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# The Porphyrin Handbook

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# Preface

The broadly defined porphyrin research area is one of the most exciting, stimulating and rewarding for scientists in the fields of chemistry, physics, biology and medicine. The beautifully constructed porphyrinoid ligand, perfected over the course of evolution, provides the chromophore for a multitude of iron, magnesium, cobalt and nickel complexes which are primary metabolites and without which life itself could not be maintained.

Falk's book, *Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins*, published in 1962, was a fairly thin volume which represented the first attempt to apply the principles of modern chemistry and physics to the structure and function of porphyrin systems. By 1975, the time when a single author could write authoritatively on this field was past; one of us (K.M.S.) managed to shoehorn the field into one volume, but the new version of *Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins* (1975) needed to be a multiauthored volume. The field was spreading rapidly in every direction across the whole spectrum of science—far beyond the ability of one person to describe it.

The present *Handbook* follows an unavoidable trend (e.g., Dolphin's *The Porphyrins*, 1978–79) in that it is a multivolume edited set. But no longer is it possible for only one editor to coordinate such an endeavor. The three of us have contributed individually to the expansion of our field—at the time of writing, we have in our careers published among us more than 1,220 papers. Our areas of expertise are complementary, being in physical chemistry, organic chemistry and organometallic/coordination chemistry. The formative days of this project were spent in Dijon, France, where two of us have been honored by the third by being annually appointed, over more than a decade, as visiting professors at the Université de Bourgogne. There, one summer, we put together the pathway for this endeavor and began testing the waters by inviting some of the world's best porphyrin scientists to contribute to a putative new series of books on porphyrins which we told them we were planning to compile. Had we been unsuccessful in obtaining support from those we initially contacted, the project would probably have ended there and then. But such was not the case, and we received encouragement and informal agreements to contribute from the first twenty or so experts that we contacted from Dijon in just the first few days.

The resulting *Handbook* is divided into ten volumes. It progresses through synthesis and organic chemistry of porphyrins, heteroporphyrins and expanded porphyrins, to inorganic and coordination chemistry, and then through biochemistry and spectroscopy, to applications and theoretical, physical and electrochemical characterization. It is important to note that the last two volumes contain collections of structural, electrochemical and equilibrium data;

this is a data-intensive field, and we believe that compilation of relevant data should be useful to investigators. We have attempted to ensure that every chapter was written by the currently acknowledged expert in the field, and very early on we had in our hands no less than sixty-nine signed contracts for chapters. With the fullness of time, and as deadlines for *Handbook* chapter submission and other essential activities (e.g., research proposal renewals) converged, some of our authors had to withdraw. On occasion we were able to recruit new authors who, with only a month or less of lead time, were able to fill these gaps and come up with authoritative and high-quality chapters. Whereas we wish to thank all of our authors for their wonderful contributions and for the way that they honored their contractual agreements to contribute, we do particularly want to thank those who stepped up to bat at crisis time and came through for us—you know who you are! In the end, we have assembled sixty-one chapters divided to provide ten separate volumes. We regretted the loss of the absent chapters, but coverage is so thorough that we believe that only the editors really know what is missing!

The manuscript deadline for the *Handbook* was October 1998. Readers can expect critical or comprehensive coverage only up to that date. Nevertheless, numerous authors continued to add new material to their submitted chapters as time went by (even up to the page-proof stage), and others (including two of us who were otherwise engaged with editing) were granted extensions to the deadline which stretched into 1999. As a result, many chapters contain literature citations from 1999, but the end of 1998 is most likely a better benchmark for coverage. For a project as large as this, we considered that publication within twelve months of the firm manuscript deadline would be a creditable target; this has been accomplished and we wish to thank the publisher, production editors and typesetters for enabling us to achieve our aim. But above all, of course, we must thank our army of contributors for their cooperation and attention. Toward the end, the e-mail instructions, reminders, pleas, demands and occasional threats flew fast and furious, but everyone—to a person—cooperated. As editors, we asked each of the authors to write a manuscript which would be definitive in this field for fifteen years to come, and we believe that most of them, if not all, rose to this challenge. Time will tell.

Enjoy!

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*September, 1999*

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## **Volumes in This Set**

**Volume 1 / Synthesis and Organic Chemistry**

**Volume 2 / Heteroporphyrins, Expanded Porphyrins and Related Macrocycles**

**Volume 3 / Inorganic, Organometallic and Coordination Chemistry**

**Volume 4 / Biochemistry and Binding: Activation of Small Molecules**

**Volume 5 / NMR and EPR**

**Volume 6 / Applications: Past, Present and Future**

**Volume 7 / Theoretical and Physical Characterization**

**Volume 8 / Electron Transfer**

**Volume 9 / Database of Redox Potentials and Binding Constants**

**Volume 10 / Database of Tetrapyrrole Crystal Structure Determination**

---

# Contents of Volumes in This Set

## Volume 1 / Synthesis and Organic Chemistry

1. Strategies for the Synthesis of Octaalkylporphyrin Systems  
*Kevin M. Smith*
2. Synthesis of *meso*-Substituted Porphyrins  
*Jonathan S. Lindsey*
3. Cyclizations of a,c-Biladiene Salts to Give Porphyrins and Their Derivatives  
*Kevin M. Smith*
4. Reactivity and Functionalization of  $\beta$ -Substituted Porphyrins and Chlorins  
*Maria da Graça H. Vicente*
5. Functionalization of 5,10,15,20-Tetra-Substituted Porphyrins  
*Laurent Jaquinod*
6. Highly Substituted Porphyrins  
*Mathias O. Senge*
7. Geochemistry of Porphyrins  
*Henry J. Callot*  
*Rubén Ocampo*

## Volume 2 / Heteroporphyrins, Expanded Porphyrins and Related Macrocycles

8. Porphyrin Isomers  
*Jonathan L. Sessler*  
*Andreas Gebauer*  
*Emanuel Vogel*
9. Expanded Porphyrins  
*Jonathan L. Sessler*  
*Andreas Gebauer*  
*Steven J. Wiegert*
10. Syntheses of Novel Porphyrinoid Chromophores  
*Timothy D. Lash*

- 
- 11. Syntheses of Corroles  
*Roberto Paolese*
  - 12. Metallocorroles: Molecular Structure, Spectroscopy and Electronic States  
*Christoph Erben*  
*Stefan Will*  
*Karl M. Kadish*
  - 13. *meso*-Azaporphyrins and Their Analogues  
*Nagao Kobayashi*
  - 14. Core-Modified Heteroanalogues of Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins  
*Lechosław Łatos-Grażyński*

**Volume 3 / Inorganic, Organometallic and Coordination Chemistry**

- 15. Axial Coordination Chemistry of Metalloporphyrins  
*Jeremy K. M. Sanders*  
*Nick Bampas*  
*Zöe Clyde-Watson*  
*Scott L. Darling*  
*Joanne C. Hawley*  
*Hee-Joon Kim*  
*Chi Ching Mak*  
*Simon J. Webb*
- 16. Systematics of the Stereochemistry of Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins  
*W. Robert Scheidt*
- 17. Alkali Metal Porphyrins  
*John Arnold*
- 18. Chemistry of Water Soluble Porphyrins  
*Peter Hambright*
- 19. Synthesis, Spectroscopic and Structural Studies of Metal–Metal-Bonded Metalloporphyrins  
*Jean-Michel Barbe*  
*Roger Guillard*
- 20. Metal Tetrapyrrole Double- and Triple-Deckers with Special Emphasis on Porphyrin Systems  
*Johann W. Buchler*  
*Dennis K.P. Ng*
- 21. Synthesis, Spectroscopy and Electrochemical Properties of Porphyrins with Metal–Carbon Bonds  
*Roger Guillard*  
*Eric Van Caemelbecke*  
*Alain Tabard*  
*Karl M. Kadish*
- 22. Coordination Chemistry of Oligoporphyrins  
*Jeremy K. M. Sanders*
- 23. Dendrimer Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins: Syntheses, Structures and Functions  
*Takuzo Aida*  
*Dong-Lin Jiang*

- 
24. Metalation and Metal-Assisted Modifications of the Porphyrinogen Skeleton Using  
*meso*-Octaalkylporphyrinogen

*Carlo Floriani*

*Rita Floriani-Moro*

25. Redox Chemistry of the Porphyrinogen Skeleton: Pathways to Artificial Porphyrins and Porphodimethenes

*Carlo Floriani*

*Rita Floriani-Moro*

**Volume 4 / Biochemistry and Binding: Activation of Small Molecules**

26. Diversity of Reactions Catalyzed by Heme-Thiolate Proteins

*Daniel Mansuy*

*Pierrette Battioni*

27. Oxometalloporphyrins in Oxidative Catalysis

*John T. Groves*

*Kirill Shalyaev*

*Jinbo Lee*

28. Shape-Selective Oxidation by Metalloporphyrins

*Kenneth S. Suslick*

29. High-Valent Iron and Manganese Complexes of Porphyrins and Related Macrocycles

*Raymond Weiss*

*Avram Gold*

*Alfred X. Trautwein*

*James Terner*

30. High-Valent Intermediates

*Yoshihito Watanabe*

31. Metalloporphyrins in Catalytic Oxidations and Oxidative DNA Cleavage

*Bernard Meunier*

*Anne Robert*

*Geneviève Pratviel*

*Jean Bernadou*

32. Peroxidase and Cytochrome P450 Structures

*Thomas L. Poulos*

33. Binding and Activation of Nitric Oxide by Metalloporphyrins and Heme

*Lin Cheng*

*George B. Richter-Addo*

34. Structural Themes Determining Function in Nitric Oxide Synthases

*C. S. Raman*

*Pavel Martásek*

*Bettie Sue S. Masters*

**Volume 5 / NMR and EPR**

35. NMR Spectroscopy of Diamagnetic Porphyrins

*Craig J. Medforth*

36. Proton NMR and EPR Spectroscopy of Paramagnetic Metalloporphyrins  
*F. Ann Walker*
37. Nuclear Magnetic Resonance of Hemoproteins  
*Gerd N. La Mar*  
*James D. Satterlee*  
*Jeffery S. De Ropp*
38. Isocyanides and Phosphines as Axial Ligands in Heme Proteins and Iron Porphyrin Models  
*Gérard Simonneaux*  
*Arnaud Bondon*
39. Solution Structures of Hemoproteins  
*Lucia Banci*  
*Ivano Bertini*  
*Claudio Luchinat*  
*Paola Turano*

**Volume 6 / Applications: Past, Present and Future**

40. Noncovalent Multiporphyrin Assemblies  
*Jean-Claude Chambron*  
*Valérie Heitz*  
*Jean-Pierre Sauvage*
41. Applications of Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins to Materials Chemistry  
*Jun-Hong Chou*  
*Hari Singh Nalwa*  
*Margaret E. Kosal*  
*Neal A. Rakow*  
*Kenneth S. Suslick*
42. Metalloporphyrins as Catalysts for Precision Macromolecular Synthesis  
*Takuzo Aida*  
*Shohei Inoue*
43. Porphyrins as Photosensitizers in Photodynamic Therapy  
*Ravindra K. Pandey*  
*Gang Zheng*
44. Porphyrin-Based Electrochemical Sensors  
*Tadeusz Malinski*
45. Calixpyrroles: Novel Anion and Neutral Substrate Receptors  
*Jonathan L. Sessler*  
*Philip A. Gale*
46. Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins as Receptor Models in Molecular Recognition  
*Hisanobu Ogoshi*  
*Tadashi Mizutani*  
*Takashi Hayashi*  
*Yasuhisa Kuroda*

**Volume 7 / Theoretical and Physical Characterization**

47. Quantum Chemical Studies of Molecular Structures and Potential Energy Surfaces of Porphyrins and Hemes  
*Abhik Ghosh*
48. Models for the Electronic Structure of Metalloporphyrins from High-Resolution X-ray Diffraction and Ab Initio Calculations  
*Claude Lecomte*  
*Marie-Madeleine Rohmer*  
*Marc Bénard*
49. X-ray Absorption Spectroscopy Applied to Porphyrin Chemistry  
*José Goulon*  
*Chantal Goulon-Ginet*  
*Vincent Gotte*
50. Molecular Simulations and Normal-Coordinate Structural Analysis of Porphyrins and Heme Proteins  
*John A. Shelnutt*
51. Resonance Raman Spectra of Heme Proteins and Model Compounds  
*James R. Kincaid*
52. Resonance Raman Spectroscopy of Petroporphyrins  
*Roman S. Czernuszewicz*  
*Estelle M. Maes*  
*J. Graham Rankin*
53. Magnetic Circular Dichroism Spectroscopy of Heme Proteins and Model Systems  
*Jennifer Cheek*  
*John Dawson*
54. Mass Spectrometry of Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins  
*J. Martin E. Quirke*

**Volume 8 / Electron Transfer**

55. Electrochemistry of Metalloporphyrins in Nonaqueous Media  
*Karl M. Kadish*  
*Eric Van Caemelbecke*  
*Guy Royal*
56. Electron Transfer Chemistry of Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins  
*Shunichi Fukuzumi*
57. Intramolecular Photoinduced Electron-Transfer Reactions of Porphyrins  
*Devens Gust*  
*Thomas A. Moore*
58. Electrochemistry of Heme Proteins  
*Fred M. Hawkridge*  
*Isao Taniguchi*

**Volume 9 / Database of Redox Potentials and Binding Constants**

59. Metalloporphyrins in Nonaqueous Media: Database of Redox Potentials

*Karl M. Kadish*

*Guy Royal*

*Eric Van Caemelbecke*

*Lena Gueletti*

60. Equilibrium Data of Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins

*Masaaki Tabata*

*Jun Nishimoto*

**Volume 10 / Database of Tetrapyrrole Crystal Structure Determinations**

61. Database of Tetrapyrrole Crystal Structure Determinations

*Mathias O. Senge*

Cumulative Index

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# The Porphyrin Handbook

## Volume 1 / Synthesis and Organic Chemistry

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# Contents

Preface .....	xi
Contributing Authors .....	xiii
Contents of Volumes in this Set .....	xxi
<b>1 / Strategies for the Synthesis of Octaalkylporphyrin Systems .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>KEVIN M. SMITH</b>	
I. Introduction .....	2
II. Syntheses of Synthetic Precursors of Porphyrins.....	2
A. Syntheses of Dipyrrolic Intermediates .....	2
III. Syntheses of Porphyrins .....	6
A. From Monopyrrole Tetramerization .....	6
B. From Dipyrrolic Intermediates: The [2 + 2] Route .....	11
C. From Tripyrrolic Intermediates: The [3 + 1] Route .....	16
D. From Open-Chain Tetrapyrrolic Intermediates.....	19
E. Miscellaneous .....	29
F. Total Synthesis: In Conclusion .....	31
IV. Preparation of Porphyrins by Degradation of Natural Pigments .....	32
A. From Hemoglobin .....	32
B. From the Plant and Algal Chlorophylls .....	37
References .....	40
<b>2 / Synthesis of <i>meso</i>-Substituted Porphyrins .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>JONATHAN S. LINDSEY</b>	
I. Introduction .....	46
II. Rothenmund Method .....	47
A. Development .....	47
B. Extensions, Applications and Limitations.....	47
C. More Recent Rothenmund-Type Methods .....	49
III. Adler Method .....	49
A. Development and Mechanistic Studies .....	49
B. Applications .....	51
C. Modifications of the Adler Method.....	55
IV. A Two-Step One-Flask Room-Temperature Synthesis of Porphyrins (Lindsey Method) .....	60
A. Background .....	60
B. Development .....	62
C. Applications .....	65
D. Mechanistic Issues .....	65
E. Extensions of the Two-Step One-Flask Room-Temperature Synthesis .....	76
V. Assorted Methods for Preparing <i>meso</i> -Substituted Porphyrins .....	80
A. Exploring Diverse Methods of Oxidation .....	80
B. Use of Oxidative Acid Catalysts .....	80
C. Exploring Diverse Reaction Conditions .....	80
VI. Comparison of Various Synthetic Methods .....	80
VII. Routes to Specific Classes of <i>meso</i> -Substituted Porphyrins .....	81
A. Alkyl-Substituted Porphyrins .....	81
B. Porphyrins with $\alpha,\beta$ -Unsaturated <i>meso</i> -Substituents .....	82

