

Zh.B. Dzhalamova  , **B.U. Dzholdasbekova** 

Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Kazakhstan, Almaty,
e-mail: zhannadz161@gmail.com, Baiyan.Zholdasbekova@kaznu.kz

NEW MORAL RITUALS IN THE PROSE OF M. ZEMSKOV

The article is devoted to the analysis of the novel «Sectarian» by a young Kazakh writer M. Zemskov. In the new literary process of Kazakhstan, new artistic trends are emerging, one of which can be called intellectual. It reflects the characteristic strengthening of the analytical principle in modern literature. Such works are characterized by a first-person story that preserves the speech characteristics of the main character, while the other characters are presented through the focus of his perception. The author's personality is consciously diminished, his individuality is shown only in the choice of the hero, which is most noticeable in the presence of the phenomenon of «text in the text» in the work.

The purpose of the article is to determine the essence of the new hero's morality. The characterization of the new hero is determined not by personal or individual parameters, but by masking. Here is the principle of so-called «double redirection», characteristic of works of modern literature. Many traditional values are undergoing a significant transformation. This is perceived as a stage of a special spiritual world of illusions – simulacrum, as a result of which the prospects of reality become uncertain.

According to the authors, the writer uses a multi-level organization of the text, the most important law of realistic depiction of life becomes dominant, and the hero's image is conditioned by the social background: everyday, historical, and spiritual circumstances of his existence. The modern hero is in a kind of vacuum, the author conducts a consistent and conscious game in the text: it seems that the work is built from a kind of cubes, cultural codes that form its structure. It is as if the texts contain a variety of writing experiences and thus form a special cultural text space. Fundamental problems of human existence, the study of the deep contradictions of the hero and modern society performs a plot – forming function.

Key words: genre, novel, intellectual prose, author, hero, simulacrum, plot.

Ж.Б. Джаламова, Б.Ө. Жолдасбекова

Әл-Фараби атындағы Қазақ ұлттық университеті, Қазақстан, Алматы қ.,
e-mail: zhannadz161@gmail.com, Baiyan.Zholdasbekova@kaznu.kz

М. Земсков прозасындағы жаңа өнегелік салт жоралары

Мақала жас қазақстандық жазушы М. Земсковтың «Сектант» романына талдау жасауға арналған. Қазақстанның жаңа әдеби процесінде шартты түрде зияткерлік деп атауға болатын жаңа көркемдік бағыттар пайда болды. Онда қазіргі заманғы әдебиетке тән аналитикалық принциптің күшеюі көрінеді. Мұндай туындылар басты кейіпкердің сөйлеу ерекшеліктерін сақтайтын бірінші реттік әңгімемен сипатталады, қалған кейіпкерлер оның қабылдауының фокусы арқылы бейнеленген. Автордың жеке басы әдейі төмендетілген, оның тұлғасы кейіпкерді таңдауда ғана көрінеді, ол шығармадағы «мәтіндегі мәтін» феномені болған кезде байқалады.

Мақаланың мақсаты – жаңа кейіпкердің моральдық мәнін анықтау. Жаңа кейіпкердің мінездемесі жеке немесе жеке параметрлермен емес, бүркеу арқылы анықталады. Мұнда қазіргі әдебиеттің шығармаларына тән «қос бағыттау» деп аталатын қағида іске қосылады. Маңызды қайта құру көптеген дәстүрлі құндылық идеяларын бастан кешіреді. Бұл елестердің ерекше рухани әлеміндегі кезең – симулякр ретінде қабылданады, нәтижесінде шындықтың болашағы белгісіз болады.

Авторлардың пікірінше, жазушы мәтіннің көп деңгейлі ұйымдастырылуын, өмірдің шынайы бейнесінің маңызды заңын, кейіпкер бейнесінің әлеуметтік фондағы шарттылығын қолданады: өмір сүруінің күнделікті, тарихи, рухани жағдайлары басым болады. Қазіргі кейіпкер вакуум түрінде, автор мәтінде дәйекті және ақпараттандырылған ойын жүргізеді: шығарма өзінің құрылымын құрайтын текшелерден, мәдени кодтардан құралғанға ұқсайды. Адам өмірінің фундаменталды мәселелері, кейіпкер мен қазіргі қоғамның терең қайшылықтарын зерделеу сюжетті қалыптастыру қызметін атқарады.

