Facile Synthesis, Single-Crystal Structure, and Biological Evaluation of Novel Pyrazolo[5,1-d][1,2,5]triazepin-4-ones

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A facile ring-enlargement reaction of 2,6-diphenyl-4H-pyrazolo[5,1-c][1,4]oxazin-4-one is described, generating the pyrazolo[5,1-d][1,2,5]triazepin-4-ones in good yields. Structures of the prepared compounds were determined on the basis of IR, ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR, and HR-MS data. Moreover, the molecular structure was confirmed by the X-ray crystal-structure analysis of one compound that was prone to crystallization. Preliminary biological evaluation showed that the compounds $2e - 2h$ promote the viability and inhibit the apoptosis of vascular endothelial cells at low concentration.

Introduction. – Small- and medium-sized N-containing heterocyclic skeletons, such as fused triazepines with a bridgehead N-atom in the molecule exhibit remarkable biological properties [1]. Although several methods for constructing 1,3,5-triazepine can be found in the literature [2], the 1,2,5-triazepin skeleton has only received scant attention [3].

It has been reported that the class of pyrazoles represents structurally diverse molecules with widespread and diverse pharmacological properties such as anticancer [4], antimicrobial [5], antiviral [6], antidepressant [7], antimycobacterial [8], antiinflammatory [9], anti-angiogenic [10], and antiglaucoma activities [11]. Moreover, pyrazoles have found applications in drug development for the treatment of dyslipidemia [12], obesity [13], and neuropathic pain [14]. However, pyrazole-fused triazepin derivatives remain to be fully exploited, since most of them have not yet been found in nature or have not been synthesized, or its biological properties have not been evaluated.

We previously reported our efforts to identify novel potential agents, which inhibited human umbilical vein endothelial cell (HUVEC) apoptosis, based on pyrazole heterocycles [15]. More recently, we became interested in exploring pyrazolefused heterocycles that contain more heteroatoms, ultimately discovering novel antithrombotic and anticancer agents [16]. In continuation of our search for biologically potent molecules, we hereby report the synthesis and structure characterization of pyrazolo $[5,1-d][1,2,5]$ triazepin-4-one derivatives, which could inhibit endothelial cell apoptosis.

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Results and Discussion. – The general synthetic strategy to obtain pyrazole-fused triazepin analogs is outlined in *Scheme 1*. Starting material 1 with various \mathbb{R}^1 and \mathbb{R}^2 substituents could be easily synthesized via cyclization of 3-aryl-1-(2-aryl-2-oxoethyl)- 1H-pyrazole-5-carboxylic acid in the presence of Ac₂O [17]. Reaction of 1 with $NH₂NH₂ \cdot H₂O$ at reflux temperature in BuOH provided the desired pyrazolo[5,1 d [1,2,5]triazepin-4-one 2 in 68–82% yield.

Scheme 1. Synthesis of 5,8-Dihydro-2,7-diphenyl-4H-pyrazolo[5,1-d][1,2,5]triazepin-4-ones

It was of interest to convert ethyl 3-aryl-1-(2-aryl-2-oxoethyl)-1H-pyrazole-5 carboxylate derivatives 3 to the corresponding pyrazolo $[5,1-d][1,2,5]$ triazepine derivatives 2. As an approach towards the construction of 2, we initially chose a sequential process of condensation and ring-closure reaction between δ -keto esters and NH₂NH₂ · H2O via the intermediate hydrazide 4 [18]. Thus, for example, we carried out the reaction of 3i with 1 equiv. or excess $NH₂NH₂·H₂O$ in refluxing EtOH for 12 h to obtain the desired compound 2i; however, our attempt unfortunately failed due to competitive reactions (Scheme 2, Path a).

We next attempted at another route as shown in *Scheme 2 (Path b)*. According to our previous report [17], basic hydrolysis of 3i, followed by acidic treatment, afforded 3-(4-methoxyphenyl)-1-[2-(4-methoxyphenyl)-2-oxoethyl]-1H-pyrazole-5-carboxylic acid. Then, treatment of the latter with Ac_2O gave lactone 1i, which reacted with $NH₂NH₂·H₂O$ in BuOH to afford 2i and 4i in 75 and 15% yields, respectively.

