Synthesis of New 2-Halo-2-(1H-tetrazol-5-yl)-2H-azirines via a Non-Classical Wittig Reaction

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Received: 30 October 2015; Accepted: 8 December 2015; Published: 12 December 2015

Abstract: The synthesis and reactivity of tetrazol-5-yl-phosphorus ylides towards N-halosuccinimide/TMSN₃ reagent systems was explored, opening the way to new haloazidoalkenes bearing a tetrazol-5-yl substituent. These compounds were obtained as single isomers, except in one case. X-ray crystal structures were determined for three derivatives, establishing that the non-classical Wittig reaction leads to the selective synthesis of haloazidoalkenes with (Z)-configuration. The thermolysis of the haloazidoalkenes afforded new 2-halo-2-(tetrazol-5-yl)-2H-azirines in high yields. Thus, the reported synthetic methodologies gave access to important building blocks in organic synthesis, vinyl tetrazoles and 2-halo-2-(tetrazol-5-yl)-2H-azirine derivatives.

Keywords: 2-halo-2H-azirines; vinyl tetrazoles; tetrasubstituted alkenes; phosphorus ylides

1. Introduction

2H-azirines are highly reactive and easily available compounds. Thus, they have been widely used as versatile building blocks for the synthesis of various nitrogen-containing compounds. They can act as nucleophiles, electrophiles, dienophiles, and dipolarophiles in a variety of organic reactions. Furthermore, selective cleavage of each of the three bonds can be achieved, and this leads to highly reactive intermediates such as vinyl nitrenes, nitrile ylides, and iminocarbenes [1–6].

We have previously described a general route to tetrasubstituted alkenes via a non-classical Wittig reaction [7]. Particularly interesting was the possibility of preparing haloazidoalkenes since the study of their thermolysis led to the development of a new route to 2-halo-2H-azirines starting from α-oxophosphorus ylides [8–10]. This study allowed the synthesis of a range of 2-halo-2H-azirines with several substituents, including the first examples of 2-bromo and 2-iodo-2H-azirine derivatives. Since then, a few examples of halo substituted azirines prepared from haloazidoalkenes by thermal or photochemical decomposition have been reported [11–14].

The study of the reactivity of these compounds showed that they can be used to prepare other functionalized 2H-azirines [15,16], but they can also lead to the synthesis of other interesting structures such as quinoxalines [15], functionalized 1,3-oxazoles [17,18], 1-aminovinyl derivatives [16], 4-halo-2-azabuta-1,3-dienes, and 2,3-dihydroazetes [19,20].

Recently, we became interested in the development of synthetic routes to functionalized 5-(substituted)-1H-tetrazoles. In this context, the synthesis of novel 2-(tetrazol-5-yl)-2H-azirines using
the Neber approach, has been reported [21]. We envisaged that these three-membered heterocyclic compounds could be particularly interesting as building blocks for the synthesis of new 5-substituted tetrazoles. In fact, their reactivity towards imines was studied resulting in a novel and efficient route to 4-(tetrazol-5-yl)-1H-imidazoles, a class of compounds with potential biological activity [22]. Aiming to extend this approach to 5-substituted tetrazoles, we decided to prepare 2H-azirines combining halogen and tetrazole functionalities, since the presence of the extra functional group could be particularly interesting.

Using the synthetic methodology previously developed in our group for the preparation of 2-halo-2H-azirines from phosphorus ylides, we carried out reactivity studies of α-oxophosphorus ylides bearing a tetrazole substituent towards N-halosuccinimides/TMSN₃ reagent systems followed by thermolysis of the corresponding halozidoalkenes (Scheme 1).

![Scheme 1. Synthetic strategy for the synthesis 2-halo-2-(1H-tetrazol-5-yl)-2H-azirines.](image)

### 2. Results and Discussion

The synthesis of the target tetrazol-5-yl phosphorus ylides 6 is outlined in Scheme 2. N-Benzylchloroacetamide (2) was prepared in good yield from the reaction of benzylamine and chloroacetyl chloride by an analogous method to that described in the literature [23]. Chloroacetamide 2 was treated with phosphorus pentachloride, followed by addition of sodium azide and water to give 1-benzyl-5-chloromethyltetrazole (3) in 54% yield [24]. Reaction of chloromethyltetrazole 3 with triphenylphosphine afforded the corresponding phosphonium salt 4 in very high yield (90%), which was subsequently neutralized with aqueous sodium hydroxide solution over a short period of time with ice-cooling to give phosphorus ylide 5 bearing a tetrazolyl substituent in moderate yield (65%). As previously observed with other tetrazolic phosphorus ylides, phosphorane 5 was hydrolyzed in water to give triphenylphosphine oxide and 5-methyl-1H-tetrazole [25,26]. For this reason, in order to prevent this hydrolysis the base treatment of 4 was carried out in water for only 2 min with vigorous stirring and the resulting precipitate was filtered and immediately dried under reduced pressure. However, even with these controlled conditions mixtures of ylide and hydrolysis products were obtained making the purification procedure difficult.

![Scheme 2. Synthesis of tetrazol-5-yl phosphorus ylides 6.](image)
Higher yields were obtained when NCS/TMSN₃ with obtained from the reaction of ylide chloroazidoalkene 5. Aiming to improve ylides of 6a and 6b yield and to overcome the difficulties observed in the synthesis of ylide 5, we tried to carry out the synthesis of ylides 6 starting directly from the phosphonium salt 4 in the presence of triethylamine. To our delight, carrying out the reaction of the phosphonium salt 4 with ethyl oxalyl chloride and benzoyl chloride in the presence of excess of triethylamine led to the formation of ylides 6a and 6b in 88% and 61% yield, respectively. The same methodology was applied to the synthesis of ylides 6d and 6e bearing a thiophenyl and a furanyl substituent, respectively, which were isolated in good yields (Scheme 2). On the other hand, reaction of ylide 5 with 5-nitro-furan-2-carboxylic acid in the presence of 1-ethyl-3-(3-dimethylaminopropyl)carbodiimide (EDCI) and 4-dimethylaminopyridine (DMAP) afforded ylide 6c in high yield (80%).

