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A Versatile Synthesis of Enantiomerically Pure D- and L-Pyranosyl Nucleoside Analogues

Romualdo Caputo^a, Annalisa Guaragna^a, Giovanni Palumbo^a & Silvana Pedatella^a

^a Department of Organic and Biological Chemistry, University of Napoli Federico II, Via Mezzocannone, 16, I-80134, Napoli, Italy
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A VERSATILE SYNTHESIS OF ENANTIOMERICALLY PURE D- AND L-PYRANOSYL NUCLEOSIDE ANALOGUES

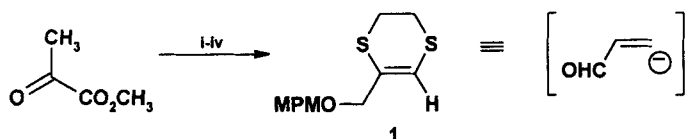
Romualdo Caputo, Annalisa Guaragna, Giovanni Palumbo*, Silvana Pedatella

Department of Organic and Biological Chemistry, University of Napoli Federico II
Via Mezzocannone, 16 I-80134 Napoli, Italy. e-Mail: ctsgroup@cds.unina.it

ABSTRACT: 2-[[*O*-(*p*-Methoxybenzyl)-oxy]methyl]-5,6-dihydro-1,4-dithiin **1** is a versatile three carbon homologation reagent which has been conveniently used in the synthesis of enantiomerically pure modified nucleosides.

Nucleoside analogues with a six-membered modified carbohydrate moiety have been used as building blocks of synthetic oligonucleotides, due to their known *in vitro* antiviral activity¹. Therefore, the synthetic methodologies to obtain these molecules have received a great impulse during the last decade. As a part of our current interest in the carbohydrate chemistry we report now a new versatile synthesis of D- and L-nucleosides bearing a six-membered acetal ring.

Scheme 1

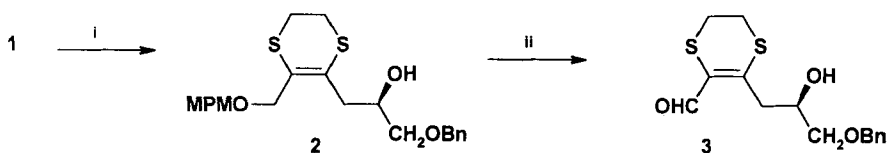


i: Polymer bound PPh₃/I₂/ethanedithiol in CH₂Cl₂; ii: NBS in CHCl₃; iii: LiAlH₄ in THF; iv: NaH in DMF, then *p*-methoxybenzyl chloride

The key step of the procedure is represented by the homologation of either (*S*)- or (*R*)-benzyl glycidyl ether by 2-[[*O*-(*p*-methoxybenzyl)-oxy]methyl]-5,6-dihydro-1,4-dithiin **1** which acts, in fact, as a masked acyl β-anion equivalent².

The compound **1** was readily prepared from pyruvate in high overall yield (83%), as is shown in Scheme 1. After treatment with BuLi, **1** was coupled with commercial (*R*)-benzyl glycidyl ether to give **2**. It is noteworthy that the cleavage of the MPM protecting group, by 2,3-dichloro-5,6-dicyano-1,4-benzoquinone (DDQ) in CH₂Cl₂/H₂O, afforded a carbaldehyde function instead of a primary hydroxyl group³ (Scheme 2), likely due to the presence of the β sulfur atom and the consequent extra stabilization of the allylic carbocation² resulting from the initial electron transfer fission step.

Scheme 2

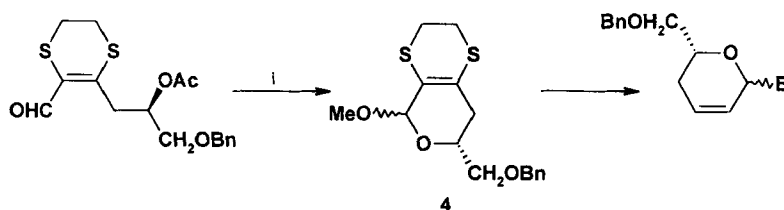


i: BuLi in THF, then (*R*)-benzyl glycidyl ether, -78 °C; ii: DDQ in CH₂Cl₂/H₂O.

The carbaldehyde bearing product **3** acetylated, when treated with TMSOTf and NEt₃ in MeOH, straight underwent the closure of the six-membered acetal ring, leading to **4**.

Sulfur removal⁴ from **4**, followed by standard coupling⁵ with silylated bases, eventually afforded the modified L-nucleosides, as show in Scheme 3.

Scheme 3



i: TMSOTf, NEt₃, MeOH.

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