

**GERMYLENES AND GERMANIUM DOUBLY
BONDED SPECIES IN HETEROCYCLIC
ORGANOGERMANIUM CHEMISTRY.
SOME RESULTS FROM THE
TOULOUSE GROUP*. (REVIEW)**

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Germynes, divalent germanium species, and germanium derivatives with Ge=Y double bonds (Y = C=, O, S, N-, P-) are powerful synthetic reagents in organometallic chemistry. The germynes exhibit properties analogous to those of carbenes and have been shown to insert into various σ -bonds such as carbon-heteroelement, metal-carbon, and metal-heteroelement of heterocyclic derivatives with ring expansion. The addition of germynes to various unsaturated compounds (dienes, orthoquinones, carbonyl compounds, imines, nitrosobenzene) leads, as a rule, to cycloadducts with low stability except for dienes and quinones. The doubly bonded germanium species are highly reactive and widely used in organometallic synthesis in various types of reactions such as:

- addition (or insertion reactions) to various σ -bonds of organometallic compounds;*
- insertion reactions with ring expansion of small organic rings;*
- cycloaddition reactions with 1-2, 1-3, and 1-4 dipolar reagents.*

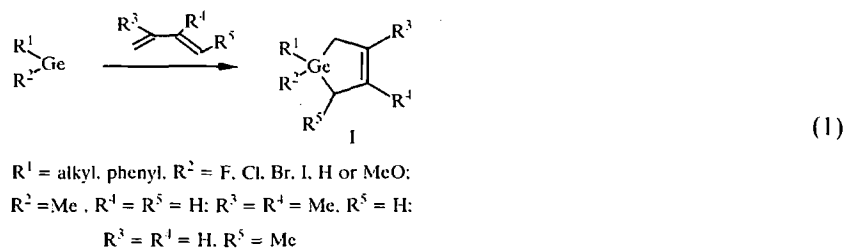
The mechanism and stereochemistry of some reactions are discussed.

During recent years considerable interest and numerous investigations have been devoted to organometallic derivatives or intermediates having a metal with an unusual degree of coordination. In this field of organometallic chemistry the germynes, divalent germanium species, and the doubly bonded germanium species are powerful synthetic agents. Our purpose is to describe some applications of germynes and doubly bonded germanium species in heterocyclic organogermanium chemistry developed in the Toulouse group.

GERMYLENES

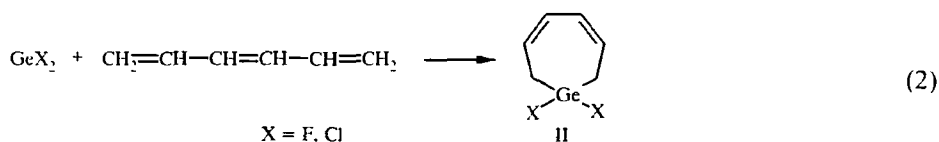
The first application of germynes studied in our group was the addition of mixed germynes $R(R^1)Ge$ (R = alkyl, phenyl, R^1 = F, Cl, Br, I, H or MeO) to conjugated dienes such as isoprene, 2,3-dimethyl-1,3-butadiene, or 1,3-pentadiene (Eq. 1).

* In commemoration of 100 years of Academician A. N. Nesmeyanov birth.

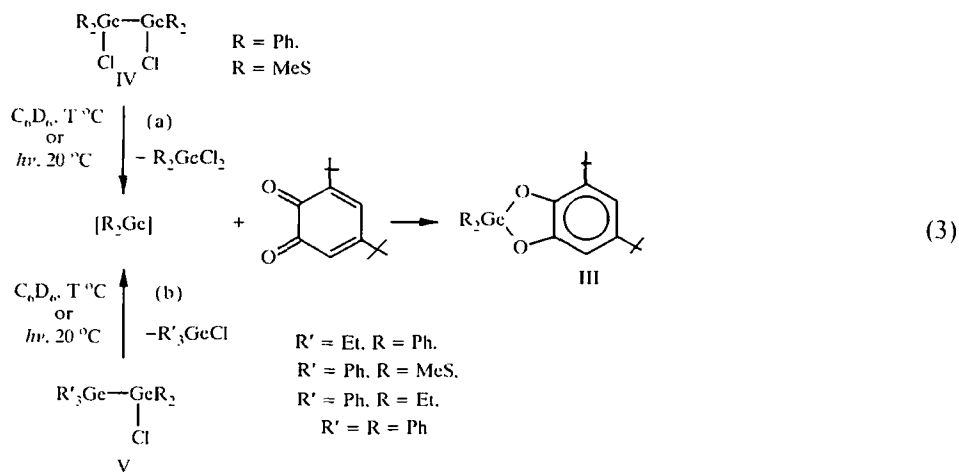


The 1,4-addition of germanium diiodide to butadiene, isoprene, and 2,3-dimethyl-1,3-butadiene also led to the diiodogermacyclopentene derivatives I [1].

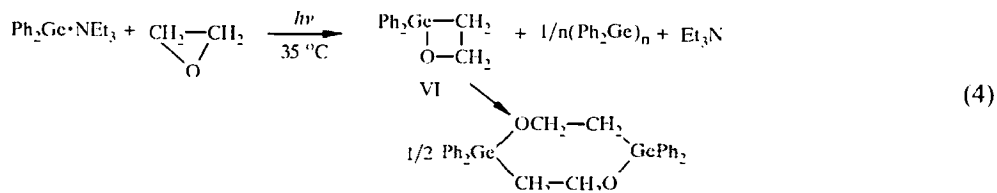
The difluorogermylene reacts, like GeCl_2 , with conjugated trienes (hexa-1,3,5-triene) to give the 1,6-cycloadduct II [2, 3] (Eq. 2).



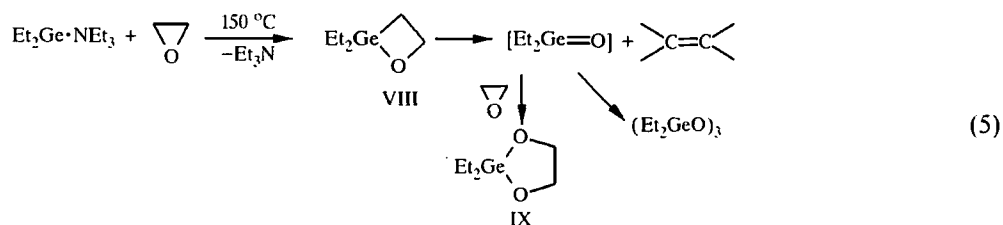
Cycloaddition of germynes to 3,5-di-*t*-butylorthoquinone affording 2-germa-1,3-dioxolanes III is also an excellent tool for characterization of these divalent species [4-9] (Eq. 3), germynes being generated using thermolysis or photolysis of suitable digermanes IV, V [10].



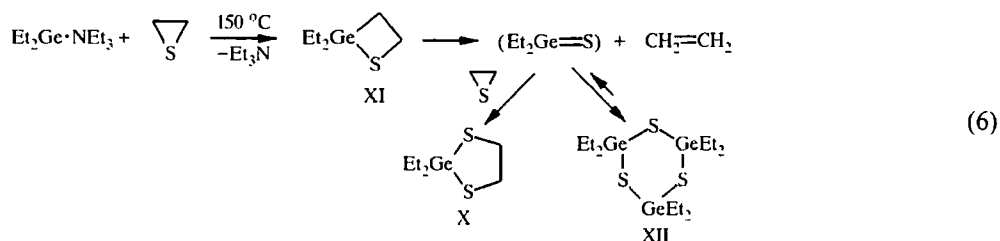
Insertion reactions in the oxirane ring are observed on interactions of germynes Ph_2Ge , PhGeX ($\text{Y} = \text{F, Cl}$), GeF_2 with ethylene oxide. These reactions lead to germaoxetanes VI which dimerize and give germadioxocanes VII [11] (Eq. 4).



