Rare earth complexes with heteroallylic ligands and their use as precursors for lanthanide-based homogeneous catalysts

Frank T. Edelmann

Institut für Anorganische Chemie der Universität Göttingen, Tammannstrasse 4, D-37077 Göttingen (Germany)

Abstract

Bulky heteroallylic ligands are shown to be very promising alternatives for cyclopentadienyl ligands in lanthanide chemistry. In particular, the easily accessible silylated benzamidinate ligands $[RC_6H_4C(NSiMe_3)_2]^-$ (NCN) may soon rival $C_5H_5^-$ and $C_5Me_5^-$ in their high versatility. Heteroallylic ligands are capable of stabilizing reactive lanthanide(II) complexes (e.g. $[RC_6H_4C(NSiMe_3)_2]_2Yb(THF)_2$ (1, 2)) as well as homoleptic complexes of the type $[RC_6H_4C(NSiMe_3)_2]_3Ln$, the latter being useful precursors for lanthanide-based materials (Ln_2O_3 , Ln_2S_3 , Ln_2S_3). Of special interest for future applications are functionalizable bis(ligand) lanthanide halides and triflates (e.g. $[Ph_2P(NSiMe_3)_2]_2LnCl(THF)$ (11) and $[RC_6H_4C(NSiMe_3)_2]_2Y(O_3SCF_3)$ (18)). Implications for the development of novel homogeneous catalysts are discussed.

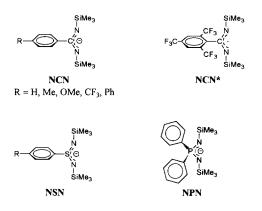
1. Introduction

Due to the numerous industrial applications of the rare earth elements and their compounds [1–3], modern lanthanide chemistry is an area of vigorous research. This is especially true for organolanthanide chemistry [4], which has produced an impressive number of highly active homogeneous catalysts [5,6]. Various olefin transformations are effectively catalyzed by organolanthanide complexes [6]. Typically the most active catalysts are compounds of the type $(C_5Me_5)_2LnX$, where X is a hydride ligand or a hydrocarbyl ligand such as methyl or bis(trimethylsilyl)methyl [7–14]. The organolanthanide hydrides are usually dimerized through bridging hydride ligands.

Surprisingly little is known about catalytically active lanthanide complexes containing other ancillary ligands than $C_5H_5^-$ or $C_5Me_5^-$ [15–17]. In fact, an estimated 90% of all organolanthanide complexes contain supporting ligands of the cyclopentadienyl type [4,18]. Therefore our research activities are directed towards the development of alternative ligand systems which eventually may rival the cyclopentadienyl ligands in their high versatility.

2. Results and discussion

Recent work in our lab has focused on the chemistry of lanthanide complexes with bulky heteroallylic ligands. These ligands have been shown to behave as "steric cyclopentadienyl equivalents" [19], *i.e.* their cone angle is very similar to that of $C_5H_5^-$ or $C_5Me_5^-$. The following heteroallylic anions have been successfully employed:



These anionic ligands combine several unique features that make them extremely useful for lanthanide chemistry:

- (1) The cone angle of NCN and NSN is roughly comparable with that of $C_5H_5^-$ or monosubstituted cyclopentadienyl ligands. On the other hand the chemistry of $C_5Me_5^-$ can be matched by using the very bulky ligands NCN* and NPN.
- (2) The trimethylsilyl substituents at nitrogen provide the necessary steric saturation around the large lanthanide ions and assure a high solubility of the products in non-polar organic solvents.
- (3) Just like cyclopentadienyl ligands, the heteroallylic ligands are kinetically more inert than halide, hydride, or alkyl ligands and thus allow facile sub-

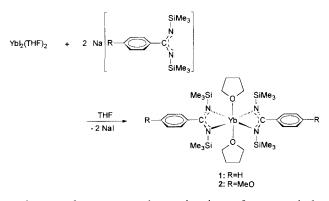
0925-8388/94/\$07.00 © 1994 Elsevier Science S.A. All rights reserved SSDI 0925-8388(93)03087-Y

stitution reactions at other reactive sites of the molecules.

