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REASSIGNMENT OF RELATIVE STEREOCHEMISTRY AT C-7 AND C-8 IN ARYLCOUMARAN NEOLIGNANS

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Key Word Index—arylcoumaran neolignans; 8-5'-neolignans; dilignols; relative configurations; *trans-cis* stereochemistry; ¹H NMR spectra; chemical shifts; coupling constants.

Abstract—¹H NMR spectral characteristics of synthetic *trans* and *cis* arylcoumarans and their acetates which are related to 8-5' neolignans are given. This information is used to reassign structures to neolignans reported in nine papers, from the *cis* to the *trans* 7-aryl-8-hydroxymethyl configurations, and to neolignans in six papers in which no assignments were made. Thus far, there is no evidence for the occurrence of 8-5' neolignans with a *cis* configuration in nature. © 1997 Elsevier Science Ltd

INTRODUCTION

Many arylcoumaran neolignans of type 1 which are linked through carbon atoms 8 and 5' of the arylpropane units have been described [1]. The relative stereochemistry of the C-7 aryl and C-8 hydroxymethyl substituents has been variously proposed to be trans and cis, mainly on the basis of 'H NMR spectroscopy, while in other cases, the configuration has not been specified. In particular, the magnitude of the ¹H NMR coupling constant $J_{7,8}$ has often been used to assign configuration at C-7 and C-8, following from the early work of Ludwig et al. in which a cis configuration for the diacetate of dehydrodiconiferyl alcohol was erroneously proposed [2]. In spite of the acknowledged uncertainty in such practice for arylcoumaran neolignans [3] and 2,3-disubstituted dihydrobenzofurans in general [4], assignments continue to be made on that basis [5]. However, some recent studies have provided more convincing evidence for the trans disposition of C-7 and C-8 substituents in neolignans of type 1 through nuclear Overhauser effect NMR spectroscopic observations [6, 7]. This led Fukuyama et al. [6] to assign the trans configuration to arylcoumaran neolignans for which stereochemistry was not, or only tentatively, given [8-13].

Several neolignan and dilignol analogues of type 1 have been synthesized by oxidative coupling of phenolic precursors [14, 15] or by other means [16, 17]. The configuration at C-7 and C-8 in the compounds was determined by conversion to structures of known

$$R_{2}O \xrightarrow{3} 2 O \xrightarrow{3} 2 CH_{3}O CH_{3$$

	N1	rt ₂	N3
a	Ac	Ac	CH 2-CH2-CH2OAc
b	Ac	glucosyl-(OAc)4	CH ₂ -CH ₂ -CH ₂ OAc
c	Ac	rhamnosyl-(OAc) ₃	CH ₂ -CH ₂ -CH ₂ OAc
d	ρ -OAc-cinnamoy	Ac Ac	CH ₂ -CH ₂ -CH ₂ OAc
•	Ac	Ac	(E) -CH=CH-CHO
f	Ac	CH₃	(E) -CH=CH-CHO

configuration [15, 18-21] and was confirmed for compound **2d** by X-ray crystallography [22]. The ¹H NMR spectra of several *trans* and *cis* arylcoumarans (**2** and **3**) are given in the present report, and from these data a number of neolignans of type **1** for which *cis* structures were proposed are reassigned as *trans* neolignans [23-31], and the *trans* configuration is assigned

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to some neolignans for which no stereochemistry was originally given [32–37].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The cis form of the arylcoumaran dihydrodehydrodiisoeugenol methyl ether (3a) is the only synthetic cis 8-5' neolignan to have been reported, and it was prepared by catalytic hydrogenation of the corresponding arylcoumarone 4a [38]. However, no cis neolignans of type 1, with an oxygenated function on C-9, have been synthesised previously. This has now been accomplished for the cis arylcoumaran 3b by catalytic hydrogenation of the arylcoumarone 4b. The ¹H NMR spectra of compound **3b** and the *trans* form 2b, their acetates (2c and 3c) and the related acetates 2e and 2f, are given in Table 1. These spectral data are further compared with those of reported neolignans of type 1 (Table 1), and this has allowed unequivocal configurational assignment to the compounds.

