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THE BIOSYNTHESIS OF GALACTOLIPIDS  
IN  
CHLOROPLAST ENVELOPES

A Thesis Presented as Partial Fulfillment for  
the Degree of Master of Science in Biochemistry

by  
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### ABSTRACT

The procedure of Douce et al (1973) was employed for the isolation of envelopes from purified chloroplasts of spinach (Spinacia oleracea) and maize (Zea maize var. Wis. 235). Maize chloroplasts gave very low yields of envelope protein and low incorporation of radioactivity from UDP-<sup>14</sup>C-Galactose into galactolipids. However the use of spinach chloroplasts resulted in higher yields of envelope protein and high levels of a galactosyltransferase that synthesised galactolipids from endogenous lipid substrates and added UDP-<sup>14</sup>C-Galactose. The products of galactosyltransferase were identified as MGDG and DGDG by comparison with standard lipids on thin layer chromatography. The procedure for the isolation of chloroplast envelopes reported by Poincelot and Day (1973) gave a higher yield of less contaminated envelope membranes and an increased specific activity of galactosyltransferase compared to the results obtained using envelopes isolated by the method of Douce et al (1973)

Total incorporation of radioactivity from 0.3  $\mu$ M UDP-<sup>14</sup>C-Galactose by galactosyltransferase was dependent on the time and temperature of incubation and the nature of the incubation buffer. Maximum incorporation (about 72% of the added radioactivity) was obtained upon incubation at 30°C for 30 min, in 50 mM HEPES-NaOH at pH 8.0. MGDG was identified as the major labelled lipid (MGDG:DGDG ratio 1.7:1). Lower pH values gave higher incorporation into DGDG.

A cation dependence of galactosyltransferase was observed and incorporation was stimulated by addition of Ca<sup>2+</sup>, Mg<sup>2+</sup> or Ba<sup>2+</sup>. Maximum incorporation was obtained with 5 mM Ba<sup>2+</sup>. In contrast 5 mM Cu<sup>2+</sup> completely inhibited incorporation.

The sulphhydryl nature of the chloroplast galactosyltransferase (Chang, 1970; Mudd et al 1971) was confirmed with galactosyltransferase of the chloroplast envelope.

Linoleic acid at 0.72  $\mu\text{M}$  completely inhibited transferase activity. The inhibition by linoleate could be partially removed by addition of about 10 mM  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  or  $\text{Ba}^{2+}$  but 10 mM  $\text{Mg}^{2+}$  and BSA (30  $\mu\text{g}$  per ml) were without effect.

UMP, UDP and UTP at 1 mM inhibited incorporation by transferase. UDP was the most effective inhibitor and gave 50% inhibition of incorporation at about 5  $\mu\text{M}$ . NADH and  $\text{PP}_i$  did not significantly affect incorporation.

The addition of exogenous diacylglycerol (1-palmitoyl, 2-oleoyl glycerol or 1, 2-di-linoleoyl glycerol) did not increase the incorporation of radioactive galactose into galactolipids. Incorporation was inhibited by 0.3% Triton X-100 and 6 mM sodium cholate. No radioactivity from added  $^{14}\text{C}$ -diacylglycerol was incorporated into MGDG by chloroplast envelopes.

Preincubation of the chloroplast envelopes with phospholipase C or D reduced the total amount of radioactivity incorporated by galactosyltransferase. Transferase activity was detectable after preincubation of the envelopes with trypsin and protease.

