

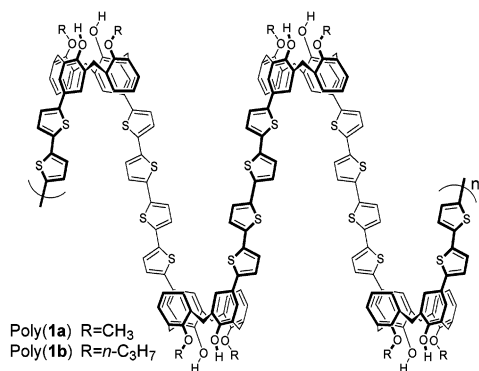
A Proton-Doped Calix[4]arene-Based Conducting Polymer

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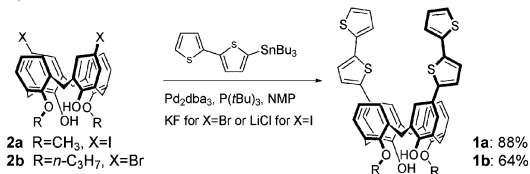
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Calix[4]arenes have long presented one of the most versatile platforms for supramolecular assemblies¹ and molecular recognition.² They undergo dramatic geometric changes involving phenol ring flips between cone, partial cone, and 1,3-alternate conformational isomers,^{1a} and they also can be fashioned to undergo smaller changes such as pinched-cone to pinched-cone hinge movements that vary the distance between two opposite phenol rings.³ For these reasons, we have been intrigued to develop segmented conjugated polymers wherein calix[4]arene units are the flexible and insulating bridges between individual organic electroactive segments. The use of electroactive segments has been demonstrated as a viable route to conducting materials,⁴ and it is understood that the spatial relationship of the electroactive segments is a critical determinant of their electronic, optical, and optoelectronic properties.⁵ We report herein proton-doped segmented polymers, Poly(**1a**) and Poly(**1b**), based upon a calix[4]arene scaffold. The cone conformation of the calix[4]arenes creates a zigzag orientation of the polymer segments, and these dynamic and porous materials are attractive candidates for the design of sensing⁶ and actuating materials.⁷



The phenol groups in monomers **1a** and **1b** display intramolecular hydrogen bonding that enforces the desired cone conformation and facilitate electropolymerization.⁸ Compounds **2a** and **2b** were synthesized as previously reported.⁹ Efficient cross-coupling reactions with these halo-phenols proved to be challenging. Attempts to obtain **1a** and **1b** under common Pd(PPh₃)₄ conditions were slow (4–5 days), poor-yielding (less than 40%), and gave large amounts of the homocoupling byproduct, quarterthiophene. Attempts to protect the phenol with acyl or trimethylsilyl¹⁰ groups prior to coupling reaction resulted in either mixtures of conformational isomers or poor yields due to steric crowding at the lower rim. Optimized cross-coupling reaction conditions were eventually accomplished by utilizing new synthetic methods developed by Fu and co-workers as shown in Scheme 1.^{11,12} Catalytic Pd₂dba₃/P(*t*Bu)₃ in the presence of inorganic salts (KF for –Br and LiCl for –I) afforded monomers **1a,b** in improved yields (64–90%) and reduced

Scheme 1



reaction times (1–2 days). The desired cone conformation was confirmed for these calix[4]arenes by proton and carbon NMR.¹³

Electropolymerizations were performed in CH₂Cl₂ containing 1 mM of monomer **1a** or **1b** and 0.1 M (*n*Bu)₄NPF₆ by repeated cycling of the electrode between –0.4 and 0.8 V at a scan rate of 100 mV/s.¹⁴ Negative shifts of the oxidation current onset after the first scan indicate the formation of the electroactive quarterthiophene *p*-dihydroquinone redox system that has been previously reported.¹⁵ The cyclic voltammogram (CV) of Poly(**1a**) and Poly(**1b**) exhibit two redox waves at $E_1^{1/2} \approx 0.22$ V and $E_2^{1/2} \approx 0.45$ V. No waves were found at negative potentials, thereby indicating that the polymer is fully reduced with the $E_1^{1/2}$ wave. Oxidation at voltages higher than $E_2^{1/2}$ leads to decomposition of the polymer. However, Poly(**1a**) and Poly(**1b**) are very stable for more than 1000 cycles in ambient atmosphere if the potential sweep is kept below $E_2^{1/2}$. Previous studies of metal/organic hybrid materials with this same electroactive system showed similar results.^{8,16,17} The similarity of the electrochemistry of Poly(**1a**) and Poly(**1b**) provides indirect evidence that the cone conformation exhibited by the monomers in solution is also present in the polymers. Most importantly the greater steric bulk of the *n*-propyl groups in Poly(**1b**) dramatically reduces its conformational flexibility and should prevent conformational changes in the polymerization. We have further determined by ¹H NMR that the cone conformation persists in the CD₂Cl₂ electrolyte solutions.

Although the charge is localized by the segmented conjugated backbone, the relatively high maximum conductivity of 6.6 S/cm was determined by in situ conductivity measurements in CH₂Cl₂ electrolyte.¹⁷ The conductivity of films of Poly(**1a**) and Poly(**1b**) showed intriguing characteristics in CH₃CN electrolyte and dropped to less than 1% of the initial value with repeated cycling over –0.20–0.95 V. A similar drop was not observed in CH₂Cl₂, and we considered that the difference was due to the reactivity of CH₃CN. We subsequently found that polymer films that had experienced the conductivity decay in CH₃CN can be transformed to materials with conductivities of the same magnitude as those analyzed in CH₂Cl₂ with the addition of trifluoroacetic acid (TFA) (see Figure 1). On the basis of this behavior, we believe that the decrease of conductivity in CH₃CN is due to the deprotonation of the phenolic protons in the oxidized state, which will not happen in CH₂Cl₂ due to the very high acidity of this solvent's conjugate acid. This behavior is illustrated in Figure 2.

