

Ru(II)-Catalyzed Asymmetric Transfer Hydrogenation of Polymethoxylated 3-Arylidene Chromanones via Dynamic Kinetic Resolution.

Juliane S. Falcão, Marcos V. O. Silva, Guilherme S. Caleffi and Paulo R. R. Costa

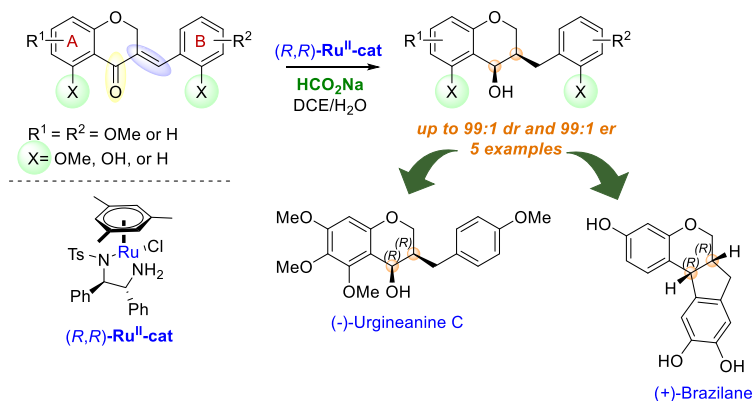
1) Laboratório de Química Bioorgânica, Instituto de Pesquisa de Produtos Naturais Walter Mors, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, UFRJ, 21941-902, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil.

e-mail: prrcosta2011@gmail.com (PRRC); guilherme.caleffi@jppn.ufrj.br (GSC)

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ABSTRACT

The asymmetric transfer hydrogenation (ATH) of carbonyl compounds catalyzed by chiral transition-metal complexes is a powerful tool for obtaining key intermediates in the synthesis of optically pure pharmaceutical and natural products.¹⁻⁴ Mono-, di-, and trimethoxylated 3-arylidenechromanones at the A-ring were hydrogenated to *cis*-benzylic alcohols with high diastereomeric ratios (91:9 to 99:1) and enantiomeric excess (up to 99:1). This transformation was achieved via a one-pot reduction of the conjugated C=C and C=O bonds in the presence of 2-5 mol% of a Ru(II) chiral complex and HCO₂Na as the hydrogen source, under ATH-DKR conditions in a DCE:H₂O solvent mixture. Electronic effects (C7 and C5) and steric effects (C5) of these substituents controlled the reaction outcome. Notably, the presence of phenol groups at C5 or C2' in these 3-(benzylidene)chroman-4-ones enhanced the reaction rate, diastereo- and enantioselectivity through intramolecular hydrogen bonding. Furthermore, the oxidation of these aryl alcohols led to the enantioselective synthesis of natural homoisoflavanones with promising anticancer activities.^{5,6} Additionally, the formal synthesis of the tetracyclic homoisoflavanoid (+)-brazilane was successfully accomplished.



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