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## SYNTHESIS OF VINCA ALKALOIDS AND RELATED COMPOUNDS.

### PART 106. AN EFFICIENT CONVERGENT SYNTHETIC PATHWAY TO BUILD UP THE IBOPHYLLIDINE SKELETON II.

#### TOTAL SYNTHESIS OF (±)-DEETHYLIBOPHYLLIDINE AND (±)-14-EPI-DEETHYLIBOPHYLLIDINE

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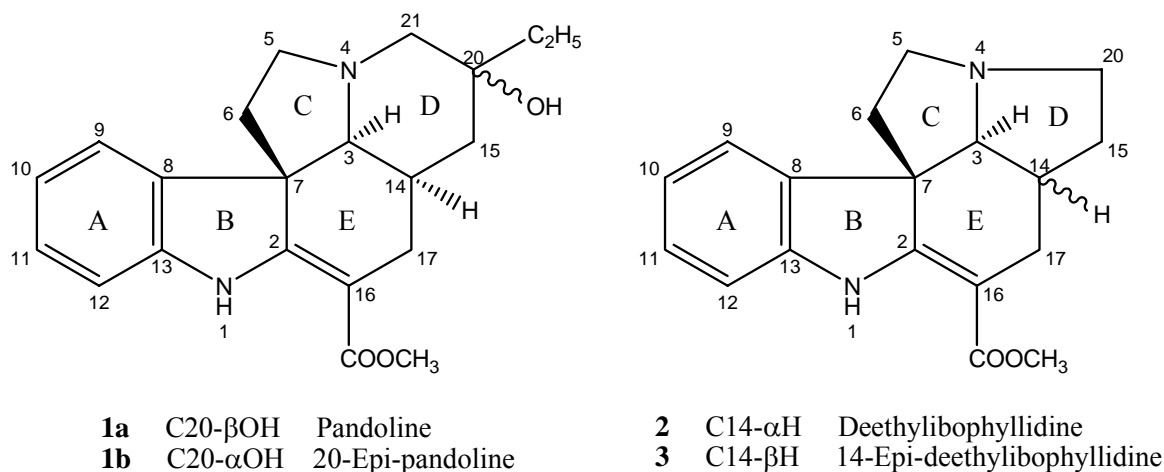
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**Abstract** – Starting from 2,3-dihydrofuran (**7**) we prepared aldehyde (**5**) which, in a [4+2] cycloaddition reaction with the tryptamine derivative (**4**) gave, as a final step, compound (**10**) having a *D*-*seco*-aspidospermane skeleton. We synthesized (±)-14-epi-deethylbophyllidine (**3**) *via* the mesylate (**12**) of alcohol (**11**) which had been obtained from **10**, whereas the cyclization of the benzoate ester (**15**) resulted in (±)-deethylbophyllidine (**2**). We have managed to build up (±)-**2** *via* the tetracyclic intermediates (**16**) and (**20**).

## INTRODUCTION

The skeleton of indole alkaloids is characterized by a great deal of diversity. *Ibophyllidine* alkaloids, such as deethylbophyllidine (**2**) have a five-membered D-ring and biogenetically deduced from one group of the pseudoaspidospermane alkaloids (e.g. **1a** and **1b**)<sup>1-4</sup> (Figure 1). Deethylbophyllidine (**2**) was isolated in 1980 by French researchers from the bark of *Tabernaemontana albiflora*.<sup>5</sup> As compared to the *Aspidosperma* and *Strychnos* alkaloids,<sup>6,7</sup> much less attention has been given to the investigation of

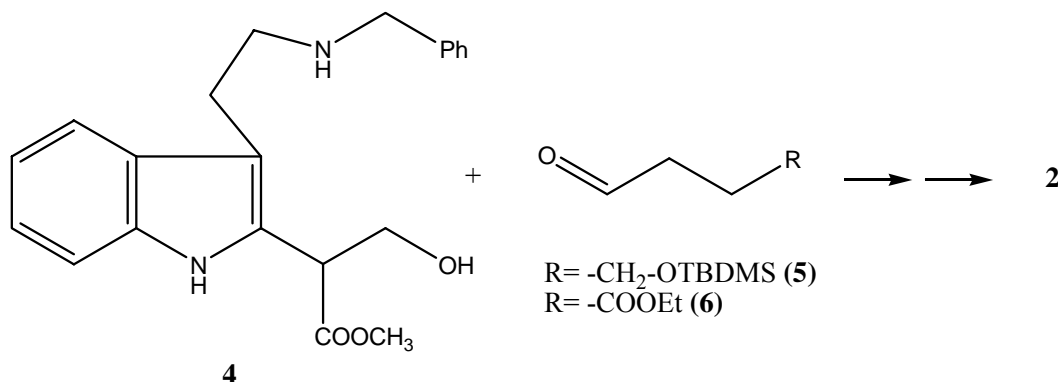
*Ibophyllidine* alkaloids. Therefore we aimed to achieve a simple synthetic route for the preparation of alkaloid (**2**) from *Ibophyllidine* family and its analogue compound (**3**).<sup>8</sup> Our previous experiences<sup>9-14</sup> gave us a reason to regard this as a plausible objective.



**Figure 1**

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

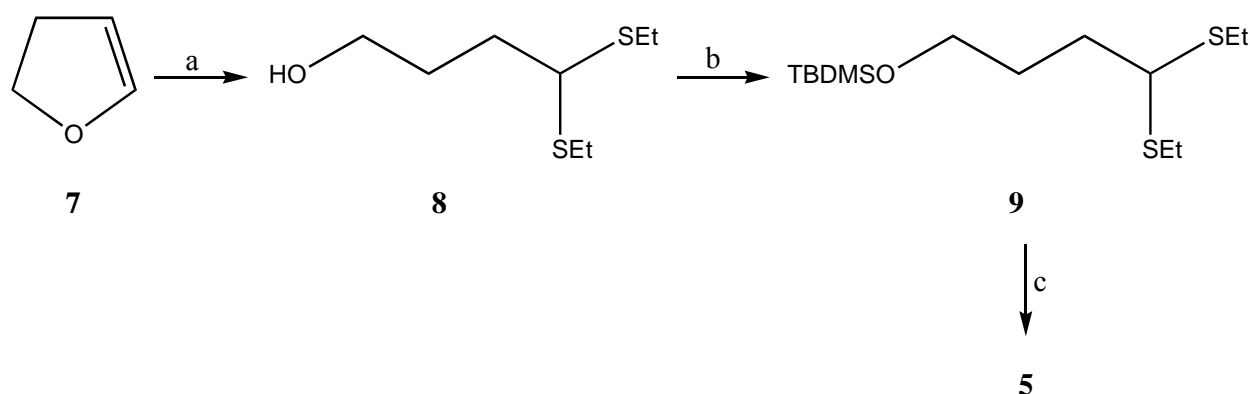
As a substrate for the planned synthesis we utilized the tryptamine derivative (**4**) which we had used successfully in our earlier works.<sup>9</sup> We anticipated that the appropriately functionalized aldehydes (**5**, **6**) and (**4**) would give, in several steps, molecules with *D*-*seco*-aspidospermane skeleton, from which the pentacyclic alkaloid (**2**) can be made to form easily (Figure 2).



**Figure 2**

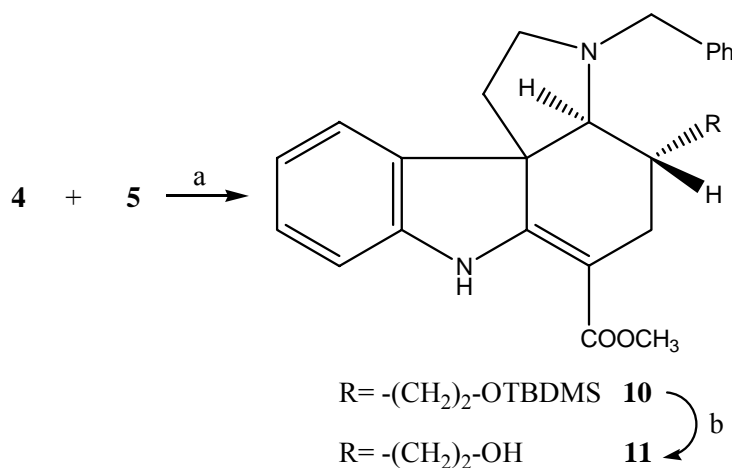
One of the reaction partners (**5**) was formed from 2,3-dihydrofuran (**7**), as a molecule containing a masked aldehyde function. In the first step, using a method known from the literature,<sup>15</sup> we opened up the ring of compound (**7**) by the application of boron trifluoride-diethyl etherate and ethanethiol (**8**), then we protected the alcohol (**8**) with *tert*-butyldimethylsilyl chloride in the presence of imidazole (**9**). Finally,

after removing the dithioacetal protective group with mercury (II) chloride in the presence of calcium carbonate in aqueous acetonitrile at room temperature, we arrived at aldehyde (**5**) (Scheme 1).



