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LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL SUBCORPUS: CULTURAL SEMANTICS OF THE RELIGIOUS WORDS

Abstract. The article discusses the lexical and cultural semantics of religious words. The cultural semantics of religious words is revealed in connection with the knowledge, faith, and national existence of the people and additionally includes information of religious content. The reason is, traditional religious knowledge is the core of our national identity. It is known that the daily life, customs, beliefs and existence of the Kazakh people are connected with the religion of Islam. In this regard, religious words are found in oral and written literature, fairy tales, proverbs and sayings. The article analyzes the religious words found in the works of "Word of the Ancestors". Descriptive, ethnolinguistic, lexico-semantic methods were used. The lexical and cultural semantic analysis of religious words in the article is of theoretical and practical importance. In particular, it is useful research for creating a Linguistic and Cultural dictionary, replenishing the National Corpus Base, and the work of doctoral and undergraduate students.

Keywords: religious terms; cultural semantics; national identity; "Words of the Ancestors"; National Corpus **Source of financing:** The article was written within the framework of the program-targeted funding project BR18574132 "Development of Cultural-Representative and Advertising Text Corpora".

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ЛИНГВОМӘДЕНИ ІШКОРПУС: ДІНИ СӨЗДЕРДІҢ МӘДЕНИ СЕМАНТИКАСЫ

Аңдатпа. Мақалада діни сөздердің лексикалық және мәдени семантикасы жайлы айтылады. Діни сөздердің мәдени семантикасы халықтың танымымен, сенімімен, ұлттық болмысымен байланысты ашылады және діни мазмұндағы ақпараттар қосымша қамтылады. Себебі дәстүрлі діни таным ұлттық болмысымыздың өзегі болып табылады. Қазақ халқының күнделікті тұрмыс-тіршілігі, салт-дәстүрі, наным-сенімі мен болмыс-бітімі ислам дінімен байланысты екені белгілі. Осымен байланысты ауыз және жазба әдебиетте, ертегілерде, мақал-мәтелдерде діни сөздер кездеседі. Мақалада «Бабалар сөзіндегі» діни дастандарда кездесетін діни сөздерге талдау жасалды. Осы ретте сипаттау, этнолингвистикалық, лексика-семантикалық әдістер қолданылды. Мақаладағы діни сөздердің лексикалық және мәдени-семантикалық жағынан талдануының теориялық және практикалық маңызы бар. Мақала нәтижелерін лингвомәдени сөздік жасауда, Ұлттық корпус базасын толықтыруда, докторанттар мен магистранттардың зерттеу жұмысында пайдалануға болады.

Тірек сөздер: діни терминдер; мәдени семантика; ұлттық бірегейлік; "Бабалар сөзі"; Ұлттық корпус

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ЛИНГВОКУЛЬТУРНЫЙ ПОДКОРПУС: КУЛЬТУРНАЯ СЕМАНТИКА РЕЛИГИОЗНЫХ СЛОВ

Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются лексическая и культурная семантика религиозных слов. Культурная семантика религиозных слов раскрывается в связи с познанием, верой, национальным бытием народа и включает информацию религиозного содержания, поскольку традиционное религиозное познание является ядром нашей национальной идентичности. Известно, что повседневная жизнь, обычаи, верования и бытие казахского народа связаны с религией ислам. В связи с этим в устной и письменной литературе, сказках, пословицах и поговорках встречаются религиозные слова. В статье представлен анализ религиозных слов, встречающихся в произведении «Бабалар сөзі» (Слово предков). При этом применялись описательные, этнолингвистические, лексикосемантические методы. Теоретическое и практическое значение статьи заключается в лексико-культурном семантическом анализе религиозных слов. В частности, исследование может быть полезно для создания Лингвокультурного словаря, пополнения Национальной корпусной базы, работы докторантов и магистрантов.

