Classical and non-classical phosphine-Ru(II)-hydrides in aqueous solution:

Many, various, and useful.¹

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¹ This paper is dedicated to Professor David J. Cole-Hamilton, an outstanding scientist and a long-time friend on the occasion of his 65th birthday. David was one of the pioneers of applying organometallic catalysts in aqueous solutions and in biphasic systems, a most fruitful idea what has been later very successfully extended into homogeneous catalysis in biphasic combinations of new alternative solvents such as supercritical fluids and ionic liquids.
1. Introduction

Ruthenium(II) complexes with various phosphine ligands play important role in homogeneous catalysis. Hydrogenation of various substrates (alkenes\textsuperscript{1,2}, alkynes\textsuperscript{3}, aldehydes\textsuperscript{4-7}, ketones\textsuperscript{6}, aromatics,\textsuperscript{8,9} CO\textsubscript{2},\textsuperscript{10,11} etc.) may be the best examples but Ru(II)-complexes catalyze many other reactions (H-transfer\textsuperscript{12}, H-D exchange\textsuperscript{13}, isomerization\textsuperscript{1,14}, alkene and alkyne metathesis,\textsuperscript{15} etc.). It is not surprising therefore that much effort has been devoted to apply Ru(II)-based catalysts also in aqueous organometallic catalysis.\textsuperscript{16-18} In most cases solubilization of such catalysts in water was achieved by ligands having certain number of sulfonate groups generally with sodium cations. Although the main drive for using water-soluble catalysts in biphasic systems is in the recovery of the expensive catalysts and isolation of the valuable products by phase separation,\textsuperscript{16-19} the aqueous medium may also significantly influence the properties of the transition metal complexes relative to those of their analogues in organic solvents.

The monosulfonated triphenylphosphine (\textit{m}tppms; sodium 3-diphenylphosphinobenzenesulfonate) was introduced into coordination chemistry in 1958 and studies on the stabilities of its metal complexes played significant role in shaping the concept of the „Ahrland-Chatt triangle“.\textsuperscript{20} The use of \textit{m}tppms in catalysis\textsuperscript{2} started in 1973 when it was applied for stabilization of low-valent transition metal ions and for synthesis of water-soluble analogues of active hydrogenation catalysts such as [RhCl(PPh\textsubscript{3})\textsubscript{3}] and [RuHCl(PPh\textsubscript{3})\textsubscript{3}]. [RuHCl(\textit{m}tppms)\textsubscript{3}] (1) was first obtained in pure form via ligand exchange in [RuHCl(PPh\textsubscript{3})\textsubscript{3}] by Borowski, Cole-Hamilton and Wilkinson in 1978 who characterized it by using infrared and NMR spectroscopies and found a broad hydride resonance in aqueous solution at $\delta_H = -18.8$ ppm.\textsuperscript{1} Broadness of this resonance was rationalized either by slow interchange of the \textit{m}tppms ligands in the coordination sphere of ruthenium(II) or by dissociation of a phosphine
ligand leading to formation of \([\text{RuHCl(H}_2\text{O)(mtpmps)}]_2\) and subsequent interchange of free and coordinated mtpmps. Nevertheless, based on the \(^{31}\text{P}\) NMR spectrum it was concluded that phosphine dissociation did not occur. Another interesting observation disclosed in this pioneering article was that at elevated temperatures the originally red aqueous solutions of 1 reacted with \(\text{H}_2\) resulting in pale yellow solutions which were active in biphasic hydrogenation and isomerization of hex-1-ene. The nature of the hydride species likely to act as catalyst in these yellow solutions was not investigated.

Reaction of \(\text{RuCl}_3\).aq and mtpmps in refluxing ethanol yielded a light brown complex which was originally formulated\(^{2(d)}\) as \([\text{RuCl}_2(\text{mtpmps)}]_2\) but later identified by Sánchez-Delgado et al. as \([\{\text{RuCl}_2(\text{mtpmps)}\}_2]\) (2).\(^{21}\) Uv-visible measurements on hydrogenation of this compound in 0.1 M HCl aqueous solutions under 1 bar \(\text{H}_2\) in the presence of increasing amounts of mtpmps indicated formation of \([\text{RuHCl(mtpmps)}]_3\) (no NMR data).\(^{2(d)}\) Conversely, refluxing a suspension of 2 under \(\text{H}_2\) in wet thf (5 %v/v \(\text{H}_2\text{O}\); thf = tetrahydrofurane) afforded \([\{\text{RuHCl(mtpmps)}\}_2]\) (3) \((\delta_H = -8.7 \text{ ppm (td)}, \ ^2J_{PH} = 38 \text{ Hz}).\(^{21}\)

Basset et al. synthesized similar Ru(II)-phosphine complexes using trisulfonated triphenylphosphine (mtppts; trisodium 3,3',3''-phosphinetriylbenzenesulfonate)\(^{22}\) ligand via ligand exchange in thf/water mixtures (6/1 v/v).\(^4\) \([\text{RuHCl(mtppts)}]_3\) (4) and \([\text{RuH}_2(\text{mtppts)}]_4\) (5) were obtained from \([\text{RuHCl(PPh}_3)]_3\) and \([\text{RuH}_2(\text{PPh}_3)]_4\), respectively, while \([\{\text{RuCl}_2(\text{mtppts)}\}_2]\) (6) was a product of the reaction of \([\text{RuCl}_2(\text{PPh}_3)]_3\) and mtppts.\(^{4(a)}\) \([\text{RuHCl(mtppts)}]_3\) (7) was isolated from the reaction of 4 and NaI. In aqueous solutions 4 reacted with \(\text{H}_2\) in the presence of an excess of mtppts to yield 5.\(^{4(a)}\)

