REVISED STRUCTURE AND SYNTHESIS OF PIPEROLEIN ACIDS, GUINEENSINE AND WISANINE FROM PIPER GUINEENSE

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Abstract—The structures of piperolein acids guineensine and wisanine have been confirmed by synthesis. UV irradiation of trans piperolein B acid ester gave the *cis*-isomer reported in the literature as the *trans*-isomer. The *trans*-2, *trans*-4 ethylenic bonds in guineensine and wisanine were introduced by reacting piperolein B aldehyde and 2-methoxy piperonal with the appropriate Wittig or Reformatsky reagent.

Recently we reported¹ the isolation and constitution of guineensine, 1 from the fruits of Piper guineense. We required piperolein B acid, 2 as intermediate in our scheme for the synthesis of guineensine. Piperolein B acid had earlier been synthesised² using a Wittig reaction. Having in mind the reported^{3,4} condition of the Wittig reaction, viz the use of reactive ylides, polar solvents with special reference to DMF and the presence of nucleophiles such as halide ions, which favour the formation of the cis-olefin bond over the *trans*-, we expected the reported² piperolein B acid should be the cis-isomer rather than the trans-isomer as assumed in that synthesis. In the synthesis of piperolein B acid to confirm the constitution of the non-crystalline amide, piperolein B, 3 isolated from the fruits of Piper nigrum ethyl suberate hemialdehyde was reacted with piperonyl-triphenylphosphonium bromide using sodium ethoxide as base in DMF. Synthetic piperolein B acid was reported to have m.p. 50-52° but no melting point was reported for the acid derived from the natural product.

It was decided to use an alternative route for the synthesis of the intermediate piperolein B acid required for that of guineensine. Part of this paper reports on the structure of piperolein B acid and that of guineensine.

Also recently reported was the isolation and structure of wisanine, 4 from the stem⁵ and root⁶ of *Piper* guineense. The synthesis of wisanine has been reported^{7,8} by two, independent groups. We have however observed that the two groups recorded different physical data for the intermediate ester, **5**. To obtain **5** Crombie *et al.*⁷ reacted 2-methoxy piperonal with 3-ethoxy carbonyl-but-2-enyltriphenylphosphorane and reported m.p. 64–66°. On the other hand Vig *et al.*⁸ reacted the same aldehyde with the modified Wittig reagent, ethyl-y-diethyl-phosphonocrotonate, and recorded the ester **5** as a viscous oil boiling at 155–156°/4–5 mm Hg. In view of the above conflicting results we also wish to record our work on the synthesis of wisanine.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Acylation of methylene-1, Guineensine. 2-dioxybenzene^{9,10} with azelayl chloride monomethyl ester in symmetrical tetrachloroethane gave methyl ω -piperonyloctanoate, 6, m.p. 52–53°. Sodium borohydride reduction of 6 gave the alcohol, 7 which was dehydrated to yield the ester 8. The ester was over 95% pure on GLC. The spectral properties of the ester confirmed the trans configuration of the ethylenic bond as established for natural piperolein B², pipataline¹¹ and guineensine.¹ The high trans stereospecificity of the dehydration step is easily explained on the basis of the accepted carbonium ion intermediate¹² in such reactions even though it was possible for any *cis*-isomer resulting from the reaction to be isomerised by toluene-p-sulphonic acid to the trans-isomer. On hydrolysis with methanolic KOH, the ester, 8 gave the corresponding acid 2 m.p. 80-81° (lit² for piperolein B acid 50-52°) showing that the sample of 2 was different stereochemically from the literature sample. To obtain the cis-isomer of the ester 8, the ester in benzene was UV irradiated. The photolysis product was shown by GLC to be over 95% homogeneous as one substance but its retention time was lower that that of the ester 8. The photoproduct had a very weak IR absorption at 960 cm^{-1} .



