STUDIES ON MITOMYCINS. V

SYNTHESIS OF INDOLEQUINONE AND THEIR ACTIVITIES

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Indolequinones postulated as essential structure for activity of mitomycin were synthesized and examined for their antibacterial activities. Acyl esters of 3-hydroxymethylindole(4, 7)dione showed strong activity against Grampositive bacteria but those of 2-hydroxymethylindolequinone did not.

In the previous paper¹, we postulated that the essential structure for activity of the mitomycins was the indolequinone as shown in I. In this paper, we wish to report the synthesis of 2-hydroxymethylindolequinone (4,7) derivatives (II) and 3hydroxymethylindolequinone (4,7) derivatives (III) and their antibacterial activities.



TEUBER and THALER²⁾ has already reported the preparation of indolequinone and recently ALLEN *et al.*³⁾, used it in the synthesis of mitomycin antibiotics. In both two, indolequinone (4,7) was prepared by oxidation with FREMY's salt.

Authors prepared the 2-hydroxymethylindolequinone (4,7) derivatives (II) and 3hydroxymethylindolequinone (4,7) derivatives (III) as shown in Charts 1 and 2.

I. Synthesis of 2-Hydroxymethylindolequinone (4,7) Derivatives

Ethyl-3-methyl-5-ethoxy-indole-2-carboxylate (IVa) was prepared from *p*-nitrophenetol and ethylacetoacetate by FISCHER's indole synthesis. Nitration of IVa was accomplished in good yield with quantitative fuming nitric acid in a mixture of acetic acid and acetic anhydride. If only an acetic acid was used as solvent, unreacted compound remained and purification of V was difficult. The location of the nitro group was established by the presence of two doublets, typical of ortho aromatic protons, in the NMR spectrum.

Selective reduction of ethyl carboxylate of V was achieved by using a limited amount of LiAlH₄. If excess LiAlH₄ was used, it gave several by-products formed by the reduction of nitro group. Catalytic hydrogenation of VI with Pd-C gave VII,

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which was unstable and oxidized with potassium nitrosodisulfonate to produce pquinone (VIIIa). 1-Methyl-quinone (VIIIb) was prepared by the same procedure from IVb which was obtained by the methylation of IVa with dimethylsulfate.

II. Synthesis of 3-Hydroxymethylindolequinone (4,7) Derivatives

3-Hydroxymethylindolequinone (4,7) derivatives were prepared as shown in Chart 2 by the method of ALLEN *et al.*^{3c)}, who had prepared 2,3-dihydro-9-hydroxymethyl-7-methoxy-6-methyl-1-H. pyrrolo (1,2a) indole 5,8 dione.

Starting material IX of this series was prepared from p-benzoquinone and ethyl β -aminocrotonate by the method of NENITZESCU⁴). When boiled with conc. HCl or 4 N NaOH, IX was decarboxylated to form X, which was transformed into methyl derivatives (XI). Pure XI (m.p. 21°C) was identical with that of GRINEV's⁵⁾ product which had been obtained by another synthetic method. Formylation of XI was accomplished by VILSMEYER-HAACK's method⁶⁾ with phosphoroxychloride and dimethylformamide. Cleavage of methoxy group of XII with aluminum chloride in refluxing xylene gave XIII. Potassium nitrosodisulfonate oxidation of XIII gave orthoquinone (XIV). Thiele acetoxylation of XIV gave triacetate XV using acetic anhydride and boron-fluoride. Hydrolysis of XV in dil. NaOH followed by air oxidation gave XVI, which was methylated with diazomethane to give the paraquinone (XVII). REMERS et al.^{3d)}, reported that hydrolysis of triacetoxy compound was unsuccessful when position 6 of 1-H-pyrrolo (1,2a) indole was hydrogen. But in our experience, hydrolysis was successful and the p-quinone was identified as XVIII by elemental analysis, nmr spectrum and infrared spectrum. Reduction of XVIII with NaBH₄ followed by oxidation with FeCl₃ gave XIX.

Our quinone XIX (m.p. 199~201°C) was different in melting point than REMER's^{3e})



product (m.p. $164 \sim 165^{\circ}$ C) which was obtained by another synthetic method. Our quinone was identified by elemental analysis and infrared spectrum and nmr spectrum.

