# Matthew J. Gaunt Research Group

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## 0. Introduction

### <u>Biography</u>

- 1995 graduated from the University of Birmingham.
- 1999 moved to the University of Cambridge to carry out his graduate studies, and finished.
- he was awarded a prestigious GlaxoWellcome Postdoctoral Fellowship.
- 2001 returned to the UK to work with Professer Steven Ley as a Junior Research Fellow at Magdalene College.
- 2003 began his independent research career in October at the University of Cambridge.
- 2004 and awarded a Royal Society University Research Fellow in October.
- 2006 he was appointed Lecturer in Organic Chemistry, and a Philip & Patricia Brown Next Generation Fellow.



### They are actively pursuing research programmes in the following areas

- Enantioselective Organocatalysis
- Transition Metal Catalysed C-H Activation
- Cascade Reactions for Complex Natural Product Synthesis
- Chemical Biology

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# 1.1 An Organocatalytic Cyclopropanation Reaction

### [Background]

The cyclopropane motif is a common feature in the synthesis of complex molecules and in medicinal chemistry owing to a unique combination of reactivity and structural properties



 $\vec{z}$  There are comparatively few methods for synthesis of enantiomerically pure tri- and tetrasubstituted cyclopropanes.



**2003** Stoichiometric "one-pot" ammonium ylide based cyclopropanation

M. J. Gaunt, ACIE, 2003, 42, 828.



<u>single diastereoisomer</u>

The reaction proceeds without the formation of byproducts, and simple aqueous workup affords pure cyclopropane that does not neessarily require further purification.

Catalytic cyclopropanation



This enantioselective catalytic cyclopropanation process via ammonium ylides has a number of advantages.

- 1) There are no transtion metals involved in the reaction.
- 2) The starting materials are readily available and conveniently handled.

This is the first general intermolecular enantioselective organocatalytic cyclopropanation reaction.

• Intramolecular Cyclization



M. J. Gaunt, ACIE, 2004, 43, 2681.

### [Catalytic cycle]

Finally the bicycloalkane **2** is generated through displacement of the ammonium group, concurrently regenerating catalyst **I**.



The amine catalyst I displaces the chloride in 1 to give the quaternary ammonium salt II.

Deprotonation forms the ammonium ylide **III**.

### Small Summary

They have developed an organocatalytic inter- and intramolecular cyclopropanation reaction as single diastereoisomers. This powerful catalytic process effects the controlled formation of stereocenters in single transformation.

# 2.1 Palladium-Catalyzed Intermolecular Arylation of Indoles



**Figure 2.** Chemical yield and TON as a function of catalyst loading in reaction of *N*-methylindole and Ph-I:  $Pd(OAc)_2/PPh_3$  (1:4), 2.54 M in substrate, CsOAc, DMA, 125 °C, 24 h.

- > 0.5 mol%: biphenyl formation
- < 0.5 mol%: led to a sharp decline in yeild, which was accompanied by a dramatic increase in the catalyst turnover number.

At such low concentrations, catalyst decomposition processes, including biphenyl formation were suppressed.

Good functional group tolerance was demonstrated.

#### ii) Mechanistic Study



Possible Reaction Mechanisms in the Arylation of N-Alkylindole



There are three reaction mechanisms that may rationalize the strong preference for C-2 arylation.

(1) Electrophilic metalation-migration

(2) δ-Bond metathesis

(3) Carbometalation, that is, Heck-type reaction

(2) This is primarily due to the large KIE at C-3.

(3) Carbopalladation of indole, following by isomerization and syn- $\beta$ -hydride elimination, should also be considered. A plausible mechanism for the isomerizaiton step is a reversible  $\alpha$ -hydride elimination, proceeding via a palladium hydride-carbene intermediate.

(1) The most likely candidate seems to be the electrophilic palladation pathway, supported by the kinetic studies.

### Electrophilic Pathway for Arylation of Indole



The first step involves the formation of intermediate **6** by electrophilic addition of an aryl-palladium(II) species to the 3-position of indole. If the reverse step  $(k_1)$  and the migration  $(k_2)$ , then the formation of 6 and the migration may become kinetically relevant.

