

Abstract

Movement disorders: Neurodevelopment and neurobehavioural expression

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Summary Braak and co-workers have recently shown that movement disorders such as Parkinson's disease develop progressively over years with early neuronal losses in brainstem regions caudal to the substantia nigra. The relevance of this finding to notions of comorbidity between movement disorders and psychiatric symptoms was recognised at the recent meeting concerning, "Implications of Comorbidity for the Etiology and Treatment of Neuropsychiatric Disorders" held in Oct. 2005 in Mazagon, Spain. The identification of stages in the early development of neurodegenerative disorders appeared to unify multiple, diverse findings. These included: novel therapeutic innovations for Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease and depression in the aged; the neurochemical ontogeny of drug-induced oral dyskinesias; the types of chemical agents abused in neuropsychiatric states; postnatal iron overload effects upon the functional and interactive role of dopaminergic and noradrenergic pathways that contribute to the expression of movement disorders; and the spectrum of motor symptoms expressed in schizophrenia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and the eventual treatment of these disorders. A continued focus on a number of neuropsychiatric diseases as progressive disorders may lead to further advances in understanding their etiology and in developing better therapeutics.

Keywords: ADHD, basal ganglia, comorbidity, development, movement disorder, neurodegeneration, Parkinson's disease, schizophrenia, staging.

Pathological staging of brain disorders

Aging without a disease complication provides a definition of "healthy" normal aging. Nevertheless, a high proportion of aged individuals who do not exhibit symptoms of disease by leading relatively normal lives show pathological alterations like those associated with Alzheimer's disease (AD), Parkinson's disease (PD), dementia with Lewy bodies (DLB), and/or cerebrovascular disease (CVD). According

to the notions introduced by Braak and co-workers (e.g., Thal et al., 2004), these alterations are restricted to specific regions of the brain and may be associated with phases of premorbidity (or preclinical debut stages) of these neurodegenerative diseases. For instance, AD-related alterations do not routinely accompany normal healthy brain aging (Arnold et al., 1991; Braak et al., 1996; Hyman et al., 1984; van Hoesen and Hyman, 1990) but rather these changes indicate differential stages of neuropathology in as yet asymptomatic individuals and in patients presenting with symptoms (Braak and Del Tredici, 2004; Braak et al., 2000, 2003c). Thus, although aging remains a major risk factor for the neurodegenerative diseases, it does not necessarily imply age-related diseases; aging is sufficient but not necessary. Thal et al. (2004) concluded that, even in the absence of clinical symptoms, early brain pathological disease-related changes constitute the debut of AD, PD, DLB and CVD rather than normal constituents of the aging process. Against this background, which provides a unique context for the accumulating evidence of 'shared symptoms', we will discuss studies pertaining to comorbidity in neurodegenerative movement disorders.

The study of movement disorders might take as its point-of-departure the recent Braak et al. (2003a, b) findings that PD-like brain disorders develop progressively over years and the loss of neurons in specific brain regions encompasses both pre-symptomatic and post-symptomatic phases. Multiple neuronal systems are involved in sporadic PD with a putative etiology stemming from progressive changes in a few susceptible types of neurons with essential α -synuclein-immunopositive Lewy neurites and Lewy

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body components. According to this notion, lesions occur initially in the motor nuclei of the glossopharyngeal and vagus nerves as well as anterior olfactory nucleus, from which more rostral areas become affected gradually, the disease process advancing in an ascending fashion. The caudal raphe, gigantocellular reticular nucleus and locus coeruleus and sub-coeruleus are next affected, followed by the substantia nigra compacta. The anteromedial temporal mesocortex is next afflicted, after which the neocortex, then the high order sensory association and prefrontal cortical areas followed by first order sensory association/premotor areas and primary sensory/motor fields, each step tracing the course of brain pathology.

From a perspective of neurologic-psychiatric comorbidity, Przuntek et al. (2004) have proposed that the motor symptoms in PD patients are preceded by the insidious onset of mild, psychopathological, i.e., cognitive and perceptual, disturbances expressed by olfactory and visual dysfunction, with consequent behavioural alteration, e.g., reduced stress tolerance. They have described an initial premotor phase, originating in non-dopaminergic areas, a conflagration of onset of gastrointestinal brainstem-associated and sensory deficits leading eventually to the expression of motor symptoms and further pathological development. Przuntek et al. (2004) suggest that an unknown pathogen entering through the gastrointestinal tract affects brainstem nuclei and initiates the progression of degeneration that leads to PD, producing multiple comorbid symptoms.

