When considering James Joyce's penchant for self-parody, the jacket portrait of Joyce on the Modern Library's 1992 edition of *Ulysses* seems appropriate. Wearing a patch over his left eye due to his severe ocular ailments, he bears the image of the one-eyed Cyclops, an Odyssean figure that Joyce modernizes into a jingoistic Irishman known as the Citizen. While it is hard to imagine Joyce as the overly-zealous Irish nationalist of the "Cyclops" episode, perhaps the monocular parody is not too far from one Joyce would have concocted for himself. In *Jocoserious Joyce*, Robert Bell cites examples of Joyce's mocking self-revisions: Bloom's pun on *Chamber Music* turns Joyce's book of verse into the sound of Molly urinating, the bird-girl in *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* becomes Gerty to whom Bloom masturbates, *Ulysses* itself is called "usylessly Blue Book of Eccles" in *Finnegans Wake*, and even Joyce could possibly be spoofed as Shem with writing scrawled over his body (213). Joyce seems to create these parodic revisions when there is a danger of an excessive amount of sincerity, as seen in the previous examples where he mocks one of his first published works, the climactic moment of *Portrait*, his epic novel *Ulysses*, and himself as an author. A "jocoserious" effect ensues with this ironic fusing of the lighthearted, or jocose, and the serious. Thus, the picture of Joyce as the Cyclops works as a possible Joycean self-parody because it satirizes his power of observation (essential for any artist), which consequently mocks the image of Joyce as an artist (a label that can be easily taken too seriously). In *James Joyce and The Making of Ulysses*, Frank Budgen describes the Cyclops as an incompetent observer, and hence an incapable artist, because of blindness to aesthetic qualities such as "half-tones, values and nuances of colour" (151).

The "Cyclops" episode broadly illustrates Joyce's habit of comedic self-revisions. The unknown narrator of the episode is continually interrupted by segments of text from an unidentified parodist who mocks the events of the chapter. It is unknown who is behind these interruptions, or if they are each from a different narrator. Nonetheless, all the interruptions lampoon their subject, and thus they will be referred to as originating from a single parodist. During the interpolations there is an apparent suspension of narrative time where the same moment is retold in a different register. Most of these interpolations function by comparing ordinary events to the grandest of spectacles, resulting in a caricature of the original subject. The practice of comparing the ordinary to the mythic is reminiscent of the epic parallels that underlie *Ulysses*. Thus, in a sense, the interruptions not only parody the chapter's events and characters, but they also target the mythic associations found in *Ulysses*. It is the contention of this paper that the "Cyclops" episode can be read as a joke on one of Joyce's central techniques, epic parallelism. Consequently, the chapter is an exercise in a "jocoserious" revision of Joyce's prose.

Perhaps one of the more striking elements of the "Cyclops" chapter is that it is a joy to read; the episode focuses on playing jokes rather than discussing politics. Recalling its creation, Budgen says, "It seemed to me that no two episodes pleased Joyce more in the writing of them than *The Sirens* and that which followed, *The Cyclops*" (135). The chapter is more laden with Irish politics than any other, yet the focus in "Cyclops" seems centered on its playful switching of voices rather than the nitty-gritty of political issues. There is even a hint of mischievousness in how the interpolations prefer to poke fun at occurrences instead of formally debating them. It is this flippant and teasing aspect of the juggling between the parodist and the narrator which gives one the sense of the fun that Budgen claims Joyce had in writing it—as well as making it a pleasurable read. The humorous disposition of the chapter is congruent with how it functions as a possible joke on Joyce's writing.

Furthermore, this playful exchange between narrative voices not only distances the reader from the weighty political exchanges, but also from all the events that occur in Barney Kiernan's. Bell says that the chapter "demands that we question, qualify, and supplement any one view; we are in a funhouse hall of mirrors, comically multiple and highly disorienting" (142). The effect of this disorientation produces a type of critical distance between the reader and the text. When the voice jumps from the narrator to the interpolation, the disruption detaches the reader from the story, and that is when "we question, qualify, and supplement any one view." Thus, one's attention is directed towards the interplay between the multiple narrations and away from the obscured narrative events. In *The Odyssey of Style in Ulysses*, Karen Lawrence notes, "The story appears to be told twice, once in the single voice of the narrator, once in the parodic forms of various literary and subliterary styles" (102). The two different narrations of the same event bounce the reader around, leaving no secure way to enter the story. Both the narrator and the parodist are unknown, creating unfamiliarity with the narration that is not present when we experience the story through Bloom. Budgen observes, "This is the only episode, *Penelope* excepted, in which Bloom is seen *entirely* through other eyes [emphasis added]" (167). As a result of the story being told through two unreliable narrators, the narrative becomes deemphasized. Although the narrator, not the parodist, seems to speak accurately, he still often interjects his bitterness, which taints the events and characters when viewed through his perspective. Thus, the episode seems to foreground the exchange between the narrator and the parodist, highlighting the comic revisions of the interpolations.

