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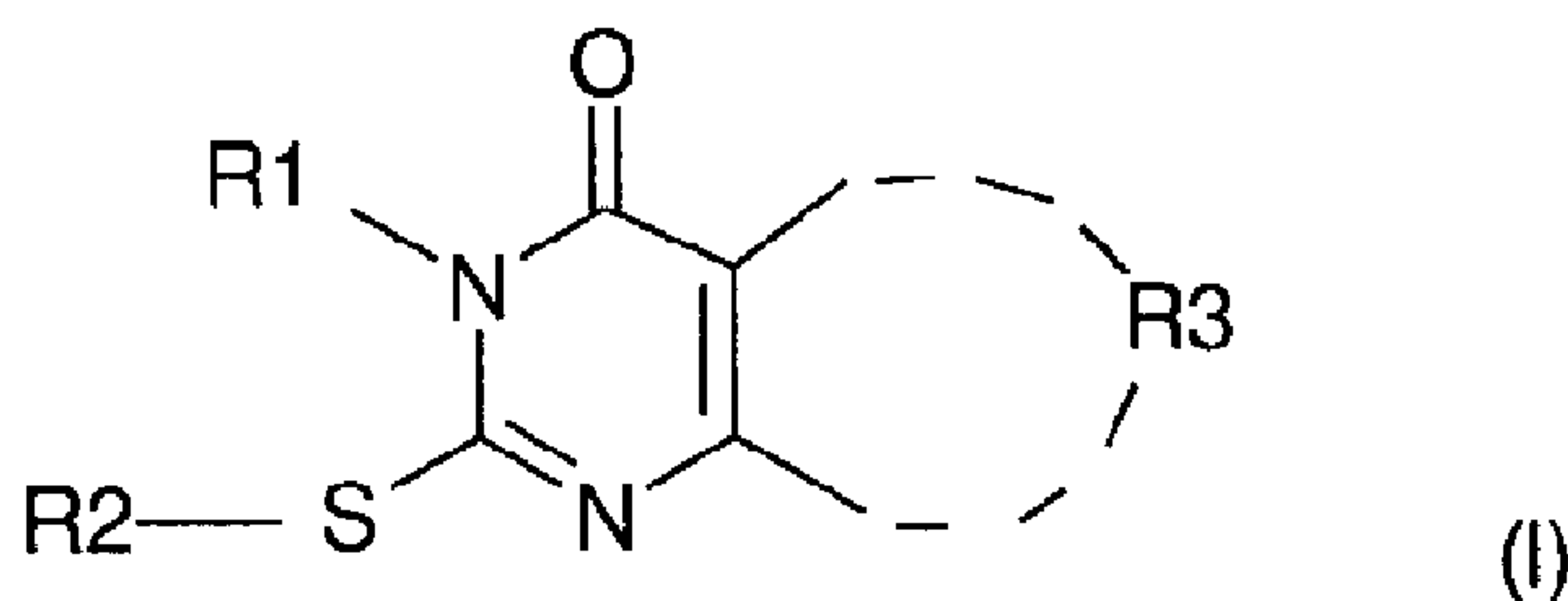
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(54) Titre : DERIVES DE PYRIMIDINONES ET DE PYRIMIDINES COMME MOLECULES ANT-LIGANDS ET APPLICATIONS BIOLOGIQUES

(54) Title: PYRIMIDINONES AND PYRIMIDINES DERIVATES AS ANT-LIGANDS MOLECULES AND BIOLOGICAL APPLICATIONS



(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

The invention relates to molecules ANT-ligands having a substituted nitrogenous heterocycle A wherein - A is a substituted pyrazinone of formula I, or - A is a substituted pyrazine of formula II, or A is a substituted pyridine group of formula III.

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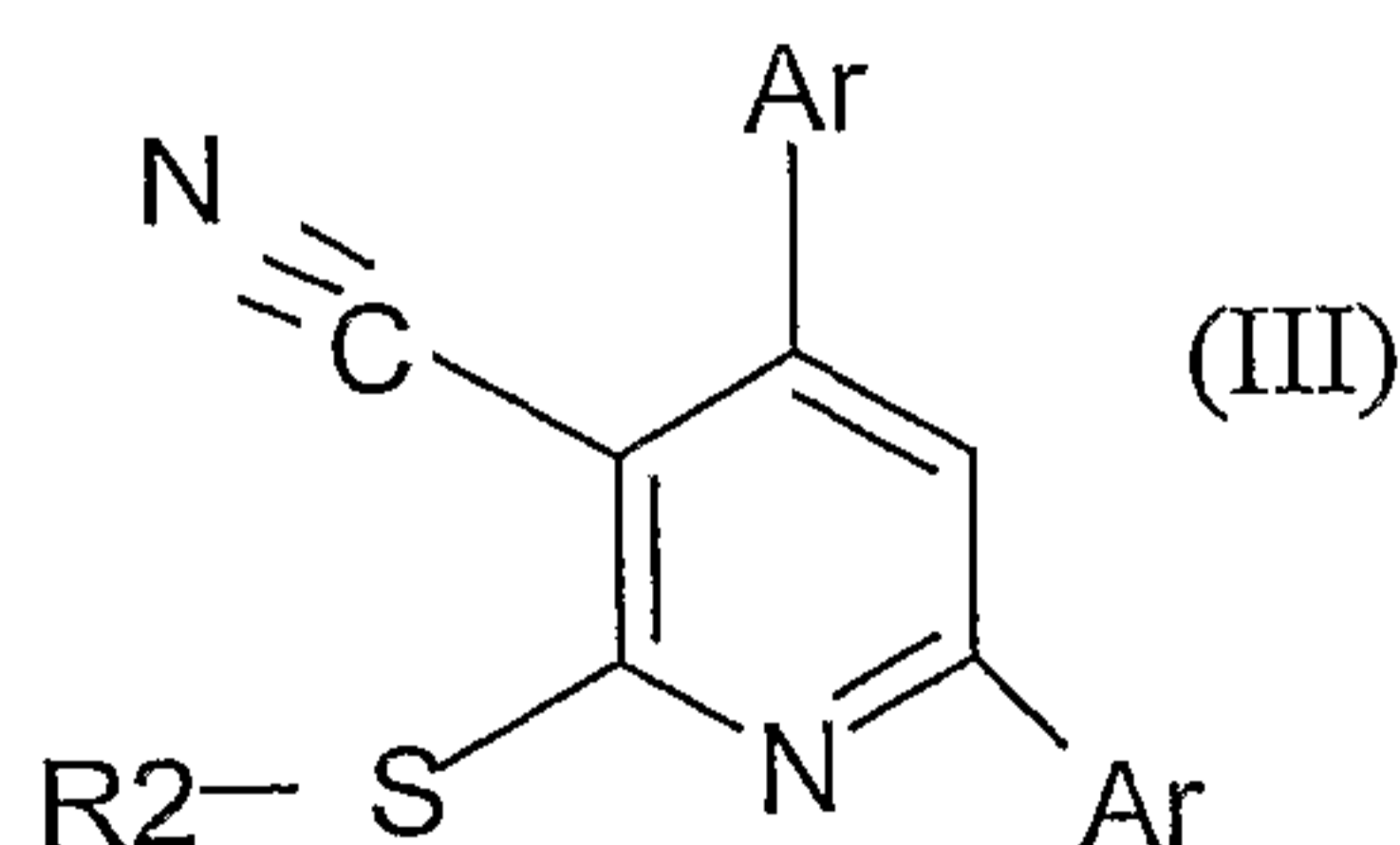
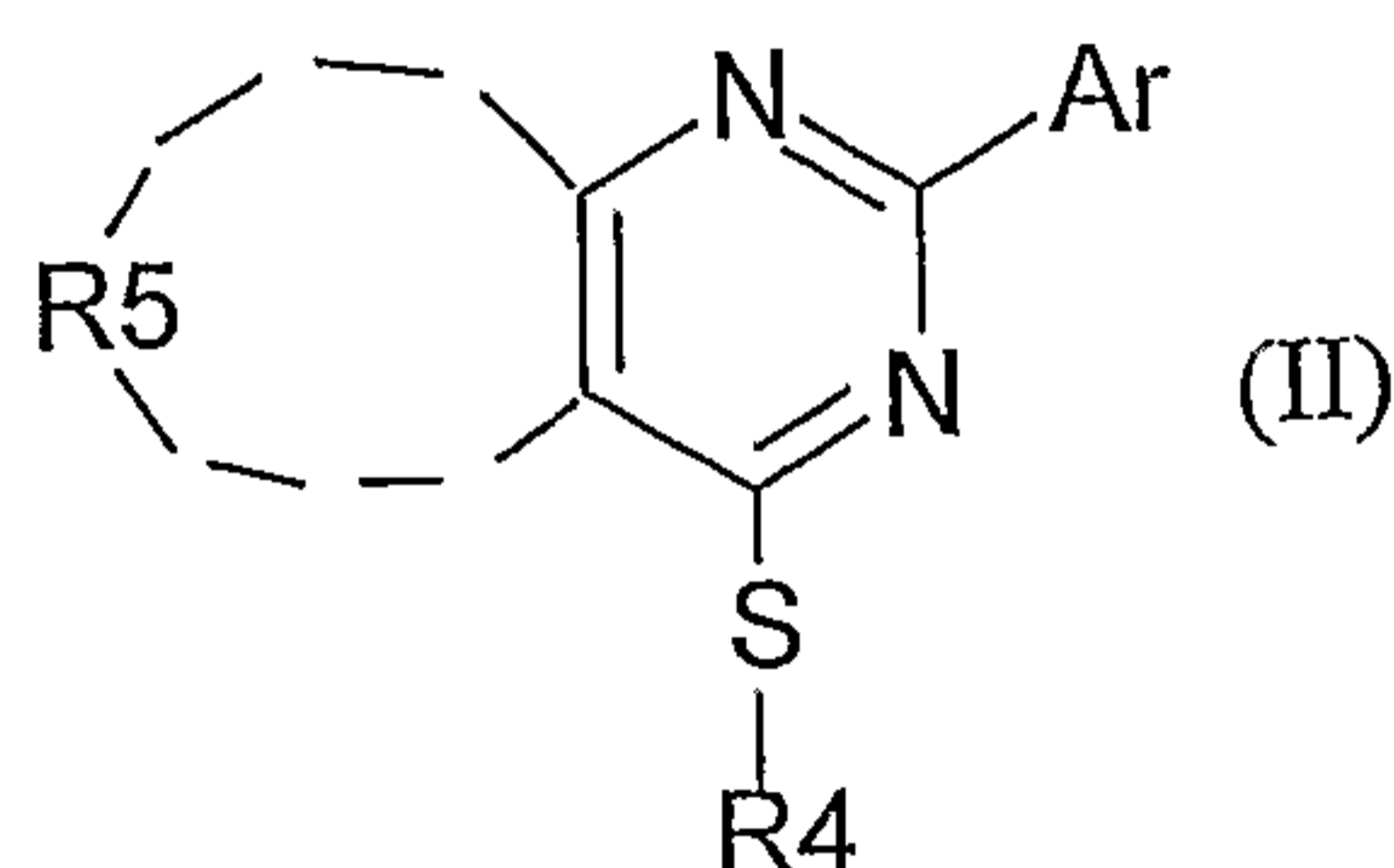
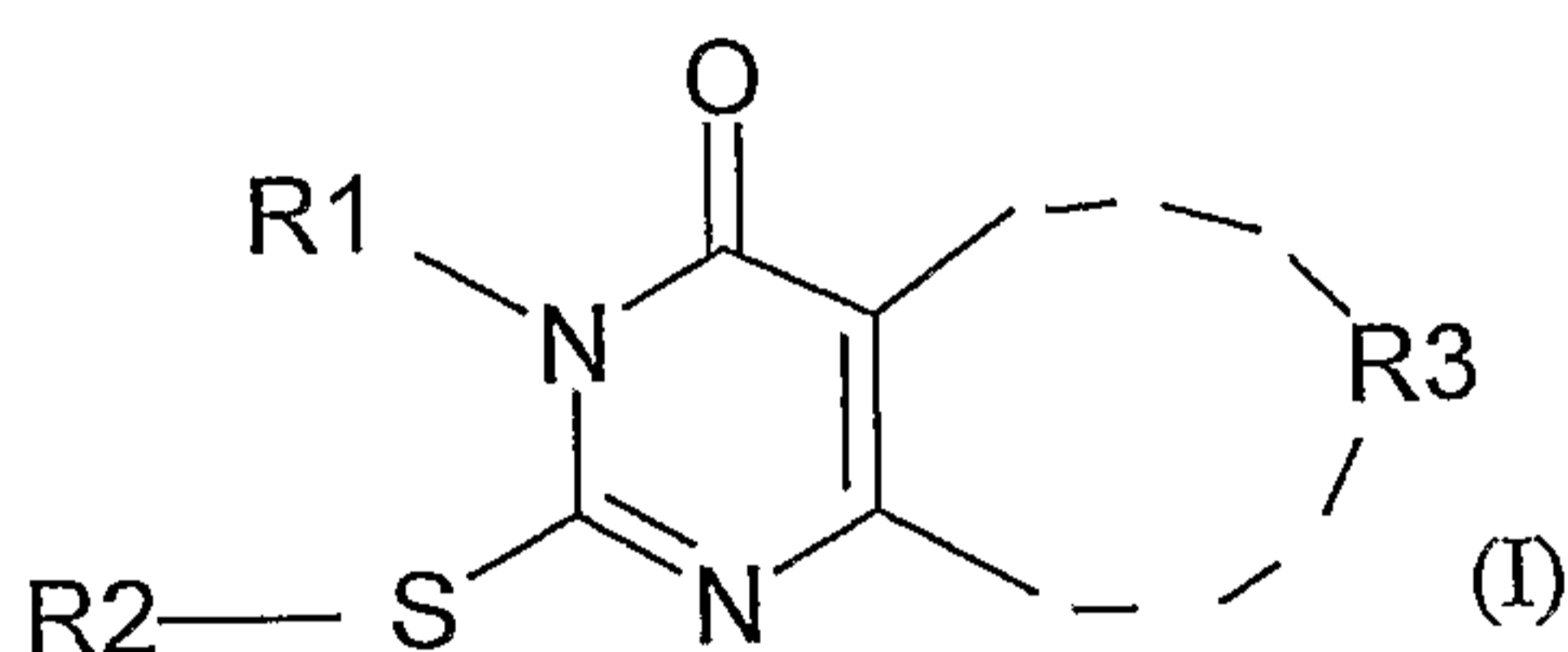
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(54) Title: ANTI-LIGANDS MOLECULES AND BIOLOGICAL APPLICATIONS



(57) Abstract: The invention relates to molecules ANT-ligands having a substituted nitrogenous heterocycle A wherein - A is a substituted pyrazinone of formula I, or - A is a substituted pyrazine of formula II, or A is a substituted pyridine group of formula III.

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Pyrimidinones and pyrimidines derivatives as ANT-ligands molecules and biological applications

The invention relates to molecules having ANT-ligands properties.

5 It more particularly relates to molecules useful for inducing apoptosis or similar cell death mechanisms and their use as therapeutical agents.

Since ten years ago, the mitochondrion has been progressively recognized as an integrator-coordinator of apoptosis and a major checkpoint leading, upon activation, irreversibly to a regulated cell death process, namely mitochondrial apoptosis. This process is favoured by a sustained Ca^{2+} accumulation in the mitochondrial matrix and manifests as signs of pro-apoptotic mitochondrial alteration, namely permeability transition, dissipation of the electrochemical potential, matrix swelling, cristae remodelling, relocalization of Bax to mitochondria and the release of pro-apoptotic factors such as cytochrome c and AIF from mitochondria. Depending on the physiopathological models, mitochondrial membrane permeabilization (MMP) would affect the outer mitochondrial membrane or both membranes, i.e. the outer and the inner membrane. MMP is under the control of Bax and Bcl-2 family members, which are respectively pro- and anti-apoptotic. Thus, apoptosis can be inhibited by overexpression of oncogenes (e.g. Bcl-2) or viral proteins (e.g. Vmia from Herpes virus). MMP is usually accompanied by a bioenergetic catastrophe: a loss of transmembrane potential ($\Delta\psi_m$), an arrest of respiration, a decrease in ATP level and an increase in reactive oxygen species (ROS) levels. In this context, two constitutive mitochondrial proteins, the adenine nucleotide translocator (ANT, inner membrane (IM)) and the voltage-dependent anion channel (VDAC, outer membrane (OM)), cooperate with the Bax and Bcl-2 proteins family. Bax is a pro-apoptotic cytosolic protein, which interacts with ligands, such as Bid and PUMA, activates and translocates to the mitochondrion to induce cell death. Furthermore, the ANT-Bax cooperation has been reported in several physiopathological models. These proteins belong to the mitochondrial permeability transition pore (PTPC), a multiprotein complex localized at the contact sites of the OM and IM membranes. The precise composition of this pore is still unknown but, several independent hypotheses converge to the possibility that ANT (IM) and VDAC (OM) interact to form a double channel. In normal conditions, this double channel opens transiently and mediates the channelling of ATP from the matrix (site of synthesis) to the cytosol (final destination). Upon stimulation by a wide range of endogenous as well as exogenous stimuli, PTPC opens as a high conductance channel to allow the free passage of water and metabolites of $\text{MM} < 1.5$ kDa, inducing a matrix swelling and the subsequent rupture of the OM, thus facilitating the release of mitochondrial proteins into the cytosol. This model has been challenged by a publication in

2004 based on the generation of conditional double-knock out mice for ANT1 and ANT2 in the liver, two isoforms of ANT, suggesting that ANT could be dispensable for apoptosis (1). Nevertheless, a novel ANT isoform (ANT4) has been identified recently (2,3) and, as ANT represents the most abundant member of a large family of highly homologous members, i.e. the mitochondrial carriers, in the absence of ANT, another carrier might replace the functional role of ANT for the induction of MMP to compensate the absence of ANT1 and 2 (4,5).

Interestingly, Jang *et al.* (6) demonstrated that ANT2 suppression by vector-based siRNA inhibits tumour growth in *in vivo* human breast cancer models. This reveals the therapeutic potential of an ANT targeting approach in oncology. An attempt to target pharmacologically ANT has been previously undertaken, using the peptidic approach (7,8), and preliminary results revealed several technological difficulties, resulting from the fact that peptides cannot penetrate into the cell and need to be coupled with targeting sequences (e.g. Tat, Ant).

WO 2008/045406 relates to compounds which prevent caspase-independent cell death for heating conditions in which occurs and for presenting the onset of necrosis.

US 2005/0038051 discloses molecules for regulating cell death via regulating mitochondrial fission or fusion Khalil *et al.*, in *Ann. Pharm. Med. Chem.* 2003, 2, 95-103 disclose substitute quinazolines screened for their *in vitro* antitumor activity.

WO 2004/101506 discloses glyoxalase inhibitors useful to treat various conditions alleviated by the inhibition of glyoxalase I.

WO 2004/0987704 relates to quinazolines as potassium channels modulators useful in the treatment of central and peripheral nervous system disorders and as neuroprotective agents.

EP 0276829 relates to 4(3H)-quinazolinone derivates for use as anti-ulcer drugs.

US 2004/0198777 relates to ligands of ANT for heating conditions associated with altered mitochondrial function.

WO 2008/092441 discloses inhibitors to disrupting ubiquitin conjugating enzyme E₂ and E₃ interactions useful for cancer treatment.

The inventors have now prepared ANT-targeted small molecules particularly for therapeutic applications. Medicinal chemistry approach coupled with *in silico* studies yield to several small organic compounds, which proved to be specific for ANT and fulfil druggability criteria (good cell penetration and biodisponibility).

Such molecules may have other cellular targets.

The invention thus relates to molecules particularly able to induce apoptosis or similar cell death mechanisms.

It also relates to those of the molecules which are new compounds.

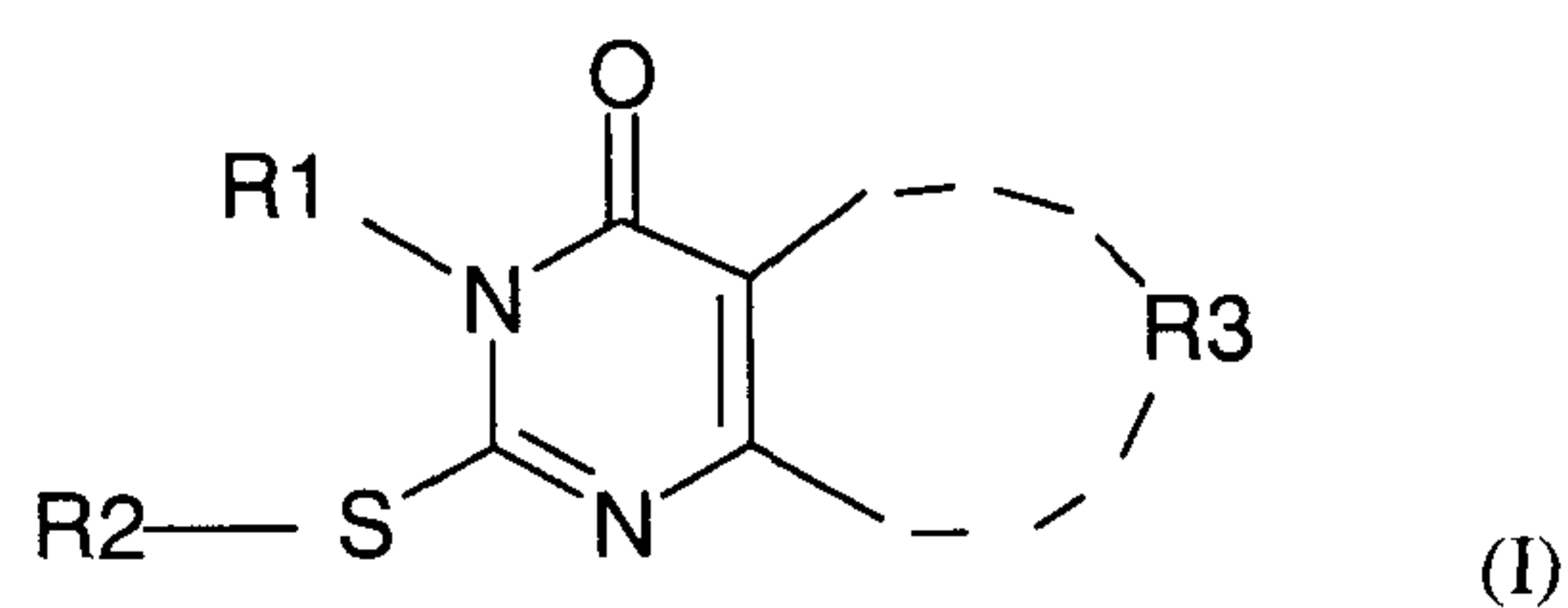
According to another object, the invention relates to pharmaceutical compositions comprising said new molecules as active principles of drugs.

According to still another object, the invention relates to the use of said above molecules able to induce apoptosis for making drugs inducing apoptosis.

5 This is another aim of this invention to provide a method for inducing cell death by targeting the ADP/ATP translocator ANT *in cellula*.

The molecules used as ligands according to the invention have a substituted nitrogeneous heterocycle, designated by A, wherein

10 - A is a substituted pyrimidine of formula I



15

wherein

- R1 is

. - (CH₂)_n-CO-OH;

. - (CH₂)_n-CO-OR;

5 . - (CH₂)_n-CO-NHR;

. - (CH₂)_n -CO-N(R, R');

. - (CH₂)_n - OH;

. - (CH₂)_n - OR;

. - (CH₂)_n- OAr;

10 . - (CH₂)_n - C(R,R') - (CH₂)_n-OH,

R and R', in the above radicals, being identical or different and representing H or a C1-C12 alkyl or cycloalkyl radical; and Ar is a phenyl or Het., Het. representing an heterocyclic radical with one or several hetero atoms selected between N, S and O, said phenyl or heterocycle being optionally substituted by one or several atoms, groups or radicals selected from
 15 halogen atoms such as Cl, Br, I, or halogenated groups such as - CCl₃ or - CF₃ ; one or several -OH, -OR, -COOH or - COOR groups; a phenyl; a linear or branched C1-C12 alkyl radical; -NH-COR; or - CN; said groups occupying the same or different positions on the phenyl or heterocyclic radical;

. a linear or branched C1-C12 alkyl radical;

20 . a linear or branched C2-C12 alkylene radical;

. - (CH₂)_n - C3-C6 cycloalkyl radical;

. - (CH₂)_n Ar or - (CH₂)_n - Het.;

. - (CH₂)_n- NH- CO-R;

. - (CH₂)_n - NH₂;

25 . - (CH₂)_n - N(R,R');

. - (CH₂)_n- NH- CO-OH;

. - (CH₂)_n- NH- CO-OR;

. - NH- (CH₂)_n- CO-OH;

. - NH- (CH₂)_n- CO-OR;

30

- R2 is

. - (CH₂)_n - Ar , Ar being such as above defined and being optionally substituted such as above defined;

. a linear or branched C1-C12 alkyl or C2-C12 alkylene radical with one or several double
 35 bonds;

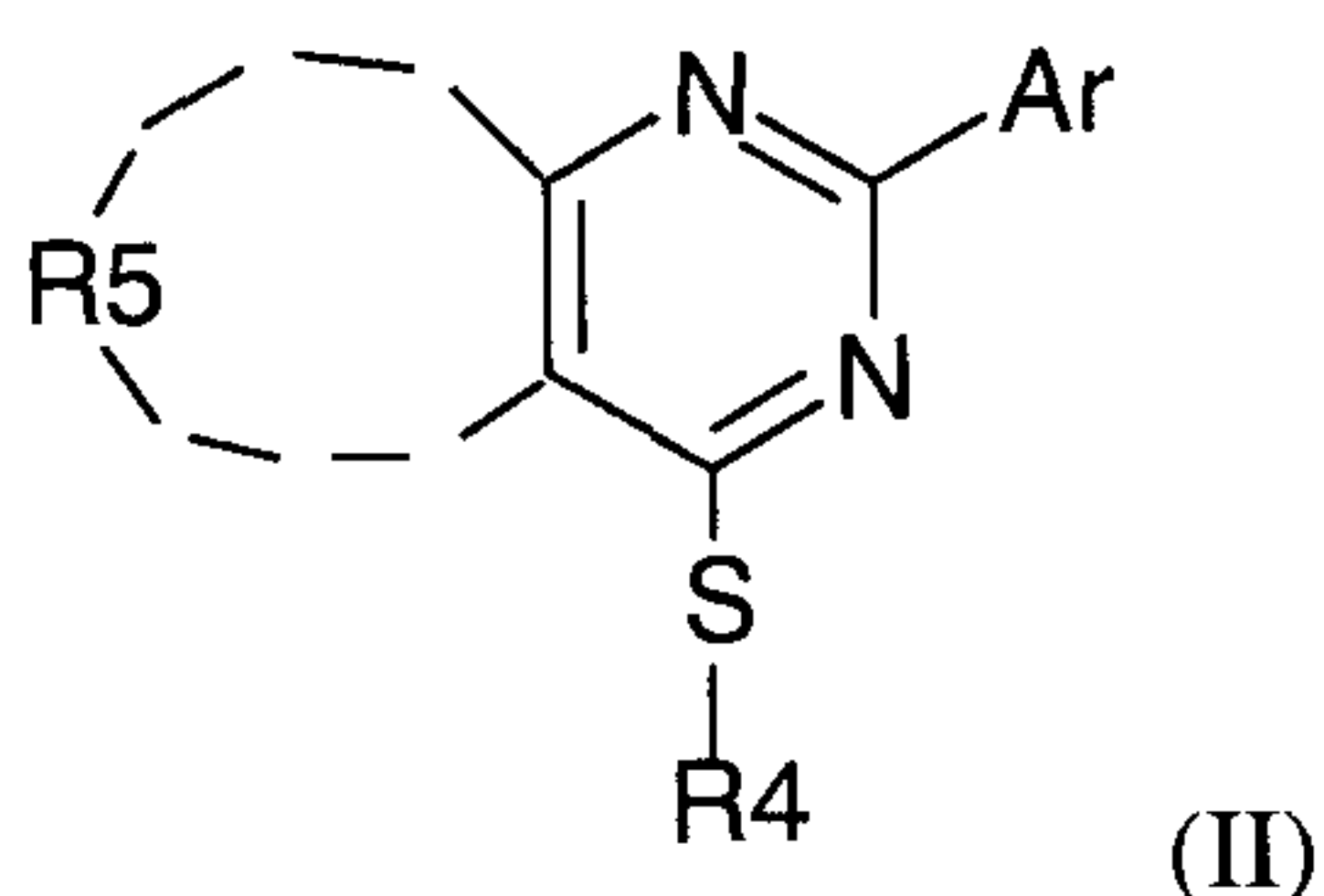
- . . - (CH₂)_n - OH;
- . - (CH₂)_n - OR;
- . - (CH₂)_n - CO - Het;
- . - (CH₂)_n - NH- CO-R;
- 5 . - (CH₂)_n - NH₂;
- . - (CH₂)_n - N(R,R');
- . - (CH₂)_n - CO - OH;
- . - (CH₂)_n - CO - OR;
- . a linear or branched C1-C12 alkyl radical;
- 10 . - (CH₂)_n - C(R) = CH-C(R) = CH₂;

- R₃ forms a phenyl or an heterocyclic condensed group with the two adjacent carbons of the pyrimidine residue, said condensed group being optionally substituted such as above defined for Ar and Het. and/or condensed to a cyclohexyl or oxanyl group, in turn optionally substituted such as above defined for Ar;
- 15

- n is 0 or an integer from 1 to 5;

or

- **A is a substituted pyrimidine of formula II**
- 20



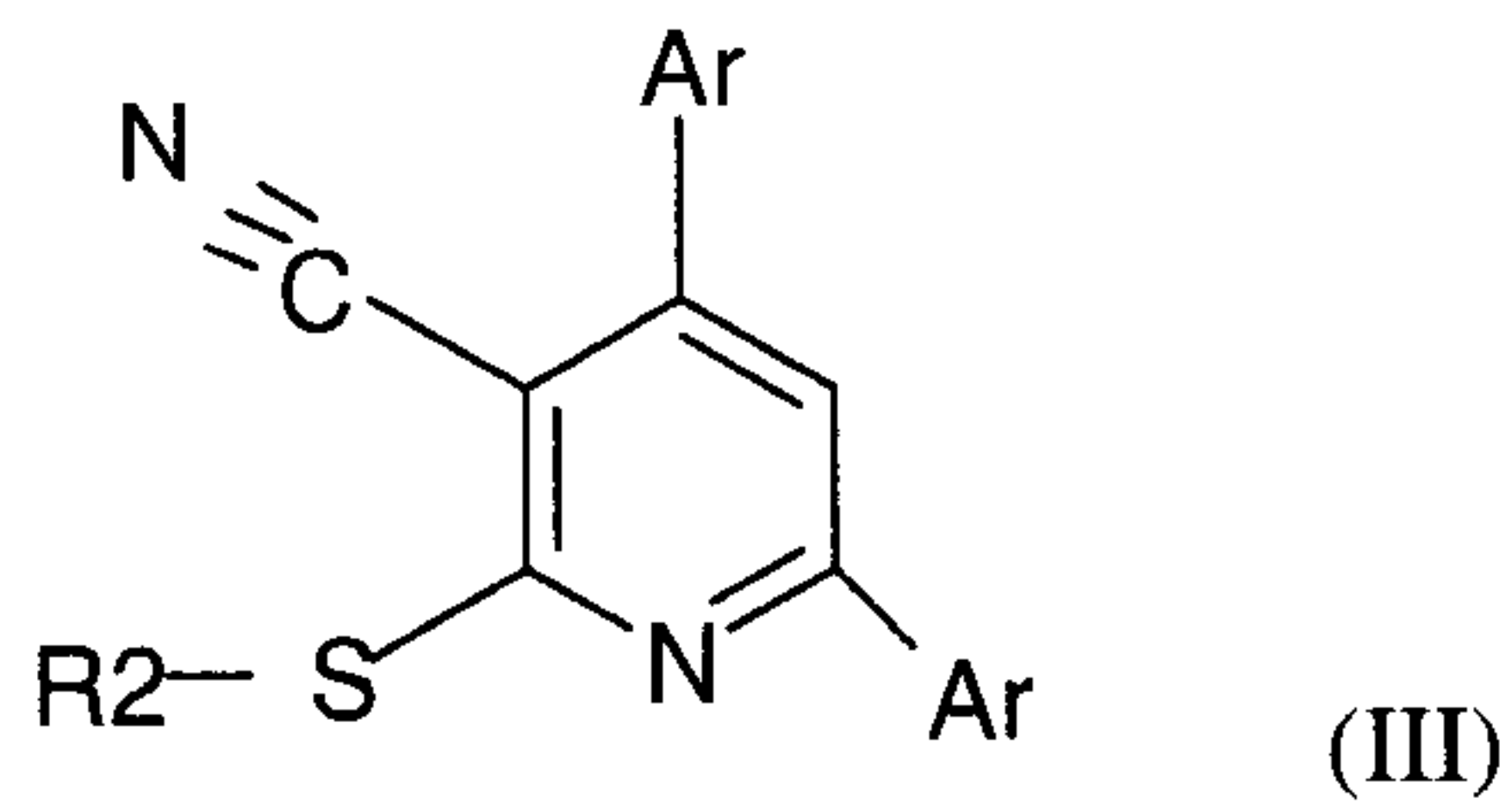
wherein

- 25 . . R₄ is a -CO-NH-Ar radical, optionally substituted such as above defined;
- R₅ forms a phenyl or heterocyclic group condensed to the two adjacent carbon groups of the pyrimidine residue, said phenyl or heterocyclic group being optionally substituted such as
- 30 above defined, and

Ar being such as above defined with respect to formula I

or

- 35 - A is a substituted pyridine group of formula III



5

wherein,

Ar and R2 are as above defined with respect to formula I.

