# The Hünlich Base – (Re)Discovery, Synthesis and Structure Elucidation after a Century

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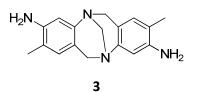
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#### **Experimental Section**

#### General Experimental Methods.

All reactions were run under an atmosphere of argon unless otherwise indicated. Room temperature refers to 22 °C, ambient pressure to 1013 hPa. Reagents and anhydrous solvents were transferred via oven-dried syringe or cannula. Flasks were flame-dried under vacuum and cooled under a constant stream of argon. Tetrahydrofuran (THF) was distilled under argon from potassium, dichloromethane from SICAPENT (phosphorus pentoxide on solid support with indicator). Acetone, acetonitrile and pyridine were purchased from Acros or Aldrich (anhydrous over molecular sieves). All other chemicals were purchased from ABCR, Acros, Aldrich, Alfa Aesar, Fluorochem, TCI Europe and VWR at highest commercially available purity and used as such. Reactions were monitored by thin layer chromatography using Merck silica gel 60 F<sub>254</sub> TLC aluminium sheets and visualized under an UV lamp and/or with ceric ammonium molybdate, potassium permanganate or vanillin staining solution. Chromatographic purification was performed as flash chromatography on Acros silica gel 35-70, 60 Å, using a forced flow of eluent (method of Still) or as preparative TLC on Merck silica gel 60 F<sub>254</sub> glass plates with concentration zone. Concentration under reduced pressure was performed by rotary evaporation at 40 °C at the appropriate pressure. NMR spectra were recorded on a Varian Mercury plus 300 (operating at 300 MHz for <sup>1</sup>H and 75 MHz for <sup>13</sup>C acquisitions), a Varian Mercury plus 400 (operating at 400 MHz for <sup>1</sup>H, 100 MHz for <sup>13</sup>C), and a Bruker Avance-700 (operating at 700 MHz for <sup>1</sup>H, 175 MHz for <sup>13</sup>C). Chemical shifts  $\delta$  are reported in ppm with the solvent resonance as internal standard (chloroform-*d*<sub>1</sub>: 7.26 (<sup>1</sup>H-NMR), 77.16 (<sup>13</sup>C-NMR); methanol-*d*<sub>4</sub>: 3.31 (<sup>1</sup>H-NMR), 49.00 (<sup>13</sup>C-NMR). Coupling constants J are given in Hertz (Hz). Multiplicities are classified by the following abbreviations: s = singlet, d = doublet, t = triplet and combinations thereof, or m = multiplet or br = broad signal. High resolution mass spectra were obtained on a Bruker Daltonics ESI-FT-ICR-MS APEX II [7 T]. IR spectra were obtained on an ATI/MATTSON Genesis FT-IR as thin film or KBr disk. Absorbance frequencies are reported in reciprocal centimeters (cm<sup>-1</sup>). Melting points were measured with a Büchi "Melting Point B-540" and are uncorrected. Optical rotation data was obtained with a Schmidt+Haensch Polartronic MHZ-8 at the sodium-D line (589 nm) using a 50 mm path-length cell in the solvent and concentration indicated.

# 2,8-dimethyl-6H,12H-5,11-methanodibenzo[b,f][1,5]diazocine-3,9-diamine (Hünlich's base)



Formaldehyde (37 % in H<sub>2</sub>O, 10.9 ml, 11.9 g, 146 mmol, 1.00 eq.) was added dropwise to a solution of 2,4-diaminotoluene (36.6 g, 300 mmol, 2.05 eq.) in aqueous sulfuric acid (5 %, 1000 ml). After the reaction was stirred for 36 h ammonia (25 %, 300 ml) was added and the precipitated crude product was separated by filtration. Purification was achieved by dissolving the raw material in hot methanol (150 ml) and slow addition of hot water (30-45 ml). Filtration yielded Hünlich's base (13.5 g, 48.3 mmol, 33 %) as light brown solid.

**R**<sub>f</sub>: 0.43 (dichloromethane/methanol = 10:1 v/v)

<sup>1</sup>**H-NMR:** (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ [ppm] 2.04 (s, 6H, 2 × -CH<sub>3</sub>), 3.48 (br, 4H, 2 × -NH<sub>2</sub>), 4.02 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H}$  = 16.0 Hz, 2H, **H-6a**, **H-12a**), 4.25 (s, 2H, -N-CH<sub>2</sub>-N-), 4.55 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H}$  = 16.0 Hz, 2H, **H-6b**, **H-12b**), 6.43 (s, 2H, **H-4**, **H-10**), 6.55 (s, 2H, **H-1**, **H-7**).

<sup>13</sup>C-NMR: (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ [ppm] 17.1 (2 × -CH<sub>3</sub>), 58.5 (C-6, C-12), 67.4 (C-13), 110.8 (C-4, C-10), 118.0 (C-6a, C-12a), 119.4 (C-2, C-8), 128.6 (C-1, C-7), 143.9 (C-3, C-9), 147.4 (C-4a, C-10a).

**HR-MS:** (ESI positive, CH<sub>3</sub>OH) calc. for  $[C_{17}H_{21}N_4]^+$ :  $[M+H]^+$  281.17607, found 281.17590.

**UV:** (CH<sub>3</sub>OH)  $\lambda$  (lg $\varepsilon$ ) = 221 nm (4.581), 301 (3.904).

**IR:** (KBr)  $v_{max} = 3409 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ , 3347, 1630, 1574, 1500, 1180, 1087, 916, 875.

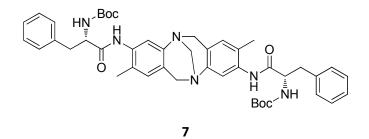
**Optical rotation:** enantiomer 1:  $\left[\alpha\right]_{D}^{22} \left(\deg \operatorname{cm}^{3} \operatorname{g}^{-1} \operatorname{dm}^{-1}\right) = +58.0 \text{ (c} = 1.0, \operatorname{CH}_{3}\operatorname{OH})$ enantiomer 2:  $\left[\alpha\right]_{D}^{22} \left(\deg \operatorname{cm}^{3} \operatorname{g}^{-1} \operatorname{dm}^{-1}\right) = -63.0 \text{ (c} = 0.33, \operatorname{CH}_{3}\operatorname{OH})$ 

Melting point: 225-230 °C

Resolution of both enantiomers was achieved via the amino acid derivatives (**7a**, **7a'** or **8a**, **8a'** respectively) by basic hydrolysis. Example for hydrolysis of **8a** to form enantiomer 1 of Hünlich's base (**3a**):

To a solution of compound **8a** (100 mg, 0.147 mmol) in THF (3.0 ml) was added saturated aqueous KOH (3.0 ml) solution. The reaction mixture was stirred at 120 °C in a sealed Pyrex tube for 48 h. After cooling to rt and solvent removal the crude product was purified by column chromatography to furnish enantiomer 1 of Hünlich's base (39.2 mg, 0.140 mmol, 95 %).

di-*tert*-butyl [(5,13-dimethyl-1,9-diazatetracyclo[7.7.1.0<sup>2,7</sup>.0<sup>10,15</sup>]heptadeca-2,4,6,10,12,14hexaene-4,12-diyl)bis{imino[(2*S*)-1-oxo-3-phenylpropane-1,2-diyl]}]biscarbamate



Hünlich's base (841 mg, 3.00 mmol, 1 eq.), *N*-[(1,1-dimethylethoxy)carbonyl]-L-phenylalanine (1.59 g, 6.00 mmol, 2 eq.) and 2-ethoxy-2*H*-quinoline-1-carboxylic acid ethyl ester (1.85 g, 7.50 mmol, 2.5 eq.) were dissolved in chloroform (150 ml) before triethylamine (1.05 ml, 759 mg, 7.50 mmol, 2.5 eq.) was added and the mixture was heated to reflux for twelve hours. Then, the solvent was removed under reduced pressure und the residue was taken up in ethyl acetate (60 ml), washed twice with water (60 ml) and dried over Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> before all volatiles were removed under reduced pressure. Purification was achieved by column chromatography to yield the titled compound (1.58 g, 2.04 mmol, 68 %) as white solid. Separation of diastereomers was accomplished by HPLC (Nucleosil 50-7, chloroform/methanol 99:1  $\rightarrow$  9:1).