Ключевые слова: религиозные термины; культурная семантика; национальная идентичность; «Слово предков»; Национальный корпус

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Introduction

In the current era of digitalization, scientific information is rapidly evolving and actively being utilized in Kazakh linguistics. One prominent example of this is the connection with the national corpus. The Kazakh National Corpus gathers, stores, and analyzes all texts in the Kazakh language. The National Corpus has compiled an electronic text collection consisting of 40 million word usages in the Kazakh language (https://qazcorpus.kz/). At present, the National Corpus includes several sub-corpora, such as the Akhmet Baitursynuly, Oral, Dialectological, Proverbial, Historical, Parallel, Onomastic, Advertising, and Linguo-Cultural corpora, Researchers note that within these sub-corpora, linguistic units containing cultural and cognitive information are identified in the linguo-cultural sub-corpus through the knowledge systems of the people (Ashimbayeva, Zhanabekova, 2023). Among these linguistic units with cultural and cognitive content are religious terms. The corpus includes not only the lexical meanings of religious terms but also their cultural semantics. In connection with this, the knowledge systems underlying religious and culturally significant words or phrases are identified (Isayeva, Serikqyzy, Otebayeva, 2023). Therefore, the goal of the study presented in the article is to uncover the hidden cultural codes behind the lexical meanings of religious words in the 100-volume "Babalar Sozi" (Words of the Ancestors). Researchers argue that words are cultural units that preserve a system of cultural knowledge within their internal content. From this perspective, scholars emphasize that while dictionaries record the lexical meanings of words, cultural dictionaries explain not only the lexical meanings of words but also their cultural semantics, which are linked to national customs and traditions (Isayeva, Serikgyzy, Otebayeva, 2023).

To uncover the essence of any language, it is necessary to consider its national identity, customs, beliefs, perceptions, and history. In this regard, researchers state that the study of a national language in connection with the culture and cognition of its people gave rise to the field of linguoculturology (Akkozhina, 2016). Specifically, linguoculturology encompasses concepts such as national code, cultural information, and national values.

So, what is cultural semantics? Scholars define cultural semantics as a system of traditional knowledge that is transmitted from generation to generation through language. They assert that culture

lies at the core of the national language, meaning that by studying the language, one also examines its culture. This leads to the understanding that studying a people's language is, in essence, studying their culture. Consequently, researchers conclude that a nation's culture is recognized through the concepts and understandings embedded in the language (Rysbergen, Uali, 2023). Based on the scholars' opinions mentioned above, the cultural semantics of religious words considered in the article will be revealed in connection with the people's cognition, beliefs, and national identity. That is, the system of knowledge related to national cognition embedded in religious words will be described based on linguistic data. Theologian R. Mukhitdinov explains the concept of religion as follows: he views religion as faith in God, which is regulated through certain rituals, ceremonies, and acts of worship, and serves as cultural consciousness that guides the spiritual development of individuals within society (Mukhitdinov, 2018). We believe that, alongside religious understanding, there exists a traditional religious perception intertwined with the essence of the people and the nation, which forms the core of national identity and cognition (Isauly, Zholdybaiuly, 2010). This is because the Kazakh people's cognition, worldview, daily lifestyle, customs, beliefs, and national values are closely linked with their religion and Shariah. Thus, the cultural cognition, beliefs, and religious knowledge system of the Kazakh people are embedded within religious terms. In this regard, scholar N. Uali notes that people have encapsulated their beliefs, perceptions, imagination, thoughts, and way of life into the content of a few words, making them both rich and expressive. Furthermore, in his research, he suggests that if the key to revealing the internal content of a word is found, it will convey information about the people's lifestyle, imagination, and worldview (Ualiyev, 1998). Overall, researchers present several approaches to uncovering the cultural semantics hidden within ethnoculturally marked linguistic units. One approach involves open and explicit coded linguistic and cultural information; another involves linguistic information that is open, while cultural information remains hidden.

In dictionaries, religious terms are typically presented only with their lexical meanings. For instance, in the dictionary of Religious Terms (Mukhitdinov, 2012), the word *to3a*κ (hell) is explained as an eternal place in the other world, created by Allah, where the *kafirs* and the duplicitous go. This, of course, is the lexical meaning of the word *mo3a*κ. Moving forward, we must also uncover its cultural semantics. In the Kazakh language, there are several collocations related to the word *mo3a*κ, such as *mo3a*κ, *omы* (flames of hell), *mo3a*κ, *mah* κ, μμκ, αρδω (saved from hell), and *mo3a*κ, κα *caλδω* (sent to hell). Scholar N. Uali notes that terms related to customs, beliefs, and rituals contain cultural semantics within their content. Indeed, the content of every custom, belief, and ritual contains a system of knowledge about cultural information (Uali, 2007). Therefore, it is necessary to reveal the cultural semantics of religious terms and incorporate them into the National Corpus database. Through the corpus database, any language user can access both the lexical and cultural-semantic information regarding religious terms.

