

## Supporting Information

### Selective synthesis of pyrrolo[1,2-*a*]azepines or 4,6-dicarbonyl indoles via tandem reactions of alkynones with pyrrole derivatives

Yulei Zhao, Yang Yuan, Murong Xu, Zhong Zheng, Runhua Zhang and Yanzhong  
Li\*

Shanghai Key Laboratory of Green Chemistry and Chemical Processes, School of Chemistry  
and Molecular Engineering, East China Normal University, 500 Dongchuan Road, Shanghai  
200241, China. Fax: (+86) 021-54340096, E-mail: yzli@chem.ecnu.edu.cn

<b>Contents:</b>	<b>Page</b>
General methods	S1
Table S1. Optimization of the reaction conditions	S2-S3
Synthesis and characterization of <b>1</b>	S4-S9
Synthesis and characterization of <b>4</b>	S9-S20
Control experiments	S20-S22
Synthesis and characterization of <b>5</b>	S22-S26
Synthesis and characterization of <b>6</b> and <b>7</b>	S26-S37
Control experiments	S38-S39
References	S39
NMR spectra of new compounds	S40-S96
X-ray crystal structure of <b>4b</b> , <b>6a</b> and <b>7a</b>	S97-S104

**General Methods.** All reactions were carried out in air except noted. Anhydrous DCE were prepared by distillation from  $\text{CaH}_2$ . Anhydrous toluene, THF and 1,4-dioxane were distilled from sodium and benzophenone. MeOH were prepared by distillation from Mg and  $\text{I}_2$ . Unless noted, all commercial reagents were used without further purification. The silica gel was purchased from Huanghai Chemical Co. Ltd. and Qingdao Haiyang Chemical Co. Ltd.. Column chromatographic purification of products was carried out using silica gel (300-400 mesh). NMR spectra were recorded at 400 MHz ( $^1\text{H}$  NMR) and 100 MHz ( $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR) respectively, referenced to tetramethylsilane ( $\delta = 0.00$  ppm) and the residual solvent peak ( $\delta = 77.00$  ppm) in  $\text{CDCl}_3$  or  $(\text{CD}_3)_2\text{SO}$  (containing 0.03% TMS) solutions.  $J$  values are in hertz. High-resolution mass spectra were performed on a mass spectrometer with a TOF (for EI or ESI) or FT-ICR (for MALDI) analyzer. Single crystal X-ray diffraction data was collected in Bruker SMARTAPEX diffractometers.

**Table S1.** Optimization of the reaction conditions<sup>a</sup>

CN1C=CC=C1c2ccccc2 (5a, 0.25 mmol) + Clc1ccc(cc1)C#CC(=O)c2ccccc2 (2b, 2.4 eq.)  $\xrightarrow[\text{Solvent, T } ^\circ\text{C, t (h) in air}]{\text{Catalyst}}$  Clc1ccc(cc1)C(=O)c2cc3c(cc2)cc4c(c3)ccccc4N(C)C (6a) + Clc1ccc(cc1)C(=O)c2cc3c(cc2)cc4c(c3)ccccc4N(C)C (7a)

Entry	Catalyst	Solvent	T <sub>1</sub> (°C), t <sub>1</sub> (h or d)	Yield of <b>6a+7a</b> (%)	<b>6a/7a</b>
1	CoCl <sub>2</sub> (0.2 eq.)	PhMe	100 °C, 24 h	64	1/2
2	ZnCl <sub>2</sub> (0.2 eq.)	PhMe	100 °C, 5 h	60	3/1
3	ZnCl <sub>2</sub> (0.2 eq.)	PhMe	60 °C, 18 h	76	4/1
4	ZnI <sub>2</sub> (0.2 eq.)	PhMe	60 °C, 5 h	74%	2/1
5	(CH <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>3</sub> CO <sub>2</sub> H (1.0 eq.)	PhMe	60 °C, 24 h	trace	-
6	AlCl <sub>3</sub> (0.2 eq.)	PhMe	60 °C, 2 d	messy	-
7	FeCl <sub>3</sub> (0.2 eq.)	PhMe	60 °C, 2 d	messy	-
8	100-200 mesh silica gel	PhMe	60 °C, 4 d	71	13/1
9	100-200 mesh silica gel	PhMe	100 °C, 15 h	70	7/1
10	200-300 mesh silica gel	PhMe	60 °C, 4 d	72	12/1
11	<b>300-400 mesh silica gel (A)</b>	<b>PhMe</b>	<b>60 °C, 4 d</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>13/1</b>
12	<b>A</b>	PhF	60 °C, 3 d	59	10/1
13	<b>A</b>	PhCl	60 °C, 3 d	76	11/1
14	<b>A</b>	DCE	60 °C, 3 d	69	4/1
15	<b>A</b>	EtOAc	60 °C, 3 d	ND	-
16	<b>A</b>	THF	60 °C, 3 d	ND	-
17	<b>A</b>	MeOH	60 °C, 4 d	41	> 20/1
18	<b>A</b>	AcOH	60 °C, 4 d	42	17/1
19 <sup>b</sup>	<b>A</b>	PhMe	60 °C, 5 d	69	13/1

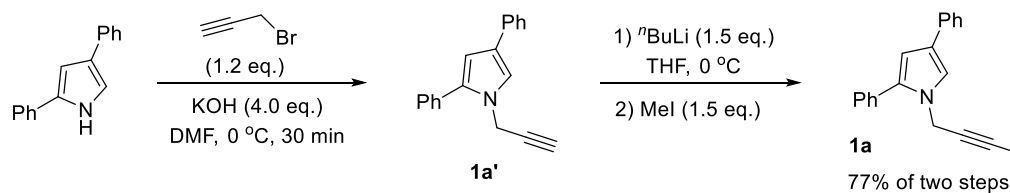
<sup>a</sup> The reactions were carried out with silica gel (300 mg) in air unless otherwise stated. Isolated yield. The ratio of **6/7** was determined by <sup>1</sup>H NMR. ND = no desired product. 300-400 mesh silica gel = **A**. <sup>b</sup> 150 mg silica gel was used.

The reaction of 1-methyl-2-phenyl-1H-pyrrole (**5a**) and 1-(4-chlorophenyl)prop-2-yn-1-one (**2b**) was selected as a model case to screen the experimental conditions. Firstly, the reaction of **5a** with **2b** was carried out using CoCl<sub>2</sub> (20 mol %) as the catalyst in toluene at 100 °C. However, **6a** and **7a** were isolated in 64% total yield with a ratio of 1:2 (Table S1, entry 1). Structural identification of **6a** and **7a** was

carried out by X-ray crystallography. 0.2 Equiv of  $\text{ZnCl}_2$  did not result in a better yield for the target product, although the ratio was improved to 3:1 (entry 2). When the reaction was carried out at 60 °C, **6a** and **7a** was obtained in 76% yield with a ratio of 4:1 (entry 3). Other catalysts such as  $\text{ZnI}_2$ ,  $(\text{CH}_3)_3\text{CO}_2\text{H}$ ,  $\text{AlCl}_3$  or  $\text{FeCl}_3$  didn't give better results (entries 4-7). Accidentally, we found there was transformation tendency with **5a** and **2b** on the silica gel plate. So, we chose silica gel (300 mg) as the promoter for further investigations (entries 8-19). To our delight, when the reaction was carried out at 60 °C with 100-200 mesh silica gel in air, the ratio was improved significantly to 13:1 (**6a:7a**) with a total yield of 71% (entry 8). Increasing the temperature to 100 °C resulted in a lower ratio (entry 9, 7:1). Furtherly, we found 100-200, 200-300 or 300-400 mesh silica gel provided similar results at 60 °C (entries 8, 10 and 11). Then, we screened the solvents with 300-400 mesh silica gel (entries 12-18). Although an excellent ratio could be detected with MeOH as the solvent, the yield was too poor to be accepted (entry 17, 41%, >20:1). We also used the mixed solvent of MeOH and PhMe, but no significant improvement was obtained. When the amount of silica gel was decreased to 150 mg, the reaction time was further increased (entry 19). So, we examined the substrate scope using 300-400 mesh silica gel in combination with toluene as the solvent at 60 °C in air (entry 11).



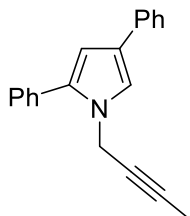
## Synthesis and characterization of 1



Under nitrogen, to a 100 mL Schlenk tube were added 2,4-diphenyl pyrrole<sup>1</sup> (1.44 g, 6.55 mmol), KOH (1.50 g, 26.2 mmol) and DMF (35 mL). After the mixture was cooled to 0 °C, propargyl bromide (678  $\mu$ L, 7.86 mmol) was added. The mixture was slowly warmed to room temperature. About 30 min latter, after full conversion of 2,4-diphenyl pyrrole by TLC analysis, the resulting mixture was quenched with saturated solution of ammonium chloride, and extracted with ethyl acetate (80 mL). The organic layers were washed with brine and dried over anhydrous  $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4$ , filtered and concentrated under reduced pressure. Purification by flash chromatography on silica gel with petroleum ether/dichloromethane = 15/1-10/1 as the eluent afforded the intermediate propargyl pyrrole intermediate **1a'** with an 86% yield.

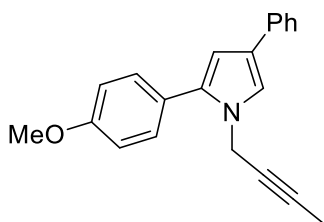
To a solution of the propargyl pyrrole intermediate **1a'** (1.40 g, 5.44 mmol) in anhydrous THF (50 mL) in Schlenk tube was added  $n$ -BuLi (2.5 M in THF, 3.7 mL, 8.16 mmol) at 0 °C. 2 h latter, MeI (580  $\mu$ L, 8.16 mmol) was added dropwise at 0 °C under nitrogen. About 1 h latter, after full conversion of propargyl pyrrole intermediate by TLC analysis, the resulting mixture was quenched with saturated solution of ammonium chloride, and extracted with ethyl acetate (100 mL). The organic layers were washed with brine and dried over anhydrous  $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4$ , filtered and concentrated under reduced pressure. Purification by flash chromatography on silica

gel with petroleum ether/dichloromethane = 20/1 as the eluent afforded the substrate propargyl pyrrole **1a**.



**1-(but-2-yn-1-yl)-2,4-diphenyl-1H-pyrrole (1a)**

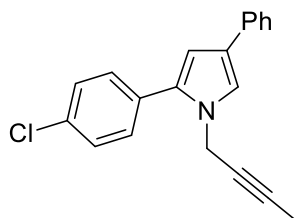
White solid, 77% yield of two steps, mp 86-88 °C; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 7.60-7.46 (m, 4H), 7.46-7.40 (m, 2H), 7.80-7.30 (m, 3H), 7.25 (s, 1H), 7.21-7.14 (m, 1H), 6.52 (s, 1H), 4.63 (s, 2H), 1.87 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 135.73, 135.45, 132.84, 128.99, 128.81, 128.78, 127.45, 125.76, 125.25, 125.08, 119.03, 106.85, 81.37, 74.35, 37.14, 3.32; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>20</sub>H<sub>18</sub>N [M+H]<sup>+</sup>: 272.1434, found 272.1430.



**1-(but-2-yn-1-yl)-2-(4-methoxyphenyl)-4-phenyl-1H-pyrrole (1b)**

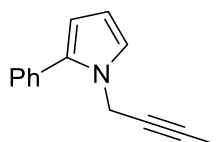
White solid, 57% yield of two steps, mp 96-98 °C; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 7.55 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.42 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.37-7.29 (m, 2H), 7.21 (s, 1H), 7.20-7.13 (m, 1H), 6.97 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 6.45 (s, 1H), 4.59 (s, 2H), 3.85 (s, 3H), 1.86 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 159.37, 135.87, 135.22, 130.40, 128.79, 1.86 (s, 3H);

125.68, 125.38, 125.24, 124.93, 118.40, 114.14, 106.31, 81.22, 74.46, 55.21, 36.99, 3.30; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{21}H_{20}NO$   $[M+H]^+$ : 302.1539, found 302.1542.



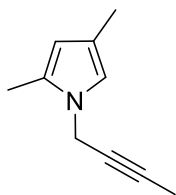
**1-(but-2-yn-1-yl)-2-(4-chlorophenyl)-4-phenyl-1H-pyrrole (1c)**

Yellowish solid, 50% yield of two steps, mp 119-121 °C;  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.54 (d,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 2H), 7.48-7.30 (m, 6H), 7.28-7.14 (m, 2H), 6.51 (s, 1H), 4.60 (d,  $J = 2.0$  Hz, 2H), 1.86 (s, 3H);  $^{13}C$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  135.54, 134.18, 133.46, 131.32, 130.15, 129.00, 128.85, 125.90, 125.27, 119.47, 107.22, 81.63, 74.18, 37.20, 3.29; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{20}H_{17}ClN$   $[M+H]^+$ : 306.1044, found 306.1046.



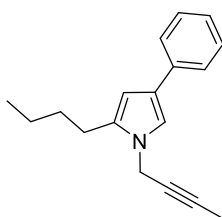
**1-(but-2-yn-1-yl)-2-phenyl-1H-pyrrole (1d)**

Yellowish oil, 64% yield of two steps;  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.51-7.28 (m, 5H), 6.95 (s, 1H), 6.26 (s, 1H), 6.22 (s, 1H), 4.61 (s, 2H), 1.84 (s, 3H);  $^{13}C$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  134.46, 133.19, 129.00, 128.68, 127.17, 122.32, 108.85, 108.61, 81.05, 74.56, 36.95, 3.25; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{14}H_{14}N$   $[M+H]^+$ : 196.1121, found 196.1119.



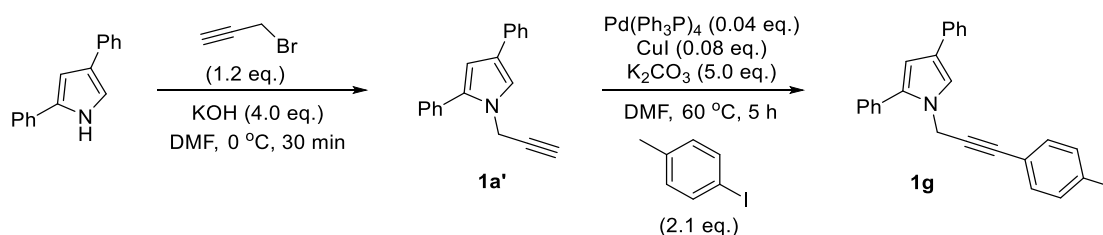
**1-(but-2-yn-1-yl)-2,4-dimethyl-1H-pyrrole (1e)**

Yellowish oil, 28% yield of two steps;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  1.81 (s, 3H), 2.05 (s, 3H), 2.22 (s, 3H), 4.44 (s, 2H), 5.73 (s, 1H), 6.44 (s, 1H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  3.19, 11.37, 11.48, 35.98, 74.05, 80.38, 108.76, 117.69, 128.48, 143.60; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{10}\text{H}_{14}\text{N}$   $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ : 148.1121, found 148.1120.



**1-(but-2-yn-1-yl)-2-butyl-4-phenyl-1H-pyrrole (1f)**

Yellowish oil, 36% yield of two steps;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  1.00 (t,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 3H), 1.40-1.50 (m, 2H), 1.62-1.70 (m, 2H), 1.84 (s, 3H), 2.60 (t,  $J = 8.0$  Hz, 2H), 4.54 (s, 2H), 6.22 (s, 1H), 7.01 (s, 1H), 7.10-7.16 (m, 1H), 7.27-7.33 (m, 2H), 7.49 (d,  $J = 8.0$  Hz, 2H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  3.24, 13.66, 22.28, 25.57, 30.64, 36.30, 73.76, 81.05, 104.34, 116.70, 123.77, 125.08, 125.31, 128.69, 134.56, 136.22; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{18}\text{H}_{22}\text{N}$   $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ : 252.1747, found 252.1747.



The first step was the same as that of **1a'**.

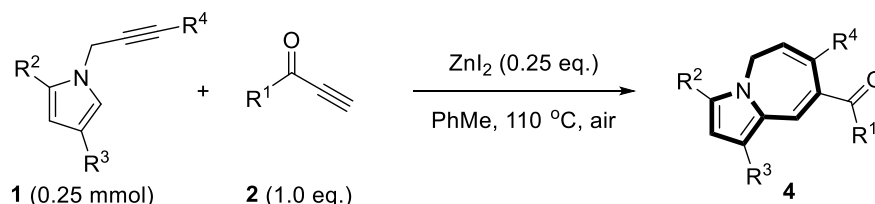
Under an atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>, to a 25 mL Schlenk tube were added propargyl pyrrole intermediate **1a'** (257.3 mg, 1 mmol), K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> (691.1 mg, 5 mmol), Pd (Ph<sub>3</sub>P)<sub>4</sub>, CuI (15.2 mg, 0.08 mmol), 4-methyl iodobenzene (457.9 mg, 2.1 mmol) and DMF (4 mL). Then, the mixture was heated to 60 °C. About 4.5 h latter, after full conversion of propargyl pyrrole intermediate **1a'** by TLC analysis, the resulting mixture was cooled to room temperature and quenched with saturated solution of ammonium chloride, and extracted with ethyl acetate (30 mL). The organic layers were washed with brine and dried over anhydrous Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, filtered and concentrated under reduced pressure. Purification by flash chromatography on silica gel with petroleum ether/dichloromethane = 50/1 as the eluent afforded the intermediate propargyl pyrrole **1g** with an 64% yield.

### 2,4-diphenyl-1-(3-(p-tolyl)prop-2-yn-1-yl)-1H-pyrrole (**1g**)

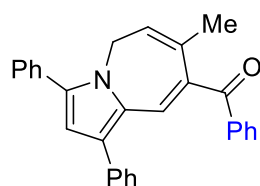
Yellow oil, 64%; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 7.59-7.52 (m, 4H), 7.47-7.42 (m, 2H), 7.37-7.30 (m, 6H), 7.20-7.15 (m, 1H), 7.14-7.09 (m, 2H), 6.55 (d, *J* = 1.6 Hz, 1H), 4.90 (s, 2H), 2.34 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 139.07, 135.70, 135.63, 132.86, 131.91, 129.31, 129.11, 128.84, 128.83, 127.55, 125.82, 125.29,

125.20, 119.44, 119.16, 107.07, 85.31, 83.49, 37.69, 21.22; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{26}H_{22}N$   $[M+H]^+$ : 348.1747, found 348.1749.

### Synthesis and characterization of **4**



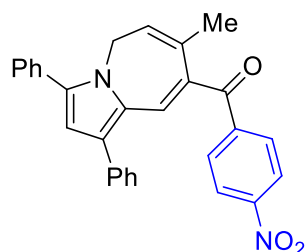
In air, to a solution of the corresponding propargyl pyrrole **1** (0.25 mmol) and alkynone **2** (0.25 mmol) in anhydrous PhMe (2.5 mL) in Schlenk tube was added  $ZnI_2$  (20.0 mg, 0.063 mmol). Then, the reaction temperature was increased to 110 °C. After the corresponding reaction time (see Figure 2 in the text), the solution was cooled to room temperature and concentrated under reduced pressure directly. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel with petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 40/1-5/1 as the eluent afforded **4**.



### (7-methyl-1,3-diphenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)(phenyl)methanone (**4a**)

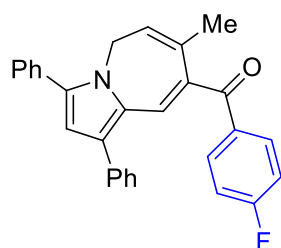
Yellow solid, 90% yield (91 mg), mp 71-73 °C;  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.91 (d,  $J$  = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.59-7.55 (m, 1H), 7.55-7.42 (m, 8H), 7.42-7.32 (m, 4H), 7.28-7.23 (m, 1H), 6.55 (s, 1H), 6.05 (t,  $J$  = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 4.40 (d,  $J$  = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 2.01 (s, 3H);  $^{13}C$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  198.11, 140.97, 138.73, 136.51, 135.36,

132.64, 132.12, 131.50, 129.88, 129.76, 129.16, 129.06, 128.69, 128.62, 128.44, 128.28, 128.08, 126.82, 124.87, 110.99, 42.95, 20.79; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{29}H_{23}NNaO$   $[M+Na]^+$ : 424.1672, found 424.1670.



**(7-methyl-1,3-diphenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)(4-nitrophenyl)methanone**

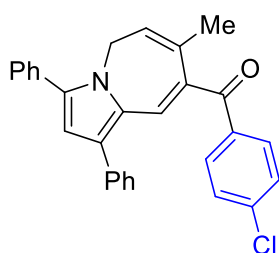
**(4b)**: Red solid, 87% yield (97 mg), mp 194-196 °C;  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  8.32 (d,  $J$  = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.99 (d,  $J$  = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.55-7.45 (m, 4H), 7.45-7.34 (m, 5H), 7.33-7.26 (m, 2H), 6.55 (s, 1H), 6.07 (t,  $J$  = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 4.39 (d,  $J$  = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 2.04 (s, 3H);  $^{13}C$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  195.79, 149.96, 144.58, 140.41, 137.65, 135.02, 133.90, 133.52, 131.76, 131.43, 130.33, 129.13, 129.03, 128.75, 128.46, 128.39, 128.31, 127.32, 125.23, 123.81, 111.44, 42.93, 20.95; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{29}H_{23}N_2O_3$   $[M+H]^+$ : 447.1703, found 447.1708.



**(4-fluorophenyl)(7-methyl-1,3-diphenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)methanone**

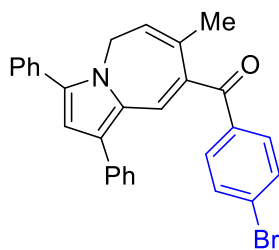
**(4c)**: Yellow solid, 91% yield (95 mg), mp 72-74 °C;  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  8.02-7.82 (m, 2H), 7.54-7.43 (m, 6H), 7.43-7.34 (m, 3H), 7.33-7.26 (m, 2H), 7.20-7.11 (m, 2H), 6.55 (s, 1H), 6.04 (t,  $J$  = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 4.40 (d,  $J$  = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 1.98

(s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  196.46, 165.73 (d,  $J_{\text{C-F}} = 253.7$  Hz), 140.81, 136.62, 135.34, 135.01, 134.91 (d,  $J_{\text{C-F}} = 2.7$  Hz), 132.26 (d,  $J_{\text{C-F}} = 9.1$  Hz), 132.06, 131.22, 130.04, 129.11, 129.08, 128.72, 128.46, 128.28, 128.13, 126.95, 124.89, 115.71 (d,  $J_{\text{C-F}} = 21.9$  Hz), 111.09, 42.95, 20.79; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{29}\text{H}_{23}\text{FNO}$   $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ : 420.1758, found 420.1758.



**(4-chlorophenyl)(7-methyl-1,3-diphenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)methanone**

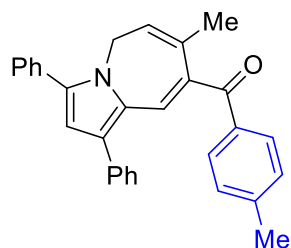
**(4d)**: Yellow solid, 91% yield (99 mg), mp 162-165 °C;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.85 (d,  $J = 8.0$  Hz, 2H), 7.67-7.32 (m, 11H), 7.32-7.21 (m, 2H), 6.55 (s, 1H), 6.04 (t,  $J = 6.4$  Hz, 1H), 4.39 (d,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 2H), 1.98 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  196.60, 140.75, 138.97, 137.06, 136.75, 135.27, 134.80, 132.02, 131.55, 131.10, 130.23, 129.08, 128.94, 128.73, 128.45, 128.27, 128.15, 127.00, 124.92, 111.13, 42.94, 20.82; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{29}\text{H}_{23}\text{ClNO}$   $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ : 436.1463, found 436.1461.



**(4-bromophenyl)(7-methyl-1,3-diphenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)methanone**

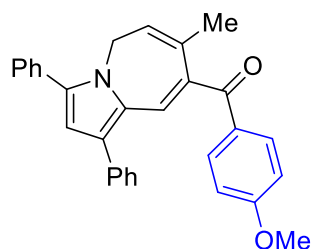


**e (4e):** Yellow solid, 95% yield (114 mg), mp 170-172 °C; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 7.77 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.62 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.53-7.35 (m, 9H), 7.34-7.26 (m, 2H), 6.56 (s, 1H), 6.04 (t, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 4.39 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 1.98 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 196.77, 140.74, 137.51, 136.79, 135.26, 134.75, 132.00, 131.94, 131.63, 131.23, 130.28, 129.08, 128.75, 128.45, 128.28, 128.17, 127.53, 127.02, 124.94, 111.14, 42.94, 20.84; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>29</sub>H<sub>23</sub>BrNO [M+H]<sup>+</sup>: 480.0958, found 480.0953.

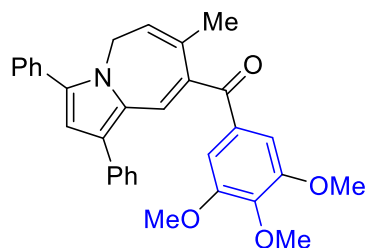


**(7-methyl-1,3-diphenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)(p-tolyl)methanone (4f)**

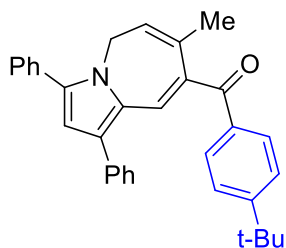
Yellow solid, 83% yield (86 mg), mp 165-176 °C; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 7.84 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.59-7.43 (m, 6H), 7.43-7.35 (m, 3H), 7.35-7.26 (m, 4H), 6.55 (s, 1H), 6.03 (t, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 4.40 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 2.44 (s, 3H), 1.99 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 197.78, 143.53, 141.06, 136.26, 135.88, 135.69, 135.44, 132.19, 130.73, 129.98, 129.52, 129.34, 129.18, 129.05, 128.69, 128.45, 128.28, 128.02, 126.75, 124.74, 110.93, 42.95, 21.42, 20.77; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>30</sub>H<sub>25</sub>NNaO [M+Na]<sup>+</sup>: 438.1828, found 438.1836.



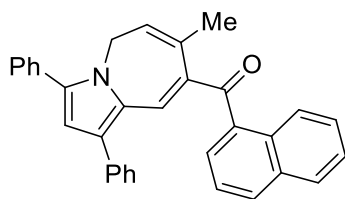
**(4-methoxyphenyl)(7-methyl-1,3-diphenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)methanone (4g):** Yellow solid, 71% yield (77 mg), mp 180-182 °C;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.94 (d,  $J$  = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.55-7.44 (m, 6H), 7.43-7.34 (m, 3H), 7.32-7.24 (m, 2H), 6.98 (d,  $J$  = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 6.55 (s, 1H), 6.03 (t,  $J$  = 6.4 Hz, 1H), 4.41 (d,  $J$  = 6.8 Hz, 2H), 3.89 (s, 3H), 1.97 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  196.77, 163.62, 141.08, 136.06, 135.77, 135.50, 132.22, 132.15, 131.08, 129.91, 129.25, 129.04, 128.69, 128.47, 128.25, 127.97, 126.72, 124.61, 113.83, 110.90, 55.39, 42.96, 20.74; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{30}\text{H}_{25}\text{NNaO}_2$   $[\text{M}+\text{Na}]^+$ : 454.1777, found 454.1785.



**(7-methyl-1,3-diphenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)(3,4,5-trimethoxyphenyl)methanone (4h):** Yellow solid, 73% yield (90 mg), mp 75-77 °C;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.52-7.43 (m, 6H), 7.42-7.33 (m, 4H), 7.29-7.23 (m, 1H), 7.14 (s, 2H), 6.56 (s, 1H), 6.04 (t,  $J$  = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 4.43 (d,  $J$  = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 3.93 (s, 3H), 3.85 (s, 6H), 2.00 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  197.32, 153.34, 142.28, 140.91, 136.41, 135.36, 135.18, 133.82, 132.04, 130.35, 129.49, 129.07, 128.72, 128.36, 128.23, 128.11, 126.93, 124.66, 111.12, 107.10, 60.88, 56.06, 43.04, 20.79; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{32}\text{H}_{29}\text{NNaO}_4$   $[\text{M}+\text{Na}]^+$ : 514.1989, found 514.1993.

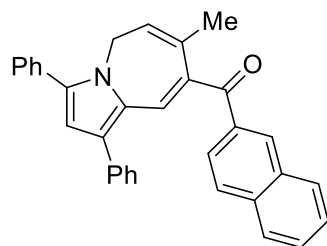


**(4-(tert-butyl)phenyl)(7-methyl-1,3-diphenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)methanone (4i):** Yellow solid, 87% yield (100 mg), mp 180-182 °C;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.87 (d,  $J$  = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.58-7.43 (m, 8H), 7.41-7.33 (m, 3H), 7.30 (s, 1H), 7.27-7.22 (m, 1H), 6.55 (s, 1H), 6.04 (t,  $J$  = 6.4 Hz, 1H), 4.40 (d,  $J$  = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 2.00 (s, 3H), 1.37 (s, 9H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  197.97, 156.47, 141.03, 136.29, 135.90, 135.65, 135.42, 132.16, 130.83, 129.83, 129.52, 129.28, 129.05, 128.63, 128.48, 128.25, 128.02, 126.70, 125.58, 124.72, 110.91, 42.97, 34.88, 30.92, 20.76; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{33}\text{H}_{31}\text{NNaO}$   $[\text{M}+\text{Na}]^+$ : 480.2298, found 480.2302.



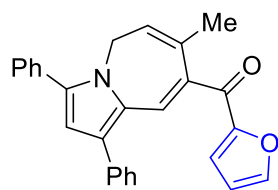
**(7-methyl-1,3-diphenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)(naphthalen-1-yl)methanone (4j):** Yellow solid, 81% yield (91 mg), mp 91-93 °C;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  8.32-8.20 (m, 1H), 8.02-7.85 (m, 2H), 7.77 (d,  $J$  = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 7.60-7.42 (m, 7H), 7.42-7.32 (m, 1H), 7.27-7.23 (m, 1H), 7.16-6.97 (m, 5H), 6.51 (s, 1H), 6.11 (t,  $J$  = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 4.38 (d,  $J$  = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 2.27 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  199.66, 140.87, 137.66, 137.21, 136.67, 134.71, 134.05, 131.96, 131.45, 131.17, 130.55, 129.08, 128.81, 128.51, 128.31, 128.21, 128.05, 127.87, 127.41, 126.64, 126.60, 125.78, 125.14, 124.87, 110.96, 42.88, 21.04; HRMS (ESI) calcd for

C<sub>33</sub>H<sub>25</sub>NNaO [M+Na]<sup>+</sup>: 474.1828, found 474.1835.



**(7-methyl-1,3-diphenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)(naphthalen-2-yl)methanone**

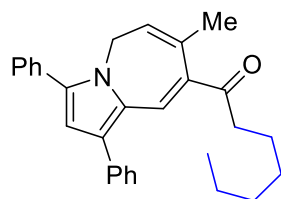
**e (4k):** Yellow solid, 94% yield (106 mg), mp 87-89 °C; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 8.48 (s, 1H), 8.06-7.88 (m, 4H), 7.68-7.60 (m, 2H), 7.59-7.43 (m, 7H), 7.43-7.35 (m, 2H), 7.25-7.20 (m, 1H), 7.18-7.09 (m, 1H), 6.56 (s, 2H), 6.09 (t, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 4.44 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 2.06 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 198.18, 141.02, 136.51, 135.92, 135.65, 135.62, 135.33, 132.66, 132.14, 131.43, 131.16, 129.79, 129.52, 129.17, 129.08, 128.78, 128.68, 128.49, 128.33, 128.28, 128.15, 128.10, 127.05, 126.71, 125.68, 125.02, 111.07, 43.02, 20.79; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>33</sub>H<sub>25</sub>NNaO [M+Na]<sup>+</sup>: 474.1828, found 474.1840.



**furan-2-yl(7-methyl-1,3-diphenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)methanone (4l)**

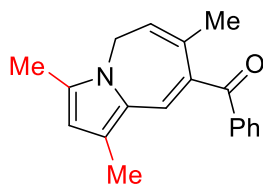
Yellow solid, 84% yield (81 mg), mp 158-160 °C; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 7.64 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.57 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.52-7.37 (m, 7H), 7.34-7.28 (m, 1H), 7.28-7.24 (m, 1H), 6.56 (s, 1H), 6.02 (t, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 4.39 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 1.99 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 184.05, 153.04, 146.85, 140.48, 136.48, 135.52, 134.63, 132.12, 130.27, 129.85, 129.23, 129.06, 128.68, 128.29, 128.07,

126.89, 124.91, 119.30, 112.35, 111.03, 42.89, 20.74; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{27}H_{21}NNaO_2$   $[M+Na]^+$ : 414.1464, found 414.1469.



**1-(7-methyl-1,3-diphenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)heptan-1-one (4m)**

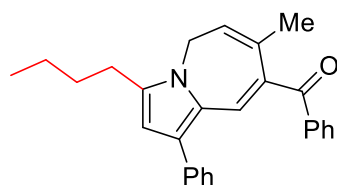
Yellow oil, 83% yield (68 mg, scale: 0.2 mmol);  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.61 (s, 1H), 7.55-7.42 (m, 8H), 7.41-7.36 (m, 1H), 7.36-7.31 (m, 1H), 6.56 (s, 1H), 5.97 (t,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 1H), 4.28 (d,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 2H), 2.76 (t,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 2H), 2.04 (s, 3H), 1.75-1.62 (m, 2H), 1.40-1.26 (m, 6H), 0.93-0.82 (m, 3H);  $^{13}C$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  203.10, 140.75, 136.61, 136.14, 135.53, 132.10, 130.00, 129.69, 129.05, 128.86, 128.44, 128.35, 128.08, 126.90, 124.85, 110.76, 42.67, 38.83, 31.45, 28.89, 25.20, 22.27, 21.25, 13.76; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{29}H_{32}NO$   $[M+H]^+$ : 410.2478, found 410.2479.



**phenyl(1,3,7-trimethyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)methanone (4n)**

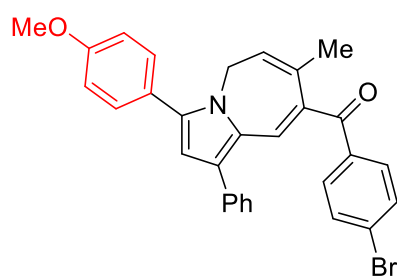
Yellow solid, 53% yield (37 mg), mp 102-105 °C;  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ )  $\delta$  1.87 (s, 3H), 2.08 (s, 3H), 2.24 (s, 2H), 4.21 (d,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 2H), 5.78 (t,  $J = 6.8$  Hz, 1H), 5.93 (s, 1H), 7.26 (s, 1H), 7.29 (s, 1H), 7.44-7.50 (m, 2H), 7.53-7.59 (m, 1H), 7.86 (d,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 2H);  $^{13}C$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ )  $\delta$  10.96, 11.75, 21.30, 41.44, 111.73, 121.49, 124.32, 127.73, 128.54, 129.71, 130.53, 131.25, 131.62, 132.29, 139.36,

140.29, 198.01; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{19}H_{20}NO$   $[M+H]^+$ : 278.1539, found 278.1541.



**(3-butyl-7-methyl-1-phenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)(phenyl)methanone (4o)**

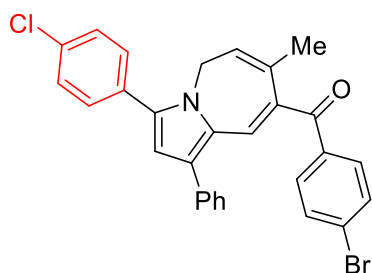
Yellow oil, 76% yield (73 mg);  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ )  $\delta$  0.98 (t,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 3H), 1.40-1.49 (m, 2H), 1.63-1.70 (m, 2H), 2.65 (t,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 2H), 4.27 (d,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 2H), 5.90 (t,  $J = 6.8$  Hz, 1H), 6.27 (s, 1H), 7.18-7.24 (m, 1H), 7.28-7.42 (m, 5H), 7.44-7.49 (m, 2H), 7.50-7.56 (m, 1H), 7.89 (d,  $J = 6.8$  Hz, 2H);  $^{13}C$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ )  $\delta$  13.60, 20.87, 22.23, 25.92, 30.30, 41.44, 108.90, 122.95, 126.51, 126.73, 128.36, 128.54, 128.57, 129.10, 129.66, 132.05, 132.40, 134.16, 135.61, 136.49, 138.95, 140.83, 198.25; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{27}H_{28}NO$   $[M+H]^+$ : 382.2165, found 382.2161.



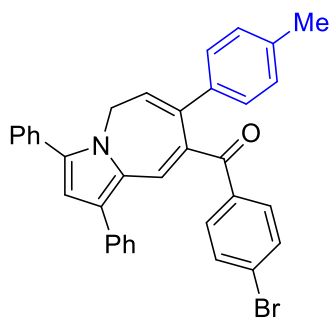
**(4-bromophenyl)(3-(4-methoxyphenyl)-7-methyl-1-phenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)methanone (4p)**

Yellow solid, 85% yield (87 mg, scale: 0.2 mmol), mp 170-172  $^{\circ}C$ ;  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.76 (d,  $J = 8.4$  Hz, 2H), 7.62 (d,  $J = 8.4$  Hz, 2H), 7.49-7.36 (m, 6H), 7.34-7.27 (m, 2H), 7.02 (d,  $J = 8.4$  Hz, 2H), 6.50 (s, 1H),

6.01 (t,  $J = 6.8$  Hz, 1H), 4.37 (d,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 2H), 3.88 (s, 3H), 1.98 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  196.81, 159.86, 140.77, 137.64, 136.76, 135.35, 134.31, 131.92, 131.87, 131.23, 130.33, 129.65, 128.74, 128.65, 128.45, 127.44, 126.98, 124.74, 124.45, 114.48, 110.73, 55.30, 42.90, 20.88; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{30}\text{H}_{25}\text{BrNO}_2$   $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ : 510.1063, found 510.1056.

