CHAPTER - V

FOLK SONGS AS A PERFORMING ARTS

5.1 PERFORMING ARTS

Folklore is that part of a people's culture which is preserved consciously or unconciously, in beliefs and practices, customs and observances of general currency, in myths, legends and tales of common acceptance, and in arts crafts whish express the temper and genious of a group rather than of an individual. It consists of traditional creation of people both primitive and civilized. These are achieved by using sounds and words in metric from and prose and include also folk beliefs related to superstitions, customs and performances, dances and plays. It includes also the materials that are handed out traditionally from generation to generation without a reliable ascription to an inventor or author.

In 1812, Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm, popularly known as German brothers' used the term Volkskunde for analysing the behaviour of general masses. Here, Vlok means folk and skunde means lore. But basically 'popular antiquities' was the popular terminology of that time. And in 1846, the English antiquarian William John Thoms coined the term folklore to take the place of the awkward term popular antiquities. Renewed folklorist Richard M. Dorson divided folklore into four greater groups, viz.

- (i) Oral Literature
- (ii) Material Culture
- (iii) Social folk and
- (iv) Folk performing arts.¹
- (i) Oral Literature: According to the form and structure oral literature is called verbal art also. The concept of verbal art avoids all these difficulties and has further advantage of emphasizing the essential feature which distinguished the folktale, myth, proverbs and related forms.

- (ii) Material Culture: Material culture comprises folk craft, folk art, folk architecture, folk cookery and folk costumes. Therefore it is called 'physical folk life'
- (iii)Social Folk Customs: Traditional life is situated in between verbal arts and material culture and it is like a bridge between those two parts and traditional folk life is called as social folk accustoms. It includes physical action, festivals and celebration, folk, religion, folk medicine, folk games etc.
- (iv) Folk Performing Arts: The society is an institution formed by the combination of nature and men. The society that existed before the rise of cities is 'folk society' and their performance are folk performing arts. It includes folk-songs, folk dance and folk drama. The shaping factors in folk performing arts are use of chorus, dance with its cicle and carefully concentrated movement.

The performing arts are arts such as music, dance and drama which are performed for an udience. It is different from visual arts, which is a artists use paint, canvas or various materials to create physical or static art objects. Performing arts include a range of desciplines which are performed in front of a live audience, including theatre, music, and dance. Theatre, music, dance and object manipulation, and other kinds of performances are present in all human culture. Many performing arts are performed professionally. Performances can in purpose built buildings, such as theatres and opera houses, on open air stages at festivals, on stages in tents such as circuses and on the street. Live performances before an audience are a form of entertainment. The development of audio and video recording has allowed for private consumption of the performing arts. The performing arts often aims to expresses one's emotions and feellings. It can be any situation that involves four basic elements, e.g. time, space, the performance art can happen any where, in any type of venue or setting and for any length of time.

In addition to tangible folk art objects, there is a second broad category of performance folk art which includes intangible arts forms such as folk music and folk song, folk dance and various kinds of narrative structures. This category is part of the performing arts. These intangible folk arts form only became grouped as such in the second half of the 20th century, when the two terms 'folklore performance' and 'text' and 'context'dominated discussions among folklorists. Performance is frequently tied to verval and customary lore, whereas context is used

in discussions of material lore. Both formulations offer different perspectives on the same folkloric understanding, specifically that folklore artifacts need to remain embedded in their cultural environment to insight

Within the worl of visual art, the vague term 'Folk art' is of rapidly declining significance, for several reasons. First, no one can agree on what it means. This is partly because the concept of 'folk' springs largely from criteria laid down by 19th century aesthetics and aestheticians, rather than from any objectives characteristics. Second, the amount of authentic art and design produced by traditional folk artists nowadays is vastly exceeded by artificial 'Folk art'. Third, all foms of traditionally-made arts and crafts are under threat from globalized culture.

On the face of it, the phrase should have a fairly simple meaning – something like: "art made by the common people, notablty from rural areas." Except which - thanks to the explosion of cultural insularity, which thanks to the explosion of mass - market culture - has more or less disappeared. To complicate matters further, the general nostalgia for traditional artifacts has led to the emergence of agrowing crafts industry, as any search of the internet for terms such as folk art design, folk crafts will reveal. These folk products are typically manufactured in local, decidedly unfolkish urban centres, or in Third World sweatshops neither operation having an intimate connection with the sort of historical traditions that typically characterizes authentic folk arts.