Hydrolysis of the photo-product by methanolic KOH gave crystals, m.p. 49-52° (cyclohexane) in good agreement with the data previously published² for piperolein B acid which further supported the cis ethylenic bond stereochemistry of the acid 9. There are hyperchromic and bathochromic shifts in λ_{max} on going from the spectrum of 9 to that of 2 and its ester.¹³ Lithium aluminium hydride reduction of piperolein B acid ester 8 gave the primary alcohol, 10 m.p. 53-54°. Modified Collins oxidation¹⁴ of 10 gave piperolein B aldehyde, 11 as a highly dense colourless oil. Introduction of the trans-2, trans-4 ethylenic bonds into the trienoate, 12, was achieved by condensing 11 with 3-carbomethoxy-propen-2-ylidene-1-triphenylphosphorane in CH_2Cl_2 (16%). Hydrolysis of 12 with methanolic KOH gave the trienoic acid 13 which was converted to the amide 1 by treatment with SOCl₂ in the cold followed by excess isobutylamine in dry C6H6. Pure 1, m.p. 117-119° (lit¹ 115°) was obtained by preparative TLC over Silica/gel. Mixed m.p. (116-118°) with an authentic sample showed no depression and co-TLC gave a single spot. Also all spectra agreed with those reported for the natural amide except the molar extinction coefficients.

Thus the earlier reported² piperolein B acid should be the *cis* (Z) and not the *trans* (E) isomer as assumed in that report. The present results also provided further support for the conclusions^{3,4} that in the Wittig reaction, the use of reactive ylides, polar solvents (particularly DMF) and the presence of nucleophiles (for example halide ions) enhance the formation of the *cis* (Z-) isomer over the *trans*-



isomer. Also by this synthesis the proposed structure for guineensine, 1 has been confirmed. Recently an amide was isolated from the fruits of *Piper guineense* by Dwuma Badu *er al.*¹⁶ and was assigned structure 14. Mixed m.p. and co-TLC with an authentic sample from the group as well as direct comparison of the spectra confirmed that they isolated guineensine, 1 and not sylvatine,¹⁷ 14. Furthermore, from the fact that tetrahydropiperic acid was the product of acid hydrolysis of hexahydrosylvatine, and since the IR spectrum and MS of 14 lacked the 960 cm⁻¹ (styryl) band and m/e 161 ion, respectively, it is obvious that 14 as reported¹⁷ does not contain the system 2 in it structure.^{1,2} However, the position of the isolate ethylenic bond appears biogenetically unusual and i is probably the first of its kind ever reported.



Wisanine. To obtain wisanine, 4 the intermediat dienoate, 5 was prepared via two alternate pathway: 2-Methoxy-piperonal was first subjected to Re formatsky reaction with ethyl- γ -bromocrotonate i THF to give 5 (60%) as bright yellow needles, m.I



88–90°. Considering the much lower m.p. recorde for 5 by previous workers (lit⁷ m.p. 64-66°) w decided to prepare 5 in accordance with literatur procedure. Consequently, 2'-methoxypiperonal wa 3-ethoxycarbonylbut-2-enyltr condensed with phenylphosphorane in benzene. This gave 5 in much lower yield (40%), m.p. 88-90°. Mixed m.1 with the product of Reformatsky reaction showed n depression and co-TLC gave a single spot. Also a spectra for the two samples were identical in a respects. To obtain 4 the ester, 5 was hydrolysed t the acid 15 with methanolic KOH, m.p. 218-220 Treatment of 15 with oxalylchloride followed t piperidine in dry benzene gave 4 as pale yello prisms, m.p. 178-180° (lit⁵ 176-178°); m.m.j 178-180°.

In their report Vig *et al.*⁸ quoted the weak I absorption band at 3050 cm^{-1} to support the pre ence of a diene system in 5. We consider the verstrong absorptions at 1700 and 1010 cm^{-1} more than the system of the strong absorption of the system of



characteristic of a conjugated *trans*, *trans*,-diene ca bonyl system. It is therefore apparent that previo workers failed to obtain an isomerically pure samp of the dienoate, 5 arising from the difficulty preparing either 2-methoxypiperonal or the ylic which is known to contain at least 25% cis (Z)-isom in CDCl₃ solution at room temperature.¹⁹ Thus tl very high yield of over 75% recorded for 5 by son workers⁸ is rather unexpected.

