Investigation of the Photoelectrochemistry of C_{60} and Its Pyrrolidine Derivatives by Monolayer-Modified SnO_{2} Electrodes

Chuping Luo, Chunhui Huang, Liangbing Gan, Dejian Zhou, Wensheng Xia, Qiankun Zhuang, Yilei Zhao, and Yanyi Huang

State Key Laboratory of Rare Earth Material Chemistry and Applications, Peking University, Beijing 100871, P. R. China

Received: May 16, 1996; In Final Form: August 5, 1996

A monolayer of a C_{60} mixture with arachidic acid (1:1) and C_{60}-pyrrolidine derivatives [C_{60}(C_{3}H_{6}NR); R = H (1), C_{6}H_{5} (2), o-C_{6}H_{4}NO_{2} (3), and o-C_{6}H_{4}NMe_{2} (4)] were successfully obtained at the air/water interface and deposited onto solid substrates with transfer ratios of about 0.90 ± 0.05 at 30 mN·m^{-1} by the Langmuir—Blodgett (LB) technique. The photoelectrochemical investigation of these compounds on SnO_{2} electrodes was carried out. The photocurrent was determined under nitrogen atmosphere because oxygen can suppress the photocurrents. Results showed that electrons flow from the electrolyte through LB film to SnO_{2} and a chemical energy conversion occurs together with the photoelectric conversion. Positive bias voltage, electron donor, the incident light intensity, and the electron-repulsion groups in the derivatives are beneficial factors for generating higher photocurrent. The quantum yields vary from 0.015 to 0.069 for C_{60} and its derivatives 1-4.

Introduction

In the past 6 years, a rich “three-dimensional” chemistry of spherical and polyfunctional all-carbon molecules has been developed.1-3 Investigations reveal that fullerenes and their derivatives, so-called fulleroids or organofullerenes, exhibit a variety of remarkable properties, for instance, superconductivity and molecular magnetism as well as catalytic and biological activity.4 One of the most realistic applications seems to be the development of specific electronic devices.5 When the cast films on metal electrode surfaces, C_{60} can act as an n-type semiconductor though the dark current is at least 1 order of magnitude larger than the photocurrent.4 The bandgap of solid semiconductor though the dark current is at least 1 order of magnitude larger than the photocurrent.4 The bandgap of solid C_{60} as a semiconductor is about 2 eV, and the conductivity can be varied between <10^{-7} and 10 S/cm by doping.6 On the other hand, fullerenes and their derivatives are good electron acceptors and can be successively reduced up to six steps.5 Polyvinyl carbazole doped with C_{60} was shown to be a photoconductor, in which holes in the carbazole valence band act as the charge carriers and the C_{60} molecules act as the photoactive electron acceptors.6 When C_{60} and C_{70} are embedded within a lipid membrane, they act both as photosensitizers for efficient electron transfer from a donor and mediators for electron transport across the membrane.7 In this process, electron transfer from the fullerene anions formed at the reductant interface occurs through fullerene aggregates in which the charges transfer by hopping and ultimately reach the oxidizing entities at the opposite interface.5

The monolayer film of the fullerenes is very sensitive to vibration, easy to aggregate, and very difficult to be transferred onto solid substrates8 due to the very high hydrophobicity of the rigid ball-shape molecules.9 It has been discovered that the introduction of polar atoms, such as nitrogen or oxygen, into the close-caged molecule can not only enhance their Langmuir film stability but also improve their monolayer transformation ability, in which the derivatives molecules really stand at the air/water interface. The monolayers were transferred onto hydrophilically pretreated quartz substrates to form high-quality LB films, which has been demonstrated in previous work.10 Besides, fullerenes and their derivatives can also form stable mixed Langmuir films with long-chain fatty acids or alcohols.9d,10a These mixed films could be easily transferred onto solid substrates with a uniform transfer ratio. However, the limiting area of the 1:1 mixed Langmuir films was much smaller than that it should be (around 93 Å²/molecule). In addition, solvents and the concentrations of spreading solutions also play an important role in making high-quality LB monolayers.10

Here we wish to report the film formation properties of a series of C_{60}-pyrrolidines derivatives C_{60}(C_{3}H_{6}NR) (where R = H (1), C_{6}H_{5} (2), o-C_{6}H_{4}NO_{2} (3), and o-C_{6}H_{4}NMe_{2} (4)) and the photocurrent generation from the monolayer modified SnO_{2} electrodes of these compounds (abbreviated as Fuller-SnO_{2} electrodes). The dependencies of the photocurrents on some factors have been studied which may enhance or decrease the magnitude of the observed photocurrent, mainly, the bias voltage, the electron donor and acceptor in the electrolyte, and the light intensity as well as the electron attracting—repulsing effect of substituent groups bridged to C_{60} by pyrrolidines. The mechanism of generating photocurrent is proposed, and a chemical energy conversion should take place together with the photoelectronic conversion.

