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Homogeneous Industrial Catalysis: Hydrosilylation, Epoxidation, Transvinylation

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I am always ready to learn although I do not always like being taught.

Winston Churchill

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Zusammenfassung

Unser Alltag wird maßgeblich durch die Produkte industriell katalysierter Prozesse geprägt. Der Fortschritt des letzten Jahrhunderts hängt somit maßgeblich mit den Meilensteinen, die im Bereich der Katalyse und der Polymerwissenschaften erreicht wurden, zusammen. Vor diesem Hintergrund liegt der Schwerpunkt dieser Arbeit auf der Untersuchung verschiedener industriell relevanter katalytischer Prozesse, der Hydrosilylierung, Epoxidierung und Umvinylierung. Im Fokus steht dabei zum einen die mechanistische Untersuchung dieser Reaktionen, zum anderen werden neue Katalysatorstrukturmotive und Komplexe vorgestellt.

Hydrosilylierung zählt zu den wichtigsten homogenkatalytisch geführten Verfahren unserer Zeit. Die Reaktion wird industriell vor allem mit Platinkatalysatoren realisiert, die seit etwa 50 Jahren bekannt sind. Trotz dieser langen Zeit der Anwendung hinkte das Verständnis der Reaktion in der Vergangenheit den enormen synthetischen Möglichkeiten hinterher. In dieser Arbeit wird eine fundamentale mechanistische Untersuchung der platinkatalysierten Hydrosilylierung vorgestellt, die seit dem ursprünglich vorgeschlagenen Modell im Jahr 1965 erstmals eine Weiterentwicklung des etablierten Katalysezyklus beinhaltet. Daneben werden neue Strukturmotive von Pt(0) NHC Komplexen präsentiert. Die Analyse der bemerkenswerten katalytischen Leistungsfähigkeit dieser Verbindungen mit Hilfe von Methoden der Elektrochemie (Cylovoltammetrie) und der Dichtefunktionaltheorie (DFT) erlaubt die Ableitung von Gesetzmäßigkeiten für die Vorhersage der Aktivität potentieller, strukturell verwandter Zielstrukturen. Zudem wird die erste mechanistische Untersuchung der iridiumkatalysierten Hydrosilylierung von Allylverbindungen vorgestellt, die in den letzten Jahren aufgrund der erhöhten Selektivität gegenüber der Platinkatalyse Anwendung findet. Die stöchiometrische Reaktion eines der bekanntesten Iridiumkatalysatoren, [{IrCl(cod)}2], führt zu einem strukturchemischen Kuriosum, einem allylverbrückten Iridiumdimer, dessen strukturelle und analytische Besonderheiten ebenfalls berichtet werden.

Die katalytische Epoxidierung erlangt vor allem durch die Bereitstellung industriell relevanter Intermediate kommerzielle Bedeutung, allen voran Ethylen- und Propylenoxid. Daneben macht man sich die Zugänglichkeit hochfunktionalisierter Produkte über intermediär auftretende Epoxide in der pharmazeutischen Industrie zu Nutze. Vor diesem Hintergrund widmet sich ein Teil dieser Arbeit der Fortentwicklung etablierter Strukturmotive von Molybdänkatalysatoren zur Olefinepoxidierung.

Die rutheniumkatalysierte Umvinylierung bietet einen einfachen synthetischen Zugang zu Vinylestern, die als Monomerbausteine zu vielfältigen Endproduktpolymeren umgesetzt werden können. In dieser Arbeit wird eine mechanistische Untersuchung dieses katalytischen Prozesses und ein wahrscheinliches Strukturmotiv der aktiven Spezies vorgestellt. Mit diesem Themenkomplex eng verknüpft ist die Synthese und Charakterisierung einiger mehrkerniger Rutheniumcarbonylcarboxylate. Strukturell verwandte Molybdändimere sind von konzeptionellem Interesse für die Herstellung funktioneller Materialien zur Anwendung in der Molekularelektronik.

Abstract

Industrial catalysis shapes many aspects of modern life. Numerous advances of the past century are closely tied to milestones in the fields of catalysis and polymer science. In this context, this work focuses on the investigation of several industrially relevant, catalytic processes, namely hydrosilylation, epoxidation and transvinylation. In particular, the mechanistic aspects of these reactions as well as novel catalyst structural motifs and related complexes are examined.

Today, hydrosilylation ranks among the most important homogeneously catalyzed industrial processes. The reaction is executed using mainly platinum catalysts which were developed about half a century ago. Regardless of its well established application, the understanding of this reaction lags significantly behind the vast synthetic possibilities. This work presents a fundamental mechanistic study of platinum-catalyzed hydrosilylation, providing a further development of the catalytic cycle for the first time since the original model in 1965. In addition, new structural motifs of Pt(0) NHC complexes are reported. Their remarkable catalytic performance can be rationalized by means of electrochemistry (cyclic voltammetry) and density functional theory (DFT). The ensuing principles can be used for the prediction of catalytic activity of potential structurally analogous target structures. Furthermore, the first mechanistic investigation of iridium-catalyzed hydrosilylation of allyl compounds is presented in view of its increasing importance over the last years due to the significantly enhanced selectivity compared to platinum catalysts. The stoichiometric reaction of one of the most common iridium catalysts, $[{IrCl(cod)}_2]$, yields a structurally intriguing allyl-bridged iridium dimer, which is also subject of this work.

The commercial relevance of catalytic epoxidation stems from the production of industrially relevant intermediates such as ethylene and propylene oxide. In addition, the accessibility of highly functionalized products via epoxide intermediates is harnessed by the pharmaceutical industry. Bearing this in mind, part of this work is dedicated to the further development of established structural motifs of molybdenum epoxidation catalysts.

Ruthenium-catalyzed epoxidation offers a facile synthetic access to vinylesters, which are commonly used monomers for the production of a variety of end-use polymers. A mechanistic study of the principles governing this reaction in conjunction with the determination of the probable structural motif of the catalytically active species is presented in this work. The synthesis and characterization of several novel multinuclear ruthenium carbonyl carboxylates is closely related to this topic. Structurally related molybdenum dimers are of conceptional interest for the production of functional materials for molecular electronics, particularly molecular wires.

List of Abbreviations

aq.	aqueous
B3LYP	Becke, three parameter, Lee-Yang-Parr exchange-correlation fuctional
BP	British Petroleum, plc
cod	cycloocta-1,5-diene
Ср	η^{s} -cyclopentadienyl
CV	cyclic voltammetry
DAniF	<i>N,N</i> '-di(<i>p</i> -anisyl)formamidinate
DArF	N,N'-diarylformamidinate
DFT	density functional theory
DMSO	dimethylsulfoxide
DPV	differential pulse voltammetry
dvtms	1,1,3,3-tetramethyl-1,3-divinyldisiloxane
$\Delta E_{1/2}$	half-cell potential
equiv.	equivalents
ESI	electrospray ionization
Fc	ferrocene
Fc ⁺	ferrocenium
$Fc-CO_2^-$	ferrocene carboxylate
GC	gas chromatography
НОМО	highest occupied molecular orbital
IFP	Institut Français du Pétrole
IL	ionic liquid
IVCT	intervalence charge transfer
ⁱ PrOH	<i>iso-</i> propanol
IR	infrared
LLDPE	linear low-density polyethylene
LUMO	lowest unoccupied molecular orbital
Mes	mesityl
МО	molecular orbital
MS	mass spectrometry
NHC	N-heterocyclic carbene

nuclear magnetic resonance
ounce (28.3 g)
phenyl
propylene oxide
pyridine
carboxylate
room temperature ionic liquid
thioacetate
sec-butyl
<i>tert-</i> butyl
tert-butylhydroperoxide
tetrahydrofuran
turnover frequency
toluene, <i>para-</i> tolyl
turnover number
ultraviolet-visible

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Industrial Catalysis

The energy and chemical industries have thrived on the economic developments of the past century, fuelled by a surge in world population, soaring demand for products, major breakthroughs in the fields of catalysis and polymer sciences, and finally the transition from coal to oil and gas as feedstock.¹ In this context, catalysis can be considered the enabling science and technology for the sustainability challenge, being the most important technology in environmental protection, with applications including e.g. emission prevention with the paramount example of the catalytic converter in automobiles.² Traditional domains of industrial catalysis comprise the fine chemical industry as well as the production of fuels and chemical raw materials from fossil resources such as coal, oil and gas,³ with its commercial relevance increasing with the rising demand for new products and improvements in engineering technology.^{2,4-6} The rapid, innovative development and efficiency enhancement of refining technologies and industrial processes in the past can largely be attributed to advancements made in the field of catalysis, a term which originates from the Old Greek word for "activate" or "unleash".⁷ It constitutes the most important value-added process in chemical industry with a 100-400% rate of value increase,⁸ accounting for a worldwide catalyst market of \$ 16.3 billion.^{3,9} Estimates indicate that 90% of chemical products are manufactured using catalytic processes,^{2,3,10} including many everyday amenities such as pharmaceuticals, construction materials, cosmetics, synthetic fibres and fluid containers.¹¹⁻¹³ In addition, the nutrition of a large proportion of the world's population depends on the Haber-Bosch process for the production of fertilizers (Figure 1).¹⁴



Figure 1. Trends in human population and nitrogen use throughout the twentieth century. Of the total world population (solid line), an estimate is made of the number of people that could be sustained without reactive nitrogen from the Haber-Bosch process.¹⁴ Reprinted with permission from *Nat. Geosci.* **2008**, *1*, 636-639. Copyright 2008 Nature Publishing Group.

The art of catalysis lies in the efficient and selective transformation of raw materials into useful base and fine chemicals with robust and highly active catalysts. A number of indispensable catalytic processes have been developed in the past century, shaping modern life.⁹ Apart from ammonia production (vide supra), important milestones include for instance methanol synthesis from syngas, catalytic cracking, the Fischer-Tropsch process, acetaldehyde production via ethylene oxidation (Wacker process) and the Shell higher olefin process (SHOP, Figure 2).³



Figure 2. Development of selected industrially important catalytic processes in the past century.³

From an industrial point of view, heterogeneous catalysis is the predominant technology, accounting for 80% of catalytically manufactured products, followed by homogeneous catalysis (15%) and biocatalysis (5%).^{3,15} In analogy to its historical development, heterogeneous catalysis was the first to be applied commercially to a large extent, while biocatalysis constitutes the most recent discipline.¹⁶ Homogeneous catalysis lies in between, accounting for a considerable amount (10⁹ tons) of bulk chemicals produced in processes such as hydroformylation, carbonylation, oxidation, hydrogenation, metathesis and hydrocyanation on the one hand, and providing access to fine chemicals with high atom efficiencies and enantiomeric excess (*ee*) on the other hand.¹⁶⁻¹⁹

Recent research efforts in industrial chemistry are often directed towards the incorporation of the principles of *Green Chemistry*, i.e., among others, waste prevention, atom economy, energy efficiency, renewable feedstocks and catalysis.²⁰⁻²⁵ These characteristics are typically showcased by biological reactions, which are generally extremely efficient and selective; moreover, they operate under mild conditions through inherently

'green' processes.^{26,27} Many scientific endeavors aim to understand and exploit the elegant catalytic principles found in nature. Such biomimetic or bioinspired catalyst systems serve as models for innovative approaches to the utilization of alternative raw materials, e.g. methane,^{26,27} lignin^{28,29} and carbon dioxide.^{27,30}

1.2 Homogeneous Industrial Catalysis

Considering that nearly all biological reactions are based on catalysis,¹⁵ the concept of defined metal sites facilitating a specific type of reaction has been used in an enzymatic environment in nature for millions of years, for example in methane monooxygenases or carbonic anhydrases.^{8,31} In a strictly chemical context, the enormous interest in organometallic chemistry since the discovery of ferrocene in the early 1950s is closely related to the advance of homogeneously catalyzed processes for the production of commodity and fine chemicals, coinciding with a marked increase of the volume and value of such products.³² Most advances in homogeneous industrial catalysis are based on the development of transition metal and organometallic complexes¹⁵ rather than homogeneous acid-base catalysts (Figure 3).¹⁶

In general, homogeneous catalysts do not suffer from the typical drawbacks of heterogeneous catalysts such as the pressure gap¹ and the lack of a deeper understanding of mechanistic processes due to the difficulty of in situ characterization of relevant species.^{33,34} The major disadvantage of homogeneously catalyzed reactions is the difficult separation of the products from the reaction mixture, since all components of the reaction are, by definition, present in the same phase.^{8,31,32,35} Their key benefit is that their behavior during catalysis is dictated by their molecular architecture; therefore, reaction mechanisms can be rationalized and tuned in a controlled and predictable fashion by specific modification of the catalyst.^{36,37} By virtue of the characteristic selectivity and efficacy of homogeneous catalysts systems, the objectives of *Green Chemistry* are predominantly pursued by means of homogeneous catalysis,¹⁶ which has revolutionized synthetic organic chemistry in both academia and industry.^{35,II} Consequently, the importance of homogeneous catalysis for the production of fine and specialty chemicals such as pharmaceuticals, agrochemicals, flavors and fragrances has been increasing tremendously in recent years.¹⁸ This is illustrated by three Nobel Prizes, which were awarded for merits in this field in the 21st century: (I) the first in 2001 to KNOWLES, NOYORI and SHARPLESS for their work related to asymmetric catalysis,³⁸ (II) the second in 2005 to CHAUVIN, GRUBBS and SCHROCK for their research in the

¹ The famous pressure gap problem stems from the fact that industrial catalytic processes are carried out at pressures in the range of 1 to 100 bar, while classical surface science has been restricted to analytical methods applicable between 10^{-4} to 10^{-10} bar.

