

## The Egyptian Collection of the Museum of the City of Varaždin, Croatia

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*One of the smallest and most interesting Egyptian collections in Croatia is housed in Varaždin. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, its artefacts were in the possession of the noble family of Pasthory-Varady and in the 1920s, they were given to the Museum of the City of Varaždin. It contains seven objects: a clay cup from the late Badari or Naqada I Period, a limestone funeral stela of Mery-Mery, a military scribe of Sitamun, the daughter of Amenhotep III, a whole set of four canopic jars from the 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty and a Late Period Scarab. The paper will discuss the history of Egyptian antiquities in Croatia and give descriptions and translations of six of the items in the Museum of the City of Varaždin.*

*Una de las más pequeñas e interesantes colecciones egipcias en Croacia se conserva en Varazdin. Desde el s.XIX, sus piezas se encontraban en posesión de la familia aristocrática de los Pasthory-Varady y en la década de 1920 fueron donados al Museo Municipal de Varazdin. Está formada por siete objetos: un recipiente de cerámica badariense final o Naqada I, una estela de caliza de Mery-Mery, un escriba militar de Sitamun, hija de Amenhotep III, una serie completa de cuatro vasos canopos de la Dinastía XXVI y un escarabeo del Período Tardío. El artículo comenta la historia de las antigüedades egipcias en Croacia y proporciona una descripción y traducciones de las seis primeras piezas mencionadas que se custodian en el Museo Municipal de Varazdin.*

**Keywords:** Badarian Period - Naqada I, 18th Dynasty, 26th Dynasty, prehistoric ware, stela, canopic jars

Croatia has a relatively small number of original objects from ancient Egypt – approximately 4,030 artefacts in various museums and almost 1,000 in private collections. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the first explorative expeditions to the Middle East began, Croatian historiographers and curators were still concentrating on their own national antiquities from the Middle Ages and the early modern period. However, there were a number of enthusiasts and maecenas (for example Mihael and Ilija Barić, Josip Juraj Strossmayer and Juraj Haulik), archaeologists and historians (such as Mijat Sabljarić and Šime Ljubić). Due to their work and interest, the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb to this day, possesses some of the most important oriental museum collections in South-Eastern Europe. Its holdings include approximately 3,100 items connected with Egyptian history. The heart of it comes from donations since 1862, including the well known linen wrapped *Zagreb Mummy* and from purchases in 1868 from the Baron Franz Koller. During the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, further small donations and acquisitions were made that have expanded the total number of objects. Apart from the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb, other Egyptian materials throughout Croatia are in the Museum Mimara in Zagreb, the Archaeological Museums in Dubrovnik and Split, the Istrian Archaeological Museum in Pula. Further smaller collections exist in many different towns from Slavonia to the Adriatic coast and the most important of these are the Museum of the City of Varaždin, the Museum of Slavonia in Osijek and the St. Euphemia monastery in Kampor on the island of Rab.

## ORIGINS OF THE VARAŽDIN COLLECTION

The Museum is in the north-western part of Croatia in the baroque town of Varaždin. Despite being one of the smaller collections, the state of preservation and aesthetic beauty of the objects, make them one of the most beautiful and interesting collections of Egyptian antiquities in South-Eastern Europe. The Archaeological Department of the City Museum was founded in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and its storerooms contain more than 10,000 artefacts from Prehistory to the early Middle Ages. The Egyptian objects were originally in the possession of the noble family of Psthory-Varady<sup>1</sup> and it is thought that one of its members acquired them in the 19<sup>th</sup> century during their diplomatic service in Egypt. On returning to Croatia, the objects were placed in their country castle of Križovljan, and in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century these artefacts were bequeathed to the Museum of the City of Varaždin with other antiquities from the castle<sup>2</sup>.

The Varaždin collection contains seven Egyptian objects: a clay cup from Prehistoric Egypt, an 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty limestone funeral stela and a whole set of four canopic jars from the 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty and one scarab from Late Period<sup>3</sup>.