C. <i>meso</i> -, $\beta$ -Substituted Porphyrins . . . . .	82
D. Strapped Porphyrins and Capped Porphyrins . . . . .	86
E. <i>trans</i> -Substituted Porphyrins . . . . .	87
VIII. Synthetic Approaches to Porphyrins Bearing from One to Four <i>meso</i> -Substituents . . . . .	100
A. Routes to <i>meso</i> -Substituted, $\beta$ -Unsubstituted Dipyrromethanes . . . . .	100
B. Via Dipyrromethanes to Porphyrins Bearing up to Four Different <i>meso</i> -Substituents . . . . .	102
IX. Distinctions Among the Syntheses of Porphyrins, Tetrabenzoporphyrins, Phthalocyanines and Porphyrazines . . . . .	109
References . . . . .	112

### 3 / Cyclizations of a,c-Biladiene Salts to Give Porphyrins and Their Derivatives . . . . . 119

KEVIN M. SMITH

I. Introduction . . . . .	119
II. Syntheses of a,c-Biladiene Salts . . . . .	120
A. 1,19-Dimethyl-a,c-Biladiene Salts . . . . .	120
B. a,c-Biladienes with 1,19-Substituents Other Than Methyl . . . . .	123
C. The Russian Advance . . . . .	124
III. Methods for Oxidative Cyclization of a,c-Biladienes . . . . .	124
A. Using Copper(II) Salts . . . . .	124
B. Using Other Metal Oxidants . . . . .	125
C. Using Chromium . . . . .	126
D. Using Anodic Oxidation . . . . .	126
IV. Mechanism . . . . .	128
A. Origin of the New <i>meso</i> -Carbon Atom . . . . .	128
B. Purpose of the Metal . . . . .	129
C. Mechanistic Similarities Between the Cu and Electrochemical Cyclizations . . . . .	132
D. Mechanistic Proposal . . . . .	133
V. Cyclization of a,c-Biladiene Salts with 1,19-Substituents Other Than Methyl . . . . .	137
A. Copper Cyclizations . . . . .	138
B. Chromium Cyclizations . . . . .	142
References . . . . .	147

### 4 / Reactivity and Functionalization of $\beta$ -Substituted Porphyrins and Chlorins . . . . . 149

MARIA DA GRAÇA H. VICENTE

I. Introduction . . . . .	150
A. General Reactivity Considerations . . . . .	150
B. Substituent Effects . . . . .	152
C. Reactivity of Metal Complexes . . . . .	153
D. Scope of the Chapter . . . . .	154
II. Reactions at the Inner Nitrogen Atoms . . . . .	155
A. Acid-base Reactivity . . . . .	155
B. Metal Insertion . . . . .	155
C. N-Alkylation, N-Vinylation and N-Arylation . . . . .	155
D. N-Amination . . . . .	158
E. N-Oxide . . . . .	158
III. Electrophilic Reactions . . . . .	158
A. Electrophilic Substitutions . . . . .	158
B. Electrophilic Additions (Excluding Oxidations and Reductions) . . . . .	175
IV. Nucleophilic Reactions . . . . .	176
A. Reactions of $\pi$ -Cation Radicals . . . . .	177
B. Reactions with Organolithiums and with Grignard Reagents . . . . .	178
C. Other Nucleophilic Reactions . . . . .	179

V. Oxidation Reactions . . . . .	179
A. Ring-opened Products . . . . .	179
B. Oxidized Macrocycles . . . . .	181
VI. Reduction Reactions . . . . .	183
A. Ring-opened Products . . . . .	183
B. Reduced Macrocycles . . . . .	184
VII. Reactions at Peripheral Substituent Groups . . . . .	186
A. Vinyl Groups . . . . .	187
B. 1-Hydroxyalkyl Groups . . . . .	190
C. Alkoxycarbonyl Groups . . . . .	191
D. Propionic Acid Groups . . . . .	192
References . . . . .	193

**5 / Functionalization of 5,10,15,20-Tetra-Substituted Porphyrins . . . . .** 201**LAURENT JAQUINOD**

I. Introduction . . . . .	202
II. Peripheral Functionalization of Tetra- <i>meso</i> -arylporphyrins . . . . .	202
A. Electrophilic Reactions . . . . .	203
B. Chemistry of $\pi$ -Cation Radicals . . . . .	206
C. Reactions Affording Tetra- <i>meso</i> -arylchlorin Analogues . . . . .	208
III. $\beta$ -Functionalized Tetra- <i>meso</i> -arylporphyrins . . . . .	212
A. Regioselective Electrophilic Functionalizations . . . . .	212
B. Aromatic Nucleophilic Substitutions . . . . .	213
C. Cyclization Reactions . . . . .	215
D. 2-Nitro-tetra-arylporphyrins . . . . .	215
E. $\beta$ - $\beta'$ -Modular Building Blocks . . . . .	218
IV. <i>meso</i> -Aryl Functionalizations . . . . .	222
A. Electrophilic Substitutions . . . . .	222
B. Oxidation Reactions of <i>meso</i> -(Hydroxyaryl)porphyrins . . . . .	223
C. Functional Group Modifications . . . . .	224
D. Atropisomerism . . . . .	226
V. Other $\beta$ -Unsubstituted Tetrapyrrolic Macrocycles . . . . .	229
A. Functionalizations of Tetra- <i>meso</i> -alkylporphyrins . . . . .	229
B. Syntheses and Functionalizations of 5,15-Di-substituted Porphyrins . . . . .	230
References . . . . .	232

**6 / Highly Substituted Porphyrins . . . . .** 239**MATHIAS O. SENGE**

I. Introduction . . . . .	240
A. Scope . . . . .	240
B. Nomenclature . . . . .	241
C. Biological Relevance of Nonplanar Porphyrins . . . . .	242
II. Historical Development and Classic Cases of Porphyrin Nonplanarity . . . . .	252
III. Dodecasubstituted Porphyrins . . . . .	257
A. Synthetic Strategies . . . . .	257
B. 2,3,7,8,12,13,17,18-Octaalkyl-5,10,15,20-tetraarylporphyrins . . . . .	257
C. Dodecaarylporphyrins . . . . .	264
D. 2,3,5,7,8,10,12,13,15,17,18,20-Dodecaalkylporphyrins . . . . .	268
E. Properties and Reactivity of Dodecaalkyl/arylporphyrins . . . . .	270
F. 2,3,7,8,12,13,17,18-Octahalogeno-5,10,15,20-tetraarylporphyrins . . . . .	273

G. 2,3,7,8,12,13,17,18-Octaalkyl-5,10,15,20-tetrahalogenoporphyrins . . . . .	280
H. 2,3,7,8,12,13,17,18-Octaethyl- <i>meso</i> -nitroporphyrins . . . . .	281
I. 5,10,15,20-Tetraphenyl-tetrabenzoporphyrins . . . . .	284
IV. 5,10,15,20-Tetrasubstituted Porphyrins and Related Compounds . . . . .	287
A. 5,10,15,20-Tetraalkylporphyrins . . . . .	287
B. Photophysical Studies on Highly Substituted Porphyrins . . . . .	295
C. Nonplanar Porphyrins Involving Sterically Unhindered Porphyrins . . . . .	296
V. Structural Data for Porphyrins with Intermediate Degrees of Substitution . . . . .	301
A. Nonasubstituted Porphyrins . . . . .	302
B. Decasubstituted Porphyrins . . . . .	304
C. Undecasubstituted Porphyrins . . . . .	311
D. Incremental Nonplanarity . . . . .	311
E. Other Porphyrins with Potential $\beta$ - <i>meso</i> Interactions . . . . .	313
F. $\beta$ -Strapped and <i>meso</i> -Strapped Porphyrins . . . . .	316
VI. Porphyrins with Core and Peripheral Steric Strain . . . . .	319
A. Simple <i>N</i> -Substituted Porphyrins . . . . .	319
B. Core and Peripherally Substituted Porphyrins . . . . .	320
VII. Nonplanar Chlorins . . . . .	323
A. Benzochlorins . . . . .	323
B. Nona- and Decasubstituted Chlorins . . . . .	325
C. Specifically Designed Nonplanar Chlorins . . . . .	326
VIII. Applications of Nonplanar Porphyrins . . . . .	327
A. Water-soluble Dodecaalkyl / arylporphyrins . . . . .	327
B. Catalysis . . . . .	329
C. Optical and Technical Applications . . . . .	329
D. Medicinal Applications . . . . .	330
List of Abbreviations . . . . .	331
Appendix . . . . .	332
References . . . . .	335

<b>7 / Geochemistry of Porphyrins . . . . .</b>	<b>349</b>
---	------------

### **HENRY J. CALLOT and RUBÉN OCAMPO**

I. Introduction . . . . .	350
II. Natural Occurrence, Isolation and Structural Determination of Geoporphyrins . . . . .	352
A. Natural Occurrence . . . . .	352
B. Extraction of Porphyrins from Geological Samples . . . . .	353
C. Preparative Separation of Geoporphyrin Series and Individual Compounds . . . . .	354
D. Analytical and Spectroscopic Methods . . . . .	355
III. Inventory of Geoporphyrin Structures . . . . .	358
A. Pigments Closely Related to Chlorophylls or Pheophorbides . . . . .	358
B. Deoxophylloerythrin, DPEP and Related Compounds . . . . .	359
C. Geoporphyrins Possessing a Fused Seven-membered Ring . . . . .	361
D. Geoporphyrins Showing a Five- or a Six-membered Ring Between Positions 15 and 17 . . . . .	363
E. Geoporphyrins Showing Additional Rings Fused to Pyrrole B: Benzo- and Tetrahydrobenzoporphyrins . . . . .	364
F. Porphyrins Lacking an Additional Carbon Ring . . . . .	364
IV. Interpretation of Structural Data of Geoporphyrins: Precursors and Diagenesis . . . . .	366
A. General Patterns . . . . .	367
B. Pheo Pigments . . . . .	367
C. Geoporphyrins Related to DPEP . . . . .	367

---

D. Geoporphyrins with a Fused Seven-membered Ring . . . . .	370
E. Geoporphyrins with a Fused Five- or Six-membered Ring Between Positions 15 and 17 . . . . .	372
F. Geoporphyrins Derived from Chlorophylls but Lacking an Additional Carbon Ring . . . . .	373
G. Geoporphyrins Likely to Result from Heme Modifications . . . . .	374
H. Benzo- and Tetrahydrobenzoporphyrins . . . . .	375
I. Fossils of Tetrapyrroles Different from Chlorophylls or Hemes and of Porphyrin Non-aromatic Catabolites . . . . .	375
J. Geoporphyrins Bound to Organic or Mineral Matrices . . . . .	376
V. Isotope Composition of Geoporphyrins . . . . .	377
VI. Metals in Geoporphyrins . . . . .	378
VII. Geoporphyrins as Biological Markers for Geological Studies and Oil Exploration . . . . .	379
A. Studies Involving Porphyrin Fractions and Series . . . . .	379
B. Studies Involving Individual Porphyrins . . . . .	380
VIII. Laboratory Models for the Geoporphyrin Formation . . . . .	381
IX. An Updated View on Treibs' Scheme . . . . .	382
X. Hemisyntheses and Total Syntheses of Geoporphyrins . . . . .	385
A. Hemisyntheses of Geoporphyrins . . . . .	385
B. Total Syntheses of Geoporphyrins . . . . .	387
XI. Conclusion . . . . .	392
References . . . . .	392
Index . . . . .	399

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# The Porphyrin Handbook

## Volume 2 / Heteroporphyrins, Expanded Porphyrins and Related Macrocycles

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# Contents

Preface .....	xii
Contributing Authors .....	xiii
Contents of Volumes in this Set .....	xxi
<b>8 / Porphyrin Isomers .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>JONATHAN L. SESSLER, ANDREAS GEBAUER and EMANUEL VOGEL</b>	
I. Introduction .....	1
II. Porphycenes and Heteroporphycenes, [18]Porphyrin-(2.0.2.0) .....	3
A. Synthesis and Characterization .....	3
B. Properties and Applications .....	14
III. Corrphycenes, [18]Porphyrin-(2.1.0.1) .....	33
A. Synthesis and Physical Properties .....	33
B. Metallocorrphycenes .....	34
C. Physical Properties of Corrphycenes and Metallocorrphycenes .....	40
IV. Hemiporphycenes, [18]Porphyrin-(2.1.1.0) .....	46
A. Synthesis and Properties .....	46
B. Photophysical Properties of Hemiporphycenes and Corrphycenes .....	48
C. Metal Complexes of Hemiporphycenes .....	48
V. Isoporphycenes, [18]Porphyrin-(3.0.1.0) .....	49
A. Synthesis and Properties .....	49
VI. Conclusion and Future Outlook .....	51
References .....	52
<b>9 / Expanded Porphyrins .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>JONATHAN L. SESSLER, ANDREAS GEBAUER and STEVEN. J. WEGHORN</b>	
I. Introduction .....	56
II. Tetrapyrrolic Systems .....	57
A. Aromatic Systems .....	57
B. Conjugated Nonaromatic Systems .....	68
III. Pentapyrrolic Systems .....	71
A. Aromatic Systems .....	71
B. Conjugated Nonaromatic Systems .....	86
IV. Hexapyrrolic Systems .....	90
A. Aromatic Systems .....	90
B. Conjugated Nonaromatic Systems .....	95
V. Octapyrrolic and Decapyrrolic Systems .....	98
A. Octaphyrin .....	98
B. Turcasarin and Dioxaturcasarin .....	102
C. Pyrrole-Thiophene Decamers .....	103
VI. Nitrogen-Bridged Systems .....	104
A. Texaphyrin and other Three Pyrrole-Containing Systems .....	105
B. Accordion Porphyrin .....	107
C. Miscellaneous Nitrogen-Bridged Systems .....	108
D. Porphocyanine .....	110
E. Superphthalocyanine .....	111
F. Hexapyrrolic Nitrogen-Bridged Systems .....	112

