

## Stability of the Cu(II)-S Bond in Mercapto Amino Acid Complexes of [2,2',2''-Tris(dimethylamino)triethylamine]copper(II) and [Tris(2-pyridylmethyl)amine]copper(II)

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Comparative kinetic studies (pH 5.6-11.1) are reported for the oxidations of cysteine (cys-SH), cysteine methyl ester (cme-SH), penicillamine (pen-SH), and glutathione (glu-SH) coordinated to [2,2',2''-tris(dimethylamino)triethylamine]copper(II) ( $\text{Cu}(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})^{2+}$ ) and [tris(2-pyridylmethyl)amine]copper(II) ( $\text{Cu}(\text{tmpa})^{2+}$ ). Relative stabilizations of  $(\text{tmpa})\text{Cu}^{\text{II}}\text{-SR}$  species by factors of ca.  $10^4$  and  $10$  were found at low- and high-pH limits, respectively, suggesting that delocalization of thiolate sulfur negative charge over the  $\pi$  systems of aromatic nitrogen donor ligands contributes significantly to Cu(II)-S bond stability. Excluding the glutathione complexes, all of the  $\text{Cu}(\text{tmpa})^{2+}$  and  $\text{Cu}(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})^{2+}$  adducts exhibit reactivity decreases from intermediate to high pH, where S,N chelation by the amino acids is favored. A mechanism involving reductive elimination of sulfur to give Cu(I) and a thiyl radical is supported by this and other results. Oxidation rate constants of S,N-bonded cysteine and its methyl ester are not greatly different in complexes with both  $(\text{tmpa})\text{Cu}^{\text{II}}$  and  $(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})\text{Cu}^{\text{II}}$ , but the reactivity of penicillamine is lower by more than 1 order of magnitude in both systems. This observation, coupled with unexpectedly slow ring closure to give  $(\text{tmpa})\text{Cu}^{\text{II}}\text{-S,N-pen}$ , reflects geometric rearrangements in the first coordination sphere of copper required to accommodate the steric demands of the penicillamine  $\beta,\beta$ -dimethyl substituents. Redox decay rate constants of  $\text{Cu}(\text{tmpa})^{2+}$  adducts with S-cys, S-cme, and S-glu are remarkably small at low pH as well ( $<10^{-3} \text{ s}^{-1}$  at 25 °C below pH 4) although S,O chelation does not contribute appreciably to the activation barrier.

### Introduction

Interest in the kinetic stability of the copper(II)-mercaptide sulfur bond has been spurred by synthetic efforts to model the physical properties of the blue copper proteins.<sup>1</sup> While synthetic analogues that exhibit both the spectroscopic and stability characteristics of type 1 Cu(II) remain elusive, suppression of internal electron transfer in (thiolato)copper(II) compounds has been achieved, primarily through steric restrictions that specifically stabilize the cupric oxidation state.<sup>1,2</sup> We have undertaken kinetic studies of reactions between mercapto amino acids and copper(II)-polyamine complexes in order to quantitatively evaluate the relative contributions of coordination geometry, electronic characteristics of ligand donor atoms, Cu(II) oxidizing strength, mercaptan substituents, and steric effects to Cu(II)-S bond stability.<sup>3-5</sup> Considerable mechanistic flexibility exists within this class of mercapto amino acid oxidations, as changes in the rate law may be induced by modest variations in reductant concentration (at fixed  $[\text{Cu}(\text{II})]_0$ ),<sup>3,5</sup> pH,<sup>5</sup> Cu(II) oxidizing strength,<sup>4</sup> and the structures of the redox partners.<sup>4,5</sup>

First-order decay of  $\text{Cu}^{\text{II}}\text{-SR}$  adducts should be regarded as atypical,<sup>5</sup> except when the oxidizing strength of the Cu(II) center permits the formation of metal-stabilized thiyl or disulfide radicals.<sup>4</sup> Second-order reactivity with respect to inner-sphere, S-bonded intermediates, leading to concerted two-electron transfer and S-S bond formation, is far more common.<sup>5-7</sup> Nevertheless, a slow, pH-dependent unimolecular redox reaction was observed within the 1:1 S-bonded cysteine (cys-SH) complex of [tris(2-pyridylmethyl)amine]copper(II) ( $\text{Cu}(\text{tmpa})^{2+}$ ), a weak oxidant ( $E^\circ = -147 \text{ mV}$ ).<sup>3</sup> This latter characteristic, coupled with chelation (S,O) of copper by the mercaptan and steric crowding about the coordinated sulfur atom, was proposed to account for the remarkable kinetic stability of aqueous  $[(\text{tmpa})\text{Cu-S-cys}]^+$  in the pH range 4-6.<sup>3</sup>

We report here comparative kinetic studies of the intracomplex redox reactions of cysteine, cysteine methyl ester (cme-SH), penicillamine ( $\beta,\beta$ -dimethylcysteine, pen-SH), and glutathione ( $\gamma$ -L-glutamyl-L-cysteinylglycine, glu-SH) with the trigonal-bipyramidal<sup>8,9</sup> oxidants  $\text{Cu}(\text{tmpa})^{2+}$  and [2,2',2''-tris(dimethyl-

amino)triethylamine]copper(II) ( $\text{Cu}(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})^{2+}$ ). The importance of aromatic nitrogen ligands to Cu(II)-S bond stability should be apparent from this comparison, and structural variations within the family of cysteine derivatives will permit a critical assessment of mercaptan substituent and chelation effects.

### Experimental Section

**Materials.** Mercaptans were obtained and checked for purity as previously described.<sup>4</sup> Literature methods were used to prepare  $\text{Cu}(\text{tmpa})(\text{ClO}_4)_2$ <sup>10</sup> and  $\text{Cu}(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})(\text{ClO}_4)_2$ .<sup>9</sup> Ionic strength 0.1 M ( $\text{NaNO}_3$ ) buffer (5 mM) solutions in the pH range 5.6-11.1 were prepared from BES (*N,N*-bis(2-hydroxyethyl)-2-aminoethanesulfonic acid) or sodium carbonate and triply distilled water.<sup>3</sup> Anaerobic reductant and oxidant solutions in the same buffer were prepared, and  $[\text{H}^+]$  was evaluated as before.<sup>3</sup>

