Novel ruthenium(II) complexes containing imino- or aminophosphine ligands for catalytic transfer hydrogenation

Pascale Crochet,^a José Gimeno,^{*a} Javier Borge^b and Santiago García-Granda^b

^a Instituto Universitario de Química Organometálica "Enrique Moles" (Unidad Asociada al CSIC), Departamento de Química Orgánica e Inorgánica, Facultad de Química, Universidad de Oviedo, 33006 Oviedo, Spain

^b Departamento de Química Física y Analítica, Facultad de Química, Universidad de Oviedo, 33006 Oviedo, Spain

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Five- and six-coordinate ruthenium(II) complexes containing imino- and aminophosphines have been prepared by ligand exchange processes. Thus, reactions of $[RuCl_2(PPh_3)_3]$ with 2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=NR (R = Ph (**1a**); 2',6'-C₆H₃Me₂ (**1b**); 2'-C₆H₄OMe (**1c**)) lead to the chelate iminophosphine complexes $[RuCl_2(\kappa^2-P,N-2-Ph_2PC_6H_4CH=NR)(PPh_3)]$ (R = Ph (**3a**); 2',6'-C₆H₃Me₂ (**3b**)) and $[RuCl_2(\kappa^3-P,N,O-2-Ph_2PC_6H_4CH=N-2'-C_6H_4OMe)(PPh_3)]$ (**3c**), respectively. Similarly, reactions with aminophosphine ligands 2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH₂NHR (R = Ph (**2a**); ⁱPr (**2d**); (S)-CHMeCy (**2e**)) afford the 16-electron complexes $[RuCl_2(\kappa^2-P,N-2-Ph_2PC_6H_4CH_2NHR)(PPh_3)]$ (R = Ph (**5a**); ⁱPr (**5d**); (S)-CHMeCy (**5e**)). The iminophosphines 2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=NR (R = ⁱPr (**1d**); (S)-CHMeCy (**1e**)) react with $[RuCl_2(DMSO)_4]$ to lead to the bis-iminophosphine complexes $[RuCl_2(\kappa^2-P,N-2-Ph_2PC_6H_4CH=NR)_2]$ (R = ⁱPr (**4d**); (S)-CHMeCy (**4e**)). The crystal structure of **4d** has been determined by X-ray diffraction. Complexes **3a–c**, **4d,e** and **5a,d,e** are active in catalytic transfer hydrogenation of acetophenone. All of them are more efficient than the precursor $[RuCl_2(PPh_3)_3]$.

Introduction

The design of new ligands for promoting high reactivity and selectivity in metal-catalyzed synthesis is a field of constant ongoing research activity. Heteroditopic ligands, bearing phosphorus and nitrogen atoms, have attracted particular attention since they can induce increased selectivity owing to the different electronic properties of the two donor atoms. Thus, they have been successfully used in a great variety of transition metal catalyzed reactions, among others, hydrosilylations of C=O bonds, allylic substitutions and Heck reactions.¹ In particular, many ruthenium(II) complexes bearing bidentate or tridentate P,N ligands such as phosphinooxazolines and pyridylphosphines have proven to be efficient catalysts in transfer hydrogenation of ketones^{1–3} with high rates and conversions. In contrast, only a few catalysts containing analogous imino- and aminophosphine ligands have been used to date in this type of catalytic process.⁴

We have recently reported the synthesis of five- and sixcoordinate ruthenium(II) complexes containing $2\text{-Ph}_2\text{PC}_6$ - $\text{H}_4\text{CH}=\text{N}^{t}\text{Bu}$ and $2\text{-Ph}_2\text{PC}_6\text{H}_4\text{CH}_2\text{NH}^{t}\text{Bu}$ as chelate ligands.⁵ Since these complexes have proved to be very active catalysts in transfer hydrogenation of acetophenone by propan-2-ol, we believe it of interest to extend these studies with a series of imino- and aminophosphine complexes by using analogous P,N ligands in which the imino and amino substituents introduce different steric and/or electronic features. Thus, in this paper we report: (i) the synthesis of new ruthenium(II) complexes containing bidentate $2\text{-Ph}_2\text{PC}_6\text{H}_4\text{CH}=\text{NR}$ (R = Ph (1a); 2',6'-C₆H₃Me₂ (1b); ¹Pr (1d); (S)-CHMeCy (1e)) and 2-Ph}_2\text{PC}_6\text{H}_4\text{CH}_2\text{NHR} (R = Ph (2a); ¹Pr (2d); (S)-CHMeCy (2e)), and the tridentate $2\text{-Ph}_2\text{PC}_6\text{H}_4\text{CH}=\text{N-2'-C}_6\text{H}_4\text{OMe}$ (1c) ligands, (ii) the study of their catalytic activity in transfer hydrogenation of acetophenone.



Results and discussion

The new ligands **1c,e** and **2d,e** have been synthesized following classical methodologies.⁶ They have been isolated as air-stable solids (**1c**) or oils (**1e**, **2d,e**) in good yields and characterized by IR and ³¹P{¹H}, ¹H and ¹³C{¹H} NMR spectroscopy and mass spectrometry (see Experimental section for details). The most significant features are: (i) ³¹P{¹H} NMR: a singlet signal at *ca.* –14 ppm, (ii) ¹H NMR of **1c,e**: a doublet at *ca.* 9 ppm attributed to the iminic proton, and (iii) ¹H NMR of **2d,e**: a resonance at *ca.* 4 ppm corresponding to the CH₂N hydrogen nuclei.

Synthesis of the iminophosphine complexes $[RuCl_2(\kappa^2-P,N-2-Ph_2PC_6H_4CH=NR)(PPh_3)]$ (R = Ph (3a); 2',6'-C_6H_3Me_2 (3b)) and $[RuCl_2(\kappa^3-P,N,O-2-Ph_2PC_6H_4CH=N-2'-C_6H_4OMe)(PPh_3)]$ (3c)

As described for the preparation of the complex $[RuCl_2(\kappa^2 - P, N-2-Ph_2PC_6H_4CH=N^tBu)(PPh_3)]$,⁵ the iminophosphines 2-Ph_2PC_6H_4CH=NR (R = Ph (1a); 2',6'-C_6H_3Me_2 (1b)) react



with [RuCl₂(PPh₃)₃], in THF at room temperature, affording complexes [RuCl₂(κ^2 -*P*,*N*-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=NR)(PPh₃)] (R = Ph (**3a**); 2',6'-C₆H₃Me₂ (**3b**)). Similarly, the reaction with the tridentate iminophosphine **2c** gives the complex [RuCl₂ (κ^3 -*P*,*N*,*O*-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=N-2'-C₆H₄OMe)(PPh₃)] (**3c**) (Scheme 1).

