



## The Artistic Interpretation Of Memory, Spiritual Heritage, And Human Will In The Novella

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### ABSTRACT

This thesis examines Said Ahmad's novella "Kiprikda qolgan tong" from artistic-aesthetic and spiritual-psychological perspectives. It analyzes the central place in the work of such issues as the fate of the writer and the individual, memory and death, the relationship between father and child, women's fortitude, the creator's moral responsibility, the preservation of literary heritage, and human will in the face of severe trials. It is shown that the events in the novella are interpreted not merely as biographical memory, but as a means of understanding the spiritual value of human life and creativity. In particular, through the image of Umida, the idea of immortalizing the father in memory is revealed; through the image of Zuhro, loyalty and endurance; and through the image of O'lmas Umarbekov, the idea that the creator does not abandon the pen even in the face of death. The compositional structure of the work, the poetics of memory, psychological depiction, symbolic images and lyrical digressions, as well as the artistic and semantic function of the title "Kiprikda qolgan tong," are analyzed. As a result of the study, the novella is evaluated as one of the important prose works in Uzbek literature that combines memory and human spirituality.

**KEYWORDS:** Said Ahmad, "Kiprikda qolgan tong," O'lmas Umarbekov, Umida, Zuhro, memory, spiritual heritage, creator's fate, human will, psychological depiction, artistic memory, symbol, composition, death and life.

### INTRODUCTION

Fiction portrays human life not only as a system of external events, but also together with a person's inner world, memories, sufferings, hopes, and moral choices. Especially in works built on memory, the relationship between the past and the present performs an important artistic function. The image of a person revived in memory, although no longer physically present, continues his spiritual life through his words, affection, creative work, children, and good deeds. In Uzbek literature, many writers have addressed the issues of human memory, the fate of the creator, and the literary environment. However, Said Ahmad's novella "Kiprikda qolgan tong" is of particular significance in this respect. The work portrays the personality of O'lmas Umarbekov, his family, creative activity, struggle with illness and death, and the mark he left in the hearts of his friends and loved ones through artistic memory. In the novella, biographical reality and artistic interpretation are harmoniously combined. The writer does not limit himself to narrating the fate of a particular person. He reflects on how a person lived, what trace he left behind, and what kind of memory he awakened in the hearts of those close to him. In this sense, the work can be evaluated not only as a memoir novella, but also as an artistic-philosophical work about human spirituality, the responsibility of the creator, and the philosophy of life.

## Literature Review And Methods

As is known, genuine literature embodies figurative thinking. The idea that “Creating an artistic image and engaging in artistic creation consist of the combination and interaction of objective and subjective factors in a certain harmony. The combination and dynamics of objective and subjective factors are not a disorderly process occurring without the influence of a certain logical force” [1;12] is fully reflected in Said Ahmad’s novella “Kiprikda qolgan tong.”

Existing studies devoted to S. Ahmad’s novella “Kiprikda qolgan tong” particularly emphasize the expressiveness of the work, its literary language, and the specific features of portraying the personality of O’lmas Umarbekov [2;3;4;5;6]. However, a comprehensive study of the poetics of memory in the novella, the spiritual and artistic functions of the images of Umida and Zuhro, the symbolic meanings of the images of “dawn” and “eyelash,” as well as the artistic interpretation of the creative personality in the face of death, deserves particular attention.

One of the most important features of the novella “Kiprikda qolgan tong” is the fusion of reality with memory. While narrating about O’lmas Umarbekov, the writer does not limit himself to listing individual events from his life. Indeed, the writer, while portraying the psychology of the character, “sought to present precisely his experiences—the individual path of growth and maturation—as turning points in his life. Consequently, human experiences are the subjective aspect of his real life, the objective aspect of the individual’s life path” [6;13]. Deeply understanding this, S. Ahmad interprets memory as a spiritual bridge between the living person and the deceased person.

The word “dawn” in the title of the work is also noteworthy from this point of view. Dawn is usually regarded as a symbol of new life, hope, awakening, and light. The “eyelash,” in turn, is associated with the human eye, tears, and emotions. Thus, “the dawn remaining on the eyelash” signifies, on the one hand, a very brief and transient moment of life and, on the other hand, the light preserved in human memory. In the novella, O’lmas Umarbekov’s life ends with death. However, for the writer, death does not mean the complete disappearance of a person. In Q. Yo’ldoshev’s words, “Death destroys the representative of the West, while death elevates the people of the East and brings them closer to their goal” [7;137]. A person’s body may leave this life, but his work, creativity, child, friends, and good name continue his spiritual life. Therefore, in the work, “memory” becomes not merely recollection, but a means of preserving spiritual heritage.

