

Organophosphorus Chemistry

A Direct, Modular, and Efficient Construction of the P–C–P Structural Motif through Coupling of Manganese Carbyne Complexes with Phosphines

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Abstract: Easily available carbyne complexes of manganese were used as a source of carbyne fragments in an unconventional synthesis of backbone-substituted diphosphinomethanes and cyclic P-ylides upon coupling with secondary or tertiary phosphines, respectively, followed by demetalation under mild conditions.

To date, transition-metal phosphoniocarbene complexes $L_n M = C(R)PR'_3^+$, which are easily available from electrophilic carbyne precursors and phosphines,^[1,2] have found only limited application in synthetic chemistry, with the notable exception of Grubbs type ruthenium phosphoniocarbene complexes being

among the most active initiators in olefin metathesis.^[2,3] Yet, a further exploitable aspect of their reactivity rests on the strong electrophilicity of their carbenic atom—inherent to the presence of the adjacent positively charged phosphorus fragment favoring further coupling with incoming nucleophiles.^[4] Based on this, we report herein a conceptually new route to backbone-substituted diphosphinomethane and cyclic P-ylide derivWe first observed that the Mn¹ phosphoniocarbene complex $[Mp=C(Me)PPh_2H]BCl_4$ [2a]BCl_4 (here and thereafter, Mp = Cp(CO)_2Mn) generated in situ upon addition of PPh_2H to the methylcarbyne precursor $[Mp=CMe)]BCl_4$, $[1^{Me}]BCl_4$ at low temperature,^[1b,d,e] can uptake a second molecule of phosphine to give the cationic complex [4aa-H]BCl_4 featuring a newly formed pendant P–C–P structural motif containing ligand resulting formally from the coupling of the carbyne fragment and two secondary phosphines (Scheme 1). Deprotonation of the latter upon purification on an alumina column afforded a neutral diphosphine complex 4aa in a nearly quantitative yield.

The $[\mathbf{2} \mathbf{a}]BCl_4 \rightarrow \mathbf{4} \mathbf{a}$ transformation is likely to proceed via the formation of an elusive semi-ylide intermediate, $[\mathbf{3} \mathbf{a} \mathbf{a}]BCl_4$,^[5] resulting from the nucleophilic attack of the



Scheme 1. Coupling of $[Mp\equiv CMe)]BCl_4$ with two equivalents of secondary phosphines $(BCl_4^- \text{ anions omitted for clarity})$. Conditions: i CH₂Cl₂,-80 °C. i Warming to RT. ii Deprotonation with Al₂O₃ (**4 aa**) or Et₃N (**4 ab**). iv) HB-F₄·OEt₂ (2 equiv), hv, CH₂Cl₂. v) hv, CH₂Cl₂.

atives using a fully controlled stepwise carbyne/phosphine/ phosphine coupling involving Mn¹ phosphoniocarbene complexes as key reactive species.

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second PPh₂H molecule onto the highly electrophilic carbene atom, the latter undergoing a proton migration from the phosphonium fragment to the central carbon atom with concomitant metal coordination to form the protonated diphosphine complex [**4aa-H**]BCl₄, ultimately giving **4aa** upon deprotonation. Though the key irreversible transformation [**3 aa**]BCl₄ \rightarrow [**4aa-H**]BCl₄ may proceed through the stepwise formation of a manganese *cis*-hydride species by 1,3-H shift followed by reductive elimination,^[6] the occurrence of a direct concerted 1,2proton migration from the phosphonium moiety to the ylidic carbon remains an alternate mechanistic possibility.