A proposed ring-enlargement mechanism is outlined in Scheme 3. In boiling BuOH, nucleophilic addition of $NH₂NH₂$ to the C=O group of lactone 1i formed an enol intermediate \bf{A} that should isomerize to the ketone $\bf{4i}$. Although the enol \bf{A} might be more stable because of the conjugated structure, ketone 4i reacts via intramolecular reaction with $NH₂$ to result in the final cyclic hydrazide [19].

The structures of compounds $2a - 2i$ were established by IR, ${}^{1}H$ -NMR, HR-MS, and X-ray crystal diffraction of $2c$ (*Fig. 1*). Moreover, the assignment of NH in the target compounds and $C=O$ in the by-products of type 4 were accomplished by spectroscopic data. For example, IR spectra showed the characteristic stretching vibration at 1657 cm⁻¹ for the C=O group of 2i, along with the absorption band at $3203 - 2933$ cm⁻¹ due to the NH group. On the other hand, IR spectra of compound 4i showed characteristic absorption bands at 1689 and 1668 cm^{-1} corresponding to the ketone C=O and hydrazide C=O group, respectively. The 1 H-NMR spectra of 2i exhibited a signal corresponding to the CONH moiety at $\delta(H)$ 11.40 ppm as well as aromatic H-

atom signals in the range of $6.97 - 7.89$ ppm. The significant feature of 4i was the appearance of a *singlet* for NH₂ at δ (H) 4.45 ppm. The mass spectra of the two compounds 2i and 4i showed peaks for the $[M + H]$ ⁺ ion at m/z 363.1454 and 381.1570, respectively, in full agreement with their assigned structures.

Fig. 1. ORTEP View of compound 2c, including the atom numbering. Displacement ellipsoids are drawn at the 25% probability.

Single crystals of 2c suitable for X-ray single-crystal analysis were obtained at room temperature by partial evaporation of the solvent from AcOEt solution. The compound was constituted as pyrazolo $[5,1-d][1,2,5]$ triazepine frame which is the core of the structure, and it has two phenyl rings attached at $C(8)$ and $C(12)$. All bond lengths and bond angles in the phenyl rings are in the normal range. In the triazepine ring, the bond length of $C(11)=O(2)$ (1.2343(19) \AA) is slightly longer than that in the corresponding reactant ${\bf 1c}$ [18]. Moreover, the bond length C(11)–N(3) and bond angle $C(11)$ –N(3)–N(4) are 1.366(2) \AA and 130.24(14)°, respectively (*Table 1*). This implies delocalization of the lone pair of electrons on the N-atom over the pyrazole and benzylideneamine moiety in 2c. All the aromatic rings are almost planar. Furthermore, the pyrazole ring and the attached substituted phenyl ring are almost coplanar with a

$N(4)$ –C(12)	1.284(2)	$N(3) - N(4)$	1.4025(19)
$N(3) - C(11)$	1.366(2)	$C(11) - O(2)$	1.2343(19)
$C(10)-C(11)$	1.467(2)	$N(1) - N(2)$	1.3439(18)
$N(2) - C(13)$	1.454(2)	$C(10) - N(2)$	1.354(2)
$C(12) - N(4) - N(3)$	119.28(15)	$N(4) - N(3) - C(11)$	130.24(14)
$N(3) - C(11) - O(2)$	119.33(15)	$O(2)$ –C(11)–C(10)	120.93(15)
$C(11) - C(10) - C(9)$	130.72(15)	$C(11) - C(10) - N(2)$	122.78(15)
$C(10)-N(2)-C(13)$	124.72(14)	$N(2) - C(13) - C(12)$	109.11(14)
$C(13) - C(12) - N(4)$	122.68(15)	$C(10) - N(2) - N(1)$	112.80(13)
$N(2) - N(1) - C(8)$	104.59(13)	$C(9) - C(10) - N(2)$	106.49(15)

Table 1. Selected Bond Lengths $[\AA]$ and Angles $[°]$ of Compound 2c

dihedral angle of 7.76(6)°. The two phenyl rings in compound 2c were neither coplanar nor perpendicular, being close to 45° (47.91(6)^{\corr}).