Spectroscopic (IR, Far-IR, ${}^{31}P{}^{1}H{}$, ${}^{1}H{}$, and ${}^{13}C{}^{1}H{}$ NMR) and analytical data confirm the proposed formulations. Complex 3a has been isolated as a mixture of two non-separable stereoisomers (3a' and 3a'') as inferred by IR and NMR spectroscopy. In particular, the Far-IR spectrum shows v_{Ru-Cl} absorptions at 320, and at 292 and 245 cm⁻¹ which are consistent with the presence of trans (3a') and cis (3a'') dichloride complexes, respectively (Scheme 1).⁷ In addition, the ${}^{31}P{}^{1}H$ NMR spectrum exhibits the expected resonances for two AX spin systems at 87.9 (3a') and 84.2 (3a") (Ph₂P fragment) and 36.2 (3a') and 43.9 ppm (3a'') (PPh₃ ligand). The small coupling constant values (${}^{2}J_{PP} = 31.3$ (3a') and 39.6 (3a'') Hz) are in agreement with the cis-disposition of the two P-donor groups. In contrast, complexes 3b,c are obtained stereoselectively as the *trans* dichloride isomers. This is assessed by the Far-IR spectra which display one single v_{Ru-Cl} stretching absorption at *ca.* 320 cm⁻¹. The ³¹P{¹H} NMR spectra of **3b,c** show an AX spin system at 87.5 (**3b**) and 69.7 (**3c**) (PPh₂ group) and 35.7 (3b) and 34.7 (3c) ppm (PPh₃ ligand) with a small coupling constant $({}^{2}J_{PP} = 33.4$ (3b) and 32.6 (3c) Hz) indicative of the cis-arrangement of the two phosphorus nuclei. The ¹H NMR spectra of the cis and trans isomers also show remarkable differences. Thus, the iminic proton resonances of the *trans* complexes **3a',b,c** show a relatively high ${}^{4}J_{PH}$ value (8.8–9.1 Hz) characteristic of a *trans* disposition of the imino group and the PPh₃ ligand.⁸ This contrasts with the corresponding resonance of the cis complex 3a" which appears as a singlet in accordance with a cis arrangement of these two groups.^{5,9} Far-IR and NMR spectroscopic data of trans complexes 3a', b, c can be compared with those reported for the complex $[RuCl_2(\kappa^2-P, N-2-Ph_2PC_6H_4CH=$ N^tBu)(PPh₃)]¹⁰ which has also been characterized by X-ray diffraction. In general, the chelate coordination of iminophosphine ligands leads to a downfield shift of the phosphorus as well as the CH=N carbon resonances with respect to the free ligands (δ 166.5 (**3a**'), 167.1 (**3a**''), 172.2 (**3b**) and 166.1 (**3c**) vs. 158.9 (1a), 161.1 (1b) and 159.7 (1c) ppm). In addition, the downfield shift observed for the OMe signal in the $^{13}C{^{1}H}$ NMR spectrum of **3c** with respect to that of the free ligand is attributed to its coordination to ruthenium (δ 63.3 (3c) vs. 55.8 (1c) ppm). This is also in accord with the highfield resonance (69.7 ppm) of the phosphorus nucleus trans to the methoxy group. In contrast, the corresponding resonance in the five coordinate complexes 3a', 3a'' and 3b appears at 87.9-84.2 ppm.

Synthesis of the bis-iminophosphine complexes *trans,cis*, *cis*-[RuCl₂(κ^2 -*P*,*N*-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=NR)₂] (R = ⁱPr (4d); (*S*)-CHMeCy (4e))

The treatment of [RuCl₂(PPh₃)₃] with one equivalent of 2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=NR (R = ⁱPr (1d); (S)-CHMeCy (1e)) does not afford the expected derivatives [RuCl₂(κ^2 -P,N-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=NR)(PPh₃)], leading instead to an equimolar mixture of the bis-iminophosphine complexes [RuCl₂(κ^2 -P,N- $2-Ph_2PC_6H_4CH=NR)_2$ (R = ⁱPr (4d); (S)-CHMeCy (4e)) and the ruthenium precursor. Complexes 4d,e were obtained in a quantitative yield by the reaction of two equivalents of 1d,e with [RuCl₂(DMSO)₄] in refluxing THF (Scheme 1).¹¹ All attempts to synthesize the bis-iminophosphine complexes $[RuCl_2(\kappa^2 - P, N - 2 - Ph_2PC_6H_4CH = NR)_2]$ $(\mathbf{R} = \mathbf{Ph};$ 2' 6'-C₆H₃Me₂; 2'-C₆H₄OMe) by treatment of either [RuCl₂ (PPh₃)₃] or [RuCl₂(DMSO)₄] with a large excess of 1a-c in refluxing THF failed. Monitoring the reaction by ${}^{31}P{}^{1}H{}$ NMR only the formation of **3a-c** is observed.

Complexes **4d**,e have been characterized by elemental analyses, and spectroscopic methods (IR, Far-IR, ${}^{31}P{}^{1}H{}$, ${}^{1}H{}$, and ${}^{13}C{}^{1}H{}$ NMR spectroscopy). Spectroscopic data show that only one stereoisomer is obtained among the five possible for **4d** (I–V) and the eight possible for **4e** (two diastereoisomers for each of structures I–III plus IV and V).



On the basis of ³¹P{¹H} and ¹H NMR data, stereoisomers I, III and V can be discarded since the spectra display: (a) only a single phosphorus resonance (δ 48.7 (**4d**) and 48.8(**4e**)), (b) the proton iminic resonance as a filled-in doublet owing to virtual coupling (δ 8.78 (**4e**) and 8.82 (**4d**)). This suggests a small ²J_{PP} value¹² consistent with a *cis*-disposition of the phosphorus nuclei. In order to determine unambiguously the stereochemistry of these compounds an X-ray diffraction study was carried out on **4d**.



Fig. 1 ORTEP view of the bis-iminophosphine complex 4d. Thermal ellipsoids are shown at 30% probability. Hydrogen atoms, except those of the NCHMe₂ fragment (H(41) and H(41a)), are omitted for clarity.

X-Ray crystal structure of complex 4d

An ORTEP drawing is shown in Fig. 1 (stereoisomer IV). Selected bonds and angles are collected in Table 1. The coordination geometry around the ruthenium atom can be described as an octahedron with two chloride atoms occupying the apical positions $[Cl-Ru-Cl_a = 175.58(4)^\circ]$. The equatorial plane is formed by the two bidentate 2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=N¹Pr ligands, displaying a bite angle P-Ru-N of 81.30(7)°. The two phosphorus as well as the two nitrogen atoms are in a cis-disposition $[P-Ru-P_a = 106.10(5); N-Ru-N_a = 91.3(1)^\circ]$. The ruthenium atom is contained in the best least-square base plane. The Ru-N and C(1)-N imine bond lengths, 2.183(2) and 1.290(4) Å, are similar to those found in $[RuCl_2(\kappa^4-P, N, N', P'-Ph_2 \begin{array}{l} PC_{6}H_{4}CH=NCH_{2}CH_{2}N=CHC_{6}H_{4}PPh_{2})] \ \ [2.094(9), \ \ 2.097(6), \\ and \ \ 1.297(9), \ \ 1.285(9) \ \ A], ^{13} \ \ [RuCl_{2}(\kappa^{4}-P,N,N',P'-(S,S)-(S,S$ $Ph_2PC_6H_4CH=NC_6H_{10}N=CHC_6H_4PPh_2)$ [2.100(5), 2.091(5), and 1.273(8), 1.272(8) Å],^{4a} and [RuCl₂(κ^2 -P,N-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=N^tBu)(PPh₃)] [2.082(6) and 1.255(9) Å].⁵ In contrast with the latter iminophosphine ruthenium complex, the metallacycles deviate strongly from planarity, probably to minimize the interactions between the two isopropyl groups. This is also reflected in the relative disposition of the two NCHMe₂ fragments since the hydrogen atoms, H(41) and H(41a), are facing each other.

