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Structural Contrast in William Blake's "The Tyger" and "The Lamb"

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Abstract. Structuralism is a theory focusing on analyzing the structure of a text and the relationship between the elements in order to get the meaning of literary works. Binary opposition is an important concept of structuralism, it is a concept or idea that can gain meaning through its relationship with its opposite. William Blake's "The Tyger" and the "The Lamb" are two poems contain a lot of meaning that opposites each other. This study address several aspects related to the binary opposition of structuralism in the poems "The Tyger" and "The Lamb" by William Blake: (1) The structural elements in the poems "The Tyger" and "The Lamb" by William Blake. (2) The way "The Tyger" and "The Lamb" by William Blake employ binary oppositions in their structure to convey contrasting themes. (3) The influence of binary opposition on the overall meaning and interpretation of "The Tyger" and "The Lamb" by William Blake. (4) The benefits of using structuralism in poetry for language teaching, and how these can be addressed in teacher training programs. This study applied a qualitative method and context-oriented approach. This study shows that by utilizing structural elements, thematic explorations, tone, language style, and binary oppositions, Blake develops two mutually enhancing yet opposing perspectives on creation and divine existence. The strong and frightening Tyger is in stark contrast with the meek and pure Lamb, representing the intricate nature of life and the various facets of spirituality. This resistance goes beyond just the use of animal imagery, affecting the themes, tone, and language in every poem. Blake prompts readers to confront the contradictions of existence by juxtaposing light with darkness, innocence with experience, and nature with divinity. Studying poetry can be difficult because of different levels of literary skill, teaching methods, and tools, but it provides many academic benefits. Poetry nurtures a greater love for literature, improves creative skills and critical thinking, and aids students in grasping language beyond its superficial interpretation.

Keywords: Structuralism, Binary Opposition, Structural Elements, Poem, Theme

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Introduction

The word structuralism might be related to the structure of a literary work. Structuralism is a theory focusing on analyzing the structure of a text and the relationship between the elements instead of its content (Segre 2020). According to Barbosa de Almeida, structuralism is a mode of knowledge of nature and human life that is interested in relationships rather than individual objects or, alternatively, where objects are defined by the set of relationships of which they are part and not by the qualities possessed by them taken in isolation (Barbosa de Almeida 2015). Structuralism in a wide meaning is a manner of seeing the world through the lens of structure. In structuralism critique, a literary product should also be evaluated based on its inherent qualities, including its complexity, coherence, equilibrium, integrity, and the links between its constituent parts.

Poetry is a literary form distinguished from prose by its use of heightened and inventive vocabulary as well as its emphasis on the aesthetic qualities of words and their arrangement. Poetry is a type of artistic expression in which language, rhythm, and typically metrical and organized lines are used to elicit emotional reactions and convey complicated concepts. Poetry is a kind of language that says more of ideas and feelings through rhythmical composition of imaginative and beautiful words (Susanti 2021). Poetry is a unique literary work due to its language that has flexibility to shape and create meaning depends on the context of the poet itself. The language used in poetry is a language that is developed and has many possible meanings (Anindita, Satoto, and Sumarlam 2017). Poetic diction refers to the style of writing used by the poet, including communication style, outline, and the use of language such as metaphors (Mansoor and Khan 2016). In another sense, poetry needs a lack of knowledge and understanding to certain things or context in order to get the meaning of it.

As it can be found in the poetry by William Blake entitled “The Tyger” and the “The Lamb” that contain a lot of meaning on it. Paul on the paper entitled “Skinning “The Lamb” and “The Tyger”” stated that Blake aimed to convey his ideas through a variety of artistic mediums (Paul 2015). Blake takes the images of the poets and effectively translates and transforms them into their verbal-visual. The imagery takes a lot of control in shaping the meaning and conveys the message of these poets. “The Lamb” is one of Blake’s simplest but one of the most beautiful lyrics of *Innocence*. In this poem, natural imagery appears to be generic. Blake uses this innocent and joyous conversation to portray the infinite goodness of God as seen through the worshipful eyes of a child.