## ANALYSIS OF THE ARTEFACTS

### 1. Black-topped clay cup

Inv. No. AO 6521

Date: Late Badari or Naqada I period. Between 4500 – 3800 BC

Origin: Unknown

Material: Clay

Dimensions: h. 8.9 cm, section of opening 6.8 cm, bottom section 4.3 cm

Bibliography: Tomorad, 2002: 550-552; Tomorad, 2003: 65, 67.

The clay cup is a rather small piece of pottery, made from good cleansed burnished clay with a polished outside surface. It was handmade and well preserved but the colours are slightly pale. The inside surface is painted from grey-black to dark brown. The outside surface is divided into two sections; the upper section is painted black and the bottom section is painted red-brown. It shows characteristics of both Badarian and Naqada I Periods. Because of these characteristics, it can be dated as Class BR black-topped polished red Badarian pottery or as the oldest Amratian SD 30 black-topped pottery.

The Archaeological Museums in Zagreb, Dubrovnik and the Mimara Museum also holds pottery, however these are all from the pharaonic periods, therefore this clay cup is the oldest Egyptian artefact in Croatia.

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<sup>1</sup> M. Tomorad examined the collection for the first time in February 1999 and for the second time in February 2002.

<sup>2</sup> The facts related to the origin of the collection is based on the information's from Mrs. Ljerka Šimunić, director of the Museum of the City of Varaždin and Mrs. Marina Šimek, curator of the Archaeological Department of this institution.

<sup>3</sup> In early 2005, when this paper was in press, the Museum of the City of Varaždin bought one Egyptian scarab made of black granite from a private collector that we could not analyze in this paper. General description: height, 4.7 cm; unknown provenance; probably from Late Period; without hieroglyphic inscription.

## 2. Funeral Stela of Mery-Mery

Inv. No. AO 5279

Date: Reign of Amenhotep III (1390 – 1352 BC)

Origin: Probably Abydos

Material: Limestone

Dimensions: h. 54.6 cm, w. 38.7 cm

Bibliography: Panić, 1976: 1-10; Tomorad, 2002: 548-549; Tomorad, 2003: 5, 67.

The limestone funerary stela is an interesting document from the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. It seems that the owner Mery-Mery (*mry-mry*), was an eminent scribe in service of Sitamun, daughter of Amenhotep III. Mery-Mery claims to be the "military scribe, of the Lord of the Two Lands" as well as "overseer of craftsmen" and "overseer of the domain of the king's daughter Sitamun". According to the text on the stela, Mery-Mery was an important man in her service.

A few monuments have been found connected to Mery-Mery. A stela with his name is kept in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (Inv. No. 34186)<sup>4</sup>, two fragments from the wall of a tomb in the Saqqara Necropolis (Inv. No. K 49, K 50)<sup>5</sup>, fragments of the side walls of a tomb in the Saqqara Necropolis (Inv. No. A.P. 6)<sup>6</sup>, shabtis<sup>7</sup> and three statuettes<sup>8</sup> are kept in the Leiden Museum<sup>9</sup>. Another stela of Mery-Mery is kept in the National Archaeology Museum in Naples.

The princess Sitamun (*s3t-ymn*)<sup>10</sup> was the famous daughter of Amenhotep III. She was born c.1368 B.C. to queen Tiy and is sometimes called Sitama, Sitamon or Satamun. There are some indications of a possible conflict between Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) and Sitamun who, as the king's eldest daughter, was also a potential heiress to the throne. Evidence for this comes from the fact that her name was erased in several places in Egypt and this is also the case with her cartouche on the stela in Varaždin.

There are a small number of Egyptian stela kept in museum collections in Croatia, numbering 29 in total<sup>11</sup>. The specimen from the Museum of the City of Varaždin is unique, as it is one of the most beautiful and better preserved stela that can be found in the museum collections of Croatia.