Stepwise addition of molar equivalents of PPh₂H followed by PCy₂H to $[1^{Me}]BCl_4$ at -80 °C led in the end to a mixture of two diphosphine complexes **4aa** and **4ab** in approximately 1:2.5 ratio (Scheme 1), finally isolated in 18% and 49% yield, respectively (see the Supporting information for details of the **4aa**/

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85^[c]

19^[c]

4ab separation). Gratifyingly, the inversion of the order of phosphines addition—that is, PCy_2H followed by PPh_2H —allowed to optimize the heterocoupling process affording **4ab** in 93% isolated yield (**4aa/4ab** ratio in the crude product was ca. 1:50). Interestingly, regardless of the order of phosphines addition, the diphosphine ligand in **4ab** was systematically found coordinated to the metal through the PPh_2 moiety, which is consistent with the occurrence of a proton migration in [**3ab**]BCl₄ from the less basic phosphonium site. The structure of **4ab** featuring the pendant PCy₂ termination was confirmed by single-crystal XRD (Figure 1).^[7]



Figure 1. A perspective view of 4ab (ellipsoids at the 30% probability level).

The selectivity observed in PPh₂H/PCy₂H coupling can be reasonably ascribed to the different electrophilic and steric properties of the phosphoniocarbene intermediates. Unlike [**2a**]BCl₄ showing the uptake of both phosphines at very low temperature (-80° C), the reaction of the less electrophilic and more bulky [**2b**]BCl₄ with PPh₂H takes place only between $-20-0^{\circ}$ C, leading to the rapid [**3a**b]BCl₄ \rightarrow [**4a**b-H]BCl₄ rearrangement. The lower selectivity observed in the reaction of [**2a**]BCl₄ with PCy₂H at -80° C could be explained by a partial scrambling of the semi-ylide complex [**3a**b]BCl₄ \Rightarrow [**2b**]BCl₄ \Rightarrow [**2b**]BCl₄ \Rightarrow [**2b**]BCl₄ \Rightarrow [**2b**]BCl₄ \Rightarrow [**2b**]BCl₄ \Rightarrow [**2b**]BCl₄ \Rightarrow [**3a**b]BCl₄ \Rightarrow [**2b**]BCl₄ \Rightarrow [**2a**]BCl₄ \Rightarrow PPh₂H tapidly trapped by complex [**2a**]BCl₄.

Having in mind the aim to exploit this original carbyne/ phosphine/phosphine coupling for the synthesis of valuable chemicals, we next focused on means to efficiently liberate the resulting diphosphines from the robust manganese complexes ($4 \rightarrow 5$, Scheme 1). Inspired by the high yield photochemical liberation of cyclopentadienes^[8] or allene^[6b] from cymantrene derivatives, we first investigated the behavior of the model complex Mp(PPh₃) (**6**) under visible light irradiation in different solvents (Table 1).

Complex **6** appeared to be stable upon prolonged irradiation in toluene. Conversely, its irradiation in THF after approxi-

Table 1. Photochemical demetalation of Mn^{I} complexes 6, 4aa, and $[4ab\text{-H}]BF_{4^{+}}{}^{[a]}$								
Complex	Solvent	Additive	Time	Product	Yield [%]			
6	toluene	_	4 h	PPh ₃	traces			
6	THF	-	30 min	PPh₃ Mp(THF)	60 ^[b] 60 ^[b]			
6	THF	$BH_3 \cdot SMe_2^{[d]}$	1 h	PPh ₃ ⋅BH ₃	95 ^[c]			
6	CH ₂ Cl ₂	_	10 min	Mp(SMe ₂) PPh ₂	76 ^[c] 92 ^[c]			

45 min

4 h

PPh₃

5 aa

4aa	CH_2CI_2	BH ₃ ·SMe ₂ ^[f]	40 min	5 aa ^(h)	88 ^[c]	
4aa	CH_2CI_2	HBF ₄ •OEt ₂ ^[g]	15 min	5 aa ⁱⁱ	90 ^[c]	
[4 ab-H]BF ₄	CH_2CI_2	-	10 min	5 ab ^[i]	97 ^[c]	
[a] Photolysis of 8–12 mм solution of Mn ^l phosphine complex in 125 mL						
of the appropriate solvent with immersed medium pressure Hg lamp						
(150 W) using Pyrex filter jacket at 15–20 °C for the indicated time period.						
[b] Yield estimated by IR spectroscopy in the ν (CO) region. [c] Yield of the						
isolated pro	duct. [d] 1	.25 equiv. [e] 1	% vol. [f]	2.5 equiv.	[g] 2.0 equiv.	
[h] After deboration with DABCO. [i] After deprotonation with 2 M NaOH						