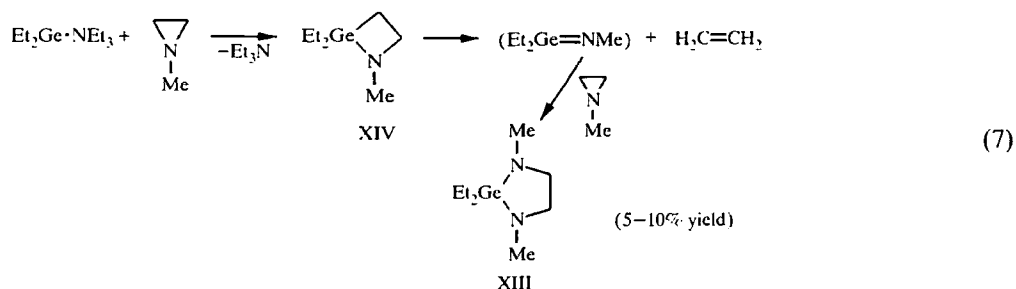
Condensation of complexed dialkylgermylenes $\text{R}_2\text{Ge}\cdot\text{NEt}_3$ with various oxiranes (oxirane, phenyloxirane, 1,2-dimethyloxirane) give, by insertion with ring expansion, the corresponding oxagermacyclobutanes VIII. These thermally unstable heterocycles transform *via* β -elimination reactions to transient dialkylgermanones which, by insertion into the oxirane ring, form germadioxolanes IX [11] (Eq. 5).



The treatment of complexed diethylgermylene with thiirane leads to germadithiolane X *via* the formation of unstable germathiacyclobutane XI. The equilibrium between monomeric diethylgermathione and its trimeric form XII can explain the rather good yield of germadithiolane [11] (Eq. 6).

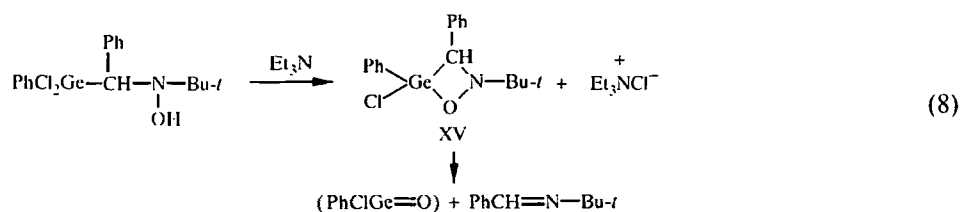


The reaction between diethylgermylene and N-methylaziridine leads to germadiazolidine XIII in low yields probably *via* an unstable germazetidone intermediate XIV [11] (Eq. 7).



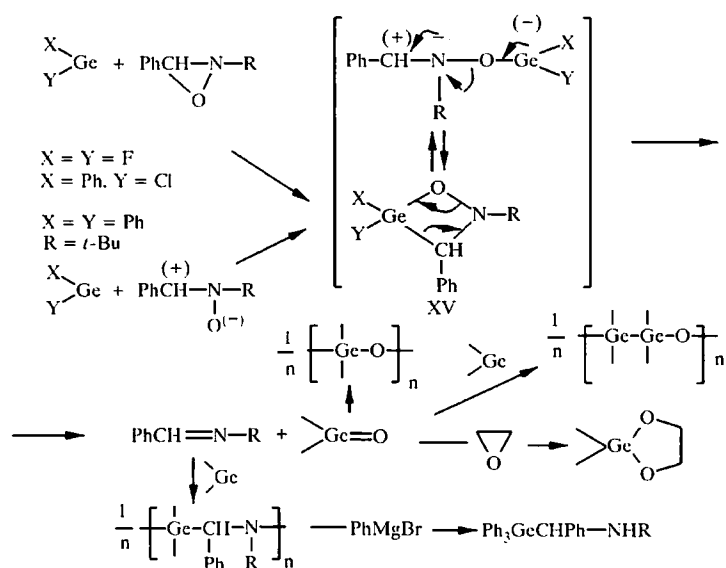
The reaction of germynes with phenyl *N-t*-butyloxaziridine reveals an increasing germylene reactivity in the series $\text{Ph}_2\text{Ge} \ll \text{PhGeCl} \ll \text{F}_2\text{Ge}$, which is due to their electrophilic character. Thus, it can be postulated that an electrophilic attack of germylene at the oxaziridine oxygen leads to a polar C–O cleavage and formation of germaoxaazetidone XV. The latter can be also obtained by 1,3-cycloaddition of the same germynes to phenyl-*N-t*-butylnitron [11] (Scheme 1).

The structure of germaoxaazetidone is confirmed chemically and by NMR analysis. Removing HCl from a phenyldichlorogermyl-substituted hydroxylamine leads to the same germaoxaazetidone structure XV (X = Ph, Y = Cl, R = *t*-Bu) [11] (Eq. 8).

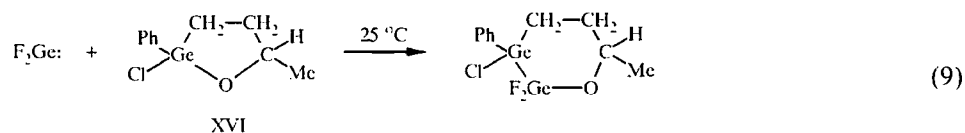


The NMR spectrum of phenylchlorogermoxaazetidone shows two signals at δ : 0.97 and 0.94 (N–Bu-*t*) of two diastereoisomeric forms.

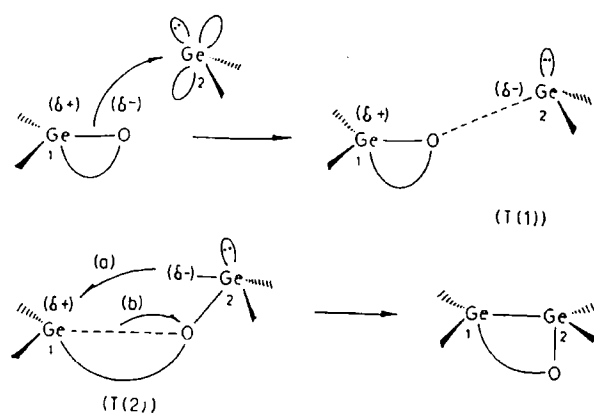
Scheme 1



Organohalogermylenes and difluorogermylene insert easily into the germanium-oxygen bond of diastereoisomeric oxagermacycloalkanes, e.g., XVI. The insertion reaction is stereospecific and can be interpreted by a concerted mechanism [10] (Eq. 9 and Scheme 2).

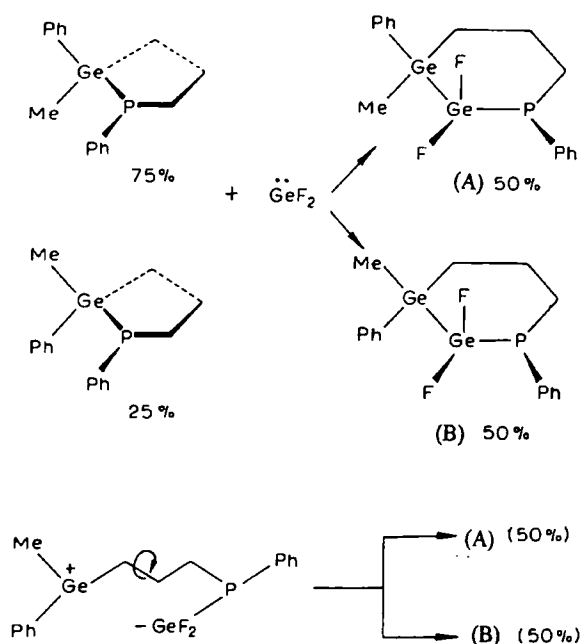


Scheme 2

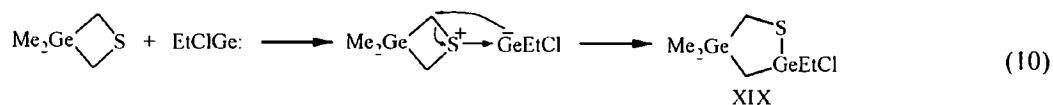


In contrast, the insertion of difluorogermylene into the germanium-phosphorus bond of the 2-dimethyl-1,2-diphenyl-2-germaphospholane diastereoisomers XVII having chiral germanium and phosphorus atoms is not stereospecific and can be interpreted by the formation of a dipolar intermediate XVIII [11, 12] (Scheme 3).

