



Phosphorus Chemistry

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metals with cyclo-P₅ ligands in bridging^[12] or end-deck^[13]

coordination modes could be obtained and it was even

possible to synthesise an all-phosphorus sandwich dianion

 $[(\eta^5-P_5)_2Ti]^{2-.[14]}$ While the synthetic strategy for these com-

Stabilization of Pentaphospholes as η⁵-Coordinating Ligands

Christoph Riesinger, Gábor Balázs, Michael Bodensteiner, and Manfred Scheer*

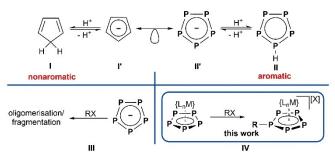
Dedicated to Professor Hansgeorg Schnöckel on the occasion of his 80th birthday

Abstract: Electrophilic functionalisation of $[Cp*Fe(\eta^5-P_5)]$ (1) yields the first transition-metal complexes of pentaphospholes (cyclo- P_5R). Silylation of 1 with $[(Et_3Si)_2(\mu-H)][B (C_6F_5)_4$] leads to the ionic species $[Cp*Fe(\eta^5-P_5SiEt_3)][B-1]_5$ $(C_6F_5)_4$ (2), whose subsequent reaction with H_2O yields the parent compound $[Cp*Fe(\eta^5-P_5H)][B(C_6F_5)_4]$ (3). The synthesis of a carbon-substituted derivative $[Cp*Fe(\eta^5-P_5Me)][X]$ $([X]^- = [FB(C_6F_5)_3]^-$ (4a), $[B(C_6F_5)_4]^-$ (4b)) is achieved by methylation of 1 employing $[Me_3O][BF_4]$ and $B(C_6F_5)_3$ or a combination of MeOTf and $[Li(OEt_2)_2][B(C_6F_5)_4]$. The structural characterisation of these compounds reveals a slight envelope structure for the cyclo-P₅R ligand. Detailed NMRspectroscopic studies suggest a highly dynamic behaviour and thus a distinct lability for 2 and 3 in solution. DFT calculations shed light on the electronic structure and bonding situation of this unprecedented class of compounds.

Introduction

The Cyclopentadienide anion (Cp⁻, C₅H₅⁻) and its derivatives are some of the most utilised ligands in organometallic chemistry. They are widely used in designing catalysts, for example, group 4 metallocene derivatives for olefin polymerisation,[1] and in the stabilisation of highly reactive and thus uncommon species (e.g. the isoelectronic series of Cp^RAl $(Cp^R = Cp^*, [2] Cp^R = Cp'''[3])$, $[Cp^*Si]^+, [4]$ and $[Cp*P]^{2+[5]}(Cp'''=1,2,4-{}^{t}Bu_{3}C_{5}H_{2},Cp*=C_{5}Me_{5}).$ The powerful concept of isolobality^[6] relates the exotic pentaphospholide anion ([cyclo-P₅]⁻) to Cp⁻ (Scheme 1). Scherer et al. were able to isolate the first transition metal complexes bearing such a cyclo-P₅ ligand in bridging $(\mu_2, \eta^{5:5})^{[7]}$ or end-deck $(\eta^5)^{[8]}$ coordination. In 1987, the group of Baudler succeeded in synthesising the first alkali metal salts of [cyclo-P₅]⁻ (II') in solution. [9] The synthesis for such solutions could later be optimized,[10] and initial reactivity studies revealed their potential in the preparation of polyphosphorus compounds.^[11] In the following decades, complexes of various transition pounds usually involves the reaction of a transition metal precursor with a reactive source of phosphorus (e.g. P4 or K_3P_7), a common way to introduce the Cp^- ligand (I') is by salt metathesis with [Cat][Cp] ($[Cat]^+=[Li]^+$, $[Na]^+$, $[K]^+$), which is obtained by deprotonation of cyclopentadiene (CpH, C₅H₆, Scheme 1, I). Because CpH is metastable at ambient temperatures and undergoes [2+4] Diels-Alder cyclisation (dimerisation), the question arises as to the existence of the isolobal parent pentaphosphole (cyclo-P5H), its derivatives (cyclo- P_5R), and their stability (Scheme 1, II). In view of the high reactivity of CpH, less stability can be assumed for cyclo-P₅R. Consequently, attempts by Baudler et al. to obtain pentaphospholes by reacting solutions of [Cat][P₅] with alkyl halides only yielded further aggregated polyphosphines (Scheme 1, III). [15] Moreover, reports on functionalised P₅ ligands coordinated to transition metal fragments are relatively scarce^[16] and there are no reports on neutral pentaphosphole ligand complexes II. [17] Thus, the current literature on pentaphospholes is mostly limited to computational studies dealing with the predicted planar structure of the aromatic parent cyclo-P5H, which is in contradiction with the nonaromaticity of CpH (I).[18] Therefore, the generation and stabilisation of such a moiety seems to be a valuable target and we report herein a first access to complexes possessing a parent-aromatic cyclo-P₅H ligand and related cyclo-P₅R ligands, respectively.

