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A study of the interaction between inverted cucurbit[6]uril and symmetric viologens

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Abstract: The interaction between inverted cucuribit[6]uril $(\lambda Q[6])$ and a series of symmetric viologens bearing aliphatic substituents, namely dicationic dialkyl-4,4'bipyridinium guests where the alkyl substituent is $CH_3(CH_2)_n$ (n = 1, 3 and 5) or benzyl, has been studied in aqueous solution by ¹H NMR spectroscopy, electronic absorption spectroscopy, Isothermal Titration Calorimetry and mass spectrometry. The viologen bearing $C_6H_5CH_2$ substituents has also been investigated. In the case of the dialkyl-derived guests, single crystal X-ray diffraction, on crystals grown in the presence CdCl₂, revealed $2(C_{36}H_{36}N_{24}O_{12}),$ of the compositions to be $4(C_{14}H_{18}N_2), Cd_5Br_{9.56}C_{110.44}2(H_2O), 2(H_3O);$ $2(C_{36}H_{36}N_{24}O_{12}), C_{18}H_{26}N_2, 2(CdCl_4), 36H_2O$ and $2(C_{36}H_{36}N_{24}O_{12}), 2(C_{11}H_{17}N), 2(CdCl_4), 20H_2O$ for the use of n = 1, 3 or 5 respectively. Thus, in the solid state, in the case of both BV^{2+} (n = 3) and HV^{2+} (n = 5), an interaction of viologen with iQ[6] was observed and the structure adopted is an external 'dumbbell-type' structure.

Introduction

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Despite the attention that cucurbit[n]urils (Q[n]s) are receiving, [1] reports relating to the inverted cucurbit[n]urils (iQ[n]s) are far more scant. [2, 3] We have embarked upon a programme to investigate the host-guest/inclusion properties of iQ[n]s, and recently reported the ability of iQ[7] to include viologens, namely α , ω -alkyldiammonium guests. [3] In that study, iQ[7] was found, in aqueous solution, to partially encapsulate the viologen when R = H, CH₃ or CH₂CH₃ forming 1:1 binary inclusion complexes. By contrast, the use of longer R groups led to 2:1 tertiary complexes with alkyl groups embedded in the iQ[7] cavity. In the same study, the presence of CdCl₂ led to the formation of pseudorotaxanes for R = 4 and 7 in the solid state. We now extend our hostguest studies of inverted cucurbit[n]urils to the iQ[6] system, and report our observations on their interaction with dicationic dialkyl-4,4'-bipyridinium guests where the alkyl is CH₃(CH₂)_n (n = 1, 3 and 5), as well as the viologen where the substituents are C₆H₅CH₂ (see chart 1). We note that other groups have reported the interaction of Q[n]s (n = 6, 7, 8 or 14) with viologens in recent work; [4] viologens are of potential use in electrochromic displays. [5]

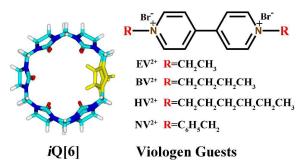


Chart 1. iQ[6] and the viologens used in this study.

Results and Discussion

The binding interactions between each of the viologen guests and iQ[6] can be conveniently monitored using ¹H NMR spectroscopic data recorded in 1M DCl solution, which is necessary due to the poor solubility in neutral D₂O solution. Figure 1 shows the changes observed in the spectrum of EV²⁺ as progressively larger amounts of iQ[6] are added to the solution. There is little evidence of any of the peaks shifting which is consistent with a lack of interaction between iQ[6] and the viologen EV²⁺.

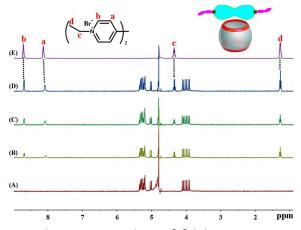


Figure 1. ¹H NMR spectra (400 MHz, D₂O) of iQ[6] (A) in the absence and in the presence of (B) 0.2, (C) 0.4, (D) 0.8, (E) 1.1equiv of EV²⁺ and (F) neat EV²⁺ in 1M DCl at 20 °C.

