The synthesis and spectral properties of novel porphyrazines with eight (*p*-tolylmethylthio) and (*o*-tolylmethylthio) units Neslihan Cenan and Ergün Gonca*

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By cyclotetramerisation of 1,2-bis(*p*-tolylmethylthio) and 1,2-bis(*o*-tolylmethylthio) maleonitrile in the presence of magnesium butanolate, magnesium porphyrazinates carrying eight (*p*-tolylmethylthio) and (*o*-tolylmethylthio) units on the peripheral positions have been synthesised. Conversion of the magnesium porphyrazinates into the metal-free derivatives was achieved by treatment with trifluoroacetic acid. Further reactions of these products with copper(II) acetate, zinc(II) acetate and cobalt(II) acetate led to the metal porphyrazinates (M = Cu, Zn, Co).

Keywords: maleonitriles, thioethers, porphyrazines, magnesium, copper, cobalt, zinc complexes

On account of their catalytic properties, biological importance and possible technological applications, metal compounds with several tetrapyrrole ligands, specifically the porphyrins, porphyrazines (tetraazaporphyrins) and phthalocyanines, have attracted great interest.¹⁻³ Metal porphyrins are well known for their biological functions such as in photosynthesis and oxygen transfer. Metal phthalocyanines have found several applications in industry as semiconductors, in energy conversion, chemical and gas sensors, catalysis, electro photography, photosensitisers, laser technology, electrochromism, liquid crystals, and optical data collection.⁴⁻¹⁰ Therefore, there have been many experimental studies of metal porphyrins and metal phthalocyanines, whereas metal porphyrazines have received much less consideration since their early synthesis, probably because of the lack of an efficient synthetic method for making soluble derivatives.¹¹⁻¹³ Recently, however, some different researches involving porphyrazines have been made, which presage an excellent future for their applications.¹⁴⁻¹⁶

Our group has been studying the preparation of new soluble phthalocyanine and porphyrazine derivatives. Among these, phthalocyanines fused to or attached through bridges to macrocyclic structures, and porphyrazines with long chains or functional units such as quaternisable amino groups,¹⁷ crown ethers,¹⁸ ferrocenes,¹⁹ triphenylphosphine,²⁰ 4-*tert*-butylphenylthio²¹ and tosylaminoethylthio²² groups can be cited. Recently, we have synthesised novel *seco*-porphyrazines substituted with 1-naphthyl²³ and *p*-tolyl or *o*-tolyl units²⁴ on the peripheral positions, as encountered by Barrett, Hoffman and coworkers, with peripheral aminoporphyrazines with bulky electron-rich substituents such as 1-naphthylmethylthio,²⁶ 9-anthracenylmethylthio units ²⁷ and (9-anthracenylmethylthio) iron derivatives.²⁸

Results and discussion

In the present study, we report novel soluble porphyrazines with eight (*p*-tolylmethylthio) and (*o*-tolylmethylthio) substituents appending to the peripheral positions. By cyclotetramerisation of 1,2-bis(*p*-tolylmethylthio)- and 1,2-bis(*o*-tolylmethylthio)-maleonitrile (**2**, **3**) in the presence of magnesium butanolate, magnesium porphyrazinates have been synthesised. Their demetalation by treatment with trifluoroacetic acid produced the metal-free derivatives. Further reactions of these products with copper(II) acetate, zinc(II) acetate and cobalt(II) acetate led to the metallo derivatives M(II) (M = Cu, Zn, Co). The new compounds were characterised by elemental analysis together with FT-IR, ¹H NMR, UV-Vis and mass spectral data.

The starting materials for these novel porphyrazine structures with eight (*p*-tolylmethylthio) or (*o*-tolylmethylthio) groups bound to the periphery are the 1,2-bis(p-tolylmethylthio) maleonitrile (2) and 1,2-bis(o-tolylmethylthio) isomer (3)which were obtained from α -chloro-p-xylene and α -chloro-oxylene respectively and the disodium salt of dithiomaleonitrile (1) (Scheme 1). The yellow product 2 and the yellow-green product 3 were obtained in 78% and 83% yields, respectively. The conversion of 2 and 3 into 4a and 5a (Scheme 1) was achieved by the template effect of magnesium butanolate: cyclotetramerisation gave the dark green magnesioporphyrazine 4a in 63% yield and the blue-green 5a in 58% yield. They were soluble in chloroform, dichloromethane, acetone and toluene, but insoluble in apolar hydrocarbon solvents such as *n*-hexane. The conversion of 4a and 5a into the magnesium-free porphyrazines 4b and 5b was achieved by treatment with trifluoroacetic acid. Their mass spectra clearly show that the magnesium has been removed and replaced by hydrogen atoms. Proton-metal exchange in the metal-free porphyrazines (4b, 5b) using metal salts gave the metalated species 4c-e, 5c-e (Scheme 1).