Another synthetic method for p-quinone (XIX) was also examined as shown in Chart 3. Nitration of XII with quantitative fuming nitric acid in acetic acid gave a mixture of two mononitro compounds, (XX and XXI). One was identified as the 4-nitro compound (XX) by its nmr spectrum, which showed two doublets, typical of ortho aromatic protons. (The other was an isomer of XXI, but location of nitro group could not be determined by nmr spectrum, which showed two aromatic protons as singlet).

Reduction of **XX** with iron powder in acetic acid followed by oxidation with potassium nitrosodisulfonate produced p-quinone (**XVIII**), which was identical with the substance prepared from the orthoquinone.

When catalytic reduction was performed with Pd-C, four p-quinones were formed by thin-layer chromatography. After purification with silica gel chromatography, four crystalline compounds were obtained.

The one was 3-methyl p-quinone (XXII), the second was 3-formyl p-quinone (XVIII), the third was methyl ether of XIX and the fourth was 3-hydroxymethyl p-quinone XIX, identified by nmr spectrum.

Acyloxy derivatives of **VIII** or **XIX** were prepared by acylchloride and pyridine or acylanhydride and pyridine. Phenylcarbonate or ethyl carbonate of **VIII** or **XIX** was prepared by chlorophenylcarbonate or chloroethylcarbonate in pyridine. Ammonolysis of phenylcarbonate gave the carbamoyl derivatives.

III. Antibacterial Activities

The derivatives prepared as described above were subjected to antibacterial testing with the results shown in Tables 1 and 2. Derivatives of 3-hydroxymethylindolequinone (4,7) showed marked activity against Gram-positive organisms but no activity against Gram-negative organisms. On the other hand, derivatives of 2hydroxymethylindolequinone (4,7) showed no activity against Gram-positive or negative bacteria. These results indicated that the protonation of methylene in 3-position of Table 1. Antibacterial activities of 2-hydroxymethylindolequinone (4,7) derivatives



			M.I.C. in mcg/ml						
No.	R ₁	R_2	Gram-	positive bacter	Gram-negative bacteria				
			B. subtilis ATCC 6633	S. aureus 209 P	S. lutea PCI 1001	E. coli K-12	E. coli B(H)		
1	н	Н	>100	25	>100	25	25		
2	н	COCH ₃	>100	>100	>100	>100	>100		
3	н	COCH=CHCH ₃	>100	>100	>100	>100	>100		
4	H	$\rm COC_6H_5$	>100	>100	>100	>100	>100		
5	Н	COCH ₂ C1	>100	>100	>100	>100	>100		
6	Н	$COCH_2Br$	>100	>100	>100	>100	>100		
7	Н	COCHCl ₂	>100	>100	>100	>100	>100		
. 8	Η	$\rm COOC_6H_5$	>100	>100	>100	>100	>10 0		

Table 2. Antibacterial activities of 3-hydroxymethyl-indolequinone (4,7) derivatives



R		M.I.C. 1n mcg/m1								
			Gram-pos	Gram-negative bacteria						
		S. lutea S. aureus B. sutilis PCI 1001 209P ATCC 6633		S. aureus K (resistant)	E. coli B(H)	P. aeru- ginosa				
	Н	>100	>100	>100	>100	>100	>100			
	COCH ₃	0.766	0. 192	0. 192	0.192	12.25	> 50			
	$\rm COC_2H_5$	2.5	1	1	0.5	25	>100			
	$CO-n-C_3H_7$	1.531	0.192	0. 192	0.766	25	> 50			
	COCH=CHCH ₃	1.531	0.766	0.766	0.766	25	> 50			
	$\rm COC_6H_5$	1.531	1.531	0. 766	0.766	> 50	> 50			
	COCH ₂ Cl	2.5	10	10	1	10	> 50			
	COCHCl ₂	50	50	50	50	> 50	> 50			
	$COCH_2Br$	3.063	3.063	1.531	1.531	> 50	> 50			
	COOEt	50	50	50	50	> 50	> 50			
	$\rm COOC_6H_5$	0.766	1.531	0.766	50	25	> 50			
	$CONH_2$	1.531	0.191	0. 093	0.383	6.125	> 50			
	CONHCH ₃	1.531	0. 383	0. 766	3.063	12.25	> 50			
			1			1				

indole is necessary for antibacterial activity, but that similar reactivity at the 2-position does not yield activity.

