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The synthesis of 1,2-azaphospholes, 1,2-azaphosphorines and 1,2-azaphosphepines

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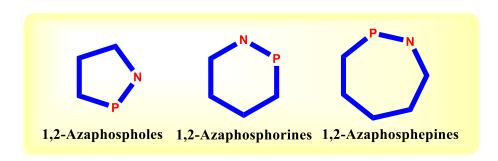
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Abstract

1,2-Azaphospholes, 1,2-azaphosphorines and 1,2-azaphosphepines are prominent phosphorus heterocycles and are of interest due to their potent pharmacological activities. In this review, we provide the available literature data on the synthesis of 1,2-azaphospholes, 1,2-azaphosphorines and 1,2-azaphosphepines.



Keywords: 1,2-azaphospholes, 1,2-azaphosphorines, 1,2-azaphosphepines, phosphorus heterocycles

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1. Introduction

Organophosphorus compounds are important intermediates in organic synthesis and have been widely used as pharmaceutical, ¹⁻⁹ agricultural, ¹⁰ and chemical agents. ¹¹⁻¹⁵ Recently, phosphorus heterocycles have

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received considerable interest because of their unique biological activities as antimicrobial¹⁸ and their anticancer effects. ^{19–22} Ifosfamide and cyclophosphamide are two important examples of phosphorus heterocycles that were launched on the market more than 30 years ago and are still used in treatment of cancer. ^{23,24} Much attention has been directed to the synthesis of phosphorus heterocycles due to their wideranging utilities as synthetic intermediates in organic syntheses. ^{25–31} Among these phosphorus heterocycles, 1,2-azaphospholes, 1,2-azaphosphorines and 1,2-azaphosphepines are of interest in several laboratories due to their potent pharmacological activities such as antitumor, ³² complexing agents, ^{33,34} and inhibitor of mammalian dihydroorotase. ³⁵ The present review is focused on the most methodologies for the construction of 1,2-azaphospholes, 1,2-azaphosphorines and 1,2-azaphosphepines up to the end of 2019 and to supplement the information available in literature. In addition, there is discussion of mechanisms.

2. Synthetic Methods for Functionalized 1,2-Azaphosphole Derivatives

2.1 Cyclization of ethyl N-methyl-3-bromopropylphosphonamidate with NaH

Cyclization of ethyl *N*-methyl-3-bromopropylphosphonamidate (1) with sodium hydride in xylene at 120-125 °C gave 2-ethoxy-1-methyl-2-oxido-l,2-azaphospholidine (2) (Scheme 1).³⁶

Scheme 1

2.2 Cyclization of γ -aminophosphorus compounds with bases

Ring closure of N-[3-(phenylphosphanyl)propyl]prop-2-en-1-amine (3) by using bromine in the presence of triethylamine or 1,2-diphenyldisulfane at 50-60 $^{\circ}$ C led to 1-allyl-2-phenyl-1,2-azaphospholidine (4) (Scheme 2). 36

Ph P N CH₂
$$\xrightarrow{Br_2}$$
 N P Ph \xrightarrow{H} 3 $\xrightarrow{CH_2}$ $\xrightarrow{CH_2}$ $\xrightarrow{CH_2}$ 4 (31%)

Scheme 2

Treatment of 2-amino-4-[hydroxy(methyl)phosphoryl]butanoic acid (5) with phosphorus pentachloride in the presence of triethylamine as a catalyst and ethanol at 45-50 °C furnished ethyl 2-amino-4-[ethoxy(methyl) phosphoryl] butanoate (6) and ethyl 2-methyl-2-oxido-1,2-azaphospholidine-5-carboxylate (7) (Scheme 3). The product 7 was also formed by treatment of acid 5 with thionyl chloride and a catalytic amount of DMF at 100-110 °C, followed by addition of absolute ethanol. Enzyme catalyzed hydrolysis of product 7 to afford the corresponding free acid 8 (Scheme 3).³⁷

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HOOC
$$H_2N$$
 OH $EtOH$ H_2N OEt H_2N OEt H_2N OEt H_2N OEt H_2N OEt OET

