

Supporting Information

Direct and Versatile Synthesis of Red-Shifted Azobenzenes

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Materials and methods

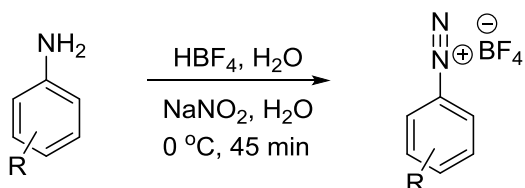
All chemicals for synthesis were obtained from commercial sources and used as received unless stated otherwise.

Thin Layer Chromatography (TLC) was performed using commercial Kieselgel 60, F254 silica gel plates with fluorescence-indicator UV₂₅₄ (Merck, TLC silica gel 60 F₂₅₄). For detection of components, UV light at $\lambda = 254$ nm or $\lambda = 365$ nm was used. Alternatively, oxidative staining using aqueous basic potassium permanganate solution (KMnO₄) or aqueous acidic cerium phosphomolybdic acid solution (Seebach's stain) was used. Flash chromatography was performed on silica gel (Silicycle Siliaflash P60, 40-63 mm, 230-400 mesh). Drying of solutions was performed with MgSO₄ and volatiles were removed with a rotary evaporator.

Nuclear Magnetic Resonance spectra were measured with an Agilent Technologies 400-MR (400/54 Premium Shielded) spectrometer (400 MHz). All spectra were measured at room temperature (22–24 °C). Chemical shifts for ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR measurements were determined relative to the residual solvent peaks in ppm (δ_{H} 7.26 for CHCl₃, 2.50 for DMSO and 2.05 ppm for Acetone, δ_{C} 77.16 for CHCl₃ and 39.52 for DMSO). The following abbreviations are used to indicate signal multiplicity: s, singlet; d, doublet; t, triplet; q, quartet; m, multiplet; brs, broad signal. All ¹³C-NMR spectra are ¹H-broadband decoupled. High-resolution mass spectrometric measurements were performed on a Thermo scientific LTQ Orbitrap XL with ESI ionization. Melting points were recorded using a Stuart analogue capillary melting point SMP11 apparatus. For spectroscopic measurements, solutions in Uvasol[®] grade solvents were measured in a 10 mm quartz cuvette. UV-Vis absorption spectra were recorded on an Agilent 8453 UV-Visible absorption Spectrophotometer.

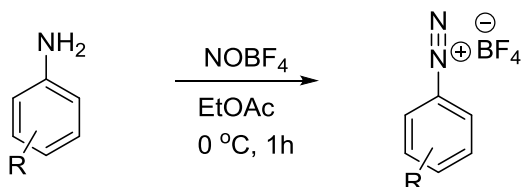
Synthesis

Aryldiazonium salt preparation, method A:^[1]



To a solution of aniline (1.00 mmol) in H₂O (0.4 mL) was added 50 wt. % aq. HBF₄ (0.34 mL) and the mixture was stirred while cooling on ice. Subsequently, a solution of NaNO₂ (1.00 mmol, 69.0 mg) in H₂O (0.2 mL) was added dropwise. After addition, the reaction mixture was stirred for 45 min on ice and subsequently filtered over a glass filter. The obtained crystals were washed with Et₂O (4 x 20 mL) and dried under vacuum. The products were stored at room temperature in the dark under N₂ atmosphere to prevent degradation.

Aryldiazonium salt preparation, method B:^[2]



To a stirred solution of aniline (1.00 mmol) in EtOAc (2.2 mL) at 0 °C was added NOBF₄ (1.00 mmol, 117 mg) in small portions. After addition, the mixture was stirred at 0 °C for 1 h and subsequently filtered over a glass filter. The obtained crystals were washed with Et₂O (2 x 20 mL) and pentane (2 x 20 mL) and dried under vacuum. The products were stored at room temperature in the dark under N₂ atmosphere to prevent degradation.

Table S1. Aryldiazonium structures with $^1\text{H-NMR}$ and IR analysis.

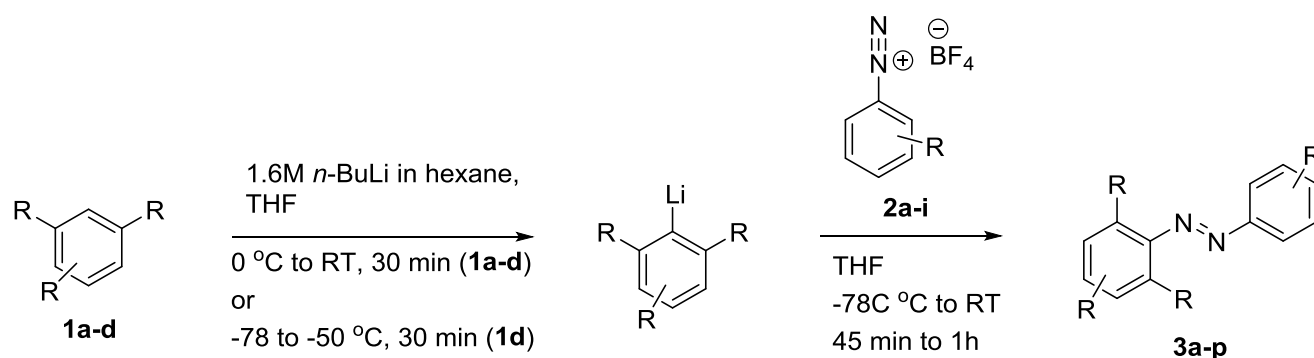
Compound (Yield)	Structure	$^1\text{H-NMR}$	IR
2a (>98%) Method A		$^1\text{H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-}d_6\text{): } \delta$ 8.18 (t, $J = 8.7$ Hz, 1H), 7.14 (d, $J = 8.7$ Hz, 2H), 4.15 (s, 6H).	IR (neat, cm^{-1}): 2238 (N≡N)
2b (85%) Method A		$^1\text{H NMR (400 MHz, Acetone-}d_6\text{): } \delta$ 8.08 (d, $J = 3.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.92 (dd, $J = 9.6, 3.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.73 (d, $J = 9.6$ Hz, 1H), 4.30 (s, 3H), 3.92 (s, 3H).	IR (neat, cm^{-1}): 2252 (N≡N)
2d (86%) Method A		$^1\text{H NMR (400 MHz, Acetone-}d_6\text{): } \delta$ 9.04 (d, $J = 9.0$ Hz, 2H), 8.50 (d, $J = 9.1$ Hz, 2H).	IR (neat, cm^{-1}): 2290 (N≡N)
2e (66%) Method A		$^1\text{H NMR (400 MHz, Acetone-}d_6\text{): } \delta$ 9.16 (d, $J = 9.0$ Hz, 2H), 8.85 (d, $J = 9.1$ Hz, 2H).	IR (neat, cm^{-1}): 2307 (N≡N)
2f (59%) Method A		$^1\text{H NMR (400 MHz, Acetone-}d_6\text{): } \delta$ 8.95 (d, $J = 8.5$ Hz, 2H), 8.52 (d, $J = 8.6$ Hz, 2H), 1.63 (s, 12H).	IR (neat, cm^{-1}): 2299 (N≡N)
2g (89%) Method B		$^1\text{H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-}d_6\text{): } \delta$ 8.67 (d, $J = 8.6$ Hz, 2H), 8.10 (d, $J = 8.6$ Hz, 2H).	IR (neat, cm^{-1}): 2289 (N≡N)
2h (31%) Method A		$^1\text{H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-}d_6\text{): } \delta$ 8.58 – 8.45 (m, 1H), 7.99 – 7.86 (m, 2H).	IR (neat, cm^{-1}): 2289 (N≡N)
2i (46%) Method A		$^1\text{H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-}d_6\text{): } \delta$ 8.31 (t, $J = 8.3$ Hz, 1H), 8.19 (d, $J = 8.4$ Hz, 2H).	IR (neat, cm^{-1}): 2285 (N≡N)
2j (84%) Method B		$^1\text{H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-}d_6\text{): } \delta$ 8.61 (d, $J = 8.7$ Hz, 2H), 8.14 (d, $J = 8.6$ Hz, 2H), 1.31 (s, 12H).	IR (neat, cm^{-1}): 2294 (N≡N)

Table S2. Optimization of *n*-butyllithium and **2a** concentrations in the novel synthetic methodology leading to the conditions as defined in entry 5.

Entry	<i>n</i> -BuLi (equiv) ^a	2a (equiv)	Isolated Yield 3a (%)
1	1.0	1.2	71
2	1.0	1.4	64
3	1.2	1.0	48
4	1.4	1.0	23
5	1.0	1.0	86

[a] 1.6 M in hexanes

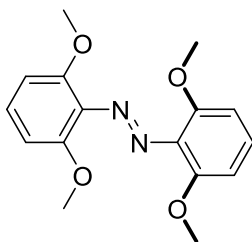
Synthetic methodology



To a stirred solution of **1** (1.00 mmol) in THF (1.0 mL) in an oven-dried Schlenk flask under N₂ atmosphere at 0 °C*[†] was slowly added 1.6M *n*-BuLi in hexane (625 μL, 1.00 mmol). Subsequently the reaction mixture was allowed to warm up to room temperature over 30 min. This mixture was added to a solution of **2** (1.00 mmol) in THF (1.0 mL) in an oven-dried Schlenk flask under N₂ atmosphere at -78 °C. The reaction mixture was slowly heated to room temperature over 1h and subsequently 2.0 mL saturated aqueous NaHCO₃ solution was added. The resulting solution was extracted with EtOAc (3 x 20 mL). The combined organic layers were washed with brine and dried (MgSO₄). Evaporation of all the volatiles yielded the crude product. The product, dissolved in EtOAc, was either precipitated in pentane or subjected to short flash chromatography (Pentane:EtOAc, 95:5 to 3:1) yielding pure azobenzenes.

*Note 1: For compound **1d**, a slightly modified lithiation procedure was utilized starting at -78 °C instead of 0 °C, and warming to -50 °C instead of room temperature in 30 min before addition to a solution of **2** in THF.

[†]Note 2: For the synthesis of **3p-r**, **1e** was kept at -78 °C after lithiation and reverse addition of a suspension of **2a,j,h** was applied to prevent the formation of side products due to benzyne formation.



2,2',6,6'-tetra-methoxyazobenzene (**3a**)

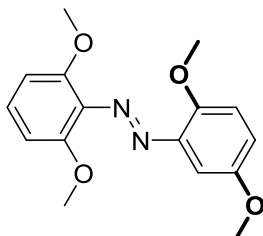
Yield: 86% (261 mg), brown/yellow crystals

Melting point: 138-140 °C (Ethyl acetate)

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 7.28 (t, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 6.77 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 4H), 3.71 (s, 12H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 152.0, 133.9, 129.9, 105.8, 56.6.

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₆H₁₉N₂O₄: 303.1339; Found: 303.1344



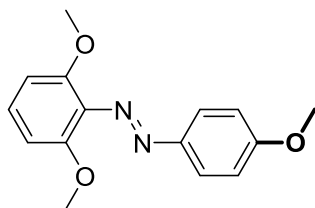
2,2',5',6-tetra-methoxyazobenzene (**3b**)

Yield: 59% (180 mg), red oil

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 7.27 (t, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.18 (d, *J* = 9.1 Hz, 1H), 7.11 (dd, *J* = 9.1, 3.1 Hz, 1H), 6.89 (d, *J* = 3.1 Hz, 1H), 6.78 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 3.85 (s, 3H), 3.72 (s, 3H), 3.71 (s, 6H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 162.2, 151.7, 147.2, 133.6, 129.0, 124.5, 114.7, 105.6, 56.5, 56.07.

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₆H₁₉N₂O₄: 303.1339; Found: 303.1344



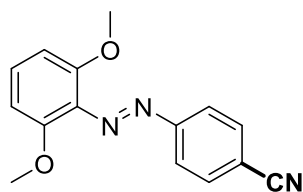
2,6,4'-trimethoxyazobenzene (**3c**)

Yield: 91% (248 mg), red oil

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 7.88 – 7.64 (m, 2H), 7.25 (t, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.14 – 7.01 (m, 2H), 6.86 – 6.59 (m, 2H), 3.84 (s, 3H), 3.71 (s, 6H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 162.2, 151.7, 147.2, 133.6, 129.0, 124.5, 114.7, 105.6, 56.5, 56.1.

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₅H₁₇N₂O₄: 273.1233; Found: 273.1238



2,6-dimethoxy-4'-cyano-azobenzene (**3d**)

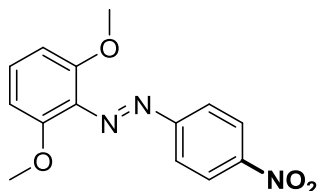
Yield: 81% (217 mg), dark red solid

Melting point: 92-93 °C (Ethyl acetate)

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 8.03 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 7.86 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 7.37 (t, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 6.82 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 3.76 (s, 6H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 155.0, 152.5, 134.2, 133.0, 131.6, 123.1, 118.9, 113.4, 105.6, 56.6.

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₅H₁₄N₃O₂: 268.1080; Found: 268.1085



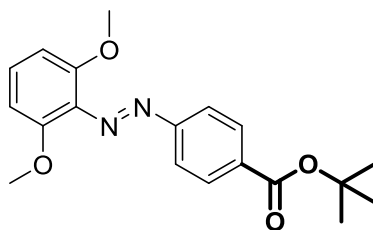
2,6-dimethoxy-4'-nitro-azobenzene (**3e**)

Yield: 67% (193 mg), red oil

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 8.38 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 2H), 7.92 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 2H), 7.38 (t, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 6.82 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 3.78 (s, 6H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 156.3, 152.7, 148.6, 133.0, 132.0, 125.4, 123.3, 105.6, 56.7.

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₄H₁₄N₃O₄: 288.0978; Found: 288.0984



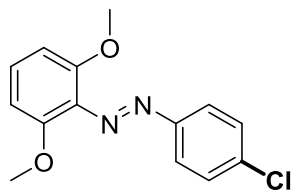
2,6-dimethoxy-4'-Boc-azobenzene (**3f**)

Yield: 45% (154 mg), red oil

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 8.09 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 7.84 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 7.34 (t, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 6.81 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 3.77 (s, 6H), 1.57 (s, 9H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 164.3, 154.9, 151.8, 132.9, 130.2, 122.03, 105.13, 81.13, 56.14, 27.71.

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₉H₂₃N₂O₄: 343.1652; Found: 343.1658



2,6-dimethoxy-4'-chloroazobenzene (**3g**)

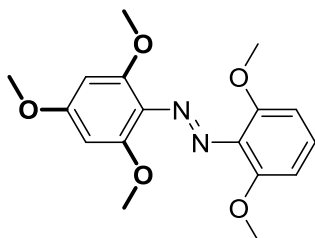
Yield: 77% (213 mg), orange solid

Melting point: 77-78 °C (Ethyl acetate)

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 7.77 (d, *J* = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 7.61 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.31 (t, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 6.79 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 3.74 (s, 6H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 152.1, 151.5, 136.2, 133.2, 130.4, 129.8, 124.2, 105.6, 56.6.

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₄H₁₄ClN₂O₂: 277.0738; Found: 277.0743



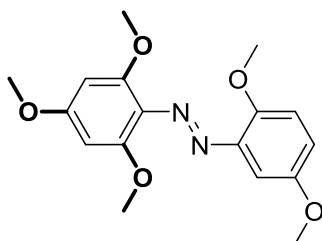
2,2',6,6',4-pentamethoxyazobenzene (**3h**)

Yield: 81% (269 mg), red oil

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 7.21 (t, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 6.74 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 6.33 (s, 2H), 3.84 (s, 3H), 3.73 (s, 6H), 3.68 (s, 6H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 162.0, 154.5, 151.5, 134.8, 128.6, 127.7, 105.8, 92.0, 56.5, 56.5, 56.0.

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₇H₂₁N₂O₅: 333.1445; Found: 333.1450



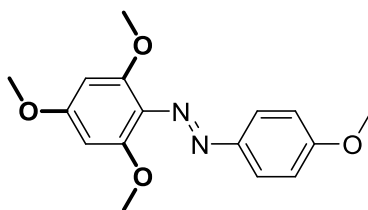
2,2',4,5',6-pentamethoxyazobenzene (**3i**)

Yield: 41% (137 mg), red oil

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 7.11 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 1H), 7.02 (dd, *J* = 9.0, 3.2 Hz, 1H), 6.86 (d, *J* = 3.2 Hz, 1H), 6.35 (s, 2H), 3.85 (d, *J* = 4.5 Hz, 6H), 3.76 (s, 6H), 3.72 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 161.8, 154.2, 153.8, 151.0, 143.7, 128.1, 117.6, 115.7, 101.1, 92.1, 57.5, 56.6, 55.9, 55.9.

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₇H₂₁N₂O₅: 333.1445; Found: 333.1450



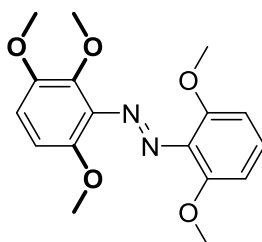
2,4,4',6-tetramethoxyazobenzene (**3j**)

Yield: 86% (260 mg), red oil

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 7.73 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 2H), 7.05 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 2H), 6.36 (s, 2H), 3.84 (s, 3H), 3.82 (s, 3H), 3.77 (s, 6H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 161.5, 161.3, 154.1, 147.8, 127.5, 124.1, 114.6, 92.1, 56.5, 55.8.

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₆H₁₉N₂O₄: 303.1339; Found: 303.1343



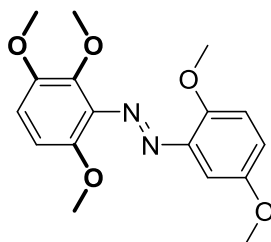
2,2',3,6,6'-pentamethoxyazobenzene (**3k**)

Yield: 76% (253 mg), red oil

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 7.31 (td, *J* = 8.4, 1.9 Hz, 1H), 6.98 (dd, *J* = 9.1, 1.9 Hz, 1H), 6.88 – 6.73 (m, 3H), 3.78 (d, *J* = 1.9 Hz, 3H), 3.74 (d, *J* = 1.9 Hz, 6H), 3.70 (d, *J* = 1.9 Hz, 3H), 3.58 (d, *J* = 1.9 Hz, 3H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 152.2, 147.7, 146.6, 139.8, 133.6, 130.4, 112.6, 107.9, 105.7, 61.6, 56.9, 56.8, 56.6.

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₇H₂₁N₂O₅: 333.1445; Found: 333.1449



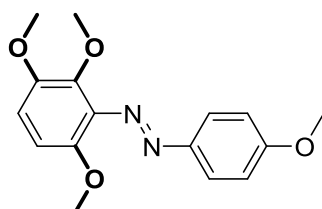
2,2',3,5',6-pentamethoxyazobenzene (**3l**)

Yield: 58% (193 mg), red oil

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 7.21 (d, *J* = 9.1 Hz, 1H), 7.14 (dd, *J* = 9.1, 3.1 Hz, 1H), 6.99 (d, *J* = 9.1 Hz, 1H), 6.94 (d, *J* = 3.1 Hz, 1H), 6.83 (d, *J* = 9.2 Hz, 1H), 3.86 (s, 3H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.73 (s, 6H), 3.70 (s, 3H), 3.63 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 153.7, 151.9, 147.6, 146.6, 142.3, 140.1, 139.6, 119.7, 115.6, 112.6, 107.7, 100.4, 62.1, 57.1, 56.8, 56.7, 56.0.

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₇H₂₁N₂O₅: 333.1445; Found: 333.1450



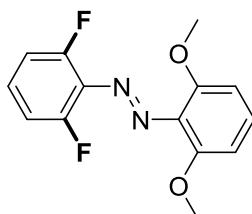
2,3,4',6-tetramethoxyazobenzene (**3m**)

Yield: 64% (193 mg), red oil

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 7.80 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 2H), 7.11 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 2H), 6.97 (d, *J* = 9.2 Hz, 1H), 6.82 (d, *J* = 9.2 Hz, 1H), 3.85 (s, 3H), 3.78 (s, 3H), 3.69 (s, 3H), 3.63 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 162.5, 147.6, 147.1, 146.4, 140.2, 139.3, 124.7, 114.9, 112.2, 107.7, 61.8, 56.8, 56.7, 56.1.

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₆H₁₉N₂O₄: 303.1339; Found: 303.1344



2,6-difluor-2',6'-dimethoxyazobenzene (**3n**)

Yield: 82% (228 mg), red solid

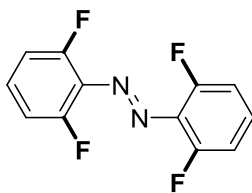
Melting point: 128-129 °C (Ethyl acetate)

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 7.57 – 7.44 (m, 1H), 7.37 (t, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 7.28 (td, *J* = 9.0, 2.1 Hz, 2H), 6.82 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 3.76 (s, 6H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 155.9 (d, *J* = 4.7 Hz), 153.3 (d, *J* = 4.6 Hz), 152.3, 133.5, 131.7, 131.5 (t, *J* = 10.3 Hz), 113.9 – 112.8 (m), 105.6, 56.7.

¹⁹F NMR (376 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ -123.88 (m).

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₄H₁₃F₂N₂O₂: 279.0939; Found: 279.0944



2,2',6,6'-tetrafluoroazobenzene (**3o**)

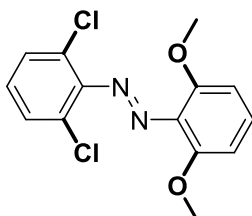
Yield: 77 % (196 mg), red oil

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 7.68 – 7.52 (m, 2H), 7.34 (t, *J* = 9.2 Hz, 4H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 156.3 (d, *J* = 4.0 Hz), 153.7 (d, *J* = 4.3 Hz), 133.6 (t, *J* = 10.7 Hz), 113.6 (dd, *J* = 19.9, 3.6 Hz).

¹⁹F NMR (376 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ -122.01 (dd, *J* = 10.1, 5.9 Hz).

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₂H₇F₄N₂: 255.0539; Found: 255.0544



2,6-dichloro-2',6'-dimethoxyazobenzene (**3p**)

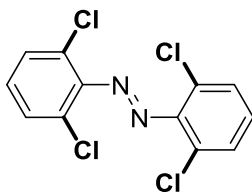
Yield: 91 % (284 mg), red solid (Ethyl acetate)

Melting point: 79-82 °C

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 7.59 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 7.49 – 7.26 (m, 2H), 6.84 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 3.79 (s, 6H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 153.1, 148.9, 132.6, 132.3, 129.77, 129.6, 125.7, 105.6, 56.7.

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₄H₁₂Cl₂N₂O₂: 311.03486; Found: 311.03447



2,6,2',6'-tetrachloroazobenzene (**3q**)

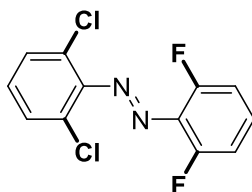
Yield: 92 % (296 mg), bright orange solid

Melting point: 120- 121 °C (Ethyl acetate)

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 7.71 (d, 4H), 7.51 (t, *J* = 7.7, 2H)

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 146.9, 131.7, 130.4, 126.5.

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₂H₆Cl₄N₂: 320.9328; Found: 320.9324



2,6-dichloro-2',6'-difluoroazobenzene (**3r**)

Yield: 89 % (256 mg), dark red solid

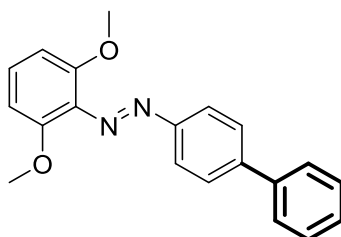
Melting point: 66-69 °C (Ethyl acetate)

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 7.74 – 7.67 (m, 1H), 7.66 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 7.46 (t, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.39 (t, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 2H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 156.5 (d, *J* = 4.1 Hz), 153.9 (d, *J* = 4.1 Hz), 148.1, 134.4 (t, *J* = 10.6 Hz), 130.9, 130.1, 125.7, 113.8 (dd, *J* = 19.7, 3.6 Hz).

¹⁹F NMR (376 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ -121.29 (dd, *J* = 10.1, 6.2 Hz).

HR-MS (ESI, [M+H]⁺): Calcd. for C₁₂H₆Cl₄N₂: 286.9948; Found: 286.9949



2,6-dimethoxy-4'-phenylazobenzene (**3s**)

After reaction of 1,3 dimethoxybenzene with para-boronic ester aryldiazonium salt as described in the general methodology, direct addition of a solution of bromobenzene (172 mg, 1.10 mmol), Pd(PPh₃)₄ (57.0 mg, 0.05 mmol), 1M aqueous K₂CO₃ (2.0 mL) and dioxane (2.0 mL) to the reaction mixture, led to a biphasic mixture which was heated to reflux under N₂ atmosphere for 16h. After cooling to room temperature H₂O was added and the mixture was extracted with EtOAc (3 x 20 mL). The combined organic layers were washed with brine and dried (MgSO₄) and the pure product was obtained after purification by flash chromatography (Pentane:EtOAc 9:1 to 3:1).

Yield: 41% (130 mg), light orange oil

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 7.86 (s, 4H), 7.75 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 7.50 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 7.41 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 7.30 (t, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 6.80 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 3.74 (s, 6H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 152.1, 151.9, 143.2, 139.5, 133.5, 129.9, 129.5, 128.6, 127.9, 127.3, 123.2, 105.6, 56.6.

HR-MS (ESI, [M+Na]⁺): Calcd. for C₂₀H₁₈N₂O₂: 341.1260 ; Found: 341.1265

UV-Vis Spectroscopy

Solutions were prepared in DMSO or as a mixture of four buffer salts (Bis-TRIS, TRIS, MES, sodium acetate, 25 mM each) to ensure the pH could be easily adjusted between 2 and 10 by addition of small quantities of concentrated hydrochloric acid and sodium hydroxide. All the compounds were dissolved in DMSO and thermally adapted by heating at 150 °C for 2 min. The measurements were taken with final concentrations of 20 μM in DMSO or 1 vol% DMSO in buffer.

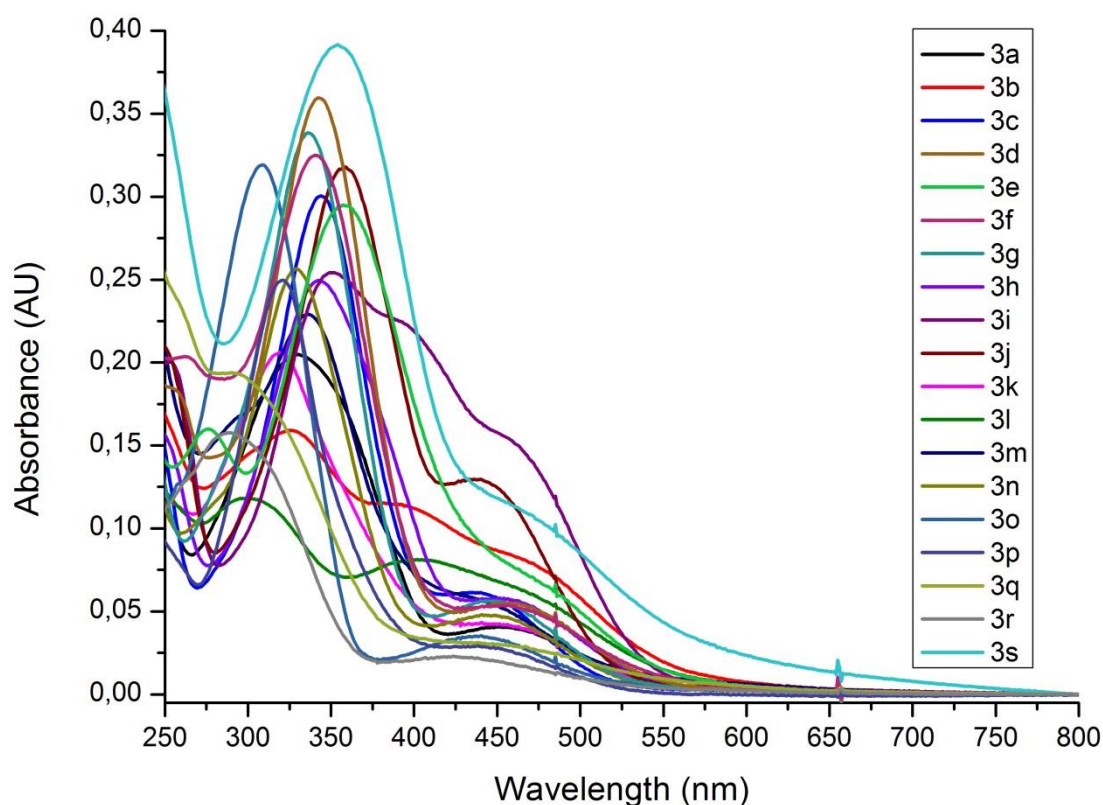


Figure S1. Absorption spectra of the newly synthesized azobenzene derivatives **3a** – **3p** (20 μM in buffer with 1 vol% DMSO at pH=7)

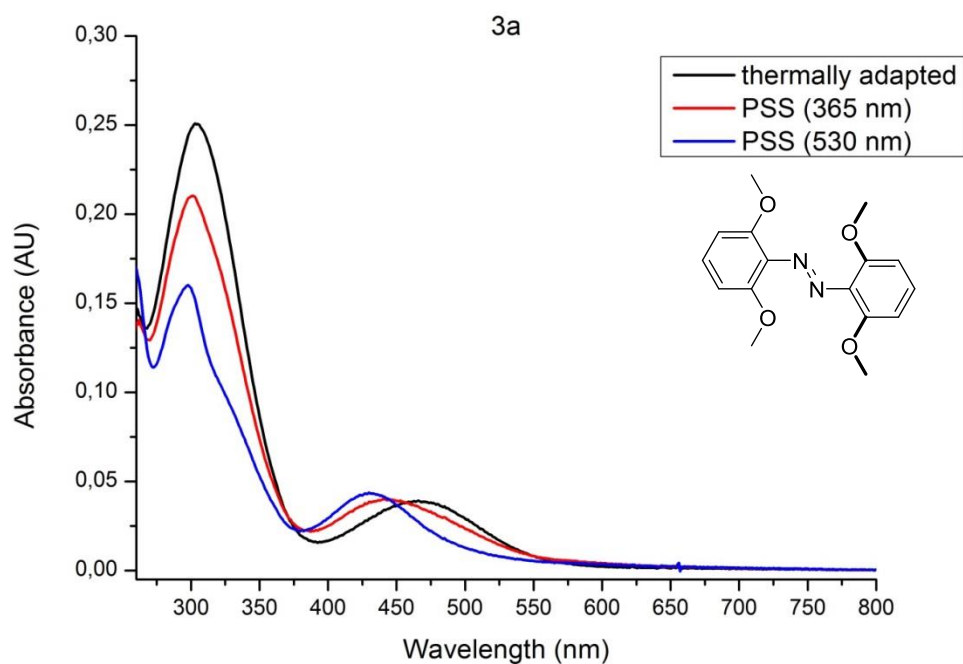


Figure S2. Absorption spectra for the photoisomerization of compound **3a** (DMSO, 37 °C, 20 μM). Photostationary states after thermal adaptation, 365 nm irradiation and 530 nm irradiation were obtained.

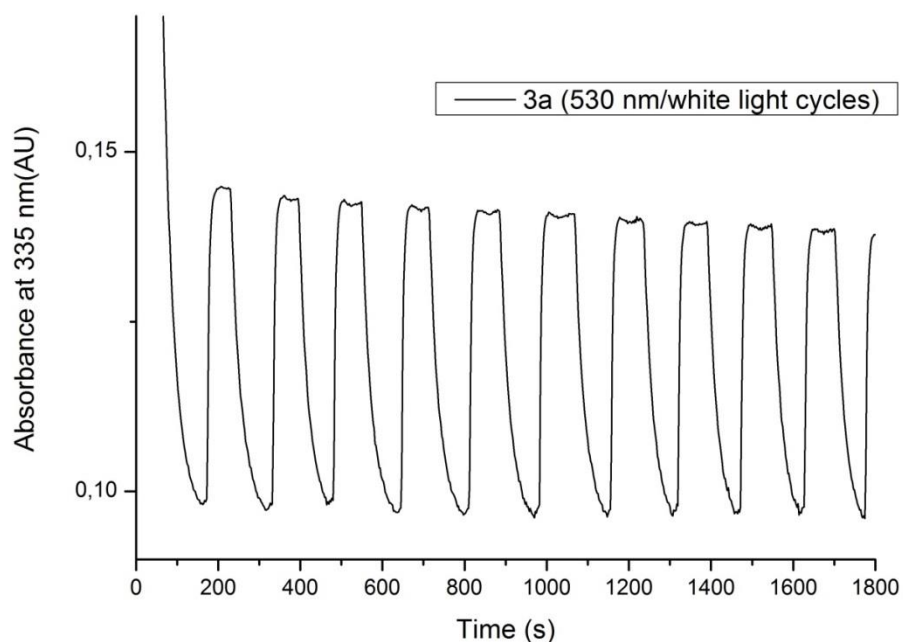


Figure S3. Reversible photoisomerization of **3a** (37 °C, Buffer with 1 vol% DMSO at pH=7, 20 μM) in the presence of 10 mM glutathione (GSH). Ten cycles of 530 nm/white light irradiation could be performed without the observation of significant fatigue or reduction.

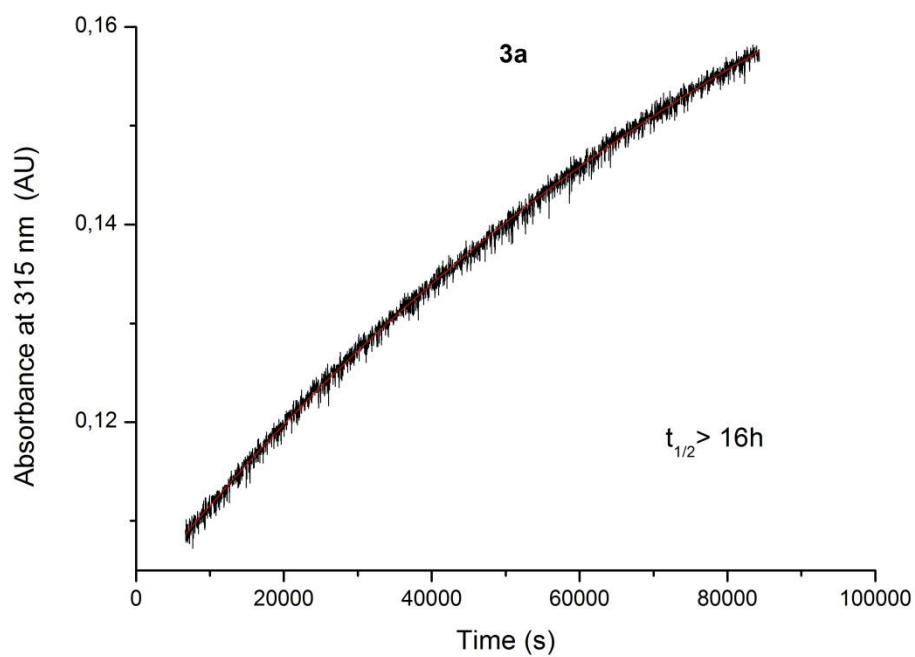


Figure S4. Determination of half-life for **3a** at 37 °C in DMSO. First, PSS was reached upon 530 nm irradiation, after which the absorption was measured at $\lambda_{\text{max}} = 315$ nm. Line presents the fitting with single exponential process.

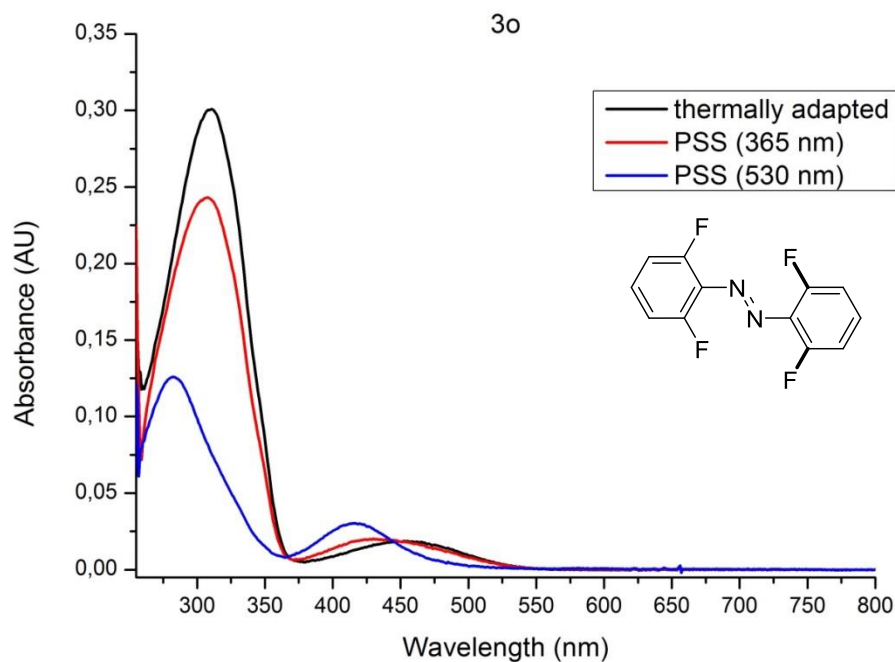


Figure S5. Absorption spectra for the photoisomerization of compound **3o** (DMSO, 37 °C, 20 μM). Photostationary states after thermal adaptation, 365 nm irradiation and 530 nm irradiation were obtained.

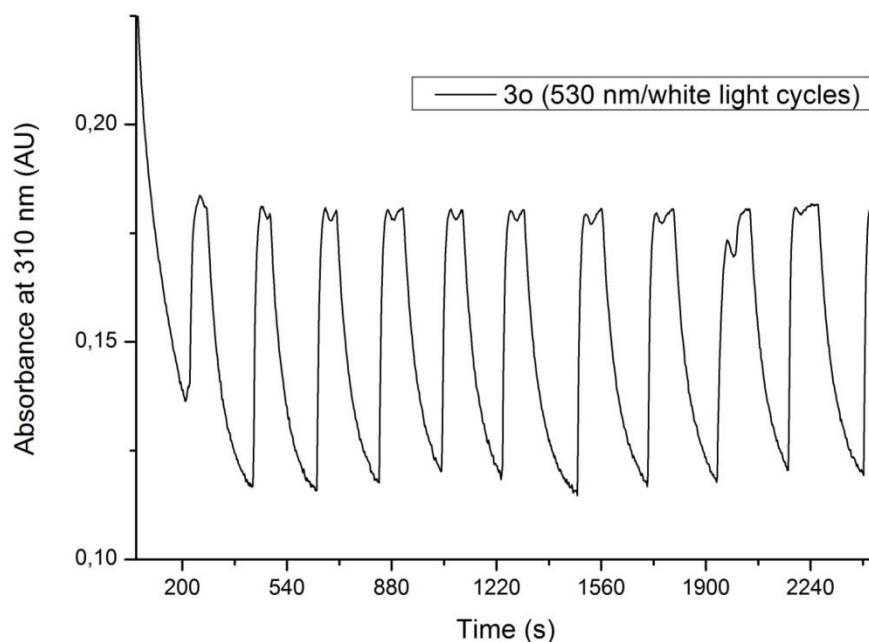


Figure S6. Reversible photoisomerization of **3o** (37 °C, Buffer with 1 vol% DMSO at pH=7, 20 μM) in the presence of 10 mM glutathione (GSH). Ten cycles of 530 nm/white light irradiation could be performed without the observation of significant fatigue or reduction.

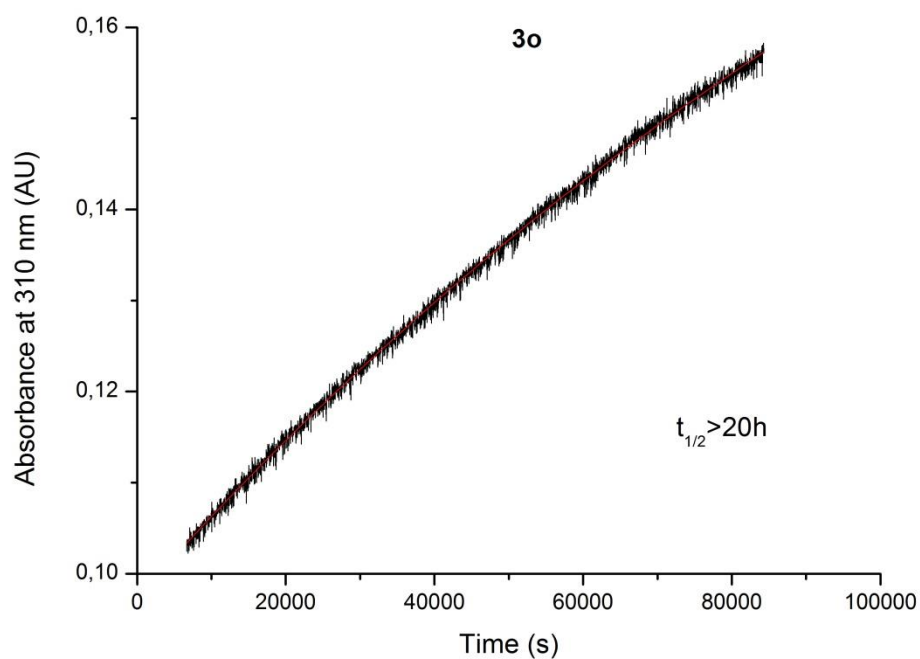


Figure S7. Determination of half-life for **3o** at 37 °C in DMSO. First, PSS was reached upon 530 nm irradiation, after which the absorption was measured at $\lambda_{\text{max}} = 310$ nm. Line presents the fitting with single exponential process.

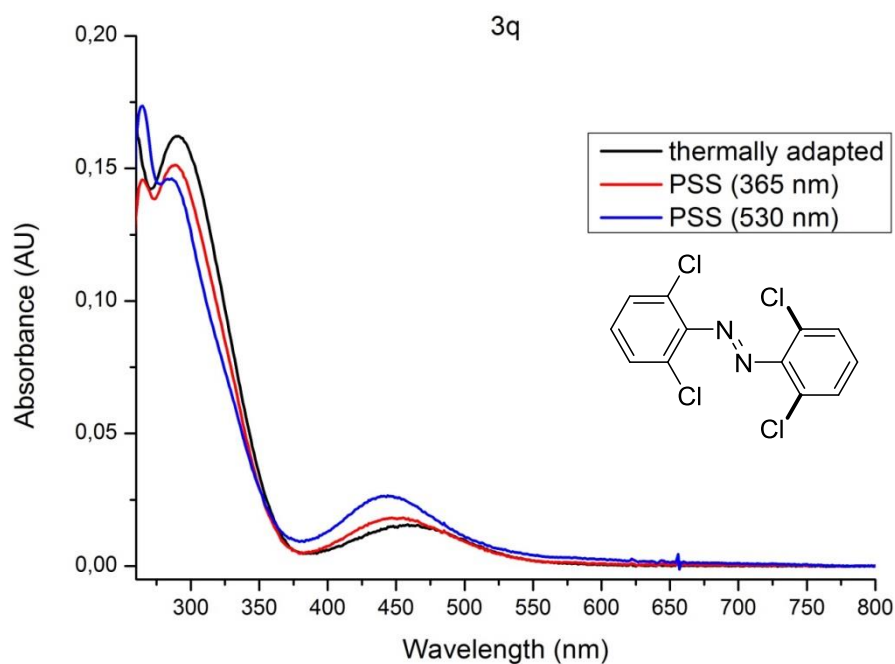


Figure S8. Absorption spectra for the photoisomerization of compound **3q** (DMSO, 37 °C, 20 μM). Photostationary states after thermal adaptation, 365 nm irradiation and 530 nm irradiation were obtained.

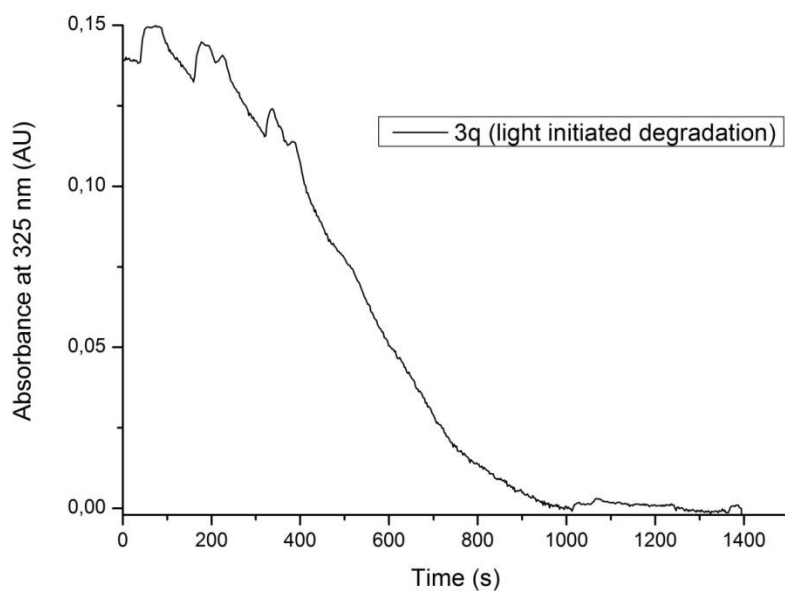


Figure S9. Reversible photoisomerization of **3q** (37 °C, Buffer with 1 vol% DMSO at pH=7, 20 μM) in the presence of 10 mM glutathione (GSH). After two cycles of 530 nm/white light irradiation, degradation was initiated which led to a full reduction of the absorbance within 20 minutes. This was irreversible and could not be prevented by white light irradiation, 530 nm irradiation or no light exposure.

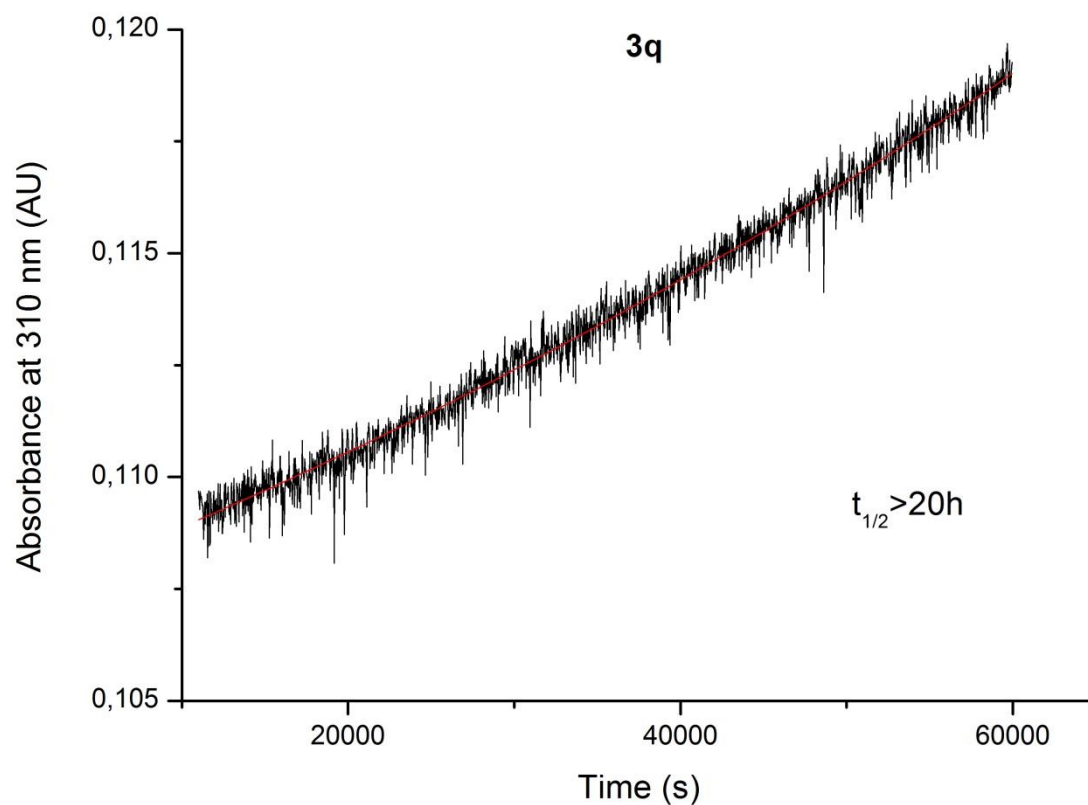


Figure S10. Determination of half-life for **3q** at 37 °C in DMSO. First, PSS was reached upon 530 nm irradiation, after which the absorption was measured at $\lambda_{\text{max}} = 310$ nm. Line presents the fitting with single exponential process.

