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Synthetic Communications

An International Journal for Rapid Communication of Synthetic Organic Chemistry

ISSN: 0039-7911 (Print) 1532-2432 (Online) Journal homepage: http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/lsyc20

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To cite this article: Sridhar Musulla, Bharathi Kumari Y, Mahesh Madala, Srinivasa Rao A & Vema Venkata Naresh (2018) Alternative total synthesis of (+)-aspicilin, Synthetic Communications, 48:13, 1657-1662, DOI: 10.1080/00397911.2018.1458241

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/00397911.2018.1458241

SYNTHETIC COMMUNICATIONS®
2018, VOL. 48, NO. 13, 1657–1662
https://doi.org/10.1080/00397911.2018.1458241

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Alternative total synthesis of (+)-aspicilin

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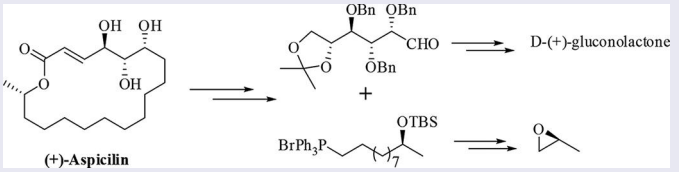
ABSTRACT

The total synthesis of an 18-membered polyhydroxylated macrolide (+)-Aspicilin was accomplished starting from commercially available enantiopure propylene oxide and D-(+)-gluconolactone by asymmetric synthetic approach. The key reactions involved are Witttig reaction, Sharpless asymmetric dihydroxylation, and Yamaguchi macrolactonization.

GRAPHICAL ABSTRACT



ARTICLE HISTORY
Received 17 December 2017

KEYWORDS
Aspicilin; *S*-propylene oxide; sharpless asymmetric dihydroxylation and Yamaguchi macrolactonization; witttig olefination

Introduction

Polyhydroxylated macrolides[1] are interesting synthetic targets to many synthetic chemists due to their interesting structure and potential biological activities, including inhibition of cholesterol biosynthesis[2–5] and microfilament formation,[1b] antimalarial and antibacterial activity,[6,7] and phytotoxicity.[1c]

Aspicilin (**1**), an 18-membered polyhydroxylated macrolide, was isolated from lichen of the *Lecanoraceae* family in 1900 by Hesse.[8] The absolute configuration of Aspicilin (**1**) was determined as 4 R,5S,6 R,17S by a combination of various spectroscopic methods, single-crystal X-ray analysis, and synthetic studies.[9] The impressive structural features of Aspicilin (**1**), (four stereocenters in which three contiguous stereocenters (4 R,5S,6 R) and an 18-membered macrolactone ring) appeared to be an attractive target molecule for total synthesis. To date, several synthetic approaches have been reported for the total synthesis of Aspicilin **1** (Fig. 1).[10]

In continuation of our interest on the total synthesis of biologically active natural products,[11] we herein disclose our successful synthetic approach toward the total synthesis of **1** utilizing the Witttig reaction, Sharpless asymmetric dihydroxylation, and Yamaguchi macrolactonization as the key steps.

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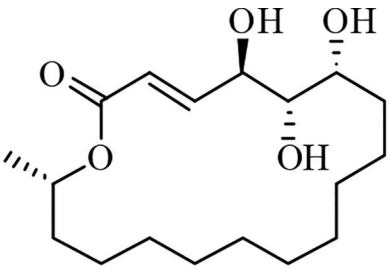
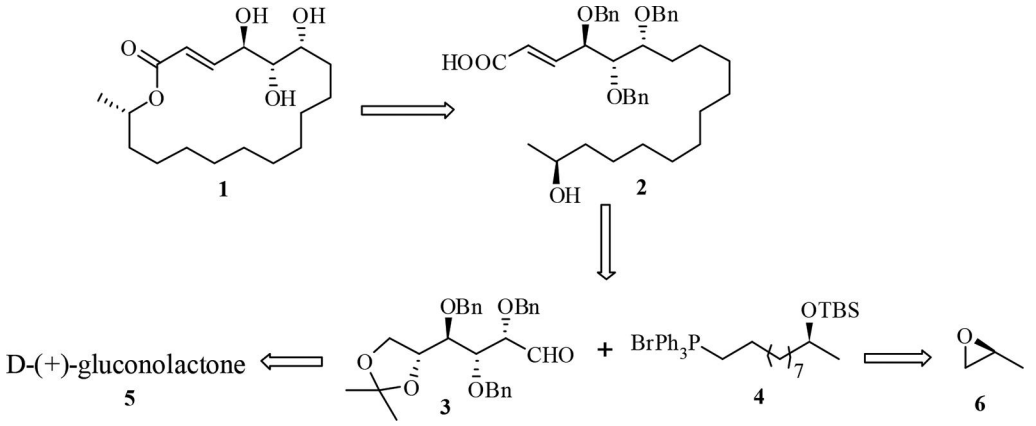