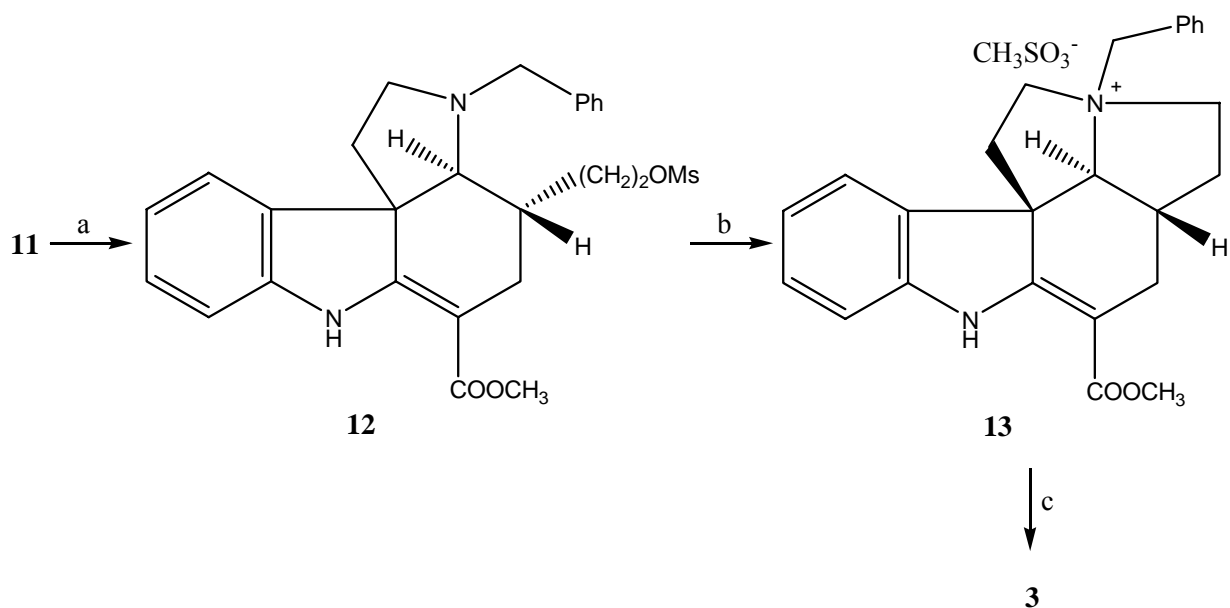
**Scheme 1.** Reagents and conditions: (a) EtSH,  $\text{BF}_3 \cdot \text{Et}_2\text{O}$ ,  $\text{CHCl}_3$ ,  $0^\circ\text{C}$ , (86%); (b) TBDMSCl, imidazole,  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ , rt, (92%); (c)  $\text{HgCl}_2$ ,  $\text{CaCO}_3$ ,  $\text{CH}_3\text{CN}$ ,  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ , rt, (78%).

As a continuation, we allowed **5** to react with the tryptamine derivative (**4**) in boiling toluene in the presence of a catalytic amount of *p*-toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate. From the reaction mixture the tertiary amine (**10**) was obtained in a good yield. We intended to construct the five-membered D-ring of the *Ibophyllidine* alkaloids by intramolecular alkylation, therefore, by hydrolysis of the derivative (**10**) containing the silyl moiety, we produced the alcohol (**11**) (Scheme 2).



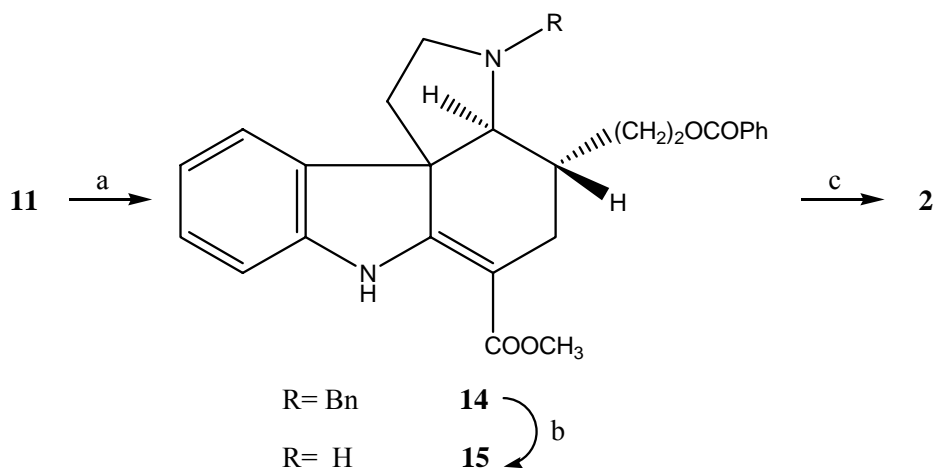
**Scheme 2.** Reagents and conditions: (a) *p*-TsOH· $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ , toluene, reflux, (67%); (b) 5M HCl, THF, rt, (88%).

Subsequently **11** was acylated with methanesulfonic acid chloride in the presence of triethylamine, then the mesylate (**12**) was converted to the quaternary salt (**13**) in boiling tetrahydrofuran from which, after catalytic debenzoylation, the ( $\pm$ )-14-*epi*-deethylibophyllidine (**3**) was obtained in a good yield. The formation of the product with the *trans* D/E ring connection can be explained by the fact that under the conditions applied, prior to cyclization, the complete epimerization that had previously been observed by us,<sup>16</sup> and which would result in alkaloid (**2**), does not take place (Scheme 3).



**Scheme 3.** Reagents and conditions: (a) MsCl, Et<sub>3</sub>N, CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, 0°C, (82%); (b) THF, reflux, (69%); (c) H<sub>2</sub>, Pd/C, CH<sub>3</sub>COOH, rt, (83%).

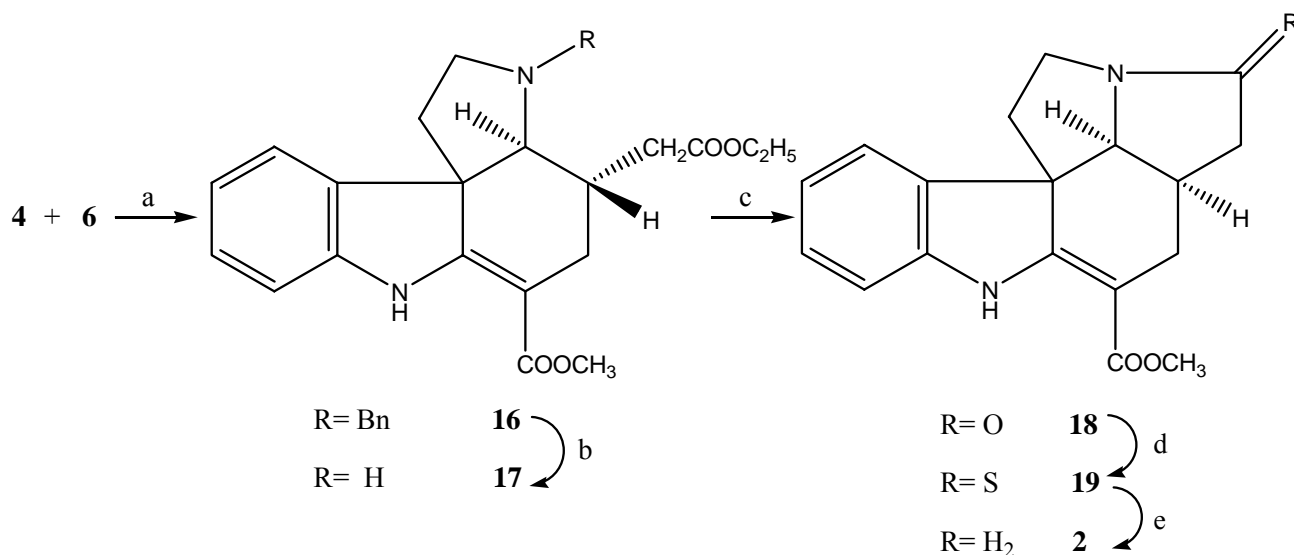
In the course of further studying the intramolecular alkylation reaction, we prepared the benzoate ester (**14**) of the alcohol (**11**) as well. The catalytic debenzoylation of **14** in glacial acetic acid resulted in the expected molecule (**15**). Boiling the secondary amine (**15**) in toluene, after full epimerization, according to our previous results and described mechanism,<sup>16</sup> we obtained racemic deethylibophyllidine (**2**) (Scheme 4).



**Scheme 4.** Reagents and conditions: (a) PhCOOH, DCC, DMAP, CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, 0°C, (85%); (b) H<sub>2</sub>, Pd/C, CH<sub>3</sub>COOH, rt, (92%); (c) toluene, reflux, (71%).

