

Scheme 1 Retrosynthetic analysis toward (+)-polyoxamic acid (**1**)

versatile intermediate for the synthesis of various natural products.

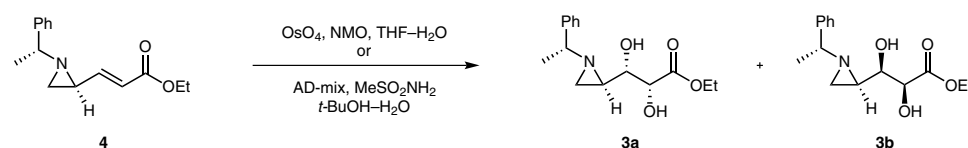
Several issues were considered before attempting the asymmetric dihydroxylation reaction of (*E*)-3-(aziridin-2-yl)acrylate **4**. Earlier, it was shown that the diastereoselectivities of dihydroxylation reactions of (*E*)-2-vinylaziridines, carried out using osmium tetroxide in the absence of chiral ligands, are low and variable depending on substituents present on the olefin moiety.¹¹ In addition, it has been reported that (*E*)-3-(aziridin-2-yl)acrylates, whose amine moieties are protected by electron-withdrawing groups, can be diastereoselectively dihydroxylated using osmium tetroxide in the absence of chiral ligands.¹² In recent efforts in our laboratory, we have shown that dihydroxylation reaction of *N*-(*R*)-1-phenylethyl-protected aziridin-*Z*-enoate using osmium tetroxide leads to nondiastereoselective (dr = ca. 1:1) production of a diol product but, in contrast, that the process proceeds with a high level of diastereoselectivity when the Sharpless AD-mix- β reagent combination is employed.¹³

Based on these early observations, we explored several methods for the dihydroxylation of (*E*)-3-(aziridin-2-yl)acrylate **4**, including the use of osmium tetroxide in the absence of a chiral ligand and Sharpless asymmetric dihy-

droxylation conditions with either the AD-mix- α or AD-mix- β reagent combinations (Table 1). In a manner that is similar to an observation we made earlier,¹³ dihydroxylation of **4** promoted by osmium tetroxide in the absence of a chiral ligand took place to form diol **3** as a near equimolar mixture of diastereomers **3a** and **3b**. In contrast, the reaction carried out by using AD-mix- α took place at room temperature with a reasonable level of diastereoselectivity (dr of **3a/3b** = 4:1). Moreover, a higher level of diastereoselectivity (dr = 10:1) was achieved by running this reaction at 0 °C for a longer time period (36 h). Thus, this approach enables ready control of the absolute stereochemistry at the three contiguous chiral centers in the amino-*syn*-diol moiety and, as such, it could be the key component of synthetic approaches to several polyhydroxylated amine alkaloid natural products.¹⁴

Owing to severe difficulties encountered in the separation of the diastereomers, a mixture of diols **3a** and **3b** was employed in the next step along the route (Scheme 2). Accordingly, reduction using LiAlH₄ and subsequent benzyl protection of the alcohol moieties in the intermediate triol led to generation of tribenzyloxy aziridine **6** in 74% yield (2 steps). Separation of the stereoisomer mixture to produce the desired diastereomer **6** was accomplished at this