In the case of BV^{2+} , as shown in Figure 2, only in neat viologen is a shift observed for the resonances (c – f) associated with the alkyl chains. This suggests that only under these conditions are the butyl chains included in the cavity of the host, with the bipyridinium nucleus remaining outside.

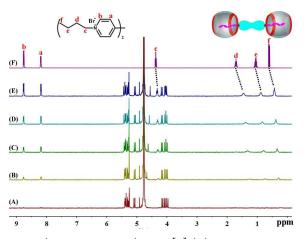


Figure 2. ¹H NMR spectra (400 MHz, D₂O) of iQ[6] (A) in the absence and in the presence of (B) 0.2, (C) 0.4, (D) 0.8, (E) 1.1equiv of BV²⁺ and (F) neat BV²⁺ in 1M DCl at 20 °C.

The situation observed for HV2+ (Figure S1) is reminiscent of that for BV^{2+} , the only difference is that the aromatic protons exhibit a slight downfield shift. We propose these observations are again consistent with the formation of a 2:1 host-guest inclusion complex with the two iQ[6] molecules encapsulating the aliphatic chains. Interestingly, for iQ[7] with the same viologen, the shifts associated with the alkyl chains are more pronounced. [3]

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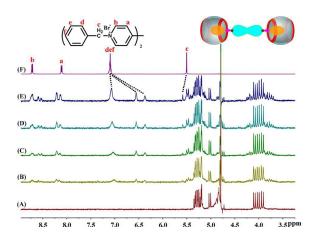


Figure 3. ¹H NMR spectra (400 MHz, D₂O) of iQ[6] (A) in the absence and in the presence of (B) 0.2, (C) 0.4, (D) 0.8, (E) 1.1equiv of NV²⁺ and (F) neat NV²⁺ in 1M DCl at 20 °C.

¹H NMR spectroscopy was also used to monitor the binding behavior of iQ[6] with a viologen bearing C₆H₅CH₂ substituents guest NV²⁺ (Figure 3). The shifts associated with the C₆H₅CH₂ substituents suggest this portion of the viologen is included in the iQ[6] again forming a 2:1 host-guest complex. This is further confirmed by the COSY spectrum of the mixture between iQ[6] and NV²⁺ in 1M DCl (Figure S2, in the Supporting Information).

Mass spectrometry

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Further evidence for the formation of the inclusion complexes of iQ[6] and guests EV²⁺, BV²⁺, HV²⁺ and NV²⁺ was provided by the MALDI-TOF mass spectrometry experiments. In their MALDI-TOF MS spectra (Figure 4), the major signals at m/z = 872.098, m/z = 1211.597, m/z=1239.778, and m/z=1245.707 were observed, corresponding to [iQ[6]+2EV $^{2+}]^{2+}/2$ (calculated 872.509), $[2iQ[6]+BV^{2+}]^{2+}/2$ (calculated 1211.928), $[2iQ[6]+HV^{2+}]^{2+}/2$ (calculated 1239.983) and $[2iQ[6]+NV^{2+}]^{2+}/2$ (calculated 1245.943). The intense signals provide direct support for the formation of the 2:1 stoichiometry of host–guest inclusion complexes $2iQ[6]@BV^{2+}$, $2iQ[6]@HV^{2+}$ and $2iQ[6]@NV^{2+}$.

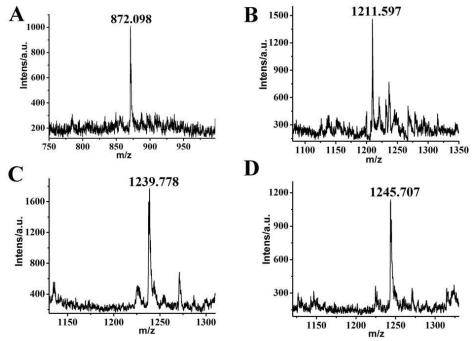


Figure 4. MALDI-TOF mass spectrometry of $iQ[6]@2EV^{2+}$ (A), $2iQ[6]@BV^{2+}$ (B), $2iQ[6]@HV^{2+}$ (C) and $2iQ[6]@NV^{2+}$ (D).

