

# Multicomponent Enantioselective Synthesis of Tetrahydropyridazinones Employing Chiral $\alpha,\beta$ -Unsaturated Acylammonium Salts

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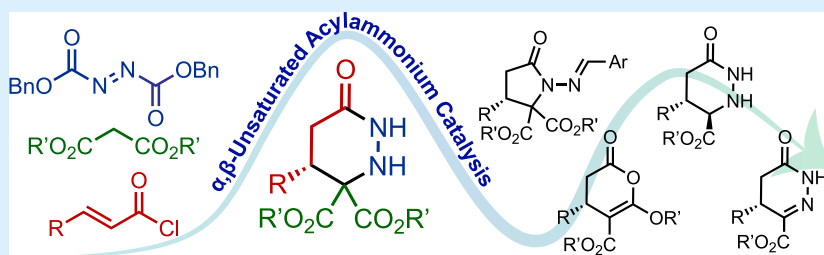
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**ABSTRACT:** An enantioselective three-component reaction was developed for the synthesis of tetrahydropyridazinones employing chiral  $\alpha,\beta$ -unsaturated acylammonium salts, malonates, and azodicarboxylates. An initial  $\alpha$ -amination of a malonate with an azodicarboxylate and a subsequent chiral Lewis-base-catalyzed Michael/proton transfer/lactamization process delivered optically active tetrahydropyridazinones (up to 99:1 er). Subsequent transformations of these adducts were explored, revealing some unexpected rearrangements, and the use of an allyl methyl malonate enabled a subsequent deallylative decarboxylation and the introduction of a second stereocenter.

Multicomponent reactions (MCRs) are defined as reactions involving three or more substrates combined into a one-pot transformation. In an ideal case, the majority, if not all, of the atoms of the starting materials should be incorporated into the product.<sup>1</sup> There are many advantages to MCRs over traditional multistep, sequential approaches, namely, the ability to build complex structures in a single pot, which significantly increases the reaction efficiency with regard to purification, labor, and cost of materials.<sup>1</sup> MCR strategies provide access to high chemical diversity, enabling the rapid development of compound libraries for the pharmaceutical and agrochemical industries.<sup>1–3</sup> Indeed, MCRs have been used since the advent of modern organic synthesis, with an initial revolutionary MCR being the Ugi four-component condensation.<sup>4</sup> First reported in 1959, this MCR subsequently led to the convergent synthesis of penicillin.<sup>5</sup> The first enantioselective three-component MCR process involving azodicarboxylates was reported in 2003 by Barbas and coworkers entailed a sequential  $\alpha$ -amination/aldol process.<sup>6</sup> The use of ketones and aldehydes is ubiquitous in such strategies through the use of enamine catalysis.<sup>7</sup> However, MCRs using tertiary amine, Lewis base catalysts remain rare.<sup>1</sup>

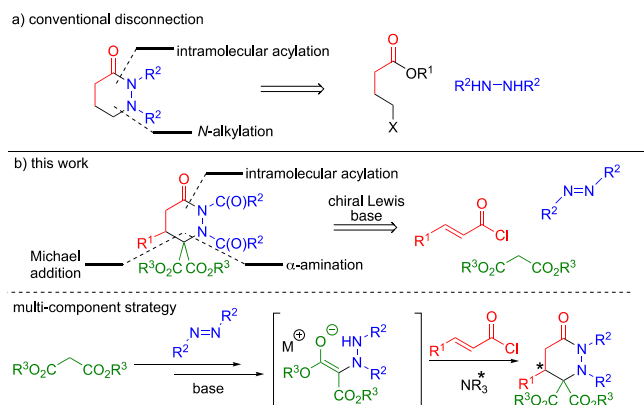
Chiral  $\alpha,\beta$ -unsaturated acylammonium salts have recently been recognized as useful intermediates for complexity-generating reactions.<sup>8,9</sup> First documented by Yamamura and coworkers in the 1960s,<sup>10</sup> these salts did not begin to be widely used in organocatalysis until 2006, when Fu and coworkers