10

In a first family, preferred ligands have formula I wherein R3 forms a phenyl or a thienyl group with the pyrimidine residue, said phenyl or thienyl group being optionally substituted such as above defined.

2

Advantageously,

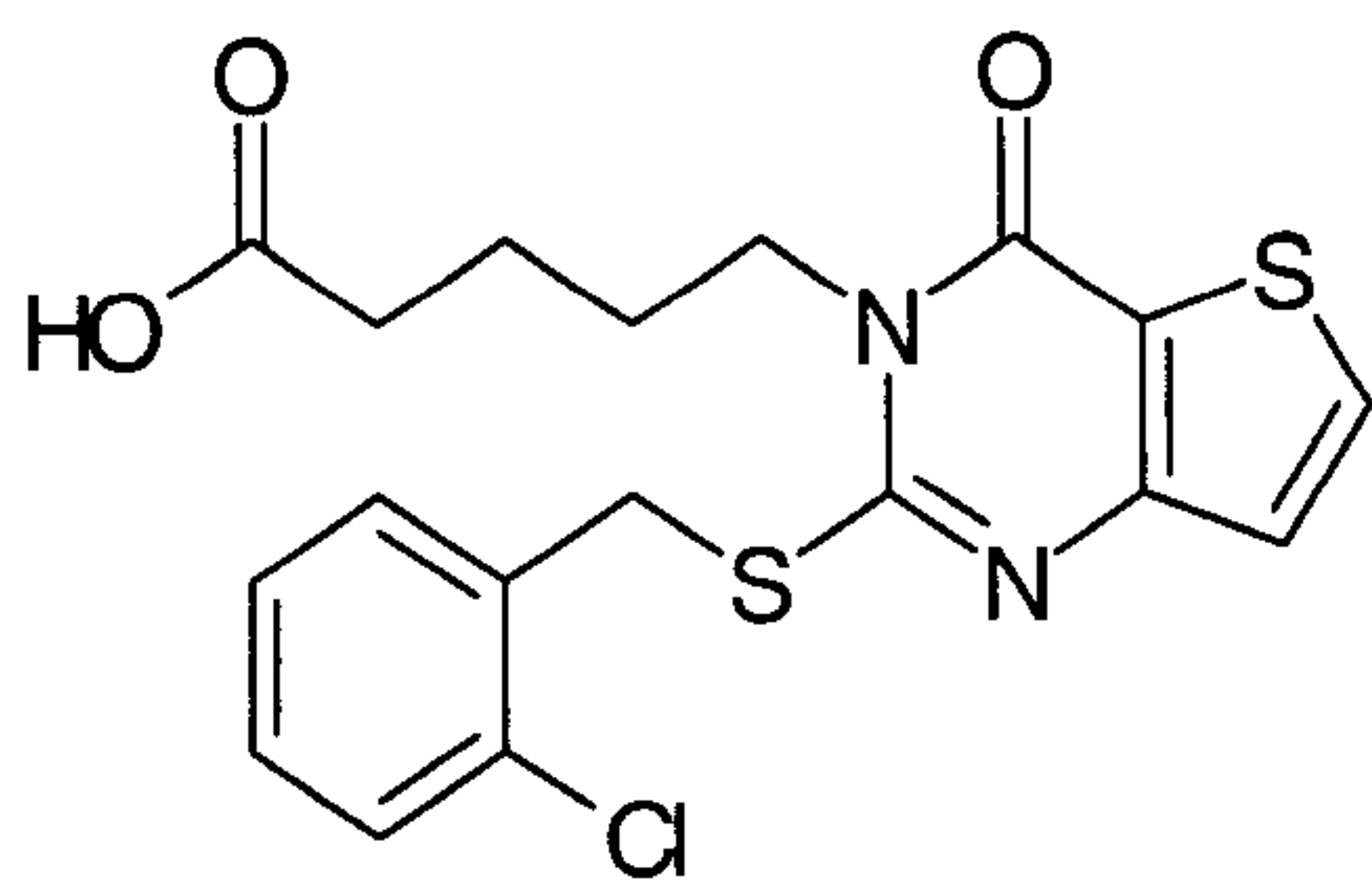
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- R1 is selected from the group comprising - (CH₂)_n-CO-OH; a branched C1- C6 alkyl group; -(CH₂)_n- C3-C6 cycloalkyl group; - (CH₂)_n-NH₂; - (CH₂)_n-NH-CO-R; - (CH₂)_n Het., with Het. representing a pyridyl radical.

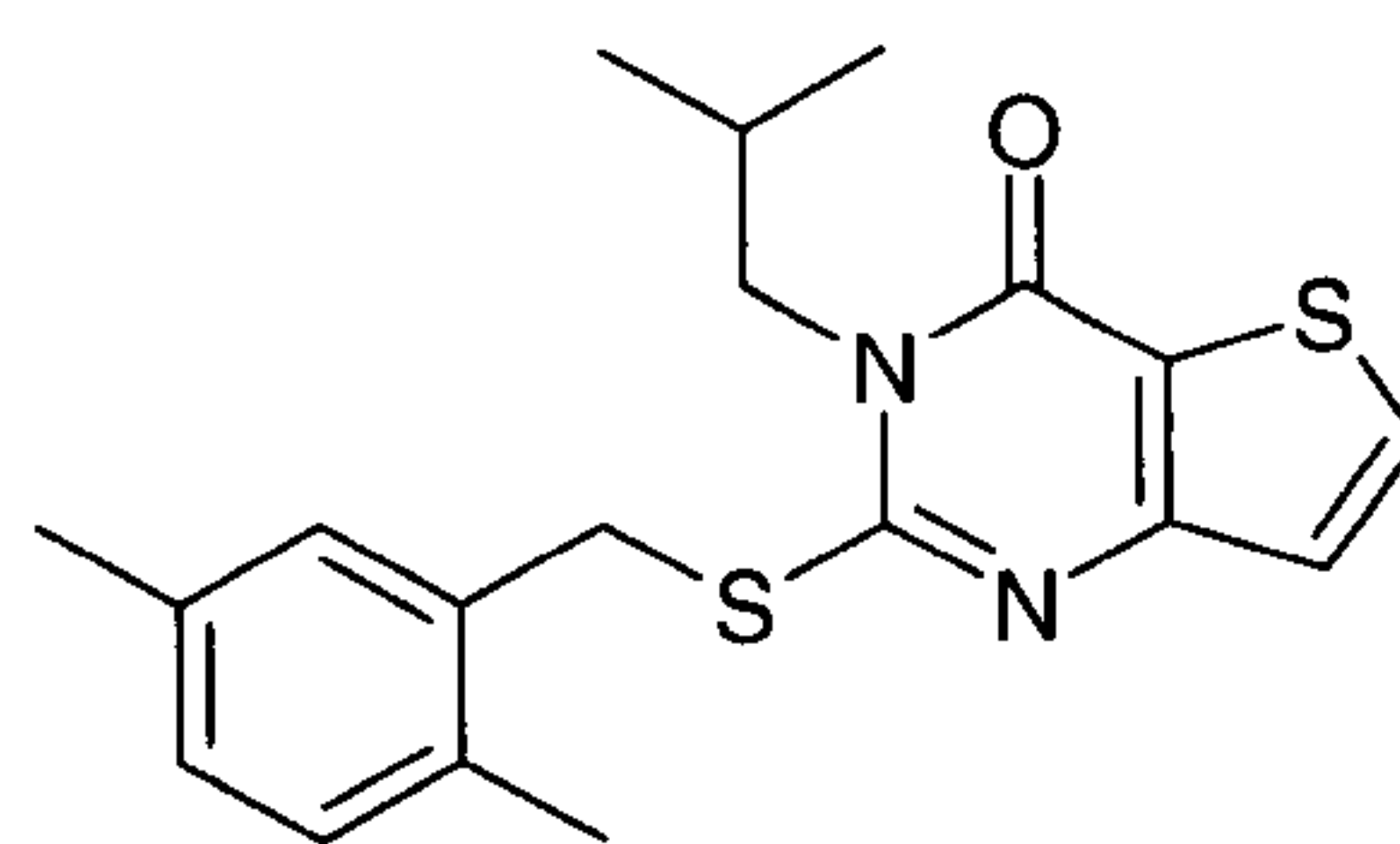
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In more preferred derivatives of said first family, R1 and R3 are as above defined and R2 is a - (CH₂)_n - phenyl group, advantageously substituted by one or several C1-C3 alkyl groups or an halogen, particularly Cl.

Preferred derivatives have the following formulae

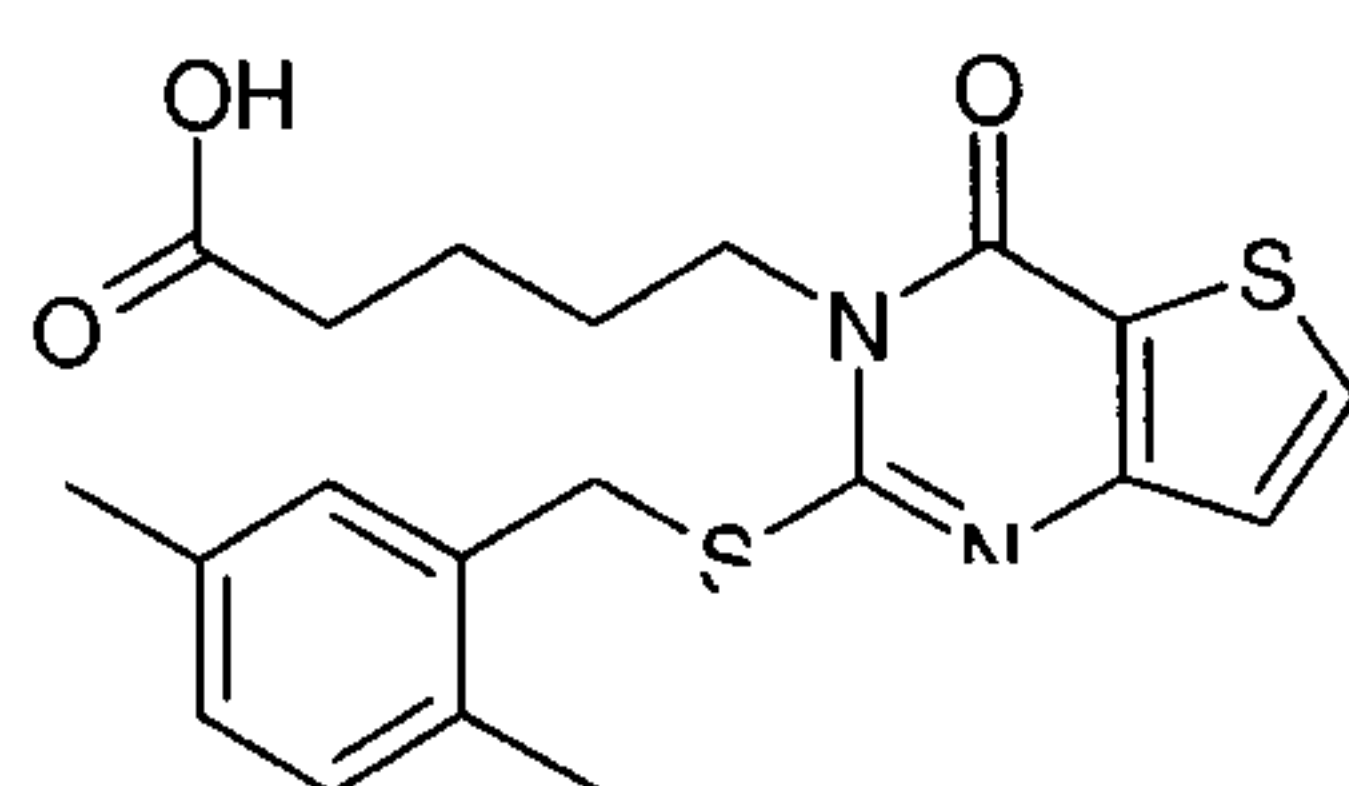


Compound 1



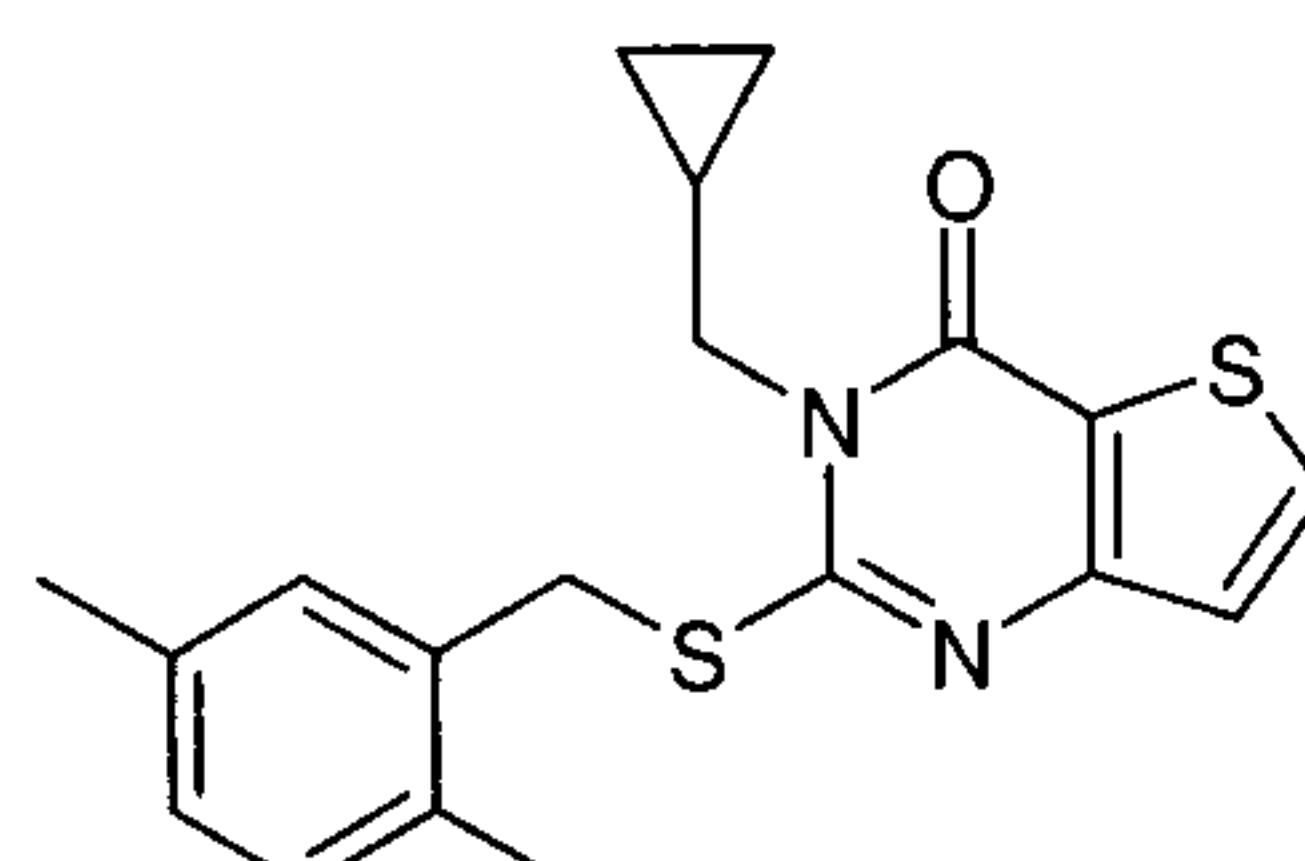
Compound 2

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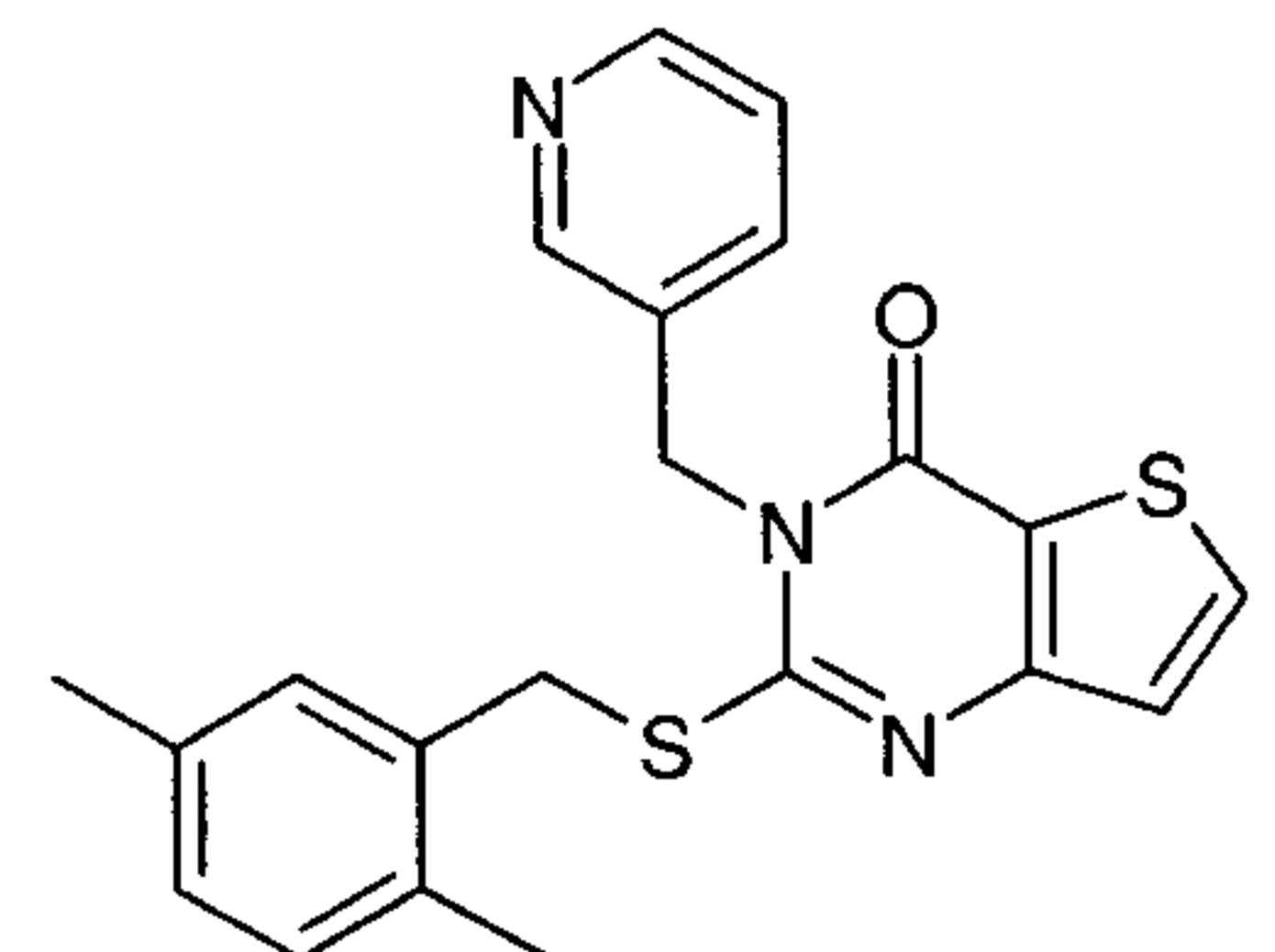


THE-22

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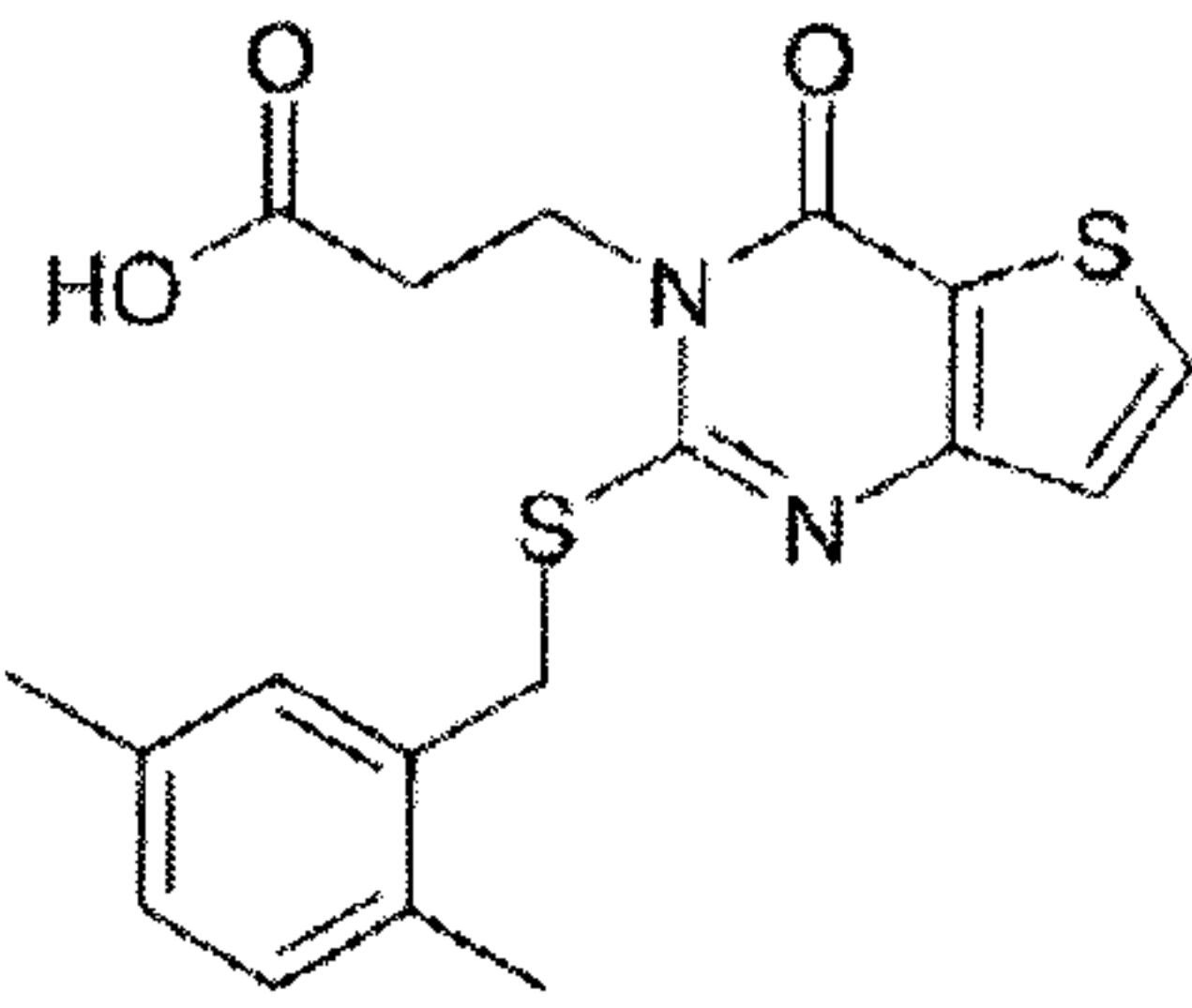
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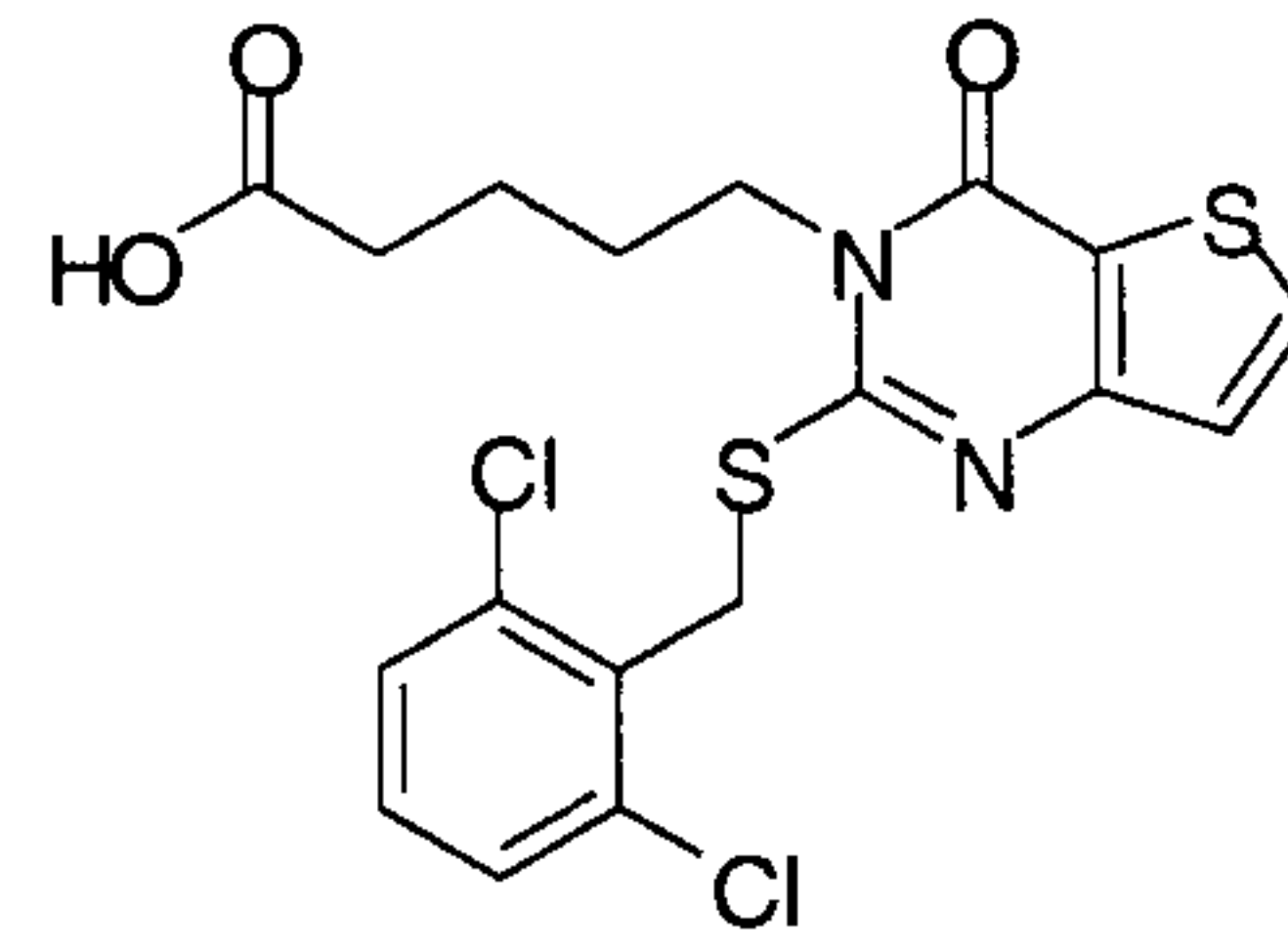
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Compound 3



