Published in final edited form as:

J Am Chem Soc. 2008 October 22; 130(42): 13814–13815. doi:10.1021/ja805681w.

Extraordinary Circularly Polarized Luminescence Activity Exhibited by Cesium Tetrakis(3-heptafluorobutylryl-(+)-camphorato) Eu(III) Complexes in EtOH and CHCl₃ Solutions

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Circularly polarized luminescence (CPL) spectroscopy is the emission analogue to circular dichroism (CD) spectroscopy.¹ It is common to report the degree of CPL in terms of the luminescence dissymmetry factor, $g_{\text{lum}}(\lambda)$, which is defined as follows: $g_{\text{lum}}(\lambda) = 2\Delta I/I = 2(I_L - I_R)/(I_L + I_R)$, where I_L and I_R refer respectively to the intensity of left and right circularly polarized emissions. A value of 0 for g_{lum} corresponds to no circular polarization, while the absolute maximum value is 2. Although the development of useful correlation between CPL spectrum and chiral structure is still limited,¹ a study by Bruce et al.² conducted on well-defined DOTA-based macrocyclic Eu(III) complexes led to the following conclusion. The sign and magnitude of CPL are affected by the degree of helical twist of the complex, the nature of the ligand field, and the axial donor group solvation. Of special importance is that the CPL will reflect the time-averaged local helicity around the lanthanide(III) ion (i.e. the magnitude of g_{lum} values increases with an increase in the degree of conformational rigidity of the complex).

To date, the largest g_{lum} value reported in the literature was for the commercially available NMR shift reagent tris(3-trifluoroacetyl-(+)-camphorato)europium(III), [Eu((+)-facam)₃], in dry DMSO (g_{lum} value of -0.78 at 588.2 nm),^{3,4} whereas lanthanidecontaining systems with chiral 2-hydroxyisophthalamide-, pyridyl diamide-, 1-hydroxy-2-pyridinone-, or DOTA-based ligand derivatives exhibited g_{lum} values as high as 0.5.^{1,4-8}

Recently, we reported on the isolation and structural characterization of sodium or cesium tetrakis(3-heptafluorobutylryl-(+)-camphorato) lanthanide(III) complexes, $M^I[\text{Ln}((+)\text{-hfbc})_4]$, by X-ray analysis and/or CD spectroscopy. The solution structure is supposed to take a square antiprism eight coordination (SAPR-8) with Δ -configurational chirality on the basis of the exciton CD spectra.^{9,10} In this communication, the CPL as well as CD of $M^I[\text{Eu}((+)\text{-hfbc})_4]$ complexes ($M^I = \text{Cs}$ and Na) in CHCl₃ and EtOH were examined in order to reveal the detailed chiral configuration in solution. Of special interest is the importance of using CPL for selectively studying only luminescent chromophores present in the systems of interest, in contrast to CD, which is affected by most chromophores and/or equilibrium mixtures in an additive manner. The $M^I[\text{Eu}((+)\text{-hfbc})_4]$ ($M^I = \text{Cs}$ and Na) compounds were obtained as crystals by the reported method (see Supporting Information).^{9,10}

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Supporting Information Available: Experimental section and Figures S1 and S2 (CD spectra of $M^I[\text{Eu}((+)\text{-hfbc})_4]$ ($M^I = \text{Cs}$ and Na) and $[\text{Eu}((+)\text{-hfbc})_3]$ in EtOH and/or CHCl₃). This material is available free of charge via the Internet at <http://pubs.acs.org>.

The CPL spectra of 2 mM solutions of $M^I[Eu((+)-hfbcb)_4]$ ($M^I = Cs$ and Na) in $CHCl_3$ are plotted in Figure 1 in the spectral range of the $^5D_0 \rightarrow ^7F_1$ transition, which is particularly well-suited for CPL measurements since it satisfies the magnetic-dipole selection rule, $\Delta J = 0, \pm 1$ (except $0 \leftrightarrow 0$), respectively. As shown in Figure 1, the detection of a CPL signal confirmed the presence of stable chiral emitting species on the luminescence time scale. The g_{lum} values of the $M^I[Eu((+)-hfbcb)_4]$ ($M^I = Cs$ and Na) complexes amounted to +1.38 and +0.15 at 595 nm, respectively. The magnitude of the g_{lum} values is affected by the alkali metal ion sizes (9-fold difference between Cs-Eu and Na-Eu). And also the solvent dependence is observed; a 1- and 2.5-fold differences in the magnitude of the g_{lum} values were observed between the 2 mM Cs-Eu and Na-Eu complex solutions in $CHCl_3$ and EtOH, respectively (+1.38 vs. +1.32 and +0.15 vs. +0.06 at 595 nm, Table 1).