The precursors 2 and 3, and the porphyrazines 4a–e and 5a–e were identified using spectroscopic techniques such as ¹H NMR, FT-IR, UV-Vis and MS, and elemental analysis. The elemental analyses correspond closely with the calculated values (see Experimental section).

In the FT-IR spectrum of 2, the stretching vibration of C=N is observed at 2215 cm⁻¹, the aromatic and aliphatic C-H peaks are around 2876-3052 cm⁻¹, and the characteristic substituted p-tolyl peak is at 803 cm⁻¹; in theIR spectrum of 3, the stretching vibration of C=N is observed at 2212 cm⁻¹, the aromatic and aliphatic C-H peaks are around 2863-3059 cm-1 and the characteristic substituted (o-tolyl) peak is at 735 cm⁻¹. These values are consistent with those reported elsewhere for similar compounds.^{23,26,27} After the conversion of 2 and 3 into 4a and 5a, the C=N vibrations around 2215 and 2212 cm⁻¹ disappeared. In the metal-free porphyrazines (4b, 5b), the N-H stretching absorptions of the inner core were observed around 3339 and 3328 cm⁻¹. The FT-IR spectra of all porphyrazine derivatives (4a-e, 5a-e) showed the aromatic and aliphatic C-H peaks at around 2848-3059 cm⁻¹, the characteristic C=C aromatic peaks around 1605-1675 cm⁻¹; the characteristic p-disubstituted benzene peaks showed at around 805-848 cm⁻¹ in 4 and the o-disubstituted benzene peaks around 735-766 cm⁻¹ in 5.

In the ¹H NMR spectra of the diamagnetic porphyrazines (4a, 4b, 4d, 5a, 5b, 5d), three different types of proton are clearly seen: a multiplet around 7.20–7.35 ppm corresponding to the phenyl protons, a singlet around 4.33–4.39 ppm corresponding to the S–CH₂, and a singlet around 2.40–2.44 ppm for the methyl protons. The ratio of the integral values 4:2:3 confirms the proposed assignments. The N–H protons of the metal-free porphyrazines (4b, 5b) were also identified in the ¹H NMR spectra with broad peaks at $\delta = -1.15$ and

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Reagents: i, heat, MeOH; ii, Mg(OBu)2; iii, CF₃CO₂H; iv, heat in EtOH, Cu(OAc)2, Zn(OAc)2, or Co(OAc)2

Scheme 1

-1.05 ppm, presenting the typical shielding of inner core protons, which is a common feature of the ¹H NMR spectra of metal-free porphyrazines.^{18,19,26,29}

Electronic spectra are especially useful to establish the structure of the porphyrazines 4a-e and 5a-e. The UV-Vis spectrum of the porphyrazine core is dominated by two intense bands, the Q band in the visible region around 650 nm and the B band in the near UV around 350 nm, both correspond to $\pi \rightarrow \pi^*$ transitions.^{30,31} The presence of electron-donating units on the periphery causes a bathochromic shift of Q bands. The UV-Vis spectra in chloroform of porphyrazines 4a, 4c-e, 5a, 5c-e prepared in the present work exhibited intense single Q band absorptions around 642-675 nm and B bands in the near UV region around 345-378 nm (Table 1). As a consequence of the change in the symmetry of the porphyrazine core from D_{4h} in the case of the metallo-derivatives) to D_{2h} , the electronic absorption spectra of 4b and 5b display a split in the Q band, to 634 and 706 nm and 638 and 715 nm, respectively. The UV-Vis spectra of 4a and 4b in chloroform are shown in Fig. 1. An absorbance vs. concentration study indicated that, due to the bulky tolylmethylthio substituents, no aggregation occurred in 4a, 4b, 5a or 5b.

In conclusion, we describe the synthesis and the spectral characterisation of novel porphyrazines surrounded by eight bulky p- or o-tolylmethylthio units on the periphery.

