

Organometallic Ruthenium and Iridium Transfer-Hydrogenation Catalysts Using Coenzyme NADH as a Cofactor**

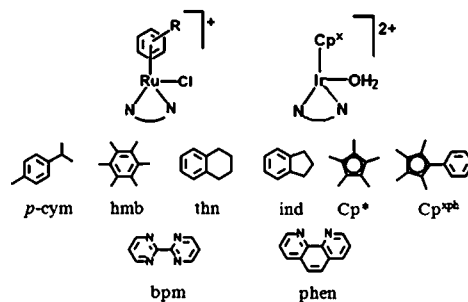
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The rapidly developing research area of bio-organometallic chemistry offers the possibility to design compounds with a potentially wide range of applications in biology and medicine.^[1] In biocatalysis, organometallic complexes have mainly been concerned with the conversion of the coenzyme NAD⁺ (or models of it)^[2] to its reduced form NADH using formate as the hydride source.^[3] Such organometallic compounds include Ir^{III} and Rh^{III} pentamethylcyclopentadienyl (Cp*) complexes and Ru^{II} arene complexes that catalyze this reduction regioselectively;^[3–5] the Rh^{III} derivative can drive enzymatic reactions relying on NADH as a cofactor.^[3b,4] In vivo, both NAD⁺ and NADH play important roles as cofactors in numerous biocatalyzed processes, including energy metabolism, antioxidation and oxidative stress, immunological functions, and cell death.^[6] We are interested in the possibility that organometallic compounds can interfere with NAD⁺/NADH hydride transfer reactions in cells as a novel mechanism of action. We have shown previously that [(η⁶-arene)Ru(en)Cl]⁺ (arene = hexamethylbenzene (hmb), *p*-cymene (*p*-cym), indane (ind), and en = ethylenediamine) complexes can convert NAD⁺ to NADH using formate as the hydride source, and that such reactions might be feasible in cells because cells can tolerate millimolar levels of formate.^[3a] Here we report the first observation of the reverse reaction, the transfer of hydride from 1,4-NADH to organometallic complexes.^[7] We show that half-sandwich Ru^{II} arene and Ir^{III} cyclopentadienyl complexes can use NADH as an hydride

source for the reduction of ketones, and that Ir^{III} cyclopentadienyl derivatives are robust catalysts for the production of H₂. These complexes may therefore be valuable for modulation of the redox status of cells (a potential drug target), as enzyme mimics, and for bio-coupled hydrogenation reactions.

Our initial aim was to improve the efficiency of [(η⁶-arene)Ru(*N,N*)Cl]⁺ complexes as catalysts for hydride transfer from formate to NAD⁺ by replacing the *N,N*-chelating ligand en by π-acceptor diimine ligands such as 2,2'-bipyrimidine (bpm) or 1,10-phenanthroline (phen). Ru^{II} arene complexes where the arene is *p*-cym (1, 5), hmb (2), ind, (3), or 1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphthalene (thn, 4; Table 1) were synthesized as PF₆[−] salts. Complexes 1, 2, and 5 have been reported previously.^[8]

Table 1: Organometallic Ru^{II} arene [(η⁶-arene)Ru(*N,N*)Cl]⁺ and Ir^{III} cyclopentadienyl [(η⁵-Cp*)Ir(phen)(H₂O)]²⁺ complexes studied in this work.



Complex	Metal	Arene/Cp ^x	<i>N,N</i> -Chelated ligand
1	Ru	<i>p</i> -cym	bpm
2	Ru	hmb	bpm
3	Ru	ind	bpm
4	Ru	thn	bpm
5	Ru	<i>p</i> -cym	phen
6	Ir	Cp*	phen
7	Ir	Cp ^{xph}	phen

We found that the formate adducts were stable and did not proceed to generate hydride species. However, when a critical amount of NADH was generated (equivalent to all NAD⁺ initially added) a subsequent color change from bright yellow to dark red was observed, along with Ru–H ¹H NMR peaks at around −7.5 ppm (for 2 and 3). For these complexes, it is favorable for the 1,4-NADH product to back-donate hydride to the Ru^{II} center. There appear to be no previous reports of direct hydride transfer from NADH to a metal center.^[7] Such hydride transfer is consistent with the proposed