^{II} It should be noted that the waste production per kg product is much higher in the fine chemicals and pharmaceuticals sector due to the required purity and more complex synthesis of these products in addition to the profit margin structure. This can be illustrated by the *E* factor, which is defined as the amount of by-products produced per kg of product. Typical *E* factors are as follows: bulk chemicals, <1-5; fine chemicals, 5-50; pharmaceuticals, 25-100. However, in absolute numbers, fine chemical and pharmaceutical industry account for only a fraction (<1%) of the total waste production.¹⁹

field of metathesis,³⁹ and (III) the third in 2010 to HECK, SUZUKI and NEGISHI for their investigations of palladium-catalyzed C–C cross-coupling reactions.⁴⁰

	Year	Inventor	Milestone	Metal
	2010	R. F. Heck, A. Suzuki, E. Negishi	Nobel Prize (C–C coupling)	Pd
2010	2005	Y. Chauvin, R. H. Grubbs, R. R. Schrock	Nobel Prize (Metathesis)	Ru, Mo
	2004	Sasol, Ltd	Selective Ethene Tetramerization	Cr
	2003	R. R. Schrock	Homogeneous N ₂ Activation	Мо
2005	2002	BP	Selective Ethene Trimerization	Cr
2005	2001	W. S. Knowles, R. Noyori, K. B. Sharpless	Nobel Prize (Asymmetric Catalysis)	Rh, Ru, Ti, Os
		D. J. Cole-Hamilton	Hydroform ylation in supercritical $\rm CO_2/IL$	Rh
	1998	G. C. Bazan	LLDPE by Tandem Catalysis	Ti+Zr
2000		IFP, Y. Chauvin	Difasol Process	(IL)
	1997	JM. Basset	Alkane Metathesis	Та
	1996	BP	Cativa Process: Acetic Acid	Ir/Ru
	1995	S. L. Buchwald, J. F. Hartwig	Amination of Aromatics	Pd
1995	1994	R. Noyori	Supercritical \rm{CO}_2 as solvent	
	1993	H. U. Blaser	Metolachlor synthesis	Ir
	1992	W. A. Herrmann	Carbene Ligands in Catalysis	
1990	1991	Kuraray Company, Ltd.	Telomerization of butadiene/water	Pd
		JM. Basset	Surface Organometallic Chemistry	
	1986	B. Cornils	Ruhrchemie/Rhône-Poulenc Process	Rh

Figure 3. Milestones in homogeneous transition metal catalysis from 1985 to present.⁸ IFP = Institut Français du Pétrole; BP = British Petroleum plc; IL = ionic liquid; LLDPE = linear low density polyethylene.

The evaluation of the importance of specific catalytic processes can be carried out based on quantity (mass, bulk chemicals) or economic value of the manufactured goods (fine chemicals). With regard to the annual output in tons, the most important industrial applications of homogeneous catalysis include oxidation processes (18 Mt a⁻¹), hydroformylation of alkenes (>7.5 Mt a⁻¹), carbonylation of methanol/methyl acetate (>7.0 Mt a⁻¹), hydroformylation of isooctenes/ethylene oxide (>2.0 Mt a⁻¹) as well as hydrogenations, oligomerization of ethane and hydrocyanations (<2 Mt a⁻¹ each).⁸ All of the above are used for the production of commodity chemicals, which in turn account for roughly 40%⁴¹ of worldwide chemical⁴² and pharmaceutical⁴³ sales of € 3.9 trillion in 2014. When considering the generated value, fine (4%) and specialty chemicals including pharmaceuticals (55%) make up the remaining 60% of the global market, even though the product amount is by far inferior to bulk chemicals.⁴¹ Figure 4 illustrates the segments of the chemical production in Europe in 2013.⁴²



Unless specified, chemical industry excludes pharmaceuticals Unless specified, EU refers to EU 28

Figure 4. Important areas of production in the chemical industry in Europe in 2013 (excluding pharmaceuticals), which amount to a total of \notin 527 billion.⁴² Pharmaceutical sales in Europe account for a revenue of \notin 218 billion.⁴⁴ Reprinted with permission from Cefic Chemdata International 2014. Copyright 2014 Cefic.

Important catalytic reactions employed for the production of fine and specialty chemicals include crosscoupling, hydroformylation, hydrosilylation, epoxidation, asymmetric hydrogenation, and cyanation.¹⁸ Examples for important products are menthol, citral, metolachlor, ibuprofen, propanolol as well as vitamins C and E.⁸

The tremendous economic significance of hydrosilylation, epoxidation and transvinylation provides the rationale for the focus of this work. These reactions are industrially relevant, homogeneously catalyzed chemical processes, which will be examined in more detail in the following chapters. In addition, the concept of rational design will be explored with respect to the development of new catalyst structural motifs and functional redox-active materials for molecular wires.

1.3 Hydrosilylation

Hydrosilylation is the largest-cost application⁴⁵ and a prime example of industrial catalysis.⁴⁶⁻⁵⁶ It typically comprises the addition of a hydrosilane to a C–C multiple bond, providing access to organofunctional sil(ox)anes and silicones, which are commonly used for the production of a variety of commercially relevant products such as adhesives, crosslinkers and polymers (Scheme 1).⁴⁶⁻⁵⁶



Scheme 1. Transition metal-catalyzed hydrosilylation (M = e.g. Pt, Ir, Pd, Rh).⁴⁵⁻⁵⁹

Consequently, it has emerged as one of the largest-scale applications of homogeneous catalysis.⁵⁷⁻⁵⁹ Depending on the desired utilization, several catalysts based on platinum, palladium, rhodium and iridium are currently employed in industry, with platinum dominating the hydrosilylation catalyst market.^{45,56} These metals are comparatively expensive at an average price of \notin 495 (Ir), \notin 630 (Pd), \notin 870 (Rh) and \notin 965 (Pt) per oz (1 oz = 29.3 g) in 2015.⁶⁰



Figure 5. Monthly average metal prices between January 2011 and January 2016 in \notin/oz (1 oz = 29.3 g). Average Prices: Pt, \notin 1305, Pd, \notin 655, Rh, \notin 1172, Ir, \notin 728.⁶¹

Owing to the superior properties of these metals, and particularly of platinum in hydrosilylation catalysis, industry tolerates their high cost, which is expected to gradually increase even further due to the difficult separation of catalyst and reaction product in many hydrosilylation processes. As a result, the staggering

amount of 4-6 t of platinum are "lost" annually in the product stream of the catalytic process for the manufacture of cured silicones,⁴⁵ which corresponds to almost the entire platinum demand of the silicones industry⁵⁹ and 23-35% of the platinum demand of the chemical industry,^{62,63} highlighting the profound importance of metal-catalyzed hydrosilylation in chemical industry.

1.3.1 Platinum-catalyzed Hydrosilylation

The key characteristics of hydrosilylation catalysis include its high atom-efficiency, broad substrate scope and widespread application, which allow for a variety of synthetic pathways.^{46-56,64} Even though recent research efforts have been directed towards the design of new commercially viable ignoble metal catalysts,^{56,59,65-67} no match for the traditional platinum catalysts has been developed so far, rendering industrial hydrosilylation still dependent on platinum (Scheme 2).^{56,68-72}



Scheme 2. Platinum-catalyzed hydrosilylation and molecular structures of the industrially relevant Speier's,^{70,71} Karstedt's,^{68,69,73} and Markó's catalyst.^{72,74-76} PrOH = *iso*-propanol, dvtms = 1,3-divinyl-1,1,3,3-tetramethyldisiloxane, NHC = *N*-heterocyclic carbene. For Speier's catalyst, the species formed in solution in situ is drawn.⁷⁷

Being the most versatile and established catalyst of these, Karstedt's catalyst $[Pt_2(dvtms)_3]$ (dvtms = 1,3divinyl-1,1,3,3-tetramethyldisiloxane) continues to serve as benchmark system for newly developed hydrosilylation catalysts.^{56,65,78,79}

Mechanistic Considerations

In light of the fact that this reaction has been commonly practiced for over half a century, the progress in understanding the associated catalytic cycle has been arduous and slow. This can be attributed to the elusive nature of highly reactive intermediates formed by extremely active catalysts such as the ones typically used in hydrosilylation catalysis.⁵⁷ The current understanding of the reaction still dates back to 1965, when CHALK and HARROD introduced a simple, yet very elegant mechanistic model that remains the widely accepted mechanism for platinum-catalyzed hydrosilylation in the literature even today (Scheme 3).⁸⁰



Scheme 3. Chalk-Harrod (CH) mechanism for the platinum-catalyzed hydrosilylation of alkenes.^{54,79,81} The reaction proceeds along the following steps: I_{CH} , oxidative addition of HSiR₃; II_{CH} , coordination of olefin; III_{CH} , insertion of the olefin into the Pt–H bond; IV_{CH} , reductive elimination of alkylsilane. Steps I_{CH} -III $_{CH}$ are believed to be reversible.

The Chalk-Harrod mechanism proceeds along four basic steps: I_{CH} , oxidative addition of the hydrosilane; II_{CH} , coordination of the olefin; III_{CH} , migratory insertion of the olefin into the Pt–H bond, and IV_{CH} , reductive elimination of the hydrosilylation product (CH = Chalk-Harrod). Step IV_{CH} is considered to be the rate determining, irreversible step, while steps I_{CH} -III_{CH} are assumed to be reversible.^{54,79,81} The formation of Pt⁰ particles has been attributed to catalyst deactivation.^{47,56,79}

Mechanistic studies in this field^{79,81-85} typically focus on the identification of the active catalyst species [Pt], which has been shrouded for a long time. Stein, Lewis et al.⁷⁹ and Roy et al.⁸¹ concluded that it contains Pt–Si and Pt–C bonds, while no evidence for Pt–H bonds has been detected so far. It is believed to resemble the molecular structure depicted in Figure 6:



Figure 6. Proposed (generic) structure of the active catalyst species in platinum-catalyzed hydrosilylation according to literature.^{79,81}

The Chalk-Harrod mechanism is in agreement with the mechanistic insights gained by Lewis and Stein,⁷⁹ Roy,⁸¹ and others,⁸²⁻⁸⁵ which provide evidence for the prevalence of the classical Chalk-Harrod mechanism rather than the modified variant^{86,87} comprising the insertion of the olefin into the Pt–Si bond. Several theoretical investigations reach the same conclusion and support the notion that step IV_{CH} is rate limiting.⁸⁸⁻⁹⁰

While the catalytic mechanism of less active transition metals has been the subject of a number of investigations, platinum-based systems have been largely omitted due to their tremendous activity and the related highly sensitive nature of the intermediate species.⁵⁷ The inconvenient characteristics of the industrially most relevant catalyst, Karstedt's catalyst, have contributed further to this negligence. Owing to its tendency to form platinum black without excess olefin ligand, it is usually distributed as a highly diluted solution rather than a solid,^{69,73} typically containing roughly 2 wt% of Pt. This impedes many common laboratory techniques of mechanistic studies such as isolation and characterization of intermediates and renders them painstakingly difficult, if not altogether impossible. As a result, only one recent report employs Karstedt's catalyst has been put forth to date, notwithstanding that unraveling the intrinsic rate laws might prove highly advantageous for a better understanding of the catalytic cycle.

