

The Kitchen as A Space of Ideological Conflict and Social Negotiation in Rizqi Turama's Short Story *Masakan Ibu Dan Bumbu-Bumbu Di Halaman Rumah*: A Gastrocritical Study

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to analyze the representation of the kitchen as a space of ideological conflict and social negotiation through culinary practices in the short story *Masakan Ibu dan Bumbu-bumbu di Halaman Rumah* by Rizqi Turama. The study used a qualitative approach with descriptive analytical methods and the gastrocritical framework of Montanari and Roland Barthes' semiotics. The data consisted of narrative excerpts representing cooking activities, ingredient selection, and interactions between characters in the kitchen. The analysis technique was conducted interactively through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results show that the kitchen does not function as a neutral domestic space, but rather as an arena for ideological struggle between the values of tradition, modernity, and intergenerational relations. The practices of planting, processing, and selecting food ingredients represent a cultural sign system that embodies the values of independence, authenticity, efficiency, and social compromise. Ideological conflict does not exist as mere verbal disagreements, but is manifested through culinary practices that are continuously negotiated within family life. The shift in spice usage and the changing function of the courtyard mark the reconstruction of culinary meaning as a form of symbolic compromise. Thus, the kitchen emerges as a dynamic ideological space, a place where negotiations of identity, authority, and social harmony take place. This research strengthens the contribution of literary gastrocriticism in reading culinary practices as a medium for ideological conflict and negotiation in contemporary Indonesian literature.

KEYWORDS: Kitchen; Ideology; Culinary Practices; Short Story; Gastrocritical Approach

I. INTRODUCTION

Food and culinary practices have long been understood not simply as biological activities, but as cultural practices imbued with social and ideological meaning [1] asserted that food functions as a cultural sign system that represents values, identity, and social relations within a society [2]. In a literary context, representations of food often serve as a symbolic medium for articulating conflict, resistance, and changes in social values. The kitchen, as a domestic space, is a crucial location where culinary practices take place and where these meanings are produced [3]. Therefore, studying the kitchen in literary texts is crucial for understanding the dynamics of ideology and social relations hidden behind everyday practices [4]

In relation to issues of food and culinary practices, gastrocriticism has become an interdisciplinary approach that positions food as an object of cultural, historical, and ideological analysis in literary texts [5]. In line with this, Montanari states that food is always related to power relations, traditions, and social negotiation processes within society [6]. In literary texts, food and cooking practices are never neutral, but rather reflect the social structure and underlying value conflicts [7]

Theoretically, the domestic space in literature is understood not as a neutral space, but as an ideological arena where power relations and social values are negotiated [8]. That space is always socially produced and contains ideological interests that reflect the structure of society. In the context of the kitchen, this space becomes a meeting place for tradition, modernity, and intergenerational relations [9]. The kitchen functions not only as a place for food production but also as a symbolic space where identity, authority, and resistance are constructed through everyday practices [10] [11].

From Barthes's semiotic perspective, food and culinary practices can be understood as a system of cultural signs containing social meanings and ideological values, where the types of food and how they are served serve as markers of specific identities and cultures within a society [12]. Montanari (2006) emphasizes that culinary choices are always related to ideological and historical selection processes [13]. Therefore, the kitchen in literary texts can be understood as a semiotic space where struggles over meaning, compromises on values, and negotiations of social identities take place through the acts of cooking and consumption [14].

The Kitchen as A Space of Ideological Conflict and Social Negotiation in Rizqi Turama's Short Story *Masakan Ibu Dan Bumbu-Bumbu Di Halaman Rumah*: A Gastrocritical Study

Research on food as a cultural sign was pioneered by Barthes (1979), who viewed food consumption as a social language [15]. Montanari's (2006) study expands this perspective by placing food in the context of history, power, and social change [16]. In the literary realm, research by Keeling and Pollard (2018) shows that culinary narratives often represent tensions between tradition and modernity [17]. These studies emphasize that culinary practices in literary texts reflect broader ideological conflicts [17]. However, studies that specifically position the kitchen as a space for ideological negotiation in Indonesian short stories are still limited [18].