published the use of acylammonium salts for asymmetric [3 + 2] annulations.<sup>11</sup> Since that time, several groups, including those of Smith,<sup>12</sup> Matsubara,<sup>13</sup> Birman,<sup>14</sup> Lupton<sup>15</sup> and ours,<sup>16–20</sup> have greatly expanded the utility of these versatile intermediates for enantioselective organocascade processes primarily employing chiral isothiourea catalysts developed by Birman and Smith.<sup>12,21,22,23</sup> We previously described a three-component MCR process for the synthesis of complex  $\beta$ -lactones through a Michael/Michael/aldol/ $\beta$ -lactonization (MMAL) sequence.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, we developed an enantioselective nucleophile (Lewis base)-catalyzed Michael addition/proton transfer/lactamization organocascade reaction for the synthesis of five- to eight-membered lactams.<sup>16,17</sup> Building on these precedents, we set out to study the synthesis of optically active tetrahydropyridazinones through acylammonium salt intermediates. Previously, these heterocycles have been synthesized via *N*-alkylation or reductive amination with hydrazine derivatives followed by intramolecular acylation (Figure 1a).<sup>24,25</sup> Among these methods, only a few employ MCRs,<sup>25</sup> and generally, these strategies do not lend themselves

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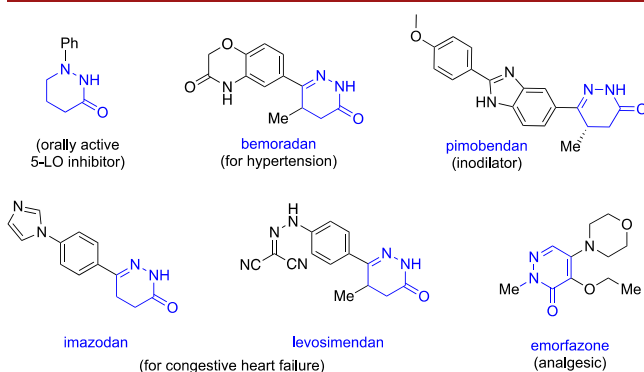




**Figure 1.** Synthesis of tetrahydropyridazinones. (a) Conventional disconnection toward tetrahydropyridazinones. (b) Current multi-component strategy to tetrahydropyridazinones employing chiral,  $\alpha,\beta$ -unsaturated acyl ammonium salts.

to asymmetric synthesis or the preparation of more complex tetrahydropyridazinones.

The pyridazinone nucleus is represented in a variety of pharmaceutical agents at various oxidation states, with many utilized to address cardiovascular disease (Figure 2). *N*-Phenyl

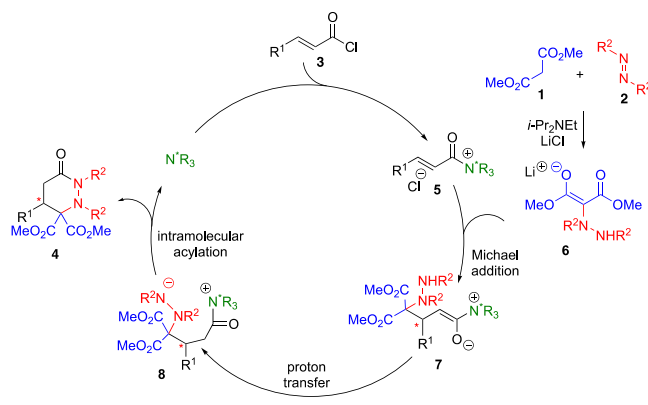


**Figure 2.** Examples of pharmaceutical agents possessing the pyridazinone nucleus at various oxidation states.

tetrahydropyridazinone is an orally active 5-lipoxygenase inhibitor.<sup>26</sup> Several 4-aryl-substituted dihydropyridazinones, including bemoradan as a racemate, are used for hypertension.<sup>27</sup> Pimobendan is used for heart disease in dogs, acting as an inodilator, a drug that serves as both a vasodilator and a muscle strengthening agent.<sup>26</sup> Other dihydropyridazinones include imazodan and levosimendan, which have utility as treatments for congestive heart failure. Finally, emorfazone, containing a fully oxidized aromatic pyridazinone as its core, is an analgesic.<sup>28</sup>