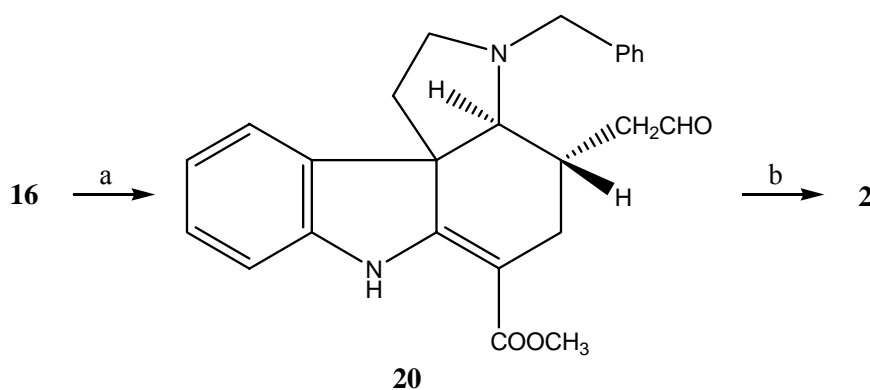
Utilizing our experiences from earlier syntheses,<sup>9-14</sup> we also synthesized the ibophyllidine skeleton *via* the lactam (**18**) known in the literature.<sup>8c</sup> We allowed the secondary amine (**4**) to react with ethyl-4-oxobutanoate (**6**)<sup>17</sup> in boiling toluene in the presence of *p*-toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate, yielding the tetracyclic ester (**16**). Following catalytic debenzoylation, by boiling the secondary amine (**17**)

in toluene we obtained the lactam (**18**) in a good yield. Further on, we converted **18** with phosphorus pentasulfide in tetrahydrofuran into thiolactam (**19**) and finally, the reductive desulfuration of the latter compound furnished ( $\pm$ )-deethylbophyllidine (**2**) (Scheme 5).



**Scheme 5.** Reagents and conditions: (a) *p*-TsOH·H<sub>2</sub>O, toluene, reflux, (61%); (b) H<sub>2</sub>, Pd/C, CH<sub>3</sub>COOH, rt (95%); (c) toluene, reflux, (78%); (d) P<sub>4</sub>S<sub>10</sub>, THF, rt, (83%); (e) Raney Ni, THF, rt, (81%).

When ester (**16**) was reduced to aldehyde (**20**) with diisobutylaluminium hydride, the tertiary amine was catalytically debenzylated and under the reaction conditions applied ( $\pm$ )-**2** was obtained *via* epimerization, cyclization and reduction steps. (Scheme 6).



**Scheme 6.** Reagents and conditions: (a) DIBAL, CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, -70°C, (66%); (b) H<sub>2</sub>, Pd/C, CH<sub>3</sub>COOH, rt, (82%).

## CONCLUSION

Starting from 2,3-dihydrofuran (**7**) we produced aldehyde (**5**), the reaction of which with the tryptamine derivative (**4**) yielded compound (**10**) with *D*-*seco*-aspidospermane skeleton. The intramolecular

alkylation reaction of the mesyl ester (**12**), which had been prepared from alcohol (**11**) led to ( $\pm$ )-14-epi-deethylbophyllidine (**3**) as a final result, whereas the cyclization achieved *via* the benzoate ester (**15**) furnished ( $\pm$ )-deethylbophyllidine (**2**). The synthesis of ( $\pm$ )-**2** from ester (**16**) was performed *via* two other reaction paths as well (see: **16** $\rightarrow$ **17** $\rightarrow$ **18** $\rightarrow$ **19** $\rightarrow$ **2**, and **16** $\rightarrow$ **20** $\rightarrow$ **2**, respectively).

## EXPERIMENTAL

Melting points were determined on a hot-stage microscope Boetius and are uncorrected. IR spectra were recorded on a Specord JR-75 spectrophotometer. NMR spectra were recorded on a Varian Unity INOVA-400 instrument at 400 MHz for  $^1\text{H}$  and 100 MHz for  $^{13}\text{C}$ . All NMR spectra were recorded at rt.  $J_{1r}$ , long range coupling constant. Chemical shifts are relative to  $\text{Me}_4\text{Si}$  ( $\delta=0$  ppm). Mutual  $^1\text{H}$ - $^1\text{H}$  couplings are given only once, at the first occurrences. MS spectra were recorded on a PE Sciex API 2000 triple-quadrupole mass spectrometer equipped with a Turbo Ion Spray source and VG ZAB2-SEQ tandem mass spectrometer (high resolution mass spectra). Preparative TLC analyses were performed on silica gel F<sub>254</sub> plates, and column chromatography was carried out on Merck Kieselgel 60 (0.063-0.200 mm).

### 4,4-Bis(ethylthio)butan-1-ol (**8**)

2,3-Dihydrofuran (**7**) (3.52 g, 3.8 mL, 50 mmol) was dissolved in dry  $\text{CHCl}_3$  (50 mL) and EtSH (6.21 g, 7.4 mL, 100 mmol) was added to the solution. It was cooled to  $0^\circ\text{C}$  and  $\text{BF}_3\cdot\text{OEt}_2$  (6.38 g, 5.7 mL, 50 mmol) was added dropwise to the solution over 10 min period. After the addition, the reaction mixture was allowed to warm up to rt, and then stirred for 30 min. It was then poured into water (20 mL). The aqueous phase extracted with  $\text{CHCl}_3$  ( $2\times 30$  mL) and the combined organic phases were washed with 1 M aqueous solution of NaOH (20 mL) and brine (20 mL). It was dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ) and concentrated in vacuo, to yield **8** (8.36 g, 86%) as a colorless oil (TLC: acetone/hexane=1:2,  $R_f=0.72$ ). IR (neat)  $\nu_{\text{max}}$  3352, 2928, 1452, 1264, 1060. MS  $m/z$  (%) (rel intensity) 194 (16.0,  $\text{M}^+$ ), 133 (30.0), 115 (23.0), 87 (10.0), 71 (100.0). HRMS (EI) calcd for  $\text{C}_8\text{H}_{18}\text{OS}_2$  194.0799, found for 194.0805.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ): 1.26 (6H, t,  $J=7.4$  Hz;  $2\times\text{SCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ ), 1.74 (1H, t,  $J=4.5$  Hz; OH), 1.76-1.94 (4H, m;  $2\text{-H}_2+3\text{-H}_2$ ), 2.60+2.69 ( $2\times 2\text{H}$ ,  $2\times\text{dq}$ ,  $J_{\text{gem}}=12.5$  Hz,  $J_{\text{vic}}=7.4$  Hz;  $2\times\text{SCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ ), 3.67 (2H, td,  $J_{\text{vic}}=5.8$  and 4.5 Hz;  $4\text{-H}_2$ ), 3.82 (1H, t,  $J=6.8$  Hz; 1-H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ): 14.50+24.18 ( $2\times\text{SCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ ), 30.57 (C3), 32.54 (C2), 51.19 (C1), 62.25 (C4).

### (4,4-Bis(ethylthio)butoxy)(*tert*-butyl)dimethylsilane (**9**)

Imidazole (2.10 g, 31 mmol) was added to a solution of **8** (5.00 g, 26 mmol) in dry  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  (50 mL). Then *tert*-butyldimethylsilyl chloride (4.65 g, 31 mmol) in dry  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  (20 mL) was added dropwise to the stirred solution. After the addition, the mixture was stirred for 2 h at rt. The salts were separated by

filtration and the organic phase was washed with water (2×15 mL) and brine (20 mL), dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and concentrated in vacuo to give **9** (7.38 g, 92%) a colorless liquid (TLC: AcOEt/hexane=1:4, R<sub>f</sub>=0.9). IR (neat)  $\nu_{\max}$  2960, 2928, 1256, 1176, 840. MS m/z (%) (rel intensity) 308 (2.0, M<sup>+</sup>), 247 (24.0), 189 (48.0), 115 (100.0), 73 (22.0). HRMS (EI) calcd for C<sub>14</sub>H<sub>32</sub>OS<sub>2</sub>Si 308.1664, found for 308.1665. <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 0.07 (6H, s; Si(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>), 0.91 (9H, s; SiC(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 1.28 (6H, t, J=7.5 Hz; 2×SCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>), 1.73-1.93 (4H, m; 2-H<sub>2</sub>+3-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.61+2.70 (2×2H, 2×dq, J<sub>gem</sub>=12.5 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=7.5 Hz; 2×SCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>), 3.65 (2H, t, J=6.1 Hz; 4-H<sub>2</sub>) 3.83 (1H, t, J=6.9 Hz; 1-H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): -5.28 (Si(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>), 14.57+24.13 (2×SCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>), 18.33 (SiC(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 25.97 (SiC(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 30.61 (C3), 32.52 (C2), 51.27 (C1), 62.53 (C4).