Based on the spectral data a fluxional distorted bipyramidal structure was assigned to \([\text{RuHCl(mtppts)}]_3\) (4) \((\delta_H = -18.5 \text{ ppm (q)}, \ ^2J_{PH} = 25 \text{ Hz})\). For \([\text{RuH}_2(\text{mtppts)}]_4\) (5) a complicated signal with four intense merging line centered around \(\delta_H = -10.5 \text{ ppm}\) was observed with an apparent coupling constant of approximately 35 Hz. This compound was
assumed a dihydride. It is of interest, that a minor species was also detected \( \delta_H = -17.7 \text{ ppm} \) (q), \( ^2J_{PH} = \text{ca. 25 Hz} \). It was suggested that this species was the *aquo* complex [RuH\(_2\)(H\(_2\)O)(mtptpts)]\(_3\) (8) arising from dissociation of the triply charged phosphine ligand in the highly polar solvent. [RuHI(mtptpts)]\(_3\) (7) showed only one hydride signal \( \delta_H = -15.4 \text{ ppm} \) (q), \( ^2J_{PH} = \text{ca. 25 Hz} \) and its structure was taken analogous to that of [RuHCl(mtptpts)]\(_3\).

Hernandez and Kalck prepared [RuHCl(mtptpts)]\(_3\) (4) both by ligand exchange in [RuHCl(PPh\(_3\))] and by the reaction of [{RuCl\(_2\)(mtptpts)}\(_2\)] (6), H\(_2\) and mtptpts under 20-35 bar H\(_2\).\(^6\) The reported hydride signal for [RuHCl(mtptpts)]\(_3\) was \( \delta_H = -18.6 \text{ ppm} \) (q), \( ^2J_{PH} = \text{ca. 25 Hz} \). [RuH\(_2\)(mtptpts)]\(_4\) (5) was obtained by NaBH\(_4\) reduction of RuCl\(_3\).aq/mtptpts, or [{RuCl\(_2\)(mtptpts)}\(_2\)]/mtptpts or [RuHCl(mtptpts)]/mtptpts at room temperature. In \(^1\)H NMR a pseudo-quartet was observed at \(-10.6 \text{ ppm}\) due to an overlap of signals.

It is very important to mention that in all the above investigations no attention was paid to the pH of the NMR samples and all spectra were recorded under atmospheric hydrogen pressure.

Since the seminal discovery of the first dihydrogen complexes\(^{23}\) by Kubas and coworkers in 1984, much attention is focussed on such complexes both from structural, stability and reactivity viewpoints.\(^{23(b),24-29}\) One distinctive feature of complexes containing coordinated dihydrogen (often termed as non-classical hydrides) is in that acid base dissociation of the \( \eta^2\)-H\(_2\) ligand can lead to formation of „classical” M-H hydride species without changing the oxidation state of the metal ion.\(^{30-35}\)

Although the number of well-characterized dihydrogen complexes is high, only a few of them were observed and studied in aqueous media.

In acidic aqueous solutions [Ru(H\(_2\)O)\(_6\)]\(^{2+}\) was shown by Merbach and coworkers to react with H\(_2\) under 40-100 bar hydrogen pressure to yield [Ru(\( \eta^2\)-H\(_2\))(H\(_2\)O)\(_5\)]\(^{2+}\) (\( \delta_H = -7.68 \text{ (s ppm)}\).\(^{36}\) On prolonged reaction in D\(_2\)O [Ru(\( \eta^2\)-HD)(H\(_2\)O)\(_5\)]\(^{2+}\) and dissolved HD was also
detected by NMR spectroscopy. The longitudinal relaxation time, $T_1$ of the $^1$H NMR signal of $\eta^2$-H$_2$ at 400 MHz was found 55.7 ms (296.4 K) and 67.1 ms (321.7 K) characteristic for a bound dihydrogen.

![Scheme 1. Structure of trans-[RuH($\eta^2$-H$_2$)(DMeOPrPE)$_2$]$^+$](image)

The water-soluble trans-[RuH($\eta^2$-H$_2$)(DMeOPrPE)$_2$]$^+$ (Scheme 1) was prepared by Tyler and coworkers by hydrogenation (25 bar H$_2$) of trans-[RuCl$_2$(DMeOPrPE)$_2$] in aqueous solution buffered to pH 7 ($\delta_{\text{H}} = -6.6$ (s, br) ppm; $\delta_{\text{H}} = -11.4$ ppm (quint), $^2J_{\text{PH}} = 20$ Hz, consistent with a cis P-H coupling). The $^1$H $T_1$ (253.1 K) value of the H$_2$ resonance was determined to be 21.1 ms at 500 MHz. The complex also underwent H/D exchange.

Süss-Fink and coworkers have found that two of the three NMR signals of [H$_6$Ru$_4$(C$_6$H$_6$)$_4$]$^{2+}$ in the hydride region at 153.1 K showed $T_1$ values in the range 200-300 ms, however, the resonance at $\delta_{\text{H}} = -17.33$ pp exhibited a $T_1$ value of only 34 ms. The non-classical hydride nature of this water-soluble hydrido-ruthenium cluster was also supported by single crystal X-ray structure determination.

