Mechanistic Study of Pyrazole Synthesis via Oxidation-Induced N-N Coupling of Diazatitanacycles

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Supporting Information

NMR Characterization of 3	S2
NMR Characterization of 1-dimer	
TEMPO Oxidation of 1	
TEMPO Oxidation of 3	
TEMPO Oxidation of 1-dimer	
FcCl Oxidation of 1 and 3	
FcBArF Oxidation of 1 and 3	
Oxidation of 1 with (NEt ₄) ₂ CeCl ₆	
Standard Procedure for ¹ H NMR Monitoring Kinetic Studies	
Time Adjustment Experiment and Analysis	
Variable Time Normalization Analysis on ${f 1}$	
Variable Time Normalization Analysis on Pyridine	
Initial Rate Measurements on TEMPO	
Cyclic Voltammetry	
DOSY of 1 and 1-dimer	
XRD Data of 1-dimer	
References	

NMR Characterization of 3



Figure S1. ¹H (left) and ¹³C (right) signal assignments of **3**. Colors are labelled for clarity purpose to indicate the ring that the chemical shifts correspond to.

We sought evidence of the restricted rotation of *N*-phenyl on **3** from NOESY NMR spectrometry. As we expected, a through-space interaction between α -H of bpy and 2-H of *N*-phenyl was observed in the NOESY spectrum of **3**. In addition, the EXSY signals of the *N*-phenyl on its 2-H vs. 6-H and 3-H vs. 5-H indicate that these hydrogens are in exchange of one another. Together with the distinguishable chemical shift differences of the aforementioned hydrogens, these results provide strong evidence on the restricted rotation of *N*-phenyl.

To our surprise, EXSY signals were also found between the two pyridines of the bpy ligand on the NOESY spectrum of **3**, indicating that the bpy can undergo self-exchange between the two pyridines. This shows that bpy is a hemilabile ligand on **3**. On the other hand, the differences in ¹H and ¹³C chemical shifts clearly indicates that the two pyridines are chemically inequivalent due to trans effect, which requires a strong coordination to Ti. It can be deduced that the bpy ligand on **3** is largely intact on Ti with a weak self-exchange at room temperature, while under elevated temperature the hemilability could be enhanced and eventually lead to the dissociation of the bpy ligand.





Figure S3. ¹³C{¹H} NMR spectrum of **3** (CD₂Cl₂, 101 MHz).



Figure S4. ¹H COSY NMR spectrum of **3** in CD₂Cl₂.



Figure S5. ¹H-¹³C HSQC NMR spectrum of **3** in CD₂Cl₂.



Figure S6. Aromatic region of ¹H-¹³C HSQC NMR spectrum of 3 in CD₂Cl₂.



Figure S7. ¹H-¹³C HMBC NMR spectrum of **3** in CD₂Cl₂.



Figure S8. ¹³C downfield region of ¹H-¹³C HMBC NMR spectrum of **3** in CD₂Cl₂.



Figure S9. NOESY NMR spectrum of **3** in CD₂Cl₂ (full spectrum).

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7.0

ο⁰ 9.6 9.4 9.2 9.0 8.8 8.6 8.4 8.2 8.0 7.8 7.6 7.4 7.2 1H (ppm) 9.0

9.5

6.8 6.6 6.4 6.2 6.0 5.8 5.6 5.4 5.2 5.0

Figure S10. Aromatic region of NOESY NMR spectrum of **3** in CD₂Cl₂. Anti-phase NOESY and in-phase EXSY signal are labeled in corresponding colored circles denoting the modes of interaction. Signals on only one side of the diagonal are labeled for clarity purpose.

NMR Characterization of 1-dimer

Limited by the sample concentration, ¹³C NMR signal of quaternary carbons were assigned with the assistance of ¹H-¹³C HSQC and HMBC spectra.

Figure S11. ¹H NMR spectrum of 1-dimer (C₆D₆, 400 MHz) in the C₆D₆ solution of the mixture.

Figure S12. ¹³C{¹H} NMR spectrum of **1-dimer** (C₆D₆, 125 MHz) in the C₆D₆ solution of the mixture and signal assignments. Chemical shifts in maroon were observed in ¹³C{¹H} NMR spectrum. Chemical shifts in teal were determined *via* ¹H-¹³C HMBC spectrum.

