


## THE CONSTRUCTION OF SPACE FROM DANCE – CHIODA: YAO CASE - IN THE DISTRICT OF CHIMBUNILA, NIASSA PROVINCE

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### ABSTRACT

The research has as its theme the construction of space from the chioda dance" case yao - District of Chimbunila, province of Niassa, with the objective of understanding how the chioda dance contributes to the construction of the space of cultural identity for the people of the District of Chimbunila, in these terms, from a political, cultural and academic point of view constitutes a link between the community and the other individualities that act directly or indirectly at that point of the country, on the other hand, is a consultation instrument in which future teachers/educators will broaden the didactic and pedagogical horizon for a good school education. Given the importance of the theme, the research provides important subsidies to adapt the Teaching-Learning process that serves as a basis for written knowledge of the potential of the chioda dance as its identity mark in that geographical space.

**Keywords:** Culture. Identity. Teaching-Learning Process.

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## INTRODUCTION

All ritualistic expressions are aimed at uniting communities, in this case, dance is one of them. The article is subordinated to the theme of "The construction of space from the chioda dance" in the case of Chimbunila - in the District of Chimbunila, Niassa province. Therefore, it is a research that analyzed the power of the Chioda dance as a catalytic instrument in the communication between the members of the community through the masses that it drags in moments of performance at that point, constituting an engine of cultural preservation.

To know the culture of this people is to penetrate these secular rituals, where the memory of the name and the doing of things remains alive, the secret of certain apparently strange behaviors of the culture of the peoples.

From the perspective of wanting to make deep studies on the construction of space from dance as a means of unification and cultural landmark of the Yao people in the district of Chimbunila, the research sought to identify the knowledge developed around the community from a cultural point of view, in the context of the school culture and the most diverse conditions of the teacher's work. It also sought to specify the necessary articulations of this knowledge of the teacher both with practice and with the theoretical and scientific knowledge of basic education, taking into account the cultural reality of the community studied. Such articulations enabled the development of the reflective capacity that favors the commitment to teaching.

Seeking to understand the construction of space from dance and by the nature of the object of study of the research, the concern arises to see the following question answered: The Chioda dance is practiced in the districts of Lago, Sanga, Mavago and Muembe, the four peoples also have this dance in their culture, to what extent does this dance belong to the people of the District of Chimbunila?

With the aim of understanding how the chioda dance contributes to the construction of the cultural identity space for the people of the district of Chimbunila.

## METHODOLOGY

### Methods of procedures

The research carried out is monographic, because, according to LAKATOS & MARCONI apud KUMAR et al (2007:12), "(...) investigates a certain subject not only in depth, but in all its angles and aspects, depending on the purposes for which it is intended".

Therefore, in the field research, several data collection instruments were used. Part of this role of instruments was the interview where rulers, secretaries of the neighborhoods as well as singulars equipped with a tape recorder to better understand this identity and what this of chioda dance and the inquiry. On the other hand, for data analysis and interpretation, eligible methods in the field of social sciences were used, such as: Statistical Method, Comparative Method and Cartographic Method. The interview was directed to the director and pedagogical director of the School as well as teachers and students in order to gain information about the research, in the case of the degree of involvement of the school in the community.

This time, the teachers, as well as members of the local government, were subjected to a questionnaire survey. It allowed them to obtain their opinions, feelings, expectations and point of view on how the Chioda dance unifies the people of Chimbunila, as well as to obtain information about the importance of this dance for the community.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONSULTATION

A review of the bibliography is carried out that makes an approach to the construction of space from dance, its importance in the community as well as in teaching-learning, in order to assume greater prominence in the discussion of the results.

#### DIRECT OBSERVATION

4 classes of the social sciences discipline were attended, rehearsals and chioda dance performance sites were visited and not only that, on the other hand, it was necessary to go to the local government of Chimbunila to collect some documented information, in order to

#### HISTORICAL-LOGICAL METHOD

It was the basis for obtaining documented information on the history of the population of the district of Chimbunila. According to MOURA (1994:76), this method "links the knowledge of the different stages of the object and its chronological successions, to know the evolution and development of the object and phenomenon of investigation".