Table 1. M.ps of trans-2,4-pentadienoates

Pentadienoates	Melting points	
	Methyl	Ethyl
5-Phenyl-2,4-		
pentadienoate	_	39-40°19
5-(3:4-Methy-	146° ²⁰	
lenedioxyphenyl)-	145-146°21	78° ²⁰
2,4-pentadienoate		
5-(2-Methoxy-3:4-	150-2°21	88-90°22
methylene disxy-		64-66°7
phenyl)-2,4-		
pentadienoate		oil ⁸

EXPERIMENTAL

M.ps were determined on a Kofler hot-stage apparatus and were uncorrected. IR and UV spectra were taken with Perkin-Elmer Ή 137 instruments. NMR spectra (CDCl₃ + TMS solns) were taken with Varian T60A instrument. Mass spectra except where otherwise stated were obtained with a Perkin-Elmer Hitachi RMU 6E spectrometer. Gas chromatograms were obtained using a Packard Becker 417 instrument with stationary phase 3% SP 2100, N₂ as carrier gas, isothermal column temperature of 230° and flame ionisation detector. Silica gel refers to the appropriate Merck Silica gel for column or thin layer chromatography. The irradiation during photolysis was carried out using a 125W GEC, MBW/U mercury arc lamp. Methylene-1,2-dioxybenzene was obtained using the procedure of Shorygin et al.9 y-Bromocrotonates were prepared according to ref. 23. 3-Methoxy-, and 3-ethoxy carbonylbut-2-envltriphenylphosphoranes were prepared according to 24, m.ps 160-165° and 157-160°, respectively. ref 3.4-Methylenedioxyanisole was obtained by methylation of sesamol (from Aldrich Chemical Co. Ltd.,).

Azelayl chloride monomethyl ester. Azelaic acid monomethyl ester was treated in the usual manner at room temperature over-night with thionyl chloride to give the required chloride (85% yield, b.p. 121-122°, 1 mm).

Methyl- ω -piperonoyl octanoate, **6.** Azelayl chloride monomethyl ester (23g, 0.059 mole) and methylene-1, 2-dioxybenzene (8.0g, 0.66 mole) in 1, 1, 2, 2-tetra-chloroethane (30 cm^3) in a 3-necked 250 cm^3 round bottomed flask carrying a reflux condenser and a CaCl, drying tube was cooled (ice bath) and stirred mechanically. Freshly distilled stannic chloride (17 cm³) was added in small portions over $\frac{1}{2}h$. On completion of the addition the ice bath was removed and the stirring was continued for a further 15 h at room temp. The reaction mixture was decomposed with a mixture of ice and HCl (1:1) and extracted with ether. The ether extract was washed with saturated NaHCO₃ and then H₂O (an emulsion may form). The ether was distilled off and the residue steam-distilled. The non-steam volatile aq residue was extracted with ether. The ether extract was washed with NaHCO₃ solution, water and dried with Na₂SO₄. Evaporation of ether gave the crude ketoester. Column chromatography over silica gel with ether/hexane gave the product (8.5 g, 47%) as colourless crystals (m.p. 52–53°, ether/hexane). v_{max} (Nujol) 1740 (ester C=O), 1675 (ketone C=O) and 925 cm⁻¹ (O-CH₂-O); δ6.85-7.73 (3H, m, aromatic), 6.03 (2H, s, O-CH₂-O), 3.66 $(3H, s, -OCH_3)$, 2.83 $(2H, t, J = 6Hz, -CH_2CO-)$ 2.33 $(2H, t, J = 6Hz, -CH_2CO-)$ (t, J = 6Hz, -CH₂CO₂R) and 1.53 10H, s, -(CH₂)₅-; λ_{max} ; (methanol) 210 (ϵ 4,500), 22 δ (16,400), 273 (2,100) and 308 nm (3,300); m/e 306 (M⁺) 275, 262, 177, 164 and 149. Found: C, 66.91; H, 7.45; C₁₇H₂₂O₅ requires: C, 66.65; H, 7.24%.

Trans-Piperolein B ester, 8 and acid 2. Methyl ω -piperonoyl-octanoate (3.42g) was dissolved in CaH₂-dried methanol (100 cm³) and NaBH₄ (1.1 g partially decomposed sample) was added and stirred magnetically for $\frac{1}{4}$ h at room temp. The methanolic solution was diluted with water and extracted with ether. The ether extract was washed liberally with water, dried with MgSO₄ and ether removed. The yield of methyl 9-hydroxy-9-(3, 4-methylene dioxyphenyl)-non-anoate was quantitative (3.7g). v_{max} (film), 3600 (OH), 1950 (ester C=O), and 925 cm⁻¹ (O-CH₂-O). This ester (3.52 g, 01011M) dissolved in sodium dried benzene (1.25 litres) and toluene-p-sulphonic acid (0.7 g) were heated at reflux for 2 h with the azeotropic removal of water using a Dean and Stark apparatus.

