

Supporting Information for

**Rhodium-Catalyzed Regioselective C-H Functionalization via Decarbonylation  
of Acid Chlorides and C-H Bond Activation under Phosphine-Free Conditions**

Xiaodan Zhao, Zhengkun Yu\*

*Dalian Institute of Chemical Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), 457 Zhongshan  
Road, Dalian, Liaoning 116023, P. R. China*

*zkyu@dicp.ac.cn*

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**Experimental procedures and analytical data**

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## 1. General Considerations

Unless otherwise noted, the starting materials were commercially available and the reactions were carried out under nitrogen atmosphere. Toluene and xylene were dried from Na/benzophenone and distilled prior to use. The inorganic bases were dried at 160 °C for 3 h, and 4A molecular sieves were activated at 500 °C for 2 h, and then cooled to ambient temperature before use. [Rh(COD)Cl]<sub>2</sub> was commercially purchased or prepared according to the reported method.<sup>1</sup> The commercially available acid chlorides were redistilled prior to use and chlorides **2b-h** and **2j** were synthesized by reacting their corresponding mother acids with thionyl chloride.<sup>2</sup> 2-Arylpyridines (**1b-g**)<sup>3</sup> and 1-(pyridin-2-yl)-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroquinoline (**1i**)<sup>4</sup> were prepared according to the literature methods. All the melting points were uncorrected. <sup>1</sup>H and <sup>13</sup>C{<sup>1</sup>H} NMR spectra were obtained with a 400 MHz NMR spectrometer, and the chemical shift values were relative to CDCl<sub>3</sub>. Products **3a**,<sup>5</sup> **3j**,<sup>5</sup> **3n**<sup>5</sup> and **3o**<sup>6</sup> are known compounds and they were identified by comparison of their NMR features with those reported data and further confirmed by HRMS analysis.

## References

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- (2) Andersson, C. M.; Hallberg, A. *J. Org. Chem.* **1988**, *53*, 235.
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- (4) Wagaw, S.; Buchwald, S. L. *J. Org. Chem.* **1996**, *61*, 7240.
- (5) Oi, S.; Fukita, S.; Hirata, N.; Watanuki, N.; Miyano, S.; Inoue, Y. *Org. Lett.* **2001**, *3*, 2579.
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## 2. Experimental procedures

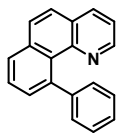
### *A typical procedure for arylation of benzo[h]quinoline (1a) and 2-substituted pyridines (1e-i)–phenylation of 1a using benzoyl chloride as the coupling partner:*

In a glovebox, to a 25-mL Schlenk tube were successively added the catalyst  $[\text{Rh}(\text{COD})\text{Cl}]_2$  (12 mg, 0.025 mmol),  $\text{Na}_2\text{CO}_3$  (106 mg, 1 mmol), 4A molecular sieves (600 mg), benzo[h]quinoline **1a** (89 mg, 0.5 mmol), benzoyl chloride **2a** (105 mg, 0.75 mmol) and xylene (3 mL). The Schlenk tube was equipped with an air condenser and the mixture was stirred at 145 °C under nitrogen atmosphere for 16 h. After cooled to ambient temperature, the resulting mixture was filtered through a short pad of celite and rinsed with 10 mL toluene. The combined filtrate was evaporated all the volatiles under reduced pressure. The resultant residue was purified by flash silica gel column chromatography (eluent: petroleum ether (60-90 °C) / EtOAc = 30 : 1, v/v), affording the target product **3a** as a white solid (118.0 mg, 93%).

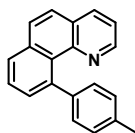
### *A typical procedure for diarylation of 2-substituted pyridines (1b-d)–diphenylation of 2-phenylpyridine (1b) using benzoyl chloride as the coupling partner:*

In a glovebox, to a 25-mL Schlenk tube were successively added the catalyst  $[\text{Rh}(\text{COD})\text{Cl}]_2$  (24.0 mg, 0.05 mmol),  $\text{Na}_2\text{CO}_3$  (159 mg, 1.5 mmol), 4A molecular sieves (600 mg), 2-phenylpyridine **1b** (78.0 mg, 0.5 mmol), benzoyl chloride **2a** (281 mg, 2.0 mmol) and xylene (3 mL). The Schlenk tube was equipped with an air condenser and the mixture was stirred at 145 °C under nitrogen atmosphere for 16 h. After cooled to ambient temperature, the resulting mixture was filtered through a short pad of celite and rinsed with 10 mL toluene. The combined filtrate was evaporated all the volatiles under reduced pressure. The resultant residue was purified by flash silica gel column chromatography (eluent: petroleum ether (60-90 °C) / EtOAc /  $\text{Et}_3\text{N}$  = 100 : 5 : 1, v/v/v), affording the target product **3j** as a white solid (110.3 mg, 72%).