The potential of developing efficient routes to optically active, substituted pyridazinones, which have seen only limited interest,<sup>29–34</sup> provided a further impetus to study the described catalytic, asymmetric MCR involving unsaturated acyl ammonium catalysis. We envisioned a type of three-component MCR process, which may be more aptly named a sequential component process,<sup>35</sup> involving the initial *in situ*  $\alpha$ -amination of a malonate with an azodicarboxylate, leading to the formation of an  $\alpha$ -hydrazino malonate (Scheme 1). Subsequent proton transfers would lead to an asymmetric Michael addition of the derived hydrazino malonyl enolate **6** with various chiral, unsaturated acyl ammonium salt **5** to deliver

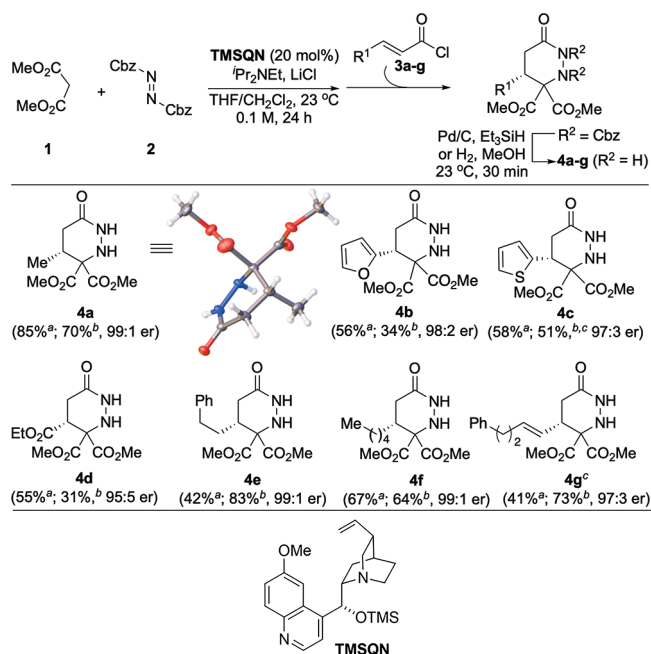
**Scheme 1.** Proposed Catalytic Cycle for a Three-Component MCR to Optically Active Tetrahydropyridazinones **4**



adduct **7**. Finally, proton transfer and intramolecular acylation would deliver the targeted optically active tetrahydropyridazinone **4**.

We started our investigations of this organocascade employing chiral  $\alpha,\beta$ -unsaturated acyl ammonium salts generated from acid chlorides (e.g. crotonyl chloride **3a**) and TMSQN, which were previously employed in our strategy toward both  $\gamma$ -lactams<sup>17</sup> and medium-sized lactams.<sup>16</sup> We studied the generation of the desired bis-nucleophile **6** under thermodynamic enolization conditions (LiCl, *i*-Pr<sub>2</sub>NEt) at ambient temperature (23 °C) to initiate addition to dibenzyl azodicarboxylate (**2**). Under these conditions, full conversion to the desired bis-nucleophile **6** was complete within ~10 min (as determined by thin layer chromatography). To our delight, under similar conditions previously reported for the nucleophile-catalyzed Michael/proton transfer/lactamization (NCMPL), the MCR between crotonyl chloride, dibenzyl azodicarboxylate, and dimethylmalonate delivered the tetrahydropyridazinone **4a** in 70% yield with 99:1 er after hydrogenolysis of the benzylcarbamate protecting groups. The presence of carbamate rotamers made nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) analysis difficult due to peak broadening. Thus initial adducts were directly submitted to hydrogenolysis to cleave the *N*-Cbz groups, thereby facilitating the characterization, including determination of the enantiomeric ratios, of the unprotected tetrahydropyridazinone. We briefly studied other solvents for this MCR, including CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> and toluene along with other catalysts, including benzotetramisole (BTM) and homobenzotetramisole (HBTM); however, these combinations led to inferior results. Therefore, further optimization was not pursued given that our original NCMPL conditions provided useful yields of the tetrahydropyridazinone **4a**.