The reaction mixture was allowed to cool, washed with sat NaHCO₃ water and dried (MgSO₄). Evaporation of benzene under reduced pressure, followed by column chromatography of the crude product over silica gel with 10% ether/hexane gave 2.7 g (82%) of the *trans* ester **8** as a dense oil. The gas chromatogram (3% SP 2100, 5 ft $\times \frac{1}{4}$ in. column, atten \times 32, isothermal 230°) exhibited a major peak (95% of volatile products). It had v_{max} (film): 1745 (ester C=O), 960 (styryl C=C), and 925 cm⁻¹ (O-CH₂-O); δ 6.90-6.70 (3H, m, aromatic), 6.50-5.90 (2H, m, vinyl protons), 5.90 (2H, s, O-CH₂-O), 3.70 (3H, s, -OCH₃), 2.20 (4H, m, CH₂C=C, CH₂C=O) and 1.50 (8H, s, -(CH₂)₄-; λ_{max} (methanol) 214 (c24,500), 260 (15,100), 267 (14,700) and 304 nm (5,600); *m/e* 290 (M⁺) 161, 148, 135, 131, 115 and 103; Found: C, 70.03; H, 7.32; C₁₇H₂₂O₄ requires: C, 70.32; H, 7.64%.

Hydrolysis of piperlein B methyl ester with 5% methanolic KOH gave 51% yield of *trans* piperolein B acid 2 recrystallised from cyclohexane m.p. $80-81^{\circ}$. v_{max} (Nujol), 1695 cm⁻¹ (carboxylic C=O); λ_{max} (methanol) 222 (ϵ 20,700), 262 (18,200) and 308nm (8,500); m/e 276 (M⁺), 161, 148, 135, 131, 115 and 103; Found: C, 69.58; H, 7.44; C, 69.56; H, 7.25%.

Cis-piperolein B acid 9. A solution of piperolein B methyl ester (340 mg) in dry benzene (150 cm³, 0.23%) was irradiated for 3 h in a 250 cm³ pyrex glass flask. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure to give an oil which was purified by filtration of its petroleum ether solution througa a short silica gel column. GLC (3% SP 2100, 5 ft $\times \frac{1}{4}$ in. column, Atten \times 60, 230° isothermal) gave a major peak (96% of volatile materials). Co-injection with the starting olefin-ester gave two major peaks, the photolysis product having a lower retention time. v_{max} (film) 1750 (ester C=O), 930 cm⁻¹ (O-CH₂-O), σ 6.40-5.30 (2H, m, vinyl protons), 6.0 (2H, s, O-CH₂-O) and 1.50 (8H, s, -(CH₂)-).

Hydrolysis with methanolic KOH, gave the corresponding acid 9 (m.p. 49–52°). λ_{max} (methanol), 219 (ϵ 15,000), 262 (15,000), 268 (7,300), 302nm (1,800); Found: C, 69.16; H, 7.66; C₁₆H₂₀O₄ requires; C, 69.56; H, 7.25%.

Piperolein B alcohol 10 and aldehyde 11. Piperolein B acid ester 8 (3,40 g) was subjected to LiAIH₄ reduction in ether (20 cm³) at 0°. The mixture was decomposed with water and extracted with ether to give 3.0g (94%) of 10 recrystallisable from petroleum ether as colourless flakes, m.p. 53–54°. It analysed for $C_{16}H_{22}O_3$; C, 73.28; H, 8.39%: Calc.; C, 73.28; H, 8.39% ν_{max} (CM⁻¹) 3500 (OH), 960 (Styryl C=C) and 925 (O–CH₂–O). δ (CDCl₃); 6.50–5.90 (2H, m, vinyl) 1.43 (1H, s, OH, disappeared with D₂O). *M/e* 262 (M⁺), 161, 148, 135, 103.

