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Graphical Abstract



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The first stereoselective synthesis of dendrodolide A

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Abstract: The first stereoselective total synthesis of natural product, dendrodolide A (1) is described from readily available (*R*)-propylene oxide and 3-buten-1-ol as starting materials. The synthesis was achieved in 10 steps with an overall yield of 19.1%. The key steps involved in the synthesis are Jacobsen hydrolytic kinetic resolution, epoxide ring opening with 2-allyl-1, 3-dithiane, Yamaguchi esterification and ring-closing metathesis (RCM).

Keywords: Jacobsen hydrolytic kinetic resolution / Epoxides / Yamaguchi esterification/ Ring-closing metathesis / Asymmetric synthesis / Macrolides

Marine microorganisms have been proven to be a rich repertoire of innumerable secondary metabolites with novel structures and wide-ranging biologically properties, particularly, half of them were from fungal genera.¹ Recently, fungal metabolites, dendrodolides A-D², (Fig.1) were isolated from the fungus Dendrodochium sp., (a fungus associated with the sea cucumber Holothuria nobilis Selenka) by Wen Zhan and co-workers. The gross structure of 1 was established by means of detailed spectroscopic analysis (1D, 2D NMR and Mass) and X-ray single-crystal diffraction studies. It was further shown that dendrodolide A (1) exhibited in vitro cytotoxicity against the tumor cell line SMMC-7721 with IC_{50} value of 19.2 µg/mL. Structurally, dendrodolide A (1) is a 12-membered macrolactone, featuring a trans double bond, one hydroxyl group, and methoxy group moieties. Because of their important biological properties coupled with the presence of interesting unique stereogenic variations, as well as the limited amounts available from natural sources, dendrodolides have attracted the attention of a number of synthetic organic chemists towards their synthesis worldwide. However, till date there are no reports on the synthesis of 1. These facts coupled with the interesting structural feature of dendrodolide A (1) prompted us to undertake the synthetic study. In continuation of our interest in targeting lactone-containing molecules³ for total synthesis, herein we describe the stereoselective total synthesis of dendrodolide A (1).



Figure 1.Structures of dendrodolides (A-D)

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Scheme 1: Retrosynthetic analysis of dendrodolide A (1)

Recognizing the importance of developing an efficient synthetic strategy for 1, our synthetic approach to a 12membered macrolide, dendrodolide involves a RCM reaction (Scheme 1). Thus, disconnection of the C-C double bond revealed the bis terminal olefin 2 as a potential key intermediate. A subsequent disconnection of 2 through Yamaguchi esterification converts it into fragments 3 and 4. The alcohol fragment 3 envisaged by regioselective ring opening of epoxide 5 with 2-allyl-1,3-dithiane 6, the epoxide 5 could, in turn be accessed from opening of (R)propylene oxide 8 with vinyl magnesium bromide through epoxidation followed by Jacobsen hydrolytic kinetic resolution. On the other hand, acid fragment 4 could be obtained by stepwise transformations from commercially available 3-buten-1-ol (11) through epoxidation and Jacobsen resolution reactions. Thus, our present total synthesis will be highlighted by utilization of Jacobsen hydrolytic kinetic resolution which directs the construction of the stereocentre at C-3, C-9, C-11 and Grubb's ring closing metathesis for the formation of 12-membered lactone ring. Furthermore, the simplicity of the precursors of this route makes it attractive for the library synthesis of

1

2

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the dendrodolides for the biological screening, as extensive biological screening was not done due to the limited amounts from natural source.