The attitude toward O’lmas Umarbekov at the beginning and in the subsequent parts of the work also points to this idea. The writer portrays the deceased not simply as a writer, but as a friend, younger brother, kinsman, and dear person. This attitude determines the emotional center of the work. The writer’s description of O’lmas Umarbekov is not accidental: “I dedicated this novella to my beloved writer O’lmas Umarbekov, who was able to refrain from every kind of unlawful and dishonorable act that disgraces a person, who came into this world pure and left it pure, who lived a life as clear as light...” [11;3]. This quotation defines the moral program of the work. That is, at the center of the novella stands not only the fate of the creator, but also the concept of “living a pure life.” The writer does not separate O’lmas Umarbekov’s personality from his creative work. The writer’s purity as a human being also serves as a spiritual foundation for his creativity.

## Results And Discussion

In the novella, the image of O'lmas Umarbekov appears in two aspects. The first is as a writer, and the second is as a father, husband, friend, and human being. These two aspects are portrayed inseparably. In particular, the hospital scenes are of great importance in revealing the character's inner strength. Despite struggling with a serious illness, O'lmas Umarbekov continues writing with a piece of plywood placed on his knees. The writer portrays this not as an ordinary working process, but as a high manifestation of human will. The work states: "For a week now, he has been lying in the hospital in serious condition. He is still writing with a piece of plywood on his knees, forgetting everything, even the shadow of death approaching today or tomorrow" [11;56]. Here, the concepts of "the shadow of death" and "writing" are contrasted with each other. Death is a force that ends life. Writing, however, is a force that enables a person to continue spiritually. O'lmas Umarbekov's refusal to stop writing signifies not a physical, but a spiritual victory over death. This is one of the strongest philosophical points of the work. A person's physical capabilities are limited, but his creative thought and spiritual heritage can continue to live after him.

"A writer's ability to understand the structure of human individuality gives rise to psychological depiction in literary works... In some cases, the mastery of the writer-psychologist is manifested in his ability to represent psychological phenomena" [8;9-10]. This aspect is fully embodied in Said Ahmad's novella "Kiprikda qolgan tong." In particular, the scene in which O'lmas Umarbekov writes a letter in the novella further strengthens this concept. On the eve of death, he thinks not about his own suffering, but about the literary heritage that will remain after him. The content of the letter, "O'lmas has now gone to a place where he can no longer write... let the things he wrote with great difficulty in the crowded wards of hospitals not be left behind..." [11;57], shows that the writer is thinking about the fate of his literary legacy after his death. It is noteworthy that a person awaiting death does not put his own interests first. He asks that Sobir Mirvaliev's work be supported, that his works be published, and that assistance be given to his wife Zuhro and his daughter Umida. Thus, the moral foundation of O'lmas Umarbekov's image is formed by three concepts: creativity, loyalty, and responsibility.

One of the strongest psychological points in the novella is the interpretation of the title "At the Threshold of the Eternal World." When the writer sees this inscription, he is deeply affected: "I shuddered when I read the words 'At the Threshold of the Eternal World' written there" [11;57]. These words express not simple fear. They convey astonishment at a person's awareness of the approach of his own death and, at the same time, his ability to continue creating. The writer asks himself: "Could it be that the hand writing these words did not tremble, could it be that he did not burst into tears..." [11;57]. Through these rhetorical questions, O'lmas Umarbekov's willpower is further exalted. He is not calm because he is unaware of death. On the contrary, he continues creating while fully conscious of death. Therefore, his fortitude appears even more impressive. For a creator, the pen is not merely a tool of labor. It is the greatest spiritual trace that a person can leave behind. In this sense, the title "At the Threshold of the Eternal World" signifies the boundary between two worlds: the transient world and the eternal world. Yet at this boundary, literature emerges as a third space. A person leaves life, but his word remains. Therefore, the motif of death in the work is not opposed to life. On the contrary, awareness of death further intensifies the meaning of life.