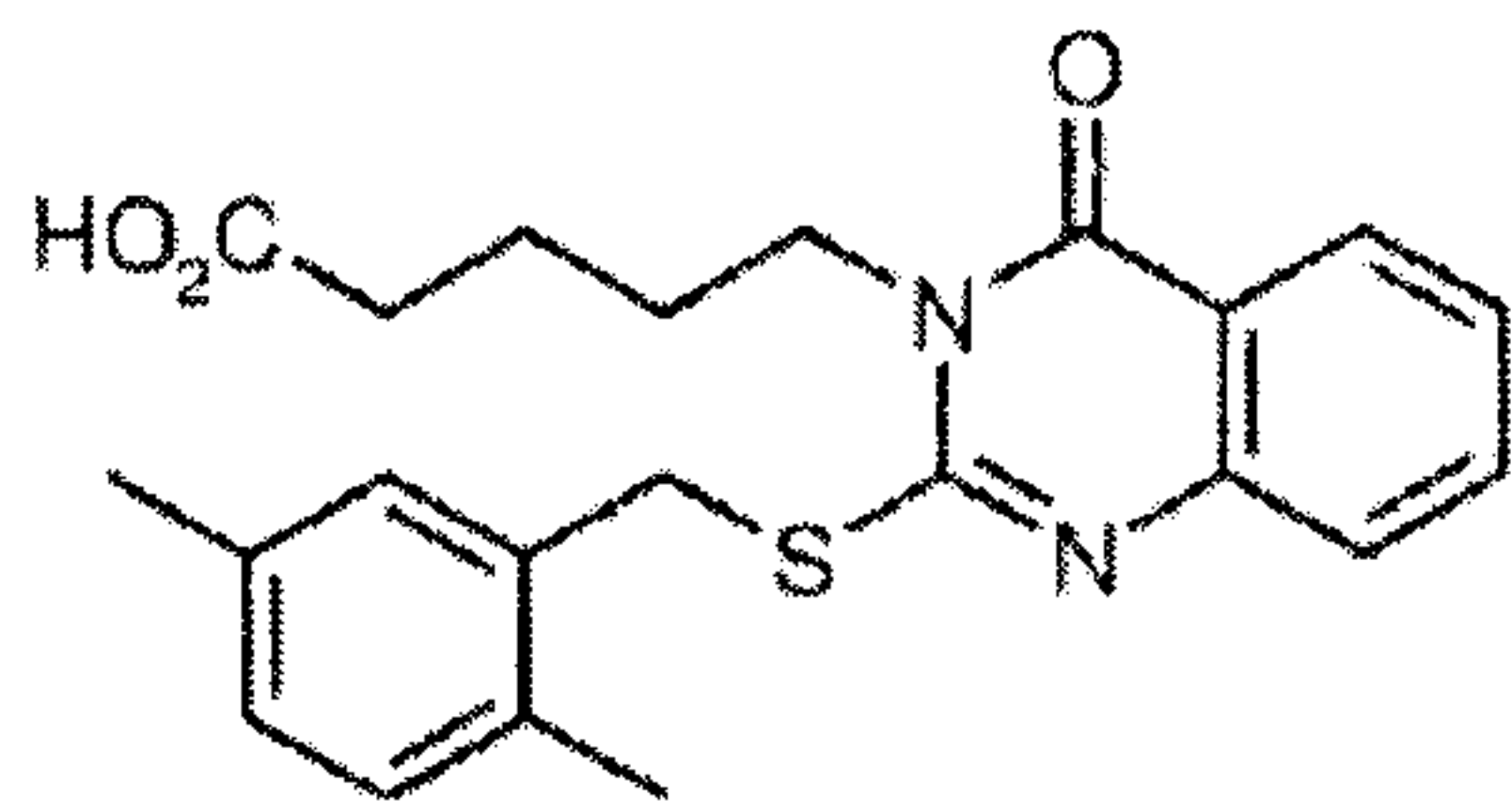
Compound 4



Compound 5

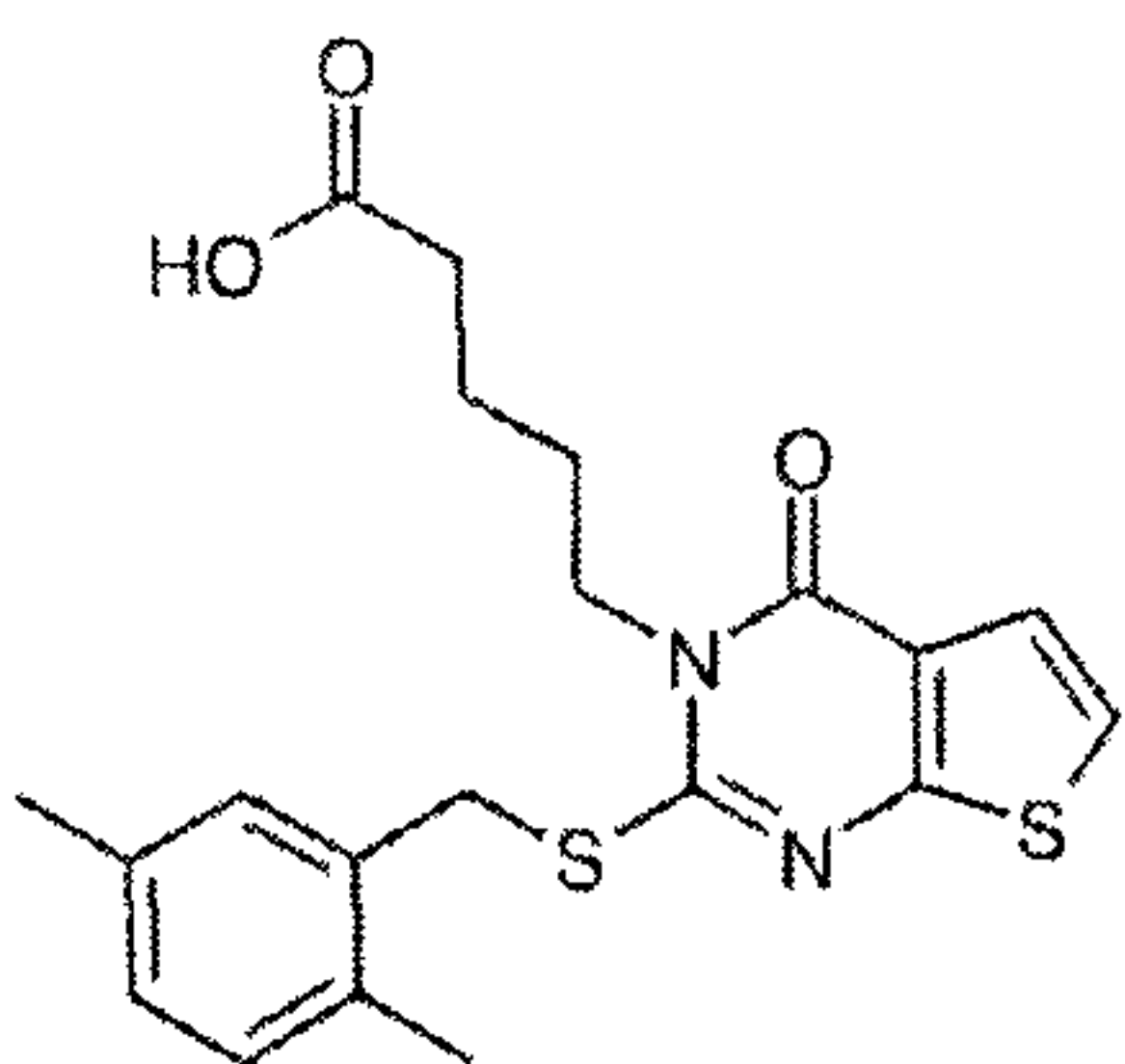
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Compound 6

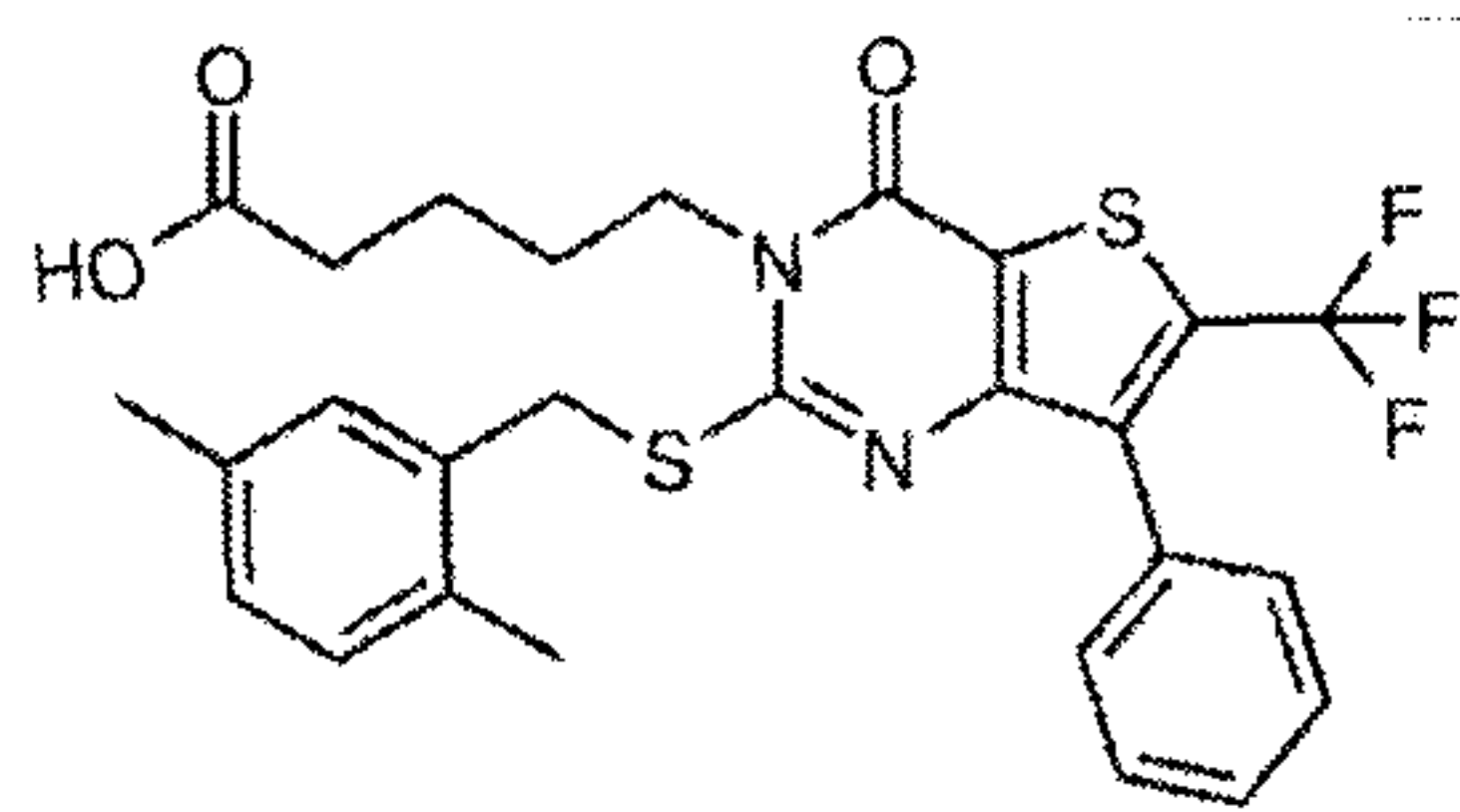


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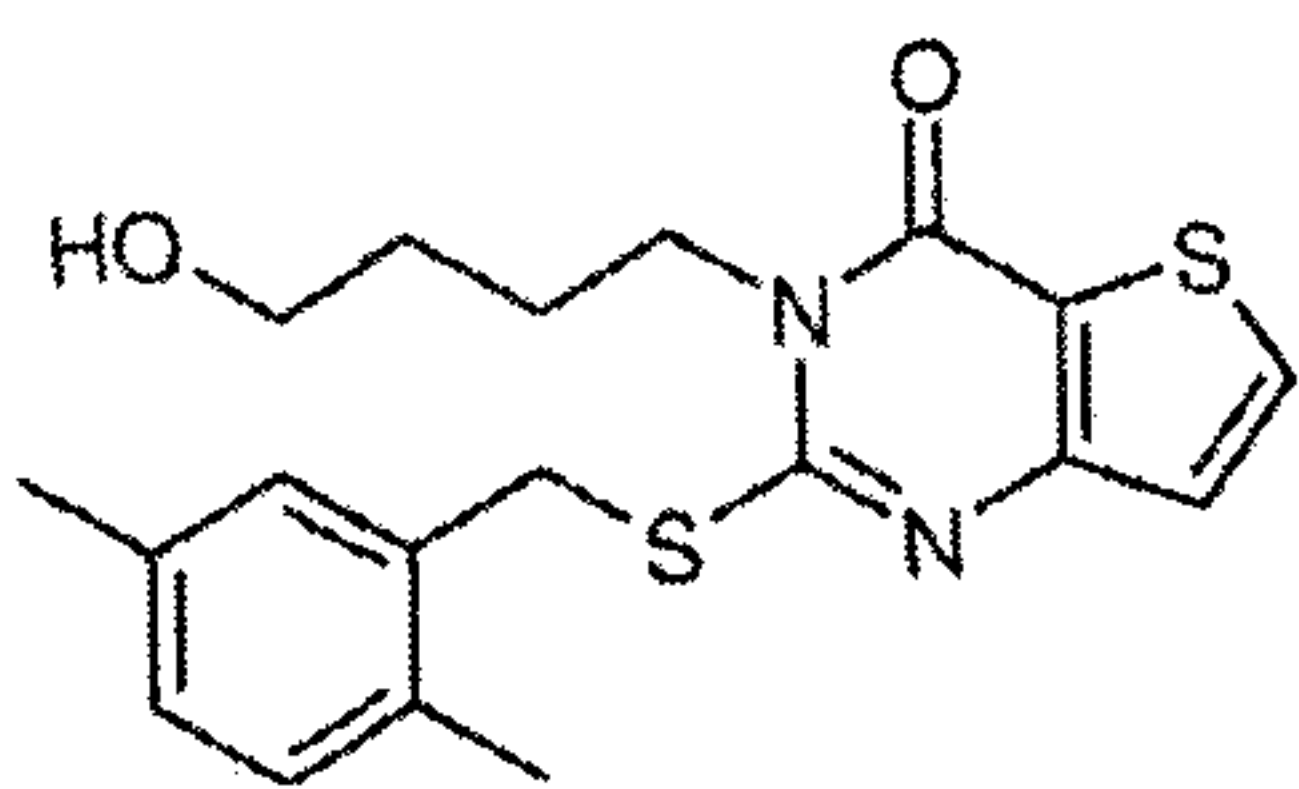
Compound 8