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Supporting information for this article including materials, characterization of the complexes, experimental procedures, and instrumentation is available on the WWW under <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/anie.201108175>.

mechanism for H–D exchange in reactions of 1-benzylpyridinium with $[\text{Cp}^*\text{Rh}(\text{bpy})(\text{H}_2\text{O})]^{2+}$ (bpy = 2,2'-bipyridine).^[5]

The reversibility of hydride transfer between 1,4-NADH and Ru^{II} was confirmed by adding 1,4-NADH to Ru^{II} arene complexes **1**, **2**, **4**, or **5** (3 mM) in 90% $\text{H}_2\text{O}/10\%$ D_2O at 310 K. During the reactions, the pH increased from 6.8–7.1 to 8.5–9.1. In the case of complex **2**, peaks for NAD^+ and an intense sharp singlet at -7.44 ppm were observed within 15 min, suggesting fast hydride transfer from 1,4-NADH to the $\text{Ru}-\text{OH}_2$ adduct (formed in situ by hydrolysis of $\text{Ru}-\text{Cl}$). However the $\text{Ru}-\text{H}$ peak disappeared after around 4.5 h (Figure S1 in the Supporting Information). The maximum intensity of peaks for the $\text{Ru}-\text{H}$ adducts of complexes **1**, **2**, **4**, and **5** was observed between 15 and 34 min (Table S1 in the Supporting Information). The extent of conversion of 1,4-NADH to NAD^+ was dependent on the arene, decreasing in the order **2** (hmb) > **4** (thn) > **5** (*p*-cym) > **1** (*p*-cym) over a period of 1–3 h (Figure S2 in the Supporting Information). The most rapid conversion occurred with complex **2** containing bpm and hmb, an arene with strong electron-donor methyl substituents.

Next we showed that hydride transfer from 1,4-NADH to Ru^{II} arene complexes can be coupled to the reduction of biologically relevant substrates. We studied the conversion of pyruvate to lactate, a reduction carried out in vivo by NADH as a cofactor for the enzyme lactate dehydrogenase.^[9] We added equimolar 1,4-NADH to a 3 mM solution of **2** or **4** in 90% $\text{H}_2\text{O}/10\%$ D_2O at 310 K, pH 6.9–7.2. Once the ^1H NMR peak of $\text{Ru}-\text{H}$ had reached its maximum intensity, 1 mol equivalent of pyruvate was added. For complex **2**, peaks for lactate appeared within 24 h (Figure 1) along with peaks for the corresponding pyruvate and lactate adducts of $\{(\eta^6\text{-hmb})\text{Ru}(\text{bpm})\}^{2+}$ (confirmed by HRMS also for complex **4**, Table S2 in the Supporting Information). Formation of these carboxylato adducts inhibited the full conversion of pyruvate to lactate.

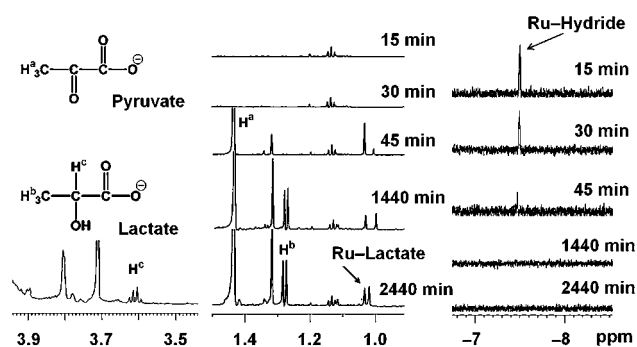


Figure 1. ^1H NMR spectra showing the conversion of pyruvate to lactate catalyzed by $\{(\eta^6\text{-hmb})\text{Ru}(\text{bpm})\text{Cl}\}^+$ (**2**) in the presence of 1,4-NADH (mol ratio 1:1) in 90% $\text{H}_2\text{O}/10\%$ D_2O at 310 K and $\text{Ru}-\text{H}$ at high field. Assignments: H^a , pyruvate; H^b and H^c , lactate.

