

CHRONOTOPE IN THE BILDUNGSROMAN “A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN” AND ITS USE IN EFL CLASSES

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Abstract

Time and place are thought to be two important concepts in the analysis of literary works. These concepts form the background and they have a direct influence on the other components of the literary work such as plot, themes, etc. Bakhtin (1981) thought that these two components have got equal significance and found out the term “chronotope”, which includes the combination of time and place. The aim of this study is to analyze the concept of chronotope in “A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man”, which is considered to be one of the most important works of Irish modern literature and an example of “Bildungsroman (Kochis, 2008) and to explain the possible ways of using this work in the EFL classes.

Key Words: *Bildungsroman, Chronotope, EFL.*

BİR BILDUNGSROMAN OLARAK “A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN”DE KRONOTOP KAVRAMI VE İNGİLİZCE’NİN YABANCI DİL OLARAK ÖĞRETİLDİĞİ SINIFLARDA KULLANIMI

Özet

Zaman ve mekan kavramları edebi eserler incelenirken üzerinde en çok durulan kavramların başında gelmektedir. Bu iki kavram edebi eserlerin arka planını oluşturur ve esere ait diğer öğeleri (olay örgüsü, temalar, vb.) etkiler. Bakhtin (1981) bu iki öğenin bir edebi eserde eşit derecede önemli olduğunu düşünmüş hatta zaman ve mekan kavramının ikisini birden içeren “kronotop” kavramını bulmuştur. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Bakhtin’in kronotop kavramını, modern İrlanda edebiyatında önemli bir yere sahip olan ve bir Bildungsroman örneği olarak kabul edilen (Kochis, 2008) James Joyce’un “A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man” adlı eserinde incelemek ve bu eserin İngilizce’nin yabancı dil olarak öğretildiği sınıflarda olası kullanım şekillerini açıklamaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Bildungsroman, Kronotop, Yabancı Dil olarak İngilizce.*

Introduction

Setting, which includes time and place, constitutes an important component of most literary works, such as novels, short stories, plays, etc., because it contributes to the development of plot, characters and themes of the works. The first element of setting is “time”. Time, in works of literature, might be analyzed within different categories, such as the time of the events in the work of literature, the time of narration, the time the author wrote the work and the time the readers read it (Aktaş, 1984). The second element is “place”. It refers to the location where the events take place, the characters live and become aware of their existence (Narli, 2002). In the works of fiction, place constitutes the background of the events taking place in relation with the characters and all these elements exist within a specific period of time. Jeremiah (2000:23) explained the concept of place in relation with the other elements like time and events and suggested that “...*place is usually combined with time and events to establish what is known as the social setting or the social context of a literary work.*” He also contends that “place in works of fiction” has the function of putting the reader where the writer intends him to be and having him some idea on the history, the terrain, the people and the customs of the community. These functions are achieved through effective detailed descriptions which will bring about evoking some feelings in the reader and in this way, it could be possible to say that literary works reach their aims.

1. Time and Place in the Modern Novel

The concepts of “time” and “place” are dwelled upon differently in different works of literature in accordance with the literary movement which the work belongs to. Modernism, which came into existence in the early twentieth century, presented these concepts very differently. Time and place turned into concepts which gained meaning through personal experience; therefore, they were more subjective. This emphasis on the individual in the modern novels gave the literary works a new direction.

When Henry James defined novel as “a direct impression of life”, he endeavoured to imply a filtering experience through an individual sensibility. Since literature has strong connections with what man experiences, even small changes man witnessed have been reflected on the literary works of important literary figures. Political and social events taking place throughout time have taken a significant place in all pieces of literature. Kohler(1948:15-16) explains the impact of important events on the literary works and says:

The novel has been assaulted also from without, for it has felt the impact of every intellectual development of the last hundred years. After Newton, Bergson and Einstein it could no longer evade the scientific necessity of a new concept of time and space; after Darwin, the biological necessity; after Marx, the economic necessity; after Freud, the psychological necessity of man’s own thwarting and distorted

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personality. As a result, the novel has been put to political and social uses having only incidental connection with its form as rigorous, self-bounded, self-contained art.

