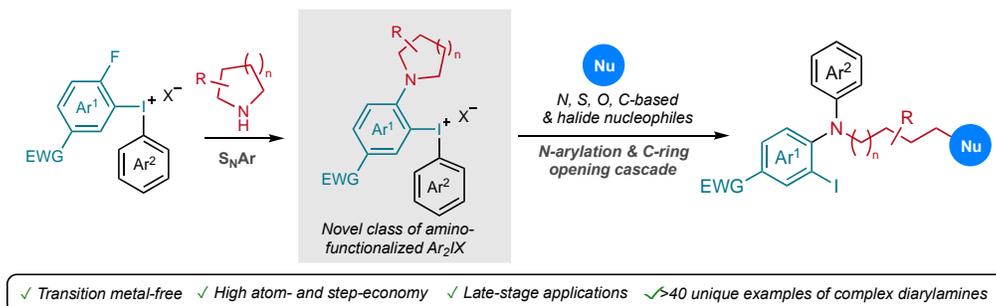


# Synthesis of Highly Functionalized Diarylamines through an *N*-, *C*-Cascade Reaction via Ammonium Salts

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**ABSTRACT:** The diarylation and skeletal diversification of unstrained cyclic amines was exploited to expand and modify the favorable properties of this important substrate class with pivotal roles in drug discovery. Cyclic amines were employed in the synthesis of a novel class of amino-substituted diaryliodonium salts, which were converted to highly functionalized diarylamines through an atom-efficient one-pot *N*-arylation/ ring opening reaction with external nucleophiles. The reaction proceeds through the *in situ* formation of a diarylammonium intermediate that undergoes a nucleophilic ring opening by cleavage of the strong *C*-*N* bond. A wide variety of diarylamines was obtained through introduction of two different aryl groups of varied electronics, and the retained iodo-substituent enables downfield diversifications of the products. More than 20 nucleophiles, including amines, phenols, carboxylic acids, thiols and halides, were alkylated with high functional group tolerance, and the strategy could be utilized in late-stage functionalization of natural products and pharmaceuticals.

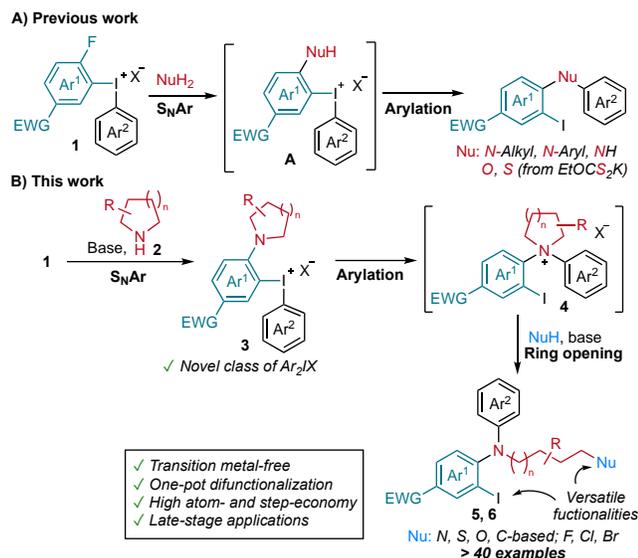
## INTRODUCTION

Arylated amines are valuable motifs in organic synthesis due to their prevalence in natural products, pharmaceuticals and functional materials.<sup>1</sup> *N*-aryl amines are commonly prepared through transition-metal catalyzed cross-couplings<sup>2</sup> or by the increasingly popular C-H aminations.<sup>3</sup> These methods are undeniably efficient and well established, however, their overall sustainability is compromised by the requirement of scarce metals and often expensive / time-consuming multi-step synthesis to attain more complex products with different *N*-aryl groups. Cyclic aliphatic amines constitute essential cornerstones in drug discovery, and methods for functionalization to modify their biological properties is of high value. Skeletal diversification through ring opening by selective breakage of the strong *C*-*N*  $\sigma$ -bond<sup>4</sup> is a powerful strategy to change the overall shape of the molecule and achieve increased structural complexity.<sup>5</sup> Such modifications have in the past been attained through reductive<sup>6</sup> or oxidative<sup>7</sup> pathways using transition metals or by von Braun type degradation via ammonium intermediates.<sup>8</sup> However, there are limited examples of *C*-*N* bond cleavage that occur with simultaneous introduction of versatile functionalities at both the *N*- and *C*-

terminal to afford complex value-added products, especially for unstrained cyclic amines.<sup>8a, 9</sup>