- (4) The *N*-silylated heteroallylic ligands are easily accessible in large quantities through one- or twostep preparations. They can be isolated either in the form of lithium or sodium salts or as fully silylated neutral species.
- (5) The heteroallylic anions are ideal new observer ligands for lanthanides as they contain several NMR-observable nuclei (¹H, ¹³C, ¹⁹F, ²⁹Si, ³¹P).

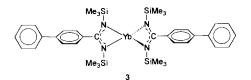
2.1. Lanthanide(II) derivatives

Like $C_5H_5^-$ and $C_5Me_5^-$, the heteroallylic ligands NCN and NPN have been found to give stable though highly reactive lanthanide(II) complexes [20,21]:



A crystal structure determination of 1 revealed a distorted octahedral geometry with the THF ligands occupying the *trans* positions (Fig. 1) [20].

Four-coordinate ytterbium was observed in the unsolvated species $PhC_6H_4C(NSiMe_3)_2]_2Yb$ (3):



Both 1 and 2 are hydrocarbon-soluble and undergo various redox reactions, *i.e.* with alkyl halides, disulfides,

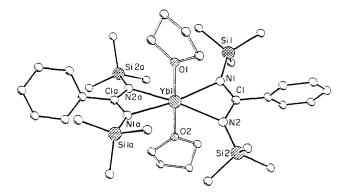
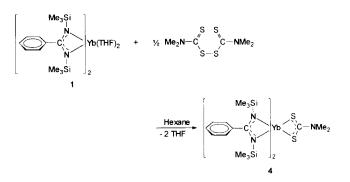
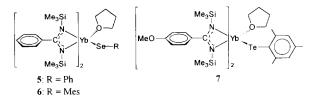


Fig. 1. Molecular structure of [PhC(NSiMe₃)₂]₂Yb(THF)₂.

diselenides and ditellurides. The reductive cleavage of E–E bonds (E=S,Se,Te) in the presence of divalent ytterbium provides a good access to lanthanide(III) complexes containing soft donor ligands. Cleavage of the sulfur-sulfur bond in $[Me_2NC(S)S]_2$ by 1 gave the ytterbium(III) dithiocarbamate 4 (Fig. 2) [20]:



A comparable pentamethylcyclopentadienyl derivative, $(C_5Me_5)_2Yb(S_2CNEt_2)$ was described by Andersen *et al.* in 1982. The ytterbium(III) selenolate complexes 5 and 6 were prepared analogously from 1 and diphenyldiselenide or dimesityldiselenide, respectively [20,21].



The preparation of 7 clearly showed that even stable compounds with lanthanide-tellurium bonds are easily accessible using this method. The molecular structures of both 5 and 6 (Fig. 3) have been determined by X-ray diffraction [20,21].

A ytterbium(II) diiminophosphinate 8 [22] was obtained by the following synthetic route:

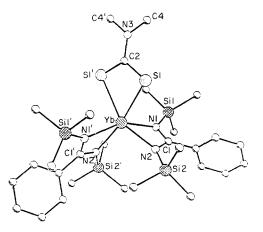


Fig. 2. Molecular structure of [PhC(NSiMe₃)₂]₂Yb(S₂CNMe₂).

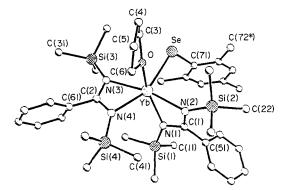


Fig. 3. Molecular structure of [PhC(NSiMe₃)₂]₂Yb(SeMes)(THF).

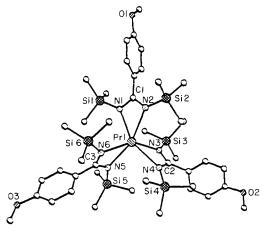
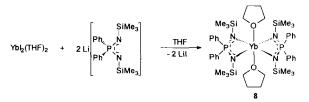


Fig. 4. Molecular structure of [MeOC₆H₄C(NSiMe₃)₂]₃Pr.



