

Molecular weight distributions of polysaccharides and lignin extracted from plant biomass with a polar ionic liquid analysed without a derivatisation process

メタデータ	言語: eng 出版者: 公開日: 2017-10-03 キーワード (Ja): キーワード (En): 作成者: メールアドレス: 所属:
URL	https://doi.org/10.24517/00009590

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Molecular weight distribution of polysaccharides and lignin extracted from plant biomass with a polar ionic liquid analysed without derivatisation process

Kosuke Kuroda,^{a,b} Yukinobu Fukaya,^{b, ‡} Tatsuhiko Yamada,^c and Hiroyuki Ohno^{*,a,b}

Polysaccharides and lignin, extracted from wheat bran with 1-ethyl-3-methylimidazolium methylphosphonate, were directly analysed with high performance liquid chromatography with the ionic liquid as an eluent (HPILC). Polysaccharides and lignin were clearly detected independently with the use of both refractive index detector and UV detector. Polysaccharides with lower molecular weight were obtained at 25 °C for 2h with extraction yield of only 4 %. Higher molecular weight polysaccharides were extracted with yield of 26 % at 120 °C. Similarly, high molecular weight polysaccharides were successfully obtained even at 80 °C from bran that was pre-treated with ionic liquid at 50 °C to extract low molecular weight fraction. Furthermore, similar extraction was carried out for wood biomass. Characteristics of pine and oak were observed in molecular weight distribution of the extracted polysaccharides and lignin. We also analysed the extracts from different parts of *Prunus × yedoensis* 'Somei-yoshino'. Polysaccharides from leaves were relatively low molecular weight than those from twigs. The present HPILC method has potential to analyse molecular weight distribution of components of plants easily and fast.

1 Introduction

Ionic liquids (ILs)¹ are widely studied as solvents for polymers that are insoluble in conventional molecular solvents.²⁻⁴ Especially, since precisely-designed polar ILs dissolve both cellulose and hemicellulose under mild conditions,^{5,6} ILs have been studied as media to extract cellulose from plant biomass.^{5,7-13} To obtain efficient use of biomass, extraction of high molecular weight (Mw) polysaccharides is necessary in spite of their little solubility. While considerably high temperature leads to a complete dissolution of biomass,^{14,15} it is not sure whether ILs at various conditions may indeed extract high Mw polysaccharides and lignin. Furthermore, higher temperature may induce decomposition of components of extracts¹⁴ but it is not also clear. From these queries, there is a strong request to accurately analyse the relation between molecular weight distribution (MwD) of extracts and extraction condition.

To date, a method to analyse MwD of extracts from biomass through derivatisation has been reported.^{16,17} However, this method is not suitable for analysis of extracts because MwD of the derivatised materials may change during the derivatisation and following processes.¹⁶ Obviously, direct

analysis of extracts without derivatisation is an important goal to achieve.

Polar ILs, in spite of less favourable physico-chemical properties such as relatively high viscosity, have been used as solvents for the analysis of cellulose.^{18,19} We have already proposed a method to analyse the component of polysaccharides (cellulose and hemicellulose) extracted with ILs using ¹H NMR.²⁰ The use of a no-deuterium NMR combined with a solvent suppression technique, allowed us to carry out the measurements without need of ILs deuteration²⁰, this enabling the analysis of polysaccharides in various ILs. This enabled the analysis of polysaccharides in various ILs. Furthermore, we have also demonstrated the use of polar ILs as eluents to high performance liquid chromatography (called HPILC) to reveal the MwD of cellulose dissolved in ILs.^{21,22} In addition, this HPILC technique allows the analysis in a very wide MwD range by a single scan; HPILC technique is expected to be an effective method to analyse polysaccharides and lignin extracted with ILs without derivatisation. It has again to be remarked that, due to the fact that derivatisation and washing processes lose low Mw compound in many cases, MwD detected with the

1 conventional methods did not show the exact profile of the
2 extracts.

3 In this study, we have investigated the relation between the
4 extraction conditions (temperature, time, kind of biomass, part
5 of a biomass) and the MwD of extracted polysaccharides and
6 lignin.

7 Experimental

8 Materials and Instruments

9 1-Ethylimidazole was purchased from Kanto Chemical Co.
10 and used after drying over KOH and distillation. Dimethyl
11 phosphite was purchased from Tokyo Chemical Ind. Co. and
12 was used after distillation. Cellulose (Cellulose powder C,
13 from Advantech Co., Ltd) and lignin (Lignin dealkaline, from
14 Tokyo chemical industry Co., Ltd) was purchased and used
15 without pretreatment. The amounts of water of IL samples
16 were confirmed by Karl Fischer coulometric titration (Kyoto
17 Electronics; MKC-510N). ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR spectra for
18 analysis of polysaccharides and confirmation of structures of
19 ILs were performed with JEOL ECX 400 (JEOL Ltd.).

20 Synthesis of [C₂mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂]

21 1-Ethylimidazole (100g, 1.04 mol) and dimethyl phosphite
22 (126g, 1.14 mol) were slowly mixed under an argon gas
23 atmosphere at room temperature without solvent. The
24 reaction mixture was stirred at 80 °C for 24h. The resulting
25 liquid was washed repeatedly with excess dehydrated diethyl
26 ether. The residual liquid was dissolved in dichloromethane,
27 and the resulting solution was passed through a column filled
28 with neutral activated alumina. After removal of
29 dichloromethane, the residual liquid was dried *in vacuo* at 80
30 °C for 24h to give [C₂mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂] as a colourless
31 liquid.

