Pd(0)-Catalyzed cross-coupling reactions of 2-indolylzinc halides. 
A convenient route to indolo[2,3-a]quinolizidines

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This work is dedicated to Prof. Marcial Moreno-Mañas on the occasion of his 60th birthday 
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Abstract
The generation of 4-, 5-, and 6-methoxy-3-indolylzinc chlorides \(3a-c\) and their Pd(0)-catalyzed cross-coupling reactions with 2-halopyridines to give 4-, 5-, and 6-methoxy substituted 2-(2-pyridyl)indoles \(4a-c\) is reported. 2-(2-Pyridyl)indole \(8\) is converted to indolo[2,3-a]quinolizidine \(15\). The key step is the regioselective cyclization on the indole 3-position of a thionium ion generated by Pummerer reaction from an appropriately substituted 2-(2-piperidyl)indole.

Keywords: Indoloquinolizidine, palladium(0), cross-coupling, Zinc, bromopyridine, Pummerer-reaction

Introduction

The indolo[2,3-a]quinolizidine ring system is often embedded in the structure of many naturally occurring compounds exhibiting a wide range of biological activities.\(^1\) Although at the present time there is a plethora of synthetic strategies for the elaboration of indoloquinolizidine derivatives, most approaches have relied on the generation of the C\(_{12a}-\)C\(_{12b}\) bond from appropriate \(\text{N-}[2-(3\text{-indolyl})\text{ethyl}]\text{piperidines or the elaboration of the piperidine D ring in the last steps of the synthesis.}^2\)

In previous works\(^3\) we have reported the preparation of 2-(2-pyridyl)indoles by Pd(0)-catalyzed cross-coupling\(^4\) of 1-(benzenesulfonyl)-2-indolylzinc chloride and a variety of 2-chloro- and 2-bromopyridines bearing substituents of different electronic nature, and we have explored a procedure for their conversion into indoloquinolizidine derivatives.\(^{3a,5}\) This approach involves the formation of the C\(_7\)-C\(_7\)a bond by intramolecular alkylation of the indole 3-position from a 2-(2-piperidyl)indole as the key step, a transformation for which no efficient methods had been described at the beginning of our studies. In this paper we report the generation of 4-, 5-, and 6-
methoxy substituted 2-indolylzinc chlorides and their use in Pd(0)-catalyzed cross-coupling reactions leading to 2-(2-pyridyl)indoles bearing methoxy groups on the indole ring, which are of interest in the synthesis of hydroxy or methoxy substituted indoloquinolizidine alkaloids such as those depicted in Figure 1. Additionally, we report an efficient conversion of 2-(2-pyridyl)indole 9 to methyl indolo[2,3-α]quinolizidine-2-carboxylate 15, thus establishing the usefulness of our method for preparing indoloquinolizidines.

![Figure 1](image)

**Results and Discussion**

The required 4-, 5-, and 6-methoxyindoles 1a-c were prepared by the procedure of Batcho and Leimgruber, from the corresponding methylnitroanisole derivatives. A subsequent sulfonation was carried out under phase-transfer conditions to give the protected methoxyindoles 2a-c in excellent yields. Regioselective lithiation of 2a-c with LDA, followed by transmetalation with anhydrous ZnCl₂ afforded 2-indolylzinc chlorides 3a-c, which were allowed to react with 2-bromo-4-methylpyridine in the presence of Pd(0) in refluxing THF. The best conditions were found to be the use of 0.1 equivalent of Pd(PPh₃)₄ with respect to the 2-halopyridine. In this manner, methoxy-2-(2-pyridyl)indoles 4a-c were isolated in 64%, 65%, and 80% yield, respectively. Finally, the deprotected methoxy-2-(2-pyridyl)indoles 5a-c were obtained in good yields by treatment of 4a-c under alkaline conditions. The new methoxy substituted 2-indolylzinc halides 3a-c reported here can be useful intermediates for the synthesis of indole derivatives.
Reagents and conditions: (a) ClSO$_2$C$_6$H$_5$, (n-Bu)$_4$N·HSO$_4$, NaOH, H$_2$O, C$_6$H$_6$, 25 ºC, overnight (2a, 98%; 2b, 85%; 2c, 92%); (b) LDA, THF, 0 ºC, 30 min, then ZnCl$_2$, 25 ºC, 30 min; (c) 2-bromo-4-methylpyridyne, Pd[P(C$_6$H$_5$)$_3$]$_4$, THF, reflux, 4 h (4a, 64%; 4b, 65%; 4c, 80%); (d) NaOH, EtOH, H$_2$O, reflux, 12 h (5a, 85%; 5b, 93%; 5c, 87%).

Scheme 1

On the other hand, as an extension of our previous work on the use of the Pummerer$^9$ reaction in electrophilic cyclizations on the indole 3-position,$^3a,10$ we describe here the synthesis of indoloquinolizidine 15 from pyridylindole 9. This compound was prepared in 85% overall yield by palladium(0)-catalyzed cross-coupling reaction of 2-indolylzinc chloride 7 and methyl 2-chloropyridine-4-carboxylate, followed by alkaline hydrolysis of the resulting protected pyridylindole 8 and reesterification of the corresponding acid. As expected, catalytic hydrogenation of 9 stereoselectively afforded the 2,4-cis indolylpiperidine 10. Incorporation of the (phenylsulfinyl)ethyl chain on the piperidine nitrogen was carried out by refluxing a methanolic solution of 10 and phenyl vinyl sulfoxide. In this way, compound 11 was obtained in 89% yield as a mixture of isomers at the sulfur atom. In previous studies$^3a$ we concluded that protection of the indole nitrogen with an electron-withdrawing group constitutes an essential requirement for the success of the closure of the indoloquinolizidine C ring by electrophilic attack on the indole 3-position of a thionium ion generated by the Pummerer reaction.