Materials and methods

To uncover the cultural semantics of religious terms, linguistic units were collected from the 100volume "Babalar Sozi" (Words of the Ancestors). These linguistic units were selected and their lexical meanings were clarified. Additionally, the cultural semantics of religious terms, which reflect the religious understanding, identity, and beliefs of the Kazakh people, were analyzed, described, and characterized using ethnolinguistic and lexical-semantic methods. The 15-volume "Dictionary of Kazakh Literary Language" (Almaty, 2005-2011) and the comprehensive one-volume "Kazakh Dictionary" (Almaty, 2013), published under the supervision of Professor N. Uali, were used as the primary references in clarifying the lexical meanings of the religious terms. To reveal the cultural semantics of these religious terms, the ethnolinguistic and linguocultural works, research, and articles of the aforementioned scholars served as the foundation. A. Zhubanov's article on the significance of ethnocultural semantics for the Kazakh National Corpus was also used as a guideline. Furthermore, academician A. Qaidar's three-volume "Ethnolinguistic Dictionary" (Almaty, 2009-2013) and the fivevolume encyclopedia "The Traditional System of Kazakh Ethnographic Categories, Concepts, and Terms" (Almaty, 2017), which systematized and compiled the word universe of the national language, were utilized as key resources for uncovering the cultural semantics of religious terms. To gather additional scientific data on religious terms, researcher R.S. Mukhitdinov's monograph "The History of the Use of Islamic Religious Terms in the Kazakh Language" and the work "Islamic Fiqh" by M. Isayev and Q. Zholdybayev were consulted. For definitions related to religion, we used information from the Sozdikqor.kz website (https://sozdikqor.kz/).

In summary, the analysis of religious terms involved examining specific religious information, legends, proverbs, phrases, and beliefs through linguistic data.

Literature review

Research on cultural semantics dates back to the 1980s. During comparative studies of Russian, German, and English languages, N.E. Merkish and I.E. Averyanova identified what they termed "culturally-marked lexicon." I.Y. Markovina and Y.A. Sorokina included traditional customs and domestic culture under the umbrella of cultural information. M.G. Yashina, in her study "Methods and Techniques of Investigating Culturally Marked Lexicon", advocated the use of the lacunaria and culturema theories and recommended a comprehensive approach. This comprehensive research approach involves identifying lexical units with cultural semantics and characterizing their distinctions from other semantic fields.

N.I. Konovalov, who studied the inclusion of culturally marked lexical units in dictionaries, pointed out the absence of multiple variants of culturally marked units in contemporary lexicography. These include: the traditional cultural encyclopedic characteristics of an ethnos (myth, ethnography, folklore); the traditional linguistic-cultural characteristics connected with customs; and the analysis of cultural concepts. The most crucial aspect, according to Konovalov, is the description of linguistic units as cultural information.

Furthermore, scholarly discussions on linguocultural studies and the concept of "cultural code," as related to cultural semantics, have been addressed by representatives of the Moscow School of Linguocultural Studies, such as D.B. Gudkov, V.V. Krasnykh, Y.E. Prokhorova, Y.A. Sorokina, V.N. Telia, and N.V. Ufimtseva. These researchers emphasized the importance of national-cultural information marked within a particular cultural code. In this context, V.V. Krasnykh defines the cultural code as a structure that organizes cultural information about the surrounding environment, connecting it to ancient archetypal ideas. Essentially, the cultural code encodes these representations.

Additionally, N.F. Alefirenko, H. Walter, V.M. Mokiyenko, V.N. Telia, and others have argued that national cultural distinctiveness should be explored from the perspectives of phraseology and word semantics.