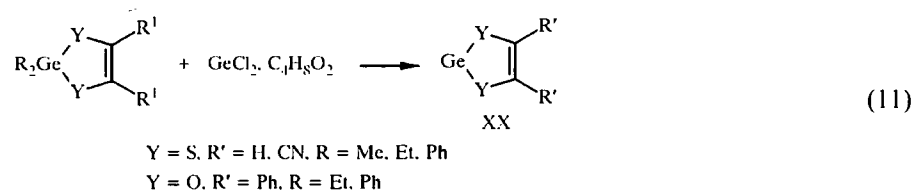
Scheme 3



Ethylchlorogermylene inserts into the C–S bond of 3,3-dimethyl-3-germathietane to form a stable ring expansion adduct XIX [11] (Eq. 10).

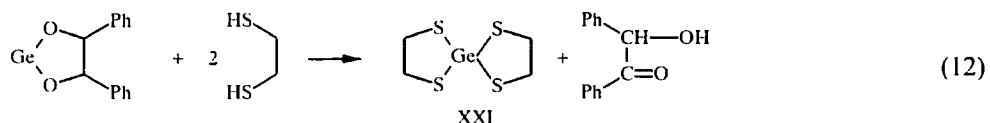


New stable cyclic germynes XX can be obtained by exchange reactions with cyclic difunctional derivatives of germanium (IV) following the general pattern [9] (Eq. 11).

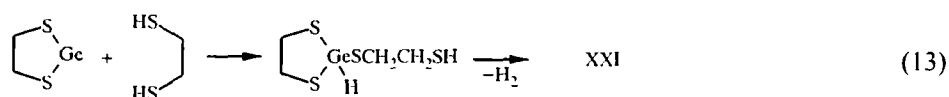


The germylene XX (Y = S, R¹ = CN) can also be obtained by the reaction of GeCl₂-dioxane with NaS–C(C=N)=C(C=N)–SNa [9].

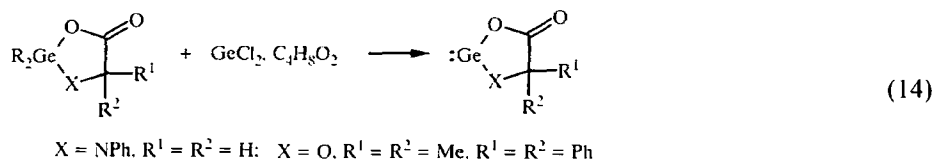
The 4,5-diphenyl-1,3-dioxagermole XX (Y = O, R¹ = Ph) has been characterized by mass spectroscopy and by the reaction with ethanedithiol [9] (Eq. 12).



The intermediate formation of 2-germa(II)-1,3-dithiolane XX (Y = S, R¹ = H) is proved by the direct reaction of this germylene with ethanedithiol giving the same *spiro*-germanium compound XXI [9] (Eq. 13).

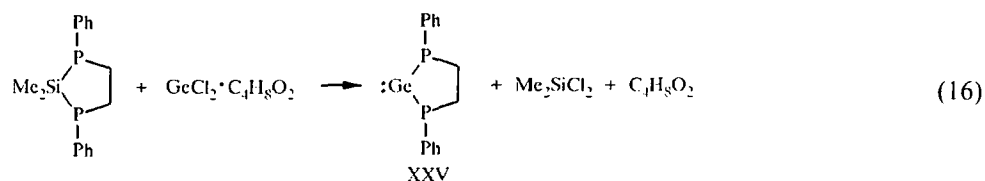
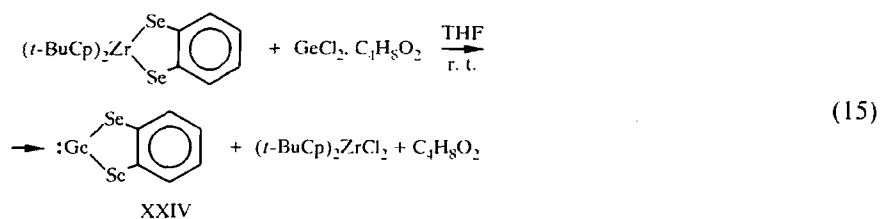


The exchange reactions of germa(IV)oxazolidones and -dioxolones XXII with dichlorogermylene lead to the corresponding germynes XXIII [13] (Eq. 14).



These stable germynes are characterized by cycloaddition to dimethylbutadiene or di-*t*-butyl-*o*-quinone and by condensation with dimethyl disulfide [13, 14].

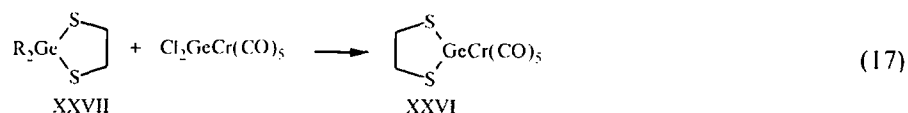
The benzodiselenagermylene XXIV is obtained easily by exchange reaction between diselenaphenylene zirconocene and dichlorogermylene [13, 15] (Eq. 15).



This new stable germylene XXIV is characterized by mass spectrometry, ¹H and ⁷⁷Se NMR, and by cycloaddition to 2,3-dimethyl-1,3-butadiene.

The same type of exchange reaction yields stable 2-germa(II)-1,3-diphospholane XXV [4, 16] (Eq. 16).

Germylene complexes XXVI are obtained by exchange reactions of functionalized organogermenes XXVII with Cl₂GeCr(CO)₅·THF [5, 17] (Eq. 17).



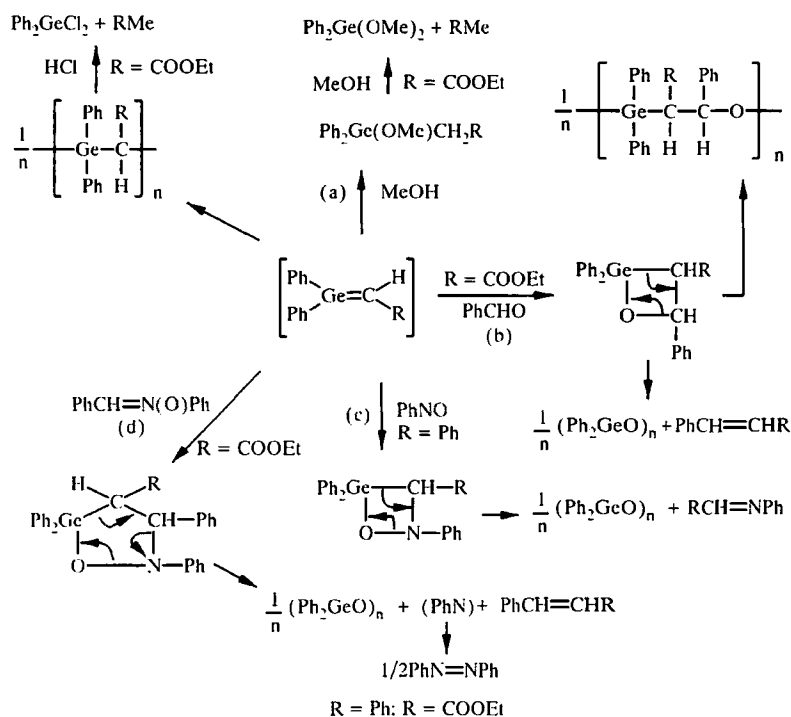
DOUBLY BONDED GERMANIUM SPECIES

The synthesis and characterization of doubly bonded germanium species: germenes =Ge=C=, germamines =Ge=N-, germaphosphenes =Ge=P, germanones, and germathiones =Ge=X (X = O, S) are largely described in [2, 4, 5, 9, 12, 13, 18–27].

Germenes

The first results concerning formation of heterocycles from germenes appeared in 1980 [28]. Germenes obtained from condensation of diazo derivatives and germynes were characterized: a) by methanol addition, b) by pseudo-Wittig reactions with benzaldehyde leading, in their first step, to germaoxetane and, finally, to germanone (which undergoes polycondensation to cyclic germaxane); c) by cycloaddition reaction with nitrosobenzene to form germaoxazetidene, and, finally germaxane and imine. The cycloaddition reaction (d) of diphenylnitrene forms germaoxazolidine decomposing to germanone, alkene, and phenylnitrene characterized by the formation of azobenzene (Scheme 4).