One of the key interests of our group is the synthesis of novel polyphosphorus (P_n) ligand complexes and the evaluation of their reactivity. We could demonstrate that pentamethyl-pentaphosphaferrocene ($[Cp^*Fe(\eta^5-P_5)], 1)^{[8]}$ readily



Scheme 1. Formal protonation/deprotonation reactions (I and II) of the isolobal Cp^- and $cyclo-P_5^-$ moieties, reactivity studies on $cyclo-P_5^-$ with organohalides (III) and our approach of stabilising pentaphospholes in the coordination sphere of transition metals (IV).

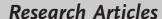
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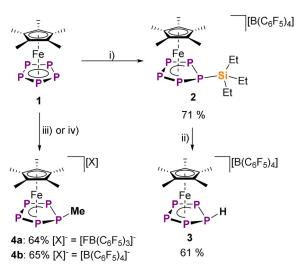




reacts with a variety of Lewis acids to form coordination compounds.[19] It was found that 1 can be oxidised and reduced under P-P bond formation to yield a dimeric dication and dianion, respectively. Doubly reducing 1 even provides a monomeric dianion with an extremely folded cyclo-P₅ ligand. [20] 1 also reacts with charged main group nucleophiles to give products bearing an \(\eta^4\)-coordinated cyclo-P₅R ligand with an envelope structure, representing the coordinated anionic form of the isolobal CpH moiety I. [16a] However, the reactivity of 1 towards cationic main group electrophiles (Scheme 1, IV) remains unexplored. Inspired by recent reports on the protonation of the P₄-butterfly complex $[{Cp'''Fe(CO)_2}_2(\mu,\eta^{2:2}-P_4)]^{[21]}$ and even P_4 (white phosphorus),[22] the question as to the possible protonation of 1 came up. Interestingly, the protonation of ferrocene^[23] or the P₄ complexes $[^{Ph}PP_2^{Cy}Fe(\eta^4-P_4)]$ $(^{Ph}PP_2^{Cy}=PhP(C_2H_4PCy_2)_2)^{[24]}$ and $[Na_2(THF)_5(Cp^{Ar}Fe)_2(\mu_4\eta^{4:4}-P_4)]$ $(Cp^{Ar}=C_5(C_6H_4-4-P_4))$ Et)₅)^[25] occurs at the iron and not on the polyphosphorus ligand. In contrast, if the protonation of 1 were to occur at the cyclo-P₅ ligand, this would yield the first transition metal complex of the parent cyclo-P5H (II). However, the comparably low proton affinity of 1 labels common acids such as HBF_4 (in Et_2O) or even $[H(OEt_2)_2][TEF]$ ($[TEF]^- = [Al-$ {OC(CF₃)₃}₄]⁻)^[26] unsuitable for this purpose (for details see SI). Thus, we envisioned a two-step process in which 1 would react with an electrophile to yield a metastable intermediate, subsequently to be quenched with a suitable proton source. With this in mind, silvlium cations, sometimes referred to as masked protons, [27] seemed to be promising electrophiles to obtain the desired reactivity.