Scheme 2
Reagents and conditions: (a) LDA, THF, 0 °C, 30 min, then ZnCl₂; (b) methyl 2-chloropyridine-4-carboxylate, PdCl₂(PPh₃)₂, DIBAH, THF, reflux (89%); (c) NaOH, EtOH, H₂O, reflux, 12 h, (96%); (d) HCl, anh. MeOH, reflux, 3 h (98%); (e) H₂, PtO₂, AcOH (65%); (f) C₆H₅S(O)CH=CH₂, MeOH, reflux, 24 h (89%); (g) (Boc)₂O, DMAP, CH₂Cl₂, 25 ºC, 10 h; (85%) (h) TMSOTf, DIPEA, CH₂Cl₂, 25 ºC, 15 min (84%); (i) Bu₃SnH, AIBN, C₆H₆, reflux, 3 h (75%); (j) HCO₂H, 25 ºC, 24 h (96%).

This protecting group not only blocks the indole nitrogen but also diminishes the nucleophilic character of the indole nucleus, thus avoiding the formation of both undesired N-regioisomers³a,¹¹ and byproducts coming from the attack of the indole ring upon the oxysulfonium intermediate¹² initially formed in the Pummerer reaction. The N-Boc derivative ¹² was obtained in good yield by treatment of ¹¹ with di-t-butyl dicarbonate and DMAP in dichloromethane. It is worth mentioning that when this transformation was attempted by treating compound ¹¹ with methyl cyanoformate and sodium hydride, tetracycle ¹⁶ was formed in 50% yield instead of the desired compound ¹². Sulfoxide ¹² was subjected to the Pummerer reaction by treatment with TMSOTf and DIPEA in dichloromethane at room temperature. This reaction afforded the desired indoloquinolizidine ¹³ in 84% yield as a mixture of epimers at C 7. Finally, elimination of the phenylsulfanyl group by treatment of ¹³ with tributyltin hydride and AIBN, followed by hydrolysis of the Boc group with formic acid, provided indoloquinolizidine ¹⁵ in excellent yield.

In conclusion, a convenient route to indolo[2,3-α]quinolizidines involving, as the key steps, a palladium(0)-catalyzed cross-coupling reaction between a 2-indolylzinc derivative and a 2-halopyridine and a Pummerer cyclization on the indole 3-position of a 2-(2-piperidyl)indole has been developed.

**Experimental Section**

**General Procedures.** Melting points were determined on a Gallenkamp melting point apparatus and are uncorrected. NMR spectra were recorded on either a Varian Gemini 200 operating at 200 MHz for ¹H and 50.3 MHz for ¹³C, or a Varian Gemini 300 operating at 300 MHz for ¹H and 75.5 MHz for ¹³C. Chemical shifts are reported in values ppm relative to TMS as internal reference. IR spectra were recorded on a FTIR Perkin-Elmer 1600 spectrometer with samples prepared either as KBr pellets or thin films on NaCl salt plates, and only noteworthy absorptions are listed. Thin-layer chromatography was done on SiO₂ (silica gel 60 F₂₅₄, Merck), and the spots were located with aqueous potassium permanganate solution. Column chromatography was carried out on SiO₂ (silica gel 60, SDS, 70-200 microns). Flash chromatography was carried out on SiO₂ (silica gel 60, SDS, 35-70 microns). All reagents were purchased from Aldrich or Fluka and were used without further purification. Tetrahydrofuran was distilled from sodium/benzophenone. Solvents for chromatography were distilled at atmospheric pressure prior
to use and dried using standard procedures. All reactions were performed under argon or nitrogen. Drying of the organic extracts during the work-up of reactions was performed over Na₂SO₄. Evaporation of solvents was accomplished with a rotatory evaporator. Microanalyses were performed by Centre d’Investigació i Desenvolupament (CSIC), Barcelona.

**General procedure for the preparation of protected methoxyindoles 2a-c**

Tetrabutylammonium hydrogen sulfate (27 mg, 78 mmol) and a 50% aqueous NaOH solution (8 mL) were added to a vigorously stirred solution of 1a-c (1.0 g, 6.8 mmol) in benzene (20 mL). After 5 min, a solution of benzenesulfonyl chloride (1.3 mL, 10.2 mmol) in benzene (10 mL) was added, and the mixture was stirred at room temperature overnight. The benzene layer was separated, washed with water, dried, and concentrated to give, after flash chromatography (3:2 CH₂Cl₂:hexane), compounds 2a-c.

1-(Benzenesulfonyl)-4-methoxyindole (2a). 98% yield; mp 77-78 °C (lit. 14 79-80 °C); ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 3.88 (s, 3H), 6.64 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 6.77 (dd, J = 3.7, 0.7 Hz, 1H), 7.23 (t, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 7.38-7.70 (m, 4H), 7.47 (d, J = 3.7 Hz, 1H), 7.60 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 7.86 (m, 1H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75.4 MHz): δ 55.4, 103.5, 106.3, 106.4, 121.0, 124.7, 125.7, 126.7 (2 C), 129.2 (2 C), 133.8, 136.0, 138.2, 153.1.