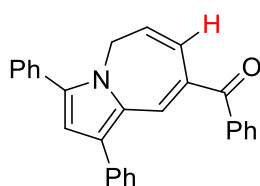


**(4-bromophenyl)(3-(4-chlorophenyl)-7-methyl-1-phenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)methanone (4q)**: Yellow solid, 83% yield (86 mg, scale: 0.2 mmol), mp 218-220 °C;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.77 (d,  $J = 8.0$  Hz, 2H), 7.62 (d,  $J = 8.0$  Hz, 2H), 7.51-7.35 (m, 8H), 7.34-7.27 (m, 2H), 6.53 (s, 1H), 6.02 (t,  $J = 6.4$  Hz, 1H), 4.36 (d,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 2H), 1.98 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  196.67, 140.90, 137.39, 135.40, 135.08, 134.12, 131.97, 131.34, 131.22, 130.46, 130.24, 129.44, 129.36, 128.79, 128.43, 127.65, 127.12, 124.75, 111.28, 42.94, 20.82; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{29}\text{H}_{22}\text{BrClNO}$   $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ : 514.0568, found 514.0567.



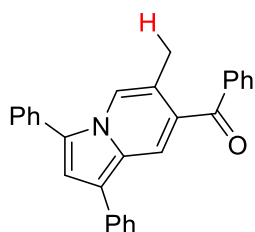
**(4-bromophenyl)(1,3-diphenyl-7-(p-tolyl)-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)methanone (4s)**: Yellow solid, 56% yield (62 mg, scale: 0.2 mmol), mp 188-190 °C;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR

(400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.79 (s, 1H), 7.68-7.30 (m, 14H), 7.13 (d,  $J$  = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.00 (d,  $J$  = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 6.61 (s, 1H), 6.27 (t,  $J$  = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 4.57 (d,  $J$  = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.25 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  196.21, 146.18, 137.89, 137.82, 137.53, 137.18, 135.27, 133.53, 132.91, 131.99, 131.55, 130.80, 129.60, 129.33, 129.10, 128.87, 128.57, 128.25, 127.47, 127.14, 126.94, 124.29, 111.42, 43.14, 20.84; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>35</sub>H<sub>27</sub>BrNO [M+H]<sup>+</sup>: 556.1271, found 556.1270.



**(1,3-diphenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl)(phenyl)methanone (4u)**

Yellow solid, 27% yield (26 mg), mp 133-135 °C; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.74 (d,  $J$  = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.60 (s, 1H), 7.55-7.45 (m, 5H), 7.45-7.30 (m, 7H), 7.26-7.23 (m, 1H), 7.02 (d,  $J$  = 10.4 Hz, 1H), 6.58 (s, 1H), 6.20-6.05 (m, 1H), 4.53 (d,  $J$  = 6.8 Hz, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  197.68, 138.86, 137.65, 135.22, 134.40, 132.31, 131.79, 131.71, 131.29, 130.52, 130.36, 129.40, 129.09, 128.73, 128.67, 128.41, 128.39, 127.05, 124.91, 112.29, 43.29; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>28</sub>H<sub>22</sub>NO [M+H]<sup>+</sup>: 388.1696, found 388.1694.



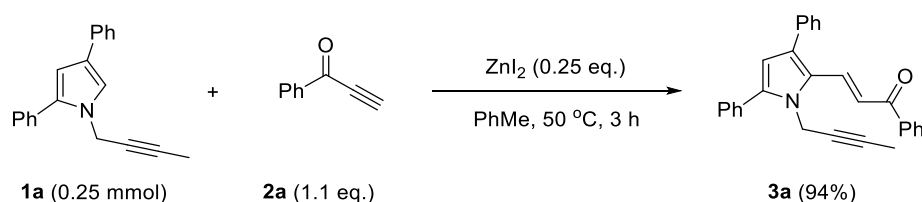
**(6-methyl-1,3-diphenylindolizin-7-yl)(phenyl)methanone (4u')**

Yellow solid, 38% yield (37 mg), mp 144-146 °C; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  8.10 (s, 1H), 7.92 (s, 1H), 7.88 (d,  $J$  = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.64 (d,  $J$  = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.60-7.32



(m, 10H), 7.28-7.20 (m, 1H), 7.07 (s, 1H), 2.33 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  196.50, 138.68, 135.62, 132.91, 131.82, 130.27, 129.39, 129.11, 128.63, 128.55, 128.15, 127.81, 127.72, 126.29, 123.27, 121.42, 120.05, 120.01, 115.05, 17.69; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{28}\text{H}_{22}\text{NO}$   $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ : 388.1696, found 388.1690.

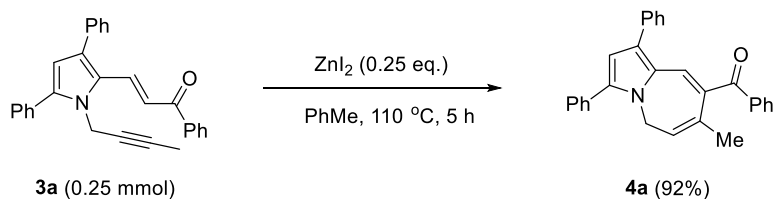
### Control experiments



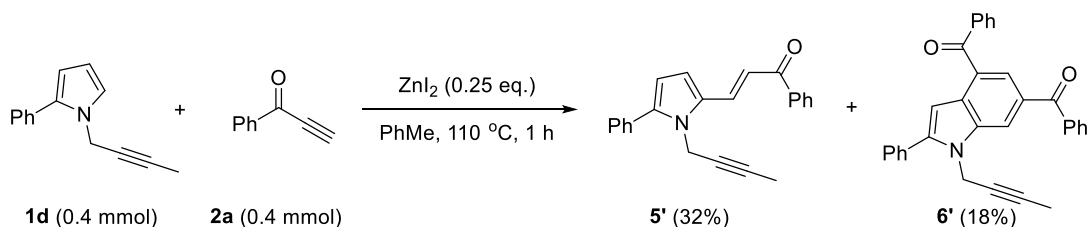
In air, to a solution of propargyl pyrrole **1a** (0.25 mmol) and alkynone **2a** (0.25 mmol) in anhydrous PhMe (2.5 mL) in Schlenk tube was added  $\text{ZnI}_2$  (20.0 mg, 0.063 mmol). Then, the reaction temperature was increased to 50 °C. After 3 hours, the solution was concentrated under reduced pressure directly. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel with petroleum ether/DCM = 2/1 as the eluent afforded **3a**.

### (E)-3-(1-(but-2-yn-1-yl)-3,5-diphenyl-1H-pyrrol-2-yl)-1-phenylprop-2-en-1-one

(**3a**): Yellow solid, 94% yield (94 mg), mp 131-133 °C;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  8.09-7.88 (m, 3H), 7.79-7.61 (m, 3H), 7.55-7.41 (m, 10H), 7.38-7.32 (m, 1H), 6.45 (s, 1H), 4.73 (s, 2H), 2.02 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  190.10, 141.10, 139.12, 136.02, 133.68, 132.81, 132.54, 131.97, 129.50, 129.15, 129.06, 128.87, 128.67, 128.49, 128.30, 127.34, 118.07, 111.90, 82.56, 75.56, 37.02, 3.49; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{29}\text{H}_{23}\text{NNaO}$   $[\text{M}+\text{Na}]^+$ : 424.1672, found 424.1677.



Under air atmosphere, to a solution of **3a** (0.25 mmol) in anhydrous PhMe (2.5 mL) in Schlenk tube was added  $\text{ZnI}_2$  (20.0 mg, 0.063 mmol). Then, the reaction temperature was increased to 110 °C. After 5 hours, the solution was concentrated under reduced pressure directly. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel with petroleum ether/DCM = 3/1-2/1 as the eluent afforded **4a**.



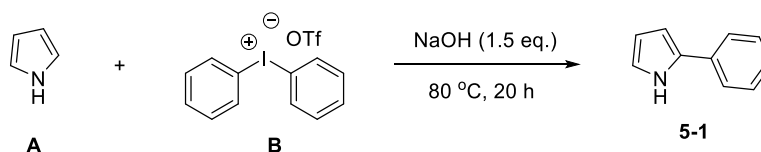
Under air atmosphere, to a solution of the propargyl pyrrole **1d** (78.1 mg, 0.4 mmol) and alkynone **2a** (52.0 mg, 0.4 mmol) in anhydrous PhMe (6 mL) in Schlenk tube was added  $\text{ZnI}_2$  (32.0 mg, 0.25 equiv). Then, the reaction temperature was increased to 110 °C. About 1 hour, after full conversion of alkynone **2a** by TLC analysis, the solution was concentrated under reduced pressure directly. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel with petroleum ether/ ethyl acetate = 20/1-10/1 as the eluent to afford **5'** and **6'**.

**5'**: yellow oil, 32% yield (41.6 mg);  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  8.05 (d,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 2H), 7.99 (d,  $J = 15.2$  Hz, 1H), 7.60-7.42 (m, 8H), 7.41-7.34 (m, 1H), 6.92 (d,  $J = 3.6$  Hz, 1H), 6.35 (d,  $J = 3.6$  Hz, 1H), 4.71 (s, 2H), 1.89 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,

CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  190.36, 140.50, 139.12, 133.11, 132.52, 132.10, 131.70, 129.03, 128.96, 128.70, 128.49, 128.23, 117.37, 113.87, 111.12, 82.09, 74.52, 35.17, 3.36; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>23</sub>H<sub>20</sub>NO [M+H]<sup>+</sup>: 326.1539, found 326.1536.

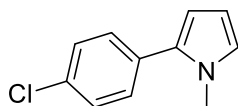
**6'**: yellow oil, 18% yield (32.0 mg); <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  8.31 (s, 1H), 7.98 (s, 1H), 7.93-7.75 (m, 4H), 7.66 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.60-7.40 (m, 9H), 7.09 (s, 1H), 4.89 (s, 2H), 1.85 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  197.17, 196.70, 147.04, 138.73, 138.56, 138.03, 132.60, 132.36, 131.46, 131.17, 130.27, 129.55, 129.25, 129.09, 128.73, 128.49, 128.40, 127.07, 116.95, 103.74, 81.68, 73.57, 34.62, 3.28; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>32</sub>H<sub>23</sub>NNaO<sub>2</sub> [M+Na]<sup>+</sup>: 476.1621, found 476.1623.

### Synthesis and characterization of **5**



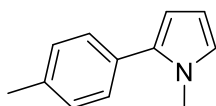
Under an atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>, to a 100 mL Schlenk tube were added pyrrole **A** (50 mL), **B** (12.91 g, 30 mmol)<sup>2</sup>, and NaOH (1.8 g, 45 mmol). Then, the mixture was heated to 80 °C. About 10 h latter, after full conversion of **B** by TLC analysis, the resulting mixture was cooled to room temperature and quenched with saturated solution of ammonium chloride, and extracted with ethyl acetate (80 mL). The organic layers were washed with brine and dried over anhydrous Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, filtered and concentrated under reduced pressure. Purification by flash chromatography on silica gel with petroleum ether/ethyl acetate/dichloromethane = 50/1/10 as the eluent afforded the intermediate 2-phenyl pyrrole **5-1**<sup>3</sup> with a 70% yield. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz,

CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  8.42 (s, 1H), 7.47 (d,  $J$  = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.39-7.32 (m, 2H), 7.24-7.15 (m, 1H), 6.90-6.80 (m, 1H), 6.55-6.45 (m, 1H), 6.35-6.25 (m, 1H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  133.02, 132.37, 129.11, 126.41, 124.05, 118.99, 110.26, 106.07.



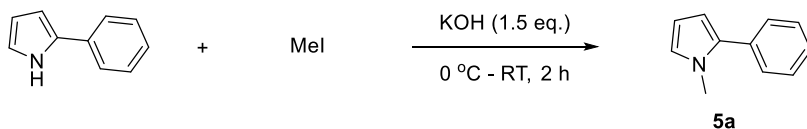
#### 2-(4-chlorophenyl)-1-methyl-1H-pyrrole (5b)<sup>4</sup>

Yellow oil, 68% yield (reacted with *N*-Me pyrrole); <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.50-7.28 (m, 4H), 6.72 (s, 1H), 6.30-6.10 (m, 2H), 3.65 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  133.59, 132.92, 132.02, 130.00, 128.78, 124.25, 109.12, 108.06, 34.84.



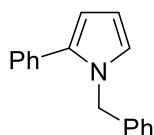
#### 1-methyl-2-(p-tolyl)-1H-pyrrole (5c)<sup>4</sup>

Yellow oil, 51% yield (reacted with *N*-Me pyrrole); <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  7.30 (d,  $J$  = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.20 (d,  $J$  = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 6.70 (s, 1H), 6.19 (d,  $J$  = 2.0 Hz, 2H), 3.65 (s, 3H), 2.38 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  136.76, 134.88, 130.70, 129.27, 128.84, 123.50, 108.41, 107.76, 34.76, 20.88.



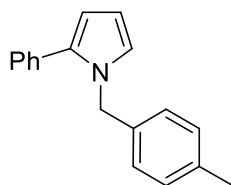
Under an atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>, to a 100 mL Schlenk tube were added 2-phenyl pyrrole (897.1 mg, 6.26 mmol), KOH (1.76 g, 31.3 mmol), DMF (30 mL) and MeI (507  $\mu$ L, 8.14 mmol) at room temperature. About 30 min latter, after full conversion of 2-phenyl pyrrole by TLC analysis, the resulting mixture was quenched with saturated solution of ammonium chloride, and extracted with ethyl acetate (50 mL).

The organic layers were washed with brine and dried over anhydrous Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, filtered and concentrated under reduced pressure. Purification by flash chromatography on silica gel with petroleum ether/dichloromethane = 40/1 as the eluent afforded **5a** with an 89% yield. **1-methyl-2-phenyl-1H-pyrrole (5a)**<sup>3</sup> white solid; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 7.56-7.29 (m, 5H), 6.76 (s, 1H), 6.40-6.20 (m, 2H), 3.71 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 134.82, 133.56, 128.83, 128.54, 126.90, 123.81, 108.73, 107.85, 34.80.



#### **1-benzyl-2-phenyl-1H-pyrrole (5d)**<sup>5</sup>

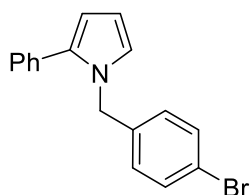
Using the synthetic method of **5a** (Benzyl bromide was used in place of MeI). **5d**: Yellow oil, 68% yield; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 7.37-7.20 (m, 8H), 7.01 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 6.75 (s, 1H), 6.28 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 2H), 5.15 (s, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 139.10, 135.23, 133.51, 129.11, 128.89, 128.59, 127.52, 127.19, 126.67, 123.08, 109.00, 108.61, 50.51.



#### **1-(4-methylbenzyl)-2-phenyl-1H-pyrrole (5e)**

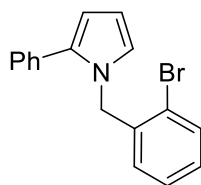
Using the synthetic method of **5a** (Corresponding benzyl bromide was used in place of MeI). **5e**: Yellowish oil, 63% yield; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 7.36-7.24 (m, 5H), 7.10 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 6.92 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 6.73 (s, 1H), 6.27 (d, *J* = 1.6

Hz, 2H), 5.11 (s, 2H), 2.32 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  137.23, 136.01, 135.18, 133.54, 129.56, 129.08, 128.58, 127.13, 126.66, 123.01, 108.88, 108.52, 50.26, 20.79; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{18}\text{H}_{17}\text{NNa}$   $[\text{M}+\text{Na}]^+$ : 270.1253, found 270.1258.



#### 1-(4-bromobenzyl)-2-phenyl-1H-pyrrole (**5f**)

Using the synthetic method of **5a** (Corresponding benzyl bromide was used in place of MeI). **5f**: Yellowish oil, 87% yield;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.40 (d,  $J = 8.4$  Hz, 2H), 7.36-1.25 (m, 5H), 6.85 (d,  $J = 8.4$  Hz, 2H), 6.73 (s, 1H), 6.28 (s, 2H), 5.09 (s, 2H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  138.13, 135.19, 133.31, 132.00, 129.07, 128.66, 128.33, 127.33, 122.95, 121.38, 109.27, 108.90, 49.97; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{17}\text{H}_{14}\text{BrNNa}$   $[\text{M}+\text{Na}]^+$ : 334.0202, found 334.0207.

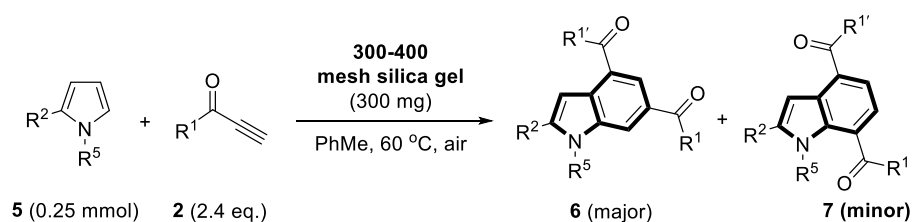


#### 1-(2-bromobenzyl)-2-phenyl-1H-pyrrole (**5g**)

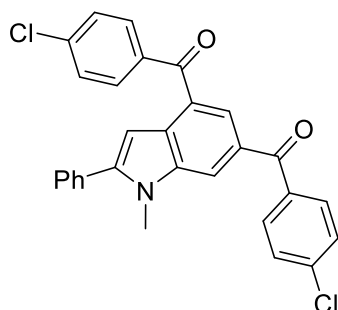
Using the synthetic method of **5a** (Corresponding benzyl bromide was used in place of MeI). **5g**: White solid, 70% yield, mp 58-60  $^{\circ}\text{C}$ ;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.52 (d,  $J = 8.0$  Hz, 1H), 7.29-7.15 (m, 6H), 7.15-7.00 (m, 1H), 6.72 (s, 1H), 6.64 (d,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 1H), 6.32 (s, 2H), 5.18 (s, 2H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  138.48,

135.20, 133.14, 132.74, 129.02, 128.71, 128.68, 128.14, 128.07, 127.22, 123.21, 121.79, 109.24, 108.97, 50.92; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{17}H_{14}BrNNa$   $[M+Na]^+$ : 334.0202, found 334.0200.

### Synthesis and characterization of 6 and 7



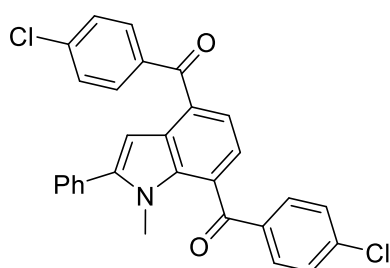
In air, to a solution of the corresponding pyrrole **5** (0.25 mmol) and alkynone **2** (0.6 mmol, 2.4 equiv) in anhydrous PhMe (5 mL) in Schlenk tube was added 300-400 mesh silica gel (300 mg). Then, the reaction temperature was increased to 60 °C. After the corresponding reaction time (see Figure 3 in the text), the solution was cooled to room temperature and concentrated carefully under reduced pressure directly. To determine the ratio of product, the residue was first dissolved in  $CDCl_3$ , and some samples were taken for NMR analysis. Then the sample for analysis and the rest mixture were recombined for column chromatographic purification using petroleum ether/ethyl acetate (from 30/1 to 10/1) as the eluent to give the **6** and **7**.



(1-methyl-2-phenyl-1H-indole-4,6-diyl)bis((4-chlorophenyl)methanone) (**6a**)

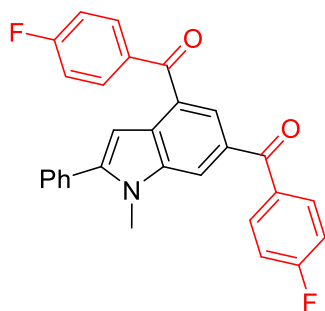
74% (total yield of **6a** and **7a**).

**6a:** yellow solid, mp 206-208 °C;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  8.11 (s, 1H), 7.87 (s, 1H), 7.85-7.71 (m, 4H), 7.58-7.41 (m, 9H), 7.01 (s, 1H), 3.88 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  195.89, 195.51, 148.19, 139.20, 138.95, 138.87, 136.97, 136.83, 131.66, 131.56, 130.93, 129.70, 129.65, 129.26, 129.02, 128.90, 128.36, 126.17, 116.32, 103.43, 31.46; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{29}\text{H}_{20}\text{Cl}_2\text{NO}_2$   $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ : 484.0866, found 484.0853.



**(1-methyl-2-phenyl-1H-indole-4,7-diyl)bis((4-chlorophenyl)methanone) (7a)**

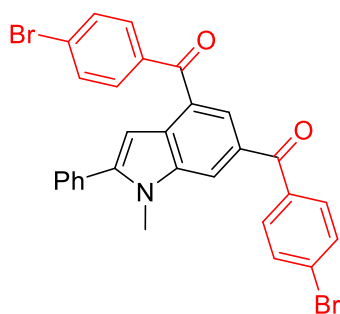
Yellow solid, mp 181-183 °C;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.94 (d,  $J = 8.4$  Hz, 2H), 7.84 (d,  $J = 8.4$  Hz, 2H), 7.57-7.38 (m, 10H), 7.28-7.24 (m, 1H), 6.97 (s, 1H), 3.49 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  196.09, 195.46, 146.45, 140.69, 139.27, 137.04, 136.90, 136.15, 132.21, 131.80, 131.40, 129.80, 129.44, 129.29, 128.86, 126.71, 122.33, 122.26, 103.09, 35.07; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{29}\text{H}_{20}\text{Cl}_2\text{NO}_2$   $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ : 484.0866, found 484.0863.





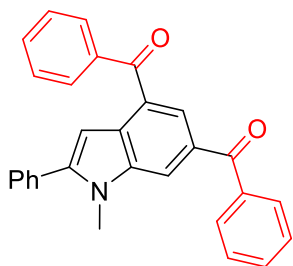
**(1-methyl-2-phenyl-1H-indole-4,6-diyl)bis((4-fluorophenyl)methanone) (6b)**

71% (79 mg, **6b** and **7b**, 11/1). **6b**: yellow solid, mp 47-49 °C; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 8.13 (s, 1H), 7.94-7.82 (m, 5H), 7.59-7.45 (m, 5H), 7.21-7.09 (m, 4H), 6.99 (s, 1H), 3.89 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 195.68, 195.37, 165.79 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 254.0 Hz), 165.56 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 253.7 Hz), 147.98, 138.95, 134.82 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 16.3 Hz), 134.79 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 16.6 Hz), 132.83 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 9.2 Hz), 132.70 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 9.1 Hz), 131.63, 130.86, 129.90, 129.63, 129.20, 128.99, 128.50, 126.12, 116.13, 115.63 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 21.3 Hz), 103.33, 31.43; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>29</sub>H<sub>20</sub>F<sub>2</sub>NO<sub>2</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup>: 452.1457, found 452.1456.



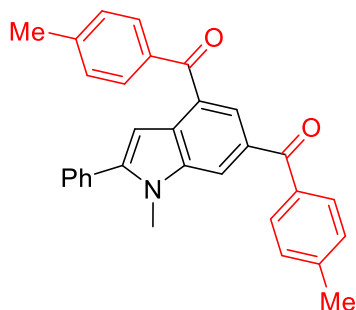
**(1-methyl-2-phenyl-1H-indole-4,6-diyl)bis((4-bromophenyl)methanone) (6c)**

73% (105 mg, **6c** and **7c**, 12/1). **6c**: yellow solid, mp 225-227 °C; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 8.11 (s, 1H), 7.87 (s, 1H), 7.82-7.35 (m, 13H), 7.01 (s, 1H), 3.88 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 196.05, 195.64, 148.23, 138.93, 137.39, 137.25, 131.89, 131.77, 131.67, 131.57, 130.93, 129.64, 129.26, 129.01, 128.29, 127.80, 127.40, 126.18, 116.36, 103.43, 31.46; HRMS (EI) calcd for C<sub>29</sub>H<sub>19</sub>Br<sub>2</sub>NO<sub>2</sub> [M]<sup>+</sup>: 570.9783, found 570.9785.



**(1-methyl-2-phenyl-1H-indole-4,6-diyl)bis(phenylmethanone) (6d)**

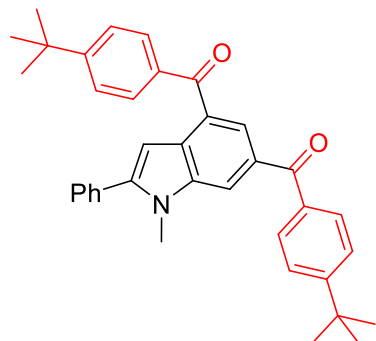
80% (82 mg, **6d** and **7d**, 13/1). **6d**: yellow solid, mp 44-46 °C;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  8.17 (s, 1H), 7.95 (s, 1H), 7.90-7.72 (m, 4H), 7.62-7.35 (m, 11H), 7.08 (s, 1H), 3.86 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  197.25, 196.79, 147.88, 138.99, 138.76, 138.57, 132.56, 132.29, 131.74, 130.91, 130.22, 130.13, 129.94, 129.61, 129.07, 128.92, 128.44, 126.92, 116.25, 103.49, 31.39; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{29}\text{H}_{22}\text{NO}_2$   $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ : 416.1645, found 416.1643.



**(1-methyl-2-phenyl-1H-indole-4,6-diyl)bis(p-tolylmethanone) (6e)**

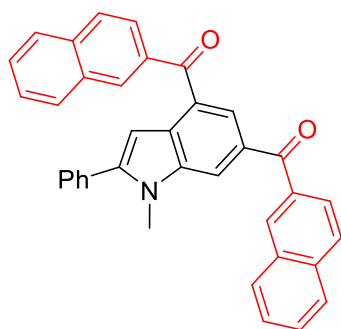
74% (82 mg, **6e** and **7e**, 11/1). **6e**: yellow solid, mp 222-224 °C;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  8.13 (s, 1H), 7.92 (s, 1H), 7.85-7.66 (m, 4H), 7.65-7.37 (m, 5H), 7.34-7.21 (m, 4H), 7.02 (s, 1H), 3.87 (s, 3H), 2.44 (s, 3H), 2.42 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  197.04, 196.73, 147.46, 143.47, 143.11, 138.93, 135.99, 135.84, 131.86, 130.72, 130.53, 130.46, 130.38, 129.64, 129.39, 129.20, 129.17, 129.00, 128.91,

126.26, 115.93, 103.34, 31.39, 21.36; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{31}H_{26}NO_2$   $[M+H]^+$ : 444.1958, found 444.1958.



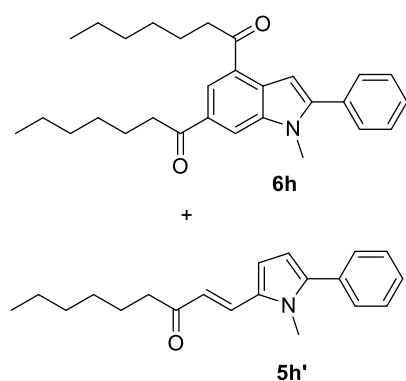
**(1-methyl-2-phenyl-1H-indole-4,6-diyl)bis((4-(tert-butyl)phenyl)methanone) (6f)**

67% (88 mg, **6f** and **7f**, 9/1). **6f**: yellow solid mp 79-81 °C;  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  8.18 (s, 1H), 7.96 (s, 1H), 7.91-7.70 (m, 4H), 7.65-7.30 (m, 9H), 7.11 (s, 1H), 3.89 (s, 3H), 1.37 (s, 9H), 1.36 (s, 9H);  $^{13}C$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  196.94, 196.56, 156.36, 156.11, 147.63, 139.05, 136.02, 135.83, 131.91, 130.81, 130.37, 130.30, 130.25, 129.65, 129.01, 128.93, 128.67, 126.83, 125.41, 115.95, 103.47, 34.86, 31.44, 30.92; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{37}H_{38}NO_2$   $[M+H]^+$ : 528.2897, found 528.2894.



**(1-methyl-2-phenyl-1H-indole-4,6-diyl)bis(naphthalen-2-ylmethanone) (6g)**

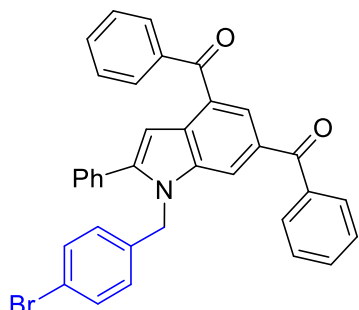
81% (104 mg, **6g** and **7g**, 11/1). **6g**: orange solid, mp 68-70 °C;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  8.34 (d,  $J = 10.0$  Hz, 2H), 8.25 (s, 1H), 8.05 (s, 1H), 8.03-7.75 (m, 8H), 7.68-7.35 (m, 9H), 7.11 (s, 1H), 3.90 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  197.27, 196.97, 147.89, 139.11, 136.01, 135.88, 135.52, 135.32, 132.56, 132.51, 132.06, 131.80, 131.65, 131.00, 130.44, 129.68, 129.56, 129.11, 128.96, 128.88, 128.45, 128.42, 128.35, 128.00, 126.95, 126.85, 126.67, 126.17, 125.99, 116.22, 103.48, 31.49; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{37}\text{H}_{26}\text{NO}_2$   $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ : 516.1958, found 516.1955.



54% (58 mg, **6h** and **5h'**, 1/1), yellow oil; **6h**:  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  8.43 (s, 1H), 8.23 (s, 1H), 7.70-7.27 (m, 6H), 3.87 (s, 3H), 3.25-3.00 (m, 4H), 1.75-1.60 (m, 4H), 1.50-1.25 (m, 12H), 1.00-0.75 (m, 6H); **5h'**:  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  6.81 (d,  $J = 3.6$  Hz, 1H), 6.59 (d,  $J = 15.6$  Hz, 1H), 6.30 (d,  $J = 4.0$  Hz, 1H), 3.87 (s, 3H), 2.59 (t,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 2H), 1.80-1.75 (m, 2H) other peaks are overlapped with the signals of **6h**;  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  202.24, 200.76, 200.46, 148.35, 140.52, 139.41, 132.48, 131.82, 131.30, 130.50, 129.99, 129.61, 129.20, 129.05, 128.92, 128.77, 128.40, 127.97, 122.86, 120.85, 114.59, 112.35, 110.95, 104.35, 41.60, 39.45, 38.47, 32.07, 31.50, 31.44, 31.30, 28.89, 28.83, 24.50, 24.41, 22.28, 22.26, 13.75; **6h**:

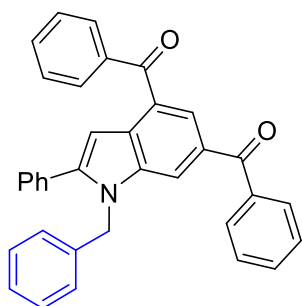
HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{29}H_{38}NO_2$   $[M+H]^+$ : 432.2897, found 432.2896; **5h'**: HRMS

(ESI) calcd for  $C_{20}H_{26}NO$   $[M+H]^+$ : 296.2009, found 296.2010.



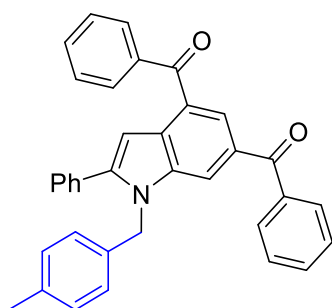
**(1-(4-bromobenzyl)-2-phenyl-1H-indole-4,6-diyl)bis(phenylmethanone) (6i)**

69% (98 mg, **6i** and **7i**, 11/1). **6i**: yellow solid, mp 63-65 °C;  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.98 (s, 1H), 7.93-7.83 (m, 3H), 7.67 (d,  $J$  = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.60-7.37 (m, 13H), 7.20 (s, 1H), 6.87 (d,  $J$  = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 5.43 (s, 2H);  $^{13}C$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  197.25, 196.41, 147.89, 138.61, 138.18, 138.01, 136.44, 132.71, 132.34, 131.54, 131.29, 130.31, 130.17, 129.42, 129.37, 129.11, 128.95, 128.55, 128.41, 127.93, 127.05, 121.73, 117.33, 104.31, 47.31; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{35}H_{25}BrNO_2$   $[M+H]^+$ : 570.1063, found 570.1057.



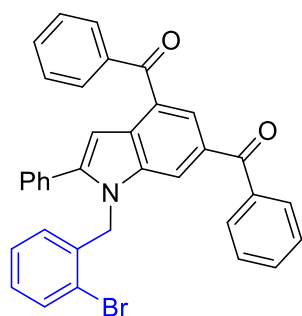
**(1-benzyl-2-phenyl-1H-indole-4,6-diyl)bis(phenylmethanone) (6j)**

74% (91 mg, **6j** and **7j**, 10/1). **6j**: yellow solid, mp 39-41 °C; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 7.99 (s, 1H), 7.95-7.81 (m, 3H), 7.66 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 7.60-7.26 (m, 14H), 7.21 (s, 1H), 7.08-6.90 (m, 2H), 5.48 (s, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 197.30, 196.37, 148.03, 138.70, 138.22, 138.14, 137.40, 132.62, 132.23, 131.71, 131.22, 130.29, 130.16, 129.98, 129.47, 129.23, 129.16, 129.01, 128.83, 128.51, 128.36, 127.82, 126.96, 126.17, 117.65, 104.10, 47.82; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>35</sub>H<sub>26</sub>NO<sub>2</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup>: 492.1958, found 492.1954.



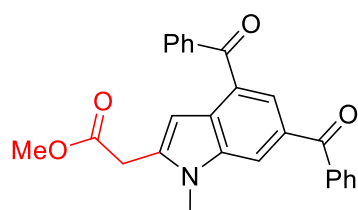
**(1-(4-methylbenzyl)-2-phenyl-1H-indole-4,6-diyl)bis(phenylmethanone) (6k)**

69% (88 mg, **6k** and **7k**, 13/1). **6k**: yellow solid, mp 60-62 °C; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 7.97 (s, 1H), 7.94-7.83 (m, 3H), 7.68 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.60-7.32 (m, 11H), 7.19 (s, 1H), 7.11 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 6.89 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 5.45 (s, 2H), 2.34 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 197.35, 196.44, 148.06, 138.75, 138.30, 138.20, 137.52, 134.37, 132.62, 132.23, 131.79, 131.24, 130.31, 130.22, 129.95, 129.83, 129.50, 129.21, 129.01, 128.77, 128.52, 128.34, 126.97, 126.13, 117.71, 104.03, 47.65, 20.82; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>36</sub>H<sub>28</sub>NO<sub>2</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup>: 506.2115, found 506.2112.



**(1-(2-bromobenzyl)-2-phenyl-1H-indole-4,6-diyl)bis(phenylmethanone) (6l)**

71% (102 mg, **6l** and **7l**, 12/1). **6l**: yellow solid, mp 164-166 °C;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.98 (s, 1H), 7.91 (d,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 2H), 7.87 (s, 1H), 7.70 (d,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 2H), 7.64-7.55 (m, 2H), 7.54-7.31 (m, 10H), 7.24 (s, 1H), 7.21-7.11 (m, 2H), 6.61 (d,  $J = 6.4$  Hz, 1H), 5.50 (s, 2H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  197.25, 196.42, 147.99, 138.67, 138.30, 138.22, 136.45, 133.28, 132.71, 132.37, 131.40, 131.22, 130.39, 130.33, 130.18, 129.37, 129.23, 129.14, 128.89, 128.55, 128.40, 128.24, 127.40, 127.22, 121.84, 117.05, 104.32, 48.34; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{35}\text{H}_{25}\text{BrNO}_2$   $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ : 570.1063, found 570.1061.

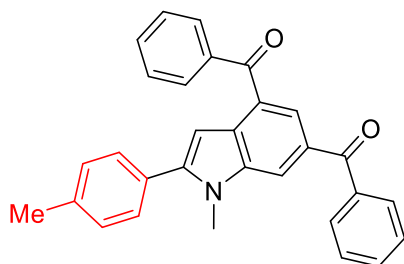


**methyl 2-(4,6-dibenzoyl-1-methyl-1H-indol-2-yl)acetate (6m)**

71% (102 mg, **6m** and **7m**, >20/1). **6m**: yellow oil;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  3.75 (s, 3H), 3.83 (s, 3H), 3.92 (s, 2H), 6.94 (s, 1H), 7.43-7.50 (m, 4H), 7.53-7.60 (m, 2H), 7.79-7.85 (m, 4H), 7.89 (s, 1H), 8.10 (s, 1H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  30.17, 33.04, 52.44, 104.00, 115.85, 126.62, 128.36, 128.44, 129.94, 130.14, 130.21,

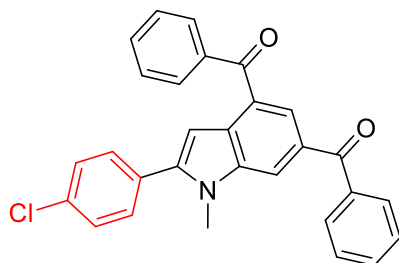
130.48, 132.34, 132.56, 138.30, 138.49, 138.70, 139.26, 169.92, 196.86, 197.21;

HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{26}H_{22}NO_4$   $[M+H]^+$ : 412.1543, found 412.1543.



**(1-methyl-2-(p-tolyl)-1H-indole-4,6-diyl)bis(phenylmethanone) (6n)**

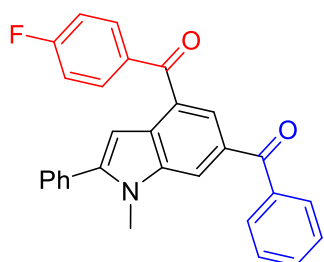
70% (75 mg, **6n** and **7n**, 17/1). **6n**: yellow oil,  $^1H$  NMR (400 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  8.16 (s, 1H), 7.94 (s, 1H), 7.90-7.78 (m, 4H), 7.61-7.54 (m, 2H), 7.51-7.41 (m, 6H), 7.32 (d,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 2H), 7.05 (s, 1H), 3.87 (s, 3H), 2.44 (s, 3H);  $^{13}C$  NMR (100 MHz,  $CDCl_3$ ):  $\delta$  197.33, 196.87, 148.15, 139.26, 139.00, 138.83, 138.66, 132.56, 132.29, 131.05, 130.25, 130.16, 129.78, 129.68, 129.54, 128.84, 128.46, 128.31, 126.99, 116.20, 103.24, 31.40, 21.08; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $C_{30}H_{24}NO_2$   $[M+H]^+$ : 430.1802, found 430.1801.