Түйін сөздер: жанр, роман, интеллектуалды проза, автор, кейіпкер, симулякр, сюжет.

Ж.Б. Джаламова, Б.У. Джолдасбекова

Казахский национальный университет им. аль-Фараби, Казахстан, г. Алматы,
e-mail: zhannadz161@gmail.com, Baiyan.Zholdasbekova@kaznu.kz

Новые нравственные ритуалы в прозе М. Земскова

Статья посвящена анализу романа молодого казахстанского писателя М. Земскова «Сектант». В новом литературном процессе Казахстана возникают новые художественные направления, одно из которых можно условно назвать интеллектуальным. Оно отражает характерное для современной литературы усиление аналитического начала. Для таких произведений характерен рассказ от первого лица, сохраняющий особенности речи главного героя, герои остальные представлены через фокус его восприятия. Личность автора сознательно у малывается, его индивидуальность проявляется только в выборе героя, что наиболее ощутимо при наличии в произведении феномена «текста в тексте».

Целью статьи является определение сущности морали нового героя. Характеристика нового героя определяется не личностными либо индивидуальными параметрами, а посредством маскирования. Здесь срабатывает принцип так называемой «двойной переадресации», характерный для произведений современной литературы. Существенной трансформации подвергаются многие традиционные ценностные представления. Это воспринимается как этап особого духовного мира иллюзий – симулякров, вследствие чего перспективы действительности становятся неопределенными.

По мнению авторов, писатель использует многоуровневую организацию текста, доминирующим становится важнейший закон реалистического изображения жизни, обусловленность образа героя социальным фоном: бытовыми, историческими, духовными обстоятельствами его существования. Современный герой находится в своеобразном вакууме, автором проводится последовательная и осознанная игра в текст: создается впечатление, что произведение выстраивается из своеобразных кубиков, культурных кодов, образующих его структуру. В текстах присутствует разнообразный писательский опыт и таким образом формируется особое культурное текстовое пространство. Фундаментальные проблемы человеческого бытия, исследование глубинных противоречий героя и современного общества выполняют сюжетобразующую функцию.

Ключевые слова: жанр, роман, интеллектуальная проза, автор, герой, симулякр, сюжет.

Introduction

«New Realism» is a relatively new cumulative creative space in which young writers and writers of our day manifest themselves. On the one hand, it is the literature of young writers, who consider the epithet «new» not only as a characteristic of a certain type of narration, but also as an important sign of self-presentation. On the other hand, the «new realists», criticizing postmodernism as an art that is not interested in the fate of modern man, defend the interests of classical Russian literature with its psychological anthropocentrism and social criticism. The modern literature of Kazakhstan has global processes taking place in a rapidly changing world. It is very diverse and has a wide range of works – from elitist, innovative and poetic to detective stories, action films, women’s novels. According to Nasrutdinova, the new realism of the 21–st century «is understood primarily as a living phenomenon of modern literature, occupying a borderline between traditional realism with its typical characters in typical circumstances and postmodernism, as well as other avant–garde movements. The emergence of

such a compromise path between traditionalism and postmodernism is dictated by the logic of the development of modern literature and not only Russian» (Nasrutdinova, 1999: 3).

The term «new realism» from the very beginning of the 2000s has become the subject of heated debate and discussion on the pages of newspapers and literary magazines. Even before the publications of the 90s, articles by literary critics appeared, indicating a serious methodological crisis in science, which was especially noticeable when comparing neorealism at the turn of the 19th – 20th centuries and modern. The question is carefully developed in the monographs of V.A. Keldysh (Keldysh, 2000), U.K. Abisheva (Abisheva, 2005), T.T. Davydova (Davydova, 2011) and others. The desire of the young generation of writers and critics to put forward a new literary direction was based on «a neglect of postmodernism, and more broadly on a denial of the old position» (Kalita, 2016). New realism is a natural result, born of a spiritual situation prevailing in the world at the end of the 20th century, when the crisis of humanistic consciousness and the crisis of culture are sharply felt. Hence the importance of

