Visible-Light-Mediated Nitrogen-Centered Radical Strategy: Preparation of 3-Acylated Spiro[4,5]trienones

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Abstract: A nitrogen-centered radical strategy for the preparation of 3-acylated spiro[4,5]trienones via visible-light-mediated acylation/ipso-cyclization of alkynes with acyl oxime esters is reported. The alkyl- and aryl-substituted acyl radicals, which generate from the cleavage of carbon-carbon σ bonds in acyl oxime esters via nitrogen-centered radical pathway, attack the carbon-carbon triple bonds in propiolamides and then undergo ipsocyclization. This method provides a way for the of 3-acyl-substituted construction spiro[4,5] trienones, which can introduce aryl- or alkylsubstituted acyl into spiro[4,5]trienone skeletons.

Keywords: nitrogen-centered radical; visible-lightmediated; acyl oxime esters; acylation/*ipso*-cyclization; spiro[4,5]trienones

Nitrogen-centered radicals (NCRs), which have the same highly reactive as that of the classical carbonbased radicals, are a common species in organic synthesis.^[1] Due to the *N*-substitution and hybridization patterns, NCRs are usually used as nucleophiles or electrophiles to go through various radical reactions.^[2–3] Thus, NCR strategies have wide applications in the synthetic chemistry due to their high reactivity and efficiency.^[4–5] Compared with CCR (carbon-centered radical) strategies,^[6] NCR strategies can be achieved by avoiding usage of strong oxidants and high temperatures.^[7–8]

In recent years, NCR strategies have been widely used for the cleavage of carbon-carbon single

bonds.^[4–5,7–10] For example, Xiao^[4] and other chemists^[5,7–8] have developed a series of ring-opening of cycloketone oxime derivatives *via* NCR strategies. As shown in Scheme 1, Chen (path I),^[11a] Wu (path II),^[11b] Yang (path III),^[11c] and Wu's groups (path IV)^[11d] have developed NCR mediated cleavage of carbon-carbon single bonds in acyl oxime derivatives. In these methods, acyl oxime esters were used as acyl precursors to reat with carbon-carbon double bonds. However, the strategy employing carbon-carbon triple bonds to carpture the acyl radicals, which generate from acyl oxime esters, is lacking.

Spirocyclic compounds, such as spiro[4,5] decatrienones, are important motifs usually encountered in pharmaceutical molecules and natural products.^[12] Among them, spiroquinones are common skeletons that can be applied for the construction of diverse important structures.^[13–14] Thus, many organic chemists have paied their attention in the development of convenient and efficient strategies for the preparation of spiroquinones,^[15–18] especially spiro[4,5] decatrienones.^[15c-g,16] The electrophilic *ipso*-cyclization strategies are traditional methods for the construction



Scheme 1. C–C bond cleavage of acyl oximes *via* NCR strategies.

Adv. Synth. Catal. 2021, 363, 1–8 Wiley Online Library 1 These are not the final page numbers! of substituted spiro[4,5]decatrienones.^[17d-k,18f-h] Recently, many chemists, such as Zhang,^[15a-d] Zhu,^[15e-g] Qiu,^[16] Li,^[17] Liang,^[18a-d] and our group^[18e-h] developed many oxidative radical cyclization approaches for the preparation of spiro[4,5]decatrienones. Among these strategies, 3-acylated spiro[4,5]decatrienones could be prepared by several different pathways, which used aldehydes,^[17k] ketoacids,^[19] acyl chlorides^[18f] as acyl precursors. However, most of these methods only provided aryl substituted acyl radicals, the alkyl substituted acyl radicals were quite few.

Visible-light-catalysis is a powerful and convenient method, which is usually employed in organic synthesis and drug synthesis.^[20] Visible-light-catalysis possesses a series of advantages, such as high efficiency, availability, safety, simple and mild conditions.^[20–21] Herein, we develop a nitrogen-centered radical strategy for the preparation of 3-acylated spiro[4,5]trienones *via* visible-light-mediated acylation/*ipso*-cyclization of alkynes with acyl oxime esters, in which a carbon-carbon σ -bond is severed and two new carbon-carbon bonds are constructed (Scheme 2).

