



# The synthesis, using microwave irradiation and characterization of novel, organosoluble metal-free and metallophthalocyanines substituted with flexible crown ether moieties

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## ABSTRACT

Cyclotetramerization of a phthalonitrile derivative to the metal-free phthalocyanine was accomplished in *n*-pentanol in the presence of 1,8-diazabicyclo[5.4.0]undec-7-ene at reflux under an argon atmosphere. Ni(II), Zn(II), Co(II), Cu(II) phthalocyanines with four, peripheral 4-[methylenedioxy(12-crown-4)] groups were synthesized from 4-[[{(12-crown-4)-yl}methylenedioxy]phthalonitrile in the presence of the anhydrous, divalent metal salts (NiCl<sub>2</sub>, Zn(CH<sub>3</sub>COO)<sub>2</sub>, CoCl<sub>2</sub> and CuCl<sub>2</sub>). The green phthalocyanines were soluble in common organic solvents such as CHCl<sub>3</sub>, CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>3</sub>COCH<sub>3</sub>, THF, DMF and DMSO. The structures of the target compounds were confirmed using elemental analysis, IR, <sup>1</sup>H NMR, <sup>13</sup>C NMR, UV–vis and MS spectral data.

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## 1. Introduction

Metal-free and metallophthalocyanines have been known to have very interesting properties coupled with excellent stability to heat, light and harsh chemical environments. Their optical and electronic properties have been exploited in various applications for example pigments in paints and printing inks, infrared security devices, information storage and computer disk writing, in photodynamic therapy of cancer [1–3]. Phthalocyanines have been applied as photoconducting agents in photocopiers and laser printers. They are expected to show a more versatile role in material chemistry because of their potential applications in molecular electronics [4], nonlinear optics [5] and electrocatalytic reagents [6]. All of them are connected by their high thermal stabilities, which in turn are closely related to the electrochemical properties of phthalocyanine macromolecules [7].

Applications of phthalocyanines are restricted owing to their insolubility in common solvents and water [8]. The solubility of phthalocyanines can be improved by introducing different kinds of substituents, such as crown ethers, alkyl, alkoxy and alkylthio, at the periphery of the phthalocyanines [9].

Phthalocyanines substituted by crown ether rings, which show a high tendency towards aggregation by solvents and cations, have

been described [10]. They can be used for the colorimetric determination of alkali cations [11] and as selective extracting reagents [12,13]. It has been proved that they are capable of forming ion channels and transport ions by arranging the pendant crown ether rings in stacks [14].

Microwaves have been previously used for the synthesis of phthalocyanines and include a wider range of references on the topic [15–20]. In recent years, a growing interest has focused on the application of microwave irradiation in organic synthesis. Microwave-assisted synthesis reduces chemical reaction times from hours to minutes, and also, reduces side reactions, increases the yield, and improves reproducibility. So, many academic and industrial research groups are already using microwave-assisted synthesis for the efficient synthesis of new chemical reactivity [21]. In this paper, we describe the synthesis and characterization of metal-free **4** and metallophthalocyanines **5–8** containing four flexible 12-crown-4(1,4,7,10-tetraoxacyclododecane) moieties on the periphery through methylenedioxy bridges by microwave irradiation.

## 2. Experimental

2-Hydroxymethyl(12-crown-4) **1** and 4-nitrophthalonitrile **2** were prepared by reported procedures [22,23]. All reagents and solvents were of reagent grade quality and were obtained from commercial suppliers. All solvents were dried and purified as described by Perrin

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and Armarego [24]. The IR spectra were recorded on a Perkin Elmer 1600 FT-IR Spectrophotometer, using KBr pellets or NaCl disc.  $^1\text{H}$  and  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectra were recorded on a Varian Mercury 200 MHz spectrometer in  $\text{CDCl}_3$  and chemical shifts were reported ( $\delta$ ) relative to  $\text{Me}_4\text{Si}$  as internal standard. Mass spectra were measured on a Micro-mass Quatro LC/ULTIMA LC-MS/MS spectrometer. The elemental analyses were performed on a Costech ECS 4010 instrument. Melting points were measured on an electrothermal apparatus and are uncorrected. Optical spectra in the UV–vis region were recorded with a Unicam UV2-100 spectrophotometer, using 1 cm pathlength cuvettes at room temperature.

