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New methodology for the preparation of 3-hydroxy-2-pyridinone (3,2-HOPO) chelators and extractants. Part 2. Reactions of alcohols, phenols, and thiols with an electrophilic 3,2-HOPO reagent†

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Abstract

The reactions of the electrophilic iminium ester mesylate salt **1** with alcohols, phenols and thiols has been investigated. In the presence of base, thiols, phenols and thiophenol react with **1** to give the corresponding ether linked HOPO derivatives in good yields. However, the ring opening of salt **1** with alcohols could only be accomplished efficiently using a large excess of the alcohol in the presence of methanesulfonic acid at 80°C. The synthetic utility of HOPO precursor, **1**, has been demonstrated by the synthesis of two polyHOPO chelators **7** and **9**.

Molecules containing the 3-hydroxy-2-pyridinone (3,2-HOPO) ligand have been of considerable interest because of their ability to form strong complexes with hard metal ions especially iron (III).¹ A number of HOPO chelators have been synthesized and examined for potential applications in the treatment of patients suffering from iron overload diseases.² Gadolinium HOPO chelates have been investigated for their use as relaxation agents in magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).³ A number of HOPO derived chelators have been studied for their ability to achieve *in vivo* clearance of actinide ions such as Pu(IV).⁴ Hydroxypyridinone ligands have been examined as potential extraction agents for Pu(IV)⁵ and they have been attached to calix[4]arenes to yield useful Th(IV) extractants.⁶ This ligand system has also been incorporated into polymers⁷, dendrimers,⁸ and self-assembled monolayers on mesoporous silica.⁹ Recently, a parallel synthesis of a library of metal ion chelators has incorporated HOPO ligands.¹⁰

The most common method for the preparation of 3,2-HOPO derivatives involves the coupling of an amine or amine scaffold with an activated carboxylic acid linker attached to the pyridinone ring system.^{2a, 11} This results in the formation of polyamide linkages reducing the organic and aqueous solubility of the final product. The direct alkylation of 2,3-dihydroxypyridine on a trimesylate under harsh conditions to yield a tris-3,2-HOPO derivative in low yields has been reported.¹² The alkylation of 1,7-dimethylcyclen with 3-benzyloxy-1-(2-chloroethyl)-1*H*-pyridin-2-one followed by hydrogenolysis has been used to prepare a diHOPO cyclen chelator.¹³

In conjunction with our program to develop selective chelators¹⁴ for actinides and trivalent cations such as Fe(III) and Gd(III), we desired a new method that would allow the easy

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incorporation of the 3,2-HOPO ligand onto a variety of platforms. In particular, we desired a method that would allow the control of aqueous or organic solubility of the target chelator by proper choice of the scaffold and tethering methodology that avoids the traditional amide linkage. We recently disclosed the synthesis of a novel electrophilic 3,2-HOPO precursor **1**, and its reactions with primary and secondary amines.¹⁵ The reactivity of **1** was found to depend on the nature of the amine (Path A or B).¹⁶ In general, secondary amines reacted with salt **1** via path A to give the corresponding amine HOPO derivatives, **2**, in high yields. Reactions of primary amines were more complex and often proceeded via path B to yield amidine products, **3**. In this paper, we report the reactivity of salt **1** with alcohols, phenols and their sulfur analogs in order to access a variety of HOPO compounds. This reaction offers a direct method for the attachment of 3,2-HOPO ligands onto a variety of platforms via oxygen and sulfur linkages.

The preparation of mesylate salt **1** from commercially available 2,3-dihydroxypyridine in four steps has been disclosed.¹⁵ We began our investigation by exploring the ring opening reactions of **1** with alcohols. To our surprise, the salt **1** was recovered unchanged even after refluxing in dry ethanol. We then examined the reaction of **1** with alcohols under basic conditions. When 1-pentanol was treated with sodium hydride in THF followed by the addition of **1** in acetonitrile, only 10–15% of the desired product **4** was obtained (Path A). The major product (40–50%) from this reaction was the HOPO alcohol, **5**, which likely arises from attack of the alkoxide at the iminium carbon of **1** (Path B) to give an adduct which hydrolyzes upon workup (Scheme 1).¹⁶ Numerous attempts to achieve the desired ring opening under basic conditions gave only low yields of the desired product.

