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ARTICLE *in* ORGANIC LETTERS · AUGUST 2003

Impact Factor: 6.36 · DOI: 10.1021/ol035408q · Source: PubMed

Published as:
Rath, H.; Ahand, V. G.; Sankar, J.; Venkatraman, S.; Chandrashekar, T. K.; Joshi, B. S.; Khetrapal, C. L.; Schilde, U.; Senge, M. O. (2003):
Core-modified Hexaphyrins; characterization of two and four ring inverted 26 π aromatic macrocycles.
Organic Letters **5**, 3531–3533.

Core-modified Hexaphyrins; characterization of two and four ring inverted 26 π aromatic macrocycles

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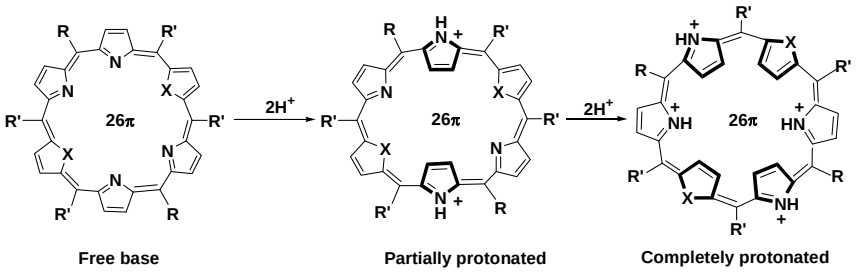
Received Date (will be automatically inserted after manuscript is accepted)

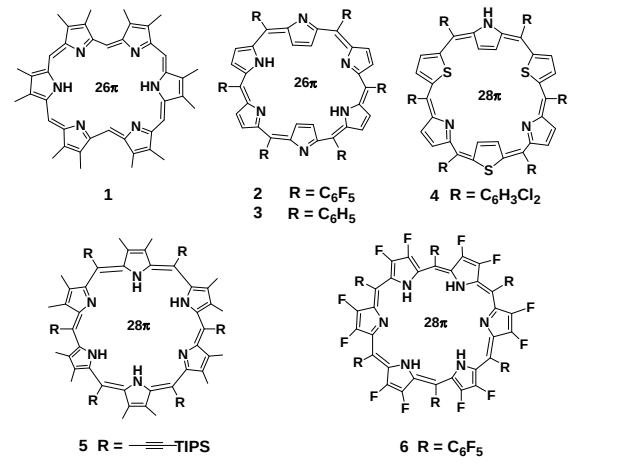
ABSTRACT



Synthesis and structural characterization of aromatic core-modified 26 π hexaphyrin analogs are reported.

Hexaphyrins are a class of expanded porphyrins with six pyrrole rings interconnected to each other through six meso carbon atoms[1]. The presence of six meso carbon bridges makes the molecule flexible and hence hexaphyrins generally adopt different conformations. The substituents present on the β-pyrrole and meso aryl groups influence the conformation. Even though the synthesis of hexaphyrin[2] **1** was reported in 1983, the advances in its chemistry are more recent. Cavaleiro and coworkers[3] were the first to characterize by X-ray diffraction analysis the structure of hexaphyrin **2** which shows a partially inverted structure with two opposite pyrrole rings undergoing 180° ring flipping. Dolphin and coworkers[4] reported the synthesis of **3** which turned out to be unstable and hence not amenable for structural characterization. More recently hexaphyrins bearing both β-pyrrole and meso substituents **5** and **6** were reported by Anderson[5], Osuka and Furuta[6] respectively. Both **5** and **6** are figure-eight-shaped with no ring inversion. The synthesis of **4** is known without any characterization and structural details[7]. Of the six

hexaphyrins known to date, only **1** and **2** exhibit aromatic character while **4**, **5** and **6** are non aromatic 28 π macrocycles. Thus the synthesis of hexaphyrins bearing different substituents is important not only from the development of methodology but also to understand their structural diversity and aromatic character. In this communication we wish to report the synthesis and structural characterization of hexaphyrin analogs bearing two different meso substituents [Scheme 1**]**. It has been shown that **9** and **10** exhibit dynamic structural behaviour in the free base form while in the partially protonated state, the single crystal X-ray structure indicates inversion of two

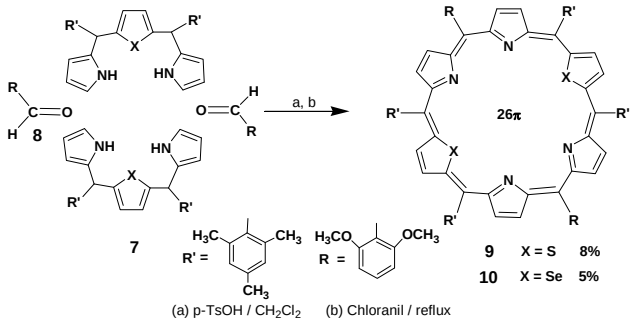


opposite pyrrole rings. In the completely protonated state, variable temperature ^{1}H and 2D NMR studies reveal 180° ring flipping of two additional heterocyclic rings leading to four rings inverted macrocycles.