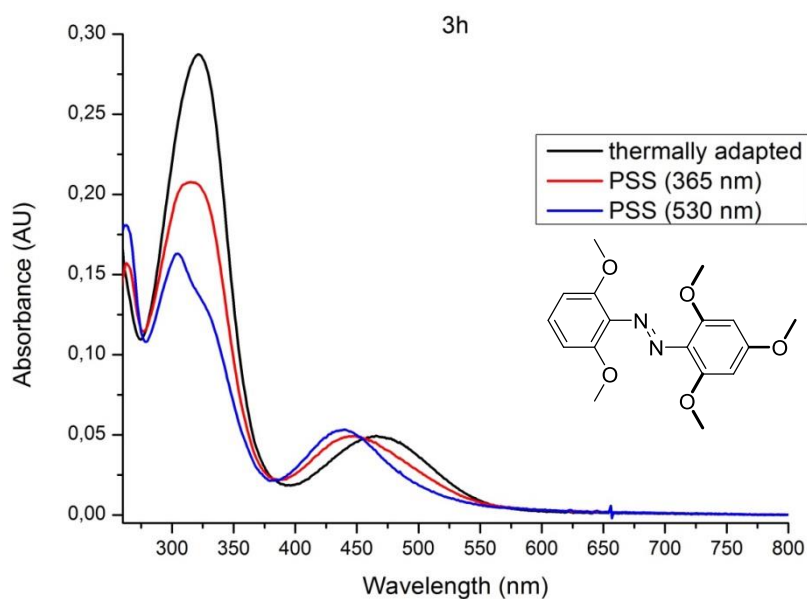


Figure S11. Absorption spectra for the photoisomerization of compound **3h** (DMSO, 37 °C, 20 μM). Photostationary states after thermal adaptation, 365 nm irradiation and 530 nm irradiation were obtained.

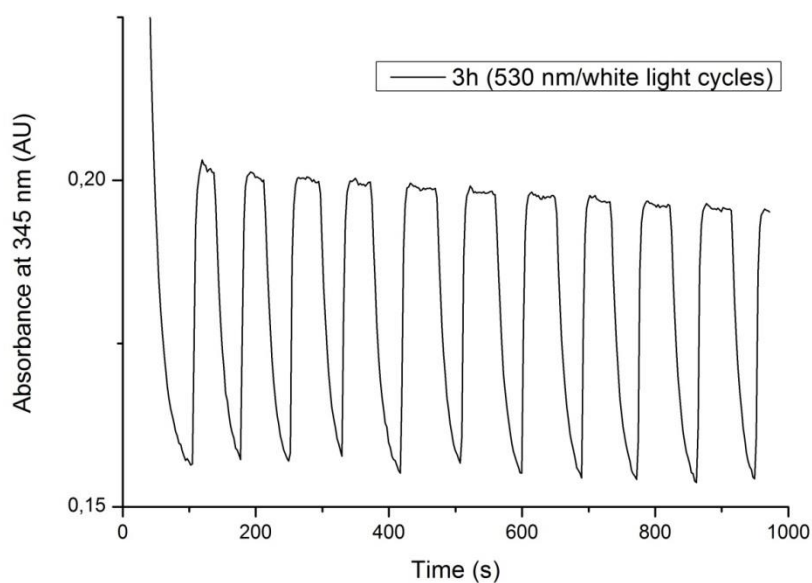


Figure S12. Reversible photoisomerization of **3h** (37 °C, Buffer with 1 vol% DMSO at pH=7, 20 μM) in the presence of 10 mM glutathione (GSH). Ten cycles of 530 nm/white light irradiation could be performed without the observation of significant fatigue or reduction.

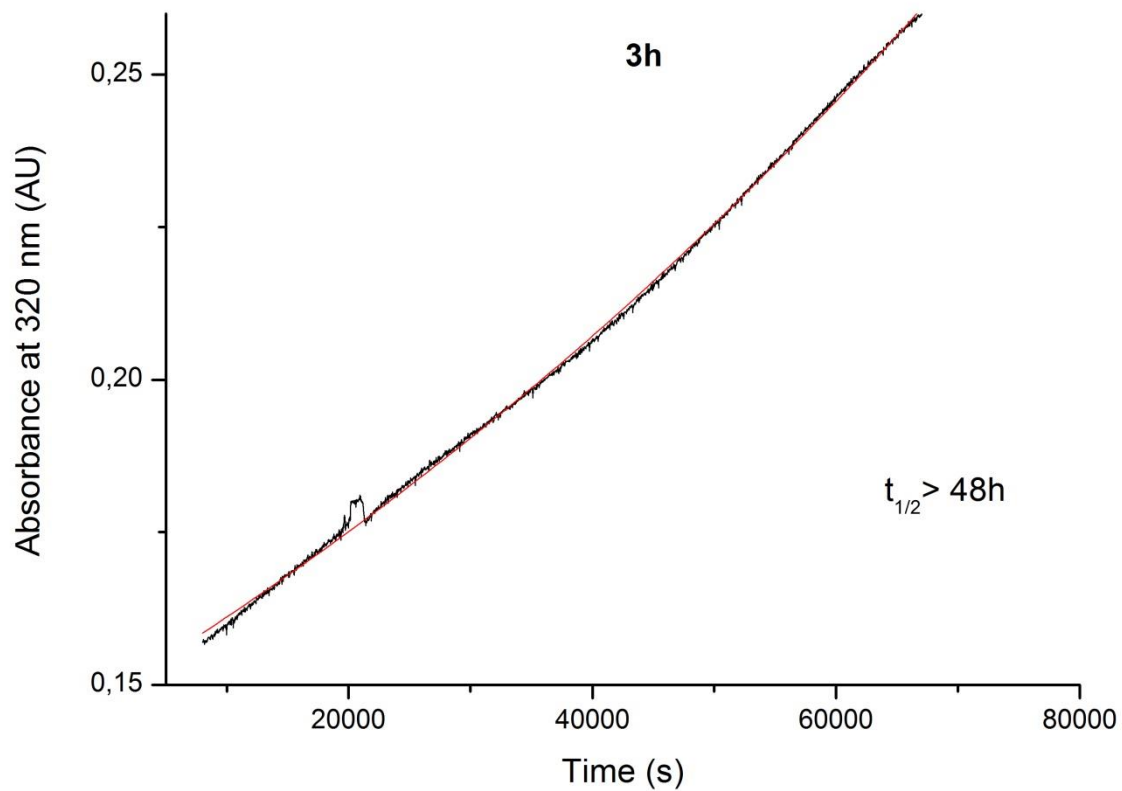


Figure S13. Determination of half-life for **3h** at 37 °C in DMSO. First, PSS was reached upon 530 nm irradiation, after which the absorption was measured at $\lambda_{\text{max}} = 310$ nm. Line presents the fitting with single exponential process.

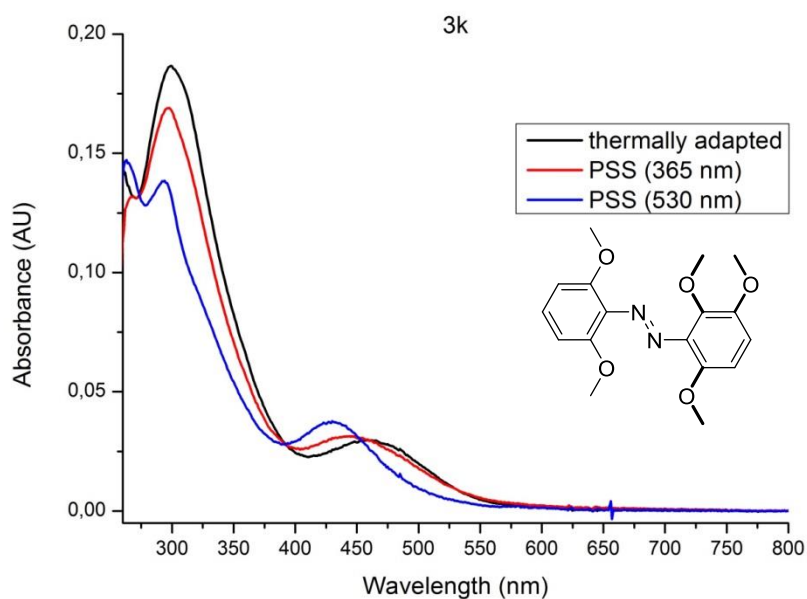


Figure S14. Absorption spectra for the photoisomerization of compound **3k** (DMSO, 37 °C, 20 μM). Photostationary states after thermal adaptation, 365 nm irradiation and 530 nm irradiation were obtained.

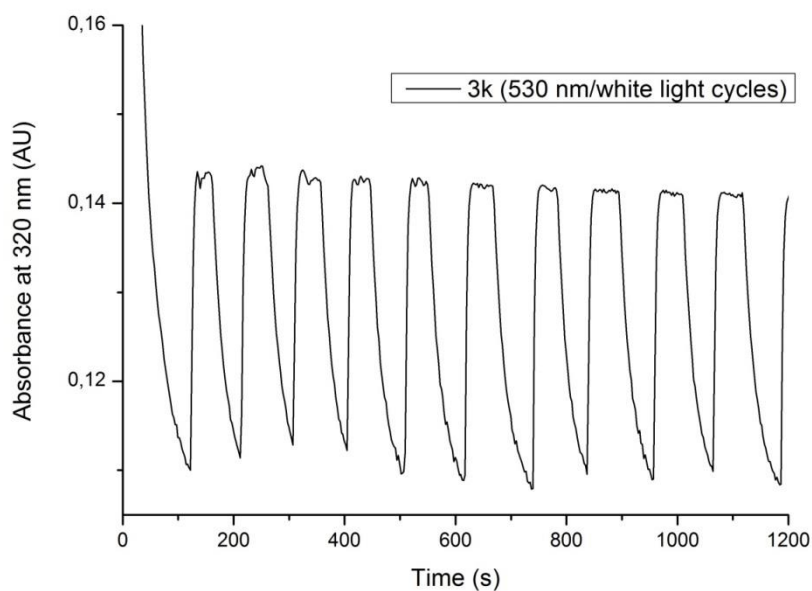


Figure S15. Reversible photoisomerization of **3k** (37 °C, Buffer with 1 vol% DMSO at pH=7, 20 μM) in the presence of 10 mM glutathione (GSH). Ten cycles of 530 nm/white light irradiation could be performed without the observation of significant fatigue or reduction.

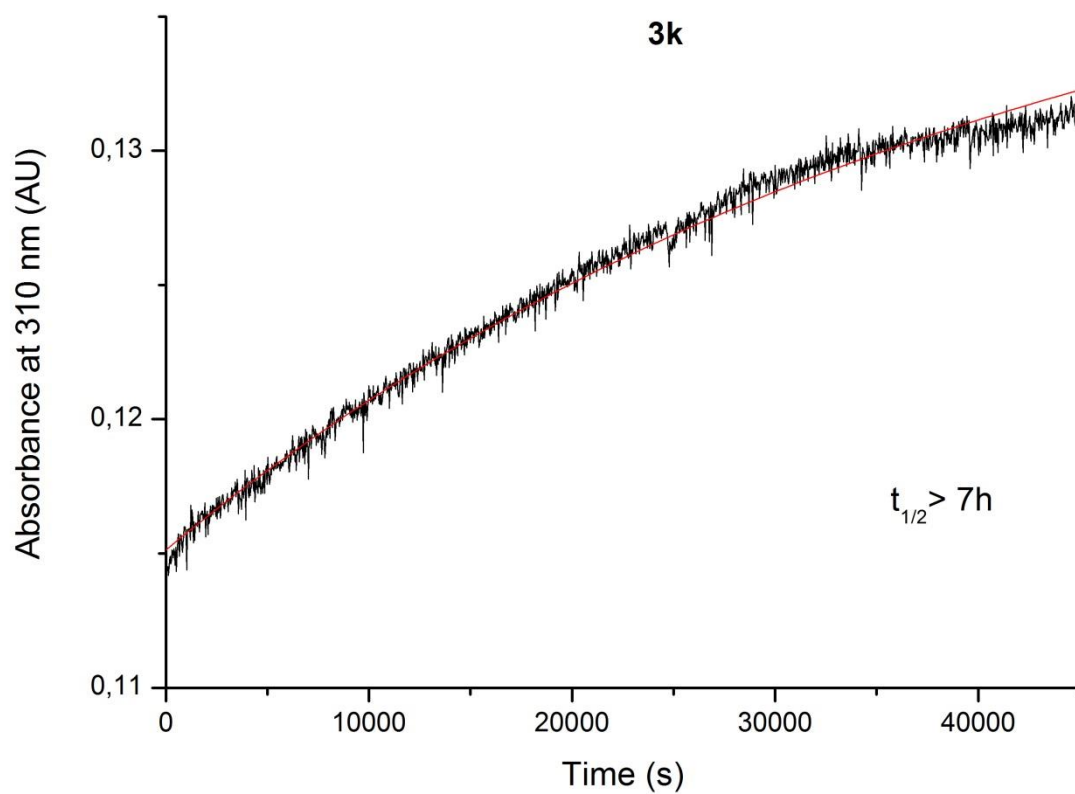


Figure S16. Determination of half-life for **3k** at 37 °C in DMSO. First, PSS was reached upon 530 nm irradiation, after which the absorption was measured at $\lambda_{\text{max}} = 310$ nm. Line presents the fitting with single exponential process.

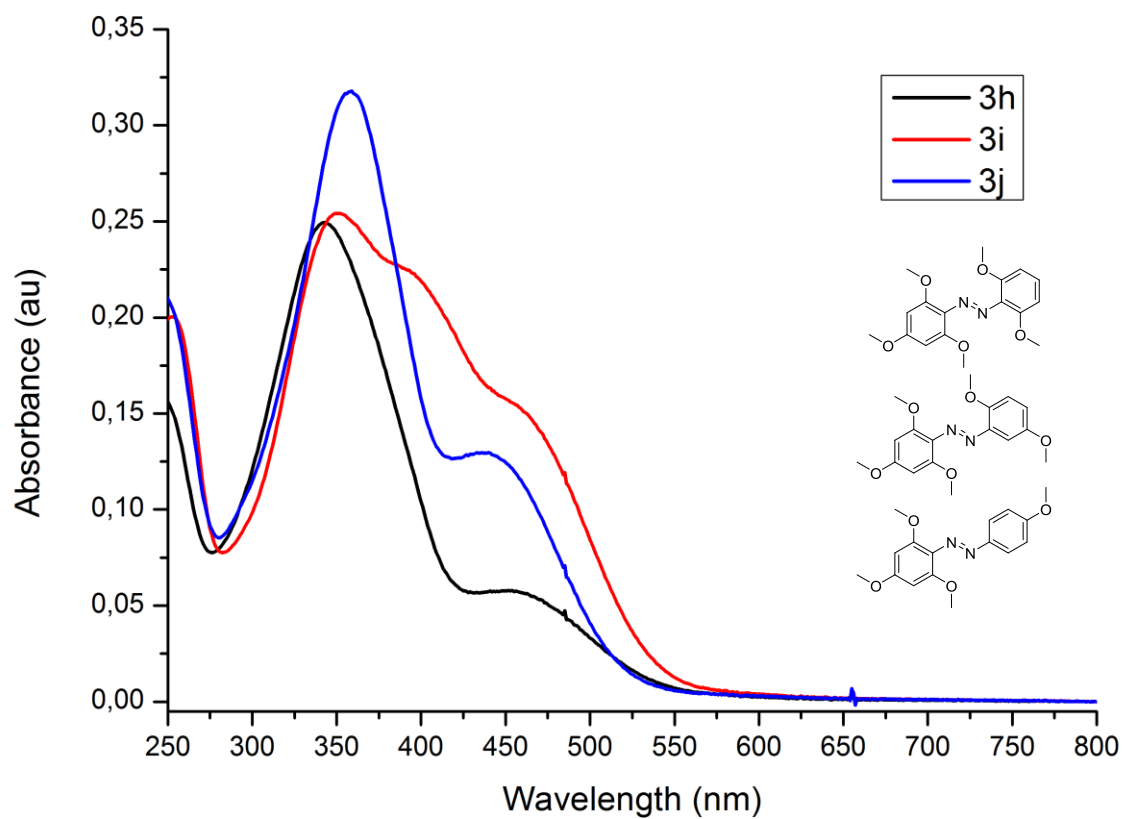


Figure S17. Absorption spectra of compound **3h-j** (20 μM in buffer with 1 vol% DMSO at pH=7) showing the distinct differences in absorption spectrum caused by a changing substitution pattern (2,6-dimethoxy to 2,5-dimethoxy to 4-methoxy substituents).

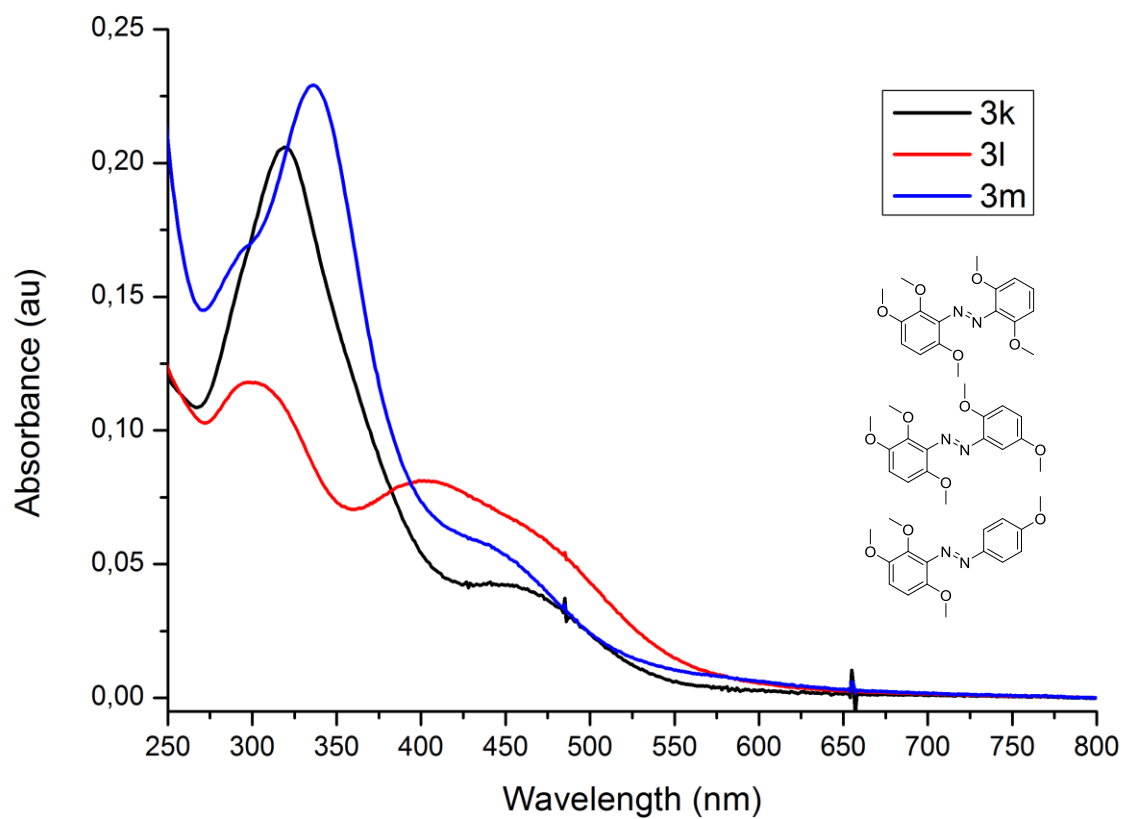


Figure S18. Absorption spectra of compound **3k-m** (20 μM in buffer with 1 vol% DMSO at pH=7) showing the distinct differences in absorption spectrum caused by a changing substitution pattern (2,6-dimethoxy to 2,5-dimethoxy to 4-methoxy substituents).

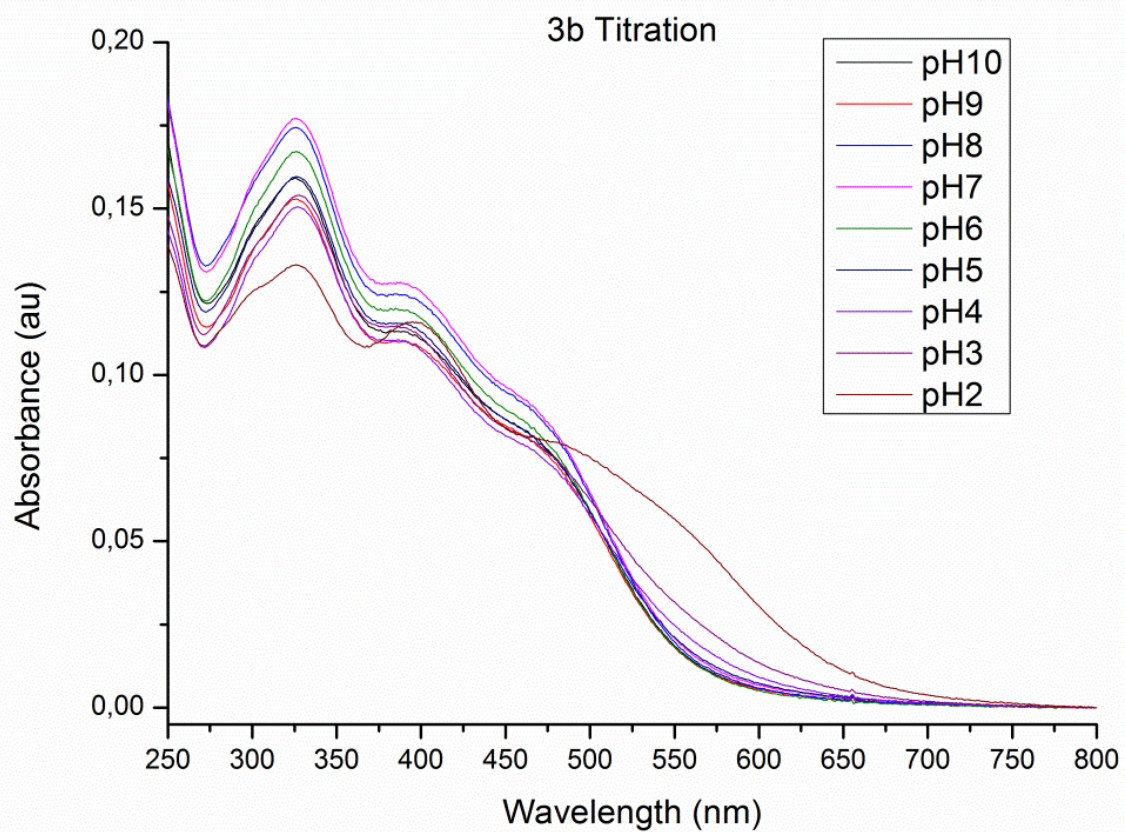


Figure S19. Titration curve of compound **3b** (20 μM in buffer with 1 vol% DMSO) showing the different absorption spectra at different pH.

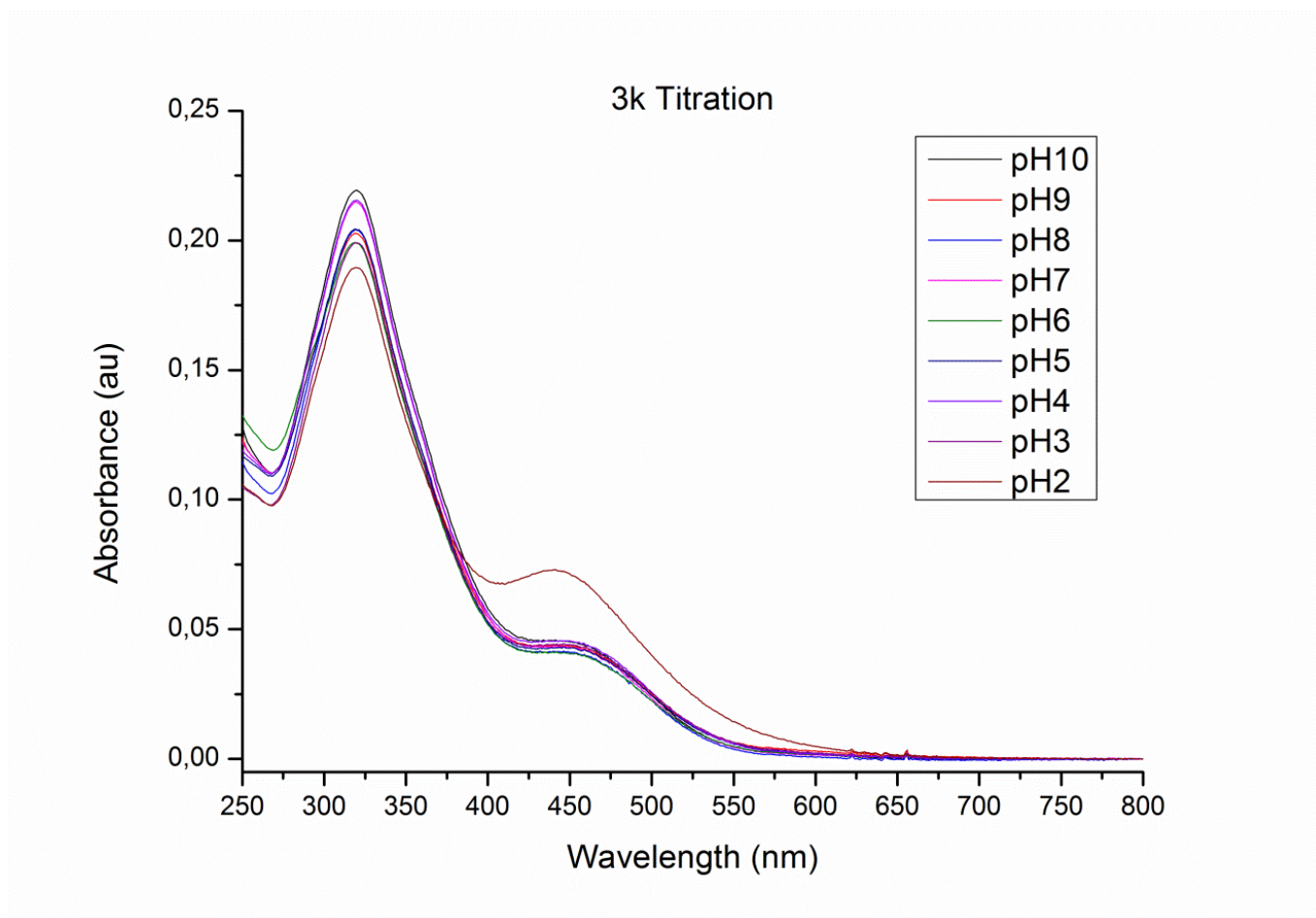
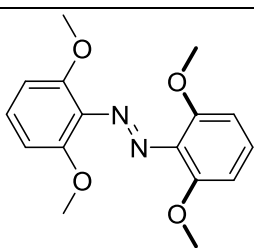
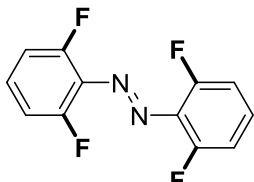
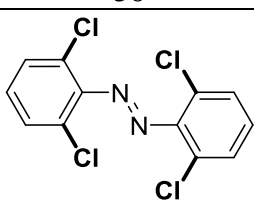
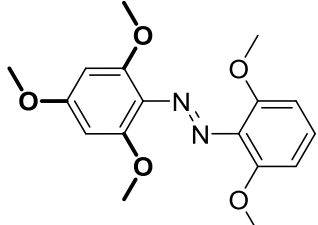
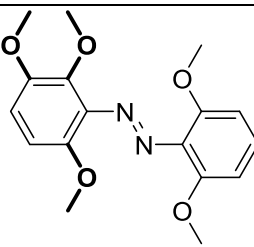
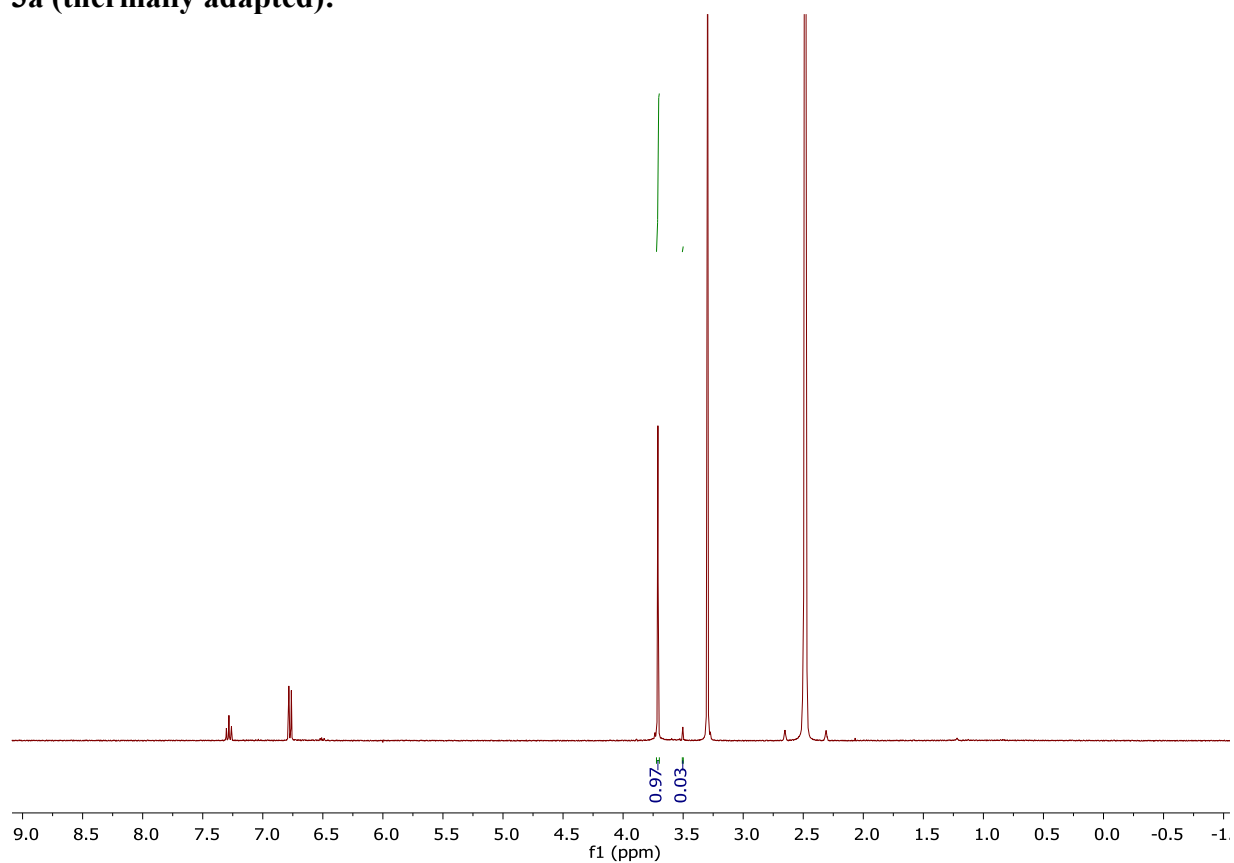


Figure S20. Titration curve of compound **3k** (20 μ M in buffer with 1 vol% DMSO) showing the different absorption spectra at different pH.

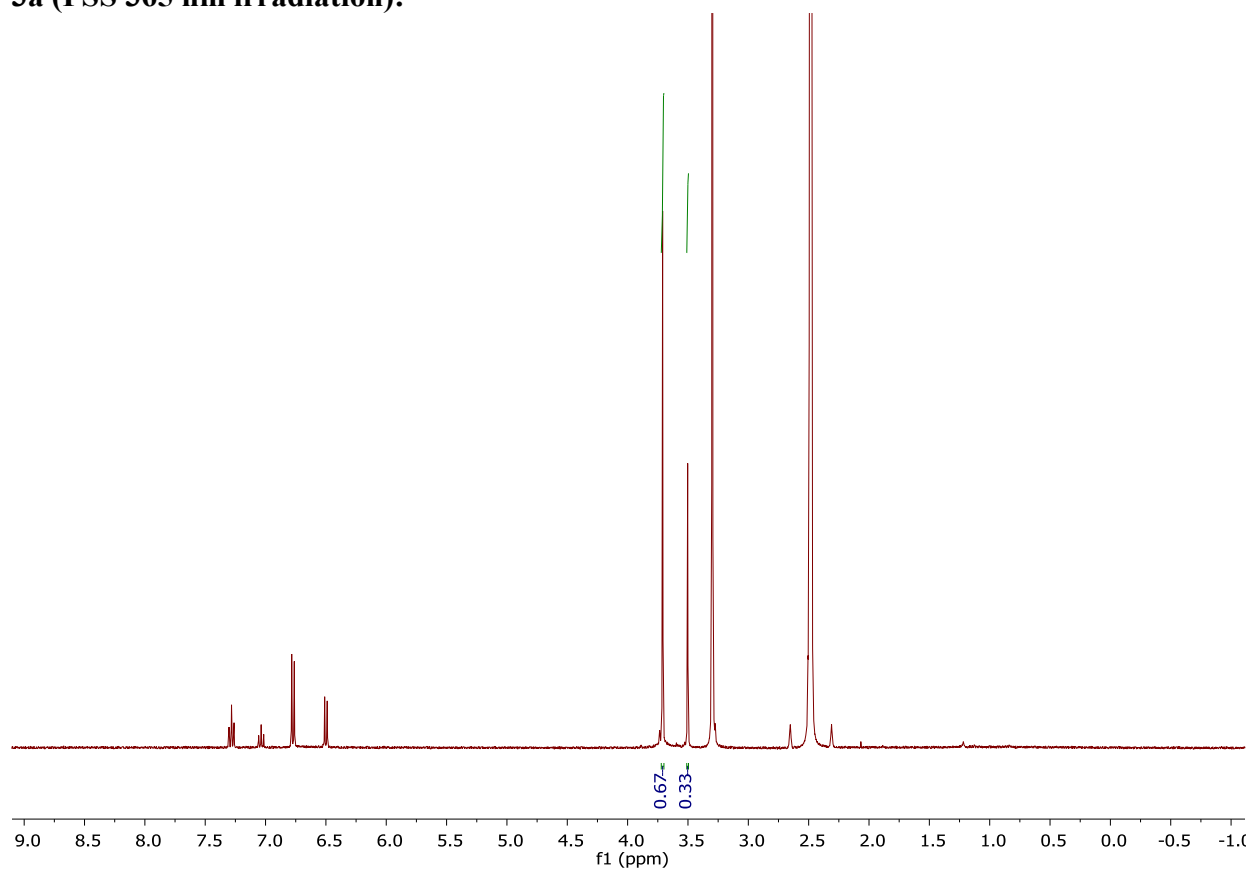
Table S3. Photostationary states (PSS, DMSO-d₆, ¹H-NMR) at different wavelengths of irradiation.

Compound	<i>Trans:cis</i> (thermally adapted)	<i>Trans:cis</i> (365 nm irradiated)	<i>Trans:cis</i> (530 nm irradiated)
 <p>3a</p>	97:3	67:33	17:83
 <p>3o</p>	98:2	75:25	8:92
 <p>3q</p>	>97:3	65:35	38:62
 <p>3h</p>	>97:3	54:46	23:77
 <p>3k</p>	89:11	61:39	20:80

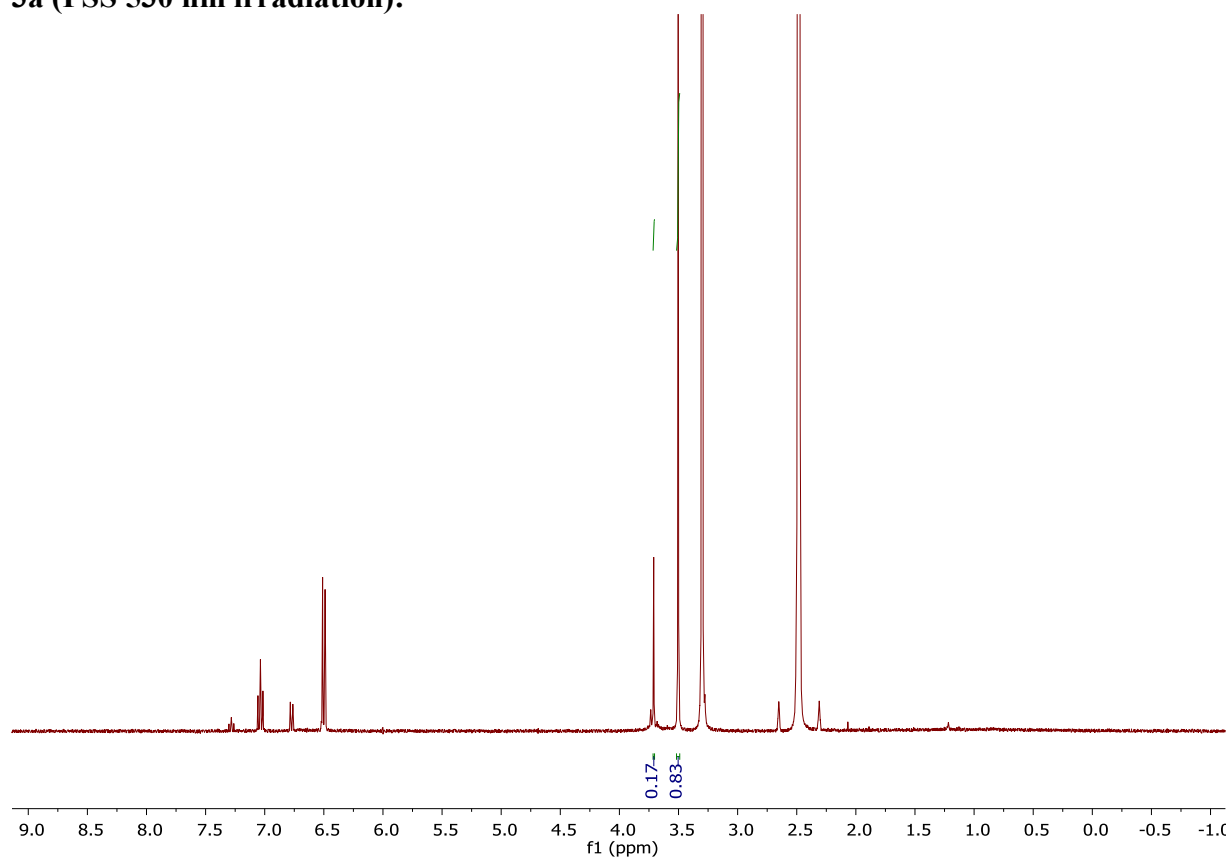
3a (thermally adapted):



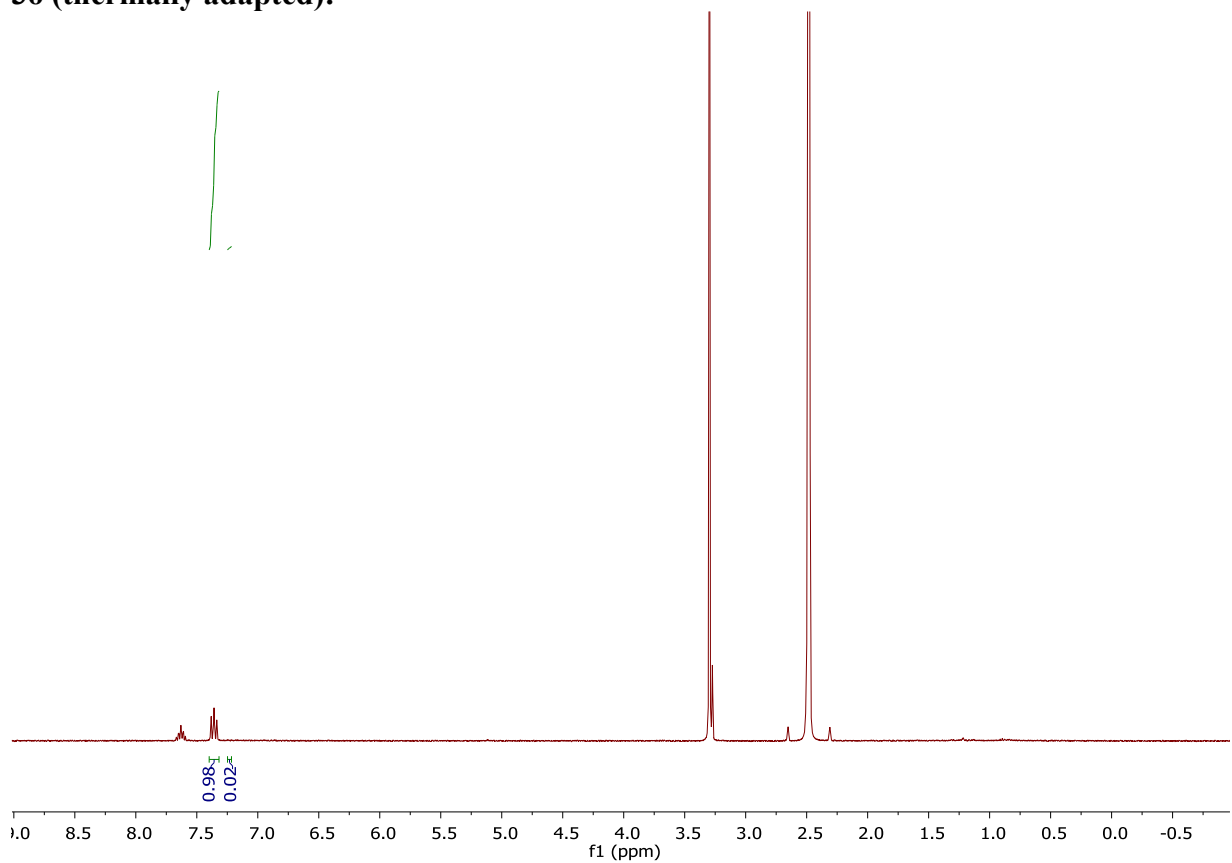
3a (PSS 365 nm irradiation):



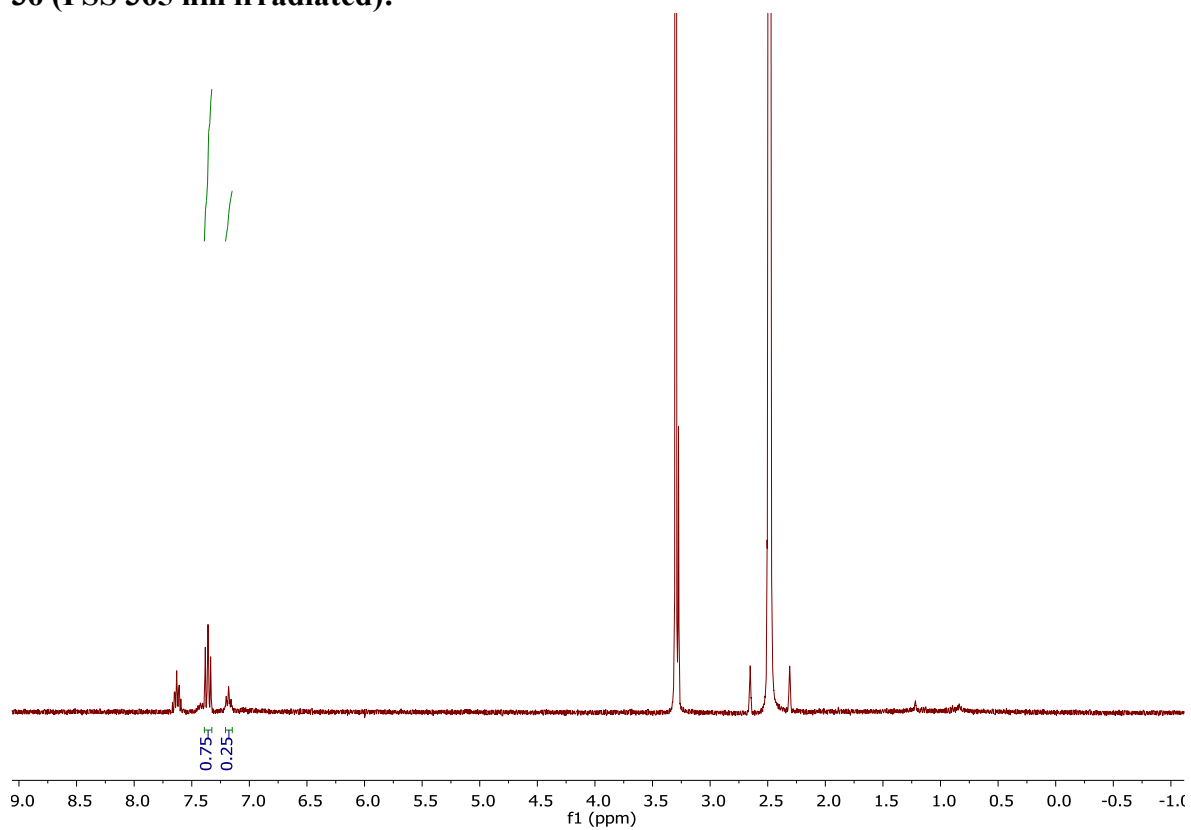
3a (PSS 530 nm irradiation):