The image of Umida has particular artistic significance in the novella. Umida is O'lmas Umarbekov's daughter. However, she is portrayed not only as the child of the deceased writer,



but also as an image that continues her father's spiritual heritage. The events before she enters the test examination reveal Umida's attitude toward knowledge. She answers the questions without haste, thinking carefully. This defines her intellectual potential. The writer states: "She answered the test questions without haste, thinking carefully, concentrating her thoughts, and marking the answer sheets knowingly and deliberately" [11;51]. When connected with subsequent events, this small episode acquires greater meaning. Umida is not merely her father's daughter, but a representative of the younger generation shaped under the influence of his spiritual world. Her study abroad and successful graduation from university also continue this idea. Umida completes a four-year course of study in three years and earns the right to receive a bachelor's degree. This demonstrates the girl's ability, diligence, and determination. However, for Umida, the spiritual value of success is connected with her father. At the presentation of the play "Fotima and Zuhro," she watches a performance based on her father's work. At that moment, a sense of regret arises in her heart: "She sat there grieving that my father himself did not see the work he had written." In this sentence, the daughter's love for her father is expressed very briefly, yet powerfully. Her words, "If my father were alive, I would buy him a foreign car..." [11;52], may appear outwardly to be an ordinary wish. However, in the context of the text, these words express the child's sense of indebtedness to her father. In fact, Umida is saying: "I love you," "I am proud of you," "I wish I could do something good for you." The writer does not explain this feeling directly, but allows the reader to understand it through the character's speech.

The image of Zuhro is one of the spiritual pillars of the novella. She appears as O'lmas Umarbekov's wife, Umida's mother, and the person who carries the family's most difficult trials on her shoulders. O'lmas Umarbekov's illness and death are a severe tragedy for Zuhro. However, she does not lose herself. Her self-control, especially in front of Umida, demonstrates her fortitude. The work states: "Having endured all the difficulties together with O'lmas, Zuhro had become resilient and patient" [11;58-59]. This sentence presents the principal feature of Zuhro's character: endurance. For Umida, Zuhro becomes a person who takes the place of both mother and father and the guardian of the family's memory. Umida's words, "You are my dear father who remained in place of my father" [11;53], define Zuhro's spiritual position within the family. Thus, in the work, family relationships are determined not by biological ties, but by affection, loyalty, and responsibility.

After losing her father, Umida preserves his memory through various objects. This aspect also enriches the system of object-images in the novella. One of the most impressive episodes is the episode with the earrings. Zuhro puts on Umida the diamond-studded earrings given by O'lmas Umarbekov. Umida looks at herself in the mirror, but then takes off the earrings and returns them to her mother. She says: "I have a small photograph of my father made by the film studio photographer. I want to put it in a medallion and wear it around my neck" [11;53].

This episode reveals Umida's character with remarkable clarity. The earrings are a symbol of external beauty and material value. The father's photograph is a symbol of memory and spiritual value. Umida chooses the latter. Through this choice, the writer reveals the character's inner world: for Umida, the most precious thing left by her father is not an expensive piece of jewelry, but his photograph, memory, and spiritual closeness. Her words, "I do not particularly like such things" [11;53], are also not merely an expression of modesty. They indicate the preference of spirituality over materiality.



In the gradual development of the events of the novella, such principles of realistic depiction as naturalness, truthfulness, spatial and temporal precision, and the credibility of interpretation are predominant. The episode involving the play performs a special compositional function in the novella. The play "Fotima and Zuhro" is created under the influence of O'lmas Umarbekov's work "Letters to My Daughter." Thus, literature is transformed into theatrical art, and the writer's word is transferred to the stage. Director Rustam Ma'diev's being influenced by the work and turning it into a stage production demonstrates the afterlife of a literary text. O'lmas Umarbekov does not see the performance. However, his words live on the stage. This is a very important artistic parallel: O'lmas Umarbekov passes away, but his work remains. Therefore, during the performance, Umida feels as if she "sees" her father once again.