These ylides reacted with N-halosuccinimides in the presence of azidotrimethylsilane giving the corresponding haloazidoalkenes 7a–h and 8 in yields ranging from 47% to 93% (Schemes 3 and 4). Higher yields were obtained when NCS/TMSN₃ were used as reagents in the reactions with all ylides 6. The reaction of NCS with ylide 6a in the presence of TMSN₃ led to the formation of the desired chloroazidoalkene 7a with the highest yield (93%). As for bromoazidoalkenes, the best result was obtained from the reaction of ylide 6e bearing a furanyl substituent with NBS/TMSN₃ reagent system which led to the formation of the corresponding bromoazidoalkene 7h in 57% yield. The reactions with N-chlorosuccinimide were completed after 1–1.5 h while the reactions with N-halosuccinimide required longer periods of time (2–3 h). The azidoalkenes were obtained selectively as single isomers except in the case of 7b and 8 which was obtained as a mixture of E and Z isomers (61:39).

![Scheme 3. Reactivity of phosphorus ylide 6a towards N-halosuccinimides in the presence of TMSN₃.](image)

![Scheme 4. Reactivity of phosphorus ylides 6b, 6d and 6e towards NXS/TMSN₃ reagent system.](image)

In order to establish the stereochemistry of the synthetized alkenes compounds 7c, 7e and 7h, bearing a phenyl group, a thiophenyl group and a furanyl group at C-2′, respectively, were selected for X-ray crystallography studies. The three compounds crystallize in the same, monoclinic, space group (P2₁/c). The X-ray data unambiguously shows that the molecules adopt in the crystal the (Z)-configuration (Figure 1). Although there is a significant freedom for rotation of substituents around single C=C bonds, no sign for disorder was found except for the thiophene ring in compound 7e, which features a minor disorder between two alternating positions related by a 180° rotation around the C2′-C2′ bond with occupancies 67:33%. A selection of bond distance, bond angles and torsion angles is provided in Table 1. They are in agreement with typical average values and also to those of the XRD study of a bromo-azidoalkene reported in [17]. Cohesion of the crystal structures is...
provided by weak C–H⋯N hydrogen bonds and also C–H⋯Cg, Cg⋯Cg and Br⋯Cg interactions involving the aromatic rings (Figure 2).

![Figure 1. X-ray structures of compounds 7c, 7e and 7h.](image)

![Figure 2. Crystal packing of 7h showing the network of C–H⋯Cg and Br–Cg interactions.](image)

Table 1. Selected bond distances (Å), bond angles (°) and torsion angles (°) for compounds 7c, 7h and 7e. Atom X is either Cl (7c and 7e) or Br (7h).

| Bond Distances or Angles | 7c       | 7h       | 7e       |
|-------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| C1′–C2′                  | 1.331(3) | 1.333(5) | 1.334(4) |
| C2′–N14                  | 1.410(3) | 1.409(4) | 1.407(4) |
| C1′–X13                  | 1.727(2) | 1.889(3) | 1.718(3) |
| C1′–C5                   | 1.460(4) | 1.448(5) | 1.458(2) |
| N14–C2′–C1′              | 116.9(2) | 118.4(3) | 116.9(3) |
| C2′–C1′–X                | 122.5(2) | 120.6(3) | 122.0(2) |
| C2′–C1′–C5               | 122.7(2) | 124.8(3) | 122.9(2) |
| C5–C1′–X                 | 114.9(2) | 114.5(2) | 114.9(2) |
| N14–C2′–C1′–C5           | −179.0(2)| −170.0(3)| 171.1(3) |
| N14–C2′–C1′–X            | 0.2(3)   | 5.9(4)   | −3.4(4)  |
| C5–N1–C6–C7              | 94.2(3)  | 74.4(5)  | 100.7(3) |
| N1–C6–C7–C8              | −105.3(3)| −104.6(4)| −117.7(3)|
| X–C1′–C5–N1              | 77.5(3)  | 66.5(4)  | −71.6(3) |
| C2′–C1′–C5–N1            | 76.1(3)  | −117.4(4)| 113.4(3)|

Since 7d, 7f and 7g differ from 7c, 7e and 7h only in the nature of the halogen, the (Z)-configuration is therefore proposed for all of these compounds. In previous studies, we could confirm that our synthetic methodology allowed the synthesis of a bromoazidoalkene bearing a carboxylate group at C-1′ and a phenyl group at C-2′ with the same selectivity [17]. Thus, the stereochemistry outcome is retained when the carboxylate group is replaced by a tetrazolyl group (7c).

The synthesis of the haloazidoalkenes can be rationalized as outlined in Scheme 5. The formation of the observed products can be explained by considering isomeric halonium ions 10 and 11 as
intermediates. These halonium ions can interconvert by way of acyclic cation 9. The opening of these intermediates by the TMSN₃ leads to the isomeric alkenes after the elimination of triphenylphosphine oxide (Scheme 5). The observed selected formation of alkenes with (Z) configuration may result from the higher stability of halonium ion 10 in comparison with the isomeric intermediate 11.

