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FOREWORD

The present volume is dedicated to the memory of Abraham Zvi Idelsohn (1882-1938), "father of Jewish music research." The volume was meant to appear on his centennial, but, to our regret, the publication was delayed. During that year, 1982, two musicological conventions, one in Jerusalem and the other in New York, were dedicated to Idelsohn. During the Jerusalem convention, the A. Z. Idelsohn Street in the new quarter of Ramot Alon in Jerusalem was ceremonially inaugurated.

The volume is divided into two sections. The first section "Biography and Bibliography" contains documentary and bibliographical items related to Idelsohn's life and work. Here we reprinted his two autobiographical sketches (one in English and a somewhat different counterpart in Hebrew) and his 1910 declaration of the establishment of *Makôn šîrat yisra'el* in Jerusalem. An introduction precedes each document and an English translation is provided for the declaration. The documentary part is enlarged with a personal memorial essay by Irma A. Cohon who worked with Idelsohn for many years, and a general appreciation of his scientific *oeuvre* by Edith Gerson-Kiwi. The bibliographical part contains annotated bibliographies of his writings and musical compositions.

The second section, "In Idelsohn's Footsteps", contains fourteen scholarly papers related to Idelsohn's areas of research and interests. Among these are evaluations of his methods and of his contributions to musicology and linguistics. Other articles attempt to open new paths in fields which were close to his heart, such as psalmody, Yemenite and Sephardi song, Italian synagogal music, even Hindu chant. These and many more occupied Idelsohn at one time or another, and the articles are meant as tributes to his broad vision and versatile activity.

The more we know about Idelsohn's life, the better will we be able to understand his work. His lifetime is clearly divided into three periods or chapters. The first chapter, from 1882 to 1907, is the European. Abraham Zvi was born on June 11, 1882 in the small town of Foelixburg in Latvia, where his father,

The present biographical survey is an enlarged version of that in the preface of A. Z. Idelsohn Archives at the Jewish National and University Library, edited by Israel Adler and Judith Cohen (Yuval Monograph Series, vol. IV), Jerusalem 1976. Some details have been emended, and a few clarifications added. An exhaustive Idelsohn biography does not yet exist; its preparation is a research project on its own account.

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Azriel, served as the district sohet and ba'al tefillah.² During his childhood, the family moved to the neighbouring town of Libau, where he received his early education, mainly in the heder. From the age of twelve (perhaps thirteen) until seventeen he studied in different religious academies (yesîvôt) in Lithuania. He then returned to Libau and began studying cantorial art and music theory with the hazzan A. M. Rabinowitz. From 1899 to 1902 he wandered extensively: he lived for a few months in Koenigsberg; travelled to London hoping to study at the Jews' College; returned to Libau; sojourned in Berlin, where he studied music at the Stern Conservatory (presumably in 1901); served for a short time as hazzan in Augsburg; from there he moved to Leipzig, where he again served as hazzan and studied at the conservatory. In Leipzig he married Zilla, the daughter of the hazzan Hillel Schneider. Later, from July 1903 to July 1905, he served as hazzan in Regensburg. From there he went to serve as hazzan in Johannesburg, South Africa, remaining there for a year until his immigration to Palestine.

Idelsohn's musical (and, no doubt, cultural and spiritual) heritage is that of Lithuanian Jewry. In the beginning of his Wanderjahre as a young cantor, he acquainted himself with the Jewish tradition of Northern Germany; in Augsburg and in Regensburg he studied the tradition of South Germany. In Johannesburg, whose congregation was based on Lithuanian immigrants, he made use once more of his own musical heritage. His scholarly training was acquired simultaneously with his work as hazzan. Already in Libau, Cantor Rabinowitz had shown him ways of understanding hazzanût as well as European art music. In the Berlin and Leipzig conservatories he acquired additional knowledge, as much as was possible in the difficult circumstances of his life at that time. Idelsohn does not tell us about any formal studies after his departure from Leipzig in 1902; henceforth he would be self-taught.