### diastereomer 1:

**R**<sub>f</sub>: 0.37 (dichloromethane/methanol = 10:1 v/v)

<sup>1</sup>**H-NMR:** (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ [ppm] 1.42 (s, 18H, 2 × -C(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 1.89 (s, 6H, 2 × CH<sub>3</sub>), 3.14-3.17 (m, 4H, 2 × Ph-CH<sub>2</sub>-), 4.11 (d, <sup>2</sup>J<sub>H,H</sub> = 16.2 Hz, 2H, **H-8a**, **H-16a**), 4.25 (s, 2H, -N-CH<sub>2</sub>-N-), 4.44 (dd, <sup>3</sup>J<sub>H,H</sub> = 14.7, 7.2 Hz, 2H, 2 × -CH-NH-), 4.57 (d, <sup>2</sup>J<sub>H,H</sub> = 16.5 Hz, 2H, **H-8b**, **H-16b**), 5.07 (br, 2H, 2 × -O-CO-NH), 6.64 (s, 2H, **H-6**, **H-14**), 7.22-7.34 (m, 10H, 10 × H<sub>Ph</sub>), 7.44 (br, 2H, 2 × CO-NH), 7.65 (s, 2H, **H-3**, **H-11**).

<sup>13</sup>C-NMR: (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ [ppm] 17.0 (2 × -CH<sub>3</sub>), 28.4 (2 × -C(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 38.1 (2 × Ph-CH<sub>2</sub>-), 57.0 (2 × -CH-NH-), 58.4 (C-8, C-16), 67.1 (-N-CH<sub>2</sub>-N-), 80.7 (2 × -C(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 118.5 (C-3, C-11), 124.5 (C-5, C-7, C-13, C-15), 127.3 (C<sub>Ph</sub>-4, C<sub>Ph</sub>-4'), 128.6 (C-6, C-14), 129.0 (C<sub>Ph</sub>-3, C<sub>Ph</sub>-3', C<sub>Ph</sub>-3'', C<sub>Ph</sub>-3'''), 129.4 (C<sub>Ph</sub>-2, C<sub>Ph</sub>-2', C<sub>Ph</sub>-2'', C<sub>Ph</sub>-2'''), 134.5 (C-4, C-12), 136.8 (C<sub>Ph</sub>-1, C<sub>Ph</sub>-1'), 146.6 (C-2, C-10), 155.8 (2 × NH-CO-O), 169.4 (2 × NH-CO).

**HR-MS:** (ESI positive,  $CH_3OH$ ) calc. for  $[C_{45}H_{55}N_6O_6]^+$ :  $[M+H]^+$  775.41780, found 775.41840, calc. for  $[C_{45}H_{54}N_6O_6Na]^+$ :  $[M+Na]^+$  797.39970, found 797.39998, calc. for  $[C_{45}H_{54}N_6O_6K]^+$ :  $[M+K]^+$  813.37400, found 813.37460.

**UV:**  $(CH_2Cl_2) \lambda (lg\epsilon) = 231 \text{ nm} (4.458), 243 (4.439), 298 (3.735).$ 

**IR:** (KBr) v<sub>max</sub> = 3422 cm<sup>-1</sup>, 2976, 2928, 1692, 1522, 1497, 1454, 1367, 1168, 921, 701.

**Optical rotation:**  $\left[\alpha\right]_{D}^{122} \left( \text{deg cm}^3 \text{ g}^{-1} \text{ dm}^{-1} \right) = +79.9 \text{ (c} = 1.0, \text{ CHCl}_3 \text{)}$ 

Melting point: 205-206 °C

### diastereomer 2:

**R**<sub>f</sub>: 0.36 (dichloromethane/methanol = 10:1 v/v)

<sup>1</sup>**H-NMR:** (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ [ppm] 1.43 (s, 18H, 2 × -C(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 1.88 (s, 6H, 2 × CH<sub>3</sub>), 3.09-3.23 (m, 4H, 2 × Ph-CH<sub>2</sub>-), 4.11 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H}$  = 16.8 Hz, 2H, **H-8a**, **H-16a**), 4.25 (s, 2H, -N-CH<sub>2</sub>-N-), 4.45 (dd,  ${}^{3}J_{H,H}$  = 13.8, 7.0 Hz, 2H, 2 × -CH-NH-), 4.57 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H}$  = 16.4 Hz, 2H, **H-8b**, **H-16b**), 5.08 (br, 2H, 2 × -O-CO-NH), 6.64 (s, 2H, **H-6**, **H-14**), 7.25-7.34 (m, 10H, 10 × H<sub>Ph</sub>), 7.47 (br, 2H, 2 × CO-NH), 7.65 (s, 2H, **H-3**, **H-11**).

<sup>13</sup>C-NMR: (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ [ppm] 16.9 (2 × -CH<sub>3</sub>), 28.4 (2 × -C(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 38.1 (2 × Ph-CH<sub>2</sub>-), 56.8 (2 × -CH-NH-), 58.4 (C-8, C-16), 67.1 (-N-CH<sub>2</sub>-N-), 80.8 (2 × -C(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 118.7 (C-3, C-11), 124.6 (C-5, C-7, C-13, C-15), 127.3 (C<sub>Ph</sub>-4, C<sub>Ph</sub>-4'), 128.6 (C-6, C-14), 129.1 (C<sub>Ph</sub>-3, C<sub>Ph</sub>-3'', C<sub>Ph</sub>-3''), 129.5 (C<sub>Ph</sub>-2, C<sub>Ph</sub>-2', C<sub>Ph</sub>-2'', C<sub>Ph</sub>-2'''), 134.4 (C-4, C-12), 136.7 (C<sub>Ph</sub>-1, C<sub>Ph</sub>-1'), 146.4 (C-2, C-10), 155.8 (2 × NH-CO-O), 169.4 (2 × NH-CO).

**HR-MS:** (ESI positive,  $CH_3OH$ ) calc. for  $[C_{45}H_{55}N_6O_6]^+$ :  $[M+H]^+$  775.41780, found 775.41840, calc. for  $[C_{45}H_{54}N_6O_6Na]^+$ :  $[M+Na]^+$  797.39970, found 797.39998, calc. for  $[C_{45}H_{54}N_6O_6K]^+$ :  $[M+K]^+$  813.37400, found 813.37460.

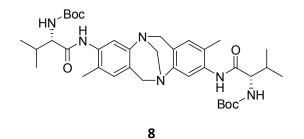
**UV:**  $(CH_2Cl_2) \lambda (lg\epsilon) = 231 \text{ nm} (4.565), 245 (4.542), 301 (3.746).$ 

**IR**: (KBr) v<sub>max</sub> = 3419 cm<sup>-1</sup>, 2977, 2930, 1691, 1519, 1496, 1454, 1367, 1168, 921, 700.

**Optical rotation:**  $\left[\alpha\right]_{D}^{22} \left(\deg \operatorname{cm}^{3} \operatorname{g}^{-1} \operatorname{dm}^{-1}\right) = -50.1 \text{ (c} = 0.50, \operatorname{CHCl}_{3}\right)$ 

Melting point: 152-153 °C

di-*tert*-butyl [(5,13-dimethyl-1,9-diazatetracyclo[7.7.1.0<sup>2,7</sup>.0<sup>10,15</sup>]heptadeca-2,4,6,10,12,14hexaene-4,12-diyl)bis{imino[(2*S*)-3-methyl-1-oxobutane-1,2-diyl]}]biscarbamate



Hünlich's base (841 mg, 3.00 mmol, 1 eq.), *N*-[(1,1-dimethylethoxy)carbonyl]-L-valine (1.39 g, 6.00 mmol, 2 eq.) and 2-ethoxy-2*H*-quinoline-1-carboxylic acid ethyl ester (1.85 g, 7.50 mmol, 2.5 eq.) were dissolved in chloroform (150 ml) before triethylamine (1.05 ml, 759 mg, 7.50 mmol, 2.5 eq.) was added and the mixture was heated to reflux for twelve hours. Then, the solvent was removed under reduced pressure und the residue was taken up in ethyl acetate (60 ml), washed twice with water (60 ml) and dried over Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> before all volatiles were removed under reduced pressure. Purification was achieved by column chromatography to yield the titled compound (1.51 g, 2.22 mmol, 74 %) as white solid. Separation of diastereomers was accomplished by HPLC (Nucleosil 50-7, chloroform/methanol 99:1  $\rightarrow$  9:1).

### diastereomer 1:

 $\mathbf{R_{f}:}$  0.33 (chloroform/methanol = 50:1 v/v)

<sup>1</sup>**H-NMR:** (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ [ppm] 0.98 (d,  ${}^{3}J_{H,H} = 6.9$  Hz, 6H, 2 × -CH-CH<sub>3</sub>), 1.03 (d,  ${}^{3}J_{H,H} = 6.9$  Hz, 6H, 2 × -CH-CH<sub>3</sub>), 1.43 (s, 18H, 2 × -C(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 2.09 (s, 6H, 2 × CH<sub>3</sub>), 2.21-2.31 (m, 2H, 2 × -CH(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>), 4.00 (dd,  ${}^{3}J_{H,H} = 8.7$ , 6.6 Hz, 2H, 2 × -CH-NH-), 4.11 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H} = 16.2$  Hz, 2H, H-8a, H-16a), 4.23 (s, 2H, -N-CH<sub>2</sub>-N-), 4.54 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H} = 16.5$  Hz, 2H, H-8b, H-16b), 5.12 (d,  ${}^{3}J_{H,H} = 8.4$  Hz, 2H, 2 × -O-CO-NH), 6.65 (s, 2H, H-6, H-14), 7.66 (s, 2H, H-3, H-11), 7.72 (s, 2H, 2 × CO-NH).