**Kinetic and Stoichiometry Measurements.** Kinetic measurements were performed at 25 °C on a Durrum D-110 stopped-flow apparatus, with inlet of anaerobic solutions through Teflon needles.<sup>3</sup> Data were transmitted to an Apple II computer, stored on floppy disks, and quantitatively interpreted through an interface system to be described elsewhere.<sup>11</sup> A 40% excess of oxidant (0.14 mM) over mercaptan (0.10 mM) was used in most kinetic runs. Reduction of  $\text{Cu}(\text{tmpa})^{2+}$  was followed at the 387-, 401-, and 396-nm charge-transfer absorptions of intermediates formed with cysteine methyl ester, glutathione, and penicillamine, respectively. Monitoring at 350 nm was convenient for all four mercaptide adducts with  $\text{Cu}(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})^{2+}$ . Observed first- or second-order rate constants ( $k_{\text{obsd}}$ ), reported as the average of at least three trials, were calculated as before.<sup>3</sup> Copper(I) in product mixtures was assayed spectrophotometrically after conversion to  $\text{Cu}(\text{dpmp})_2$ .<sup>3,12</sup>

### Results

**Mercaptan Reactions with  $\text{Cu}(\text{tmpa})^{2+}$ .** Stoichiometric measurements on the reactions of excess  $\text{Cu}(\text{tmpa})^{2+}$  and  $\text{Cu}(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})^{2+}$  (0.30 mM) with mercaptans (0.10 mM) indicated the formation of disulfide products (1 mol of Cu(I) formed/mol of RSH), as expected. Intense transient sulfur-to-copper(II) charge-transfer maxima at 396, 387, and 401 nm are observed upon mixing cysteine, cysteine methyl ester, and glutathione, respectively, with  $\text{Cu}(\text{tmpa})^{2+}$  at pH 5.<sup>3</sup> In contrast, no such transient absorption was detected with penicillamine (pH 5.0)<sup>3</sup> and S-methyl-L-cysteine (pH 7.3). An absorbing intermediate does form in the penicillamine- $\text{Cu}(\text{tmpa})^{2+}$  reaction above pH

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**Table I.** Observed Rate Constants for Redox Decay of Cu(tmpa)<sup>2+</sup> Complexes with Mercapto Amino Acids<sup>a</sup>

mercaptan	[H <sup>+</sup> ], M	10 <sup>2</sup> k <sub>obsd</sub> , <sup>b</sup> s <sup>-1</sup>	10 <sup>2</sup> k <sub>calcd</sub> , <sup>c</sup> s <sup>-1</sup>
cysteine methyl ester	1.82 × 10 <sup>-6</sup>	8.7 (0.4)	7.4
	1.07 × 10 <sup>-6</sup>	10.2 (0.1)	11.2
	1.05 × 10 <sup>-6</sup>	10.5 (1.6)	11.3
	7.59 × 10 <sup>-7</sup>	10.4 (0.7)	14.2
	3.31 × 10 <sup>-7</sup>	21.2 (0.5)	22.4
	2.69 × 10 <sup>-7</sup>	25.1 (1.2)	24.4
	1.95 × 10 <sup>-7</sup>	27.8 (1.0)	27.4
	1.12 × 10 <sup>-7</sup>	36.4 (1.5)	31.8
	4.90 × 10 <sup>-8</sup>	39.7 (0.1)	35.9
	4.37 × 10 <sup>-8</sup>	38.3 (0.2)	36.2
	2.40 × 10 <sup>-8</sup>	36.0 (1.2)	37.5
	1.38 × 10 <sup>-8</sup>	33.4 (0.2)	37.6
	1.05 × 10 <sup>-8</sup>	35.4 (0.3)	37.4
	2.75 × 10 <sup>-9</sup>	32.3 (2.0)	32.8
	1.66 × 10 <sup>-9</sup>	31.3 (0.3)	29.3
	1.15 × 10 <sup>-9</sup>	23.1 (1.1)	26.3
	4.27 × 10 <sup>-10</sup>	18.5 (0.3)	17.5
	7.58 × 10 <sup>-11</sup>	12.6 (0.9)	7.5
penicillamine	3.31 × 10 <sup>-11</sup>	6.7 (0.7)	5.7
	1.15 × 10 <sup>-11</sup>	4.1 (0.8)	4.7
	2.51 × 10 <sup>-7</sup>	8.6 (0.4)	9.0
	1.07 × 10 <sup>-7</sup>	8.5 (0.2)	8.5
	4.57 × 10 <sup>-8</sup>	8.4 (0.3)	7.7
	1.45 × 10 <sup>-8</sup>	5.5 (0.3)	5.6
	8.91 × 10 <sup>-9</sup>	4.1 (0.1)	4.5
	3.98 × 10 <sup>-9</sup>	2.4 (0.1)	2.8
	2.82 × 10 <sup>-9</sup>	2.7 (0.1)	2.2
	2.04 × 10 <sup>-9</sup>	1.5 (0.1)	1.8
	9.77 × 10 <sup>-10</sup>	1.9 (0.1)	1.1
	2.34 × 10 <sup>-10</sup>	0.37 (0.02)	0.52
glutathione	8.32 × 10 <sup>-11</sup>	0.25 (0.02)	0.39
	1.86 × 10 <sup>-6</sup>	0.074 (0.001)	0.075
	5.62 × 10 <sup>-7</sup>	0.075 (0.001)	0.076
	2.29 × 10 <sup>-7</sup>	0.077 (0.004)	0.078
	1.58 × 10 <sup>-7</sup>	0.081 (0.018)	0.079
	3.98 × 10 <sup>-8</sup>	0.096 (0.001)	0.092
	2.14 × 10 <sup>-8</sup>	0.10 (0.01)	0.11
	1.29 × 10 <sup>-8</sup>	0.13 (0.01)	0.13
	7.59 × 10 <sup>-9</sup>	0.15 (0.01)	0.15
	2.63 × 10 <sup>-9</sup>	0.18 (0.01)	0.18
	1.38 × 10 <sup>-9</sup>	0.17 (0.01)	0.16
	6.61 × 10 <sup>-10</sup>	0.13 (0.01)	0.14
5.62 × 10 <sup>-10</sup>	0.14 (0.01)	0.14	
4.37 × 10 <sup>-10</sup>	0.13 (0.01)	0.13	
3.55 × 10 <sup>-11</sup>	0.13 (0.01)	0.12	
2.09 × 10 <sup>-11</sup>	0.12 (0.01)	0.12	

<sup>a</sup> Conditions: [Cu(tmpa)<sup>2+</sup>]<sub>0</sub> = 0.14 mM; [RSH]<sub>0</sub> = 0.10 mM; 25.0 °C; I = 0.1 M (NaNO<sub>3</sub>). <sup>b</sup> Average deviations from the mean shown in parentheses. <sup>c</sup> Rate constant calculated from nonlinear least-squares rate parameters (see Table III and text) by using eq 2 or 3 (penicillamine).