#### 4-(*tert*-Butyldimethylsilanyloxy)butanal (**5**)

**9** (2.00 g, 6.5 mmol) was dissolved in acetonitrile (50 mL) and water (5 mL) was added to the solution. CaCO<sub>3</sub> (2.60 g, 26 mmol) and mercury(II) chloride (7.10 g, 26 mmol) were added to a stirred solution. After the addition the mixture was stirred for 1 h. The salts were filtrated and the acetonitrile was removed at 40°C under reduced pressure to leave a yellow oil. This was then taken up into CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (50 mL) and washed with 20 mL portion of aqueous solution of NaI, 20 mL portion of aqueous solution of Na<sub>2</sub>S<sub>2</sub>O<sub>8</sub> and brine (20 mL). The combined organic phases were dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and concentrated under vacuum, yielded 1.03 g (78 %) of **5** as a colorless oil (TLC: AcOEt/hexane=1:4, R<sub>f</sub>=0.69). IR (neat)  $\nu_{\max}$  2928, 1728, 1468, 1256, 1100. MS m/z (%) (rel intensity) 202 (2.0, M<sup>+</sup>), 161 (12.0), 145 (17.0), 75 (100.0). HRMS (EI) calcd for C<sub>10</sub>H<sub>22</sub>O<sub>2</sub>Si 202.1389, found for 202.1392. <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 0.06 (6H, s; Si(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>), 0.91 (9H, s; SiC(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 1.88 (2H, m; 3-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.52 (2H, td, J<sub>vic</sub>=7.0 and 1.8 Hz; 2-H<sub>2</sub>), 3.67 (2H, t, J=6.0 Hz; 4-H<sub>2</sub>), 9.81 (1H, t, J=1.8 Hz; CHO). <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): -5.41 (Si(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>), 18.29 (SiC(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 25.52 (C3), 25.90 (SiC(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 40.78 (C2), 62.09 (C4), 202.58 (C1).

#### 3-Benzyl-4-[2-(*tert*-butyldimethylsilanyloxy)-ethyl]-2,3,3a,4,5,7-hexahydro-1H-pyrrolo[2,3-*d*]carbazole-6-carboxylic acid methyl ester (**10**)

A solution of **4** (1.00 g, 2.85 mmol), **5** (0.69 g, 3.42 mmol), and *p*-toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate (10 mg, 0.06 mmol) in dry toluene (50 mL) was refluxed under argon over 24 h, then the reaction mixture was cooled and extracted with brine (2×40 mL) and the combined organic phases were dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and evaporated in vacuo. The residue was purified by column chromatography (eluting with AcOEt/hexane=1:4, R<sub>f</sub>=0.65) to yield 0.99 g (67 %) of **10** as a yellow oil. IR (neat)  $\nu_{\max}$  3384, 2928, 1676, 1612, 1464, 1440, 1248, 1104, 744. MS m/z (%) (rel intensity) 518 (33.0, M<sup>+</sup>), 385 (65.0), 304 (100.0), 168 (11.0), 91 (74.0). HRMS (EI) calcd for C<sub>31</sub>H<sub>42</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>Si 518.2965, found for 518.2973. <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): -0.02+ -0.01 (2×3H, 2×s; Si(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>), 0.85 (9H, s; SiC(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 1.12 (2H, m; 15-H<sub>2</sub>), 1.67+2.03 (2×1H, 2×ddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=11.6 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=4.9+<1 and 12.0+6.0 Hz; 6-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.09 (1H, m; 14-H), 2.53+2.62 (2×1H,

2×dd,  $J_{\text{gem}}=15.0$  Hz,  $J_{\text{vic}}=3.3$  and 3.0 Hz; 17-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.65+2.90 (2×1H, 2×ddd,  $J_{\text{gem}}=9.0$  Hz,  $J_{\text{vic}}=12.0+4.9$  and 6.0+<1 Hz; 5-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.98 (1H, br s; 3-H), 3.49 (2H, m; 20-H<sub>2</sub>), 3.72+4.13 (2×1H, 2×d,  $J_{\text{gem}}=13.0$  Hz; NCH<sub>2</sub>Ph), 3.77 (3H, s; OCH<sub>3</sub>), 6.80 (1H, d,  $J=7.7$  Hz; 12-H), 6.82 (1H, ddd,  $J=7.5+7.4+1.4$  Hz; 10-H), 6.94 (1H, br d,  $J=7.5$  Hz; 9-H), 7.13 (1H, ddd,  $J=7.7+7.4+1.6$  Hz; 11-H), 7.24-7.40 (5H, m; Ph), 8.94 (1H, br s; N1-H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): -5.39 and -5.32 (Si(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>), 18.34 (Si(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 22.46 (C17), 25.99 (Si(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>), 33.96 (C15), 35.28 (C14), 42.33 (C6), 50.40 (C5), 50.92 (OCH<sub>3</sub>), 55.16 (C7), 58.02 (NCH<sub>2</sub>Ph), 61.11 (C20), 71.56 (C3), 90.87 (C16), 109.18 (C12), 120.51 (C9), 122.26 (C10), 127.77 (C11), 127.05+128.31+129.05+138.98 (Ph), 137.97 (C8), 143.08 (C13), 165.33 (C2), 169.08 (16-COOCH<sub>3</sub>).

### **3-Benzyl-4-(2-hydroxyethyl)-2,3,3a,4,5,7-hexahydro-1H-pyrrolo[2,3-d]carbazole-6-carboxylic acid methyl ester (11)**

5 M aqueous solution of HCl (0.75 mL) was added to a solution of **10** (1.00 g, 1.92 mmol) in 10 mL THF and the mixture was stirred for 45 min at rt. After stirring the mixture was concentrated in vacuo, then the residue was dissolved in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (25 mL) and washed with water (10 mL) and brine (10 mL). The organic phase was dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and the solvent was evaporated in vacuo. The residue was purified by column chromatography (eluting with acetone/hexane=1:2,  $R_{\text{f}}=0.4$ ) to yield a yellow oil, which was crystallized from CH<sub>3</sub>OH to afford **11** (0.69 g, 88 %) as white crystals. IR (neat)  $\nu_{\text{max}}$  3376, 2952, 1676, 1608, 1464, 1440, 744. MS  $m/z$  (%) (rel intensity) 404 (10.0, M<sup>+</sup>), 373 (4.0), 271 (4.0), 190 (36.0), 91 (100.0). HRMS (EI) calcd for C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>28</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> 404.2099, found for 404.2099. <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.11+1.18 (2×1H, 2×dm,  $J_{\text{gem}}=13.8$  Hz; 15-H<sub>2</sub>), 1.68+2.05 (2×1H, 2×ddd,  $J_{\text{gem}}=11.7$  Hz,  $J_{\text{vic}}=4.9+<1$  and 12.0+6.0 Hz; 6-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.04 (1H, m; 14-H), 2.55+2.63 (2×1H, 2×dd,  $J_{\text{gem}}=15.2$  Hz,  $J_{\text{vic}}=3.3$  and 3.0 Hz; 17-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.68+2.96 (2×1H, 2×ddd,  $J_{\text{gem}}=9.0$  Hz,  $J_{\text{vic}}=12.0+4.9$  and 6.0+<1 Hz; 5-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.98 (1H, br s; 3-H), 3.10 (1H, br s; OH), 3.50 (2H, t,  $J=6.7$  Hz; 20-H<sub>2</sub>), 3.79+4.11 (2×1H, 2×d,  $J_{\text{gem}}=13.0$  Hz; NCH<sub>2</sub>Ph), 3.77 (3H, s; OCH<sub>3</sub>), 6.81 (1H, br d,  $J=7.7$  Hz; 12-H), 6.83 (1H, ddd,  $J=7.5+7.4+1.4$  Hz; 10-H), 6.94 (1H, br d,  $J=7.5$  Hz; 9-H), 7.13 (1H, ddd,  $J=7.7+7.4+1.6$  Hz; 11-H), 7.25-7.40 (5H, m; Ph), 8.94 (1H, br s; N1-H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 22.50 (C17), 33.94 (C15), 35.30 (C14), 42.17 (C6), 50.56 (C5), 51.02 (OCH<sub>3</sub>), 55.20 (C7), 58.15 (NCH<sub>2</sub>Ph), 60.77 (C20), 71.72 (C3), 90.67 (C16), 109.25 (C12), 120.58 (C9), 122.22 (C10), 127.88 (C11), 127.21+128.36+129.16+138.64 (Ph), 137.74 (C8), 143.02 (C13), 165.02 (C2), 169.01 (16-COOCH<sub>3</sub>). Anal. Calcd for C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>28</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>: C, 74.23; H, 6.98; N, 6.93. Found C, 73.94; H, 6.87; N 7.00.