### 2.1. Synthesis of 4-[[12-crown-4-yl]methyleneoxy]phthalonitrile (**3**)

2-Hydroxymethyl-12-crown-4 (**1**) (2.31 g, 11.20 mmol) was dissolved in anhydrous DMF (40 ml) under  $\text{N}_2$  atmosphere and 4-nitrophthalonitrile (**2**) (1.94 g, 11.20 mmol) was added to the solution. After stirring 10 min, finely ground anhydrous  $\text{K}_2\text{CO}_3$  (4.64 g, 33.60 mmol) was added portionwise within 2 h with efficient stirring. The reaction mixture was stirred under  $\text{N}_2$  at  $50^\circ\text{C}$  for 3 days. Then the solution was poured into ice-water (100 ml) and the aqueous phase was extracted with chloroform ( $3 \times 50$  ml). The combined extracts were dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate. The crude product was crystallized from ethanol. Yield: 2.34 g (63%), mp:  $107\text{--}108^\circ\text{C}$ . Anal. Calcd for  $\text{C}_{17}\text{H}_{20}\text{N}_2\text{O}_5$ : C, 61.44; H, 6.07; N, 8.43%. Found: C, 61.46; H, 6.12; N, 8.03. IR (KBr tablet),  $\nu_{\text{max}}/\text{cm}^{-1}$ : 3076 (Ar-H), 2915–2863 (Aliph. C-H), 2230 ( $\text{C}\equiv\text{N}$ ), 1597, 1562, 1491, 1460, 1319, 1254, 1134, 1098, 1024, 915, 840, 524.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ), ( $\delta$ :ppm): 7.71 (d, 1H, Ar-H), 7.29 (s, 1H, Ar-H), 7.23 (d, 1H, Ar-H), 4.11–3.65 (m, 17H,  $\text{CH}_2\text{-O}$ ).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ), ( $\delta$ :ppm): 161.93, 135.14, 119.81, 119.41, 117.24, 115.62, 115.18, 107.25, 76.40, 71.28, 70.54, 70.40, 70.30, 70.06, 69.53. MS ( $\text{ES}^+$ ), ( $m/z$ ): 355 [ $\text{M} + \text{Na}$ ] $^+$ .

### 2.2. Metal-free phthalocyanine (**4**)

A standard Schlenk tube was charged with 0.4 g, 1.20 mmol of compound **3**, 6 ml of dry *n*-pentanol and 0.186 g (1.8 ml, 1.2 mmol) of 1,8-diazabicyclo[5.4.0]undec-7-ene (DBU) under argon atmosphere and degassed several times. The temperature was gradually increased up to  $90^\circ\text{C}$  and degassed again by argon atmosphere. Then the reaction mixture was stirred at  $160^\circ\text{C}$  for 12 h. After the reaction mixture was cooled and decanted, the remaining dark green solid was stirred with 30 ml of ethanol:diethyl ether mixture (1/1; v/v). The dark green product **4** was filtered off and then dried in vacuo. The solid product was purified by preparative thin layer chromatography (TLC) using chloroform/petroleum ether/methanol (7:2:1) solvent system. This product is soluble in  $\text{CHCl}_3$ ,  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ ,  $\text{CH}_3\text{COCH}_3$  (acetone), THF, DMF, and DMSO. Yield: 176 mg (44%), mp  $137\text{--}139^\circ\text{C}$ . Anal. Calcd for  $\text{C}_{68}\text{H}_{82}\text{N}_8\text{O}_{20}$ : C, 61.34; H, 6.21; N, 8.42%. Found: C, 61.37; H, 6.27; N, 8.49. IR (KBr tablet)  $\nu_{\text{max}}/\text{cm}^{-1}$ : 3289 (N-H), 3065 (Ar-H), 2909–2860 (Aliph. C-H), 1611, 1481, 1396, 1342, 1239, 1130, 1095, 1016, 914, 824, 746.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ), ( $\delta$ :ppm): 8.16 (d, 4H, Ar-H), 7.75 (d, 4H, Ar-H), 6.96 (s, 4H, Ar-H), 4.06–3.41 (m, 68H,  $\text{CH}_2\text{-O}$ ).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ), ( $\delta$ :ppm): 167.80, 132.98, 132.44, 130.90, 128.81, 120.32, 120.14, 107.80, 72.65–68.15. UV–vis (chloroform):  $\lambda_{\text{max}}/\text{nm}$ : [ $(10^{-5} \text{ dm}^3 \text{ mol}^{-1} \text{ cm}^{-1})$ ]: 290 (4.92), 341 (5.17), 389 (4.47), 614 (4.34), 647 (4.86), 671 (5.25), 707 (5.29). MS ( $\text{ES}^+$ ), ( $m/z$ ): 1332 [ $\text{M} + \text{H}$ ] $^+$ .

