

Topological transformation of a trefoil knot into a [2]catenane

Thirumurugan Prakasam¹, Rana Bilbeisi², Roberto El-Khoury¹, Loïc J. Charbonnière,³ Mourad Elhabiri,⁴
Gennaro Esposito,^{1,5} John-Carl Olsen⁶ and Ali Trabolsi^{1*}

¹*New York University Abu Dhabi (NYUAD), Experimental Research Building, Building C1, Saadiyat Island, Abu Dhabi, UAE*

²*American University of Beirut, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE), Faculty of Engineering and Architecture (FEA), Beirut, Lebanon*

³*Laboratoire d'Ingénierie Moléculaire Appliquée à l'Analyse, IPHC UMR 7178 CNRS-Université de Strasbourg, ECPM, 25 rue Becquerel, 67087 Strasbourg, France*

⁴*Laboratoire de Chimie Bioorganique et Médicinale, UMR 7509 CNRS-Université de Strasbourg, ECPM, 25 rue Becquerel, 67087 Strasbourg, France*

⁵*DMIF, Udine University, 33100 Udine, Italy*

⁶*Department of Chemistry, RC Box 270216, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY, 14627*

Supporting Information

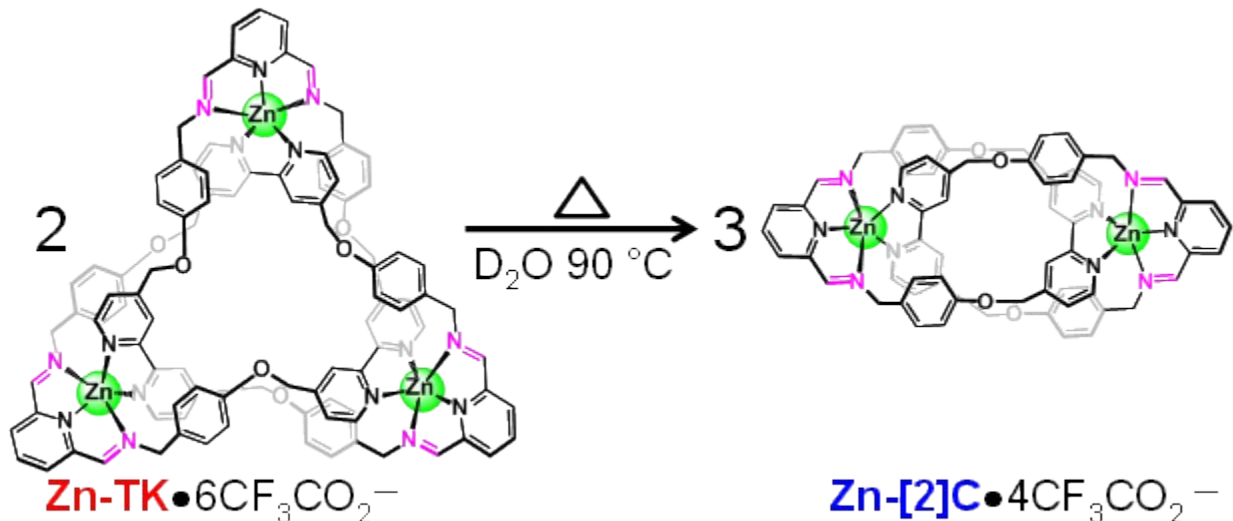
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1. General materials and methods

All reagents and starting materials were purchased from Sigma-Aldrich and used without further purification. The zinc(II)-templated trefoil knot (**Zn-TK**) and the cadmium(II)-templated trefoil knot (**Cd-TK**) were synthesized as previously reported.^{1, 2} Thin-layer chromatography (TLC) was performed on silica gel 60 F254 (E. Merck). The plates were inspected with UV light. Column chromatography was performed on silica gel 60F (Merck 9385, 0.040–0.063 mm). Routine nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectra were recorded at 25 °C on a Bruker Avance III spectrometer, with working frequencies of 600 and 500 MHz for ¹H, and 151.0 and 125.0 MHz for ¹³C nuclei. All chemical shifts are reported in ppm relative to the signals corresponding to the residual non-deuterated solvents (CD₃CN: δ = 1.94 ppm, CD₃OD: δ = 3.31 ppm) and deuterated water was calibrated using an internal standard 1% TMS.³ All ¹³C spectra were recorded with the simultaneous decoupling of proton nuclei. Coupling constant values (*J*) are given in hertz (Hz). The multiplicity of the proton spectrum is abbreviated in the following way: s (singlet), d (doublet), dd (doublet of doublets), t (triplet), q (quartet), qt (quintet), sx (sextet), m (multiplet) and a wide signal is preceded by br (broad). High resolution mass spectrometry (HRMS) was performed using an Agilent 6540 UHA Accurate Mass Q-TOF / LC - MS-spectrometer in the positive mode and an acetonitrile/water gradient was used with a C-18 column.

2. Transformation of Zn-TK into Zn-[2]C



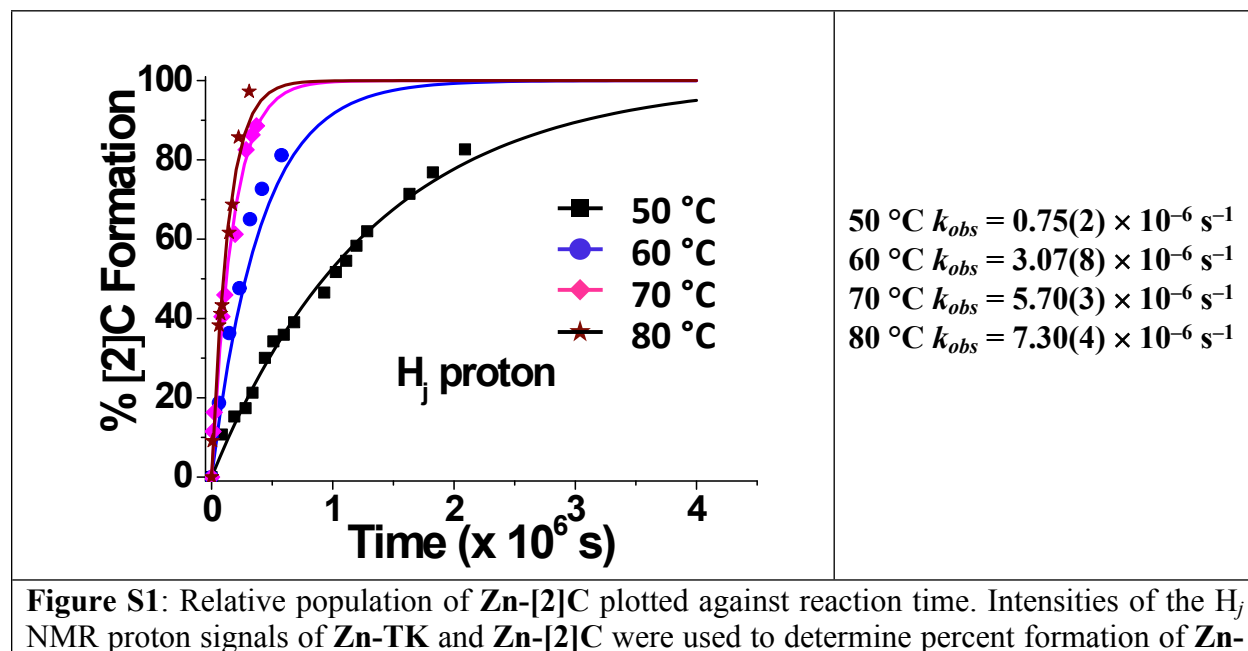
Deuterated water (D₂O) solutions (0.85 mM, 1.7 mM and 3.4 mM) of the zinc-containing trefoil knot were placed in an NMR tube and heated (conventionally) to 90 °C. The progress of the reaction was monitored by ¹H NMR spectroscopy at room temperature and regular time intervals. After reaction completion, **Zn-[2]C** was precipitated upon addition of a mixed solvent of isopropanol and THF (2:1). The precipitate was washed four times with the hot solvent mixture to remove side-products, including open chain zinc complexes which were estimated to amount to less than 10 mol % of the total product mixture. The final precipitate was dried under vacuum for 4h and characterized by ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectroscopy and HRMS.

Zn-[2]C: Yield: 89 %. ¹H NMR (500MHz, D₂O, 25 °C): δ 5.03 (s, 8H, Ar-CH₂), 5.43 (s, 8H, Ar-CH₂), 6.60 (ABq, 16H, *J* = 12 Hz, Ar-*H*), 7.97 (d, 4H, *J* = 4.5 Hz, Ar-*H*), 8.10 (s, 4H, Ar-*H*), 8.37 (s, br, 4H, Ar-*H*), 8.64 (d, 4H, *J* = 8.2 Hz, Ar-*H*), 8.94 (t, 2H, *J* = 7.8 Hz, Ar-*H*), 9.16 (s, 4H, Ar-*H*); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, MeOD-d₄, 25 °C): δ 63.6, 68.3, 116.6, 117.7 (q, ²*J*_{C-F} = 255 Hz, TFA), 122.1, 127.0, 128.0, 129.7, 130.1, 131.0, 135.4, 148.4, 148.8, 148.9, 152.9, 158.4, 161.7 (q, ³*J*_{C-F} = 34.5 Hz, TFA); MS (ESI-HRMS): *m/z* Calcd for (C₇₀H₅₈F₆N₁₀O₈Zn₂)²⁺: 704.146 [M-2TFA]²⁺,

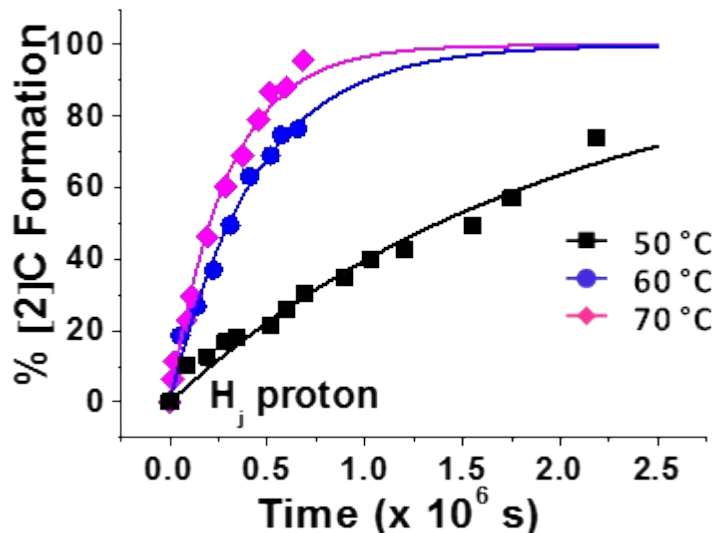
found: 704.147 [M-2TFA]²⁺, m/z Calcd for (C₆₈H₅₈F₃N₁₀O₆Zn₂)³⁺: 431.769 [M-3TFA]³⁺, found: 431.768 [M-3TFA]³⁺.