the philosophy of disappointment, the tragic skepticism that characterizes the perceptions of the worldview of many contemporary artists. The perceptual consciousness, which has become the norm, creates a universal postmodern situation. Here we see, as even «pure» realists cannot do without the artistic philosophy of postmodernism, it is a various forms of play: with a word, with a philosophy, with a reader, with realities culture. However, the features of realistic aesthetics are no less significant: attention to the relationship between man and the social environment, the desire to find the purpose and meaning of existence in the surrounding chaos of Being. According to Hesle (Hesle, 1994), «anyone who wants to understand the modern world is unlikely to achieve their goal without comprehending the logic of the identity crisis» (Hesle, 1994: 114). The author's goal is to follow the rapidly changing reality, without imposing on it a predetermined ideologue. In this regard, a new multicultural personality begins to take shape, in which both the writer and the hero identify themselves not only with a certain ethnic group, they have an involvement in the ethnocultural tradition. One of the significant beginnings of the «new realism» is the young writer's interest in his own life. To the personal experience of modernity, «passed through a personal biography, the search for a new hero that meets the needs of the times and in the context of the approval of new life principles» (Khomyakov, 2019: 50).

Experiment

In the new literary process, new artistic directions arise, one of which can be arbitrarily called intellectual, reflects the strengthening of the analytical principle, characteristic of modern literature. In such works, the emphasis is on intellectual search. This is a slightly fictionalized reflection on the meaning of life, on its underlying foundations. The authors write on the verge of literature and philosophy, literature and history, literature and religion, even literature and literary criticism. The plot is the very development of thought. The text explains itself and fluctuates between the narrative itself and the auto-commentary. These works are characterized by a first-person, narrative that preserves the features of the main character's speech, the rest of the characters are represented through the focus of his perception. The author's personality is deliberately diminished; his personality is manifested only in the choice of a hero, which is most noticeable in the presence of the phenomenon of «text in text» in the work. One of the important dominants of conscious-

ness is the feeling of a certain ideological emptiness. Having arisen a long time ago, about a decade and a half ago, it does not weaken – on the contrary, it is intensifying. He is felt by an individual person, whose life goals in most cases are purely personal in nature and are limited to family, private relationships or, at best, career ambitions. The modern hero is in a kind of vacuum, the authors conduct a consistent and informed game in the text: it seems that the works are built from a kind of cubes, cultural codes that form its structure.

It is as if a diverse writing experience is present in the texts and in this way a special cultural text space is formed. Autobiographical principles of narration are inherent in such a direction, the author strives to realize himself in the role of the main character, and the personal fate of the writer is correlated with the fate of the character. One of the significant beginnings of the «new realism» is the young writer's interest in his own life. To the personal experience of modernity, passed through a personal biography, the search for a new hero that meets in the times and in the context of the approval of new life principles (Khomyakov, 2019:50). This literature is simultaneously fascinating and easy to read, pragmatic and extremely oriented to the present, which is why it is interesting. Its reader, in addition to a fascinating intrigue, plot, will also appreciate the literary game, this kind of work can be called literature of mutual provocation of the mass and elite reader.

Results and discussion

Mikhail Zemskov is one of Kazakhstan's modern authors. He owns works of various genres, novels, novels, and stories. He is one of the founders and leaders of open literary school. One of the main and recognizable topics in the writer's work is the theme of the hero's knowledge of himself. The writer's works are differ by a deep understanding of the fundamental dominants of social life, a study of the deep contradictions of man and modern society, city and culture.

In 2010, the largest Russian publishing house «Eksmo» published his novel «Sectarian» (Zemskov, 2010). «Sectarian» is a philosophical thriller, much of the plot of which is based on real events. The action of the novel «Sectarian» is based on the plot of a journey to the Kazakh steppes, in order to find the true text of the Gospel of John, which, according to legend, is hidden by Nestorian Christians in the foothills of the Tien Shan. The impetus for the creation of the novel was the author's fascination with oriental philosophy, yoga and other meditative