Experimental Section

Materials. The C_{60}/C_{70} mixture was prepared in our lab according to the graphite-arc vaporization method.11 Pure C_{60} was obtained by a chromatographic separation method, in a purity of >99.9% (detected by HPLC12). The pyrrolidines
derivatives 1−4 were synthesized by a 1,3-dipolar addition to C₆₀ of the decarboxylated iminium ion formed from aldehyde (RCHO, R = H, C₆H₅, o-C₆H₄NO₂, and o-C₆H₄NMe₂) and N-methylglycine by following a procedure slightly modified from that described by Maggini et al. The structures of 1−4 were characterized by ¹H NMR and ¹³C NMR (400 MHz Bruker, CS₂, 310 K) as shown in Scheme 1.

Methylviologen diiodide (MV²⁺) was synthesized by the reaction of 4,4'-bipyridyl with excess methyl iodine in refluxing ethanol for 6 h. The product was filtered and washed with ethanol four times, then dried in vacuum. The NMR spectrum indicated that the product was highly pure. Arachidic acid (AA) was purchased from Aldrich Co. The electrolytes were (n-Bu)₄NPF₆ and KCl for electrochemical and photoelectrochemical experiments, respectively. The former was purchased from Aldrich Co. and the later from Beijing Chemical Factory.

Preparation of LB Films. A NIMA 622 computer-controlled Langmuir trough (U.K.) was used for the formation of the fullerene monolayers. It took about 1 h to spread a chloroform solution of C₆₀/AA or its derivatives (10⁻⁶−10⁻⁵ mol·L⁻¹) onto an ultrapure water subphase (20 ± 1 °C, pH 5.60, >18 Ω). After the evaporation of the solvent over 15 min, the surface pressure−area (π−A) isotherms were recorded. The monolayer was deposited onto the hydrophilic pretreated transparent SnO₂ glass substrates with a lateral resistance of 50 Ω at a rate of 5 mm/min (vertical dipping) at a constant surface pressure of 30 mN·m⁻¹. Typical transfer ratios were 0.90 ± 0.05.

Electrochemical Measurements. Cyclic voltammetry was recorded on a PAR-270 Electrochemical Analysis System (U.S.). A three-electrode configuration was used throughout. A polished platinum electrode (0.5 mm diameter) was used as working electrode. The counter electrode and the reference electrode were a platinum wire and a Ag/AgCl electrode, respectively. All measurements were performed in a 0.1 mol·L⁻¹ dichloromethane solution of (n-Bu)₄NPF₆ at −10 °C under a nitrogen atmosphere. The concentrations of C₆₀ and its derivatives ranged from 10⁻⁴ to 10⁻³ mol·L⁻¹.

Photoelectrochemical Measurements. The photoelectrochemical studies were performed by using a model 600 voltammetric analyzer (CH Instruments Inc., U.S.) and a 500 W xenon lamp (Ushio Electric, Japan). A variety of filters (Toshiba, Japan) with certain band passes were used to obtain different wavelengths. The intensities of incident beams were standardized by a power and energy meter (Scientech 372, Boulder Co., U.S.). The IR light was filtered throughout the experiment with a Toshiba IRA-25S filter (Japan). To eliminate the influence of oxygen, all experiments were carried out under a nitrogen atmosphere. At least eight Fuller-SnO₂ electrodes were fabricated to test the reproducibility of photocurrent data under each conditions.

