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1,3-Diaza-2-azoniaallene Salts as Novel N₃-Building Blocks: Preparation and Cycloadditions to Alkenes, Alkynes, Carbodiimides, and Cyanamides¹)

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Abstract. 1,3-Diaza-2-azoniaallene salts $R^1-N=N^+=N-R^2$ 6 represent a new functional group. 1,3-Disubstituted triazenes 8 are oxidized with *tert*-butyl hypochlorite to stable open-chain N-chlorotriazenes $R^1-N=N-NCl-R^2$ 9, which at low temperatures with Lewis acids afford the reactive intermediates 6. The salt 6a is stable below -50 °C and was characterized by spectroscopic and analytical data. Heterocumulenes 6 behave as positively charged 1,3-dipoles undergoing cycloadditions to many different multiple bonds to furnish 1,2,3-triazolium and tetrazolium salts, *e.g.* to both electron-rich and electrondeficient alkenes, alkynes, to one or both double bonds of 1,3-butadienes, to carbodiimides, and cyanamides (1,3-dipolar cycloaddition with inverse electron demand). With an allene, a butatriene and a pentatetraene the 4,5-dihydro-1H-1,2,3-triazolium salts **17**–**19** were obtained. The constitutions of four of the products were secured by X-ray structural analyses. 4,5-Dihydro-1H-1,2,3-triazolium salts **11** and 1H-1,2,3-triazolium salts **20** are aza analogues of Arduengo's and Wanzlick's nucleophilic carbenes.

1 Introduction

Five classes of monocations 2-6 can be written by replacing one or more carbon atoms of allenes 1 by nitrogen atoms.



Only a few keteniminium salts 2 have been isolated. According to an X-ray crystallographic analysis they are isosteric to allenes [1] and react as strong electrophiles under [2+2]-cycloaddition with alkenes, alkynes, allenes and azomethines [2–4].



X = Y: alkenes, alkynes, allenes, azomethines

The C=N⁺=C unit of the remarkably stable 2-azoniaallene salts **3** is rather flexible [5, 6]. Depending on the substituents local symmetries of type D_{2d} (allene) [6], C_{2v} (allyl cation) [7, 8] or, most often, geometries in between these two extremes were found in the crystals [9, 10]. For certain compounds **3** reactions with alkenes, alkynes, isocyanates and carbodiimides have been reported [11–15].

Only recently, 1-aza-2-azoniaallene salts 4 have become known as reactive intermediates [16-21]. Semi empirical AM1 calculations suggest them to be geometrically related to ketenimines. Salts 4 are cationic three-center-four-electron components undergoing

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[3+2] cycloadditions to nitriles, alkenes, alkynes, carbodiimides, and isocyanates [16–21]. In most cases the primarily formed 3*H*-pyrazolium salts rearrange to the more stable 1*H* species.



X = Y: nitriles, alkenes, alkynes, carbodiimides, isocyanates

For a cyanamidium salt **5** a linear NCN unit and bond lengths as expected for an aminonitrilium salt were found by X-ray crystallographic analysis [22].

Until recently 1,3-diaza-2-azoniaallene salts were unknown in the literature [23–25].

2 Preparation and Properties of 1,3-Diaza-2-azoniaallene Salts

Recently, we reported oxidation of triazenes 8 with *tert*butyl hypochlorite to afford rather unstable open-chain *N*-chlorotriazenes 9, a hitherto unreported class of compounds [23, 26] (Scheme 1). On the other hand, cyclic compounds such as 1-chlorobenzotriazole are well docu-