![Scheme 5. Formation of isomeric halonium ions as intermediates of the reaction.](image)

The formation of halophosphonium salt 9 is the expected intermediate of the halogenation of α-oxophosphorus ylides, which affords the corresponding halophosphonium salts [27]. Moreover, the synthesis of halogenated enol lactones from keto acid phosphoranes via an intramolecular non-classical Wittig reaction has also been described [28–31]. In fact, α-oxophosphorus ylides bearing a terminal carboxylic acid group react with halogenating agents leading to E- and Z-halo enol lactones. This cyclization was rationalized via a halophosphonium salt followed by loss of triphenylphosphine oxide. Indeed, bromophosphonium salt 13 could be isolated from the reaction of ylide 12 with bromine at 0 °C in the absence of NEt₃. Treatment of 13 with triethylamine leads to the corresponding bromo enol lactones 14 (Scheme 6) [28].

![Scheme 6. Synthesis of halogenated enol lactones from keto acid phosphoranes.](image)

The $^{13}$C-NMR spectra of the haloazidoalkenes 7a–h show the C–X carbon between 85.8 and 109.3 ppm and the C-N₃ between 134.8 and 147.6 ppm (Table 2). As expected, the chemical shift of C–X carbon of all bromoazidoalkenes is lower than the ones of the corresponding chloroazidoalkenes (e.g., 7b vs. 7a).

| Alkene | C–X   | C–N₃  | 2H-Azirine  | C-2  | C-3  |
|-------|-------|-------|-------------|------|------|
| 7a    | 109.3 | 135.3 | 15a         | 51.9 | 156.8|
| 7b    | 97.8  | 137.3 | 15b         | 40.7 | 157.4|
| 7c    | 98.5  | 145.4 | 15c         | 46.4 | 168.6|
| 7d    | 85.8  | 147.6 | 15d         | 33.8 | 169.6|
| 7e    | 100.4 | 138.6 | 15e         | 47.0 | 161.7|
| 7f    | 87.9  | 140.7 | 15f         | 34.5 | 162.7|
| 7g    | 99.8  | 134.8 | 15g         | 46.1 | 157.7|
| 7h    | 87.2  | 136.8 | 15h         | 33.3 | 158.5|

Table 2. $^{13}$C NMR in CDCl₃ of the haloazidoalkenes 7 and 2H-Azirines 15 (δ in ppm).
The thermolysis of the haloazidoalkene derivatives 7 was then investigated (Scheme 7). Initially, attempts were made to promote these reactions in n-heptane. However, due to the low solubility of the haloazidoalkenes in this solvent, the thermolysis in n-heptane often led to complex mixtures of the desired 2H-azirines and degradation products. Nonetheless, carrying out the reaction of these haloazidoalkenes in toluene at 90 °C for 2-3 h led efficiently to the formation of new 2-halo-2-tetrazol-5-yl-2H-azirines 15. The reaction can be followed by TLC and by IR by monitoring the disappearance of the band corresponding to the azido group of the starting azidoalkenes (ν ~2105–2130 cm⁻¹). Regardless of C-3 substituents, 2-bromo- and 2-chloro-2H-azirines 15 were obtained in high yield (85%–99%).

Scheme 7. Synthesis of 2-halo-2-(tetrazol-5-yl)-2H-azirines 15.

The ¹³C-NMR spectra of the 2-chloro- and 2-bromo-2-(tetrazol-5-yl)-2H-azirines 15 show the sp² carbon between 156.8 and 169.6 ppm and the sp³ carbon between 33.3 and 51.9 ppm, depending on the substitution pattern (Table 2).

It is well established that some 2-halo-2H-azirines undergo thermal rearrangement to their azirine isomers through a [1,2]-halogen shift [32,33]. Recently, Banert et al. reported optimized reaction conditions to favor the complete and irreversible isomerization of 2-halo-2H-azirines [11]. In our case, it was possible to isolate 2H-azirines 15 as pure isomers by thermolysis of the haloazidoalkenes 7. However, after being stored at −30 °C for 3 months 2-chloro-2H-azirine 15a, bearing a carboxylate group at C-3, underwent rearrangement to a mixture of 2H-azirines 15a and 16 (Scheme 8). Carrying out NMR measurements at different temperatures (25–95 °C), the variation of the isomer ratio with increasing temperature was observed, until complete rearrangement of 2H-azirine 15a into the isomer 16a (Supplementary Materials). Similar NMR experiments with 15c and 15e did not indicate the same behavior.

Scheme 8. Isomerization of 2-halo-2-(tetrazol-5-yl)-2H-azirine 15a.

3. Experimental Section

3.1. General Information

NMR spectra were run in CDCl₃ or DMSO-d₆ on a 400 MHz Bruker Avance III spectrometer (Bruker Biospin SA, Wissembourg, France) and recorded at the following frequencies: proton (¹H, 400 MHz), carbon (¹³C, 100 MHz). Chemical shifts are expressed in parts per million related to internal TMS and coupling constants (J) are in hertz. Infrared spectra (IR) were recorded on a Nicolet 6700 FTIR spectrometer (Thermo Scientific, Waltham, MA, USA). Mass spectra were recorded in electrospray ionization (ESI) mode on a Bruker FTMS APEX III spectrometer (Bruker Corporation, Bremen, Germany). Melting points were determined in open glass capillaries and are uncorrected. Thin-layer chromatography (TLC) analyses were performed using precoated silica gel plates.
(Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany). Flash column chromatography was performed with silica gel 60 as the stationary phase.

3.2. Experimental Details

3.2.1. Synthesis of Phosphorus Ylide 5

N-Benzyl-2-chloroacetamide (2): Chloroacetamide 2 was prepared following the procedure described in the literature [23]. To a stirred solution of benzylamine (7.8 mL, 70.8 mmol) in toluene (60 mL) under cooling with ice bath, chloroacetyl chloride (4 g, 35.4 mmol) was slowly added. The reaction mixture was stirred vigorously for 1 h at room temperature. The solvent was evaporated under vacuum, the crude reaction was dissolved in dichloromethane (100 mL) and washed with water (3 × 50 mL). The organic layer was dried over anhydrous MgSO₄, filtered and the solvent evaporated under vacuum.

