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The synthetically interesting processes available for indolization reactions are discussed and illustrated in tabular form and particular emphasis is placed on the more recent methods.

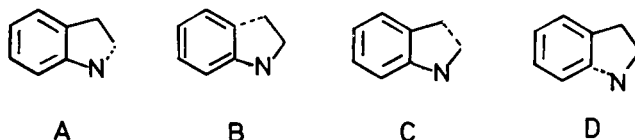
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### Introduction.

The indole skeleton, when selectively functionalized, is a building block for the preparation of numerous alkaloids and substances with pronounced biological activities [1]. The search for efficient syntheses of indoles has been both a target and a problem in organic synthesis for nearly a century. Beginning with the classical Fischer and Reisert method, there is, thus, still a major need for versatile and, especially, regiospecific methods for the preparation of indole derivatives. In the present review, recent variants of indolization reactions for the preparation of synthetically attractive indoles are summarized. In general, work published in the period 1981 to 1986 has been surveyed. Reference has also been made to individual, trend-setting synthetic reports from the older literature. For a review on the older methods, see Ref. [2] and on some selected, more recent methods, see Refs. [3,4]. A review on the oldest indolization reaction, the Fischer indole synthesis, has been published recently [5].

The majority of indolization reactions start from selectively functionalized arenes. The arrangement of this article is based on the processes **A**, **B**, **C**, and **D**. In this roughly mechanistic classification of the processes, the respective key step in the indolization is indicated by a dashed bond (- -) in the formulae **A** - **D** (Tables 1-4).

Table 5 lists new syntheses of indoles which cannot be directly classified as types **A** - **D**, either because the mechanisms have not yet been clarified or because they are based on completely different strategies such as, for example, benzoanellation.

