



The compounds (IV) and (V) were isolated by reaction of their molybdenum complexes with sodium hydroxide and  $\text{LiAlH}_4$  and characterized by  $^1\text{H}$  and  $^{31}\text{P}$ -NMR spectroscopies and mass spectrometry. The  $^{31}\text{P}$ -NMR spectra of (IV) and (V) consist, in each case, of one resonance of virtually singlet peak indicating the magnetic equivalence of the phosphine groups. The  $^1\text{H}$  and  $^{13}\text{C}$ -NMR spectra of (IV) and (V) consist of distinctively characteristic resonances (all complex multiplets) whose assignments were made by considering chemical shift and to the ratio of the intensities. The  $^1\text{H}$ -NMR spectrum of each compound shows resonances that are consistent with the magnetic equivalence of the backbone  $\alpha$ -protons  $\text{PCH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{P}$  which are mutually inequivalent to the  $\beta$ -protons ( $\text{PCH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{P}$ ). In addition, the remaining substituents of phosphines, P-R (R=H, Me), were all magnetically equivalent. The compounds (IV) and (V) were studied by mass spectrometry; in both cases, the molecular ions were observed.

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### Synthesis of Symmetrically $\alpha$ -N-Functionalized Piperazine-2,5-diones

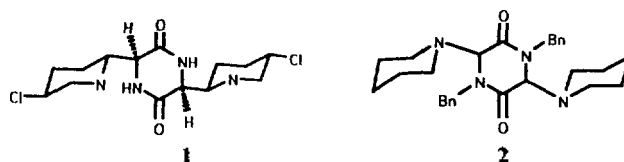
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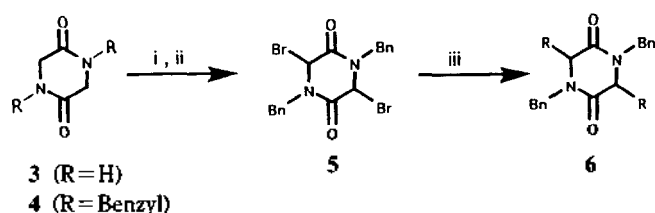
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Piperazine-2,5-diones are one of the most important classes of peptides found in nature<sup>1</sup> and constitute a large class of organic substances that are formally derived by the removed of two molecules of water from two amino acid derivatives.<sup>2</sup> During the course of our synthetic model studies on the anti-tumour antibiotic agent DKP 593-A, **1**,<sup>3</sup> we found that 1,4-dibenzyl-3,6-bis(piperidyl)-piperazine-2,5-dione, **2**, can be easily prepared from glycine anhydride. Surprisingly, this compound was stable as a number of its analogues.



The compound **2** is of particular interest for QSAR (Quantitative Structure-Activity Relationship) study since its structure is quite similar to that of **1**. Synthetic approaches to monoaryl or alkylidene derivatives have been reported for  $\alpha$ -carbon<sup>4</sup>,  $\alpha$ -oxygen<sup>5</sup> or  $\alpha$ -sulfur<sup>6</sup> functionalized piperazine-2,5-dione derivatives. However synthetic studies of symmetrically *N*-functionalized piperazine-2,5-diones have received very little attention. In this paper, we wish to report a facile approach to  $\alpha$ -*N*-functionalized piperazine-2,5-diones that features the nucleophilic reaction of a variety of amines with 1,4-dibenzyl-3,6-bis(bromo)-piperazine-2,5-dione in the presence of NaH.

As shown in Scheme 1, commercially available glycine anhydride, **3**, was treated with NaH/benzylbromide to afford *N,N'*-dibenzyl piperazine-2,5-dione, **4**. Bromination was accomplished by treating **4** with NBS/benzoyl peroxide.<sup>7</sup> Treatment of the secondary amines such as piperidine(a), pyrrolidine(b), *N*-methylpiperazine(c), imidazole(d), and morpholine (e) with 2,2 equiv. of sodium hydride at 0°C generated sodium metallated nitrogen anions which were reacted with dibromide, **5**, to give the corresponding coupled products **6a**.



**Scheme 1.** Reagents and conditions; (i) NaH, DMF, BnBr, 0°C; (ii) NBS,  $\text{CCl}_4$ ,  $(\text{PhCOO})_2$ , 60°C (iii) amines, NaH, THF.