Art revives memory. After the performance ends, Umida holds her uncle's hand. In his hands, she feels her father's hand: "Perhaps because of the pulse in his hands or something else, she thought they resembled her father's hands" [11;52]. This sentence is a very powerful psychological detail. Human memory is sometimes revived not through major events, but through small sensory signs such as a hand, voice, smell, or gaze. Umida "finds" her father in her uncle's hand. Then: "It seemed as though his breath, the smell of cigarette smoke, and even the scent of some medicine that O'lmas would occasionally drip into water and drink were reaching her nostrils" [11;52]. Here, smell appears as a psychological trigger of memory. Thus, in the novella, memory is not merely an intellectual process. It is portrayed as a complex psychological process connected with a person's abilities to see, hear, smell, and feel.

In the later part of the novella, Zuhro and Umida's travels to foreign countries are depicted. England, Manchester, Italy, Rome, Pompeii, Venice, Pisa, Spain, and Granada broaden the geographical scope of the work. At first glance, these episodes may seem distant from the main plot. In fact, they express Umida's spiritual development and the broadening of her worldview. After childhood, Umida sees the world. Her personal memory connects with the memory of world civilization. In the reflections on Pompeii, the themes of time and death appear once again. In Pompeii, people remain frozen in the positions in which they were caught. The city demonstrates the mercilessness of time. O'lmas Umarbekov's death is, in a certain sense, similar to this: a person physically departs, but his state in life, the deeds he performed, and the words he left behind remain "frozen" in memory. In this respect, the Pompeii episode indirectly serves the main idea of the work. The reflections on Venice are also not far from this theme. The writer sees the great city gradually deteriorating: "Great Venice seemed to be slowly reaching the end of its life" [11;55]. This thought also alludes to human life. Even the greatest cities in the world are powerless before time. Human beings are the same. However, what distinguishes a human being from a city is the ability to leave behind memory and spiritual heritage.

The reflections on the Leaning Tower of Pisa are among the most interesting philosophical digressions in the novella. Seeing that the tower is leaning, the writer thinks that it could be straightened with the help of modern technology. However, another question immediately arises: if the tower is straightened, will it not lose its uniqueness? The work states: "But the Tower of Pisa is famous precisely because it leans to one side" [11;55]. This reflection can be connected with the overall philosophy of the work. A human being is not perfect either. There are deviations, pains, and losses in one's life. Yet it is precisely these trials that shape one's personality. Just as the Tower of Pisa is valuable because of its "imperfection," a person's life path acquires meaning through the trials he has experienced. O'lmas Umarbekov's illness does

not break him. On the contrary, it reveals his willpower. From this point of view, the episode about the Tower of Pisa can be interpreted as an indirect symbol of the philosophy of human beings and fate in the work.

In the depiction of the Roman Colosseum, the motif of memory also comes to the fore. When the writer puts his ear to the bricks, he seems to try to hear the voice of history: "If you took a piece of the much-experienced Colosseum's bricks and held it to your ear, would you hear the celebrations that took place here, the noise of the gladiators fighting bulls, and the cries of the people?" [11;55]. Of course, a brick does not speak. However, human imagination gives it a "voice." This idea is very close to the poetic essence of the entire novella. Memory itself is the same. A deceased person does not speak. However, through what he wrote, what he did, his belongings, his relatives, and his children, he "speaks" again. Therefore, the Colosseum episode places the main idea of the novella within a broader historical context. A similarity emerges between the memory of one person and the historical memory of an entire people. The most dramatic point of the novella is the telephone call announcing O'lmas Umarbekov's death. When the telephone rings at night, the writer thinks: "No one brings good news at such an untimely hour." This sentence prepares the psychological impact of the news of death in advance. Akmal's words, "My brother has passed away" [11;57], bring all the emotions accumulated throughout the work together at one point. After this, nature also becomes attuned to human suffering. The rain intensifies. The road is flooded, trees fall, and the movement of the car becomes difficult.

