

Review Article

A CRITICAL REVIEW OF RASAUSHADHIES USED IN SHWASA ROGAWITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ITS METALLIC CONTENT

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Abstract

Chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases (COPD), bronchial asthma, pneumonia, tuberculosis (TB), are the major respiratory disorders which can be correlated with Shwasa Roga in Ayurvedic classics. Traditional system of medicine is gaining its popularity day by day for its holistic and bio-friendly approach. Herbometalic, herbo-mineral, metallo-mineral preparations which are classically known as Rasaushadhies are said to be boon to the system. However, now-a-days their use is a matter of concern as their safety aspect has become questionable in the scientific society. Therefore, an attempt has been made to compile the Rasaushadhies indicated in Shwasa Roga and probable justification for the use of their metallo-mineral content. Various classics of Rasa shastra and internet database were searched for this study. The combination of content, Bhavana Dravya, Anupana of these formulations has been found to be logical and scientific as they have multiple established pharmacological actions to control, prevent and manage Shwasa Roga. The metals and minerals present in the formulations are in compound form and have different types of herbochemical bond; therefore, they act differently than the environmental metals and minerals. Therefore, different novel methods to assess the bioavailability and bio accessibility of herbo-metalic, herbo-mineral and metalomineral preparations are to be studied before questioning their safety.

Key words: Rasaushadhies; Herbo-metallic formulation; *Shwasa Roga*; Metallic content; Bio accessibility.

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INTRODUCTION

Indoor and outdoor air pollution, workplace exposure, unwholesome diet, active and passive smoking, urban overcrowding leads to respiratory disease and has become a severe health burden to the society. It accounts for more than 6.4 % total DALYs (disabilityadjusted life-years) in India.[1] Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), bronchial asthma, pneumonia, tuberculosis (TB), lung cancer are 5 major component of chronic respiratory disease and globally 4 million of people per year become the victim of it.^[2] In traditional system of medicine respiratory diseases refers to Shwasa Roga which is classified into five types as per Doshika involvement, severity and prognosis. Due to side effects and lack of curative treatments for several chronic diseases, high cost of the new medicines, microbial resistance developed against different active ingredients as well as lack of empathy experienced by patients during contemporary medical treatments, Traditional system of medicine (TSM) are gaining popularity world wide.[3]

Traditional Indian system of medicine is the treasure of various formulations depending their ingredients and different indications. It was strengthen by ancient scholars, in the medieval period by adding metals and minerals in to the repertoire. Solo metallic, mineral, metalo-mineral, herbometalic, herbo-metalo-mineral formulations be considered Rasaushadhies. as Rasaushadhies are said to be a boon to the traditional pharmaceutical sciences as they poses quick action, lesser dose, no issue of palatability, long shelf life. Due to these virtues, Rasaushadhies occupied a significant place in Ayurvedic therapeutics and has been prescribed routinely all over country.

Being used for over a long period, for the purpose of prevention, control and treatment these medicines are acknowledged as safe, which is the ultimate proof for their nontoxic beneficial effects. However, the use of metals and minerals in therapeutics has been questioned and debatable in concern to their safety aspect and heavy metal content in scientific and public domain.

Therefore, in this article, an attempt has been made to compile the *Rasaushadhies* indicated in *Shwasa Roga* in respect to their metallic and mineral content as well as putative justification in favor of their safety.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Various classics of Rasa shastra like Rasa yogasagara, Bharat Bhaishajya Ratnakar, Rasatantrasara and Siddha Prayoga Samgraha, Siddha Yoga Samgraha, Ayurved Formulary of India were searched. Internet browsing from Google Scholar, PubMed, DHARA database was used to identify and to download abstracts and research papers related to herbo-metallic/mineral drugs by using suitable keywords- Ayurvedic drug + herbometallic / mineral drug + respiratory disease + anti asthmatic + anti-oxidant+ bio rejuvenating + bioavailability accessibility + metallic content.

OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS

Observations and results are tabulated as Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3.

