Published in final edited form as:

Inorganica Chim Acta. 2009 August 1; 362(10): 3853–3856. doi:10.1016/j.ica.2008.10.011.

Stereoselective Synthesis of Cyclometalated Iridium (III) Complexes: Characterization and Photophysical Properties

Liangru Yang^{a,b}, Alex von Zelewsky^b, Huong P. Nguyen^c, Gilles Muller^c, Gaël Labat^d, and Helen Stoeckli-Evans^d

^aSchool of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, He'nan University of Technology, 450001 He'nan, P. R. China. ^bDepartment of Chemistry, University of Fribourg, Pérolles, 1700 Fribourg, Switzerland. ^cDepartment of Chemistry, San José State University, One Washington Square, San José, CA 95192-0101. ^dInstitute of Microtechnology, University of Neuchâtel, 2002 Neuchâtel, Switzerland.

Abstract

The stereoselective synthesis of a highly luminescent neutral Ir(III) complex comprising two bidentate chiral, cyclometalating phenylpyridine derivatives, and one acetylacetonate as ligands is described. The final complex and some intermediates were characterized by X-ray structural analysis, NMR-, CD-, and CPL-spectroscopy.

Keywords

Iridium; Cyclometalated Complexes; Stereoselective Synthesis; Circular Polarized Luminescence

Current interest in stereoselective synthesis and in emissive metal complexes has motivated the synthesis of chiral luminescent materials. Before, we reported the fabrication of C_3 -symmetric complexes of Ru(II) and Ir(III), and C_2 -symmetric species of Pt(II), with chiral enantiopure bipyridine- or cyclometalating phenylpyridine-derivatives.¹ Two types of chiral pinene-phenylpyridine ligands have been synthesized as precursors for the tripod ligands, having the pinene moiety annellated in 4,5-position (HL^I) or in 5,6-position (HL^{II}) (Scheme 1).² As reported recently, HL^I yields with $IrCl_3 \cdot 3H_2O$ a HEXOL-type tetranuclear species $Ir_4Cl_6L_6^I$, which shows an interesting stereochemistry.³ In the present communication, we report on the fabrication of a dinuclear complex $Ir_2Cl_2L^{II}_4$ and derivatives thereof. Of special interest is the stereoselective synthesis of a mononuclear molecular complex $Ir(L^{II})_2(acac)$, which has interesting properties, especially with regard to its luminescence behavior.

As shown in Scheme 2, the reaction of iridium trichloride hydrate with enantiopure 2-phenyl-5,6-pinenepyrindine derivative ($-$)- HL^{II} , in a refluxing mixture of 2-ethoxyethanol and water, leads to the formation of a red precipitate. Flash chromatography on a short silica column gives complex **1** [$IrL^{II}_2(\mu-Cl)_2$] as a red powder. Reaction of complex **1** with 2,4-pentanedione (Hacac) and sodium carbonate in refluxing 2-ethoxyethanol under inert gas atmosphere, followed by chromatography, gives the mononuclear molecular complex **2**, $Ir(L^{II})_2(acac)$. Attempts to crystallize complex **1** from various solvents resulted finally in the formation of a

Supporting Information: Experimental details and spectral properties of complexes **1** and **2**.

Publisher's Disclaimer: This is a PDF file of an unedited manuscript that has been accepted for publication. As a service to our customers we are providing this early version of the manuscript. The manuscript will undergo copyediting, typesetting, and review of the resulting proof before it is published in its final form. Please note that during the production process errors may be discovered which could affect the content, and all legal disclaimers that apply to the journal pertain.

solvolysis product of **1**, namely $\text{Ir}(\text{L}^{\text{II}})_2(\text{CH}_3\text{CN})\text{Cl}$. The molecular structure of the latter was determined by X-ray crystallography. Crystals of **2** were obtained from $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2/\text{n-hexane}$.

Figure 1 illustrates the aromatic region of the ^1H NMR spectra of complexes **1** and **2**. These spectra, as well as the ^{13}C NMR spectra, show the presence of two sets of magnetically non-equivalent cyclometalating ligands in complex **1**, while one set of magnetically equivalent cyclometalating ligands in complex **2**. Comparison of the NMR spectra of dissolved crystals from complex **1** and the powder obtained from chromatography, an additional signal attributed to CH_3CN appears. Therefore, the μ -chloro bridge was broken by CH_3CN during the process of crystallization, yielding the acetonitrile coordinated complexes shown in Figure 2.

