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## FIRST SYNTHESIS OF TRANS- AND CIS-DENDROCHRYSANINES

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Abstract – *Trans*- and *cis*-dendrochrysanines (1 and 2), isolated from the stems of *Dendrobium chrysanthum* Wall., were first synthesized from L-proline. The absolute configuration of 1 and 2 was established to be *S* by the syntheses.

### INTRODUCTION

*Trans*- and *cis*-dendrochrysanines  $(1 \text{ and } 2)^1$  were isolated from the stems of *Dendrobium chrysanthum* Wall.<sup>2</sup> by Z. Wang and co-workers in 2005 and used in traditional Chinese medicine. These structures identified N-trans-cinnamoyl-2-oxopropyrrolidine were (1) and the as the *N-cis*-cinnamoyl-2-oxopropyrrolidine (2), based on extensive 2D-NMR (<sup>1</sup>H-<sup>1</sup>H COSY, HMQC, and HMBC) experiments. The absolute configuration of 1 and 2, however, has been estimated by comparing their optical rotations and CD curve with those of known related compounds, N-cis-cinnamoly-L-proline and *N-cis*-cinnamoyl-L-2-methyl pyrrolidine.<sup>3</sup> In the course of studying cysteine protease inhibitors,<sup>4,5</sup> we have interested in these natural products, since their  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ -unsaturated carbonyl structure is known to be a typical functional group for the thiol group of cysteine proteases. Here, we describe the first synthesis of trans- and cis-dendrochrysanines (1 and 2) as well as the determination of their absolute configurations, prior to medicinal studies of those natural products.



Figure Structure of *trans*-dendrochrysanine (1) and *cis*-dendrochrysanine (2)

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Trans-dendrochrysanine (1) was synthesized according to the route shown in Scheme 1. Z-L-Proline (Z-L-Pro-OH) was first transformed into Z-prolinal (3) through protection of the carboxyl group with iodomethane, and aldehyde transformation via the alcohol in a overall yield of 30%.<sup>6</sup> The optical purities of 3 and the intermediate alcohol were determined to be >98%ee by HPLC using chiral column. A subsequence Wittig reaction with (methoxymethyl)triphenylphosphonium chloride and potassium *tert*-butoxide in THF gave a one-carbon extended methoxy olefin product, which was then treated with 1N HCl in THF to give the desired aldehyde (4) in 63% yield. Enantiomeric excess of aldehyde (4) was determined to be 98%ee by HPLC using chiral column. A Grignard reaction of aldehyde (4) with methylmagnesium iodide in ether afforded two diastereomeric alcohols (5) as a 1:1.5 mixture in 79% yield. Deprotection of the Z group in the presence of 5% palladium on carbon in a hydrogen atmosphere gave the pyrrolidine (6), which was coupled with *trans*-cinnamic acid (7) by a reaction with O-(7-azabenzotriazol-1-yl)-1,1,3,3-tetramethyluronium hexafluorophosphate  $(HATU)^{9}/$ 1-hydroxy-7-azabenzotriazole (HOAt)<sup>10</sup>/ N, N-diisopropylethylamine in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> to afford **8** as a diastereoisomeric mixture in 85% yield. Finally, the alcohol (8) was oxidized with Jones' reagent to give *trans*-dendrochrysanine (1),  $[\alpha]_D^{20}$  -11.8° (*c* 0.15, CHCl<sub>3</sub>) [lit.;  $[\alpha]_D^{20}$  -19.2° (*c* 3.4, CHCl<sub>3</sub>)] in 95% yield. The <sup>1</sup>H- and <sup>13</sup>C-NMR spectra of the synthetic **1** were in good agreement with those of natural **1**.



Scheme 1. Synthesis of *trans*-dendrochrysanine (1)

Similarly, *cis*-dendrochrysanine (**2**) was synthesized from pyrrolidine (**6**) in 2 steps (Scheme 2). The pyrrolidine (**6**) was coupled with *cis*-cinnamic acid<sup>11</sup> using HATU/ HOAt/ *N*, *N*-diisopropylethylamine in  $CH_2Cl_2$  as above. The condensation product, however, was obtained with only 5% yield probably deu to the formation of stable adduct from the *cis*-cinnamic acid and HOAt. Desired alcohol (**9**) was obtained in 75% yield when benzotriazol-1-yl-oxy-tris–pyrrolidino-phosphonium hexafluorophosphate (PyBOP)<sup>12</sup> was employed instead of HOAt. Finally, oxidation of **11** with Dess-Martin periodinane<sup>13</sup> in  $CH_2Cl_2$ 

afforded *cis*-dendrochrysanine (**2**),  $[\alpha]_D^{24}$  -14.5° (*c* 0.04, CHCl<sub>3</sub>) [lit.;  $[\alpha]_D^{20}$  -17.7° (*c* 3.5, CHCl<sub>3</sub>)]. The <sup>1</sup>H- and <sup>13</sup>C-NMR spectra of the synthetic **2** were in good agreement with those of natural **2**.