To obtain the best reaction conditions, we started to test the reaction between propiolamide 1 a (0.2 mmol) and 3-(4-(trifluoromethyl)benzoyloxyimino)butan-2one (2a, 1.5 equiv.) (Table 1). Conducting the reaction in the presence of $Ir(ppy)_3$ (1 mol%), H₂O (3 equiv.), CH₃CN (2 mL) at 80 °C irradiated by 5 W blue LED light for 24 h could form the target product 3aa in 84% yield (entry 1). Next, several other O-benzoic substrates 2a-1-2a-7, including $4-NO_2C_6H_4CO$, 4- $4-\text{MeC}_6\text{H}_4\text{CO},$ $4-\text{OMeC}_6\text{H}_4\text{CO},$ FC_6H_4CO , 2-NO₂C₆H₄CO, C₆F₅CO and C₆H₅CO, were examined (entries 2-8). The results suggested that different acyl moieties of the oximes affected the reaction yields obviously. O-4-CF₃ C₆H₄CO substrate 2 a still afforded the highest yield (entries 2–8 vs entry 1). Additionally, O-acetic substrate 2a-8 was also suitable for this transformation, but it could not give higher yield than that of 2a (entry 9). Conducting the *ipso*-cyclization reaction in the absence of Ir(ppy)₃ could not form the target product 3 aa (entry 10). Increasing the dosage of $Ir(ppy)_3$ to 2 mol% afforded the same yield as 1 mol% of $Ir(ppy)_3$ (entry 11). Then, other phtotocatalysts, such as Ru(bpy)₃Cl₂, Eosin Y, Na₂-Eosin Y and Mes-Acr⁺, were screened (entries 12-15). The reaction yields showed that $Ir(ppy)_3$ was the best choice. The acylation/ipso-cyclization transformation could not



Scheme 2. NCR strategies for tandem acylation/*ipso*-cyclization of alkynes.

 Table 1. Screening optimal conditions.^[a]



	2a-4 IX = 4-01/1606/1400 2a-0 IX = 01/300	
Entry	Variation from the standard conditions	Isolated yield (%)
1	none	84
2	2 a–1 instead of 2 a	58
3	2 a–2 instead of 2 a	51
4	2 a–3 instead of 2 a	47
5	2 a–4 instead of 2 a	43
6	2 a–5 instead of 2 a	46
7	2 a–6 instead of 2 a	63
8	2 a–7 instead of 2 a	53
9	2 a–8 instead of 2 a	38
10 ^[b]	without Ir(ppy) ₃	0
11	$Ir(ppy)_3$ (2 mol%)	83
12	$Ru(bpy)_3Cl_2$ (10 mol%) instead of Ir(ppy)_3	10
13 ^[b]	Eosin Y (10 mol%) instead of Ir(ppy) ₃	8
14 ^[b]	Na ₂ -Eosin Y (10 mol%) instead of Ir(ppy) ₃	6
15 ^[b]	Mes-Acr ⁺ (2 mol%) instead of $Ir(ppy)_3$	15
16 ^[b]	without additional light	0
17 ^[c]	36 W compact fluorescent light	44
18 ^[c]	3 W blue LED light	72
19 ^[c]	12 W blue LED light	82
20 ^[b]	DMSO instead of CH ₃ CN	9
21 ^[b]	DMF instead of CH ₃ CN	11
22	DCE instead of CH ₃ CN	80
23	"BuOAc instead of CH ₃ CN	78
24 ^[b]	toluene instead of CH ₃ CN	18
25 ^[d]	THF instead of CH ₃ CN	0
26	H_2O (1 equiv.)	58
27	H_2O (5 equiv.)	66
28 ^[b]	at 100 °C	70
29 ^[b]	at 60 °C	25
30	for 48 h	83
31 ^[e]	none	51

^[a] Reaction conditions: **1a** (0.2 mmol), **2a** (0.3 mmol, 1.5 equiv.), H₂O (3 equiv., 10.8 mg), $Ir(ppy)_3$ (1.3 mg, 1 mol%), CH₃CN (2 mL) at 80 °C irradiated by 5 W blue LED light for 24 h.

^[b] The rest of substrate **1** a was recovered.

^[c] Instead of 5 W blue LED light.

^[d] Most of **1 a** was decomposed.