The opposite meaning lies in the other poem. “The Tyger” represents experience, ferocity, and the darker aspect of life. Kontrec in Živković (Živković 2020) emphasizes that the tiger is the one being close to the good and evil and his energy can bring into existence or lead to destruction, therefore he is the one who spreads hope and fear, but perhaps above all that we are the ones who remain fascinated with his strength and beauty.

Related to the context of structuralism study, French anthropologist Claude Levi Strauss popularized structuralism in France by applying Saussurian linguistic principles to the examination of cultural phenomena. The term “structuralism” appeared in the Levi Strauss’s works and gave rise to the “structuralist movement” in France. It influenced the thinking of writers such as Louis Althusser, psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, and Nicos Poulantzas (Munawar 2016). Concerning

with structuralism however binary opposition is not limited to linguistic use. Levi Strauss did his analysis on myth using linguistic model which we called binary opposition, he believed that the study of myth not only expands space as the main line and completes history, but also explores the significance of “naturalizing man” in cultural studies (Zou 2023). He refers to the group of myths as "mythemes," which seem familiar since in linguistics they are comparable to phonemes and morphemes. Levi Strauss found an interest in the structural pattern in Oedipus’s myth that provides meaning to it (Putri and Sarwoto 2016). Lévi-Strauss suggests that one might uncover the profound patterns of human cognition that form the basis for the production of various cultural elements by examining the binary oppositions ingrained in language and cultural manifestations. It indicates a relationship between cognition, language, and the cultural expressions that come from the human mind.

Poem is a powerful tool in teaching, offering many benefits that can improve students' language skills, creativity and emotional intelligence. By integrating poem into teaching, teachers can develop a deeper understanding of literary techniques and themes, while encouraging critical thinking and self-expression. Poetry's ability to evoke emotions and create vivid imagery makes it an effective way to engage students and encourage them to explore their thoughts and feelings.

This study contributes to a broader field of literary world, provides a deeper understanding to the structural elements including binary opposition in poems and how William Blake employed the techniques. This study also serves as a valuable educational resource for students, scholars, and people interested in William Blake’s poetry, structuralism, or literary analysis. This study address several aspects related to the binary opposition of structuralism in the poems “The Tyger” and “The Lamb” by William Blake: (1) The structural elements in the poems “The Tyger” and “The Lamb” by William Blake. (2) The way “The Tyger” and “The Lamb” by William Blake employ binary oppositions in their structure to convey contrasting themes. (3) The influence of binary opposition on the overall meaning and interpretation of “The Tyger” and “The Lamb” by William Blake. (4) The benefits of using structuralism in poetry for language teaching, and how these can be addressed in teacher training programs.

Review of Related Literature

Chakraborty in “William Blake: ‘The Lamb’ & ‘The Tyger’” (Chakraborty 2020) emphasizes the differences between two poems of William Blake. The researcher examines the different meaning of the poems portrayed in the Lamb and the Tiger. It explains the finding of this study that both “The Lamb” and “The Tiger” refer to each other which have the same context to convey a message with a theme "The Lamb" and "The Tyger" can be seen as complementary pieces that together offer a more complete and nuanced perspective on the complexities of life and the divine.

Poem

Poem is one of literary works that expresses human emotions, ideas, or experiences through the beauty and crafted language by the use of rhythm and imagery. According to the famous poet T.S. Eliot, poem is “an escape from personality.” It means that poem has the power to extend the meaning beyond

individual subjectivity (Devi and Singha 2018). Poem often uses metaphorical elements to expand the literal meaning of the words, or to evoke a deep emotional or sensual response from the reader (Risdianto 2014). It emphasizes that the elements of metaphor contributes to the layer of meaning in poem. Metaphors also allow poets to express things that are inexpressible to provide the readers with deeper understanding. During the romantic era, poetry from the Romantic era frequently addressed themes of nature, individualism, emotion, fantasy, and the paranormal. A literary, artistic, and intellectual movement known as romanticism emerged in Western Europe in the 18th century during the Industrial Revolution (Arianto 2018).

Structural Elements of Poem

The structural elements of poem are elements that make up a poem and contributes to its overall meaning of a poem. Every element such as theme, rhythm, tone, and the language used in poem should work in harmony to create a strong impression. The structural elements of a poem involves many elements, such as the number of lines, the rhyming of certain words and phrases with others, and much more (Chris 2021). The elements are the parts that give shape and form to a poem. The structural elements of a poem work together to create form, rhythm, and meaning. By understanding these components, readers can appreciate the artistry behind a poem's construction, as well as its emotional and aesthetic impact.