The mixture was stirred for 1 min and filtered. The precipitate was washed with cold H₂O and MeOH (2 mL) and cooled on ice bath. A solution of phosphonium salt 4 (1.0 g, 2.13 mmol) was added. The mixture was stirred for 1 min and filtered. The precipitate was washed with cold H₂O and immediately dried under reduced pressure affording the ylide 5 as a light yellow solid (0.83 g, 90%). m.p. > 257 °C (decomp., from diethyl ether); IR (KBr) 490, 506, 522, 686, 719, 1112, 1434, 1494 cm⁻¹; ¹H-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 4.29 (d, J = 6.4 Hz, 1H), 5.12 (d, J = 14.4 Hz, 2H), 7.17–7.19 (m, 3H, Ar-H), 7.28–7.29 (m, 3H, Ar-H), 7.57–7.60 (m, 7H, Ar-H), 7.73–7.80 (7H, m, Ar-H); ¹³C-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 32.1 (d, J_CFP = 54.9 Hz), 43.6, 118.4 (d, J_CFP = 88.0 Hz), 126.8, 128.0, 128.3, 128.4, 128.6, 128.9, 130.0, 130.1, 132.0, 132.1, 134.0, 134.1, 134.9, 138.0, 162.5 (d, J_CFP = 4.9 Hz); HRMS (EI) calcd for C₂₇H₂₄N₄P 435.1733 [M + H]+, found 435.1738.

3.2.2. General Procedure for the Synthesis of Ylides 6

A solution of phosphonium salt 4 (10 mmol) and triethylamine (2.53 g, 25 mmol) in dry CHCl₃ (50 mL) was stirred at room temperature while a solution of the appropriate acid chloride (12 mmol)
in dry CHCl₃ (10 mL) was added dropwise to it. After the addition, the mixture was stirred at room temperature for 12 h. The reaction mixture was washed with H₂O (3 × 50 mL), dried and evaporated to give the desired ylides 6i which were recrystallized from ethyl acetate.

Ethyl 3-(1-benzyl-1H-tetrazol-5-yl)-2-oxo-3-(triphenylphosphoranylidene)propanoate (6a): Ylide 6a was obtained as a light yellow solid (4.70 g, 88%). m.p. 174-176 °C (from ethyl acetate/ hexane); IR (KBr) 524, 557, 696, 1103, 1193, 1456, 1540, 1735 cm⁻¹; ¹H-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 1.10 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 3H), 4.02 (q, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 5.43 (br s, 1H), 5.51 (br s, 1H), 7.11-7.13 (m, 2H, Ar-H), 7.21-7.23 (m, 3H, Ar-H), 7.36-7.41 (m, 1H, Ar-H), 7.53-7.56 (4H, m, Ar-H); ¹³C-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 13.9, 51.0, 57.6 (d, J₁CP = 114 Hz), 61.5, 123.0 (d, J₁CP = 92.0 Hz), 128.4, 128.5, 128.6, 128.7, 128.9, 129.1, 132.9, 133.6, 133.7, 133.8, 134.1, 134.2, 151.9 (d, J₂CP = 12.6 Hz), 164.4 (d, J₃CP = 15.2 Hz), 175.0 (d, J₄CP = 6.2 Hz); HRMS (ESI) calcd for C₃₄H₂₈N₄O₃P 535.18935 [M + H]⁺, found 535.18932.

2-(1-Benzyl-1H-tetrazol-5-yl)-1-phenyl-2-(triphenylphosphoranylidene)ethanone (6b): Ylide 6b was obtained as a white solid (2.75 g, 61%). m.p. 213-214 °C (from ethyl acetate/ hexane); IR (KBr) 507, 693, 723, 1095, 1102, 1337, 1434, 1529 cm⁻¹; ¹H-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 4.70 (br s, 1H), 4.94 (br s, 1H), 6.95-6.96 (m, 2H, Ar-H), 7.01-7.04 (m, 2H, Ar-H), 7.08-7.14 (m, 3H, Ar-H), 7.19-7.32 (m, 9H, Ar-H), 7.37-7.46 (9H, m, Ar-H); ¹³C-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 50.3, 55.7 (d, J₁CP = 120.4 Hz), 124.9 (d, J₁CP = 92.5 Hz), 127.2, 128.3, 128.4, 128.6, 128.7, 128.8, 129.7, 132.4, 133.6, 133.7, 133.8, 141.0 (d, J₃CP = 9.9 Hz), 153.3 (d, J₂CP = 15.9 Hz), 186.0 (d, J₄CP = 4.6 Hz); HRMS (ESI) calcd for C₃₄H₂₈N₄O₃P 539.1995 [M + H]⁺, found 539.1997.

2-(1-Benzyl-1H-tetrazol-5-yl)-1-(thiophen-2-yl)-2-(triphenylphosphoranylidene)ethanone (6d): Ylide 6d was obtained as a white solid (4.08 g, 75%). m.p. > 210 °C (decomp., from ethyl acetate/ hexane); IR (KBr) 531, 691, 715, 1106, 1352, 1503 cm⁻¹; ¹H-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 5.09 (br s, J = 12.4 Hz, 1H), 5.33 (br d, J = 12.4 Hz, 1H), 6.37 (dd, J = 1.0 Hz and J = 3.6 Hz, 1H), 6.80 (dd, J = 4.0 Hz and J = 4.8 Hz, 1H), 7.06-7.10 (m, 2H, Ar-H), 7.14-7.19 (m, 3H, Ar-H), 7.29 (d, J = 4.4 Hz, 1H), 7.34-7.39 (m, 6H, Ar-H), 7.42-7.47 (m, 6H, Ar-H), 7.50-7.54 (m, 3H, Ar-H); ¹³C-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 50.7, 53.7 (d, J₁CP = 122.7 Hz), 124.7 (d, J₁CP = 92.6 Hz), 127.4, 127.7, 128.5, 128.6, 128.8, 128.9, 132.4, 133.5, 133.7, 133.8, 145.4 (d, J₃CP = 12.0 Hz), 152.8 (d, J₂CP = 15.0 Hz), 177.4 (d, J₄CP = 5.9 Hz); HRMS (ESI) calcd for C₃₄H₂₈N₄O₃S 545.1559 [M + H]⁺, found 545.1548.