### 2.3. Nickel(II) phthalocyanine (**5**)

4-[[12-crown-4-yl]Methyleneoxy]phthalonitrile **3** (0.4 g, 1.2 mmol) and anhydrous  $\text{NiCl}_2$  (39 mg, 0.3 mmol) were ground together in a microwave oven and 2-(dimethylamino)ethanol (2.5 ml)

was added. The reaction mixture was irradiated in microwave reaction oven at  $175^\circ\text{C}$ , 350 W for 7 min. After cooling to room temperature, diethyl ether (6 ml) was added. The precipitated green solid product was filtered off and then dried. The obtained green product was purified by preparative thin layer chromatography (TLC) using chloroform/petroleum ether/methanol (4:4:2) solvent system. This product is soluble in  $\text{CHCl}_3$ ,  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ ,  $\text{CH}_3\text{COCH}_3$  (acetone), THF, DMF, and DMSO. Yield: 229 mg (55%), mp  $258\text{--}260^\circ\text{C}$ . Anal. Calcd for  $\text{C}_{68}\text{H}_{80}\text{N}_8\text{O}_{20}\text{Ni}$ : C, 58.84; H, 5.81; N, 8.07%. Found: C, 58.94; H, 5.87; N, 8.02. IR (KBr tablet)  $\nu_{\text{max}}/\text{cm}^{-1}$ : 3054 (Ar-H), 2917–2858 (Aliph. C-H), 1608, 1531, 1463, 1411, 1349, 1279, 1237, 1127, 1092, 1020, 912, 848, 749.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ), ( $\delta$ :ppm): 7.70 (d, 4H, Ar-H), 7.25 (br s, 4H, Ar-H), 7.16 (m, 4H, Ar-H), 4.09–3.69 (m, 68H,  $\text{CH}_2\text{-O}$ ).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ), ( $\delta$ :ppm): 161.68, 135.01, 121.90, 119.63, 119.23, 117.04, 115.89, 107.10, 71.10–69.33. UV–vis (chloroform):  $\lambda_{\text{max}}/\text{nm}$ : [ $(10^{-5} \text{ dm}^3 \text{ mol}^{-1} \text{ cm}^{-1})$ ]: 275 (4.87), 328 (4.96), 382 (4.79), 616 (4.39), 678 (5.22). MS ( $\text{ES}^+$ ), ( $m/z$ ): 1388 [ $\text{M}$ ] $^+$ .