Although studies on food in literature are growing, the kitchen as a space for ideological conflict in domestic narratives has received relatively little attention. Many previous studies have focused more on food as a symbol of national identity or collective memory [19]. In the short story *Masakan Ibu dan Bumbu-bumbu di Halaman* by Rizqi Turama the kitchen appears as an arena where traditional values, modernity, and social compromise meet within the family [20]. The conflict between the use of fresh and instant spices demonstrates the struggle of ideologies through culinary practices. Therefore, the main problem of this research is how the kitchen is represented as a space for ideological conflict and social negotiation through culinary practices in the short story *Masakan Ibu dan Bumbu-bumbu di Halaman Rumah* by Rizqi Turama.

Khatoon and Antony (2025) examine how food functions as a narrative device in literary works that represent cultural identity and social dynamics. This research uses qualitative methods with textual analysis based on a structural approach and cultural criticism. The results show that food is not merely an element decorative element of the story, but rather a symbol of memory, power relations, and the characters' social positions. Food becomes a medium that connects personal experience with the context [21].

Jaafar et al. (2022) examined the role of food as a marker of community identity in the novel "The Sum of Our Follies." This study used qualitative text analysis with an approach to identity studies and imagined communities. The findings indicate that food functions as a means of forming collective identity, a marker of ethnicity, and a space for social negotiation between groups in a multicultural society. Food also displays differences in social class and cultural relations between characters. A limitation is that this study has not explicitly examined ideological conflicts within domestic spaces, such as the kitchen as an arena for value battles [22].

Arisandi (2024) examined the representation of Indonesian cuisine in short stories from Kompas 2021. The method used was qualitative analysis with representation theory. The results showed that food represents cultural memory, intergenerational relationships, and traditional values inherent in the characters' identities. Culinary narratives serve as a means of maintaining social and cultural memory. A limitation of this study lies in the lack of discussion of ideological conflicts or value tensions that emerge through cooking and food consumption practices [23].

Wachidah et al. (2025) examined collective identity in ASEAN culinary-themed folktales using literature review and qualitative descriptive analysis. The research findings indicate that traditional food serves as a symbol of solidarity, togetherness, and community moral values. Culinary arts are positioned as a medium for cultural inheritance and social identity. However, this study's limitations include the lack of discussion of narrative conflicts or ideological negotiations that may occur behind these culinary practices, thus remaining culturally normative in nature [24].

These four articles affirm that food in literary and cultural texts functions as a medium for identity and social values. However, most research still positions culinary arts as a symbol of culture and collective memory, rather than as an explicit space for ideological conflict and social negotiation. Therefore, research on the kitchen as a space for ideological conflict and social negotiation through a gastrocritical approach holds a strong novelty because it deepens aspects of the struggle for values, power, and social relations within the domestic space that have not been widely explored critically.

This research positions itself within the tradition of literary gastrocriticism, focusing on the kitchen as a locus of conflict and value negotiation. Unlike previous research that emphasized food as a symbol of collective identity, this study highlights culinary practices as ideological actions in domestic relations. The short story *Masakan Ibu dan Bumbu-bumbu di Halaman Rumah* by Rizqi Turama was chosen because it explicitly depicts generational conflict through everyday cooking practices. This analysis combines Barthes's semiotic perspective [25] and Montanari's gastrocriticism to interpret the symbolic meaning of the kitchen. Thus, this research offers a new perspective in literary and food studies [6]. Based on the foregoing background, the main objective of this study is to analyze the representation of the kitchen as a space of ideological conflict and social negotiation in the short story *Masakan Ibu dan Bumbu-bumbu di Halaman Rumah* by Rizqi Turama. Through this objective, the study seeks to reveal how culinary practices function as a system of cultural signs that embody values and ideologies.

II. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical method because the object of study is a literary text analyzed based on its meaning, symbols, and cultural representation. A qualitative approach allows for an in-depth interpretation of culinary practices as ideological constructs within literary narratives [26]. The descriptive-analytical method is used to describe textual facts while interpreting their meaning based on a theoretical framework [27]. The data source for this research is the short story *Masakan Ibu dan Bumbu-bumbu di Halaman Rumah* by Rizqi Turama, published in the 2021 *Kompas Collection of Selected Short Stories*. The data consists of words, phrases, sentences, dialogue, and narratives that represent culinary practices, kitchen activities, character

The Kitchen as A Space of Ideological Conflict and Social Negotiation in Rizqi Turama's Short Story *Masakan Ibu Dan Bumbu-Bumbu Di Halaman Rumah*: A Gastrocritical Study

relationships, and attitudes toward food and food ingredients. The data were selected because culinary practices in the text serve not only as a setting but also as ideological symbols and a medium for social negotiation.