Table 1 Dihydroxylation Reactions of (*E*)-3-(Aziridin-2-yl)acrylate **4**



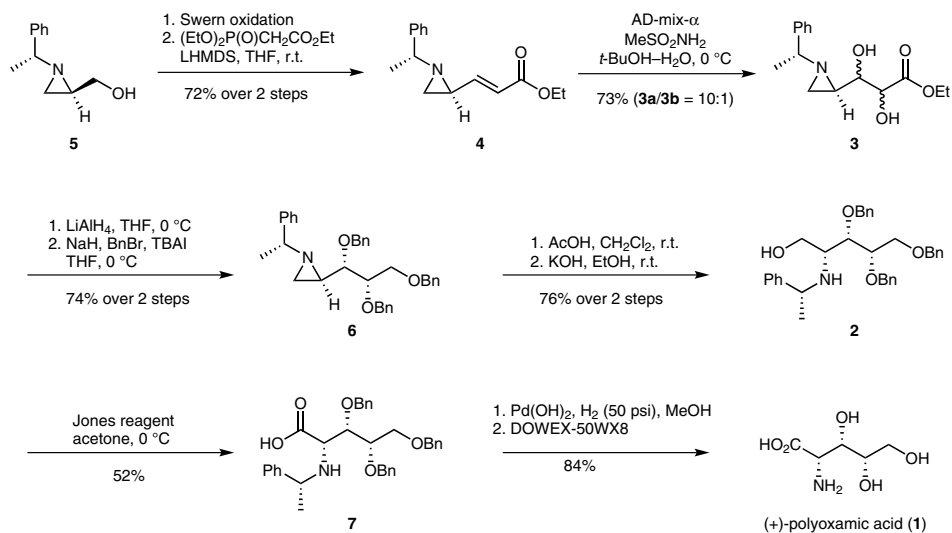
Reagent	3a ^a	3b ^a	Temp	Yield (%) ^b	Time (h)
OsO ₄ , NMO ^c	1	1	r.t. or 0 °C	87	6
AD-mix- α ^d	4	1	r.t.	78	24
AD-mix- α ^d	10	1	0 °C	73	36
AD-mix- β ^d	1	4	r.t.	76	24
AD-mix- β ^d	1	10	0 °C	69	36

^a Ratio of **3a/3b** was determined by ¹H NMR spectroscopy.

^b Mixture of **3a** and **3b**.

^c OsO₄ (0.05 equiv), NMO (1.2 equiv), THF-H₂O = 3: 1 (0.1 M).

^d AD-mix (1000% w/w), MeSO₂NH₂ (1.5 equiv), *t*-BuOH-H₂O = 1: 1 (0.1 M).



Scheme 2 Synthesis of (+)-polyoxamic acid (1) starting with the chiral aziridine 5

stage by using flash column chromatography (silica gel), thus enabling the production of this key intermediate in greater than 1 g quantities. Next, regioselective aziridine ring-opening reaction¹⁵ of **6** was successfully carried out using excess acetic acid in CH_2Cl_2 . This process afforded the monoacetate ester, which without purification was subjected to treatment with potassium hydroxide in ethanol to form the corresponding alcohol **2** in a 76% yield (2 steps).

Several oxidizing agents were explored to carry out the transformation of the primary alcohol group in **2** to the corresponding carboxylic acid in **7**. While PDC/ DMF ¹⁶ and $\text{CrO}_3/2\text{-pyridine}$ ¹⁷ promoted reaction resulted in the formation of substantial amounts of by-products, and while significant levels of substrate decomposition and sluggish reactivity were accompanied with respective Dess–Martin periodinane¹⁸ and $\text{RuCl}_3/\text{NaIO}_4$ ¹⁹ oxidations, the conversion of **2** to **7** took place with modest efficiency (52%) using the Jones reagent (Scheme 2).

In studies targeted at accomplishing simultaneous deprotection of the *O*-benzyl and *N*-phenylethyl protecting groups in **7**, we observed that, contrary to expectations, the removal of the *N*-phenylethyl group was sluggish, even with prolonged reaction times (4 d), when catalytic amounts of Pd/C or $\text{Pd}(\text{OH})_2$ were used under 1 atmosphere of H_2 . Furthermore, inclusion of catalytic amounts of several acids (e.g., AcOH, HCl, TFA, HCO_2H) as well as the use of catalytic hydrogen transfer employing ammonium formate in refluxing MeOH²⁰ failed to bring about nitrogen deprotection.

