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Collective Total Syntheses of Atisane-Type Diterpenes and Atisine-Type Diterpenoid Alkaloids: (\pm) -Spiramilactone B, (\pm) -Spiraminol, (\pm) -Dihydroajaconine, and (\pm) -Spiramines C and D

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Dedicated to Professor Guo-Qiang Lin

Abstract: The first total syntheses of the architecturally complex atisane-type diterpenes and biogenetically related atisine-type diterpenoid alkaloids (\pm) -spiramilactone B, (\pm) spiraminol, (\pm) -dihydroajaconine, and (\pm) -spiramines C and D are reported. Highlights of the synthesis include a latestage biomimetic transformation of spiramilactone B, a facile formal lactone migration from the pentacyclic skeleton of spiramilactone E, a highly efficient and diastereoselective 1,7enyne cycloisomerization to construct the functionalized tetracyclic atisane skeleton, and a tandem retro-Diels–Alder/ intramolecular Diels–Alder sequence to achieve the tricyclo-[6.2.2.0] ring system.

Atisine-type diterpenoid alkaloids and atisane-type diterpenes are widely distributed in the plant world and have long been attractive targets for synthetic chemists because of their physiological and architectural properties.^[1] Spiramines C and D (1, 2; Figure 1), representative alkaloids for the *Spiraea japonica* complex, were first isolated by Hao and co-workers in 1987.^[2] These compounds and their derivatives have been shown to exhibit anti-platelet aggregation, anti-inflammatory, and neuroprotective effects,^[3a,b] and are capable of inhibiting



Figure 1. Representative members of the series of atisane-type diterpenes and atisine-type diterpenoid alkaloids.

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Wnt/β-catenin signaling and colon-cancer-cell tumorigenesis.^[3c-e] The structures of spiramines C and D show an unprecedentedly complex heptacyclic ring framework that contains three bridged ring units (A/E, B/F, and C/D). One of the distinctive structural characteristics of spiramines C and D is a C7-C20 oxygen-bridge linkage that distinguishes them from other atisine-type members, such as isoatisine (4) and dihydroajaconine (3).^[4] This unusual structural motif is also found in a few members of the atisane-type diterpenes, such as spiraminol $(5)^{[5a]}$ and spiramilactone B $(6)^{[5b]}$ which surprisingly were isolated from the same Spiraea plants. Compounds 5 and 6 are closely related to spiramines C and D and only differ in the constitution of ring E. It has been proven that spiraminol (5) can be transformed into spiramines C and D by reaction with ethanolamine, indicating that the spiraminol could be regarded as the potential biosynthetic precursor of Spiraea alkaloids.[3a,6]

Despite the intriguing biosynthetic and structural properties of these *Spiraea* atisine-type alkaloids and related diterpenes, there are no reports on their total syntheses. To date, successful total syntheses towards atisane diterpenes and atisine diterpenoid alkaloids have been limited to some relatively uncomplicated compounds, such as methyl atisenoate,^[7a-d] antiquorin,^[7e] atisine or isoatisine (4),^[7d,f-k] and azitine.^[71] In continuation of our long-standing interest in the chemistry of diterpenoid alkaloids,^[8] we wish to describe herein the first total syntheses of several atisane- and atisinetype compounds with more highly oxidized skeletons including spiramilactone B (6), spiraminol (5), spiramines C and D (1,2), and dihydroajaconine (3), using a unified synthetic strategy that is distinctly different from previous approaches.

In view of the chemical and biogenetic relationships of atisine-type diterpenoid alkaloids and atisane-type diterpenes proposed by Hao and co-workers,^[3a,b] it is obvious that spiramines C and D could be generated from spiramilactone B (**6**) via spiraminol (**5**) by a biomimetic reduction of the lactone group followed by condensation with ethanolamine.^[6] Moreover, reduction of the C15-OH epimer of spiramines C and D would deliver dihydroajaconine (**3**).

Thus, spiramilactone B (6) was chosen as the first natural product target in our synthetic route. By retrosynthetic analysis (Scheme 1), we envisioned that hexacyclic 6 could be formed from the pentacyclic δ -lactone 8, which might be generated by a formal lactone migration^[9] from the γ -lactone 9. Interestingly, the pentacyclic core structure of 9 is common to another naturally occurring atisane diterpene named



Scheme 1. Retrosynthetic analysis of spiramilactone B (6). D–A = Diels–Alder.