Compound 8 was the first ytterbium(II) complex for which a ytterbium-phosphorus coupling constant was determined by NMR spectroscopy (8 δ (¹⁷¹Yb)= 521.2(d) ppm, ²J_{Yb-P}=67 Hz) [21].

2.2. Lanthanide(III) complexes

Both NCN and NPN form homoleptic lanthanide complexes of the type $[RC_6H_4C(NSiMe_3)_2]_3Ln$ [23] and $[PhS(NSiMe_3)_2]_3Ln$ [24]. These highly soluble compounds have been described for many lanthanide elements. The molecular structure of the praseodymium derivative $[MeOC_6H_4C(NSiMe_3)_2]_3Pr$ (9) was determined by X-ray diffraction (Fig. 4) [23].

The coordination geometry in 9 was found to be distorted octahedral. Due to their high solubility in organic solvents, the homoleptic lanthanide benzamidinates $[PhC(NSiMe_3)_2]_3Ln$ are promising precursors for lanthanide based materials. The formation of lanthanide oxides Ln_2O_3 using the sol-gel technique has been studied [25].

$$[PhC(NSiMe_3)_2]_3Ln + 6H_2O \longrightarrow$$

$$Ln(OH)_3 + 3PhC(=NH)NH_2 + 3Me_3SiOSiMe_3$$

$$\downarrow$$

$$Ln_2O_3$$

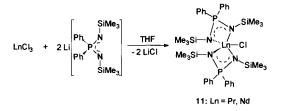
Preliminary experimental results indicate that other lanthanide chalcogenides (Ln_2S_3, Ln_2Se_3) may also be accessible by a similar procedure [25].

Homoleptic lanthanide complexes containing the $[PhS(NSiMe_3)_2]^-$ ligand were prepared analogously from anhydrous lanthanide trichlorides and Li $[PhS(NSiMe_3)_2] \cdot 0.5Et_2O$ [24]:



As expected, the physical properties of the sulfur derivatives 10 are very similar to those of the corresponding lanthanide(III) benzamidinates.

An interesting difference in reactivity was observed when anhydrous lanthanide trichlorides were reacted with 3 equiv. of Li[Ph₂P(NSiMe₃)₂]. Regardless of the stoichiometry (1:2 or 1:3), the disubstituted complexes 11 were found to be the only isolable products [26]. In the exclusive formation of disubstituted products, the diiminophosphinate ligand NPN very much resembled the pentamethylcyclopentadienyl ligand. In fact this was the first indication that the very bulky ligands NCN* and NPN might behave as steric equivalents of $C_5Me_5^-$.

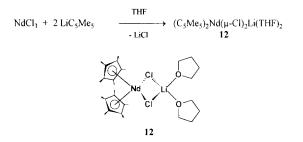


In cyclopentadienyl lanthanide chemistry, disubstituted complexes are probably the most important compounds as they contain reactive halide ligands [4,18]. These can be replaced by various other substituents such as hydride, alkyl, amide or alkoxide ligands. Thus, the bis(cyclopentadienyl)lanthanide chlorides represent one of the most versatile classes of reactive precursors in organolanthanide chemistry. These compounds exist in several different structural types depending on the size of the ligands and on the ionic radius of the lanthanide element. In the case of the unsubstituted

