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1-Arylamino-1-Methylthio-2-Nitroethene in Superacids: NMR Study and Reactivity of the Formed Hydroxynitrilium lons.

Jean-Marie COUSTARD

Laboratoire de Chimie XII / URA CNRS 1468 Faculté des Sciences - 40, avenue du Recteur Pineau F-86022 POITIERS (France)

Abstract: At low temperature in triflic acid, 1-arylamino-1-methylthio-2-nitroethylenes give firstly C,O-protonated species then a conjugated dication with aryliminium and hydroxynitrilium sites. The last one was trapped in situ with aromatic or quenched with MeOH or MeSH to form aryliminohydroxyimino derivatives. Intramolecular reaction occurs when temperature rises. Effect of aromatic ring substituant, acidity (HF-SbF5 5:1) and Z/E imine configuration are also discussed. Copyright © 1996 Elsevier Science Ltd

INTRODUCTION.

Nitroene derivatives are useful synthons in organic chemistry which can be used, for instance in heterocyclic chemistry¹. In superacids, they are polyprotonated to yield multicharged species that can be trapped by suitable nucleophiles^{2,3}. To explain electrophilic reaction with aromatics and mainly the configuration of formed aromatic oximes, we postulated the existence of a transient hydroxynitrilium ion on which reaction lead to the predicted oxime configuration³. Later it was shown that 1,1-bis(methylthio)-2-nitroethylene 1 dissolved in TFSA at low temperature, led quantitatively to the stable hydroxynitrilium ion 2. Trapping this ion by suitable nucleophiles gives α -hydroxyniminoorthothioesters or furoxane orthothioesters⁴.



The present study was undertaken with the purpose to assess existence of other stable hydroxynitrilium ions, 1-arylamino-1-methylthio-2-nitroethylene derivatives **3a-c** were studied because they were reported to give cyclic oximes in TFSA at room temperature⁵.

NMR STUDY.

Starting materials were prepared on a conventional way^{5,6} by reacting 1,1-bis(methylthio)-2nitroethylene with one molar equivalent of a substituted aniline in acetonitrile. Resulting compounds **3a-c** dissolved easily in TFSA at 0-5°C to give a colored solution. By quickly lowering the temperature it was possible to monitor the reaction and to study the formed cations. Starting material quickly disappeared (no vinylic proton observed) to give cation 4 characterized by a methylene group that resonates near $\delta_{\rm H}$ = 5.4 ppm and $\delta_{\rm C}$ = 75 ppm. Those chemical shifts are of the same order of magnitude as those reported for C,O-

protonated forms of 1 in TFSA. Protonation of the nitro group was not observed by NMR in those experimental conditions probably because of a fast exchange process with the medium, but must be postulated because of the acidity of the medium. This kind of protonation is known to be fast even at temperature as low as -80°C in the more acidic medium⁷ HSO₃F and is only postulated indirectly in TFSA by its influence on chemical shifts or by cryometry². The iminium NH protons resonate near δ_{H} = 10.5 ppm and the iminium carbons in the range of δ_c = 183.8 to 187.8 ppm. NMR spectral data of ions 4a-c are reported in table 1.

	1н	NMR			13C	NMR		
Cation		>CH2	H ar.	NH ⁺		>CH2	C ar.	>C=N
Y= H 4a	2.15 s, MeS	5.36 s	6.8 m, 2H 6.9 m, 3H	10.27 s	15.80 SMe	73.76	123.44; 124.39; 133.39; 135.77	184.80
Y= F 4b	2.41 s, MeS	5.36 s	6.65 m, 2H 6.86 m, 2H	10.22 s	15.81 SMe	74.52	118.15 d, ² J= 24 Hz 126.45 d, ³ J= 9 Hz 132.12 d, ⁴ J= 3 Hz 164.88 d, ¹ J=253 H	187.79
Y= MeO (Z)-4c	2.32 s, MeS 3.62 s, MeO	5.44 s	6.78 d, <i>J</i> = 9Hz 2H 7.02 d, <i>J</i> = 9Hz 2H	10.79 s	16.24 MeS 59.24 MeO	75.07	118.24; 127.46 130.00; 158.94	183.79
Y= MeO <i>(E)</i> -4c	2.50 s, MeS 3.64 s, MeO	5.10 s	6.82 d, <i>J</i> = 9Hz 2H 6.91 d, <i>J</i> = 9Hz 2H	10.15 s	16.58 MeS 59.44 MeO	74.45	118.19; 128.45 130.44; 158.83	187.32

Table 1: NMR spectra of cations 4a,b,c in TFSA at 255 °K







Figure 1: ¹H NMR (200 MHz/Ref. TMS in methanol-d4) of ions (Z)-4c and (E)-4c (with *) at 255 °K in TFSA/CDCl3

Only the Z isomer was observed, however, the methoxy derivative isomerized in TFSA/CDCl₃ at temperature slightly above 273° K to give a final 1:1 mixture of both Z and E isomers (Figure 1). The slowly formed (E)-4c isomer is mainly characterized by i) shielding of the methylene group ($\Delta\delta_{H}$ = 0.34 and $\Delta\delta_{C}$ =

0.62 ppm) and ortho aromatic protons ii) deshielding of the MeO ($\Delta\delta_{H}$ = - 0.02 and $\Delta\delta_{C}$ = - 0.20 ppm), MeS ($\Delta\delta_{H}$ = -0.18 and $\Delta\delta_{C}$ = -0.34 ppm) and iminium carbon ($\Delta\delta_{C}$ = - 3.53 ppm).

