The Synthesis of 6,9-Dioxo-, 6,9- and 7,9-Dihydroxychlorpromazines, Possible Metabolites of Chlorpromazine (1)

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The syntheses of dioxogenated chlorpromazines 1, 2, and 3 via the reductive ring closure of substituted nitrodiphenyl sulfides are described.

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An important metabolic pathway of the major psycholeptic agent, chlorpromazine (3) in humans involves oxidation with the stepwise formation of 7-hydroxy-chlorpromazine (4), possibly from a non-enzymatic rearrangement of a 7,8-epoxide intermediate initially formed by microsomal oxidation of the parent drug (5), and 7,8-dihydroxychlorpromazine (6). The dihydroxylated metabolite can exist in the body per se, in part O-methylated (6) and/or further oxidized to its respective ortho-quinone (7), a biotransformation product which previously has been proposed as a metabolite by our group (8).

This oxidation pathway has been investigated and demonstrated in vitro utilizing the 7-hydroxy metabolite and enzymatic (9) or electrochemical procedures (10). Chemical and electrochemical oxidation studies of the monohydroxylated metabolite at pH 7 further indicated two mechanisms of formation of the ortho-quinone, each of which evolved from a quinoneimine intermediate (11). Interestingly, one of these processes by-passes the 7,8dihydroxy analog as an intermediate and forms instead 6,9-dihydroxy-, 1, and 6,9-dioxochlorpromazine, 2, as sequential intermediates. This prompted us to report our synthesis of these two para-substituted compounds, which may be of interest in chemical as well as in biological studies. Furthermore, as a development from this synthesis, we wish to report the preparation of another dihydroxylated isomer, 7,9-dihydroxychlorpromazine, 3. An analogous reaction expected to provide a 6,8-disubstituted phenothiazine gave instead the 7,9-isomer. This is also described.

Cadogen and co-workers (12-14) found that nitrodiphenyl sulfides, such as 4, when refluxed with triethyl phosphite in cumene, would give rise to a 3-substituted phenothiazine 5, rather than a 2-substituted derivative 6 (Scheme I).

Scheme

They found that the rearrangement was general and surmised that it proceeded through a nitrene, or nitrene precursor, as in related cyclizations occurring in decomposition reactions of azides (15,16).

As our interest was in the preparation of a 2-chloro-6,9-dioxogenated phenothiazine derivative, our synthesis was modeled according to the preparation of 1,4-dimethoxy-phenothiazine 7(12), which was obtained by the reductive ring closure of 2,5-dimethoxy-2'-nitrodiphenyl sulfide 8 (Scheme II). They also isolated diethyl N-ethyl-N-

[o(2,5dimethoxyphenylthio)phenyl]phosphoramidate, 9. In our analogous reaction, the cyclization of 4'-chloro-2,5-dimethoxy-2'-nitrodiphenyl sulfide, 10, provided the desired 2-chloro-6,9-dimethoxy phenothiazine, 11a, as the major product but also small amounts of an unexpected isomer, 2-chloro-7,9-dimethoxyphenothiazine, 12a (Scheme III).

In addition, we isolated a phosphoramidate which, lacking nmr analysis, is assumed to have the para-di-

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methoxy structure, 13. Nmr analysis (Table 1) of pure 11a displayed a complex pattern at δ 6.3-6.8 (methanol- d_4) containing a quartet having ortho-coupling, $J_{7,8} = 10$ Hz (for 7, $J_{2,3} = 3.8$ Hz) (12). Due to difficult separation problems, we obtained an nmr spectrum of 12a superimposed on the spectrum of 11a, from a mixture of 12a and 11a in approximately a 1:1 ratio. A quartet was distinguishable, showing that 12a had meta-coupling, $J_{6,8} = 3$ Hz. Corresponding samples of 11b and 12b had similar coupling constants. In thin layer chromatography, 11a and 12a could be separated in SB/CD chamber (17) and their spots as developed with iodine had distinct color differences.

Furthermore, Fremy's salt oxidations (18,19) of 11a and 12a provided the required quinoncimines, 14 and 15, respectively, which gave satisfactory elemental analyses.