Comparison of the ¹H NMR spectra of the *trans* and *cis* arylcoumarans 2a and 3a revealed that for the *trans* isomer the C-9 methyl group doublet appeared at lower field while the H-7 and H-8 signals were at higher field than those of the *cis* isomer (Table 1). This can be explained in terms of restricted rotation about the C-7-aryl bond in the *cis* isomer, which places the C-9 methyl group protons in the shielding zone of the aromatic ring, and the H-7 proton in the deshielding zone. The coupling constant $J_{7,8}$ was larger for the *trans* than for the *cis* isomer (9.1 vs 8.2 Hz, respectively). Similar trends are noted in the ¹H NMR spectra of the *trans* and *cis* isomers 2b and 3b and their acetates 2c and 3c, although in these cases, the *trans*

isomers had smaller coupling constants $J_{7.8}$ than did the *cis* isomers (7.3 vs 8.2–8.4 Hz). Each C-9 proton occurred as a doublet of doublets and exhibited different chemical shifts, although those signals for the *cis* acetate 3c occurred with the H-8 signal as a multiplet overlapped by methoxyl signals. Comparison of the ¹H NMR spectrum of the *trans* acetate 2c with that of the *trans* triacetate 2f reveals that the H-7, H-8, H-9 and C-9 acetate signals have similar characteristics (Table 1), which shows that the R₃ substituent in 2f does not affect those signals. When the 3,4-dimethoxyphenyl substituent in 2c is replaced by a 3-methoxy-4-acetoxyphenyl substituent (2e), the H-7 NMR signal was shifted downfield from 5.47 to 5.52 ppm, in line with previous observations [39].

A neolignan glucoside of type 1 isolated from *Pteris* vittata was assigned the cis configuration by the authors [31]. The acetylated aglycone has ¹H NMR spectral characteristics of the trans compound 2f rather than the cis isomer 3f (Table 1). The signals assigned to the two C-9 protons were inadequately described as a quartet centred at 4.31 ppm by Satake et al. [31]. In this and several following cases, the spectrometer operating at 60 MHz was not able to resolve the signals completely. A further neolignan of type 1 from the sapwood of Larix leptolepis for which no stereochemistry was proposed [34] had ¹H NMR signals for its acetate and aglycone acetate, which were similar to those of compound 2f. These observations require the compounds to be reassigned the trans configuration.

A number of neolignan glycosides of type 1 have been isolated from the needles of Picea abies [30] and Pinus massoniana [11], and the inner bark of Betula pendula [24] and Pinus sylvestris [23], and the cis configuration 3f was assigned to the acetylated aglycone of the compounds. However, the ¹H NMR spectral data given for the acetylated aglycone [30], with the exception of the coupling constants $J_{8,9}$, are identical with those of 2f (Table 1), which requires the compounds to be reassigned the trans configuration. The coupling constants $J_{8,9}$ given for individual H-9 protons in the ¹H NMR spectrum of the acetylated aglycone [30] were transposed, probably in error, in comparison with those given in the earlier [16] and present reports for compounds 2e and 2f, respectively. In addition, the acetylated glucoside previously given in cis configuration 3g [30] has an H-7 NMR signal identical with that of the acetylated aglycone 2f, which allows the trans configuration 2g to be given to the compound. Likewise, the hexacetate of the neolignan glucoside isolated from the inner bark of Larix leptolepis [35], shown above to have the trans configuration, had an identical H-7 NMR signal (Table 1).

Kouno *et al.* [32] described a neolignan of type 1 from the bark of *Illicium difengpi*, to which no stereochemistry was assigned. The *trans* stereochemistry (2h) is given to the acetylated compounds on the basis of the similarity of its ¹H NMR signals to those of compound 2f (Table 1).