cyclopentadienyl ligand, dimeric complexes of the type [Cp₂LnCl]₂ can be isolated for almost any lanthanide element. For $C_5Me_5^-$ and other bulky substituted cyclopentadienyl ligands (e.g. $(Me_3Si)_2C_5H_3^-$, $(Bu)_2C_5H_3^-$) chlorine-bridged dimers have been isolated with the early lanthanide elements. In some cases, the THF solvates $(C_5Me_5)_2$ LnCl(THF) are formed. Obviously the fragments $(C_5Me_5)_2$ LnCl (coordination number 7) are coordinatively unsaturated and exhibit a strong tendency to increase the coordination number around the lanthanide atom. Formal eight-coordination is achieved in the above-mentioned dimers and THF solvates. The third possibility is the formation of "ate" complexes through incorporation of lithium halide. This results in complexes of the general type $(C_5Me_5)_2Ln(\mu Cl)_2Li(S)_2$ where S is a solvent molecule such as diethyl ether, THF or 1/2 DME. These compounds containing a four-membered $Ln(\mu-Cl)_2Li$ ring are very characteristic and common in pentamethylcyclopentadienyl lanthanide chemistry. In fact, this type of complex was known originally only for organolanthanide complexes containing the $C_5Me_5^-$ ligand [4,18]. Thus, it was an important finding that the bulky heteroallylic ligands are able to form very similar disubstituted lanthanide(III) complexes containing a four-membered $Ln(\mu$ -Cl)₂Li ring as the central structural unit. Together with numerous other analogies it confirms our theory that the N-silvlated heteroallylic ligands are steric cyclopentadienyl equivalents, especially in the case of lanthanide and actinide elements [23,27,28].

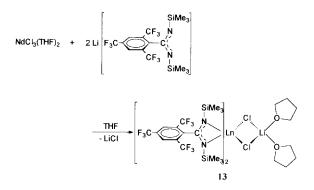
Just as the $(C_5Me_5)_2$ LnCl derivatives are highly useful in organolanthanide precursors chemistry, the bis(benzamidinate)lanthanide chlorides should also develop into some very useful starting materials. Thus, considerable research effort is currently being directed towards rational syntheses of these compounds. For many metal/ligand combinations, it was found that the homoleptic lanthanide benzamidinates [RC6H4C(NSi- $Me_{3}_{2}_{3}Ln$ were the preferred reaction products. In these cases, mixtures of products were obtained when the reactions were carried out in a 2:1 ligand-to-metal molar ratio. From this, it was concluded that two factors should increase the chance of isolating pure disubstitution products. Disubstitution should be more favorable if either very bulky ligands are used (i.e.NCN*) or if the ionic radius of the metal ion is small (i.e. Sc, Y, Yb, Lu). Both assumptions were subsequently confirmed through experiments.

In an early paper by Evans and Wayda [29], it was reported that LiC_5Me_5 reacts with anhydrous neodymium trichloride in refluxing THF to give exclusively the disubstituted complex 12:



Compound 12 is formally an "ate" complex in which 1 equiv. of LiCl is retained in the product in order to increase the coordination number at the neodymium atom. Neodymium and lithium are bridged by two chlorine atoms and the coordination sphere at lithium is completed by two THF ligands.

An entirely analogous reaction occurs when anhydrous neodymium trichloride is reacted under similar conditions with 2 equiv. of Li[(CF₃)₃C₆H₂C(NSiMe₃)₂]. In this reaction, the very bulky benzamidinate ligand behaves like a steric equivalent of C₅Me₅⁻:



The molecular structure of 13 was confirmed by Xray diffraction [30]. Just as in the corresponding C_5Me_5 derivatives, a four-membered Nd(μ -Cl)₂Li ring forms the central part of the molecule (Fig. 5).

Initial reactivity studies showed that **13** can serve as a useful starting material for further reactions [31]. For example, the reactive chlorine atom can be replaced

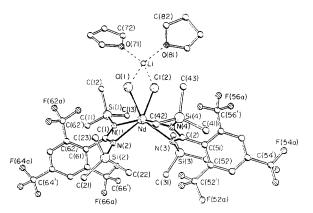
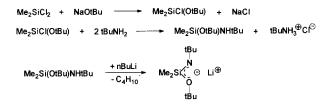


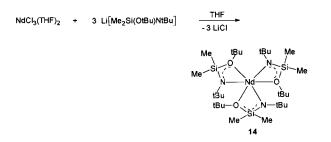
Fig. 5. Molecular structure of $[(CF_3)_3C_6H_2C(NSiMe_3)_2]_2Nd(\mu-Cl)_2Li(THF)_2$.