In Kazakh linguistics, there is a substantial body of research on religious terms, linguocultural studies, and the concept of cultural semantics. Notable works include A. Qaidar's "Historical Lexicology and Ethnolinguistics", Y. Zhanpeissov's "Kazakh Antiquities", N. Uali's "Phraseology and Linguistic Norms and Theoretical Foundations of Kazakh Verbal Culture", B. Sagyngdykov's "Wonders of the Universe", Zh.A. Mankeyeva's "Cognitive Foundations of Ethnocultural Terms in the Kazakh Language", Q. Rysbergen's "Linguocognitive and Ethnocultural Foundations of Kazakh Toponymy", E.A. Ongarov's "Kazakh Culture and Islamic Values and Religion and Tradition", N. Ondasynov's "Arabic-Kazakh Explanatory Dictionary", and B. Aqberdiyeva's "Mythological System in the Kazakh Language". These works are pertinent to the issues discussed in the article.

Since the article addresses the cultural semantics of religious terms, the definition of cultural semantics was provided based on the research of these scholars.

Results and discussions

It is well known that Islam began spreading across the Kazakh steppe starting from the 8th century. With the introduction of the religion, numerous words entered the Kazakh language's lexicon, profoundly influencing the Kazakh worldview, cultural identity, and daily life. For instance, religious terms became prevalent in epic poems, oral traditions, and literary works, as well as in songs and poetic improvisations (aytys and termé). For instance, in the religious dastans included in the 100-volume "Words of the Ancestors", the following notions can be found: *uxcah* (*Ihsan*), *uшаh* (*Ishan*), *кебін* (*cerement*), көр (*grave*), күнә (*sin*), күнә (*sinner*), Қағба (*Kaaba*), қажы (*Hajji*), қажылық (*Hajji*), қари (*Qari*), құбыла (the direction where people turn to pray), Құдай (*God*), Құран (*Kuran*), кәлам (*Kalam*), құрбандық (*sacrifice*), қылкөпір (the bridge that the dead cross before getting into heaven), қызыр (the saint), мазар (tomb), мәзһаб (mazhab), мақшар (magshar), Мекке (Mekka), мешіт

(mosque), мәйіт (corpse), мәңкүр-нүңкүр (the two angels who interrogate the dead), Миграж (Miraj), мұгжиза (wonder) and other religious words.

In religious texts, various names and titles for the divine are used interchangeably, including Allah, Tengri, Жаратушы (Creator), Жаратқан (Created One), Жасаған (Maker), Құдай (God), and Жаппар (Lord). Additionally, the names of angels, prophets, and companions of the Prophet are frequently mentioned (Babalar sozi (Words of the Ancestors).

Scholars generally categorize religious terms in the Kazakh language into three groups. These are:

- 1. Frequently used active words (∂әрет ablution, намаз prayer, ораза fasting, ауызашар iftar, cayan reward, қабір grave): these words are still in common use today;
- 2. Words that have become archaic ($\varepsilon auapah$ hellfire, $\varepsilon ausp$ infidel): these terms are less frequently used and have become somewhat obsolete;
- 3. Borrowed words that entered after independence ($mayxu\partial$ monotheism, caxux authentic, $\partial au\phi$ weak, $my\partial y\varepsilon$ fabricated, $ma\kappa\phi up$ excommunication, $\delta u\partial ax$ innovation, $xu\partial \varkappa a\delta$ veil): these terms were introduced after Kazakhstan gained independence.

Both active religious terms and archaic words can be found in the linguistic data from the 100 Volumes of the "Words of the Ancestors". This indicates that religious terminology was commonly used in Kazakh thought, cultural practices, and daily life. For instance, certain religious words that were prohibited during the Soviet era, such as жамағат (congregation), мешіт (mosque), қажылық (pilgrimage), қажы (pilgrim), сауап жасау (to earn reward), and садақа (alms), are now actively used again.

The article examines the lexical and cultural-semantic meanings of religious words found in the "Words of the Ancestors". Here are a few examples. For instance, the term A6 Зәмзәм found in the Word of Ancestors is analyzed both lexically and culturally.

Lexical Meaning: Zamzam refers to the sacred well in Mecca; the holy and healing water from the Zamzam well.