**(2-(4-chlorophenyl)-1-methyl-1H-indole-4,6-diyl)bis(phenylmethanone) (6o)**

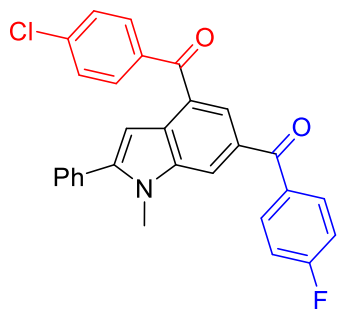


76% (86 mg, **6o** and **7o**, 9/1). **6o**: yellow solid, mp 171-173 °C; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 8.16 (s, 1H), 7.94 (s, 1H), 7.90-7.78 (m, 4H), 7.61-7.42 (m, 10H), 7.08 (s, 1H), 3.86 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 197.22, 196.78, 146.47, 139.08, 138.67, 138.49, 135.37, 132.66, 132.40, 130.84, 130.25, 130.16, 129.27, 128.49, 126.99, 116.30, 103.78, 31.42; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>29</sub>H<sub>21</sub>ClNO<sub>2</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup>: 450.1255, found 450.1252.



After the complete conversion of **5a** and **2a** (1:1) with 300-400 mesh silica gel at room temperature, 1.1 equiv of 1-(4-fluorophenyl)prop-2-yn-1-one (**2c**) was added and the reaction was heated to 60 °C for another 4 days. (scale: 0.25 mmol)

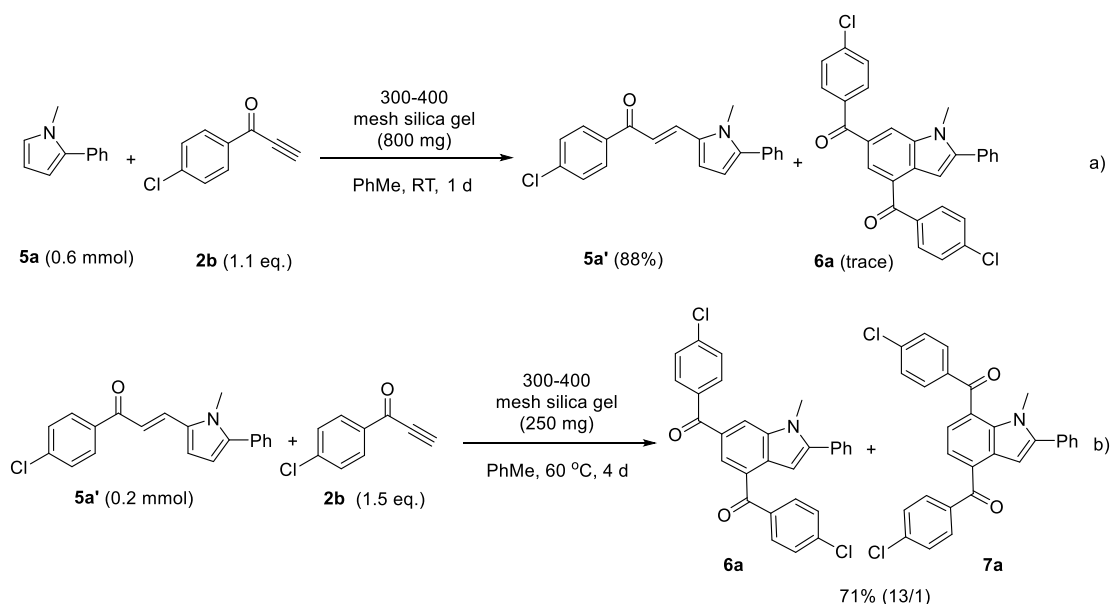
**(6-benzoyl-1-methyl-2-phenyl-1H-indol-4-yl)(4-fluorophenyl)methanone (6p)**: yellow solid, 58% yield of **6p** (63 mg), mp 222-224 °C; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 8.17 (s, 1H), 8.00-7.87 (m, 3H), 7.84 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.62-7.43 (m, 8H), 7.20-7.09 (m, 2H), 7.02 (s, 1H), 3.88 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 196.81, 195.74, 165.74 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 253.9 Hz), 147.94, 138.76 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 40.5 Hz), 134.95, 132.84 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 9.1 Hz), 132.39, 131.69, 130.84, 130.13, 130.00, 129.63, 129.15, 128.97, 128.50, 128.35, 126.51, 116.34, 115.59 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 21.8 Hz), 103.34, 31.43; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>29</sub>H<sub>21</sub>FNO<sub>2</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup>: 434.1551, found 434.1550.



The conjugate addition intermediate, which was isolated after complete conversion of **5a** and 1-(4-fluorophenyl)prop-2-yn-1-one (**2c**) (1:1) at room temperature (24 h), was used for the subsequent reaction with **2b** (that with *p*-ClPh group, 1.1 eq.) using 300-400 mesh silica gel as the catalyst at 60 °C. (scale: 0.25 mmol)

**(4-(4-chlorobenzoyl)-1-methyl-2-phenyl-1H-indol-6-yl)(4-fluorophenyl)methanone (6q)**: yellow solid, 54% yield of **6q** (63 mg), mp 61-63 °C; <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 8.13 (s, 1H), 7.95 (m, 5H), 7.60-7.38 (m, 7H), 7.22-7.10 (m, 2H), 7.01 (s, 1H), 3.89 (s, 3H); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 195.94, 195.36, 165.60 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 253.7 Hz), 148.10, 139.07 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 19.3 Hz), 137.00, 134.71, 132.72 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 9.0 Hz), 131.66, 130.84, 129.93, 129.65, 129.23, 129.01, 128.88, 128.25, 126.27, 116.29, 115.66 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 21.9 Hz), 103.39, 31.45; HRMS (ESI) calcd for C<sub>29</sub>H<sub>20</sub>ClFNO<sub>2</sub> [M+H]<sup>+</sup>: 468.1161, found 468.1157.

## Control reactions:



**(a)** In air, to a solution of propargyl pyrrole **5a** (0.6 mmol) and alkynone **2b** (1.1 equiv) in anhydrous PhMe (15 mL) in Schlenk tube was added 300-400 mesh silica gel (800 mg) at room temperature. After 24 hours, the solution was added petroleum ether (5 mL) and purified directly by flash chromatography on silica gel with petroleum ether/ethyl acetate/DCM = 30/2/3 as the eluent afforded **5a'**. Yellow solid, 88% yield, mp 148-150 °C;  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  7.98 (d,  $J$  = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.92 (d,  $J$  = 14.8 Hz, 1H), 7.53-7.36 (m, 7H), 7.31 (d,  $J$  = 15.2 Hz, 1H), 6.96 (d,  $J$  = 4.0 Hz, 1H), 6.35 (d,  $J$  = 3.6 Hz, 1H), 3.75 (s, 3H);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  188.81, 141.23, 138.89, 137.46, 133.38, 132.33, 131.98, 129.85, 129.25, 129.02, 128.84, 128.18, 115.88, 113.05, 111.42, 32.10; HRMS (ESI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{20}\text{H}_{16}\text{ClNNaO}$   $[\text{M}+\text{Na}]^+$ : 344.0813, found 344.0818.

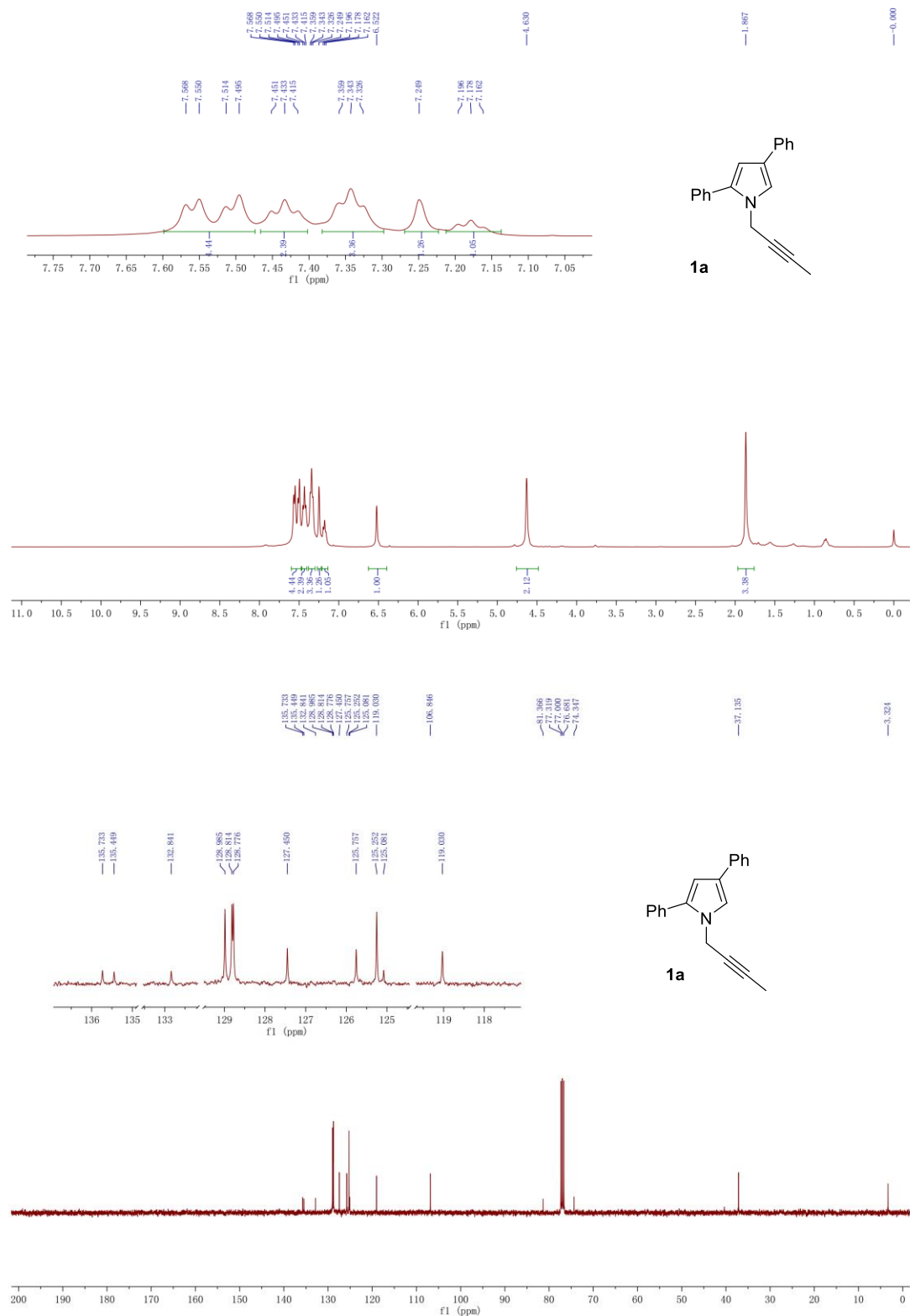
**(b)** In air, to a solution of **5a'** (64.4 mg, 0.2 mmol) and **2b** (36.2 mg, 0.22 mmol) in anhydrous PhMe (5 mL) in Schlenk tube was added 300-400 mesh silica gel (250

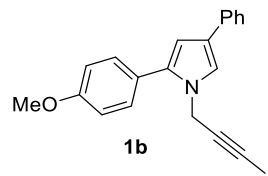
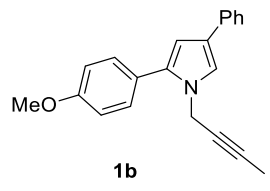
mg). Then, the reaction temperature was increased to 60 °C. After 4 days, the solution was concentrated under reduced pressure directly. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel with petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 25/1-125/8 as the eluent to afford **6a** and **7a** (68.8 mg, 71%, 13/1).

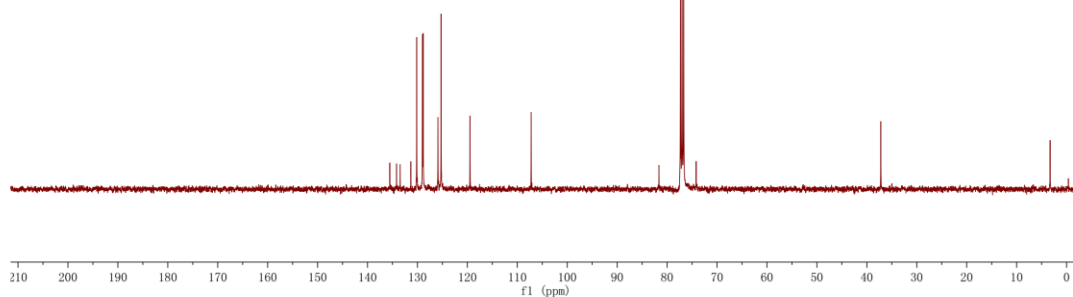
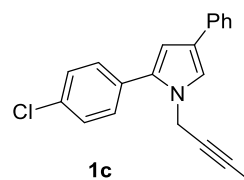
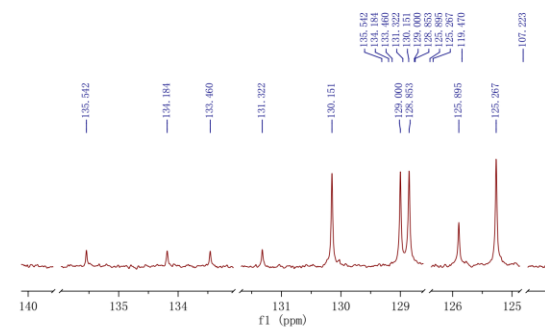
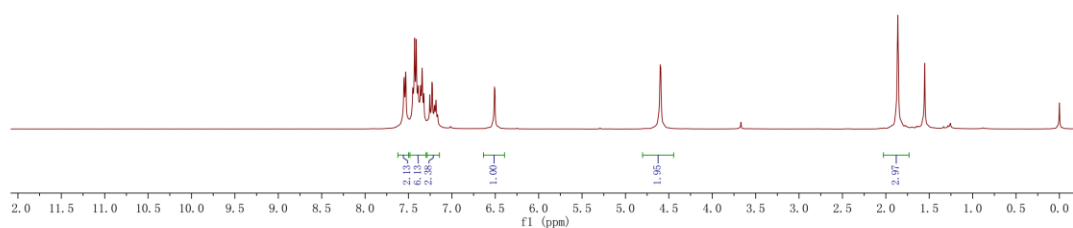
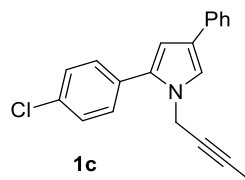
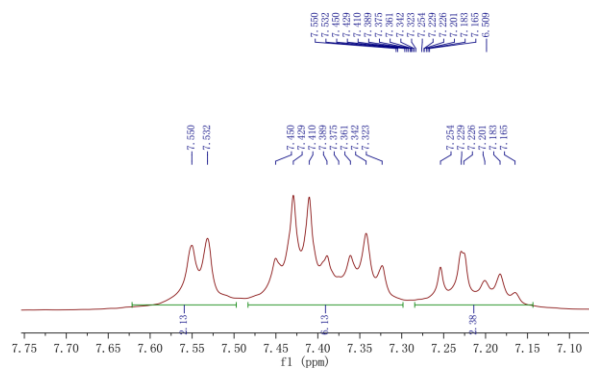
## References

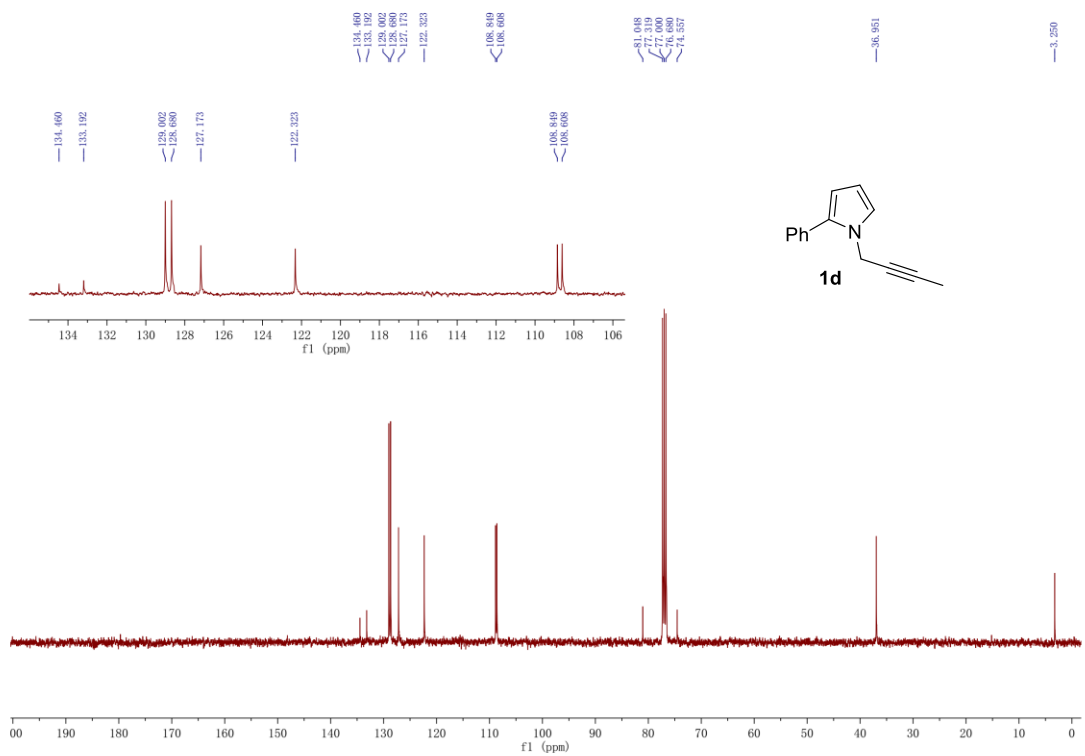
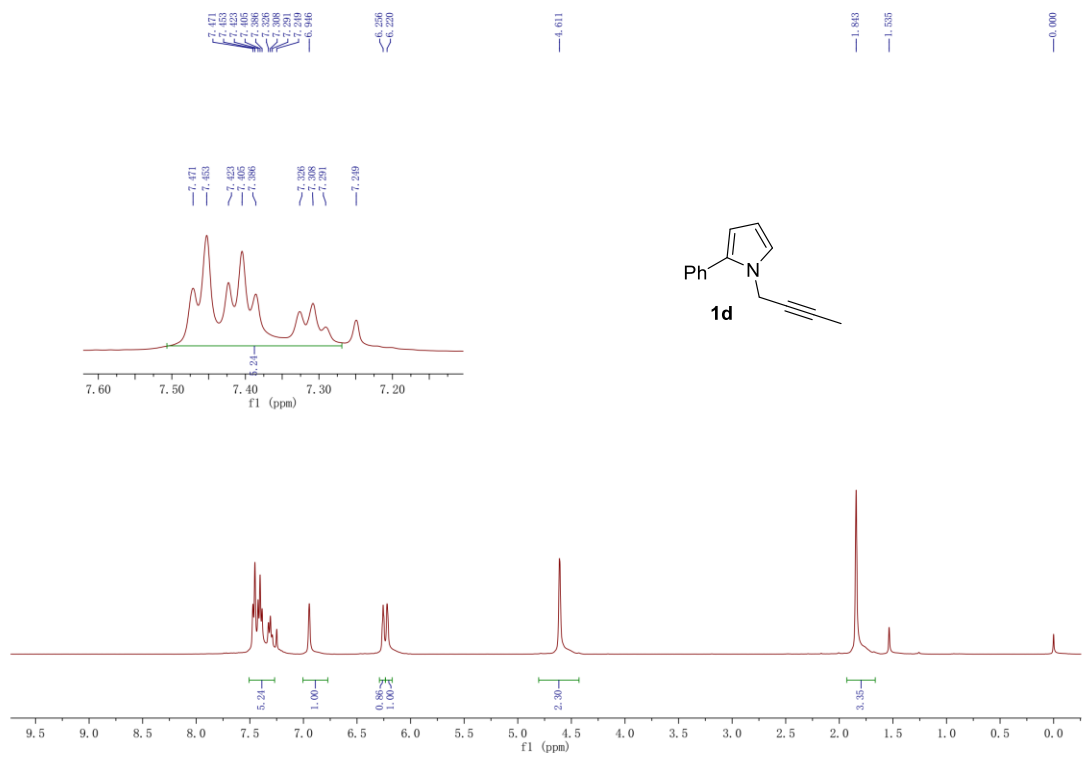
1. X. Li, X. Xie, Y. Liu, *J. Org. Chem.*, 2016, **81**, 3688.
2. (a) M. Bielawski, M. Zhu, B. Olofsson, *Adv. Synth. Catal.*, 2007, **349**, 2610; (b) M. Bielawski, D. Aili, B. Olofsson, *J. Org. Chem.*, 2008, **73**, 4602.
3. J. Wen, R.-Y. Zhang, S.-Y. Chen, J. Zhang, X.-Q. Yu, *J. Org. Chem.*, 2012, **77**, 766.
4. Y.-X. Liu, D. Xue, J.-D. Wang, C.-J. Zhao, Q.-Z. Zou, C. Wang, J. Xiao, *Synlett*, 2013, **24**, 507.
5. J. Yang, S. Liu, J.-F. Zheng, J. Zhou, *Eur. J. Org. Chem.*, 2012, 6248.

## NMR spectra of new compounds (1)

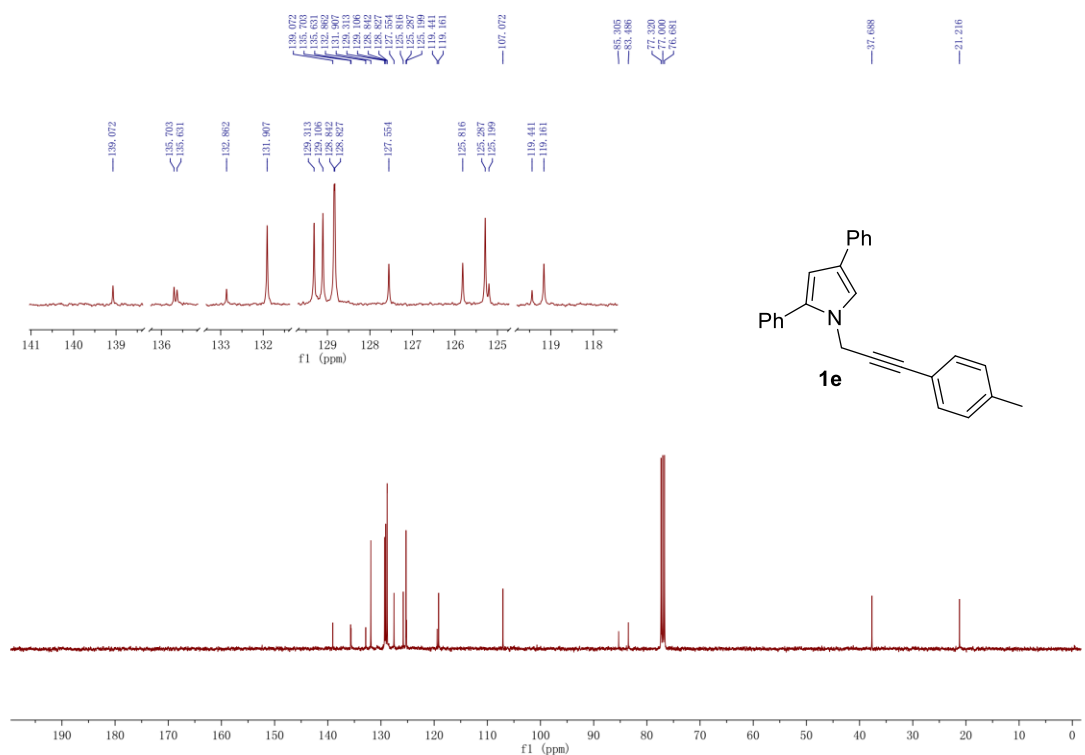
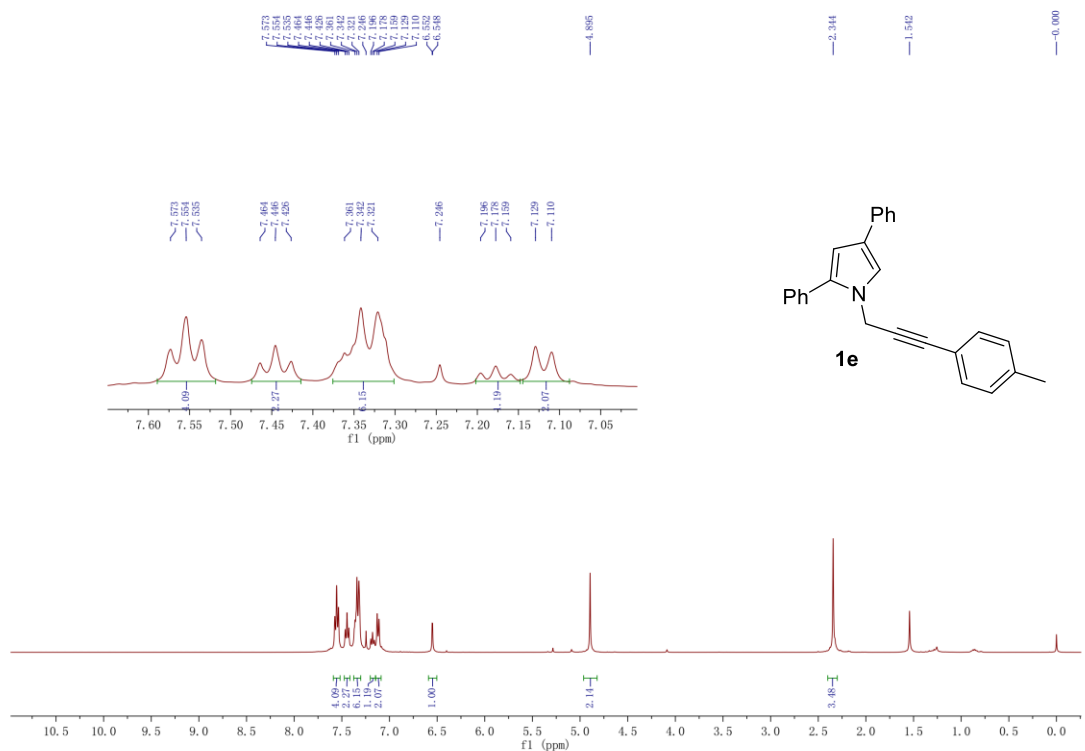


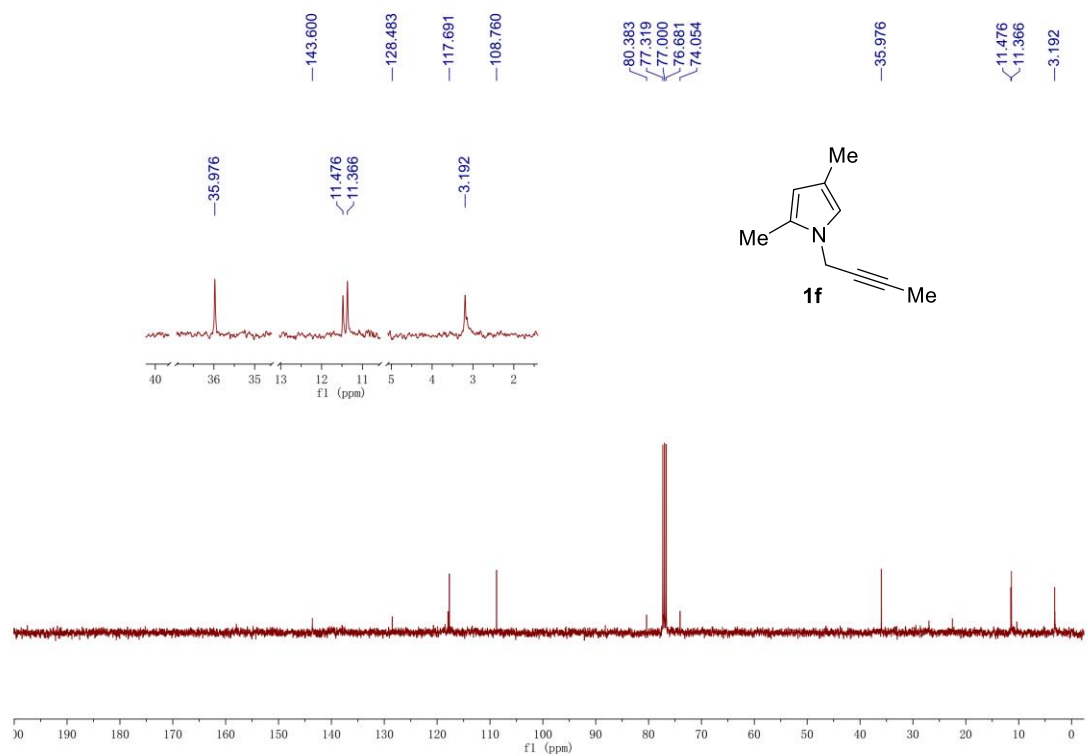
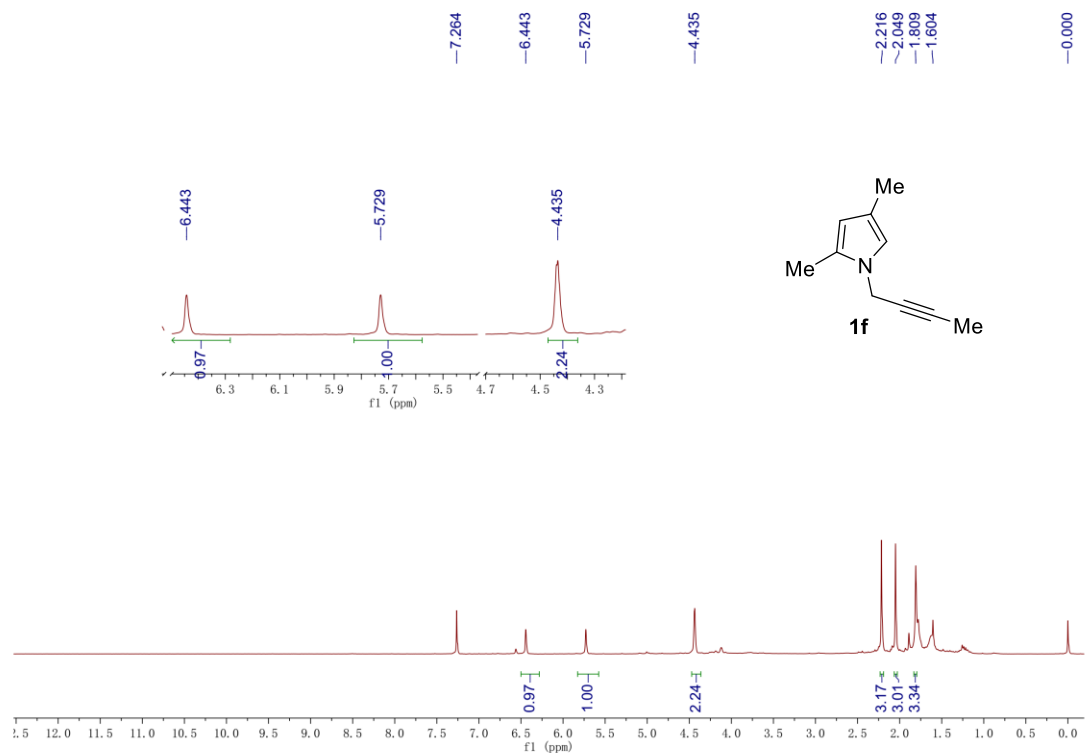