Experimental

<u>Ethyl-5-ethoxy-3-methyl-4-nitro-indole-2-carboxylate (Va)</u> To a solution of 5 g of ethyl-5-ethoxyindole-2-carboxylate (IVa) in a mixture of 50 ml of acetic acid and 50 ml of acetic anhydride was added 1 ml of fuming nitric acid. After two hours at room

temperature water was added slowly and the precipitate was collected. Recrystallization from ethanol gave 4.5 g (76.3 %) of Va m.p. 177~178°C. nmr: τ 2.6, 2.95 two doublets (ortho aromatic protons); 5.65, 5.80 two quartets (-CH₂-); 7.57 singlet (3-methyl); 8.62, 8.66 two triplets (CH₃-). Anal. Calcd. for C₁₄H₁₆N₂O₅ (292.28): C 57.53, H 5.52, N 9.59. Found: C 57.41, H 5.42, N 9.62.

<u>5-Ethoxy-2-hydroxymethyl-3-methyl-4-nitroindole (VIa)</u> To a mechanically stirred solution of 4 g of Va in anhydrous tetrahydrafuran was added a suspension of 600 mg of LiAlH₄ in anhydrous ether during about 1 hour at room temperature. After extraction with organic solvent and drying with anhydrous Na₂SO₄, the solution was evaporated. Recrystallization from dil. ethanol gave 3.3 g (96.4 %) of yellow crystals (m.p. 184~185°C). Anal. Calcd. for $C_{12}H_{14}N_2O_4$ (250.25): C 57.79, H 5.64, N 11.20. Found: C 57.74, H 5.69, N 10.86.

5-Ethoxy-2-hydroxymethyl-3-methylindolequinone (4,7) (VIIIa) A solution of 3 g of VIa in 100 ml of methanol was treated with hydrogen with 600 mg of 5 % Pd-C at room temperature and atmospheric pressure. After absorption of quantitative hydrogen, catalyst was filtered off and filtrate was oxidized with a solution of 8 g of potassium nitrosodisulfonate in 200 ml of water and 200 ml of 1/6 M KH₂PO₄ under the mechanical stirring. After 1 hour, it was extracted with organic solvent and dried. After the evaporation precipitate was recrystallized from ethanol to give 1.5 g (50.7 %) of reddish orange needles. m.p. 213°C, IR, 3300 cm⁻¹ (-CH₂OH), 3200 (=NH), 1675, 1635 (=CO). Anal. Calcd. for $C_{12}H_{18}NO_4$ (235.23): C 61.27, H 5.57, N 5.96. Found: C 61.34, H 5.60, N 5.76.

<u>Ethyl-5-ethoxy-1,3-dimethylindole-2-carboxylate (IVb)</u> Methylation of IVa with dimethylsulfate in acetone and potassium hydroxide solution gave IVb, pale yellow needles. m.p. 68~68.5°C. Anal. Calcd. for $C_{15}H_{19}NO_3$ (261.31): C 68.94, H 7.33, N 5.36. Found: C 69.28, H 7.83, N 5.50.

Ethyl-5-ethoxy-1,3-dimethyl-4-nitroindole-2-carboxylate (Vb) 693 mg of fuming nitric acid was added to a solution of 2.61 g of IVb in 30 ml of acetic acid. After 2 hours water was added to this solution and resulting precipitate was filtered and recrystallized from ethanol to give 1.7 g (55.5 %) of yellow crystals. m.p. $82\sim85^{\circ}$ C. nmr: τ 2.68, 2.97 two doublets (ortho aromatic protons), 5.85, 5.92 two quartets (-CH₂-), 6.10 (N-CH₃), 7.62 (C-3-CH₃) 8.53, 8.62 two triplets (CH₃-). Anal. Calcd. for C₁₅H₁₈N₂O₅ (306.31): C 58.81, H 5.92, N 9.15. Found: C 59.28, H 6.12, N 9.18.

