C₆₀ Recognition from Extended Tetrathiafulvalene Bis-acetylide Platinum(II) Complexes

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Supporting Information

ABSTRACT: The favorable spatial organization imposed by the square planar 4,4′-di(tert-butyl)-2,2′-bipyridine (dbbpy) platinum(II) complex associated with the electronic and shape complementarity of π-extended tetrathiafulvalene derivatives (exTTF) toward fullerenes is usefully exploited to construct molecular tweezers, which display good affinities for C₆₀-

Given the importance of fullerene derivatives for various types of applications, research related to their recognition through host–guest processes is very active. In this context, different families of molecular receptors have been designed, be they covalent organic macrocycles, self-assembled macrocycles and cages, or molecular tweezers. Most often, such receptors involve two or more highly π-extended units, which are prone to interact with the fullerene surface. Recently, the π-extended tetrathiafulvalene (exTTF) unit has known a strong interest in the designing of fullerene receptors, supported by a suitable combination of geometric and electronic specific features. In particular, the butterfly shape of exTTF allows for a favorable concave/convex interaction when its highly π-donating capability is complementary with the electron-poor nature of fullerene derivatives. Despite those electronic and geometric complementarities, to the best of our knowledge, the interaction between an isolated exTTF unit and fullerenes has never been detected in solution. On the contrary, receptors bearing two suitably preorganized exTTF fragments do interact with these guests, thanks to synergetic effects. On this basis, macrocyclic receptors incorporating two exTTF units were successfully designed. Nevertheless, related molecular tweezers, i.e., an open cavity formed by a central platform bearing two pendant units, are still scarcely described despite the ability of such host compounds to be generally synthesized in a straightforward way.

We describe herein a simple procedure to produce exTTF-based molecular tweezers incorporating a metal complex as the central platform, by coupling two functionalized alkynes to a platinum diimine complex in a square planar cis configuration. The geometry that is imposed by the coordination to the metal center as well as the length of the acetylide spacer were selected to provide a suitable distance between both exTTF units in order to accommodate a fullerene C₆₀ acceptor.

The synthesis of target complexes C¹ and C² is depicted in Scheme 1. Monoacetylide exTTF 2 was quantitatively obtained upon deprotection of the silylated derivative 1 using potassium carbonate. Bis-alkyne exTTF 4 was synthesized from 3 according to a similar methodology and subsequently reacted with one equivalent of 4-iodopyridine through a Sonogashira cross-coupling. The target dissymmetrical ligand 6 was isolated with a 44% yield in addition to the symmetric compound 5 (40%). Finally, analogously to the preparation of bis-corannulene diphosphino platinum tweezers, complexes C¹ and C² were respectively obtained via a CuI-catalyzed coupling reaction between alkynes 2 and 6 and the Pt(dbbpy)Cl₂ complex (dbbpy = 4,4′-di(tert-butyl)-2,2′-bipyridine) in the presence of diisopropylamine. Both target Pt(II) complexes were purified by silica gel chromatography and proved to be soluble in usual organic solvents. Thus, their structures could be confirmed by HR-MS spectrometry and NMR spectroscopy since both complexes exhibit well-defined NMR signals, and their purities confirmed through elemental analysis measurements.

Diamine platinum(II) acetylide complexes are known to exhibit remarkable luminescence properties at room temperature, characterized by bright emission in the visible range and long lifetimes decay, arising mainly from a πCT exited state. Nevertheless, in some cases, the charge transfer transition can be observed in a bipyridine Pt (II) complex presenting energetically proximate πCT and 3IL excited states. However, tetraphiafulvalene and derivatives can act as efficient luminescence quencher by electron-donating effect.

UV–vis absorption spectra of exTTF intermediates 1–6 and complexes C¹ and C² recorded in dichloromethane (C = 2 × 10⁻⁵ M) are shown in Figure 1. The corresponding maxima and extinction coefficients are given in Supporting Information (SI) (Table S1). The organic intermediates present four absorption bands attributed to π−π∗ transitions. Whereas no significant shift is observed upon deprotection of the TMS protecting groups, the increasing size of the π-system from the mono- (1, 2) to the...
corresponding bis-ethynyl derivatives (3, 4) is accompanied by ca. 13 nm red-shifts. Grafting electron-withdrawing pyridine subunits in 5 and 6 leads to a similar effect for the lower energy bands with a redshift of ca. 12 nm compared to compounds 2 and 4. One should note that the presence of the peripheral ethynyl fragments leads to a red-shift of the lowest energy transition ranging from 9 nm (compound 1) to 30 nm (compound 6) when compared to the corresponding naked exTTF (435 nm, CH₂Cl₂). This effect is not as important as for other linearly conjugated systems, most likely because of the nonplanar shape of the exTTF core in the neutral state. As expected, the extinction coefficients are similar for all compounds. UV–vis absorption spectra of complexes C1 and C2 are close in terms of shape to those of 2 and 6, respectively. The low energy transitions are not shifted after coordination to the platinum and their molar extinction coefficients correspond to the contributions of both exTTF donors 4 and 6 superimposed to slight CT contributions typical of acetylide diimine platinum complexes. Finally, the intense high energy transitions below 360 nm are attributed to the superimposition of intraligand π-π* localized on the iBu₂bpy and the ethynyl-exTTF fragments.