At low temperature, cations 4 are slowly transformed into ions 5. Using ¹H NMR, this reaction can be monitored by following disappearance of the methylene signal. The NMR spectra of ions 5 exhibit, along with MeS and aromatic signals, an iminium carbon that resonates upfield in the region δ_c = 166.08 to 169.56 ppm because of conjugation. However, the main feature in ¹³C NMR was a broad and weak signal near 26.5 ppm. This signal, by its shape, chemical shift and intensity is very similar to the one observed for hydroxynitrilium 2 derived from 1,1-bis(methylthio)-2-nitroethene⁴ and close to values found for substituted aromatic nitrile oxides⁸. Broadening and weakening of the signal is due to coupling with ¹⁵N but mainly to quadripolar relaxation with ¹⁴N, the most abundant isotope^{8d,9}. Ion 5a exists as a sole (*E*) isomer (Figures 2 and 3), meanwhile 5b gives both the (*Z*) and (*E*) isomers in a 2:1 ratio.



Figure 2: ¹H NMR spectrum (200 MHz/Ref. TMS in methanol-d4) of hydroxynitrilium ion 5a in TFSA at 255 K.



Figure 3: ¹³C NMR (50 MHz/Ref. TMS in methanol-d₄) spectra of ion 5a in TFSA at 255 °K (* : TSFA signals)

The major difference between (*E*) and (*Z*) structures lies in the chemical shift of the iminium carbon $\Delta\delta_c = 3.48$ ppm, value found in other iminium systems¹⁰. A weak difference is also observed for the MeS group ($\Delta\delta_H = 0.14$ and $\Delta\delta_c = 0.80$ ppm).

¹ H NMR			¹³ C NMR				
lon	MeS	H-ar.	=N+-H	MeS	-C=N+-OH	C-ar.	>C=N ⁺
Y = H (F)-6a	2.31 s	6.83 m, 2H	10.35 s	18.07	26.4*	124.13 (C-3,5), 131.19 (C-2,6), 132.80 (C ipso NH) 134.40 (C-4)	168.59
Y = F (E)-5b	2.34 s	6.67 m, 2H 6.87 m, 2H	10.28 s	18.04	26.5*	118.40 d, ${}^{2}J$ = 24 Hz (C-3,5) 126.95 d, ${}^{3}J$ = 9 Hz (C-2,6) 130.31 d, ${}^{4}J$ = 3 Hz (C <i>ipso</i> NH)	169.56
Y = F <i>(Z)-</i> 5b	2.20 s	6.67 m, 2H 6.87 m, 2H	10.48 s	17.24	26.5*	118.47 d, ${}^{2}J$ = 24 Hz (C-3,5) 127.13 d, ${}^{3}J$ = 9 Hz (C-2,6) 130.21 d,, ${}^{4}J$ = 3 Hz (C <i>ipso</i> NH) 164.88 d, ${}^{1}J$ = 253 Hz (C-4)	166.08

Table 2: NMR spectra of hydroxy	hitrilium ions 5 in Th	FSA.(200/50 Mhz; I	MeOD-d ₄ /TMS)	at 254°K
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*broad signal.

REACTIVITY OF IONS 5.

lons 5 can also be trapped *in situ* with aromatic or quenched with excess MeOH or MeSH. The reaction occurs on the carbon bearing initially the nitro group to give an oximino derivative.

i) In situ trapping with benzene: When 3a-c are dissolved with benzene in TFSA, in situ trapping occurred to yield products 6a-c isolated after quenching on CH₂Cl₂ /ice-water/NaHCO₃ and flash-chromatography

Compounds	Experimental conditions	Product	Yield (%)
3a	3.5 h./ -20° to 12°C	6a	77
3b	9 h./ -20° to 12°C	6b	83
3с	6.5 h./ 0-5°C	6c 11c	36 51

Table 3: Trapping hydroxynitrilium ion 5 with C₆H₆

In the case of the methoxy derivative 3c, trapping with benzene competes with intramolecular reaction leading to the cyclic product 11c.



Compounds 6 were characterized from their mass spectra that show three main peaks at M⁺, [M-(MeS)]⁺, a conventional fragment, and [ArNCH]⁺ with increasing order of intensity. The NMR spectra in usual solvent like CDCl₃ are complicated because of equilibrium occurring in solution: two equilibrating isomers were generally observed as indicated by the number of MeS signals and broadening of all NMR signals. Compound 6a gives rise to broad aromatic and to two broad MeS signals in a 3:2 ratio, the stronger

one being the more deshielded. The same phenomenon occurred with 6c (3:2 ratio) and 6b (3:2 ratio). However, when directly dissolved in the strongly protonating medium TFSA, isomerization was prevented and a sole cation 7a or 7b was formed. Hydroxyiminium and iminium carbons resonate, respectively, close to 155 and 178 ppm (Table 4). The downfield shift of the iminium carbons must be attributed to heavy atom effect of the MeS group^{10c}.