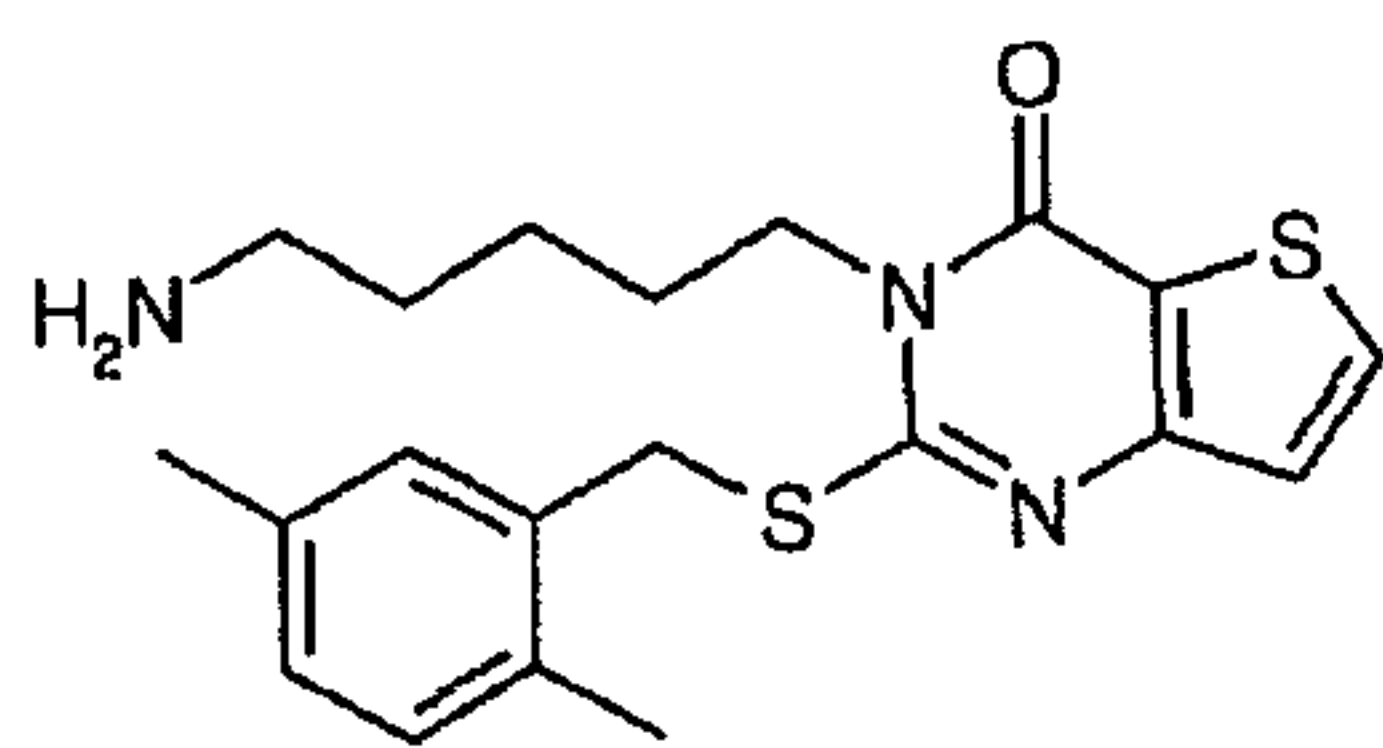
Compound 9



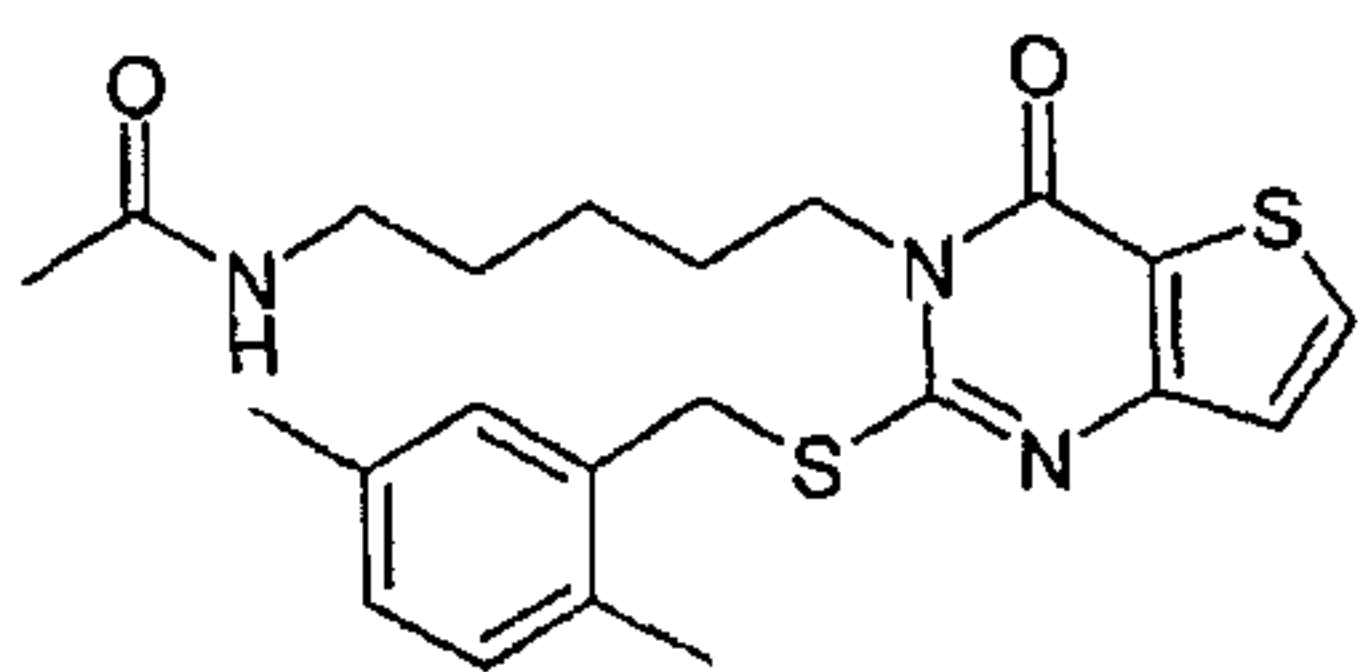
Compound 10



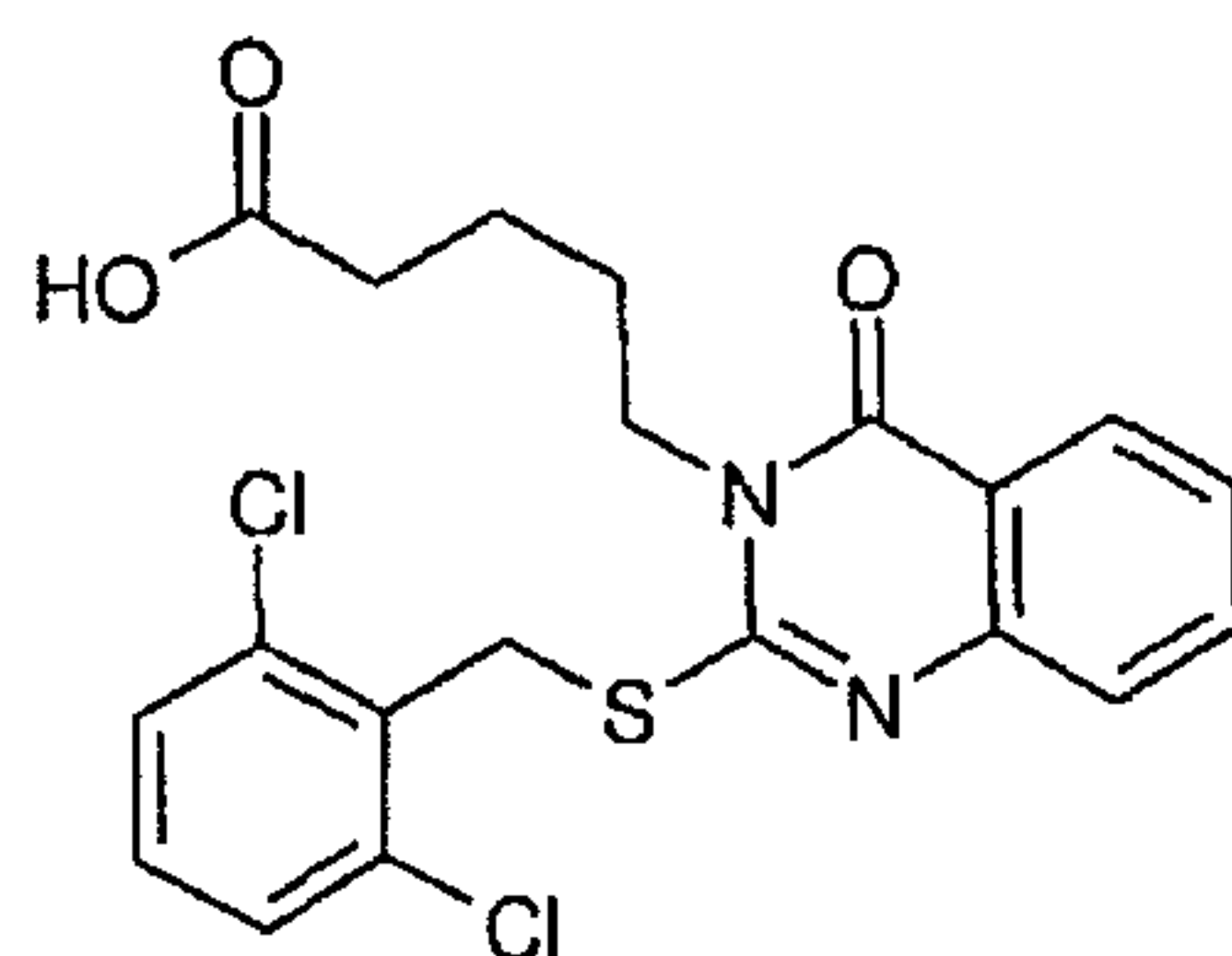
Compound 11



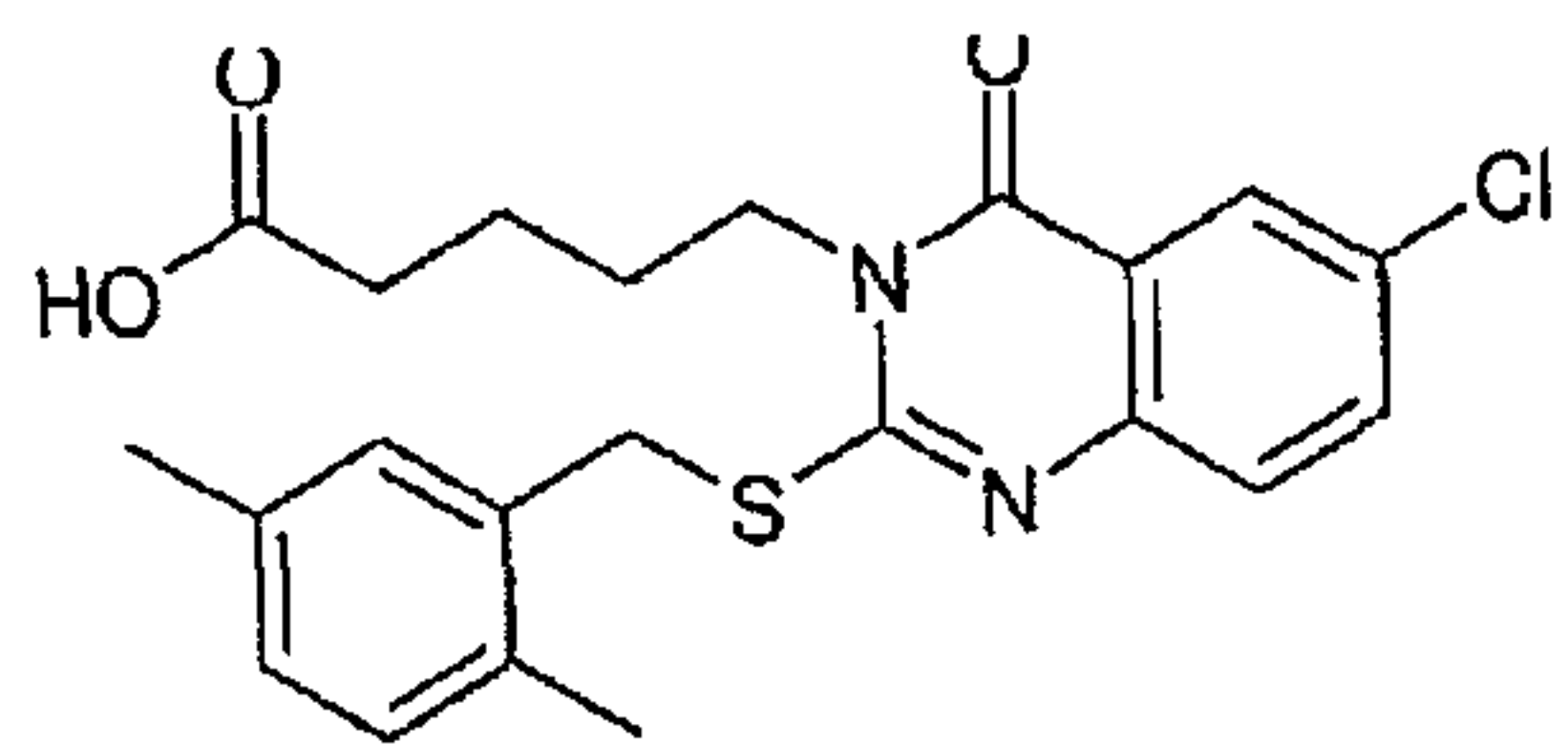
Compound 12



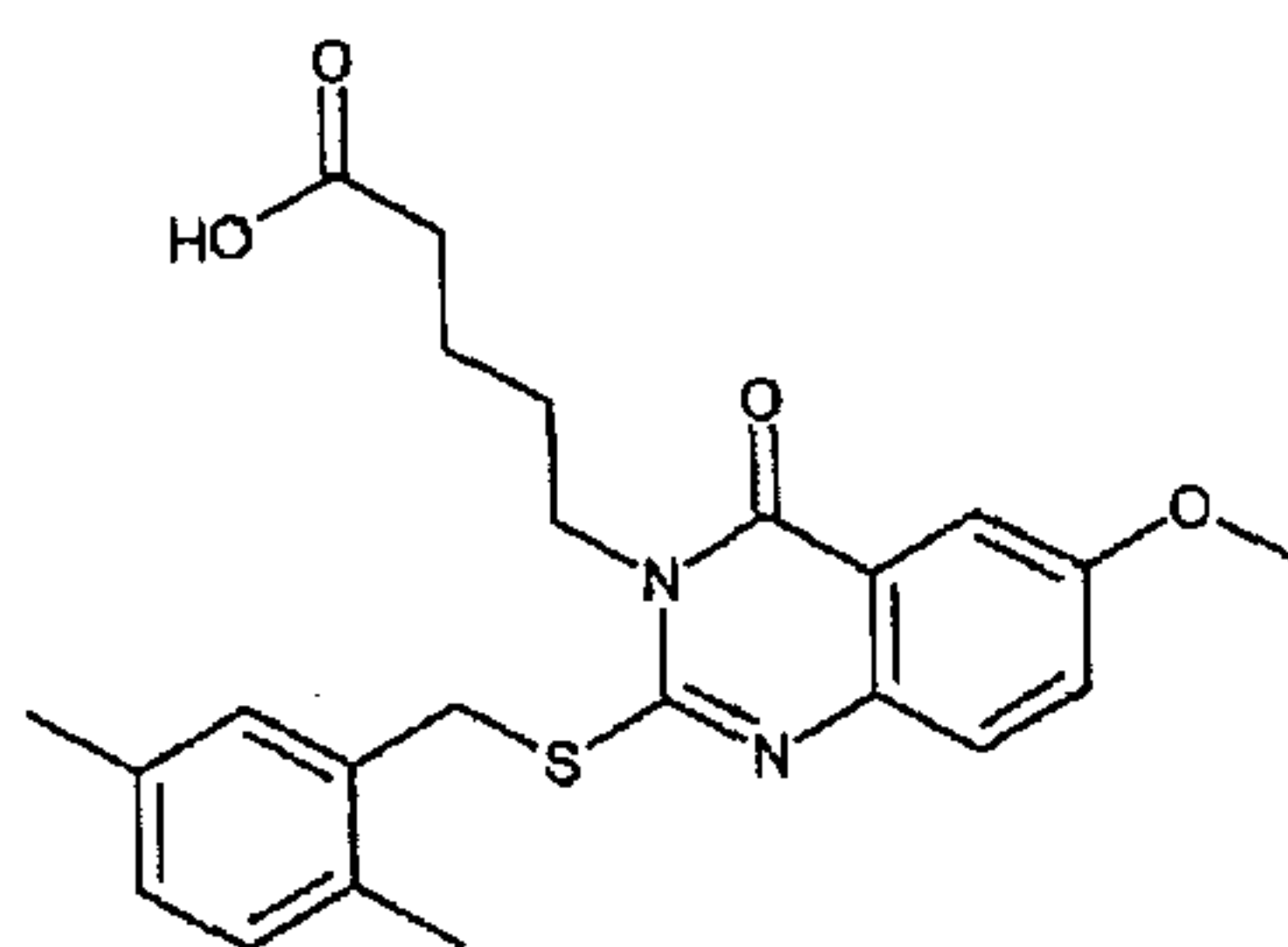
Compound 13



Compound 14



Compound 15



Compound 16

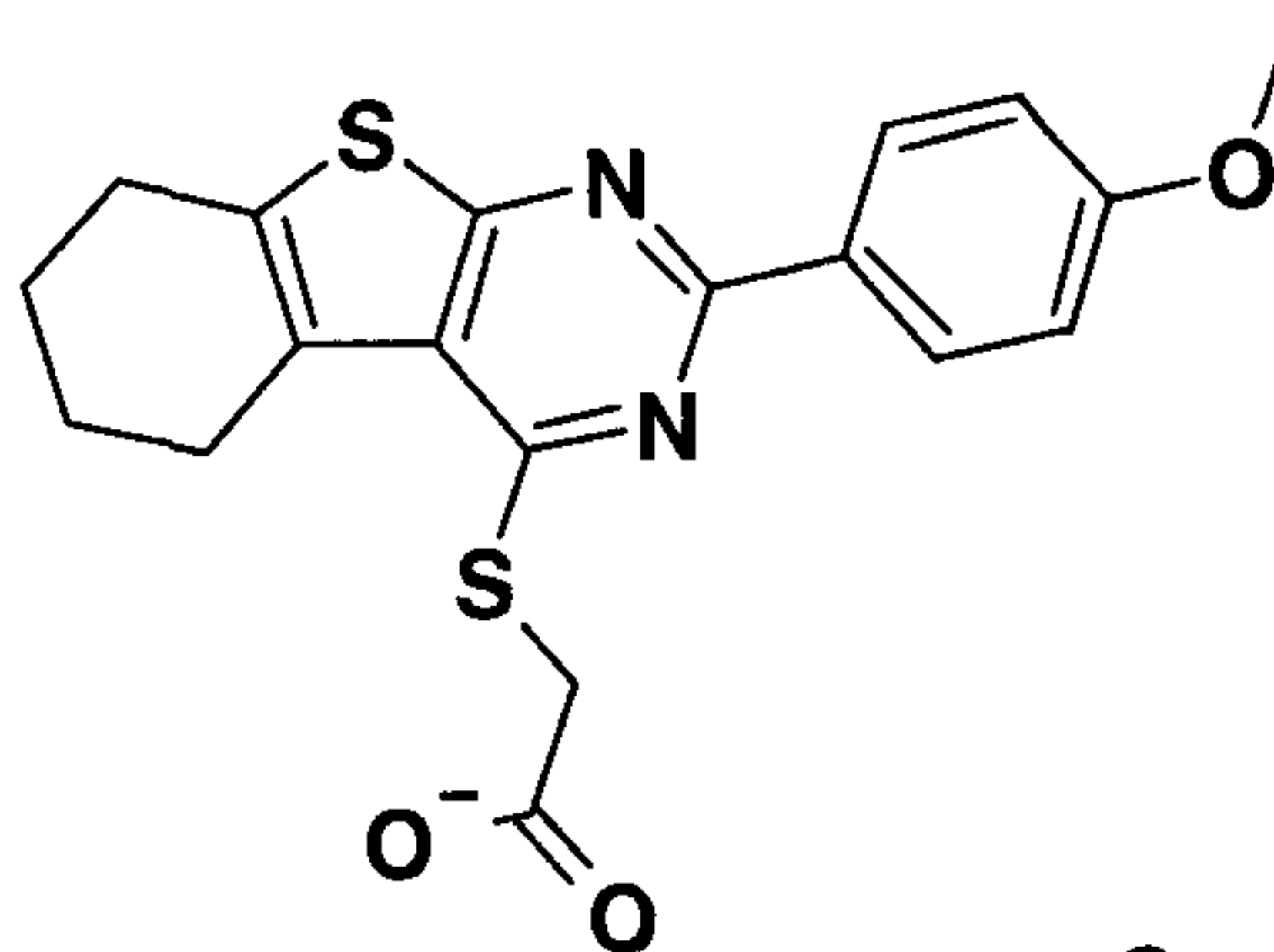
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In a second family, preferred ligands have formula II wherein Ar and R4 are a phenyl group, advantageously substituted such as above defined with respect to formula I.

- 5 In more preferred derivatives R5 forms a phenyl group with the two adjacent carbon atoms of the pyrimidine residue or a thienyl group optionally condensed to a cyclohexyl or a oxanyl group, optionally substituted such as above defined with respect to Ar in formula I

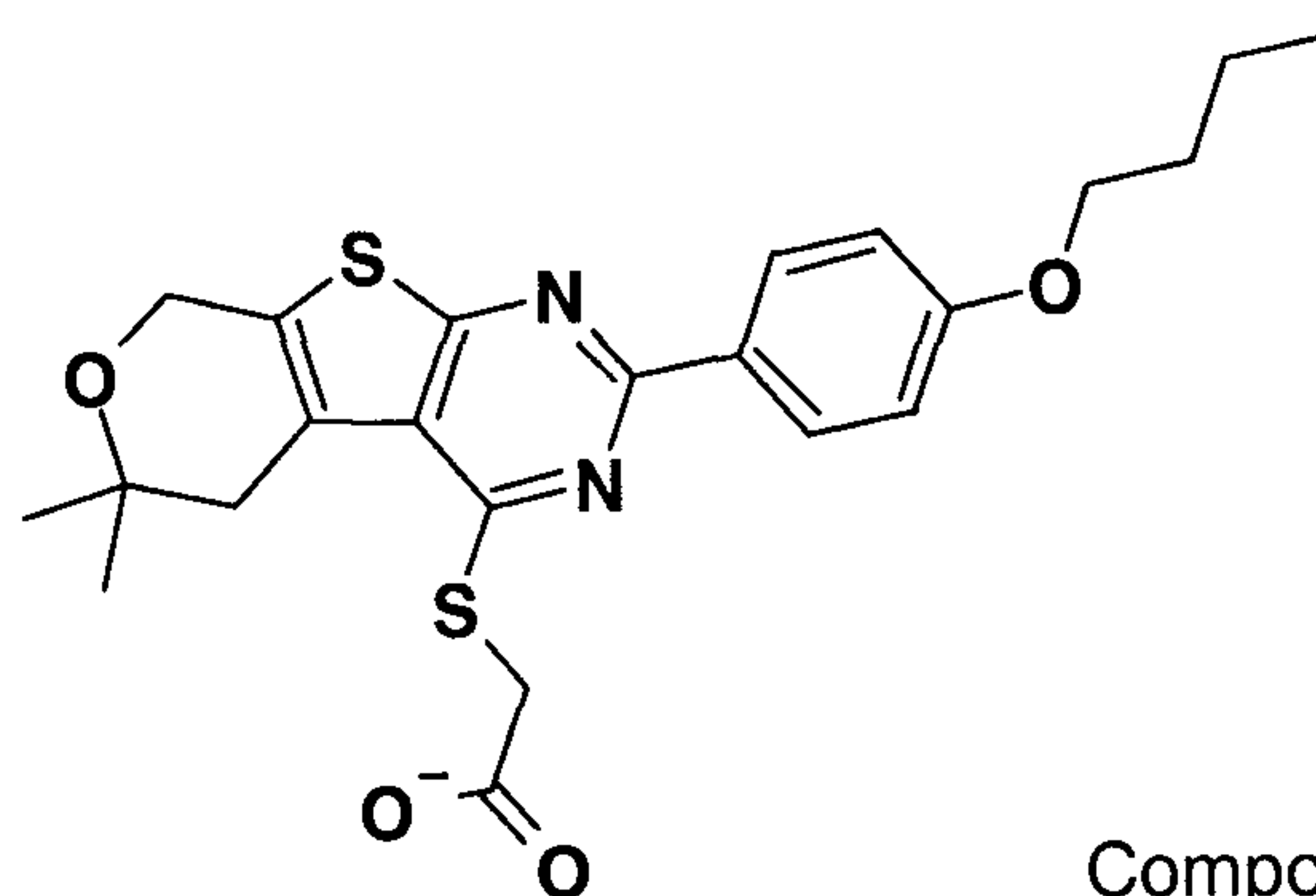
Preferred derivatives have the following formulae:

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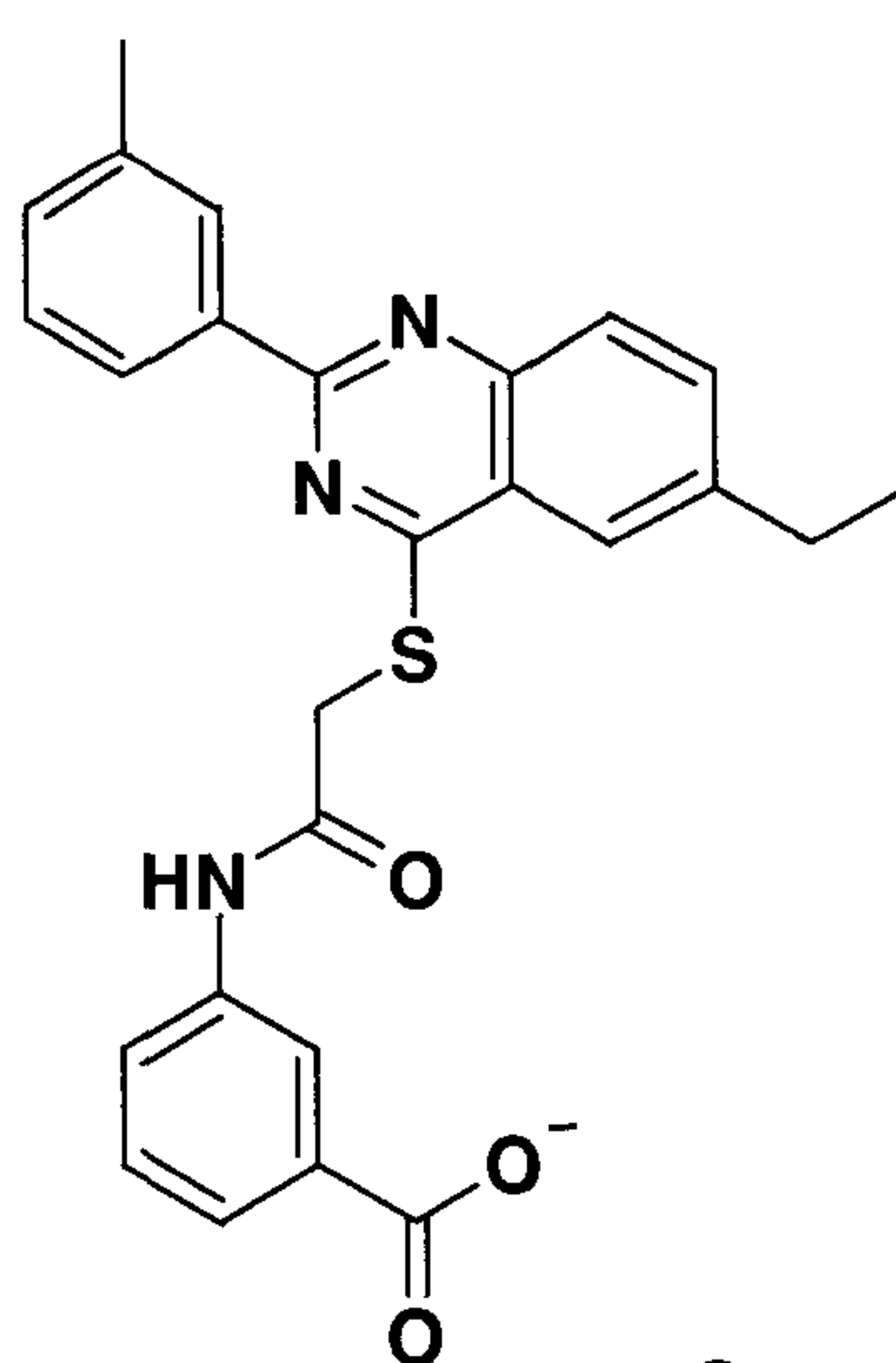
Compound 17

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Compound 18

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Compound 19

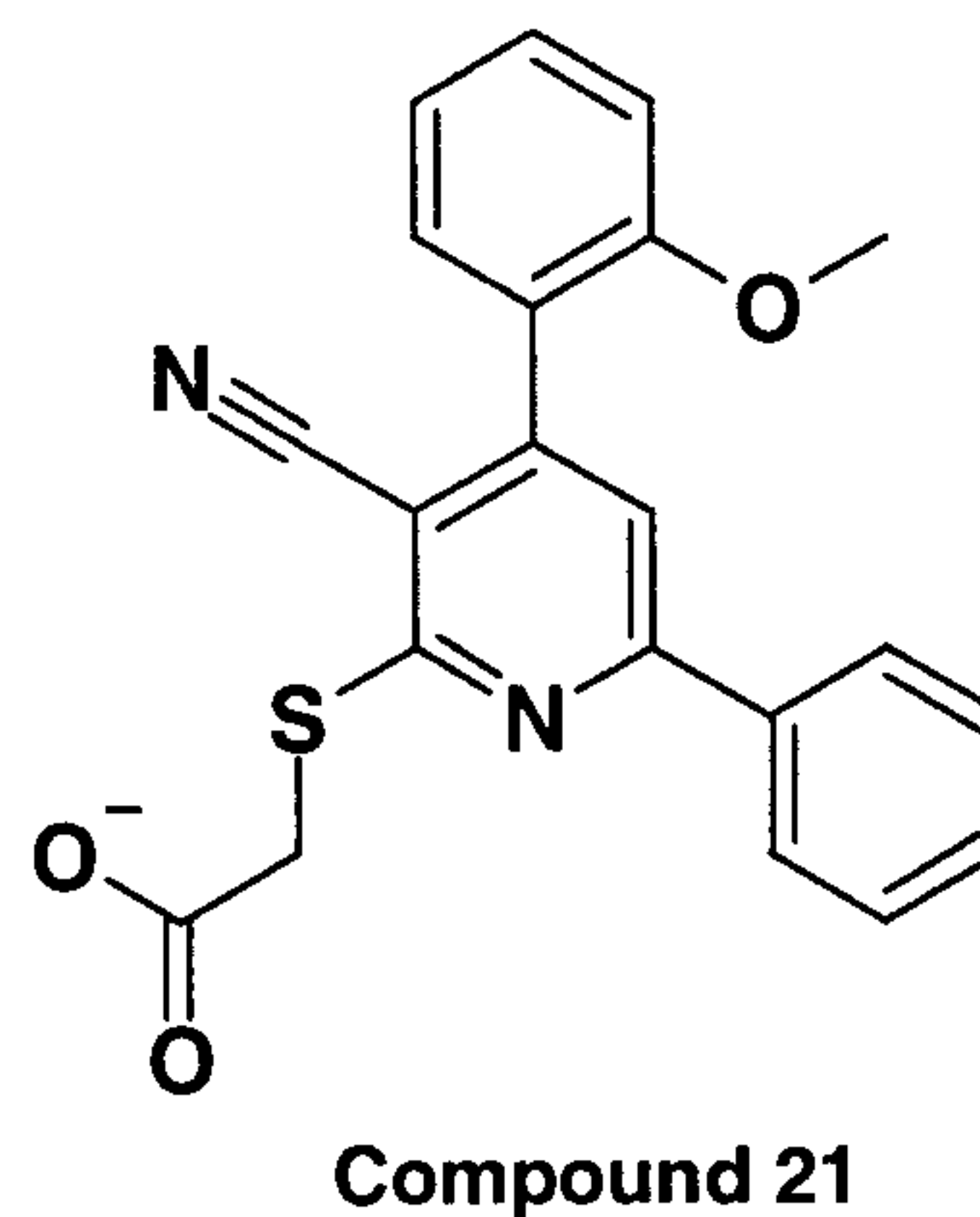
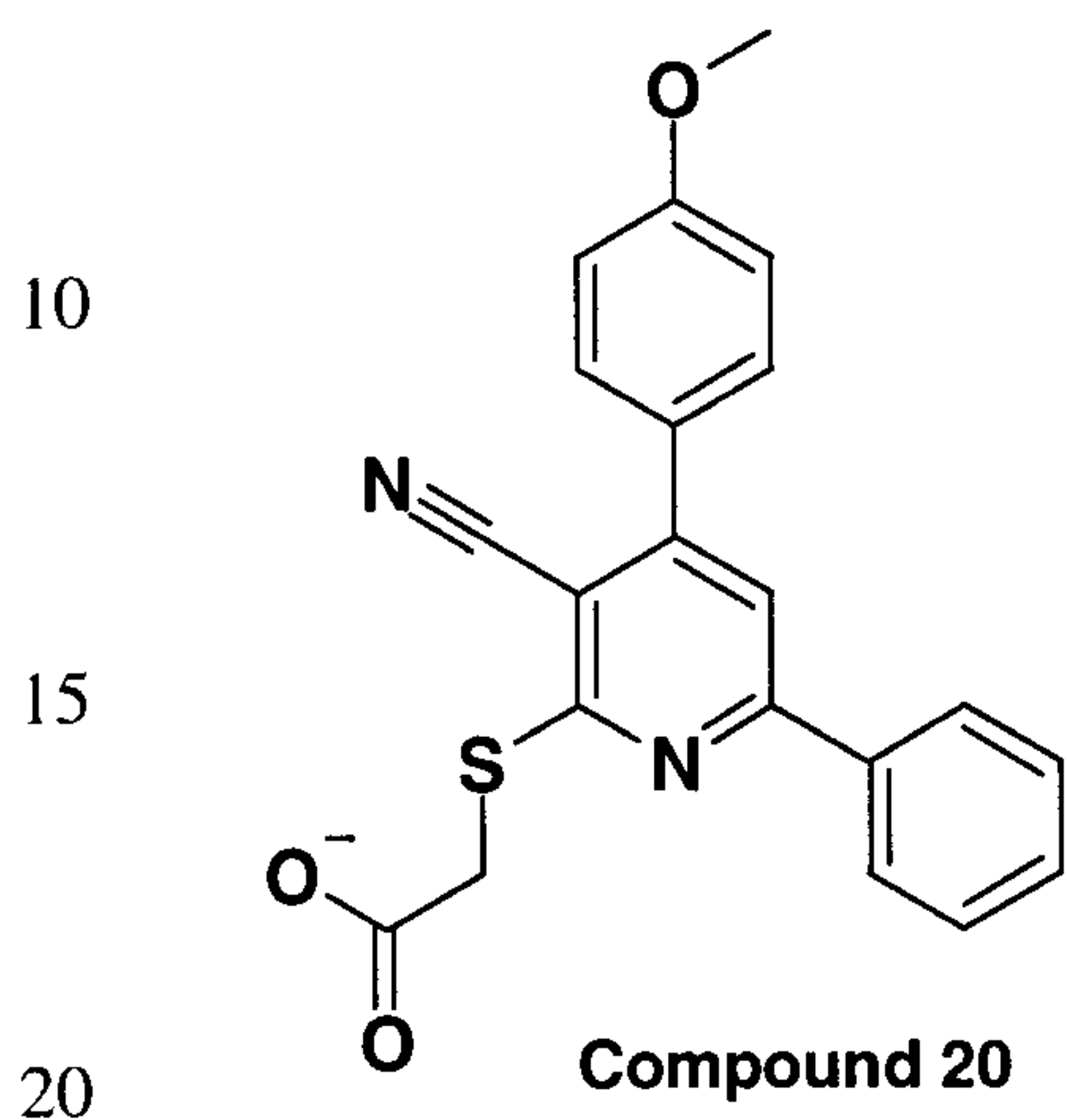
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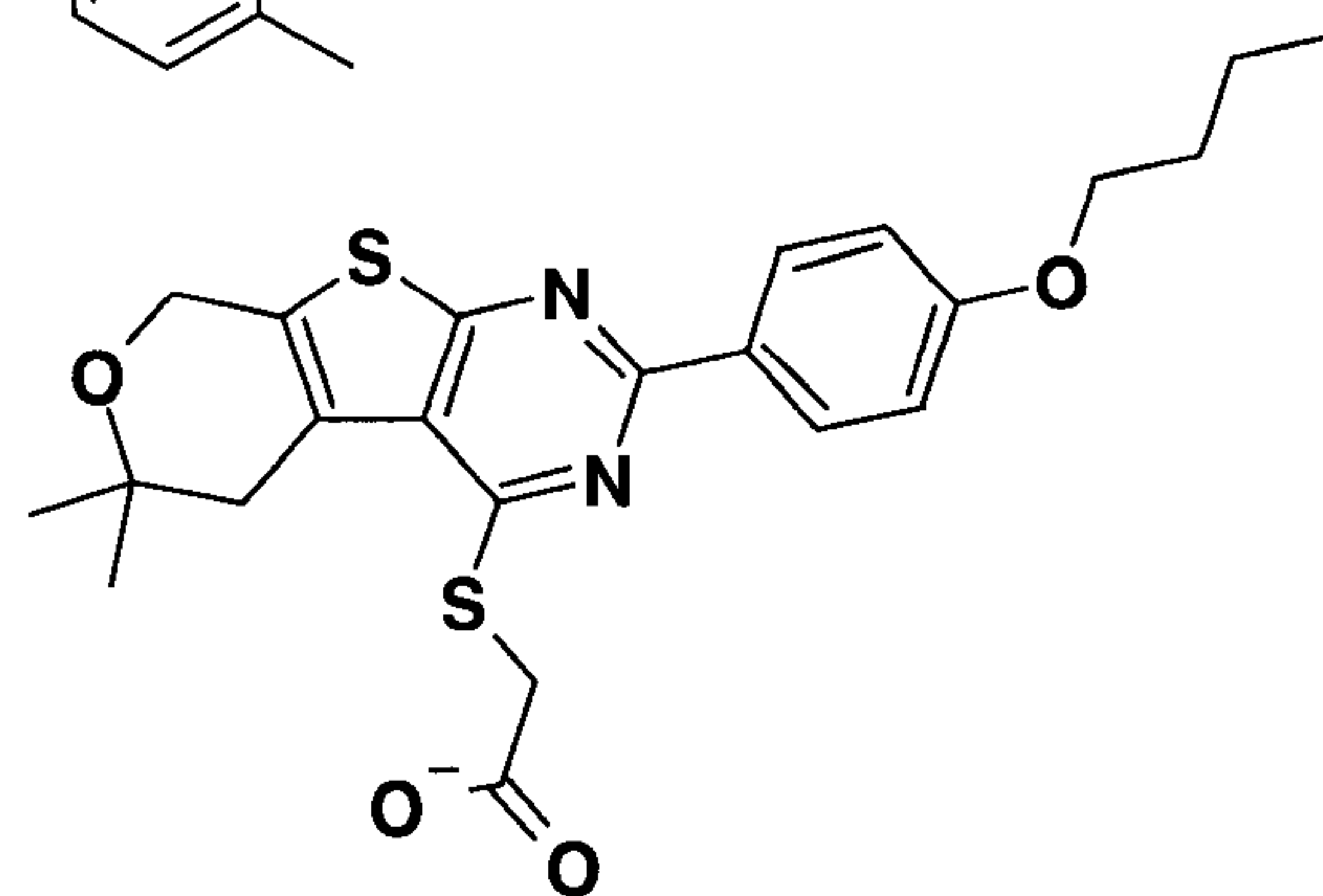
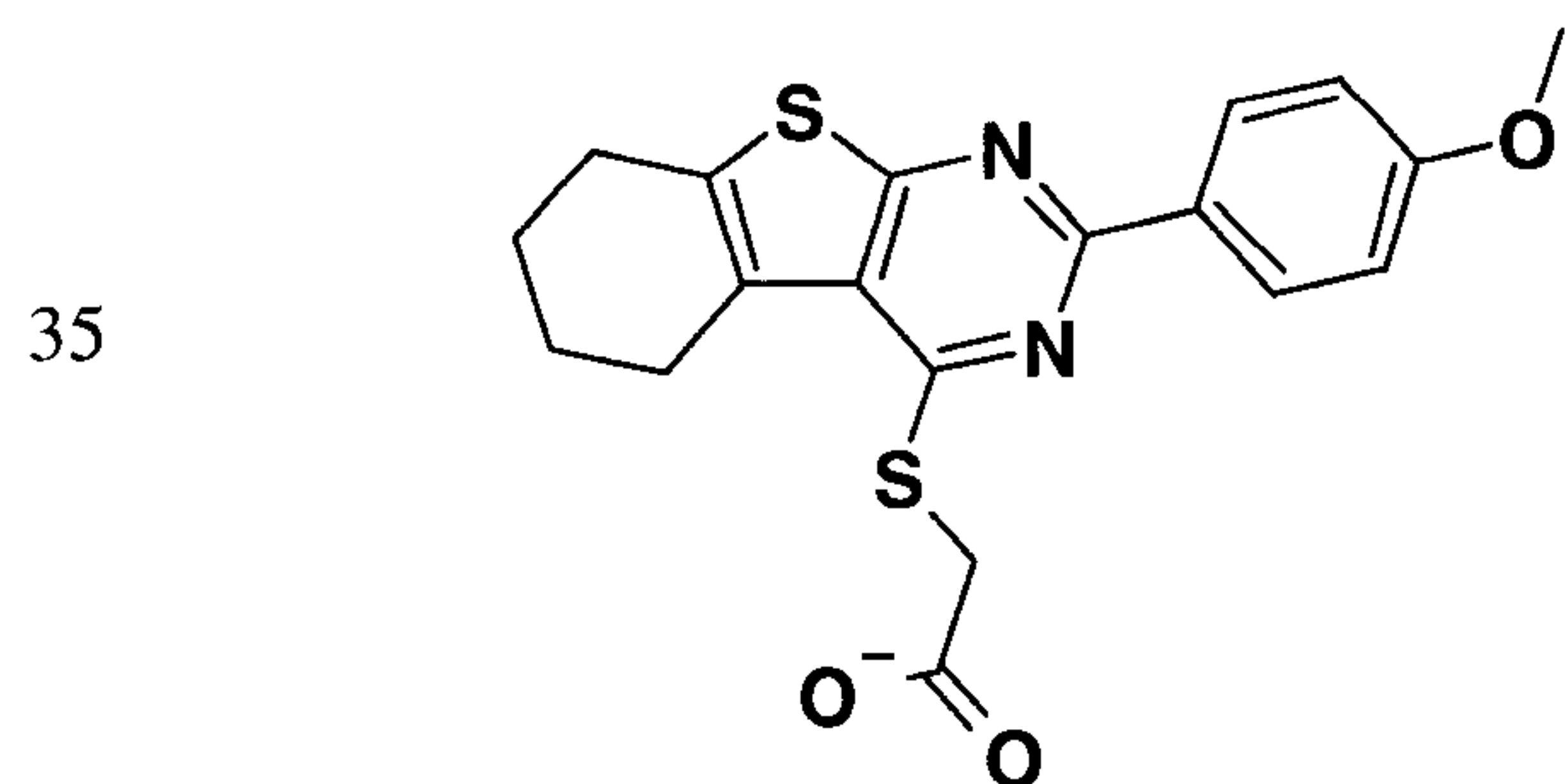
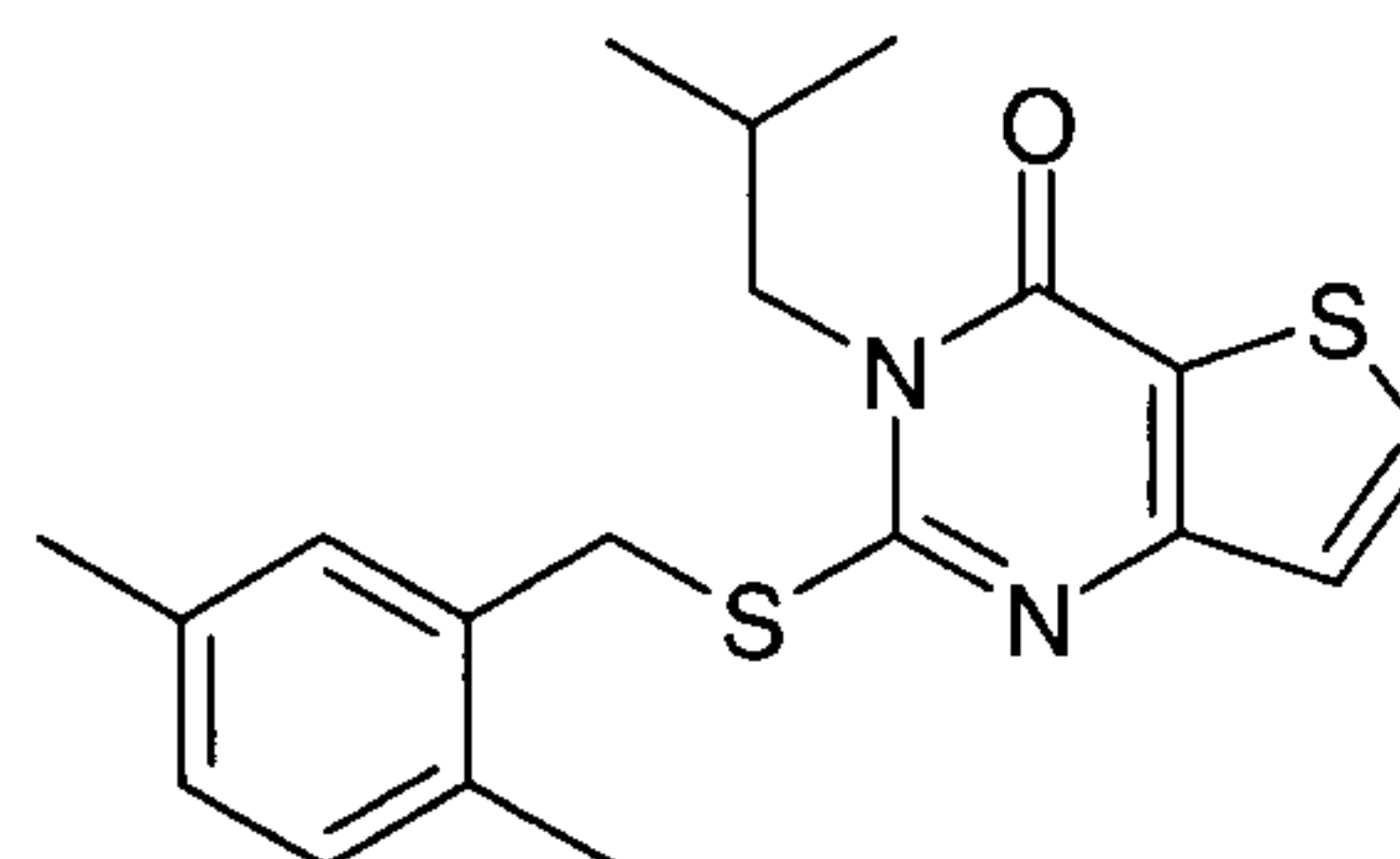
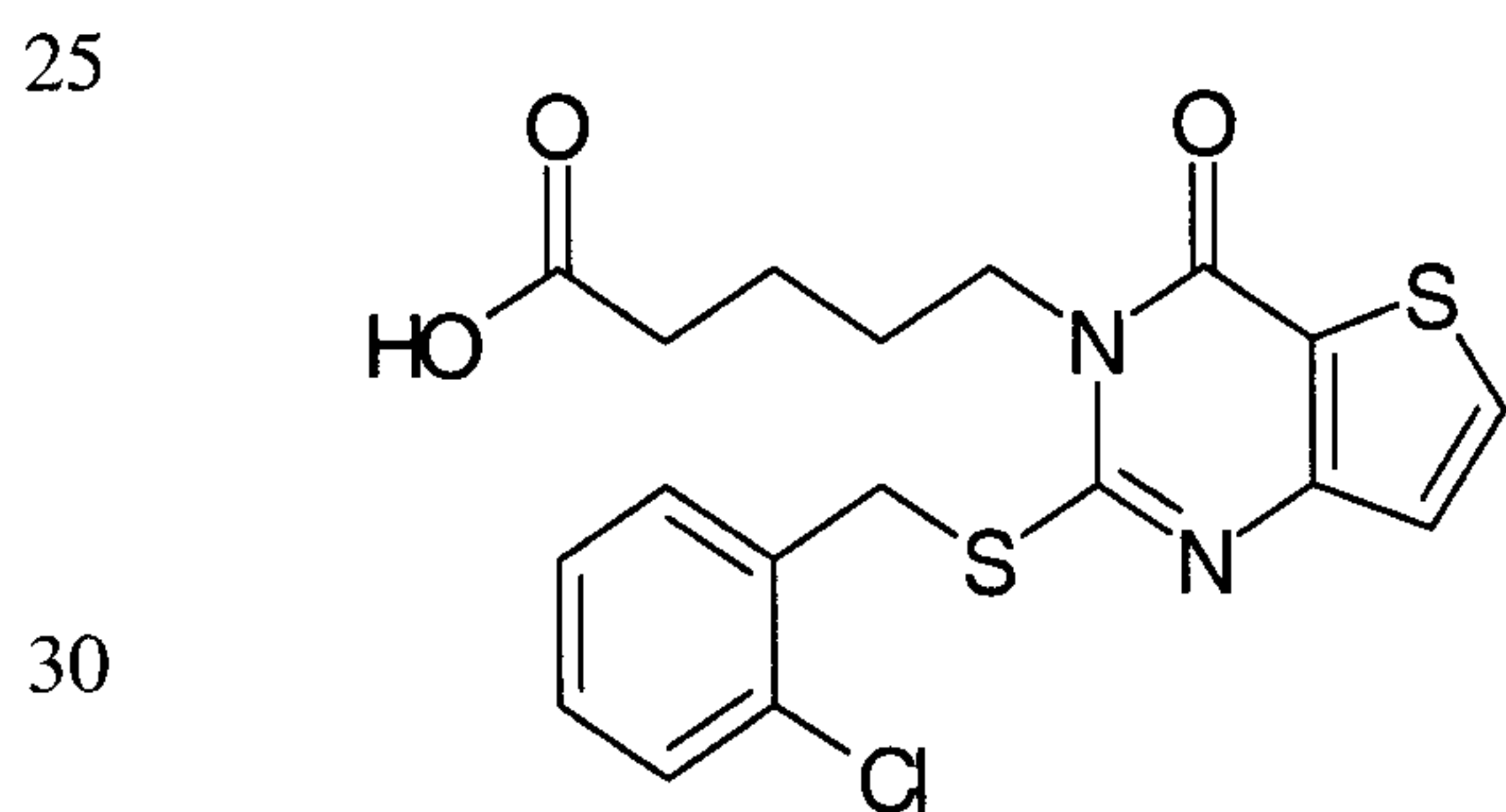
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In a third embodiment of the invention preferred ligands have formula III, wherein both Ar are phenyl groups, optionally substituted such as above defined, and R₂ is as above defined with respect to formula I, preferably a $-(CH_2)_n-COOH$ group.