Aspects of neuropathological staging and expression

Youdim and co-workers (in press) reviewed the therapeutic profiles of drug candidates that are designed to express a diversity of pharmacological properties and multiplicity of target sites in their actions against the symptoms of neurodegenerative disorders. For example, ladostigil (Sterling et al., 2002; Weinstock et al., 2000a, b; Youdim and Buccafusco, 2005) combines a selective monoamine oxidase-B (MAO-B) inhibition with a cholinesterase inhibitory activity to provide a pharmacophore with neuroprotective and procholinergic properties as well as an iron chelator moiety. Ladostigil (TV3326; (N-propargyl-(3R) aminoindan-5yl)-ethyl) thereby incorporates the pharmacological actions of rasagiline, rivastigmine and M30, and is potentially useful for treating the comorbidity underlying the disease states AD, PD and LBD, outlined by, for example, Braak and Braak (1991).

The incidence of depressive symptoms in AD and PD patients is of major importance in attempts to understand

comorbid brain pathologies (Leentjens, 2004; McDonald et al., 2003; Shih et al., 2004; Veazey et al., 2005). An antidepressant action of ladostigil was observed, using the forced swim test (Borsini and Meli, 1988) in laboratory rats and mice (Weinstock et al., 2000b, c). Concurrently, an anti-Parkinsonian action of the compound as a result of its MAO-A and MAO-B inhibiting properties was indicated (Finberg et al., 1996a, b; Gal et al., 2005; Huang et al., 1999; Wu et al., 2000). The anticholinesterase action of ladostigil for a therapeutic efficacy in AD enjoys much support (DeKosky et al., 2002; Francis et al., 1999; Giacobini, 2004; Racchi et al., 2004; Weinstock et al., 2001), particularly in view of evidence that the compound may block certain neurodegenerative processes (Francis et al., 2005). The neuropathological sequence of cytoskeleton changes relating to neuronal damage and debris in AD is relevant from the staging perspective (Braak and Braak, 1994, 1999; Braak et al., 1994). Thus, studies of the early stages of AD reveal that formation of the intraneuronal cytoskeletal alterations precedes formation of aggregated amyloid- β protein (Braak and Braak, 1997). Accordingly, accumulation of abnormally phosphorylated, soluble tau protein (cf., Palomo et al., 2004), incorporated in projection cells with initial "pretangle" cytoskeletal changes, is distributed throughout the cell body and cellular processes (Baner et al., 1989), and appears in the trans-entorhinal cortex, magnocellular nuclei of the basal forebrain and locus coeruleus prior to occurrence of traces of amyloid- β (Braak and Del Tredici, 2004; see fig. 1), with deposits of insoluble β -amyloid proteins developing in parts of the basal temporal neocortex (Thal et al., 2000). An elevated expression in generation of β -amyloid proteins may contribute to amyloidogenesis processes in AD (Arends et al., 2000; Gouras et al., 2005; Klyubin et al., 2005). It seems to be the case that the cholinesterase inhibiting actions of ladostigil and other anticholinesterases, with or without the MAO-inhibiting component (using the S-isomer, TV3279), exert a variety of actions that counteract the amyloid processes in AD (Pakaski and Kasa, 2003; Yogeve-Falach et al., 2002, 2003; Zhang et al., 2004; Zimmerman et al., 2004). Finally, the neuroprotectant profiles of the N-propargylamine component itself, among other aspects showing an anti-apoptotic action (Maruyama et al., 2003, 2004; Weinreb et al., 2004; Yi et al., 2005), appear relevant (Youdim, 2003; Youdim and Weinstock, 2002a, b; Youdim et al., 2001a, b; Zheng et al., 2005). All this serves to impart a particular instrumental feature upon ladostigil; on the one hand, it serves as a substrate for elucidating the complexities of comorbidity, and on the other, as a template for considering the notion of staging from a novel perspective.

