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Dynamic features of the zirconocene-boron-betaine complexes obtained by treatment of bis(alkynyl) zirconocenes with the tris(pentafluorophenyl) borane Lewis-acid¹

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Abstract

Bis(propynyl)zirconocene (6a) reacts with tris(pentafluorophenyl)borane to yield the carbon-carbon coupled $Cp_2M(\mu-RC_4R)B(C_6F_5)_3$ betaine product 4a (M = Zr, R = CH₃). A variety of differently substituted analogs was prepared (M = Zr, R = *n*-butyl, phenyl, cyclohexyl; M = Ti, R = CH₃; M = Hf; R = CH₃, phenyl, SiMe₃). These complexes 4 are chiral due to the presence of a rather stable propeller-like R-B(aryl)₃ conformation. The activation barrier of the intramolecular enantiomerization process of many examples of this series of complexes was determined by dynamic ¹H NMR spectroscopy, with ΔG^4 values ranging from ca. 13 to 16kcal mol⁻¹, depending on the substitution pattern. Complex 4a reacts with 2,6-dimethylphenylisocyanide to yield the methylenecyclopropene derivative 1 that was characterized by X-ray diffraction.

Keywords: Betaine; Boron; Early transition metals; Zirconium-boron-betaine; Conformational chirality; Metallocenes

1. Prologue and introduction

The chemistry of ionic organic and organometallic systems is often dominated by charge effects [1-4]. Kinetic lability towards nucleophiles or ion pairing features may mask other interesting per se properties of such charged species. A possible way to suppress dominating reaction pathways resulting from strong Coulomb interaction is to covalently bind a balanced anionic counterpart to the cationic framework in such a way that the principal features of the underlying cation system is in its essential part preserved in the resulting overall neutral dipolar molecule (for recent examples in metal-locene chemistry see e.g. Ref. [4]).

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We have tried to use this general concept to synthesize Group 4 metallocene cation complexes that bear their anion covalently bonded with them [5]. Such Group 4 metallocene-boron-betaines may be of great interest since it is possible to introduce analogs of highly reactive organic π -systems between the Cp₂M and BAr₃ ends of these organometallic dipols and study them in a stable molecular environment [6] (for related examples see Ref. [7]).

Complex 1 represents a typical example. Formally, it contains an iminoacyl-substituted methylenecyclopropene moiety bridging between a Cp₂Zr(L) unit (L = 2,4-dimethylphenylisocyanide) and a tris(pentafluorophenyl)borane unit. The connecting organic system possesses a fully conjugated π -system. Its central σ -framework is completely planar. One could formally describe this compound by a chemical formula (resonance form 1A) that exhibits a positive charge at the metal center and a negative charge at boron. However, there is substantial evidence for this compound, as well as a number of recently described related systems in this

¹ Dedicated to Professor Max Herberhold on the occasion of his 60th birthday.

series, that a pronounced contribution of the resonance form 1B has to be taken into account; this has the positive charge placed in the three-membered ring, and thus would constitute some cyclopropenylium-betaine character (for a closely related non-organometallic example see Ref. [8]) to the dipolar complex 1. This evidence comes from the X-ray crystal structure analysis of 1 (see Fig. 1) that clearly indicates an about equal contribution of both the resonance hybrid structures 1A and 1B to adequately describe the observed overall bonding situation.



In complex 1 the C1-B bond length is 1.604(11)Å. The adjacent C1-C3 bond inside the three-membered ring is short (1.328(10)Å), but the distal three-membered ring bond is also short at 1.379(10)Å (the C-C bond length inside the three-membered ring of the triphenylcyclopropenylium cation is almost identical to this value at 1.378 Å [9]). The C2-C5 bond is 1.382(10) Å, the adjacent C5-C7 bond is only slightly longer at 1.408(9) Å. We conclude that the organic bridging π -ligand in the very stable metallocene-(π organyl)-boron-betaine complex exhibits some unusual bonding features that bear some resemblance with a partial alkenylcyclopropenylium-type system.

The formation of 1 and the explanation of the observed reaction pattern is rather straightforward. Obviously, the direct precursor of the ligand-stabilized system 1 is the unstable donor ligand free (η^2 iminoacyl)zirconocene species 2 [10], whose precursor obviously is 3. In our reaction, this is generated from 4a, which was isolated and fully characterized (see below and the preliminary communication in Ref. [11]).

Apparently, the open-chain betaine complex 4a is in an equilibrium with the thermodynamically less favored (but much more reactive) cyclic species 3, that is preferentially trapped by the added isonitrile reagent. The $4a \rightarrow 3a$ rearrangement can simply be regarded as an intramolecular alkyne insertion into an adjacent zirconium to carbon σ -bond. Complex 4a, in turn, is formed by a similar reaction. It is obtained by treatment of the bis(alkynyl)zirconocene complex 6a with B(C₆F₅)₃. In this case σ -ligand transfer (to give 5a) followed by alkyne insertion into the Zr-C σ -bond straightforwardly explains the reaction course taken (Scheme 1).

In some respects, the key intermediates in this reaction sequence are the zirconium-boron-betaine complexes 4. It has turned out that these systems exhibit a d_jnamic behavior. We have now prepared a variety of differently substituted systems 4 from differently substi-



Zr-C8 2.349(9), C8-N2 1.148(9), Zr-N1 2.173(6), Zr-C7 2.202(8), N1-C7 1.289(8), C7-C5 1.408(9), C5-C2 1.382(10), C2-C1 1.423(10), C2-C3 1.379(10), C1-C3 1.328(10), C1-B 1.604(11); Zr-C8-N 175.4(7), N1-Zr-C7 34.3(2), Zr-N1-C7 74.1(5), Zr-C7-N1 71.6(5), N1-C7-C5 129.5(7), C7-C5-C2 117.7(7), C5-C2-C1 148.5(8), C5-C2-C3 154.9(8), B-C1-C2 151.4(8), B-C1-C3 148.1(8), C1-C2-C3 56.5(5), C2-C3-C1 63.4(6), C3-C1-C2 60.1(6).

Fig. 1. A view of the molecular structure of 1 with atom numbering scheme and selected bond lengths (Å) and angles (deg).



Scheme 1. Retrosynthetic pathway of the formation of complex 1.

tuted precursors 6 to gain insight into the nature of this unexpected dynamic behavior.