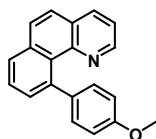
### 3. Analytical data



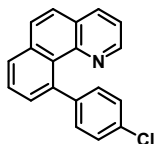
**10-Phenyl-7,8-benzoquinoline (3a)**<sup>5</sup>: White solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 8.50 (dd, J = 4.2, 1.8 Hz, 1H), 8.11 (dd, J = 8.0, 1.8 Hz, 1H), 7.97 (dd, J = 7.9, 1.2 Hz, 1H), 7.90 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.76-7.71 (m, 2H), 7.63 (dd, J = 7.2, 1.3 Hz, 1H), 7.51-7.43 (m, 5H), 7.35 (dd, J = 8.0, 4.3 Hz, 1H). <sup>13</sup>C{<sup>1</sup>H} NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 147.0, 146.5, 141.8, 135.3, 135.1, 131.6, 129.1, 128.8, 128.4, 128.0, 127.5, 127.3, 127.1, 126.0, 125.8, 121.1.



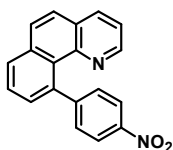
**10-(4-Methylphenyl)-7,8-benzoquinoline (3b)**: Viscous yellow liquid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 8.58 (dd, J = 4.2, 1.7 Hz, 1H), 8.11 (dd, J = 8.0, 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.98 (d, J = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.91 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.78-7.72 (m, 2H), 7.67 (d, J = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.42-7.34 (m, 5H), 2.59 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C{<sup>1</sup>H} NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 146.90, 146.86, 143.5, 141.8, 135.2, 135.1, 131.7, 129.1, 128.7, 128.3, 128.2, 127.8, 127.2, 127.1, 125.9, 121.1, 21.4. HRMS calcd. for C<sub>20</sub>H<sub>15</sub>N [M]<sup>+</sup>: 269.1204; found: 269.1193.



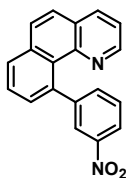
**10-(4-Methoxyphenyl)-7,8-benzoquinoline (3c)**: White solid; m.p. 121-122 °C. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 8.51 (dd, J = 4.2, 1.7 Hz, 1H), 8.09 (dd, J = 8.0, 1.8 Hz, 1H), 7.92 (d, J = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 7.86 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.71-7.67 (m, 2H), 7.58 (dd, J = 7.2, 1.0 Hz, 1H), 7.36-7.32 (m, 3H), 6.99 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 3.99 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C{<sup>1</sup>H} NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 158.0, 147.0, 141.5, 139.0, 135.4, 135.2, 131.8, 129.9, 129.2, 128.4, 127.9, 127.3, 127.2, 126.0, 121.1, 112.9, 55.4. HRMS calcd. for C<sub>20</sub>H<sub>15</sub>NO [M]<sup>+</sup>: 285.1154; found: 285.1146.



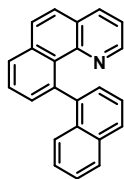
**10-(4-Chlorophenyl)-7,8-benzoquinoline (3d):** White solid; m.p. 82 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  8.49 (dd,  $J = 4.2, 1.6$  Hz, 1H), 8.11 (d,  $J = 8.0$  Hz, 1H), 7.95 (d,  $J = 7.8$  Hz, 1H), 7.87 (d,  $J = 8.8$  Hz, 1H), 7.73-7.68 (m, 2H), 7.52 (d,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 1H), 7.41-7.30 (m, 5H).  $^{13}\text{C}\{^1\text{H}\}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  147.0, 146.7, 145.0, 140.5, 135.4, 135.1, 131.6, 131.4, 130.2, 129.0, 128.4, 127.6, 127.4, 127.2, 126.2, 121.3. HRMS calcd. for  $\text{C}_{19}\text{H}_{12}\text{ClN}$   $[\text{M}]^+$ : 289.0658; found: 289.0647.