Scheme 2. Synthesis of *cis*-dendrochrysanine (2)

In conclusion, we have completed the first synthesis of *trans*- and *cis*-dendrochrysanines (1 and 2). The absolute structure of these compounds has been established to be (2S)-*N*-*trans*-cinnamoly-2-oxopropyrrolidine for 1 and (2R)-*N*-*cis*-cinnamoly-2-oxopropyrrolidine for 2.

### **EXPERIMENTAL**

**General Experimental Procedures.** All manipulations were conducted under an inert atmosphere (N<sub>2</sub>). All solvents were of reagent grade. THF was distilled from sodium and benzophenone ketyl. CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> was distilled from CaH<sub>2</sub>. All commercial reagents were of the highest purity available. Analytical TLC was performed on silica gel (60 F-254, Plates 0.25 mm). Column chromatography was carried out on Wakogel 60 (particle size, 0.063-0.200 mm). <sup>1</sup>H-, and <sup>13</sup>C-NMR were recorded on a JEOL JNM-EX-400 or Bruker AVANCEII-300. Chemical shifts are expressed in ppm relative to TMS (0 ppm) or CHCl<sub>3</sub> (7.28 ppm for <sup>1</sup>H and 77.1 ppm for <sup>13</sup>C). IR were obtained on HORIBA FREEXACT-II FT-710 spectrometer. Optical rotations were recorded on a HORIBA SEPA-200 or SEPA-300 polarimeter at the sodium D line. Low-resolution mass spectra (LRMS) and High-resolution mass spectra (HRMS) were obtained on either a JOEL JMS-DX-303 or a JMS-AX-500 (EI or FAB). Optical puries were determined on a Hitachi LaChrom HPLC instrument equipped with the DAICEL chiral column.

(2S)-N-Benzyloxycarbonyl-prolinal (3): To a solution of Z-L-proline (43.4 g, 174 mmol) in DMF (200 mL) were added  $K_2CO_3$  (121 g, 1.75 mmol) and MeI (16.2 mL, 260 mmol) at 0°C and the mixture was stirred for 2 h. To the mixture were added H<sub>2</sub>O and Et<sub>2</sub>O. The organic layer was washed with brine, dried over MgSO<sub>4</sub>, and evaporated in vacuo. To the residue in THF (300 mL) was added LiAlH<sub>4</sub> (13.2 g, 348 mmol) at 0°C and the mixture was stirred for 1 h. H<sub>2</sub>O (15 mL) and 1N NaOH (30 mL) were added and filtered. Evaporation of the solvent provided an oil, which was purified with silica gel column chromatography (hexane:AcOEt = 4:1) to give Z-prolinol (24.2 g, 103 mmol, 59%) as a colorless oil: IR (film)  $\nu = 3410$ , 3033, 2954, 1684, 1415, 1358, 1105, 769, 698 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta =$ 

1.50-2.10 (m, 4H), 3.30-3.70 (m, 4H), 4.01 (brs, 1H), 4.32 (brs, 1H), 5.15 (s, 2H), 7.36 (m, 5H). Optical purity was determined to be 99%ee by HPLC using CHIRALCEL OD-H column (0.46 cm $\Phi \times 25$  cm); elution with 2% *i*-PrOH in hexane,  $t_R = 8.11$  min for *S* isomer,  $t_R = 9.91$  min for *R* isomer. To a solution of Z-prolinol (2.45 g, 10.5 mmol) in DMSO (30 mL) were added sulfur trioxide pyridine complex (5.00 g, 31.4 mmol) and Et<sub>3</sub>N (13.9 mL, 98.8 mmol) and the mixture was stirred for 1 h. To the mixture were added H<sub>2</sub>O, and Et<sub>2</sub>O, and the organic layer was washed with brine, dried over MgSO<sub>4</sub>, and evaporated in vacuo. The product was purified with silica gel column chromatography (hexane:AcOEt = 6:1) to give Z-prolinal (**3**) (1.22 g, 5.25 mmol, 51%) as a colorless oil:  $[\alpha]_{\rm B}^{25}$  -211.5° (*c* 0.10, CHCl<sub>3</sub>); IR (film) v = 3033, 2956, 2702, 1732, 1695, 1413, 1357, 1101, 769, 698 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta = 1.89$  (m, 2H), 2.06 (m, 2H), 3.58 (m, 2H), 4.22 (m, 0.5H), 4.33 (m, 0.5H), 5.12 (m, 2H), 7.35 (m, 5H), 9.51 (d, 0.5H, *J* = 2.4 Hz), 9.62 (d, 0.5H, *J* = 1.5 Hz); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta = 23.9$ , 24.6, 26.7, 27.9, 46.8, 47.4, 65.0, 65.4, 67.4, 128.1, 128.2, 128.62, 136.6, 200.1; MS: m/z = 234 (MH<sup>+</sup>, 40%), 154 (70%), 91 (100%). HRMS Calcd. for C<sub>13</sub>H<sub>16</sub>NO<sub>3</sub>: 234.1130. Fonud: 234.1125. Optical purity was determined to be 98%ee by HPLC using CHIRALCEL OJ-H column (0.46 cm $\Phi \times 25$  cm); elution with 0.5% *i*-PrOH in hexane,  $t_R = 22.95$  min for *S* isomer,  $t_R = 28.64$  min for *R* isomer.

