

Copper-Catalyzed Ring-Opening 1,3-Aminotrifluoromethylation of Arylcyclopropanes

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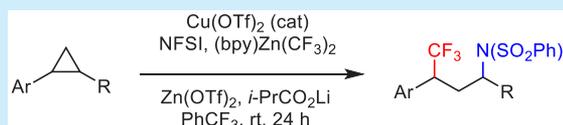


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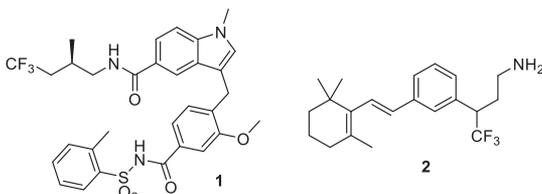


Supporting Information

ABSTRACT: The copper-catalyzed reaction of arylcyclopropanes, *N*-fluorobis(arenesulfonyl)imides, and (bpy)Zn(CF₃)₂ (bpy = 2,2'-bipyridine) at room temperature affords the corresponding ring-opening 1,3-aminotrifluoromethylation products in satisfactory yields. The protocol is highly regioselective, providing a convenient entry to γ -trifluoromethylated amines. A mechanism involving the trifluoromethylation of benzyl radicals is proposed.



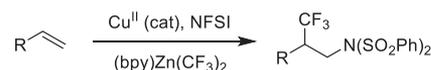
Trifluoromethyl groups have been demonstrated to be important structural motifs in pharmaceuticals and agrochemicals owing to their profound effect on properties such as lipophilicity, permeability, and metabolic stability. In this context, γ -trifluoromethylated amines are a unique class of compounds of important biological activities. For example, γ -CF₃-substituted amine Zeneca ZD 3523 (**1**) is a potent, orally active antagonist of leukotrienes D₄ and E₄ discovered by the Zeneca Pharmaceutical Co.¹ Another example is that 3-(trifluoromethyl)-3-arylpropylamine **2** has been identified as a powerful inhibitor of retinol dehydrogenases for treating ophthalmic diseases and disorders.² However, there have been no reports to date of general methods for the synthesis of γ -trifluoromethylated amines despite recent advances in the introduction of CF₃ groups into organic molecules, in particular, C(sp³)-trifluoromethylation.³



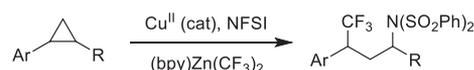
Radical trifluoromethylation has been established as a versatile tool in the synthesis of trifluoromethylated compounds, enabling the successful implementation of a number of useful transformations such as C(sp³)-H trifluoromethylation, decarboxylative trifluoromethylation of aliphatic carboxylic acids, and trifluoromethylation of alkyl (or aryl) halides, as developed by the groups of MacMillan,⁴ Liu,⁵ Cook,⁶ and our group⁷ in the past few years. Based on the strategy, the copper-catalyzed 1,2-aminotrifluoromethylation of alkenes has also been accomplished by us, providing a convenient entry to β -trifluoromethylated amines (Scheme 1a).^{7,8} Given that arylcyclopropanes are a unique class of structurally constrained molecules⁸ prone to ring-opening 1,3-difunctionalization upon single-electron oxidation,^{9,10} we speculate that they might be used as the starting materials for the concomitant introduction

Scheme 1. Aminotrifluoromethylation via Trifluoromethylation of Alkyl Radicals

(a) 1,2-aminotrifluoromethylation (previous work)



(b) 1,3-aminotrifluoromethylation (this work)



of a CF₃ motif and a protected amino group. Herein, we report the copper-catalyzed ring-opening 1,3-aminotrifluoromethylation of arylcyclopropanes, providing a convenient synthesis of γ -trifluoromethylated amines in a highly regioselective manner (Scheme 1b).

As a start, we chose phenylcyclopropane (**3a**) as the model substrate to test our idea. After an extensive screening of reaction parameters (Table 1, also see Tables S1–S4 for details), we were pleased to find that, with Cu(OTf)₂ as the catalyst, *N*-fluorobis(benzenesulfonyl)imide (NFSI)¹¹ and (bpy)Zn(CF₃)₂ (bpy = 2,2'-bipyridine)¹² as the reagents, and Zn(OTf)₂ and *i*-PrCO₂Li as the additives, the reaction of **3a** in PhCF₃ at room temperature (rt) furnished the desired product **4a** in almost quantitative yield (entry 1, Table 1). Switching the catalyst to Cu(MeCN)₄BF₄ also led to the formation of **4a** in a high yield (entry 2, Table 1). However, the use of other copper salts such as CuCN, CuCl₂, or Cu₂O in place of Cu(OTf)₂ showed a poor performance (entries 3–5,