6, however, with λ<sub>max</sub> at 338 nm and pronounced shoulders near 300 and 380 nm (pH 12.0). The spectrophotometric method<sup>3</sup> used to calculate the formation constant of [(tmpa)Cu-S-cys]<sup>+</sup> was not successful in the case of penicillamine at pH 7.1 and 8.1. Initial fast absorbance increases (396 nm), prior to redox decay, were found to be essentially independent of [pen-SH] at [Cu(tmpa)<sup>2+</sup>]<sub>0</sub> = 0.14 mM.

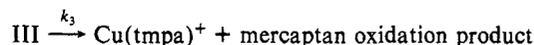
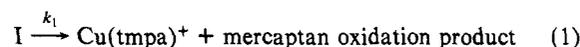
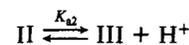
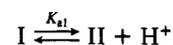
First-order analytical plots were found to be linear over ≥90% of the absorbance decrease in redox decay reactions of Cu(tmpa)<sup>2+</sup> adducts with all mercaptans examined (40% excess of oxidant). The dependence of k<sub>obsd</sub> on [Cu(tmpa)<sup>2+</sup>]<sub>0</sub> (0.08–0.14 mM) at fixed [RSH]<sub>0</sub> = 0.10 mM was examined to verify that these electron-transfer processes are strictly unimolecular, with rates independent of small concentrations of excess oxidant or reductant. We have already established that a change in rate law to second order in the absorbing intermediate occurs when greater than a 10-fold excess of cysteine is present (pH 7.8).<sup>3</sup> Experiments at pH 7.6–8.2 showed no variation in k<sub>obsd</sub> between the above concentration limits, but distinct rate increases were noted with [Cu(tmpa)<sup>2+</sup>]<sub>0</sub> ≥ 0.20 mM.

**Table II.** Penicillamine-Cu(tmpa)<sup>2+</sup> Complex Formation Rate Constants<sup>a</sup>

[H <sup>+</sup> ], M	10 <sup>-2</sup> k <sub>obsd</sub> , <sup>b</sup> s <sup>-1</sup>	10 <sup>-2</sup> k <sub>calcd</sub> , <sup>c</sup> s <sup>-1</sup>
7.59 × 10 <sup>-7</sup>	2.05 (0.27)	2.02
4.47 × 10 <sup>-7</sup>	2.03 (0.12)	2.08
2.51 × 10 <sup>-7</sup>	2.07 (0.05)	2.19
1.07 × 10 <sup>-7</sup>	2.60 (0.04)	2.49
4.57 × 10 <sup>-8</sup>	3.13 (0.09)	3.05
8.91 × 10 <sup>-9</sup>	4.17 (0.01)	4.31
2.82 × 10 <sup>-9</sup>	3.73 (0.27)	3.52
9.77 × 10 <sup>-10</sup>	1.80 (0.06)	1.95
2.34 × 10 <sup>-10</sup>	0.584 (0.013)	0.690
8.32 × 10 <sup>-11</sup>	0.499 (0.014)	0.357

<sup>a</sup> Conditions: [Cu(tmpa)<sup>2+</sup>]<sub>0</sub> = 0.14 mM; [pen-SH]<sub>0</sub> = 0.10 mM; 25.0 °C; I = 0.1 M (NaNO<sub>3</sub>). <sup>b</sup> Average deviations from the mean shown in parentheses. <sup>c</sup> Rate constant calculated from nonlinear least-squares rate parameters (see text) by using eq 2.

Table I displays the [H<sup>+</sup>] dependence of (tmpa)Cu-SR redox decay rate constants (pH 5.6–11.1). The bell-shaped k<sub>obsd</sub>-pH profile of (tmpa)Cu-S-cys was understood in terms of three distinct reactant species (I, II, III) related through two rapid ionization equilibria (eq 1).<sup>3</sup>



Relationship 2 describes the [H<sup>+</sup>] dependence of k<sub>obsd</sub> for decay of [adduct]<sub>tot</sub> implied by this mechanism. When only one ion-

$$k_{\text{obsd}} = \frac{k_1[H^+]^2 + k_2K_{a1}[H^+] + k_3K_{a1}K_{a2}}{[H^+]^2 + K_{a1}[H^+] + K_{a1}K_{a2}} \quad (2)$$

ization equilibrium pertains (K<sub>a1</sub>), this rate expression simplifies to relationship 3. In the case of cysteine, II was found to be

$$k_{\text{obsd}} = \frac{k_1[H^+] + k_2K_{a1}}{[H^+] + K_{a1}} \quad (3)$$

considerably more reactive than either I or III.<sup>3</sup>

Bell-shaped k<sub>obsd</sub>-pH curves were also found in the decay of Cu(tmpa)<sup>2+</sup> complexes with cysteine methyl ester and glutathione. As compared with the values for cysteine, the maximum rate and corresponding pH exhibited by the ester complex are shifted from 8 × 10<sup>-1</sup> s<sup>-1</sup> and 8.6 to 4 × 10<sup>-1</sup> s<sup>-1</sup> and 7.9, respectively. In contrast to the cys-S<sup>-</sup> and cme-S<sup>-</sup> oxidation results, the electron-transfer rate within (tmpa)Cu-S-glu varies within only a 2-fold range between pH 5.8 and 10.8, and k<sub>obsd</sub>(max) (1.8 × 10<sup>-3</sup> s<sup>-1</sup>, pH 8.7) is smaller by more than 2 orders of magnitude.

Complexation of Cu(tmpa)<sup>2+</sup> by all mercaptans except penicillamine was complete within the stopped-flow mixing time (ca. 3 ms). With [Cu(tmpa)<sup>2+</sup>]<sub>0</sub> = 0.14 mM and [pen-SH] = 0.10 mM, the fast initial 396-nm absorbance increase was barely measurable in the pH 6.2–10.2 interval. Considering the relative slowness of the subsequent redox decay reaction, A<sub>∞</sub> could be reliably assigned as the maximum in biphasic absorbance-time traces. The pH dependence of first-order Cu(tmpa)<sup>2+</sup>-pen-SH complexation rate constants, displayed in Table II, shows a maximum at pH 8.2.