Data collection was conducted through a close reading technique to identify narrative details related to food, the kitchen, and the characters' social relationships. Relevant quotes were classified based on themes such as culinary traditions, modernity, generational conflict, family memory, and social compromise. Data validity was maintained through diligent reading, consistent use of theory, and the interconnectedness of data, analysis, and conclusions. Data analysis employed the interactive analysis model of Miles, [28], which encompasses data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The analysis process was conducted dialogically between text data and theory, enabling culinary practices to be understood as symbolic constructions of ideological, identity, and power relations within the domestic sphere.

III. RESULT

In family life, food serves not only to fulfill biological needs but also as a medium for shaping identity and ideology. Culinary practices can represent value choices, attitudes toward tradition, and an individual's relationship with the broader social system. This is reflected in the character of Ibu in the short story Turama, who positions cooking as a space for articulating life principles. This attitude is evident in the way she treats food as something to be produced, not simply purchased. An early depiction of this principle is seen in Ibu's habit of growing her own herbs in the yard. This activity forms the basis for the ideological meaning of the kitchen in the narrative. The following data excerpt illustrates this practice.

As far as I know, Ibu is one of very few people who adheres to her principles in cooking. She usually grows most of the herbs she uses herself. In the yard—which is indeed larger than our house—you can see various herbs scattered throughout. Some are in small hanging pots. Chilies, ginger, lemongrass, shallots, turmeric, and several others (Turama, 2022:95).

The practice of growing her own herbs demonstrates that Ibu's cooking activity is inseparable from the process of producing ingredients. Within Roland Barthes's framework, food can be read as a cultural sign system containing values, ideologies, and social identities. Homegrown kitchen spices serve as ideological markers, representing independence and resistance to instant gratification. Chilies, ginger, turmeric, and lemongrass are not merely ingredients but symbols of the continuity of local culinary knowledge. Thus, the kitchen is no longer understood as a passive domestic space, but rather as a medium for the production of cultural meaning that connects the body, nature, and tradition. From Montanari's gastrocritical perspective, food practices are always intertwined with power relations, cultural resistance, and social negotiation. The mother's decision to prioritize the yard as a growing space demonstrates the kitchen as a symbolic arena of resistance against the modern, market-based food system. These culinary practices become a form of value negotiation within family life without necessarily eliciting verbal conflict. The kitchen, in this context, functions as an ideological space where the principles of independence and simplicity are maintained through daily habits.

These principles don't stop with planting, but extend to the process of preparing food. The subsequent narrative about the mother's character in this short story then shows how the mother's relationship with the cooking ingredients unfolds holistically, from care to presentation. This process reinforces the kitchen's position as a space for the production of meaning. This is evident in the following quote.

The plants are not only meticulously tended and watered, but also harvested and processed by hand to become spices. For the mother, cooking with spices grown and prepared by herself produces a more potent flavor. When she wants to make soup, for example, she picks soup leaves from the front yard, spring onions from the backyard, and several other spices I can't quite remember. Everything is washed, some are cut, some are ground, and then sautéed, then added to the chicken. The result is a favorite chicken soup. (Turama, 2022:95).

The data excerpt above depicts a detailed sequence of cooking actions, demonstrating that taste quality is understood as the result of full engagement with the process. From Barthes' perspective, the sequence of picking, washing, grinding, and sautéing constitutes a sign system that affirms the value of authenticity and labor. Expressions of taste that are considered more "pungent" refer not only to the sensation of the tongue but also to the moral legitimacy of the food production process. Thus, taste becomes an ideological category, not merely a sensory one.

From Montanari's gastrocritical perspective, this practice represents a subtle resistance to the logic of modern efficiency. The kitchen becomes a negotiation arena between traditional customs and the possibility of instant consumption patterns. However, this resistance is not presented as an open conflict, but rather as inherited and maintained habits. The kitchen thus emerges as an ideological space where the values of tradition, independence, and taste are negotiated through culinary practices.