Results and Discussions

Fabrication of Fuller-SnO₂ Electrodes. The π−A isotherm of C₆₀/AA (Figure 1) shows that the film can sustain more than 70 mN·m⁻¹ surface pressure and has a limiting molecular area of 87.9 Å²/molecule. Expansion and recompression of a previously compressed film reveals very little hysteresis up to the point at which the expansion initiated (for less than about 55 mN·m⁻¹) without visible patchy domains on subphase. This suggests that the film on the aqueous subphase is a uniform and high-quality monolayer. Supposing that the molecules of C₆₀ and arachidic acid were in an ideal arrangement on the air/water interface (Figure 2), then the projection of the molecules onto the water surface forms a square lattice with a lateral length a; the calculated area per molecule is a². This yields nearest-neighbor distances of 9.4 ± 0.6 Å for C₆₀ or arachidic acid molecules. Considering that arachidic acid has limiting area of 20 Å²/molecule, the calculated nearest-neighbor distance of 9.4 ± 0.6 Å is slightly smaller than of the ideal monolayer of C₆₀/AA (11.2 ± 0.4 Å). This fact suggests that the C₆₀ molecules are squeezed into the hydrophobic long chains in a certain extent at such a surface pressure.

The π−A isotherms of all fullerene derivatives indicate that these molecules can form stable monolayers on an aqueous
The experimental results show that C_{60} and its derivatives have the SnO_2 electrode increases very sharply at wavelengths below low when visible incident light is used, and the absorbency of give the largest photocurrent among them.

$\frac{4}{2}$ of circular objects of radius $r$ of the molecules onto the water surface forms a triangular lattice derivatives are attracted toward the water and that the projection follows. Assuming that the substituents of the fullerene is 2$^2$, thus the nearest-neighbor distances of the derivatives 1, 2, 3, and 4 are 10.4 ± 0.5, 10.6 ± 0.5, 10.6 ± 0.5, and 10.6 ± 0.5 Å, respectively. They are slightly larger than that of C_{60}^{8a,c} This indicates that the films are really monolayers and the phenyl group occupied a small area on the monolayers. The $\pi$-$\pi$ isotherms of expansion and recompression also show the same results as C_{60}/AA, suggesting that the induced hydrophilic groups really enhance the stability of these Langmuir films.

### Photocurrent Generation from Fuller-SnO_2 Electrodes.

The experimental results show that C_{60} and its derivatives have very similar photoelectric responsibilities. To describe conveniently, the derivative 4 (C_{60}(C_1H_2N_2)) is chosen as a representative to discuss below because its SnO_2 electrode can give the largest photocurrent among them.

**The Wavelength of Incident Light.** The photocurrents are very low when visible incident light is used, and the absorbency of the SnO_2 electrode increases very sharply at wavelengths below 320 nm. Since the electronic absorption spectra of Fuller-films on quartz substrate show that the absorbencies in the near-ultraviolet part are several times higher than those in the visible part^{11a} the light beam of the wavelength at 355 nm was chosen as the exciting source. The action spectra prove that the photocurrent with the wavelength of 355 ± 30 nm is the main contributors causing the change of photocurrent.

**Effect of Oxygen.** Oxygen can quench the triplet state of the fullerene^{8b,15a,b} and suppress >95% of the photocurrent. These processes occur for the derivatives since the electronic structure of C_{60} is retained in its derivatives and the similar photoelectrochemical responses of C_{60} and its derivatives were observed when oxygen exists. From our experimental results, oxygen can not only suppress the magnitude of photocurrent but also redirect the flow of electrons. Consequently, all experiments were carried out under nitrogen.

Under the condition of a nitrogen atmosphere, an anodic pulse photocurrent up to 120 nA was observed when the Fuller-SnO_2 electrode was illuminated under a light intensity of 3.4 mW·cm^{-2} with a 355 ± 30 nm light beam as the exciting source (after transmitting the SnO_2 electrode). Also, the photocurrent rose gradually to an equilibrium value ranging from 19 to 38 nA in a 1.0 mol·L^{-1} KCl electrolyte solution without any bias voltage (Figure 4). The equilibrium values can increase to 65–92 nA if nitrogen is kept bubbling when the photocurrent is being determined.