2. Results and discussion

The metallocene [(μ -1,4-bishydrocarbyl)butadiyne]borato-betaine complexes 4 were, in this study, all prepared by stoichiometric treatment of the respective bis(alkynyl)metallocene precursors [12] with tris(pentafluorophenyl)borane. Five zirconium complexes (4a-4e) were prepared containing methyl-, *n*butyl-, phenyl-, or cyclohexyl-substituents at the bridging organic ligand. Usually, the parent Cp₂Zr moiety was used, only in one case (4b) did we employ the related bis(η^5 -methylcyclopentadienyl)zirconium unit. In addition, we prepared a corresponding titanocene(μ -R-C₄-R)B(C₆F₅)₃ betaine complex (4f, with R = CH₃) and three related hafnocene systems (4g-4i, with R = CH₃, Ph, and SiMe₃).



The reactions between the bis(alkynyl)metallocenes (6a-6i) with tris(pentafluorophenyl)borane were all car-

ried out analogously. As a typical example, a solid sample of bis(propynyl)zirconocene (6a) was mixed with solid B(C₆F₅)₃ at -78 °C. Addition of toluene at low temperature and work-up after several hours of stirring under ambient conditions resulted in an amorphous solid of $4a \cdot toluene$ (ca. 90% isolated). The zirconocene(μ -hexadiyne)borato-betaine complex 4a does not exhibit any typical IR band in the $\tilde{\nu}(C=C)$ range (contrary to the starting material 6a). The ¹³C NMR resonances of the internally coordinated $-C \equiv C - R$ triple bond are observed at δ 108.5 and 105.0. The ¹³C NMR signal of the α -alkenyl carbon center of the bridging hydrocarbyl ligand that is bonded to zirconium appears at a typically high δ value (255.2) [13], the corresponding β -carbon signal was not observed, probably because of extensive line broadening due to the neighboring boron atom. Surprisingly, complex 4a is chiral and exhibits temperature-dependent dynamic NMR spectra. The 'H NMR spectrum (200 MHz) of 4a in $[D_{B}]$ toluene at 300 K shows methyl singlets at δ 2.20 and 1.09 and a very broad cyclopentadienyl resonance centered at δ 5.3. Decreasing the monitoring temperature rapidly leads to a splitting into two Cp-singlets of equal intensity that are observed at δ 5.39 and 5.11 in the limiting low temperature ¹H NMR spectrum at 273 K. A Gibbs activation energy of $\Delta G^{\ddagger}(292 \text{ K}) =$ 14.3 ± 0.5 kcal mol⁻¹ was estimated (using the method described in Ref. [14]) for the intramolecular enantiomerization process of complex 4a at the Cp-coalescence temperature.

It turns out that the ¹⁹F NMR spectrum of complex 4a (Fig. 2) is also dynamic. At 303 K the ¹⁹F NMR resonances (at 564 MHz) of most of the $B(C_6F_5)_3$ fluorine atoms are broad (see Fig. 2); lowering the monitoring temperature rapidly leads to sharpening and splitting of the signals. At 233 K a set of nicely separated ¹⁹F NMR resonances is observed; this indicates that all 15 fluorine substituents in the betaine complex 4a are



Fig. 2. ¹⁹F NMR spectra (564MHz, CD_2Cl_2) of 4 at 303K (top) and 233K (bottom).

chemically inequivalent. We have observed six C_6F_5 o-F signals at $\delta - 128.3$, -129.0, -129.3, -133.1, -133.3, -133.5, two overlapping ($\delta - 160.0$) and a single p-C₆F₅ resonance (-160.4) and six m-C₆F₅ signals at $\delta - 164.4$, -164.5, -164.9, -165.5 (two closely adjacent signals), and -165.8.

It appears that complex 4a exhibits a dynamic process in the course of which the diastereotopic faces of the μ -hexadiyne ligand become equilibrated. The bridging hydrocarbyl ligand itself remains unaffected by this process — its methyl groups do not become equilibrated; only the diastereotopic cyclopentadienyl ligands exchange their respective chemical environments during this process. This 'top ≠ bottom' exchange remaine the essential topological feature of this dynamic process. This rearrangement is not accompanied by a possibly related 'left right' equilibration. This has become evident by following the NMR dynamics of the related bis(methylcyclopentadienyl) $Zr(\mu - MeC_4Me)B(C_6F_5)_1$ betaine complex 4b. This was prepared analogously by treatment of $(McCp)_2 Zr(-C \equiv C - Me_3)_2$ (6b) with $B(C_6F_5)_3$ in an equimolar ratio. Complex 4b also shows temperature dependent dynamic ¹⁹F NMR spectra, Also, at low temperature a set of 15 separated fluorine resonances are observed: six o-F signals at low field, accompanied by three p-F- and six m-F-resonances at subsequently lower δ values (see Section 4).

The 'H NMR spectrum of 4b (200 MHz, CD_2Cl_2) shows two hexadiyne-methyl singlets at δ 2.30 and 2.08 that are not changed with temperature in addition to the two MeCp methyl singlets. These are located at δ 2.09 and 1.89 at 235 K, but rapidly broaden upon raising the temperature of the NMR probe. Eventually they undergo coalescence and then show a single sharp resonance at high temperature. From these dynamic 'H NMR spectra a Gibbs-activation energy of $\Delta G^{\dagger}(269 \text{ K})$ = 13.3 kcal mol⁻¹ was calculated [14]. We have also recorded the variable-temperature 'H NMR spectra of Table 1

Gibbs	activation	energies	$(\Delta G^{\ddagger}(T_{c}))$)) of	the	intramolecular	enan-			
tiomerization process of complexes $[M](\mu - RC_4 R)B(C_6 F_5)_3$ 4										

	•						
	[M]	R	ΔG^{+a} (kcalmol ⁻¹)	7 _c (K)			
4 a	Cp ₂ Zr	CH ₃	14.3	292			
4b	(MeCp) ₂ Zr	CH ₃	13.3	269			
4c	Cp ₂ Zr	n-C₄H ₉	15.0	323			
4e	Cp ₂ Zr	cyclohexyl	16.4	332			
4f	Cp ₂ Ti	CH,	13.2	272			
4g	Cp ₂ Hf	CH ₃	13.8	282			
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^a Determined by dynamic ¹H NMR spectroscopy from the Cpcoalescence (4b: Cp-CH₃ coalescence),  $\Delta G^{\ddagger}$  values  $\pm 0.5$  kcalmol⁻¹.