spiramilactone E (**7**; Figure 1).^[10] Subsequently, the bridged γ lactone **9** could be prepared from the functionalized tetracyclic atisane skeleton **10**, which itself could be formed by installation of the *trans*-fused ring A by using a pivotal ruthenium-catalyzed cycloisomerization reaction^[11] on the tricyclic intermediate **11**. In turn, **11** could be obtained by means of an oxidative dearomatization of phenol **12** followed by intramolecular Diels–Alder reaction developed previously by us and Liao and co-workers.^[8b, 12]

Our synthetic efforts commenced with the preparation of the required tricyclic intermediate 11 with an optimized procedure based on a previously reported method.^[12] As shown in Scheme 2, dearomatization of the readily available phenol $12^{[8b]}$ with PhI(OAc)₂ in MeOH at room temperature generated masked ortho-benzoquinone 13 which dimerized spontaneously to 14.^[12] Upon heating 14 to reflux in mesitylene, a retro Diels-Alder/intramolecular Diels-Alder cascade process proceeded efficiently to give the desired cycloadduct 11 as a single diastereomer in 86% yield over two steps. Notably, by using this improved reaction sequence, 11 could be efficiently and reliably accessed on the decagram scale from 12. With the tricyclo[6.2.2.0] ring precursor 11 in hand, the installation of trans-fused six-membered ring A was next addressed (Scheme 2). After sequential reductive removal of the two methoxy groups of 11 with SmI2^[13] and protection of the ketone with glycol alcohol, oxidation of the hydroxy group of the resulting ethylene ketal 15 with Dess-Martin periodinane (DMP)^[14] followed by hydrogenation of the double bond afforded ketone 16 in 57% overall yield. Subsequently, vinyl triflate formation^[15] followed by palladium-catalyzed carboxymethylation^[16] converted ketone 16 into α,β -unsaturated methyl ester 17 in 75% yield. Moving forward, the elaboration of the requisite side-chain for eventual construction of ring A called for a stereoselective alkylation occurring at the C10 position in enoate 17 to an exo orientation. To our delight, the deconjugative alkylation^[17] of 17 was effected on treatment with LDA/DMPU (LDA = lithium diisopropylamide; DMPU = 1,3-dimethyl-3,4,5,6-tetrahydro-2(1H)-pyrimidinone) then iodide derivative 18, delivering the desired 19 as a single diastereomer in 75% yield. The exclusive stereochemistry of alkylation could



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Scheme 2. Construction of the functionalized tetracyclic atisane skeleton **21**. Reagents and conditions: a) PhI(OAc)₂, MeOH, RT, 2 h, 95%; b) mesitylene, reflux, 3 h, 91%; c) Sml₂, THF/MeOH (5:1 v/v), RT, 5 h, 72%; d) (CH₂OH)₂, CAS (5 mol%), toluene, reflux, 5 h, 90%; e) DMP, Na₂CO₃, CH₂Cl₂, 0°C to RT, 2 h, 92%; f) H₂, 10% Pd/C, MeOH, 30°C, 4 h, 96%; g) NaHMDS, Tf₂NPh, THF, -78°C, 3 h; h) [Pd(PPh₃)₄], Et₃N, CO, MeOH/DMF (2:3 v/v), 70°C, 10 h, 89% over two steps; i) LDA, DMPU, **18**, THF, 0°C, 3.5 h, 75%; j) K₂CO₃, MeOH, RT, 2 h, 95%; k) *n*BuLi, ClCO₂Me, THF, -78°C to 0°C, 1.5 h, 83%; l) [CpRu-(CH₃CN)₃]PF₆ (10 mol%), DMF, acetone, RT, 1 h; then TsOH, RT, 1 h, 91%. CAS = L(–)-camphorsulfonic acid; DMP = Dess–Martin periodinane; NaHMDS = sodium bis(trimethylsilyl)amide; Tf = trifluoro-methanesulfonyl; TsOH = *p*-toluenesulfonic acid; DMF = *N*,*N*-dimethyl-formamide; LDA = lithium diisopropylamide; DMPU = 1,3-dimethyl-3,4,5,6-tetrahydro-2(1 H)-pyrimidinone; Cp = cyclopentadienyl.

be attributed to the relatively more congested *endo*-side of the allylic ester anion. Subsequent desilylation followed by a straightforward acylation furnished the enyne ester **20**, setting the stage for the crucial Ru-catalyzed cycloisomerization. Gratifyingly, with a slightly modified version of the conditions of Trost et al.,^[11] 1,7-enyne cycloisomerization of **20** by employing 10 mol% [CpRu(CH₃CN)₃]PF₆ in the presence of 1.5 equivalents of DMF as additive, followed by removal of the ethylene ketal group in a one-pot step, proceeded efficiently to furnish the tetracyclic ketone **21** as a single diastereomer in excellent yield.