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Table 1. Optimization of Reaction Conditions

"standard conditions":
 Cu(OTf)₂ (20 mol %)
 NFSI (2.0 equiv)
 (bpy)Zn(CF₃)₂ (1.5 equiv)
 Zn(OTf)₂ (50 mol %)
i-PrCO₂Li (1.0 equiv)
 PhCF₃, rt, 24 h

entry ^a	variation from the "standard conditions"	yield ^b (%)
1	none	98
2	Cu(MeCN) ₄ BF ₄ in place of Cu(OTf) ₂	96
3	CuCN in place of Cu(OTf) ₂	67
4	CuCl ₂ in place of Cu(OTf) ₂	46
5	Cu ₂ O in place of Cu(OTf) ₂	9
6	less amount (10 mol %) of Cu(OTf) ₂ used	60
7	without Cu(OTf) ₂	0
8	TMSCF ₃ in place of (bpy)Zn(CF ₃) ₂	0
9	LiOAc in place of <i>i</i> -PrCO ₂ Li	88
10	without <i>i</i> -PrCO ₂ Li	4
11	without Zn(OTf) ₂	14
12	without <i>i</i> -PrCO ₂ Li and Zn(OTf) ₂	0
13	DCM in place of PhCF ₃	51
14	MeCN in place of PhCF ₃	trace

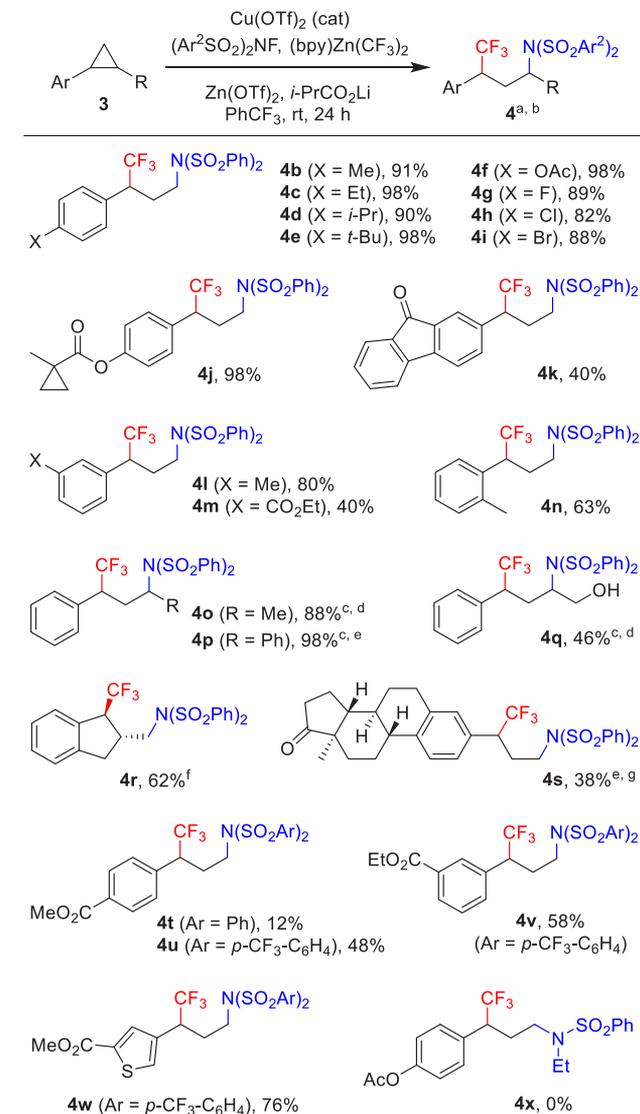
^aThe reaction was carried out on 0.10 mmol scale in PhCF₃ (2.0 mL).

^bIsolated yield based on 3a.