The interpolations elevate their subjects to larger-than-life portraits. Written in different styles, they imitate the language of law, medieval romance, science, journalism, the Bible, and various others. The parodist glorifies the banal happenings in the pub with trite and unconvincing language. When the narrator is headed towards the bar, an interpolation depicts the Dublin vegetable markets in an Irish revivalist style, creating an idealistic portrayal of a plethora of goods taken from all over the majestic land—"In Inisfail the fair there lies a land, the land of holy Michan" (293). When the Citizen uses his handkerchief to wipe the remnants of his spit, the handkerchief and its contents are compared to a sacred Irish artifact that contains lovely green imagery—"all of these moving scenes are still there for us today rendered more beautiful still by the waters of sorrow which have passed over them and by the rich *incrustations* of time" [Emphasis added] (332). When the drunkard Bob Doran asks Bloom to pass on his condolences to Mrs. Dignam, the narrator comments, "So Bob Doran comes lurching around asking Bloom to tell Mrs. Dignam he was sorry for her… Choking with bloody foolery" (313). Here the narrator infuses the events with his vituperative outlook, with Doran "lurking lurching around" and "Choking with bloody foolery." The narrator's picture of Doran is then followed by an interpolation with ornate language:

> —Let me, said he [Doran], so far presume upon our acquaintance which, however slight it may appear if judged by the standard of mere time, is founded, as I hope and believe, on a sentiment of mutual esteem, as to request of you this favour.(313).

The Doran of the interpolation is represented as having the eloquence of a romantic bard, yet he is slipping in and out of consciousness due to his inebriation. It is the movement from the

narrator's downtrodden image of Doran into the parodist's excessively magnificent revision that demonstrates the interpolation's tendency to insincerely exalt.

These interpolations parody their subject as well as the language they are written in. The language is so tightly fastened to its form that it lacks any sign of a personality behind it. Lawrence explains, "All of these discourses are a kind of propaganda or encoded language that propels itself forward without the necessity of an individual speaker" (108). Given that the episode is deeply ingrained in Irish politics, the parodist's trite language is especially relevant to political discourse. Even while many of the interpolations do not deal directly with political events, the language is strongly evocative of political rhetoric. Lawrence states that the interpolations "parody a language that is a ready-made deception, a kind of sloganeering" (104). In "Cyclops," an interpolation details a boxing match with phrases such as "a historic and hefty battle" and "a fight to the finish and the best man for it" (318). The language does not depict the reality that this specific fight was immensely brutal. In *Ulysses Annotated*, Don Gifford states that the thirty-seven round match was fought bare-knuckled and lead to the implementation of more humane boxing rules (276). The interpolations follow the same format as political dialogue, speaking in language that overly euphemizes, self-advertises, and articulates without actually expressing anything substantial.

The epic parallels that Joyce weaves throughout *Ulysses* follow the same general trend of the interpolations; both ironically transform the ordinary into the exceptional**.** In "Cyclops," the narrator refers to Bloom's "knockmedown cigar," comparing Bloom to Odysseus, who uses a giant stake to blind the Cyclops (305). Like the interpolations, these epic parallels mock their subject. The comparison between Bloom's cigar and Odysseus' spear invites a taunting contrast to the virility of the Greek hero and Bloom. Later in the episode, when tensions between the Citizen and Bloom reach their height, Bloom equates himself to Jesus: "Your God was a jew. Christ was a jew like me" (342). The Citizen further enacts the comparison—he says, "crucify him so I will" (342). The aggravated Citizen's threatening of Bloom appears laughable in contrast to one of the most famous executions in the Western tradition.

