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Fluoride anion-initiated bis-trifluoromethylation of phenyl aromatic carboxylates with (trifluoromethyl)trimethylsilane[†]

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Received 00th January 20xx, Accepted 00th January 20xx

DOI: 10.1039/x0xx00000x

The fluoride anion-initiated reaction of phenyl aromatic carboxylates with (trifluoromethyl)trimethylsilane (Me₃SiCF₃) with the formation of *O*-silyl-protected 2-aryl-1,1,1,3,3,3-hexafluoroisopropanols is reported. A phenoxide anion, generated during the trifluoromethylation of the phenyl carboxylate, functions to activate the Me₃SiCF₃, which permits a catalytic amount of the fluoride anion source to be used. Various functional groups, which can be used for further elaboration, are tolerated in the reaction.

The intrinsic nature of fluorine atoms enables fluorinesubstituted organic compounds to acquire unique properties that differ from their hydrocarbon analogues.¹ Among these, increased attention has been directed to 1,1,1,3,3,3hexafluoroisopropanol (HFIP) and derivatives thereof.² With the of trifluoromethyl groups, aid two the hydroxyhexafluoroisopropyl moiety is sufficiently bulky to confer highly acidic properties on the proton, thus contributing to the formation of strong hydrogen bonding. The introduction of the hydroxyhexafluoroisopropyl group can, therefore be used in the design of catalysts and ligands³ as well as in chemical sensing materials.⁴ Moreover. 2-aryl-1,1,1,3,3,3hexafluoroisopropanol derivatives found are in pharmaceutically potent products⁵ and polymeric materials.⁶

The conventional synthesis of 2-aryl-1,1,1,3,3,3hexafluoroisopropanols typically involves the electrophilic substitution of arenes or the nucleophilic addition of aryl metal reagents, using hexafluoroacetone as the electrophile.⁷ Dehydrogenative coupling of HFIP with electron-rich arenes, including anilines and indoles, has recently been achieved by utilizing Co⁸ or Cu⁹ catalysis. Alternatively, the introduction of hydroxyhexafluoroisopropyl groups into aromatic compounds has been accomplished by employing a nucleophilic trifluoromethylation protocol.10 The trifluoromethylation of trifluoroacetophenones is a typical method for the synthesis of 2-aryl-1,1,1,3,3,3-hexafluoroisopropanols, a reaction that usually involves the use of the Ruppert-Prakash reagent, Me₃SiCF₃,¹¹ or the less reactive Bu₃SnCF₃ in the presence of a catalytic amount of a Lewis base activator.12 However, the synthesis of trifluoroacetophenone derivatives are not so straightforward compared with carboxylic acid derivatives. The trifluoromethylation of aroyl chlorides is a convenient method for the synthesis of 2-aryl-1,1,1,3,3,3-hexafluoroisopropanols, in which trifluoromethylating reagents derived from a trifluoroacetate salt or a fluoroform are usually employed.13 Me₃SiCF₃ can also be used for the trifluoromethylation of acid anhydrides as well as acid chlorides.¹⁴ Skrydstrup reported on a practical example that proceeds via the Pd-catalyzed fluorocarbonylation of aryl bromides or fluorosulfates followed by trifluoromethylation using Me₃SiCF₃.¹⁵ In these methods, more than a stoichiometric amount of the fluoride anion (F⁻) source is generally required for the efficient activation of Me₃SiCF₃.

To the best of our knowledge, reports on the synthesis of 2aryl-1,1,1,3,3,3-hexafluoroisopropanols from aromatic esters using Me₃SiCF₃ have been limited despite their availability and synthetic utility. Pentafluorophenyl benzoates can also serve as а substrate for the synthesis of 2-aryl-1,1,1,3,3,3hexafluoroisopropanols, however the use of a stoichiometric amount of tetramethylammonium fluoride (Me₄NF) is required (Scheme 1a),¹⁴ or alternatively a large excess of Me₃SiCF₃ was used when the amount of Me₄NF was reduced.¹⁶ The trifluoromethylation of methyl benzoates can proceed in the presence of a catalytic amount of the F⁻ source to give trifluoromethyl ketones (Scheme 1b).¹⁷ However, the synthesis of 2-aryl-1,1,1,3,3,3-hexafluoroisopropanols from methyl benzoates has not been fully explored except for the bistrifluoromethylation of an electronically deficient methyl benzoate.5a

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⁺ Electronic Supplementary Information (ESI) available: [details of any supplementary information available should be included here]. See DOI: 10.1039/x0xx00000x

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In this report, we disclose that the reaction of phenyl aromatic carboxylates with Me₃SiCF₃ provides O-silyl-protected 2-aryl-1,1,1,3,3,3-hexafluoroisopropanols, even in the presence of a catalytic amount of the F⁻ source (Scheme 1c).