Then we investigated the ability of Ir^{III} aqua complexes $[(\eta^5\text{-Cp}^*)\text{Ir}(\text{phen})(\text{H}_2\text{O})]^{2+}$ (**6**) and $[(\eta^5\text{-C}_5\text{Me}_4\text{C}_6\text{H}_5)\text{Ir}(\text{phen})(\text{H}_2\text{O})]^{2+}$ (**7**; Table 1) to catalyze 1,4-NADH oxidation. When 2 mol equivalents of 1,4-NADH were added to a 1 mM

solution of **6**, the color changed from light to dark yellow immediately (Figure S3A in the Supporting Information). ^1H NMR spectra recorded at 298 K contained a sharp singlet at -11.3 ppm within the first 10 min, corresponding to an Ir^{III} hydrido complex together with a new set of signals attributable to NAD^+ . Over the next 33 h, the signal for the hydrido complex decreased in intensity and the major signals present were those for NAD^+ and aqua complex **6**. During that time, the pH of the solution increased from 6.8 to 8.9. The disappearance of the $\text{Ir}-\text{H}$ species and the rise in pH are consistent with protonation of $\text{Ir}-\text{H}$ as the reaction proceeds to give H_2 . Addition of 2 further mol equivalents of 1,4-NADH again rapidly gave rise to an $\text{Ir}-\text{H}$ peak (Figure S3B in the Supporting Information). Similar results were obtained for reactions of **7** (Figure S4 in the Supporting Information). The hydrido complex $[(\text{Cp}^*)\text{Ir}(\text{bpy})\text{H}]^+$ has been isolated previously and its X-ray crystal structure has been reported.^[10]

Ir^{III} complex **7** was also active in the conversion of pyruvate to lactate. Addition of 3 mol equivalents of sodium pyruvate to a solution containing 3 mol equivalents of 1,4-NADH and 1 mol equivalent (1 mM) $[(\eta^5\text{-C}_5\text{Me}_4\text{C}_6\text{H}_5)\text{Ir}(\text{phen})(\text{H}_2\text{O})]^{2+}$ (**7**) in 10% $[\text{D}_4]\text{MeOD}/90\%$ H_2O (v/v), resulted in conversion of around 30% of the pyruvate to lactate after 10 min at 298 K (Figure S5 in the Supporting Information). However, no further pyruvate was converted after 24 h.

Next we showed that $\text{Ir}-\text{H}$ generation can be coupled to enzymatic production of NADH. Complex **7** was added to a solution containing 1,4-NADH generated from NAD^+ by enzymatic oxidation of ethanol by alcohol dehydrogenase (ADH).^[11] UV/Vis spectroscopy indicated that all the NADH produced was immediately consumed after addition of complex **7** (Figure 2). This reaction was also studied by ^1H NMR spectroscopy, with similar results (Figure S6 in the Supporting Information). Hence 1,4-NADH produced by various biochemical pathways may readily react with iridium complexes in cells.