<u>5-Ethoxy-2-hydroxymethyl-1,3-dimethyl-4-nitroindole (VIb)</u> Selective reduction of Vb with LiAlH₄ according to the procedure of VIa gave 76.2 % of yellow needles (m.p. 142~143°C after two recrystallization from ethanol). Anal. Calcd. for $C_{13}H_{16}N_2O_4$ (264.27): C 59.08, H 6.10, N 10.60. Found: C 59.12, H 6.07, N 10.10.

<u>5-Ethoxy-2-hydroxymethyl-1,3-dimethyl-indolequinone (4,7) (VIIIb)</u> Catalytic reduction of VIb followed by oxidation with potassium nitrosodisulfate according to procedure of VIIIa gave 55.2 % of reddish orange needles after recrystallization from ethanol. m.p. 184.5~185.5°C. IR 3300 cm⁻¹ (-CH₂OH), 1680, 1630 (=CO). Anal. Calcd. for C₁₃H₁₅NO₄ (249.26): C 62.64, H 6.07, N 5.62. Found: C 62.51, H 6.05, N 5.71.

Synthesis of 1-Ethyl-3-hydroxymethyl-5-methoxy-2-methylindolequinone (4,7) XIX XIX were prepared by the method of ALLEN.^{3c)} Physicochemical data were shown as follows:

1-Ethyl-5-hydroxy-2-methylindole (X) Yield ; 98.4 %, m.p. 114~115°C as white needles from cyclohexane.

1-Ethyl-5-methoxy-2-methylindole (XI) Yield 71.8 %, b.p.₂₁ 185~190°C. m.p. 21°C as white needles.

1-Ethyl-3-formyl-5-methoxy-2-methylindole (XII) Yield 86.7 %, m.p. $95\sim96^{\circ}C$ as white crystals from ethanol. Anal. Calcd. for $C_{13}H_{15}NO_2$ (217.26): C 71.86, H 6.96, N 6.45. Found: C 71.78, H 7.01, N 6.69.

1-Ethyl-3-formyl-5-hydroxy-2-methylindole (XIII) Yield 72.5 %, m.p. 207 \sim 212°C as white needles from ethanol. Anal. Calcd. for C₁₂H₁₃NO₂ (203.23): C 70.91, H 6.45, N 6.89. Found: C 71.3, H 6.90, N 6.75.

1-Ethyl-3-formyl-2-methyl-indolequinone (4,5) (XIV) Yield 85 %, m.p. $198 \sim 201^{\circ}$ C as black needles from ethanol. IR 1670, 1665, 1650 cm⁻¹ (=CO, -CHO). Anal. Calcd. for $C_{12}H_{11}NO_3$ (217.22): C 66.35, H 5.10, N 6.45. Found: C 66.82, H 5.19, N 6.31.

4,5,7-Triacetoxy-1-ethyl-3-formyl-2-methylindole (**XV**) Yield 76.5 %, m.p. 192~194°C as white needles from ethanol. IR 1770 cm⁻¹ (CH₃CO-), 1660 (-CHO). Anal. Calcd. for $C_{18}H_{19}NO_7$ (361.34): C 59.83, H 5.30, N 3.88. Found: C 60.06, H 5.20, N 3.99. Acetyl value 36.0 % (Calcd. 35.74 %)

1-Ethyl-3-formyl-5-methoxy-2-methylindolequinone (4,7) (XVIII) Yield 48 %, m.p. 207~208°C as orange needles from ethanol. nmr: τ 4.30 (C-6-hydrogen, singlet), 5.55 (-CH₂-, quartet), 6.15 (O-CH₃, singlet), 7.37 (C-2-CH₃), 8.63 (CH₃-, triplet), -0.26 (formyl). IR 1680, 1665 cm⁻¹ (=O), 1640 (-CHO). Anal. Calcd. for C₁₃H₁₃NO₄ (247.24): C 63.15, H 5.30, N 5.67. Found: C 62.89, H 5.39, N 5.17.

1-Ethyl-3-hydroxymethyl-5-methoxy-2-methylindolequinone (4,7) (XIX) Yield 63 %, m.p. 199 \sim 201°C as reddish orange needles from ethanol. IR 3420 cm⁻¹ (-CH₂OH) 1670, 1635 (=CO). Anal. Calcd. for C₁₃H₁₅NO₄ (249.26): C 62.64, H 6.07, N 5.62. Found: C 63.02, H 6.35, N 5.66.

