## The Stereoselective Synthesis of 2,9,10-Trioxatricyclo[4.3.1.0<sup>3,8</sup>]decane Analogues of Resiniferatoxin

Graham C. Bloomfield, Roger Wrigglesworth and Timothy J. Ritchie\* Sandoz Institute for Medical Research, 5 Gower Place, London WC1E 6BN, UK

Structurally simplified analogues of the diterpene resiniferatoxin possessing a 2,9,10-trioxatricyclo[4.3.1.0<sup>3,8</sup>]decane system are synthesised stereoselectively from cyclohexa-1,3-diene.

Resiniferatoxin  $1^1$ , a diterpene component isolated from the resin of *Euphorbia resinifera*, has attracted recent attention due to its potent irritant and antinociceptive activity, and its similarity in pharmacological properties to capsaicin<sup>2</sup> 2, the active principle from *Capsicum* species, which also possesses analgesic properties.

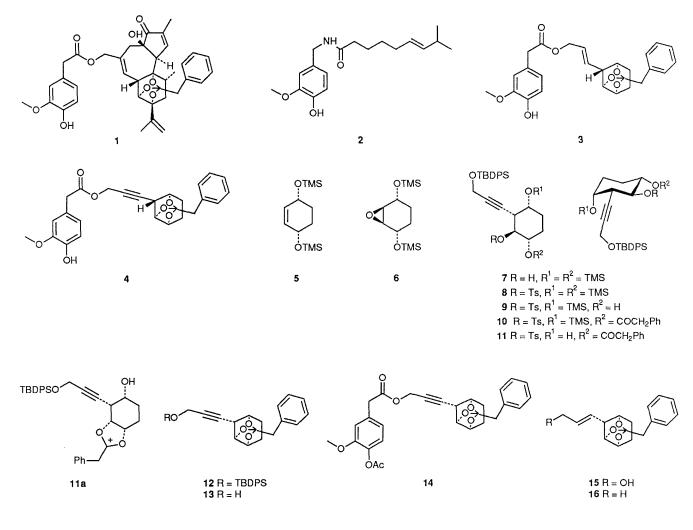
As part of a project to determine the structure-activity relationships responsible for analgesia that are present in resiniferatoxin, the synthesis of a simplified fragment, namely **3**, was required. The key structural feature present in such a molecule is the unusual tricyclic phenylorthoacetate moiety. This trioxatricyclo[ $4.3.1.0^{3.8}$ ]decane skeleton occurs in a number of natural products but to our knowledge the total synthesis of such a structure has not been reported in the literature. We report here the successful stereoselective synthesis of the orthoester **3** and the corresponding propynyl analogue **4**, starting from cyclohexa-1,3-diene.

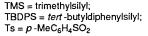
Cyclohexa-1,3-diene was converted in two steps into *cis*-cyclohex-2-ene-1,4-diol using literature procedures.<sup>3</sup> Silylation with chlorotrimethylsilane–triethylamine in dimethyl-

formamide afforded the bis-trimethylsilyl ether  $5,\dagger$  which was oxidised with *m*-chloroperoxybenzoic acid in dichloromethane in the presence of sodium hydrogen carbonate to give the expected *anti*-epoxide **6** by approach of the reagent from the least hindered side of the alkene. The reactions to form **5** and **6** were sufficiently high-yielding (>90%) to allow the crude products, obtained after work-up, to be used without further purification.

Attempts to effect ring-opening of the epoxide to introduce the 3-carbon side chain using organolithium, organomagnesium or organocopper reagents failed. However, the alkynylalane system (Bu<sup>t</sup>Ph<sub>2</sub>SiOCH<sub>2</sub>C=CAlEt<sub>2</sub>) described<sup>4</sup> by Nicolaou smoothly converted epoxide **6** into the desired racemic alcohol **7** in good yield ( $-40 \,^\circ$ C, 3 h, 56–70%), which was then converted to the *p*-toluenesulphonate **8** with *p*-toluenesul-

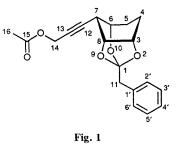
 $<sup>^\</sup>dagger$  New compounds exhibited spectroscopic (IR,  $^1H$  NMR,  $^{13}C$  NMR and MS) data in agreement with their structures and satisfactory elemental analyses.





phonic anhydride in pyridine (0–25 °C, 1.3 h, 66%). <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectroscopy suggested that 7 and 8 existed in the chair conformation as shown with three of the four substituents equatorial; the proton attached to the carbon bearing the tosyloxy function exhibited two large vicinal coupling constants (*J ca.* 10 Hz) in agreement with two axial-axial interactions.

