

# **New Perspectives in Oxazole Chemistry:** Synthesis and Cycloaddition Reactions of a 4-Nitro-2-phenyl Derivative<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

Whereas 4-nitroisoxazoles have been extensively investigated over the past century,<sup>2</sup> the corresponding oxazole derivatives remained practically unexplored in the same period,<sup>3</sup> probably due to the discouraging results achieved by different synthetic approaches. Since the 4-position of this heterocycle is quite resistant to direct electrophilic nitration,<sup>4</sup> a mercuration-iodination sequence followed by treatment of the resulting 4-halo derivative with nitrogen tetraoxide was examined with 2-methyl-5-phenyl- and 2-methyl-5-(p-chlorophenyl)oxazole, but the desired nitro compounds were obtained in 4-5% yields.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, although thermal isoxazole isomerization represents a well established and attractive entry into the oxazole system,<sup>6</sup> flash vacuum pyrolysis (FVP) of some 5-alkyl-3-methyl-4-nitro derivatives afforded only 1-cyano-1-nitroacetone in quantitative yields.7

In order to probe if this latter disappointing finding can be ascribed to the peculiar acidic properties of the substituents at position 5 rather than to a retarding effect of the NO<sub>2</sub> group on the ring closure of the intermediate nitrile ylide,<sup>7</sup> we decided to explore the FVP chemistry of 4-nitro-3-phenylisoxazole 1.

#### **Results and Discussion**

Attempts to obtain the 4-nitrooxazole 5 by FVP of 1 under different conditions were completely unsuccessful. Isoxazole 1 was recovered unchanged at 425 °C (1 Torr), and its progressive decomposition was observed at 550-700 °C (10<sup>-2</sup> Torr) without any appearance of the desired product. In contrast, prolonged heating of the same compound in boiling anisole (170 °C) afforded 5 in 35-40% yields.<sup>1</sup> Interestingly, this isomerization vanished for repeated experiments on more and more purified samples of 1, that were substantially stable under these

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due to increased decomposition processes. (10) The regiochemistry of these intermediates is arbitrarily por-

(8) Nesi, R.; Giomi, D.; Turchi, S.; Tedeschi, P.; Ponticelli, F. Gazz.

(9) Attemps to improve this value at the expense of the recovered

nitroisoxazole 1 (Experimental Section) by longer reaction times failed,

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conditions. Bearing in mind that the starting material was prepared by treatment of the corresponding 5-methoxycarbonyl derivative with concentrated HCl,<sup>8</sup> it appeared reasonable to account for the original results by adventitious acid catalysis. Indeed, when 1 was heated in xylene at 155 °C with a trace amount of the same acid, 4-nitro-2-phenyloxazole 5 was isolated in 29% absolute vield.9

Nitrogen protonation probably favors the cleavage of both N–O and C–C bonds in the intermediates 2 and 3, respectively, and the resulting nitrile ylide 4 is now able to convert into 5 despite the presence of the NO<sub>2</sub> group (Scheme 1).

The same electron-withdrawing substituent enabled the oxazole system to participate as a dienophile in normal [2 + 4] cycloaddition processes. Treatment of 5 with an excess of 2,3-dimethylbuta-1,3-diene (DMB) (6) in chloroform at 110 °C afforded predominantly the dihydrobenzoxazole 8 through the labile adduct 7, together with a minor amount of compound 9 that could be easily obtained from 8 and 2,3-dichloro-5,6-dicyano-1,4-benzoquinone (DDQ) (Scheme 2).

The nitro derivative 5 was found to react even at 40 °C both with cyclopentadiene (10) and 6,6-dimethylfulvene (13), leading in good yields to mixtures of the diastereomeric tricyclic systems **11** and **12**, and **14** and 15, respectively (Scheme 3). The former compounds were smoothly separated in chromatography, but efforts to isolate the more strained species 14 and 15 as pure products failed, due to their tendency to undergo retro Diels-Alder reactions.