Because of insufficient adduct formation at lower pHs, redox decay of (tmpa)Cu<sup>II</sup>-S-pen could only be followed in the pH 6.5–10.2 range. Reduction of copper(II) in the penicillamine adduct, characterized by a decreasing sigmoidal k<sub>obsd</sub>-pH profile, is substantially faster than in (tmpa)Cu-S-glu but still is 1 order

Table III. Comparison of Rate Parameters for the Redox Decay of Mercaptide Complexes with  $\text{Cu}(\text{tmpa})^{2+}$  and  $\text{Cu}(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})^{2+}$ 

oxidant	mercaptan	$k_1, \text{s}^{-1}$	$k_2, \text{s}^{-1}$	$k_3, \text{s}^{-1}$	$\text{p}K_{a1}$	$\text{p}K_{a2}$
$\text{Cu}(\text{tmpa})^{2+}$	cysteine <sup>b</sup>	$<1 \times 10^{-3}$	2.0	$4.1 \times 10^{-2}$	8.33	8.52
	cysteine methyl ester	$<1 \times 10^{-3}$	$4.1 (0.2) \times 10^{-1}$	$4 (1) \times 10^{-2}$	6.39 (0.06)	9.13 (0.10)
	penicillamine	$9.3 (0.4) \times 10^{-2}$	$3 (1) \times 10^{-3}$		7.98 (0.08)	
$\text{Cu}(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})^{2+}$	glutathione <sup>c</sup>	$7.5 (0.2) \times 10^{-4}$	0.36–40.8	$1.2 (0.1) \times 10^{-3}$	10.7–8.7	6.0–8.0
	cysteine	7.0 (0.2)	$5 (1) \times 10^{-1}$		7.44 (0.06)	
	cysteine methyl ester	$1.8 (0.1) \times 10^0$	2.5 (0.3)		7.24 (0.07)	
	penicillamine	$2.1 (0.2) \times 10^{-1}$	$3.9 (0.5) \times 10^{-2}$		6.36 (0.11)	

<sup>a</sup> Conditions: 25.0 °C;  $I = 0.1 \text{ M}$  ( $\text{NaNO}_3$ ). Standard deviations are shown in parentheses. See text and eq 1 for definitions of parameters obtained from nonlinear least-squares fits to eq 2 or 3. <sup>b</sup> Reference 3. <sup>c</sup> See text for discussion of  $k_2$ ,  $\text{p}K_{a1}$ ,  $\text{p}K_{a2}$  uncertainties.

of magnitude slower than the analogous reactions of  $\text{cys-S}^-$  and  $\text{cme-S}^-$ .

A nonlinear least-squares fit<sup>13</sup> of the rate data to eq 2 was performed for  $\text{cme-S}^-$  and  $\text{glu-S}^-$  adducts with  $\text{Cu}(\text{tmpa})^{2+}$ , basing initial parameter estimates on limiting rate constants at high- and low-pH extremes and inflection points in  $k_{\text{obsd}}$ -pH plots. Parameters derived from these fits are contained in Table III. A satisfactory fit of the cysteine methyl ester data was achieved, as indicated by the good agreement between observed rate constants and those calculated from eq 2 ( $k_{\text{calcd}}$ ) with the least-squares parameters (see Table I). As was previously reported for  $[(\text{tmpa})\text{Cu-S-cys}]^+$ ,  $k_1(\text{cme})$  is experimentally indistinguishable from zero; only an upper limit may be given.

The precise extraction of five rate parameters for redox decay of  $(\text{tmpa})\text{Cu-S-glu}$  is not possible, considering the narrow range of  $k_{\text{obsd}}$  values observed in the pH-dependence study. Indeed, even the applicability of mechanism 1 and eq 2 to this system is in doubt. Only  $k_1$  and  $k_3$  (Table III) are well-defined from the low- and high-pH limits, respectively, of  $k_{\text{obsd}}$ . While the best-fit results,  $k_2 = 0.37 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ,  $\text{p}K_{a1} = 10.7$ ,  $\text{p}K_{a2} = 6.0$ , give excellent agreement between  $k_{\text{obsd}}$  and  $k_{\text{calcd}}$  (Table I), extraordinarily large uncertainties in all three parameters dictate the reporting of ranges rather than specific values (Table III). A virtual continuum of  $k_2$ ,  $K_{a1}$ ,  $K_{a2}$  combinations that satisfactorily fit the rate data may be drawn from these ranges. This continuum is defined by compensating changes in  $\text{p}K_{a1}$  and  $\text{p}K_{a2}$  (constant  $(\text{p}K_{a1} + \text{p}K_{a2})/2$ ), coupled with increases in  $k_2$  as the  $\text{p}K$ 's move closer together.<sup>14</sup>

The bell-shaped kinetic pH dependence of  $\text{Cu}(\text{tmpa})^{2+}$ -penicillamine complexation suggests a mechanism similar to eq 1, where the  $K_{a1}$ ,  $K_{a2}$  ionizations may apply to either reactant. Three different weakly absorbing  $\text{Cu}(\text{II})$ -mercaptan precursors (I, II, III) would then rearrange to give strongly absorbing, inner-sphere, (*S*-penicillaminato)copper(II) products. Nonlinear least-squares parameters based on eq 2 for the complexation reaction are as follows:  $k_1 = (1.9 \pm 0.1) \times 10^2$ ,  $k_2 = (7.5 \pm 1.6) \times 10^2$ ,  $k_3 = (1.6 \pm 1.7) \times 10 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ;  $\text{p}K_{a1} = 7.9 \pm 0.2$ ,  $\text{p}K_{a2} = 8.5 \pm 0.2$ . The  $(\text{tmpa})\text{Cu-S-pen}$  intracomplex electron-transfer data were fit to eq 3 in straightforward fashion (Table III), assuming only two reactive intermediates. Identical rate constants were obtained from pH 7.60 measurements at 340 and 396 nm.

