 mmol) was added dropwise at -78 °C. The resultant solution was allowed to warm to 0 °C with stirring for 50 min. A solution of 8 in dry toluene (4 ml) was added dropwise at -78 °C. The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for 2 h and at 40 °C for 2 h. The reaction mixture was poured into the mixed solvent of ethyl acetate and 0.1 M ag HCl. The organic layer was successively washed with water and brine, dried over Na₂SO₄, filtered, and concentrated under reduced pressure to dryness. The residue was purified by column chromatography (SiO₂; *n*-hexane/EtOAc=5/1) to afford **10** (14.1 mg, 47% yield) as a yellow oil. Compound 10 was gradually decomposed in a solution state. IR (film) 2927, 1631, 1506, 1392, 1252, 1149, 1076, 1003 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.42 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.21 (s, 1H), 7.79 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.77 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.61 (s, 1H), 7.48 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.39 (d, *J*=2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.32 (d, J=2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.31 (dd, J=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.14 (dd, J=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 5.75 (s, 1H, =CH₂), 5.62 (s, 1H, =CH₂), 5.33 (s, 2H, -CH₂OCH₃), 5.32 (s, 2H, -CH₂OCH₃), 3.55 (s, 3H, -CH₂OCH₃), 3.55 (s, 3H, $-CH_2OCH_3$); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 156.1, 155.8, 149.4, 145.8, 135.5, 135.3, 132.8, 129.8, 126.6, 124.0, 122.8, 122.1, 122.0, 120.4, 120.1, 118.7, 118.3, 113.9, 111.8, 110.1, 108.4, 101.0, 94.4, 56.2 (two peaks overlapped); MS (EI⁺) *m/z* (rel int.) 414 (M⁺, 2), 279 (38), 167 (36), 149 (100); HRMS (EI⁺) calcd for C₂₆H₂₂O₅ (M⁺): 414.1467. Found: 414.1463.

4.9. Compound 11

To a stirred solution of 8 (40 mg, 0.096 mmol) in dry THF (4 ml), a solution of borane–THF complex (1.1 M THF solution; 700 µl, 0.77 mmol) was added at 0 °C. The resultant solution was allowed to warm to room temperature for 5 h. The reaction mixture was poured into the mixed solvent of ethyl acetate and water. The organic layer was successively washed with water and brine, dried over Na₂SO₄, filtered, and concentrated under reduced pressure to dryness. The residue was purified by column chromatography (SiO₂; n-hexane/EtOAc=4/1) to afford **11** (25.2 mg, 65% yield) as a white powder. Mp 153.0-155.0 °C; IR (KBr) 1641, 1610, 1508, 1427, 1244, 1146, 1082, 1018, 876, 822 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.37 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.68 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.63 (s, 1H), 7.53 (s, 1H), 7.43 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.38 (d, J=2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.34 (d, J=2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.29 (dd, J=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.25 (d, J=8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.11 (dd, J=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 5.31 (s, 2H, -CH₂OCH₃), 5.30 (s, 2H, -CH₂OCH₃), 4.30 (s, 2H, ArCH₂Ar), 3.54 (s, 3H, -CH₂OCH₃), 3.54 (s, 3H, -CH₂OCH₃); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 155.3, 155.3, 150.8, 146.7, 134.6, 134.4, 128.8, 127.4, 127.3, 126.6, 123.1, 121.5, 120.2, 120.2, 118.7, 117.6, 112.7, 111.2, 109.9, 109.0, 94.6, 56.1, 28.1 (two peaks overlapped); MS (EI⁺) *m*/*z* (rel int.) 462 (M⁺, 100), 357 (12); HRMS (EI⁺) calcd for C₂₅H₂₂O₅ (M⁺): 402.1467. Found: 402.1470. Anal. Calcd for C₂₅H₂₂O₅: C, 74.61; H, 5.51. Found: C, 74.47; H, 5.50.

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Supplementary data

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