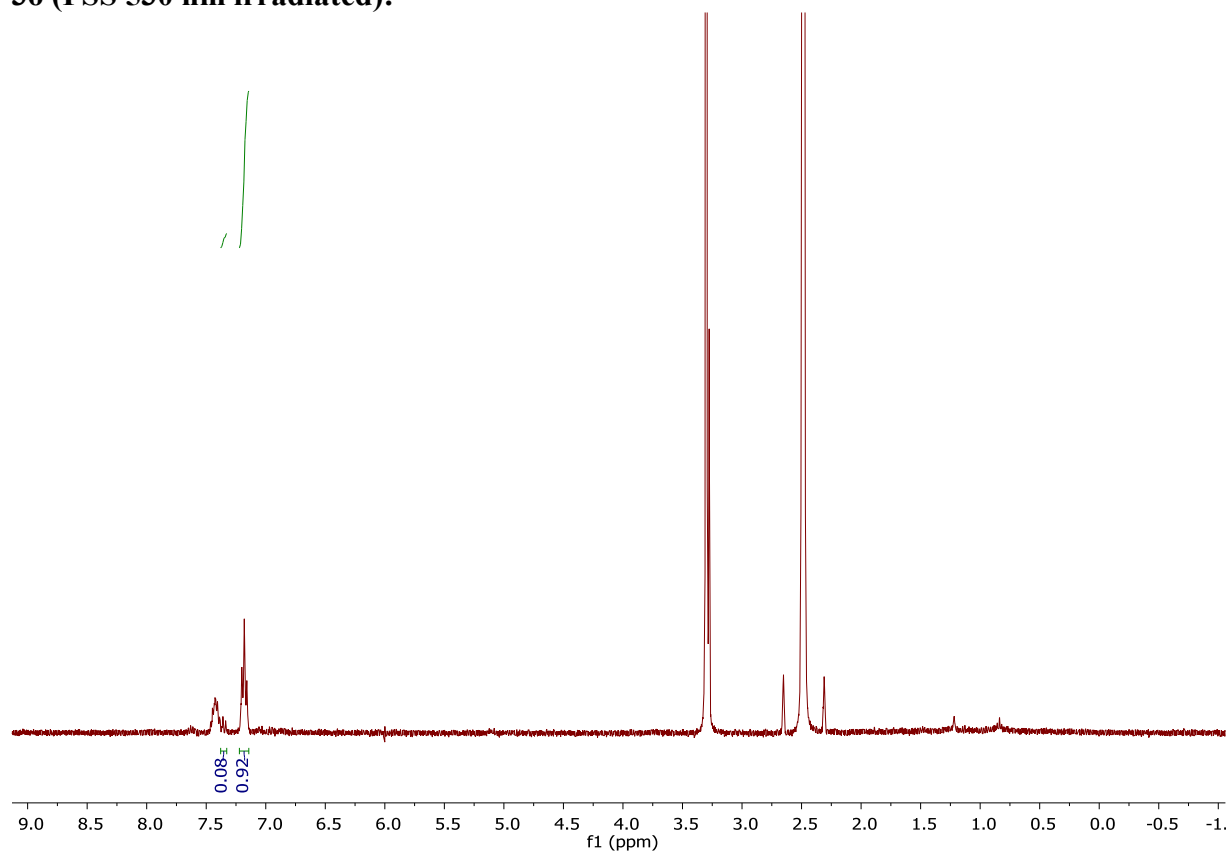
3o (thermally adapted):



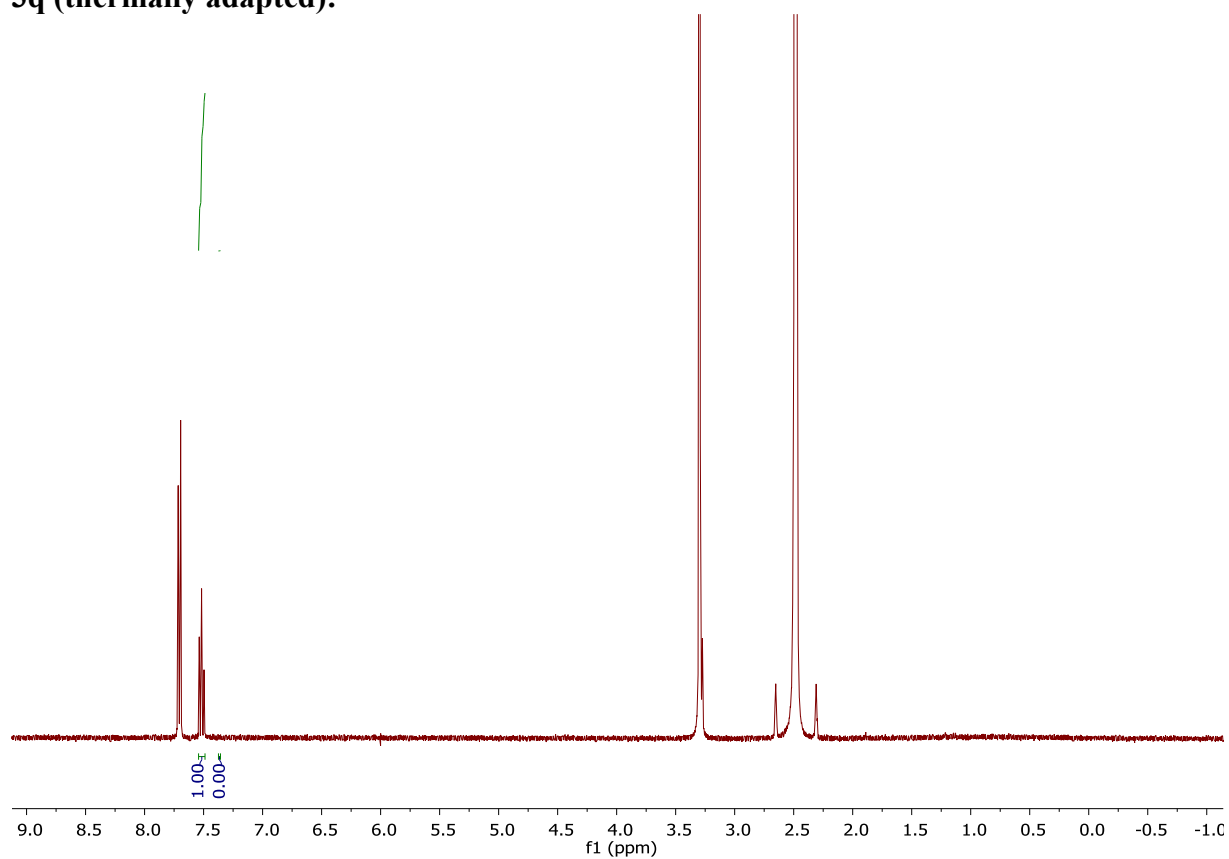
3o (PSS 365 nm irradiated):



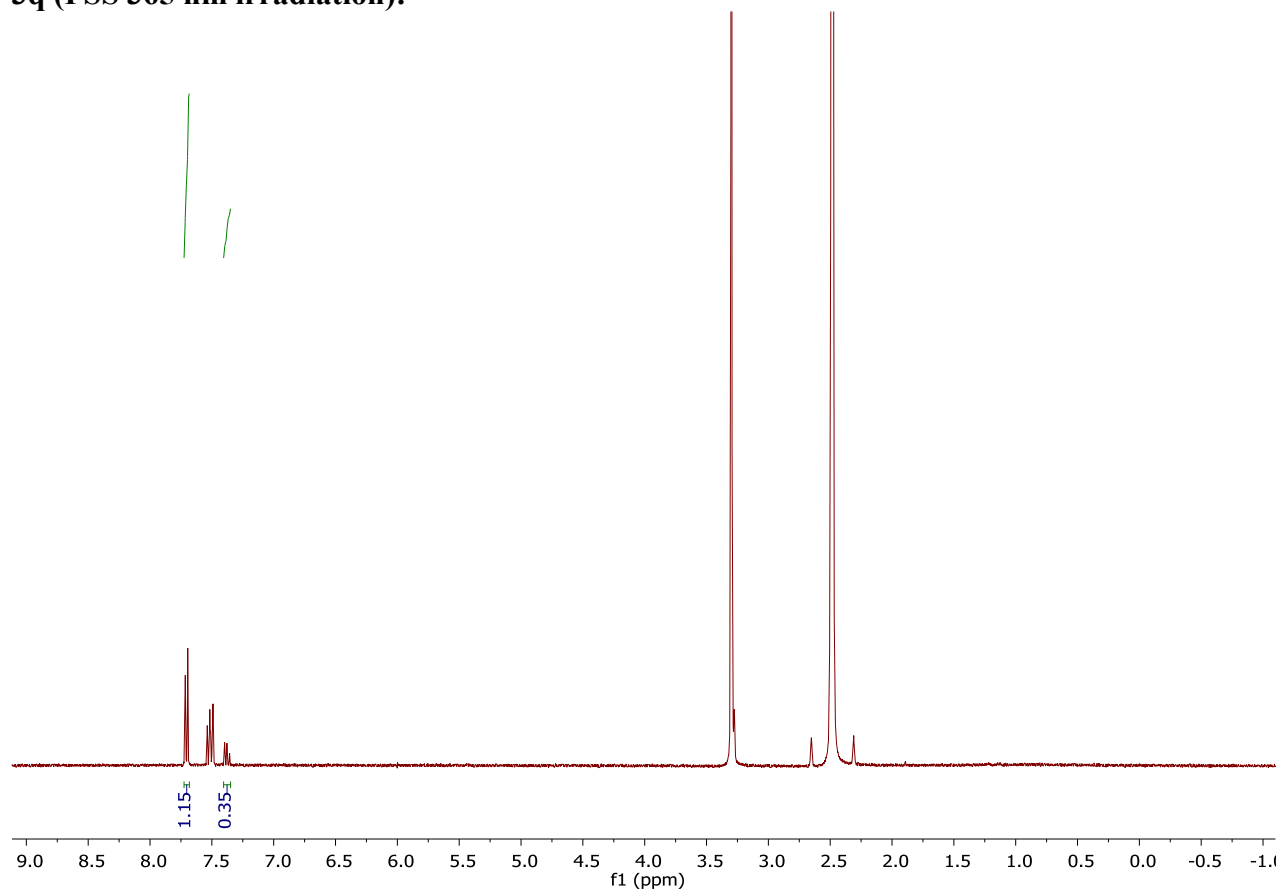
3o (PSS 530 nm irradiated):



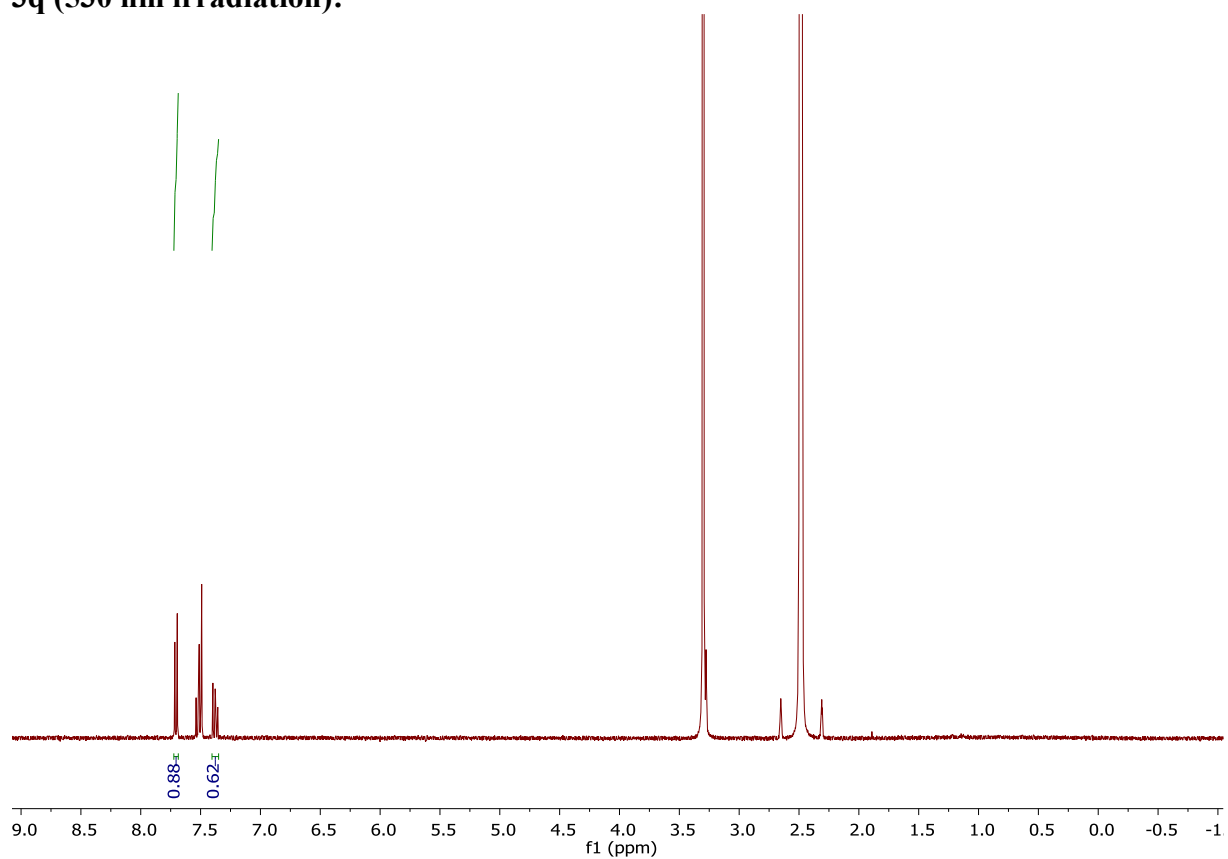
3q (thermally adapted):



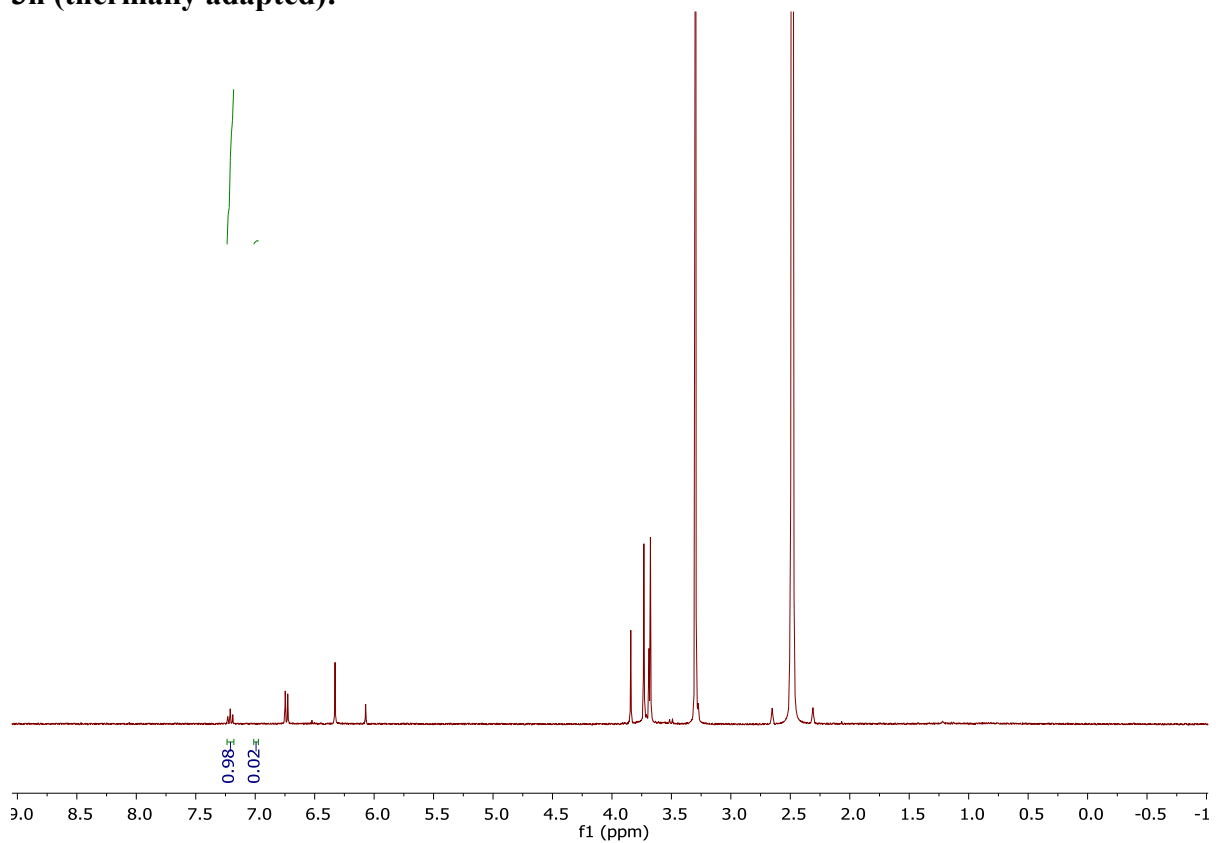
3q (PSS 365 nm irradiation):



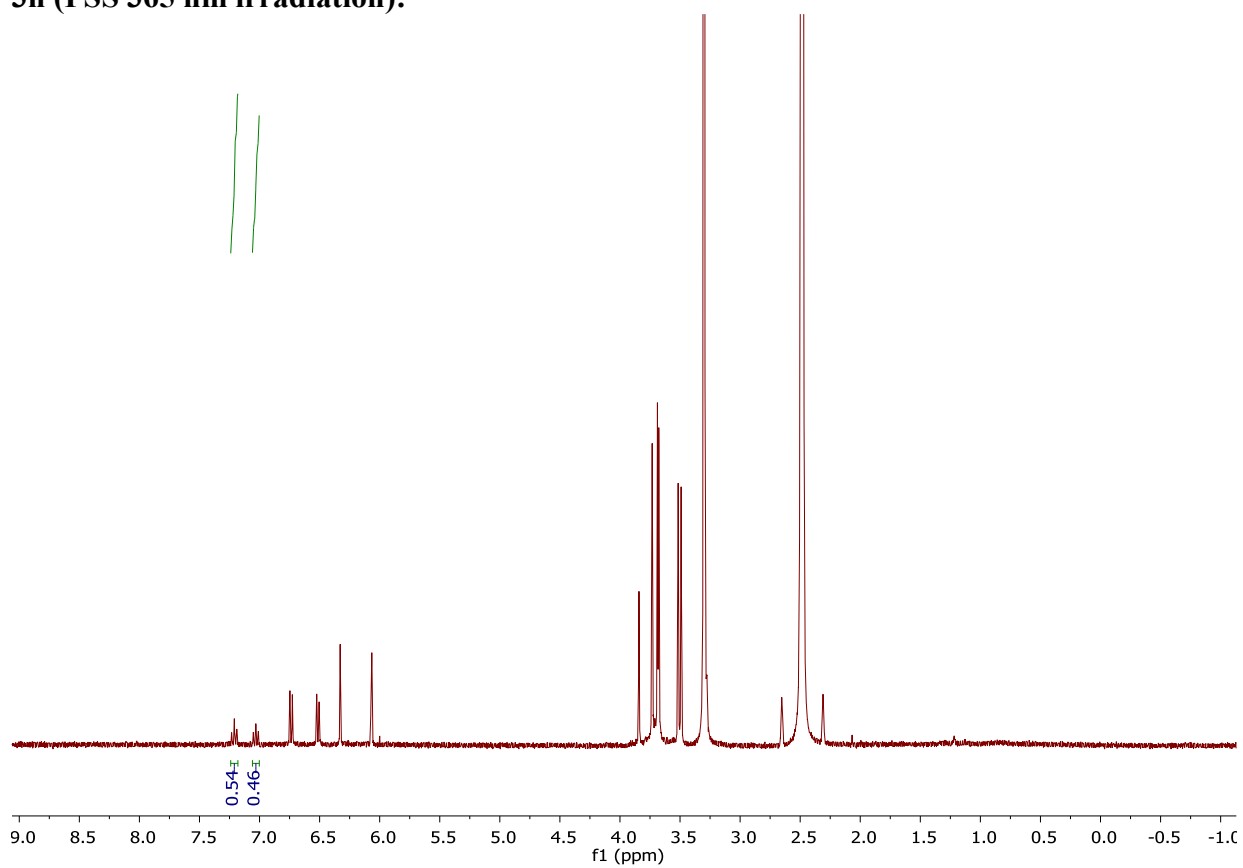
3q (530 nm irradiation):



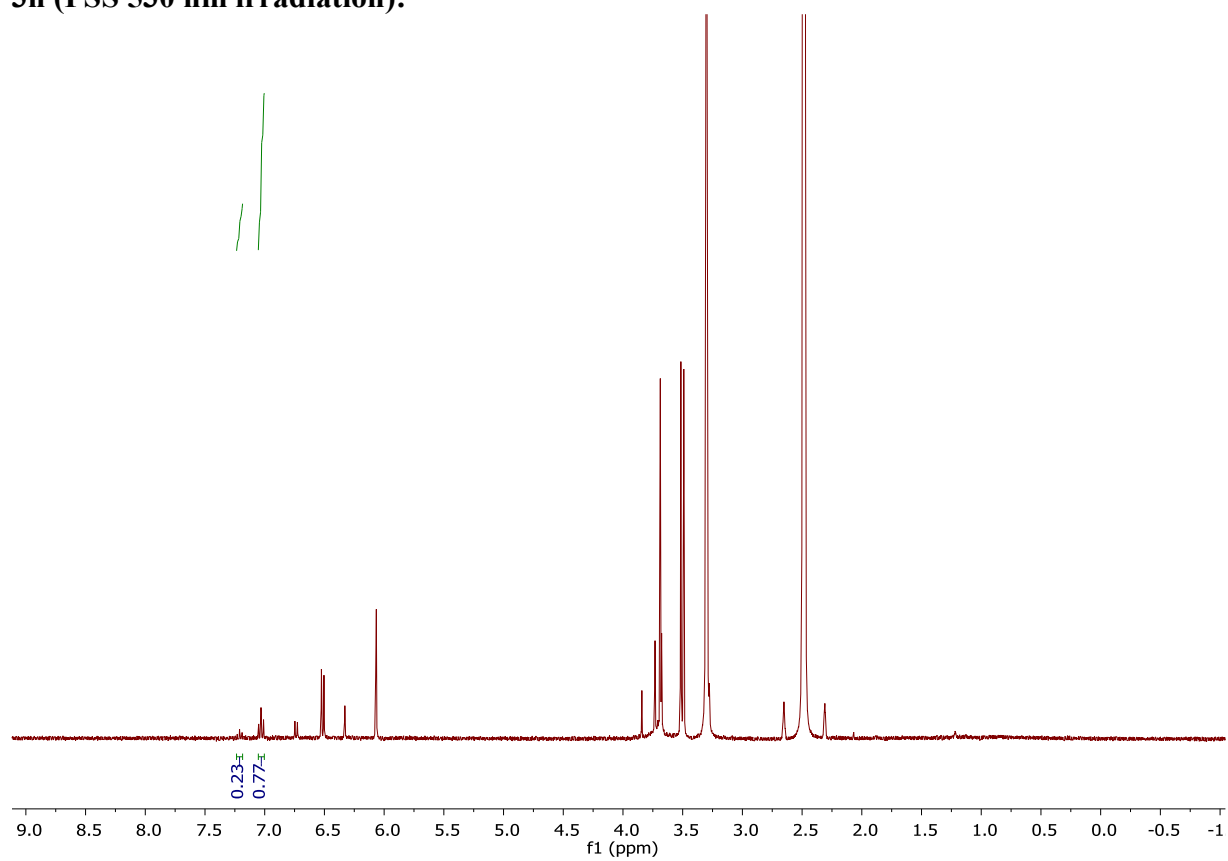
3h (thermally adapted):



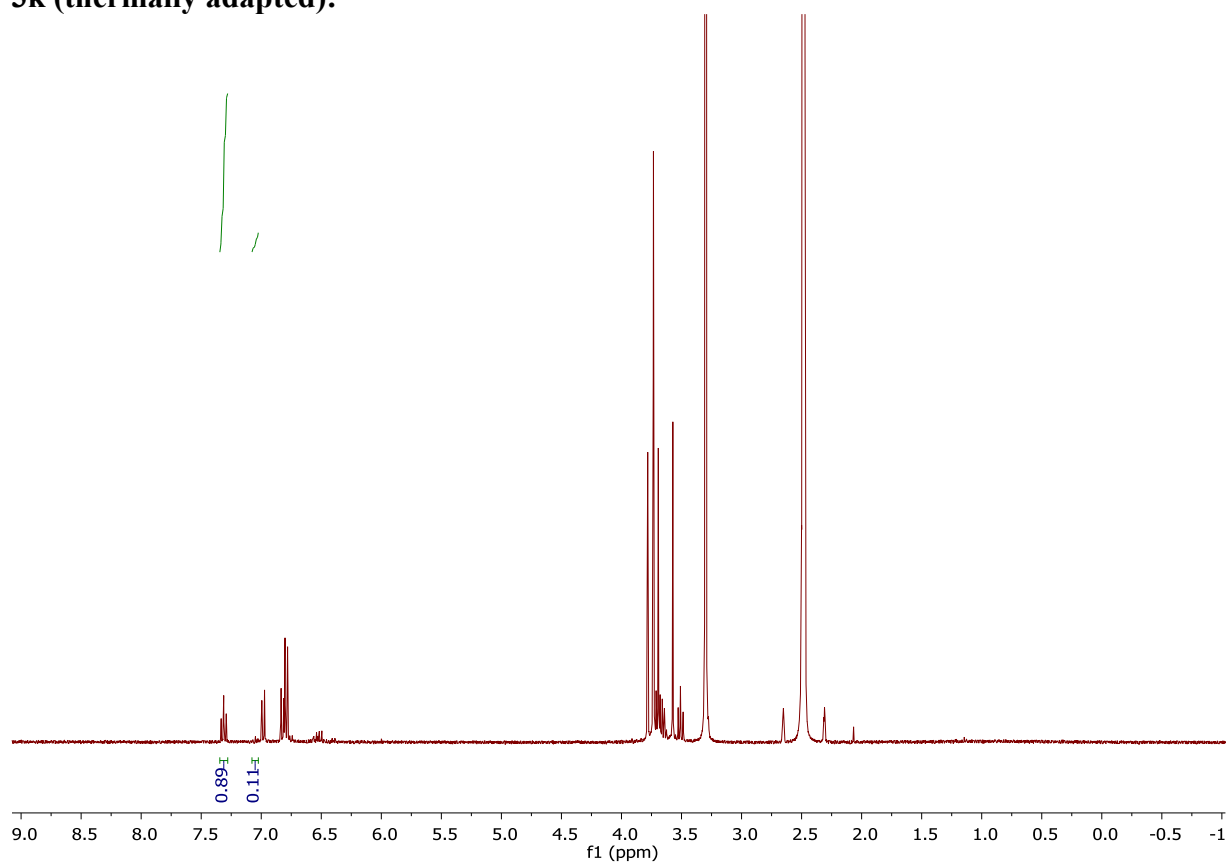
3h (PSS 365 nm irradiation):



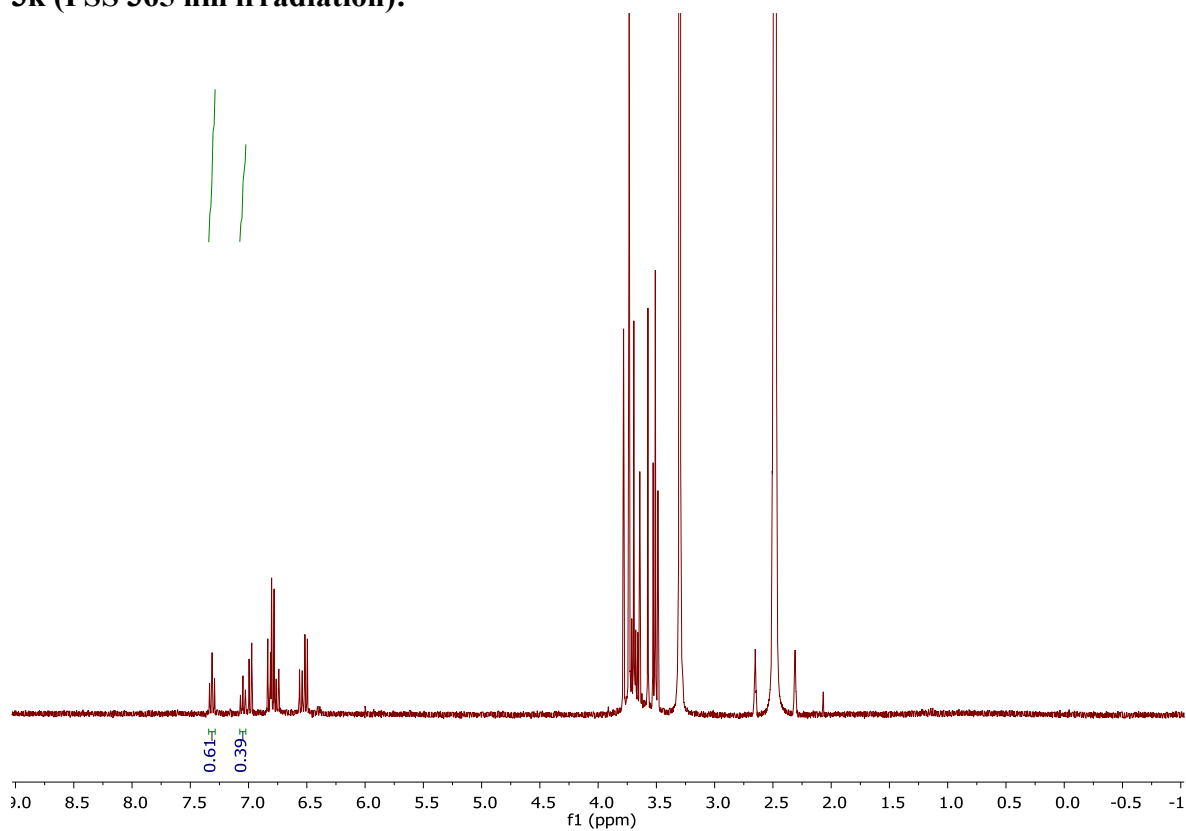
3h (PSS 530 nm irradiation):



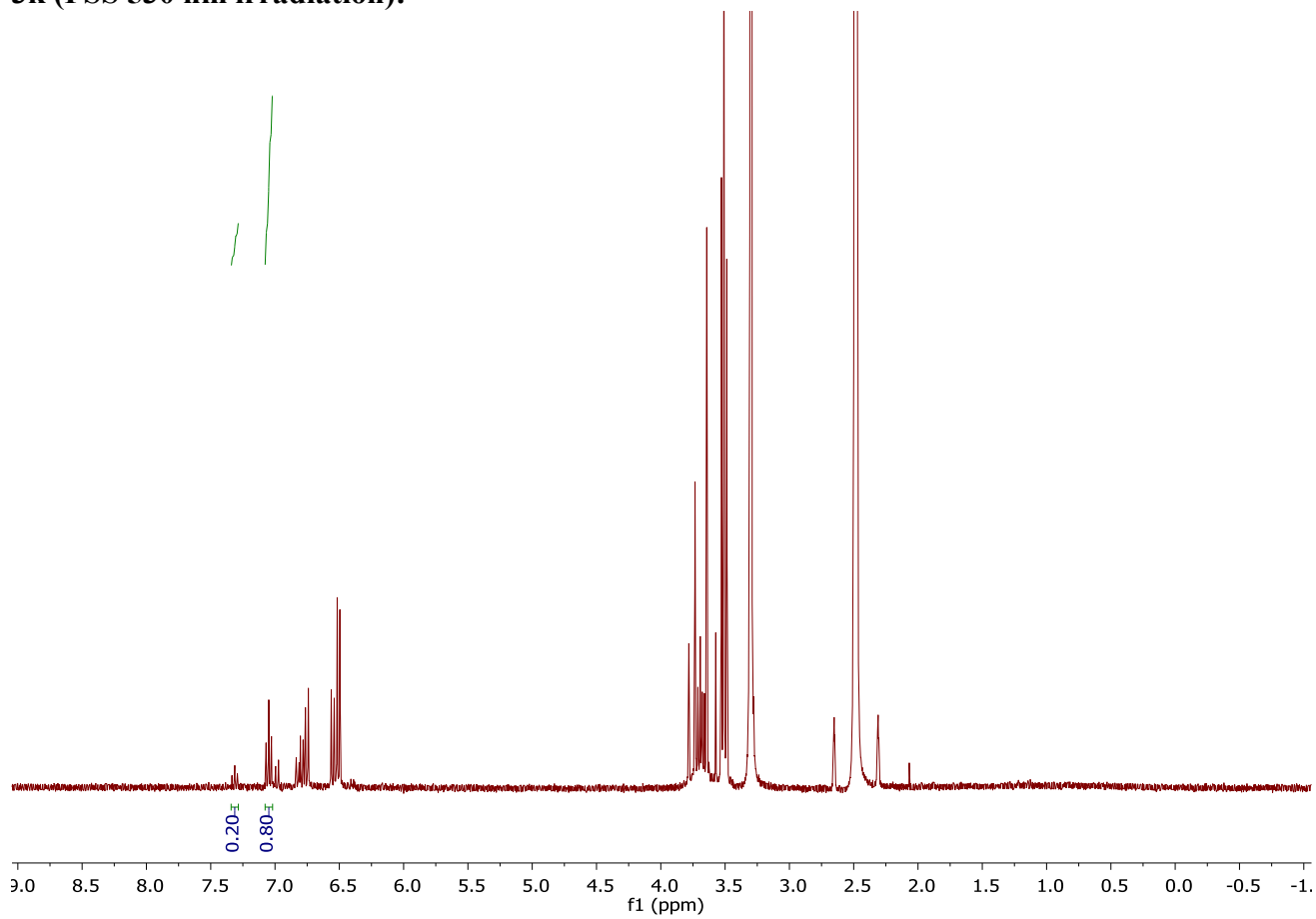
3k (thermally adapted):



3k (PSS 365 nm irradiation):

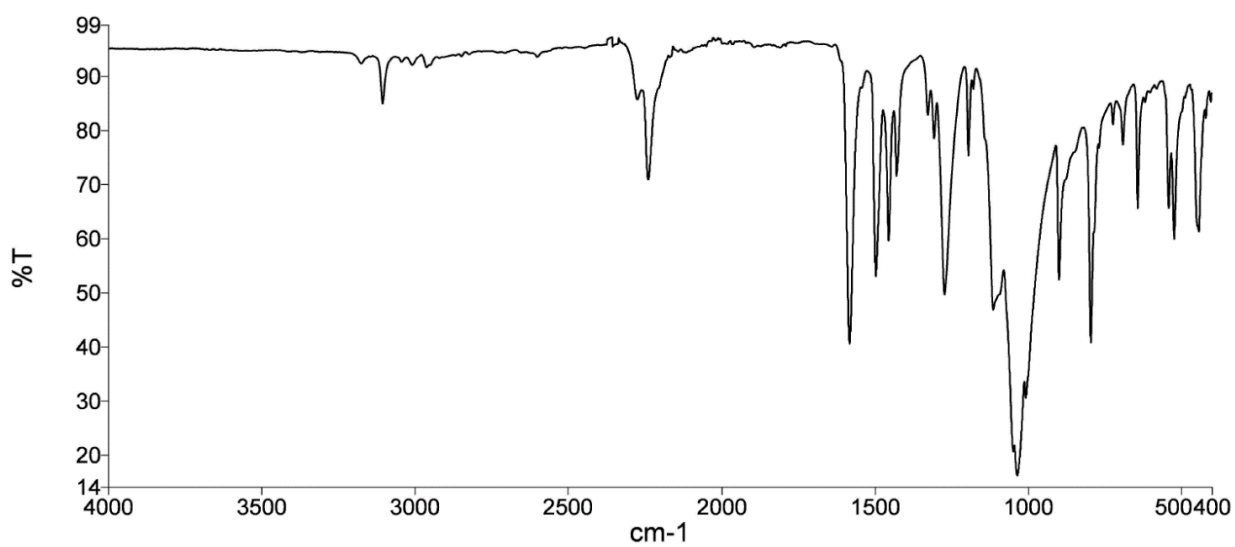
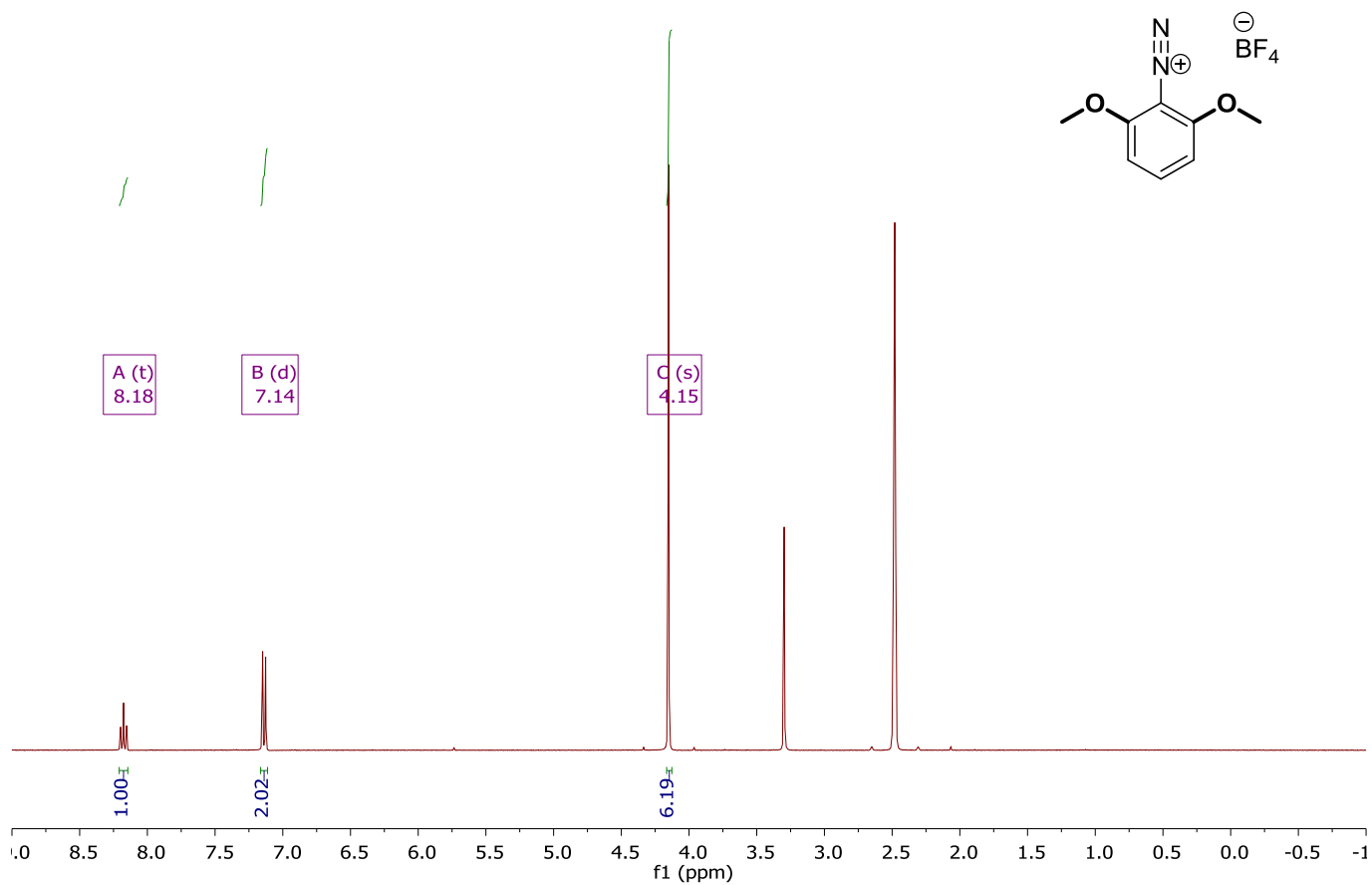


3k (PSS 530 nm irradiation):

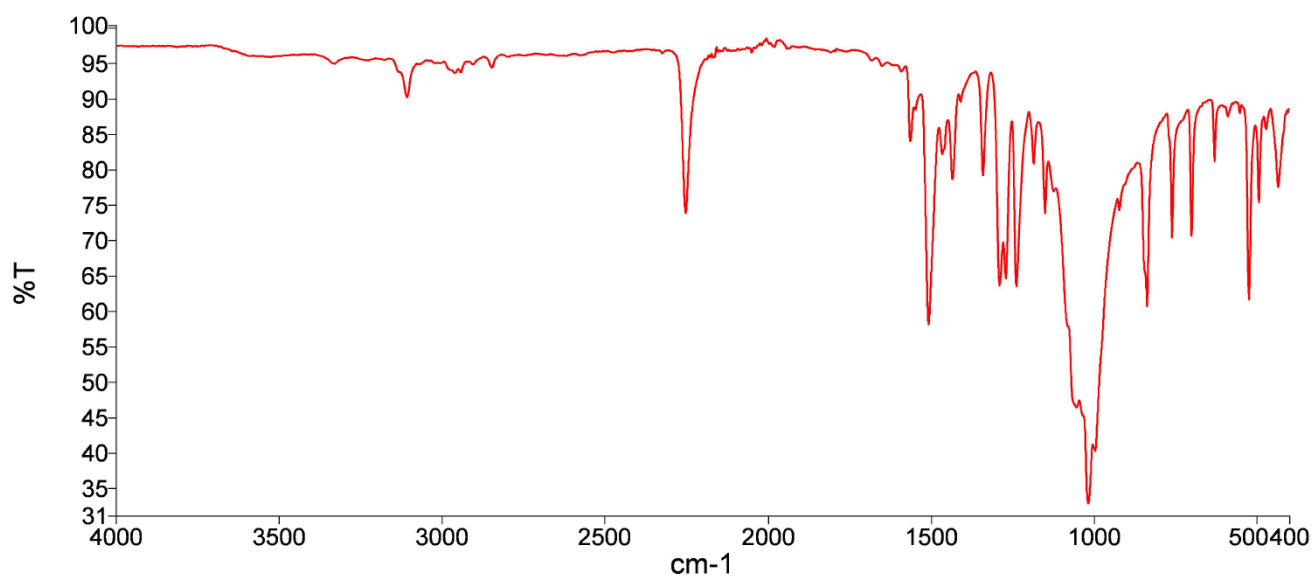
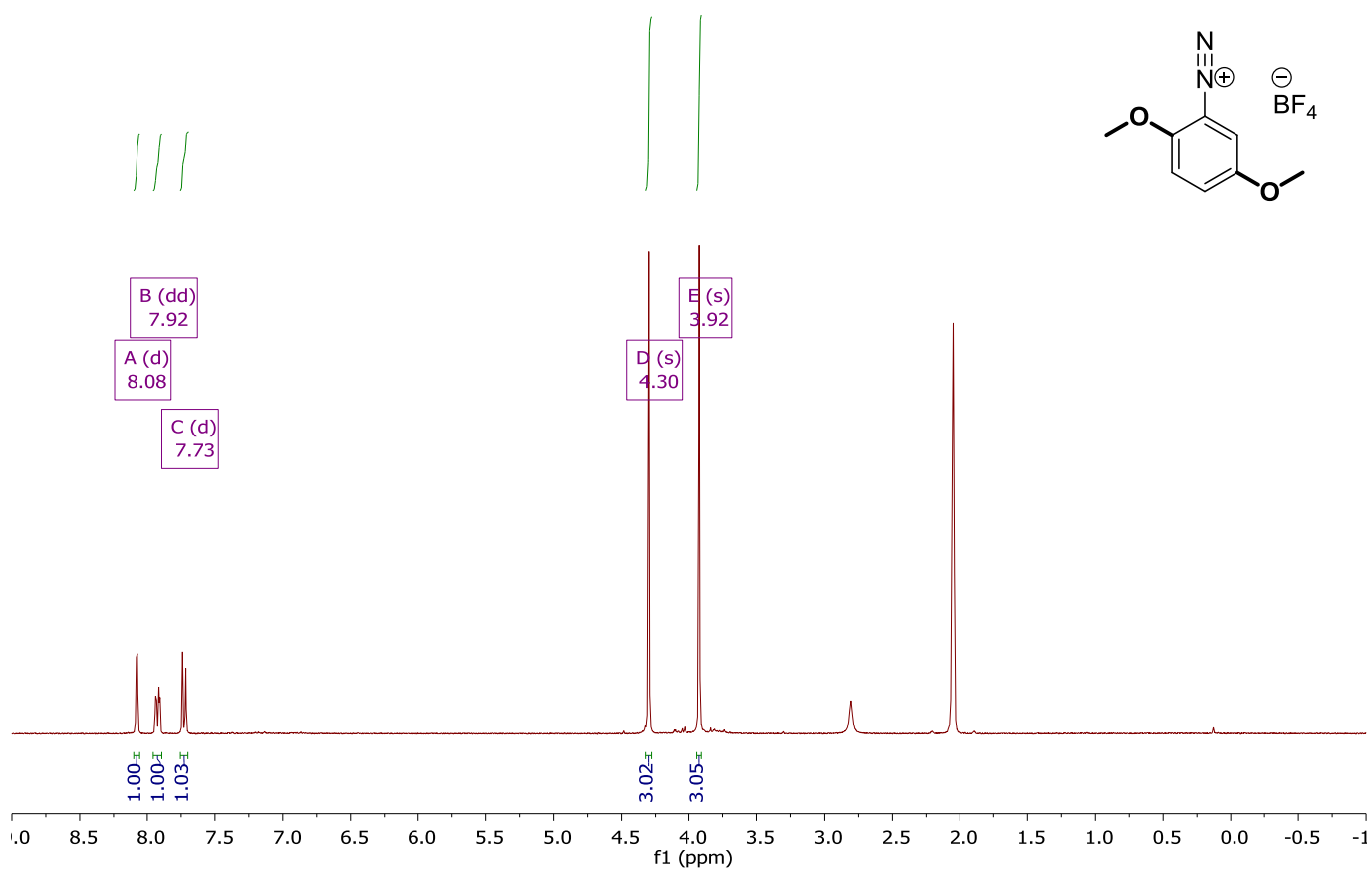