by amido or alkyl ligands such as $-N(SiMe_3)_2$ or $-CH(SiMe_3)_2$ to give the products $[(CF_3)_3C_6H_2C-(NSiMe_3)_2]_2NdN(SiMe_3)_2$ and $[(CF_3)_3C_6H_2C(NSiMe_3)_2]_2NdCH(SiMe_3)_2$, respectively. These correspond to the known organoneodymium complexes $(C_5Me_5)_2NdN(SiMe_3)_2$ and $(C_5Me_5)_2NdCH(SiMe_3)_2$.

The ionic radius of the lanthanide atom is another important factor governing the formation and successful synthesis of well-defined disubstituted complexes. This can be nicely illustrated by the example of the closely related ligand $[Me_2Si(O'Bu)(N'Bu)]^-$. This anionic ligand has been frequently employed by Veith *et al.* [32]. The lithium salt Li $[Me_2Si(O'Bu)(N'Bu)]$ is easily obtained in a straightforward preparation starting with Me_2SiCl_2 [33]:



The large ionic radius of neodymium as a typical representative of the early lanthanide elements allowed the formation of a homoleptic tris(alkoxysilylamide) complex [34]:



Compound 14 was isolated as a sky-blue crystalline solid which is highly soluble in non-polar organic solvents. The molecular structure of 14 was determined by a single crystal X-ray analysis. It showed the neodymium atom in a distorted octahedral coordination environment (Fig. 6) [34]. Dark red crystalline $[Me_2Si(O'Bu)(N'Bu)]_3Eu$ was prepared analogously [35].

A marked difference in reactivity is observed with the smaller ytterbium ion. Even if an excess of the ligand is used, ytterbium trichloride reacts with $Li[Me_2Si(O'Bu)(N'Bu)]$ selectively in a 1:2 molar ratio to give a high yield of the disubstituted product 15 (Fig. 7) [34]. Not even traces of the homoleptic complex $[Me_2Si(O'Bu)(N'Bu)]_3$ Yb were formed in this reaction.

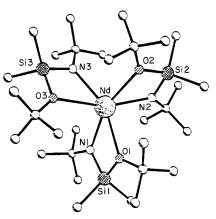


Fig. 6. Molecular structure of [Me₂Si(O'Bu)(N'Bu)]₃Nd.

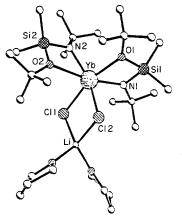


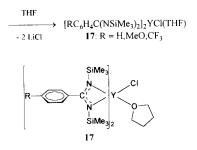
Fig. 7. Molecular structure of $[Me_2Si(O'Bu)(N'Bu)]_2Yb(\mu-Cl)Li(THF)_2$.

$$YbCl_{3} + 2Li[Me_{2}Si(O'Bu)(N'Bu)] \xrightarrow[-LiCl]{THF} \\ [Me_{2}Si(O'Bu)(N'Bu)]_{2}Yb(\mu-Cl)_{2}Li(THF)_{2} \\ 15$$

Once again the typical chloro-bridged "ate" complex known so far only from C_5Me_5 lanthanide chemistry was realized with a bulky chelating ligand. This example clearly showed that the selective formation of disubstituted complexes could be achieved also by adjusting the ionic radius of the metal atom to the steric requirements of the ligands. To test this hypothesis, scandium and yttrium were chosen to synthesize welldefined complexes of the type $[RC_6H_4C(NSi Me_3)_2]_2MCl(THF)$ (M=Sc,Y). Indeed, treatment of either ScCl₃(THF)₃ or YCl₃(THF)_{3.5} with 2 equiv. of the silylated benzamidinate ligands resulted in a clean formation of the desired disubstitution products [25]:

$$ScCl_{3} + 2Li[RC_{6}H_{4}C(NSiMe_{3})_{2}] \xrightarrow[-2LiCl]{-2LiCl}} [RC_{6}H_{4}C(NSiMe_{3})_{2}]_{2}ScCl(THF)$$
$$16: R = H, MeO, CF_{3}$$