Results and Discussion

When 1 is reacted with the silylium ion precursor $[(Et_3Si)_2(\mu-H)][B(C_6F_5)_4]^{[28]}$ in *o*-DFB (1,2-difluorobenzene), a colour change to brownish green marks a rapid reaction providing $[Cp*Fe(\eta^5-P_5SiEt_3)][B(C_6F_5)_4]$ (2) in 71% yield (Scheme 2). 2 is stable in o-DFB solution at room temperature but decomposes slowly in CH₂Cl₂ and is insoluble in toluene or aliphatic hydrocarbons. Furthermore, the slightest traces of moisture immediately decompose 2. When 2 is treated with half an equivalent of H2O in o-DFB, a rapid colour change to bright red is observed and after workup the protonated complex $[Cp*Fe(\eta^5-P_5H)][B(C_6F_5)_4]$ (3) can be isolated in 61% yield. 3 represents the first transition metal complex of the parent pentaphosphole P₅H. It is well soluble and stable in o-DFB and CH₂Cl₂ at room temperature and can be stored as a solid under inert atmosphere for several weeks. Similar to 2, 3 is highly sensitive towards moisture and air and has to be handled with great care. Thus, we also searched for ways to avoid H₂O during the synthesis of 3, as slight errors in stoichiometry lead to the decomposition of the product. However, when 2 was reacted with MeOH as a proton source, the ³¹P NMR spectrum of the corresponding reaction solution suggested that, besides 3, a second species ($[Cp*Fe(\eta^5 P_5Me$)[[B(C_6F_5)₄], **4b**) with a substituted P_5 ligand is formed, which we assume to be caused by C-O bond cleavage of MeOH induced by the silvlium cation (vide infra, Figure 2d).



Scheme 2. Reaction of **1** with cationic main group electrophiles to yield silylated **(2)**, protonated **(3)** and methylated **(4)** pentaphosphole complexes: i) 1 equiv. $[(Et_3Si)_2(\mu-H)][B(C_6F_5)_4]$, o-DFB, r.t., 1 h; ii) 0.5 equiv. H_2O , o-DFB, r.t., 1 h; iii) 1. 1 equiv. $[Me_3O][BF_4]$ in o-DFB, 2. 1 equiv. $B(C_6F_5)_3$, o-DFB, r.t., 3 h; iv) 1. 1 equiv. MeOTf in o-DFB, r.t., 1 h, 2. 1 equiv. $[Li(OEt_2)_2][B(C_6F_5)_4]$, o-DFB, r.t., 18 h.

The respective product mixture could, however, not be separated. Thus, we sought for an alternative way to access the methylated derivative 4 which we found in the stoichiometric reaction of 1 with a trimethyloxonium salt. When 1 is reacted with [Me₃O][BF₄] and B(C₆F₅)₃ in o-DFB at room temperature, a slow colour change of the solution from clear green to brownish red can be observed. After workup and crystallisation, $[Cp*Fe(\eta^5-P_5Me)][FB(C_6F_5)_3]\cdot \{HFB(C_6F_5)_3\}_{0.5}$ $(4a \cdot \{HFB(C_6F_5)_3\}_{0.5})$, a carbon-substituted pentaphosphole transition metal complex, can be isolated as dark red crystals in 64 % yield (Scheme 2). In addition, we found an even easier way to access the methylated derivative 4 and avoided the stoichiometric formation of HFB(C₆F₅)₃ by reacting 1 with MeOTf followed by the addition of one equivalent of $[Li(OEt_2)_2][B(C_6F_5)_4]$. After workup, the product **4b** can then be isolated as dark red crystals in 65 % yield (Scheme 2).

Compounds 2, 3 and 4 crystallise from mixtures of o-DFB or CH₂Cl₂ and n-hexane at -30°C (2 and 3) or at room temperature (4) as dark green plates (2) and red blocks (3, 4), respectively, which allowed for their X-ray crystallographic investigation. The core-structural motif of the cations is a slightly bent cyclo- P_5R ($R = SiEt_3$ (2), H (3), Me (4)) ligand coordinating to the $\{Cp*Fe\}^+$ moiety in η^5 mode (Figure 1). In contrast to the previously reported anionic compounds $[Cp*Fe(\eta^4-P_5R)]^{-}$, [16a] the substituents at the P1 atom in 2, 3 and 4 are oriented in exo-fashion with regard to the envelope of the P₅ ring (towards the {Cp*Fe}⁺ moiety). The P-P bond lengths in 2 (2.099(1)-2.122(1) Å) are similar to each other, and those in 3 (2.115(1)-2.130(1) Å) and 4 (2.108(4)-2.133-(4) Å) are only slightly longer and in-between the expected values for P-P single (2.22 Å) and double (2.04 Å) bonds. [29] The deviation of the P1 atom from the plane spanned by the other P atoms is less pronounced in 2 (7.44(6)°) than in 3 (25.38(5)°) and 4 (18.1(2)°), which may be attributed to the sterically demanding SiEt₃ group in 2. The P1-Fe distances are