^1H , ^{13}C -NMR (DMSO- d_6), HR-MS (ESI+) and IR (neat) spectra

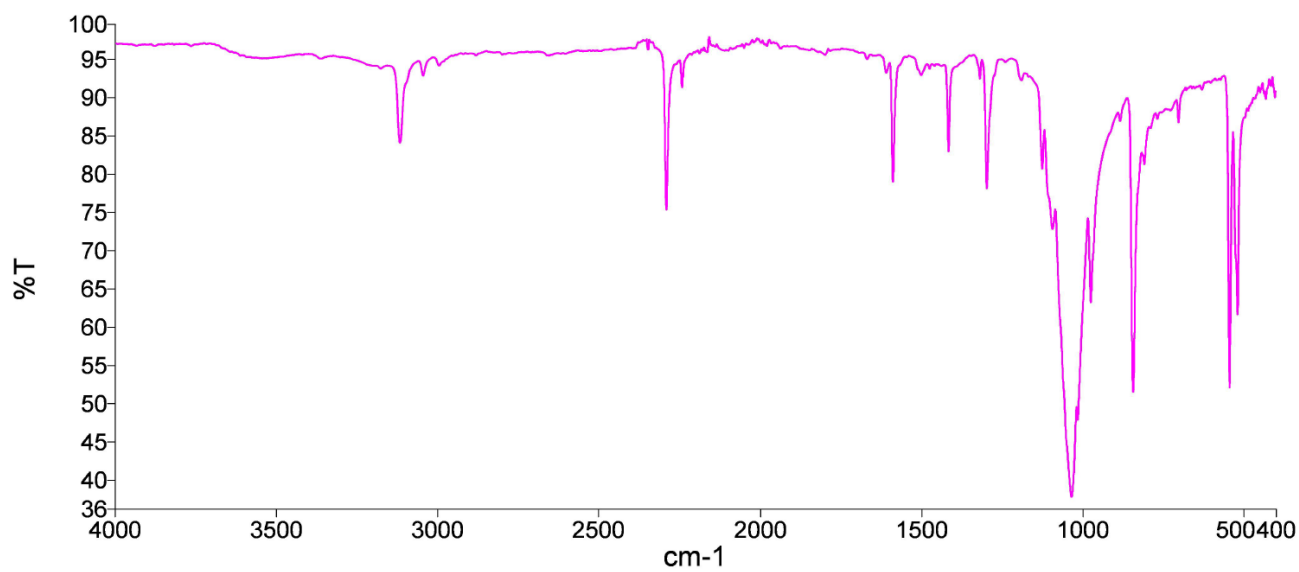
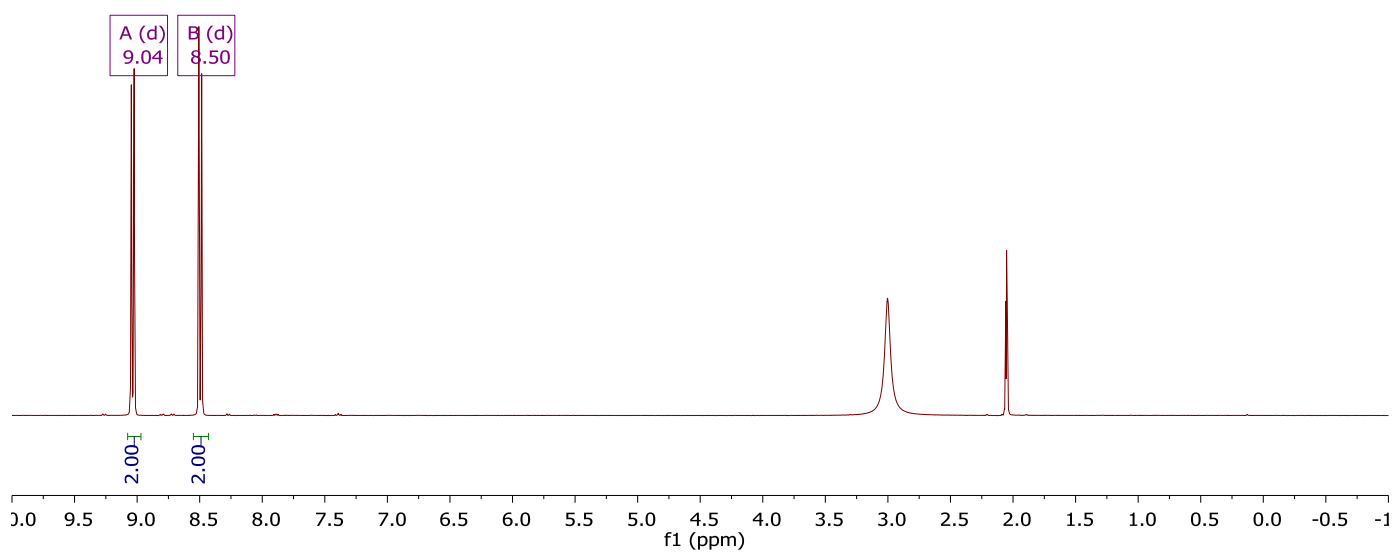
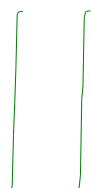
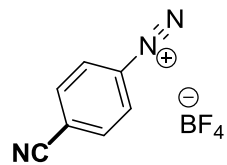
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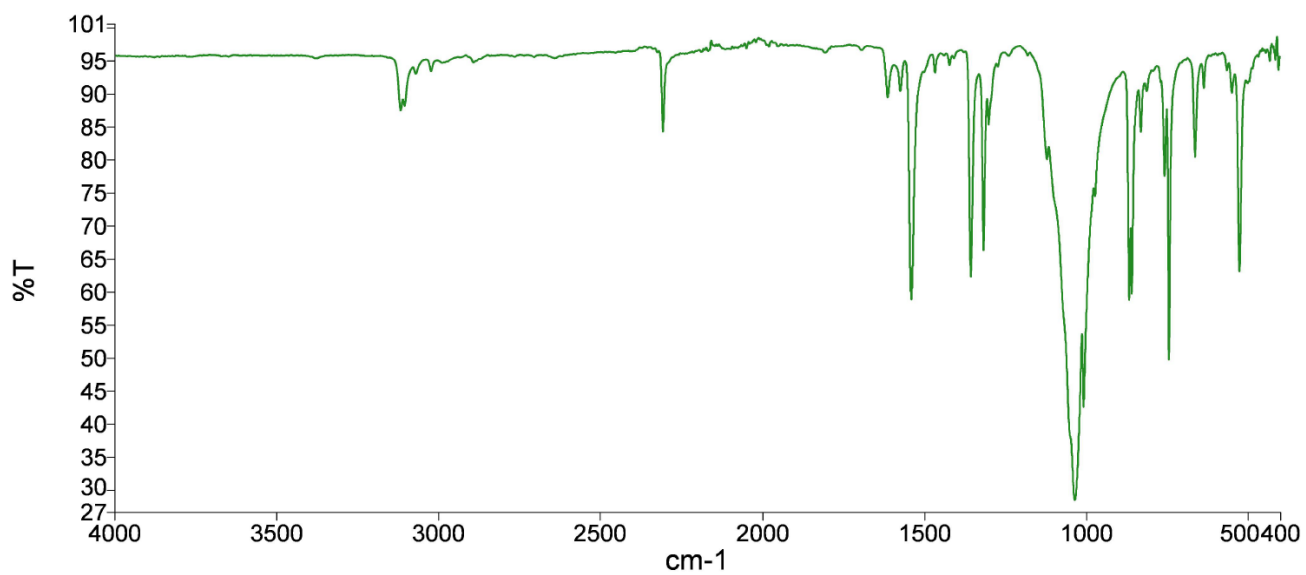
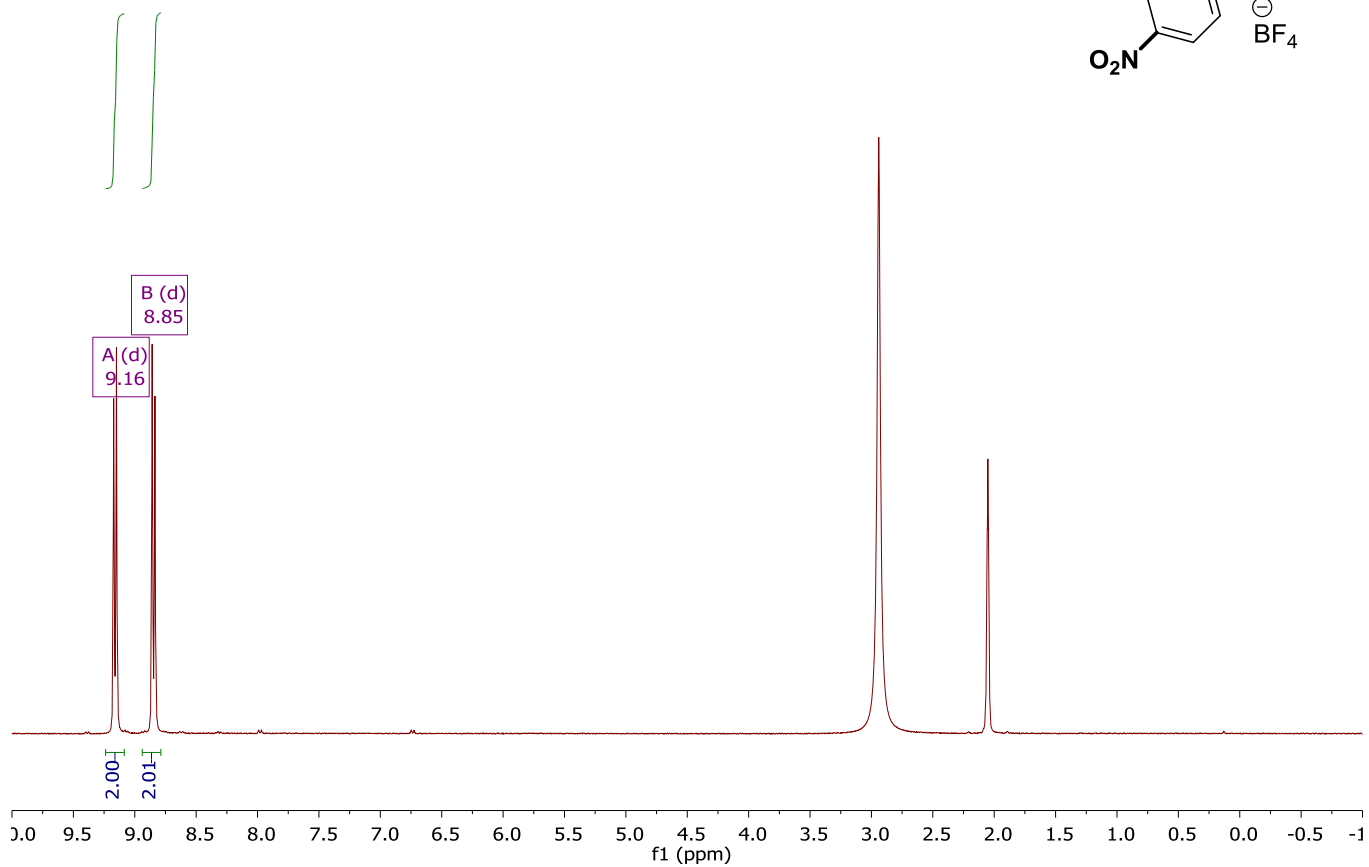
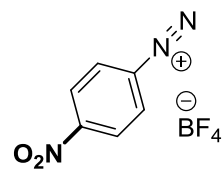
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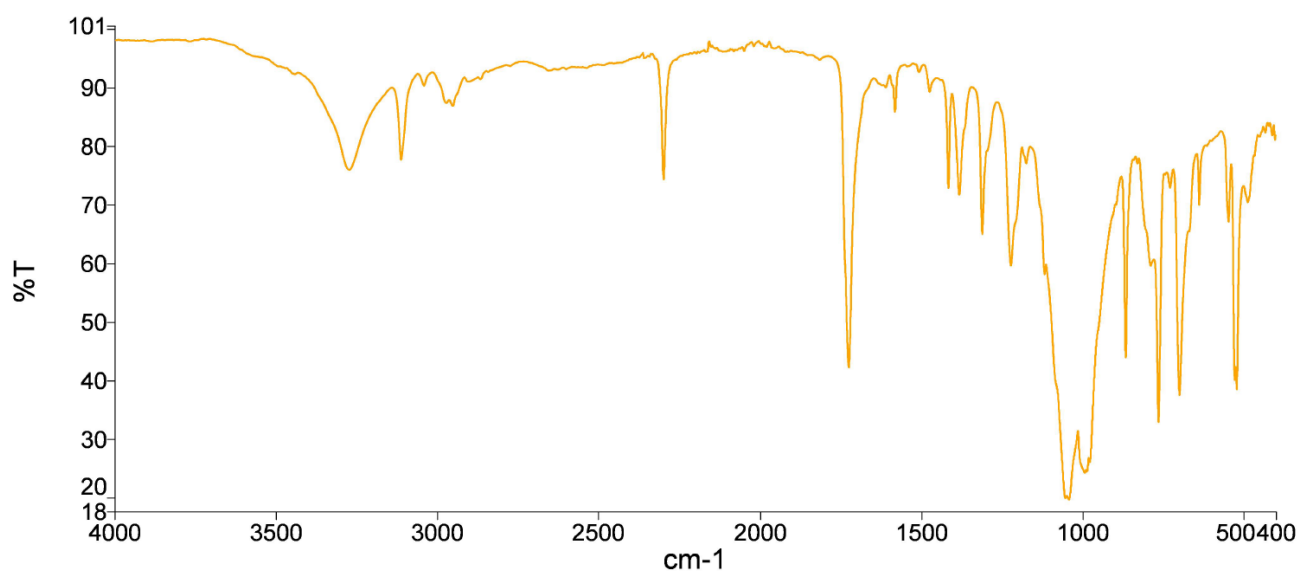
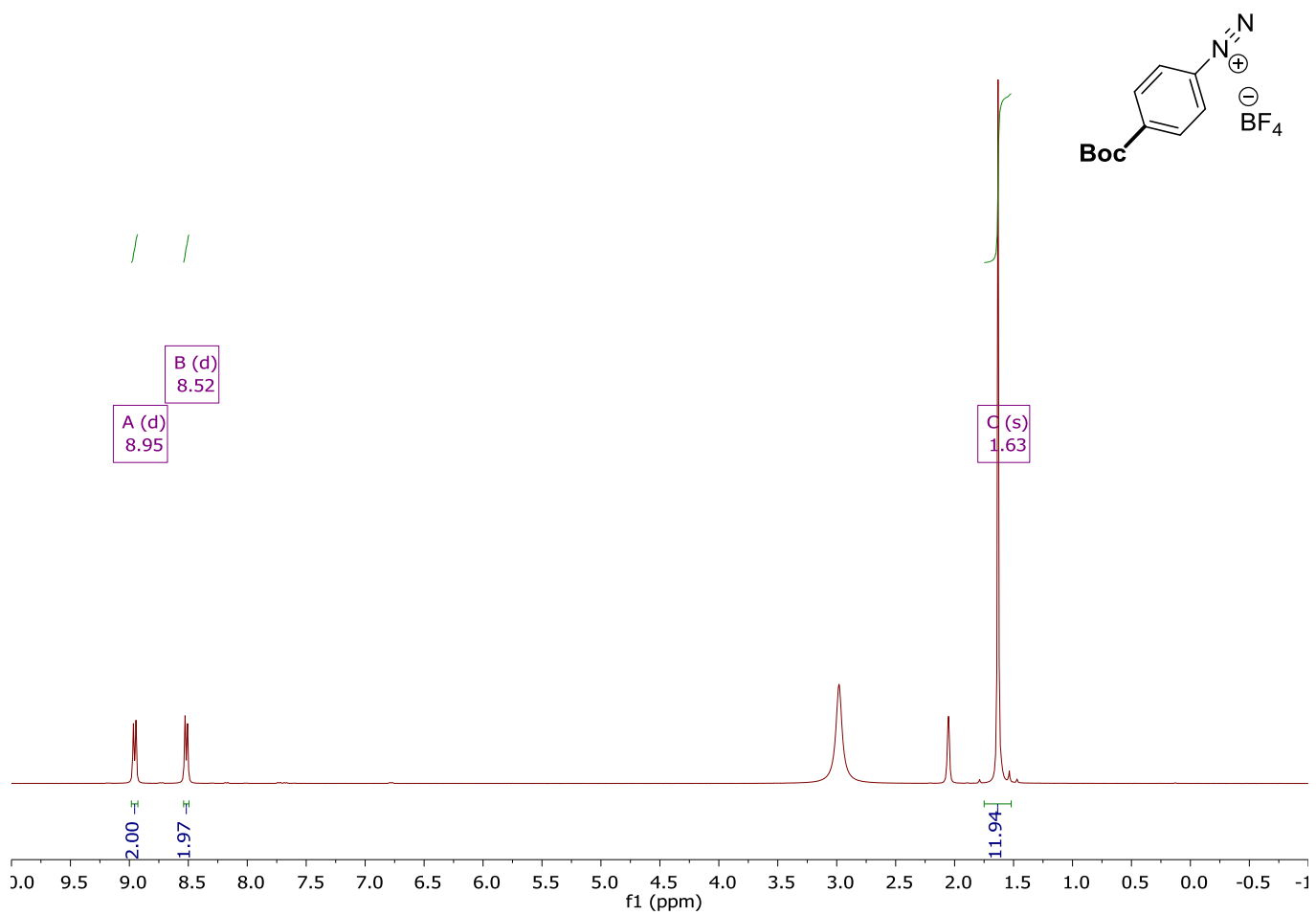
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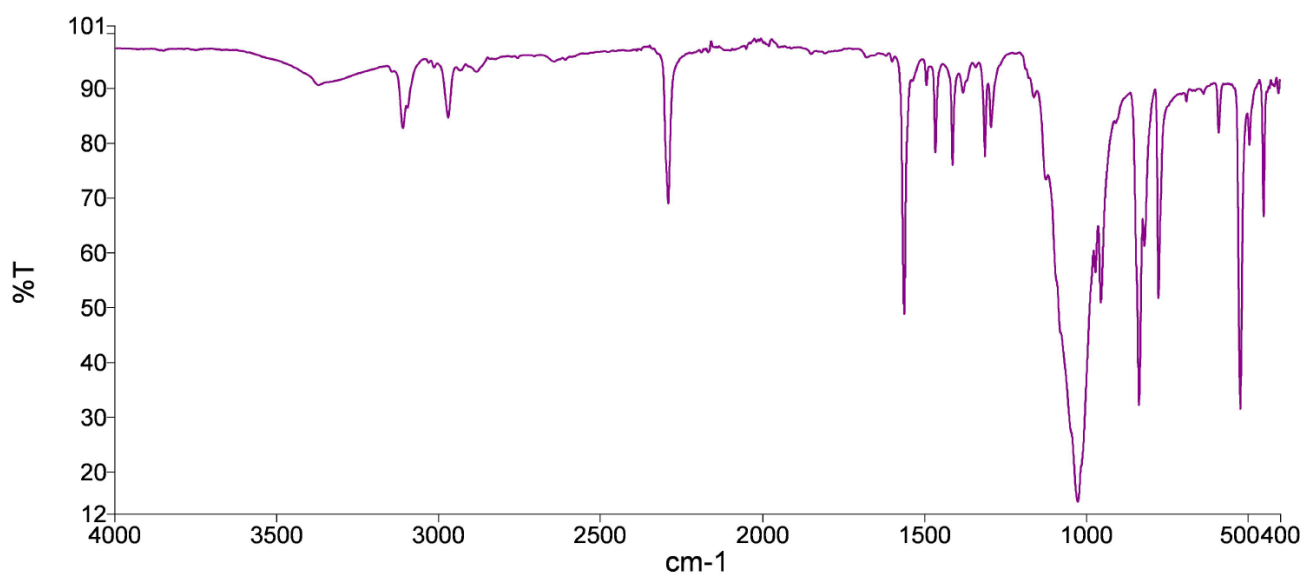
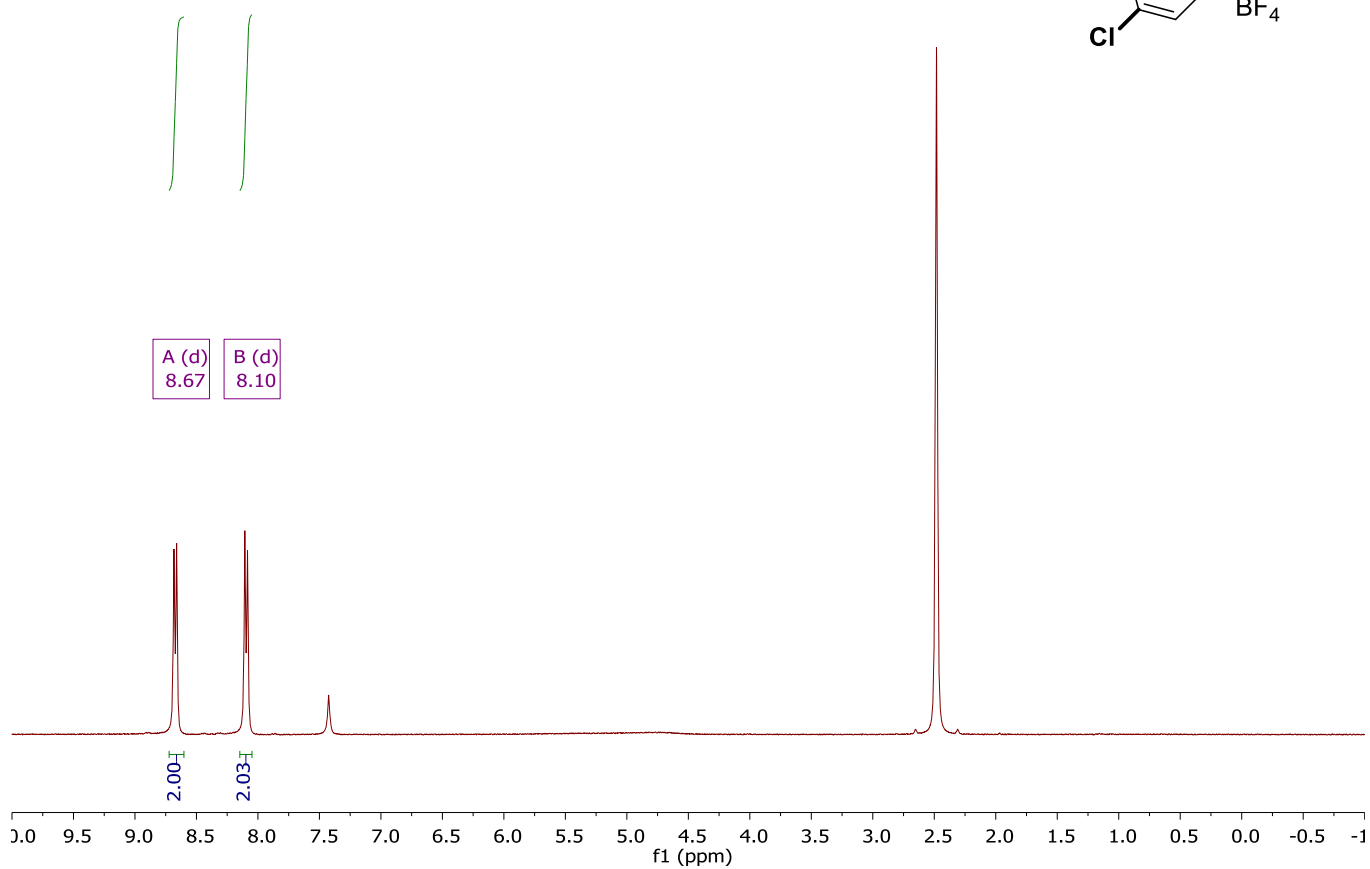
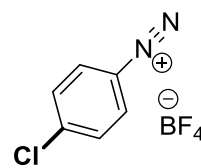
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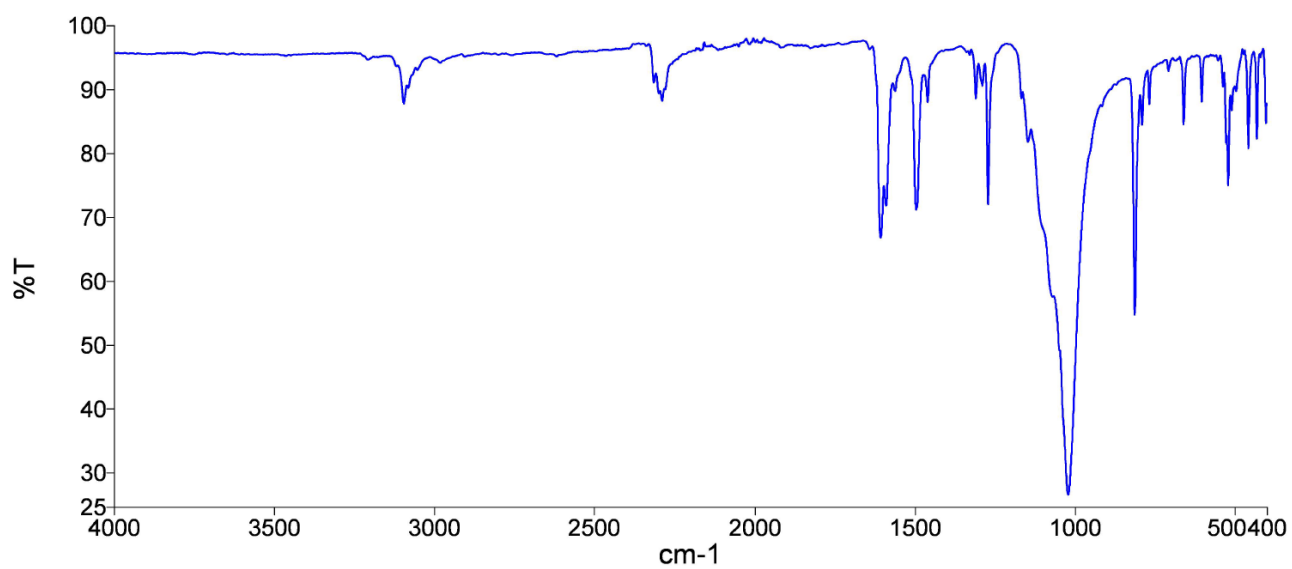
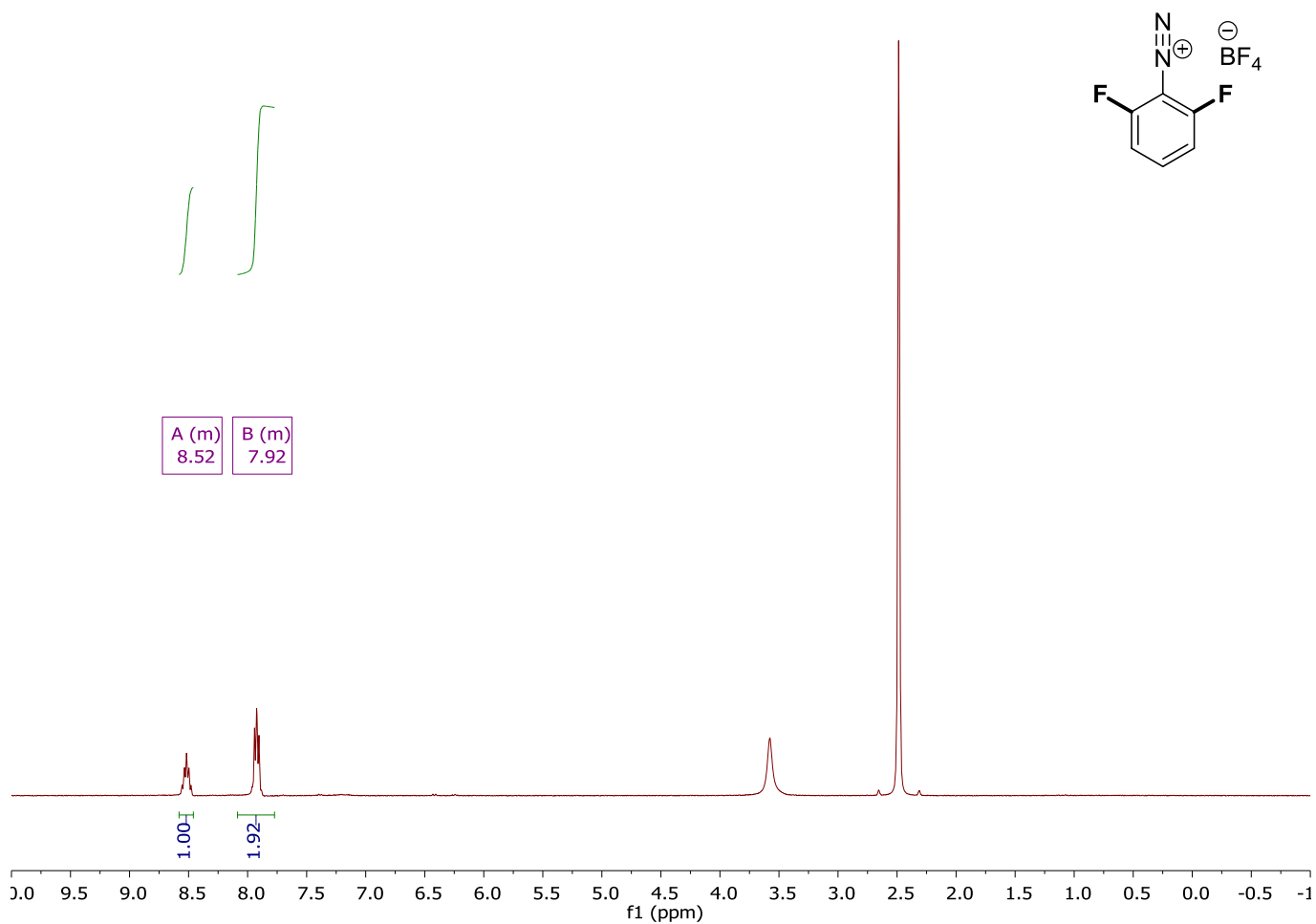
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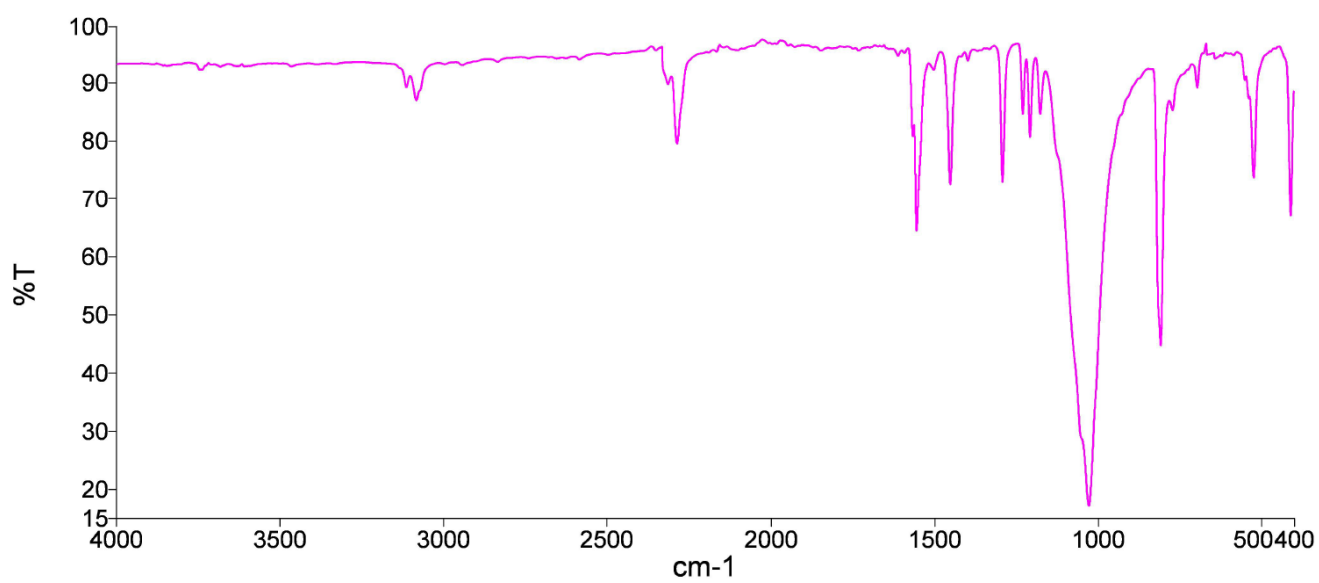
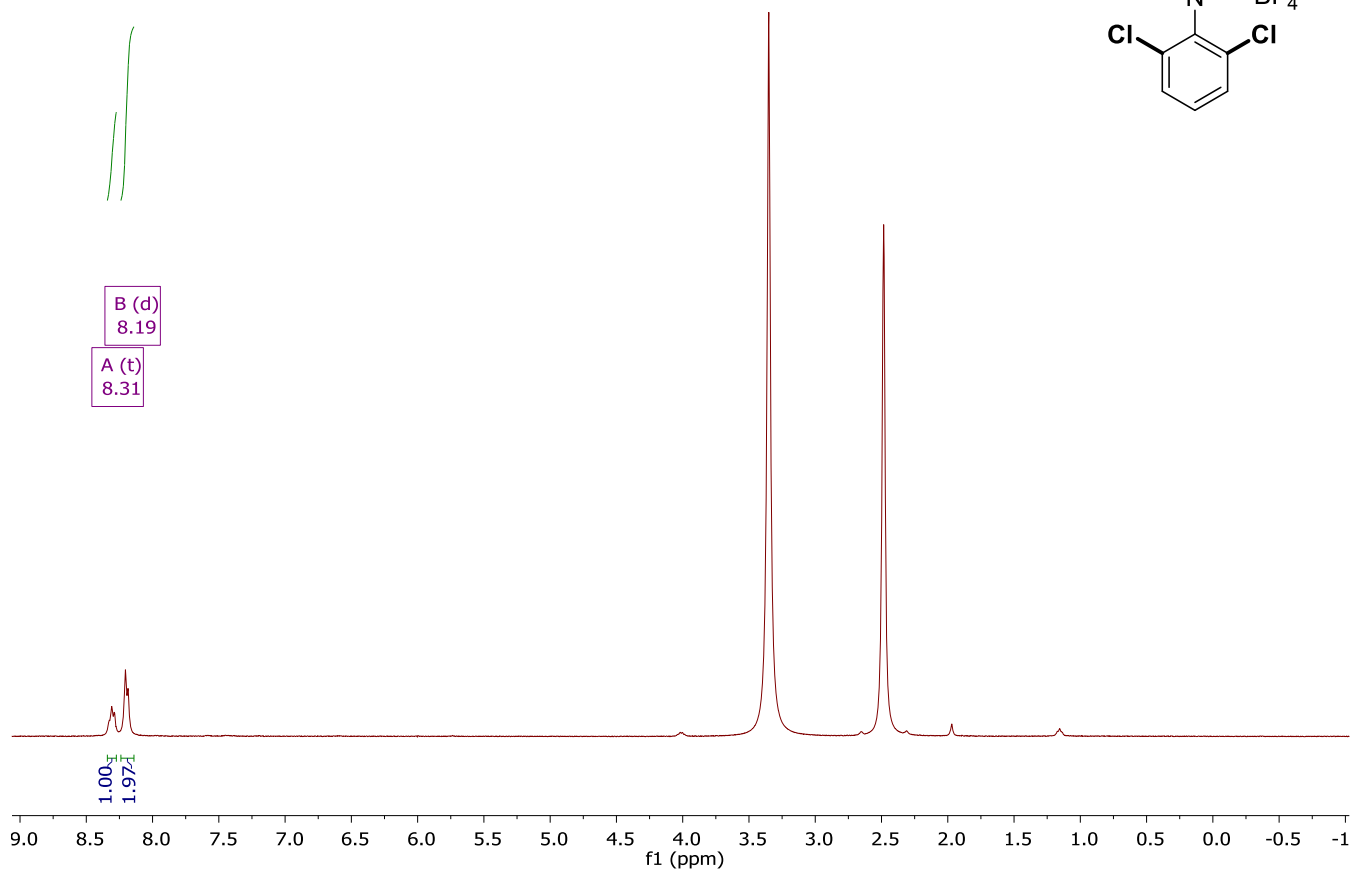
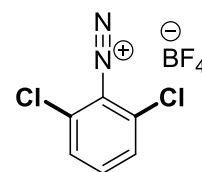
2g:



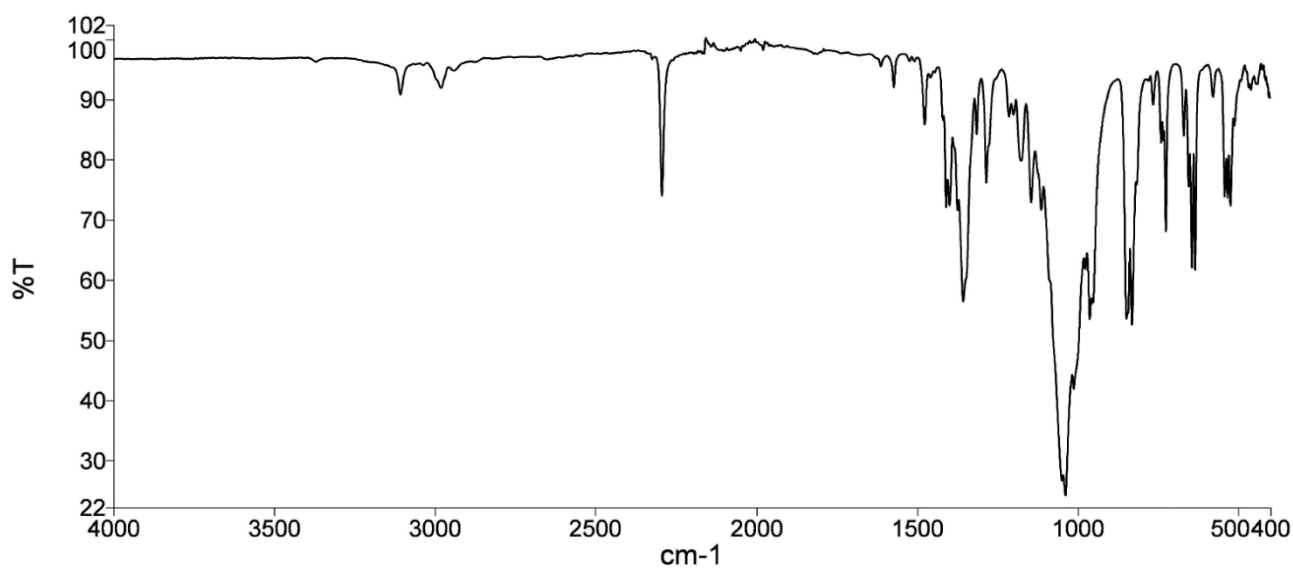
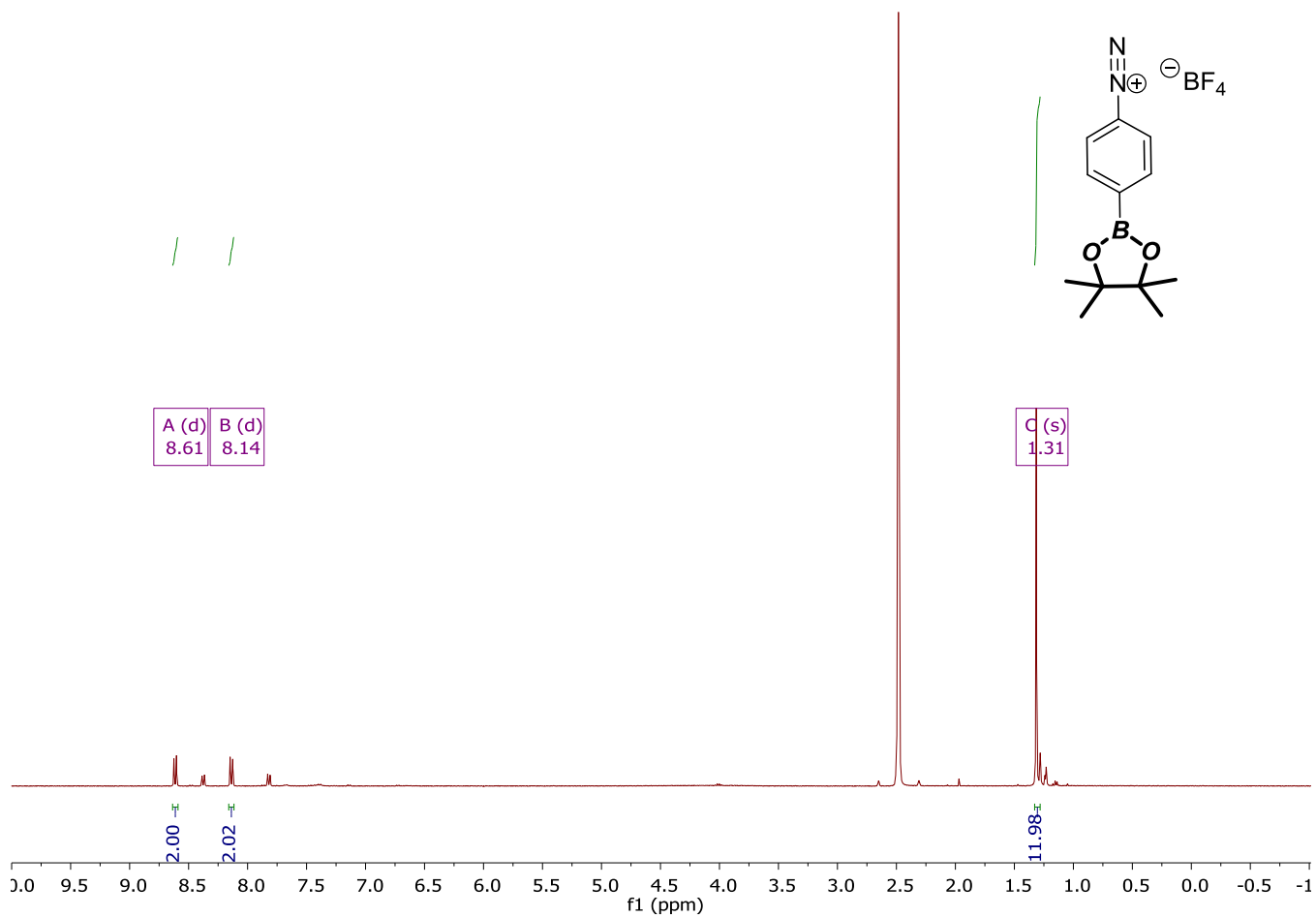
2h:



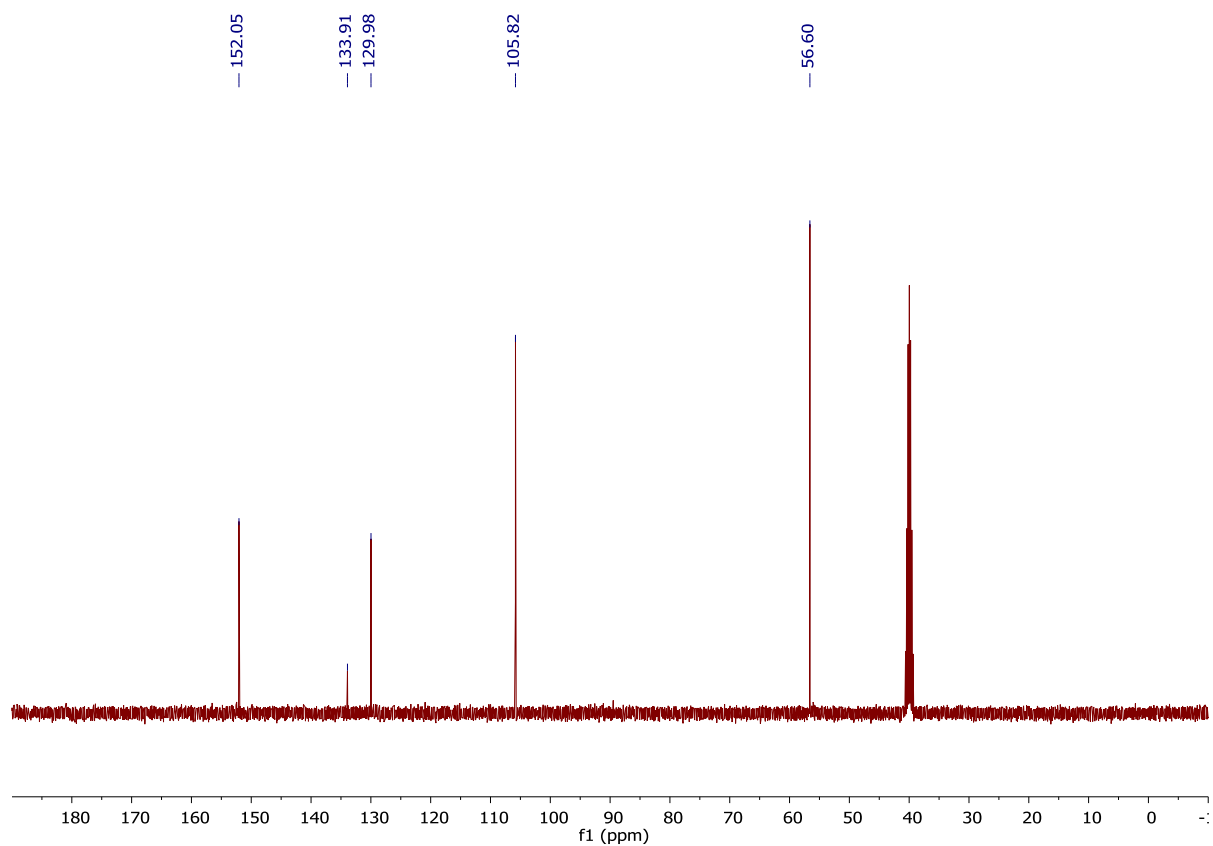
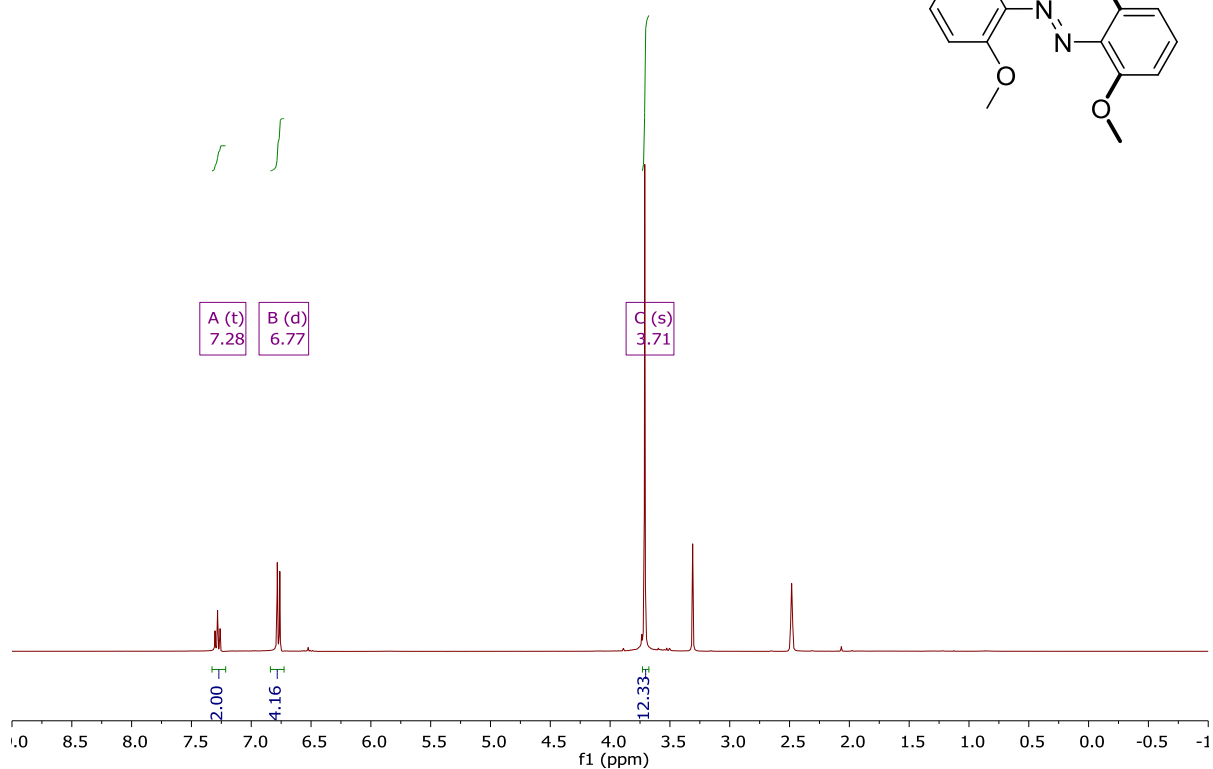
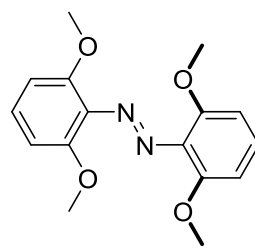
2i:

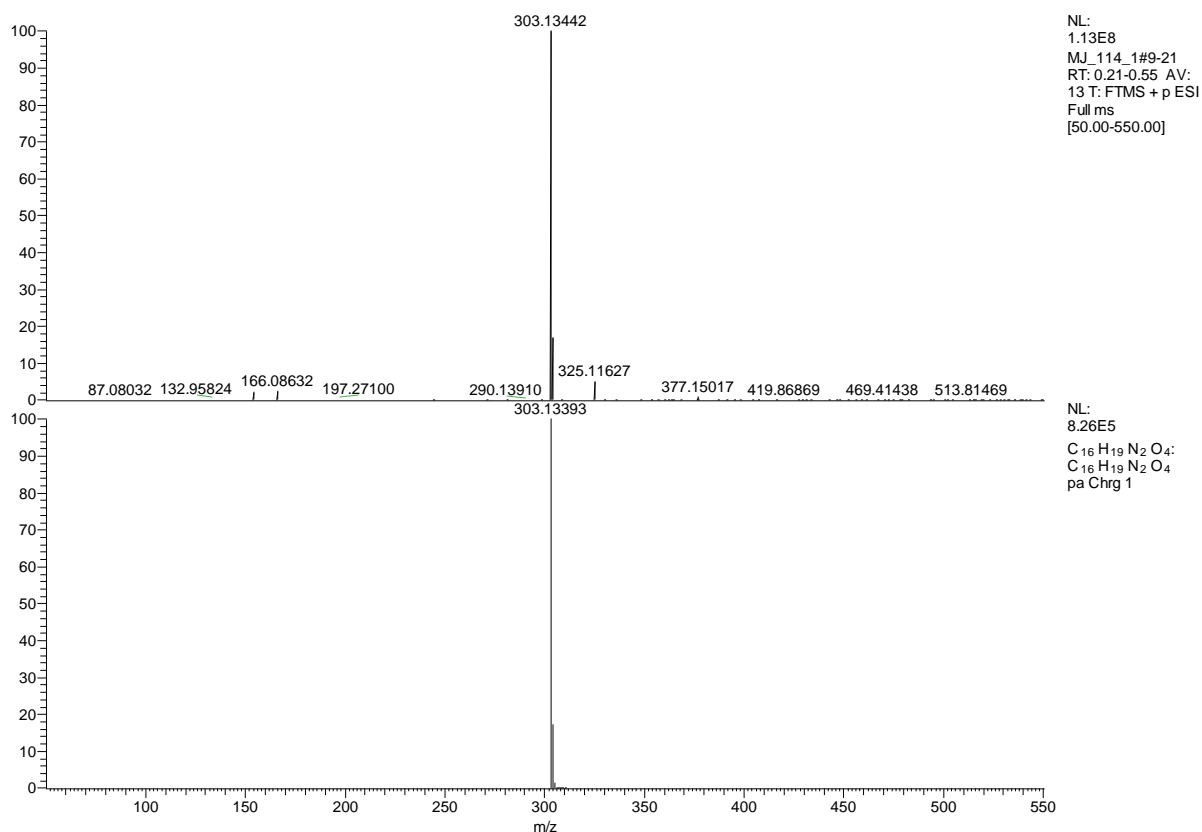


2j: Upon preparation of the NMR sample, some hydrolysis of the pinacol boronic ester was observed, which becomes apparent in the $^1\text{H-NMR}$ spectrum at 8.4 and 7.8 ppm.