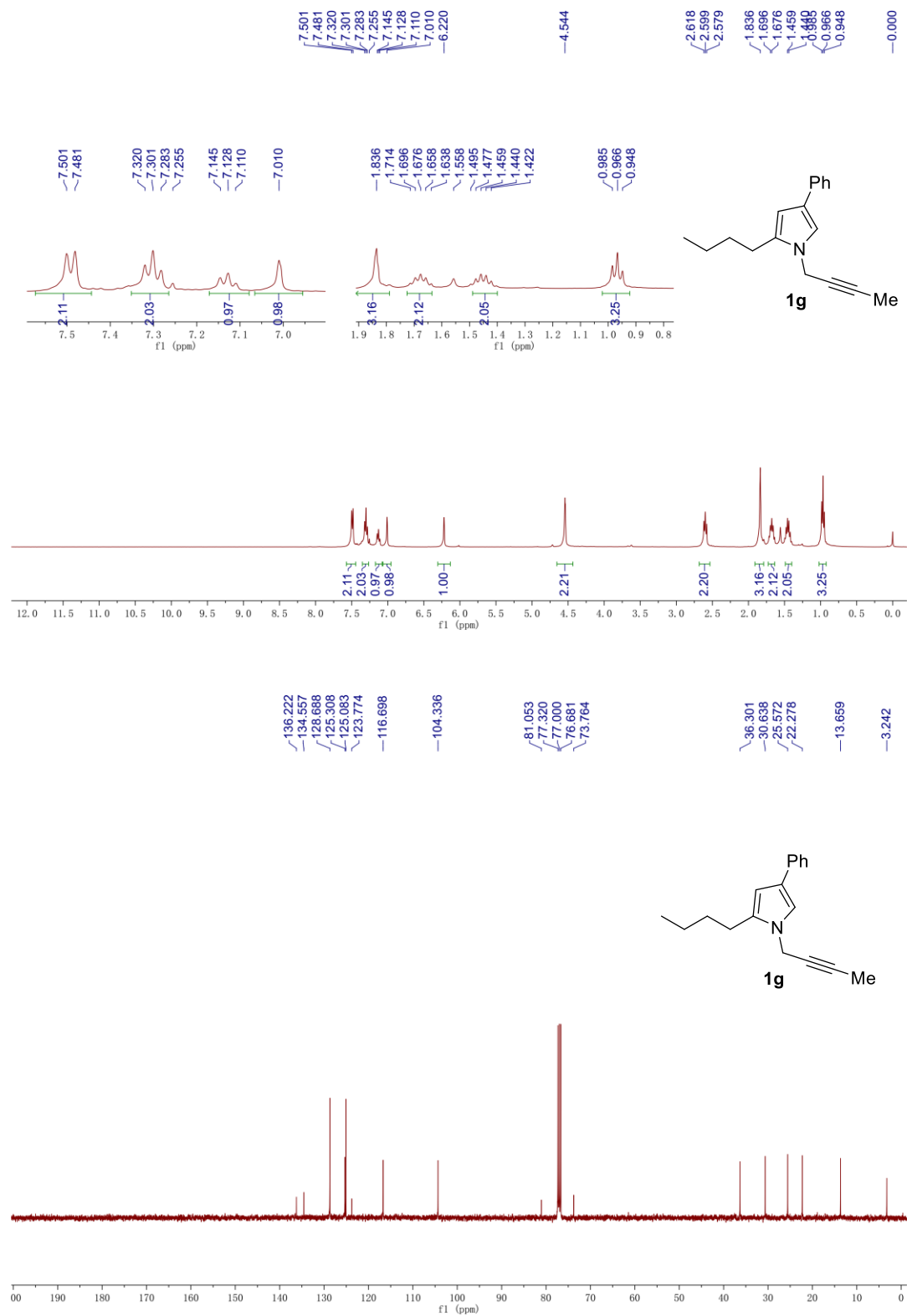




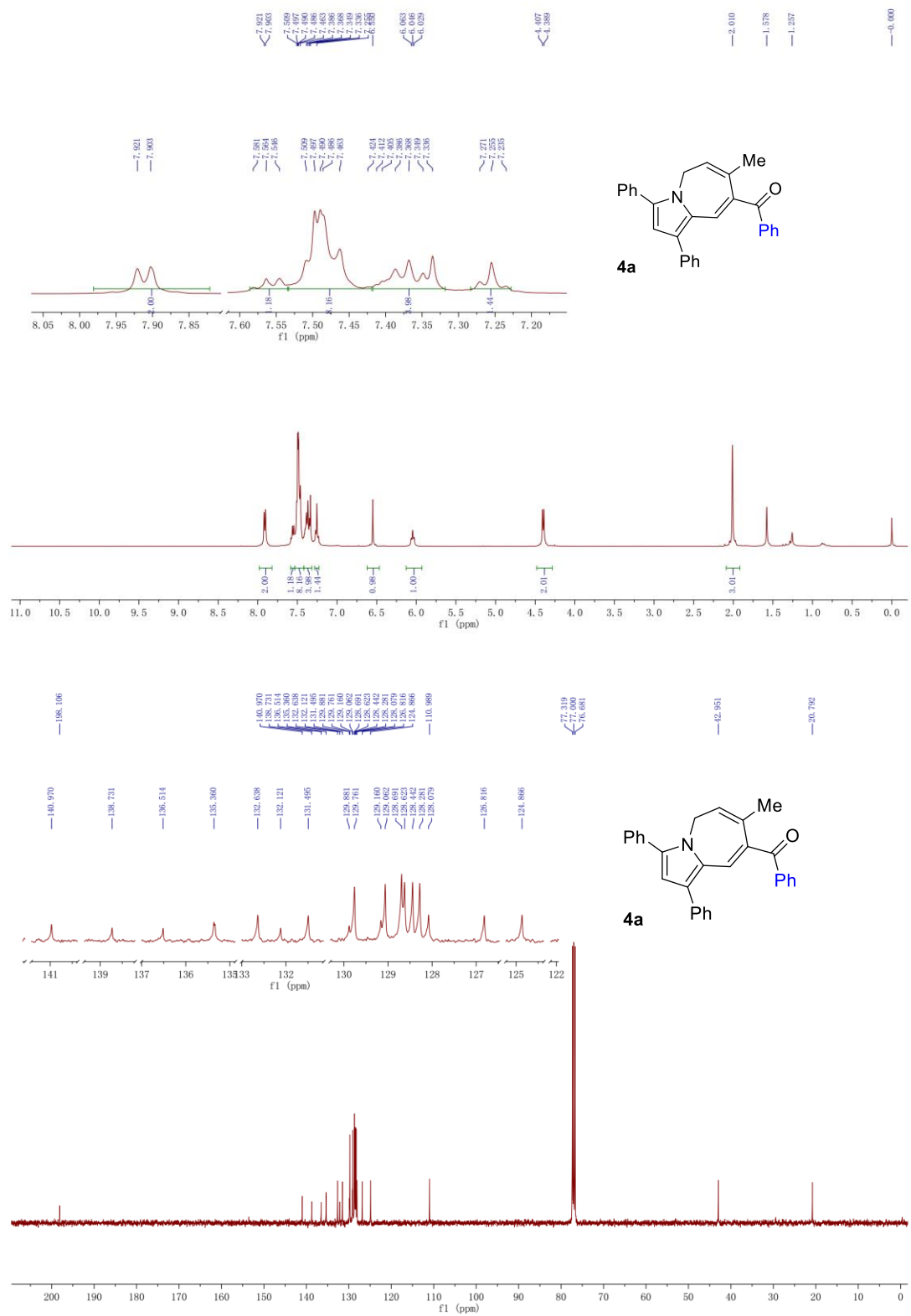


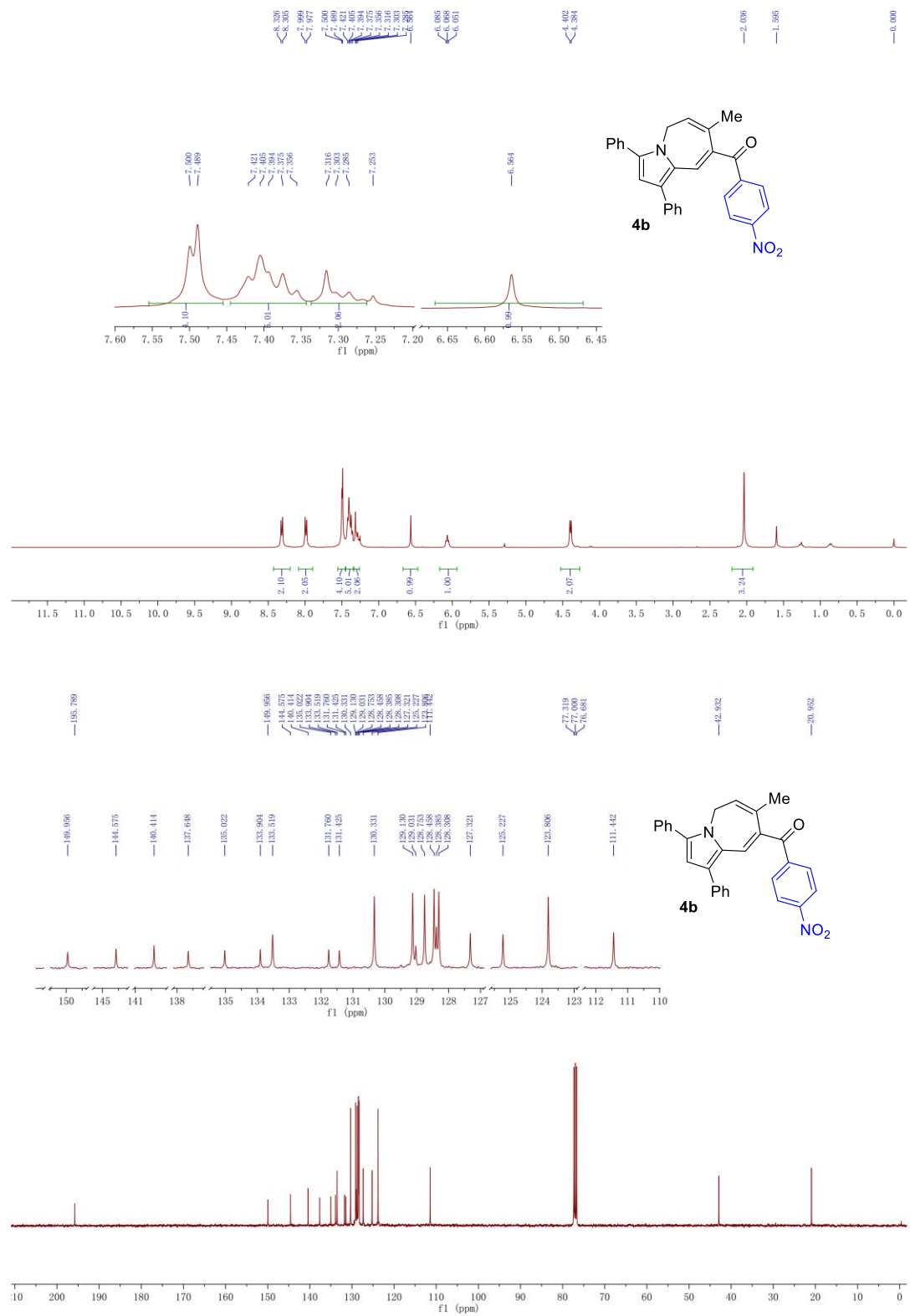


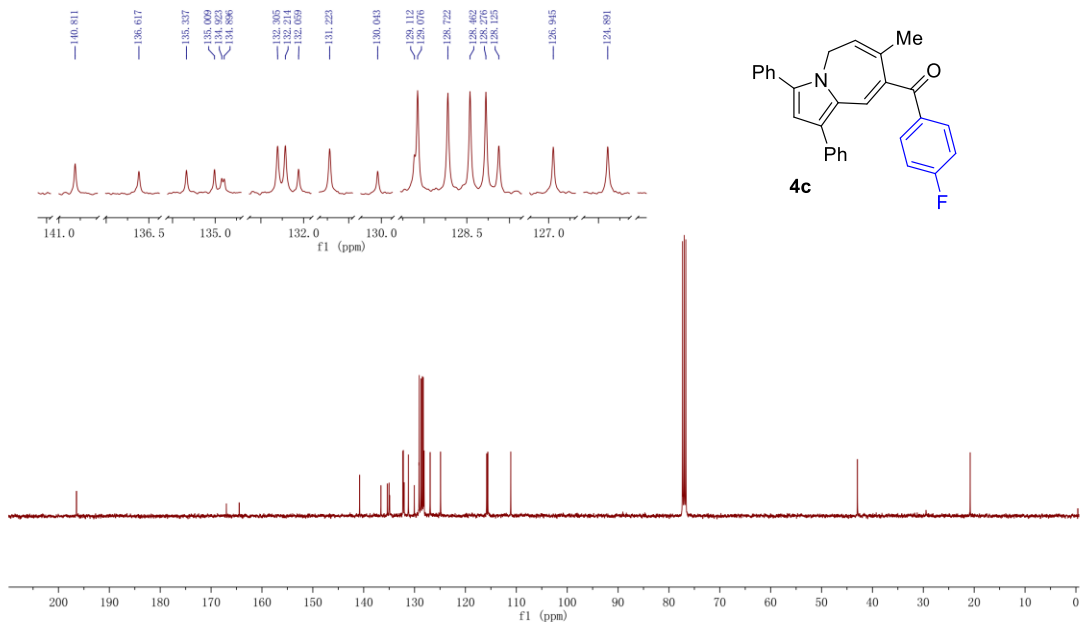
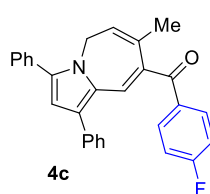
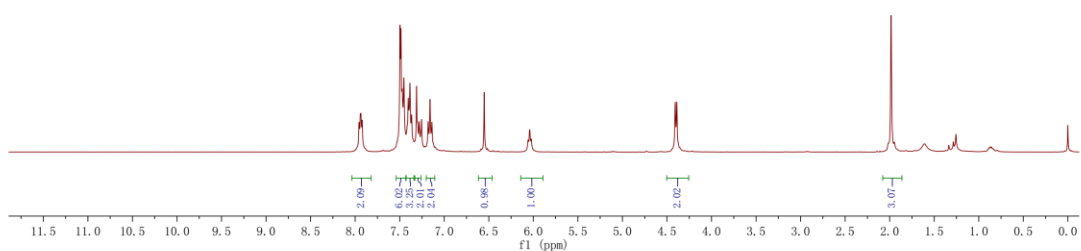
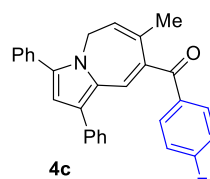
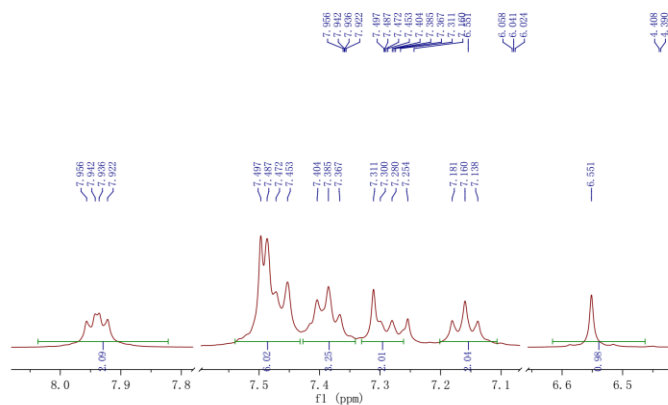


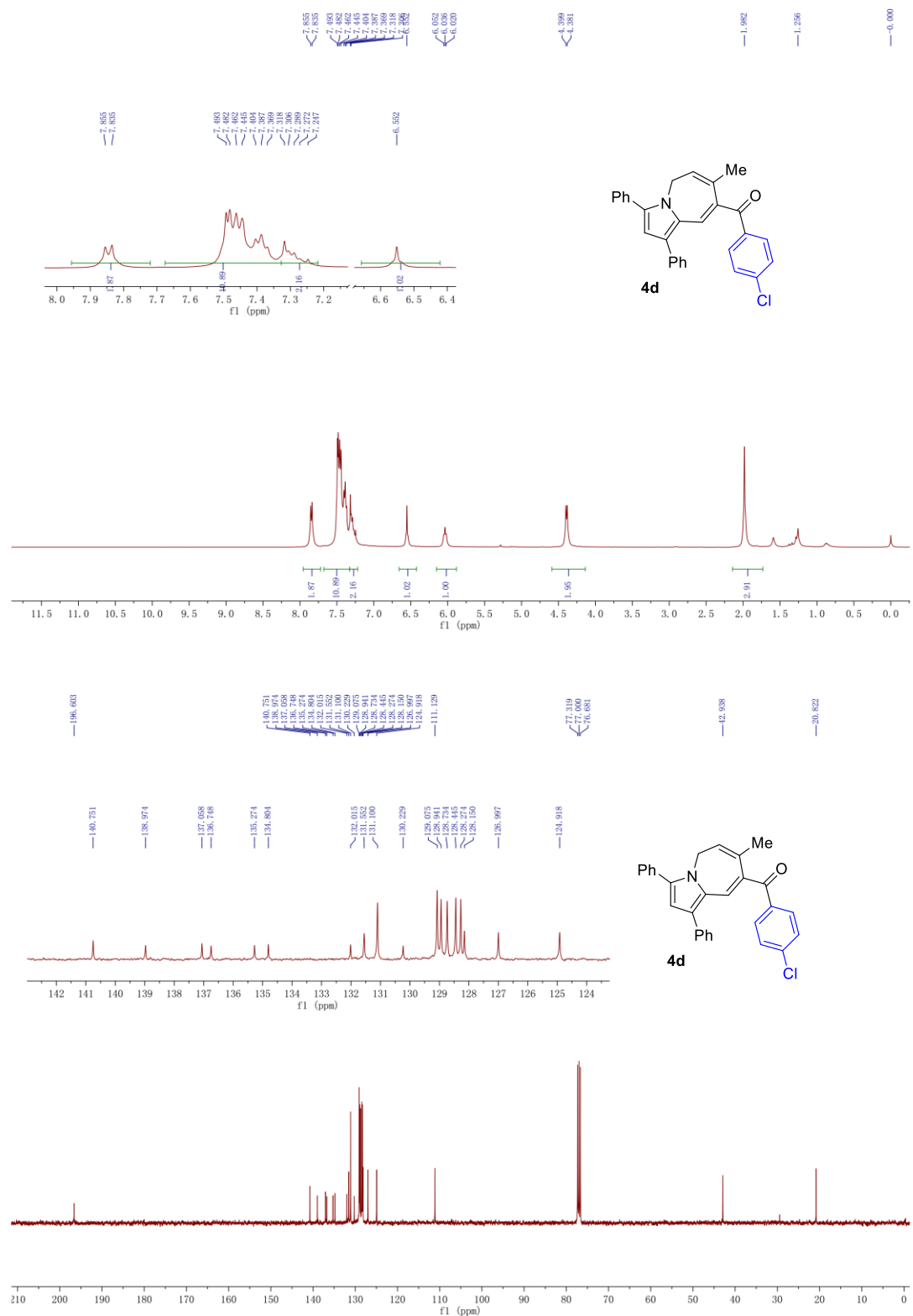


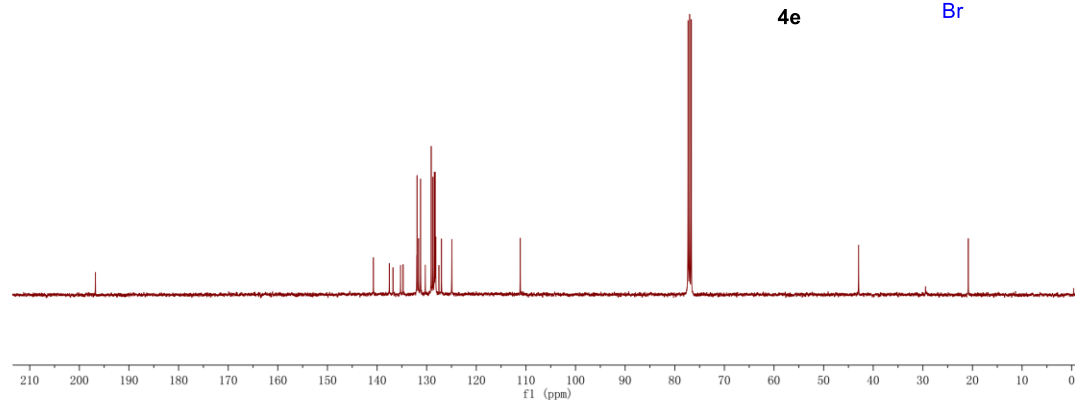
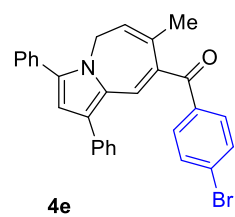
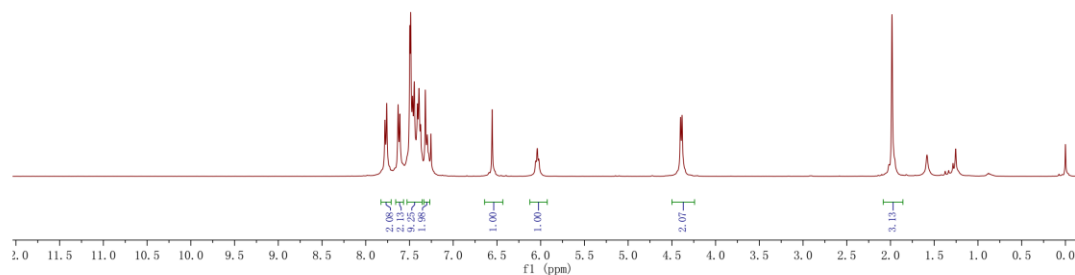
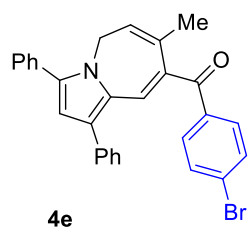
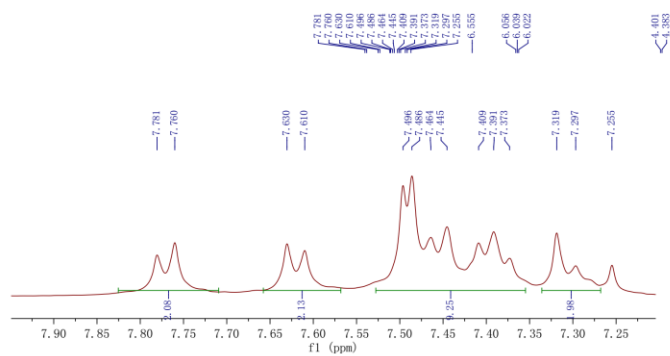
## NMR spectra of new compounds (4)



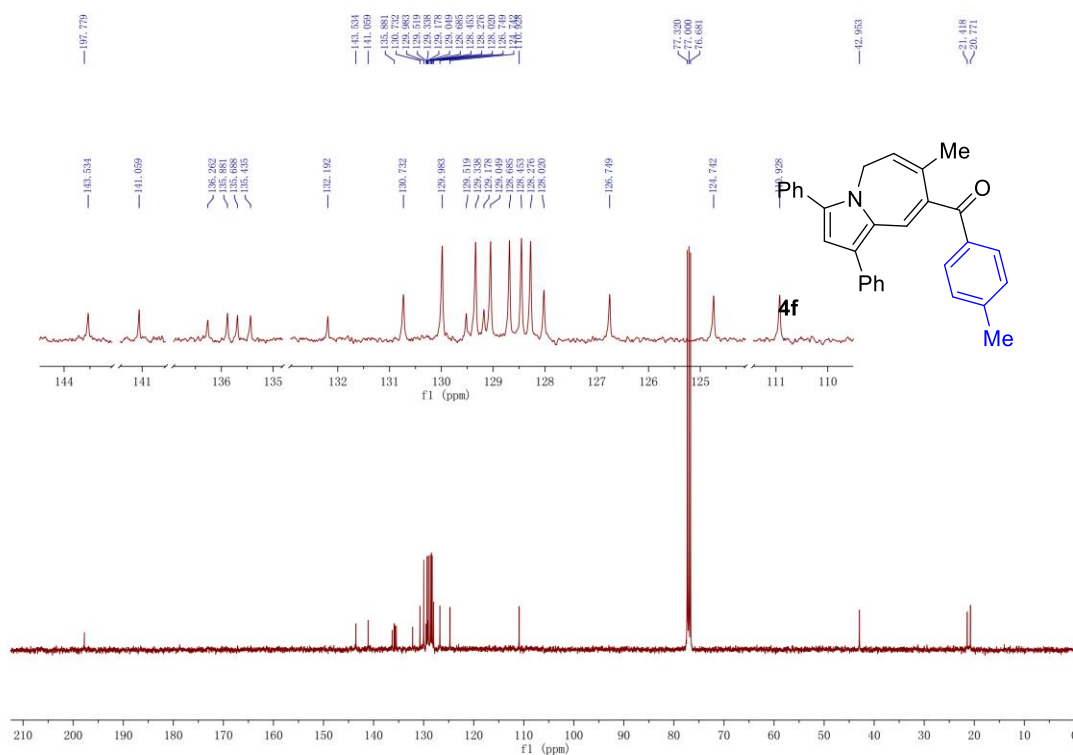
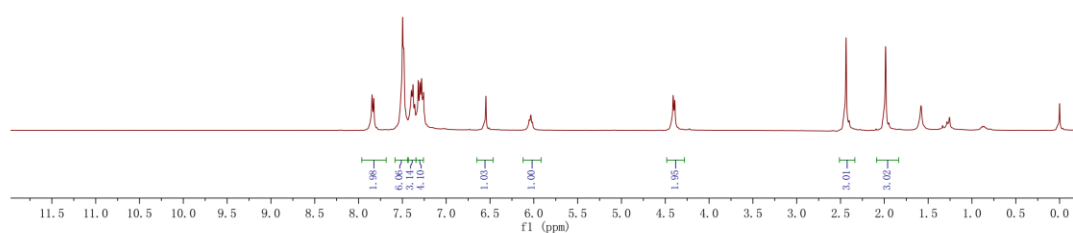
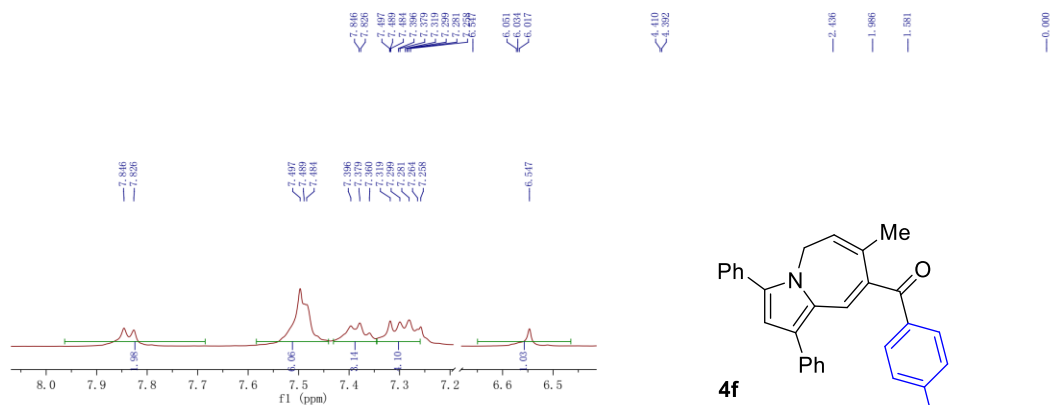




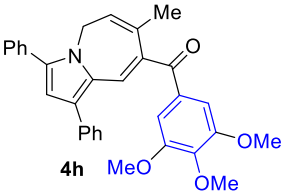


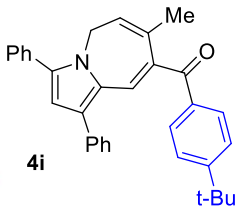
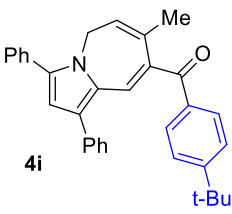


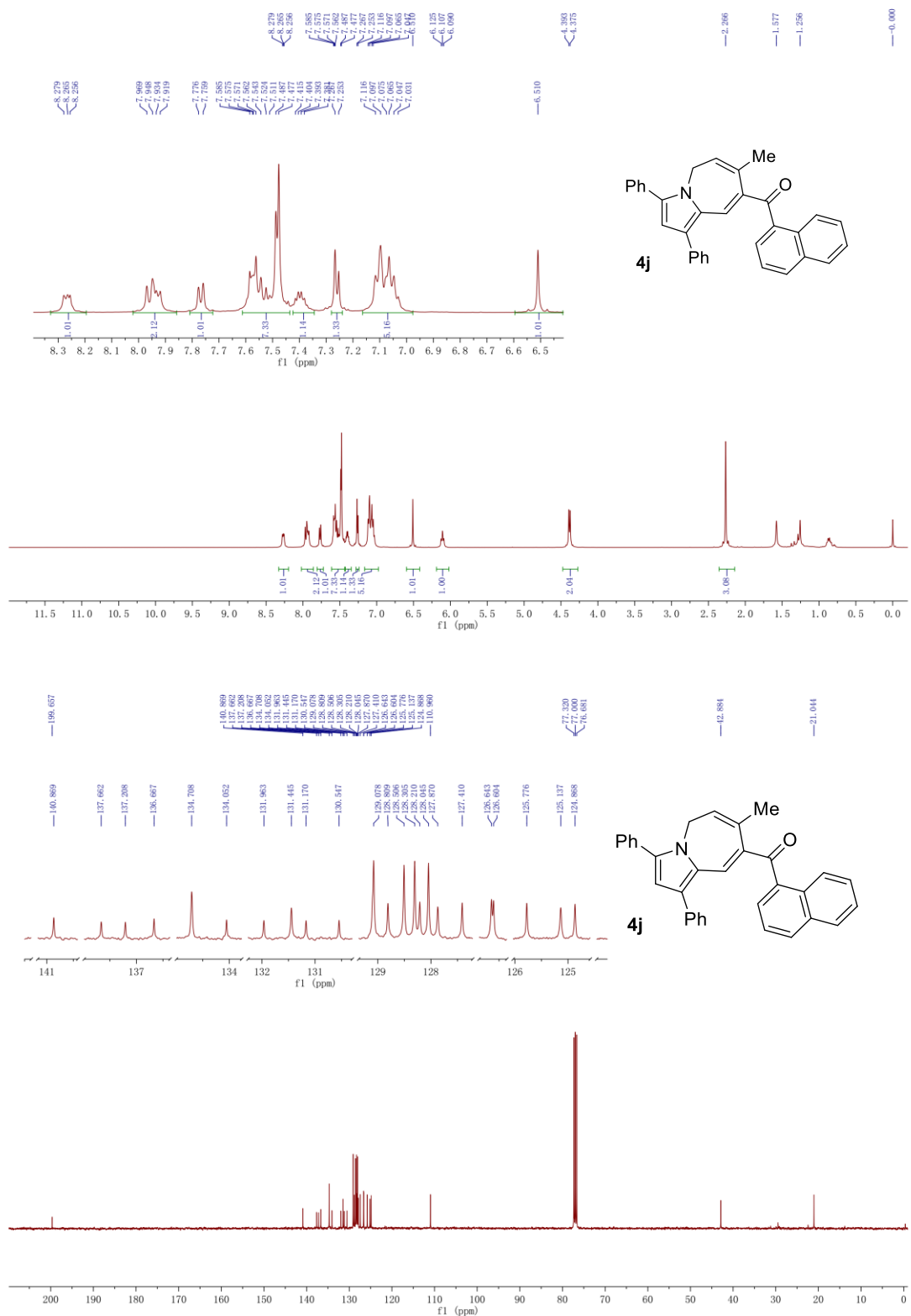




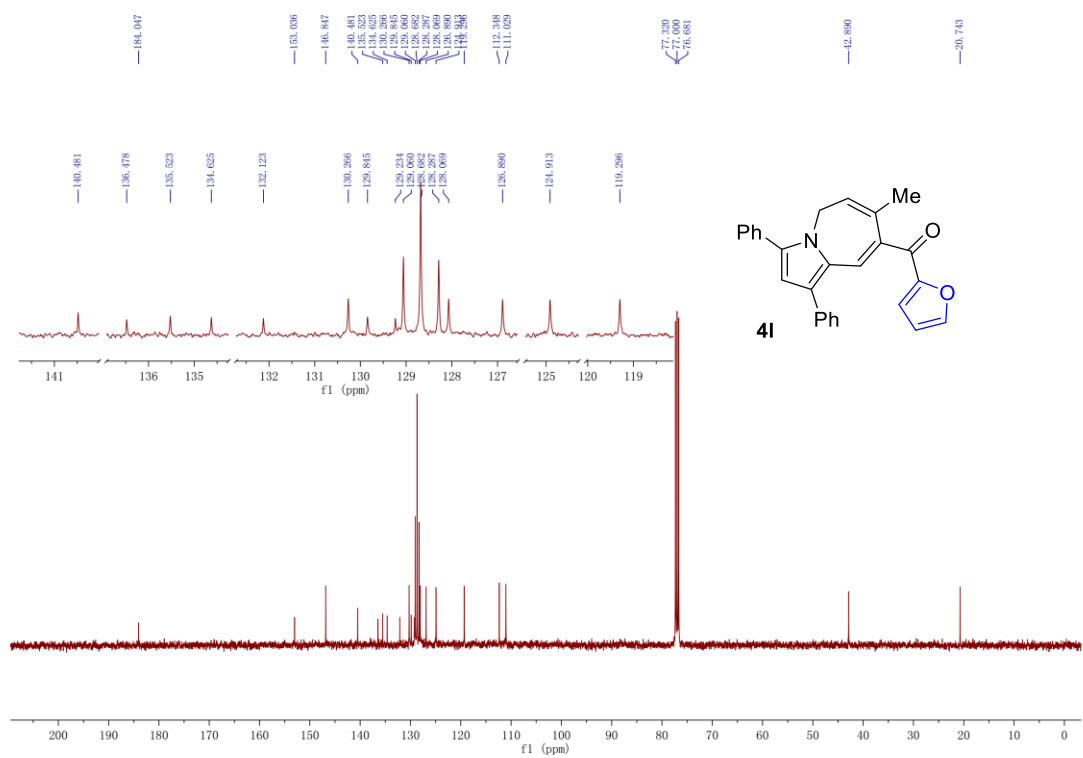
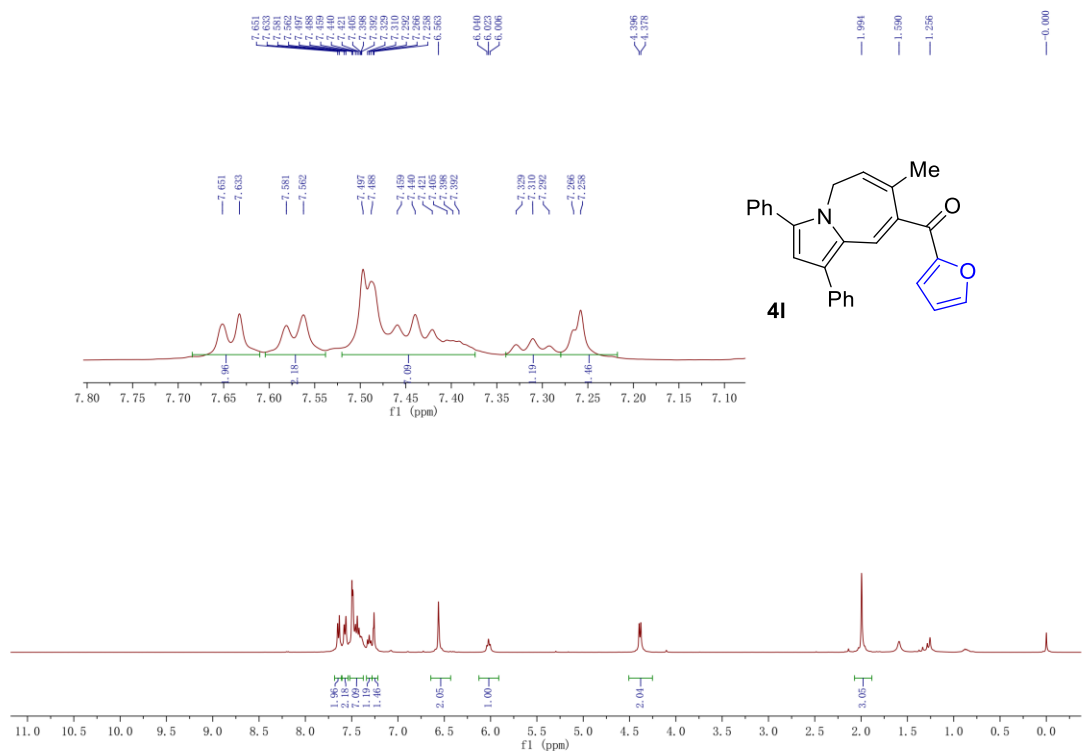


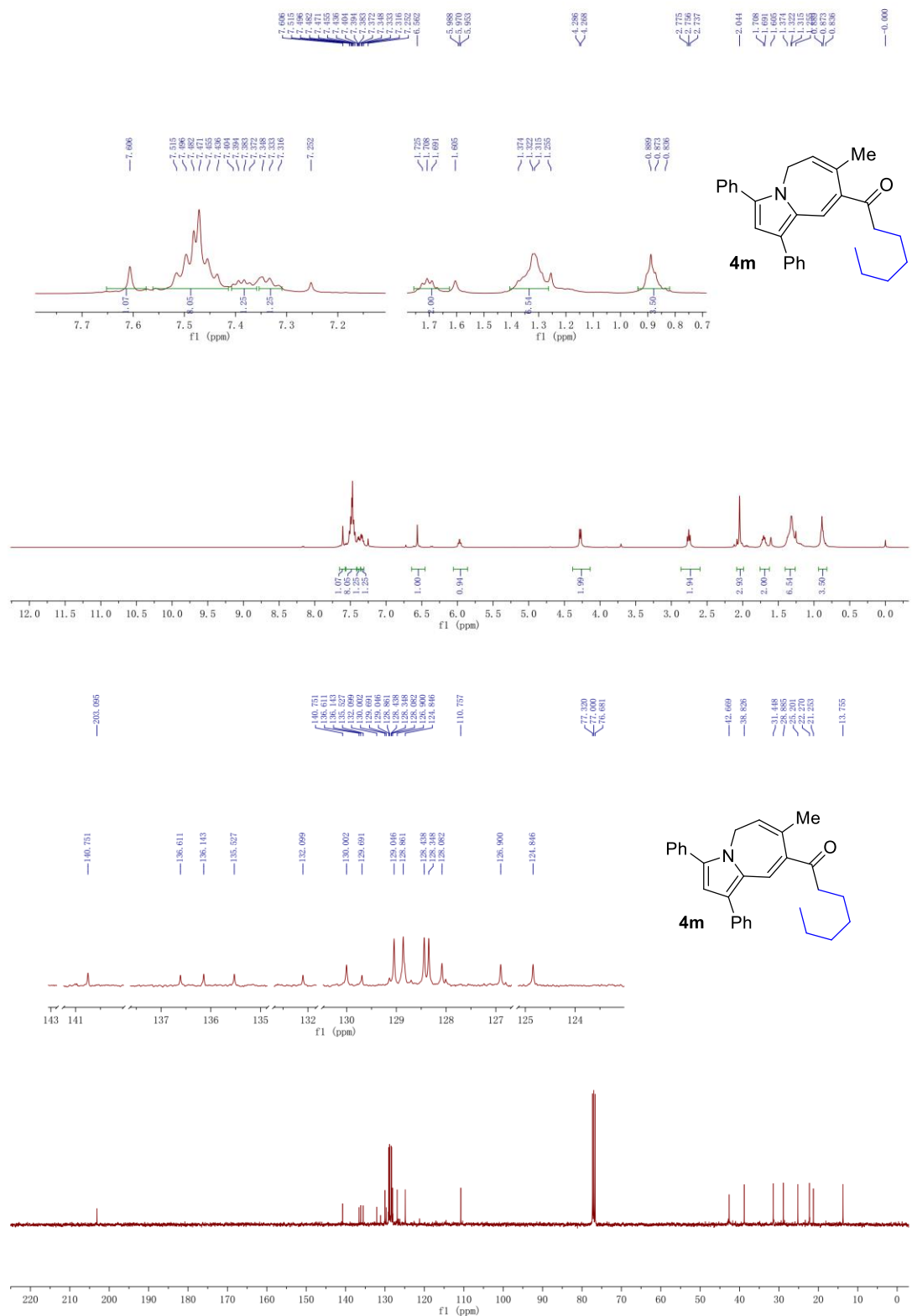




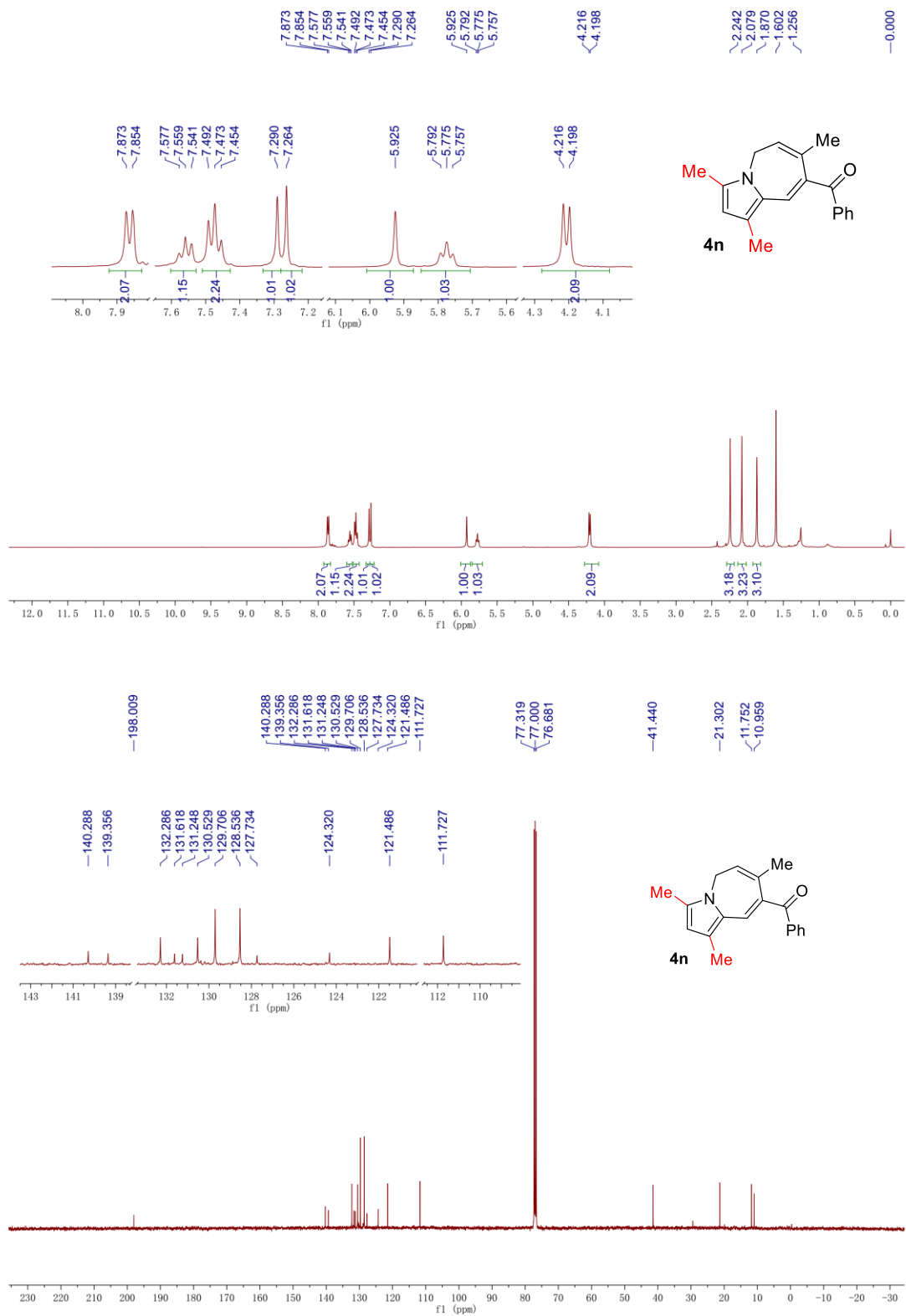


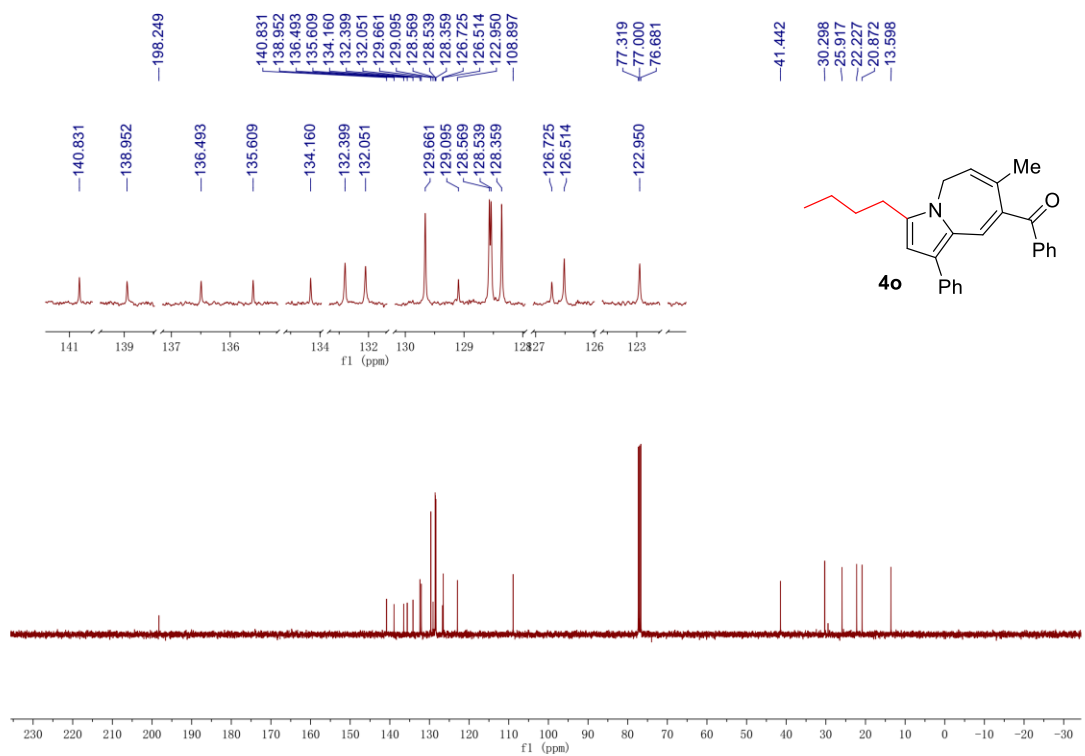
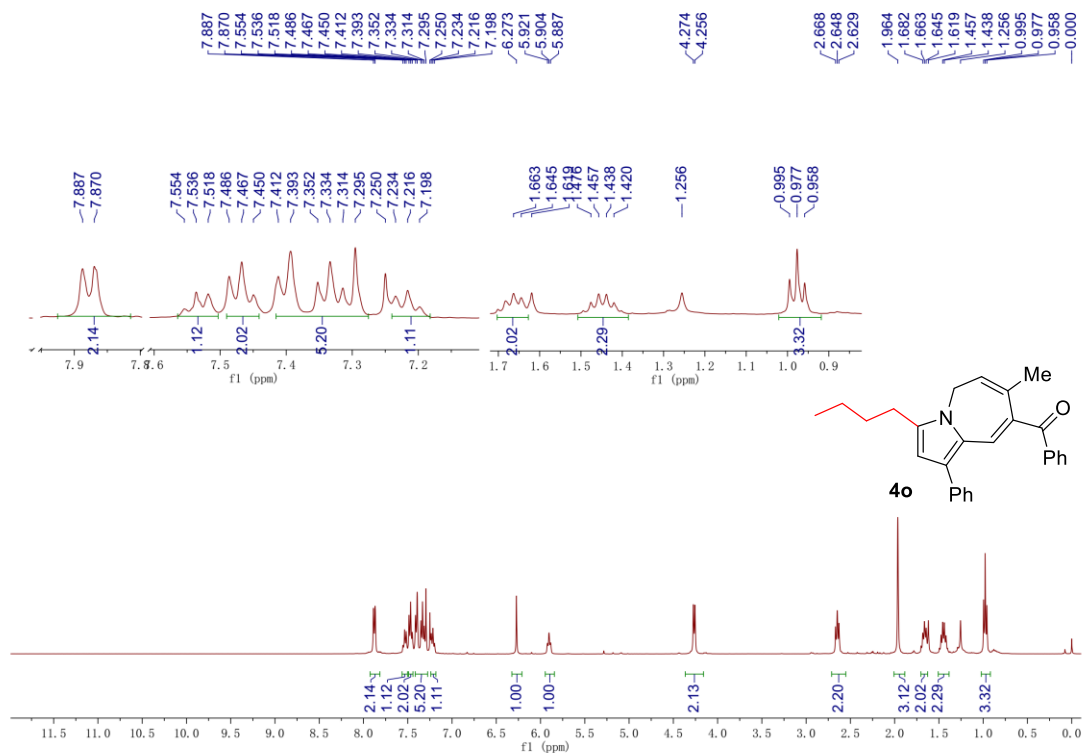