<u>1-Ethyl-3-formyl-5-methoxy-2-methyl-4-nitroindole (XX)</u> To a solution of 1 g of 1ethyl-3-formyl-5-methoxy-2-methylindole (XII) in 20 ml of acetic acid was added 0.3 ml of fuming nitric acid. After 1 hour at room temperature water was added slowly and resulting precipitate was collected to give 1 g of a mixture of mononitro compounds, XX and XXI. After purification from silica gel chromatography, two crystals were obtained. The one was main product of 4-nitro compound XX. m.p. 179°C nmr: τ 0.05 (3formyl singlet), 2.69, 3.07 (ortho aromatic protons, two doublets), 5.86 (1-CH₂-, quartet), 6.11 (5-CH₃O, singlet), 7.31 (2-CH₃, singlet), 8.62 (1-CH₂-, triplet). The other was XXI, isomer of XX, m.p. 189°C yellow prisms. nmr: τ 0.10 (3-formyl, singlet), 2.14, 2.16 (2 aromatic protons, 2 singlet), 5.87 (1-CH₂-, quartet), 6.06 (5-CH₃O, singlet), 7.31 (2-CH₃, singlet), 8.59 (1-CH₃-, triplet).

Indolequinone (4,7) from XX. Method A: A stirred solution of 1 g of a mixture of mononitrocompounds XX and XXI in 100 ml of glacial acetic acid and 10 ml of water was heated to steam bath temperature and treated with 2 g of iron powder over 90 minutes. Additional 10 ml of water was added after 45 minutes. After cooling large volume of water was added and this solution was extracted with $CHCl_3$. Evaporation of the dried organic solution gave mono amino compounds which were used for subsequent oxidation without purification. A solution of above 4-amino compound in 150 ml of acetone was added to a stirred solution of 2 g of potassium nitrosodisulfonate in 100 ml of water and 50 ml of $1/6 \text{ M KH}_2PO_4$.

Resulting reddish solution was stirred for 2 hours, then crude product was extracted with $CHCl_3$ and chromatographed on silica gel. The main fraction of orange band was recrystallized from ethanol to give 400 mg of orange needles, which was identical with the substance prepared from orthoquinone by melting point, elemental analysis, infrared and nmr spectra.

Method B: A solution of 1 g of XX in 150 ml of methanol was treated with hydrogen with 200 mg of Pd-C at room temperature and atmospheric pressure. After an absorption of quantitative hydrogen, catalyst was filtered off and filtrate was oxidized with a solution of 4 g of potassium nitrosodisulfonate in 300 ml of water and 150 ml of $1/6 \text{ M KH}_2\text{PO}_4$ under mechanical stirring. After 2 hours resulting orange solution was extracted with CHCl₃ and chromatographed on silica gel. From the first eluate main product of reddish needles was obtained after recrystallization from acetone - petroleum ether. m.p. 184~186°C. nmr: $\tau 4.42$ (6-H, singlet), 5.65 (1-CH₂-, quartet), 6.21 (5-CH₃O,





D	σ		Formula	Carbon %		Hydrogen %		Nitrogen %	
м1	K2	m.p. (C)		Calcd.	Found	Calcd.	Found	Calcd.	Found
Н	COCH3	$182 \sim 184$	$\mathrm{C_{14}H_{15}NO_{5}}$	60.64	60.34	5.47	5.71	5.05	5.20
н	COCH=CHCH₃	not clear	$\mathrm{C_{16}H_{17}NO_5}$	63.36	63.51	5.65	5.40	4.62	4.32
Η	$\rm COC_6H_5$	"	$C_{19}H_{17}NO_5$	67.25	67.56	5.05	4.96	4.13	4.08
Н	$COCH_2C1$	"	$C_{14}H_{14}NO_5C1$	53.94	53.84	4.53	4.38	4.49	4.64
Η	COCHCl ₂	"	$C_{14}H_{13}NO_5Cl_2$	48.57	48.23	3.79	3.85	4.05	3.98
н	$COCH_2Br$	"	$C_{14}H_{14}NO_5Br$	47.21	46.87	3.96	4.12	3.93	4.07
н	$\rm COOC_6H_5$	$193 \sim 195$	$C_{19}H_{17}NO_6$	64.22	64.13	4.82	4.48	3.97	3.74
CH_3	COCH ₃	$167 \sim 170$	$\mathrm{C_{15}H_{17}NO_5}$	61.83	61.95	5.89	5.99	4.81	4.56
CH_3	COCH ₂ C1	122~125	$C_{15}H_{16}NO_5C1$	55.49	55.06	4.93	4.89	4.28	4.80
CH_3	COCHCl ₂	152.5~153.5	$\mathrm{C_{15}H_{15}NO_5Cl_2}$	50.20	50.51	4.18	4.33	3.87	4.16

