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Synthesis and characterization of homo- and heterometallic metal-organic frameworks based on 1,2,4,5-benzenetetracarboxylate ligand



E. Yang a,b,*, Qing rong Ding a,b, Yao Kang b, Fei Wang b,*

- ^a College of Chemistry and Chemistry Engineering, Fujian Normal University, Fuzhou, Fujian 350007, People's Republic of China
- b State Key Laboratory of Structural Chemistry, Fujian Institute of Research on the Structure of Matter, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Fuzhou, Fujian 350002, People's Republic of China

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ABSTRACT

Two new three-dimensional metal-organic frameworks, $[H_2N(CH_3)_2]_2[Zn(btec)]\cdot DMF$ (1, $H_4btec=1,2,4,5$ -benzenetetracarboxylate acid) and $[H_2N(CH_3)_2][ZnLi(btec)]\cdot DMF$ (2), have been solvothermally synthesized and structurally characterized by single crystal X-ray diffraction. Compound 1 based on μ_4 -btec features an anionic homometallic framework with 4-connected **pts** topology. Compound 2 is a heterometallic organic framework with rare (4, 4, 8)-connected network topology, which can be considered as constitute of a Li-btec (**pts**) net and a Zn-btec net. Moreover, the luminescent properties of two compounds are investigated in the solid state at room temperature.

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Metal-organic frameworks (MOFs) or porous coordination polymers (PCPs) have attracted much attention not only for their potential applications in gas storage, separation, sensing and heterogeneous catalysis, but also for fascinating architectures and intriguing topologies [1]. The architectures of MOFs are mainly depended on the assembly of metals and linkers. As we know, some famous framework materials such as MOF-5, ZIF-8 and HZIFs, are all based on the assembly of Zn cation [2]. In MOF-5, a cationic oxide-centered Zn₄O tetrahedron is edge-bridged by six carboxylates to give the neutral octahedron-shaped SBU that reticulates into a three-dimensional (3D) cubic porous network with pcu type topology [2a]. Indeed, the design strategy in many ZIFs (zeolitic imidazolate frameworks) uses tetrahedral Zn²⁺ centers linked by different uninegative imidazolate derivatives, forming 4-connected zeolite-like structures [2b,3]. As mentioned above, most of these frameworks are homometallic materials, and the heterometallic framework materials are relatively less reported, especially Zincalkali metal heterometallic complexes.

In this work, we reported two new three-dimensional homometallic and heterometallic MOFs $[H_2N(CH_3)_2]_2[Zn(btec)]\cdot DMF$ (1, $H_4btec=1,2,4,5$ -benzenetetracarboxylate acid) and $[H_2N(CH_3)_2][ZnLi(btec)]\cdot DMF$ (2). Compound 1 based on μ_4 -btec and tetrahedral building unit features a three-dimensional (3D) anionic framework with 4-connected **pts** topology. Compound 2 is a heterometallic organic framework with trinodal (4, 4, 8)-connected network topology, which can be simplified as constitute of a Li-btec (**pts**) net and a Zn-btec net. Although the

simple Li-btec or Zn-btec system has been largely explored during the last decade [4], no mixed Zn-btec-Li structures are known to date. In addition, the luminescent properties of these compounds were investigated in the solid state at room temperature.

Compound **1** was solvothermally synthesized by employing $Zn(NO_3)_2 \cdot 6H_2O$ and H_4 btec ligands in mixed N,N'-dimethylformamide (DMF) and 1,3-dimethyl-2-imidazolidinone (DMI) solvents [5]. Such mixed solvents provide not only proper templates for the formation of pores, but also the charge-balancing $[H_2N(CH_3)_2]^+$ cations which are in situ generated by the decomposition of DMF [7]. X-ray crystallography reveals that compound **1** has a 3D anionic open framework constructed from Zn atoms and μ_4 -btec ligands, which is charge-balanced by $[H_2N(CH_3)_2]^+$ cations [8].

The asymmetric unit of ${\bf 1}$ includes one half Zn^2+ center, one half btec ligand and one $[H_2N(CH_3)_2]^+$ cation, respectively. As depicted in Fig. 1a, The Zn cation has the distorted tetrahedral coordination geometry and is coordinated by four O atoms from four carboxylate groups of four btec ligands. The Zn–O distances are ranging from 1.950(2) to 1.973(2) Å. In compound ${\bf 1}$, there is one independent btec ligand and adopts the μ_4 -bridging mode with four carboxylate groups being a unidentate fashion (Fig. 1a). The μ_4 -btec ligands link Zn atoms to generate a 3D anionic framework exhibiting 1D channels (Fig. 1b), occupied by the disordered guest molecules as well as $[H_2N(CH_3)_2]^+$ cations to balance charge. From the viewpoint of structural topology, each Zn unit and each μ_4 -btec ligand can be viewed as a 4-connected node, respectively (Fig. 1c); thus, the whole framework of ${\bf 1}$ can be simplified to a 4-connected ${\bf pts}$ net (Fig. 1d).