Table 1 Selected bond lengths (Å) and angles (°) for 4d

Bond lengths			
Ru–N	2.183(2)	N–C(1)	1.290(4)
Ru–P	2.2957(9)	N-C(41)	1.504(4)
Ru–Cl	2.4164(9)		
Bond angles			
N–Ru–P	81.30(7)	N–Ru–N _a	91.3(1)
N–Ru–P _a	172.54(7)	P-Ru-Cl	94.23(3)
P–Ru–P _a	106.10(5)	P–Ru–Cl _a	88.43(3)
N–Ru–Cl	90.09(7)	Cl-Ru-Cla	175.58(4)
Torsion angles			
Ru–P–C(31)–C(36)	43.7(2)	C(36)-C(1)-N-Ru	-11.1(5)
P-C(31)-C(36)-C(1)	1.8(4)	P-Ru-N-C(1)	45.4(3)
C(31)-C(36)-C(1)-N	-24.6(5)	N-Ru-P-C(31)	-52.0(1)



Synthesis of the five-coordinate aminophosphine complexes $[RuCl_2(\kappa^2-P,N-2-Ph_2PC_6H_4CH_2NHR)(PPh_3)]$ (R = Ph (5a); ⁱPr (5d); (S)-CHMeCy (5e))

Reactions of the aminophosphines 2a,d,e with [RuCl₂(PPh₃)₃], in THF at room temperature, lead to the formation of the fivecoordinate complexes [RuCl₂(κ^2 -P,N-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH₂NHR) (PPh_3)] (R = Ph (5a); ⁱPr (5d); (S)-CHMeCy (5e)) (Scheme 2). They have been characterized by elemental analyses and spectroscopic techniques (IR, Far-IR, and ¹H, ³¹P{¹H}, and ¹³C{¹H} NMR spectroscopy) all data being in agreement with the stoichiometry and a trans RuCl₂ arrangement. The most significant features, which can be compared to those shown by 3a', 3b and 3c, are: (i) ${}^{31}P{}^{1}H{}$ NMR: an AX spin system in the range 72.5-77.6 (PPh2 group) and 40.8-42.0 (PPh3 ligand) ppm with a small ${}^{2}J_{PP}$ coupling constant (34.2–38.1 Hz) in accordance with a cis-arrangement of two different Pdonor groups, and (ii) Far-IR: an absorption at ca. 320 cm^{-1} indicative of a *trans* arrangement of the chloride atoms. In addition, the ¹H NMR spectra exhibit a NH signal at *ca*. 4.0-4.5 ppm and the two resonances attributable to the two diastereotopic CH₂N protons in the range 4.0-5.2 ppm. The inequivalence of the methylenic protons arises from the coordination of the amino group which converts the nitrogen atom in a stereogenic center. Complex 5e incorporating the chiral aminophosphine (S)-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH₂NHCHMeCy was obtained as a non-separable mixture of two diastereoisomers, 5e' and 5e'', in a 20:80 ratio, arising from the R and S configurations of the nitrogen atom.

Catalytic studies

The catalytic activity in transfer hydrogenation of acetophenone by propan-2-ol of all the novel complexes has been investigated (Scheme 3). In a typical experiment, NaOH was added to a solution of the ruthenium(II) catalyst precursor and acetophenone (0.1 M) in ⁱPrOH (ketone:Ru:base = 500:1:24) at refluxing temperature, the reaction being monitored by gas chromatography. Selected results are collected in Table 2. For comparative purposes, the catalytic activity of complexes [RuCl₂(κ^2 -*P*,*N*-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=N^tBu)(PPh₃)] and [RuCl₂(κ^2 -*P*,*N*-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH₂NH^tBu)(PPh₃)] previously reported by us⁵ and that of [RuCl₂(PPh₃)₃] used by Bäckvall,¹⁴ have also been examined under the same conditions.

All the complexes **3a–c**, **4d**,**e** and **5a**,**d**,**e** are more active catalysts than the precursor [RuCl₂(PPh₃)₃] (entries 1–10 vs. entry 11), and afford almost quantitative yields of 1-phenylethanol within 4 hours. The highest rate is observed for **3a** (as a mixture of **3a**' and **3a**''), the turnover frequency being 5220 h⁻¹ at 50% of conversion (entry 2). The chiral six coordinate complex **4e** leads to a moderate enantiomeric excess (44%; entry 6). In contrast, no chiral induction is observed when the mixture



 Table 2
 Transfer hydrogenation of acetophenone^a

Entry	Catalyst	Yield (%) ^b	Time/h	TOF ₅₀ ^c	ee (%) ^d
Complexes [RuCl ₂ (PPh ₃)(2-Ph ₂ PC ₆ H ₄ CH=NR)]					
1	$\mathbf{R} = {}^{\mathrm{t}}\mathbf{B}\mathbf{u}^{\mathrm{5}}$	97	2	1650	
2	R = Ph, 3a	98	1	5220	_
3	$R = 2', 6'-C_6H_3Me_2, 3b$	98	3	590	
4	$R = 2' - C_6 H_4 OMe$, 3c	98	4	730	
Complexes [RuCl ₂ (2-Ph ₂ PC ₆ H ₄ CH=NR) ₂]					
5	$\mathbf{R} = {}^{\mathrm{i}}\mathbf{Pr}, \mathbf{4d}$	97	1	1030	
6	$\mathbf{R} = (S)$ -CHMeCy, 4e	97	1	820	44 (R)
Complexes [RuCl ₂ (PPh ₃)(2-Ph ₂ PC ₆ H ₄ CH ₂ NHR)]					
7	$\mathbf{R} = {}^{\mathrm{t}}\mathbf{B}\mathbf{u}^{\mathrm{5}}$	97	2	1610	
8	$\mathbf{R} = \mathbf{P}\mathbf{h}, 5\mathbf{a}$	96	2	1680	
9	$\mathbf{R} = {}^{\mathrm{i}}\mathbf{P}\mathbf{r}, \mathbf{5d}$	96	2	1040	
10	$\mathbf{R} = (S)$ -CHMeCy, 5 e	98	1	2500	0
11	[RuCl ₂ (PPh ₃) ₃]	91	5	220	_

^{*a*} Conditions: reactions were carried out in a Schlenk tube fitted with a condenser at 82 °C using 50 mL of propan-2-ol, 5 mmol of acetophenone, 0.2 mol% of catalyst precursor and 4.8 mol% of NaOH. ^{*b*} Yield of 1-phenylethanol, GC determined. ^{*c*} Turnover frequency = ((mol product/mol catalyst)/time) at 50% conversion, in h^{-1} . ^{*d*} Enantiomeric excess, GC determined. Absolute configuration in parenthesis, determined on the basis of the sign of optical rotation.

of diastereoisomers of the five-coordinate complex 5e is used (entry 10) even at temperatures lower than $82 \degree C$.