However, we observed that simultaneous *O*-benzyl and *N*-phenylethyl group deprotection can be accomplished by using excess $\text{Pd}(\text{OH})_2$ under a high pressure hydrogen atmosphere (50 psi, 12 h).²¹ The product generated in this process was subjected to ion-exchange chromatography on Dowex-50WX8 (H^+ form) using 0.6 M aqueous NH_4OH as the eluent. This procedure afforded the free

base form of (+)-polyoxamic acid (**1**) in 84% yield (Scheme 2). The identity of the synthetic material was confirmed by comparing its spectroscopic properties and optical rotation ($[\alpha]_D^{23.5} +2.2$ (c 0.17, H_2O) {Lit. $[\alpha]_D^{23} +2.1$ (c 1.0, H_2O)}) to those reported earlier for the natural product.²²

In conclusion, in the work described above, a route for the stereoselective and facile synthesis of (+)-polyoxamic acid (**1**) has been developed. The sequence involves 9 steps, three of which do not require product purification, and provides the target in a 12.9% overall yield. The strategy employed in this stereoselective synthesis of (+)-polyoxamic acid uniquely utilizes an enantiomerically pure chiral aziridine as the starting material. Moreover, other interesting features of the approach include the use of Sharpless asymmetric dihydroxylation and a regioselective aziridine ring-opening process. This general strategy has the potential of being applicable to enantioselective syntheses of several other polyhydroxylated amine natural products.

Reactions were monitored by TLC with 0.25 mm E. Merck precoated silica gel plates (60 F₂₅₄). Reaction progress was monitored by TLC analysis using a UV lamp, ninhydrin, or *p*-anisaldehyde stain for detection purpose. Purification of reaction products was carried out by flash chromatography using Kieselgel 60 Art. 9385 (230–400 mesh). The purity of all compounds was over 95% and was analyzed using Waters LCMS system (Waters 2998 Photodiode Array Detector, Waters 3100 Mass Detector, Waters SFO System Fluidics Organizer, Water 2545 Binary Gradient Module, Waters Reagent Manager, Waters 2767 Sample Manager) using SunFire™ C18 column (4.6 × 50 mm, 5 μm particle size): solvent gradient = 60% (or 95%) A at 0 min, 1% A at 5 min. Solvent A = 0.035% TFA in H_2O ; Solvent B = 0.035% TFA in MeOH; flow rate : 3.0 (or 2.5) mL/min. ^1H and ^{13}C NMR spectra were obtained using a Bruker 400 MHz FT-NMR (400 MHz for ^1H , and 100 MHz for ^{13}C) spectrometer. Chemical shifts are reported relative to CHCl_3 ($\delta = 7.26$) for ^1H NMR and CHCl_3 ($\delta = 77.2$) for ^{13}C NMR or D_2O for ^1H ($\delta = 4.80$) and D_2O for ^{13}C NMR. Standard abbreviations are used for denoting the signal multiplicities. High-resolution mass spectra (HRMS) were recorded on a QTOF mass spectrometer.

Ethyl 3-[(R)-1-[(R)-1-Phenylethyl]aziridin-2-yl]prop-2-enoate (4)

To a solution of (COCl)₂ (4.1 mL, 47.73 mmol) in CH₂Cl₂ (100 mL) was slowly added DMSO (7 mL, 99.43 mmol) at –78 °C. After 30 min, a solution of **5** (7.05 g, 39.77 mmol) in CH₂Cl₂ (80 mL) was added. After 30 min, Et₃N (22 mL, 119.3 mmol) was added at –78 °C and the reaction mixture was stirred for 30 min at 0 °C. The mixture was quenched with H₂O (50 mL) and then extracted with CH₂Cl₂ (2 × 200 mL). The combined organic layers were dried (MgSO₄), filtered, and concentrated in vacuo. The resulting aldehyde was used in the next step without further purification. To a solution of the aldehyde in THF (80 mL) was added triethyl phosphonoacetate at r.t. After 10 min at r.t., LHMDS (47.7 mL, 47.7 mmol, 1 M in THF) was added. The mixture was stirred for 1 h at r.t., then quenched with H₂O (20 mL), and extracted with EtOAc (2 × 100 mL). The combined organic layers were dried (MgSO₄), filtered, and concentrated in vacuo. The resulting crude product was purified by silica gel flash column chromatography with EtOAc–hexane (1:6) to afford the title product **4**; yield: 7.02 g (28.63 mmol, 72% over 2 steps); yellow oil.