For an enantioselective approach for the synthesis of 5, we selected (R)-propylene oxide 8 as a chiral synthon, readily prepared from racemic-propylene oxide through Jacobsen hydrolytic kinetic resolution⁴ (HKR) using (R, R)-(salen)-Co^{III} OAc. Thus, treatment of (R)-propylene oxide 8 with vinyl magnesium bromide in the presence of CuI afforded homoallylic alcohol^{5,6} in 89% yield, in which the secondary hydroxyl group was protected as its TBS ether using TBSCl, imidazole, in DCM to give 7 in 98% yield. Epoxidation of 7 with *m*-CPBA afforded a mixture of two diastereomers 12 (anti:syn/3:1), which was then subjected to Jacobsen hydrolytic kinetic resolution (HKR) method with (S, S)-(salen)-Co^{III} OAc complex (0.5 mol %) and water (0.55 equiv) in THF (0.55 equiv) to afford the diastereometrically pure epoxide 5^6 in 70% yield (>94% ee) (determined by chiral HPLC) and diol 5a in 21% yield. Ring opening of epoxide 5 with 2-allyl-1,3-dithiane⁷ yielded compound 13^8 in 87% yield. Subsequent methylation of alcohol 13 using MeI/NaH⁹ afforded 14 in 98% yield. Removal of TBS group with TBAF furnished the required alcohol $\mathbf{3}^{10}$ in 96% yield.



Scheme2. Reagents and conditions: (a) (i) vinyl magnesium bromide, CuI, THF, -78°C to -20 °C, 12 h, 89%; (ii) TBDMSCl, imidazole, CH₂Cl₂, 0 °C to rt, 4 h, 98%; (b) *m*-CPBA, CH₂Cl₂, 0 °C to rt, 12 h, 92%, (c) (*S*,*S*)-(salen)-Co^{III.} OAc (0.5 mol %), H₂O (0.55 equiv.), THF, 0°C to rt, 18 h, 45% for **5**, 47% for **5a**; (d) **6**, *n*-BuLi, dry THF,-78 °C to -20 °C, 2 h, 87%; (e) NaH, MeI, THF, 0 °C to rt, 5 h, 98%; (f) TBAF, THF, 0°C to rt, 4 h, 96%.

The journey for the synthesis of acid fragment 4 began from readily available 3-buten-1-ol (11) (Scheme 3), which was protected as PMB ether using PMBBr, NaH and a catalytic amount of TBAI in DMF to afford 15^{11} in 96% yield. The compound 15 was subjected to m-CPBA epoxidation to give racemic epoxide 16^{12} , which was subjected to Jacobsen's hydrolytic kinetic resolution using the (S, S)-catalyst to give optically pure epoxide (S)- 10^{13} in yield (determined by chiral HPLC). 44% The regioselective ring opening of epoxide¹⁴ 10 with dimethylsulfonium methylide (Me₃S⁺I⁻), *n*-BuLi, in THF afforded the allylic alcohol 9 in 92% yield. The allylic alcohol was subsequently protected with TBSCl and imidazole in DCM to afford 17^5 in 96% yield. Finally deprotection of PMB group with DDQ¹⁵ followed by oxidation with TEMPO/BAIB in $CH_2Cl_2:H_2O$ (1:1) afforded acid 4^{16} in 92% yield.



Scheme 3. Reagents and conditions: (a) PMBBr, NaH, DMF, 0 °C to rt, 12 h, 96%; (b) *m*-CPBA, CH₂Cl₂, 0 °C to rt, 12 h, 89%; (c) (*S*,*S*)-(salen)-Co^{III}·OAc (0.5 mol%), H₂O (0.55 equiv.), 0 °C to rt, 18 h, 45% for 10, 47% for 10a; (d) Me₃S⁺T⁻, n-BuLi, THF, -20 °C, 4 h, 92%; (e) TBSCl, imidazole, DCM, 0°C to rt, 96%; (f) DDQ, CH₂Cl₂ : P^H 7 buffer (9 : 1), 0 °C to rt, 1 h, 92%; (g) TEMPO, BAIB, CH₂Cl₂ : H₂O (1 : 1), 0 °C to rt, 2 h, 92%.