### 2.4. Zinc(II) phthalocyanine (**6**)

4-[[12-crown-4-yl]Methyleneoxy]phthalonitrile **3** (0.4 g, 1.2 mmol) and anhydrous  $\text{Zn}(\text{CH}_3\text{COO})_2$  (55 mg, 0.3 mmol) were ground together in a microwave oven and 2-(dimethylamino)ethanol (2.5 ml) was added. The reaction mixture was irradiated in microwave reaction oven at  $175^\circ\text{C}$ , 350 W for 7 min. After cooling to room temperature, diethyl ether (6 ml) was added. The precipitated green solid product was filtered off and then dried. The obtained green product was purified by preparative thin layer chromatography (TLC) using chloroform/petroleum ether/methanol (7:2:1) solvent system. This product is soluble in  $\text{CHCl}_3$ ,  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ ,  $\text{CH}_3\text{COCH}_3$  (acetone), THF, DMF, and DMSO. Yield: 263 mg (63%), mp  $243\text{--}245^\circ\text{C}$ . Anal. Calcd for  $\text{C}_{68}\text{H}_{80}\text{N}_8\text{O}_{20}\text{Zn}$ : C, 58.56; H, 5.78; N, 8.03%. Found: C, 58.71; H, 5.85; N, 8.00. IR (KBr tablet)  $\nu_{\text{max}}/\text{cm}^{-1}$ : 3043 (Ar-H), 2917–2860 (Aliph. C-H), 1606, 1487, 1451, 1393, 1335, 1226, 1130, 1093, 1051, 914, 850, 745.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ), ( $\delta$ :ppm): 7.72 (d, 4H, Ar-H), 7.36 (s, 4H, Ar-H), 7.17 (d, 4H, Ar-H), 4.10–3.69 (m, 68H,  $\text{CH}_2\text{-O}$ ). UV–vis (chloroform):  $\lambda_{\text{max}}/\text{nm}$ : [ $(10^{-5} \text{ dm}^3 \text{ mol}^{-1} \text{ cm}^{-1})$ ]: 281 (4.74), 353 (4.91), 617 (4.54), 686 (5.29). MS ( $\text{ES}^+$ ), ( $m/z$ ): 1394 [ $\text{M}$ ] $^+$ .

### 2.5. Cobalt(II) phthalocyanine (**7**)

4-[[12-crown-4-yl]methyleneoxy]Phthalonitrile **3** (0.4 g, 1.2 mmol) and anhydrous  $\text{CoCl}_2$  (39 mg, 0.3 mmol) were ground together in a microwave oven and 2-(dimethylamino)ethanol (2.5 ml) was added. The reaction mixture was irradiated in microwave reaction oven at  $175^\circ\text{C}$ , 350 W for 7 min. After cooling to room temperature, diethyl ether (6 ml) was added. The precipitated green solid product was filtered off and then dried. The obtained green product was purified by preparative thin layer chromatography (TLC) using chloroform/petroleum ether/methanol (5:3:2) solvent system. This product is soluble in  $\text{CHCl}_3$ ,  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ ,  $\text{CH}_3\text{COCH}_3$  (acetone), THF, DMF, and DMSO. Yield: 241 mg (58%), mp  $198\text{--}200^\circ\text{C}$ . Anal. Calcd for  $\text{C}_{68}\text{H}_{80}\text{N}_8\text{O}_{20}\text{Co}$ : C, 58.83; H, 5.81; N, 8.07%. Found: C, 58.81; H, 5.86; N, 8.12. IR (KBr tablet)  $\nu_{\text{max}}/\text{cm}^{-1}$ : 3065 (Ar-H), 2923–2856 (Aliph. C-H), 1609, 1524, 1484, 1456, 1416, 1346, 1284, 1242, 1129, 1097, 1023, 916, 850, 751.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ), ( $\delta$ :ppm): 7.62 (d, 4H, Ar-H), 7.55 (s, 4H, Ar-H), 7.20 (m, 4H, Ar-H), 4.06–3.62 (m, 68H,  $\text{CH}_2\text{-O}$ ).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ), ( $\delta$ :ppm): 165.89, 138.42, 120.78, 120.56, 119.71, 119.68, 118.49, 104.22, 70.30–66.75. UV–vis (chloroform):  $\lambda_{\text{max}}/\text{nm}$ : [ $(10^{-5} \text{ dm}^3 \text{ mol}^{-1} \text{ cm}^{-1})$ ]: 280 (4.62), 328 (4.85), 618 (4.47), 678 (5.23). MS ( $\text{ES}^+$ ), ( $m/z$ ): 1388 [ $\text{M}$ ] $^+$ .

