**Stereoselective C-Sialylation**

# Synthesis of a Carbon-Linked Mimic of the Disaccharide Component of the Tumor-Related SialylTn Antigen**

*Zouleika Abdallah, Gilles Doisneau, and Jean-Marie Beau**

Among the large number of known tumor-associated carbo-hydrate motifs, Tn (GalNAcα1→*O*-Ser/Thr) and sialylTn (Neu5Acα2→6GalNAcα1→*O*-Ser/Thr) are the most specific to human epithelial tumor cells (breast, colon, ovarian, lung, and pancreatic cancers).[1] The sialylTn antigen, which is expressed on membrane-bound mucin-type glycoproteins, appears in transformed cells by premature sialylation of *N*-acetylgalactosamine, the first sugar moiety of the nascent *O*-glycane side chains in glycoproteins.[2] Integration of these antigens into synthetic vaccine constructs induces an anti-cancer immune response in which the carbohydrate domain plays a decisive role in determining immunogenicity.[1,3] The glycosylated antigen is, however, partially deglycosylated during the priming period.[4] It is therefore important to evaluate compounds in which the carbohydrate moiety cannot be detached from the peptide. We previously reported a mimic of the Tn antigen that could be incorporated into immunogenic glycopeptides.[5] We now describe the easy access to a carbon-linked mimic **2** of the Neu5Acα2→6GalNAcα1→OR disaccharidic component of the sialylTn antigen (Scheme 1).[6,7]



**1** Y = O; X = Ser or Thr : SialylTn antigen

**2** Y = CH₂ or a functionalized carbon
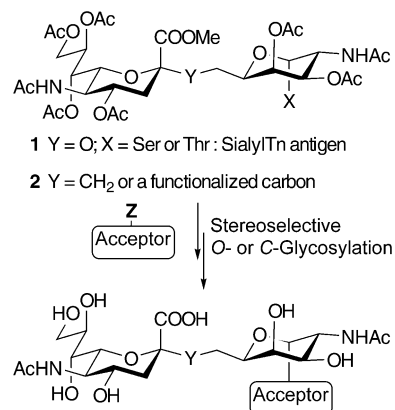
**Scheme 1.** SialylTn tumor antigen **1** and a stable analogue of the sialyl-*N*-acetylgalactosaminyl donor **2** for "block" synthesis.

[*] Prof. Dr. J.-M. Beau, Z. Abdallah, Dr. G. Doisneau
  Université Paris-Sud
  Laboratoire de Synthèse de Biomolécules associé au CNRS
  Institut de Chimie Moléculaire et des Matériaux
  91405 Orsay Cedex (France)
  Fax: (+33) 1-6985-3715
  E-mail: jmbeau@icmo.u-psud.fr

The synthesis was designed in such a way that an activated disaccharidic block would be available for modular attachment to a wide variety of acceptors.[8] Integrated in a vaccine, this segment would not be sensitive to enzymatic cleavage of the sialyl and the galactosaminyl moieties. This stable mimic may also be useful for the immunodiagnosis of different tumors or for the affinity purification of specific receptors.

We previously established that a samarium diiodide ($SmI_2$) promoted Barbier reaction with glycosyl 2-pyridyl sulfones is a rapid approach for the stereoselective assembly of C-glycosides.[9–11] In an interesting extension to this work, Linhardt and co-workers showed that the procedure worked equally well with anomeric pyridyl sulfones of 2-ulosonic esters.[12] They later reported that anomeric chlorides or phenyl sulfones could also be used in this procedure without the need of activation by hexamethyl phosphoramide (HMPA).[13] These results were expected since reduction of a functional group α to both an ester group and an oxygen atom (Reformatsky-type reaction) is much more facile than the same operation on a functional group α to an oxygen atom alone. This observation suggests that functional groups other than halides, sulfones, or phosphates would also be appropriate anomeric anion precursors for Neu5Ac or related ulosonic acid derivatives. We report here a synthesis which relies on the unprecedented use of a stable and crystalline 2-pyridyl sulfide of the N-acetylneuraminic acid derivative 3 as the anionic precursor in a samarium–Reformatsky procedure.[14]