With the two fragments 3 and 4 in our hand, the synthesis proceeded as shown in Scheme 4. The connection between the fragments 3 and 4 was performed using the Yamaguchi protocol¹⁷ (2,4,6-trichlorobenzoyl chloride, Et₃N, THF, DMAP, toluene), which yielded key olefin 2 in good yield. Having the key intermediate 2 in hand, we next planned for ring-closing metathesis (RCM) reaction of 2 with the Grubbs second generation catalyst (G-II, 25 mol %). However, the reaction did not progress¹⁸ and the starting material was completely recovered. At this stage, we investigated the alternative strategy, viz., deprotection followed by the RCM reaction to achieve the compound 20. Thus, deprotection of TBS group using TBAF gave 19¹⁰ with 96% yield, which was then subjected to the RCM reaction using G-II (25 mol %) in dry DCM (deoxygenated), which at reflux temperature gratifyingly yielded macrolide 20^{19} in 65% yield and with good Eselectivity (>95%).



Scheme 4. Reagents and conditions: (a) 4, 2,4,6trichlorobenzoylchloride, Et₃N, THF, 0 °C to rt, 2 h, then 3, DMAP, toluene, 0 °C, 2 h, 98%; (b) G-II (25 mol%), CH₂Cl₂, reflux, 20 h, (c) TBAF, THF, 0°C to rt, 4 h, 96%; (d) G-II (25 mol%), CH₂Cl₂, reflux, 20 h, 65%; (e) CaCO₃, I₂, THF:H₂O (4:1), 0 °C, 20 min, 92%.

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Finally, removal of 1,3-dithiane group²⁰ in **20** with CaCO₃, I₂, in THF: H₂O (4:1) furnished the presumed, dendrodolide A (**1**) with 92% yield. All the intermediate compounds including the dendrodolide A (**1**) were fully characterized ²¹ by ¹H NMR, ¹³C NMR, and Mass spectral data. The spectral and analytical data of synthetic dendrodolide A (**1**) were in agreement with the reported natural dendrodolide data.

In conclusion, we have accomplished the first total synthesis of dendrodolide A (1) in 10 steps with an overall yield of 19.1 %, featuring the Jacobsen catalyst hydrolytic kinetic resolution (HKR), Yamaguchi esterification and ring-closing metathesis reactions (RCM) as a key reactions. Following the same series of reactions, we are presently investigating the synthesis of other dendrodolide including their analogues. Its biological properties will also be investigated and compared with those of the natural product.

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 Y.; Sun, Y.P. J. Org. Chem. 2006, 71, 5748-5751.
- 21. Spectroscopic data for representative examples: Compound **13**: Colorless oil; $[a]_D^{25} = -3.36$ (c = 1.6, CHCl₃); ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 5.96$ -5.86 (m, 1 H), 5.18-5.17 (m, 1 H), 5.16-5.14 (m, 1 H), 4.28-4.22 (m, 1 H), 4.15-4.09 (m, 1 H), 3.59-3.56 (bs, 1 H), 3.0-2.96 (m, 1 H), 2.91-2.76 (m, 4 H), 2.73-2.67 (m, 1 H), 2.28-2.21 (m, 1 H), 2.05-1.98 (m, 1 H), 1.97-1.91 (m, 1 H), 1.89, 1.86 (d, J = 1.8 Hz, 1 H), 1.64-1.58 (m. 1 H), 1.45-1.39 (m, 1 H), 1.18 (d, J = 6.2 Hz, 3 H), 0.9 (s, 9 H), 0.1 (s, 3 H), 0.08 (s, 3 H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 132.5$, 118.8, 65.7, 65.0, 51.5, 46.6, 45.3, 43.9, 26.3, 26.0, 25.8 (3 C), 24.8, 23.8, 17.9, -4.4, -4.9; IR (KBr): $v^{\tau} = 3478$, 2956, 1741, 1649, 1255, 836 cm⁻¹; MS (ESI): m/z = 399 [M + Na]⁺.