Monitoring the H_h and H_j protons of Zn-[2]C

The *h* and *j* protons of Zn-TK and Zn-[2]C were monitored in order to follow the evolution of the interconversion process. The mole-percent formation of each topological structure was deduced from the integrals of its corresponding protons and by using the rough approximation that the two structures were the only ones present. Origin 7.0 was used to fit a kinetic model to the data, with the assumption that the interconversion involves a single rate limiting step, *i.e.* that the concentration of each species varied in a mono-exponential fashion over time: %_{Zn-[2]C} = *p*1 + *p*2×exp(-*p*3×*t*) with *p*1 = mole % of Zn-[2]C at *t* = 0 s, *p*2 = mole % Zn-[2]C, *p*3 = apparent first order rate constant, *k*_{obs}, in s⁻¹ and *t* the time in s. *p*1 was fixed at 0 because the experiments started with pure Zn-TK in D₂O and *p*2 is close to 100% in most cases, which indicates that after sufficient time the process is quantitative.

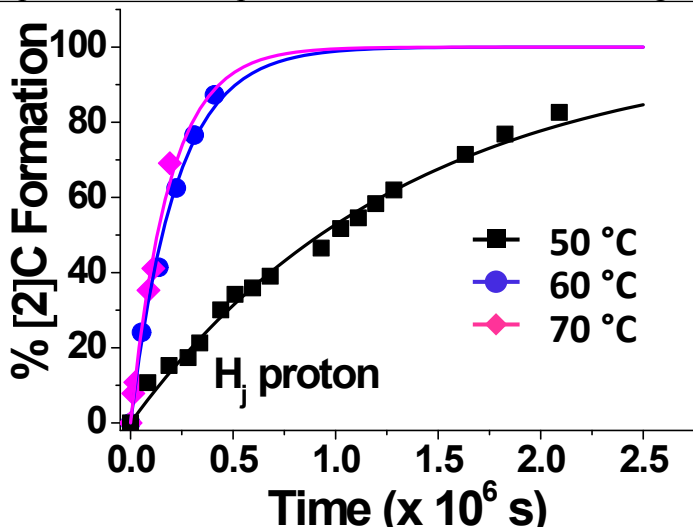


[2]C. Four samples, each 1.7 mM solutions of Zn-TK in D₂O were heated to four different temperatures: 50, 60, 70, or 80 °C. Solid lines in the plot represent the best fits for a first order kinetic process. k_{obs} values are presented in the box at the right. [2]C decomposed at the higher temperatures, which prevented the reaction from being monitored for as long as it was at 50 °C.



50 °C $k_{obs} = 0.51(2) \times 10^{-6} \text{ s}^{-1}$
 60 °C $k_{obs} = 2.30(8) \times 10^{-6} \text{ s}^{-1}$
 70 °C $k_{obs} = 3.40(1) \times 10^{-6} \text{ s}^{-1}$

Figure S2: Relative population of Zn-[2]C plotted against reaction time. Intensities of the H_j NMR proton signals of Zn-TK and Zn-[2]C were used to determine percent formation of Zn-[2]C. Three samples, each 0.85 mM solutions of Zn-TK in D₂O were heated to three different temperatures: 50, 60, or 70 °C. Solid lines in the plot represent the best fits for a first order kinetic process. k_{obs} values are presented in the box at the right. [2]C decomposed at the higher temperatures, which prevented the reaction from being monitored for as long as it was at 50 °C.



50 °C $k_{obs} = 0.75(2) \times 10^{-6} \text{ s}^{-1}$
 60 °C $k_{obs} = 4.50(2) \times 10^{-6} \text{ s}^{-1}$
 70 °C $k_{obs} = 5.30(3) \times 10^{-6} \text{ s}^{-1}$

Figure S3: Relative population of Zn-[2]C plotted against reaction time. Intensities of the H_j NMR proton signals of Zn-TK and Zn-[2]C were used to determine percent formation of Zn-[2]C. Three samples, each 3.4 mM solutions of Zn-TK in D₂O were heated to three different temperatures: 50, 60, or 70 °C. Solid lines in the plot represent the best fits for a first order kinetic process. k_{obs} values are presented in the box at the right. [2]C decomposed at the higher

temperatures, which prevented the reaction from being monitored for as long as it was at 50 °C.

Monitoring of the H_h proton of Zn-[2]C

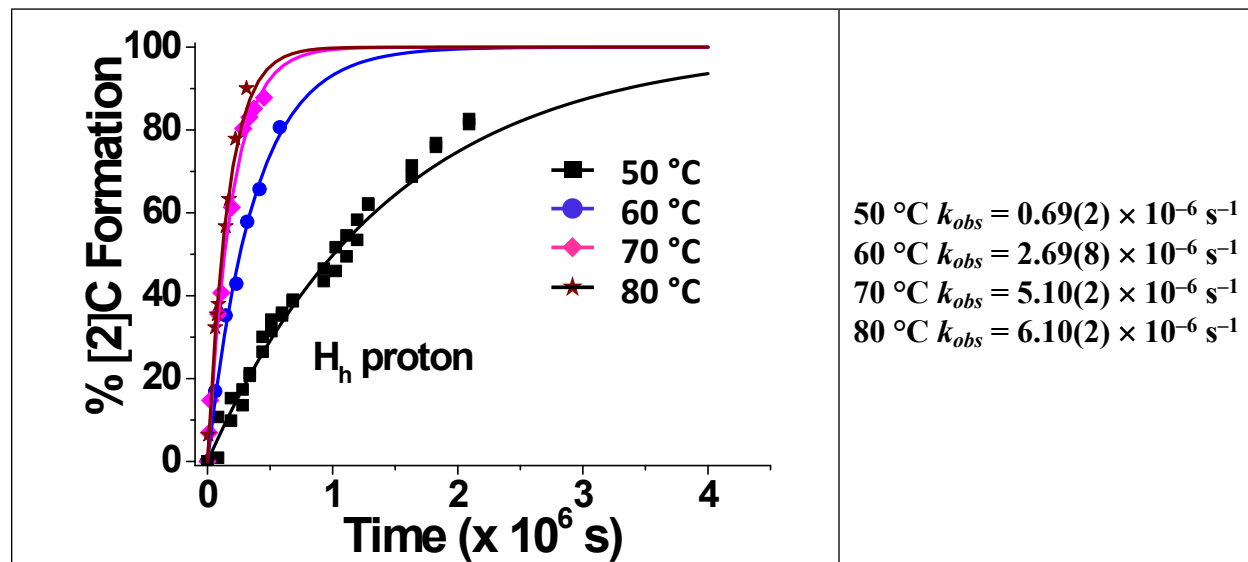


Figure S4: Relative population of Zn-[2]C plotted against reaction time. Intensities of the H_h NMR proton signals of Zn-TK and Zn-[2]C were used to determine percent formation of Zn-[2]C. Four samples, each 1.7 mM solutions of Zn-TK in D_2O were heated to four different temperatures: 50, 60, 70 or 80 °C. Solid lines in the plot represent the best fits for a first order kinetic process. k_{obs} values are presented in the box at the right. [2]C decomposed at the higher temperatures, which prevented the reaction from being monitored for as long as it was at 50 °C.

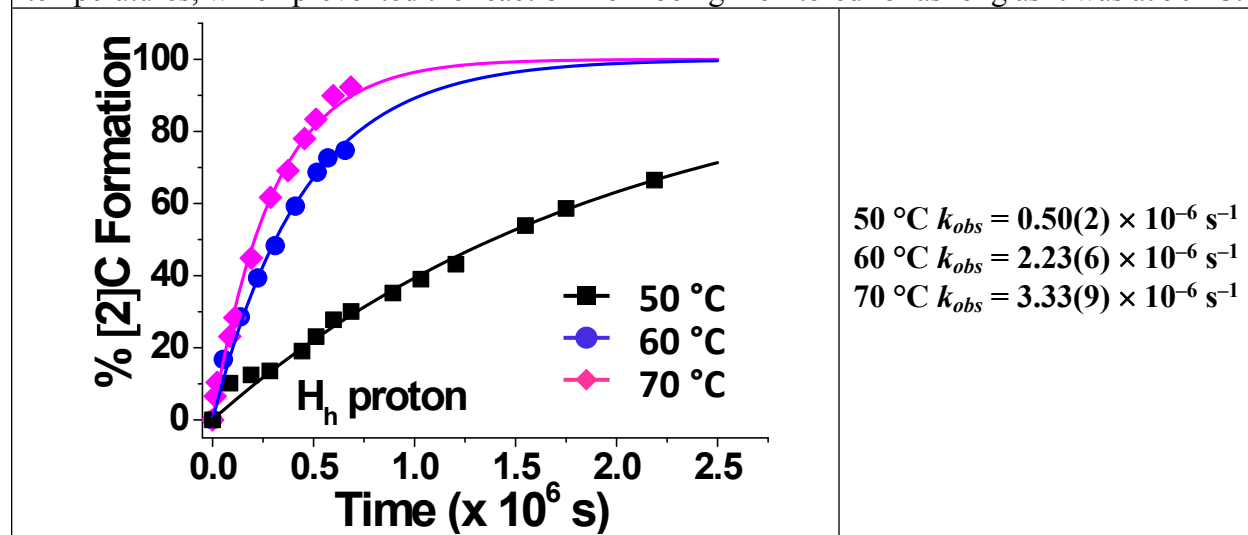


Figure S5: Relative population of Zn-[2]C plotted against reaction time. Intensities of the H_h NMR proton signals of Zn-TK and Zn-[2]C were used to determine percent formation of Zn-[2]C. Three samples, each 0.85 mM solutions of Zn-TK in D_2O were heated to three different temperatures: 50, 60, or 70 °C. Solid lines in the plot represent the best fits for a first order kinetic process. k_{obs} values are presented in the box at the right. [2]C decomposed at the higher temperatures, which prevented the reaction from being monitored for as long as it was at 50 °C.