Scheme 3

2.3 Reaction of methyleneaminophosphanes with activated alkenes and alkynes

Methyleneaminophosphanes **9** reacted with activated alkenes such as acrylonitrile and methyl acrylate at room temperature to give the corresponding 5,5-diphenyl-4,5-dihydro-3H-1,2 λ ⁵-azaphospholes **10** (Scheme 4), while its reaction with dimethyl acetylenedicarboxylate furnished dimethyl 2,2-dimethyl-5,5-diphenyl-5H-1,2 λ ⁵-azaphosphole-3,4-dicarboxylate (**11**) (Scheme 4).

$$R_{2}PN=CPh_{2}$$

$$g$$

$$R_{2}PN=CPh_{2}$$

$$g$$

$$R_{2}PN=CPh_{2}$$

$$R_{3}PN=CPh_{4}$$

$$R_{4}PN=CPh_{4}$$

$$R_{4}PN=CPh_{4}$$

$$R_{5}Ph=CPh_{4}$$

$$R_{6}Ph=CPh_{4}$$

$$R_{5}Ph=CPh_{4}$$

$$R_{6}Ph=CPh_{4}$$

$$R_{5}Ph=CPh_{4}$$

$$R_{6}Ph=CPh_{4}$$

$$R_{7}Ph=CPh_{4}$$

$$R_$$

Scheme 4

2.4 Cyclization of 2-[2-(t-butylimino)cyclohexyl]acetonitrile with PCl₃

1-t-Butyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-1H-1,2-benzazaphosphole-3-carbonitrile (**13**) was prepared by condensation of 2-[2-(t-butylimino)cyclohexyl]acetonitrile (**12**) with PCl₃ at 50-55 $^{\circ}$ C in the presence of triethylamine as a base. The yield was improved when 1,4-diazabicyclo[2.2.2]octane (DABCO) was used in place of triethylamine (Scheme 5).³⁹

Scheme 5

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2.5 Cyclization of 2-imino-2*H*-chromene-3-carboxamide with chlorodiphenylphosphine and diethyl phosphite

2-Imino-2*H*-chromene-3-carboxamide (**14**) reacted with chlorodiphenylphosphine in dry dioxane containing a few drops of triethylamine at 90-95 $^{\circ}$ C to yield 1,1-diphenyl-4-imino-3a,4-dihydro-15-chromeno[4,3-c][1,2] azaphosphol-3(2*H*)-one (**15**) (Scheme 6).

Scheme 6

4-Amino-1-ethoxy-1-oxido-1,9b-dihydrochromeno[4,3-c][1,2]azaphosphole-3(2H)-one (16) was obtained by treatment of the carboxamide 14 with diethyl phosphite in the presence of BF₃.Et₂O as a catalyst at 80-90 °C (Scheme 7).

Scheme 7

2.6 Cyclization of chromonyl arylidenes and hydrazones with phosphorus tribromide and diethyl phosphite 2-Cyano-3-(4-oxo-4*H*-chromen-3-yl)prop-2-enamide (**17**) reacted with phosphorus tribromide in dry dioxane containing a catalytic quantity of triethylamine 90-95 °C to give two isomeric chromonyl-1,2-azaphospholes **18** and **19** (Scheme 8).⁴²

Fusion of the chromonyl phenylhydrazone **20** with diethyl phosphite at 80-90 $^{\circ}$ C in the presence of BF₃.Et₂O as a catalyst under Pudovik reaction conditions resulted in the nonisolable diethyl hydrazino-phosphonate **21** (Scheme 9). The latter intermediate underwent spontaneous cyclization by elimination of ethanol to provide the chromeno[3,2-d][1,2]azaphosphole **22** as two diastereoisomers (Scheme 9).