UV spectroscopy

To further understand the binding of symmetric viologens to iQ[6], we also investigated, by UV-vis spectrometry, the interactions between iQ[6] and symmetric viologens. In Figure 5, the UV spectra shown were obtained in 0.1M HCl solutions containing a fixed concentration of viologens and variable concentrations of iQ[6]. On gradually increasing the iQ[6] concentration in the viologens solution, the absorption band of the guest BV^{2+} exhibits a progressively higher absorbance due to the formation of the host-guest complex $2iQ[6]@BV^{2+}$. The absorbance vs. ratios of $n(iQ[6])/n(BV^{2+})$ data can be fitted to a 2:1 binding model. The alkyl moiety of the guests were encapsulated into the cavity of the iQ[6] host, generating a 2:1 host-guest inclusion complex. Similar changes in the absorption spectra of the guests HV^{2+} and NV^{2+} were observed as the iQ[6] concentration was increased. Thus, these the guests showed similar binding interactions with iQ[6] for which the alkyl moiety of the guests is embedded in the iQ[6] host. Nevertheless, the absorption band of the EV^{2+} exhibits near invariable absorbance as the ratio of $n(iQ[6])/n(EV^{2+})$ is increased, which is different to the absorption spectra observed for the guests BV^{2+} , HV^{2+} or NV^{2+} on increasing the iQ[6] concentration; these observations are

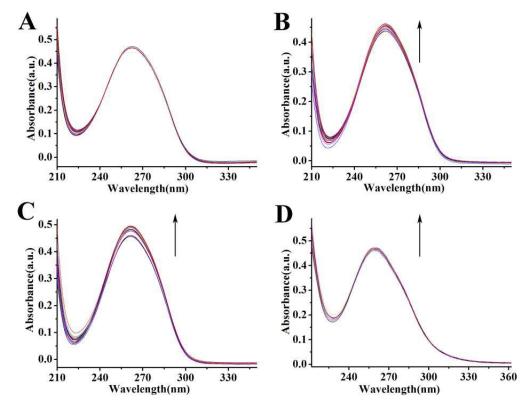


Figure 5. UV spectrum of EV²⁺ (A); BV²⁺ (B); HV²⁺ (C); NV²⁺ (D) at 2×10^{-5} mol L⁻¹ upon addition of increasing amounts (0 0.2 0.4 0.6...3.8 4.0 equiv.) of *i*Q[6] with an excitation of 262 nm.

Molecular structures

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In the structures, it was not possible to locate hydrogen atoms attached to water. However, the central oxygen atoms can be reliably located. In some of the structures, it is necessary to include H_3O^+ for charge balancing. Although the structures are obtained from a chloride-rich solution there is clear evidence that bromide is present in the n = 1case (presumably from the viol²⁺ (Br⁻) starting material).

The structure of iQ[6] with EV²⁺ (n = 1):

Single crystals of the iQ[6]- EV²⁺ system suitable for X-ray diffraction were obtained by solvent evaporation of the filtrate in air over a period of about three weeks to afford rhombic colorless crystals. Following treatment with SQUEEZE, the composition of the compound was found to be $2(C_{36}H_{36}N_{24}O_{12}), 4(C_{14}H_{18}N_2), Cd_5Br_{9.56}Cl_{10.44}2(H_2O).2(H_3O),$ *ie* $<math>2iQ[6]/4EV/Cd_5Br_{9.56}Cl_{10.44}2(H_2O).2(H_3O)$. Hydrogen atoms were not resolved, whilst the

anions are $5 \times CdX_{4^{2^{*}}}$ where X is roughly two chloride and two bromide. This is not an inclusion complex, see Figure 6.

This structure is much less well resolved than the other two (see below), perhaps as a result of the absence of an interaction between the viologen and the AQ[6]. There is substantial disorder present in the position of the $CdX_{4^{2^{-}}}$ anions. These anions lie in 1-D channels that extend parallel to the crystallographic c-axis between the organic components. The absence of significant hydrogen bonding to these anions is presumably a cause of the disorder. The AQ[6] and viologens are packed alternately in layers in the xy plane; the viologens are aligned with the *b*-axis. This is not an inclusion complex. The ethyl viologen molecules are located between the rims of two AQ[6] molecules and are held in place by C-H…O interactions and also some C-H…halide interactions. The H…O distances lie in the range 2.32 to 2.76 Å.

