

formamide or dimethyl sulfoxide. They are, however, soluble in TFA. Combustion analysis confirms that they are tetracationic hydrobromide salts. Based on the ^1H NMR and UV–Vis spectra, macrocycles **7–9** showed, as expected, no macrocyclic aromaticity. Attempts to oxidize

these macrocycles (**7–9**) to their fully conjugated systems using common oxidizing agents such as DDQ, Br_2 , $\text{Pb}(\text{OAc})_4$, etc have so far failed in our hands.

Compounds **7–9** form binuclear complexes with $\text{Zn}(\text{II})$ in high yield from the reaction with $\text{Zn}(\text{OAc})_2$.

3. Discussion

Although X-ray structures of **7–9** are not available, results from molecular modeling¹⁹ showed that, unlike octapyrin **1a**, which adopted a ‘figure-eight’ conformation, they tend to adopt a chair conformation (Fig. 1), while the zinc(II) complexes adopt square-shaped conformations (Fig. 2). These conformations presumably result from the greater flexibility of **7–9** compared to **1a**. Like biladienes the dipyrin units in our cyclooctapyrroles are flat and fully conjugated and the optical spectra of compounds **7–10** are very similar to those of biladienes-a,c. However, unlike biladienes, where the pyrrolic rings in the dipyrromethene units adopt a Z-conformation, an E-conformation is seen in the cyclooctapyrroles. Modeling also suggests that the flat

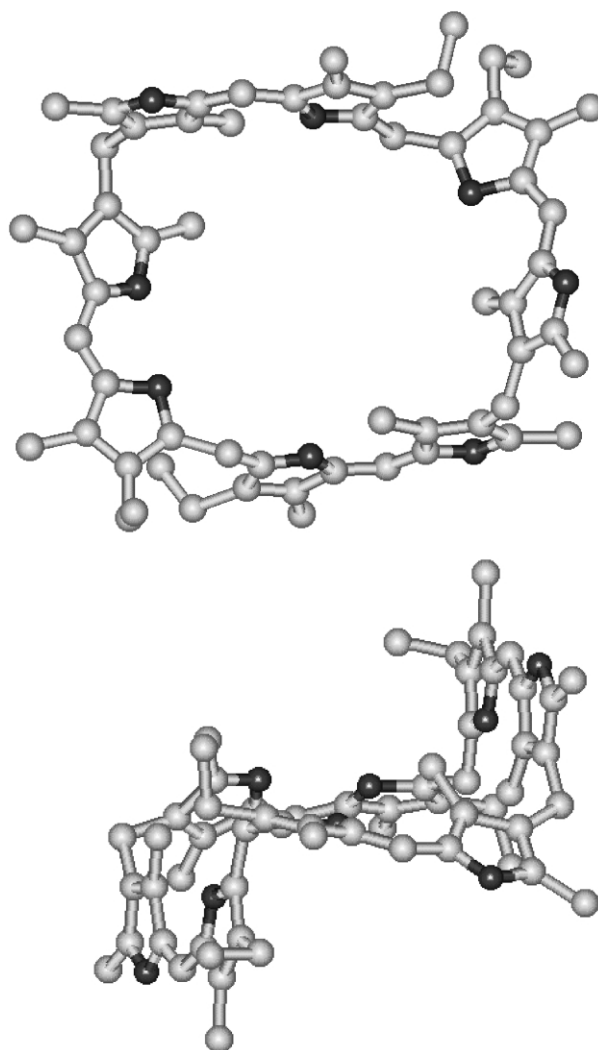


Figure 1. Lowest energy conformation of **7**, obtained using Hyperchem (Release 5.01).¹⁷ For clarity, all H atoms have been omitted, top view (upper), and edge view (lower).