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Scheme 8

Scheme 9

2.7 Reaction of dialkyl acetylenedicarboxylate with isocyanates and triphenylphosphine

Dialkyl 2,5-dihydro-5-oxo-1,2-azaphosphole-3,4-dicarboxylates (**25**) resulted from a three-component reaction between triphenylphosphine, dialkyl acetylenedicarboxylate and arylsulfonyl isocyanates (Scheme 10). The product **25** was a result of the initial addition of triphenylphosphine to the acetylenic diester and subsequent attack of the resulting anion **23** to the carbonyl carbon atom of the arylsulfonyl isocyanate to yield the betaine **24**. The latter betaine underwent spontaneous cyclization to produce the 1,2-azaphosphole **25** (Scheme 10). 43

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Scheme 10

2.8 Dearomatizing anionic cyclization of N-alkyl-N-benzyl-diarylphosphinamides

Treatment of *N*-alkyl-*N*-benzyl-diphenylphosphinamides (**26**) at low temperature with n-BuLi in THF in the presence of HMPA or DMPU gave the anions **27**. The developed anions **27** underwent anionic cyclization by Michael addition to the *ortho* position of the *P*-phenyl ring, which resulted in tetrahydro-2,1-benzazaphospholes **28** as a dearomatized species trapped with methanol with high regio- and stereo-control (Scheme **11**). Similarly, the cyclization of *N*-alkyl-*N*-benzyl-dinaphthylphosphinamides **29** by using n-BuLi in THF and subsequent trapping with a series of alkyl halides afforded a series of tetrahydro-1*H*-naphtho[1,2-*c*]-[1,2]azaphospholes **31-36** (Scheme **12**).

Scheme 11

Scheme 12

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N-Benzyl-N-methyl-dinaphthylphosphinamide (29) underwent cyclization by using n-BuLi in THF then adding acetic anhydride to isolate the azaphosphole 38 as the major product in the presence or absence of the co-solvent HMPA (Scheme 13). The acylation then deprotonation of the methyl group of the CH₃CO moiety and trapping gave the product of O-acetylation 37, or C-acetylation 39 with low yields (Scheme 13).

Scheme 13

In the same way, the reaction of compound **29** with n-BuLi in THF then acyclic α , β -unsaturated aldehydes and ketones afforded the functionalized tricyclic 1,2-azaphospholes **40-44** (Scheme 14).

Scheme 14

The reaction of starting material **29** with *n*-BuLi in THF followed by addition of 2-cyclopenten-1-one or 2-cyclohexen-1-one took place with good yield and low selectivity to form a mixture of tricyclic 1,2-azaphospholes **45** and **46** with a *cis*-junction in a ratio of 1:1.6 (Scheme 15). Other products (**47** and **48**) were also formed due to the dearomatization of the two naphthalene rings (Scheme 15).

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Scheme 15

2.9 Rearrangement of 4,8-diaza-1-phosphaspiro[2.5]oct-1-ene with GaCl₃

Reaction of 2-t-butyl-6,6-dimethyl-4,8-bis(methylthio)-4,8-diaza-1-phosphaspiro[2.5]oct-1-ene-5,7-dione (49) with $GaCl_3$ induced an unexpected rearrangement leading to the formation of the complex 50 which stabilized into 1,2-azaphosphole form 51 (Scheme 16).⁴⁶

Scheme 16

2.10 Thermal ring opening of 2*H*-azaphosphirene complexes

The thermolysis of the (2*H*-azaphosphirene)tungsten carbonyl complex **52** at 60 °C gave the nitrilium phosphanylide complex **54**, which reacted with acetylene to yield the 1,2-azaphosphole complex **55** (Scheme 17).⁴⁷

$$(OC)_{5}W \xrightarrow{Me} (OC)_{5}W \xrightarrow{OC)_{5}W} P: \xrightarrow{HCN} P=N \equiv CH \xrightarrow{P-N \equiv CH} HC \equiv CH \xrightarrow{Me} Me$$

$$52 \qquad 53 \qquad \qquad 55 \qquad \qquad 55 \qquad \qquad (59\%)$$

Scheme 17

Thermal ring opening of the (2*H*-1,2-azaphosphirene)tungsten complex **56** with dimethyl acetylene-dicarboxylate and nitriles yielded the corresponding 1,2-azaphosphole complexes **57** (Scheme 18). When 1-piperidinocarbonitrile or dimethyl cyanamide was used, 1,3,2-oxazaphospholene complexes **58** (*meso* and