Oxidation of chlorophenothiazines generally occur in the ring which does not have the chloro substituent and are accommodated by concomitant dealkylation when the 7-position is blocked by an alkoxyl group (19-21). The quinoneimines possessed the characteristic dark red color and showed strong absorption in the carbonyl region of their infrared spectra as well as the absence of the strong N-H band present in phenothiazine spectra.

An attempt was made to prepare the 2-chloro-6,8-dimethoxy isomer, 16, from 4'-chloro-3, 5-dimethoxy-2'-nitrodiphenyl sulfide, 17 (Scheme IV). The anticipated

Scheme IV

rearrangement did not take place and **12a** was obtained as the sole phenothiazine derivative as confirmed by Fremy's salt oxidation to **14**. It may be that this is due to the strong *ortho-para* directive effects of the two methoxyl groups (15) on the available 2- and 5- positions.

In addition, the ring closure of 4'-chloro-2,4-dimethoxy-2'-nitrodiphenyl sulfide, 18, yielded 12a as the major product and 11a as a minor product. (Scheme V). Obtaining 11a from 18 and 12a from 10 is not readily explainable, although it is interesting to note that methoxyl shifts have been observed in this type of ring closure (12,22).

Pursuant to our original quest of preparing 1, 11a was dealkylated by pyridine hydrochloride to 2-chloro-6,9-dihydroxyphenothiazine, 19 (Scheme VI). The dimethoxymethylene derivative, 20, was obtained upon treatment of 19 with sodium hydride and chloromethyl methyl ether and the protected chlorpromazine derivative 21, obtained by treatment of 20 with sodium hydride and dimethylaminopropyl chloride. Cleavage of the acid labile protective groups was effected with methanolic hydrogen chloride and the product 1, was isolated as the free base qupon treatment with ammonia.

Scheme VI

By a similar synthetic route, 7,9-dihydroxychlorpromazine, 3, was obtained starting from 12a. The 6,9dioxochlorpromazine, 2, was obtained by reaction of 1 with p-chloranil. This is analogous to the oxidation of 7,8dihydroxychlorpromazine, which on treatment with ochloranil give 7,8-dioxochlorpromazine.

Nmr data are presented in Table I and assignments are based on observed coupling constants and substituent factors (8,12,24-26). The influence of the quinonoid system in 2 is particularly interesting not only in the

 C_6 -OCH₃

C7-OCH3

C9-OCH3

Table I

NMr Data for Phenothiazine Derivatives (a)

(a) Chemical shifts in δ, coupling constants in Hz. (b) In deuterodimethyl sulfoxide. (c) In deuteromethanol. (d) doublet. (dd) doublet of doublets. (e) With 15-20% of 1. (f) With 11a in approximately a 1:1 ratio. (g) With 11b in a 1:2 ratio. (m) Multiplet. (s) Singlet.

markedly downfield shift of aromatic protons but also in the simplified absorption pattern. The lowest field signal, δ 7.24, appears as a singlet and has been assigned to H_1 which would be most affected by a substantial partial positive charge on the ring nitrogen atom. Canonical forms can be drawn with separation of charge on the nitrogen and oxygen atoms. Also, ortho- and metacoupling is not observed, and H_3 and H_4 as well as H_7 and H_8 appear as 2-proton singlets and have thus become essentially equivalent.

3.78(s)

3.72(s)

3.79(s)

The assignment of the methoxy groups is based primarily on the effect of the N-substituted side chain. The possibility of hydrogen-bonding is removed between the N-hydrogen atom and the neighboring C_9 -methoxy group and the latter would be more affected than either the C_6 or C_7 -methoxy groups by N-substitution. In 11a, two resolved 3-proton singlets are observed at δ 3.78 and 3.72. In 11b, the two signals coincide and appear at δ 3.79 as a 6-proton singlet. Thus the higher field signal of

11a has been assigned to the C₉-methoxy group. Similarly, the high field methoxy signals in 12a and 12b have been assigned to the C₉-methoxy group which exhibits a small but perceptible downfield shift with the addition of the side chain.