With all of these developments related to scientific, political and social life, the authors felt the need to elaborate on their technique and their style on account of the inadequacy of the traditional technique in displaying the reality and experiences of man. As an important literary movement, modernism made significant contributions to the world of literature with its extraordinary narration and time line. The conventional literary style indicated a sense of regularity with its starting and leading up to a climax and bringing the novel to a satisfying conclusion. However, in the modern novel, the world displayed included a troubled and uncertain atmosphere. Therefore, all the events experienced by man were revealed in detail through a moving succession of incidents and agglomeration of ideas, theories and often conflicting interpretations of the individual's place in the world, of his possibilities in an alien social system. Haksal (2006:2) states that "*Modernists attempted to reveal a rebellious spirit in art, a tendency to reject the commonplace and the traditional conventions and to reflect in their works this state of confusion and chaos of which James Joyce is perhaps the most important English hypostasis*".

Kohler points out that this lack of a chronological order and the deep analysis of the thoughts and feelings of the characters was a necessity on taking the chaotic atmosphere of the century into consideration. He says (1948:15-16):

For the modern novelist life is no longer "a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged." It is the spectacle of man in his universe and the falling atoms of impression and sensation that shower about him in his time and place. In this view of life the realities of human experience no longer arrange themselves as a sequence of events unfolding in calendar time but as an interrelation of all events, past or present, that shape the patterns of our life.

According to this extract, it is really difficult to consider human experience as consisting of merely well-arranged events following one another. Therefore, modernist writers preferred to deal with "man" and growth of his consciousness rather than the successive events taking place in his life. In the treatment of time, the difference between the modern novel and the traditional novel became quite evident. Man's consciousness became the only criterion for determining the duration of time. In the prominent works of Marcel Proust and Henri Bergson, "memory" is a very important component to express man's experiences. Leon Edel (1980:28) defines the concept of time in their terms as "*the measure of existence*" and explains that it is "*the invisible progress of the past, which gnaws into the future*". Every experience renews us and as long as a person's mind and senses are functioning, it is "*the continuation of an indefinite past in a living present*" (Edel, 1980:29). This preoccupation with time is a central component in "the modern psychological novel". Since this irregularity is dominant in every part of the novel, it

is also seen in the concept of "time". The watch measures the time regularly; however, its experience or consciousness makes an hour seem like a day or a day like an hour. For instance, when a character's present situation of actions is described, his mind might suddenly go back to the childhood memories or near past happenings but it becomes prominent in the present moment. For this reason, time is a very essential component of a literary work contributing to the plot, character development and specific themes. Ergiydiren (2001:17) explains the significance of the time in the novel as:

Taking precedence, described as the usage of the art of time and likened to the music, analyzing the meaning of time in novel is to enter the world the author reflects; to realize the understanding his psychology and the metaphysical reality under the parts of time that he has chosen and shown.

In addition to the concept of "time" which is considerably related to the individual experience and consciousness, the explanation of place in the novel is also of significance. Similar to the use of time by the authors of modern fiction, place is also used as a concept which gains meaning with the help of the experience of the characters. A character might be standing at a specific place physically but his/her mind and his/her thoughts might be in some other places depending on what s/he thinks. In the characters' endless flow of thoughts, every single thought might be located in different places. These two concepts; namely, "time" and "place" gain new meanings depending on the characters, the type of the novel and the author's style. Bakhtin uses the term "chronotope" to express the important connection and fuse of these two terms. He indicates that "*chronotope*" is a formally constitutive category of literature. This term is composed of two words; namely, *cronos* (time) and *topos* (place). Indicators of space and time are fused in a concrete whole. Bakhtin (1981:84) points out that "*Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, and becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. This intersection of axes and fusion of indicators characterizes the artistic chronotope*".