Moreover, little attention has been paid to internals alkenes as substrates for hydrosilylation catalysis, which are known to be less prone to undergo hydrosilylation than terminal olefins.^{46,47,56} Previous reports have unanimously ascribed this solely to steric aspects, which does not adequately account for the widely varying reactivity of structurally closely related alkenes. For example, norbornene is prone to hydrosilylation under comparatively mild conditions,⁹¹ while cyclohexene is challenging to hydrosilylate.⁹² This demonstrates that not the internal position of the double bond per se is decisive and that other factors such as coordination ability and electron density at the double bond must exert an influence.

In this context, a detailed mechanistic study of the reaction mechanism of hydrosilylation is presented as part of this work. It comprises both kinetic and isotope labeling experiments and reveals several new principles governing platinum-catalyzed hydrosilylation. The Chalk-Harrod mechanism can be further developed based on the presented results.

Structural Motifs

In addition to the endeavor for novel catalyst systems based on ignoble metals, several new structural motifs of platinum complexes applicable to hydrosilylation catalysis have been presented recently (Figure 7).^{64,65,72,74,76,93-106}



Figure 7. Selected structural motifs of recently reported Pt(0) hydrosilylation catalysts. 64,65,72,74,76,95,96,99-105

The underlying idea is to exploit the exceptional reactivity of platinum in hydrosilylation catalysis and develop more stable, hence reusable catalysts at the same time to reduce the enormous platinum consumption. One established way to increase complex stability is the introduction of *N*-heterocyclic carbene (NHC) ligands as spectator ligands, which typically form very strong metal-carbon bonds by virtue of their strong σ -donating and poor π -accepting character.^{74,107} In addition, variation of the NHC allows for stereoelectronic tuning at the metal center.¹⁰⁷⁻¹⁰⁹

Consequently, the use of NHC ligands has greatly extended the scope of Pt(0) complexes in hydrosilylation catalysis.^{64,72,76,93} Complexes of the type [Pt(dvtms)(NHC)] (Markó's catalyst, Scheme 2) are easily synthesized, stable towards both air and moisture, and show remarkable selectivity and efficiency in hydrosilylation of alkenes and alkynes.^{64,72,76,94} Several structurally derived Pt(0) NHC complexes have been reported in recent years,⁹³⁻⁹⁷ all of which venture to exploit the strong $Pt-C_{Carbene}$ bond while maintaining a high reactivity in hydrosilylation catalysis at the same time. It has been established that steric encumbrance caused by bulky aryl substituents is instrumental for achieving high selectivity and catalytic activity.⁷⁴ Imidazo[1,5-a]pyridine-3-ylidenes (ImPy–R) are structurally related to 1,3-disubstituted NHCs (Figure 8).



Figure 8. Generic molecular structure of imidazo [1,5-a] pyridine-3-ylidene complexes.

They are among the strongest heteratomic σ -donors and match 1,3-disubstituted imidazolylidenes with regard to steric demand.¹¹⁰⁻¹¹² Their bicyclic structure facilitates a unique stereoelectronic environment at the metal center, which may easily be manipulated by varying the substituent R on the free wingtip of the integrated NHC ligand.¹¹⁰⁻¹¹² These characteristics render imidazo[1,5-a]pyridine-3-ylidenes (ImPy–R) promising candidates for the development of derived catalytically active transition metal complexes.^{60,110-114} Their application in novel Pt(0) hydrosilylation catalysts is presented in this work.

1.3.2 Iridium-catalyzed Hydrosilylation

In the context of hydrosilylation, iridium complexes are predominantly employed in the conversion of allyl compounds to yield γ -substituted propylsilanes. These are commercially relevant products due to the multiple functionalities of the obtained products, although their efficient synthesis remains one of the current challenges in hydrosilylation catalysis (Scheme 4).^{56,65,115}



Scheme 4. Ir- and Pt-catalyzed hydrosilylation of allyl compounds.^{56,65,115}

The application of typical platinum-based hydrosilylation catalysts in these transformations initiates several competing reaction pathways associated with considerable byproduct formation and consequently low selectivities.¹¹⁵⁻¹²¹ Particularly the conversion of allyl chloride, the most widely used allyl compound in industry, is prone to byproduct formation.^{56,65} The use of iridium catalysts has emerged and grown explosively in the past decade to circumvent the selectivity issues inherent to platinum catalysis, with the most prominent catalyst precursor being [{IrCl(cod)}₂] (cod = cycloocta-1,5-diene).¹²²⁻¹³⁴ The major drawback of these catalyst systems is their short lifetime, resulting in low yields and the necessity for high metal loadings.^{56,65}

Catalyst loadings can be significantly reduced by the use of additives^{III} such as cycloocta-1,5-diene (cod); however, a deep mechanistic understanding of the catalytic system on a molecular level has not been established to date, with patent literature constituting the main source of information.¹²²⁻¹³⁴ Thus, part of this work has been dedicated to the in-depth mechanistic study of the iridium-catalyzed hydrosilylation of allyl compounds. It features the results of both stoichiometric and catalytic experiments and also reveals the main deactivation pathways, paving the way toward the design and implementation of more efficient catalyst systems. In addition, the extension of the substrate scope to include allyl acetate has led to the successful direct synthesis of the first μ^2 - η^2 , η^2 -allyl bridged diiridium complex showcasing unique structural features.

^{III} In the literature on hydrosilylation, cod is often termed a *co-catalyst*, which is misleading since it constitutes merely a replacement for the degenerated (via hydrogenation) cod ligand (vide infra).

1.4 Epoxidation

Epoxidation is an important process in the chemical industry, since epoxides offer a facile access to many functionalizations by ring-opening reactions and thus constitute important building blocks for a variety of polymers such as polyglycols, polyamides and polyurethanes.^{135,136} In addition, the production of various fine chemicals, including e.g. pharmceuticals, agrochemicals, food additives, flavor and fragrance compounds, depends on epoxide intermediates.¹³⁷⁻¹³⁹ The relevance of asymmetric epoxidation catalysis for the production of enantiomerically pure, biologically active compounds is highlighted by the Nobel prize to B. SHARPLESS in 2001 (vide supra).¹⁴⁰ The most commonly used olefins in epoxidation catalysis are short-chained alkenes extracted from mineral oil, such as ethylene and propylene.^{136,141} Of these, the most important commodity is propylene oxide,¹³⁵ while alternative olefin substrates extracted from sustainable vegetable resources become increasingly important in light of the diminishing fossil resources.¹⁴²

Industrially, the epoxidation of ethene to ethylene oxide is carried out using molecular oxygen as oxidant in the presence of heterogenous silver contacts. On account of the excessive byproduct formation associated with oxidation of methyl groups by O_2 , the strategy of "direct oxidation" has failed for larger substrates such as propene or even longer alkenes to date.^{IV} Instead, an indirect process utilizing alkyl hydroperoxides such as *tert*-butylhydroperoxide (TBHP), the oxirane process, is applied (Scheme 5).⁸



Scheme 5. Selected industrial epoxidation processes.⁸ (a) Industrial production of ethylene oxide, (b) oxirane process for the production of propylene oxide (PO). $[M] = Ti(IV)/SiO_2$ (heterogeneous, Shell) or Mo (homogeneous catalyst, Halcon/ARCO). The production of PO is also carried out via several other industrial processes, including the chlorohydrin route and the cumene hydroperoxide process according to Sumitomo.¹⁴⁴

The significance of PO as base chemical is illustrated by its worldwide annual supply of just shy of 8 million tonnes in 2012, which is expected to grow even further to beyond 9 million tonnes in 2017.¹⁴⁵ Roughly two thirds of this amount is used for the production of polyether polyols, which are an important intermediate in the production of polyurethanes. The subsequent outlets of PO production include propylene glycols (20%), glycol ethers (5%), isopropanolamines, alkoxylates, cellulose ethers, propylene carbonate, allyl alcohol and

^{IV} The best selectivities reported are in the range of 50-60% at 9% propene conversion.¹⁴³

1,4-butanediol.¹⁴³ The oxirane process as developed by Halcon and ARCO in the 1960s was based on Mo, W, V and Ti catalysts. Metals with low oxidation potentials and high Lewis acidity are superior in epoxidation catalysis, hence reactivity decreases along Mo(VI) > W(VI) > V(V) > Ti(IV).¹⁴⁶ In agreement with this trend, established benchmark systems in homogeneous epoxidation catalysis include molybdenum and rhenium complexes.¹³⁵ Recent research efforts have been directed towards the development of facile syntheses of high valent molybdenum complexes that are active in epoxidation catalysis.¹³⁹ Particularly η^{5} -cyclopentadienyl molybdenum complexes have attracted interest in recent years^{135,136,139,147,149} by virtue of the possibility of haptotropic shifts of the Cp moiety in the transition state and the inert behavior of Cp during epoxidation catalysis.¹⁵⁰⁻¹⁵⁶ Two main structural motifs and variations thereof prevail in the literature, namely [MoCp(CO)₃X] and [MoCpO₂X] (X = e.g. halide, alkyl; Figure 9).¹³⁹



Figure 9. Structural motifs of cyclopentadienyl molybdenum complexes in olefin epoxidation catalysis. X = e.g. halide, alkyl.¹³⁹ Note that substituted Cp derivatives C₅R'₅, including chiral residues and *ansa* bridges to X are also in use,¹³⁹ but are omitted here for clarity.

The tricarbonyl compounds $[MoCp(CO)_3X]$ can be viewed as pre-catalysts, since they are known to oxidize in situ to the active dioxo and oxo-peroxo Mo(VI) species by the hydroperoxide used (Scheme 6).^{139,157-162} Bearing this in mind, the stability and robustness of the ligand X towards oxidative conditions is of particular importance with respect to recyclability and catalyst lifetime (TON), which is a major aspect in the development of industrially relevant catalysts.^{15,161} Ideally, the formation of the catalytically active Mo(VI) species should be facilitated by the Cp and X ligands by stabilization of the corresponding dioxo and oxoperoxo species.



Scheme 6. Oxidation of $[MoCp(CO)_3X]$ precatalysts with TBHP.¹⁶² TBHP = *tert*-butylhydroperoxide, 'BuOH = *tert*-butanol.

In recent years, several ligand spheres have been investigated as part of the η^5 -cyclopentadienyl tricarbonyl molybdenum structural motif.^{139,163-169} In this subclass of molybdenum precatalysts for olefin epoxidation, the *ansa*-bridged cyclopentadienyl Mo complex [{ η^5 -C₅H₄[CH(CH₂)₃]- η^1 -CH}Mo(CO)₃]¹⁷⁰ demonstrates the highest activity with a TOF of 11800 h⁻¹ in organic solvents¹⁷¹ and TOFs up to 44000 h⁻¹ in room temperature ionic liquids (RTILs).¹⁷²

N-heterocyclic carbene (NHC) ligands are often employed as spectator ligands in homogeneous catalysis (vide supra).¹⁰⁷⁻¹⁰⁹ As a consequence of the robust metal-carbon bond originating from their strong σ -donating and poor π -accepting character, their implementation in the complex coordination sphere often facilitates higher complex stability, particularly where high oxidation states of the metal are involved, as is the case in epoxidation catalysis.¹⁰⁷ In addition, variation of the NHC allows for stereoelectronic tuning at the metal center.¹⁰⁷⁻¹⁰⁹ Several complexes with the general formula [MoCp(CO)₂(NHC)X] (X= halide, alkyl) have been reported, which can be viewed as structural analogues to [MoCp(CO)₃X] with one carbonyl ligand replaced by the NHC .¹⁷³⁻¹⁷⁵ These complexes exhibit indeed longer catalyst lifetimes compared to their tricarbonyl congeners due to their enhanced stability under oxidative conditions, allowing for higher conversions. However, long induction periods and comparatively low turnover frequencies (TOFs) indicate that the stereoelectronic features of the NHC ligand are beneficial for catalyst stability, but detrimental to catalytic activity.¹⁷³⁻¹⁷⁵



Figure 10. Selected previously reported cyclopentadienyl NHC molybdenum complexes $A_{,}^{175} B_{,}^{173} C_{,}^{174}$ and D^{174} with similar structural motifs. Tol = *para*-tolyl, Ph = phenyl, Mes = mesityl.