**Mercaptan Reactions with  $\text{Cu}(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})^{2+}$ .** Black transients were observed upon mixing excess  $\text{Cu}(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})^{2+}$  with mercapto amino acids (pH 5.6–11.0). Point-by-point 330–400-nm spectra of these transients were obtained from initial absorbance measurements after mixing 0.14 mM  $\text{Cu}(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})^{2+}$  with 0.10 mM mercaptan on the stopped-flow apparatus (pH 7.0 (BES),  $I = 0.1 \text{ M}$  ( $\text{NaNO}_3$ )). Broad bands with  $\lambda_{\text{max}}$  at  $345 \pm 5$ ,  $355 \pm 10$ , and  $338 \pm 5 \text{ nm}$  and  $\epsilon$ 's on the order of  $10^3 \text{ M}^{-1} \text{ cm}^{-1}$  were found for adducts with cysteine, cysteine methyl ester, and penicillamine, respectively. Excellent linear first-order plots of  $\ln(A_t - A_\infty)$  vs. time could be derived from  $A_{350}$  in most runs where 0.14 mM  $\text{Cu}(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})^{2+}$  was mixed with 0.10 mM mercaptan. It should be noted, however, that decay curves could be better understood

Table IV. Observed Rate Constants for Redox Decay of  $\text{Cu}(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})^{2+}$  Complexes with Mercapto Amino Acids<sup>a</sup>

mercaptan	$[\text{H}^+], \text{M}$	$k_{\text{obsd}}, \text{s}^{-1}$ <sup>b</sup>	$k_{\text{calcd}}, \text{s}^{-1}$ <sup>c</sup>	
cysteine	$8.37 \times 10^{-7}$	6.76 (0.44)	6.72	
	$6.01 \times 10^{-7}$	6.85 (0.55)	6.62	
	$2.92 \times 10^{-7}$	6.19 (0.13)	6.27	
	$1.32 \times 10^{-7}$	5.60 (0.08)	5.59	
	$7.41 \times 10^{-8}$	4.62 (0.18)	4.85	
	$3.70 \times 10^{-8}$	3.30 (0.26)	3.78	
	$1.87 \times 10^{-8}$	3.00 (0.15)	2.71	
	$9.91 \times 10^{-9}$	1.95 (0.26)	1.91	
	$5.38 \times 10^{-9}$	1.85 (0.05)	1.36	
	$4.53 \times 10^{-9}$	1.69 (0.22)	1.24	
	$2.60 \times 10^{-9}$	0.91 (0.09)	0.96	
	$7.41 \times 10^{-10}$	0.50 (0.13)	0.66	
	$6.47 \times 10^{-11}$	0.43 (0.02)	0.54	
	$3.89 \times 10^{-11}$	0.41 (0.04)	0.54	
	$2.40 \times 10^{-11}$	0.40 (0.05)	0.53	
cysteine methyl ester	$1.50 \times 10^{-11}$	0.36 (0.04)	0.53	
	$7.94 \times 10^{-7}$	$1.77 (0.07) \times 10^0$	$1.70 \times 10^0$	
	$3.72 \times 10^{-7}$	$1.59 (0.05) \times 10^0$	$1.60 \times 10^0$	
	$1.00 \times 10^{-7}$	$1.10 (0.05) \times 10^0$	$1.24 \times 10^0$	
	$5.01 \times 10^{-8}$	$1.00 (0.05) \times 10^0$	9.78	
	$2.14 \times 10^{-8}$	7.12 (0.06)	6.74	
	$9.77 \times 10^{-9}$	5.56 (0.10)	4.76	
	$7.41 \times 10^{-9}$	4.42 (0.06)	4.27	
	$5.01 \times 10^{-9}$	4.01 (0.06)	3.74	
	$2.34 \times 10^{-9}$	3.84 (0.06)	3.09	
	$1.91 \times 10^{-9}$	3.38 (0.08)	2.98	
	$3.80 \times 10^{-10}$	2.35 (0.04)	2.58	
	penicillamine	$3.72 \times 10^{-6}$	$1.94 (0.01) \times 10^{-1}$	$1.88 \times 10^{-1}$
		$8.32 \times 10^{-7}$	$1.34 (0.06) \times 10^{-1}$	$1.48 \times 10^{-1}$
		$3.39 \times 10^{-7}$	$1.17 (0.02) \times 10^{-1}$	$1.12 \times 10^{-1}$
$1.20 \times 10^{-7}$		$7.70 (0.04) \times 10^{-2}$	$7.51 \times 10^{-2}$	
$5.13 \times 10^{-8}$		$6.07 (0.10) \times 10^{-2}$	$5.66 \times 10^{-2}$	
$1.70 \times 10^{-8}$		$5.76 (0.01) \times 10^{-2}$	$4.53 \times 10^{-2}$	
$1.15 \times 10^{-8}$		$5.10 (0.01) \times 10^{-2}$	$4.33 \times 10^{-2}$	
$3.31 \times 10^{-9}$		$4.56 (0.01) \times 10^{-2}$	$4.03 \times 10^{-2}$	
$2.09 \times 10^{-10}$		$3.86 (0.18) \times 10^{-2}$	$3.91 \times 10^{-2}$	
$1.29 \times 10^{-10}$		$3.07 (0.21) \times 10^{-2}$	$3.91 \times 10^{-2}$	
glutathione		$7.94 \times 10^{-7}$	$6.3 (0.1) \times 10^{-1}$	
		$3.63 \times 10^{-7}$	$5.1 (0.2) \times 10^{-1}$	
		$1.02 \times 10^{-7}$	1.00 (0.04)	
		$5.62 \times 10^{-8}$	1.18 (0.12)	
		$2.63 \times 10^{-8}$	1.40 (0.09)	
	$1.32 \times 10^{-8}$	1.54 (0.09)		
	$1.26 \times 10^{-8}$	1.87 (0.01)		
	$8.32 \times 10^{-9}$	2.61 (0.12)		
$1.55 \times 10^{-10}$	$7.36 (0.15) \times 10^{-4}$	<sup>d</sup>		

<sup>a</sup> Conditions:  $[\text{Cu}(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})^{2+}]_0 = 0.14 \text{ mM}$ ;  $[\text{RSH}]_0 = 0.10 \text{ mM}$ ; 25.0 °C;  $I = 0.1 \text{ M}$  ( $\text{NaNO}_3$ ). <sup>b</sup> Average deviations from the mean shown in parentheses. <sup>c</sup> Rate constant calculated from nonlinear least-squares rate parameters (see Table III) by using eq 3. <sup>d</sup> Second order rate constant ( $\text{M}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$ ).

through a second-order analysis when larger than 2-fold excesses of  $\text{Cu}(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})^{2+}$  over  $\text{cme-SH}$ ,  $\text{glu-SH}$ , and  $\text{pen-SH}$  were employed.