Table 1. 'H NMR chemical shifts of arylcoumaran neolignans and their acetates (in CDCl₃)

Reference	this work	this work	this work		this work	واستحدد متطه	UIIS WOLK	this work	16		this work	3.1	34		30	ć	30	33	3.2	76 26	97	87	9	67 50	\ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \	<u> </u>	ţ,	35	CC	36	ų	35	S :	17		37	33 and 34	בין מוומ יין
Н-7	(10 / 1 / 01)	5.12(d, J = 9.1) 5.78 (d. $J = 8.2$)	5.70 (4, 5 - 5.5)	(d, J = 7.3)	5.88	(d, J = 8.4)	5.47	(a, J = 1.3) 5.87 (d. $I = 8.2$)	5.57	(d, J = 6.8)	5.51	(d, J = 0.7)	5.46(d, J = I) 5.54	(d, J = 6.0)	5.51	(d, J = 7.2)	5.47 (d, J = 7.2)	5.46 (d, J = 6.0)	5.48 (d, J = 6.6)	5.42 (d, J = 6.5)	5.58(d, J = 6.5)	5.49	(a, J = 7.5)	5.48 (d, J = I)	5.54 (a, J = 0)	5.64(d, J = I)	5.54	(d, J = 6.0)	5.36	not reported		5.54(d, J = 6.0)	5.64 (d, J = 6.0)	5.63	(d, J = 5.9)	5.64 (d, J = 5.9)	5.63 (a, J = 0.0)	5.37 (a, 3 - 1.0)
H-8		3.48 (dq)	3.56 (aq) 3.66 (m)	(41)	3.71 (m)		3.82(m)	(***) 70 (3.84 (m) 3.70 (m)	3.17 (111)	3.77 (m)		3.7-3.9 (m)	3.70 (m)	not reported		not reported	3.6-3.9~(m)	not reported	3.60 (br ddd)	3.62 (br ddd)	3.79	(ddd, J = 8, 7.5, 6)	3.74 (m)	4.30 (td, J = 6, 6)	3.50-4.00(m)	3.72 (m)	,	3.76 (m)	3.70 m)		4.0-4.6 (m)	3.6-4.2 (m)	3.72–3.86	(<i>w</i>)	3.74-3.83 (m)	3.6 + 0.0 (m)	3.72 (m)
ч6-Н		= 6.6)	, 6.9)	(60.105)	3.55	(dd, J = 7.3, 11.5)	4.44	(dd, J = 5.7, 11.0)	3.78-3.96 (m)	0.001 = 55 11.1	4.45	(dd, J = 5.3, 11.2)	J = J	(<i>m</i>)	4 47	(dd, J = 7.1, 10.9)	not reported		56 (m)	(m)	0 (m)	4.45	(dd, J = 6.11)	.4 (m)	(1, J = 6)	.00 (m)	4.36 (m)		4.38 (m)	7.78	(q, J = 6, 10)		3.6-4.2 (m)	4.58	(dd, J = 5.1, 11.0)	4.33-4.48 (m)	4.4 (m)	4.40 (m)
, n		1.37(d, J = 6.6)	0.82 (d, 6.9)	3.92	(aa, J = 4.0, 10.2) 3.45	(dd, J = 5.7, 11.5)	4.33	(dd, J = 7.4, 11.0)	3.78-3.96 (m)	4.32	(aa, J = 7.9, 11.1) 4.29	(dd, J = 7.8, 11.2)	4.31(q, J = 7)	4.41 (m)	4.21	(dd I = 56.10.9)	not reported	4.0-4.3 (m)	4.27.4.56 (m)	3.85-4.0 (m)	3.85-4.0 (m)	4.32	(dd, J = 8, 11)	4.14-4.4 (m)	4.25 (dd, J = 6)	3.50-4.00 (m)	4.36		4.38		(a, J = 8, 10)		3.64	4.43	Ξ	4.33-4	4.4	4.40
C-9	OCOCH3	1	I	ļ			2.03 (s)		1.89 (s)	2.04 (s)	2.05 or 2.06 (s)	(5) 20:2 10 (0:2	2.04 (s)	2.05 or 2.07 (s)	7 10 0	2.05 or 2.07 (s)	potaceer to	not reported	200	70.7	i	2.04(s)	(2) . 211	not reported	2.00 (s)		2.05 or 2.07 (s)	(5) (5:7 10 (7:7	2.00 or 2.08 (s)		2.05 or 2.08 (s)	not reported	not reported	nor report		2.10 (s)	2.10 (s)	2.06 (s)
Previous	designation	ı	1	ļ		l			!	3		1	34	unassigned		3€	•	96	naassigned	unassigned	ন :	रा ह	40	7	; .	3m	500 Page 100	unassigned	unassigned	ì	unassigned		unassigned	unassigned	5 6	9	nassianed	unassigned
	Compound	29	3a 3a	2b		ફ્ટ	į	37	ځ	3 6	į	77	36	77		2f		2g	2g	2 p	23	নে :	7K	7	7 ,	u,	uz.	52	ž		Sa	í	S	%	3 2		ន	ર્સ સ