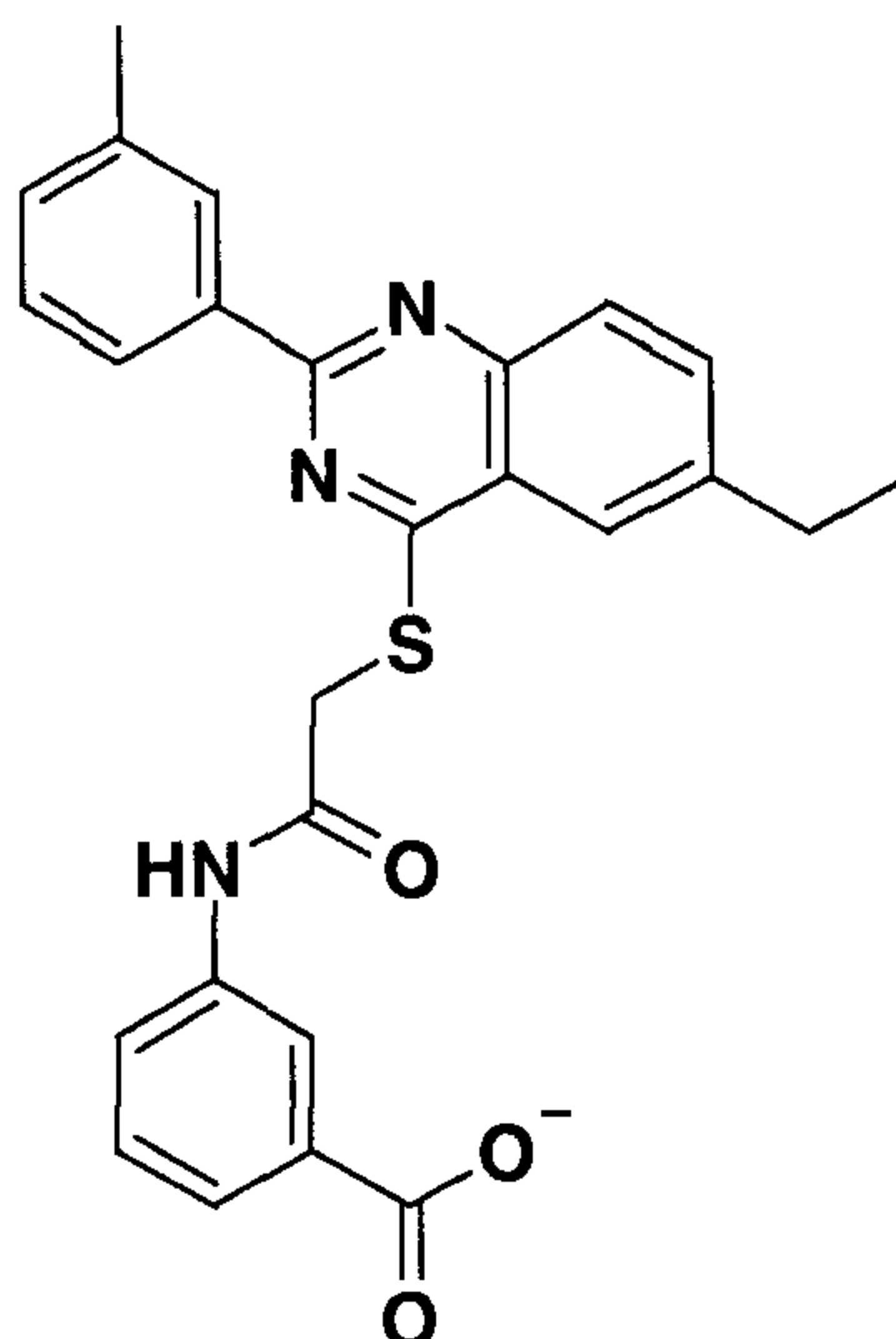
5 Preferred derivatives have the following formulae:



The invention also relates to the above defined derivatives as new products, the following compounds 1, 2, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21 being excluded:

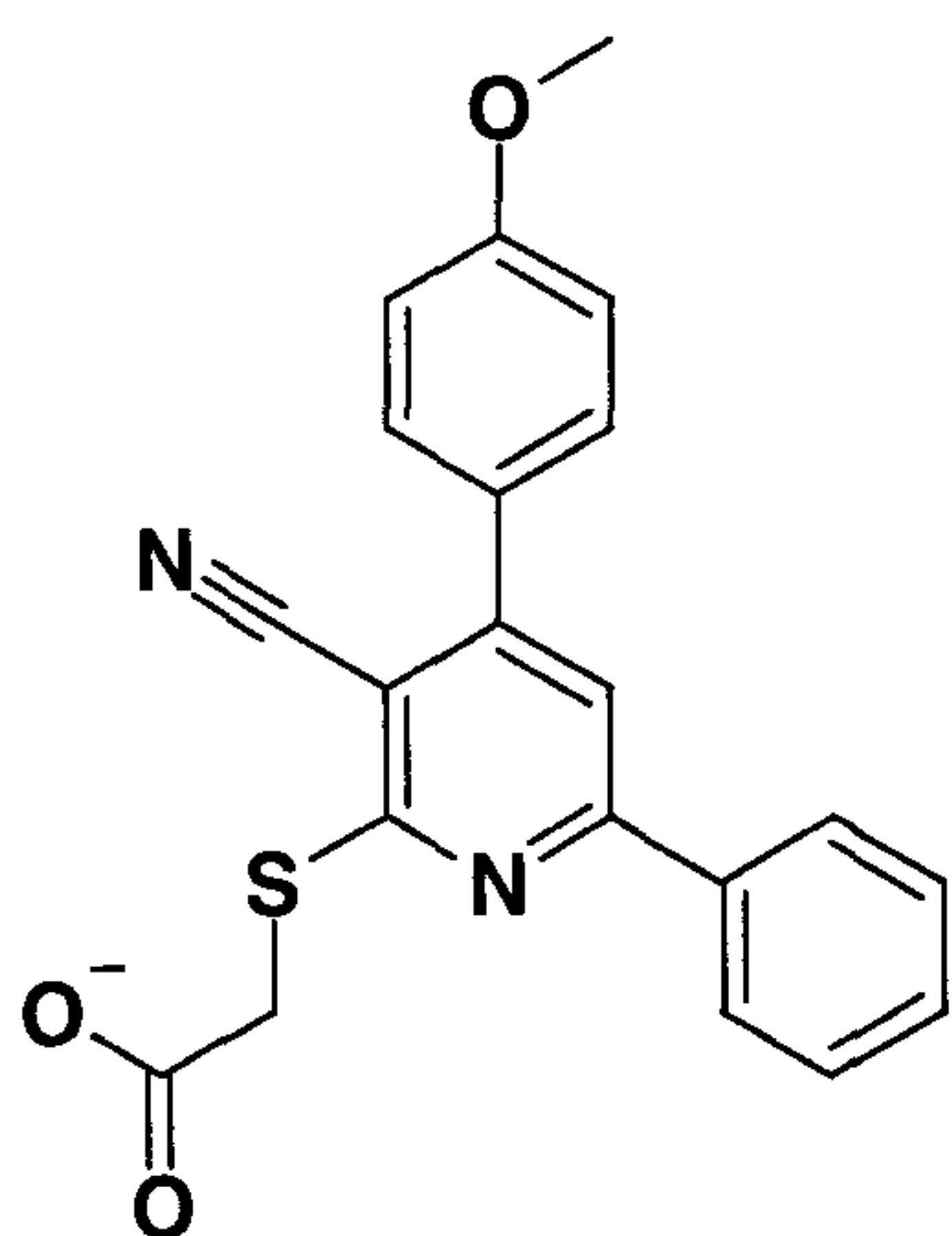


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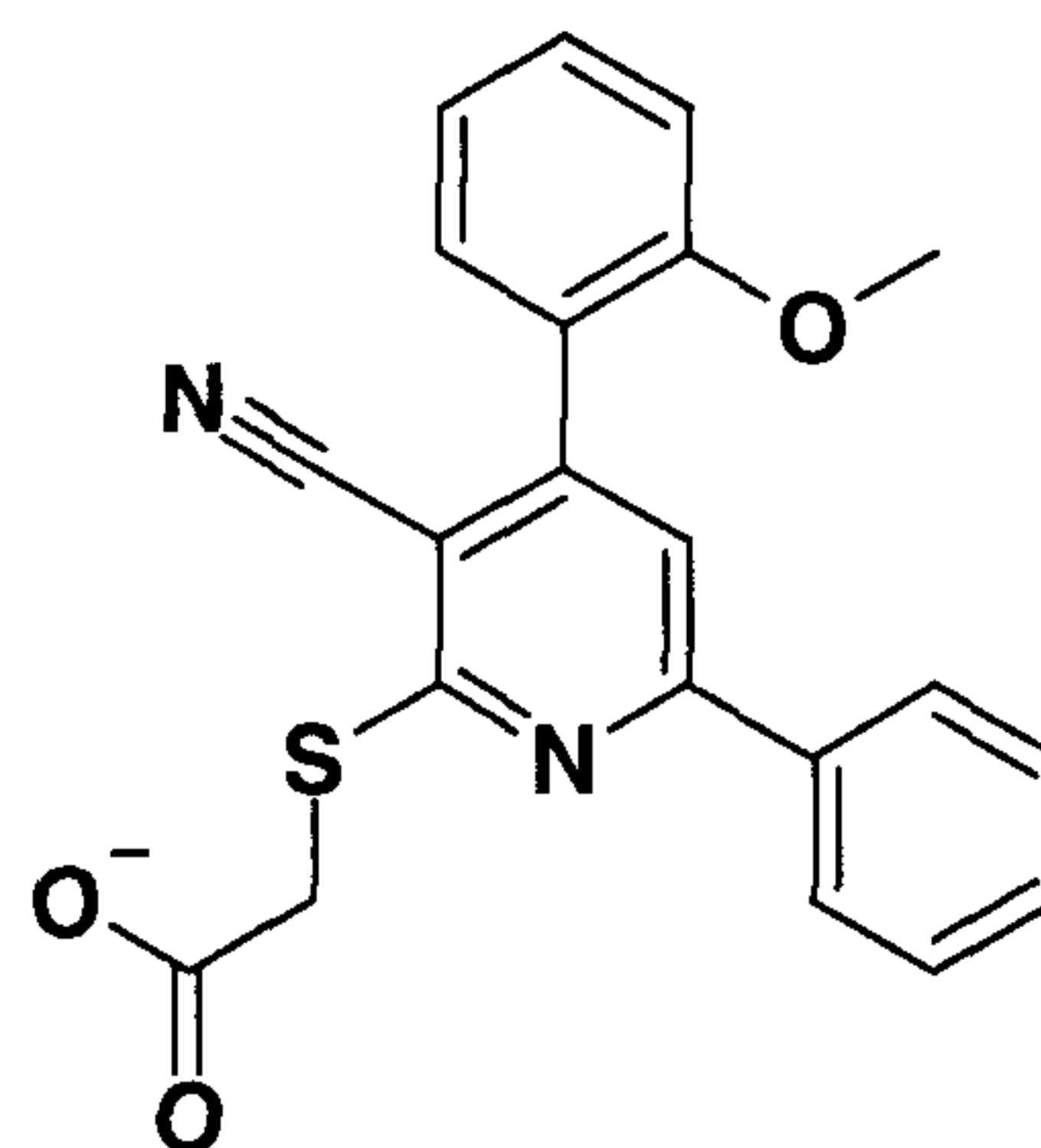


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More particularly, taking advantage of the published crystal structure of bovine ANT1 with its specific inhibitor carboxyatractyloside (9) (Fig. 1A), the inventors have identified by molecular docking a library of putative ANT-ligands *in silico*. Considering the high homology between bovine ANT1 and human ANT isoforms in term of tertiary structure, a three-dimensional analysis permitted (1) to localize the carboxyatractyloside, a well-known inhibitor of ADP/ATP translocation, in the human ANT2 binding pocket (Fig. 1B) and (2) to identify chemical structures able to interact similarly with amino acid residues of the ANT binding pocket.

The library is constituted of a total of 1171 small commercial molecules among which 956 have been tested. Each compound has been evaluated on the following *in vitro* screening assays: HT-29 and BxPC3 tumour cells lines viability and ADP/ATP translocator activity of ANT on isolated mitochondria. These screening techniques lead to selection of molecules being efficient ANT inhibitors with important cellular effects (cell death or growth delay).

Among them, compound 1 induces dissipation of the mitochondrial trans-membrane potential and apoptosis hallmarks that are abolished by caspase inhibitors (Fig. 3) and pro-apoptotic factors (Bax/Bak) deletion. Interestingly compound 1 is not cytotoxic for all cellular types. Indeed, the Wi-38 cells express the ANT3 isoform as HT-29 and BxPC3, while the
5 ANT2 isoform is almost no detectable (Fig. 4A). In correlation with ANT expression levels, compound 1 toxicity on normal lung fibroblasts is minor compared to tumor cells (HT-29, BxPC3) (Fig. 4B). On lymphocytes (PBMC, not shown), the compound presents no sign of toxicity for doses below 400 μ M.

The importance of ANT isoforms in cytotoxic effects of the selected ANT-ligands has
10 been evaluated using *S. cerevisiae* strains deficient for ANT isoforms (Fig. 5). Clonogenic assays on these strains are used to ensure that cytotoxic effects of the ANT-ligands are really due to the expression of ANTs in the cells.

The inventors found that the strain deficient for ANT isoforms (Δ ANT1, 2 & 3) is more resistant to the compound 1 than the wild-type (WT) control strain, indicating that the
15 mechanism of cell death induced by this ligand is ANT-dependent (Fig. 5).

For the first time, it is possible to demonstrate that an ANT-ligand induces cell death by targeting the ADP/ATP translocator ANT *in cellula*. Structure/activity relationship studies lead to the optimization of the compound in terms of killing efficiency and selectivity for one of the ANT isoforms (Fig. 6). The chemical structures of optimized compound 1 derivatives
20 are given in Fig. 7.

The invention also relates to a method for inducing cell death by targeting the ADP/ATP translocator ANT *in cellula* comprising adding an effective amount of at least one of the above defined derivatives.

25 The above defined molecules are advantageously used as active principle of drugs.

The invention thus also relates to pharmaceutical compositions comprising a therapeutically effective amount of at least one of the above defined molecules in association with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.
30

Said compositions are administrable by the appropriate way, comprising oral, parenteral (subcutaneous, intravenous), injectable and topical including intratumoral ways of administration.

They are advantageously formulated as liquid solutions with appropriate carriers
35 and/or diluents and/or solvents.

The pharmaceutical compositions of the invention may further comprise a therapeutic agent selected in the group comprising chemotherapeutics, apoptosis modulators, antimicrobial, antiviral, antifungal or anti-inflammatory agents.

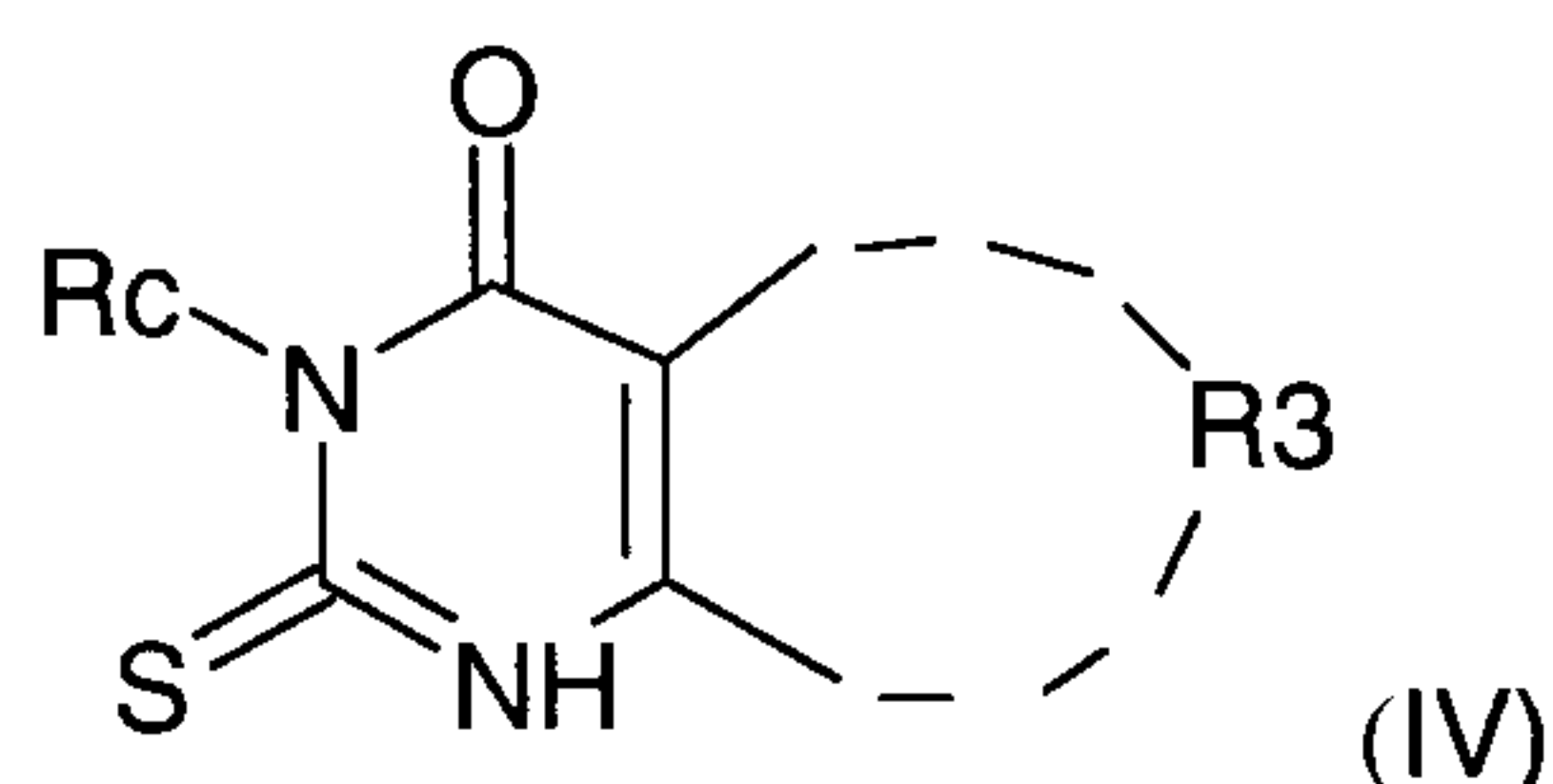
The above defined pharmaceutical compositions are useful for cancer therapy.

5 The invention also relates to the use of a ligand such as above defined for making a proapoptotic drug for treating cancer.

Therapeutically effective amount of the compounds will advantageously be 0.1 mg/kg to 100 mg/kg body weight with a daily to weekly administration.

10 TT the above defined ligands are advantageously obtained by a method such as defined below.

The derivatives of formula I are thus preferably obtained by reacting a derivative of formula IV



15

wherein R_c is R₁ such as above defined or a $-(\text{CH}_2)_n - \text{O} - \text{Si}(\text{CH}_3)_2 - \text{C}(\text{CH}_3)_3$ or $-(\text{CH}_2)_n - \text{NH} - \text{C}(=\text{O}) - \text{O} - \text{C}(\text{CH}_3)_3$ radical and R₃ is as above defined,

with a derivative of formula V

20



wherein R₂ is as above defined and R'' is a reactive group such as an halogen. Preferably, R'' is Cl. or Br.

25

Said reaction is advantageously carried out in the presence of triethylamine in an organic solvent. Appropriate solvents comprise DMF (dimethylformamide) and DCM (dichloromethane).

30

When R_c comprises a $-\text{OH}$ terminal group, the reaction is followed by a chromatography on a Dowex type column to recover the desired derivative.

When R_c comprises a $-\text{NH}_2$ terminal group, the resulting derivative is treated with TFA and DCM. Said derivative, by reaction with $\text{R}_c(=\text{O}) - \text{R}''$, may be used to obtain derivatives of formula I with $\text{R}_1 = -(\text{CH}_2)_n - \text{NH} - \text{C}(=\text{O}) - \text{R}$, R and R'' being such as above defined.

According to the invention, the derivatives of formula IV are obtained by reacting a derivative of formula VI



5

wherein S=C=N- and - C(=O)-OR are on carbon adjacent positions on Ar and R is such as above defined, with an amino derivative of formula VII



10

with R1 being such as above defined.

Said reaction is advantageously carried out in an alcoholic solvent and H₂O. Preferably the alcoholic solvent is isopropanol.

15

The compounds of the second and third families are obtained according to usual synthesis routes, advantageously using commercially available molecules as starting materials.

Other characteristics and advantages are given in the following examples which refer to figures 1 to 8, wherein:

20

- Figure 1: Illustrates *in silico* molecular docking to find new ANT-ligands

(A) Structure of the carboxyatractyloside (CAT)-bovine ANT1 complex (adapted from (26))

25 (B) Prediction by computer analysis of the carboxyatractyloside (CAT) localization in the human ANT2 binding.

- Figure 2: The ANT-ligand is pro-apoptotic on HT-29 and BxPC3 tumor cell lines

(A) Chemical structure of compound 1

30 (B) Multiparametric analysis (chromatin condensation, mitochondrial transmembrane potential ($\Delta\Psi_m$) loss, plasma membrane permeabilization, phosphatidylserine exposure) of cellular effects of the ANT-ligand on BxPC3 cell line after 48h treatment.

(C) Effects of compound 1 on ADP/ATP translocator activity of ANT measured on isolated mitochondria from mice liver or HT-29 tumor cell line (IC₅₀ is given in μM based on ANT assays) and on viability of HT-29 and BxPC3 tumor cell lines (LD₅₀ is given in μM based on MTT assays at 48h).

35

- Figure 3: Compound 1 induced-cell death is caspase-dependent

Compound 1 induces classical hallmarks of apoptosis: mitochondrial potential ($\Delta\Psi_m$) loss (Dioc6-), phosphatidylserine exposure (Annexin-V+), plasma membrane permeabilization (PI+) and chromatin condensation as shown by multiparametric analysis. Apoptosis induced by the ANT-ligand is inhibited by pan-caspase inhibitors (z-VAD-fmk, Q-VD-OPH) but not by the cathepsin B inhibitor (Z-FA-fmk).

- Figure 4: Compound 1 induces low toxicity on normal fibroblast Wi-38

(A) Expression pattern of ANT isoforms in HT-29, BxPC3 and Wi-38 (normal lung fibroblasts) cell lines after RT-PCR reaction on total RNA

(B) Multiparametric analysis (mitochondrial transmembrane potential, plasma membrane permeabilization, phosphatidylserine exposure) of cellular effects of the ANT-ligand on Wi-38 cell line after 48h and 72h treatments.

- Figure 5: Target validation of compound 1 using ANT-deficient yeasts

(A) Quantitative estimation of yeasts viability at 48h after 2h incubation with compound 1

(B) Illustration of WT (W303) and JL1-3 (Δ ANT1, 2 and 3) yeast strains growth on plates at 48h after 2h incubation with compound 1.

- Figure 6: Optimization by structure-Activity Relationship studies

The table shows the effects of optimized compounds on HT-29, BxPC3, MiaPaca, Wi-38 cell viability (LD50 in μ M); on ANT activity in mice liver and HT-29 tumor cell line mitochondria (IC50 in μ M); on swelling (DS50 in μ M) and $\Delta\Psi_m$ parameters (DP50 in μ M) in mice liver mitochondria (MitotrusterTM platform); and on viability of wild-type (W303) and ANT-deficient (JL1-3) yeasts strains (ED50 in μ M).

- Figure 7: Chemical structures of optimized compounds in structural family 1.

- Figure 8: Effects of compounds (family 2 & 3) on cell lines and isolated mitochondria

The table shows the effects of compounds on HT-29, BxPC3, MiaPaca, Wi-38 cell viability (LD50 in μ M); on ANT activity in mice and HT-29 tumor cell line mitochondria (EC50 in μ M); on swelling (DS50 in μ M) and $\Delta\Psi_m$ parameters (DP50 in μ M) in mice liver mitochondria.