Upon excitation of complexes C1 and C2 in the CT region, no luminescence in the visible or near-IR region could be detected at room temperature under degassed conditions, although it is usually observed with platinum(II) diimine diethynyl complexes. This suggests that the lowest excited state could be exTTF centered, as previously reported with other classes of ligands, or that a photoinduced electron transfer occurs from the exTTF moieties toward the CT excited state. Such a behavior has already been reported with similar platinum complexes bearing TTF or phenothiazine donors.

The electrochemical properties of precursors 1–6 and complexes C1 and C2 were studied by cyclic voltammetry (CV) in CH₂Cl₂/CH₃CN (3/1) mixtures (Figure 2). The resulting data are compiled in Table S1 (SI). Compounds 1–6 all exhibit the characteristic electrochemical exTTF behavior, with one pseudo-reversible two-electron process ranging from $E^{\text{ox}} = +0.05$ to $+0.14$ V vs Fc/Fc⁺ depending on their substitution. Interestingly, mono- and bis-functionalized exTTF present the same oxidation potential, which therefore only depends on the nature of the substituent. In most cases, metal coordination leads to a loss of electron density on the anchored redox units and provokes an anodic shift of the oxidation wave. In contrast, complexes C1 and C2 present exTTF-centered oxidation potentials shifted by ca. 50 mV toward lower potentials in comparison to alkyn derivatives 2 and 6. Such a cathodic shift was already observed for acetylide TTF platinum(II) complexes and reveals the electron-donating nature of the platinum acetylide complex. It is worth noting that both exTTF units of C1 or C2 do not seem to
interact from these CV studies, suggesting a four-electron process in each case.

Single crystals of complex C1 were obtained by slow diffusion of MeOH in a CH2Cl2 solution, and the molecular structure was determined by X-ray diffraction analysis (Figure 3 and SI). In the solid state, the exTTF moieties exhibit the characteristic butterfly shape6d with a slight distortion from planarity of the central anthraquinoidic platform. The bond lengths and the angles around the platinum atoms are similar to those usually observed for bis-acetylide Ptppy complexes (Table S2, SI), within particular C−Pt−C angles close to 90°.20 Importantly, the distance between the two exTTF fragments (measured between both quinoidic ring centers) is 12.2 Å, which suggests complex C1 (and by extension C2) could host a fullerene guest.

The binding abilities of complexes C1 and C2 were evaluated for fullerene C60 by UV−vis titration. The spectral changes observed at λmax = 439 nm (C1) and 462 nm (C2) (C = 10−5 M in PhCl) were monitored upon addition of aliquots of C60 (C = 5 × 10−3 M in PhCl) and working at constant host concentration.9 The corresponding Job plots (Figure 4) show the formation of 1:1 host−guest complexes. From these results, binding constants of K = 250 ± 42 and 650 ± 60 were calculated for C1 and C2, respectively (SI), illustrating the ability of these tweezers to bind the electron-deficient C60 in the competitive chlorobenzene solvent. It is worth noting that complex C2, which exhibits a...
lower electron-donating character as evaluated by CV measurements, presents a stronger interaction with the guest under consideration. This behavior is attributed to the larger interaction surface between both species in the case of C2, due to the presence of the 4-ethynylpyridine fragment. Importantly, this also confirms the prominent contribution of dispersive-type forces (which increase with size extension as in C2 relatively to C1) over charge-transfer interactions. 

In summary, two molecular tweezers C1 and C2, which encompass two electron-rich extended tetrafulvalene (exTF) units, were synthesized and fully characterized. They are prepared in a straightforward way by formation of bis-acetylide platinum(II) complexes. Their binding ability toward fullerene C60 is mainly governed by a suitable concave/convex shape complementarity. This host–guest interaction could be confirmed by UV–vis titrations, both tweezers being able to bind the complementary fullerene guest in a 1:1 stoichiometry (Job plots) with high binding constants in PhCl (K = 250 and 650, respectively). Given the simplicity and the efficiency of the metal-driven assembly approach, efforts are currently underway in our laboratory to extend the scope of this approach toward new families of molecular tweezers.

**REFERENCES**


**Notes**

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The authors gratefully acknowledge the ANR-PNANO (ANR-07-NANO-030-01) and the ANR JCJC BOMBER (14-CE08-0001) for financial support and the PLAM analytical platform (Univ. Angers) for its assistance in spectroscopic analyses.

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