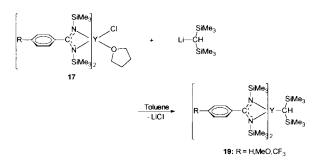
 $YCl_3(THF)_{3.5} + 2 Li[RC_6H_4C(NSiMe_3)_2]$



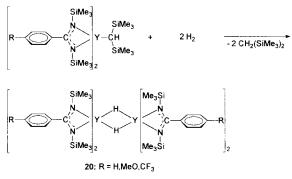
The products 16 and 17 were isolated as colorless, crystalline solids. Thus far the use of scandium and yttrium appears to be the best entry into the chemistry of disubstituted complexes with bulky heteroallylic ligands. Even higher yields (*ca.* 80–90%) of such disubstituted complexes are obtained when anhydrous yttrium triflate is used as precursor. Treatment of $Y(O_3SCF_3)_3$ with 2 equiv. of Li[RC₆H₄C(NSiMe₃)₂] yields the novel bis(ligand) yttrium triflates 18 [25]:

$$Y(O_{3}SCF_{3})_{3} + 2Li[RC_{6}H_{4}C(NSiMe_{3})_{2}] \xrightarrow{\text{THF}} \\ = 2LiO_{3}SCF_{3} \\ [RC_{6}H_{4}C(NSiMe_{3})_{2}]_{2}Y(O_{3}SCF_{3}) \\ 18: R = H, MeO, CF_{3} \\ \end{bmatrix}$$

All these new scandium and yttrium complexes may serve as versatile starting materials for highly reactive alkyl and hydride derivatives [25]. For example, the chlorine atom in 16 and 17 is easily replaced by bulky anionic ligands such as $-N(SiMe_3)_2$ or $-CH(SiMe_3)_2$. More recently it was found that the yttrium triflates 18 are even better suited for this type of substitution reaction because LiO_3SCF_3 is more easily separated from the reaction mixtures than LiCl. The yttrium alkyls 19 have been prepared either from 17 or 18 by treatment with LiCH(SiMe_3)_2 in toluene solution:



Hydrogenation of **19** under mild conditions yields the dimeric yttrium hydrides **20**:



The hydrides **20** have been found to polymerize ethylene and react with a variety of protic reagents [25].

3. Conclusions

Bulky heteroallylic ligands of the type NCN, NCN*, NSN and NPN have been found to be highly versatile observer ligands for lanthanide elements in their diand trivalent oxidation states. Surprising parallels between the lanthanide complexes with heteroallylic ligands and the corresponding cyclopentadienyl complexes have been discovered. Several important advantages make the ligand systems NCN, NCN*, NSN and NPN very promising alternatives to the well-known cyclopentadienyl ligands. Initial investigations have shown that lanthanide complexes with heteroallylic ligands may be very useful as precursors for lanthanidebased materials as well as homogeneous catalysts.

Acknowledgments

Financial support of this work by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, the Fonds der Chemischen Industrie and the Dr. Otto Röhm-Gedächtnisstiftung is gratefully acknowledged.

References

- 1 B.T. Kilbourn, Inorg. Chim. Acta, 140 (1987) 335.
- 2 L. Niinistö, Inorg. Chim. Acta, 140 (1987) 339.
- 3 R. Reisfeld, Inorg. Chim. Acta, 140 (1987) 345.
- 4 H. Schumann, Angew. Chem., 96 (1984) 475; Angew. Chem., Int. Ed. Engl., 23 (1984) 474.
- 5 P.L. Watson and G.W. Parshall, Acc. Chem. Res., 18 (1985) 51.
- 6 K.N. Harrison and T.J. Marks, J. Am. Chem. Soc., 114 (1992) 9220 and refs. therein.
- 7 H. Mauermann, P.N. Swepston and T.J. Marks, Organometallics, 4 (1985) 200.
- 8 G. Jeske, H. Lauke, H. Mauermann, P.N. Swepston, H. Schumann and T.J. Marks, J. Am. Chem. Soc., 107 (1985) 8091.