Experimental

IR spectra were recorded on a Perkin Elmer Spectrum One FT-IR (ATR sampling accessory) spectrophotometer, electronic spectra on a Unicam UV2 spectrophotometer. Elemental analyses were recorded on a Thermo Finnigan Flash EA 1112 instrument. Proton NMR spectra were recorded on a Varian INOVA 500 MHz spectrometer using TMS and CDCl₃ as the reference and solvent, respectively. Mass spectra were recorded on a Bruker Daltonics MicrOTOF LC–MS spectrometer using the electro spray ionisation (ESI) method. The instrument was operated in positive ion mode. All starting materials were purchased from major suppliers and used without any further purification.

The disodium salt of dithiomaleonitrile (1) was prepared according to the previously reported procedure.³²

1,2-Bis(p-tolylmethylthio)maleonitrile (2): The disodium salt of dithiomaleonitrile (1)³² (1.12 g, 6 mmol) was mixed with (α -chloro-*p*-xylene) (2.11 g, 15 mmol) in methanol (50 ml) and heated to reflux under nitrogen for *ca* 8 h. Then MeOH was evaporated off, and

Table 1 UV-Vis data for 4a-e and 5a-e in chloroform

	Compound	λ/nm (log ε/dm³ mol ⁻¹ cm ⁻¹)
4a	378 (4.71)	675 (4.70)
4b	378 (4.89)	634 (4.74) 706 (4.81)
4c	377 (4.79)	652 (4.84)
4d	368 (4.78)	644 (4.88)
4e	366 (4.84)	646 (4.89)
5a	345 (4.53)	675 (4.58)
5b	354 (4.51)	638 (4.18) 715 (3.85)
5c	358 (4.41)	642 (4.38)
5d	350 (4.45)	646 (4.42)
5e	356 (4.49)	650 (4.40)



Fig. 1 UV-Vis spectra of 4a and 4b in chloroform.

the residue was treated with chloroform to remove insoluble salts by filtration. The chloroform solution was extracted several times with 15% aqueous Na₂SO₄ and then dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄ overnight. After evaporation of the solvent the residual solid was extracted with refluxing *n*-hexane to remove any excess of α -chloro*p*-xylene. The yellow dinitrile **2** was very soluble in chloroform and dichloromethane, but insoluble in *n*-hexane. Yield: 1.64 g (78%). IR: v_{max} 3052, 2974–2876, 2215, 1651, 1517, 1452, 1380, 1269, 1201, 1168, 1087, 1041, 848, 803, 747, 721 cm⁻¹. NMR: $\delta_{\rm H}$ 7.30–7.17 (m, 8H, ArH), 4.31 (s, 4H, S–CH₂), 2.39 (s, 6H, CH₃). MS (ESI): *m/z* 350.2 [M]⁺. Anal. Calcd for C₂₀H₁₈N₂S₂ (350.09): C, 68.53; H, 5.18; N, 7.99. Found: C, 68.65; H, 5.07; N, 7.85%.

1,2-Bis(o-tolylmethylthio)maleonitrile (3): The synthetic procedure was identical to that of 2 above, but using α -chloro-o-xylene in place of the p-xylene. The dinitrile 3 was yellow-green and very soluble in chloroform and dichloromethane, but insoluble in n-hexane. Yield: 1.75 g (83%). IR: v_{max} 3059, 2974–2863, 2212, 1605, 1494, 1461, 1380, 1261, 1222, 1170, 1093, 1036, 875, 838, 766, 735 cm⁻¹. NMR: δ_H 7.32&7.19 (m, 8H, ArH), 4.36 (s, 4H, S–CH₂), 2.41 (s, 6H, CH₃). MS (ESI): m/z 350.7 [M]⁺. Anal. Calcd for C₂₀H₁₈N₂S₂ (350.09): C, 68.53; H, 5.18; N, 7.99. Found: C, 68.68; H, 5.26; N, 8.09%.

The octakis(tolylmethylthio)porphyrazinato]magnesium(II) complexes 4a, 5a

Mg turnings (24.3 mg, 1 mmol) and a small I₂ crystal were refluxed in n-BuOH (20 ml) for about 8 h to obtain Mg(OBu)2. To this solution the dinitrile (701 mg, 2 mmol) was added and the mixture was refluxed for about 8 h. The crude coloured product was filtered off, washed with ethanol and water and dried in a vacuum. The solid was dissolved in chloroform and filtered from insoluble salts. The chloroform solution was dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄. After evaporation of the solvent the green or blue-green solid residue was purified by column chromatography on silica (eluent CH₃OH: CHCl₃, 1:50 v/v). The products were soluble in chloroform, dichloromethane, acetone and toluene, but insoluble in n-hexane.