Increasingly forcing conditions were required with cyclohexa-1,3-diene (16) and 2-pyrone (19), giving comparable amounts of 17 and 18 (overall yield 63%) and 2-phenylbenzoxazole (21) in 25% yield, respectively. The formation of the latter compound can be explained by a concomitant loss of carbon dioxide and nitrous acid from unstable primary adducts of type **20** (Scheme 4).<sup>10</sup>

In order to test the possibility of exploiting 5 for a new synthetic approach to oxazolopyridines, this species was allowed to react with 1-(dimethylamino)-3-methyl-1azabuta-1,3-diene (22). As a result of a [2 + 4] cycloaddition process followed by elimination of nitrous acid and dimethylamine from the labile intermediate 23, 6-methyl-2-phenyloxazolo[4,5-b]pyridine (24) was obtained in 30% yield (Scheme 5).

A quite different reaction course was observed on going from 22 to the uracil 25, previously employed as a 2-azadiene partner with electrophilic alkenes,<sup>11</sup> and we isolated the pyridopyrimidine system 28 in 67% yield. Ring-opening of the oxazoline moiety of the Michael adduct 26 now gives rise to the polyfunctionalized derivative **27** that leads to **28** by a  $6\pi$ -electron cyclization, followed by elimination of nitrous acid (Scheme 6).

Chim. Ital. 1993, 123, 633.

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<sup>(1)</sup> For a preliminary communication on a part of this work, see: Nesi, R.; Turchi, S.; Ğiomi, D.; Papaleo, S. J. Chem. Soc., Chem. Commun. 1993, 978.

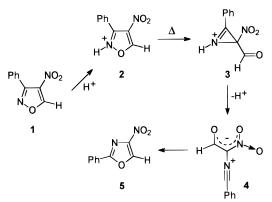
<sup>(2) (</sup>a) Boyer, J. H. *Nitroazoles. The C-Nitro Derivatives of Five-membered N- and N,O-Heterocycles*; Feuer, H., Ed.; VHC Publishers: New York, 1986; Chapter 5. (b) Grünanger, P.; Vita-Finzi, P. *Isoxazoles*, *The Chemistry of Heterocyclic Compounds*; Taylor, E. C., Ed.; Wiley-Interscience: New York, 1991; Vol. 49, Part 1, Chapter 1.

<sup>(3)</sup> Reference 2a, p 340.

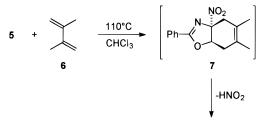
<sup>(4)</sup> Turchi, I. J. Oxazoles, The Chemistry of Heterocyclic Compounds;
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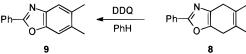
 <sup>(6)</sup> Reference 2b, p 285.
 (7) Perez, J. D.; Wunderlin, D. A. J. Org. Chem. 1987, 52, 3636.

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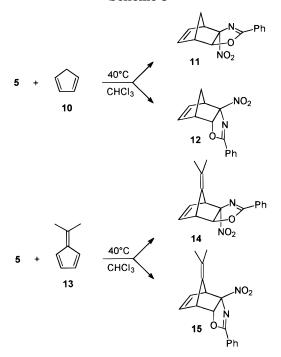


Scheme 2





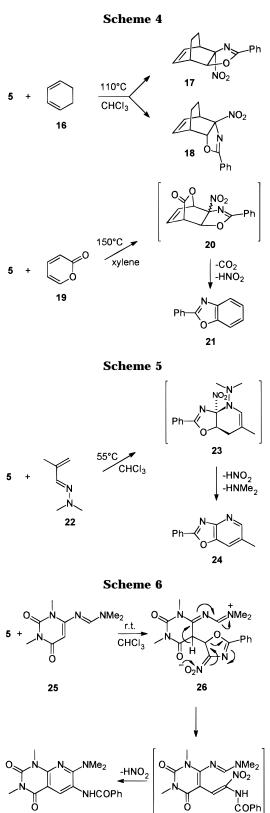
Scheme 3



Finally, treatment of 5 with diphenylnitrilimine (29) at room temperature afforded compound 31 in 49% yield through a regioselective 1,3-dipolar cycloaddition involving a primary adduct 30 that suffers from extrusion of nitrous acid (Scheme 7).