4b at 600 MHz. In combination with the dynamic ¹H NMR 200 MHz spectrum in  $[D_8]$  toluene, this has revealed that the  $C_5H_4CH_3$  methine resonances are changing from an eight signal pattern at low temperature (233 K:  $\delta$  6.13, 6.11, 6.09, 6.07, 5.83, 5.80, 5.75, 5.67) to a four signal pattern above the coalescence point. Thus, the in-plane asymmetry of the bridging CH₃C₄CH₃ ligand remains unaffected in the course of the rearrangement process; apparently there is no rotation about the Zr-C  $\sigma$ -bond taking place on the NMR time scale. Also, any process that would require the formation of a  $C_{2\nu}$  (instead of  $C_{\nu}$ ) symmetric intermediate (or its dynamic rapidly equilibrating symmetry analog) is not compatible with the observed symmetry properties of the dynamic process as it is revealed by the appearance of the temperature dependent NMR spectra of complexes 4a and 4b.

The activation barrier of the dynamic process shows a measurable substituent dependence. Attaching *n*-butyl or cyclohexyl groups instead of the methyl groups to the ends of the  $\mu$ -butadiyne ligand results in gradually increased  $\Delta G^{\ddagger}$  values of the internal enantiomerization process (see Table 1). The corresponding zirconoceneborate-betaine complex 4c exhibits  $\Delta G_{\text{enant}}^{\ddagger}(323 \text{ K}) =$  $15.0 \pm 0.5 \text{ kcal mol}^{-1}$ . This complex also shows 15 clearly distinguished ¹⁹F NMR signals at low temperature (see Fig. 3). The cyclohexyl-substituted complex 4e has an even higher enantiomerization barrier at  $\Delta G^{\ddagger}(332 \text{ K}) = 16.4 \text{ kcal mol}^{-1}$ .

The corresponding phenyl-substituted zirconocene betaine system (4d) was also generated, but this turned



Fig. 3. ¹⁹F NMR spectrum (564MHz, CD₂Cl₂) of complex 4c at 233K.



Fig. 4. A projection of the molecular structure of complex 4g in the crystal.

out to be rather unstable and so a reliable  $\Delta G^{\ddagger}$  value could not be obtained. Bis(propynyl)titanocene (6f) reacted cleanly with B(C₆F₅)₃ to give 4f. The enantiomerization barrier is smaller than that of the analogous zirconium complex (4f:  $\Delta G^{\ddagger}(272 \text{ K}) = 13.2 \pm$ 0.5 kcal mol⁻¹; 4a:  $\Delta G^{\ddagger}(292 \text{ K}) = 14.3 \text{ kcal mol}^{-1}$ ).

Hafnium to carbon  $\sigma$ -bonds are slightly stronger and shorter than their corresponding Zr-C analogs [15]. Therefore, it is expected that hafnocene complexes attain a position intermediate between their corresponding titanocene and zirconocene congeners. In this case, the Ti < Hf < Zr series is also followed by the order of the  $\Delta G_{\text{enant}}^3$  values. The hafnocene complex 4g was prepared in the usual way and its enantiomerization barrier determined as  $\Delta G^{\ddagger}(282 \text{ K}) = 13.8 \text{ kcal mol}^{-1}$ . Again, the corresponding phenyl-substituted metallocene-betaine system 4h turned out to be too sensitive for a reliable quantitative analysis of its dynamic behavior. In the trimethylsilyl-substituted analog (4i) the Cp-signals were unfortunately isochronous (or very close to isochronous) under all conditions investigated. Therefore, its  $\Delta G_{\text{enant}}^{\ddagger}$  value could not be determined.

The dynamic process observed of the Group 4 metallocene( $\mu$ -butadiyne)borate-betaine complexes 4 requires the presence of a molecular element of chirality that is reversibly inverted in the course of the observed thermally induced equilibration process. The fact that all 15 fluorine atoms of each of the complexes 4 are observed to be chemically inequivalent, points to the chirality information being located at the triarylborateend of the betaine. The presence of 15 different fluorine substituents requires that all three C₆F₅ groups are diastereotopic and that there is a stereochemical differentiation between the ortho- and meta-fluorine pairs at each  $C_6F_5$ -ring. Thus the  $B(C_6F_5)_3$  moiety must have attained a chiral conformation within the  $R-B(C_6F_5)_3$ unit. We propose that the  $-B(C_6F_5)_3$  building block inside the complexes 4 attains a chiral propeller-like orientation of the three  $-C_6F_5$  substituents. Inside the overall framework of the complexes 4 this would be sufficient to make the metallocene Cp-ligand systems diastereotopic, provided the molecule is looked at in the kinetic regime where the stereochemically essential rotations about the B-C  $\sigma$ -bonds are sufficiently slow on the NMR time scale.

This explanation of the dynamic features of the complexes 4 is supported by the results of a preliminary X-ray crystal structure analysis of the hafnocene( $\mu$ -hexadiyne)borate-betaine complex 4g. Owing to problems caused by crystal twinning the quality of the X-ray crystal structure analysis is below the usual standard, so details of the structure will not be discussed. It is, however, sufficient to provide an outline of the overall structural framework of the complexes 4. They exhibit a planar R-C₄-R carbon framework that is located in the main plane of the bent metallocene wedge that bisects the Cp-M-Cp angle, and it shows that the  $-B(C_6F_5)_3$  unit attains a chiral distorted three-bladed propeller-like conformation (see Fig. 4).

### **3. Conclusions**

The dynamic equilibration typically observed of the complexes 4 ip solution can thus be explained as being due to a conformational inversion of a three-bladed propeller-like conformation of the  $-B(C_6F_5)_3$  unit inside the metallocene( $\mu$ -hydrocarbyl)borate structure [16].