1-(Benzenesulfonyl)-5-methoxyindole (2b). 85% yield; mp 94-95 °C (lit. 15 98-99 °C); ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 3.81 (s, 3H), 6.59 (d, J = 3.6 Hz, 1H), 6.93 (dd, J = 8.8, 2.5 Hz, 1H), 6.96 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.39-7.56 (m, 3H), 7.52 (d, J = 3.6 Hz, 1H), 7.83-7.90 (m, 3H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75.4 MHz): δ 55.4, 103.6, 106.3, 106.4, 121.0, 124.7, 125.7, 126.7 (2 C), 129.5, 131.7, 133.7, 138.0, 156.4.

1-(Benzenesulfonyl)-6-methoxyindole (2c). 92% yield; mp 138-139 °C (lit. 15 140-142 °C); ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 3.87 (s, 3 H), 6.58 (dd, J = 3.6, 0.6 Hz, 1H), 6.86 (dd, J = 8.7, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.38 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 1H), 7.42 (t, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.43 (d, J = 3.6 Hz, 1H), 7.51 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.54 (d, J = 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.87 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75.4 MHz): δ 55.7, 97.9, 109.1, 112.5, 124.4, 125.0, 125.1, 126.6 (2 C), 129.1 (2 C), 133.7, 135.9, 138.3, 157.9.

**General procedure for the preparation of methoxy-2-(2-pyridyl)indoles 4a-c**

A solution of LDA (1.34 mL of a 1.5 M solution in cyclohexane, 2.0 mmol) was slowly added to a solution of indoles 2a-c (500 mg, 1.83 mmol) in anhydrous THF (3 mL) at 0 °C, and the resulting mixture was stirred for 30 min at this temperature. Then, a solution of anhydrous ZnCl₂ (330 mg, 2.0 mmol) in THF (4.5 mL) was added, and the stirring was continued for 30 min at 25 °C. In a separate flask, a solution of 2-bromo-4-methylpyridine (210 mg, 1.22 mmol) in anhydrous THF (1.5 mL) was added to a solution of tetrakis(triphenylphosphine)palladium(0) (141 mg, 0.12 mmol) in THF (4.5 mL), and the mixture was stirred at 25 °C for 10 min. The resulting solution was transferred via cannula to the solution of methoxyindolylzinc chloride 3a-c prepared above and the mixture was heated at reflux for 4 h, cooled, and poured into saturated
aqueous Na$_2$CO$_3$. The aqueous phase was extracted with Et$_2$O, and the organic extracts were concentrated to give a residue, which was purified by flash chromatography (CH$_2$Cl$_2$).

1-(Benzenesulfonyl)-4-methoxy-2-(4-methyl-2-pyridyl)indole (4a). 64% yield; IR (KBr): 3450, 1607, 1369, 1103, 784 cm$^{-1}$; $^1$H NMR (CDCl$_3$, 300 MHz): $\delta$ 2.42 (s, 3H), 3.83 (s, 3H), 6.64 (d, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 1H), 6.96 (s, 1H), 7.13 (dm, $J = 5.2$ Hz, 1H), 7.26 (t, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.32 (tm, $J = 7.8$ Hz, 1H), 7.43 (t, $J = 7.8$, 1.2 Hz, 1H), 7.48 (br s, 1H), 7.73 (dm, $J = 7.8$ Hz, 1H), 7.77 (d, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 1H), 8.52 (d, $J = 5.2$ Hz, 1H); $^{13}$C NMR (CDCl$_3$, 75.4 MHz): $\delta$ 21.1, 55.4, 104.5, 108.8, 111.8, 120.7, 123.9, 126.2, 126.7, 127.0 (2 C), 128.6 (2 C), 133.5, 137.3, 139.1, 139.5, 146.5, 148.5, 151.2, 153.1.

1-(Benzenesulfonyl)-5-methoxy-2-(4-methyl-2-pyridyl)indole (4b). 65% yield; $^1$H NMR (CDCl$_3$, 300 MHz): $\delta$ 2.42 (s, 3H), 3.83 (s, 3H), 6.68 (d, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 1H), 6.96 (s, 1H), 7.13 (dm, $J = 5.2$ Hz, 1H), 7.43 (t, $J = 7.8$, 1.2 Hz, 1H), 7.48 (br s, 1H), 7.73 (dm, $J = 7.8$ Hz, 1H), 7.77 (d, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 1H), 8.52 (d, $J = 5.2$ Hz, 1H); $^{13}$C NMR (CDCl$_3$, 75.4 MHz): $\delta$ 21.1, 55.5, 103.6, 114.1, 115.6, 117.4, 124.2, 127.0 (2 C), 127.2, 128.2, 128.6 (2 C), 132.6, 133.5, 136.6, 142.2, 146.5, 148.6, 151.0, 157.1.