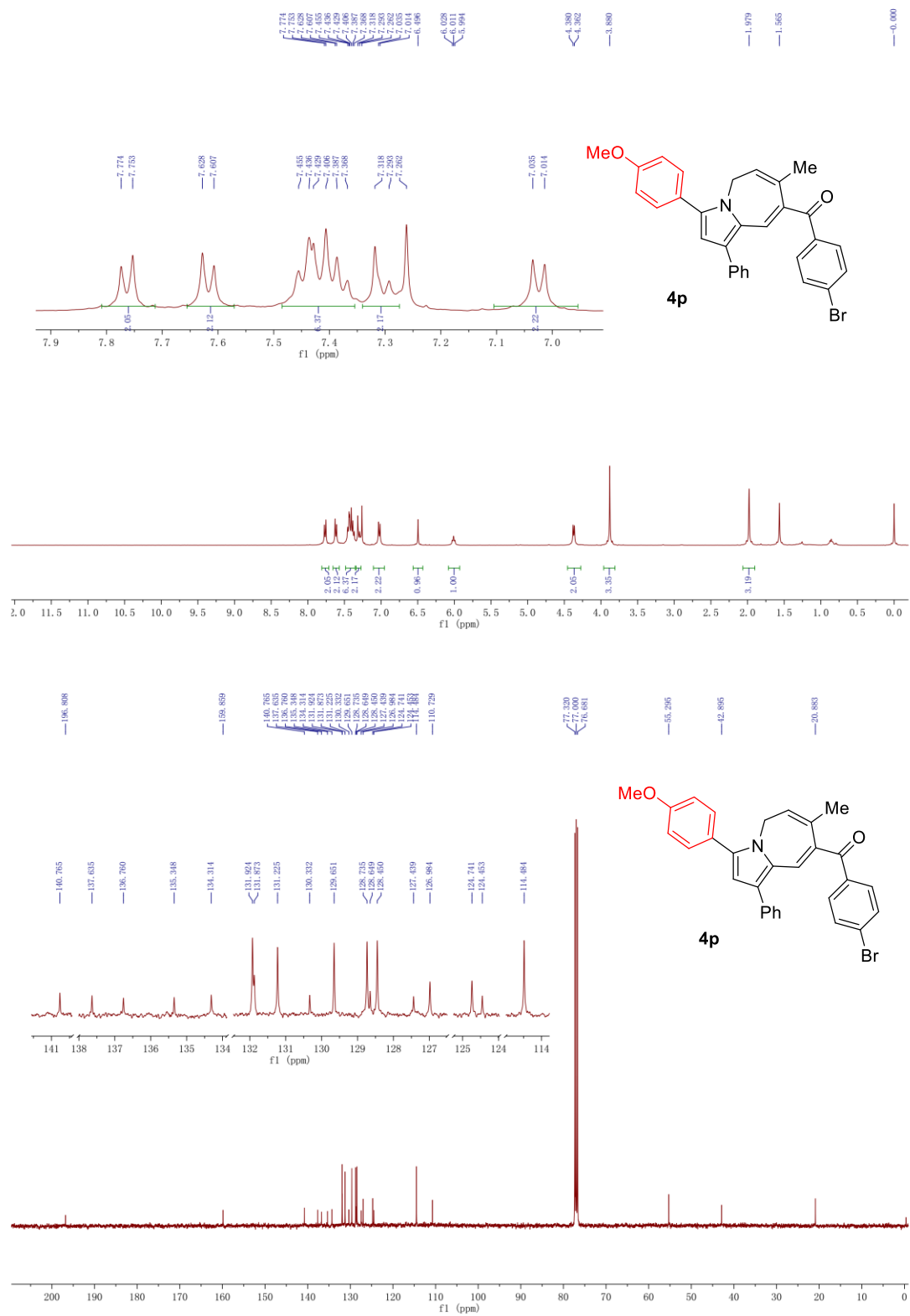


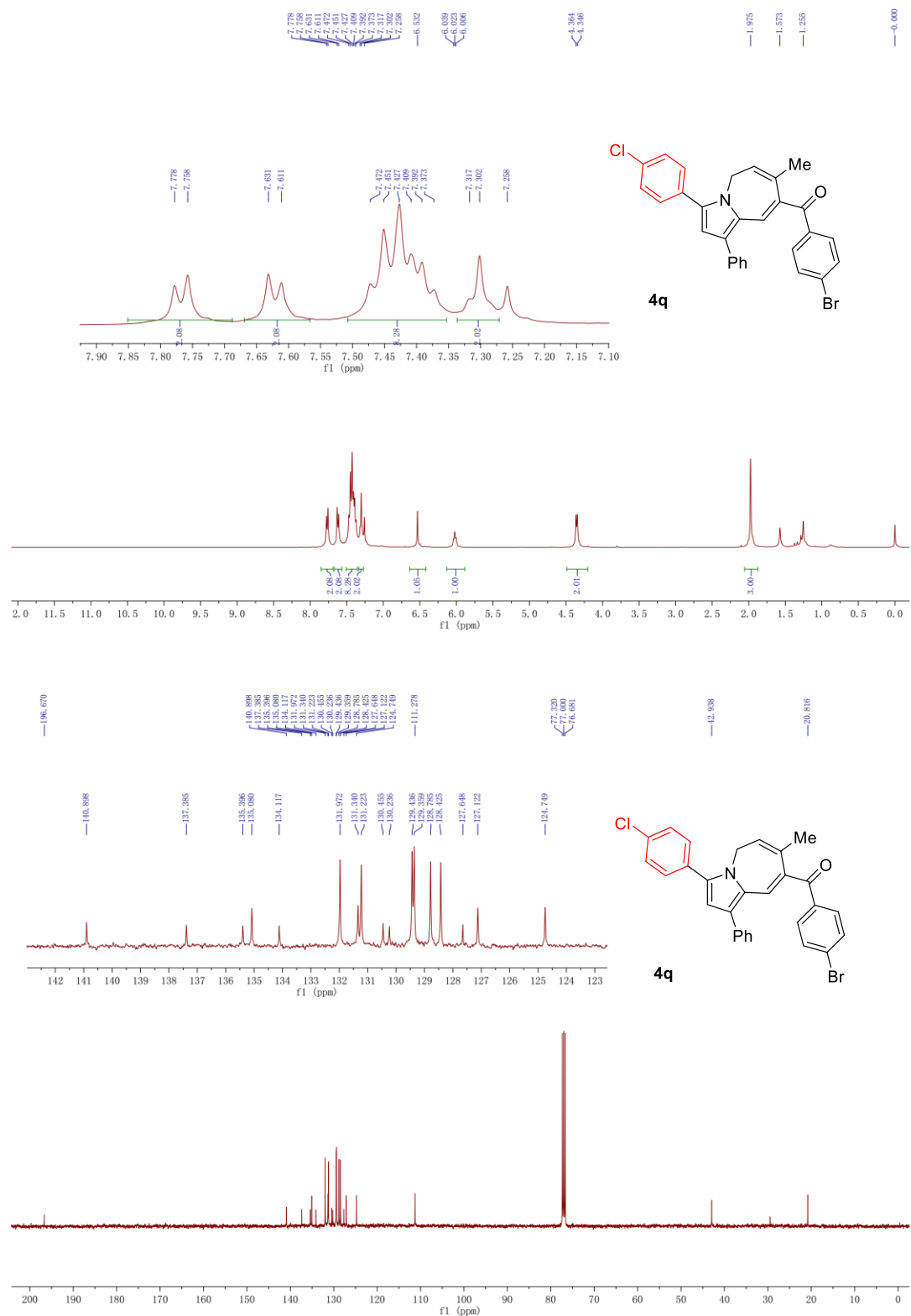


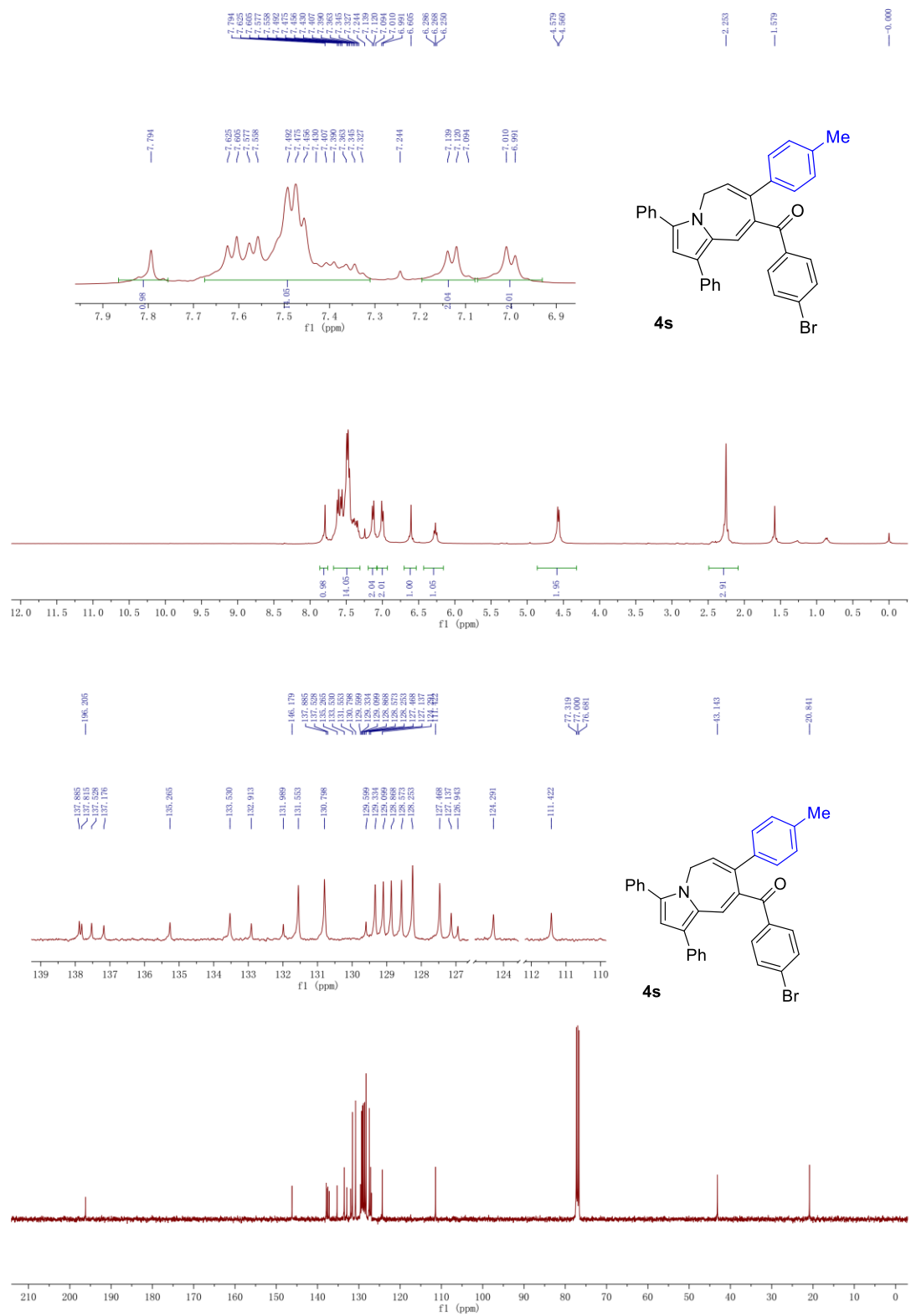


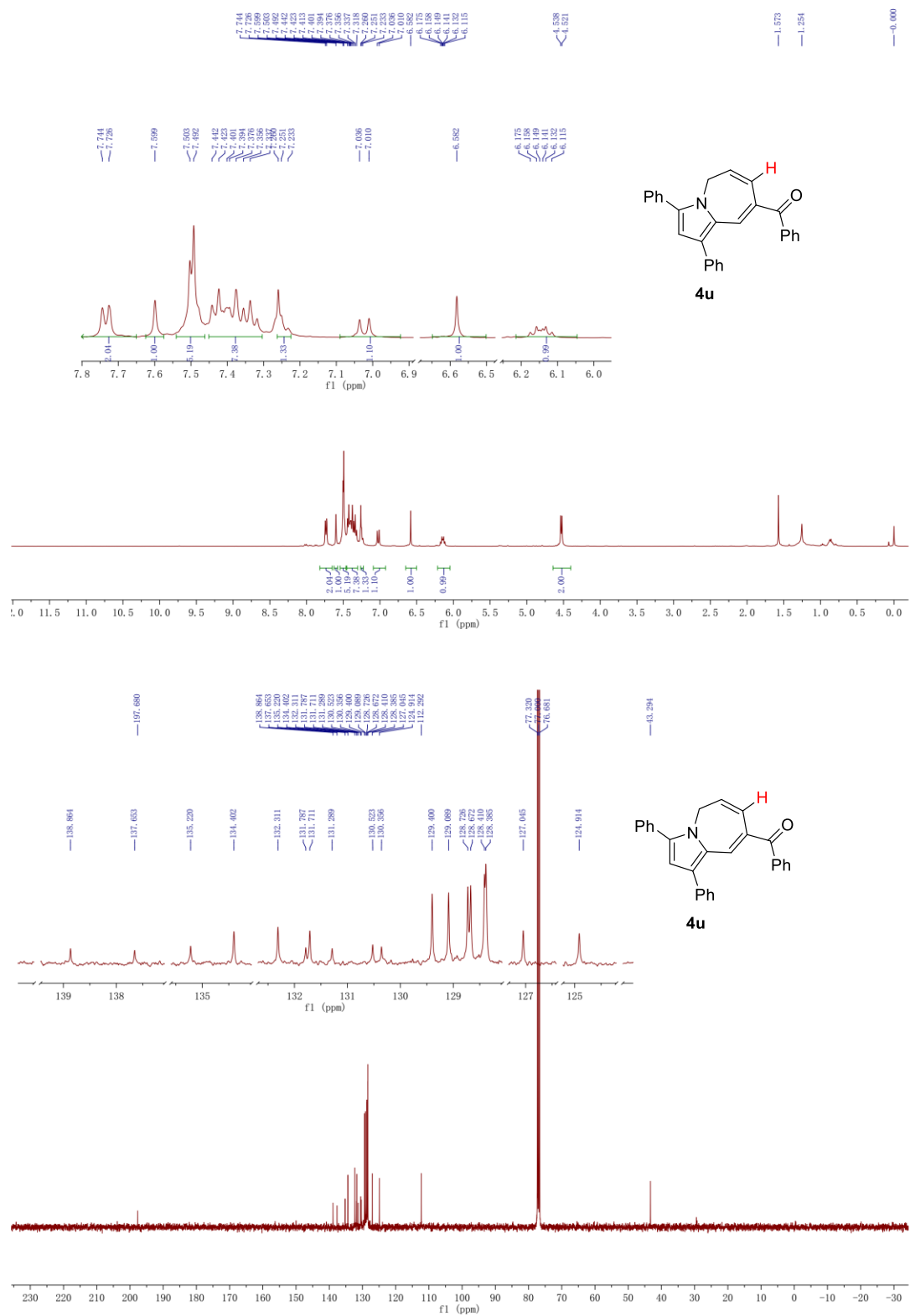


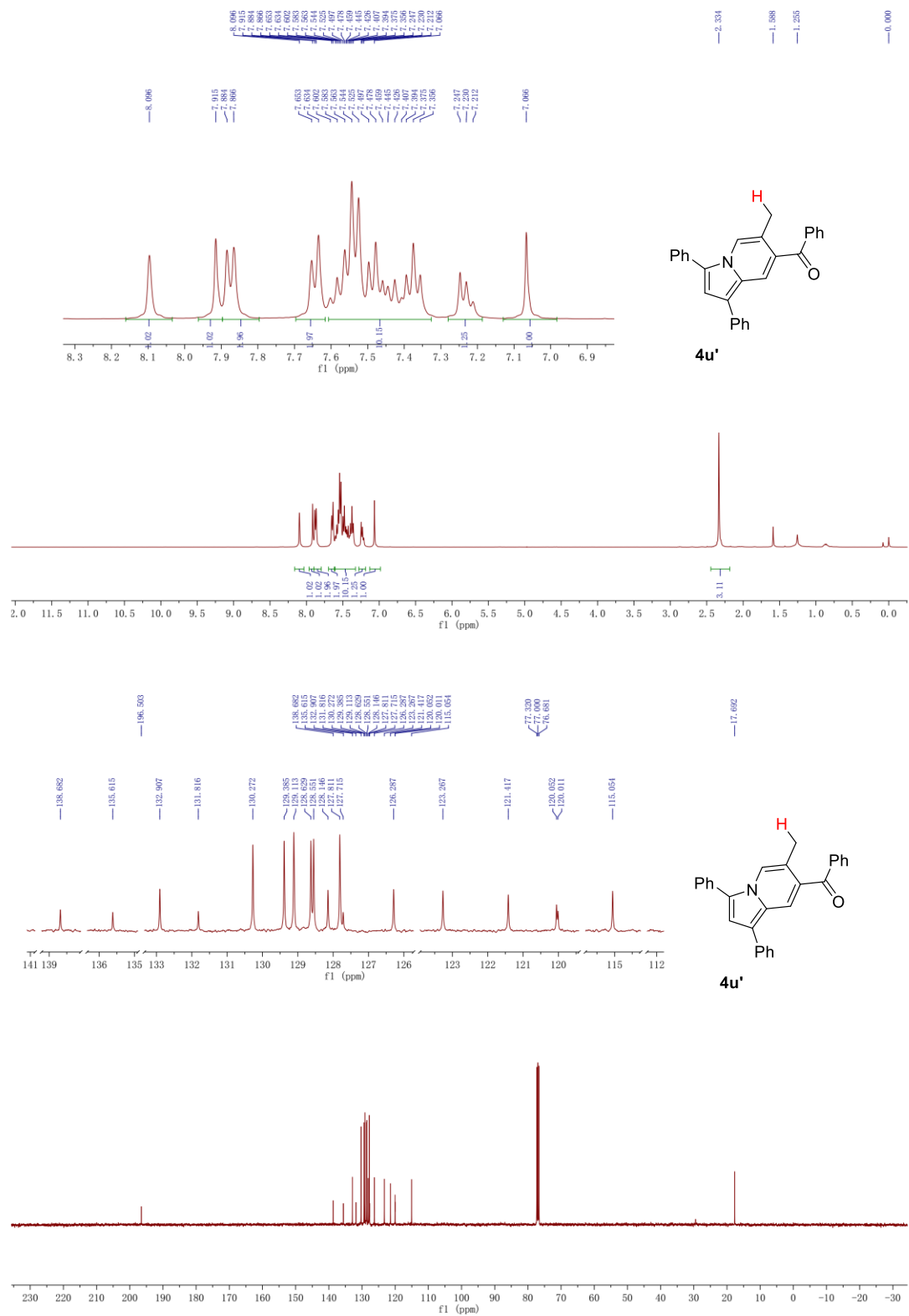




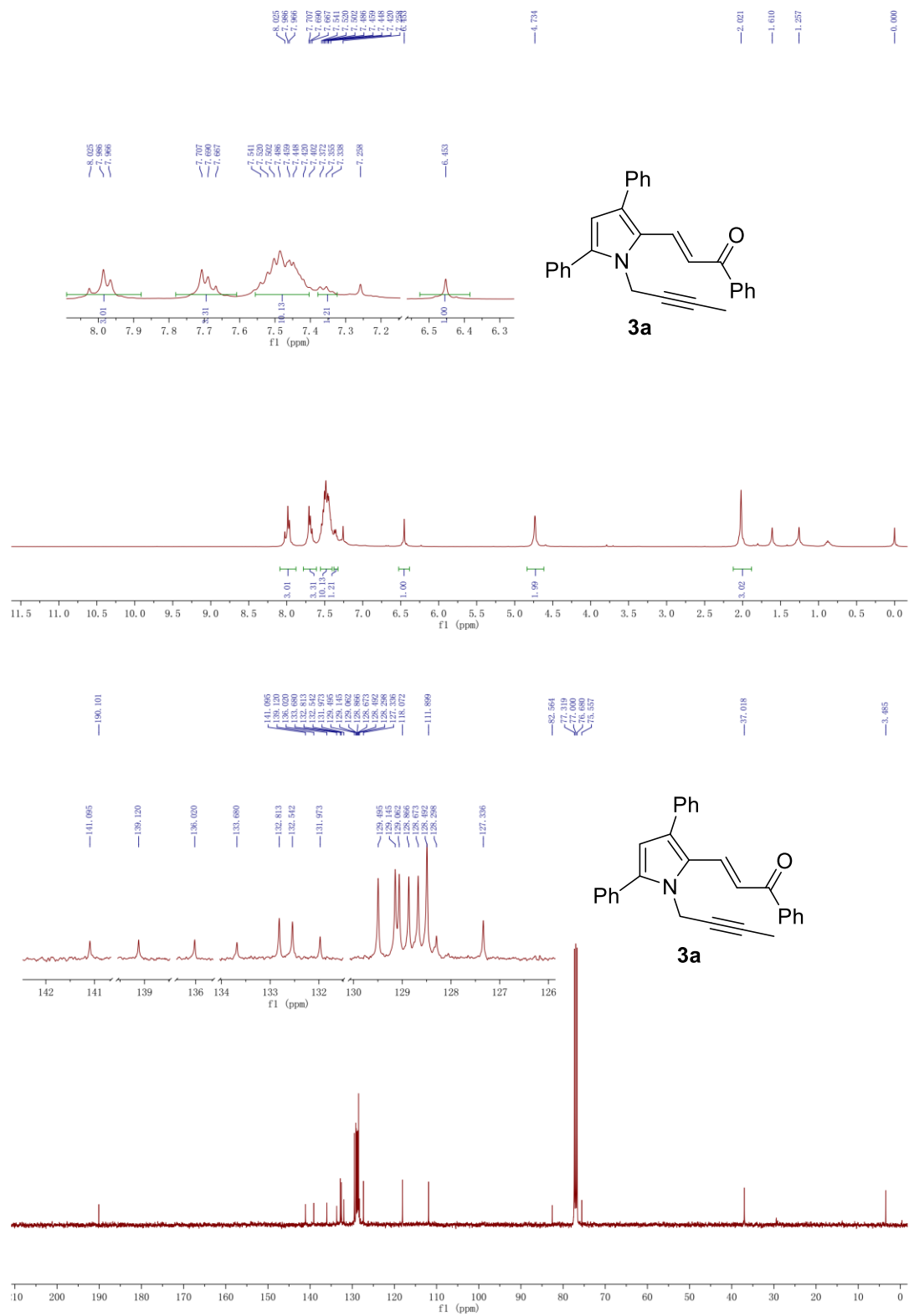






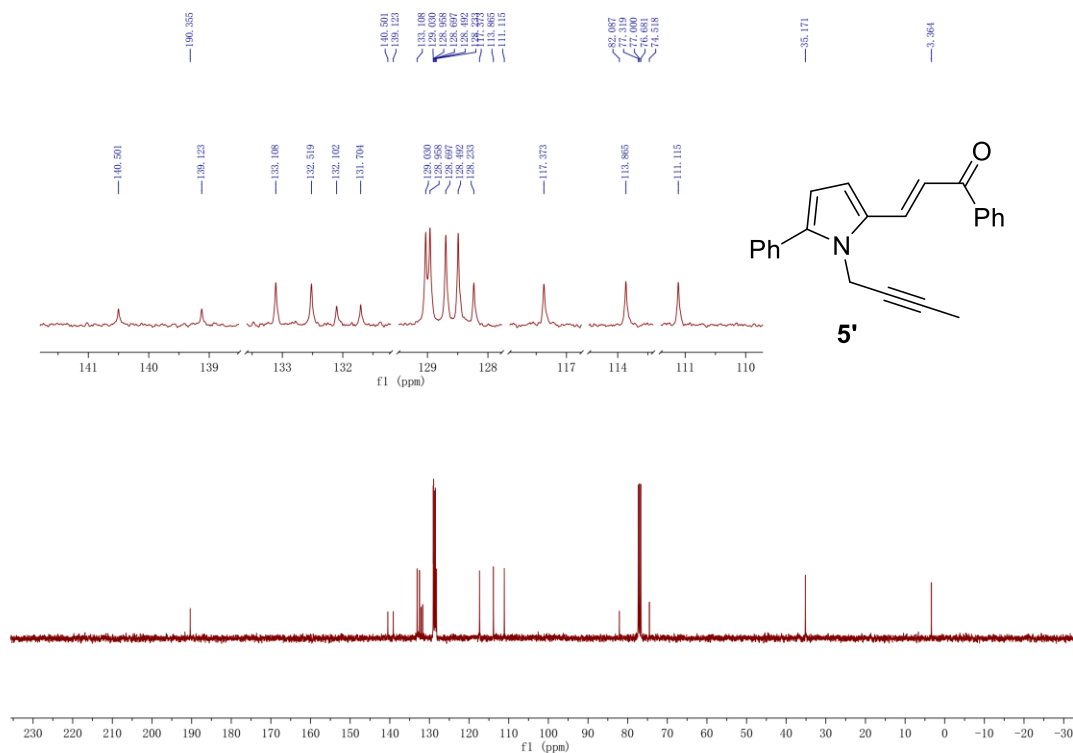
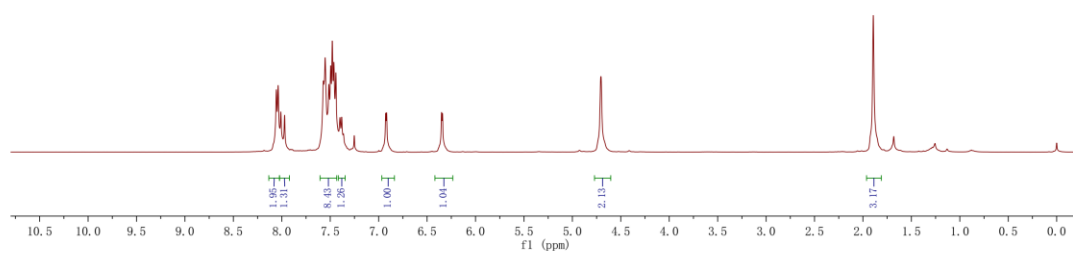
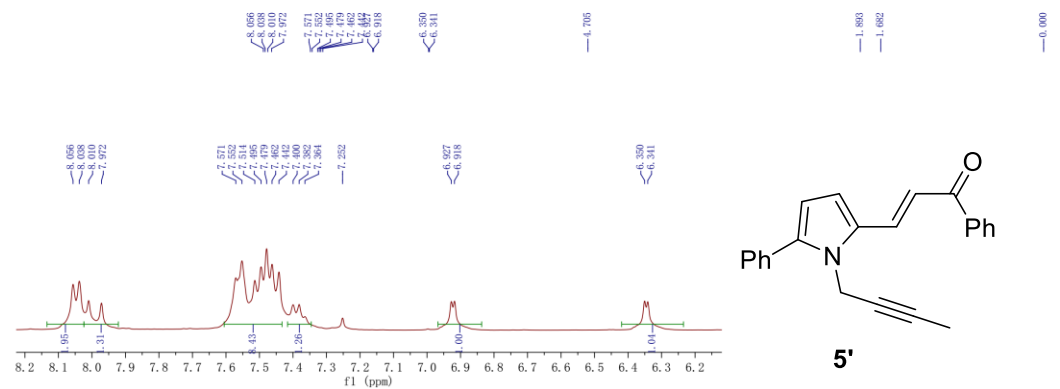


**NMR spectra of new compounds (3a)**

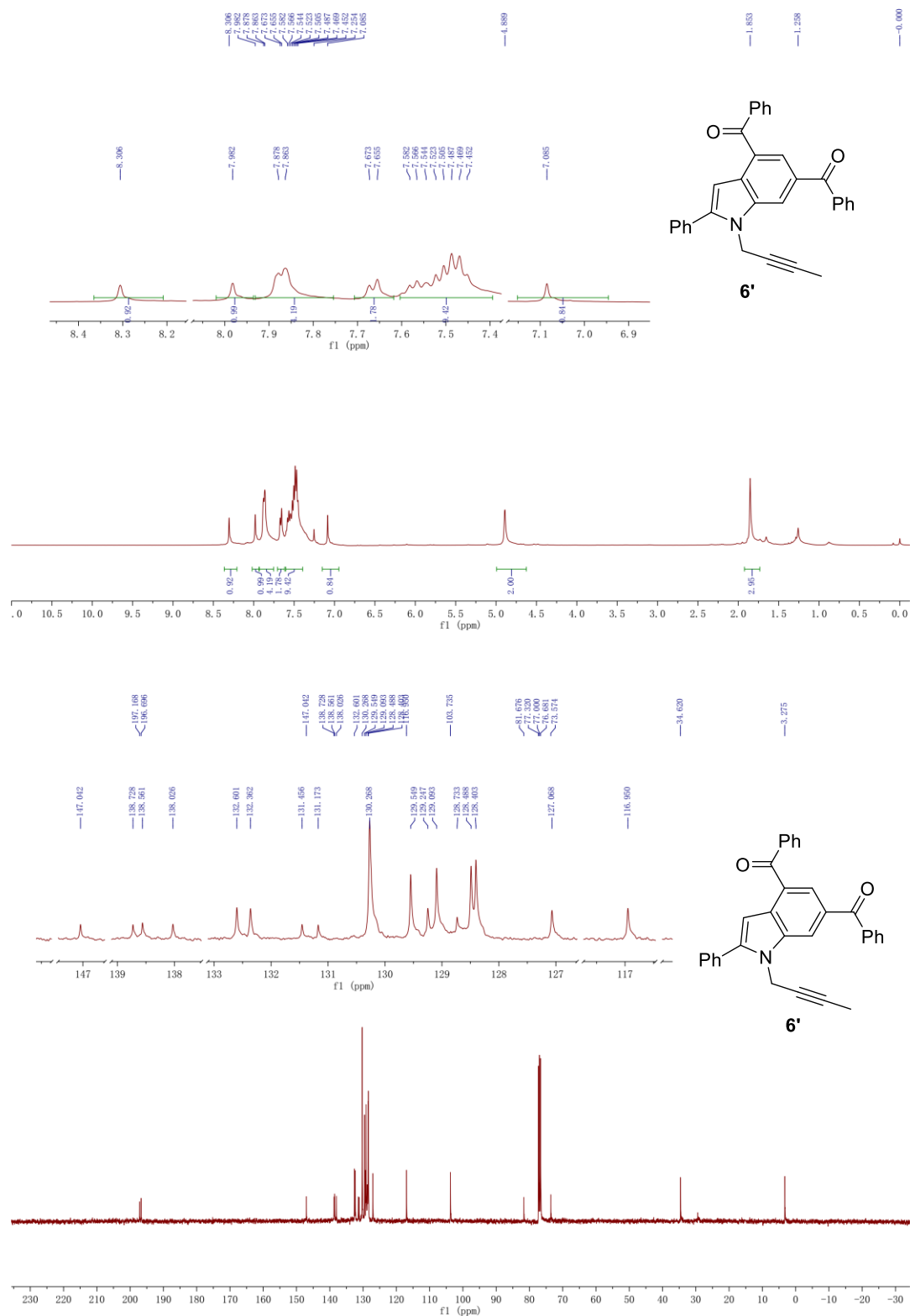


**NMR spectra of new compounds (5')**

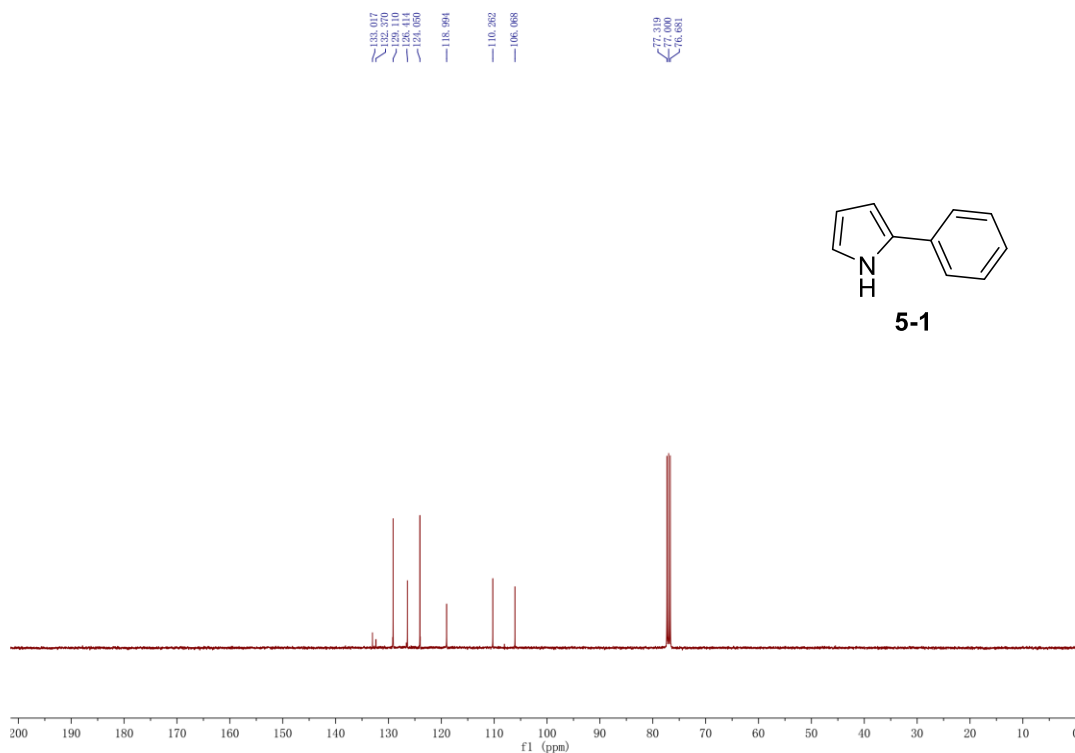
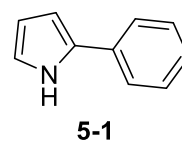
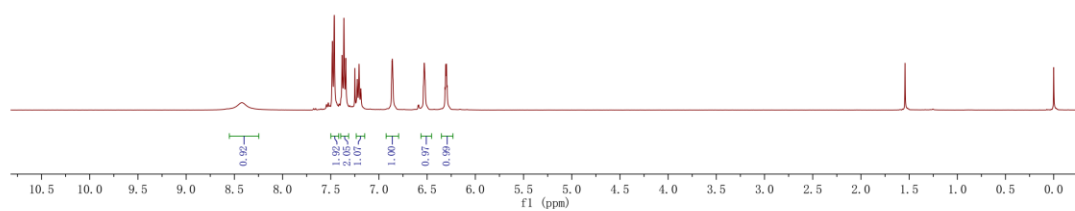
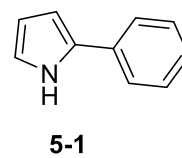
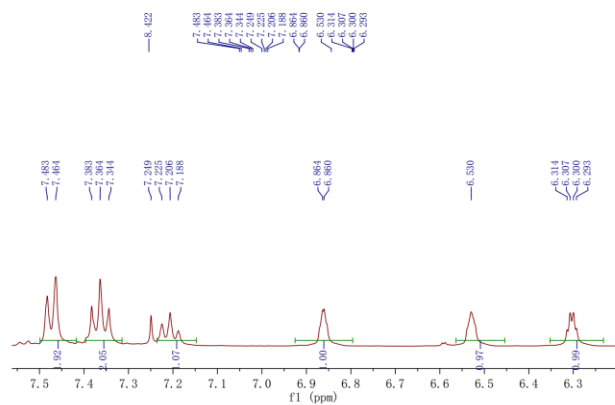