<sup>13</sup>C-NMR: (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ [ppm] 17.3 (2 × -CH<sub>3</sub>), 18.1 (2 × -CH-CH<sub>3</sub>), 19.6 (2 × -CH-CH<sub>3</sub>), 28.5 (2 × -C(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 30.3 (2 × -CH(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>), 58.4 (C-8, C-16), 61.1 (2 × -CH-NH-), 67.1 (-N-CH<sub>2</sub>-N-), 80.5 (2 × -C(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 119.0 (C-3, C-11), 124.6 (C-7, C-15), 124.9 (C-5, C-13), 128.7 (C-6, C-14), 134.6 (C-4, C-12), 146.3 (C-2, C-10), 156.3 (2 × NH-CO-O), 170.1 (2 × NH-CO).

**HR-MS:** (ESI positive, CH<sub>3</sub>OH) calc. for  $[C_{37}H_{55}N_6O_6]^+$ :  $[M+H]^+ 679.41776$ , found 679.41805, calc. for  $[C_{37}H_{54}N_6O_6N_3]^+$ :  $[M+N_3]^+ 701.39970$ , found 701.40023.

**UV:**  $(CH_2Cl_2) \lambda (lg\epsilon) = 229 \text{ nm} (4.330), 299 (3.480).$ 

**IR:** (KBr) v<sub>max</sub> = 3435 cm<sup>-1</sup>, 2969, 2931, 1688, 1623, 1518, 1498, 1367, 1170, 920.

**Optical rotation:**  $\left[\alpha\right]_{D}^{p_{1}}\left(\deg \operatorname{cm}^{3} \operatorname{g}^{-1} \operatorname{dm}^{-1}\right) = +83.6 \text{ (c} = 1.0, \operatorname{CHCl}_{3}\right)$ 

Melting point: 255-256 °C

# diastereomer 2:

**R**<sub>f</sub>: 0.30 (chloroform/methanol = 50:1 v/v)

<sup>1</sup>**H-NMR:** (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  [ppm] 0.98 (d, <sup>3</sup>*J*<sub>H,H</sub> = 6.4 Hz, 6H, 2 × -CH-CH<sub>3</sub>), 1.03 (d, <sup>3</sup>*J*<sub>H,H</sub> = 6.4 Hz, 6H, 2 × -CH-CH<sub>3</sub>), 1.45 (s, 18H, 2 × -C(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 2.10 (s, 6H, 2 × CH<sub>3</sub>), 2.27-2.32 (m, 2H, 2 × -CH(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>), 3.98 (dd, <sup>3</sup>*J*<sub>H,H</sub> = 8.0, 6.6 Hz, 2H, 2 × -CH-NH-), 4.13 (d, <sup>2</sup>*J*<sub>H,H</sub> = 16.4 Hz, 2H, **H-8a**, **H-16a**), 4.24 (s, 2H, -N-CH<sub>2</sub>-N-), 4.55 (d, <sup>2</sup>*J*<sub>H,H</sub> = 16.8 Hz, 2H, **H-8b**, **H-16b**), 5.09 (br, 2H, 2 × -O-CO-NH), 6.68 (s, 2H, **H-6**, **H-14**), 7.66 (s, 2H, **H-3**, **H-11**), 7.67 (s, 2H, 2 × CO-NH).

<sup>13</sup>C-NMR: (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ [ppm] 17.3 (2 × -CH<sub>3</sub>), 18.0 (2 × -CH-CH<sub>3</sub>), 19.7 (2 × -CH-CH<sub>3</sub>), 28.4 (2 × -C(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 30.2 (-CH(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>), 58.4 (C-8, C-16), 61.1 (2 × -CH-NH-), 67.1 (-N-CH<sub>2</sub>-N-), 80.5 (2 × -C(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 119.0 (C-3, C-11), 124.5 (C-7, C-15), 125.0 (C-5, C-13), 128.7 (C-6, C-14), 134.5 (C-4, C-12), 146.3 (C-2, C-10), 156.3 (2 × NH-CO-O), 169.9 (2 × NH-CO).

**HR-MS:** (ESI positive,  $CH_3OH$ ) calc. for  $[C_{37}H_{55}N_6O_6]^+$ :  $[M+H]^+ 679.41776$ , found 679.41805, calc. for  $[C_{37}H_{54}N_6O_6Na]^+$ :  $[M+Na]^+ 701.39970$ , found 701.40023.

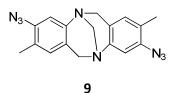
**UV:**  $(CH_2Cl_2) \lambda (lg\epsilon) = 231 \text{ nm} (4.998), 298 (4.191).$ 

**IR:** (KBr)  $v_{max} = 3429 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ , 2969, 2931, 1689, 1497, 1367, 1170, 921.

**Optical rotation:**  $\left[\alpha\right]_{D}^{22} \left(\deg \operatorname{cm}^{3} \operatorname{g}^{-1} \operatorname{dm}^{-1}\right) = -151.7 \text{ (c} = 1.0, \operatorname{CHCl}_{3}\right)$ 

Melting point: 182-184 °C

### 3,9-diazido-2,8-dimethyl-6H,12H-5,11-methanodibenzo[b,f][1,5]diazocine



#### Method A:

To an ice-cooled suspension of Hünlich's base (6.00 g, 21.4 mmol, 1 eq.) in water (15.0 ml) was subsequently added concentrated sulfuric acid (4.20 ml, 7.68 g, 78.6 mmol, 3.67 eq.), NaNO<sub>3</sub> (1.62 g, 19.1 mmol, 0.9 eq.) in water (9.60 ml), NaN<sub>3</sub> (1.42 g, 21.8 mmol, 1.02 eq.) in water (15.0 ml) and dichloromethane (36 ml). Then, the mixture was stirred one hour at 0 °C and one hour at rt. After separation of the phases, the aqueous one was extracted twice with dichloromethane (120 ml). The combined organic layers were dried over Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> and after solvent removal the product was purified by recrystallization from dichloromethane to furnish the desired compound (2.40 g, 7.20 mmol, 34 %) as yellow solid.

### Method B:

To a solution of Hünlich's base (50.0 mg, 0.178 mmol, 1.0 eq.), potassium carbonate (83.8 mg, 0.606 mmol, 3.4 eq.) and copper sulfate (0.28  $\mu$ g, 1.78  $\mu$ mol, 0.01 eq.) in methanol (900  $\mu$ l) was added freshly prepared 1*H*-imidazole-1-sulfonyl azide hydrochloride (89.7 mg, 0.428 mmol, 2.4 eq.) and the resulting mixture was stirred at rt for 18 h. After addition of water (1.0 ml) and slight acidification with hydrochloric acid the mixture was extracted with ethyl acetate (3 × 3 ml). The combined organic layers were dried over MgSO<sub>4</sub> and after solvent removal the product was purified by column chromatography to furnish the desired compound (33.2 mg, 0.100 mmol, 56 %) as faintly yellow solid.

 $\mathbf{R}_{\mathbf{f}}$ : 0.24 (*n*-hexane/ethyl acetate = 5:1 v/v)

<sup>1</sup>**H-NMR:** (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ [ppm] 2.07 (s, 6H, 2 × -CH<sub>3</sub>), 4.11 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H}$  = 16.5 Hz, 2H, **H-6a**, **H-12a**), 4.28 (s, 2H, -N-CH<sub>2</sub>-N-), 4.63 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H}$  = 16.5 Hz, 2H, **H-6b**, **H-12b**), 6.70 (s, 2H, **H-1**, **H-7**), 6.87 (s, 2H, **H-4**, **H-10**).

<sup>13</sup>C-NMR: (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ [ppm] 16.8 (2 × -CH<sub>3</sub>), 58.5 (C-6, C-12), 67.0 (C-13), 114.2 (C-4, C-10), 124.0 (C-6a, C-12a), 125.9 (C-2, C-8), 129.4 (C-1, C-7), 137.7 (C-3, C-9), 146.8 (C-4a, C-10a).

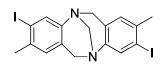
**HR-MS:** (ESI positive, CH<sub>3</sub>OH) calc. for  $[C_{17}H_{17}N_8]^+$ :  $[M+H]^+$  333.15707, found 333.15677.

**UV:** (CHCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\lambda$  (lg $\varepsilon$ ) = 249 nm (4.487), 309 (3.984).