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G. Sulfur-Bridged Expanded Porphyrins . . . . .	115
VII. Miscellaneous Systems . . . . .	117
VIII. Conclusion . . . . .	121
References . . . . .	121
<b>10 / Syntheses of Novel Porphyrinoid Chromophores . . . . .</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>TIMOTHY D. LASH</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	125
II. Modification of the Porphyrin Chromophore by the Addition of Fused Aromatic Ring Systems . . . . .	126
A. Monobenzoporphyrins and Dibenzoporphyrins . . . . .	126
B. Mononaphthoporphyrins and Dinaphthoporphyrins . . . . .	131
C. Phenanthroporphyrins and Phenanthrolinoporphyrins . . . . .	132
D. Acenaphthoporphyrins and Other <i>b</i> -Annulated Porphyrin Systems . . . . .	138
E. Synthesis of Annulated Systems by Modification of Preformed Porphyrins . . . . .	148
F. Tetraannelated Porphyrins . . . . .	155
III. Porphyrin Analogues with Carbocyclic or Expanded Rings in Place of One or More Pyrrole Subunits . . . . .	165
A. Aromaticity in Porphyrinoid Systems . . . . .	165
B. Six-Membered Ring Analogues of Porphyrins: Benziporphyrins, Oxybenziporphyrins and Oxyppyriporphyrins . .	167
C. Carbaporphyrinoids: True Carbaporphyrins, Tropiporphyrin, Azuliporphyrin, Carbachlorins and Related Systems . . . . .	176
D. Expanding on the Theme: Modified Sapphyrins . . . . .	190
IV. Conclusions and Future Directions . . . . .	193
References . . . . .	196
<b>11 / Syntheses of Corroles . . . . .</b>	<b>201</b>
<b>ROBERTO PAOLEFFE</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	201
A. General Properties of Corroles . . . . .	202
II. Syntheses of Corroles . . . . .	203
A. Syntheses from Pyrroles . . . . .	203
B. Syntheses from Bipyrrolic Units . . . . .	206
C. Syntheses from <i>a,c</i> -Biladienes . . . . .	206
D. Syntheses by Macrocycle Ring Contraction . . . . .	211
III. Syntheses of Corrole Analogues . . . . .	212
A. Heterocorroles . . . . .	213
B. Isocorroles . . . . .	215
IV. Syntheses of Corrole Dyads . . . . .	215
A. Corrole-Corrole Dyads . . . . .	216
B. Porphyrin-Corrole Dyads . . . . .	217
C. Oxophlorin-Corrole Derivatives . . . . .	220
D. Photophysical Properties of Corrole Dyads . . . . .	221
V. Peripheral Reactions of Corroles . . . . .	221
A. Alkylation and Acetylation Reactions . . . . .	221
B. Formylation Reactions . . . . .	223
VI. Syntheses of Metallocorroles . . . . .	224
A. Titanium, Vanadium and Niobium Corroles . . . . .	225
B. Chromium and Molybdenum Corroles . . . . .	225
C. Manganese and Rhenium Corroles . . . . .	226
D. Iron Corroles . . . . .	226
E. Cobalt and Rhodium Corroles . . . . .	227

F. Nickel and Copper Corroles . . . . .	229
G. Palladium and Zinc Corroles . . . . .	230
H. Indium, Germanium, Tin and Phosphorus Corroles . . . . .	230
VII. Note Added in Proof . . . . .	230
References . . . . .	231

## 12 / Metallocorroles: Molecular Structure, Spectroscopy and Electronic States . . . . . 233

CHRISTOPH ERBEN, STEFAN WILL and KARL M. KADISH

I. Introduction . . . . .	235
II. Synthesis of Corroles . . . . .	235
III. Spectroscopy of Free Base Corroles . . . . .	237
A. NMR Spectroscopy and Electrochemistry . . . . .	237
B. NH-Tautomerism . . . . .	238
C. UV-Vis Spectroscopy . . . . .	238
D. X-ray Analysis . . . . .	239
IV. Metallocorroles . . . . .	239
A. Synthesis of Metallocorroles . . . . .	239
B. Bonding Geometries of Metallocorroles . . . . .	240
V. Titanium, Vanadium and Niobium Corroles . . . . .	242
A. Titanium and Vanadium Corroles . . . . .	242
B. Niobium Corroles . . . . .	242
VI. Chromium and Molybdenum Corroles . . . . .	243
A. Chromium Corroles . . . . .	243
B. Molybdenum Corroles . . . . .	244
VII. Manganese Corroles . . . . .	244
A. Synthesis . . . . .	244
B. Physical Characterization . . . . .	245
VIII. Rhenium Corroles . . . . .	251
IX. Iron Corroles . . . . .	252
A. Introduction . . . . .	252
B. $\mu$ -Oxo-Bis[(octaethylcorrolato)iron(IV)] . . . . .	252
C. Mononuclear Iron Corroles . . . . .	255
D. Nitrosyl (octaethylcorrolato)iron . . . . .	261
X. Cobalt Corroles . . . . .	265
A. Introduction and Overview . . . . .	265
B. Four-Coordinate Cobalt(III) Corroles . . . . .	266
C. Triphenylphosphine Cobalt(III) Corroles . . . . .	268
D. High-Valent Cobalt Corroles . . . . .	270
XI. Rhodium Corroles . . . . .	274
XII. Nickel Corroles . . . . .	276
A. Introduction . . . . .	276
B. X-ray Analysis . . . . .	277
C. Magnetic Measurements and UV-Vis Spectroscopy . . . . .	277
D. Electron Paramagnetic Resonance Spectroscopy and Electrochemistry . . . . .	278
E. Tetraphenylphosphonium (7,8,12,13-Tetraethyl-2,3,17,18-tetramethylcorrolato)nickelate(II) . . . . .	278
XIII. Palladium Corroles . . . . .	279
XIV. Copper Corroles . . . . .	280
A. Synthesis . . . . .	280
B. X-ray Analysis . . . . .	280
C. $^1\text{H}$ NMR and Magnetic Measurements . . . . .	280

D. UV-Vis, Electron Paramagnetic Resonance Spectroscopy and Electrochemistry . . . . .	281
XV. Zinc Corroles . . . . .	282
XVI. Indium Corroles . . . . .	283
XVII. Tin and Germanium Corroles . . . . .	283
A. Synthesis . . . . .	283
B. Spectroscopy . . . . .	283
C. X-ray Analysis . . . . .	283
D. Electrochemistry . . . . .	284
XVIII. Group 15 Corroles . . . . .	284
A. Synthesis and X-Ray Analysis . . . . .	285
B. Spectroscopic Data . . . . .	286
C. Electrochemistry . . . . .	288
D. HOMO-LUMO Gap in Main Group Corroles . . . . .	289
XIX. <i>N</i> -Alkyl and <i>N</i> -Acetyl Corroles . . . . .	289
XX. Heterocorroles . . . . .	291
XXI. Core-Modified Corrole Isomers: Isocorroles . . . . .	292
A. Synthesis and Characterization . . . . .	292
B. Metal Complexes . . . . .	295
References . . . . .	295
<b>13 / <i>meso</i>-Azaporphyrins and Their Analogues . . . . .</b>	<b>301</b>
<b>NAGAO KOBAYASHI</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	302
II. Monoazaporphyrins . . . . .	302
A. Synthesis . . . . .	302
B. X-ray Crystallography . . . . .	303
C. Absorption and Emission Spectroscopy . . . . .	303
D. Nuclear Magnetic Resonance, Electron Paramagnetic Resonance and Infrared Spectroscopy . . . . .	307
E. Derivatives of Monoazaporphyrin . . . . .	308
F. Other Reported Properties of Monoazaporphyrins . . . . .	310
III. Diazaporphyrins . . . . .	310
A. Synthesis . . . . .	310
B. Absorption and Emission Spectroscopy . . . . .	310
C. Derivatives of Diazaporphyrin . . . . .	316
IV. Tetraazaporphyrins (Porphyrazines) . . . . .	317
A. Synthesis . . . . .	317
B. X-ray Crystallography . . . . .	321
C. Absorption and Emission Spectroscopy . . . . .	325
D. IR Spectroscopy . . . . .	333
E. NMR and EPR Spectroscopy . . . . .	346
F. Electrochemistry and Spectroelectrochemistry . . . . .	349
G. Metal Incorporation Reactions . . . . .	351
H. Other Spectroscopic Properties of TAPs . . . . .	352
I. Analogues of TAPs . . . . .	354
References . . . . .	357
<b>14 / Core-Modified Heteroanalogue s of Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins . . . . .</b>	<b>361</b>
<b>LECHOSŁAW LATOS-GRAŻYŃSKI</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	362
A. Heteroporphyrins—A Special Class of Modified Porphyrins . . . . .	362

B. Nomenclature and Abbreviations . . . . .	364
II. Synthesis of Core-Modified Porphyrins . . . . .	365
A. $\beta$ -Pyrrole Alkylated Heterosubstituted Porphyrins . . . . .	365
B. Monoheterotetraarylporphyrins and Diheterotetraarylporphyrins . . . . .	366
C. Tetrachalcogen Analogues of Porphyrin . . . . .	373
D. Heteroporphycenes . . . . .	375
E. Inverted Porphyrins . . . . .	377
III. Metalloheteroporphyrins—Synthesis, Properties and Reactivity . . . . .	380
A. Synthesis and Properties . . . . .	380
B. Reactivity of Nickel Heteroporphyrins . . . . .	380
C. Reactivity of Other Metalloheteroporphyrins . . . . .	381
D. Nickel(II) and Nickel(III) Carbaporphyrins . . . . .	381
IV. Structures of Core-Modified Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	383
A. Crystal Structures of Heterosubstituted Porphyrins . . . . .	383
B. Crystal Structures of Metalloheteroporphyrins . . . . .	388
C. Crystal and Molecular Structures of Inverted Porphyrins and Related Nickel(II) Complexes . . . . .	391
D. Structure and Stability of Inverted Porphyrins Tautomers—Density Functional Theory Studies . . . . .	393
V. Physicochemical Studies . . . . .	394
A. Electronic Spectra . . . . .	394
B. Emission Spectra . . . . .	396
C. Resonance Raman Spectra . . . . .	397
D. Electrochemistry . . . . .	398
E. NMR of Heteroporphyrins . . . . .	398
F. NMR of Paramagnetic Core-Modified Porphyrin Nickel Complexes . . . . .	402
G. EPR . . . . .	408
VI. Conclusion . . . . .	413
References . . . . .	413
Index . . . . .	417

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# The Porphyrin Handbook

## Volume 3 / Inorganic, Organometallic and Coordination Chemistry

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# Contents

Preface .....	xiii
Contributing Authors .....	xv
Contents of Volumes in this Set .....	xxiii
<b>15 / Axial Coordination Chemistry of Metallocporphyrins .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>JEREMY K. M. SANDERS, NICK BAMPOS, ZÖE CLYDE-WATSON, SCOTT L. DARLING, JOANNE C. HAWLEY, HEE-JOON KIM, CHI CHING MAK and SIMON J. WEBB</b>	
I. Introduction .....	3
A. Some General Features and Trends.....	4
II. Group 2.....	5
A. Magnesium.....	5
B. Calcium, Strontium and Barium.....	6
III. Groups 3, 4 and 5 .....	6
A. General Features .....	6
B. Scandium .....	6
C. Yttrium .....	7
D. Titanium .....	7
E. Zirconium and Hafnium.....	8
F. Vanadium .....	10
G. Niobium and Tantalum .....	10
IV. Group 6.....	10
A. Chromium .....	10
B. Molybdenum .....	11
C. Tungsten.....	12
V. Group 7.....	13
A. Manganese.....	13
B. Rhenium .....	14
C. Technetium.....	15
VI. Group 8.....	15
A. General Features .....	15
B. Iron.....	15
C. Ruthenium .....	19
D. Osmium .....	21
VII. Group 9.....	23
A. General Features .....	23
B. Cobalt.....	23
C. Rhodium and Iridium.....	24
VIII. Group 10.....	25
A. Nickel .....	25
B. Palladium and Platinum.....	26
IX. Group 11.....	27
A. Copper .....	27
B. Silver.....	29
C. Gold .....	29
X. Group 12.....	30

A. Zinc . . . . .	30
B. Cadmium . . . . .	33
C. Mercury . . . . .	34
XI. Group 13 . . . . .	34
A. Boron . . . . .	34
B. Aluminum . . . . .	34
C. Gallium . . . . .	36
D. Indium . . . . .	36
E. Thallium . . . . .	36
XII. Group 14 . . . . .	36
A. Carbon . . . . .	36
B. Silicon . . . . .	36
C. Germanium . . . . .	37
D. Tin . . . . .	37
E. Lead . . . . .	38
XIII. Group 15 . . . . .	39
A. Phosphorus . . . . .	39
B. Arsenic . . . . .	39
C. Antimony . . . . .	40
D. Bismuth . . . . .	40
References . . . . .	40
<b>16 / Systematics of the Stereochemistry of Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins . . . . .</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>W. ROBERT SCHEIDT</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	50
A. General Comments and Scope of Review . . . . .	50
B. Notation . . . . .	50
C. Other Reviews . . . . .	52
II. General Features of Metalloporphyrin Stereochemistry . . . . .	53
III. Transition Metal Derivatives . . . . .	56
A. d <sup>0</sup> Complexes . . . . .	56
B. d <sup>1</sup> Complexes . . . . .	58
C. d <sup>2</sup> Complexes . . . . .	58
D. d <sup>3</sup> Complexes . . . . .	59
E. d <sup>4</sup> Complexes . . . . .	59
F. d <sup>5</sup> Complexes . . . . .	63
G. d <sup>6</sup> Complexes . . . . .	63
H. d <sup>7</sup> Complexes . . . . .	65
I. d <sup>8</sup> Complexes . . . . .	66
J. d <sup>9</sup> Complexes . . . . .	68
K. d <sup>10</sup> Complexes . . . . .	69
L. Iron Derivatives . . . . .	70
M. Porphyrin Nitrosoyls and Related Iron Species with Nitrogen Oxide Ligands . . . . .	83
IV. Other Metalloporphyrin Derivatives . . . . .	87
A. Porphyrin π–π Interactions and π-Cation Complexes . . . . .	87
B. Main Group Derivatives . . . . .	92
C. Lanthanide and Actinide Derivatives . . . . .	95
V. Summary Appendices . . . . .	95
VI. Stereochemistry of Metal-Free Porphyrins . . . . .	95
A. Free Bases . . . . .	95