#### UNIVERSE

According to SILVA & MENESES (2001:32), he defines the research universe as being "the totality of individuals who have the same characteristics defined for a given

study". Thus, the present study had a total universe of 20,602 (twenty thousand six hundred and two) individuals that corresponds to the population of Chimbunila, the School appears later to see where and how this knowledge should be introduced in the Local Curriculum.

## **SAMPLE**

According to SILVA & MENESES (2001:32), "A sample is part of the population or of the universe, selected according to a rule or plan". In this context, the research was carried out in Chimbunila, where there were 2 chiefs, 4 neighborhood secretaries, and 20 individuals (constituting a community), members of the local government being: Permanent Secretary, Head of the Secretariat and 2 support staff, and then it was at the Complete Primary School 24 de Junho, in the headquarters of the District of Chimbunila Niassa Province, who teaches from 1st to 7th Grades.

Therefore, there were 6 teachers from the 24 de Junho School; 22 students, 10 male and the rest female.

## **READING AND INTERPRETING DATA**

The reading and interpretation of data took place from February 10th to March 30th, 2023. Therefore, the process of interpreting the data collected consisted of decoding the information related to the topic in question.

## **GENERAL OF THE STUDIED AREA**

### **GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION**

The District Council of Chimbunila, according to ANTÓNIO & OMAR (2001:4), is located on the same plateau of Lichinga that includes the Maniamba – Amaramba mountain system, in the extreme west of the Province of Niassa, between the coordinates 35° and 32' 59" north latitude and 35° and 12' 52" east longitude, at an altitude between 1000 and 1400 meters and has an area of 5,342 km<sup>2</sup>. (see annex 1 the map of the city of Lichinga).

### **ETYMOLOGICAL ORIGIN OF THE NAME CHIMBUNILA**

In the MONOGRAPH OF THE DISTRICT OF LICHINGA (1998:21), it is predicted that the Wayao are a people of Bantu origin who occupied the region between the Rovuma and Lugenda rivers. The Yaos trace their origin to Mount Yao (Inserted in the ancient council of Valadim).

The geographical location of the area occupied by this people contributed to the fact that they had always lived peacefully, protected from the incursions of warring tribes through the high mountains that surrounded their territory.

The establishment of populations of Yao origin in the district of Chimbunila is the result of the fragmentation of this people into several tribes, which was followed by an intense process of expansion and domination of peoples from other areas. The causes of this movement, which, it seems, was not carried out with hostile intentions, are unknown, and it is known that eleven different tribes resulted from it. The warrior spirit that later developed in this people arose from the need to fight to defend themselves from the incursions of the Achewas, Macuas and Angonis.

In the other line of knowledge, ÓDALA JAUADO (Regulus of the BODY Neighborhood), states that the name CHIMBUNILA derives from a river that is next to the headquarters of the district with the same name, original name given by FRELIMO - Party.

Previously called the village of "Homem", this village was part of the old council of Vila Cabral (Vila Cabral – current city of Lichinga).

For ÓDALA JAUADO (Régulo do Bairro BODY), Chimbunila historically belongs to the Yao group. They are foreigners from Chimbunila, coming from the district of Muembe. After leaving Muembe, they went to a village called Ntonha de Ntonha, to another called Edique de Edique, to Namichery and finally to the current place that is Chimbunila Sede, all of this influenced by the colonial war approximately 1962.

Currently there are other ethnic groups from other corners of our beautiful Mozambique, but precisely because of the imperatives of various branches of activity.

It is also important to remember that this Yao population has Bantu origin, emigrated from the Great Lakes region, later expanding to other parts of Niassa.

On March 21, 2013, the district of Lichinga became the district of Chimbunila, the departure from 126 districts to 141 districts of Mozambique, was approved by the Assembly of the Republic, where the Province of Niassa, especially the district of Lichinga, benefited from this increase.

## CULTURAL ASPECTS

MONOGRAPH OF THE DISTRICT OF LICHINGA, apud WEGHER (1998:19). It stresses that in totality, the territory of the district of Chimbunila is occupied by populations of Yao origin, commonly known as Ajauas. The Wayao, which means natives of Mount Yao,

are an ethnic group originating from this mountain, which occupies an extensive facha between the Lugenda and Lucheringo rivers.

