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Stereoselective Electro-2-Deoxyglycosylation from Glycals

Miao Liu,^[+] Kai-Meng Liu,^[+] De-Cai Xiong,* Hanyu Zhang, Tian Li, Bohan Li, Xianjin Qin, Jinhe Bai and Xin-Shan Ye*

Dedicated to Professor Henry N. C. Wong on the occasion of his 70th birthday.

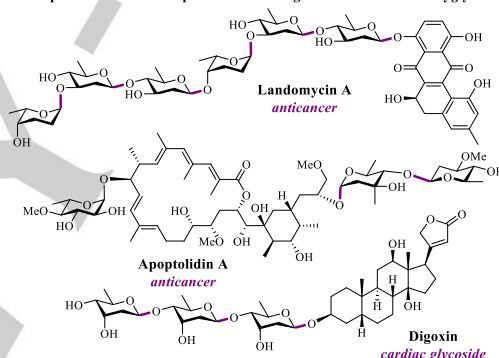
Abstract: We herein report a novel and highly stereoselective electro-2-deoxyglycosylation from glycals. This method is featured by the excellent stereoselectivity and scope as well as functional-group tolerance. This process could also be amenable to the modification of a wide range of natural products and drugs. Furthermore, a scalable synthesis of glycosylated podophyllotoxin and a one-pot trisaccharide synthesis through iterative electro-glycosylations have also been achieved.

Glycosylation reaction is the central topic in modern carbohydrate chemistry.^[1] Due in large part to the fact that sugar attachments are essential for the biological activities of naturally occurring glycosylated natural products.^[2] Moreover, glycosylated modification of a drug could very often drastically change its physical properties and thus significantly improve its pharmacological activity.^[3] Among them, 2-deoxyglycosides are widely found as a single sugar motif or part of oligosaccharides, in aureolic acid antibiotics, cardiac glycosides, anthracyclines, avermectins, macrolides, pluramycins, angucyclines, enediynes and other biologically active compounds and drugs (Figure 1A).^[4] Accordingly, the development of a highly effective 2-deoxyglycosylation method has been in high demand over the last decades. However, owing to the absence of any directing group at C2 position, the stereoselective construction of the labile 2-deoxyglycosidic bond has been a long-standing challenge.^[5]

So far, many successful strategies have already been developed to give access to 2-deoxyglycosides in a direct, indirect, or de novo manner.^[6-10] Of special note, 2-deoxyglycosylation of glycals with glycosyl acceptors proves to be one of the most atom-economic and straightforward approaches.^[5] Accordingly, numbers of elegant methods (Figure 1B), including metal-catalyzed glycosylation,^[11] organo-catalyzed glycosylation,^[12] photo-catalyzed glycosylation,^[13] have been established in recent years. *En route* to stereoselective 2-deoxyglycosylations, we gradually shift our focus to organic electrochemistry, an old but potentially ideal pursuit since it is green and sustainable.^[14] Indeed, the beginning of this century has witnessed the renaissance of organic electrosynthesis as a

valuable addition to the synthetic community.^[15] The application of electrical current to catalyze glycosylation reactions could be traced back to Noyori's pioneer work in the late 1980s.^[16] Later, Yoshida and co-workers successfully identified that thio-/seleno-/telluro- glycoside donors could also be activated and undergo glycosylation under different electrochemical conditions.^[17,18] However, to the best of our knowledge, electro-2-deoxyglycosylation remains elusive to date. In continuation of our interest in the area of carbohydrate synthesis,^[19] we envisage the possibility of the generation of 2-deoxyglycosides from glycals in an electro-induced fashion, and we report herein the results of our studies on electro-2-deoxyglycosylation.

A. Representative natural products and drugs that contain a 2-deoxyglycoside moiety



B. Strategies for the synthesis of 2-deoxyglycosides from glycals

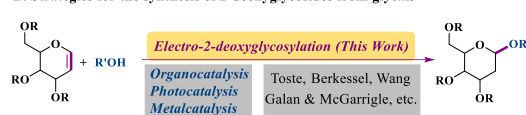


Figure 1. Selected bioactive 2-deoxyglycosides and glycosylation methods derived from glycals.