Scheme 4

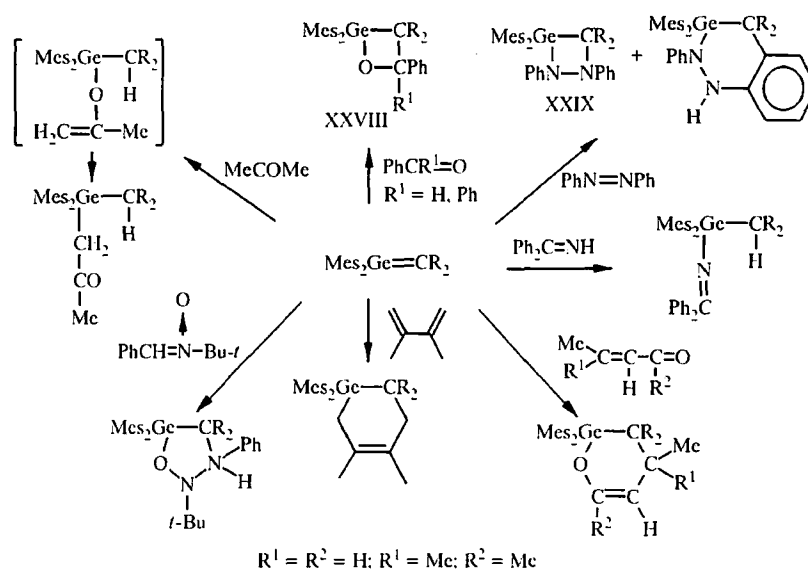


Various [2 + 2], [2 + 3], and [2 + 4] cycloadditions occur with participation of dimesitylfluorenylgermene $\text{Mes}_2\text{Ge}=\text{CR}_2$. Four-membered rings are obtained from this germene and aldehydes or ketones. The germaoxetanes XXVIII are highly stable, probably due to steric hindrances [29, 30]. Diphenylketimine reacts with the same germene as a protic reagent, but when reacting with azobenzene a stable four-membered ring XXIX with Ge–N–N linkage is obtained. In this case the steric hindrance also plays a very important role for the stabilization.

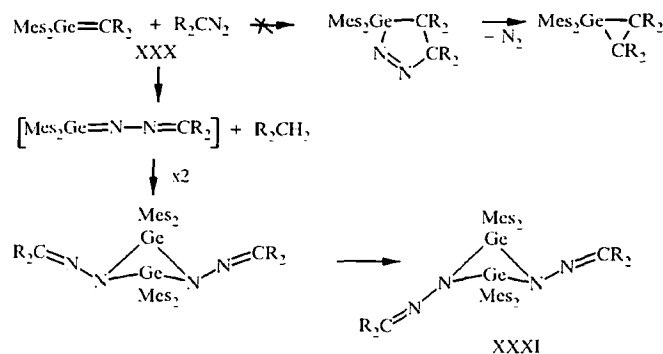
Nearly quantitative [2 + 3] cycloadditions have been observed with nitrones. [2 + 4] Cycloadditions occur with 1,3-dienes and α -ethylenic aldehydes and ketones [20, 29–31] (Scheme 5).

Reactions of diazo compounds R_2CN_2 (R_2C = fluorenylidene) or $\text{R} = \text{CN}$ with germene $\text{Mes}_2\text{Ge}=\text{CR}_2$ (XXX) lead to cyclodigermadietazetidines XXXI probably *via* transient germainimes with evolution of carbene CR_2 [20, 32] (Scheme 6).

Scheme 5



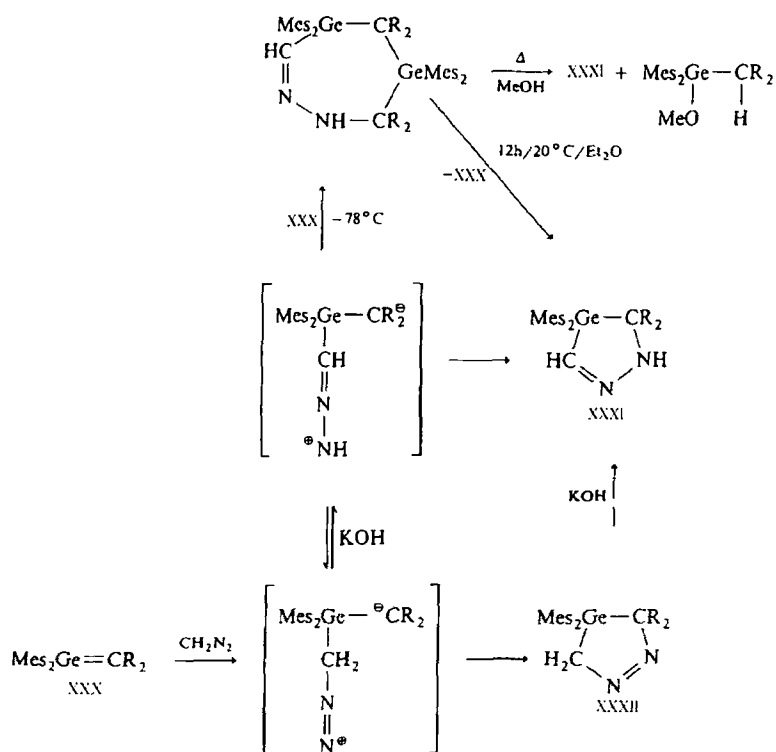
Scheme 6



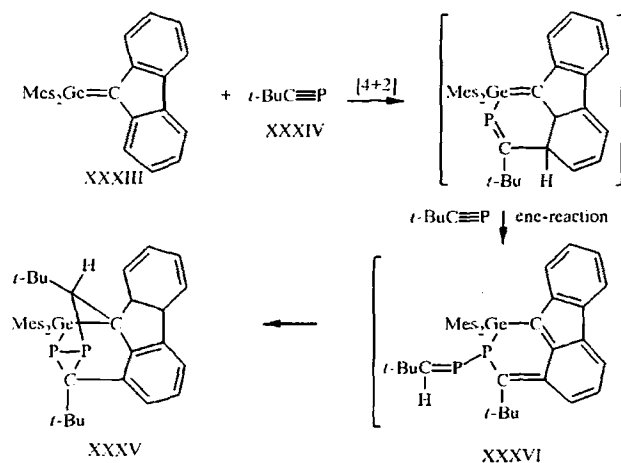
The reaction with diazomethane is strongly dependent on experimental conditions. When a large excess of an ethereal solution of diazomethane was added to a solution of germene XXX in Et₂O at -78°C, the only observable product was the germapyrazoline XXXI. When the reaction was carried out with a solution of distilled diazomethane, isomeric 4-germa-1-pyrazoline XXXII was obtained [33, 34] (Scheme 7).

The reaction of dimesitylfluorenylidene germene XXXIII and *tert*-butylphosphoalkyne XXXIV gives a polycyclic derivative XXXV. The mechanism leading to this compound involves, in the first step, a Diels–Alder reaction, in which germene reacts as a 1,3-diene with participation of one aromatic carbon-carbon bond of the fluorenylidene group. This cycloaddition step is followed by an ene-reaction with *t*-BuC≡P acting as an enophile which affords XXXVI. The latter undergoes an intramolecular Diels–Alder reaction to give the final product XXXV [26, 35] (Scheme 8).