### Table 1: Comparison of Interfacial Properties of C_{60} and Its Derivatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>compd</th>
<th>spreading solution (mmol·L^{-1})</th>
<th>$A_0$ (Å^2)</th>
<th>$\tau_{max}$ (mN·m^{-1})</th>
<th>model</th>
<th>treatment</th>
<th>transferability or transfer ratio</th>
<th>ref</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C_{60}</td>
<td>CS/CH_2Cl_2(0.1)</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>~73</td>
<td>vertical</td>
<td>either</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>9c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C_{60}/IA$^a$</td>
<td>benzene</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>&gt;45</td>
<td>vertical</td>
<td>hydrophobic</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>10b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C_{60}O</td>
<td>CS/CH_2Cl_2(&lt;0.1)</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>~73</td>
<td>vertical</td>
<td>hydrophobic</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>9c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C_{60}(C_3H_7N)</td>
<td>CHCl_3(8.8 × 10^{-3})</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>&gt;70</td>
<td>vertical</td>
<td>hydrophilic</td>
<td>0.90 ± 0.05</td>
<td>this work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C_{60}(CH_2N) (1)</td>
<td>CHCl_3 (7.8 × 10^{-3})</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>&gt;60</td>
<td>vertical</td>
<td>hydrophilic</td>
<td>0.90 ± 0.05</td>
<td>this work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C_{60}(C_9H_10N_2O_2) (2)</td>
<td>CHCl_3 (6.8 × 10^{-3})</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>&gt;60</td>
<td>vertical</td>
<td>hydrophilic</td>
<td>0.90 ± 0.05</td>
<td>this work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C_{60}(C_9H_11N) (3)</td>
<td>CHCl_3 (8.5 × 10^{-3})</td>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>&gt;60</td>
<td>vertical</td>
<td>hydrophilic</td>
<td>0.90 ± 0.05</td>
<td>this work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C_{60}(C_1H_2N_2) (4)</td>
<td>CHCl_3 (9.5 × 10^{-3})</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>&gt;60</td>
<td>vertical</td>
<td>hydrophilic</td>
<td>0.90 ± 0.05</td>
<td>this work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^a$ IA: icosanoic acid. $^b$ AA: the limiting molecular area. $^c$ $\tau_{max}$: the collapse pressure.

---

![Figure 3](Image3.png)

**Figure 3.** Representative actions spectrum of the Fuller-SnO_2 electrode (derivative 4). The photocurrents and the intensities of different wavelengths are all normalized.

![Figure 4](Image4.png)

**Figure 4.** Representative photocurrent for the derivative 4 obtained under N_2 atmosphere without bubbling when the Fuller-SnO_2 electrode was first illuminated.

The monolayer film shows a stable photoelectronic response for tens of times switching on and off the light, and the attenuation is not very large compared with the initial photocurrent (ca. 0.01 of decay rate) after keeping in 1.0 mol·L^{-1} KCl electrolyte for 3 days. The photoelectronic responses of uncoated SnO_2 electrodes and more than eight SnO_2 electrodes coated by arachidic acid were studied to probe their contributions to the photocurrent. A stable anodic photocurrent ranging from 12 to 20 nA under a 355 ± 30 nm light beam was obtained. These values are smaller than the photocurrent generated from the Fuller-SnO_2 electrode, revealing that C_{60} and its derivatives are the main contributors causing the change of photocurrent.

**Effect of Bias Voltage and Light Intensity.** To probe the electron-transfer process between the SnO_2 electrode and the Fuller film, the effect of bias voltage was investigated. There is a linear relationship with a slope of 0.27 nA·mV^{-1} between the observed photocurrent and the bias voltage in the range 0.10 to 0.20 V vs SCE (Figure 5). The anodic photocurrent
The photocurrent can be repeated for tens of times switching on and off the light, and the attenuation is also very small, coincident with the results obtained under no AsA and no bias voltage. It is worthy to notice that the equilibrium values of photocurrent are almost the same regardless of aeration or not.

An opposite effect is observed for the addition of the electron acceptor methylviologen diiodide (MV\(^{2+}\)) to the electrolyte. Without bias voltage, the photocurrents decrease sharply when the concentration is less than 2 mmol-L\(^{-1}\). Results indicate that MV\(^{2+}\) not only attenuates the anodic photocurrent but also redirects the flow of electrons when the concentration is up to 20 mmol-L\(^{-1}\).

From the above results, it can be concluded that positive bias voltage and electron donor as well as light intensity are beneficial factors for generating photocurrent and that the electrons flow from the electrolyte through the LB films to the electrodes.

