139. Structural Isomerism in Polycondensates

Part IV1)

Synthesis and Characterization of Liquid Crystalline Poly(azomethines) and Low Molecular Weight Model Compounds

by Robert Deschenaux, Peter Neuenschwander, and Piero Pino*

Institut für Polymere, ETH-Zentrum, Universitätstrasse 6, CH-8092 Zürich

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With the aim to investigate the influence of structural isomerism on the mesomorphic thermal stability in main chain thermotropic polycondensates, a series of poly(azomethines) and low molecular weight models have been prepared. The model compounds exhibit smectic and/or nematic mesophases whose stabilites are very sensitive to structural modifications. On the basis of the above results, monomers 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 23, 25, and 26 were selected to synthesize oligomers 27–33. The oligomer 33 obtained from the nonsymmetric diamine 23 has a lower melting point than the symmetric oligomer 28, but a similar liquid crystalline range.

Introduction. – Recently, we have shown that the synthesis of polycondensates with a predetermined degree of structural order is achievable in one step from a nonsymmetrical monomer (XabX) and a symmetrical one (HccH). Structurally ordered polyureas [1] and polyamides [2] were prepared as well as some analogous structurally disordered polymers [3].

Among the possible applications of these results, the influence of structural order on the existence of mesomorphic phases in main chain thermotropic polymers seems particularly interesting. Different types of main chain thermotropic polymers are described in the literature [4]. For our scope, poly(azomethines) appear to be suitable for the following reasons: *i*) nonsymmetric diamines XabX (X=NH₂), in which the NH₂ groups have largely different reactivity, can be easily synthesized; *ii*) the polycondensation between diamines and dialdehydes has already been studied [5], and *iii*) the polymers have a reasonable thermal stability [6]. To identify structures having a sufficient solubility coupled with a relatively low melting point, a number of model compounds have been first prepared, and their anisotropic liquid phases were investigated. On the basis of their properties, low molecular weight poly(azomethines) have been synthesized using symmetric and nonsymmetric monomers.

Results and Discussion. – A. *Model Compounds*. The diamines 1–9 were first condensed with either the 4-pentoxybenzaldehyde (10) or the 4-pentoxyacetophenone (11) for preparing the symmetrical compounds 12–22. Their transition temperatures and entropy changes associated with the melting and clearing points are collected in *Table 1*.

¹) Part III: [1].



These compounds will be discussed following the increasing complexity of their mesogenic unit.

Compound 12 having a 1,4-phenylene unit in its rigid segment shows a smectic mesophase and a nematic one, while the tetramethyl-substituted 13 exhibits only a nematic mesophase. The benzidine derivative 14 presents a smectic mesophase and a nematic one. In 15 replacement of the benzidine moiety by two *trans*-cyclohexyl units lowers both the melting and clearing points of 107° and 65°, respectively. The presence of an ethylene fragment in the central core also depresses $T_{n,i}$ as shown by 16 and 17.

This result could be due to an increase of the flexibility of the mesogenic unit. Substitution of one *ortho*-position next to the N-atom not only causes a decrease of the clearing temperature as illustrated by 18 and 19, but also eliminates the smectic mesophases. This behavior has been observed for other systems and has been attributed to a decrease of the intermolecular attractive forces [8]. In contrast to the large nematic range exhibited by 18 and 19 (126° and 144°, resp.), a remarkable contraction of the anisotropic region occurs for 20 in which both *ortho*-positions with respect to each N-atom are occupied by a Me group. In compounds 21 and 22 Me substitution at the C-atom of the azomethine function also suppresses the smectic mesophases.