32 Water content of [C₂mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂] was measured
33 with Karl Fischer Coulometric Titrator (Kyoto Electronics;
34 MKC-510N). The IL with water content of less than 2000
35 ppm was used as both eluent and solvent. Structure of
36 [C₂mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂] was confirmed by ¹H- and ¹³C-
37 NMR spectra (JEOL ECX-400). ¹H-NMR δ_H (400 MHz;
38 CDCl₃; Me₄Si); 1.58 (3H, t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, NCH₂CH₃), 3.55
39 (3H, d, *J* = 11.9 Hz, POCH₃), 4.06 (3H, s, NCH₃), 4.36 (2H,
40 q, *J* = 7.3 Hz, NCH₂CH₃), 6.92 (1H, d, *J* = 588.5 Hz, PH),
41 7.58 (2H, d, *J* = 11.3 Hz, NCHCHN), 10.66 (1H, s, NCHN).
42 ¹³C-NMR δ_C (100 MHz; CDCl₃; Me₄Si); 15.22 (NCH₂CH₃),
43 35.87 (NCH₃), 44.98 (NCH₂CH₃), 50.05 (POCH₃), 121.35
44 (NCHCHN), 123.17 (NCHCHN), 138.40 (NCHN).

45 Methods

46 HPLC setup

47 Components in the HPLC system used were high pressure
48 durable pump (LC-20AD; Shimadzu), an injector (7725;
49 Rheodyne) with a 5 μL loop, a UV-vis detector (SPD-20AV;
50 Shimadzu), and a refractive index detector (Shodex RI-71;
51 Showa Denko). Columns filled with silica gel (Shodex KW-

402.5-4F, 4.6 mm (inner diameter) × 300 mm, 3 μm, and KW-
53 405-4B, 4.6 mm (inner diameter) × 50 mm, 5 μm; Showa
54 Denko) were used in tandem. The columns were heated at
55 55 °C using a column oven (CTO-10Avp; Shimadzu). The RI
56 detector cells were maintained at 40 °C. The flow rate was set
57 at 0.01 mL·min⁻¹. Sodium polystylenesulfonate standards
58 from Sowa Science Corporation with molecular weight
59 ranging from 3,000 to 2,350,000 Da were used for calibration
60 of the SEC system because pullulan shows no UV-absorption.
61 For data acquisition and processing we used the software
62 package SIC-480 II XP (SIC). [C₂mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂] with
63 water less than 2000 ppm was used as an eluent under an
64 argon atmosphere.

65 HPILC measurement of cellulose and lignin

66 Suspensions of cellulose or lignin (1.0 mg each) in 200 mg of
67 dried [C₂mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂] were prepared under dry
68 nitrogen gas atmosphere. The mixtures were gently stirred at
69 room temperature until the solutions became homogeneous
70 and clear. The solutions were directly injected into HPILC
71 and measured.

72 Analysis of extracts from biomass with ILs by HPILC

73 The milled biomass from different sources were used; wheat
74 bran (herbaceous plant, 42-50 mesh), pine (softwood, *Picea*
75 *jezoensis*, 36-200 mesh), and oak (hardwood, *Quercus*
76 *crispula*, 36-200 mesh) without defatting. Detailed procedure
77 according to *Prunus* × *yedoensis* was described below.
78 Biomass was dried under reduced pressure before use. The
79 dried biomass powder (70 mg) was added into 1.0 g of dried
80 [C₂mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂] and stirred at 200 rpm in an oil bath.
81 The resulting solutions were centrifuged at 14,800 rpm (16200
82 G) from 10 to 60 min for removing residue. The supernatants
83 were mixed with 70 wt% of DMSO and the resulting solutions
84 were stirred at 80 °C for 3min. After filtration with glass filter
85 under reduced pressure, the samples were injected to HPILC.

86 When we extracted polysaccharides from IL-treated bran,
87 we subjected three IL/bran solutions to 1st extraction
88 (temperature: 50 °C, time: 2h, stirring: 200 rpm, feed bran: 70
89 mg, IL: 1.0 g). They were centrifuged and the precipitation
90 was collected. The precipitation was dispersed into 40 ml of
91 DMSO and mixed with vortex mixer for 2min, to strip any
92 dissolved substances adsorbed or trapped within the solid
93 texture. The solution was centrifuged (10000 G, 10min) and
94 the supernatant was removed. For further washing, 40 ml of
95 methanol was added and the solution was mixed with vortex
96 mixer for 1min. The solution was centrifuged (10000 G,
97 10min) and the supernatant was removed. Washing process
98 with methanol was repeated 2 times. After drying under
99 reduced pressure at room temperature, we collected the IL-
100 treated bran (over 80 mg) from three samples. The IL-treated
101 bran (70 mg) was added into 1.0 g of fresh
102 [C₁mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂] and stirred (80 °C, 2h, 200 rpm).

103 Pretreatment of *Prunus* × *yedoensis*

1 Petal, leaf, and twig of *P. × yedoensis* were obtained on the
2 campus of Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology in
3 April, 2014. They were freeze-dried and bark of the twig was
4 peeled. They were fragmented by hands to be almost 1 mm in
5 diameter.