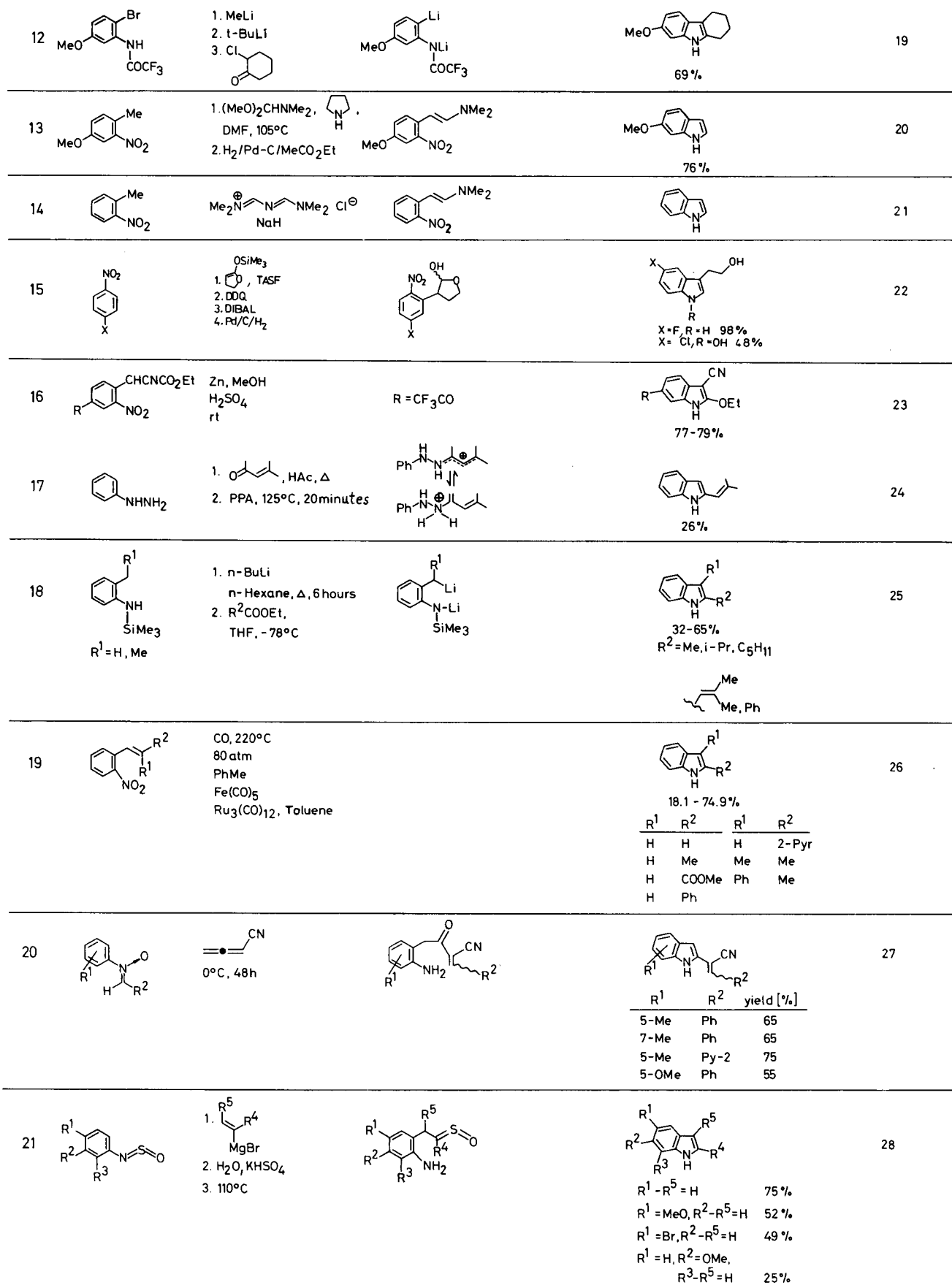


### Indolization Processes.

Type **A** (Table 1), the most highly developed indolization process, exhibits a broad synthetic flexibility, especially for the construction of indole derivatives substituted at position 2 and on the benzene ring. Both donor- and acceptor-substituted derivatives are easily accessible in this way. The palladium-catalyzed indolization of *o*-alkenyltolylanilines (Entry 4) and the heteroCope variants (Entries 8,9) have particularly wide scopes of application. Modified Leimgruber-Batcho processes represent very elegant methods for the synthesis of 4-substituted indoles (Entries 3,10). A convenient, one-pot preparation of 6-indolecarbaldehyde and 6-indolemethanol proceeds through an analogous reaction (Entry 11). Carbocyclic [b]annellated indole derivatives can be obtained through organometallic routes from the reactions of *N*-trifluoroacetyl-*o*-bromoanilines with 2-chlorocyclohexanone (or 2-chlorocyclopentanone) (Entry 12). Substituted tryptophol derivatives are elegantly accessible from silyl enol ethers and nitroarenes (Entry 15). The synthetically attractive 2-vinylindoles can be obtained by a modified Fischer method (Entry 17) or by the preparatively more flexible heteroCope methodology (Entry 20).

Table 1		Type A											
Entry	Starting material	Reagent, Conditions	Intermediate Mechanism	Product	Lit.								
1		Me <sub>2</sub> S <sup>+</sup> CH <sub>2</sub> <sup>-</sup> , DMSO 70°C		 <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>R</th> <th>yield [%]</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Me</td> <td>80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ph</td> <td>69</td> </tr> <tr> <td>CO<sub>2</sub>H</td> <td>48</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	R	yield [%]	Me	80	Ph	69	CO <sub>2</sub> H	48	6
R	yield [%]												
Me	80												
Ph	69												
CO <sub>2</sub> H	48												
2		CO/H <sub>2</sub> , 160°C/160 atm Rh-C		 70%	7								