### 2.6. Copper(II) phthalocyanine (**8**)

4-[[12-crown-4-yl]Methyleneoxy]phthalonitrile **3** (0.4 g, 1.2 mmol) and anhydrous  $\text{CuCl}_2$  (40 mg, 0.3 mmol) were ground

together in a microwave oven and 2-(dimethylamino)ethanol (2.5 ml) was added. The reaction mixture was irradiated in microwave reaction oven at 175 °C, 350 W for 7 min. After cooling to room temperature, diethyl ether (6 ml) was added. The precipitated green solid product was filtered off and then dried. The obtained green product was purified by preparative thin layer chromatography (TLC) using chloroform solvent system. This product is soluble in  $\text{CHCl}_3$ ,  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ ,  $\text{CH}_3\text{COCH}_3$  (acetone), THF, DMF, and DMSO. Yield: 250 mg (60%), mp 265–267 °C. Anal. Calcd for  $\text{C}_{68}\text{H}_{80}\text{N}_8\text{O}_{20}\text{Cu}$ : C, 58.63; H, 5.79; N, 8.04%. Found: C, 58.65; H, 5.75; N, 8.08. IR (KBr tablet)  $\nu_{\text{max}}/\text{cm}^{-1}$ : 3054 (Ar–H), 2919–2862 (Aliph. C–H), 1595, 1486, 1287, 1245, 1189, 1133, 1095, 1020, 913. UV–vis (chloroform):  $\lambda_{\text{max}}/\text{nm}$ : [(10<sup>−5</sup>  $\epsilon$  dm<sup>3</sup> mol<sup>−1</sup> cm<sup>−1</sup>): 288 (4.67), 338 (4.90), 620 (4.51), 689 (5.25). MS ( $\text{ES}^+$ ), ( $m/z$ ): 1415  $[\text{M} + \text{Na}]^+$ .