The Wayao tribe was the only one in Niassa that showed resistance to the Portuguese occupation of their lands. It is known that the tribe was composed of more than ten families, citing as examples Amasaninga, Amachinga, Wancula, Wamlemba and Achingole.

The Wayao who occupy the district of Chimbunila are only a small part of a group that has expanded over a vast territory roughly bounded by the Rovuma and Lugenda rivers and Lake Niassa.

Aspects of the uses and customs of the population of the Chimbunila district are characteristic of the Yao people in general, so it is difficult to make an approach that is restricted to the district. Thus, this approach will be made in a broader way, covering the Yao people in general.

Traditionally, men of the Yao tribe are not supposed to marry women of another tribe. In the past, if this happened, a man could not take his wife to his home village.

Sterility is almost invariably attributed to the woman, and this is often "returned" to the parents if the couple does not produce children. This does not oblige the groom to pay any compensation to the wife's family.

Polygamy is a common practice, in which the first woman is considered the most important of all, enjoying the greatest perks. The prestige of men is, in a way, evaluated according to the number of wives and children they have had (associated with the size of their farms and goods). Cases of monogamy are quite rare.

The inheritance is made by matrilineal, with the heir being the eldest sister's firstborn son.

The leadership of the family is assumed by the maternal uncle ("Mjomba"); he "commands" the niece's children and they owe obedience to their uncle.

The art is poorly developed, limited to the production of some items such as clay pots (usually by elderly women), mats and baskets (by men). Traditionally, art was also revealed in the past through the production of tattoos, but this practice was progressively abandoned due to the influence of the Muslim religion.

## RELIGION

Most of them are married, after the age of 12 they have a strong religious belief, dominated by the Muslim religion, in addition to this, we can also find: - Catholic; - Anglican and; - Assembly of God.

## THEORETICAL APPROACH

### CONCEPTS

#### Education

Etymologically, the word Education comes from the Latin educare, which means to feed, to create.

HAYDT (undated: 11) complements, considering education in two senses: social and individual. In the social sense,

Currently, not only in the area of education, but also in other areas, the individual is thought of as a whole and, therefore, the concept of education is broadened to the concept of the teaching-learning process. FREIRE (1997) explains that it is necessary to understand that the teaching-learning process takes place in the relationship between individuals who have their own life history and are inserted in their own life contexts.

## THE CHIODA DANCE

Chioda is a traditional dance typical of the northern quadrant of Mozambique concretely practiced in the Province of Niassa by the Yao and Anyanjas tribes.

It is danced on the occasion of the good harvest. For the yaos of Chimbunila it is not only danced for the joy of harvest, but also as a milestone in their celebrations of cultural representation in events of various kinds. Therefore, it in Chimbunila is danced for numerous meanings and remember that this has a very old age and this makes us realize that dance is really one of the oldest arts that man has experienced, in social and cultural facts this dance for the yaos of Chimbunila reveals the relationship of man with the world unites and strengthens the community, it is a necessity that binds the living to the spirits of dead ancestors and facilitates communion with them.

This symbolic appropriation of that Chimbunila people through Chioda dance produces distinct lifestyles of distinct landscapes, which are historically and geographically specific. The task of cultural geography is to grasp and understand this dimension of human interaction with nature and its role in the ordering of space.

ÓDALA JAUADO (Regulus of the BODY Neighborhood), stressed that after the loss of life of some elders in that area, some dances became extinct, such as: - Dondalo; -



Nchomanga; - Ngidi and; - Chitoto. Staying with feathers: - Chioda (it is the dance that demonstrates and characterizes them culturally); - Chinguengue; - Ciquir (it is a dance accepted by the Muslim religion) and; - Macuaela (Children are the ones who dance).

Moral values are the manifestation of joy from the Chioda dance and constitutes a cultural value because it is a manifestation of the Yao people.

### DRESS IN THE ACT OF DANCING

There is a combination of attire (uniform): - T-shirts; -Caps; - Two capulanas (one normal worn and the other tied at the waist) and; - There is no combination of shoes, each one wears its color according to its possibility and taste.

Therefore, this differentiation of footwear does not discourage them in any way from manifesting the spirit of belonging to the geographical space of Chimbunila.