6 Calculation of yield

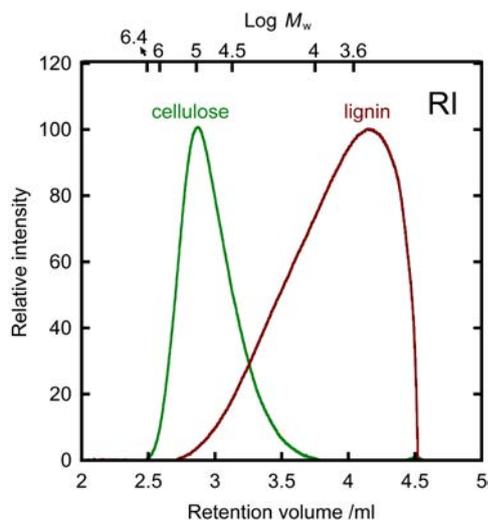
7 Yield was calculated based on peak area of RI-chromatograms
8 with a hypothesis that signals appeared in RI-chromatogram
9 are cellulose. We already reported that HPILC enabled
10 quantitative analysis.²¹ For yield calculation, following
11 equation was used:

$$\text{yield (\%)} = \frac{\text{weight of extract from chromatogram (mg)}}{70 \text{ (mg)}}$$

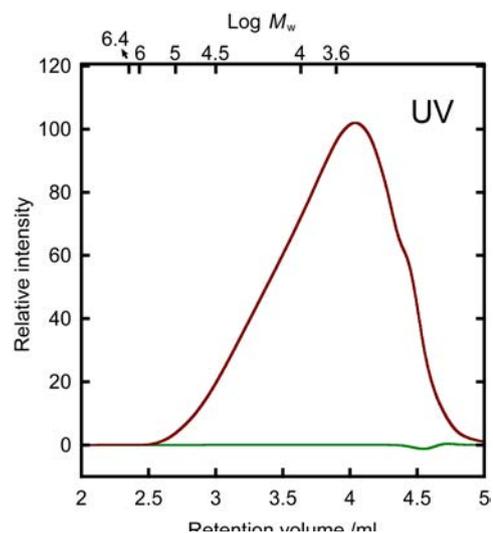
12 Results and discussion

13 HPILC measurement with model polysaccharides and lignin

14 To analyse polysaccharides and lignin independently,
15 combination of refractive index (RI) detector and UV detector
16 should be effective. Since lignin has UV absorption from 500
17 nm, lignin is detectable with both RI and UV detectors. On
18 the other hand, both cellulose and hemicellulose have no UV
19 absorption, and hence, detection of polysaccharides and lignin
20 separately should be possible by using both detectors.
21 However, the frequently-used imidazolium-type polar ILs also
22 have UV absorption based on the imidazolium ring. We have
23 preliminarily performed UV



24



25

27 Fig. 1 RI-chromatogram (top) and UV-chromatogram (bottom) of the solutions
28 of cellulose or lignin dissolved in [C₂mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂].

29 spectrometry of lignin dissolved in 1-ethyl-3-methyl-
30 imidazolium methylphosphonate ([C₂mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂]),
31 as shown in Fig. S1 (see ESI). Absorption of UV light of
32 [C₂mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂] was found from 350 nm with
33 saturation at 260 nm. Lignin dissolved in
34 [C₂mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂] shows intense UV absorption
35 spectrum. We chose the detection wavelength of 300 nm for
36 detection of lignin. At this wavelength, appreciable detection
37 of lignin was possible with relatively low absorption of the
38 imidazolium ring as the background.

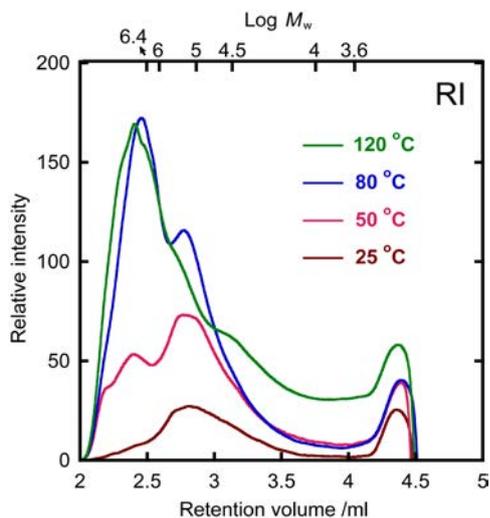
39 To confirm that cellulose and lignin were distinguished by
40 use of the two detectors, solutions of cellulose or lignin in
41 [C₂mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂] (0.5 wt%) were measured using
42 HPILC (Fig. 1). As expected, the signals of cellulose and
43 lignin were detected with RI detector (Fig. 1, top), while with
44 UV detector, only lignin was detected (Fig. 1, bottom). There
45 was difference in peak of intensity of the peaks between the
46 two detectors depending on their sensitivity (7 mV with RI
47 detector and 265 mV with UV detector). For an easy
48 comparison of the chromatograms, these signals were
49 normalised based on the intensity of the peaks for lignin:
50 maximum intensity of the peaks of lignin was calculated to be
51 100.