Formation and distribution of the various hydrido-Ru(II)-mtppms species in aqueous solutions is strongly influenced by the pH. With combined pH-potentiometric and NMR ($^1$H, $^{31}$P) measurements we established that the major species below pH 7 was [RuHCl(mtppms)$_3$] (I) while the dominant species above pH 8 was thought to be [RuH$_2$(mtppms)$_4$].

Stoichiometric proton liberation accompanying hydrogenation of 2 also showed that 3 and [RuH$_2$(mtppms)$_4$] were formed via heterolytic activation of H$_2$. This may imply the intermediate role of molecular hydrogen complexes as was demonstrated in case of [RuCl$_2$(dppe)$_2$] (dppe = Ph$_2$PCH$_2$CH$_2$PPh$_2$).
Hydrogenation of \textit{trans}-cinnamaldehyde ((2\textit{E})-3-phenylprop-2-enal) (Scheme 2) became a prototype reaction to test the selectivity of catalysts in biphasic hydrogenations of \(\alpha,\beta\)-unsaturated aldehydes to allylic alcohols. When 2 + mtpms was used as catalyst at atmospheric \(\text{H}_2\) pressure as a function of the pH it was found that selectivity paralleled the distribution of Ru(II)-hydrides: below pH 5 mostly hydrogenation of the \(-\text{C}═\text{C}−\) double bond (formation of 3-phenylpropanal) occurred while above pH 6 a fast and selective reduction of the aldehyde function (formation a cinnamyl alcohol) took place.\textsuperscript{38,39} These results were in agreement with those of Grosselin et al.\textsuperscript{7} but were at variance with the findings that cinnamaldehyde could be selectively hydrogenated to cinnamyl alcohol in slightly acidic solutions at 20 bar \(\text{H}_2\) pressure,\textsuperscript{6} so we decided to study the effect of hydrogen pressure on the selectivity of the reaction. Indeed, at pH 3.04 and 1 bar \(\text{H}_2\) the product was a 61:39 mixture of cinnamyl alcohol and 3-phenylpropanal, however, the selectivity increased to 93:7 by increasing the hydrogen pressure to 8 bar.\textsuperscript{39}

It is of interest that 2 is a very active catalyst of the H/D exchange between \(\text{H}_2\text{O}\) and \(\text{D}_2\text{O}\) and the reaction rate depends to a great extent on the pH of the solutions.\textsuperscript{13} Similarly, there are significant pH effects on the aqueous-biphasic redox isomerization of allylic alcohols catalyzed by 2.\textsuperscript{14}

It could be reasoned that the pronounced effects of the solution pH and \(\text{H}_2\) pressure (concentration of dissolved \(\text{H}_2\)) on the rate and selectivity of the above reactions indicated changes in the catalytic species, conceivably Ru(II)-hydrides. Theoretical calculations also
showed unlikely the presence of [RuH$_2$(mtpms)$_4$] in aqueous solutions and suggested the formation of [RuH$_2$(H$_2$O)(mtpms)$_3$] [40]. Therefore we decided to systematically determine the composition and structure of the various hydrido-Ru(II)-mtpms species formed under H$_2$ in acidic or basic aqueous solutions, at atmospheric as well as at elevated pressures. These measurements were complemented by investigations on the Ru(II) hydrides formed in aqueous sodium formate solutions. Below we report the results of these studies.

2. Experimental

Monosulfonated triphenylphosphine (mtpms), [{RuCl$_2$(mtppts)$_2$}$_2$] [41(a)] and [Ru(H$_2$O)$_6$(tos)$_2$] [tos=tosylate, 4-toluensulfonate] were obtained by literature methods. All reagents and solvents were commercial products of highest purity supplied by Sigma-Adrich, VWR International, and Merck. D$_2$O and NaH$^{13}$CO$_2$ were purchased from Sigma-Adrich. Gases (Ar, N$_2$, H$_2$) were supplied by Messer and Linde. pH of the solutions was adjusted by using 0.2 M phosphate buffer. Doubly distilled water was used throughout.

$^1$H, $^{13}$C, and $^{31}$P NMR spectra were recorded on Bruker AV360, Bruker AV400 and Bruker DRX400 NMR spectrometers and referenced to solvent peaks as well as to DSS (4,4-dimethyl-4-silapentane-1-sulfonic acid sodium salt) and phosphoric acid, respectively. $J$ values are given in Hz. To prevent H/D exchange, D$_2$O or other deuterated solvents for locking purposes were in many cases used in closed capillaries. Samples above atmospheric but below 10 bar total pressure were prepared in Wilmad® quick pressure valve tubes, while those at higher H$_2$ pressures were studied in 10 mm medium-pressure sapphire NMR tubes as described earlier. The longitudinal relaxation time ($T_1$) was determined by $t_{1ir}$ (inversion-recovery experiment) and the transversal relaxation time ($T_2$) was established using the $cpmg$ (Carr-Purcell-Meiboom-Gill) pulse sequence. The $cosyqf$ and the $zgigcw$ (inverz gated
decoupling) pulse sequence was used to determine the structure of trans-
[RuH₂(HCOO)(mtppms)₃].