The observed variation of the enantiomerization barrier from the substituents at the bridging  $\mu$ -butadiynederived ligand and of the nature of the attached metallocene unit (see Table 1) clearly indicates that some steric interaction of the  $-C_6F_5$  groups at boron with the extended planar  $\mu$ -R-C₄-R system is determining the height of this barrier. This is further supported by the



observation that the related metallocene( $\mu$ -iminoacylmethylenecyclopropene)-borate-betaine complexes (such as 1), mentioned and discussed in Section 1, up to now have in no case shown a similar behavior. Although these systems also contain chiral R-B(C₆F₅)₃ conformations in the solid state, we have not been able to freeze out their enantiomerization process on the NMR time scale so far. It thus appears that the increased steric interaction with the laterally extended conjugated planar C₄-framework (and its terminal substituents) provides an essential feature for generating a rather large kinetic barrier of the -B(aryl)₃ propeller inversion process at the R-B(C₆F₅)₃ building block of the metallocene-borate-betaine complexes 4 (see Scheme 2).

### 4. Experimental section

All reactions were carried out in an inert atmosphere (argon) using Schlenk-type glassware or in a glovebox. Solvents were dried and distilled under argon prior to use. Instrumentation used for physical characterization: NMR, Bruker AC 200 P ( 1 H 200.1 MHz,  13 C 50.3 MHz), Bruker ARX 300 ( 1 H 300.1 MHz,  13 C 75.5 MHz), Bruker AM 360 (¹H 360.1 MHz, ¹³C 90.6 MHz), Varian unity plus (¹H 600 MHz, ¹³C 150 MHz, ¹⁹F 564 MHz) spectrometer; IR, Nicolet 5 DXC FT IR spectrometer; elemental analyses, Foss-Heraeus CHNO-Rapid; melting points, DSC 910, DuPont; X-ray crystal structure analyses, Enraf-Nonius MACH 3 diffractometer, SHELX 86, SHELX 93, SCHAKAL. The bis(alkynyl)metallocene complexes (6) were prepared according to literature procedures [12]. Previously described reagents 6 were only characterized spectroscopically.  $B(C_6F_5)_3$  was prepared as described in the literature [17]. It was freshly recrystallized from pentane prior to use. ¹⁹F NMR chemical shifts were determined by external calibration using the room temperature  $C_6H_5CF_3$  resonance ( $\delta - 64$ ppm); the listed values are relative to the CFCl₃ standard ( $\delta = 0$  ppm).

# 4.1. Preparation of the bis(alkynyl)metallocene complexes 6: general procedure

One equivalent of the metallocenedichloride was mixed with two equivalents of the respective alkynyllithium compound. Tetrahydrofuran was added at 0°C. After stirring for 2 h at this temperature the solvent was evaporated in vacuo and replaced by dichloromethane. The lithium chloride was removed by filtration, the solvent evaporated in vacuo, the residue stirred with pentane and the resulting solid product collected by filtration.



Žt[.]C1 2.241(6), C1-C2 1.198(8), C2-C3 1.472(8), C3-C4 1.508(9), C4-C5 1.493(9), C5-C6 1.479(10); C1-Žt·C1* 105.4(3), Zt·C1-C2 171.7(5), C1-C2-C3 177.3(7), C2-C3-C4 113.9(5), C3-C4-C5 114.4(6), C4-C5-C6 115.4(8).

Fig. 5. A view of the molecular structure of 6c with selected bond lengths (Å) and angles (deg).

### 4.1.1. Bis(propynyl)zirconocene (6a)

Treatment of 0.80 g (17.4 mmol) of propynyllithium with 2.52 g (8.60 mmol) of zirconocene dichloride in 50 ml of tetrahydrofuran gave 2.00 g (78%) of **6a**. ¹H NMR ( $C_6D_6$ ):  $\delta = 6.12$  (s, 10H, Cp), 1.78 (s, 6H, CH₃).

# 4.1.2. Bis( $\eta^{s}$ -methylcyclopentadienyl)bis(propynyl)zirconocene (6b)

Treatment of 2.40 g (52.2 mmol) of propynyllithium with 8.38 g (26.2 mmol) of  $(MeCp)_2ZrCl_2$  in 80 ml tetrahydrofuran yielded to 4.68 g (55%) of **6b**. ¹H NMR  $(C_6D_6)$ :  $\delta = 6.17$  (pt, 4H, Cp), 5.75 (pt, 4H, Cp), 2.30 (s, 6H, Cp-CH₃), 1.76 (s, 6H, CH₃).

### 4.1.3. Bis(hexynyl)zirconocene (6c)

Reaction of 3.56 g (40.5 mmol) of hexynyllithium with 5.90 g (20.2 mmol) zirconocene dichloride in 80 ml of tetrahydrofuran gave 4.52 g (58%) of **6c** as orange needles. ¹H NMR ( $C_6D_6$ ):  $\delta = 6.14$  (s, 10H, Cp), 2.24 (m, 4H, CH₂), 1.44 (m, 8H, CH₂), 0.84 (m, 6H, CH₃). IR (KBr):  $\tilde{\nu} = 3087$ , 2953, 2948, 2929, 2866, 2080, 1840, 1730, 1641, 1438, 1360, 1319, 1311, 1299, 1244, 1103, 1015, 947, 902, 799, 737, 612, 522, 429 cm⁻¹. Anal. Found: C, 67.52; H, 7.39.  $C_{22}H_{28}Zr$  (383.66). Calc.: C, 68.89; H, 7.31%.

X-ray crystal structure analysis of **6c** (see Fig. 5). Needles were obtained by cooling a pentane solution down to -20 °C.  $C_{22}H_{28}Zr$  (383.66), crystal size 0.80  $\times 0.25 \times 0.10$  mm, T = 223 K,  $\lambda = 0.71073$  Å, orthorhombic, space group  $P2_12_12$  (No. 18), cell parameters a = 7.535(1) Å, b = 20.104(5) Å, c = 6.461(1) Å, V = 978.7(3) Å³, Z = 2,  $\rho_{calcd.} = 1.302$  g cm⁻³,  $\mu =$ 5.6 cm⁻¹, 1191 collected reflections, 1190 independent and 1076 observed reflections, full matrix least squares refinement on  $F^2$ , R = 0.039,  $wR^2 = 0.107$ . Further information about the X-ray structure analysis can be obtained from the Fachinformationszentrum Karlsruhe, D-76344 Eggenstein-Leopoldshafen, on quoting the depository number CSD-405298, the names of the authors, and the journal citation.