B. Porphyrin Acids and Related Species . . . . .	98
References . . . . .	100
Appendix A . . . . .	110
Appendix B . . . . .	111
Appendix C . . . . .	112
<b>17 / Alkali Metal Porphyrins . . . . .</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>JOHN ARNOLD</b>	
I. Introduction and Scope . . . . .	113
II. Complexes with Alkali Metals Bound to the Porphyrin Core . . . . .	114
A. Complexes of General Formula M <sub>2</sub> (P) . . . . .	114
B. Complexes of General Formula M(Por) . . . . .	123
C. Complexes of General Formula M <sub>2</sub> (M')(Por) . . . . .	123
D. Complexes of General Formula M <sub>2</sub> (H <sub>2</sub> Por) . . . . .	124
III. Appendix . . . . .	126
A. Preparation of Li <sub>2</sub> (OEP)(THF) <sub>4</sub> . . . . .	126
B. Preparation of Zr(OEP)(CH <sub>2</sub> SiMe <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>2</sub> . . . . .	126
Abbreviations . . . . .	126
References . . . . .	126
<b>18 / Chemistry of Water Soluble Porphyrins . . . . .</b>	<b>129</b>
<b>PETER HAMBRIGHT</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	130
II. Applications of Water Soluble Porphyrins . . . . .	130
III. An Overview of the Molecules . . . . .	132
A. Positive Porphyrins and Carboxyphenyl Compounds . . . . .	132
B. Sulfonated Porphyrins . . . . .	136
C. Other Variations . . . . .	139
IV. Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	139
A. General Trends . . . . .	139
B. Indirect and Direct Synthetic Methods . . . . .	140
V. Acid–Base Properties . . . . .	141
VI. Homonuclear Aggregation . . . . .	145
VII. Supramolecular Aggregates . . . . .	150
A. Homonuclear . . . . .	150
B. Heteroporphyrin Aggregation . . . . .	151
C. Molecular Complexes . . . . .	153
VIII. Metal–Porphyrin Equilibria . . . . .	154
IX. Metal Incorporation Mechanisms . . . . .	156
A. Porphyrins in Nonaqueous Media . . . . .	156
B. N-Alkyl Porphyrins in Nonaqueous Media . . . . .	161
C. Porphyrin Metalation in Aqueous Solutions . . . . .	161
D. Water Soluble N-Alkylated Porphyrins . . . . .	168
X. Metal Ion-Exchange Reactions . . . . .	170
XI. Removal of Metals from Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	172
XII. Metalloporphyrin Ligation in Aqueous Solution . . . . .	178
A. Nickel Porphyrins . . . . .	178
B. Ruthenium Porphyrins . . . . .	178
C. Rhodium Porphyrins . . . . .	179
D. Cobalt Porphyrins . . . . .	180
E. Chromium Porphyrins . . . . .	182

F. Manganese Porphyrins . . . . .	182
G. Iron Porphyrins . . . . .	184
H. Other Metal Ions . . . . .	188
XIII. Electron-Transfer Reactions . . . . .	189
XIV. Absorption Spectra . . . . .	198
References . . . . .	200

**19 / Synthesis, Spectroscopic and Structural Studies of Metal–Metal-Bonded Metalloporphyrins . . . . .** **211**

**JEAN-MICHEL BARBE and ROGER GUILARD**

I. Introduction . . . . .	211
II. Metallocporphyrin Dimers with Single or Multiple Metal–Metal Bonds . . . . .	212
A. Singly Bonded Homobinuclear Complexes . . . . .	212
B. Multiply Bonded Binuclear Complexes . . . . .	216
III. Heteronuclear Metallocporphyrin Complexes . . . . .	225
A. $\sigma$ Metal–Metal Bonds . . . . .	225
B. Donor–Acceptor Metal–Metal Bonds . . . . .	231
IV. Metal–Metal Interactions in Metallocporphyrin Dimers . . . . .	235
A. Bis-Cobalt Derivatives . . . . .	237
B. Heterobinuclear Derivatives . . . . .	237
Abbreviations . . . . .	241
References . . . . .	241

**20 / Metal Tetrapyrrole Double- and Triple-Deckers with Special Emphasis on Porphyrin Systems . . . . .** **245**

**JOHANN W. BUCHLER and DENNIS K. P. NG**

I. Introduction . . . . .	246
A. Definitions . . . . .	246
B. Scope of the Chapter . . . . .	249
II. Historical Development of the Field as Seen by Coordination Chemists . . . . .	249
A. Sandwich-like Phthalocyaninato Complexes . . . . .	249
B. Sandwich-like Porphyrinato Complexes . . . . .	250
C. Metal Ions and Their Capability of Tetrapyrrole Sandwich Formation . . . . .	251
III. Synthesis of Sandwich-like Metal Tetrapyrrole Double- and Triple-Deckers . . . . .	252
A. Homoleptic Metal Bis(porphyrinates) and Dimetal Tris(porphyrinates) (“Metallocporphyrin Double- and Triple-Deckers”) . . . . .	252
B. Homoleptic Metal Bis(phthalocyaninates) and Dimetal Tris(phthalocyaninates) . . . . .	255
C. Heteroleptic Double- and Triple-Deckers . . . . .	256
D. Double-Deckers with Porphyrin Rings and Ethylenebis(salicylidenealdimine) Chelates (“Pseudosandwich Complexes”) . . . . .	259
E. Double-Deckers with Porphyrin Rings and Cyclic Organic Ring Anions . . . . .	259
F. Homoleptic and Heteroleptic Double-Deckers with Porphyrazine Rings . . . . .	259
IV. Acid–Base Reactions of Metal Bis- and Tris(tetrapyrroles) . . . . .	259
A. Demetalation of Tetrapyrrole Double- and Triple-Deckers . . . . .	260
B. Basic Behavior of Metal Bis(porphyrinate) and Bis(phthalocyaninate) Anions . . . . .	261
V. Oxidation–Reduction Reactions of Double- and Triple-Deckers . . . . .	262
A. Electrochemical Investigations of Metal Tetrapyrrole Double- and Triple-Deckers . . . . .	262
B. Chemical Oxidation or Reduction of Metal Tetrapyrrole Double- and Triple-Deckers . . . . .	269
VI. Optical Properties of Sandwich-like Metal Tetrapyrrole Double- and Triple-Decker Systems and Their Various Oxidized and Reduced Derivatives . . . . .	271
A. Optical Absorption Spectra . . . . .	271

B. The Dependence of the Near-Infrared Absorption Bands of $\pi$ -Electron-Deficient Species on the Ionic Radius of the Central Metal and the Nature of Their $\pi$ -Electron Holes .....	276
C. Excitation Studies .....	278
VII. Structures of Tetrapyrrole Double- and Triple-Deckers .....	279
A. Basic Crystal Structures and Essential Findings .....	279
B. Structural Information from Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectra.....	284
C. Structural Information from Molecular Modeling Procedures.....	286
VIII. Metalloporphyrin Double-Deckers as Parts of Larger Aggregates .....	287
A. Aggregates Cohering Through Covalent Bonds .....	287
B. Aggregates Cohering Through Ionic Bonds .....	288
IX. Outlook: Metal Phthalocyanine and Porphyrin Sandwich Systems in Materials Science .....	288
A. Color Displays .....	289
B. Organic Metals .....	289
References .....	290
<b>21 / Synthesis, Spectroscopy and Electrochemical Properties of Porphyrins with Metal–Carbon Bonds .....</b>	<b>295</b>
<b>ROGER GUILARD, ERIC VAN CAEMELBECKE, ALAIN TABARD and KARL M. KADISH</b>	
I. Introduction .....	296
A. Types of Macrocycles.....	296
B. Types of Ligands .....	297
C. Types of Coordination Schemes.....	297
D. Metal Oxidation States .....	297
E. Solution and Solid State Characterization .....	297
F. Precursors and General Scheme of Syntheses .....	301
G. Stability and Reactivity of the $\sigma$ -Bonded Metalloporphyrin Complexes.....	301
II. Group 3 Metalloporphyrins .....	302
A. Scandium .....	302
B. Yttrium .....	302
C. Lutetium .....	303
III. Group 4 Metalloporphyrins .....	303
A. Titanium .....	303
B. Zirconium.....	304
C. Hafnium .....	305
IV. Group 5 Metalloporphyrins .....	305
A. Tantalum.....	305
V. Group 6 Metalloporphyrins .....	305
A. Chromium .....	305
B. Molybdenum and Tungsten.....	306
VI. Group 7 Metalloporphyrins .....	306
A. Manganese .....	306
VII. Group 8 Metalloporphyrins .....	307
A. Iron.....	307
B. Ruthenium .....	320
C. Osmium .....	323
VIII. Group 9 Metalloporphyrins .....	325
A. Cobalt.....	325
B. Rhodium .....	326
C. Iridium .....	328
IX. Group 10 Metalloporphyrins .....	329
A. Nickel .....	329

X. Group 12 Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	330
A. Zinc . . . . .	330
XI. Group 13 Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	330
A. Aluminum, Gallium, Indium and Thallium . . . . .	330
XII. Group 14 Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	332
A. Silicon, Germanium and Tin . . . . .	332
XIII. Group 15 Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	334
A. Phosphorus . . . . .	334
B. Arsenic . . . . .	335
C. Antimony . . . . .	336
References . . . . .	338
<b>22 / Coordination Chemistry of Oligoporphyrins . . . . .</b>	<b>347</b>
<b>JEREMY K. M. SANDERS</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	347
II. Dimers . . . . .	350
A. Monodentate Ligands . . . . .	350
B. Bidentate Ligands . . . . .	352
C. Tetridentate Ligands . . . . .	358
III. Trimers . . . . .	358
A. Monodentate Ligands . . . . .	358
B. Bidentate Ligands . . . . .	359
C. Tridentate Ligands . . . . .	361
IV. Tetramers . . . . .	362
V. Reactions Between Bound Ligands . . . . .	363
A. Diels–Alder Reactions . . . . .	364
B. Acyl Transfer Reactions . . . . .	365
VI. Noncovalent Oligomers . . . . .	365
References . . . . .	367
<b>23 / Dendrimer Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins: Syntheses, Structures and Functions . . . . .</b>	<b>369</b>
<b>TAKUZO AIDA and DONG-LIN JIANG</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	369
II. Synthesis . . . . .	370
A. The Convergent Approach . . . . .	370
B. The Divergent Approach . . . . .	370
III. Structural Characteristics and Dynamics . . . . .	370
IV. Functions . . . . .	377
A. Electrochemical Properties . . . . .	377
B. Photochemical Properties . . . . .	379
C. Dioxygen ( $O_2$ ) Binding Activities . . . . .	380
D. Catalyses . . . . .	382
E. Assemblies . . . . .	382
V. Conclusion . . . . .	383
References . . . . .	383
<b>24 / Metalation and Metal-Assisted Modifications of the Porphyrinogen Skeleton Using <i>meso</i>-Octaalkylporphyrinogen . . . . .</b>	<b>385</b>
<b>CARLO FLORIANI and RITA FLORIANI-MORO</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	385
II. Porphyrinogens . . . . .	386

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A. <i>meso</i> -Octaalkylporphyrinogens.....	386
III. Metal-Derivatization of the <i>meso</i> -Octaalkylporphyrinogen .....	386
A. Alkali Metal Derivatives .....	386
B. Main Group Metal Complexes .....	387
C. Early Transition Metal Complexes.....	387
D. Late Transition Metal Complexes .....	389
IV. Organometallic Chemistry Based on the Porphyrinogen Skeleton .....	389
A. Complexation of Polar Organometallics and Alkali Hydrides: Formation of M–H and M–C Bonds .....	390
B. Migratory Insertion Reaction of Isocyanides and Carbon Monoxide into M–H and M–C Bonds: Homologation of the Porphyrinogen Skeleton .....	393
C. The Metalation and Functionalization of Aliphatic Chains at the Porphyrinogen Periphery .....	398
V. Acid–Base Behavior of the Metallo- <i>meso</i> -Octaalkylporphyrinogens: Metal-Assisted Functionalization of the Pyrrole Ring.....	400
References .....	402
<b>25 / Redox Chemistry of the Porphyrinogen Skeleton: Pathways to Artificial Porphyrins and Porphodimethenes .....</b>	<b>405</b>
<b>CARLO FLORIANI and RITA FLORIANI-MORO</b>	
I. Introduction .....	405
II. Oxidations of the <i>meso</i> -Octaalkylporphyrinogen: Discovery of Artificial Porphyrins .....	406
III. Redox Chemistry of <i>meso</i> -Octaethylporphyrinogen Complexes Occurring with the Formation and Cleavage of a Cyclopropane Unit.....	406
IV. Redox Chemistry of <i>meso</i> -Octaethylporphyrinogen Complexes Occurring with the Formation and Cleavage of Two Cyclopropane Units .....	411
V. Oxidation Pathway of Alkali-Porphyrinogen: Synthesis of the Metal-Free Artificial Porphyrins .....	415
VI. One- vs Two-Electron Oxidation Pathway: Intra- and Intermolecular C–C Bond Formation .....	415
VII. Oxidative Dealkylation of the <i>meso</i> -Octaalkylporphyrinogen .....	418
References .....	419
Index .....	421

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# The Porphyrin Handbook

## Volume 4 / Biochemistry and Binding: Activation of Small Molecules

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# Contents

Preface .....	xi
Contributing Authors .....	xiii
Contents of Volumes in this Set .....	xxi
<b>26 / Diversity of Reactions Catalyzed by Heme-Thiolate Proteins . . . . .</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>DANIEL MANSUY and PIERRETTE BATTIONI</b>	
I. Introduction .....	1
II. Reactions Catalyzed by Heme-Thiolate Proteins .....	2
A. Monooxygenations .....	2
B. Oxidations Without Oxygen Transfer from O <sub>2</sub> to Substrates .....	4
C. Heme-Thiolate Protein-Catalyzed Reactions that Are Different from Oxidations .....	5
III. Various Reactive States under which Heme-Thiolate Proteins May Exist .....	6
IV. Explanation of the Diversity of Heme-Thiolate Protein-Catalyzed Reactions .....	7
A. Reactions Performed by the Fe(III) State .....	7
B. Reactions Performed by the Fe(II) State .....	8
C. Reactions of the Fe(II)-O <sub>2</sub> State .....	9
D. Reactions of the Fe(III)-O-O <sup>-</sup> State .....	10
E. Reactions of the Fe(V)=O State .....	11
V. Conclusion .....	13
References .....	14
<b>27 / Oxometalloporphyrins in Oxidative Catalysis . . . . .</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>JOHN T. GROVES, KIRILL SHALYAEV and JINBO LEE</b>	
I. Ruthenium Porphyrins in Oxidative Catalysis .....	17
A. Introduction .....	17
B. Oxoruthenium Porphyrin Complexes in Catalytic Aerobic Oxidations of Hydrocarbons .....	18
C. Nitrous Oxide Activation by Ruthenium Porphyrins .....	23
D. Catalytic Oxidations with Pyridine N-oxides Mediated by Ruthenium Porphyrins .....	24
E. Asymmetric Oxidations with Ruthenium Porphyrins .....	28
F. Nonporphyrin Ruthenium Complexes in Oxidative Catalysis .....	30
II. Manganese Porphyrins .....	30
A. Manganese Porphyrins in Catalytic Oxidations .....	30
B. Metalloporphyrins as Detectors and Decomposition Catalysts of Peroxynitrite .....	32
C. Oxometalloporphyrins in Enzymatic Processes .....	33
D. Synthetic Oxometalloporphyrins as Models for Cytochrome P450 .....	34
E. On the Mechanism of Hydroxylation by Cytochrome P450 and Related Model Systems .....	35
F. Synthetic Metalloporphyrins as Selective Catalysts and Building Blocks of Supramolecular Assemblies .....	35
References .....	38
<b>28 / Shape-Selective Oxidation by Metalloporphyrins . . . . .</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>KENNETH S. SUSLICK</b>	
I. Introduction .....	41
II. Hydrocarbon Oxidation by Metalloporphyrins .....	42
A. Cytochrome P450 .....	42
B. Synthetic Metalloporphyrins .....	46