2-(1-Benzyl-1H-tetrazol-5-yl)-1-(furan-2-yl)-2-(triphenylphosphoranylidene)ethanone (6e): Ylide 6e was obtained as a white solid (2.70 g, 51%). m.p. > 220 °C (decomp., from ethyl acetate/ hexane); IR (KBr) 522, 689, 721, 1106, 1456, 1512 cm⁻¹; ¹H-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 5.20 (br d, J = 14.4 Hz, 1H), 5.43 (br d, J = 14.4 Hz, 1H), 6.26 (dd, J = 1.6 Hz and J = 3.6 Hz, 1H), 6.40 (d, J = 2.8 Hz, 1H), 7.08-7.12 (m, 3H, Ar-H), 7.17-7.21 (m, 3H, Ar-H), 7.34-7.39 (m, 6H, Ar-H), 7.43-7.48 (m, 6H, Ar-H), 7.52-7.54 (m, 3H, Ar-H); ¹³C-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 50.6, 53.4 (d, J₁CP = 122.5 Hz), 111.2, 113.0, 124.6 (d, J₁CP = 92.6 Hz), 128.4, 128.6, 128.7, 128.8, 129.8, 132.4, 133.5, 133.6, 143.6, 152.6 (d, J₃CP = 13.9 Hz), 153.2 (d, J₂CP = 12.2 Hz), 173.8 (d, J₄CP = 5.7 Hz). HRMS (ESI) calcd for C₃₄H₂₈N₄O₃S 529.1787 [M + H]⁺, found 529.1784.

2-(1-Benzyl-1H-tetrazol-5-yl)-1-(5-nitrofuran-2-yl)-2-(triphenylphosphoranylidene)ethanone (6c): Compound 6c was prepared by an analogous method to that described in the literature [34]. A solution of phosphorus ylide 5 (2.1 mmol) and 5-nitrofuran-2-carboxylic acid (2.5 mmol) in dry CHCl₃ (40 mL) was cooled in an ice bath. Then EDCI (3.2 mmol) and DMAP (catalytic) was added to it. After the addition, the mixture was stirred at room temperature for 12 h. The reaction mixture was washed with H₂O (3 × 50 mL), dried and evaporated. The crude product was purified by flash chromatography (ethyl acetate). Ylide 6c was obtained as a yellow solid (4.59 g, 80%). m.p. > 210 °C (decomp., from ethyl acetate/ hexane); IR (KBr) 515, 525, 688, 1099, 1300, 1541 cm⁻¹; ¹H-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 5.38 (d, J = 14.8 Hz, 1H), 5.49 (d, J = 14.8 Hz, 1H), 6.60 (d, J = 4.0 Hz, 1H), 6.80 (d, J = 4.0 Hz, 1H), 7.09-7.12 (m, 2H, Ar-H), 7.17-7.24 (m, 3H, Ar-H), 7.42-7.43 (m, 6H, Ar-H), 7.48-7.56 (m, 6H, Ar-H), 7.58-7.59 (m, 3H, Ar-H); ¹³C-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 50.9, 56.3.
(d, $^{1}J_{CP} = 118.2$ Hz), 111.6, 114.4, 123.4 (d, $^{1}J_{CP} = 92.4$ Hz), 128.5, 128.6, 129.1, 129.2, 133.0, 133.4, 133.5, 133.6, 150.9, 151.6, 153.4 (d, $^{2}J_{CP} = 12.3$ Hz), 171.2 (d, $^{2}J_{CP} = 6.6$ Hz); HRMS (ESI) calcd for C$_{32}$H$_{26}$N$_{10}$O$_{5}$P 574.1638 [M + H]$^+$, found 574.1631.

3.2.3. General Procedure for the Synthesis of Haloazidoalkenes 7 and 8

Ylide 6 (4.5 mmol) was dissolved in dichloromethane (50 mL) and a solution of azidotrimethylsilane (0.71 g, 6.5 mmol) and N-chloro- or N-bromosuccinimide (6.5 mmol) in dichloromethane (10 mL) was added. The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for the appropriate time (1–3 h). After removal of the solvent, the crude product was purified by flash chromatography (ethyl acetate/hexane).

Ethyl 2-azido-3-(1-benzyl-1H-tetrazol-5-yl)-3-chloropropenoate (7a): Haloazidoalkene was obtained as a white solid (1.41 g, 93%). m.p. 87.4–88.1 °C (from ethyl acetate/ hexane); IR (KBr) 699, 722, 1232, 1258, 1723, 2119 cm$^{-1}$; $^{1}$H-NMR (CDCl$_{3}$) δ (ppm) 0.80 (t, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 3H), 3.84 (q, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 2H), 5.50 (s, 2H), 7.34–7.37 (m, 5H, Ar-H); $^{13}$C-NMR (CDCl$_{3}$) δ (ppm) 13.1, 52.0, 63.4, 109.3, 128.7, 129.0, 129.2, 129.3, 132.3, 135.3, 150.5, 158.8; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C$_{13}$H$_{13}$CIN$_{2}$O$_{2}$ 334.0813 [M + H]$^+$, found 334.0813.