52 HPILC analysis of extracts from wheat bran

53 Fig. 2 shows MwD of extracts from wheat bran with
54 [C₂mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂] at various temperature. Wheat bran
55 (70 mg) was added into 1.0 g of [C₂mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂] and
56 stirred for 2h. To decrease viscosity, dimethyl sulfoxide was
57 added. The resulting solution was measured after filtration.
58 Comparing the RI- and UV-chromatograms, we see that the
59 former showed much higher intensity than the latter (e.g. 170
60 vs. 4 at 80 °C). This clearly indicates that RI-chromatograms
61 are attributed mainly to cellulose and hemicellulose. Three
62 peaks were observed in the RI-chromatograms, namely at 2.4,

1 2.8, and 4.4 ml of the retention volume. Among them, the
 2 peak at 4.4 ml was assigned to monomeric or oligomeric sugar
 3 and other low Mw compounds. Two fractions, observed in
 4 between 2.0 and 3.5 ml (Mw of over 10^4) were suggested to
 5 be attributed to mainly hemicellulose and cellulose
 6 respectively according to the literature¹⁷. In the UV-detected
 7 chromatograms in Fig. 2, mainly two peaks were observed at
 8 higher and lower retention volume than 3.5 ml, respectively.
 9 The peaks at higher retention volume should be assigned to
 10 both lignin and low Mw aromatic species. The peak at low
 11 retention volume are presumably considered to be lignin-
 12 carbohydrate complexes (LCCs).¹⁷

13 At lower temperature, only low Mw polysaccharides were
 14 detected with an extracted yield calculated from the
 15 chromatogram to be approximately 4 %. By increasing the
 16 extraction temperature, high Mw polysaccharides were
 17 obtained with an increase of the extracted yield. At 120 °C,
 18 the extracted amount of high Mw components was almost the
 19 same as that detected at 80 °C but with an increased yield
 20 (26 %), attributed to the extraction of low Mw
 21 polysaccharides (at around 3.0 to 4.2 ml). Additionally, some
 22 decomposition of polysaccharides was detected at 120 °C, as
 23 suggested by the decreased intensity of the signal at 2.8 ml.
 24 According to lignin (UV-chromatogram), there is no change in
 25 MwD between 25 to 80 °C, but extracted amount



28 Fig. 2 Temperature-dependence of chromatogram of extracts from wheat bran
 29 with $[C_2mim][(MeO)(H)PO_2]$: upper: with RI detector, lower: with UV detector.

26

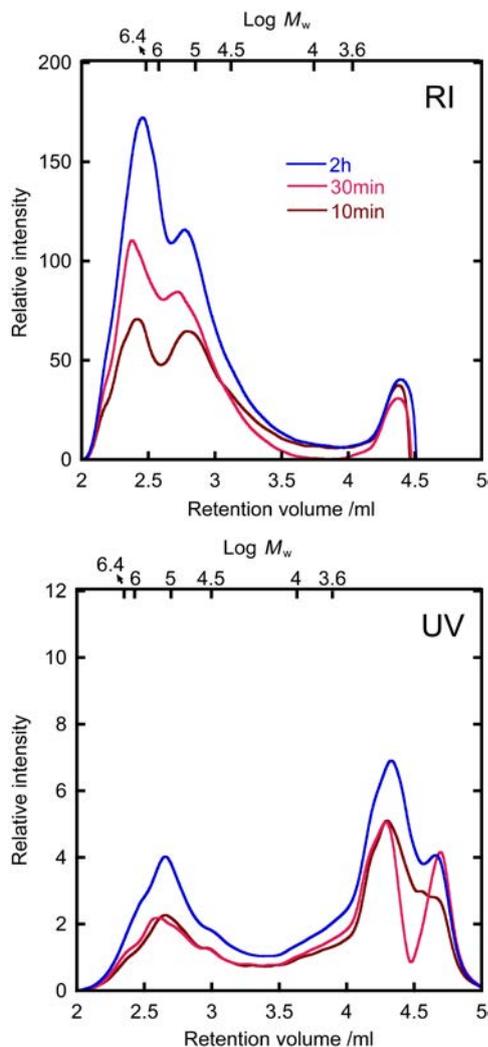
30 increased at higher temperature. At 120 °C, decrease of the
 31 peak at 2.6 ml and appearance of new peak at 3.1 ml were
 32 observed. They are attributed to the partial decomposition of
 33 lignin. It is known that partial decomposition of lignin
 34 generally occurs at temperature over 100 °C.^{23,24}

35 The relation between extraction temperature and extracted
 36 amount of cellulose and xylan (main hemicellulose of wheat
 37 bran) with ¹H NMR using a quite similar IL, 1,3-
 38 dimethylimidazolium methyl methylphosphonate, was
 39 previously investigated in our laboratory.²⁴ In our report, it is
 40 reported that extracted amount of only xylan increases at
 41 temperature in between 80 and 120 °C. Therefore, the
 42 increased signal between 3.0 and 4.2 ml in the RI-
 43 chromatogram was attributed to be xylan. Furthermore, since
 44 decomposition of LCCs was observed at 120 °C in the UV-
 45 chromatogram, the increase of xylan signal was caused by
 46 degradation of the LCCs.