Chronic dosing with typical antipsychotic agents, classically used in the treatment of schizophrenia (e.g., Farde et al., 1988; Seeman et al., 1975), carries the risk of inducing extrapyramidal side effects (EPS). These compounds, e.g., haloperidol, are associated with a variety of EPS that may include dystonia, akathisia, drug-induced Parkinsonism and the tardive dyskinesias (TDs), with varying extents of personal severity (Casey, 1989, 1991, 1994; Deniker, 1983; Lewander, 1994; Youssef and Waddington, 1987; see also Schmidt and Beninger, in press), whereas administration of the atypical clozapine is associated with TDs in a subset of patients (Davé, 1994; Kane et al., 1993; Kurz et al., 1993; Tamminga et al., 1994). TDs constitute the most serious of the EPS and are characterised by vacuous, purposeless, involuntary movements that include chewing behaviour, tongue (often circling) protrusions, lip-smacking, and grimacing in a repetitive fashion, and may incorporate movement disorders in other body parts (Albin et al., 1989; DeLong, 1990; Jeste and Caligiuri, 1993; Mink, 1996). In animal studies, the phenomenon of “vacuous chewing movements” (VCMs), whether tardive or acute (Egan et al., 1996), was associated both with an imbalance between dopamine D₁- and D₂-like receptors (Daly and Waddington, 1993; Koshikawa et al., 1987; Levin et al., 1989; Rupniak, 1985) and long-term typical neuroleptic treatment (Waddington et al., 1983, 1989). VCMs have also been reported following long-term treatment with an atypical (Kakigi et al., 1995; Lieberman et al., 1991; Yu et al., 1999) possibly due, in the case of clozapine, to a dopamine D₁-like receptor agonist action (Salmi and Ahlenius, 1996). Nevertheless, there is evidence to indicate that clozapine is less likely to cause, and may even ameliorate TD and remains markedly useful for the treatment of chronically psychotic patients with TD (De Leon et al., 1991; Kalian et al., 1993; Lamberti and Bellnier, 1993; Levkovitch et al., 1995; Littrell and Magill, 1993; Naber et al., 1989; Nair et al., 1996; Wirshing et al., 1990). This severe sensitivity to neuroleptic compounds constitutes a major clinical problem in DLB. An evaluation of severe neuroleptic sensitivity reactions, blind to diagnosis, confirmed high prevalence in DLB and identified high frequencies in PD and PD with dementia. In the light of comorbidity implications as derived from Braak's staging notions, these findings must imply important relationships that affect clinical practice (Aarsland et al., 2005; Dalack et al., 1998a).

In their focus upon dopamine D₁-like receptor influences, Kostrzewa and co-workers (in press) applied a novel animal model of TDs by utilizing neonatal 6-hydroxydopamine (6-OHDA) administration, following desipramine pretreatment, to destroy nigrostriatal dopamine fibres,

thereby causing a denervation-induced sensitivity (Brus et al., 1994; Kostrzewa, 1995; Kostrzewa and Gong, 1991; Kostrzewa and Hamdi, 1991; Kostrzewa et al., 1993). Several studies were described involving treatment of neonatal dopamine-denervated rats with the D₁-like receptor agonist SKF 38393. A very low dose produced VCMs (Kostrzewa and Gong, 1991). If the depletion of striatal dopamine was less than 98.5%, there was no induction of VCMs by SKF 38393 (Gong et al., 1993a). Additional studies implicated other neurotransmitter systems in this animal model of the oral dyskinesias (Gong et al., 1993b, 1994; Huang and Kostrzewa, 1994; Huang et al., 1997). Thus, neonatal 6-OHDA lesions also induced serotonin receptor supersensitivity. A serotonin receptor antagonist attenuated VCMs induced by a D₁-like dopamine receptor agonist (Gong and Kostrzewa, 1992; Gong et al., 1992; Plech et al., 1995). Dopamine denervation-induced supersensitivity may be associated with notions of staging through the interactive role of serotonergic transmission modulating expressions of VCMs; thus, VCMs were abolished by neonatal serotonin lesions (Brus et al., 1994). Kostrzewa et al. (in press) indicated that a marked aspect of neonatal dopamine denervation is supersensitization of the dopamine D₁ receptors (necessarily Stage 1) but it is then followed by supersensitization of 5-HT₂ receptors.

Substance abuse by schizophrenic patients remains an important issue (cf. O'Brien et al., 2004); these patients are at disproportionately high risk (Regier et al., 1990), commonly abusing the same agents as the general public (Anthony et al., 1994). The comorbidity of smoking and nicotine dependence in schizophrenic patients (e.g., Zammit et al., 2003) is well documented. Thus, (i) nicotine may play a role in medicating negative symptoms (Aguilar et al., 2005; Dalack et al., 1998b) although some have suggested reconsideration of the “negative-symptom” construct in the comorbid disease state (Krystal et al., in press), (ii) schizophrenia incorporates a primary defect in brain nicotinic systems modulating cognition and sensory gating (Adler et al., 1992; Sacco et al., 2004, 2005; Sarter et al., 2005), and (iii) cigarette-smoking in these patients modulates the expression of TD and other movement disorders. These represent both neurologic-psychiatric comorbidity (Decina et al., 1990; Menza et al., 1991; Yassa et al., 1987) as well as nicotinic-dopaminergic comorbidity (Levin et al., 1996; Morens et al., 1995; Sandyk, 1993). Cigarette smoking is a behaviour that provides information about schizophrenia that may be applicable in several aspects (Hughes et al., 1986; Jann et al., 1986; Sandyk and Kay, 1991); e.g., it appears that nicotine withdrawal may exacerbate schizophrenic symptoms (Dalack and Meador-Woodruff, 1996;

but see Dalack et al., 1999). It is worth noting that typical and atypical neuroleptics affected smoking in schizophrenic patients differentially: haloperidol increased whereas clozapine decreased smoking (McEvoy et al., 1995a, b). Continued study of the role of nicotine receptors in schizophrenia is warranted.