**Photocurrent Generation Mechanism.** Photoinduced electron transfer investigations show that C\(_{60}\) and its derivatives give very high yields of the triplet state under irradiation at 355 nm as a result of very high rate of intersystem crossing from the singlet state.\(^{8,15}\) C\(_{60}\) is a powerful electron acceptor with a reduction potential near 1.14 V vs SCE. The reduction potential of compounds 1–4 should also be near 1.14 V vs SCE. The reasons are that (1) the redox potentials of compound 1–4 are ca. 0.1 V negative shifts with C\(_{60}\) (as shown in Table 2), which means that derivatives 1–4 retain the electronegative property of its parent fullerene, and (2) the triplet energies of the derivatives (1.50 eV) are very close to that of C\(_{60}\) (1.57 eV).\(^{8b,15a,b,17}\) Another important aspect of the photoinduced electron-transfer process of fullerenes is that the triplet state can be efficiently quenched by oxygen.\(^{8,15}\)

Therefore, when the Fuller-SnO\(_2\) electrode is illuminated without an electron donor, the Fuller molecules are excited to the singlet and transfer to the triplet very quickly. Then the excited Fuller molecules are reduced to anions by water and oxygen is produced because the \(E_{\text{red}}\) (the reduced potential of the triplet state) of the Fuller molecules is higher than the \(E_{\text{red}}\) of \(\text{O}_2/\text{H}_2\text{O}\) (0.66 V SCE as pH is 5.60). After that the electrons transfer from the Fuller-triplet-state anions to the holes in the valence band of SnO\(_2\). As a result, the electrons transfer from electrolyte through film to the SnO\(_2\) electrode. More details of mechanism are still being investigated.

The oxygen molecules produced in the photoelectronic response process quench the photoactive Fuller-molecules, and a suppressed photocurrent is thus obtained. This causes the equilibrium values of photocurrent without bubbling nitrogen to be lower due to the concentration of oxygen in the electrolyte rising up. As the electron donor, AsA, is added, the molecules of AsA take precedence to give electrons to the Fuller molecules because of the lower potential \(E_{\text{AsA/AsA}^+}\) (−0.21 V SCE). In this case, the equilibrium photocurrent is independent of aeration or not since there is no suppressed factor.

**The Effect of Different Substituent Groups on Photocurrent Generation.** Due to the fact that arachidic acid was used for improving the stability of C\(_{60}\) film, part of the SnO\(_2\) electrode surface is occupied by the arachidic acid molecules and some C\(_{60}\) molecules are squeezed into the hydrophobic long chains increases as the positive bias of the electrode increase, and vice versa. This shows that the electrons flow from the electrolyte through the LB film to the electrode.

A good linear relationship between the photocurrent and the light intensities (from 0.9 to 10.3 mW/cm\(^2\)) is observed. The photocurrent increases along with the light intensity increase. No saturation state was observed because the filter and the SnO\(_2\) glass absorbed more than 90% of the intensity of the excitation light and such an intensity cannot supply enough photons to make all molecules active and contribute to the photocurrent.

**Effect of Electron Donor and Acceptor.** The effect of the electron acceptor (AsA) and donor (MV\(^{2+}\)) also certifies the direction of electron transfer. As the well-known electron donor ascorbic acid was added into the electrolyte solution (1.0 mmol-L\(^{-1}\)), the photocurrent increases along with the concentration of AsA in the electrolyte solution. As the electron donor, AsA, is added, the molecules of AsA take precedence to give electrons to the Fuller molecules because of the lower potential \(E_{\text{AsA/AsA}^+}\) (−0.21 V SCE). In this case, the equilibrium photocurrent is independent of aeration or not since there is no suppressed factor.

**Effect of Different Substituent Groups on Photocurrent Generation.** Due to the fact that arachidic acid was used for improving the stability of C\(_{60}\) film, part of the SnO\(_2\) electrode surface is occupied by the arachidic acid molecules and some C\(_{60}\) molecules are squeezed into the hydrophobic long chains.