Diaryliodonium salts ( $Ar_2IX$ ) are acknowledged as excellent electrophilic arylating agents with desirable properties such as high reactivity, stability and synthetic accessibility.<sup>10</sup> They have found extensive application in arylations of both carbon and heteroatom nucleophiles,<sup>10</sup> and are recognized as attractive multi-purpose reagents also in material chemistry.<sup>11</sup> Their main drawback is the generation of stoichiometric  $ArI$  waste in the majority of their arylation pathways.<sup>12</sup> To overcome this atom-economy limitation, our group recently developed a sustainable strategy for incorporation of both aryl groups and the iodine of diaryliodonium salts **1** onto *N*-, *O*- and *S*-nucleophiles through a metal-free cascade reaction (Scheme 1A).<sup>13</sup> Mechanistic studies suggested this atom-efficient diarylation to proceed through a novel pathway, with initial nucleophilic aromatic substitution ( $S_NAr$ ) followed by intramolecular arylation, as supported by isolation of  $S_NAr$  intermediates **A** with *O*- and *S*-nucleophiles.<sup>13</sup>

We envisioned that utilization of secondary amines in our diarylation strategy could lead to potent cascade reactions to yield a wide scope of functionalized diarylamines. Novel *ortho*-



**Scheme 1.** Strategy for diarylation/ring-opening reaction of unstrained cyclic amines. EWG = electron-withdrawing group.

amino-functionalized diaryliodonium salts **3** could be synthesized through  $S_NAr$  on **1**, followed by a one-pot sequential arylation and ring-opening pathway via ammonium intermediates **4** (Scheme 1B). Upon C-N cleavage of **4** by external nucleophiles,<sup>14</sup> highly functionalized diarylamines **5, 6** would be obtained with excellent atom- and step economy. Moreover, diaryliodonium salts **3** with unprotected aliphatic amine substituents, could have interesting applications in organic synthesis and materials chemistry. They are, to the best of our knowledge, unknown in literature, which is likely due to the incompatibility of such functionalities with the oxidizing and acidic conditions required for the synthesis of diaryliodonium salts.