Compound 14: Colorless liquid; $[\alpha]_D^{25} = -8.22$ (c = 0.45, CHCl₃); ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 5.99$ -5.87 (m, 1 H), 5.18-5.16 (bs, 1 H), 5.15-5.12 (m, 1 H), 3.99-3.91 (m, 1 H), 3.72-3.65 (m, 1 H), 3.35 (s, 3 H), 2.90-2.68 (m, 6 H), 2.15, 2.12 (d, J = 5.8 Hz, 1 H), 1.98-1.87 (m, 3 H), 1.71-1.59 (m, 2 H), 1.17 (d, J = 6.1Hz, 3 H), 0.9 (s, 9 H); 0.09 (s, 3 H), 0.08 (s, 3 H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 113.3$, 118.2, 74.9, 65.5, 56.0, 51.5, 46.5, 43.6, 43.3, 26.19, 26.16, 25.9 (3 C), 24.9, 24.3, 18.0, -3.9, -4.6; IR (KBr): $\upsilon_{max} = 2959$, 2855, 1742, 1260, 802, 773 cm⁻¹; MS (ESI): m/z = 413 [M + Na]⁺.

Compound 3: Colorless liquid; $[\alpha]_D^{25} = -12.7$ (c = 0.85, CHCl₃); ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 5.98-5.87$ (m, 1 H), 5.18-5.11 (m, 2 H), 4.17-4.10 (m, 1 H), 3.85-3.8

(m, 1 H), 3.39 (s, 3 H),2.91-2.68 (m, 6 H), 2.25 (dd, J =15.2, 7.0 Hz, 1 H), 2.1 (dd, J = 15.4, 3.0 Hz, 1 H), 1.98-1.89 (m, 3 H), 1.51, 1.48 (q, J = 4.4, 2.4 Hz, 1 H), 1.2 (d, J = 6.1 Hz, 3 H); (¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 133.1, 118.5, 77.3, 65.1, 56.4, 51.7, 43.6, 42.8, 41.4,$ 26.1, 26.0, 24.9, 23.7; IR (KBr): v_{max} = 3429, 2927, 1643, 1219, 772 cm⁻¹; HRMS (ESI): calcd. for $C_{13}H_{24}NaO_2S_2$ [M + Na]⁺ 299.1110; found 299.1106. **Compound 4**: Colorless oil; $[\alpha]_D^{25} = +3.73$ (*c* = 1.0, CHCl₃); ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 5.86$ (ddd, *J* = 16.8, 10.3, 6.2 Hz, 1 H), 5.26 (dt, J = 17.0, 1.3 Hz, 1 H), 5.12, 5.11 (dt, J = 10.3, 1.2 Hz, 1 H), 4.58 (q, J =6.7 Hz, 1 H), 2.56 (dd, J = 6.8, 4.4 Hz, 2 H), 0.89 (s, 9 H); 0.08 (s, 3 H), 0.07 (s, 3 H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, $CDCl_3$): $\delta = 176.8, 139.6, 115.1, 70.5, 43.2, 25.6 (3 C),$ 18.0, -4.4, -5.2; IR (KBr): $\upsilon_{max} = 2928, 2876, 1716,$ 1460, 1092, 773 cm⁻¹; MS (ESI): m/z = 253 [M + $Na]^+$.