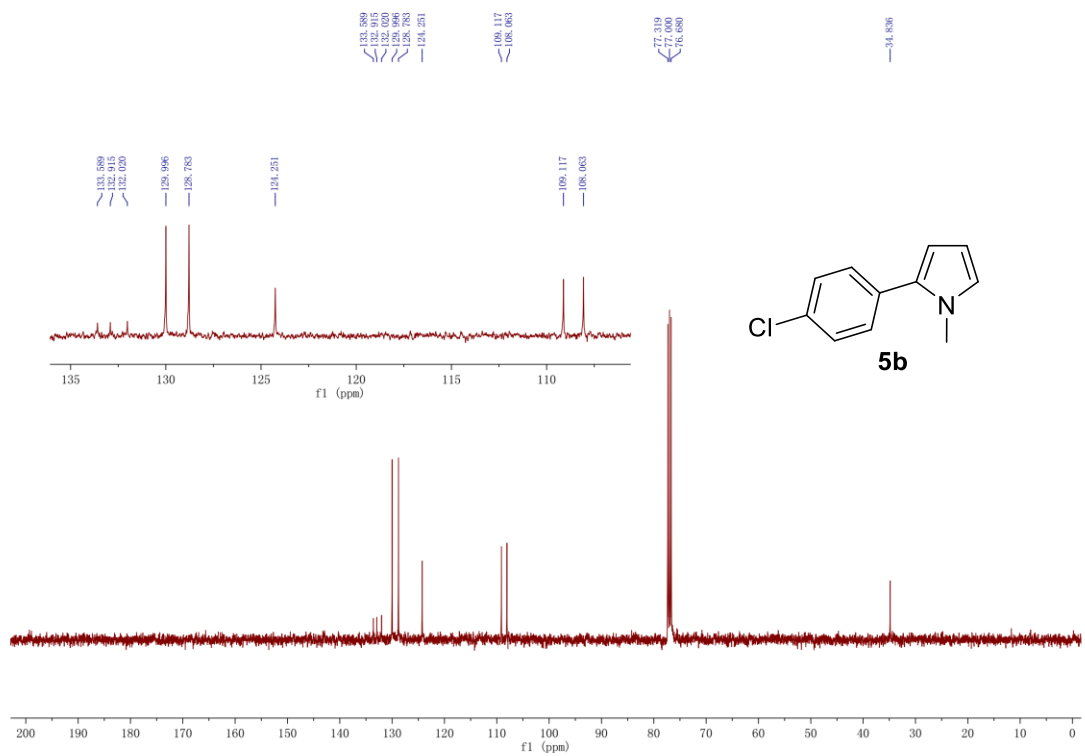
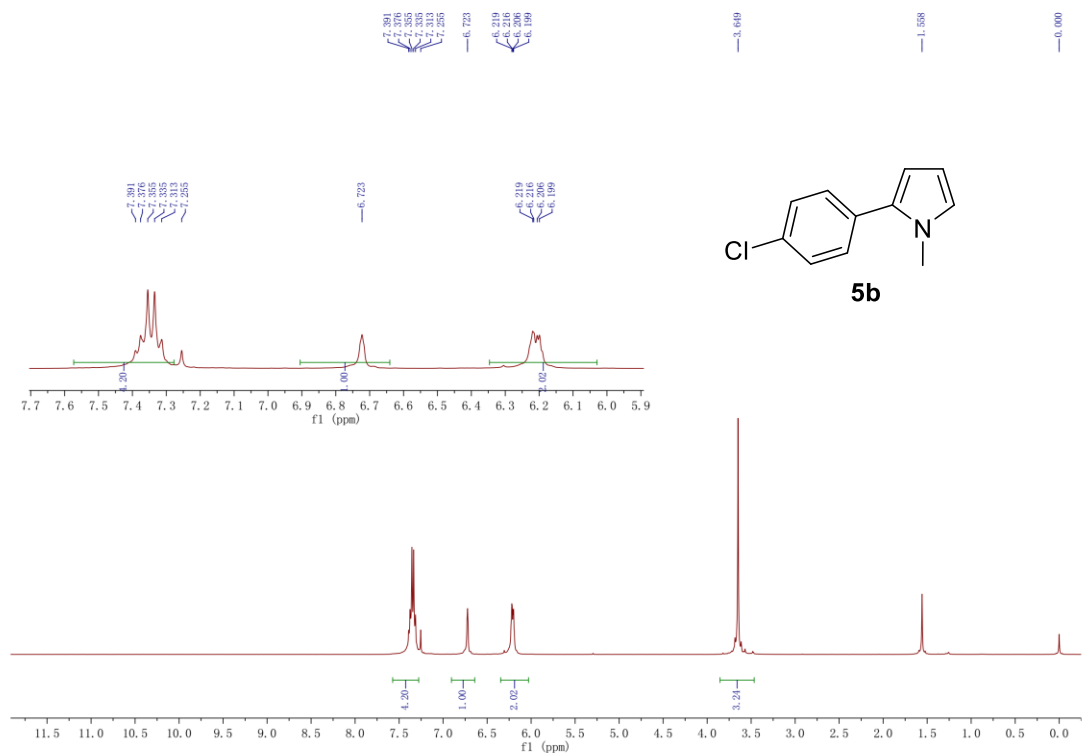


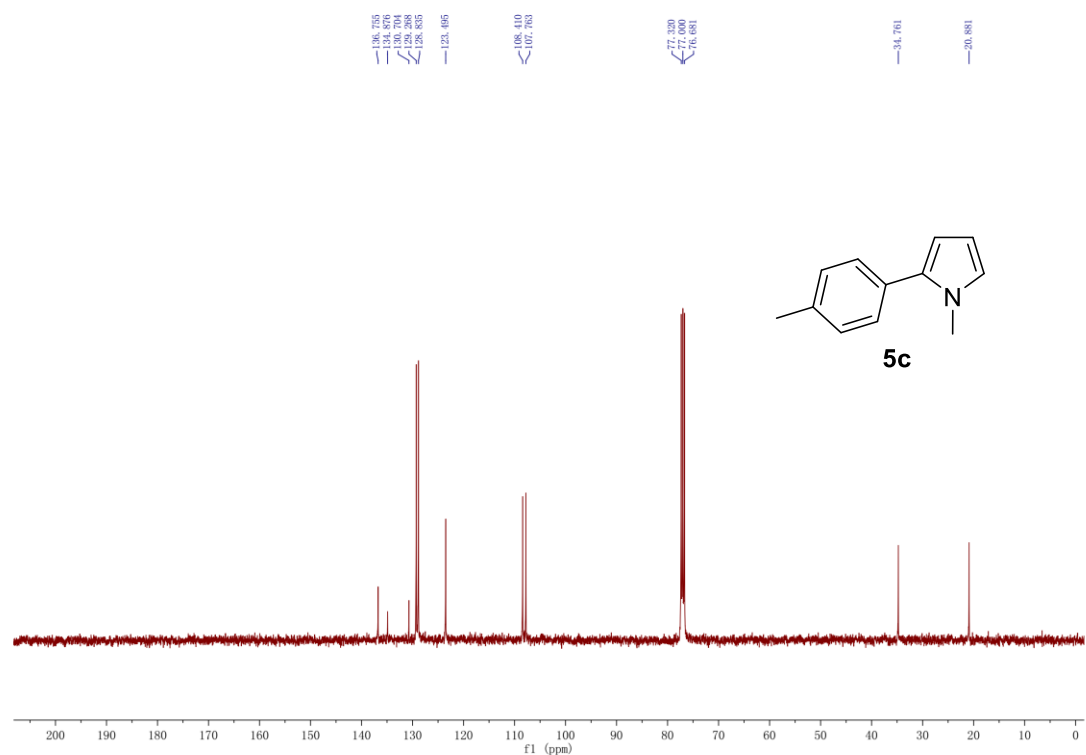
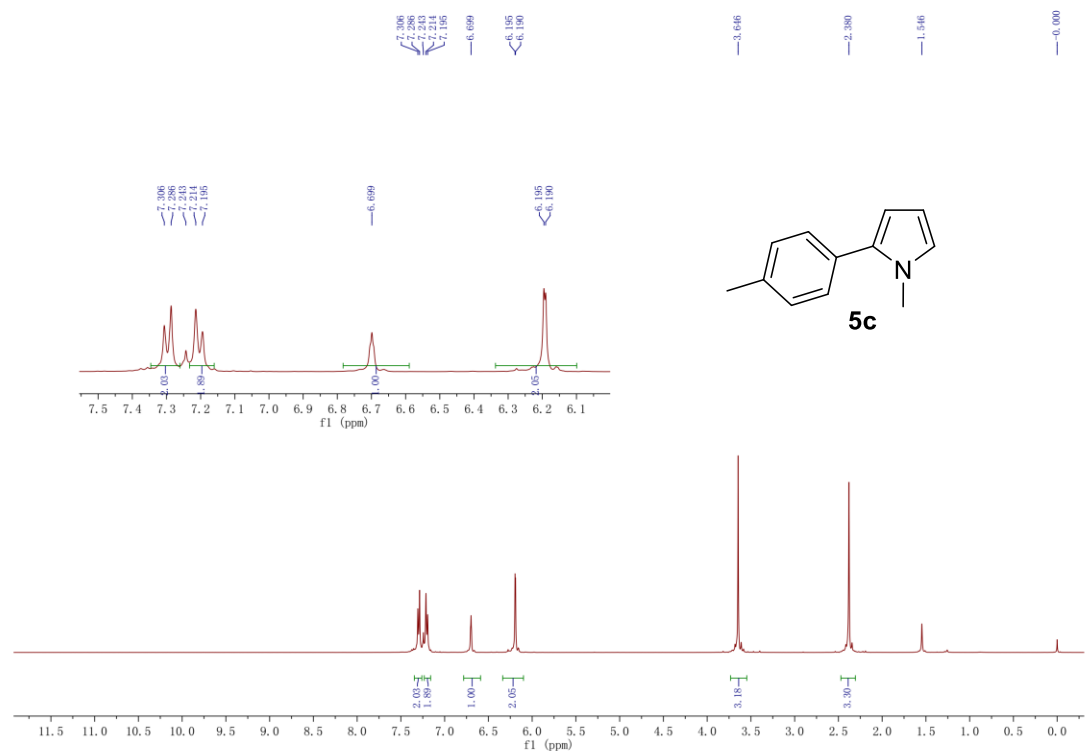
NMR spectra of new compounds (**6'**)

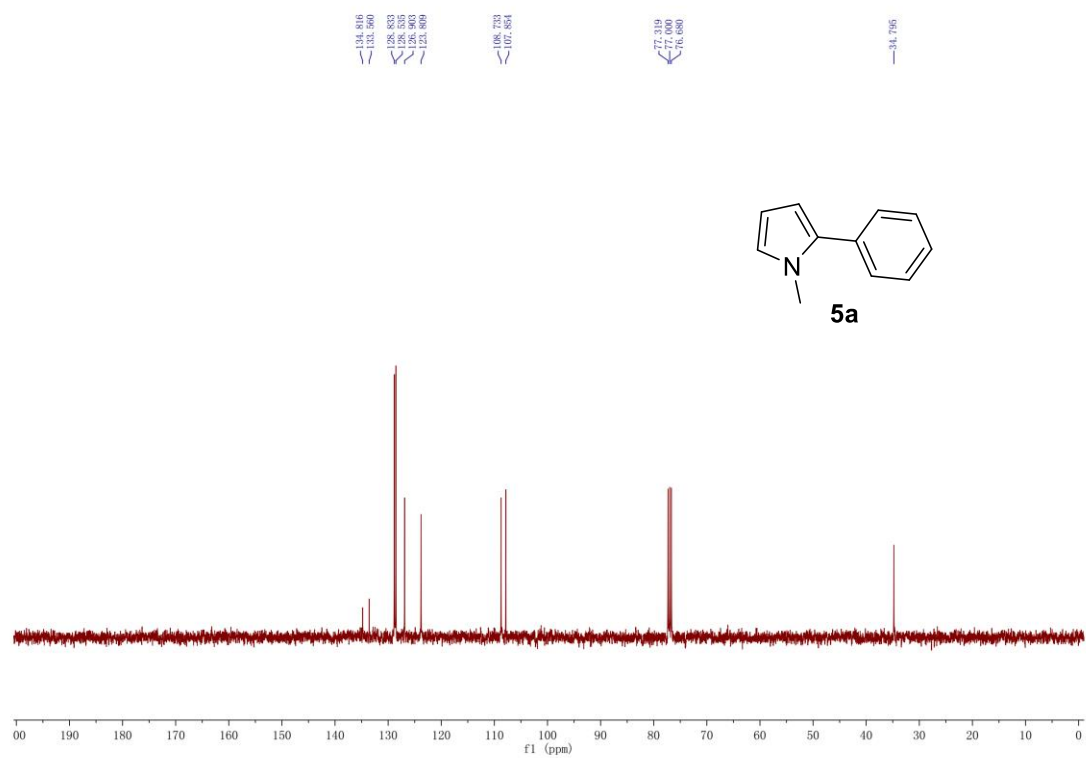
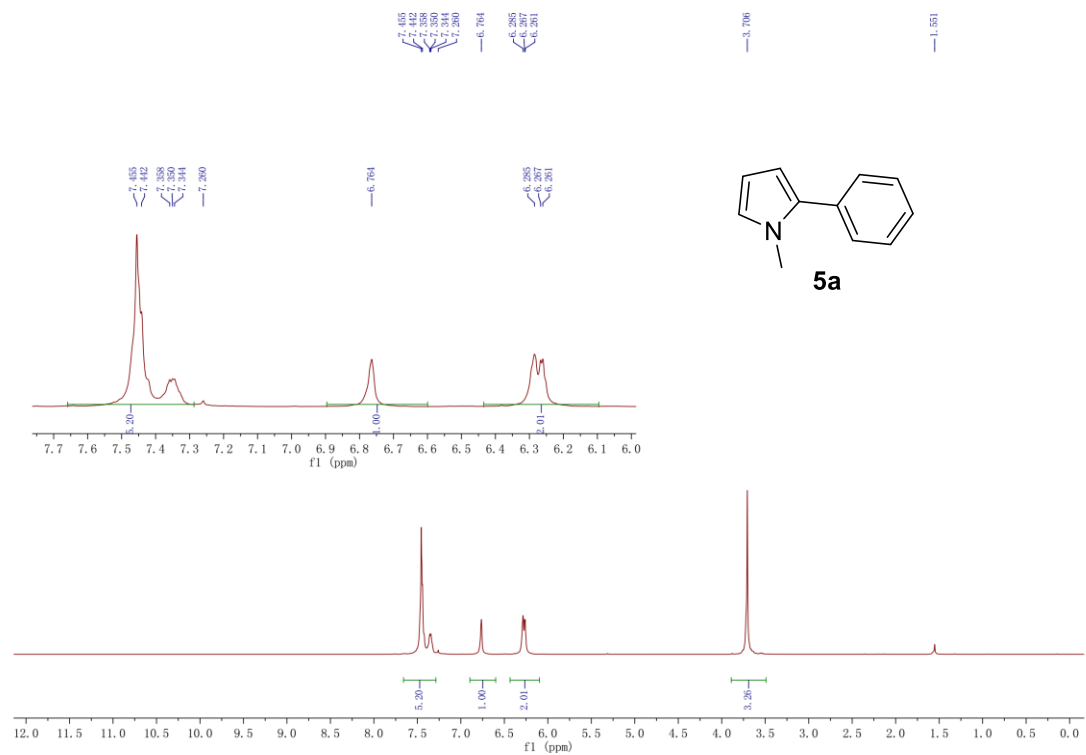


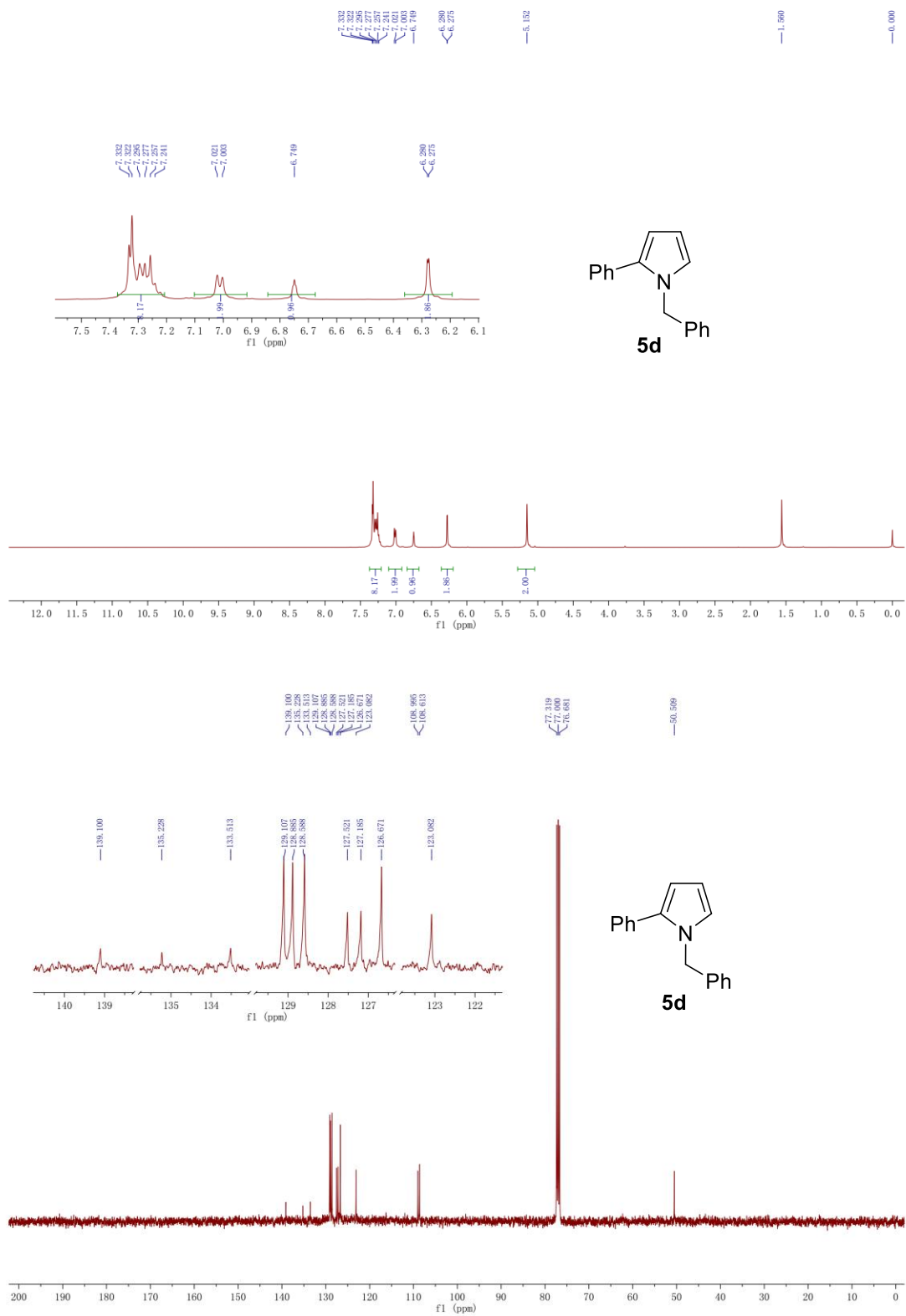
## NMR spectra of new compounds (5)

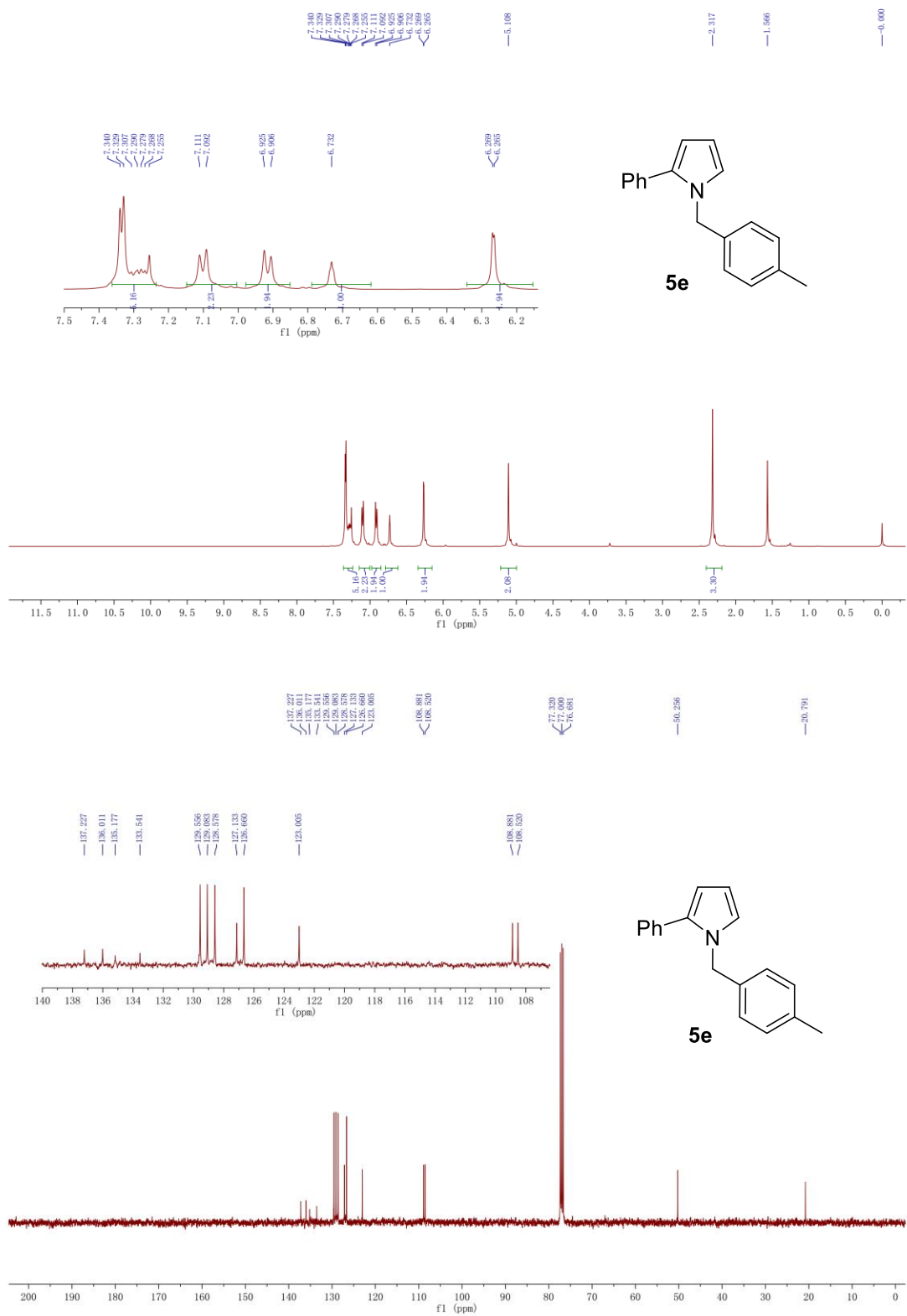




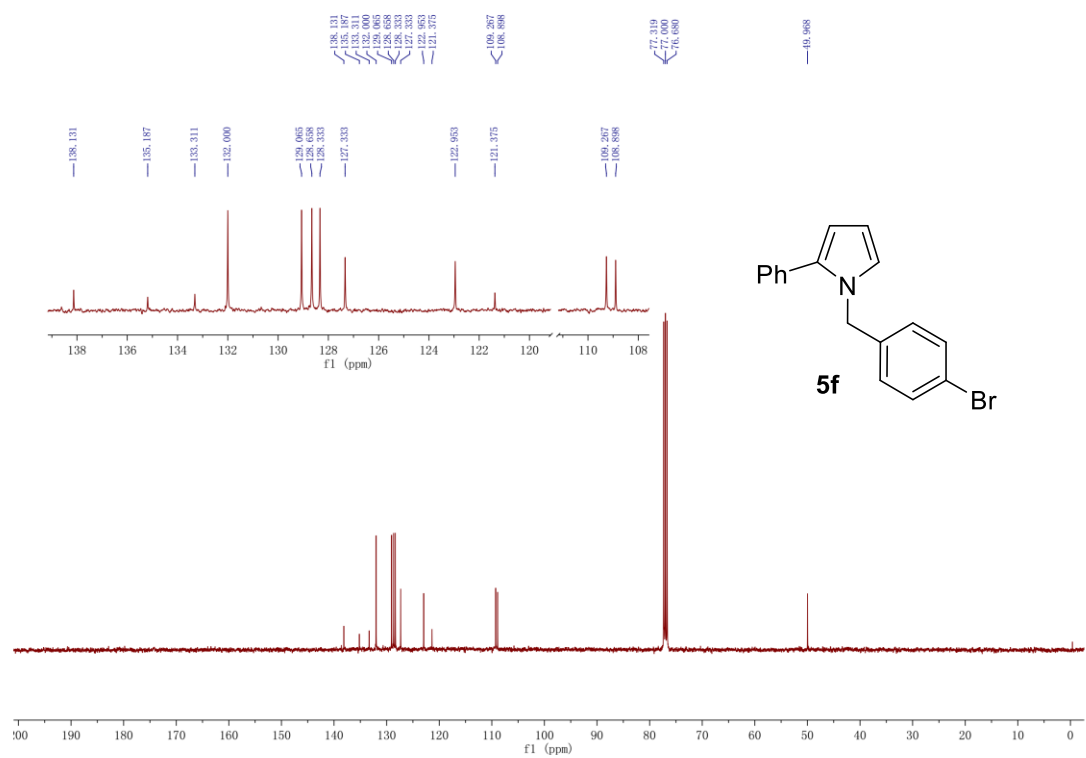
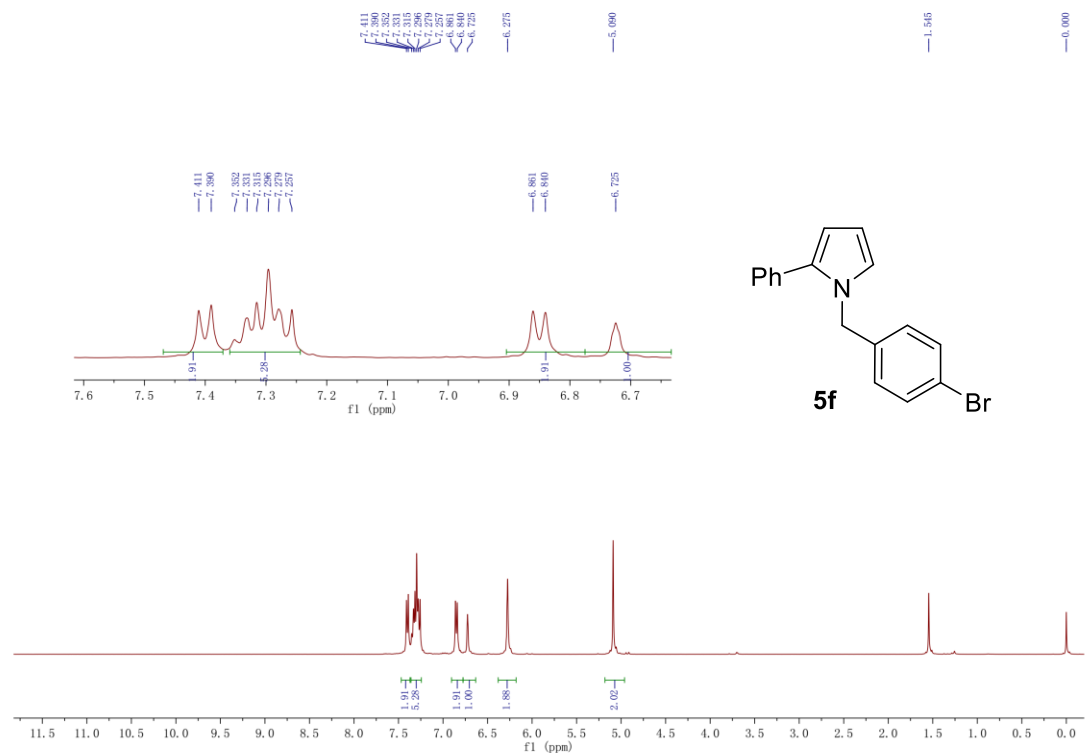