Table 1). Lowering the amount of Cu(OTf)₂ from 20 to 10 mol % resulted in a decreased product yield (entry 6, Table 1), and its role as the catalyst was further demonstrated by the control experiment (entry 7, Table 1). The zinc complex (bpy)Zn(CF₃)₂ proved to be superior over other trifluoromethylating agents such as the Ruppert–Prakash reagent (TMSCF₃)¹³ (entry 8, Table 1, also see Table S2 for details). In the meantime, the additives had a dramatic influence on the transformation. Among various additives screened (also see Table S3 for details), the combination of Zn(OTf)₂ and *i*-PrCO₂Li offered the best result. Replacing *i*-PrCO₂Li by other salts such as LiOAc caused a slight decrease in product yield (entry 9, Table 1). Interestingly, a low yield of 4a was observed with the use of only one additive, while no expected product was observed without any additive at all (entries 10–12, Table 1). Similar phenomena were also observed in our previous investigations.^{7g} While the detailed reason remains unclear for the synergistic effect of additives, it might be possible that the use of the two salts helps to have a better control over the rate of transmetalation of the CF₃ group from zinc to copper (vide infra). Finally, PhCF₃ turned out to be a solvent better than dichloromethane (DCM) or acetonitrile (entries 13 and 14, Table 1).

With the optimized conditions, we set out to examine the scope of the method. As summarized in Scheme 2, arylcyclopropanes with *p*-alkyl, acyloxy, or halogen substitution all underwent the condensation with NFSI and (bpy)Zn(CF₃)₂ at rt, producing the corresponding 1,3-aminotrifluoromethylation products 4b–4j in excellent yields. Note that the aryl bromide function in 4i makes possible further elaboration of the product into more complex molecules (see below). The reaction of *meta*- and *ortho*-substituted arylcyclopropanes also proceeded smoothly to afford the expected products 4k–4n in acceptable yields. The protocol was also applicable to 1,2-disubstituted cyclopropanes, as exemplified by the efficient synthesis of 4o and 4p. Sensitive functional groups such as free hydroxyl group were well tolerated by the oxidative process, as

Scheme 2. 1,3-Aminotrifluoromethylation



^aConditions: 3 (0.10 mmol), Cu(OTf)₂ (0.02 mmol), (Ar₂O₂)₂NF (0.20 mmol), (bpy)Zn(CF₃)₂ (0.15 mmol), Zn(OTf)₂ (0.05 mmol), *i*-PrCO₂Li (0.10 mmol), PhCF₃ (2.0 mL), rt, 24 h. ^bIsolated yield based on 3. ^cThe substrate was in 1,2-*trans* configuration. ^d*dr* = 45:55 determined by ¹⁹F NMR. ^e*dr* = 50:50 determined by ¹⁹F NMR. ^f*trans/cis* = 92:8 determined by ¹⁹F NMR. ^gReaction time: 48 h.

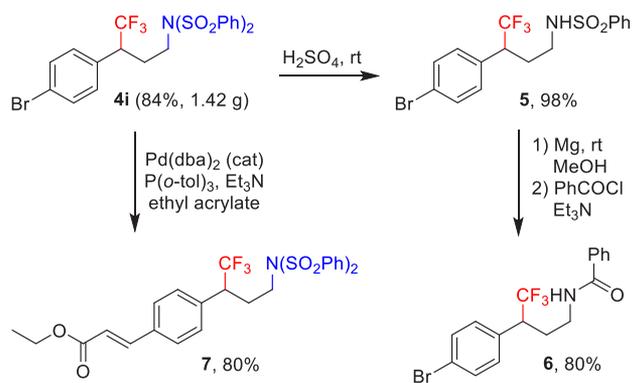
evidenced by the generation of 4q. In another case, the reaction of tetrahydrocyclopropa[*a*]indene (3r) delivered 2,3-disubstituted indene 4r in a highly stereoselective (92:8) manner in favor of the *trans* configuration. Interestingly the ring-opening of 3r was highly chemoselective in that no ring expansion product (i.e., 1,3-disubstituted tetrahydronaphthalene) could be detected. Furthermore, the use of cyclopropylestrone furnished γ -CF₃-amine 4s, indicating that the method was suitable for late-stage modification of complex molecules.

While γ -trifluoromethylated amine 4l having a *meta*-methyl substitution on the aromatic ring was achieved in 80% yield, the *meta*-ethoxycarbonyl-substituted analogue (4m) was obtained in a lower (40%) yield. As a comparison, *p*-methoxycarbonyl-substituted product 4t was isolated in only 12% yield. The electron-withdrawing substitution on the