Ethyl 2-azido-3-(1-benzyl-1H-tetrazol-5-yl)-3-bromopropenoate (7b and 8b): Haloazidoalkenes were obtained as a mixture of isomers (61:39), yellow solid (0.71 g, 47%). IR (KBr) 696, 721, 1232, 1255, 1719, 2117 cm$^{-1}$; $^{1}$H-NMR (CDCl$_{3}$) δ (ppm) Major isomer 0.78 (t, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 3H), 3.80 (q, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 2H), 5.46 (s, 2H), 7.33–7.38 (m, 5H, Ar-H); Minor isomer 1.43 (t, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 3H), 4.46 (q, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 2H), 5.53 (s, 2H), 7.26–7.36 (m, 5H, Ar-H); $^{13}$C-NMR (CDCl$_{3}$) δ (ppm) Major isomer 13.1, 52.0, 63.4, 97.8, 128.8, 129.0, 129.3, 132.3, 137.3, 151.6, 158.4; Minor isomer 14.0, 53.2, 64.5, 94.1, 128.3, 128.4, 128.7, 129.2, 129.4, 129.8, 136.7, 150.6, 159.7; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C$_{13}$H$_{13}$BrN$_{2}$O$_{2}$ 378.0308 [M + H]$^+$, found 378.0307.

(Z)-5-(2-Azido-2-phenylvinyl)-1-benzyl-1H-tetrazole (7c): Haloazidoalkene was obtained as a white solid (1.00 g, 66%). m.p. 90.7–92.1 °C (from ethyl acetate/ hexane); IR (KBr) 699, 715, 1203, 1317, 1628, 2105, 2113 cm$^{-1}$; $^{1}$H-NMR (CDCl$_{3}$) δ (ppm) 5.41 (s, 2H), 6.81 (d, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 2H), 7.18–7.23 (m, 4H, Ar-H), 7.30–7.32 (m, 1H, Ar-H), 7.36–7.39 (m, 3H, Ar-H); $^{13}$C-NMR (CDCl$_{3}$) δ (ppm) 51.6, 98.5, 128.2, 128.3, 129.0, 129.2, 129.7, 130.7, 132.8, 145.4, 150.6; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C$_{16}$H$_{13}$ClN$_{2}$ 338.0915 [M + H]$^+$, found 338.0922.

5-(2-Azido-1-bromo-2-phenylvinyl)-1-benzyl-1H-tetrazole (7d): Haloazidoalkene was obtained as a white solid (0.84 g, 49%). m.p. 88.8–90.0 °C (from ethyl acetate/hexane); IR (KBr) 698, 715, 1204, 1316, 1629, 2106, 2122 cm$^{-1}$; $^{1}$H-NMR (CDCl$_{3}$) δ (ppm) 5.38 (s, 2H), 6.82 (d, $J = 7.2$ Hz, 2H), 7.15–7.22 (m, 4H, Ar-H), 7.28–7.38 (m, 3H, Ar-H); $^{13}$C-NMR (CDCl$_{3}$) δ (ppm) 51.5, 85.8, 128.1, 128.2, 129.0, 129.1, 129.2, 130.1, 130.7, 132.8, 147.6, 1515; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C$_{16}$H$_{13}$BrN$_{2}$ 382.0410 [M + H]$^+$, found 382.0418.

(Z)-5-(2-Azido-2-thiophen-2-ylvinyl)-1-benzyl-1H-tetrazole (7e): Haloazidoalkene was obtained as a light yellow solid. m.p. 83.4–84.2 °C (from ethyl acetate/hexane); IR (KBr) 526, 697, 712, 870, 1068, 1245, 1406, 1680, 2120 cm$^{-1}$; $^{1}$H-NMR (CDCl$_{3}$) δ (ppm) 5.39 (s, 2H), 6.76 (dd, $J = 1.2$ Hz and $J = 3.6$ Hz, 1H), 6.91 (dd, $J = 3.6$ Hz and $J = 5.2$ Hz, 1H), 7.20–7.22 (m, 2H, Ar-H), 7.33–7.39 (m, 4H, Ar-H); $^{13}$C-NMR (CDCl$_{3}$) δ (ppm) 51.8, 1004, 127.7, 128.2, 129.1, 129.2, 129.9, 130.0, 130.4, 132.6, 138.6, 156.6; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C$_{14}$H$_{11}$ClN$_{2}$S 344.0479 [M + H]$^+$, found 344.0486.

5-(2-Azido-1-bromo-2-thiophen-2-ylvinyl)-1-benzyl-1H-tetrazole (7f): Haloazidoalkene was obtained as a white solid (0.77 g, 50%). m.p. 88.1–89.4 °C (from ethyl acetate/ hexane); IR (KBr) 694, 715, 798, 880, 1292, 1403, 1608, 2114 cm$^{-1}$; $^{1}$H-NMR (CDCl$_{3}$) δ (ppm) 5.36 (s, 2H), 6.77 (dd, $J = 1.2$ Hz and $J = 3.6$ Hz, 1H), 6.90 (dd, $J = 3.6$ Hz and $J = 5.2$ Hz, 1H), 7.18–7.21 (m, 2H, Ar-H), 7.33–7.36 (m, 4H,
Ar-H);[C]C-NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ (ppm) 51.7, 87.9, 127.6, 128.3, 129.1, 129.8, 130.1, 130.3, 132.5, 140.7, 151.4; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C$_{14}$H$_{11}$BrN$_5$ 387.9975 [M + H]$^+$, found 387.9974.