Table 4. The derivatives of 3-hydroxymethyl indolequinone (4,7)



D	m n (°C)	Formula	Carbon %		Hydrogen %		Nitrogen %	
K	m.p. (C)	Formula	Calcd.	Found	Calcd.	Found	Calcd.	Found
COCH ₃	175~180	$C_{15}H_{17}NO_5$	61.85	62.18	5.88	5.93	4.81	4.65
$\rm COC_2H_5$	$120 \sim 122$	$C_{16}H_{19}NO_5$	62.94	63.11	6.27	6.97	4.59	4.84
$CO-nC_3H_7$	$74 \sim 76$	$C_{17}H_{21}NO_5$	63.93	63.70	6.63	6.98	4.39	4.29
COCH=CHCH ₃	$110 \sim 113$	$C_{17}H_{19}NO_5$	62.94	62.53	6.27	6.58	4. 59	4.71
$\rm COC_6H_5$	$145 \sim 146$	$C_{20}H_{19}NO_5$	67.98	67.02	5.42	5.11	3.96	4.07
$COCH_2C1$	$149 \sim 152$	$C_{15}H_{16}NO_5C1$	55.49	55.86	4.93	4.77	4.28	4.20
COCHCl ₂	$162 \sim 165$	$C_{15}H_{15}NO_5Cl_2$	50.20	50.13	4.18	4.11	3.87	3.78
$COCH_2Br$	$114 \sim 118$	$C_{15}H_{16}NO_5Br$	48.66	48.98	4.36	4.03	3.78	3.50
$\rm COOC_2H_5$	$123 \sim 124$	$C_{16}H_{19}NO_6$	59.80	59.83	5.96	5.74	4.36	4.62
$\rm COOC_6H_5$	73~ 8 4	$C_{20}H_{19}NO_6$	65.03	65.21	5.19	4.88	3.79	3.22
$CONH_2$	$225 \sim 228$	$C_{14}H_{16}N_2O_5$	57.53	57.36	5.52	6.08	9.59	9.08
CONHCH ₃	204~207	$\rm C_{15}H_{18}N_{2}O_{5}$	58.81	58.68	5.92	5.94	9.15	8.70

singlet), 7.77, 7.82 (1-CH₃, 2-CH₃, two singlets), 8.70 (1-CH₃-, triplet). Identified as 1-ethyl-5-methoxy-2,3-dimethylindolequinone **XXII**.

The second eluate was identical with 1-ethyl-3-formyl-5-methoxy-2-methylindolequinone (4,7) **XVIII**. The third fraction was determined as 1-ethyl-5-methoxy-3-methoxymethyl-2-methylindolequinone (4,7) **XXIII**, orange needles after recrystallization from acetone - petroleum ether. m.p. 170~180°C. nmr: τ 4.20 (6-H, singlet), 5.18 (3-CH₂-O, singlet), 5.42 (1-CH₂-, quartet), 6.01, 6.40 (5-CH₃O, 3-OCH₃, two singlets), 7.54 (2-CH₃, singlet), 8.50 (1-CH₃, triplet).

The fourth fraction was identical with 1-ethyl-3-hydroxymethyl-5-methoxy-2-methyl-indolequinone (4,7) XIX.

Derivatives of VIIIa, VIIIb, or XIX Acyl, alkylcarbonate and carbamate derivatives of VIIIa, VIIIb or XIX were prepared by usual methods.

The derivatives of the above quinone studied in this work are listed in Tables 3 and 4. Infrared spectra were measured in potassium bromide disk by a JASCO spectrophotometer. Elemental analysis were carried out by Yanagimoto elemental analyzer. Nuclear magnetic resonance spectra were measured in deuterio chloroform by a Varian Spectrophotometer.

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