1-(Benzenesulfonyl)-6-methoxy-2-(4-methyl-2-pyridyl)indole (4c). 80% yield; IR (film): 3350, 1610, 1371, 1176, 591 cm$^{-1}$; $^1$H NMR (CDCl$_3$, 300 MHz): $\delta$ 2.43 (s, 3H), 3.91 (s, 3H), 6.78 (d, $J = 0.9$ Hz, 1H), 6.86 (dd, $J = 8.6$, 2.3 Hz, 1H), 7.12 (dm, $J = 5.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.32 (d, $J = 8.6$ Hz, 1H), 7.33 (tm, $J = 7.5$ Hz, 1H), 7.50 (tt, $J = 7.5$, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.52 (m, 1H), 7.65 (dm, $J = 7.5$ Hz, 1H), 7.74 (d, $J = 2.3$ Hz, 1H), 8.51 (dd, $J = 5.2$, 0.6 Hz, 1H); $^{13}$C NMR (CDCl$_3$, 75.4 MHz): $\delta$ 21.0, 55.8, 100.7, 113.4, 115.1, 121.7, 123.8, 124.2, 126.8, 126.9 (2 C), 128.5 (2 C), 133.5, 137.0, 139.4, 140.1, 146.4, 148.5, 151.2, 158.3.

General procedure for the preparation of methoxy-2-(2-pyridyl)indoles 5a-c

A solution of compounds 4a-c (250 mg, 0.66 mmol) in EtOH (40 mL) and 10% aqueous NaOH (4 mL) was heated at reflux for 12 h. The resulting mixture was concentrated, and the residue was dissolved in CH$_2$Cl$_2$ (15 mL). The organic solution was washed with water and aqueous Na$_2$CO$_3$, dried, concentrated, and the resulting residue was purified by flash chromatography (CH$_2$Cl$_2$).

4-Methoxy-2-(4-methyl-2-pyridyl)indole (5a). 85% yield; IR (film): 3162, 1610, 1247, 1105, 771 cm$^{-1}$; $^1$H NMR (CDCl$_3$, 300 MHz): $\delta$ 2.37 (s, 3H), 3.98 (s, 3H), 6.50 (d, $J = 7.8$ Hz, 1H), 6.97 (d, $J = 5.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.02 (d, $J = 7.8$ Hz, 1H), 7.12 (t, $J = 7.8$ Hz, 1H), 7.14 (s, 1H), 7.64 (s, 1H), 8.36 (d, $J = 5.1$ Hz, 1H), 10.25 (br s, 1H); $^{13}$C NMR (CDCl$_3$, 75.4 MHz): $\delta$ 20.9, 55.1, 98.1, 99.3, 104.7, 120.0, 120.7, 122.9, 123.7, 135.0, 139.0, 148.0, 148.3, 150.2, 153.4; Anal. Calcd for C$_{15}$H$_{14}$N$_2$O·2/3 H$_2$O: C, 71.96; H, 6.18; N, 11.19. Found: C, 71.94; H, 5.75; N, 10.79.

5-Methoxy-2-(4-methyl-2-pyridyl)indole (5b). 93% yield; mp 115-116 °C; IR (film): 3150, 1606, 1225, 801 cm$^{-1}$; $^1$H NMR (CDCl$_3$, 300 MHz): $\delta$ 2.42 (s, 3H), 3.88 (s, 3H), 6.88 (dd, $J = 9.0$, 2.3 Hz, 1H), 6.95 (m, 1H), 7.00 (dm, $J = 5.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.11 (d, $J = 2.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.25 (d, $J = 9.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.63 (m, 1H), 8.44 (d, $J = 5.1$ Hz, 1H), 10.0 (br s, 1H); $^{13}$C NMR (CDCl$_3$, 75.4 MHz): $\delta$ 21.1, 55.7, 100.0, 102.2, 112.1, 113.6, 120.5, 123.1, 129.4, 131.8, 137, 147.7, 148.7,
6-Methoxy-2-(4-methyl-2-pyridyl)indole (5c). 87% yield; mp 145-146 °C; IR (KBr): 3418, 1603, 1261, 816 cm⁻¹. 1H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 2.34 (s, 3H), 3.74 (s, 3H), 6.68 (d, J = 2.2 Hz, 1H), 6.76 (dd, J = 8.6, 2.2 Hz, 1H), 6.90 (m, 1H), 6.93 (dm, J = 5.1 Hz, 1H), 7.49 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 7.56 (br s, 1H), 8.39 (d, J = 5.1 Hz, 1H), 10.5 (br s, 1H); 13C NMR (CDCl₃, 75.4 MHz): δ 21.1, 55.4, 94.2, 100.5, 110.4, 120.2, 121.6, 122.6, 123.3, 135.9, 137.6, 147.7, 148.5, 150.5, 157.0; Anal. Calcd for C₁₅H₁₄N₂O·1/₂ H₂O: C, 72.85; H, 6.11; N, 11.33. Found: C, 72.41; H, 5.92; N, 11.76.

