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SYNTHESES AND TAUTOMERISATIONS OF AMINO-SUBSTITUTED AND PYRIMIDINE-ANNULATED PYRROLOBENZODIAZEPINES

Andreas Schmidt,*^a Abbas Gholipour Shilabin,^a and Martin Nieger^b

- a) Clausthal University of Technology, Institute of Organic Chemistry, Leibnizstrasse 6, D-38678 Clausthal-Zellerfeld, Germany E-mail: schmidt@ioc.tu-clausthal.de
- b) University of Bonn, Institute of Inorganic Chemistry, Gerhard-Domagk-Strasse 1, D-53121 Bonn, Germany

Abstract – Different tautomers of 11-amino-substituted pyrrolo[2,1-c][1,4]benzodiazepines and 2-substituted 4,7a,12b-triazadibenzo[e,g]azulene-1,8-diones were formed depending on the substitution pattern. Syntheses, spectroscopic investigations and an X-Ray analysis are presented.

INTRODUCTION

Pyrrolo[2,1-*c*][1,4]benzodiazepines continue to be of interest from different points of view. Thus, some representatives such as anthramycin (1) bind to specific sequences of DNA and have therefore potential as regulators of gene expression with possible application as therapeutic agents.¹ This ring system is also found in some antitumor antibiotics produced by various *Streptomyces* species.² In 1999, some new fused pyrrolobenzodiazepines, circumdatins A (2), B (3), D (4) and E (5), were isolated from the fungus *Aspergillus ochraceus*.³



Scheme 1

The (*S*)-configuration of the α -C-atom of the pyrrolidine ring causes an isohelicity with the minor groove of DNA, so that tautomerism involving this position plays a crucial role for the biological activities of this class of compounds. In continuation of our work on benzodiazepines,⁴ pyrrolobenzodiazepines^{5,6} and mesomeric betaines⁷ we became interested in studying possible tautomerisations of 11-amino-substituted and pyrimidine-annulated pyrrolobenzodiazepines.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We started the syntheses of our target molecules from the readily available monothiolactam $(7)^8$ which was reacted with ammonia, methylamine, and aniline in THF in the presence of mercury(II) chloride to give 8, 9, and 10, respectively. The N-unsubstituted amidine (8) reacts quantitatively to the starting material (6) on heating in water or dilute aqueous sodium hydroxide. In contrast to 9 and 10, which exist as a mixture of the tautomeric forms (A) and (B), respectively,⁶ only one tautomer of the amidine (8) in DMSO-d₆ and MeOD is observable. One broad H/D-exchangeable signal of two protons with a center of gravity at $\delta = 7.49$ ppm in DMSO-d₆ provides strong evidence for the formation of the tautomer (8A) under these conditions. Neat reaction of the amidines (8 - 10) with 2-ethyl- and 2-benzyl-substituted bis(2,4,6-trichlorophenyl) malonates in a Zincke apparatus resulted in the formation of the pyrimidine-annulated pyrrolobenzodiazepines (11 - 16) and the leaving group 2,4,6-trichlorophenol which can be distilled off during the reaction. Dependent on the substitution pattern 11 - 16 form different tautomers in solution as well as in the solid state. Thus, only the 4,7a,12b-triazadibenzo[e,g]azulenes (11) and (12) resulting from the N^{11} -unsubstituted pyrrolobenzodiazepine (8) were isolated as optically active compounds. These two new compounds form only one tautomer in DMSO-d₆, MeOD, and CDCl₃ at room temperature, respectively, as evidenced by ¹H NMR spectroscopy. A combination of HMBC and HSOC NMR unambiguously proved the existence of enolic partial structures in 11 and 12 under these conditions, as couplings between 4b-H and C-5, C-6, and C-4a were detected. The latest mentioned carbon atom C-4a appears at $\delta = 157.4$ ppm (11) and 158.0 ppm (12). The carbon atom C-2 is sp² hybridized and appears at δ = 103.5 ppm (11) and 101.6 ppm (12). The hydroxy group causes one broad, H/D-exchangeable signal at δ = 11.45 ppm in DMSO-d₆ and at δ = 6.34 ppm in CDCl₃ in the ¹H NMR spectra. NOESY experiments of **11**, which possesses the N-(3-oxopropenyl)formamidine chromophor, provide evidence for close proximities between the hydroxy group at C-3 and the ethyl group as well as C-5 of the pyrrolidine ring.