3. Results

3.1 Formation of water-soluble Ru(II)-hydrides in acidic aqueous solutions

Characteristic NMR parameters of the water-soluble Ru(II)-hydrido-phosphine complexes involved in this study are given in Table 1 while the structures of these compounds based on NMR measurements are shown in Scheme 3. Coupling constants are given only in Table 1. In aqueous solutions all complexes showed broad overlapping δH resonances in the aromatic region. Therefore in the discussion we refer mainly to the proton resonances in the hydride region. Table 1 and Scheme 3 are followed by the description of the formation and properties of the individual complexes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound</th>
<th>δH (ppm) hydride region</th>
<th>δP (ppm)</th>
<th>JₚH</th>
<th>JₚP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[RuHCl(mtppms)₃] (1)</td>
<td>-17,94(q)</td>
<td>60,2(br)</td>
<td>24,4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[{RuHCl(mtppms)₂}₂] (3)</td>
<td>-8,71(t)</td>
<td>-8,73(t)</td>
<td>52,3(d)</td>
<td>52,7(d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[RuHBr(mtppms)₃] (9)</td>
<td>-16,7(q)</td>
<td>59,9(br)</td>
<td>25,4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[RuHI(mtppms)₃] (10)</td>
<td>-15,0(q)</td>
<td>59,5(br)</td>
<td>24,6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trans-[RuH₂(mtppms)₄] (11)</td>
<td>-7,7(quint)</td>
<td>57,2(s)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cis-fac-[RuH₂(H₂O)(mtppms)₃] (12)</td>
<td>-10,4(td)</td>
<td>42,0(br)</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>58,0(br)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[RuH₂(η²-H₂)(mtppms)₃] (d)</td>
<td>-7,2(br)</td>
<td>43,0(br)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound</td>
<td>Chemical Shift</td>
<td>J Coupling</td>
<td>Temperature</td>
<td>Comments</td>
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<td>----------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13) trans-[RuH₂(HCOO)(mtppms)₃]⁺⁺</td>
<td>-19.2(td)</td>
<td>44.0(br)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(14) trans-[RuH₂(H₂O)(mtppms)₃]⁺⁺</td>
<td>-17.7(td)</td>
<td>44.0(br)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[RuH(OH)(mtppms)₂]₂⁺⁺</td>
<td>-8.66(t)</td>
<td>51.1(d)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(16) [RuH(OH)(mtppms)₃]⁻⁻</td>
<td>-8.68(t)</td>
<td>51.8(d)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[RuH(OH)(mtppms)₃]⁻⁻</td>
<td>-19.7(q)</td>
<td>58.5(br)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1, 3, 9, 10: δ₀H(400MHz; 0.1M phosphoric acid/10%CD₃OD; 333K; H₂O), δ₀e(146MHz; 0.1M phosphoric acid/10%CD₃OD; 333K; H₃PO₄); 11, 12, 13: δ₀H(360MHz; 0.2M phosphate buffer, pH(for 11)=3.01; pH(for 12, 13)=10.0/10%CD₃OD; 333K; H₂O), δ₀e(146MHz; 0.2M phosphate buffer, pH(for 11)=3.01; pH(for 12, 13)=10.0/10%CD₃OD; 333K; phosphate); 14, 15: δ₀H(360MHz; H₂O/D₂O capillary; 300K), δ₀e(146MHz; H₂O/D₂O capillary; 300K; H₃PO₄); 16, 17: δ₀H(360MHz; EtOH/D₂O capillary; 300K; EtOH), δ₀e(146MHz; EtOH/D₂O capillary; 300K; H₃PO₄)

(a) [Br⁻] = 2M, (b) [I⁻] = 2M, (c) p(H₂) > 5bar, T_{1min} = 152ms (343K), (d) p(H₂) > 5bar, T_{1min} = 18ms (367K), (e) δ_c(90MHz; H₂O/D₂O capillary; 300K) 174 (1 C, br t, coord. HCOO⁻) J_{CP} 5.

### Scheme 3. Structures of water-soluble Ru(II)-hydridophosphine complexes

(P = monosulfonated triphenylphosphine, mtppms)
3.1.1 \([\{\text{RuHCl(mtppms)}\}_2]_2; (3)\)

Hydrogenation of \([\{\text{RuCl}_2(mtppms)_2\}]_2\) (2) (0.051 M Ru) in 0.1 M phosphoric acid (containing 10% v/v CD$_3$OD) under 1 bar H$_2$ at 333K (in the absence of added mtppms and halide) led to the formation of the known\textsuperscript{21,38} monohydride dimer \([\{\text{RuHCl(mtppms)}_2\}_2]\); the spectral parameters (Table 1) agree well with those determined by Sánchez-Delgado et al.\textsuperscript{21} In the absence of further mtppms the compound did not show signs of bridge splitting on heating or under H$_2$ pressure up to 100 bar.

3.1.2 \([\text{RuHX(mtppms)}_3]; X = \text{Cl}^- (1), \text{Br}^- (9), \text{I}^- (10)\)