Binary Opposition

Binary opposition refers to concepts and ideas that are defined by their opposite or negation. In other words, it is a concept or idea that can gain meaning and significance through its relationship with its opposite. Binary opposition is an important concept of structuralism that are not limited to abstract concepts or notions (Memon, Rao, and Siyal 2021). It is the opposition of two mutually exclusive terms, such as good and evil, light and dark, left and right.

This idea contributes to the structuralism approach, highlighting how elements in a system rely on their differences to create meaning. Binary opposition is not contradictory relation but a structural, and complementary (Chunmei 2018), in short, binary opposition acknowledges the structural interdependence and complementary aspects of the paired concepts. This perspective aligns with the broader notions of structuralism, which holds that the interactions between parts are essential to understanding meaning and structure in language, culture, and other systems of thought.

Poetry Teaching (POT)

Poetry has been known as a popular tool for language teaching. In poetry, it can be used to fill human experience and shape language awareness among people who write and read it. Meanwhile, poetry teaching should include several components that can enhance its effectiveness for teaching poetry. According to (Samanik 2018) he mentioned the seven major components of effective learning are constructivism, questioning, inquiry, learning community, modeling, and genuine assessment—are expected to be met by learning processes when they employ poetry. Furthermore, learning can foster the development of critical thinking abilities in addition to language proficiency.

Additionally, many practitioners have faced some problems related to teaching poetry. As it is stated by (Kuru Gönen 2018), the potential of poetry to promote language development is still not completely understood. The poetry teaching method should be implied in order to get full understanding from the student.

Method

The data was collected in the form of words by utilizing a qualitative method. This method give the description of a phenomenon systematically, factually and accurately (Anggraini, Sumardiyani, and Hawa 2017). The report of this study contains an explanation of the data to illustrate the presentation of the report. The data obtained from William Blake's poems "The Tyger" and "The Lamb".

In order to conduct this study, a context-oriented approach was chosen as the approach. This approach interprets literature such as novel, drama, or poem by trying to place literary works against the historical, social, or political background (Nugrahawati 2014). The purpose of this qualitative research is to describe and evaluate structural elements, binary oppositions in poems, and the effect of binary oppositions in these poems. Structured analysis was utilized as a method to study each subject or symbol in the poems in order to analyze the data. Structuralism, in its broadest sense, is a way of viewing the world through the perspective of structure. Analyzing the structures of these poems can be a proper way of examining and finding the message behind them.

From a structuralism perspective, analyzing William Blake's poems "The Lamb" and "The Tyger" requires evaluating the text's structure, symbolisms, and language to find deeper meaning and investigate how these aspects affects the theme. The key factors, such as binary oppositions and language are important to consider in this study.

Furthermore, it is important to use a comprehensive data based methodology to systematically collect, analyze, and assess solutions; this provides empirical support for the concepts put out in this research. In the context of teaching poetry, this accurate data gathering not only support the theoretical frameworks and educational methods described, but also make it possible to identify areas for improvement and effective practices. Researchers and teachers can better understand how different teaching approaches affect student engagement, comprehension, and language development by utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data. This evidence-based approach facilitates the development of sound, well-informed solutions that are tailored to diverse learning situations and student demands.

Findings and Discussion

Structural Elements in "The Tyger" and "The Lamb" by William Blake

The structural elements of "The Tyger" and "The Lamb" by William Blake include aspects such as rhyme scheme, meter, theme, tone, and language style.

Table 1 Structural Elements of “The Tyger” and “The Lamb”

Structural Elements	The Tyger	The Lamb
Rhyme	AABB	AABB
Meter	Trochaic	Iambic
Theme	Evilness	Innocence
Tone	Mysterious, questioning	Gentle and innocence
Language	Intense, fiery	Peaceful

The rhyme of both “The Tyger” and “The Lamb” are AABB. The rhymes contribute to the flow of the lines and to add continuity to the stanzas. Meanwhile, the meter of “The Tyger” is trochaic meter. In trochaic meter, the stress falls on the first syllable of each pair, for example in the line 1 of stanza 1 “*Tyger Tyger, burning bright*” the stressed syllables fall on “*Ty-*” and “*burn-*”. This pattern continues throughout the poem and contributes to the intense and rhythmic quality. Furthermore, the meter of “The Lamb” is iambic where stress falls on every second syllable of each pair. For example in line 1 of stanza 1 “*Little Lamb who made thee*” the stress falls on “*Lamb-*” and “*made*” which creates an iambic meter. This pattern continues to add the gentle and flowing quality.

