STUDIES DIRECTED TOWARD THE TOTAL SYNTHESIS OF THE MILBEMYCINS:
SYNTHESIS OF THE C11 TO C31 FRAGMENT OF MILBEMYCIN D

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Summary: A highly stereocontrolled synthesis of the C11 to C31 fragment of the potent antimicrobial agent milbemycin D has been completed. This approach utilizes a unique hydrolysis-cyclization to construct the spiroketal portion of the molecule.

The milbemycins 2 and the avermectins3 are two structurally related classes of macrocyclic lactones with remarkable biological activity.4 These compounds show potent, broad spectrum anthelmintic, insecticidal, and acaracidal activity. Ivermectin, a semisynthetic derivative, is currently being employed as a veterinary medicine5 and is being used to treat onchocerciasis ("river blindness") in humans on an experimental basis.6

Considerable effort has recently been directed toward the total synthesis of these important compounds. Several syntheses of milbemycin β3, the simplest member of this class which lacks the complex hexahydrobenzofuran subunit, have been reported.7 In addition, a number of approaches to the spiroketal fragment8 and the hexahydrobenzofuran fragment9 have appeared.10 We report here a stereocontrolled preparation of the C11 to C31 fragment of milbemycin D (1). The basic synthetic plan was to construct a C1 to C10 fragment9b and a C11 to C31 fragment 2 leaving their connection for the final stages of the synthesis. Our strategy for the construction of the C11 to C31 portion centered around the preparation of the spirocyclic dihydropyranone 3 which would serve as a template to control the stereochemistry at C17 and C19 of the spiroketal. Spiroketal 3 was to be derived from lactone 4 by way of our previously reported method for spiroketalization.11

The preparation of spiroketal 3 (Scheme I) began with construction of lactone 4. Sharpless asymmetric epoxidation12 of 4-methyl-2-penten-1-ol followed by regioselective opening of the epoxide with lithium dimethylcopper produced 90% yield of a 6:1 mixture of diol 513 and the corresponding 1,2-diol. The minor isomer could be readily removed by treating the mixture of diols with NaIO4. Selective acetylation of the primary hydroxyl (CH3COCl, Et2O, pyr.) followed by formation of the secondary THP ether (dihydropyran, PPTS.)
CH₂Cl₂) and subsequent removal of the primary acetate (K₂CO₃, MeOH) produced the alcohol 6 in high yield. Oxidation of the alcohol and condensation of the aldehyde 7 with carboethoxymethylenetriphenylphosphorane gave an 89% yield of ester 8. Removal of the THP ether followed by hydrogenation of the α,β-unsaturated ester and lactonization provided lactone 4 in 65% overall yield. Addition of the lithium acetylide of 1-methoxy-1-buten-3-yne to lactone 4 in THF at -78°C produced hydroxyketone 9 which was immediately treated with K₂CO₃ in methanol to give ketone 10 in 88% yield. Exposure of 10 to 30% HClO₄ in dichloromethane in an ultrasonic cleaner produced a 63% yield of a 4:1 mixture of spiroketal 3 and the corresponding methanol adduct 11. Use of ultrasonic waves is essential for the efficient execution of this hydrolysis-cyclization. Methyl ether 11 could be chromatographically separated and converted to 3 (moist amberlyst, CH₂Cl₂, 40°C, 75%).

**Scheme I**

![Scheme I](image)

(a) CH₃COCl, Et₂O, pyridine, 0°C, 1h. (b) Dihydropyran, PPTS, CH₂Cl₂, 3h. (c) K₂CO₃, MeOH, 25°C, 2h. (d) (COCl)₂, Me₂SO, CH₂Cl₂, Et₃N. (e) Ph₃P=CHCO₂Et, C₆H₆, 80°C, 24h. (f) MeOH, PPTS, 5h. (g) H₂, Pd/C, EtOH. (h) CH₂Cl₂, PPTS, 40°C, 45 min. (i) CH₃OH=CHCCLi, THF, -78°C, 1h. (j) MeOH, K₂CO₃, 18h. (k) 30% HClO₄, CH₂Cl₂, ultrasound, 20 min.