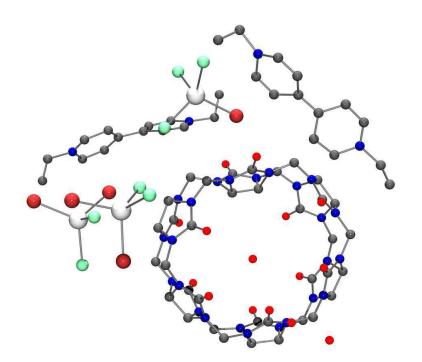


Figure 6. Molecular structure of 2*i*Q[6]/4EV/Cd₅Br_{9.56}Cl_{10.44}2(H₂O).2(H₃O)

The structure of iQ[6] with BV²⁺ (n = 3):

Again, crystals suitable for X-ray diffraction were obtained from the filtrate upon slow evaporation. The best estimate of the composition of the crystal is $2(C_{36}H_{36}N_{24}O_{12})$, C₁₈H₂₆N₂, 2(CdCl₄), 36H₂O, *ie* 2*i*Q[6]/BV/2(CdCl₄), 36H₂O. Charge balancing is not obvious in this case. As shown in Figure 7, the crystal structure contains two unique iQ[6]molecules, two CdCl₄²⁻ ions and one dibutyl viologen cation in the asymmetric unit and there is water of crystallisation that is poorly resolved. Presumably for the purposes of charge balancing some of the water is present as H_3O^+ . Importantly, the viologen is encapsulated within two symmetry-related iQ[6]; every viologen is encapsulated and every IQ[6] is involved in this process. The dumbbells formed are packed in a C-centred array according to the space group symmetry. Between these exist large regions of space that are occupied by water. The butyl viologen resides with each of the alkyl chains located within the iQ[6] cavity of a different iQ[6] molecule. There are no classical hydrogen bonds but a raft of $C-H \cdots O$ interactions between the viologen and the iQ[6]. These interactions are between the C=O and CH_2 groups and also aromatic C-H on the viologen. The $H \cdots O$ distances lie in the range 2.38 to 2.77 Å. The formally positively-charge nitrogen atom is displaced slightly from the centre of the ring to form $C=O \cdots N$ distances in the range 3.28 to 4.53 Å. Presumably the displacement from the centre maximises this favourable interaction.

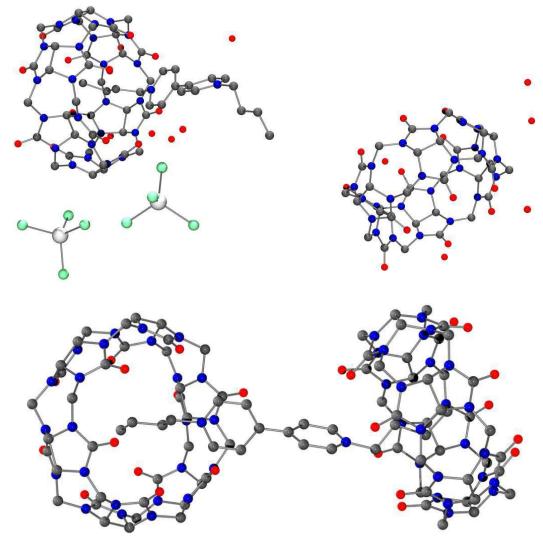


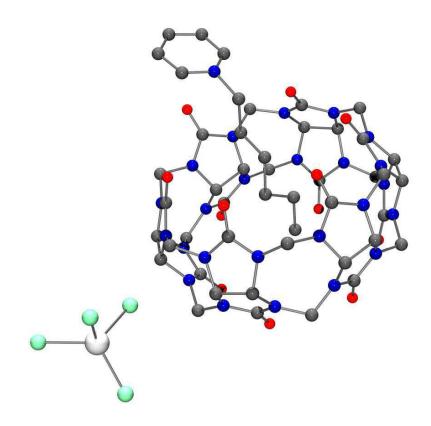
Figure 7. Molecular structure of $2iQ[6]/BV/2(CdCl_4)$, $36H_2O$. Top: the asymmetric unit. Bottom: the docking between the viologen and iQ[6].