Imidazo[1,5-a]pyridine-3-ylidenes (ImPy–R) are structurally related to 1,3-disubstituted imidazolylidenes (Figure 8). Owing to their bicyclic structure, they facilitate a unique stereoelectronic environment at the metal center, which may easily be manipulated by varying the substituent R on the free wingtip of the integrated NHC ligand.¹¹⁰⁻¹¹²

This type of ligand has attracted interest since the synthetic route has been significantly simplified by the group of ARON,¹¹¹ and consequently several imidazo[1,5-a]pyridine-3-ylidene transition metal complexes based on Rh,^{60,113,114} Ir,^{110,113} and Pd^{60,110} have been reported for various applications such as allylic substitution,⁶⁰ Suzuki-Miyaura cross-coupling,¹¹⁰ and other cross-coupling reactions.¹¹² They can be

considered promising candidates for the further development of $[MoCp(CO)_2(NHC)X]$ type epoxidation catalysts bearing in mind their unique steric and electronic characteristics. Hence, the report of two novel NHC molybdenum complexes, $[CpMo(CO)_2(ImPyMes)Cl]$ (7) (ImPyMes = 2-mesitylimidazo[1,5a]pyridine-3-ylidene) and $[CpMo(CO)_2(ImPyMes)(NCCH_3)]BF_4$ (8), and their application as precatalysts in olefin epoxidation is part of this work.

1.5 Transvinylation

Vinyl ester monomers can be used in a wide range of applications and can be converted into a plethora of end product polymers.¹⁷⁶ The industrial applications of vinyl esters include paint synthesis,¹⁷⁷ medical products,¹⁷⁸ paper coatings,¹⁷⁹ and construction materials,¹⁸⁰ as well as organic synthesis and pharmaceutical chemistry.¹⁸¹⁻¹⁸³ In addition, vinyl ester resins are used for the preparation of polymer matrix composites in both military and commercial applications due to their high modulus, high impact strength, high glass transition temperature, low weight and low cost.¹⁸⁴ Owing to the economic interest in vinyl ester monomers, several synthetic strategies have been established for their synthesis (Scheme 7). These include the reaction of carboxylic acids and acetylene,^{185,186} direct addition of carboxylic acids to terminal alkynes catalyzed by mercury salts,¹⁸⁷ Ru-,¹⁸⁸⁻¹⁹² Rh-,¹⁹³ Pd-,¹⁹⁴ or Ir-¹⁹⁵ complexes, and allylic oxidation of olefins¹⁹⁶⁻¹⁹⁸ using Pd(OAc)₂. The synthetic approach via transvinylation of carboxylic acids with vinyl donors has been reported using Hg(II)-¹⁹⁹ and Pd(II)-²⁰⁰⁻²⁰³ materials as well as a series of ruthenium precursors such as ruthenium carbonyls, ruthenocene or ruthenium trichloride hydrate.²⁰⁴⁻²⁰⁶

(a)
$$= + \bigcap_{R} (Hg, Ru, Zn, Cr) \to \bigcap_{R} (Hg, Ru, Zn, Cr) \to O_{R} (Hg, Ru, Rh, Pd, Ir) \to O_{R} (Hg, Pd, Ru) \to O_{R} (Hg, Pd$$

Scheme 7. Catalytic synthetic pathways to vinyl ester monomers.²⁰⁷ (a) Reaction of carboxylic acids and acetylene,^{185,186,208} (b) addition of carboxylic acids to alkynes,^{187-193,195} (c) allylic oxidation of olefins using palladium acetate,^{196,197} (d) transvinylation.¹⁹⁹⁻²⁰⁶

The advantages of catalytic transvinylation compared to the formerly prevalent acetylene route include a significantly increased selectivity and mild reaction conditions. Ruthenium catalyst precursors have proven

particularly useful by virtue of their lower toxicity compared to mercury-based reactions, their higher stability compared to Pd(II) systems as well as the accessibility of thermally labile vinyl esters and functionalized vinyl ester building blocks.^{176,200,202,204-206}

1.5.1 Mechanistic Considerations

Despite the industrial utilization of catalytic transvinylation processes, reports on the mechanistic aspects of this type of reaction are scarce. Previously published studies focus on the mechanism adopted by Pd(II) catalyst precursors, for which – in analogy to olefin oxidation – an intermediate π -complex is proposed.²⁰⁰⁻²⁰² A report by SABEL *et al.* deduces that Pd(II)-catalyzed transvinylation is best described as an equilibrium reaction (1) and comprises the transfer of a vinyl rather than a vinyloxy group (2). In addition, it could be demonstrated that bond formation and bond cleavage take place at the same carbon atom (3) and transvinylation of *cis/trans*-isomers leads to inversion of the stereoconfiguration (4). Based on these experimental findings, the reaction mechanism illustrated in Scheme 8 was proposed by the group of SABEL.



Scheme 8. Mechansim of Pd(II)-catalyzed transvinylation according to SABEL et al.²⁰²

Notwithstanding the publication of several patents reporting the application of a variety of ruthenium precursors for ruthenium-catalyzed transvinylation,²⁰⁴⁻²⁰⁶ mechanistic details have been largely disregarded in the literature prior to this work. Thus, part of this study and the preceding Master's Thesis²⁰⁷ has been devoted to a thorough mechanistic investigation of this process.

1.5.2 Structural Motifs

The structural chemistry of ruthenium carbonyl carboxylates is closely related to transvinylation catalysis due to the nature of the catalytically active ruthenium species, which can be described as a mixture of the monoand dinculear species $[Ru(CO)_3(\eta^2-O_2C-R)(\eta^1-O_2C-R)]$ and $[Ru_2(CO)_4(\mu-\eta^2-O_2C-R)_2(L)_2]$ $(R-CO_2^- = carboxylate, L = two-electron donor).^{167}$ Ruthenium complexes of this type have first been described in the literature by CROOKS *et al.*²⁰⁹ and in the course of the past five decades, several catalytic applications apart from transvinylation including isomerization,²¹⁰ hydrogenation,^{211,212} and C-C-bond formation reactions²¹³ have been established. This class of compounds is structurally diverse, comprising mono-,^{214,215} di-,²¹⁶ and tetranuclear^{213,217-227} as well as polymeric structures.²¹⁶ If dicarboxylic acids are used, tetra-,²²⁸ hexa-,²²⁸⁻²³⁰ and octanuclear²³¹ cage structures are accessible (Figure 11).



Figure 11. Structural motifs of ruthenium carbonyl carboxylates.²¹³⁻²²⁷ For a detailed review on dinuclear ruthenium sawhorse type complexes see SÜSS-FINK *et al.*²¹⁶

Of these, the by far most diverse and best understood group are dinuclear ruthenium sawhorse type complexes.²¹⁶ Reports of tetranuclear complexes are scarce and frequently require unusual synthetic

techniques. In general, they are composed of two dimeric "Ru₂(CO)₄(μ -O₂C-R)₂L" fragments linked via Ru-O^{213,217-225} or Ru-Ru^{217,226,227} interactions (vide supra). On the other hand, trinuclear ruthenium carbonyl carboxylates have not been reported at all to date. Structurally related complexes typically involve other ligand systems such as thiolates,²³² amino acids,²³³ and formyl²³⁴ in complexes of the general formula $[(\mu^2-H)Ru_3(CO)_{10}(\mu^2-L)]$ or bridging ligands like *para*-ethinylaniline²³⁵ and alkynoate acetyl salicylic acid esters²³⁶ in $[HRu_3(CO)_9(\mu^3-L)]$ type complexes. In addition, a number of complexes comprising a " $(\mu^3-O)(\mu-H)Ru_3$ " core have been reported;²³⁷⁻²⁴⁵ however, μ^3 -bridging OH groups connecting three Ru centers are not known in ruthenium carbonyl carboxylates, one component of this work is the report of new complexes of this type.

1.6 Ligand Fine Tuning: Structural Motifs for Molecular Wires

The rich structural chemistry of multinuclear ruthenium compounds not only offers access to numerous catalytic applications, but has also been exploited for the development of functional materials for molecular electronic devices.²⁴⁷⁻²⁴⁹ Even though R. FEYNMAN envisioned the ultimate integrated circuits to be constructed at the molecular or atomic level as early as 1959,^{250,251} molecular electronics is a relatively young area of research.^{252,253} It can be defined as technology using single molecules, small groups of molecules, carbon nanotubes, or nanoscale metallic or semiconductor wires to perform electronic functions.²⁵² More specifically, molecular wires are one-dimensional molecules (i.e. chains) with two redox-active termini, which allow for (1) electron transport along the chain and (2) electron exchange with the outside world.²⁵⁴ Much of the early work in this field has been focused on materials based on organic molecules,²⁵⁵ the majority of which feature HOMO-LUMO gaps (E_g) ranging from 2.4 to 5.4 eV, leaving plenty of room for E_g reduction which in turn should lead to higher conductivities (Figure 12).²⁵⁶

^V There has been one report of a complex comprising a similar structural fragment by the group of SÜSS-FINK. It was found that in the tetranuclear cluster $[Ru_4(\mu^3-OH)(\mu^2-H)_3(\eta^6-C_6H_6)_4]$, three of four Ru atoms are connected by a μ^3 -bridging OH.²⁴⁶



Figure 12. (a-b) Examples of synthetic organic molecular wires (SAc = thioacetate).^{257,258} (c) DNA has also been shown to be a functional molecular wire.^{255,259,261}

One approach is to incorporate metal complex units into the backbone of conjugated organic molecules in such a way that optimum orbital mixings between metal and organic fragments may result in a reduced E_{g}^{247} In this context, diruthenium handles $[Ru_2]^{n+}$ have been used to cap alkynyl polymer chains, facilitating electron transfer along the chain.^{247,248,262} Contrary to the previously employed mononuclear piano-stool motif employed in organometallic wire termini (see Figure 13a), such dinuclear units $[M_2]^{n+}$ facilitate the development of oligomers consisting of alternating metal and polymer units (Figure 13d).²⁴⁸

$$[M] \xrightarrow{(\Longrightarrow)_{m}} [M] \qquad [M] \xrightarrow{(\Longrightarrow)_{m}} [M] \xrightarrow{(\Longrightarrow)_{m}} [M]$$
(a)
(c)
$$[M_{2}] \xrightarrow{(\Longrightarrow)_{m}} [M_{2}] \qquad [M_{2}] \xrightarrow{(\Longrightarrow)_{m}} [M_{2}] \xrightarrow{(\Longrightarrow)_{m}} [M_{2}]$$
(b)
(d)

Figure 13. Structural motifs of simple (a, b) and oligometric (c,d) metallayne wires.²⁴⁸

The *trans* ditopic nature of $[M_2]^{n+}$ implied by the realization of such a structural motif is highly beneficial to accomplish the key features of scalability and connectivity to external building blocks.^{252,253} In addition, the concept of ligand fine tuning can be exploited in order to tailor the redox properties of the $[M_2]^{n+}$ for the desired application.