In contrast to this, the pyrrolobenzodiazepines derived from the N^{11} -substituted pyrrolobenzodiazepines (9) and (10) form the tautomers 13 to 16 in DMSO-d₆ at room temperature. No traces of cross-conjugated mesomeric betaines, which would resemble the proposed structures of circumdatins A and B, or enols were detectable. In 13 – 16, the carbon atom C-2, which appears between $\delta = 53.6$ ppm and 55.8 ppm, unambiguously is sp³ hybridized. HMBC and HSQC NMR measurements displayed couplings of C-2



with the ethyl group and the benzyl group, respectively.

In order to elucidate a structure in the solid state, we performed an X-Ray single crystal structure analysis of the benzyl derivative (**16**).⁹ Single crystals were obtained by slow evaporation of a concentrated solution in 2-butanol. The molecular structure and the crystallographic numbering are shown in Figure 1 and relevant bond distances and angles are given in the Tables 1 and 2. The molecule crystallized with one molecule of 2-butanol in the elemental cell which forms a hydrogen bond to the C12=O12 carbonyl group [crystallographic numbering]. The carbon atom [C3] of the 1,3-diketo moiety is sp³ hybridized, as its bond angles are 107.89(8)° [C2-C3-C4], 113.80(9)° [C31-C3-C4], and 112.05(9)° [C31-C3-C2], respectively. The bond length C6-C7 was determined to be 132.93(15) pm and corresponds to a $C_{sp}^{2}=C_{sp}^{2}$ double bond. The bond angles N1-C6-N5, C6-C7-N11, and C7-C6-N5 are 114.82(9)°, 124.74(10)°, and 123.30(10)°, respectively. The dioxopyrimidine moiety N1-C2-C3-C4-N5-C6 adopts a boat conformation with the benzyl substituent in equatorial position.



Figure 1: Molecular drawing of 4,7a,12b-triazadibenzo[*e*,*g*]azulene-1,3,8-trione (16).

Bond lengths					
N1-C2	137.63(14)	C4-N5	138.52(13)	C12-C13	149.42(16)
C2-C3	153.22(14)	N5-C6	142.36(13)	C13-C18	139.72(15)
C3-C31	152.40(15)	C6-N1	142.24(13)	C18-N1	143.16(13)
C2-O2	121.34(13)	C7-N11	141.05(14)	C18-C17	139.27(15)
C3-C4	153.41(15)	N11-C12	136.80(15)	C13-C14	140.35(16)
C4-O4	121.51(13)	C12-O12	123.16(14)	N5-C51	143.18(14)
Bond angles					
N1-C2-C3	110.87(9)	C4-N5-C6	115.51(9)	C6-C7-N11	124.74(10)
C2-C3-C4	107.89(8)	C4-N5-C51	123.74(9)	C7-N11-C12	131.28(9)
C3-C4-N5	111.44(9)	N5-C6-N1	114.82(9)	N11-C12-C13	120.84(10)
O2-C2-C3	125.38(10)	C6-N1-C2	116.95(9)	C12-C13-C18	125.44(10)
C3-C4-O4	124.23(10)	N1-C2-O2	123.71(10)	C13-C18-N1	119.64(9)
C2-C3-C31	112.05(9)	N1-C6-C7	121.85(10)	N11-C12-O12	118.71(10)

 Table 1. Selected atomic distances (pm) and angles (°) for (16).

 Table 2. Selected torsion angles for compound (16) (°).