The fatty acid composition of MGDG, DGDG and DG from whole tissue, chloroplasts and chloroplast envelopes of spinach is presented. The characteristic highly unsaturated nature of the fatty acids of MGDG and DGDG is in contrast to the relatively saturated fatty acid content of DG isolated from whole tissue and chloroplasts. However, DG isolated from chloroplast envelopes contained predominantly 16:0, 18:1 and 18:3.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>page</u>
Acknowledgements	ii
Abstract	iii
Table of Contents	v
List of Tables	viii
List of Figures	xi
Abbreviations	xiii
Chapter 1 Review of literature	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.1.1 Structure and occurrence of galactolipids	1
1.1.2 The cellular distribution of galactolipids	3
1.1.3 The fatty acid composition of galactolipids	5
1.2 Biosynthesis of galactolipids	7
1.2.1 Outline of the biosynthetic pathways	7
1.2.2 Desaturation of the fatty acids	9
1.2.3 The nature of the diacylglycerol as substrate for the synthesis of MGDG	10
1.2.4 Synthesis of UDP-Galactose	11
1.2.5 Variations in the level of galactolipid in plant tissue	12
1.2.6 Galactolipases and galactosidases of plant tissue	12
1.3 The chloroplast envelope	14
1.3.1 Isolation and composition of the chloroplast envelope	14
1.3.2 Properties and possible role of the chloroplast envelope	16
1.4 Membrane-bound enzymes and galactosyltransferase	18
1.4.1 The biochemistry of membrane-bound enzymes	18
1.4.2 Galactosyltransferase of the chloroplast envelope	19
1.4.3 Galactosyltransferase from animals and bacteria	22
Chapter 2 Aim of the present study	24
Chapter 3 Methods and materials	25
3.1 Materials and analytical techniques	25
3.1.1 Chemicals and solvents	25

	<u>page</u>
3.1.2 Radioactive compounds	25
3.1.3 Chromatography	25
3.1.4 Incubation procedure	26
3.1.5 Determination of radioactivity	27
3.1.6 Protein determination	27
3.1.7 Sonication	28
3.1.8 Chlorophyll determination	28
3.1.9 Polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis	28
3.1.10 ATPase and FDPase assays	29
3.1.11 Preparation of samples for electronmicroscopy and phase contrast microscopy	29
3.1.12 Tryptic, protease and phospholipase digestions	30
3.2 Experimental procedures	30
3.2.1 Isolation of chloroplasts	30
3.2.2 Isolation of chloroplast envelopes	31
3.2.3 Isolation of phospholipids from spinach leaf tissue	31
3.2.4 Preparation and purification of diacylglycerol	32
 Chapter 4 Results	 33
4.1 Experiments with maize chloroplasts	33
4.1.1 Isolation of envelopes from maize chloroplasts	33
4.2 Experiments with spinach chloroplasts	36
4.2.1 Isolation of envelopes from spinach chloroplasts	36
4.2.2 Variations in the level of galactosyltransferase in envelopes isolated from spinach chloroplasts	43
4.2.3 The effect of storage of the envelope preparation on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C- Galactose into lipids	43
4.2.4 The effect of time and temperature of incubation on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C- Galactose into lipids	46
4.2.5 The nature of the acceptor molecule involved in the synthesis of <sup>14</sup> C-MGDG from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose	50
4.2.6 The effect of the composition of the incubation buffer and pH of incubation on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by chloroplast envelopes	54

	<u>page</u>
4.2.7 The effect of mono- and divalent cations on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by a preparation of envelopes	58
4.2.8 The effect of UMP, UDP, UTP, NADH and PP <sub>i</sub> on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by chloroplast envelopes	62
4.2.9 The effect of -sulphydryl reagents on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by galactosyltransferase of chloroplast envelopes	64
4.2.10 Inhibition of incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose by linoleic acid and the effect of the cations Ca <sup>2+</sup> , Mg <sup>2+</sup> and Ba <sup>2+</sup> , and BSA on the observed inhibition	65
4.2.11 The effect of addition of of 1,2-diacylglycerol on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by chloroplast envelopes	71
4.2.12 The effect of Triton X-100 and sodium cholate on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into galactolipids by envelopes of chloroplasts	76
4.2.13 The effect of phospholipase C and D on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by chloroplast envelopes	81
4.2.14 The effect of proteolytic digestion of chloroplast envelopes with trypsin or protease on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids	84
4.2.15 The fatty acid composition of MGDG, DGDG and DG isolated from whole tissue, chloroplasts and chloroplast envelopes of spinach	85
 Chapter 5 Discussion	 89
 References	