[2,3,7,8,12,13,17,18-Octakis(p-tolylmethylthio)porphyrazinato] Mg(II) (4a): Prepared using the dinitrile 2, as a dark green solid (450 mg, 63%). IR: v_{max} 3050, 2978–2880, 1614, 1519, 1465, 1366, 1271, 1184, 1126, 1090, 1044, 847, 805, 750, 725 cm⁻¹. NMR: $\delta_{\rm H}$ 7.34–7.21 (m, 4H, ArH), 4.33 (s, 2H, S–CH₂), 2.41 (s, 3H, CH₃). MS (ESI): m/z 1426.6 [M]⁺. Anal. Calcd for C₈₀H₇₂ MgN₈S₈ (1426.32): C, 67.37; H, 5.09; N, 7.86. Found: C, 67.49; H, 5.20; N, 7.71%.

[2,3,7,8,12,13,17,18-Octakis(o-tolylmethylthio)porphyrazinato] Mg(II) (5a): From the dinitrile 3, a blue-green solid (414 mg, 58%). IR: v_{max} 3055, 2980–2870, 1625, 1495, 1465, 1355, 1265, 1220, 1148, 1095, 1040, 878, 818, 758, 735 cm⁻¹. NMR: δ_H 7.35–7.22 (m, 4H, ArH), 4.39 (s, 2H, S-CH₂), 2.44 (s, 3H, CH₃). MS (ESI): m/z 1426.2 $[M]^+$. Anal. Calcd for $C_{80}H_{72}$ MgN₈S₈ (1426.32): C, 67.37; H, 5.09; N, 7.86. Found: C, 67.52; H, 5.18; N, 7.73%.

The octakis(tolylmethylthio)porphyrazines 4b, 5b: The porphyrazinato-magnesium complex 4a or 5a (143 mg, 0.1 mmol) was dissolved in the minimum amount of trifluoroacetic acid (ca 4 ml) and stirred for 3 h at room temperature. When the reaction mixture was added to ice drop by drop, and then neutralised with 25% aqueous ammonia, precipitation occurred and the solid was separated and dissolved in chloroform, and the chloroform solution was extracted with water twice. After drying over anhydrous Na2SO4 the solvent was evaporated to obtain the metal-free porphyrazine, which was purified by column chromatography (SiO₂; CH₃OH: CHCl₃, 1:50 v/v). 2,3,7,8,12,13,17,18-Octakis(p-tolylmethylthio-H²¹,H²³-porphyr-

azine (4b): Green solid (62 mg, 44%). IR: v_{max} 3339, 3053, 2928–2862, 1618, 1515, 1452, 1328, 1275, 1172, 1125, 1085, 1040, 847, 803, 753, 723 cm⁻¹. NMR: $\delta_{\rm H}$ 7.35–7.21 (m, 4H, ArH), 4.34 (s, 2H, S– CH₂), 2.42 (s, 3H, CH₃), -1,15 (br s, 2H, NH). MS (ESI): m/z 1404.3 [M]⁺. Anal. Calcd for C₈₀H₇₄N₈S₈ (1404.04): C, 68.44; H, 5.31; N, 7.98. Found: C, 68.32; H, 5.44; N, 7.86%.

2,3,7,8,12,13,17,18-Octakis(o-tolylmethylthio)-H²¹,H²³-porphyrazine (**5b**): Green powder (73 mg (52%). IR: v_{max} 3328, 3045, 2924–2852, 1628, 1491, 1441, 1332, 1260, 1215, 1185, 1088, 1038, 885, 820, 762, 738 cm⁻¹. NMR: $\delta_{\rm H}$ 7.34–7.20 (m, 4H, ArH), 4.38 (s, 2H, S-CH₂), 2.43 (s, 3H, CH₃), -1.05 (br s, 2H, NH). MS (ESI): m/ z 1404.5 [M]⁺. Anal. Calcd for $C_{80}H_{74}N_8S_8$ (1404.04): C, 68.44; H, 5.31; N, 7.98. Found: C, 68.30; H, 5.38; N, 7.83%.