The second chapter, from 1907 to 1921, is the Palestinian, or rather the Jerusalem period.⁵ His activity here was interrupted only twice: in the winter of

- In his birth certificate, the date was erroneously given as July 1, and the error was copied in later documents. See the autobiographical sketch in Hebrew published in this volume.
- Idelsohn visited Eduard Birnbaum in Koenigsberg, but no firm relations developed between them. See Idelsohn's autobiographical sketches and the introductions.
- 4 Zilla Idelsohn gave birth to four children; three daughters, Shoshana, Jessica and Dina and a son, Eliyahu, who died in infancy.
- The exact date of Idelsohn's arrival in Palestine needs clarification. He himself used to name only the Hebrew year 5667 (i.e., September 20, 1906 to September 8, 1907). In the archives there is a "passport" of two pages (actually a "laissez passer") issued in Port Said by the government of Egypt on May 10, 1907 (Mus.7[677a]). The document states that the person certified lives in Jerusalem and that the certificate was issued for a voyage to Europe. The document includes Idelsohn's wife Zillah, his daughter Shoshana and his son Eliyahu. We have not yet found any evidence that Idelsohn travelled from Palestine to Europe at that time. Ships sailing from South Africa to the Mediterranean passed through Port Said. Ships departing from Port Said for

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1913/1914 he visited Vienna on the invitation of the Academy of Sciences there; and during the World War he served in the Turkish army, mainly as band conductor. The Jerusalem period was the decisive one in both his life and work. In Jerusalem, amidst the almost complete "gathering of exiles" which already existed there, he discovered the great diversity of the musical traditions of the people of Israel. At the same time, he also discovered the diversity of the traditions of the other peoples of the Near East, Muslims and Christians. He discovered, collected, absorbed and reflected; and he began his scientific oeuvre, which would soon center on the formation of his monumental project, the Thesaurus of Hebrew Oriental Melodies. He earned his livelihood working as a hazzan, as a teacher in grade schools and in teachers' seminaries, and by giving private lessons. He was also active in the cultural life of the Jewish community; he composed various works and published anthologies of songs; he established choirs, and in 1910 he even tried to establish an institute for the research and cultivation of Jewish music ("Makôn šîrat yisra'el"). At some point during this period he began composing an opera, Yiftah (Jephte) - the first opera composed in Palestine.6 For a while he Hebraized his name as א. צב"י or "Ben Yehuda".7

In the summer of 1921 Idelsohn left Jerusalem and Palestine. His motives require explanation. The hardships of war brought about a decline of population, a severe impoverishment and a general atmosphere of depression in the Jewish comunity (the old yiššūv as well as the new one); recuperation was very slow. Since his immigration to Palestine, Idelsohn had been absorbed in the experience of discovery and intellectual growth and in his contribution to the building of the new Jewish settlement; but at the same time he had gradually become worn out and his health declined, mainly due to malaria. Like many others, he could not find the stamina to wait until the situation should improve and it was also obvious that even if living conditions became better he would not be able to survive merely on research, which had now become his main occupation. His existence as musician and scholar demanded not only suitable economic conditions, but also a proper academic milieu; this Palestine could not supply.

Europe would frequently anchor at Jaffa on their way north. A vivid description of such a voyage from Port Said to Jaffa is found in Idelsohn's story *Le-hayyîm hadašîm* (see no.13 in the annotated bibliography of Idelsohn's writings in this volume).

Details are given in the bibliography of Idelsohn's musical compositions in the Hebrew section of this volume, under § 1.

Lack of knowledge of Idelsohn's Hebraized name has caused some confusion in recent descriptions of life in Jerusalem at the beginning of the century, and, most regretfully, in various song

8 British military rule was enforced gradually, region after region, during the war; in 1920 the civil government took over, and the mandate was declared in 1922.

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The third and last chapter in Idelsohn's life is the American one. Apparently Idelsohn left Palestine in the summer of 1921, going first to Germany. He stayed in Berlin for over a year, making arrangements to publish his *Thesaurus* and the song books he had compiled in Jerusalem; he even found a publisher for his opera. In the winter of 1922/23, he travelled to the United States and embarked on a year long cross-country lecture tour. The Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati then invited him to catalogue Eduard Birnbaum's collection of Jewish music. In 1924, shortly after his arrival, he was appointed Professor of Liturgy and Jewish Music at the college. One may say that the year of 1922 marked the beginning of the fulfillment of Idelsohn's mission. This was the beginning of the period when he gathered the fruits of his labours. He completed the publication of the *Thesaurus* with the volumes dealing with the Ashkenazi traditions, he published many articles and text books to aid his teaching; he also planned an extensive Hebrew book on Jewish music (*Tôledôt han-negînah ha-'ivrît*, of which only the first volume was ever published).