The feasibility of this approach was first assessed with a simple aldehyde and 2-pyridyl sulfide 3, which is available from the corresponding 2-O-acetate (AcCl, AcOH, HCl[15a] then 2-sulfanylpyridine (1.2 equiv), $K_2CO_3$ (1.3 equiv), toluene/acetone;[15b] 60% yield over the two steps). Treatment of a solution of sulfide 3 and cyclohexanecarbaldehyde (1.5 equiv) in THF at 20°C with a freshly prepared solution of $SmI_2$[16] in THF led to a very fast consumption of the one-electron reducing agent.[17] After a standard workup, the C-glycosyl derivatives 4 were obtained in an approximately 1:1 diastereomeric ratio and separated by chromatography (86% yield; Scheme 2).

Both compounds displayed a standard $_5C^2$-chair conformation as determined by $^1H$ NMR analysis ($J_{3ax,4}$, $J_{4,5}$, and $J_{5,6}$ values of 10.2, 11.8, and 10.5 Hz, respectively, for one isomer and of 12.0, 10.5, and 10.5 Hz for the other). The
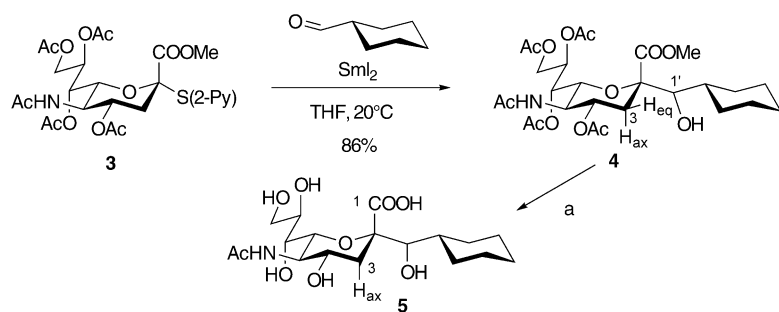
expected equatorial orientation of the newly formed C–C bond at the quaternary center was determined by NOE measurements on both isomers of 4 (NOE contacts between $H_{1'}$ and $H_{3eq}/H_{3ax}$ and not $H_4/H_6$). This stereochemical assignment was further confirmed by the large values of the $C_1$-$H_{3ax}$ heteronuclear coupling constants observed in the deprotected C-glycosyl compounds 5 ($^3J = 8.0$ Hz for one isomer and 7.3 Hz for the other); these values are typical of a trans diaxial orientation of the $C_1$–$C_2$ and $C_3$–$H_{3ax}$ bonds.[18]

Preparation of the required aldehyde 12 (Scheme 3) started from methyl α-D-N-acetylgalactosamine (6), which was obtained by Fischer glycosylation[19] (MeOH, Dowex
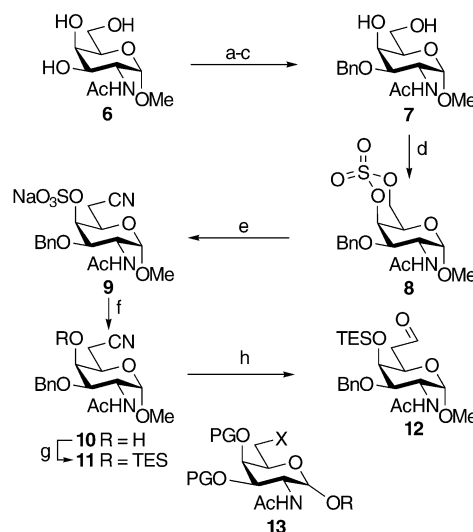
**Scheme 3.** Preparation of aldehyde 12. Reagents and conditions: a) $PhCH(OMe)_2$, CSA, DMF, 40°C, 2 h, 60%; b) BnBr (3.5 equiv), $Ba(OH)_2 \cdot 8H_2O$, BaO, DMF, 25°C, 77%; c) $AcOH/H_2O$ (70/30), 70°C, 1 h, 88%; d) $SOCl_2$, $Et_3N$, $CH_2Cl_2$, 0°C, 1 h; cat. $RuCl_3 \cdot 3H_2O$, $NaIO_4$, $CH_3CN/CH_2Cl_2/H_2O$ (2/2/3), 25°C, 1 h, 65%; e) NaCN, DMF, 25°C, 3 h, 97%; f) cat. $H_2SO_4$, moist THF, 25°C, 1 h, 86%; g) TESOTf (3 equiv), pyridine, DMAP, $CH_2Cl_2$, 0°C, 0.5 h, 80%; h) DIBAL-H (3.3 equiv in 3 portions every 20 min), $CH_2Cl_2$, −78°C, 1 h, 60%. CSA = camphorsulfuric acid, Bn = benzyl, TES = triethylsilyl, DMAP = 4-dimethylaminopyridine, DIBAL-H = diisobutylaluminum hydride.