As can be seen from the content of the cited text, metaphoricality, which is considered an important feature of the artistic image, occupies a special place in the writer's work, and by "metaphoricality" is meant "the tendency of the artistic image to reveal the essence of one thing through another, a mode of thinking characteristic of art" [9;66]. In this respect, the depiction of nature in the novella performs the function of a psychological background. Here, rain is not merely a weather phenomenon. It can also be perceived as a symbol of weeping, mourning, and purification. At the end of the work, rain is repeatedly mentioned: "The rain roars. The rain howls. The rain cries out for you, turning its tears into a flood" [11;59]. This repetition creates the emotional climax of the work. Throughout the entire work, the rain turns into human tears. In the funeral scene, the assessment given to O'lmas Umarbekov's personality constitutes the moral culmination of the work. The writer says of the deceased: "Today we are accompanying a perfect human being on his final journey, to the presence of Allah" [11;58]. Here, the concept of a "perfect human being" is important. Perfection is not measured by external success, position, or wealth. According to the writer's description, true perfection is honesty, purity, doing good to people, and refraining from coveting what belongs to others. In the mentor's speech, it is stated: "The deceased came into this world only to work, only to do good to people" [11;58]. This description summarizes the spiritual portrait of O'lmas Umarbekov that has been formed throughout the work. Likewise, the assessment that "The deceased never hurt anyone's feelings, never reproached anyone, came into this world pure and left it pure, and was a person as clear as light..." [11;57] also serves as the final moral conclusion about his personality. The mentor's words, "People would name their children O'lmas, saying, 'May my child be like him, may my younger brother be like him, may my son-in-law be like him'" [11;57], show that the personal qualities of the deceased were also preserved in the memory of society. Thus, a

person's true lifespan is measured not by the dates of birth and death, but by the impression left in people's hearts.

In the novella, death is interpreted in several meanings. First, it is the natural end of human life; second, it is the termination of physical existence; and third, death becomes the beginning of memory and spiritual heritage.

After O'lmas Umarbekov's death, his life continues in the memory of his family, friends, and readers. In particular, his works and "Letters to My Daughter" are the main means of this spiritual continuity. Therefore, in the novella, the question of how one lives one's life is more important than the fear of death. O'lmas Umarbekov's state before death also demonstrates this. He spends his final days not in sorrow and complaint, but in creative work. This aspect elevates his image from that of a tragic hero to the level of a spiritual hero.

In "Kiprikda qolgan tong," the work "Letters to My Daughter" performs the function of an important internal text. Although these letters are addressed to Umida, in terms of content they constitute a spiritual dialogue between father and child. Even while sensing that he is about to leave this life, O'lmas Umarbekov leaves words for his daughter. Here, we can observe "the metaphorical mode of expression, that is, the transfer of the meaning of a word to another object, the creation of allusion, irony, or symbols" [10;143] in the symbolic meaning acquired by the epistolary genre. Usually, a letter is a means of communication between two living people. However, because O'lmas Umarbekov's letters were written on the eve of his death, they become a form of communication between a living person and the future. The father leaves his daughter not only advice, but also his spiritual world as a legacy. Umida, in turn, is a representative of the generation that receives this legacy. From this point of view, the image of Umida is a symbol of the future in the work. O'lmas Umarbekov represents the past and memory, Umida represents the future, while Zuhro is the spiritual bridge connecting the two. Such a system of images ensures the internal compositional unity of the novella.

Said Ahmad often expresses profound philosophical ideas in the novella through small details. For example, such details as Umida taking off the earrings, wearing her father's photograph in a medallion, comparing her uncle's hand to her father's hand, and recalling the smell of cigarettes reveal the character's inner world. This method is one of the important features of psychological prose. Instead of providing lengthy explanations, the writer creates meaning through objects and emotions. Zuhro's looking at the clock is also one of such details. At the time of O'lmas Umarbekov's death: "Zuhro stopped it at twenty minutes past two" [11;58]. The stopping of the clock signifies that time symbolically stopped for one family. Mechanically, the clock stopped, but artistically it marks the final point of O'lmas Umarbekov's life. Thus, an ordinary object becomes an artistic symbol.

In the novella, time appears in two forms. The first is objective time measured by the calendar and the clock; the second is subjective time that lives in memory. The date of O'lmas Umarbekov's death is exact: November 10, 1994. The time is also recorded precisely. However, for Umida, the period of childhood spent with her father is still alive. She remembers her father's hand, smell, and voice. Therefore, in human memory, time moves backward. This situation also harmonizes with the image of "dawn" in the title of the work. Dawn is the beginning of a new day, but the dawn "remaining on the eyelash" is a moment that should have passed but has been retained in memory. Thus, the title also expresses the concept of time in the work.

