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First stereoselective synthesis of synargentolide A and revision of absolute stereochemistry

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ABSTRACT

The first stereoselective total synthesis of synargentolide A isolated from Syncolostemon argenteus has been achieved from commercially available (R)-benzyl glycidyl ether using Sharpless asymmetric epoxidation and cross-metathesis reactions as the key steps. Comparing the spectral data of the synthesized and naturally occurring synargentolide A, the C4' and C6'- stereogenic centers of the natural synargentolide A were assigned a corrected anti relationship.

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Naturally isolated 6 -substituted- α , β -unsaturated- δ -lactones gained great attention of researcher due to their cytotoxic and anti-tumor properties.¹ In addition they inhibit HIV protease,² induce apoptosis, $3,4$ and have proven to be *anti*-leukemic,⁵ along with having many other relevant pharmacological properties. $\overline{6}$ Synargentolide A (1) ,^{[7](#page-3-0)} spicegerolide (2) ,^{[8](#page-3-0)} hyptolide (3) ,^{[9](#page-3-0)} synroto-lide (4),^{[10](#page-3-0)} and anamarine (5)^{[11](#page-3-0)} isolated from Syncolostemon and Hyptis species are examples of α , β -unsaturated δ -lactones (Fig. 1). Due to their pharmacological properties, these molecules became the interesting synthetic goals. The structure of synargentolide A was proposed to be 1 by Davies-Coleman and Rivett^{[7](#page-3-0)} on the basis of spectroscopic findings, Mosher ester analysis, and acetonide formations. Alberto Marco et al. 12 12 12 synthesized the published structure of synargentolide A 1 and found that the spectroscopic data of the synthetic product did not match with those reported for the natural product and therefore stated that the proposed structure for the synargentolide A 1 differs from the actual one.

Figure 1. Polyoxygenated lactones.

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Scheme 2. Reagents and conditions: (a) \equiv –Li, DMSO, 0 °C to rt, 1 h, 92%; (b) DIEA, MOM–Cl, 2 h, 0 °C to rt, 95%; (c) Li/liq NH3, –33 °C, anhydrous THF, 0.5 h, 90%; (d) IBX DMSO, anhydrous CH₂Cl₂, 0 °C to rt, 24 h, 95%; (e) PPh₃=CHCO₂Et, Ph–H, rt, 2 h, 85%; (f) DIBAL-H, anhydrous CH₂Cl₂, -20 °C, 1 h, 75%; (g) L-(+) DIPT, Ti(OⁱPr)₄ cumenehydroperoxide, anhydrous CH2Cl2, –24 °C, 4 h, 98%; (h) TPP, I2, imidazole, Et2O/CH3CN, (3:1) 0 °C to rt, 20 min 92%; (i) Zn dust, EtOH, reflux, 2 h, 92%; (j) (a) m-CPBA, NaHCO3, anhydrous CH2Cl2, −10 °C, 10 h, 92%, dr (1:1); (b) BnBr, NaH, anhydrous THF, 0 °C to rt, 3 h, 95%; (k) LiAlH4, anhydrous THF, 0 °C to rt, 0.5 h, 95%; (l) 2 N HCl, rt, 5 h. 93%; (m) 2,2-DMP, PPTS, anhydrous CH_2Cl_2 , 0 °C to rt, 1 h, 95%.

+

O O

OBn

9b

20a R = H **20b** R = Bn

O O

l, m

OBn

9a

Scheme 3. Reagents and conditions: (a) (i) Li/liq NH3, anhydrous THF, –33 °C, 0.5 h, 91%; (ii) MeOH, 2 N HCl, rt, 1 h, 93%; (iii) Ac2O, TEA, DMAP, anhydrous CH2Cl2, 0 °C to rt, 0.5 h, 94%; (b) Pd/CaCO₃, quinoline, HPLC–EtOAc, rt, 2 h, 92%; (c) Gr-II, refluxing anhydrous CH₂Cl₂, 2 h, 65%.