III.	Shape Selective Oxidation of Hydrocarbons . . . . .	48
A.	Homogeneous Catalysts . . . . .	48
B.	Heterogeneous and Microheterogeneous Catalysts . . . . .	54
C.	Shape Selectivity as a Mechanistic Probe . . . . .	56
D.	Regioselectivity Based on Polarity . . . . .	57
IV.	Enantioselective Oxidations . . . . .	57
V.	Conclusions . . . . .	60
	References . . . . .	60
<b>29 /</b>	<b>High-Valent Iron and Manganese Complexes of Porphyrins and Related Macrocycles . . . . .</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>RAYMOND WEISS, AVRAM GOLD, ALFRED X. TRAUTWEIN and JAMES TERNER</b>		
I.	General Introduction . . . . .	66
II.	Oxoiron(IV) Porphyrins. . . . .	67
A.	Introduction . . . . .	67
B.	Formation . . . . .	68
C.	Spectroscopic and Structural Characterizations . . . . .	70
III.	Oxoiron(IV) Complexes of Chlorins and Other Partially Saturated Hemes . . . . .	72
A.	Introduction . . . . .	72
B.	Formation . . . . .	72
C.	Spectroscopic and Structural Characterization . . . . .	73
IV.	Non-oxoiron(IV) Complexes. . . . .	74
A.	Aryliron(IV) Porphyrins species . . . . .	74
B.	Dialkyliron(IV) Porphyrins. . . . .	75
C.	Difluoroiron(IV) Porphyrins . . . . .	75
D.	$\mu$ -Nitrido Iron(IV) Porphyrin Dimers . . . . .	76
E.	$\mu$ -Carbido Iron(IV) Porphyrin Dimers . . . . .	76
F.	$\mu$ -Nitrido Iron(IV) Phthalocyanine Dimers . . . . .	76
G.	$\mu$ -Carbido Iron(IV) Phthalocyanine Dimers . . . . .	76
H.	Iron(IV) Porphycenes . . . . .	76
I.	Iron(IV) Corroles . . . . .	77
J.	$\mu$ -Oxo Iron(IV) Hemiporphyrazine . . . . .	77
V.	Iron(IV) $\pi$ -Cation Radical Complexes. . . . .	77
A.	Oxoiron(IV) Porphyrin $\pi$ -Cation Radicals. . . . .	77
B.	$\pi$ -Cation Radical Complexes of $\mu$ -Nitrido Iron(IV) Porphyrin Dimers . . . . .	85
C.	Oxoiron(IV) Complexes of $\pi$ -Cation Radicals of Chlorins and Other Partially Saturated Hemes . . . . .	86
D.	Iron(IV) Corrole $\pi$ -Cation Radical Complexes . . . . .	88
VI.	Iron(V) Complexes . . . . .	88
A.	Oxoiron(V) Porphyrins. . . . .	88
VII.	High Valent Manganese Complexes . . . . .	89
A.	Introduction . . . . .	89
B.	Oxomanganese(IV) Complexes . . . . .	89
C.	Non-oxomanganese(IV) Complexes . . . . .	90
VIII.	Manganese(IV) Porphyrin $\pi$ -Cation Radicals . . . . .	91
A.	Oxomanganese(IV) Porphyrin $\pi$ -Cation Radicals . . . . .	91
IX.	Manganese(V) Complexes . . . . .	91
A.	Nitridomanganese(V) Porphyrin and Porphodimethene Complexes. . . . .	91
B.	Nitridomanganese(V) Tetraazaporphyrin . . . . .	91
C.	Nitridomanganese(V) Phthalocyanine. . . . .	91
D.	Oxomanganese(V) Porphyrins . . . . .	91
	References . . . . .	92

<b>30 / High-Valent Intermediates . . . . .</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>YOSHIHITO WATANABE</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	97
II. Roles of the Active Site Structures for the Formation of Compound I . . . . .	97
A. Push-Pull Effect . . . . .	97
B. Hydrogen Bond Network and Thiolate Ligation in Cytochrome P450 . . . . .	98
C. Distal Histidines in Cytochrome <i>c</i> Peroxidase and Myoglobin . . . . .	104
III. Mechanistic Studies for the Formation of Compound I by Models . . . . .	104
A. Preparation of Compound I by Synthetic Heme Models . . . . .	104
B. Push-Pull Effect on the Heterolytic O–O Bond Cleavage of Peroxides Bound to Heme . . . . .	105
C. Push-Pull Effect on the Homolytic O–O Bond Cleavage of Peroxides Bound to Heme . . . . .	105
D. Possible Roles of Push-Pull Effect on the Heterolytic and Homolytic O–O Bond Cleavage of Peroxides Bound to Heme . . . . .	106
IV. Synthetic Models of Formally Two-Electron Oxidized Iron Porphyrins Other than Compound I . . . . .	107
A. Oxo-Perferryl ( $O=Fe^{\cdot\cdot}$ ) Porphyrins . . . . .	108
B. Ferric Porphyrin N-Oxides . . . . .	109
C. Ferric Porphyrin Dications . . . . .	110
D. Ferric Porphyrin Peroxo Complexes . . . . .	111
E. Acylperoxo-Ferric Porphyrin Complexes . . . . .	113
V. Conclusion . . . . .	116
References . . . . .	116
<b>31 / Metalloporphyrins in Catalytic Oxidations and Oxidative DNA Cleavage . . . . .</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>BERNARD MEUNIER, ANNE ROBERT, GENEVIÈVE PRATVIEL and JEAN BERNADOU</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	121
A. Preliminary Remarks . . . . .	121
B. Early Work on Oxygenation Reactions Catalyzed by Metalloporphyrins and Evolution of Ligand Design . . . . .	121
II. Olefin Epoxidations Catalyzed by Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	123
A. Epoxidation with PhIO Derivatives . . . . .	123
B. Epoxidations with NaOCl and Related Hypochlorites Catalyzed by Manganese Porphyrins and Other Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	126
C. Epoxidations with $O_2$ . . . . .	127
D. Epoxidations with $H_2O_2$ . . . . .	129
E. Epoxidations with ROOH . . . . .	130
F. Epoxidation with $KHSO_5$ and Related Oxidants . . . . .	131
G. Epoxidations with Other Oxygen Atom Donors . . . . .	132
III. Alkane Hydroxylations Catalyzed by Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	132
A. Hydroxylations with Iodosylbenzene . . . . .	133
B. Hydroxylations with NaOCl and Related Hypochlorites . . . . .	135
C. Hydroxylations with Molecular Oxygen . . . . .	136
D. Hydroxylation with Hydrogen Peroxide . . . . .	139
E. Hydroxylation with Alkyl Hydroperoxides . . . . .	140
F. Hydroxylation with Potassium Monopersulfate . . . . .	142
G. Hydroxylation with Peracid Derivatives . . . . .	143
H. Hydroxylation with Amine N-Oxides and Periodate . . . . .	144
IV. Oxidations of Other Organic Substrates . . . . .	144
A. Lignin and Lignin Models . . . . .	144
B. Pollutants . . . . .	148
C. Drugs (Metabolization Tests) . . . . .	150
D. Nitrogen-, Sulfur- or Oxygen-Containing Molecules and Miscellaneous Substrates . . . . .	152
V. Oxidations Catalyzed by Supported Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	153

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A. Ion-Exchange Resins . . . . .	153
B. Polystyrenes and Polyethylene Glycols . . . . .	154
C. Polypeptides . . . . .	154
D. Metalloporphyrin-Based Polymers . . . . .	154
E. Zeolites . . . . .	155
F. Silica . . . . .	155
G. Clays . . . . .	155
VI. Characterization of High-Valent Metal-Oxo Porphyrins Complexes . . . . .	155
A. Introduction: High-Valent Metal-Oxo Speciers in Heme-Enzymes and Related Chemical Models . . . . .	155
B. Iron-Oxo Porphyrins . . . . .	157
C. Manganese-Oxo Porphyrins . . . . .	159
D. Chromium-Oxo Porphyrins . . . . .	161
E. Ruthenium-Oxo Porphyrins . . . . .	161
F. Oxo-Hydroxo Tautomerism in High-Valent Metal-Oxo Porphyrin Complexes in Aqueous Phase . . . . .	161
G. Metalloporphyrin Peroxo Complexes . . . . .	163
VII. DNA Cleavage by Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	164
A. Metalloporphyrins Used for DNA Cleavage and their Interactions with DNA . . . . .	164
B. DNA Cleavage with O <sub>2</sub> . . . . .	167
C. DNA Cleavage with H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> . . . . .	169
D. DNA Cleavage with KHSO <sub>5</sub> and Related Oxidants . . . . .	169
VIII. Conclusions . . . . .	171
IX. List of Abbreviations . . . . .	172
References . . . . .	173

## 32 / Peroxidase and Cytochrome P450 Structures . . . . . **189**

THOMAS L. POULOS

I. Introduction to Peroxidases . . . . .	190
II. Peroxidase Crystal Structures . . . . .	192
A. Overall View of Structures . . . . .	192
B. Calcium Binding Sites and Disulfide Bonds . . . . .	192
C. Active Site . . . . .	193
III. Peroxidase Enzyme-Substrate Complexes . . . . .	194
A. Kinetic and Spectral Evidence . . . . .	194
B. Direct Probes of Substrate Binding . . . . .	194
C. The Manganese Peroxidase-Substrate Complex . . . . .	195
D. The Cytochrome c Peroxidase-Cytochrome c Complex . . . . .	195
E. Evidence of Additional Substrate-Binding Sites . . . . .	196
IV. Peroxidase Mechanism . . . . .	196
A. Compound I Fomation . . . . .	196
B. The Cytochrome c Peroxidase-Cytochrome c . . . . .	198
C. Reduction of Compounds I and II in Traditional Peroxidases . . . . .	199
V. Chloroperoxidase . . . . .	200
A. Introduction . . . . .	200
B. Chloroperoxidase Structure . . . . .	200
VI. Myeloperoxidase . . . . .	202
A. Introduction . . . . .	202
B. Myeloperoxidase Structure . . . . .	202
VII. Introduction to Cytochromes P450 . . . . .	203
VIII. Summary of Known Cytochromes P450 Structures . . . . .	203
IX. Oxygen Activation in Cytochromes P450 . . . . .	205
A. Acid Catalysis in P450 <sub>CAM</sub> . . . . .	205

B. Substrate-Assisted Acid Catalysis in P450 <sub>eryF</sub> . . . . .	206
C. P450 <sub>nor</sub> . . . . .	206
X. Cytochrome P450 Electron Transfer Complexes . . . . .	207
A. P450 <sub>cam</sub> -Putidaredoxin . . . . .	207
B. P450 Reductase . . . . .	207
C. P450 <sub>BM-3</sub> . . . . .	208
XI. Cytochrome P450 Substrate Binding . . . . .	209
A. P450 <sub>cam</sub> . . . . .	209
B. P450 <sub>eryF</sub> . . . . .	210
C. P450 <sub>BM-3</sub> . . . . .	210
XII. Nitric Oxide Synthase . . . . .	211
A. Introduction . . . . .	211
B. Overall Structure of the Dimeric Heme Domain . . . . .	212
C. The Active Site . . . . .	212
D. Tetrahydrobiopterin . . . . .	212
E. Zinc Binding Site . . . . .	215
F. Functional Implications . . . . .	215
References . . . . .	215

**33 / Binding and Activation of Nitric Oxide by Metalloporphyrins and Heme . . . . . 219**  
**LIN CHENG and GEORGE B. RICHTER-ADDO**

I. Introduction . . . . .	221
A. Nitric Oxide . . . . .	221
B. Metal-NO binding . . . . .	221
C. Metal-NO Formalism/Nomenclature . . . . .	224
D. Denitrosylation of Metal-NO Bonds . . . . .	227
II. Synthesis of Metal-NO Bonds in Porphyrins and Heme . . . . .	231
A. Nitric Oxide . . . . .	231
B. Nitrosonium Salts . . . . .	232
C. Inorganic Nitrite . . . . .	233
D. Angeli's Salt and Its Derivatives . . . . .	233
E. X-N=O Compounds . . . . .	233
F. Oxidation of N-Containing Compounds . . . . .	235
III. Synthetic Nitrosyl Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	235
A. Group 6 . . . . .	235
B. Group 7 . . . . .	238
C. Group 8 . . . . .	247
D. Group 9 . . . . .	251
IV. Nitrosyl-Heme Systems . . . . .	254
A. Nitric Oxide Synthase . . . . .	254
B. Cytochrome P450 . . . . .	255
C. Chloroperoxidase . . . . .	255
D. Myoglobin . . . . .	255
E. Hemoglobin . . . . .	261
F. Cytochrome Oxidases . . . . .	263
G. Soluble Guanylyl Cyclase . . . . .	267
H. Nitrophorins from Blood-Sucking Insects . . . . .	269
I. N-Oxide Reduction . . . . .	271
J. Other Cytochromes . . . . .	275

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K. Heme-Hemopexin . . . . .	277
L. Heme-Heme Oxygenase . . . . .	277
M. Indoleamine 2,3-Dioxygenase and Tryptophan 2,3-Dioxygenase . . . . .	277
N. Prostaglandin H Synthase . . . . .	277
O. Peroxidases . . . . .	277
P. Catalase . . . . .	278
Q. Cobalamin and its Derivatives . . . . .	278
V. Epilogue . . . . .	278
References . . . . .	280
<b>34 / Structural Themes Determining Function in Nitric Oxide Synthases . . . . .</b>	<b>293</b>
<b>C. S. RAMAN, PAVEL MARTÁSEK and BETTIE SUE S. MASTERS</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	293
II. Structural Aspects of Nitric Oxide Synthase . . . . .	295
A. Tertiary Topology . . . . .	295
B. Nonplanar Distortion of the Porphyrin . . . . .	296
C. Substrate Recognition . . . . .	297
D. Cofactor Binding . . . . .	300
E. The Zinc-Sandwiched Subunits . . . . .	302
F. Dimer Interface and Stability of the Quaternary Structure . . . . .	309
III. Mechanistic Insights into Nitric Oxide Biosynthesis . . . . .	311
A. Substrate Specificity . . . . .	312
B. Cofactor Function . . . . .	313
C. Heme-Thiolate Chemistry . . . . .	318
D. Electron Transfer . . . . .	319
IV. Protein-Protein Interactions . . . . .	320
V. Design of Isoform-Specific Inhibitors and Activators . . . . .	322
VI. Pathophysiological Implications . . . . .	324
VII. The Evolution of Heme-Based Sensors and Nitric Oxide as a Biological Signal . . . . .	326
References . . . . .	327
Index . . . . .	341