DISCUSSION

Rasaushadhies are described as the formulations prepared from the Rasavargiya Dravyas (A combination of mercury and mercurial preparations, metalloids, minerals, drugs of animal origin, poisonous medicinal plant and sometimes herbal drugs too). Rasaushadhies are considered to be best over medicines. Physicians prefer to prescribe Rasaushadhies in chronic and nonresponding conditions. There are total 46 Rasaushadhies mentioned for Shwasa Roga. However, very few of them are being



manufactured by the government and private Ayurvedic pharmacies. Moreover, availability of the raw ingredients, in process difficulties and cost-effectiveness might be some of the reasons.

Rasayoga Sagara, a prominent text having compilation of more than 3900 Rasaushadhies has been prolifically referred and taken as the base text for compiling references in the present article. Formulation nomenclature bearing the word "Shwasa" as well as those having direct indication in Shwasa Roga have only been considered in present compilation. More than 200 formulations having secondary indication in Shwasa Roga have been excluded for ease of drawing inferences.

Dosage form is the means by which it can introduce the therapeutic component to the biological system. It is determined on the basis of nature of the ingredients, pharmaceutical processing, palatability, amount of dose, site of action, nature of the disease etc. Every dosage form has its own advantages and limitations. In the present compilation, with respect to *Rasaushadhies*of *Shwasa Roga*, 15pill, 3 *Parpati* (flakes) and 25 powders has been described. (Table 1) *Pathabheda* of the formulations has not been considered.

In the present compilation, (Table 2) it is observed that Abhraka (Biotite), Vaikranta (Tourmaline) and *Makshik*a (Chalcopyrite) from Maharasa Varga has been mentioned as an ingredient in some of the formulations for Shwasa Roga. Processed Abhraka (Biotite), (Tourmaline) and Makshika Vaikranta (Chalcopyrite) has been found in 9, 2 and 4 formulations respectively. In classics all of them have been described as a Rasayana (rejuvenating agent). Free radical scavenging activity, [4] cell rejuvenating activity, antimicrobial and anti-fungal activity reported.^[5] AbhrakaBhasma has been Gandhaka (Sulphur), Hartala (Orpiment), Manhshila (Realgar), the Dravvas are described under Uparasa Varga. In classics,

Rasaushadhies were divided into two groups Sagandha (with processed sulphur) and Nirgandha (without processed sulphur). Out of 46 formulations processed sulphur was found in 29 formulations in which maximum quantity of processed sulphur was found in KSHG formulation (228.18 mg). Maximum quantity of Processed Haratala and Manashila were found as 62.5 mg in SKKR formulation. Gouripashana (white arsenic) and Hingula (Cinnabar) from Sadharana Rasa Varga are the ingredients also noted in Gouripashana chemically known as As₂O₃is reported to have inhibitory effects asthmatic Th17-IL17 axis and can reduce airway inflammation and mucus hyperplasia in asthmatic rat model. [6] Swarna Bhasma (Incinerated gold), Rajata Bhasma (Incinerated silver), Tamra Bhasma (incinerated copper), Louha Bhasma (incinerated iron), Naga Bhasma (incinerated lead) and Vanga Bhasma (incinerated tin) were also found as one of the ingredients in Shwasahara Rasaushadhies. incinerated metals. Louha bhasma (incinerated iron) was found in maximum number of formulation (11)followed bv Tamra (incinerated copper) and Swarna Bhasma Incinerated gold) (9). In ancient literature all of them are described as rejuvenating and revitalizing agent. While immuno-modulatory, anti- cancerous activity of Swarna Bhasma, [7] Rajata Bhasma^[8] and antibacterial activity of Rajata Bhasma, Tamra Bhasma, Loha Bhasma has been found. [9] No hazardous effect of incinerated metals has been found to be reported in acute, sub-acute and chronic toxicological study. [10] Mukta (Pearl), Pravala (Coral). Vaidurva (Cats eve), Survakanta (Sun stone), of *Ratna*-Uparatna Varga and *Sankha*, Tankana of Shukla Varga were mentioned by Acharyas. Calcinated marine product like Mukta Bhasma, Pravala Bhasma, Shankha Bhasma are used in the management of pulmonary tuberculosis, bronchial asthma, bronchiactesis in Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani medicines.[11] ofVatsanabha (Aconitum ferox Wall ex Seringe)



Dhatura (Datura stramonium L) are enlisted in Drugs and cosmetic rule 1945, Schedule E1 for their poisonous property. Every poison can be a panacea if it is used wisely. Therefore, after detoxification they are used in the formulation and most of the formulation which having Vatsanabha as a part, Tankana is also found with it to minimize / eradicate any untoward effects.^[12] Both the drugs have Yogavahi, vyavahi, rasayan, tridoshaghna properties and therapeutically potent to cure respiratory disease. [13] Anti-asthmatic, antiinflammatory and antispasmodic properties of Dhatura has been widely reported. [14] In present compilation, maximum quantity of processed Vatsanabha and Dhatura were found as 26.78 mg.