### COMPOSITION OF THE GROUP

Originally, the chioda dance is danced simply by the ladies. The men appear as assistants and supporters. Thus, the group in the act of performance is composed of: - 20 Women and; - 2 Men (therefore, these are the ones who play the drums while the ladies dance, vibrating and exciting the crowd that watches).

Photo 1: - The two men who play the batucada accompanying the women in the Chioda dance.



Source: Authors - September 2023

DIAS (2009:62), argues that SPACE is constructed and constituted by social relations, by the relationships that different human beings establish among themselves, within a group or community (a socio-spatial formation) and relationships with "other" groups and community, friendly or conflicting. Geographical space is not produced by a direct and indirect relationship of society on a natural basis alone, since this action has no



meaning or effects without the simultaneous that men and groups establish among themselves.

For STEPHEN (1992:29), every social group needs to transmit its experience accumulated over time to the next generation, as a condition for its historical continuity. The fact that the individual members of the group are always renewing themselves, whether by death or birth, drives the need for this accumulated experience, which is called knowledge and which exists outside of individual time, to be organized in a memory that remains in the historical time of social groups where there is a predominance of oral memory. Knowledge or knowledge is materialized in the systematization or classification of human beings into genealogies and hierarchies.

In the conception of ARTAUD (1999:42), it can be affirmed, without a doubt, that dance is an artistic language whose signs are movements. But movements in dance are always provided with different meanings. They are created and interpreted as a great scenic mosaic and only point out ideas, metaphors. The choice of meaning is extremely subjective. For each look of each performer, be it the performer – creator or the performer – spectator, there will be a double of the meanings of dance, a double of the meanings of life.

Dance and Education, dance is not only an art that allows the human soul to express itself in movement, but also the basis of a whole conception of life that is more flexible, more harmonious, more natural. Dance is not, as is commonly believed, a set of more or less arbitrary steps that are the result of mechanical combinations and that, although they can be useful as technical exercises, could not claim to constitute an art: they are means and not an end (DUNCAN apud GARAUDY, 1980:57).

STEPHEN (1992:19), advances that the Multicultural teacher:

- 1- It sees cultural diversity as a source of richness for the teaching/learning process;
- 2- Promotes the profitability of knowledge and cultures;
- 3- It takes into account cultural diversity in the classroom, making it a condition for confrontation between cultures;
- 4- It retraces the map of its cultural identity to overcome cultural ethnocentrism;
- 5- It defends the decentralization of the School – the School assumes itself as part of the local community;
- 6- It knows cultural differences through the development of pedagogical devices based on the notion of culture as a social practice.

## GEOGRAPHY AS A SCIENCE OF THE ORGANIZATION OF SPACE

Geography is also considered a science of landscapes. "If we gather the definitions of geography given since the beginning of the century, by the great geographer of all countries, we will be impressed by their convergence". Geography, it is said, is the "description and explanatory of landscapes" (IBID, p.62). Thus, the description and explanation of a natural landscape, rural or urban, are of an extraordinary wealth of teaching in geography. Each landscape expresses a certain organization of space – spontaneous or directed organization, conscious or unconscious.

According to LUCCHI (1998:15), Geography is "a science that studies the production of space and its transformations by society". In this context, the work of geographic education is no longer about memorization, it consists of leading people in general, citizens, to a critical and spatial awareness with reasoning to locate and extend certain facts.

For CALLAI (1998:56), Geography is the science that studies, analyzes and tries to explain the space produced by man and, as a teaching subject, it allows the person to perceive himself as a participant in the space he studies, where the phenomena that occur there are the results of the life and work of men and are inserted in a process of development.

## HOW TO MAKE THE CHILD KNOW THAT LOCAL KNOWLEDGE IS IMPORTANT?

The use of local knowledge makes sense if the child uses it to respond to the concerns of his day-to-day life.

- For the School, the knowledge of the community gets in the way, it only makes sense when it knows how to reconcile what has been learned in the community, to help with the systematized.
- For the community, the school gets in the way because the school consumes the time that the child should produce/do housework to eat.

## RESULTS

P. 1. Years of experience as a teacher?

A: 1 – Around this question, two female professionals answered that they have 12 years of experience and two others answered that they have 16 years of experience, the last one did not answer. Of the four males, two answered that they have 15 years of experience and the remaining two, one 16 and the last with 19 years of experience.

