

Abstract: A series of substituted derivatives of tetraaza[7]helicenes were synthesized and the influence of the substitution on their photophysical and photoredox-catalytic properties was studied. The combination of their high fluorescence quantum yields of up to 0.65 and their circularly polarized luminescence (CPL) activity results in CPL brightness values ($B_{CP}$) that are among the highest recorded for [7]helicenes so far. A sulfonylation/hetarylation reaction using cyanopyridines as substrates for photoinduced electron transfer (PET) from the excited helicenes was conducted to test for viability in photoredox catalysis. DFT calculations predict the introduction of electron withdrawing substituents to yield more oxidizing catalysts.

Introduction

The research interest in helicenes has grown in recent years, driven by the increasing number of synthetic approaches[1–8] and the desire to exploit the unique properties of this class of compounds, which originate from their helical structure in combination with the extended aromatic system. Helicenes find a wide variety of applications, such as synthetic use in the preparation of chiral catalysts, often in the form of ligands, or more exotic applications including the construction of molecular machines. In particular, their (chir)optical properties are increasingly being highlighted in the current literature and are used, for example, in molecular sensors and switches.[9–14] Enantiopure helicenes exhibit strong circular dichroism, absorbing circularly left- and right-polarized light to different extents and emitting light with a preferential circular polarization upon excitation (circularly polarized luminescence, CPL).[15–16] Since the emission is not linked to a specific functional group or moiety (ketone, BODIPY), but originates from the helically bent acene backbone, substitution in and decoration of the core structure allows for a variety of modifications to tune the electronic and optical properties.[17] In order to compare the CPL activity of different compounds, the disymmetry factor of emission ($g_{lm}$), defined as $2(I_L-I_R)/(I_L+I_R)$, is commonly used, with $I_L$ and $I_R$ being the intensity of light with left-handed and right-handed circular polarization, respectively. However, currently available CPL dyes show low $g_{lm}$ values, and efforts are being made to increase them to ranges that make the dyes suitable for applications such as CPL microscopy, 3D displays, and CP-OLEDs.[9–16] Strategies for CPL enhancement include the introduction of host-guest interactions,[17] additional annulations,[18] or self-assembly of helical structures,[19] but can also be achieved by substitution of CPL emitters.[20–22]

Another field of application of light-absorbing organic molecules utilizes the absorbed photon energy to enable chemical transformations via photocatalysis. While the renaissance of photoredox chemistry was initially based on precious metal-based catalysts (Ru, Ir),[24–25] organic photocatalysts were rapidly included,[26–27] and their importance and applications continue to grow.[28–30] However, helicenes have not been broadly considered as potential photoredox catalysts, with the only reports to the best of our knowledge being the use of a helical carbenium ion by Gianetti et al.[31] and later Cozzi et al.[32] We recently investigated the use of a polyaza[7]helicene as a reductive photocatalyst[33] and here report a chromatography-free gram-scale synthesis of the catalyst and provide further insight into its optical properties. In addition, five substituted azahelicenes were synthesized and characterized with respect to their (chir)optical properties, and the influence of the substitution pattern on the catalytic performance was tested. DFT calculations of three additional model compounds draw a path for further optimization by introducing electron-withdrawing substituents.

Synthesis

The azahelicenes 7a–f (Scheme 2) can be prepared in two steps from 2-chloroquinolines 3a–f, of which 3a and 3b are...
commercially available. The 2-chloroquinolines 3c–f (Scheme 1) with substituents in 6- and 8-position can be prepared in three steps from cinnamoyl chloride and the corresponding anilines. Aminolysis of the acid chloride yields anilides which were cyclized to the quinoline-2(1H)-ones in a Friedel-Crafts reaction with an excess of aluminum chloride either in chlorobenzene or solvent-free in a melt, leading to the elimination of benzene. Deoxychlorination with phosphoryl chloride gives the 2-chloroquinolines. 2-Chloro-4-phenylquinoline 3c was prepared in three steps from ethyl benzoyleacetate.