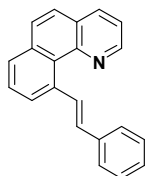
**10-(4-Nitrophenyl)-7,8-benzoquinoline (3e):** Pale yellow solid; m.p. 159 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  8.38 (dd,  $J = 4.1, 1.5$  Hz, 1H), 8.26 (d,  $J = 8.6$  Hz, 2H), 8.11 (dd,  $J = 8.0, 1.5$  Hz, 1H), 8.00 (d,  $J = 7.9$  Hz, 1H), 7.89 (d,  $J = 8.8$  Hz, 1H), 7.75-7.70 (m, 2H), 7.47-7.45 (m, 3H), 7.35 (dd,  $J = 8.0, 4.3$  Hz, 1H).  $^{13}\text{C}\{^1\text{H}\}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  153.9, 146.9, 146.1, 139.2, 135.5, 134.9, 130.7, 129.5, 129.0, 128.6, 128.2, 127.4, 127.1, 126.4, 122.8, 121.5. HRMS calcd. for  $\text{C}_{19}\text{H}_{12}\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$   $[\text{M}]^+$ : 300.0899; found: 300.0895.



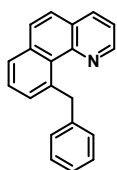
**10-(3-Nitrophenyl)-7,8-benzoquinoline (3f):** Pale yellow solid; m.p. 92 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  8.37 (dd,  $J = 4.2, 1.7$  Hz, 1H), 8.25-8.23 (m, 2H), 8.13 (dd,  $J = 8.0, 1.7$  Hz, 1H), 8.01 (dd,  $J = 7.9, 0.7$  Hz, 1H), 7.90 (d,  $J = 8.8$  Hz, 1H), 7.76-7.68 (m, 3H), 7.57-7.52 (m, 2H), 7.35 (dd,  $J = 8.0, 4.3$  Hz, 1H).  $^{13}\text{C}\{^1\text{H}\}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  148.1, 147.8, 147.0, 146.3, 139.0, 135.6, 135.2, 131.3, 129.1, 128.8, 128.4, 128.1, 127.5, 127.3, 126.4, 124.1, 121.5, 120.9. HRMS calcd. for  $\text{C}_{19}\text{H}_{12}\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$   $[\text{M}]^+$ : 300.0899; found: 300.0902.



**10-(1-Naphthyl)-7,8-benzoquinoline (3g):** Yellow solid; m.p. 88-89 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  8.10-8.08 (m, 2H), 8.04-7.95 (m, 4H), 7.84-7.80 (m, 1H), 7.75-7.64 (m, 3H), 7.50-7.43 (m, 2H), 7.35 (d,  $J = 8.4$  Hz, 1H), 7.17-7.14 (m, 2H).  $^{13}\text{C}\{^1\text{H}\}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  147.3, 146.5, 145.0, 139.6, 135.0, 134.7, 133.3, 133.1, 131.7, 130.4, 128.4, 128.3, 128.0, 127.3, 127.1, 126.5, 126.3, 126.1, 125.6, 125.2, 125.1, 124.7, 120.9. HRMS calcd. for  $\text{C}_{23}\text{H}_{15}\text{N}$   $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ : 306.1283; found: 306.1279.

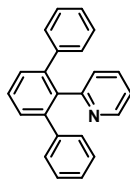


**10-(β-Styryl)-7,8-benzoquinoline (3h):** Brown viscous oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  9.19 (d,  $J = 16$  Hz, 1H), 9.09 (dd,  $J = 4.2, 1.7$  Hz, 1H), 8.16 (d,  $J = 8.0$  Hz, 1H), 7.96 (d,  $J = 7.4$  Hz, 1H), 7.90-7.78 (m, 3H), 7.72-7.67 (m, 2H), 7.52-7.47 (m, 3H), 7.36 (m, 1H), 7.03 (d,  $J = 16$  Hz, 1H).  $^{13}\text{C}\{^1\text{H}\}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  148.2, 147.9, 138.9, 138.6, 135.6, 135.0, 134.8, 128.9, 128.7, 128.6, 128.2, 128.1, 127.7, 127.6, 127.0, 126.8, 126.4, 125.8, 120.9. HRMS calcd. for  $\text{C}_{21}\text{H}_{15}\text{N}$   $[\text{M}]^+$ : 281.1204; found: 281.1210.

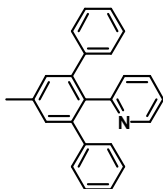


**10-Benzyl-7,8-benzoquinoline (3i):** White solid; m.p. 89-90 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  8.92 (dd,  $J = 4.2, 1.9$  Hz, 1H), 8.12 (dd,  $J = 8.0, 1.7$  Hz, 1H), 7.86-7.82 (m, 2H), 7.67-7.61 (m, 2H), 7.55 (d,  $J = 7.3$  Hz, 1H), 7.44 (dd,  $J = 8.0, 4.3$  Hz, 1H), 7.29-7.20 (m, 4H), 7.14-7.11 (m, 1H), 5.40 (s, 2H).  $^{13}\text{C}\{^1\text{H}\}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  148.2, 147.1, 143.2, 140.6, 135.6, 135.4, 132.0, 129.7, 129.3, 128.9,

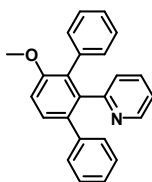
128.0, 127.6, 127.4, 125.7, 125.3, 120.9, 43.6. HRMS calcd. for  $C_{20}H_{15}N$   $[M+H]^+$ : 270.1283; found: 270.1284.