3.84(s)

3.69(s)

3.84(s)

3.72(s)

Mass spectral data for 1, 2, and 3 are satisfactory for our structures. Molecular ion peaks occur at m/e 350 (M) for 1 and 3 and at m/e 350 (M + 2) for 2. This is in agreement with previously reported data for 7,8-dihydroxy- and 7,8-dioxochlorpromazine (8).

EXPERIMENTAL

Melting points were taken on a Thomas-Hoover melting point apparatus in open capillaries and are uncorrected. Electronimpact mass spectra were obtained on a Hewlett-Packard 5985 quadrupole spectrometer. Nuclear magnetic resonance spectra were obtained on a JEOL FX-100 FT-NMR spectrometer. Elemental analysis were performed by Micro-Tech Laboratories, Skokie, Illinois. SB/CD chambers (17) are from Regis Chemical Company, Morton, Brove, Illinois.

2,5-Dimethoxythiophenol.

In a manner described previously (25), 2,5-dimethoxythiophenol was prepared from 2,5-dimethoxyaniline in 42% yield, b.p. $88-92^{\circ}/0.26$ mm (lit. b.p. $131^{\circ}/8$ mm) (26).

3,5-Dimethoxythiophenol.

By the precedure of Newman and Angier (27), 3,5-dimethoxy-thiophenol was obtained from 3,5-dimethoxyaniline in 30% yield, b.p. 98°/0.2 mm, 102°/0.35 mm (lit. b.p. 111°/0.1 mm). 2,4-Dimethoxythiophenol.

In a similar manner, 2-4-dimethoxyaniline was converted to 2,4-dimethoxythiophenol in 78% yield, b.p. 118-122°/2 mm (lit. b.p. 142°/8 mm) (26).

4'-Chloro-2,5-dimethoxy-2'-nitrodiphenyl Sulfide (10).

The procedure of Galt and London (28) was used to prepare 10 from 2,5-dimethoxythiophenol and 2,5-dichloronitrobenzene. Crude product (93%), m.p. 117.5-119°, was obtained. An analytical sample was crystallized from ethanol, m.p. 117-119°.

Anal. Calcd. for $C_{14}H_{17}CINO_4S$: C, 51.62; H, 3.71; N, 4.30. Found: C, 51.44; H, 3.49; N, 4.13.

4'-Chloro-3,5-dimethoxy-2'-nitrodiphenyl Sulfide (16).

In the above manner, 16, m.p. 95.5-97° was obtained (99%) from the condensation of 3,5-dimethoxythiophenol and 2,5-dichloronitrobenzene. A sample was crystallized from ethanol for analysis, m.p. 96-98°.

Anal. Calcd. for $C_{14}H_{17}CINO_4S$: C, 51.62; H, 3.71; N, 4.30. Found: C, 51.68; H, 3.60; N, 4.33.

4'-Chloro-2,4-dimethoxy-2'-nitrodiphenyl Sulfide (17).

In like manner, 17, m.p. 113-135°, was obtained (91%) from 2,4-dimethoxythiophenol and 2,5-dichloronitrobenzene. An analytical sample from ethanol melted at 134-135°.

Anal. Calcd. for $C_{14}C_{17}CINO_4S$: C, 51.62; H, 3.71; N, 4.30. Found: C, 51.42; H, 3.60; N, 4.29.

Ring Closure of Nitrodiphenyl Sulfides 10, 17, and 18.

4'-Chloro-2,5-dimethoxy-2'-nitrodiphenyl Sulfide (10). Method I.

Following the conditions of Cadogen and Kulik (12), a mixture of 5 g. (0.015 mole) of 10, 10.2 g. (0.062 mole) of triethyl phosphite, and 12.5 ml. of cumene was refluxed under nitrogen for 18 hours. The resulting dark reaction mixture was filtered through silica gel, washing with benzene-hexane (2:1). The filtrate was stripped and the resulting oil filtered through silica gel, washing with benzene-hexane (1:2). The filtrate was stripped at aspirator and vacuum pump pressures to a red oil weighing 4.7 g. Trituration of this oil with 8 ml. of benzene-hexane (1:2) gave a solid weighing 2.3 g. The mother liquor was saved for later workup. The solid on crystallization from ethanol gave 0.66 g. (14%) 2-chloro-6,9-dimethoxyphenothiazine 11a, m.p. 137-138°.