aromatic ring had a negative impact on the reaction probably by making the arylcyclopropanes more difficult to oxidize. To overcome this limitation, we switched NFSI to its *p*-trifluoromethylated derivative.¹⁴ We were delighted to find that the same substrate **3t** now delivered the desired products **4u** in a much higher (48%) yield in comparison with **4t** (12% yield). Similarly, the reaction of (*m*-methoxycarbonylphenyl)-cyclopropane (**3m**) with (*p*-CF₃-C₆H₄SO₂)₂NF provided **4v** in a higher (58%) yield compared to its reaction with NFSI (to give **4m** in 40% yield). The protocol could be further extended to heteroaryl cyclopropanes. For example, thiophenylcyclopropane **3w** furnished the expected product **4w** in 76% yield on reaction with (*p*-CF₃-C₆H₄SO₂)₂NF. The above experiments clearly demonstrated that the *p*-CF₃ substitution increased the reaction efficiency. Presumably, the *p*-CF₃-substitution renders the N–F reagent a stronger oxidant than NFSI, thus facilitating the oxidative ring opening of electron-deficient arylcyclopropanes. This assumption was further supported by our observation that a much weaker oxidant, (PhSO₂)EtN–F, failed to give the desired product **4x**.

In addition to being general, the 1,3-aminotrifluoromethylation was highly regioselective in that the trifluoromethyl group was always attached to the benzylic carbon. Moreover, the reaction could be easily scaled up without an obvious decrease in product yield, as exemplified by the gram-scale synthesis of **4i** (Scheme 3). One of the sulfonyl groups in **4i**

Scheme 3. Gram-Scale Synthesis and Derivatization of **4i**



was readily removed by acid hydrolysis at rt to give sulfonamide **5** in almost quantitative yield. Further treatment of **5** with Mg/MeOH at rt furnished the corresponding free amines under mild conditions, which could be easily converted to amides such as **6** according to the conventional methods. In another case, the palladium-catalyzed Heck coupling of **4i** with ethyl acrylate led to the easy synthesis of alkene **7**. These experiments further demonstrated the potential of 1,3-aminotrifluoromethylation products in the synthesis of structurally complex trifluoromethylated compounds.

A mechanism involving the trifluoromethylation of benzyl radicals could be inferred from the above experiments. Indeed, the reaction was completely inhibited by the addition of a stoichiometric amount of TEMPO (2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidin-*N*-oxyl) or BHT (2,6-di-*tert*-butyl-4-methylphenol), thus providing additional evidence for the radical intermediacy.

A plausible mechanism can thus be proposed based on the above results and literature reports, as depicted in Figure 1. Transmetalation of CF₃ anion from (bpy)Zn(CF₃)₂ to Cu^I forms the Cu^I–CF₃ species that is then captured by NFSI to

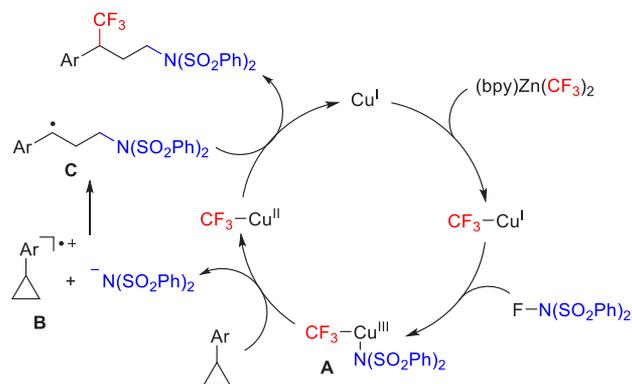


Figure 1. Proposed mechanism.

give the Cu^{III} intermediate **A**.¹⁵ The oxidation of arylcyclopropanes by **A** generates arylcyclopropanes radical cation **B**, (PhSO₂)₂N[–] anion, and Cu^{II}–CF₃ complex. The interaction of (PhSO₂)₂N[–] anion with radical cation **B** results in the ring-opening of the latter, and the corresponding benzyl radical **C** is produced. Finally, the CF₃ group transfer from the Cu^{II}–CF₃ complex to radical **C** furnishes the 1,3-aminotrifluoromethylation product and regenerates the Cu^I catalyst.

In conclusion, we have successfully developed the unprecedented protocol for the 1,3-aminotrifluoromethylation of arylcyclopropanes, providing a convenient entry to γ -trifluoromethylated amines. As the procedure is catalytic in copper, broad in scope, and operationally simple, the method should find important applications in the synthesis of trifluoromethylated molecules of biological interests.

■ ASSOCIATED CONTENT

Supporting Information

The Supporting Information is available free of charge at <https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/acs.orglett.1c00390>.

Full experimental details, characterizations of new compounds, and copies of ¹H, ¹³C, and ¹⁹F NMR spectra (PDF)

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Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

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DEDICATION

This paper is dedicated to Professor Ilhyong Ryu, a pioneer in free radical chemistry, on the occasion of his 70th birthday.

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