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ETHANOL AND ACETALDEHYDE METABOLISM  
IN SHEEP

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ABSTRACT

Ethanol and acetaldehyde metabolism in sheep has been studied in three different types of experiments: in purified enzyme systems, in liver homogenates and in the intact animals. Particular emphasis has been placed on the aldehyde oxidase enzyme from sheep liver, a molybdo-flavoprotein with a broad specificity which includes aldehydes, quinines and N<sup>1</sup>-methyl nicotinamide. This thesis describes a method for preparing an enzyme solution in which sheep liver aldehyde oxidase constitutes 85% of the total protein present. Investigations of its physical and kinetic properties show that the sheep liver enzyme differs from the aldehyde oxidases previously prepared from pig and rabbit livers. In addition, an antibody to sheep liver aldehyde oxidase has been prepared from rabbit serum and has been shown to act as a specific, competitive inhibitor of the enzyme. This has been used to assess the contribution that aldehyde oxidase makes to acetaldehyde oxidation in sheep liver homogenates under several different conditions.

The effects of steroids on ethanol and acetaldehyde metabolism has been investigated, special interest being taken in the effects of progesterone. Progesterone stimulates sheep liver aldehyde oxidase activity in vitro and inhibits sheep liver aldehyde dehydrogenase. Administration of progesterone to castrated sheep in vivo increased the rates of ethanol and acetaldehyde oxidation, and aldehyde oxidase has been identified as a factor in decreasing acetaldehyde concentrations in the homogenates of livers from these animals during the metabolism of exogenous ethanol. Low endogenous ethanol concentrations in peripheral venous blood of sheep are positively correlated with high progesterone levels in sheep due to its experimental administration, and to pregnancy and the oestrus cycle.

Studies of the effects of disulphiram on ethanol and acetaldehyde metabolism have shown that the compound inhibits sheep liver aldehyde oxidase and aldehyde dehydrogenase enzymes in vitro, increases endogenous concentrations of acetaldehyde in peripheral venous blood, and causes acetaldehyde accumulation during ethanol metabolism in vivo. When diazepam is present together with disulphiram it provides protection from all but one of the effects shown by disulphiram alone. It does not alter the disulphiram inhibition of sheep liver aldehyde dehydrogenase. Amitriptyline is an inhibitor of both aldehyde oxidase and aldehyde dehydrogenase enzymes. It seems to increase the aldehyde

oxidase response to disulphiram, and its in vivo administration causes acetaldehyde accumulation in peripheral blood during and in the absence of metabolism of exogenous ethanol.

Investigations into the effects of ethanol on ethanol and acetaldehyde metabolism in sheep have shown that ethanol increases the activity of aldehyde oxidase in vitro and its chronic administration accelerates acetaldehyde oxidation in vivo. A supplementary study of the interrelationships between the relative concentrations of NADH and  $\text{NAD}^+$ , and ethanol and acetaldehyde metabolism shows that aldehyde oxidase participation in acetaldehyde oxidation is dependent on the  $\text{NAD}^+$  concentrations, and that acetaldehyde oxidation can account for much of the NADH accumulation that occurs during ethanol metabolism in vivo.

Acetaldehyde oxidation during ethanol metabolism in sheep can be diverted through the aldehyde oxidase catalyzed pathway, avoiding dependence on the  $\text{NAD}^+$ -linked aldehyde dehydrogenase enzyme. The results in this thesis have shown that aldehyde oxidase can catalyze up to two-thirds of acetaldehyde oxidation in sheep liver when  $\text{NAD}^+$  is limited, and that the pathway is dependent on the endocrine state and the pattern of ethanol consumption of the animal.

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Upon the advice of Prof.R.D.Batt, this thesis is presented in the form of several papers to facilitate its later publication.