---

**TABLE 2:** \(E^{1/2} (V vs Ag/AgCl)\) by Cyclic Voltammetry\(^{b}\) of C\(_{60}\) and Its Derivatives 1–4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>compd</th>
<th>C(_{60})</th>
<th>C(<em>{60}/(\text{C}</em>{9}H_{10}N_{2}O_{2})) (3)</th>
<th>C(<em>{60}/(\text{C}</em>{9}H_{11}N)) (2)</th>
<th>C(<em>{60}/(\text{C}</em>{9}H_{12}N_{2}O_{2})) (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(E^{0/1})</td>
<td>−0.50</td>
<td>−0.61</td>
<td>−0.61</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(E^{1/2})</td>
<td>−0.88</td>
<td>−0.96</td>
<td>−0.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(E^{2/3})</td>
<td>−1.33</td>
<td>−1.51</td>
<td>−1.51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(a\) \(E^{1/2}\) is the reduced potential from state 1 to state 2. \(b\) vs Ag/AgCl in a 0.1 mol-L\(^{-1}\) dichloromethane solution of Bu\(_4\)NPF\(_6\) at −10 °C. Scan rates = 200 mV/s.
TABLE 3: Values of Photocurrent (I, nA) and the Quantum Yields of the Fuller-SnO₂ Electrodes with the Electrolytes Containing 15 mmol-L⁻¹ AsA and Saturated N₂ under 0.1 V Bias Voltage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>electrode</th>
<th>C₆₀/AA</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iₑₒ (nA)</td>
<td>270–430</td>
<td>450–600</td>
<td>550–750</td>
<td>500–700</td>
<td>1300–1900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iₑₒ (nA/mm²)</td>
<td>3.4–5.4</td>
<td>5.6–7.5</td>
<td>6.9–9.4</td>
<td>6.3–8.8</td>
<td>16.3–23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quantum yield (%)</td>
<td>1.2–1.9</td>
<td>1.9–2.6</td>
<td>2.4–3.2</td>
<td>2.2–3.0</td>
<td>5.6–8.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The quantum yield obtained from C₆₀ SnO₂ electrode. The derivatives can give higher photocurrents than the monolayer C₆₀-SnO₂ electrode. But the value still can be used as a standard when the effect of different substituent groups on generation photocurrents for compounds 1–4 is taken into comparison.

The photocurrent ranges of C₆₀/AA and its derivatives without bias voltage and electron donor are overlapped to quite an extent. This may due to the complex influence of the produced oxygen, the released rate of oxygen from the electrolyte solution, and the different adsorption abilities for oxygen on the surfaces of the Fuller-SnO₂ electrodes. Results show that positive bias voltage and electron donor as well as light intensity enhance generating stable photocurrents. Therefore, in order to test the capacities of generating photocurrents of each compound, the determining conditions were chosen as follows: a 1.0 mol-L⁻¹ KCl electrolyte solution containing 15 mmol-L⁻¹ ascorbic acid and saturated N₂ under 0.1 V bias voltage. Table 3 shows the values of photocurrent and the quantum yields of C₆₀/AA and its derivatives with these conditions. The quantum yields were calculated according to the following formula:

\[ \text{quantum yield} = \frac{\text{electron number of photocurrent}}{\text{photon number absorbed by the Fuller-SnO₂ electrode}} \]

Results in Table 3 indicate that the photocurrent and the quantum yield obtained from C₆₀–SnO₂ electrode are higher than what were reported by Hwang et al.² This difference results from the beneficial factors used here. What need to be emphasized is the electron attracting—repulsing effect of different substituent groups. The introduction of the ring of pyrrolidines can increase the values of photocurrent as compared with that of C₆₀ because the methyl on the nitrogen can act as an electron donor and cause more efficient electric charge separation than the parent fullerene. Values also show that the phenyl-substituted pyrrolidines promote photocurrent more effectively. Particularly for the compound 4, the photocurrent is more than twice that of other systems. This strongly supports that an efficient electron-donating group can efficiently enhance photocurrent, but the electron-attracting group, −NO₂ in compound 3, does not show the effect expected on generating photocurrent as compared with compound 2.

Conclusion

We have successfully transferred the monolayer films of C₆₀ and its pyrrolidines derivatives onto SnO₂ electrodes by the LB technique; their photoelectrochemistry behavior were observed. The photocurrents indicate that electrons flow from the electrolyte through the LB film to SnO₂, therefore, a chemical energy conversion occurs together with the photoelectronic response. The derivatives can give higher photocurrents than C₆₀ itself, especially when efficient electron-donating groups exist. More investigation is in progress on the electron-transfer process and photocurrent generation of other Fuller-systems.

Acknowledgment. Financial support from the Climbing Program (a National Fundamental Research Key Project of China) and the National Natural Science Foundation of China is greatly acknowledged.

References and Notes