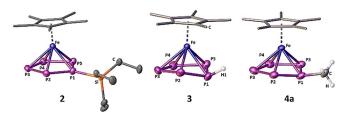


Figure 1. Solid state structures of the cations in 2, 3 and 4; Hydrogen atoms at the Cp* ligand and the Et groups in 2, the anions $[B(C_6F_5)_4]^-$ (2 and 3) and $[FB(C_6F_5)_3]^-$ (4a) and cocrystallised $[H][FB(C_6F_5)_3]$ (4a) are omitted for clarity. As the cyclo-P₅Me ligand in 4b is disordered, only structural parameters within 4a are discussed; ADPs are drawn at the 50% probability level.

only slightly longer (2: 2.3010(7) Å, 3: 2.3729(5) Å, 4: 2.306-(3) Å) than the sum of the covalent radii (2.27 Å), which we attribute to the bonding interaction between the Fe centre and the back lobe of an occupied p-orbital of P1 (vide infra). The P1-Si bond in 2 (2.308(1) Å) is slightly longer than the expected P-Si single bond (2.27 Å), [29] which may again be caused by the steric bulk of the SiEt3 group and points towards a comparably weak bond between these atoms. In contrast, the P1–C bond length in 4 (1.848(9) Å) is well within the expected values for a P-C single bond (1.86 Å). The position of H1 in 3 is clearly visible in the difference electron density map, but standard refinement of hydrogen positions from X-ray diffraction data is known to underestimate their distance to adjacent atoms. Thus, it is not surprising that the determined P1-H1 bond length for 3 is only 1.29(3) Å, which is distinctly shorter than the sum of the covalent radii (1.43 Å).^[29] Consequently, neutron diffraction data obtained on compounds containing P-H bonds shows P-H distances much closer to the expected value of 1.43 Å,[30] even when there is a positive charge localisation at the P atom as in $[PH_4][I].^{[31]}$

NMR spectroscopic investigations of 2 in o-DFB revealed its dynamic behaviour in solution at room temperature (see SI). The respective ³¹P NMR spectrum shows three broad signals centred at 87.6, 102.7 and 149.8 ppm. Upon cooling, the signals sharpen up and at -30°C a clear AA'MXX' spin system can be observed, which proves the structural integrity of 2 in solution. Additionally, the signal for PM shows the expected ²⁹Si satellites and the ²⁹Si{¹H} NMR spectrum reveals a doublet (${}^{1}J_{Si-P} = 61 \text{ Hz}$) at 42 ppm, which is slightly upfield shifted compared to the starting material (δ = 57 ppm).^[28] Similar to 2, 3 expresses dynamic behaviour in solution (CD₂Cl₂) at room temperature, which is indicated by three broad resonances centred at -60.9, 112.6 and 179.6 ppm in the ³¹P NMR spectrum. Consequently, the respective ¹H NMR spectrum shows a broad resonance at 1.56 ppm for the Cp* ligand and an additional very broad signal for the proton of the phosphole ligand ($\delta = 4.6$ ppm). Upon cooling the sample, the signals in the ³¹P{¹H} NMR spectrum become sharper and at -80 °C a well resolved AA'MM'X spin system is observed (Figure 2c). While these signals are only slightly shifted compared to the room temperature spectrum, the PX signal shows additional coupling in the ³¹P NMR spectrum $(^{1}J_{P-H} = 316 \text{ Hz}, \text{ Figure 2b})$. The same coupling constant is

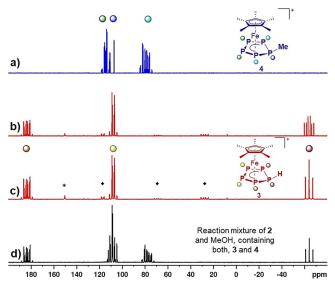


Figure 2. a) ${}^{31}P{}^{1}H}$ NMR spectrum of isolated 4 in CD_2Cl_2 at r. t., b) ^{31}P and c) $^{31}P\{^{1}H\}$ NMR spectra of isolated 3 in $CD_{2}Cl_{2}$ at -80 $^{\circ}C$ and d) ³¹P{¹H} NMR spectrum of the product mixture obtained from the reaction of ${\bf 2}$ with MeOH in CD_2Cl_2 at $-80\,^{\circ}C$; assignment of P atoms to the molecular structures of 3 and 4 is provided by the colour code of the signals; * marks the signal for residual 1 and ♦ a group of signals assigned to trace impurities of an unidentified side product.