**IR**: (KBr)  $v_{max} = 2951 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ , 2902, 2108, 1616, 1572, 1490, 1306, 1290, 1080, 1030, 920.

Melting point: 182-185 °C

### 3,9-diiodo-2,8-dimethyl-6H,12H-5,11-methanodibenzo[b,f][1,5]diazocine



10

To an ice-cooled suspension of Hünlich's base (6.00 g, 21.4 mmol, 1 eq.) in water (15.0 ml) was subsequently added concentrated sulfuric acid (4.20 ml, 7.68 g, 78.6 mmol, 3.67 eq.), NaNO<sub>3</sub> (1.62 g, 19.1 mmol, 0.9 eq.) in water (9.60 ml), NaI (3.27 g, 21.8 mmol, 1.02 eq.) in water (15.0 ml) and dichloromethane (36.0 ml). Then, the mixture was stirred one hour at 0 °C and one hour at rt. After separation of the phases, the aqueous one was extracted twice with dichloromethane (120 ml). The combined organic layers were dried over Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> and after solvent removal the product was purified by column chromatography on silica to furnish the desired compound (5.16 g, 10.3 mmol, 48 %) as brownish solid.

**R**<sub>f</sub>: 0.32 (*n*-hexane/ethyl acetate = 5:1 v/v)

<sup>1</sup>**H-NMR:** (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ [ppm] 2.29 (s, 6H, 2 × -CH<sub>3</sub>), 4.05 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H}$  = 17.0 Hz, 2H, **H-6a**, **H-12a**), 4.21 (s, 2H, -N-CH<sub>2</sub>-N-), 4.55 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H}$  = 17.0 Hz, 2H, **H-6b**, **H-12b**), 6.77 (s, 2H, **H-1**, **H-7**), 7.58 (s, 2H, **H-4**, **H-10**).

<sup>13</sup>C-NMR: (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ [ppm] 27.4 (2 × -CH<sub>3</sub>), 58.6 (C-6, C-12), 66.9 (C-13), 98.7 (C-3, C-9), 127.74 (C-4, C-10), 127.77 (C-6a, C-12a), 135.2 (C-1, C-7), 137.1 (C-2, C-8), 146.9 (C-4a, C-10a).

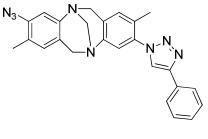
**HR-MS:** (ESI positive, CH<sub>3</sub>OH) calc. for  $[C_{17}H_{17}I_2N_2]^+$ :  $[M+H]^+$  502.94756, found 502.94722.

**UV:** (CHCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\lambda$  (lg $\varepsilon$ ) = 241 nm (4.319), 298 (3.665).

**IR:** (KBr)  $v_{max} = 3436 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ , 2941, 2911, 1599, 1471, 1434, 1200, 1066, 955, 875.

Melting point: 205-210 °C

3-azido-2,8-dimethyl-9-(4-phenyl-1*H*-1,2,3-triazol-1-yl)-6*H*,12*H*-5,11methanodibenzo[*b*,*f*][1,5]diazocine



11

Triethylamine (51.5 µl, 38.9 mg, 0.301 mmol, 2.0 eq.) and phenylacetylene (33.0 µl, 30.7 mg, 0.301 mmol, 2.0 eq.) was subsequently added to a suspension of 3,9-diazido-2,8-dimethyl-6H,12H-5,11-methanodibenzo[b,f][1,5]diazocine (50.0 mg, 0.150 mmol, 1.0 eq.) and cuprous iodide (28.6 mg, 0.150 mmol, 1.0 eq.) in dichloromethane (2.5 ml). After stirring at rt for 24 h water (12.5 ml) was added. Then, the reaction mixture was extracted with 2-methoxy-2-methylpropane (3 × 10 ml) before the combined organic layers were dried over Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> and all volatiles were removed under reduced pressure. Colum chromatography furnished the titled compound (26.1 mg, 0.0600 mmol, 40 %) as brown solid.

**R**<sub>f</sub>: 0.24 (*n*-hexane/ethyl acetate = 2:1 v/v)

<sup>1</sup>**H-NMR:** (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ [ppm] 2.09 (s, 3H, C-2-CH<sub>3</sub>), 2.14 (s, 3H, C-8-CH<sub>3</sub>), 4.12 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H} = 16.8$  Hz, 1H, **H-12a**), 4.23 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H} = 16.8$  Hz, 1H, **H-6a**), 4.31 (s, 2H, -N-CH<sub>2</sub>-N-), 4.63 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H} = 17.1$  Hz, 1H, **H-12b**), 4.71 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H} = 16.8$  Hz, 1H, **H-6b**), 6.71 (s, 1H, **H-1**), 6.89 (s, 1H, **H-4**), 6.94 (s, 1H, **H-7**), 7.18 (s, 1H, **H-10**), 7.33-7.39 (m, 1H, **H<sub>Ph</sub>-4**), 7.44-7.48 (m, 2H, **H<sub>Ph</sub>-3**, **H<sub>Ph</sub>-3'**), 7.88-7.91 (m, 3H, **H<sub>triazole</sub>-5**, **H<sub>Ph</sub>-2**, **H<sub>Ph</sub>-2'**).

<sup>13</sup>C-NMR: (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ [ppm] 16.8 (C-2-CH<sub>3</sub>), 17.5 (C-8-CH<sub>3</sub>), 58.6 (C-12), 58.7 (C-6), 67.0 (-N-CH<sub>2</sub>-N-), 114.2 (C-4), 121.2 (C<sub>triazole</sub>-5), 122.5 (C-10), 123.8 (C-12a), 126.0 (C<sub>Ph</sub>-2, C<sub>Ph</sub>-2'), 126.1 (C-2), 128.5 (C<sub>Ph</sub>-4), 129.1 (C<sub>Ph</sub>-3, C<sub>Ph</sub>-3'), 129.2 (C-6a), 129.5 (C-1), 129.8 (C-8), 130.5 (C-7), 135.7 (C-9), 137.9 (C-3), 146.8 (C-4a), 147.0 (C-10a), 147.8 (C<sub>triazole</sub>-4).

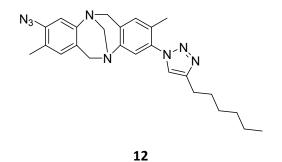
**HR-MS:** (ESI positive,  $CDCl_3/CH_3OH$ ) calc. for  $[C_{25}H_{22}N_8Na]^+$ :  $[M+Na]^+$  457.18596, found 457.18616.

**UV:** (CHCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\lambda$  (lg $\varepsilon$ ) = 253 nm (4.545), 256 (4.541).

**IR**: (KBr) v<sub>max</sub> = 2924 cm<sup>-1</sup>, 2852, 2116, 1617, 1575, 1491, 1385, 1304, 1294, 1081, 1034, 766.

Melting point: 197-202 °C

3-azido-9-(4-hexyl-1*H*-1,2,3-triazol-1-yl)-2,8-dimethyl-6*H*,12*H*-5,11methanodibenzo[*b*,*f*][1,5]diazocine



Hünig's base (22.5  $\mu$ l, 17.0 mg, 0.131 mmol, 2.0 eq.), acetic acid (7.50  $\mu$ l, 7.88 mg, 0.131 mmol, 2.0 eq.), and 1-octyne (58.1  $\mu$ l, 43.4 mg, 0.394 mmol, 6.0 eq.) was subsequently added to a suspension of 3,9-diazido-2,8-dimethyl-6*H*,12*H*-5,11-methanodibenzo[*b*,*f*][1,5]diazocine (21.8 mg, 0.0656 mmol, 1.0 eq.) and cuprous iodide (12.5 mg, 0.0656 mmol, 1.0 eq.) in dichloromethane (1.25 ml). After stirring at rt for 24 h water (6.0 ml) was added. Then, the reaction mixture was extracted with ethyl acetate (3 × 5 ml) before the combined organic layers were dried over Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> and all volatiles were removed under reduced pressure. Colum chromatography furnished the titled compound (11.6 mg, 0.0262 mmol, 40 %) as brown solid.