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<sup>4</sup> PM, vol. III, Memphis, Oxford 1931., p. 225; PM, vol. III<sup>2</sup>, Oxford, 1981., p. 870

<sup>5</sup> PM, vol. III, Saqqara – Necropolis, Oxford 1931., p. 193

<sup>6</sup> PM, vol. III<sup>2</sup>, Saqqara – Necropolis, Oxford 1979., p. 705

<sup>7</sup> PM, vol. III, Saqqara – Necropolis, Oxford 1931., p. 193

<sup>8</sup> PM, vol. III<sup>2</sup>, Saqqara – Necropolis, Oxford 1979., p. 705

<sup>9</sup> It seems that side walls with Inv. No. A.P. 6 are the same side walls fragments as Inv. No. K 49, K 50. Compare PM, vol. III, Saqqara – Necropolis, Oxford 1931., p. 193 with PM, vol. III<sup>2</sup>, Saqqara – Necropolis, Oxford 1979., p. 705. It's also possible that shabtis and statuettes in PM, vol. III, Saqqara – Necropolis, Oxford 1931., p. 193 and PM, vol. III<sup>2</sup>, Saqqara – Necropolis, Oxford 1979., p. 705 are the same.

<sup>10</sup> She is to be distinguished from other princesses with the same name from the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, who was probably the daughter of king Amosis. See: K. Matrin, LA. III, Satamun 315-319., Wiesbaden 1980.

<sup>11</sup> One limestone funeral stela called Pedi-Hor-Pa-Khered was found in Osijek Upper Town in 1895. It is usually connected with some Egyptian cults from the Roman periods (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> century AD). The Egyptian collection of Archaeological Museum in Zagreb keeps 27 steles dating from the Middle Kingdom to the Late Period.

## Description of the stela

The stela is shaped in a traditional manner with a lunette. Its face is divided into three registers. The top register shows two *wꜣt* eyes. Between them there is a *šnw* sign and a *wšḥ* vessel with *nw* below it. Below the eyes appears *jmj-wt*<sup>12</sup> on the left and the *dd* pillar on the right side. The whole image consists of two gods Osiris and Wepwawet, on the left, and the deceased – Mery-Mery – praying to them on the right side. Above Osiris is his title *hntj-jmntj* "Foremost of the Westerners", while behind Wepwawet is the title: *nb tꜣ-dsr* "Lord of the desert". Osiris is holding a crook and flail while Wepwawet has an ankh in his right hand. Before the gods there is an offering table with two lotus flowers, as well as two cartouches bearing the names of Amenhotep III. While Nebmaatre name is readable, the other with the name *imn-ḥtp ḥkꜣ wꜣst* is erased. On the right side of the relief, Mery-Mery is standing with his hands raised in adoration before the deities. His clothing is typical for the New Kingdom, consisting of a short skirt and a long transparent garment. He is also wearing a wig and a large collar. The text is placed between the man and the deities, and it spans three vertical lines from left to right.

In the middle register Mery-Mery (standing on the left) is performing offerings to his parents' souls. The parents are sitting on the right at the table full of offerings. The text in five vertical lines (this time spanning from right to left) separates the scene in two parts. The parents are sitting on chairs with lion's legs, and their names are expunged. In two horizontal rows before them it is written "father" and "mother", but in the place where the names are expected to be there is a gap. Their clothes are similar to the Mery-Mery's. The mother's transparent garment reaches the ground and on their wigs there are cones of aromatic oil. On the woman's cone there is also a lotus bud. The father is holding a lotus flower in his right hand while the mother places her right hand on her husband's right shoulder.

In the lower register, a man named Khuy (*ḥwj*) or Hy (*ḥj*)<sup>13</sup> and his family (four people in total) are bearing offerings. It is possible that Khuy was the surname or another name of Mery-Mery. Behind him, two males and a female are standing in a line bearing different offerings. The first of them does not wear a wig but holds a cluster of papyrus flowers. He is followed by the second male wearing a wig and holding two lotus flowers - one in each hand. The third person behind Khuy is a woman wearing a long wig and a long dress reaching the ground, holding a small stool laden with two lotus flowers. There is a short inscription in five vertical lines above the offering table in the middle of the scene. Two features representing the parents are shown in the same way as in the middle register.

## Upper register

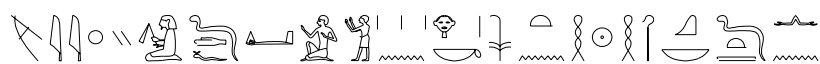


*sš mšꜣw n nb tꜣwj imy-rꜣ ḥmwt n ḥm=f tjsw m inpw imy-rꜣ-pr n sꜣt-njswt sꜣt-imn*

<sup>12</sup> The symbol of animal skin hanged on a stick was connected to Anubis. It seems it was one of his titles. WB, I, 73.15.