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# The Porphyrin Handbook

## Volume 5 / NMR and EPR

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# Contents

Preface .....	ix
Contributing Authors .....	xi
Contents of Volumes in This Set .....	xix
<b>35 / NMR Spectroscopy of Diamagnetic Porphyrins .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CRAIG J. MEDFORTH</b>	
I. Introduction .....	3
A. Historical Perspective and Scope of this Review .....	3
B. Nomenclature .....	3
II. $^1\text{H}$ NMR Spectroscopy of Diamagnetic Porphyrins .....	4
A. Introduction .....	4
B. $^1\text{H}$ NMR Spectroscopy of Porphyrins .....	7
C. $^1\text{H}$ NMR Spectroscopy of Hydroporphyrins .....	16
D. $^1\text{H}$ NMR Spectroscopy of Heteroporphyrins .....	21
E. $^1\text{H}$ NMR Spectroscopy of Porphyrin Isomers .....	22
F. $^1\text{H}$ NMR Spectroscopy of Porphyrins with Unusual $\pi$ -Systems .....	25
G. $^1\text{H}$ Coupling Constants .....	28
III. Heteronuclear NMR Spectroscopy of Diamagnetic Porphyrins .....	28
A. Introduction .....	28
B. Nuclei of the Porphyrin Core ( $^{13}\text{C}$ , $^{15}\text{N}$ , $^2\text{H}$ , $^3\text{H}$ ) .....	30
C. NMR Spectroscopy of Other Nuclei .....	38
IV. Studies of Porphyrin Intermolecular and Intramolecular Interactions .....	46
A. Introduction .....	46
B. Aggregation and $\pi$ -Stacking Interactions .....	46
C. Ligand and Anion Binding .....	50
D. Miscellaneous Intermolecular and Intramolecular Interactions .....	59
V. Investigations of Porphyrin Dynamic Processes .....	60
A. Introduction .....	60
B. NH Tautomerism .....	61
C. Rotational Processes .....	65
D. Macrocyclic Inversion .....	70
E. Miscellaneous Dynamic Processes .....	73
References .....	74
<b>36 / Proton NMR and EPR Spectroscopy of Paramagnetic Metalloporphyrins .....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>F. ANN WALKER</b>	
I. Introduction and Background .....	82
A. Structures and Electron Configurations of Metalloporphyrins .....	84
II. Principles .....	88
A. Proton Resonance Shifts .....	88
B. Nuclear Relaxation and Linewidths .....	91
C. Spin Density and Bonding: Mechanisms of Spin Delocalization .....	93
D. Methods of Assignment of the $^1\text{H}$ NMR Spectra of Paramagnetic Metalloporphyrins .....	101
III. Spectral Analysis .....	105
A. Resolution and Assignment .....	105
B. Analysis of Shifts .....	107
IV. NMR and EPR Data for Metalloporphyrins and Related Macrocycles .....	111

A. Iron Porphyrins . . . . .	111
B. Ruthenium and Osmium Porphyrins . . . . .	155
C. Chromium Porphyrins . . . . .	156
D. Manganese Porphyrins . . . . .	157
E. Cobalt Porphyrins . . . . .	160
F. Rhodium Porphyrins . . . . .	163
G. Nickel Porphyrins . . . . .	164
H. Copper and Silver Porphyrins . . . . .	167
I. Lanthanide Porphyrins . . . . .	168
V. The Use of NMR Spectroscopy to Investigate Chemical Reactions . . . . .	170
A. Electron Exchange . . . . .	170
B. Autoreduction . . . . .	171
C. Aggregation . . . . .	172
D. Metal–Metal Bond Dissociation . . . . .	172
E. Other Dynamic Processes: Ligand Addition, Exchange and Rotation . . . . .	172
F. Bond Formation . . . . .	175
References . . . . .	175
<b>37 / Nuclear Magnetic Resonance of Hemoproteins . . . . .</b>	<b>185</b>
<b>GERD N. LA MAR, JAMES D. SATTERLEE and JEFFREY S. DE ROOP</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	188
II. Chromophores . . . . .	190
III. NMR Information Content . . . . .	192
A. Chemical Shifts . . . . .	192
B. Relaxation . . . . .	197
IV. NMR Methods . . . . .	197
A. Diamagnetic Hemoproteins . . . . .	198
B. Paramagnetic Proteins . . . . .	200
V. Electronic/Magnetic Properties of Heme Iron . . . . .	211
A. Iron(II) . . . . .	212
B. Iron(III) . . . . .	213
C. Iron(IV) . . . . .	215
D. Effect of Orbital Degeneracy for Low-Spin Iron(III) . . . . .	215
VI. Hemoprotein Assembly and Protein-Heme Recognition . . . . .	218
A. Equilibrium Heme Orientational Heterogeneity . . . . .	218
B. Mechanism of Reconstitution and Protein-Heme <i>b</i> Assembly . . . . .	220
C. Probes of Heme Pocket Polarity . . . . .	223
VII. Globins . . . . .	224
A. General Properties . . . . .	224
B. Interpretive Bases of Globin Derivatives . . . . .	226
C. Axial Ligand Mutations . . . . .	234
D. Nonallosteric Globins . . . . .	234
E. Sulfglobins . . . . .	237
F. Allosteric Monomeric <i>Chironomus</i> Hbs . . . . .	238
G. Human Adult Hb (Hb A) . . . . .	239
VIII. Cytochromes . . . . .	244
A. Introduction . . . . .	244
B. Class I Cytochromes <i>c</i> . . . . .	245
C. Cytochromes <i>b</i> <sub>5</sub> . . . . .	250
D. Cytochromes <i>c'</i> . . . . .	252
E. Multiheme Cytochromes . . . . .	253
F. Other Monoheme Cytochromes . . . . .	255
G. Special Topics . . . . .	257

H. Redox Complexes . . . . .	259
IX. Heme Peroxidases . . . . .	263
A. Common Structural and Mechanistic Features . . . . .	263
B. Characterization of the Active Site of Class I, II and III Peroxidases . . . . .	265
C. Class III Plant Peroxidases . . . . .	268
D. Class I Plant Peroxidases . . . . .	274
E. Class II Plant Peroxidases . . . . .	275
F. Mammalian Peroxidases . . . . .	277
G. Other Heme Peroxidases . . . . .	278
X. Miscellaneous Hemoproteins . . . . .	279
A. Cytochromes P450 . . . . .	279
B. Sulfite Reductase . . . . .	281
C. Heme Oxygenase . . . . .	282
D. Cytochrome <i>c</i> Oxidase . . . . .	283
E. Hemopexin . . . . .	284
F. Catalase . . . . .	284
G. <i>p</i> -Cresol Methylhydroxylase . . . . .	285
H. FIXL . . . . .	285
I. Nitrophorin . . . . .	286
References . . . . .	286

<b>38 / Isocyanides and Phosphines as Axial Ligands in Heme Proteins and Iron Porphyrin Models . . . . .</b>	<b>299</b>
--	------------

**GÉRARD SIMONNEAUX and ARNAUD BONDON**

I. Introduction . . . . .	300
II. Isocyanides as Ligands to Iron Porphyrin Models . . . . .	300
A. Ferrous Porphyrins . . . . .	300
B. Ferric Porphyrins . . . . .	303
III. Isocyanides as Ligands to Heme Proteins . . . . .	306
A. Myoglobin and Hemoglobin . . . . .	306
B. Cytochromes <i>c</i> , <i>c'</i> and Peroxidase . . . . .	308
C. Cytochrome P450 and Chloroperoxidase . . . . .	309
IV. Phosphines as Ligands to Iron Porphyrin Models . . . . .	311
A. Ferrous Porphyrins . . . . .	312
B. Ferric Porphyrins . . . . .	313
V. Phosphines as Ligands to Heme Proteins . . . . .	315
A. Myoglobin . . . . .	315
B. Hemoglobin . . . . .	316
C. Cytochrome <i>c</i> . . . . .	317
D. Cytochrome P450 and Chloroperoxidase . . . . .	318
References . . . . .	318

<b>39 / Solution Structures of Hemoproteins . . . . .</b>	<b>323</b>
---	------------

**LUCIA BANCI, IVANO BERTINI, CLAUDIO LUCHINAT and PAOLA TURANO**

I. Foreword . . . . .	323
II. Introduction . . . . .	324
III. Diamagnetic Hemoproteins . . . . .	325
IV. Paramagnetic Hemoproteins . . . . .	328
V. Pseudocontact Shifts as Unconventional Constraints . . . . .	330
VI. The Paramagnetic Susceptibility Tensor Related to the Structural Properties . . . . .	332

VII. Exploiting Partial Molecular Alignment in High Magnetic Fields . . . . .	335
VIII. Further Comments on the Quality of the Structures of Paramagnetic Proteins . . . . .	337
IX. Structural Differences Between Solid State and Solution . . . . .	339
X. Structural Differences between Oxidized and Reduced Cytochromes . . . . .	340
XI. Water–Protein Interactions . . . . .	342
XII. Protein–Protein Interactions . . . . .	344
XIII. Structural Aspects of Unfolding . . . . .	344
XIV. Mobility . . . . .	345
XV. Perspectives . . . . .	347
Notes Added in Proofs . . . . .	347
References . . . . .	348
Index . . . . .	351

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# The Porphyrin Handbook

## Volume 6 / Applications: Past, Present and Future

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# Contents

Preface .....	ix
Contributing Authors .....	xi
Contents of Volumes in This Set .....	xix
<b>40 / Noncovalent Multiporphyrin Assemblies .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>JEAN-CLAUDE CHAMBRON, VALÉRIE HEITZ and JEAN-PIERRE SAUVAGE</b>	
I. Introduction .....	1
II. Multiporphyrin Edifices Built via H Bonds and Other Host–Guest Interactions .....	4
III. Assembly of Porphyrins via Metal–Ligand Bonds .....	7
A. Metals Inside Porphyrins Involved in Assembly Processes .....	7
B. Porphyrins Assembled by Coordination to Nonporphyrinic Metals .....	23
C. Metal-Bridged Porphyrin Dimer .....	30
D. Molecular Boxes for Porphyrins .....	30
E. Combination of Coordination Bonds and Hydrogen Bonds .....	31
IV. Rotaxanes and Catenanes Incorporating Two or Several Noncovalently Bound Porphyrins .....	31
A. [2]-Catenanes .....	32
B. Porphyrin Arrays with Noncovalently Assembled Components Incorporated in Rotaxane Structures .....	34
V. Conclusion .....	40
References .....	41
<b>41 / Applications of Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins to Materials Chemistry .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>JUN-HONG CHOU, HARI SINGH NALWA, MARGARET E. KOSAL, NEAL A. RAKOW and KENNETH S. SUSICK</b>	
I. Introduction .....	000
II. Photonic Materials .....	000
A. Mesogenic Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins .....	000
B. Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins as Nonlinear Optical Materials .....	000
C. Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins as Opto-Materials .....	000
III. Porphyrinic Solids .....	000
A. Microporous Solids .....	000
B. Conductive Polymers and Ferroelectrics .....	000
C. Porphyrin-Based Chemical Sensors .....	000
IV. Conclusions .....	000
References .....	000
<b>42 / Metalloporphyrins as Catalysts for Precision Macromolecular Synthesis .....</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>TAKUZO AIDA and SHOHEI INOUE</b>	
I. Introduction .....	133
II. Metalloporphyrins Containing Nontransition Metals .....	134
A. Ring-Opening Polymerization of Heterocyclic Monomers .....	134
B. Addition Polymerization of Unsaturated Monomers .....	145
C. Structure-Reactivity Relationships .....	146
D. Effect of Axial Coordination .....	146
E. Utilization of Steric Hindrance for Acceleration of Polymerization .....	147
F. Ligand-Exchange Activity (Immortal Polymerization) .....	149

G. Stereochemical Aspects . . . . .	152
III. Metalloporphyrins Containing Transition Metals . . . . .	153
A. Ring-Opening Polymerization of Heterocyclic Monomers . . . . .	153
B. Addition Polymerization of Unsaturated Monomers . . . . .	153
IV. Conclusion. . . . .	155
References . . . . .	155
<b>43 / Porphyrins as Photosensitizers in Photodynamic Therapy. . . . .</b>	<b>157</b>
<b>RAVINDRA K. PANDEY and GANG ZHENG</b>	
I. Introduction. . . . .	158
A. A Brief History of Photodynamic Therapy . . . . .	158
B. Mechanisms of Tumor Necrosis . . . . .	159
C. Basic Requirements for an Ideal Photosensitizer for PDT . . . . .	160
D. Advantages and Limitations of Photofrin . . . . .	161
II. Porphyrin-Based Photosensitizers . . . . .	161
A. Theoretical Considerations. . . . .	161
B. Hematoporphyrin and Protoporphyrin Analogues. . . . .	162
C. Tetraphenylporphyrin (TPP) Analogues. . . . .	163
III. Chlorin-Based Photosensitizers . . . . .	164
A. Modification of Chlorophyll <i>a</i> . . . . .	164
B. Importance of Lipophilicity . . . . .	166
C. Chemical Modification of Purpurin-18 . . . . .	167
IV. Synthetic Chlorins . . . . .	170
A. Benzoporphyrin Derivatives (BPD) . . . . .	170
B. Benzochlorins, Naphthochlorins, Purpurins and Verdins . . . . .	172
C. Tetra(hydroxyphenyl)chlorins (THPC) . . . . .	177
D. Vic-Dihydroxy- and Ketochlorins . . . . .	177
E. Azachlorins . . . . .	178
F. Tailor-Made Chlorins . . . . .	179
G. Chlorins with Ethyldene Groups . . . . .	179
H. Spirochlorins . . . . .	181
I. Direct Synthesis of Chlorins from Dipyrromethanes. . . . .	181
V. Bacteriochlorin-Based Photosensitizers . . . . .	182
A. Naturally Occurring Bacteriochlorins . . . . .	182
B. Tolyporphyrin from the Alga <i>Tolypothrix nodosa</i> . . . . .	183
C. Stable Bacteriochlorins from <i>Rb. sphaeroides</i> . . . . .	183
VI. Synthetic Bacteriochlorins. . . . .	184
A. Tetrahydrobacteriochlorins and Isobacteriochlorins . . . . .	185
B. Vic-Dihydroxybacteriochlorins and Isobacteriochlorins . . . . .	185
C. Bacteriochlorins via Diels–Alder Reaction Approach . . . . .	185
D. Vic-Dihydroxybacteriochlorins and their Keto-Analogues . . . . .	187
E. Effect of Electron Withdrawing Substituents in OsO <sub>4</sub> Reactions and Pinacol-Pinacolone Reaction . . . . .	190
F. Benzobacteriochlorins . . . . .	196
VII. Isomeric Porphyrins . . . . .	196
A. Porphycenes . . . . .	196
B. Inverted Porphyrins . . . . .	198
VIII. Porphyrin Dimers and Higher Oligomers . . . . .	198
A. Porphyrin Dimers with Ether, Ester and Carbon–Carbon Linkages . . . . .	198
B. Chlorin Dimers with Carbon–Carbon Linkages . . . . .	201
C. Chlorin Dimers with Amide Linkages . . . . .	203
IX. Expanded Porphyrins . . . . .	204