(Z)-5-(2-Azido-1-chloro-2-(furan-2-yl)vinyl)-1-benzyl-1H-tetrazole (7g): Haloazidoalkene was obtained as a white solid (0.97 g, 66%). m.p. 72.3–72.7 °C (from ethyl acetate/hexane); IR (KBr) 593, 687, 727, 804, 1018, 1321, 1624, 2155 cm$^{-1}$;[C]H-NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ (ppm) 5.40 (s, 2H), 7.37–7.40 (m, Ar-H, 3H), 7.43–7.45 (m, Ar-H, 3H), 7.39–7.45 (m, Ar-H, 3H), 7.16–7.39 (m, Ar-H, 6H), 7.99 (d, J = 3.2 Hz, 1H), 8.06 (d, J = 4.8 Hz);[C]C-NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ (ppm) 30.6, 51.9, 53.2, 64.3, 124.8, 129.4, 129.8, 130.0, 130.8, 131.1, 131.3, 133.1, 135.7, 152.9, 164.9; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C$_{14}$H$_{11}$BrN$_5$O$_2$ 306.0752 [M + H]$^+$, found 306.0752 (Figures S48–S53).

5-(2-Azido-1-bromo-2-(furan-2-yl)vinyl)-1-benzyl-1H-tetrazole (7h): Haloazidoalkene was obtained as a light yellow solid (0.95 g, 57%). m.p. 84.0–85.3 °C (from ethyl acetate/hexane); IR (KBr) 697, 718, 1117, 1232, 1455, 1497, 2121 cm$^{-1}$;[C]H-NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ (ppm) 1.24 (t, 3H, J = 6.8 Hz), 4.16–4.26 (m, 2H), 5.89 (d, J = 14.8 Hz, 1H), 5.96 (d, J = 14.8 Hz, 1H), 7.16–7.39 (m, 5H, Ar-H);[C]NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ (ppm) 13.9, 51.9, 53.2, 64.3, 124.8, 129.4, 129.8, 131.9, 140.1, 156.8, 164.9; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C$_{15}$H$_{13}$ClN$_5$O$_3$ 387.0203 [M + H]$^+$, found 387.0209.

3.2.4. General Procedure for the Synthesis of 2-Chloro- and 2-Bromo-2H-azirines 15

A solution of the vinyl azide 7 (2.0 mmol) in toluene (10 mL) was heated at 90 °C for 1–3 h (the reaction was monitored by TLC and reaction was complete when disappearance of the vinyl azide was observed). The reaction mixture was cooled and the solvent evaporated giving the 2H-azirine.

Ethyl 2-(1-benzyl-1H-tetrazol-5-yl)-2-chloro-2H-azirine-3-carboxylate (15a): 2-Chloro-2H-azirine 15a was obtained as a yellow oil (97%). IR (film) 701, 723, 1095, 1247, 1408, 1729 cm$^{-1}$;[C]H-NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ (ppm) 1.24 (t, 3H, J = 6.8 Hz), 4.16–4.24 (m, 2H), 5.90 (d, J = 14.8 Hz, 1H), 5.97 (d, J = 14.8 Hz, 1H), 7.39 (br s, 5H, Ar-H);[C]C-NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ (ppm) 13.9, 51.9, 53.2, 64.3, 124.8, 129.4, 129.8, 131.9, 140.1, 156.8; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C$_{15}$H$_{13}$ClN$_5$O$_3$ 387.0247 [M + H]$^+$, found 387.0243.

2-(1-Benzyl-1H-tetrazol-5-yl)-2-chloro-3-phenyl-2H-azirine (15c): 2-Chloro-2H-azirine 15c was obtained as an orange oil (85%). IR (film) 686, 721, 831, 1068, 1451, 1498, 1597, 1743 cm$^{-1}$;[C]H-NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ (ppm) 5.91 (d, J = 15.2 Hz, 1H), 5.95 (d, J = 15.2 Hz, 1H), 7.37–7.40 (m, Ar-H, 3H), 7.43–7.45 (m, Ar-H, 2H), 7.61–7.65 (m, Ar-H, 2H), 7.73–7.77 (m, Ar-H, 1H), 8.04 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H);[C]NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ (ppm) 30.6, 51.2, 51.9, 119.7, 128.5, 129.0, 129.1, 129.8, 130.0, 130.4, 131.3, 133.1, 135.7, 152.9, 168.6; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C$_{16}$H$_{13}$ClN$_3$ 318.0854 [M + H]$^+$, found 318.0854.

2-(1-Benzyl-1H-tetrazol-5-yl)-2-bromo-3-phenyl-2H-azirine (15d): 2-Bromo-2H-azirine 15d was obtained as an orange oil (87%). IR (film) 685, 720, 808, 1114, 1451, 1498, 1597, 1743 cm$^{-1}$;[C]H-NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ (ppm) 5.91 (d, J = 14.8 Hz, 1H), 5.96 (d, J = 14.8 Hz, 1H), 7.37–7.39 (m, Ar-H, 3H), 7.45–7.47 (m, Ar-H, 2H), 7.62–7.66 (m, Ar-H, 2H), 7.74–7.78 (m, Ar-H, 1H), 8.09 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2H);[C]NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ (ppm) 33.8, 52.1, 119.7, 128.6, 129.0, 129.1, 129.8, 131.4, 133.0, 135.8, 153.2, 169.6; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C$_{16}$H$_{13}$BrN$_3$ 354.0348 [M + H]$^+$, found 354.0343.