Model Compound	T _{c,s} [°C]	⊿S _{c,s} [e.u.]	<i>T</i> _{c,n} [°C]	⊿S _{c,n} [e.u.]	T _{s,s} [°C]	T _{s,n} [°C]	<i>T</i> _{n,i} [°C]	⊿S _{n,i} [e.u.]	⊿ <i>T</i> _{c,i} [°C]
12	$(169)^{d}$) 11.85 $(171)^{d}$) [13]					172 172 [13]	265 264 [13]	1.09	96
13		-	162 (152)	21.13			197	1.78	35
14 ^c)	243 (223) 244 [14]	12.41				303 303 [14]	390 393 [14]	1.22	147
15 ^c)	136 (89)	14.36				225	325	1.25	189
16	143 (125)	13.43				205	285	3.07	142
17	143 (103)	10.86			165	193	265	1.96	122
18			118 (87)	28.26			244	1.21	126
19			151 (98)	20.91			295	1.23	144
20			206 (177)	19.54			211	1.86	5
21			229 (212)	23.40			315	2.50	86
22			145 (113)	29.28			233	1.98	88
24 ^c)	100 (45)	15.77				163	268	2.67	168

Table 1. Phase-Transition Temperatures^a)^b) and Entropy Changes Associated with the Melting and Clearing Points of the Bis(azomethines)

^a) Transitions: c,s = crystal-to-smectic, c,n = crystal-to-nematic, s,s = smectic-to-smectic, s,n = smectic-to-nematic, n,i = nematic-to-isotropic; $\Delta T_{c,i}$ = liquid crystalline range.

b) The values between parentheses correspond to the transition tempcratures obtained on cooling.

^c) Nematic droplets [7] were observed by polarized microscopy.

^d) Transition from monotropic smectic.

To investigate the possible influence of the lack of symmetry in a bis(azomethine) on the liquid crystal transition temperatures, 23 was reacted with 10 to give the model compound 24. A comparison of the entropy changes of 24 ($\Delta S_{c,s}$ 15.77 e.u.; $\Delta S_{n,i}$ 2.67 e.u.) with those of the symmetric models 16 ($\Delta S_{c,s}$ 13.43 e.u.; $\Delta S_{n,i}$ 3.07 e.u.) and 17 ($\Delta S_{c,s}$ 10.86 e.u.; $\Delta S_{n,i}$ 1.96 e.u.) indicates that 24 displays a nematic mesophase lacking head-to-head and tail-to-tail ordering of the nonsymmetric molecules within the nematic regions. Moreover, $T_{c,s}$ and $T_{s,n}$ of 24 are much lower than those of 16 and 17, while their $T_{n,i}$ are similar. As a consequence, 24 exhibits a wider liquid crystalline range than both 16 and 17.







32



B. Oligomers. By reacting either 25 or 26 with 2, 5, 6, and 8 following the procedure used for the model compounds, oligomers 27–32 were synthesized. Oligomers 27, 30 and 32 are soluble in CHCl₃, and their molecular weights could be measured by vapor-pressure osmometry. Compounds 28, 29, and 31 are insoluble in common organic solvents and dissolve only in protic media such as H_2SO_4 and *m*-chlorophenol. No molecular peak was observed by means of high resolution mass spectrometry, and their molecular weights could not be determined so far. As in some cases the mesophases of the oligomers have not been identified, the term liquid-crystal-to-liquid-crystal transition (abbreviated to $T_{ic,ic}$) will be used to mention a phase transition within the liquid crystalline region. However, in compounds 29, 32, and 33, the observation of nematic droplets allowed an unambiguous identification of the mesophase textures.

Oligomer		<u>n</u> pd)	<u>т</u>	<i>T</i>	<i>T</i>	<u></u>
	202 n	Di)	[°C]	[°C]	[°C]	[°C]
27	1250	5	228 (165)	_	263	35
28	-		200 (182)	293	352	152
29 ^e)	_	-	224 (175)	_	385	161
30	3500	12	280 (268)	-	-	-
31	-	-	200 (153)		260	60
32 ^e)	1540	5	194 (185)	-	220	26
33 ^e)	_	-	183 (161)	280	315	132

Table 2. Phase-Transition Temperatures^a)^b) and Molecular Weights^c) of the Oligomeric Azomethines

^a) $T_{\rm m}$ = melting point, $T_{\rm lc,lc}$ = liquid-crystal-to-liquid-crystal transition, $T_{\rm c}$ = clearing point, $\Delta T_{\rm c,i}$ = liquid crystalline range.

b) The values between parentheses correspond to the transition temperatures obtained on cooling.