However, for the oily product **6c** in TFSA, two ions were observed with MeS signals at $\delta_{H} = 2.70$ and 2.12 ppm, $\delta_{C} = 17.92$ and 17.80 ppm, iminium $\delta_{C} = 178.34$ and 177.69 ppm and hydroxyiminium carbon: $\delta_{C} = 154.17$ and 155.19 ppm. The same phenomenon also occurred when **6a** or **6b** were first dissolved in the minimum amount of CDCl₃ then diluted with excess TFSA (Figure 4).





Structure of compounds 6a-c was further confirmed by their partial hydrolysis that led to the corresponding *para*-substituted aniline and S-methyl α -hydroxyiminophenylthioglyoxylate 8.



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lon		¹³ C NMR
7a	2.74 s, (MeS) 6.55 d, ${}^{3}J_{HH}$ = 8 Hz (2H <i>o</i> -imino.) 6.76 t, ${}^{3}J_{HH}$ = 8 Hz (2H <i>m</i> -imino) 6.84 t, ${}^{3}J_{HH}$ = 8 Hz (2H <i>p</i> -imino.) 6.93 dd, ${}^{3}J_{HH}$ = 8 Hz (1H <i>m</i> - hydroxyimino.) 7.16 t, ${}^{3}J_{HH}$ = 8 Hz (1H <i>p</i> -hydroxyimino.) 7.22 d, ${}^{3}J_{HH}$ = 8 Hz (2H <i>o</i> -hydroxyimino.) 10.73 s, =NH ⁺ -OH	19.94 (MeS); 121.24; 124.75; 130.99; 131.50; 132.84; 133.39; 134.98; 140.17; 155.19 (hydroxyiminium); 178.69 (iminium)
7b	2.72 s. (MeS) 6.45 dd, ${}^{3}J_{HH}$ = 8, ${}^{3}J_{HF}$ = 8 Hz (2H <i>m</i> -imino.) 6.57 dd, ${}^{3}J_{HH}$ = 8, ${}^{4}J_{HF}$ = 4 Hz (2H <i>o</i> -imino.) 6.96 dd, ${}^{3}J_{HH}$ = 8; 8 Hz (2H <i>m</i> -hydroxyimino.) 7.18 t, ${}^{3}J_{HH}$ = 8 Hz (1H <i>p</i> -hydroxyimino.) 7.24 d, ${}^{3}J_{HH}$ = 8 Hz (2H <i>o</i> -hydroxyimino.) 10.67 s, =NH ⁺ -OH	18.24 (MeS); 119.22 d, ${}^{2}J_{CF}$ = 25 Hz (ortho fluoro); 121.42; 126.94 d, ${}^{3}J_{CF}$ = 10 Hz (meta fluoro); 130.89 d, ${}^{4}J_{CF}$ = 4 Hz (para fluoro); 131.32; 132.92; 140.62, 154.83 (hydroxyiminium); 164.58 d, ${}^{1}J_{CF}$ = 258 Hz (ipso fluoro); 178.88 (iminium)

Table 4: NMR spectra of ions 7 in TFSA at room temperature*

*300 MHz; δ relative to TMS/MeOD-d4.

ii) Quenching with MeSH or MeOH. Ions 5a in TFSA was also quenched with excess MeSH to afford the corresponding derivative 9b (62%) along with some hydroxyiminiorthotrithioester 10 (18%). Quenching with methanol in somewhat different experimental conditions led to 9a (50%) along with cyclization product 11a (14%). The NMR spectrum of compound 9b is complicated probably by some kind of equilibrium, as aforementioned in CDCl₃ or acetone- d_6 solution, that gives unusual signals: for instance ¹³C NMR spectrum shows weak and broad signals along with a sharp and strong one. However, dissolving crystals of 9a,b in TFSA lead only to ions 12a,b that can be easily observed (table 5).

Cation	¹ H NMR	¹³ C NMR
9a [*]	2.40 s, (MeS); 3.77 s, (MeO) 7.25 to 7.43 m, 5H ar.; 11.33 bs, 1H. (N-OH)	13.87 (MeS); 52.55 (MeO); 126.29; 127.60; 129.14; 136.56; 162.84 hydroxyimino; 173.95 imine
12a ^{**}	1.97 s, (MeS), 3.32 s, (MeO) 6.71 bs, 2H; 6.87 bs, 3H) 8.05 s, (=N ⁺ H- iminium); 11.03 s, [=N ⁺ H(OH)]	13.44 (MeS); 56.07 (MeO); 126.62; 130.80; 131.64; 133.34; 154.13 (hydroxyiminium); 174.83 (iminium)
9b	2.13 s, (MeS); 2.50 s, (MeS) 6.92 m, 2H; 7.08 m, 1H 7.28 m, 2H; 11.95 bs, (=N-OH)	13.40 MeS [§] ; 122.11; 125.43 ortho; 129.58; 150.30; 150.90
12b***	2.15 s, (MeS); 2.73 s, (MeS) 6.88 d, J= 8 Hz. 2H; 7.17 complex d, J= 8 Hz 3H	16.72 (MeS); 18.25 (MeS); 124.12; 132.50; 134.49; 134.75; 167.32 (hydroxyiminium); 174.66 (iminium)