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The *cis* configuration was given to two neolignans 3i and 3j isolated from the roots of *Vladimiria souliei* [26]. However, as the ¹H NMR spectra of the neolignans had signals corresponding to the *trans* compound 2b, rather than the *cis* compound 3b (Table 1), they are reassigned to the former configuration 2i and 2i.

The roots of Lasiolaena morii were found to contain a neolignan of type 1 to which the cis configuration 3k was given [28]. However, the 'H NMR spectrum of the compound had signals corresponding to the trans compound 2f (Table 1), which shows that the trans configuration should be assigned to the compound. A related compound, isolated from Euphrasia rostkoviana, was also reported to have a cis configuration [29]. However, comparison of the 'H NMR signals of its acetate 3l with those of compound 2f (Table 1) showed that once more, the compound has the trans configuration 2l.

The stem bark of *Xylopia buxifolia* yielded a type 1 neolignan, for which a *cis* structure was proposed [25]. The ¹H NMR spectrum of its acetate 3m had signals more consistent with those of the *trans* compound 2f than those of the *cis* structure 3c (Table 1). The chemical shift given for the C-8 proton, 4.30 ppm, is about 0.5 δ downfield from that of analogous structures, possibly due to an error in assigning different chemical shifts to the C-9 protons. The structure should be reassigned as the *trans* compound 2m.

A neolignan of type I was isolated by Takehara and Sasaya from the sapwood of *Larix leptolepis*, although no configurational assignment was made [34]. From comparison of the ¹H NMR signals of the acetylated compound with those of compound 2f (Table 1), the trans configuration 5a is given to the compound. On the same basis, compound 5a is assigned to the acetylated aglycone of two neolignans from the inner bark of *Larix leptolepis* [35]. The two glycosides thus have the trans configuration and are represented by structures 5b and 5c, respectively. Their ¹H NMR spectra have similar characteristics to those of the aglycone (Table 1). The aglycone (cedrusin) has also been described as a component of the wood of Cedrus deodara [36], and although 'H NMR data for the H-7 signal of the tetracetate was not recorded, the similarity of the signals to those of 5a require the compound to have the *trans* configuration (Table 1).

Ozawa et al. isolated two neolignans of type 1 from the wood of Abies sachalinensis, to which they assigned the cis configuration [27]. The acetylated neolignans 6d and 6e had 'H NMR signals similar to those of the trans compound 2f and different from those of the cis compound 3c (Table 1). Furthermore, the H-7 proton of 6e had a chemical shift (5.64 ppm) identical with that of the synthetic analogous compound 2n with a trans configuration. Based on these observations, the trans configuration 5d and 5e should be reassigned to the acetylated compounds. Following similar reasoning, the acetylated neolignan isolated from Larix leptolepis heartwood, for which no con-

figuration was assigned [37], should be given the *trans* configuration **5e**, and the acetylated neolignan from the sapwood of *Larix leptolepis* [33, 34] should also be given the *trans* configuration (**5f**) (Table 1).