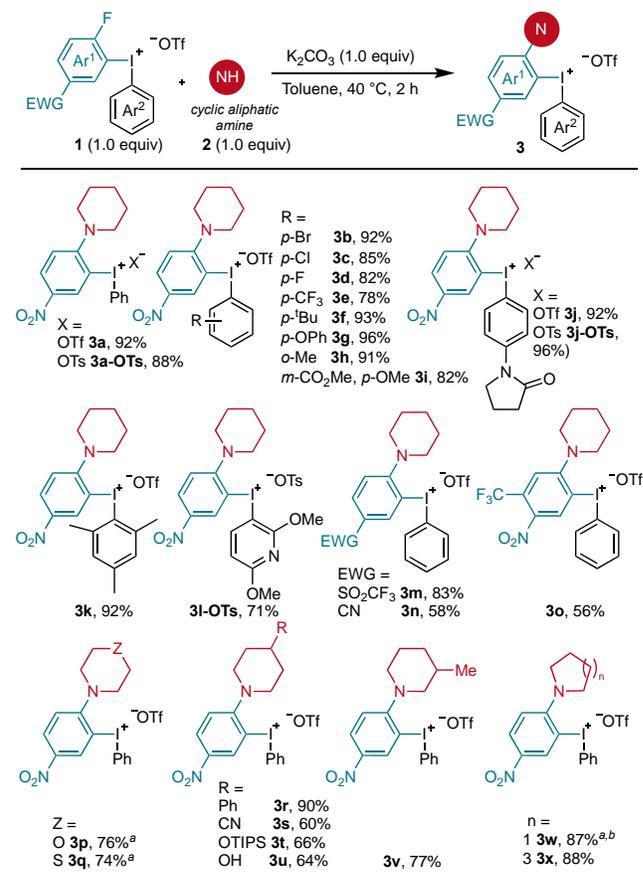
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Piperidine derivatives are particularly interesting compounds due to their versatile medicinal properties, *e.g.* as anticancer, antipsychotic and anti-Alzheimer agents.<sup>15</sup> The introduction of such nucleophiles to iodonium salts **1** could hence be of special interest, and piperidine (**2a**) was chosen as the model substrate in reactions with **1a**. To our delight, the desired product **3a** was obtained in excellent yield under the conditions used in the previous isolation of  $S_NAr$  intermediate **A** with water (EtOAc, 40 °C, 2 h),<sup>13a</sup> A small optimization study revealed that toluene was the superior solvent for most substrates (see SI, Table S1). The substrate scope of salts **3** was first evaluated by varying aryl group  $Ar^2$ , and both electron rich and electron deficient substituents in *ortho*-, *para*- and *meta*-position were tolerated, giving the corresponding products **3b-j** in high to excellent yields (Scheme 2). Carbonyl containing aryl groups could be incorporated, as demonstrated by products **3i-j**, and sterically congested  $Ar^2$  were well tolerated (**3k-3l**).

Variations on aryl group  $Ar^1$  are more restricted, to retain the required  $S_NAr$  reactivity of this moiety. Thus, we were pleased to see that the electron-withdrawing group (EWG) could be varied from nitro to other activating groups *e.g.*  $SO_2CF_3$  and CN (**3m, 3n**), and allow for introduction of additional substituents such as  $CF_3$  (**3o**). Other cyclic amines, such as morpholine and thiomorpholine, were also productive in the reaction with salt

