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## Kinetics of photoinduced electron transfer reactions of ruthenium(II) complexes and phenols, tyrosine, *N*-acetyl-tyrosine and tryptophan in aqueous solutions measured with modulated fluorescence spectroscopy



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## ABSTRACT

Photooxidation kinetics of phenol, 1-naphthol, 2-naphthol, tyrosine (TyrOH) and N-acetyl-tyrosine (AcTyrOH), tryptophan (TrpH) by ruthenium(II) polypyridyl complexes: [Ru(bpy)<sub>3</sub>]Cl<sub>2</sub> (1), [Ru(phen)<sub>3</sub>]Cl<sub>2</sub> (2),  $[Ru(bpy)(phen)(bpg)]Cl_2$  (3), and  $[Ru(dpq)_2(bxbg)]Cl_2$  (4) where bpy is 2,2'-bipyridine, phen - 1,10phenanthroline, bpg – bipyridine-glycoluril, dpq – dipyrido[3,2-d:2',3'-f]quinoxaline, and bxbg – bis(oxylene)bipyridine-glycoluril are investigated. Rate constants have been measured by steady-state luminescence and phase-modulation fluorometry in aqueous solutions at different pH's. The rates for the oxidation of the phenols and phenolic aromatic amino acids spreads over a wide range from  $4.2 \times 10^6$  to  $6.8 \times 10^9$  M<sup>-1</sup> s<sup>-1</sup>, depending on pH and the nature of solutes. At pH > pK<sub>a</sub> of the quenchers, the presence of reactive species (PhO<sup>-</sup>) in the alkaline solutions is accounted for the rapid ET rates. In the pH range between 4 and 10 (pH < pK<sub>a</sub>), the ETPT mechanism becomes dominate and the rate constants are relatively low. It reveals that the important parameters that influence the quenching reaction rates, others than the driving forces  $\Delta G^0$  are the steric and hydrophobic interactions arising from the structure of the compounds. This is clearly seen in the case of photoreaction between the Ru(phen) $_{3}^{2+}$  complex and AcTyrOH. Phen ligands and acetyl group cause a steric effect, but strengthen the hydrophobic interactions and thus promote the quenching process. The pH-dependent equation of the observed rate constant for PhOH/AcTyrOH oxidation is expressed as a sum of rates for its protonated, neutral and deprotonated forms.

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## 1. Introduction

Oxidation of phenolic compounds partakes in many of the biologically important processes in nature. Oxidation of phenols in aqueous solution strongly depends on pH's because of their pH-dependence redox potentials [1]. Oxidation potential for phenol itself is reported as:  $E_{PhOH^{++}/PhOH}^{0} = 1.56 \text{ V vs.}$  *NHE* and for phenolate form is  $E_{PhO^{-}/PhO^{-0}} = 0.85 \text{ V vs.}$  *NHE* [2]. To study the phenols oxidation reactions ruthenium polypyridyl complexes are usually used as favourable oxidants. Such excited state [Ru(bpy)<sub>3</sub>]<sup>2+</sup> ( $E_{Ru^{2+}/Ru^{+}}^{0} = 0.84 \text{ V vs.}$  *NHE* ] or photogenerated [Ru(bpy)<sub>3</sub>]<sup>3+</sup> ( $E_{Ru^{2+}/Ru^{+}}^{0} = 1.26 \text{ V vs.}$  *NHE* ] [3] complexes with pH-independent reduction potentials are used for investigations of the phenols oxidation reactions in aqueous solutions. It is also reported that such phenol oxidations often involve a proton-coupled electron transfer (PCET) process as a function of pH. Hammarström et al. suggested an electron transfer – proton transfer (ETPT) at pH  $\leq 4$ 

[2], concerted electron – proton transfer (CEP) between pH 4–10 and pure electron transfer (ET) at pH > 10 [4], as dominant reaction mechanisms between phenols derivatives and  $[Ru(bpy)_3]^{3+}$ . Numerous experiments have been devoted to the phenols oxidation reaction by the  $[Ru(bpy)_3]^{2+*}$  complex. However, most of the work focused on the reactions in strong basic solutions where the very reactive species (PhO<sup>-</sup>) is presence [5,6]. Oxidation of another type of the phenolic compounds, like tyrosine (TyrOH) amino acid also received scientist's great interest because of its function in Photosystem-II and as redox proteins. Hammarström's group focused on artificial photosynthesis and reported on a covalently linked  $[Ru(bpy)_3]^{2+}$ -TyrOH system [7,8]. In such a system four mechanistic regions dominate over the wide pH-range including PTET at pH < 5.5, CEP between pH 5.5-8.5, PTET (proton transfer – electron transfer) between pH 8.5–10 and ET at pH > 10 [8]. Important effects/parameters that influence the phenols oxidation reaction rates are steric hindrance (distance), solvent (reorganization energy), coulombic charge, hydrogen bonding [4], hydrophobic interaction ( $\pi$ -stacking) and driving force (1).

As a contribution for an overview of the phenols oxidation reactions, the present work reports on the kinetics of the photoreaction between

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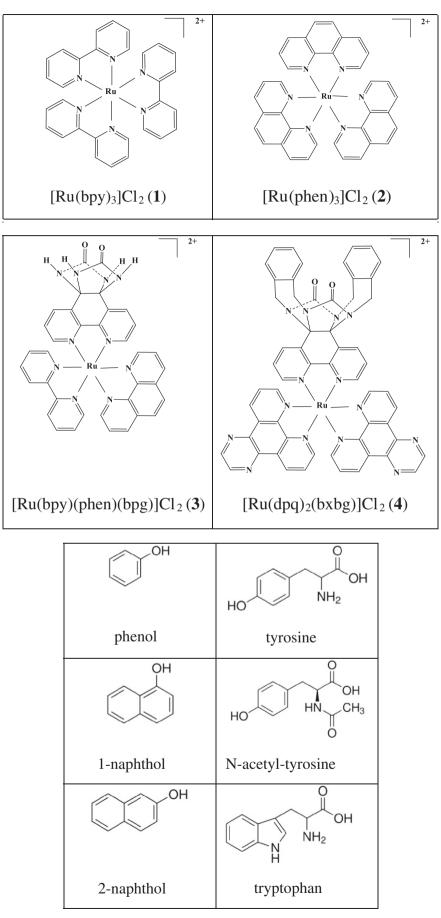


Chart 1. Molecular structures of compounds.

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