During the 19th century, it was the industrial relution that undermined folk art, in the 20th century it was mass-prodused culture- everything from soda and denin jeans, to TV programs, in the 21st century it is computers, the internet and globalization. In general, therefore, folk art is adying activity, and now survives only in isolated ares whose inhabitants have aproud tradition of handicrafts and making thing for themselves.

5.1.1 DEFINITION OF PERFORMING ARTS

Folk art is mostly utilitarian or decorative art created by an unaffluent social class of peasants, artisans and tradespeople who live in rural areas of civilized but not highly industrialized societies. It also encompasses nomadic groups like gypsies. A few sush places can

still be found in areas of Central and Eastern Europe, and doubtless in areas on other continents, although their number is shrinking. The term folk art may also encompass art produced by ethnic minorities in more developed societies, who have succeeded in preserving their beliefs and customs by living in separate communities apart from the mainstream. The performing arts intersect each with the other and often appear in conjunction.

Violet Alford introduces her book Sword Dance and Drama with a quotation from T. E. Ordish: "The shaping factor in folk drama was the Sword dance with its circle. Chorus and carefully concerned movements." ²

According to R.M. Dorson the performing folk arts also interact with the formal performing arts.³

5.2 DIFFERENT TYPES OF PERFORMING ARTS

The performing arts range from vocal and instrumental music, dance, theatre to pantomime, sung verse and beyond. They include numerous cultural expressions that reflect human creativity and that are also found, to some extent, in many other intangible cultural heritage domains.

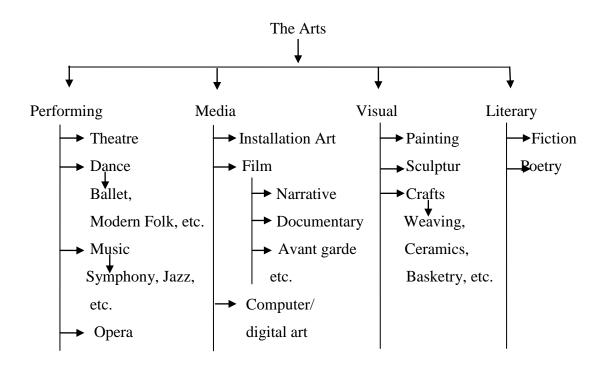
Music is perhaps the most universal of the performing arts and is found in every socity, most often as an internal part of other performing art forms and other domains of intangible cultural heritage including rituals, festive events or oral traditions. It can be found in the most diverse contexts, sacred or profane, classical or popular, closely connected to work or entertainment. There is also a political or economic dimension tomusic. It can recent a community's history, sing the praises of a powerful person and play a key role in economic transactions. The occasions on which music is performed are just as varied: marriages, funerals, rituals and initiations, festivities all kinds of entertainment as well as many other social functions.

Dance through very complex, it is described simply as ordered bodily movements, usually performed to music. Apart from its physical aspects the rhythmic movements, steps and gestures of dance often express a sentiment or mood or illustrate a specific event or daily act, such as religious dances and those representing hunting, warfare or sexual activity.

Traditional theatre performances usually combine, acting, singing, dance and music, dialogue, narration or recitation art is also include puppetry or pantomime. These arts, however, are more than simply 'performances' for an audience, they are also play crucial roles in culture and society such as songs sung while carrying out agricultural work or music that is part of a ritual. In a more intimate setting, lullabies are often sung to help a baby sleep.

The instruments, objects, artefacts and spaces associated with cultural expressions and practices are all included in the convention's definition of intangible cultural heritage. In the performing arts this includes musical instruments, masks, costumes and other body decorations used in dance, and the scenery and props of theatre. Performing arts are often performed in specific places; when those spaces are closely linked to the performance, they are considered cultural spaces by the convention.

Performing arts are includes, dance, music, opera, theatre, magic, illusion, mime, spoken word, puppetry, circus arts, performance art. There is also a specialized form of fine art, in which the artists perform their work live to an audience. This is called performance arts. From the following chart of arts are details mentioned.



5.3 MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

The Boros have own traditional musical instruments. The following musical instruments and weapons are essential in Bodo folk performing arts.

