

MGIMO University
School of Government and International Affairs

Syllabus approved
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Religion and Politics in the Modern Age
Undergraduate Course Syllabus

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PART 1. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND TEACHING METHODS

1.1 The place and role of the course in the program of study:

The course “Politics and Religion in the Modern Age” is an undergraduate elective course within the International Relations program. It aims at providing students with a broad historical understanding of the role religion played and continues to play in politics across the globe. It complements the core study of international relations and diplomacy through an appreciation of this important societal feature.

The course will mainly be taught in a chronological manner; however, deviations from this will accommodate geographical and topical concerns. It covers a half-dozen or so different types of relationships that form between established religion and the politics of the governing power:

- Religion as a catalyst for political change (Reformation)
- Religion as a guiding force in politics (Confessional politics of the 16th and 17th centuries in Europe and Islamic fundamentalism/Sharia Law in the Ottoman Empire and other parts of the Near East)
- Religion, or in this case, Christianity, as a form of political opposition (China and Korea in the modern era)
- Religion, as a catalyst for political punishment or suppression (Irish penal laws within the British Empire)
- Politics and States divorcing themselves gradually from Religion in Europe in the 19th century (away from the ‘throne and altar’ approach of the 17th- mid-19th centuries)
- Secularisation of Politics in the 20th century (Communist Russia and China)

1.2 The course goals and objectives:

The course has the following objectives:

1. To introduce the different types of relationships between politics and religion covered in the course
2. To orient students to understand the key theoretical and methodological distinctions that inform these relationships
3. To demonstrate how this relationship is one way of assessing the relative health of a given political system
4. To explore other possible political-religious paradigms
5. To offer students the opportunity to develop their own views on the various relationships

1.3 Learning outcomes:

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. To appreciate how at times religion and politics are inextricably linked and understand how these various relationships formed
2. To appreciate the many different types of relationships these two areas held with each other

3. To apply these models to the present in order to appreciate today's global political situation and the challenges
4. To discuss critically and write knowledgeably about these challenges today with an awareness of historical precedence
5. To understand the basic tenets of the major religions discussed in the class and their historical development

1.4. Course requirements and evaluation:

Format:

The format of this course is a combination of lectures and seminars. Lectures provide an overview of a particular topic (presentations may also be included). Seminars consist a presentation done by students, followed by a class discussion on the material read and presented.

Attendance and active involvement in class discussions are essential to success in the course. Students will be required to attend not less than 90% of classes and to be prepared for class discussions on a regular basis.

Reading:

Lectures and the required reading complement each other, they are not substitutes. In order to properly participate in class, students must do all the readings prior to each session.

Presentation:

Students will also be required to prepare 1 presentation individually (or in team). The length of presentation is preferably 15 minutes and should not exceed 20 minutes. Presentations are expected to offer a critical discussion of the reading material, present a summary of the main arguments of the reading, a discussion of how the reading relates to the broader themes of the course, and questions for discussion.

Research paper:

Students will write a 7-10 page research paper on a question or topic that relates to one of the subject areas. A research paper is not only presenting facts, but crucially includes the analysis of the empirical information that you gather. The paper will consist of an introduction, main body and conclusion. In the introduction you set out what you want to write about. You should explain why the topic you chose deserves discussion, why it is relevant/important or why it is important in practical terms. The introduction should end with the main research question you will answer that will guide the essay. The crucial idea of the main body is to present and analyze ideas. The emphasis must be on your own critical evaluation of the ideas presented. There should be a conclusion with brief answers to the question suggested in the introduction and a summary of your view of the issues.

Papers should include a list of references and bibliography, using at least five sources. The final version of the paper is due three weeks before the end of term.

I will be available for consultation during office hours or by appointment.

Plagiarism:

MGIMO-University values academic integrity. Plagiarism is a most serious offence in academic work. Examples of plagiarism include turning in a paper written by someone else, or using parts of a book or article without acknowledging the source. To avoid plagiarism, keep in mind that all references to someone else's ideas – whether a direct quotation or simply an indirect summary – must be properly cited. A 'proper citation' should typically identify the author, the work, the publisher, the place and the year of publication, and the page number. Direct quotations must be placed in quotation marks. Please note that any violation of the code of academic integrity results in the student's immediate failure of the course, as well as possible further disciplinary action.

