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Phosphorus, Sulfur, and Silicon and the Related Elements

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713618290>

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To cite this Article Schank, Kurt and Moschel, Susanne(1993) 'Ozonolysis of 3,4-Dimethylsulfolene Revised Once More - the End of an Old Puzzle', *Phosphorus, Sulfur, and Silicon and the Related Elements*, 74: 1, 419 — 420

To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/10426509308038144

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10426509308038144>

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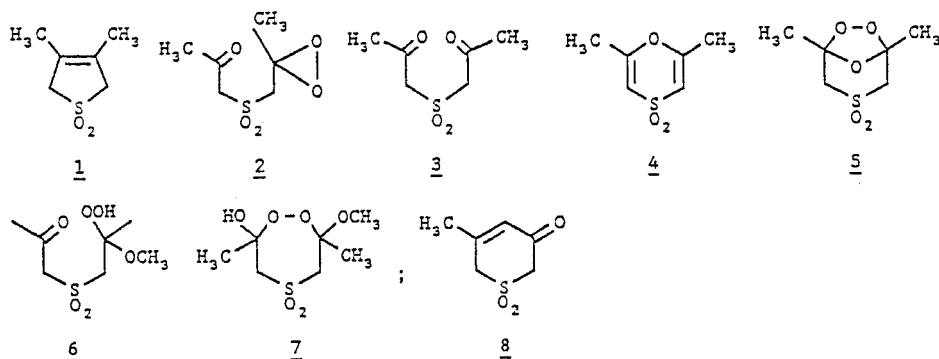
OZONOLYSIS OF 3,4-DIMETHYLSULFOLENE REVISED ONCE MORE - THE END OF AN OLD PUZZLE

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Abstract Reinvestigation of ozonolyses of 3,4-dimethylsulfolene (**1**) removes earlier errors and uncertainties. A novel mechanistic proposal on the ozonolyses of cyclopentenenes is presented.

Introduction

Contradictory results are reported on ozonolyses of 3,4-dimethylsulfolene (**1**) in different solvents. In spite of the simplicity of the reacting compounds a reasonable explanation on the base of the commonly accepted olefin ozonolysis mechanism appears rather difficult. Therefore, the object of the present work was a careful reinvestigation of this reaction including elucidation of all questionable structures. Our interest was focussed on subsequent formulas:

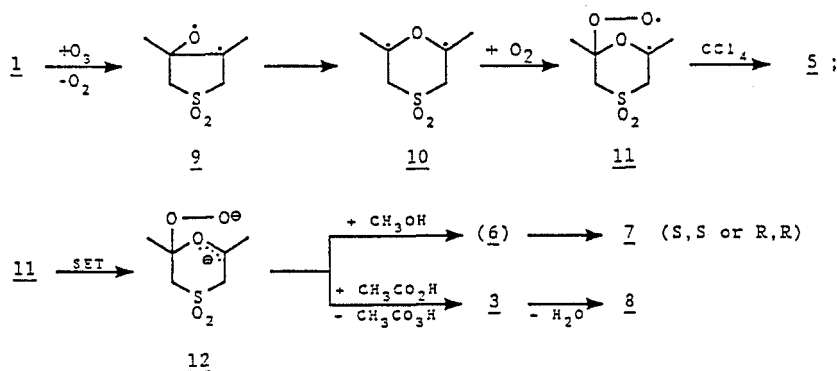


A paper of 1934¹⁾ described ozonolytic cleavage of **1** to **2** in chloroform, reduction of **2** gave rise to diketone **3**. A subsequent paper²⁾ described the formation of **4** in acetic acid. Criegee and Lohaus³⁾ corrected the structure of **2** to be ozonide **5**, in methanol as solvent they reported the generation of a hydroperoxy ether of structure **6** or **7**. Treating this compound with benzoyl chloride/pyridine the divinylsulfone **4** should be formed. However a compound with the real structure of **4** has been synthesized later on via an

unambiguous way⁴⁾.

During our reinvestigations we could establish structures 3, 5 and 7, the latter proved to be the S,S.(or R,R)-isomer (X-Ray)⁵⁾. "Compound 4 from ozonolyses" proved to be 8 (already known from literature⁶⁾). Our mechanistic proposal is as follows:

1. Mono-oxygen transfer from ozone⁷⁾ to the C,C double bond generating 1,3-C,O-diradical 9 (a C,O-homolyzed oxirane)⁸⁾.
2. Rearrangement of 9 forming 1,3-diradical 10 (a C,C-homolyzed oxirane)⁸⁾, corresponding to an oxidative ring enlargement.
3. Dioxygenation of 10 forming ozonide 5 via 1,5-C,O-diradical 11, or zwitterion 12 after preceding SET within a protic solvent.
4. Zwitterion 12 represents a mesomerism stabilized carboxonium peroxide which follows the known substitution rules of ambident carboxonium cations⁹⁾ ending up in the formation of 7 via 6 or 8 via 3:



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The authors gratefully acknowledge support by the "Fonds der Chemischen Industrie" as well as a valuable X-Ray structure elucidation by Professor G. Maas (ref. 5).