Under the conditions above, hydrogenation of 2 in the presence of 0.102 M NaCl resulted in a deep red solution with a well-resolved quartet $^1$H NMR signal in the hydride region, $\delta_H = -17.94$ ppm (q). Under the same conditions with increasing amounts of chloride this quartet is gradually shifted to $\delta_H = -17.63$ ppm (2 M NaCl). In the presence of 2 M NaBr the colour of the final solution is deep bluish red while in 2 M NaI solutions it becomes purple. $^1$H NMR spectra in these cases show resonances at $\delta_H = -16.7$ ppm (q) and $\delta_H = -15.0$ ppm (q), respectively. Considering also the $^{31}$P NMR data (Table 1) it can be concluded that the solutions contained the monomeric Ru(II)-monohydrides \([\text{RuHX(mtppms)}_3]\) ($X = \text{Cl}^-, \text{Br}^-, \text{I}^-$), respectively. 1 has already been characterised,\textsuperscript{1,38} however, the bromo- and iodo-derivatives are new compounds. Interestingly, although all the hydride signals are well resolved, those for 1 and 9 are somewhat broad in contrast to the sharp and intensive resonance of \([\text{RuHI(mtppms)}_3]\) (10). Conversely, $^{31}\text{P}$$\{$H$\} NMR spectra show only a broad signal for each compound at $\delta$/ppm = 60.2 (Cl$^-$), 59.9 (Br$^-$) and 59.5 (I$^-$), respectively.
3.1.3 \( \text{trans-}[\text{RuH}_2(\text{mtppms})_4] \); (11)

When 2 was hydrogenated under acidic conditions (pH 3.01) in the presence of excess mtppms applying hydrogen pressure (>5 bar) a yellow solution was obtained. Solutions of [RuHCl(mtppms)_3] are deep red therefore this colour indicated formation of a new compound. Indeed, the \(^1\)H NMR spectrum contained a well resolved quintet at \( \delta_\text{H} = -7.7 \) ppm (quint) while \(^{31}\)P\{H\} NMR showed a singlet at \( \delta_\text{P} = -57.2 \) ppm; both refer to four equivalent phosphine ligands in the coordination sphere. The NMR spectra did not change up to 100 bar H\(_2\) pressure. Integrated signal intensities in the hydride and aromatic region as well as those of the bound and free phosphorus signals showed a 2:1 hydride:ruthenium ratio. Such spectral data are in accord with formulating the species in solution as octahedral \( \text{trans-}[\text{RuH}_2(\text{mtppms})_4] \); such a species have not been observed earlier.

Distinguishing classical and non-classical transition metal hydrides is often based on the criterion of Crabtree et al.\(^{33,43-45}\) According to this, complexes can be regarded as non-classical hydrides (complexes of molecular hydrogen) in case the minimum value of the hydride longitudinal relaxation time \( T_1 \) is less than 80 ms, while the characteristic value of \( T_1(\text{min}) \) for classical hydrides is higher than 150 ms (at 250 MHz). \( T_1(\text{min}) \) refers to the minimum of \( T_1 \) as a function of the temperature, however its experimental determination is not always possible, especially for aqueous solutions where the available „temperature window” is rather limited. Following Crabtree’s suggestion, we determined \( T_1(\text{min}) \) from the plot of \( \ln T_1 \) and \( \ln T_2 \) as the functions of \( 1/T \) in the 303-338 K range; intersection of the two straight lines \( T_1=T_2 \) yielded \( T_1(\text{min}) = 152 \) ms. This allowed unambiguous formulation of the complex formed in acidic solutions under H\(_2\) pressure as the classical dihydride: \( \text{trans-}[\text{RuH}_2(\text{mtppms})_4] \). It is important to mention that 11 (\( \delta_\text{H} = -7.7 \) ppm) is not the mtppms-containing analogue of \( \text{[RuH}_2(\text{mtppts})_4] \) reported by Basset et al. (\( \delta_\text{H} = -10.4 \) ppm)\(^{4(a)}\) and by Hernandez and Kalck (\( \delta_\text{H} = -10.6 \) ppm)\(^6\) (see below).
3.2 Formation of water-soluble Ru(II)-hydrides in neutral or basic aqueous solutions

3.2.1 cis-fac-[RuH₂(H₂O)(mtppms)₃]; (12)

[RuH₂(mtptts)₄] was prepared earlier by ligand exchange⁴(a) in [RuH₂(PPh₃)₄] and atmospheric hydrogenation⁴(a) of [RuHCl(mtptpts)₃] as well as by NaBH₄ reduction⁶ of RuCl₃.aq/mtptpts, [{RuCl₂(mtptpts)₂}₂/mtptpts, or [RuHCl(mtptpts)₃]. It is of interest, that in the latter three cases the conditions are basic, neutral in the ligand exchange process, and possibly slightly acidic in hydrogenation of [RuHCl(mtptpts)₃] due to heterolytic splitting of H₂.

Elemental analysis of the yellow solid agreed with that of a tetrakisphosphine complex. However, solution characterization was never unambiguous since the hydride resonance around δH = −10.5 ppm was broad and not well resolved.

In our studies on the pH dependence of the formation of Ru(II)-hydrides we observed similar overlapping ¹H resonances (at −10.3 ppm) and based on analogy of mtppms- and mtptpts-containing complexes assigned it to the species cis-[RuH₂(mtppms)₄].¹ In those measurements [{RuCl₂(mtppms)₂}₂] was hydrogenated in the presence of excess mtppms (Ru:P=1:6). When this reaction was now reinvestigated, it was found that at pH 10.0 the ³¹P NMR spectrum of a solution with a Ru:P=1:3 ratio did not show the presence of free mtppms. Conversely, in solutions with Ru:P=1:4 or 1:5, the ratio of bound and free mtppms was 3:1 and 3:2, respectively. Based on these measurements we concluded that even in an excess of phosphine ligand the Ru-containing species was cis-fac-[RuH₂(H₂O)(mtppms)₃]. The hydride resonance can now be interpreted as a doublet of triplets with close coupling constants giving rise to a „pseudo quartet”.