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 7.39–7.23 (m, 5 H), 6.76 (dd, *J* = 7.6, 15.6 Hz, 1 H), 6.13 (d, *J* = 15.6 Hz, 1 H), 4.20 (q, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2 H), 2.54 (q, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 1 H), 2.16–2.11 (m, 1 H), 1.80 (d, *J* = 3.2 Hz, 1 H), 1.66 (d, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 1 H), 1.43 (d, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 3 H), 1.29 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3 H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 166.38, 148.63, 144.28, 128.59, 127.39, 126.95, 122.05, 70.14, 60.51, 39.83, 36.49, 23.42, 14.46.

HRMS-ESI: *m/z* [M + H]⁺ calcd for C₁₅H₂₀NO₂: 246.1489; found: 246.1494.

Ethyl 2,3-Dihydroxy-3-[(R)-1-[(R)-1-phenylethyl]aziridin-2-yl]propanoate (3)

To a solution of **4** (2.7 g, 13.3 mmol) in *t*-BuOH–H₂O (55 mL/55 mL) were added AD-mix-α (27 g) and MeSO₂NH₂ (1.57 g, 16.6 mmol) at 0 °C. The reaction mixture was stirred for 36 h, washed with sat. aq Na₂SO₃ (3 × 20 mL), and then partitioned between CH₂Cl₂ (300 mL) and H₂O (200 mL). The aqueous layer was extracted with CH₂Cl₂ (3 × 100 mL) and the combined organic layers were washed with brine (200 mL), dried (MgSO₄), filtered through a pad of Celite, and concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was subjected to silica gel column chromatography with EtOAc–hexane (2:3 to 1:1) to afford the diol **3** (diastereomeric mixture, **3a/3b** = 10:1); yield: 2.25 g (9.71 mmol, 73%); yellow oil.

The diastereomeric mixture **3** from column chromatography was further purified by preparative TLC (eluent: EtOAc–hexane, 1:2 to 2:3) to collect small amount of the desired diastereomer **3a**.

Diastereomer 3a

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 7.36–7.23 (m, 5 H), 4.29–4.23 (m, 3 H), 3.72 (dd, *J* = 2.4, 6.4 Hz, 1 H), 3.55 (br s, 2 H), 2.61 (q, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 1 H), 2.05–2.01 (m, 1 H), 1.71 (d, *J* = 3.2 Hz, 1 H), 1.48 (d, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 3 H), 1.40 (d, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 1 H), 1.29 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3 H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 172.92, 144.37, 128.62, 127.38, 127.00, 73.42, 72.12, 69.43, 62.16, 41.62, 30.87, 23.44, 14.42.

HRMS-ESI: *m/z* [M + Na]⁺ calcd for C₁₅H₂₁NO₄ + Na: 302.1363; found: 302.1368.

(R)-1-[(R)-1-Phenylethyl]-2-[(1S,2S)-1,2,3-tri(benzyloxy)propyl]aziridine (6)

To a solution of **3** (1 g, 3.57 mmol) in THF (35 mL) was added LiAlH₄ (1.96 mL, 3.93 mmol, 2 M in THF) at 0 °C. The reaction mixture was stirred for 20 min at 0 °C, diluted with THF (35 mL), quenched with sat. Rochelle's solution (70 mL), and stirred for an additional 12 h at 0 °C. The mixture was filtered through a pad of Celite and partitioned between EtOAc (300 mL) and H₂O (100 mL). The aqueous layer was extracted with *i*-PrOH–CHCl₃ (1:4; 3 × 100 mL) and the combined organic layers were dried (MgSO₄), filtered through a pad of Celite, and concentrated in vacuo. The re-