| $Ar - \stackrel{+}{N \equiv N} \xrightarrow{i} Ar - N = N - NH - R \xrightarrow{ii} Ar - N = N - N - R \xrightarrow{i} CI$ | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|--|--|--|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| | 7a,e,f, | h–j | 8a,e,f,l | 9a,e,f,h–j | | | | | | | | |
| $Ar - N = N - R \xrightarrow{\text{iii}} Ar - N = N - R$ $C^{-} X^{-}$ | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6a,e,f,h–j 6a–f,i,k,l | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 6a - | × A | r—N=N → | ⊦ 1/2 ∣ | R — M | I —N —R | | | | | | |
| | | | 7a [×] | | 10 | | | | | | | |
| | Ar | R | х | | Ar | R | x | | | | | |
| a b c d e f | a) a) a) a) b) c) | a) a) a) b) c) | $\begin{array}{c} \text{SbCl}_6\\ \text{AlCl}_4\\ \frac{1}{2} \text{ TiCl}_6\\ \text{ClO}_4\\ \text{SbCl}_6\\ \text{PF}_6 \end{array}$ | g h j k l | c) d) e) f) f) | c) d) e) Me Me Me | CI CI SbCI ₆ CI ½ SnCI ₆ PF ₆ | | | | | |
| ^a) 2,4,6-Cl ₃ C ₆ H ₂ ^d) 2,4,6-Me ₃ C ₆ H ₂ | | ^b) 2,4,6-Br ₃ C ₆ H ₂ ^e) 4-NO ₂ C ₆ H ₄ | | ^c) 4-CIC ₆ H ₄ ^f) 4-MeC ₆ H ₄ | | | | | | | | |

Scheme 1 Reagents and conditions: i, H_2N-R ; ii, *t*BuOCl, CH₂Cl₂, -20 °C, exclusion of light; iii, Lewis acid or KPF₆, CH₂Cl₂, -60 °C; iv, >-25 °C.

mented [27, 28]. While other *N*-chlorotriazenes **9** exploded on attempted isolation, compound **9a** proved to be moderately stable at room temperature [23]. However, for transformation into heterocumulenes **6** compounds **9** need not to be isolated [23–25]. In Scheme 1 some of the products **6**, **8**, **9** prepared are put together. On addition of antimony pentachloride to a cold (-60 °C) solution of **9a** a red-orange precipitate of the hexachloroantimonate **6a** was formed, which could be isolated at -50 °C. At -80 °C the salt is stable for months. The NMR-spectra (CD₃CN, -35 °C) show only signals for two equivalent aryl substituents [23].

Above -25 °C in solution (CD₃CN) compound **6a** decomposes quickly essentially into equal amounts of the diazonium salt **7a**, which remains in solution, and the azo compound **10**, which precipitates (Scheme 1). The IR spectrum (at -50 °C in acetonitrile) of **6a** is dominated by a very strong absorption at 2012 cm⁻¹ assigned to the asymmetric stretching vibration of the -N=N⁺=N-unit. These data together with a correct elemental analysis are in accord with the proposed structure **6a**.

According to semiempirical calculations (AM1) the $-N=N^+=N$ - unit of **6a** is bent (155°) (Fig. 1). The planes through C15–N1–N2 and C4–N3–N2 are almost perpendicular with respect to each other as are the planes through the two aryl rings.



Fig. 1 AM1-calculated geometry of the cation 6a

The bond distances (122 pm) between the nitrogen atoms are characteristic for N=N double bonds.

Cumulenes 6 can be regarded as N3 substituted azides. Schmidt showed, that alkylation and protonation of hydrazoic acid and alkyl azides give exclusively 1,1-disubstituted salts [29]. The structural proposal $H_2N-N^+\equiv N$ was confirmed by IR- and RAMAN spektroscopic studies [30]. According to ab initio calculations on the 3-21G-level of theory, an isolated cation

H-N=N⁺=N-H A is about 200 kJ mol⁻¹ less stable than the tautomer $H_2N-N^+\equiv N B$ [31, 32] (Fig. 2). In Fig. 2 the differences in the calculated (AM1) geometries of a 1,3-diaza-2-azoniaallene salt A and an aminonitrilium salt **B** are shown. Recently, an X-ray structural analysis for $H_2N-N^+\equiv N$ Sb F_6^- was reported [30].