(a) Bis-trifluoromethylation of pentafluorophenyl benzoates using a stoichiometric amount of $\mathsf{R}_4\mathsf{NF}$ or a large excess amount of Me₃SiCF₃ in the presence of a catalytic amount of R₄NF.



(b) Trifluoromethylation of methyl benzoates using a catalytic amount of F⁻ sources



(c) This work: Bis-trifluoromethylation of phenyl benzoates using a catalytic amount of CsF



We began our studies by conducting the reaction of phenyl 2-naphthoate (1a, 0.3 mmol) with Me₃SiCF₃ (3 equiv) in the presence of 10 mol% of CsF in 1,4-dioxane at room temperature, giving the 1,1,1,3,3,3-hexafluoro-2-naphthylisopropyl silyl ether (2a) in 81% isolated yield (Table 1, entry 1). PhOSiMe₃ was also present in the crude reaction mixture, as evidenced by ¹H NMR and GC analysis. Reducing the amount of CsF to 1 mol% improved the yield of 2a to 98% (entry 2). When 1 mol% of KF was used in place of CsF as an additive, the yield of 2a was significantly decreased (entry 3), due, in part, to the low solubility of KF in 1,4-dioxane. In fact, the addition of KF with 18-crown-6 provided the desired trifluoromethylation product without loss of the yield of 2a (entry 4). It should be noted that this reaction also proceeded when 1 mol% of CsOPh was added, leading to the formation of 2a in 70% yield (entry 5). However, other additives including NaOPh/15-crown-5, PPh₃, and Et₃N were ineffective (entries 6-8), and no reaction occurred in the absence of an additive (entry 9). Lowering the amount of Me₃SiCF₃ (2.2 equiv) decreased the yield of **2a**. (entry 10). After the screening of solvents and leaving groups, 1,4-dioxane and a phenoxy group, respectively, were suitable for achieving an efficient transformation.18



^a Isolated yield. ^b Me₃SiCF₃ (2.2 equiv) was used.

With the optimized conditions in hand, we investigated the scope of the reaction with respect to phenyl aromatic carboxylates (Scheme 2). Phenyl 1-naphthoate (1b), 4phenylbenzoate (1c), and 3,4-dimethylbenzoate (1d) could be converted into the corresponding silyl ethers in good yields (2bd). Steric hindrance of ortho-substituents affected the progress of the reaction, resulting in only modest yields of **2e** and **2f** even when the reaction run for 24 h. The trifluoromethylation of halogenated aryl esters (1g and 1h) proceeded smoothly to give 2g and 2h, which would serve as valuable intermediates in cross-coupling reactions. Both of the ester groups in the diphenyl naphthalene-1,4-dicarboxylate (1i) could be converted into siloxyhexafluoroisopropyl groups. When 1j, bearing a terminal alkyne functionality, was reacted with 5 equivalents of Me₃SiCF₃, the silvlation of the terminal alkyne took place along with the formation of the desired trifluoromethylation of ester, affording 2j in 90% yield.¹⁹ Phenyl cinnamate (1k) as well as phenyl heteroaromatic carboxylates, including quinoline (11, 1m), benzofuran (1n), indole (1o), and pyridine (1p), were also applicable for use in this protocol, giving the corresponding trifluoromethylation products **2k-p** in good yields. Unfortunately, the reaction of phenyl aromatic carboxylates with other (perfluoroalkyl)trialkylsilanes, such as Et₃SiCF₃, Me₃SiC₂F₅, and Me₃SiCF₂H, was unsuccessful under the optimized conditions.20