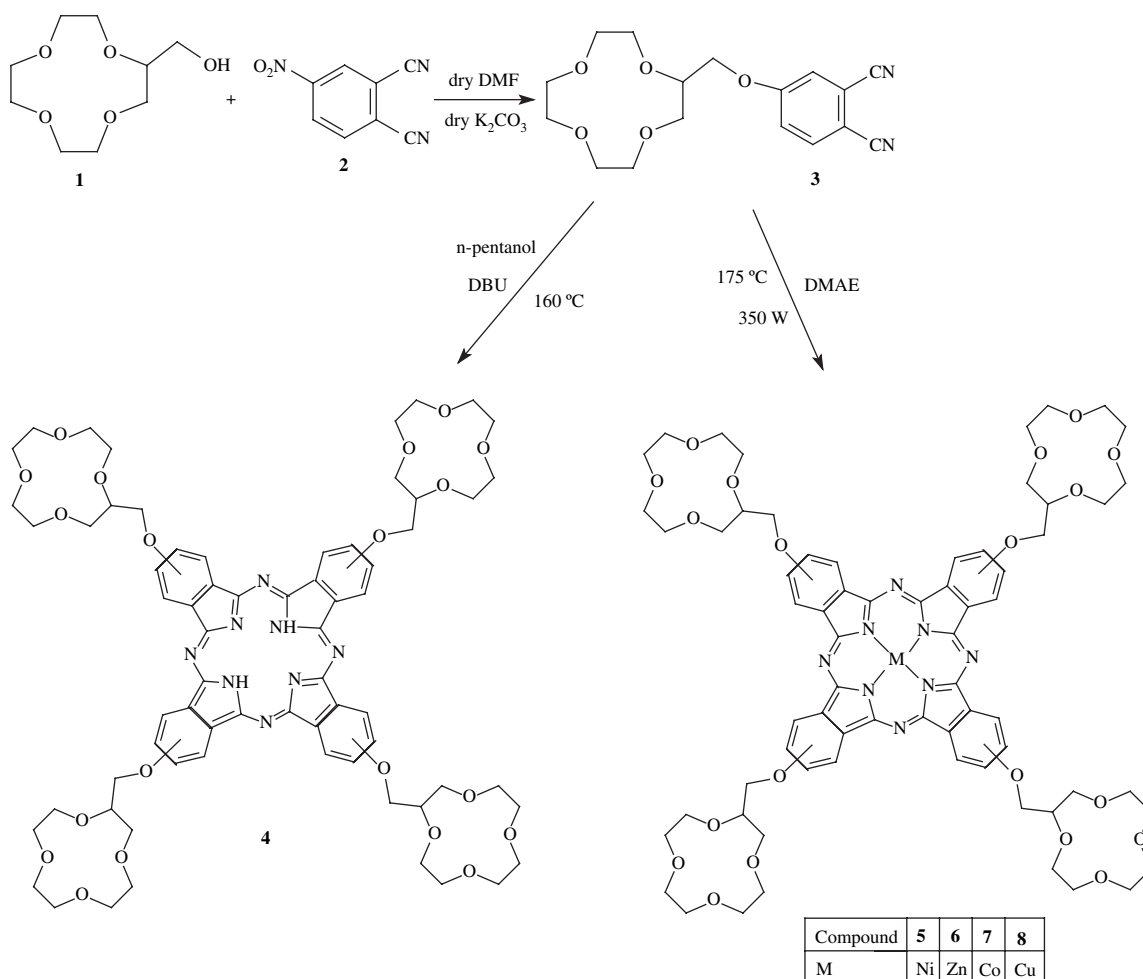
### 3. Results and discussion

The synthetic routes to **3–8** are summarized in Scheme 1. The first step in the synthetic procedure was to obtain 4-[[{(12-crown-4)yl}methylenoxy]phthalonitrile **3**. This reaction was accomplished by a base-catalysed nucleophilic aromatic nitro displacement of 4-nitrophthalonitrile with 2-hydroxymethyl(12-crown-4) **1** [10]. The reaction was carried out at 50 °C in dimethylformamide with  $\text{K}_2\text{CO}_3$  as the base, and the yield was reasonably (ca. 63%). Cyclotetramerization of the phthalonitrile derivative **3** to the metal-free phthalocyanine **4** was accomplished

in *n*-pentanol in the presence of a few drops of 1,8-diazabicyclo[5.4.0]undec-7-ene (DBU) as a strong base at reflux temperature under argon atmosphere. The metallophthalocyanines **5–8** were obtained by the anhydrous metal salts [ $\text{NiCl}_2$ ,  $\text{Zn}(\text{CH}_3\text{COO})_2$ ,  $\text{CoCl}_2$  and  $\text{CuCl}_2$ ] in 2-(dimethylamino)ethanol by microwave irradiation. We used a domestic oven synthesis of compounds **4–8** including 350 W, 175 °C as conditions. The solubility of phthalocyanines is summarized in Table 1.

In the IR spectra, the formation of compound **3** was clearly confirmed by the disappearance of the OH and  $\text{NO}_2$  bands at 3338 and 1538–1355  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  and appearance of the  $\text{C}\equiv\text{N}$  band at 2230  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ . In the  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of **3**, OH group of compound **1** disappeared as expected.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of **3** showed new signals at  $\delta = 7.71$  (d, 1H, Ar–H), 7.29 (s, 1H, Ar–H), 7.23 (d, 1H, Ar–H) belonging to aromatic protons. The  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectrum of **3** indicated the presence of nitrile carbon atoms in **3** at  $\delta = 115.62$  and 115.18 ppm. The MS mass spectrum of compound **3**, which shows a peak at  $m/z = 355$   $[\text{M} + \text{Na}]^+$  supports the proposed formula for this compound. The results of the elemental analysis confirmed the proposed structure of compound **3**.

The synthesis of metal-free phthalocyanine **4** was accomplished by reacting **3** in *n*-pentanol in the presence of a few drops of DBU as a strong base at reflux temperature under argon atmosphere. The IR spectra of metal-free **4** and metallophthalocyanines **5–8** are very similar. The significant difference is the presence of N–H vibrations of the inner phthalocyanine core which are assigned to a weak vibration at 3289  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  in the metal-free molecule. The  $^1\text{H}$  NMR



Scheme 1. The synthesis of the metal-free phthalocyanine and metallophthalocyanines.