Scheme 7



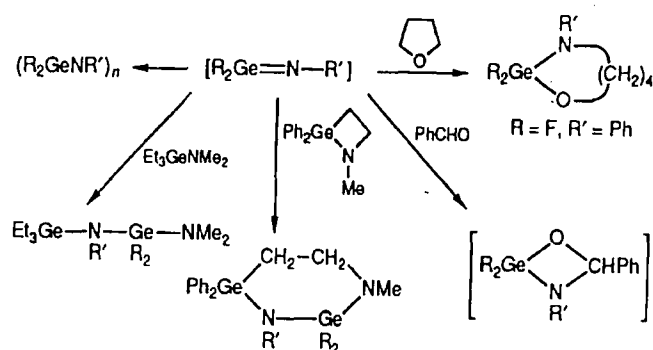
Scheme 8



Germainines

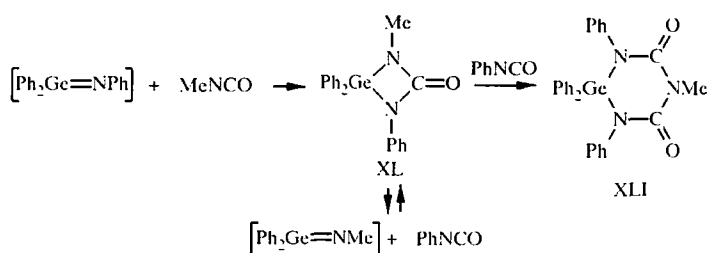
Syntheses of germainines are described in [4, 18, 20, 23]. Germainines are characterized as cyclic polygermazanes $(\text{R}_2\text{GeNR}^1)_n$, by insertion into the germanium-nitrogen bond of germylazetidine XXXVII and dimethyl(triethylgermyl)amine, by insertion into the tetrahydrofuran ring with the formation of a seven-membered heterocycle XXXVIII, as well as by the pseudo-Wittig reaction with benzaldehyde to form unstable germaoxazetidine XXXIX [20, 23] (Scheme 9).

Scheme 9

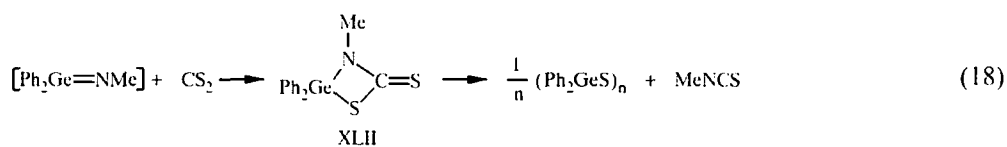


The [2+2] cycloadditions of germaines with phenyl or methyl isocyanates produce unstable oxogermadiazetidine XL, which reacts with phenyl isocyanate to give 4,6-dioxo-2-germaperhydro-1,3,5-triazine XLI [20, 23, 36] (Scheme 10).

Scheme 10



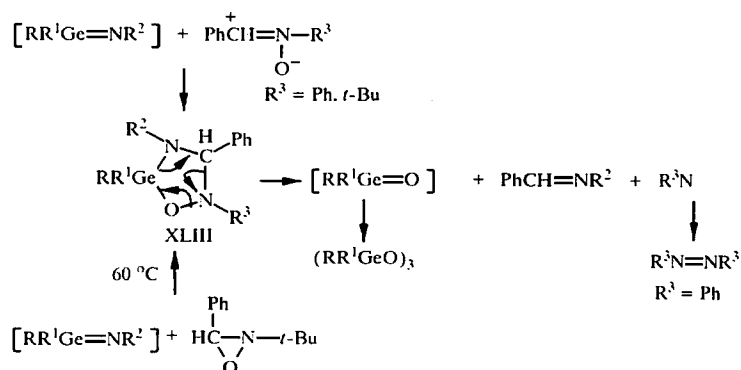
N-Methyldiphenylgermaine adds CS_2 with the formation of unstable 2-germa-4-thioxo-2-germa-1,3-thiazetidine XLII [20, 23, 36] (Eq. 18).



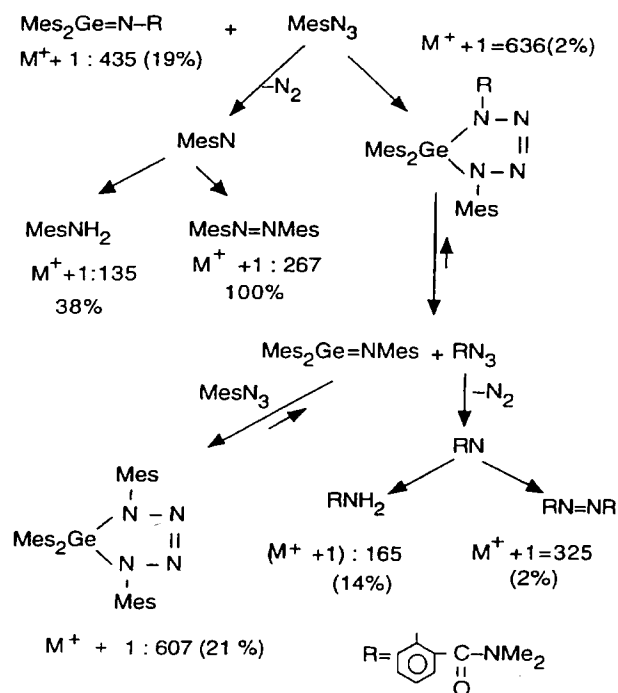
The [2+3] cycloadditions of germaine $RR^1Ge=NR^2$ ($R = Ph, R^1 = Ph, Cl, R^2 = Me, Ph, t-Bu$) with diphenyl- or phenyl-*t*-butylnitrones as well as their insertion reactions with oxaziridines lead to germanones ($RR^1Ge=O$), imines, and nitrenes probably *via* transient 2-germa-1-oxa-3,5-diazolidines XLIII [20, 23, 36, 37] (Scheme 11).

Reaction of germaines XLIV with a 1,3 dipole such as mesitylazide leads to the expected cyclic tetrazene XLV in accordance with Wiberg's results [38]. However, the (2+3) cycloadducts are unstable and at room temperature give an equilibrium in which all components were detected and characterized by CI mass spectrometry (CH_4 as reagent gas [23, 39] (Scheme 12).

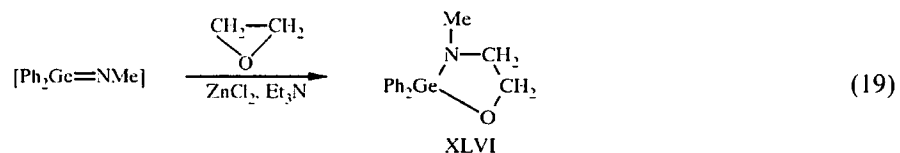
Scheme 11



Scheme 12

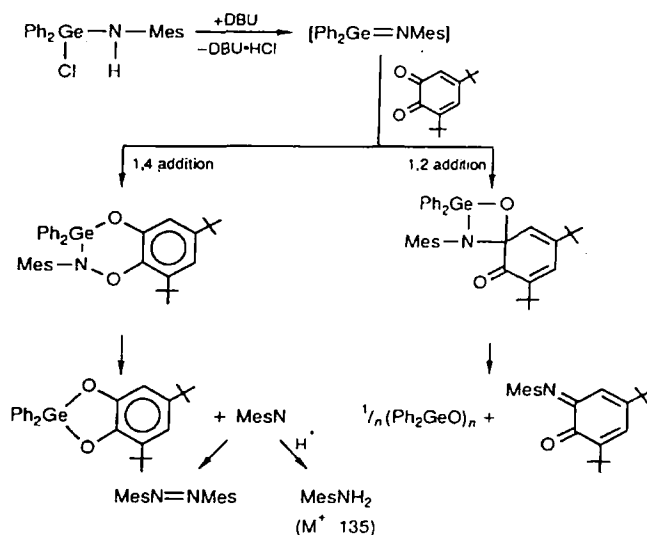


Germaines insert into ethylene oxide with the formation of 2-germa-1,3-oxazolidine XLVI [23, 36] (Eq. 19).



The transient diphenyl-N-mesitylgermaine $Ph_2Ge=NMe$ gives unstable 1,4- and 1,2-adducts with di-*t*-butyl-3,5-*o*-quinone [20, 23] (Scheme 13).