Table 5: NMR spectra of products 9a,b and their protonated forms 12a,b in TFSA at room temperature

*CDCl3 solution . ** solution in TFSA, reference: methenol d4 in a sealed capillary tube inside the NMR cell, at 255 K.

***TFSA/CDCl3 at room temperature. § only one signal was observed in CDCl3

NMR spectra of ions **12a,b** are characterized by chemical shifts of their MeS and MeO groups, hydroxyiminium and iminium carbon. Both iminium carbons resonate at very close values (174.66 and 174.83 ppm respectively for **12a** and **12b**) meanwhile the hydroxyiminium carbons appear at different values because of heavy atom effect of sulfur (154.13 vs. 167.32 ppm respectively for **12a** and **12b**). This last value (δ_c = 167.32 ppm) is also very close to the one reported for ion **13** (δ_c = 167.0 ppm)⁴.



DISCUSSION.

Protonation of nitrogen atoms in superacids are known to be strong enough to "freeze" the configuration of aromatic oximes^{11a}. In the present case, the observed configurations in TFSA must be the same as those in the neutral forms, either in the crystal when products are directly dissolved in TFSA, or in the liquid state for oily products or solutions in organic solvents. For instance, **6a** or **6b** exist as equilibrating mixtures (broadening of the signals) of two isomers in CDCl₃ solution, further dissolution with large excess of TFSA "freezed" both configurations and allowed observation of two ions with well resolved signals. Those solutions are stable for days at room temperature. By contrast, the same compounds directly dissolved in TFSA led to a sole cation.

When compounds **3a-c** are dissolved in TFSA, cations **4a-c** are probably the kinetic products of the reaction because only one isomer was observed. A second one appeared only slowly in the case of the methoxy derivative because of the ability of methoxy group to share a non negligible part of the positive charge, thus lowering the C=N double bond character of the iminium group and so, its barrier to rotation¹³. In this case, the observed configuration in TFSA solution must be the same as the existing one for **3a-c** in the crystalline state which was "frozen" upon protonation immediatly on dissolution.

Configuration assignment to the C=N bond in ions 4 was made from differences in chemical shifts. Generally, the *Z* configuration is associated (e.g. imine, oxime and their N-protonated forms) with both the more shielded iminium carbon and the more deshielded α -carbon in the anti-position¹⁰. In ion (*Z*)-4c the iminium carbon resonates at $\delta_c = 183.8 \text{ vs.} 187.33 \text{ ppm}$, a $\Delta \delta_c$ in the range of what was observed for aromatic protonated oximes in TFSA¹¹. In both ions 4c, the iminium nitrogen and the protonated nitro group should be as far as possible from each other because of coulombic repulsion, so causing a stretching of the chain; the aromatic ring must be out of the plane of the iminium bond because of steric repulsions as encountered in various imines and related compounds¹². Because of aromatic ring anisotropic effects, the methylene group would be expected to be more shielded in (*E*)-4c than in (*Z*)-4c. Assuming that the anisotropic effect of the nitro group on the methylene should be quite equivalent in both isomers, the (*E*)-4c methylene would resonate upfield, in agreement with the observed values $\delta_H = 5.10 \text{ vs.} 5.44 \text{ ppm}$. Other features concern aromatic protons: in N-protonated aromatic oximes or their C-substituted derivatives, the $\Delta \delta_H$ of *para* methoxy substituted aromatic ring is greater in the *Z* isomer than in the *E* one because of steric interaction between *ortho* proton and the gamma substituent: $\Delta \delta_H = 0.24 \text{ vs.} 0.05 \text{ ppm}$.



The same analysis may be applied to ions 5 to determine the imine configuration. The main feature for the Z isomer would be a shielding of C-iminium carbon and MeS group. The iminium carbon of (Z)-5b resonates at δ_c = 166.08 vs. 169.56 ppm and MeS at δ_H =2.20 vs. 2.34, δ_c = 17.24 vs. 18.04 ppm. It can be concluded that the (Z)/(E)-5b isomer ratio is 2/1 and that 5a is the E isomer.