Various mercurial preparations like Kajjali (Black sulfide of mercury), Rasasindoor (Red sulfide of mercury), Rasakarpoor (Mercuric chloride), are described as a solo medicine or as an ingredients of other formulations for Shwasa Roga. Most of the formulations had Kajjali (Black sulfide of mercury) with different ratio of Parada (mercury) and Gandhaka (Sulphur). The multidimensional effect of Kajjali like free radicals scavenging, antioxidant, anti-microbial, catalytic, enzymatic, immunomodulator activitieshave been reported.^[15] These mercurial compound enhance the bioavailability, bio-accessibility and potency of other component what are mixed with them by carrying the component into the targeted cell. [16] A recent study in Soma Yoga, combination of Somlata churna (Ephedra gerardiana Wall. ex Stapf) and Rasasindura (Red sulfide of mercury) at a dose of 600 mg (1:20) twice a day showed significant remission of Shwasa roga without any untoward effect biochemical and alteration.[17] In similar study, Shwasakuthara Rasa prepared with Kajjali found to be more effective in experimental and clinical trials in comparison to the formulation prepared without Kajjali and only herbal ingredients^[18] and it is well tolerated clinically without any adverse drug

reaction.^[19] A compound formulation consisting of *Abhraka Bhasma* and *Manahshila* is also reported to be safe and effective in clinical trials in management of *Shwasa Roga*.^[20]

Anupana is considered as a vehicle which has the ability to carry the drug to the targeted cells. It can increase bioavailability of the drugs by its yogavahi and vyavayi attributes thus, a very low dose of drug can mitigate the ailment. Not only that, it also has Roghagna property which adds to synergistic potency to the drugs and can also minimize the untoward effect of the drugs. Maricha (Piper nigrum. L), Ardraka (Zingiber officinale Roxb), Pippali (Piper Longum Linn), Kantikari virginianum L), (Solanum Astadashanga Kwatha (Decoction of 18 herbs), Haritraki (Terminalia chebula. Retz), Parna Khanda (Piper betle), Beejpura Toya (Citrus medica L.), Bharangi (Clerodendrum serratum (Linn) Kutz), Pushkara (Inula racemosa), Karkati (Carica papaya Linn), Shathi (Hedychium spicatum Buch Ham), Dhatura (Datura stramonium L), Bhringaraj (Eclipta alba (L.) Hassk), Jiraka (Cuminum cyminum Linn), Sarkara (Sugar), Madhu (Honey), Dugdha (Milk), Sarpi (Ghee) were found to described as a Anupana / Sahapana administration of Rasaushadhies in Shwasa Roga. (Table 1) Apart from that, these drugs have proven pharmacological actions bioavailability enhancer. asthmatic, [22][23] free radical scavenging activity, anti-microbial activity, anti-inflamatory, detection, bronchodialator and anti-allergic activities. [29] These attributes increase the potency and safety of Rasaushadhies prescribed in Shwasa Roga and help in targeted action.

The nano-structured and chemically stable metalloids and minerals are the principal factors to potentiate the efficacy of a formulation. Maximum amount of mercury/ its compound, arsenical compound, incinerated



