

Total Synthesis of Reserpine





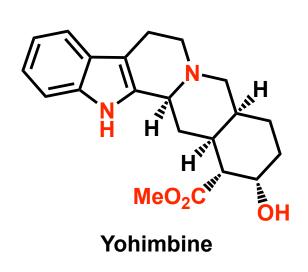
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Isolation of Reserpine





Isolation

Reserpine was isolated from the dried root of the Indian 'Snake root'

Reserpine had been used for the treatment of snake bites, insanity etc

Its structure was elucidated in 1953 and the absolute configuration was established in 1955

The first total synthesis of this indole-based alkaloid was reported by R. B. Woodward in 1956 and since then there are several syntheses



Synthetic Challenges



One of the most complex natural products of its size

There are 5 contiguous chiral centers

21 atoms arranged in 5 rings

Most of the Synthesis focused on 'Synthesis of E-ring" first

Construction of E ring followed by D, AB and C

Diels-Alder reaction also has been utilized to get the *cis* ring junction of DE ring

CD ring junction is epimerizable under acidic conditions

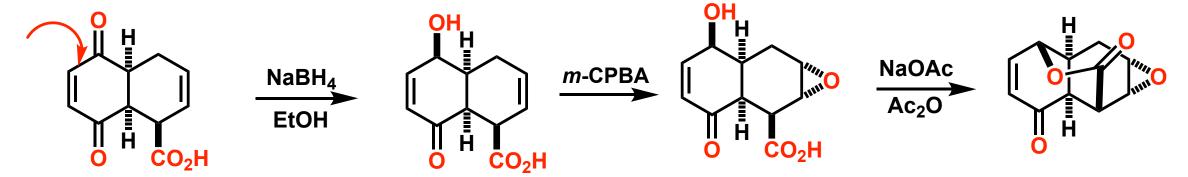


Woodward's Retrosynthesis







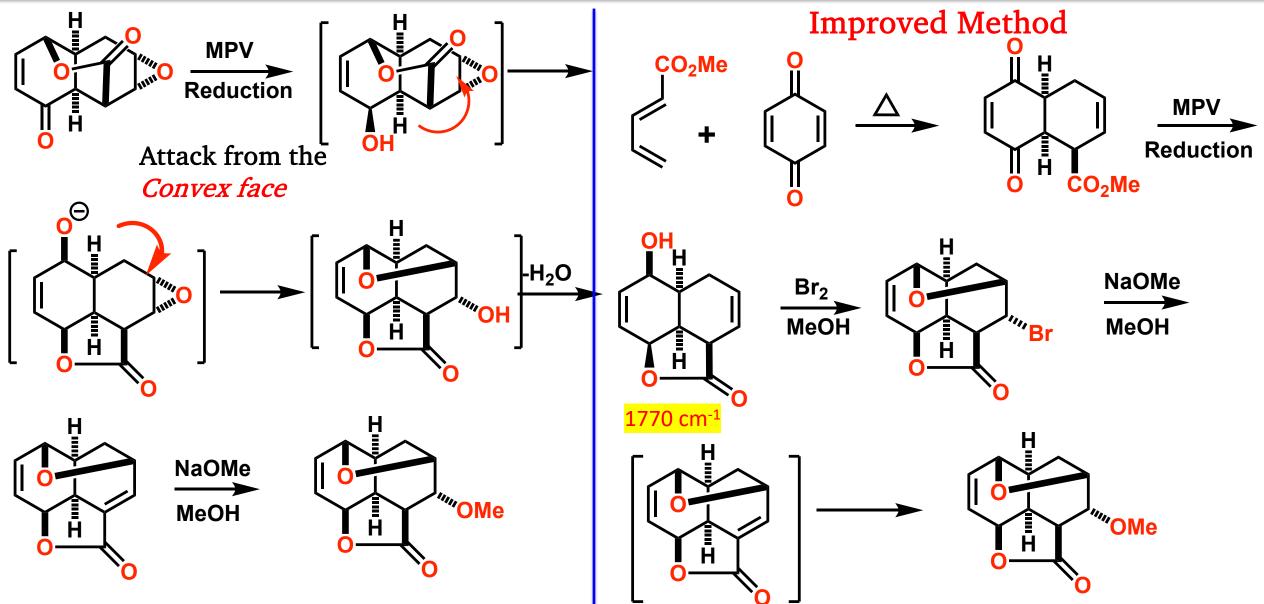


Stereo- & Regioselective reduction

Attack from the *Convex face*

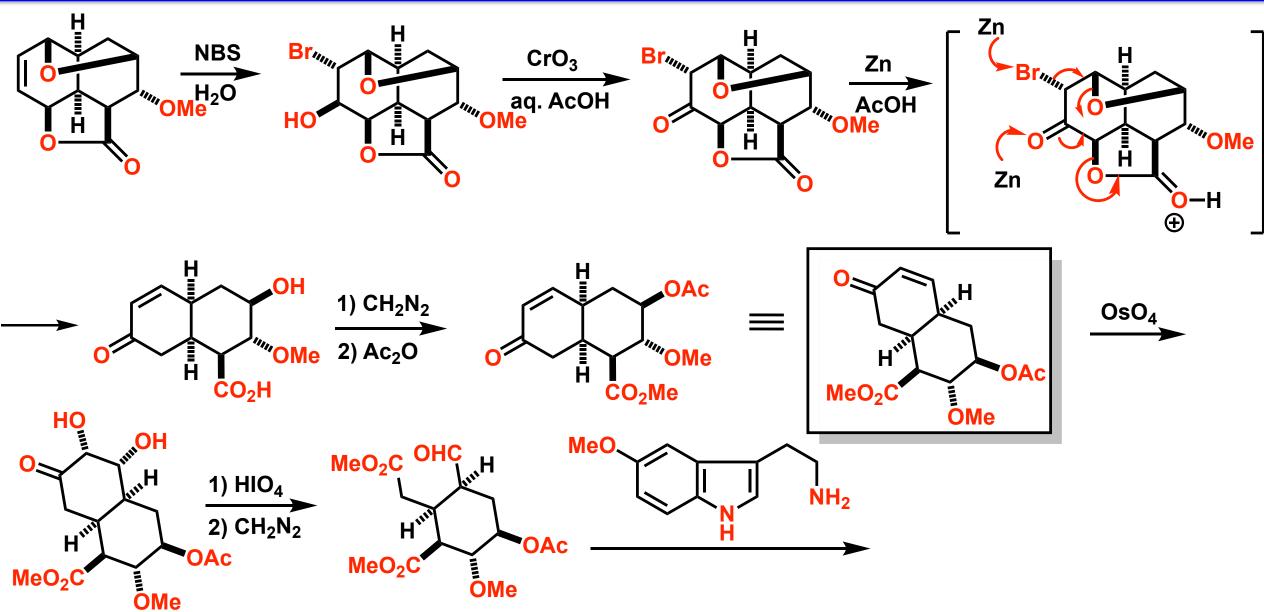
























After resolution with camphor sulfonic acid