Although the mother's principles about cooking are firmly upheld, the narrative shows that reality does not always allow for full realization of ideals. When ingredients are unavailable, the mother must confront limitations. This situation demonstrates how culinary ideology is tested in real-life situations. This is evident in the following quote.

Of course, the crops are not always ready to be harvested or the necessary spices are available in the yard. If so, the mother would go to the market early in the morning to find the freshest spices. "The ones closest to the ones I harvested myself," she always said.

The Kitchen as A Space of Ideological Conflict and Social Negotiation in Rizqi Turama's Short Story *Masakan Ibu Dan Bumbu-Bumbu Di Halaman Rumah*: A Gastrocritical Study

I even remember my father commenting, "This doesn't have enough starfruit." On another occasion, my father remarked, "This dish is delicious, but the galangal I used doesn't seem fresh. The stock in the yard is out, isn't it?" (Turama, 2022:96).

Mother choice to find the closest spices to the ideal condition demonstrates ideological consistency with the principle of authenticity. Linked to Barthes's symbolic concept of cooking, taste quality is read as a cultural sign representing value. My father's comment serves as a mechanism for evaluating taste, confirming that the kitchen is a space for the production and assessment of meaning. Taste is no longer understood as a mere product of technique, but rather as a reflection of principles and adherence to certain values. From Montanari's perspective, this situation marks a process of compromise between independence and dependence on the market system. My father's comment demonstrates the social dialogue that marks the negotiation of taste within the family. Ideological conflict does not present itself as a violent opposition, but rather as subtle corrections and adjustments.

The mother's choice to seek out spices that are closest to ideal conditions demonstrates ideological consistency with the principle of authenticity. Linked to Barthes's symbolic concept of cooking, taste quality is read as a cultural sign representing value. The father's comments serve as a mechanism for evaluating taste, reinforcing the kitchen as a space for the production and assessment of meaning. Taste is no longer understood as a mere product of technique, but rather as a reflection of principles and adherence to certain values. From Montanari's perspective, this situation marks a process of compromise between independence and dependence on the market system. The father's comments demonstrate the social dialogue that marks the negotiation of taste within the family. Ideological conflict does not manifest as a violent confrontation, but rather as subtle corrections and adjustments. The kitchen thus functions as a dynamic space for social negotiation.

Ideological tensions become increasingly apparent when generational differences begin to emerge explicitly. The narrative then presents the wife as a representation of differing culinary values. This difference expands the kitchen's meaning from a domestic space to an arena for ideological battles. This is evident in the following quote.

Unfortunately, this relief is short-lived. Whether it is because they are from different generations or because the principles instilled in them since childhood are different, both my mother and my wife apparently hold very opposing views... (Turama, 2022:97-98).

The wife's preference for instant seasoning represents a cultural sign of modern practicality and efficiency. From Barthes' perspective, this choice is a system of signs that expresses a life orientation. Generational differences emphasize that the kitchen becomes a space for meaningful struggles between traditional values and productive rationality. Linked to Montanari's thinking, this conflict demonstrates the kitchen as an arena for intergenerational social negotiation. The wife's arguments about saving time position the kitchen as a space for work efficiency, while the mother's principles emphasize the continuity of tradition. The conflict presents itself not as a verbal clash, but as a practice that is constantly negotiated. The kitchen becomes an arena for the intersection of ideologies, generations, and role divisions. This tension reaches its most concrete form when the mother and wife cook together. This situation demonstrates how ideological conflict is no longer latent but present in direct interaction. This is evident in the following quote.

And so it happened. When the two of them cooked together... my mother couldn't joke, "Why are you using packaged pepper?" At other times, she would have said, "Did you buy ready-made seasoning?" My wife remained silent. And so I remained. Since I no longer heard their complaints about cooking spices, I thought the problem was over, until finally that day arrived. The day I thought would be the culmination of their dispute, who knows who suggested it, my mother and wife would cook the same menu in their own ways. My mother seemed confident that her dish would be much more delicious, while my wife also seemed confident that the taste would not be much different. (Turama, 2022:99).