The theme of “The Tyger” is evilness. The poem reflects on the existence of evil or the darker side of creation through the depiction of a fierce and terrifying tiger. The poem prompts questions about the origin and purpose of such a powerful and potentially destructive creature. By describing the “fearful symmetry” of the tiger and its fiery brightness, Blake evokes a sense of amazement and wonder, but also acknowledges the potentially threatening character of the tiger. In contrast, the theme of “The Lamb” is innocence. This poem celebrates innocence and purity through the depiction of a gentle lamb. The poem highlights the simple and gentle nature of the creature, as well as its connection to God. By addressing the lamb with the repeated question about who made her/him, Blake invites readers to reflect on the beauty and wonder of God’s creation and the innocence attached to the natural world. The theme of innocence in “The Lamb” is closely linked to the concept of God’s love and nurture, which presents a vision of purity and goodness.

The tone of “The Tyger” are mysterious and questioning. Blake uses vivid imagery and rhetorical questions to contemplate the creation of the tiger and the existence of evil in the world. The question “*What immortal hand or eye // dare frame thy fearful symmetry?*” in line 3 and 4 of stanza 1 and line 3 and 4 of stanza 6 creates a sense of mystery while hinting at the darker aspects of creation. Different from “The Tyger”, the tones of “The Lamb” are gentle and innocence. Blake depicts the lamb as a symbol of purity and innocence, evoking respect and admiration for the beauty and simplicity of creation. The tone of the poem is characterized by its soft language and depiction of the lamb as a gentle creature. The language style of both poems contributes to the contrast of the tones and themes of the poem. Blake uses vivid and powerful imagery throughout “The Tyger” to build a sense of intense and fiery. The language used to describe the tiger, such as “*burning,*” “*terrifying,*” and “*dread*”, conveys a sense of intensity and danger. The repeated use of words related to fire and power contribute to the fiery tone of the poem. Meanwhile “The Lamb” uses soft and peaceful imagery to evoke a sense of innocence. The repetition of the phrase “*Little Lamb*” throughout

the poem adds a peaceful tone and creates a rhythmic pattern that reflects the innocence and simplicity of the creature.

Binary Opposition in "The Tyger" and "The Lamb" by William Blake

Binary opposition refers to the contrast or juxtaposition of two opposed concepts, ideas, or topics within a poem. There are several instances of binary oppositions within William Blake's poems "The Tyger" and "The Lamb". The binary opposition is reflected in the titles "The Tyger" and "The Lamb," which both represent two different animals with each connotation a contrast meaning. This contrast between two different animals serves to highlight each other's significance. The lamb in the poetry "The Lamb" symbolizes goodness, while tiger in "The Tyger" symbolizes evil. Furthermore, based on the poem itself, the Tyger symbolizes power, ferocity and the darker aspect of nature. It can be seen in the stanza 1 below:

*Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?*

In the bold line, the Tyger was depicted a powerful creature which supports with the sentence immortal and had its scary shape. In this poem, Blake designs this poem to represent the darkness that God created. To convey the ferocity of the heavenly creature, the speaker asks, "*What immortal hand or eye, / Could frame thy fearful symmetry*" in the opening of the poem.

In "The Tyger", Blake compares the brightness of the tyger's eyes to the darkness of the night ("*In what distant deeps or skies, Burnt the fire of thine eyes?*"). Contrasting with "The Tyger," "The Lamb" highlights the lamb's connection to light. In any Christian literature, the lamb is often portrayed as a follower who owns their purity and is innocent, which is mostly represented as light. Nevertheless when the speaker asks, "*Who gave thee clothing of delight, / Softest clothing wooly bright;*" he is describing the lamb as a child. (5–6). The traits of the lamb highlight its innocence and playfulness, which is also evident in the sentence "*He became a little child*" (16).