The pH dependence of  $(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})\text{Cu}^{\text{II}}\text{-SR}$  redox decay rate constants (pH 5.6–10.8) is described in Table IV. As compared with the corresponding  $\text{Cu}(\text{tmpa})^{2+}$  reductions, these reactions are uniformly much faster. Decreasing sigmoidal  $k_{\text{obsd}}$ -pH profiles with only small differences in inflection points characterize the

(13) Program NLSQ (CET Research Group Ltd., Norman, OK). This Apple II+ program uses an optimum seeking routine based on the Levenberg-Marquardt algorithm. See: Christian, S. D.; Tucker, E. E. *Am. Lab.* 1982, 14 (9), 31.

(14) This statement is based, in part, on the prediction from eq 2 that  $k_{\text{obsd}}$  is maximal when  $-\log[\text{H}^+] = (\text{p}K_{a1} + \text{p}K_{a2})/2$ .

Table V. Comparison of Free Energy Changes Resulting from S,N Chelation in Cu(tmpa)<sup>2+</sup> and Cu(Me<sub>6</sub>tren)<sup>2+</sup> Complexes (25 °C)

parameter	cysteine methyl ester		penicillamine
	cysteine	ester	
pK <sub>a</sub> <sup>a</sup>	10.37 <sup>e</sup>	8.99 <sup>f</sup>	10.45 <sup>e</sup>
ΔpK <sub>a</sub> (tmpa) <sup>b</sup>	-1.85	+0.14	-2.47
ΔΔG <sub>a</sub> <sup>o</sup> (tmpa) <sup>c</sup>	-2.5	+0.2	-3.4
ΔpK <sub>a</sub> (Me <sub>6</sub> tren) <sup>b</sup>	-2.93	-1.75	-4.09
ΔΔG <sub>a</sub> <sup>o</sup> (Me <sub>6</sub> tren) <sup>c</sup>	-4.0	-2.4	-5.6
ΔΔG <sub>a</sub> <sup>o</sup> (Me <sub>6</sub> tren - tmpa) <sup>d</sup>	-1.5	-2.6	-2.2

<sup>a</sup> Ammonium group ionization constant of free amino acid.

<sup>b</sup> Kinetically determined ammonium group pK<sub>a</sub> in S-bonded Cu(II) complex minus pK<sub>a</sub> of free amino acid. <sup>c</sup> Free energy difference (kcal/mol) corresponding to ΔpK<sub>a</sub>.

<sup>d</sup> ΔΔG<sub>a</sub><sup>o</sup>(Me<sub>6</sub>tren) - ΔΔG<sub>a</sub><sup>o</sup>(tmpa). <sup>e</sup> Reference 17.

<sup>f</sup> Reference 19.

oxidations of cys-S<sup>-</sup>, cme-S<sup>-</sup>, and pen-S<sup>-</sup> coordinated to Cu(Me<sub>6</sub>tren)<sup>2+</sup>. Relationship 3 accounts well for these results, supporting a two-reactant, single-ionization mechanism. Again, the nonlinear least-squares parameters  $k_1$ ,  $k_2$ , and  $K_{a1}$  may be found in Table III, and a comparison of  $k_{\text{obsd}}$  with  $k_{\text{calcd}}$  is included in Table IV. A notable similarity between the Cu(tmpa)<sup>2+</sup> and Cu(Me<sub>6</sub>tren)<sup>2+</sup> reductions is the relatively low reactivity of penicillamine.

Electron transfer within (Me<sub>6</sub>tren)Cu-S-glu is unique in several respects. A modest increase in  $k_{\text{obsd}}$  from 0.63 to 2.61 s<sup>-1</sup> occurs between pH 6.2 and 8.4. Neither first- nor second-order analysis was satisfactory in the pH 8.5–9.5 interval. In more alkaline solutions, up to at least pH 11, decay rates are [H<sup>+</sup>] independent and cleanly second order with respect to the absorbing intermediate. Neither eq 2 nor eq 3 offers an appropriate quantitative interpretation of the (Me<sub>6</sub>tren)Cu-S-glu kinetic data.

### Discussion

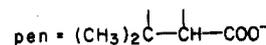
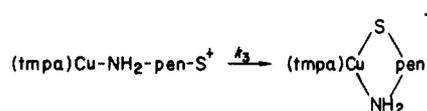
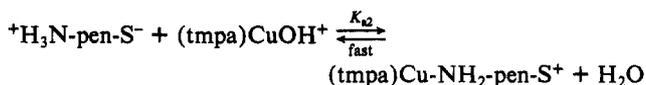
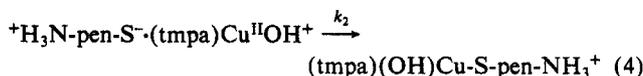
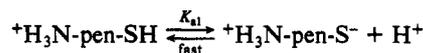
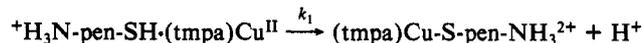
Rate-limiting unimolecular decay of Cu<sup>II</sup>-SR adducts, to give Cu(I) and a thyl radical as the initial organic product, is indicated by our kinetic results for all reactions considered except that of glu-SH with Cu(Me<sub>6</sub>tren)<sup>2+</sup> at high pH. The three-reactant, two-ionization formalism (eq 1) adequately accounts for the pH dependence of (tmpa)Cu<sup>II</sup>-S-cys, -S-cme, and -S-glu electron-transfer rates. The mechanistic resemblance of the last reaction to the first two may only be superficial, however, considering the uniformly low and nearly pH-independent redox reactivity of (tmpa)Cu<sup>II</sup>-S-glu.