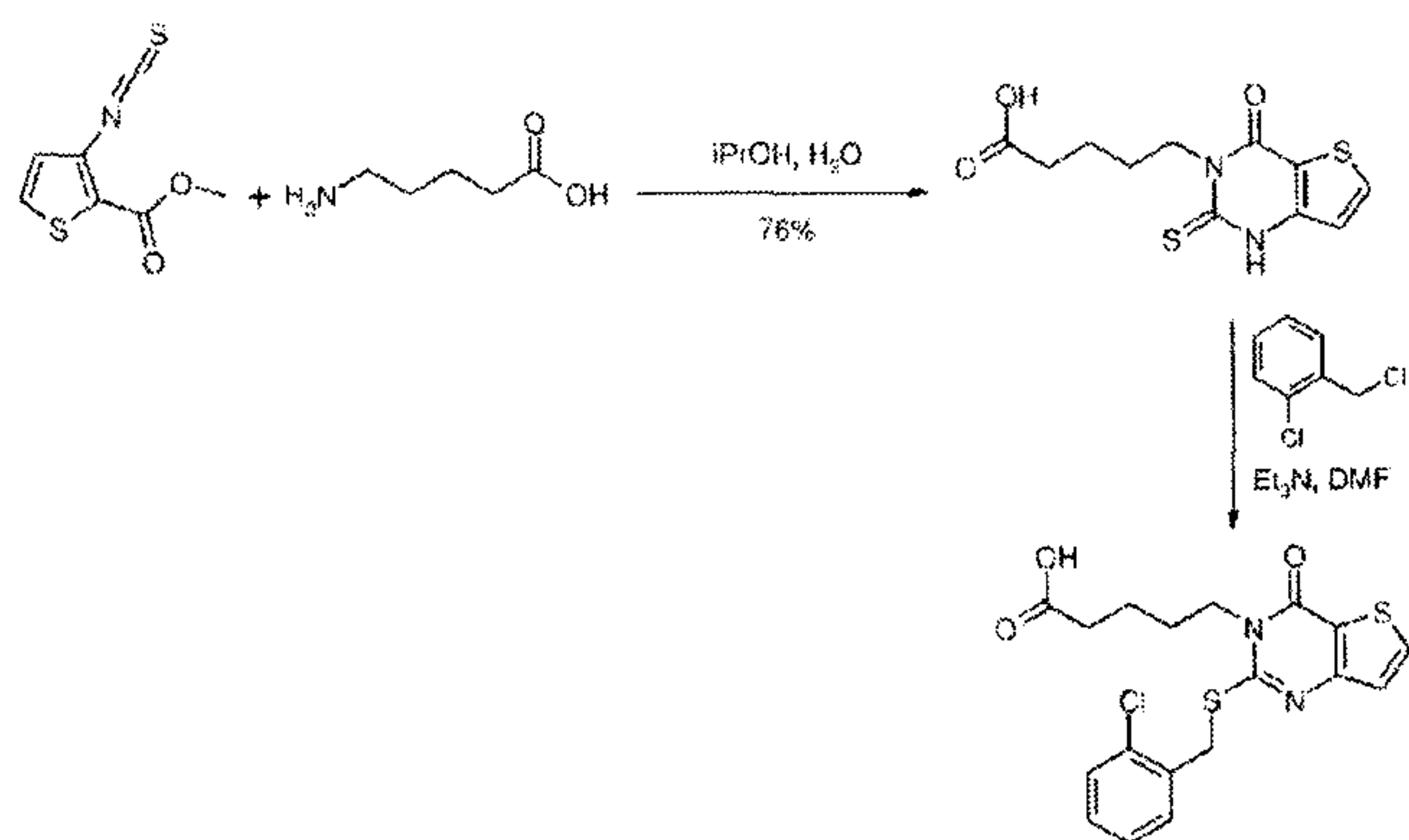
ADP/ATP translocase activity assay

The ANT activity assay is an indirect measure of ATP translocation from isolated mitochondria in exchange of ADP followed by NADPH formation in the medium. This assay is using a complex system of ATP detection constituted of enzymes (hexokinase, glucose-6-phosphate-dehydrogenase), a substrate (glucose) and a co-substrate (NADP⁺) allowing NADP⁺ reduction in NADPH. The method is adapted from (10), with modifications: reactions in microplates, no pre-loading of mitochondria with ATP, detection of NADP⁺ reduction by fluorescence (Spectrofluorimeter Infinite M200, Tecan), incorporation of AP₅A (P1P5-diadenosine-5'-pentaphosphate) to inhibit the adenylate kinase-dependent ATP synthesis (IC₅₀: dose inducing 50% of carboxyatractyloside inhibition activity).

Viability assay and characterisation of cell death

MTT assay was used to evaluate the viability of a large range of human cell lines in presence of small molecules. Dose-response experiments allow us to determine a lethal-dose 50 (LD₅₀; dose killing 50% of the cellular population) for each compound on a particular cell type after a 48-hour incubation. This viability assay is used as a first screening assay to identify cell-permeant molecules able to induce cell death (cytotoxic) or growth delay (cytostatic) among the 956 molecules of the ANT-ligands library. We have chosen to select molecules having an LD₅₀ below 50 µM on HT-29 (colon adenocarcinoma) or BxPC3 (pancreatic adenocarcinoma) cell lines. These molecules come into the ANT activity screening assays and the efficient ANT-inhibitors (IC₅₀ below 50 µM) are investigated for their mechanisms of cell death induction. Indeed, the characterisation of cell death consists in a multiparametric analysis of treated-cells by flow cytometry (FacsCalibur, Becton Dickinson) where can be measured (1) the loss of mitochondrial trans-membrane potential ($\Delta\Psi_m$; DIOC6 labelling), (2) the plasma membrane permeabilization (Propidium Iodide labeling) and (3) the phosphatidylserines exposure (Annexin-V-fitc labelling).

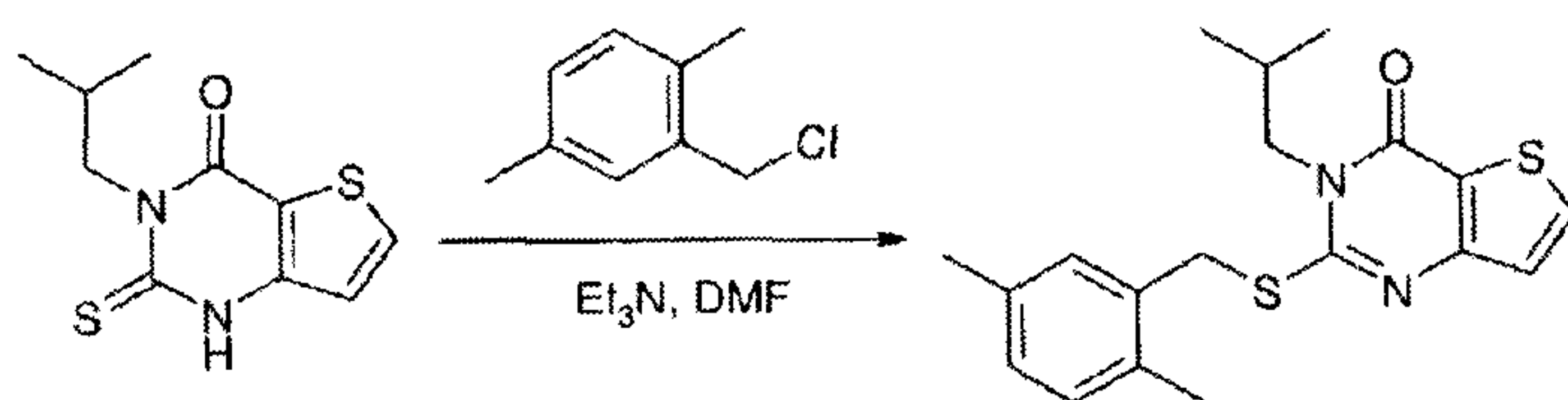
Scheme of synthesis of compounds 1 -6 and 8- 16



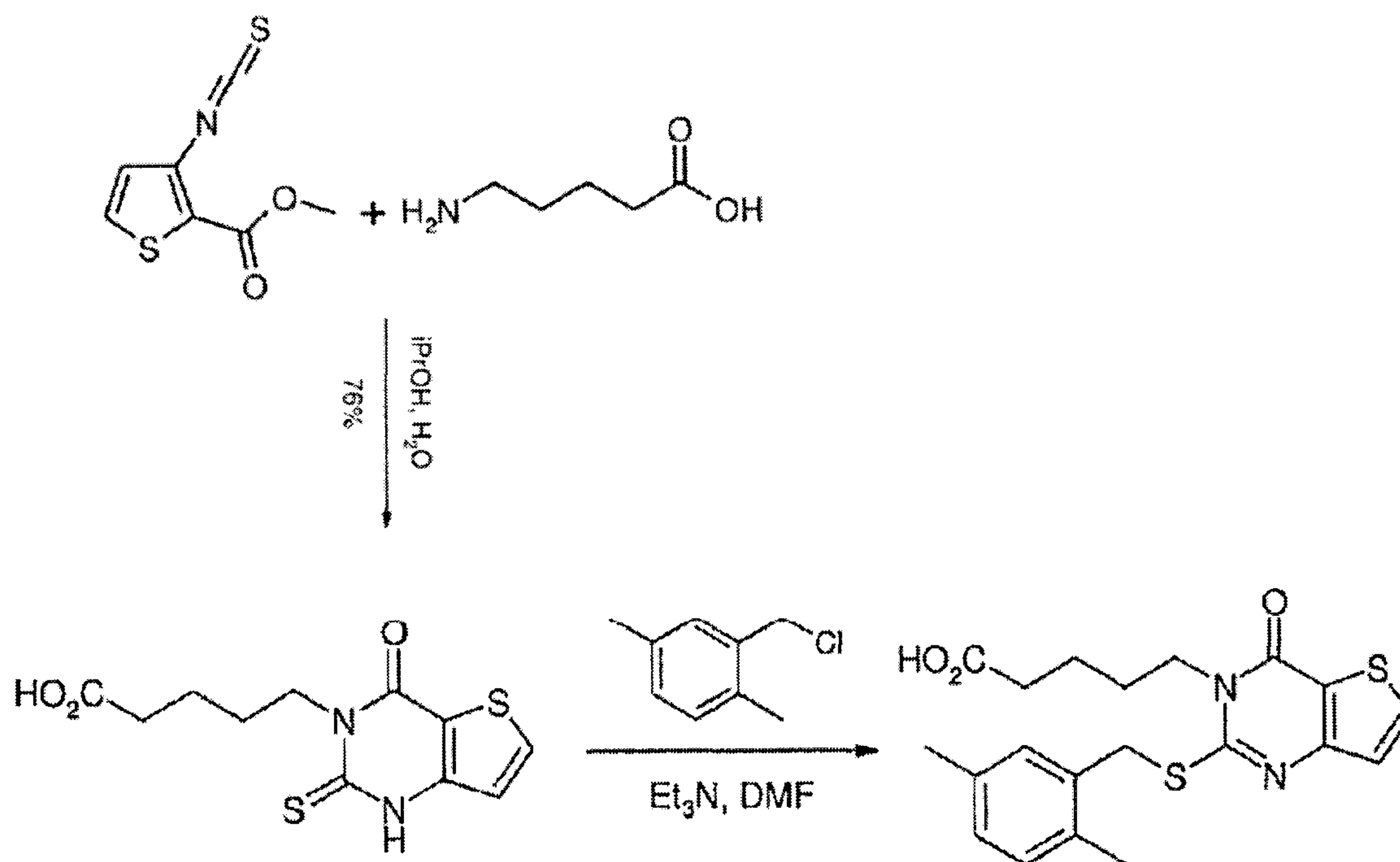
Compound 1

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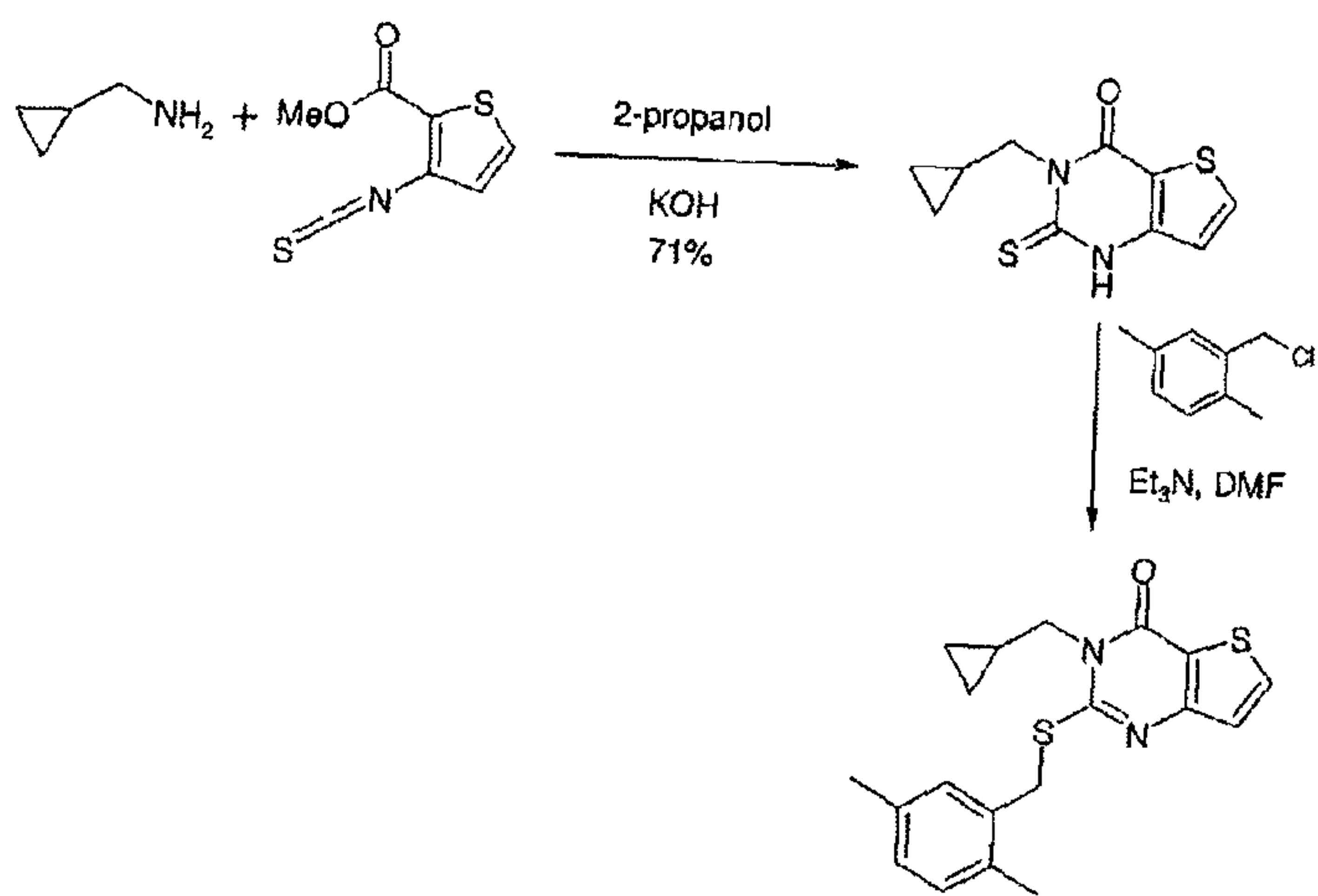
Compound 2



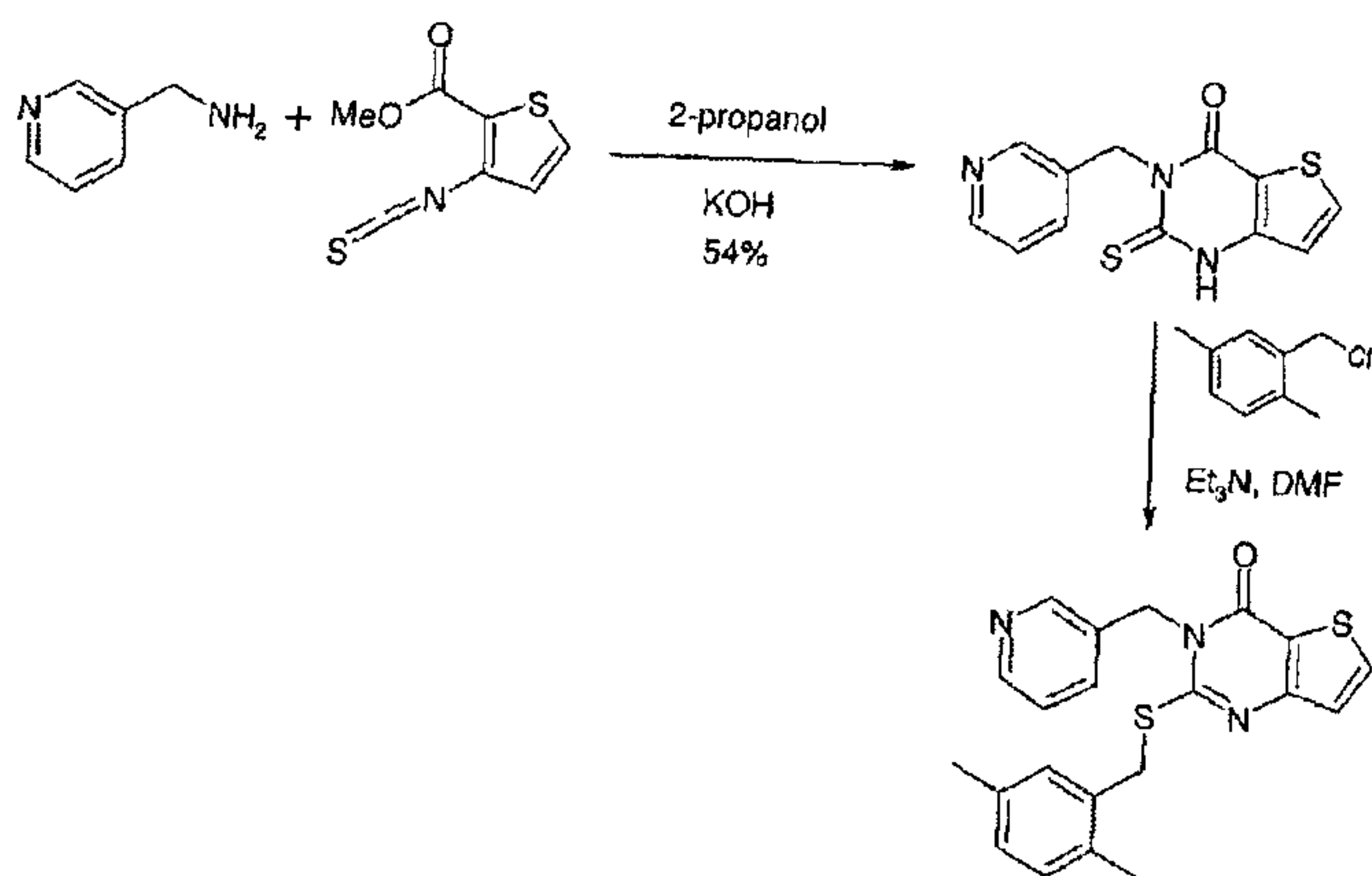
Compound 3

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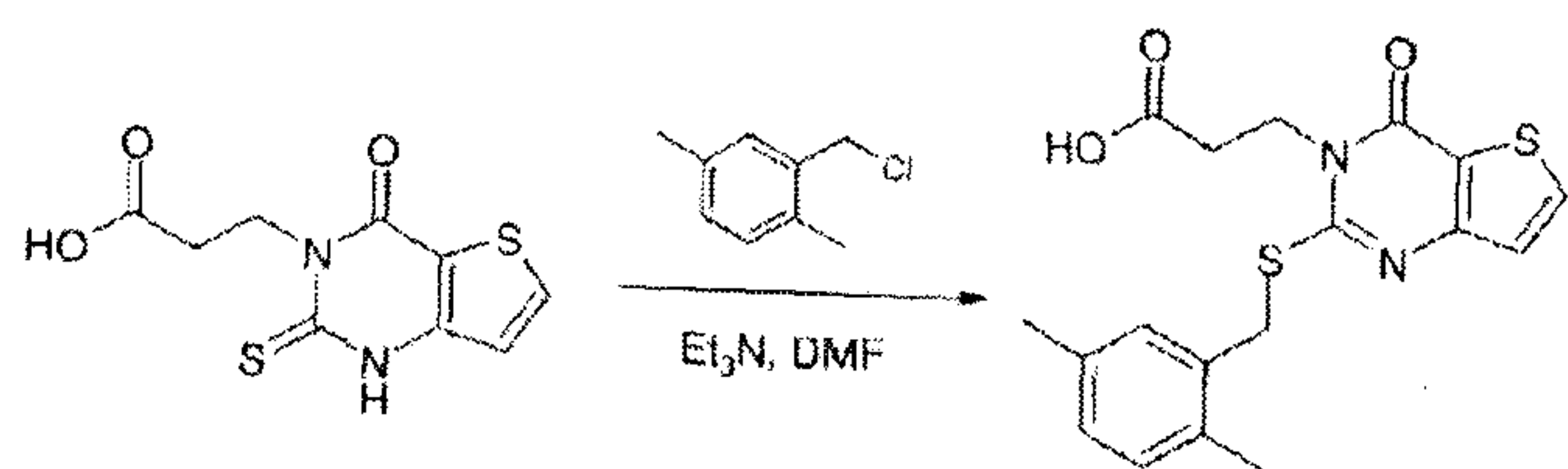
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Compound 4



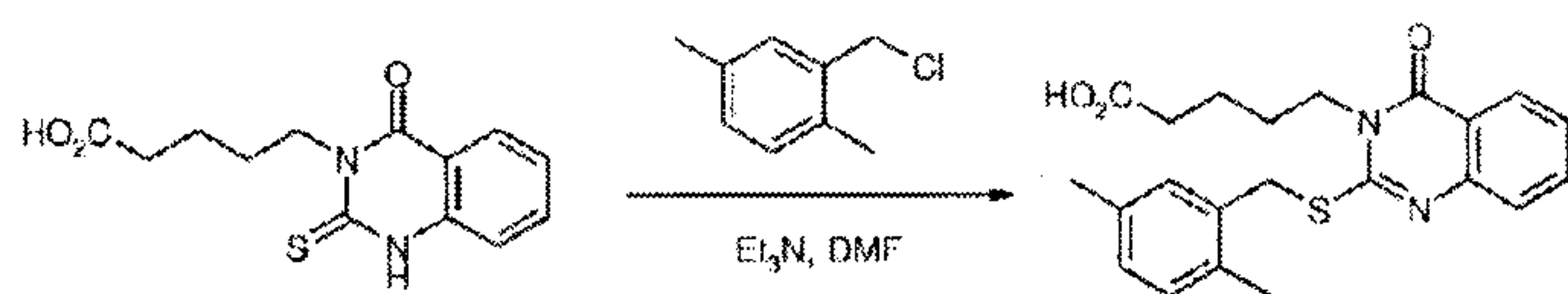
Compound 5



Compound 6

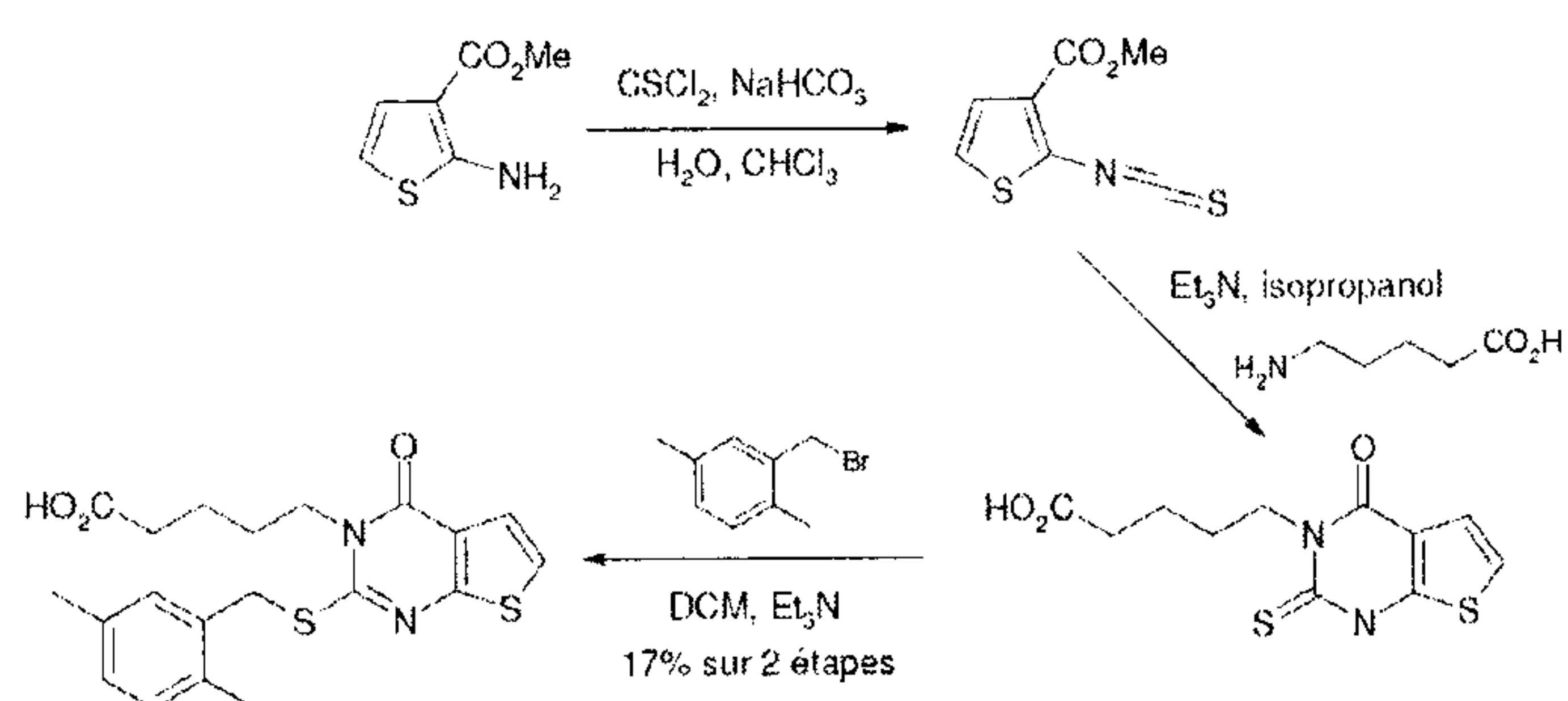
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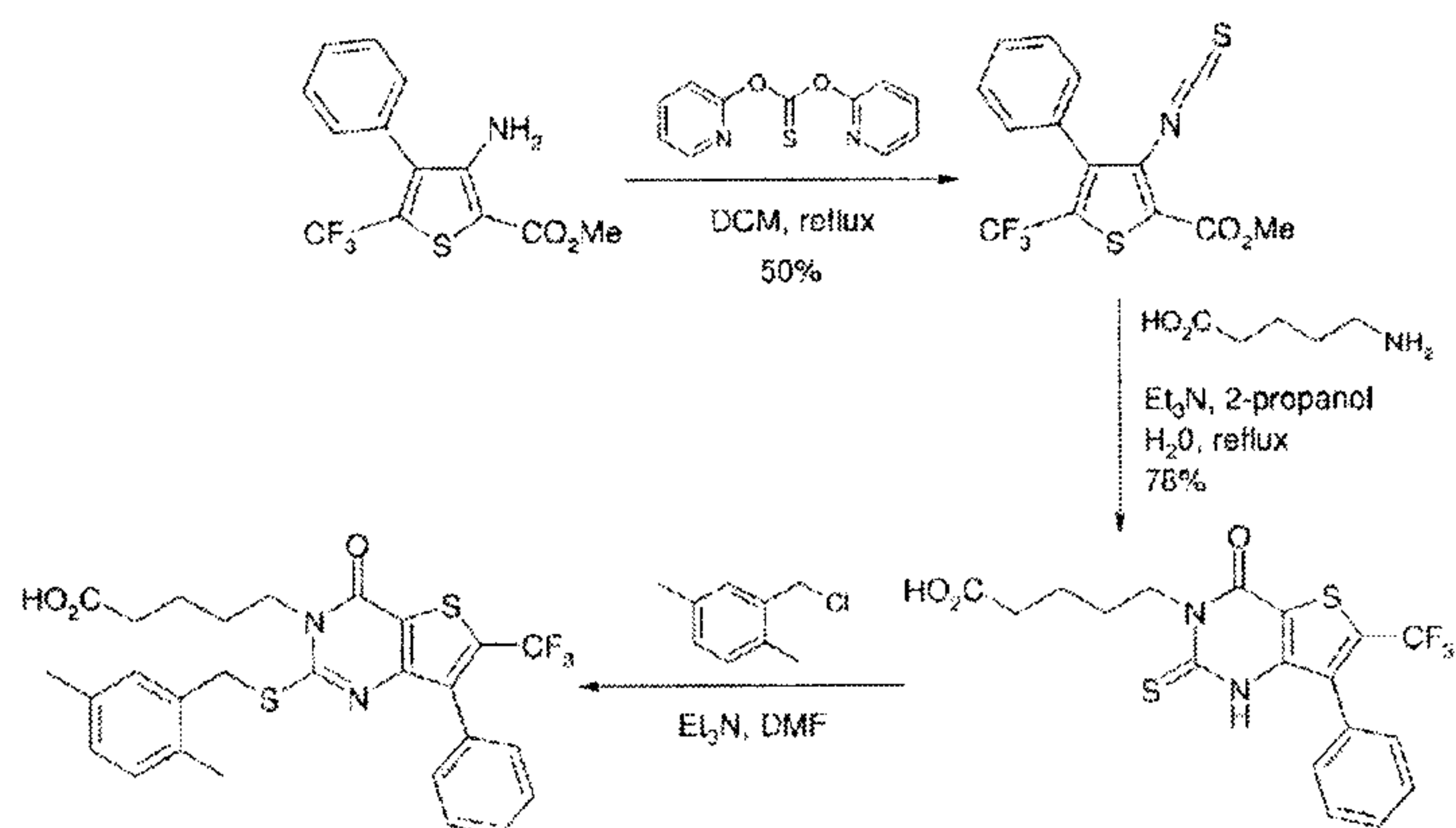


Compound 8

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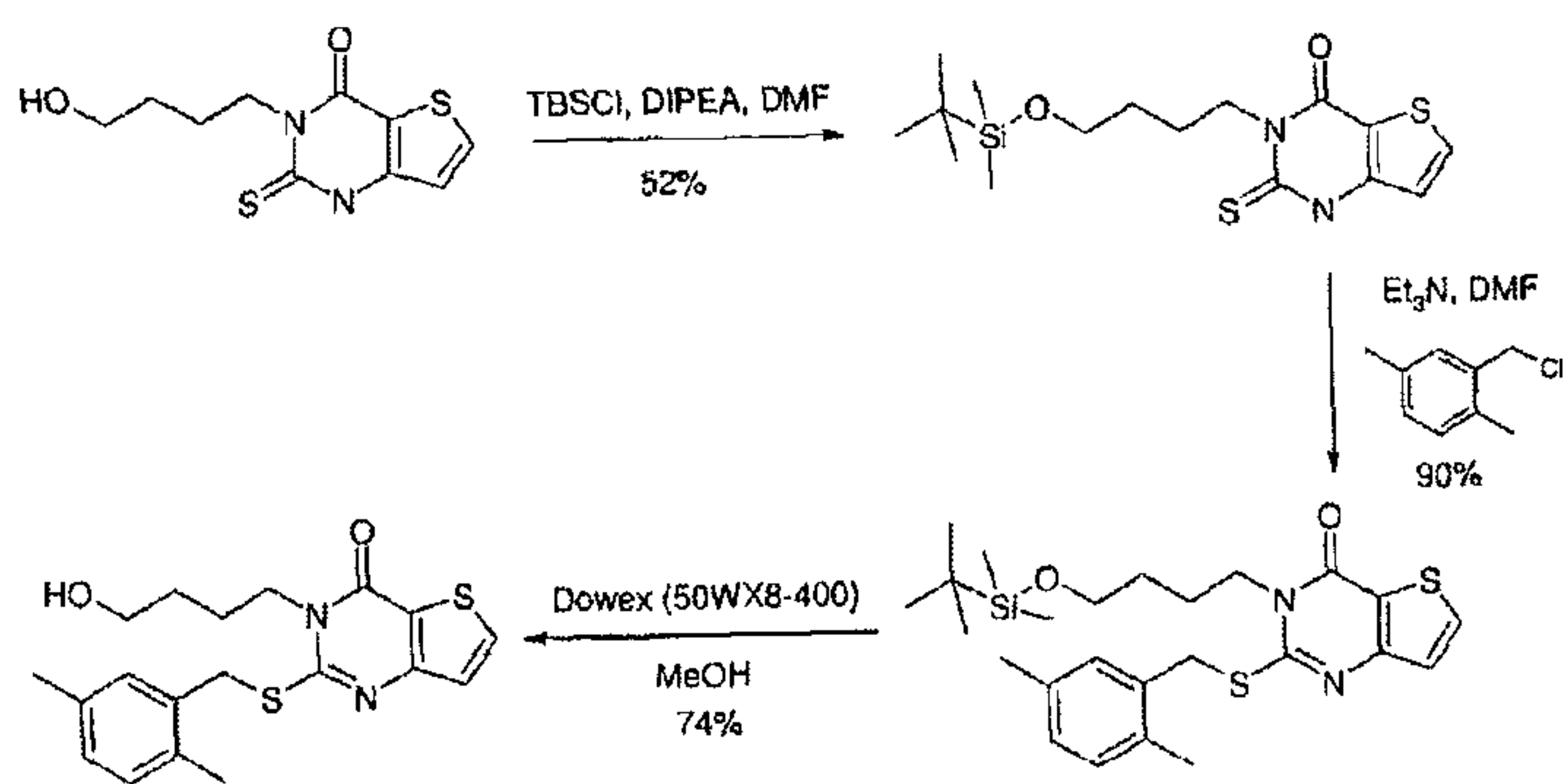