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racemic in ratio of 1:1) was also obtained beside the desired product **57** (Scheme 18). Furthermore, the reaction of complex **56** with 2-(triphenyl- λ^5 -phosphanyl)acetonitrile led to the formation of 1,2-azaphosphole **59** (Scheme 18). $^{33,48-50}$

Scheme 18

Also, ring opening reaction of 1,2-azaphosphirene complex **56** with dimethyl acetylenedicarboxylate and benzonitrile in toluene furnished a mixture of 2*H*-1,2-azaphosphole complexes **60** and **61** (Scheme 19). The yield of complex **60** was significantly improved to 90% when the reaction was carried out photochemically in pentane at -50 °C. Heating of complex **60** in benzonitrile with sulfur gave the 2-sulfido-2*H*-1,2-azaphosphole **63** (Scheme 19). ^{33,51-53}

Scheme 19

On the other hand, the three component reactions of 2H-azaphosphirene complex **56**, ethyl propiolate and nitriles led to the formation of the regioisomeric 2H-1,2-azaphosphole complexes **64** and **65** (Scheme 20). In case of using $Ph_3P=CH(CN)$ (**66**), a mixture of 1,2-azaphosphole complexes **64** and **67** were formed. Also,

reaction of complex **56** with ethyl propiolate and different nitriles in pentane gave 1,2-azaphospholes **65** in high yield (Scheme 20). 49,50,52,54

Scheme 20

Similarly, the ring-opening of the 1,2-azaphosphirene complex **68** in benzonitrile in the presence of dimethyl acetylenedicarboxylate as a trapping reagent afforded the 1,2-azaphosphole complex **69**. When the reaction was performed with $Ph_3P=NCN$ in dry toluene, the 1,2-azaphosphole complex **70** was formed in high yield (Scheme 21).

Scheme 21

Reaction of the (2*H*-azaphosphirene)tungsten complex **71** with trifluoromethanesulfonic acid, phenylacetylene and triethylamine in CH_2Cl_2 proceeded through P–C bond ring enlargement to afford 2*H*-1,2-azaphosphole complex **72** in low yield (Scheme 22). ⁵⁶

Scheme 22

2.11 Photolysis of azidophosphetanes

Photolysis of 1-azido-2,2,4,4-tetramethylphosphetane 1-oxide **73** (R=H) afforded the cyclic 1,2-aza-phospholidine **75** by elimination of N_2 and addition of methanol (Scheme 23). Likewise, photolysis of azide **73** (R = Me) gave a mixture of *cis*- and *trans*-1,2-azaphospholidines **76** (Scheme 23).

Scheme 23

Scheme 24

Unlike **73**, the azide **77** lacks symmetry and has two possible modes of ring expansion. Thus, its photolysis in methanol yielded an approximately equimolar mixture (40% total) of the isomeric 1,2-azaphospholidines **79** and **81** (Scheme 24).⁵⁷

2.12 Reaction of adduct of phosphaalkynes and imidovanadium with acetylenes

The cycloadduct **84** was generated in *situ* by addition of an equimolar amount of a phosphaalkynes **83** to the imidovanadium complexes **82** (Scheme 25). The cycloadduct **84** was treated with an excess of disubstituted acetylenes in toluene at -78 °C to form the tetrasubstituted 1,2-azaphospholes **85** in 31-71% yields (Scheme 25). ⁵⁸

$$R = t\text{-Bu, 1-Ad, } i\text{-Pr}$$

$$R^1 = t\text{-Bu, i-Pent, MecPen, MecHex, 1-Ad}$$

$$R^2 = H, Me, Ph \quad R^3 = Ph, Tol, Bz, Pr, Me$$

$$R = t\text{-Bu, i-Pent, MecPen}$$

$$R = t\text{-Bu, i-Pent, MecPen}$$

$$R^3 = Ph, Tol, Bz, Pr, Me$$

$$R^4 = t\text{-Bu, i-Pent, MecPen}$$

$$R^3 = Ph, Tol, Bz, Pr, Me$$

Scheme 25

Scheme 26

2.13 Thermal decomposition of 7-phosphanorbornadiene complex

In the presence of piperidine-1-carbonitrile and dimethyl acetylenedicarboxylate, 7-phosphanorbornadiene complex **86** underwent thermal decomposition in xylene at 120 °C to afford the 1,2-azaphosphole complex **87**