N1-C2-C3-C4	-52.26(11)	C2-N1-C6-N5	46.76(12)	N11-C12-C13-C18	32.90(17)
N1-C2-C3-C31	-178.28(9)	C6-N1-C2-C3	3.03(12)	N11-C12-C13-C14	-148.09(11)
C2-C3-C4-O4	-123.15(11)	N1-C6-C7-N11	-0.74(17)	C12-C13-C18-C17	-178.68(11)
C2-C3-C4-N5	56.00(11)	N1-C6-C7-C8	173.45(10)	O12-C12-C13-C14	27.45(16)
C3-C4-N5-C6	-9.41(12)	C6-C7-N11-C12	-30.00(19)	O12-C12-C13-C18	-151.56(12)
C3-C4-N5-C51	-176.84(9)	C6-C7-N11-C10	159.49(11)	C12-C13-C18-N1	1.29(17)
C4-N5-C51-C52	-42.59(15)	C7-N11-C12-O12	-178.65(11)	C6-N1-C18-C13	- 60.62(13)
C4-N5-C6-N1	-42.62(12)	C7-N11-C12-C13	-3.04(18)	C18-N1-C6-N5	-122.19(10)

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EXPERIMENTAL

General methods: The ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker ARX-400 and DPX-200 in DMSO-d₆ (400 and 200 MHz for ¹H NMR) unless otherwise noted. The chemical shifts are reported in ppm relative to internal tetramethylsilane ($\delta = 0.00$ ppm). FT-IR spectra were obtained on a Bruker Vektor 22 in the range of 400 to 4000 cm⁻¹ (2.5 % pellets in KBr). The GC-MS spectra were recorded on a GC Hewlett-Packard 5980, Serie II in combination with a MS Hewlett-Packard 5989 B, and on a Varian GC3900 with SAT2100T mass spectrometer.

11-Amino-1,2,3,11a-tetrahydrobenzo[*e*]pyrrolo[1,2-*a*][1,4]diazepin-5-one (8).

To a solution of thiolactam (7) (1.16 g, 5.0 mmol) in anhyd THF (50 mL) was added HgCl₂ (1.63 g, 6.0 mmol) and pure anhydrous ammonia was bubbled through the mixture for 1 h at 60 °C. After cooling, the resulting suspension was filtered off through a pad of Celite and eluted with methanol. The organic solution was evaporated under reduced pressure at rt. Addition of an acetone/ether mixture afforded a white solid which was washed with ether and recrystallized from anisole/methanol (0.925 g, 86%), mp >240 °C (decomp) $[\alpha]_D^{20} = \pm 510.5^\circ$ (*c* 1.0, DMSO); ¹H NMR: $\delta = 7.79$ (dd, *J* = 7.8, 1.5 Hz, 1H, 6-H), 7.49 – 7.54 (m, 1H, 7-H), 7.28 – 7.70 (br m, 2H, NH₂), 7.22 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H, 8-H), 7.15 (d, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H, 9-H), 4.22 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H, 11a-H), 3.63 – 3.69 (m, 1H, 3-H), 3.35 – 3.42 (m, 1H, 3-H), 2.43 – 2.59 (m, 1H, 1-H), 2.08 – 2.18 (m, 1H, 1-H), 1.91 – 2.00 (m, 2H, 2-H); ¹³C NMR: $\delta = 24.0$ (C-2), 26.7 (C-1), 47.4 (C-3), 55.1 (C-11a), 124.6, 125.1, 127.7, 131.0, 132.8, 141.3, 164.3, 165.4 (CO); IR (KBr) 1679, 1614, 1456 cm⁻¹; MS *m/z* (rel. Int.) 215 (M⁺, 39), 70 (100). Anal. Calcd for C₁₂H₁₃N₃O: C, 66.96; H, 6.09; N, 19.52. Found: C, 66.71; H, 6.27; N, 19.65.

General procedure for the reaction of the cycloamidines (8 - 10) with malonic esters. All of these reactions were carried out *in vacuo* at 3×10^{-2} mbar. An equimolar mixture of the cycloamidine and the corresponding 2-substituted bis(2,4,6-trichlorophenyl)malonate was heated in a *Zincke* apparatus for 10 min at 180-190 °C, whereupon 2,4,6-trichlorophenol was distilled off. The residue was treated with ether (20 mL), the resulting precipitate was collected by filtration and washed with diethylether. The crude solid was recrystallized from the solvents indicated below.