The biogenesis of neolignans is considered to proceed by oxidative coupling of p-hydroxyphenylpropane monomers through the intermediacy of free radical intermediates [40]. For 8-5' neolignans, radical coupling gives an intermediate quinonemethide, to which an adjacent phenol adds intramolecularly to form the arylcoumaran structure. The oxidative coupling of both (E)- and (Z)-isoeugenol has given rise, in both cases, to an arylcoumaran with a trans arrangement of aryl and methyl substituents about the coumaran ring. This suggests that the ring closure will always proceed to give trans arylcoumarans, because rotation about the C-7-C-8 bond to give the more stable trans configuration is faster than the cyclisation reaction [38, 41]. There is thus no evidence for the occurrence of neolignans of type 1 with the cis configuration in nature.

EXPERIMENTAL

General. ¹H NMR spectra were measured at 60 MHz (compounds 2a and 3a), 270 MHz (compound 2f) and 400 MHz (compounds 2b, 3b, 2c and 3c). The spectra were obtained with deuteriochloroform solns of the compounds, and chemical shifts are given in ppm from tetramethylsilane (δ 0.00), added as an int. standard. trans-Dihydrodehydrodiisoeugenol methyl ether was prepd from isoeugenol, and the arylcoumarone 4a was prepd according to ref. [38, 41]. The trans arylcoumaran 2d was prepd by the methods reported in ref. [16]. trans-Dihydrodehydrodiconiferyl alcohol triacetate (2f) was prepd from (E)-coniferyl alcohol according to ref. [15].

cis-Dihydrodehydrodiisoeugenol methyl ether (3a). A soln of the phenylcoumarone 4a (100 mg) in EtOH (25 mL) containing 5% Pd-C (25 mg) was hydrogenated at 20° for 7 days. The catalyst was removed by filtration, and the solvent was removed in vacuo to give an oil, which was adsorbed on a column of silica gel. Elution with petrol-dichloromethane 4:1 gave successively starting material (10 mg) and compound 3a as an oil (70 mg). 1 H NMR δ 0.82 (3H, d, d = 6.9 Hz, H-9), 0.95 (3H, d = 6.5 Hz, H-9'), 1.65 (2H, d = 8.2, 6.9 Hz, H-8), 3.85 (3H, d = 8.2, 6.9 Hz, H-8), 3.85 (3H, d = 8.2, GCH₃), 3.90 (3H, d = 8.2, GCH₃), 5.78 (1H, d = 8.2, H-7), 6.64 (2H, d = 8.2, GCH₃) and 6.89 (3H, d = 8.2, GCH₃), 8.40 (3H, d = 8.2, GCH₃), 8.74 (2H, d = 8.2, GCH₃), 8.75 (3H, d = 8.2, GCH₃), 8.90 (3H, d = 8.2, GCH₃)

2-(3,4-Dimethoxyphenyl)-3-formyl-7-methoxybenzofuran (4b). 1-(3,4-Dimethoxyphenyl)-3-[2-(tetra-hydropyran-2-yl)-3-methoxyphenyl]-2,3-epoxy-1-propanone (mixt. of two diasterometric forms) was prepd from 3',4'-dimethoxyacetophenone and ovanillin using procedures applied to the synthesis of related compounds [16, 42]. Freshly distilled boron trifluoride diethyl etherate (22.6 g) was added to a soln of the epoxide (8.28 g) in anhydrous Et₂O (500

mL) at 20°. After stirring for 25 min, the soln was washed \times 3 with H₂O (200, 2 \times 50 mL), and most of the Et₂O was removed by distillation. The residual oil was dissolved in a mixt. of 0.5 M HCl (30 mL) and THF (60 mL), and the mixt. was stirred for 22 hr at 20°. The resulting crystals were filtered and washed with Me₂CO (4 \times 5 mL) to give product (2.6 g). Recrystallisation from Me₂CO gave 2-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-3-formyl-7-methoxybenzofuran (4b), m.p. 185–6°. ¹H NMR. δ 3.98 (3H, s, OCH₃), 4.00 (3H, s, OCH₃), 4.04 (3H, s OCH₃), 6.91 (1H, dd, J = 0.8, 8.0 Hz, Ar-H), 7.02 (1H, d, J = 8.4, Ar-H), 7.30 (1H, t, J = 8.0, Ar-H), 7.40 (1H, t, t = 2.0, Ar-H), 7.46 (1H, t), t = 2.0, 8.4, Ar-H), 7.83 (1H, t), t = 0.8, 8.0, Ar-H), 10.32 (1H, s, CHO).