practices: «I was interested in the topic itself and how everything intertwines in it – a sincere search for the truth, the meaning of life and God». The prototypes for the novel, were various sects and their rules of the game, and the prototypes of the heroes were crooks and lost souls. A group of young people from Moscow is led by the mysterious David, dedicated and «rejected», an intellectual leader and an esoteric adventurer, and among the seekers are his followers and students who are preparing for some «new practice». The narration is conducted on behalf of Ivan. He runs away from Moscow, in which he feels psychological discomfort. The protagonist of the novel, the model guy, appears in the group as if by accident, but as the story unfolds, it becomes clear that this is a predictable inevitability. During the expedition, strange events begin to occur around him, leading to fatal consequences and changing his ideas about the world. As the writer himself spoke about this novel, this is «an absolutely realistic work, because I wrote it in the genre of criminal psychological drama, which, I hope, will also lead the reader to some thoughts. At the same time, I think it will be interesting to read «Sectarian». In any case, everyone to whom I gave him to read literally swallowed a novel overnight. I would say that «Sectarian» is written in the style of anti-Coelho in the sense that Coelho's path to finding his spiritual «I» is something sublime, beautiful and easy, although in reality everything is more complicated. My book is more realistic. This is a correlation of beautiful truths and life, and not Coelho's tales for adults» (Zemskov, 2009).

The mystical and fantastic component is the main one for the work of Mikhail Zemskov, the novel of the writer evokes very interesting associations. In this work of the writer, the linear sequence of times is violated and the boundaries between the outside world and the inner sensations in a person are erased. Mikhail Zemskov uses a multi-level organization of a text designed for an esthete familiar with the philosophy of Christianity, spiritual practices and the general reader at the same time. The possibility of using the detective genre as a «reading model» seems to modern writers to be quite a productive means for activating the reader in the process of interpreting the text and thereby maximizing the potential readership. This contributes to the use by modern authors of the principle of postmodern aesthetics – the principle of «double coding», which assumes «addressing simultaneously to several groups of readers with different levels of competence (Repenkova, 2013: 103). The protagonist of the novel is a young man Ivan, a Moscow intellectual who is in

a state of searching for himself. He is very lively and original, unlike other characters of the novel, lost in the world. Young heroes are at a crossroads between East and West. The main code that goes through all the plot twists and turns of the novel is the code for traveling to Kazakhstan. The modern world is mobile and unpredictable; the lost Christian Gospel is in the steppes of Kazakhstan.

The heroes of the novel are new heroes, people with a blurred identity. The characterization of such a hero is determined not by personal or individual parameters, but by means of masking. The characters of the novel gradually acquire the likeness of a simulacrum. Reality becomes the likeness of something, a game, or a copy of the image of reality. According to a common point of view, we live in an era of the triumph of visuality, the replacement of reality with a simulacrum, sociality – a society with the illusion of happiness, personality – a construct. According to J. Baudrillard (Baudrillard, 2008), a simulacrum is a copy that does not have the original in reality, an empty image without a referent. J. Baudrillard singles out three orders of simulacrum replacing each other in parallel with changes in the law of value: «fake» in the classical era, «production» in the era of the industrial revolution, «simulation» in the modern world.

In everyday life, in the electronic form of everyday life, in the virtual reality of our subjectivity, this expressed by a keen sense of the authenticity (absurdity) of existence, a nostalgic dream of contacts with living nature, «real-real» times, people, things, events, actions. With a constant everyday feeling: «no, it's somehow not right», «something is missing», «everything is wrong», the life of the protagonist of the novel, Ivan, goes on. His profession itself involves the creation of copies, images that mimic reality. «Open your mouth. Shut up. Hand to the side. More natural. More natural. Keep a look. Yet. More natural. More energy. More emotions. More natural. Smile. Sex appeal. Relaxedness. The wisdom of experience. Condescension. Wisdom. Sex appeal. Open your mouth. Shut up. Naturally» (Zemskov, 2010: 20). Simulacrum does not imply the presence of personality. Today, even popular culture exploits an uncritical distinction between the real and the visible, lost nostalgic objects and their alienated copies. This is also a sign, a message, but a sign directed to the crowd at the average user is addressless. The main character himself becomes a copy of him, cannot understand who he really is, what he should do, how his life goes. Copies, masks, pictures and photographs become reality. He tries on social and cultural masks and thus identifies him-

self. Ivan is a person deprived of depth and personal meaning – he himself is an «empty sign» – a simulacrum, unable to bear the reality of the existing world, and, therefore, is not capable of perceiving real-life situations. The type of such a hero creates other characters who also try on masks in the format of the work. The behavior of the hero becomes «ritual», gesture, which demonstrates the type of «artificial» consciousness. The main meaning of the journey is to comprehend your own «I» and liberation through Death.