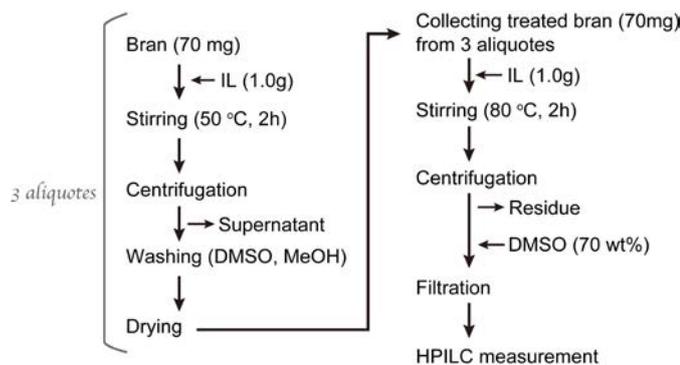
47 Fig. 3 shows MwD of extracted polysaccharides and lignin
 48 at various extraction time at 80 °C. As the figure clearly
 49 shows, the extracted amount and fraction of high Mw
 50 cellulose increased as increasing the treatment time.
 51 However, compared to the effect of temperature (see Fig. 2),
 52 the extraction time affected the fraction of high Mw
 53 polysaccharides only a bit. Also the extracted amount of
 54 lignin also increased by increasing the extraction time.

55 The extraction process was also performed at 25 °C (see
 56 ESI, Fig. S2). As mentioned above, only low Mw
 57 polysaccharides were extracted at 25 °C for 2h, but longer
 58 extraction time (e.g. 96h) led to extraction of high Mw
 59 polysaccharides. This result strongly suggests that
 60 $[C_2mim][(MeO)(H)PO_2]$ has an ability to extract high Mw
 61 polysaccharides even at 25 °C; however, other factors, such as
 62 viscosity of ILs, prevent the extraction of high Mw polymers.
 63 It should be noted, nevertheless, that low Mw polysaccharides
 64 were main components of extracts at 25 °C even after 96h
 65 stirring with an extracted polysaccharides yield (14 %) similar

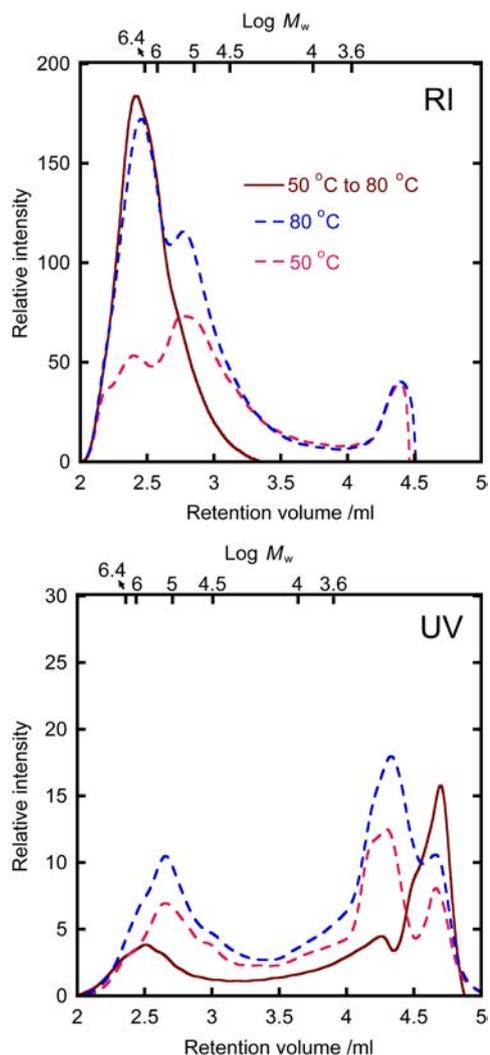
1 to those obtained at 50 °C for 2h (17 %) and at 80 °C for
 2 10min (13 %), respectively. Undoubtedly, the elevating
 3 temperature certainly accelerated the extraction of
 4 polysaccharides.



5
 6
 7 Fig. 3 Chromatograms of extracts for various extraction time from wheat bran
 8 with $[C_2mim][(MeO)(H)PO_2]$ at 80 °C upper: with RI detector, lower: with UV
 9 detector.



10
 11 Scheme 1 Extraction at 80 °C from bran treated with $[C_2mim][(MeO)(H)PO_2]$ at
 12 50 °C.



13

14

15 Fig. 4 Chromatograms of the extract from wheat bran (80 °C) after treatment
 16 with $[C_2mim][(MeO)(H)PO_2]$ at 50 °C upper: with RI detector, lower: with UV
 17 detector.

18 Our results in fact show that the fraction of high Mw
 19 polysaccharides in extracts was affected by the extraction
 20 temperature more than extraction time. Therefore, we
 21 expected that only high Mw polysaccharides could be
 22 obtained from the bran pre-treated at lower temperature. Bran
 23 was first stirred at 50 °C for 2h, and successively the treated
 24 bran was immersed in fresh IL at 80 °C (summarised in
 25 Scheme 1). As shown in Fig. 4, only high Mw
 26 polysaccharides were successfully extracted. Furthermore,
 27 lignin content in the extract from IL-treated bran was found to
 28 be low. These results show that extracts predominantly
 29 composed of high Mw polysaccharides were successfully
 30 obtained. This is the first report on the control of MwD of the
 31 extracted polysaccharides with single and pure IL just by
 32 varying temperature. This fact should be helpful to improve
 33 problems concerning industrial processes such as removing
 34 excess co-solvents.