The evolution of the conversion as a function of the reaction time was investigated. In contrast with 16-electron complexes **3a,b** and **5a,d,e**, the saturated derivatives [RuCl₂(κ^3 -P,N,O-2- $Ph_2PC_6H_4CH=N-2'-C_6H_4OMe)(PPh_3)$] (3c), [RuCl₂(κ^2 -P,N-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=NⁱPr)₂] (4d) and [RuCl₂(κ^2 -P,N-(S)-2- $Ph_2PC_6H_4CH=NCHMeCy_2$ (4e) present, before the fast reaction of acetophenone, an induction period (of 5, 20 and 30 min respectively). In addition, during the first thirty minutes, the enantiomeric excess observed for 4e increases from 16 to 46% and then remains almost constant. This is indicative of an evolution of the active species. In order to find out how the chiral catalyst 4e changes as a function of time, the following experiments were carried out: (i) the catalyst and NaOH were refluxed for 30 min, and then acetophenone was added, and (ii) the catalyst, NaOH and a small quantity of acetophenone (Ru:acetophenone = 1:10) were refluxed for 30 min, and then the rest of acetophenone was added, (iii) the catalyst, NaOH and a small quantity of racemic 1-phenylethanol (Ru:1-phenylethanol = 1:10) were refluxed for 30 min, and then acetophenone was added. In the two former cases the induction time, the conversion and the enantiomeric excess are not affected. In the latter case no induction period is observed but the enantiomeric excess drops dramatically to 2%. This seems to indicate that the initial active species formed from the precursor and the base reacts with the 1-phenylethanol. When the 1-phenylethanol is enantiomerically enriched the enantiomeric excess increases with the conversion. A similar effect has been described previously in hydrogen transfer reaction of isopropyl phenyl ketone catalyzed by [Ir(COD)Cl]2 associated with a salen type ligand.¹⁵

Conclusions

In this work new five (**3a–b**) and six coordinate (**3c,4c–d**) iminophosphine ruthenium(II) complexes are reported. The stoichiometry seems to depend on the steric hindrance of the ligands. Thus the bulky iminophosphines **1a–c** bearing iminic aryl groups give rise only to the five coordinate complexes (**3a–b**), while the ligands **1d,e**, bearing a -CHRR' substituent on the nitrogen, lead to the six-coordinate bis-iminophosphine derivatives (**4d,e**). In contrast, aminophosphines **2a,d,e** only form five coordinate 16-electron complexes (**5a,d,e**) reflecting the higher steric hindrance of these ligands in comparison with the related iminophosphines. The steric properties also seem to govern the stereoselectivity of the five coordinate iminophosphine complexes **3a,b** since, for the bulkier xylyl group, the *trans* stereoisomer *vs.* the mixture of *cis* and *trans* for the phenyl substituted iminophosphine, is obtained.

All the complexes 3–5 are efficient catalysts in transfer hydrogenation of ketones. The catalytic activity can be compared to that observed for analogous ruthenium(II) complexes bearing other chelating P,N ligands.³ It is interesting to note that the mixture of the *trans* and *cis* isomers of complex [RuCl₂(κ^2 -P,N-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=NPh)(PPh₃)] (3a' and 3a'' respectively) has been found to be by far the most efficient catalyst precursor. Since similar five-coordinate *cis*-dichloride complexes [RuCl₂(PPh₃)(oxazolinylferrocenylphosphine)] have proved to be particularly active in transfer hydrogenation of acetophenone^{3c,d,f} we propose that the increased catalytic activity observed for 3a is probably due to the presence of the *cis*-isomer. However, the catalytic results for 3–5 do not allow us to determine clearly the influence of the steric and electronic properties of the different ligands on the catalytic activity.

Experimental

General

The manipulations were performed under an atmosphere of dry nitrogen using vacuum-line and standard Schlenk techniques. All reagents were obtained from commercial suppliers and used without further purification. Solvents were dried by standard methods and distilled under nitrogen before use. The compounds $[RuCl_2(PPh_3)_3]$,¹⁶ $[RuCl_2(DMSO)_4]$,¹⁷ 2-Ph_2PC₆H₄CH=NR (R = Ph,¹⁸ -2',6'-C₆H₃Me₂,¹⁹ ⁱPr²⁰) and 2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH₂NHPh²¹ were prepared following the methods previously reported. Gas chromatographic measurements were made on a Hewlett Packard HP6890 equipment. A HP-INNO-WAX cross-linked polyethyleneglycol (30 m, 250 μm) or a Supelco Beta-DexTM 120 (30 m, 250 μm) columns were used. Infrared spectra were recorded on a Perkin-Elmer 1720-XFT or a Perkin Elmer FT-IR 1000 spectrometer. The C, H and N analyses were carried out with a Perkin-Elmer 2400 microanalyzer. NMR spectra were recorded on Bruker AC300 or 300DPX instruments at 300 (¹H), 121.5 (³¹P) or 75.4 MHz (¹³C) using SiMe₄ or 85% H₃PO₄ as standards. DEPT experiments have been carried out for all the compounds. Coupling



Synthesis and product characterization

2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=N-2'-C₆H₄OMe, 1c. A solution of 2-(diphenylphosphino)benzaldehyde (0.248 g, 0.85 mmol) and 2-anisidine (0.105 g, 0.85 mmol) in a mixture of methanol (40 mL) and dichloromethane (20 mL) was stirred overnight at room temperature. After evaporation to dryness, the residue was washed twice with 5 mL of a mixture of hexane–diethyl ether (9:1) to afford a pale yellow solid. Yield: 0.321 g (96%). Found (calc. for C₂₆H₂₂NOP): C, 79.03 (78.97); H, 5.74 (5.61); N, 3.49 (3.54)%. ³¹P{¹H} NMR, CDCl₃, δ : -13.9 (s). ¹H NMR, CDCl₃, δ : 9.18 (d, 1 H, ⁴J_{PH} = 5.4 Hz, CH=N), 8.33 (m, 1 H, H-6), 7.72–6.60 (m, 17 H, ArH), 3.78 (s, 3 H, OMe). ¹³C{¹H} NMR, CDCl₃, δ : 159.7 (d, ³J_{PC} = 25.6, CH=N), 152.3 (s, C-2'), 141.4 (s, C-1'), 139.5 (d, ²J_{PC} = 16.9, 16.9, C-1), 138.4 (d, ¹J_{PC} = 19.8, C-2), 136.2 (d, ¹J_{PC} = 9.9, C-*i*), 134.1 (d, ²J_{PC} = 19.8, C-*o*), 133.4 (s, C-4, 5 or 6), 130.9 (s, C-4, 5 or 6), 129.0 (s, C-4, 5 or 6), 128.9 (s, C-*p*), 128.7 (d, ³J_{PC} = 7.0, C-*m*), 127.8 (d, ²J_{PC} = 4.1, C-3), 126.7, 120.9, 120.7 and 111.5 (all s, C-3', 4', 5' and 6'), 55.8 (s, OMe). IR (Nujol, cm⁻¹), $v_{C=N}$: 1607.