In our initial study of (tmpa)Cu<sup>II</sup>-S-cys complexes, the resistance of species I and III to internal electron transfer (see Table III) was attributed in part to S,O and S,N chelation, respectively.<sup>3</sup> The absence of such chelation (monodentate OH<sup>-</sup> and S-cysteinato ligands) was proposed for the more reactive complex II. This hypothesis is supported by the decrease in pK<sub>a1</sub> from 8.33 to 6.39 associated with esterification of the cysteine carboxylate group. Thus, the transformation of (tmpa)Cu<sup>II</sup>(RS) into (tmpa)Cu<sup>II</sup>(RS)(OH) should be facilitated when the competition between -COO<sup>-</sup> and OH<sup>-</sup> for a common binding site is eliminated. Esterification of the carboxylate group has only a moderate effect on  $k_2$ , decreasing the reactivity of II by a factor of 5. This observation also is consistent with the formulation of II as a hydroxo, monodentate thiolato complex, since a noncoordinated -COO<sup>-</sup> or -COOCH<sub>3</sub> substituent remote from the Cu(II)-S bond should have little effect on the activation process.<sup>4</sup>

Although suppression of S,O chelation markedly affects  $K_{a1}$ ,  $k_1$  upper limit estimates for (tmpa)Cu<sup>II</sup> adducts with cys-S<sup>-</sup> and cme-S<sup>-</sup> demonstrate that such chelation is not primarily responsible for their remarkable kinetic stabilities at low pH. The actual  $k_1$  value reported for the glu-S<sup>-</sup> adduct further underscores this point. Surprisingly large thermodynamic stabilization of the cupric oxidation state by coordinated thiolate sulfur (typical ΔE<sub>1/2</sub> of -0.33 V)<sup>15</sup> should not be underestimated.<sup>15,16</sup> Considering the

already unfavorable Cu(II,I) conversion in Cu(tmpa)<sup>2+</sup> ( $E^\circ = -147$  mV),<sup>3</sup> ligation of Cu(II) by RS<sup>-</sup> ironically may reduce thermodynamic driving force to such an extent that thiolate oxidation no longer is favored.

Formation of the (tmpa)Cu<sup>II</sup>-S-pen complex was the only reaction of this type slow enough to be observable on the stopped-flow apparatus. The mechanism of eq 4 is offered to account



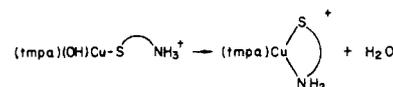
for the strong pH dependence of this complexation rate. The prevalent form of the (tmpa)Cu<sup>II</sup> reactant will be Cu(tmpa)(OH)<sup>+</sup> above pH 8, as ionization of coordinated water occurs with a pK<sub>a</sub> of 7.40 (25 °C, I = 0.1 M);<sup>10</sup> the reactant species shown in the  $k_1$  and  $k_2$  steps represent outer-sphere complexes. Good agreement between kinetically determined (7.9) and literature (7.95)<sup>17</sup> penicillamine pK<sub>a1</sub> values may be cited in support of this mechanism, and the  $k_2 > k_1$  ordering is as expected for either I<sub>a</sub> or I<sub>d</sub> substitution processes. The relative slowness of the  $k_3$  ring-closure step presumably reflects geometric rearrangements in the first coordination sphere required to accommodate the steric demands of the -C(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>S<sup>-</sup> donor unit.

Except for the glutathione complexes, all of the Cu(tmpa)<sup>2+</sup> and Cu(Me<sub>6</sub>tren)<sup>2+</sup> thiolate adducts considered here are greatly stabilized at the high-pH limit, where S,N or S,N,O chelation should be favored. Before the kinetic results are interpreted, a comparison of kinetically determined and literature -NH<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> substituent ionization constants will be useful (Table V). For this purpose, we assign all (Me<sub>6</sub>tren)Cu-SR and the (tmpa)Cu-S-pen  $K_{a1}$  values to ionization of ammonium substituents with subsequent S,N, or S,N,O chelation; the  $K_{a2}$  ionization is attributed to this reaction in the (tmpa)Cu<sup>II</sup>-S-cys and -S-cme adducts. We assume, therefore, that the difference between the ammonium group pK<sub>a</sub> value in a Cu(II)-mercapto amino acid complex and the free amino acid (ΔpK<sub>a</sub> with corresponding free energy change ΔΔG<sub>a</sub><sup>o</sup>) is mainly due to Cu(II) ligation. The thermodynamic driving force associated with S,N chelation is largest for penicillamine in both the Cu(tmpa)<sup>2+</sup> and Cu(Me<sub>6</sub>tren)<sup>2+</sup> series, and ΔΔG<sub>a</sub><sup>o</sup> is consistently more negative, by 1.5–2.6 kcal/mol, in the (Me<sub>6</sub>tren)Cu-SR ammonium group ionization reactions.<sup>18</sup> Although ΔΔG<sub>a</sub><sup>o</sup> is notably less favorable for cysteine methyl ester,

(16) Anderson, O. P.; Perkins, C. M.; Brito, K. K. *Inorg. Chem.* **1983**, *22*, 1267.

(17) Wilson, E. W., Jr.; Martin, R. B. *Arch. Biochem. Biophys.* **1971**, *142*, 445. To be precise, pK<sub>a1</sub> corresponds to predominant, but not exclusive, ionization of -SH rather than a -NH<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> proton.

(18) The overall reaction for S,N chelation in (tmpa)Cu<sup>II</sup> adducts is thought to be



whereas displacement of coordinated hydroxide ion is unlikely in the (Me<sub>6</sub>tren)Cu<sup>II</sup> system.

(19) Li, N. C.; Manning, R. A. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1955**, *77*, 5225.

(15) Addison, A. W.; Rao, T. N.; Sinn, E. *Inorg. Chem.* **1984**, *23*, 1957.

a strong case cannot be made for S,N,O chelation by cysteine and penicillamine.

A substantial contribution of S,N chelation to kinetic Cu(II)-S bond stability is readily apparent from the  $k_2((\text{Me}_6\text{tren})\text{Cu}-\text{SR}, (\text{tmpa})\text{Cu}-\text{S-pen})$  and  $k_3((\text{tmpa})\text{Cu}-\text{S-cys}$  and  $-\text{S-cme})$  rate constants. The presence of an optimal, five-membered S,N chelate unit certainly would stabilize the Cu(II) oxidation state and retard Cu(II)-S bond breaking in a reductive-elimination pathway leading to Cu(I) and a monodentate, N-bonded thiol radical. Oxidation rate constants of S,N-bonded cysteine and its methyl ester are not greatly different in complexes with both  $(\text{tmpa})\text{Cu}^{\text{II}}$  and  $(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})\text{Cu}^{\text{II}}$ , but the reactivity of penicillamine is lower by more than 1 order of magnitude in both systems. This observation lends further support to a reductive-elimination mechanism requiring Cu(II)-S bond cleavage in the rate-determining step. Considering the surprisingly small rate of ring closure within  $(\text{tmpa})\text{Cu}-\text{NH}_2\text{-pen-S}^-$  and this reaction's ample thermodynamic driving force, even slower ring opening would be anticipated from microscopic reversibility considerations alone. The enhanced kinetic stability of  $\text{Cu}^{\text{II}}-\text{S-pen}$  certainly is not entirely related to S,N chelation, as shown most dramatically by the 30-fold difference in  $k_1(\text{Cu}(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})^{2+})$  for oxidation of  $\text{cys-S}^-$  and  $\text{pen-S}^-$ .