3.2.2 [RuH₂(η²-H₂)(mtppms)₃]; (13)
Under slight H$_2$ pressure (>5 bar), basic (pH 10.0) aqueous solutions of \([\{RuCl_2(mtppms)_{2}\}]_2\) + mtppms (Ru:P = 1:4) displayed an $^1$H NMR spectrum containing only a rather broad singlet at $\delta_H = -7.2$ ppm. The spectrum was unchanged up to 100 bar H$_2$ and no fine structure could be resolved. From integrated intensities of the spectra it could be established, that the species in solution contained 4H and 3P per Ru. Using the NMR techniques described for trans-[RuH$_2$(mtppms)$_3$] (see 3.1.3), the temperature dependence of $T_1$ and $T_2$ allowed the determination of $T_1(\text{min}) = 18$ ms. This value is characteristic for a dihydrogen complex and we suggest the species in basic solutions under H$_2$ pressure to be [RuH$_2$(\(\eta^2\)-H$_2$)(mtppms)$_3$]. The broad singlet in $^1$H NMR may indicate a fast site exchange of the four hydrogens. The same solutions under atmospheric H$_2$ contain cis-fac-[RuH$_2$(H$_2$O)(mtppms)$_3$] (see 3.2.1) so formation of [RuH$_2$(\(\eta^2\)-H$_2$)(mtppms)$_3$] involves the replacement of an H$_2$O ligand at elevated H$_2$ pressures. Studies on similar H$_2$/H$_2$O exchanges showed such processes feasible, however, those measurements were made in thf or hexane solutions of W(0)-aqua complexes$^{46}$ or in CH$_2$Cl$_2$ solutions of Ru(II)-hydridotris(1-pyrazolyl)borate complexes.$^{47}$ Although a water-soluble [RuH($\eta^2$-H$_2$)(PP)$_2$] (PP=chelating bisphosphine) complex is known$^{37}$, to our knowledge, [RuH$_2$(\(\eta^2\)-H$_2$)(mtppms)$_3$] is the first water-soluble molecular hydrogen complex of Ru(II) with monodentate phosphine ligands.

3.3 Formation of the water-soluble Ru(II)-hydrides trans-[RuH$_2$(HCOO)(mtppms)$_3$]$^-$(14) and trans-[RuH$_2$(H$_2$O)(mtppms)$_3$] (15) in aqueous formate solutions

In addition to using H$_2$ of various pressures, biphasic hydrogenations can be achieved also by hydrogen transfer from aqueous sodium formate. In such a transfer hydrogenation reduction of cinnamaldehyde with 2 + mtppms catalyst we observed very selective formation of cinnamyl alcohol ((2E)-3-phenylprop-2-en-1-ol) with 3-phenylpropanal or the fully saturated
product, 3-phenylpropanol below the GC detection limit. It was therefore of interest to establish the nature of the catalytic species in aqueous formate solutions.

Reactions of \([\{\text{RuCl}_2(\text{mtppms})_2\}_2]\) (0.042 M Ru), \(\text{mtppms}\) (0.17 M) with HCOONa (0.84 M) in a \(\text{H}_2\text{O (D}_2\text{O capillary)}\) under an argon atmosphere at 300 K temperature led to the appearance of two \(^1\text{H}\) NMR signals in the hydride region. In the first few minutes of the reaction only the one at \(\delta_H = -19.2\text{ppm (td)}\) could be seen while the other at \(\delta_H = -17.7\text{ ppm (td)}\) grew in gradually in about 1 hour. Our earlier studies have shown that one has to consider the presence of formato complexes under such conditions. Therefore one of the compounds (\(\delta_H = -19.2\text{ ppm}\)) was assumed to be \(\text{trans-}[\text{RuH}_2(\text{HCOO})(\text{mtppms})_3]^-\) while the other (\(\delta_H = -17.7\text{ ppm}\)) \(\text{trans-}[\text{RuH}_2(\text{H}_2\text{O})(\text{mtppms})_3]^-\). \(^{31}\text{P}\) COSY spectra revealed that \(\text{trans-}[\text{RuH}_2(\text{HCOO})(\text{mtppms})_3]^-\) had \(\delta_{\text{P(A)}} = 44.0\text{ ppm (s)}\) and \(\delta_{\text{P(B)}} = 79.2\text{ ppm (t)},\) while \(\text{trans-}[\text{RuH}_2(\text{H}_2\text{O})(\text{mtppms})_3]^-\) displayed \(\delta_{\text{P(A)}} = 44.0\text{ ppm (s)}\) and \(\delta_{\text{P(B)}} = 77.1\text{ ppm (t)}\). Selective \(^{31}\text{P}\) decoupling at 44 ppm and 79 ppm led to the replacement of the two triplets of doublets in \(^1\text{H}\) NMR by two doublets and by two triplets, respectively. This unambiguously showed the \(\text{trans-mer}\) coordination in the \(\text{ʻRhH}_2(\text{mtppms})_3\)’ fragment of an octahedral complex. The resonance of coordinated formate in \(\text{trans-}[\text{RuH}_2(\text{H}^{13}\text{COO})(\text{mtppms})_3]^-\) (\(\delta_C = 174.0\text{ ppm, br; J}_{\text{CH}} = 195 \text{ Hz}\)) could be clearly distinguished from that of free \(\text{H}^{13}\text{COO}^-\) (\(\delta_C = 170.7\text{ ppm, J}_{\text{CH}} = 193 \text{ Hz}\)). In the \(^{31}\text{P}\) NMR spectrum the resonance at 79.2 ppm broadened upon using H\(^{13}\text{COONa}\) and although the coupling did not lead to well resolved fine structure \(^3J_{\text{CP}}\) could be estimated approximately 5 Hz what is in the range of \(^3J_{\text{CP}}\) values of similar complexes. No similar line-broadening was observed on the \(^{31}\text{P}\) NMR signal of the aquo complex (15). Altogether these measurements support our assumption that the two species prevailing in aqueous formate solutions are, indeed, 14 and 15. One question remains concerning the time course of the appearance of these complexes. According to the NMR data, in the early phase of the reaction that is at relatively
high formate concentration chloride is replaced entirely by formate. However, mixtures of \([\{\text{RuCl}_2(m\text{ttpms})_2\}_2]\) and mttpms catalyze the decomposition of aqueous formate to yield \(\text{H}_2\) and bicarbonate – the reaction is known to lead to equilibrium.\(^{11}\) One reason for the coexistence of 14 and 15 in aged samples may be this decomposition of free formate. The reaction results in a buildup of some \(\text{H}_2\) pressure in the NMR tube under which circumstances 15 is stabilized. Since aqueous HCOONa solutions are basic (with pH around 8) the conditions are very similar to those favouring the formation of \(\text{cis}-\text{fac}-[\text{RuH}_2(\text{H}_2\text{O})(m\text{ttpms})_3]\) in formate-free solutions.