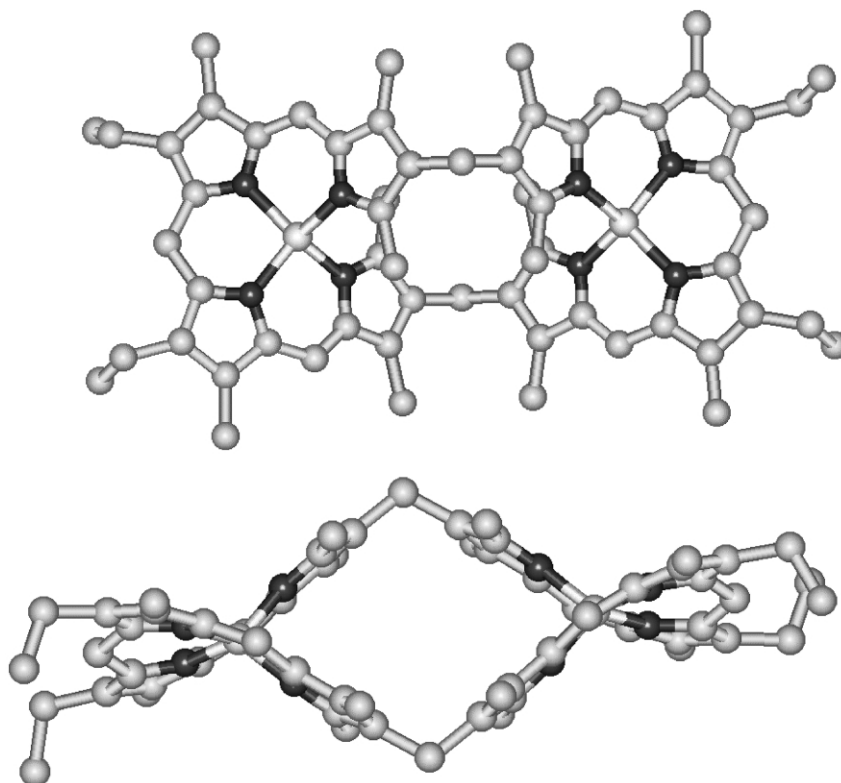


Figure 2. Lowest energy conformation of **7** complexed with Zn (II) obtained using Hyperchem (Release 5.01).¹⁷ For clarity, all H atoms have been omitted, top view (upper), and edge view (lower).

'aromatic' systems are conformationally unstable and that the peripheral alkyl groups play an important role in forming the twisted conformations. Upon metal [Zn^{2+}] binding the binuclear complexes exhibit dramatic conformational changes where the biladiene units adopt a 'porphyrin-like' geometry. However, the two sets of four pyrrolic rings are not coplanar, rather they adopt a helical conformation.

4. Conclusion

It is clear from recent studies^{4,18} that [2+2+2+2] MacDonalld type condensations can occur, under appropriate conditions, in preference to the more common [2+2] reactions. Unlike the fully conjugated octaphyrin (**1a**) the macrocycles described here cannot be fully oxidized and show no macrocyclic aromaticity. To a large extent this reflects the inherent stability of the dipyrromethene units themselves.

5. Experimental

5.1. General

All reagents and solvents were purchased and used as received. Melting points were determined on a Thomas hot stage or Buchi apparatus and are uncorrected. ^1H and ^{13}C NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker AC-200 or AMX-300 instrument. The high and low-resolution mass spectra were obtained by the departmental mass spectrometry service laboratory. Combustion analyses were performed

by the departmental microanalytical laboratory. UV–Vis spectra were recorded on an HP8452A photo diode array spectrophotometer (instrumental precision ± 2 nm).

The carboxylic acids **2–5** readily decarboxylate and satisfactory combustion analyses were not obtained. The macrocyclic zinc complex all showed very low solubility and gave NMR spectra that were too broad to be of use.

Starting materials, 1,2-bis(5-benzoxycarbonyl-2,4-dimethylpyrrole-3-yl)ethane, 1,3-bis(5-benzoxycarbonyl-2,4-dimethylpyrrole-3-yl)propane and 1,4-bis(5-benzoxycarbonyl-2,4-dimethylpyrrole-3-yl)butane were prepared according to literature procedures.²⁰