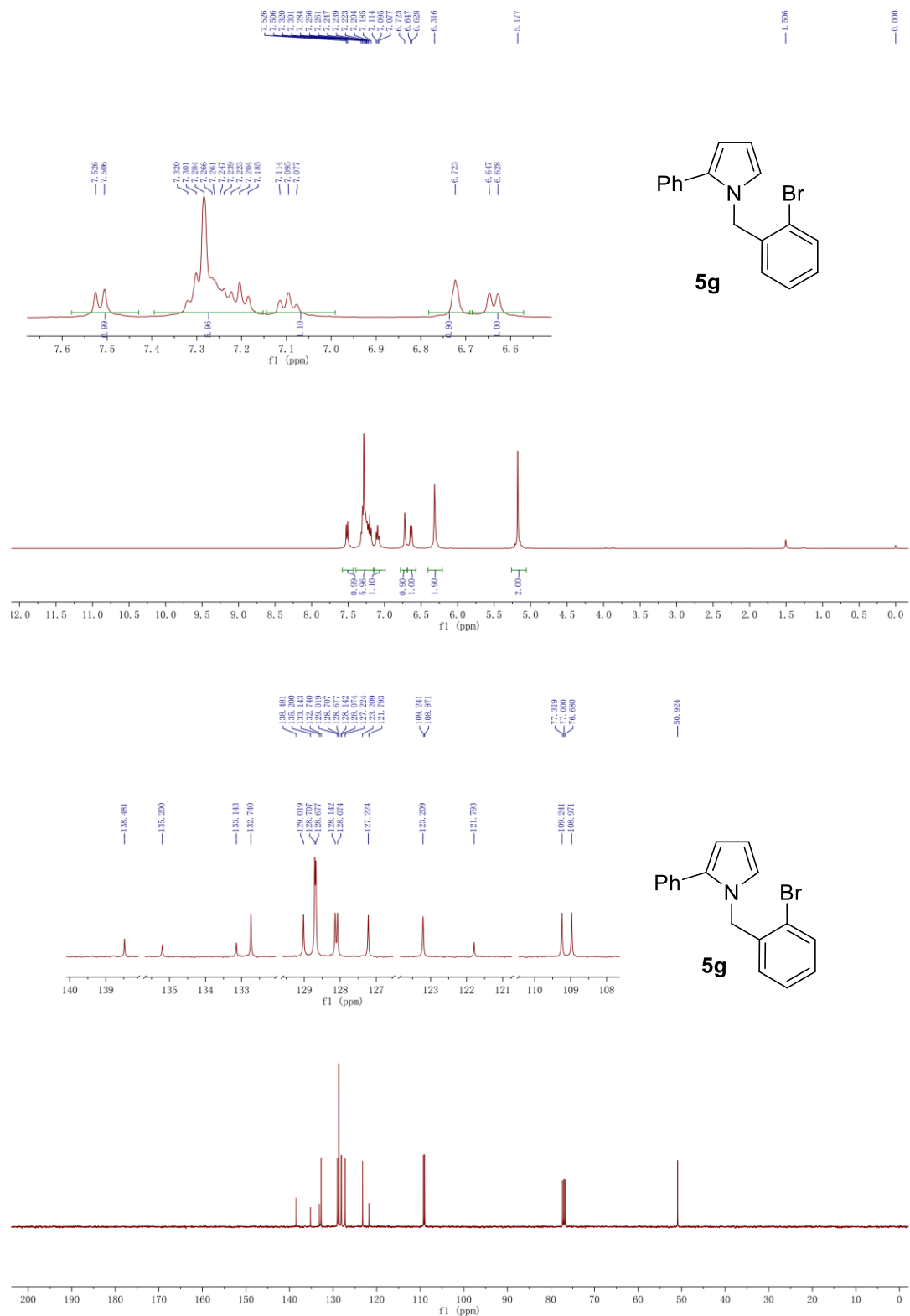




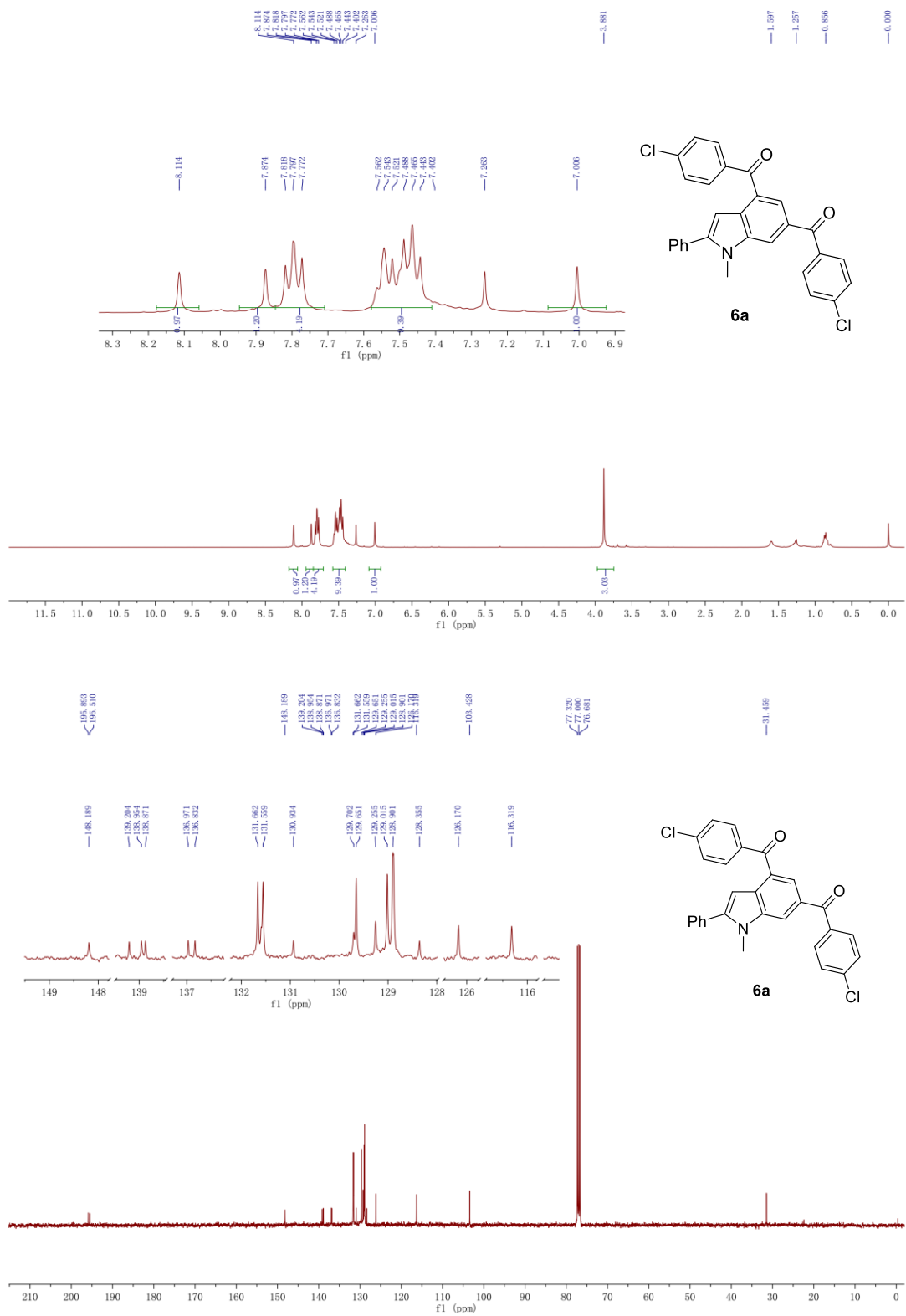


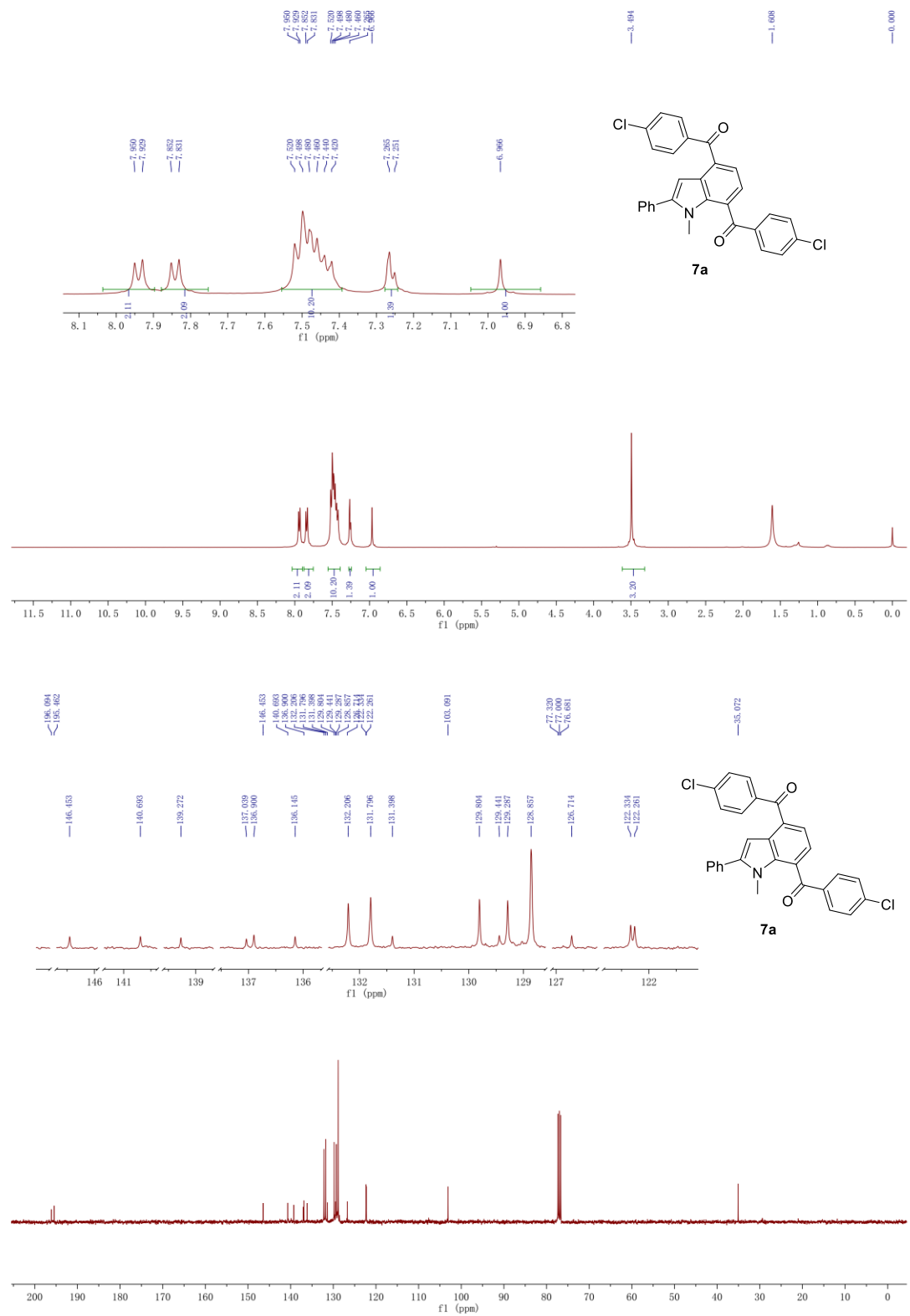


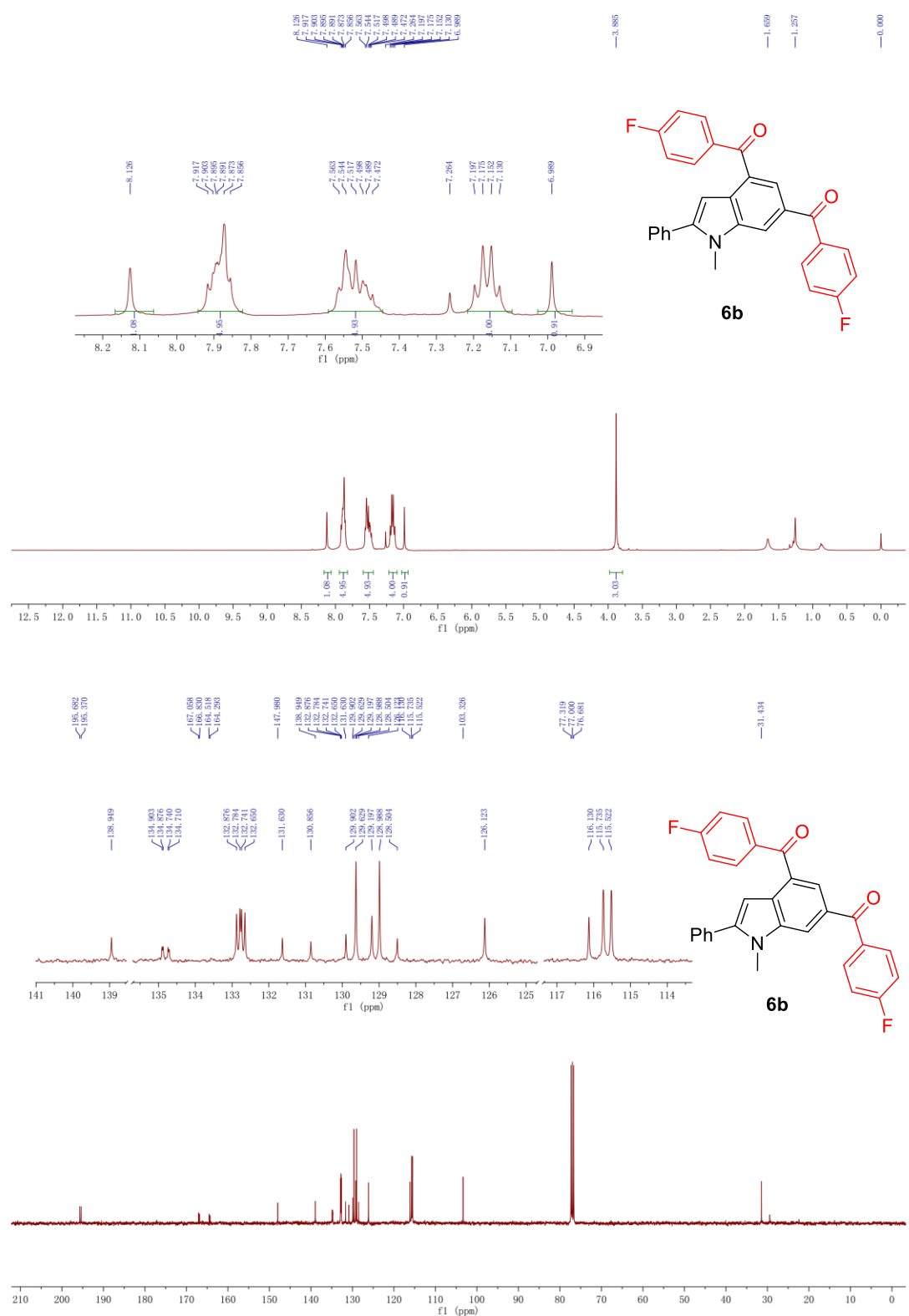


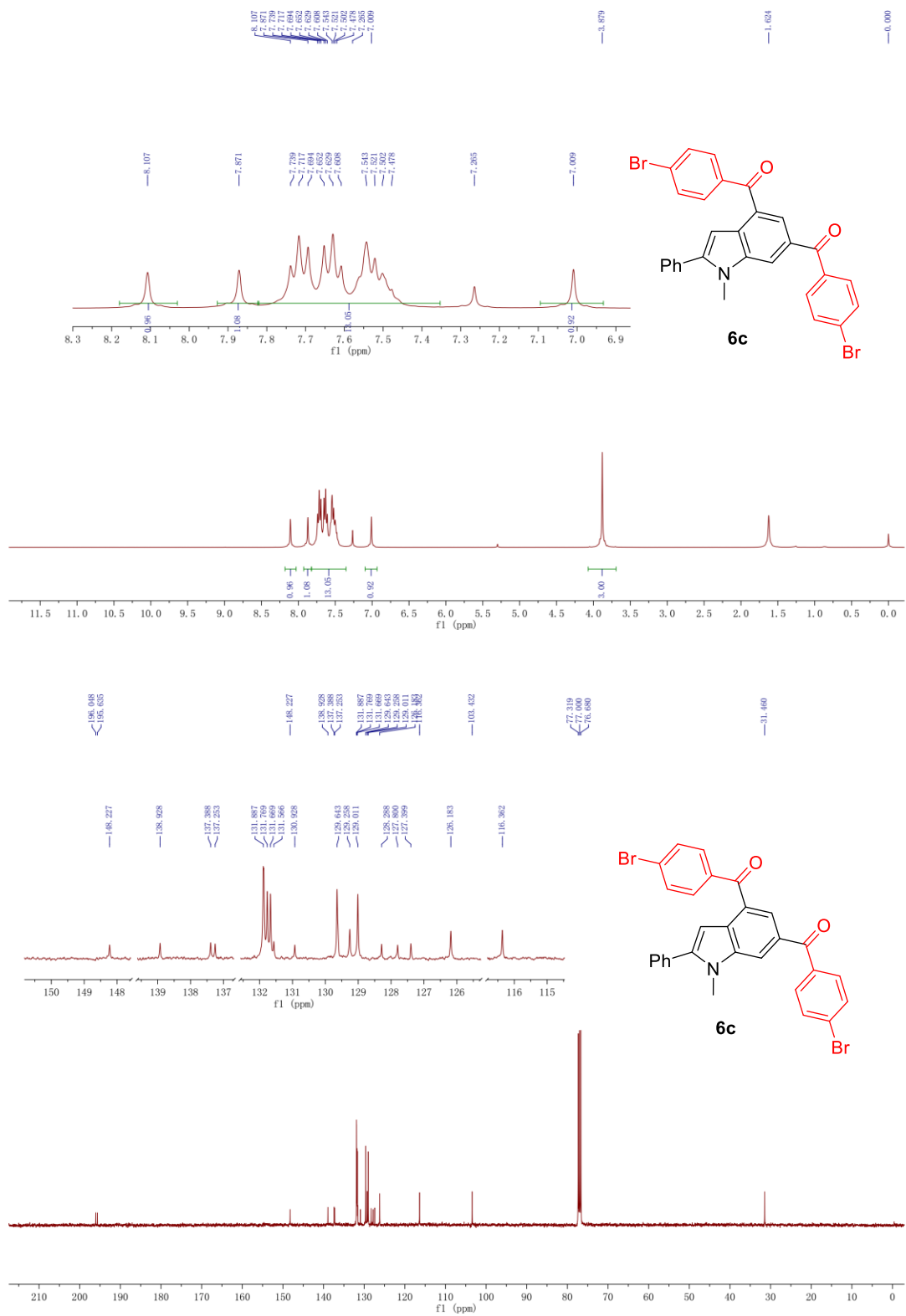


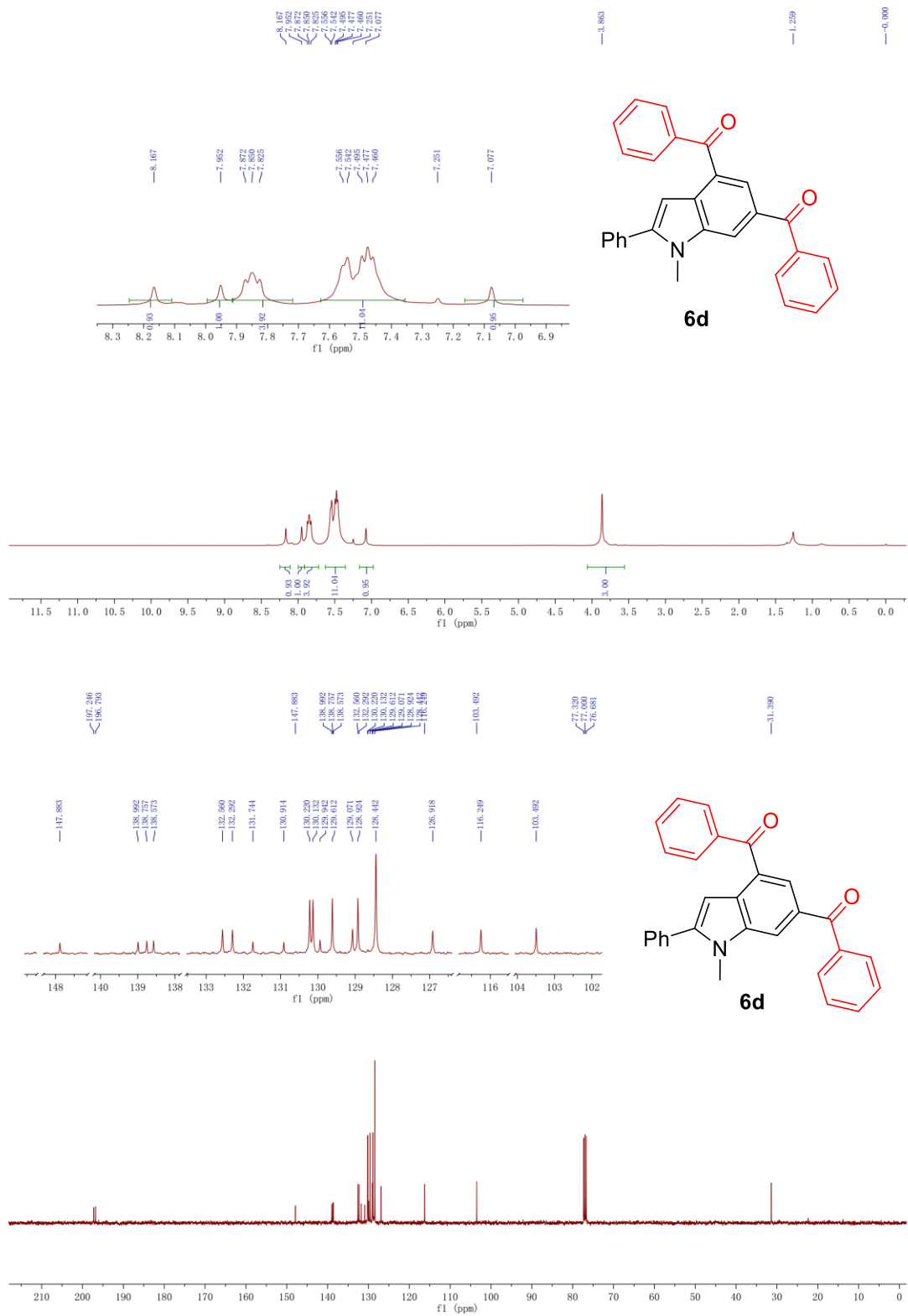
NMR spectra of new compounds (6 and 7a)

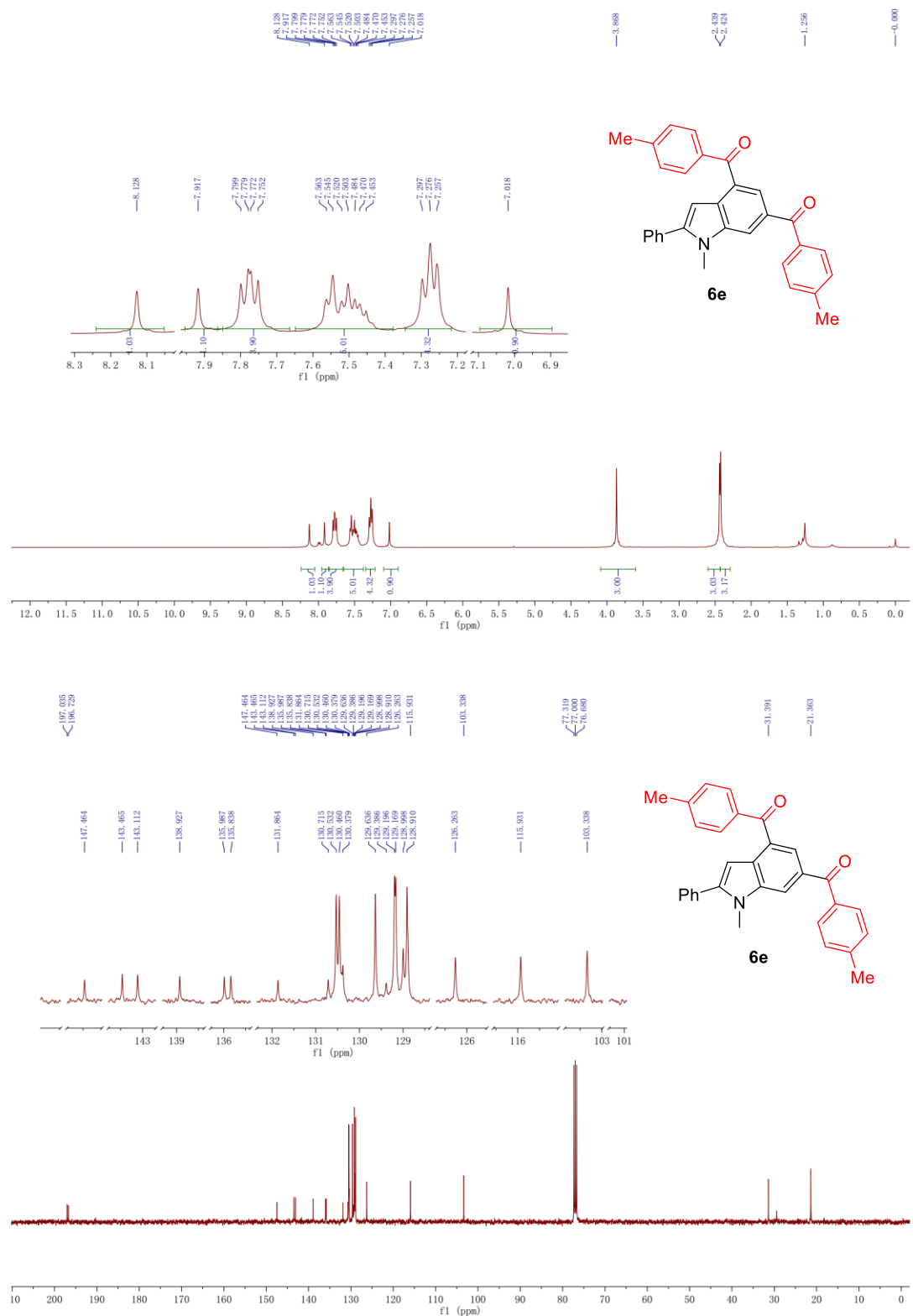




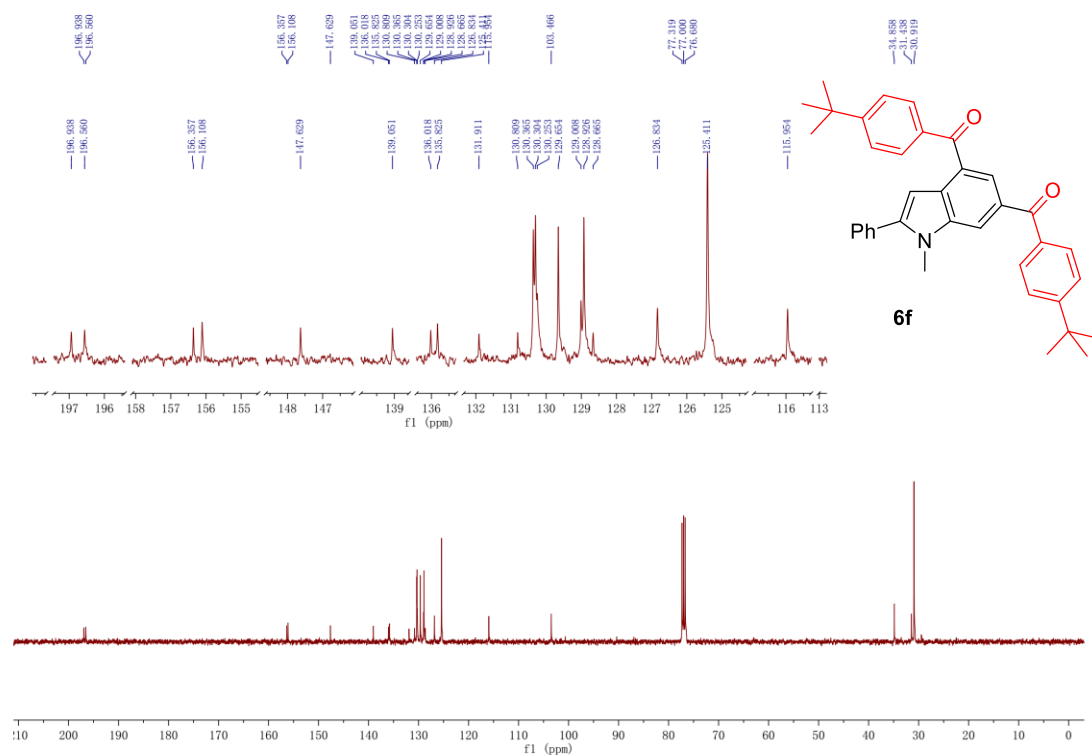
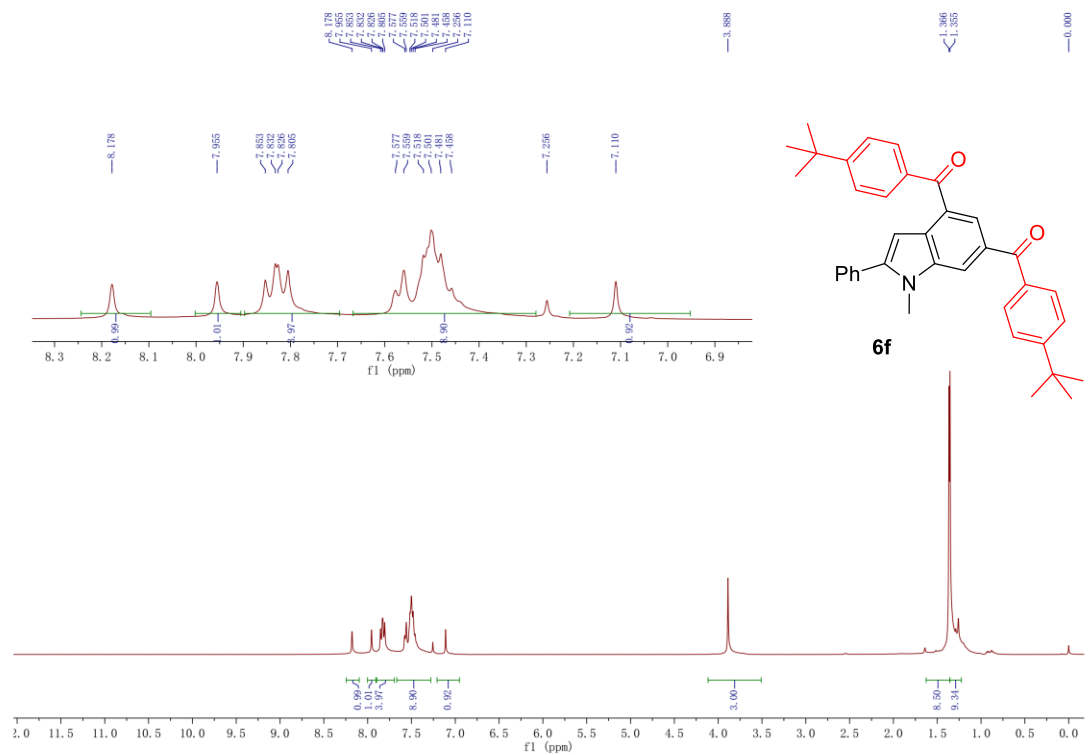


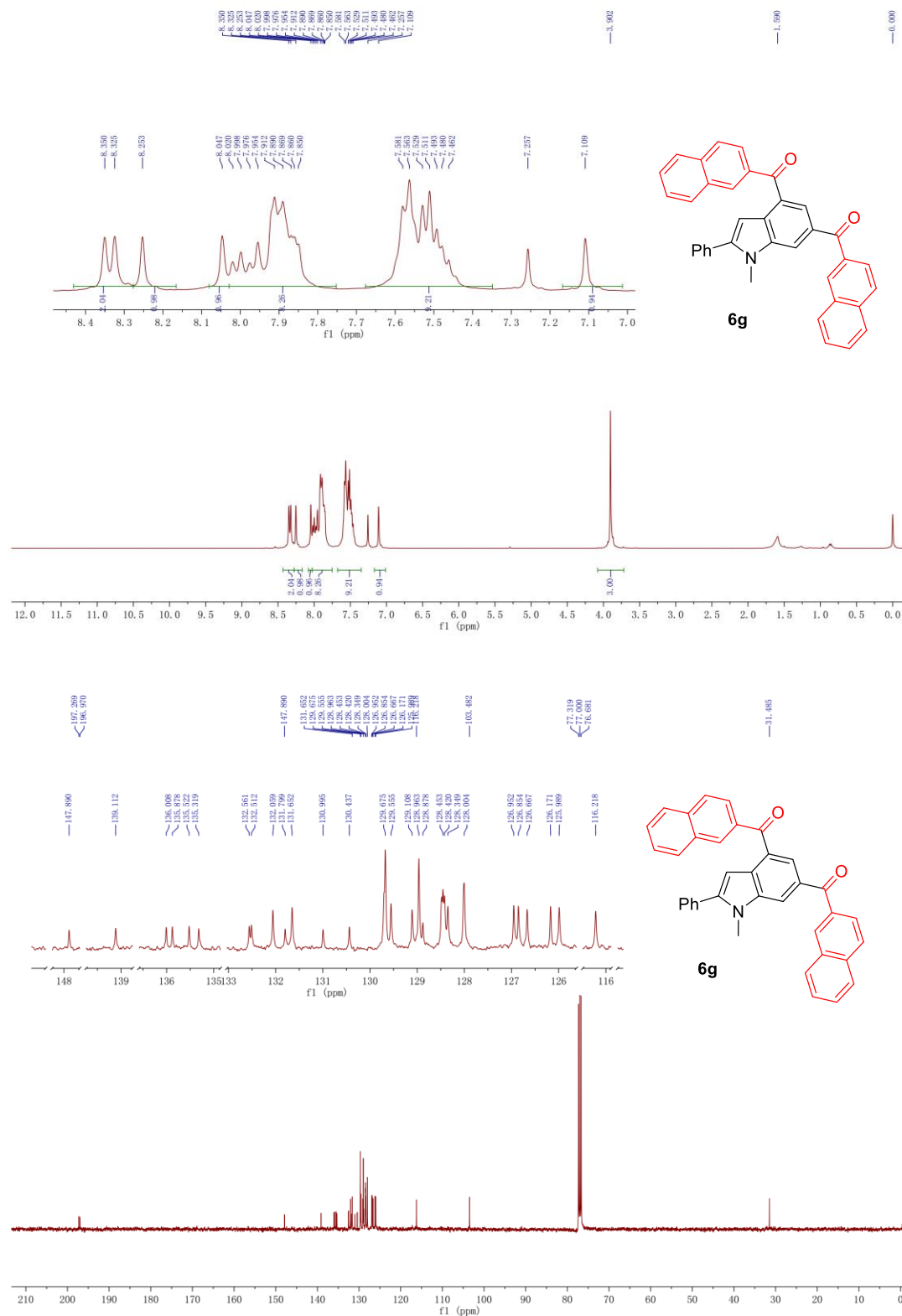


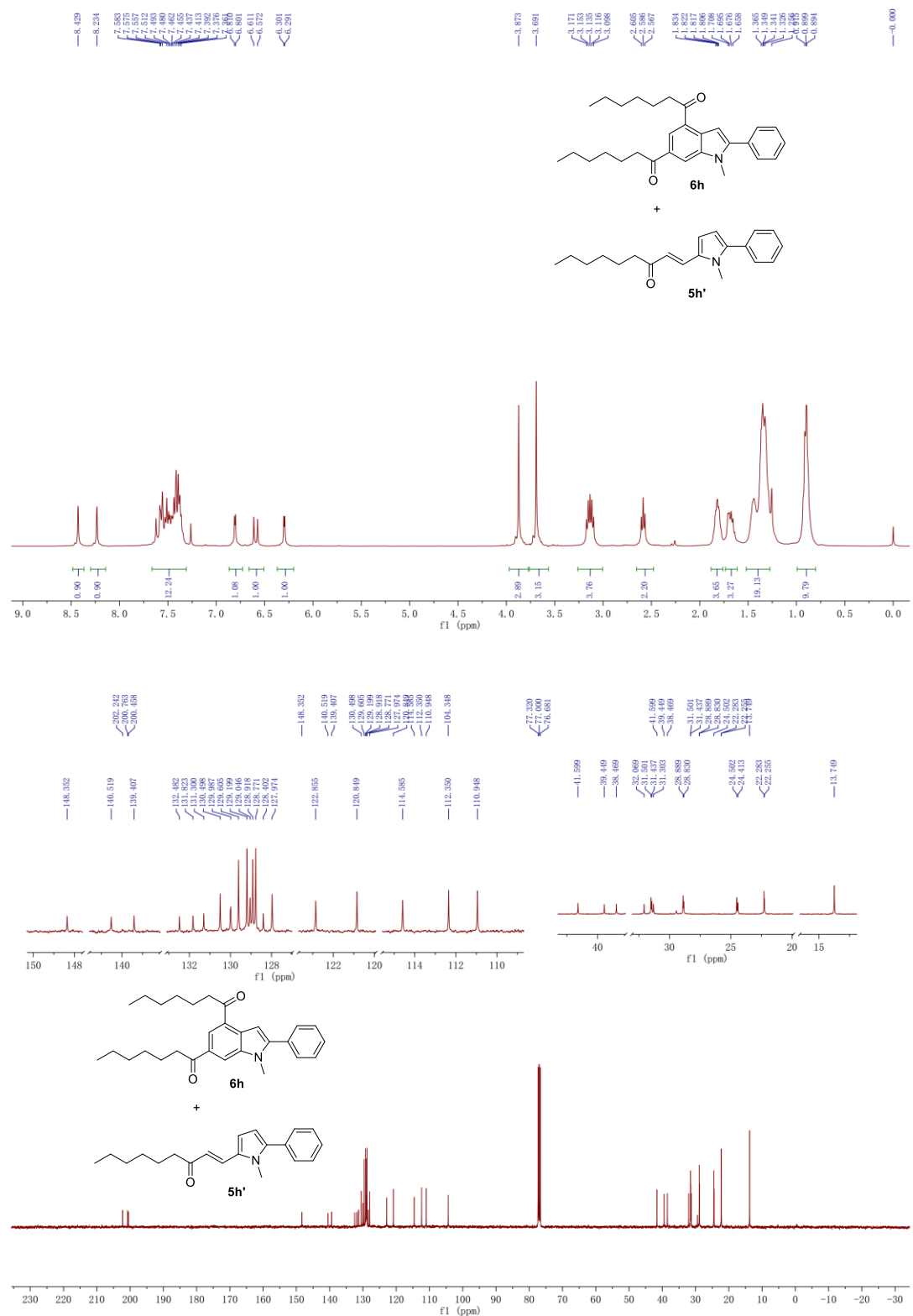




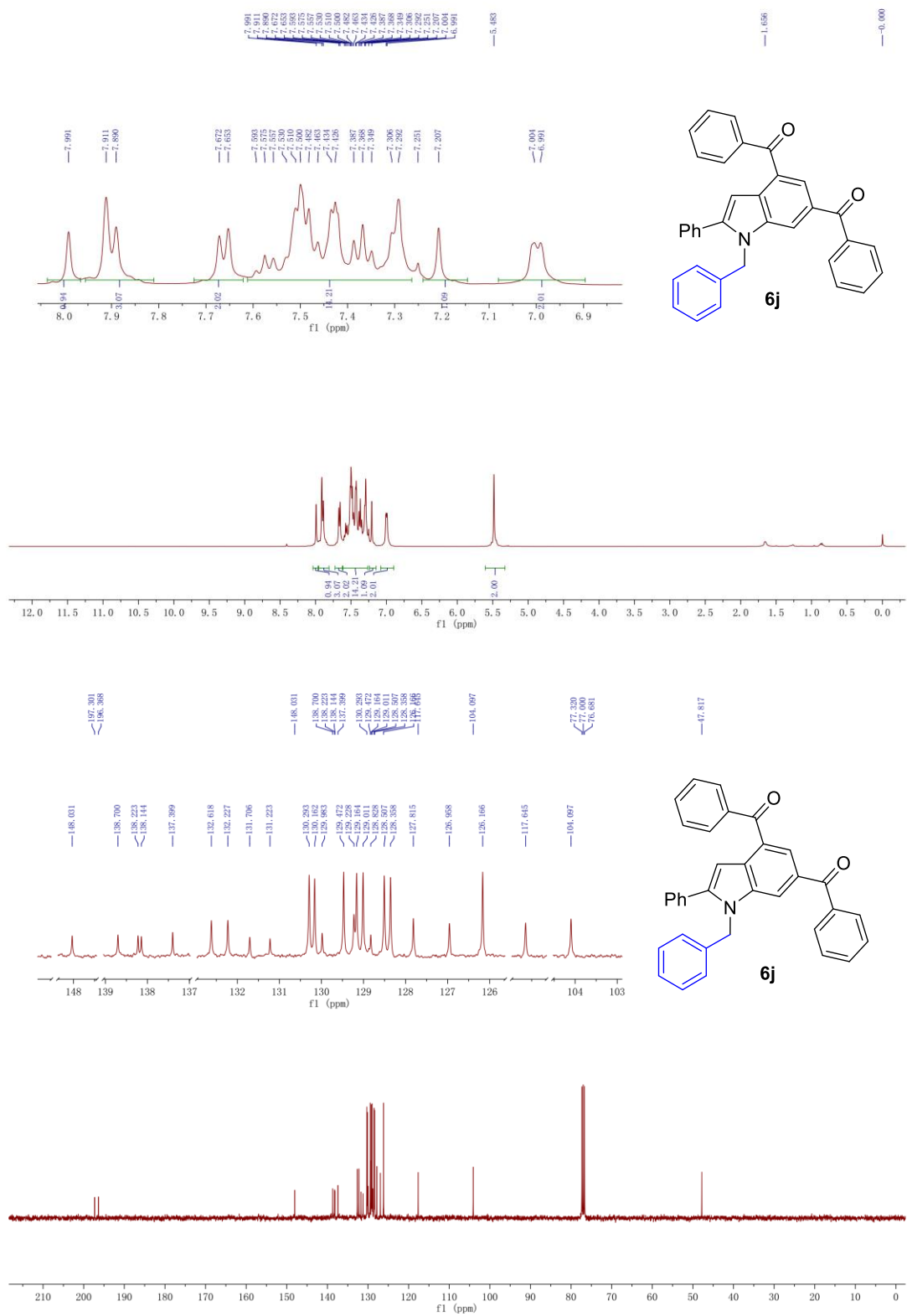


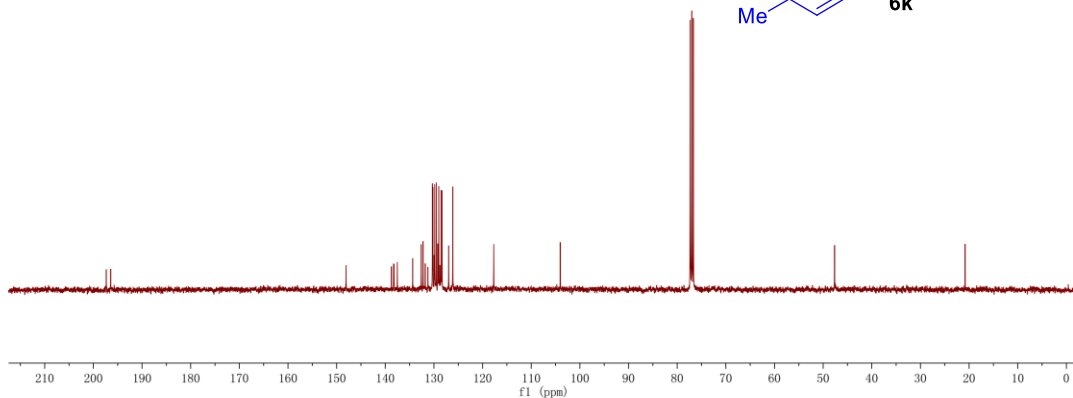
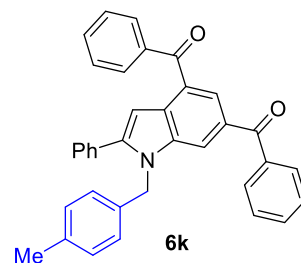
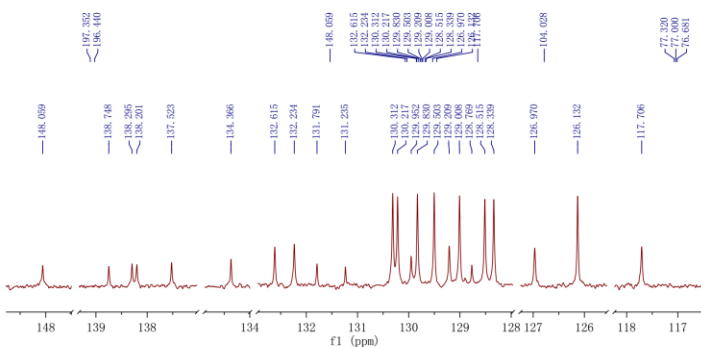
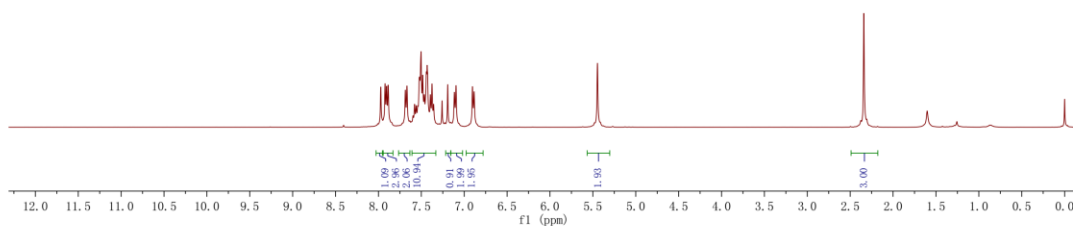
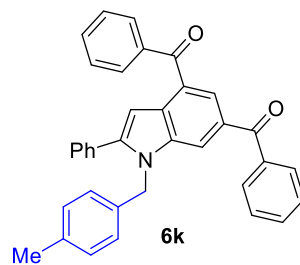
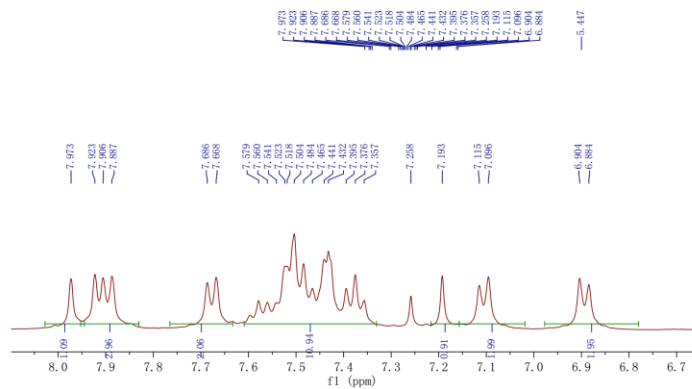