Anal. Calcd. for $C_{14}H_{12}CINO_2S$: C, 57.23; H, 4.12; N, 4.77. Found: C, 57.12; H, 4.24; N, 4.67.

Fremy's salt oxidation (19) of 11a gave 2-chloro-6,9-dimethoxyphenothiazin-7-one 14, m.p. 266-267.5 dec.

Anal. Calcd. for $C_{14}H_{10}CINO_3\hat{S}$: C, 54.63; H, 3.28; N, 4.55. Found: C, 54.25; H, 3.21; N, 4.43.

From the ethanol mother liquor 0.39 g. of a white solid, m.p. 110-113°, was isolated which analyzed for diethyl N-ethyl-N-[o-(2,5-dimethoxyphenylthio)-4'-chlorophenyl]phosphoramidate 13

Anal. Caled. for C₂₀H₂₇ClNO₅PS: C, 52.22; H, 5.92; N, 3.05. Found: C, 52.23; H, 6.16; N, 3.05.

The benzene-hexane mother liquor was stripped to an oil which was chromatographed through a 125 g. alumina column (neutral Brockman, + 10% water), eluting with benzene-hexane (1:2). Like fractions were stripped to an oil which readily solidified. Crystallization from ethanol gave a mixture of 2-chlorodimethoxyphenothiazines, m.p. 104-123°, weighing 0.57 g. (13%). A second crystallization gave a m.p. of 105-106°.

Nmr showed the presence of the 6,9-isomer 11a and a second dimethoxy isomer in roughly a 1:1 ratio. A meta-coupling was observed (J m = 3 Hz) from the spectrum of the latter superimposed on that of 11a. After further column chromatography and crystallization, a pure sample was obtained, m.p. 134-135° and was assigned the structure of 2-chloro-7,9-dimethoxy-phenothiazine 12a.

Anal. Calcd. for $C_{14}H_{12}CINO_{2}S$: C, 57.23; H, 4.12; N, 4.77. Found: C, 57.08; H, 4.02; N, 4.67.

Fremy's salt oxidation of 12a gave 2-chloro-9-methoxyphenothiazin-7-one 15, m.p. 240° dec.

Anal. Calcd. for C₁₃H₈ClNO₂S: C, 56.22; H, 2.90; N, 5.04. Found: C, 56.25; H, 3.02; N, 4.90.

Method II (High Dilution).

A mixture of 50 g. (0.15 mole) of 10, 102 g. (0.62 mole) of triethyl phosphite, and 1500 ml. of cumene was refluxed under nitrogen for 18 hours. It was stripped to an oil weighing 96 g., which on stirring with 100 ml. of chloroform-hexane (1:3) for one hour gave 15.8 g. (35%) 11a, m.p. 137.5-139° after filtration and drying. The mother liquor was stripped to an oil which was applied onto 250 g. of silica gel and eluted with chloroform-hexane (1:2) to give another oil weighing 39 g., containing phenothiazines 11a and 12a. The oil was again chromatographed through 250 g. of silica with chloroform-hexane (1:3). Product fractions were stripped to a solid weighing 5.2 g. (11%), which showed the presence of both isomers by thin layer chromatography.

4'-Chloro-3,5-dimethoxy-2'-nitrodiphenyl Sulfide (17).

Under the conditions of Method II, 17.5 g. (0.054 mole) of 17 was ring closed to give an initial crop of 2.58 g. (16%) of 12a, m.p. 131.5-133°. The mother liquor was chromatographed to give a further 2.21 g. (13%) of .12a, m.p. 133-135°.

Anal. Calcd. for $C_{1.3}H_8CINO_2S$: C, 56.22; H, 2.90; N, 5.04. Found: C, 56.45; H, 2.96; N, 4.97.

4'-Chloro-2,4-dimethoxy-2'-nitrodiphenyl Sulfide (18).

Under conditions of Method II, 17.5 g. (0.054 mole) of 18, was ring closed to yield an initial crop of 6.60 g. (41%) of 12a, m.p. 132-134°. Chromatography of the mother liquor followed by crystallization gave 0.08 g. of 11a, m.p. 137-138° a mixture of 11a and 12a weighing 4.0 g. (25%), and 0.80 g. (5%) of pure 12a, m.p. 134-135°.