Figure 2. Comparison of the ¹H NMR spectra of the synthetic lactones 1 (A) and 6 (B) with that of natural synargentolide A (C).

As a part of our current interest in naturally occurring, pharmacologically active δ -lactones,¹³ we became interested in the synthesis of synargentolide A and to determine the absolute configuration of the natural product.

The retrosynthesis is outlined in [Scheme 1](#page-1-0). The target molecule **1** (published structure)⁷ and **6** (revised structure) could be prepared independently by cross-metathesis reaction of 8a and 8b with vinyl lactone 7. The substrates 8a and 8b in turn could be obtained from the commercially available (R) -benzyl glycidyl ether 12 by sequential reactions.

The synthesis began with the commercially available (R) -benzyl glycidyl ether 12 [\(Scheme 2\)](#page-1-0). Accordingly the ring opening of epoxide 12 with lithium acetylide ethylene diamine complex provided chiral homopropargyl alcohol 13 in 92% yield. The secondary hydroxyl group in compound 13 was protected as its MOM ether 14 using MOMCl and Hunig's base and the subsequent removal of benzyl group furnished alcohol 11. Oxidation of 11 using IBX in DMSO/DCM gave the corresponding aldehyde 15, which was subjected to a Wittig reaction with the stable ylide to afford α , β unsaturated ester 16. After reduction of 16 to allylic alcohol 17 (75%) using DIBAL-H, Sharpless asymmetric epoxidation delivered epoxy alcohol 18 in 98% yield as a single diastereomer, which was elaborated to allylic alcohol 10 by an iodination/reductive ringopening sequence.

Epoxidation of the terminal double bond in 10 using m -CPBA provided an inseparable mixture of epoxy alcohol 20a in a ratio of 1:1 (92% combined yield). After protection of the secondary hydroxyl group as benzyl ether, the resulting compound 20b was treated with LAH to give an alcohol again as an inseparable mixture (21). The MOM group was deprotected and a 1,3-diol function in compound 21 was protected as acetonide by 2,2-dimethoxypropane in the presence of PPTS and the resulting acetonides 9a and 9b were easily separable by flash chromatography. In order to confirm the relative configuration of 1,3-acetonides **9a** and **9b**, 13 C NMR chemical shifts were studied. The two methyl groups in the acetonide part in 9a resonated at 19.0 and 29.6 ppm indicating that the two hydroxyl groups are in a 1,3-syn orientation and further substantiated by the appearance of the quaternary carbon in the down-field region (98.8 ppm).¹⁴ In contrast, for the acetonide derivative 9b signals were found at 24.8 and 23.8 ppm and quaternary carbon at 100.7 ppm, which were characteristic for the methyl groups in the acetonide part of $1,3$ -anti diol.¹⁴

To determine the correct absolute configuration of natural synargentolide A, both isomers of synargentolide A 1 and 6 were synthesized by the following steps from **9a** and **9b** as shown in [Scheme 3](#page-1-0).

Removal of benzyl and acetonide groups, followed by acetylation of the three hydroxy groups was performed to provide 22a in 95% yield [\(Scheme 3](#page-1-0)). The terminal triple bond was reduced partially to double bond under Lindlar's conditions to afford 8a. Finally, the cross-metathesis reaction between $8a$ and vinyl lactone 7^{13j} was smoothly performed using Grubbs' second generation catalyst to give the published structure of synargentolide A 1 ([Fig. 2](#page-2-0)). This did not turn out to be identical with the natural product but matched with the synthesized product.¹²

In a similar fashion, synthesis of 6 was commenced from 9b ([Scheme 3\)](#page-1-0) independently repeating the steps as in the case of 1 and the target molecule 6 was obtained in good yield. The spectral properties [\(Fig. 2](#page-2-0)) and optical rotation of the synthetic compound 6 were found to be identical with those published for the natural synargentolide A 1 { $[\alpha]_{\text{D}}^{25}$ +36.5 (c 1, CHCl₃), lit.⁷ $[\alpha]_{\text{D}}^{25}$ +40 (c 1.1, CHCl3)}. Therefore, the structure of natural product stands revised to be of 6.