The acid dependence of Poly(**1a**) and Poly(**1b**)'s conductivity is similar to the strong pH conductivity dependence of polyaniline which is said to be acid dopable.¹⁸ Oxidation of the fully reduced

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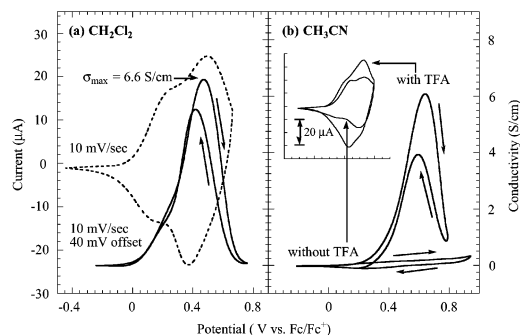


Figure 1. CV (dashed line in (a) and small plot in (b)) and in situ conductivity measurements (solid lines in the large plots) of Poly(**1a**) on 5 μm interdigitated microelectrodes under different conditions: (a) 0.1 M $(n\text{Bu})_4\text{NPF}_6$ in CH_2Cl_2 and (b) 0.1 M $(n\text{Bu})_4\text{NPF}_6$ in CH_3CN with or without 0.5 M trifluoroacetic acid (TFA).

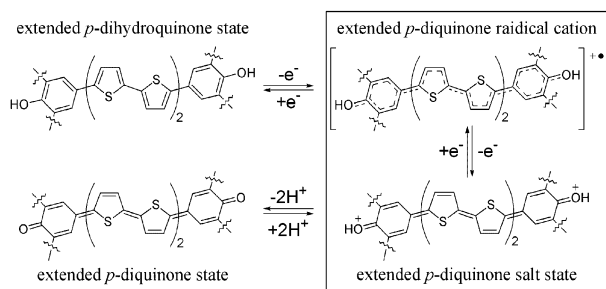


Figure 2. Different oxidation states of the conductive conjugated system in Poly(**1a**) and Poly(**1b**).

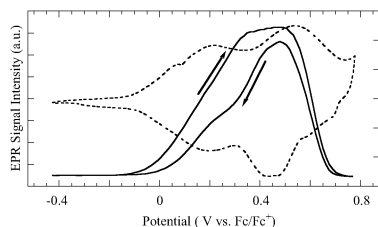


Figure 3. In situ EPR spectroscopy (solid line) and CV (dashed line) of films of Poly(**1a**) on Pt wire electrode in $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2/(n\text{Bu})_4\text{NPF}_6$.

“extended *p*-dihydroquinone” state under conditions that do not allow deprotonation gives a high conductivity. Infrared studies support the presence of the protonated and deprotonated quinones in **1a**. A new intense band at 1578 cm^{-1} is observed for material oxidized in CH_2Cl_2 , and a band at 1596 cm^{-1} is found for material oxidized in CH_3CN solution with small amounts of pyridine. Similar to polyaniline,¹⁶ protonation is expected to shift the $\text{C}=\text{O}$ stretching frequency to lower energy. To further support our assignment of the two different oxidation processes shown in Figure 2, we conducted in situ EPR experiments in CH_2Cl_2 .¹⁷ These investigations, shown in Figure 3, reveal an increase in spin density as Poly(**1a**) undergoes the first oxidation, which is consistent with a one-electron oxidation and a build-up of the extended *p*-diquinone radical cation state. We observed a decrease in the spin density throughout the second oxidation consistent with formation of *p*-diquinone salt. Similar to the emeraldine state of polyaniline, the oxidized protonated state is much more conductive than the conjugate base *p*-diquinone state. However, Poly(**1a**) and Poly-

(**1b**) are very different from polyaniline because they have a segmented structure that imposes greater localization of the carriers. The conductivity of such a system can be considered to result from rapid self-exchange between discrete units and should exhibit a maximum when there are equal amounts of oxidized and reduced states (i.e., $E_1^{1/2}$ and $E_2^{1/2}$).¹⁹ This behavior is readily apparent in Figure 1a wherein the conductivity shows an inflection at $E_1^{1/2}$ and reaches a maximum at $E_2^{1/2}$. Hence, electron exchange between radical cations (1+) and *p*-diquinone salts (2+) shown in Figure 2 produces the highest conductivity.

In summary, we have synthesized electroactive calix[4]arene polymers that require protonation to be highly conductive. Our continuing studies are directed toward related sensory and actuating materials.

Acknowledgment. This work was supported by The Office of Naval Research and the TOPS MURI (Army Research Office). We thank Professor Gregory C. Fu and Michael Smith for valuable discussions.

Supporting Information Available: Detailed description of experimental procedures, synthetic preparations, and key CV measurements (PDF). This material is available free of charge via the Internet at <http://pubs.acs.org>.

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- (13) NMR signals of bridge $-\text{CH}_2-$ indicate the conformation of calix[4]arene: a pair of doublets between 3.0 and 4.5 ppm in proton NMR with $\Delta\delta$ around 0.9 ppm and one carbon NMR signal at 31 ppm is consistent with all the cone conformation calix[4]arenes.
- (14) All the potentials are referenced to Fc/Fc^+ . Standard three-electrode setup was used for all electrochemical studies: Pt button or ITO/glass working electrode, Pt coil counter electrode, and Ag/Ag^+ reference electrode. Ferrocene is used as an external standard.
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JA028545B