The following reaction scheme may be postulated to explain the observed ions and their reactivity:

lon 5 is formed probably through the protonated nitronic acid form 14, as observed by Shudo² with different substrates in the same medium, then 15, a kind of protosolvated species as postulated by Olah¹⁶, that leads to 5. The hydroxynitrilium site is electrophilic and reacted with suitable nucleophiles to form the hydroxyimino derivatives, meanwhile the iminium site did not react *in situ* and was only deprotonated into imine when the acidity was reduced. Methanol and methanethiol led to the quenching products 9a,b. Some hydroxyiminoorthotrithioester 10 was also formed by nucleophilic substitution during quenching with MeSH. Aromatic electrophilic substitutions occurred through an intermolecular pathway with benzene or by intramolecular reaction when temperature rises. No attempt was made to determine the configuration of oxime and imine groups in the final products because of isomerization occurring in organic solvent solutions.

It was interesting to compare cyclization capability in the stronger acidic medium HF-SbF₅. In this medium, dissolution of **3a-c** is very exothermic even at low temperature. To prevent this drawback, **3a-c** were first dissolved in HF and then SbF₅ was carefully added at low temperature with vigourous stirring. A quite fast cyclization was observed for **3a,b** but a slower one for the methoxy derivative **3c** (Table 6).

Starting material	Reaction conditions	Products (%)
3a	-30 to 5°C/ 2.5 h.	11a (53) and 3a (41)
3b	-20 to 0-5°C/ 1.5 h.	11b (37) and 3b (50)
3c	-30 to 0-5°C/ 4.5 h.	11c (24) and 3c (60)

Table 6: Cyclization of 3a-c in HF-SbF5

This behavior may be explained by the fact that HF-SbF₅ is much more acidic than TFSA as indicated by their Hammett acidity function H_o. A value of H_o = -13.6 was reported^{14b} for neat TFSA meanwhile a much lower one: H_o < -20 was determined^{14a} in HF-SbF₅ with a 95:5 molar ratio. In those last media, for instance,

complete O-protonation of α -substituted *para*-methoxy benzylic cations were observed by SOMMER *et al.* and this property was used to determine H₀ by mean of NMR spectroscopy^{14a}. In the presently reported reaction the molar ratio of HF-SbF₅ was near 5:1 and the acidity function H₀ may be estimated to be much lower than -21 in the neat medium, however, addition of organic compounds lower the acidity but not enough to prevent a third protonation occurring, e.g. O-methoxyprotonation^{14a,15,} causing slow formation of the electrophilic species: the corresponding hydroxynitrilium ion. The slow isomerization rate may be explained by the fact that a further protonation must be needed, as previously postulated⁴, to achieve formation of hydroxynitrilium ion and H₃O⁺. Because of the existence of polyprotonated species, the activation energy must be high and the addition rate low. The following reaction may be postulated, e.g.:



Such an hypothesis was exemplified by trapping with benzene in comparable temperature and reaction time conditions: in TFSA formation of hydroxynitrilium occurred faster than in HF-SbF₅ and yield benzene trapping product **6c**, along with the intramolecular cyclization product **11c** because of the temperature. In HF-SbF₅ no cyclization occurred and recovery of starting material **3c** was high (Table 7).

	acidic media	temperature/time	products (yield %)
3c	C ₆ H ₆ /TFSA	0-5°C/ 6.5 h	6c (36)
			11c (51)
3c	C ₆ H ₆ /HF-SbF ₅	0-5°C/ 7 h.	6c (16)
			starting material (55)

Table 7: Comparative trapping reactions in TFSA and HF-SbF5

CONCLUSION.

This study extends the previous one concerning formation of hydroxynitrilium ion from 1,1bis(methylthio)-2-nitroethylene. In superacids, 1-arylamino-1-methylthio-2-nitroethylenes are firstly O,Cprotonated before leading to a conjugated hydroxynitrilium ion stable at low temperature, that may undergo intra- or intermolecular electrophilic reaction. From a synthesis point of view, starting materials are readily available, the observed reactions are generally clean and easy to carry on. Other work is in progress in this field and will be published soon.

EXPERIMENTAL PART.

Metting points were determined with a Büchi 510 apparatus using capillary tube (temperature rate 2°C/mn) and are not corrected. Infra-red spectra were recorded with a Bomem Easy Fourrier transform spectrometer, in $CHCl_3$ solution with a NaCl windows cell; absorbance in cm⁻¹ (w= weak, str= strong, b= broad), spectra of insoluble products in this solvent were taken dispersed in KBr powder and reflective technic. A Bruker WP 200 SX NMR spectrometer or a Bruker DPX 300, equipped with a low temperature probe, were used for ¹H and ¹³C spectra recorded respectively at 200 MHz / 50 MHz or 300 MHz / 75 MHz. NMR spectra of cations were recorded in TFSA at low temperature or at room temperature, and chemical shifts are relative to Me₄Si in methanol-d₄, contained in a sealed capillary tube placed inside the NMR cell. The reproducibility of ¹³C NMR shifts was about 0.05 ppm. Electron impact ionization (70 eV) mass spectra were obtained with a Finnigan Incos 500 instrument. HRMS and microanalysis were performed at the CNRS Service microanalyses. Flash chromatography were achieved on silica gel 20 to 45 µm particle size. HPLC was used to check purity or identity of the various compounds describe below, and performed with a Gynkotek 480 pump equipped with Rheodyne 7125 injector valve (20 µl loop) and an Applied Biosystem 785 A programmable UV detector, mobile phase AcOEt/hexane, flow rate 1500µl/mn, column 250X4 mm I.D., 5 µm silica. TFSA and MeSH came from Aldrich. 1,1-bis(methylthio)-2-nitroethylene from which starting products were prepared, was purchased from Lancaster.