When the Li_2CO_3 was added to the synthesis system of 1, a new 3D heterometallic framework 2 was obtained. The compound 2 crystallizes

^{*} Corresponding authors.

E-mail addresses: yangeli66@yahoo.com.cn (E. Yang), wangfei04@fjirsm.ac.cn

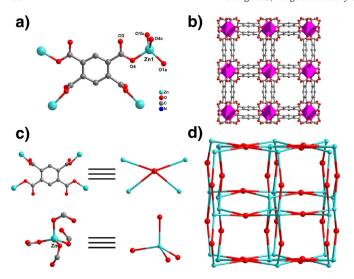


Fig. 1. (a) The coordination environment in **1** (Symmetry codes: a, x, -y + 1, -z; b, y - 1/4, -x + 3/4, z + 1/4; c, -y + 3/4, -x + 3/4, -z + 1/4); (b) the 3D framework of **1**; (c) the defined 4-connected nodes; (d) the 4-connected **pts** net of **1**.

in the orthorhombic space group Fddd. The asymmetric unit of **2** contains one crystallographically independent Zn center, one half Li1, one half Li2, one btec ligand and one $[H_2N(CH_3)_2]^+$ cation, respectively. As shown in Fig. 2a, The Zn center has the distorted tetrahedral coordination environment with ZnO_4 donor set by four O atoms from four carboxylate groups of four btec ligands. The Zn–O distances are ranging from 1.924(2) to 1.975(2) Å and both Li1 and Li2 cations also have the same distorted tetrahedral coordination environment, which is surrounded by four O atoms from four different carboxylate

groups of btec ligands. The Li–O distances are ranging from 1.926(2) to 2.005(2) Å. In comparison to 1, the Li $^+$ cations participate in the assembly of 2, meanwhile they replace parts of $[H_2N(CH_3)_2]^+$ cations to balance charge. Compound 2 also has one independent btec ligand, but it adopts the μ_8 -bridging mode with four carboxylate groups being a bidentate fashion (Fig. 2a), coordinating to four Zn atoms and four Li atoms. The μ_8 -btec ligands link Zn and Li atoms to generate a 3D anionic framework exhibiting 1D channels (Fig. 2c), occupied by the disordered guest molecules as well as $[H_2N(CH_3)_2]^+$ cations to balance charge.

An outstanding structural feature of **2** is the presence of the integrated topological nets. Topological analysis was performed by using Topos program [9,10]. As shown in Fig. 3a, each Li atom can be reduced to a 4-connected node, each Zn atom is also regarded as a 4-connected node, and each µ₈-btec ligand can be viewed as an 8-connected node, so the whole framework of 2 can be considered as a rare trinodal (4, 4, 8)-connected network topology (Fig. 3d). The Point (Schläfli) symbol of this net is $(4^5 \cdot 6)_2 (4^{10} \cdot 6^6 \cdot 8^{12})$. Considering that the structure of 2 contains two metal centers, to further simplify this complicated topological net, it is easy to divide the whole structure into two parts. Interestingly, if only the connectivity between Li atoms and btec ligands is considered, a 3D Li-btec framework is formed. Such a Li-btec framework can be reduced into a 4-connected **pts** net as well as the topological net of 1 (Fig. 3b). Following the same consideration, the simple connectivity between Zn atoms and btec ligands becomes a binodal (4, 4)-connected net with Point (Schläfli) symbol of $(4^2 \cdot 8^4)(4^2 \cdot 8^3 \cdot 10)$ (Fig. 3c). The final framework of **2** is thus a constitute of a Li-btec net and a Zn-btec net.

Powder X-ray diffraction (PXRD) was measured to confirm the phase purity and to examine the crystallinity of bulk sample (Fig. 4). The simulative (black line) and experimental (red line) X-ray powder diffraction patterns for compound 1 and compound 2 are compared,

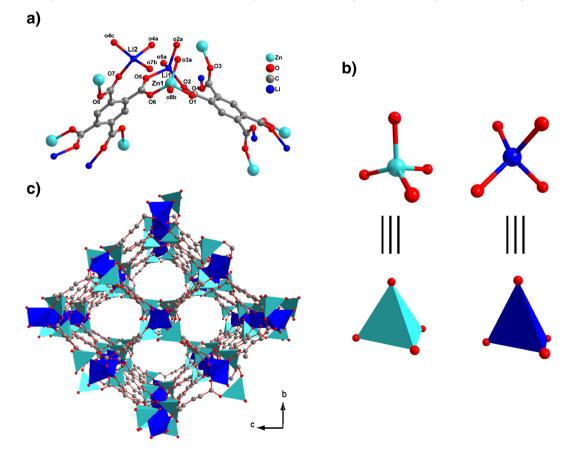


Fig. 2. (a) The coordination environment in **2** (Symmetry codes: a, -x - 1/4, -y + 3/4, z; b, -x + 1/4, y, -z + 1/4; c, x + 1/2, -y + 3/4, -z + 1/4); (b) the distorted tetrahedral coordination mode of Zn and Li cations in **2**; (c) the 3D framework of **2**.