2-Ethyl-3-hydroxy-4b,5,6,7-tetrahydro-4,7a,12b-triazadibenzo[*e*,*g*]azulene-1,8-dione (11).

Cycloamidine (8) (0.430 g, 2.0 mmol) and 2-ethyl bis(2,4,6-trichlorophenyl)malonate (0.982 g, 2.0 mmol) were used, yield 0.529 g (85%), mp >250 °C (nitromethane); $[\alpha]_D^{20} = -6.1 ° (c \ 0.5, DMSO)$; ¹H NMR: $\delta = 11.46$ (s, 1H, OH), 7.79 (dd, J = 7.6, 1.7 Hz, 1H, 9-H), 7.61 (td, J = 7.6, 1.7 Hz, 1H, 10-H), 7.51 – 7.55 (m, 1H, 11-H), 7.49 – 7.51 (m, 1H, 12-H), 4.48 – 4.50 (m, 1H, 4b-H), 3.61 – 3.66 (m, 1H, 7-H), 3.38 – 3.45 (m, 1H, 7-H), 2.74 – 2.81 (m, 1H, 5-H), 2.35 (q, J = 7.4 Hz, 2H, CH₂), 2.01 – 2.12 (m, 2H, 5,6-H), 1.92 – 1.98 (m, 1H, 6-H), 1.00 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 3H, CH₃); ¹³C NMR: $\delta = 13.3$ (CH₃), 17.3 (CH₂), 24.2 (C-6), 27.0 (C-5), 47.0 (C-7), 58.9 (C-4b), 103.5 (C-2), 129.2, 129.7, 129.8, 131.1, 132.7, 133.8, 157.4 (C-4a), 163.6, 163.9, 164.3; IR (KBr) 1650, 1554, 1458 cm⁻¹; MS *m*/*z* (rel. Int.) 311 (M⁺, 100). Anal. Calcd for C₁₇H₁₇N₃O₃ · 0.5 H₂O: C, 63.74; H, 5.66; N, 13.12. Found: C, 63.47; H, 5.44; N, 13.34.

2-Benzyl-3-hydroxy-4b,5,6,7-tetrahydro-4,7a,12b-triazadibenzo[*e*,*g*]azulene-1,8-dione (12).

Cycloamidine (8) (0.430 g, 2.0 mmol) and 2-benzyl bis(2,4,6-trichlorophenyl)malonate (1.106 g, 2.0 mmol) were used, yield 0.537 g (72%), mp >250 °C (methanol); $[\alpha]_D^{20} = -29.6$ ° (*c* 0.5, DMSO); ¹H NMR: $\delta = 11.71$ (s, 1H, OH), 7.80 (dd, J = 7.5, 1.1 Hz, 1H, 9-H), 7.59 – 7.64 (m, 1H, 10-H), 7.52 – 7.55 (m, 1H, 11-H), 7.48 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H, 12-H), 7.21 – 7.27 (m, 4H, Ph), 7.12 – 7.15 (m, 1H, Ph), 4.50 (d, J = 6.3 Hz, 1H, 4b-H), 3.58 – 3.69 (m, 1H, 7-H), 3.37 – 3.44 (m, 1H, 7-H), 3.17 (s, 2H, CH₂), 2.75 – 2.77 (m, 1H, 5-H), 2.01 – 2.14 (m, 2H, 5,6-H), 1.92 – 1.97 (m, 1H, 6-H); ¹³C NMR: $\delta = 24.1$ (C-6), 27.0 (C-5), 29.6 (CH₂), 47.0 (C-7), 58.9 (C-4b), 101.6 (C-2), 126.6, 129.0, 129.2, 129.3, 129.7, 129.8, 131.1, 132.6, 133.8, 141.4, 158.0 (C-4a), 163.8, 164.2, 164.5; IR (KBr) 1667, 1626, 1604, 1558, 1458 cm⁻¹; MS *m*/*z* (rel. Int.) 373 (M⁺, 100). Anal. Calcd for C₂₂H₁₉N₃O₃ · 0.5 H₂O: C, 69.10; H, 5.27; N, 10.99. Found: C, 68.89; H, 5.33; N, 10.76.