- 9 G. Jeske, H. Lauke, H. Mauermann, H. Schumann and T.J. Marks, J. Am. Chem. Soc., 107 (1985) 8111.
- 10 M.R. Gagné and T.J. Marks, J. Am. Chem. Soc., 111 (1989) 4108.
- 11 M.R. Gagné, C.L. Stern and T.J. Marks, J. Am. Chem. Soc., 114 (1992) 275.
- 12 H.J. Heeres and J.H. Teuben, Organometallics, 10 (1991) 1980.
- 13 T. Sakakura, H.-J. Lautenschlager and M. Tanaka, J. Chem. Soc., Chem. Commun., (1991) 40.
- 14 J. Renkema and J.H. Teuben, Rec. Trav. Chim. Pays-Bas, 105 (1986) 241.
- 15 J. Sieler, A. Simon, K. Peters, R. Taube and M. Geitner, J. Organomet. Chem., 362 (1989) 297.
- 16 Z. Shen, Inorg Chim. Acta, 140 (1987) 7.
- 17 M. Brunelli, S. Poggio, U. Pedretti and G. Lugli, Inorg. Chim. Acta, 131 (1987) 281.
- 18 F.G.A. Stone, G. Wilkinson and E.W. Abel (eds.), Comprehensive Organometallic Chemistry, Vol. 3, Pergamon Press, London, 1982.
- 19 T.V. Lubben, P.T. Wolczanski and G.D. van Duyne, Organometallics, 3 (1984) 977.
- 20 M. Wedler, M. Noltemeyer, U. Pieper, H.-G. Schmidt, D. Stalke and F.T. Edelmann, Angew. Chem., 102 (1990) 941; Angew. Chem., Int. Ed. Engl., 29 (1990) 894.

- 21 M. Wedler, A. Recknagel, J.W. Gilje, M. Noltemeyer and F.T. Edelmann, J. Organomet. Chem., 426 (1992) 295.
- 22 A. Recknagel, A. Steiner, S. Brooker, D. Stalke and F.T. Edelmann, J. Organomet. Chem., 415 (1991) 315.
- 23 M. Wedler, F. Knösel, U. Pieper, D. Stalke, F.T. Edelmann and H.-D. Amberger, *Chem. Ber.*, 125 (1992) 2171.
- 24 F. Knösel, M. Noltemeyer and F.T. Edelmann, Z. Naturforsch., 44b (1989) 1171.
- 25 J. Richter and F.T. Edelmann, unpublished results.
- 26 A. Recknagel, M. Witt and F.T. Edelmann, J. Organomet. Chem., 371 (1989) C40.
- 27 M. Wedler, F. Knösel, M. Noltemeyer, F.T. Edelmann and U. Behrens, J. Organomet. Chem., 388 (1990) 21.
- 28 M. Wedler, F. Knösel, F.T. Edelmann and U. Behrens, *Chem. Ber.*, 125 (1992) 1313.
- 29 A.L. Wayda and W.J. Evans, Inorg. Chem., 19 (1980) 2190.
- 30 A. Recknagel, F. Knösel, H. Gornitzka, M. Noltemeyer, F.T. Edelmann and U. Behrens, J. Organomet. Chem., 417 (1991) 363
- 31 F.T. Edelmann, unpublished results.
- 32 M. Veith, Angew. Chem., 99 (1987) 1; Angew. Chem,. Int. Ed. Engl., 26 (1987) 1.
- 33 M. Veith and R. Rösler, J. Organomet. Chem., 229 (1982) 131.
- 34 A. Recknagel, A. Steiner, S. Brooker, D. Stalke and F.T. Edelmann, J. Organomet. Chem., 415 (1991) 315.
- 35 U. Kilimann and F.T. Edelmann, unpublished results.