3		1. $\text{H}_2\text{NNHCONH}_2$ 2. $\text{H}_2/\text{Pd-C}$			<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>R</th> <th>yield [%]</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Me</td> <td>81</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MeO</td> <td>82</td> </tr> <tr> <td>CO<sub>2</sub>Me</td> <td>82</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	R	yield [%]	Me	81	MeO	82	CO <sub>2</sub> Me	82	8												
R	yield [%]																									
Me	81																									
MeO	82																									
CO <sub>2</sub> Me	82																									
4		$\text{Li}_2\text{PdCl}_4$ , EtOH, 36 hours, reflux			<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>R = X = H</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>R = -C<sub>4</sub>H<sub>9</sub>, X = H</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>R = Ph, X = H</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>R = Ph, X = 5-Me</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>R = C<sub>4</sub>H<sub>9</sub>, X = 5-NO<sub>2</sub></td> <td>65-85%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	R = X = H		R = -C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>9</sub> , X = H		R = Ph, X = H		R = Ph, X = 5-Me		R = C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>9</sub> , X = 5-NO <sub>2</sub>	65-85%	9										
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R = C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>9</sub> , X = 5-NO <sub>2</sub>	65-85%																									
5		$\text{R}^1\text{-CH}_2\text{-C(=O)-R}^2$ liq. $\text{NH}_3$ , t-BuOK, hv, -33°C			<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>R<sup>1</sup> = H, R<sup>2</sup> = H, Me, Pr<sup>i</sup>;</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup> = -(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>4</sub>-</td> <td>&gt;75%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	R <sup>1</sup> = H, R <sup>2</sup> = H, Me, Pr <sup>i</sup> ;		R <sup>1</sup> , R <sup>2</sup> = -(CH <sub>2</sub> ) <sub>4</sub> -	>75%	10																
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6		1. $\text{PdCl}_2(\text{MeCN})_2$ THF 2. Et <sub>3</sub> N -HCl, -PdH			84%	11																				
7		1. TFA, PhCH <sub>3</sub> , 85°C 2. O <sub>3</sub> , CH <sub>2</sub> Cl <sub>2</sub> , -78°C 3. MeSMe, rt, 12 hours 4. Ag <sub>2</sub> O, EtOH -CHO → -COOEt			<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>R = CHO</td> <td>66%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>COOEt</td> <td>36%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	R = CHO	66%	COOEt	36%	12																
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COOEt	36%																									
8		$\text{CH}_2=\text{C}(\text{OAc})\text{R}^2$ $\text{Li}_2\text{PdCl}_4$ 0° → 70°C			<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>R<sup>2</sup> = Me, -O-Et, -Ph, -CH=CH<sub>2</sub>, -CH<sub>2</sub>-CH<sub>2</sub>Cl; R<sup>1</sup> = H</td> <td>51-95%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>R<sup>1</sup> = H; R<sup>2</sup> = CH<sub>2</sub>Cl</td> <td>52%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup> = H</td> <td>12%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	R <sup>2</sup> = Me, -O-Et, -Ph, -CH=CH <sub>2</sub> , -CH <sub>2</sub> -CH <sub>2</sub> Cl; R <sup>1</sup> = H	51-95%	R <sup>1</sup> = H; R <sup>2</sup> = CH <sub>2</sub> Cl	52%	R <sup>1</sup> , R <sup>2</sup> = H	12%	13														
R <sup>2</sup> = Me, -O-Et, -Ph, -CH=CH <sub>2</sub> , -CH <sub>2</sub> -CH <sub>2</sub> Cl; R <sup>1</sup> = H	51-95%																									
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R <sup>1</sup> , R <sup>2</sup> = H	12%																									
9		1. CF <sub>3</sub> COOLi 2. $\text{CH}_2=\text{C}(\text{OR})\text{X}$ HCOOH			<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>R<sup>1</sup></th> <th>R<sup>2</sup></th> <th>X</th> <th>yield [%]</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>5-Me</td> <td>COMe</td> <td>CN</td> <td>70</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5-Me</td> <td>COMe</td> <td>PO(OEt)<sub>2</sub></td> <td>95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H</td> <td>CO<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>Ph</td> <td>SOMe</td> <td>85</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5-CO<sub>2</sub>Me</td> <td>COMe</td> <td>SOPh</td> <td>85</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	R <sup>1</sup>	R <sup>2</sup>	X	yield [%]	5-Me	COMe	CN	70	5-Me	COMe	PO(OEt) <sub>2</sub>	95	H	CO <sub>2</sub> CH <sub>2</sub> Ph	SOMe	85	5-CO <sub>2</sub> Me	COMe	SOPh	85	14
R <sup>1</sup>	R <sup>2</sup>	X	yield [%]																							
5-Me	COMe	CN	70																							
5-Me	COMe	PO(OEt) <sub>2</sub>	95																							
H	CO <sub>2</sub> CH <sub>2</sub> Ph	SOMe	85																							
5-CO <sub>2</sub> Me	COMe	SOPh	85																							
10		1. TPM 2. TiCl <sub>3</sub>			60-70%	15																				
				X = 4-OAlk, 5-OAlk 4-CH <sub>2</sub> Ph, 5-CH <sub>2</sub> Ph, 4-Cl, 4-CN																						
		$\text{Ni}_2\text{B}$ , EtOH $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$ , Δ			90%	16																				
						17																				
11		1. DMFDMA, THF·Py 2. TiCl <sub>3</sub>			22%	18																				
					20%																					