Musical instruments : 1 Kham (drum)

2 Moilam Jotha (cymbal)

3 Sifung (flute of bamboo)

4 Serja (like behela)

5 Thorkha (piece of bamboo)

6 Egtara (single string)

7 Gonggona

8 Jabkhring (Jabsri)

Weapons : 1 Thunggri (sword)

2 Dhal or Dahal

3 Jong (spear)

System of making: (1) Kham: This musical instrument is made of woods like Sama, Odal (Odla), Khanthal (jack), Thaijou (Mango), Seothan, Ghugra and Sijau. Either on Saturday or Tuesday the work of making must be started. It takes seven to fifteen days of time to complete the making of a Kham. The wooden frame is covered in two ends by the skin of goat or the deer. Its strings are made from the skin of the buffallo. It has a particular size. It is thirty five inches long and three and half broad. One Kham lasts for a period of fifty to hundred years more of course. It is depends on the proper care and use. The Kham is used on the occasion of the Kherai Puja and folk performance of Bodo music.

- (2) **Moilam Jotha**: It is made of the metal or brass. This instrument is generally purchased from the market. It is used in the kherai puja; during the marriage; festivals 'Baisagu' and Domasi. For the kherai puja and folk performance of Bodo music it is essential.
- (3) **Sifung**: The Sifung is made of a particular bamboo, called owajlaw (deowa). It has five holes for playing and one hole for blowing. It is twenty five to thirty five inches long. It is

used in the kherai puja, at the marriage ceremony and during Baisagu and domasi festivals. Along with the Sifung, Kham, Jotha and Jabsri or Jabsring are played during the kherai puja, traditional folk songs, dances, dramas etc.

- (4) Serja: It is made of the Sijou, Chetawne and Khanthal wood. The skin of the she goat is used in it. Its four strings are made of muga or endi and its four puthis are made of bamboo or wood. Its Ghora is made of wood. Its handle is made of bamboo and it is stringed with odla. It is an approximate take the time of three to seven days are necessary for making it. This instrument is mainly used in the marriage ceremony. Otherhand instrument like Jotha, Jabsri and Sifung are ued along with the Serja. During the Baisagu and Domasi festival this instrument is used very widely.
- (5) **Thorkha:** It is made of bamboo. This instrument is used during the festivals of Baisagu and Domasi both boys and girls use this instrument.
- (6) Egtara: It is made one kind of fruits (rutifal) outer body (kholtha). It is only one stringed with thread. This instrument is mainly used in the Khemtha Gawn (folk song of khemta tal). This type of song is available in Goalpara District and sung by Ananda Brahma, Prasanna Kr. Boro Khakhalary and many more.
- (7) Gonggona: It is made of iron. This instrument is generally used by the female. It is purchased from the market. During the time of the Baisagu, Domasi and marriage festivals this instrument is used by the users.
- (8) **Jabkhring**: It is made of wood and metal plates. It can be made within one day or two-days. This instrument is used in festivals. It is widely used during the Baisagu, Domasi and marriage festivals.

5.4 PERFORMING ARTS OF BODO FOLK SONGS

5.4.1 O Bida Bebo Dong

Among the various kinds of Bodo folk songs the mythological related folk songs are also available in Boro society of Goalpara district. In these folk songs various types of arts of performing are reflected vividly. Such type of folk song no.1 as given below is means to like this folk song. Here in the folk song, a girl expressed her woe and sorrow through the folk song about

her pathetic condition as she has tortured by her own seven brothers. In the song the story is elaborated as sister-in-laws in absence of her follows -

Song no.1 O bida bebo dong?

Ma jagarbaykho angni khafalale

Nayhod do oi o bida angkho

Angni bajoi sanoiya

Thukhuni bungnani doimayao langnani

Bongfang gesaoyo

Khakhrob jhukhrob bhasaydong oi

O bida angkho

Bhasay bhasay thangyinu thangyinu

Khalalagoi

Daokha rajani janokho oi

Thabthadung o bida

Rajaya nunani bandi hamgun bungnani

Gajang gesao hudung,

Khalay jahunani gotho babayhudung angkhou

O bida naydo.4

English Rendering

O elder brother, you where

What had happened in my fortune

Look o elder brother

My two sister-in-laws

Bring me saying to bath in the river

Tited me in a rotten piece of wood and sailed

O, elder brother look me,

Floating downward

Remind stuck in the dam of Daokha Raja

Seeing me the king bring me home
To make me bonded maid and
Allow me to eat cool and rotten rice
Allow me to eat left - over food
Given me to rear the child
O elder brother look me.