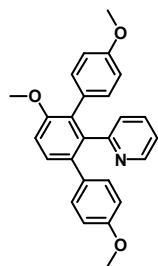
**2-(2,6-Diphenyl)-phenylpyridine (3j)**<sup>5</sup>: White solid.  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ )  $\delta$  8.34 (d,  $J$  = 4.8 Hz, 1H), 7.55-7.53 (m, 1H), 7.50-7.48 (m, 2H), 7.32-7.31 (m, 1H), 7.19-7.13 (m, 10H), 6.94-6.90 (m, 2H).  $^{13}C\{^1H\}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ )  $\delta$  158.9, 148.5, 141.9, 141.6, 138.5, 135.0, 129.7, 129.5, 128.3, 127.7, 126.9, 126.4, 121.0.



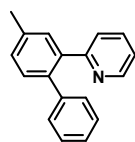
**2-(2,6-Diphenyl-4-methyl)-phenylpyridine (3k)**: White solid; m.p. 134 °C.  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ )  $\delta$  8.32 (d,  $J$  = 4.6 Hz, 1H), 7.32-7.28 (m, 3H), 7.17-7.11 (m, 10H), 6.93-6.88 (m, 2H), 2.50 (s, 3H).  $^{13}C\{^1H\}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ )  $\delta$  159.0, 148.4, 141.9, 141.8, 138.0, 135.8, 135.1, 130.3, 129.7, 127.7, 127.1, 126.3, 120.9, 21.4. HRMS calcd. for  $C_{24}H_{19}N$   $[M]^+$ : 321.1517; found: 321.1516.



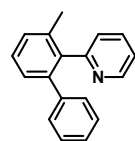
**2-(2,6-Diphenyl-5-methoxy)-phenylpyridine (3l)**: White solid; m.p. 173-174 °C.  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ )  $\delta$  8.26 (d,  $J$  = 4.3 Hz, 1H), 7.46 (d,  $J$  = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 7.27-7.23 (m, 1H), 7.14-7.11 (m, 11H), 6.86-6.83 (m, 2H), 3.83 (s, 3H).  $^{13}C\{^1H\}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ )  $\delta$  158.8, 156.3, 148.3, 141.5, 140.5, 136.9, 134.8, 134.3, 131.0, 130.8, 130.4, 129.8, 127.7, 127.3, 126.7, 126.3, 126.0, 120.8, 111.0, 56.1. HRMS calcd. for  $C_{24}H_{19}NO$   $[M]^+$ : 337.1467; found: 337.1462.



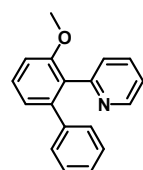
**2-(2,6-Di(4-methoxyphenyl)-3-methoxyphenyl)-phenylpyridine (3m):** Yellow solid; m.p. 155 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  8.30 (d,  $J$  = 4.3 Hz, 1H), 7.41 (d,  $J$  = 8.5, 1H), 7.29-7.26 (m, 1H), 7.10 (d,  $J$  = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 7.04-7.00 (m, 4H), 6.88-6.83 (m, 2H), 6.72-6.68 (m, 4H), 3.82 (s, 3H), 3.73 (s, 6H).  $^{13}\text{C}\{^1\text{H}\}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  159.1, 157.8, 156.2, 148.3, 140.6, 134.9, 134.0, 133.8, 132.0, 130.7, 130.3, 130.0, 129.1, 126.6, 120.7, 113.1, 112.8, 110.9, 56.0, 55.1, 55.0. HRMS calcd. for  $\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{23}\text{NO}_3$   $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ : 398.1756; found: 398.1770.



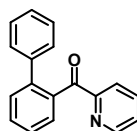
**2-(5-Methyl-2-phenyl)-phenylpyridine (3n)<sup>5</sup>:** Viscous yellow oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  8.66 (d,  $J$  = 4.7 Hz, 1H), 7.56 (s, 1H), 7.38-7.29 (m, 3H), 7.25-7.15 (m, 5H), 7.10 (dd,  $J$  = 6.8, 5.2 Hz, 1H), 6.88 (d,  $J$  = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 2.47 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}\{^1\text{H}\}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  159.4, 149.4, 141.3, 139.2, 137.9, 137.5, 135.2, 131.1, 130.5, 129.8, 129.4, 128.1, 126.6, 125.6, 121.4, 21.2.