Anal. Calcd. for $C_{14}H_{12}CINO_2S$: C, 57.23; H, 4.12; N, 4.77. Found: (12a): C, 57.13; H, 4.12; N, 4.71; (11a): C, 57.07; H, 4.19; N, 4.75.

6,9-Dimethoxychlorpromazine (11b).

In a manner described previously (19), 0.55 g. (0.0019 mole) of 11a was converted to 0.14 g. (20%) of 11b. An analytical sample was obtained from petroleum ether, m.p. 87-88°.

Anal. Calcd. for $C_{19}H_{23}CIN_2O_2S$: C, 60.22; H, 6.12; N, 7.50. Found: C, 60.14; H, 6.19; N, 7.39.

7,9-Dimethoxychlorpromazine Hydrochloride 12b as obtained with 11b Hydrochloride.

In the above manner, a mixture of 0.5 g. (0.0015 mole) of isomers 11a and 12a were converted to a mixture of 11b and 12b, isolated as hydrochlorides weighing 0.067 g., m.p. 167-168°. Crystallization from acetone-ether gave a sample weighing 0.028 g., m.p. 180-190°. Nmr indicated a mixture of 11b and 12b in a 1:2 ratio.

Anal. Calcd. for C₁₉H₂₃ClN₂O₂S·HCl: C, 54.94; H, 5.82. N, 6.74. Found: C, 54.70; H, 5.79; N, 6.60.

2-Chloro-6,9-dihydroxy phenothiazine (19).

A mixture of 10 g. (0.034 mole) of 2-chloro-6,9-dimethoxy-phenothiazine 11a and 50 g. (0.43 mole) of pyridine hydrochloride was heated and stirred under nitrogen in an oil bath maintained at 195-205° for 0.5 hour. The hot reaction mixture was added to 350 ml. of ice cold water containing 2 g. of sodium bisulfite. The resulting green suspension was filtered and the solid washed with aqueous bisulfite and with water. After drying at room temperature and then at 78° for 3 hours, the product weighed 7.5 g. (83%), m.p. 190-196° dec. An analytical sample from chloroform-ether did not melt $\geq 260^\circ$.

Anal. Calcd. for $C_{12}H_8CINO_2S$: C, 54.24; H, 3.03; N, 5.27. Found: C, 54.22; H, 3.10; N, 5.33.

2-Chloro-7,9-dihydroxyphenothiazine.

In a similar manner as above, 1 g. (0.0034 mole) of 2-chloro-7,9-dimethoxyphenothiazine 12a gave 0.86 g. (96%) of 2-chloro-7,9-dihydroxyphenothiazine, m.p. $213-216^{\circ}$ dec. An analyzed sample melted at $199-201^{\circ}$ dec.

Anal. Caled. for $C_{12}H_8CINO_2S$: C, 54.24; H, 3.03; N, 5.27. Found: C, 54.27; H, 3.12; N, 5.27.

2-Chloro-6,9-dimethoxymethyleneoxyphenothiazine (20).

In a manner similar to that described previously (19), 7.5 g. (0.028 mole) of **19** was converted to 5.4 g. (54%) of **20**, m.p. 72-74°. An analytical sample from petroleum ether melted at 73-74°.

Anal. Calcd. for $C_{16}H_{16}CINO_4S$: C, 54.31; H, 4.56; N, 3.96. Found: C, 54.15; H, 4.59; N, 3.96.

2-Chloro-7,9-dimethoxymethyleneoxyphenothiazine.

In the above manner, 0.85 g. (0.0032 mole) of 2-chloro-7,9-dihydroxyphenothiazine yielded 0.31 g. (28%) of product, m.p. 75.5-77.5°. An analytical sample obtained from petroleum ether melted at 74-75°.

Anal. Calcd. for $C_{16}H_{16}CINO_4S$: C, 54.31; H, 4.56; N, 3.96. Found: C, 54.24; H, 4.50; N, 3.85.

