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Isolation and Characterization of a New Ginsenoside from the Fresh Root of Panax Ginseng

Chang-Chun Ruan 1,2, Zhi Liu 1, Xiang Li 3,4, Xia Liu 2,*, Li-Juan Wang 2, Hong-Yu Pan 4, Yi-Nan Zheng 2, Guang-Zhi Sun 1, Yan-Sheng Zhang 5 and Lian-Xue Zhang 2,*

1 Institute of Agricultural Modernization, Jilin Agricultural University, Changchun, 130118, China; E-Mails: ccyuan@yahoo.com (C.C.R.); lzhiu126.com (Z.L.); gzsun1967126.com (G.Z.S.)
2 College of Chinese Medicinal Materials, Jilin Agricultural University, Changchun, 130118, China; E-Mails: ljwang@yahoo.com (L.J.W.); zhenyinan@tom.com (Y.N.Z.)
3 Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Saskatoon Research Center, 107 Science Place, Saskatoon, S7N 0X2, SK, Canada; E-Mail: drxiang@hotmail.com (X.L.)
4 College of Plant Science, Jilin University, Changchun, 130062, China; E-Mail: panhongyu@jlu.edu.cn (H.Y.P.)
5 Wuhan Botanical Garden, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Wuhan, 430074, China; E-Mail: zhangys@wbgcas.cn (Y.S.Z.)

* Authors to whom correspondence should be addressed; E-Mails: jlndzyc@126.com (X.L.); zh.lianxue@gmail.com (L.X.Z.)

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Abstract: A new saponin, malonylginsenoside Ra3, was isolated from the fresh root of Panax ginseng, along with four known ginsenosides. The new compound was identified as (20S)-protopanaxadiol-3-O-(6-O-malonyl-β-D-glucopyranosyl(1→2)-β-D-glucopyranoside-20-O-β-D-xylopyranosyl(1→3)-β-D-glucopyranosyl(1→6)-β-D-glucopyranoside on the basis of extensive 1D and 2D NMR as well as HRESI-MS spectroscopic data analysis.

Keywords: Panax ginseng; ginsenoside; malonyl-ginsenoside Ra3
1. Introduction

Panax ginseng C.A. Meyer has been used in China for thousands of years as a traditional medicine and proved to exhibit wide pharmacological properties, such as anti-fatigue, anti-diabetes, as well as activity in the prevention of cancer and the ageing process [1–4]. The major components contributing to its pharmacology activities were considered to be the ginsenosides, a group of steroidal saponins. Around 40 ginsenosides have been isolated and characterized till now, including the recent identified ginsenosides Ki and Km [5]. Among these known compounds, malonylginsenosides are natural ginsenosides that exist in both fresh and air-dried ginseng roots and which contain malonyl residues attached to the glucose units of the corresponding neutral ginsenosides [6]. Kitagawa et al. and Yamaguchi et al. reported the presence of four acidic ginsenosides both in Asian and American ginseng [7,8]. Our previous pharmacology results showed that total malonyl-ginsenosides exhibit hypoglycemic effects on streptozotocin-induced diabetic mice [9]. During our continued studies on bioactive compounds from Panax ginseng [10–12], a novel ginsenoside, namely malonylginsenoside Ra3 (compound 1), was isolated from a methanolic extraction of the fresh roots of Panax ginseng. This paper describes the isolation and structure determination of the new compound 1 (Figure 1).

![Figure 1. The structures of the isolated ginsenosides.](image)

2. Results and Discussion

A crude methanolic extract of the fresh roots of Panax ginseng was subjected to open column chromatography on silica gel and then purified by preparative HPLC, to yield five ginsenosides, one of which, namely malonylginsenoside Ra3 (compound 1), was new. The other four saponins were identified as known malonylginsenoside-Rb1 (compound 2), malonylginsenoside-Rb2 (compound 3), malonylginsenoside-Rc (compound 4) and malonylginsenoside-Rd (compound 5) by comparison of NMR data with those in the literature [6] and by comparison with authentic sample by ESI-MS, optical rotation and TLC.