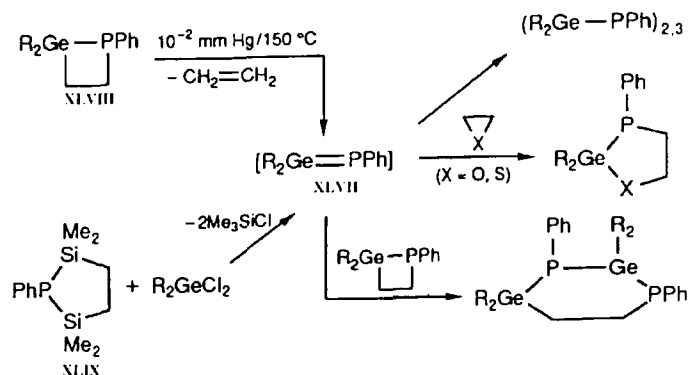
Scheme 13



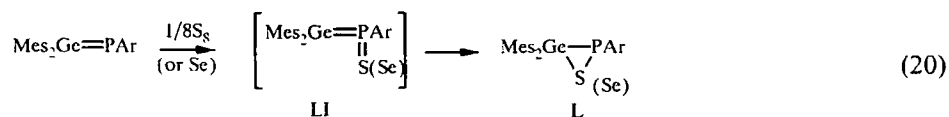
Germaphosphenes

Transient germaphosphenes XLVII obtained by thermal decomposition of 2-germaphosphetanes XLVIII or by reaction between dialkyldichlorogermanes and disilaphosphole XLIX were clearly characterized by the formation of dimeric or trimeric cyclic germylphosphine and by the insertion and ring expansion reactions of strained three- or four-membered heterocycles [20, 40, 41] (Scheme 14).

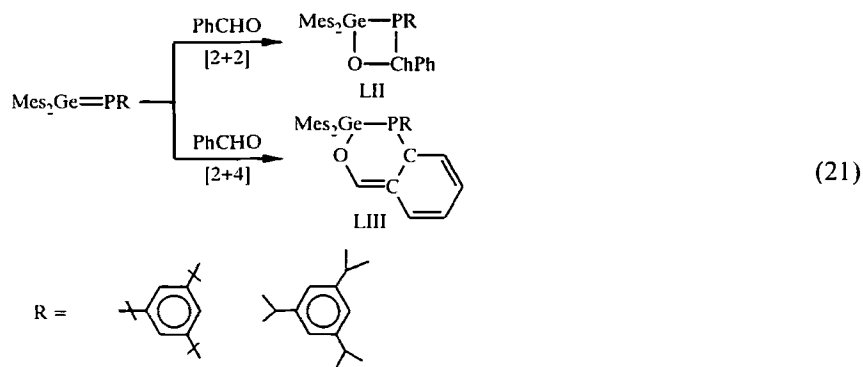
Scheme 14



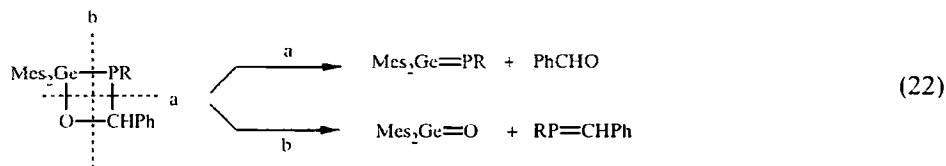
Reactions of an equivalent sulfur or selenium with germaphosphene lead to the stable three membered heterocycles L, germathiaphosphirane and germaselenaphosphirane. The first step of the reaction is probably the formation of germaphosphene sulfide (or selenide) LI [20, 21, 42] (Eq. 20).



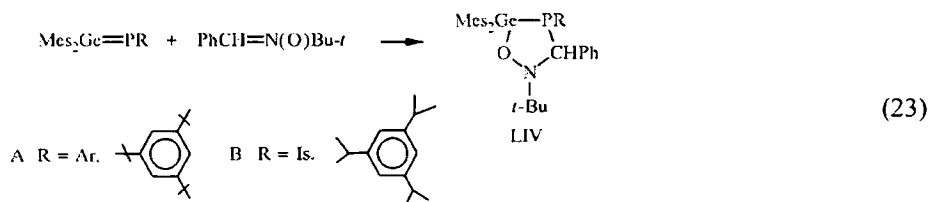
Germaphosphenes react readily with benzaldehyde by [2+2] cycloaddition to give the corresponding four-membered ring heterocycles LII. The products of [2 + 4] cycloadditions LIII are never obtained [21, 43] (Eq. 21).



In the mass spectrum of germaphosphaoxetanes LII the classical [2+2] decomposition of organometallic four-membered heterocycles has been observed, the most important route (a/b 95 : 5) regenerating the starting material [21, 43] (Eq. 22).



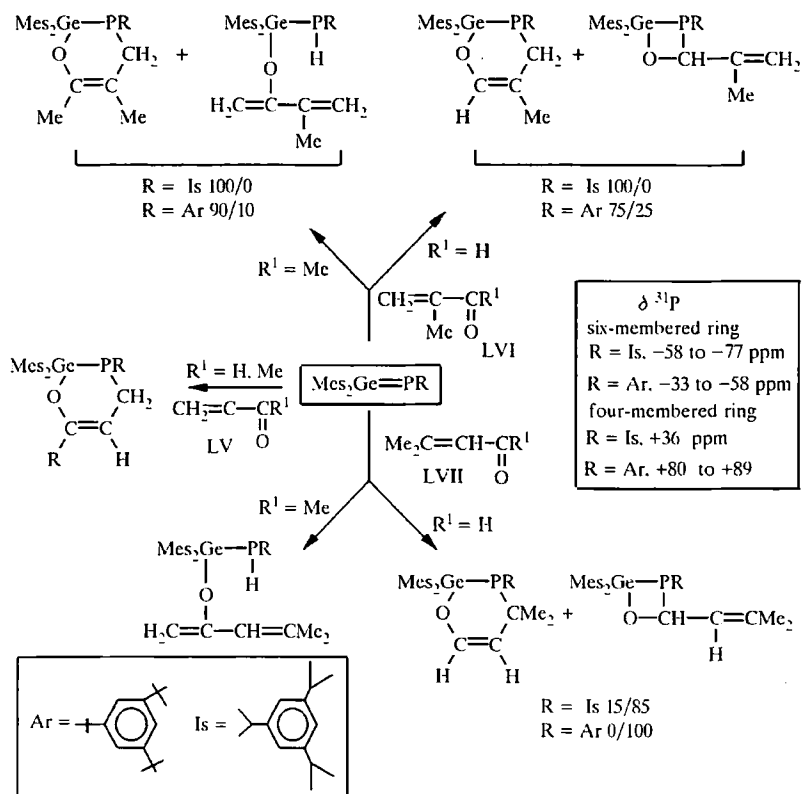
Reactions of N-phenyl-N-*tert*-butylnitron with germaphosphenes afford the corresponding five-membered heterocycles LIV, while two diastereoisomers are obtained for B and only one is observed for A, probably due to the high steric hindrance imposed by the 2,4,6-tri-*tert*-butyl group [21, 43] (Eq. 23).



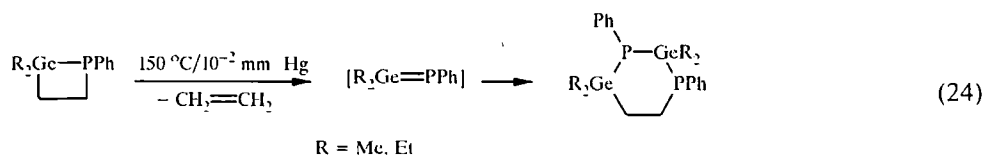
Germaphosphenes react with α,β -unsaturated aldehydes and ketones LV to produce six-membered dihydrogermaoxaphosphorines according to a [2+4] cycloaddition [33]. However, four-membered ring compounds, the [2+2] cycloaddition, and open-chain products are also obtained with α - or β -methyl substituted aldehydes and ketones LVI, LVII [26, 44] (Scheme 15).

The first step in these reactions is probably the nucleophilic attack of oxygen at the germanium center while the attack of phosphorus occurs at the carbonyl carbon or β -carbon depending on the substituents at these atoms [26, 44].

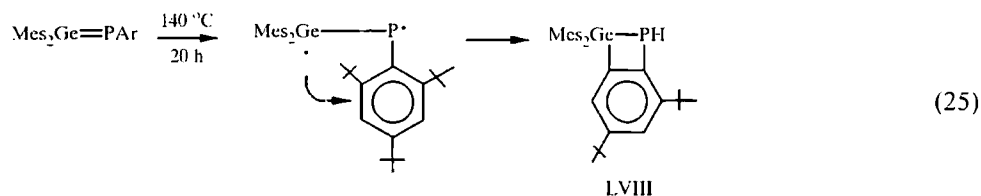
Scheme 15



An interesting transformation, which is equivalent to a [2+4] cycloaddition, has been observed in reaction of ethylene with germaphosphenes obtained by thermolysis of the four-membered ring [21, 40] (Eq. 24).



