Synthesis Design

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Ir-Catalyzed Borylation of C–H Bonds in N-Containing Heterocycles: Regioselectivity in the Synthesis of Heteroaryl Boronate Esters**

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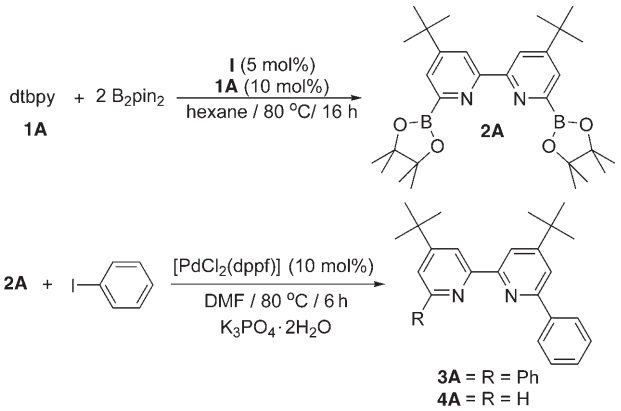
Aryl and heteroaryl boronates are very important, especially as intermediates for Suzuki–Miyaura cross-coupling reactions;[1] for the Cu-catalyzed C–O and C–N coupling reactions developed by Chan, Lam, and co-workers;[2] and for Rh-catalyzed conjugate additions to carbonyl compounds.[3] The most attractive potential synthesis of these boronate esters would be the direct borylation of C–H bonds in arenes or heteroarenes themselves. A very exciting recent advance has been the development by Ishiyama et al.[4] and Smith and co-workers[5] of in situ prepared, suitably ligated analogues of the iridium tris(boryl) complexes discovered by us,[6] which catalyze the borylation of aromatic C–H bonds under mild conditions. Density functional theory (DFT) calculations by Sakaki and co-workers,[7] in agreement with proposals from the experimental data, suggest that the key catalytic intermediate that leads to C–H activation is the sterically encumbered, five-coordinate $[Ir(Bpin)_3L_2]$ species (Bpin = $B(OCMe_2CMe_2O)$). This intermediate accounts for the selectivity observed, as borylation typically avoids positions *ortho* to either substituents or to ring junctions. We have taken advantage of this selectivity to prepare novel pyrene-2,6-bis(boronate) and perylene-2,5,8,11-tetra(boronate) esters amongst other polycyclic aryl boronates.[8] During the course of our studies on the system developed by Ishiyama et al. (L_2 = 4,4′-*t*Bu_2-2,2′-bipyridine (dtbpy; **1A**)), we were intrigued that GC–MS analysis of the borylation reaction mixtures in situ did not show any borylation of the ligand **1A**, although **1A** could be detected by itself. We envisaged three possible reasons for this: 1) **1A** is firmly attached to the Ir center through the nitrogen atoms at all times; 2) it is simply not a suitable substrate for the catalyst, even if it were to dissociate; or 3) we would be unable to detect borylated **1A** by using our GC–MS method. We noted that pyridine itself is a "poor" substrate for the borylation reaction,[9,10] whereas pyrrole and quinoline are readily borylated;[11] however, 2,6-chloropyridine and 2,6-dimethylpyridine were effectively borylated at the 4-position,[5,12] and 5-bromo-2-cyanopyridine was borylated at the 3- and 4-positions in a 2:1 ratio.[13]

To investigate the question of the borylation of **1A** further, rather than add a stoichiometric amount of **1A** with respect to the Ir center, 20 equivalents of the ligand and 40 equivalents of bis(pinacolato-*O*,*O*′)diboron (B_2pin_2) in hexane (5 mL) were added to $[Ir(cod)(\mu\text{-OMe})]_2$ **I** (cod = cyclooctadiene). GC–MS analysis of the reaction mixture in situ after heating at 80 °C for 16 h showed borylation of **1A** was complete (100 % conversion) and gave rise to a single isomer, which ^1H, ^{13}C, and 2D NMR spectroscopic experiments indicated to be 4,4′-*t*Bu_2-6,6′-$(Bpin)_2$-2,2′-bipyridine (**2A**) with the boryl group on the carbon atom adjacent to the nitrogen atom (Scheme 1). Removal of the solvent in vacuo



Scheme 1. Borylation of **1A**.

followed by addition of 3 equivalents of PhI, 4 equivalents of $K_3PO_4{\cdot}2H_2O$ as the base, 10 mol % of $[PdCl_2(dppf)]$ (dppf = 1,1′-bis(diphenylphosphino)ferrocene) as the catalyst, and dry dimethylformamide (DMF) as the solvent and heating (80 °C, 6 h) gave 4,4′-*t*Bu_2-6,6′-Ph_2-2,2′-bipyridine (**3A**) in 67 % yield of isolated product. The structure of this product was confirmed by single-crystal X-ray diffraction (see the Supporting Information).[14]