Aminolysis to the anilide, cyclization to the quinoline-2(1H)-one in polyphosphoric acid and refluxing in phosphoryl chloride gave 3c. 2-Chloro-4-methylquinoline 2b can be prepared analogously using sulfuric acid. Azahelicenes were prepared from the 2-chloroquinolines analogously to the unsubstituted parent compound 7a (Scheme 2) in a double nucleophilic aromatic substitution followed by oxidation with phenyliodine bis(trifluoroacetate) (PIFA). For 7a and the methyl-substituted 7b, an alternative purification protocol avoiding column chromatography was used for gram-scale preparations, slightly reducing the yields obtained (53% 7a, 62% 7b) but efficiently removing impurities and discoloration.

Single crystals suitable for X-ray diffraction were grown by evaporation of solutions of 7c in CH2Cl2/pentane. The structure (Figure 1) shows the helically bent shape of the molecule, in which the torsional angles of the inner atoms add up to 71.4° (9.6°, 26.9°, 4.2°, 24.4°, 6.3°), with most of the twisting on the two imidazole subunits.

Characterization of photophysical properties

Absorption and emission spectra were recorded in acetonitrile solution (Figure 2). The lowest energy absorption bands of 7a–f tail into the blue spectral region and the broad fluorescence bands peak between 457 and 484 nm. Compared to the...
unsubstituted helicene 7a, the absorption and emission spectra of 7b–f are red-shifted which is most pronounced for 7c. This is due to their extended conjugated system (7c) and the fluorination (7d–f), respectively. The presence of excimers as a source of the shoulder at longer wavelengths was ruled out by fluorination (of 7b), which varies on a case-by-case basis for different fluorophores.

For the azahelicenes studied here, a fluorination in 1,16-position (7d) reduces $\Phi_f$ to a greater extent than fluorination in 3,14-position (7e and 7f). $\Phi_f$ in dichloromethane are higher than in acetonitrile for 7a–d, as is expected for a lower polarity solvent ($\epsilon_{\text{MeCN}} = 36.64$ vs. $\epsilon_{\text{DCM}} = 8.93$) resulting in a decreased non-radiative decay rate.44–46

Under air, quenching by oxygen lowered $\Phi_f$ with quenching efficiencies in MeCN ranging from 20% for the tetrafluorinated 7f to 35% for less-substituted 7a and 7b (SI, Table S1). The fluorescence lifetimes of 7a–f also shorten in the presence of oxygen (Table S1) with quenching efficiencies matching those obtained from fluorescence quantum yields.

The (P)- and (M)-enantiomers of 7a–f were resolved using semi-preparative HPLC with chiral stationary phases. Depending on the retention time differences and the solubility of the compounds, 3–10 mg could be purified in a single injection with stacked injections speeding up the separation of larger quantities. The purity of the separated enantiomers was assessed via analytical HPLC (SI, Figures S12–17). Optical rotations of the enantiomers were measured in chloroform and corrected for the determined enantiomeric excess (Table 2). The configurational stability and the activation parameters of enantiomerization of 7a–f were determined by examining the

High fluorescence quantum yields ($\Phi_f$) of 0.20–0.65 with nanosecond emission lifetimes $\tau$ were measured for 7a–f in deaerated acetonitrile and dichloromethane (Table 1). Under deaerated conditions, fluorescence quantum yields for the fluorinated helicenes 7d (29%) and 7f (25%) are lower compared to the other azahelicenes including 7e, whose $\Phi_f$ remains above 40%. Halogenation often lowers the fluorescence quantum yield due to enhanced spin-orbit coupling, enabling higher intersystem crossing rates to the triplet state from which a non-radiative decay to the ground state occurs.42–43 However, fluoride does not show this effect due to its low atomic number, and the effect of fluorination varies on a case-by-case basis for different fluorophores.44–46

Table 1. Absorption maxima $\lambda_{\text{max(abs)}}$ and the corresponding molar extinction coefficients $\varepsilon$, fluorescence maxima $\lambda_{\text{max(fl)}}$ and fluorescence quantum yields $\Phi_f$, fluorescence lifetimes $\tau$ and phosphorescence maxima $\lambda_{\text{max(ph)}}$ for azahelicenes 7a–f. Absorption (20 μM), fluorescence (20 μM) at room temperature and fluorescence lifetimes (100 μM) were measured in MeCN. Low temperature measurements were performed in EtOH:MeOH (4:1) glass at 77 K. The purity of the separated enantiomers was estimated via analytical HPLC (SI, Figures S12–17). Optical rotations of the enantiomers were measured in chloroform and corrected for the determined enantiomeric excess (Table 2). The configurational stability and the activation parameters of enantiomerization of 7a–f were determined by examining the