Heating dimesityl (tri-*t*-butylphenyl)germaphosphene at 140°C affords the stable germaphosphetene LVIII probably due to the intramolecular radical aromatic substitution. Although the four-membered ring is highly strained, it is thermally stable. Its structure has been determined by X-ray analysis [21, 45] (Eq. 25).



The germaphosphenes isolated in pure crystalline form appear very reactive in spite of the high steric hindrance necessary for its stabilization.

Germanones and Germathiones

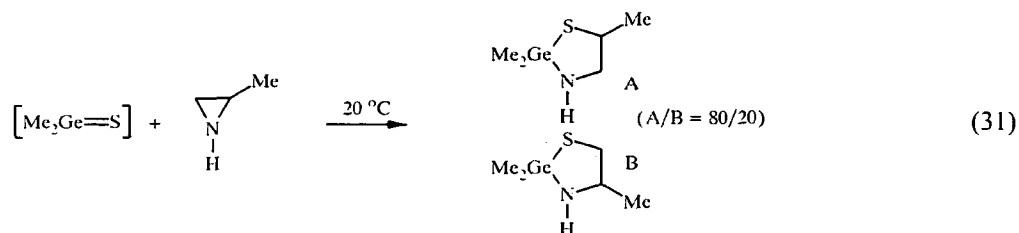
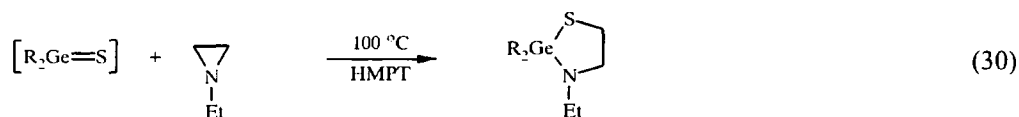
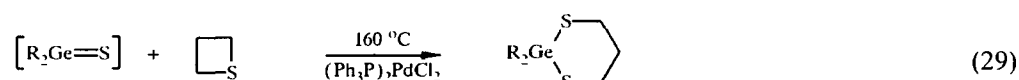
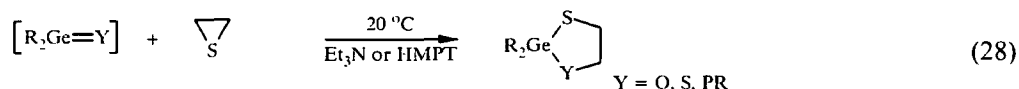
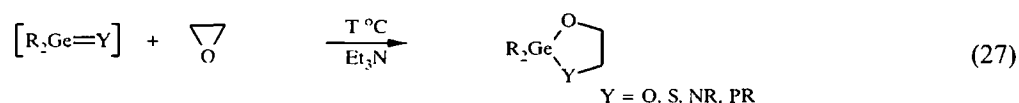
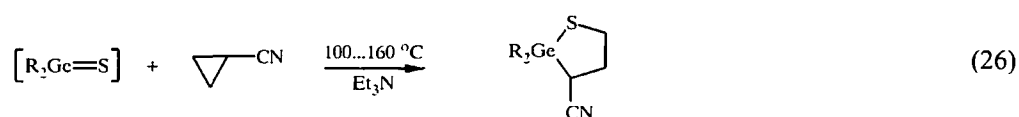
The chemistry of the species $=\text{Ge}=\text{Y}$ ($\text{Y} = \text{O}, \text{S}$) essentially remains a transient species chemistry. In spite of numerous attempts, one metastable germanone and six germanethiones are the only species of this type stable at room temperature [27].

Transient germanones and germathiones are obtained by different ways as described in [2, 4, 5, 9, 12, 13, 18 - 21, 26, 27].

These germanones and germathiones with strongly polarized double bond [46] are highly reactive and may be used in organometallic synthesis in various types of reactions such as:

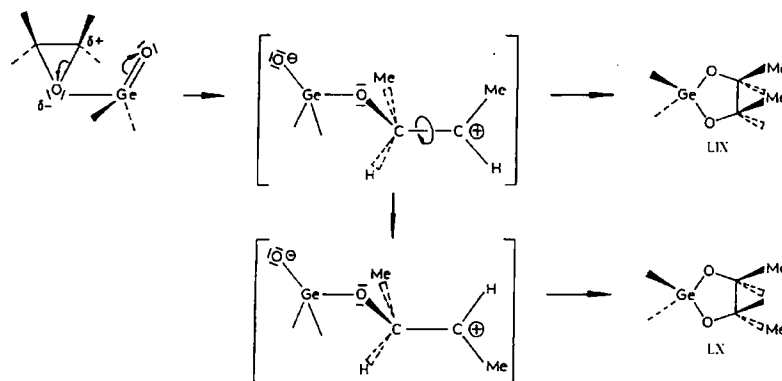
- 1) addition reactions to various σ bonds of organometallic and organic compounds,
- 2) insertion reactions with ring expansion of small organic rings,
- 3) cycloaddition reactions.

Certain results of insertion reactions with small organic rings [19] are summarized in the equations:



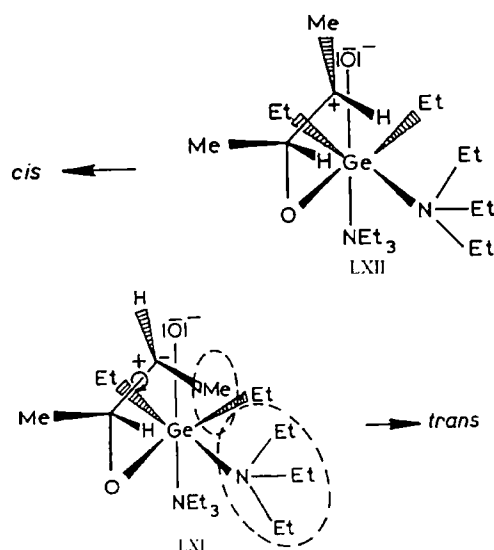
The mechanism and stereochemistry of some of these additions to the small ring have been studied [47]. Condensation reactions of germanone with oxirane begin with the nucleophilic attack of oxygen at germanium followed by ring opening and cyclization. This nonconcerted mechanism is supported by the results of condensation of germanone with *cis* or *trans* isomers of butene oxide. Each reaction leads to a mixture of *cis* (LIX) and *trans* adducts (LX): 45/55 from the *cis*-butene oxide and 52/48 from the *trans*-butene oxide. However, in the presence of triethylamine, the percentage of the *cis* adduct increases, and with 300% excess of triethylamine, almost exclusive formation of the *cis* adduct is observed from both *cis*- and *trans*-butene oxide along with a $\leq 2\%$ yield of the *trans* adduct [9, 19, 47] (Scheme 16).

Scheme 16



The high stereoselectivity in the presence of triethylamine seems to imply a germanium atom hexacoordinated by two molecules of triethylamine. The study of molecular models shows very strong steric overcrowding of the methyl and triethylamino groups in the equatorial positions of the bipolar intermediate (LXI) during the cyclization process. The steric hindrance diminishes when both methyl groups are in *cis* position (LXII), which leads to the *cis* isomer [9, 19, 47] (Scheme 17).

Scheme 17



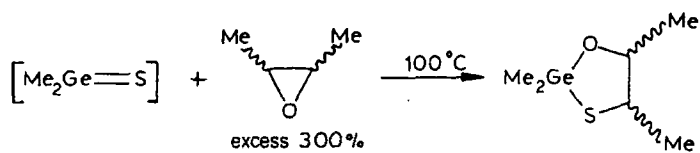
On the other hand, the condensation of germathione with *cis*- or *trans*-butene oxide gives a stereospecific reaction with inversion of configuration: *cis*- and *trans*-butene oxides lead to *trans* and *cis* adducts LXIII, respectively, in a proportion higher than 95% with or without triethylamine [9, 19, 47] (Schemes 18 and 19).

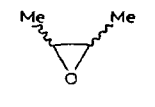
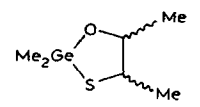
Cycloaddition reactions with 1,3-dipolar reagents (nitrilimines, nitrones, and nitrile oxides) have been observed [2, 18, 19, 48, 49].