The ORTEP plots⁴ in Figure 2 show that there are two independent mononuclear molecules of the complex per asymmetric unit. It shows that the formation of complex **1** is completely regioselective, i.e. only *C,C-cis-N,N-trans* isomers are obtained. Metal atoms Ir1 and Ir2 have Δ - and Δ -configuration, respectively. It has already been reported that in the formation of $[\text{Ir}(\text{phpy})_2(\mu\text{-Cl})]_2$, structural models suggest that interligand steric interactions in the meso form favor formation of the racemate.⁵ In the formation of complex **1**, the two diastereoisomers $[\Delta\text{-Ir}(\text{L}^{\text{II}})_2(\mu\text{-Cl})]_2$ and $[\Delta\text{-Ir}(\text{L}^{\text{II}})_2(\mu\text{-Cl})]_2$, which can be designated as pseudoenantiomers, occur in a 1:1 ratio, causing the appearance of the two sets of magnetically non-equivalent cyclometalating ligands in the NMR spectra.

The X-ray structure⁶ in Figure 3 shows clearly that in complex **2**, the metal center Ir1 atom has Δ -configuration and thus it explains the difference between the NMR spectra of complex **1** and **2**. During the reaction of complex **1** with 2,4-pentanedione (Hacac), only $\Delta\text{-Ir}(\text{L}^{\text{II}})_2(\text{acac})$ is stereoselectively formed.

Neither the chiral didentate ligand nor complex **1** show detectible CD activities in the range 250–600 nm, whereas upon formation of the mononuclear $\text{IrL}^{\text{II}}_2(\text{acac})$, a strong Cotton effect is observed in the 250–400 nm region. The absence of signals in the CD spectrum of complex **1** is undoubtedly due to the opposite configuration of the two Ir-centers. Figure 4 shows the CD spectrum of complex **2** in CH_2Cl_2 at RT.

Complex **2** exhibits intense emission spectra similar to the achiral analogous,⁷ displaying a maxima around 507 nm and a shoulder around 542 nm. The luminescence quantum yield, ϕ , was determined using the following equation:

$$\phi = \frac{Q_x}{Q_r} = \frac{A_r(\lambda_r)}{A_x(\lambda_x)} \times \frac{I_r(\lambda_r)}{I_x(\lambda_x)} \times \frac{n_x^2}{n_r^2} \times \frac{D_x}{D_r} \quad \text{Equation 1}$$

where the subscript *r* and *x* denote reference and sample, respectively; *A* is the absorbance at the exciting wavelength, *I* is the intensity of the excitation light at the same wavelength, *n* is the refractive index of the solution (*n*=1.343 in CH_3CN and *n*=1.424 in CH_2Cl_2), and *D* is the measured integrated luminescence intensity.

The luminescence quantum yield of complex **2** was determined to be 6.1% by reference to the $[\text{Ru}(\text{bpy})_3]^{2+}$ complex (absolute quantum yield: 6.2%⁸) in deoxygenated CH_2Cl_2 and CH_3CN solutions at concentrations of 1.3×10^{-5} and $3.6\text{--}6.7 \times 10^{-6}$ M at 295 K, respectively. The luminescence quantum yield was determined at excitation wavelengths at which (i) the Lambert-Beer law is obeyed and (ii) the absorption of the reference closely matches that of the sample.

The circularly polarized luminescence (ΔI) and total luminescence (I) spectra measured for complex **2** in CH_2Cl_2 solution (at 295 K) are shown in Figure 5. The degree of circularly polarized luminescence is given by the luminescence dissymmetry ratio:

$$g_{\text{lum}} = \frac{\Delta I}{\frac{1}{2}I} = \frac{I_L - I_R}{\frac{1}{2}(I_L + I_R)}$$
Equation 2

where I_L and I_R refer, respectively, to the intensity of left and right circularly polarized emissions. The total luminescence of complex **2** is remarkably high, while as is usual for most chiral organic chromophores and transition metal complexes,⁹ the g_{lum} obtained for complex **2** is small: $+0.0019 \pm 0.0004$ as determined at the maximum emission wavelength. Although the g_{lum} values are very small (a value equal to ~ 0.002 corresponding to light that is only 0.2% circularly polarized) and the signals here are weak,¹ they are measurable.

Supplementary Material

Refer to Web version on PubMed Central for supplementary material.

Acknowledgments

We thank the Swiss National Science Foundation for financially supported to this work. G.M. thanks the National Institute of Health Minority Biomedical Research Support (2 S06 GM008192-27) and Research Corporation Cottrell Science Award (CC6624) for their financial support, and Ms. Nicole M. Kosareff for her help in the spectroscopic measurements.