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OSiMe₃ Me₃SiCF₃ 3 equiv -CF₃ CsF 1 mol% OPh CF₃ 1.4-dioxane 1 mL rt. 6 h 1 0.3 mmol 2 OSiMe₃ **OSiMe** OSiMe₃ CFa CFa CF₃ ℃F₃ CF₃ Ph 2d 89%^a 2b 82% 2c 98% OSiMe₃ Ph OSiMe₃ OSiMe₃ CFa CF₃ CF₃ CF₃ CFa MeO CI 2g 78% 2e 71%^a 2f 45% OSiMe₃ Me₃SiC OSiMe₃ F₃C CF3 -CFa F₃C CF₃ CF₃ Br 2h 86% 2i 90%^{a,b} OSiMe₃ CF₃ Me₃Si **2**j 90%° 1j OSiMe₃ OSiMe₃ -CF₃ CF₃ CF₃ N **ÓSiMe**₃ 2k 85% 2m 89% **2I** 83% OSiMe₃ OSiMe₃ OSiMe₃ -CF₃ CF₃ CF₃ CF₃ CF₃ N Me 2n 86% 20 67% 2p 81%^a

Scheme 2 Scope of phenyl carboxylates. Reaction conditions: phenyl carboxylate (0.3 mmol), Me₃SiCF₃ (0.9 mmol), CsF (0.003 mmol), 1,4-dioxane (1 mL), rt, 6 h unless otherwise noted. ^{*a*} Run for 24 h. ^{*b*} Me₃SiCF₃ (6 equiv) was used. ^{*c*} Me₃SiCF₃ (5 equiv) was used.

We next examined a large-scale trifluoromethylation of **1a**, which successfully afforded **2a** without any loss of yield (Scheme 3). The subsequent deprotection of **2a** by treatment with a base led to the formation of 2-naphthylhexafluoroisopropanol (**3a**) in 88% yield in 2 steps.



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Recently, Lloyd-Jones reported on a detailed mechanistic investigation of anion-initiated trifluoromethylation using Me₃SiCF₃.²¹ They concluded that the pentacoordinate silicon intermediates such as Me₃SiF(CF₃)⁻ or Me₃Si(CF₃)₂⁻ are unable to transfer a CF₃ group directly, while CF_3^- can serve as an active nucleophile. It should also be noted that metal phenoxides such as CsOPh and KOPh are effective initiators for the anioninitiated trifluoromethylations using Me₃SiCF₃. On the basis of this report and our results, a proposed reaction mechanism for this transformation is illustrated in Scheme 4. The reaction of Me₃SiCF₃ with CsF initially gives CsCF₃, which then reacts with Me₃SiCF₃ to produce an equilibrium mixture of a pentacoordinate silicon intermediate (Scheme 4a). The nucleophilic attack of CF₃⁻ to the carbonyl group in 1 then gives the trifluoroacetophenone 4 along with the elimination of PhO-. The subsequent addition of CF_3^- to 4 results in the deprotonation of the 2-aryl-1,1,1,3,3,3-hexafluoroisopropanol (2'), which then reacts with Me_3SiCF_3 to afford CF_3^- and 2 (Scheme 4b). The reaction of PhO⁻ with Me₃SiCF₃ can also provide CF_3^- along with the formation of PhOSiMe₃ (Scheme 4c). Owing to this process, the use of a catalytic amount of CsF initiator is sufficient to allow the transformation of 1 into 2.



In conclusion, we report on the development of an efficient method for the synthesis of 2-(hetero)aryl-1,1,1,3,3,3-hexafluoroisopropanol derivatives from phenyl (hetero)aromatic carboxylates by using Me₃SiCF₃ in

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combination with a catalytic amount of CsF. Various functionalities including metal-malleable halogen groups are compatible to this protocol. A key to the successful reaction is the sufficient leaving ability and basicity of the phenoxide anion that can activate Me_3SiCF_3 to promote the following trifluoromethylation.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts to declare.

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by a Grant in Aid for Specially Promoted Research by MEXT (No. 17H06091).

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Fluoride anion-initiated trifluoromethylation of phenyl aromatic carboxylates with (trifluoromethyl)trimethylsilane leading to the formation of 2-aryl-1,1,1,3,3,3-hexafluoroisopropanols⁺

Received 00th January 20xx, Accepted 00th January 20xx

DOI: 10.1039/x0xx00000x

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activation of Me₃SiCF₃ by F⁻ and leaving PhO⁻

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Electronic Supplementary Information (ESI) available: [details of any supplementary information available should be included here]. See DOI: 10.1039/x0xx00000x