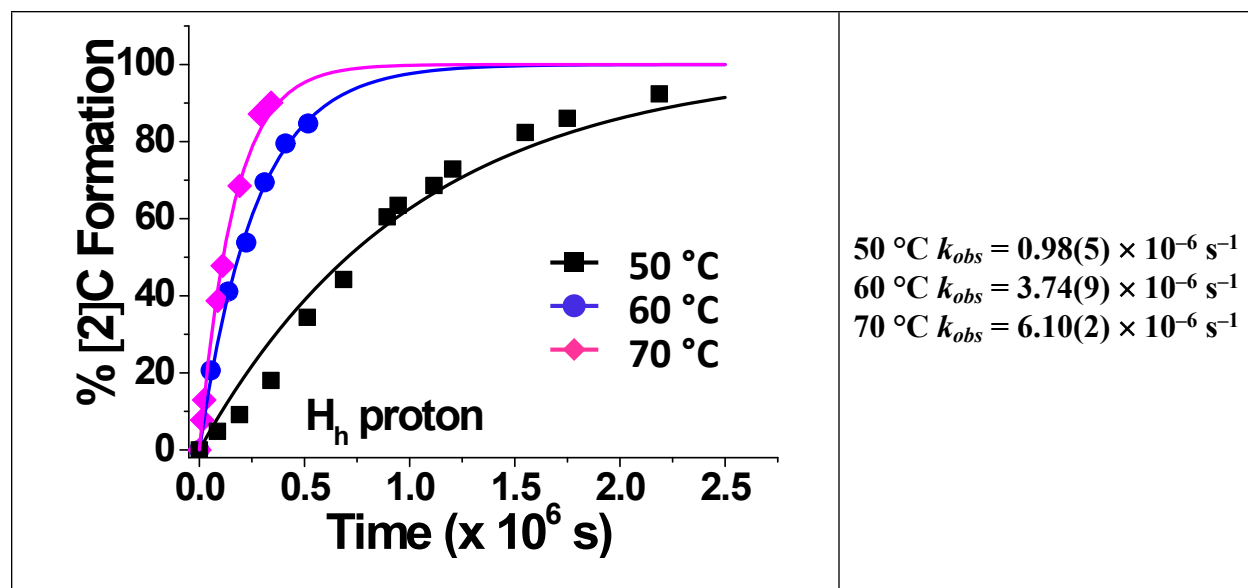


Figure S6: Relative population of Zn-[2]C plotted against reaction time. Intensities of the H_h NMR proton signals of Zn-TK and Zn-[2]C were used to determine percent formation of Zn-[2]C. Three samples, each 3.4 mM solutions of Zn-TK in D₂O, were heated to three different temperatures: 50, 60, or 70 °C. Solid lines in the plot represent the best fits for a first order kinetic process. k_{obs} values are presented in the box at the right. [2]C decomposed at the higher temperatures, which prevented the reaction from being monitored for as long as it was at 50 °C.

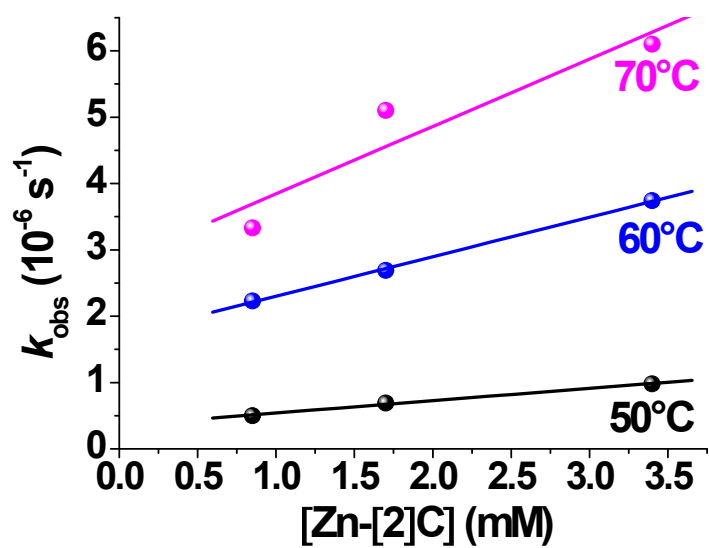
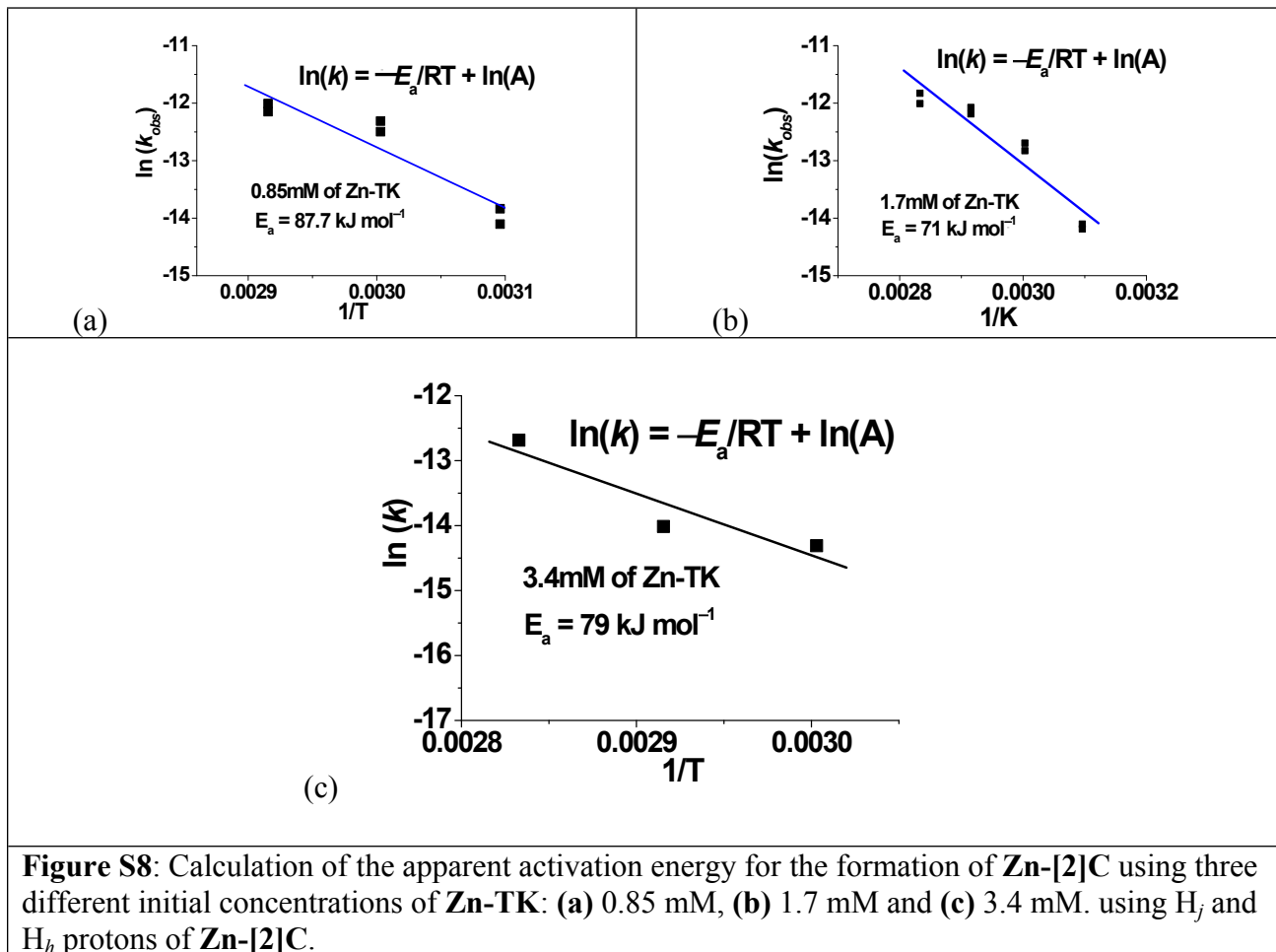


Figure S7: Variation of the k_{obs} (s^{-1}) as a function of **Zn-2[C]** concentration which shows that the interconversion is complex and cannot be considered to have a simple rate-limiting step. Solvent: D_2O .

Calculation of the apparent energy of activation of Zn-[2]C formation using an Arrhenius plot



Calculation of the apparent ΔH^0 and ΔS^0 using van't hoff equation

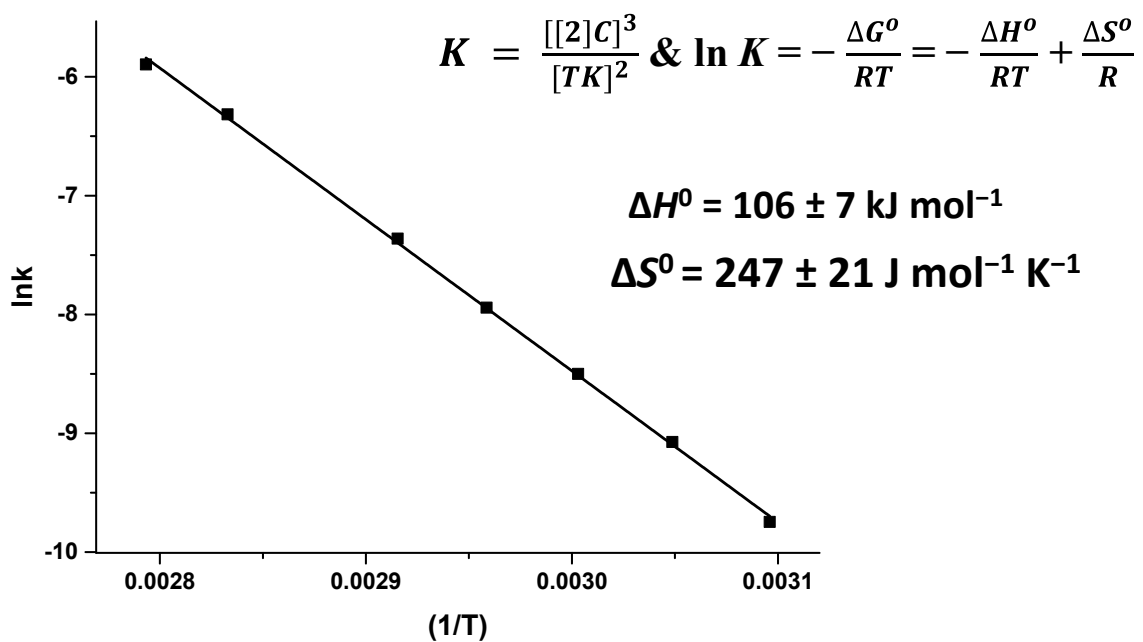


Figure S8a: Calculation of the apparent ΔH^0 and ΔS^0 using 1.7 mM initial concentrations of Zn-TK .

High resolution mass spectrometric kinetic analysis of the transformation of Zn-TK into Zn-[2]C

HRMS analysis reveals the presence of a pool of intermediates at every stage of the reaction.