Compound 9

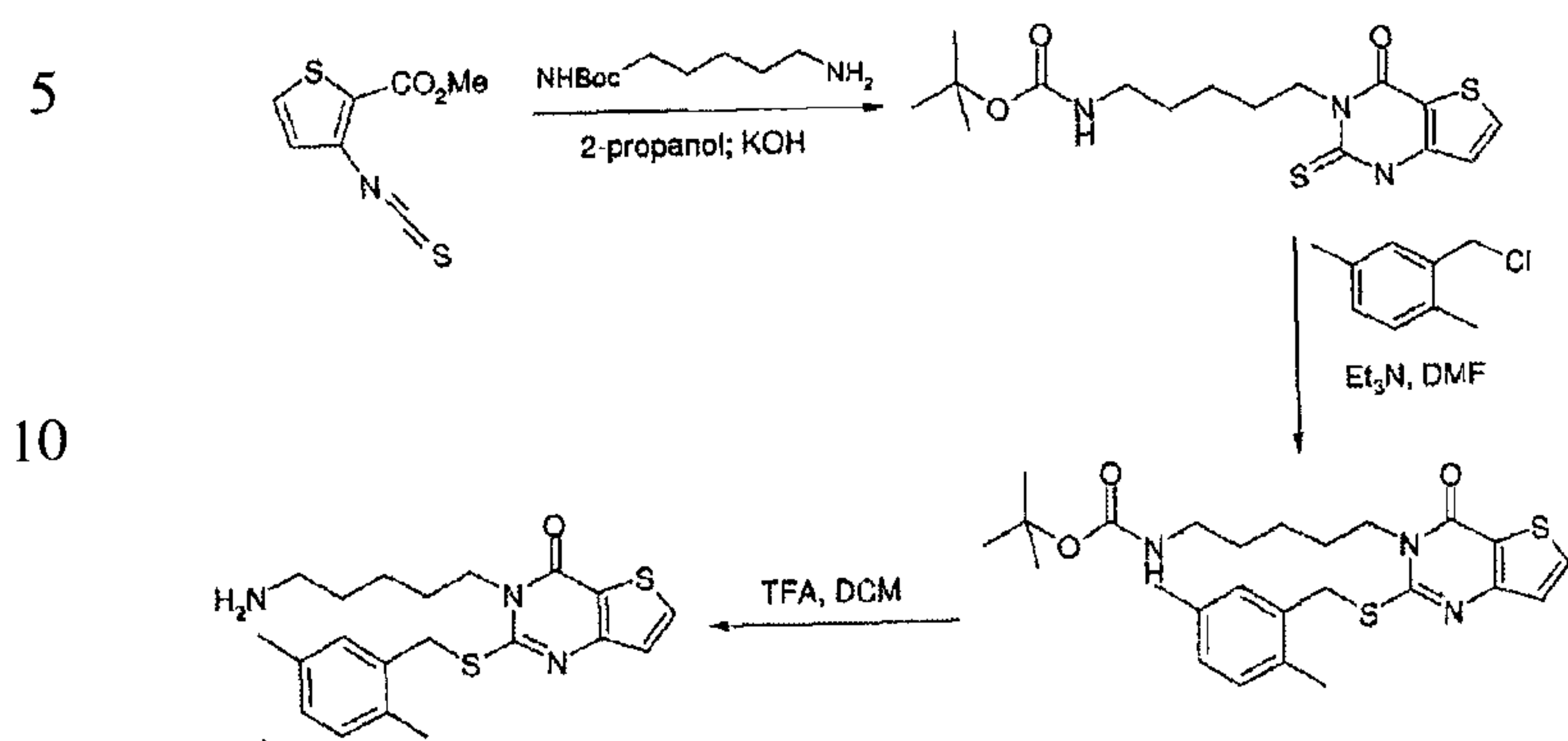


Compound 10

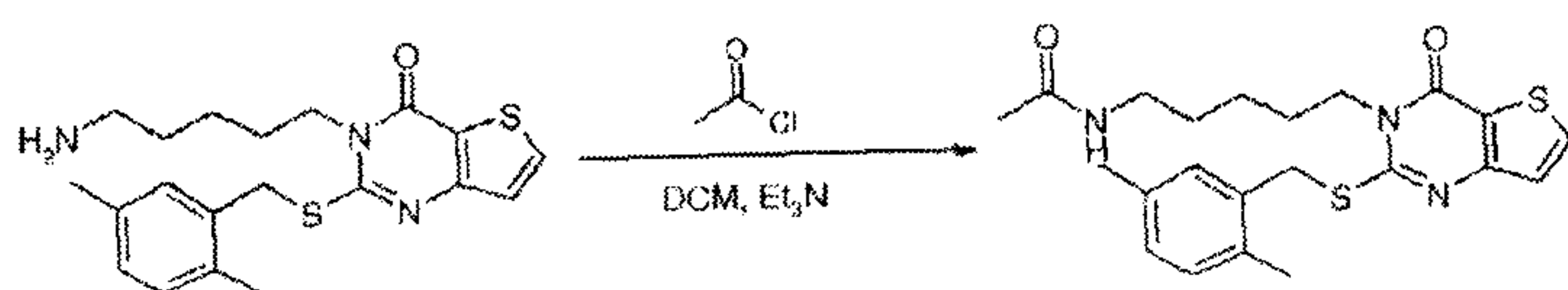
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Compound 11



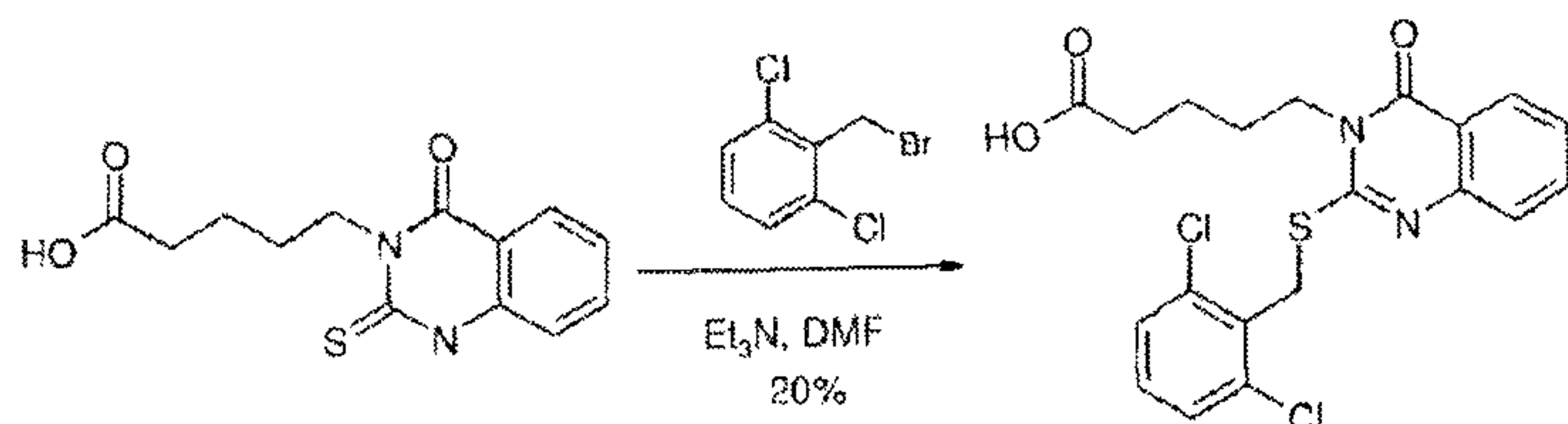
Compound 12



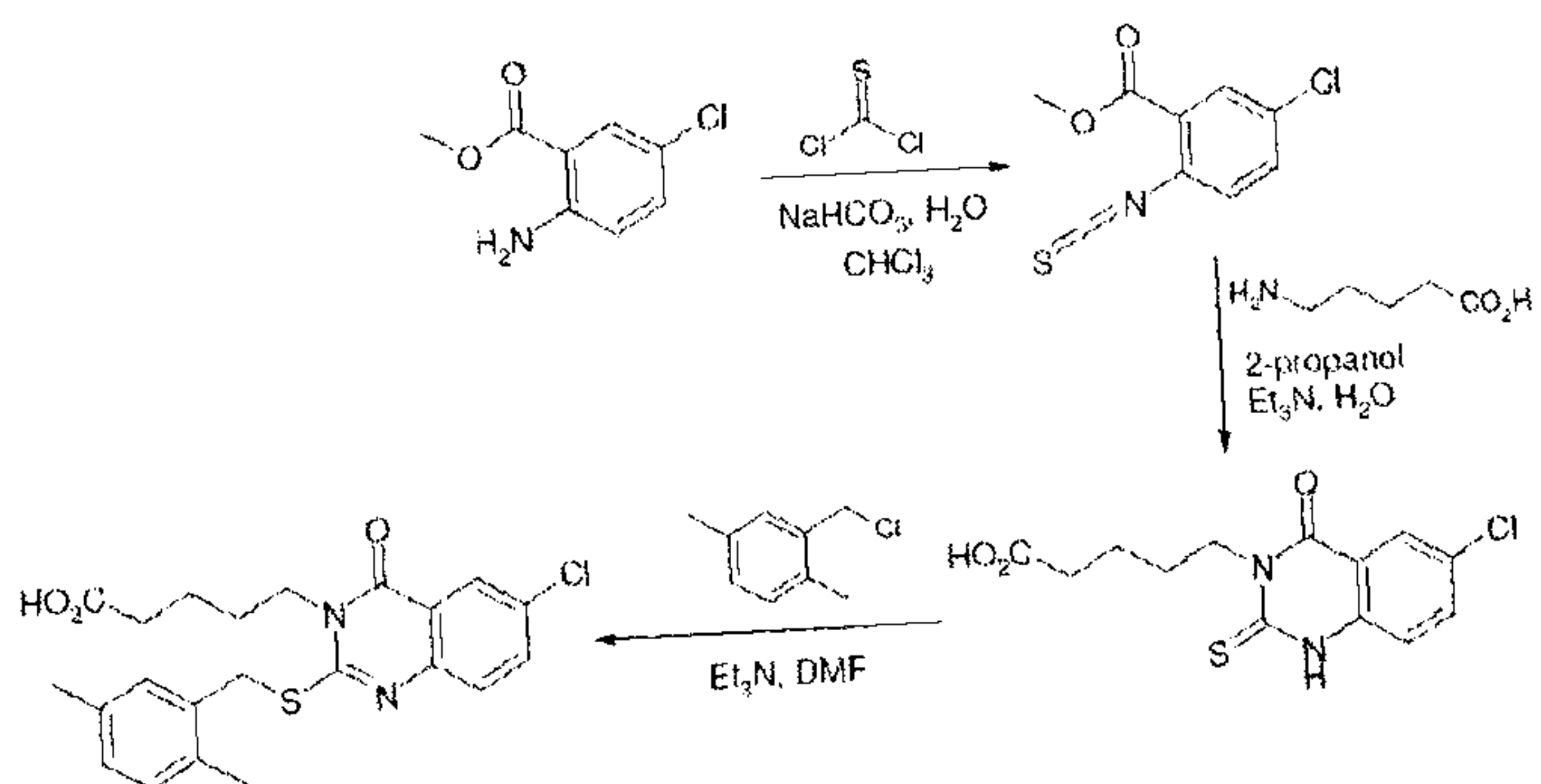
(Compound 12)

Compound 13

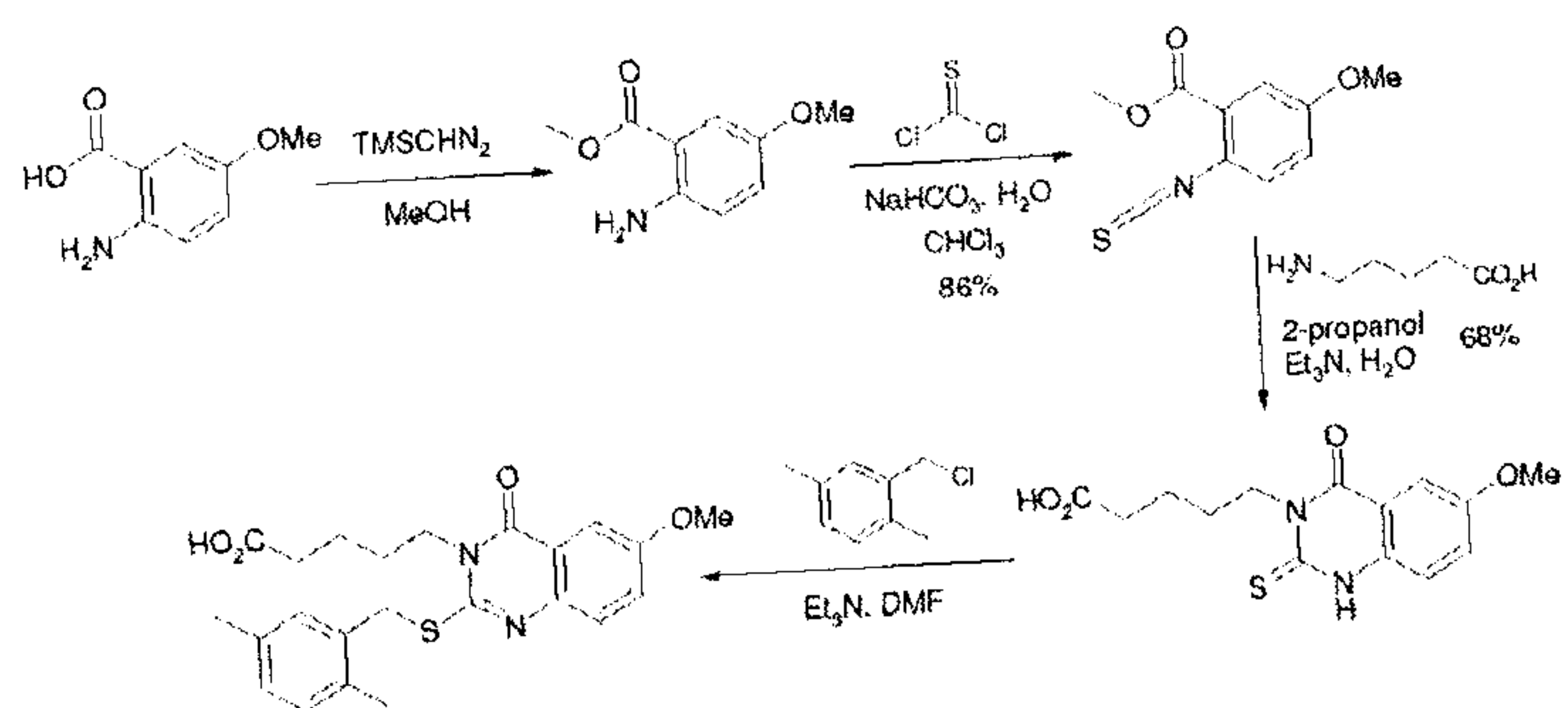
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Compound 14



Compound 15



Compound 16

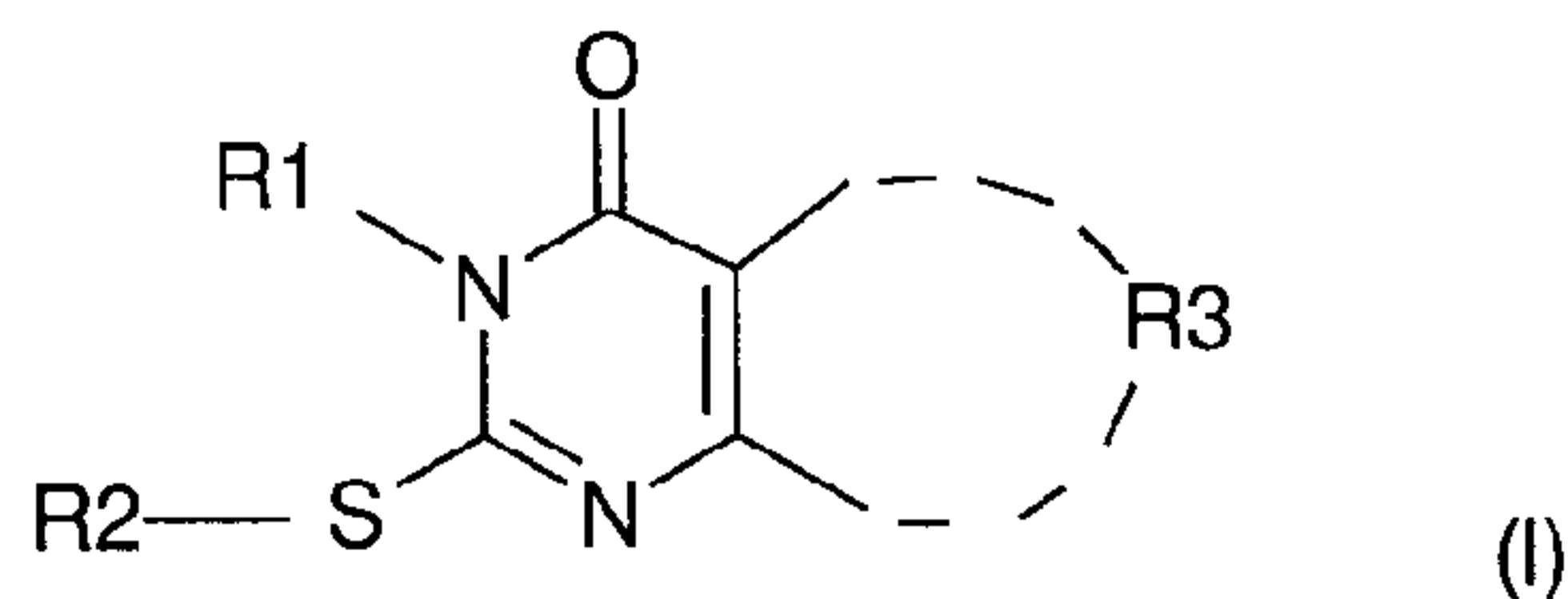
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30

CLAIMS

1. A compound of Formula (I)



Wherein

- R1 is
- (CH₂)_n-CO-OH;
- (CH₂)_n - C3-C6 cycloalkyl radical;
- 10 - (CH₂)_n - Het.;
- (CH₂)_n- NH- CO-R;
- (CH₂)_n - NH₂;
- (CH₂)_n- NH- CO-OH;

R in the above radicals, representing H or a C1-C12 alkyl or cycloalkyl radical,

15 Het. representing an heterocyclic radical with one or several hetero atoms selected between N, S and O, said heterocycle being optionally substituted by one or several atoms, groups or radicals selected from

- Cl, I, F or -CF₃;
- one or several -OH, -OR₁₀, -COOH or -COOR₁₀ groups;
- 20 -a linear or branched C1-C12 alkyl radical; -NHCOR₁₀; or -CN;

said groups occupying the same or different positions on the heterocyclic radical; wherein R₁₀ in the above radicals represents H or a C1-C12 alkyl or cycloalkyl radical;

- 25 - R2 is
- (CH₂)_n - Ar, wherein Ar is a phenyl, said phenyl being optionally substituted by one or several atoms, groups or radicals selected from
- Cl, I, F or -CF₃;
- one or several -OH, -OR, -COOH or -COOR groups; said groups
- 30 occupying different positions on the phenyl radical;
- (CH₂)_n - CO - OH

- R3 forms a thienyl group with the two adjacent carbons of the pyrimidinone residue, said thienyl being optionally substituted as above defined for Ar; and
- n is 0 or an integer from 1 to 5;

5

wherein said compounds of Formula (I) are selective for ANT protein.

2. The compound of claim 1, wherein R1 is selected from the group consisting of - (CH₂)_n-CO-OH; - (CH₂)_n-NH₂; - (CH₂)_n-NH-CO-R; and - (CH₂)_n Het, wherein Het is a pyridyl radical.

10

3. The compound of claim 1, wherein R2 is a - (CH₂)_n - phenyl group, said phenyl group being substituted by at least one of Cl, I, F, CF₃, or - OR, wherein R represents H or a C1-C12 alkyl or cycloalkyl radical.

15

4. Use of a compound of formula (I) according to any one of claims 1 to 3, for the treatment of cancer.

5. An *in vitro* method for inducing cell death comprising the use of an effective amount of at least one compound of any one of claims 1 to 3 to target the ADP/ATP translocator ANT in tumor cells.

20

6. Pharmaceutical composition comprising at least one compound of any one of claims 1 to 3, in association with a pharmaceutically acceptable inert carrier.

25

7. The pharmaceutical composition of claim 6, further comprising a therapeutic agent selected from the group consisting of chemotherapeutics, apoptosis modulators, antimicrobial, antiviral, antifungal and anti-inflammatory agents.