LIST OF CONTENTS

|                                                                                              | Page |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Chapter 1 <u>INTRODUCTION</u>                                                                | 1    |
| METABOLISM OF ACETALDEHYDE                                                                   |      |
| I) Enzymatic Synthesis of Acetaldehyde in Mammals                                            | 1    |
| II) Enzymatic Degradation of Acetaldehyde in Mammals                                         | 4    |
| PHARMACOLOGY OF ACETALDEHYDE                                                                 | 8    |
| OUTLINE OF THE WORK PRESENTED IN THIS THESIS                                                 | 9    |
| <br>Chapter 2 <u>ALDEHYDE OXIDASE</u>                                                        | 11   |
| METHODS AND MATERIALS                                                                        | 12   |
| I) Enzyme Assays with Various Hydrogen Acceptors                                             | 12   |
| II) Other Methods                                                                            | 16   |
| RESULTS                                                                                      | 17   |
| I) Enzyme Purification: Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase                                         | 17   |
| II) Physical Properties: Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase                                        | 20   |
| III) Kinetic Properties: Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase                                        | 24   |
| IV) Immunology                                                                               | 32   |
| DISCUSSION                                                                                   | 39   |
| <br>Chapter 3 <u>ESTIMATION OF ETHANOL AND ACETALDEHYDE IN</u><br><u>BIOLOGICAL FLUIDS</u>   | 40   |
| DETAILS OF THE METHOD                                                                        | 47   |
| Collection of Blood                                                                          | 47   |
| Storage of Blood Samples                                                                     | 50   |
| Estimation of Ethanol, Acetaldehyde and Acetone in                                           |      |
| Blood Samples                                                                                | 50   |
| Infusion of Ethanol or Acetaldehyde into Sheep                                               | 54   |
| Liver Homogenate Preparation and Analysis                                                    | 54   |
| DISCUSSION                                                                                   | 57   |
| <br>Chapter 4 <u>EFFECT OF PROGESTERONE ON ETHANOL AND</u><br><u>ACETALDEHYDE METABOLISM</u> | 59   |
| METHODS                                                                                      | 59   |
| RESULTS                                                                                      | 61   |
| Aldehyde Oxidase and Xanthine Oxidase Activities                                             |      |
| in Sheep Livers                                                                              | 61   |
| Steroid Effect on Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase                                               | 61   |
| Steroid Effect on Sheep Liver Aldehyde Dehydrogenase                                         | 64   |

|                                                                                                                                                                                 | Page   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Administration of Progesterone to Sheep                                                                                                                                         | 64     |
| Liver Homogenates                                                                                                                                                               | 70     |
| Oestral Variation in Endogenous Levels of Ethanol and Acetaldehyde                                                                                                              | 73     |
| Endogenous Levels of Ethanol and Acetaldehyde during Pregnancy                                                                                                                  | 73     |
| DISCUSSION                                                                                                                                                                      | 76     |
| <br>Chapter 5 <u>EFFECT OF DISULPHIRAM AND OTHER COMPOUNDS ON ETHANOL AND ACETALDEHYDE METABOLISM</u>                                                                           | <br>77 |
| METHODS                                                                                                                                                                         | 80     |
| RESULTS                                                                                                                                                                         | 81     |
| I) Disulphiram, Diazepam and Amitriptyline                                                                                                                                      | 81     |
| i) Effects of Disulphiram, Diazepam and Amitriptyline Hydrochloride on Sheep Liver Enzymes <u>in vitro</u>                                                                      | 81     |
| ii) Effects of Disulphiram, Diazepam and Amitriptyline Administration <u>in vivo</u> on Endogenous Acetaldehyde, Ethanol and Acetone Levels in Peripheral Venous Blood of Sheep | 83     |
| iii) Effects of Disulphiram, Diazepam and Amitriptyline on the Clearance of Exogenous Ethanol from Peripheral Venous Blood of Sheep                                             | 88     |
| II) Metronidazole                                                                                                                                                               | 90     |
| DISCUSSION                                                                                                                                                                      | 93     |
| <br>Chapter 6 <u>OTHER ASPECTS OF ETHANOL AND ACETALDEHYDE METABOLISM</u>                                                                                                       | <br>98 |
| METHODS                                                                                                                                                                         | 99     |
| RESULTS                                                                                                                                                                         | 100    |
| I) Effects of Chronic Ingestion of Dilute Ethanol Solutions on Ethanol and Acetaldehyde Metabolism <u>in vivo</u>                                                               | 101    |
| i) Voluntary Intake of Dilute Ethanol Solutions                                                                                                                                 | 101    |
| ii) Effect of Chronic Ingestion of Ethanol on Basal Acetaldehyde, Ethanol and Acetone Levels in Peripheral Venous Blood of Sheep                                                | 101    |
| iii) Effect of Chronic Consumption of Ethanol on the Clearance of Exogenous Acetaldehyde from the Peripheral Venous Blood of Sheep                                              | 101    |