Figure S13. $^{1}H^{-13}C$ HSQC NMR spectrum of **1-dimer** in the C₆D₆ solution of the mixture.

Figure S14. ¹H-¹³C HMBC NMR spectrum of **1-dimer** in the C₆D₆ solution of the mixture.

Figure S15. Aromatic region of ${}^{1}H{}^{-13}C$ HMBC NMR spectrum of 1-dimer in the C₆D₆ solution of the

mixture.

TEMPO Oxidation of 1

p-T	Py py Clin, Ti Cl Ph N Ti N Et Me 1	2 TEMI solvent	PO , T N p-Tol	Ph I N Et Me 2
entry	solvent	T (°C)	time (h)	yield (%)
1	C_6D_6	50	2	92
2	C_6D_6	35	5 (22)	61 (76)
3	C_6D_6	r.t.	2	29
4	CD_2Cl_2	50	5 (22)	77 (82)
5	$1,2-Cl_2C_2H_4$	50	2	99

Table S1. TEMPO oxidation of **1** under various conditions. Extended time reaction conditions and yields are noted in parentheses.

1 (5.5 mg, 0.01 mmol, 1.0 equiv), TEMPO (3.1 mg, 0.02 mmol, 2.0 equiv), internal standard (entries 1, 3, 5: TMB, 5.0 mg, 0.03 mmol; entries 2, 4: HMDSO, 0.008 mmol, in 0.01 mL stock solution in C_6D_6), and 0.5 mL solvent were added to an NMR tube in the glovebox. The NMR tube was capped and placed in the oil bath at corresponding temperature. ¹H NMR spectra were collected before and after the reaction. The reaction product **2** matched up with the reported chemical shifts.¹ The reaction yields were determined *via* ¹H NMR against the internal standard.

Example NMR spectra are listed below.

Figure S16. Time = 2 hours ¹H NMR spectrum of TEMPO oxidation of **1** in C_6D_6 at 50 °C (entry 1). Peaks for yield calculation are labelled with chemical shifts and structural assignments.

Figure S17. Stacked ¹H NMR spectra of TEMPO oxidation of 1 in C₆D₆ at 50 °C (entry 1). Top: time = 15

minutes. Bottom: time = 2 hours.

TEMPO Oxidation of 3

3 (5.5 mg, 0.01 mmol, 1.0 equiv), TEMPO (3.7 mg, 0.024 mmol, 2.4 equiv), TMB (5.0 mg, 0.03 mmol, internal standard), and 0.5 mL solvent ($CH_2Cl_2 \text{ or } 1,2-Cl_2C_2H_4$) were added to an NMR tube in the glovebox. The NMR tube was capped and placed in the oil bath at corresponding temperature (50 °C or 90 °C) for 22 hours. ¹H NMR spectra were collected before and after the reaction. The reaction yields were determined *via* No-D ¹H NMR against the internal standard TMB.

Figure S18. Stacked No-D ¹H NMR spectra of TEMPO oxidation of 3 in CH₂Cl₂ at 50 °C.

Figure S19. Stacked No-D ¹H NMR spectra of TEMPO oxidation of 3 in 1,2-Cl₂C₂H₄ at 90 °C.

TEMPO Oxidation of 1-dimer

The product mixture solution in C_6D_6 from the reaction between **1** and TiCl₄ was diluted to 0.5 mL and added to an NMR tube in the glovebox. This solution contains **1-dimer** (0.0034 mmol, determined by ¹H NMR against internal standard, 1.0 equiv) and HMDSO (0.008 mmol). TEMPO (0.02 mmol, 6 equiv.) was added to the NMR tube before the tube was capped and shaken vigorously to ensure the thorough mixing. ¹H NMR was collected at 20 minutes. Due to the rapid reaction, time = 0 NMR was unable to be collected. Time = 30 minutes, 10 h and 20 h NMR spectra were also collected, while only minor changes have been observed. The reaction product **2** matched up with the reported chemical shifts.¹ The reaction yields were determined *via* ¹H NMR against the internal standard HMDSO.

Figure S20. Time = 20 minutes ¹H NMR spectrum of TEMPO oxidation of **1-dimer** in C₆D₆.