5.1.1. 5,5'-Bisbenzoxycarbonyl-2,2',4,4'-tetramethyl-3,3'-dipyrromethane. Paraformaldehyde (2.6 g, 86.7 mmol, 2.0 mol equiv.) was suspended in glacial acetic acid (100 mL) containing conc. hydrochloric acid (33%, 5 mL). The mixture was stirred with heating until the solid had dissolved. After cooling to room temperature, 2-benzoxycarbonyl-3,5-dimethylpyrrole (9.9 g, 43.3 mmol) was added. The mixture was allowed to stir at 40°C for 3 h. After removal of solvent, the residue was crystallized from methanol. The product was obtained as white crystals (9.10 g, 90%). Mp 282–284°C. ^1H NMR (200 MHz, DMSO-d_6) δ : 1.95 (s, 6H, 2 CH_3), 2.05 (s, 6H, 2 CH_3), 3.25 (s, 2H, CH_2), 5.25 (s, 4H, 2 CH_2), 7.25 (m, 10H, 2 Ph), 11.05 (s, 2H, 2NH) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (50 MHz, DMSO-d_6) δ : 10.7 (CH_3), 12.0 (CH_3), 19.5 (CH_2), 64.3 (OCH_2) 115.4, 119.4, 126.7, 127.8, 128.5, 131.0, 137.1, 160.6 (COO) ppm. Anal. calcd for $\text{C}_{19}\text{H}_{26}\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$: C 65.87; H 7.56; N 8.09; found: C 65.45; H 7.51; N 7.58.

5.1.2. 1,1-Bis(5-carboxy-2,4-dimethylpyrrole-3-yl)methane (2). 1,2-Bis(5-benzoxycarbonyl-2,4-dimethylpyrrole-3-yl)methane (9.0 g, 19 mmol) was dissolved in tetrahydrofuran (150 mL). Palladium on carbon (10%, 0.1 g) and a drop of triethylamine was then added. The mixture was stirred for 20 h under a hydrogen atmosphere at room temperature. The catalyst was removed by suction filtration. After removal of solvent, the residue was dried under vacuum. The product was obtained as a white powder (5.40 g, 99%), which was used directly for the next step synthesis without further purification. Mp 220°C (dec.). IR (KBr), $\nu=3309, 3072, 2920, 1678, 1579, 1466, 1375, 1251, 1199, 1153, 1124, 1085, 982, 900, 767, 727, 642, 561 \text{ cm}^{-1}$. ^1H NMR (200 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ : 1.90 (s, 6H, 2CH₃), 2.10 (s, 6H, 2CH₃), 3.20 (s, 2H, CH₂), 10.95 (s, 2H, 2NH) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (50 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ : 11.2 (CH₃), 11.3 (CH₃), 19.5 (CH₂), 121.3, 127.7, 130.3, 136.4, 161.5 (COOH) ppm.

5.1.3. 1,2-Bis(5-carboxy-2,4-dimethylpyrrole-3-yl)ethane (3). Prepared following the procedure for compound **2** using 1,2-bis(5-benzoxycarbonyl-2,4-dimethylpyrrole-3-yl)ethane as starting material. Yield 99%. Mp 233°C (dec.). IR (KBr), $\nu=3408, 2924, 2862, 1655, 1579, 1498, 1466, 1375, 1259, 1186, 1095, 1002, 903, 775, 752, 561 \text{ cm}^{-1}$. ^1H NMR (200 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ : 1.90 (s, 6H, 2 CH₃), 2.10 (s, 6H, 2CH₃), 2.30 (s, 4H, 2CH₂), 10.90 (s, 2H, 2NH) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (50 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ : 10.2 (CH₃), 10.6 (CH₃), 24.0 (CH₂), 116.2, 120.3, 125.6, 130.0, 162.5 (COO) ppm.

5.1.4. 1,3-Bis(5-carboxy-2,4-dimethylpyrrole-3-yl)propane (4). Prepared following the procedure for compound **2** using 1,3-bis(5-benzoxycarbonyl-2,4-dimethylpyrrole-3-yl)propane²⁰ as starting material. Yield 98%. Mp 230°C (dec.). IR (KBr), $\nu=3257, 2928, 2856, 1655, 1500, 1466, 1375, 1263, 1170, 1109, 1065, 962, 779, 729, 540 \text{ cm}^{-1}$. ^1H NMR (200 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ : 1.45 (t, $J=7.3 \text{ Hz}$, 2H, CH₂), 2.05 (s, 6H, 2 CH₃), 2.10 (s, 6H, 2CH₃), 2.30 (t, $J=7.3 \text{ Hz}$, 4H, 2CH₂), 10.90 (s, 2H, 2NH) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (50 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ : 10.1 (CH₃), 10.4 (CH₃), 22.1 (CH₂), 24.1 (CH₂), 117.2, 122.3, 130.6, 137.0, 161.3 (COO) ppm.