We commenced our investigation with a model reaction using galactal **1** as the donor and the alcohol **2** as the acceptor (Scheme 1 and Tables S1-S4). Upon extensive solvent screening, CH₂Cl₂ and dimethoxyethane (DME) were initially found to generate desired disaccharide **3** with exclusively α-selectivity, albeit in a 5% yield. The combination of DME and methyl nonafluorobutyl ether (MFE)^[20] could slightly promoted the formation of desired disaccharide **3** along with less decomposition of the starting material **1** (Table S1). Later, the additives proved to be essential to our reaction outcome.^[15b] After an extensive screening of numerous additives (entries 2-8, Scheme 1 and Table S2), alkyl bromides were found to be optimal, and saccharide **3** was obtained in 92% isolated yield when using 60 mol% of 3-bromopropionitrile (entry 6, Scheme 1). Whereas Bu₄NOTf was identified as the suitable electrolyte (entries 6, 12, Table S3), the carbon electrode and platinum electrode were chosen as the optimal anode and cathode,

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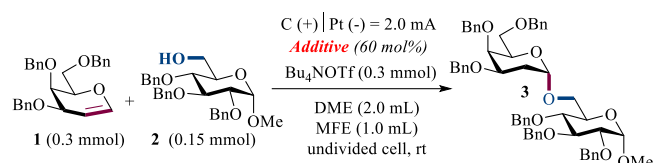
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respectively (Table S4). Lastly, dichloromethane or DME alone could also be applied as reaction solvent (entries 15-16, Scheme 1), and we observed no conversion whatsoever in the absence of electrical current (entry 17, Scheme 1). Of particular note, all the reactions mentioned above were performed under constant current conditions (2.0 mA) in an undivided cell at ambient temperature.



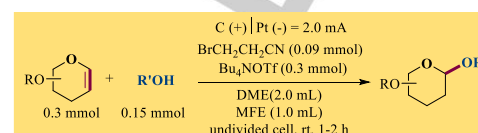
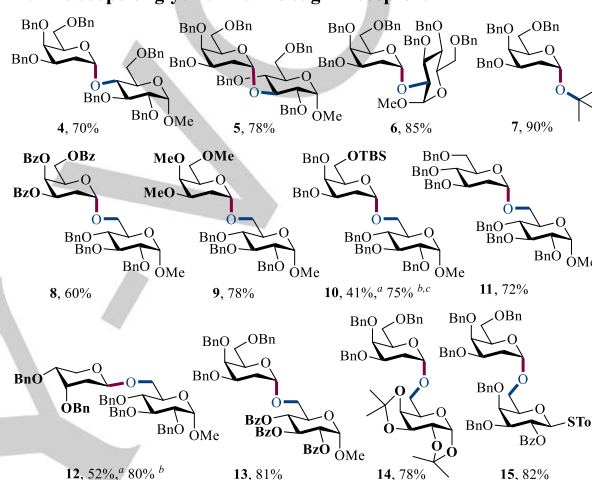
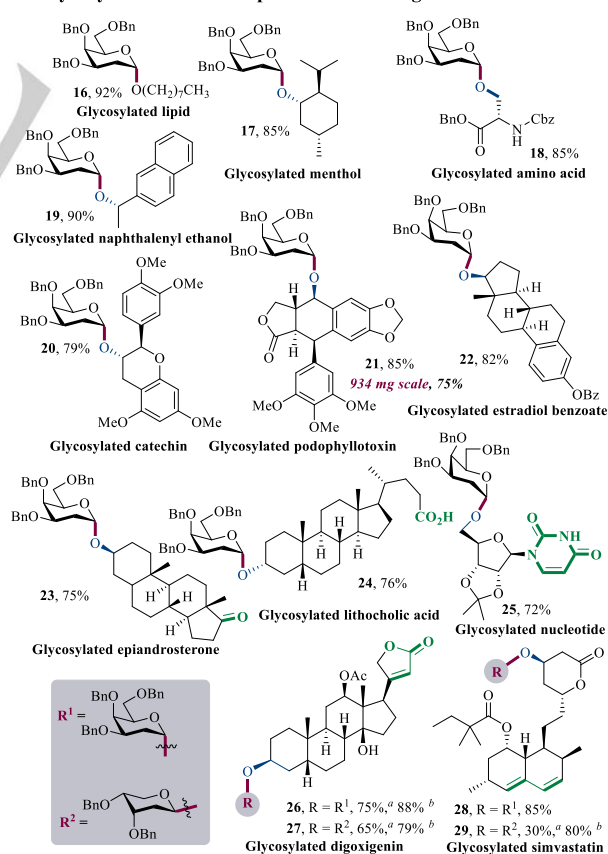
Entry	Deviation from above	Yield (%)
1	-	8
2	CBr ₄	60
3	BrCCl ₃	65
4	BrCH ₂ CO ₂ Et	80
5	BrCH ₂ CN	79
6	BrCH₂CH₂CN	92
7	1.0 equiv of BrCH ₂ CH ₂ CN	91
8	0.3 equiv of BrCH ₂ CH ₂ CN	86
9	BrCH ₂ CH ₂ CN, 3.0 mA	71
10	BrCH ₂ CH ₂ CN, 1.0 mA	80
11	BrCH ₂ CH ₂ CN, 1.5 equiv of 1	78
12	BrCH ₂ CH ₂ CN, 3.0 equiv of Bu ₄ NOTf	92
13	BrCH ₂ CH ₂ CN, Bu ₄ NBF ₄	89
14	BrCH ₂ CH ₂ CN, RVC (+)/Pt (-)	89
15	BrCH ₂ CH ₂ CN, CH ₂ Cl ₂ as solvent	91
16	BrCH ₂ CH ₂ CN, no MFE	88
17	BrCH ₂ CH ₂ CN, no electricity	n.d.