### 4.1.4. Bis(phenylethynyl)zirconocene (6d)

Treatment of 7.58 g (70.1 mmol) of phenylethynyllithium with 10.2 g (34.8 mmol) of zirconocene dichloride in 100 ml of tetrahydrofuran gave 8.87 g (60%) of the dark brown product **6d**. ¹H NMR (C₆D₆):  $\delta = 7.50$ (m, 4H, Ph), 7.00 (m, 6H, Ph), 6.14 (s, 10H, Cp).

# 4.1.5. Bis(cyclohexylethynyl)zirconocene (6e)

1.70 g (14.6 mmol) of cyclohexylethynyllithium was treated with 2.13 g (7.30 mmol) of zirconocene dichloride to yield 1.17 g (37%) of **6e**. ¹H NMR ( $C_6D_6$ ):  $\delta = 6.14$  (s, 10H, Cp), 1.70 (m, 22H, cyclohexyl). ¹³C NMR ( $C_6D_6$ ):  $\delta = 110.8$  (Cp), 33.8, 31.3, 26.5, 25.1 (cyclohexyl), quarternary carbons not observed.

#### 4.1.6. Bis(propynyl)titanocene (6f)

The reaction of 2.15 g (46.7 mmol) of propynyllithium with 5.82 g (23.4 mmol) of titanocene dichloride in 80 ml of tetrahydrofuran gave 5.11 g (86%) of 6f. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃):  $\delta = 6.31$  (s, 10H, Cp), 1.90 (s, 6H, CH₃).

### 4.1.7. Bispropynylhafnocene (6g)

Treatment of 2.67 g (58.0 mmol) of propynyllithium with 11.0 g (29.0 mmol) of hafnocene dichloride in 50 ml of tetrahydrofuran yielded 10.2 g (89%) of **6g**. ¹H NMR (C₆D₆):  $\delta = 6.04$  (s, 10H, Cp), 1.72 (s, 6H, CH₃).

### 4.1.8. Bis(phenylethynyl)hafnocene (6h)

1.08 g (10.0 mmol) of phenylethynyllithium was reacted with 1.89 g (5.00 mmol) of hafnocene dichloride in 80 ml of tetrahydrofuran to yield 1.80 g (70%) of the pale yellow colored product 6h. ¹H NMR (C₆D₆):  $\delta = 7.50$  (m, 4H, Ph), 7.00 (m, 6H, Ph), 6.08 (s, 10H, Cp).

### 4.1.9. Bis(trimethylsilylethynyl)hafnocene (6i)

1.10 g (10.5 mmol) of trimethylsilylethynyllithium was treated with 2.00 g (5.77 mmol) of hafnocene dichloride in 100 ml of tetrahydrofuran to yield 2.00 g (80%) of 6i. ¹H NMR ( $C_6D_6$ ):  $\delta = 5.99$  (s, 10H, Cp), 0.23 (s, 18H, CH₃).

# 4.2. Preparation of metallocene-boron-betaines 4: general procedure

The respective bis(alkynyl)metallocene (6) and tris(pentafluorophenyl)borane were mixed as solids in a 1:1 molar ratio. Toluene was added at -78 °C and the mixture was stirred vigorously at that temperature. After 2 h the cooling bath was removed and the reaction mixture was allowed to warm to room temperature with stirring. The resulting precipitate was isolated by filtration and washed twice with a small amount of toluene.

# 4.2.1. [Bis( $\eta^{5}$ -cyclopentadienyl)zirconium(IV)]-hex-2ene-4-yne-2-yl-3-[tris(pentafluorophenyl)]borate (4a)

Treatment of 3.00 g (10.0 mmol) of bis(propynyl)zirconocene (6a) with 5.12 g (10.0 mmol) of tris(pentafluorophenyl)borane in 15 ml of toluene yielded 8.01 g (88%) of the orange colored product 4a, m.p. 74°C (dec., DSC). ¹H NMR (C₆D₆):  $\delta = 5.32$  (br s, 10H, Cp), 2.26 (s, 3H, CH₃), 1.04 (s, 3H, CH₃); (toluene: 7.08 (m, 5H, Ph), 2.11 (s, 3H, CH₃)). ¹³C NMR (CD₂Cl₂):  $\delta = 255.2$ , 151.2 (d, o-C₆F₅, ¹J_{CF} = 232 Hz), 142.0 (d, p-C₆F₅, ¹J_{CF} = 242 Hz), 140.1 (d, m-C₆F₅, ¹J_{CF} = 240 Hz), 116.3 (Cp), 108.5, 105.0, 29.7, 10.7; (toluene: 141.4, 132.4, 131.6, 128.7 (Ph), 24.5 (CH₃)). ¹⁹F NMR (CD₂Cl₂):  $\delta = -124.6$ , -125.6, -131.5, -134.0 (o-C₆F₅), -159.6 (p-C₆F₅), -164.7, -165.2 (m-C₆F₅). IR (KBr):  $\tilde{\nu} = 3120, 2970, 2929$ , 2142, 1644, 1516, 1461, 1376, 1276, 1092, 1018, 977, 815, 761, 694 cm⁻¹. Anal. Found: C, 52.23; H, 2.59. C₃₄H₁₆BF₁₅Zr  $\cdot$  0.5C₇H₈ (857.7). Calc.: C, 52.52; H, 2.35%.

# **4.2.2.** [Bis( $\eta^{5}$ -methylcyclopentadienyl)zirconium(IV)]hex-2-ene-4-yne-2-yl-3-[tris(pentafluorophenyl)]borate (**4b**)