The triazepine ring adopts a twist-boat conformation, similar to those observed in the crystal structures of azepine [20]. The seven-membered ring consists of two coplanar halves (Fig. 1). The first is defined by atoms $N(3)$, $N(4)$, $C(12)$, and $C(13)$. The second half of the ring is composed of atoms $C(13)$, $N(2)$, $C(10)$, and $C(11)$, with the largest deviation from this plane not exceeding $0.007(2)$ Å. The dihedral angle between the two halves is $61.89(8)^\circ$, which is within the range of $57.74 - 63.93^\circ$, values found for this group of the similar compounds [21].

In the crystal lattice, the $C=O$ group of the triazepinone interacts with the NH of the adjacent molecules through a pair of linear $N(3)$ – $H(3)_{A} \cdots O(2)$ H-bonds to form an eight-membered $R_2^2(8)$ ring motif (*Table 2*). A C(15)–H(15) \cdots O(1) H-bond leads to self-assembly of 2c molecules into $C(13)$ chains, and pairs of $C(1)$ –H $(1)_{A}$ ··· O(2) Hbonds join two 2c molecules into centrosymmetric dimers of $R_2^2(24)$ type. Moreover, the $C(13)$ –H $(13)_B \cdots O(2)$ H-bonds convert the mentioned chains to a 2D network. Furthermore, some other C-H $\cdots \pi$ interactions may supply further Coulombic stabilization and take part in formation of the three-dimensional structure $(Fig. 2)$.

The sulforhodamine B (SRB) assay as described first by Skehan et al. was developed to be used in the disease-oriented, large-scale anticancer drug-discovery program of the National Cancer Institute (NCI) that was launched in 1985 [22]. Up to now, SRB protein staining has been widely used for cell proliferation and chemosensitivity testing, replacing tetrazolium-based assays.

Regulation of vascular endothelial cell (VEC) survival and apoptosis plays a crucial role during development, and in numerous physiologic and pathologic processes. First, we observed the morphological image of the VECs treated with compounds $2a-2i$ under a phase-contrast microscope in this study. We found that there were no obvious morphological changes of the cells, even if the cells were treated with compounds at a concentration of 2.5 μ m for 24 h. To evaluate the effects on the growth of VECs, we carried out the SRB assay with the compounds at 12 and 24 h, respectively. To our surprise, it was found that the quantities of the cells treated with the synthesized compounds were increased as shown in Fig. 3. Compounds $2c$ and $2e - 2h$ promoted VEC growth by ca. 10% at 2.5 μ for 12 and 24 h compared with the control group. Compounds 2d and 2i could markedly promote the cell growth after the treatment for 12 h. Other compounds did not affect the growth of VECs (data not shown).

Fig. 2. Molecular packing in compound 2c, showing details of the H-bond connectivities

Fig. 3. Effects of compounds $2a - 2i$ on cell viability of VECs at the concentration of 2.5 μ M for 12 and 24 h $(*: p < 0.05, **: p < 0.01 \text{ vs. control group}, n = 3)$

Analyzing endothelial apoptosis is necessary not only for the understanding of several physiologic and pathologic processes but also for evaluating treatments that inhibit endothelial cell apoptosis. To further demonstrate the apoptotic level, we examined the morphological changes induced by compounds $2a - 2i$ in VECs using Hoechst 33258 staining. Granulation of the nucleus appeared as fluorescent blue in the detail of the Hoechst 33258 stained cells (those in which vehicle was absent). Since nucleus granulation is a feature of the morphological change in apoptosis, these results indicate that $2e-2h$ may inhibit partly apoptosis in VECs compared with the control group at the concentration of 2.5 μ m after 12 h (*Fig. 4*), whereas the ratio of apoptotic

Fig. 4. Inhibition of VEC apoptosis by compounds $2a-2i$ at the concentration of 2.5 μ m for 12 and 24 h. Ratio of apoptotic cells vs. control. Results are presented as mean \pm SE ($n = 3, *$; $P < 0.05$ vs. control, **: $P < 0.01$ vs. control).

cells in the experimental groups treated with compounds $2e-2h$ for 24 h was restored to their original level. These results suggested that the anti-apoptotic effects of compounds 2e – 2h at low concentration may be in accordance with the proliferation of the VECs.