8. The pharmaceutical composition of any one of claim 6 or 7, for its use in the treatment of cancer.

30

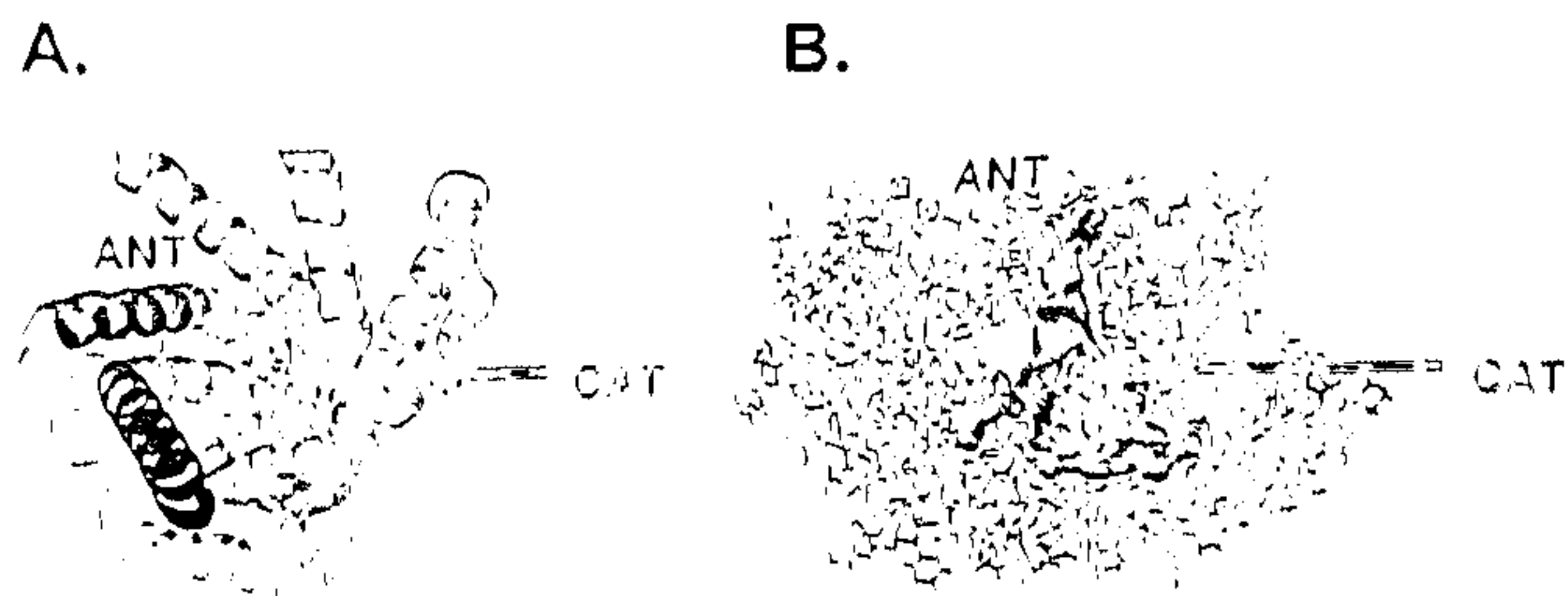


Fig. 1

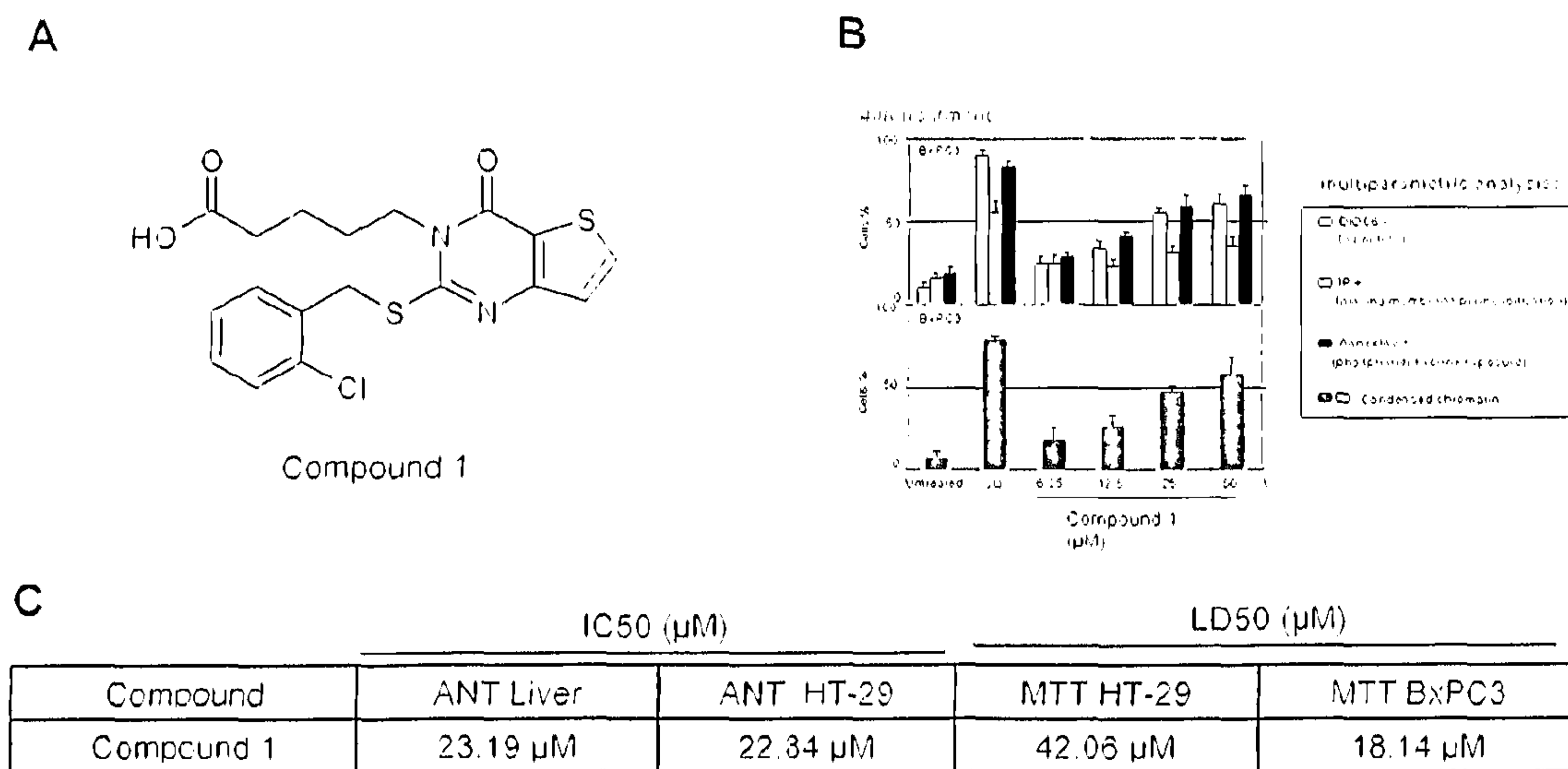


Fig. 2

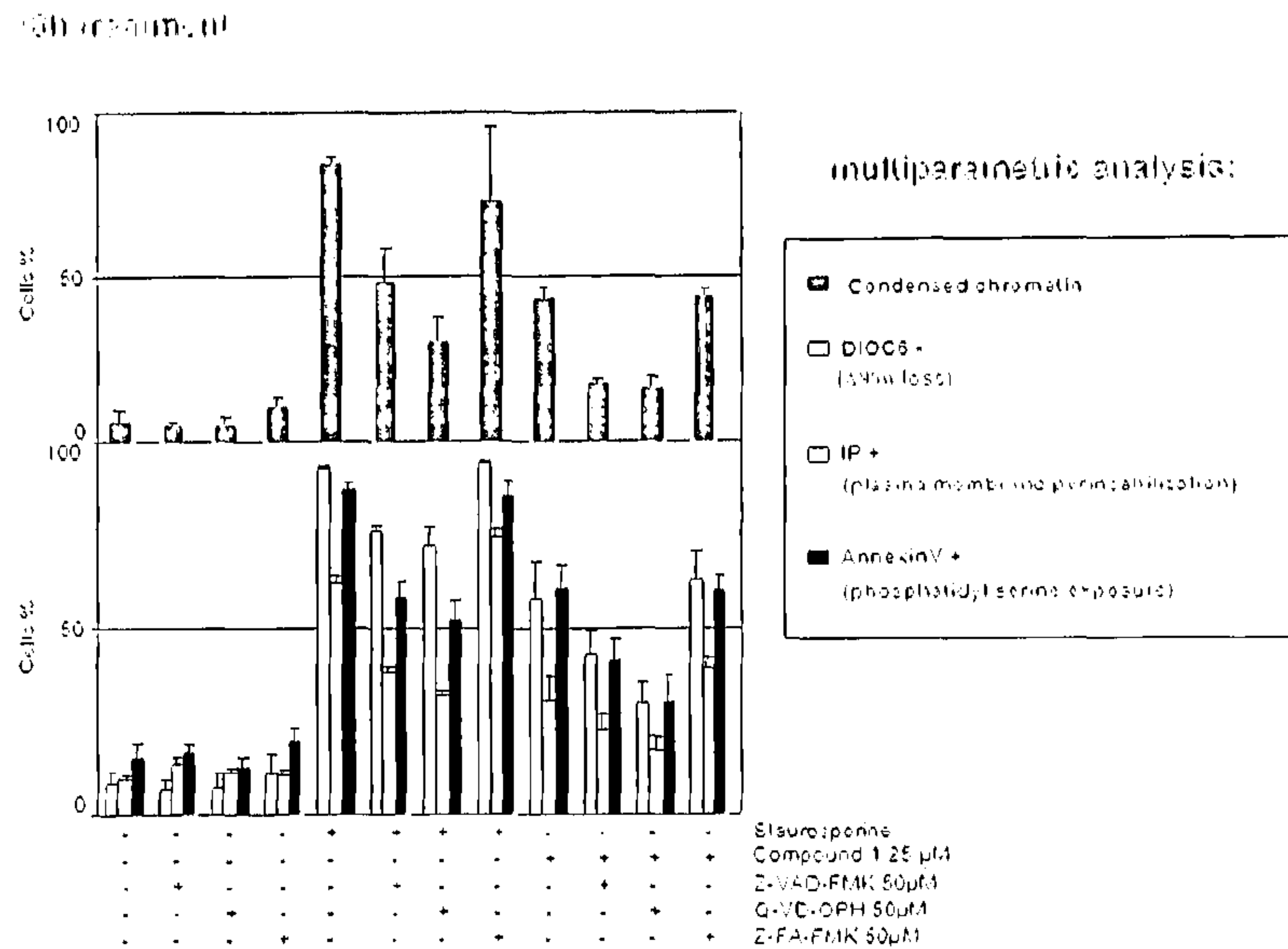
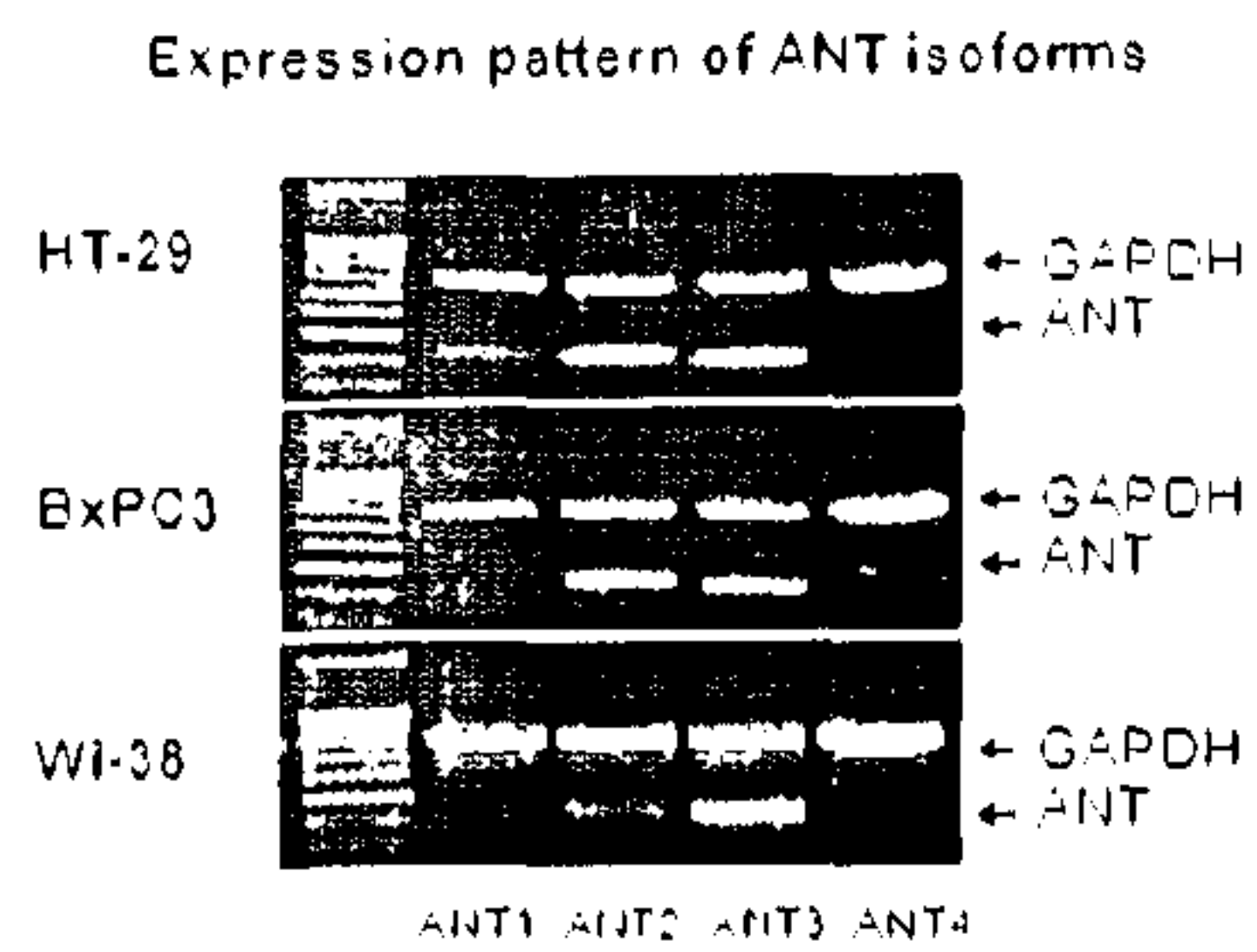


Fig. 3

A.



B.

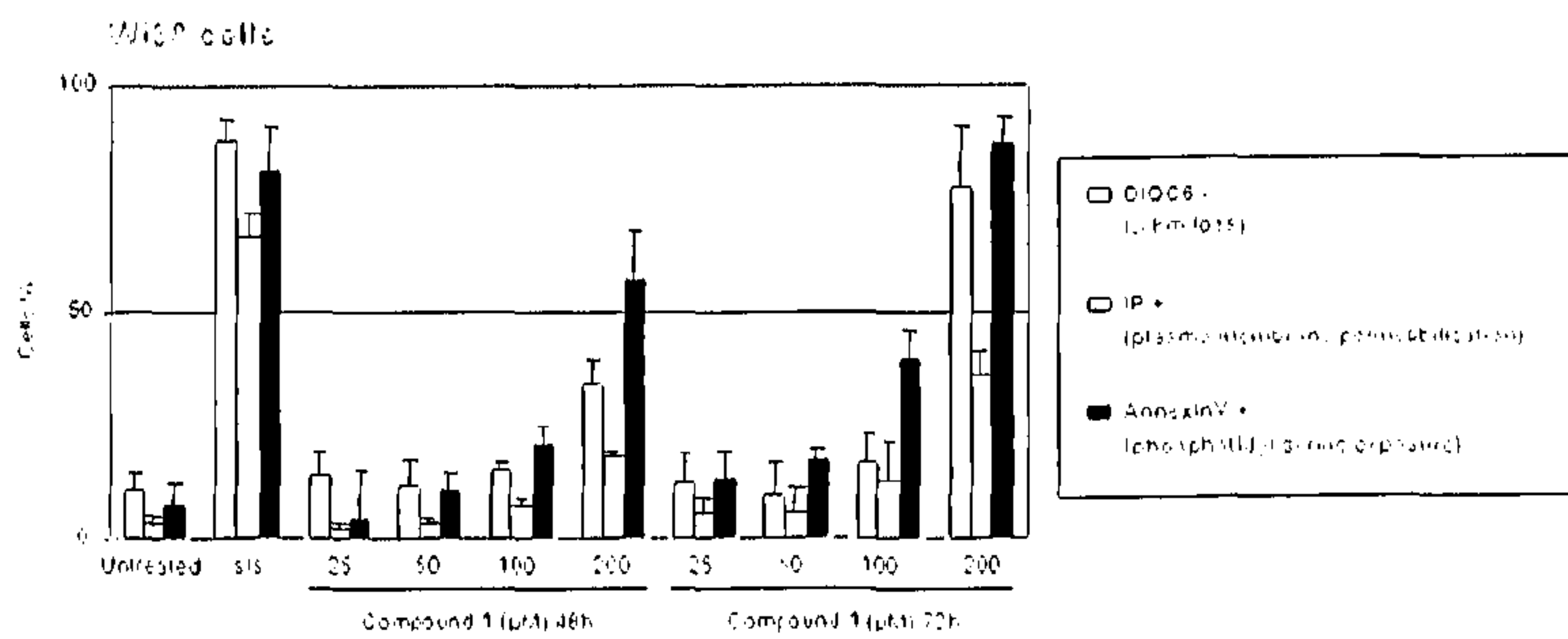


Fig. 4

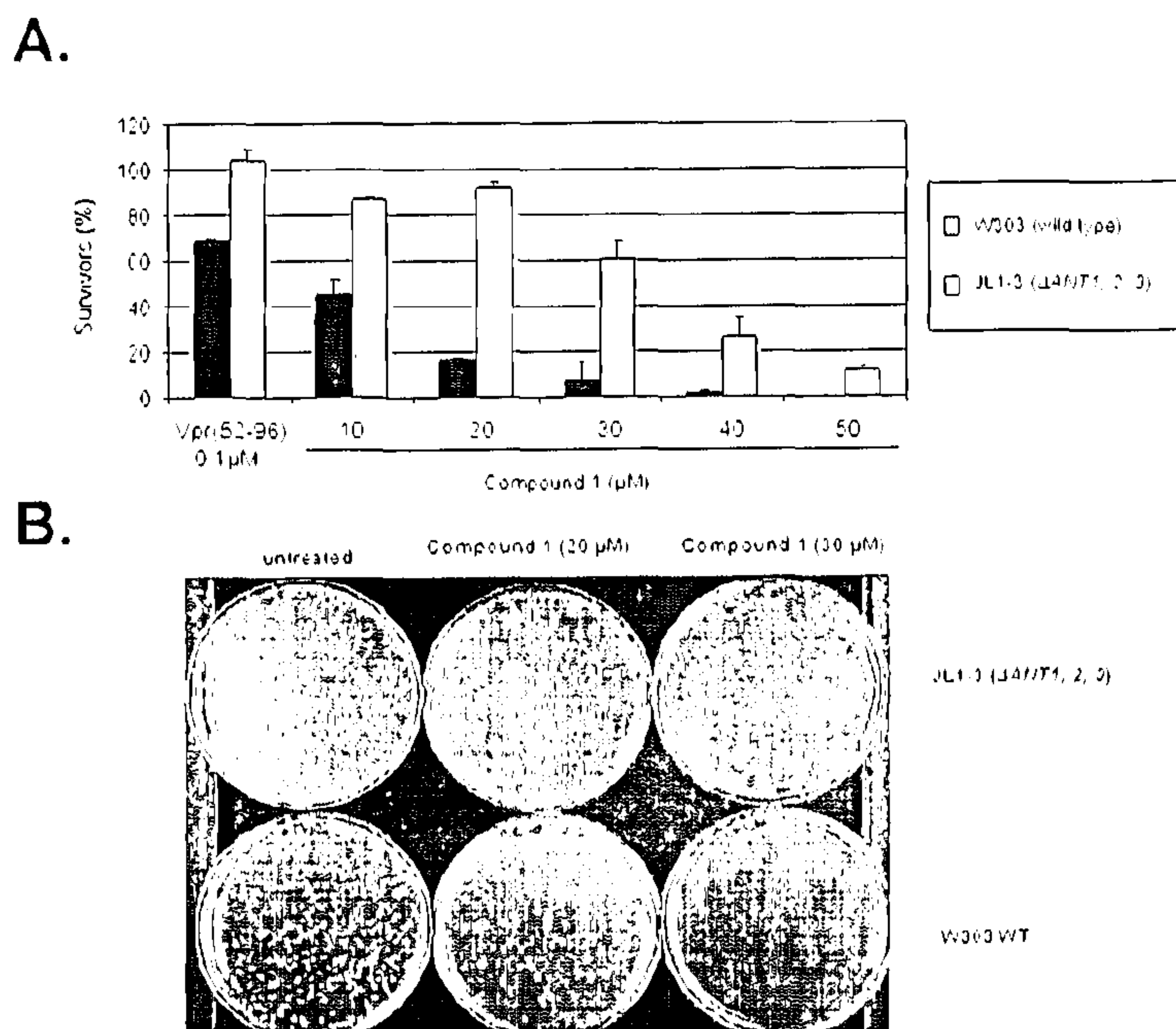
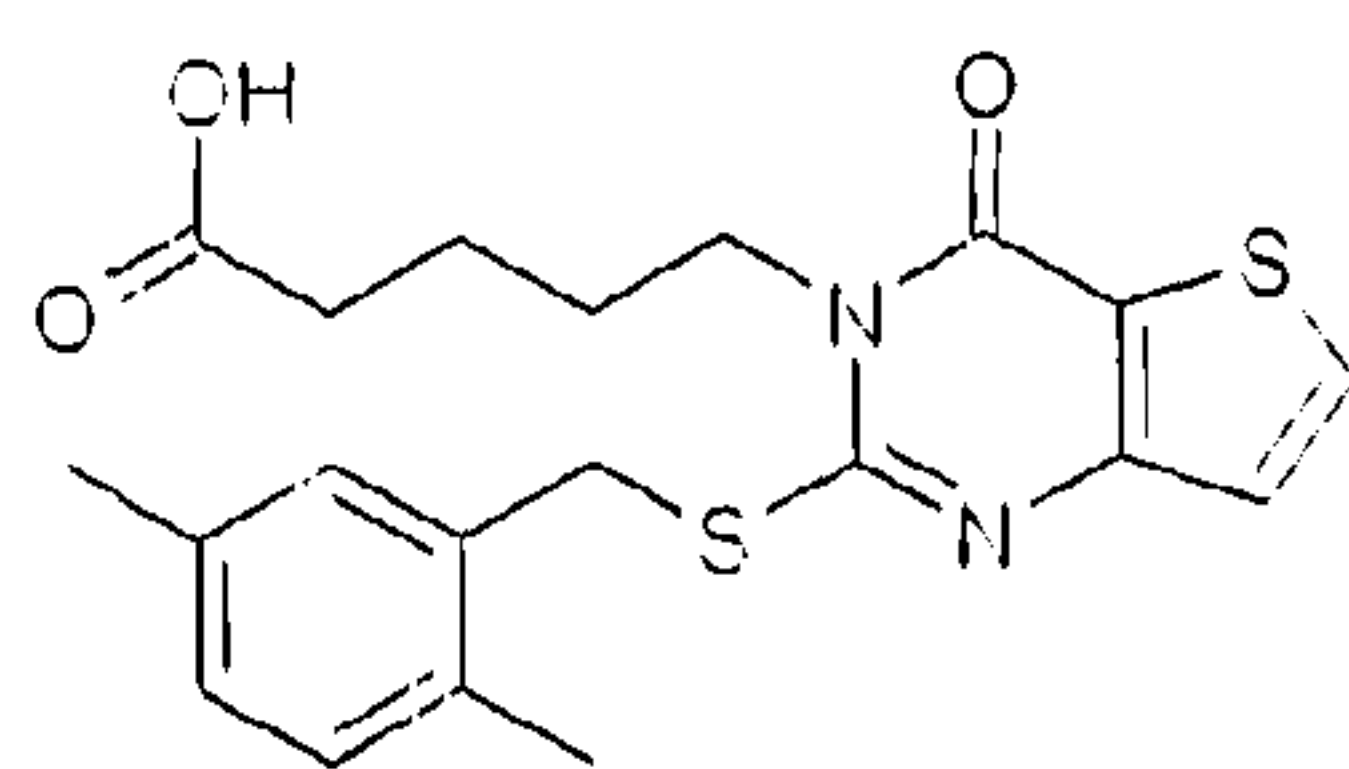


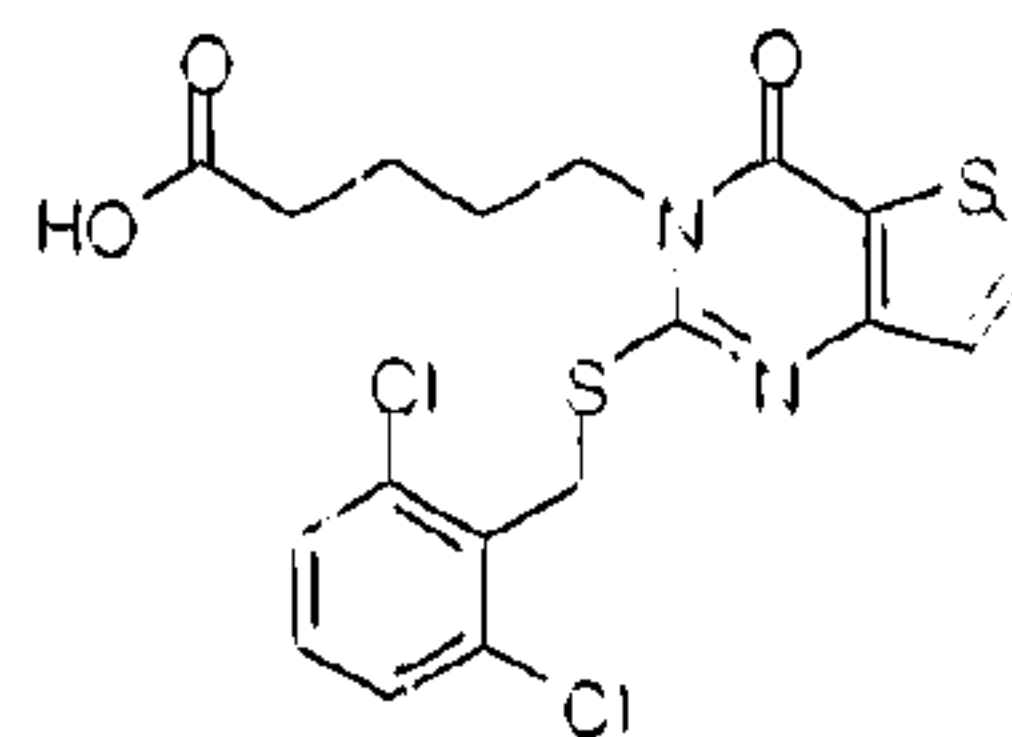
Fig. 5

Compound	MTT				ANT		MitoTrust		Yeast	
	LD50 (μM)				IC50 (μM)		Liver (μM)		ED50 (μM)	
Compound	HT-29	BxPC3	MiaPaca	Wi-38	Liver	HT-29	DS50	DP50	W303	JL1-3
Compound 1	42,06	18,14	ND	>100	23,19	22,84	> 200	> 200	17,18	31,36
Compound 2	0,83	0,59	ND	6,3	159,8	13,93	ND	11,27	>100	>100
Compound 3	0,87	0,53	0,69	2,50	28,69	24,03	>200	173	16,9	35,46
Compound 4	0,62	0,48	0,95	100,00	>100	10,23	ND	33,60	ND	ND
Compound 6	<0,2	<0,2	0,24	30,63	>100	14,05	>200	>200	>50	>50
Compound 6	1,36	0,70	1,67	93,47	>100	32,19	84,65	>200	125	>200
Compound 7	5,71	2,57	5,87	100,00	16,94	5,09	>200	72,70	9,5	46,18
Compound 8	0,87	0,31	0,61	12,50	15,53	11,11	>200	132,69	6,75	17,38
Compound 9	0,39	0,12	0,29	ND	22,23	16,08	>200	75,25	21,34	>35
Compound 10	28,77	58,51	55,07	100,00	9,31	2,94	8,97	5,50	>50	>50
Compound 11	0,87	0,53	0,73	43,91	>200	31,39	>200	>200	25	>100
Compound 12	3,60	0,94	1,07	10,07	27,06	56,67	19,66	5,97	3,54	6,82
Compound 13	1,70	1,61	1,69	52,34	28,63	26,74	>200	3,62	20,53	42,88
Compound 14	8,76	3,69	7,33	>100	7,18	6,65	23,33	>200	3,97	9,53
Compound 15	5,33	3,15	4,86	ND	8,53	8,05	66,58	16,74	ND	ND
Compound 16	4,62	2,82	4,65	ND	6,78	13,7	120,22	57,82	ND	ND

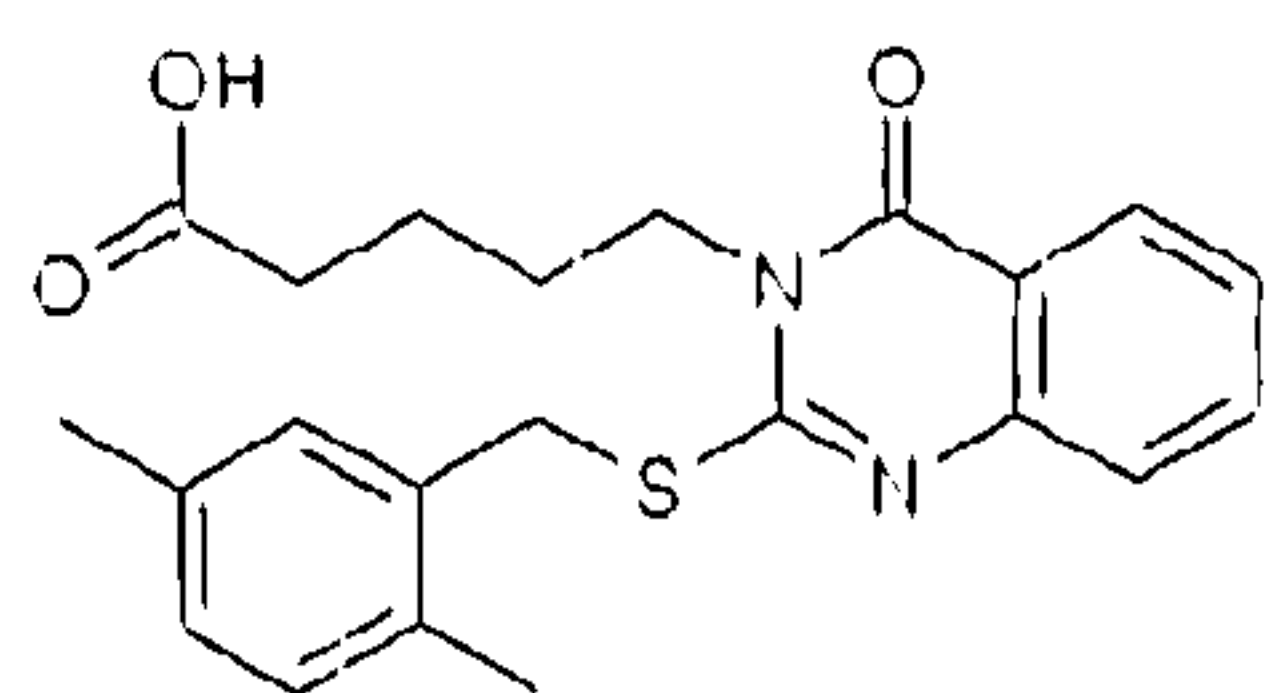
Fig. 6



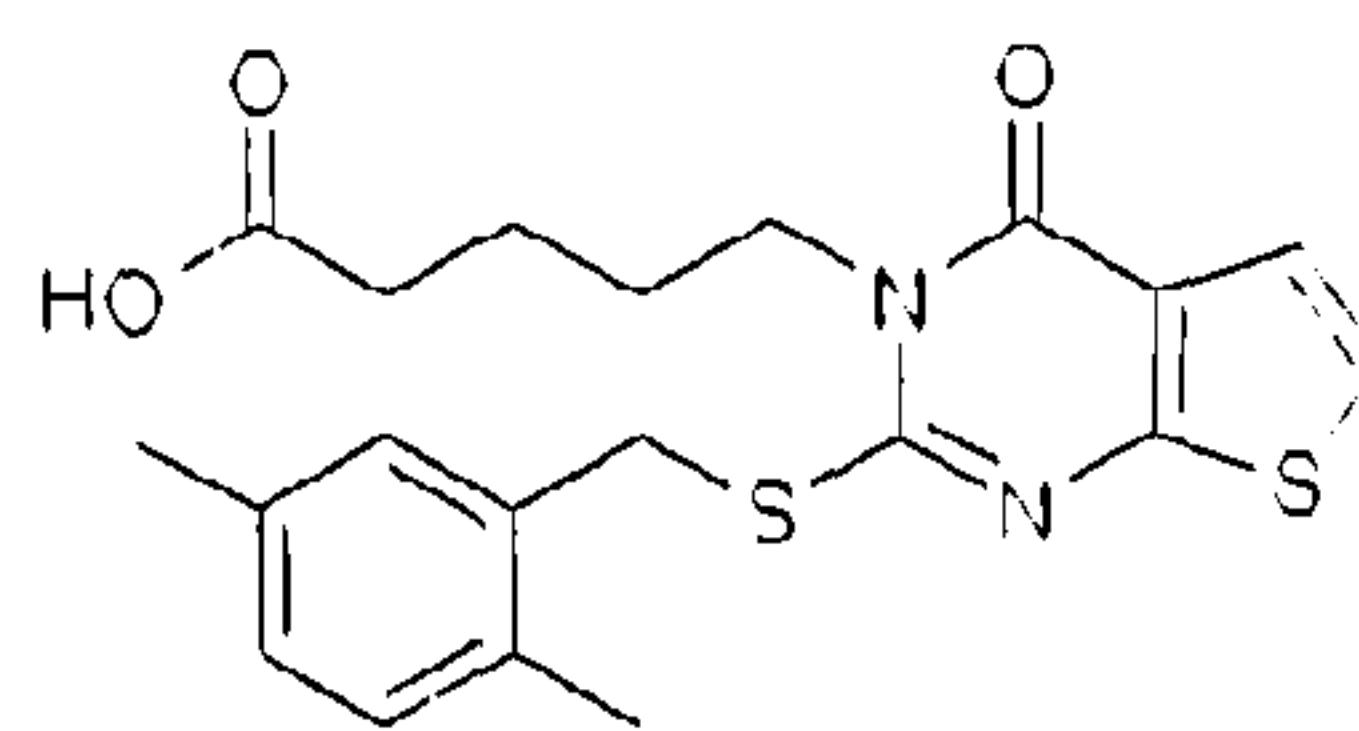
Compound 3



Compound 7



Compound 8

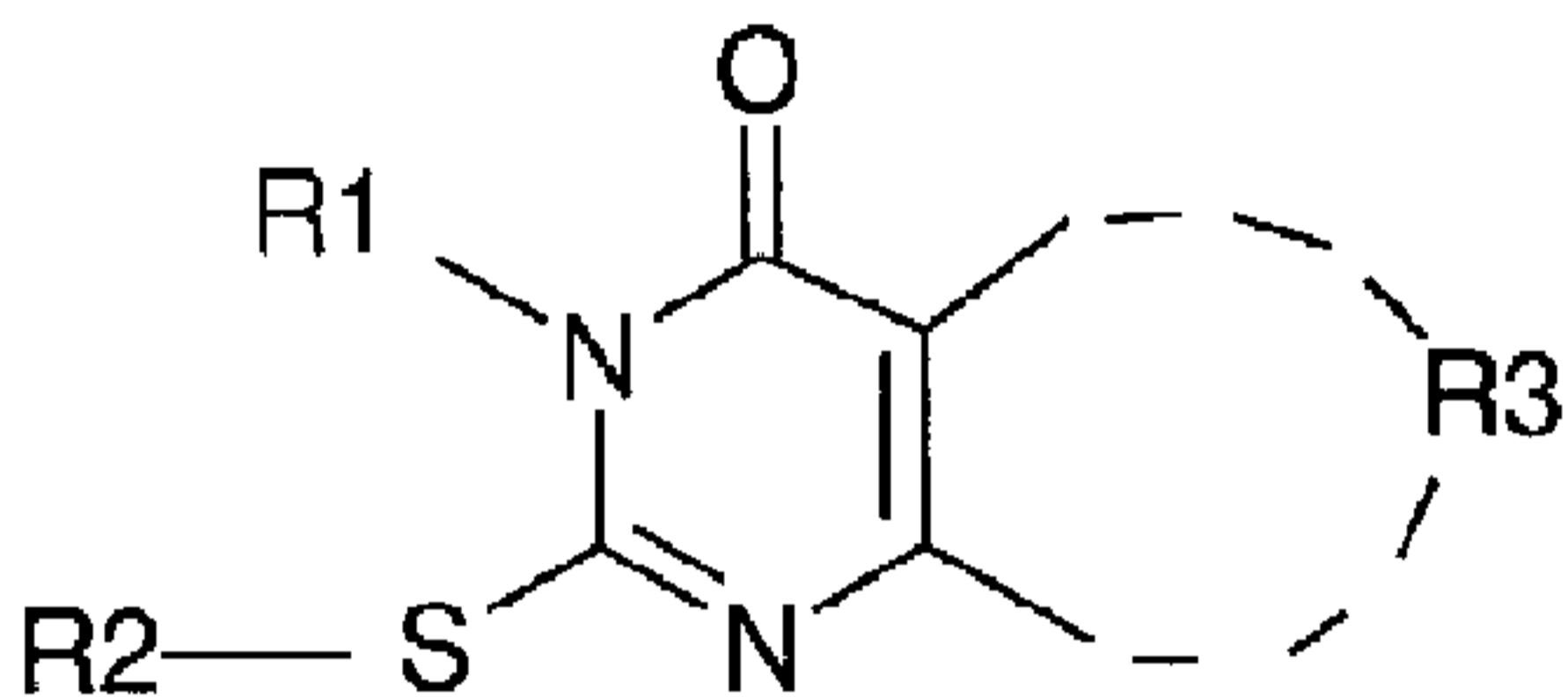


Compound 9

Fig. 7

Compound	MTT DL50 (μM)				ANT IC50 (μM)		Mitotrust foie	
	HT-29	Mia Paca	BxPC3	WI-38	Foie	HT-29	DS50 (μM)	DP50 (μM)
17	39,90	83,42	43,7	>100	22,58	9,66	18	22,77
18	26,20	41,31	55,9	>100	5,05	6,61	133,48	18,68
19	39,90	67,10	43,7	91,2	6,96	33,97	ND	3,68
20	35,93	57,63	22,3	93,7	15,65	7,09	>200	79,53
21	39,51	68,13	6,7	100,0	17,3	22,33	>200	>200

Fig. 8



(I)