|                                                                                                                                                                  | Page |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| II) Relationships between Relative Concentrations of NADH and $\text{NAD}^+$ , and Ethanol and Acetaldehyde Metabolism in Sheep                                  | 104  |
| i) Metabolism of Exogenous Ethanol in Sheep Liver Homogenates                                                                                                    | 104  |
| ii) Changes in the Relative Concentrations of Pyruvate and Lactate in Peripheral Venous Blood of Sheep during Acetaldehyde and Ethanol Metabolism <u>in vivo</u> | 107  |
| DISCUSSION                                                                                                                                                       | 107  |
| Chapter 7 <u>CONCLUSION</u>                                                                                                                                      | 110  |
| Appendix I <u>ALDEHYDE DEHYDROGENASE</u>                                                                                                                         | 113  |
| REFERENCES                                                                                                                                                       | 119  |

LIST OF FIGURES

|           |                                                                                                                                                                                      | Page |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| FIGURE 1  | Standard Curve for the Determination of Changes in Oxidised Methylene Blue Concentration                                                                                             | 15   |
| FIGURE 2  | Standard Curve for the Emission Spectrographic Estimation of Molybdenum                                                                                                              | 15   |
| FIGURE 3  | Electrophoresis of a Purified Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase Preparation                                                                                                               | 21   |
| FIGURE 4  | Diagrams to show the Patterns obtained when Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase and Xanthine Oxidase were separated by Gel Electrophoresis and Stained with a Methylene Blue Activity Stain | 22   |
| FIGURE 5  | Sedimentation Pattern of a Purified Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase Preparation in the Analytical Ultracentrifuge                                                                       | 23   |
| FIGURE 6  | Absorption Spectra of Oxidised and Reduced Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase                                                                                                              | 26   |
| FIGURE 7  | Determination of the Optimum pH for Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase Activity using Acetaldehyde as Substrate                                                                            | 27   |
| FIGURE 8  | Determination of the Michaelis Constant of Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase for Acetaldehyde as Substrate                                                                                | 30   |
| FIGURE 9  | Effect of Various Ethanol Concentrations on the Rate of Oxygen Uptake catalyzed by Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase                                                                      | 34   |
| FIGURE 10 | Immunoelectrophoresis of Aldehyde Oxidase Preparations from Ewe and Wether Livers and a Xanthine Oxidase Preparation                                                                 | 36   |
| FIGURE 11 | Oxygen Uptake catalyzed by Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase in the presence of Anti-Aldehyde Oxidase $\gamma$ -Globulin or Blank $\gamma$ -Globulin Preparations                         | 38   |
| FIGURE 12 | Effect of Varying the $\gamma$ -Globulin Concentration on the Rate of Oxygen Uptake catalyzed by Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase                                                        | 38   |
| FIGURE 13 | Effect of Anti-Aldehyde Oxidase $\gamma$ -Globulin Preparation on Ethanol and Acetaldehyde Levels in Sheep Liver Homogenates during Metabolism of Exogenous Ethanol                  | 40   |