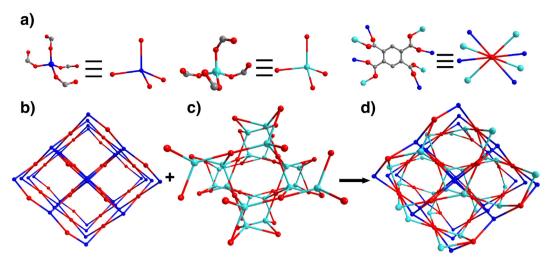


Fig. 3. (a) The defined 4-connected and 8-connected nodes; (b) the 4-connected **pts** net from Li-btec framework; (c) the (4,4)-connected net from Zn-btec framework; (d) the (4,4,8)-connected net of **2**.

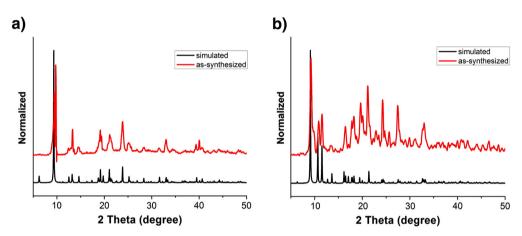


Fig. 4. (a) The powder XRD patterns of 1; (b) the powder XRD patterns of 2.

respectively. The diffraction (XRD) peaks are corresponded well in position, indicating the phase purity of the experimental compounds.

The luminescent properties of compounds 1 and 2 were investigated in the solid state at room temperature. The emission peaks of the compounds are shown in Fig. 5. Both compounds 1 and 2 display an intense

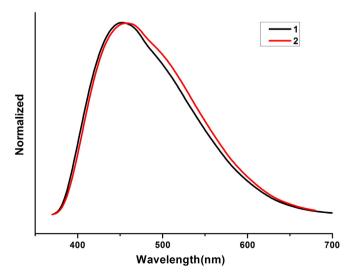


Fig. 5. Solid-state emission spectra of 1 and 2 at room temperature.

emission band at about 450 nm ($\lambda_{ex}=350$ nm). Obviously, the emissions of the two compounds are not involved with contributions from the Li⁺ cations. In comparison to the free 1,2,4,5-btec ligand which shows the emission band at 397 nm ($\lambda_{ex}=270$ nm) [11], the emission peaks of compounds 1–2 show obvious red shifts, and we speculate that the 1,2,4,5-btec ligand makes a significant contribution to the fluorescent emission of 1–2 and the red shifts maybe due to the ligand-to-metal charge transfer (LMCT) since the formation of Zn–O coordination bonds

In summary, two new three-dimensional metal–organic frameworks have been synthesized and structurally characterized. Compound 1 based on μ_4 -btec features an anionic homometallic framework with 4-connected **pts** topology. The Li $^+$ cation introduced in the reaction system of 1, results in the Zn–Li cooperative assembly, which generates a new compound 2. So compound 2 is a heterometallic organic framework with rare (4, 4, 8)-connected network topology, which can be considered as constitute of a Li-btec (**pts**) net and a Zn-btec net. Furthermore, the luminescent properties of two compounds are investigated in the solid state at room temperature.

Acknowledgments

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Appendix A. Supplementary material

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.inoche.2013.08.031.

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- (480.78): Calcd. C 42.47, H 5.20, N 8.73. Found. C 42.58, H 5.46, N 8.54. IR (KBr pellet, cm-1) for 1: 627(w) 764(w) 860(w) 1013(w) 1141(w) 1364(s) 1433(w) 1630(s) 2796(w) 3781(w). Synthesis of 2: compound 2 was obtained by the same solvothermal procedure as that for compound 1 only adding Li2CO3 (0.018 g, 0.24 mmol). Colorless block crystals of 2 were obtained (0.086 g; yield: 80% based on H4btec). Elemental analysis (EA) for 2, C15H17N2O9ZnLi (441.63): Calcd. C 40.79, H 3.85, N 6.34. Found. C 41.02, H 3.92, N 6.13. IR (KBr pellet, cm-1) for 2: 507(w) 636(w) 808(w) 1090(w) 116(w) 1364(s) 1425(w) 1493(w) 1630(s) 2796(w) 3781(w).
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