Ultimately the effect of the interpolations differs from that of the epic parallels. Joyce's parallels show that there is a connection—however slight and humorous it may be—between the epic figures and Bloom. The epic parallels enact a "jocoserious," part comedic and part serious, rendering of Bloom. In Richard Ellmann's biography, *James Joyce*, he explains Joyce's technique: "The first aim is the mock-heroic, the mighty spear juxtaposed with the two-penny cigar. The second, a more subtle one, is what might be called the ennoblement of the mock-heroic" (360). Thus, while Joyce mocks Bloom to an extent, he also draws a serious comparison, resulting in a partially sincere epic view of Bloom. Ellmann continues, "Bloom can demonstrate the qualities of man by word of mouth as effectively as Ulysses by thrust of spear" (360). For Joyce, his comparisons equalize the ordinary and the epic. While Bloom may not meet the traditional criteria of an epic hero, his courage in standing up to an anti-Semite in a bar is a viable comparison to Odysseus' struggle with the Cyclops.

Unlike Joyce, the parodist does not offer any genuine comparison between the ordinary and the epic. The interpolations ennoble, but they do so in a blatantly artificial way, resulting in ridicule instead of the "jocoserious." When the interpolations introduce the Citizen, the parodist

narrates, “The widewinged nostrils, from which bristles of the same tawny hue projected, were of such capaciousness that within their cavernous obscurity the fieldlark might easily have lodged her nest” (296). Imagining a bird nesting within a nostril of the Citizen turns him into a joke rather than an oppressive figure. The Citizen is depicted in a colossal manner, yet this grandiloquent presentation is nothing more than parody. The parodist only glorifies in order to mock.

Moreover, the satire exemplified by the interpolations is aided by the narrator’s criticism. The narrator’s contemptible rendering precedes the hyperbole of the parodist, and makes the interpolations seem even more farcical. The narrator abases the Citizen when he first sees him in the bar: “having a great confab with himself and that bloody mangy mongrel, Garryowen, and he waiting for what the sky would drop in the way of the drink” (295). Here the Citizen is depicted pathetically talking to his dog and hopelessly waiting for more booze. The narrator then takes this opportunity to sarcastically say of the Citizen, “There he is… working for the cause,” which further develops the lowly image. For all of the Citizen’s patriotism, the narrator points out that the Citizen seems more concerned with drinking than political change (295). The interpolations mock by misdirected epic comparison, such as saying a bird could fit in the Citizen’s nostril, and they revise a subject that has already been made to look trivial from the narrator. The narrator and the interpolations work in opposite directions, but they actually combine for a synergistic derision.

The union between the narrator and the parodist is exemplified in the final interpolation where the narrator and the interpolation coalesce: “amid clouds of angels ascend to the glory of the brightness at an angle of forty-five degrees over Donoheo’s in Little Green Street like a shot off a shovel” (345). The biblical language describes Bloom’s retreat from the bar as an ascent into heaven, but it deflates at the end of the passage into the narrator’s voice, who then finishes the episode with the phrase: “like a shot off a shovel.” The narrator and the parodist, who are seemingly opposed in their contractive and expansive effects, are depicted as one. The coalition suggests that the narrator aids the parodist in the cause of constructing untenable epic comparisons.

When the interpolations are viewed as epic parallels that purposely fall apart, it is possible that they are not only sneering at the narrative events, but they are mocking Joyce’s epic parallelisms. Interestingly, the interpolations comment specifically on the Citizen-Cyclops and Bloom-Jesus parallels. Thus, as Joyce performs his “jocoserious” epic parallels, the interpolations are simultaneously tearing down these comparisons. The episode enacts the epic parallel through a series of references to the one eye of the Odyssean Cyclops. Further, the confrontation with Bloom equates the Citizen to the Cyclops. Yet, the aim of the interpolations, as it has been argued, is to show how the Citizen is nothing like this epic image. Along with the bird in the Citizen’s nostrils, the parodist describes him as:

> a broadshouldered deepchested stronglimbed frankeyed redhaired freely freckled shaggybearded widemouthed largenosde longheaded deepvoiced barekneed brawnyhanded hairylegged ruddyfaced sinewyarmed hero (296).