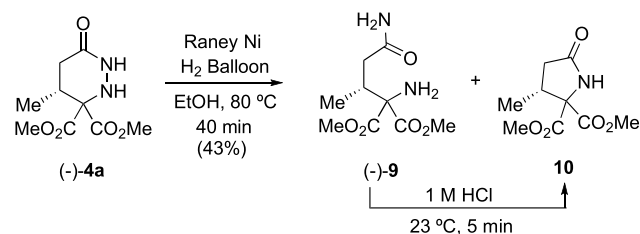
With this procedure in hand, we applied this method to a selection of unsaturated acid chlorides (Table 1). As noted above, directly subjecting adducts to hydrogenolysis to cleave the Cbz groups with Pd/C and either H<sub>2</sub> or Et<sub>3</sub>SiH simplified characterization of the tetrahydropyridazinones by removing-rotamers for NMR and chiral high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) analysis. Notably, we were able to employ  $\beta$ -heteroaromatic acyl chlorides such as  $\beta$ -furyl acryloyl chloride (**3b**) and  $\beta$ -thienyl acryloyl chloride (**3c**) in this MCR (MCR yields of 56 and 58%, respectively; 98:2 and 97:3 er, respectively). Furthermore, ethyl fumaroyl chloride (**3d**) provided the ester-substituted tetrahydropyridazinone **4d** in 31% yield (95:5 er). Although cinnamoyl chloride did not

**Table 1. MCR Employing Unsaturated Acylammoniums for the Synthesis of Tetrahydropyridazinones**

<sup>a</sup>Purified, isolated yield of the intermediate Cbz-protected tetrahydropyridazinones. <sup>b</sup>Purified, isolated yield of the Cbz-deprotected tetrahydropyridazinones 4a–g (enantiomeric ratio (er) was determined by chiral-phase HPLC following Cbz deprotection). <sup>c</sup>Cbz deprotection was carried out using trimethylsilyl iodide (TMSI).

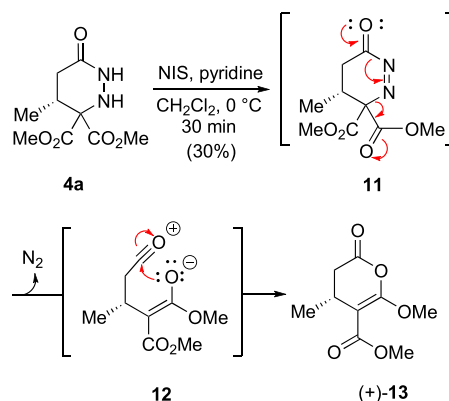
participate in this MCR,  $\beta$ -phenethyl acid chloride led to tetrahydropyridazinone 4e in 83% yield with 99:1 er. A fatty-acid-derived acyl chloride 3f from caprylic acid<sup>36</sup> also participated to afford the tetrahydropyridazinone 4f (64% yield, 99:1 er). The dienyl acid chloride 3g also successfully delivered the alkene-bearing tetrahydropyridazinone 4g in 73% yield with 97:3 er. The crystalline tetrahydropyridazinone 4a enabled structural confirmation by X-ray analysis (Table 1, inset). Other substituted cinnamoyl (*p*-OMe, *p*-F) and acryloyl chlorides ( $\beta$ -isopropyl,  $\beta$ -trifluoromethyl, and  $\beta$ -chloro) did not participate in this MCR. In addition, other diazene derivatives, namely, di-*t*-butyl azodicarboxylate (DBAD) and 4-phenyl-1,2,4-triazoline-3,5-dione (PTAD), did not lead to the corresponding tetrahydropyridazinones (see SI Figure S1, p S16).