Beware of hellish smell when handling MeSH !!

1. Reaction with benzene in TFSA. Typical procedure.

Starting product 3c (297 mg, 1.27 mmol) was dissolved in benzene (1.00 ml, 11.2 mmol) and TFSA (3.7 ml, 42 mmol) at 0-5°C (ice water bath). The strongly colored acidic solution was quenched 6.5 hours later with ice/Na₂CO₃/CH₂Cl₂. After extraction and reduce pressure solvent elimination, the crude product was flash chromatographed (hexane/ethyl acetate : 9/1) to yield 6c (135 mg, 36.4%) as a viscous oil, then a strongly red-orange product 11c (140 mg, 51.1%). S-methyl α -(hydroxyimino)-N-(4-methoxyphenyl)phenylthioglyoxyimidate. [6c]

oil, I.R. 831, 895, 931, 988, 1034, 1109, 1180, 1203, 1242 (str.), 1289, 1353, 1440, 1465, 1502 (str.), 1603, 2837, 3006, 3267, 3562. ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃) mixture of isomers. 2.22 s: 2.54 s (1:2) MeS; 3.66 s: 3.78 s (2: 1) MeO; 6.57 s. 3H; 6.88 m. 1H; 7.17, 7.29, 7.44 and 7.91 m. 5H; 9.82 b.s.: 9.90 b.s. (2: 1) 1H. ¹³C NMR (50 MHz, CDCl₃) 13.67; 55.80; 106.15; 120.65; 128.42; 129.18; 129.42; 130.35; 135.30; 137.83; 143.24; 151.11; 155.90; 161.05. MS: 300 (M⁺, 20), 253 ([M-MeS]⁺, 70), 134 ([MeOC₆H₅NCH]⁺, 100) HRMS: $C_{16}H_{16}N_2O_2S$ cal. 300.093249 found 300.09310

5-methoxy-2-methylthio-3H-indol-3-one 3-oxime. [11c]

m.p. 200-2°C (dec.) lit.: 210-1°C^{5a} ¹H NMR (200 MHz, CDCl₃/DMSO- d_6) 2.56 s. MeS; 3.77 s. MeO; 6.90 dd. J= 3 Hz, J= 8 Hz, (H-6); 7.21 d. J= 8Hz, (H-7); 7.50 d. J= 3Hz, (H-4); 13.43 s. (OH). ¹³C NMR(50 MHz, CDCl₃/DMSO- d_6) 11.75 (MeS); 55.80 (MeO); 112.64; 115.73; 118.46; 122.64; 149.23; 152.56; 157.08; 167.95 (C2). MS 222 (M⁺, 84) 205 (M-[OH], 100) 190 (M-[MeOH], 99), 175 (M-[MeS], 54).

S-methyl a-(hydroxyimino)-N-phenylphenylthioglyoxyimidate. [6a]

Reaction time: 3.5 h and temperature from -20 to 12°C. Yield: 77 %. m.p. 114.5-115°C (Petroleum ether); I.R. 883, 909, 927, 987, 1112, 1221, 1354 (w), 1485, 1592 (str.), 3007, 3018, 3029, 3281, 3561.; ¹H NMR (300 MHz, $CDCl_{3}$ mixture of isomers) 2.28: 2.60 (2:3 ratio) MeS; 6.56; 6.91; 7.06; 7.22; 7.30; 7.52; 7.95; 9.64: 9.66 (3: 2 ratio) NH. MS 270(M⁺, 20), 253 (M-[OH], 8), 223 ([M-MeS]⁺, 75), 104 (C₆H₅NCH⁺, 100); **Analysis** calc. C 66.65 H 5.22 N 10.37 S 11.84 found C 66.81 H 5.05 N 10.59 S 11.63

Minor ion [7a], ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃/TFSA; R.T.) 2.14 s, 3H (MeS); 7.15 s, 5H; 7.30 t, J= 7.5 Hz. 2H; 7.52 J= 7.5 Hz. 1H; 7.83 d, J= 7.5 Hz. 1H; 11.10 s, 1H (NH). (For major ion, see text).