Conclusions. - A series of novel pyrazolo $[5,1-d][1,2,5]$ triazepin-4-ones were synthesized. The structures of the prepared compounds $2a - 2i$ were determined by spectroscopic methods. The representative X-ray single-crystal structure characterization of 2c was also performed. The biological assay revealed that compounds $2e - 2h$ promoted the VEC growth and inhibited the apoptosis of VECs at the concentration of $2.5 \mu M$.

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Experimental Part

General. The purity of the obtained compounds was checked by TLC on silica gel (SiO₂) 60 F₂₅₄ plates (Merck) in AcOEt/petroleum ether 1:1 and 1:2, detection with UV light. M.p.: XD-4 Digital micro melting point apparatus; uncorrected. IR Spectra: Avatar 370 FT-IR (ThermoNicolet) spectrophotometer in KBr disks; $\tilde{\nu}$ in cm⁻¹. ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR spectra: *Bruker Avance 400* spectrometer at 400 (1 H) and 100 (13 C) MHz; in (D₆)DMSO solns.; δ in ppm rel. to Me₄Si as internal standard, J in Hz. HR-MS: LTO Orbitrap Hybrid mass spectrometer; in m/z .

5,8-Dihydro-2,7-diphenyl-4H-pyrazolo[5,1-d][1,2,5]triazepin-4-ones 2. To a soln. of 2,6-diphenyl- $4H-pyrazolo[1,5-a]/1,4]oxazin-4-one$ (1; 1.0 mmol) in BuOH (25 ml), $NH₂·H₂O$ (1.2 mmol) was added. The mixture was stirred and heated to reflux for 2.5 – 6 h, until TLC indicated the end of the reaction. After cooling, a white solid was filtered off and washed with a small amount of EtOH. Pure products of 2 were obtained by column chromatography ($SiO₂$; AcOEt/petroleum ether 1:1) in good yields.

5,8-Dihydro-2,7-diphenyl-4H-pyrazolo[5,1-d][1,2,5]triazepin-4-one (2a). White solid. Yield: 248 mg (82%) . M.p. 230 – 232°. IR: 3201 – 2946 (NH), 1658 (C=O). ¹H-NMR: 5.61 (s, CH₂); 7.34 (t, J = 7.2, 1 arom. H); 7.40 (s, 1 pyrazole H); 7.42 (t, J = 7.2, 2 arom. H); 7.50 – 7.54 (m, 3 arom. H); 7.86 (d, J = 7.2, 2 arom. H); 7.91 – 7.94 (m, 2 arom. H); 11.55 (s, CONH). HR-MS: 303.1234 ($[M + H]^+$, C₁₈H₁₅N₄O⁺; calc. 303.1246).

2-(4-Chlorophenyl)-5,8-dihydro-7-phenyl-4H-pyrazolo[5,1-d][1,2,5]triazepin-4-one (2b). White solid. Yield: 230 mg (68%). M.p. 276–277°. IR: 3206–2916 (NH), 1663 (C=O). ¹H-NMR: 5.62 (s, CH₂); 7.46 (s, 1 pyrazole H); 7.48 (d, $J = 8.6, 2$ arom. H); 7.51 – 7.53 (m, 3 arom. H); 7.89 (d, $J = 8.6, 2$ arom. H); 7.91 – 7.93 (m, 2 arom. H); 11.59 (s, CONH). HR-MS: 337.0847 ($[M + H]^+$, C₁₈H₁₄ClN₄O⁺; calc. 337.0856).