2-(1-Benzyl-1H-tetrazol-5-yl)-2-chloro-3-(thiophen-2-yl)-2H-azirine (15e): 2-Chloro-2H-azirine 15e was obtained as a brown oil (99%). IR (film) 699, 720, 805, 1033, 1408, 1498, 1742 cm$^{-1}$;[C]H-NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ (ppm) 5.91 (s, 2H), 7.35–7.44 (m, Ar-H, 6H), 7.99 (d, J = 3.2 Hz, 1H), 8.06 (d, J = 4.8 Hz);[C]C-NMR (CDCl$_3$) δ (ppm) 47.0, 52.2, 121.1, 128.5, 129.1, 129.4, 131.3, 138.3, 138.9, 152.7, 161.7; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C$_{14}$H$_{11}$ClN$_5$S 316.0418 [M + H]$^+$, found 316.0417.
2-(1-Benzyl-1H-tetrazol-5-yl)-2-bromo-3-(thiophen-2-yl)-2H-azirine (15f): 2-Bromo-2H-azirine 15f was obtained as a brown oil (99%). IR (film) 698, 719, 790, 856, 1406, 1497, 1739 cm⁻¹; ¹H-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 5.90 (d, J = 14.8 Hz, 1H), 5.95 (d, J = 14.8 Hz, 1H), 7.37–7.41 (m, Ar-H, 4H), 7.44–7.47 (m, Ar-H, 2H); ¹³C-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 34.5, 52.1, 121.2, 128.6, 129.1, 129.5, 133.0, 138.6, 139.2, 153.0, 162.7; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C₁₄H₁₁BrN₅S 359.9913 [M + H]+, found 359.9912.

2-(1-Benzyl-1H-tetrazol-5-yl)-2-chloro-3-(furan-2-yl)-2H-azirine (15g): 2-Chloro-2H-azirine 15g was obtained as an oil (98%). IR (film) 699, 719, 883, 1016, 1072, 1455, 1747 cm⁻¹; ¹H-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 5.90 (s, 2H), 6.78 (dd, J = 1.2 Hz and J = 3.6 Hz, 1H), 7.37–7.43 (m, Ar-H, 5H), 7.56 (d, J = 3.6 Hz, 1H), 7.97 (d, J = 1.2 Hz, 1H); ¹³C-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 46.1, 52.1, 113.9, 125.6, 128.5, 129.1, 133.0, 136.9, 151.7, 152.5, 157.7; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C₁₄H₁₁ClN₅O 300.0647 [M + H]+, found 300.0648.

2-(1-Benzyl-1H-tetrazol-5-yl)-2-bromo-3-(furan-2-yl)-2H-azirine (15h): 2-Bromo-2H-azirine 15h was obtained as a brown oil (99%). IR (film) 699, 719, 790, 856, 1406, 1497, 1739 cm⁻¹; ¹H-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 5.89 (d, J = 15.2 Hz, 1H), 5.93 (d, J = 15.2 Hz, 1H), 6.80 (d, J = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.37–7.40 (m, Ar-H, 3H), 7.44–7.45 (m, Ar-H, 2H), 7.63 (d, J = 3.6 Hz, 1H), 8.00 (br s, 1H); ¹³C-NMR (CDCl₃) δ (ppm) 33.3, 52.1, 114.0, 126.0, 128.6, 129.0, 132.9, 137.0, 152.0, 152.8, 158.5; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C₁₄H₁₁BrN₅O 344.0142 [M + H]+, found 344.0143.

3.2.5. X-ray Crystallography Structure Determination

X-ray data for compounds 7c, 7h and 7e were collected on a Bruker APEXII diffractometer (Mo Kα radiation, graphite monochromator, λ = 0.71073 Å) using ϕ and ω scans. Data integration and scaling were performed with the SAINT suite of programs [35] and SADABS [35] was used for an empirical absorption collection based on a measurement of a large set of redundant reflections. All structures were solved by direct methods using SHELXT-2014/7 [36] and full-matrix least squares refinement of the structural model was performed by SHELXL-2014/7 [37]. All non-H atoms were refined anisotropically. H atoms were placed at calculated idealized positions and refined as riding using SHELXL-2014/7 default values. A summary of the data collection and refinement details is given in Table 1. Crystallographic figures and tables were produced using PLATON [38]. CCDC 1432372 (7c), CCDC 1432373 (7h) and CCDC 1432374 (7e) contains the supplementary crystallographic data for this paper. These data can be obtained free of charge via http://www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/conts/retrieving.html (or from the CCDC, 12 Union Road, Cambridge CB2 1EZ, UK; Fax: + 44 1223 336033; E-mail: deposit@ccdc.cam.ac.uk).

4. Conclusions

The selective synthesis of (Z)-haloazidoalkenes bearing a tetrazol-5-yl substituent via a non-classical Wittig reaction is reported. The stereochemistry assignment was supported by X-ray crystallography studies. Halooazidoalkenes underwent thermolysis to efficiently give novel 2-halo-2-(tetrazol-5-yl)-2H-azirines bearing phenyl, furan-2-yl, thiophen-2-yl and carboxylate substituents at C-3. These 2H-azirines can be very useful building blocks for the synthesis of new 5-substituted tetrazoles.

Supplementary Materials: Supplementary materials can be accessed at: http://www.mdpi.com/1420-3049/20/12/19848/s1.

Acknowledgments: Thanks are due to FCT (Coimbra Chemistry Centre, UID/QUI/00313/2013) for financial support. ALC also acknowledge FCT and Coimbra Chemistry Centre for post-doctoral research grant CQC-QO-BPD-2015. We acknowledge the UC-NMR facility for obtaining the NMR data (www.nmrccc.uc.pt).

Author Contributions: T.P.M. designed the research and wrote the paper. A.L.C. co-wrote the paper and carried out synthetic work. J.A.P. was responsible for the X-ray crystallography studies and M.S.C.H. collaborated in this study. C.S. contributed to the synthetic work.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.
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**Sample Availability:** Samples of the compounds are not available.