In such instance,  $k_3$  must be faster than  $k_2$ , and  $k_4$  must be slower than  $k_2$ .

The driving force for this migration is related to stabilizaiton of the carbon-palladium bond by the adjacent nitrogen atom.

### M. J. Gaunt's works

#### iii) Intermolecular Alkenylation of Indoles by Solvent-Controlled Regioselective C-H Functionalization

#### <u>New swichable solvent-controlled regioselective palladium-catalyzed</u> <u>indole alkenylation by C-H functionalization.</u>

M. J. Gaunt, ACIE, 2005, 44, 3125.

The natural reactivity of indole suggested that palladation and Heck coupling would take place preferentially at the 3-position.



Table 1: Optimization studies for indole functionalization.<sup>[a]</sup>



[a] For all reactions the mixture (0.4 M) was stirred for 18 h. [b] Yields after isolation and purification by flash silica-gel chromatography. n.r. = no reaction. Bz = benzoyl, DMF = N, N-dimethylformamide, DMSO = dimethyl sulfoxide.



Scheme 2. Proposed mechanism of C-H functionalization.

They propsed plausible pathways for the two reactions in Scheme 2. Palladation at C3 is thought to occur via intermediate I, and following rearomatization to II a Heck-type reaction forms the C3-functionalized indole 3.

Under neutral conditions, the acetate ion formed from the attack of indole on  $Pd(OAc)_2$  will readily remove a proton from I to form the C3-palladated species II.

Under acidic condition they propose that this deprotonation would be slow, which could allow a migration of the C3-PdX bond in I to the highly activated 2-position of the iminium intermediate to give intermediate III and ultimately IV.

The effect of the cosolvent is also important since the results in Table 1 suggest that strongly coordinating solvents (DMSO, MeCN) override any effect that the presence of acid may have, thus leading to C3 selectivity.



This strategy thus allows the selective installation of substituents at either position in any order and provides access to highly functionalized indoles by catalytic methods.

Scheme 3. Formation of bis (alkenyl) indoles.



#### Small Summary

 $\begin{array}{lll} \mbox{Free(NH)- and $N$-alkylindoles} & \rightarrow \mbox{C3-arylated product} \\ \mbox{$N$-acetylindoles} & \rightarrow \mbox{C2-arylated product} \end{array}$ 

# 2.2 Arylation with Diaryliodonium Salts



Exploiting the diverse reactivity of a possible carbocation intermediate



This new Cu-Catalyzed arylation may proceed by a reaction pathway displaying carbocation-like character, allowing the development of a number of novel tandem and cascade reactions that could expedite the synthesis of complex molecules.

(c) Arylation - semi-Pinacol reaction



#### Small summary

They have shown that the product out comes differ significantly from these commonly obtained by the Heck reaction. Preliminary studies have shown that a carbocation-type mechanism may be involeved in these reactions.

# 3.1 Meta-Selective C-H Bond Activation

Introduction

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Chemical transformations of benzene derivatives have been guided by the high selectivity for electrrophilic attack at the ortho/para positions in electron-rich substrates and at the meta position in electron-deficient molecules.



### **Pioneerting Work**

Friedel-Crafts Reaction



### Precedent & Other Works

meta and para Functionalization of Arenes



electron-donating substituents  $\rightarrow$  <u>ortho and para</u> electron-withdrawing substituents  $\rightarrow$  <u>meta</u>

P. Knochel, ACIE, 2008, 47, 1503.

not completely selective meta functionalization

Carboxylic Acid as Traceless Directing Groups for meta Selective Direct Arylation I. Larrosa, ACIE, 2011, 50, 9429.



harch condition and long reaction time Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub> were needed.

### Why was meta-selective C-H bond activation difficult and elusive ?

The several mechanisms that usually rationalize the majority of selective metal-catalyzed C-H bond activation.

- a) oxidative addition (OA) at electron-rich low-valent transition metal centers
- b)  $\sigma$ -bond metathesis (SBM) at electrophilic early transitionmetal centers
- c) electrophilic activation (EA) at electron-deficient late transitionmetal centers
- d) concerted metalation-deprotonation (CMD)

 $\underline{\mbox{These mechanistic pathways most commonly form the ortho-substitution product}.$ 



### Meta-Selective C-H borylation

### i) Meta Halogenation of 1,3-Disubstituted Arenes via Iridium-Catalyzed Arene Borylation



Circumventing the inherent ortho/para-selectivity of electron-rich aromatic systems to generate the meta product remains a largely elusive and unmet goal for chemical synthesis.