Grading:

Final grades will be assigned as follows:

- Class participation – 25%
- Three in-class tests – 60%
- Class presentation – 15 %.

Grades will be assigned according to the following criteria: A – outstanding work; B – solid, capable work; C – good work; D – satisfactory work; F – failure to meet minimum goals.

Note on the instructor

Professor Korten was born in the US and studied at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. In addition to participating in many international conferences, he has guest lectured at the universities of Hong Kong, Trinity College, Dublin, La Sapienza (Rome), as well as Oxford and Cambridge. He was also visiting professor at Moscow State University (Lomonosov) in the autumn of 2016. Professor Korten formerly taught at the University of Warsaw and, most recently, has been teaching in the department of History at Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan. He is currently writing a book on diplomacy under Tsar Nicholas I (1825-1855).

PART 2. COURSE CONTENT

2.1 Types of work

Types of work	Academic hours
Total	108
Total for lectures, seminars	34
Lectures	16
Seminars	18
Homework	74
Oral Presentation and Essay	20
Preparation for lectures, seminars	20
Course works	34
Course assessment	Class participation, three in-class tests, class presentation

2.2. COURSE CONTENT

Topic 1. Course introduction and overview

Lecture 1.1. Introduction and overview of the various relationships that will be encountered in the semester

Topic 2. Early Modern Period (16th-18th centuries)

Lecture 2.1. The political motives of the Reformations

This lecture compares and contrasts the two major religious reformations that took place in the 16th century: the European and English. The European Reformation occurred at a time when few expected it. The initial conflict was theological, between an unknown friar (Martin Luther) and Rome. Part of the reason the split grew to a European wide scale is the political support Luther held locally and within the Holy Roman Empire. As well, the publicity of his case was on an unprecedented scale thanks to the recent invention of the printing press.

In England, by contrast, there were personal motivations which initiated the rupture with Rome. Henry VIII's desire to remarry instigated the 'divorce proceedings' with Rome. However, there were political consequences for this decision. Enhanced political freedom and confiscation of Church assets, which provided economic relief were balanced by military threats from Catholic countries, most notably Spain.

Topics for presentation:

1. What was the extent to which political factors determined the split with the Roman Catholic Church?
2. What were the political consequences in England and Europe following the Reformations?

Consolidated Reading List:

Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided, 1490-1700*, London 2013, chapter 4. (suggested reading: chapter 3)

Susan Brigden, *New Worlds, Lost Worlds: The Rule of the Tudors, 1485-1603*, NY 2002, pp. 101-139.

Lecture 2.2. England and Ireland – anti-Catholic (Penal) laws, 16th to 19th century

Frictions between England and Ireland have a long history. They were punctuated by the English Reformation, when Ireland chose to remain Catholic and united to Rome. Distrust between them festered. Political intrigues grew, as Ireland desired freedom from British tyranny. The focal point of the political conflict was confessional differences. Irish Catholics could never be fully trusted, given their desire to see a united Catholic Europe, which included reconverting England back to Catholicism.

At several points between the 16th and 20th centuries, the Irish initiate revolution (or rebellion) in order to gain their political independence. Following each defeat, retribution took the form of anti-Catholic policies. Catholics were deprived of owning land, gaining a proper education, serving in parliament and, in general, were considered second-class citizens.

Topics for presentation:

1. What were the political policies implemented by successive English rulers as punishment for Irish-Catholic recalcitrance?
2. To what extent did religion play a role in the bias against the Irish?

Consolidated Reading List:

N. McCord and B. Purdue, *British History, 1815-1914*, Oxford 2007, pp. 179-181, 310-311, 401-404, 482-483.

Supplemental reading: R.F. Foster, *Modern Ireland, 1600-1972*, London 2011.