Scheme 1. Reaction Optimization.

With optimal conditions in hand, we next set out to investigate the reaction scope. As shown in Figure 2A, to our delight, under standard reaction conditions both secondary and tertiary alcohols could all successfully react with galactal 1 to deliver glycosides 4-7 in good yields with exclusive α -selectivity. Benzoyl and methyl protected galactals were also well-tolerated to give glycosides 8 and 9 in moderate to good yields. TBS-protected galactal proved to be sensitive under standard reaction conditions and gave glycoside 10 in 41% yield. Fortunately, the yield could be further improved to 75% upon using CH₂Cl₂ as the solvent along with the addition of β -pinene as a proton scavenger.^[21] Moreover, glucal donor, which is commonly believed to be more challenging,^[12b] in our case underwent 2-deoxyglycosylation smoothly and afforded disaccharide 11 as a single α -anomer in 72% yield. Arabinal was also identified as a suitable substrate, providing disaccharide 12 as a single β -anomer in a 80% yield. Reaction with different kinds of acceptors was also permissible and delivered the desired glycosides 13 and 14 in satisfactory yields. Lastly, thioglycosides were also well tolerated during the reaction, which indicates the possibility of potential one-pot orthogonal glycosylations.

Next, we applied our established protocol to the late-stage modification of natural products and drugs.^[22] As shown in Figure 2B, late-stage glycosylated modification occurred smoothly under standard reaction conditions, thus afforded the desired products (16-29) in good to excellent yields. Of note, owing to the solubility issue, CH₂Cl₂ was also applied as the reaction solvent, as is the case for 26 and 27. In all cases,

excellent α -selectivity for galactal and β -selectivity for arabinal were observed, respectively. Meanwhile, it is worth mentioning that various functional groups including ketone (23), carboxylic acid (24), uracil (25), enoate (26-27) and 1,3-diene (28-29) moieties are all well tolerated during the reactions. And the scalability of this protocol was further demonstrated by an efficient synthesis of glycosylated podophyllotoxin 21 on a 934 mg scale in 75% isolated yield.