Fig. 2 Results of AM1 calculations

Heterocumulenes 6 with different aryl and alkyl substituents on N1 and N3 and with counterions such as $SbCl_6^-$, $AlCl_4^-$, $SnCl_6^{2-}$, $TiCl_6^{2-}$, PF_6^- , and ClO_4^- can be prepared (Scheme 1). Above -30 °C all these salts decompose quickly.

3 Reactions of 1,3-Diaza-2-azoniaallene Salts with **C–C-Multiple Bonds**

3.1 Reactions of 1,3-Diaza-2-azoniaallene Salts with Alkenes, Cumulenes, and Butadienes

Between -60 and -30 °C suspensions of the heteroallenes 6 react with the C-C-multiple bonds of alkenes [23], 1,3-butadienes, cumulenes (allenes, butatrienes, pentatetraenes) [23], and of alkynes [25] to afford 1,2,3triazolium salts 11-20. The cycloadducts are obtained in yields between 45 and 90%. Thus, between -60 °C and -25 °C the reactive intermediates 6 react with ethene and mono- to trisubstituted alkenes to give 4,5-dihydro-1,2,3-triazolium salts 11 (Scheme 2). No reaction occurred with tetrasubstituted alkenes [23].

Electron-rich alkenes such as 2-methylbut-2-ene or vinyl acetate react equally well as do electron-deficient olefines like ethyl acrylate or N-phenylmaleimide.

Spiro compounds (e.g. 11h) as well as bicyclic 1,2,3triazolium salts (e.g. 11f,g,o,p) can be prepared. The reaction of **6a** with vinyl chloride furnished the triazolium salt 12 in 98% yield (Scheme 2). Obviously, the primary adduct **11b** looses HCl spontaneously.

Only very few 4,5-dihydro-1H-1,2,3-triazolium salts have been mentioned in the literature [33, 34].

The structural assignments of compounds 11 are based on the NMR and IR spectra. The structure of 11e was confirmed by X-ray crystallographic analysis (Fig. 3).

No reaction could be achieved between 1-chlorobenzotriazole and alkenes in the presence of antimony pentachloride.



^b) 2,4,6-Cl₃C₆H₂ ^c) 4-NO₂C₆H₄ ^e) X: Cl d)4-MeC₆H₄

Scheme 2 Reagents and conditions: i, CH₂Cl₂, -60 °C to 23 °C, ca 2 h, 44–98%; ii, -HCl, 98%.



Fig. 3 ORTEP Plot of the Cation 11e

The cycloadducts **11k**,**m** of dibutyl maleate (Ar = $2,4,6-Cl_3C_6H_2$ and Ar= $4-NO_2C_6H_4$) rearrange in solution (CD₃CN, 23 °C) into the *trans* isomers **111**,**n** (half life of about 50 minutes, respectively 2500 min). The rearrangement is believed to proceed *via* an intermediate ylide.



1,3-Butadiene reacts with **6a** with formation of the vinyl derivative **13a** (Scheme 3). When a solution of **13a** in dichloromethane was treated with another equivalent of **6a** the pale yellow bistriazolium salt **14a** was formed in 67% yield showing that even the vinyl group of a cation is reactive enough to add another cation **6a**. Correspondingly, from 2,3-dimethyl-1,3-butadiene the vinyl triazolium salt **13b** (52%) and the bistriazolium salt **14b** (59%) were prepared [24].







| • | 15a,b |
|---|-------|
|---|-------|

| | Ar | R | R¹ | R ² | R ³ | R ⁴ |
|---|----------------|--|---|----------------|----------------|---------------------------------|
| a | ^b) | ^b) | Н | н | Н | н |
| b | ^b) | ^b) | H | н | Me | Me |
| C ^D) | | D) | -(C⊦ | 2)2- | Н | н |
| d ^e) | c) | °) | Н | н | Me | Me |
| e,f | ^D) | ^b) | Н | Н | Me | Н |
| g,h ^e) | d) | Me | _н | н | Me | Me |
| ^a) X: SbCl ₆ ^d) 4-MeC ₆ H₄ | | ^b) 2,4 ^e) X | ^b) 2,4,6-Cl ₃ C ₆ H ₂ ^e) X: PF ₆ | | | CIC ₆ H ₄ |