Lecture 2.3. Confessional politics: France and the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648)

Following the European Reformation, France was divided (mainly geographically) in terms of religious loyalty. Most Frenchmen remained loyal to Rome but there was a significant minority who turned Protestant. The political problems which ensued in the second half of the 16th century reveal the problems with a multi-confessional State at this time. The Bartholomew Massacre (1572) was the low ebb, in which scores of leading Protestants were murdered, or nearly so. The reign of Henry IV brings into the focus the need for confessional unity. His conversion in 1593 and subsequent assassination in 1610 brings this into focus.

France will also feature prominently in our discussions of the Thirty Years' War, a military conflict along confessional lines (initially) which embroiled most of Europe. This would be the last major war fought in such a confessional manner, where Protestant States fought Catholic States. However, during the protracted war France departed from its confessional allies and backed Protestant Sweden. This is significant as it marked the beginning of *real politique*, in which the needs of the State would gradually take precedence over religion and the dictates of Rome. This would pave the way for Absolutism under the Sun King, Louis XVI.

Topics for presentation:

1. What are the problems France encounters as a mixed confessional state?
2. What were the future consequences of France's decision to back a Protestant power in the Thirty Years' War over a Catholic one?

Consolidated Reading List:

Yves-Marie Bercé, *The Birth of Absolutism: A History of France, 1598-1661*, London 1996, chapters 1 and 7.

Richard Bonney, *The Thirty Years' War, 1618-1648*, Oxford 2002, pp. 11-34.

Background reading: Geoffrey Parker (ed.), *The Thirty Years' War*, 3rd ed., London 2006, chapter 1.

Lecture 2.4 Colonial America: Quakers of Pennsylvania vs. the Puritans of Massachusetts. **Comparative study**

This lecture looks at the beginnings of two important Colonial American communities and examines their success in political leadership. As America became more heterogenous, the political issues required flexibility and an ability to adapt. The Puritans were, for the most part, able to separate religion from politics, while the Quakers maintained their uncompromising religious positions. The results were predictable, as the former were eventually forced out of office and remained only a religious sect. Meanwhile, the Puritans gradually integrated with the larger community and endured, ultimately influencing American politics until the present day.

Topics for presentation:

1. Why was the Puritan community ultimately successful in governing and not the Quakers?
2. What are the problems inherent in a religious community with strict practices, when it governs a mixed-confessional area?

Reading List:

Daniel Boorstin, *Americans: The Colonial Experience*, New York 1958, parts 1 and 2.

Topic 3: Modern Era (19th-20th centuries)

Seminar 3.1. Religion and the Politics of Fear: China and Korea and Christianity

This seminar will discuss the great differences between Chinese and Korean political approaches and Christianity, which by the late 18th and into the 19th century had a presence in each area. Christians have always comprised a very small percentage of the Chinese population; slightly larger proportions,

though still small, were found in Korea. Nonetheless, their associations of Christianity with Imperialism created an unease among the political elite. These nervous feelings prompted persecutions and forced exiles of foreign missionaries on several occasions.

Topics for presentation:

1. How was it that Christianity was associated with political and economic imperialism for Korean and Chinese authorities?
2. What is the effort of persecution on a religious community?

Reading List:

D.H. Bays and J.H. Grayson, 'Christianity in East Asia: China, Korea and Japan', *The Cambridge History of Christianity: World Christianities, 1815-1914*, eds. S. Gilley and B. Stanley, vol. 8, Cambridge 2008, pp. 493-512.

Lecture 3.2. Napoleon and the French Empire's attitude toward religion

With the exception of the Reformations of the 16th century, the French Revolution effected the Catholic Church more than any other movement or organisation to that time. Church properties were confiscated and sold at auction or requisitioned for use by the French government. Valuables of all sorts, including art work, old books and manuscripts, marble from the altars, and gold and silver elements used in the Mass were stolen and monetized. Despite these Draconian policies, religion was valued as a means of ordering society and inculcating obedience to political authority. Stripped of much of its authority, the Church reorganised and survived in more subdued forms.

Jewry, by contrast, experienced a revival of sorts in many parts of Europe where the French held sway. The anti-semitic policies of their Christian counterparts, and especially the Catholic Church, were swept away, along with the ghettos which housed them. Jews were given equal or near equal social status and political freedoms rarely instanced earlier.