Figure 1. Structure of (+)-Aspicilin (**1**).

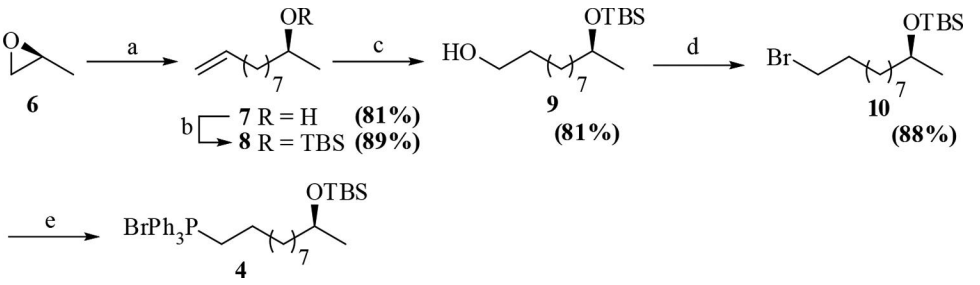
Results and discussion

Our retrosynthetic approach for the synthesis of Aspicilin is outlined in Scheme 1. The target molecule **1** could be made from hydroxy acid **2** by intramolecular Yamaguchi macrolactonization, whereas 2 could be synthesized from the coupling reaction of two key fragments aldehyde **3** and phosphonium salt **4**. Aldehyde **3** could be obtained from cheap and commercially available D-(+)-gluconolactone **5** and **4** was achieved from known chiral epoxide **6**.

Thus, the synthesis of (+)-Aspicilin **1** mainly involved the synthesis of two key fragments aldehyde **3** and phosphonium salt **4** followed by their coupling into the target molecule. First, our synthesis begins with the preparation of key fragment phosphonium salt **4**, which was shown in Scheme 1. Accordingly, opening of known chiral epoxide **6** with oct-7-enylmagnesium bromide (prepared from 1-bromooctene and Mg in THF) in the presence of CuCN in THF at −15 °C to rt furnished allyl alcohol **7** in 81% of yield. Subsequent Silyl ether formation of resulting alcohol **7** using TBSCl in the presence of Imidazole in CH_2Cl_2 at 0 °C to rt for 6 h provided **silyl** ether **8** in 89% of yield. Next, Silyl ether **8** was subjected to hydroboration with 9-BBN-H followed by treatment with sodium hydroxide and H_2O_2 to give alcohol **9** in 81% yield. Treatment of alcohol **9** with CBr_4 and PPh_3 in CH_2Cl_2 at 0 °C to rt for 4 h gave



Scheme 1. Retroanalysis of (+)-Aspicilin (**1**).



Scheme 2. Synthesis of fragment **4.** *Reagents and conditions*: (a) 1-bromooctene, Mg, CuCN, THF, reflux to −15 °C, 7 h; (b) TBSCl, imidazole, CH_2Cl_2, 0 °C to rt, 6 h; (c) i) 9-BBN, THF, **reflux**, 3 h ii) NaOH, H_2O_2, rt, 12 h; (d) CBr_4, PPh_3, CH_2Cl_2, 0 °C to rt, 12 h; (e) PPh_3, CH_3CN, 90 °C, 24 h, quantitative.

bromide **10** in 88% yield, which was later converted into corresponding phosphonium salt **4** using PPh_3 in CH_3CN at 90 °C for 24 h in quantitative yield (Scheme 2).

