

Sesquiterpenoids and 2-(2-Phenylethyl)-4*H*-chromen-4-one (=2-(2-Phenylethyl)-4*H*-1-benzopyran-4-one) Derivatives from *Aquilaria malaccensis* Agarwood

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The four new sesquiterpenoids **1–4**, and the new 2-(2-phenylethyl)-4*H*-chromen-4-one (=2-(2-phenylethyl)-4*H*-1-benzopyran-4-one) derivative **5**, together with the two known sesquiterpenoids **6** and **7**, the five known chromenones **8–12**, and 1-hydroxy-1,5-diphenylpentan-3-one (**13**), were isolated from a 70% MeOH extract of *Aquilaria malaccensis* agarwood chips. Their structures were elucidated on the basis of comprehensive spectral analyses and comparison with literature data.

Introduction. – The *Aquilaria* genus (Thymelaeaceae), consisting of fifteen species of trees, is mainly distributed in rain forests of southeast Asia and New Guinea [1]. Several species of this genus can produce a dark aromatic resin mainly in response to the infection by *Phaeoacremonium parasitica*, a parasitic ascomycetous mould [2]. The resin-deposited heartwood is well known as agarwood, which has long been used as incense, and as sedative, analgesic, and digestive agent in traditional Chinese medicine [3]. Previous phytochemical research on this genus led to the isolation of many (phenylethyl)chromenones [3–8] and sesquiterpenoids [9][10].

As a result of our investigation of the *Aquilaria malaccensis*, the five new compounds **1–5** and the eight known compounds **6–13** were isolated (Fig. 1). Herein, we present the isolation and structure determination of them.

Results and Discussion. – A 70% MeOH extract of *A. malaccensis* agarwood was extracted with Et₂O, BuOH, and H₂O. The Et₂O fraction was then subjected to repeated column chromatographic and preparative HPLC separation to afford thirteen compounds, including **1–4** as new sesquiterpenoids and **5** as a new 2-(2-phenylethyl)-4*H*-chromen-4-one (=2-(2-phenylethyl)-4*H*-1-benzopyran-4-one) derivative.

Compound **1** was obtained as colorless oil, and its molecular formula was determined to be C₁₅H₂₄O₂ by HR-ESI-MS (*m/z* 259.1666, [*M* + Na]⁺, C₁₅H₂₄NaO₂⁺). The signal at δ(C) 194.8 in its ¹³C-NMR spectrum (Table 1) revealed the presence of a carbonyl group, while those at δ(C) 155.1 and 132.8 suggested the existence of an olefinic bond. These two groups accounted for two of the four degrees of unsaturation in **1**, suggesting its bicyclic structure. Two quaternary sp³ C-atoms resonating at δ(C) 41.4 and 73.2, the latter bearing an O-substituent, together with two CH, six CH₂, and two Me groups were identified through the combinatory analysis of ¹³C- and

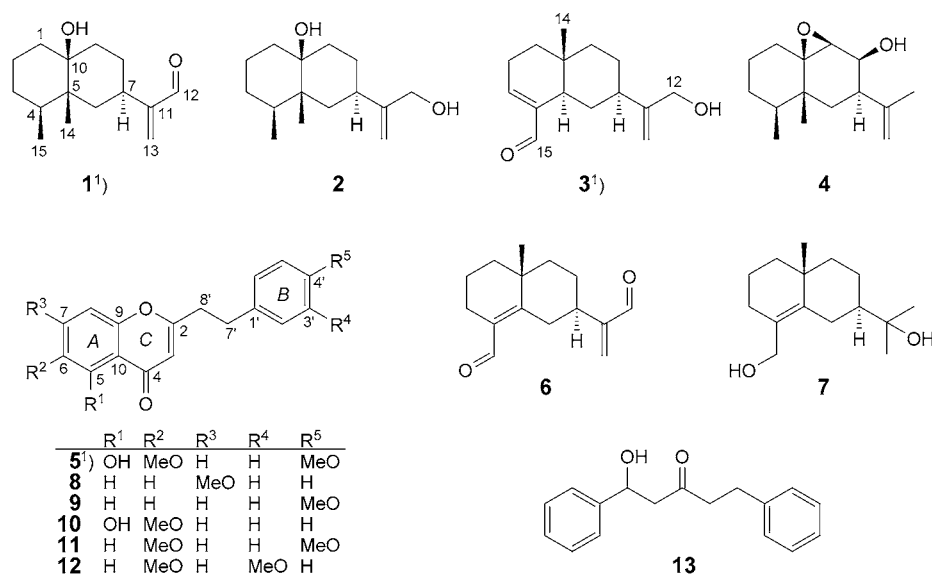


Fig. 1. New and known compounds **1–5** and **6–13**, respectively, isolated from *Aquilaria malaccensis* agarwood

Table 1. ¹³C-NMR Data (CDCl₃, 125 MHz) of Compounds **1–4**¹⁾. δ in ppm.