found for the P_5H signal ($\delta = 4.6$ ppm) in the 1H NMR spectrum at -80°C. Neither the ¹¹B nor the ¹⁹F NMR spectrum of 3 reveal an interaction of the $[B(C_6F_5)_4]^$ counteranion with the proton. However, traces of 1 can be detected in the ³¹P NMR spectrum of 3 (even after several recrystallisation steps). We thus attribute the observed dynamic behaviour to a "bond-breaking/bond-forming" process between 3 itself and 1 (see SI for further details). In contrast to 2 and 3, 4 shows a well-resolved AA'BXX' spin system with signals centred at 78.7, 111.8 and 114.2 ppm in the ³¹P NMR spectrum (CD₂Cl₂, Figure 2a). Thus, dynamic behaviour (on the NMR time scale) of 4 in solution at room temperature can be ruled out. In keeping with that, the

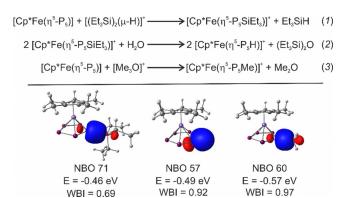


Figure 3. Reaction equations for the formation of 2, 3 and 4 (top); NBO orbitals representing the bond between the P₅ moiety and the respective substituent in 2, 3 and 4, respectively (isosurfaces drawn at 0.04 contour value), the energies of these orbitals and the respective WBIs (bottom).

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¹H NMR spectrum (CD₂Cl₂, r. t.) of **4** shows a singlet for the Cp* ligand (δ = 1.7 ppm) and a doublet of triplets for the methyl group of the P₅Me ligand (δ = 2.68 ppm, ²J_{H-P} = 11.2 Hz, ³J_{H-P} = 3.8 Hz). Consistent with the dynamic behaviour in solution, **3** undergoes partial fragmentation under ESI-MS conditions, and several other species are detected besides the molecular ion **3**⁺ (m/z = 347). This behaviour is even more pronounced for **2**, for which the molecular ion peak is absent and of which only fragments can be detected in the ESI mass spectrum. In contrast, for **4**, the molecular ion peak is

detected at m/z = 361 (4⁺) and only minor hints of fragmentation are observed under ESI MS conditions.

To obtain further insight into the reaction energetics and the electronic structure of the obtained products **2–4**, DFT calculations were carried out at the B3LYP^[32]/def2-TZVP^[33] level of theory (see SI for details). The silylation reaction ((1), Figure 3) of **1** is only slightly exothermic with a reaction enthalpy of $\Delta H = -31.41 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$, which is in line with the experimentally observed dynamic behaviour and instability of **2**. However, the follow-up hydrolysis (2) of **2** is highly

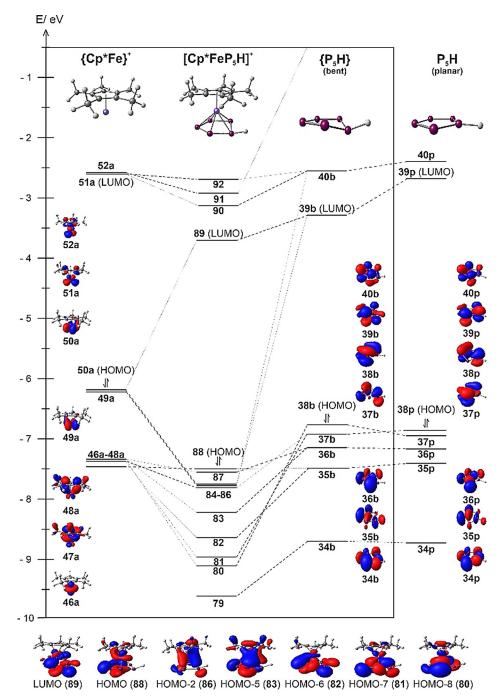
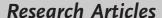


Figure 4. Section of the orbital interaction diagram for 3^+ , which is split into the cationic $\{Cp*Fe\}^+$ and the neutral $cyclo-P_5H$ fragments; as well as selected frontier orbitals of both fragments (isosurfaces at 0.04 contour value), and 3^+ . Additionally, the frontier orbitals of the bent geometry of the P_5H ligand observed in 3^+ are compared to those of the planar geometry (global minimum structure of free $cyclo-P_5H$).