Cultural-Semantic Meaning: according to some legends, if a drop of this water is placed in the mouth of a dying person, it is believed to ease their suffering in the afterlife. Zamzam water is considered the softest and most superior of waters; it quenches thirst and is believed to cure various ailments. It is customary to drink Zamzam water while reciting "Bismillah" (in the name of God) and making a wish. Despite being used by thousands of people for millennia and transported elsewhere, the sacred well has never dried up, according to widespread belief.

If we analyze the cultural semantics related to Zamzam water, it is noteworthy that despite being used by people for so many years, the water never runs out. This fact highlights the uniqueness of Zamzam water compared to other waters. Additionally, the belief that Zamzam water can cure many diseases also attests to its sacredness. Similarly, in the "Words of the Ancestors", the phrase "аруақ қонды" (spirit descended) is encountered.

If we analyze the phrase "*apyaқ қοнды*", according to traditional beliefs, it refers to an invisible, mysterious force that resides within or accompanies a person. In Kazakh culture, a person with extraordinary abilities is said to have a "possessor" or to be "possessed by a spirit" (aruaq qondy). It is believed that this spiritual possession is hereditary, passed down through generations. There is also a belief that only powerful shamans and seers can perceive a person's spiritual possessor or the extraordinary qualities within them. This belief has given rise to various expressions such as *ueci бар* (has a possessor), *ueci қысты* (the possessor pressed), *ueci қозды* (the possessor stirred), *ueci қыстаққа алды* (the possessor took hold), *ueci көрінді* (the possessor appeared), *ue қонды* (the possessor descended), and *ueci келді* (the possessor arrived).

It is believed that a person possessed by a spirit may have healing abilities, which are thought to be related to their connection with the spirit of a deceased person. There are even legends associated with this belief.

THE AFTERLIFE

When he arrived, urging his horse, And became a friend in the afterlife, I was content and said, When he offered his sister,

Looking with a smile at Karlyga's daughter-in-law,

"My dear, this is all certain,

We, the elderly, are contemplating happiness."

He was the only friend of my dear in the afterlife.

Qobylandy and he embraced,

And there, in front of the people,

They recognized their friendship for the afterlife (Babalar sozi (Words of the Ancestors).

The two verses: "To Tengezbai," "To Toiymbai,"

In the end, it passes: "Where is the feast?"

- I do not know, I became an afterlife friend too early,

Where are the past pleasures and games?

Lexical meaning: Forever, till the end of life (Babalar sozi (Words of the Ancestors).

Cultural semantics: In Islam, there are verses (Shura 67) that emphasize the importance of choosing a true friend. From this verse, we understand that only those who guide each other towards good deeds in this world will remain true friends on the Day of Judgment. This is also mentioned in the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): "A good friend is better than loneliness, and loneliness is better than a bad friend". This principle is also affirmed in Kazakh worldview, where it is said that a friend should be as close as a brother in this life, a concept echoed both in religion and in proverbs. In traditional Kazakh ethics, great importance is placed on friendship: "A friend tells the truth even if it hurts, while an enemy flatters", "The friend of a good person is also good", "In this world, being alone is akin to being dead, and all sorrow rests upon the one who is alone". Other sayings include, "Never say a word you can't take back to a friend you can't lose", "A true friend shares everything, as those in the same boat share the same fate", and "A friend tells the truth even if it hurts, while an enemy flatters".

THE SPIRIT

This one is five-years-old this year, a four-year-old last year,

We have come with this request

In honor of the spirits of your ancestors

This is the present we have brought

The book of Karibai we have brought (Babalar sozi (Words of the Ancestors).

Lexical meaning: according to the religious concept that the soul lives separately from the body, it refers to the spirit of a deceased person that continues to guide and protect the living.