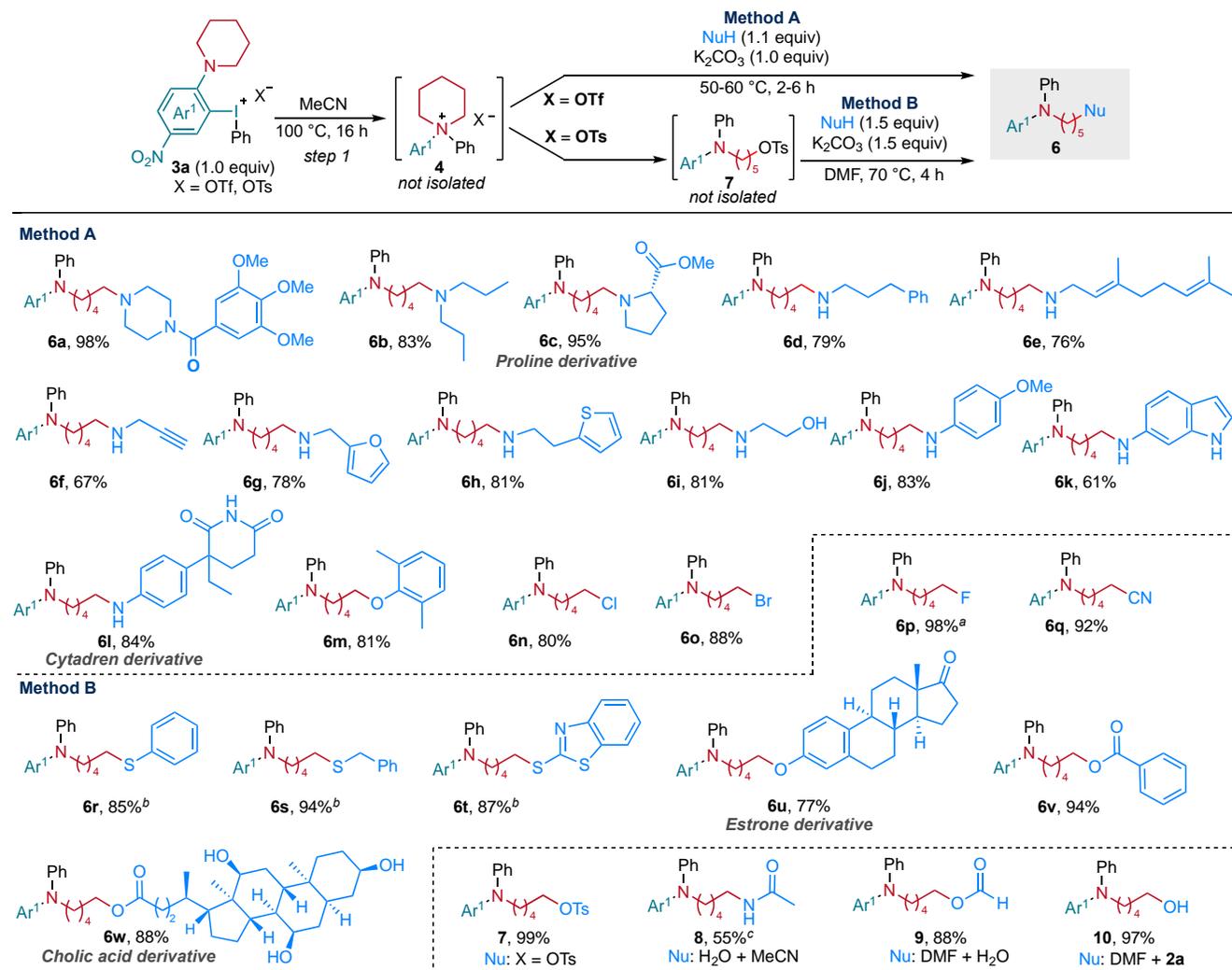
**1a (3p, 3q)**. Additional functionality could be introduced by decorating amines **2** with a variety of functional groups (**3r-3v**), including a free hydroxyl group (**3u**). Also 5- and 7-membered cyclic amines **2** could be utilized, giving products **3w** and **3x** in 87% and 88% yield, respectively. Limitations of the scope were encountered with acyclic aliphatic amines, which underwent a competing reductive pathway (see SI, section 3.1). Since the synthesis of salts **3** was performed without excess reagents, the pure products were generally isolated after a simple filtration to remove the base residues.

Next, the envisioned arylation/ ring-opening sequence was investigated using salt **3a** and piperidine as the external nucleophile for the ring-opening of **4a**, with the aim to install this valuable moiety at the end of the carbon chain of **5a** (Table 1). The synthesis of organic ammonium salts is generally difficult, and only a few examples are known in literature.<sup>16</sup> Our key intermediate, ammonium salt **4**, could be particularly challenging due to the high steric congestion from the two aryl moieties as well as the large *ortho*-iodo substituent. To our delight, the reaction proved to be possible using a mild base and no excess reagents, by heating salt **3a** in MeCN at 100 °C for 4 h followed by reaction with  $K_2CO_3$  and piperidine at rt for 2 h, to provide **5a** as the only product in 47% yield (entry 1). Extension of the reaction time of step 1 to 16 h, to allow full formation of **4a** prior to the piperidine addition, provided **5a** in 93% yield (entry 2). Lowering the temperature had a negative impact on the yield (entry 3), as did using the other explored solvents and bases (entries 4-



**Scheme 2.** Scope of diaryliodonium salts **3**. <sup>a</sup> EtOAc as solvent. <sup>b</sup> Performed at -78 °C to rt for 6 h.