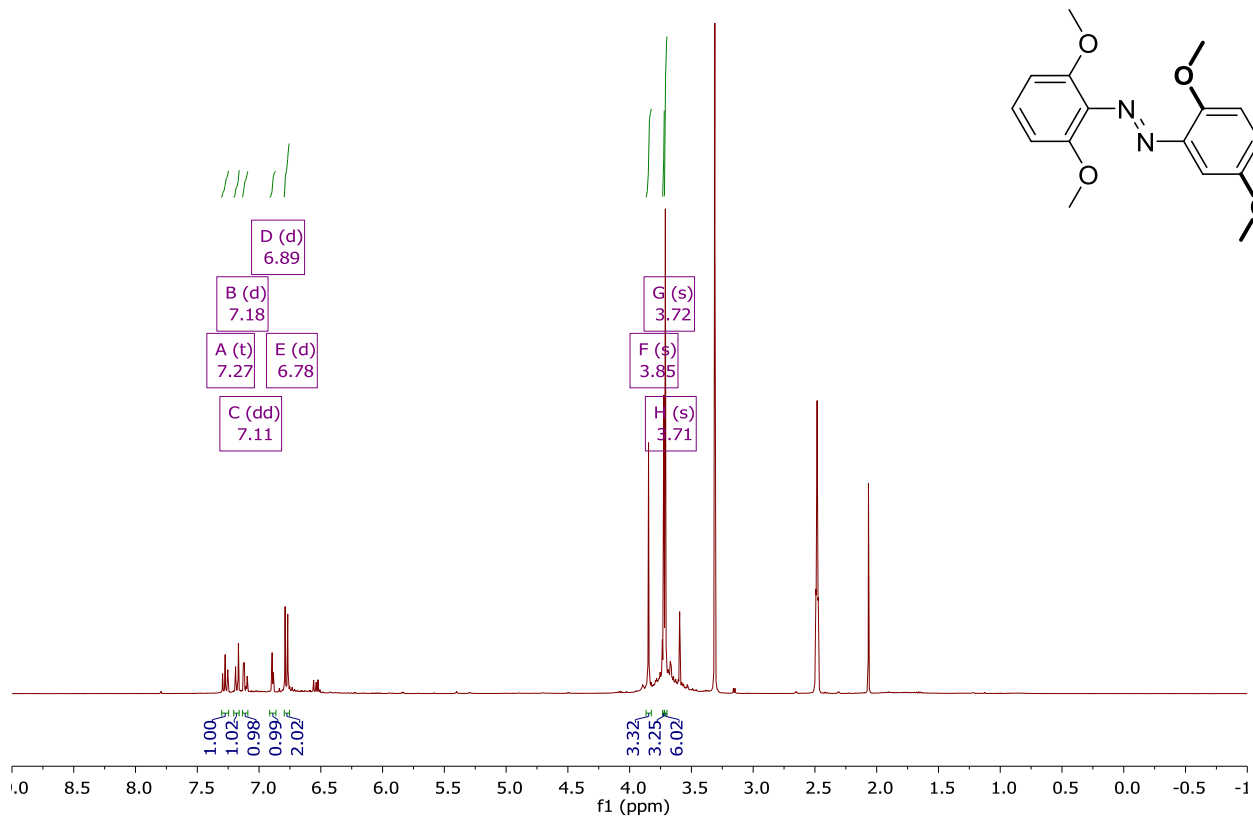


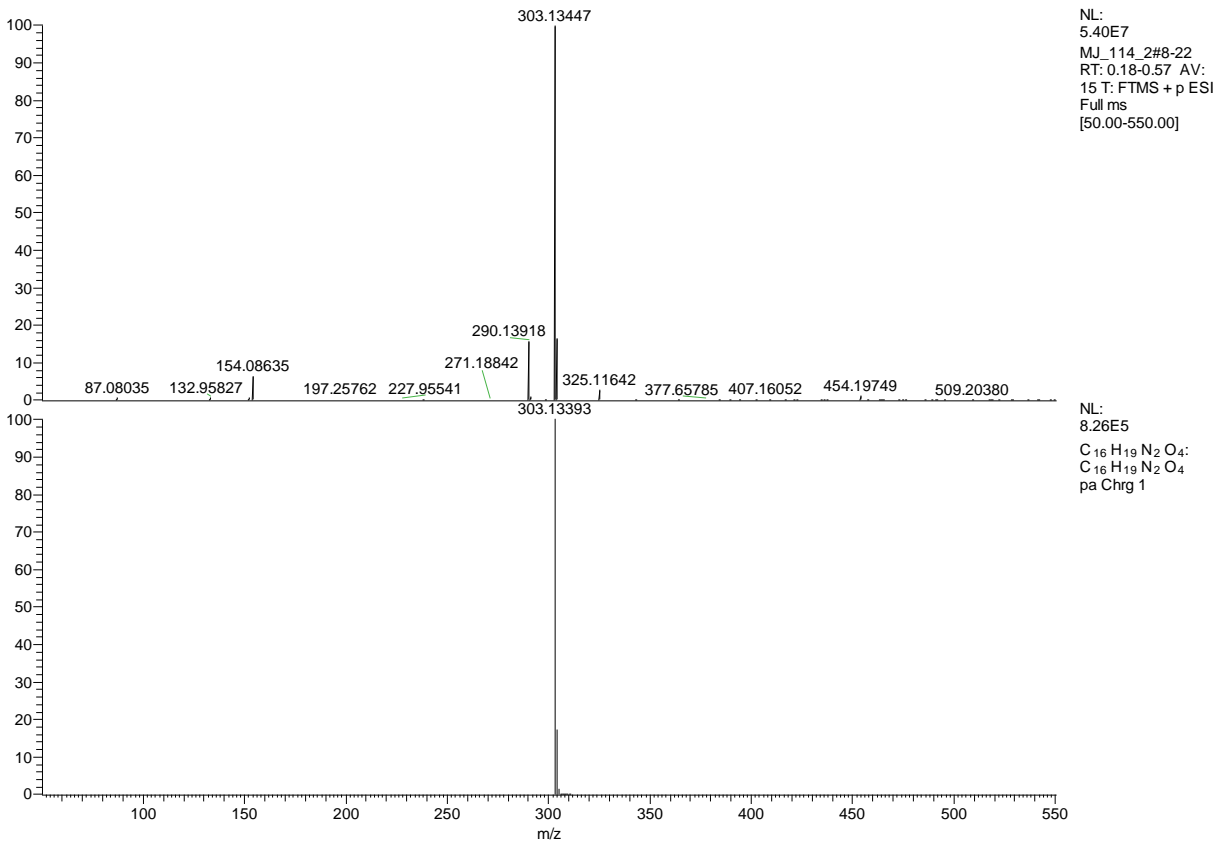
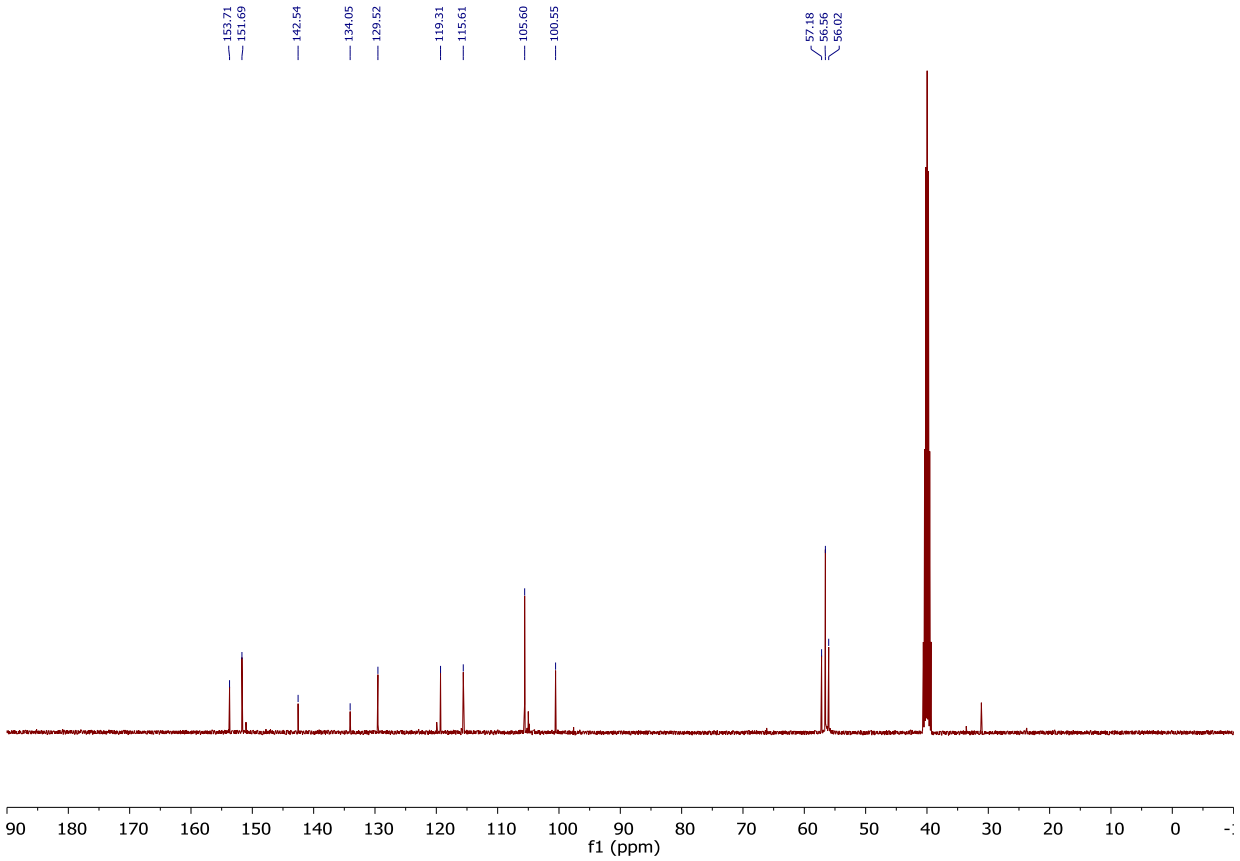
3a:



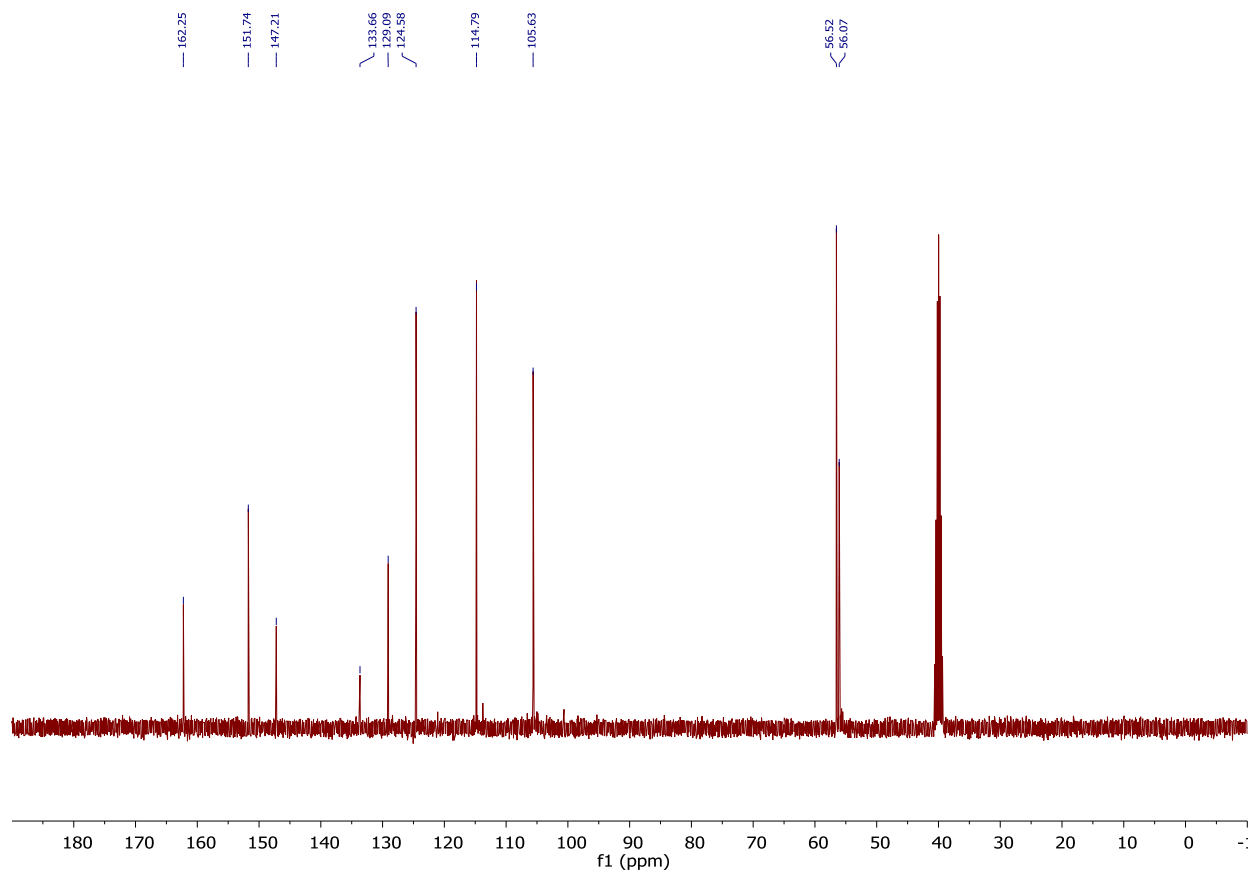
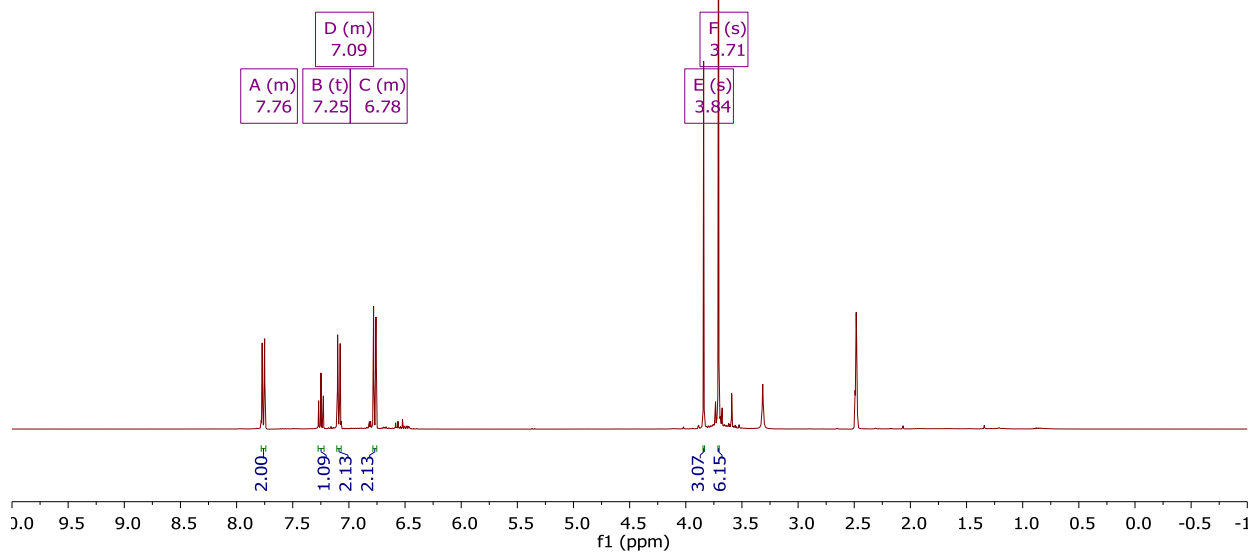
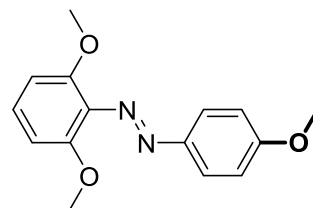


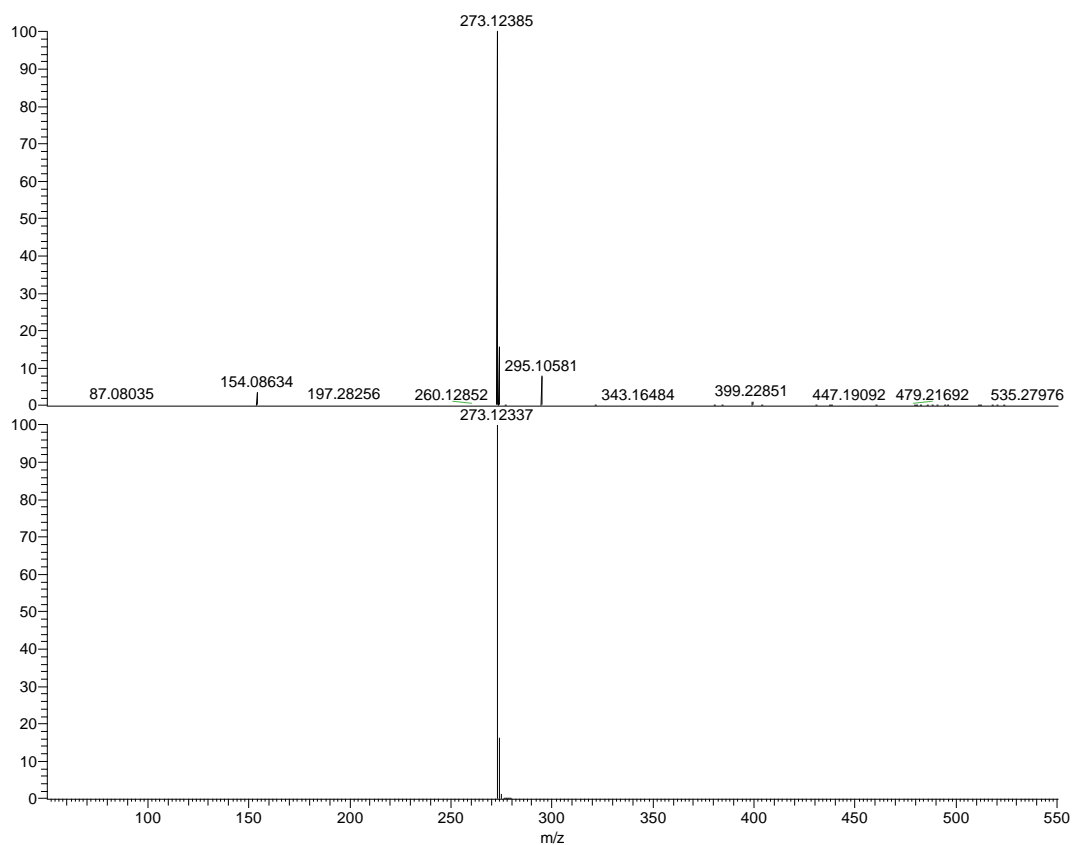
3b: After thermal adaption, no full conversion to the *trans* isomer was observed which became apparent in the ¹H-NMR and ¹³C-NMR spectrum showing small quantities of the *cis* isomer.





3c: After thermal adaption, no full conversion to the *trans* isomer was observed which became apparent in the $^1\text{H-NMR}$ and $^{13}\text{C-NMR}$ spectrum showing small quantities of the *cis* isomer.

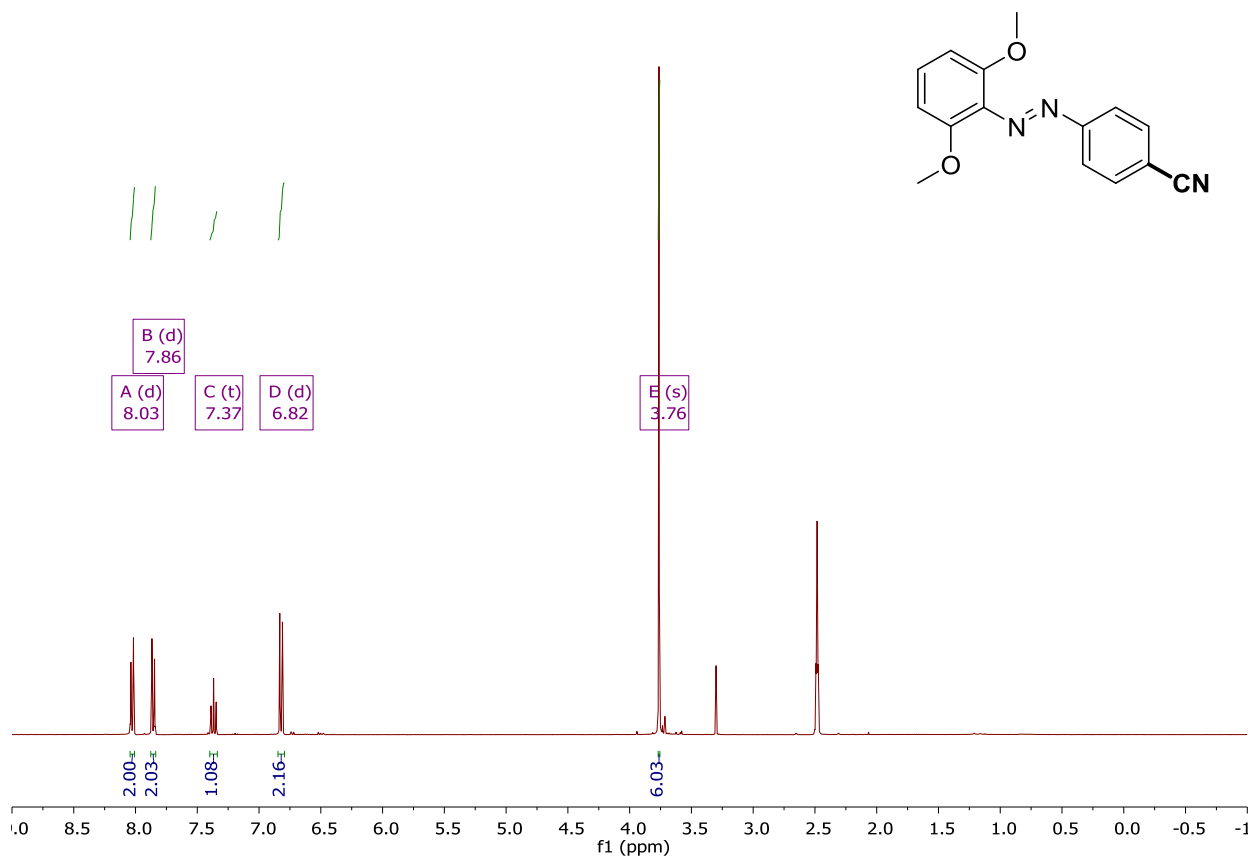


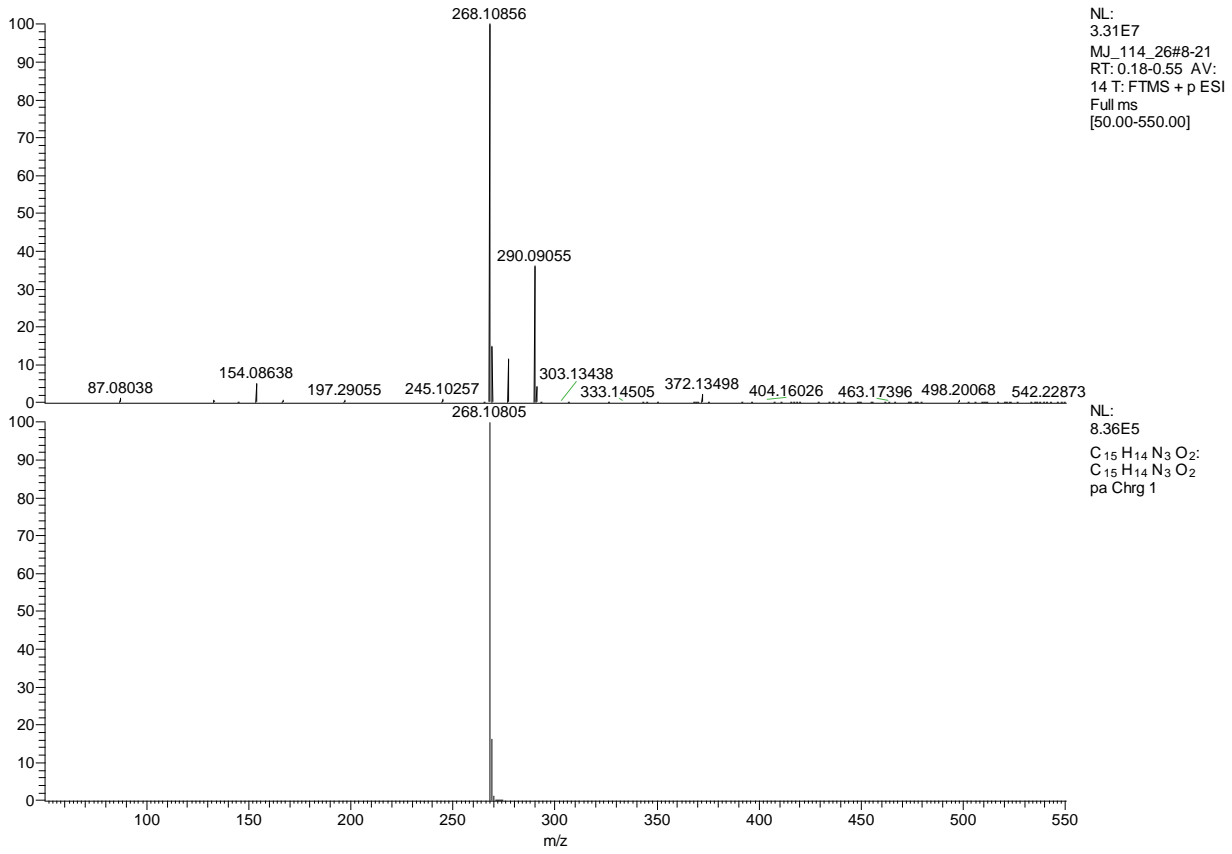
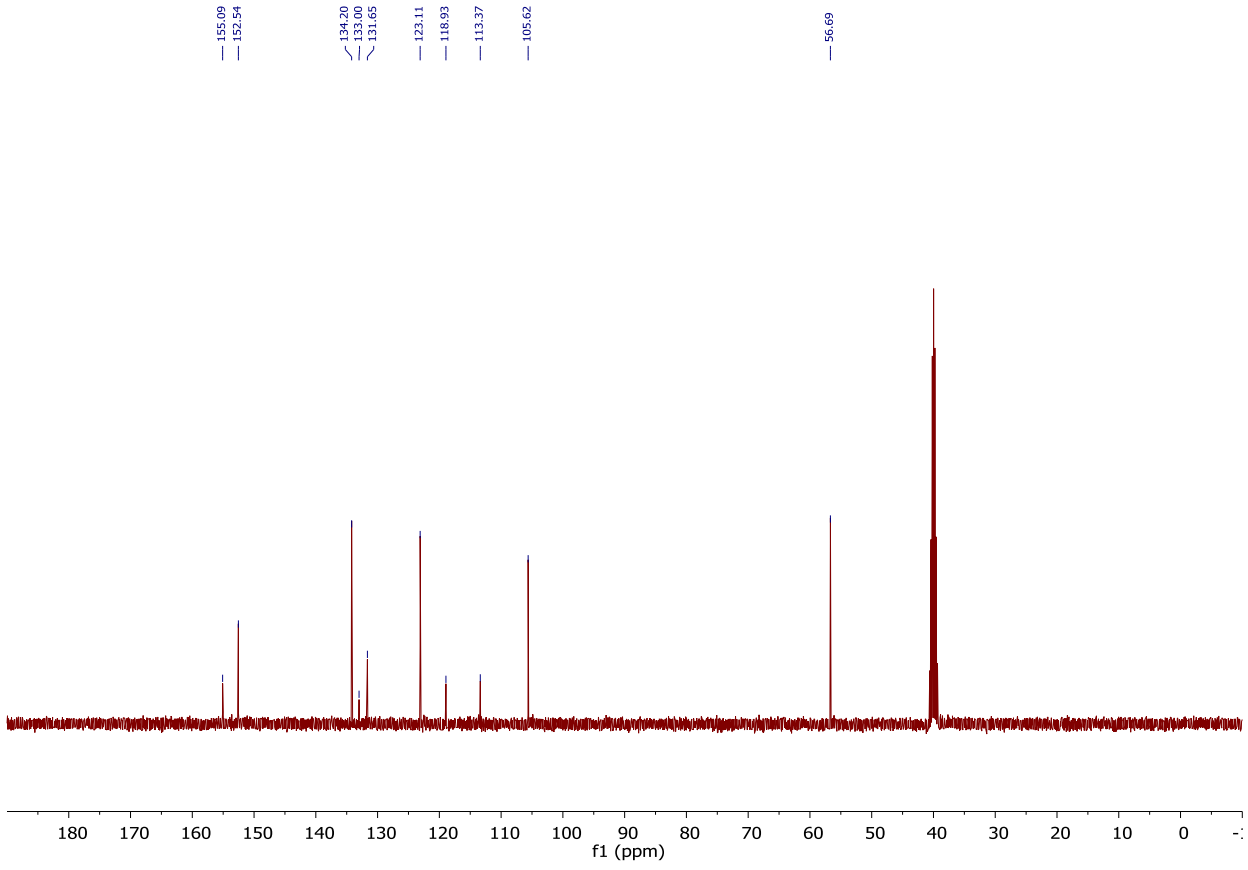


NL:
8.80E7
MJ_114_3#8-27
RT: 0.18-0.71 AV:
20 T: FTMS + p ESI
Full ms
[50.00-550.00]

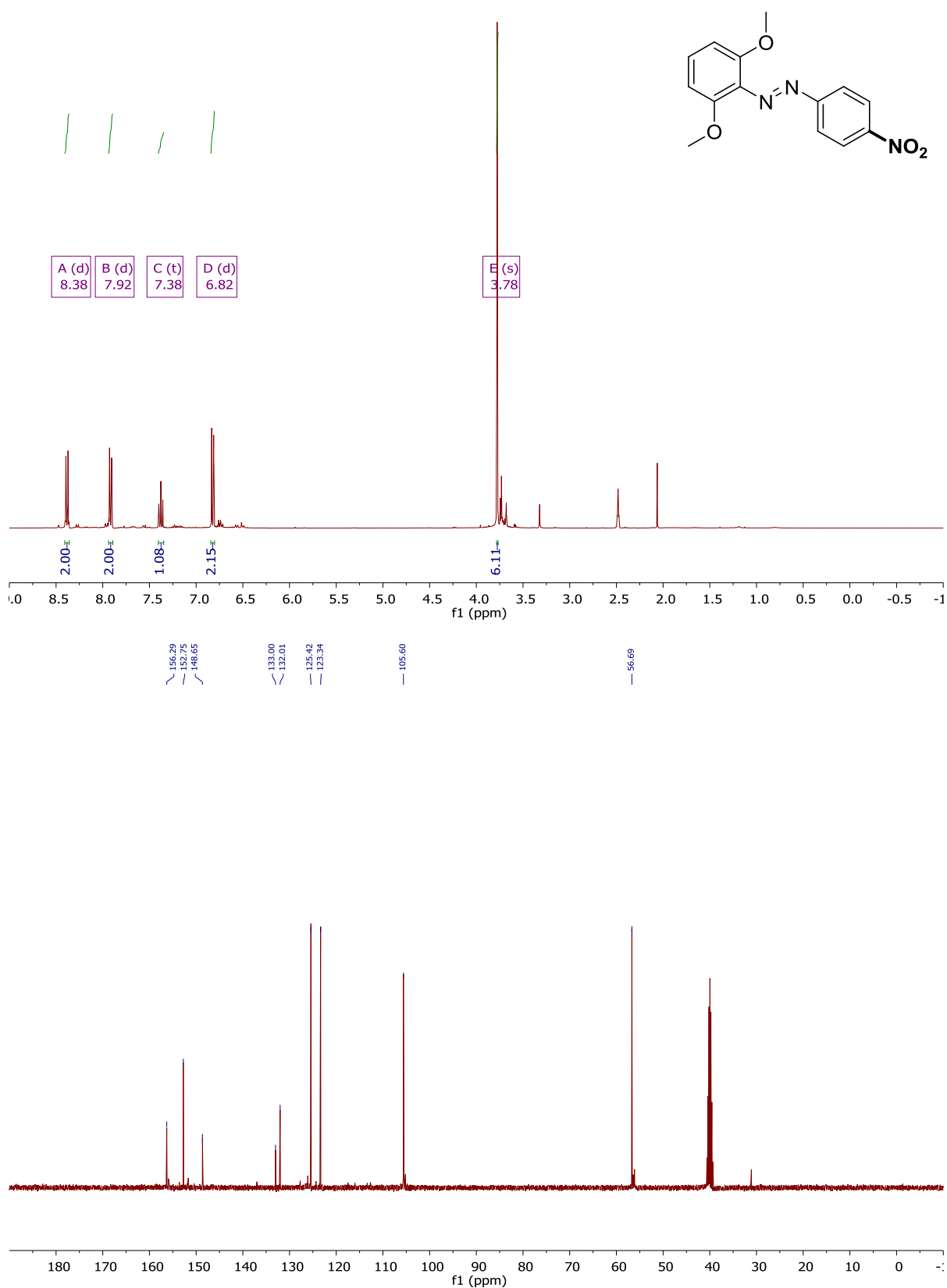
NL:
8.37E5
C₁₅H₁₇N₂O₃:
C₁₅H₁₇N₂O₃:
pa Chrg 1

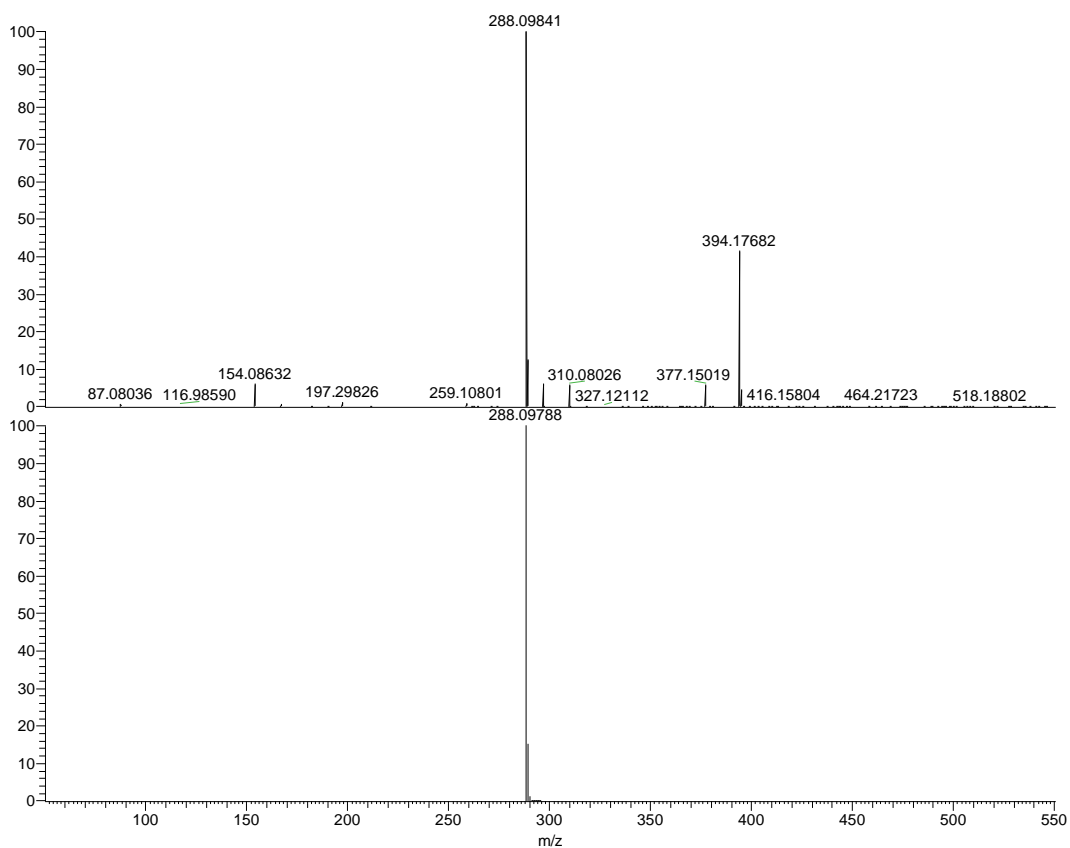
3d:





3e: After thermal adaption, no full conversion to the *trans* isomer was observed which became apparent in the $^1\text{H-NMR}$ and $^{13}\text{C-NMR}$ spectrum showing small quantities of the *cis* isomer.

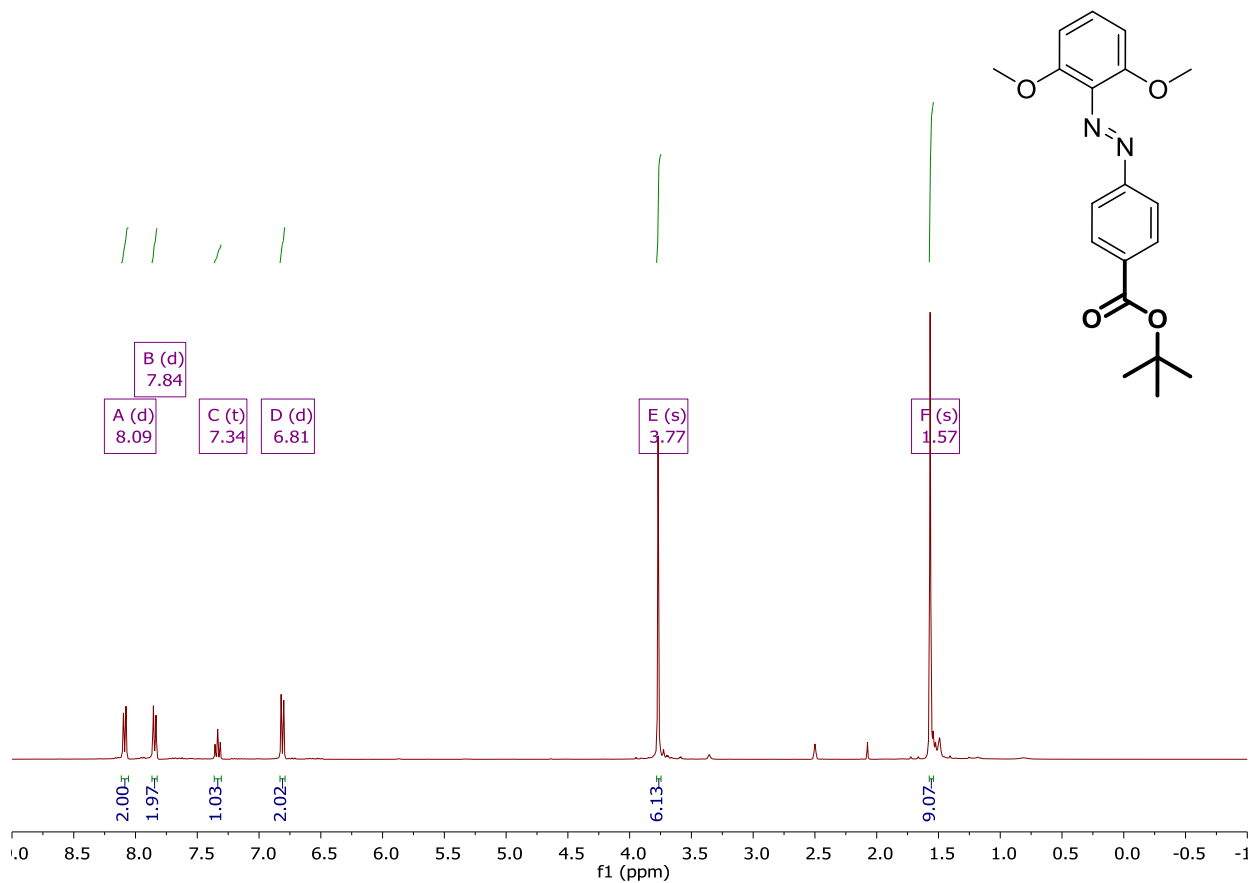


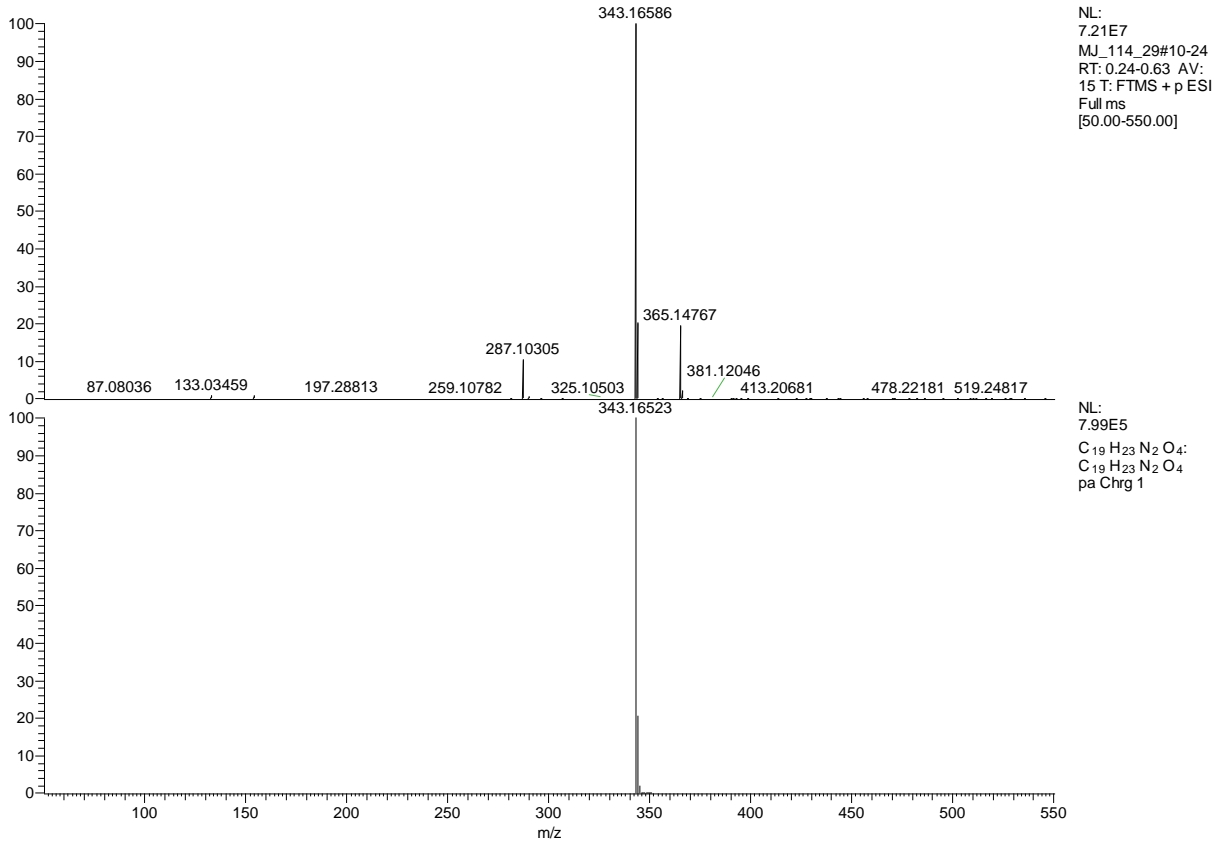
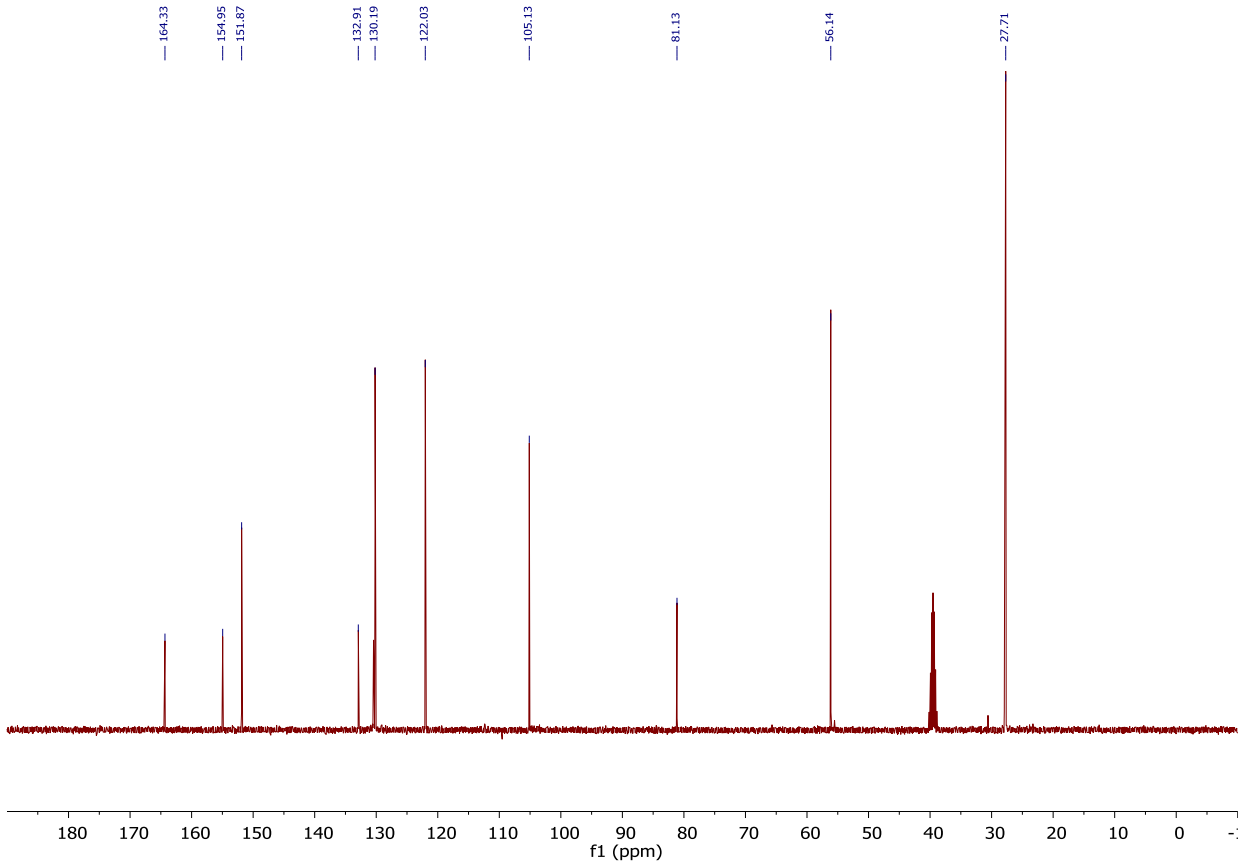