Naga (Lead), Makshika (Chalcopyrite), Tamra (Copper), were present in Bhagottara Vati (428.57 mg), Shwasakaskarikeshari Rasa (62.5 mg), Shwasahari rasa (75 mg). Shwaskas chintamani Ras (21.73)mg), Panchamrita rasa (75 mg) and Muktadi churna is the Shwasahara formulation having maximum quantity of Swarna, Rajata, Louha, (571.42 Vanga Abhraka. each) respectively and Shwasakuthara Rasa, Vrisabhadhwaia Rasa. Shwasakaleshwara. Tandavbarana Rasa. Shwasakaleswara Rasa are having minimum amount of mercury / its compound (7.81 mg), arsenical compound (7.81mg), Nag (11.36 mg), Makshika (11.90 mg), Tamra (7.24mg), Swarna (11.36 mg), Rajata (11.36)mg), Louha (11.90mg),Abhraka (11.90 mg), Vanga (11.36 mg) respectively. (Table 2) It is pertinent to mention here that solid contents of Bhavana Dravya gets added into the formulation while levigation. Thus, the percentage of individual drug gets reduced in a formulation by considering this fact. Trituration with organic juices also initiates chemical reaction and cyclic process may result into formation of herbo-mineral bonds and formation of organic metal - mineral compounds which are relatively safe.

Metals and minerals undergo different type of e.g. Shodhana (purification detoxification), Jarana (oxidation), Marana (incineration. calcination). (sublimation) before using in the formulations. Mercury and other metals and minerals which are used in the formulation get converted into different compound form during processing and safety of these mercurial componds [30][31] metalo-mineral compounds [32][33] already reported. However, in recent era, presence of metalloids and minerals in the formulations become debatable in scientific society in relation to their hazardous effects. According to contemporary science metallic element with high atomic weight (e.g., mercury, chromium, cadmium, arsenic, and lead) which can damage living things at

low concentrations and tend to accumulate in the food chain (EPA, 2000) is defined as heavy metals. WHO, FDA, USEPA, IPCS and other reputed angencies have set a safety limit for these heavy metals (JECFA 1989, US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) 2006). (Table 3)

The amount of metals and minerals which are detected through sophisticated instruments are relatively lower in concentration than the amount which is gravimetrically added as a part of formulation. (Table 3) Conversion of metals and minerals into particular compound form and limitation to detect different species of metals and minerals may be one of the Bio-accessibility of metals causes. minerals depends upon chemical species, physico-chemical properties and herbochemical bond. Therefore, bio-accessibility of metalloids and mineral are varies from formulation to formulation.^[34]

CONCLUSION

Present review gives an insight into the available literature citing various Rasaushadhies used in Shwasa Roga. It is evident that very few are prepared today and still fewer are prevalent amongst practicing physicians. This gives an immense scope for exploring these drugs for their Shwasahara activity. Parada and Gandhaka in form of Kajjali or Hingula forms base of most number of formulations. It indicates towards bioenhancing property of *Kajjali*. contributes towards imparting stability to herbal components. Mica (Abhraka). Arsenical compounds (Manahshila, Haratala and Malla) and its compounds are also frequently used in most of the formulations. The percentage of metals/minerals varies according to formulation. But they cannot be deemed to be toxic by mere presence of higher percentages of these metal / minerals. Concept of speciation, bioavailability, bio-accessibility and novel methods for bio assessing needs to be in place before questioning their safety.



Table 1: Rasaushadhies indicated in $Shwasa\ roga^{[35][36][37][38][39]}$ (Abbreviation of name of drugs are mentioned in Annexure I)