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound</th>
<th>$\lambda_{\text{max(abs)}}$ [nm]</th>
<th>$\varepsilon$ [M$^{-1}$ cm$^{-1}$]</th>
<th>$\lambda_{\text{max(fl)}}$ [nm]</th>
<th>$\Phi_f$ (degassed)</th>
<th>$\tau_f$ (ns)</th>
<th>$\lambda_{\text{max(ph)}}$ [nm]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7a</td>
<td>376 (9.4), 335 (15.3), 297 (17.2)</td>
<td>380 (10.2), 337 (16.8), 299 (17.6)</td>
<td>457, 413, 436, 464</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7b</td>
<td>378 (9.8), 335 (14.8), 299 (16.9)</td>
<td>380 (16.8), 335 (24.6), 301 (28.0)</td>
<td>461, 413, 437, 464</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7c</td>
<td>389 (11.9), 343 (17.1), 303 (18.3)</td>
<td>391 (19.9), 345 (27.9), 305 (29.1)</td>
<td>484d, 436, 462, 488</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7d</td>
<td>379 (10.9), 340 (12.1), 298 (17.7)</td>
<td>383 (10.9), 345 (12.1), 299 (17.4)</td>
<td>461, 414, 461, 467</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7e</td>
<td>379 (9.8), 340 (16.4), 296 (14.7)</td>
<td>382 (13.9), 342 (23.5), 298 (19.6)</td>
<td>464, 418, 442, 469</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7f</td>
<td>383 (9.9), 345 (12.1), 296 (13.6)</td>
<td>388 (14.7), 350 (17.7), 291 (17.9)</td>
<td>477, 424, 448, 473</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[a] 10 μM; [b] $\lambda_{\text{max}}$ = 250 nm; [c] $\lambda_{\text{max}}$ of azahelicenes; [d] $\lambda_{\text{max}}$ of 7a–f; [e] 10 μM; [f] $\lambda_{\text{max}}$ of 7e; [g] estimated relative error: 5%.
The activation parameters of enantiomerization of the azahelicenes show positive Cotton bands at longer (Figure 1, additionally see Supporting Information, CCDC deposition).

Figure 3. ECD-spectra (top, 100 μM, d = 1 mm) and 2Δλ-spectra of emission (bottom, 25 μM of 7a-f in CHCl₃). Solid lines: (P)-(−)-Enantiomers, dashed lines: (M)-(−)-Enantiomers.

Specific optical rotatory powers of the helicenes range from +2300° cm²g⁻¹ dm⁻¹ ((P)-7c) to +3555° cm²g⁻¹ dm⁻¹ ((P)-7f). The assignment of absolute configuration is based on the general relationship that (P)-helicenes are dextrorotatory and (M)-helicenes are levorotatory, and was confirmed exemplarily by DFT calculation of the ECD spectrum of 7a (Figure S18). The activation parameters of enantiomerization of the azahelicenes (Table 2) show the expected effect of increased conformational stability for C-1 substituted derivatives (7c, 7f).

The influence of temperature on ΔG⁺ is small as was reported for carbon[n]helicenes. The values of ΔG⁺ calculated for 7a-f lie between those of carbo[5]helicene (24.1 kcal/mol (298 K)) and carbo[6]helicene (35.4 kcal/mol (298 K)) and are lower than for [7]helicenes consisting only of six-membered rings, since the presence of the two five-membered rings drastically lowers the enantiomerization barrier. The influence of the substituents in 3,14- and 5,12-position is much smaller, but the phenyl substituents in 7c slightly lower the barrier of enantiomerization compared to the unsubstituted structure. It should be noted that the phenyl rings in 7c are not fully conjugated to the π-system of the helix, as the planar configuration of the phenyl substituents is expected to be hindered to a similar extent as in 1-phenynaphthalene. An equilibrium torsion angle of 50–70°, depending on the solvent, has been reported for 1-phenynaphthalene and an appropriate angle is observed in the crystal structure of rac-7c (Figure 1, additionally see Supporting Information, CCDC deposition number 2241858).