5.1.5. 1,3-Bis(5-carboxy-2,4-dimethylpyrrole-3-yl)butane (5). Prepared following the procedure for compound **2** using 1,4-bis(5-benzoxycarbonyl-2,4-dimethylpyrrole-3-yl)butane²⁰ as starting material. Yield 98%. Mp 245°C (dec.). IR (KBr), $\nu=3275, 2926, 2856, 1657, 1500, 1460, 1375, 1261, 1159, 1094, 1008, 893, 773 \text{ cm}^{-1}$. ^1H NMR (200 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ : 1.20 (t, $J=7.3 \text{ Hz}$, 4H, 2CH₂), 2.05 (s, 6H, 2CH₃), 2.10 (s, 6H, 2CH₃), 2.30 (t, $J=7.3 \text{ Hz}$, 4H, 2CH₂), 10.90 (s, 2H, 2NH, 2COOH) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (50 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ : 10.1 (CH₃), 10.4 (CH₃), 22.1 (CH₂), 24.1 (CH₂), 117.2, 122.3, 130.6, 137.0, 161.3 (COO) ppm.

5.1.6. Macrocycle 7·4HBr. 1,2-Bis(5-carboxy-2,4-dimethylpyrrole-3-yl)methane (**2**, 400 mg, 1.38 mmol) was suspended in trifluoroacetic acid (10 mL), and stirred at 40°C until all the solid had dissolved. The mixture was cooled to room temperature and 5,5'-diformyl-4,4'-dimethyl-3,3'-diethyl-dipyrrromethane (**6**, 394 mg, 1.38 mmol, 1.0 mol equiv.) and a mixture of dichloromethane (20 mL), methanol (20 mL) and hydrogen bromide

(48% in acetic acid, 2 mL) were added. The red mixture was left to stir overnight at room temperature. Anhydrous ether (100 mL) was added. The suspension was allowed to stir for another 30 min. The red solid was collected by suction filtration and washed with anhydrous ether containing a few drops of HBr (48% in glacial acetic acid). The crude product was suspended in methanol (50 mL) containing a few drops of HBr (48% in glacial acetic acid) and stirred at room temperature for a period of 30 min. The solid was collected by filtration to afford the product (800 mg, 95%). An analytic sample was obtained by repeating the following procedure three times: the crude product was dissolved in a minimum amount of trifluoroacetic acid, then dichloromethane (1 mL), methanol (1 mL) and a few drops of HBr (48% in glacial acetic acid) were added, followed by anhydrous ether to precipitate the product. The red solid was collected by centrifugation and dried in vacuo. Mp 295°C (dec.). IR (KBr), $\nu=3460, 2933, 2854, 1610, 1512, 1452, 1377, 1236, 1168, 1097, 1051, 964, 914, 846, 681 \text{ cm}^{-1}$. ^1H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃+10% TFA-D, v/v), δ : 0.75 (t, $J=7.3 \text{ Hz}$, 6H, 2CH₃), 1.10 (s, 6H, 2CH₃), 2.20 (s, 24H, 8CH₃), 2.30 (m, 8H, 4CH₂), 2.55 (s, 12H, 4CH₃), 3.75 (s, 4H, 2CH₂ at β,β -position), 4.40 (s, 4H, 2CH₂ at α,α -position), 7.20 (s, 4H, 4-CH=), 9.25 (s, 1H, NH), 10.60 (brs, 1H, NH), 12.80–13.30 (m, 6H, 6 NH) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (CDCl₃+10% TFA-D, v/v, 75 MHz), δ : 10.0, 13.8, 14.3, 14.5, 17.3, 19.4, 23.1, 120.9, 121.4, 126.9, 127.4, 131.1, 145.5, 147.2, 155.0, 156.3 ppm. UV–Vis (CHCl₃+1% of TFA), $\lambda_{\text{max}}(\epsilon)=370$ (29800), 455 (111600), 490 (105900), 538 (79300) nm. MS: LRP+LSIMS (matrix: thioglycerol): $m/e=905$ (M⁺+1). HRMS (LSIMS, matrix: thioglycerol+CHCl₃), found: 904.58818, [C₆₀H₇₂N₈] requires: 904.58799. Anal. calcd for C₆₀H₇₂N₈·4HBr: C 58.63; H 6.18; N 9.12; found: C 59.09; H 6.38; N 8.97.