He became famous in the United States and Europe, even among musicologists. In 1929 he published his English book Jewish Music in Its Historical Development, which became a "bible" in its field.

All his hopes for the further realization of his dreams were shattered by fate. In 1930, his health began to deteriorate, he was partially paralyzed and his speech was severely hampered. In 1934 the college allowed him to retire. From September 1935 until September 1937 he stayed in Miami, Florida, and then he travelled (or rather was carried to) Johannesburg, South Africa, to live among his family (his three daughters and his brother Jeremiah). On August 14, 1938, Idelsohn died at the age of fifty-six.

The honorary title "father of a discipline" can be awarded only to him who lays the foundations and constructs the edifice that makes up the discipline. This, indeed, is the significance of Idelsohn's work. The edifice he built over two generations ago remains solid and useful even today. Changes and additions have been made in the details and a few emphases have been shifted. A number of problems to which he gave confident answers have returned bearing the same qustion marks as before. But these modifications are all the result of a natural process; and this process is still taking place within the edifice which Idelsohn built.

INTRODUCTION TO IDELSOHN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Eliyahu Schleifer, Tel-Aviv

In 1934, Idelsohn's rapidly deteriorating health forced him to retire from his teaching position at the Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati. The retirement, at the early age of fifty-two, came only two years after the triumphant completion of the German version of the Hebräisch-orientalischer Melodienschatz and marked the end of Idelsohn's scholarly career. Forced illness provided ample time for reflection and stock taking, and Idelsohn wrote, perhaps dictated, two autobiographical sketches which were published in the following year. The first sketch, in Hebrew, appeared in January 1935 in Die Chasanim Welt, the journal of the organization of Jewish cantors in Poland; the second, in English, was printed half a year later in Jacob Beiml's Jewish Music Journal (New York).

The English sketch is longer and more detailed than its Hebrew counterpart. Thus, for instance, the statement about the author's studies with Eduard Birnbaum, a mere sentence in Hebrew, becomes, in English, a short paragraph relating that Idelsohn was never actually instructed by Birnbaum and criticising the latter's Germanized cantorial art. Moreover, important facts that are described in detail in the English text are skipped over in the Hebrew. The influence of Tolstoy's ideas on Idelsohn and his attempt to live as a Tolstoian disciple are not at all mentioned in the Hebrew sketch. Hence it seems at first glance that the Hebrew text is a mere abbreviation of the English autobiographical sketch. But this is not so.

Idelsohn, a man of multi-faceted character and genius, felt all his life that he had a mission to carry out and a message to spread wherever possible. He wrote in four languages to different kinds of readers, always selecting suitable data, emphasizing particular details and adopting the style that would best interest the potential readers of each article (cf. "Problems of Registering Idelsohn's Work" in the Introduction of "Idelsohn's Scholarly and Literary Works..." in this volume). The two autobiographical sketches present the same attitude. The Hebrew sketch written, as its subtitle states, "especially for *Die Chasanim Welt*," is addressed to modern East-European Jewish cantors, most of them orthodox and many with a strong Zionist tendency. The English counterpart is intended for the general American reader. Consequently, the two presentations of his own

Eliyahu Schleifer

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life differ in the selection of events and the emphasis given to certain facts and ideas.