^c) By vapor-pressure osmometry in CHCl₃ at 25°.

^d) Polycondensation degree calculated from \bar{M}_n regardless the end groups.

e) Nematic droplets [7] were obtained by polarized microscopy.

Oligomer 27 shows only one, the nonsubstituted 28 two, and the substituted compounds 29-32 only one mesophase. The comparison of 28 with 32 as well as the data of the models 16 and 17 indicate that the replacement of the methin H-atom by a CH₃ group causes a reduction of the liquid crystalline range $(\Delta T_{c,i})$. This is also confirmed by comparing 29 with 31. The results of 29 and 30, the latter exhibiting no anisotropic behavior, indicate that $\Delta T_{c,i}$ is very sensitive to substitution in *ortho*-position with respect to the N-atom. This is in agreement with the indications given by the models 19 and 20.

Under the same reaction conditions as used for preparing oligomers 27–32, the nonsymmetrical diamine 23 was condensed with 25 to give 33. Under these conditions, no substantial structural order should be expected in 33. *Table 2* shows a depression of T_m (17°), of $T_{lc,lc}$ (13°), and of T_c (37°) for 33 with respect to the symmetrical compound 28. Thus, the oligomers exhibit a smaller difference between their melting points than the models 16 or 17 with respect to 24. This fact could be ascribed to a different degree of polymerization between 28 and 33. The $\Delta T_{c,i}$ of 33 is smaller than the one of 28. This is rather unexpected according to the indications obtained from the model compounds 16, 17, and 24. It might also be connected to either a different degree of polymerization or to the existence of a small degree of structural order in 33.

Conclusion. – The research on low molecular weight models described in the first part of this paper has shown that structures like **24** exhibit a low melting point and a high mesomorphic thermal stability. The polymers reflect part of the properties of the model compounds, the major problem beeing their poor solubility in common aprotic solvents. Because of the large prevalence of the (E)-configuration of the C=N function [9], no problem should be encountered due to the possible (E/Z) isomerism. The most interesting repeating units from the viewpoint of the solubility of the corresponding polymers seem to be **34** and **35**. Work is in progress to synthesize polycondensates with these structures and with different degree of structural regularity.

Both, the investigation on the model compounds and oligomers confirmed the tendency of bis(azomethines) containing benzene and 1,4-*trans*-cyclohexane rings to form mesophases whose properties and thermal stability are markedly sensitive to structural modifications.

Experimental Part

General. The starting materials phenylene-1,4-diamine $(1; m.p. 143.5^{\circ}), 2,3,5,6$ -tetramethylphenylene-1,4-diamine $(2; m.p. 152.3^{\circ})$, biphenyl-4,4'-diamine $(3; m.p. 124.7^{\circ}), 4,4'$ -ethylenedi(phenylamine) $(5; m.p. 137.6^{\circ}), 3,3'$ -dimethoxybiphenyl-4,4'-diamine $(7; m.p. 136.4^{\circ}), 3,3'$ -dimethylbiphenyl-4,4'diamine $(8; m.p. 128.2^{\circ}), and 3,3', 5,5'$ -tetramethylbiphenyl-4,4'-diamine $(9; m.p. 167.8^{\circ})$ were purchased from *Fluka* and sublimed before use. The 4,4'-(decamethylenedicoxy)dibenzaldehyde [10] $(25; m.p. 73.5^{\circ}; [8]: m.p. 78-80^{\circ}), 4$ -pentoxybenzaldehyde [11] $(10; b.p. 115-117^{\circ}/1 \text{ Torr}; [11]: b.p. 156-158^{\circ}/10 \text{ Torr})$ and 4-pentoxyacetophenone [12] $(11; b.p. 126-128^{\circ}/17 \text{ Torr}; [12]: b.p. 181-183^{\circ}/18 \text{ Torr})$ were prepared according to literature procedures. The synthesis of *trans,trans*-bicy-clohexane-4,4'-diamine (4), trans,trans-4,4'-ethylenedi(cyclohexylamine) (6) and 4-(trans-4-aminocyclohexyl)-aniline (23) will be reported elsewhere [15]. Optical studies of the textures were conducted under Ar with a polarizing *Universal R Pol Zeiss* microscope. Transition temp. and m.p. were determined by a differential scanning calorimeter (*Mettler DSC 3000*) at a heating rate of 10° under a flow of N₂. The mol. wt. of the oligomers were determined by ayor-pressure osmometry in CHCl₃ at 25° using a *Corona Wescan 232 A* instrument. ¹H-NMR (360 MHz): in CDCl₃; *Bruker AM 300 WB; \delta* in ppm relative to TMS as internal standard, *J* in Hz.