Synthesis of (S)-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=NCHMeCy, 1e. Following the same procedure **1e** was prepared as a colorless oil, using 0.272 g (0.94 mmol) of 2-(diphenylphosphino)benzaldehyde and 0.2 mL (1.35 mmol) of (*S*)-(+)-cyclohexylethylamine. Yield: 0.365 g (97%). ³¹P{¹H} NMR, CDCl₃, δ : -12.9 (s). ¹H NMR, CDCl₃, δ : 8.81 (d, 1 H, ⁴*J*_{PH} = 4.8 Hz, *CH*=N), 7.99 (m, 1 H, H-6), 7.60–7.14 (m, 12 H, ArH), 6.86 (m, 1 H, H-3), 2.89 (m, 1 H, *CHMe*), 1.70–0.60 (m, 11 H, Cy), 1.03 (d, 3 H, ³*J*_{HH} = 6.3 Hz, CH*Me*). ¹³C{¹H} NMR, CDCl₃, δ : 157.3 (d, ³*J*_{PC} = 21.2 Hz, *CH* = N), 139.7 (d, ²*J*_{PC} = 16.6 Hz, C-1), 137.1 (d, ¹*J*_{PC} = 18.9 Hz, C-2), 136.5 (d, ¹*J*_{PC} = 9.8 9.8 Hz, C-*i*), 136.4 (d, ¹*J*_{PC} = 9.1 Hz, C-*i*), 134.2 (d, ²*J*_{PC} = 20.4 Hz, C-*o*), 134.1 (d, ²*J*_{PC} = 20.4 Hz, C-*o*), 132.8 (s, C-4, 5 or 6), 128.8 (s, 2 C, C-*p*), 128.5 (d, 4 C, ³*J*_{PC} = 6.8 Hz, C-*m*), 128.3 (s, C-4, 5 or 6), 127.7 (d, ²*J*_{PC} = 4.5 Hz, C-3), 71.9 (s, NCH), 43.4 (s, CH of Cy), 29.6, 26.5, 26.3 and 26.2 (all s, CH₂ of Cy), 19.7 (s, Me). IR (Nujol, cm⁻¹), $v_{C=N}$: 1638. HRMS *m/z* calc. for C₂₇H₃₀NP (found): M⁺ = 399.21120 (399.21139).

Synthesis of 2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH₂NHⁱPr, 2d. A solution of 2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=NⁱPr (0.410 g, 1.24 mmol) in 30 mL of methanol was treated by NaBH₄ (0.180 g, 4.76 mmol) at 0 °C. After stirring 15 min the reaction was quenched with aqueous NaOH (5 mL, 1 M). The organic layer was extracted with dichloromethane (3 × 15 mL) and the combined phases were dried over MgSO₄. The solvents were removed to afford a pale yellow oil which was used without further purification. Yield: 0.390 g (94%). ³¹P{¹H} NMR, CDCl₃, δ : -15.6 (s). ¹H NMR, CDCl₃, δ : 7.48 (m, 1 H, H-6), 7.36-7.14 (m, 12 H, ArH), 6.89 (ddd, ³J_{HH} = 7.3, ³J_{PH} = 4.6, ⁴J_{HH} = 1.1, 1 H, H-3), 3.99 (s broad,

2 H, CH₂N), 2.70 (sept, 1 H, ${}^{3}J_{HH} = 6.2$, CHMe₂), 0.93 (d, 6 H, ${}^{3}J_{HH} = 6.2$, CHMe₂), the NH proton is not observed. ${}^{13}C{}^{1}H{}$ NMR, CDCl₃, δ : 144.2 (d, ${}^{1}J_{PC} = 23.5$, C-2), 136.5 (d, ${}^{1}J_{PC} = 10.2$, C-*i*), 137.7, (d, ${}^{2}J_{PC} = 13.4$, C-1), 133.8 (d, ${}^{2}J_{PC} = 20.3$, C-*o*), 133.6 (s, C-4, 5 or 6), 129.6 (d, ${}^{2}J_{PC} = 5.1$, 5.1, C-3), 129.0 (s, C-4, 5 or 6), 128.7 (s, C-*p*), 128.5 (d, ${}^{3}J_{PC} = 7.0$, C-*m*), 127.3 (s, C-4, 5 or 6), 50.0 (d, ${}^{3}J_{PC} = 21.0$, CH₂N), 48.0 (s, CHMe₂), 22.4 (s, CHMe₂). IR (Neat, cm⁻¹), v_{N-H} : 3312. HRMS *m*/*z* calc. for C₂₂H₂₄NP (found): M⁺ = 333.16463 (333.16471).

Synthesis of (S)-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH₂NHCHMeCy, 2e. Following the same procedure **2e** was obtained as a pale yellow oil using (S)-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=NCHMeCy (0.200 g, 0.50 mmol) and NaBH₄ (0.081 g, 2.14 mmol). Yield: 0.193 g (96%). ³¹P{¹H} NMR, CDCl₃, δ :-15.7 (s). ¹H NMR, CDCl₃, δ : 7.55-7.15 (m, 13 H, ArH), 6.92 (m, 1 H, H-3), 4.05 (part A of AB system, 1 H, ²J_{HH} = 19.7, NCH₂), 3.95 (part B of AB system, 1 H, ²J_{HH} = 19.7, NCH₂), 2.42 (m, 1 H, CHMe), 1.80–0.78 (m, 11 H, Cy), 0.93 (d, 3 H, ³J_{HH} = 6.3 Hz, CH*Me*), the NH proton is not observed. ¹³C{¹H} NMR, CDCl₃, δ : 145.1 (d, ¹J_{PC} = 24.1, C-2), 136.8 (d, ¹J_{PC} = 9.9, C-*i*), 135.6 (d, ²J_{PC} = 19.2, C-*o*), 133.6 (s, C-4, 5 or 6), 129.5 (d, ²J_{PC} = 5.7, 5.7, C-3), 129.0 (s, C-4, 5 or 6), 128.6 (d, ⁴J_{PC} = 2.1, C-*p*), 128.5 (d, ³J_{PC} = 7.1, C-*m*), 127.1 (s, C-4, 5 or 6), 57.0 (s, NCHMe), 50.2 (d, ³J_{PC} = 21.3, CH₂N), 42.6 (s, CH, Cy), 29.7, 27.6, 26.7, 26.6 and 26.4 (all s, CH, Cy), 16.3 (s, Me). IR (Nujol, cm⁻¹), v_{N-H} : 3315. HRMS *m*/*z* calc. for C₂₇H₃₂NP (found): M⁺ = 401.22722 (401.22729).