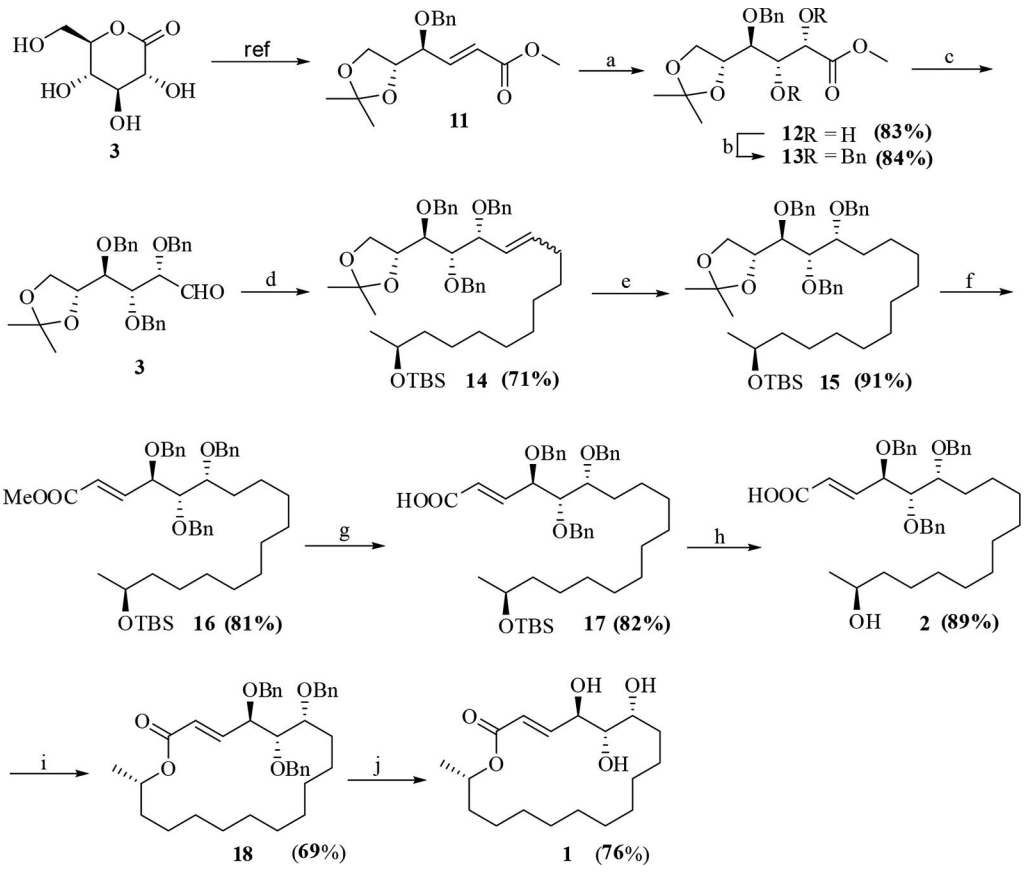
After successful synthesis of phosphonium salt **4**, we next focused on another key fragment aldehyde **3** followed by its coupling with phosphonium salt **4 lead to** the target molecule. Accordingly, commercially available D-(+)-gluconolactone **5** was converted into *trans*-ester **11** according to a known procedure.[12] Consequently, ester **11** was subjected to Sharpless asymmetric dihydroxylation[13] with AD-mix-β in *t*-BuOH-H_2O (1:1) at 0 °C for 22 h to give corresponding diol **12** in 83% yield as a single diastereomer. In the next step, the newly formed hydroxy groups in the resulting diol **12** were protected as its benzyl ethers using BnBr in the presence of NaH in THF at 0 °C to rt for 8 h to give tri-benzyl ether **13** in 84% yield. Treatment of the methyl ester in **13** using DIBAL-H gave an aldehyde **3** in 82% yield, which upon Wittig reaction with phosphonium salt **4** using NaHMDS in THF at 0 to −78 °C furnished isomeric mixture of **olefin 14** in 81% of yield. Next, the olefin mixture **14** was subjected to partial **hydrogenation** with 5% Pd-C in ethyl acetate to afford saturated compound **15** in 91% yield, which on treatment with H_5IO_6 in Et_2O at rt followed by a Wittig olefination of resulting aldehyde afforded the exclusively *trans* ester **16** in 81% yield (Scheme 3).