Methyl 2-[1-(p-methoxybenzenesulfonyl)-2-indolyl]pyridine-4-carboxylate (8). A solution of LDA (51.3 mL, 1.5 M in cyclohexane, 77 mmol) was slowly added to a solution of sulfonylindole 6¹⁶ (20 g, 70 mmol) in anhydrous THF (100 mL) at 0 °C, and the resulting mixture was stirred for 30 min at this temperature. Then, a solution of anhydrous ZnCl₂ (10.5 g, 77 mmol) in THF (170 mL) was added, and the stirring was continued for 30 min at 25 °C. In a separate flask, a solution of dichlorobis(triphenylphosphine)palladium(II) (0.7 g, 1 mmol) and DIBAH (2 mL, 1.0 M solution in hexane, 2.0 mmol) in THF (40 mL) was stirred at 25 °C for 5 min, and then a solution of methyl 2-chloropyridine-4-carboxylate 17 (8.6 g, 50 mmol) in anhydrous THF (60 mL) was added. The stirring was continued at 25 °C for 10 min. The resulting solution was transferred via canula to the solution of methoxyindolylzinc chloride 7 prepared above and the mixture was heated at reflux for 4 h, cooled, and poured into saturated aqueous Na₂CO₃. The aqueous phase was extracted with Et₂O, and the organic extracts were concentrated to give a residue, which, after purification by flash chromatography (CH₂Cl₂), afforded pure 2-(2-pyridyl)indole 8 (18.8 g, 89%): mp 126-127 °C (Et₂O); IR (KBr): 1732, 1595, 1371 cm⁻¹; 1H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 3.75 (s, 3H), 3.99 (s, 3H), 6.77 (dm, J = 9.1 Hz, 2H), 6.90 (s, 1H), 7.26 (td, J = 7.5, 1.4 Hz, 1H), 7.39 (ddd, J = 8.5, 7.5, 1.4 Hz, 1H), 7.49 (dd, J = 7.5, 0.7 Hz, 1H), 7.57 (dm, J = 9.1 Hz, 2H), 7.90 (dd, J = 5.1, 1.6 Hz, 1H), 8.20 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 8.27 (br s, 1H), 8.84 (d, J = 5.1 Hz, 1H); 13C NMR (CDCl₃, 50.3 MHz): δ 52.7, 55.4, 113.8 (2 C), 115.8, 116.3, 121.4, 122.0, 124.4, 125.4, 125.5, 128.4, 129.2 (2 C), 130.3, 136.9, 138.2, 140.2, 149.5, 152.5, 163.5, 165.3; Anal. Calcd for C₂₂H₁₈N₂O₅S: C, 62.55; H, 4.30; N, 6.63; S, 7.59. Found: C, 62.23; H, 4.18; N, 6.46; S, 7.60.

Methyl 2-(2-indolyl)pyridine-4-carboxylate (9). A solution of compound 8 (1.8 g, 4.27 mmol) in EtOH (200 mL) and 10% aqueous NaOH (25 mL) was heated at reflux for 12 h, cooled, concentrated, and the residue treated with 10% aqueous H₂SO₄ (10 mL). The resulting precipitate was filtered, washed with water, and dried to give acid 2-(2-indolyl)pyridine-4-carboxylic (0.98 g, 96%) as a white solid: mp 286-289 °C (H₂O); IR (KBr): 3300, 1713, 1620 cm⁻¹; 1H NMR (DMSO, 200 MHz): δ 7.01 (t, J = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.13 (t, J = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.25 (s, 1H), 7.46 (d, J = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.58 (d, J = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.69 (d, J = 4.8 Hz, 1H), 8.35 (s, 1H), 8.79 (d, J = 4.8 Hz, 1H), 11.8 (br s, 1 H); 13C NMR (DMSO, 50.3 MHz): 101.8, 112.4, 119.0, 119.9, 121.2 (2 C), 123.0, 128.6, 136.7, 137.7, 139.5, 150.6, 151.7, 166.5; Anal. Calcd for C₁₄H₁₀N₂O₂·1/₂ H₂O: C, 68.01; H, 4.48; N, 11.33. Found: C, 68.36; H, 4.05; N, 11.33. A
solution of this acid (0.76 g, 3.2 mmol) in a saturated HCl methanolic solution (100 mL) was heated at reflux under stirring for 3 h. The solution was cooled and concentrated under reduced pressure, and the resulting residue was taken up with saturated aqueous NaHCO₃ (10 mL). The precipitate was filtered and dried to give compound 9 (0.79 g, 98%) as a white solid: mp 160-161 °C (CH₂Cl₂); IR (film): 3370, 1719 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 4.01 (s, 3H), 7.14 (dd, J = 8.0, 7.0, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.15 (s, 1H), 7.24 (dd, J = 8.0, 7.0, 1.4 Hz, 1H), 7.43 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.68 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.70 (dd, J = 4.8, 1.6 Hz, 1H), 8.33 (dd, J = 1.6, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 8.70 (dd, J = 4.8, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 9.55 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 50.3 MHz): δ 52.7, 101.7, 111.4, 119.3, 120.2, 120.7, 121.3, 123.5, 128.9, 135.9, 136.7, 137.9, 149.7, 151.3, 165.4; Anal. Calcd for C₁₅H₁₂N₂O₂: C, 71.42; H, 4.79; N, 11.11. Found: C, 71.03; H, 4.79; N, 10.94.

Methyl cis-2-(2-indoly)piperidine-4-carboxylate (10). A solution of pyridylindole 9 (4.0 g, 16 mmol) in glacial acetic acid (50 mL) was shaken at 25 ºC under hydrogen in the presence of PtO₂ (600 mg). The catalyst was removed by filtration, and the solvent was evaporated. The residue was dissolved in CH₂Cl₂ and the solution was washed with saturated aqueous Na₂CO₃, dried, filtered, and concentrated under reduced pressure. Column chromatography (95:3:2 Et₂O:acetone:DEA) of the residue afforded pure piperidine 10 (2.68 g, 65%): mp 116-117 °C (Et₂O); ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 1.63 (qd, J = 12.5, 4.2 Hz, 1H), 1.68-1.80 (m, 2H), 1.98 (dm, J = 13.2 Hz, 1H), 2.29 (dm, J = 12.9 Hz, 1H), 2.60 (tt, J = 12.3, 3.8 Hz, 1H), 2.83 (td, J = 12.5, 2.7 Hz, 1H), 3.26 (dd, J = 12.5, 4.1, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 3.70 (s, 3H), 3.91 (dd, J = 11.3, 2.5 Hz, 1H), 6.35 (d, J = 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.03-7.16 (m, 2H), 7.30 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.55 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 8.85 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 50.3 MHz): δ 28.6, 35.1, 41.7, 45.9, 51.7, 54.3, 98.6, 110.7, 119.5, 120.2, 121.5, 127.9, 135.6, 140.7, 175.0; Anal. Calcd for C₁₅H₁₈N₂O₂·1/2 H₂O: C, 67.40; H, 7.16; N, 10.85. Found: C, 67.00; H, 7.20; N, 10.54.