<sup>13</sup> There is a statue of the scribe Khuy or Hy listed in Porter-Moss (on-line edition) under no. 801-633-050: Huy *hjj*, Rope-maker of Amun, with sun-hymn and a text mentioning Amon-Ra, much damaged. Mid-Dynasty XVIII or temp. Amenophis III, Musée Calvet in Avignon (S. Aufrère in Foissy-Aufrère, 1985, p. 51-52 fig. 30). Another document of the man with the name Huy is found on a stele of the head of merchants in the temple of the Aten. PM. vol. IV. Lower and Middle Egypt, Saqqara-Necropolis, Cairo National Museum Inv. No. 34182, p. 192.

Military scribe of the Lord Two Lands, the overseer of craftsmen of his majesty in his early age, the overseer of domain<sup>14</sup> of the king's daughter Sitamun,



*mrj-mrj. dd=f: dj(=j) j3w hr=k njswt nhh hk3 dt. nn*

Mery-Mery. His words: (I) give adoration before your face, Lord of Eternity<sup>15</sup>, master of everlasting. There is no



*kjj hr hw=f. dj=k wn(=j) m-m hsjw m šmsw*

One like him. You placed me among the favoured (ones), together with followers of



*hm=k r nb.*

Your Majesty, the Lord, every day.

### **Middle register**



*jr.t htp-dj-njswt n k3=tn. w3b, sp-sn, m t3-wr n t3 m3tjw<sup>16</sup>*

Making a royal offering to your (pl.) souls. May (you) be twice purified in Abydos<sup>17</sup>, in the realm of the justified ones.



*šsp=tn snw pr m-b3h d3=tn r pqr*

May you receive offerings before you (and) leave (to) ferry to Peker<sup>18</sup>.



*nhm=tn hft jst=f m rd.t w3h n*

May you rejoice before his tomb in offerings flower-garlands by



*m3t-hrw jn s3=tn mrw=tn sš-mšc n nb t3wj*

the justified, your son, your beloved, military scribe of the Lord of Two Lands,

<sup>14</sup> It seems that Sitamun was in possession of her own palace or "domain". That "domain" could have been Malqata palace but the evidence is not sufficient to confirm that assumption. On this problem see: Gardiner 1961; Desroches-Noblecourt 1965; Stevenson Smith 1981; Grimal 1992; Bryan 2000; Van Dijk 2000.

<sup>15</sup> One of Osiris titles in Egyptian mythology. By this title Osiris as a judge of the dead was commonly addressed by the deceased. He or she appealed to make his flesh to germinate and to save his body from decay.

<sup>16</sup> One of the names for a dwelling place of the dead. WB, II, 21. Since connected with *m3t* the expression includes the meaning of "those who are justified".

<sup>17</sup> In Egyptian mythology near Abydos were the Kingdom of Osiris and the Islands of the Blessed.

<sup>18</sup> This passage in whole is obscure. M. Panić in her translation (Panić, 1976: 2-7) assumes that U-Peker is written. She also translates the whole sentence in a different way. She thinks that some words are expunged. Uranić's assumption is that the word order may be false, for there is no sense of *d3* after the preposition *m-b3h*. Further possibility is that *pr m b3h d3d3t* means "They come before the Great Consul of Gods". But such form of abbreviation was not found in literature.



*mrj wj nb jm3ḥ.*

the beloved, blessed lord.

### ***Lower register***



*ḥbḥw w<sup>c</sup>b n k3=*

Pure water for your souls,



*tn n ḥsjw n*

for the favoured (ones) of



*Pth jn s3=tn*

Ptah, by your son,



*sš mš<sup>c</sup>*

military scribe



*ḥwjj*

Khuy.