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
C(1)	36.8	36.6	36.5	31.0	C(9)	32.7	32.8	64.0
C(2)	23.0	22.9	24.5	24.6	C(10)	73.2	73.2	69.0
C(3)	30.1	30.1	153.0	30.1	C(11)	155.1	153.8	145.2
C(4)	33.1	33.0	142.3	35.6	C(12)	194.8	65.3	111.3
C(5)	41.4	41.3	43.6	38.0	C(13)	132.8	108.0	22.5
C(6)	36.8	37.1	27.3	28.2	C(14)	15.5	15.3	18.0
C(7)	29.5	34.5	41.8	40.5	C(15)	15.2	15.4	15.5
C(8)	26.7	27.2	27.0	64.4	C(15)	15.2	15.4	15.5

HSQC-NMR spectra. Comprehensive consideration of the ¹H,¹H-COSY and HMBC data enabled the characterization of structural units and connection of them to form an eremophilane-type skeleton for **1** (Fig. 2) (eremophilane = decahydro-1,8a-dimethyl-7-(1-methylethyl)naphthalene). Thus, the constitutional formula of **1** was unambiguously established. In the NOESY plot of **1**, a correlation of δ(H) 2.72 (H–C(7)) and 2.03 (H–C(4)) was observed (Fig. 3, Table 2). Assuming a low-energy chair–chair conformation for this decahydronaphthalene derivative, the observed proximity of these two H-atoms can only be realized when the two rings are *cis*-fused. Besides that, H–C(4) should be located on the same side of the rings as H–C(7) but be *trans* with respect to Me(14) (Fig. 3). Therefore, H–C(7), Me(14), and OH–C(10) are α -, β -, and

¹⁾ Trivial or arbitrary atom numbering; for systematic names, see *Exper. Part*.

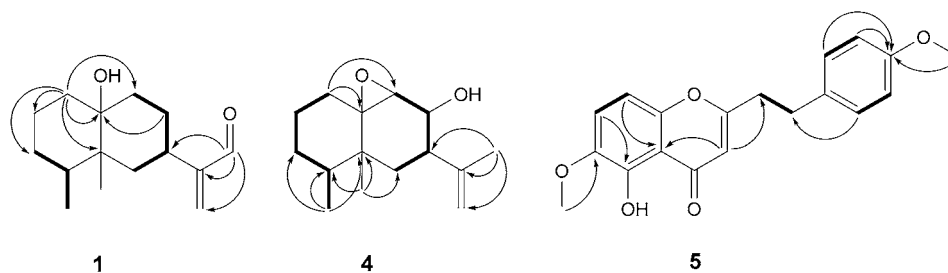


Fig. 2. Key $^1\text{H},^1\text{H}$ -COSY (\rightleftharpoons) and HMBC (H \rightarrow C) features of **1**, **4**, and **5**

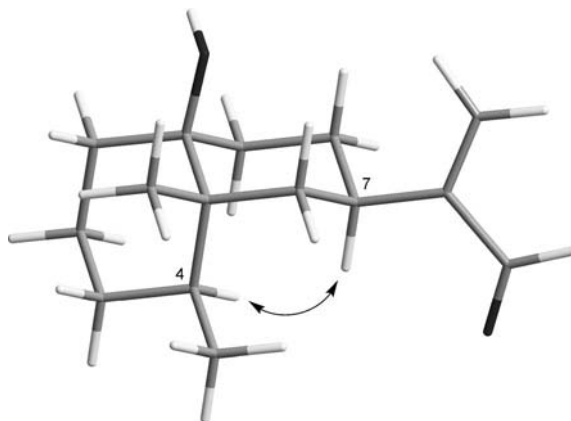


Fig. 3. Configuration-diagnostic NOESY (\leftrightarrow) correlation in compound **1**

β -oriented, respectively, when an α -configuration of H–C(4) is assumed. Based on all the information given above, the structure of **1**, apart from its absolute configuration, was elucidated as shown in Fig. 1.