Methyl cis-2-(2-indoly)-1-[2-(phenylsulfinyl)ethyl]piperidine-4-carboxylate (11). A solution of indolylpiperidine 10 (1.11 g, 4.3 mmol) and phenyl vinyl sulfoxide (980 mg, 6.4 mmol) in MeOH (15 mL) was heated at reflux for 24 h. The mixture was cooled, concentrated, and the residue was chromatographed (20:1 Et₂O:MeOH) to give two epimeric sulfoxides 11 (1.57 g, 89%). Major epimer (1.15 g, higher Rf): mp 162-163 °C (CH₂Cl₂); IR (film): 1731 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 1.89-2.12 (m, 3H), 2.18 (ddd, J = 13.2, 4.1, 2.9 Hz, 1H), 2.25 (ddd, J = 12.3, 2.7 Hz, 1H), 2.37 (ddd, J = 12.5, 4.1, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 3.26 (dd, J = 12.5, 4.1 Hz, 1H), 3.70 (s, 3H), 3.91 (dd, J = 11.3, 2.5 Hz, 1H), 6.35 (d, J = 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.03-7.16 (m, 2H), 7.30 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.55 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 8.85 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 50.3 MHz): δ 28.6, 35.1, 41.7, 45.9, 51.7, 54.3, 98.6, 110.7, 119.5, 120.2, 121.5, 127.9, 135.6, 140.7, 175.0; Anal. Calcd for C₂₃H₂₆N₂O₃S: C, 67.29; H, 6.38; N, 6.82; S, 7.81. Found: C, 67.19; H, 6.54; N, 6.78; S, 7.65. Minor isomer (0.42 g, lower Rf): mp 120-121 °C (Et₂O); IR (KBr): 1731 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 1.77 (qd, J = 12.3, 3.9 Hz, 1H), 1.90 (masked, 1H), 2.14 (ddd, J = 13.2, 3.8, 2.8 Hz, 1H), 2.28 (ddd, J = 12.3, 11.6, 2.6 Hz, 1H), 2.47 (tt, J = 12.3, 3.8 Hz, 1H), 2.52-2.92 (m, 4H), 3.21 (dt, J = 11.6, 3.3 Hz, 1H), 3.47 (dd, J = 11.4, 2.8 Hz, 1H), 3.66 (s, 3H), 6.30 (s, 1H), 7.09 (ddd, J = 8.0,
Methyl cis-2-[1-(tert-butoxycarbonyl)-2-indolyl]-1-[2-(phenylsulfinyl)ethyl]-piperidine-4-carboxylate (12). A mixture of 11 (200 mg, 0.49 mmol, mixture of epimers), DMAP (10 mg, 0.08 mmol), and di-tert-butyl dicarbonate (229 mg, 1.05 mmol) in anhydrous CH$_2$Cl$_2$ (4 mL) was stirred at 25 °C for 10 h. The resulting mixture was concentrated and the residue was chromatographed (12:1 Et$_2$O:MeOH) to give pure compound 12 as a mixture of epimers (211 mg, 85%). Higher Rf epimer: mp 131-132 °C (Et$_2$O); IR (KBr): 1730 cm$^{-1}$; $^1$H NMR (CDCl$_3$, 300 MHz): $\delta$ 1.71 (s, 9H), 1.66-1.84 (m, 2H), 1.92 (dm, $J = 12.3$ Hz, 1H), 2.28 (dm, $J = 12.5$ Hz, 1H), 2.43 (td, $J = 12.2$, 2.5 Hz, 1H), 2.45-2.59 (m, 2H), 2.65-2.70 (m, 2H), 3.12 (dt, $J = 13.4$, 7.9 Hz, 1H), 3.21 (dt, $J = 12.3$, 3.0 Hz, 1H), 3.67 (s, 3H), 4.37 (dd, $J = 7.4$, 1.1 Hz, 1H), 6.68 (s, 1H), 7.27-7.39 (m, 6H), 7.53 (d, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 1H), 9.02 (s, 1H); $^{13}$C NMR (CDCl$_3$, 50.3 MHz): $\delta$ 27.6, 35.6, 41.3, 48.1, 51.7, 52.8, 54.8, 61.0, 100.8, 111.3, 119.5, 120.1, 121.6, 123.7 (2 C), 127.9, 128.9 (2 C), 130.7, 136.2, 139.3, 143.3, 174.8.