5,8-Dihydro-2-(4-methoxyphenyl)-7-phenyl-4H-pyrazolo[5,1-d][1,2,5]triazepin-4-one (2c). White solid. Yield: 245 mg (74%). M.p. 217–219°. IR: 3217–2936 (NH), 1668 (C=O). ¹H-NMR: 3.78 (s, MeO); 5.58 (s, CH₂); 6.97 (d, J = 8.8, 2 arom. H); 7.31 (s, 1 pyrazole H); 7.48 – 7.52 (m, 3 arom. H); 7.78 (d, $J = 8.8$, 2 arom. H); 7.90 – 7.92 (*m*, 2 arom. H); 11.52 (*s*, CONH). ¹³C-NMR: 49.0; 55.6; 106.6; 114.6; 125.0; 127.2; 127.3; 129.4; 131.2; 134.8; 137.6; 150.5; 155.6; 158.2; 159.8. HR-MS: 333.1341 ($[M + H]^+$) $C_{19}H_{17}N_4O_2^+$; calc. 333.1352).

7-(4-Chlorophenyl)-5,8-dihydro-7-phenyl-4H-pyrazolo[5,1-d][1,2,5]triazepin-4-one (2d). White solid. Yield: 246 mg (73%). M.p. 280–282°. IR: 3196–2927 (NH), 1669 (C=O). ¹H-NMR: 5.61 (s, CH₂); 7.34 (t, J = 7.4, 1 arom. H); 7.41 (s, 1 pyrazole H); 7.42 (t, J = 7.4, 2 arom. H); 7.58 (d, J = 8.6, 2 arom. H); 7.65 (d, J = 7.4, 2 arom. H); 7.94 (d, J = 8.6, 2 arom. H); 11.60 (s, CONH). HR-MS: 337.0865 ($[M + H]$ ⁺, $C_{18}H_{14}CIN_4O^+$; calc. 337.0856).

2,7-Bis(4-chlorophenyl)-5,8-dihydro-4H-pyrazolo[5,1-d][1,2,5]triazepin-4-one (2e). White solid. Yield: 304 mg (82%). M.p. 238 – 239°. IR: 3188 – 2936 (NH), 1665 (C=O). ¹H-NMR: 5.60 (s, CH₂); 7.45 (s, 1 pyrazole H); 7.48 $(d, J = 8.6, 2 \text{ arom. H})$; 7.58 $(d, J = 8.6, 2 \text{ arom. H})$; 7.88 $(d, J = 8.6, 2 \text{ arom. H})$; 7.93 (d, J = 8.6, 2 arom. H); 11.61 (s, CONH). HR-MS: 371.0456 ($[M + H]^+$, C₁₈H₁₃Cl₂N₄O⁺; calc. 371.0466).

7-(4-Chlorophenyl)-5,8-dihydro-2-(4-methoxyphenyl)-4H-pyrazolo[5,1-d][1,2,5]triazepin-4-one $(2f)$. White solid. Yield: 289 mg (79%). M.p. 186 – 187°. IR: 3231 – 2932 (NH), 1653 (C=O). ¹H-NMR: 3.78 (s, MeO); 5.57 (s, CH₂); 6.97 (d, J = 8.3, 2 arom. H); 7.31 (s, 1 pyrazole H); 7.57 (d, J = 8.3, 2 arom. H); 7.78 $(d, J = 8.3, 2 \text{ arom. H})$; 7.93 $(d, J = 8.3, 2 \text{ arom. H})$; 11.57 (s, CONH) . ¹³C-NMR: 48.9; 55.6; 106.8; 114.6; 125.0; 127.2; 129.1; 129.5; 133.6; 136.0; 137.6; 150.6; 154.4; 158.1; 159.8. HR-MS: 367.0951 ([M þ $[H]^+, C_{19}H_{16}ClN_4O_2^+;$ calc. 367.0962).

5,8-Dihydro-7-(4-methoxyphenyl)-2-phenyl-4H-pyrazolo[5,1-d][1,2,5]triazepin-4-one (2g). White solid. Yield: 242 mg (73%). M.p. 204–205°. IR: 3202–2938 (NH), 1664 (C=O). ¹H-NMR: 3.82 (s, MeO); 5.57 (s, CH₂); 7.06 (d, J = 8.9, 2 arom. H); 7.33 (t, J = 7.9, 1 arom. H); 7.38 (s, 1 pyrazole H); 7.42 (t, $J = 7.9$, 2 arom. H); 7.85 (d, $J = 7.9$, 2 arom. H); 7.89 (d, $J = 8.9$, 2 arom. H); 11.43 (s, CONH). HR-MS: 333.1351 ($[M+H]^+$, C₁₉H₁₇N₄O₂⁺; calc. 333.1352).