General procedure for metallo-porphyrazines (4c-e): The metal-free porphyrazine (4b or 5b) (140 mg, 0.1 mmol) in $CHCl_3$ (10 ml) was stirred with the metal salt (1 mmol) [Cu(OAc)₂ (182 mg), Zn(OAc)₂ (183 mg) or Co(OAc)₂ (177 mg)] in ethanol (15 ml) and heated to reflux under nitrogen for about 4 h. After cooling, the precipitate, consisting of the crude product and the excess of metal salt, was filtered off and dried. The precipitate was treated with chloroform and the insoluble metal salts were removed by filtration. The filtrate was reduced to minimum volume under reduced pressure and then added to n-hexane (100 ml) drop by drop to precipitate the product. The porphyrazine derivatives (4c-e or 5c-e) were purified by column chromatography (SiO2; CH3OH: CHCl3, 1:20 v/v).

[2,3,7,8,12,13,17,18-Octakis(p-tolylmethylthio)porphyrazinato] *Cu(II)* (4e): Blue powder (66 mg, 45%). IR: v_{max} 3055, 2928–2885, 1642, 1513, 1448, 1380, 1276, 1191, 1123, 1083, 1042, 838, 802, 758, 725 cm⁻¹. MS (ESI): m/z 1465.2 [M]+. Anal. Calcd for C80H72CuN8S8 (1465.57): C, 65.56; H, 4.95; N, 7.65. Found: C, 65.43; H, 4.82; N, 7.79%.

[2,3,7,8,12,13,17,18-Octakis(p-tolylmethylthio)porphyrazinato] Zn(II) (4d): Green powder (56 mg, 38%). IR: v_{max} 3048, 2925-2875, 1675, 1510, 1440, 1355, 1265, 1184, 1128, 1080, 1038, 830, 805, 767, 728 cm⁻¹. NMR: δ_H 7.35–7.19 (m, 4H, ArH), 4.35 (s, 2H, S–CH₂), 2.44 (s, 3H, CH₃). MS (ESI): m/z 1467.6 [M]⁺. Anal. Calcd for C80H72N8S8Zn (1467.41): C, 65.48; H, 4.95; N, 7.64. Found: C, 65.55; H, 4.83; N, 7.75%.

[2,3,7,8,12,13,17,18-Octakis(p-tolylmethylthio)porphyrazinato] *Co*(*II*) (4e): Blue powder (63 mg, 43%). IR: v_{max} 3056, 2936–2848, 1668, 1518, 1438, 1361, 1262, 1174, 1135, 1081, 1044, 845, 803, 758, 727 cm⁻¹. MS (ESI): m/z 1460.7 [M]⁺. Anal. Calcd for C₈₀H₇₂CoN₈S₈ (1460.95): C, 65.77; H, 4.97; N, 7.67. Found: C, 65.88; H, 4.86; N, 7.79%.

[2,3,7,8,12,13,17,18-Octakis(o-tolylmethylthio)porphyrazinato] Cu(II) (5c): Blue powder (70 mg, 48%). IR: v_{max} 3052, 2928–2868, 1621, 1493, 1458, 1355, 1258, 1212, 1188, 1091, 1041, 888, 828, 759, 735 cm⁻¹. MS (ESI): m/z 1465.4 [M]⁺. Anal. Calcd for C₈₀H₇₂CuN₈S₈ (1465.57): C, 65.56; H, 4.95; N, 7.65. Found: C, 65.62; H, 5.05; N, 7.54%.

[2,3,7,8,12,13,17,18-Octakis(o-tolylmethylthio)porphyrazinato] Zn(II) (5d): Green powder (65 mg, 44%). IR: v_{max} 3055, 2922-2864, 1631, 1495, 1448, 1352, 1260, 1214, 1193, 1094, 1038, 885, 825, 756, 736 cm⁻¹. NMR: $\delta_{\rm H}$ 7.33–7.21 (m, 4H, ArH), 4.35 (s, 2H, S– CH2), 2.40 (s, 3H, CH3). MS (ESI): m/z 1467.1 [M]+. Anal. Calcd for C80H72N8S8Zn (1467.41): C, 65.48; H, 4.95; N, 7.64. Found: C, 65.57; H, 5.06; N, 7.53%.

[2,3,7,8,12,13,17,18-Octakis(o-tolylmethylthio)porphyrazinato] Co(II) (5e): Blue powder (75 mg (51%). IR: v_{max} 3040, 2935–2874, 1632, 1498, 1437, 1342, 1271, 1236, 1192, 1098, 1035, 889, 823, 759, 735 cm⁻¹. MS (ESI): m/z 1460.6 [M]⁺. Anal. Calcd for C₈₀H₇₂CoN₈S₈ (1460.95): C, 65.77; H, 4.97; N, 7.67. Found: C, 65.85; H, 4.83; N, 7.77%.

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