Cultural semantics: according to Kazakh beliefs, the spirit of the deceased is thought to protect and support their relatives and loved ones in this life. The term "apyak" signifies a soul or spirit. For instance, every Friday, people bake "шелпек" (a type of bread) and recite special prayers for the aruaq, as a way to seek its blessing. There is also a belief that if an aruaq appears in a dream, it is a sign of the spirit's presence and concern. This reflects the Kazakh emphasis on the importance of aruaq. For example, women who are unable to conceive or those suffering from illness may spend the night at a shrine of a revered aruaq, praying for blessings. In traditional prayers and blessings, the term "aruaq" is frequently used, stemming from the belief "May the aruag support you". The devotion to aruag can also be seen in the customs of people forced to leave their ancestral lands; it was customary to take a handful of soil from the graves of ancestors when moving away. When someone was angered, phrases like "May the aruaq curse you, may God curse you" were used. Various expressions, proverbs, and blessings related to aruaq are widespread among the people. For instance, аруагы қозды (the spirit has been triggered), аруағына сиынды (praying to one's spirit), аруақ аттады (stepped over his spirit), аруақ қонды (the spirit has descended); аруақ тепкен ары түсер, атан тепкен бері түсер (the one kicked by the spirits falls to this side, the one kicked by the camel falls further), аруақтарға арнап иіс шығарды (he burned the incense for the spirits), mipi аруақ (the living spirit), аруақ қолдады (the spirit supports).

In addition, warriors would shout "Aruaq, aruaq" when attacking the enemy. However, according to religious beliefs, invoking aruaq is considered as associating partners with Allah.

THE MOURNING

The Dungan's incompetent cleric Shigazy,

Picky, restless, and troublesome to his people.

The dombra – like the hammer of Munkir-Nankir,

In a state of alarm, as if it were meant to terrify (Babalar sozi (Words of the Ancestors).

Lexical meaning: The mourning of a person's death, grief.

Cultural semantics: Such rituals as жоқтау (vocal mourning), жылау (crying), дауыс шығару (voicing), зар (lamenting), теріс өлең (reversed verse) are carried out when mourning happens. In the traditional understanding, if a person has not been mourned after their death, it is considered as "dying without being sought after." According to the traditional Kazakh worldview, mourning customs are generally divided into two phases: first, the actions to be taken before the person is buried, and second, the period after the person has been laid to rest. The house of mourning was under public scrutiny for a year. Those who did not attend the burial would come later to offer condolences and comfort. Even travelers passing by a house in mourning would stop their journey and not continue until they had offered their condolences. The end of the mourning period can be discerned from the mood and dress of the family members. Additionally, "aza" refers to the aid, either in the form of livestock or goods, brought by close relatives and kin to the bereaved household (Traditional System of Kazakh Ethnographic Categories, Concepts, and Terms, 2017).

AQSAR-BAS

Magsut was adamant to have this feast,

He slaughtered the agsar-bas, invoking the spirits.

A thought after a thought he uttered (Babalar sozi (Words of the Ancestors).

Lexical meaning: a special sacrificial animal offered to God during times of joy, fear, recovery from a serious illness, or when making a wish.

Cultural semantics: the practice involves sacrificing an animal to God during significant events such as major celebrations, moments of fright, or when facing unforeseen dangers, seeking divine favor. This tradition originally stemmed from a practice of invoking nature and mystical forces. According to Kazakh beliefs, the color white symbolizes purity, honesty, and justice. For instance, after childbirth, a white ram would be sacrificed, and a blessing would be recited to ensure the health of the mother and child, based on the belief that if the mother did not sweat, it would bring forty types of misfortune, and if the mother did not eat the ritual dish (qalzha), the child would grow up weak. Additionally, when a proposal was made for a daughter, the father would have a white sheep sacrificed and recite a blessing. There is a Kazakh saying, "The blood of a white sheep and the blessing of a white sheep" reflecting this practice. The groom's family also brings a white lamb to the bride's family to celebrate the union.

Conclusion

In conclusion, religious terms have been widely used in proverbs, religious epics, poems, epics, and literary works. These works feature religious words that are either actively used or have become archaic. The article explores not only the lexical meanings of these religious terms but also their cultural semantics. Additionally, their cultural semantics are described according to religious understanding and explained through Kazakh beliefs, customs, and perceptions. The views of scholars who describe religion as the guiding principle that leads to the desired goal (Isayev, Zholdybayev, 2010) are significant. This is because traditional religious concepts and notions are deeply ingrained in the Kazakh way of life, making the frequent use of religious terms understandable. These terms are also closely intertwined with Kazakh customs and traditions. For instance, in words like "ακωρεμπικ" and "α3α," one can see the connection between religious understanding and Kazakh beliefs, customs, and traditions. However, there are instances where religious understanding and Kazakh perceptions do not overlap at all.

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