Synthesis of $[\text{RuCl}_2(\kappa^2-P, N-2-\text{Ph}_2\text{PC}_6\text{H}_4\text{CH}=\text{NPh})(\text{PPh}_3)]$, 3a' and 3a". A solution of $[\text{RuCl}_2(\text{PPh}_3)_3]$ (0.200 g, 0.21 mmol) and 2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=NPh (0.116 g, 0.32 mmol) in 30 mL of THF was stirred for 2 hours at room temperature. After evaporation to dryness, the resulting residue was washed 3 times with 10 mL of a mixture of hexane and diethyl ether (1:1) to afford a red solid. A mixture of two non-separable isomers, **3a'** and **3a''**, is obtained in a 60:40 ratio. Yield: 0.151 g (90%). Found (calc. for C₄₃H₃₅Cl₂NP₂Ru): C, 64.55 (64.58); H, 4.38 (4.41); N, 1.73 (1.75). ³¹P{¹H} NMR, CDCl₃, δ : **3a'** 87.9 (d, ²J_{PP} = 31.3, PPh₂), 36.2 (d, ²J_{PP} = 31.3, PPh₃); **3a''** 84.2 (d, ²J_{PP} = 39.6, PPh₂), 43.9 (d, ²J_{PP} = 39.6, PPh₃). ¹H NMR, CDCl₃, δ : **3a'** 9.00 (d, 1 H, ⁴J_{PH} = 9.1, CH = N), 8.07–6.67 (m, 34 H, ArH); **3a''** 8.72 (s, 1 H, CH = N), 8.07– 6.67 (m, 34 H, ArH). ¹³C{¹H} NMR, CDCl₃, δ : **3a'** 166.5 (d, ³J_{PC} = 4.5, CH=N), 150.9 (s, C-1'), 136.7–123.1 (m, Ar); **3a''** 167.1 (d, ³J_{PC} = 6.0, CH=N), 151.9 (s, C-1'), 136.7–123.1 (m, aromatic). IR and FIR (Nujol, cm⁻¹), $v_{C=N}$: 1608, 1588; $v_{CI-Ru-CI}$: 323, 292, 245.

Synthesis of [RuCl₂(κ^2 -*P*,*N*-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=N-2',6'-C₆H₃Me₂)(PPh₃)], **3b.** Following the same procedure **3b** was prepared as a purple solid using [RuCl₂(PPh₃)₃] (0.200 g, 0.21 mmol), 2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=N-2',6'-C₆H₃Me₂ (0.116 g, 0.29 mmol) and 20 mL of THF. Yield: 0.132 g (76%). Found (calc. for C₄₅H₃₉Cl₂NP₂Ru): C, 65.15 (65.30); H, 4.74 (4.75); N, 1.72 (1.69). ³¹P{¹H} NMR, CD₂Cl₂, δ : 87.5 (d, ²*J*_{PP} = 33.4, PPh₂), 35.7 (d, ²*J*_{PP} = 33.4, PPh₃). ¹H NMR, CD₂Cl₂, δ : 8.80 (d, 1 H, ⁴*J*_{PH} = 8.8, C*H* = N), 7.76–6.66 (m, 32 H, ArH), 6.66 (dd, 1 H, ³*J*_{PH} = 10.5, ³*J*_{HH} = 7.7, H-3), 1.86 (s, 6 H, Me). ¹³C{¹H} NMR, CD₂Cl₂, δ : 172.2 (d, ³*J*_{PC} = 4.1, CH=N), 153.2 (s, C-1'), 137.3 (d, ¹*J*_{PC} = 12.2, C-2), 134.9 (d, *J*_{PC} = 9.9, 9.9, C-*o*, PPh₃), 133.4 (d, ¹*J*_{PC} = 55.3, C-*i*, PPh₃), 125.7 (s, C-4'), 137.4–126.7 (m, Ar), 20.4 (s, Me). IR and FIR (Nujol, cm⁻¹), $\nu_{C=N}$: 1598; $\nu_{CI-Ru-CI}$: 318.

Synthesis of $[RuCl_2(\kappa^3-P,N,O-2-Ph_2PC_6H_4CH=N-2'-C_6H_4OMe)(PPh_3)]$, 3c. Following the same procedure 3c was prepared as a red solid, using $[RuCl_2(PPh_3)_3]$ (0.181 g, 0.19

mmol) and 2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=N-2'-C₆H₄OMe (0.090 g, 0.23 mmol) in 40 mL of THF. Yield: 0.139 g (88%). Found (calc. for C₄₄H₃₇Cl₂NOP₂Ru): C, 63.81 (63.70); H, 4.48 (4.50); N, 1.67 (1.70). ³¹P{¹H} NMR, CD₂Cl₂, δ : 69.7 (d, ²J_{PP} = 32.6, PPh₂), 34.7 (d, ²J_{PP} = 32.6, PPh₃). ¹H NMR, CD₂Cl₂, δ : 9.03 (d, 1 H, ⁴J_{PH} = 8.8, CH = N), 7.77–6.72 (m, 33 H, ArH), 3.41(s, 3 H, OMe). ¹³C{¹H} NMR, CD₂Cl₂, δ : 166.1 (d, ³J_{PC} = 3.2, CH=N), 156.1 (s, C-2'), 145.7 (s, C-1'), 137.7 (d, ²J_{PC} = 8.9, C-*m*, PPh₃), 127.5 (d, ²J_{PC} = 8.3, C-3), 127.7 (d, ³J_{PC} = 8.9, C-*m*, PPh₃), 127.5 (d, ³J_{PC} = 10.2, C-*m*, PPh₂), 124.2, 119.2 and 117.6 (all s, 3 C of C-3', 4', 5' and 6'), 135.8–128.9 (m, Ar), 63.3 (s, OMe). IR and FIR (Nujol, cm⁻¹), $\nu_{C=N}$: 1608; $\nu_{Cl-Ru-Cl}$: 319.