We have resorted to the $^5D_0 \leftarrow ^7F_0$ (Eu) excitation spectroscopy to study the speciation of the Cs-Eu complex solution and investigate its influence on the CPL results, upon monitoring at 612 nm in the spectral range of the $^5D_0 \rightarrow ^7F_2$ emission transition. In Figure 2 we show the $^5D_0 \leftarrow ^7F_0$ excitation spectra of the 2 and 0.2 mM Cs-Eu complex solutions in EtOH. These spectra show two peaks centered around 578.8 and 579.3 nm, and predominantly one peak centered at 579.3 nm for the 2 and 0.2 mM Cs-Eu complex solutions, respectively. These results confirm the presence of different species in solution. It is interesting to note that the CPL activities of the Cs-Eu and Na-Eu complexes are not concentration dependent (see g_{lum} values at 612 nm in Table 1). However, the CD intensities in the intraligand transition are concentration dependent in EtOH; going from a weaker exciton couplet to a single CD band with lowering the concentration,^{9,10} while little concentration dependence was observed in $CHCl_3$ (Figs. S1-S2). These observations suggest that the large CPL activity observed for the Cs-Eu complex solution originates from the tetrakis (+)-hfbcb Eu(III) complex still present at lower concentrations. Unlike the CPL activity, the variation in the exciton CD activity is due to the contribution of both species present in solution.

This was confirmed by comparing the $^5D_0 \leftarrow ^7F_0$ excitation spectra of the $[Eu((+)-hfbcb)_3]$ solutions with that of the Cs-Eu complex. These $^5D_0 \leftarrow ^7F_0$ excitation spectra of the 2 and 0.2 mM $[Eu((+)-hfbcb)_3]$ solutions showed one main peak centered around 579.3 nm in Figure 2. On the other hand, the 0.2 mM Na-Eu and 0.02 mM Cs-Eu solutions in EtOH give a single positive CD band similar to that of the $[Eu((+)-hfbcb)_3]$ (Figs. S1-S2). These facts confirm that the predominant species in the M^I -Eu solutions at lower concentration is due to the presence of the $[Eu((+)-hfbcb)_3]$ compound. This is consistent with the CPL results. Unlike the Cs-Eu and Na-Eu complexes (g_{lum} values of -0.19 and -0.01 at 612 nm, respectively), the CPL signal of the 2 and 0.2 mM $[Eu((+)-hfbcb)_3]$ solutions in EtOH is very weak (g_{lum} values of +0.003 and +0.002 at 612 nm, respectively, Table 1). In addition, the g_{lum} values obtained for $[Eu((+)-hfbcb)_3]$ and M^I -Eu complexes have opposite signs. These observations suggest that the concentration dependence of the $^5D_0 \leftarrow ^7F_0$ excitation spectra for the Cs-Eu solution and of the CD of the M^I -Eu complexes result from the dissociation of the tetrakis (+)-hfbcb Eu(III) complex (Cs-Eu) into the tris (+)-hfbcb Eu(III) compound, $[Eu((+)-hfbcb)_3]$. On the other hand, the constant CPL activity observed for the M^I -Eu complex solution upon 10-fold dilution is due to the helical Δ -SAPR(C_4) arrangement of the four (+)-hfbcb ligands,^{9,10} even if $M^I[Eu((+)-hfbcb)_4]$ is the minor species in solution at lower concentrations. This latter species shows strong CPL activity in solution, whereas the CPL activity of $[Eu((+)-hfbcb)_3]$ is almost negligible, as corroborated by its CPL data (Fig. 1 and Table 1).

It is also interesting to note that the difference of the line shape of the $^5D_0 \rightarrow ^7F_1$ emission bands between the two total luminescence spectra of $M^I[Eu((+)-hfbcb)_4]$ suggests a difference in local crystal field around the Eu(III) ions (Fig. 1). The splitting of the 7F_J levels is dependent on the local symmetry of the Eu(III) ion which is mainly governed by the chemical environment around the Eu(III) ion. Knowing that the constant CPL activity (it is not concentration