It is important to note that the parodist does not actually believe what he expresses. He does not see the Citizen as the immensely powerful image that he describes. His language is intentionally hyperbolized**;** he is not invested in the grandiose picture. Thus, the chapter's loftier narrator is deemed the parodist and not the sentimentalist. By the time one reaches the end of the parodist's long list of adjectives, the word "hero" seems rather flat. The expansive language dilates the mythic image of the Citizen past its bursting point, and the Citizen now seems anything but epic. The interpolation mocks the idea of a link between the Cyclops and the Citizen, and thus ridicules the intent of the epic parallel to equate the two figures.

The final interpolation speaks specifically to the Bloom and Jesus parallel. Within the episode, Bloom is connected to Christ through references to crucifixion. Yet, the parodist jokes about the connection: "When, lo, there came about them all a great brightness and they beheld the chariot wherein He stood ascend to heaven… And they beheld Him even Him, ben Bloom Elijah" (345). Elijah, the possible long awaited Messiah or the second coming, is renamed "ben Bloom Elijah," a rechristening that is difficult to take seriously. By parodying the idea of Bloom as a savior, it jabs the parallel that raises Bloom up to the level of Christ. While the epic parallelisms are already "jocoserious," the parodist's hyperbolic language mocks any analogy made between Bloom and the epic. Further, the title *Ulysses* is itself an epic parallel, and with the steady flow of mythic correspondences throughout the novel, these parallels could potentially be taken too sincerely. The interpolations thus serve as a reminder that Bloom is his own character, not just a modern heroic figure under the shadow of Odysseus or Christ.

Additionally, "Cyclops" is littered with an exorbitant amount of references to the epic parallels, rendering them redundant and ineffective. Joyce tends to construct the parallels with greater subtlety in the other episodes. For example, when he coins the term "jocoserious" in "Ithaca," he writes, "His [Stephen's] attention was directed to them by his host [Bloom] jocosely and he accepted them seriously as they drank in jocoserious silence Epps's massproduct, the creature cocoa" (677). Here the interpolation relates the "jocoserious" image of Stephen and Bloom. They are having hot cocoa, but they are sharing a version of religious communion as well. Here the religious parallelism is alluded to by "host," "massproduct," and "cocoa," or the food of the Gods, but the parallel is not overly conspicuous. There is this simultaneous presentation of an epic communion occurring alongside a simple sharing of hot chocolate. There is a corresponding moment in "Cyclops" where a toast and an exclamation of "Amen" between the men in the bar leads to the parodist listing numerous religious figures. By overstating the religious allusion, the parodist mocks the idea of any underlying religious communion between men sharing a drink. Thus, while Joyce tends toward the use of subtle parallels, as shown in "Ithaca," the epic parallelisms appear overly explicit in "Cyclops." The word "eye" and "I" are scattered throughout, resulting in a great many references to the monocular Cyclops. Further, the interpolation introducing the Citizen describes the Cyclopean imagery of the cave: "the summit of the lofty tower and still loftier walls of the cave" (297). The parodist describes the giant stake as, "A couched spear of acuminated granite" (297). Additionally, it has already been shown how unambiguously the parodist depicts Bloom as a Christ figure. The epic parallels lose their charm as they are repeatedly underscored. When the parodist explicitly lays out the epic comparison it seems to emphasize the distance between the ordinary and the epic. It takes a subtle "jocoserious" technique to create a convincing link to the mythic. Therefore, the excessive

references undermine the epic analogies, and tease Joyce's dissemination of the parallels throughout *Ulysses*.

The parodist mocks epic parallelism in the same way that Joyce's comical revisions mock him. The interpolations laugh at the supposed link of Bloom as Christ and Odysseus, and the Citizen as the Cyclops. The parodist points to the reality that, of course, neither Bloom nor the Citizen are the monumental figures that Joyce suggests. The parodist's argument is that the epic comparisons are completely farcical. Thus, the interpolations might be seen as a comedic rendering of Joyce's epic parallels. The interpolations use such extravagant language and depictions of already humbly rendered subjects that they lampoon the idea of likening the ordinary to the epic. Of Joyce's art, Ellmann writes, "For Joyce life *was* charmed; nature was both stolid and magical, its ordinary details suffused with wonder, its wonderful manifestations permeated by the ordinary" (550). The interpolations satirically imitate this central thread in the work of Joyce, pointing to the possibility that the "Cyclops" episode is demonstrating one of Joyce's many self-deprecating moments. Thus, while the parodist is mocking the circumstances in the episode, it is possible that Joyce is simultaneously speaking through the parodist to make a joke regarding his epic analogies.