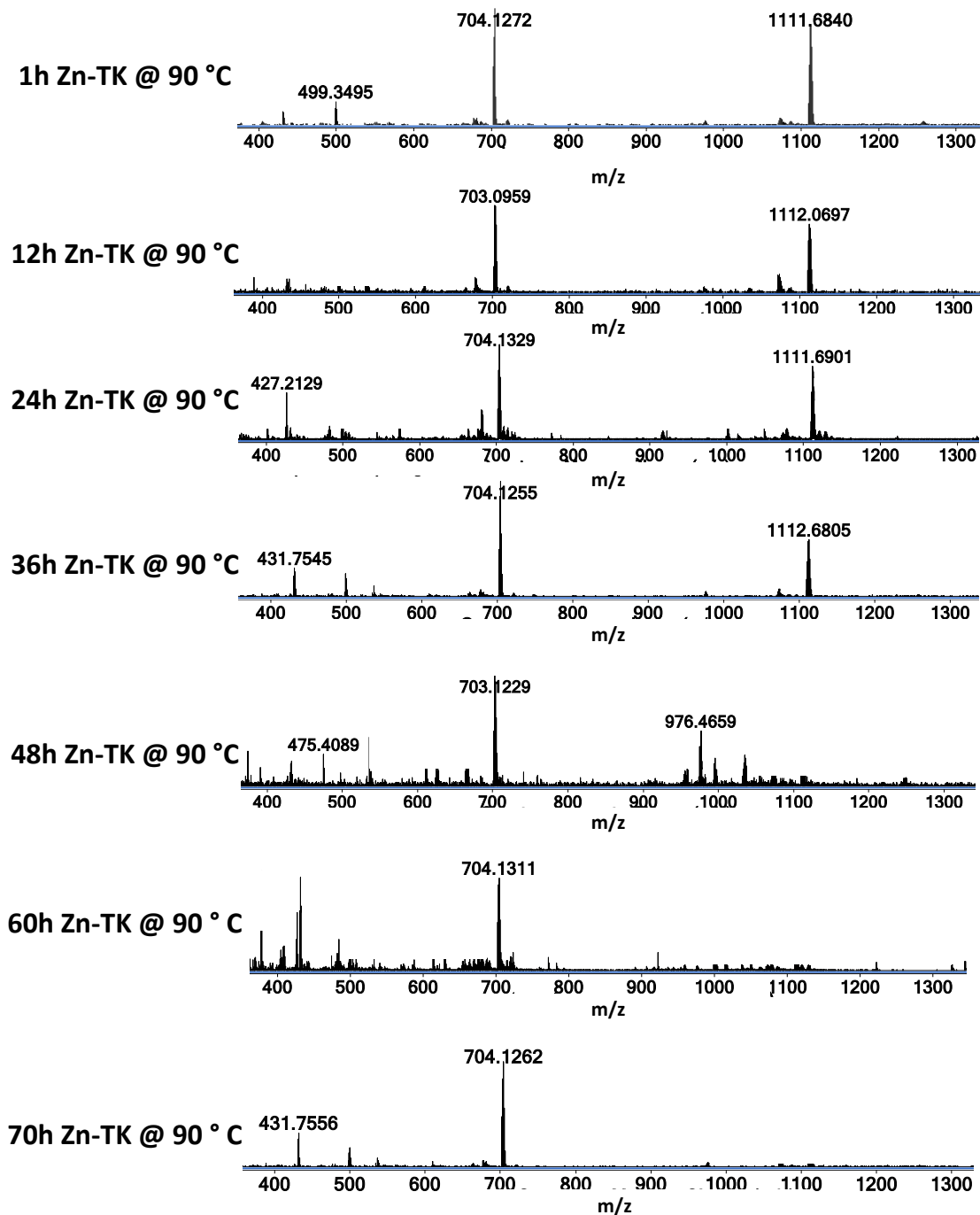
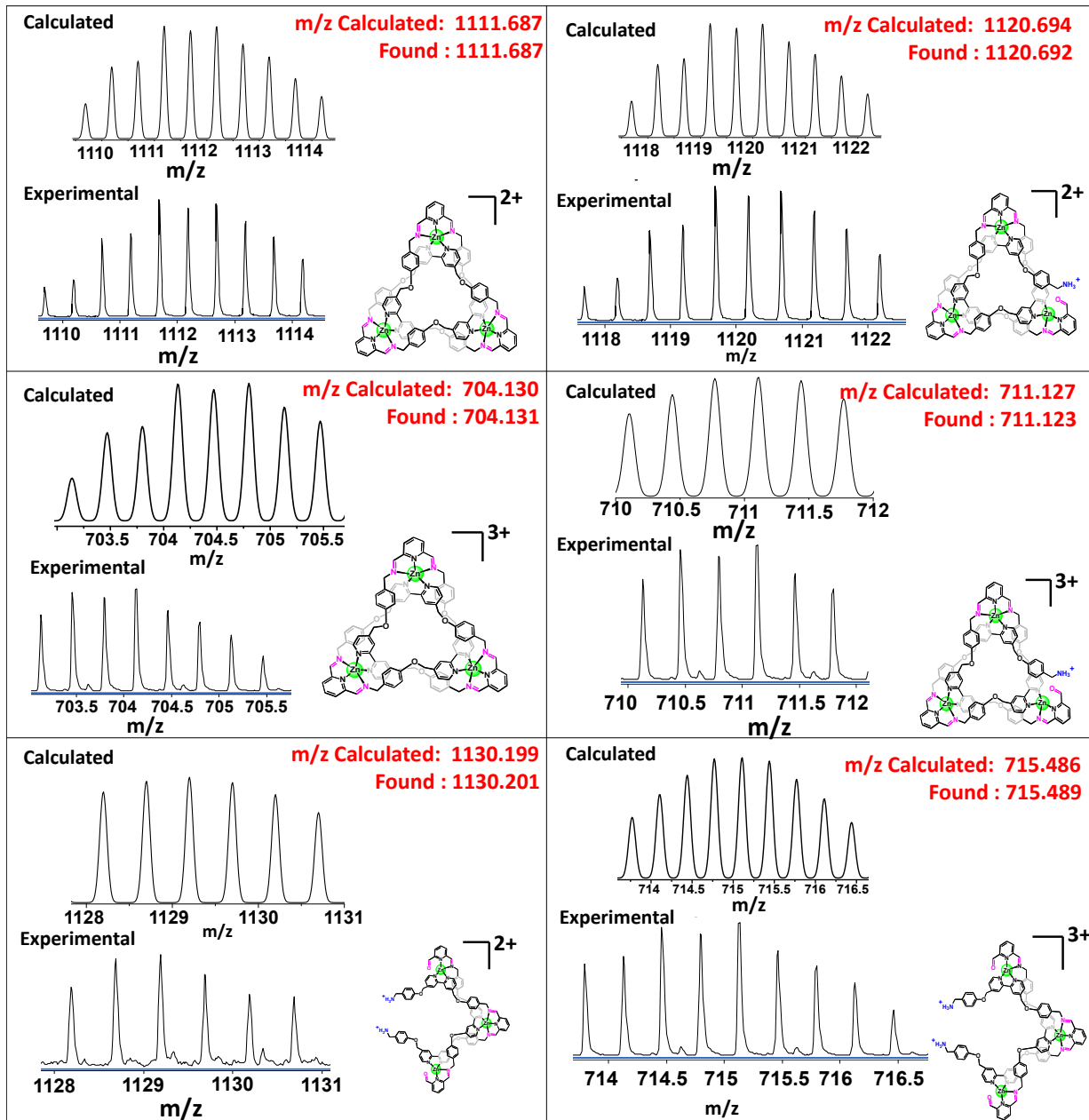
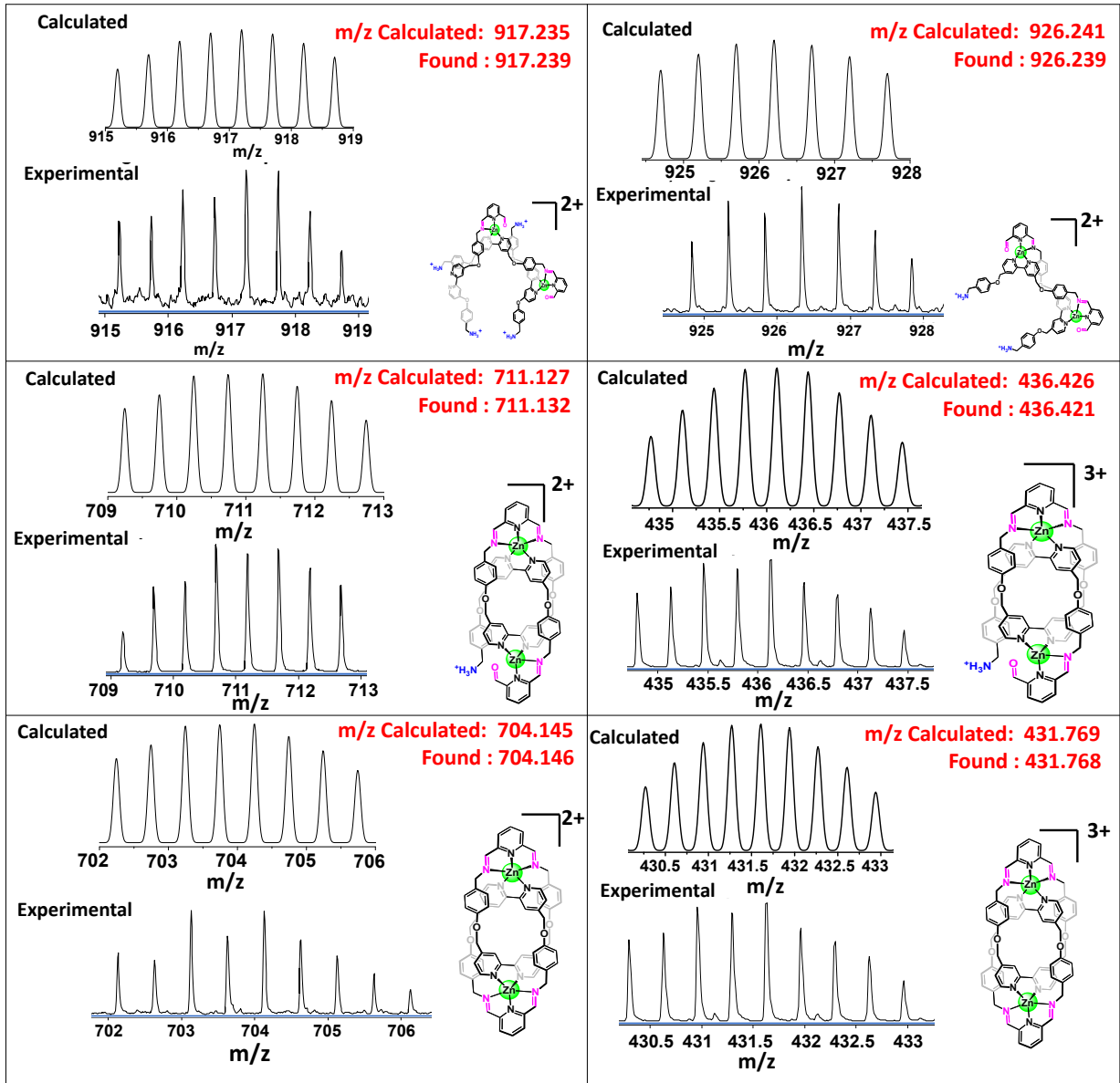


Figure S9: High resolution mass spectrograms of a Zn-TK solution heated at 90 °C and sampled over time. The evolution of the spectra reflects the progress of the transformation of Zn-TK into Zn-[2]C.