While $[Ru_2]^{n+}$ moieties were used in the pioneering work by the groups of REN and others, 247,248,262 a similar structural chemistry has been established for several other transition metals, including Re, Cr, Mo and W.²⁶³⁻²⁷² The properties of these complexes have been studied extensively in relation to the development of supramolecular structures and intrinsic informative electrochemical properties.^{264-266,268,273-282} Apart from research efforts regarding their electronic and photophysical properties²⁸³⁻²⁹⁰ in order to examine potential applications in catalysis²⁹¹⁻²⁹³ and biochemistry,²⁹⁴ synthetic work for the development of molecular wires^{269,295-301} has also been presented. Recent research efforts are focused on the isolated molecular building blocks in order to foster a deep understanding of the electrochemical properties of the $[M_2]^{n+}$ entities, including the specific influence of the employed ligands and identification of any potential sweet spots for their fine-tuning.^{302,303} When redox-active equatorial ligands such as ferrocenecarboxylate (Fc–CO₂⁻) are employed, the mediating effect of the $[M_2]^{n+}$ core and possible coupling effects can be observed. A number of studies concentrate on [Mo2]4+ systems, 274,287,289,296,304-312 which show great structural diversity when different *cis*- $[Mo_2(DAniF)_2(NCCH_3)_4][BF_4]_2^{270,280,313-315}$ and precursors such as its congener trans- $[Mo_2(DAniF)_2(NCCH_3)_4][BF_4]_2$ (DAniF⁻ = N,N'-di(p-anisyl) formamidinate) are used.^{298,316}



Figure 14. Metal-metal bonded units used in the formation of extended structures $(N \cap N = N, N' \cdot di(p \cdot anisyl)$ formamidinate; L_{eq} = equatorial ligand, L_{ax} = axial ligand).³¹⁷

Equatorial and axial ligation can be utilized to attain specifically designed molecular geometries, such as wires, ladders and cyclic structures.³¹⁷ Controllable equatorial ligation offers many advantages with respect to synthesis and application of these redox-active entities. The outcome of the related synthetic routes is largely affected by ligand basicity, which has been found to be proportional to the *trans* effect, hence decreasing in the order DArF⁻ > R-CO₂⁻ > CH₃CN (DArF⁻ = *N*,*N*'-diarylformamidinate).³¹⁸ Several series of dinuclear complexes coordinated by two mixed-ligands, $[Ru_2(DArF)_n(O_2CCH_3)_{4-n}Cl]$ (n = 4–0),^{319,322-325} $[Mo_2(DArF)_n(NCCH_3)_{8-2n}][BF_4]_{4-n}$ (n = 4–0),^{318,323-325} and $[Mo_2(DAniF)_n(O_2CCH_3)_{4-n}]$ (n = 4–0)^{318,325-327} have been reported,^{280,282,309,326,328-330} which might be applicable as building blocks for supramolecular structures such as molecular wires. Generally speaking, six configurations of $[Mo_2]^{4+}$ complexes coordinated by two different bridging ligands are feasible (Figure 15).



Figure 15. Full series of dinuclear molybdenum complexes with mixed-ligands ($O \cap O$ = carboxylate and $N \cap N$ = *N*,*N*'-diarylformamidinate). The terminologies Tetra, Tris, Bis, Mono, and Non are based on the number of formamidinate ligands.

While there are many examples of the Tetra,³²⁵ Bis,^{295,296,298,318} and Non^{327,331} species, the synthetic accessibility of the Tris and Mono species is limited. Only a few tris-substituted Mo₂ complexes $[Mo_2(DArF)_3(O_2C-R)]^{326,332-336}$ and one mono-substituted example of the composition $[Mo_2(o-DMophF)(O_2C-Me)_3]$ (*o*-DMophF = *N*,*N*'-di(2-methoxyphenyl)formamidinate)³³⁷ have been reported to date. However, a full series is required to quantitatively grasp the relative ligand basicity of the ligands involved, particularly DArF⁻ and Fc-CO₂⁻. Therefore, part of this work has been dedicated to the investigation of the structural and electrochemical characteristics of representatives of the $[Mo_2(DArF)_n(O_2C-Fc)_{4-n}]$ (n = 4–0)^{295,325,331} series. By virtue of the different redox activities of these otherwise closely related compounds, they are promising candidates for the synthesis of molecular wires.

2 OBJECTIVE

Platinum-catalyzed hydrosilylation ranks among the most important industrial applications of homogeneous catalysis in terms of both cost and scale of this process. Even though this reaction has been established for over half a century, the development of an understanding for the reaction pathway on a molecular level has been arduous and slow. Bearing this in mind, the prime objective of this thesis is the in-depth mechanistic investigation of platinum-catalyzed hydrosilylation. Owing to its industrial significance, Karstedt's catalyst will be used as platinum source, even though this choice entails several preparative challenges. A combination of isotope labelling, stoichiometric and kinetic experiments will be utilized to reach a deeper understanding of the catalytic cycle. In addition, new structural motifs of Pt(0) NHC complexes will be presented utilizing the ImPy–R ligands, which have only recently become easily accessible (Scheme 9).



Scheme 9. Left: Types of reactions investigated in this work. (a) Hydrosilylation, (b) Epoxidation, (c) Transvinylation. The denoted transition metals indicate the focus of the respective study. The prime area of research of this work was the investigation of platinum-catalyzed hydrosilylation. **Right:** Generic molecular structure of imidazo[1,5-a]pyridine-3-ylidene (ImPy-R) complexes.

Considering the recent development to employ iridium catalysts for the hydrosilylation of allyl compounds due to their high selectivity compared to conventional catalysts, a mechanistic study of this process will also be presented. In addition, the structural and electronic properties of the first allyl-bridged iridium dimer, which is formed in the stoichiometric reaction of one of the most common iridium catalysts, $[{IrCl(cod)}_2]$, and allyl acetate will be discussed.

On account of the industrial relevance of epoxidation catalysis, new catalyst structural motifs using molybdenum as central metal will be described. To this end, the relatively new ImPy–R ligands will be employed for the further development of complexes of the type $[MoCp(CO)_2(NHC)]$. Their applicability in epoxidation catalysis will be evaluated.

Ruthenium-catalyzed transvinylation offers a facile synthetic pathway to vinyl ester monomers, which are frequently used for the production of a plethora of end-use polymers. This process will be examined with respect to the underlying mechanistic principles, and structural motifs of related ruthenium carbonyl carboxylates will be presented. Furthermore, structurally related molybdenum dimers will be reported as potential candidates for the synthesis of functional materials for the manufacture of molecular wires.
OUTLINES

3 RESULTS – PAPER

The individual contributions of T. K. Meister to each of the following publications have been collected in Table A1 (Appendix).

3.1 Molecular Catalysts for Bond Activation – Paving the Way for Alternative Resources

Original Title: Molekulare Katalysatoren zur Bindungsaktivierung – Auf dem Weg zu alternativen Rohstoffquellen

TERESA K. ZIMMERMANN AND FRITZ E. KÜHN

CHEMIE IN UNSERER ZEIT 2015, 49, 248-259

This front page review article is directed at a broad audience including interested laymen and students on the high school level. It focuses on the concept of catalysis as one of the most important value-added processes in chemical industry and provides a short overview of the most important principles and parameters. The importance of the industrial Haber-Bosch Process for the global food production is illustrated. Regardless of the economic and geopolitical significance of catalysis, naturally catalyzed processes remain by far superior to synthetic chemistry with respect to a number of aspects. This is particularly true for the activation of small molecules, which are typically abundant on earth but chemically almost inert. Prominent examples include dinitrogen (N_2) or carbon dioxide (CO_2) . The conversion of such molecules to useful building blocks and fuels remains one of the key challenges of catalytic research to date. Consequently, this review describes several biological processes which are currently subject to investigation in the field of biomimetic and bioinspired catalysis by virtue of their high efficiency and efficacy. Special attention is paid to the utilization of alternative resources, since the design of artificial catalysts modeled after natural systems may prove to be a viable approach to solve the global energy problem. In particular, concepts for the exploitation of the following abundant raw materials are presented: methane (1), carbon dioxide (2) and lignin (3).

Methane is the main component of natural gas and is the largest fossil energy source alongside coal. In light of its vast reserves and the high hydrogen to carbon ratio, it is an interesting alternative to oil as main carbon supply. Methane is most notably converted in biological archetypes, i.e. enzymes such as methanemonooxygenases and cytochromes P450. The latter typically comprise a Fe(II) core in a porphyrinic ring structure, which has served as inspiration for numerous innovative catalyst designs aiming for alkane oxidation. The ultimate dream reaction would be the direct oxidation of methane to methanol, hence providing a versatile fuel and carbon feedstock that is both liquid and comprises a high energy density. Carbon dioxide on the other hand is the building block used in nature for the production of carbohydrates and derived products in photosynthesis. If this process could be appropriated by chemical industry, a nearly unlimited carbon source would be unleashed. Similar considerations apply for the utilization of lignin, a natural polymer occurring mainly in plants. This review provides an overview on concepts and current methodologies for the employment of these potential raw materials, giving a perspective view on each resource candidate.

3.2 Platinum Catalysis Revisited – Unraveling Principles of Catalytic Olefin Hydrosilylation

TERESA K. MEISTER, KORBINIAN RIENER, PETER GIGLER, JÜRGEN STOHRER, WOLFGANG A. HERRMANN, AND FRITZ E. KÜHN

ACS CATALYSIS 2016, 6, 1274-1284

Platinum-catalyzed hydrosilylation ranks among the most important applications of homogeneous catalysis today, with respect to both cost and scale of this process. This industrial process has been established for over half a century and provides access to a number of useful products such as adhesives, crosslinkers, surfactants and molding products via the manufacture of organofunctional sil(ox)anes and silicones. Taking into account that this reaction has been commonly practiced for over 50 years, the development of an understanding of the molecular processes governing this reaction has been arduous and slow. The original model proposed by CHALK and HARROD in 1965 continues to be widely accepted in the literature, providing an elegant yet simple mechanistic approach to this process, yet structural features of the active catalyst species still remain elusive. In addition, the industrially pivotal Karstedt's catalyst has been omitted in past mechanistic studies owing to its disadvantageous features detrimental to common experiments for the elucidation of reaction mechanisms. Furthermore, internal olefins have been largely disregarded as substrates in this process in the past. However, their reactivity cannot be adequately rationalized based on the Chalk-Harrod mechanism.

This paper provides an in-depth mechanistic study of platinum-catalyzed hydrosilylation. To account for its industrial relevance, Karstedt's catalyst was used as platinum source regardless of the ensuing experimental challenges. Based on ¹⁹⁵Pt NMR data, ²H labelling experiments as well as a kinetic study, new insights into this fundamentally important industrial process are provided (Scheme 10).



Scheme 10. Proposed revised mechanism for platinum-catalyzed hydrosilylation using Karstedt's catalyst as platinum source (HS = $\underline{h}ydro\underline{s}ilylation$, IS = $\underline{is}omerization$).

The proposed revised mechanism comprises the following steps (HS = hydrosilylation, IS = isomerization): I_{HS}, oxidative hydrosilane addition, II_{HS}, migratory olefin insertion, III_{HS}, reductive product elimination and recoordination of the olefin. The side reaction leading to olefin isomerization proceeds via I_{HS}, oxidative hydrosilane addition, II_{IS}, migratory olefin insertion, III_{IS}, β -H elimination, and IV_{IS}, loss of the isomerization product and recoordination of olefin. The rate limiting nature of the olefin insertion step II_{HS} was evidenced via the determination of a primary kinetic isotope effect (KIE), characteristic product distributions in labelling experiments, the observation of Pt–²H species as well as the coherence of experimentally determined rate laws and the mechanistic model. In addition to the advances with respect to the catalytic cycle, the dependence of structural features of the catalytically active species on the coordination strength of the chosen olefin substrate could be demonstrated in a ¹⁹⁵Pt NMR study and a series of kinetic experiments.