As Bakhtin stated, these two important components of literature have a very close relationship, which positively contributes to the construction of meaning of the novel. The interrelationship between these two concepts, in fact, expresses the inseparability of them in any kind of novel. In addition to this inseparability, Bakhtin points out that "man" is the main concern and chronotope determines the image of man in literature with the possibility of defining what a character experiences in certain time periods and certain locations specified in the literary works. Because a character experiences something in the plot of a literary work, Ergiydiren (2001:19) claims that it must be represented in a space-time relationship on the narrative level of a novelistic text. The space is important for human existence as well because "*Space can be the meaning of a character's will. If it is in a natural space it can be the reflection of human will. It can also be the power that*

affects the character. Moreover, it can be thought as a physical and social factor without the control of the individual". With the help of these two components, which are time and place, chronotope is "applicable to the analysis and interpretation of both the narrative structure of the Bildungsroman^a and its range of motifs, themes, emblems, characters, images and details.

2.A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man by James Joyce as a Representative of Bildungsroman and Its Use of Chronotope

In Stephen's life, every time period and every place has got significance contributing to his character development. Haksal states that "*James Joyce's fiction is rooted in complexities of location. Space meant "urban" for Joyce and in addition, he dealt with the inner space, which is "the mind"* (2006:19). The places having a direct effect upon his life are emphasized in nearly every part of the novel. At the beginning of the novel is a map of Dublin in which all of the important places Stephen has a connection with such as Clongowes Wood College, County Kildare, are stated clearly. With the help of this map given to the reader at the beginning of the novel, visualizing the places in which Stephen's life passes becomes easier and the readers may grasp the importance of these places in the protagonist's life. Since the character of Stephen represents the author James Joyce, these places are the ones which have a clear importance in Joyce's life as well.

The boarding school in which Stephen stayed during his studying in the Clongowes Wood College had a negative and disturbing image for him because he was away from his mother, his whole family and Stephen's homesickness is visible in most of the sentences he formed while mentioning this place. He always describes the chapel where he stays as "*cold, dark and ugly*" (Joyce, 1977:19) and he misses his home and family a lot. He says "*...Going home for the holidays! That would be lovely*" (Joyce, 1977:20). Stephen also repeatedly puts his feelings into words. He once writes "*Dear mother, I'm sick. I want to go home. Please come and take me home. I'm in the infirmary. Your fond son, Stephen. How far away they were! There was cold sun light outside the window. He wondered if he'd die... He might die before his mother came*" (Joyce, 1977:23-24).

Having a very strict religious education in such a place had an important influence in the formation of Stephen's character and his thoughts about the world. With the strong influence of this religious education, he explains his ideas in connection with the important places in his life. He is defined by his place and the formation of his mind will be possible with the experience of this place which is defined specifically. He says:

*Stephen Dedalus is my name,
Ireland is my nation,*

^a *Bildungsroman*: is a novelistic genre in which the author presents the psychological, moral and social shaping of the personality of a (usually young) protagonist. This term is coined by Johann Carl Simon Morgenstern.

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*Clongowes is my dwelling place
And heaven my expectation.*

*Stephen Dedalus
Class of elements
Clongowes Wood College
Sallins
County Kildare
Ireland
Europe
The world
The universe*

That was he: and he read down the page again. What was after the universe? Nothing. But was there anything round the universe to show where it stopped before the nothing place began? It could not be a wall but there could be a thin thin line there all round everything. It was very big to think about everything and everywhere. Only God could do that" (Joyce, 1977:15-16).

The existence of God could be a good answer for all the questions in Stephen's mind and that was the main thing which was taught him in every part of his education in Clongowes Wood College. In an effort to find his real self, Stephen tried to express what he felt by referring to the elements of space around him in his family's house in Blackrock in a very detailed way. He actively explores his world and comes to conclusions about it via this exploration. He says "...Sometimes a fever gathered within him and led him to rove alone in the evening along the quiet avenue. The peace of the gardens and the kindly lights in the windows poured a tender influence into his restless heart. The noise of children at play annoyed him and their silly voices made him feel, even more keenly than he had felt at Clongowes, that he was different from others. He did not want to play. He wanted to meet in the real world the unsubstantial image which his soul so constantly beheld. He did not know where to seek it or how: but a premonition which led him on told him that this image would, without any overt act of his, encounter him"(Joyce, 1977: 64-65).