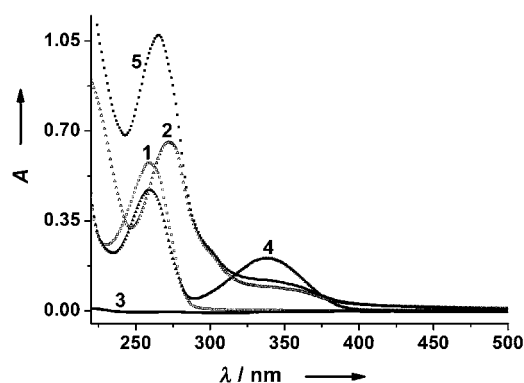


Figure 2. UV/Vis spectra showing the reaction of 1,4-NADH (produced from NAD^+ by an enzymatic action of ADH) with $[(\eta^5\text{-C}_5\text{Me}_4\text{C}_6\text{H}_5)\text{Ir}(\text{phen})(\text{H}_2\text{O})]^{2+}$ (**7**) in 6 mM $\text{Na}_2\text{HPO}_4/\text{NaH}_2\text{PO}_4$ buffer, 3.4 M ethanol, pH 7.2, at 298 K. Line 1: NAD^+ (34 μM). Line 2: complex **7** (72 μM). Line 3: ADH (3.8×10^{-3} mg mL $^{-1}$). Line 4: NAD^+ + ADH, 10 min after mixing. Line 5: NAD^+ + ADH + complex **7**, recorded immediately.

Strikingly, these initial data showed the turnover of more than one mol equivalent of NAD^+ per Ir^{III} suggesting that the Ir^{III} complex can act as a catalyst and be recycled through Ir-H protonation and formation of H_2 . The possible production of H_2 was investigated by gas chromatography for solutions containing **7** (0.9 mM) and 1,4-NADH (1.3 mM in 5 mM phosphate buffer at pH 7.2). The time dependence of H_2 evolution was monitored by tracking the peak with a retention time of around 0.39 min (Figure S7 in the Supporting Information). The sum of H_2 detected in the headspace and H_2 dissolved in solution (1.6×10^{-2} mL) was in good agreement with the amount of H_2 which would be produced if all the available hydride from 1,4-NADH is converted to H_2 (1.8×10^{-2} mL). A number of photocatalytic hydrogen-evolution systems have been reported.^[12] The turnover of 1,4-NADH using $[(\eta^5\text{-C}_5\text{Me}_4\text{C}_6\text{H}_5)\text{Ir}(\text{phen})(\text{H}_2\text{O})]^{2+}$ (**7**) as catalyst was investigated. Kinetic experiments on aqueous solutions (around pH 7.4) with 1,4-NADH concentrations of 70, 110, 156, and 173 μM , and a constant concentration of catalyst **7** of 1.5 μM were monitored by UV/Vis absorption spectroscopy at 310 K (Figure 3). The reactions were first-order with respect to 1,4-NADH (Figure 3B) suggesting that

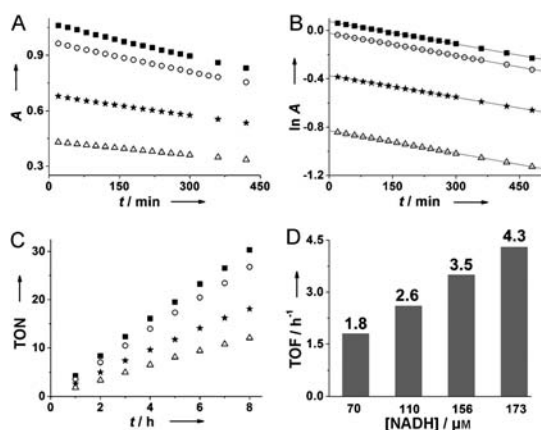


Figure 3. Oxidation of 1,4-NADH catalyzed by $[(\eta^5\text{-C}_5\text{Me}_4\text{C}_6\text{H}_5)\text{Ir}(\text{phen})(\text{H}_2\text{O})]^{2+}$ (**7**) detected by UV/Vis spectroscopy. A) Time dependence of 1,4-NADH absorption at 339 nm. B) Plots of $\ln A$ against time suggest that conversion of NADH is first-order with respect to 1,4-NADH (average rate constant k of $6.14 \times 10^{-4} \text{ min}^{-1}$). C) Plots of the TON against time. D) 1,4-NADH concentration dependence of the TOF. The concentration of **7** in each case was 1.5 μM . Assignments: [1,4-NADH]: ■ 173 μM , ○ 156 μM , ★ 110 μM , and △ 70 μM .

the formation of an Ir-NADH adduct is rate-limiting. The turnover numbers (TON) of these reactions increased with time and 1,4-NADH concentration (Figure 3C). The maximum TON reached 75 after 24 h for 173 μM 1,4-NADH. Initial turnover frequencies (TOF) expressed as the number of moles of consumed 1,4-NADH per mole of catalyst after an initial 1 h of the reaction, increased with the concentration of 1,4-NADH (Figure 3D), from 1.8 h^{-1} for 70 μM 1,4-NADH to 4.3 h^{-1} for 173 μM NADH.