trans-2-(3,4-Dimethoxyphenyl-3-hydroxymethyl-7-methoxy-2,3-dihydrobenzofuran (**2b**). The trans arylcoumaran **2d** after methylation with CH₂N₂ in Et₂O gave the trans arylcoumaran **2b** as an oil (cf [16, 43]). ¹H NMR δ 3.66 (1H, m, H-3), 3.86 (3H, s, OCH₃), 3.87 (3H, s, OCH₃), 3.90 (3H, s, OCH₃), 3.92 (1H, dd, J = 4.6, 10.9 Hz, CH_{2a}OH), 4.00 (1H, dd, J = 6.0, 10.9 Hz, CH_{2b}OH), 5.60 (1H, d, J = 7.3 Hz, H-2), 6.8–7.0 (6H, m, Ar-H).

cis-2-(3,4-Dimethoxyphenyl-3-hydroxymethyl-7methoxy-2,3-dihydrobenzofuran (3b). A soln of the benzofuran 4b (1.20 g) in dioxane (80 mL) containing 10% Pd-C (600 mg) was hydrogenated for 48 hr at 20° and 275 kPa H₂ pressure. After filtration of the catalyst and evapn of the solvent in vacuo, the resulting solid was recrystallised from EtOAc to give 2-(3,4diimethoxyphenyl)-7-methoxy-3-methylbenzofuran (410 mg) m.p. 136–7° (lit. [44] m.p. 85–6°). ¹H NMR δ 2.43 (3H, s, CH₃), 3.93 (3H, s, OCH₃), 3.97 (3H, s, OCH₃), 4.03 (3H, s, OCH₃), 6.7-7.4 (6H, m, Ar-H). The mother liquor was adsorbed on a column of silica gel, and successive elution of the column with EtOAcdichloromethane 1:20, 1:15 and 1:10 gve further amounts of the above benzofuran contaminated with cis-2-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl)-7-methoxy-3-methyl-2,3dihydrobenzofuran. H NMR δ 0.84 (3H, d, J =7.3 Hz, H-9), 3.63 (1H, m, H-8), 3.87 (3H, s, OCH₃), 3.89 (3H, s, OCH₃), 3.92 (3H, s, OCH₃), 5.80 (1H, d, J = 8.6 Hz, H-7), 6.78-6.91 (6H, m, Ar-H), 2-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl-3-hydroxymethyl-7-methoxybenzofuran (70 mg) and cis-2-(3,4-dimethoxyphenyl-3-hydroxymethyl-7-methoxy-2,3-dihydrobenzofuran (3b) (210 mg) as an oil ¹H NMR δ 3.44 (1H, dd, $J = 5.7, 11.5 \text{ Hz}, \text{CH}_{2a}\text{OH}), 3.53 (1\text{H}, dd, J = 7.1, 11.5)$ Hz, $CH_{2b}OH$), 3.71 (1H, m, H-3), 3.886 (3H, s, OCH_3), 3.894 (3H, s, OCH₃), 3.92 (3H, s, OCH₃), 5.88 (1H, d, $J = 8.4 \text{ Hz}, \text{ H-2}, 6.8-7.1 (6\text{H}, m, \text{Ar-H})^{13}\text{C NMR }\delta$ 49.5 (C-3), 55.9 (OCH₃), 56.0 (OCH₃), 56.1 (OCH₃), 63.0 (CH₂OH), 86.9 (C-2), 109–150 (109.6, 111.2, 112.3, 117.3, 118.7, 121.6, 129.1, 129.3, 144.6, 148.0, 148.9, 149.1) (aromatic C).

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