The acid catalyzed ring opening of salt **1** with alcohols was then examined. Stoichiometric attempts to open the salt with alcohols in the presence of methanesulfonic acid with heating were unsuccessful. However, when salt **1** was dissolved in 1-pentanol (20 eq) in the presence of MsOH (1 drop) and the reaction heated to 80 °C for 3 days, the desired product was obtained in 81% yield after purification (Table 1, entry 1).¹⁷ Reaction of 3-pentanol with **1** was slower (Table 1, entry 2) and only gave moderate yields of the desired product under the same reaction conditions. Our attempts to enhance the rate of this reaction by increasing the reaction temperature resulted in the acid catalyzed cleavage of the benzyl protecting group from the desired product (Table 1, entry 3). Using the standard conditions, it was also possible to monoalkylate diols (Table 1, entries 3&4) to give HOPO derivatives that can be further elaborated.

We are unable to postulate a definitive mechanism for the acid catalyzed ring opening of salt **1** with alcohols at this time. However, it is pertinent to mention that when the alcohol **5** was treated with pentanol (20 eq) in the presence of methanesulfonic acid at 80 °C for 3 days, we could isolate about 16% of the ether **4** along with significant amounts of the unreacted alcohol **5** after chromatographic purification (Scheme 1).

In contrast to the alcohols, nucleophilic ring opening reactions of salt **1** with thiols could be readily effected under basic conditions (NaH in THF/acetonitrile at rt) in moderate yields to give the desired products. The preparation of the fluorinated thio HOPO ligand (Table 2, entry 1) was of interest in order to demonstrate the use of this methodology to access ligands that are potentially useful in supercritical carbon dioxide metal ion extractions, an area of much recent interest.¹⁸ Further, it was possible to dialkylate propanedithiol to obtain the corresponding diHOPO compound (Table 2, entry 2).

The reactions of phenols and thiophenol with salt **1** were then examined using a variety of bases (NaH, Et₃N, K₂CO₃). For phenols, it was found that the best yields were obtained using sodium hydride for the deprotonation. For example, treatment of phenol (1.1 eq) with sodium hydride (1 eq) in dry THF followed by addition of a solution of the mesylate salt, **1**, (1 eq) in dry acetonitrile gave the corresponding HOPO derivative in 63% yield after purification (Table 2, entry 3). Other phenols could be alkylated using these conditions (Table 2, entries 4&5). In the case of thiophenol, better yields were obtained using triethylamine as the base (Table 2, entry 6).

It is not surprising that the softer and less basic thiolate and phenolate anions (compared to the alkoxides) give predominantly products of alkylation (path A). In these cases, nucleophilic addition to the iminium carbon of **1** (path B) is readily reversible ultimately leading to the formation of the desired alkylation product.¹⁶

Finally, the utility of this methodology has been demonstrated by the synthesis of two new polyhydroxypyridinone chelators. The diHOPO chelator, **7**, was readily prepared in two steps from benzenedithiol in good yield (eqn 1).¹⁹ The synthesis of calix tetraHOPO chelator **9**, targeted for actinide(IV) extraction, was accomplished using a two-step alkylation procedure followed by transfer hydrogenolysis (eqn 2). Some tetraHOPO calixarenes have been shown to effectively extract Th(IV) and Fe(III) from aqueous solutions, even below pH 2, into chloroform.⁶

eqn 1

eqn 2

In conclusion, the facile alkylation of HOPO salt **1** with a variety of nucleophiles makes it an extremely useful reagent for the introduction of the HOPO group onto a variety of structural platforms including calixarenes. The fact that a large excess of alcohol must be used to achieve efficient ring opening of salt **1** does pose a synthetic limitation. However, the reaction is quite efficient with phenols, thiols and thiophenols and can be used to prepare poly HOPO derivatives. The new classes of ligands described in this paper are not accessible by existing methods. This methodology is particularly valuable in developing novel extractants for actinides that must have the requisite organic solubility for separations. Further, the methodology allows access to new chelators for biomedically relevant cations such as iron and gadolinium, which may have potential diagnostic and therapeutic applications.