sulting alcohol was used in the next step without further purification. To a slurry of NaH (471 mg, 11.78 mmol, 60% dispersion in mineral oil) in THF (12 mL) was added a solution of the resulting alcohol in THF (12 mL) at 0 °C. After 1 h, BnBr (1.4 mL, 11.78 mmol) and TBAI (442 mg, 1.2 mmol) were added. The reaction mixture was stirred for 12 h at r.t., diluted with EtOAc (30 mL), quenched with H₂O (10 mL) at 0 °C and extracted with EtOAc (2 × 30 mL). The combined organic layers were washed with brine (30 mL), dried (MgSO₄), filtered, and concentrated under reduced pressure. The resulting crude product was purified by silica gel flash chromatography with EtOAc–hexane (1:9) to afford the title product **6**; yield: 1.29 g (2.64 mmol, 74% over 2 steps); yellow oil.

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 7.38–7.25 (m, 20 H), 4.99 (d, *J* = 12.0 Hz, 1 H), 4.73 (d, *J* = 12.4 Hz, 2 H), 4.60 (d, *J* = 11.6 Hz, 1 H), 4.41 (s, 2 H), 3.65 (m, 3 H), 3.17 (dd, *J* = 2.8, 8.4 Hz, 1 H), 2.42 (q, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 1 H), 1.87–1.82 (m, 1 H), 1.50 (d, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 3 H), 1.42 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 1 H), 1.06 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 1 H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 144.90, 139.13, 138.79, 138.50, 128.57, 128.47, 128.42, 127.87, 127.84, 127.79, 127.71, 127.22, 127.09, 81.71, 79.37, 73.63, 73.41, 73.39, 70.43, 70.40, 41.69, 30.01, 23.61.

HRMS-ESI: *m/z* [M + H]⁺ calcd for C₃₄H₃₈NO₃: 508.2846; found: 508.2852.

(2R,3S,4S)-3,4,5-Tri(benzyloxy)-2-[(R)-1-phenylethyl]amino]pentan-1-ol (2)

To a solution of **6** (340 mg, 0.67 mmol) in CH₂Cl₂ (2 mL) was added AcOH (0.38 mL, 6.7 mmol). The reaction mixture was stirred for 18 h at r.t., diluted with CH₂Cl₂ (20 mL), and quenched with sat. aq NaHCO₃ (100 mL). The aqueous layer was extracted with CH₂Cl₂ (2 × 200 mL) and the combined organic layers were washed with brine (100 mL), dried (MgSO₄), filtered through a pad of Celite, and concentrated in vacuo. The resulting acetate was used in the next step without further purification. To a solution of the acetate in EtOH (2 mL) was added KOH (113 mg, 2.1 mmol). The reaction mixture was stirred for 2 h at r.t., diluted with CH₂Cl₂ (20 mL), and quenched with H₂O (2 mL). The aqueous layer was extracted with CH₂Cl₂ (3 × 50 mL) and the combined organic layers were washed with brine (50 mL), dried (MgSO₄), filtered through a pad of Celite, and concentrated in vacuo. The resulting crude product was purified by silica gel flash chromatography with EtOAc–hexane (1:3) to afford the title product **2**; yield: 267 mg (0.51 mmol, 76% yield over 2 steps); yellow oil.

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 7.40–7.24 (m, 20 H), 4.81 (d, *J* = 11.6 Hz, 1 H), 4.73 (d, *J* = 11.6 Hz, 1 H), 4.69 (d, *J* = 12.0 Hz, 1 H), 4.58–4.53 (m, 3 H), 3.97 (q, *J* = 4.8 Hz, 1 H), 3.83 (q, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 1 H), 3.77–3.73 (m, 3 H), 3.37–3.29 (m, 2 H), 2.85 (q, *J* = 4.4 Hz, 1 H), 2.22 (br s, 1 H), 1.24 (d, *J* = 6.2 Hz, 3 H).

¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 138.11, 138.02, 128.53, 128.50, 128.41, 128.38, 128.31, 128.16, 127.94, 127.77, 127.74, 127.72, 127.27, 126.80, 79.35, 78.14, 74.23, 73.44, 72.86, 69.85, 61.47, 56.95, 56.82, 23.78.