Topics for presentation:

1. How did France's religious policy change over time (1780s-1810s)?
2. What was the fate of Jewry throughout the French Empire?
3. How can it be said that the French Revolution accelerated the process of secularisation which spread throughout Europe in the 19th century?

Reading List:

tba

Seminar 3.3 *Russian Empire and its policy towards religious minorities*

This seminar will examine Russian policy towards religious minorities beginning in 1772 with the first partition of Poland under Catherine II. From this time, Russia witnessed a large infusion of Catholics and Uniates into its empire. This forced Russia to adopt policies to accommodate these new citizens. In general, Polish Catholics were given relative freedom in their ecclesiastical affairs until 1825 and the Decembrist revolt and especially the Warsaw Uprising of 1830/31. Henceforth, the Church was closely monitored, especially the actions and communication of bishops. In 1839, a million or so adherents of the Uniate Church were forced merge with the Orthodox church, in a move that chilled relations with the Pope for a few years.

These policies will be compared to those adopted towards their Jewish and Islamic counterparts in other parts of the Empire. Geographical location, ie. great distance from S. Petersburg, dictated much of the policy towards Muslim communities, who were generally given great latitude subject to taxation, military participation and political loyalty. In the case of Jewry, many of the poorest Jews had been removed to the Pale under Catherine II and forced to adopt subsistence living. Controls were placed on others more well-to-do in the big cities, such as in education.

Topics for presentation:

1. How do we reconcile Catherine's restrictive policies towards the Catholic Church in general but her protection of the Jesuit order in and after 1773?
2. Compare and contrast the policies of the Empire towards Catholics, Uniates, Jews, and Muslims.
3. What prompted Nicholas I to crack down on the Catholic Church in Poland after 1831 and how successful was this policy in preventing political disruption?

Reading List:

Dominic Lieven (ed), *Imperial Russia, 1689-1917*, Cambridge 2006, chapters 8,9,10.

Daniel H. Shubin, *A History of Russian Christianity*, vol. III, New York 2005, tba.

Seminar 3.4 *Ottoman Empire and minority religions*

In this seminar we take up a similar question to that of the previous week, in order to form a comparison with how two of greater Europe's empires dealt with heterogeneous people groups within their territories. In the case of the Ottomans, they introduced the most liberal policy at the time, granting each approved religious sect or community autonomy in the form of a *millet*. These peoples were free to worship and conduct their day-to-day existence with little interference by the Sultan, albeit largely in isolation from the predominant Islamic community . Autonomy and good relations were predicated upon observance of the tribute or taxes and military loyalty in the event of war.

In hindsight, this autonomy, while effective in the short-term, ultimately produced the cracks which destroyed the Empire. Such autonomy created few real ties with Constantinople. And since the language, religion and mentality were often different from their constituents in Europe, loyalty faded and

was replaced by the late 19th century with independence movements beginning with Bulgaria and Romania.

Topics for presentation:

1. Compare Russian and Ottoman policies towards religious minorities. Which general policy is better long-term and why?
2. Explain what the Millet system.

Reading List:

A Cambridge History of Turkey: The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839, ed. S. N. Faroqhi, vol. 3, Cambridge, chapters 10, 12, 13.

Lecture 3.5 *The Catholic Church and Italian Unification*

The Church's interaction with revolutionaries is the focus of this lecture. The Catholic Church acted as a bulwark against revolution and political innovation. The exception to this rule was 1846-1847, when Pius IX appeared to adopt many of the policies championed by revolutionaries. His abrupt change, refusing to go to war against Austria to remove them from northern Italy, resulted in the assassination of his secretary of state and his own exile and temporary loss of power. The papacy remained in power thanks to the generosity of Austria and especially France, until its collapse in 1870.

Topics for presentation:

1. How did the Church, conservative politically, unwittingly act as a catalyst for political change in the peninsula?
2. Explain the change in policy of Pius IX between 1846 and 1848.
3. Characterize the relationship between Church and State between 1871 and 1929.

Reading List:

David I. Kertzer, 'Religion and Society, 1789-1892', *Italy in the Nineteenth Century 1796-1900*, ed. John A. Davis, Oxford 2000, pp. 181-205.