The reactions of germanone and germathione with diphenyl-2,5-tetrazole (precursor of nitrilimine LXIII) lead to regioselective cycloaddition to form germaoxa- or germathiadiazolinc LXIV (Scheme 20).

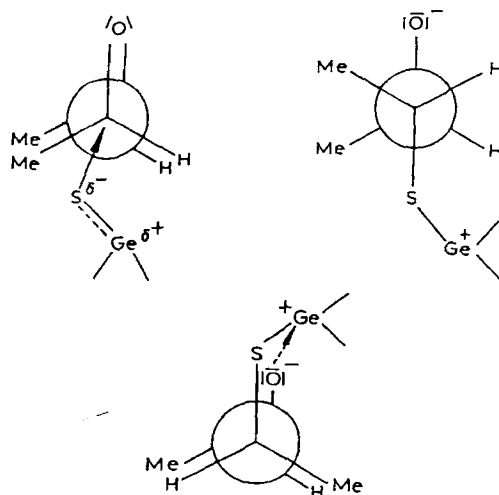
Dimethylgermathione reacts with the nitrones (diphenylnitron and phenyl *N*-*t*-butylnitron) to give germaoxathiazolidines.

Scheme 18

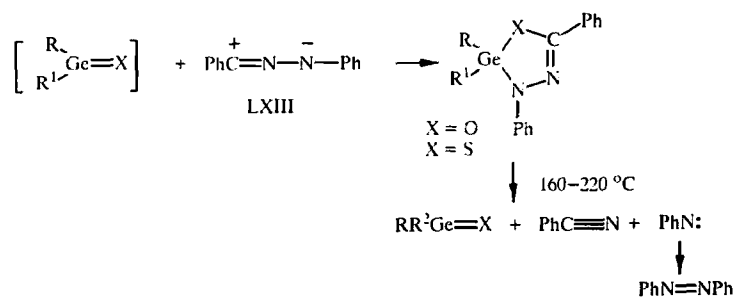


| |  |  | yield (%) |
|---------------------------|---|---|-------------|
| with Et ₃ N | cis trans | cis / trans ~ 0 / 100 cis / trans 95 / 5 | 85 95 |
| without Et ₃ N | cis trans | cis / trans ~ 0 / 100 cis / trans 95 / 5 | 40-50 15 |

Scheme 19

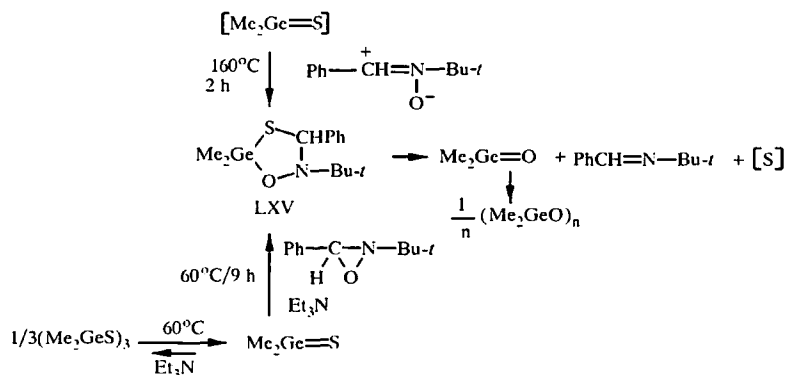


Scheme 20

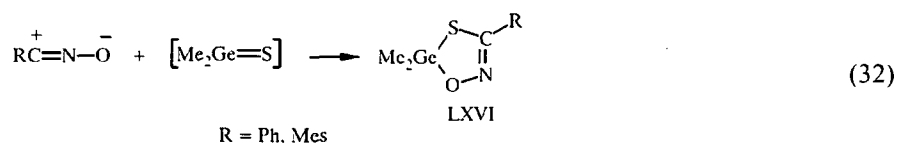


Dimethylgermathione undergoes with *t*-butylphenyloxazirane an insertion reaction in the oxazirane ring to form the same germaoxathiazolidine LXV as in the reaction with isomeric phenyl-*N*-*t*-butylnitrone [2, 18, 19, 48, 49] (Scheme 21).

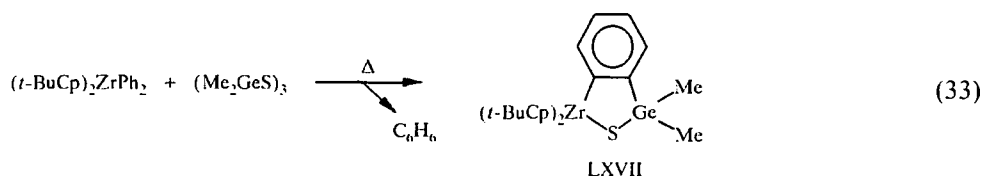
Scheme 21



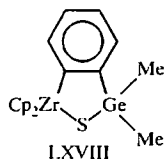
Nitrile oxides give cycloadducts LXVI with germathiones [2, 8, 19, 49] (Eq. 32).



The trimer $(\text{Me}_2\text{GeS})_3$ reacts with bis $(\pi^5$ -*tert*-butylcyclopentadienyl)-diphenylzirconium to give dimetallacycle LXVII in good yield. This complex results from the insertion of the monomer germanethione $\text{Me}_2\text{Ge}=\text{S}$ into the Zr-C bond of the transient benzynezirconocene formed from the diphenyl complex [13, 50] (Eq. 33).



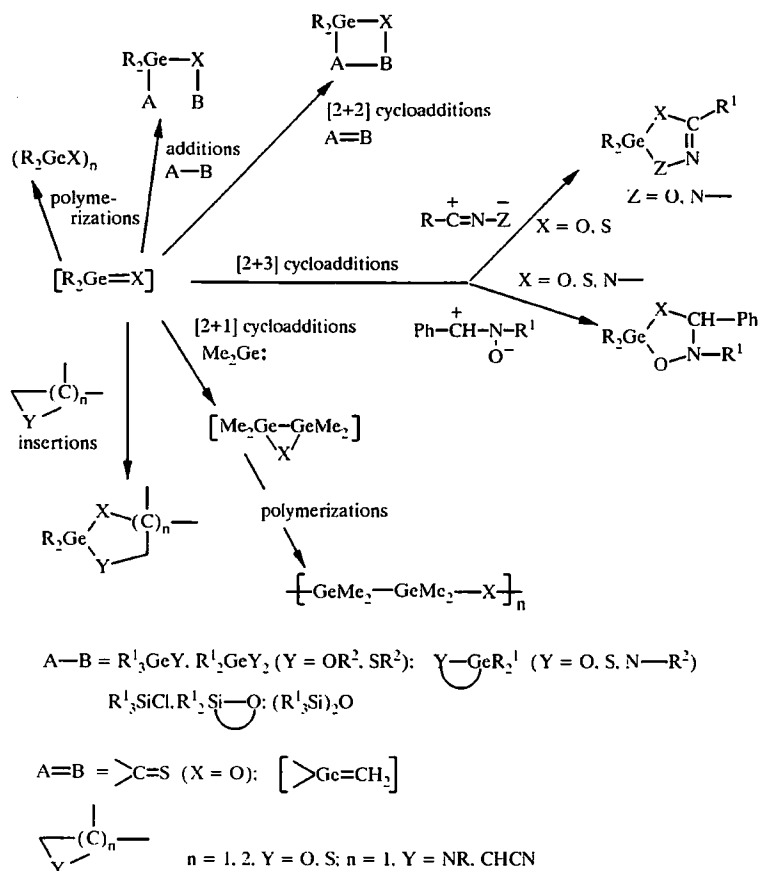
A similar reaction of $(\text{Me}_2\text{GeS})_3$ and Cp_2ZrMePh in boiling benzene afforded the complex LXVIII [13, 50].



Scheme 22 summarizes the most important reactions known for germanones and germathiones [20].

In conclusion, the germynes and the $=\text{Ge}=\text{X}$ derivatives appear much more reactive than the corresponding carbon analogs.

Scheme 22



Various types of cycloadditions ([2 + 1], [2 + 2], [2 + 3], [2 + 4]) are possible with these species. The studies of these new "organometallic functions" is now in progress in several groups and appears very promising in organometallic synthesis

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