### **2-(9-(Methoxycarbonyl)-1-benzyl-2,3,8,10,11,11a-hexahydro-1H-pyrrolo[2,3-d]carbazol-11-yl)ethyl methanesulfonate (12)**

**11** (1.00 g, 2.47 mmol) was dissolved in dry CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (20 mL), triethylamine (0.41 mL, 0.30 g, 2.97 mmol) and 4-dimethylaminopyridine (35 mg, 0.3 mmol) were added to the solution. After the addition it was



cooled to 0°C and methanesulfonyl chloride (0.23 mL, 0.34 g, 2.97 mmol) was added dropwise at 0°C. The mixture was stirred 1 h and poured into water (5 mL). The phases were separated and the organic phase was washed with brine (10 mL). It was dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and concentrated in vacuo. The residue was purified by column chromatography (eluent: Et<sub>2</sub>O/hexane=1:5, R<sub>f</sub>=0.45) to afford 1.08 g (82 %) of the product (**12**) as a yellow oil. IR (neat)  $\nu_{\max}$  3376, 2936, 1676, 1608, 1464, 1352, 1208, 746. MS m/z (FAB) (%) (rel intensity) 483 (10.0, M+H<sup>+</sup>), 387 (45.0), 268 (12.0), 194 (13.0), 168 (15.0), 91 (100.0). HRMS (FAB) calcd for C<sub>26</sub>H<sub>31</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>S (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 483.1958, found for (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 483.1951. <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.33 (2H, m; 15-H<sub>2</sub>), 1.70+2.06 (2×1H, 2×ddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=12.1 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=4.8+<1 and 12.0+6.7 Hz; 6-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.07 (1H, m; 14-H), 2.59+2.65 (2×1H, 2×dd, J<sub>gem</sub>=15.5 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=3.5 and 3.0 Hz; 17-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.70+2.98 (2×1H, 2×m; 5-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.93 (3H, s; OSO<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>), 2.97 (1H, br s; 3-H), 3.78 (3H, s; OCH<sub>3</sub>), 3.80+4.13 (2×1H, 2×d, J<sub>gem</sub>=14.0 Hz; NCH<sub>2</sub>Ph), 4.00-4.14 (2H, m; 20-H<sub>2</sub>), 6.82 (1H, d, J=7.7 Hz; 12-H), 6.85 (1H, ddd, J=7.5+7.2+1.0; 10-H), 6.96 (1H, br d; J=7.2 Hz; 9-H), 7.15 (1H, ddd, J=7.7+7.5+1.3 Hz; 11-H), 7.27-7.42 (5H, m; Ph), 8.94 (1H, br s; N1-H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 21.94 (C17), 30.15 (C15), 35.11 (C14), 37.31 (OSO<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>), 42.09 (C6), 50.58 (C5), 51.11 (OCH<sub>3</sub>), 55.15 (C7), 58.16 (NCH<sub>2</sub>Ph), 68.13 (C20), 71.44 (C3), 90.14 (C16), 109.36 (C12), 120.75 (C9), 122.21 (C10), 128.04 (C11), 127.31+128.43+129.08+138.4 (Ph), 137.50 (C8), 142.88 (C13), 164.90 (C2), 168.73 (16-COOCH<sub>3</sub>).

### 12-Benzyl-4-(methoxycarbonyl)1,2,2a,3,5,10,11,12a-octahydropyrrolizino[1,7-cd]carbazol-12-ium mesylate (**13**)

**12** (0.50 g, 1 mmol) was dissolved in dry THF (10 mL) and it was refluxed over 12 h. Then it was cooled and the salt was separated by filtration. The crystals were washed with cold THF and dried in vacuo to give 345 mg (69 %) of **13** as white crystals. IR (KBr)  $\nu_{\max}$  3320, 2944, 1680, 1608, 1464, 1204, 748. MS m/z (%) (rel intensity) 483 (100.0, M<sup>+</sup>), 387 (10.0), 297 (35.0), 216 (4.0), 149 (5.0). HRMS (EI) calcd for C<sub>26</sub>H<sub>30</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>S 482.9272, found for 482.9269. <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.95-2.06 (2H, m; 15-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.15+2.80 (2×1H, 2×dd, J<sub>gem</sub>=16.0 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=12.0 and 4.5 Hz; 17-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.22+3.12 (2×1H, 2×ddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=13.8 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=6.8+~1 and 12.6+8.0 Hz; 6-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.55 (1H, m; 14-H), 2.82 (3H, s; CH<sub>3</sub>SO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>), 3.74 (3H, s; OCH<sub>3</sub>), 4.00 (1H, d, J=11.9 Hz; 3-H), 4.08+4.88 (2×1H, 2×ddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=13.2 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=12.4+5.6 and 7.0+<1 Hz; 20-H<sub>2</sub>), 4.22+4.79 (2×1H, 2×ddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=14.0 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=12.6+6.8 and 8.0+<1 Hz; 5-H<sub>2</sub>), 4.80+5.70 (2×1H, 2×d, J<sub>gem</sub>=13.0 Hz; N<sup>+</sup>CH<sub>2</sub>Ph), 6.92 (1H, d, J=8.0 Hz; 12-H), 6.97 (1H, ddd, J=7.9+7.2+1.5 Hz; 10-H), 7.29 (1H, ddd, J=8.0+7.2+1.0 Hz; 11-H), 7.44 (1H, d, J=7.9 Hz; 9-H), 9.48 (1H, br s; N1-H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 26.54 (C17), 29.25 (C15), 39.65 (CH<sub>3</sub>SO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>), 40.26 (C6), 42.12 (C14), 51.62 (OCH<sub>3</sub>), 57.06 (C7), 67.93+68.75+69.16 (C5+C20+N<sup>+</sup>CH<sub>2</sub>Ph), 77.85 (C3), 98.57 (C16), 111.15 (C12), 121.34 (C10), 122.28 (C9), 129.98 (C11), 129.05+129.65+130.93+132.94 (Ph), 131.46 (C8), 145.23 (C13), 159.67 (C2), 167.96 (16-COOCH<sub>3</sub>).

**(±)-14-Epi-deethylbophyllidine (3)**

A mixture of **13** (0.50 g, 1 mmol) and 10 % palladium/charcoal (0.25 g) in glacial AcOH (10 mL) was hydrogenated for 2 h at rt and then filtered. The filtrate was poured into ice-water (50 mL) and neutralized with saturated Na<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> solution. The mixture was extracted with CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (3×50 mL) and the combined organic phases were dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and evaporated in vacuo. The residue was purified by column chromatography (eluting with AcOEt/methanol=1:1, R<sub>f</sub>=0.15) yielded 0.26 g (83 %) of **3** as a colorless oil. IR (neat)  $\nu_{\max}$  3384, 2952, 1676, 1608, 1468, 1440, 1208, 744. MS m/z (%) (rel intensity) 296 (21.0, M<sup>+</sup>), 202 (4.0), 167 (3.0), 91 (12.0), 82 (100.0), 44 (58.0). HRMS (EI) calcd for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>20</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> 296.1525, found for 296.1528. <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.59+2.13 (2×1H, 2×dddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=11.7 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=12.6+9.8+9.0 and 5.6+7.5+1.0 Hz; 15-H<sub>2</sub>), 1.82+2.63 (2×1H, 2×ddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=12.5 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=7.6+1.5 and 10.5+9.6 Hz; 6-H<sub>2</sub>), 1.91 (1H, m; 14-H), 2.18+2.84 (2×1H, 2×dd, J<sub>gem</sub>=15.7 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=12.0 and 4.7 Hz; 17-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.83+3.82 (2×1H, 2×ddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=11.8 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=9.6+1.5 and 10.5+7.6 Hz; 5-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.93+3.77 (2×1H, 2×ddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=11.7 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=9.8+7.5 and 9.0+1.0 Hz; 20-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.95 (1H, d, J=10.8 Hz; 3-H), 3.76 (3H, s; OCH<sub>3</sub>), 6.78 (1H, d; 12-H), 6.86 (1H, dd; 10-H), 7.14 (1H, dd; 11-H), 7.42 (1H, d; 9-H), 9.18 (1H, br s; N1-H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 27.30 (C17), 30.50 (C15), 39.67 (C6), 40.74 (C14), 51.20 (OCH<sub>3</sub>), 56.41 (C7), 56.71 (C5), 58.57 (C20), 71.86 (C3), 96.73 (C16), 109.57 (C12), 120.99 (C10), 122.15 (C9), 128.13 (C11), 135.71 (C8), 144.34 (C13), 164.11 (C2), 168.88 (16-COOCH<sub>3</sub>).