### 3.4 Formation of water-soluble Ru(II)-hydrides in alcoholic solutions

Heating of \([\text{Ru}(\text{H}_2\text{O})_6]_{\text{tos}}\) in MeOH or EtOH under an argon atmosphere (1 bar) in the presence of mttpms (Ru:P=1:3) yielded deep orange solutions. These displayed \(^1\text{H}\) and \(^{31}\text{P}\{^1\text{H}\}\) NMR spectra closely resembling those of \([\text{RuHCl}(m\text{ttpms})_3]\) (1) and \([\{\text{RuHCl}(m\text{ttpms})_2\}_2]\) (3). However, these solutions do not contain chloride therefore we assume formation of a hydroxide-bridged dimer \([\{\text{RuH(OH)}(m\text{ttpms})_2\}_2]\) (16; \(\delta_{\text{H}} = -8.66\) ppm (t); \(-8.68\) ppm (t)) as well as that of the hydroxo monomer \([\text{RuH(OH)}(m\text{ttpms})_3]\) (17; \(\delta_{\text{H}} = -19.7\) ppm (q). The exact composition and structure of such chloride-free Ru(II)-hydride complexes together with their catalytic properties are under intense scrutiny in our laboratory.

### 4. Discussion

Ruthenium(II) hydrides are important catalysts or catalyst precursors in homogeneous hydrogenation attracting much attention.\(^{12,48-51}\) \([\text{RuH}_4(P\text{Ph}_3)_3]\) was synthetized long before the discovery of \(\eta^2\)-\(\text{H}_2\) complexes, and can be obtained by NaBH\(_4\) reduction of \([\text{RuCl}_2(P\text{Ph}_3)_3]\) in benzene/methanol,\(^{52}\) or by hydrogenation of \([\text{RuHCl}(P\text{Ph}_3)_3]\) in a benzene/50\% NaOH aqueous biphasic system.\(^{53}\) Note, that both methods apply strongly basic conditions. The
complex is characterized by a broad singlet hydride resonance (literature data for δH between −7.0, and −7.1 ppm). It was one of the first compounds shown to contain a molecular hydrogen ligand and consequently reformulated as \([\text{RuH}_2(\eta^2-\text{H}_2)(\text{PPh}_3)_3]\). As described above, the water-soluble analog, 13, is also formed easily but is stable only in basic aqueous solutions under H\(_2\) pressure. Despite the slight difference in the phosphine ligand and in the solvent, the hydride resonance (δH = −7.2 br, s) and the \(T_1(\text{min})\) (18 ms) of 13 are in good agreement with those of \([\text{RuH}_2(\eta^2-\text{H}_2)(\text{PPh}_3)_3]\) (\(T_1(\text{min}) = 30\) ms). Although \([\text{RuH}_2(\eta^2-\text{H}_2)(\text{PPh}_3)_3]\) was reported to undergo dimerization in benzene/ethanol, aqueous solutions of 13 remained stable for longer times.

\([\text{RuH}_2(\text{PPh}_3)_4]\) was prepared in reduction of \([\text{Ru(acac)}_3]\) with Et\(_3\)Al or by that of RuCl\(_3\cdot\text{aq}\) with NaBH\(_4\) in hot ethanol in the presence of an excess of PPh\(_3\). With no phosphine excess, as well as in the reaction of \([\text{RuCl}_2(\text{PPh}_3)_3]\) with hot 2-propanol/KOH or in that of 1/\(x\)[RuCl\(_2\)(COD),\(\text{aq}\)]/3PPh\(_3\) in hot 2-butanol/NaOH \([\text{RuH}_2(\text{PPh}_3)_3]\) (δ = −10.15 ppm) was obtained. \([\text{RuH}_2(\text{PPh}_3)_4]\) readily loses one phosphine ligand in solution. Similarly, we have found that at 1 bar H\(_2\) pressure in basic aqueous solutions 12 (δ = −10.4 ppm) does not exchange its H\(_2\)O ligand for mtppms in slight excess of phosphine. Conversely, the tetrakisphosphine complex, 11 (δ = −7.7 ppm), can be obtained in acidic aqueous solutions under H\(_2\) pressure from \([\text{RuCl}_2(\text{mtppms})_2]_2\) and an excess of mtppms. The analogous trans-[RuH\(_2\)(dppe)\(_2\)] (dppe=Ph\(_2\)PCH\(_2\)CH\(_2\)PPh\(_2\)) is characterized by δH = −8.62 ppm, quintet \(J_{\text{PH}}\) 18 Hz.