 $\mathbf{R}_{\mathbf{f}}$ : 0.20 (*n*-hexane/ethyl acetate = 1:1 v/v)

<sup>1</sup>**H-NMR:** (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ [ppm] 0.87-0.91 (m, 3H, -CH<sub>3</sub>), 1.31-1.43 (m, 6H, H<sub>Hex</sub>-3, H<sub>Hex</sub>-3', H<sub>Hex</sub>-4, H<sub>Hex</sub>-4', H<sub>Hex</sub>-5, H<sub>Hex</sub>-5'), 1.67-1.75 (m, 2H, H<sub>Hex</sub>-2, H<sub>Hex</sub>-2'), 2.07 (s, 3H, C-8-CH<sub>3</sub>), 2.08 (s, 3H, C-2-CH<sub>3</sub>), 2.79 (t,  ${}^{3}J_{H,H}$  = 7.7 Hz, 2H, H<sub>Hex</sub>-1, H<sub>Hex</sub>-1'), 4.11 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H}$  = 16.8 Hz, 1H, H-12a), 4.21 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H}$  = 17.1 Hz, 1H, H-6a), 4.30 (s, 2H, -N-CH<sub>2</sub>-N-), 4.61 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H}$  = 16.5 Hz, 1H, H-12b), 4.70 (d,  ${}^{2}J_{H,H}$  = 17.4 Hz, 1H, H-6b), 6.69 (s, 1H, H-1), 6.89 (s, 1H, H-4), 6.90 (s, 1H, H-7), 7.12 (s, 1H, H-10), 7.41 (s, 1H, H<sub>triazole</sub>-5).

<sup>13</sup>C-NMR: (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ [ppm] 14.2 (-CH<sub>3</sub>), 16.8 (C-2-CH<sub>3</sub>), 17.4 (C-8-CH<sub>3</sub>), 22.7 (C<sub>Hex</sub>-5), 25.7 (C<sub>Hex</sub>-1), 29.1 (C<sub>Hex</sub>-3), 29.5 (C<sub>Hex</sub>-2), 31.7 (C<sub>Hex</sub>-4), 58.5 (C-12), 58.6 (C-6), 67.0 (-N-CH<sub>2</sub>-N-), 114.1 (C-4), 122.3 (C<sub>triazole</sub>-5), 122.5 (C-10), 123.8 (C-12a), 126.1 (C-2), 129.2 (C-8), 129.3 (C-6a), 129.5 (C-1), 129.7 (C-7), 136.0 (C-9), 137.8 (C-3), 146.6 (C-4a), 146.7 (C-10a), 148.4 (C<sub>triazole</sub>-4).

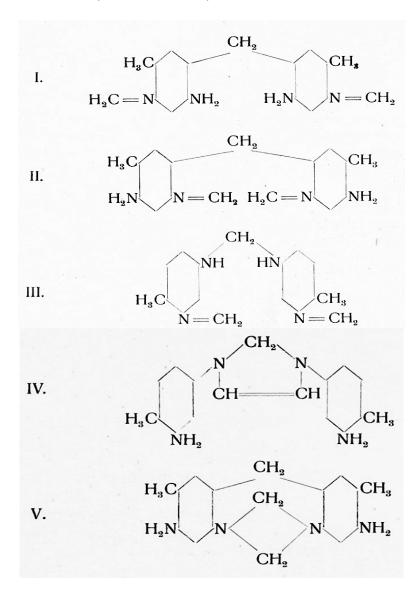
**HR-MS:** (ESI positive,  $CHCl_3/CH_3OH$ ) calc. for  $[C_{25}H_{31}N_8]^+$ :  $[M+H]^+$  443.26662, found 443.26640, calc. for  $[C_{25}H_{30}N_8Na]^+$ :  $[M+Na]^+$  465.24856, found 465.24833.

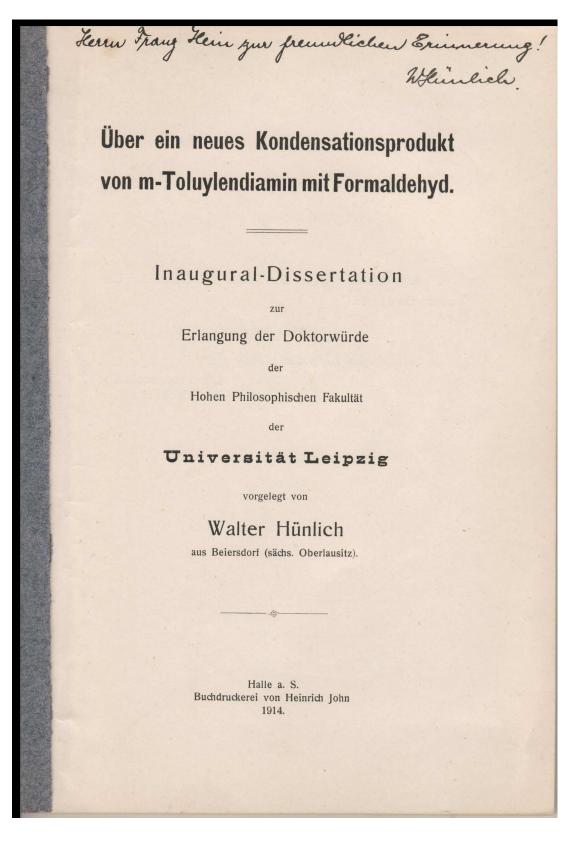
**UV:**  $(CH_2Cl_2) \lambda (lg\epsilon) = 231 \text{ nm} (4.238), 302 (3.543).$ 

**IR:** (KBr)  $v_{max} = 2952 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ , 2854, 2115, 1711, 1619, 1572, 1503, 1492, 1455, 1302, 1039, 916.

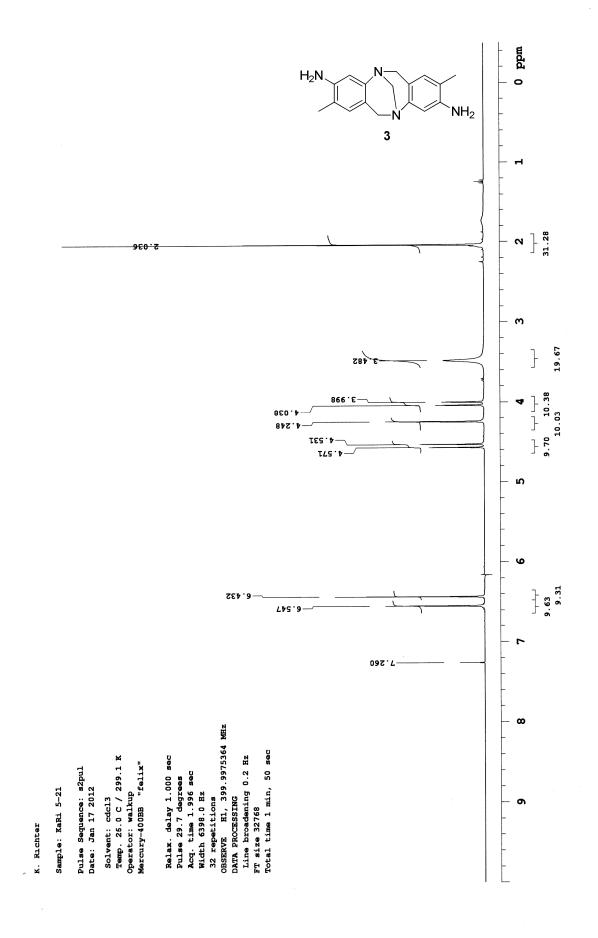
Melting point: 88-90 °C

Proposed structures for the synthesized base by Walter Hünlich:



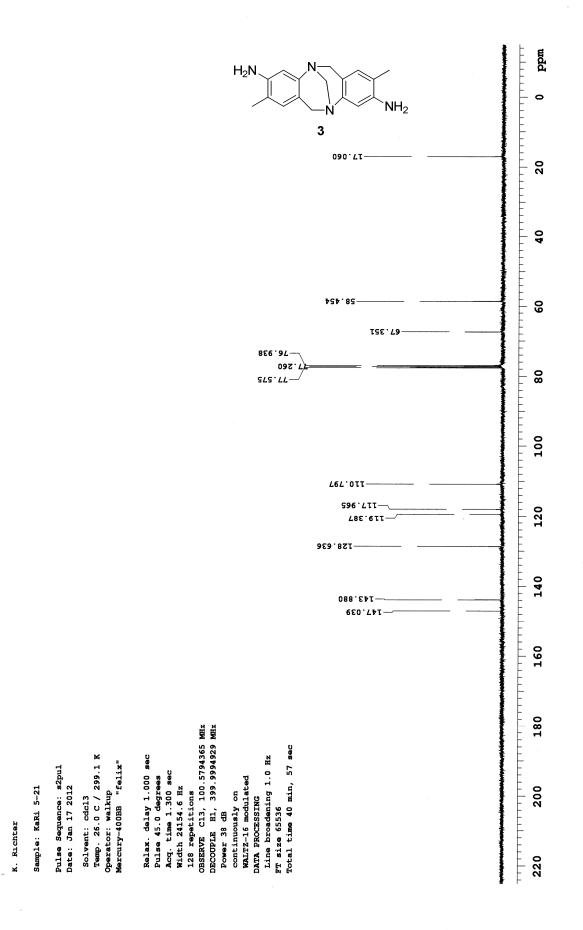


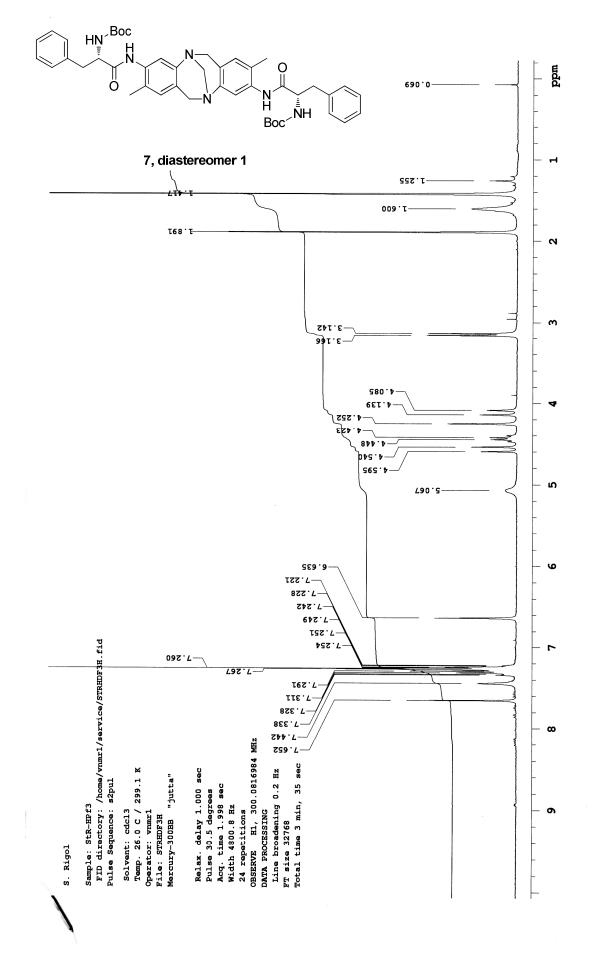
German handwritten text at the top: "Herrn Franz Hein zur freundlichen Erinnerung! WHünlich."

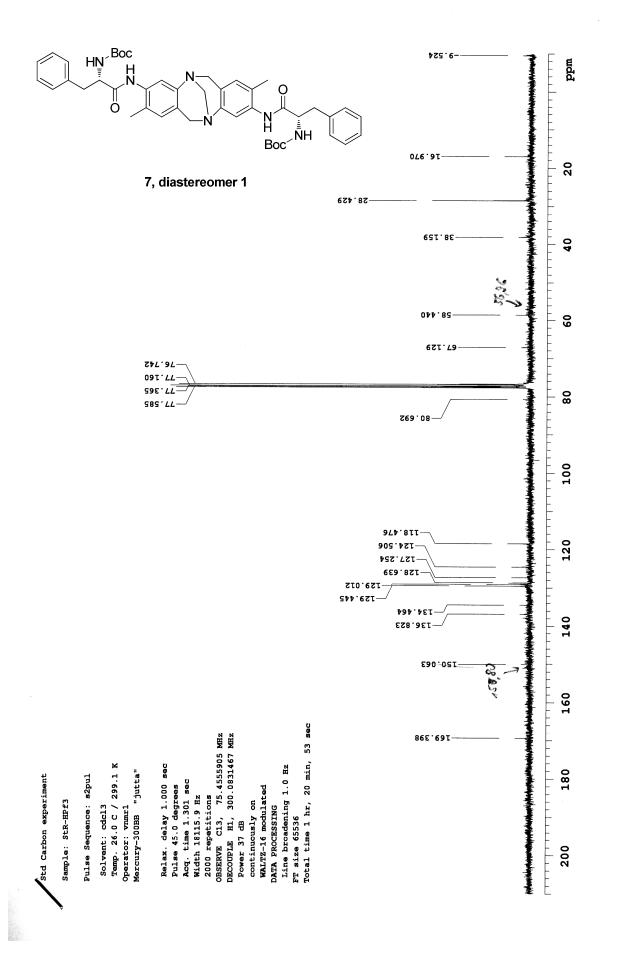


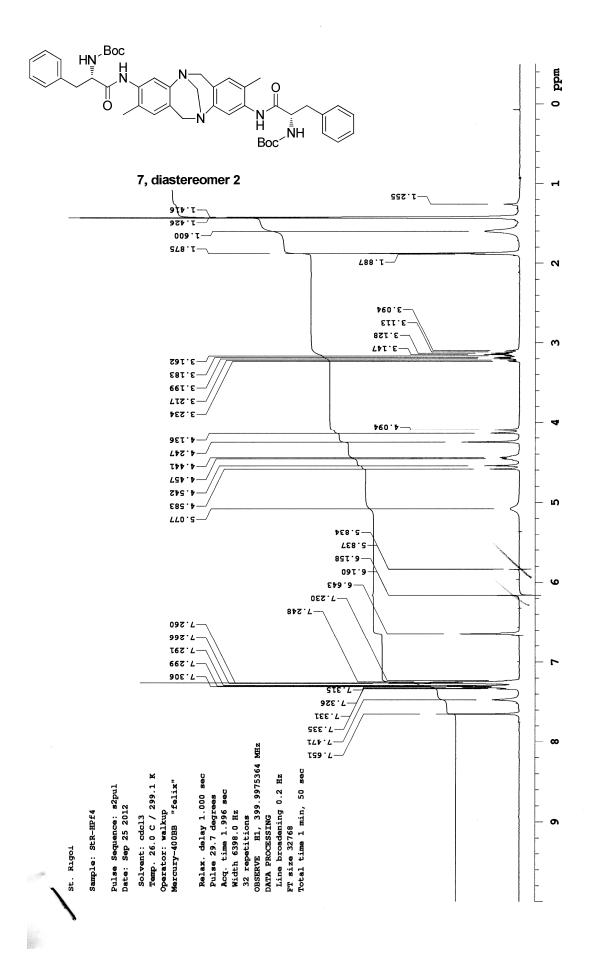


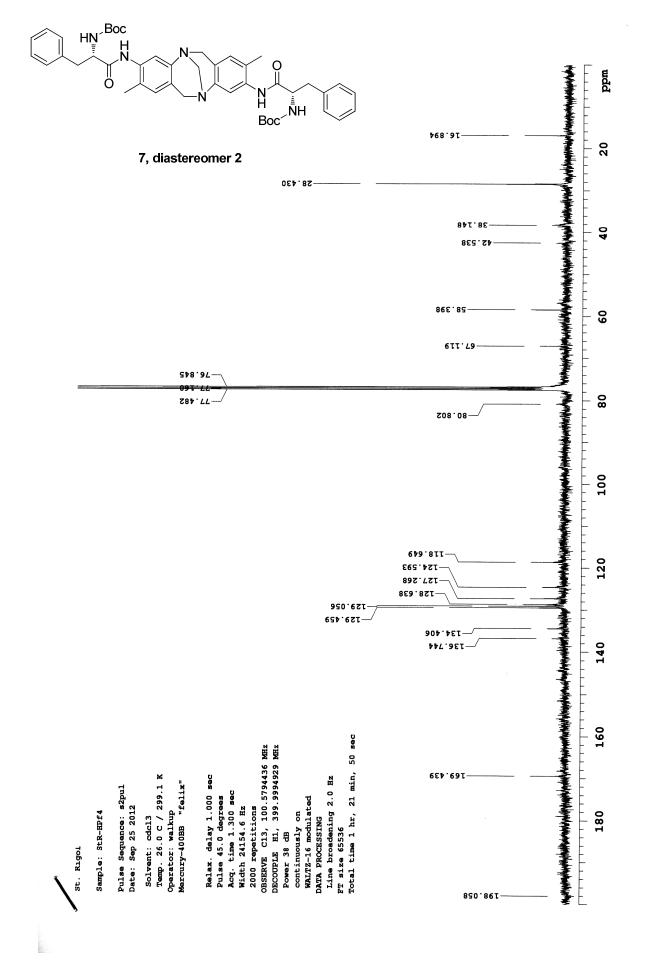
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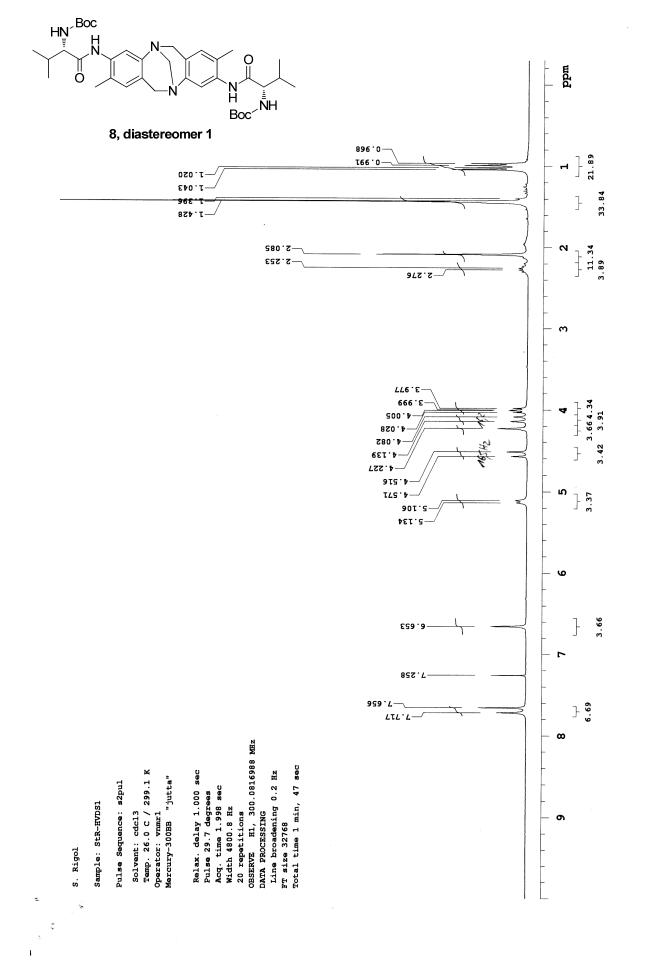