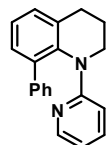
**2-(6-Methyl -2-phenyl)-phenylpyridine (3o)<sup>6</sup>:** Yellow viscous liquid.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  8.64 (d,  $J$  = 4.7 Hz, 1H), 7.46 (dt,  $J$  = 7.6, 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.38 (t,  $J$  = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 7.32-7.29 (m, 2H), 7.15-7.08 (m, 6H), 6.90 (d,  $J$  = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 2.21 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}\{^1\text{H}\}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  159.4, 148.7, 141.5, 141.1, 139.2, 136.6, 135.7, 129.5, 129.3, 128.0, 127.5, 126.1, 125.5, 121.2, 20.4.



**2-(6-Phenyl-2-methoxyl)-phenylpyridine (3p):** White solid; m.p. 86-87 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  8.60 (d,  $J$  = 4.6 Hz, 1H), 7.49-7.42 (m, 2H), 7.15-7.07 (m, 7H), 7.04-7.01 (m, 2H), 3.80 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}\{^1\text{H}\}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  157.3, 156.8, 148.8, 142.9, 141.1, 135.7, 129.7, 129.3, 129.0, 127.7, 126.5, 126.4, 122.6, 121.4, 110.2, 56.1. HRMS calcd. for  $\text{C}_{18}\text{H}_{15}\text{NO}$   $[\text{M}]^+$ : 261.1154; found: 261.1145.

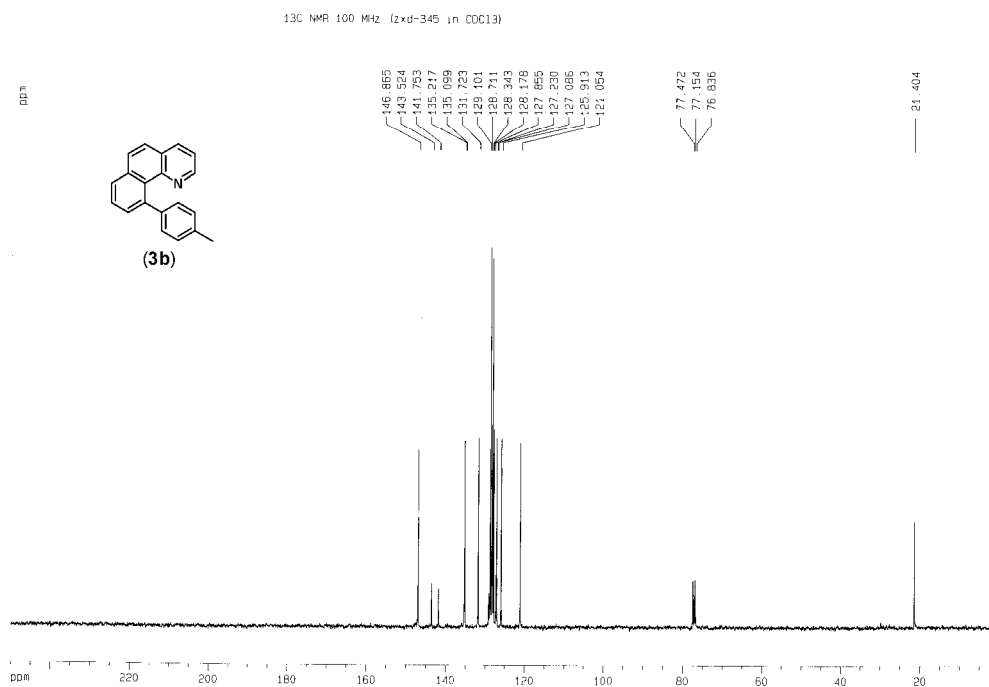
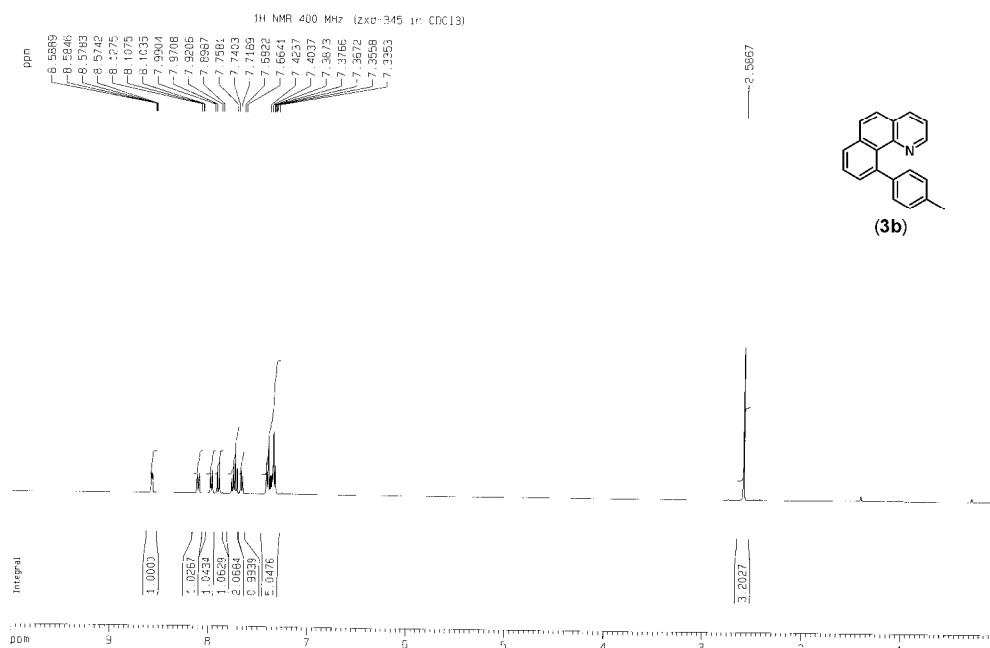