Interestingly, the same bis(borylated) dtbpy could be converted cleanly into the monophenyl product **4A** in 31 % yield of isolated product (also structurally characterized by X-ray diffraction;[14] see the Supporting Information) under the same conditions but using only 1.2 equivalents of PhI and 2 equivalents of $K_3PO_4{\cdot}2H_2O$ as the base, thus indicating that 1) cross-coupling took place initially at one ring and 2) when

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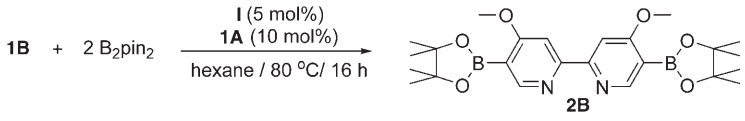
the PhI was depleted, hydrolysis of the remaining C–B bond was relatively facile under the reactions conditions.

In contrast, no borylation of 4-*t*Bu-pyridine was observed even after 2 days at 80 °C in hexane using 5 mol % of catalyst prepared from dimer **I** and 2 equivalents of **1A**; moreover, 10 mol % of the catalyst was required to achieve approximately 6 % conversion into the C–H borylation product. Presumably, 4-*t*Bu-pyridine binds to the Ir center strongly through the N atom, thus blocking the site needed for C–H activation.[10] Interestingly, the ^{2}H NMR spectrum following quenching with $[^2H]_2O$ showed that borylation had taken place *ortho* to the N atom. As we were unable to borylate 4-*t*Bu-pyridine effectively, we examined 4,4′-$(MeO)_2$-2,2′-bipyridine (**1B**) because of its similarity to **1A**. A complete reaction (100 % conversion) of **1B** was achieved after 16 h using 2 equivalents of B_2pin_2 in hexane (5 mL), **I** (5 mol %), and **1A** (10 mol %) at 80 °C, as shown by in situ GC–MS analysis. A single isomer of the bipyridyl bis(boronate) ester (**2B**) was produced in approximately 85 % yield plus approximately 15 % yield of the analogous monoboronate. ^{1}H, ^{13}C, and 2D NMR spectroscopic experiments indicated that borylation took place at the 5-position, *ortho* to the MeO groups, in complete contrast with the borylation of dtbpy (Scheme 2). A single-crystal X-ray diffraction study[14] (Figure 1) confirmed the structure of the product.



Scheme 2. Borylation of **1B**.

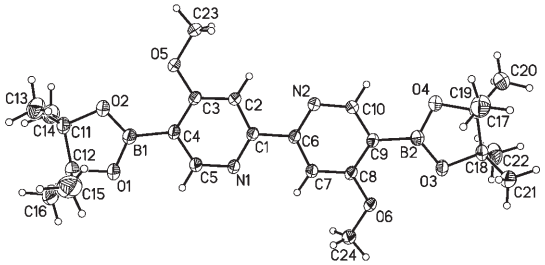
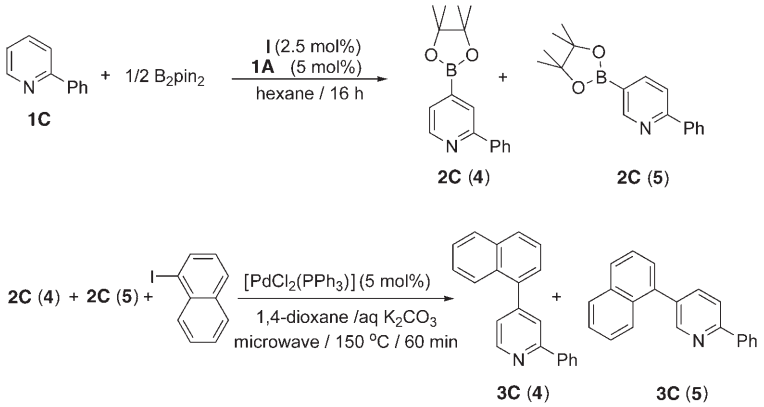


Figure 1. Molecular structure of **2B**.