5.1.7. Preparation of 7·Zn₂. The ligand (~100 mg) was dissolved in trifluoroacetic acid (5 mL) and dichloromethane (50 mL) was then added. To this mixture, a solution of zinc acetate (~20 mg) in methanol (20 mL) was added at once, followed by triethylamine (5 mL). The red mixture was allowed to stir for 2 h at room temperature. The solvent was removed under vacuum and the residue was stirred with methanol (20 mL) for 2 h. The red dark solid was collected and further purified by repeating this procedure three times. IR (KBr), $\nu=3441, 2960, 2925, 2868, 1597, 1438, 1396, 1225, 1167, 1107, 972, 922, 856, 783, 733, 663 \text{ cm}^{-1}$. UV–Vis (CHCl₃), $\lambda_{\text{max}}(\epsilon)=360$ (16800), 485 (68600), 545 (42600) nm. MS: LRP+LSIMS (thioglycerol): $m/e=1033$ (M⁺+1), C₆₀H₆₈N₈Zn₂ requires 1032. HRMS. (ESI) found: 1031.4163, [C₆₀H₆₈N₈Zn₂] requires 1031.4197. Anal. calcd for C₆₀H₆₈N₈Zn₂: C 69.83; H 6.64; N 10.86; found: C 69.50; H 6.85; N 10.44.

5.1.8. Macrocycle 8·4HBr. Prepared according to the procedure for compound **7**. Yield 90%. Mp 300°C (dec.). IR (KBr), $\nu=3441, 2921, 2853, 1612, 1512, 1453, 1378, 1261, 1168, 1050, 960, 915, 825, 678, 508 \text{ cm}^{-1}$. ^1H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃+10%TFA-d, v/v), δ : 1.05 (t, $J=7.3 \text{ Hz}$, 12H, 4CH₃), 2.00–2.80 (m, 52H, 12CH₃, 8CH₂), 4.40 (s, 4H, 2CH₂), 7.20 (m, obscured by CHCl₃ signal, 4-CH=), 11.60 (brs, obscured by TFA signal, NH) ppm. ^{13}C NMR (CDCl₃+10% TFA-d, v/v, 50 MHz), δ : 9.8, 12.5, 14.4, 17.2, 17.3, 23.3, 23.7, 120.8, 121.3, 126.8, 127.7, 130.9, 144.0,

145.2, 155.6, 159.6 ppm. UV–Vis (CHCl₃), $\lambda_{\max}(\epsilon)=372$ (27500), 456 (171000), 494 (82600), 525 (68800) nm. MS: LRP+LSIMS (thioglycerol): $m/e=933$ (M⁺+1). HRMS (LSIMS, matrix: thioglycerol+CHCl₃), found: 933.62752, [C₆₂H₇₇N₈] requires 933.62712. Anal. calcd for C₆₂H₇₇N₈·4HBr: C 59.24; H 6.41; N 8.91; found: C 59.74; H 6.57, N 8.67.

5.1.9. Compound 8·Zn₂. Prepared following the procedure for compound 7·Zn₂. IR (KBr), $\nu=3440, 2958, 2930, 2871, 1561, 1439, 1396, 1224, 1677, 1108, 972, 923, 865, 783, 732, 662$ cm⁻¹. UV–Vis (CHCl₃), $\lambda_{\max}(\epsilon)=365$ (17900), 488 (78600), 546 (39800) nm. MS (FAB): $m/e=1061$ (M⁺+1), C₆₂H₇₂N₈Zn₂ requires 1060. HRMS (ESI) found: 1059.4501, [C₆₀H₆₈N₈Zn₂] requires 1059.4510. Anal. calcd for C: C 70.25; H 6.85; N 10.57; found: C 69.92; H 6.51; N 10.43.