Treatment of 8 with catalytic (10 mol%) citric acid monohydrate in methanol at room temperature for 5 h selectively hydrolysed the equatorially disposed trimethylsilyl ether to give the alcohol 9 in 82% yield, which was acylated with phenylacetic acid-dicyclohexylcarbodiimide (DCC)-4dimethylaminopyridine (DMAP) in dichloromethane to afford the crystalline phenylacetate 10 (0-25 °C, 4 h, 76%, m.p. 125-126.5 °C). More vigorous conditions (10 mol% citric acid-methanol-water, reflux, 30 min) cleaved the other trimethylsilyl ether (TMS) to give the alcohol 11‡ in 83% yield. Alternatively, simple treatment of crude 10, obtained after acylation and work-up, with methanol at room temperature immediately gave 11, in 75% overall yield from 9.



It has been reported<sup>5</sup> previously that the solvolysis of *trans*-2-acetoxycyclohexyl *p*-toluenesulphonate in absolute ethanol containing potassium acetate affords the bicyclic 2-ethoxy-1,3-dioxolane orthoester *via* the corresponding dioxolenium ion intermediate. In the case of **11**, it was envisaged that if such a dioxolenium ion (*i.e.* **11a**) could be generated, intramolecular trapping by the hydroxy function would lead directly to the phenylorthoacetate **12**. This was indeed found to be the case; **11** was converted smoothly to **12** in 73% yield, after 10 h at reflux in 2,4,6-collidine under argon. Heating at lower temperatures, *e.g.* in pyridine or 2,6-lutidine at reflux, resulted in prolonged reaction times and/or incomplete conversion of **11**. Confirmation of the presence of the required phenylorthoacetate was obtained by NMR spectroscopy; the <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectrum contained a characteristic orthoester

<sup>‡</sup> Spectroscopic data for 11: <sup>1</sup>H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 1.05 (9H, s, −CMe<sub>3</sub>); 1.45 (1H, m, ring CH); 1.84 (3H, m, ring CH); 1.98 (1H, br s, −OH); 2.30 (3H, s, ArCH<sub>3</sub>); 2.64 (1H, dd, J 2.2, 10.2 Hz, −CHC≡C-); 3.59 (2H, s, OCOCH<sub>2</sub>Ph); 3.89 (1H, m, −CHOH); 4.17 (2H, d, J 1.8 Hz, −OCH<sub>2</sub>C≡C−); 4.82 (1H, m, −CHOCOCH<sub>2</sub>Ph); 5.03 (1H, dd, J 10.2, 10.2 Hz, −CHOTs); 7.14–7.34 (7H, m, ArH); 7.36–7.51 (6H, m, ArH); 7.65–7.80 (6H, m, ArH).

resonance at  $\delta$  119 and in the <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum, the methylene protons adjacent to the orthoester carbon resonated as a singlet at  $\delta$  3.20, in good agreement with the resonance of the corresponding protons in resiniferatoxin.

Removal of the *tert*-butyldiphenylsilyl ether (TBDPS) with tetra-n-butylammonium fluoride in tetrahydrofuran (THF) gave an essentially quantitative yield of the propynylic alcohol **13** (room temperature, 20 min., 97%), which was coupled with 4-O-acetylhomovanillic acid (DCC, DMAP, CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, room temperature, 3 h) to give **14**. Subsequent cleavage of the phenolic acetate with excess pyrrolidine at room temperature for 1 h afforded **4** in 86% overall yield from **13**.§

In order to obtain the corresponding *trans*-alkenyl derivative **3**, the propynylic alcohol **13** was treated with Red-Al in THF to give stereoselectively the desired *E*-isomer **15** in 50% yield. Treatment of **13** with sodium in liquid ammonia also reduced the alkyne to the *E*-alkene but concomitant reductive fission occurred giving rise to the unwanted deoxy-analogue **16**. Coupling of **15** with the protected homovanillic acid and final deprotection as above afforded **3** in 61% yield.

Received, 19th November 1990; Com. 0/05192F

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<sup>§</sup> Spectroscopic data for the acetate derivative of **13**: (see Fig. 1) <sup>1</sup>H NMR (360 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  1.50 (1H, m, H-4<sub>ax</sub>); 1.82 (1H, m, H-5<sub>ax</sub>); 2.11 (3H, s, H-16); 2.14 (2H, m, H-4<sub>eq</sub>, H-5<sub>eq</sub>); 2.46 (1H, m, H-7); 3.22 (2H, s, H-11); 4.25 (1H, m, H-6); 4.51 (1H, m, H-3); 4.59 (1H, m, H-8); 4.74 (2H, d, H-14); 7.28 (3H, m, H-3', H-4', H-5'); 7.38 (2H, m, H-2', H-6').

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup>C NMR (90 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 21.0 (C-16); 21.6 (C-4); 27.8 (C-5); 30.2 (C-7); 40.7 (C-11); 52.9 (C-14); 73.3 (C-6); 74.0 (C-3, C-8); 76.2 (C-12); 85.4 (C-13); 118.9 (C-1); 126.7 (C-4'); 128.0 (C-3', C-5'); 130.2 (C-2', C-6'); 135.0 (C-1'); 170.3 (C-15).