Synthesis of Some Fluorinated Nitrogen Heterocycles from (Diethylaminomethylene)Hexafluoroacetylacetone (DAMFA)

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Abstract: Simple and highly efficient syntheses of the title compounds from DAMFA are described in the quinoline, azepinonaphtalene, azaphenanthrene(s), pyridopyridine, pyrazole, pyrrole and pyrimidine series.

The serendipitous observation of the oxidation of some alkaloidal tertiary amines with trifluoroacetic anhydride¹ had recently focused our attention to N,N-diethylaminomethylene-1,1,1,5,5,5-hexafluoroacetylacetone 1 (DAMFA), a compound prepared by Schreiber in 1980². Despite its highly reactive enaminodiketone pattern, surprisingly enough no mention of the use of DAMFA in the syntheses of heterocycles could be found in literature.



Owing to the pharmacological interest in heterocycles bearing CF₃ appendages³, we studied the substitution of NEt₂ in DAMFA with various nitrogen nucleophiles, and the further cyclization of the resulting enamine-diones **a** to heterocycles **b** (Scheme 1).



As expected, DAMFA easily suffered nucleophilic substitutions: prolonged treatments with primary amines in the presence⁴ of 0.1 eq of FeCl₃ gave the enamino-diketones **2a-5a** (Table) in 90 to 100% yields. Further cyclizations to nitrogen heterocycles were performed using protonic or Lewis acids. While heating **2a** in polyphosphoric acid (PPA) gave quinoline **2b** with a 10% yield only, the cyclization was made highly efficient (96%) upon treating a dichloromethane solution of **2a** with TiCl₄ (4-5 eq) for 14 h at room temperature. Compound **3a** from α -naphtylamine⁵ gave the azepinonaphtalene **3b** (90%) with TiCl₄, and the azaphenanthrene **3c** (15%) with PPA, probably reflecting a more hindered (enol phosphoric ester) intermediate in the last case. The isomeric azaphenanthrene **4b** was obtained (100%) from β -naphtylamine⁵ upon treatment of **4a** with TiCl₄. PPA treatment of **5a**, prepared from 3-aminopyridine, yielded the trifluorinated pyridopyridine **5b** (25%) while the TiCl₄ conditions improved the yield to 60% and disclosed the probable intermediacy of the β -mono-trifluoroacetylenamine **5c**.



Reaction of DAMFA with hydrazine in acetonitrile (rt, 4h) was straighforward yielding pyrazole 6 (96 %) (Scheme 2). Under similar conditions phenylhydrazine yielded both regioisomeric pyrazoles 7 (75 %) and 8 (25 %). The intermediate enehydrazine-diones were not isolated and the reaction proceeded smoothly in one step.

Turning to pyrroles, a synthesis by Okada⁶ using 1-ethoxy-2-trifluoroacetylethylene was conveniently adapted to DAMFA: enamine-dione 9 resulting from the reaction of 1 with 2,2-dimethoxyethylamine was treated with trifluoroacetic acid (TFA) and a few drops of water (rt, 4h). The intermediate 3,3bis(trifluoroacetyl)pyrrolenine 10 lost one molecule of TFA in the reaction medium to generate 3trifluoroacetylpyrrole 11 (83% from 1), which had been actually described in Okada's paper.

Evans' efficient synthesis⁷ of porphobilinogen through the cyclization of an enaminone derived from an alkyl glycinate inspired a subsequent synthesis in the pyrrole series: reaction of DAMFA with ethyl N-benzylglycinate in MeCN (70°C, 4h) gave the enamine-dione 12, which was not isolated and readily cyclized to the highly substituted pyrrole 13 (96%).

DAMFA was finally shown to react with urea derivatives, thus giving access to pyrimidines (Scheme 3):



N,N-dimethylguanidine yielded pyrimidine 14 (MeCN, rt, 4h, 85 %), whose treatment with acetone in the presence of potassium carbonate incidentally gave aldol 17 (79 %), which was further dehydrated (methylene chloride, sulfuric acid, rt, 14h, 99 %) to enone 18. Treatment of 14 with ethanolic KOH (rt, 4h)

followed by acidification quantitatively gave acid 15 while anhydrous methanol and potassium carbonate (rt, 24h) yielded ester 16 (85%). Reaction of 1 with O-methylisourea in acetonitrile at room temperature was less straightforward, affording the diethylamino derivative 19 resulting from nucleophilic displacement of OMe by the diethylamine originating from DAMFA. However conducting the reaction at 65° C with continuous abstraction of the vapors allowed isolation of 20 with a 65% yield. Transformation of 20 into nucleosidic analogues of thymidine is under current study.



Quinoline 2b was similarly submitted to a haloform reaction (KOH, EtOH), which quantitatively gave 4trifluoromethylquinoline-carboxylic acid 21 after careful neutralization, but suffered partial (60 %) decarboxylation to 22 upon acidification of the reaction medium to pH 1 and concentration under reduced pressure.

Acknowledgements

Spectral measurements by Dr D.Royer and Mr D.Patigny (NMR) and by Mr P.Sigaut (MS) are gratefully acknowledged. M.S. was partially supported by grants from the Moroccan government and from the University of Reims Champagne-Ardenne.

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(Received in France 19 July 1993; accepted 24 September 1993)