ECD-spectra of compounds 7a-f were recorded in dichloromethane solution and are shown in Figure 3. The (P)-enantiomers of the azahelicenes show positive Cotton bands at longer wavelengths. The 1,16-substituted 7d and 7f have less structured spectra compared to the compounds without substituents at this position, resulting in differences in the region around 330 nm. The spectra of the (M)-enantiomers appear as mirror images. A plot of the dissymmetry factor of absorption (δₐₛₐₜ) is given in the Supporting Information (Figure S19).

Circularly polarized luminescence (CPL) spectra were recorded (Figure 3) and the dissymmetry values gₐₛₐₜ at λₐₓₜₜₑₙ are given in Table 2. The absolute values gₐₛₜ for the (P)- and (M)-enantiomers match for each compound, except for 7d, showing a lower value for the (M)-enantiomer. A difference was also observed in the optical rotation in this case. The differences for the enantiomers of 7d may result from a luminescent impurity which cannot be removed in this particular case via the chromatography methods applied, which can be detected in the absorption and emission spectra of the two enantiomers (see Supporting Information, Figures S20, S21). Substitution lowers the CPL intensity and the unsubstituted 7a remains the strongest CPL emitter in this series of helicenes with |gₛₐₜ| = −8.1 x 10⁻³, which is consistent with the value determined by Otani et al. To allow for a direct comparison to other CPL emitters, the CPL brightness (Bₛₐₜ), which was introduced by Arico et al., was calculated using the molar extinction coefficient at excitation wavelength and the fluorescence quantum...
yield of each helicene using Equation (1). For the calculation, \(|g_{\text{sum}}|\) was defined as the mean of the \(g_{\text{sum}}\) absolute values for the \((P)\)- and \((M)\)-enantiomers.

\[
B_{\text{CPL}} = \frac{1}{2} E_k \cdot \Phi_B \cdot |g_{\text{sum}}| \tag{1}
\]

The azahelicenes 7a-f show exceptionally high \(B_{\text{CPL}}\) values of 11.4–45.0 M\(^{-1}\)cm\(^{-1}\) at the excitation wavelength used for CPL measurements (see Table 2, Footnote [b]). For 7a the value we obtained is higher than in earlier reports \((B_{\text{CPL}} = 37.6)\) due to the higher fluorescence quantum yield determined in our measurement. The increased extinction coefficient of 7b yields a higher CPL brightness compared to 7a, despite its lower fluorescence quantum yield and dissymmetry factor \(g_{\text{sum}}\). The CPL brightness of \(B_{\text{CPL}} = 45 \text{ M}^{-1}\text{cm}^{-1}\) for 7b is among the highest of [7]helicenes compiled by Arrico et al., with only few, mostly dimeric, helicenes showing higher values.\(^{[22]}\)

### Photocatalytic properties

To explore the electronic structure of the azahelicenes and the effect of substitution DFT calculations were performed on the structures 7a-f and additionally on model compounds 7g-i (Figure 4) to investigate the influence of stronger acceptor substituents.

Calculated HOMO- and LUMO energies are included in Table 3 and the frontier orbitals are shown in the Supporting Information. Attachment of a methyl or phenyl group in 5,12-position destabilizes the HOMO by +0.14 eV and +0.12 eV, respectively. Placing a CF\(_3\)-group or a C\(_6\)F\(_5\)-group in the same position (model substrates 7h, 7i) results in a strong stabilization compared to the non-fluorinated substituents (−0.71 eV \(\text{CH}_3\text{→CF}_3\), −0.47 eV \(\text{Ph}→\text{C}_6\text{F}_5\)). The LUMO energy of the methylated 7b is raised to a similar extent (+0.11 eV) as the HOMO, resulting in comparable absorption and emission bands of 7a and 7b but an easier oxidation of 7b. Fluorination on the inner ring positions (1,16) does not influence the HOMO level but fluorination in the 3,14-position stabilizes it by −0.23 eV. LUMOs of the fluorinated derivatives 7d and 7e are shifted similarly to the HOMOs, with the 1,16-F-substitution having a lesser stabilizing effect compared to the 3,14-substitution (−0.06 eV and −0.27 eV), Orbitals of the tetrafluorinated helicene 7f show the combined effect of both substitutions. In model substrate 7g the cyano group in 1,16-position, unlike a fluoro-substitution, does stabilize (−0.17 eV) the HOMO but is also predicted to stabilize the LUMO to an even larger extent (−0.51 eV) leading to a reduced energy gap of 3.23 eV.