In dilute solutions of \([\text{RuH}_2(\text{mtptps})_4]\), Basset et al observed a small intensity quartet in \(^1\text{H}\) NMR at −17.7 ppm and attributed it to a \([\text{RuH}_2(\text{H}_2\text{O})(\text{mtptps})_3]\) species. In agreement with this suggestion, within this study we characterized 15 (δH = −17.7 ppm, td) which does not form in appreciable concentrations upon hydrogenation of
DFT calculations led to the conclusion that the Ru(II)-dihydrides, such as 
[RuH$_2$(PPh$_3$)$_3$] are more active catalysts for aldehyde and ketone hydrogenations than the corresponding monohydrides, e.g. [RuHCl(PPh$_3$)$_3$].$^{12}$ Our findings give support to these calculations in that the changes in experimental conditions to favour the formation of the dihydrides 11, 12 or 13 (increasing basicity or hydrogen pressure) dramatically increase the selectivity of the hydrogenation of unsaturated aldehydes towards formation of allylic alcohols.$^{1,m}$

*trans*-Ru(II)-dihydrides are rare and in most cases contain bidentate phosphine ligands; to our knowledge *trans*-[RuH$_2$(mtppms)$_4$] (11) is the first such compound characterized with monodentate phosphine ligands in aqueous solution. Formation of this complex already at slight H$_2$ pressure in contrast to the presence of [RuHCl(mtppms)$_3$] under atmospheric H$_2$ may be behind the remarkable change$^{39}$ in C=C vs. C=O selectivity in cinnamaldehyde hydrogenation upon increasing H$_2$ pressure from 1 to 8 bar.
Scheme 4. Formation and interconversion of Ru(II)-hydridophosphine species under various conditions

Formation and interconversion of the Ru(II)-hydrido-phosphine complexes in aqueous solution show considerable diversity – the relevant processes are summarized on Scheme 4. Our studies revealed the existence of rare species such as a trans-dihydrides (11 and 15) and a dihydrido-dihydrogen-Ru(II) complex (13) perfectly stable in aqueous solution. 11, 15 and 13 are all unique in the sense that the hitherto known similar complexes contained bidentate phosphine ligands. Formation of 12 from 2 is in accord with our earlier pH-potentiometric measurements when in basic solutions and at 1 bar H₂ pressure heterolytic splitting of two H₂ molecules in two independent steps were observed to lead to a Ru(II)-dihydride then identified as [RuH₂(mttpms)₄]. The detailed structural studies described here have shown that under atmospheric hydrogen the prevalent dihydride is, indeed, 12; its formation from 2 also requires release of 2 mol H⁺ for each mol Ru(II). 12 readily converts to 13 upon increasing the H₂ pressure. Both H₂O (in 12) and H₂ (in 13) can be easily replaced by an aldehyde substrate. Alternatively, the aldehyde C=O can be hydrogenated by direct hydrogen transfer from 12 or 13 what can lead to selective formation of allylic alcohols.

Transfer hydrogenations in aqueous solutions or aqueous-organic biphasic systems often use Na-formate+H₂O as H-donor and such reactions are usually carried out in concentrated formate solutions. According to our present results, in those solutions the prevalent Ru(II) species is 14, while in dilute formate solutions 15 could be also observed. For the reasons discussed above both are expected to be selective catalysts for the C=O hydrogenation of unsaturated aldehydes and, indeed, that is the case.

Although NMR measurements show the 1 to 9 and 1 to 10 reactions (Scheme 4) complete in 2 M NaBr and NaI solutions, respectively, we wanted to prepare chloride free
Ru(II)-hydrides in alcoholic solutions from $[\text{Ru(H}_2\text{O)}_6]^{2+}$ and mtppts. During such experiments we observed formation of hydrido-hydroxo complexes which showed interesting catalytic properties e.g. in aqueous-organic biphasic racemization of (S)-1-phenylethanol. Presently these compounds are only partially characterized in solutions, and their $^1\text{H}$- and $^{31}\text{P}$-NMR parameters are different from those determined for Ru-hydrido-hydroxo complexes by Wilkinson, Cole-Hamilton and co-workers. Due to their useful catalytic properties these compounds deserve further studies.

**Conclusions**

In this article we showed that in aqueous solution a plethora of classical and non-classical Ru(II)-hidrides can be formed from $[\{\text{RuCl}_2(m\text{tppts})_2\}_2]$ and mtppts depending on the pH and hydrogen pressure. Some of them have organosoluble analogs, such as e.g. $[\text{RuHCl(PPh}_3)_3]$ and $[\text{RuH}_2(\eta^2-\text{H}_2)(\text{PPh}_3)_3]$, others (e.g. 12 and 15) were observed only in aqueous solutions. The easy interconversion of these species with changing pH and H$_2$ pressure allows rationalization of changes in the rate and selectivity of certain reactions such as the hydrogenation of unsaturated aldehydes in aqueous systems.

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