The structure of iQ[6] with HV²⁺ (n = 5):

Single crystals of the $iQ[6]@HV^{2+}$ system suitable for X-ray diffraction were obtained by solvent evaporation of the filtrate in air over a period of about three weeks to afford colorless crystals of the solid products. HV1 was treated with SQUEEZE to pick up a little tiny bit of poorly ordered water. Best estimate of the composition of the crystal is $2(C_{36}H_{36}N_{24}O_{12})$, $(C_{22}H_{34}N_2)$, $2(CdCl_4)$, $18H_2O.2(H_3O)$, *ie* $2iQ[6]/HV/2CdCl_218H_2O.2(H_3O)$, see Figure 8. The asymmetric unit contains one iQ[6], one CdCl₄ anion, and one half of the

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hexyl viologen and some isolated water molecules. The second half of the viologen is generated by symmetry; each viologen is located with the hexyl group located encapsulated within the viologen ring. Dumbbells of viologen between two IQ[6] are packed in a highly symmetric arrangement aligned in layers in the yz plane alternately along the [011] and [01-1] directions. Between these are the CdX₄²⁻ anions. Again, this structure is best considered as a dumbbell-type inclusion complex. The alkyl chain shows some disorder towards its end, but there are discernible C–H…O interactions between CH₂ groups and the rim of the IQ[6]. Four H…O distances lie in the range 2.48 to 2.63 Å. There is a single aromatic C–H…O interaction (H…O 2.51 Å). The positively-charged nitrogen atom is located out of the centre of the ring almost directly about two C=O groups at O…N distances of 3.69 and 3.88 Å.



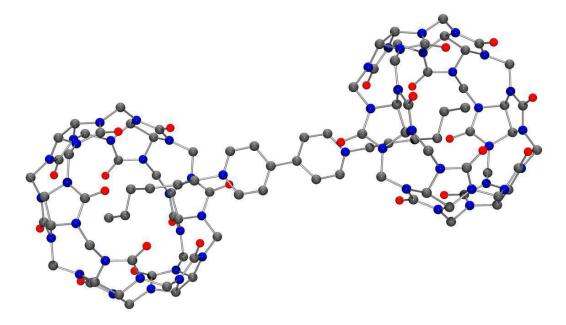


Figure 8. Molecular structure of $2iQ[6]/HV/2CdCl_218H_2O.2(H_3O)$. Top: the asymmetric unit. Bottom: the docking between the viologen and iQ[6].

Experimental Section

All ¹H NMR spectra, including those for the titration experiments, were recorded at 20°C on a JEOL JNM-ECZ400S spectrometer. 1M DCl was used as a field-frequency lock, and the observed chemical shifts are reported in parts per million (ppm). MALDI-TOF mass spectrometry was recorded on a Bruker BIFLEX III ultra-high resolution Fourier transform ion cyclotron resonance (FT-ICR) mass spectrometer with a cyano-4-hydroxycinnamic acid as matrix. Absorption spectra of the host-guest complexes were performed with an Aglient 8453 spectrophotometer at room temperature. The host and guests were dissolved in deionized water. UV-visible spectra was obtained at a concentration of $2.00-4.00 \times 10^{-5}$ mol·L⁻¹ guest and different *i*Q[6] concentrations for the *A*Q[6]@guest system.

Starting materials and solvents for syntheses were purchased commercially and used as supplied without further purification. iQ[6] was prepared and purified according to our previously published procedure. [2a, 6] With the exception of methyl viologen and N,N'-diheptyl-4,4'-bipyridinium dibromide (Aldrich), all other viologen guests were prepared by the treatment of 4,4'-bipyridine with an excess of the corresponding alkyl bromide.