Type B (Table 2) represents an indolization process proceeding through formation of the indole 3/3a bond. Some of these processes exhibit a wide synthetic flexibility (Entries 1,2,7). Whereas the method illustrated in Entry 1 makes an elegant access to 3-acetyl- and 3-ethoxycarbonyl-substituted indoles possible, the method of Entry 2 offers

a new route to 2-phenylindoles. The reaction exemplified by Entry 7 involves a new intramolecular, carbanionic addition to acetylenes. The 2-lithioindole formed as an intermediate in this process can be further functionalized by reaction with electrophiles.

Entry	Starting material	Reagent, Conditions	Intermediate, Mechanism	Product	Lit.									
1		1. $\text{CH}_2=\text{C}(\text{R}^2)\text{LiCl}$ , $\text{PdCl}_2(\text{MeCN})_2$ , $\text{O}=\text{C}_6\text{H}_4=\text{O}$ 2. $\text{Pd}(\text{OAc})_2$ , $\text{ToI}_3\text{P}$ , $\text{Et}_3\text{N}$ , $\text{MeCN}$ $100^\circ\text{C}$ , sealed tube			29 80-96% $\text{R}^1 = \text{H}, 3-, 4-, 5-\text{COOMe}, 5-\text{OMe}$ $\text{R}^2 = \text{Me}, \text{OEt}$									
2		$\text{Ph}-\text{C}(\text{O}^+)(\text{SMe}_2)-\text{CH}_2-\text{Br}^-$ $\text{PhNEt}_2$ , $\Delta$ , 3hours			30 60 % $\text{R}^1, \text{R}^2 = \text{H}$ 72 % $\text{R}^1 = \text{Me}, \text{R}^2 = \text{H}$ 75 % $\text{R}^1 = \text{Me}, \text{R}^2 = \text{Me}$									
3		$(\text{CF}_3\text{CO})_2\text{O}$ $\text{CF}_3\text{CO}_2\text{H}$ , $56^\circ\text{C}$			31 93%									
4		$\text{Pd}^0$ $125^\circ\text{C}$			32 43%									
5		Cyclodehydrogenation porous catalyst (silica, alumina) $710-750^\circ\text{C}$			33 50 %									
6		1. $\text{Ni}(\text{PPh}_3)_4$ 2. $\text{O}_2$			34 5,2 %									
7		1. $\text{R}^1\text{Li}$ 2. $\text{H}^+$			35 <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><math>\text{R}^1</math></th> <th><math>\text{R}^2</math></th> <th>yield [%]</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>n-Bu</td> <td>OMe</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>sec-Bu</td> <td>OMe</td> <td>50</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	$\text{R}^1$	$\text{R}^2$	yield [%]	n-Bu	OMe	60	sec-Bu	OMe	50
$\text{R}^1$	$\text{R}^2$	yield [%]												
n-Bu	OMe	60												
sec-Bu	OMe	50												

Indolizations of Type C (Table 3) are used principally for the specific preparation of differing 2-substituted indoles. From the point of view of the mechanism, the reactions are mostly modified Madelung variants (Entries 1,3,4,5,6). Of these cyclization processes which are all

regio-controlled, the "Le Corre" method is especially worthy of mention (Entry 6). This procedure offers a very elegant access to a series of 2-substituted indole derivatives and has also been used successfully by us for the preparation of a series of 2-vinylindoles.