NL:
2.98E7
MJ_114_27#10-19
RT: 0.24-0.49 AV:
10 T: FTMS + p ESI
Full ms
[50.00-550.00]

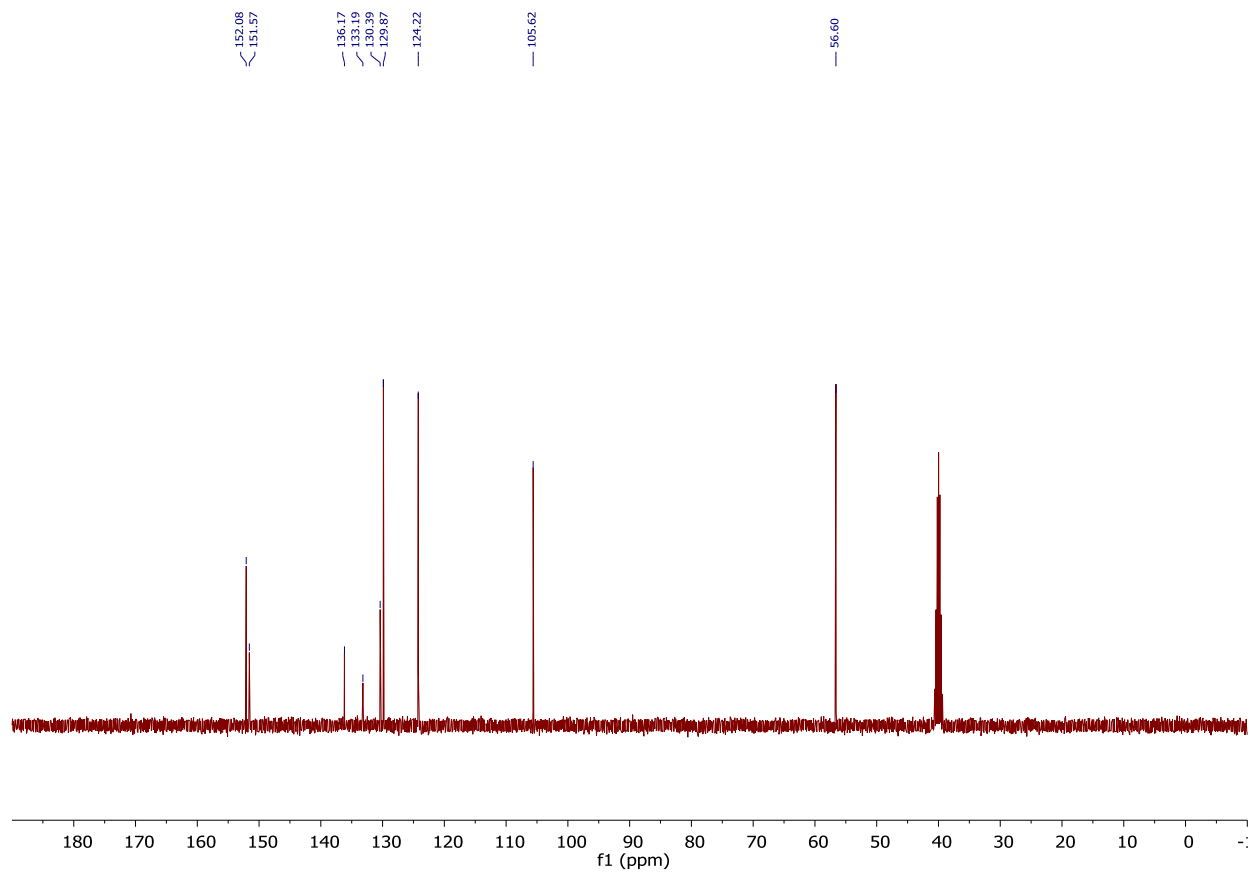
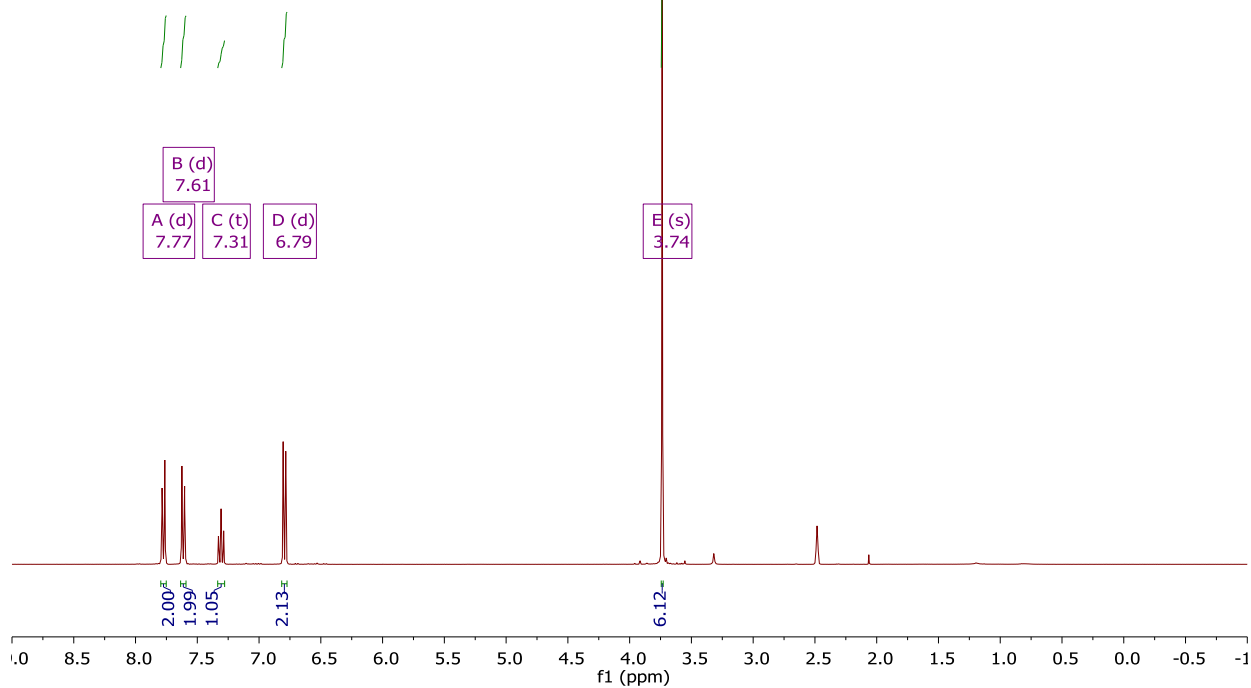
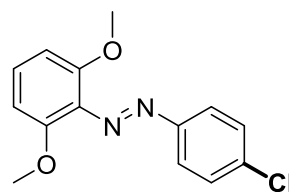
NL:
8.41E5
C₁₄H₁₄N₃O₄:
C₁₄H₁₄N₃O₄
pa Chrg 1

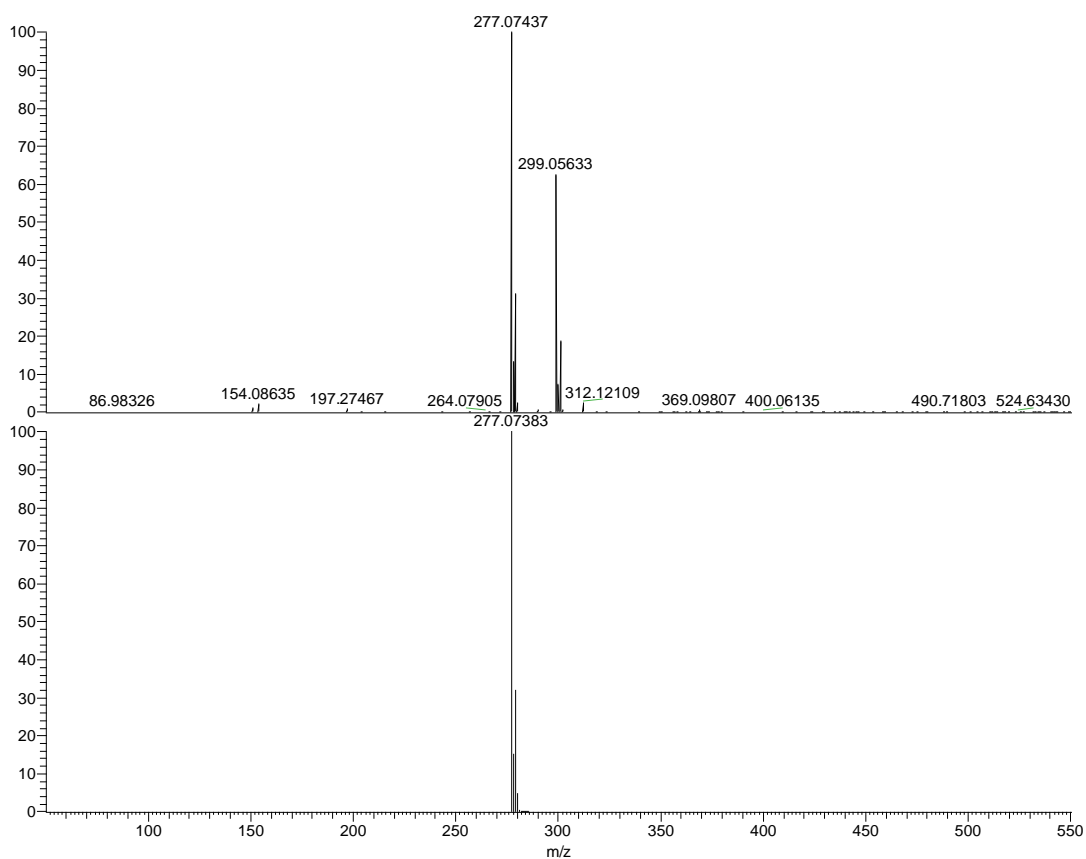
3f:





3g:

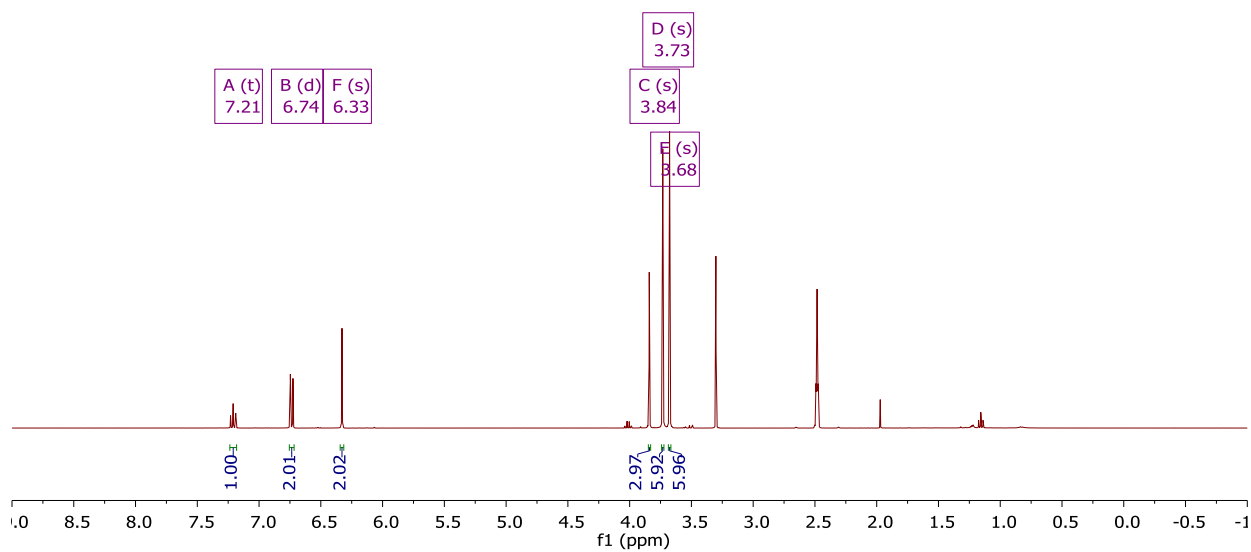
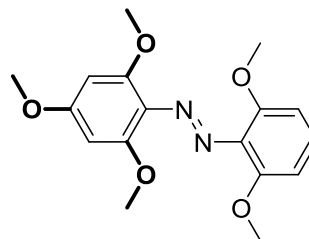


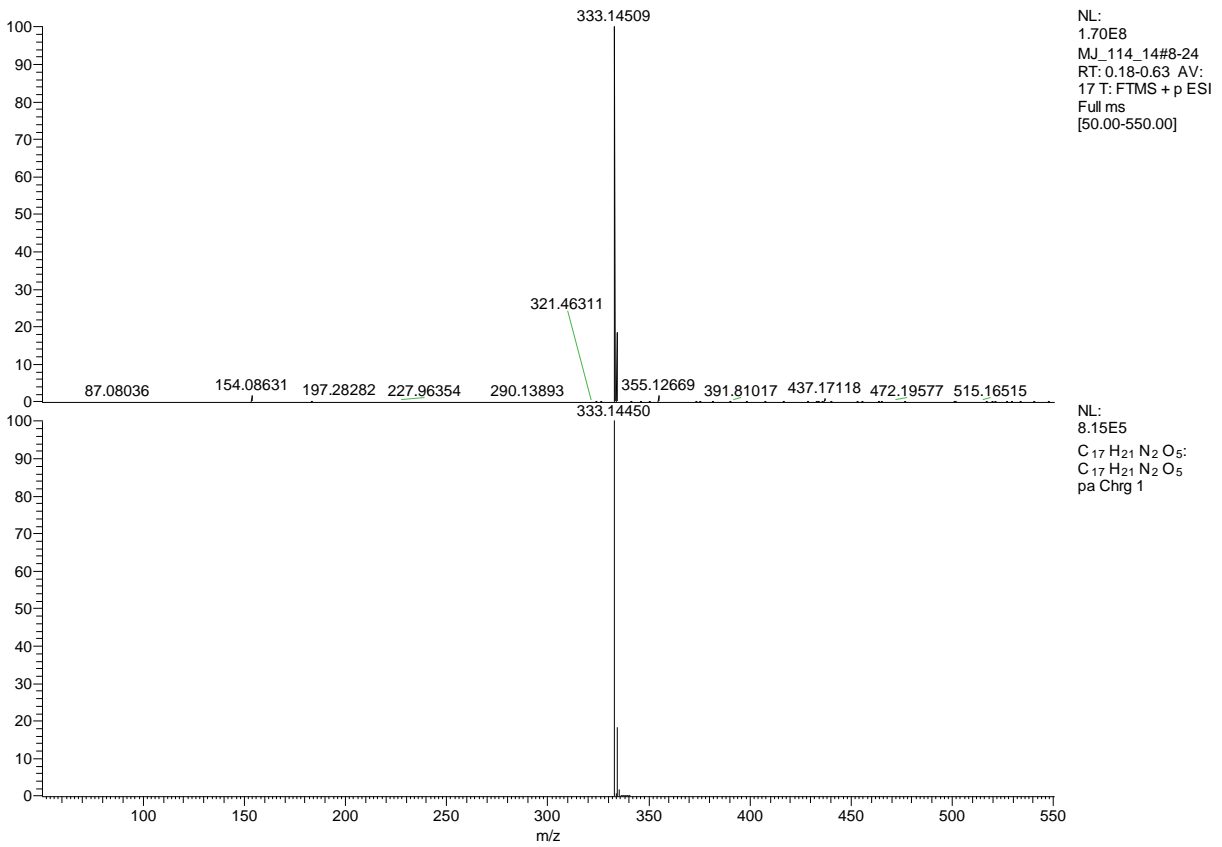
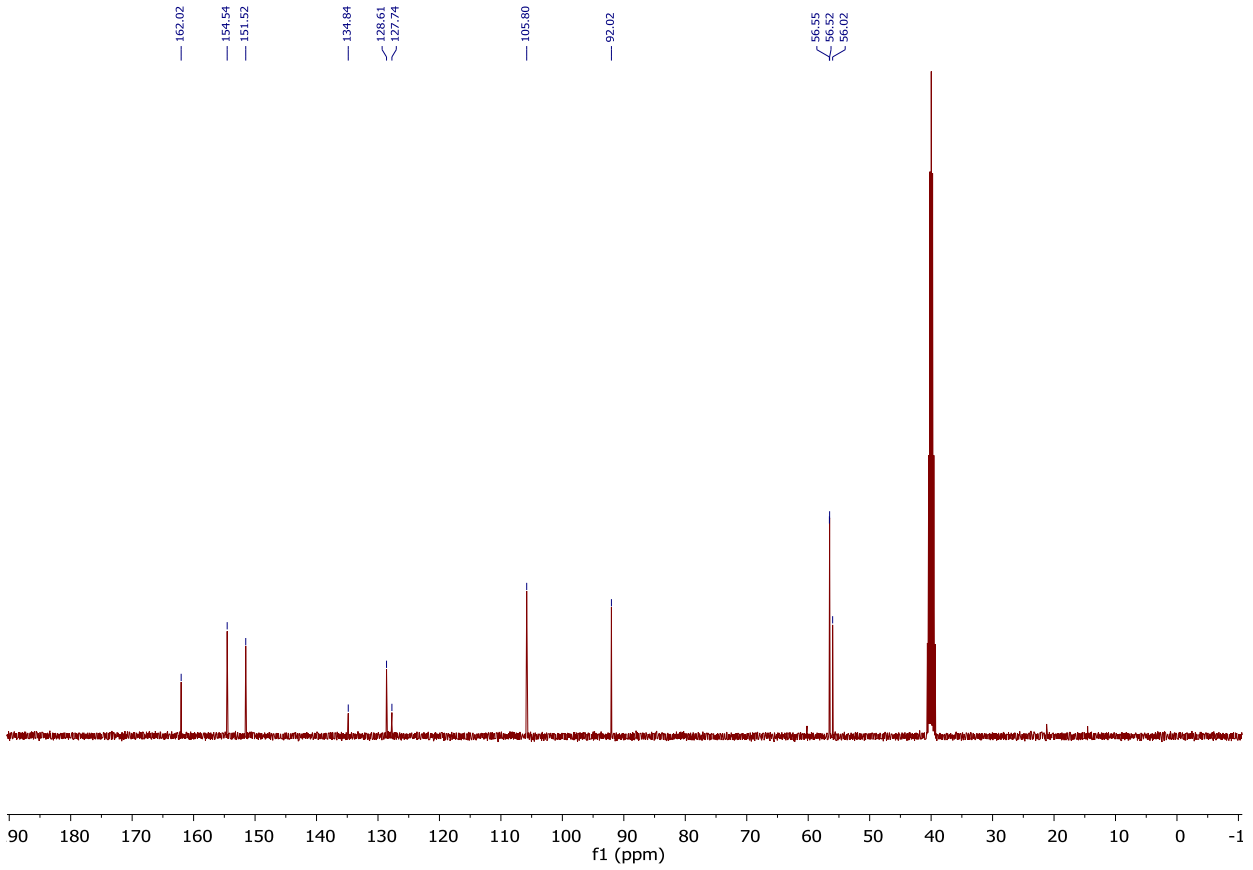


NL:
5.74E7
MJ_114_25#8-18
RT: 0.18-0.46 AV:
11 T: FTMS + p ESI
Full ms
[50.00-550.00]

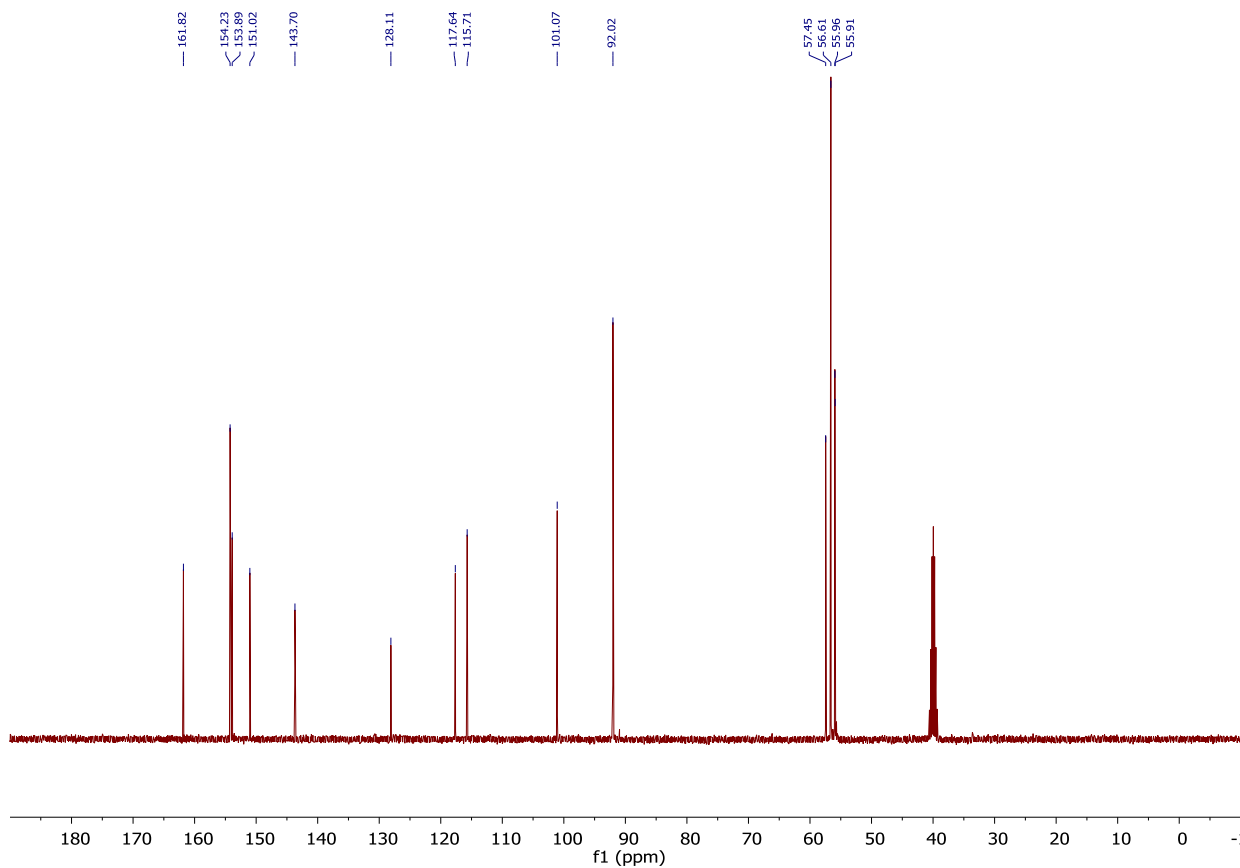
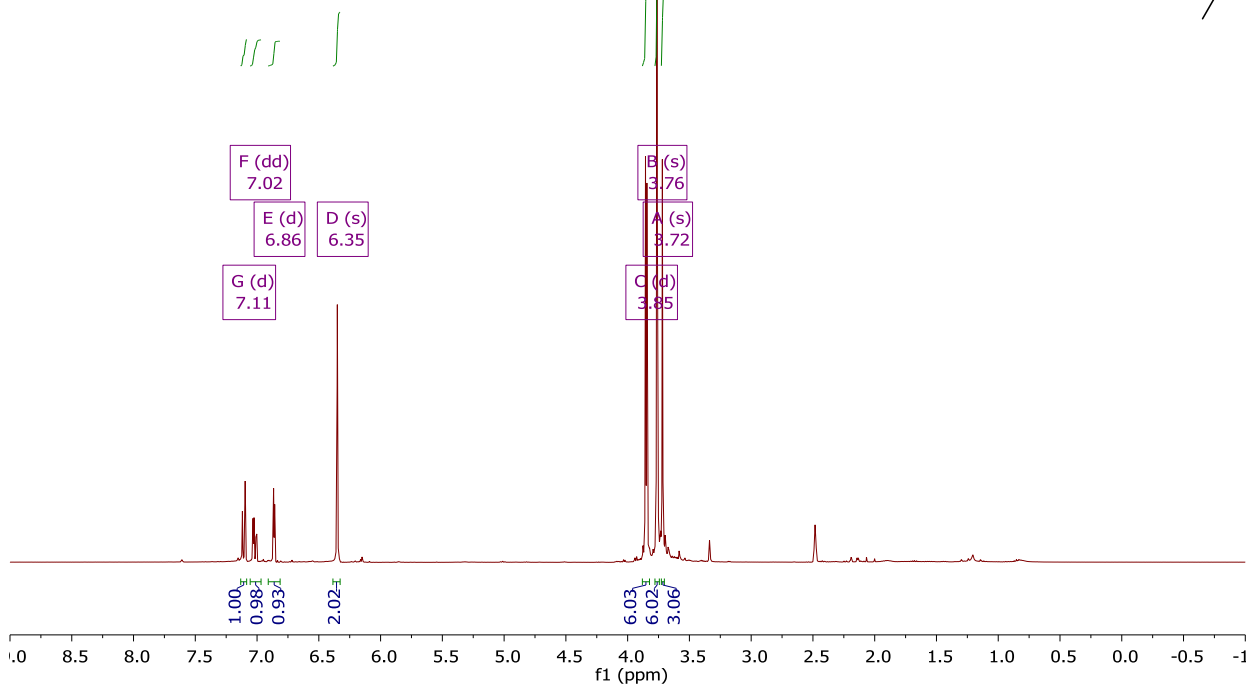
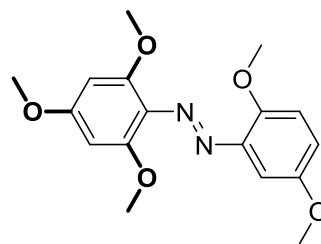
NL:
6.43E5
C₁₄ H₁₄ ClN₂ O₂:
C₁₄ H₁₄ Cl₁ N₂ O₂
pa Chrg 1

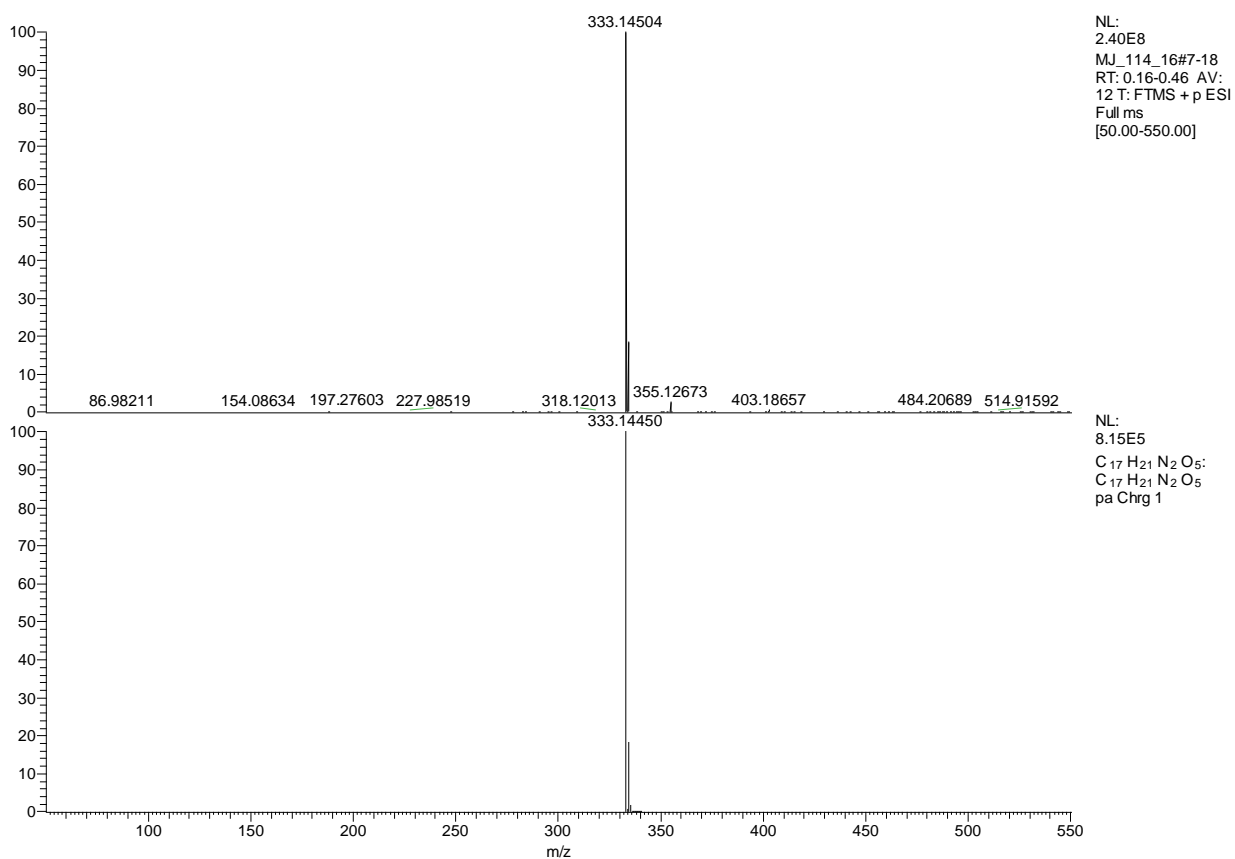
3h:



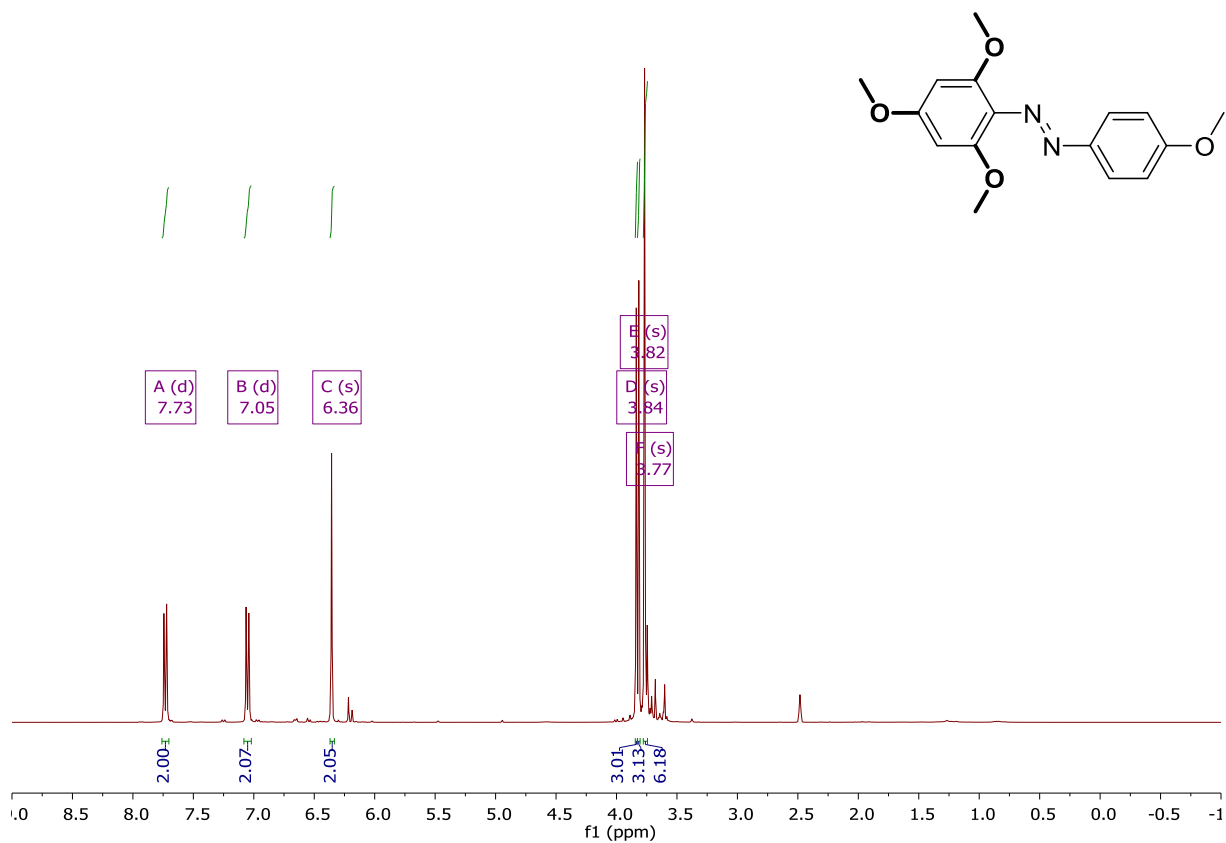


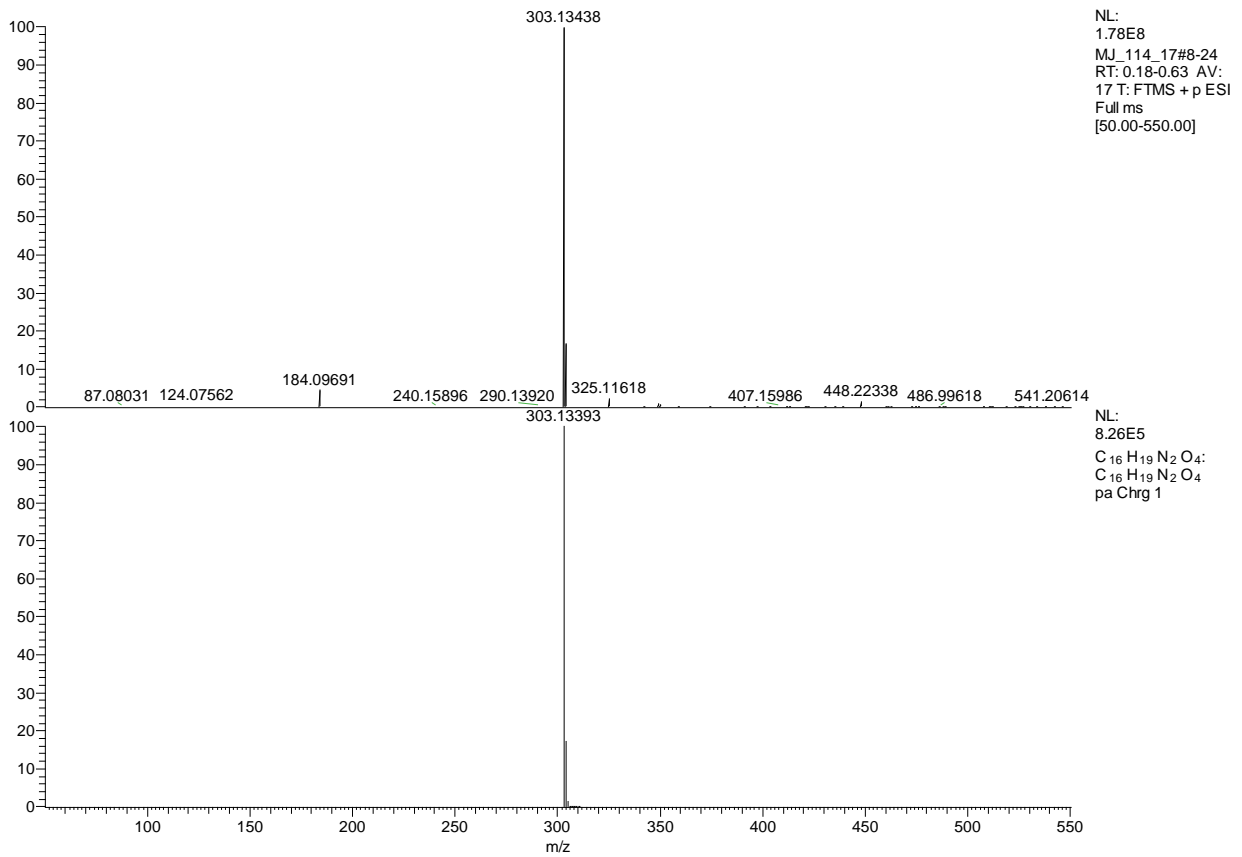
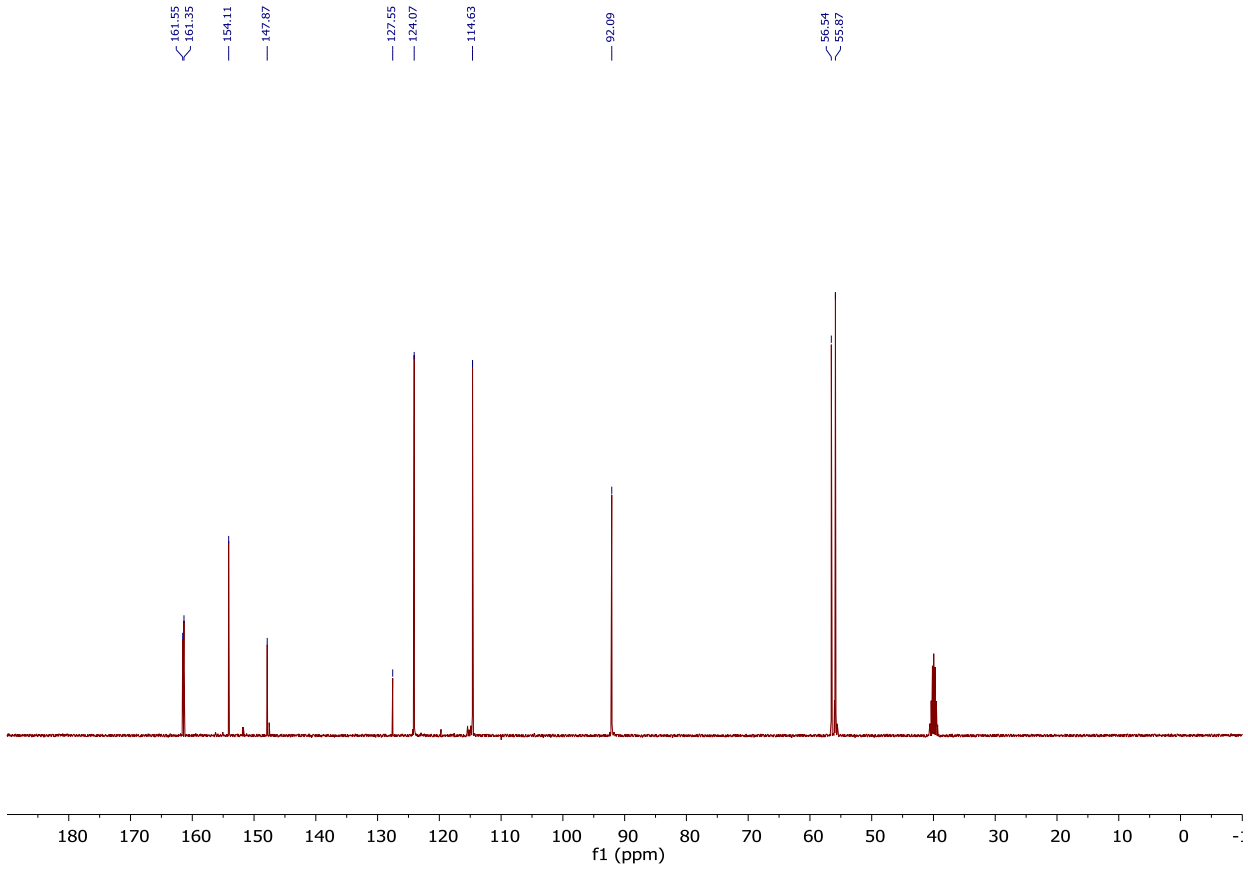
3i:



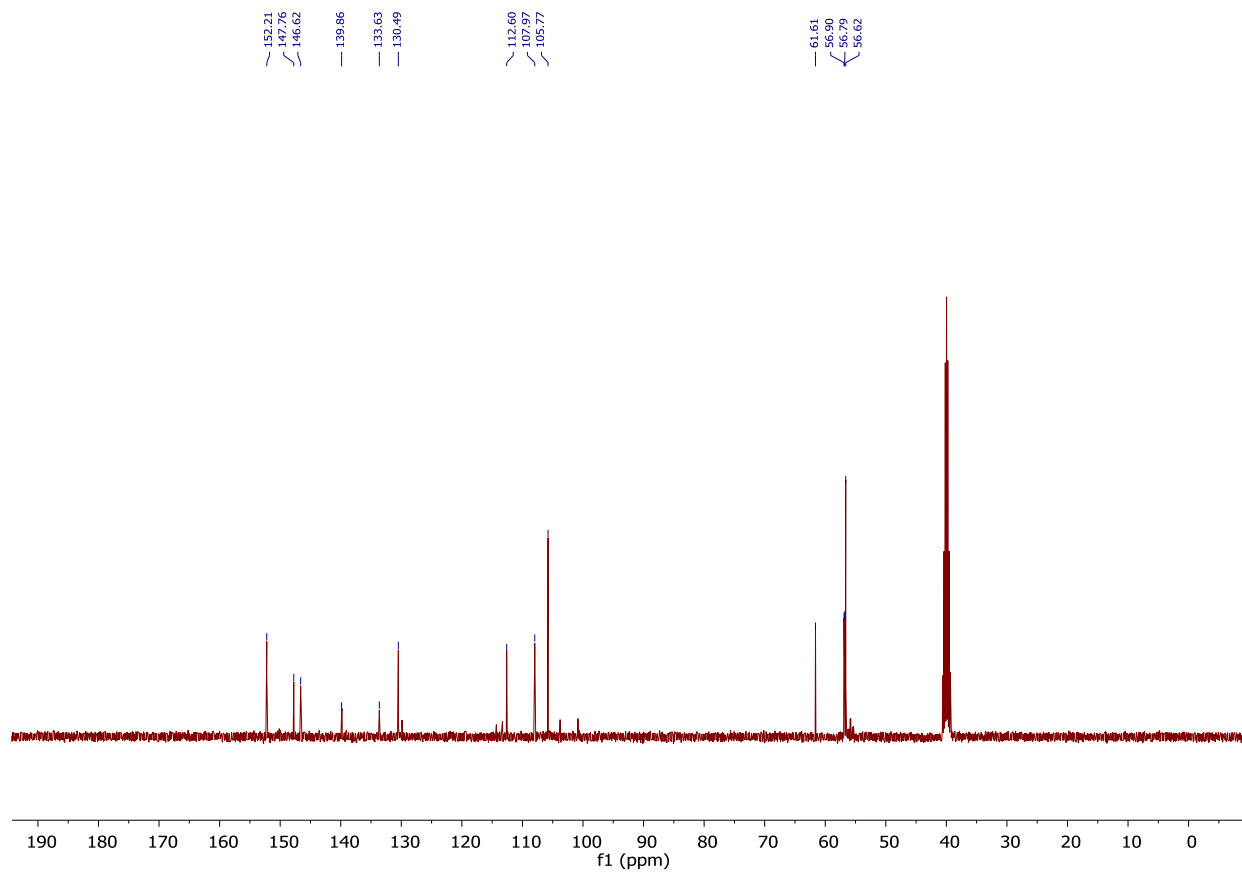
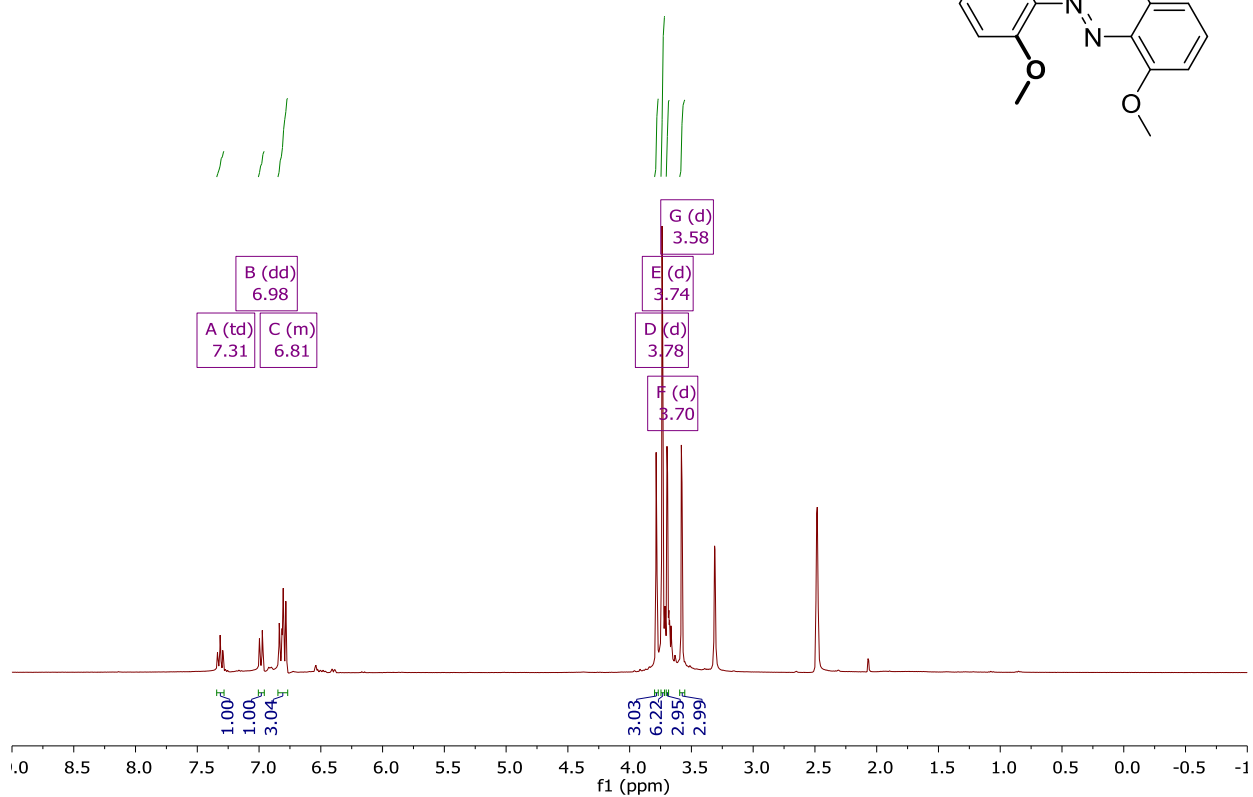
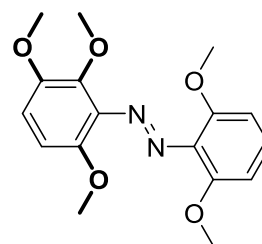


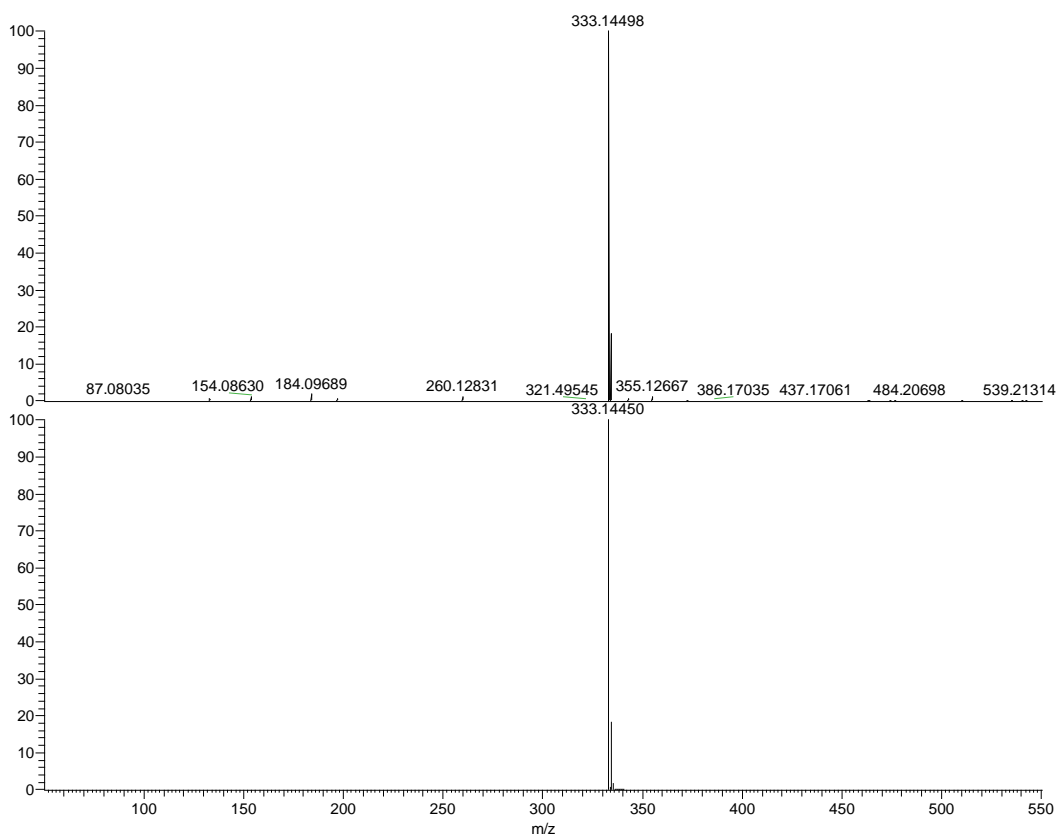
3j: After thermal adaption, no full conversion to the *trans* isomer was observed which became apparent in the ¹H-NMR and ¹³C-NMR spectrum showing small quantities of the *cis* isomer.