^[e] 1 a (1.0 g, 3.77 mmol), 2 a (1.5 equiv.), Ir(ppy)₃ (1 mol%), H₂O (3 equiv.) and MeCN (40 mL) at 80 °C for 64 h.

occur when the reaction was conducted in the absence of additional light irradiation (entry16). These results showed that both photocatalyst and visible-light were indispensable for this NCRs reaction (entries 10 and 16). Next, the test of other different light source indicated that 5 W blue LED light was suitable light

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source (entry 17). The solvents screening suggested that none of them gave a better result than that of MeCN (entries 20–25). Employing DCE or "BuOAc as solvents could give thefinal product **3 aa** in 80% and 78% yields, respectively (entries 22–23). Subsequently, the amount of H₂O was investigated. We found that H₂O was important for the reaction and 3 equiv. of H₂O was beneficial to generate the product (entries 26–27 vs entry 1). Changing the reaction temperature to 100 °C or 60 °C could not afford higher yields (entries 28–29). A longer reaction time could also not furnish a higher the reaction yield (entry 30). An amplified experiment could generate the product **3 aa** in moderate yield (entry 31).

Based on the acquired standard conditions, we began to examine the scope of propiolamides 1 in the presence of acyl oxime ester 2a (Table 2). First, several kinds of propiolamides 1a-e bearing different substituents on N atom were tested. All of them could afford the corresponding products 3aa-ea in 70-84% yields. However, the substrate 1f bearing a H on the N atom could not undergo this *ipso*-cyclization and most of the starting materials were recovered (product 3fa). Next, we investigated the propiolamides 1g-k bearing different substituents on the *N*-aryl moiety. This type

 Table 2. Scope of propiolamides (1).^[a]



- ^[a] Reaction conditions: 1 (0.2 mmol), 2 a (1.5 equiv.), H₂O (3 equiv.), Ir(ppy)₃ (1 mol%), CH₃CN (2 mL) at 80 °C irradiated by 5 W blue LED light for 24 h.
- ^[b] Most of the substrate **1** was recovered.
- ^[c] Most of the substrate **1** was decomposed.

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of substrates could also go through the acylation/ipsocyclization smoothly. Propiolamides 11-v bearing different substituents, including alkyl, phenyl, halo, OMe, CF₃, and CN groups, on the aromatic ring connected with carbon-carbon triple bond were good candidates (products 3la-va). The steric effect and electronic effect of the substituents had important effect on the yields of *ipso*-cyclization products. The propiolamides bearing para-substituents could afford higher yields than substrates bearing ortho- and metasubstituents (products 31a, 3ma and 30a). The propiolamides bearing electron-withdrawing substituents provided lower yields than substrates bearing electron-donating substituents. The propiolamides 1w $(R^1 = naphthyl)$ and $1 \times (R^1 = thienyl)$ could furnish the ipso-cyclization products 3wa and 3xa in moderate yields. However, the alkyl-substituted alkynes 1y-z and terminal alkyne 1aa could not undergo the acylation/ipso-cyclization under the standard conditions with most of the starting materials decomposed (products 3 ya-aaa).

After the investigation of propiolamides, we next examined the scope of acyl oxime esters 2 in the presence of propiolamide 1a (Table 3). For R^5 =Me, a variety of different acyl oxime esters 2b-g bearing alkyl groups on the acyl moieties, including Et, "Pr, 'Pr, "Bu, "C₅H₁₁ and 2-methylbutyl, were researched. All of



^[a] Reaction conditions: 1 a (0.2 mmol), 2 (1.5 equiv.), H₂O (3 equiv.), Ir(ppy)₃ (1 mol%), CH₃CN (2 mL) at 80 °C irradiated by 5 W blue LED light for 24 h.

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them could generate the 3-acylated spiro[4,5]trienones **3 ab-ag** in 70–80% yields. Aryl-substituted acyl oxime esters **2 h-n** were also suitable for this *ipso*-cyclization, affording the target products **3 ah-an** in moderate yields. The thienyl-substituted acylation product **3 ao** could be furnished from propiolamide **1 a** and 1-(thiophen-2-yl)-2-(4-(trifluoromethyl)

benzoyloxyimino)propan-1-one **20**. For R^3 =Et, three acyl oxime esters **2p**-r were screened and offered the corresponding products **3ab**, **3ac** and **3ah** in 77%, 71% and 70% yields, respectively.