R=Me, Ph, CH₂CH₂CN, CH₂CH₂COOEt

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beside a complicated mixture of the regioisomeric complexes **88** and **89** (Scheme 26). When the reaction was performed in dry toluene, the product 2H-1,2-azaphosphole complex **87** only was isolated. When another carbonitrile derivative such as $Ph_3P=NCN$ was used, the thermal decomposition of complex **86** in xylene furnished the 2H-1,2-azaphosphole complex **92** through [3+2] cycloaddition reaction of nitrilium phosphane ylide complexes **91** formed with dimethyl acetylenedicarboxylate (Scheme 26). $^{59-61}$

2.14 Reaction of I,3,2-diazaphosphole-4,5-dicarbonitriles with alkynes

The regioselective cyclization of I,3,2-diazaphosphole-4,5-dicarbonitriles **93** with symmetrical and non-symmetrical alkynes in chloroform at room temperature yielded the I,2-azaphosphole-5-carbonitriles **94** (Scheme 27). In some cases of non-symmetrical alkynes, the other isomers **95** were also formed (Scheme 27). 62

Scheme 27

2.15 Flash vacuum pyrolysis of 5-butyl-3-phenyl-1,2,3,4-triazaphosphole

Dinitrogen was split off from 5-butyl-3-phenyl-1,2,3,4-triazaphosphole (**96**) on flash vacuum pyrolysis to give the azaphosphirene intermediate **97**. This intermediate underwent 1,5-electrocyclization followed by proton migration to form the annulated 3-butyl-1H-[1,2]benzazaphosphole (**98**) and 2-butyl-1H-[1,3]benzazaphosphole (**99**) in a ratio of 4:1 (Scheme 28).³⁹

Scheme 28

2.16 Reaction of chlorophosphenium triflate with potassium metal

Treatment of chlorophosphenium triflate **100** with potassium metal in toluene at 25 °C resulted in a pale yellow crystalline **1,2**-azaphospholidine **104** (Scheme 29). It was assumed that the two-electron reduction of the idealized chlorophosphenium ion **100** proceeded in two steps; addition of the first electron would generate the monoradical **101**. Addition of the second electron would then generate the triplet diradical phosphinidene **102**. The conversion of **102** to **103** took place by an intramolecular P–C bond formation to afford the derivative **103**. Finally, the latter **103** underwent N–C bond cleavage and hydrogen transferred from

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 β -methyl group to the nascent imido nitrogen center forming the isolated 1,2-azaphospholidine isomer **104** (Scheme 29). ⁶³

Scheme 29

3. Synthetic Methods for Functionalized 1,2-Azaphosphorine Derivatives

3.1 Cyclization of phosphinamides using various bases

Cyclization of different phosphinamides **105** using various bases at the boiling point of the used solvent furnished 2-oxido-1,2-azaphosphinanes **106** in different yields through removal of ethanol or hydrogen halide (Scheme 30).^{64,65}

O
$$R - P$$

NHR²

105

106

i, NaH, Xylene (X=H₂)

R = OEt, Ph, R¹ = CH₂Br, R² = H, CH₂Ph

ii, t-BuOK, BuOH (X=O)

R = OEt, R¹ = CO₂Et, R² = CH₂Ph, Me, CH₂CH=CH₂

iii, NaH, C₆H₆ (X=O)

R = OEt, R¹ = CO₂Et, R² = H, Me

iv, Et₃N, THF, (X=O)