4.4'-(*Decamethylendioxy*)di(acetophenone) (26) was synthesized analogously to 25 [10] and recrystallized from EtOH. M.p. 109.5°. ¹H-NMR: 1.3–1.6 (*m*, 12 H); 1.80 (*m*, J = 6.5, 4 H); 2.55 (*s*, 6 H); 4.01 (*t*, J = 6.5, 4 H); 6.91 (*m*, 4 H); 7.92 (*m*, 4 H). Anal. calc. for C₂₆H₃₄O₄ (410.22): C 76.06, H 8.35; found: C 76.23, H 8.44.

N,N'-Bis(4-pentoxybenzylidene)phenylene-1,4-diamine (12). A soln. of 0.28 g (2.60 mmol) of 1 and 1.00 g (5.20 mmol) of 10 in 20 ml of benzene was heated overnight at reflux temp. The H₂O was continuously eliminated by means of a *Dean-Stark* trap. The mixture was then cooled to r.t. and evaporated. The solids were recrystallized from benzene to afford 1.10 g (93%) of 12. ¹H-NMR: 0.95 (t, J = 7.0, 6 H); 1.36–1.50 (m, 8 H); 1.77–1.78 (m, 4 H); 4.02 (t, J = 6.6, 4 H); 6.95–6.99 (m, 4 H); 7.24 (s, 4 H); 7.82–7.86 (m, 4 H); 8.43 (s, 2 H). Anal. calc. for C₃₀H₃₆N₂O₂ (456.38): C 78.91, H 7.95, N 6.13; found: C 78.78, H 7.98, N 6.17.

Model compounds 13-22 and 24 were synthesized according to the above procedure. AcOH (0.5 ml) was added to the reaction mixture for preparing 21 and 22. The chemical yields ranged from 85 to 90%.

2.3.5.6-Tetramethyl-N,N'-bis(4-pentoxybenzylidene)phenylene-1,4-diamine (13) recrystallized from EtOH. ¹H-NMR: 0.95 (t, J = 7.1, 6 H); 1.34–1.52 (m, 8 H); 1.78–1.87 (m, 4 H); 2.07 (s, 12 H); 4.03 (t, J = 6.6, 4 H); 6.97–7.00 (m, 4 H); 7.84–7.87 (m, 4 H); 8.08 (s, 2 H). Anal. calc. for $C_{34}H_{44}N_2O_2$ (512.32): C 79.65, H 8.65, N 5.46; found: C 79.39, H 8.37, N 5.49.

N,N'-bis(4-pentoxybenzylidene)biphenyl-4,4'-diamine (14) recrystallized from benzene. ¹H-NMR: 0.95 (t, J = 7.1, 6 H); 1.39–1.50 (m, 8 H); 1.78–1.88 (m, 4 H); 4.04 (t, J = 6.6, 4 H); 6.97–7.00 (m, 4 H); 7.27–7.30 (m, 4 H); 7.60–7.66 (m, 4 H); 7.84–7.88 (m, 4 H); 8.45 (s, 2 H). Anal. calc. for C₃₆H₄₀N₂O₂ (532.34): C 81.17, H 7.57, N 5.26; found: C 81.41, H 7.83, N 5.23.

trans,trans-N,N'-*Bis*(4-pentoxybenzylidene)bicyclohexane-4,4'-diamine (15) recrystallized from EtOH. ¹H-NMR: 0.93 (t, J = 7.1, 6 H); 1.16–1.26 (m, 6 H); 1.32–1.47 (m, 8 H); 1.49 1.67 (m, 4 H); 1.76–1.86 (m, 12 H); 3.06 3.13 (m, 2 H); 3.98 (t, J = 6.6, 4 H); 6.88–6.91 (m, 4 H); 7.62–7.66 (m, 4 H); 8.24 (s, 2 H). Anal. calc. for C₃₆H₅₂N₂O₂ (544.34): C 79.66, H 9.28, N 5.16; found: C 79.73, H 9.30, N 5.00.