Treatment of 1.50g (4.58 mmol) of  $bis(\eta^3$ -methylcyclopentadienyl)bis(propynyl)zirconocene 6b with 2.34g (4.58 mmol) of tris(pentafluorophenylborane) in 60 ml of toluene yielded 2.32 g (60%) of the yellow colored betaine 4b, m.p. 150°C (dec., DSC). ¹H NMR  $(C_6 D_6)$ :  $\delta = 5.23$  (br m, 8H, Cp), 2.23 (s, 3H, CH₃), 1.39 (br s, 6H, Cp-CH₃), 1.09 (s, 3H, CH₃). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃):  $\delta = 244.1$ , 147.9 (d,  $o - C_6 F_5$ ,  ${}^1J_{CF} = 246$  Hz), 138.9 (d,  $p - C_6 F_5$ ,  ${}^1J_{CF} = 279$  Hz), 136.7 (d,  $m - C_6 F_5$ ,  ${}^{1}J_{CF} = 245 \text{ Hz}$ , 112.6, 112.5, 111.3 (Cp), 105.7, 102.1, 14.7 (Cp-CH₃), 7.49 (CH₃), 0.97 (CH₃) (ipso-C of  $C_6F_5$  not found). ¹⁹F NMR ( $CD_2Cl_2$ , 213K):  $\delta =$ -133.0, -133.5, -134.7, -138.1, -138.6, -140.2 $(o-C_{6}F_{5}), -165.2, -165.3, -165.7 (p-C_{6}F_{5}),$ -169.5, -169.7, -170.0, -170.8, -170.9, -171.0 $(m-C_{6}F_{5})$ . ¹⁹F NMR  $(CD_{2}Cl_{2}, 303 \text{ K})$ :  $\delta = -133.3$ , -134.0 (br s), -137.4, -139.5 (br s) (o-C₆F₅), -166.1, -166.3 ( $p-C_6F_5$ ), -170.3, -171.0 (br s), -171.6 (*m*-C₆F₅). IR (KBr):  $\tilde{\nu} = 2964$ , 2933, 2919, 2128, 1644, 1599, 1516, 1461, 1378, 1275, 1090, 1035, 976, 867, 815, 755, 733, 693, 674, 615 cm = '.

# 4.2.3. [Bis(η⁵-cyclopentadienyl)zirconium(IV)]-dodec-5-ene-7-yne-5-yl-6-[tris(pentafluorophenyl)]borate (4c)

Treatment of 1.50 g (3.91 mmol) of bis(hexynyl)zirconocene 6c with 2.00g (3.91 mmol) of tris(pentafluorophenyl)borane in 20 ml of toluene yielded 2.61 g (74%) of the product 4c, m.p. 152°C (dec., DSC). ¹H NMR ( $C_6 D_6$ ):  $\delta = 5.63$  (s, 5H, Cp), 5.36 (s, 5H, Cp), 1.34–1.15 (m, 4H, CH₂), 1.05–0.80 (m, 8H, CH₂), 0.80-0.65 (m, 6H, CH₃). ¹³C NMR (C₆D₆):  $\delta = 244.9$ , 148.6 (d, *o*-C₆F₅, ¹J_{CF} = 238 Hz), 139.4 (d, *p*-C₆F₅, ¹J_{CF} = 248 Hz), 137.3 (d, *m*-C₆F₆, ¹J_{CF} = 248 Hz), 113.0 (Cp), 112.0 (Cp), 106.9, 105.2, 41.6, 33.5, 30.4, 23.4, 22.5, 21.8, 13.7, 13.3 (ipso-C of C_kF_s not found). ¹⁹F NMR (CD₂Cl₂):  $\delta = -133.1, -133.9,$ -134.6, -138.3, -138.7, -140.4 (o-C₆F₅), -165.6,-165.8, -166.0 (p-C₆F₅), -170.0, -170.2, -170.4, -170.6, -171.1, -171.4 (*m*-C₆F₅), IR (KBr):  $\tilde{\nu} =$ 3120, 2963, 2956, 2936, 2872, 2104, 1731, 1721, 1645, 1517, 1462, 1378, 1273, 1091, 1019, 977, 867, 812, 758, 695, 673, 608, 587, 577, 555, 472, 431, 423 cm⁻¹. Anal. Found: C, 53.19; H, 3.49. C₃₈H₂₈BF₁₅Zr (871.6). Calc.: C, 53.63; H, 3.13%.

# 4.2.4. [Bis(η⁵-cyclopentadienyl)zirconium(IV)]-1,4-diphenyl-but-1-ene-3-yne-1-yl-2-[tris(pentafluorophenyl)]borate (**4d**)

Treatment of 200 mg (0.47 mmol) of bis(phenylethynyl)zirconocene with 242 mg (0.47 mmol) of tris(pentafluorophenyl)borane in 10 ml of toluene yielded 380 mg (79%) of the brown betaine 4d, m.p. 5 °C (dec.). ¹H NMR (C₆D₆):  $\delta = 8.02$  (br s, 5H, Ph), 7.31 (br s, 5H, Ph), 5.27 (br s, 10H, Cp). ¹³C NMR (C₇D₈):  $\delta = 244.8$ , 148.5 (d, o-C₆F₅, ¹J_{CF} = 260 Hz), 146.2, 139.5 (d, p-C₆F₅, ¹J_{CF} = 236 Hz), 137.4 (d, m-C₆F₅, ¹J_{CF} = 240 Hz), 131.5, i31.3, 129.7, 129.2, 125.9, 122.3 (Ph), 119.5, 114.4 (Cp), 111.7, 102.9 (*ipso*-C of C₆F₅ not found). IR (KBr):  $\tilde{\nu} = 3113$ , 3054, 3027, 2964, 1646, 1594, 1519, 1466, 1383, 126, 1091, 1022, 978, 817, 736, 697, 472 cm⁻¹.

# 4.2.5. [Bis( $\eta^{5}$ -cyclopentadienyl)zirconium(IV)]-1,4-biscyclohexyl-but-1-ene-3-yne-1-yl-2-[tris(pentafluorophenyl)]borate (4e)

Treatment of 600 mg (1.38 mmol) of bis(cyclohexylethynyl)zirconocene **6e** with 760 mg (1.38 mmol) of tris(pentafluorophenyl)borane in 20 ml of toluene yielded 990 mg (68%) of the orange colored betaine **4e**, m.p. 133 °C (DSC). ¹H NMR (C₆D₆):  $\delta$  = 5.69 (s, 5H, Cp), 5.44 (s, 5H, Cp), i.8-1.2 (m, 22H, cyclohexyl); (toluene: 7.1-7.0 (m, 5H, Ph), 2.11 (s, 3H, CH₃)). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃):  $\delta$  = 243.8, 148.0 (d, *o*-C₆F₅, ¹J_{CF} = 238.4Hz), 138.8 (d, *p*-C₆F₅, ¹J_{CF} = 235 Hz), 136.8 (d, *m*-C₆F₅, ¹J_{CF} = 242 Hz), 112.7 (Cp), 111.8 (Cp), 109.8, 109.1, 50.6, 35.5, 34.4, 33.4, 32.7, 31.9, 26.2, 26.0 (cyclohexyl); (toluene: 129.0, 128.2, 125.3, 115.9 (Ph), 24.8 (CH₃)). IR (KBr):  $\tilde{\nu}$  = 3123, 2935, 2857, 2100, 1642, 1513, 1462, 1371, 1280, 1085, 1015, 978, 814 cm⁻¹. Anal. Found: C, 56.47; H, 3.64. C₄₄ H₃₂ BF₁₅Zr +947.8). Calc.: C, 57.41; H, 3.63%.