Methyl cis-2-[1-(tert-butoxycarbonyl)-2-indolyl]-1-[2-(phenylsulfinyl)ethyl]-piperidine-4-carboxylate (12). A mixture of 11 (200 mg, 0.49 mmol, mixture of epimers), DMAP (10 mg, 0.08 mmol), and di-tert-butyl dicarbonate (229 mg, 1.05 mmol) in anhydrous CH$_2$Cl$_2$ (4 mL) was stirred at 25 °C for 10 h. The resulting mixture was concentrated and the residue was chromatographed (12:1 Et$_2$O:MeOH) to give pure compound 12 as a mixture of epimers (211 mg, 85%). Higher Rf epimer: mp 131-132 °C (Et$_2$O); IR (KBr): 1730 cm$^{-1}$; $^1$H NMR (CDCl$_3$, 300 MHz): $\delta$ 1.71 (s, 9H), 1.66-1.84 (m, 2H), 1.92 (dm, $J = 12.3$ Hz, 1H), 2.28 (dm, $J = 12.5$ Hz, 1H), 2.43 (td, $J = 12.2$, 2.5 Hz, 1H), 2.45-2.59 (m, 2H), 2.65-2.70 (m, 2H), 3.12 (dt, $J = 13.4$, 7.9 Hz, 1H), 3.21 (dt, $J = 12.3$, 3.0 Hz, 1H), 3.67 (s, 3H), 4.37 (dd, $J = 7.4$, 1.1 Hz, 1H), 6.68 (s, 1H), 7.27-7.39 (m, 6H), 7.53 (d, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 1H), 9.02 (s, 1H); $^{13}$C NMR (CDCl$_3$, 50.3 MHz): $\delta$ 27.6, 35.6, 41.3, 48.1, 51.7, 52.8, 54.8, 61.0, 100.8, 111.3, 119.5, 120.1, 121.6, 123.7 (2 C), 127.9, 128.9 (2 C), 130.7, 136.2, 139.3, 143.3, 174.8.

5-Oxo-1-[2-(phenylsulfinyl)ethyl]-2,6-methano[1,4]diazocino[1,2-a]indole (16). Methyl cyanoformiate (66 mg, 0.78 mmol) was added to a solution of compound 11 (320 mg, 0.78 mmol) and TMEDA (100 µL) in anhydrous THF (5 mL) containing NaH (100 mg of a 45-50% dispersion in mineral oil) and the mixture was stirred at 25 °C. After 8 h, water was added and the mixture was extracted with CH$_2$Cl$_2$. The combined organic extracts were dried and concentrated to give a residue, which, after purification by column chromatography (gradient from Et$_2$O to 10:1 Et$_2$O:H$_2$O), afforded pure diazocinoindole 16 (150 mg, 50%) as an oil: IR (film): 1704, 1454 cm$^{-1}$; $^1$H NMR (CDCl$_3$, 300 MHz): $\delta$ 2.02-2.06 (m, 3H), 2.11 (dt, $J = 12.9$, 3.0 Hz, 1H), 2.29 (dt, $J = 12.9$, 3.0 Hz, 1H), 2.62-2.74 (m, 2H), 2.78 (m, 1H), 2.92-3.60 (m, 3H), 3.92 (t, $J = 3.0$ Hz, 1H), 6.16 (s, 1H), 7.23-7.34 (m, 2H), 7.47-7.60 (m, 4H), 7.68 (m, 2H), 8.43 (dd, $J = 7.6$, 1.5 Hz, 1H); $^{13}$C NMR (CDCl$_3$, 75.4 MHz): $\delta$ 29.1, 31.7, 38.0, 46.0, 47.6, 50.8, 54.7, 107.3, 116.3, 120.4, 124.0, 124.0 (2 C), 124.8, 129.2 (2 C), 131.0, 133.4, 134.5, 143.8, 171.7; Anal. Calcd for C$_{28}$H$_{24}$N$_2$O$_2$S.1/2 H$_2$O: C, 69.37; H, 6.55; N, 6.42; S, 6.77. Found: C, 69.09; H, 6.42; N, 6.77; S, 7.82.