(2S)-N-Benzyloxycarbonyl-2-pyrrolidinylethanal To (4): solution of a (methoxymethyl)triphenylphosphonium chloride (2.92 g, 8.50 mmol) and potassium tert-butoxide (960 mg, 8.50 mmol) in THF (20 mL) was added Z-prolinal (1.00 g, 4.29 mmol), and the mixture was stirred at room temperature for 30 min. To the mixture were added H<sub>2</sub>O and Et<sub>2</sub>O, and the organic layer was washed with brine, and dried over MgSO<sub>4</sub>, and evaporated in vacuo. The product was stirred in 1N HCl-THF (1:5 mixture, 10 mL) for 30 min. The mixture was extracted with Et<sub>2</sub>O, and the organic layer was washed with brine, dried over MgSO<sub>4</sub>. The solvent was removed, and the product was purified with silica gel column chromatography (hexane:AcOEt = 8:1) to give 4 (707 mg, 2.71 mmol, 63%) as a colorless oil,  $[\alpha]_D^{25}$  +4.9° (*c* 1.22, CHCl<sub>3</sub>); IR (film) v = 3033, 2956, 2727, 1718, 1699, 1415, 1358, 1105, 769, 698 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  = 1.89 (m, 2H), 2.16 (m, 1H), 2.53 (m, 1H), 2.97 (m, 1H), 3.46 (m, 2H), 4.34 (m, 1H), 5.14 (s, 2H), 7.36 (m, 5H), 9.69 (brs, 0.4H), 9.82 (brs, 0.6H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta = 22.8$ , 23.6, 31.1, 31.9, 46.3, 46.6, 48.4, 49.1, 52.1, 52.9, 66.6, 127.7, 127.9, 128.0, 128.6, 128.8, 136.7, 154.7, 200.6; MS: m/z = 248 (MH<sup>+</sup>, 45%), 154 (45%), 91 (100%). HRMS Calcd. for C<sub>14</sub>H<sub>18</sub>NO<sub>3</sub>: 248.1281. Fonud: 248.1288. Optical purity was determined to be 98%ee by HPLC using chiral CHIRALCEL AD-H column (0.46 cm $\Phi \times 25$  cm); elution with 2% *i*-PrOH in hexane,  $t_{\rm R} = 21.70$ min for S isomer,  $t_{\rm R} = 26.26$  min for R isomer.

