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Electronic Supporting Information

An efficient ruthenium(IV) catalyst for the selective hydration of nitriles to amides in water under mild conditions

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EXPERIMENTAL SECTION

General methods: Synthetic procedures were performed under an atmosphere of dry nitrogen using vacuum-line and standard Schlenk techniques. Organic solvents were dried by standard methods and distilled under nitrogen before use. All reagents were obtained from commercial suppliers and used without any further purification, with the exception of complex $[\{\operatorname{RuCl}(\mu-\operatorname{Cl})(\eta^3:\eta^3-\operatorname{C}_{10}\operatorname{H}_{16})\}_2]$ (1),¹ the secondary phosphine oxides $R_2P(=0)H$ (R = Ph, Me)² and 4cyano-1-(2,6-difluorobenzyl)-1H-1,2,3-triazole (**3aa**),³ which were prepared by following the methods reported in the literature. Infrared spectra were recorded on a Perkin-Elmer 1720-XFT spectrometer. GC measurements were made on a Hewlett-Packard HP6890 equipment using a Supelco Beta-Dex[™] 120 column (30 m length; 250 µm diameter). NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker DPX-300 or AV400 instruments. The chemical shift values (δ) are given in parts per million and are referred to the residual peak of the deuterated solvent employed (¹H and ¹³C) or an external 85% aqueous H_3PO_4 solution (³¹P). DEPT experiments have been carried out for all the compounds reported. Elemental analyses were provided by the Analytical Service of the Investigaciones Químicas (IIQ-CSIC) Instituto de of Seville. The numbering for protons and carbons of the 2,7dimethylocta-2,6-diene-1,8-diyl skeleton is as follows:



Synthesis of $[RuCl_2(\eta^3:\eta^3-C_{10}H_{16}){PPh_2(OH)}]$ (2a): A solution of the dimeric precursor $[{RuCl(\mu-Cl)(\eta^3:\eta^3-C_{10}H_{16})}_2]$ (1)

(0.200 g, 0.32 mmol) and $Ph_2P(=0)H$ (0.131 g, 0.64 mmol) in dichloromethane (50 mL) was stirred at room temperature for 48 h. The solvent was then removed under reduced pressure. The resulting yellow solid washed with hexanes $(2 \times 10 \text{ mL})$ and diethyl ether $(2 \times 10 \text{ ml})$, and dried under vacuum. Yield: 0.269 g (82%). IR (KBr): 3035 (s), 2909 (w), 2854 (w), 1437 (s), 1380 (m), 1216 (w), 1146 (s), 1100 (m), 1027 (w), 878 (s), 742 (m), 690 (s), 609 (w), 538 (s), 489 (s) cm^{-1} . ${}^{31}P{}^{1}H{}$ NMR (CDCl₃) δ = 80.2 (s) ppm. ${}^{1}H{}$ NMR (CDCl₃) δ = 2.14 (s, 6H, Me), 2.70-2.75 (m, 2H, H_4 and H_6), 3.15 (d, 2H, ${}^{3}J_{PH}$ = 3.3 Hz, H₂ and H₁₀), 3.52-3.58 (m, 2H, H₅ and H₇), 3.85 (d, 2H, ${}^{3}J_{PH}$ = 10.4 Hz, H₁ and H₉), 5.14-5.18 (m, 2H, H₃ and H_8), 7.39-7.44 (m, 6H, Ph), 7.75 (s, 1H, OH), 8.00-8.06 $(m, 2H, Ph), 8.11-8.17 (m, 2H, Ph) ppm. {}^{13}C{}^{1}H{} NMR (CDCl_3)$ δ = 21.1 (s, Me), 37.2 (s, C₄ and C₅), 67.1 (s, C₁ and C₈), 107.7 (br, C_3 and C_6), 125.2 (s, C_2 and C_7), 128.0 (d, ${}^2J_{CP}$ = 10.5 Hz, Ph), 128.2 (d, ${}^{2}J_{CP}$ = 10.5 Hz, Ph), 129.6-129.8 (m, Ph), 139.1 (d, ${}^{1}J_{CP}$ = 54.3 Hz, Ph), 140.8 (d, ${}^{1}J_{CP}$ = 53.6 Hz, Ph) ppm. Elemental analysis calcd. (%) for C₂₂H₂₇Cl₂OPRu: C 51.77, H 5.33; found: C 51.59, H 5.38.