With the functionalized tetracyclic atisene skeleton in hand, the next challenging task was to install the bridged lactone moieties on the molecules. As shown in Scheme 3, stereoselective reduction of ketone **21** with Super-Hydride (LiBHEt₃) at -78 °C followed by epoxidation of C6–C7 olefin using *m*-chloroperoxybenzoic acid (*m*-CPBA)^[18] furnished **22** as the major hydroxy isomer. After protection of the hydroxy group of **22** with a methoxymethyl (MOM) group, regiose-lective ring-opening of the epoxide in the presence of the catalytic [Ti(O*i*Pr)₂Cl₂] led to exclusive formation of the



Scheme 3. Installation of the lactone moieties. Reagents and conditions: a) LiBHEt₃, THF, -78 °C, 30 min, 85%; b) *m*-CPBA, NaHCO₃, CH₂Cl₂, 0 °C, 2 h, 71%; c) MOMCl, *i*Pr₂NEt, CH₂Cl₂, 0 °C, 3.5 h, 89%; d) [Ti(OiPr)₂Cl₂], CH₂Cl₂, -20 °C, 1 h, 83%; e) DMP, NaHCO₃, CH₂Cl₂, RT, 1 h, 90%; f) SmI₂, THF/MeOH (10:1 v/v), -78 °C, 2 h; g) NaBH₄, CeCl₃·7 H₂O, THF:MeOH (5:1 v/v), 1 h; h) DIC, HOBt, toluene, 45 °C, 3 h, 75% over three steps. *m*-CPBA=*m*-chloroperoxybenzoic acid; MOMCl = chloromethyl methyl ether; DIC = *N*,*N*′-diisopropylcarbodiimide; HOBt = 1-hydroxybenzotriazole.

hydroxy γ -lactone **23**, completing the core pentacyclic structure of spiramilactone E (7). Next, the formal lactone migration from γ -lactone **23** to δ -lactone **25** was achieved by a straightforward four-step sequence.^[19] First DMP oxidation of the hydroxy group of **23** gave ketone **24** in 90% yield, then sequential reductive α -deoxygenation of ketone **24** with SmI₂,^[13] stereoselective reduction of the carbonyl group with NaBH₄, and lactonization of the resulting hydroxy acid with *N*,*N'*-diisopropylcarbodiimide and 1-hydroxybenzotriazole ultimately furnished the desired δ -lactone **25** (characterized by X-ray crystallography)^[20] in 75% overall yield (over three steps). Notably, the crude acid intermediates in the reaction sequence could be directly used in the next steps without purification.

With the requisite pentacyclic lactone 25 in hand, we focused our attention on constructing the hexacyclic skeleton of spiramilactone B (Scheme 4). Ozonolysis of the conjugated enoate 25 followed by Takai olefination^[21] of the resulting ketone using CH2Br2 in the presence of TiCl4/Zn afforded terminal olefin 26 in 72% yield. Conversion of lactone 26 to aldolactol 27 was achieved in 85% yield by reduction with diisobutylaluminium hydride (DIBAL-H) followed by condensation with MeOH in the presence of catalytic pyridinium *p*-toluenesulfonate (PPTS). Hydroboration–oxidation^[22] of olefin 27 gave the primary alcohol 28. DMP oxidation of 28 afforded a labile aldehyde, which was immediately subjected to an exclusive alkylation on treatment with potassium tertbutoxide and methyl iodide, delivering the methyl group to the β -face to give **29** in 87% yield.^[8d] Pleasingly, attempt to oxidize aldehyde to acid using Pinnick oxidation^[23] resulted in direct formation of lactone 30 in 90% yield, completing the whole hexacyclic skeleton of spiramilactone B.

The synthetic steps involved in the final stage of the synthesis are summarized in Scheme 5. Removal of the MOM protecting group of **30** under mild conditions (ZnBr₂/*n*-



Scheme 4. Construction of the hexacyclic skeleton 30. Reagents and conditions: a) O₃, CH₂Cl₂, -78 °C, 45 min, 95%; b) PbCl₂, Zn, TiCl₄, CH₂Br₂, THF/CH₂Cl₂ (5:2 v/v), 0 °C to RT, 2.5 h, 72%; c) DIBAL-H, CH₂Cl₂, -78 °C, 1 h; d) PPTS, MeOH, RT to 45 °C, 5 h, 85% over two steps; e) BH₃·Me₂S (1 M in THF), THF, 0 °C, 1 h; then 30% H₂O₂, 3 N NaOH, 30 min, 75%; f) DMP, NaHCO₃, CH₂Cl₂, RT, 1 h; g) tBuOK, CH₃I, -20 °C, 40 min; h) NaClO₂, NaH₂PO₄, 2-methyl-2-butene, t-BuOH/H₂O (3:1 v/v), -5 °C, 78% over three steps. DIBAL-H = diisobutylaluminium hydride; PPTS = pyridinium p-toluenesulfonate.