CH₂Cl₂^[e]

toluene

 CH_2CI_2

6

4aa

mately 30 min led to an equilibrium mixture of 6, PPh3 and Mp(THF). This equilibrium could be easily shifted to the right upon addition of BH₃·SMe₂ as a phosphine scavenger, to afford PPh₃·BH₃ and Mp(SMe₂) in good yield. This represents the first evidence for a selective PPh₃ ligand photodissociation upon bulk photolysis of Mp(PR₃) complexes.^[9] We were pleased to observe that the irradiation of 6 in CH₂Cl₂ caused its very rapid destruction with liberation of PPh3 and formation of an insoluble metal-containing product. As a working hypothesis, we considered that this decomplexation process could include a CO dissociation step followed by a fast decomposition of the resulting solvent adduct Cp(CO)(PPh₃)Mn(CH₂Cl₂).^[10] However, the competitive dissociation of PPh₃ (like in THF) and photochemical electron transfer from 6 to the solvent,^[11] followed by degradation of Mp(CH₂Cl₂)^[12] and 6^{+} , respectively, could also be implicated in the demetalation process.

Application of the most effective CH_2CI_2 demetalation protocol to the diphosphine complex **4aa** appeared to be disappointedly sluggish, giving **5aa** in low yield after prolonged irradiation time. We ascribe the drastic difference in behavior between **4aa** and **6** to the primary transformation of the former into a mixture of chelate diphosphine complexes $Cp(CO)Mn(\kappa^2-PPh_2CHMePPh_2)$ (see the Supporting information), undergoing demetalation with low rate and chemoselectivity. To our delight, in situ treatment of **4aa** with borane or acid providing protection of the pendant phosphine moiety toward coordination, allowed a rapid and nominal liberation of **5aa**. Finally, **5ab** could also be quantitatively liberated from the isolated **[4ab-H]**BF₄ upon irradiation, without any additive.

The overall two-step preparation of **5 aa** and **5 ab** highlights a novel unconventional route to backbone-substituted diphosphinomethanes^[13] from simple and readily available building blocks,^[14] which could complement the set of traditional synthetic methods for this type of ligands in terms of simplicity and modularity.

Beyond the utilization of simple secondary phosphines, we were prompted to extend the scope of this coupling process

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Scheme 2. Coupling of carbyne complex $[1^{Ph}]BPh_4$ with tertiary diphosphines $(BPh_4^-$ anions omitted for clarity).

to tertiary diphosphines, in an intramolecular manner, first using dppm as a model substrate (see Scheme 2).^[15] The reaction of phenylcarbyne [1^{Ph}]BPh₄ with dppm was found to proceed at -80 °C in CH₂Cl₂ to give a red solution of the thermally unstable intermediate [7]BPh₄, which underwent a spontaneous demetalation above -20°C producing insoluble brown manganese decomposition products and a yellow solution of the cationic cyclic semi-ylide [8]BPh₄, isolated in 83% yield as a solvate with one CHCl₃ molecule. Following the same protocol and now using our newly prepared diphosphine 5ab (Scheme 1), the unsymmetrical cyclic semi-ylide [8 ab]BPh4, finally constructed in a fully controlled and highly convergent manner from two different carbynes and two different secondary phosphine moieties, was obtained in 90% yield. Both compounds were fully characterized, including single-crystal XRD (see Figure 2 for [8ab]BPh₄ and Figure 30S in the Supporting information for [8]BPh₄·CHCl₃).



Figure 2. A perspective view of $[8 ab]BPh_4$ (ellipsoids at the 30% probability level, BPh₄⁻ anion is not shown).

In conclusion, we have demonstrated that readily available electrophilic manganese carbyne complexes^[14] can serve as stoichiometric carbyne synthons being potentially useful for organophosphorus chemistry.^[16] We are now exploring the application scope of such carbyne/phosphine/phosphine coupling processes and its possible development in asymmetric version.

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