Entry	Starting material	Reagent, Conditions	Intermediate, Mechanism	Product	Lit.
1		1. Ar <sup>2</sup> -CHO p-TSA, C <sub>6</sub> H <sub>6</sub> 30 minutes, Δ 2. NaOH, DMSO			36
				74-92% R = H, Ar <sup>2</sup> =  , R = Cl, Ar <sup>1</sup> = Ph, Tol R = Ph	
2		1. R <sup>1</sup> -C≡CH, Et <sub>3</sub> N, Pd(PPh <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>2</sub> Cl <sub>2</sub> 100°C, 3 hours, 2. NaOEt, EtOH			37
			R <sup>1</sup> = SiMe <sub>3</sub> , n-Bu, Ph	R <sup>2</sup> = H 93% R <sup>2</sup> = n-Bu 74% R <sup>2</sup> = Ph 82%	
3		1. xylene, Δ 2. t-BuOK, toluene, Δ			38
				R = Ph 10% R = Me 5%	
4		NaNH <sub>2</sub> , 200-400°C or n-BuLi(LDA), THF, 20°C			39
				94%	
5		1. RX, diglyme, -78°C 2. LTMP(LDA), -78°C 3. -78°C → RT 4. H <sub>2</sub> O			40
				R      yield [%] H      100 Me     95 i-C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>9</sub> 78	
6		MeONa or t-BuOK, toluene, Δ			41
				R <sup>1</sup> R <sup>2</sup> yield [%] H   Me      96 H         93 H   Ph      97	

In indolization processes of Type D (Table 4), the N/7a bond is formed for construction of the indole system. This strategy is particularly attractive in the cases of the thermolysis of azidocinnamates and the sodium hydride/cop-

per(I) halide-catalyzed cyclization of 2-(2-bromophenyl)-ethylacetamides since wide ranges of the required starting materials are available (Entries 1,3).