3k:

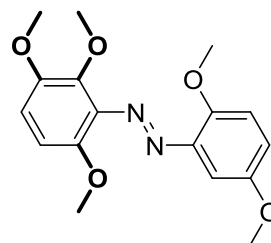
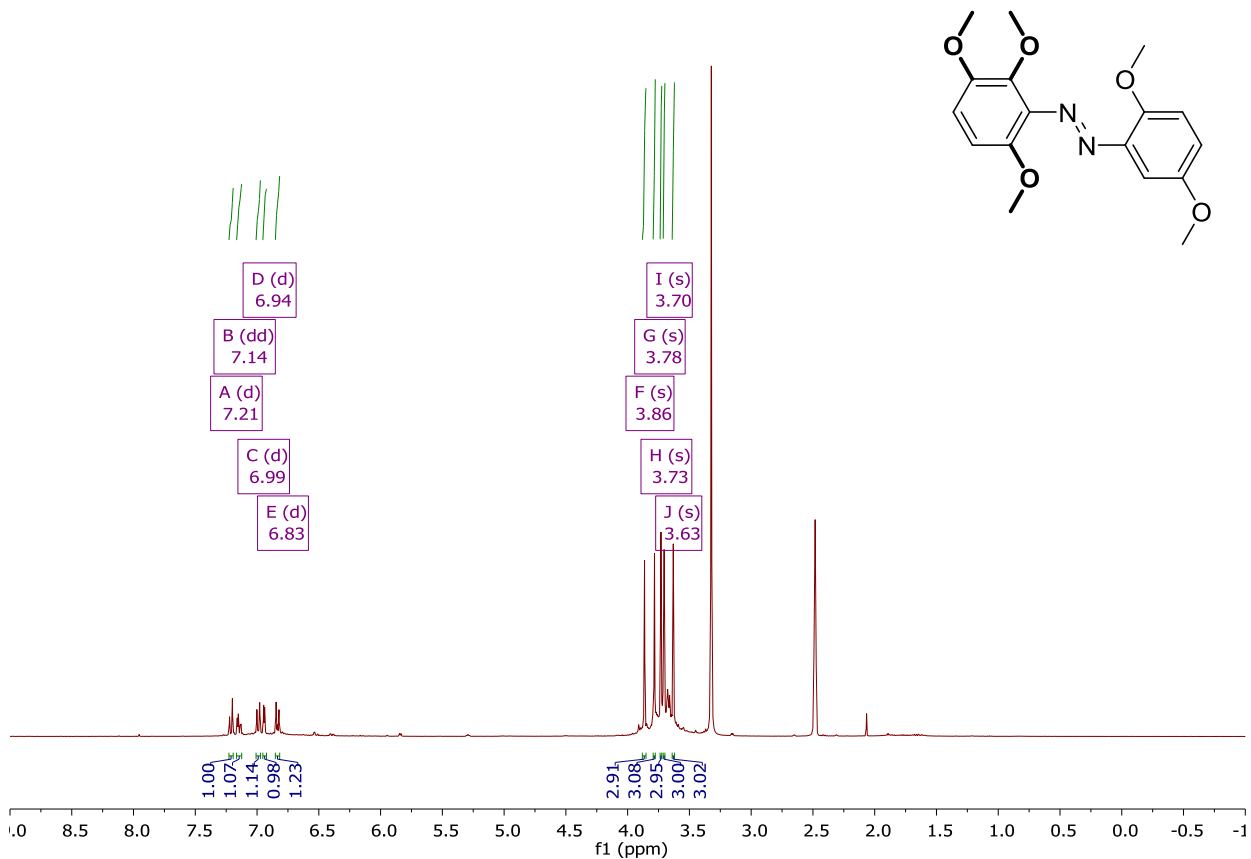


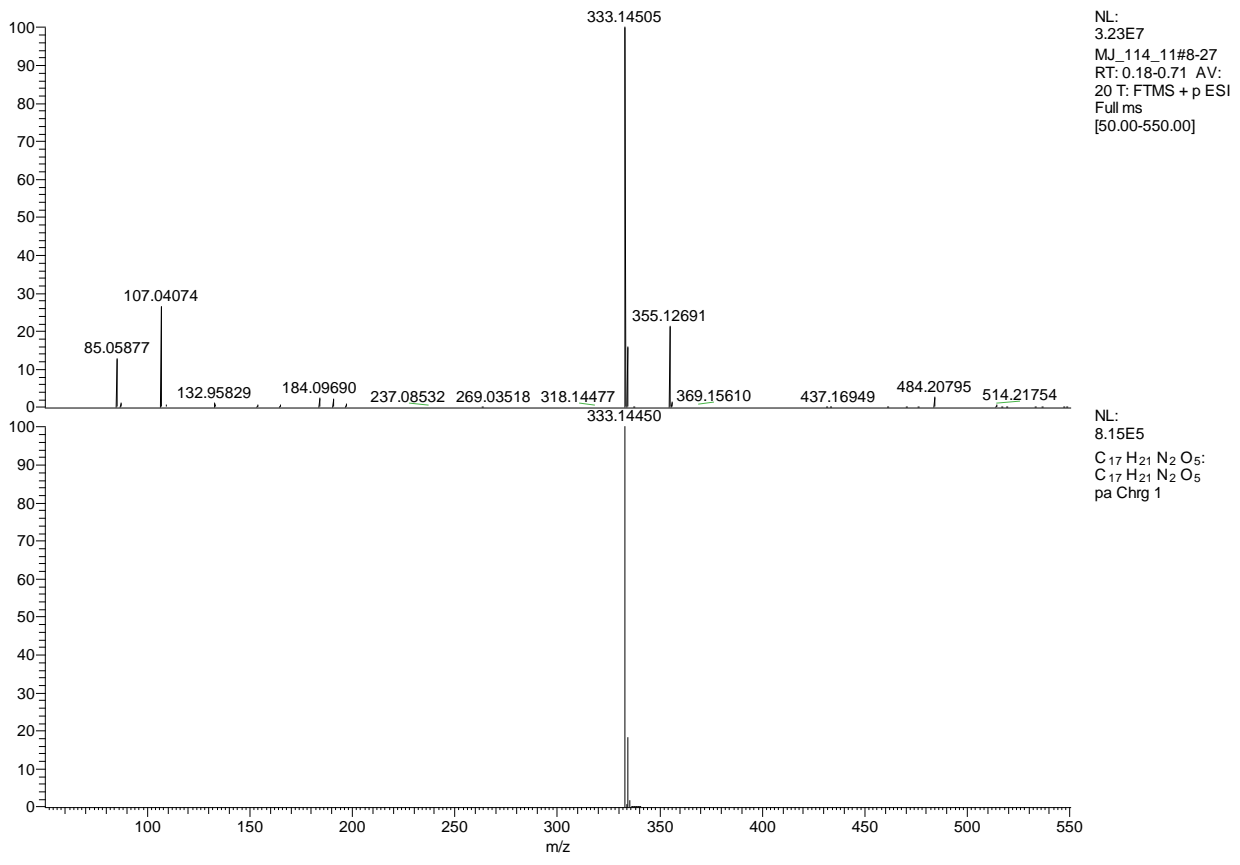
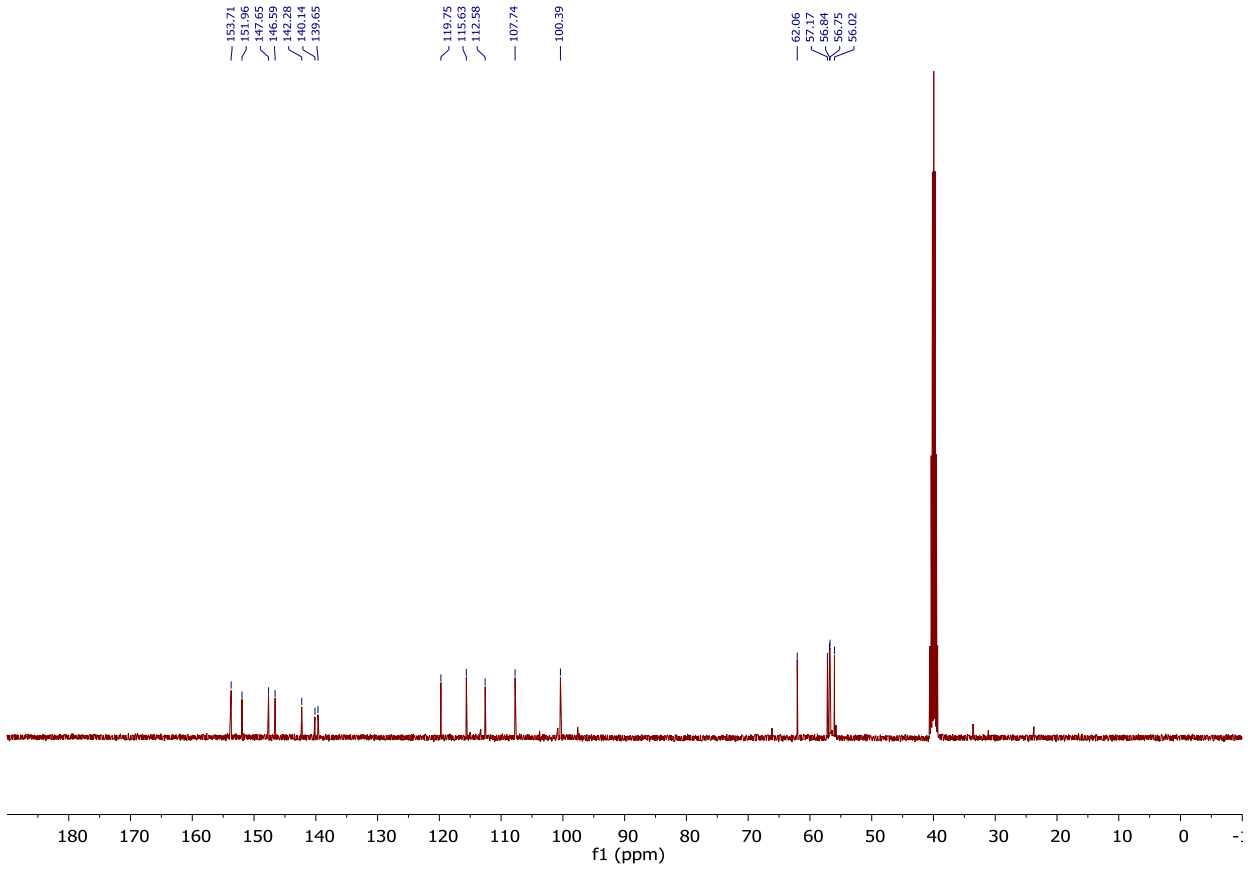


NL:
8.96E7
MJ_114_10#7-31
RT: 0.16-0.82 AV:
25 T: FTMS + p ESI
Full ms
[50.00-550.00]

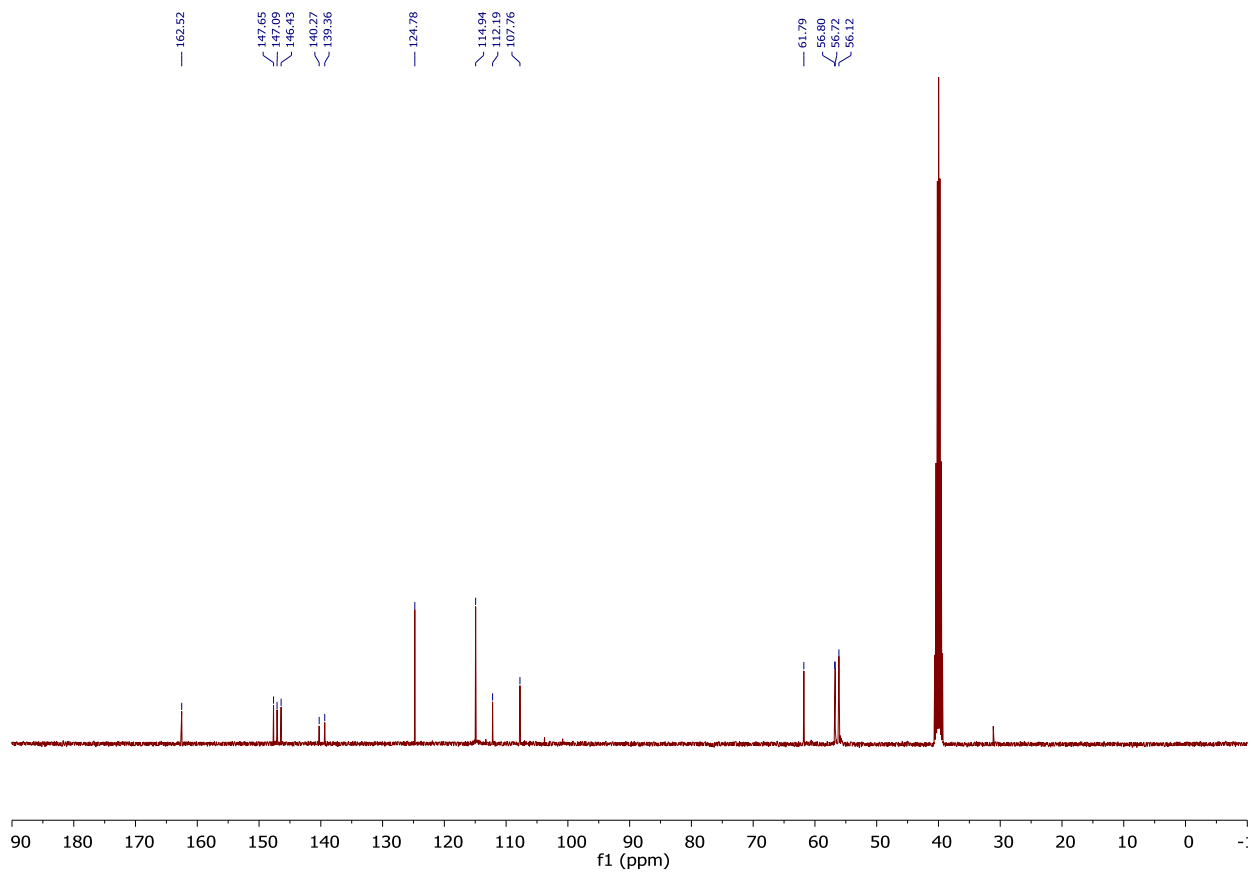
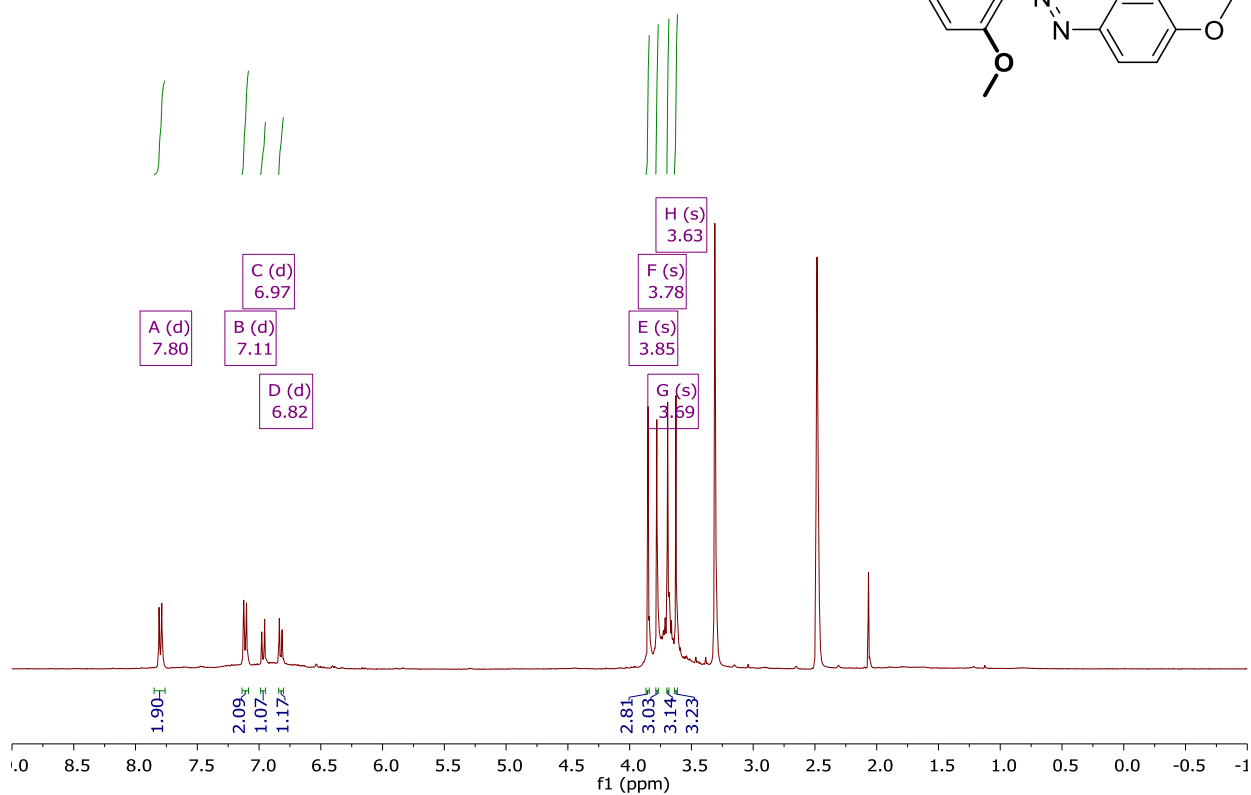
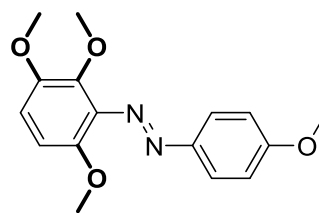
NL:
8.15E5
C₁₇H₂₁N₂O₅:
C₁₇H₂₁N₂O₅
pa Chrg 1

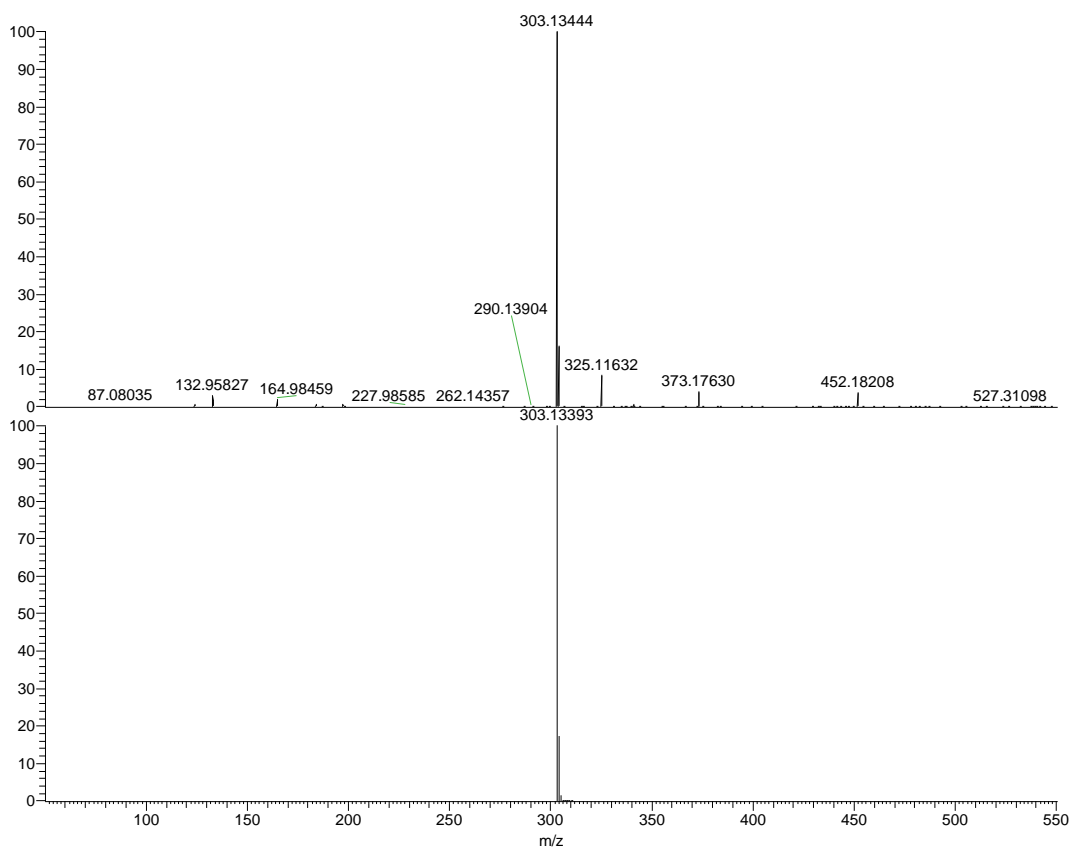
31:





3m:

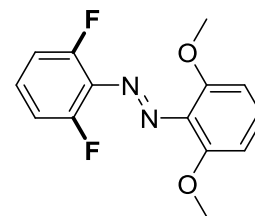
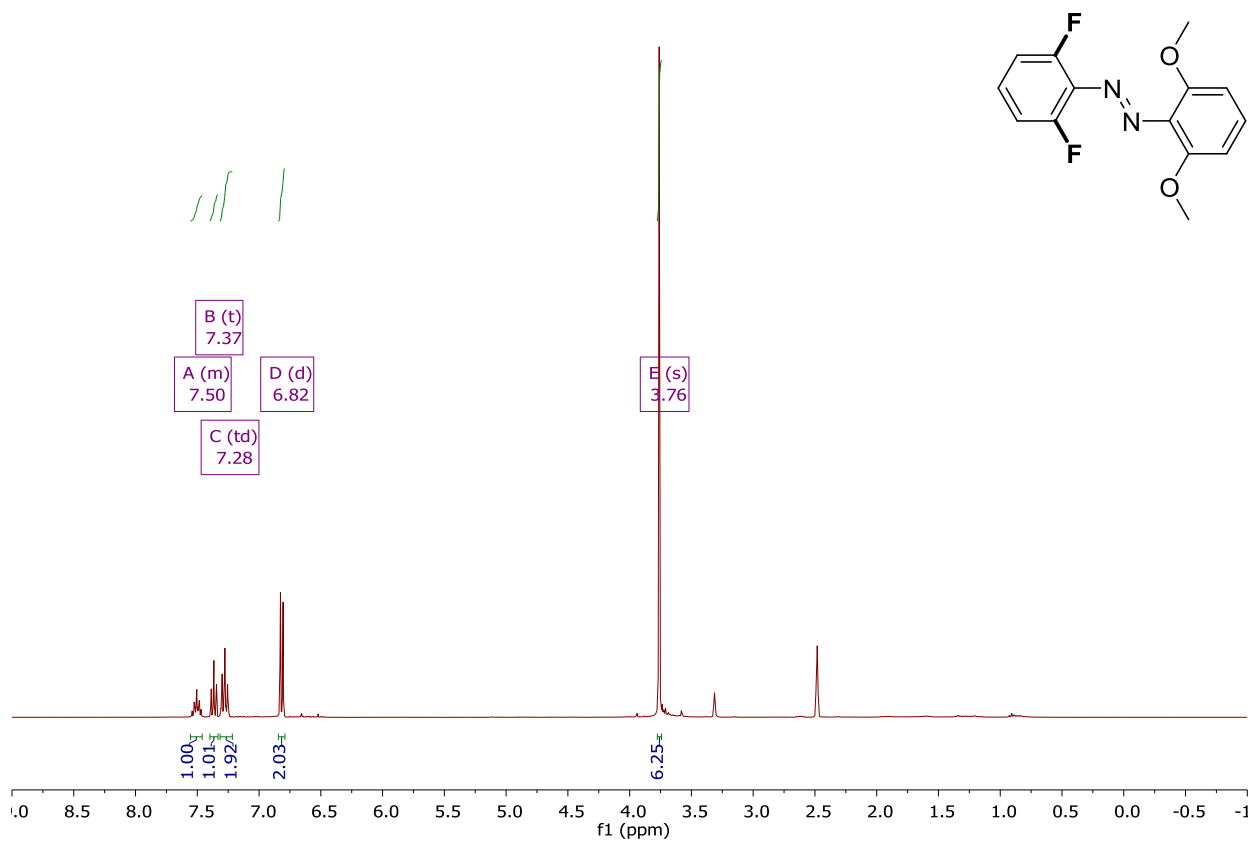


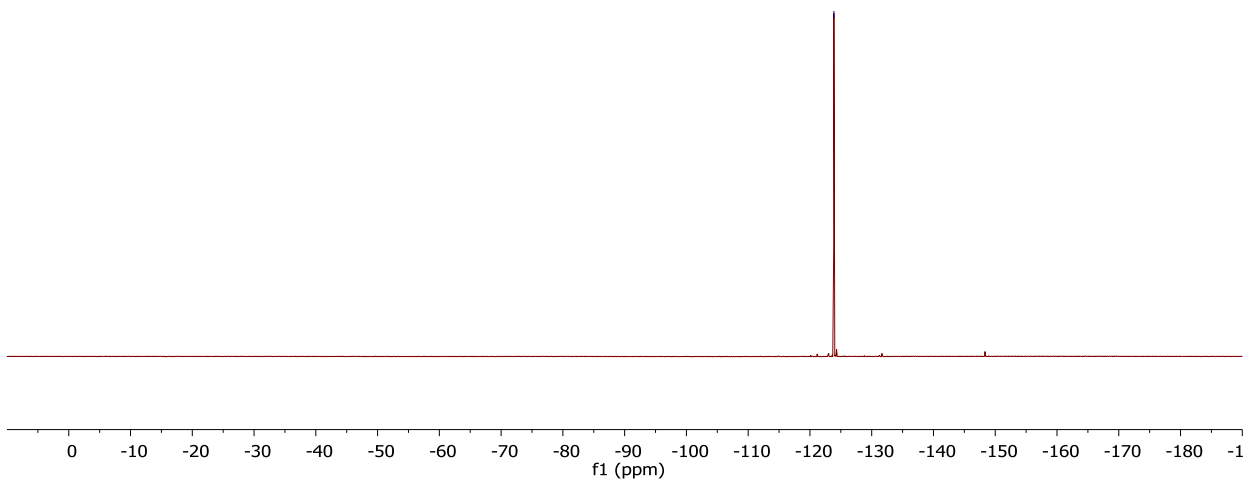
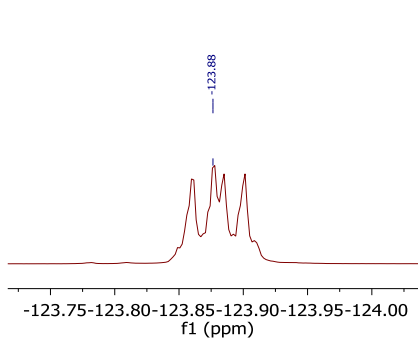
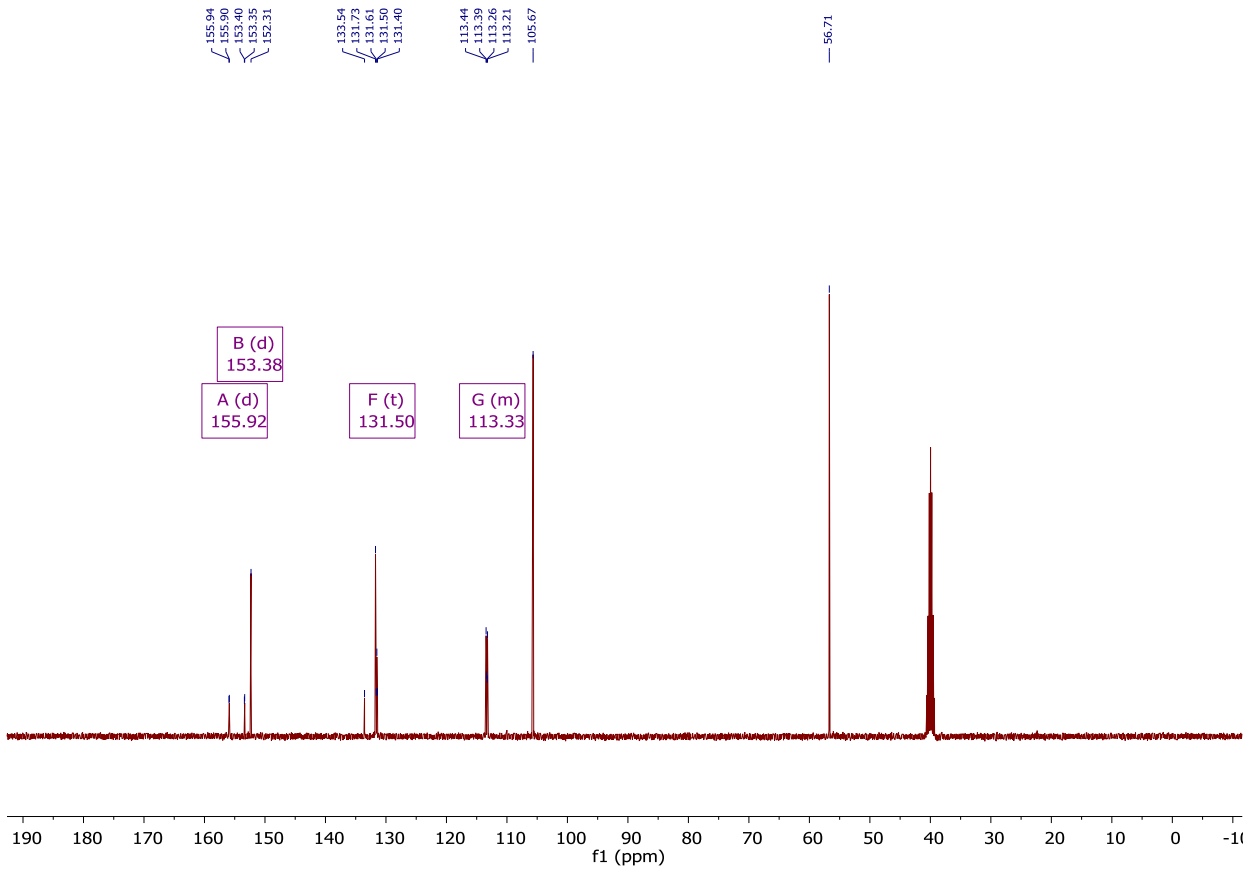


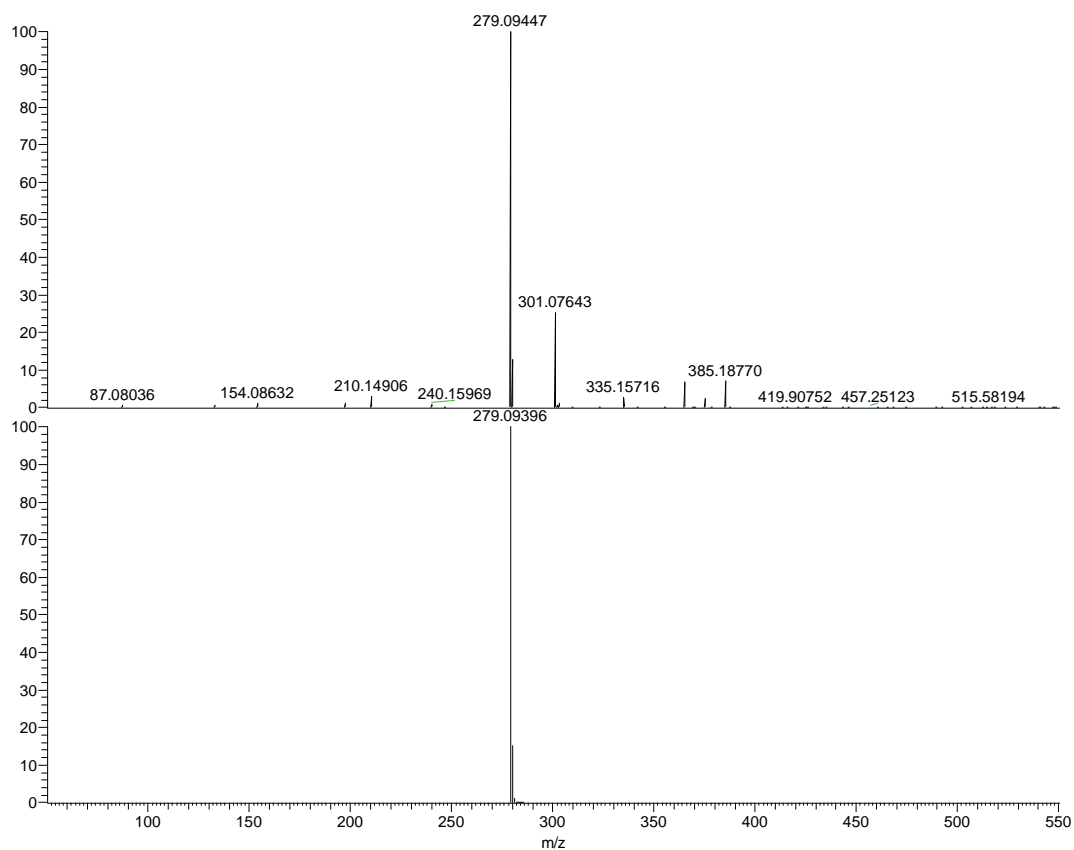
NL:
6.60E7
MJ_114_12#9-20
RT: 0.21-0.52 AV:
12 T: FTMS + p ESI
Full ms
[50.00-550.00]

NL:
8.26E5
C₁₆H₁₉N₂O₄:
C₁₆H₁₉N₂O₄
pa Chrg 1

3n:



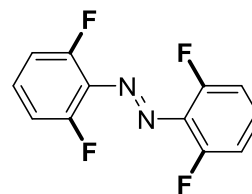
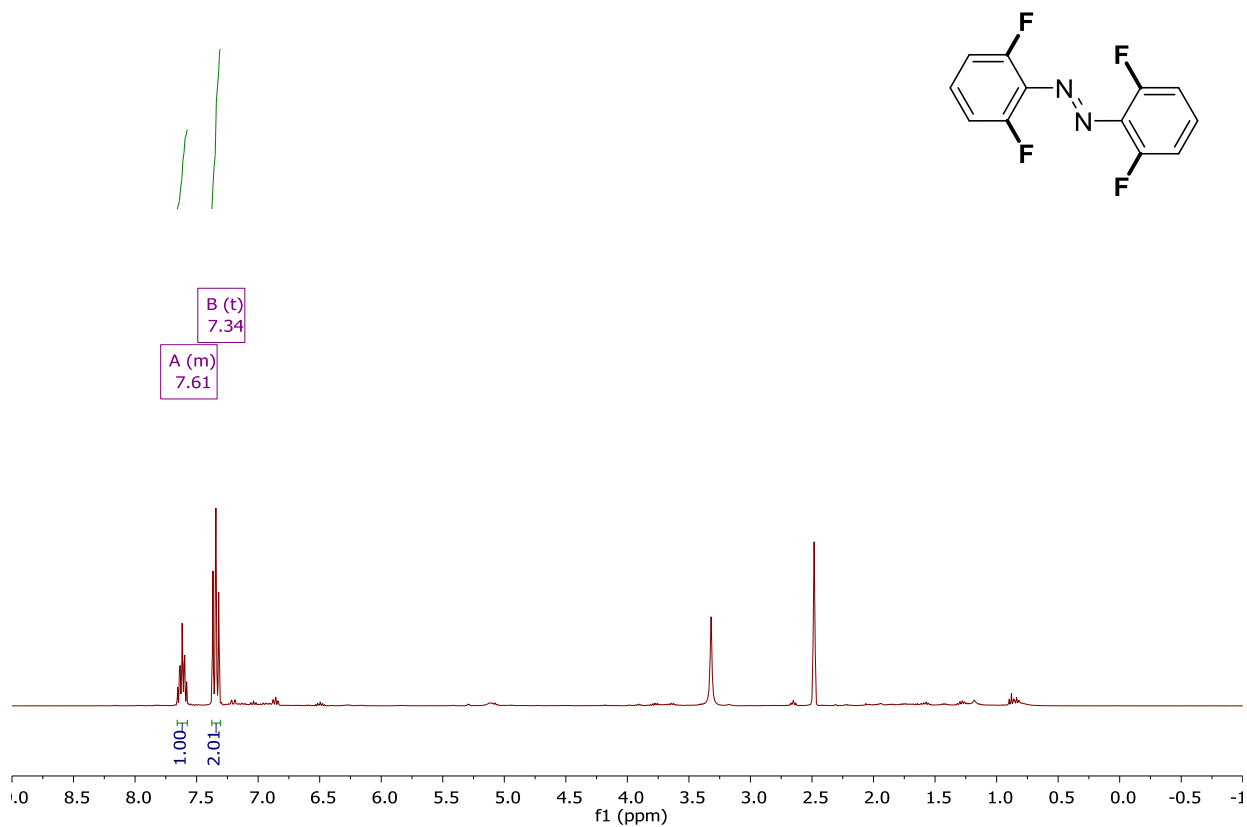


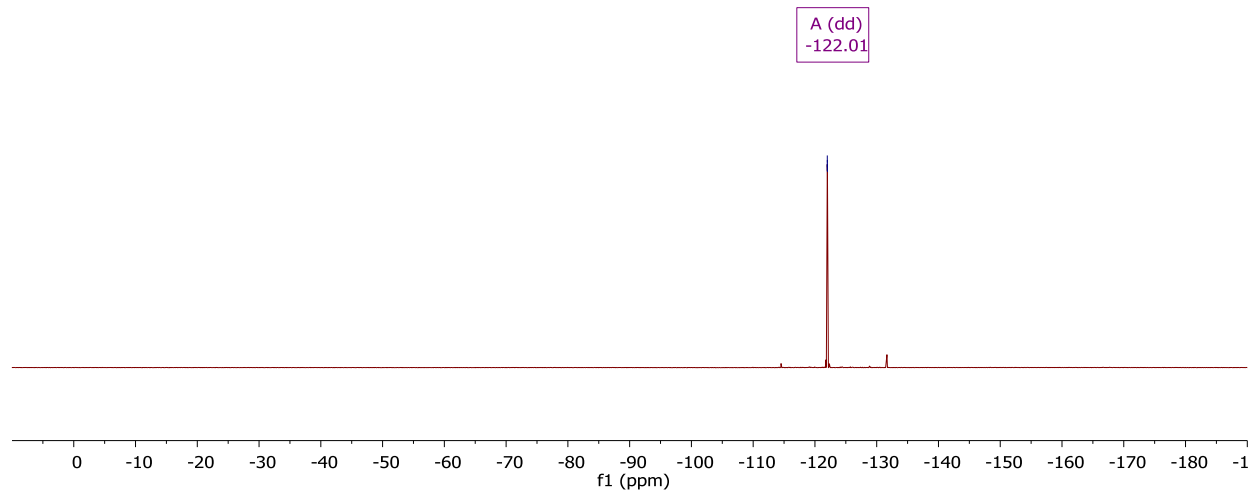
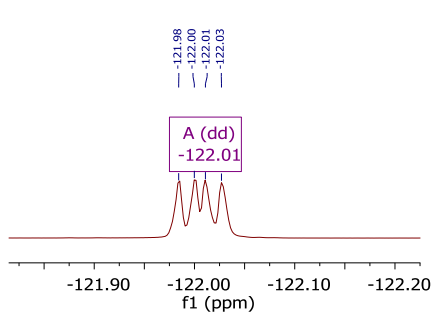
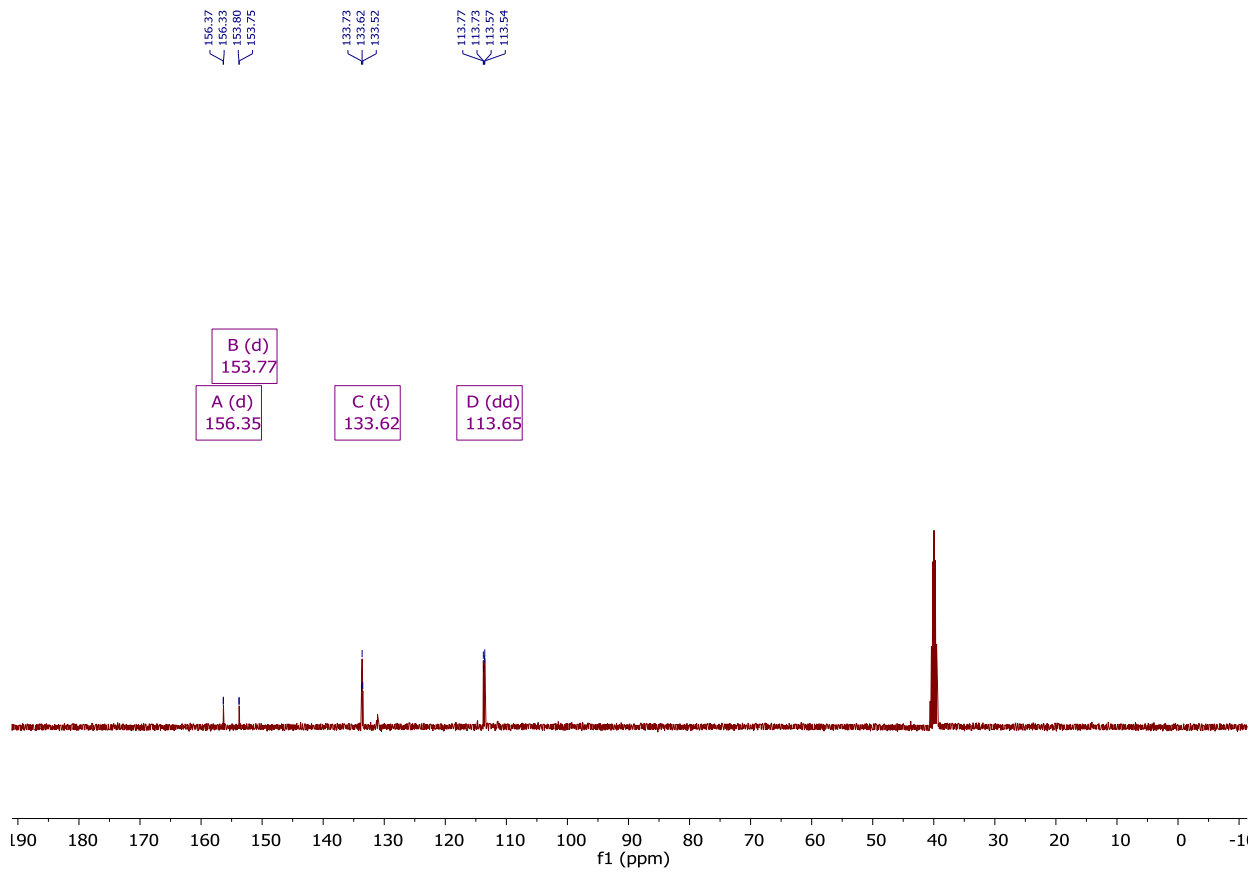


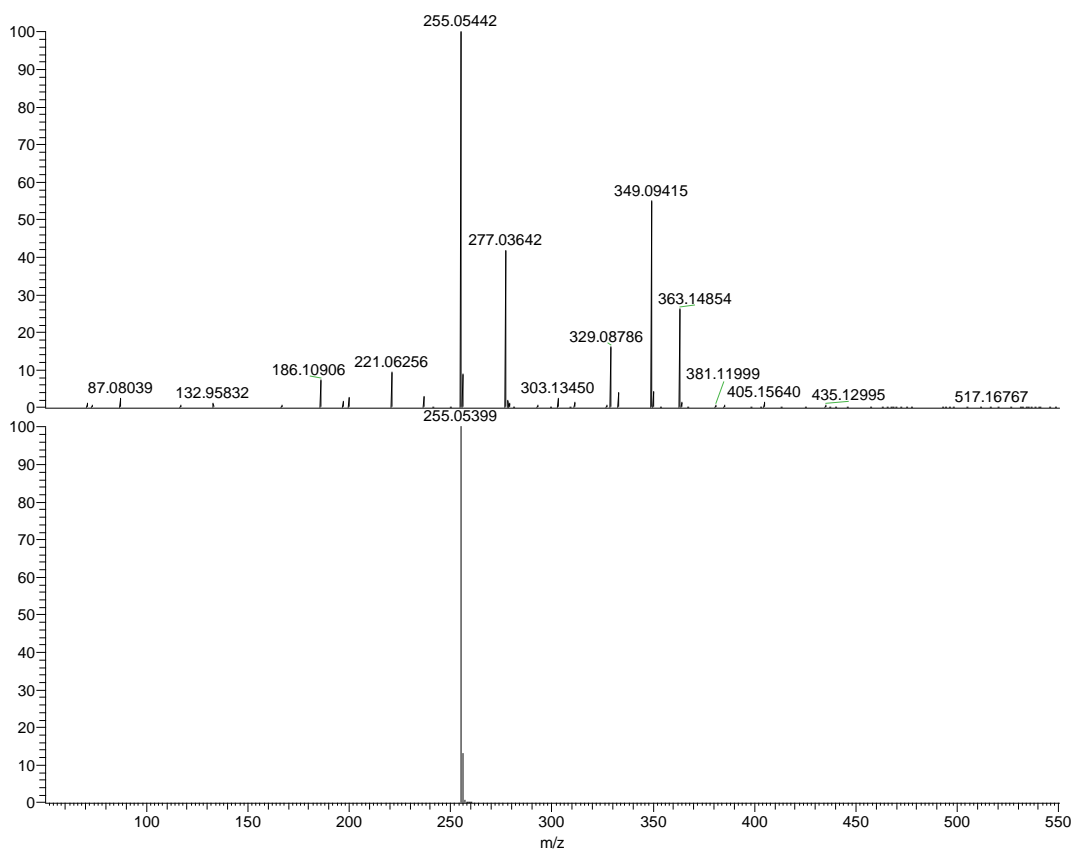
NL:
5.84E7
MJ_114_20#11-27
RT: 0.27-0.71 AV:
17 T: FTMS + p ESI
Full ms
[50.00-550.00]

NL:
8.48E5
C₁₄H₁₃F₂N₂O₂:
C₁₄H₁₃F₂N₂O₂:
pa Chrg 1

3o: After thermal adaption, no full conversion to the *trans* isomer was observed which became apparent in the ¹H-NMR and ¹³C-NMR spectrum showing small quantities of the *cis* isomer.