1.50 g of 10 in CH₂Cl₂ was oxidised to the corresponding aldehyde 11 using modified Collins procedure.¹⁴ The organic soln of the aldehyde was passed rapidly through a short column of silica gel, dried (MgSO₄), and solvent removed under reduced pressure to give a viscous oil (1.04g, 72%). λ_{max} (film cm⁻¹ 1740 (aldehyde C=O), 960 (styryl C=C); δ (CDCl₃) 9.8 (1H, t₁, J 2H₂; formyl group).

Methyl 13-(3, 4-methylenedioxyphenyl)-2, 4, 12-tridecatrienote 12. A solution of 1.60 g (4.4 mole of 3-ethoxycarbonylbut-2-enyltriphenylphosphorance in CH_2Cl_2 (10 cm³) was treated dropwise under N₂ at room temp (24 h) with a solution of 1.04 g (4.0 moles) of 11 in CH_2Cl_2 (10 cm³) with magnetic stirring. The solvent was removed on water bath and the residue extracted with petroleum ether. Evaporation of the solvent gave the crude trienoate which on column chromatography over silica gel with 5% ether-hexane first gave a mixture (0.04 g) lacking the 1000 cm⁻¹ band in the IR spectrum, and then 0.22g (16%) all *trans* trienoate, **12**. Recrystallisation from methanol gave needle-like crystals, m.p. 46-48°. It analysed for C₂₁H₂₆O₄: Calc. C, 73.68; H, 7.60%. Found: C, 73.48; H. 7.75%. v_{max} (Nujol) 1700 (α , β ; γ , σ , -unsaturated ester), 1000 (*trans* C=C conjugated with C=O), 960 (styryl C=C) and 925 (O-CH₂-O). λ_{max} (methanol), 216 (ϵ 32,400); 261 (51,800) and 305, (9,900) nm; δ (CDCL₃), 7.1–6.7 (3H, m, aromatic), 6.50–563 (6H, m, vinyl), 5.90 (2H, s, OCH₂-O), 3.70 (3H, s, -OCH₃), and 1.50 (8H, m, (CH₂)₄-); *m/e* 342 (M⁺), 161, 148, 135, 131 and 103.

Guineensine 1. 405mg of 12 was refluxed with 5% methanolic KOH (3 cm³) under N₂ (2 h). Most of the methenol was distilled off and the residue diluted with water and extracted with ether. The aqueous layer was acidified with cold dilute HCl and extracted with chloroform. Evaporation of the solvent gave guineensic acid 13 (278 mg, 71%).

220 mg of 13 was added to ice-cold SOCl₂ (1 cm³) and left to stand overnight in an ice-bath. Excess SOCl₂ was removed by co-distillation with dry benzene. The crude acid chloride was taken up in dry benzene (10 cm³) and added drop-wise with stirring to a solution of excess isobutylamine (1.0 g) also in dry benzene (10 cm^3) which was cooled in ice. The mixture was stirred at room temp $(\frac{1}{2}h)$ and diluted with benzene (30 cm³). It was washed successively with dilute HCl, 5% NaHCO₃, water and then dried (MgSO₄). The solvent was removed under reduced pressure. Preparative TlC on silica gel gave 79 mg (30% based on acid) of amide 1, m.p. 117–119°, m.m.p. 116–118° (lit¹ 113–115°, petroleum ether-benzene). (Found: C, 75.39; H, 8.65% M, 3.60. Calc for $C_{24}H_{33}NO_3$ requires; C, 75.15 H, 8.65; N, 3.65%.) All spectral analyses agreed with those reported for the natural product except the molar extinction co-efficient: Natural: $\bar{\lambda}_{max}$ (ethanol) 214 (34,000), 261 (35,600), 302 (6,500): Synthetic: λ_{max} (methanol) 216 (21,300) 263 (36,900), and 304 (7,000) nm.

2-Methoxypiperonal. A soln of 3:4-methylene dioxyanisole (2.8 g) in DMF (4 cm³) was cooled in ice bath for 15 min. Phosphorus oxychloride (5 cm³) was added and the mixture heated under reflux at 100° (2.5 h). The mixture was then poured into ice, and allowed to stand for several hours at room temp. The precipitated 2-methoxypiperonal 2.3 g, (70%) was filtered off at the pump and dried in vacuo over self indicating silica gel. Recrystallisation from ethanol gave needle-like pale brown cryatals, m.p. 110–112° (lit²⁵ 111.5–112.5°). (Found: C, 60.85% H, 4.6. Calc for C₉H₈O₄ requires: C, 60%, H, 4.5%.)