Scheme 3 Reagents and conditions: i, CH_2Cl_2 , -60 °C to 23 °C, ca 2 h, 52-81%; ii, **6a**, CH_2Cl_2 , -60 °C to 23 °C, ca. 2h; **a:** 67%; **b**: 59%; iii, CH_3CN , 24 h, reflux, 88%.

In acetonitrile the dihexachloroantimonates 14a,b slowly decompose into two molecules of the triazolium tetrachloroantimonates 15a,b. The mechanism could imply homolytic cleavage of the bond connecting the two rings of 14 followed by oxidation of the resulting radicals by antimony(V). The salts 13c,d were prepared by reaction of equimolecular mixtures of 6a,d and the corresponding butadienes. Preparation of 2:1 adducts were not attempted. With isoprene an almost equimolar mixture of the regioisomers 13e,f was obtained. With 2,3dimethylbutadiene the unsymmetrically substituted heterocumulene 6g afforded 13g,h as a 1:5 mixture of the regioisomers in respect to the triazolium ring (Scheme 3). No reactions were observed between hexa-chloro-1,3-butadiene and cumulenes 6.

In addition to 1,3-butadienes reactions of 6a with cyclooctatetraene and a few cumulenes were studied. With cyclooctatetraene only the symmetric dication 16 could be prepared (Scheme 4). Large amounts of the diazonium salt 7a were formed as side-product.



Scheme 4 Reagents and conditions: i, CH_3CN , 12 h reflux, loss of isobutene, 65%.

Tetraphenylallene afforded the triazolium salt 17 in 50% yield.

With (E)-1,4-bis(4-bromophenyl)-1,4-di-*tert*-butylbutatrien [35] the allene **18** was isolated (73%). Recrystallization from acetonitrile resulted in loss of isobutene and quantitative formation of the triazolium salt **18a**, the constitution of which was secured by X-ray structural analysis (Fig. 4). AM1 calculations suggest elimination of Me_3C^+ from the 4-position of **18** and protonation of the resulting ylide (Scheme 4).



Fig. 4 ORTEP Plot of the Cation 18a

In contrast to the butatriene, the central double bond of 1,5-di-*tert*-butyl-1,5-diphenylpentatetraene [36] was attacked by **6a** to afford the allene **19** (Scheme 4) the constitution of which was also secured by X-ray crystallographic analysis (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5 SCHAKAL Plot of the Cation 19

3.2 Reactions of 1,3-Diaza-2-azoniaallene Salts with Alkynes

Alkynes react with 1,3-diaza-2-azoniaallene salts **6** to afford 1H-1,2,3-triazolium compounds **20** (Scheme 5). For instance, from **6a** and acetylene the triazolium compound **20a** was isolated in 83% yield [25].

Alkyl-, aryl-, mono- and disubstituted acetylenes undergo cycloaddition to aryl and alkyl substituted cations 6. The cations 6 react with electron-rich alkynes,



^a) X: SbCl₆ ^b) 2,4,6-Cl₃C₆H₂ ^c) 4-ClC₆H₄ ^d) 4-MeC₆H₄ ^e) X: PF₆

Scheme 5 Reagents and conditions: i, CH_2Cl_2 , -60 °C to 23 °C, ca 2 h; a-j: 49-83%; k: 27%.

such as 1- or 3-hexyne, as well as with the electrondeficient dimethyl acetylenedicarboxylate.

The constitution of **20d** obtained by reaction of **6a** with 3-hexyne was secured by X-ray crystallographic analysis (Figure 6).