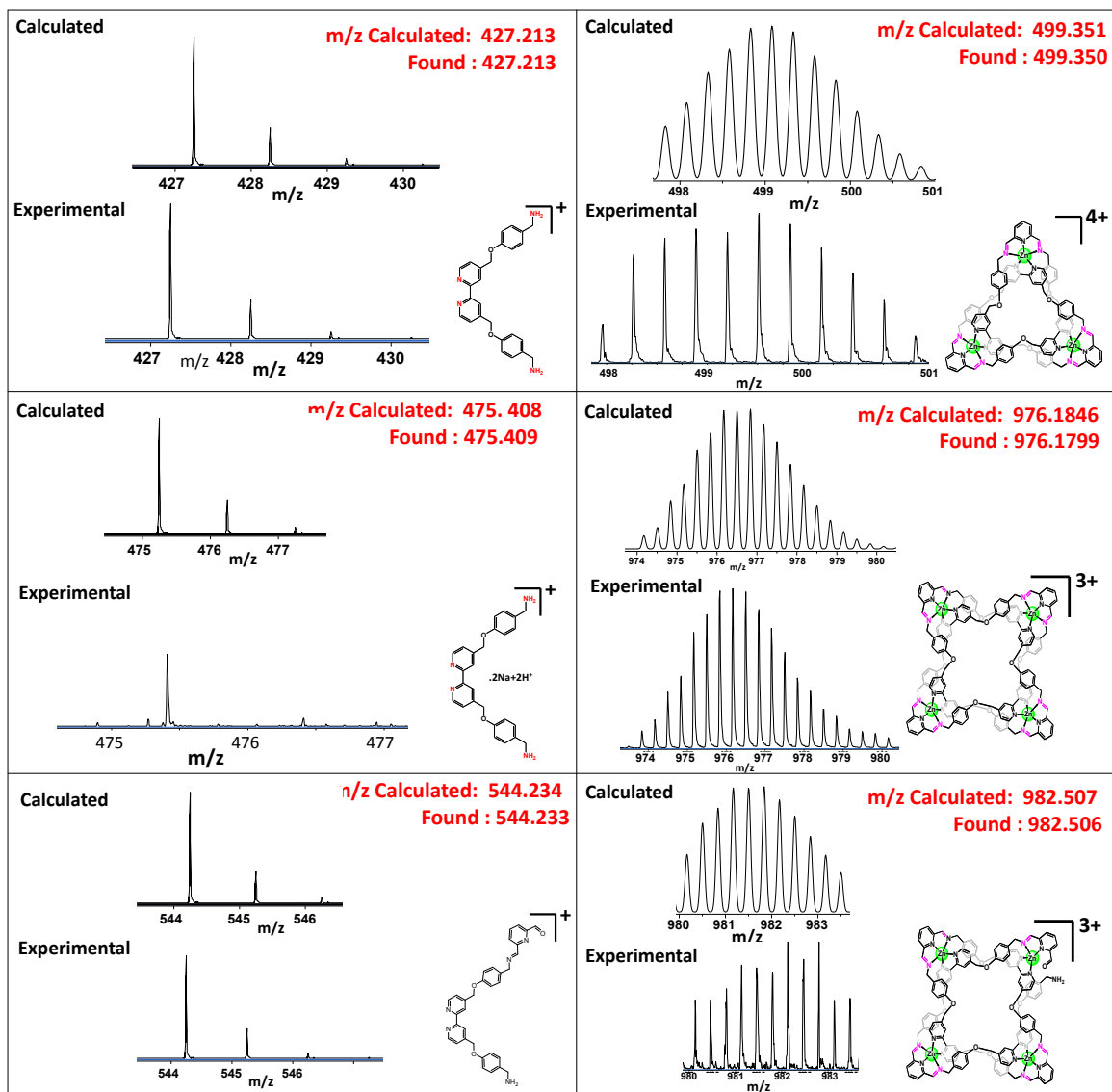


Figure S10: Expansions of the isotopic distribution patterns of the intermediates (represented in the upper right of each box) identified by HRMS during the thermal transformation of **Zn-TK** into **Zn-[2]C**.

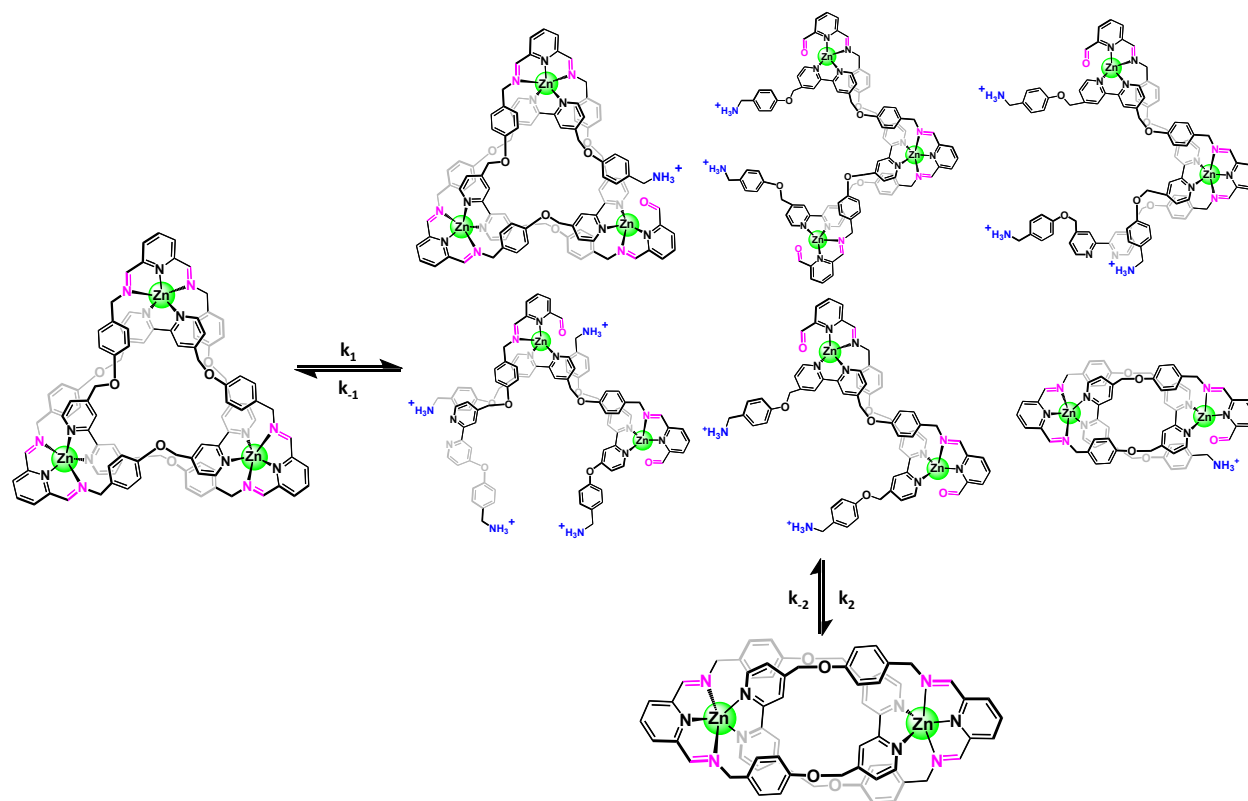


Figure S11a: Intermediate species identified by HRMS during the thermal conversion of **Zn-TK** into **Zn-[2]C**. This study revealed the complexity of the mechanism of transformation.

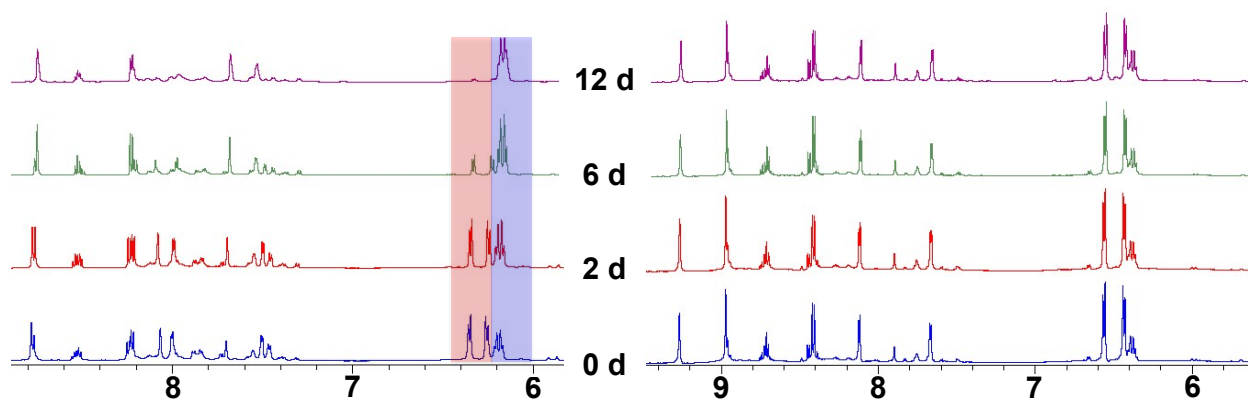
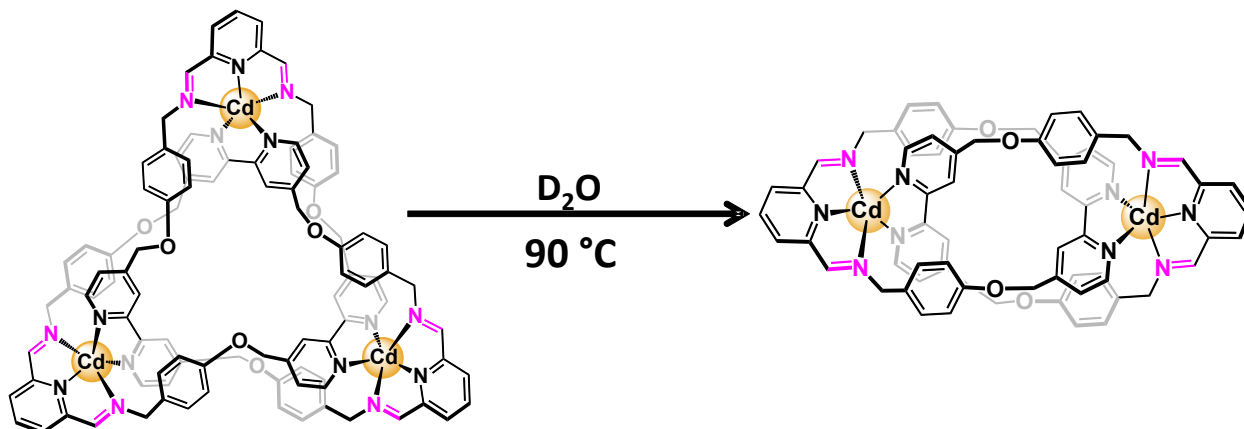


Figure S11b: (Left) Downfield regions of the ^1H NMR spectra measured during the interconversion of **Zn-TK** into **Zn-[2]C** in the absence of bromide. (Right) Downfield regions of the ^1H NMR spectra measured during the interconversion of **Zn-TK** into **Zn-[2]C** in the presence of two equivalents of tetrabutylammonium bromide. Solvent: D_2O , $T = 323$ K.