HRMS-ESI: *m/z* [M + H]⁺ calcd for C₃₄H₄₀NO₄: 526.2952; found: 526.2962.

(2S,3S,4S)-3,4,5-Tri(benzyloxy)-2-[(R)-1-phenylethyl]amino]pentanoic Acid (7)

To a solution of **2** (110 mg, 0.209 mmol) in acetone (2 mL) was added Jones reagent (0.21 mL, 0.522 mmol, 2.5 M solution in H₂O) at 0 °C. The reaction mixture was stirred for 4 h at 0 °C, quenched with *i*-PrOH (0.1 mL), and filtered through a pad of Celite, and washed with CH₂Cl₂ (20 mL). The reaction mixture was partitioned between CH₂Cl₂ (50 mL) and H₂O (10 mL). The aqueous layer was extracted with CH₂Cl₂ (3 × 10 mL) and combined organic layers were washed with brine, dried (MgSO₄), filtered through a pad of Celite, and concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was subjected to silica gel column chromatography with EtOAc–hexane

(1:2) to CH_2Cl_2 –MeOH (20:1) to afford the title product **7**; yield: 59 mg (0.11 mmol, 52%); white solid; mp 121–124 °C.

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3): δ = 7.42–7.19 (m, 18 H), 7.02–7.00 (m, 2 H) 4.70 (dd, J = 10.8, 14.4 Hz, 2 H), 4.56 (dd, J = 1.2, 5.2 Hz, 1 H), 4.50 (dd, J = 1.6, 11.2 Hz, 2 H), 4.46 (s, 2 H), 4.07 (q, J = 6.8 Hz, 1 H), 3.87 (dd, J = 4.0, 9.2 Hz, 1 H), 3.69 (dd, J = 4.4, 10.4 Hz, 1 H), 3.59 (dd, J = 4.4, 10.4 Hz, 1 H), 3.52 (d, J = 1.2 Hz, 1 H), 1.20 (d, J = 6.8 Hz, 3 H).

^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3): δ = 170.00, 137.37, 136.99, 129.15, 128.95, 128.70, 128.66, 128.43, 128.26, 128.23, 128.09, 128.00, 127.20, 79.36, 77.70, 75.01, 73.73, 72.75, 68.83, 60.29, 57.76, 19.82.

HRMS-ESI: m/z $[\text{M} + \text{H}]^+$ calcd for $\text{C}_{34}\text{H}_{38}\text{NO}_5$: 540.2744; found: 540.2749.

(+)-Polyoxamic Acid (**1**)

To a solution of **7** (59 mg, 0.109 mmol) in MeOH (10 mL) was added $\text{Pd}(\text{OH})_2$ (59 mg). The reaction mixture was flushed with H_2 and stirred for 12 h under a H_2 atmosphere (50 psi) at r.t. The mixture was then filtered through a pad of Celite and concentrated in vacuo. The resulting crude solid was recrystallized from EtOH to give a white solid, which was subjected to ion-exchange chromatography on Dowex-50WX8 (H^+ form) using 0.6 M aq NH_4OH as eluent to afford (+)-polyoxamic acid (**1**); yield: 15 mg (0.091 mmol, 84%); white solid; mp 168–171 °C; $[\alpha]_{\text{D}}^{23.5} +2.2$ (c 0.17, H_2O) {Lit.²² $[\alpha]_{\text{D}}^{23} +2.1$ (c 1.0, H_2O)}.

^1H NMR (400 MHz, D_2O): δ = 4.08 (t, J = 2.4 Hz, 1 H), 3.78–3.74 (m, 2 H), 3.57–3.48 (m, 2 H).

^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, D_2O): δ = 172.65, 73.12, 68.07, 62.43, 57.95.

HRMS: m/z $[\text{M} + \text{Na}]^+$ calcd for $\text{C}_5\text{H}_{11}\text{NO}_5 + \text{Na}$: 188.0529; found: 188.0535.

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