

Synthesis of (+)-(1*S*,2*R*) and (–)-(1*R*,2*S*)-2-aminocyclobutane-1-carboxylic acids

Christine Gauzy, Elisabeth Pereira, Sophie Faure and David J. Aitken*

Laboratoire SEESIB-CNRS, Département de Chimie, Université Blaise Pascal, Clermont-Ferrand II,
24 Avenue des Landais, 63177 Aubière cedex, France

Abstract—(+)-(1*S*,2*R*) and (–)-(1*R*,2*S*)-2-aminocyclobutane-1-carboxylic acids have been prepared in >97% ee and in 33% and 20% overall yields starting from a single, chiral, bicyclic compound perceived as a chiral uracil equivalent. Construction of the cyclobutane ring is achieved via a [2+2] photocycloaddition reaction of this chiral precursor with ethylene.

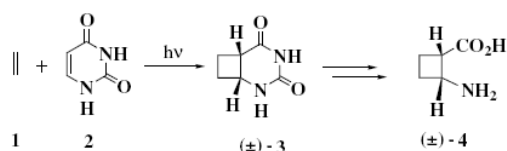
The incorporation of conformationally constrained β -amino acids into peptides can dramatically influence their secondary and tertiary structures and biological activities.¹ In consequence, interest for the synthesis and study of alicyclic β -amino acids has rapidly increased.² Most efforts are devoted to cyclohexane,³ cyclopentane⁴ and cyclopropane⁵ derivatives. Indeed, oligopeptide chains containing *trans*-2-aminocyclohexanecarboxylic acid have been shown to adopt 14-helical structures while those containing *trans*-2-aminocyclopentanecarboxylic acid prefer 12-helices.^{3b} *cis*-Cyclopropane derivatives, too, give highly stable helical conformations in peptides.^{5c} Moreover, some alicyclic β -amino acid derivatives display antifungal, antibiotic or analgesic activities.^{2,6} Despite the clear potential of cyclobutane β -amino acid building blocks in this context, and some positive indications of their ability to impose secondary structure from preliminary studies,^{7,8a} there are currently very few means of access to these compounds.

Only two enantioselective syntheses of *cis*-2-aminocyclobutane-1-carboxylic acid have been described so far: first by Martín-Vilà et al.⁸ and then recently by Bolm et al.⁹ Both procedures are based on an enantioselective *meso*-cyclobutane-1,2-dicarboxylic acid desymmetrization strategy, involving enzymatic hydrolysis of a diester in

the first case and alkaloid-mediated opening of the anhydride in the second. Subsequent transformations led to the (–)-(1*R*,2*S*) antipode in each case. We present here an alternative strategy allowing rapid access to both enantiomers using simple and easily accessible materials.

We previously described the synthesis of racemic 2-aminocyclobutane-1-carboxylic acid (\pm)-**4**.¹⁰ The strategy was based on a photochemical reaction of ethylene (**1**) with uracil (**2**) to give the cyclobutane adduct (\pm)-**3**, followed by controlled degradation of the heterocyclic ring. The target amino acid (\pm)-**4** was obtained with an overall yield of 52% (Scheme 1).

Our aim was to develop an enantioselective version of this synthesis. To this end, we decided to introduce a chiral auxiliary on the uracil ring in order to induce diastereochemical discrimination of cyclobutane adducts. There was also the possibility for diastereofacial selection during the photochemical [2+2] reaction,¹¹ although results with ethylene as one of the reaction components are highly variable.¹² We selected to use



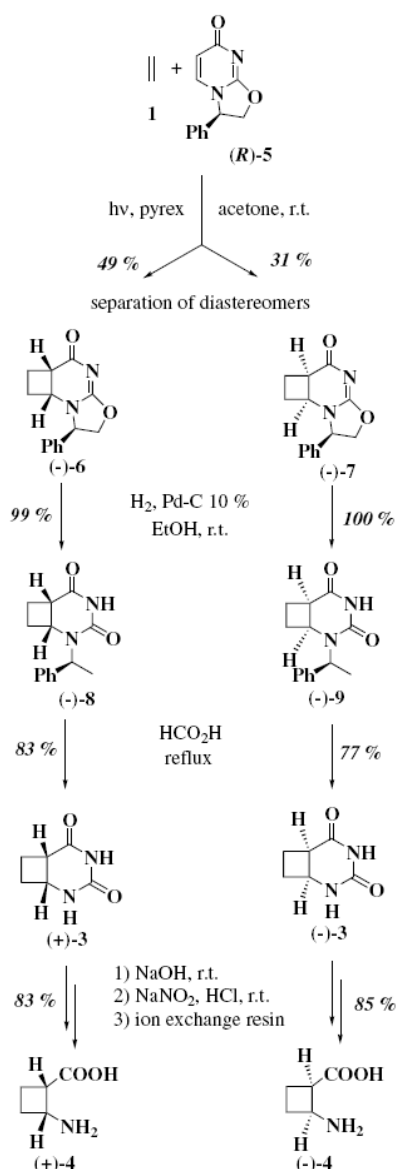
Scheme 1.