Frank Coppa, 'Italy: the church and the *Risorgimento*', *The Cambridge History of Christianity: World Christianities, 1815-1914*, eds. S. Gilley and B. Stanley, vol. 8, Cambridge 2008, pp. 233-249.

Seminar 3.6 *Prussia/Germany: Bismarck and Kulturkampf ('Culture war')*

Bismarck's consolidation of the German empire politically, included a loosening of dependence on the Catholic Church, which he viewed as an obstacle and challenge to his authority. His policies towards the Church, which it saw as persecutory, attempted to strip all authority held in Rome and, by extension, Catholic bishops in his territory. In particular, Bismarck sought control over senior ecclesiastical appointments and his State's educational curriculum. The resistance to these policies was stronger than even he anticipated, as the Church came out of these period stronger, especially in political terms.

Topics for presentation:

1. What was Bismarck's motivation for introducing *kulturkampf*? How successful was it?
2. Describe the German Church as a cultural and political force during and after this Cultural War.

Reading List:

David Blackbourn, *A History of Germany, 1780-1918*, Oxford 1998, pp. 283-301.

Topic 4: 20th century

Seminar 4.1 *The secularization of politics: Communist Russia*

Secularisation within society had already been gradually gaining momentum throughout the 19th century, especially following the French Revolution. The Bolshevik revolution and the adoption of Communism took this trend to its logical extreme. Religion was eradicated to the extent possible, forcing the Church underground. This seminar will examine the intellectual underpinnings of this political movement, pace Karl Marx. It will also examine how this was achieved in the 1920s and 1930s, and discuss, from the benefit of hindsight, how successful this policy was.

Topics for presentation:

1. Define Bolshevism and its attitudes and policies towards organised religion?
2. Identify intellectual underpinnings to Communism.
3. How did Christianity survive under Communism and what long-term effects did it have on organised religion?

Reading List:

Ronald Suny (ed), *The Cambridge History of Russia*, vol. 3, *The Twentieth Century*, Cambridge 2006, chapters tba.

Seminar 4.2 *The secularization of politics: Maoist China and Tibet*

For decades, China had claimed Tibet as part of its territory. The chance to take it came in 1950, while the world preoccupied with the Korean War (1950-1953). This seminar looks at Chinese policy towards their Buddhist neighbours, historically a rather peaceful area of the globe. Successive Dalai Lamas adopted policies which tried to address these political tensions. The Tibetan government was abolished in 1959, following an unsuccessful uprising. Today, China governs western and central Tibet as the Tibet Autonomous Region, while in the eastern region, there are ethnic autonomous prefectures. This seminar discusses the thorny issue of historical precedent as a reason or motive for forced occupation.

Topics for presentation:

1. What were the conditions in 1950 which allowed China to take over much of Tibet?
2. Describe the successive policies of the Dalai Lamas towards China.
3. How important are historical relations with a region in legitimising a take over of the region in question? And how far back in time does one have to go before the history is no longer 'relevant' to the present political conditions?

Reading List:

Melvyn C. Goldstein, *The Snow Lion and the Dragon: China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama*, Berkeley 1997.

Seminar 4.3 *Religion as Political Power: The Middle East and Sharia Law*

The Islamic revival of the 20th century by Islamic movements included the full implementation of sharia, reinstatement of *hudud* (corporal punishments), like stoning. In some cases, this resulted in traditionalist legal reform, while other countries witnessed juridical reinterpretation of sharia advocated by progressive reformers. Today, in many of these regions, though not all, sharia-based criminal laws have been widely replaced by European law. Judicial procedures and legal education in the Muslim world have also been assimilated with European practice. This seminar discusses the authority of religion within the political sphere and its consequences on minority groups within its sphere.

Topics for presentation:

1. What political factors contributed to the Islamic revival of the 20th century?
2. Explain the tension between the standards of the international community on human rights versus the laws towards women and corporal punishment as dictated by Sharia Law.

Reading List:

The Cambridge History of Iran, vol. 7: *From the Nadar Shah to the Islamic Republic*, eds. P. Avery, G. Hambly and C. Melville, 3rd ed., Cambridge 2007, chapters 19 and 20.