Characterization of compound 1

Compound 1 was obtained as a white amorphous powder and gave a peaks at m/z 1325.4 [M-H]−, 1281 [M-CO₂]−, 1239 [M-COCH₂COOH], 1107 [M-COCH₂COOH-xyl], 945 [M-COCH₂COOH-glc-xyl], 783 [M-COCH₂COOH-xyl-2glc-H], 621 [M-COCH₂COOH-xyl-3glc-H], 459 [M-
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COCH₂COOH-xyl-4glc-H]-, in the negative ESI-MS, indicating its molecular weight to be 1326. The molecular formula was determined as \( \text{C}_{62}\text{H}_{102}\text{O}_{30} \) based on HRESI-MS \([\text{M}+\text{Na}]^+\): \( m/z \) 1349.6348 \([\text{M}+\text{Na}]^+\) (calcd. for \( \text{C}_{62}\text{H}_{102}\text{NaO}_{30}, 1349.6353 \)). IR (KBr) \( \nu_{\text{max}}/\text{cm}^{-1} \): 3423 cm\(^{-1}\) (OH), 1732 cm\(^{-1}\) (C=O), 1608 (C=C) and 1386 cm\(^{-1}\) (–CH₃). Since compound 1 can’t be dissolved in pyridine-\( d_5 \), we added 0.1 mL of D₂O in 0.5 mL of pyridine-\( d_5 \) as NMR solvent. Ginsenoside m-Rb₁ (compound 2) and the alkaline hydrolysis product of 1, ginsenoside Ra₃ (compound 1a) were also dissolved in the same mixture solvent for NMR measurement. Analysis of the \(^{13}\text{C}\)-NMR spectrum (Table 1) and DEPT experiments, allowed the identification of eight methyl groups and six quaternary carbons.

Table 1. The \(^{13}\text{C}\)-NMR data of compounds 1, 2 and 1a.\(^a\)

|     | 1   | 2   | 1a  | 1   | 2   | 1a  |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| C-1 | 40.0| 40.1| 39.3| 3   |     |     |
| C-2 | 27.7| 27.6| 26.7| C-1’| 105.5| 105.8| 105.0|
| C-3 | 90.9| 90.7| 89.0| C-2’| 85.1 | 84.8 | 83.5 |
| C-4 | 40.6| 40.6| 39.6| C-3’| 78.5 | 78.5 | 78.0 |
| C-5 | 57.4| 57.4| 56.5| C-4’| 72.2 | 72.2 | 71.6 |
| C-6 | 19.4| 19.4| 18.4| C-5’| 78.5 | 78.8 | 78.0 |
| C-7 | 36.0| 36.0| 35.1| C-6’| 63.4 | 63.4 | 62.8 |
| C-8 | 40.9| 41   | 40.0| Glu |     |     |     |
| C-9 | 51.0| 51.1| 50.1| C-1”| 106.3| 106.5| 105.9|
| C-10| 37.8| 37.8| 36.8| C-2”| 77.4 | 77.5 | 77.1 |
| C-11| 31.2| 31.3| 30.9| C-3”| 79.5 | 79.4 | 79.2 |
| C-12| 71.0| 70.9| 70.1| C-4”| 71.6 | 71.7 | 71.6 |
| C-13| 50.0| 50.2| 49.3| C-5”| 75.7 | 75.8 | 78.0 |
| C-14| 52.5| 52.4| 51.4| C-6”| 66.1 | 66.1 | 62.8 |
| C-15| 31.8| 31.9| 30.9| 20-Glu|     |     |     |
| C-16| 27.7| 27.6| 26.6| C-1’| 98.7 | 98.8 | 98.1 |
| C-17| 52.8| 52.8| 51.7| C-2’| 75.3 | 75.6 | 74.8 |
| C-18| 17.2| 17.2| 16.3| C-3’| 78.5 | 78.8 | 78.0 |
| C-19| 16.9| 16.9| 16.0| C-4’| 72.2 | 72.2 | 71.6 |
| C-20| 85.2| 85.0| 83.5| C-5’| 77.4 | 77.2 | 77.1 |
| C-21| 23.3| 23.3| 22.7| C-6’| 70.4 | 72   | 69.6 |
| C-22| 37.2| 37.1| 36.1| Glu |     |     |     |
| C-23| 24.3| 24.2| 23.3| C-1”| 105.5| 105.6| 105.0|
| C-24| 126.7| 126.8| 126.0| C-2”| 74.7 | 75.6 | 74.2 |
| C-25| 132.8| 132.6| 130.8| C-3”| 88.0 | 78.8 | 87.4 |
| C-26| 26.9| 26.8| 25.8| C-4”| 71.7 | 72.2 | 71.3 |
| C-27| 19.0| 19.0| 17.9| C-5”| 78.5 | 78.8 | 78.0 |
| C-28| 29.0| 29.0| 28.1| C-6”| 63.0 | 63.4 | 62.4 |
| C-29| 17.5| 17.5| 16.5| Xyl |     |     |     |
| C-30| 18.3| 18.3| 17.3| C-1’’’| 106.6| 106.2|     |
| -O-CO | 172.1| 171.9| 172.1| C-2’’’| 75.7 | 75.2 |     |
Table 1. Cont.

|             | 41.9 | 41.9 | C-3''' | 77.4 | 77.1 |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|------|
| CH₂         |      |      |        |      |      |
| COOH        | 174.6| 174.5| C-4''' | 71.2 | 70.8 |
|             |      |      |        |      |      |
|             |      |      | C-5''' | 67.8 | 67.2 |

*a* Compounds 1, 1a and 2 were measured in C₈N₅-d₆ (0.5 mL) plus D₂O (0.1 mL).

The ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR spectroscopic data of compound 1 were similar to those of ginsenoside-Ra₃ [13], except the data attributed to a malonyl group (δ_H 3.70, δ_C 172.1, δ_C 174.6). The malonyl group was assigned to C₃-glc-C-6” position by HMBC experiment (Figure 2), which the protons of C₃-glc-H-6” showed HMBC correlations with malonyl group (δ_C 172.1).

**Figure 2.** Partial HMBC correlation of compound 1.

Malonyl group connection also caused a 2.7 ppm lower-field shift for C₃-glc-C-6” (δ_C 66.1) than seen in ginsenoside-Ra₃. Alkaline hydrolysis of compound 1 yield compound 1a, which showed the structure identical to ginsenoside Ra₃ by 1D NMR analysis (Table 1). The absolute configurations of the sugar moieties were further determined to be β-D-glucose and β-D-xylose by chiral GC analysis. The 20 position was determined as S conformation due to its similar NMR data with the known compounds 1a and 2. All the data above led us to identified the structure of 1 as (20S)-protopanaxadiol 3-O-(6-O-malonyl-β-D-glucopyranosyl(1→2)-β-D-glucopyranoside)-20-O-β-D-xylopyranosyl(1→3)-β-D-glucopyranosyl(1→6)-β-D-glucopyranoside, which we have named malonylginsenoside Ra₃.

### 3. Experimental

#### 3.1. General

The ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR spectra were measured on a Bruker Avance DRX 500 NMR spectrometer, using TMS as an internal standard. Chemical shifts (δ) are expressed in parts per million (ppm), with the coupling constants (J) reported in Hertz (Hz). The ESI-MS spectra were recorded on a triple quadrupole mass spectrometer Quattro (VG Biotech, Altrincham, England) and the HRESI-MS spectra on a Bruker FT-ICRMS spectrometer. Column chromatographies were carried out with silica gel 60 M (200–300 mesh), Lichrospher RP-18 (20 μm); TLC was performed with silica gel plates (Macherey-
The fresh root of *Panax ginseng* was collected from Fu-Song, Jilin, China, in August 2003, and identified by one of the authors, Prof. Yi-Nan Zheng. A voucher specimen (ZYC-RS-03-08) has been deposited in College of Chinese Medicinal Material, Jilin Agricultural University.

### 3.3. Extraction and isolation

The root of *Panax ginseng* (10 kg) was extracted five times with MeOH-H$_2$O (4:1), and the extract was concentrated under reduced pressure at 40 °C. The residue (~2 kg) obtained was suspended in water and subjected to D-101 resin column chromatography, using MeOH-H$_2$O (0:1, 3:2) as eluted solvent to give total-ginsenoside (~300 g). The total-ginsenoside was applied to silica gel column chromatography and eluted with CHCl$_3$-MeOH-H$_2$O (6:4:1) to yield three fractions (F$_1$-F$_3$). Fraction F$_1$ was further chromatographed on preparative HPLC eluted with gradient CH$_3$CN-H$_2$O (20% to 50%) to give the known saponins: malonylginsenoside-Rb$_1$ (compound 2, 100 mg), malonylginsenoside-Rb$_2$ (compound 3, 60 mg), malonylginsenoside-Rc (compound 4, 65 mg), malonylginsenoside-Rd (compound 5, 42 mg) and the new saponin malonylginsenoside Ra$_3$ (compound 1, 40 mg). Compound 1: $^1$H-NMR (400 MHz, 0.5 mL pyridine-d$_5$ + 0.1 mL D$_2$O, ppm): $\delta$ 0.73 (3H, s, H-19), 0.87 (3H, s, H-18), 0.95 (3H, s, H-30), 0.98 (3H, s, H-29), 1.17 (3H, s, H-28), 1.63 (3H, s, H-21), 1.65 (3H, s, H-26), 1.69 (3H, s, H-27), 5.29 (1H, t-like, H-24), 5.11 (1H, d, $J = 7.2$ Hz, C$_{20}$-glc-H-1'), 4.93 (1H, d, $J = 7.2$ Hz, C$_{20}$-glc-H-1''), 4.83 (1H, d, $J = 7.6$ Hz, C$_{20}$-xyl-H-1''), 4.81 (1H, d, $J = 7.8$ Hz, C$_3$-glc-H-1'), 5.19 (1H, d, $J = 7.6$ Hz, C$_3$-glc-H-1''); $^{13}$C-NMR data, see Table 1.