Methyl cis-12-(tert-Butoxycarbonyl)-7-(phenylsulfanyl)indolo[2,3-a]quinolizidine-2-carboxylate (13). TMSOTf (305 µL, 1.7 mmol) was added to a solution of sulfoxide 12 (190 mg, 0.37 mmol, mixture of
epimers) and DIPEA (300 µL, 1.7 mmol) in anhydrous CH₂Cl₂ (1.5 mL), and the mixture was stirred at 25 °C for 15 min. The solution was poured into aqueous NaHCO₃, and the aqueous layer was extracted with CH₂Cl₂. The combined organic extracts were dried and concentrated to afford a residue, which, after chromatography (1:1 AcOEt:hexane), gave two epimeric indoloquinolizidines 13 (155 mg, 84%). Higher Rf epimer (α-SC₆H₅, 105 mg 57%): mp 167-168 °C (Et₂O); IR (KBr): 1731 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 1.60-1.87 (m, 3H), 1.68 (s, 9H), 2.22 (dm, J = 13.5 Hz, 1H), 2.67 (tt, J = 12.2, 3.8 Hz, 1H), 2.86 (dd, J = 12.2, 2.7 Hz, 1H), 3.14-3.30 (m, 2H), 3.66 (s, 3H), 4.50 (dd, J = 11.0, 2.0 Hz, 1H), 4.61 (dd, J = 3.8, 2.7 Hz, 1H), 7.22-7.38 (m, 5H), 7.54 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.65 (dd, J = 7.3, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 8.13 (dd, J = 7.2, 1.3 Hz, 1H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75.4 MHz): δ 23.2, 27.9, 28.2, 41.8, 42.5, 50.1, 51.7, 53.9, 56.2, 84.2, 114.3, 115.8, 119.0, 122.8, 124.3, 127.1, 127.8, 129.0 (2 C), 131.9 (2 C), 136.0, 136.6, 138.4, 149.8, 174.9; Anal. Calcd for C₂₈H₃₂N₂O₄S: C, 68.27; H, 6.55; N, 5.69; S, 6.51. Found: C, 68.20; H, 6.68; N, 5.62; S, 6.35. Lower Rf epimer (β-SC₆H₅, 50 mg 27%): oil; IR (film): 1731 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 1.38 (ddd, J = 12.0, 12.0, 10.5 Hz, 1H), 1.67 (s, 9H), 1.75-1.90 (m, 2H), 2.40 (dm, J = 12.0 Hz, 1H), 2.57 (tt, J = 12.0, 4.2 Hz, 1H), 2.73 (td, J = 12.0, 3.5 Hz, 1H), 3.02-3.10 (m, 2H), 3.20 (dd, J = 12.0, 4.3 Hz, 1H), 3.67 (s, 3H), 3.85 (d, J = 10.5 Hz, 1H), 7.22-7.30 (m, 5H), 7.42-7.47 (m, 2H), 7.77 (dd, J = 7.3, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 8.09 (dd, J = 7.2, 1.3 Hz, 1H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75.4 MHz): δ 26.0, 28.1, 31.6, 41.9, 42.6, 51.7, 54.2, 55.7, 58.7, 84.2, 115.4, 115.8, 119.6, 122.8, 124.2, 127.2, 127.9, 128.8 (2 C), 132.8 (2 C), 135.2, 136.8, 138.4, 150.0, 174.9.

Methyl cis-12-(tert-butoxycarbonyl)indolo[2,3-a]quinolizidine-2-carboxylate (14). A mixture of sulfide 13 (180 mg, 0.37 mmol, mixture of epimers), Bu₃SnH (300 µL, 1.12 mmol), and AIBN in benzene (20 mL) was heated at reflux for 3 h. The mixture was concentrated, and the residue was purified by column chromatography (Et₂O) affording pure indoloquinolizidine 14 (105 mg, 75%): mp 148-149 °C (hexane-Et₂O); IR (film): 1729 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 1.65 (ddd, J = 12.1, 12.1, 10.9 Hz, 1H), 1.68 (s, 9H), 1.79 (dm, J = 12.1 Hz, 1H), 1.90 (qd, J = 12.1, 4.2 Hz, 1H), 2.42 (dm, J = 12.6 Hz, 1H), 2.66 (tt, J = 12.1, 4.1 Hz, 1H), 2.73-2.85 (m, 3H), 2.94 (td, J = 12.6, 3.3 Hz, 1H), 3.12-3.19 (m, 1H), 3.20 (ddd, J = 12.6, 4.1, 2.2 Hz, 1H), 3.68 (s, 3H), 4.10 (br d, J = 10.9 Hz, 1H), 7.18-7.30 (m, 2H), 7.40 (dd, J = 7.0, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 8.10 (dd, J = 7.4, 1.0 Hz, 1H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75.4 MHz): δ 22.2, 24.9, 28.2, 30.4, 42.0, 46.7, 51.7, 54.1, 58.1, 83.8, 115.5, 116.0, 117.9, 122.6, 124.0, 129.1, 136.2, 136.7, 150.2, 175.1; Anal. Calcd for C₂₂H₂₈N₂O₄·3/2H₂O: C, 64.22; H, 7.46; N, 6.80. Found: C, 64.52; H, 7.16; N, 6.80.

Methyl cis-indolo[2,3-a]quinolizidine-2-carboxylate (15). Compound 14 (65 mg, 0.17 mmol) was dissolved in formic acid (10 mL), and the solution was stirred at 25 °C for 24 h. The resulting mixture was concentrated, and the residue dissolved in CH₂Cl₂. The organic solution was washed with 10% aqueous Na₂CO₃, dried, and concentrated to give a residue, which was chromatographed (9:1 Et₂O:MeOH) affording pure compound 15 (46 mg, 96%): ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ 1.71 (q, J = 12.3 Hz, 1H), 1.89 (qd, J = 12.3, 4.2 Hz, 1H), 2.03 (dm, J = 12.3 Hz, 1H), 2.33-2.44 (m, 2H), 2.51 (tt, J = 12.3, 3.8 Hz, 1H), 2.60 (td, J = 11.0, 4.7 Hz, 1H), 2.71 (dm, J = 14.4 Hz, 1H), 2.92-3.14 (m, 3H), 3.20 (dd, J = 11.5, 1.8 Hz, 1H), 3.71 (s, 3H),
7.07-7.13 (m, 2H), 7.25 (d, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.46 (d, J = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 8.01 (br s, 1H); $^{13}$C NMR (CDCl$_3$, 75.4 MHz): δ 21.6, 28.1, 32.2, 41.4, 51.9, 52.9, 54.7, 59.1, 108.3, 110.8, 118.1, 119.3, 121.4, 127.2, 134.1, 136.0, 175.0.

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References and Notes


17. Methyl 2-chloropyridine-4-carboxylate was prepared in 97% yield by treatment (reflux, 12 h) of methyl isonicotinate N-oxide (4.6 g, 30 mmol) with POCl₃ (11 mL) in CHCl₃ (11 mL).