2-Ethyl-4-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-4,7a,12b-triazadibenzo[*e*,*g*]azulene-1,3,8-trione (13).

Cycloamidine (9) (0.458 g, 2.0 mmol) and 2-benzyl bis(2,4,6-trichlorophenyl)malonate (0.982 g, 2.0 mmol) were used, yield 0.507 g (78%), mp 185–187 °C (xylene); $[\alpha]_D^{20} = 0 ° (c 1.0, CHCl_3)$; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃): $\delta = 8.05$ (dd, J = 8.1, 1.6 Hz, 1H, 9-H), 7.59 (ddd, J = 8.1, 7.4, 1.6 Hz, 1H, 10-H), 7.38 – 7.42 (m, 1H, 11-H), 7.35 (dd, J = 8.2, 0.8 Hz, 1H, 12-H), 4.00 – 4.06 (m, 2H, 7-H), 3.25 – 3.28 (m, 1H, 2-H), 3.22 (s, 3H, NCH₃), 2.72 – 2.77 (m, 2H, 5-H), 2.20 – 2.28 (m, 1H, 6-H), 2.09 (dd, J = 7.4/6.3 Hz, 2H, CH₂CH₃), 2.04 – 2.16 (m, 1H, 6-H), 1.16 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 3H, CH₂CH₃); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃): $\delta = 12.9$ (CH₃), 17.2 (CH₂), 20.9 (C-6), 29.7 (C-5), 29.7 (NCH₃), 49.7 (C-7), 53.6 (C-2), 120.6, 125.8, 127.7, 129.0, 129.7, 132.6, 133.6, 140.5, 165.6 (CO), 167.1 (CO), 168.4 (CO); IR (KBr) 1681, 1632, 1574, 1489, 1452 cm⁻¹; MS m/z (rel. Int.) 325 (M⁺, 100). Anal. Calcd for C₁₈H₁₉N₃O₃: C, 66.45; H, 5.89; N, 12.91. Found: C,

66.37; H, 5.92; N, 12.91.

2-Benzyl-4-methyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-4,7a,12b-triazadibenzo[*e*,*g*]azulene-1,3,8-trione (14).

Cycloamidine (**9**) (0.458 g, 2.0 mmol) and 2-benzyl bis(2,4,6-trichlorophenyl)malonate (0.982 g, 2.0 mmol) were used, yield 0.619 g (80%), mp 185–187 °C (xylene); $[\alpha]_D{}^{20} = 0 ° (c 1.0, CHCl_3)$; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃): $\delta = 8.01$ (dd, J = 7.7, 1.1 Hz, 1H, 9-H), 7.55 – 7.59 (m, 1H, 10-H), 7.21 – 7.42 (m, 7H, Ph), 3.91 – 4.01 (m, 2H, 7-H), 3.57 – 3.60 (m, 1H, 2-H), 3.42 (d, J = 5.7 Hz, 2H, CH_2 Ph), 3.19 (s, 3H, NCH₃), 2.62 – 2.72 (m, 2H, 5-H), 2.14 – 2.19 (m, 1H, 6-H), 1.95 – 2.06 (m, 1H, 6-H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃): $\delta = 20.7$ (C-6), 29.3 (C-5), 29.7 (CH_2 Ph), 35.7 (NCH₃), 49.7 (C-7), 54.9 (C-2), 120.2, 125.7, 126.8, 127.8, 128.8, 129.0, 129.2, 130.1, 132.7, 133.7, 140.4, 140.6, 165.5 (CO), 166.7 (CO), 168.0 (CO); IR (KBr) 1721, 1682, 1644, 1597, 1487, 1450 cm⁻¹; MS m/z (rel. Int.) 387 (M⁺, 100). Anal. Calcd for C₂₃H₂₁N₃O₃: C, 71.30; H, 5.46; N, 10.85. Found: C, 71.46; H, 5.48; N, 10.61.