In conclusion, we have performed a stereoselective synthesis of the natural synargentolide A and shown it to be $\boldsymbol{6}$. 15 Synargentolide A is therefore 6R[4R,5R,6R-triacetyloxy-1E-heptenyl]-5,6-dihydro2H-pyran-2-one. Sharpless asymmetric epoxidation (SAE) and cross-metathesis (CM) are the key reactions involved.

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- 15. Analytical data of all the new compounds are given below: Compound 1: $[\alpha]_D^{25}$ +12.5 (c 1, CHCl₃); IR (KBr) 1738, 1374, 1221, 1024 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 6.84 (ddd, J = 8.8, 4.0, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 6.02 (dt, J = 10.4, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 5.75–5.63 (m, 2H), 5.15 (m, 1H), 5.08 (dt, $J = 7.2$, 4.0 Hz, 1H, CH), 4.96 (m, 1H, CH), 4.86 (m, 1H, CH), 2.39 (m, 2H, CH2), 2.28 (m, 2H, CH2), 2.12 (s, 3H, CH₃), 2.04 (s, 3H, CH₃), 2.0 (s, 3H, CH₃), 1.18 (d, J = 6,4 Hz, 3H, CH₃); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 170.2, 170.1, 170.0, 163.8, 144.5, 130.9, 128.3, 121.5,

77.2, 73.7, 69.6, 69.3, 34.0, 29.5, 21.0, 20.8, 20.7, 16.0; HRMS calcd for C₁₈H₂₄O₈Na: 391.1368; found: 391.1355.

Compound 8a: $[\alpha]_D^{25}$ +1.5 (c 1, CHCl₃); IR (KBr) 1742, 1370, 1216 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR $(300 \text{ MHz}, \text{CDCl}_3)$: δ 5.66 (m, 1H), 5.30–4.93 (m, 5H), 2.35–2.14 (m, 2H), 2.06 (s, 3H, CH₃), 2.01 (s, 3H, CH₃), 1.99 (s, 3H, CH₃), 1.15 (d, J = 6.0 Hz, 3H, CH₃); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 170.1, 170.0, 169.9, 132.0, 118.8, 74.2, 70.2, 68.7, 35.3,

121.0, 20.8, 20.6, 16.3.
Compound **8b**: [x]^[5] +22.5 (c 1, CHCl₃); IR (KBr) 1744, 1372, 1222 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 5.69 (m, 1H), 5.16 (dt, J = 7.0, 3.1 Hz, 1H, CH), 5.11-5.03 (m, 3H), 4.94 (m, 1H, CH), 2.24 (m, 2H, CH₂), 2.13 (s, 3H, CH₃), 2.02 (s, 3H, CH₃),
2.0 (s, 3H, CH₃), 1.18 (d, J = 6.2 Hz, 3H, CH₃); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): *δ* 169.9. 169.8, 169.7, 132.2, 118.4, 73.7, 69.7, 67.2, 35.4, 20.8, 20.6, 20.5, 15.9; HRMS

calcd for C₁₃H₂₀O₆Na: 295.1157; found: 295.1149.
Compound **9a**: [$\alpha l_{\rm D}^{25}$ –42.0 (c 1, CHCl₃); IR (KBr) 2985, 1455, 1378, 1229,
1091 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.42–7.21 (m, 5H, ArH), 4.72 (ABq, $J = 11.3$ Hz, 2H, CH₂-OAr), 3.97 (m, 2H), 3.29 (m, 1H, CH), 2.68 (dd, $J = 2.6$, 16.4 Hz, 0.5H), 2.65 (dd, J = 2.4, 10.0 Hz, 0.5H), 1.98 (m, acetylinic CH), 1.43 (s, 1H, CH₃); 1.40 (s, 3H, CH₃), 1.18 (d, J = 6.4 Hz, 3H, CH₃); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl3): d 138.2, 128.2, 128.1, 127.6, 98.8, 80.6, 75.0, 72.8, 71.6, 70.6, 68.5, 29.6, 29.3, 19.0, 17.7; HRMS calcd for C₁₇H₂₂O₃Na: 297.1466; found: 297.1465.