Comparative analysis of the ^1H - and ^{13}C -NMR spectra of **1** and **2** (Tables 2 and 1) indicated a close structural similarity between them, except for the presence of a CH_2OH group linked to C(11) in **2** instead of CHO in **1**. The relative configuration of **2** was the same as that of **1**, as suggested by the NOESY cross-peak $\delta(\text{C})$ 2.20 (H–C(7))/ $\delta(\text{H})$ 1.94 (H–C(4)).

Compound **3** was isolated as a pale yellow oil, and its molecular formula $\text{C}_{15}\text{H}_{22}\text{O}_2$ was deduced from the HR-ESI-MS (m/z 235.1685, $[\text{M} + \text{H}]^+$, $\text{C}_{15}\text{H}_{23}\text{O}_2^+$). According to the spectral data, its structure closely resembled that of (–)-selina-3,11-dien-14-al (= (4*aS*,7*S*,8*aS*)-3,4,4*a*,5,6,7,8,8*a*-octahydro-4*a*-methyl-7-(1-methylethenyl)naphthalene-1-carboxaldehyde) reported by Ishihara *et al.* [10], with the only difference that a CH_2OH group rather than a Me group was attached to C(11). Since both of these two compounds were isolated from the *Aquilaria* genus, considering the biosynthetic aspect, their relative configurations were assumed to be the same. Thus, the structure of **3** was determined as depicted in Fig. 1.

Compound **4** was obtained as colorless oil and assigned a molecular formula $\text{C}_{15}\text{H}_{24}\text{O}_2$ by HR-ESI-MS (m/z 237.1841, $[\text{M} + \text{H}]^+$, $\text{C}_{15}\text{H}_{25}\text{O}_2^+$). Its ^{13}C - and DEPT-

Table 2. $^1\text{H-NMR}$ Data (CDCl_3 , 500 MHz) of Compounds **1–4**). δ in ppm, J in Hz

	1	2	3	4
$\text{CH}_2(1)$	1.72 (<i>td</i> , $J = 13.1, 4.8$), 1.62–1.44 (<i>m</i>)	1.71 (<i>td</i> , $J = 13.2, 4.8$), 1.37–1.36 (<i>m</i>)	1.45 (<i>dd</i> , $J = 12.4, 5.3$), 1.36–1.30 (<i>m</i>)	2.05 (<i>td</i> , $J = 13.4, 4.4$), 1.07 (<i>dd</i> , $J = 13.4, 2.3$)
$\text{CH}_2(2)$	1.62–1.44 (<i>m</i>)	1.57–1.55, 1.46–1.45 (<i>2m</i>)	2.44–2.40, 2.38–2.36 (<i>2m</i>)	1.78–1.76, 1.37–1.37 (<i>2m</i>)
$\text{CH}_2(3)$	1.43–1.25 (<i>m</i>)	1.42–1.27 (<i>m</i>)	6.69–6.68 (<i>m</i>)	1.53–1.49, 1.34–1.34 (<i>2m</i>)
H–C(4)	2.06–1.99 (<i>m</i>)	1.97–1.92 (<i>m</i>)		1.72–1.68 (<i>m</i>)
H–C(5)	–	–	2.23–2.20 (<i>m</i>)	–
$\text{CH}_2(6)$	1.43–1.25 (<i>m</i>)	1.54–1.51, 1.42–1.40 (<i>2m</i>)	2.77 (<i>br. d</i> , $J = 13.3$), 1.09–1.08 (<i>m</i>)	1.32–1.32 (<i>m</i>)
H–C(7)	2.75–2.69 (<i>m</i>)	2.23–2.17 (<i>m</i>)	2.13–2.06 (<i>m</i>)	2.14 (<i>dt</i> , $J = 11.7, 4.1$)
$\text{CH}_2(8)$ or H–C(8)	1.61–1.58 (<i>m</i>)	1.62–1.61 (<i>m</i>)	1.64–1.63 (<i>m</i>), 1.60 (<i>dd</i> , $J = 12.5, 4.0$)	4.19–4.16 (<i>m</i>)
$\text{CH}_2(9)$ or H–C(9)	2.30–2.24, 1.43–1.25 (<i>2m</i>)	2.23–2.17, 1.30–1.27 (<i>2m</i>)	1.52 (<i>dt</i> , $J = 13.4, 3.4$), 1.25–1.22 (<i>m</i>)	3.23 (<i>d</i> , $J = 5.3$)
H–C(12), $\text{CH}_2(12)$, or Me(12)	9.50 (<i>s</i>)	4.10 (<i>br. s</i>)	4.14 (<i>s</i>)	1.81 (<i>s</i>)
$\text{CH}_2(13)$	6.25, 5.94 (2 <i>br. s</i>)	5.00, 4.90 (2 <i>br. s</i>)	5.02 (<i>d</i> , $J = 1.1$), 4.91 (<i>br. s</i>)	4.88 (<i>br. s</i>), 4.71 (<i>br. s</i>)
Me(14)	0.82 (<i>s</i>)	0.82 (<i>s</i>)	0.80 (<i>s</i>)	0.98 (<i>s</i>)
Me(15) or H–C(15)	0.83 (<i>d</i> , $J = 7.3$)	0.77 (<i>d</i> , $J = 6.8$)	9.39 (<i>s</i>)	0.82 (<i>d</i> , $J = 6.8$)