Whereas the regiochemistry of the bicyclic compound 24 was firmly established on the basis of the available <sup>13</sup>C NMR data for the different oxazolopyridine systems,<sup>12</sup> the stucture of 31 was suggested by comparison of the <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectrum with that of the corresponding





unequivocal N-methyl derivative.<sup>13</sup> The relative stereochemistry of the endo adducts 11, 14, and 17 and the exo isomers 12, 15, and 18 was inferred by a careful analysis of the shape of the H-2 resonance in the range  $\delta$  5.15–5.65 (Experimental Section). In particular, as a

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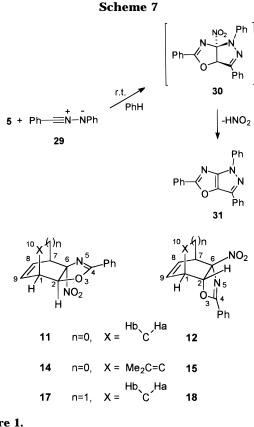
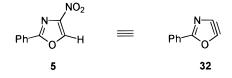


Figure 1.



## Figure 2.

consequence of different dihedral angles between the H-1 and H-2 protons, the corresponding  $J_{1,2}$  values increased (1.0 Hz vs 4.5 Hz) on going from the nitro derivatives **11** and **14** to **12** and **15**, respectively. On the other hand, COSY experiments on **11** and **17** clearly showed, although to a different extent, a diagnostic interaction of the *endo* H-2 with the bridge methylene H-b10 proton.

In conclusion, a practical route to a 4-nitrooxazole system **5** was devised for the first time, based on the acidcatalyzed thermal isomerization of the corresponding isoxazole derivative **1**. The former compound behaves both as a dienophile and a dipolarophile toward different  $4\pi$  counterparts and, in some instances, it can be formally regarded as a synthetic equivalent of the hetaryne **32** for direct carbo- and heteroannulations of the oxazole ring through tandem cycloaddition-elimination processes.

#### **Experimental Section**

**General.** Melting points are uncorrected. Unless otherwise stated, IR spectra were taken as dispersions in KBr, while <sup>1</sup>H and <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectra were recorded in CDCl<sub>3</sub> solutions at 200 MHz and 50 MHz, respectively. Silica gel plates (Merck F<sub>254</sub>) and silica gel 60 (Merck, 230–400 mesh) were used for TLC and flash chromatographies, respectively; petroleum ether and ligroin employed for chromatographic workup refer to the fractions of bp 40–70 °C and 75–120 °C, respectively. The raw products, obtained by evaporation to dryness under reduced pressure of the reaction mixtures, were dried over phosphorus pentoxide. The  $R_f$  values of the isolated compounds refer to the different solvent systems employed as eluents. Unless otherwise

indicated, the reactions of the nitrooxazole **5** were carried out in a screw-capped tube (Pyrex No. 13) on 1 mmol scale in the specified solvent (1 mL); magnetic stirring was adopted for those experiments performed at room temperature.