A. Sapphyrins and Texaphyrins . . . . .	204
B. Vinylogous Porphyrins . . . . .	205
X. Miscellaneous Porphyrins and Chlorins . . . . .	205
A. Glycosylated Porphyrins and Chlorins . . . . .	205
B. Barbituric Acid Functionalized Porphyrins and Chlorins . . . . .	206
C. Nucleoside Adducts of Porphyrins and Chlorins . . . . .	206
D. Porphyrins Containing Six-Membered Rings . . . . .	207
XI. Endogenous Porphyrins from ALA . . . . .	208
A. Cationic Photosensitizers . . . . .	209
XII. Cationic Porphyrins, Chlorins and Phthalocyanines . . . . .	209
XIII. Phthalocyanines and Naphthalocyanines . . . . .	211
XIV. Current Status of Photosensitizers Under Clinical Trials . . . . .	214
A. Advantages and Disadvantages of Some Selected Photosensitizers . . . . .	224
XV. Conclusions . . . . .	224
References . . . . .	225
<b>44 / Porphyrin-Based Electrochemical Sensors . . . . .</b>	<b>231</b>
<b>JONATHASZ MALINSKI</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	232
II. Amperometric/Voltammetric Porphyrin-Based Sensors . . . . .	232
A. Conductive Polymeric Porphyrins . . . . .	232
B. Sensors for Detection of Metal Cations . . . . .	236
C. Nitric Oxide Sensors . . . . .	240
D. Preparation and Measurement of NO with Amperometric Sensors . . . . .	245
III. Potentiometric Porphyrinic Sensors for Detection of Ions . . . . .	251
A. Preparation of Porphyrin-Based Potentiometric Sensors for Anions . . . . .	252
B. Potentiometric Sensor for Nickel . . . . .	254
References . . . . .	255
<b>45 / Calixpyrroles: Novel Anion and Neutral Substrate Receptors . . . . .</b>	<b>257</b>
<b>JONATHAN L. SESSLER and PHILIP A. GALE</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	257
II. Early Work . . . . .	258
III. Structural Studies of Free Ligands . . . . .	258
IV. Coordination Chemistry of Simple Systems . . . . .	259
A. Cation Coordination Chemistry . . . . .	259
B. Anion Coordination Chemistry . . . . .	259
C. Neutral Molecule Coordination Chemistry . . . . .	262
V. Synthesis of Functionalized Calixpyrroles . . . . .	264
A. $\beta$ -Substituted Systems . . . . .	264
B. meso-Substituted Systems . . . . .	265
VI. Properties of Functionalized Calixpyrroles . . . . .	265
A. Self-Assembly of "meso-hook" Carboxylate 12 . . . . .	265
B. Anion-Binding Properties of $\beta$ -Substituted Calix[4]pyrroles . . . . .	267
VII. Calix[4]pyrrole Conjugates . . . . .	267
A. Calixpyrrole-Based Sensors . . . . .	267
B. Calixpyrrole-Modified HPLC Media . . . . .	269
VIII. Expanded Calixpyrroles . . . . .	271
IX. From Calixpyrroles to Calixpyridines . . . . .	272
X. Related Heterocalixarene Analogues . . . . .	274

A. Calixindoles . . . . .	274
B. Azolophanes . . . . .	276
XI. Conclusion . . . . .	276
Note Added in Proof . . . . .	276
References . . . . .	277
<b>46 / Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins as Receptor Models in Molecular Recognition . . . . .</b>	<b>279</b>
<b>HISANOBU OGOSHI, TADASHI MIZUTANI, TAKASHI HAYASHI and YASUHISA KURODA</b>	
I. New Aspects of Synthesis and Design of Porphyrins for Receptor Models . . . . .	280
A. Introduction . . . . .	280
B. Chemical Modification of Naturally Occurring Porphyrins . . . . .	280
C. Synthetic Strategy for Multifunctional Porphyrins as Building Blocks for Receptors . . . . .	281
D. Strapped Porphyrins . . . . .	284
E. Oligoporphyrins . . . . .	284
F. Chiral Porphyrins . . . . .	285
II. Host–Guest Chemistry of Porphyrins in Molecular Recognition . . . . .	287
A. Recognition of Amines and Diamines . . . . .	287
B. Amino-Acid Recognition in Water . . . . .	291
C. Recognition of Amino-Acid Derivatives in Organic Solvents . . . . .	297
D. Chiral Recognition of Amino-Acid Derivatives . . . . .	298
E. Alcohols and Sugar Recognition . . . . .	300
F. Quinone Recognition . . . . .	303
G. DNA Recognition . . . . .	304
H. Solvent Effects on Molecular Recognition . . . . .	306
I. Thermodynamic Parameters of Complexation . . . . .	307
J. Combinations of Porphyrin and Other Hosts—Porphyrin–Calixarene, Porphyrin–Cyclodextrin, Porphyrin–Steroids . . . . .	310
K. Kinetic Aspects of Recognition . . . . .	311
III. Electron Transfer Regulated by Molecular Recognition . . . . .	312
A. Introduction . . . . .	312
B. Design of Donor–Acceptor Pairing via Noncovalent Interaction . . . . .	312
C. Determination of ET Rate Constants . . . . .	313
D. Noncovalently Linked Donor–Acceptor Pairings via Hydrogen-Bonding Interaction . . . . .	313
E. Noncovalently Linked Donor–Acceptor Pairings via van der Waals Contacts . . . . .	317
F. Noncovalently Linked Donor–Acceptor Pairings via Metal Coordination . . . . .	318
G. Energy Transfer Within Noncovalently Linked Donor–Acceptor Complex . . . . .	320
H. Intracomplex ET via Molecular-Recognition Process on Protein Surface . . . . .	322
I. Survey of ET Model Systems . . . . .	325
IV. Self-Organized Porphyrin Systems . . . . .	325
A. Covalently Linked Multiporphyrin Systems . . . . .	326
B. Self-Assembling Multiporphyrin System . . . . .	328
References . . . . .	336
Index . . . . .	341

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# The Porphyrin Handbook

## Volume 7 / Theoretical and Physical Characterization

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# Contents

Preface .....	xi
Contributing Authors .....	xiii
Contents of Volumes in This Set .....	xxi

## 47 / Quantum Chemical Studies of Molecular Structures and Potential Energy Surfaces of Porphyrins and Hemes .....

ABHIK GHOSH

I. Introduction .....	1
II. Prototype Molecular Structures and Methodological Requirements .....	3
III. Hydroporphyrins and Azaporphyrins .....	4
IV. Porphyrin Isomers .....	6
V. Corroles .....	9
VI. Carbaporphyrins .....	12
VII. NH Tautomers and Tautomerization .....	16
VIII. Nonplanar Porphyrins .....	21
IX. Porphyrin Cation Radicals .....	23
X. Iron(II) Porphyrins .....	24
XI. Iron(III) Porphyrins .....	26
XII. Carbonmonoxyhemes .....	30
XIII. Oxyheme and Nitrosylheme .....	32
XIV. Iron(IV)-Oxo Porphyrins .....	34
XV. Concluding Remarks .....	35
References .....	35

## 48 / Models for the Electronic Structure of Metalloporphyrins from High-Resolution X-ray Diffraction and Ab Initio Calculations .....

CLAUDE LECOMTE, MARIE-MADELEINE ROHMER and MARC BÉNARD

I. Introduction .....	40
II. Electron Density and Quantum Chemistry .....	40
A. The Schrödinger Equation .....	40
B. The Hydrogenoid Atom and Beyond .....	41
C. Basis Sets .....	42
D. Correlation Density .....	44
E. Density Functional Theory (DFT) .....	44
III. Electron Density Study from High-Resolution X-ray Diffraction Methods .....	48
A. Definitions .....	48
B. Experimental Methods .....	50
C. Electron Density Models .....	50
D. Estimation of d Electron Population .....	54
E. Molecular Systems to Which Experimental Electron Density Methods May Be Applied: Difficulties Related to Porphyrin Crystals .....	55
IV. Theoretical Models for Metalloporphyrins and Related Complexes .....	55
A. The Four-Orbital Model .....	55
B. Metalloporphyrins: the Metal–Macrocyclic Interactions .....	55
C. Problems Encountered in the Ab Initio Description of Metalloporphyrins .....	56
V. Electron Density and Charge Distributions in Metalloporphyrins .....	57

A. Cobalt Porphyrins . . . . .	57
B. Four-Coordinate Ferrous Porphyrins: Fe <sup>II</sup> (TPP) . . . . .	60
C. (THF) <sub>2</sub> Fe(TPP): the Unique Example of a Hexacoordinated High-Spin Ferrous Complex . . . . .	64
D. Structural and Electronic Variability in bis-Pyridine and bis-Imidazole Iron Porphyrins . . . . .	65
E. Five-Coordinate Fe(III) Porphyrins: (OCH <sub>3</sub> )Fe <sup>III</sup> (TPP) and the (F)Fe <sup>III</sup> (P) Model . . . . .	69
F. Nickel Porphyrins . . . . .	71
G. Charge and Spin Density Distributions of Copper and Silver Porphyrins . . . . .	72
H. Charge Density of Difluoro-Octaethylporphyrin Germanium(IV) . . . . .	73
VI. Conclusions . . . . .	74
References . . . . .	75

**49 / X-Ray Absorption Spectroscopy Applied to Porphyrin Chemistry . . . . .** **79**

**JOSÉ GOULON, CHANTAL GOULON-GINET and VINCENT GOTTE**

I. Scope of XAS Today . . . . .	80
A. XANES and Polarization Effects . . . . .	80
B. EXAFS and MEXAFS . . . . .	82
C. Fluorescence-Detected X-ray Excitation Spectra . . . . .	84
D. Resonant X-ray Emission Spectroscopy . . . . .	84
E. Synchrotron Radiation Sources of Third Generation . . . . .	85
F. Outline of the Chapter . . . . .	86
II. Formal Theories of XAS . . . . .	87
A. MSW Formalisms . . . . .	87
B. XANES and EXAFS Regimes . . . . .	93
C. Local Effective Potentials . . . . .	97
D. Spin-Dependent Effects . . . . .	103
III. Practice of XAS . . . . .	109
A. Standard Analyses of EXAFS . . . . .	109
B. Difference EXAFS Analyses . . . . .	119
C. Analyses of XANES Spectra . . . . .	127
D. Challenges for Third-Generation SR Sources . . . . .	132
IV. Applications in Porphyrin Chemistry and Biochemistry . . . . .	139
A. Hemoproteins and Biomimetic Compounds . . . . .	139
B. Non-Iron Porphyrins . . . . .	150
C. Concluding Remarks . . . . .	156
References . . . . .	157

**50 / Molecular Simulations and Normal-Coordinate Structural Analysis of Porphyrins and Heme Proteins . . . . .** **167**

**JOHN A. SHELNUTT**

I. Introduction . . . . .	168
II. Theory . . . . .	188
A. Molecular Mechanics . . . . .	188
B. Force Fields . . . . .	190
C. Molecular Dynamics . . . . .	191
D. Normal-Coordinate Structural Decomposition . . . . .	191
III. Normal-Coordinate Structural Analysis . . . . .	194
A. Porphyrins and Nonheme Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	194
B. Iron Porphyrins and Heme Proteins . . . . .	199
IV. Molecular Mechanics and Dynamics Calculations . . . . .	201
A. Porphyrins and Simple Porphyrin Complexes . . . . .	202
B. Superstructures Containing Porphyrins . . . . .	212

C. Porphyrin Radicals and Diacids . . . . .	216
D. Hydroporphyrins . . . . .	217
E. Heme Proteins . . . . .	217
V. Conclusions and the Future . . . . .	219
A. Normal-Coordinate Structural Decomposition . . . . .	219
B. Molecular Mechanics and Dynamics . . . . .	220
References . . . . .	220

**51 / Resonance Raman Spectra of Heme Proteins and Model Compounds . . . . .** 225**JAMES R. KINCAID**

I. General Introduction . . . . .	226
II. Oxygen Transport: Myoglobin and Hemoglobin . . . . .	227
A. Introduction . . . . .	227
B. The RR Spectra of Natural Hemes . . . . .	228
C. The Iron–Histidine Stretching Mode . . . . .	232
D. Exogenous Axial Ligands . . . . .	236
E. Time-Resolved Resonance Raman Studies of Hemoglobin . . . . .	251
III. Peroxidases . . . . .	258
A. Plant Peroxidases . . . . .	258
B. Mammalian Peroxidases . . . . .	272
IV. Cytochromes P450 . . . . .	277
A. Introduction . . . . .	277
B. RR Studies of Cytochrome P450cam . . . . .	277
C. RR Studies of Other Cytochromes P450 . . . . .	284
D. Summary . . . . .	286
V. Other Heme Proteins . . . . .	287
A. Cytochrome c . . . . .	287
B. Cytochrome c Oxidase . . . . .	287
C. Nitric Oxide Synthase . . . . .	287
References . . . . .	287

**52 / Resonance Raman Spectroscopy of Petroporphyrins . . . . .** 293**ROMAN S. CZERNUSZEWCZ, ESTELLE M. MAES and J. GRAHAM RANKIN**

I. Introduction . . . . .	293
II. Electronic Spectra and Resonance Raman Scattering of Petroporphyrins . . . . .	296
A. In-Plane Skeletal Vibrations . . . . .	296
B. Peripheral Substituent Vibrations . . . . .	306
III. Vibrational Mode Description and Assignments of Resonance Raman Spectra . . . . .	307
A. Tetrapyrrole Macrocycle Local Coordinates . . . . .	307
B. Alkyl Local Coordinates . . . . .	308
IV. Petroporphyrin Skeletal Vibrations and Structure in Solution . . . . .	316
A. The Role of Central Metal Ion . . . . .	318
B. Contributions from $\beta,\beta$ -Tetrahydrobenzo Exocyclic Rings . . . . .	322
C. Structural Effects due to <i>meso</i> , $\beta$ -Cycloalkano Ring Size . . . . .	322
D. Raman Active IR Modes of Cycloalkanoporphyrin Skeletons . . . . .	325
V. Raman Marker Bands of Structure at the Petroporphyrin Periphery . . . . .	326
A. Etioporphyrin Positional Isomerism . . . . .	326
B. Tetrahydrobenzoporphyrin Regiosomerism . . . . .	328
C. Cycloalkanoporphyrins . . . . .	330
VI. Summary and Conclusions . . . . .	334
References . . . . .	335

---

<b>53 / Magnetic Circular Dichroism Spectroscopy of Heme Proteins and Model Systems . . . . .</b>	<b>339</b>
<b>JENNIFER CHEEK and JOHN H. DAWSON</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	339
II. Histidine-Ligated Heme Systems . . . . .	340
A. Peroxidases . . . . .	340
B. Heme <i>b</i> -Containing Proteins . . . . .	343
C. Heme <i>c</i> -Containing Proteins . . . . .	345
D. Myoglobin and Myoglobin Mutants . . . . .	347
E. Heme-Copper Terminal Oxidases . . . . .	350
F. Denitrifying Heme Enzymes . . . . .	354
G. Mixed-Heme Systems . . . . .	356
H. Porphyrin Model Complexes . . . . .	356
I. Unusual Heme Systems . . . . .	359
III. Thiolate-Ligated Heme Systems . . . . .	361
IV. Bis-Methionine-Ligated Systems . . . . .	366
V. Tyrosine-Ligated Systems . . . . .	366
References . . . . .	367
<b>54 / Mass Spectrometry of Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins . . . . .</b>	<b>371</b>
<b>J. MARTIN E. QUIRKE</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	373
A. Format of Chapter . . . . .	374
II. Electron Ionization Mass Spectrometric (EIMS) Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	374
A. The EIMS and "In Beam" EIMS Experiments . . . . .	374
B. EIMS Analyses of Free-Base Porphyrins . . . . .	374
C. EIMS Analyses of Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	379
D. EIMS Analyses of Geoporphyrins . . . . .	381
E. EIMS Analyses of Chlorins . . . . .	383
F. "In Beam" and "Near Beam" EIMS Analyses of Chlorins and Chlorophylls . . . . .	385
G. EIMS Analyses of Chlorin Analogues and Isobacteriochlorins . . . . .	385
H. EIMS Analyses of Hexahydroporphyrins . . . . .	386
I. EIMS Analyses of Isomers of the Porphyrin Skeleton . . . . .	386
J. EIMS Analyses of Expanded and Contracted Porphyrin Systems . . . . .	387
K. EIMS Analyses of Carbaporphyrins and Related Compounds . . . . .	388
L. EIMS Analyses of Porphyrin Analogues Bearing Other Heteroatoms . . . . .	389
III. Electron Ionization Tandem Mass Spectrometric (EIMS/MS) Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	389
A. The EIMS/MS Experiments . . . . .	389
B. EIMS/MS Analyses of Porphyrins, Geoporphyrins and Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	390
C. EIMS/MS Analyses of Porphyrin Mixtures . . . . .	391
IV. Chemical Ionization (CI) and Desorption Chemical Ionization Mass Spectrometric Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	393
A. The CIMS and Desorption CIMS Experiments . . . . .	393
B. CIMS Analyses of Free-base Porphyrins . . . . .	393
C. CIMS Analyses of Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	394
D. Negative Ion Chemical Ionization Mass Spectrometric (ECNCIMS) Analyses of Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	395
V. Gas Chromatography-Electron Ionization Mass Spectrometric (GCMS) Analyses of Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	396
VI. Field Desorption Mass Spectrometric (FDMS) Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	397
A. The FDMS Experiment . . . . .	397
B. FDMS Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	397