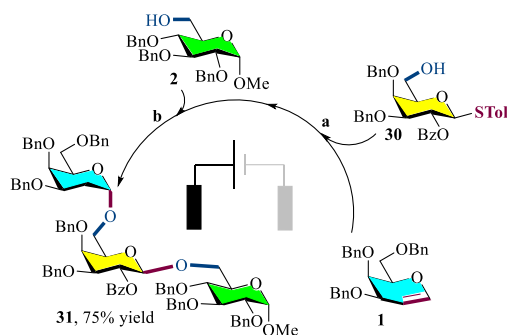
A. The scope of glycals and the sugar acceptors^aB. Glycosylation of natural products and drugs^aFigure 2. Substrate scope. The yields were isolated yields, the α/β ratios were determined by ¹H NMR. (a) Standard conditions: glycal (0.30 mmol), acceptor

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(0.15 mmol), Bu₄NOTf (2.0 equiv), BrCH₂CH₂CN (0.09 mmol), DME (2.0 mL)/MFE (1.0 mL), 2.0 mA, rt. (b) CH₂Cl₂ as the solvent. (c) β -Pinene (0.15 mmol) was added.

Finally, to further extend the synthetic potential of this method, we performed a one-pot trisaccharide synthesis via iterative electro-glycosylations. As shown in Scheme 2, galactal **1** was first reacted with the acceptor **30** to furnish the disaccharide **15** within 2 h under the standard reaction conditions (2 mA in DME/MFE). Subsequent in-situ electro-glycosylation with acceptor **2** following Yoshida's^{18a,c} protocol delivered the trisaccharide **31** in low yield (<10%) at room temperature. Fine-tuning Yoshida's reaction conditions by lowering the temperature to -50 °C increased the yield to 22%. Finally, the iterative electro-one-pot trisaccharide synthesis was successfully accomplished by conducting the second electro-glycosylation at -78 °C using CH₂Cl₂ as solvent, affording the desired trisaccharide **31** in 75% isolated yield.

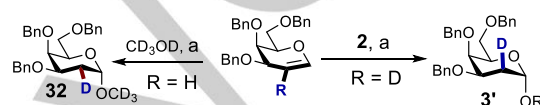


Scheme 2. Iterative Electro-Glycosylation. Conditions: (a) **1** (0.30 mmol), **30** (0.15 mmol), BrCH₂CH₂CN (0.09 mmol), CH₂Cl₂ (3.0 mL), 2.0 mA, rt. (b) **2** (0.08 mmol), 4.0 mA, -78 °C.

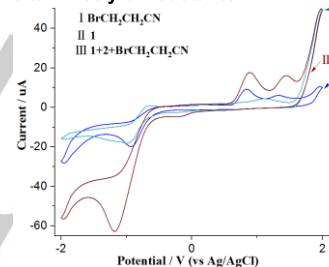
To shed light on the possible reaction mechanism (Figures 3A-C, Figures S1-5 and Tables S5-7), a series of mechanistic experiments were carefully designed and executed. Firstly, two deuterium labeling experiments proved a *syn*-addition of glycal with alcohol (Figure 3A and Figures S1-2). ¹H-NMR monitoring the reaction between **1** and CH₃OH in CD₂Cl₂ revealed just a 14% gradual loss of the amount of BrCH₂CH₂CN at the most during the reaction (Figure S3 and Table S5). The CV of BrCH₂CH₂CN was consistent with that of the full Br⁻/Br₃⁻/Br₂ reaction.^[23] The CVs of the reactants depicted that the intensity of both the oxidation peaks and the reduction peak increases, especially a dramatic increase in the reduction peak current (Figure 3B and Figure S4). Then, Bu₄NBr, Bu₄NBr₃, Br₂ or ClCH₂CH₂CN were used as an alternative additive, respectively. Only Br₂ gave the disaccharide in 20% yield. ClCH₂CH₂CN alone could not facilitate this reaction either (Figure 3C and entries 3-6 in Table S6). Interestingly, the combination of ClCH₂CH₂CN with Br₂ was able to generate the disaccharide in 52% yield (Table S6, entries 9-10). TEMPO inhibition and trapping experiments proved the presence of a propionitrile radical (entry 11 in Table S6, and Figure S5). Thus, we speculate an involvement of propionitrile radical, Br₂, and Br⁻ in this reaction.^[24,25] Combining these observations with enol ether radical cation work reported previously,^[26] a postulated mechanism is proposed in Figure 3D. Cathodic reduction of BrCH₂CH₂CN generates propionitrile radical and Br⁻, which could combine H⁺ to give HBr. Covalent H-