According to J. Baudrillard's theory, guilty feelings, fear and death can be replaced by enjoying pure signs of guilt, despair, violence and death. This is the euphoria of simulation, striving to cancel the cause and effect, beginning and end, to replace them with duplication (Baudrillard, 2008). But simulacrum is not just a play of signs; it also contains special social relations and a special authority. Eastern spiritual practice preached by a «guru» who, by his confession, found God. Ordinary human life, with its inevitable worries and troubles, is scorned and rejected by him. Death and life are the most important concepts of human existence for the heroes of the novel. It is all and nothing at the same time. Death can take away human life, but a new life can arise out of nothing. «If you are looking for ways to expand or change your consciousness, then the most valuable and unique experience for you will be to be close to death. It could be your death or the death of another person, just death. A banal domestic death in its pure form without embellishment, without any aesthetic or mythological associations. Surround yourself with death for a while. There are three ways of knowing God: through sight – yantra, through hearing – mantra and sensations – tantra. The path through sensations is the fastest, and sex and death give us the most powerful sensations in this life. And if we choose the tantric path to God, then sex and death are the most effective tools on this path» (Zemskov, 2010: 31).

For the guru – David, it is important to know about the inevitability of death, because the attitude towards death determines the attitude towards life. Therefore, one of the practices is ritual killing to comprehend the meaning of life, its awareness. This simulacrum does not contain anything wonderful. First, a miracle is possible only if there is a person perceiving the miracle; secondly, a miracle occurs in history, like history, it always takes place in time. Thirdly, the simulacrum is fundamentally banal, realistic. J. Baudrillard characterizes hyperreality as a time when life and death are clearly separated, death turns into a specific area that should be ignored,

and life becomes an accumulation of benefits and avoidance of death. In this unequivocal division there is no place for a miracle, revival. J. Baudrillard constantly emphasizes that in the simulacrum there is no signified, and moreover, there is no transcendental signified, referring to genuine being. «In the world of signs there is no «back meaning»; there is no unconscious: which is the last, most cunning of connotations and rationalization» (Baudrillard, 2008: 182). A simulacrum of this order is an empty signifier, indicating an empty signifier – is the ultimate statement of death. An external void (a void is always equal to another void), indicating an internal void – this is not even a metaphor, but a perfect semiotic representation of death. There can be emphasizing the special aspect of the connection between the motives of sleep and death in the novel. Sleep allows depicting various mental states and processes, a «different» reality. Elements of fiction or mysticism are also often associated with dreams. The author, associating death with sleep, sometimes describes the events occurring in a dream as real.

M. Zemskov's dream expresses the character's state of mind, his trauma or life concept. Ivan, trying to commit suicide by swallowing sleeping pills. «A month ago, I drank a handful of some sleeping pills, about to stop my life. It didn't work out – I drank a little. Because in the minutes of swallowing the pills I felt some kind of uncertainty. Uncertainty in everything: in what I do, in tablets (one or the other), in the world around him (he exists or not already). Insecurity softened my limbs. Slowed down the movements – so much so that I fell asleep» (Zemskov, 2010: 43). Only in a dream the hero does not feel free. He returns again and again to the story of his unintentional crime. Having knocked down a girl by car in his youth, Ivan escapes from the scene of the crime. The mother becomes an accomplice, forcing her son to commit this act. Accidental death becomes the harbinger of dreams and the sensation of death approaching again inexorably. «I did it «inadvertently», and my mother forced me to hide and not help a person. In addition, the blow was so strong that helping was probably late and pointless. But I began to dream... Dreams in which I again knocked someone down in a car. Dreams in which a white handbag appeared. Dreams in which I in various ways – with a knife, with a pistol, with the help of poison – killed people. In those dreams I was hiding from punishment and at the same time I was tormented because it did not overtake me» (Zemskov, 2010: 134). The transition to other worlds, where people can become real, is possible, according to Ivan, only after sleep or death. He is trying to return

to his former life, but falling asleep he sees strange dreams, images of the past.