FcCl Oxidation of 1 and 3

1 or **3** (0.01 mmol, 1.0 equiv), ferrocenium chloride (FcCl, 4.4 mg, 0.02 mmol, 2 equiv), 0.5 mL CH₂Cl₂, and a stir bar were added to a 4 mL scintillation vial in the glovebox. The vial was capped and heated at 50 °C for 22 hours. TMB (1.7 mg, 0.01 mmol, internal NMR standard) was added after the reaction mixture cooled down to room temperature and taken out of the glovebox. The reaction yield was determined *via* No-D ¹H NMR in CH₂Cl₂ against the internal standard TMB.

Figure S21. Stacked No-D ¹H NMR spectra of FcCl oxidation of (top) **1** and (bottom) **3** in CH_2Cl_2 after the addition of TMB.

FcBArF Oxidation of 1 and 3

1 or **3** (0.01 mmol, 1.0 equiv), ferrocenium BArF salt (FcBArF, BArF = tetrakis(3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)phenyl)borate, 21.0 mg, 0.02 mmol, 2 equiv), 0.5 mL CH₂Cl₂, and a stir bar were added to a 4 mL scintillation vial in the glovebox. The vial was capped and heated at 50 °C for 22 hours. TMB (1.7 mg, 0.01 mmol, internal NMR standard) was added after the reaction mixture cooled down to room temperature and taken out of the glovebox. The reaction mixture was then extracted between CH₂Cl₂/H₂O. The organic phase was evaporated after being dried over MgSO₄. The reaction yield was determined *via* ¹H NMR in C₆D₆ against the internal standard TMB.

Figure S22. Stacked ¹H NMR spectra of FcBArF oxidation of (top) **1** and (middle) **3** in C_6D_6 after aqueous workup, and (bottom) TEMPO oxidation of **1** (Table S1 entry 1) in C_6D_6 as a comparison.

Oxidation of 1 with (NEt₄)₂CeCl₆

1 (13.8 mg, 0.025 mmol, 1.0 equiv), (NEt₄)₂CeCl₆ (30.7 mg, 0.05 mmol, 2.0 equiv), TMB (5.0 mg, 0.03 mmol, internal standard), 0.5 mL CD₃CN, and a stir bar were added to a 4 mL scintillation vial in the glovebox. The vial was capped, taken out of the glovebox, and stir in the dark at room temperature for 20 hours. The reaction mixture was then transferred into an NMR tube in the glovebox, and the reaction yield was determined *via* ¹H NMR against the internal standard TMB.

Figure S23. ¹H NMR spectrum of (NEt₄)₂CeCl₆ oxidation of 1 in CD3CN.

Standard Procedure for ¹H NMR Monitoring Kinetic Studies

TEMPO oxidation of **1** at room temperature (Table S1, entry 3) revealed that **1** could undergo Ti-mediated pyrazole synthesis with TEMPO slowly without heating. To obtain the optimal t = 0 data, cooling was applied to the reaction mixture to decelerate this reaction before the measurement took place.

Standard Procedure:

J-Young NMR tube was cooled in a pre-cooled cold well (coolant: dry ice/acetone) in the glovebox for 30 minutes. C_6D_6 stock solution of **1** (0.020 mol/L), HMDSO (internal standard, 50 µL, 0.008 mol/L), and TEMPO (0.160 mol/L) were added with syringe in order. The solution was immediately frozen due to the low temperature of the pre-cooled J-Young NMR tube and high melting point of C_6D_6 , preventing **1** from reacting with TEMPO prior to the NMR monitoring experiment. C_6D_6 was further added till the volume of the reaction solution was 400 µL. The NMR tube was capped, quickly taken out of the glovebox, and immediately cooled in an ice water bath. The reaction mixture was kept frozen during the temperature calibration of the NMR spectrometer. Shimming was performed on a C_6D_6 solution of **1**. When switching to samples for monitoring experiments, shimming was not performed again in order to shorten the time interval between t = 0 and the 1st acquisition. Before the measurement, the NMR tube was taken out of the ice water bath, allowed to warm up in a 35 °C bath for 20 seconds, shaken to mix the reactants, and injected

into the NMR spectrometer. A timer was started when the NMR tube was taken out of the ice water bath to obtain a relatively accurate t = 0 time point. Multiple acquisitions were performed in automatic mode in 30 seconds interval (dummy scan = 0, number of scan = 1, acquisition time = 5 s, delay = 20 s, idle time = 5 s). The ¹H NMR spectra were processed using batch integration (MestReNova, integrals graph). The concentration of **1** and **2** were obtained from their peak integrals against the peak integral of HMDSO.