### **3. Canopic Jars of Ketjen**

Inv. No AO 5280

Date: Reign of Psamtek I (664 – 610 BC)

Origin: Unknown

Material: Egyptian “alabaster”

Bibliography: Panić, 1974: 15-31; Tomorad, 2002: 549-550; Tomorad, 2003: 8, 66, 67.

#### ***General description and dating***

On the front of all of the jars are hieroglyphic inscriptions in four columns. The text is the usual formula found on these objects. It contains a king's name *Wahibre*, which was the praenomen taken by the kings Psamtik and Apries. An unsolved problem in the text relates to the owner's name Ktjen (*ktn*), which also means the “chariot driver”. It is always written before the king's name therefore it can also be understood as the “chariot driver of Wahibre”. A previous translation by Panić (1974) does not offer a solution to this problem. It is also possible that the title “*the chariot driver*” became a personal name of the owner because of its importance.

Canopic jars belonging to the Late Egyptian Period can be dated to the reign of Psamtek I (664–610 BC). This assumption is made on the orthography of various words and

the cartouche of Psamtek I. The typology of K. Sethe<sup>19</sup> and G.A. Reisner<sup>20</sup> has helped set the date of these inscriptions. They have been compared with the typology made by Sethe and Reisner and they all belong to the type XIX from 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. The magical sayings on the canopic jars are dedicated to the god pairs: Isis-Imsety, Nepthis-Hapy, Neit-Duamutef and Serket-Qebehsenuf. All the magical sayings are different. Based on Reisner's divisions, the jars can be ranked in the 5<sup>th</sup> group of canopic jars with inscriptions. This type appears for the first time during the 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty.

The Egyptian collection of the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb also keeps 23 canopic jars with lids<sup>21</sup> and 22 canopic lids<sup>22</sup> dating from the Middle Kingdom to the Late Egyptian Periods. One canopic lid from the period of the Middle Kingdom<sup>23</sup> is kept in Museum Mimara in Zagreb, while these four canopic jars from the Varaždin collection are the most beautiful specimens which can be found in Croatia.

### 3a. Canopic jar of god Imsety

Dimensions of jar: h. 33.0 cm, w. 17.4 cm

Dimensions of lid: h. 9.3 cm, w. 12.4 cm.

Dimensions of inscription: h. 10.5 cm, w. 7.2 cm

The lid is made in the form of a human head and represents the Egyptian god Imsety. The surface is slightly damaged. Transliteration and translation of the texts:



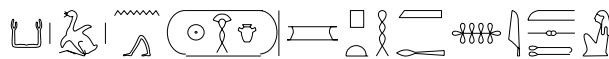
*dd-mdw in 3st: "sm3=j d3, stp=j*

Words spoken by Isis: "I kill the enemy,



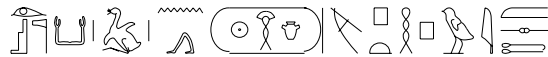
*s3 hr jmst ntj jm=j. s3 wsjr*

I protect Imsety who is in me. The protection of Osiris



*ktn w3h-jb-r mrj pth m3c-hrw. s3 jmst*

Ketjen Wahibre, the beloved of Ptah, the true of voice, is the protection of Imsety.



*wsjr ktn w3h-jb-r mrj pth pw jmst".*

(Because) Osiris Ketjen Wahibre, the beloved of Ptah, is Imsety."

### 3b. Canopic jar of god Hapy

<sup>19</sup> Sethe, 1934, 211 sq.

<sup>20</sup> Reisner, 1967.

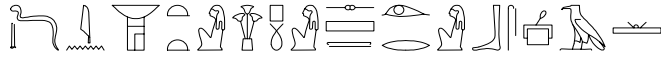
<sup>21</sup> Inv. No. 606-628.

<sup>22</sup> Inv. No. 629-650.

<sup>23</sup> Inv. No. ATM 228.

Dimensions of jar: h. 32 cm, w. 17.4 cm  
 Dimensions of lid: h. 8.0 cm, w. 13.2 cm  
 Dimensions of inscription: h. 11 cm, w. 7.5 cm

The canopic lid is made in the form of a head of a baboon and represents the Egyptian god Hapy. The surface is slightly damaged.