50W-X8, $H^+$ form, reflux, 24 h) of N-acetyl-D-galactosamine or, more conveniently for large-scale preparations, by transformation of the inexpensive N-acetyl-D-glucosamine.[20]

A standard three-step sequence provided diol 7 which was converted into 4,6-cyclic sulfate 8 by using the procedure of Gao and Sharpless.[22] Regioselective ring opening of cyclic sulfate 8 at C-6[23] by sodium cyanide provided cyanide sulfate 9 in high yield which, after hydrolytic removal of the intermediate sulfate, gave alcohol 10. This high-yielding one-carbon extension of the sugar chain at position 6 is in stark contrast to all attempts at nucleophilic displacement of iodides or sulfonates by cyanide ions in the more conventional 6-iodo (or 6-O-sulfonates) derivatives of N-acetyl-D-galactosamine 13 with a variety of protecting groups at positions 3 and 4 (OPG in 13, including OH groups).[24] These attempts all failed and yielded only elimination

**Scheme 2.** $SmI_2$-induced coupling of pyridyl sulfide 3 with cyclohexanecarbaldehyde. 2-Py = 2-pyridyl. a) MeONa, MeOH, 20°C, overnight; NaOH, MeOH-$H_2O$, 20°C, 2 h, then Dowex 50W-X8-$H^+$ form, 90%.

products.[25] Triethylsilylation at position 4 furnished **11**, and careful reduction of the nitrile with diisobutylaluminum hydride at −78 °C provided the aldehyde **12**, which was used immediately after purification in the next step.[26] The samarium–Reformatsky coupling procedure, as described above, with sulfide **3** (1.5 equiv) and aldehyde **12** afforded the carbon-linked dimer **14** in high yield (93 %) as a 1:1 diastereomeric mixture (Scheme 4).[27]
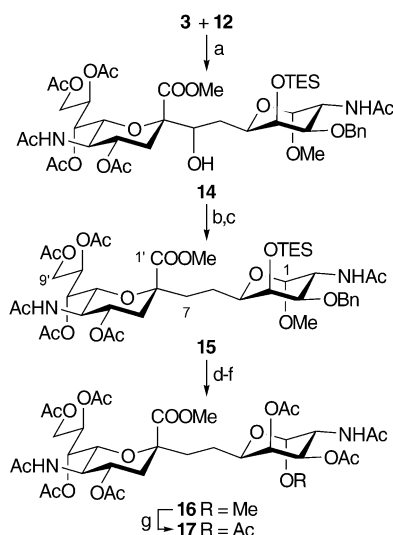


**Scheme 4.** Preparation of the carbon-linked sialyl-*N*-acetylgalactosaminyl donor **17**. Reagents and conditions: a) SmI$_2$ (2.5 equiv), THF, 25 °C, 93 %; b) (Imid)$_2$CS (10 equiv), CH$_3$CN, reflux, 4 h; c) Ph$_3$SnH (2.5 equiv), C$_6$F$_5$OH (1 equiv), cat. AIBN, toluene, reflux, 2 h, 65 % over two steps; d) MeOH/HCl$_{aq}$, 25 °C, 2 h, 95 %; e) H$_2$, Pd/C, EtOH, cat. HCl$_{aq}$, 94 %; f) Ac$_2$O, pyridine, 94 %; g) Ac$_2$O/AcOH/H$_2$SO$_4$ (8/2/0.1), 25 °C, 6 h, 70 %. Imid = imidazole, AIBN = azobisisobutyronitrile.