Fig. 6 Ortep Plot of the Cation 20d

The cycloaddition to the triazolium salts 20 is not confined to the hexachloroantimonates 6. Hexachlorostannates or hexachlorotitanates 6 also react with alkynes to give good yields of cycloadducts 20. However, the products were obtained as brown oils, from which correct elemental analyses could not be obtained. A way around this difficulty was found by transformation of the oily salts into the hexafluorophosphates 20h-k(Scheme 5).

Conventionallyl, 1,2,3-triazolium salts are prepared by alkylation of 1,2,3-triazoles [33, 37-44] or, for instance, by the following reaction sequence [45]:



Scheme 6 Reagents and conditions: i, benzene.

3.3 Mechanism of the Reaction of 1,3-Diaza-2-azoniaallene Salts with C–C Multiple Bonds

The cycloaddition of 1,3-diaza-2-azoniaallene salts **6** to alkenes is completely stereoselective with respect to the configuration of the alkene double bond. Thus, from **6a** and (*E*)-3-hexene the *trans* adduct **11j** was obtained exclusively and (*Z*)-3-hexene afforded the pure *cis* form **11i**. Corresponding stereoselectivities were observed for cycloadditions of salts **6** to (*E*)- and (*Z*)-1,4-dichloro-2-butene, dibutyl fumarate, or dibutyl maleate. This points to a concerted $[4\pi + 2\pi]$ -cycloaddition mechanism (1,3-dipolar cycloaddition with inverse electron demand) [20]. AM1 calculations for the cycloaddition of **6a** to ethene support this view (Scheme 7).

The cycloaddition was calculated to be exothermic by 167 kJmol⁻¹ with an activation enthalpy ΔH^{\neq} of 74 kJ mol⁻¹. In the transition structure the forming CNbonds are of equal lenghts (210 pm) in agreement with a synchronous reaction. The dominant orbital interaction is that of LUMO of **6a** (LUMO: -6.13 eV, HOMO: -13.14 eV) with HOMO of ethene (LUMO: +1.44 eV, HOMO: -10.55 eV) (Scheme 7).

The assumption of a concerted reaction is also supported by the structure of the cation **11d**, obtained by reaction of **6a** with norbornene. Mayr *et al.* have shown that addition of a carbenium ion R⁺ to the C=C double bond of norbornene gives a cation, which undergoes fast Wagner-Meerwein rearrangements and H shifts [46]. After quenching with a nucleophile X⁻, exclusively products with a rearranged norbornane skeleton are isolated. On the other hand, concerted cycloadditions, *e.g.* of chlorosulfonyl isocyanate [47–49] to the double bond of norbornene, yield exo products without rearrangement of the norbornane skeleton. Thus, norbornene can serve as a mechanistic probe to discriminate between concerted and stepwise mechanisms of cycloadditions of cations to norbornene (Scheme 8).

Similarly, for the reaction of **6a** with 2-butyne AM1 calculations suggest a concerted mechanism in the manner of a 1,3-dipolar cycloaddition with inverse electron demand.

While 1,3-dipolar cycloadditions of electrically neutral 1,3-dipoles are widely used in preparative organic chemistry [50], reports on cycloadditions of cationic four-electron-three-center components to multiple bonds seem to be rare.

An interesting inorganic example for a cationic "1,3dipole" are cycloadditions of $S=N^+=S$ AsF₆⁻ **21** prepared by Passmore *et al.* (Scheme 8) [51–53].

In contrast to the well-known nitronium ion $O=N^+=O$, which reacts as an electrophile, *e.g.* effecting aromatic nitration, the ion $S=N^+=S$ acts as a four-electron component in cycloadditions to alkenes such as ethene to afford the 1,3,2-dithiazolium salt **22a**, which itself reacts as a four-electron component with another molecule of ethene to furnish the salt **22b**.



Scheme 7 AM1 calculation for the reaction of 6a with ethene ($\Delta\Delta H_f^\circ$) relative to $\Delta H_f^\circ = 0$ kJmol⁻¹ for 11a.



Scheme 8 Reagents and conditions: i, ethene, SO₂, 23 °C; ii, ethene.