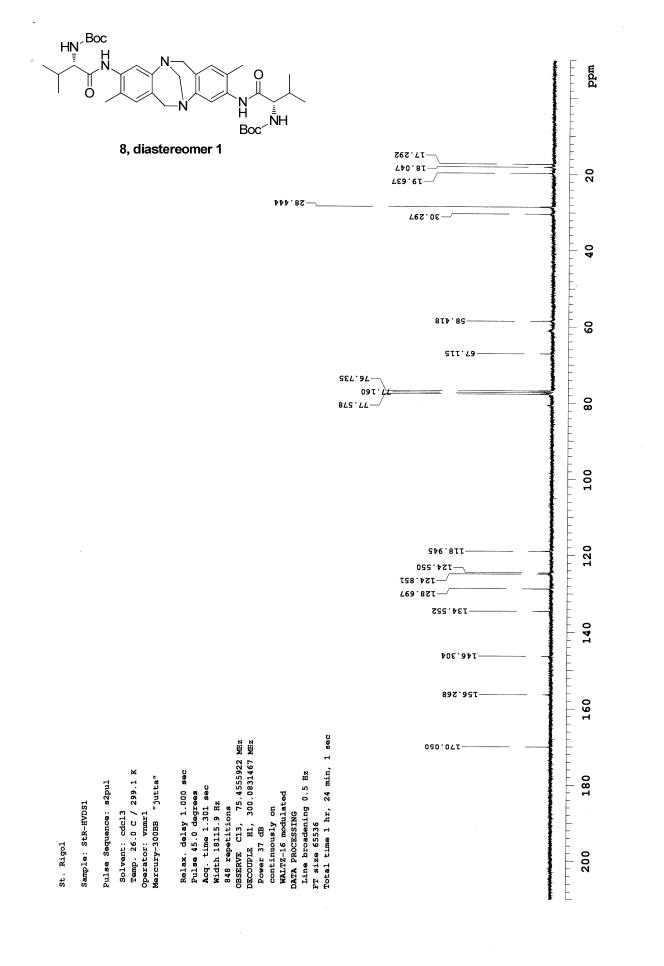


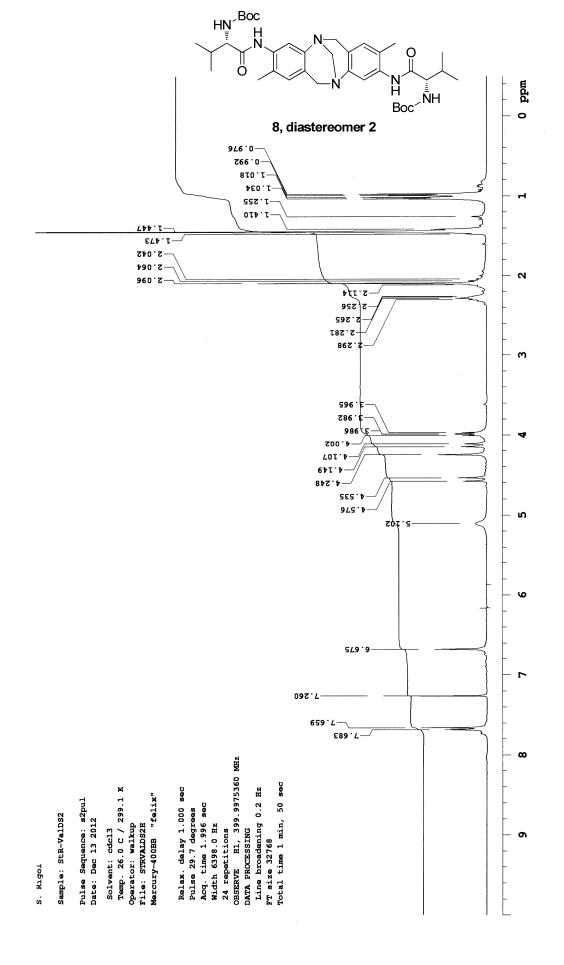


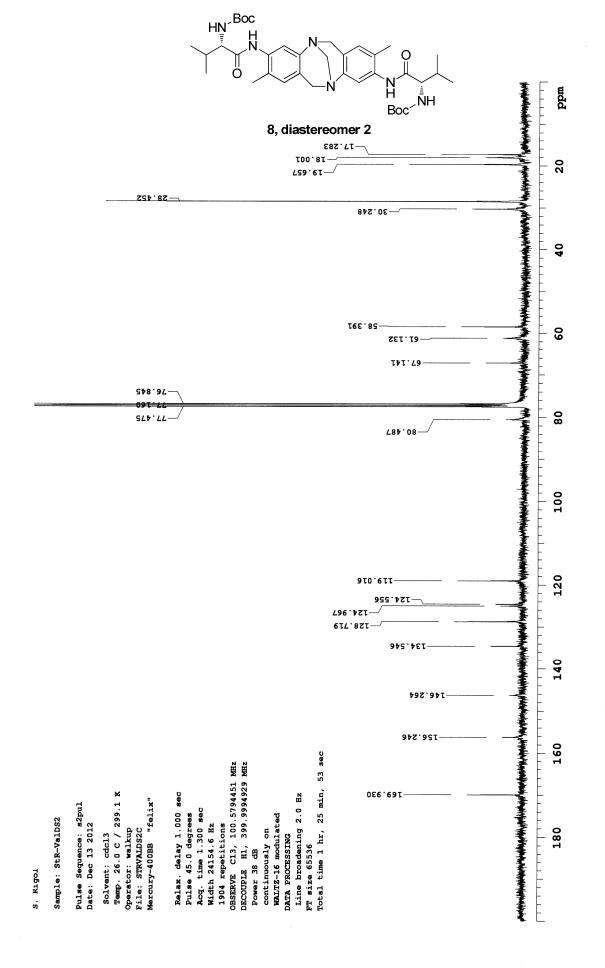


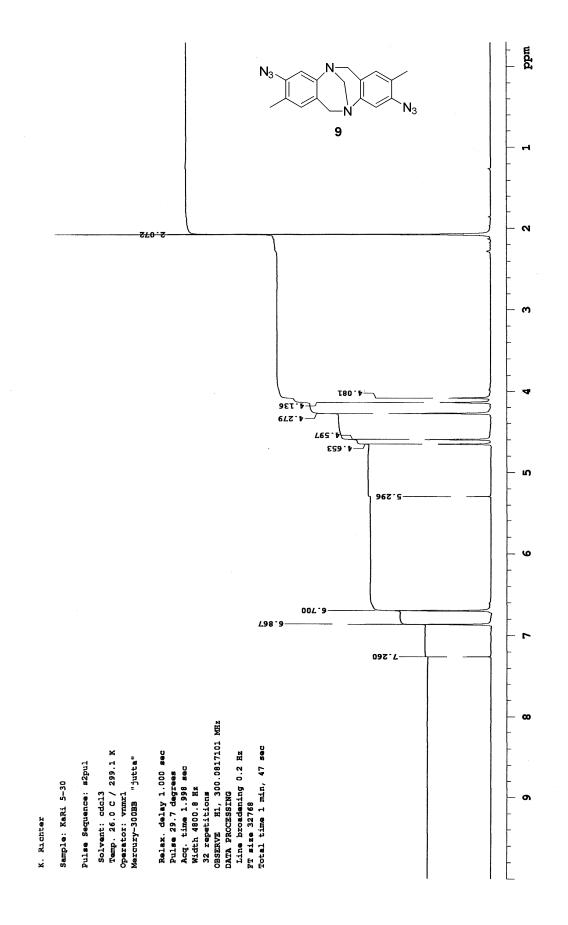
S19



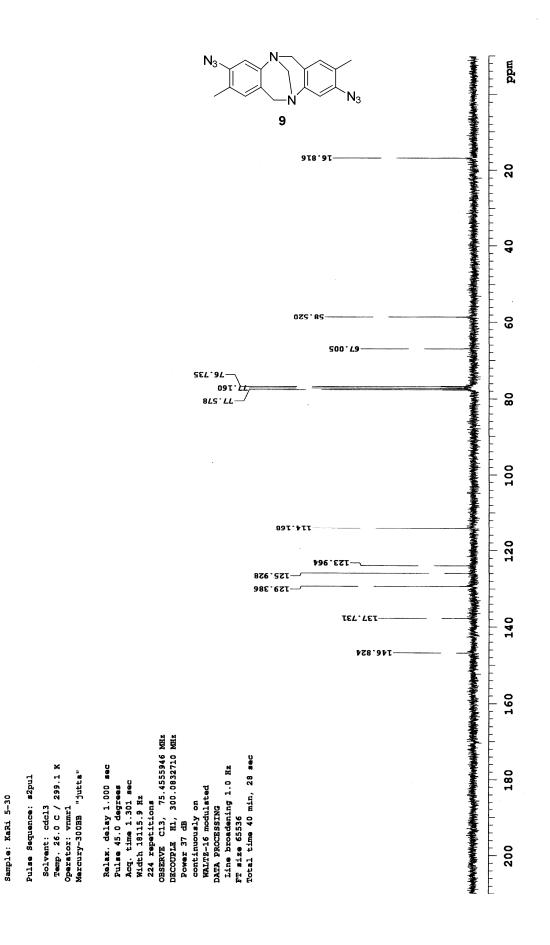