**Table 1**  
The solubility of phthalocyanines in different solvents

Compound	Solubility in mg/ml					
	CH <sub>2</sub> Cl <sub>2</sub>	CHCl <sub>3</sub>	Acetone	THF	DMF	DMSO
H <sub>2</sub> -Pc <b>4</b>	10.3	9.8	2.5	4.4	11.7	12.4
Ni-Pc <b>5</b>	10.4	9.6	2.4	4.3	11.6	12.4
Zn-Pc <b>6</b>	10.4	9.7	2.5	4.3	11.6	12.3
Co-Pc <b>7</b>	10.6	9.9	2.6	4.5	11.8	12.5
Cu-Pc <b>8</b>	10.3	9.6	2.3	4.4	11.6	12.3

spectrum of compound **4** indicates the aromatic protons at  $\delta$  8.16, 7.75, 6.96 and the aliphatic ether protons at  $\delta$  4.06–3.41. The NH protons of compound **4** could not be observed owing to the probable strong aggregation of the molecules [25]. The MS mass spectrum of compound **4** displayed the  $[M + H]^+$  parent ion peak at  $m/z = 1332$ , which confirms the same structure. The results of the elemental analysis confirmed the proposed structure of compound **4**.

In the IR spectra of metallophthalocyanines **5–8**, cyclo-tetramerization of dinitriles **3** to Pcs **5–8** was confirmed by the disappearance of the sharp  $-C\equiv N$  vibration at  $2230\text{ cm}^{-1}$ . The  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectra of these compounds are almost identical to those of metal-free phthalocyanine **4**. The  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectra of complexes **5–7** showed almost identical chemical shifts.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR measurement of the copper(II) phthalocyanine **8** was precluded owing to its paramagnetic nature. In the mass spectrum of Ni, Zn, Co, and Cu phthalocyanines, the presence of molecular ion peaks at  $m/z = 1388$   $[M]^+$ , 1394  $[M]^+$ , 1388  $[M]^+$  and 1415  $[M + Na]^+$ , respectively, confirmed the proposed structures. Elemental analysis data were satisfactory.

The best indications for phthalocyanine systems are given by their UV–vis spectra in solution (Fig. 1). Metal-free phthalocyanine **4** and metallophthalocyanines **5–8** showed typical UV–vis electronic spectra with two significant absorption bands, one of them in the visible region at about 614–707 nm corresponding to the Q band, and the other in the UV, approximately at 300 nm. The Q band was attributed to  $\pi \rightarrow \pi^*$  transition from the highest occupied molecular orbital (HOMO) to the lowest unoccupied molecular orbital (LUMO) of the Pc ring. The other bands (B) in the UV region at 275–389 nm are observed due to the transitions from the deeper  $\pi$  levels to the LUMO [3,26]. The Q band absorptions of **4** in chloroform at  $\lambda_{\text{max}} = 707, 671, 647, 614\text{ nm}$  and the other absorption at 290, 341 and 389 nm are consistent with the results for similar phthalocyanines [17].

Metallophthalocyanines **5–8** showed the expected absorptions at the main peaks of the Q and B bands appearing at  $\lambda_{\text{max}} = 678, 686, 678, 689\text{ nm}$  and 328, 353, 328, 338 nm, respectively. This

result is typical of metal complexes of substituted and unsubstituted Pc with  $D_{4h}$  symmetry [27].

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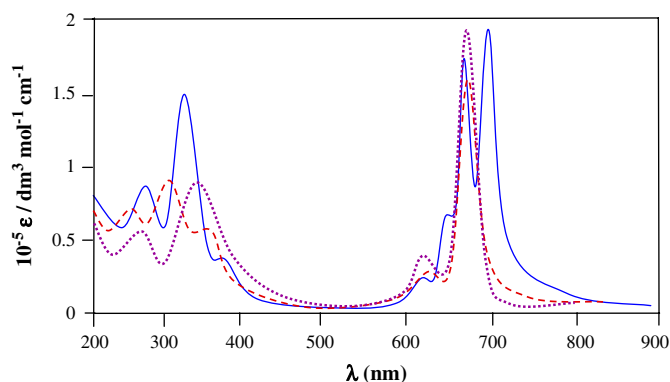


Fig. 1. UV–vis spectra of compounds **4** (—), **5** (---) and **6** (...) in chloroform.

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