NMR spectra revealed fifteen C-atom signals arising from three Me, five CH_2 , and four CH groups and from three quaternary C-atoms. Among them, the two signals at $\delta(\text{C})$ 145.2 and 111.3 indicated the presence of an olefinic bond (*Table 1*). Cross-peaks in the HSQC spectrum permitted the assignment of the H-atoms to their directly connected C-atoms (*Table 2*). Partial structures of **4** were identified with the assistance of $^1\text{H}, ^1\text{H}$ -COSY and HMBC data (*Fig. 2*) and assembled to form an eremophilane-type framework. Three signals at $\delta(\text{C})$ 64.4, 64.0, and 69.0 were assigned to the oxygenated C(8), C(9), and C(10), respectively. The molecular formula of **4** and the upfield shift of its C(10) signal ($\delta(\text{C})$ 69.0) relative to that of **1** ($\delta(\text{C})$ 73.2) suggested the location of an epoxy group between C(9) and C(10). Similarly to **1**, the NOESY correlation $\delta(\text{H})$ 2.14/ $\delta(\text{H})$ 1.70 indicated the α -, β -, and β -configuration of H–C(7), Me(14), and the O-atom at C(10), respectively, if H–C(4) is assumed to be α -oriented. The H–C(8) should also be positioned on the α -face, because its signal at $\delta(\text{H})$ 4.18 coupled with the signal of the axial H–C(7) at $\delta(\text{H})$ 2.14 in the NOESY plot. Therefore, the structure of **4** was established as shown in *Fig. 1*.

The absolute configurations of compounds **1–4** were not determined due to the scarcity of the samples.

Compound **5** was obtained as pale yellow amorphous powder. Its HR-ESI-MS spectrum exhibited a molecular-ion peak at m/z 327.1228 ($[M + H]^+$, $C_{19}H_{19}O_5^+$), in accordance with the molecular formula $C_{19}H_{18}O_5$. In the aromatic region of its 1H -NMR spectrum (Table 3), two d at $\delta(H)$ 7.19 ($J = 9.0$ Hz, 1 H) and 6.84 ($J = 9.0$ Hz, 1 H) and two d at $\delta(H)$ 7.08 ($J = 8.5$ Hz, 2 H) and 6.81 ($J = 8.5$ Hz, 2 H) were attributable to a tetrasubstituted and a *para*-disubstituted benzene ring, respectively. Besides that, a comprehensive analysis of the 1H - and ^{13}C -NMR data (Table 3) revealed the presence of one carbonyl, one olefinic CH, two CH_2 , one OH, and two MeO groups. The above findings suggested a (phenylethyl)chromenone skeleton for **5**, which was further confirmed by HMBC data (Fig. 2). The three signals at $\delta(C)$ 158.3, 149.5, and 143.3 in the ^{13}C -NMR spectrum, arising from O-bearing aromatic C-atoms, were ascribed to C(4'), C(5), and C(6), respectively, on the basis of relevant HMBC cross-peaks and comparison with a structurally similar known compound [8]. The two MeO groups were determined to be located at C(6) and C(4'), respectively, based on HMBC cross-peaks between the Me H-atoms and the corresponding C-atoms. Thus, the OH group should be linked to the last open position, namely to C(5). Consequently, the structure of **5** was elucidated as shown in Fig. 1.

Table 3. 1H - and ^{13}C -NMR Data ($CDCl_3$, 500 and 125 MHz, resp.) of Compound **5**¹. δ in ppm, J in Hz.