Mother's sarcasm about the use of packaged seasonings is a symbolic rejection of cultural signs of modernity. Her wife's silence signifies the tension of meaning in the kitchen. The decision to cook the same dish differently makes taste a field of ideological verification. Within Barthes's framework, the kitchen appears as a space for the battle of signs. From Montanari's perspective, the activity of cooking together becomes a form of negotiation through practice, not discourse. The struggle for the legitimacy of taste and culinary authority takes place symbolically. The kitchen becomes a space of ideological conflict as well as social negotiation. The narrative then presents a turning point that demonstrates the transformation of meaning. The conflict does not end with a victory for one party, but rather with a symbolic compromise. This is evident in the following quote.

"What do you want to cook?" Mother spoke again...

"Chicken soup."

"Get the plastic bag on the front porch. Inside are ready-to-use seasonings. I bought some packets earlier to stock up," she said with a smile. Hearing this, I became even more confused. "Hurry! It's almost mealtime. Get the seasonings and let me cook lunch!" "But your plants?" I couldn't help but ask. "Mom, replace them with flower seeds. It's time this house looked more festive, isn't it? We'll be welcoming a new member soon?" This time, my mother and my wife looked at each other. They both smiled. (Turama, 2022:102). (Turama, 2022:102).

The mother's decision to use ready-made spices marks a shift in cultural significance. From Barthes' perspective, this action represents a reconstruction of culinary meaning for the sake of social harmony. The replacement of herbs with flowers marks a

The Kitchen as A Space of Ideological Conflict and Social Negotiation in Rizqi Turama's Short Story *Masakan Ibu Dan Bumbu-Bumbu Di Halaman Rumah*: A Gastrocritical Study

transformation in values from food independence to domestic aesthetics. Furthermore, from Montanari's critical perspective, this decision represents a form of ideological compromise. The kitchen becomes an arena for social negotiation that produces symbolic agreements. The smiles of the mother and wife signal the achievement of harmony without verbal conflict. The kitchen emerges as a dynamic space for social negotiation.

IV. DISCUSSION

The analysis shows that culinary practices in the short story *Masakan Ibu dan Bumbu-bumbu di Halaman Rumah* by Risqi Turama function as both a cultural sign system and an arena for social negotiation. This finding can be theoretically substantiated through two main frameworks: Roland Barthes's semiotics and Montanari's gastrocriticism. From Barthes' perspective, food is understood as a cultural language that produces ideological meaning through the choice of ingredients, processing methods, and representations of taste. The mother's practice of growing, harvesting, and processing her own spices emphasizes food's function as a marker of identity and resistance to instant culture. Thus, spices and flavors are no longer neutral but function as signs that convey the character's life orientation and moral principles.

At the same time, the conflict between the use of fresh and instant spices demonstrates how this sign system operates dialectically. The wife's choice of instant spices signifies a culture of modern efficiency, while the mother's attitude represents the continuity of tradition. This tension confirms Barthes's thesis that food is always involved in the production of social meanings that reflect ideological structures. From Montanari's perspective, the culinary practices in this short story demonstrate the kitchen as an arena for power relations and social negotiation. Ideological conflicts between generations are mediated not through open debate, but through the practice of cooking together, correcting flavors, and compromising on ingredients. The mother's final decision to use ready-made seasonings demonstrates that food practices are always subject to contextual negotiation. Thus, the findings of this study empirically demonstrate that Montanari's theory of food as a space for cultural compromise functions effectively in literary reading. The integration of these two theories reinforces the conclusion that the kitchen in this short story is an ideological space that simultaneously mediates sign production and social negotiation.

The results of this study indicate that the culinary conflict in the short story does not aim to assert the victory of one ideology over another, but rather to demonstrate the process of transformation of meaning. Tradition and modernity are not positioned as a rigid binary opposition, but are negotiated to produce symbolic compromise. This finding demonstrates that culinary ideology is fluid and adaptive to the social context of the family. Furthermore, this study also confirms that food in the short story Turama functions not only as a narrative element but also as a medium for ideological conflict and social negotiation. The culinary practices chosen by the mother and her wife reveal that 'food can represent life orientations and cultural values that are contested between generations. This finding aligns with Mangano's (2025) study of food semiotics, which shows that food can act as a system of signs that articulates identity, culture, and values at various social and personal levels—not merely physiological consumption. Both Mangano's and this study position food as a symbol containing complex sociocultural meanings, but this study broadens this focus by capturing the dynamics of intergenerational conflict and symbolic compromise that are less explicitly discussed in the existing food semiotic literature [29].