The synthesis involves MacDonald type acid catalysed condensation of modified tripyrrane[8] **7** with 2, 6-dimethoxy benzaldehyde **8** in methylene chloride followed by chloranil oxidation under reflux. The yield of hexaphyrin was dependent on the concentration of the acid catalyst[9]. Maximum yields are obtained with 0.5 equivalent of p-toluenesulphonic acid. Increasing the acid concentration to 1 equivalent and 2 equivalents reduces the yield to less than 1%. Doubling the aldehyde concentration does not have any effect on the yield. Despite the low yields, the advantage of the methodology is the isolation of single product leading to easy purification by column chromatography. It should be mentioned here that all the previous syntheses of hexaphyrins reported in literature give mixture of products where the separation of pure forms was not easy. The mechanism of formation of **9** and **10** is based on the well known MacDonald's synthesis of porphyrins[10].

The proposed structure for various forms of **9** and **10** were confirmed by different spectroscopic techniques and the single crystal X-ray structure of partially protonated form of **9**. The FAB mass spectra show M^+ peak at m/z 1243 for **9** and 1337 for **10** confirming the composition for freebase form. The completely protonated form of **9** and **10** exhibit well resolved peaks in ^{1}H NMR at 228K for **9** and 238K for **10** and we were successful in complete assignment of all the peaks [Figure 1]. Specifically for **9**, the β-CH protons of inverted pyrrole rings (b, b') appear at 0.68 and 0.08 ppm while the β-CH protons of the inverted thiophene rings (c, c') appear at -0.88 ppm. The inner NH protons of the non inverted pyrrole rings appear as a sharp singlet at -2.16 ppm. The NH proton of the inverted pyrrole ring appears as a sharp singlet at 40.22 ppm further confirming the pyrrole ring inversion. The β-CH protons of the non inverted pyrrole rings (a, a') appear at 32.58 and 32.77 ppm which show correlation between themselves. Furthermore, the ^{77}Se NMR of completely protonated form of **10** shows a single peak at approximately 495 ppm confirming the inversion of selenophene rings (see the supporting information for details). Thus the NMR spectrum clearly reveals the presence of two fold symmetry in the completely protonated state. The aromatic nature of the protonated forms of **9** and **10** is evident from the large Δδ values [42.38 for **9** and 31.22 ppm for **10**] observed. The electronic absorption spectra in figure 2 show intense Soret type and weak Q type bands in the visible region confirming the porphyrinoid nature of the macrocycle. The observation of split Soret bands both in the free base and protonated forms indicate a nonplanar conformation. The ε values of the Soret absorptions are of the order of 10^5 further confirming aromatic nature of the hexaphyrins. The large red shift observed upon complete protonation is typical of meso aryl expanded porphyrins[11].

Scheme 1



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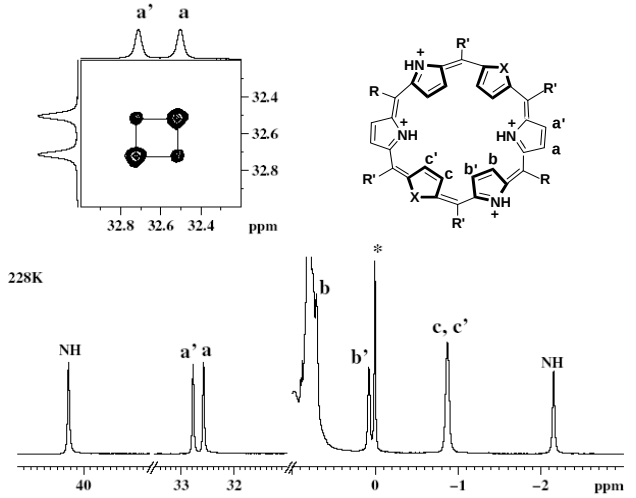

Figure 1. The ^{1}H NMR spectrum of completely protonated **9** in $CDCl_3$ at 228K in selected regions. The assignments are marked. The correlation observed for **a** and **a'** protons in 2D COSY is shown in inset.