In ancient times there was a family of seven brothers and a sister who was the younger one. All the seven brothers have involved themselves with business of selling their own product to other place and bring the other products which are essential for domestic purposes. So, one day the all of seven brothers went out for business to other places handing over their lone lovely sister for taking care to their wives. But the sister-in-laws were very cruel and jealous on her. So, her sister-in-laws make a conspiracy to kill her in absence of their husbands because their husbands will come back after three months at home from the business. So, they assumed it is the golden chance to fulfil their conspiracy over her.

One day they brought her to the nearby river convincing to bath in the river and tied her along with a rotten piece of wood and thrown way in the river. Floating in river she stuck in a dam (Jan) which dam was the Daokha Raja (Daokha King). So, the dam was called as Daokha Rajani Jan. In early morning of the next day Daokha Raja himself came to collect the fishes and see the lovely girl and as soon as possible he lifted the girl and noticed the girl was alive still. He picks up her immediately and brings home at his home. He takes care of her and soon she becomes fine and normal. Daokha Raja has become very happy of getting such girl. He had looked such girl to kept a maid servant of their house. But she did not give to eat the fresh food like other family members. She was given to eat only the left stale food everyday. So, she did not expect such behaviour from him and began to weep and express herself the story by means of song everyday going to the nearby river. That very song sung by that girl is known to be the mythological folk song of Bodo Kachari people of Goalpara district. In this folk song no.1 alone sister of seven brothers expresses about her worry and misbehaviour happend upon her life by performing arts. She took to sing everyday in the edge of the river and one day when her seven brothers returned from business they heard her singing and assumed that the singer of that very

song was nothing but their beloved sister. They rescued her from the custody of Daokha Raja in the long run and she was saved as per the reflected in the song.

5.4.2 Bala Bariaolay Gabong

There are some folk songs explaining about the activities and behaviour of birds. The songs are placed under nature related folk songs. In such type of folk song the activities performed by birds are clearly explained. These folk songs are the performing arts of the bird through which is expresses the folk song. The folk songs no. 2 "Bala Bariolay Gabdong Daothi Daothu." In this folk song the behaviour of birds are depicted clearly in which the singer of this song could easily understood and reflected the activities of the nature of that birds and explained through the folk song.

Song no. 2 Bala bariaolay gabdong

Daothi Daothu

Lanjay loled-loletd mano gabdong?

Na nungbu junggidi

Mansini juli jano sandung.

Daono hudung daoni juli

Mansino hudung mansini juli

Simangao fisa bambaybayu

Mukthangao danggrumbayu

Na nungbu junggidi

Mansini juli jano sandung.⁵

English Rendering

In sandy ground there crying?

A cute dove

Why are you crying by moving your tail

Are you like us

Want to marry like a human being

Birds have been given

Birds couple

Human have human couple

See babies in dream

But grope in reality

Are you like us

Want to marry like human.

5.4.3 Sila Hali Halidong

There are some folk songs explaining about the activities and behaviour of birds. The songs are placed under nature related folk songs. In such type of folk song the activities performed by birds are clearly explained. These folk songs are the performing arts of the bird through which is expresses the folk song. The folk song no. 3 "Sila Hali Halidong." In this folk song the behaviour of birds are depicted clearly in which the singer of this song could easily understood and reflected the activities of the nature of that birds and explained through the folk song.

Song no. 3 Sila hali hali halidong

Khugun hali hali halidong

Alok alok sayo oi

Alok alok sayao

Gang fowaroi oi

Gangkhong helayoi

O-oi o-oi

Gogere go...

Habab hunoi daojala rao

Bese majang

Godo falaoi oi

Thor thoraynay rao oi

Thor thoraynay rao

O-oi o-oi

Dalay bilay oraybo makhadong

Bongfangni daoabw gidu rajabdong

O-oi o-oi.6

English Rendering

The kites are leaning in pairs

Vultures are leaning in pairs

Separate separates in too high

Spreading open the feathers

O-oi o-oi

Gogere go

What a strong voice of a cock,

How sweet

Spreading the neck,

Thor thoraynay voice (sound)

O-oi o-oi

Branch and leaves of trees are dancing

The birds of the tree are also singing

O - oi o - oi.