Idelsohn may have not felt the necessity to describe his basic concept of Jewish music for the well informed hazzanîm, and therefore the Hebrew version does not contain the concise statement of the four principles stated in the English sketch as Idelsohn's credo of Jewish music. On the other hand, the Zionist readers of the Hebrew sketch would appreciate the various details of the attempt to establish an institute of Jewish music in Jerusalem as well as his other activities there. They would also understand his account of the opposition of the "zealots of Jerusalem" to his efforts. The Hebrew sketch has the tone of Idelsohn's deep-felt personal attitude to the essence of Jewish music. The Hebrew language lends itself to prophetic locutions; therefore strong expressions such as "the German music that devastated the music of the synagogue" or "the galût (exile) of the Hebrew soul" can be found only in the Hebrew sketch. On the other hand, the English autobiography is crowded with everyday data and events. Details of Idelsohn's activities while serving in the Turkish army, or names of well known American Jewish personalities such as Rabbi De Sola Pool, Prof. M. (i.e. Mordecai) Kaplan and Dr. Stephen Wise who helped him in one way or another and the names of his "sincerest friends," Prof. and Mrs. Samuel S. Cohon who were instrumental in his establishment as teacher at the Hebrew Union College and "furthered my cause in various ways," all these can be found only in the English autobiography.

There are various other minor differences between the two sketches. Most notably, Idelsohn does not mention his birth date in the English text, whereas in the Hebrew text he gives the correct date as 24 Sivan 5682 (corresponding to 11 June 1882) and notes that his birth was registered in the official documents on the first of July 1892.

In summary, it is clear that the two sketches should be read as complementary documents. Yet even so, they are incomplete. They gloss over some important facts, and at times puzzle the reader as to the true sequence of events, or even leave him with a few enigmas to solve. Thus, for instance, even if it is true that Eduard Birnbaum never instructed Idelsohn officially, the latter's debt to Birnbaum is greater than stated in the autobiographical sketches. Idelsohn knew Birnbaum's important contributions to the history of Jewish music and even availed himself extensively of this scholar's notes when he catalogued the Birnbaum collection in Cincinnati, yet none of this is mentioned in the autobiography. Sequence of events, especially those related to Idelsohn's youth, differ in the two sketches, and explanations of important decisions are insufficient in both texts. For example, Idelsohn's decision to leave South Africa after a short stay there is not fully explained. Beyond the quest for the origins of Jewish music,

beyond the lofty Zionist ideals, sincere and deep as they were, even beyond Idelsohn's apparent nomadic tendencies, there may have been local circumstances in Johannesburg that made his sojourn there difficult. Perhaps much depended upon the way he was accepted as cantor there.

The sketches are also silent upon other matters that would be of interest to biographers or to students of Jewish music. Idelsohn, who was an admirer of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, who wrote stories for the latter's newspaper and even adopted the name Ben-Yehuda as a Hebrew equivalent of Idls-Sohn, never even mentions the great linguist's name in his autobiography. The account of Idelsohn's activities in Jerusalem, even in the Hebrew text, does not provide details as to how he found and selected his informants and what the circumstances were in which he recorded them or how he went about transcribing the melodies.

A few enigmas are sprinkled in the texts; the most puzzling is the following statement in the Hebrew sketch: "In these years [1923-1933] I was able to complete the remaining volumes of my *Thesaurus*, to print them and also to gather materials for two additional volumes which are still in manuscript." One wonders why these two additional volumes (presumably vols. eleven and twelve of the *Hebräisch-orientalischer Melodienschatz*) are not mentioned by Idelsohn elsewhere. One also wonders what their contents were to be, which communities they were supposed to represent, and above all, what are the whereabouts of these manuscripts. There are no traces of them in the Idelsohn Archives at the INUL.

Idelsohn concludes the Hebrew autobiographical sketch with a paraphrase of Jacob's summary of his life (Genesis 47:9). "Here, in short," says Idelsohn, "are the events of my life, few and evil." This bitter statement is, no doubt, an expression of the despair of a most dynamic person now forced to terminate his vocation for good, but it may also reflect Idelsohn's frequent disillusion of dreams that never materialized and perhaps also the sense of failure over his unfulfilled Zionist mission to establish a universal institute for Jewish music in Jerusalem. Disillusion and failure are expressed elsewhere in the biographical sketches, it is more pronounced in the Hebrew text and more latent in English. All in all, the English autobiographical sketch is less pessimistic about past

The text has been reproduced without changes, except for the tacit correction of spelling mistakes in English words and in names, and of misprints.

achievements but equally so about the gloomy future.