Riederer's overview (Mojacar paper) implied that neurochemical dysfunctions in loop systems associated with motor behaviour, psychomotor behaviour (or, conversely, retardation) or psychiatric behaviour induce the risk of vulnerability in the respective unaffected pathway. From the point of view of staging (Braak et al., 2003a, b) the early diagnosis of degenerative disorders is essential. In this regard an increased echogenicity of the substantia nigra, detected with transcranial ultrasound, has been observed in PD patients and a small proportion of healthy adults (Berg et al., 1999, 2001a, b, 2002; Iova et al., 2004). Zecca et al. (2005) assayed for iron, ferritin, and neuromelanin content following postmortem scanning of normal subjects' brains to measure substantia nigra echogenicity. A significant positive correlation was found between the echogenic area of the SN and the concentration of iron, H- and L-ferritins. Multivariate analysis carried out in relation to iron content showed a significant negative correlation between echogenicity and neuromelanin content of the substantia nigra. In PD, a typical loss of neuromelanin and increase of iron is observed in this brain area. Certainly, the involvement of iron, ferritins and neuromelanin in substantia nigra and locus coeruleus neuropathology implicated in PD is accumulating (Zecca et al., 2004; and see below). For instance, the two regions share certain similarities, e.g. both are pigmented because of neuromelanine and both contain catecholaminergic neurons, and there is neuronal loss in both in PD, AD and Down's syndrome. Remarkably, Zarow et al. (2003), examining a sample comprising cases of pathologically confirmed AD ($n = 86$), PD ($n = 19$) and healthy elderly controls ($n = 13$), found that the AD cases showed neuron loss of the order: locus coeruleus > nucleus basalis > substantia nigra, and PD cases: locus coeruleus > substantia nigra > nucleus basalis. Thus, the greatest loss of neurons in both AD and PD was obtained in the locus coeruleus. From the point of view of staging, the significant correlations between neuronal loss in the locus coeruleus and nucleus basalis (but not SN) in both PD and AD imply that these two cell body-containing regions may share common pathogenetic susceptibilities relevant to the neurogenetic process.

Mehler-Wex, Riederer and Gerlach (under review) have discussed recent evidence that a dopamine-related imbalance of basal ganglia neurocircuitries contributes the essen-

tial pathophysiology underlying PD, schizophrenia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The basal ganglia include the striatum, caudate nucleus, putamen, medial and lateral segments of the globus pallidus and the amygdala, with functional connections to the subthalamic nucleus and substantia nigra (Graybiel, 1990). In disorders involving dysfunctional movement expression, clusters of striatal neurons (matrisomes) become abnormally active in inappropriate contexts leading to inhibition of GPi or SNpr neurons that would normally be active to suppress unwanted movements or inactive in the initiation of motor activation. The inhibition/excitation of GPi or SNpr neurons may lead to the disinhibition/inhibition of thalamocortical circuits, the final common pathway (see fig. 11 in Mehler-Wex et al., 2006). Activity-dependent dopamine effects may phasically reinforce, inappropriately, these activity patterns leading to stereotyped behaviours (Albin, 2006; Mink, 2006). Essentially, Mehler-Wex et al. (under review) imply that the a critical consequence will be overactivity of basal ganglia output sites with concomitant inhibition of thalamo-cortical drive (see above). In schizophrenia, the hyperactive nature of inhibitory dopamine D₂ receptor-mediated transmission disinhibits the thalamus thereby resulting in cortical overstimulation; this may underlie the end-products of faulty perceptual, attentional and information processing functions and affective regulation. Related dopaminergic neuropathology may contribute to symptom expression in ADHD. In this regard, Lee et al. (2006) reported that high-frequency stimulation of the subthalamic nucleus increased action potential firing there only during the initial stimulation period and was followed by a cessation of firing over the remainder of stimulation. Electrical stimulation of the subthalamic nucleus with 15 pulses elicited stimulus time-locked increases in striatal dopamine efflux with maximal peak effects occurring at 50 Hz frequency and 300 μ A intensity. Extended subthalamic nucleus stimulation (1000 pulses at 50 Hz; 300 μ A) elicited a similar peak increase in striatal dopamine efflux that was followed by a relatively lower steady-state elevation in extracellular dopamine over the course of stimulation. In contrast, extended stimulation immediately adjacent and dorsal to the subthalamic nucleus resulted in an 11-fold greater increase in dopamine efflux that remained elevated over the course of the stimulation. These findings implicate the subthalamic nuclei in dopamine release that may function in an antiparkinsonian manner and/or a proschizophrenic manner. Perhaps this account also identifies stages of neurodysfunction like those identified by Braak et al. (2003a, b) that may underlie all three of the disorders mentioned above.