Compound **9b:** $[x]_D^{25}$ -19.5 (c 1, CHCl₃); IR (KBr) 2990, 1455, 1377, 1202, 1083 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.34-7.23 (m, 5H, ArH), 4.61 (ABq, $J = 11.7$ Hz, 2H, CH₂-OAr), 4.0, (m, 1H, CH), 3.74 (m, 1H, CH), 3.40 (m, 1H, CH), 2.62 (dd, J = 2.9, 16.5 Hz, 0.5H), 2.60 (dd, J = 2.9, 16.5 Hz, 0.5H), 2.42 (dd, J = 2.9, 16.5 Hz, 0.5H), 2.41 (dd, J = 2.9, 16.5 Hz, 0.5H), 1.92 (m, acetylinic CH), 1.35 (s, 3H, CH₃), 1.30 (s, 3H, CH₃), 1.19 (d, J = 6.8 Hz, 3H, CH₃), ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 138.0, 128.3, 127.9, 127.7, 100.7, 8 24.8, 23.8, 20.0, 19.4; HRMS calcd for C17H22O3Na: 297.1466; found: 297.1457. Compound 10: $[\alpha]_D^{25}$ -10.0 (c 1, CHCl₃); IR (KBr) 3446, 3295, 2897, 1040 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 5.85 (m, 1H), 5.40 (m, 1H), 5.23 (m, 1H), 4.76 (d, J = 6.5 Hz, 1H), 4.70 (d, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 4.22 (m, 1H, CH), 3.57 (m, 1H, CH),
3.41(s, 3H, CH₃), 2.62–2.35 (m, 2H, CH₂), 1.94 (m, 1H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl3): d 136.7, 117.2, 96.7, 80.3, 79.3, 73.4, 70.2, 55.8, 21.2; HRMS calcd for

C₉H₁₄O₃Na: 193.0840; found: 193.0848.
Compound **11**: [x]²⁵ –71.6 (c 1, CHCl₃); IR (KBr) 3437, 3293, 2932, 1640, 1363, 1105 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 4.72 (m, 2H, CH₂), 3.77-3.68 (m, 2H CH₂), 3.59 (m, 1H, CH), 3.41 (s, 3H, CH₃), 2.43 (m, 2H, CH₂), 1.93 (m, 1H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 96.5, 78.1, 70.2, 64.3, 55.6, 36.2, 21.6; HRMS calcd for

C₇H₁₂O₃Na: 167.0684; found: 167.0684.
Compound **6**: [x]²⁵ +36.5 (c 1, CHCl₃); IR (KBr) 1738, 1374, 1221, 1024 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 6.84 (ddd, J = 8.8, 4.0, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 6.02 (dt, J = 10.4, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 5.75-5.63 (m, 2H), 5.15 (m, 1H), 5.08 (dt, $J = 7.2$, 4.0 Hz, 1H, CH), 4.96 (m, 1H, CH), 4.86 (m, 1H, CH), 2.39 (m, 2H, CH2), 2.28 (m, 2H, CH2), 2.12 (s, 3H, CH₃), 2.04 (s, 3H, CH₃), 2.0 (s, 3H, CH₃), 1.18 (d, J = 6,4 Hz, 3H, CH₃); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl3): d 170.2, 170.1, 170.0, 163.8, 144.5, 130.9, 128.3, 121.5, 77.2, 73.7, 69.6, 69.3, 34.0, 29.5, 21.0, 20.8, 20.7, 16.0; HRMS calcd for $C_{18}H_{24}O_8$ Na: 391.1368; found: 391.1355.