The general procedure for the synthesis of (dialkyl) viologens is as follows: A mixture of 4,4'-dipyridyl (1.0 equiv.) and the corresponding alkyl bromide (6 equiv.) were refluxed for 3 h. The resulting precipitate was filtered, and then loaded onto a silica gel (G200) column, eluted with a 3:1 acetone: acetic acid mixture and the second major species eluted was collected. The eluate was reduced *in vacuo* to a small volume, separated, and recrystallized from a solvent system comprising 1:2 ethanol: ether. The crystals were collected, washed with ether, and then air-dried.

UV-Vis Absorption Spectra

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All UV spectra were recorded with an Agilent 8453 spectrophotomete at room temperature. The solutions of iQ[6] (1.0×10⁻⁴ mol/L) were prepared by directly dissolving host in 0.1M HCl. The solutions of viologen guests (1.0×10⁻³ mol/L) were prepared for absorption spectra determination. Samples of these solutions were combined to give guest:host ratios of 0, 0.2:1, 0.4:1, 0.6:1,... 4:1 respectively. The data were then analyzed using ORIGIN 8.0 and photoshop software.

Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Measurements

To analyze the host-guest complexation of iQ[6] and viologen guests, all ¹H NMR spectra, including those for the titration experiments, were recorded at 20°C on a JEOL JNM-ECZ400S spectrometer. 1M DCl was used as a field-frequency lock and the observed chemical shifts are reported in parts per million (ppm) relative to that for the internal standard (TMS at 0.0 ppm). The ratio of viologen guests *versus i*Q[6] was calculated by the ratio of their integral are as for special peaks. The concentrations of the viologen guests are 1.0×10⁻⁴ mol/L in the ¹H NMR spectroscopic experiments.

Preparation of single crystals $iQ[6]@EV^{2+}$, $iQ[6]@BV^{2+}$ and $iQ[6]@BV^{2+}$

Similar processes were used to prepare crystals of this series of samples (see below). Complex $iQ[6]@EV^{2+}$: weigh accurately about 59 mg iQ[6](0.05 mmol), 55mg CdCl₂ (0.3mmol) and 150 mg EV²⁺ (0.4mmol) into a 25 mL beaker and dissolve in 12mL of 3M HCl solution, The mixture was heated at 50°C with stirring until the iQ[6] and guest dissolved completely. The solution was then allowed to slowly evaporate under air at room temperature, whilst being kept in a shaded environment. Colorless and needlelike crystals were obtained in the beaker over about three weeks.

Complex $iQ[6]@BV^{2+}$: weigh accurately about 59 mg iQ[6](0.05 mmol), 55 mg CdCl₂ (0.3mmol) and 173 mg BV²⁺ (0.4mmol) into a 25 mL beaker and dissolve in 12mL of 3M HCl solution, The mixture was heated at 50°C with stirring until the iQ[6] and guest dissolved completely. The solution was allowed to slowly evaporate under air at room temperature, whilst being kept in a shaded environment. Colorless and needlelike crystals were obtained in the beaker over about three weeks.

Complex $iQ[6]@HV^{2+}$: weigh accurately about 59 mg iQ[6] (0.05mmol), 55mg CdCl₂ (0.3mmol) and 195mg HV²⁺ (0.4mmol) into a 25 mL of beaker and dissolve in 12mL of 3M HCl solution, The mixture was heated at 50°C with stirring until the iQ[6] and guest dissolved completely. The solution was allowed to slowly evaporate under air at room temperature, whilst being kept in a shaded environment. Colorless and needlelike crystals were obtained in beaker in air over about three weeks.