3. Transformation of Cd-TK into Cd-[2]C



A 1.7 mM solution of **Cd-TK** in D_2O was placed in an NMR tube and heated to 90 °C in an oil bath. The progress of the reaction was monitored by 1H NMR spectroscopy at room temperature and regular time intervals. After reaction completion, **Zn-[2]C** was precipitated upon addition of a mixed solvent of isopropanol and THF (2:1). The precipitate was washed four times with the hot solvent mixture to remove side-products, including open chain cadmium complexes which were estimated to amount to less than 10 mol % of the total product mixture. The final precipitate was dried under vacuum for 4 h and characterized by 1H and ^{13}C NMR spectroscopy and HRMS.

Cd-[2]C: 85 %; 1H NMR (500 MHz, D_2O , 25 °C): δ 4.74 (s, 8H, Ar- CH_2), 5.04 (s, 8H, Ar- CH_2), 6.09 (d, 8H, $J = 7.6$ Hz, Ar- H), 6.49 (d, 8H, $J = 7.8$ Hz, Ar- H), 7.61 (d, 4H, $J = 5.2$ Hz, Ar- H), 8.08 (d, 4H, $J = 5.1$ Hz, Ar- H), 8.22 (m, 8H, Ar- H), 8.51 (t, 2H, $J = 7.7$ Hz, Ar- H), 8.89 (s, 4H, Ar- H); ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz, MeOH- d_4 , 25 °C): δ 62.6, 66.4, 114.0, 118.6 (q, $^2J_{C-F} = 263$ Hz, TFA), 120.6, 124.7, 128.9, 129.3, 129.9, 137.8, 143.2, 148.1, 148.5, 150.4, 156.7, 158.5, 161.2 (q, $^3J_{C-F} = 33$ Hz, TFA); MS (ESI-MS): m/z Calcd for $(C_{70}H_{54}Cd_2F_6N_{10}O_8)^{2+}$: 751.104 [M-2TFA] $^{2+}$, found: 751.105 [M-2TFA] $^{2+}$.

The transformation of **Cd-TK** into **Cd-[2]C** was monitored in solution by ^1H NMR spectroscopy at regular time intervals.

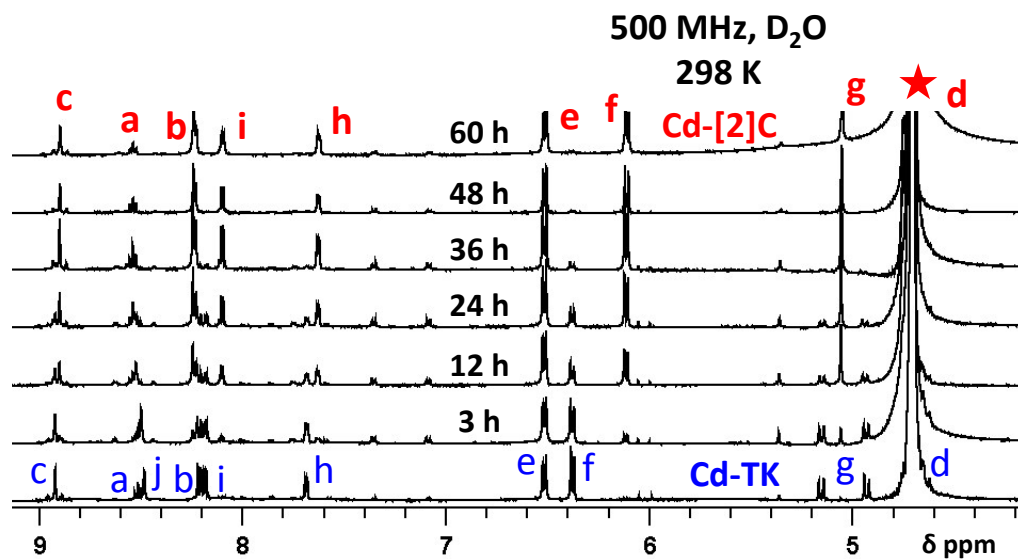


Figure S12: Stacked ^1H NMR spectra of a 1.7 mM solution of **Cd-TK** in D_2O acquired at 500 MHz, 298 K and at regular time intervals. The evolution of the spectra reflects the progress of the transformation of **Cd-TK** into **Cd-[2]C**.

The transformation of **Cd-TK** into **Cd-[2]C** was also monitored by HRMS in the gas phase at regular time intervals.

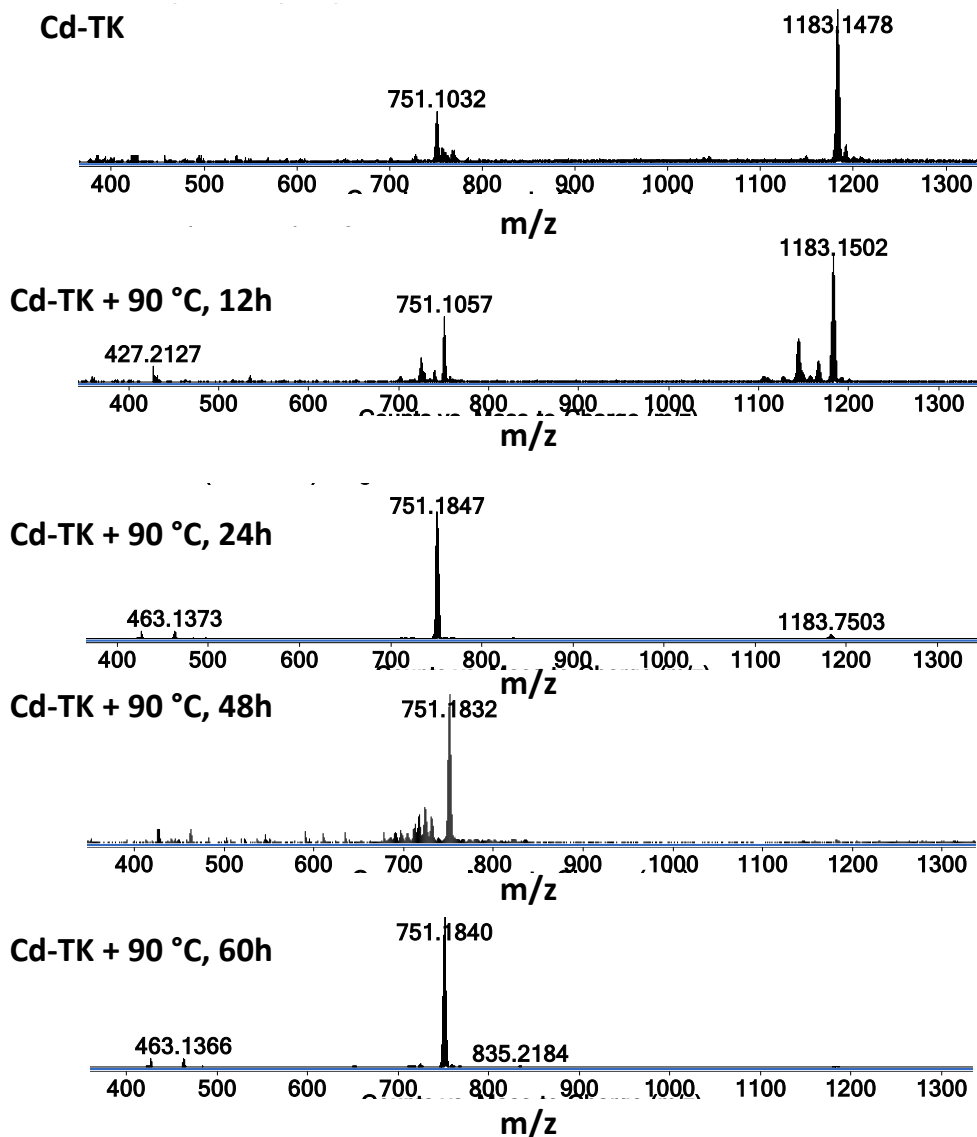
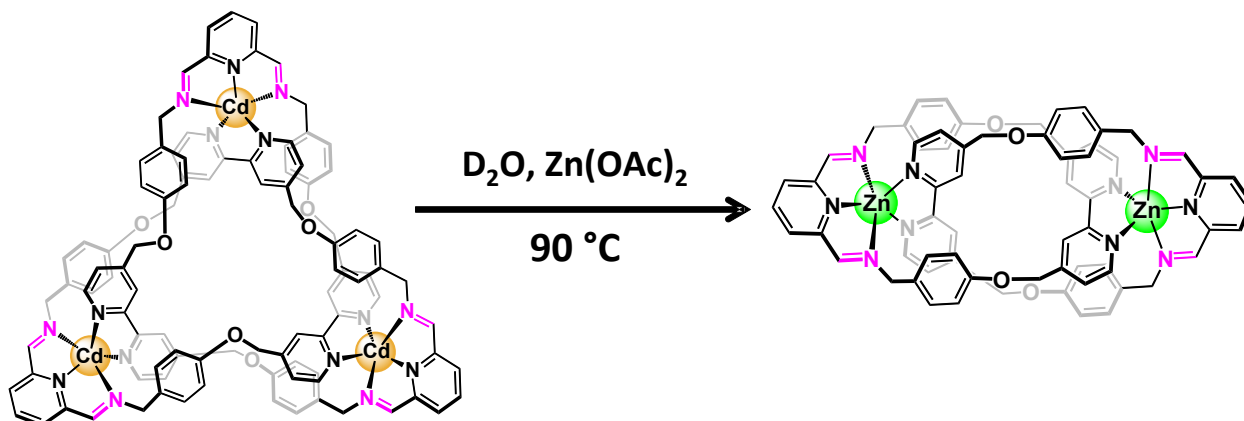


Figure S13: High resolution mass spectrograms of a **Cd-TK** solution heated @ 90 °C and sampled over time. The evolution of the spectrograms reflects the progress of the transformation of **Cd-TK** into **Cd-[2]C**.