Years of experience vary significantly among participants, with responses demonstrating consolidated trajectories in education. According to Nóvoa (1995), the teaching experience reflects not only the technical capacity, but also the construction of a professional identity linked to daily practice and interactions with the school community.

P. 2. Have you ever heard of the chioda dance?

A:2 – Everyone answered yes, they have heard of the Chioda dance.

All the interviewees know the Chioda dance, which highlights its cultural relevance. Geertz (1989) states that cultural practices play an essential role in the construction of collective identities, functioning as vehicles of social cohesion.

P. 3. Do you think this dance unites people here in Chimbunila?

A: 3 – Of the nine respondents, eight answered yes, this dance unites the people of Chimbunila and only one, which corresponds to the ninth, added that it is a conviviality that most of them participate in.

Eight of the nine interviewees agree that the Chioda dance unites the community. Durkheim (2001) argues that rituals and cultural manifestations strengthen social bonds and solidify the sense of belonging in groups.

P. 4. Does the knowledge of the community interfere in the School?

A: 4 – The first answered yes they interfere because for a school to exist there must be a community, in this case the knowledge of the community interferes in the school in favor of the community; The second replied that they interfere in a certain way, hence they have already started teaching the traditional chioda dance at school with the help of experts on the subject from the community; The third responded by saying that they interfere from the school board; The fourth answered that the knowledge of the community can influence because the teaching of the community to the school can conclude that something is missing and therefore the school-community relationship; The fifth replied by saying that the knowledge of the community interferes in the school in the context of raising the culture of the community, in particular the chioda dance; The sixth replied that he only a few times; The seventh replied that they do not interfere; the eighth replied that they are not often, because some feel retarded in their ideas and that they rarely appear when they are called; The ninth and last replied that they do not interfere.

The answers indicate that interference is perceived in different ways, from positive (as in dance teaching) to neglected. Tardif (2002) suggests that integrating local knowledge into the school curriculum promotes more contextualized and meaningful learning.

P. 5. How can dance use its values for the School?

A: 5 – The first respondent replied by saying that teaching students to practice this dance; the second replied that dance can use its values for the school first: there must be a connection between the school – community and vice versa, through the information of the school collective and neighborhood secretaries; The third replied that this dance can use its values for the school by practicing the dance or watching; The fourth did not answer, because he abstained; The fifth replied, publicizing this dance, as one of those practiced in the province and in the district of Chimbunila in particular; The sixth replied that this dance can give values to the school because there are songs that talk about education, whether at home, this creates a link to the school; The seventh replied by saying that dance uses its values for school when its message transmits education to the new generations; The eighth replied that by teaching more students to preserve the traditional dance of the area, in particular the chioda, which is more practiced by women; The ninth and last replied that dance can use its values for the school, it is well known that dance is a social character, and there is a dance group that unites the school to adapt the values, dignifying the Mozambican culture in the context of social relations of the community.

The practice of Chioda dance at school is seen as a bridge to transmit cultural values. Freire (1996) reinforces the importance of connecting popular knowledge to formal education to enrich the pedagogical process.

Q.6. How can the School use the values of dance to complement teaching?

A: 6 – The first answered, creating a group of students, which means that within the school there should be a group of students who can belong to cultural activities, recognize the cultural adversity of the country; The second replied that interpreting the teachings or messages from the songs and the importance of the commemorative and festive dates of the country and the community; The third answered that the values of dance to complement teaching can be used in the way song educates and transmits teaching, reaching students in an educational way; The fourth, the school can use the values of dance to complement the teaching by interpreting the messages coming from the songs; The fifth replied that this dance the school can use to complete the teaching in the cultural field, the students get to know their culture through dance; The sixth, creating a cultural group of the same dance; The seventh answered, the school can use the values of dance to complement teaching, creating a cultural group in the school; The eighth answered that the school can use the values of dance for teaching, valuing the uses and customs of the community in general; The ninth answered, the school can use the values of dance to complement teaching by creating a cultural group.

Dance values can complement teaching through cultural activities and the enhancement of local customs. According to Candau (2000), the recognition of cultural diversity in the school environment is crucial to form critical and conscious citizens.

Q.7. What is the relationship between the School, Teachers and parents in relation to cultural manifestation?