We also studied further transformations of the derived tetrahydropyridazinones. Reductive cleavage of the N–N bond in tetrahydropyridazinone 4a with Raney nickel gave the  $\gamma$ -amino amide 9 in 43% yield (Scheme 2).<sup>32</sup> However, this

**Scheme 2. Cleavage of the N–N Bond of Tetrahydropyridazinone 4a and Facile Lactamization**

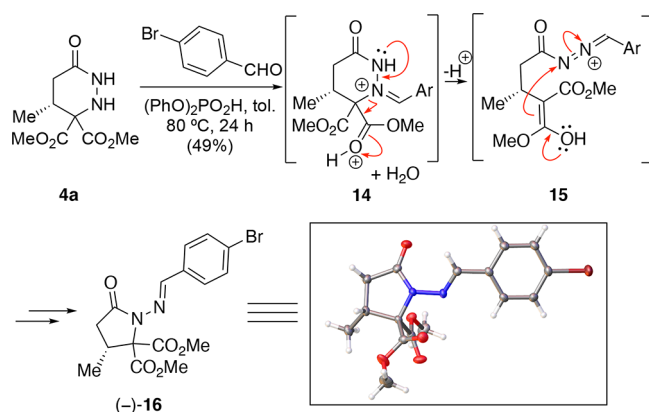
product was always accompanied by trace amounts of the corresponding  $\gamma$ -lactam 10 derived from facile lactamization with a loss of NH<sub>3</sub> under acidic conditions. Indeed, gas evolution and the distinct smell of NH<sub>3</sub> were first detected when CDCl<sub>3</sub> was added to the amino amide 9 for NMR analysis. Subsequently, we determined that full conversion to the  $\gamma$ -lactam 10 was possible upon stirring amino amide 9 with 1 M HCl for 5 min.

In an attempt to reoxidize the N–N bond to the diazene, treatment of tetrahydropyridazinone 4a with *N*-iodosuccinimide (NIS)<sup>37</sup> instead led to enol lactone 13 (30%, unoptimized, Scheme 3). This unexpected rearrangement

**Scheme 3. Oxidation of Tetrahydropyridazinone 4a and Rearrangement to Enol Lactone 13**

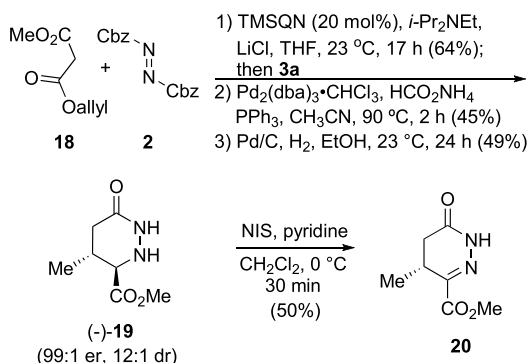
may be a result of the facile loss of N<sub>2</sub> gas from the targeted and presumed intermediate diazene 11. An additional driving force for the loss of N<sub>2</sub> is the stability of the derived malonate enolate, leading to the formation of the intermediate zwitterionic acylium ion/enolate 12. The acylium ion 12 could then undergo lactonization to give enol lactone 13. Interestingly, to the best of our knowledge, 6-alkoxy enol lactones similar to 13 have not been previously described in the literature. Whereas it would seem that this type of adduct could be obtained by the addition of malonates to acid chlorides, to date, we have found that this type of reaction leads only to C-acylation rather than Michael additions in attempted reactions with unsaturated acylammonium salts. On the contrary,  $\beta$ -ketoesters do provide 6-alkyl and 6-aryl enol lactones upon reaction with unsaturated acylammonium salts, as we previously described.<sup>17</sup>

We anticipated that subjecting 4a to a condensation with *p*-bromobenzaldehyde would deliver an azomethine ylide that might undergo a subsequent [3 + 2] cycloaddition;<sup>38</sup> however, condensation with *p*-bromobenzaldehyde resulted in the formation of a rearranged *N*-imino pyrrolidinone 16 (Scheme 4). This process may proceed through the initial formation of the targeted iminium 14; however, the facile cleavage of the C–N bond, driven by the stability of the derived malonate enol and the subsequent reclosure onto the electrophilic nitrogen, could deliver the observed *N*-imino  $\gamma$ -lactam 16. The structure of this unexpected rearranged product was verified by X-ray analysis (Scheme 4, inset). The presence of the heavy atom also confirmed the absolute stereochemistry and correlates with Michael additions we have previously reported employing TMSQN-derived unsaturated acylammonium salts.<sup>16,17</sup> The absolute stereochemistry of the other tetrahy-