As can be seen in this extract, Stephen expresses his feelings clearly in a very artistic manner by describing the scenery around him in a detailed way. All the spatial elements have a specific meaning for him and his life. When they move to a new house in Dublin because of his family's financial problems, the first thing he focuses on is the city of Dublin again with all its details. He knows that this place is a new beginning in his life with its suggestion of a new pace of life. Joyce explains this as "Dublin was a new and complex sensation. Uncle Charles had grown so witless that he could no longer be sent out on errands and the disorder in settling in the new house left Stephen freer than he had been in Blackrock. In the beginning he contented himself with circling timidly round the neighbouring square or, at most,

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going half way down one of the side streets: but when he had made a skeleton map of the city in his mind he followed boldly one of its central lines until he reached the customhouse. He passed unchallenged among the docks and along the quays wondering at the multitude of corks that lay bobbing on the surface of the water in a thick, yellow scum, at the crowds of quay porters and the rambling carts and the ill-dressed bearded policemen. The vastness and strangeness of the life suggested to him by the bales of merchandise stocked along the walls or swung aloft out of the hold of steamers wakened again in him the unrest which had sent him wandering in the evening from garden to garden in search of Mercedes (Joyce, 1977:66).

The city of Dublin itself is very different from what he observed while he was staying in Blackrock. As a representation of urbanization with its crowd of people and noise coming from steamers, Dublin is described in an unconventional way by James Joyce, sometimes critically, sometimes aesthetically and sometimes psychoanalytically. James Joyce prefers to deal with the experience of modernity by representing a city in literature, which is "Dublin". Leonard (1995:85) expresses the importance of Dublin in *A Portrait* as "*He (Joyce) portrays Stephen as still merely living in it, threatened by its institutionalized anonymity and therefore dependent upon its apparently boundless possibilities for self-affirmation*".

Dublin is an important and ideal place for Joyce; therefore, it is very clearly portrayed in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. There are a few reasons for it, as stated by Haksal (2006:21) "*Joyce was born there, so he was aware of all the aspects of life in Dublin. And Dublin itself could reflect the Irish life like a mirror. All these made it possible for Joyce to criticize this city and made it a major setting for his novels*". As James Joyce's fiction emphasized locations, and particularly Dublin, he placed *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* in the reality of this city and tried to depict the Irish way of life and Irish people in their own locations. In his description of Dublin, Joyce does not benefit from geographical terms; instead, he describes it as "a new and complex sensation". According to Leonard (1995:90), "*this sensation aroused by the city and embodied within –is so new and complex that he approaches it like the labyrinth designed by his namesake*".

In addition to the striking examples related to the description of important places in Stephen's life, the element of time and its significance in the evaluation of particular aspects of human life gains a new meaning in the modern novel. As an important characteristic of modernism, the shifts of time in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* are difficult to follow since the flow of thoughts in a person's mind is difficult to follow as well. From time to time, the scenery changes so fast that it becomes very difficult to discern where the events are taking place, who the characters are and what they are doing. Edel (1980:12) suggests that as "*retaining and recording the inwardness of an experience*" is much more important than the actual experience itself, Stephen's thoughts and feelings were emphasized in the novel rather than the description of actual experiences. James Joyce, with his great insistence on the significance of present moment, wanted to catch the present and he called it "epiphany". In his view, all that is important was present time the light

of which lingers the past. Since the modern novel of James Joyce deals with the inner thoughts of the characters in his novels, "immediate perception or direct impression" of the feelings and thoughts of them becomes much more important, which automatically increases the importance of present time.

In *A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man*, the narrator develops and moves through time simultaneously with the protagonist Stephen; therefore, the language used at the beginning of the novel carries traces from childhood because Stephen is a child at the beginning. As time goes by and Stephen gets older, the simple sentences of the first chapter include complicated ones. Time is directly related to Stephen's consciousness in the novel as both of them include a kind of progression. Kershner (1976:605-606) explains this connection between time and consciousness and divides Stephen's stages of perception into five saying that "...As a young child he simply takes in sensations as he takes in language, without attempting to order his world through them; as a boy, he tries and fails to assimilate "adult" ideas of clock-time and of geography. In his religious period, Stephen's perception of ongoing time is subordinated to the Church's concept of eternity; following his rejection of Catholicism, he makes a religion of the Esthetic and narrows his perceptual focus to a Pateresque "moment". Finally he comes to reject this mode of existence as well and enters into a mature phase of orientation towards future".