**11-(2-(Benzoyloxy)ethyl)-1-benzyl-2,3,8,10,11,11a-hexahydro-1H-pyrrolo[2,3-d]carbazole-9-carboxylic acid methyl ester (14)**

1,3-Dicyclohexylcarbodiimide (0.55 g, 2.6 mmol) and 4-dimethylaminopyridine (32 mg, 0.26 mmol) were added to a solution of benzoic acid (0.32 g, 2.6 mmol) in dry CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (10 mL). The mixture cooled to 0°C and at this temperature **11** (1.00 g, 2.5 mmol) in dry CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (10 mL) was added dropwise. The mixture was allowed to warm up to rt and then stirred for 3 h. The suspension was extracted with brine (2×10 mL). The organic phase was dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and concentrated in vacuo. The residue was purified by column chromatography (eluting with Et<sub>2</sub>O/hexane=1:1, R<sub>f</sub>=0.45) to afford 1.08 g (85 %) of the product (**14**) as white crystals after recrystallization from CH<sub>3</sub>OH. IR (KBr)  $\nu_{\max}$  3376, 2952, 1720, 1680, 1608, 1472, 1440, 1384, 1328, 748. MS m/z (%) (rel intensity) 508 (4.0, M<sup>+</sup>), 386 (29.0), 367 (13.0), 149 (15.0), 91 (5.0), 82 (100.0). HRMS (EI) calcd for C<sub>32</sub>H<sub>32</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub> 508.2362, found for 508.2357. <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.34+1.40 (2×1H, 2×dm, J<sub>gem</sub>=14.0 Hz; 15-H<sub>2</sub>), 1.70+2.07 (2×1H, 2×ddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=11.9 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=5.0+<1 and 12.0+6.2 Hz; 6-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.10 (1H, m; 14-H), 2.60+2.71 (2×1H, 2×dd, J<sub>gem</sub>=15.5 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=3.0 and 2.8 Hz; 17-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.68+2.94 (2×1H, 2×ddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=9.0 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=12.0+5.0 and 6.2+<1 Hz; 5-H<sub>2</sub>), 3.03 (1H, br s; 3-H), 3.76+4.11 (2×1H, 2×d, J<sub>gem</sub>=13.4 Hz; NCH<sub>2</sub>Ph), 3.77 (3H, s; OCH<sub>3</sub>), 4.14-4.26 (2H, m; 20-H<sub>2</sub>), 6.82 (1H, br d, J=7.7 Hz; 12-H), 6.85 (1H, ddd, J=7.5+7.4+1.4 Hz; 10-H), 6.99 (1H, br d, J=7.5 Hz; 9-H),

7.15 (1H, ddd,  $J=7.7+7.4+1.6$  Hz; 11-H), 7.20-7.42 (7H, m; Ph+3'-H+5'-H), 7.52 (1H, m; 4'-H), 7.96 (2H, m; 2'-H+6'-H), 8.99 (1H, br s; N1-H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ): 22.56 (C17), 29.95 (C15), 36.00 (C14), 42.27 (C6), 50.66 (C5), 51.04 ( $\text{OCH}_3$ ), 55.23 (C7), 58.28 ( $\text{NCH}_2\text{Ph}$ ), 63.21 (C20), 71.58 (C3), 90.56 (C16), 109.30 (C12), 120.65 (C9), 122.29 (C10), 127.92 (C11), 127.14+128.33+128.95+138.88 (Ph), 128.36+129.56 (C2'+C3'+C5'+C6'), 130.37 (C1'), 132.84 (C4'), 137.76 (C8), 143.03 (C13), 165.08 (C2), 166.52 ( $\text{OCOPh}$ ), 169.02 (16- $\text{COOCH}_3$ ). Anal. Calcd for  $\text{C}_{32}\text{H}_{32}\text{N}_2\text{O}_4 \cdot \text{CH}_3\text{OH}$ : C, 73.13; H, 6.71; N, 6.39. Found C, 73.08; H, 6.55; N 5.38.

**11-(2-(Benzoyloxy)ethyl)-2,3,8,10,11,11a-hexahydro-1H-pyrrolo[2,3-d]carbazole-9-carboxylic acid methyl ester (15)**

A mixture of **14** (0.50 g, 0.98 mmol) and 10 % palladium/charcoal (0.25 g) in glacial AcOH (10 mL) was hydrogenated for 1 h at rt and then filtered. The filtrate was poured into ice-water (40 mL) and neutralized with saturated  $\text{Na}_2\text{CO}_3$  solution. The mixture was extracted with  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  (3×50 mL) and the combined organic phases were dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ) and evaporated in vacuo. The main component was separated by preparative TLC (eluting with  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2/\text{CH}_3\text{OH}=20:1$ ,  $R_f=0.32$ ) yielded 0.38 g (92 %) of **15** as a yellow oil. IR (neat)  $\nu_{\text{max}}$  3368, 2952, 1720, 1676, 1608, 1464, 1440, 1276, 748. MS  $m/z$  (%) (rel intensity) 418 (3.0,  $\text{M}^+$ ), 296 (27.0), 154 (5.0), 122 (16.0), 82 (100.0), 77 (12.0). HRMS (EI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{25}\text{H}_{26}\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$  418.1893, found for 418.1897.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ): 1.36-1.52 (2H, m; 15- $\text{H}_2$ ), 1.80-2.10 (3H, m; 6- $\text{H}_2$ +14-H), 2.37 (1H, m; N4-H), 2.41+2.74 (2×1H, 2×dd,  $J_{\text{gem}}=15.5$  Hz,  $J_{\text{vic}}=3.8$  and 3.0 Hz; 17- $\text{H}_2$ ), 3.10-3.20 (2H, m; 5- $\text{H}_2$ ), 3.59 (1H, br s; 3-H), 3.77 (3H, s;  $\text{OCH}_3$ ), 4.21+4.28 (2×1H, 2×dt,  $J_{\text{gem}}=11.1$  Hz,  $J_{\text{vic}}=7.0$  and 6.2 Hz; 20- $\text{H}_2$ ), 6.85 (1H, br d; 12-H), 6.90 (1H, ddd; 10-H), 7.17 (1H, ddd; 11-H), 7.24 (1H, br d; 9-H), 7.38-7.56 (3H, m; 3'-H+4'-H+5'-H), 7.98 (2H, m; 2-H+6'-H), 9.07 (1H, br s; N1-H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ): 22.17 (C17), 30.47 (C15), 38.04 (C14), 44.20 (C6), 45.18 (C5), 51.08 ( $\text{OCH}_3$ ), 55.71 (C7), 62.87 (C20), 66.32 (C3), 90.10 (C16), 109.37 (C12), 120.89 (C9), 121.95 (C10), 128.04 (C11), 128.33+129.57 (C2'+C3'+C5'+C6'), 130.32 (C1'), 132.87 (C4'), 137.48 (C8), 143.14 (C13), 165.22 (C2), 166.54 ( $\text{OCOPh}$ ), 168.87 (16- $\text{COOCH}_3$ ).

**(±)-Deethylbophyllidine (2)**

**Method I.:** A mixture of **15** (0.3 g, 0.72 mmol) and potassium iodide (0.12 g, 0.72 mmol) in dry DMF (7 mL) was refluxed 4 h, then was evaporated in vacuo. The main component was purified by preparative TLC (eluting with  $\text{AcOEt}/\text{CH}_3\text{OH}=1:1$ ,  $R_f=0.15$ ) to yield **2** (0.15 g, 71 %) as a yellow oil. IR (neat)  $\nu_{\text{max}}$  3376, 2944, 1676, 1608, 1248, 1112, 744. MS  $m/z$  (%) (rel intensity) 296 (24.0,  $\text{M}^+$ ), 265 (4.0), 239 (5.0), 154 (30.0), 127 (13.0), 115 (6.0), 82 (100.). HRMS (EI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{18}\text{H}_{20}\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$  296.1525, found for 296.1537.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ): 1.70+2.09 (2×1H, 2×ddd,  $J_{\text{gem}}=12.5$  Hz,  $J_{\text{vic}}=5.5+1.2$  and 12.0+7.5 Hz;

6-H<sub>2</sub>), 1.80+2.16 (2×1H, 2×dddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=12.8 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=5.7+1.2+1.0 and 11.8+7.2+6.8 Hz; 15-H<sub>2</sub>), 1.89+2.81 (2×1H, 2×ddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=15.4 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=12.0 and 5.9 Hz; 17-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.07 (1H, m; 14-H), 2.77+3.33 (2×1H, 2×ddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=9.5 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=11.8+5.7 and 7.2+1.2 Hz; 20-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.93+3.40 (2×1H, 2×ddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=12.2 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=7.5+1.2 and 12.0+5.5 Hz; 5-H<sub>2</sub>), 3.77 (3H, s; OCH<sub>3</sub>), 3.79 (1H, d, J=7.0 Hz; 3-H), 6.82 (1H, d; 12-H), 6.90 (1H, dd; 10-H), 7.18 (1H, dd; 11-H), 7.36 (1H, d; 9-H), 9.06 (1H, br s; N1-H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR δ<sub>C</sub> (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 26.32 (C17), 31.82 (C15), 38.77 (C14), 38.94 (C6), 50.97 (OCH<sub>3</sub>), 52.48 (C5), 55.13 (C20), 57.55 (C7), 73.10 (C3), 91.74 (C16), 109.19 (C12), 120.99 (C10), 122.58 (C9), 128.13 (C11), 136.62 (C8), 143.55 (C13), 164.29 (C2), 168.54 (16-COOCH<sub>3</sub>).