JEWISH LITURGICAL FORMS IN THE FALASHA LITURGY? A COMPARATIVE STUDY*

Kay Kaufman Shelemay, New York

The Falashas of Ethiopia have attracted considerable attention because of their Judaic religious practice, yet the relationship of their liturgy to normative Judaism remains underdetermined. This article is a first step in the direction of comparative studies. In any society, a Jewish influence may be manifested in certain aspects of cultural life and religious practice, but all Jewish traditions share basic liturgical forms. By defining forms common to Jewish liturgies and determining their presence or absence within Falasha rituals, we can better relate the Falasha tradition to Jewish liturgical precedents.

Until recently, the inaccessibility of Falasha villages sheltered their religious tradition from direct observation.² The transmission and performance of the liturgy as an oral tradition discouraged most early investigators.³ Linguistic barriers hindered scholars in Jewish studies since the Falasha liturgy is in Ge^cez, an ancient Semitic language shared by the Ethiopian Church. Furthermore, the

- * This article was written during a 1981-1982 fellowship year supported by the American Council of Learned Societies through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. I also wish to thank Dr. Johanna Spector for her comments upon drafts of this paper. Dr. Olga Kapeliuk and Abba Petros Gebreselassie provided invaluable help with the prayer texts.
- 1 The article is based upon data gathered in Ethiopia during 1973-1975. The Falasha liturgical examples quoted here are drawn from the prayerhouse liturgy performed in the village of Ambober during the Fall of 1973, by Falasha priests (qesoc). Prayer texts and music are transcribed directly from field tapes. A key to the system of textual transliteration and musical symbols is found in Appendix 1.
- Although rumors about Jews in northeastern Africa intrigued Europeans from medieval times, the first detailed accounts of Falasha religious life were provided by missionaries who began to proselytize among the Falashas in the nineteenth-century. See Flad 1869, and Stern 1862. Apart from information published from a questionnaire by Luzzatto 1851-54, the earliest Jewish observers were Joseph Halévy in 1868, followed by his student Jacques Faitlovitch in 1905. See Halévy 1877 and Faitlovitch 1910.
- 3 A. Z. Idelsohn made the first recording of Falasha liturgical music with a Falasha informant in Jerusalem during 1911. The recording is no. 1175 in the Phon. Arch. of Vienna. See Appendix 2 for further discussion of Falasha examples gathered by Idelsohn.

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liturgy contains passages in the Agau dialect formerly spoken by the Falashas.⁴ Although many Falashas have learned Hebrew in the last quarter-century, there is no evidence that they knew the language in the past.⁵

Considerable controversy has surrounded the discussion of Falasha history. After long debate, the Falashas were recognized as Jews in the last decade and a number have immigrated to Israel.⁶ Yet scholars have been unable to identify the source of their Jewish traditions:

Very few of the western scholars who have dealt with the problem of the Falashas are of the opinion that they are ethnically Jews. Most of them think that they are a segment of the indigenous Agau population which was converted to Judaism. How and when they were converted is a problem for which historical evidence is lacking. It has been argued that the Jews of Egypt — we know of the existence of a Jewish community in Elephantine in the fifth century B.C. — or the Jews of Yemen may have sent forth missionaries who converted these African tribes to Judaism... It must be conceded, however, that nearly all the proofs in favor of this view are indirect rather than direct. The problem still awaits final solution. (Leslau 1969:xliii.)

I have elsewhere entered into this debate and suggested that existing theories of Falasha history neglect their Ethiopian context, in particular, their relationship to other Judaized elements within Ethiopia. (See Shelemay 1980:233-258.) We shall return to a discussion of possible Ethiopian precedents later.

This comparative study presents serious methodological problems. Our goal is to begin to define the relationship between the Falasha and Jewish liturgies. Two considerations must inform our procedures. First, since we cannot establish direct contact between the Falashas and a single Jewish community at any point in history before the nineteenth century, our initial inquiry must investigate Jewish liturgical elements that transcend cultural boundaries. Secondly, it is usually agreed that any direct contact between Jews and Ethiopians must have predated the establishment of Christianity as the Ethiopian state religion in the fourth century (Ullendorff 1960:105-107). Thus, we must consider only those liturgical elements established to have been part of Jewish liturgical practice not later than the first centuries of the Common Era.