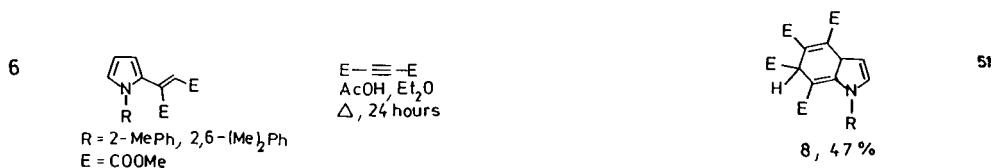
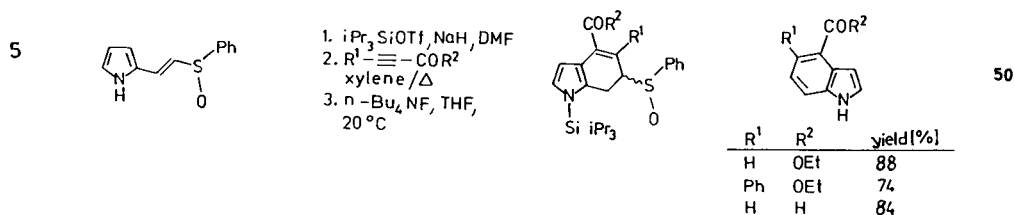
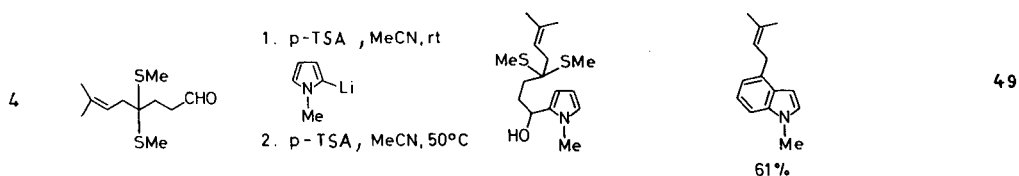
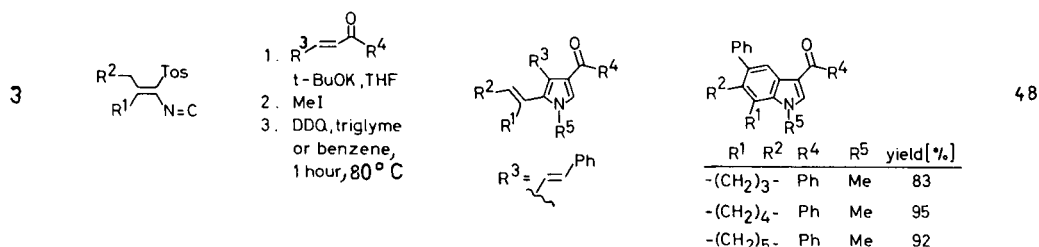
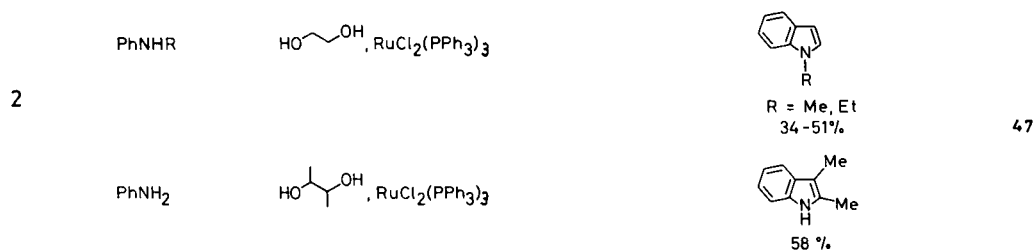
Table 4			Type D		
Entry	Starting material	Reagent, Conditions	Intermediate, Mechanism	Product	Lit.
1		thermolysis; decalin 190°C, 0.1 hours			42  28%
2		1. MeLi 2. n-BuLi, hexane 3. 15°C/ 2-3 hours 4. H <sub>2</sub> O 5. Ac-Cl, Py, Et <sub>2</sub> O			43  78%
3		1. 50% NaH/DMF 2. Cu Hal 3. Mg <sup>0</sup> or MgO <sub>2</sub> , CH <sub>2</sub> Cl <sub>2</sub>			44  65 - 88 %
4		PO(OEt) <sub>3</sub> 160°C			45  30, 40%

The methods listed in Table 5 have to be classified as special cases with regard to the mechanisms. The methods illustrated in Entries 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6 involve pericyclic processes centered upon the construction of the benzene ring of the indole system. The Diels-Alder process (Entry

1) as well as the reactions of 1-tosylalkenyl isocyanides with Michael acceptors (Entry 3) are characterized by particularly wide synthetic scopes. Entry 6 represents a special case for the simple preparation of a 3a,6-dihydroindole.

Table 5					
Entry	Starting material	Reagent, Conditions	Intermediate, Mechanism	Product	Lit.
1		1. CH <sub>2</sub> O, i-Pr <sub>2</sub> NH, CuBr 2. 160°, 6-12 hours 3. DDQ (MnO <sub>2</sub> ) 20°C			46  36 - 80%

$R^1, R^2, R^3 = H, Me, Et$   
 $R^1 - R^2 = -(CH_2)_4-$   
 $R^4 = H, CH_2Ph$



## Conclusions.

This review presents an up-to-date summary of the newer methods for the preparation of indole derivatives. Emphasis has been placed on procedures with pronounced synthetic flexibilities and also the limitations of the reaction principles have been delineated. As a result of the intensive synthetic developments of the last 20 years and, in particular, the discovery of new and selective reagents, especially of the organometallic type, indole derivatives are now accessible that could not be obtained by the classical procedures.

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