Conclusions

In summary, we have investigated the binding interactions of iQ[6] with a series of dialkyl-viologen dicationic guests using ¹H NMR spectroscopy and X-ray crystallography. In aqueous solution, the alkyl chains of the viologens (BV²⁺ and HV²⁺) were engulfed into the cavity of the iQ[6] host, forming 2:1 ternary complexes. The viologen bearing C₆H₅CH₂ substituents (NV²⁺) behaves in a similar fashion. This result is consistent with the binding behavior of Q[6] and its derivatives, tetramethylcucurbit[6]uril (Me₄Q[6]) and cyclohexanocucurbit[6]uril (Cy₆Q[6]), with dialkyl-viologens.[7] By contrast, there was no significant interaction between iQ[6] and the viologen EV²⁺, which is different to the observations for Q[6] and its derivatives. [7, 8] This is thought to be due to the smaller cavity of iQ[6] which contains a single inverted glycoluril units. The strong binding of iQ[6] to viologens is presumably due to the favorable ion–dipole interactions between the positively charged guest and the portal oxygen atoms of iQ[6] in addition to hydrophobic effects. Single crystals grown in the presence of CdCl₂, revealed solid-state structures best described as external 'dumbbell' type in the case of both BV²⁺ (n = 3) and HV²⁺ (n = 5) with iQ[6].

Single-crystal X-ray crystallography

Single crystals of complexes were grown from 3 M HCl solution containing CdCl₂ salt by slow evaporation. In each case, the structure was treated with the SQUEEZE routine to model disordered water contained within the structure and the formulas reflects the composition obtained from SQUEEZE. Diffraction data were collected at 293 K with a Bruker SMART Apex-II CCD diffractometer using graphite-monochromated Mo-K α radiation (wavelength = 0.71073 Å). Empirical absorption corrections were performed by using the multiscan program SADABS. Structural solution and full-matrix least-squares refinement based on F 2 were performed with the SHELXS-2014 and SHELXL-2018/1 program packages, respectively. [9, 10] All non-hydrogen atoms were treated anisotropically in all cases. All hydrogen atoms were introduced as riding atoms with an isotropic displacement parameter equal to 1.2 times that of the parent atom.

CCDC 1823647-1823649 contain the supplementary crystallographic data for this paper.

Compound	<i>i</i> Q[6] with EV ²⁺	<i>i</i> Q[6] with BV ²⁺	2 <i>i</i> Q[6]@HV ²⁺
Formula	$C_{128}H_{144}Br_{9.56}Cd_{5}Cl_{10.44}N_{56}O_{30}$	$C_{90}H_{98}Cd_2Cl_8N_{50}O_{36}\bullet15H_2O$	$C_{94}H_{106}Cd_2Cl_8N_{50}O_{43}$
Formula weight	4642.844	2964.58	3132.68
Crystal system	Triclinic	Monoclinic	Monoclinic
Space group	P-1	Сс	$C^2/_c$
Unit cell			
dimensions			
a (Å)	14.9882(11)	25.637(11)	23.0853(19)
b (Å)	15.3355(11)	16.148(7)	24.898(2)
c (Å)	23.6644(17)	35.826(15)	24.780(3)
α (Å)	83.034(2)	90	90
<i>6</i> (Å)	79.110(2)	97.719(6)	111.814(2)
γ (Å)	61.125(2)	90	90
<i>V</i> (Å ³)	4674.4(6)	14697(11)	13223(2)
Ζ	1	4	4
Temperature (K)	296(2)	293(2)	293(2)
Wavelength (Å)	0.71073	0.71073	0.71073
Calculated	1.649	1.340	1.574
density (Mg m ⁻³)			

Table 1. Crystallographc data

Absorption			
coefficient	2.828	0.518	0.584
(mm⁻¹)			
Transmission			
factors	0.977 and 0.981	0.845 and 0.884	0.193 and 0.252
(min/max)			
Crystal size (mm ³)	0.210 x 0.180 x 0.178	0.260 x 0.220 x 0.190	0.280 x 0.230 x 0.220
ರಿ (max) (°)	25.0	26.1	27.6
Reflections	50045	40079	86705
measured	59315		
Unique	16518	19604	15260
reflections			
R _{int}	0.0671	0.0427	0.042
Reflections with	9862	13326	10243
$F^2 > 2\sigma(F^2)$			
Number of	1053	1616	831
parameters	2000		
$R_1\left[F^2>2\sigma(F^2)\right]$	0.1773	0.0528	0.0608
wR_2 (all data)	0.5171	0.1513	0.2117
GOOF, S	1.960	0.951	1.040
Largest			
difference peak	9.339 and -5.667	0.657 and -0.580	1.469 and -0.710
and hole (e Å ⁻³)			

Acknowledgements

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