- 4 See Halévy 1873. Today the Falashas speak the language of the region in which they live. Falashas of Ambober and other areas of central Ethiopia speak Amharic, the national language, while those to the northeast speak Tigrinya.
- 5 For further discussion of this point, see Leslau 1947. Jacques Faitlovitch started a school for Falasha children in Addis Ababa in 1924, and later sponsored other Falashas in Jewish studies abroad. By 1956, thirty-three schools sponsored by Jewish organizations had opened in Falasha villages. Bogale n.d.
- 6 A recent discussion of Falasha recognition by the Israeli Rabbinate and Falasha immigration to Israel is found in Rapoport 1980.

סיכומים של החלק הלועזי

התמדה וטרנספורמציה של נעימת סליחה ספרדית בתנאי סביבה משתנים

חנוך אבנארי, תל־אביב

התמדתה של נעימה אחת בכל הקהילות הספרדיות במזרח ובמערב יוצרת עשרות גירסאות של התבנית היסודית. בדרך כלל, אף אחת מגירסאות אלה אינה יכולה או צריכה להיחשב כטובה, מקורית או אב־טיפוסית יותר מחברותיה; אלא כלל הגירסאות הרבות הוא הוא שנקרא "המסורת".

מאמר זה מטפל ב־43 גירסאות של נעימת ״סליחה״ ידועה. שאיפתו הראשונה לפתח כלים אנליטיים ושיטות השוואה מתאימים כדי לברר מהו הגרעין החיוני של המנגינה, ואלו מגמות מדריכות את הטרנספורמציות שלו.

נמצא שהגירסאות מסתדרות, לפי תכונותיהן המוסיקליות, בשני מעגלי־מסורת, האירופי והמזרחי, החופפים זה את זה באזור־מעבר שמקומו בבלקן. בתוך המעגל עצמו מסתדרות הגירסאות בשני גושים של מסורת, האחת מרכזית והשנייה פריפרית. אולם החלוקה הזאת אינה כוללת הערכה לחיוב או לשלילה, מאחר שההערכה המוסיקולוגית כשלעצמה מחייבת תיקון על־ידי התחשבות בהיבטים סוציולוגיים, פסיכולוגיים וגורמים אנושיים אחרים, כדי שתוכל לשקף את המציאות נאמנה.

ארכיון המרכז העולמי למוסיקה עברית בארץ ישראל, בבית הספרים הלאומי והאוניברסיטאי, ירושלים 1940-1936,

פיליפ בוהלמן, איתקה, ניו יורק

המרכז העולמי נוסד בשנת 1936 ע"י מהגרים מגרמניה ואוסטריה אשר שמו להם כמטרה ליצור מקום בארץ ישראל שבו ירוכזו, יילמדו ויבוצעו יצירות מוסיקה יהודיות מכל הסוגים ומכל התקופות. המרכז התפתח במהירות לאחר ייסודו. הוא יזם קונצרטים ומופעים ואף החל להוציא לאור כתב־עת בשם "מוסיקה יהודית" (Musica Hebraica) בעריכתם של ד"ר סלי לוי והרמן סוויט. יהודים רבים נרתמו לפעילות במרכז מתוך אמונה בתחיית תרבות ישראל וגם מתוך חששות לגורל התרבות היהודית עקב עליית הנאצים לשלטון. אך מאמצי המרכז נדונו לכישלון כיון שמלחמת העולם השנייה ניתקה את הקשרים בין יהודי ארץ ישראל ויהודי התפוצות. המסמכים של המרכז העולמי, שלוקטו ומוינו בקפדנות בידי היוזם של המפעל והרוח החיה בו, ד"ר סלי לוי (1951-1951), נתרמו ע"י אלמנתו, גב' אלזה לוי־

אורי שרביט



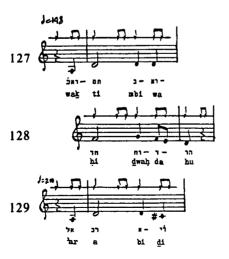


רלג

המוסיקה בקציד "אבדא ברבי די כלק"



מחרוזת 19



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