3.3 Decoding Catalytic Activity of Platinum Carbene Hydrosilylation Catalysts

TERESA K. MEISTER, JENS W. KÜCK, KORBINIAN RIENER, ALEXANDER PÖTHIG, WOLFGANG A. HERRMANN, AND FRITZ E. KÜHN

JOURNAL OF CATALYSIS 2016, 337, 157–166

The application of NHC ligands has extended the scope of platinum hydrosilylation catalysts. By virtue of the strong Pt–C bond, platinum(0) carbene complexes are stable towards air and moisture and feature superior stability and selectivity compared to classical catalysts such as Karstedt's and Speier's catalyst. Imidazo[1,5-a]pyridine-3-ylidenes (ImPy–R) provide access to an entire class of NHC complexes featuring a heteroatomic bicyclic ligand structure. They are susceptible to stereoelectronic tuning by variation of the wingtip substituent R. This report endeavors to exploit the unique characteristics of ImPy–R ligands in hydrosilylation catalysis, presenting seven novel complexes [Pt(dvtms)(ImPy–R)] (R = 4-cyanophenyl (4a), 4-trifluoromethylphenyl (4b), phenyl (4c), 4-methoxyphenyl (4d), mesityl (4e), pentafluorophenyl (4f), *tert*-butyl (4g), Scheme 11).



Scheme 11. Synthesis of **4a-g**. **1** = $[Pt_2(dvtms)_3]$ (Karstedt's catalyst, see Scheme 2).

The accepted mechanism associated with catalytic hydrosilylation utilizing Pt NHC complexes proceeds in a different manner compared to classical platinum catalysts. The slowest step of the reaction is believed to be the loss of the dvtms ligand, resulting in the formation of a reactive Pt–NHC fragment. The results of detailed investigations of spectroscopic and electrochemical properties of **4a**-**g** as well as a theoretical study on the B3LYP/6-31G^{**} level of theory suggest that [Pt(ImPy-R)L] complexes follow an analogous reaction pathway. Several parameters influencing catalytic activity could be established in this report. According to Koopman's Theorem, a distinct correlation of HOMO energy levels E_{HOMO} and the oxidation potential E_{Ox} is revealed (Figure 16, left). In addition, the reactivity of **4a**-**g** can be interpreted by means of the electronics of

the respective substituent R provided that sterics are comparable. More specifically, an increasing electron withdrawing character of the substituent R appears to augment the rate of hydrosilylation, which can be attributed to (1) facilitated loss of the dvtms ligand due to reduced π -backbonding of Pt to dvtms and (2) expedited reductive elimination of the hydrosilylation product by virtue of the corresponding rising E_{Ox} . This can be illustrated by the linear Hammet correlation depicted in Figure 16.



Figure 16. Left: Linear relationship of the experimental oxidation potential E_{Ox} as determined via cyclic voltammetry and HOMO energy levels E_{HOMO} derived from a theroretical investigation of the B3LYP/6-31G** level of theroy. **Right:** Hammet plot illustrating the interdependence of electronics and catalytic activity in hydrosilylation of **4a-d**.

In general, **4a-d** are more efficient hydrosilylation catalysts than **4e-g**, suggesting that the steric bulk at the imidazole-N obstructs reaction progress. **4a-g** show remarkable reactivity in hydrosilylation, yielding competitive results to Markó's catalyst in the model hydrosilylation of oct-1-ene with HSi₃O₂Me₇.

3.4 Mechanistic Insights into the Iridium-Catalyzed Hydrosilylation of Allyl Compounds

Korbinian Riener, **Teresa K. Meister**, Peter Gigler, Wolfgang A. Herrmann, and Fritz E. Kühn

JOURNAL OF CATALYSIS 2015, 331, 203-209

Iridium catalysis has become increasingly important in industrial hydrosilylation of allyl compounds in recent years owing to the economic significance of the resulting γ -substituted propylsilanes on the one hand, and the remarkable selectivity of Ir catalysts compared to established platinum systems on the other hand. While there are several reports on different aspects of platinum-based procedures, this is the first mechanistic investigation of the more recently developed iridium-variant, which has previously been treated in patent literature only. These feature superior selectivities while generally suffering from short catalyst lifetimes.

A series of stoichiometric and isotope labeling experiments allows for the identification of crucial parameters determining catalytic performance and elucidation of deactivation pathways. The hydrosilylation of allyl chloride, the most widely used allyl compound in industry, with Me₂SiHCl was chosen as model system with $[{IrCl(cod)}_2]$ as catalyst. The developed mechanistic picture is shown in Scheme 12.



Scheme 12. Proposed catalytic pathway of hydrosilylation of allyl compounds using $[{IrCl(cod)}_2]$ as iridium source. AE = activation via <u>allyl ether</u>; AC = <u>activation via allyl c</u>hloride; IH = <u>i</u>ridium catalyzed <u>hydrosilylation</u>.

The activation pathway and the corresponding entry point into the catalytic cycle depends on the chosen allyl substrate (I_{AC} and I_{AE}). Starting from the reactive [IrCl(cod)] fragment (Scheme 12, bottom), the reaction proceeds via III_{IH}, allyl substrate coordination, IV_{IH} , oxidative addition of hydrosilane, V_{IH} , migratory insertion of the allyl substrate into the Ir–H bond and VI_{IH} , reductive product elimination. The formation of iridium nanoparticles at high silane concentrations and the hydrogenation of the cod ligand were identified as major deactivation pathways. Their impact can be diminished by continuous silane addition and the employment of cod as additive. In view of these results, new catalyst structural motifs impeding particle formation and ligand hydrogenation can be developed.

3.5 Direct Sythesis and Bonding Properties of the First $\mu^2 - \eta^2$, η^2 -Allyl Bridged Diiridium Complex

Korbinian Riener, **Teresa K. Zimmermann**, Alexander Pöthig, Wolfgang A. Herrmann, and Fritz E. Kühn

INORGANIC CHEMISTRY 2015, 54, 4600-4602

This report describes the one-step synthesis of the first allyl-bridged diiridium complex $[5]^+$ bearing the uncommon counterion $[6]^+$ and the investigation of the unusual and electronic features of this compound. The reaction proceeds upon treatment of the established hydrosilylation catalyst $[{\rm IrCl(cod)}_2]$ with a potential allyl substrate, allyl acetate (Scheme 13).



Scheme 13. Synthesis and molecular structure (ORTEP plot) of [**5**][**6**]. Ellipsoids are drawn at the 50% probability level. Hydrogen atoms are omitted for clarity. Selected bond lengths (Å): Ir1–Ir2 2.8736(3), C1–C2 1.441(8), C2–C3 1.454(7), Ir1⁻⁻C1 2.105(6), Ir1⁻⁻C2 2.489(5), Ir2⁻⁻C3 2.111(6), Ir2⁻⁻C2 2.454(6).

Allyl acetate undergoes C–O bond cleavage, thereby providing the bridging allyl and acetate fragments that are subsequently incorporated into the title compound $[5]^+$. These replace one of the bridging chloride anions, while the other one is retained. The cleaved Cl⁻ recombines with a [IrCl(cod)] fragment, yielding the anionic $[6]^-$. The intriguing structural motif can be unequivocally confirmed by single crystal XRD analysis (Scheme 13). [5][6] has been reported to be the first contribution to multinuclear iridium complex chemistry comprising a symmetrically allyl bridged iridium dimer. It features comparatively long Ir–Ir and C–C_{allyl} bonds while showcasing Ir–C_{methylene} bonds that are among the shortest in any Ir–allyl compound reported to date. These structural characteristics are indicative of significant π -backbonding from Ir to the allyl ligand, which could be further evidenced via DFT calculations of the B3LYP/6-311++G** level of theory. The orbital interactions that could be deduced from frontier molecular orbital analysis of $[5]^+$ indicate a σ -like interaction between the iridium centers (Ir–Ir bond) as well as the metal and the allyl ligand (Ir–C_{allyl}). Weakening and elongation of both the C–C_{allyl} and the Ir–Ir bonds results from the population of antibonding

ligand orbitals while strengthening the metal-ligand interactions. This report constitutes a significant contribution to multinuclear iridium chemistry. Future perspectives in this area include the systematic synthesis, characterization and comparison of analogous allyl-bridged compounds bearing other d-block elements.

3.6 Synthesis and Characterization of Novel Cyclopentadienyl Molybdenum Imidazo[1,5-a]pyridine-3-ylidene Complexes and their Application in Olefin Epoxidation Catalysis

ANDREA SCHMIDT,[#] NIDHI GROVER,[#] TERESA K. ZIMMERMANN,[#] LILIAN GRASER, MIRZA COKOJA, Alexander Pöthig, Fritz E. Kühn

[#]A. Schmidt, N. Grover and T. K. Zimmermann contributed equally to this work.

JOURNAL OF CATALYSIS 2014, 319, 119-126

Epoxidation catalysis using molybdenum complexes such as $[MoCp(CO)_3X]$ (X = e.g. Cl⁻, Br⁻) involves highvalent active species. The stability of such intermediates can often be enhanced by the use of NHC ligands by virtue of their strong σ -donating and poor π -accepting character. Consequently, NHCs have extended the scope of cyclopentadienyl molybdenum complexes in epoxidation catalysis. ImPy–R ligands are an interesting source of NHC moieties comprising a unique annulated bicyclic structure prone to stereoelectronic tuning by variation of the wingtip substituent R. This report presents the synthesis and characterization of two novel complexes 7 and 8 bearing both cyclopentadienyl and ImPy–R spectator ligands as well as their application in epoxidation catalysis (Figure 17).



Figure 17. Epoxidation catalysts 7 and 8.

Synthesis of 7 and 8 proceeds via the silver transmetallation route using the molybdenum precursor $[MoClCp(CO)_3]$. IR spectroscopic analysis was used to evaluate the degree of π -backbonding of molybdenum to the carbonyl ligands, which can be a useful indicator of the Lewis acidity at the metal. The experimental evidence suggests that electron density at Mo in 8 is higher compared to 7, which could be further substantiated by a theoretical investigation at the B3LYP/6-31G^{**} level of theory. In addition, ⁹⁵Mo shiedling tensors were calculated for improved analysis of unexpected ⁹⁵Mo NMR shifts of 7 and 8. Both 7 and 8 are efficient and selective pre-catalysts in epoxidation of cyclooctene using TBHP (TBHP = *tert*-butylhydroperoxide) as oxidant, outperforming previously reported molybdenum-based epoxidation catalysts

and yielding high TOFs of up to $40,900 h^{-1}$ (7) and $53,100 h^{-1}$ (8). This report concludes that the stereoelectronic characteristics of ImPy–R ligands facilitate catalyst stability and activity in epoxidation catalysts. The electronic situation at Mo is decisive for catalytic performance of the respective pre-catalyst, with enhanced Lewis acidity promoting higher activity. Hence, the higher reactivity of 8 over 7 can be rationalized in terms of augmented electron density at Mo.

3.7 Ruthenium-Catalyzed Transvinylation – New Insights

Jennifer Ziriakus,[#] **Teresa K. Zimmermann**,[#] Alexander Pöthig, Markus Drees, Stefan Haslinger, Dominik Jantke, and Fritz E. Kühn

[#]J. Ziriakus and T. K. Zimmermann contributed equally to this work.

ADVANCED SYNTHESIS & CATALYSIS 2013, 355, 2845-2859

Vinyl ester monomers are important building blocks for numerous end-use polymers such as medical products, paper coatings and construction materials. They can be produced via ruthenium-catalyzed transvinylation, which has been established since the 1980s. However, the active catalyst species as well as the reaction mechanism has remained elusive in the past. This study presents experimental evidence for the nature of the catalytically active species comprising ruthenium carbonyl carboxylate structural motifs. A combination of IR, ESI-MS and NMR data indicates the presence of both mononuclear and dinuclear ruthenium species in situ (Scheme 14).



Scheme 14. Proposed catalytically active dinuclear Ru(I) (left) and mononuclear Ru(II) (right) species in the active reaction mixture and proposed catalytic cycle of ruthenium-catalyzed hydrosilylation. L = H₂O, Cl⁻, CH₃COOH; R = CH₂CH₃, CH₃.