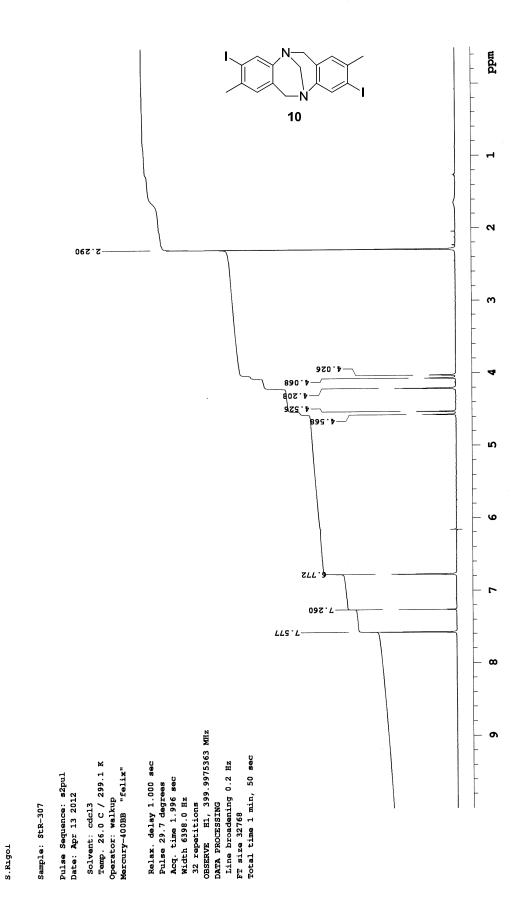




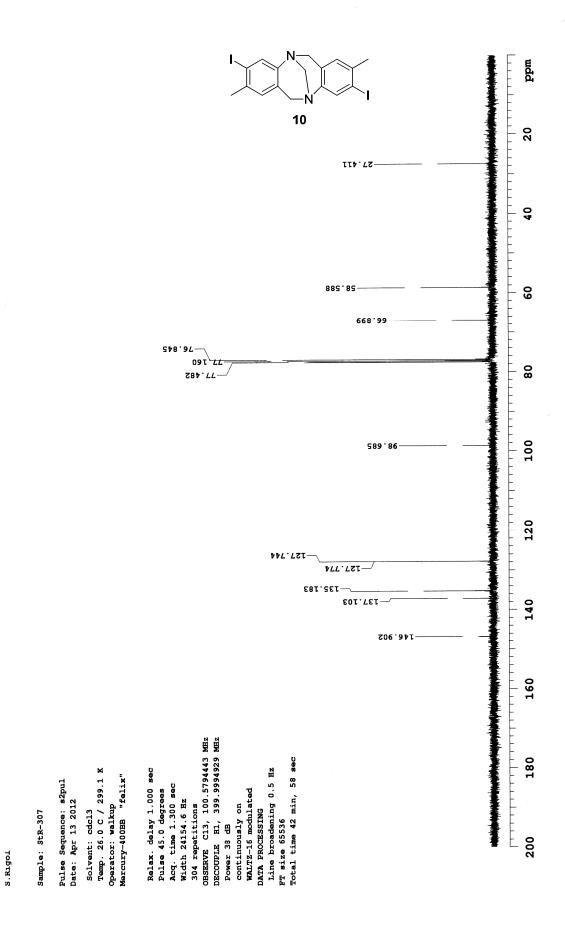


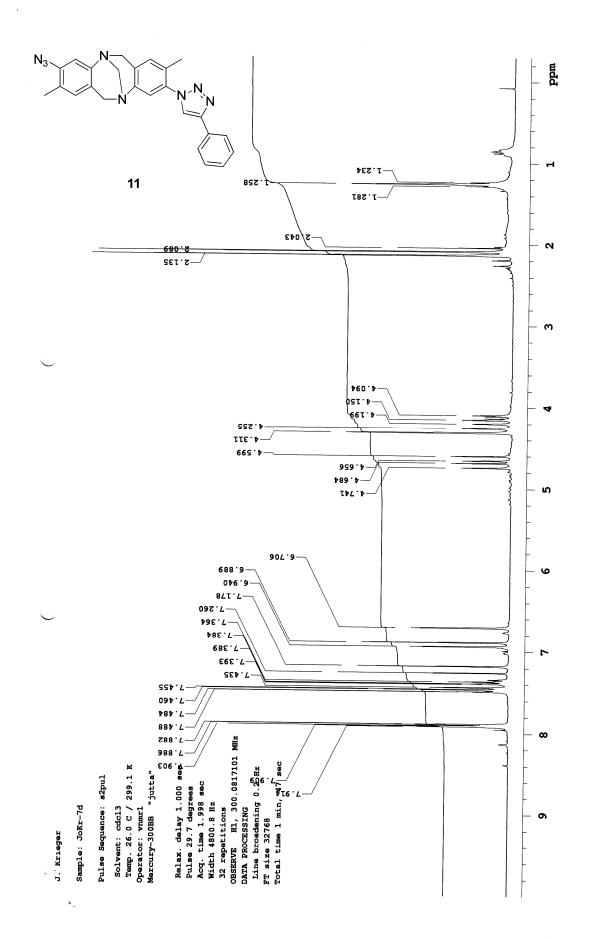


Std Carbon experiment

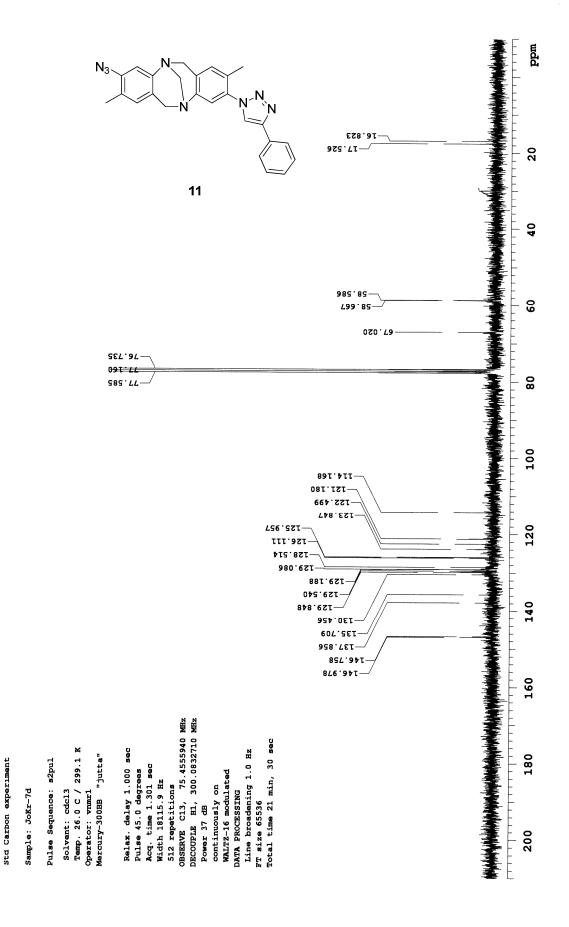








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