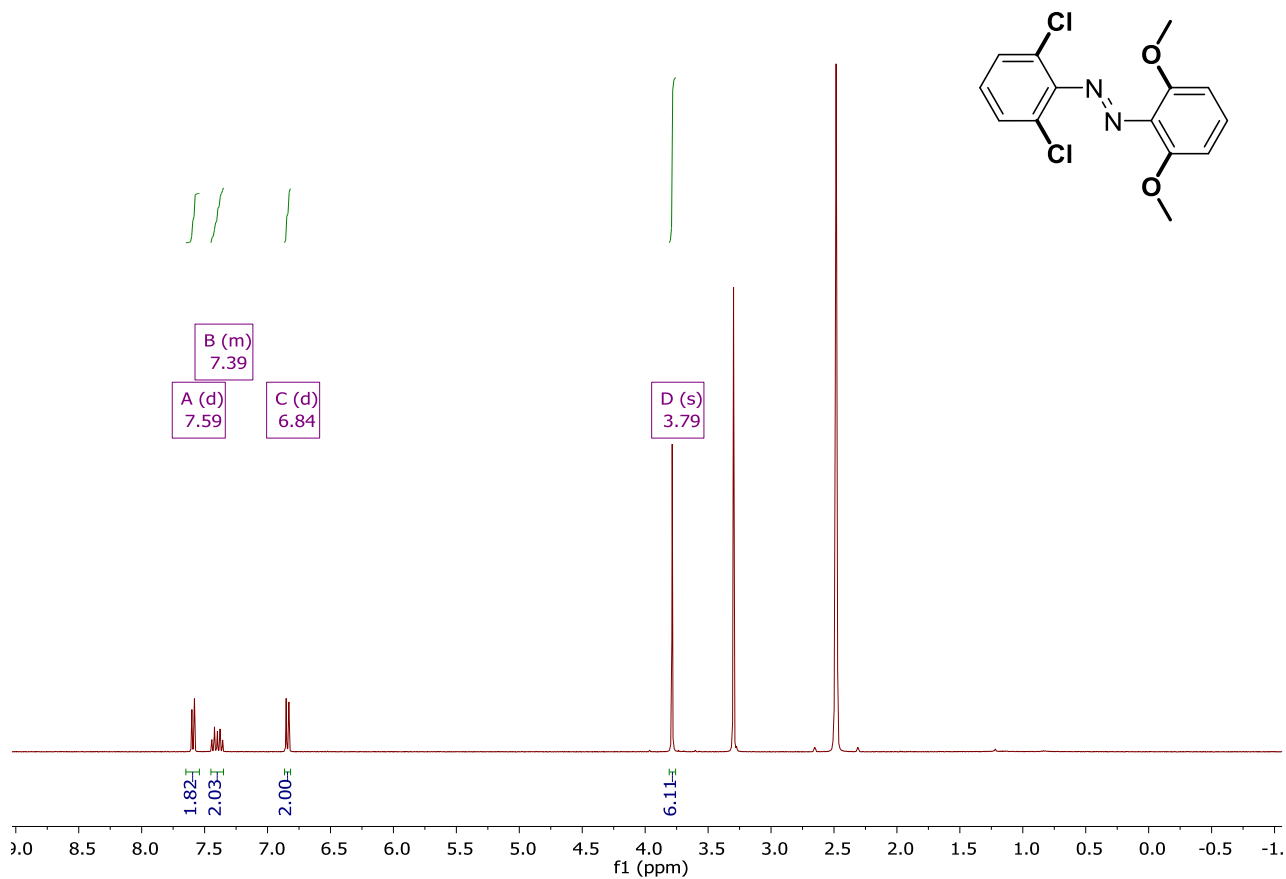




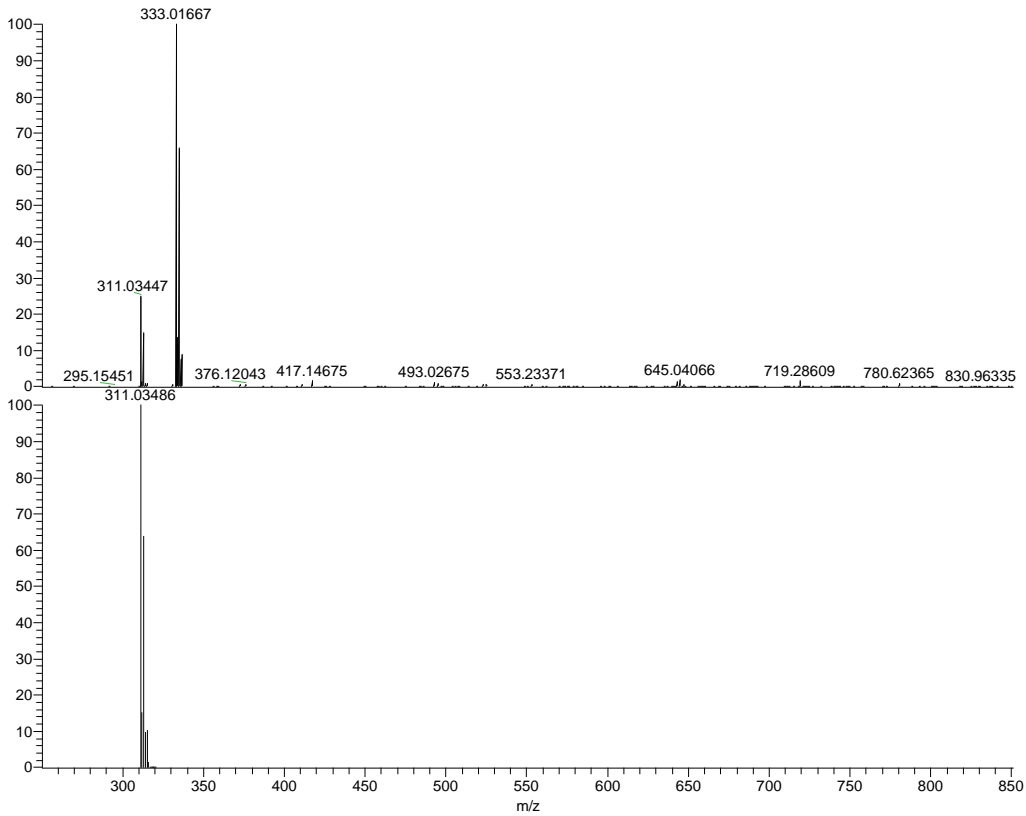
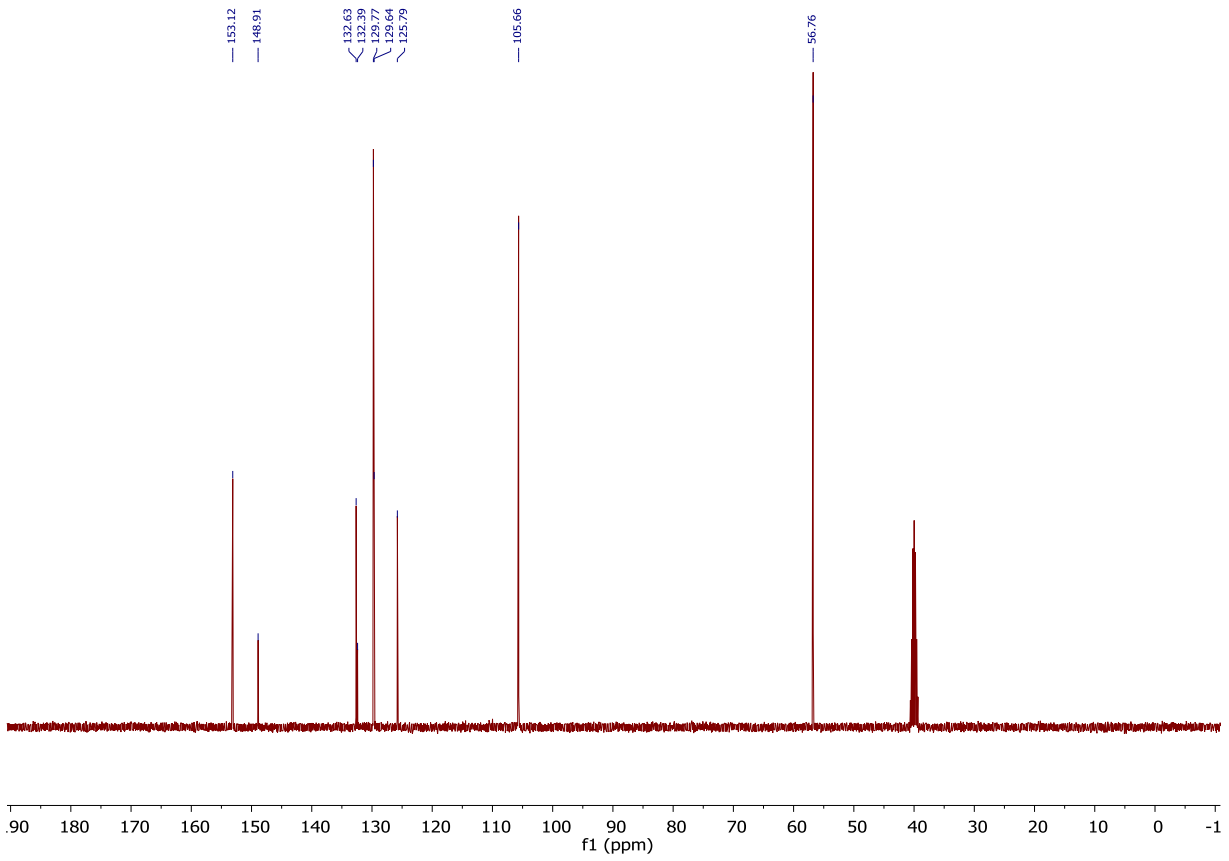
NL:
1.66E7
MJ_114_21#7-22
RT: 0.16-0.57 AV:
16 T: FTMS + p ESI
Full ms
[50.00-550.00]

NL:
8.72E5
C₁₂H₇F₄N₂:
C₁₂H₇F₄N₂:
pa Chrg 1

3p:



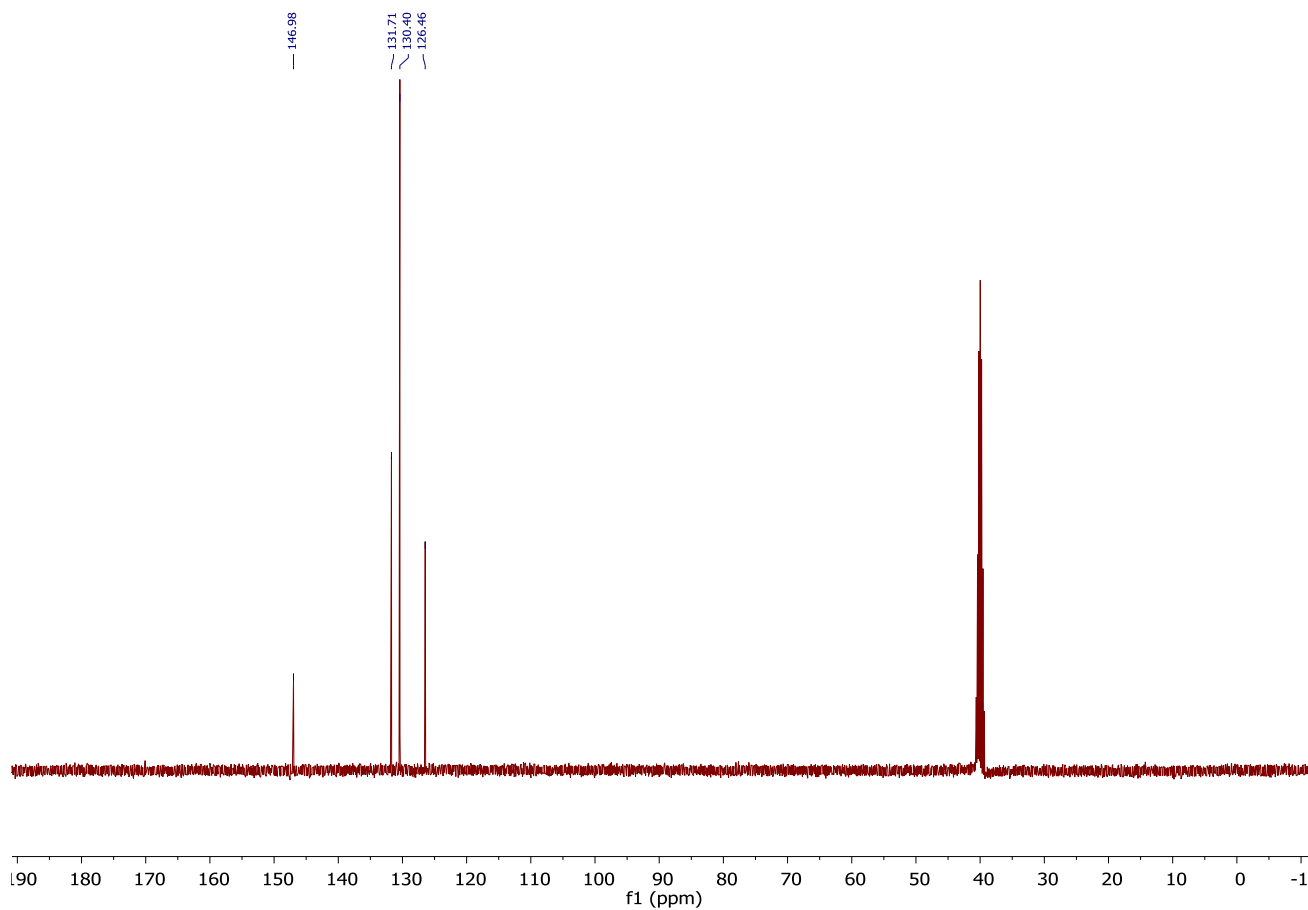
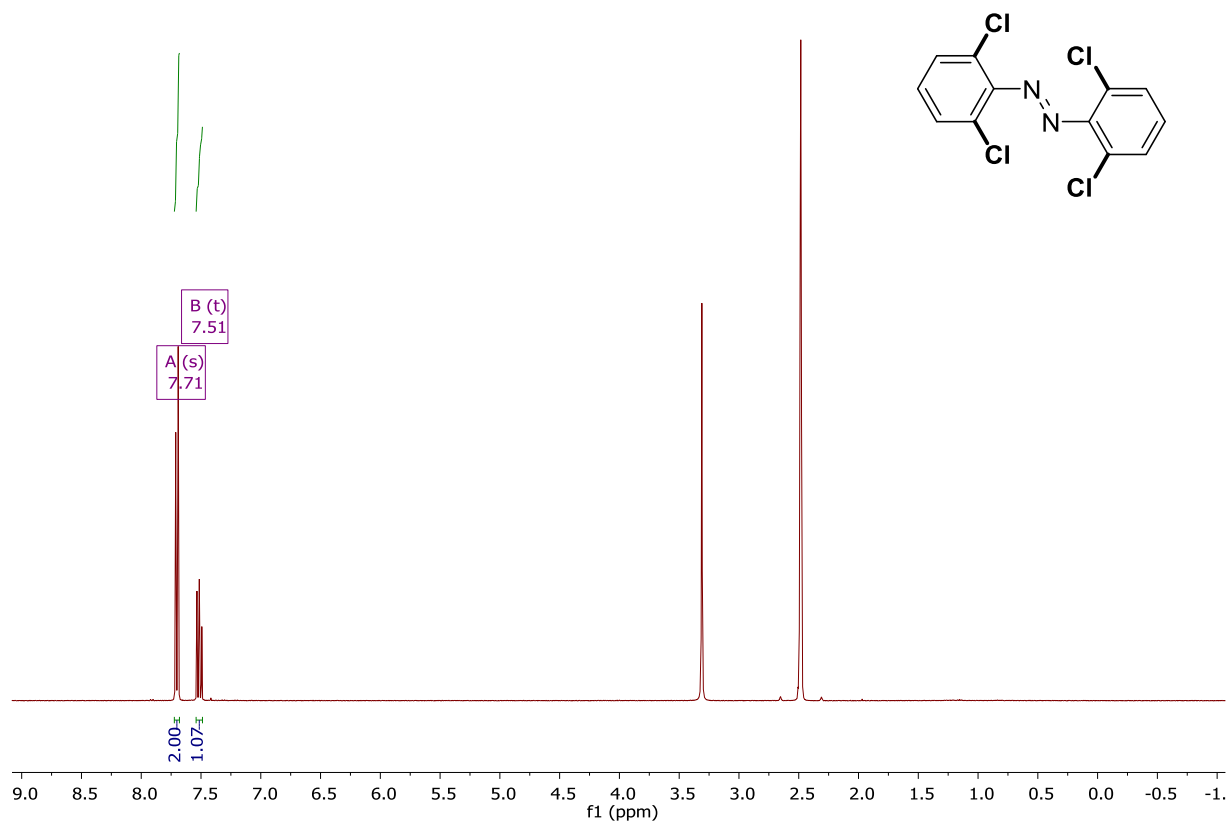
S69

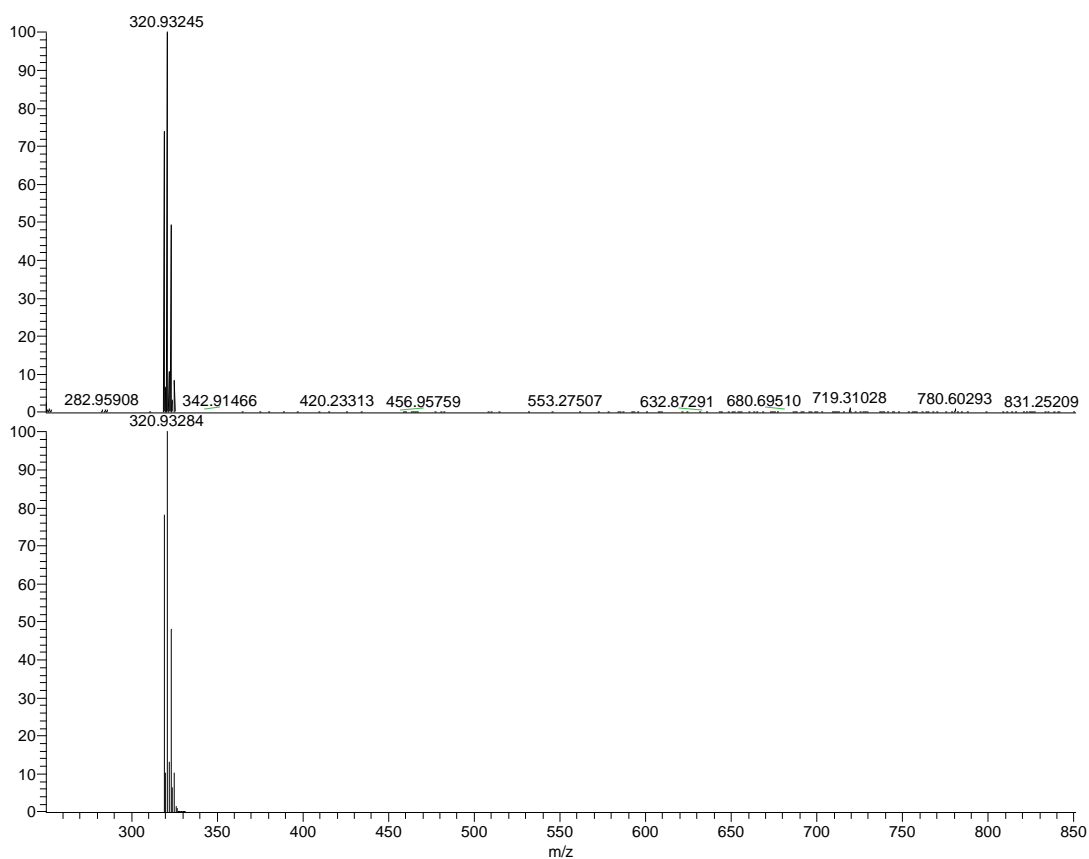


NL:
6.06E5
MJ166#7-24 RT:
0.15-0.64 AV: 18 T:
FTMS + p ESI Full
ms [250.00-850.00]

NL:
4.87E5
C₁₄H₁₃Cl₂N₂O₂:
C₁₄H₁₃Cl₂N₂O₂
pa Chrg 1

3q:

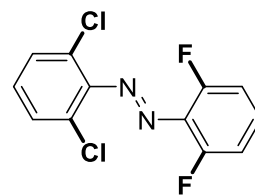
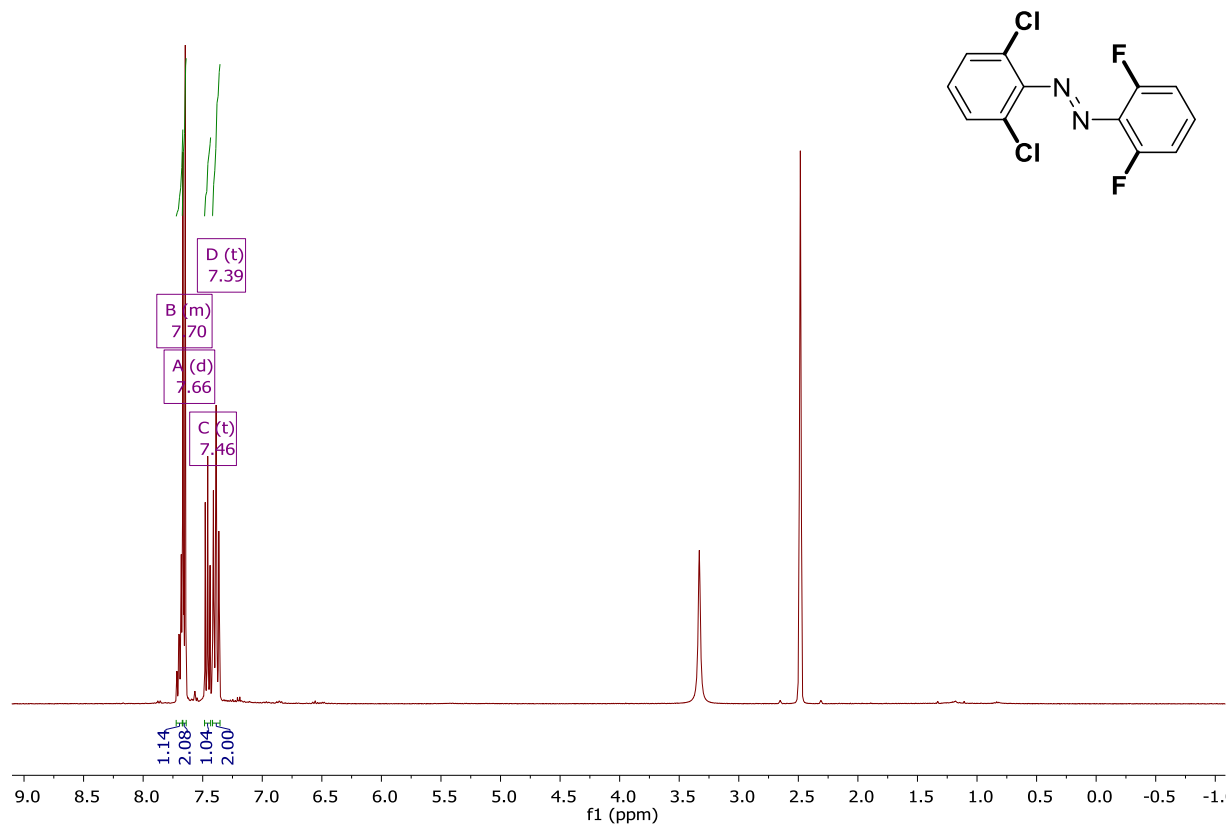


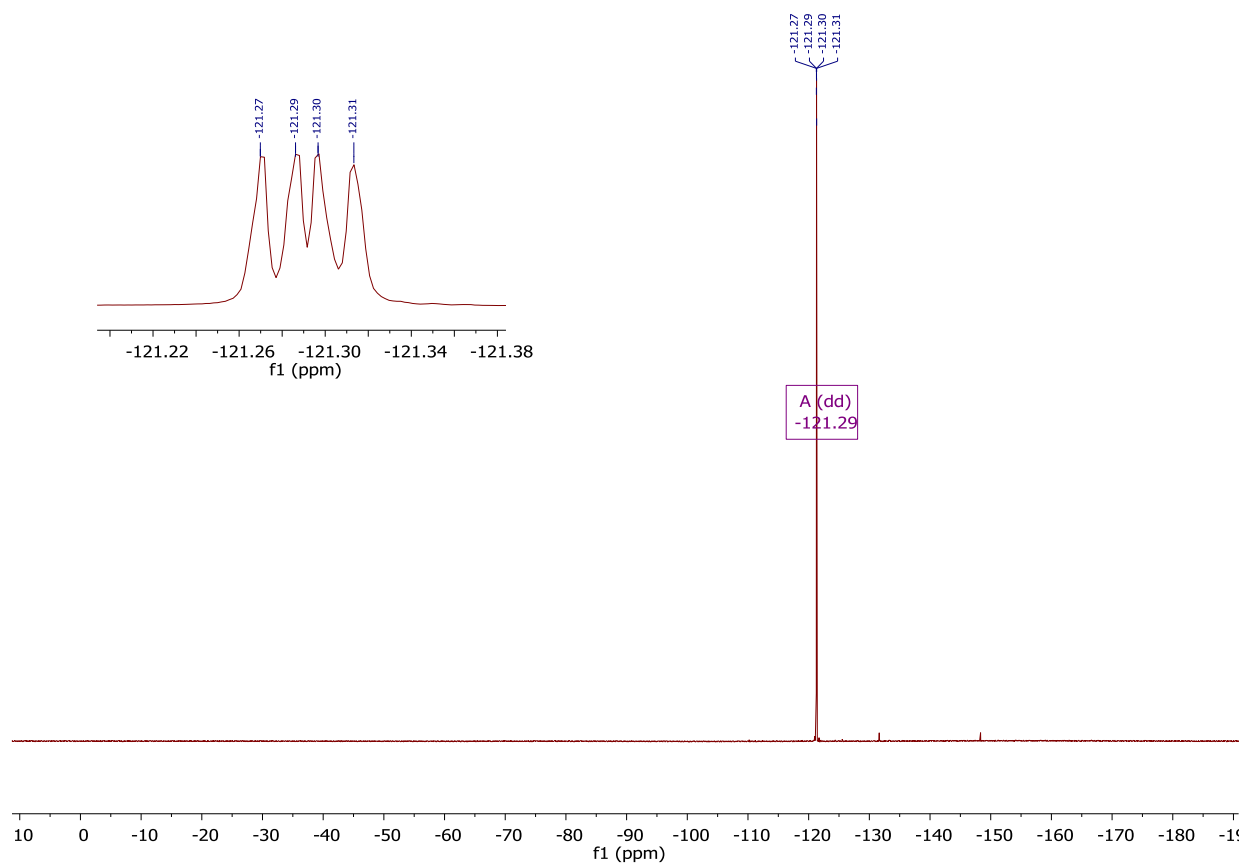
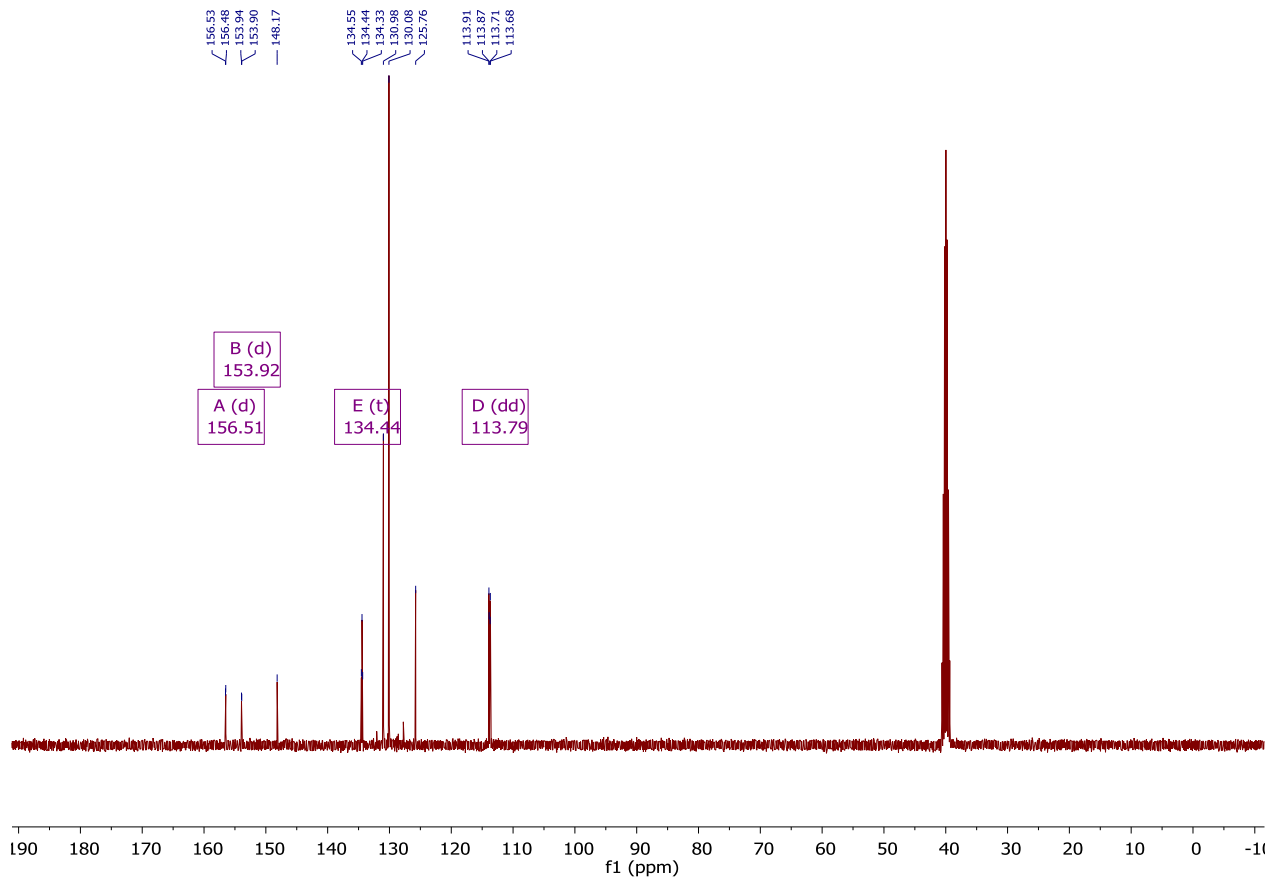


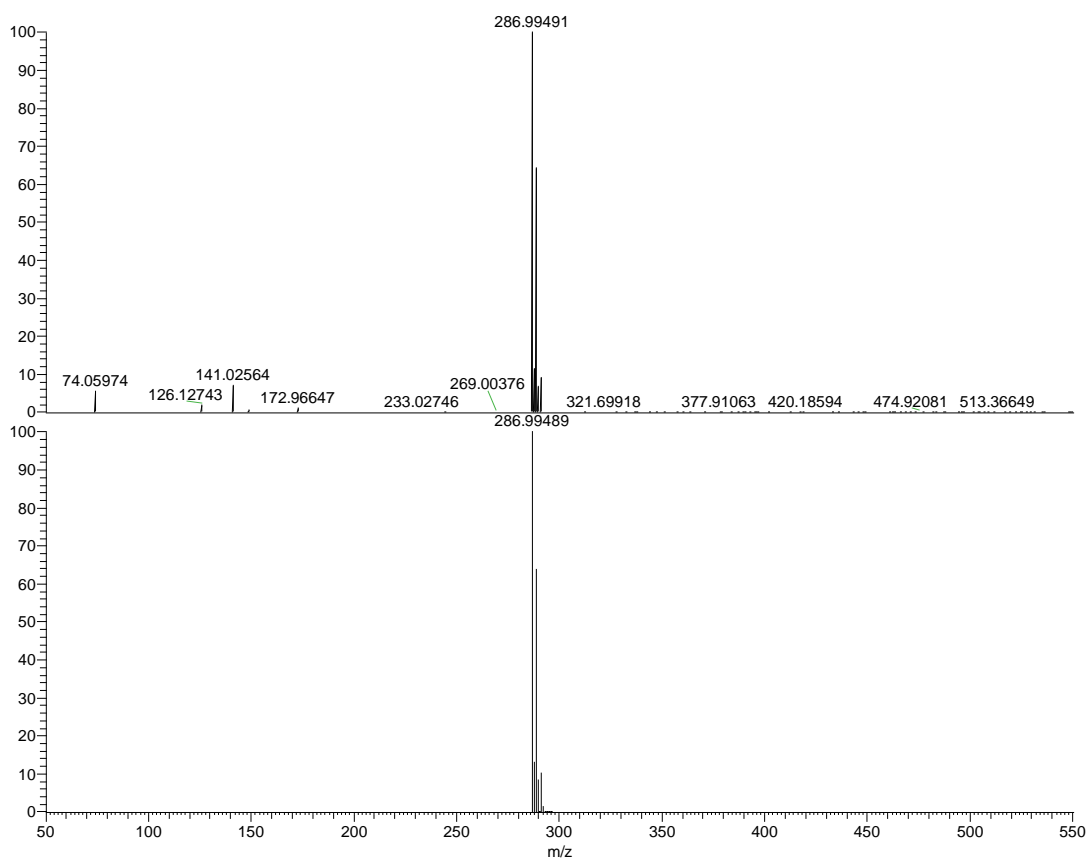
NL:
7.00E5
MJ168#11-30 RT:
0.27-0.81 AV: 20
T: FTMS + p ESI
Full ms
[250.00-850.00]

NL:
3.68E5
C₁₂H₇Cl₄N₂
C₁₂H₇Cl₄N₂
pa Chrg 1

3r:



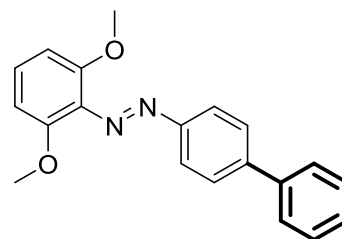
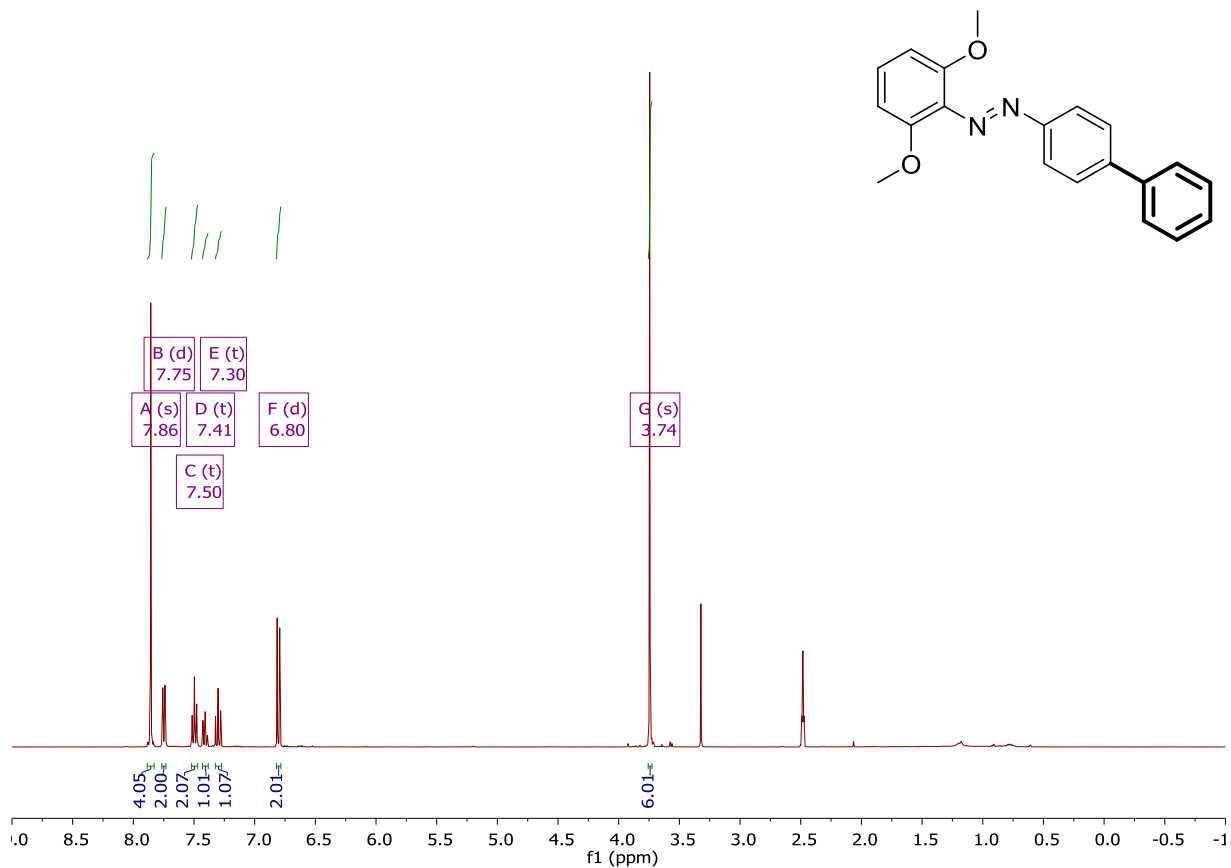


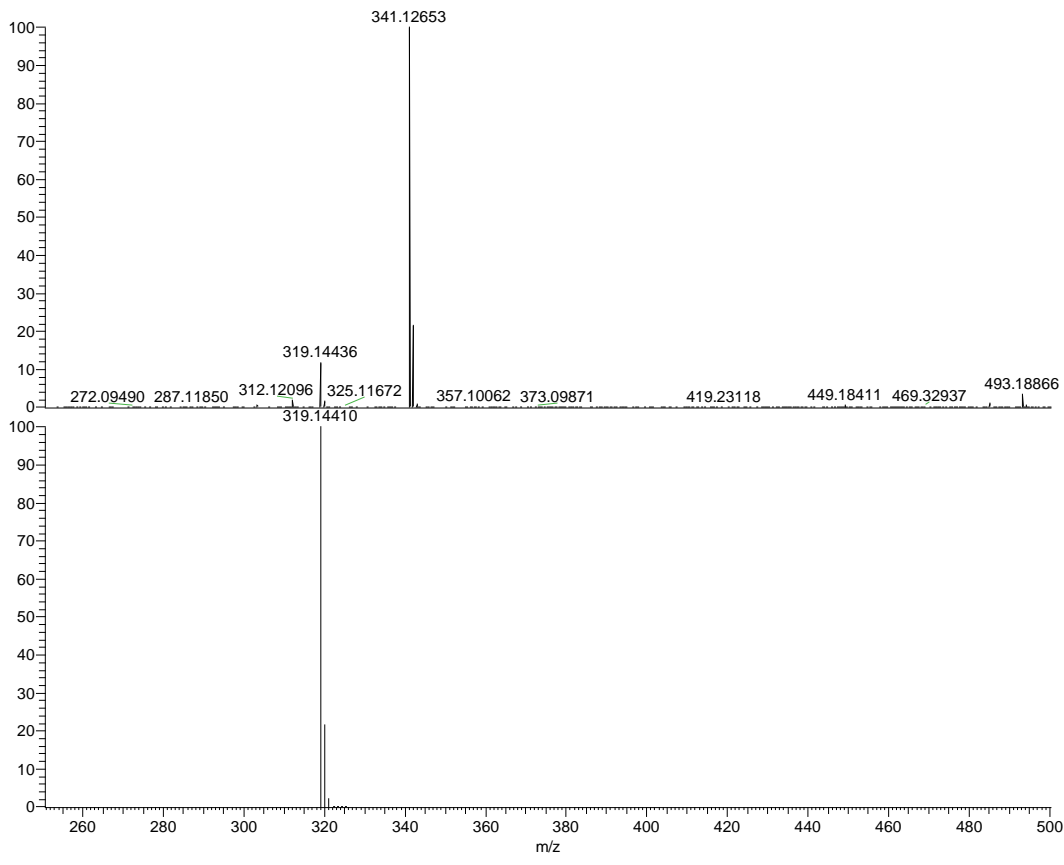
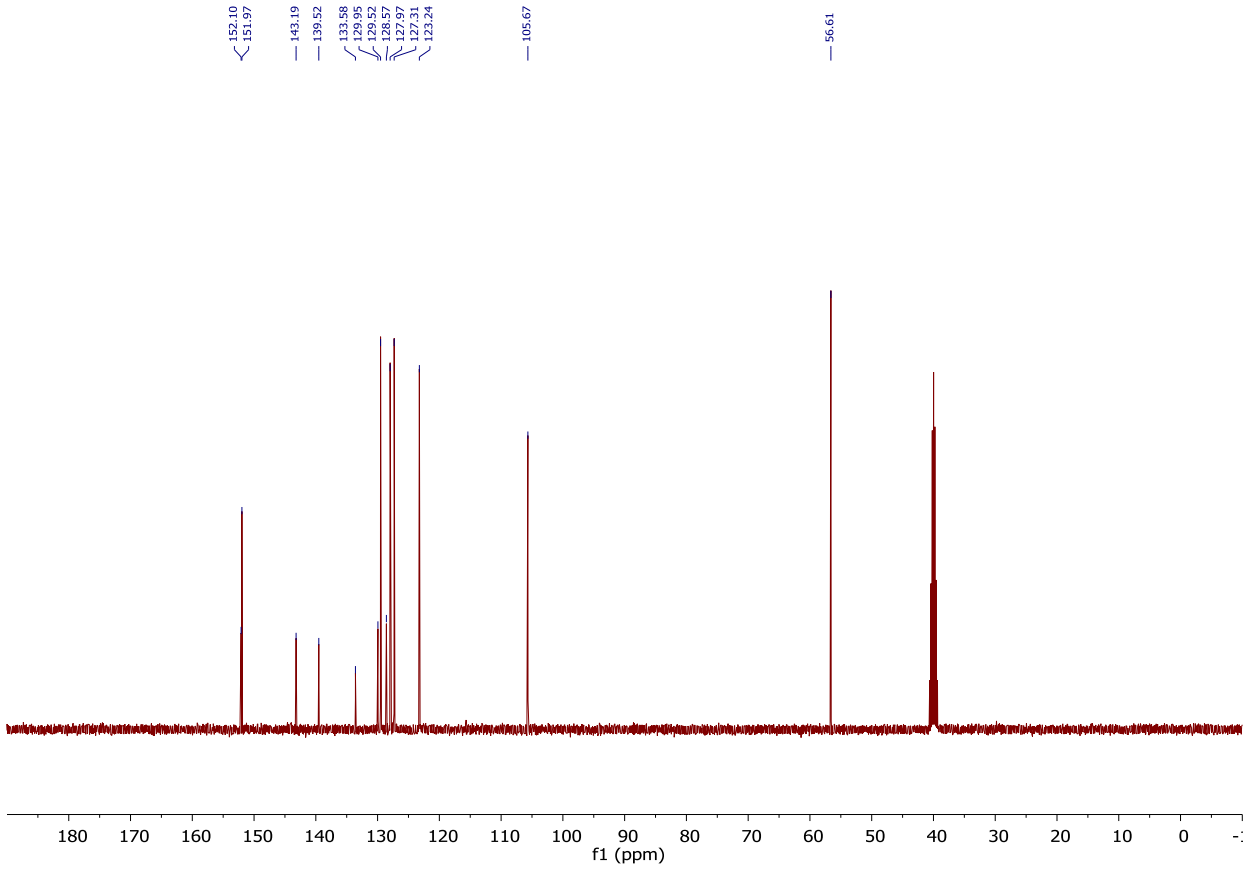


NL:
7.68E6
MJ169#8-20 RT:
0.19-0.53 AV: 13
T: FTMS + p ESI
Full ms
[50.00-550.00]

NL:
5.01E5
C₁₂H₇Cl₂F₂N₂:
C₁₂H₇Cl₂F₂N₂:
pa Chrg 1

3s:





NL:
5.28E7
MJ_138_1604131159
36#7-19 RT:
0.15-0.48 AV: 13 T:
FTMS + p ESI Full ms
[250.00-850.00]

NL:
7.95E5
C₂₀H₁₉N₂O₂:
C₂₀H₁₉N₂O₂:
pa Chrg 1

References

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