R = OEt, R¹ = COCI, R² = CH₂Ph

Scheme 30

3.2 Cyclization of N-[2-ethyl-3-methylhexa-1,3-dien-1-yl]butan-1-imine with RPCl2

Cyclocondensation of N-[2-ethyl-3-methylhexa-1,3-dien-1-yl]butan-1-imine (**107**) with dichlorophosphine derivatives in dry benzene at 50 °C containing Et₃N afforded 1-butyl-3,5-diethyl-1,2-dihydro-1,2-aza-phosphorines (**108**) (Scheme 31). ⁶⁶

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Me Me
$$\frac{\text{RPCI}_2}{\text{C}_6\text{H}_6, \, \text{Et}_3\text{N}}$$
 Me $\frac{\text{RPCI}_2}{\text{N}}$ Me $\frac{\text{N}}{\text{N}}$ Me $\frac{\text{N}}{\text{N}}$ Me $\frac{\text{N}}{\text{N}}$ Me $\frac{\text{RPCI}_2}{\text{N}}$ Me $\frac{\text{N}}{\text{N}}$ Me $\frac{\text{N$

Scheme 31

3.3 Cyclization of 2-aminobiphenyl with PCl₃

Reaction of 2-aminobiphenyl (**109**) with phosphorus trichloride in boiling benzene at 65 °C containing a catalytic amount of AlCl₃ afforded 10-chloro-9,10-dihydro-9,10-azaphosphaphenanthrene (**110**). Compound **110** has an active chlorine atom which can be substituted by a wide range of nucleophiles. Thus, treatment of the product **110** with methyl magnesium iodide in CH_2Cl_2 gave 10-methyl-9,10-dihydro-9,10-azaphosphaphenanthrene 10-methiodide (**111**) while its reaction with aryl magnesium bromide in dry CH_2Cl_2 at room temperature formed 10-aryl-9,10-dihydro-9,10-azaphosphaphenanthrenes **112** (Scheme 32). Also, reaction of compound **110** with (2-methoxyphenyl) magnesium bromide in THF at 60 °C gave 10-(2-methoxyphenyl)-9,10-dihydro-9,10-azaphosphaphenanthrene (**113**) which was phosphorylated with chlorodiaryl-phosphine in acetonitrile at room temperature to give 5-(diarylphosphanyl)-6-(2-methoxyphenyl)-5,6-dihydro-dibenzo[c,e][1,2]azaphosphinines **114** and **115** (Scheme 32).

Scheme 32

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Compound **112** (R = H) acts as a substrate for the preparation of a series of functionalized 1,2-azaphosphaphenanthrenes. Thus, its reaction with bromobenzene in the presence of anhydrous AlCl₃ in current of nitrogen gas furnished 10-pheny1-9,10-dihydro-9,10-azaphosphaphenanthrene 10-oxide (**116**) (Scheme 33). Moreover, its reaction with methyl iodide in dry benzene gave 10-phenoxy-9,10-dihydro-9,10-azaphosphaphenanthrene methiodide **117** (Scheme 33). Oxidation of compound **112** by hydrogen peroxide in ethanol at room temperature afforded the corresponding oxide **118**. Furthermore, reaction of compound **112** with chlorodiphenylphosphine or bis(2-methoxyphenyl)chlorophosphine in acetonitrile in the presence of triethylamine gave 5-(diarylphosphanyl)-6-phenyl-5,6-dihydrodibenzo[*c*,*e*][1,2]azaphosphinines (**119**) (Scheme 33). ⁶⁷⁻⁶⁹

Scheme 33

3.4 Cyclization of naphthylethylamine with thiophosphoryl chloride

Treatment of naphthylethylamine **120** with thiophosphoryl chloride in dry pyridine at 100 °C gave 2-[(naphthalene-1-yl)ethyl]phosphoramidothioic dichloride (**121**), which with $AlCl_3$ at 165 °C for 8 h gave 4-chloro-1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphtho[2,1-c][1,2]azaphosphinine 4-sulfide (**122**) (Scheme 34).⁷⁰