4.0. Transformation of Cd-TK into Zn-[2]C



Cd-TK (2.8 mg; 0.023 mM) was added to zinc acetate (10.1 mg, 20 equivalents) in a 1:1 mixture of 0.6 mL of CD₃OD and D₂O. The samples were prepared in NMR tubes subjected to 90 °C in oil bath and the progress of the reactions was monitored by ¹H NMR spectroscopy at various time intervals. After reaction completion, **Zn-[2]C** was precipitated upon addition of a mixed solvent of isopropanol and THF (2:1). The precipitate was washed four times with the hot solvent mixture to remove excess zinc acetate and side-products, including open chain complexes which were estimated to amount to less than 10 mol % of the total product mixture. The final precipitate was dried under vacuum for 4 h and characterized by ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectroscopy and HRMS.

Zn-[2]C: Yield: 86 %. ¹H NMR (500MHz, D₂O, 25 °C): δ 5.03 (s, 8H, Ar-CH₂), 5.43 (s, 8H, Ar-CH₂), 6.60 (ABq, 16H, *J* = 12 Hz, Ar-*H*), 7.97 (d, 4H, *J* = 4.5 Hz, Ar-*H*), 8.10 (s, 4H, Ar-*H*), 8.37 (s, br, 4H, Ar-*H*), 8.64 (d, 4H, *J* = 8.2 Hz, Ar-*H*), 8.94 (t, 2H, *J* = 7.8 Hz, Ar-*H*), 9.16 (s, 4H, Ar-*H*); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, MeOD-d₄, 25 °C): δ 63.6, 68.3, 116.6, 117.7 (q, ²*J*_{C-F} = 255 Hz, TFA), 122.1, 127.0, 128.0, 129.7, 130.1, 131.0, 135.4, 148.4, 148.8, 148.9, 152.9, 158.4, 161.7 (q, ³*J*_{C-F} = 34.5 Hz, TFA); MS (ESI-HRMS): *m/z* Calcd for (C₇₀H₅₈F₆N₁₀O₈Zn₂)²⁺: 704.146 [M-2TFA]²⁺,

found: 704.147 [M-2TFA]²⁺, m/z Calcd for (C₆₈H₅₈F₃N₁₀O₆Zn₂)³⁺: 431.769 [M-3TFA]³⁺, found: 431.768 [M-3TFA]³⁺.

To track the reaction carefully, the transformation of **Cd-TK** into **Zn-[2]C** was monitored using ¹H NMR in solution and HR mass spectrometry at regular time intervals.

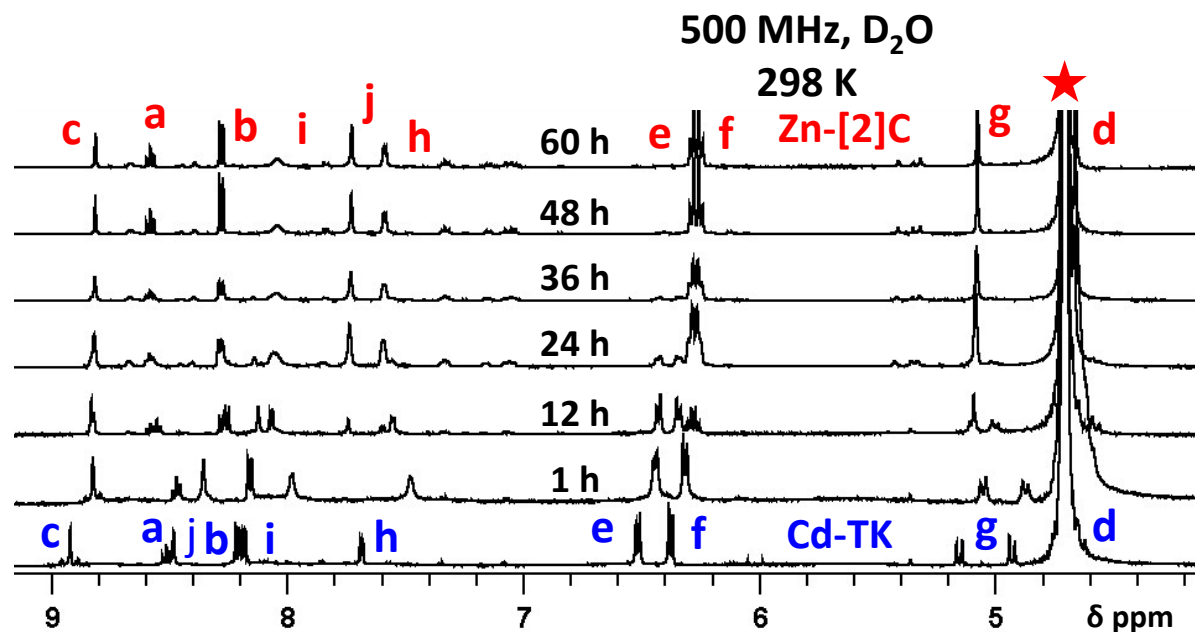


Figure S14: Stacked ¹H NMR spectra of a 1.7 mM solution of **Cd-TK** in D₂O with excess Zn(OAc)₂ acquired at 500 MHz, 25 °C and at regular time intervals. The evolution of the spectra reflects the progress of the transformation of **Cd-TK** into **Zn-[2]C**.