Keywords: β -Amino acid; Cyclobutane; Stereoselective synthesis; [2+2] Photocycloaddition reaction.

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +33 4 73 40 71 84; fax: +33 4 73 40 77 17; e-mail: aitken@chimie.univ-bpclermont.fr

the *N*1-substituted uracil mimic (*R*)-**5**. This bicyclic compound was easily obtained in enantiomerically pure form in two steps from commercial (*R*)-phenylglycinol, essentially as described by Agami et al. for the *S*-enantiomer.¹³

Compound (*R*)-**5** was submitted to [2+2] photocycloaddition reaction conditions (Scheme 2). Ethylene (**1**) was bubbled through a solution of (*R*)-**5** in acetone at room temperature, which was irradiated with a 400 W medium-pressure mercury lamp fitted with a Pyrex filter during 2 h. In the event, the desired cyclobutane adduct was obtained as a mixture of two diastereoisomers. In conformity with our previous study involving uracil **2** (Scheme 1),¹⁰ cyclobutane compounds (–)-**6** and (–)-**7** each had a *cis* configuration; a de of 14% was determined by integration of ¹H NMR data obtained on the crude material. Separation was easily achieved by



Scheme 2.

column chromatography on silica gel, giving both (–)-**6** and (–)-**7** in stereochemically pure form in 49% and 31% yield, respectively. Subsequent transformations were carried out under identical conditions for each pure compound.

Selective opening of the five-membered rings of (–)-**6** and (–)-**7** was achieved by catalytic hydrogenation in the presence of palladium on charcoal, as described by Agami et al. for related heterocyclic structures.¹³ Single diastereoisomers (–)-**8** and (–)-**9** were thus obtained in effectively quantitative yield.

Next, the α-methylbenzyl group was removed cleanly and efficiently with refluxing formic acid.¹⁴ We thus obtained enantiomers (+)-**3** and (–)-**3** whose spectroscopic data were identical with those of our previous sample of (±)-**3**.¹⁰ The two-step transformation of the heterocyclic ring—involving mild base hydrolysis followed by diazotization with 1 equiv of sodium nitrite in acidic medium—followed by purification on ion exchange resin proceeded in good yield without trace of epimerization and led to the target β-amino acids (+)-**4** and (–)-**4** in zwitterionic form (Scheme 2). NMR spectroscopic data¹⁵ were comparable with those for racemic material¹⁰ and with those reported by Bolm et al.⁹ for (–)-**4**.

The overall yields following this short sequence were 33% and 20% for (+)-**4** and (–)-**4**, respectively, from (*R*)-**5**. Their respective optical rotations were +71 (*c* 0.88, H₂O) and –70 (*c* 1.03, H₂O). We determined an enantiomeric excess of >97% for each enantiomer (+)-**4** and (–)-**4** by HPLC on chiral column.¹⁶ Since the ee of (*R*)-**5** was 98%, as determined by ¹H NMR with the chiral shift reagent Eu(hcf)₃, we can conclude that there was no loss of stereochemical fidelity during the synthesis.

The attribution of the 1*R*,2*S* absolute configuration of the β-amino acid (–)-**4** was made by correlation with the previous observations made by Martín-Vilà et al.⁸ and Bolm et al.⁹ The absolute configuration of (+)-**4** is therefore 1*S*,2*R*.

In summary, we have succeeded in synthesizing both (+)-(1*S*,2*R*) and (–)-(1*R*,2*S*)-2-aminocyclobutane-1-carboxylic acid **4** in five steps from (*R*)-**5**. Previous desymmetrization based stereoselective syntheses started with derivatives of *cis*-cyclobutane-1,2-dicarboxylic acid, which, although commercially available, is rather expensive. Our synthesis represents a useful complementary strategy and provides the first described access to the (+) antipode.¹⁷ Millimolar-range quantities of the title β-amino acids are routinely accessible in this way and their incorporation into peptides is currently under study.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the MENRT for a grant (to C.G.) and the CNRS for 'Jeune Equipe' (AIP) funding. We also thank undergraduate students E. Rossignol (Cler-

mont-Ferrand) and P. Ferchaud (Poitiers) for carrying out some initial experiments competently.