|           |                                                                                                                                                                                       | Page |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| FIGURE 14 | Postulated Sequence of Sites of Electron Egress and Inhibition of Electron Transport within the Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase Molecule                                                 | 43   |
| FIGURE 15 | Collection of Blood from the Left Jugular Vein of a Sheep                                                                                                                             | 48   |
| FIGURE 16 | Typical Variation in Endogenous Acetaldehyde, Ethanol and Acetone Levels in Sheep Blood (Left Jugular) throughout the Day                                                             | 51   |
| FIGURE 17 | Variations in Acetaldehyde and Ethanol Concentrations in a Typical Blood Sample during Storage at 4°C                                                                                 | 52   |
| FIGURE 18 | Typical Traces of the Gas Chromatographic Separation of Volatile Compounds in Standard Aqueous Solution and in a Sheep Blood Sample                                                   | 53   |
| FIGURE 19 | Calibration Curves for the Gas Chromatographic Estimation of Ethanol, Acetaldehyde and Acetone Concentrations                                                                         | 56   |
| FIGURE 20 | Histogram to show the Distribution of Aldehyde Oxidase Activities in the Livers of Individual Sheep                                                                                   | 63   |
| FIGURE 21 | Effect of varying the Progesterone Concentration on Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase Activity                                                                                             | 67   |
| FIGURE 22 | Clearance Pattern of Acetaldehyde from the Peripheral Venous Blood of Sheep following its Intravenous Infusion                                                                        | 69   |
| FIGURE 23 | Clearance Pattern of Ethanol from the Peripheral Venous Blood of Sheep following its Intravenous Infusion                                                                             | 69   |
| FIGURE 24 | Metabolism of Ethanol in Homogenates of Livers from Progesterone-Treated Wethers                                                                                                      | 72   |
| FIGURE 25 | Metabolism of Ethanol in Homogenates of Livers from Progesterone-Treated Wethers in the presence of Anti-Aldehyde Oxidase $\gamma$ -Globulin Preparation                              | 72   |
| FIGURE 26 | Comparison of the Variation in Endogenous Acetaldehyde and Ethanol Levels with the Levels of Progesterone in Peripheral Venous Blood of a Non-Pregnant Ewe reported in the literature | 74   |
| FIGURE 27 | Mean Endogenous Acetaldehyde and Ethanol Levels in the Peripheral Venous Blood of a Ewe during and following Pregnancy                                                                | 75   |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Page |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| FIGURE 28 Absolute Endogenous Acetaldehyde and Ethanol Levels in the Peripheral Venous Blood of a Pregnant Ewe for Three Weeks before and after Parturition                                              | 75   |
| FIGURE 29 Structures of some Compounds that affect Acetaldehyde and Ethanol Metabolism                                                                                                                   | 78   |
| FIGURE 30 Inhibitor Constant for Disulphiram Effect on Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase                                                                                                                      | 82   |
| FIGURE 31 Graph to show the Effect of Varying Diazepam Concentrations on Disulphiram Inhibition of Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase                                                                          | 82   |
| FIGURE 32 Inhibition of Sheep Liver Aldehyde Oxidase by Amitriptyline Hydrochloride with and without Disulphiram Present                                                                                 | 85   |
| FIGURE 33 Effects of Disulphiram, Diazepam and Amitriptyline Hydrochloride Administration <u>in vivo</u> on Endogenous Acetaldehyde, Ethanol and Acetone Levels in Peripheral Venous Blood of Sheep      | 87   |
| FIGURE 34 Effects of Diazepam and Amitriptyline Hydrochloride Administration <u>in vivo</u> on Endogenous Acetaldehyde, Ethanol and Acetone Levels in Peripheral Venous Blood of Sheep                   | 89   |
| FIGURE 35 Effects of Oral Administration of Disulphiram, and Diazepam and Disulphiram together on <u>in vivo</u> Clearance of Exogenous Ethanol from Peripheral Venous Blood of Sheep                    | 91   |
| FIGURE 36 Effects of Oral Administration of Disulphiram, and Amitriptyline Hydrochloride and Disulphiram together on <u>in vivo</u> Clearance of Exogenous Ethanol from Peripheral Venous Blood of Sheep | 92   |
| FIGURE 37 Effects of Oral Administration of Metronidazole on <u>in vivo</u> Clearance of Exogenous Ethanol from Peripheral Venous Blood of Sheep                                                         | 95   |
| FIGURE 38a Voluntary Consumption of Dilute Ethanol Solutions by Sheep I                                                                                                                                  | 102  |
| FIGURE 38b Voluntary Consumption of Dilute Ethanol Solutions by Sheep II                                                                                                                                 | 102  |
| FIGURE 39 Effect of Chronic Consumption of Dilute Ethanol Solutions on the <u>in vivo</u> Clearance of Exogenous Acetaldehyde from the Peripheral Venous Blood of Sheep                                  | 103  |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Page |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| FIGURE 40 Effects of Varying the $\text{NAD}^+$ Concentration on Ethanol and Acetaldehyde Levels in Sheep Liver Homogenates during Metabolism of Exogenous Ethanol                                                                     | 105  |
| FIGURE 41 Effect of Anti-Aldehyde Oxidase $\gamma$ -Globulin Preparation on Ethanol and Acetaldehyde Levels in Sheep Liver Homogenates during Metabolism of Exogenous Ethanol in the presence of Varying $\text{NAD}^+$ Concentrations | 106  |
| FIGURE 42 Effect of <u>in vivo</u> Metabolism of Exogenous Ethanol or Acetaldehyde on the Relative Concentrations of Lactate and Pyruvate in the Peripheral Venous Blood of Sheep                                                      | 108  |
| FIGURE 43 Major Pathways for Ethanol Metabolism in the Liver                                                                                                                                                                           | 111  |