(C) This study - meta-C-H arylation of acetanilides with Cu(II) catalysis



A possible rationalization could involve the highly electrophilic Cu(III)-aryl species activating the aromatic ring sufficiently to permit an anti-oxy-cupration of the carbonyl group of an acetamide across the 2,3positions on the arene ring.

The dearomatizing transformation would place the Cu(III)-aryl species at the meta position, and rearomatizing deprotonation.

Step 3:

**Reductive elimination** 

### ii) Meta-Selective Copper-Catalyzed C-H Bond Arylation



In certain cases the meta-selectivity can be overridden by strongly electron-donating substiruents.

### iii) Concerted Metalation deprotonation (CMD)

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[lr] ={lr(acac)<sub>2</sub>}

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Proposed transition states and calculated agostic intermediate



geometries.

required to deform the reactants into their transition state

### Analysis of the Concerted Metalation-Deprotonation Mechanism





 $\textit{\textbf{E}}_{int}$  = strength of the carboxylate-H\_Ar and Pd-C\_Ar interaction  $\textit{\textbf{E}}_{dist}$  = ongoing study

th	iazole <i>N</i> -oxides	Arene	ΔE <sup>‡</sup>	E <sub>dist</sub> (ArH)	E <sub>dist</sub> (PdL) <sup>a</sup>	Eint	q <sub>NPA</sub> (ArH) <sup>b</sup>	B <sub>Pd-C</sub> °
large E <sub>int</sub>		1	5.8	29.3	16.6	-40.1	-0.039	0.45
		2	12.4	33.8	16.7	-38.1	-0.079	0.44
		3	16.5	36.8	15.4	-35.7	-0.065	0.43
electrondeficient arene		4	14.5	36.8	16.9	-39.2	-0.041	0.51
		5	15.9	39.9	17.4	-41.4	-0.014	0.52
		6	15.6	42.5	17.9	-44.8	+0.009	0.56
		7	11.1	42.2	18.3	-49.4	+0.017	0.58
IOW E <sub>dist</sub>		8	13.1	48.1	19.9	-54.9	+0.065	0.62
		9	12.5	50.1	20.4	-58.0	+0.078	0.59
		10	12.8	40.0	18.6	-45.8	+0.003	0.51
$\pi$ -electron-rich arenes		11	11.9	28.8	15.3	-32.2	-0.092	0.44
large negative <i>F</i> <sub>int</sub>		12	25.1	44.6	15.8	-35.3	-0.010	0.51
large $E_{dist}$	benzene	13	16.7	37.5	16.8	-37.6	-0.035	0.50
	not favored either value	14	12.3	32.4	17.2	-37.3	-0.041	0.48

### iv) Mechanistic Understanding

The three calculated reaction pathways. Relative free energies including the solvent effect (AG<sub>sol</sub>) are given in kcal/mol.



(a) the amide group is a weak  $\pi$ -electron donor, and the site being attacked is the unfavorable electron-rich ortho position.

(b) copper shifts from the preferred electron-rich para position to the unfavorable meta position.

(c) the aromaticity is brocken without adequate compensation.



The effects of the terminal  $R^1$  proup and the aromatic substituent  $R^2$  group



• A large R<sup>1</sup> group pushes copper to the trans position, facilitating the electrophilic attack at the ortho carbon. (entry 2)

• The electronic character of R<sup>1</sup> has a small effect on the reaction. (**entry 3~7**)

? • All of the ortho, meta, and para EDGs lower the barrier for path c because they can increase the electron density at either C1 or C2.

• EWGs generally raise the berriers for both pathways.

 $R^1 \rightarrow$  reflect the steric character of the Cu(III)-Ph species

 $R^2 \rightarrow$  reflect the electrophilic character of the Cu(III)-Ph species

### v) Activation of remote meta-C-H bonds





### 4. Summary

Meta-selective C-H activation chemistry has room to improve the range of substrates so on.

but I think .....