LIST OF TABLES

Table number		page
1	The lipid composition of photosynthetic tissue from spinach	1
2	The lipid composition of fractions isolated from chloroplasts of <u>Vicia faba</u> and <u>Spinacia oleracea</u>	4
3	The fatty acid composition of MGDG and DGDG from whole tissue, chloroplasts and envelopes of several plant species	6
4	The lipid composition of envelopes and lamellae isolated from spinach chloroplasts	15
5	Characteristics of galactosyltransferase from spinach chloroplasts	21
6	The distribution of protein, chlorophyll and galactosyltransferase in fractions isolated by sucrose gradient centrifugation of disrupted maize chloroplasts	34
7	The distribution of protein, chlorophyll and galactosyltransferase in fractions isolated by sucrose gradient centrifugation of disrupted spinach chloroplasts	39
8	The distribution of protein, chlorophyll and galactosyltransferase in fractions isolated by sucrose gradient centrifugation of disrupted spinach chloroplasts (modified gradient)	42
9	The effect of increasing amounts of envelope protein on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose	44
10	The effect of storage of the envelope preparation on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids	46
11	The effect of time and temperature of incubation on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by chloroplast envelopes	47
12	The effect of time of incubation on the incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into MGDG, DGDG and TGDG by chloroplast envelopes	50
13	The nature of the acceptor molecule involved in the synthesis of <sup>14</sup> C-MGDG from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose	51
14	The effect of the composition of the incubation buffer and pH of incubation on incorporation of radioactivity	

Table number		page
	from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by chloroplast envelopes	55
15	The effect of mono- and divalent cations on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by chloroplast envelopes	59
16	The effect of Mg <sup>2+</sup> , Ca <sup>2+</sup> and Ba <sup>2+</sup> over the concentration range 0.1 - 50 mM on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by a preparation of envelopes	60
17	The effect of UMP, UDP, UTP, NADH and PP <sub>1</sub> on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by chloroplast envelopes	62
18	The effect of sulphhydryl reagents on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by galactosyltransferase of chloroplast envelopes	64
19	The effect of linoleic acid on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by chloroplast envelopes	66
20	The effect of Ca <sup>2+</sup> , Mg <sup>2+</sup> , Ba <sup>2+</sup> and BSA on the inhibition of incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose by linoleic acid	68
21	The effect of addition of 1-palmitoyl, 2-oleoyl glycerol on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose by chloroplast envelopes	72
22	The effect of sonication in the presence and absence of diacylglycerol on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose by chloroplast envelopes	73
23	The biosynthesis of <sup>14</sup> C-MGDG from <sup>14</sup> C-diacylglycerol and UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose by chloroplast envelopes	75
24	The effect of Triton X-100 and sodium cholate on the incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into galactolipids by envelopes of chloroplasts	78
25	The effect of phospholipase C and D on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by chloroplast envelopes	82
26	The effect of proteolytic digestion of chloroplast envelopes with trypsin or protease on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids	85

Table number		page
27	The MGDG, DGDG and DG content of whole tissue, chloroplasts and chloroplast envelopes of spinach	87
28	The fatty acid composition of MGDG, DGDG and DG isolated from whole leaf tissue, chloroplasts and chloroplast envelopes of spinach	88

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure number		page
1	The structure of monogalactosyldiacylglycerol (MGDG) and digalactosyldiacylglycerol (DGDG)	2
2	Proposed pathways for the biosynthesis of galactosyldiacylglycerol	8
3	Representative fields from a preparation of maize chloroplasts	35
4	A representative field from a preparation of spinach chloroplasts and chloroplast envelopes	37
5	The profile of fractions obtained from sucrose gradient centrifugation of disrupted spinach chloroplasts	38
6	Representative fields of a preparation of envelopes from spinach chloroplasts obtained from fraction 1 and fraction 2 of the modified discontinuous sucrose gradient	40
7	The profile of fractions obtained by sucrose gradient centrifugation of disrupted spinach chloroplasts (modified gradient)	41
8	The effect of increasing amounts of envelope protein on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by chloroplast envelopes	44
9	Radiochromatogram scan of the lipid extract obtained after incubating 50 µg envelope protein with UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose (55,000 dpm)	45
10	The effect of time and temperature of incubation on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by chloroplast envelopes	48
11	The effect of time of incubation on the incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into MGDG, DGDG and TGDG by chloroplast envelopes	49
12	The nature of the acceptor molecule involved in the synthesis of <sup>14</sup> C-MGDG from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose	52
13	Radiochromatogram scans of the products from incubation with 0.28 µM UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose for 30 min and then with 1.4 mM UDP-Galactose for 30 min	53
14	The effect of the composition of the incubation buffer and pH of incubation on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by chloroplast envelopes	56