Figure S24. Process of example ¹H NMR kinetic trace from entry 1, Table SXXX. (Top left) spectrum of an example time point (the 38th time point is shown in the spectrum). (Top right) peak integral versus time plot of HMDSO (red trace), **1** (green trace), and **2** (yellow trace). (Bottom) stacked spectra of the kinetic trace with batch integration of HMDSO, **1** and **2**.

Time Adjustment Experiment and Analysis

Table S2. Conditions of the time adjustment experiment.

The measurements were performed following Standard Procedure under the conditions in the table

above. The consumption of **1** was monitored *via* ¹H NMR, and the concentration of **1** was plotted against reaction time. "Time adjusted" trace of entry 2 was obtained by plotting the consumption profile in entry 2 against an adjusted time profile (t' = t + 1600, in seconds) to allow the starting coordinate of the "time adjusted" trace locates on the trace of entry 1. The overlap of the trace of entry 1 and the "time adjusted" trace suggested that product inhibition and side reactions are kinetically insignificant in this reaction system.

Figure S25. Concentration of 1 vs. time plots of entries 1, 2, and "time adjusted".

Variable Time Normalization Analysis on 1

Variable time normalization analysis (VTNA) with varied concentration of **1** was performed for determination of reaction order of **1**:

Table S3. Conditions of the VTNA experiments for reaction order of 1.

The measurements were performed following **Standard Procedure** under the conditions in the table above. The formation of **2** was monitored *via* ¹H NMR. The concentration of **2** (approximated via the trapezoid rule) was plotted against an adjusted time scale $\sum [\mathbf{1}]^{\alpha} \Delta t$ with

$$\sum [\mathbf{1}]^{\alpha} \Delta t = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left(\frac{[\mathbf{1}]_{i} + [\mathbf{1}]_{i-1}}{2} \right)^{\alpha} (t_{i} - t_{i-1})$$

where α is the order of dependence on **1** and *t* is the reaction time.^{5–7} The reaction order of **1** was obtained by adjusting α to allow the kinetic traces of entries 1-3 visually overlapped. $\alpha = 0.7$ was found to give the best overlapped of the kinetic traces. Three characteristic VTNA plots ($\alpha = 0, 0.5, 0.7, 1$) and the raw data in [**2**] versus time plot are shown below.

Figure S26. VTNA plots with α = (a) 0, (b) 0.5, (c) 0.7, (d) 1, and (e) the raw data in [2] versus time plot.

Variable Time Normalization Analysis on Pyridine

VTNA with varied concentration of pyridine was performed for determination of reaction order of pyridine:

Table S4. Conditions of the VTNA experiments for reaction order of pyridine.

The measurements were performed following **Standard Procedure** under the conditions in the table above. The formation of **2** was monitored *via* ¹H NMR. The concentration of pyridine (noted as [py]) was monitored *via* ¹H NMR. The concentration of **2** (approximated via the trapezoid rule) was plotted against an adjusted time scale $\sum [py]^{\alpha} \Delta t$ with

$$\sum [py]^{\alpha} \Delta t = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left(\frac{[py]_i + [py]_{i-1}}{2} \right)^{\alpha} (t_i - t_{i-1})$$

where α is the order of dependence on pyridine and t is the reaction time.^{5–7} The reaction order of pyridine was obtained by adjusting α to allow the kinetic traces of entries 1-3 visually overlapped. α = -2.5 was found to give the best overlapped of the kinetic traces. Three characteristic VTNA plots (α = 0, -1, -2, -2.5, -3) and the raw data in [**2**] versus time plot are shown below.

Figure S27. VTNA plots with α = (a) 0, (b) -1, (c) -2, (d) -2.5, (e) -3, and (f) the raw data in [**2**] versus time plot.