References

1. (a) Hamann C, von Zelewsky A, Neels A, Stoeckli-Evans H. Dalton Trans 2004;3:402. [PubMed: 15252546] (b) Schaffner-Hamann C, von Zelewsky A, Barbieri A, Barigelletti F, Muller G, Riehl JP, Neels A. J Am Chem Soc 2004;126:9339. [PubMed: 15281825] (c) Gianini M, Forster A, Haag P, von Zelewsky A, Stoeckli-Evans H. Inorg Chem 1996;35:4889. [PubMed: 11666689]
2. (a) Ghizdavu L, Lentzen O, Schumm S, Brodkorb A, Moucheron C, Kirsch-De Mesmaeker A. Inorg Chem 2003;42:1935. [PubMed: 12639127] (b) Malkov AV, Bell M, Vassieu M, Bugatti V, Kocovsky P. J Mol Cat A: Chem 2003;196:179. (c) Djukic JP, Michon C, Maisse-François A, Allagapen R, Pfeffer M, Dötz KH, De Cian A, Fischer J. Chem Eur J 2000;6:1064.
3. Yang L, von Zelewsky A, Stoeckli-Evans H. Chem Commun 2005;33:4155.
4. X-ray data for crystals from complex **1**: $\text{C}_{38}\text{H}_{38}\text{ClIrN}_3 \cdot 0.5(\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2)$, $M_r = 806.83$, yellow-orange plate, $0.27 \times 0.19 \times 0.08 \text{ mm}^3$, obtained from dichloromethane by the diffusion of hexane, $F(000) = 3216$. Monoclinic, space group $C2$, $a = 35.163(3)$, $b = 13.2940(11)$, $c = 23.990(3) \text{ \AA}$, $\beta = 132.925(7)^\circ$, $V = 8211.6(14) \text{ \AA}^3$, $Z = 8$, $\rho_{\text{calcld}} = 1.305 \text{ g cm}^{-3}$. Data collection at 173K on a Stoe Image Plate Diffraction System, using graphite monochromated $\text{MoK}\alpha$ radiation ($\lambda = 0.71073 \text{ \AA}$). Image plate distance: 70 mm, φ oscillation scans $0 - 200^\circ$, step $\Delta\varphi = 1.0^\circ$, exposure time 5 mins, $2\theta = 3.27 - 52.1^\circ$, $d_{\text{min}}/d_{\text{max}} = 12.45/0.81 \text{ \AA}$. A total of 32629 reflections were collected of which 14629 reflections were independent and used to refine 775 parameters. 9072 observed reflections with $I > 2\sigma(I)$. $R_I = 0.0351$, $wR_2 = 0.0744$ (observed); $R_I = 0.0616$, $wR_2 = 0.0797$ (all data). Flack Parameter $x = -0.021(7)$. The structure was solved by direct methods (SHELXS-97). The refinement and all further calculations were carried out using SHELXL-97. The H-atoms were included in calculated positions and treated as riding atoms using SHELXL default parameters. The non-H atoms were refined anisotropically, using weighted full-matrix least-squares F^2 . There are two independent molecules of complex per asymmetric unit ($Z = 8$, $Z' = 2$). An empirical absorption correction was applied using the DELREFABS routine in PLATON [Spek, A. L. J. Appl. Cryst. 36 (2003) 7]; transmission factors: $T_{\text{min}}/T_{\text{max}} = 0.265/0.718$. A region of disordered electron density was squeezed out using the SQUEEZE routine in PLATON: 167 electrons for a volume of $2305.6 \text{ \AA}^3$, and assumed to be equivalent to $0.5 \text{ CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$

per molecule of the complex. The molecular structure and crystallographic numbering scheme are illustrated in the PLATON drawing, Figure 2. CCDC-282956.