In the study of gastrocriticism in literary works, several previous studies have also found that food plays a role in mapping the identities of characters in the text. For example, Rosyadi (2023) [32] analyzed the novel *Aruna dan Lidahnya* found that food serves to represent the protagonist's social and ethical identity in facing the cultural diversity of modern society. The results of this study align with Rosyadi's regarding food as a marker of identity and value choices, but differ in its functional significance: Rosyadi's study emphasizes food as a site of ideological conflict and practical negotiation within the domestic family sphere, while Rosyadi's emphasizes aspects of cultural identity within a broader social context [30].

Furthermore, study of food semiotics in poetry demonstrates that culinary arts in poetry function as a medium for representing the body and specific social meanings, where food symbolizes not only taste but also implications for social relations and the structure of the reader's personal experience[31]. This comparison demonstrates that your research intersects with these findings namely, food as a narrative medium with codified cultural meanings—but expands upon them by showing that these meanings are dynamic and contested dialogically between characters with differing perspectives within a single narrative. Overall, it can be said that while previous studies have focused on food as identity bodily symbols or as a general cultural sign, this study fills a gap by positioning food as an arena for ideological conflict and internal value negotiation within the family. Thus, this study enriches the discourse of gastrocriticism and food semiotics in literature by emphasizing the dynamic dimensions of value struggles and symbolic compromises that have not been empirically explored in previous studies.

V. CONCLUSIONS

This research demonstrates that the kitchen in the short story *Masakan Ibu dan Bumbu-bumbu di Halaman* by Risqi Turama does not function as a neutral domestic space, but rather as an ideological space where meaning production, value conflicts, and social negotiations take place. The culinary practices depicted through the mother and wife characters represent the struggle between

The Kitchen as A Space of Ideological Conflict and Social Negotiation in Rizqi Turama's Short Story *Masakan Ibu Dan Bumbu-Bumbu Di Halaman Rumah*: A Gastrocritical Study

tradition and modernity, mediated through the choice of ingredients, the cooking process, and the perception of taste. Thus, food in literary texts is not merely a narrative element, but a system of cultural signs that reflects life orientations and intergenerational social relations.

Within Roland Barthes's semiotic framework, spices, flavors, and the cooking process function as ideological markers that reveal the characters' identities and attitudes toward food culture. Meanwhile, through Montanari's gastrocritical perspective, the kitchen appears as an arena for social negotiation where ideological conflicts are not manifested in verbal confrontations, but rather through everyday practices that culminate in symbolic compromise. The integration of these two approaches demonstrates that gastrocriticism and semiotics can complement each other in interpreting the complexity of culinary meaning in literary texts.

The findings of this research demonstrate that culinary conflicts do not result in the absolute victory of one ideology, but rather result in contextual and adaptive transformations of meaning. The mother's final decision to use ready-made spices and replace herbs with flowers marks the reconstruction of culinary ideology for the sake of family harmony. This emphasizes that food ideology in literature is dynamic, fluid, and always in the process of negotiation. Theoretically, this research strengthens the position of gastrocriticism as a relevant approach in Indonesian literary studies, particularly in understanding the relationship between food, identity, and social conflict. Practically, this research demonstrates that literary works can function as a space for critical reflection on issues of tradition, modernity, and changing values in everyday life.

However, this research is still limited to a single short story and textual analysis alone. Therefore, future research is recommended to expand the data corpus, incorporate the reader's reception perspective, and integrate the gender and political dimensions of food so that gastrocritical studies in Indonesian literature can develop more comprehensively. Thus, this research confirms that the kitchen in literature is not simply a domestic setting, but an ideological space that records the dynamics of conflict, negotiation, and transformation of meaning in human life.

The heading of the Conclusion section must be numbered

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The Kitchen as A Space of Ideological Conflict and Social Negotiation in Rizqi Turama's Short Story *Masakan Ibu Dan Bumbu-Bumbu Di Halaman Rumah*: A Gastrocritical Study

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