To obtain a deeper insight of the mechanism of the acylation/*ipso*-cyclization, several control experiments were conducted (Scheme 3). The reactions between propiolamide **1a** and acyl oxime ester **2**, which were carried out under the best conditions in the presence of BHT, TEMPO or 1,1-diphenylethene as radical inhibitors, were suppressed (eqs 1–3, Scheme 3). As employing TEMPO in the reaction, the acyl captured product **4** could be isolated in 46% yield (eq 2, Scheme 3). The acyl-trapping product **5** could be obtained in 44% when 1,1-diphenylethene was used in the reaction (eq 3, Scheme 3). Then, the reaction between **1a** and **2a** was conducted in the presence of Ir(ppy)₃ (1 mol%), H₂¹⁸O (3 equiv.), CH₃CN (2 mL) at 80 °C irradiated by 5 W blue LED light for 24 h (eq 4,



Scheme 3. Control Experiments.



Scheme 4. Applications.

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Scheme 3). The results indicated that H₂O offered an O atom for building carbonyl group.

The 2-IBn substituted *ipso*-product **3 ca** could undergo intramolecular Heck reaction to afford azaquaternary tricyclic product **6** in 70% yield (Scheme 4).^[17]]

Based on the above results and existing literature,^[11,16–18,20–22] we propose a plausible mechanism for the acylation/ipso-cyclization of alkynes with acyl oxime esters via visible-light-mediated nitrogencentered radical pathway (Scheme 5). As irradiated by visible-light, Ir^{3+} is tansformed into Ir^{3+*} . The photoexcited Ir^{3+*} gives a single electron to acyl oxime ester **2a**, to form the radical anion A and Ir^{4+} . Then, the intermediate A decomposes into RO⁻ and iminyl radical **B**, which deliveres acyl radical **C** and acetonitrile.^[11] The substrate **1** a converts into benzyl radical D via the addition of the intermediate C to the carbon-carbon triple bond of 1a. The intermediate D undergoes *ipso*-cyclization to furnish the radical E, which goes through SET to afford the carbocation Funder the oxidation of Ir^{4+} , regenerating Ir^{3+} . The hydroxide ion, which comes from H₂O under the action RO^- , attacks the carbocation F to assemble the intermediate G.^[17d-k,18f-h] The intermediate G occurrs release of OMe⁻ and H⁺ to provide the target product 3 aa.

In conclusion, we have reported a nitrogen-centered radical strategy for the preparation of 3-acylated spiro [4,5]trienones *via* visible-light-mediated acylation/ *ipso*-cyclization of alkynes with acyl oxime esters. The alkyl- or aryl-substituted acyl radicals, which generate from the cleavage of carbon-carbon σ -bonds in acyl oxime esters *via* nitrogen-centered radical pathway, attack the carbon-carbon triple bonds in propiolamides and then undergo *ipso*-cyclization. This method provides a way for the construction of 3-acyl-substituted spiro[4,5]trienones, which can introduce aryl- or alkyl-



Scheme 5. Possible Mechanisms.

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substituted acyl into spiro[4,5]trienone skeletons. The further study and application of nitrogen-centered radical strategy are currently undergoing in our laboratory.

Experimental Section

Typical Experimental Procedure for the Synthesis of 3-Acylated Spiro[4,5]trienones

To a Schlenk tube were added propiolamides 1 (0.2 mmol, 0.1 M), acyl oxime esters compounds 2 (1.5 equiv.), $Ir(ppy)_3$ (1 mol%), H₂O (3 equiv.) and MeCN (2 mL) at 80 °C under irradiation of 5 W blue light for 24 h. Until complete consumption of the starting material was observed by TLC and/ or GC-MS analysis. After the reaction was finished, the reaction mixture removal of the solvent, the crude product was purified by column chromatography (petroleum ether/ethyl acetate, 3:1) to provide the desired products **3**. A scaled-up experiment conducted in the presence of **1a** (1 g, 3.77 mmol), **2a** (1.5 equiv.), $Ir(ppy)_3$ (1 mol%), H₂O (3 equiv.) and MeCN (40 mL) at 80 °C under irradiation of 5 W blue light for 64 h gave the target product **3 aa** in 51% yield (563.6 mg).

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UPDATES

Visible-Light-Mediated Nitrogen-Centered Radical Strategy: Preparation of 3-Acylated Spiro[4,5]trienones

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