	$\delta(H)$	$\delta(C)$		$\delta(H)$	$\delta(C)$
C(2)		170.2	C(1')		131.5
H-C(3)	5.99 (<i>s</i>)	107.9	H-C(2')	7.08 (<i>d</i> , $J = 8.5$)	129.2
C(4)		184.0	H-C(3')	6.81 (<i>d</i> , $J = 8.5$)	114.1
C(5)		149.5	C(4')		158.3
C(6)		143.3	H-C(5')	6.81 (<i>d</i> , $J = 8.5$)	114.1
H-C(7)	7.19 (<i>d</i> , $J = 9.0$)	119.1	H-C(6')	7.08 (<i>d</i> , $J = 8.5$)	129.2
H-C(8)	6.84 (<i>d</i> , $J = 9.0$)	105.7	$CH_2(7')$	2.98–2.95 (<i>m</i>)	32.0
C(9)		150.5	$CH_2(8')$	2.87–2.84 (<i>m</i>)	36.4
C(10)		110.8	MeO-C(6)	3.91 (<i>s</i>)	57.0
			MeO-C(4')	3.76 (<i>s</i>)	55.2

The known compounds isolated were identified as selina-4,11-diene-12,15-dial (**6**) [11][12], eudesm-4-ene-11,15-diol (**7**) [13], 7-methoxy-2-(2-phenylethyl)-4*H*-chromen-4-one (**8**) [14][15], 2-[2-(4-methoxyphenyl)ethyl]-4*H*-chromen-4-one (**9**) [6], 5-hydroxy-6-methoxy-2-(2-phenylethyl)-4*H*-chromen-4-one (**10**) [8], 6-methoxy-2-[2-(4-methoxyphenyl)ethyl]-4*H*-chromen-4-one (**11**) [6], 6-methoxy-2-[2-(3-methoxyphenyl)ethyl]-4*H*-chromen-4-one (**12**) [5], and 1-hydroxy-1,5-diphenylpentan-3-one (**13**) [16] by comparing their spectroscopic data with those reported in the above references. To the best of our knowledge, **8** was isolated from a natural source for the first time, **7** was first obtained from a plant, **6** was first isolated from the *Aquilaria* genus, and **9–11** were first obtained from *A. malaccensis* species.

Experimental Part

General. Column chromatography (CC): silica gel (*Kieselgel 60*, No. 7734, 70–230 mesh; *Kieselgel 60*, No. 9385, 230–400 mesh; *Merck*) and *Sephadex™ LH-20* (*GE Healthcare*, Sweden). Anal. TLC: silica gel 60 *F₂₅₄* glass plates 20 × 20 cm (*Merck*). Semi-prep. HPLC: *Hitachi* instrument (pump *L-7100*, UV detector *L-7420*); *Waters-SunFire™-Prep-C18-OB* column (19 × 150 mm, 5 μm); *t_R* in min. Optical rotations: *Jasco-P-1020* polarimeter (Japan). UV Spectra: *Hitachi-U-3010* spectrophotometer (Japan); λ_{max} (log ε) in nm. IR Spectra: *Jasco-FT/IR-4200* spectrometer (Japan); in cm⁻¹. NMR Spectra: *Bruker-Avance-500* FT-NMR spectrometer (Germany); δ in ppm rel. to the residual solvent signal of CDCl₃. MS: *Bruker-microTOF-Q-II* mass spectrometer (Germany); in *m/z*.

Plant Material. The agarwood chips of *A. malaccensis* were purchased from *Industrial Plantation Co.*, Vientiane, Laos, in January, 2010. The voucher specimen was deposited with the Herbarium of the Natural Product Research Institute, Seoul National University.

Extraction and Isolation. Air-dried *A. malaccensis* agarwood chips (450 g) were crushed and exhaustively refluxed with 70% MeOH. The extract was concentrated to give a residue of 68.2 g, which was successively partitioned with Et₂O, BuOH, and H₂O. The Et₂O fraction (21.5 g) was subjected to CC (SiO₂, hexane/AcOEt 40:1 → 1:1): *Fractions E1–E14*. Further purification of *Fr. E11* by CC (SiO₂, CHCl₃) yielded **3** (8.9 mg). By using semi-prep. HPLC (mobile phase: *A* = H₂O, *B* = MeCN; flow rate 5 ml/min; monitor wavelength 203 nm), **4** (2.8 mg, with 60% *B*; *t_R* 26.20) and **6** (3.3 mg, with 70% *B*; *t_R* 30.50) were isolated from *Fr. E6*, **1** (4.9 mg, with 65% *B*; *t_R* 19.25) and **13** (10.7 mg, with 65% *B*; *t_R* 6.12) from *Fr. E7*, **9** (1.9 mg, with 50% *B*; *t_R* 37.30) and **10** (10.7 mg, with 60% *B*; *t_R* 31.25) from *Fr. E9*, **5** (9.1 mg, with 60% *B*; *t_R* 28.50) and **8** (4.7 mg, with 50% *B*; *t_R* 39.75) from *Fr. E12*, and **2** (12.6 mg, with 55% *B*; *t_R* 15.05), **7** (10.4 mg, with 55% *B*; *t_R* 23.00), and **11/12** (26.1 mg, with 55% *B*; *t_R* 31.10) from *Fr. E13*.