Scheme 34

3.5 Cyclization of 2-amino-3-ethynylnaphthalenes with triphenoxyphosphine

Cyclization of 2-amino-3-ethynylnaphthalenes (**123**) with triphenoxyphosphine in dry pyridine for 12 h furnished naphtho[2,3-*e*][1,2]azaphosphorines (**124**) in moderate yields (Scheme 35).⁷¹

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Scheme 35

3.6 Cyclization of 2-(1H-indol-3-yl)-N-phenethylacetamides with phosphorus oxychloride

2-(1H-indol-3-yl)-N-phenethylacetamides (**125**) underwent double condensation using excess of phosphorus oxychloride at 175 °C to form the phosphoramide derivatives **127** (Scheme 36). Compounds **127** underwent another cyclocondensation reaction through the α -position of the indole nucleus followed by treatment with ethanol at room temperature to yield 8-ethoxy-5,6-dihydro-2,3-disubstituted-9H-indolo[2,3-c]isoquino[1,2-f] [1,2]azaphosphorine 8-oxides **128** (Scheme 36).

Scheme 36

3.7 Reaction of a 1 λ^5 ,3 λ^5 -diphosphete adduct with ethyl isothiocyanate

Reaction of 1,2-dihydro- $1\lambda^5$,3 λ^5 -diphosphete-2-carbothioamide adduct **129** with ethyl isothiocyanate gave the 1,2,4-azadiphosphinine intermediate **130**, which reacted with a second molecule of ethyl isothiocyanate to give the acyclic ketenimine **131** (Scheme 37). This easily underwent cyclization to afford the isolated 1,2-azaphosphinine **132** (Scheme 37).

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Scheme 37

3.8. Ring expansion of 2,3-dihydro-1,2-azaphospholes by dichlorocarbene

Reaction of 2,3-dihydro-1H-1,2-azaphosphole oxides (133) with dichlorocarbene at -25 $^{\circ}$ C gave the corresponding 1,2-azaphosphinine oxides 134 through Ciamician-Dennsted rearrangement (Scheme 38).

Scheme 38

3.9. Reaction of 1,3,2-diazaphosphinines with alkynes

Reaction of 4,6-di-*t*-butyl-1,3,2-diazaphosphinine (**135**) with different alkynes in toluene 100 °C afforded the corresponding substituted 1,2-azaphosphinines **136** through [4+2] cycloaddition, while its reaction with *bis*-alkynes furnished the 1,2-azaphosphinine-based bidentate ligands **137** (Scheme 39). ^{76,77}

Scheme 39

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4. Synthetic Methods for Functionalized 1,2-Azaphosphepine Derivatives

4.1 Ring expansion of phospholenes with benzonitrile

Treatment of 1-oxo-3,4-dimethyl-3-phospholenes (138) with n-BuLi in benzonitrile at -70 °C followed by hydrolysis formed the corresponding 1,2-azaphosphepine oxides 139 (Scheme 40).⁷⁸

Scheme 40

4.2 Ring expansion of 1,2-azaphosphinines with dichlorocarbene

Reaction of 1-t-butyl-2-phenyl-3,5-dipropyl-1H-1,2-azaphosphinine (**140**) with dichlorocarbene by regioselective addition to the C_5 - C_6 double bond at -25 $^{\circ}$ C yielded the 3-oxo-2-aza-3-phosphabicycloheptene **141** (Scheme 41). Flash vacuum thermolysis of **141** gave 6-chloro-3,4-dipropyl-2-phenyl-2-oxo-2H-1,2-azaphosphepine (**142**) and substituted 3-chloropyridines **143** (Scheme 41).

Scheme 41

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, this survey has presented the synthetic methods for 1,2-azaphospholes, 1,2-azaphosphorines and 1,2-azaphosphepines. Most of these synthetic methods require special reaction conditions and specific starting materials that are not available in some laboratories. However, cyclization of amino- and hydrazino compounds with phosphorus reagents or cyclization of aminophosphorus compounds with simple

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electrophiles are convenient and easy to perform. We hope that this review may encourage scientists to create new routes towards these ring systems with important biological activity.

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