Further confirmation of the proposed structure comes from the single crystal X-ray structure of the partially protonated form of **9**. The structure depicted in figure 3 shows that the opposite pyrrole rings, which are protonated, are inverted and they are above and below the plane of the macrocycle defined by the six meso carbons by 17.14°. There are two C-H---N interactions [2.536Å, 110.94°] and two kinds of C-H---S interactions [2.686Å, 114.26° and 2.803Å, 150.76°] within the cavity of the macrocycle. Furthermore the inverted pyrrole NH protons are involved in N-H---π interactions [2.905Å, 128.96° and 2.955Å, 128.95°] with the adjacent meso aryl rings.

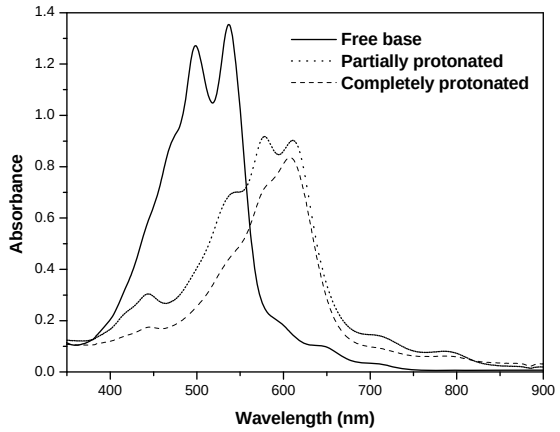

Figure 2. Electronic absorption spectra of **9** [~10^{-6}M] and the protonated derivative in CH_2Cl_2. The protonation is achieved by the careful addition of dilute solution of TFA in CH_2Cl_2.

In summary, we have successfully described the syntheses and characterization of modified hexaphyrins containing thiophene and selenophene rings via a (3+3) acid catalyzed MacDonald type condensation reaction. It has been shown that the conformation of these hexaphyrins is critically dependent on the nature of meso substituents and the state of protonation. Further studies are in progress to explore their rich structural diversity.

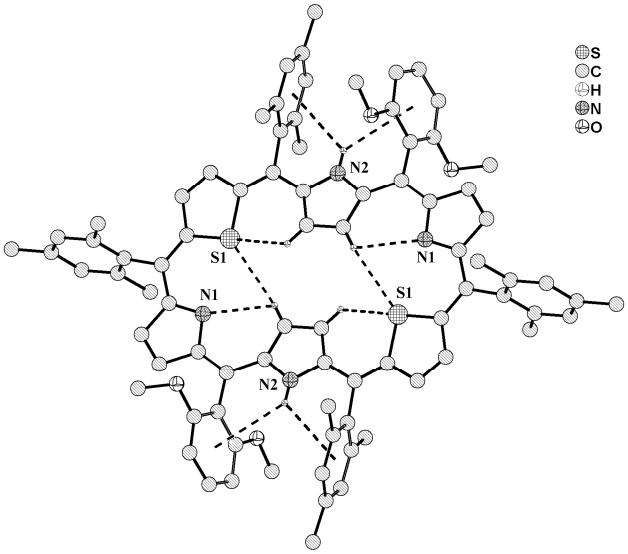

Figure 3. Crystal structure of partially protonated **9** (top view). The hydrogen bonded interactions are shown with dotted lines.

Acknowledgement: TKC thanks Department of Science and Technology (DST), New Delhi for the research funding. HR and JS thank CSIR for the fellowship. Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft grant, Se543/5-1 to M.O.Senge is acknowledged.

Supporting Information Available: Characterization data including FAB mass, UV-vis data, ^{1}H NMR and 2D NMR and CIF file of **9**. This material is available via the Internet at http://pubs.acs.org.

(9) In a typical procedure, modified tripyrrane **7** (0.6g, 1.25mmol) was reacted with **8** (0.2g, 1.25mmol) in dry dichloromethane (250ml) and was stirred under nitrogen atmosphere in absence of light for 15 minutes. p-tolyl sulphonic acid (0.11g, 0.62mmol) was added and stirring continued for 90 minutes. the reaction mixture was opened to air, chloranil (0.3g, 1.25mmol) was added, refluxed for 90 minutes on a pre-heated oil bath. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure. Upon purification by column chromatography with alumina (basic, grade III), a pink band eluted with 2:3 dichloromethane / petroleum ether which on solvent evaporation afforded **9** as dark green solid [120mg, 8%].

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