S-methyl a-(hydroxyimino)-N-(4-fluorophenyl)phenylthioglyoxyimidate. [6b]

Reaction time 9 hours and temperature from -20 to 12°C. Yield 83%. m.p. 117-118°C (acetone-petroleum ether); I.R. 832, 897, 934, 987, 1012, 1114, 1151, 1198, 1229, 1354, 1425, 1498 (str.), 1599, 3005, 3014, 3028, 3277, 3561;

¹H NMR (CDCl₃, mixture of isomers) 2.19 s: 2.53 s (2: 3), MeS; 6.64 and 6.67 m. 3H; 6.97, 7.15, 7.26, 7.43 and 7.89 broad singulets 6H; 10.18 b.s.: 10.40 b.s. (3: 2). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, mixture of isomers) 13.93 (broad) MeS; 115.10 d, ${}^{2}J_{CF}$ = 23 Hz; 122.05 d, ${}^{3}J_{CF}$ = 8 Hz, 157.73 ${}^{1}J_{CF}$ = 242 Hz; 129.10; 129.58, 129.77; 154.03; 145.60 (oxime); 165.00 (imine).; MS. 288(M⁺, 15), 241 ([M-MeS]⁺, 42), 207 (18), 122 (58); HRMS C₁₅H₁₃FN₂OS cal. 288.0732 found 288.0727.

Minor ion [7b], ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃/TFSA; R.T.). 2.20 s: MeS; 6.87 dd, ³J_{HH}, ³J_{HF} = 8.4, 7.7 Hz, (2H *meta* imino); 7.20 dd, ³J_{HH}, ⁴J_{HF} = 8, 4 Hz (2H *para* imino); 7.34 t, ³J_{HH} = 8 Hz, (2H *meta* hydroxyimino); 7.56 t, ³J_{HH}, = 8 Hz (1H *para* hydroxyimino); 7.84 d, ³J_{HH} = 8 Hz (2H *ortho* hydroxyimino); 11.53 s. 1H, =NH⁺OH. ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃/TFSA, R.T.) 18.15 (MeS); 119.01 d, ²J_{CF}.= 24 Hz; 127.39 d, ³J_{CF} = 10 Hz; 127.34; 130.39 d, ⁴J_{CF} = 3.6 Hz; 132.50; 134.82; 142.60; 152.73 (hydroxyiminum); 179.32 (iminium). (For major ion, see text).

2. Trapping with methanol.

Starting product 3a (480 mg, 2.28 mmol) was dissolved with stirring in TFSA (4 ml, 0.2 mol) at -30°C to 10°C

for 6 hours. The acidic solution was poured into $CH_2Cl_2:MeOH$ (60:10 ml/ml) at -60°C and let to warm at room temperature. When temperature reached about 0°C, water (15 ml) and NaHCO₃ were added and extraction proceeded with dichloromethane. The resulting products were flash chromatographed ($CH_2Cl_2/Acetone$) to yield 9a: (223 mg, 49.7 %) then a yellow product 11a (58 mg, 14.3 %) and finally starting material (42 mg, 8.7 %)

2-(O-methyl)-1-(S-methyl) 1-N-phenylimino-2-hydroxyimidodithiooxalate. [9a].

m.p. 66-7°C (Pet. Et.), I.R. 746, 754, 788, 889, 937, 1054, 1255 (str.), 1262 (str.), 1314, 1360 (str.), 1439 (str.), 1495, 1560 (str.), 1591, 1641, 2951, 3007, 3033.¹H NMR (CDCl₃) 2.40 (MeS); 3.77(MeO); 7.2-7.5 m, 5H; 11.33 (=N-OH). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃) 13.87 (MeS); 52.55 (MeO); 126.29; 127.60; 129.14; 136.56; 162.84 (C-oximino); 173.95 (C-imino).MS: 224 (M⁺, 35), 192([M-(MeOH)]⁺, 20), 177 ([M-MeS], 55), 150 (40), 118 (50), 77 (100); HRMS: $C_{10}H_{12}N_2O_2S$ cał. 224.06195 found 224.06193.

2-methylthio-3H-indol-3-one 3-oxime. [11a]

mp. 198-9°C (dec.) lit.: 183-5°C^{5a}. ¹**H NMR** (CDCl₃: DMSO- d_6 ; 200 MHz) 2.60 s, (MeS); 7.11-7.18 m, 1H; 7.29-7.41 m, 2H; 7.93 d, J= 7 Hz, 1H; 13.0 b.s. 1H. ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃: DMSO- d_6 ; 50 MHz) 12.05; 118.29; 121.89; 125.01; 126.12; 131.53; 152.72; 155.47; 170.57 (C-2). **M.S.** 192 (M⁺, 32), 175 (M-[OH], 77), 160 (M-[MeOH], 41), 145 (M-[MeS], 12). **HRMS** C₉H₈N₂O₅ calc. 192.03573 found. 192.03565.

Protonated form **[16a]** in TFSA (a very stable solution at room temperature). ¹H NMR (TFSA, Ref: TMS/acetone- d_6) 2.68 s. MeS; 6.96 d, J= 8 Hz, 1H; 7.12 t, J= 8 Hz, 1H; 7.42 t, J= 8 Hz, 1H; 7.82 t, J= 8 Hz; 10.95 s, 1H. ¹³C NMR (TFSA, Ref: TMS/acetone- d_6) 17.03; 115.05; 116.75; 130.82; 135.50; 142.89; 144.64; 148.52; 173.69.