dependent) is due to the helical Δ -SAPR(C_4) arrangement of the four (+)-hfbc ligands in $M^I[Eu((+)\text{-hfbc})_4]$, the 9-fold decrease in the magnitude of the CPL signal of the Na-Eu complex results from a less chiral environment for the Eu(III) ion in Na-Eu compared to Cs-Eu (Fig. 1 and Table 1). This observation suggests that the helical Δ -SAPR(C_4) arrangement of the four (+)-hfbc ligands in $CHCl_3$ and EtOH accounts for the CPL pattern of the M^I -Ln complexes, which in turn is controlled by the alkali metal ion sizes. The solvent and alkali metal ion effects are due to the difference in susceptibility to solvation toward the alkali metal ion, but not toward the Eu(III) ion unlike the case of axially symmetric DOTA-type complexes.^{1,2} A complete study of such effects on the CPL activity of $M^I[Ln((+)\text{-hfbc})_4]$ will be described in a forthcoming publication.

In conclusion, the observation of a constant and large CPL activity substantiates the stereospecific formation of chiral Δ -SAPR- (C_4) configurations with aid of $M^I\cdots FC$ (fluorocarbon) interactions as revealed by the X-ray analysis more clearly than the exciton CD spectra.^{9,10} It is also found that the Cs-Eu and Na-Eu complexes are dissociated in an equilibrium with the $[Eu((+)\text{-hfbc})_3]$ at lower concentrations. Knowing that the absolute maximum g_{lum} value is 2, the reported g_{lum} values for the $Cs[Eu((+)\text{-hfbc})_4]$ complex in EtOH and $CHCl_3$ solutions are the highest ever observed for any CPL studies of lanthanidecontaining compound solutions described in the literature. The observation of large CPL activities with variation of M^I ions and solvents opens new perspective for the studies aimed at understanding the chiroptical spectral-structure relationships and their important roles in configurational chirality for chemical sensors, NMR shift reagents, or chiral catalysis.

Supplementary Material

Refer to Web version on PubMed Central for supplementary material.

Acknowledgment

G.M. thanks the National Institute of Health Minority Biomedical Research Support (2 S06 GM008192-24A1) and Research Corporation Cottrell Science Award (CC6624) for their financial support.

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Figure 1.

CPL (upper curves) and total luminescence (lower curves) spectra for the $^5D_0 \rightarrow ^7F_1$ transition of the 2 mM $\text{Cs}[\text{Eu}(+)\text{-hfbc}_4]$ (left) and $\text{Na}[\text{Eu}(+)\text{-hfbc}_4]$ (middle) solutions in CHCl_3 , and for the $^5D_0 \rightarrow ^7F_2$ transition of the 2 mM $[\text{Eu}(+)\text{-hfbc}_3]$ solution (right, $\Delta I \times 10^2$) in EtOH at 295 K, upon excitation at 352 and 335 nm, and 359 nm, respectively.

Figure 2.
 $^5D_0 \leftarrow ^7F_0$ excitation spectra of the 2 (solid lines) and 0.2 mM (dashed lines) $\text{Cs}[\text{Eu}((+)\text{-hfbc})_4]$ (first two spectra from bottom) and $[\text{Eu}((+)\text{-hfbc})_3]$ (last two spectra from bottom) solutions in EtOH at 295 K, respectively. The luminescence was monitored at about 612 nm.

Table 1

Summary of CPL results for $M^I[\text{Eu}((+)\text{-hfbc})_4]$ ($M^I = \text{Cs, Na}$) and $[\text{Eu}((+)\text{-hfbc})_3]$ at 295 K ($\lambda_{\text{exc}} = 335\text{-}359$ nm range).

Complex	Solvent [mM]	$g_{\text{lum}}(^5\text{D}_0 \rightarrow ^7\text{F}_1)$	$g_{\text{lum}}(^5\text{D}_0 \rightarrow ^7\text{F}_2)$
$\text{Cs}[\text{Eu}((+)\text{-hfbc})_4]$	EtOH	2 mM	+1.32 (595 nm)
		0.2 mM	+1.32 (595 nm)
	CHCl_3	2 mM	+1.38 (595 nm)
		0.2 mM	+1.38 (595 nm)
$\text{Na}[\text{Eu}((+)\text{-hfbc})_4]$	EtOH	2 mM	+0.06 (595 nm)
		0.2 mM	-0.01 (612 nm)
	CHCl_3	2 mM	+0.15 (595 nm)
		0.2 mM	-0.02 (612 nm)
$[\text{Eu}((+)\text{-hfbc})_3]$	EtOH	2 mM	+0.003 (612 nm)
		0.2 mM	+0.002 (612 nm)