5.4.4 Jhong Dhawayao Thangni

Bodo Kachari people are known to the warrior since ancient times. Because, many name of male and female hero and heroines are found in the book of 'Bijnini Jarimin' (History of Bijni). Such as the great hero of Kurukhetra war the great Ghototkosa the powerful king of then Pragjyotishpura taken part on behalf of Pandava against the Kourava. He was the son of Mlesha Queen Hirimba who fought on behalf of truth. Among them Jwhwlao Doimalu was also a great general of Bodo Kachari kingdom who captured Burma and Manipur on behalf of Kachari kingdom. Apart from that Jwhwlao Swmdwn and Tularam Senapati were fought against the

British army who compeled the Britishers to agree for "Iandabu Treaty" with Tularam in 1828 A.D.. The Britishers ruled and occupied the North-East region in that time. Therefore, there are so many war related folk songs in Bodo Kachari in Goalpara district area.

In Bodo society, there was also a tradition among Bodo people that, before going to the war field, the young boy and girls practises the techniques and skills of war. The practises were occurred in a safe for themselves and open field. They also worshiped jointly in a secured place among themselves so as they become successful in the war and pray by worshiping their Supreme God Bathou Brai. The villagers give farewell to the youths by fastening the 'Thapsi' (the Kavasa) for their safety which are prepared in a night by female people of the society. This picture is reflected in the folk song no. 4. This very folk song is also performed in the stage in present day. The song is given below —

Song no. 4 Jhong dhawayao thangni

Jhong dhawayao thangni

Jhoholao jaliya

Jhong dhawayao thangni

He guru Bathou nong jhongni

Nongkhonu khulumni jhong dhini

He maynao bima nong jongni

Burli Buri aya bor bansani giri

Thudohe logo jhong dhawayao thangdoni

Ronggo ronggo jhong dhini

Dhawa nangdoni.⁷

English Rendering

Lets we go to the battle

We the young hero and heroines

Let's go to battle

Oh, our mighty God Bathou

We salute you in our away to battle

Go ahead our friends we will fight with joy and
Our wealth god mother Burli buri is the Goddess of Bless
We shall fight cheerfully the battle.

5.4.5 May Souru Souru Fagli

There is also a popular Bodo folk song in Goalpara district among Bodo Kachari people. They are conversation between husband and wife regarding the visit to their son-in-law house. In folk song no. 5 husband asking his wife to get ready to receive their son-in-law's without any difficulty. Here in this song husband is talking to his wife about the information of son-in-law's coming and asking wife to milled the rice in available and prepared at least one rice beer for son-in-law. This very context is explained by performing arts about the conversation of villagers of Bodo Kachari of Goalpara district.

Song no. 5 May souru souru fagli

Nongjamadiya fayno namaydong

Jou thayse se songru

Jouwa boro nam he lokhay

Jouwa boro nam

Khobor hunani jou munabala

Ma bundani nam he lokhay

Ma bundani nam.

Jouwa boro nisa he lokhay

Jouwa boro nisa

Jou lungnani thot gamabala

Oray khathayabu misa he lokhay

Oray khathayabu misa

Ajikhaliniba nongya he jouwa

Sinthamoni suradevi

Mithaphukhurini gongya he lokhay

Mithaphukhurini gongya.

Bihiya jogayu engkham okhali

Bihiya jogayu engkham

Engkham janani felem nangdung

Ongkhardung ermoni nam

Khuthuni buriya nudung bikho

Lewa loihuri foisab boirab

Bikhounu ermo soudung.

Binu desuao bangdung ajikhali

Binu desuao bangdung

Khoithuni dinao maday baokhanda

Bikhounu mansiya lungdung

Joukho madu songohay lokhay

Khuthuni buriya mithiyu

Lewa lohory fosab fosab

Bikhonu souo ermo he lokhay.8

English Rendering

Milled the rice milled my dear mad

Son - in-law has inform to come

Prepared at least one wine

Wine is the only symbol of respect dear,

Wine is most respectful

Coming the guest with pre-information

Have not been received with wine

What type of relatives these are.