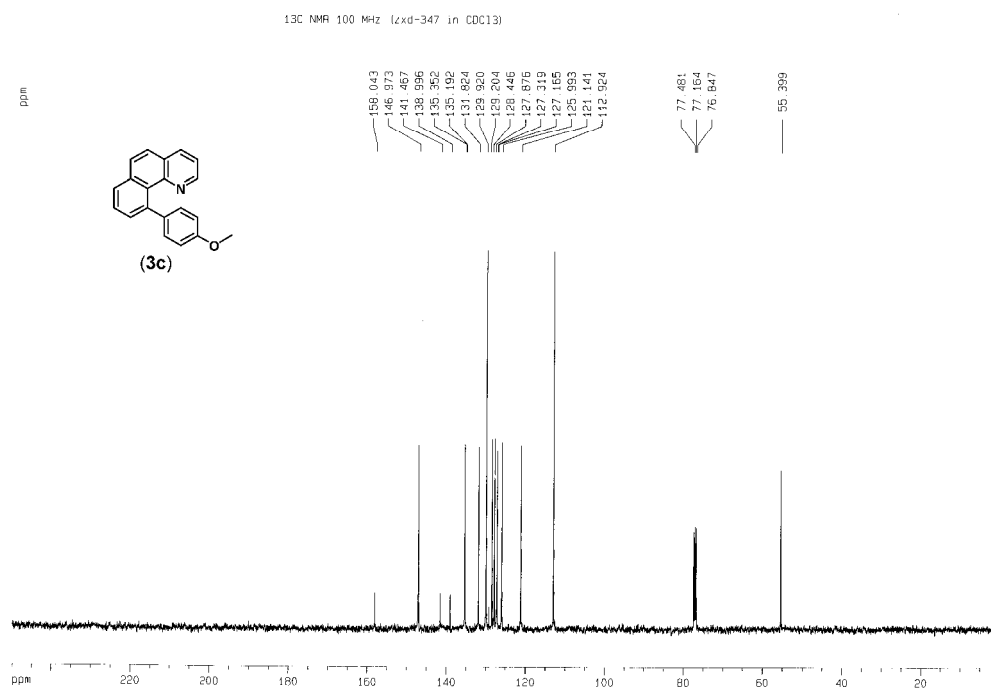
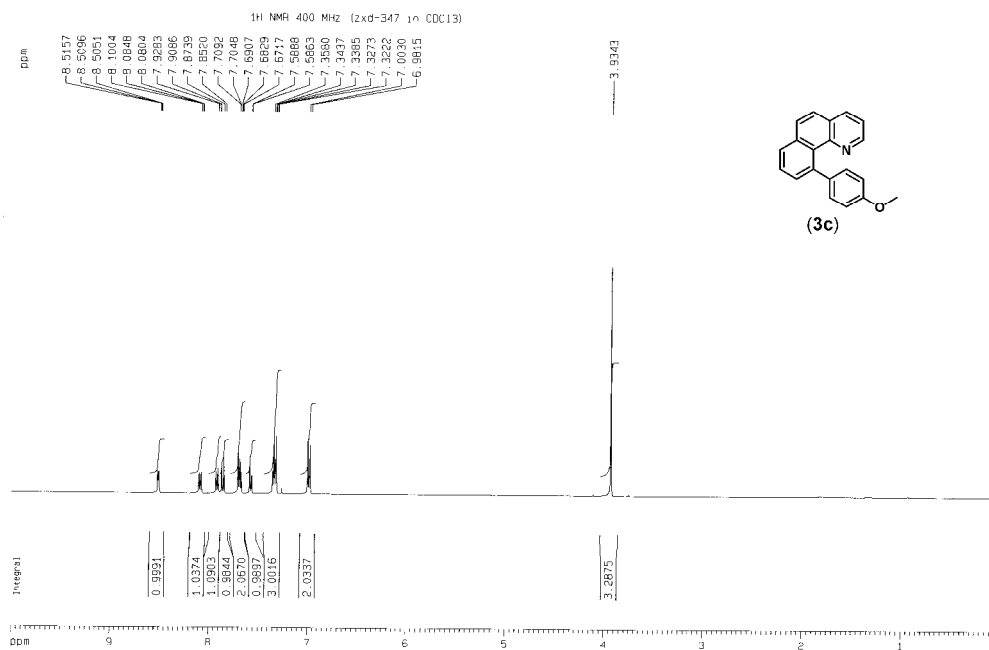
**2-Biphenyl 2-pyridinyl methanone (3q):** White solid; m.p. 110 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  8.43 (d,  $J$  = 4.5 Hz, 1H), 7.81 (d,  $J$  = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.68-7.59 (m, 3H), 7.52-7.47 (m, 2H), 7.27-7.09 (m, 6H).  $^{13}\text{C}\{^1\text{H}\}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  198.6, 154.7, 148.9, 142.0, 140.8, 138.5, 136.5, 131.0, 129.9, 129.5, 129.2, 128.2, 127.3, 127.2, 126.1, 123.8. HRMS calcd. for  $\text{C}_{18}\text{H}_{13}\text{NO}$   $[\text{M}+\text{K}]^+$ : 298.0634; found: 298.0642.