Rain becomes the leading symbolic image in the final part of the novella. It rains even before O'lmas Umarbekov's death. The rain does not stop during the funeral either. It is also raining at the cemetery. At the end of the work, the repetition appears: "The rain roars. The rain howls" [11;59]. This repetition gives the text musicality and a mourning tone. The rain "cries out, turning its tears into a flood" [11;59], transforming personal human grief into a general state of nature. Here, nature becomes a companion to human emotion. On the other hand, rain is a symbol of purification. Since O'lmas Umarbekov is portrayed as a person who "came pure and left pure," the rain on his final journey can also be perceived as a symbol of spiritual purification. Outwardly, the novella seems to consist of various events: Umida's test examination, her studies abroad, travels, the performance, O'lmas Umarbekov's illness, death, and funeral. However, they are united by a single spiritual axis. This is the spiritual trace that remains after a person. The test examination represents Umida's future. The performance represents the continuation of O'lmas Umarbekov's creative work on stage. The journey represents the expansion of Umida's worldview. The hospital represents O'lmas Umarbekov's creativity on the boundary between life and death. The funeral represents the general evaluation of his life path. The medallion represents personal memory. The book represents creative memory. The grave represents physical finality. Spiritual heritage, however, represents continuity. In this way, every part of the novella serves the general idea.

At the center of "Kiprikda qolgan tong" lies love for the human being. By idealizing O'lmas Umarbekov, the writer does not merely praise one individual. He poses to the reader the question of what kind of person one should be. The question in the funeral speech, "If the deceased owed someone money during his lifetime and was unable to repay it on time..." [11;56], also shows a person's responsibility in this world. Here, debt can be interpreted not only as a financial obligation, but also as a person's moral debt to others. O'lmas Umarbekov, on the contrary, strives throughout his life to do good to people. Even his final request concerns not himself, but Sobir Mirvaliev and his family. As the analysis shows, in this respect his humanism is preserved even in the face of death. Said Ahmad's novella "Kiprikda qolgan tong" is a multifaceted literary work that closely interweaves the issues of human life, memory, creativity, family, death, and spiritual heritage.

## Conclusion

First, memory appears in the novella as one of the main compositional and spiritual categories. The events of O'lmas Umarbekov's life and death are reconstructed through the memories of Umida, Zuhro, and the writer. Memory does not leave the deceased in the past; on the contrary, it continues his spiritual life.

Second, through the image of O'lmas Umarbekov, the responsibility of the creator before people and literature is revealed. Even in the face of severe illness and death, he does not stop creating. His writing entitled "At the Threshold of the Eternal World" expresses a person's striving to continue spiritual life even while being aware of death.

Third, the image of Umida is a symbol of the new generation receiving the father's spiritual heritage. Her pursuit of knowledge, success at university, and preservation of her father's memory demonstrate the connection between her personal development and her father's spiritual heritage.

Fourth, the image of Zuhro is created as a symbol of female fortitude, loyalty, and family responsibility. Even after O'lmas Umarbekov's illness and death, she remains a spiritual support for Umida.

Fifth, details such as the earrings, medallion, photograph, clock, hand, voice, and smell serve to reveal the psychological mechanisms of memory in the novella. In particular, Umida's feeling of her father's hand in her uncle's hand and recalling her father through the smell of cigarettes vividly demonstrate the emotional nature of memory.

Sixth, the depictions of the Tower of Pisa, Pompeii, the Colosseum, and Venice broaden the philosophical scope of the work. These images strengthen reflections on time, history, destruction, memory, and the transience of human life.

Seventh, the image of rain defines the final emotional and symbolic point of the work. It unites the symbols of human tears, mourning, and spiritual purification.

Eighth, the title "Kiprikda qolgan tong" expresses the entire philosophical essence of the work. "Dawn" is associated with hope and light, while "eyelash" is associated with tears and the human heart. The combination of these two images signifies the inseparability of joy and sorrow, hope and regret in human life.

In general, in this novella Said Ahmad artistically substantiates the idea that a person's physical life is transient, but his good name, work, creativity, and the spiritual lessons left to his children endure for a long time. Although the life and death of O'lmas Umarbekov are tragic, he continues spiritually through his creative work, memory, and a generation such as Umida. In this sense, the main idea of the work can be summarized as follows: a person's true life is measured not by how long he lived in this world, but by how much goodness he left in people's hearts after his departure.

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