**4-Nitro-2-phenyloxazole (5).** A solution of the nitroisoxazole **1** (0.190 g, 1 mmol) in xylene (3 mL) containing a catalytic amount of concentrated aqueous HCl (37%, 2–3  $\mu$ L) was heated in a screw-capped tube (Pyrex No. 18) at 155 °C for 72 h. The brown residue was subjected to flash chromatography with toluene/ligroin (3:1 v/v) as eluent. After the unreacted **1** was recovered from the faster moving band ( $R_f$  = 0.48, 0.057 g), the slower one afforded compound **5** ( $R_f$  = 0.28, 0.056 g, 29%) that was crystallized from *n*-pentane as ivory-colored needles: mp 153–154 °C; IR 3163, 1608, 1561, 1513, and 1377 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta$  7.45–7.60 (m, 3H), 8.06–8.12 (m, 2H), 8.50 (s, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta$  125.15 (s), 127.0 (d), 129.1 (d), 132.2 (d), 137.7 (d), 149.4 (s), 161.5 (s). Anal. Calcd for C<sub>9</sub>H<sub>6</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>: C, 56.85; H, 3.18; N, 14.73. Found: C, 57.04; H, 3.22; N, 14.55.

**Cycloaddition Reactions of 5 with the Dienes 6, 10, and 16: Synthesis of Compounds 8, 9, 11, 12, 17, and 18. General Procedure.** A mixture of **5** and the reagent (5 mmol) in CHCl<sub>3</sub> was heated at the temperature indicated in the schemes until the starting material was completely consumed (TLC, <sup>1</sup>H NMR). The residue was resolved into two components by flash chromatography with toluene as eluent.

**A.** The first band gave 5,6-dimethyl-2-phenylbenzoxazole (9) as a white solid ( $R_f = 0.34$ , 0.030 g, 13%): mp 161–162 °C [after sublimation at 65–70 °C ( $10^{-2}$  Torr)]; IR 3059, 3030, 1620, 1585, and 1549 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta$  2.37 (s, 3H), 2.39 (s, 3H), 7.36 (s, 1H), 7.48–7.55 (m, 4H), 8.20–8.27 (m, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta$  20.2 (q), 20.6 (q), 110.85 (d), 120.0 (d), 127.0 (s), 127.4 (d), 128.8 (d), 131.1 (d), 133.3 (s), 134.3 (s), 140.2 (s), 149.4 (s), 162.3 (s). Anal. Calcd for C<sub>15</sub>H<sub>13</sub>NO: C, 80.69; H, 5.97; N, 6.27. Found: C, 80.46; H, 6.04; N, 5.97.

The slower moving fractions yielded 4,7-dihydro-5,6-dimethyl-2-phenylbenzoxazole (**8**) ( $R_f = 0.17$ , 0.160 g, 71%) that was crystallized from 30–50 °C petroleum ether as colorless needles: mp 148–148.5 °C; IR 3059, 3036, 1686, 1646, and 1546 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta$  1.79 (s, 6H), 3.25 (m, 4H), 7.39–7.48 (m, 3H), 7.98–8.05 (m, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta$  19.15 (q), 19.25 (q), 29.9 (t), 31.9 (t), 121.9 (s), 124.3 (s), 125.9 (d), 127.9 (s), 128.6 (d), 129.7 (d), 132.8 (s), 144.5 (s), 159.95 (s). Anal. Calcd for C<sub>15</sub>H<sub>15</sub>NO: C, 79.97; H, 6.71; N, 6.22. Found: C, 80.00; H, 6.82; N, 6.06.

**B.** The faster running band afforded (2*SR*,6*SR*)-6-nitro-4-phenyl-3-oxa-5-azatricyclo[5.2.1.0<sup>2.6</sup>]deca-4,8-diene (**11**) as ivorycolored crystals ( $R_i = 0.25$ , 0.049 g, 19%): mp 70–71 °C (from 30–50 °C petroleum ether); IR 3080, 2998, 1631, 1578, 1534, and 1350 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta$  1.73 (br, d, J = 10.2 Hz, 1H), 1.90 (dq, J = 10.2 and 2.0 Hz, 1H), 3.34–3.40 (m, 1H), 3.51–3.56 (m, 1H), 5.20 (dd, J = 2.0 and 1.0 Hz, 1H), 6.22 (dd, J = 5.7 and 3.0 Hz, 1H), 6.30 (dd, J = 5.7 and 2.8 Hz, 1H), 7.40–7.60 (m, 3H), 7.98–8.03 (m, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta$  43.7 (t), 47.9 (d), 49.5 (d), 87.2 (d), 171.0 (s). Anal. Calcd for C<sub>14</sub>H<sub>12</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>: C, 65.62; H, 4.72; N, 10.93. Found: C, 65.34; H, 4.79; N, 10.66.