(2S)-N-Benzyloxycarbonyl-2-hydroxypropyrrolidine (5): To a solution of 4 (271 mg, 1.04 mmol) in THF (5 mL) was added methylmagnesium iodide (2M in Et<sub>2</sub>O, 1.50 mL) at -20°C and mixture was stirred for 20 min. To the mixture were added saturated aq. NH<sub>4</sub>Cl and Et<sub>2</sub>O, and the organic layer was washed with brine, dried over MgSO<sub>4</sub>, and evaporated in vacuo. The product was purified with silica gel column chromatography (hexane:AcOEt = 2:1) to give 5 (205 mg, 779  $\mu$ mol, 75%) as a diastereomeric mixtures. Low polar **5** as a colorless oil,  $[\alpha]_{D}^{25}$  -6.4° (*c* 0.94, CHCl<sub>3</sub>); IR (film) v = 3438, 3033, 2966, 1699, 1684, 1356, 1105, 769, 698 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  = 1.21 (d, 3H, J = 5.7 Hz), 1.48 (m, 1H), 1.72 (m 1H), 1.96 (m, 4H), 3.43 (t, 2H, J = 5.7 Hz), 3.88 (brs, 1H), 4.01 (m, 1H), 5.14 (s, 2H), 7.36 (m, 5H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  = 23.0, 23.8, 24.2, 31.1, 32.0, 45.2, 46.3, 54.6, 56.1, 66.4, 66.9, 127.9, 128.0, 128.5, 136.9, 155.6; MS: m/z = 264 (MH<sup>+</sup>, 95%), 154 (70%), 91 (100%). HRMS Calcd. for  $C_{15}H_{22}NO_3$ : 264.1600. Fonud: 264.1598. High polar **5** as a colorless oil,  $[\alpha]_D^{25}$  -4.2° (*c* 0.72, CHCl<sub>3</sub>); IR (film)  $v = 3431, 3032, 2966, 1700, 1684, 1414, 1358, 1109, 769, 698 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ ; <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ = 1.19 (d, 3H, J = 6.0 Hz), 1.47 (m, 2H), 1.63 (brs, 1H), 1.93 (m, 3H), 3.43 (m, 2H), 3.76 (m, 1H), 4.23 (m, 1H), 5.16 (s, 2H), 7.38 (m, 5H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta = 22.7, 23.7, 31.2, 45.6, 46.4, 54.8,$ 63.8, 67.2, 127.9, 128.1, 128.6, 129.0, 136.8, 157.0; MS: m/z = 264 (MH<sup>+</sup>, 50%), 154 (100%), 91 (45%). HRMS Calcd. for C<sub>15</sub>H<sub>22</sub>NO<sub>3</sub>: 264.1600. Fonud: 264.1600.

(2*S*)-*N*-*trans*-Cinnamoyl-2-hydroxypropyrrolidine (8): To a solution of 5 (27 mg, 102 µmol) in MeOH (5 mL) were added HCO<sub>2</sub>NH<sub>4</sub> (64 mg, 1.0 mmol) and Pd-C (20 mg). The mixture was stirred for 40 min at 50°C and the solvent was removed in vacuo. The residue was added to H<sub>2</sub>O, extracted with AcOEt, dried over MgSO<sub>4</sub>, and evaporated in vacuo. To the residue in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (2 mL) were added *trans*-cinnamic acid (20 mg, 134 µmol), HATU (58 mg, 204 µmol), HOAt (28 mg, 204 µmol), and *i*Pr<sub>2</sub>NEt (50 µL, 703 µmol), and the mixture was stirred at room temperature for 10 h. To the mixture were added H<sub>2</sub>O and CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>. The organic layer was washed with brine, dried over MgSO<sub>4</sub>, and evaporated in vacuo. The product was purified with silica gel column chromatography (hexane:AcOEt = 1:1) to give 8 (20 mg, 77 µmol, 75%) as a colorless oil, IR (film) v = 3410, 2966, 1647, 1456, 1435, 1151, 843 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  = 1.18 (d, 2H, *J* = 6.1 Hz), 1.26 (d, 1H, *J* = 6.1 Hz), 1.55-2.10 (m, 6H), 3.62 (m, 2H), 3.80 (m, 1H), 4.40 (m, 1H), 6.72 (d, 1H, *J* = 15.4 Hz), 7.36 (m, 3H), 7.51 (m, 2H), 7.71 (d, 1H, *J* = 15.4 Hz); MS: m/z = 260 (MH<sup>+</sup>, 20%), 282 (M<sup>+</sup>+Na, 100%). HRMS Calcd. for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>22</sub>NO<sub>2</sub>: 260.1651. Fonud: 260.1653.

(2S)-*N*-trans-Cinnamoyl-2-oxoxypropyrrolidine (*trans*-dendrochrysanine; 1): To a solution of 8 (20 mg, 77  $\mu$ mol) in acetone (2 mL) was added Jones' reagent at 0°C and the mixture was stirred for 20 min. To the mixture were added isopropanol and Et<sub>2</sub>O, and the organic layer was washed with brine, dried over