The HOMO is predominantly localized on the central A-, B- and C-rings, while the LUMO mainly extends to the outer (C- and D-) rings. The substituents only have minor effects on the orbital coefficients of the HOMOs. The LUMO of 7c and 7i is among the highest of [7]helicenes compiled by Arrico et al., with only few, mostly dimeric, helicenes showing higher values.\(^{[22]}\)

### Table 3. Excited state energies, redox potentials and HOMO–LUMO energies of azahelicenes 7a-f. Estimated values from HOMO–LUMO energies for 7g-i are given in italics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helicene</th>
<th>7a</th>
<th>7b</th>
<th>7c</th>
<th>7d</th>
<th>7e</th>
<th>7f</th>
<th>7g (oCN)</th>
<th>7h (CF(_3))</th>
<th>7i (PFP)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(E_{\text{ox}}) (eV)</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>2.77</td>
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<tr>
<td>(E_{\text{red}}) (eV)(^{[b]})</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(E_{\text{LUMO}}) (V)</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>1.28(^{[a]})</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>1.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>(E_{\text{HOMO}}) (V)</td>
<td>−1.83</td>
<td>−1.87</td>
<td>−1.74</td>
<td>−1.71</td>
<td>−1.66</td>
<td>−1.55</td>
<td>−1.32</td>
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<td>HOMO (eV)</td>
<td>−5.53</td>
<td>−5.39</td>
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<td>LUMO (eV)</td>
<td>−3.96</td>
<td>−3.85</td>
<td>−2.01</td>
<td>−2.02</td>
<td>−2.24</td>
<td>−2.30</td>
<td>−2.47</td>
<td>−2.64</td>
<td>−2.53</td>
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<tr>
<td>calc.</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOMO-LUMO gap (eV)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

All potentials are given vs. SCE. Cyclic voltammetry, as well as absorption and emission spectra were recorded in CH\(_2\)Cl\(_2\).\(^{[16]}\) No reversible reduction was observed, the peak potential is used.\(^{[16]}\) From lowest \(\lambda_{\text{max}}\).
coefficients of the cyano-substituted 7g, which are larger on the outer D-rings compared to any other derivative studied here. The calculations allow prediction of the (photo)redox and optical properties of the model substrates, and the estimated values are given in Table 3. Further information on the calculations of the excited state energies and redox potentials is given in the Supporting Information.

To calculate the photoredox potentials of the catalysts 7a–f cyclic voltammograms were recorded (SI, Figure S9). Using the equation for the Gibbs energy of photoinduced electron transfer (Eq. (2)), omitting the electrostatic work term, the excited state potentials of the helicenes were calculated. The excited state energy $E_0^*$ is approximated from the absorption and fluorescence spectra using the midpoint between the lowest energy absorption maximum and the fluorescence maximum. The potentials are compiled in Table 3.

$$E_{0^*}^{\text{exc}}(\text{PC}^*/\text{PC}) = E_{0^*}^{\text{ox}}(\text{PC}^*/\text{PC}) - E_{0^*}$$

(2)