3. Trapping with methanethiol.

Starting product **3a** (430 mg; 2.05 mmol) was dissolved with stirring in TFSA (3 ml; 34 mmol) at -30°C. After 2.5 hours, the acidic solution was poured into CH_2CI_2 :MeSH (60:4 ml/ml) at -60°C and let to warm at room temperature. When temperature reached about 0°C, water (15 ml) and NaHCO₃ were added and extraction proceeded. The white crystalline product so obtained was flash chromatographed (hexane/ethyl acetate: 9/1) to afford **10** (83 mg, 18%)⁴ and **9b** (305 mg, 62%) as white crystals.

bis(S-methyl) 1-N-phenylimino-2-hydroxyimidodithiooxalate. [9b]

m.p. 139-41°C; **I.R.** 882, 914, 963, 985, 1162 (w), 1341, 1428, 1590 (str.), 1605 (str.), 2930, 3002, 3252, 3569.¹H NMR (acetone d_6 , 200 MHz) 2.13 s, (MeS); 2.50 s, (MeS); 6.92 m, 2H; 7.07 m, 1H; 7.28 m, 2H; 11.95 s, (=N-OH).¹³C NMR (acetone d_6 , 50 MHz) 13.40 (MeS); 122.11; 125.43; 129.58; 150.30; 150.90. MS. 240 (M⁺, 8), 193 ([M-MeS]⁺, 50), 77 (100). HRMS C₁₀H₁₂N₂OS₂ cal. 240.03910 found 240.0391.

4. Cyclization in HF-SbF5. Typical Procedure.

Compound **3b** (323 mg; 1.41 mmol) was dissolved in HF (6 ml; 0.33 mol) at -30°C, then SbF₅ (4 ml, 12 g; 55 mmol.) was slowly added with effective stirring. After some minutes, the reaction medium was let to slowly warm to 0-5°C. After 1.5 h. reaction time, the acidic medium was poured into ice/Na₂CO₃/CH₂Cl₂. After extraction with CH₂Cl₂ (3X100 ml), the organic phase was washed with brine (10 ml) then dried over MgSO₄. Solvent was eliminated under vacuum and the resulting products flash chromatographed with CH₂Cl₂: ethyl acetate.(9:1) to afford an orange red product **11b** (120 mg; 37%) then starting material **3b** (162 mg; 50%)

5-fluoro-2-methylthio-3H-indol-3-one 3-oxime. [11b]

mp. 199-202°C (dec.) lit. 178-180°C^{5a} ¹H NMR(CDCl₃: DMSO-d₆; 300MHz) 2.59 s (MeS); 7.13 ddd ${}^{3}J_{HF}$ =7.8 J_{HH}=2.2, 9 Hz (H6); 7.28 dd, ${}^{4}J_{HF}$ = 3.7 ${}^{3}J_{HH}$ =8.3 Hz (H7); 7.63 dd, ${}^{3}J_{HF}$ =7.8 J_{HH}= 2.2 Hz (H4). ${}^{13}C$ NMR (CDCl₃: DMSO-d₆;75 MHz) 12.37 (MeS); 113.54 d, ${}^{2}J_{CF}$ = 27 Hz (C4); 117.59 d, ${}^{2}J_{CF}$ = 24 Hz (C6); 119.24 d, ${}^{3}J_{CF}$ = 8 Hz (C7); 122.86 d ${}^{3}J_{CF}$ = 10 Hz (C9); 150.90 m (C3);152.38 d ${}^{4}J_{CF}$ = 3 Hz (C8); 159.97 d, ${}^{1}J_{CF}$ = 242 Hz (C5); 170.59 m (C9). M.S. 210 (M⁺, 57), 193 (M-[OH], 100), 178 (M-[MeOH], 88), 149 (70).

5. Trapping with benzene in HF-SbF₅.

Compound 3c (295 mg; 1.23 mmol) was dissolved in HF (5 ml; 0.25 mol) at -30°C with benzene (1500 µl; 16.9 mmol), then SbF₅ (3.5 ml; 48 mmol.) was slowly added with effective stirring. After some minutes, the reaction medium was let to slowly warm to 0-5°C. After 7 h. reaction time, the acidic medium was poured into ice/Na₂CO₃/CH₂Cl₂ and extraction proceeded as above. Flash chromatography afforded 6c (44 mg; 16 %) then starting material (162 mg 55%).

6. Hydrolysis: typical procedure.

Compound 6b (168 mg; 0.56 mmol.) was dissolved in 6M HCl (5 ml) with the help of some ethanol, and heated at 70° C for 7 hours. The solution was poured over ice/sodium carbonate and extracted with CH₂Cl₂ (3 X 40ml). Organic phase

was dry over MgSO₄ then evaporated under vacuum to yield a residue that was flash chromatographed (hexane: AcOEt 8: 3) to afford 8 (65 mg; 57%)⁴ and 4-fluoroaniline (24 mg; 39%).

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- Other protonations may also be considered e.g. S-protonation ,N-protonation or C-protonation of aromatic ring. For more details, see Olah, G.A.; Surya Prakash, G.G.; Sommer, J. in "SUPERACIDS", John Wiley and Sons. 1985.p. 177-211
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