A: 7 – The first one did not answer; The second answered, in this context, the school that is part of the school, the teachers and the parents must work together for the cultural manifestation of a date of any year; The third, the relationship between the school, teachers and parents in relation to the demonstration is correct, we all have identity; The fourth answered that the relationship that exists is that the school as a learning center, parents should collaborate with teachers as a means of massifying this cultural trait; The fifth answered, the school promotes a festival of culture at the school level, thus using what was taught by the school inviting parents to be part of the event and then you can get to know what is part of our culture; The sixth answered that the relationship between teacher and students in relation to cultural manifestation is good because they accept to take institutions in the community, as in the case of the school, because the school has to do with the student and the student with the school; The seventh replied by saying that knowing that the parents linked to the school council bring some teachings of the uses and customs of the community to the students, this is important; The eighth answered that the relationship is good since they accept to give instructions to the students regarding traditional dance on commemorative dates or in rehearsals, they accept to train with the students or dance with them; The ninth also answered that the relationship between school and teacher is that the school is a learning entity, the teacher is the individual who makes his knowledge to teach, in relation to culture the teacher must adapt to the environment.

The responses highlight the need for collaboration between school, teachers and parents. Epstein (2001) argues that school-family-community partnerships are fundamental to students' academic and social success.

Q.8. The knowledge of the School creates resistance in favor of homework, how do you overcome this?

A: 8 – The first answering said, at some point the students are forced to do housework as well as the field, in this regard the school management has overtaken by holding meetings with parents and guardians; The second responder said that we encourage students to comply with homework, value homework activities because they are part of our culture; The third replied by teaching the children not to despise homework,

because school education complements home education and vice versa; The fourth replied that in their encouragement there can be no resistance to overcome, it is necessary to bring rigor to sensitize them; The fifth did not answer; The sixth answered no, on the contrary, the teacher at school should try to break prejudices that at some point the child tries to preserve them as something rooted. It is being said that we should try to bring together cultural and school knowledge; The seventh replied that to overcome this it is necessary to call on parents and guardians to raise awareness of their children; The eighth replied that no, the child must know how to divide the time, limited to homework and also to school; The latter replied that this can be overcome by talking to the parents and having a sitting down to find out the situation of their children.

The tension between school and homework is mediated by meetings and sensitizations. Freire (1996) argues that dialogue is the basis for overcoming resistance and promoting integration between school and community knowledge.

Q.9. What is your assessment of the community in relation to the official contents of the Basic Education Curriculum?

A:9 – The first replied that the community's appreciation of the contents of basic education in the curriculum is that they complain saying that the subjects are many in relation to previous years and exceed the capacity of the students; The second replied by saying that in fact, if my memory serves me correctly, in past years, in this school there was a meeting with the parents, and that one of them stood up and explained the following: a long time ago we only studied the Portuguese language and mathematics, today the study itself has changed; The third is that the community in relation to the official contents in the basic education curriculum they have complained saying that there is an excess of disciplines such as: craft, musical education, visual, it breaks the capacity of children; The fourth answered that it is positive, since the new curriculum provides a space for learning the relevant content of the community according to the specificities of each region or zone; The fifth responder said that the community's appreciation of the contents is not the best, the new basic education curriculum brings the already computerized contents that make it difficult for students to quickly understand, a greater number of subjects that make it difficult for students to capture the material; The sixth abstained; The seventh answered, the community should participate in teaching for some subjects, it needs help from the community (Visual Education); The eighth replied that the community has a great hand to give in relation to the teachings in the subjects of civic education and/or trade, the father must either help the teacher to educate his child; The latter answered that, in this case, the



appreciation made by the community is to characterize or develop in the student skills and knowledge of all areas of learning. In the integration of students, the teacher must organize himself and carry out extracurricular activities.

Although there are criticisms about the number of disciplines, the cultural relevance is recognized by some. Saviani (2008) points out that curricula need to balance universal content with the valorization of local knowledge to meet regional specificities.

## CONCLUSION

- The Chioda dance is a catalyzing element through the masses it drags, it is easy to communicate.
- Whenever chioda is danced, the cultural manifestation is being updated as a way of keeping the culture of that people alive.
- Whenever chioda is danced, it is a moment of celebration and the appropriation of the chimbunila district as its cultural landmark space

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