The oxidation potentials of the fluorinated helicenes 7d–f are increased compared to the donor-substituted or unsubstituted helicenes 7a–c, as expected for electron-negative substituents. The effect is not very pronounced due to the strong mesomeric properties of the fluorine substituents which attenuate the inductive effect (resonance parameter $R = -0.39$, field effect parameter $F = 0.45$).[53] The methyl- (7b, $R = -0.18$, $F = 0.01$) and phenyl-substituted (7c, $R = -0.13$, $F = 0.12$) derivatives show a comparable oxidation potential, while the excited state energy of 7c is decreased as the extended π-system reduces the HOMO–LUMO gap. 7c shows a second oxidation wave ($E_{0^*}^{\text{exc}} = +1.37 \text{V}$) with both oxidations being reversible. Apart from this, reversibility of the first oxidation on the CV time scale was observed only for 7a and 7f. No peaks in the reductive region were observed except for 7f ($-1.58 \text{V}$), which corresponds to an electrochemical gap of 2.91 eV that compares well to the estimated optical gap $E_{0^*} = 2.86 \text{eV}$. The expected position of the reductive peaks for 7a–e is beyond the potential window of dichloromethane and sweeps to $-2 \text{V}$ failed to give peaks in these cases. 7h and 7i are expected to show increased oxidation potentials compared to their non-fluorinated counterparts 7b and 7i. This effect is especially pronounced for 7h, which should be a photoredox catalyst with a much lower reductive power in the excited state.

The photoredox-catalytic properties of 7a–f were compared in a sulfonylation/arylation of styrenes earlier developed in our lab[54] using four different cyanopyridine substrates 8a–d with varying reduction potentials. The results are compiled in Scheme 3. The stronger reducing derivatives 7a–c give higher yields in this reaction compared to the fluorinated compounds 7d–f, even if the catalyst’s reduction potential matches or surpasses the substrates electron affinity by calculation as is the case for the combinations 7d–f and 8a. Another factor coming into play might be the singlet lifetime (Table 1) which is decreased for 7d and 7f. Certain combinations (7d and 8b, 7e and 8a) give high yields of the product even if the catalyst’s reduction potential should not allow for efficient electron transfer to the substrate.

It was anticipated that the improved performance in the reaction with 8d of 7b compared to 7a may also stem from a decreased decomposition rate through styrene addition due blocking of the 6,11-positions by methyl groups. A comparison of the decay in acetonitrile solution containing 40 equiv. α-methylstyrene reveals the opposite to be true as the decomposition rate constant, assuming first order kinetics, for 7b ($k_{\text{decomp}} = 6.1 \pm 0.3 \cdot 10^{-5} \text{s}^{-1}$) is twice the rate constant of 7a ($k_{\text{decomp}} = 2.7 \pm 0.1 \cdot 10^{-4} \text{s}^{-1}$). While the spectral shift of 2 nm (Table 1) between 7a and 7b does increase the spectral overlap with the used lamp for 7b (Supporting Information, Figure S23) it does so only to a small extent and cannot be the sole cause of the accelerated decomposition observed. The lower fluorescence quantum yield of 7b (41 % vs. 48 % for 7a) may be an indication of a higher intersystem crossing rate to the triplet state, from which the reaction of the catalyst with the styrene probably proceeds to decomposition.
Conclusions

The synthesis of substituted aza[7]helicenes from 2-chloroquinolines in a two-step sequence was demonstrated for six derivatives and the oxidative cyclization with PIFA proved a reliable method for each of the substrates used. The photophysical properties of the azahelicenes were extensively studied, a weak phosphorescence and the sensitization of $^{1}O_2$ show the formation of a triplet state. The chiroptical properties of the helicenes were studied after chromatographic separation of the enantiomers. Electronic circular dichroism and circularly polarized luminescence spectra were recorded, giving $g_{	ext{vam}}$ values in the $10^{-3}$ range for each of the derivatives.

The suitability of the helicenes as photoredox catalysts was evaluated in view of their reductive power in a sulfonylation/hetarylation reaction with four benchmark cyanopyridine substrates. The strongly reductive variants 7a and 7b performed best in this reaction. Subtle differences in the catalyst structure result in significant effects on substrate preference. While the use of chiral catalysts of this type in enantioselective photocatalysis will be investigated, structural modifications may be required to ensure a sufficient enantiodiscrimination. The redox potentials of the helicenes were determined by cyclic voltammetry and the excited state potentials estimated. DFT calculations were performed to visualize the frontier orbitals and to evaluate three additional model compounds and calculate their expected redox potentials. The influence of the substitution on the localization of the HOMO and LUMO was small in the synthesized cases.

Supporting Information

General information on the materials and methods used, characterization data, additional spectra and chromatograms are included in the Supporting Information.

Additional references cited within the Supporting Information.[101–94]

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available in the supplementary material of this article.

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