In the poems "The Tyger" and "The Lamb," there are two opposite meaning that is questioning and acceptance. The speaker in "The Tyger" asks how such a terrifying creature could have been created, asking the question, "*What immortal hand or eye, Could frame thy fearful symmetry?*" The speaker poses a moral question toward the end of the poem: is it possible for something to be beautiful and destructive? The tiger is a violent animal that can cause hurt and destruction. The speaker's reflection on the creator of the gentle lamb and the furious tiger is reflected in the line "*Did he who made the Lamb make thee?*" Blake invites readers to consider the coexistence of innocence and experience, goodness and evil, inside the same divine creation by contrasting the lamb with the tiger. The speaker makes a question that asks the ideas of goodness and beauty, asking readers to ponder whether something as aesthetically pleasing as a tiger could also be dangerous. This query explores the intricacies of the human condition as well as the duality present in the natural world.

However, the speaker of "The Lamb" understands that God is the one who created the lamb, reflecting a sense of acceptance and reverence towards the creator. In "The Lamb," the speaker acknowledges the lamb's existence to God

alone, demonstrating a deep sense of acceptance and respect for the creator. The speaker's tone and images throughout the poem demonstrate this acceptance, underscoring a strong sense of confidence and trust in the supernatural. Sentences like "*He is mild and meek*" and "*Because He calls himself a Lamb*" express the speaker's perception of God's kindness. The lamb represents the goodness and compassion of its creator and is a sign of innocence and purity. A sense of trust and reverence in the speaker's relationship with the divine is fostered by this presentation of God as a caring and loving character. The poem's structure and language add to the overall sense of acceptance and devotion. The repeating of lines such as "*Little Lamb*" and "*He is called by thy name*" emphasizes the personal tie between the lamb and its creator.

"The Lamb" expresses a deep sense of acceptance and reverence for the creator, in contrast to the questioning and moral inquiry seen in "The Tyger." The speaker celebrates the beauty of God's creation with gentle imagery and a trusting and faithful tone, confirming the kindness and love inherent in the divine act of creation.

The Influence of Binary Opposition in "The Tyger" and "The Lamb" by William Blake

William Blake's "The Tyger" and "The Lamb" are two completely opposite poems that investigate various aspects of existence and the nature of God. Meanwhile, binary oppositions significantly influence the meaning and understanding of these works. William Blake's "The Tyger" and "The Lamb" express the belief that God created binary oppositions, such as light and darkness, to show dual parts of God's character (Gillespie, Dong, and Wamae 2018). William Blake's works "The Tyger" and "The Lamb" express the notion that God created binary oppositions, such as light and darkness, to reveal multiple parts of God's character. The poem's tone contrasts with "The Tyger" and provides a straightforward description of creation. This interpretation matches up with Blake's overall theological and philosophical beliefs, which frequently challenged traditional notions of god and human life (Douglas 2012).

The influence towards this binary opposition to overall meaning in both works of William Blake takes a control in how the author conveys the messages on it. "The Tyger" and "The Lamb" stand together as a pair due to it is related to each other in order to grasp its meaning. These poems were largely controversial pieces of writing in the 18th century. Furthermore, the poems' implication that God could be dark was not generally received, and they did not achieve their current reputation until well after Blake's death.

Besides that, the general meaning of William Blake's poems "The Tyger" and "The Lamb" is profoundly influenced by binary oppositions, which serve to highlight the intricacies of existence, the nature of divinity, and the human situation. The tiger reveals scary beauty, exhibiting the creator's ability to produce both good and hideous results. In "The Tyger," the most obvious binary opposition is between innocence and experience. The poem contrasts the innocence of the lamb with the ferocious and menacing image of the tiger. This stark contrast emphasizes the complexity of creation, as well as the coexistence of innocence and experience in the world. The binary contrast of light and darkness is also visible, with the tiger representing the deeper, more mysterious parts of existence.