C. Applications of FDMS in Cyclic Tetrapyrrole Chemistry . . . . .	397
VII. Fast Atom Bombardment (FAB) Mass Spectrometric and Liquid Secondary Ion Mass Spectrometric (LSIMS) Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	398
A. The FAB/LSIMS Experiment . . . . .	398
B. Selection of the FAB Matrix for Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	399
C. FAB Fragmentation Processes for Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	399
D. Applications of FAB Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	403
E. Solid SIMS Analyses . . . . .	405
VIII. Plasma Desorption Mass Spectrometric (PDMS) Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	405
A. The PDMS Experiment . . . . .	405
B. PDMS Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	405
C. Variations on the PDMS Experiment . . . . .	406
IX. Laser Desorption Mass Spectrometric (LDMS) and Matrix Assisted Laser Desorption Mass Spectrometric (MALDI) Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	406
A. The LDMS and MALDI Experiments . . . . .	408
B. LDMS/MALDI Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	408
C. Applications of LDMS/MALDI Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	409
X. Electrospray Mass Spectrometric (ESMS) and Ionspray Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	409
A. The ESMS and Ionspray Experiments . . . . .	409
B. ESMS Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	410
C. ESMS Analyses of Porphyrin-Containing Proteins . . . . .	411
D. Other Applications of ESMS Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	412
XI. Fourier Transform Mass Spectrometric (FTMS) Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	412
A. The FTMS Experiment . . . . .	412
B. FTMS Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	412
XII. Separations and Mass Spectrometric Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	414
A. High Performance Liquid Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry (LCMS) Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	414
B. Other Linked Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	415
XIII. Inductively Coupled Plasma-Mass Spectrometric (ICPMS) Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	415
A. The ICPMS Experiment . . . . .	415
B. ICPMS Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrrolic Systems . . . . .	415
XIV. Stable Isotope Mass Spectrometric Analyses of Cyclic Tetrapyrroles . . . . .	415
A. The Measurement and Significance of $^{13}\text{C}/^{12}\text{C}$ Ratios . . . . .	415
B. Studies on $^{13}\text{C}/^{12}\text{C}$ Ratios of Cyclic Tetrapyrrolic Systems . . . . .	416
XV. Summary . . . . .	416
References . . . . .	416
Index . . . . .	423

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# The Porphyrin Handbook

## Volume 8 / Electron Transfer

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# Contents

Preface .....	ix
Contributing Authors .....	xi
Contents of Volumes in This Set .....	xix
<b>55 / Electrochemistry of Metalloporphyrins in Nonaqueous Media .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>KARL M. KADISH, ERIC VAN CAEMELBECKE and GUY ROYAL</b>	
I. Introduction and Scope of Review .....	3
A. Overview of Past and Current Work .....	3
B. Porphyrin Electrochemistry in the Early 1960s and the 1970s .....	7
C. Porphyrin Electrochemistry in the 1980s and the 1990s .....	7
II. Characterization of Porphyrin Redox Reactions .....	8
A. Selection of Appropriate Solvent .....	8
B. Selection of Appropriate Supporting Electrolyte .....	9
C. Measuring and Reporting Redox Potentials .....	10
D. Measuring and Reporting the Number of Electrons Transferred .....	10
E. Assigning Site of Electron Transfer .....	10
F. Selection of Appropriate Porphyrin Reference Compound .....	10
G. Factors Influencing Half-Wave Potentials .....	10
III. Effect of Macrocyclic Structure on Potentials .....	11
A. Octaethylporphyrins (OEP) and Tetraphenylporphyrins (TPP) .....	11
B. Tetramesitylporphyrins (TMP) .....	14
C. Octaalkyltetraphenylporphyrins ( $R_8$ TPP) .....	14
D. Dodecaphenylporphyrins (DPP) .....	16
E. Tetrabenzoporphyrins (TBP) .....	16
F. Octabromotetraphenylporphyrins ( $Br_8$ TPP) .....	17
G. Octabromotetramesitylporphyrins ( $Br_8$ TMP) .....	17
H. Pentafluorophenylporphyrins ( $F_{20}$ TPP) .....	18
I. Pentafluorophenyl Octasubstituted Porphyrins ( $Br_8F_{20}$ TPP, $Cl_8F_{20}$ TPP and $Me_8F_{20}$ TPP) .....	18
J. Tetra(4-methylpyridinium)porphyrins (TMpyP) .....	19
K. Tetra(4-sulfonatophenyl)porphyrins (TPPS) .....	20
L. Alkyl and Aryl Nitrogen-Substituted Porphyrins ( <i>N</i> -RP) .....	20
M. Isoporphyrrins .....	20
IV. Porphyrins with Specific Axial Ligands .....	21
A. Sigma-Bonded Alkyl and Aryl Complexes .....	21
B. NO Complexes .....	22
C. CO Complexes .....	24
V. Periodic Table of Metalloporphyrins .....	25
A. Free Base Porphyrins .....	25
B. Group 1 Porphyrins .....	25
C. Group 2 Porphyrins .....	25
D. Group 3 Porphyrins .....	25
E. Group 4 Porphyrins .....	26
F. Group 5 Porphyrins .....	27
G. Group 6 Porphyrins .....	28
H. Group 7 Porphyrins .....	32

I. Group 8 Porphyrins . . . . .	38
J. Group 9 Porphyrins . . . . .	59
K. Group 10 Porphyrins . . . . .	66
L. Group 11 Porphyrins . . . . .	73
M. Group 12 Porphyrins . . . . .	75
N. Group 13 Porphyrins . . . . .	76
O. Group 14 Porphyrins . . . . .	79
P. Group 15 Porphyrins . . . . .	83
Q. Lanthanides and Actinides Porphyrins . . . . .	87
VI. Double-Decker Complexes . . . . .	87
VII. Porphyrins Linked to Porphyrins . . . . .	88
VIII. Porphyrins Linked to Other Redox Active Sites . . . . .	89
IX. Substituent Effects on Redox Reactivity . . . . .	90
A. Overview . . . . .	90
B. Phenyl-Ring-Substituted Tetraphenylporphyrins . . . . .	92
C. Substituents Directly on the Porphyrin Skeleton . . . . .	93
X. Correlations of Redox Potentials . . . . .	95
A. With Structural Data . . . . .	95
B. With Chemical Properties of Porphyrins, (Catalysis) . . . . .	95
C. Determination of Axial Ligand Binding and Calculation of Binding Constants . . . . .	96
D. Spectroelectrochemistry . . . . .	96
XI. Summary . . . . .	97
References . . . . .	97

## 56 / Electron Transfer Chemistry of Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins . . . . . 115

SHUNICHI FUKUZUMI

I. Introduction . . . . .	115
II. Factors Which Control Rates of Electron Transfer . . . . .	115
III. Electron Self-Exchange Reactions . . . . .	116
A. Reactions of Iron(II)/Iron(III) Porphyrins . . . . .	116
B. Heme Proteins . . . . .	119
C. Generation of Iron(IV) Porphyrins . . . . .	123
D. Other Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	128
IV. Site of Electron Transfer of Metalloporphyrins . . . . .	132
V. Cleavage of Metal–Carbon Bond of Organometallic Porphyrins . . . . .	137
VI. Electron Transfer Catalytic Systems . . . . .	140
A. Thermal Catalysis . . . . .	140
B. Photocatalysis . . . . .	143
VII. Conclusions and Future Prospects . . . . .	145
References . . . . .	146

## 57 / Intramolecular Photoinduced Electron-Transfer Reactions of Porphyrins . . . . . 153

DEVENS GUST and THOMAS A. MOORE

I. Introduction . . . . .	154
II. Photosynthesis . . . . .	154
A. Natural Photosynthesis . . . . .	154
B. Artificial Photosynthesis . . . . .	155
III. Theoretical Descriptions of Photoinduced Electron Transfer . . . . .	156
A. Electronic Coupling . . . . .	157
B. Effect of Solvent . . . . .	157
IV. Intramolecular Photoinduced Electron Transfer in Porphyrin-Based Systems . . . . .	157

---

A. Porphyrin–Quinone Dyads . . . . .	158
B. More Complex Porphyrin–Quinone Systems: Slowing Charge Recombination . . . . .	163
C. Porphyrins Linked to Aromatic Imides . . . . .	170
D. Porphyrins Linked to Fullerenes . . . . .	174
E. Porphyrins Linked to Transition Metal Complexes . . . . .	178
F. Porphyrins Linked to Viologens . . . . .	179
G. Porphyrins Linked to Carotenoid Polyenes . . . . .	180
H. Porphyrins Linked to Other Porphyrins . . . . .	181
V. Photoinduced Electron Transfer in Self-Assembled Systems . . . . .	184
VI. Conclusions . . . . .	185
References . . . . .	185
<b>58 / Electrochemistry of Heme Proteins . . . . .</b>	<b>191</b>
<b>FRED M. HAWKRIDGE and ISAO TANIGUCHI</b>	
I. Introduction . . . . .	191
II. Background . . . . .	192
III. Methods . . . . .	193
A. Cyclic Voltammetry . . . . .	193
B. Potential-Step Chronocoulometry . . . . .	197
IV. Application Examples . . . . .	197
V. Summary . . . . .	200
References . . . . .	201
Index . . . . .	203

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# The Porphyrin Handbook

## Volume 9 / Database of Redox Potentials and Binding Constants

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# Contents

Preface .....	vii
Contributing Authors.....	ix
Contents of Volumes in This Set.....	xvii
<b>59 / Metalloporphyrins in Nonaqueous Media: Database of Redox Potentials.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>KARL M. KADISH, GUY ROYAL, ERIC VAN CAEMELBECKE and LENA GUELETTI</b>	
I. Introduction .....	2
II. Abbreviations Used in the Database .....	2
A. Macrocycles .....	2
B. Axial Ligands .....	2
C. Solvents .....	2
D. Supporting Electrolytes.....	3
E. Reference Electrodes and Reference Couples .....	3
III. Organization of the Database.....	3
A. Type of Macrocycle (Ring) .....	6
B. Type and Oxidation State of Metal Ion .....	8
C. Type of Axial Ligand.....	8
D. Solvent.....	10
E. Supporting Electrolyte .....	10
F. Reference Electrode .....	10
G. Temperature.....	10
H. Redox Potentials.....	10
I. References .....	10
IV. Tables of Electrochemical Data .....	11
Table 1. TPP Macrocycle .....	11
Table 2. OEP Macrocycle.....	90
Table 3. TMP and Substituted TMP Macrocycles.....	118
Table 4. TBP and Substituted TBP Macrocycles.....	121
Table 5. $X_n$ TPP Macrocycles and Derivatives Where $X = \text{Br, Cl or F}$ and $n = 1$ to 8 .....	122
Table 6. $T(X_5)\text{PP}$ and $\beta$ -Substituted $T(X_5)\text{PP}$ Macrocycles ( $X = \text{Cl, F}$ ) .....	127
Table 7. DPP and Substituted DPP Macrocycles .....	130
Table 8. $R_8\text{TPP}$ Macrocycle ( $R = \text{Alkyl Group}$ ) and $TC_x\text{TPP}$ .....	133
Table 9. Phenyl-Substituted TPP Macrocycles.....	134
Table 10. $\beta$ -Substituted TPP and TPP-like Macrocycles .....	164
Table 11. <i>meso</i> -Substituted OEP Macrocycles and Oxophlorin Macrocycles .....	169
Table 12. Macrocycles with Charged Substituents .....	176
Table 13. <i>N</i> -Substituted Macrocycles .....	179
Table 14. Natural Porphyrins and Derivatives .....	181
Table 15. Picket-Fence and Basket-Handle Macrocycles .....	192
Table 16. Other Substituted Porphyrin Macrocycles .....	202
Table 17. Porphyrins Adsorbed on an Electrode (Porphyrin Films) .....	207
References .....	212

---

<b>60 / Equilibrium Data of Porphyrins and Metalloporphyrins.....</b>	<b>221</b>
<b>MASAAKI TABATA and JUN NISHIMOTO</b>	
I. Introduction .....	222
II. Porphyrin Names .....	222
III. Porphyrin Structures .....	222
IV. Equilibrium Constants .....	222
V. Metal Ions .....	223
VI. Data Arrangement .....	223
VII. Abbreviations of Measurement Methods .....	223
VIII. Abbreviations of Solvents .....	223
IX. How to Find Specific Equilibrium Data .....	224
Figures 1-1-1-5. Structures of Natural Porphyrins and Their Derivatives.....	224
Figures 2-1-2-18. Structures of Synthetic and Simple Porphyrins.....	227
Figures 3-1-3-3. Structures of Side-Arm Porphyrins.....	241
Figures 4-1-4-6. Structures of Picket-Fence Porphyrins .....	243
Figures 5-1-5-14. Structures of Strapped and Capped Porphyrins .....	246
Figures 6-1-6-8. Structures of Bridged, or Dimeric, Trimeric, and Oligomeric Porphyrins .....	254
Figures 7-1-7-7. Structures of Other Types of Porphyrins .....	258
Table 1. Equilibrium Data of Axial Ligation .....	263
Table 2. Equilibrium Data for Ligand-Exchange Reactions .....	355
Table 3. Equilibrium Data for Interaction of Free-Base or Protonated Porphyrins with Ligands, Dimerization of Metalloporphyrins and Free-Base Porphyrins, Metalation of Porphyrins, and Hydrolysis of Metalloporphyrins .....	368
Table 4. Equilibrium Data of Protonation and Deprotonation of Free-Base Porphyrins .....	387
Table 5. Other Types of Reactions .....	393
Table 6. Porphyrin Names and Abbreviations .....	401
Table 7. Abbreviations of Binding Ligands .....	413
References .....	417

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# The Porphyrin Handbook

## Volume 10 / Database of Tetrapyrrole Crystal Structure Determination

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# Contents

Preface .....	vii
Contributing Authors.....	ix
Contents of Volumes in This Set.....	xvii
<b>61 / Database of Tetrapyrrole Crystal Structure Determinations .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>MATHIAS O. SENGE</b>	
I. General Remarks .....	1
Table 1. Abbreviations .....	2
Table 2. Structure Listing .....	4
Table 3. Unit Cell Listing.....	42
Table 4. Author Listing.....	90
Table 5. Index .....	107
References .....	196
<b>Cumulative Index .....</b>	<b>219</b>

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