It should be noted that the experimental work related to this paper has been carried out during the Master's Thesis preceding this dissertation²⁰⁷ and in cooperation with J. ZIRIAKUS.³³⁸ The evaluation of the catalytic performance of several mono- and dinuclear ruthenium carbonyl carboxylates indicates that the mononuclear species present in solution accounts for the lion's share of catalytic activity using simple precursors such as RuCl₃. Hence, a mechanistic model was developed, which was verified and further developed utilizing isotope

labeling exerperiments, investigation of stereo- and regioselectivity as well as a theoretical study on the B3LYP/6-31G^{*} level of theory. The resulting proposed cycle is depicted in Scheme 14 and comprises the following steps: I_{TV} , coordination of vinylester, II_{TV} , formation of a six-membered ruthenacycle, III_{TV} , vinyl transfer, and IV_{TV} , loss of product and recoordination of vinyldonor (e.g. vinyl acetate, TV = transvinylation). Based on these results, rational design of new transvinylation catalysts mimicking the structural motifs of the active catalyst species is feasible. In addition, replacement of the carbonyl ligands with suitable anchors might allow for catalyst immobilization.

3.8 [Ru₄(CO)₈(μ-OOCCH₂CH₃)₄(THF)₂] and [Ru₃(μ₃-OH)(CO)₆(μ-OOC'Bu)₄(OOC'Bu)]: Novel Multinuclear Ruthenium Carbonyl Carboxylates

TERESA K. ZIMMERMANN, JENNIFER ZIRIAKUS, EBERHARDT HERDTWECK, ALEXANDER PÖTHIG, AND FRITZ E. KÜHN

ORGANOMETALLICS 2014, 33, 2667-2670

This paper describes the synthesis of two novel multinuclear ruthenium complexes by reaction of triruthenium dodecacarbonyl $[Ru_3(CO)_{12}]$ with propionic and pivalic acid, forming $[Ru_4(CO)_8(\mu-OOCCH_2CH_3)_4(THF)_2]$ (9) and $[Ru_3(\mu_3-OH)(CO)_6(\mu-OOC'Bu)_4(OOC'Bu)]$ (10, Scheme 15). Ruthenium carbonyl carboxylates have been known since the late 1960s, and particularly dinuclear compounds of the composition $[Ru_2(CO)_4(\mu-OOCR)_2L_2]$ (R = alkyl, L = donor ligand, e.g. THF, py) have attracted research interest in the past. Tetranuclear complexes bearing similar building blocks are scarce, while trinuclear complexes of this type have not been reported at all previously. Hence, this report contributes to the structural diversity of ruthenium carbonyl carboxylate chemistry.



Scheme 15. Left: Synthesis of **9** and **10. Right:** Graphical representation of frontier molecular orbitals of **9** and **10** as determined by a computational study on the B3LYP/LANL2DZ level of theory.

It was found that a dynamic equilibrium exists in solution between **9** and ist dimeric and oligomeric analogues, $[Ru_2(CO)_4(\mu\text{-OOCCH}_2CH_3)_2(THF)_2]$ and $[\{Ru_2(CO)_4(\mu\text{-OOCCH}_2CH_3)_2\}_6(THF)_2]$, indicating that **9** is prone to cleavage of the tetranuclear Ru₄ core structure by donor ligands such as THF or pyridine. This is also illustrated by the geometry of this complex' frontier molecular orbitals, which show the localization of the LUMO between the Ru₂ fragments, facilitating a fracture at the weaker axial Ru-OOC-R interactions. The molecular structure of **10** is quite unique, featuring a μ_3 -bridging hydroxyl group, whose identity could be unequivocally confirmed by refinement of the OH proton in XRD analysis as well as the characteristic low field ¹H NMR shift at $\delta = 14.37$ in CDCl₃. It is synthesized in an excess of pivaliv acid with no additional solvent. Both **9** and **10** reveal remarkable structural characteristics, extending the scope of ruthenium carbonyl carboxylate chemistry.

3.9 Structure and Catalytic Activity of the Ruthenium(I) Sawhorse-Type Complex $[Ru_2\{\mu, \eta^2 - CF_3(CF_2)_5COO\}_2(DMSO)_2(CO)_4]$

TERESA K. ZIMMERMANN, STEFAN HASLINGER, ALEXANDER PÖTHIG, AND FRITZ E. KÜHN ACTA CRYSTALLOGRAPHICA SECTION C **2014**, C70, 384-387

The title compound $[Ru_2\{\mu, \eta^2-CF_3(CF_2)_5COO\}_2(DMSO)_2(CO)_4]$ (11) was synthesized using heptanoic acid and $[Ru_3(CO)_{12}]$ as ruthenium precursor. It is an archetype of ruthenium carbonyl sawhorse type complexes and features the typical μ -bridging coordination mode of the carboxylate ligands (Figure 18).



Figure 18. Left: ORTEP-Plot of the molecular structure of **11**. Hydrogen atoms have been omitted for clarity. Displacement ellipsoids are drawn at the 50% probability level. Selected bond lengths (Å) and angles (deg): Ru1–Ru2 2.6907(4), Ru1–S1 2.4164(8), Ru2–S2 2.4095(7), Ru1–O1 2.1476(17), Ru1–O3 2.1256(18), Ru2–O2 2.1364(18), Ru2–O4 2.1515(17), Ru2–Ru1–S1 165.14(3), Ru1–Ru2–S2 164.70(3), O1–Ru1–O3 81.58(7), O2–Ru2–O4 81.56(7). **Right:** Crystal packing of **11**, highlighting the layered arrangement in the crystal (view along *a* axis).

Both Ru atoms are coordinated in a distorted octahedral manner, with two DMSO molecules occupying the axial positions along the Ru–Ru axis. The DMSO atoms are tilted with respect to one another and oriented away from the carbonyl groups, thus accounting for the Ru1–Ru2–S2 (164.70(4) deg) and Ru2–Ru1–S1 (165.14(3) deg) torsion angles well below the ideal 180 deg. The examination of the crystal packing reveals a multilamellar structure of bilayers, where sheets of lipophilic fluorinated alkyl chains are intersected by more hydrophilic layers of "Ru₂(DMSO)₂(CO)₄" fragments. The application of **11** in a model vinyl transfer reaction of propionic acid and vinyl acetate to evaluate its reactivity in transvinylation catalysis illustrates that the catalytic performance of **11** compares well with that of structurally similar dinuclear ruthenium carbonyl sawhorse complexes. The obtained data further indicates that the perfluorinated bridging heptanoate exerts a beneficial effect compared to propionate, but overall **11** is still outperformed by mononuclear catalysts. However, it may prove useful to employ perfluorinated carboxylate ligands in the synthesis of mononuclear ruthenium transvinylation catalysts.

3.10 Synthesis and Electrochemical Properties of *cis*- and *trans*-[$Mo_2(O_2C-Fc)_2(DArF)_2$] (O_2C-Fc = Ferrocenecarboxylate, DArF = N,N'-Diarylformamidinate)

XU-MIN CAI, **Teresa K. Zimmermann**, Alexander Pöthig, and Fritz E. Kühn

INORGANIC CHEMISTRY 2015, 54, 6631-6640

The synthesis of three complexes of the composition $[Mo_2(O_2C-Fc)_2(DArF)_2]$ by reaction of the precursor *cis*- $[Mo_2(O_2C-Fc)_2(NCCH_3)_4][BF_4]_2$ with three electronically different *N,N'*-diarylformamidinate (DArF) ligands [DArF = N,N'-diphenylformamidinate (DPhF), *N,N'*-di(*p*-trifluoromethylphenyl)formamidinate (DTfmpF), and *N,N'*-di(*p*-anisyl)formamidinate (DAniF)] is described. The reaction is performed as a one-pot reaction and generally leads to a mixture of the *cis* and *trans* complexes in the crude product. The preferentially crystallized isomer could be identified unambiguously via single crystal X-ray diffraction in all cases, showcasing the typical molybdenum paddlewheel structures.



Figure 19. ORTEP plot of the molecular structures of **12**, **13** and **14**. Hydrogen atoms are omitted for clarity. Displacement ellipsoids are shown at the 50% probability level.

The new complexes cis-[Mo₂(O₂C-Fc)₂(DPhF)₂] (cis-12), cis-[Mo₂(O₂C-Fc)₂(DTfmpF)₂] (cis-13), and trans-[Mo₂(O₂C-Fc)₂(DAniF)₂] (trans-14) were subjected to electrochemical analysis in order to elucidate their redox properties. On account of the electron-donating character of these DArF ligands, the oxidation of the [Mo₂]⁴⁺ occurs prior Fc oxidation, hence inversing the redox sequence previously reported with ligands such as acetonitrile or phosphines. Evidence for the electronic interaction of the redox-active ferrocene carboxylate ligands was found for trans-[Mo₂(O₂C-Fc)₂(DAniF)₂], while the [Mo₂]⁵⁺/[Mo₂]⁶⁺ oxidation was observed exclusively with DAniF⁻ as ligand, which can be attributed to the electron-donating character of the

methoxyphenyl substituent. The resemblance of the absorption patterns in UV-vis spectroscopy illustrates the similarity of structural and electronic features of **12-14**. Based on the basicity of the ferrocenecarboxylate and DArF ligands employed in this work, a mechanism for the isomerization of intermediate species during synthesis is presented. This work constitutes an important contribution to the concept of controllable design of structural motifs applicable to the synthesis of molecular wires. Ultimately, this could pave the way for the development of redox-active supramolecular structures. In this context, the directed conversion of the precursor *trans*- $[Mo_2(DAniF)_2(NCCH_3)_4][BF_4]_2$ to obtain multi redox-active ladder type oligomers utilizing the principles established in this study is of particular interest.

3.11 Filling a Gap: Electrochemical Property Comparison of the Completed Compound Series $[Mo_2(DArF)_n(O_2C-Fc)_{4-n}]$ (DArF = N,N'-Diarylformamidinate; O_2C-Fc = Ferrocenecarboxylate)

XU-MIN CAI, **TERESA K. MEISTER**, ALEXANDER PÖTHIG, AND FRITZ E. KÜHN

INORGANIC CHEMISTRY 2015, 55, 858-864

The substitution pattern in complexes of the series $[Mo_2(DArF)_n(O_2C-Fc)_{4-n}]$ (n = 4–0) is demonstrated to be influenced by the electronic properties of the DArF ligand employed for the reaction with the precursor, *cis*- $[Mo_2(O_2C-Fc)_2(NCCH_3)_4][BF_4]_2$. In particular, when two electronically different *N,N'*diarylformamidinate (DArF) ligands [DArF = N,N'-di(p-trifluoromethylphenyl)formamidinate (DTfmpF) and *N,N'*-di(*p*-anisyl)formamidinate (DAniF)] are employed, the respective tris- and mono-substituted complexes $[Mo_2(DTfmpF)_3(O_2C-Fc)]$ (**15**) and $[Mo_2(DAniF)(O_2C-Fc)_3]$ (**16**) are isolated.



Figure 20. ORTEP plots of the molecular structures of **15** and **16**. Displacement ellipsoids are shown at the 50% probability level. Aryl groups are shown as wireframes, and hydrogen atoms (except for the ones on the DArF bridge) are omitted for clarity.

15 and 16 complete the series of $[Mo_2(DArF)_n(O_2C-Fc)_{4-n}]$ (n = 4–0) type compounds, thus offering the opportunity of a comprehensive study of the electrochemical properties. Using the characteristic and well-observable oxidation potential $E_{1/2}([Mo_2]^{4+}/[Mo_2]^{5+})$, ligand basicity can be quantified and compared in detail. It is concluded that ligand basicity decreases along the series $DAniF^- > DTfmpF^- > Fc-CO_2^- >> CH_3CN$, providing a useful tool for future synthetic approaches aimed at the design of multi redox-active complex building blocks intended for the synthesis of molecular wires.

4 CONCLUSION AND

Outlook

This work addresses several aspects of homogeneous industrial catalysis. The following three key transformations were selected and examined in more detail on account of their industrial significance: hydrosilylation, epoxidation and transvinylation (Scheme 16).