Synthesis of *trans,cis,cis*-[RuCl₂(κ^2 -P,N-2-Ph_2PC₆H₄CH= NⁱPr)₂], 4d. A suspension of [RuCl₂(DMSO)₄] (0.500 g, 1.03 mmol) and 2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=NⁱPr (0.821 g, 2.48 mmol) in 60 mL of THF was refluxed for 6 hours. The resulting red solution was filtered through kieselguhr and the filtrate was evaporated to dryness. The residue was washed 3 times with 10 mL of a mixture of hexane–diethyl ether (4:1) to afford a redbrownish solid. Yield: 0.645 g (75%). Found (calc. for C₄₄H₄₄Cl₂N₂P₂Ru): C, 63.27 (63.31); H, 5.42 (5.31); N, 3.27 (3.36)%. ³¹P{¹H} NMR, CDCl₃, δ : 48.7 (s). ¹H NMR, CDCl₃, δ : 8.78 (d_f, 2 H, ⁴J_{PH} = 6.5, CH=N), 7.71–6.31 (m, 28 H, ArH), 4.57 (m, 2 H, CHMe₂), 1.51 (d, 6 H, ³J_{HH} = 6.5, Me), 0.73 (d, 6 H, ³J_{HH} = 6.0, Me). ¹³C{¹H} NMR, CD₂Cl₂, δ : 167.4 (broad s, CH=N), 139.5–127.2 (m, Ar), 61.7 (s, CHMe₂), 28.3 (s, CHMe), 24.1 (s, CHMe). IR and FIR (Nujol, cm⁻¹), $\nu_{C=N}$: 1616; $\nu_{CI-Ru-CI}$: 341.

Synthesis of *trans,cis,cis*-[RuCl₂(κ^2 -*P*,*N*-(*S*)-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH= NCHMeCy)₂], 4e. Following the same procedure 4e was prepared as a red-brownish solid using [RuCl₂(DMSO)₄] (0.480 g, 0.99 mmol), (*S*)-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH=NCHMeCy (0.950 g, 2.38 mmol) and 60 mL of THF. Yield: 0.640 g (67%). Found (calc. for C₅₄H₆₀Cl₂N₂P₂Ru): C, 66.73 (66.80); H, 6.31 (6.23); N, 2.93 (2.88)%. ³¹P{¹H} NMR, CDCl₃, δ : 48.8 (s). ¹H NMR, CDCl₃, δ : 8.82 (d_f, 2 H, ⁴*J*_{PH} = 6.7, CH=N), 7.71–6.31 (m, 28 H, ArH), 2.42 (m, 1 H, CHMe), 1.80–0.78 (m, 11 H, Cy), 0.93 (d, 3 H, ³*J*_{HH} = 6.3 Hz, CH*Me*). ¹³C{¹H} NMR, CD₂Cl₂, δ : 167.0 (s, CH=N), 140.2–127.5 (m, Ar), 69.4 (s, CHN), 40.9 (s, CH, Cy), 31.2, 26.7, 26.6, 25.6 and 23.7 (all s, CH₂, Cy), 14.9 (s, Me). IR and FIR (Nujol, cm⁻¹), $v_{C=N}$: 1616.; $v_{CI-Ru-Cl}$: 335.

Synthesis of [RuCl₂(κ^2 -*P*,*N*-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH₂NHPh)(PPh₃)], 5a. A solution of [RuCl₂(PPh₃)₃] (0.228 g, 0.24 mmol) and 2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH₂NHPh (0.105 g, 0.29 mmol) in 30 mL of THF was stirred at room temperature for 2 hours. After evaporation to dryness, the resulting residue was washed 3 times with 10 mL of a mixture of hexane and diethyl ether (1:1) to afford a green solid. Yield: 0.182 g (95%). Found (calc. for C43H37Cl2NP2Ru): C, 64.03 (64.42); H, 4.87 (4.65); N, 1.80 C₄₃H₃₇Cl₂NP₂Ku): C, 64.05 (64.42), fi, 4.67 (4.05), N, 1.60 (1.75)%. ³¹P{¹H} NMR, CDCl₃, δ : 77.6 (d, ²J_{PP} = 38.1, PPh₂), 40.8 (d, ²J_{PP} = 38.1, PPh₃). ¹H NMR, CDCl₃, δ : 7.67–6.35 (m, 34 H, ArH), 5.19 (dd, 1 H, J = 11.5, ²J_{HH} = 11.5, CH₂N), 4.50* (broad d, 1 H, ³J_{HH} = 3.8, NH), 4.32 (dd, 1 H, ²J_{HH} = 11.5, ³J_{HH} = 3.8, CH₂N).* This signal disappears when D₂O is added. ¹³C{¹H} NMR, CD₂Cl₂, δ : 146.0 (c, C 1) 140.1 (d, ¹L₂ = 13.6 C₂2) 135.0 (d, 146.9 (s, C-1'), 140.1 (d, ${}^{1}J_{PC} = 13.6$, C-2), 135.0 (d, ${}^{1}J_{PC} = 41.8$, C-*i*, PPh₃), 135.1 (d, $J_{PC} = 10.2$, C-*o* or -*m*, PPh₂), 134.7 (d, $J_{PC} = 10.2$, C-o or -m, PPh₂), 134.6 (d, $J_{PC} = 10.2$, C-o or -m, PPh₃), 133.5 (d, ${}^{1}J_{PC} = 47.5$, C-i, PPh₂), 132.5–132.1 (m, Ar), 132.0 (d, $J_{PC} = 3.7$, C-3,4,5 or 6), 131.4 (d, $J_{PC} = 2.4$, C-3,4,5 or 6), 130.8 (d, ${}^{1}J_{PC} = 54.3$, C-*i*, PPh₂), 130.6 (d, ${}^{4}J_{PC} = 2.4$, C-*p*, PPh₂), 130.3 (d, ${}^{4}J_{PC} = 2.4, C-p, PPh_2$), 129.8 (s, C-p, PPh₃), 129.0 (s, C-3',5'), 128.2 (d, $J_{PC} = 10.2$, C-o or -m, PPh₂), 128.1 (d,

 $J_{PC} = 9.0$, C-o or -m, PPh₃), 127.4 (d, $J_{PC} = 10.2$, C-o or -m, PPh₂), 125.5 (s, C-4'), 121.3 (s, C-2', 6'), 56.6 (d, $J_{PC} = 5.6$, 5.6, CH₂N). IR and FIR (Nujol, cm⁻¹), v_{N-H} : 3225; $v_{CI-Ru-CI}$: 319.