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19. A solution of mesylate salt **1** (0.5 g, 1.48 mmol) in dry acetonitrile (1.5 mL) was added to a solution of 1,3-benzenedithiol (0.070 g, 0.493 mmol) and triethylamine (0.199 g, 1.97 mmol) in dry acetonitrile (3.5 mL) at rt under nitrogen. After stirring for 18h, the reaction mixture was diluted with dichloromethane (75 mL) and washed with saturated NaHCO₃ (2×30 mL). The organic layer was dried (Na₂SO₄) and the solvent was removed under reduced pressure. The crude product was purified by radial chromatography to give **6** (0.225 g, 70%). IR (neat) 3033, 2943, 1652 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.44–7.12 (m, 14H), 6.88 (d, *J* = 7 Hz, 2H), 5.98 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 5.07 (s, 4H), 4.06 (t, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 4H), 2.90 (t, *J* = 7 Hz, 4H), 2.11–2.00 (m, 2H); ¹³C (50 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 158.21, 149.05, 136.96, 136.36, 129.54, 129.22, 128.61, 128.05, 127.42, 127.11, 115.63, 104.80, 70.83, 48.54, 30.67, 28.16; Anal. calc'd for C₃₆H₃₆N₂O₄S₂·H₂O: C, 67.26; H, 5.96; N, 4.36; Found: C, 67.36; H, 5.53; N, 4.26. A solution of concentrated HBr/glacial AcOH (1:1, 2 mL) was added to **6** (0.080 g, 0.129 mmol) and stirred at rt for 3 days. The solvents were removed under reduced pressure and the residue was washed with ethyl acetate and chloroform and dried *in vacuo* to give diHOPO **7** (0.040 g, 70%); IR (KBr) 3048, 1647 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.2 (d, *J* = 6.2 Hz, 2H), 7.06–6.92 (m, 6H), 6.41 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 4.09 (t, *J* = 7 Hz, 4H), 2.78 (t, *J* = 7 Hz, 4H), 1.92–1.80 (m, 4H); ¹³C (50 MHz, CD₃OD) δ 158.85, 147.82, 138.35, 130.57, 129.84, 128.22, 119.30, 110.57, 50.73, 31.15, 29.53; Anal. calc'd for C₂₂H₂₆Br₂N₂O₄S₂: C, 43.58; H, 4.32; N, 4.62; Found: C, 43.94; H, 4.11; N, 4.58.

Scheme 1.

Table 1Reaction of Alcohols with Mesylate Salt **1**

Entry	Reactant	Product	Yield ^a
1			81%
2			50%
3			45% ^b
4			82%
5			46%

^a Conditions: alcohol (20 eq), salt **1** (1 eq), methanesulfonic acid 1 drop, 80°C, 3 days^b Conditions: alcohol (20 eq), salt **1** (1 eq), methanesulfonic acid 1 drop, 100°C, 3 days

Table 2Reaction of thiols, phenols, and thiophenol with mesylate salt, **1**.

Entry	Reactant	Product	Yield ^a
1	CF ₃ (CF ₂) ₅ CH ₂ CH ₂ SH		49%
2	HSCH ₂ CH ₂ CH ₂ SH		48% ^b
3			63%
4			79%
5			52%
6			63% 75% ^c

^aROH or RSH (1.1 eq), NaH (1 eq), **1** (1 eq), 20% THF/CH₃CN, 0°C to rt^b1,3-propanedithiol (1 eq), NaH (3 eq), **1** (3 eq), 20% THF/CH₃CN, 0°C to rt^cPhSH (1eq), Et₃N (1.5 eq), **1** (1 eq), CH₃CN, rt