Compound 2: Colorless liquid; $[\alpha]_D^{25} = -1.3$ (*c* = 1.0, CHCl₃); ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ = 5.98-5.83 (m, 2 H), 5.27-5.22 (m, 1 H), 5.18-5.16 (bs, 1 H), 5.15-5.12 (m, 1 H), 5.1-5.06 (m, 1 H), 5.04-4.98 (m, 1 H), 4.59 (q, J = 13.1, 6.2 Hz, 1 H), 3.58-3.52 (m, 1 H), 3.32 (s, 3 H), 2.90-2.81 (m, 3 H), 2.79, 2.68 (m, 3 H), 2.56 (dd, J =14.8, 7.0 Hz, 1 H), 2.46 (dd, J = 14.8, 6.2 Hz, 1 H), 2.1 (dd, J = 15.4, 6.4 Hz, 1 H), 2.0-1.93 (m, 2 H), 1.89-1.82 (m, 1 H), 1.73-1.66 (m, 2 H), 1.26 (d, J = 6.2 Hz, 3 H) 0.88 (s, 9 H); 0.07 (s, 3 H), 0.05 (s, 3 H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 170.3$, 140.2, 133.2, 118.3, 114.6, 75.1, 70.5, 68.5, 56.7, 51.3, 44.0, 43.8, 43.5, 42.2, 26.15, 26.11, 25.7 (3 C), 24.9, 20.5, 18.1, -4.4, -4.9; IR (KBr): $v_{max} = 2929$, 1733, 1219, 802, 772 cm⁻¹; HRMS (ESI): calcd. for $C_{24}H_{44}NaO_4S_2Si [M + Na]^+ 511.2342;$ found 511.2381.

Compound 19: Colorless oil; $[a]_D^{25} = -8.6$ (c = 1.0, CHCl₃); ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 5.96$ -5.86 (m, 2 H), 5.35-5.32 (t, J = 1.5, Hz, 1 H), 5.18-5.15 (m, 3 H), 5.14-5.12 (m, 1 H), 4.58-4.54 (m, 1 H), 3.6-3.55 (m, 1 H) 3.33 (s, 3 H), 3.14-3.1 (bs, 1 H, OH), 2.93- 2.85 (m, 2 H), 2.82-2.69 (m, 5 H), 2.63-2.57 (m, 1 H), 2.56-2.5 (m, 1 H), 2.11 (dd, J = 15.4, 6.0 Hz, 1 H), 1.99-1.91 (m, 3 H), 1.72-1.65 (m, 1 H), 1.25 (d, J = 6.2 Hz, 3 H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 171.6$, 138.8, 133.2, 118.4, 115.2, 75.0, 68.8 (2 C), 56.7, 51.3, 43.8, 43.5, 41.6, 42.2, 26.12, 26.09, 24.8, 20.6; IR (KBr): $\upsilon_{max} = 2959$, 2919, 2851, 1728, 1219, 802, 772 cm⁻¹; HRMS (ESI): calcd. for C₁₈H₃₀NaO₄S₂ [M + Na]⁺ 397.1478; found 397.1514.

Compound 20: Light brown oil; $[a]_D^{25} = -12.36$ (c = 0.55, CHCl₃); ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 5.89$ -5.81 (m, 1 H), 5.62-5.56 (m, 1 H), 5.22-5.15 (m, 1 H), 4.57-4.51 (m, 1 H), 3.51-3.44 (m, 1 H) 3.33 (s, 3 H), 2.98- 2.89 (m, 3 H), 2.80-2.70 (m, 3 H), 2.65-2.63 (m, 2 H), 2.12-2.01 (m, 2 H), 1.99-1.84 (m, 3 H), 1.69-1.63 (m, 1 H), 1.24 (d, J = 6.2 Hz, 3 H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 171.6$, 134.9, 127.3, 76.1, 70.0, 68.9, 56.5, 50.7, 45.2, 42.3, 41.8, 41.3, 26.4 (2 C), 25.1, 21.1; IR (KBr): $\upsilon_{max} = 3432$, 2980, 2911, 2829, 1721, 1276,

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Tetrahedron Letters

1166, 802, 764 cm⁻¹; HRMS (ESI): calcd. for $C_{16}H_{16}NaO_4S_2 [M + Na]^+$ 369.1165; found 369.1198. **Compound 1**: Colorless crystal; M.P 114-116⁰C; Accepter $[\alpha]_{\rm D}^{25}$ = + 40.4 (c = 0.3, CHCl₃); ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): $\delta = 5.73-5.71$ (m, 2 H), 5.31-5.24 (m, 1 H),