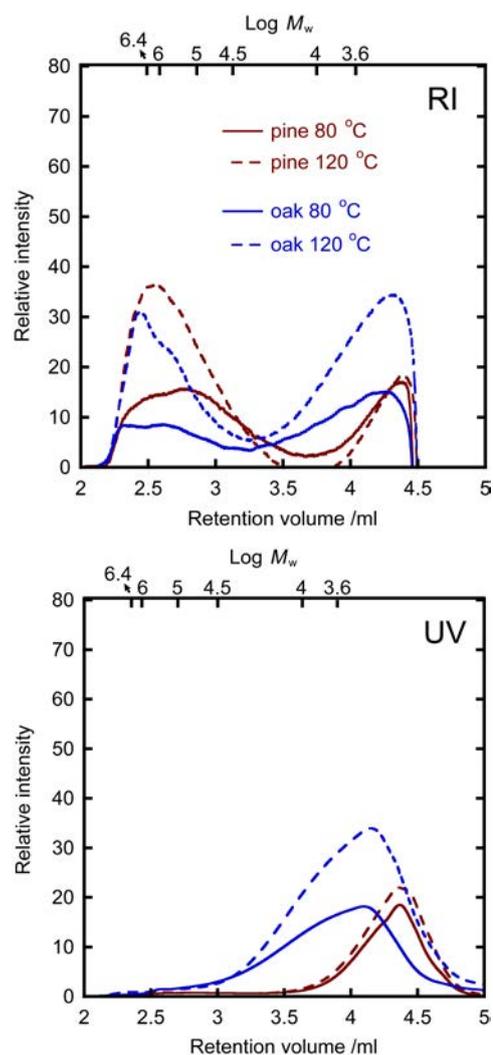
35 HPILC analysis of extracts from wood powder

1 We extracted polysaccharides from pine (*Picea jezoensis*
2 (*Sieb. et Zucc.*) Carr.) and from oak (*Quercus crispula* Blume)
3 as a typical examples of softwood and hardwood, respectively.
4 The extracts were analysed and compared as shown in Fig. 5.
5 As well known, it is more difficult to extract polysaccharides
6 from woody biomass than that from herbaceous species, and
7 this trend was also observed in the present experiments;
8 extraction yield from both pine and oak was 3 % at 80 °C
9 (around 1/5 of that from bran). Additionally, Mw of the
10 extracted lignin from woody biomass was larger than that
11 from bran extracted under the same condition.

12 When we extracted polysaccharides from two different
13 woody biomasses at 80 °C for 2h, a bimodal distribution in
14 MwD was observed in the RI-chromatograms (Fig. 5). The
15 peaks at smaller and larger retention volume in the RI-
16 chromatogram should be attributed to polysaccharides and
17 lignin, considering the profile of UV-chromatograms. 45
18 Extracts from pine contained low Mw polysaccharides and
19 low Mw lignin, compared to oak. The broad MwD of
20 polysaccharides and narrow MwD of lignin observed in pine
21 were also seen in the case of cedar (Softwood, *Cyptomeria*
22 *japonica* D. Don) as shown in Fig. S3 in ESI. Thus, these data
23 can be concur to clarify the characteristics of softwood (the
24 structures of lignin in softwood and hardwood are different²⁵).
25 All this considering, we may state that our HPILC analysis
26 should contribute to elucidate the presently unsolved
27 discussion on the relation between properties of components
28 from various wood samples and their lignin structures.

29 Compared with the data extracted at 80 °C, the extracted
30 amount of polysaccharides was a little increased when the oak
31 powder was treated at 120 °C (yield: 6 %, this value includes
32 both polysaccharides and lignin). Increase in the extracted
33 yield of lignin was also found. In the extracts from pine,
34 increase of extracted yield of polysaccharides was also 46
35 confirmed (yield: 5 %), but the extracted amount of lignin was
36 not changed. This indicates that in the case of pine,
37 polysaccharides can be preferentially obtained at higher 49
38 temperature. From the viewpoint of MwD, fraction of high
39 Mw polysaccharides was found to increase by changing the
40 treatment temperature from 80 °C to 120 °C.

41 Figure 6 compares the MwD of extracts after 2h and 6h,
42 respectively at 80 °C (Fig. 6). In the case of pine, no change
43 was observed in the RI- and UV- chromatograms. It strongly
44 suggested that extractable components in pine powder were

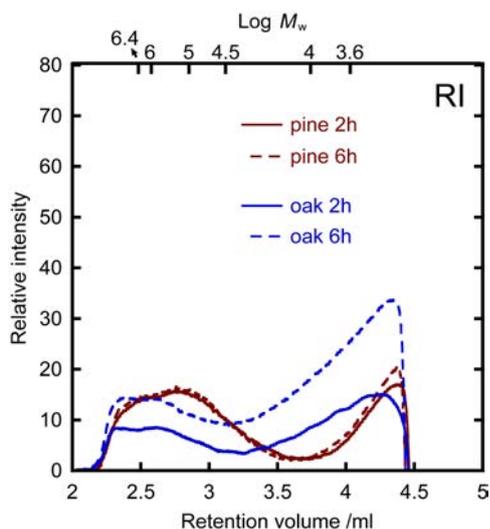


47 Fig. 5 Chromatograms of extracts at 80 °C and 120 °C from woody biomass with
48 [C₂mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂] upper: with RI detector, lower: with UV detector.