Alcohols **14** were converted into thiocarbonates by treatment with a large excess of *N,N'*-thiocarbonyldiimidazole in refluxing acetonitrile and deoxygenated by employing triphenyltin hydride, catalytic AIBN, and pentafluorophenol,[28] which yielded the required C-disaccharide **15** as a single compound (65 % for the two steps). Desilylation, hydrogenolysis, and acetylation provided the peracetylated C-dimer **16**.[29] The high stability of the linkage between the *N*-acetylneuraminyl and the *N*-acetylgalactosaminyl residues now allows for modifications under conditions that are unacceptable with a native O linkage. Thus, acetolysis of the methyl glycoside in dimer **16** provided anomeric acetate **17**, which can be easily converted into other anomeric substituents usable in "block" synthesis.

In conclusion, the reductive samariation of a pyridyl sulfide of methyl *N*-acetylneuraminate is a useful and high-yielding approach for stereoselective α-C-sialylation. One may notice here that anomeric sulfides of Neu5Ac are also good glycosyl donors in stereoselective α-O-sialylation.[30] C-Disaccharidic building block **17** can be readily transformed into a variety of glycosyl donors for β-selective O-glycosylation by standard procedures, for α-selective O-glycosylation by a modification of Koganti's procedure,[31] and α-[10] or

β-[32]selective C-glycosylations on a wide range of adapted acceptors for different biological applications.

## Experimental Section

**14**: A 0.1M solution of SmI$_2$ in THF (6.5 mL, 0.65 mmol of SmI$_2$) was added to a stirred mixture of pyridyl sulfide **3** (151 mg, 0.26 mmol) and freshly prepared aldehyde **12** (78 mg, 0.17 mmol) at 20 °C under Ar. After stirring the mixture for 10 min, saturated aqueous NH$_4$Cl was added and the reaction mixture was extracted three times with CH$_2$Cl$_2$. The combined organic phases were washed twice with water, dried with Na$_2$SO$_4$, and evaporated to dryness. Flash chromatography (toluene/acetone, 2/1) gave **14** (148 mg, 93 %). Isomers of **14** were separated at this stage (isomer ratio of 1:1). The following steps of the synthesis are, however, carried on with the mixture. Selected data for one of the isomers of **14**: ¹H NMR (CDCl$_3$, 250 MHz, atom numbering of the natural dimer): $\delta = 7.36$–7.25 (m, 5H, Ph), 5.41 (ddd, $J_{7',8'} = 7.6$, $J_{8',9'a} = 6.9$, $J_{8',9'b} = 2.2$ Hz, 1H, H-8′), 5.25 (dd, $J_{7',8'} = 7.6$, $J_{6',7'} = 2.2$ Hz, 1H, H-7′), 5.26 (d, $J_{NH,5'} = 10.0$ Hz, 1H, NH Neu5Ac), 5.17 (d, $J_{NH,2} = 9.6$ Hz, 1H, NH Gal), 4.82 (ddd, $J_{4',3'ax} = 11.8$, $J_{4',5'} = 10.1$, $J_{4',3'eq} = 4.4$ Hz, 1H, H-4′), 4.71 and 4.39 (2 × d, $J = 12$ Hz, 2H, CH$_2$Ph), 4.61 (d, $J_{1,2} = 3.7$ Hz, 1H, H-1), 4.50 (ddd, $J_{2,3} = 10.6$, $J_{2,NH} = 9.6$, $J_{1,2} = 3.7$ Hz, 1H, H-2), 4.34 (dd, $J_{9'a,9'b} = 12.2$, $J_{8',9'b} = 2.2$ Hz, 1H, H-9′b), 4.11 (d, $J_{3,4} = 2.8$ Hz, 1H, H-4), 4.01 (ddd, $J_{5',6'} = 10.2$, $J_{4',5'} = 10.1$, $J_{5',NH} = 10$ Hz, 1H, H-5′), 3.99 (dd, $J_{9'a,9'b} = 12.2$, $J_{8',9'a} = 6.9$ Hz, 1H, H-9′a), 3.92–3.82 (m, 2H, H-5,7), 3.89 (dd, $J_{5',6'} = 10.2$, $J_{6',7'} = 2.3$ Hz, 1H, H-6′), 3.76 (s, 3H, COOCH$_3$), 3.42 (dd, $J_{2,3} = 10.6$, $J_{3,4} = 2.8$ Hz, 1H, H-3), 3.26 (s, 3H, OCH$_3$), 2.71 (d, $J_{7,OH} = 11.2$ Hz, 1H, OH), 2.47 (dd, $J_{3'eq,3'ax} = 12$, $J_{3'eq,4'} = 4.4$ Hz, 1H, H-3′eq), 2.15, 2.09, 2.02, and 2.00 (4 × s, 12H, OCOCH$_3$), 1.84 (s, 3H, NCOCH$_3$) 1.70 (dd, $J_{3'eq,3'ax} = 12$, $J_{3'ax,4} = 11.8$ Hz, 1H, H-3′ax), 1.51–1.41 (m, 2H, H-6a,b), 0.95 (t, $J = 7.9$ Hz, 9H, CH$_3$CH$_2$Si), 0.65 ppm (q, $J = 7.9$ Hz, 6H, CH$_2$Si); MS (ES): $m/z = 949$ [*M*+Na]⁺; HR-MS (ES) for C$_{43}$H$_{66}$Na-N$_2$O$_{18}$Si; calcd: 949.3977; found: 949.3989.