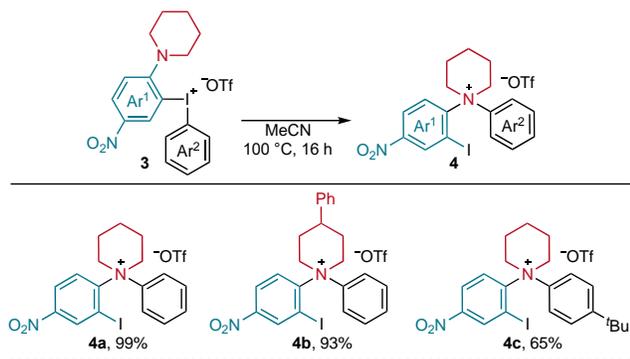
**Scheme 4.** Scope of products **6** from variation of NuH. <sup>a</sup> 80 °C, 16 h. <sup>b</sup> Reaction performed under dark conditions. <sup>c</sup> Ring-opening step at 100 °C, 2 h.

Using method B, efficient fluorination was achieved in quantitative yield, allowing straightforward isolation of the pure product **6p** by filtration. Furthermore, a range of C-, S- and O-nucleophiles with varying nucleophilicity could be employed, such as cyanide, aromatic/aliphatic thiols, thioamides, phenols and carboxylic acids, to afford products **6q-w** in good to excellent yields. Notably, the competing S<sub>N</sub>Ar pathway observed for phenols with method A was circumvented, and even complex substrates such as the steroid estrone could be derivatized into **6u** in 77% yield. Moreover, the unprotected natural product cholic acid, with three competing nucleophilic hydroxy groups, underwent selective alkylation of the carboxylate moiety, to give product **6w** in 88% yield.

Some nucleophiles reacted in unexpected ways with **4a**. For instance, the addition of water resulted in amide product **8** in 55% yield (see SI section 3.3), rather than the intended ring opening by hydroxide. The formation of **8** can be rationalized through a Ritter-type reaction in the presence of the MeCN solvent.<sup>19</sup> Surprisingly, also DMF could be used as a productive nucleophile for the ring opening of **4a**. When **3a** was heated in DMF instead of MeCN, followed by addition of piperidine at room temperature, the formate product **9** was obtained in 88%

yield. Furthermore, when the reaction was performed without addition of an external nucleophile, the primary alcohol product **10** was obtained in quantitative yield after aqueous workup. We anticipate that products **9** and **10** stem from an iminium intermediate formed through the ring opening of **4a** by DMF in similarity with the Vilsmeier-Haack intermediate<sup>20</sup> (see SI section 3.3).

Ammonium salt **4** are potentially interesting compounds since organic ammonium salts find various industrial applications<sup>16</sup> owing to their antimicrobial,<sup>21</sup> antistatic<sup>22</sup> and surfactant<sup>22a, 23</sup> properties. To demonstrate the efficient preparation of **4**, a small set of these products were synthesized by heating of **3**, and isolated in good to excellent yields by simple evaporation of the solvent (Scheme 5).



**Scheme 5.** Isolation of ammonium salts **4**.

## CONCLUSIONS

We herein present a method for preparation of previously synthetically inaccessible amino-functionalized diaryliodonium salts through an  $S_NAr$  reaction with fluorinated diaryliodonium salts. After incorporation of a range of cyclic amines, these salts were efficiently utilized in a sequential arylation/ring opening pathway, allowing for skeletal diversification of this valued substrate class. The reaction takes place via an intramolecular arylation, forming an ammonium salt, which upon ring opening by external nucleophiles affords *C*- and *N*-functionalized diaryl amines. The reaction displays excellent functional group tolerance and transfer of aryl groups with varied electronic properties was demonstrated. The ring-opening allows for incorporation of common *N*-, *O*-, *S*-, *C*-, and halogen nucleophiles and derivatization of various natural products, giving a versatile set of amine products in a metal-free manner with high atom- and step-economy. The majority of the products contain a range of reactive sites/unprotected polar functionalities that increase their versatility and likeliness to attain medicinal applicability.<sup>5b</sup>

## ASSOCIATED CONTENT

### Supporting Information

Additional optimization, mechanistic suggestions, full experimental details, and analytical data (PDF).

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### Author Contributions

E. L. and B. O. designed the study; E. L. performed all experimental and analytical work; E. L. and B. O. wrote the manuscript; E. L. wrote the SI.

### Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

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