Synthesis of [RuCl₂(κ^2 -*P*,*N*-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH₂NHⁱPr)(PPh₃)], 5d. Following the same procedure [RuCl₂(κ^2 -*P*,*N*-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH₂NHⁱPr)(PPh₃)] was prepared as a green solid, using [RuCl₂(PPh₃)₃] (0.500 g, 0.52 mmol) and 2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH₂NHⁱPr (0.210 g, 0.63 mmol) in 30 mL of THF. Yield: 0.375 g (94%). Found (calc. for C₄₀H₃₉Cl₂NP₂Ru): C, 62.63 (62.58); H, 5.10 (5.12); N, 1.85 (1.82)%. ³¹P{¹H} NMR, CDCl₃, δ : 74.1 (d, ²*J*_{PP} = 37.3, PPh₂), 41.6 (d, ²*J*_{PP} = 37.3, PPh₃). ¹H NMR, CDCl₃, δ : 7.62–6.67 (m, 29 H, ArH), 4.51 (ddd, 1 H, ²*J*_{HH} = 11.3, ⁴*J*_{PH} = 11.3, *J* = 2.0, CH₂N), 4.01 (m, 2 H, CH₂N and NH), 3.86 (m, 1 H, CHMe₂), 1.40 (d, 3 H, ³*J*_{HH} = 6.3, CH*Me*), 0.89 (d, 3 H, ³*J*_{HH} = 6.2, CH*Me*). ¹³C{¹H} NMR, CDCl₃, δ : 140.2 (d, ²*J*_{PC} = 12.7, C-1), 134.7 (d, ²*J*_{PC} = 10.2, C-*o*, PPh₃), 134.6 (d, ¹*J*_{PC} = 39.4, C-*i*, PPh₃), 134.5 (d, ²*J*_{PC} = 9.5, 9.5, C-*o*, PPh₂), 134.4 (d, ²*J*_{PC} = 10.2, C-*o*, PPh₂), 129.9 (d, ⁴*J*_{PC} = 2.5, C-*p*, PPh₂), 129.7 (d, ⁴*J*_{PC} = 2.5, C-*p*, PPh₂), 129.1 (d, ⁴*J*_{PC} = 1.9, C-*p*, PPh₃), 127.5 (d, ³*J*_{PC} = 9.5, C-*m*, PPh₃), 127.5 (d, ³*J*_{PC} = 11.0, C-*m*, PPh₂), 126.9 (d, ³*J*_{PC} = 7.6, ³*J*_{PC} = 1.9, CH₂N), 51.3 (s, CHMe₂), 23.9 (d, ⁴*J*_{PC} = 3.2, CH*Me*), 21.5 (d, ⁴*J*_{PC} = 1.9, CH*Me*). IR and FIR (Nujol, cm⁻¹), v_{N-H}: 3197; v_{Cl-Ru-Cl}: 317.

Synthesis of [RuCl₂(κ^2 -P,N-(S)-2-Ph₂PC₆H₄CH₂NHCHMe-Cy)(PPh₃)], 5e' and 5e". Prepared following the same procedure as a green solid, using RuCl₂(PPh₃)₃ (0.420 g, 0.44 mmol) and (S)-2-Ph2PC6H4CH2NHCHMeCy (0.210 g, 0.52 mmol) in 30 mL of THF. Compound 5e is obtained as a mixture of two non-separable diastereoisomers, 5e' and 5e'', in a 20:80 ratio. Yield: 0.384 g (90%). Found (calc. for C₄₄H₄₇Cl₂NP₂Ru): C, 64.09 (64.15); H, 5.82 (5.75); N, 1.71 (1.70)%. ³¹P{¹H} NMR, CDCl₃, δ : **5e**' 72.8 (d, ²J_{PP} = 37.3, PPh₂), 42.0 (d, ²J_{PP} = 37.3, PPh₃), **5e**'' 72.5 (d, ²J_{PP} = 34.2, PPh₂), 41.7 (d, ²J_{PP} = 34.2, PPh₃). ¹H NMR, CDCl₃, δ : **5e**' 7.62–6.65 (m, 29 H, ArH), 4.54 (dd, 1 H, ${}^{3}J_{HH} = 10.4$, ${}^{2}J_{HH} = 10.4$, CH₂N), 4.43 (ddd, 1 H, ${}^{3}J_{HH} = 10.4$, ${}^{3}J_{HH} = 10.4$, ${}^{3}J_{PH} = 3.9$, NH), 4.02 (dd, 1 H, ${}^{2}J_{HH} = 10.4$, ${}^{4}J_{\rm PH} = 4.3$, CH₂N), 3.66 (m, 1 H, CHMe), 2.10–0.87 (m, 11 H, Cy), 0.68 (d, 3 H, ${}^{3}J_{\text{HH}} = 6.8$, CHMe). **5e**'' 7.62–6.65 (m, 29 H, ArH), 4.28 (m, 2 H, CH₂N and NH), 4.08 (m, 1 H, CH₂N), 3.87 (m, 1 H, CHMe), 2.10-0.87 (m, 11 H, Cy), 1.31 (d, 3 H, ${}^{3}J_{\text{HH}} = 6.3$, Me). Attribution confirmed by ${}^{1}\text{H}^{-1}\text{H}$ Cosy. ¹³C{¹H} NMR, CDCl₃, δ : **5e**' 140.7–126.9 (m, Ar), 59.8 (s, NCH), 53.1 (d, ${}^{3}J_{PC} = 5.8$, NCH₂), 38.2 (s, CH, Cy), 30.3, 26.8, 26.6, 26.3 and 25.2 (all s, CH_2 , Cy), 15.9 (d, ${}^{4}J_{PC} = 4.6$, Me). **5**e'' 139.5–127.4 (m, Ar), 58.4 (s, NCH), 52.4 (d, ${}^{3}J_{PC} = 5.8$, NCH₂), 43.8 (s, CH, Cy), 31.5, 29.9, 26.1, 25.6 and 25.3 (all s, CH₂, Cy), 14.7 (d, ${}^{4}J_{PC} = 2.3$, Me). IR and FIR (Nujol, cm⁻¹), v_{N-H} : 3209; v_{Ru-Cl} : 320, 315.

General procedure for catalytic transfer hydrogenation of acetophenone

Under an inert atmosphere, acetophenone (5 mmol), the ruthenium catalyst precursor (0.01 mmol, 0.2 mol%), and 45 mL of propan-2-ol were introduced in a Schlenk tube fitted with a condenser and heated at $82 \,^{\circ}$ C for 15 min. Then NaOH was added (5 mL of a 0.048 M solution in propan-2-ol, 4.8 mol%) and the reaction was monitored by gas chromatography. 1-Phenylethanol and acetone were the only products detected in all cases.

Suitable single crystals of $[RuCl_2(\kappa^2 - P, N-2 - Ph_2PC_6H_4CH =$ N¹Pr)₂]-toluene for X-ray diffraction analyses were obtained by slow diffusion of hexane into a concentrated solution of 4d in toluene. Data were collected on a Nonius CAD-4 single crystal diffractometer. The crystal data and structure refinement are: $C_{51}H_{52}Cl_2N_2P_2Ru$, M = 926.26, monoclinic, $a = 14.816(3), \quad b = 17.296(4), \quad c = 18.660(5) \quad \text{\AA}, \quad \beta =$ 106.21(3)°, U = 4591(2) Å³, T = 293 K, space group C2/c, Z = 4, λ (Mo-K_{α}) = 0.564 mm⁻¹. 4952 reflections measured, 4499 unique ($R_{int} = 0.041$) which were used in all calculations. The final $wR(F^2)$ was 0.117 (all data).

CCDC reference number 199894. See http://www.rsc.org/ suppdata/nj/b2/b206119h/ for crystallographic data in CIF or other electronic format.

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