6,9-Dimethoxymethyleneoxychlorpromazine Hydrogen Oxalate Hydrate (21).

Using a procedure similar to that described previously (19), $5\,\mathrm{g.}\,(0.014~\mathrm{mole})$ of **20** yielded 4.9 g. (63%) of **21**, m.p. 119-120°. An analytical sample melted at 120-121°

Anal. Calcd. for $C_{2\,1}H_{2\,7}CIN_2O_4S\cdot C_2H_2O_4\cdot H_2O$: C, 50.50; H, 5.71; N, 5.12. Found: C, 50.34; H, 5.34; N, 4.93.

7,9-Dimethoxymethyleneoxychlorpromazine Hydrogen Oxalate Hydrate.

In the above manner, 0.30 g. (0.00085 mole) of 2-chloro-7,9-dimethoxymethyleneoxyphenothiazine yielded 0.22 g. (48%) of product, m.p. 128-128.5°.

Anal. Calcd. for C₂₁H₂₇ClN₂O₄S·C₂H₂O₄·H₂O: C, 50.50; H, 5.71; N, 5.12. Found: C, 50.38; H, 5.37; N, 4.96. 6,9-Dihydroxychlorpromazine (1).

A solution of 3 g. (0.0058 mole) of 6,9-dimethoxymethyleneoxychlorpromazine hydrogen oxalate monohydrate 20, 45 ml. of methanol, and 7.2 ml. of 9.2% methanolic hydrogen chloride was refluxed under nitrogen for 1.5 hours. The reaction mixture was stripped to an oil which was dissolved in 30 ml. of distilled water. The aqueous solution was stirred under nitrogen as 25 ml. of 0.6M ammonium hydroxide solution was added to give a suspension. The solid was collected under nitrogen and washed with 25 ml. of water. After drying in vacuo at room temperature for 35 hours at 100°, and at 110° for 16 hours, an anhydrous product was obtained as a grey solid weighing 1.71 g. (83%), m.p. 168-170° dec; ms: (70 eV) m/e 350 (M).

Anal. Calcd. for $C_{1.7}H_{1.9}CIN_2O_2S$: C, 58.19; H, 5.46; N, 7.98. Found: C, 57.94; H, 5.46; N, 7.89.

7,9-Dihydroxychlorpromazine (3).

In a similar manner, **3** was obtained from 7,9-dimethoxy-methyleneoxychlorpromazine hydrogen oxalate hydrate in 41% yield, m.p. 153-157° dec; ms: (70 eV) m/e 350 (M).

Anal. Calcd. for $C_{1.7}H_{1.9}ClN_{2}O_{2}S$: C, 58.19; H, 5.46; N, 7.98. Found: C, 58.37; H, 5.55; N, 7.68.

6,9-Dixochlorpromazine Hydrochloride (2).

To a solution of 0.20 g. (0.00057 mole) of 1, 10 ml. of methanol, and 0.092 g. (0.00082 mole) of 90% perchloric acid, was added 0.21 g. (0.00085 mole) of p-chloranil and 10 ml. of methanol. The resulting mixture was stirred at room temperature for 2.5 hours and stripped to a blue-green solid. The latter was washed with 25 ml. of methanol, dried in vacuo at room temperature and extracted exhaustively with ethyl ether. The resulting hydroperchlorate salt weighted 0.125 g., m.p. 189-90° dec. It was stirred with 25 ml. of Dowex 1-X8 (chloride form) into 50 ml. of methanol for 3 hours. The resin was filtered and washed well with methanol and the methanol filtrate stripped to a blue film which was dried in vacuo over phorphorus pentoxide. The residue was taken up in isopropanol, filtered, and concentrated slowly to 3 ml. as a dark solid formed. The latter was collected, washed with isopropanol and with ether, and dried in vacuo at 100° for 30 hours to weigh 0.066 g. (30%), m.p. 154-160° dec. Nmr indicated the presence of 15-20% of 1; ms: (70 eV) m/e 350 (M + 2).

Anal. Calcd. for $C_{1.7}H_{1.7}CIN_2O_2S\cdot HCl$: C, 52.99; H, 4.71; N, 7.27. Found: C, 52.76; H, 4.70; N, 7.21.

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