(a)
$$R' \longrightarrow H \to SiR_3$$
 $(Pt, Ir] \to R' \xrightarrow{SiR_3} SiR_3$
(b) $R' \swarrow H \to R \to OOH$ $(Mo] \to R' \xrightarrow{S'} O$
(c) $R \downarrow OH + \downarrow O \to R \downarrow O \to OH$

Scheme 16. Key transformations examined in this work. (a) Hydrosilylation, (b) epoxidation, (c) transvinylation. The denoted transition metals indicate the focus of the respective study. The prime area of research of this work was the investigation of platinum-catalyzed hydrosilylation.

This thesis can be broadly divided into mechanistic studies on the aforementioned reaction types (part I) and the development of novel structural motifs (part II). Most of the experimental work associated with this thesis has been dedicated to the investigation of platinum-catalyzed hydrosilylation (Scheme 16a). As a result of an extensive study comprising isotope labelling experiments, comprehensive NMR investigations and kinetic approaches, an important contribution to the mechanistic understanding of this fundamentally important industrial process using the most widely applied Karstedt's catalyst as platinum source was provided. It was demonstrated that not only reductive elimination, but also olefin insertion is part of the rate limiting step, thereby refining the established Chalk-Harrod mechanism (Chapter 3.2).



Scheme 17. Simplified representation of the revised catalytic cycle of platinum-catalyzed hydrosilylation developed in this work (Chapter 3.2). Contrary to previous reports, it has been proposed that the olefin insertion step is rate limiting.

Furthermore, the first investigation of iridium-catalyzed hydrosilylation of allyl compounds was presented, providing valuable insights into the associated decomposition pathways which account for the observed short catalyst lifetimes (Chapter 3.4). Ruthenium-catalyzed transvinylation (Scheme 16c) was examined in detail

with respect to relevant mechanistic aspects and a likely pathway for the course of the reaction suggested (Chapter 3.7).

The mechanistic investigations of this thesis demonstrate that many reaction mechanisms remain shrouded even in well-established industrial reactions. Their elucidation can provide results that are valuable not only in scientific terms, but can also be utilized for the development and improvement of novel catalyst systems that may actually be put to use.

In addition, new catalyst structural motifs were presented. These can be grouped into (1) carbene complexes comprising ImPy–R ligands and (2) multinuclear structures. Both hydrosilylation and epoxidation catalysts utilizing the newly developed bicyclic ImPy–R ligands were synthesized and tested in model catalytic reactions (Figure 21, Chapter 3.3 and 3.6). The introduction of these ligands proved to be a valuable synthetic strategy with beneficial effects on catalysis in both cases. Furthermore, the investigation of redox properties, HOMO energy levels and TOFs of **4a**-**g** revealed a distinct correlation of these parameters, illustrating the relevance of electrochemical characteristics for hydrosilylation catalysis. The DFT investigation of **7** and **8** illustrated an increased electron density at Mo compared to previously reported systems, accounting for their remarkable performance in catalysis.

Hence, the application of ImPy–R ligands in catalysts where classical NHC ligands had been established proved to be a worthwhile endeavor. This approach could be extended to other catalyst systems in the future, possibly utilizing the bicyclic ImPy–R structure for asymmetric catalysis.



Hydrosilylation:

Figure 21. Structural motifs of novel hydrosilylation (top, **4a-g**) and epoxidation (bottom, **7** and **8**) catalysts employing ImPy–R ligands (for more details, see Chapters 3.3 and 3.6).

Novel multinuclear compounds reported in this work include complexes bearing [Ru₂], [Ru₃], [Ru₄], [Ir₂] and [Mo₂] cores. These are associated with transvinylation ([Ru₂], [Ru₃], [Ru₄], Chapter 3.8 and 3.9) or hydrosilylation ([Ir₂], Chapter 3.5) catalysis, respectively, or are of conceptual interest for the synthesis of molecular wires ([Mo₂], Chapter 3.10 and 3.11). The complexes in this thesis typically bear μ^2 -bridging carboxylate ligands, often feature a paddlewheel or sawhorse type structure and could all be characterized by single crystal XRD (Figure 22)



Figure 22. Single crystal structures of multinuclear complexes presented in this work comprising $[Ir_2]$ (**5**), $[Ru_2]$ (**11**), $[Ru_3]$ (**10**), $[Ru_4]$ (**9**) and $[Mo_2]$ (**12-16**) core structures. Hydrogen atoms are omitted for clarity except on the *N*,*N*-diarylformamidinate bridges and the μ_3 -bridging hydroxyl group in **10**. Ellipsoids are shown at the 50% proability level; bulky ligand residues are depicted as wireframes.

These complexes contribute to the rich structural chemistry of multinuclear iridium, ruthenium and molybdenum compounds. The combination of DFT studies, electrochemical investigation and characterization demonstrates different ways to rationalize their composition and reactivity.

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5.1 Molecular Catalysts for Bond Activation – Paving the Way for Alternative Resources

Original Title: Molekulare Katalysatoren zur Bindungsaktivierung – Auf dem Weg zu alternativen Rohstoffquellen

TERESA K. ZIMMERMANN AND FRITZ E. KÜHN

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5.2 Platinum Catalysis Revisited – Unraveling Principles of Catalytic Olefin Hydrosilylation

TERESA K. MEISTER, KORBINIAN RIENER, PETER GIGLER, JÜRGEN STOHRER, WOLFGANG A. HERRMANN, AND FRITZ E. KÜHN

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5.3 Decoding Catalytic Activity of Platinum Carbene Hydrosilylation Catalysts

TERESA K. MEISTER, JENS W. KÜCK, KORBINIAN RIENER, ALEXANDER PÖTHIG, WOLFGANG A. HERRMANN, AND FRITZ E. KÜHN

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Korbinian Riener, Teresa K. Meister, Peter Gigler, Wolfgang A. Herrmann, and Fritz E. Kühn

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ANDREA SCHMIDT,[#] NIDHI GROVER,[#] TERESA K. ZIMMERMANN,[#] LILIAN GRASER, MIRZA COKOJA, Alexander Pöthig, Fritz E. Kühn

[#]A. Schmidt, N. Grover and T. K. Zimmermann contributed equally to this work.

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5.7 Ruthenium-Catalyzed Transvinylation - New Insights

JENNIFER ZIRIAKUS,[#] **TERESA K. ZIMMERMANN**,[#] Alexander Pöthig, Markus Drees, Stefan Haslinger, Dominik Jantke, and Fritz E. Kühn

[#]J. Ziriakus and T. K. Zimmermann contributed equally to this work.

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TERESA K. ZIMMERMANN, JENNIFER ZIRIAKUS, EBERHARDT HERDTWECK, ALEXANDER PÖTHIG, AND FRITZ E. KÜHN

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5.9 Structure and Catalytic Activity of the Ruthenium(I) Sawhorse-Type Complex $[Ru_2\{\mu, \eta^2 - CF_3(CF_2)_5COO\}_2(DMSO)_2(CO)_4]$

TERESA K. ZIMMERMANN, STEFAN HASLINGER, ALEXANDER PÖTHIG, AND FRITZ E. KÜHN

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5.10 Synthesis and Electrochemical Properties of *cis*- and *trans*-[$Mo_2(O_2C-Fc)_2(DArF)_2$] (O_2C-Fc = Ferrocenecarboxylate, DArF = N,N'-Diarylformamidinate)

XU-MIN CAI, TERESA K. ZIMMERMANN, ALEXANDER PÖTHIG, AND FRITZ E. KÜHN

INORGANIC CHEMISTRY 2015, 54, 6631-6640

DOI 10.1021/acs.inorgchem.5b00964



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5.11 Filling a Gap: Electrochemical Property Comparison of the Completed Compound Series $[Mo_2(DArF)_n(O_2C-Fc)_{4-n}]$ (DArF = N,N'-Diarylformamidinate; O_2C-Fc = Ferrocenecarboxylate)

XU-MIN CAI, **TERESA K. MEISTER**, ALEXANDER PÖTHIG, AND FRITZ E. KÜHN

INORGANIC CHEMISTRY 2015, 55, 858-864

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TERESA K. MEISTER,^{a,b} Korbinian Riener,^{b,c} Peter Gigler,^d Jürgen Stohrer,^d Wolfgang A. Herrmann,^c and Fritz E. Kühn^{a,c,*}

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Decoding Catalytic Activity of Platinum Carbene Hydrosilylation Catalysts

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Mechanistic Insights into the Iridium-Catalyzed Hydrosilylation of Allyl Compounds

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Direct Sythesis and Bonding Properties of the First $\mu^2 - \eta^2, \eta^2$ -Allyl Bridged Diiridium Complex

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Synthesis and Characterization of Novel Cyclopentadienyl Molybdenum Imidazo[1,5-a]pyridine-3-ylidene Complexes and their Application in Olefin Epoxidation Catalysis

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Ruthenium-Catalyzed Transvinylation - New Insights

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[Ru₄(CO)₈(μ -OOCCH₂CH₃)₄(THF)₂] and [Ru₃(μ ₃-OH)(CO)₆(μ -OOC'Bu)₄(OOC'Bu)]: Novel Multinuclear Ruthenium Carbonyl Carboxylates

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Structure and Catalytic Activity of the Ruthenium(I) Sawhorse-Type Complex [Ru₂{ μ , η^2 -CF₃(CF₂)₅COO}₂(DMSO)₂(CO)₄]

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Synthesis and Electrochemical Properties of *cis*- and *trans*- $[Mo_2(O_2C - Fc)_2(DArF)_2]$ (O₂C-Fc = Ferrocenecarboxylate, DArF = N,N'-Diarylformamidinate)

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Filling a Gap: Electrochemical Property Comparison of the Completed Compound Series $[Mo_2(DArF)_n(O_2C-Fc)_{4-n}]$ (DArF = N,N'-Diarylformamidinate; O₂C-Fc = Ferrocenecarboxylate)

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8 COMPLETE LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

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[#] Equally contributing co-authors.

9 APPENDIX

Table A1. Contribution of Ph.D. candidate T. K. Meister to individual publications. * = contributed equally as first author (refers to publications in Chapters 3.6 and 3.7).

Bibliographic Data	Chapter	Author	Contribution
<i>Chem. Unserer Zeit</i> 2015 , <i>49</i> , 248-259	3.1	1 st	research, conception and writing of manuscript
<i>ACS Catal.</i> 2016 , <i>6</i> , 1274-1284	3.2	1 st	conceptual approach, experimental work, conception and writing of manuscript
<i>J. Catal.</i> 2016 , <i>337</i> , 157- 166	3.3	1 st	conceptual approach, experimental work, DFT study, conception and writing of manuscript
<i>J. Catal.</i> 2015 <i>, 331,</i> 203- 209	3.4	2 nd	support of 1^{st} author (K. Riener) in conception and wording of manuscript
<i>Inorg. Chem.</i> 2015 , <i>54</i> , 4600-4602	3.5	2^{nd}	experimental work and related data interpretation, support of first author (K. Riener) in conception and wording of manuscript
<i>J. Catal.</i> 2014 , <i>319</i> , 119- 126	3.6	3 ^{rd*}	DFT study and related data interpretation, contribution to conception and writing of the manuscript
<i>Adv. Synth. Catal.</i> 2013 , <i>355</i> , 2845-2859	3.7	2 ^{nd*}	conceptual approach, experimental work and related data interpretation, conception and writing of manuscript
<i>Organometallics</i> 2014 , <i>33,</i> 2667-2670	3.8	1 st	conceptual approach, experimental work and related data interpretation, DFT study, conception and writing of manuscript
Acta Cryst. C 2014 , C70, 384-387	3.9	1 st	conceptual approach, experimental work and related data interpretation, conception and writing of manuscript
<i>Inorg. Chem.</i> 2015 , <i>54</i> , 6631-6640	3.10	2^{nd}	experimental work and related data interpretation, support of 1 st author (XM. Cai) in conception and wording of manuscript
<i>Inorg. Chem.</i> 2015 , <i>55</i> , 858-864	3.11	2 nd	experimental work and related data interpretation, support of 1 st author (XM. Cai) in conception and wording of manuscript