Figure number		page
15	The effect of the composition of the incubation buffer and pH of incubation on the distribution of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose between MGDG and DGDG of chloroplast envelopes	57
16	The effect of Ca <sup>2+</sup> , Mg <sup>2+</sup> and Ba <sup>2+</sup> over the concentration range 0.1 - 50 mM on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by chloroplast envelopes	61
17	The effect of UMP, UDP, UTP, NADH and pyrophosphate (PP <sub>i</sub> ) on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by chloroplast envelopes	63
18	The effect of linoleic acid on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by chloroplast envelopes	67
19	The effect of Ca <sup>2+</sup> , Mg <sup>2+</sup> and Ba <sup>2+</sup> on the inhibition of incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose by linoleic acid	69 + 70
20	The effect of addition of 1-palmitoyl, 2-oleoyl glycerol on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose by chloroplast envelopes	72
21	The effect of sonication in the presence and absence of diacylglycerol on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose by chloroplast envelopes	74
22	The effect of Triton X-100 in the presence and absence of diacylglycerol and triacylglycerol on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into galactolipids by envelopes of chloroplasts	79
23	The effect of sodium cholate in the presence and absence of diacylglycerol on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into galactolipids by envelopes of chloroplasts	80
24	The effect of phospholipase C and D on incorporation of radioactivity from UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose into lipids by chloroplast envelopes	83
25	Gel electropherograms of the chloroplast envelope before and after digestion with trypsin	86

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ATP	adenosine-5'-triphosphate
Tris	tris(hydroxymethyl)aminomethane
BSA	bovine serum albumin
cm	centimetre
CoA and acylCoA	coenzyme A and its acyl derivative
cpm	counts per minute
$C_i$	curie ( $3.7 \times 10^{10} \text{ s}^{-1}$ )
$^{\circ}\text{C}$	degrees celsius
DG	1,2-diacylglycerol (diglyceride)
DEGS	di-ethylene glycol succinate
DGDG	digalactosyldiacylglycerol
EDTA	ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid
E	extinction ( $\log \frac{I_0}{I}$ )
GLC	gas-liquid chromatography
G-3-P	<u>sn</u> -glycerol-3-phosphate
g	gram
x g	x gravitational force
h	hour
l	litre
$K_m$	Michaelis constant
$\mu\text{g}$	microgram ( $10^{-6} \text{ g}$ )
p (prefix)	micromicro ( $10^{-12} \text{ x}$ )
$\mu\text{mole}$	micromole ( $10^{-6} \text{ M}$ )
n (prefix)	millimicro ( $10^{-9} \text{ x}$ )
M	molar (moles per litre)
mM	millimolar (millimoles per litre)
min	minute
MGDG	monogalactosyldiacylglycerol
NADH	nicotinamide-adenine dinucleotide, reduced
$P_i$	orthophosphate (inorganic)
$PP_i$	pyrophosphate (inorganic)
%	per cent
PC	phosphatidylcholine
PE	phosphatidylethanolamine
PG	phosphatidylglycerol
PI	phosphatidylinositol
rpm	revolutions per minute
s	second
<u>sn</u>	stereospecific numbering

TLC	thin layer chromatography
PA	phosphatidic acid
lyso-PA	lyso-phosphatidic acid
TTGDG	tetragalactosyldiacylglycerol
TGDG	trigalactosyldiacylglycerol
UMP	uridine-5'-phosphate
UDP	uridine-5'-pyrophosphate
UTP	uridine-5'-triphosphate
UDP- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose	uridine-5'-diphosphate-D-U- <sup>14</sup> C-Galactose
UDP-Galactose	uridine-5'-diphosphate-D-galactose
vol.	volume
wt.	weight
dpm	disintegrations per minute