**11-((Ethoxycarbonyl)methyl)-1-benzyl-2,3,8,10,11,11a-hexahydro-1H-pyrrolo[2,3-d]carbazole-9-carboxylic acid methyl ester (16)**

A solution of **4** (1.00 g, 2.85 mmol), **6** (0.45 g, 3.42 mmol) and *p*-toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate (10 mg, 0.06 mmol) in dry toluene (50 mL) was refluxed under argon over 24 h. The reaction mixture was extracted with brine (2×40 mL) and the combined organic phases were dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and evaporated in vacuo. The residue was purified by column chromatography (eluting with AcOEt/hexane=1:2, R<sub>f</sub>=0.42) to yield a yellow oil, which was crystallized from methanol to afford **16** (0.78 g, 61 %) as white crystals. IR (KBr) ν<sub>max</sub> 3376, 2976, 1736, 1680, 1612, 1464, 748. MS m/z (%) (rel intensity) 446 (25.0, M<sup>+</sup>), 401 (9.0), 313 (59.0), 232 (98.0), 91 (100.0). HRMS (EI) calcd for C<sub>27</sub>H<sub>30</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub> 446.2206, found for 446.2225. <sup>1</sup>H NMR δ<sub>H</sub> (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.18 (3H, t, J=7.0 Hz; COOCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>), 1.67+2.04 (2×1H, 2×ddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=11.8 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=5.0+<1 and 12.0+6.1 Hz; 6-H<sub>2</sub>), 1.90+2.03 (2×1H, 2×dd, J<sub>gem</sub>=16.0 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=8.4 and 6.0 Hz; 15-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.51 (1H, m; 14-H), 2.63 (2H, m; 17-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.63+2.89 (2×1H, 2×ddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=9.0 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=12.0+5.0 and 6.1+<1 Hz; 5-H<sub>2</sub>), 3.04 (1H, br s; 3-H), 3.74+4.30 (2×1H, 2×d, J<sub>gem</sub>=13.2 Hz; NCH<sub>2</sub>Ph), 3.76 (3H, s; OCH<sub>3</sub>), 4.05 (2H, q, J=7.0 Hz; COOCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>), 6.81 (1H, d, J=7.6 Hz; 12-H), 6.82 (1H, ddd; 10-H), 6.92 (1H, br d, J=7.2 Hz; 9-H), 7.14 (1H, ddd, J=7.6+7.4+1.7 Hz; 11-H), 7.24-7.42 (5H, m; Ph), 8.96 (1H, br s; N1-H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR δ<sub>C</sub> (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 14.23 (COOCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>), 23.49 (C17), 35.76 (C14), 36.16 (C15), 42.23 (C6), 50.10 (C5), 50.96 (OCH<sub>3</sub>), 55.02 (C7), 57.55 (NCH<sub>2</sub>Ph), 60.26 (COOCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>), 70.55 (C3), 90.72 (C16), 109.26 (C12), 120.62 (C9), 122.30 (C10), 127.88 (C12), 127.00+128.28+128.99+139.02 (Ph), 137.67 (C8), 142.99 (C13), 164.77 (C2), 168.91 (16-COOCH<sub>3</sub>), 172.84 (COOCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>). Anal. Calcd for C<sub>27</sub>H<sub>30</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub>·CH<sub>3</sub>OH: C, 70.72; H, 6.04; N, 5.85. Found C, 70.79; H, 5.93; N 5.80.

**11-((Ethoxycarbonyl)methyl)-2,3,8,10,11,11a-hexahydro-1H-pyrrolo[2,3-d]carbazole-9-carboxylic acid methyl ester (17)**

**16** (1.00 g, 2.24 mmol) was dissolved in 10 mL of glacial AcOH and 10 % palladium/charcoal (0.50 g) was added to the solution. It was hydrogenated for 2 h at rt and then filtered. The filtrate was poured into

ice-water (50 mL) and neutralized with saturated  $\text{Na}_2\text{CO}_3$  solution. The mixture was extracted with  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  ( $3 \times 70$  mL) and the combined organic phases were dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ) and evaporated in vacuo. The residue was purified by column chromatography (eluent:  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2/\text{CH}_3\text{OH}=9:1$ ,  $R_f=0.65$ ) to yield 0.77 g (95 %) of the product (**17**) as a yellow oil. IR (neat)  $\nu_{\text{max}}$  3368, 2944, 1732, 1676, 1608, 1464, 1248, 747. MS  $m/z$  (%) (rel intensity) 356 (80.0,  $\text{M}^+$ ), 313 (24.0), 311 (25.0), 287 (15.0), 280 (14.0), 238 (15.0), 215 (96.0), 168 (16.0), 154 (31.0), 142 (100.0), 96 (24.0). HRMS (EI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{20}\text{H}_{24}\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$  356.1736, found for 446.2225.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ): 1.17 (3H, t,  $J=7.0$  Hz;  $\text{COOCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ ), 1.84+1.99 ( $2 \times 1\text{H}$ ,  $2 \times \text{ddd}$ ,  $J_{\text{gem}}=12.2$  Hz,  $J_{\text{vic}}=5.0+2.0$  and  $10.3+7.6$  Hz; 6- $\text{H}_2$ ), 1.99+2.04 ( $2 \times 1\text{H}$ ,  $2 \times \text{dd}$ ,  $J_{\text{gem}}=16.0$  Hz,  $J_{\text{vic}}=7.6$  and  $7.1$  Hz; 15- $\text{H}_2$ ), 2.40 (1H, m; 14-H), 2.47+2.65 ( $2 \times 1\text{H}$ ,  $2 \times \text{dd}$ ,  $J_{\text{gem}}=15.5$  Hz,  $J_{\text{vic}}=4.0$  and  $3.0$  Hz; 17- $\text{H}_2$ ), 2.85 (1H, br s; N4-H), 3.16-3.24 (2H, m; 5- $\text{H}_2$ ), 3.57 (1H, br s; 3-H), 3.76 (3H, s;  $\text{OCH}_3$ ), 4.04 (2H, q,  $J=7.0$  Hz;  $\text{COOCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ ), 6.85 (1H, d,  $J=7.6$  Hz; 12-H), 6.90 (1H, ddd,  $J=7.6+7.3+1.4$  Hz; 10-H), 7.18 (1H, ddd,  $J=7.6+7.6+1.6$  Hz; 11-H), 7.25 (1H, br d,  $J=7.3$  Hz; 9-H), 9.05 (1H, br s; N1-H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ): 14.12 ( $\text{COOCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ ), 23.15 (C17), 36.76 (C15), 37.65 (C14), 43.44 (C6), 44.84 (C5), 51.00 ( $\text{OCH}_3$ ), 55.34 (C7), 60.34 ( $\text{COOCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ ), 65.59 (C3), 90.37 (C16), 109.34 (C12), 120.88 (C9), 122.02 (C10), 128.08 (C11), 137.12 (C8), 143.09 (C13), 164.39 (C2), 168.77 (16- $\text{COOCH}_3$ ), 172.47 ( $\text{COOCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ ).

### 20-Oxodeethylibophyllidine (**18**)

A solution of **17** (0.50 g, 1.4 mmol) and *p*-toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate (10 mg, 0.06 mmol) in 15 mL of dry toluene was refluxed under argon for 16 h. Then it was cooled and concentrated in vacuo, the residue was dissolved in  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  (20 mL) and washed with water (10 mL) and brine (10 mL). The organic phase was dried ( $\text{MgSO}_4$ ) and the solvent was removed in vacuo. The residue was purified by preparative TLC (eluting with  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2/\text{CH}_3\text{OH}=9:1$ ,  $R_f=0.85$ ) to yield a colorless oil, which was crystallized from  $\text{CH}_3\text{OH}$  to afford 0.34 g (78 %) of **18** as white crystals. IR (KBr)  $\nu_{\text{max}}$  3384, 2944, 1696, 1608, 1440, 1252, 748. MS  $m/z$  (%) (rel intensity) 310 (27.0,  $\text{M}^+$ ), 279 (3.0), 251 (6.0), 227 (44.0), 214 (100), 195 (46.0), 182 (21.0), 167 (20.0), 154 (40.0). HRMS (EI) calcd for  $\text{C}_{18}\text{H}_{18}\text{N}_2\text{O}_3$  310.3471, found for 310.3475.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ): 1.79+2.78 ( $2 \times 1\text{H}$ ,  $2 \times \text{dd}$ ,  $J_{\text{gem}}=15.3$  Hz,  $J_{\text{vic}}=12.0$  and  $5.0$  Hz; 17- $\text{H}_2$ ), 1.84-1.94 (2H, m; 6- $\text{H}_2$ ), 2.15+2.86 ( $2 \times 1\text{H}$ ,  $2 \times \text{dd}$ ,  $J_{\text{gem}}=16.2$  Hz,  $J_{\text{vic}}=<1$  and  $6.5$  Hz; 15- $\text{H}_2$ ), 2.21 (1H, m; 14-H), 3.26+4.17 ( $2 \times 1\text{H}$ ,  $2 \times \text{dm}$ ,  $J_{\text{gem}}=12.0$  Hz; 5- $\text{H}_2$ ), 3.77 (3H, s;  $\text{OCH}_3$ ), 4.31 (1H, d,  $J=6.0$  Hz; 3-H), 6.88 (1H, br d;  $J=7.9$  Hz; 12-H), 6.94 (1H, ddd,  $J=7.6+7.4+1.0$  Hz; 10-H), 7.22 (1H, ddd,  $J=7.9+7.6+1.2$  Hz; 11-H), 7.27 (1H, br d,  $J=7.4$  Hz; 9-H), 9.05 (1H, br s; N1-H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  ( $\text{CDCl}_3$ ): 24.84 (C17), 36.10 (C14), 38.65 (C15), 42.60+43.19 (C5+C6), 51.14 ( $\text{OCH}_3$ ), 54.95 (C7), 67.74 (C3), 92.86 (C16), 109.66 (C12), 121.25+121.72 (C9+C10), 128.70 (C11), 135.59 (C8), 143.39 (C13), 163.10 (C2), 168.04

(16-COOCH<sub>3</sub>), 176.70 (C20). Anal. Calcd for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>18</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>: C, 69.66; H, 5.85; N, 9.03. Found C, 69.57; H, 5.86; N 8.58.