The second one gave (2*RS*,6*RS*)-6-nitro-4-phenyl-3-oxa-5-azatricyclo[5.2.1.0<sup>2.6</sup>]deca-4,8-diene (**12**) as a colorless oil ( $R_f = 0.20, 0.169$  g, 66%): an analytical sample was obtained by dissolution in 30–50 °C petroleum ether, filtration, evaporation to dryness, and prolonged evacuation at room temperature ( $10^{-2}$  Torr); IR (liquid film) 3072, 1630, 1600, 1577, 1544, and 1350 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta$  1.78 (br d, J = 10.2 Hz, 1H), 1.90 (dt, J = 10.2 and 1.7 Hz, 1H), 3.41–3.48 (m, 1H), 3.82–3.88 (m, 1H), 5.65 (d, J = 4.5 Hz, 1H), 6.08–6.18 (m, 2H), 7.35–7.58 (m, 3H), 7.85–7.95 (m, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta$  44.3 (t), 45.9 (d), 51.6 (d), 87.6 (d), 121.5 (s), 125.9 (s), 128.5 (d), 128.9 (d), 132.7 (d), 134.2 (d), 136.0 (d), 169.0 (s). Anal. Calcd for C<sub>14</sub>H<sub>12</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>: C, 65.62; H, 4.72; N, 10.93. Found: C, 65.40; H, 4.94; N, 10.82.

**C.** (2*SR*,6*SR*)-6-Nitro-2-phenyl-3-oxa-5-azatricyclo[5.2.2.0<sup>2,6</sup>]undeca-4,8-diene (**17**) was obtained from the first fraction as a white solid ( $R_f$  = 0.22, 0.080 g, 30%): mp 89 °C (from 30–50 °C petroleum ether); IR 3070, 3057, 1628, 1579, 1546, and 1352 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta$  1.08–1.39 (m, 2H), 1.54–1.86 (m, 2H), 3.18– 3.27 (m, 1H), 3.61–3.68 (m, 1H), 5.15 (br d, *J* = 4.0 Hz, 1H), 6.26 (ddd, *J* = 8.1, 6.8, and 1.1 Hz, 1H), 6.46 (ddd, *J* = 8.1, 6.2, and 1.1 Hz, 1H), 7.42–7.62 (m, 3H), 8.01–8.08 (m, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta$  15.5 (t), 21.0 (t), 34.3 (d), 35.9 (d), 83.8 (d), 116.9 (s), 126.0 (s), 128.6 (d), 129.0 (d), 130.9 (d), 132.95 (d), 134.1 (d), 169.8 (s). Anal. Calcd for  $C_{15}H_{14}N_2O_3$ : C, 66.66; H, 5.22; N, 10.36. Found: C, 66.75; H, 5.33, N, 10.35.

The following band yielded (2*RS*,6*RS*)-6-nitro-4-phenyl-3-oxa-5-azatricyclo[5.2.2.0<sup>2.6</sup>]undeca-4,8-diene (**18**) ( $R_f$  = 0.15, 0.089 g, 33%) that was crystallized from *n*-pentane as colorless crystals: mp 114–115 °C; IR 3090, 3070, 3052, 1631, 1578, 1547, and 1351 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta$  1.23–1.79 (m, 4H), 3.18–3.27 (m, 1H), 3.60– 3.69 (m, 1H), 5.58 (d, *J* = 3.7 Hz, 1H), 6.11–6.26 (m, 2H), 7.35– 7.57 (m, 3H), 7.89–7.98 (m, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta$  19.2 (t), 19.35 (t), 33.7 (d), 37.7 (d), 83.3 (d), 117.3 (s), 125.7 (s), 128.4 (d), 128.9 (d), 130.6 (d), 131.8 (d), 132.7 (d), 169.2 (s). Anal. Calcd for C<sub>15</sub>H<sub>14</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>: C, 66.66; H, 5.22; N, 10.36. Found: C, 66.38; H, 5.20; N, 10.34.