It would, thus, appear that for electronic reasons the borylation reactions will avoid positions *ortho* to the N atom in a pyridine ring unless extreme steric hindrance makes other positions inaccessible. Preliminary results of DFT calculations (B3LYP, 6-31G*) show that charges on the C atom *ortho* to the N atom and the highest-occupied molecular orbitals (HOMOs) and lowest-unoccupied molecular orbitals (LUMOs) of **1A** and **1B** are very similar. This example is the first wherein purely electronic control leads to exclusive borylation of aromatic compounds *ortho* to a substituent (namely, OMe). A recent discussion of substituent effects in the borylation of cyanoarenes is given in reference [13]. Even though the regioselectivity of the borylation of the two 4,4′-disubstituted bipyridines (bpys) was different, what they have in common is that bpy can be considered to be a 2-pyridyl substituted pyridine, that is, that there is a bulky pyridine-substituent *ortho* to the N atom that blocks N-coordination of either ring because of the steric constraints of the key $[Ir(Bpin)_3(dtbpy)]$ intermediate (see above). It cannot act as a bidentate ligand because the Ir center is already five-coordinate, and it cannot act as a monodentate pyridine (py) ligand because the *ortho* py substitutent is too big to allow coordination at the N atom.

With that model in mind, we decided to examine 2-Ph-pyridine (**1C**) which, along with its derivatives, has received considerable attention as a C,N chelate on Ir centers for electroluminescence in organic light-emitting diode (OLED) devices.[15] We wondered whether a single 2-Ph group would also inhibit N-coordination, thus allowing borylation of the pyridine ring, and whether borylation of the phenyl or pyridine groups would predominate. Indeed, borylation was successful within 16 h at room temperature using 2.5 mol % of **I** and 5 mol % of **1A**, thus giving rise to equal amounts of 2-Ph-4-(Bpin)-pyridine (**2C**(**4**)) and 2-Ph-5-(Bpin)-pyridine (**2C**(**5**)). The solvent was removed from the crude mixture, which was redissolved in 1,4-dioxane to which aqueous K_2CO_3 and $[PdCl_2(PPh_3)_2]$ (5 mol %) were added. This mixture was treated with 1-iodonaphthalene in a 20-mL crimp-top sealed glass vessel and heated to 150 °C for 1 h in a Biotage-Personal Chemistry microwave reactor, thus giving 2-Ph-4-(1-Np)-pyridine (**3C**(**4**)) and 2-Ph-5-(1-Np)-pyridine (**3C**(**5**)) in 61 % yield of the combined isolated products (Scheme 3). Compounds **3C**(**4**) and **3C**(**5**) were separated chromatographically, identified spectroscopically, and their structures confirmed by single-crystal X-ray diffraction[14] (see the Supporting Information).

Finally, to test the generality of the process for the one-pot synthesis of unusual heterocycles, to evaluate whether a single CH_3 group is sufficient to block N-coordination, and to direct borylation *ortho* to the N atom, we carried out the borylation of 2,3-dimethylpyrazine (**1D**) using **I**/**1A** under the same conditions as for **1C**. The product, 2,3-Me_2-5-Bpin-pyrazine (**2D**), was subsequently cross-coupled with 2-bromothiophene to give 2,3-Me_2-5-(2-thienyl)-pyrazine (**3D**),[16] which was isolated in 34 % yield (and also structurally characterized by X-ray diffraction;[14] see the Supporting Information).



Scheme 3. Borylation of **1C**.

In summary, we have shown that the catalyst will borylate dtbpy unless it is already coordinated to the Ir center. Moreover, we note that a single substituent *ortho* to the N atom is sufficient to inhibit N-coordination to the Ir center, thus "activating" the six-membered heteroarenes to borylation of C–H bonds and providing a design criterion for substrates for selective borylation. Complete regioselectivity has been achieved through either electronic or steric control, which allows, for the first time, borylation of pyridine derivatives *ortho* to the N atom or *ortho* to a MeO substituent (that is, *meta* to the N center). The compound 2-Ph-pyridine, important in the design of triplet-emitting Ir complexes for OLEDs,[15] can be further derivatized at the 4- and 5-positions of the py ring in preference to the Ph ring, thus leading to useful 4-(or 5-)-Ar′-2-Ar-pyridine derivatives. The compound 2,3-dimethylpyrazine was borylated *ortho* to the N atom and cross-coupled with the electron-rich heteroarene 2-bromothiophene. Finally, whilst some of the aryl pyridines, such as **3A** and **4A**, have been reported previously as ligands in Ru and luminescent Ir and Pt complexes,[17] prepared by the addition of PhLi to dtbpy followed by hydrolysis and oxidation, our route is more general and inherently more functional-group tolerant and does not require highly reactive ArLi reagents. We expect this route to be of use in applications that range from pharmaceuticals to new optical and electronic materials.