5. Sprouse S, King KA, Spellane PJ, Watts RJ. *J Am Chem Soc* 1984;106:6647.
6. X-ray data for complex **2**: $C_{41}H_{44}IrN_2O_2 \cdot (H_2O)$, $M_r = 807.00$, yellow cube, $0.30 \times 0.30 \times 0.25$ mm³, obtained from dichloromethane by the diffusion of hexane, $F(000) = 1221$. Trigonal, space group $P3_12_1$, $a = 13.5401(8)$, $b = 13.5401(8)$, $c = 18.8928(12)$ Å, $V = 2999.6(3)$ Å³, $Z = 3$, $\rho_{\text{calcld}} = 1.340$ g cm⁻³. A yellow crystal of complex **2** was mounted on a Stoe Imaging Plate Diffractometer System (Stoe & Cie, 1995) equipped with a one-circle ϕ goniometer and a graphite-monochromator. Data collection was performed at -100°C using $\text{MoK}\alpha$ radiation ($\lambda = 0.71073$ Å). 200 exposures (3 min per exposure) were obtained at an image plate distance of 70 mm with $0 < \phi < 200^\circ$ and the crystal oscillating through 1° in ϕ . The resolution was $d_{\text{min}}/d_{\text{max}} = 12.45/0.81$ Å. A total of 10477 reflections were collected of which 3844 reflections were independent and used to refine 212 parameters. 3009 observed reflections with $I > 2\sigma(I)$. $R_I = 0.0301$, $wR_2 = 0.0598$ (observed); $R_I = 0.0431$, $wR_2 = 0.0614$ (all data). Flack Parameter $x = 0.001(11)$. The molecular formula of this complex is $\{[\text{Ir}(\text{C}_{18}\text{H}_{18}\text{N})_2(\text{C}_5\text{H}_8\text{O}_2)](\text{H}_2\text{O})\}$. The SQUEEZE instruction in PLATON [Spek, A. L. *J. Appl. Cryst.* 36 (2003) 7.] was used to calculate the remaining potential solvent accessible area in the unit cell; 31 electrons for a volume of 550.3 Å³; estimated to be equivalent to one water molecule per molecule of the complex. The structure was solved by direct methods using the program SHELXS-97 and refined by full matrix least squares on F^2 with SHELXL-97. The hydrogen atoms were included in calculated positions and treated as riding atoms using SHELXL-97 default parameters. All non-hydrogen atoms were refined anisotropically. A semi-empirical absorption correction was applied using MULScanABS in PLATON, transmission factors: $T_{\text{min}}/T_{\text{max}} = 0.346/0.422$. CCDC-282957.
7. Lamansky S, Djurovich P, Murphy D, Abdel-Razzaq F, Kwong R, Tsyba I, Bortz M, Mui B, Bau R, Thompson ME. *Inorg Chem* 2001;40:1704. [PubMed: 11261983]
8. (a) Caspar JV, Meyer TJ. *Inorg Chem* 1983;22:2444. (b) Caspar JV, Meyer TJ. *J Am Chem Soc* 1983;105:5583.
9. (a) Riehl, JP.; Muller, G. *Handbook on the Physics and Chemistry of Rare Earths*. Gschneidner, KA., Jr; Bünzli, J-CG.; Pecharsky, VK., editors. Vol. 34. North-Holland Publishing Company; Amsterdam: 2005. p. 289-357. see also references therein (b) Peacock RD, Stewart B. *J Chem Soc, Chem Commun* 1982:295. (c) Gunde KE, Credi A, Jandrasics E, von Zelewsky A, Richardson FS. *Inorg Chem* 1997;36:426. (d) Field JE, Muller G, Riehl JP, Venkataraman D. *J Am Chem Soc* 2003;125:11808. [PubMed: 14505389]

Figure 1. Aromatic region of the ¹H NMR spectra of complexes **1** (a) and **2** (b) (500 MHz, CD₂Cl₂(*), RT)

Figure 2.

X-ray structures of the two independent molecules from complex **1**, with thermal ellipsoids at the 30% probability level. Configurations, selected bond lengths (Å) and bond angles (deg) are: (left) Λ -configuration; Ir1–C1, 1.995(9); Ir1–C19, 2.040(10); Ir1–N2, 2.092(9); Ir1–N1, 2.095(7); Ir1–N3, 2.141(8); Ir1–Cl1, 2.491(2); C1–Ir1–N1, 80.5(3); C19–Ir1–N2, 79.8(3); N3–Ir1–Cl1, 85.42(18); C1–Ir1–C19, 87.8(4); N2–Ir1–N1, 168.3(3); (right) Λ -configuration; Ir2–C41, 1.980(8); Ir2–C59, 2.044(11); Ir2–N5, 2.098(7); Ir2–N4, 2.099(8); Ir2–N6, 2.140(7); Ir2–Cl2, 2.503(2); C41–Ir2–N5, 81.4(3); C59–Ir2–N4, 78.9(4); N6–Ir2–Cl2, 84.02(19); C41–Ir2–C59, 88.6(4); N5–Ir2–N4, 167.5(3).

Figure 3.

X-ray molecular structure of complex **2**, with thermal ellipsoids at the 50% probability level [Symmetry code i) $x-y, -y, 5/3-z$]. Configuration, selected bond lengths ($\text{\AA}$) and bond angles (deg) are: Δ -configuration; C1–Ir1, 1.972(6); N1–Ir1, 2.089(5); O1–Ir1, 2.168(4); Ir1–C1a, 1.972(6); Ir1–N1a, 2.089(5); Ir1–O1a, 2.168(4); C1–Ir1–N1a, 81.6(2); C1a–Ir1–N1, 81.6(2); O1a–Ir1–O1, 87.7(2); C1–Ir1–C1a, 92.3(3); N1–Ir1–N1a, 171.5(3).

Figure 4.
CD spectrum of complex **2** (298 K, in CH_2Cl_2)

Figure 5. Circularly polarized luminescence (upper curve) and total luminescence (lower curve) spectra of complex **2** in CH_2Cl_2 at 295 K, upon excitation at 350 nm. The continuous line in the CPL plot is presented to show the luminescence spectral line shape.

Scheme 1.

Chiral pinene-phenylpyridine ligands and their numbering scheme for NMR in the cyclometalated complexes

Scheme 2.
Synthesis of complexes **1** and **2**