Recently, we reported cycloadditions of 1-aza-2-azoniaallene cations 4 to nitriles, alkynes, carbodiimides, isocyanates, and alkenes [16-21]. It was shown that cations 4 behave as positively charged 1,3-dipoles against alkynes and alkenes undergoing cycloadditions to electron-rich olefins with complete conservation of the configuration of the alkene.



3.4 Reaction of 1,3-Diaza-2-azoniaallene Salts with Cyanamides and Carbodiimides

While 1-aza-2-azoniaallene salts undergo smooth reactions with simple nitriles, 1,3-diaza-2-azoniaallene cations 6 do not.

However, with cyanamides, e.g. dimethylcyanamide, and carbodiimides, e.g. diisopropylcarbodiimide, salts 6 react under formation of tetrazolium salts 23 and 24 (Scheme 9). AM1 calculations suggest a stepwise mechanism via nitrilium salts (Scheme 10) [25].

The formation of 23b is calculated to be endothermic by 12 kJmol⁻¹. The cyanamide reacts with an activation enthalpy of 71 kJ mol⁻¹ to give the nitrilium ion 25, which is 9 kJ mol⁻¹ lower in energy than the sum of the formation enthalpies of the starting components. In the second step the nitrilium ion 25 cyclizes with an activation barrier of 84 kJ mol⁻¹ to the tetrazolium salt 23b. Concerted formation of 23b from 6a and dimethylcyanamide would require an activation enthalpy of at least 200 kJ mol⁻¹.



^b) 2,4,6-Cl₃C₆H₂ ^d) X: PF₆ c) 4-CIC₆H₄

Scheme 9 Reagents and conditions: i, CH₂Cl₂, -60 to -20 °C, ca 2 h; **23a**: 36%; **23b-d**: 61–71%; ii, CH_2Cl_2 , -60 to -30 °C, ca 2 h, 24e-i: 50-77%.

The reaction products of salts 6 with carbodiimides with $R^3 = CC-H$ underwent eliminations of alkenes to furnish tetrazolium salts 23f-h. A mechanistic proposal for this reaction is given [25]:



4 Are 1,2,3-Triazolium Salts Stable Nitrenium Salts?

Recent investigations of Arduengo and others on stable so-called nucleophilic carbenes 26 and 27 attracted



Scheme 10 AM1 calculated heats of formation (kJ mol⁻¹) for the reaction of **6a** with dimethylcyanamide relative to $\Delta H_f^{\circ}=0$ kJmol⁻¹ of 25.

much attention [54-59,72-77]. The work is based on earlier observations of Wanzlick who postulated carbene character for **26** and **27** but did not isolate such compounds [60-64].

1,2,3-Triazolium cations 11 and 20 are isoelectronic to cations 26, 27. Arguments put forward in favor of the singlet carbene character of 26, 27 and against important ylidic contributions 26', 26" are small bond angles N–C–N of ca 105° (26) and 102° (27), and long single bonds between nitrogen and the carbene carbon atom (132-137 ppm).

Rather short bond angles were also found by X-ray crystallographic analyses for the 1,2,3-triazolium salts **18a**, **20c** [N1–N2–N3: 102.5(4), respectively 101.9(2)] and the 4,5-dihydrotriazolium salt **11c** [N1–N2–N3: 110.5(3)] (Fig. 3, 4, 6).





These angles and the N–N bond distances may be compared with those of 1-substituted 4,5-dihydro-1,2,3-triazoles **28** [N1–N2–N3: 112–113°; N1–N2: 135–136 pm; N2=N3: 125–126 pm [65–67]], and 1-substituted 1,2,3-triazoles **29** [N1–N2–N3: 106–108°; N1–N2: ca 135 pm; N2=N3: ca 130 pm [68–70]].



Thus, while allylic conjugation (11',11" etc) is certainly important in compounds 11 and 20, the small N– N–N-bond angles may suggest some singlet nitrenium character for these compounds [24, 71].

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