Br with weak acidity is considered to be a good hydrogen source in the hydrogen abstraction reaction.^[27] Since enol radical cations and related nucleophilic addition reactions are well-evidenced,^[26] anodic oxidation of glycal **A** affords radical cation **B**.^[26e] The attack of **B** by a glycosyl acceptor produces intermediate **C**.^[26c] The combined effects of a half-chair conformer^[28] and the orientation of 3-substituent in the glycal radical cation might be responsible for the good stereoselectivity, for instance, the α -selectivity for disaccharide **11** and β -selectivity for disaccharide **12**. Br⁻ abstracts H⁺ from **C** to produce HBr and radical **D**. Radical **D** abstracts hydrogen from HBr to give the glycoside **E** and a Br radical at the anode. The newly-formed C-H bond is mainly equatorial.^[29] Two liberated Br radicals combine to form Br₂, which could diffuse back to the cathode and react with two propionitrile radicals to regenerate BrCH₂CH₂CN.

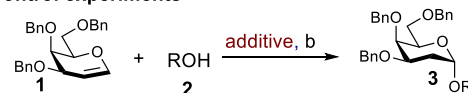
A. Deuterium-labeling experiments^a



B. Cyclic voltammetry of reactants



C. Control experiments



Br(CH₂)₂CN, 92%; without electricity, no reaction

Bu₄NBr/ Bu₄NBr₃/ Cl(CH₂)₂CN, < 5%; Br₂, 20%

Br₂ + Cl(CH₂)₂CN, 52% yield; without electricity, < 5% yield

Br(CH₂)₂CN + TEMPO, < 5%, TEMPO(CH₂)₂CN was detected

D. Postulated mechanism

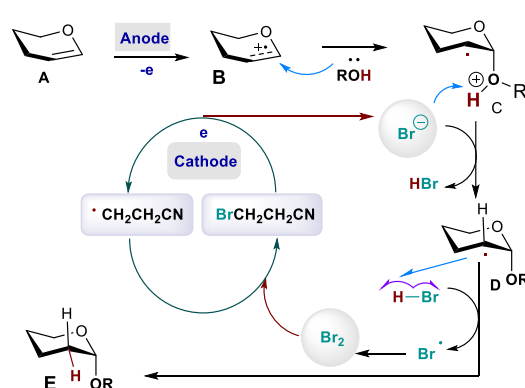


Figure 3. Mechanistic studies. (a) Standard conditions: glycal (0.30 mmol), acceptor (9.0 mmol for CD₃OD or 0.15 mmol for **2**), Bu₄NOTf (2.0 equiv), BrCH₂CH₂CN (0.09 mmol), DME (2.0 mL)/MFE (1.0 mL), 2.0 mA, rt. (b) glycal (0.30 mmol), **2** (0.15 mmol), Bu₄NOTf (2.0 equiv), additive, DME (2.0 mL)/MFE (1.0 mL), 2.0 mA, rt. Cyclic voltammogram at 50 mV/s of (I) glycal **1**, (II) BrCH₂CH₂CN and (III) **1** + **2** + BrCH₂CH₂CN in DME.

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To conclude, an unprecedented electro-2-deoxyglycosylation from glycals has been established in an undivided cell, using $\text{BrCH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CN}$ as an additive. Accordingly, thirteen 2-deoxyglycosides covering a large set of challenging linkages were prepared in good yields and with excellent stereoselectivities. The glycosylation of fourteen natural products and drugs further demonstrates its great potential in carbohydrate-based drug discovery. A scalable synthesis of glycosylated podophyllotoxin and an iterative one-pot trisaccharide synthesis have also been achieved. Given the large abundance of 2-deoxyglycosides in natural products, this method might find wide applications in the field of glycochemistry and glycomedicines.

Acknowledgements

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Keywords: carbohydrate • electrosynthesis • 2-deoxyglycoside • glycal • glycosylation

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Layout 2:

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