Although stable five- or six-membered rings would not be readily formed from S-bonded glutathione (except through deprotonation of glycine or cysteine peptide nitrogens), the redox decay rate of  $(\text{tmpa})\text{Cu}-\text{S-glu}$  is remarkably small and insensitive to pH. Extraordinarily large uncertainties in  $k_2$ ,  $\text{p}K_{\text{a}1}$ , and  $\text{p}K_{\text{a}2}$  preclude a quantitative analysis of these parameters, but it is clear that the unusual relationship  $\text{p}K_{\text{a}1} > \text{p}K_{\text{a}2}$  must apply to achieve a good fit of the kinetic data to eq 3. In any case, the incorporation of cysteine into a protein environment seemingly is more important to Cu(II)-S bond stability than the reactions corresponding to the  $K_{\text{a}1}$ ,  $K_{\text{a}2}$  ionizations. Partial encapsulation of the  $(\text{tmpa})\text{Cu}^{2+}$  unit by the polypeptide would hinder reductive elimination of thiol sulfur in much the same way as chelation.

The consistently greater kinetic instability of  $(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})\text{Cu}^{\text{II}}-\text{SR}$  adducts and the accessibility of only one kinetically relevant ionization in these complexes are the main points of contrast between the  $(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})\text{Cu}^{2+}$  and  $(\text{tmpa})\text{Cu}^{2+}$  kinetic results. The oxidizing strengths of the two Cu(II) centers appear to be similar, although a rigorous comparison is excluded by the irreversible cathodic wave of  $(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})\text{Cu}^{2+}$ .<sup>20</sup> Steric interactions among

the  $\text{Me}_6\text{tren}$  dimethylamino groups strongly hinder the rearrangement of  $(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})\text{Cu}^{2+}$  coordination geometry from trigonal bipyramidal toward square pyramidal or octahedral.<sup>9,21</sup> In contrast, four equatorial donor atoms are easily accommodated in complexes of  $\text{tmpa}$  and related polypyridylamine ligands.<sup>10</sup> For this reason, rearrangement of an S-thiolato, trigonal-bipyramidal  $(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})\text{Cu}^{\text{II}}-\text{SR}$  complex into a six-coordinate thiolato, hydroxo species analogous to that proposed for the  $\text{tmpa}$  system (II) is unlikely, as is S,O chelation by the mercaptan. Considering the well-known high affinity of Cu(II) for nitrogen donor ligands,<sup>22</sup> the  $(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})\text{Cu}-\text{SR}$   $K_{\text{a}1}$  ionization most logically corresponds to S,N chelation of copper. Such chelation need not involve displacement of a  $\text{Me}_6\text{tren}$  dimethylamino group, as five-coordination could be retained by displacement of Cu(II) below the plane of these  $-\text{N}(\text{CH}_3)_2$  donors.

Structural differences among the various mercaptide adducts of  $(\text{tmpa})\text{Cu}^{2+}$  and  $(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})\text{Cu}^{2+}$  complicate comparisons of rate constants between the two systems. Nevertheless, impressive relative stabilizations of the  $(\text{tmpa})\text{Cu}^{\text{II}}-\text{SR}$  species by factors of ca.  $10^4$  and 10 are apparent at the low- and high-pH limits, respectively. Although increases in  $\text{S}(\sigma) \rightarrow \text{Cu}(\text{II})$  LMCT transition energies correlate in some instances with negatively tending  $E^\circ(\text{Cu}(\text{II},\text{I}))$ ,<sup>16</sup> the  $(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})\text{Cu}^{\text{II}}-\text{SR}$  rate data clearly show that such blue shifts do not necessarily result in greater kinetic stability of the Cu(II) oxidation state. Delocalization of thiolate sulfur negative charge over the  $\text{tmpa}$  pyridyl  $\pi$  systems could contribute to the reactivity difference between complexes with aliphatic and aromatic nitrogen donor atoms. Such delocalization would of course be analogous to that available through the imidazole group of physiological histidine ligands in the blue copper proteins.

**Acknowledgment.** Support of this research by the Robert A. Welch Foundation (Grant D-735) is gratefully acknowledged.

- (20) Voltammograms generated from 1 mM  $(\text{Me}_6\text{tren})\text{Cu}^{2+}$  in pH 6.0,  $I = 0.1$  M (MES) buffer showed a cathodic current maximum at  $-217$  mV vs. NHE (50 mV/s sweep rate).  $E^\circ(\text{Cu}(\text{tmpa})^{2+/+})$  is  $-147$  mV under these conditions.<sup>3</sup> MES = morpholinoethanesulfonic acid.
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## Electron Self-Exchange in Dicyanoiron Porphyrins

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Electron self-exchange rate constants have been measured for a series of dicyanoiron porphyrins by  $^1\text{H}$  NMR. The rate constant for the  $\text{Fe}^{\text{II/III}}\text{TPP}(\text{CN})_2^{2-/-}$  system in  $\text{Me}_2\text{SO}-d_6$  is  $5.8 \times 10^7 \text{ M}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$  at  $37^\circ\text{C}$ . Substituted tetraphenylporphyrins have slightly lower rate constants. Iron(II, III) protoporphyrin and deuteroporphyrin have self-exchange rate constants of  $\sim 1 \times 10^7 \text{ M}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$ . Assignments are given for the  $^1\text{H}$  NMR resonances of the Fe(II) synthetic porphyrins and the  $^{13}\text{C}$  resonances of  $\text{CN}^-$  bound to Fe(II) porphyrins. The rate constants for cyanide exchange in the Fe(II) and Fe(III) systems are both  $< 15 \text{ s}^{-1}$ .

### Introduction

The factors that control the rates of electron-transfer reactions of transition-metal complexes have been the focus of substantial interest.<sup>1-3</sup> In recent years this interest has been extended to biological systems.<sup>4-6</sup> One area of intense study has been the

pathway of electron transfer in heme proteins.<sup>7-9</sup>

Most heme proteins have one edge of the heme exposed to solvent, and current thinking is that electron transfer generally takes place between the exposed heme edges of two proteins. The

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