### 3.4. Alkaline hydrolysis of compound 1

A solution of 1 (20 mg) in MeOH (3 mL) was treated with 5% KOH-MeOH (0.1 mL) and the whole mixture was stirred at room temperature (22 °C) for 30 min [6]. The reaction mixture was neutralized with cation exchange resin (SP20ss, Resindion S.R.L., Rome, Italy) and filtered. Removal of the solvent from the filtrate under reduced pressure gave a product which was purified by column chromatography with reversed-phase silica gel (Zorbax SB-C$_{18}$) to furnish compound 1a, which was determined to be identical with an authentic sample [6] by TLC comparison [CHCl$_3$-MeOH-H$_2$O (65:35:10, lower phase), n-BuOH-AcOH-H$_2$O (4:1:5 upper phase)], IR(KBr), MS and $^{13}$C NMR spectral comparisons. Compound 1a: IR (KBr) $\nu_{max}$/ cm$^{-1}$: 3432, 1728, 1605, 1385, 1078; ESI-MS [M-]: m/z = 1239 [M-H], 1107 [M-xyl], 945 [M-glc-xyl], 783 [M-xyl-2glc-H], 621 [M-xyl-3glc-H], 459 [M-xyl-4glc-H]; $^1$H-NMR (400MHz, 0.5 mL pyridine-d$_5$, ppm): $\delta$ 0.70 (3H, s, H-19), 0.84 (3H, s, H-18), 0.86 (3H, s, H-30), 0.96 (3H, s, H-29), 1.17 (3H, s, H-28), 1.49 (3H, s, H-21), 1.55 (3H, s, H-26), 1.58 (3H, s, H-27), 5.20 (1H, t, H-24), 5.04 (1H, d, $J = 7.5$ Hz, C$_{20}$-glc-H-1'), 4.96 (1H, d, $J = 7.6$ Hz, C$_{20}$-glc-H-1''), 4.83 (1H, d, $J = 7.6$ Hz, C$_{20}$-xyl-H-1''), 4.80 (1H, d, $J = 7.8$ Hz, C$_3$-glc-H-1'), 5.26 (1H, d, $J = 7.6$ Hz, C$_3$-glc-H-1''); $^{13}$C-NMR data, see Table 1.
3.5. Acid hydrolysis of compound 1

To determine the stereochemistry of sugar moiety, compound 1 (2.0 mg) was refluxed with 6 N HCl (5 mL) at 100 °C for 2 h [14,15]. The mixture was extracted with CHCl₃ to afford the aglycone, and the aqueous layer was neutralized with Na₂CO₃ and filtered. The aqueous layer was dried under vacuum and the residue was re-dissolved in H₂O for sugar analysis by TLC with n-BuOH-AcOH-H₂O (4:1:2) as the solvent. The sample spots were detected by spraying aniline hydrogen phthalate reagent (100 mL n-BuOH saturated by H₂O, 0.96 g aniline and 1.66 g phthalic acid) and heating at 120 °C. D-Glucose and D-xylose were used as authentic standards. The absolute configuration of glucose was further determined by chiral GC analysis using a SatoChrom GC and a 0.25 mm × 25 m Hydrodexb-6-TBDM chiral capillary column (Macherey-Nagel, Germany). β-D-Glucose and β-D-xylose were used as an authentic GC standard. The aqueous layer residues mentioned above were re-suspended in dichloromethane (1 mL), and trifluoroacetic anhydride (50 µL) was added. The mixtures were allowed to react at room temperature overnight and dried under a stream of nitrogen at room temperature. The sugar derivatives were separated using the following temperature program: inlet temperature was set at 240 °C, with hydrogen carrier gas and a 1/20 split, using nitrogen makeup gas. Column temperatures started at 120 °C, ramped to 220 °C at 50 °C·min⁻¹ and were maintained for 12 min.

4. Conclusion

A phytochemical investigation on the fresh root of Panax ginseng led to the isolation of a new saponin (20S)-protopanaxadiol 3-O-(6-O-malonyl-β-D-glucopyranosyl(1→2)-β-D-glucopyranoside)-20-O-β-D-xylopyranosyl(1→3)-β-D-glucopyranosyl(1→6)-β-D-glucopyranoside (1) along with four known ginsenosides (2–5).

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*Sample Availability:* Samples are available from the authors (contact zh.lianxue@gmail.com).

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