Ultimately, a "jocoserious" image of Joyce as an author can be extrapolated from the mockery of the parodist. The "jocoserious" portrait of Joyce is a caricature of his former self, much like the Irish nationalist as the Citizen. This "jocoserious" Joyce is a figure who points out references to his epic parallels in excess. He unconvincingly and obnoxiously tries to make his reader believe that his characters are undoubtedly monumental as Christ and Odysseus. His ornate language becomes so incongruent with actuality that it renders the narrative meaningless. Of the interpolations, Lawrence argues, "The length of the parodies (particularly the gigantic catalogues) contributes to this feeling that the discourse is a machine without a driver, which only stops when it runs out of fuel" (108). The parodist mocks the mechanical production of epic parallels—the parodist insincerely inflates everything that he views. Thus, the "jocoserious" caricature of Joyce is that he is a prolific epic parallel machine. This image of Joyce is like the Irish nationalist as the Citizen—an exaggerated yet poignant joke. The narrator relates the truism, "Gob, there's many a true word spoken in jest" (338). In a chapter where everything is blown out of proportion, the parodist's exaggerated rhetoric is a mutated form of Joyce's practice of underlying his narration with the mythic.

The interpolations are reminiscent not only of the central theme of epic parallelism, but of *Ulysses* as a whole. Joyce's novel invokes a new style every episode, and comparably the interpolations use an eclectic range of language. The parodist seems to not pay attention to what he is narrating, but rather focuses on the use of language. As Lawrence says, "Much of the comedy of the parodies in 'Cyclops' depends upon the language riding like a steamroller over the content" (108). Oddly enough, this seems to be one of the prevalent criticisms of Joyce's writing: the style tramples the content of his work. Bell suggests that the interpolations' expansion of the trivial is similar to the general workings of the novel: "This Parodist, like *Ulysses* generally, loves to pick up a verbal detail, a tidbit, a throwaway, and give it new life, until it proliferates wildly and comically" (140). According to Gifford there are thirty-three interpolations (314). The number three is particularly significant in *Ulysses*: with three episodes in the Telemachiad and the Homecoming sections, three sets of three episodes in the Wandering

of Ulysses section, and with the trinity of Bloom, Stephen, and Molly. Additionally, an interpolation that relates a meeting on the revival of Gaelic sports as a tool for national unity begins with, "A most interesting discussion took place in the ancient hall" (316). This line vaguely recalls Stephen's possible beginning of his internal writing of *Ulysses* in "Scylla and Charybdis." Stephen self-narrates, "One day in the national library we had a discussion" (215). Finally, Marilyn French, in *The Book as World*, claims that all of the interpolations make up the contents of a newspaper, with reports of such happenings as a sporting event, a debate, an execution, an earthquake, and a science page (148). *Ulysses* functions as a newspaper in a certain regard. Just as a newspaper explains the events of the day, *Ulysses* captures a day in Dublin. Thus, while these connections are not as concrete as the interpolations' mocking of the mythic parallels, there is still the suggestion that they are targeting the novel as a whole.

It fits Joyce's "jocoserious" humor to have the chapter that is most explicitly concerned with the gravity of politics to be simultaneously enacting a self-critique. The contrast of the arena of politics to the realm of Joyce's writing combines the serious with the playful. There are not many other areas besides politics that require such an extreme self-involvement and sincerity, and thus a "jocoserious" insertion in "Cyclops" seems all the more necessary. Of the effect of the "jocoserious," Bell writes, "Jocoserious duality… is as firmly established in 'Cyclops' as it is anywhere in *Ulysses*. Its cumulative effect is not to create some golden mean between magnification and diminution, but to maintain the potential validity of contrary possibilities" (144). Joyce's facetiousness is not necessarily apolitical, but it leaves room for some doubt and detachment from one's beliefs, allowing as Bell says for "contrary possibilities," an important safeguard to the blinding force of the Citizen's fanaticism.