exothermic ($\Delta H = -89.49 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$), which is also the case for the methylation (3) of 1 ($\Delta H = -122.96 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$). The latter is in line with the calculated methyl cation affinity^[34] of 1 (see Scheme S1). NBO analysis^[35] revealed sigma bonding interaction between the P1 atom and the respective substituent in 2, 3 and 4 (Figure 3). While the Wiberg bond indices (WBI) for the P-H bond in 3 (WBI = 0.92) and the P-C bond in 4 (WBI = 0.97) are in line with the formulation as single bonds, the one for the P-Si bond in 2 (WBI = 0.69) is significantly smaller. Additionally, the charge distribution between the $\{Cp*Fe(\eta^5-P_5)\}\$ moiety and the respective substituent suggests a more polar bond for 2 than for 3 and 4. This corresponds with the dynamic behaviour of 2 in solution and the elongated P-Si distance observed in the solid state, underlining the weak character of this bond and the high instability of 2. As 3 displays the first isolated coordination complex of the parent pentaphosphole cyclo-P₅H and the molecular structure of free cyclo-P5H has been subject to numerous computational studies,[18] we were especially interested in the orbital interactions within the cation $[Cp*Fe(\eta^5-P_5H)]^+$ (Figure 4, see SI for details). While the global minimum geometry of free P₅H is planar, the coordination to the {Cp*Fe}⁺ fragment in 3 leads to a bent geometry for the P₅H ligand. However, we found that the differences regarding the orbital energy and the symmetry of the frontier molecular orbitals (MOs) of both geometries are minor. Namely, the HOMO and HOMO-1 switch places by going from planar P₅H to the bent geometry, and the LUMO experiences a lowering in energy of 0.61 eV (Figure 4). Additionally, the aromatic character of the P₅H moiety is largely preserved in the bent geometry as indicated by a comparison of NICS $(1/-1)_{zz}$ [36] values of -31.71/-30.92and -37.19 for the bent and planar geometry of P_5H , respectively, obtained at the PBE0[37]/aug-pcSseg-2[38] level of theory. While the HOMO (88) and HOMO-1 (87) in 3 can be considered as non-bonding, bonding interaction can be found for the MOs 84 (π bond), 85 (δ bond) and 86 (δ bond). The strongest bonding interactions, however, become manifest in the HOMO-7 (81) and HOMO-8 (80) which display large contributions from the HOMO (38b) and HOMO-1 (37b) of the P₅H ligand. The LUMO (89) of 3 is mainly located at the P5H ligand, which goes hand in hand with the large contribution of the LUMO (39b) of the P₅H ligand itself. As 37b itself shows a large contribution from one of the p orbitals localised at P1 and contributes to the bonding MOs 86 and 81 in 3, the hapticity of the P₅H ligand in 3 can be regarded as η^5 . A related bonding motif has already been found in the oxidation product^[20] of 1 and is consistent with the short P1-Fe distances found in the solid state structure of **2–4** (vide supra). In account of the bonding situation in 3 and the aromaticity of the bent cyclo-P₅H ligand, the description of 3 as a coordination complex of neutral cyclo- P_5H and the {Cp*Fe}+ fragment seems appropriate, despite the high degree of covalency between the cyclo-P₅H and the {Cp*Fe}⁺ fragment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we were able to isolate and fully characterise the first transition metal complexes bearing pentaphosphole (cyclo-P₅R) ligands. Silylation and methylation of $[Cp*Fe(\eta^5-P_5)]$ (1) afforded the respective products [Cp*Fe- $(\eta^5 - P_5 R) [X] (R = SiEt_3, [X]^- = [B(C_6 F_5)_4]^- (2); R = Me,$ $[X]^- = [FB(C_6F_5)_3]^- (4a), [X]^- = [B(C_6F_5)_4]^- (4b)).$ Selective hydrolysis of 2 results in P-Si bond cleavage and yields the protonated compound $[Cp*Fe(\eta^5-P_5H)][B(C_6F_5)_4]$ (3), which bears the parent cyclo-P5H ligand. Crystallographic characterisation of these compounds revealed that the P5R unit, in contrast to earlier computational predictions, [18] shows a slight envelope structure, which we attribute to the coordination to the {Cp*Fe}+ fragment. Detailed computational analysis of the parent compound 3 highlights the preservation of the aromatic character of the cyclo-P₅H ligand upon coordination and slightly bending and sheds light on the covalent bonding situation within the cation $[Cp*Fe(\eta^5-P_5H)]^+$. Furthermore, the cationic charge of the obtained compounds may allow for the functionalisation of the cyclo-P5R ligand, which could lead to further advances in polyphosphorus chemistry.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Keywords: electrophilic functionalisation · iron · pentaphosphole · polyphosphorus ligands · protonation

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Research Articles





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