**Scheme 4. Attempted Formation of an Azo-methine Ylide Leading to the *N*-Imino  $\gamma$ -Lactam 16**

dropyridazinones **4b–g** previously described was assigned by analogy.

We also sought to introduce a second stereocenter through the use of an allylmalonate-containing Michael donor that would enable a subsequent deallylative decarboxylation following the formation of the tetrahydropyridazinone. Indeed, directly subjecting the derived allyl methyl malonate tetrahydropyridazinone, obtained as an  $\sim$ 1:1 mixture of diastereomers, to conditions described by Tsuji<sup>39</sup> afforded the anti-disubstituted tetrahydropyridazinone **19** (12:1 dr) following Cbz deprotection (Scheme 5). The enantioselectivity observed in this sequence was in line with that of other MCRs described herein (99:1 er).

**Scheme 5. Deallylative Decarboxylation of an Allylmethyl-Malonate-Derived Tetrahydropyridazinone and Subsequent Oxidation**

Because the two unexpected rearrangements previously described could in part be due to the presence of the electron-withdrawing geminal diester moiety, we reinvestigated these reactions with monoester **19** derived from deallylative decarboxylation. The attempted condensation of monoester (-)-**19** with *p*-bromobenzaldehyde led to the same rearrangement previously observed (cf. Scheme 4; see the SI for further details, Scheme S1, p S16). However, the oxidation of monoester **19** with NIS led to the expected imine **20** in 50% yield, presumably derived from N–N oxidation and tautomerization. The derived dihydropyridazinone **20** is reminiscent of the heterocyclic cores found in the previously described pharmaceutical agents (cf. Figure 2).

In summary, we developed an enantioselective, sequential, three-component organocascade process enabling a one-pot synthesis of  $\beta$ -substituted, optically active tetrahydropyridazinones from azo dicarboxylates, malonates, and acid chlorides through the intermediacy of chiral,  $\alpha,\beta$ -unsaturated acylammonium salts. We studied several transformations of the derived tetrahydropyridazinones, which led to some unanticipated reactions. The attempted oxidation of tetrahydropyridazinone **4a** led to the rapid loss of N<sub>2</sub> gas and the formation of a novel 6-alkoxy enol lactone **13**. The attempted formation of an azomethine ylide from tetrahydropyridazinone **4a** led to an unexpected rearrangement to an *N*-imino  $\gamma$ -lactam. Finally, the use of allyl methyl malonate as a Michael donor enabled a subsequent deallylative decarboxylation and the introduction of a second stereocenter with 12:1 dr.

## ■ ASSOCIATED CONTENT

### Supporting Information

The Supporting Information is available free of charge at <https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/acs.orglett.1c02044>.

Experimental procedures including further optimization studies of the MCR toward tetrahydropyridazinones (Table S1) and X-ray diffraction and compound characterization (PDF)

## ■ Accession Codes

CCDC 2084772–2084773 contain the supplementary crystallographic data for this paper. These data can be obtained free of charge via [www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/data\\_request/cif](http://www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/data_request/cif), or by emailing [data\\_request@ccdc.cam.ac.uk](mailto:data_request@ccdc.cam.ac.uk), or by contacting The Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre, 12 Union Road, Cambridge CB2 1EZ, UK; fax: +44 1223 336033.

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### Author Contributions

The initial MCR process was performed by S.V. All authors contributed to the examples presented. S.A.K. performed many of the subsequent transformations of the tetrahydropyridazinones. R.J. identified the rearrangement to the enol lactone upon the attempted oxidation to the diazene. The manuscript was written through the contributions of all authors.

### Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

## ■ ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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