Copper catalyzed conjugate addition of vinylmagnesium bromide to enone 3 provided a >25:1 preference for equatorial addition to give 78% of ketone 12 (Scheme II). The remarkable diastereoselectivity observed in this reaction is most likely attributable to the C25 isopropyl group which serves to block axial approach. In contrast to the high diastereoselectivity obtained in the cuprate addition, reduction (NaBH₄, MeOH, 98%) of the C19 ketone produced a meager 2:1 preference for the equatorial alcohol 13a. Fortunately, the undesired axial alcohol 13b could be readily recycled in high yield (Jones, acetone, 80%; NaBH₄, MeOH).

Protection of the hydroxyl as its t-butyldiphenylsilyl ether (DMAP, DMF, t-BuPh₂SiCl, imidazole, 48h) proceeded in quantitative yield. Hydroboration (9-BBN, THF, ultrasound; then H₂O₂) of the vinyl substituent and subsequent Swern oxidation provided 97% of aldehyde 14. Exposure of aldehyde 14 to carboethoxyethylenetriphenylphosphorane in benzene at reflux resulted in a single detectable olefin isomer 15 in
89% yield. Reduction of the ester with diisobutylaluminum hydride (3 equiv, -78°C, 91%) gave the allylic alcohol 16. Treatment of 16 with carbon tetrabromide and triphenyl phosphine in acetonitrile generated the desired allylic bromide 17 in 93% yield. It is of interest to note that this same transformation failed when the C19 alcohol was protected as its tert-butylmethylsilyl ether. The conditions of the reaction resulted only in removal of the protecting group without bromination. With bromide 17 in hand it remained only to execute an Evans asymmetric alkylation\(^\text{17}\) to introduce the C12 secondary methyl with the correct relative and absolute stereochemistry. Initial experiments with stoichiometric quantities of bromide 17 and the Evans lithium enolate derived from (L)-valinol proved disappointing, but when an excess (10 equiv) of the enolate was employed, good yields of the alkylated material were obtained. It proved most practical to carry out the alkylation and the subsequent reductive removal (LiAlH\(_4\), Et\(_2\)O) of the chiral auxiliary without isolation of the intermediate oxazolidinone. In this manner yields of 60-70%\(^\text{18}\) of alcohol 2 (>95% c.e.; \([\alpha]_{D20}^\circ +51.6^\circ, \text{CHCl}_3, c = 0.0185 \text{ g/mL}\) were obtained for the two steps (d.e. >95%). Thus the C11 to C31 fragment of milbemycin D has been prepared in 13 steps in approximately 15% overall yield from lactone 4. Current efforts are directed toward the connection of the C1 to C10 and the C11 to C31 fragments to complete the synthesis of milbemycin D.

**Scheme II\(^a\)**

\[(a) \text{NaBH}_4, \text{MeOH}, 30 \text{ min.} \quad (b) \text{t-BuPh}_2\text{SiCl, DMAP, DMF, imidazole, 48h.} \quad (c) 9\text{-BBN, THF, ultrasound, 1h; then H}_2\text{O}_2. \quad (d) (\text{COCl})_2, \text{Me}_2\text{SO, CH}_2\text{Cl}_2, \text{Et}_3\text{N, -78°C.} \quad (e) \text{Ph}_3\text{P} = \text{C(CH}_3\text{)}_2\text{CO}_2\text{Et, C}_6\text{H}_6, 80^\circ\text{C, 1h.} \quad (f) \text{Dibal-H, THF, -78°C, 3h.} \quad (g) \text{CBr}_4, \text{Ph}_3\text{P, CH}_3\text{CN, 1h.} \quad (h) \text{Evans alkylation.} \quad (i) \text{LiAlH}_4, \text{Et}_2\text{O, 0°C, 1h.}\]

**Acknowledgement:** Financial support from the National Institutes of Health (AI-19544), the Upjohn Company, and the Merck, Sharp, and Dohme Company is gratefully acknowledged. Thanks are also due to the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation for a fellowship to M.T.C. and to the National Science Foundation for a fellowship to W.G.H., Jr. We also thank Lori D. Gould and Dr. David H. Harris for help in recording high field NMR spectra.

**References**

1. a) Fellow of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, 1986-88. b) National Science Foundation Predoctoral Fellow.


13. All new compounds gave consistent NMR and IR data as well as satisfactory elemental analyses. All yields are for chromatographically pure material.

14. This aldehyde has been previously prepared by Baker by a similar route (see ref. 8b).


18. These yields are based on the amount of allylic halide recovered by chromatography prior to the reduction

(Received in USA 7 April 1987)