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[14] For synthetic and crystallization details and the molecular structures, see the Supporting Information. X-ray diffraction experiments were performed with SMART 1 K CCD area-detector diffractometers using $Mo_{K\alpha}$ radiation ($\lambda = 0.71073$ Å) at $T = 120(2)$ K; the structures were solved by direct methods (SHELXTL; Bruker AXS, Inc., Madison, WI, USA). **3A**·2 C_6F_6: $C_{42}H_{32}F_{12}N_2$, $M_r = 792.70$, orthorhombic, space group *Pccn*, $a = 14.021(2)$, $b = 19.509(3)$, $c = 13.2267(19)$ Å, $V = 3618.1(9)$ Å^3, $Z = 4$, $\rho_{calcd} = 1.455$ Mg m^{-3}, $\mu = 0.128$ mm^{-1}, R (F; $F^2 > 2\sigma$) = 0.0550, R_w (F^2, all data) = 0.1583, $S = 1.297$ for 5474 unique data ($\theta < 30.5$) and 317 refined parameters; final difference synthesis within ± 0.54 e Å^{-3}. **4A**·C_6F_6: $C_{30}H_{28}F_6N_2$, $M_r = 530.54$, orthorhombic, space group *Pnma*, $a = 27.2125(17)$, $b = 6.7353(5)$, $c = 14.3175(10)$ Å, $V = 2624.2(3)$ Å^3, $Z = 4$, $\rho_{calcd} = 1.343$ Mg m^{-3}, $\mu = 0.108$ mm^{-1}, R (F; $F^2 > 2\sigma$) = 0.0508, R_w (F^2, all data) = 0.1346, $S = 1.010$ for 4319 unique data ($\theta < 30.51$) and 291 refined parameters; final difference synthesis within ± 0.34 e Å^{-3}. **2B**: $C_{24}H_{34}B_2N_2O_6$, $M_r = 468.15$, monoclinic, space group $P2_1/n$, $a = 9.3567(6)$, $b = 22.0270(13)$, $c = 12.2764(8)$ Å, $\beta = 98.213(3)°$, $V = 2504.2(3)$ Å^3, $Z = 4$, $\rho_{calcd} = 1.242$ Mg m^{-3}, $\mu = 0.087$ mm^{-1}, R (F; $F^2 > 2\sigma$) 0.0717, R_w (F^2, all data) = 0.2121, $S = 1.069$ for 7652 unique data ($\theta < 30.50°$) and 317 refined parameters; final difference synthesis within ± 0.64 e Å^{-3}. **3C(4)**: $C_{21}H_{15}N$, $M_r = 281.34$, monoclinic, space group $P2_1$, $a = 6.7020(8)$, $b = 7.6743(9)$, $c = 14.6965(17)$ Å, $\beta = 97.980(3)°$, $V = 748.57(15)$ Å^3, $Z = 2$, $\rho_{calcd} = 1.248$ g cm^{-3}, $\mu = 0.072$ mm^{-1}, R (F; $F^2 > 2\sigma$) = 0.0426, R_w (F^2, all data) = 0.1261, $S = 0.645$ for 2165 unique data ($\theta < 27.50$) and 260 refined parameters; final difference synthesis within ± 0.33 e Å^{-3}. **3C(5)**: $C_{21}H_{15}N$, $M_r = 281.34$, monoclinic, space group $P2_1$, $a = 7.099(1)$, $b = 12.943(2)$, $c = 7.928(1)$ Å, $\beta = 100.02(1)°$, $V = 717.33(18)$ Å^3, $Z = 2$, $\rho_{calcd} = 1.303$ g cm^{-3}, $\mu = 0.075$ mm^{-1}, R (F; $F^2 > 2\sigma$) = 0.0423, R_w (F^2, all data) = 0.1188, $S = 1.069$ for 2163 unique data ($\theta < 29.98$) and 259 refined parameters; final difference synthesis within ± 0.33 e Å^{-3}. **3D**: $C_{10}H_{10}N_2S$, $M_r = 190.26$, monoclinic, space group $P2_1/n$, $a = 7.1352(19)$, $b = 12.292(3)$, $c = 11.175(3)$ Å, $\beta = 94.168(4)°$, $V = 977.5(4)$ Å^3, $Z = 4$, $\rho_{calcd} = 1.293$ Mg m^{-3}, $\mu = 0.283$ mm^{-1}, R (F; $F^2 > 2\sigma$) = 0.0464, R_w (F^2, all data) = 0.1293, $S = 1.062$ for 2618 unique data ($\theta < 27.50°$) and 142 refined parameters; final difference synthesis within ± 0.25 e Å^{-3}. CCDC 279973–279978 contain the supplementary crystallographic data for this paper. These data can be obtained free of charge from The Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre via www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/data_request/cif.

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