# 4.2.6. |Bis(η⁵-cyclopentadienyl)titanium(IV)]-hex-2ene-4-yne-2-yl-3-|tris(pentafluorophenyl)]borate (**4f**)

Treatment of 1.50 g (5.90 mmol) of bis(propynyl)titanocene (6f) with 3.00g (5.90 mmol) of tris(pentafluorophenyl)borane in 60 ml of toluene yielded 4.00 g (5.22 mmol, 88%) of the violet colored betaine 4f, m.p. 74°C (dec., DSC). ¹H NMR ( $C_6 D_6$ ):  $\delta = 5.24$ (br s, 10H, Cp), 1.99 (s, 3H, CH₃), 0.79 (s, 3H, CH₃); (toluene: 7.14-6.95 (m, 5H, Ph), 2.10 (s, 3H, CH₃)). ³C NMR (CD₂Cl₂):  $\delta = 262.7$ , 152.7 (d, *o*-C₆F₅, ¹J_{CF} = 232 Hz), 143.0 (d, p-C₆F₅,  ${}^{1}J_{CF}$  = 240 Hz), 139.9 (d,  $m - C_6 F_5$ ,  ${}^{1}J_{CF} = 240 \text{ Hz}$ ), 119.6 (Cp), 104.9, 99.6, 24.5, 10.1; (toluene: 141.4, 132.4, 131.6, 128.7 (Ph), 24.5  $(CH_3)$ ). IR (KBr):  $\tilde{\nu} = 3131, 3033, 2967, 2921, 2144,$ 1643, 1517, 1462, 1377, 1278, 1093, 1020, 979, 871, 827, 786, 733, 698, 672, 470 cm⁻¹. Anal. Found: C, 57.10; H, 2.72. C₃₄H₁₆BF₁₅Ti · C₇H₈ (860.3). Calc.: C, 57.24; H. 2.81%.

# 4.2.7. [Bis( $\eta^{s}$ -cyclopentadienyl)hafnium(IV)]-hex-2ene-4-yne-2-yl-3-[tris(pentafluorophenyl)]borate (4g)

Treatment of 2.00 g (5.1 mmol) of bis(propynyl)hafnocene **6g** with 2.60 g (5.1 mmol) of tris(pentafluorophenyl)borane in 15 ml of toluene yielded 3.90 g (77%) of the yellow betaine **6**g, m.p. 78 °C (dec., DSC). ¹H NMR (C₆D₆):  $\delta = 5.27$  (br s, 10H, Cp), 2.34 (s, 3H, CH₃), 1.00 (s, 3H, CH₃); (toluene: 7.08 (m, 5H, Ph), 2.11 (s, 3H, CH₃)). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃):  $\delta = 251.4$ , 147.9 (d, *o*-C₆F₅, ¹J_{CF} = 235 Hz). 138.7 (d, *p*-C₆F₅, ¹J_{CF} = 254 Hz), 136.6 (d, *m*-C₆F₅, ¹J_{CF} = 245 Hz), 111.7 (Cp), 107.3, 96.4, 26.9 (CH₃), 21.4 (CH₃); (toluene: 129.0, 128.2, 125.3, 114.1 (Ph), 7.78 (CH₃), *ipso*-C of C₆F₅ not found). IR (KBr):  $\tilde{\nu} = 3118$ , 2967, 2927, 1646, 1517, 1463, 1381, 1279, 1094, 1017, 980, 806, 772, 697 cm⁻¹. Anal. Found: C, 48.15; H, 2.37. C₃₄H₁₆BF₁₅Hf · C₇H₈ (990.9). Calc.: C, 49.70; H, 2.44%.

X-ray structure analysis of 4g:  $C_{40}H_{22}BF_{15}Hf$ (976.88), crystal size  $0.7 \times 0.5 \times 0.4$  mm, T = 223 K,  $\lambda = 0.71073$  Å, monoclinic, space group  $P2_1/n$  (No. 14), cell parameters a = 13.242(6) Å, b = 16.493(7) Å, c = 16.865(4)Å,  $\beta = 106.24(2)^{\circ}$ , V = 3536(2)Å³, Z =4,  $\rho_{calcd.} = 1.835 \, \text{g cm}^{-3}$ ,  $\mu = 30.6 \, \text{cm}^{-1}$ , 7458 collected reflections, 7148 independent and 4635 observed reflections, full matrix least squares refinement on  $F^2$ , R =0.096,  $wR^2 = 0.231$ . Selected bond lengths (Å) and angles (deg): Hf-C2 2.65(2), Hf-C3 2.33(2), Hf-C4 2.63(2), Hf-C5 2.15(2), C1-C2 1.49(3), C2-C3 1.20(2), C3-C4 1.45(2), C4-C5 1.35(2), C4-B 1.66(2), C5-C6 1.49(2); C1-C2-C3 174(2), C2-C3-C4 176(2), C3-C4-C5 117(2), C3-C4-B 114(1), C5-C4-B 129(2), C4-C5-C6 124(2). Further information about the X-ray structure analysis can be obtained from the Fachinformationszentrum Karlsruhe, D-76344 Eggenstein-Leopoldshafen, on quoting the depository number CSD-405297, the names of the authors, and the journal citation.