### 20-Thioxodeethylbophyllidine (19)

To a solution of 20-oxodeethylbophyllidine (**18**) (0.50 g, 1.61 mmol) in dry THF (30 mL) was added 0.55 g (2.42 mmol) of phosphorus pentasulfide. The reaction mixture was stirred for 2 h at rt and then diluted with 30 mL of CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>. The solution was extracted with 20 mL of brine and the aqueous phase was extracted with 10 mL of CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>. The combined organic phases were dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and the solvent was evaporated in vacuo. The residue was purified by preparative TLC (eluting with acetone/hexane=1:2, R<sub>f</sub>=0.35) to yield a yellow oil, which was crystallized from CH<sub>3</sub>OH to afford **19** (0.44 g, 83 %) as white crystals. IR (KBr)  $\nu_{\max}$  3384, 2944, 1672, 1624, 1608, 1456, 1176, 748. MS m/z (%) (rel intensity) 326 (100.0, M<sup>+</sup>), 293 (10.0), 267 (4.0), 227 (70.0), 195 (67.0), 167 (48.0). HRMS (EI) calcd for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>18</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S 327.1167, found for 327.1206. <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.78+2.78 (2×1H, 2×dd, J<sub>gem</sub>=15.5 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=12.0 and 5.0 Hz; 17-H<sub>2</sub>), 1.94-2.05 (2H, m; 6-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.28 (1H, m; 14-H), 2.88+3.27 (2×1H, 2×dd, J<sub>gem</sub>=16.8 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub><1 and 5.8 Hz; 15-H<sub>2</sub>), 3.58+4.64 (2×1H, 2×dm, J<sub>gem</sub>=12 Hz; 5-H<sub>2</sub>), 3.77 (3H, s; OCH<sub>3</sub>), 4.61 (1H, d, J=6.0 Hz; 3-H), 6.89 (1H, br d, J=7.9 Hz; 12-H), 6.97 (1H, ddd, J=7.6+7.4+1.0 Hz; 10-H), 7.24 (1H, ddd, J=7.9+7.6+1.2 Hz; 11-H), 7.31 (1H, br d, J=7.4 Hz; 9-H), 9.05 (1H, br s; N1-H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 23.92 (C17), 38.43 (C14), 42.45 (C6), 47.25 (C15), 51.22 (OCH<sub>3</sub>), 51.47 (C5), 53.99 (C7), 73.80 (C3), 93.26 (C16), 109.84 (C12), 121.38+121.46 (C9+C10), 128.96 (C11), 134.96 (C8), 143.39 (C13), 162.77 (C2), 168.00 (16-COOCH<sub>3</sub>), 202.06 (C20). Anal. Calcd for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>18</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>S: C, 66.23; H, 5.56; N, 8.58; S, 9.82. Found C, 66.32; H, 5.66; N 8.56; S, 9.76.

### (±)-Deethylbophyllidine (2)

**Method II.:** To a solution of **19** (0.25 g, 0.77 mmol) in dry THF (20 mL) was added ca. 1 g of water, CH<sub>3</sub>OH and dry THF-washed Raney Ni. The suspension was stirred for 10 h at rt and then filtered. The Raney Ni was washed with dry THF (10 mL) and the combined filtrates were concentrated in vacuo. The residue was purified by preparative TLC (eluent: AcOEt/CH<sub>3</sub>OH=1:1, R<sub>f</sub>=0.15) to afford 0.18 g (81 %) of the deethylbophyllidine (**2**) as a yellow oil. The analytical data were identified in the previous method.

### 1-Benzyl-11-(formylmethyl)-2,3,8,10,11,11a-hexahydro-1H-pyrrolo[2,3-d]carbazole-9-carboxylic acid methyl ester (20)

The ester (**16**) (1.00 g, 2.24 mmol) was dissolved in dry CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (50 mL) and cooled to -78°C. A solution of 1.0 M diisobutylaluminium hydride in hexane ( 2.91 mL, 2.91 mmol) was added dropwise, and the resulting solution was stirred at -78°C for 1 h. Then saturated aqueous NH<sub>4</sub>Cl (10 mL) was added, and the

solution was allowed to warm to rt. After stirring for 30 min the white precipitate was filtered, the solvent was extracted with water (2×20 mL) and brine (15 mL). The combined organic phases were dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and concentrated in vacuo. The residue was purified by column chromatography (eluting with Et<sub>2</sub>O/hexane=1:1, R<sub>f</sub>=0.41) to yield a colorless oil, which was crystallized from CH<sub>3</sub>OH to afford **20** (0.77 g, 66 %) as white crystals. IR (KBr)  $\nu_{\max}$  3384, 2944, 1720, 1676, 1608, 1448, 1248, 744. MS m/z (%) (rel intensity) 402 (20.0, M<sup>+</sup>), 269 (46.0), 214 (10.0), 188 (69.0), 91 (100.0). HRMS (EI) calcd for C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>26</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> 402.1943, found for 402.1922. <sup>1</sup>H NMR  $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.68 (1H, dd, J<sub>gem</sub>=11.9 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=5.0 Hz; 6-H<sub>A</sub>), 2.05 (1H, m; 6-H<sub>B</sub>), 2.05+2.16 (2×1H, 2×ddd, J<sub>gem</sub>=18.0 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=8.4+1.6 and 5.8+1.5 Hz; 15-H<sub>2</sub>), 2.57 (1H, m; 14-H), 2.6-2.7 (3H, m; 17-H<sub>2</sub>+5-H<sub>A</sub>), 2.92 (1H, dd, J<sub>gem</sub>=9.0 Hz, J<sub>vic</sub>=6.7 Hz; 5-H<sub>B</sub>), 2.98 (1H, br s; 3-H), 3.80+4.28 (2×1H, 2×d, J<sub>gem</sub>=13.4 Hz; NCH<sub>2</sub>Ph), 3.77 (3H, s; OCH<sub>3</sub>), 6.82 (1H, d; 12-H), 6.83 (1H, m; 10-H), 6.90 (1H, br d, J=7.1 Hz; 9-H), 7.14 (1H, ddd, J=7.6+7.4+1.7 Hz; 11-H), 7.25-7.42 (5H, m; Ph), 8.98 (1H, br s; N1-H), 9.58 (1H, t, J=1.5 Hz; 20-H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR  $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 23.40 (C17), 33.33 (C14), 42.13 (C6), 45.79 (C15), 50.28 (C5), 51.03 (OCH<sub>3</sub>), 55.10 (C7), 57.79 (NCH<sub>2</sub>Ph), 70.81 (C3), 90.67 (C16), 109.28 (C12), 120.72 (C9), 122.31 (C10), 127.97 (C11), 127.07+128.31+129.02+138.84 (Ph), 137.45 (C8), 142.88 (C13), 164.83 (C2), 168.81 (16-COOCH<sub>3</sub>), 201.45 (C20). Anal. Calcd for C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>26</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>·3/4CH<sub>3</sub>OH: C, 72.51; H, 6.38; N, 6.56. Found C, 72.53; H, 6.33; N 6.53.

### (±)-Deethylibophyllidine (**2**)

**Method III.:** A mixture of the amino aldehyde (**20**) (0.50 g, 1.24 mmol) and 10 % palladium/charcoal catalyst (0.1 g) in 10 mL of CH<sub>3</sub>COOH was stirred for 48 h under hydrogen at atmospheric pressure. The reaction mixture was filtered and the filtrate was poured into ice-water (40 mL) and neutralized with saturated Na<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> solution. The mixture was extracted with CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (3×50 mL) and the combined organic phases were dried (MgSO<sub>4</sub>) and evaporated in vacuo. The residue was purified by preparative TLC (eluent: AcOEt/CH<sub>3</sub>OH=1:1, R<sub>f</sub>=0.15) to yield 0.31 g (82 %) of deethylibophyllidine (**2**) as a yellow oil. The analytical data were identified in the previous method.

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