Initial Rate Measurements on TEMPO

Initial rate measurement with varied concentration of TEMPO for determination of reaction order of TEMPO:

<i>p</i> -Tol≦	py py Cl//, TI Cl Ph N I Ft Me	TEMPO C ₆ D ₆	$\xrightarrow{\text{monitoring}}_{, 35 ^{\circ}\text{C}} \xrightarrow{\text{Ph}}_{\text{I}} \xrightarrow{\text{N}}_{\text{Et}}$
	0.01 mmol	x mmol	2
entry	[1] (mol/L)	[TEMPO] (mol/L)	(d[2]/dt) _{int} (10 ⁻⁶ mol/(L*s))
1	0.010	0.020	4.51281
2	0.010	0.016	4.27914
3	0.010	0.020	4.43008
4	0.010	0.020	4.00074
5	0.010	0.012	3.38525
6	0.010	0.008	2.04410
7	0.010	0.004	1.23593
8	0.010	0.024	5.13483
9	0.010	0.028	5.84779
10	0.010	0.024	4.99294
11	0.010	0.016	3.30507
12	0.010	0.012	2.91090
13	0.010	0.008	2.15967
14	0.010	0.004	1.01667
15	0.010	0.028	5.53663
16	0.010	0.028	6.92910

17	0.010	0.024	5.27840
18	0.010	0.016	3.30628
19	0.010	0.012	2.49613

Table S5. Conditions and results of the initial rates measurement for reaction order of TEMPO.

The measurements were performed following **Standard Procedure** under the conditions in the table above. The formation of **2** was monitored *via* ¹H NMR. The concentration of **2** was plotted against reaction time. Initial rates of the formation of **2**, known as $d[\mathbf{2}]/dt$ _{int}, were obtained from the slope of the linear function fitting curve of each entry. $d[\mathbf{2}]/dt$ _{int} was then plotted against [TEMPO], and the experimental reaction order of TEMPO can be obtained from the power function fitting of the plot as 0.87.

Figure S28. Initial rates versus concentrations of TEMPO plot and the power fitting result.

Cyclic Voltammetry

Cyclic voltammetry of **1** was collected in CH_2Cl_2 with 0.1 M TBABArF as electrolyte at scan rate = 200 mV/s. Fc was used as potential reference which was then converted to SCE based on reported Fc^{0/+} couple vs. SCE in $CH_2Cl_2.^8$

Figure S29. Cyclic voltammetry of 1 in CH₂Cl₂ with 0.1 M TBABArF.

DOSY of 1 and 1-dimer

DOSY NMR spectra were collected with first gradient amplitude = 2%, final gradient amplitude = 98%, number of points = 19 and linear ramp type. DOSY transformation was performed using Bayesian method with resolution factor = 1 and repetitions = 2. Estimated molecular weight (MW) was obtained by subjecting the diffusion coefficient (*D*) from DOSY spectra to SEGWE calculator (Manchester NMR Methodology Group, https://nmr.chemistry.manchester.ac.uk/?q=node/432).^{9,10} DOSY spectra of **1** were collected at two concentrations: (1) 0.010 mol/L **1** in C₆D₆ and (2) 0.003 mol/L **1** in C₆D₆. DOSY spectrum of **1-dimer** was collected from a C₆D₆ solution diluted from the product solution mixture from the reaction between **1** and TiCl₄, which contained 0.010 mol/L **1-dimer** in C₆D₆. DOSY of **3** was not collected due to the low solubility of **3** in C₆D₆. **3** is soluble CD₂Cl₂, however the estimated MW of **3** based on its DOSY in CD₂Cl₂ was inaccurate due to the low viscosity of CD₂Cl₂.

Figure S30. Proposed species found in DOSY studies and their MW.

Figure S31. DOSY NMR spectrum of 0.010 mol/L 1 in C₆D₆.

Figure S32. DOSY NMR spectrum of 0.003 mol/L 1 in C₆D₆.

Figure S33. DOSY NMR spectrum of 0.010 mol/L 1-dimer in C₆D₆.

XRD Data of 1-dimer

Figure S34. ORTEP diagram of 1-dimer. Thermal ellipsoids are drawn at 50% probability.

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