**Conversion of the Dihydro Derivative 8 into 9.** A mixture of **8** (0.060 g, 0.27 mmol) and DDQ (0.067 g, 0.3 mmol) in anhydrous benzene (1 mL) was refluxed with stirring for 1 h. Chromatographic workup [petroleum ether/ethyl acetate (6:1 v/v)] of the brown solid left by evaporation to dryness gave **9** ( $R_f = 0.6, 0.057$  g, 95%).

**Reaction of 5 with 6,6-Dimethylfulvene (13).** The raw product coming from the reaction of **5** with **13** (0.53 g, 0.60 mL, 5 mmol) in CHCl<sub>3</sub> at 40 °C for 7 days was subjected to flash chromatography [petroleum ether/ethyl acetate (10:1 v/v)] to give a 12:1 mixture of (2*SR*,6*SR*)- and (2*RS*,6*RS*)-10-isopropylidene-6-nitro-4-phenyl-3-oxa-5-azatricyclo[5.2.1.0<sup>2.6</sup>]deca-4,8-diene (**14** and **15**) as a white solid ( $R_f = 0.44$ , 0.156 g, 53%): <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta$  1.49 (s, 3H), 1.51 (s, 3H), [1.63 (s, 3H)], [1.64 (s, 3H)], 3.82–3.87 (m, 1H), [3.88–3.92 (m, 1H)], 4.01–4.06 (m, 1H), [4.34–4.37 (m, 1H)], 5.22 (d, J = 1.0 Hz, 1H), [5.52 (d, J = 4.5 Hz, 1H)], [6.24–6.27 (m, 2H)], 6.29–6.40 (m, 2H), 7.35–7.58 (m, 3H), 7.88-7.94 (m, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta$  19.5 (q), [19.7 (q)], 20.0 (q), [29.6 (q)], [46.6 (d)], 49.35 (d), [50.9 (d)], 51.5 (d), [86.5 (d)], 86.7 (d), 119.8 (s), 120.3 (s), 126.1 (s), 128.5 (d), 128.7 (d), 132.6 (d), 135.0 (d), 136.25 (d), 160.7 (s), 169.55 (s).<sup>14</sup>

Some unreacted **5** was recovered from the slower running fractions ( $R_f = 0.30$ , 0.030 g).

**Cycloaddition of 5 with 2-Pyrone (19).** Compound **5** was heated with **19** (0.49 g, 0.4 mL, 5 mmol) in xylene at 150 °C for 48 h; the brown residue was purified by flash chromatography [petroleum ether/ethyl acetate (10:1 v/v)] to give 2-phenylbenzoxazole (**21**) as a white solid ( $R_f$ = 0.53, 0.040 g, 21%): mp 101–102 °C [after sublimation at 50 °C (10<sup>-2</sup> Torr)] (lit.<sup>15</sup> mp 102 °C).