N,N'-Bis(4-pentoxybenzylidene)-4,4'-ethylenedi(phenylamine) (16) recrystallized from EtOH/benzene 1:1. ¹H-NMR: 0.94 (t, J = 7.1, 6 H); 1.33-1.51 (m, 8 H); 1.76-1.86 (m, 4 H); 2.94 (s, 4 H); 4.01 (t, J = 6.6, 4 H); 6.94-6.97 (m, 4 H); 7.11-7.19 (m, 8 H); 7.80-7.84 (m, 4 H); 8.38 (s, 2 H). Anal. calc. for C₃₈H₄₄N₂O₂ (560.36): C 81.44, H 7.85, N 5.00; found: C 81.26, H 7.96, N 4.93.

N,N'-trans,trans-*Bis*(4-*pentoxybenzylidene*)-4,4'-*ethylenedi*(*cyclohexylamine*) (17) recrystallized from EtOH/benzene 2:1. ¹H-NMR: 0.93 (t, J = 7.1, 6 H); 1.00–1.07 (m, 4 H); 1.21–1.26 (m, 6 H); 1.31–1.49 (m, 8 H); 1.55–1.86 (m, 16 H); 3.06–3.14 (m, 2 H); 3.97 (t, J = 6.6, 4 H); 6.87–6.90 (m, 4 H); 7.61–7.66 (m, 4 H); 8.24 (s, 2 H). Anal. calc. for C₃₈H₅₆N₂O₂ (572.36): C 79.95, H 9.53, N 4.91; found: C 79.91, H 9.50, N 4.84.

3.3'-Dimethoxy-N,N'-bis(4-pentoxybenzylidene)biphenyl-4,4'-diamine (18) recrystallized from EtOH. ¹H-NMR: 0.95 (t, J = 7.1, 6 H); 1.36–1.50 (m, 8 H); 1.77–1.87 (m, 4 H); 3.97 (s, 6 H); 4.03 (t, J = 6.6, 4 H); 6.95–6.99 (m, 4 H); 7.05–7.09 (m, 2 H); 7.17–7.24 (m, 4 H); 7.86–7.90 (m, 4 H); 8.44 (s, 2 H). Anal. calc. for C₃₈H₄₄N₂O₄ (592.34): C 77.00, H 7.48, N 4.73; found: C 76.74, H 7.46, N 4.75.

3,3'-Dimethyl-N,N'-bis(4-pentoxybenzylidene)biphenyl-4,4'-diamine (19) recrystallized from EtOH. ¹H-NMR: 0.95 (t, J = 7.2, 6 H); 1.34–1.56 (m, 8 H); 1.78–1.87 (m, 4 H); 2.43 (s, 6 H); 4.03 (t, J = 6.6, 4 H); 6.97–7.00 (m, 6 H); 7.43–7.48 (m, 4 H); 7.85–7.89 (m, 4 H); 8.34 (s, 2 H). Anal. calc. for C₃₈H₄₄N₂O₂ (560.36): C 81.44, H 7.85, N 5.00; found: C 81.55, H 8.01, N 4.94.

3,3',5,5'-*Tetramethyl*-N,N'-*bis*(4-*pentoxybenzylidene*)*biphenyl*-4,4'-*diamine* (20) recrystallized from EtOH/ benzene 5:1. ¹H-NMR: 0.95 (t, J = 7.1, 6 H); 1.34–1.52 (m, 8 H); 1.78–1.87 (m, 4 H); 2.20 (s, 12 H); 4.04 (t, J = 6.6, 4 H); 6.98–7.01 (m, 4 H); 7.30 (s, 4 H); 7.83–7.87 (m, 4 H); 8.17 (s, 2 H). Anal. calc. for C₄₀H₄₈N₂O₂ (588.38): C 81.59, H 8.22, N 4.76; found: C 81.37, H 8.29, N 4.68.