In every period of his life, Stephen conceptualizes "the time" in accordance with the characteristics of this period. In his childhood period, for instance, through his free will, he tries to understand what is happening around him and first his family, then the schools he attends help him make sense the outside world, and in this way, he tries to adapt himself to the "sequential notion of time that the outside world claims to run by." as suggested by Kershner (1976:607). However, these conceptions of time are not sufficiently well-defined for him to meet his requirements for understanding them after he becomes mature. After realizing his artistic abilities and deciding to focus on them, which is the period dominated by his artistic concerns, he starts to use art as a vehicle to gather the meaning of "time and place". At that moment, the clock time loses its meaning and his perceptions related to "the experienced time" gains importance.

Stephen experiences time differently when he is under the influence of religious education he takes and the Church. Since in religious terms there is no present time and everything is evaluated within the scope of eternity, Stephen feels the confusion at that point and thinks that he is spiritually bad or a kind of sinner. He believes that both these feelings and his physical attraction to a prostitute are, in fact, very important barriers for his pursuit of piety, which he can never truly find. According to Kershner (1976:612) this religious confusion also leads to "disorientation in time and space" and he leaves his religious thoughts behind and makes a new beginning when he sees the "bird-girl" in the shoreline. This is a real turning point in Stephen's life.

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In spite of the great changes in his feelings and thoughts he undergoes in his life from childhood to adulthood, "past" has always had a significant place shaping his childhood dreams and determining his relationships with girls. For instance, while trying to find "the woman of his life", he is under the influence of previously experienced stories such as that of the Count of Monte Cristo. Later on, E_____ C_____ takes an important place in his life and it forms the image for his artistic studies. In his religious life, also, he can never get rid of the feeling of guilt because of his sexual relationship with a prostitute.

In this novel, which displays the personal development of a man and therefore is considered to be an important example of *Bildungsroman*, the moral, psychological and physical growth of Stephen Dedalus is revealed through his own deep feelings and thoughts flowing in his mind. His development from a child into an adult and his going away from his family and the place they have been living at the end of the novel and Stephen's continuous struggle with the values and beliefs imposed on him by his family, religion and the society in which he lives highly contribute to the characteristics of the novel as a "*Bildungsroman*". The thing he actually chases is to the real meaning of his existence in the world and he tries to discern his future; is he going to focus on his religious or artistic identity? In the light of this kind of questions, his quest for identity is explained clearly with the help of his thoughts and feelings, through his own eyes. This psychological aspect of modernist novel makes the reader see the world through the eyes of that character in that place, at that time.

With the important contribution of modernism at that period, James Joyce uses man (Stephen Dedalus) as a central element in the novel as the other modernist writers used. The personality growth of Stephen has a great connection with the places and time which he has contact with. The former explains the important role of the places he has been to and been in touch with throughout his growing up whereas the latter affects his perceptions related to himself, his life, the important institutions and important people in his life. Leonard (1995:87) states that Stephen tries to "*invest places with meaning, memory and desire*"; that's why, the places he has been to directly contribute to his personal development as a person and as an artist.

3. The Use of "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" in Advanced ELT Classes

The use of literary texts in the foreign language classroom is an extensively discussed issue. It is either considered to be "*a springboard for the development of critical thinking and aesthetic appreciation*" (Bretz, 1990:335) or a construct which is very beneficial for language learning process; therefore, it should be included in the syllabus (Collie & Slater, 1987). İnan (2009) suggests that culture and language are highly interrelated concepts, for this reason, integrating literature into language teaching curriculum is one of the best ways of understanding the target culture.