By juxtaposing a lighthearted joke on himself alongside the political preaching, Joyce can be seen as advocating a "jocoserious" disposition. Joyce's self-deprecation must be understood as distinct from the Citizen, the parodist, and the narrator. Bloom, recalling a sermon of Jesus, says, "Some people, says Bloom, can see the mote in others' eyes but they can't see the beam in their own" (326). The Citizen, the parodist, and the narrator never implicate themselves in their own ridicule. While the Citizen is overly invested in his politics, the parodist and the narrator are not involved at all. They are the cynics who stand back and make fun of all. Joyce is certainly not a cynic. His hero, Bloom, stands up to the political fanaticism rather than laughing at it. With a chapter that is so full of unknowns—the Citizen, the parodist, and the narrator—it appears that no one is willing to reveal their identity for fear of being lambasted. Yet, Joyce does not make the same mistake, he makes himself the butt of the joke in "Cyclops," and as a result, he advocates a "jocoserious" temperament to one's views.

There is a connection between fanaticism and excessive sincerity in art. In *Anomalous States*, David Lloyd argues, "The commodification of style and the mechanical reproduction of standardized forms of affect that define kitsch have their close counterpart in cultural nationalism" (98). Lloyd connects kitsch, excessively sentimental and thus overly sincere art, with cultural nationalism. They both produce a complete involvement with their subject. There is no moment when they allow the participant to take a step back and critique. Further, Lloyd writes, "A national poetry must speak with one voice" (97). Nationalism and kitsch aim to create a unification that does not account for any complications or contradictory points. This is the worldview of the Citizen—the modern day monocular Cyclops.

Through his "jocoserious" style, Joyce speaks in two registers rather than in a monotone. Joyce is not tied to any one system of thought, but is in motion between them. According to the schema, the organ of the chapter is the muscle. While the muscle carries the image of the brute nature of politics, a muscle can be seen in two ways**,** as flaccid and flexed. The "jocoserious" is parallactic or a double vision—a vision of the same thing from two different angles, and thus a representation of two simultaneously distinct views of the same object. The comedic revisions demonstrate that monocular vision misses half the picture. To only see *Ulysses* as an epic novel ignores that it later becomes a joke with "usylessly." Viewing the interpolations in "Cyclops" as only satirizing the elements in the chapter is to miss that they also appear to mock Joyce's own epic parallels. Joyce's revisions remind us that humans are naturally binocular—with two eyes taking in two different views of the world.

This paper has been meant to demonstrate that the interpolations in Joyce's "Cyclops" episode not only mock the hypocrisies of the events and politics in the chapter, but also take a jab at Joyce. The parodist, with the aid of the narrator, shows how the subject is anything but the overly grand representation. Given that Joyce is an author who so explicitly makes himself a part of his writing, an analysis of Joycean texts that does not consider the author as a figure or presence seems lacking. After perceiving the interpolations as mocking Joyce, then other possibilities of comedic self-revision seem to play along with the joke. The narrator is a gossiper who scathingly criticizes everyone—possibly an exaggerated view of Joyce's own revenge on his personal enemies within his writing. Bloom sentimentally sums up the aim of life as "love," and Joyce hints at doing the same by repeating the phrase "the word known to all men" throughout his novel. The Citizen is a figure obsessed with Ireland, which is the center of Joyce's entire body of work. Although the Citizen is one of the more despicable characters in the novel, Ellmann argues that there is still a side of Joyce present in him. Ellmann writes that the Citizen who "windily discusses the plight of cattles in terms of Irish glories and English injustices, is an aspect of Joyce's mind as well as the butt of his satire" (258). Thus, the jacket portrait of Joyce as one-eyed is especially fitting. If Joyce is in fact aligning a side of himself with the Citizen, then he does so with a grain of salt. By illustrating his political side with the grotesque caricature rather than an articulate and intelligent political activist, Joyce demonstrates a healthy lightheartedness towards his beliefs.

In a conversation with Joyce, Budgen said to him, "Your countrymen are men of violent beliefs, and your book is the book of a sceptic" (156). Joyce agreed. Budgen defines this skepticism of the novel as "not of tried human values, necessary at all times for social cohesion, but of all tendencies and systems whatsoever" (73). Joyce's skepticism argues for a certain detached disposition towards one's beliefs. It is this skepticism that prevents Joyce from any strict tethering to one image and allows him to offer up a seemingly endless amount of comedic self-revisions.

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