N,N'-Bis(α -methyl-4-pentoxybenzylidene)biphenyl-4,4'-diamine (**21**) recrystallized from EtOH. ¹H-NMR: 0.95 (*t*, *J* = 7.1, 6 H); 1.36–1.49 (*m*, 8 H); 1.77–1.87 (*m*, 4 H); 2.25 (*s*, 6 H); 4.02 (*t*, *J* = 6.6, 4 H); 6.83–6.88 (*m*, 4 H); 6.92–6.97 (*m*, 4 H); 7.58–7.62 (*m*, 4 H); 7.92–7.96 (*m*, 4 H). Anal. calc. for C₃₈H₄₄N₂O₂ (560.36): C 81.44, H 7.85, N 5.00; found: C 81.12, H 8.17, N 4.98.

3,3'-Dimethyl-N,N'-bis(α -methyl-4-pentoxybenzylidene)biphenyl-4,4'-diamine (22) recrystallized from EtOH. ¹H-NMR: 0.95 (*t*, *J* = 7.0, 6 H); 1.37–1.50 (*m*, 8 H); 1.77–1.87 (*m*, 4 H); 2.15 (*s*, 6 H); 2.18 (*s*, 6 H); 4.03 (*t*, *J* = 6.6, 4 H); 6.68–6.71 (*m*, 27 H); 6.94–6.97 (*m*, 4 H); 7.41–7.46 (*m*, 4 H); 7.96–7.99 (*m*, 4 H). Anal. calc. for C₄₀H₄₈N₂O₂ (588.38): C 81.59, H 8.22, N 4.76; found: C 81.46, H 8.44, N 4.78.

N-(4-Pentoxybenzylidene)-4- $\{2-[4-((4-pentoxybenzylidene)amino)cyclohexyl]ethyl\}aniline$ (24) recrystallized from EtOH/benzene 2:1. ¹H-NMR: 0.93 (t, J = 6.9, 3 H); 0.95 (t, J = 7.0, 3 H); 1.04–1.20 (m, 2 H); 1.25–1.50 (m, 8 H); 1.50–1.70 (m, 5 H); 1.70–1.94 (m, 8 H); 2.63–2.69 (m, 2 H); 3.09–3.16 (m, 1 H); 3.98 (t, J = 6.6, 2 H); 4.02 (t, J = 6.6, 2 H); 6.88–7.00 (m, 4 H); 7.12–7.21 (m, 4 H); 7.60–7.66 (m, 2 H); 7.80–7.84 (m, 2 H); 8.25 (s, 1 H); 8.39 (s, 1 H). Anal. calc. for C₃₈H₅₀N₂O₂ (566.36): C 80.52, H 8.89, N 4.94; found: C 80.47, H 9.11, N 4.91.

Oligomers. They were prepared according to the procedure used for the synthesis of the model compounds. The soluble oligomers 27, 30, and 32 were recrystallized from EtOH, benzene/EtOH 10:1, and benzene/EtOH 1:4, resp. The insoluble compounds 28, 29, 31, and 33 were filtered from the reaction mixture, purified by *Soxhlet* extraction for 24 h with EtOH and dried at 60°/10 Torr. Data in *Table 2*. The wide-angle X-ray (WAXS) bands are listed in *Table 3*.

Oligomer	20 [deg]								
27	11.8,	15.0,	16.6,	17.5,	20.4,	21.3,	23.8,	27.5	
28	23.0,	23.7,	24.5,	26.2,	29.2				
29	14.9,	15.7,	16.8,	18.5,	18.9,	21.2,	23.5,	24.9,	25.7
30	13.1,	16.9,	19.4,	20.0,	22.0,	23.4,	24.0		
31	16.6,	19.3,	20.3,	22.0,	26.0				
32	19.5,	20.6,	22.0,	24.8					
33	22.4,	21.8,	23.5						

Table 3. Wide-Angle X-Ray Bands of the Oligomers^a)

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