References and notes

- (a) North, M. *J. Pept. Sci.* **2000**, *6*, 301–313; (b) Cheng, R. P.; Gellman, S. H.; DeGrado, W. F. *Chem. Rev.* **2001**, *101*, 3219–3232.
- Fülöp, F. *Chem. Rev.* **2001**, *101*, 2181–2204.
- (a) Appella, D. H.; Christianson, L. A.; Karle, I. L.; Powell, D. R.; Gellman, S. H. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1999**, *121*, 6206–6212; (b) Barechi, J. J., Jr.; Huang, X.; Appella, D. H.; Christianson, L.; Durell, S. R.; Gellman, S. H. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2000**, *122*, 2711–2718; (c) Raguse, T. L.; Porter, E. A.; Weisblum, B.; Gellman, S. H. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2002**, *124*, 12774–12785.
- (a) Appella, D. H.; Christianson, L. A.; Klein, D. A.; Huang, X.; Barchi, J. J.; Powell, D. R.; Gellman, S. H. *Nature (London)* **1997**, *387*, 381–384; (b) Appella, D. H.; Christianson, L. A.; Klein, D. A.; Richards, M. R.; Powell, D. R.; Gellman, S. H. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1999**, *121*, 7574–7581; (c) Fülöp, F. *Stud. Nat. Prod. Chem.* **2000**, *22*, 273–306.
- (a) Hibbs, D. E.; Hursthouse, M. B.; Jones, I. G.; Jones, W.; Abdul Malik, K. M.; North, M. *Tetrahedron* **1997**, *53*, 17417–17424; (b) Gnad, F.; Reiser, O. *Chem. Rev.* **2003**, *103*, 1603–1623; (c) De Pol, S.; Zorn, C.; Klein, C. D.; Zerbe, O.; Reiser, O. *Angew. Chem., Int. Ed.* **2004**, *43*, 511–514.
- Mittendorf, J.; Kunisch, F.; Matzke, M.; Militzer, H.-C.; Schmidt, A.; Schönfeld, W. *Bioorg. Med. Chem. Lett.* **2003**, *13*, 433–436.
- Izquierdo, S.; Martín-Vilà, M.; Moglioni, A. G.; Branchadell, V.; Ortuño, R. M. *Tetrahedron: Asymmetry* **2002**, *13*, 2403–2405.
- (a) Martín-Vilà, M.; Muray, E.; Aguado, G. P.; Alvarez-Larena, A.; Branchadell, V.; Minguillón, C.; Giralt, E.; Ortuño, R. M. *Tetrahedron: Asymmetry* **2000**, *11*, 3569–3584; (b) Martín-Vilà, M.; Minguillón, C.; Ortuño, R. M. *Tetrahedron: Asymmetry* **1998**, *9*, 4291–4294.
- Bolm, C.; Schiffrers, I.; Atodiresei, I.; Hackenberger, C. P. R. *Tetrahedron: Asymmetry* **2003**, *14*, 3455–3467.
- Aitken, D. J.; Gauzy, C.; Pereira, E. *Tetrahedron Lett.* **2002**, *43*, 6177–6179.
- Bach, T. *Synthesis* **1998**, 683–703.
- (a) Meyers, A. I.; Fleming, S. A. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1986**, *108*, 306–307; (b) Alibés, R.; Bourdelande, J. L.; Font, J.; Gregori, A.; Parella, T. *Tetrahedron* **1996**, *52*, 1267–1278; (c) Tsujishima, H.; Nakatani, K.; Shimamoto, K.; Shigeri, Y.; Yumoto, N.; Ohfune, Y. *Tetrahedron Lett.* **1998**, *39*, 1193–1196; (d) de March, P.; Figuerdo, M.; Font, J.; Raya, J. *Tetrahedron Lett.* **1999**, *40*, 2205–2208.
- (a) Agami, C.; Dechoux, L.; Melaimi, M. *Org. Lett.* **2000**, *2*, 633–634; (b) Agami, C.; Cheramy, S.; Dechoux, L.; Melaimi, M. *Tetrahedron* **2001**, *57*, 195–200.
- (a) Semple, J. E.; Wang, P. C.; Lysenko, Z.; Joullié, M. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1980**, *102*, 7505–7510; (b) Davies, S. G.; Fenwick, D. R.; Ichihara, O. *Tetrahedron: Asymmetry* **1997**, *8*, 3387–3391; (c) Magnus, N. A.; Confalone, P. N.; Storace, L. *Tetrahedron Lett.* **2000**, *41*, 3015–3019.
- Compounds (+)-**4** and (–)-**4**: ^1H NMR (400 MHz, D_2O , calibration on 1,4-dioxane at δ_{H} 3.75 ppm) δ 1.75 (m, 1H), 1.95 (m, 2H), 2.03 (m, 1H), 2.92 (m, 1H), 3.61 (q, 1H, $J = 6.8$ Hz); ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, D_2O , calibration on 1,4-dioxane at δ_{C} 67.2 ppm) δ 21.2, 25.0, 41.3, 45.5, 181.0.
- HPLC analysis was performed using a Waters 590 apparatus equipped with a Waters 484 UV detector and a Crownpak CR(+) column (0.4×15 cm) with the following conditions: perchloric acid solution ($\text{pH} = 1$) as mobile phase; $T = 4^\circ\text{C}$; $\lambda = 220$ nm; flow rate = 0.2 mL/min. Retention times: (+)-**4**: 12.20 min; (–)-**4**: 19.48 min.
- It is also worth noting that this route incurs no difficulties related to the facile ring-opening propensity of the final products; see: Aitken, D. J.; Gauzy, C.; Pereira, E. *Tetrahedron Lett.* **2004**, *45*, 2359–2361.