2-Ethyl-4-phenyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-4,7a,12b-triazadibenzo[*e*,*g*]azulene-1,3,8-trione (15).

Cycloamidine (**10**) (0.582 g, 2.0 mmol) and 2-benzyl bis(2,4,6-trichlorophenyl)malonate (0.982 g, 2.0 mmol) were used, yield 0.612 g (79%), mp 201–202 °C (n-butanol); $[\alpha]_D^{20} = 0 ° (c 1.0, CHCl_3)$; ¹H NMR (CDCl₃): $\delta = 8.07 - 8.09$ (m, 1H, 9-H), 7.61 – 7.66 (m, 1H, 10-H), 7.41 – 7.46 (m, 2H, Ph), 7.27 – 7.34 (m, 2H, Ph), 7.08 – 7.20 (m, 3H, Ph), 3.94 – 3.98 (m, 2H, 7-H), 3.47 (td, J = 6.2, 0.8 Hz, 1H, 2-H), 2.44 – 2.50 (m, 1H, 6-H), 2.08 – 2.15 (m, 2H, CH₂CH₃), 1.82 – 2.02 (m, 3H, 5,6-H), 1.19 (td, J = 7.5, 0.8 Hz, 3H, CH₂CH₃); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃): $\delta = 12.9$ (CH₃), 17.3 (CH₂), 20.4 (C-6), 29.8 (C-5), 50.0 (C-7), 54.5 (C-2), 119.1, 124.5, 124.8, 126.7, 128.0, 129.2, 129.6, 131.7, 132.9, 133.9, 139.1, 139.9, 165.6 (CO), 166.9 (CO), 167.0 (CO); IR (KBr) 1724, 1684, 1635, 1600, 1490, 1453 cm⁻¹; MS *m/z* (rel. Int.) 387 (M⁺, 100). Anal. Calcd for C₂₃H₂₁N₃O₃: C, 71.30; H, 5.46; N, 10.85. Found: C, 70.93; H, 5.58; N, 10.72.

2-Benzyl-4-phenyl-4,5,6,7-tetrahydro-4,7a,12b-triazadibenzo[*e*,*g*]azulene-1,3,8-trione (16).

Cycloamidine (**10**) (0.582 g, 2.0 mmol) and 2-benzyl bis(2,4,6-trichlorophenyl)malonate (0.982 g, 2.0 mmol) were used, yield 0.790 g (88%), mp 187–188 °C (2-propanol); $[\alpha]_D^{20} = 0$ ° (*c* 1.0, CHCl₃); ¹H NMR (CDCl₃): $\delta = 8.06 - 8.08$ (m, 1H, 9-H), 7.63 - 7.67 (m, 1H, 10-H), 7.42 - 7.48 (m, 4H, Ph), 7.22 - 7.35 (m, 5H, Ph), 7.15 - 7.19 (m, 1H, Ph), 7.06 - 7.09 (m, 2H, Ph), 3.87 - 3.98 (m, 2H, 7-H), 3.81 (t, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 1H, 2-H), 3.47 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 2H, CH₂Ph), 2.39 - 2.45 (m, 1H, 5-H), 1.82 - 1.97 (m, 3H, 5, 6-H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃): $\delta = 20.2$ (C-6), 29.3 (C-5), 29.8 (CH₂Ph), 50.0 (C-7), 55.8 (C-2), 118.7, 124.5, 125.8, 126.8, 128.1, 128.9, 129.2, 129.4, 129.7, 130.2, 132.1, 132.9, 134.0, 139.1, 139.8, 140.6, 165.5 (CO), 166.4 (CO), 166.6 (CO); IR (KBr) 1735, 1695, 1633, 1619, 1574, 1496, 1454 cm⁻¹; MS *m*/*z* (rel. Int.) 449 (M⁺, 100). Anal. Calcd for C₂₈H₂₃N₃O₃ · 0.5 2-propanol): C, 73.89; H, 5.68; N, 8.76. Found: C, 73.70; H, 5.67; N, 8.66.

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