However, the speaker identifies the lamb as a child when he asks who "*Gave thee clothing of delight, / softest clothing woolly bright;*" (5-6). While the poems differ, they are used together to show God's power to create humble, beautiful, and terrible creatures. In "The Lamb," the binary conflict between innocence and experience reappears, yet in a different way. The lamb represents innocence and purity, while the speaker's question about the lamb's maker introduces the idea of experience and deeper philosophical inquiry. The poem examines the idea of God as a loving and nurturing creator, in contrast to the terrible image offered in "The Tyger." However, the poem adds an additional layer of complexity with the speaker's question concerning the lamb's creator: "*Little Lamb, who made thee?*" Do you know who made you? This question encourages more philosophical reflection and reflects a shift from simple innocence to study of the deeper secrets of reality. The speaker's question suggests an understanding of the complexity of creation, as well as a desire to grasp the lamb's heavenly beginnings.

"The Lamb" explores the concept of God as a loving and nurturing creator, focusing on themes of innocence, purity, and divine care. The poem's study of these ideas, set against the darker imagery of "The Tyger," emphasizes Blake's religious perspective and urges readers to consider the diverse nature of divine creation. Furthermore, both poems can be interpreted as representing the binary antithesis of nature and divinity. "The Tyger" shows nature as more awe-inspiring and terrible, and "The Lamb" depicts nature as soft and nurturing, representing various elements of the divine. Overall, binary oppositions such as innocence/experience, light/darkness, and nature/divinity add to the rich complexity of meaning in both "The Tyger" and "The Lamb" by emphasizing the dualities inherent in existence and inviting readers to ponder the mysteries of creation and God's nature.

The Benefits and Challenges of Using Structuralism in Poetry in Language Teaching

Poem has many benefits in teaching, one of which is useful for developing student's creative talents. In addition, poem can improve critical thinking skills which can help students go beyond the surface meaning in understanding language. Poem also makes students feel comfortable and free, and it will improve their language and stimulates imagination Poem which often has multiple layer of meaning can be used effectively to share feelings or opinions (Illankumaran and Deepa 2018) Moreover, poem can enhance students' expressive abilities (Iida 2016) and build social relationships among students (Chanmann et al. 2016).

On the other hand, people who study poetry have particular types of difficulties. Poetry usually uses metaphor, symbolism, and nuanced emotional details that call for a high degree of interpretive talent, making it difficult for children to understand due to its complex and frequently ambiguous nature. Poetry's density and simplicity give each word a lot of weight, demanding careful reading and careful attention to detail. A thorough study of literary traditions and societal influences is also necessary because poetry can arise from a variety of complex historical and cultural situations. For students who are unfamiliar with poetry or who are unsure of their capacity for analysis, these difficulties can make the genre seem intimidating and unapproachable.

According to (Eliasari 2018) the challenge comes from factors were from students' literary competence, teaching methods, students' references, insufficient

of learning resources and the materials or textbooks during learning poetry. Furthermore, the instructional methods utilized in poetry education can present noteworthy obstacles. Standard, instructional methods that only emphasize memorization and poetic interpretation without including students in critical and creative thinking exercises may not capture their interest or allow them to comprehend the subject matter more deeply. Additionally, pupils may not be exposed to a wide variety of poetic forms and voices due to the restricted selection of references available to them, which may hinder the development of a comprehensive and inclusive appreciation of poetry. This problem is made worse by the dearth of educational materials, which frequently prevents pupils from accessing a broad range of poems and critical texts that could improve their learning opportunities.

Conclusion

This study shows that by utilizing structural elements, thematic explorations, tone, language style, and binary oppositions, Blake develops two mutually enhancing yet opposing perspectives on creation and divine existence. The strong and frightening Tyger is in stark contrast with the meek and pure Lamb, representing the intricate nature of life and the various facets of spirituality. This resistance goes beyond just the use of animal imagery, affecting the themes, tone, and language in every poem. Blake prompts readers to confront the contradictions of existence by juxtaposing light with darkness, innocence with experience, and nature with divinity. Studying poetry can be difficult because of different levels of literary skill, teaching methods, and tools, but it provides many academic benefits. Poetry nurtures a greater love for literature, improves creative skills and critical thinking, and aids students in grasping language beyond its superficial interpretation.

Additionally, it is recommended that future researchers conduct similar studies related to the structural elements of a poem as an improvement on a better study in structural analysis of a poem.

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