# 4.2.8. [Bis(η³-cyclopentadienyl)hafnium(IV)]-1,4-diphenyl-but-1-ene-3-yne-1-yl-2-[tris(pentafluorophenyl)]borate (4h)

Treatment of 100 mg (0.20 mmol) of bis(phenylethynyl)hafnocene **6h** with 100 mg (0.20 mmol) of tris(pentafluorophenyl)borane in 10 ml of toluene yielded 130 mg (65%) of the brown colored betaine **6h**, m.p. 5°C (dec.). ¹H NMR ( $C_6D_6$ ):  $\delta = 8.10$  (br s, 5H, Ph), 7.30 (br s, 5H, Ph), 5.26 (br s, 10H, Cp); (toluene:7.08 (m, 5H, Ph), 2.11 (CH₃)). IR (KBr):  $\tilde{\nu} = 3117$ , 3056, 3031, 2961, 2927, 2859, 1643, 1525, 1472, 1387, 1268, 1084, 1025, 979, 827, 761, 702 cm⁻¹. Anal. Found: C, 54.31; H, 2.80. C₄₄H₂₀BF₁₅Hf · C₇H₈ (1115.1). Calc.: C, 54.94; H, 2.53%.

# 4.2.9. [Bis( $\eta^{s}$ -cyclopentadienyl)hafnium(IV)]-1,4bis(trimethylsilyl)-but-1-ene-3-yne-1-yl-2-[tris(pentafluorophenyl)]borate (**4i**)

Treatment of 200 mg (0.40 mmol) of bis(trimethylsilyl)hafnocene **6i** with 204 mg (0.40 mmol) of tris(pentafluorophenyl)borane in 10 ml of toluene yielded 370 mg (92%) of the orange colored betaine **4i**, m.p. 20°C (dec.). ¹H NMR ( $C_6D_6$ ):  $\delta = 5.86$  (s, 10H, Cp), 0.08 (s, 18H, CH₃). ¹³C NMR ( $C_7D_8$ , 243 K):  $\delta =$ 173.6, 148.7 (d,  $o-C_6F_5$ , ¹ $J_{CF} = 242$  Hz), 140.4 (d,  $p-C_6F_5$ , ¹ $J_{CF} = 240$  Hz), 137.6 (d,  $m-C_6F_5$ , ¹ $J_{CF} =$ 246 Hz), 118.5 (*ipso-C* of  $C_6F_5F$ ), 1¹8.2, 112.9 (Cp), 101.7, 1.4 (CH₃), -0.50 (CH₃). IR (KBr):  $\tilde{\nu} = 3131$ , 2960, 2908, 1980, 1651, 1525, 1473, 1387, 1262, 1091, 992, 847, 828, 762, 690 cm⁻¹. Anal. Found: C, 44.53; H, 2.75.  $C_{38}H_{28}BF_{15}HfSi_2$  (1015.1). Calc.: C, 44.96; H, 2.78%.

# 4.3. Preparation of the 2,6-dimethylphenylisocyaniae insertion product (1)

1.50g (1.65 mmol) of 4a was suspended in 15 ml of toluene. After addition of 1.09 mg (8.31 mmol) of 2,6dimethylphenylisocyanide at  $-20^{\circ}$ C the mixture was stirred for 1 h at room temperature and then the precipitate isolated by filtration and washed twice with toluene to give 1.78 g (93%) of the pale yellow product 1, m.p. 192°C (dec., DSC). ¹H NMR (CDCl₃):  $\delta = 7.12 - 7.08$ (m, 2H, Ph), 6.81-6.78 (m, 4H, Ph), 5.92 (s, 10H, Cp), 2.61 (s, 3H, CH₃), 2.08 (s, 6H, Ph-CH₃), 1.89 (s, 6H, Ph-CH₃), 1.14 (s, 3H, CH₃); (toluene: 7.40-7.15 (m, 5H, Ph), 2.08 (s, 3H,  $CH_3$ )). ¹³C NMR (THF- $d_8$ ):  $\delta = 201.9, 160.8, 149.0, 148.5$  (d,  $o \cdot C_6F_5, {}^1J_{CF} = 238 \text{ Hz}$ ), 147.9, 139.2 (d,  $p \cdot C_6F_5, {}^1J_{CF} = 246 \text{ Hz}$ ), 137.1 (d,  $m \cdot C_6F_5, {}^1J_{CF} = 248 \text{ Hz}$ ), 136.2, 131.5, 131.2, 129.1, 124.8, 124.6 (Ph), 106.6 (Cp), 89.8, 18.8, 17.6 (Ph- $CH_3$ ), 16.0, 11.5, 122.0 (br s, *ipso*-C of  $C_6F_5$ ); (toluene: 129.4, 128.5, 128.3, 125.4 (Ph), 20.9 (CH₃)). ¹⁹F NMR  $(CDCl_1)$ :  $\delta = -133.2$  (*o*-C₆F₅), -161.1 (*p*-C₆F₅), -165.7 (*m*-C₆F₅). IR (KBr):  $\tilde{\nu} = 3068$ , 3031, 3024, 2957, 2923, 2863, 2173, 1816, 1643, 1558, 1513, 1461, 1380, 1317, 1277, 1154, 1091, 1053, 1049, 1019, 1011, 976, 896, 868, 800, 769, 732, 686, 616, 572, 466 cm⁻¹. Anal. Found: C, 58.32; H, 3.31; N, 2.61. C₅₂H₃₄BF₁₅N₂Zr(1073.8). Calc.: C, 58.16; H, 3.19; N, 2.61%.

### 4.3.1. X-ray crystal structure analysis of 1

Single crystals were obtained by slow diffusion of pentane into a toluene solution of 1.  $C_{52}H_{34}BF_{15}N_2Zr$ (1073.8), crystal size  $0.25 \times 0.20 \times 0.10$  mm, T =223 K,  $\lambda = 0.71073$  Å, monoclinic, space group  $P2_1/n$ (No. 14), cell parameters a = 8.871(1) Å, b =25.913(3) Å, c = 20.256(3) Å,  $\beta = 101.37(1)^\circ$ , V =4564.9(10) Å³, Z = 4,  $\rho_{calcd.} = 1.562$  g cm⁻³,  $\mu =$ 3.42 cm⁻¹, 6420 collected reflections, 5969 independent and 2617 observed reflections, full matrix least squares refinement on  $F^2$ , R = 0.054,  $wR^2 = 0.089$ , programs used: SHELX86, SHELX93, SCHAKAL. Further information about the X-ray structure analysis can be obtained from the Fachinformationszentrum Karlsruhe, D-76344 Eggenstein-Leopoldshafen, on quoting the depository number CSD-405299, the names of the authors, and the journal citation.

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