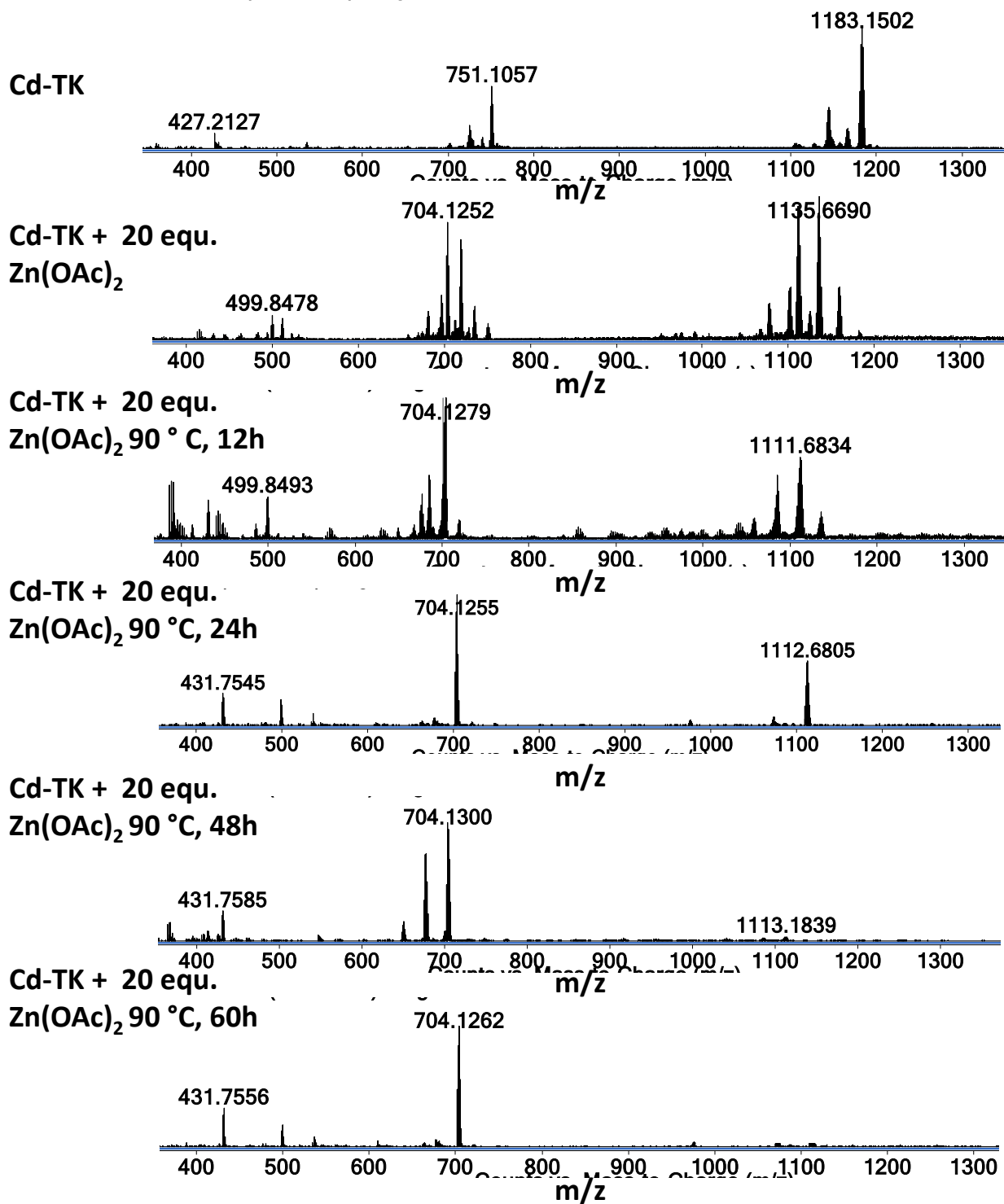
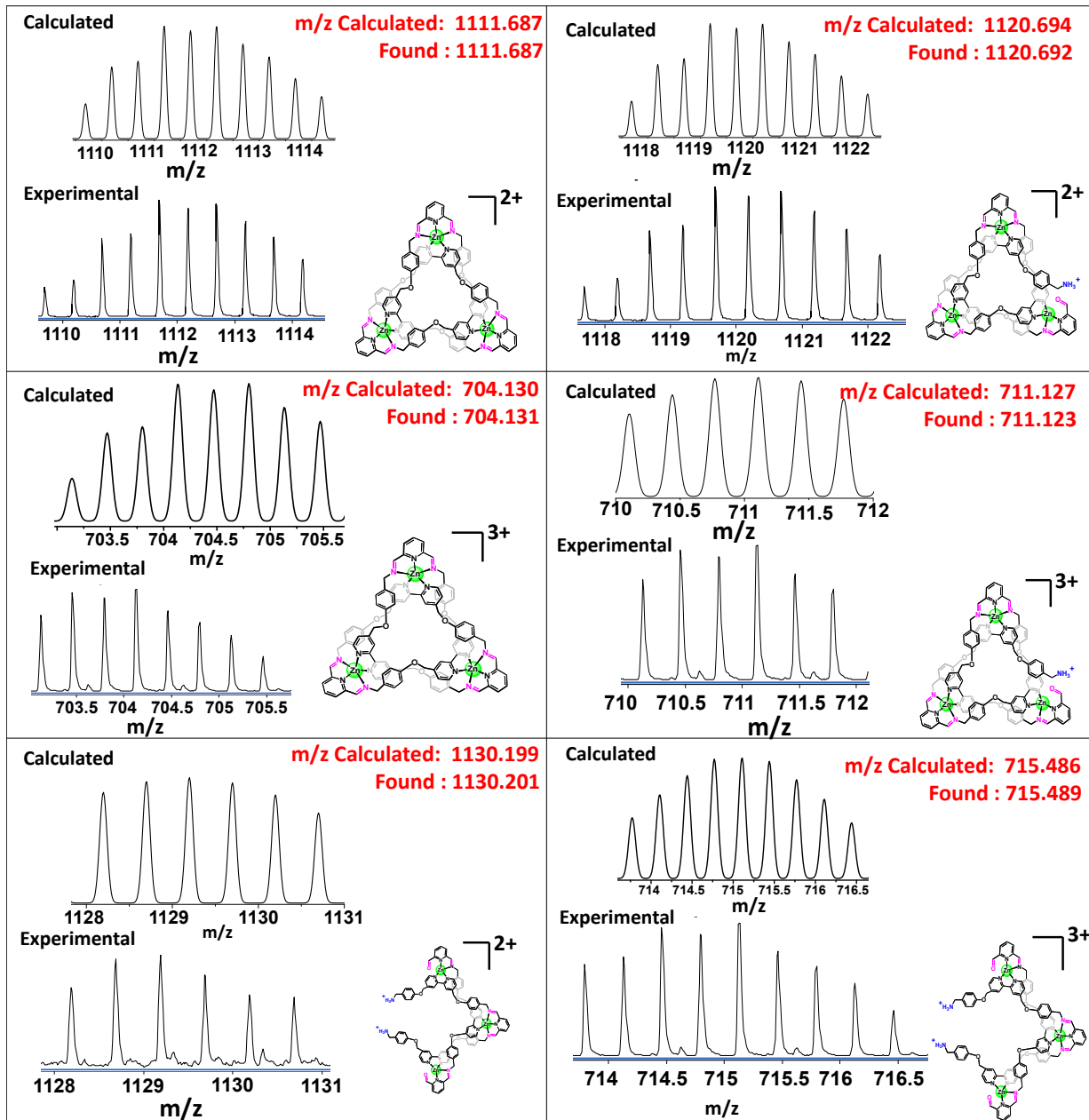
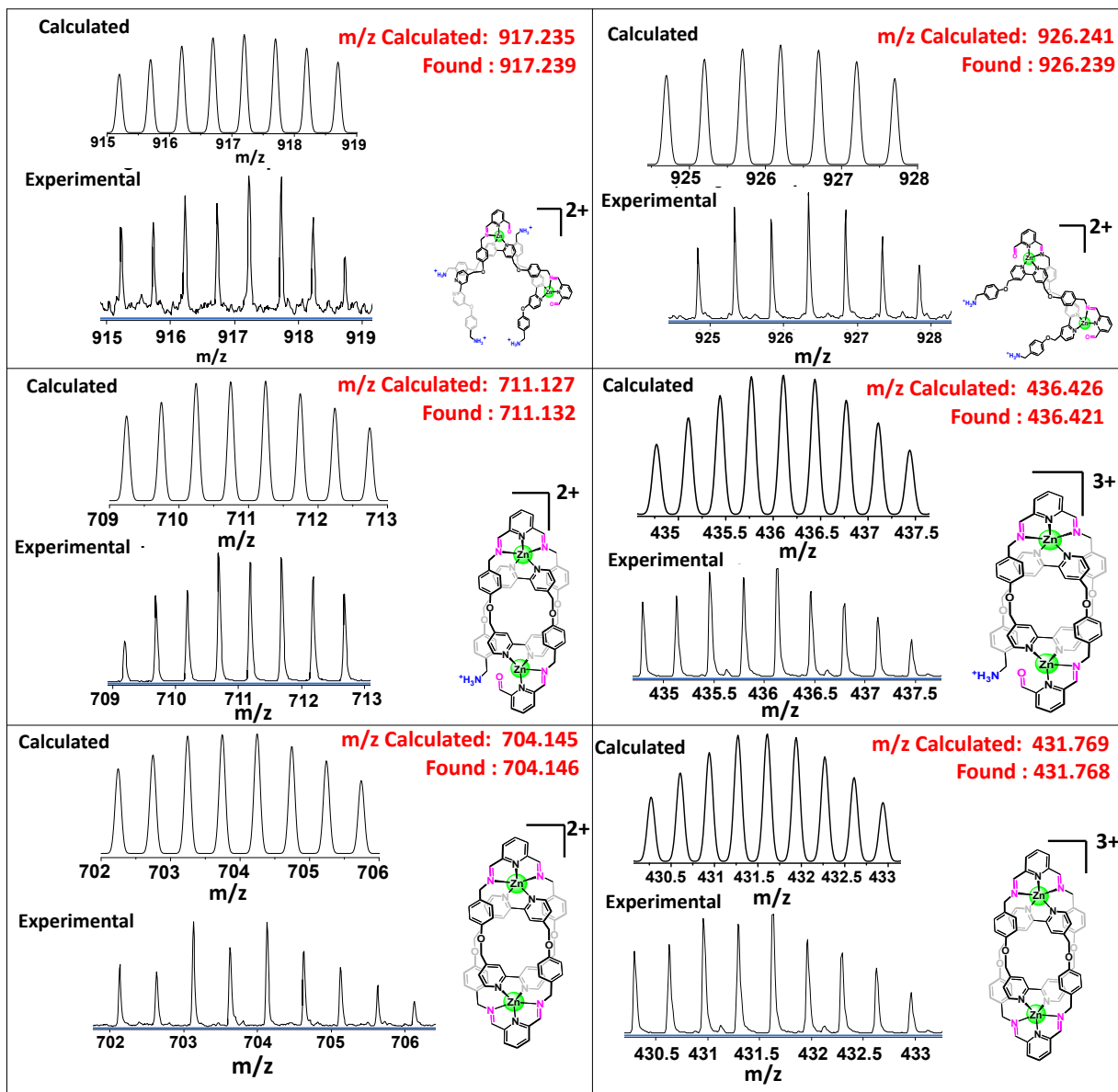


Figure S15a: High resolution mass spectrograms of a Cd-TK solution heated at 90 °C and sampled over time. The evolution of the spectrograms reflects the progress of the transformation of Cd-TK into Zn-[2]C.





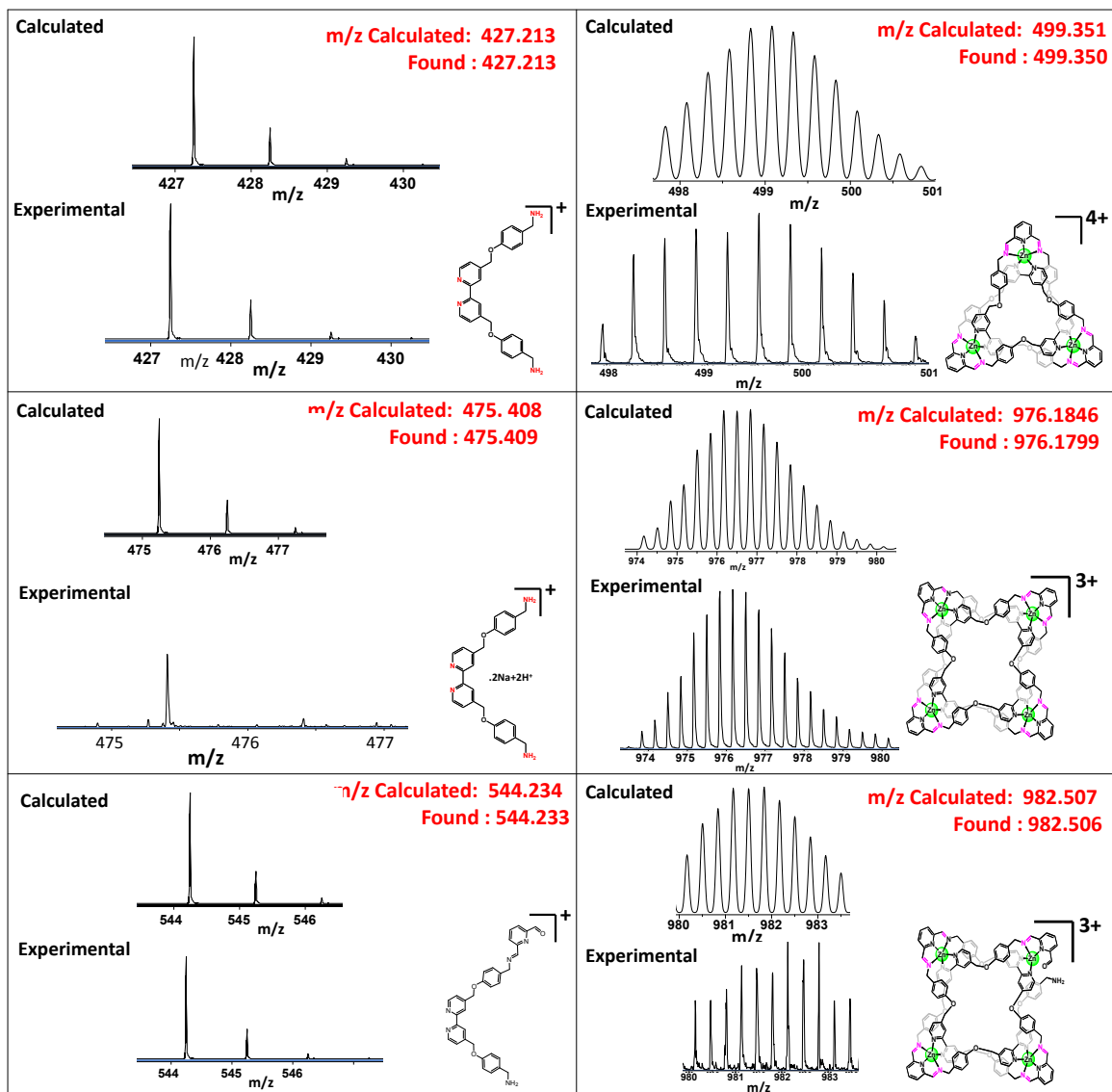


Figure S15b: Expansions of the isotopic distribution patterns of several of the key intermediates (represented in the upper right of each box) identified by HRMS during the transformation of Cd-TK into Zn-[2]C.

References

1. T. Prakasam, M. Lusi, M. Elhabiri, C. Platas-Iglesias, J.-C. Olsen, Z. Asfari, S. Cianfèrani-Sanglier, F. Debaene, L. J. Charbonnière and A. Trabolsi, *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.*, 2013, **52**, 9956-9960.
2. T. Prakasam, R. A. Bilbeisi, M. Lusi, J.-C. Olsen, C. Platas-Iglesias and A. Trabolsi, *Chem. Commun.*, 2016, **52**, 7398-7401.
3. H. E. Gottlieb, V. Kotlyar and A. Nudelman, *The J. Org. Chem*, 1997, **62**, 7512-7515.