Ethyl 2-methoxypiperate 5

(i) Zinc (0.85 g) in THF (2 cm³) was refluxed with a crystal of iodine for about 10 min. A soln of 2-methoxypiperonal (1.4 g) in THF (6 cm³) was added followed by a solution of ethyl y-bromocrotonate (3.85 g) in THF (6 cm³), and the mixture refluxed with magnetic stirring. After the reaction had subsided another portion of bromoester (3.85 g) in THF (6 cm³) was added and stirring continued under reflux for 2 h. The mixture was decomposed with dil. H₂SO₄ and extracted with ether $(3 \times 50 \text{ cm}^3)$. The ether extract was washed to neutral and evaporated. Dehydration of the intermediate alcohol was completed by refluxing in benzene (150 cm³) with toluene-p-sulphonic acid using the Dean-Stark apparatus for 2 h. Column chromatography of the crude product on Solica gel gave pure trans, trans-diene ester 5 (1.2 g, 60%), recrystallisable from benzene as yellow nccdlcs m.p. 88-90°. λ_{max} (MeOH); 225 (ε 6,300), 250 (9,400) 300 (8,200) and 366 (16,800) nm: γ_{max} (KBr); 1700, 1610 and 1010 cm⁻¹; δ (CDCl₃): 7.4–5.8 (6H, aromatic and vinyl protons), 5.9 (3H, S, O–CH₂–O), 4.3 (2H, q, J 7H₂, -OCH₂CH₃), 3.9 (3H, S, -OCH₃) and 1.3 (3H, t, J6H₂)-OCH₂CH₃). (Found: C, 65.20%: H, 5.81. Calc for C₁₅H₁₆O₅C, 65.22%, H, 5.80%.)

(ii) To a solution of 3-ethoxycarbonylbut-2-eny triphenyl-phosphorane (0.8 g) in dry benzene (20 cm³) solution of 2-methoxy piperonal (0.3 g) in dry benzen (20 cm³) was added under N_2 and the mixture heated undreflux for 24 h. Evaporation of the solvent under reduce pressure followed by column chromatography gave the dienoate 5 (0.162, 40%) as yellow needles, m.p. 88–94 (benzene). Co-TLC with product from (i) gave a single spc M.m.p. showed no depression, and all spectra were supe imposable.

Wisanine, 4. Ethyl 2-methoxypiperate 5 (0.7 g) was heatt under reflux with 2N methanolic KOH (5 cm³) for 3 h. Mo of the methanol was then evaporated and the residue dilute with water (10 cm³) and extracted with ether (2 × 20 cm³) Acidification of the aqueous layer gave 2-methoxypiper acid 5 (0.280 g, 44%) as yellow crystals, m.p. $218-220^{\circ}$ (li $221-224^{\circ}$; EtOAc).

To a soln of the acid (270 mg) in $5 \text{ cm}^3 \text{ dry } \text{C}_6\text{H}_6 1 \text{ cm}^3$ oxalyl chloride was added and the mixture heated at 8 under reflux for 2 h. The solvent was evaporated und reduced pressure and 1 cm³ of piperidine in $5 \text{ cm}^3 \text{ C}_6\text{F}$ added and stirred at room temp overnight. The C₆H₆ so was washed with dil HCl, then water and dried ov anhydrous Na₂SO₄. Column chromatography over neutr alumina gave the piperidide (130 mg, 49%) as pale yello prisms, m.p. 178–180° m.p.p. 178–180° (lit⁵ 176–178 EtOAc). Requires: C, 68.57, H, 6.67, N, 4.44%; Found: (68.56; H, 6.73; N, 4.35%, r_{max} (KBr) 1640, 1610, 1600, 102 and 1010 cm⁻¹ δ (CDCl₃) 6–7 (6H, m) 5.9 (2H, S), 3.9 (3I S), 3.6 (4H) and 1.5 (6H).

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