Later, Ester **16** was subjected to base (LiOH) hydrolysis in THF:MeOH:H_2O (3:1:1) to afford the corresponding acid **17**, which on desilylation with TBAF in THF at 0 °C to room temperature for 3 h afforded hydroxy acid **2** in 89% yield. After successful synthesis of hydroxyl acid fragment **2**, it was then focused at macrolactonization and further transformations to complete the synthesis of Aspicilin **1**. Accordingly, **hydroxy**-acid **2** was subjected to macrolactonization under Yamaguchi high dilution conditions[14] ((i) 2,4,6-trichlorobenzoyl chloride, Et_3N, dry THF, rt, 2 h; ii) DMAP, toluene, 90 °C) to provide the lactone **18** in 69% yield. In the final step, deprotection of three benzyl ethers in lactone **18 was** removed successfully in a single step using $TiCl_4$ at 0 °C to r.t to afford Aspicilin **1** [m.p. 151–153 °C. $[\alpha]_D^{25} = +36.8$ (*c* 0.6, $CHCl_3$) in 76% yield. The characterization (^1H and ^{13}C NMR spectroscopy and optical rotation) of our synthetic sample was identical to the literature data.

Experimental section

(5R,6S,7R,18S,E)-5,6,7-tris(benzyloxy)-18-methyloxacyclooctadec-3-en-2-one (18)

To a stirred solution of **2** (0.38 g, 0.61 mmol) and Et_3N (0.26 mL, 1.83 mmol) in dry THF (3 mL), a solution of 2, 4, 6-trichlorobenzoyl chloride (0.22 mL, 0.91 mmol) in



Scheme 3. Synthesis of (+)-Aspicilin (**1**). *Reagents and conditions*: (a) AD-mix-β, $MeSO_2NH_2$, *t*-BuOH-H_2O, 0 °C, 22 h; (b) BnBr, NaH, THF, 0 °C to rt, 8 h; (c) DiBAL-H, -78 °C, CH_2Cl_2, 2 h; (d) **4**, NaHMDS, THF, 0 °C, then −78 °C, 6 h; (e) H_2, Pd/C, EtOAc, rt, 3 h; (f) i) H_5IO_6, Et_2O, 0 °C to rt, 5 h. Ii) Ph_3P=CHCOOMe, Benzene, reflux, 2 h; (g) LiOH, THF:MeOH:H_2O (3:1:1), rt, 4 h; (h) TBAF, THF, 0 °C to rt, 3 h; (i) i) 2,4,6-trichlorobenzoyl chloride, Et_3N, dry THF, rt, 2 h, ii) DMAP, toluene, 90 °C, 10 h; (j) $TiCl_4$, 0 °C to rt, 2 h.

dry THF (1 mL) was added. The resulting mixture was stirred for 2 h at room temperature under nitrogen atmosphere and evaporated to afford the mixed anhydride. It was diluted with toluene (10 mL) and filtered quickly through celite. The filtrate was added dropwise to a stirred solution of DMAP (0.07 g, 0.61 mmol) in toluene (490 mL) (total volume used for this operation was 500 mL) at 90 °C over a period of 8 h. After the complete addition, the reaction mixture was stirred at same temperature for 2 h. It was cooled; washed with 7% aq $NaHCO_3$ (40 mL), 2 M aqueous HCl (40 mL), brine (40 mL); and dried (Na_2SO_4). The organic layer was evaporated and the obtained residue was purified by column chromatography (silica gel, 60–120 mesh, 15% EtOAc in pet. ether) to give **18** (0.24 g, 69%) as a syrup. $[\alpha]_D^{25}$ -10.6 (*c* 0.56, CH_2Cl_2); IR (neat): 2931, 2851, 1719, 1649, 1455, 1366, 1166, 1067 cm^{-1}; ^1H NMR (300 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ: 7.34–7.21 (m, 15H, ArH), 7.12 (dd, 1H, $J = 8.3$, 16.1 Hz, olefinic), 6.01 (d, 1H, $J = 16.1$ Hz, olefinic), 4.99 (m, 1H, benzylic), 4.88 (d, 1H, $J = 14.49$ Hz, benzylic), 4.66 (d, 1H, $J = 14.49$ Hz, benzylic), 4.64 (d, 1H, $J = 11.25$ Hz, benzylic), 4.57 (d, 1H, $J = 11.91$ Hz, benzylic), 4.39 (d, 1H, $J = 11.25$ Hz, benzylic), 4.32