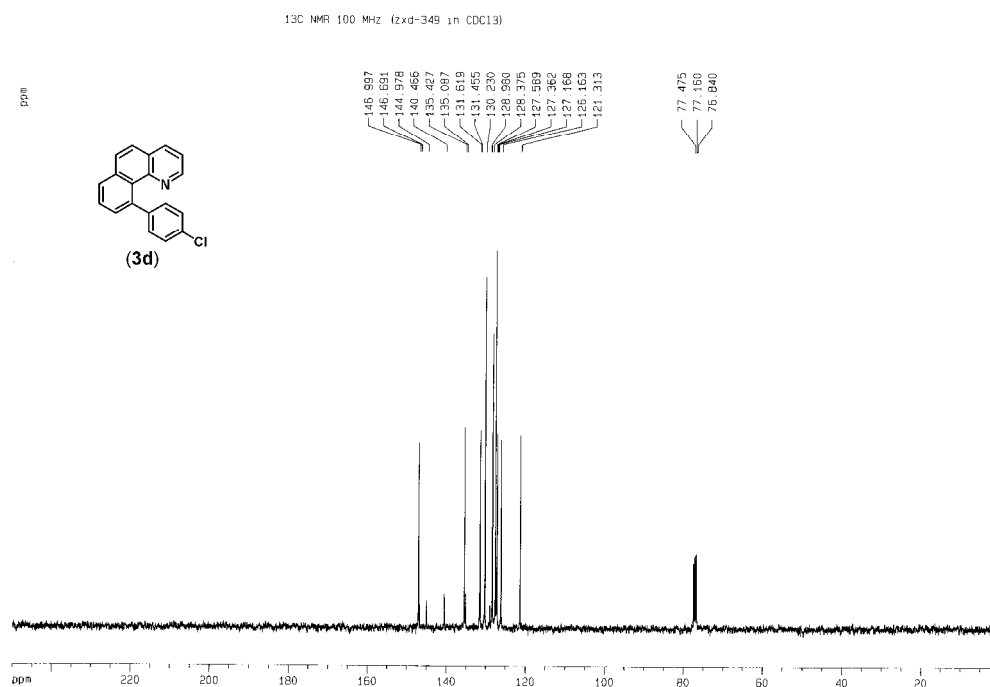
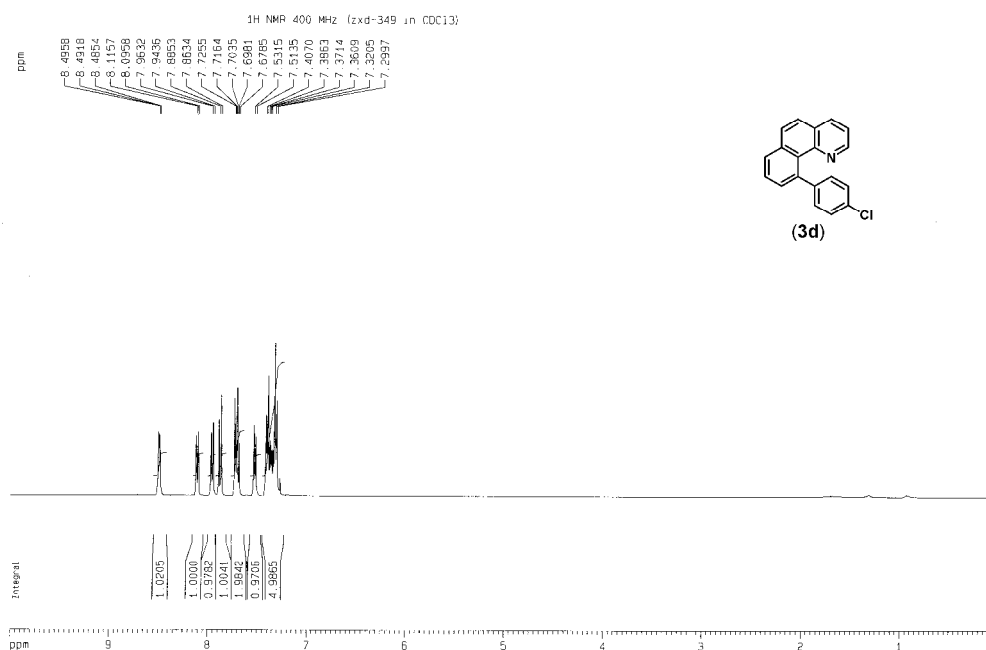