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|                   |                                                     |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| a.m.              | ante meridian                                       |
| by vol.           | by volume                                           |
| CoQ               | coenzyme Q                                          |
| D                 | diffusion constant                                  |
| $\Delta$          | change in                                           |
| DCI               | 2,6-dichlorophenol indophenol                       |
| DM                | dry matter                                          |
| E.C.No.           | Enzyme Commission Number                            |
| EDTA              | ethylenediamine-tetra-acetate                       |
| FAD               | flavin adenine dinucleotide                         |
| g                 | gravity                                             |
| HCl               | hydrochloric acid                                   |
| K                 | degrees Kelvin                                      |
| $K_i$             | inhibitor constant                                  |
| $K_m$             | Michaelis constant                                  |
| LD <sub>50</sub>  | lethal dose for 50% of a population                 |
| M                 | molecular weight                                    |
| MeB               | methylene blue                                      |
| mmoles            | millimoles                                          |
| mg%               | mg/100cm <sup>3</sup>                               |
| N                 | number of samples                                   |
| NAD <sup>+</sup>  | nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide                   |
| NADH              | reduced nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide           |
| NADP <sup>+</sup> | nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide phosphate         |
| NADPH             | reduced nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide phosphate |
| NE                | not estimated                                       |
| OD                | optical density                                     |
| p                 | relative density                                    |
| p<                | probability less than                               |
| pH <sub>max</sub> | optimum pH                                          |
| R                 | universal gas constant                              |
| R <sub>f</sub>    | distance travelled relative to the front            |
| RNA               | ribonucleic acid                                    |
| s                 | sedimentation coefficient                           |
| S                 | Svedburgs                                           |
| SD                | standard deviation                                  |

-xiii-

|           |                            |
|-----------|----------------------------|
| $SE_M$    | standard error of the mean |
| -S-S-     | sulphydryl group           |
| tert.     | tertiary                   |
| T         | absolute temperature       |
| $\bar{v}$ | partial specific volume    |
| vol.      | volume                     |
| w/v       | weight/volume              |
| v/v       | by volume                  |
| 'zero'    | taken at zero time         |