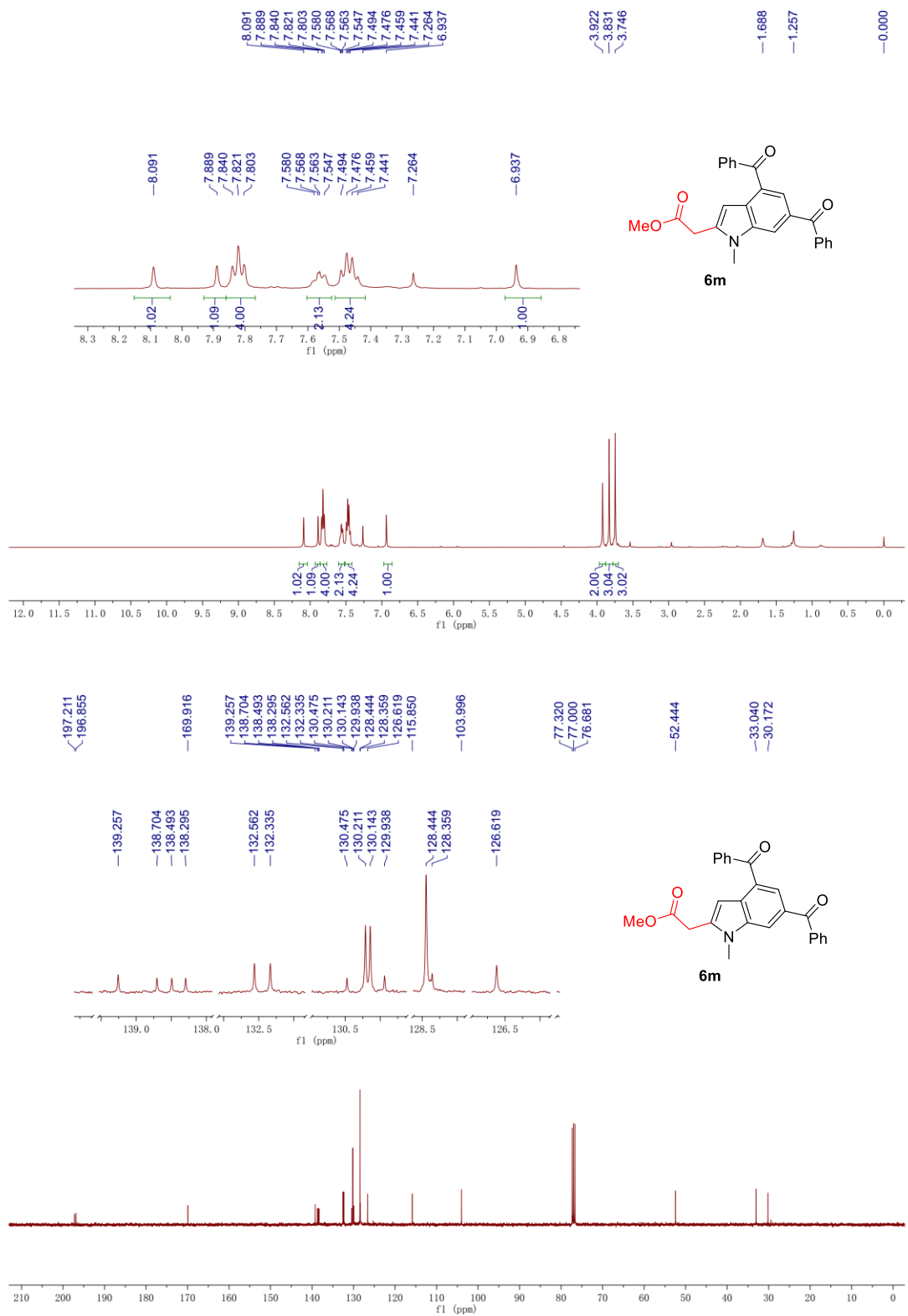




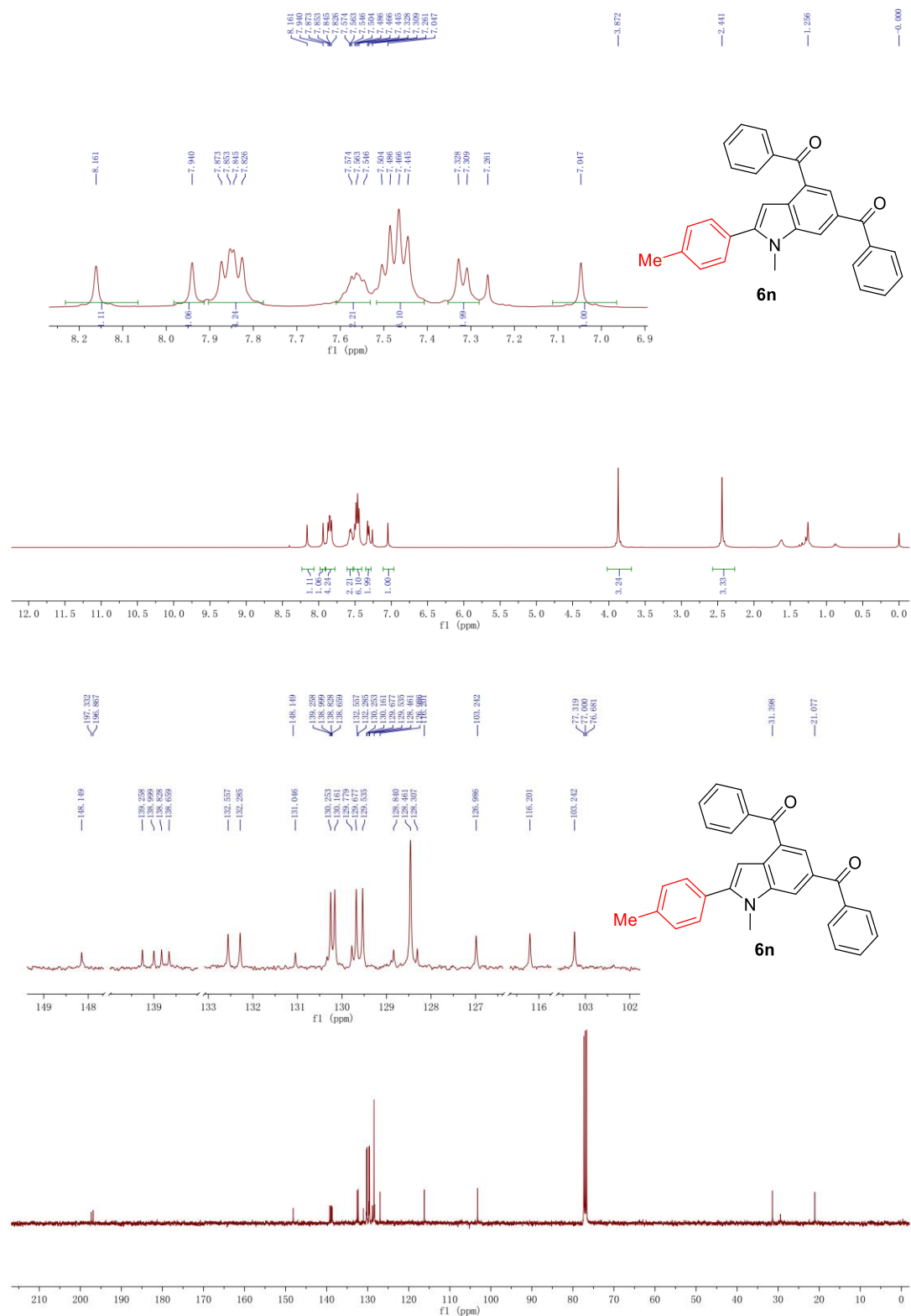


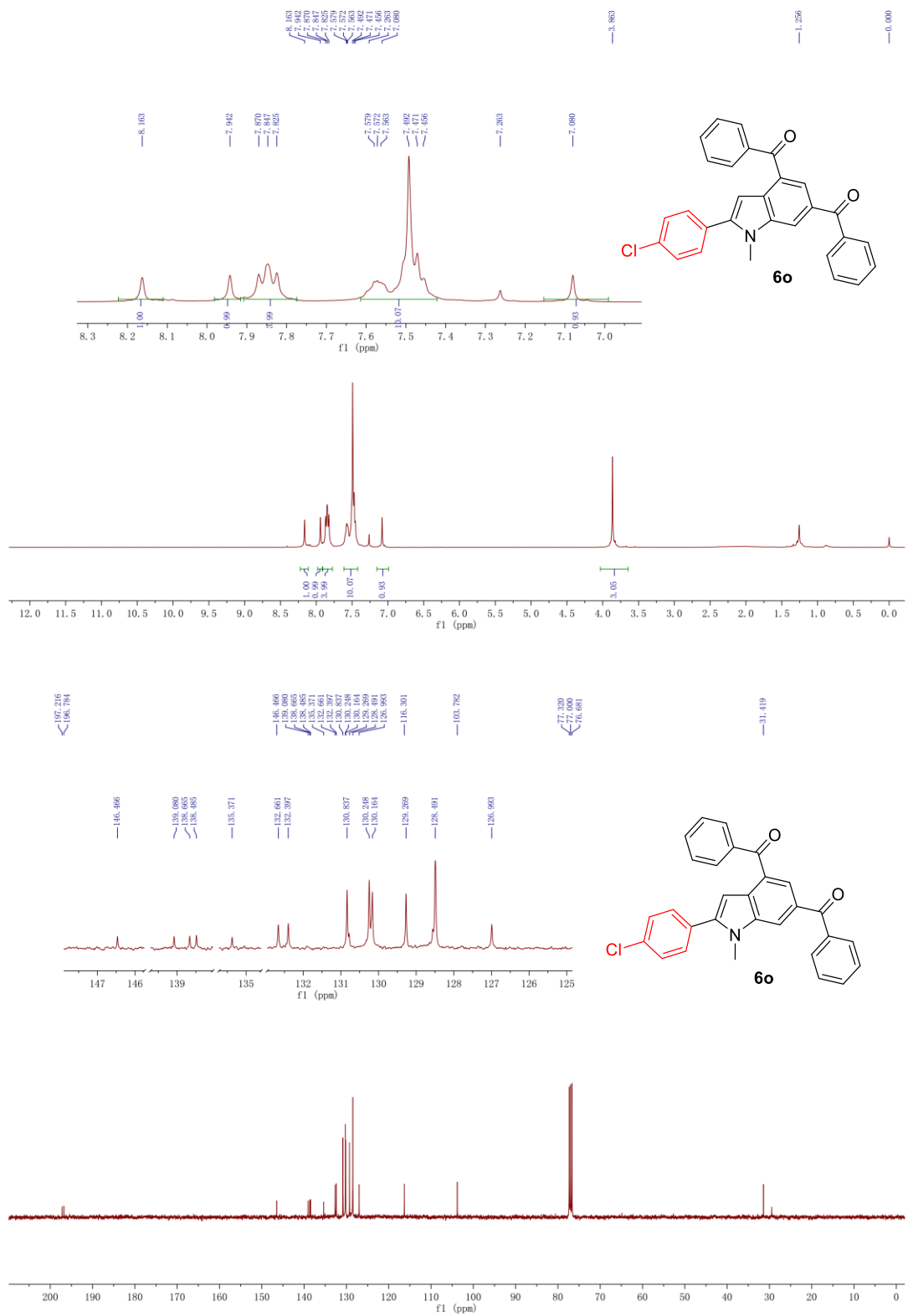


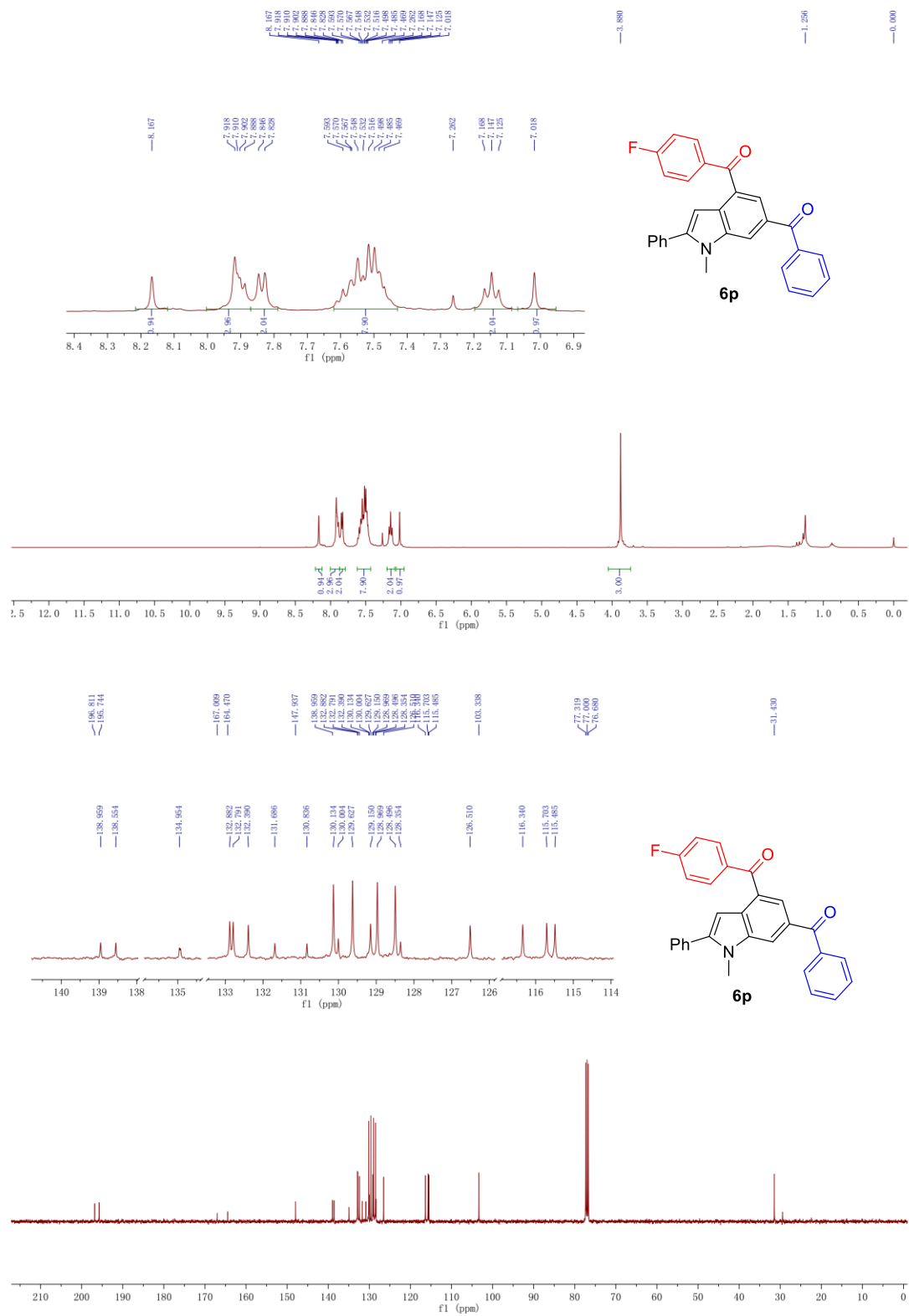


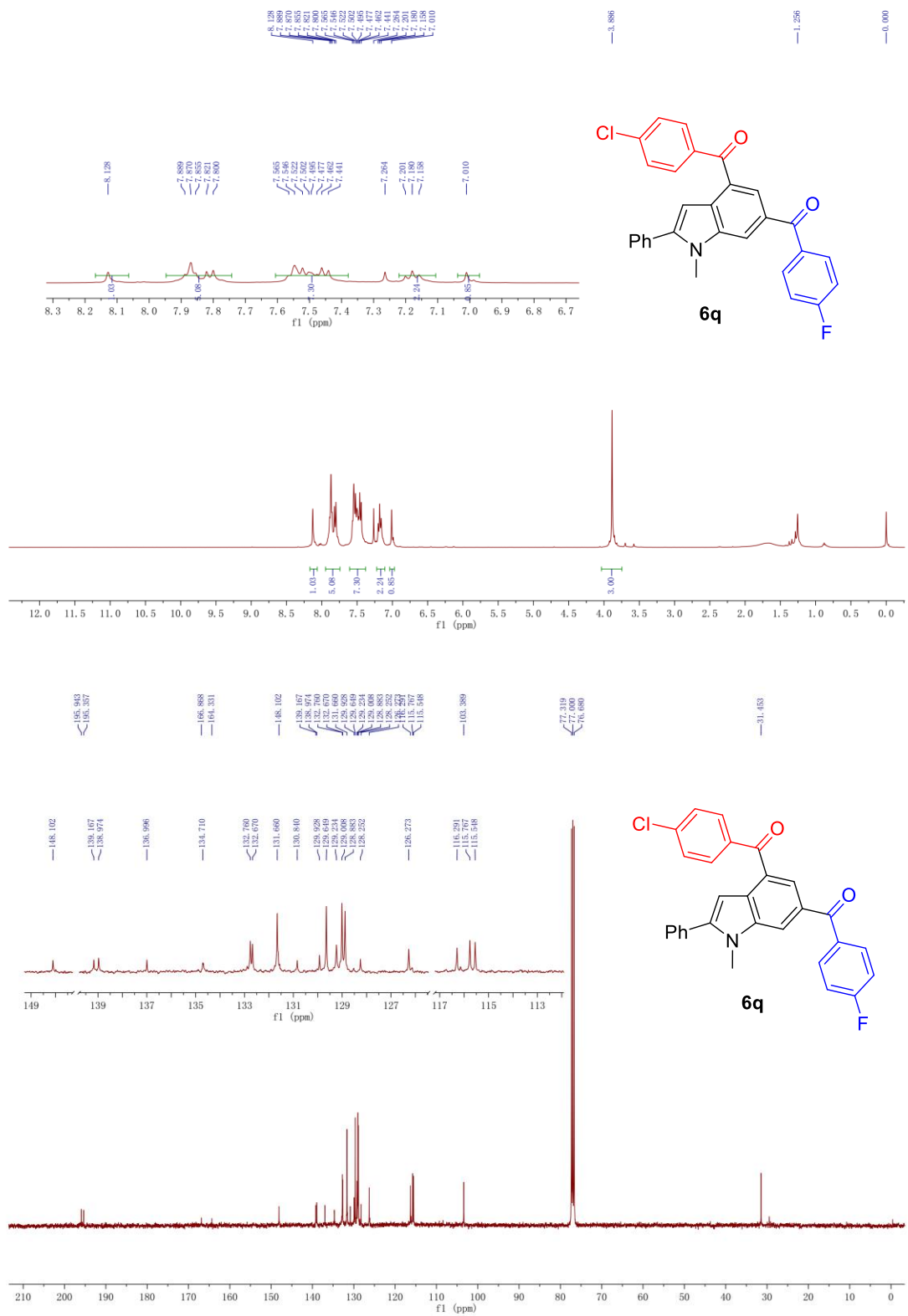


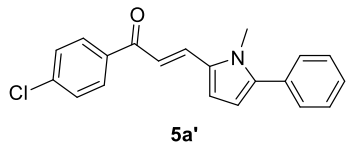
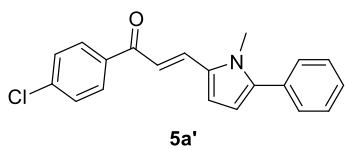












### X-ray crystal structure of 4b:

X-ray ORTEP illustration of (7-methyl-1,3-diphenyl-5H-pyrrolo[1,2-a]azepin-8-yl) (4-nitrophenyl)methanone (**4b**) (50% probability ellipsoids)

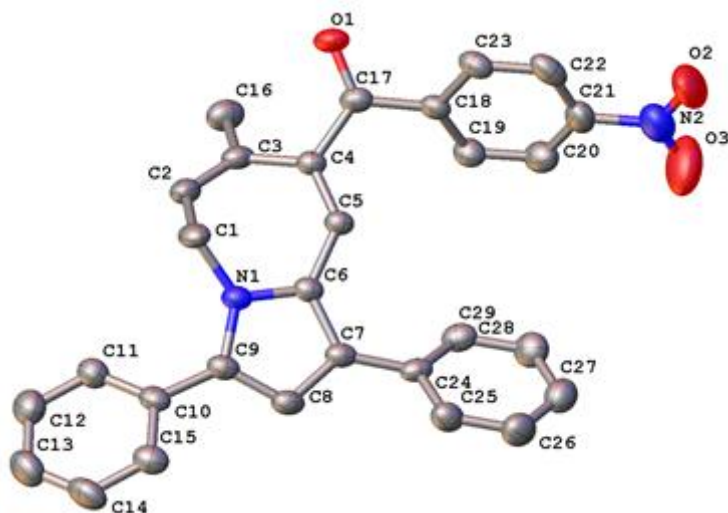
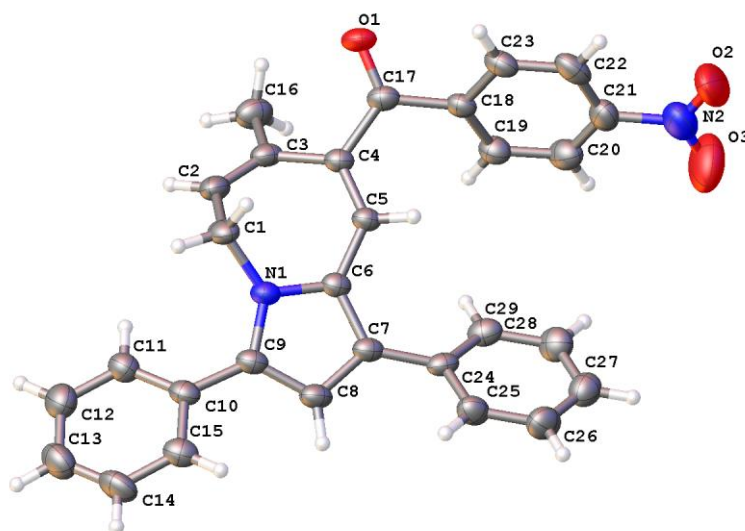


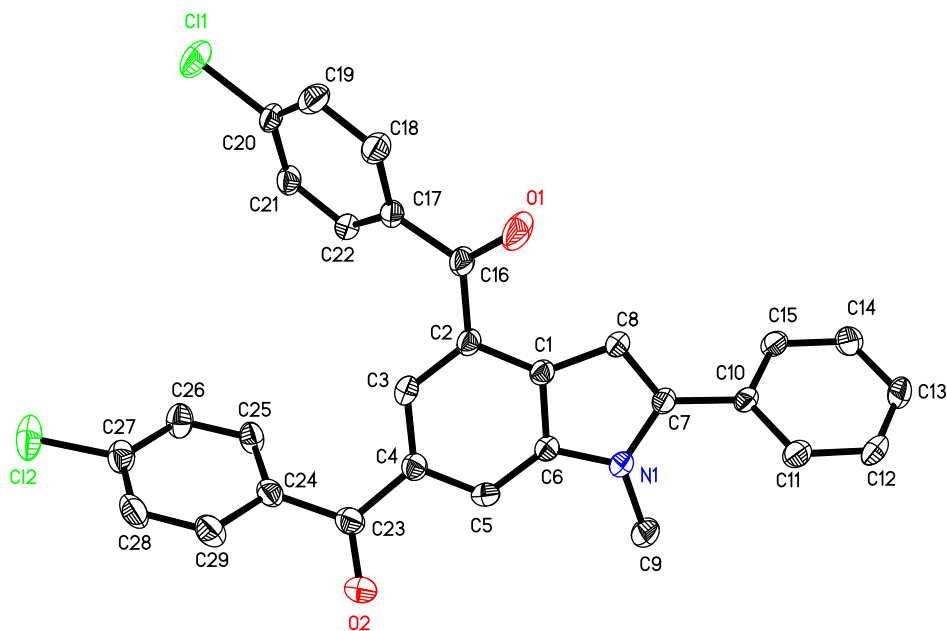
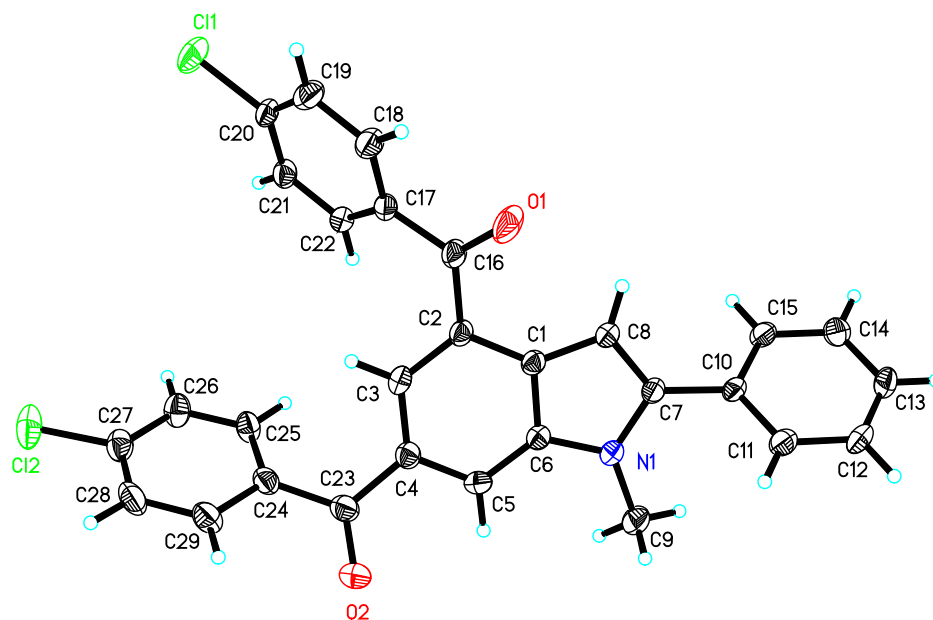
Table 1. Crystal data and structure refinement for mo\_dm16500\_0m (**4b**).

Identification code	mo_dm16500_0m	
Empirical formula	C <sub>29</sub> H <sub>22</sub> N <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	
Formula weight	446.49	

Temperature	296 K	
Wavelength	0.71073 Å	
Crystal system	Triclinic	
Space group	P -1	
Unit cell dimensions	a = 10.396(3) Å	$\alpha = 81.864(6)^\circ$ .
	b = 12.966(4) Å	$\beta = 89.495(5)^\circ$ .
	c = 16.944(5) Å	$\gamma = 89.905(5)^\circ$ .
Volume	2260.9(12) Å <sup>3</sup>	
Z	4	
Density (calculated)	1.312 Mg/m <sup>3</sup>	
Absorption coefficient	0.086 mm <sup>-1</sup>	
F(000)	936	
Crystal size	0.22 x 0.18 x 0.15 mm <sup>3</sup>	
Theta range for data collection	1.587 to 25.500°.	
Index ranges	-12 ≤ h ≤ 12, -15 ≤ k ≤ 15, -20 ≤ l ≤ 20	
Reflections collected	15906	
Independent reflections	8408 [R(int) = 0.0577]	
Completeness to theta = 25.242°	99.9 %	
Absorption correction	Semi-empirical from equivalents	
Max. and min. transmission	0.7461 and 0.6128	
Refinement method	Full-matrix least-squares on F <sup>2</sup>	
Data / restraints / parameters	8408 / 0 / 616	
Goodness-of-fit on F <sup>2</sup>	1.002	
Final R indices [I > 2σ(I)]	R1 = 0.0724, wR2 = 0.1784	
R indices (all data)	R1 = 0.1584, wR2 = 0.2253	
Extinction coefficient	0.0118(18)	
Largest diff. peak and hole	0.287 and -0.246 e.Å <sup>-3</sup>	

### X-ray crystal structure of 6a:

X-ray ORTEP illustration of (1-methyl-2-phenyl-1H-indole-4,6-diyl)bis((4-chlorophenyl)methanone)(4-nitrophenyl)methanone (**6a**) (50% probability ellipsoids)





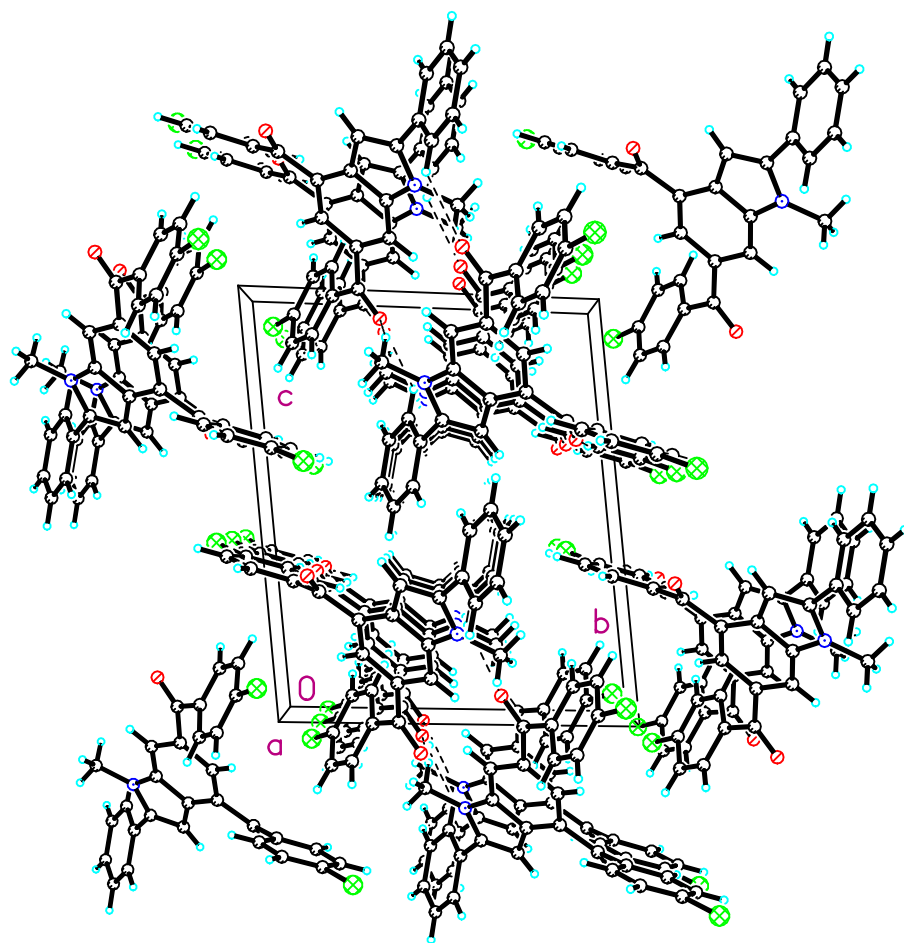


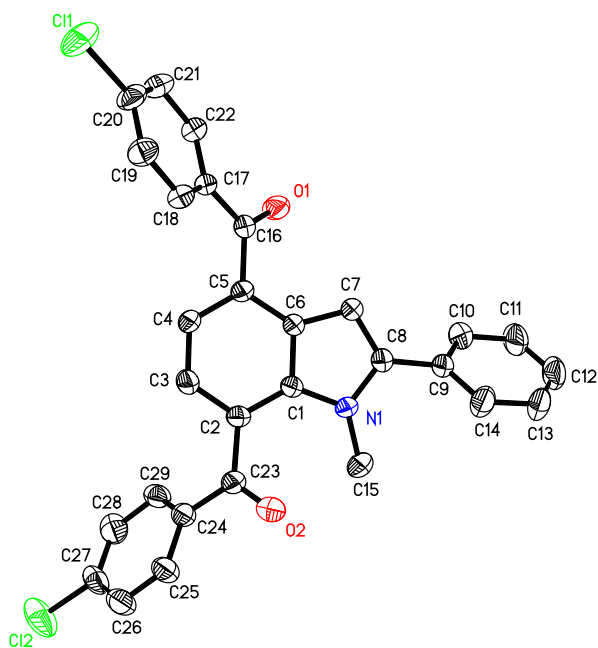
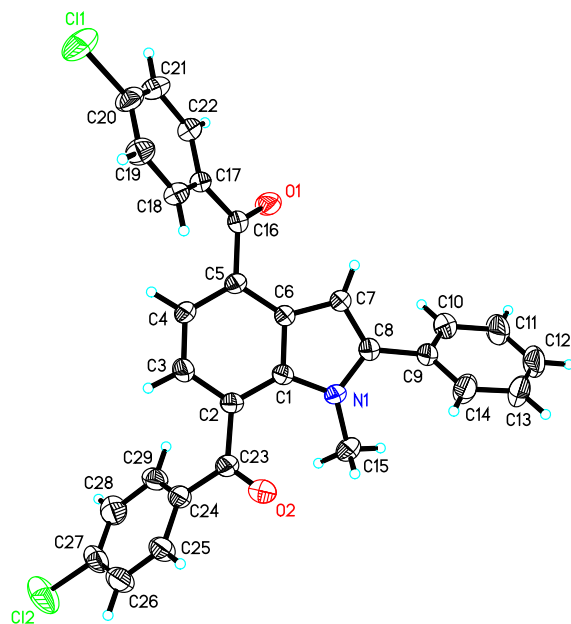
Table 1. Crystal data and structure refinement for cd16305 (**6a**).

Identification code	cd16305	
---------------------	---------	--

Empirical formula	C <sub>29</sub> H <sub>19</sub> Cl <sub>2</sub> NO <sub>2</sub>	
Formula weight	484.35	
Temperature	293(2) K	
Wavelength	0.71073 Å	
Crystal system	Triclinic	
Space group	P -1	
Unit cell dimensions	a = 7.6783(13) Å	α = 96.491(4)°.
	b = 11.4349(19) Å	β = 91.287(4)°.
	c = 13.505(2) Å	γ = 100.696(4)°.
Volume	1156.6(3) Å <sup>3</sup>	
Z	2	
Density (calculated)	1.391 Mg/m <sup>3</sup>	
Absorption coefficient	0.309 mm <sup>-1</sup>	
F(000)	500	
Crystal size	0.180 x 0.110 x 0.050 mm <sup>3</sup>	
Theta range for data collection	1.825 to 24.999°.	
Index ranges	-9 ≤ h ≤ 8, -13 ≤ k ≤ 13, -16 ≤ l ≤ 15	
Reflections collected	6443	
Independent reflections	4052 [R(int) = 0.0317]	
Completeness to theta = 25.242°	96.9 %	
Absorption correction	Semi-empirical from equivalents	
Max. and min. transmission	0.7456 and 0.5740	
Refinement method	Full-matrix least-squares on F <sup>2</sup>	
Data / restraints / parameters	4052 / 0 / 308	
Goodness-of-fit on F <sup>2</sup>	1.085	
Final R indices [I > 2σ(I)]	R1 = 0.0680, wR2 = 0.1458	
R indices (all data)	R1 = 0.0984, wR2 = 0.1607	
Extinction coefficient	n/a	
Largest diff. peak and hole	0.219 and -0.201 e.Å <sup>-3</sup>	

### X-ray crystal structure of 7a:

X-ray ORTEP illustration of (1-methyl-2-phenyl-1H-indole-4,7-diyl)bis((4-chlorophenyl)methanone) (**7a**) (50% probability ellipsoids)



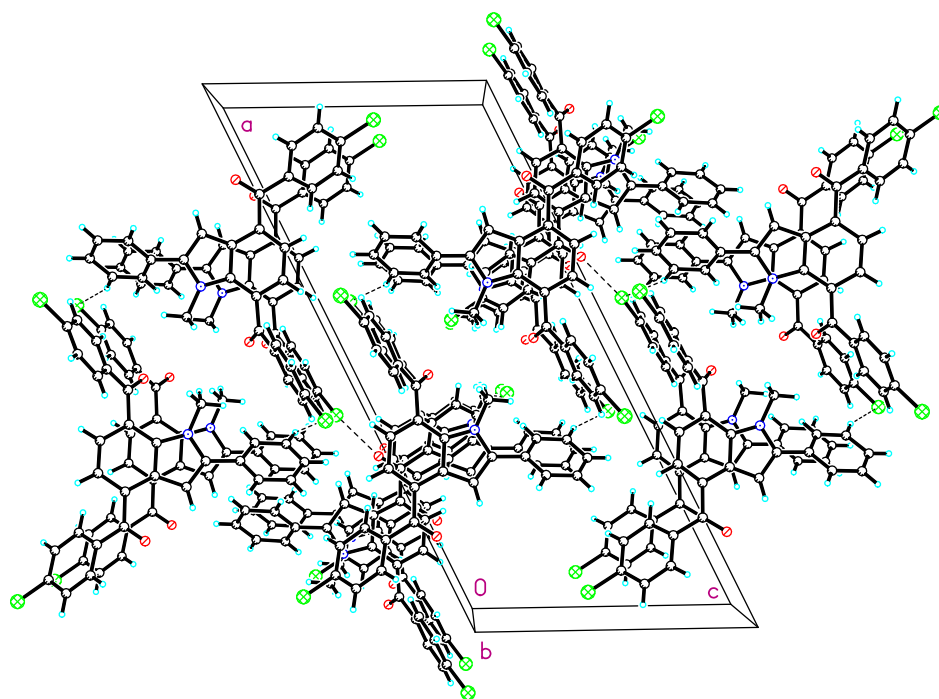


Table 1. Crystal data and structure refinement for cd16445 (**7a**).

Identification code	cd16445	
Empirical formula	C <sub>29</sub> H <sub>19</sub> Cl <sub>2</sub> NO <sub>2</sub>	
Formula weight	484.35	
Temperature	293(2) K	
Wavelength	0.71073 Å	
Crystal system	Monoclinic	
Space group	C 2	
Unit cell dimensions	a = 26.413(4) Å	α = 90°.
	b = 8.3862(13) Å	β = 115.572(3)°.
	c = 12.2342(18) Å	γ = 90°.
Volume	2444.5(6) Å <sup>3</sup>	
Z	4	
Density (calculated)	1.316 Mg/m <sup>3</sup>	
Absorption coefficient	0.292 mm <sup>-1</sup>	
F(000)	1000	
Crystal size	0.200 x 0.150 x 0.120 mm <sup>3</sup>	
Theta range for data collection	1.898 to 25.495°.	
Index ranges	-31 ≤ h ≤ 31, -10 ≤ k ≤ 10,	

	-13<= $l$ <=14	
Reflections collected	7073	
Independent reflections	4266 [R(int) = 0.0334]	
Completeness to $\theta = 25.242^\circ$	99.8 %	
Absorption correction	Semi-empirical from equivalents	
Max. and min. transmission	0.7456 and 0.6426	
Refinement method	Full-matrix least-squares on $F^2$	
Data / restraints / parameters	4266 / 1 / 308	
Goodness-of-fit on $F^2$	0.996	
Final R indices [ $I > 2\sigma(I)$ ]	R1 = 0.0555, wR2 = 0.1364	
R indices (all data)	R1 = 0.0832, wR2 = 0.1542	
Absolute structure parameter	-0.09(7)	
Extinction coefficient	n/a	
Largest diff. peak and hole	0.316 and -0.201 e. $\text{\AA}^{-3}$	