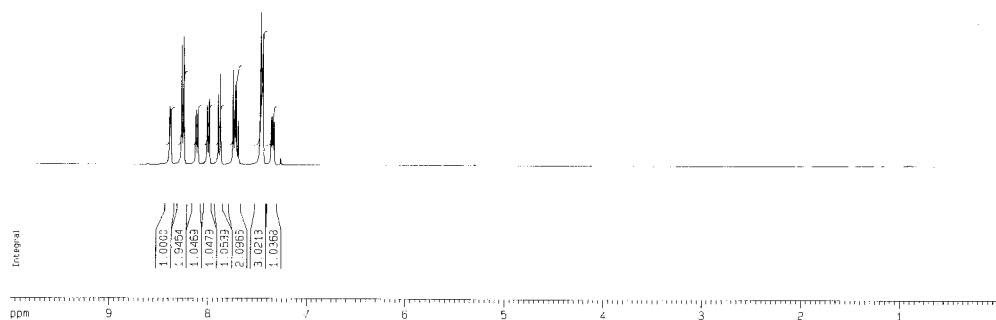
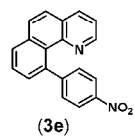
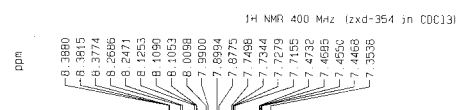
**8-Phenyl-1-(2-pyridinyl)-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroquinoline (3r):** Pale yellow solid; m.p. 103-104 °C.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  8.00 (dd,  $J$  = 4.9, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.32-7.30 (m, 2H), 7.24-7.12 (m, 5H), 7.06-7.02 (m, 1H), 6.99-6.95 (m, 1H), 6.37 (dd,  $J$  = 7.0, 5.0 Hz, 1H), 6.24 (d,  $J$  = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 4.07 (t,  $J$  = 6.2 Hz, 2H), 2.78 (t,  $J$  = 6.6 Hz, 2H), 2.09-2.02 (m, 2H).  $^{13}\text{C}\{^1\text{H}\}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  157.3, 147.3, 140.2, 138.8, 136.2, 135.9, 135.5, 129.0, 128.4, 128.0, 126.6, 124.4, 113.9, 111.1, 45.9, 27.6, 24.7. HRMS calcd. for  $\text{C}_{20}\text{H}_{18}\text{N}_2$   $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ : 287.1548; found: 287.1552.

#### 4. Copies of NMR spectra for new compounds









<sup>13</sup>C NMR 100 MHz (zxd-354 in CDCl<sub>3</sub>)