Lazar (1993: 14-15) mentions a number of reasons for the use of literature in foreign language classrooms:

- a. *it is very motivating*
- b. *it is authentic material*
- c. *it has general educational value*
- d. *it is found in many syllabuses*
- e. *it helps students to understand another culture*
- f. *it is a stimulus for language acquisition*
- g. *it develops students' interpretative abilities*
- h. *students enjoy it and it is fun*
- i. *it is highly valued and has a high status*
- j. *it expands students' language awareness*
- k. *it encourages students to talk about their opinions and feelings*

All these factors explain the significant role of literary texts in foreign language teaching contexts. They indicate the influence of literature on both the cognitive and affective side of the learning process.

4. A Sample Lesson Plan on *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*

A number of different approaches might be adopted while using literature in the language classrooms as suggested by Lazar (1993:23-24), which are: a) a language-based approach, b) literature as content and c) literature for personal enrichment. In this study, a combination of these three approaches has been used with a communicative focus and possible activities have been suggested by the author.

4.1. Pre-Reading Activities

a) Quick guesses based on the title

- Look at the title and tell us what you think the novel is about.
- Who is that artist, in your opinion? What is his art?

b) Discussion questions

- Do you think our past life influences our present life negatively or positively?
- Do you remember any childhood memories that have influenced your present life?

c) Author's biography and historical and social context

- What do you know about James Joyce? What are his important works in Irish literature?
- What are the peculiarities of his style as an author?
- What do you know about "modernism in literature"?

4.2. While-Reading Activities

a) Re-ordering the sentences according to the plot of the novel: The following sentences are in the jumbled order and students are asked to put them into correct order.

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- Stephen wants to marry the young girl next door, Eileen Vance.
 - Stephen reads Alexander Dumas's novel "The Count of Monte Cristo".
 - Stephen goes to a birthday party and watches everybody else in the party silently.
 - Stephen reads a verse from the book of Ecclesiastes as a guest lecturer in his new school.
 - Stephen imagines himself as a priest.
 - Mrs. Dedalus is worried that her son's attitudes have changed a lot in his university years.
 - Stephen notes a conversation that he has had with his mother about Virgin Mary.
- b) Finding suitable headings for the chapters in the novel: While working on each chapter, teacher and students try to find a suitable title for each chapter.
- c) Summarizing the novel: The students are asked to summarize each chapter in the novel with 50 words only.

4.2. Post-Reading Activities

- a) Analysis of the novel according to the literary movement: Students are asked to match the qualities of "modernism" with the characteristics of the novel.
- b) Literary devices in the novel: Students are asked to find the literary devices in the novel.
- c) Composition writing: A theme is chosen from the novel and students are asked to write an essay on this theme by giving examples from the novel.

While devising these activities, it is a good idea to integrate as many different language skills as possible since the integration of different skills might contribute to students' communicative competence in the target language.

5. Conclusion and Discussion

As "*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*" is considered to be an example of Bildungsroman, James Joyce focused on the main character, Stephen Dedalus and told his story by mentioning the changes in his personality as he grew up. Different time periods in his life and also Dublin (like in James Joyce's other literary works) has got significance in his personal development. Joyce highlighted the changes in Stephen's language as he grew older and when he was a child; his sentences were simple, whereas when he became adult, the sentences he used became more complicated. Stephen's thoughts and conscious experiences were given in an intensive manner.

While giving explanations about the main character, Stephen Dedalus, James Joyce made important connections between the character development of Stephen in different time periods and the city of Dublin. This is the way the concept "*chronotope*" is used in the novel. The character of Stephen is deeply

affected by different locations and different time periods in his life. His childhood, his adolescence, and his adulthood had significant influence on his personal development.

When it comes to the use of this novel for ELT purposes, as an important example of modern literature, “*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*” might be used in advanced literature classes as it illustrates the characteristics of the period and the technique of “stream-of-consciousness”. The stream-of-consciousness novels are sometimes very demanding, for this reason, it might be a good idea to have classroom discussions based on the characteristics of such kind of novels in the classroom, which will not only facilitate the process of understanding the content but also foster students’ productive skills.

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