Selected data for **16**: ¹H NMR (CDCl$_3$, 250 MHz, atom numbering of the natural dimer): $\delta = 5.8$ (d, $J_{NH,5} = 9.5$ Hz, 1H, NH Gal), 5.55–5.28 (m, 3H, H-7′,8′,NH Neu5Ac), 5.19 (d, $J_{3,4} = 2.9$ Hz, 1H, H-4), 5.08 (dd, $J_{2,3} = 10.9$, $J_{3,4} = 2.9$ Hz, 1H, H-3), 4.76 (ddd, $J_{4',3'ax} = 12.5$, $J_{4',5'} = 10.0$, $J_{4',3'eq} = 4.4$ Hz, 1H, H-4′), 4.7 (d, $J_{1,2} = 3.7$ Hz, 1H, H-1), 4.51 (ddd, $J_{2,3} = 10.9$, $J_{2,NH} = 10.2$, $J_{1,2} = 3.7$ Hz, 1H, H-2), 4.29 (dd, $J_{9'a,9'b} = 12.3$, $J_{9'a,8'} = 2.0$ Hz, 1H, H-9′a), 4.05 (dd, $J_{9'a,9'b} = 12.3$, $J_{8',9'b} = 4.9$ Hz, 1H, H-9′b), 3.97 (m, 1H, H-5′), 3.75 (m, 2H, H-5,6′), 3.71 (s, 3H, COOCH$_3$), 3.35 (s, 3H, OCH$_3$), 2.43 (dd, $J_{3'eq,3'ax} = 12.5$, $J_{3'eq,4'} = 4.4$ Hz, 1H, H-3′eq), 2.17, 2.09, 2.07, 2.00, 1.98, 1.95, and 1.93 (7 × s, 21H, OCOCH$_3$), 1.92 (m, 1H, H-6b), 1.84 (s, 3H, NCOCH$_3$), 1.78–1.70 (m, 2H, H-6a,7b), 1.72 (dd, $J_{3'ax,3'eq} = 12.5$, $J_{3'ax,4'} = 12.5$ Hz, 1H, H-3′ax), 1.16 ppm (m, 1H, H-7a); MS (ES): $m/z = 813$ [*M*+Na]⁺; HR-MS (ES) for C$_{34}$H$_{50}$NaN$_2$O$_{19}$; calcd: 813.2905; found: 813.2905.

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2 h; MeONa, MeOH, 25 °C; 59% (3 steps). Piv = pivaloyl, Tf = trifluoromethanesulfonyl, DCE = 1,2-dichloroethane.