Sl.No.	Name of Dose Dosage Bhavna Dravya Grugs (mg) form		Anupana		
1.	KSAR	375	Pill	Sudha rasa	Sarkara
2.	KSHG	375- 750	Pill	Snuhi ksheera	-
3.	GA	NM	Powder	-	Maricha
4.	KR	NM	Powder	Guda	-
5.	TVR	375	Pill	Bhanga, Ardraka, Dhatoora Swarasa	Kantikari, Astadashanga Kwatha, Adraka Swarasa
6.	TS	NM	Powder	Raktakarpas Swarasa	Haritaki
7.	NR	375	Pill	ArdrakaSwarasa	Ardraka Swarasa
8.	PPT	375	Parpati (Flakes)	-	-
9.	PR	375	Pill	-	Pippali, Madhu
10.	PV	NM	Pill	Parna rasa, Ardrak rasa	- -
11.	KR	250	Powder		Parna khanda
12.	PK	NM	Linctus	<u>-</u>	-
13.	PL	250	Powder	_	Madhu
13. 14.	BGV	12000	Pill	Aprasuta gomutra, Rakta mulik swaras	
1 4 . 15.	BV	125	Pill	Kadalimool, Chitrak, Dhatoormoola	<u>-</u>
16.	MY	123	1 111	Kaaaimooi, Chiirak, Dhaiooimooia	_
10. 17.	MV	NM	Pill	- Gulab jala	- Dugdha
17. 18.	MCh	96000		Guiab jaia	
16. 19.	MBY		Powder	-	Madhu, Sarpi
19.	NID I	NM		-	Beejpur rasa
20.	MAR	250	Powder	-	Haritaki, Pippali, Bharangi, Pushkar, Karkati, Shathi
21.	RKR	NM	Powder	Am la veta sa Rasa	Madhu, Sarpi
22.	RPT	750	<i>Parpati</i> (Flakes)	Vasaka, Tulasi, Kshudrika, Triphala, Meghnada, Kumari	Ardraka, DhatooraRasa
23.	RS	125- 250	Powder	Kumari	Trikatu, Bharangi, Madhu Pippali, Bhringaraj
24.	MS	30-60	Powder/ Pill	Kumari swaras	Madhu, Pippali
25.	RDPT	250	Parpati (Flakes)	Vatari, Ardrak, Bhringaraj, Kakmachi	Bhringaraj, Madhu
				Agastya, Bharangi, Chitraka, Indravaruni,	
26.	VDR	375	Powder	vasaka, Nirgundi, Tambulika, Eranda, Jiraka, Tulasi	-
27.	SCR	3000	Powder	-	Madhu
28.	SDR	375	Powder	Chitraka, DhatooraRasa	Jirak, Bhringaraj, Madhu
29.	SKLR	250	Powder		Ardrak rasa
30.	SKKR	NM	Powder	Vasak, Trikatu drava Kantikari, Aja duadha Vashtimadhu	
31.	SKCR	250	Pill	Kantikari, Aja dugdha, Yashtimadhu, Parnapatra	Pippali, Madhu
32.	SKSR	750	Powder	Vatsanabha	-
33.	SKR	125	Powder	-	Parnakhanda, Madhu, Ushnaddak
34.	SGKR	750	Pill	Gomutra	-
35.	SWR	375	Powder	Agastya swaras	-
36.	SAR	375	Powder	Karir, Ardrak, Nimbu swaras	-
37.	SAKR	NM	Powder	Jambir swaras	-
38.	SRGR	125	Pill	Nagvalli rasa	Madhu,sarkara+ Dugdha/Ghrita
39.	SWL	750	Powder	<u>-</u>	Madhu



40.	SDCh	500	Powder	-	Madhu, Ghrita
41.	CR	375	Pill	Vasaka Swarasa	-
42.	AKCR	125	Powder	Bhringaraja	-
43.	SY	625- 1250	Powder	-	Madhu, Abhraka bhasma, Bhagottar vati, Chandramrita Rasa
44.	SPR	60-250	Powder	Tulsi, Kumari Rasa	Nagvalli, Ardrak rasa, Madhu
45.	PSR	60	Powder	-	Madhu, Ardrak, Tulsi, Yashti Bibhitaki, Vasak
46.	LTS	125	Pill	Lavangadi Kwatha	Adrakh swaras, nagvalli swaras, madhu

Table 2: Rasaushadhies indicated in Shwasa Roga with its metallic/Mineral/Poisonous plant in aprox. Quantity (mg)