6-Methyl-2-phenyloxazolo[4,5-b]pyridine (24). A mixture of 5 and 22<sup>16</sup> (0.34 g, 3 mmol) in CHCl<sub>3</sub> was heated at 55 °C for

48 h; chromatographic workup [petroleum ether/ethyl acetate (3:1 v/v)] of the residue afforded compound **24** ( $R_f = 0.22$ , 0.060 g, 29%) that was crystallized from ether as colorless flakes: mp 157–158 °C; IR 3059, 3035, 1611, and 1546 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta$  2.51 (t, J = 0.7 Hz, 3H), 7.51–7.58 (m, 3H), 7.68 (m, 1H), 8.28–8.33 (m, 2H), 8.42 (m, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta$  18.8 (q), 118.4 (d), 126.6 (s), 127.9 (d), 128.9 (d), 130.4 (s), 132.1 (d), 143.1 (s), 147.3 (d), 154.3 (s), 164.95 (s). Anal. Calcd for C<sub>13</sub>H<sub>10</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O: C, 74.27; H, 4.79; N, 13.32. Found: C, 73.98; H, 4.74; N, 13.32.

**6**-(Benzoylamino)-1,3-dimethyl-7-(dimethylamino)pyrido-[2,3-*d*]pyrimidine-2,4(1*H*,3*H*)-dione (28). A mixture of 5 and the uracil 25<sup>17</sup> (0.63 g, 3 mmol) in CHCl<sub>3</sub> was stirred at room temperature for 96 h; the raw product was subjected to flash chromatography with ethyl acetate/petroleum ether (3:1 v/v) as eluent to give compound 28 ( $R_f = 0.5, 0.236$  g, 67%) that was crystallized from CHCl<sub>3</sub> as white needles: mp 224–225 °C; IR 3487, 3420, 3212, 1694, 1650, and 1639 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (DMSO- $d_6$ )  $\delta$  3.14 (s, 6H), 3.25 (s, 3H), 3.50 (s, 3H), 7.48–7.62 (m, 3H), 7.83 (s, 1H), 7.96-8.05 (m, 2H), 10.11(br s, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (DMSO- $d_6$ )  $\delta$  28.0 (q), 29.1 (q), 40.1 (q), 99.6 (s), 115.4 (s), 127.9 (d), 128.8 (d), 132.0 (d), 133.9 (s), 137.6 (d), 148.3 (s), 151.6 (s), 158.3 (s), 160.3 (s), 166.1 (s). Anal. Calcd for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>19</sub>N<sub>5</sub>O<sub>3</sub>: C, 61.18; H, 5.42; N, 19.82. Found: C, 60.97; H, 5.73; N, 19.76.

**1,3,5-Triphenyl-1***H***-pyrazolo**[**3,4-***d***]oxazole** (**31**). Triethylamine (0.304 g, 0.42 mL, 3 mmol) was added dropwise to a solution of **5** and *N*-phenylbenzoylhydrazonoyl chloride<sup>18</sup> (0.69 g, 3 mmol) in anhydrous benzene (4 mL), and the mixture was stirred at room temperature for 24 h. After removal of the solid by filtration, the organic solution was evaporated to dryness; chromatographic workup of the residue with ligroin/toluene (5:4 v/v) as eluent afforded the tricyclic derivative **31** ( $R_f$  = 0.40, 0.165 g, 49%) that was crystallized from acetone as white needles: mp 234 °C; IR 3060, 3040, 1599, 1570, and 1538 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta$ 7.20–7.57 (m, 9H), 8.08–8.32 (m, 6H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz)  $\delta$ 117.7 (d), 125.55 (d), 126.2 (d), 127.2 (d), 127.65 (s), 128.5 (d), 128.8 (d), 128.9 (d), 129.3 (d), 130.6 (s), 131.5 (d), 132.05 (s), 139.1 (s), 139.5 (s), 150.1 (s), 167.8 (s). Anal. Calcd for C<sub>22</sub>H<sub>15</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O: C, 78.32; H, 4.48; N, 12.45. Found: C, 78.26; H, 4.53; N, 12.67.

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<sup>(14)</sup> The values in square brackets refer to the most evident resonances of the minor diastereoisomer.

<sup>(15)</sup> Cohen, V. I. J. Heterocycl. Chem. 1979, 16, 13.

<sup>(16)</sup> Waldner, A. Helv. Chim. Acta 1988, 71, 486.