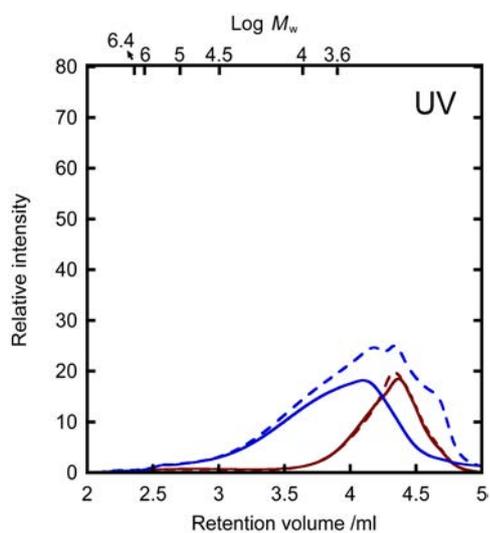
49 sufficiently extracted within 2h at 80 °C. In the case of oak,
50 the relative intensity of both the RI- and UV-detected
51 chromatograms was found to increase by longer treatment
52 time. This might be due to the different assembled structure
53 of LCCs. We however do not have any supporting data to
54 confirm this hypothesis, hence, a more complete analysis of
55 these biomasses should be carried out to clarify this point.

56 HPILC analysis of extracts from different parts of *Prunus* × 57 *yedoensis* ‘Somei-yoshino’

58 For efficient use of plant biomass, various regions of plant
59 biomass such as twigs and leaves should be utilized. Since
60 they are intrinsically different tissues, the extracted
61 polysaccharides are expected to have a different MwD and
62 therefore, a different profile of the extraction. Analysis of
63 MwD of component polymers in different tissues in plants is
64 of another great interest in plant biology. We have examined
65 leaves, petals, and twigs of *Prunus* × *yedoensis* ‘Somei-
66 *yoshino*’ as typical biomass in Japan in spite of hardness of
67 the woody part of cherry tree.



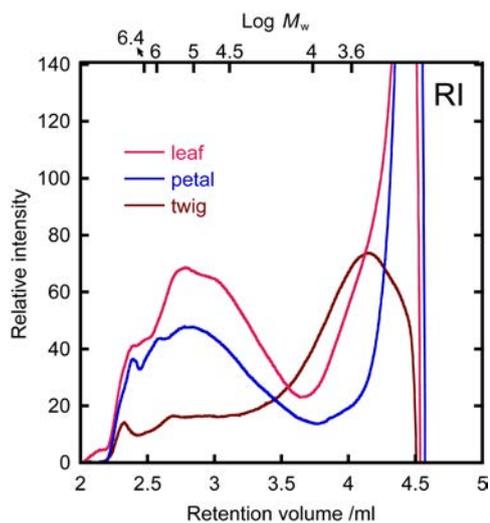
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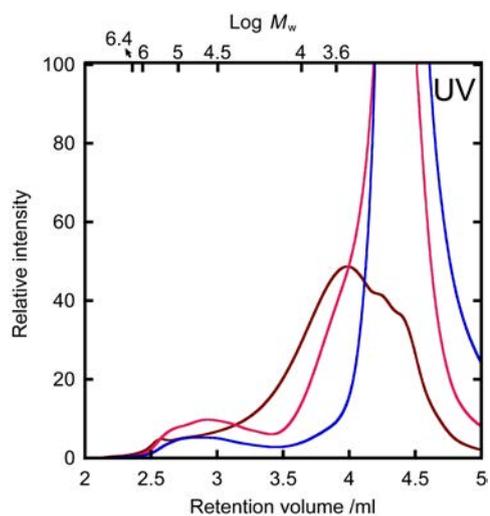
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3 Fig. 6 Chromatograms of extracts for 2h and 6h from woody biomass with
 4 $[C_2mim][[(MeO)(H)PO_2]]$ (load amount: 70 mg, IL amount: 1.0 g extraction
 5 temperature: 80 °C, upper: with RI detector, lower: with UV detector).

6 These were added into $[C_2mim][[(MeO)(H)PO_2]]$ and stirred at
 7 120 °C for 2h. A large amount of polysaccharides was
 8 extracted from leaves compared to that from twigs (Fig. 7). In
 9 terms of leaves, relatively low Mw polysaccharides were
 10 mainly extracted, while high Mw as well as low Mw
 11 polysaccharides were extracted from twigs. MwD of
 12 polysaccharides extracted from petals was almost similar to
 13 that extracted from leaves in spite that the extracted amount
 14 was somewhat lower than that obtained from petals. This may
 15 be related to the different role and life-span of the tissues.
 16 Lignin extracted from twigs showed the largest Mw among
 17 them. This result is fairly comprehensible from the similar
 18 viewpoint as mentioned above. It should be noted here that
 19 UV-chromatograms of leaf and petal may include other low
 20 Mw aromatic compounds such as flavonoids and chlorophyll.
 21 Analysis of these aromatic compounds will be the further task,
 22 and it is expected to be carried out with multi-wavelength
 23 spectrophotometers.



24



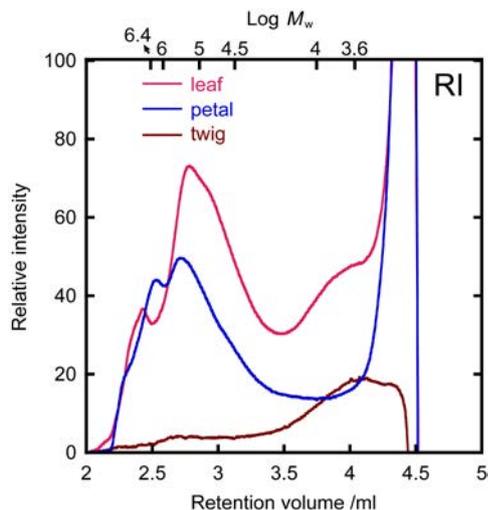
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26 Fig. 7 Chromatograms of extracts from different parts of *Prunus × yedoensis*
 27 'Somei-yoshino' with $[C_2mim][[(MeO)(H)PO_2]]$ at 120 °C upper: with RI detector,
 28 lower: with UV detector.