The hero tries to find the path to comprehension of himself with the help of spiritual practice. He wants to survive and let go of the past in order to develop further. Death recedes because the hero is aware of it. «The true «I» – it is most often called the soul – exists forever in different worlds. Our physical body, mind, feelings, and ego – all this is nothing more than different images and manifestations of our physical body. To see the true «I», it must be identified with its manifestations – separated from the body, from the mind, from the senses. What we mean by death is just such a separation, and nothing more. By observing death and identifying the true «I» and the physical body, you can comprehend your «I» and become free» (Zemskov, 2010: 266). The destruction of a weaker person in a person by a strong one, the submission of a guru who, through the influence of various spiritual practices, is trying to take on the role of arbiter of fate, is predetermined from the very beginning of the novel. Fatum predestination, a premonition of what should happen to the heroes anticipates the very plot development of the novel. One of the significant beginnings of Zemskov's prose lies in the young writer's interest in his own life, in personal experience, in modernity, passed through his personal biography. As S. Belyakov rightly observes, «I» is the protagonist of almost every new realist text. The author merged with the hero, and prose turned into an early memoir» (Belyakov, 2003).

According to the guru–David, a person who does not find the strength in himself to realize himself, to become indifferent, is doomed to destruction. Such a state of liberation is available only to the «outcasts» who live in a world of simulated illusions. That is why Ivan gains real freedom after the murder of Guru David. As at the beginning of the novel, he again tries to commit suicide, but now he can «be identified», so death is not terrible for him. Again, in the final of the novel, the hero falls asleep, but this is a dream of rebirth, a new life begins.

The novel does not prompt the reader to serious thoughts; it plays out the techniques inherent in modern literature. The author engages the reader in fascinating reading, communicates with him, referring him to the well-known intertexts: the Gospel, the legend of Korkut, Sufi spiritual practices, meditations. This is a structure-forming technique that complements the content of the text. This novel is a game, «the characters play with each other, the mind has long played out; plays (in a philosophical sense)

and the author with the reader. Offering, by the way, between the lines, the reader has the choice to participate in the training game or, if he's good enough, stand next to the author and look at the entertaining deadly swarming» (Bannikov, 2010).

Summary

As we see, an intelligent reader, keen on a detective story, does not need direct references to the source, the principle of the so-called «double redirection», which is typical for works of modern literature, is triggered. Why does the hero seek himself in the sect, the answer is simple: «he is not satisfied with being, the life surrounding him and the ideology that is imposed, as well as the straightforward answers that society gives» (Vlasenko, 2011). The novel is positioned as a philosophical thriller. This definition, according to the author, was given by the first reviewers due to the fact that its storyline is dynamic, as in a movie. But the author did not count on the cinematography of the text and did not set out to write something like a script.

In addition, from his point of view, the plot is not very cinematic in dramaturgy. Many traditional value representations undergo a significant transformation. This is perceived as a stage in the special spiritual world of simulated illusions, as a result of which the prospects of reality become uncertain. The following features of the new realism: «documentary; fixing both the smallest moments of modernity and the nuances of the hero's mental movements, often, but not necessarily, identical to the author; confession; ultimate artistic veracity, sincerity; traditionalism» (Rudalev, 2007), can be used to characterize the writer's works.

The novel «Sectarian» is a kind of special intellectual journey that allows the reader to independently interpret the semantic centers of the work. The works of Mikhail Zemskov are distinguished by a deep staging fundamental problems of human life, the study of the deep contradictions of man and modern society, city and culture. So, the novels by Mikhail Zemskov, is due to several reasons: a change in the artistic paradigm at the turn of the XX–XXI centuries, disappointment in the values of globalism, curtailing the project of postmodernism, putting forward a realistic direction on the literary stage. One of the properties of realism as a specific type of artistic understanding of reality, is its ability to consolidate in culture the achievements of previous trends, trends, styles

and methods, thus forming a «solid platform for a new, multi-vector, development of art, in order to synthesize these vectors again into a harmonious the whole» (Serova, 2015: 18).

For our part, we will notice that dissatisfaction with life is the state of any normal person. Therefore, the search for truth under the guidance of a charismatic guru in the circle of like-minded people is a normal phenomenon both for the individual and for culture

and society as a whole. True, often such a path can lead to negative and even tragic consequences. An analysis of the writer's artistic world opens up new possibilities for studying the relevance of the aesthetics and poetics of modern literature process in the newest era. The novel «Sectarian» is a kind of special intellectual journey that allows the reader to independently interpretation the semantic centers of the work.

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