Eds. P.M.Holt, A.K.S. Lampton, and B. Lewis, *The Cambridge History of Islam*, vol. 2b: *Islamic Civilization and Society*, Cambridge 1970, Chapter 4 (optional 5 and 7)

Seminar/Lecture 4.4 *South America and the Catholic Church (Liberation theology), 1950s-*

Since the Spanish (and Portuguese) invasions of central and south America, the Catholic Church has wielded great political power. With the advent of the independence movements at the beginning of the 19th century, this traditional position was challenged and the Church was often the object of persecution. As South American states matured and developed in the last part of the 20th century, they were subjected to many intellectual, political and religious forces, producing some notable dictators and otherwise rather weak political structures. In the case of the latter, the Church provided communities with the most dependable institutions; in the case of the former, dictators had to reconcile their views with the Church in order to win over adherents. With such a strong presence, the Church's theology, took on social and political forms, and, as such, represented legitimate political policies.

Topics for presentation:

1. Explain how Catholic theology after 1950, such as liberation theology, took on political significance.
2. Explain the relationship between the Catholic Church and national independence in Latin America.

Reading List:

John Lynch, 'Latin America: The church and national independence', *The Cambridge History of Christianity: World Christianities, 1815-1914*, eds. S. Gilley and B. Stanley, vol. 8, Cambridge 2008, pp. 395-411.

Seminar/Lecture 4.5 *Africa: colonialism and religion.*

This seminar will use the Ethiopian Church as a pivot in discussing African religion and politics more generally. In particular, there will be a focus on how great the religious and political legacy was of the so-called 'Scramble for Africa', in which European powers colonised the African continent at the end of the 19th century. Following World War II, African colonies gradually gained independence, until the last one, Zimbabwe gained independence from the British in 1980. What is the legacy of the colonial period in terms of religion and politics? For those under the British Empire, the economic and cultural

(and ultimately political) ties continued within the Commonwealth, comprised of former British colonies following World War II. For those former French colonies, their ties to France have been even stronger, especially in economics and politics.

Topics for presentation:

1. During the colonial period, discuss the importance of religion in these various colonies and the role the Christianity played within Empire.
2. Discuss in general terms the legacy of the colonial period in Africa in terms of religion and politics. Focus on one country, as a case study.

Reading List:

Ogbu U. Kalu, 'Ethiopianism and the roots of modern African Christianity', *The Cambridge History of Christianity: World Christianities, 1815-1914*, eds. S. Gilley and B. Stanley, vol. 8, Cambridge 2008, pp. 576-592.

Topic 5: conclusions

Seminar 5.1 What's next?

As the title of the reading suggests, this class will take up the subject of transformations of international order. Taking into account the various alignments of religion and the state discussed in the course, this concluding seminar assimilates this information and applies it to various parts of the world, not mentioned in the course. The aim of this seminar is to develop more confidence and fluency in discussing the difficult relationships as expressed in various parts of the globe. Opinions and ideas should take into account the case studies discussed throughout the course.

Topics for discussion

1. How can the ideas discussed in the course be applied to present political situations around the globe?
2. Is there a preferred religious-political model within politics?

Reading List:

Andrew Phillips, *War, Religion, and Empire: the transformations of international order*, Cambridge 2011.

2.3 ESSAY TOPICS/ EXAM QUESTIONS

See above

2.4 CONSOLIDATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Faroqhi, S. N. (ed.), *A Cambridge History of Turkey: The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839*, vol. 3, Cambridge, chapters 10, 12, 13.

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Goldstein, Melvyn C., *The Snow Lion and the Dragon: China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama*, Berkeley 1997.

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Lynch, John, 'Latin America: The church and national independence', *The Cambridge History of Christianity: World Christianities, 1815-1914*, eds. S. Gilley and B. Stanley, vol. 8, Cambridge 2008, pp. 395-411.

MacCulloch, Diarmaid, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided, 1490-1700*, London 2013, chapter 4. (suggested reading: chapter 3)

McCord, N., and Purdue, B., *British History, 1815-1914*, Oxford 2007, pp. 179-181, 310-311, 401-404, 482-483.

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