2-(4-Chlorophenyl)-5,8-dihydro-7-(4-methoxyphenyl)-4H-pyrazolo[5,1-d][1,2,5]triazepin-4-one $(2h)$. White solid. Yield: 267 mg (73%). M.p. 270–271°. IR: 3201–2939 (NH), 1663 (C=O). ¹H-NMR: 3.82 (s, MeO); 5.57 (s, CH₂); 7.06 (d, J = 8.8, 2 arom. H), 7.42 (s, 1 pyrazole H); 7.47 (d, J = 8.5, 2 arom. H); 7.87 (d, $J = 8.5$, 2 arom. H); 7.89 (d, $J = 8.8$, 2 arom. H); 11.45 (s, CONH). HR-MS: 367.0972 ($[M + H]^+$, $C_{19}H_{16}CIN_4O_2^+$; calc. 367.0962).

2,7-Bis(4-methoxyphenyl)-5,8-dihydro-4H-pyrazolo[5,1-d][1,2,5]triazepin-4-one (2i). White solid. Yield: 272 mg (75%). M.p. 193–194°. IR: 3203–2933 (NH), 1657 (C=O). ¹H-NMR: 3.78 (s, MeO); 3.82 (s, MeO) ; 5.54 (s, CH_2) ; 6.97 $(d, J = 8.8, 2 \text{ arcm})$. H); 7.06 $(d, J = 8.9, 2 \text{ arcm})$. H); 7.28 $(s, 1 \text{ pyrazole H})$; 7.77 (d, $J = 8.8$, 2 arom. H); 7.89 (d, $J = 8.9$, 2 arom. H); 11.40 (s, CONH). ¹³C-NMR: 48.8; 55.6; 55.9; 106.4; 114.6; 114.8; 125.1; 126.9; 127.1; 129.1; 137.6; 150.4; 155.6; 158.3; 159.7; 161.8. HR-MS: 363.1454 $([M+H]^+, C_{20}H_{19}N_4O_3^+;$ calc. 363.1457).

2,7-Bis(4-methoxyphenyl)-8H-pyrazolo[5,1-d][1,2,5]triazepin-4-ol: White solid. Yield: 57 mg (15%). M.p. 190–192°. IR: 3332–3248 (NH), 1689 (C=O), 1668 (CONH). ¹H-NMR: 3.79 (s, MeO); 3.88 (s, MeO); 4.45 (s, NH₂); 6.08 (s, CH₂); 7.01 (d, $J = 8.7, 2$ arom. H); 7.10 (d, $J = 8.8, 2$ arom. H); 7.26 (s, 1 pyrazole H); 7.67 (d, $J = 8.7, 2$ arom. H); 8.03 (d, $J = 8.8, 2$ arom. H); 9.84 (s, CONH). HR-MS: 381.1570 $([M+H]^+, C_{20}H_{21}N_4O_4^+$; calc. 381.1563).

X-Ray Crystal-Structure Analysis. Crystals suitable for X-ray analysis were grown by slow evaporation of the solvent from AcOEt soln. The diffraction measurement was carried out by graphite monochromated Mo K_a radiation ($\lambda = 0.71073 \text{ Å}$) on a *Bruker SMART CCD* diffractometer at r.t. The

structure was solved with direct methods using the *SHELXS-97* program, and refined on $F²$ by fullmatrix least-squares with the SHELXL-97 package [23]. All data were corrected by multi-scan method using SADABS program [24]. The H-atoms were placed at calculated positions with 0.96 Å (Me) and 0.93 Å (aromatic CH) using a riding model. Molecular graphics were designed by using XP and DIAMOND 3.2 [25]. PLATON Program was also used for structure analysis [26]. The crystal data and details concerning data collection and structural refinement are collected in Table 3. CCDC-819054 contains the supplementary crystallographic data for this article. These data can be obtained free of charge via http://www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/data_request/cif.

a) Weighting scheme: $w = 1/[\sigma^2 (F_o)^2 + (0.0806P)^2 + 0.0618P]$ where $P = (F_o^2 + 2F_c^2)/3$.

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