2-[2β,4αβ,8β,8αβ]-Decahydro-4a-hydroxy-8,8a-dimethylnaphthalen-2-yl]prop-2-enal (= *2β,4αβ,8β,8αβ*)-*Decahydro-4a-hydroxy-8,8a-dimethyl-α-methylenenaphthalene-2-aldaldehyde*; **1**): Colorless oil. [α]_D²⁵ = 56.0 (*c* = 0.191, MeOH). UV (MeOH): 219 (4.07), 199 (3.90). IR (film): 3473, 2926, 2862, 1690, 1449, 1379, 1247, 1174, 1008. ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR: *Tables 2 and 1*. HR-ESI-MS (pos.): 259.1666 ([*M* + Na]⁺, C₁₅H₂₄NaO₂⁺; calc. 259.1669).

(1β,4αβ,7β,8αβ)-Octahydro-7-[1-(hydroxymethyl)ethenyl]-1,8a-dimethylnaphthalen-4a(2H)-ol (= *1β,4αβ,7β,8αβ*)-*Decahydro-4a-hydroxy-8,8a-dimethyl-α-methylidenenaphthalene-2-ethanol*; **2**): Colorless oil. [α]_D²⁵ = +30.2 (*c* = 0.159, MeOH). UV (MeOH): 247 (3.39), 203 (3.56). IR (film): 3403, 2924, 2863, 1653, 1449, 1380, 1053, 1033. ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR: *Tables 2 and 1*. HR-ESI-MS (pos.): 261.1803 ([*M* + Na]⁺, C₁₅H₂₆NaO₂⁺; calc. 261.1825), 221.1892 ([*M* – OH]⁺, C₁₅H₂₅O⁺; calc. 221.1900).

(4αβ,7β,8αβ)-3,4,4a,5,6,7,8,8a-Octahydro-7-[1-(hydroxymethyl)ethenyl]-4a-methylnaphthalene-1-carboxaldehyde (**3**): Pale yellow oil. [α]_D²⁵ = –12.3 (*c* = 0.280, MeOH). UV (MeOH): 203 (3.64). IR (film): 3387, 2948, 2837, 1654, 1451, 1415, 1114, 1026. ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR: *Tables 2 and 1*. HR-ESI-MS (pos.): 235.1685 ([*M* + H]⁺, C₁₅H₂₃O₂⁺; calc. 235.1693).

(1αβ,2β,3β,4αβ,5β,8αβ)-Octahydro-4a,5-dimethyl-3-(1-methylethenyl)-3H-naphth[1,8a-b]oxiren-2-ol (**4**): Colorless oil. [α]_D²⁵ = –60.6 (*c* = 0.145, MeOH). UV (MeOH): 246 (2.46), 204 (3.01). IR (film): 3503, 2934, 2861, 1746, 1647, 1542, 1449, 1374, 1135, 1046. ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR: *Tables 2 and 1*. HR-ESI-MS (pos.): 237.1841 ([*M* + H]⁺, C₁₅H₂₅O₂⁺; calc. 237.1849).

5-Hydroxy-6-methoxy-2-[2-(4-methoxyphenyl)ethyl]-4H-1-benzopyran-4-one (**5**): Pale yellow amorphous powder. UV (MeOH): 342 (3.38), 230 (4.22), 203 (4.23). IR (film): 3375, 2919, 2836, 1734, 1651, 1627, 1579, 1513, 1478, 1453, 1398, 1271, 1243, 1230, 1157, 1051, 1031. ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR: *Table 3*. HR-ESI-MS (pos.): 327.1228 ([*M* + H]⁺, C₁₉H₁₉O₅⁺; calc. 327.1227).

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