Scheme 5. Total syntheses of (\pm) -spiramilactone B (6), (\pm) -spiraminol (5), (\pm) -spiramines C and D (1,2), and (\pm) -dihydroajaconine (3). Reagents and conditions: a) CH₂Cl₂, ZnBr₂, *n*-PrSH, 3 h; b) DMP, NaHCO₃, CH₂Cl₂, 0 °C to RT, 1 h, 81 % over two steps; c) LiHMDS, *N*,*N*-dimethylmethyleneiminium iodide, THF, -78 °C, 3.5 h; CH₃I, CH₂Cl₂, RT, 8 h; DBU, CH₂Cl₂, RT, 2 h, 71%; d) NaBH₄, MeOH/CH₂Cl₂ (2:1 v/v), -20 °C, 1 h, 95% (β : α = 5:1); e) PhSCl, Et₃N, Et₂O, 0 °C to RT, 1.5 h, 99%; f) P(OMe)₃, MeOH, 50 °C, 72 h, 64% (91% yield based on recovered 33); g) DIBAL-H, CH₂Cl₂, -78 °C, 1.5 h, 90% for **5**; h) H₂N(CH₂)₂OH, THF, reflux, 3 h; silica gel, MeOH, 8 h, 60% for (\pm)-spiramine C (1), 36% for (\pm)-spiramine D (2); i) NaBH₄, MeOH, RT, 5 h, 85% for three steps from 33. DBU = 1.8-diazabicyclo-I5.4.0]undec-7-ene.

PrSH)^[24] followed by DMP oxidation of the resulting alcohol led cleanly to the ketone **31** (characterized by X-ray crystallography).^[20] The subsequent Eschenmoser α -methe-

nylation of ketone 31 proceeded smoothly by means of a successive three-step sequence to provide exocyclic enone 32 in 71 % yield.^[25] However, for the synthesis of spiramilactone B, reduction of enone 32 with NaBH₄ unfortunately gave the undesired β -OH isomer **33** as the major product (β : α = 5:1). After an unsuccessful attempt to invert the configuration of the β -OH isomer with Mitsunobu reaction, the stereochemistry of the allylic alcohol of 33 was inverted, for the most part, by a Mislow–Evans rearrangement^[26] via an allylic sulfoxide intermediate (see the Supporting Information for the detailed description), to provide (\pm) -spiramilactone B (6) in 64% yield (after separation and purification)). Next, reduction of the lactone moiety with DIBAL-H at -78°C successfully gave (\pm) -spiraminol (5) as a single C-19 epimer,^[27] which condensed with ethanolamine in THF to deliver (\pm)-spiramine C (1) and (\pm)-spiramine D (2) in 60% and 36% yield, respectively.^[6] Additionally, another naturally occurring atisine-type diterpenoid alkaloid (\pm) -dihydroajaconine (3) bearing a C15 positioned β -OH group was smoothly synthesized by complete reduction of the C15-OH epimers 34 of spiramines C/D. Compound 34 itself was prepared by applying the same reduction/condensation sequence to epimer 33 of spiramilactone B.

In summary, we have achieved the collective total syntheses^[28] of several members of the structurally complex atisane-type diterpenes and related atisine-type diterpenoid alkaloids, namely (\pm) -spiramilactone B, (\pm) -spiraminol, (\pm) spiramines C and D, and (\pm) -dihydroajaconine, characterized by late-stage biomimetic transformations of (\pm) -spiramilactone B. The synthesis of spiramilactone B features the effective construction of the hexacyclic system from the pentacyclic core structure 23 of spiramilactone E by means of a straightforward formal lactone migration. In the construction of the pentacyclic skeleton of spiramilactone E bearing a γ-lactone moiety, a unique retro Diels-Alder/intramolecular Diels-Alder cascade sequence allowed rapid access to the tricyclo[6.2.2.0] ring system 11. Subsequently, a diastereoselective Ru-catalyzed 1,7-envne cycloisomerization was used to achieve the highly functionalized tetracyclic atisane skeleton 21. Further development of the asymmetric synthetic route as well as application of this new strategy for construction of functionalized atisane skeletons to synthesize architecturally more complex hetidine- or hetisine-type diterpenoid alkaloids^[1c] are currently underway in our laboratory.

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Keywords: alkaloids · cycloisomerization · ruthenium · terpenoids · total synthesis

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