29 We also performed the extraction experiments at 80 °C for
 30 2h and analysed them (Fig. 8 and Fig. S4 in ESI). Except for
 31 increase of extracted amount from twigs, significant change
 32 was not observed. This indicates that heating at 80 °C was
 33 enough to extract polysaccharides from leaves and petals. On
 34 the other hand, higher temperature (> 120 °C) might be
 35 preferred for efficient extraction from twigs. These reflect
 36 different composition of lignin in different parts of plants.

37 HPILC was successfully applied to direct analysis of
 38 extracts from woody biomass. It is noted here that some
 39 improvements lead to more convenient and precise
 40 measurement. At present, one measurement needs 8h due to
 41 slow feeding based on high viscosity of ILs. Elevating
 42 column temperature or/and using pressure-durable column are
 43 expected to be potential solutions. Additionally, the void
 44 volume of 2.2 ml is another critical point because the analysis
 45 of super high Mw might not be precise. Seeking a column
 46 applicable to super high Mw should be needed for the
 47 improvement.

1 In the present paper, HPILC was successfully examined to



2
3 Fig. 8 Chromatograms of extracts from different parts of *Prunus × yedoensis*
4 'Somei-yoshino' with [C₂mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂] at 80 °C with RI detector.

5 analyse extracted both polysaccharides and lignin. This
6 methodology is also useful to get a clue to extract only high or
7 low Mw cellulose. MWD of cellulosic materials is very
8 important when their physico-chemical properties are
9 controlled.

10 Conclusions

11 We have examined the extraction power of a polar IL from a
12 viewpoint of MwD of polysaccharides and lignin in extracts
13 using HPILC. Higher extraction temperature led to increase
14 of the fraction of high Mw polysaccharides and extracted
15 amount. Whereas longer extraction temperature also
16 improved the extraction yield, it was less effective than that by
17 temperature change. Considering these, we have tried to
18 extracted polysaccharides with desired Mw, showing that only
19 high Mw polysaccharides were extracted at 80 °C from bran
20 pre-treated at 50 °C with the same IL. Extracts from woody
21 biomass were also investigated to find similar effect of
22 temperature to that in case of bran. In a viewpoint of wood
23 types, the broad MwD of polysaccharides and narrow MwD of
24 lignin were seen in the case of softwood compared to
25 hardwood. The findings can be a clue to establish efficient
26 biorefinery against each of wood species. Polysaccharides
27 extracted from different parts of *Prunus × yedoensis* were also
28 analysed. It was observed that polysaccharides extracted from
29 leaf were materials having relatively low Mw in respect to
30 those extracted from twig. It was also found that treatment at
31 80 °C was appropriate to extract polysaccharides in the case of
32 leaves and petals, providing a clue for the extraction of other
33 valuable molecules from plants without partial decomposition.

34 Acknowledgements

35 This study was supported by a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific
36 Research from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science

(No. 21225007). This study was also partly supported by the
38 Japan Science Technology Agency, JST-CREST program. K.
39 K. acknowledges the financial support of the Japan Society for
40 the Promotion of Science (Research Fellowship for Young
41 Scientists). Dr. Hideaki Murata and Mr. Shinya Ono of
42 Shimadzu Corporation should be acknowledged for their
43 helpful advice about HPLC analysis. We would like to
44 dedicate this article to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the
45 Department of Biotechnology and Life Science, Tokyo
46 University of Agriculture and Technology.

47 Notes and references

48 ^a Department of Biotechnology, Tokyo University of Agriculture and
49 Technology, 2-24-16, Naka-cho, Koganei, Tokyo, 184-8588, Japan.

50 E-mail: ohnoh@cc.tuat.ac.jp; Fax: +81-42-388-7024;

51 Tel: +81-42-388-7024

52 ^b Functional Ionic Liquid Laboratories, Graduate School of Engineering,
53 Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology, 2-24-16, Naka-cho,
54 Koganei, Tokyo, 184-8588, Japan.

55 ^c Department of Biomass Chemistry, Forestry and Forest Products
56 Research Institute, Matsunosato 1, Tsukuba, Ibaraki 305-8687, Japan. E-
57 mail: yamadat@affrc.go.jp; Fax: +81-29-874-3720; Tel: +81-29-829-
58 8348

59 [‡] Present address: Department of Chemistry and Biotechnology, Tottori
60 University, 4-101 Koyama Minami, Tottori, 680-8522, Japan.

61 [†] Electronic Supplementary Information (ESI) available: a UV-vis
62 spectrum of lignin/[C₂mim][(MeO)(H)PO₂] solution; RI- and UV-
63 chromatograms of extracts at 25 °C for various extraction time;
64 chromatograms of cedar extracted at 80 and 120 °C; chromatograms of
65 extracts from three parts of *P. × yedoensis* at 80 °C. See
66 DOI: 10.1039/b000000x/

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