MgSO<sub>4</sub>, and evaporated in vacuo. The product was purified with silica gel column chromatography (hexane:AcOEt = 1:1) to give **1** (19 mg, 73 µmol, 95%) as a colorless oil,  $[\alpha]_D^{25}$  -11.8° (*c* 0.15, CHCl<sub>3</sub>); IR (film)  $\nu$  = 2930, 1711, 1649, 1601, 1419, 1149, 980, 766 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  = 1.78 (m, 1H), 2.00 (m, 2H), 2.14 (m, 2H), 2.21 (s, 3H), 2.49 (dd, 1H, *J* = 16.6, 9.5 Hz), 3.28 (dd, 1H, *J* = 12.0, 7.8 Hz), 3.67 (m 2H), 4.54 (m, 1H), 6.73 (d, 1H, *J* = 15.6 Hz), 7.39 (m, 3H), 7.54 (m, 2H), 7.70 (d, 1H, *J* = 15.4 Hz); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (100 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  = 23.7, 29.9, 30.0, 46.7, 46.8, 53.6, 118.7, 127.6, 128.5, 129.4, 134.9, 141.7, 164.5; MS: m/z = 131 (100%), 257 (M<sup>+</sup>, 30%). HRMS Calcd. for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>19</sub>NO<sub>2</sub>: 257.1416. Fonud: 257.1414.

(2*S*)-*N*-*cis*-Cinnamoyl-2-hydroxypropyrrolidine (9): To a solution of **6** (15 mg, 116 µmol) in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (1 mL) were added *cis*-cinnamic acid (18 mg, 121 µmol), PyBOP (60 mg, 115 µmol), and *i*Pr<sub>2</sub>NEt (50 µL, 703 µmol). The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 10 h. To the mixture were added H<sub>2</sub>O and CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, and the organic layer was washed with brine, dried over MgSO<sub>4</sub>, and evaporated in vacuo. The product was purified with silica gel column chromatography (hexane:AcOEt = 1:1) to give **11** (23 mg, 87 µmol, 75%) as a colorless oil,  $[\alpha]_D^{25}$  -20.0° (*c* 0.20, CHCl<sub>3</sub>); IR (film) v = 2923, 1712, 1612, 1434, 1371, 1153, 698 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  = 1.56 (m, 1H), 1.73 (m, 2H), 2.07 (m, 1H), 2.19 (s, 3H), 2.38 (dd, 1H, *J* = 16.5, 9.6 Hz), 3.12 (td, 1H, *J* = 10.8, 6.6 Hz), 3.31 (m, 2H), 4.43 (m, 1H), 6.03 (d, 1H, *J* = 12.6 Hz), 6.65 (d, 1H, *J* = 12.6 Hz), 7.30 (m, 3H), 7.40 (m, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  = 24.0, 30.2, 30.7, 46.6, 47.4, 53.3, 124.3, 128.38, 128.44, 128.6, 123.9, 135.7, 162.4, 207.0; MS: m/z = 260 (MH<sup>+</sup>, 20%), 282 (M<sup>+</sup>+Na, 100%). HRMS Calcd. for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>22</sub>NO<sub>5</sub>: 260.1651. Fonud: 260.1653.

(2*S*)-*N*-*cis*-Cinnamoyl-2-oxoxypropyrrolidine (*cis*-dendrochrysanine; 2): To a solution of 9 (11 mg, 42 mmol) in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (1 mL) was added Dess-Martin periodinane (0.2 M in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, 200 µL) at 0°C and the mixture was stirred for 20 min at 0°C. To the mixture were added H<sub>2</sub>O and CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, and the organic layer was washed with brine, dried over MgSO<sub>4</sub>, and evaporated in vacuo. The product was purified with silica gel column chromatography (hexane:AcOEt = 1:1) to give 2 (8 mg, 31 mmol, 73%) as a colorless oil,  $[\alpha]_D^{25}$  -14.5° (*c* 0.04, CHCl<sub>3</sub>); IR (film) n = 2923, 1712, 1612, 1434, 1371, 1153, 698 cm<sup>-1</sup>; <sup>1</sup>H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) d = 1.56 (m, 1H), 1.73 (m, 2H), 2.07 (m, 1H), 2.19 (s, 3H), 2.38 (dd, 1H, *J* = 16.5, 9.6 Hz), 3.12 (td, 1H, *J* = 10.8, 6.6 Hz), 3.31 (m, 2H), 4.43 (m, 1H), 6.03 (d, 1H, *J* = 12.6 Hz), 6.65 (d, 1H, *J* = 12.6 Hz), 7.30 (m, 3H), 7.40 (m, 2H); <sup>13</sup>C-NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) d = 24.0, 30.2, 30.7, 46.6, 47.4, 53.3, 124.3, 128.38, 128.44, 128.6, 123.9, 135.7, 162.4, 207.0; FABMS: m/z = 258 (MH<sup>+</sup>, 45%), 69 (100%). HRMS Calcd. for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>20</sub>NO<sub>2</sub>: 258.1494. Fonud: 258.1498.

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