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Sulfur Transfer in A Three-Component System Including Phenyl Azide, Aromatic Thione and Sterically Crowded Tetramethylcyclobutanethione

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SULFUR TRANSFER IN A THREE-COMPONENT SYSTEM INCLUDING PHENYL AZIDE, AROMATIC THIONE AND STERICALLY CROWDED TETRAMETHYLCYCLOBUTANETHIONE

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Abstract A new access to thiosulfines generated in a reaction system containing thiocarbonyl compounds and phenyl azide is described.

Thiocarbonyl-S-sulfides (thiosulfines) 1 belong to the class of sulfur centered 1,3-dipoles, they are considered as sulfur anologues of the much better known thiocarbonyl-S-oxides (sulfines) 2.

$$R_2C \stackrel{+}{=} \stackrel{-}{S} \qquad \qquad R_2C \stackrel{+}{=} \stackrel{-}{S} \stackrel{-}{O}$$
Thiocarbonyl-S-sulfides
Thiocarbonyl-S-oxides

Thiocarbonyl-S-sulfides (Thiosulfines)

(Sulfines)

In contrast to the relatively stable sulfine compounds¹⁾, thiosulfines are not isolable and they appear only as intermediates which can be trapped using suitable dipolarophiles ²⁻⁴⁾.

Huisgen and Rapp²⁾ reported on a smooth desulfurization of aryl substituted thiiranes by thiobenzophenone in which intermediate thiobenzophenone-S-sulfide added at room temperature to unconsumed thione to give 3,3,5,5-tetraphenyl-1,2,4-trithiolane. The latter was isolated as a crystalline substance in almost quantitative yield.

Now we report on the formation of thiosulfines at elevated temperature (80°C) in a three component system including thioketones 3 and 5 dissolved in phenyl azide (molar ratio of 3 and 5 2:1). Aromatic thiones are known to react with 1,3-dipoles much faster than other dipolarophiles⁶⁾, so the first step of conversion must be the formation of an unstable 1,2,3,4-thiatriazoline 4 from aromatic thioketone 3 and phenyl azide.

Two-fold extrusion of nitrogen and elemental sulfur follows the preliminary step. Atomic sulfur is effectively intercepted by thioketones and in this way reactive thiosulfines are generated. The reaction time depended strongly on the nature of aromatic thione and in the case of the most reactive thiofluorenone conversion was completed within several minutes.

Sterical hindrance in the mixed trithiolanes 6 enhances the stability of this heterocyclic system and enables its isolation from reaction mixtures warmed up to 80°C. Tetraaryl trithiolanes 7 are thermally unstable²⁾ and this is the reason why Schönberg and Urban⁵⁾ were not successful in isolation of them when aromatic thiones and phenyl azide were heated at 80°C. In this reactions only N-phenyl imines of the corresponding carbonyl compound were observed as the products.

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