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(9,10-Dihydro-9,10-*o*-benzeno-2,6-anthrylene)di(phenylmethylene): A Ground State Quintet Molecule

Hideyuki Tukada* and Kiyoshi Mutai

Department of Chemistry, The College of Arts and Sciences, The University of Tokyo, Komaba, Meguro-ku, Tokyo 153, Japan

The title molecule, which has two diphenylmethylene moieties in a rigid triptycene skeleton, is photochemically generated from the corresponding diazo compound at cryogenic temperature in an ESR cavity, and the ESR spectra is identified with a quintet ground state, with ZFS parameters, |D|/hc = 0.0665 and |E|/hc = 0.0043 cm⁻¹, respectively.

Current interest in organo-ferromagnets requires the control of stacking of open-shell molecules in crystals.¹ For this purpose, it is necessary to examine spin–spin interactions in a variety of spatial arrangements in molecular assemblies. We tried to generate the title dicarbene as a model for a special case of molecular stacking.² Compound **1** has two diphenylmethylene (ground state triplet) moieties which are fixed in a rigid triptycene skeleton without direct conjugation.

Synthesis of the precursor, 2,6-bis(diazobenzyl)triptycene 2 is outlined in Scheme 1. 2,6-Dimethyltriptycene 3 was converted to dialdehyde 4 via the tetrabromide. The aldehyde was treated with phenyllithium, and then pyridinium chlorochromate to afford 2,6-dibenzoyltryptycene 5. The hydrazone derivative of the ketone was oxidized with NiO₂ to give **2** as a red crystalline powder [v_{CNN} (Nujol) = 2045 cm⁻¹].





Scheme 1 Reagents and conditions: i, N-bromosuccinimide (5 equiv.), CCl₄; ii, aq. AgNO₃, MeOC₂H₄OH; iii, PhLi, diethyl ether; iv, pyridinium chlorochromate, CH₂Cl₂; v, anhydrous NH₂NH₂, EtOH; vi, NiO₂, CH₂Cl₂



Fig. 1 ESR spectrum (frequency = 9.08206 GHz) of the dicarbene 1 in 2-MeTHF at 22 K. R and $T_{x,y,z}$ denote mono-radical and triplet carbene, respectively. Calculated resonance fields for quintet with zero field splitting parameters |D|/hc = 0.0665 and |E|/hc = 0.0043 cm⁻¹ are indicated as Δ .

When a *ca.* 0.2 mmol dm⁻³ 2-methyltetrahydrofuran solution (2-MeTHF) of **2** was irradiated with UV light (no filter) at 22 K for 15 min, a monotonic increase of the signals due to triplet monocarbene (|D|/hc = 0.4073, |E|/hc = 0.01915 cm⁻¹), doublet radical and quintet dicarbene (see Fig. 1) was observed, and no sign of stepwise generation of the dicarbene from the monocarbene was detected.

All the signal intensities show linear decrease with the reciprocal of temperature in the range 10-40 K, which indicates that the three species are independent and the observed triplet is not a thermally excited triplet of the dicarbene. The ground state quintet signals disappeared above *ca.* 80 K in 2-MeTHF matrix, and recooling to 20 K did not regenerate the ESR signals.

Zero field splitting parameters, D and E, for the quintet state constructed with two triplet sites can be estimated from the sum of D tensors of the two triplets after appropriate rotational operation to the triplet D tensors.³ According to the approximation, |D|/hc and |E|/hc for the syn conformer of **1** are estimated as 0.083 and 0.011 cm⁻¹, respectively. Detailed simulation for resonance fields of quintet was done by the third-order perturbation method³ around the estimated Dvalue. The observed resonance fields for the quintet were best fitted to the calculated ZFS parameters of |D|/hc = 0.0665 and |E|/hc = 0.0043 cm⁻¹. Some weak signals cannot be assigned at this time; however, they might be attributed to the quintet.^{3,4} The D value is similar to that of other quintet⁴ dicarbenes, such as *m*-phenylenebis(phenylmethylene) (|D|/





Fig. 2 Schematic spin polarization mechanisms (a) (I)–(III) via bridgehead and (b) through-space mechanism (IV)



Fig. 3 Schematic spin populations with antiferromagnetic throughspace interaction between two edges of diphenylmethylene units. Shaded and open circles represent α - and β -spin populations, respectively.

hc = 0.07131, |E|/hc = 0.01902 cm⁻¹). ZFS parameters for the thermally excited triplet are calculated from the *D* and *E* values for the quintet **1** as |D|/hc = 0.1995 and |E|/hc = 0.0129 cm⁻¹, respectively. No obvious signals corresponding to the *D* and *E* of the triplet were observed up to 80 K.

Triptycenes are known in which inter-ring interactions are observed.⁵ We consider four possible mechanisms for the spin-spin interaction in **1**. The first mechanism (I) [Fig. 2(*a*)] is that two open shell units interact through two σ bonds at the bridgehead carbon atom by the usual π - σ spin polarization. This is effective in propane-1,3-diyls.⁶ Mechanism (II) is hyperconjugation through the bridgehead carbon which may have high p-character. Mechanism (III) is that the spin-spin interaction occurs through the third benzene ring with no carbene unit. If spin populations on the diphenylmethylene units in **1** were similar to that of diphenylmethylene, alternative spin polarization around the benzene ring would be present, so that all these three mechanisms suggest a ground singlet state for the dicarbene **1**. In contrast to these mechanisms, direct through-space interaction between two open shell units [Fig. 2(b)] reasonably predicts a ground quintet state as shown in Fig. 3. Antiferromagnetic interaction (a kind of a weak bond) between the two edges of the benzene rings in the diphenyl-methylene units is suitable for totally ferromagnetic through-space interaction between two carbene centres.

Experimental results showed that ferromagnetic throughspace interaction of McConnell's type⁷ is dominant rather than through-bond interaction *via* bridgehead carbon or throughspace interaction *via* the third benzene ring, at least in 1.

Research on isomeric 2,7-dicarbene and tricarbene with a triptycene skeleton is currently in progress.

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