Synthesis of $[\operatorname{RuCl}_2(\eta^3:\eta^3-\operatorname{C}_{10}\operatorname{H}_{16})\{\operatorname{PMe}_2(\operatorname{OH})\}]$ (2b): A solution of the dimeric precursor $[\{\operatorname{RuCl}(\mu-\operatorname{Cl})(\eta^3:\eta^3-\operatorname{C}_{10}\operatorname{H}_{16})\}_2]$ (1) (0.150 g, 0.24 mmol) and Me₂P(=O)H (0.037 g, 0.48 mmol) in dichloromethane (50 mL) was stirred at room temperature for 48 h. The solvent was then removed under reduced pressure and the resulting oily residue dissolved in diethyl ether (30 mL) and filtered. The filtrate was evaporated to dryness and the yellow syrup formed washed with hexanes (10 mL) to afford a dark yellow solid, which was dried under vacuum. Yield: 0.156 g (84%). IR (KBr): 3188 (m), 2962 (w), 2906 (m), 2852 (w), 1457(w), 1413 (m), 1383 (m), 1283 (m), 1137 (s), 1024 (s), 948 (s), 912 (s), 849 (s), 736 (m), 699 (s), 556 (m) cm⁻¹. ³¹P{¹H} NMR (CDCl₃) δ = 108.5 (s) ppm. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) $\delta = 1.91$ (d, 3H, ${}^{2}J_{HP} = 9.6$ Hz, PMe), 2.03 (d, 3H, ${}^{2}J_{HP} = 9.5$ Hz, PMe), 2.24 (s, 6H, Me), 2.84-2.88 (m, 2H, H₄ and H₆), 3.06 (d, 2H, ${}^{3}J_{PH} = 4.8$ Hz, H₂ and H₁₀), 3.42-3.47 (m, 2H, H₅ and H₇), 4.25 (d, 2H, ${}^{3}J_{PH} = 8.2$ Hz, H₁ and H₉), 4.91-4.95 (m, 2H, H₃ and H₈) ppm; OH signal not observed. ${}^{13}C{}^{1}H{}$ NMR (CDCl₃) $\delta = 19.8$ (d, ${}^{1}J_{CP} = 41.1$ Hz, PMe), 20.6 (s, Me), 22.2 (d, ${}^{1}J_{CP} = 35.7$ Hz, PMe), 36.5 (C₄ and C₅), 63.4 (d, ${}^{2}J_{CP} = 6.2$ Hz, C₁ and C₈), 108.2 (d, ${}^{2}J_{CP} =$ 9.7 Hz, C₃ and C₆), 121.0 (s, C₂ and C₇) ppm. Elemental analysis calcd. (%) for C₁₂H₂₃Cl₂OPRu: C 37.31, H 6.00; found: C 37.17, H 6.38.

General procedure for the catalytic hydration of nitriles with complex $[RuCl_2(\eta^3:\eta^3-C_{10}H_{16}){PMe_2(OH)}]$ (2b): Under a nitrogen atmosphere, the corresponding nitrile **3a-ac** (1 mmol), water (3 mL), and the ruthenium complex 2b (0.0038 g, 0.01 mmol; except for 3h and 3ab,ac which required 0.03 and 0.05 mmol of **2b**, respectively) were introduced into a Teflon-capped sealed tube, and the reaction mixture stirred at 60 °C for the indicated time (see Table 2 and Schemes 2-3). The course of the reaction was monitored regularly taking samples of ca. 20 μ L, which, after extraction with CH_2Cl_2 (3 mL), were analyzed by GC (in the case of **3ab,ac** the reactions were monitored by ¹H NMR spectroscopy). Once the reaction is completed, two different procedures were applied to isolate the primary amide product depending on its solubility. For amides which partially precipitate in the medium, the reaction mixture was cooled at r.t., or O ٥C in ice bath, until complete an precipitation/crystallization of the product. The suspension was then filtered, the solid washed with water (2 x 3 mL) and hexanes (3 mL) and dried in vacuo. For those amides that do not precipitate, isolation was carried out as follows: After elimination of the water solvent under

reduced pressure, the crude reaction mixture was pulverized in diethyl ether and the resulting solid filtered, washed and dried in vacuo. In some cases additional purification by column chromatography was required (silica gel with CH₂Cl₂ as the eluent). The identity of the amide products was assessed by comparison of their NMR spectroscopic data with those reported in the literature (copies of the NMR spectra are included below).

Recycling of complex $[\operatorname{RuCl}_2(\eta^3:\eta^3-C_{10}H_{16})\{\operatorname{PMe}_2(OH)\}]$ (2b): Under a nitrogen atmosphere, pentafluorobenzonitrile 3b (0.193 g, 1 mmol), water (3 mL), and the ruthenium complex 2b (0.0038 g, 0.01 mmol) were introduced into a Tefloncapped sealed tube, and the reaction mixture was stirred at 60 °C for 30 min. After this time, a sample of ca. 20 µL was taken and, after extraction with CH_2Cl_2 (3 mL), analyzed by GC to determine the conversion of **3b** into **4b**. The reaction mixture was then cooled at 0 °C in an ice bath until the complete crystallization of 4b. The suspension was filtered and pentafluorobenzonitrile 3b (0.193 g, 1 mmol) added to the aqueous filtrate containing 2b. The resulting mixture was introduced into a Teflon-capped sealed tube, and stirred at 60 °C for 30 min. The same procedure was repeated for 10 times.

References

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COPIES OF THE NMR SPECTRA OF COMPLEXES 2a,b AND AMIDES 4a-ac

























220 210 200 190 180 170 160 150 140 130 120 110 100 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10 0 -1(f1(ppm)







































220 210 200 190 180 170 160 150 140 130 120 110 100 90 80 70 f1 (ppm)





