Archer and Fredriksson (under review) described the influence of postnatal iron overload upon the interactive role of dopaminergic and noradrenergic pathways in mice. These pathways contribute to the expressions of movement disorder and psychotic behaviours. Excessive iron deposits in the brain may generate cytotoxic free radical formation (Ben-Shachar and Youdim, 1990; Ben-Shachar et al., 1991) and alterations in iron metabolism play an important role in many neurologic diseases (Evans, 1993; Olanow, 1992; Strong et al., 1993). Postnatal iron overload at doses of 7.5 mg/kg (administered on days 10–12 post partum) and above induced a behavioural syndrome consisting of an initial hypoactivity followed by a later hyperactivity, in adult mice tested for 60 min. Following postnatal iron overload, subchronic treatment with the neuroleptic compounds, clozapine and haloperidol, dose-dependently reversed the initial hypoactivity and later hyperactivity induced by the metal. Furthermore, dopamine D₂ receptor supersensitivity (as assessed using the apomorphine-induced behaviour test) was directly and positively correlated with iron concentrations in the basal ganglia. The selective denervation of noradrenaline terminals using the selective noradrenaline neurotoxin, DSP4, followed by administration of the selective dopamine neurotoxin, MPTP, has been employed as an experimental model for ‘accelerated’ PD, reflecting a striatal dopamine and central noradrenaline deficiency (Fornai et al., 1997; Marien et al., 1993; Nishi et al., 1991). Brain noradrenaline denervation, using the selective noradrenaline neurotoxin, DSP4, prior to administration of the selective dopamine neurotoxin, MPTP, exacerbated both the functional (hypokinesia) and neurochemical (dopamine depletion) effects of the latter neurotoxin. Treatment with L-Dopa restored motor activity only in the animals that had not undergone noradrenaline denervation. Finally, C57/BL6 mice were administered either postnatal iron (Fe²⁺ 7.5 mg/kg, on postnatal days 10–12) or vehicle, followed by either DSP4 (50 mg/kg, s.c., 30 min after injection of zimeldine, 20 mg/kg, s.c.) or vehicle (saline) at 63 days of age. Postnatal iron administration exacerbated the bradykinesia induced by MPTP and virtually abolished all spontaneous motor activity in noradrenaline-denervated mice that were MPTP-treated. Suprathreshold doses (20 mg/kg) of L-Dopa invariably restore motor activity in MPTP mice: nevertheless, postnatal iron administration reduced markedly the restoration of motor activity by suprathreshold L-Dopa (20 mg/kg) following a 60-min habituation to the test chambers. Pretreatment with DSP4 effectively eliminated the restorative effect of L-Dopa in the MPTP mice. Postnatal iron administration caused enduring higher levels of total iron

content in all the groups with an increased level in mice treated with DSP4 followed by MPTP. From a perspective based on the staging findings of Braak et al. (2003a, b), these divergent findings confirm the developmental and predispositional role of postnatal iron overload and prior denervation of noradrenaline upon dopaminergic functional expression and indicate a permanent vulnerability both in the noradrenergic and dopaminergic pathways following the postnatal infliction of an iron overload.

In conclusion, the findings of Braak and co-workers showed that diseases such as PD and AD have stages associated with progressive neuronal loss from specific brain regions. In the early stages, affected individuals may be relatively symptom-free or may show symptoms not previously associated with the disorder that they eventually develop. Thus, there is a natural comorbidity of some symptom clusters associated with different stages of an illness. This comorbidity has influenced approaches to drug development as was shown in the work of Youdim and coworkers (in press). It has been implied by the findings of interactive effects of different monoamines in models of TD (Kostrzewa et al., in press) and of complex neurotransmitter abnormalities in PD and AD (Archer and Fredriksson, under review; Mehler-Wex et al., under review). Taken together, results suggest that a continued focus on a number of neuropsychiatric diseases as progressive disorders may lead to further advances in understanding their etiology and in developing better therapeutics.

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