(d, 1H, 11.91 Hz, –OCH), 4.12 (d, 1H, $J = 8.61$ Hz, –OCH), 3.84 (dd, 1H, $J = 1.05$, 8.61 Hz, –OCH), 3.31 (m, 1H, –OCH), 1.62–0.99 (m, 23H, 10 x $-CH_2$, $-CH_3$); ^{13}C NMR (75 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ: 165.5, 144.0, 138.8, 138.7, 138.1, 128.5, 128.4, 128.1, 128.0, 127.9, 127.7, 127.53, 127.1, 125.4, 84.3, 79.6, 78.8, 74.3, 74.2, 71.1, 70.6, 35.4, 31.0, 29.2, 28.2, 28.0, 27.4, 26.7, 26.5, 25.8, 23.2, 20.1; HRMS (ESI): *m/z* calculated for $C_{39}H_{50}O_5Na$ $[M+Na]^+$ 621.3556, found 621.3559.

(+)-Aspicilin (1)

To a stirred solution of **18** (0.2 g, 0.33 mmol) in CH_2Cl_2 (1 mL), $TiCl_4$ (0.15 mL, 1.33 mmol) in CH_2Cl_2 (1 mL) was added at 0 °C and stirred at room temperature for 2 h. The reaction mixture was treated with saturated $NaHCO_3$ solution (5 mL) and extracted with $CHCl_3$ (3 × 10 mL). The combined organic layers were washed with water (10 mL), brine (10 mL) and dried (Na_2SO_4) and concentrated. The residue was purified by column chromatography (silica gel, 60–120 mesh, 30% EtOAc in pet. ether) to afford **1** (82 mg, 76%) as a colorless syrup, $[\alpha]_D^{25} + 35.8$ (*c* 0.9, CH_2Cl_2); m.p.: 151–153 °C; IR (neat): 3444, 3277, 2928, 2854, 1709, 1649, 1455, 1366, 1245, 1163, 1075 cm^{-1}; ^1H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$): δ 6.91 (dd, 1H, $J = 5.3$, 16.0 Hz, olefinic), 6.13 (d, 1H, $J = 16.0$ Hz, olefinic), 5.08–5.02 (m, 1H, –OCH), 4.63–4.57 (m, 1H, –OCH), 3.79–3.73 (m, 1H, –OCH), 3.62–3.54 (m, 1H, –OCH), 3.31 (brs, 1H, –OH), 3.14 (brs, 1H, –OH), 2.88 (brs, 1H, –OH), 1.59–1.54 (m, 4H, 2 x $-CH_2$), 1.49–1.26 (m, 19H, 8 x $-CH_2$, $-CH_3$); ^{13}C NMR (75 MHz, $CDCl_3$): δ 165.5, 144.6, 123.1, 74.8, 73.3, 71.2, 69.9, 35.8, 32.0, 28.1, 27.7, 27.5, 27.2, 27.1, 26.4, 24.2, 23.7, 20.5; HRMS (ESI): *m/z* calculated for $C_{18}H_{32}O_5Na$ $[M+Na]^+$ 351.2147, found 351.2154.

Conclusion

Thus, in summary, an efficient stereoselective total synthesis of Aspicilin (**1**) has been achieved from commercially available D-(+)-gluconolactone. The key steps involved in this synthesis are Wittig olefination, Sharpless asymmetric dihydroxylation, and Yamaguchi macrolatonization.

Acknowledgments

The autohrs are thankful to GVK Bio sciences, JNT University, Hyderabad for constant encouragement in providing laboratory facilities and analytical data.

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