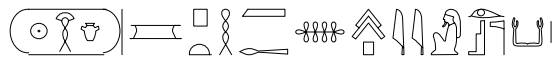
*dd-mdw jn nbt-hwt: "ḥ3p=j sšṯ3(w) jr=j bs3*

Words spoken by Nephtis: "I hide the secrets, I protect



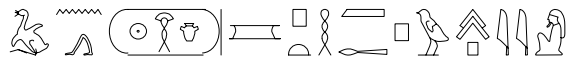
*n ḥ3pj ntj jm=j s3 wsjr ktj*

Hapy who is in me. The protection of Osiris Ketjen



*w3ḥ-jb-r3 mrj pth m33-ḥrw s3 ḥ3pj wsjr*

Wahibre, the beloved of Ptah, the true of voice, is the protection of Hapy. (Because) Osiris



*ktj w3ḥ-jb-r3 mrj pth m33-ḥrw pw ḥ3pj".*

Ketjen Wahibre, the beloved of Ptah, the true of voice, is Hapy".

### 3c. Canopic jar of god Duamutef

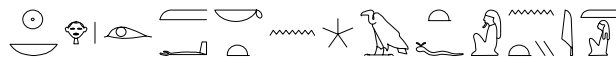
Dimensions of jar: h. 32 cm, w. 17.2 cm  
 Dimensions of lid: h. 11.1 cm, w. 13.2 cm  
 Dimensions of inscription: h. 10.5 cm, w. 7.5 cm

The canopic lid is made in the form of a head of jackal and represents the Egyptian god Duamutef. It is well preserved.



*dd[-mdw] (j)n nt: "sdw3=j smšr=j*

[Words] spoken by Neith: "I shall make the dawn, I shall make the evening



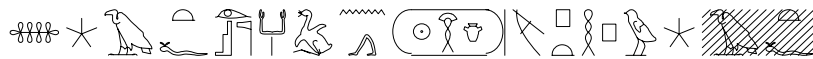
*r3 nb ḥr jrj mkt n dw3-mwt=f ntj jm=j*

every day to protect Duamutef who is in me.



*s3 wsjr ktj w3ḥ-jb-r3 mrj pth.*

The protection of Osiris Ketjen Wahibre, the beloved of Ptah,



*s3 dw3-mwt=f wsjr ktj w3ḥ-jb-r3 mrj pth pw dw3[-mwt=f]".*



is the protection of Duamutef. (Because) Osiris Ketjen Wahibre, beloved of Ptah, is Dua[mutef]."

### 3d. Canopic jar in the form of god Qebehsenuef

Dimensions of jar: h. 31.2 cm, w. 17.6 cm

Dimensions of lid: h. 9.0 cm, w. 13 cm

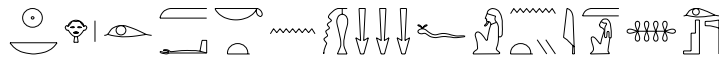
Dimensions of inscription: h. 10.7 cm, w. 6.6 cm

The canopic lid is made in the form of a head of falcon and represents Egyptian god Qebehsenuef. It is completely preserved.



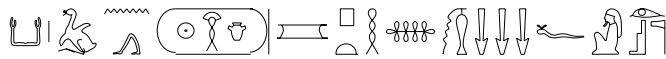
*dd[-mdw] jn srqt n k3=k: "skd=j*

[Words] spoken by Serqet to your Ka: "I watch



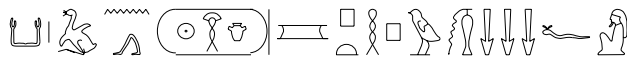
*r<sup>c</sup> nb hr jr(t) mkt n qbh-snw=f ntj jm=j. s3 wsjr*

every day to protect Qebehsenuef, who is in me. The protection of Osiris



*ktn w3h-jb-r<sup>c</sup> mrj pth s3 qbh-snw=f wsjr*

Ketjen Wahibre, beloved of Ptah, is the protection of Qebehsenuef. (Because) Osiris



*ktn w3h-jb-r<sup>c</sup> mrj pth pw qbh-snw=f".*

Ketjen Wahibre, the beloved of Ptah, is Qebehsenuef."

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