Sl.No.	Metal/minerals	No of formulations	Maximum quantity present in single dose (mg)	Minimum quantity present in single dose (mg)
1.	Parada (Mercury)	31	428.57 (BGV)	7.81(SKR)
2.	Abhraka (Biotite)	9	571.42 (MCh)	11 (RPT)
3.	Vaikranta (Tourmaline)	2	83.33 (SCR)	-
4.	Makshika (Chalcopyrite)	4	21.73 (SKCR)	20.83 (TVR)
5.	Gandhaka (Sulphur)	29	228.18 (KSHG)	11.90 (SKLR)
6.	Hartala (Orpiment)	8	62.5 (SKKR)	20.83 (TVR)
7.	Manashila (Realgar)	6	62.5 (SKKR)	7.81(SKR)
8.	Hingula (Cinnabar)	3	34.08 (VDR)	11.90 (SKLR)
9.	Swarna (Gold)	9	571.42 (MCh)	11.36 (VDR)
10.	Rajata (Silver)	3	571.42 (MCh)	11.36 (VDR)
11.	Tamra (Copper)	9	75 (PR)	11.90 (SKLR)
12.	Louha (Iron)	11	571.42 (MCh)	11.90 (SKLR)
13.	Naga (Lead)	4	75 (SWR)	11.36 (VDR)
14.	Vanga (Tin)	2	571.42 (MCh)	75 (PR)
15.	Tankana (Borax)	8	107.42 (KSHG)	7.81 (SKR)
	Varsanabha			
16.	(Aconitum ferox Wall ex	5	26.78 (SAR, PSR)	7.81 (SKR)
	Seringe)		• • • •	, ,
17.	Dhatura (Datura stramonium L)	1	26.78 (SAR)	-

^{*}Quantity of the metals / minerals / poisonous plants has been calculated by dividing the fraction of ingredients from the quantity of single dose mentioned in formulations. Quantity of *Bhavna dravyas* (media for levigation) added in the formulations has not considered here.

Table 3: Amount of Mercury and Arsenic detected through ICP-OES/AES/MS/AAS and their safety limit $^{[40][41][42]}$

	Rasa Parpati	Panchamrita Parpati	Shringrabhra	Swasanti Yoga	Shwasakuthar Rasa	Sameer Pannag Rasa	Malla sindura	Accepted daily intake concentration (mg / weak)	Safety limit mgkg bw_1 day_1
Hg	13,483- 28,258 mg/kg	13,266- 25711 mg/kg	20 mg/kg	200 mg/kg	65 mg/kg	53400- 362400 mg/kg	808, 500 mg/kg	0.84	2
As	-	-	0.8 mg/kg	118 mg/kg	66 mg/kg	121, 200-323, 700 mg/kg	661300 mg/kg	*0.126 *0.90 *1.26	*0.3 *15 *3

(*Different species of inorganic Arsenic)



Annexure 1: Abbreviation of name of the drugs

- 1. Kasashwasabadhano Ras- KSAR
- 2. Kasashwashari Gutika- KSHG
- 3. Gandhak anupana- GA
- 4. Kanark Ras- KR
- 5. Tandavaran Ras- TVR
- 6. Talsindoor- TS
- 7. Naga Ras- NR
- 8. Panchamruta Parpati- PPT
- 9. Panchamruta Ras- PR
- 10. Paradadi Vati- PV
- 11. Kaphantak ras- KR
- 12. Pippladi Khanda- PK
- 13. Pippaladi Louha- PL
- 14. Bhagottar Vati- BGV
- 15. Bhairavi Vati- BV
- 16. Malla Yoga- MY
- 17. Malladi Vati- MV
- 18. Muktadi Ch- MCh
- 19. Muktabhasma Yoga-MBY
- 20. Meghadambar Ras- MAR
- 21. Ratnakaranda Ras- RKR
- 22. Rasa Parpati- RPT
- 23. Rasa sindura- RS
- 24. Malla sindura- MS
- 25. Rudra Parpati- RDPT
- 26. Vrishabhadhwaja Ras- VDR
- 27. Sankhachur Ras- SCR
- 28. Sankhadora Ras-SDR
- 29. Shwaskaleshwar Ras- SKLR
- 30. Shwaskas karikeshari Ras- SKKR
- 31. Shwaskas chintamani Ras- SKCR
- 32. Shwaskasari Ras- SKSR
- 33. Shwaskuthar Ras- SKR
- 34. Shwasgajankush Ras- SGKR
- 35. Shwashari Ras- SWR
- 36. Shwankush Ras- SAR
- 37. Shwasantak Ras- SAKR
- 38. Shwasrogantak Ras- SRGR
- 39. Shwasari Louha- SWL
- 40. Shwasdaman Churna- SDCh
- 41. Chandramruta Ras-CR
- 42. Ashwakanchuk Ras- AKCR
- 43. Somyoga-SY
- 44. Sameerpannag Ras- SPR
- 45. Panchasoot Ras-PSR
- 46. Lavangadi talsindoor- LTS

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