A possible mechanism for the oxidative conversion of 1,4-NADH to NAD^+ by Ru^{II} arene bipyrimidine complexes is shown in Figure S8A in the Supporting Information; it

involves hydride transfer from 1,4-NADH to the Ru^{II} center through the formation of a kinetically favored six-membered-ring transition state, through a coordination site which may become available by a ring-slippage mechanism.^[3c,13] A similar mechanism can be proposed for Ir^{III} complexes with a cyclopentadienyl ring slippage from η^5 - to η^3 -coordination,^[14] Figure S8B in the Supporting Information. Protonation of bound hydride can then give rise to H_2 release and coordination of water completes the cycle.

Some organometallic Ru and Ir complexes show anti-cancer activity^[15] and our findings suggest a possible new mechanism involving interference in NADH-mediated cell signalling pathways and cellular redox potentials. As cells have a high concentration of the tripeptide thiol glutathione (GSH), we studied the competitive reaction between complex **6**, $[(\eta^5\text{-C}_5\text{Me}_3)\text{Ir}(\text{phen})(\text{H}_2\text{O})]^{2+}$ (1 mM), NADH (2 mM), and GSH (6 mM) at physiological pH (7.4). Even under these conditions, we still observed rapid formation of the hydride adduct $[(\eta^5\text{-C}_5\text{Me}_3)\text{Ir}(\text{phen})\text{H}]^+$ and NAD^+ (Figure S9 in the Supporting Information). In addition, we showed that the chlorido form of complex **6**, $[(\eta^5\text{-C}_5\text{Me}_3)\text{Ir}(\text{phen})\text{Cl}]^+$ (1 mM) reacts with 1,4-NADH (2 mM) in the presence of a large excess of Cl^- (500 mM) giving an ^1H NMR peak of Ir-H immediately at -11.3 ppm . These experiments suggest that such reactions might readily occur in cells. Also the generation of H_2 may have significant effects in cells because H_2 is an efficient antioxidant which can quench harmful reactive oxygen species (ROS) and suppress oxidative stress-induced injury.^[16] We investigated the possibility that iridium complex **7** can lower the level of 1,4-NADH in cells (as described in the Supporting Information). After exposure of human ovarian A2780 cancer cells to 35 μM complex **7** for 6 h, the NAD^+/NADH ratio in lysates almost doubled from 7.95 ± 0.10 to 14.84 ± 0.77 , suggesting that such complexes can indeed modulate the redox balance in cells. Recently, Fukuzumi et al. reported the interconversion of NAD^+ and NADH accompanied by the generation/consumption of hydrogen using a [C,N]-cyclometallated organoiridium complex.^[17] In contrast to their studies, which were performed under acidic conditions, we have shown that the conversion of NADH to NAD^+ can be effected by N,N -chelated organoiridium complexes and by organoruthenium complexes under neutral/basic conditions.

The NAD^+/NADH couple is an important redox couple in cells.^[6] Organometallic Ru^{II} and Ir^{III} complexes offer the prospect of carrying out reductions with NADH without the presence of an enzyme. Furthermore we have shown that organometallic Ru^{II} and Ir^{III} complexes can use NADH as an hydride source for hydrogenation reactions. Catalytic hydrogenation reactions using organometallic Ru^{II} and Ir^{III} complexes in water are of much current interest.^[18] It is possible to mimic reactions of enzymes such as lactate dehydrogenase which use NADH as a cofactor and iridium complex **7** appears to be a robust catalyst for the generation of H_2 . It will now be interesting to explore a range of potential applications including coupling to electrochemical processes and enzymatic processes which generate NADH.

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