5.1.10. Macrocycle 9·4HBr. Prepared following the procedure for compound 7. Yield 90%. Mp 285°C (dec.). IR (KBr), $\nu=3400, 2930, 2872, 1610, 1566, 1510, 1444, 1390, 1238, 1163, 1097, 1061, 953, 922, 899, 685$ cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃+10%TFA-d, v/v), δ : 1.05 (t, $J=7.3$ Hz, 12H, 4CH₃), 2.65 (brs, 4H, 2CH₂), 2.20–2.80 (m, 52H, 12CH₃, 8CH₂), 4.40 (s, 4H, 2CH₂), 7.20 (s, obscured by CHCl₃ signal, 4-CH=), 11.00 (brs, obscured by TFA signal, NH) ppm. ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃+10% TFA, 75 MHz), δ : 10.0, 13.1, 14.6, 17.4, 22.8, 23.8, 24.4, 30.3, 120.4, 126.6, 127.8, 130.2, 130.2, 143.0, 145.2, 145.3, 157.2 ppm. UV–Vis (CHCl₃), $\lambda_{\max}(\epsilon)=375$ (29000), 454 (186000), 525 (88600) nm. MS: LRP+LSIMS (matrix: thioglycerol): $m/e=961$ (M⁺+1). HRMS (LSIMS, matrix: thioglycerol+CHCl₃), found: 961.65689, [C₆₄H₈₁N₈] requires 961.65842. Anal. calcd for C₆₄H₈₀N₈·4HBr·4H₂O: C 56.64; H 6.78 N 8.25; found: C 56.89; H 6.67; N 8.37.

5.1.11. Compound 9·Zn₂. Prepared following the procedure for compound 7·Zn₂. IR (KBr), $\nu=3440, 2926, 2864, 1597, 1439, 1396, 1230, 1164, 1107, 956, 931, 887, 781, 733, 669$ cm⁻¹. UV–Vis (CHCl₃), $\lambda_{\max}(\epsilon)=370$ (18900), 475 (81200), 539 (40200) nm. MS (ESI) $m/e=1089$ (M⁺+1), [C₆₄H₇₆N₈Zn₂] requires 1088. HRMS (ESI) found: 1085.4841, [C₆₄H₇₆N₈Zn₂] requires: 1085.4854. Anal. calcd for C₆₄H₇₆N₈Zn₂: C 70.64; H 7.04; N 10.30, found: C 70.20; H 6.85; N 9.90.

5.1.12. Macrocycle 10·2HBr. Prepared following the procedure for compound 7. Yield 72%. Mp 246°C (dec.). IR (KBr), $\nu=3440, 2930, 2869, 1610, 1568, 1510, 1443, 1389, 1238, 1164, 1097, 1074, 960, 922, 685, 663$ cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃+10% TFA-d), δ : 1.05 (t, $J=7.3$ Hz, 6H, 2CH₃), 1.54 (brs, 4H, 2CH₂), 2.25 (s, 12H, 4CH₃), 2.40–2.80 (m, 14H, 4CH₂, 2CH₃), 4.20 (s, 2H, CH₂), 7.24 (s, obscured by CHCl₃ signal, -CH=), 11.05 (brs, obscured by TFA signal, NH) ppm. UV–Vis (CDCl₃), $\lambda_{\max}(\epsilon)=375$ (12500), 455 (58600), 535 (82000) nm. MS: LRP+LSIMS (matrix: thioglycerol): $m/e=495$ (M⁺+1). HRMS (ESI) found: 495.3483, [C₃₃H₄₂N₄] requires: 495.3488. Anal. calcd for C₃₃H₄₂N₄·2HBr·H₂O: C 58.76; H 6.87; N 8.31%; found: C 58.54; H 6.39, N 7.90.

Acknowledgements

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