Wine is very toxic dear

Wine is very toxic

If become senseless with over drinks

Every word is false, dear

Every word is meaningless.

Wine is not of these days only

The sweet pond of sintamoni suradevi

Is the source of it

Peoples` sweet pond is the source

Wife made ready the rice on that day

Wife made ready the rice

Eating rice feel toxic

The name of yeast is admired

Khuthuniburi (old woman) have seen it

Cleaning the creeper grinded it

It have been increase in these days

Among the peoples of the world.

During the days of sotya

The access after offering

Have been drunked by the people

5.4.6 Guruni Asar, Boroni Bisar

There is a very rigid traditional system in the society of Goalpara district area. To maintaining the very traditional systems they nominate as a Hadenggara (village Headman) is among themselves who is nominated as the head of the village in any purposes. The Hadenggara is the sole authority to give any judgement on any matter arises in the village. Any order and rules announced by Hadenggara is become law for that village. The people of that village should abide by the laws. Disobeying the order of a Hadenggara is must a punisheable offence in previous days. But in present days such system is something changed. The villagers are followed such traditional system. To express such context there also originated some folk songs. The song no. 6 "Guruni Asar Boroni Bisar" depicts the real pictures of Bodo Kachari people of Goalpara district of modern age.

Song no. 6 Guruni asar, Boroni bisar,

Jubbay dhini khuli dino,

Hay hay gami fara fara hadunggara

Bino giyathi fakhabgara.

Asar gaylaya hadunggaraya,

Om bathouni nam lalaya,

Fisaya mithiya fifani man,

Janay thabaynay khoman khoman,

Janay lungnay khogang khogang,

Domasiao khuluma fifa bima,

Gajanao thangnanoi khulumu behao

Bimani khoroyo jithu khadung,

Thao thobse goiya jhinid jadong,

Bihino hufaydong modomnay thao

Daosri deled jadung naythao-thao.⁹

English Rendering

The custom, the tradition of preceptor

Have finished in this kuli age

Alas each part of village has got hadunggara

He is reformer of each giathi

Hadunggara has lost their tradition

Have not taken the name of 'Om Bathou'

Sons does not know father's respect

Eating walking in a same line

Advance in eating drinking

Does not salute father mother in domasi

Salute father-in-law going far distance

Head of mother become interlaced

Not a single drop of oil in mother's head become dart

Giving cented oil to wife Become beautiful to look, Advance in eating drinking.

5.4.7 Raohabo Thuiyajase Ayu Nongya

There are some folk songs which has the context the universal truth. Here in this folk song no. 7 "Raohabu thuiyajase au nongya" reflects the context of universal truth regarding the immortal human life. The song mentioned that human life is not ever lasting. If one born in this earth must die one day, because man is not immortal it is reflecting very clearly as the performing arts.

Song no. 7 Raohabo thuiyajase ayu nongya,

Khomani khafalao kholayni

Sukhuyoi din thangya.

Deddong laodong jonom lananoi

Bima bifaya khangyoi bayoi

Athol amol forongdong

Gaoni khorang rongjase mojangyoi

Dinoile gabonle baraylanggon

Khoro khanay fudlanggon

Khogani hathay golanggon

Lasoi lasoi ayou sunngyi

Ebe dehani ranlangyoi

Songsarao jesang dong boybu thoilanggon

Suwa jagon bungnani sanggra sayao bannani

Bakhur bariyo garhodgon

No soknifara khayoi juyoi langyoi

Aghad bighad malamgon- khugun, siyala rongjagon

Fasla gandi thugu

Bukhrang-busi gele-gele seolangyi

Bikhayao badkhangyi jokhanggon Farthing- farthing sithur-sin Rodthing-rodthang ha jagon funlangyi. 10

English Rendering

Nobody has immortal life

In everybodies fortune

Does not spent the joyful days

We have grown after born

Father mother rearing us

With affection teaches us

Till we can assumed about ourselves

Will be grown old day by day

Hair of hat become gray and white

Teeth of mouth will fall down

Slowly age will be shorten

This body will dried

Everybody of this earth will die

Feeling it will become untouchable or left out

Lifting on bamboo bed

Will throw in waste land

Tideting and packing from homestead

Untouchables

End notes

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