



Taybeh info

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Newsletter #3 - May-Jun 2006

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I. Introduction

This third edition of Taybeh's newsletter tries, among other news from the village and the Holy Land, to share the time of Lent lived in Taybeh.

You will also find news from the French sisters of "la Sainte Croix de Jérusalem" for Easter, and an article on Cardinal Daneels' stay in Taybeh and his speech on Ephraim. The dates of "D'Une Seule Voix" the musical tour in France in which the children of Taybeh's Choir will take part in May 2006 are also given in this edition.

Finally, the conclusion of this edition is the beautiful Easter Message of Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, H.B. Michel Sabbah that we encourage you to read.

Enjoy reading !

Guillaume Piganeau
Volunteer in Taybeh

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II. "La Sainte Croix de Jérusalem" in the Holy Land

And so their eyes opened and they recognized him! (St Luke 24,31)



«Your word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light to my path» - XXI^e World Youth Days - Palm Sunday 2006

Happy Easter to you all ! On this Holy Land, we cannot miss the event. Whatever our faith, everything leads

to meditate on the mystery, this fundamental question of death and life.

From Beit Paggi (outskirts of East-Jerusalem) close to Bethany (the village of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, today on the other side of the separation wall), the road leads us to the Mount of Olives, from where the view onto worldly Jerusalem is superb, to reach the garden of the agony full of olive trees, located in a domain named Gethsemane (place of the olive-press). On the other side of the Kidron valley, the esplanade of the Temple spreads under our eyes, today the home of the El Aqsa Mosk (3rd Holy Place in Islam) and the Dome of the Rock (site of Isaac's sacrifice and where the Moriah Rock is located, from which the Prophet Muhammad miraculously rose to the sky on his winged mare, Bourak), the rests of the Antonia fortress -the roman garrison-, the home of Mary's parents (Sainte Anne Basilica), the Roman cardos, the Golgotha (site of the skull) a little further Ephraim's Gate (today in the old city inside an Orthodox convent). It is easy to imagine the rests of the western wall of the temple lower down the esplanade, (Wailing wall, Holy place for the Jews). It is on this path that Jesus wept on Jerusalem that did not recognize its God whilst present in the middle of it.

Today, in these localities the Jews will celebrate the Passover (commemoration of the Exodus and the liberation from Egypt with Moses) and the Christians -Catholics first and Orthodox a week later- will celebrate Easter (death of Jesus and the resurrection of the Christ). Easter tells us the unlimited love of God for us. A God who gives his own Son as model for humanity to better explain the goal of our lives on earth and after, as well as the path to take.

Here is one of the aspects of our life here. We should not forget though the realities of our world. Hard realities that we all face at one point in our lives (illness, brutal separation, economical difficulties, family problems, weariness, etc.) but also joyful realities (simple happiness, life together). We confide them all to God for Him to find a way to help us go through difficult times and also keep strength and peace for the journey.



Jerusalem seen from the Mount of Olives.

Television regularly broadcasts all the bad news from our troubled world and also from our home country, France, which does not avoid the turmoil of modern times. It is sometimes difficult to describe entirely the everyday life of the people here. And yet, even if we risk repeating ourselves, the political situation in the region does not give any tangible sign of any improvement for the future of Palestinians, both Christian and Muslims. Gaza is sinking into chaos. The withdrawal of the Israelis now allows almost permanent closures of all access points to Israel and Egypt and makes it easier for targeted attacks and destruction of infrastructure by the Israeli army. Virtually no foreigner can work or live in Gaza apart from the religious sisters settled there for a long time. The testimony of the "Petites Soeurs de Jésus" who live there is very moving. The population lacks everything; shootings are permanent, in the sky, on the ground, etc. The wall encircles the Gaza strip and fixes the limits of the Palestinian maritime space at very short distance from the shore. Built in the sea, the wall has gaps in it to allow fishes to go through. It is the only source of income for the Gaza fishermen. Jericho, spared by the 2nd Intifada until now, is today highly controlled and its prison is in ruins Nablus is now very much used to military barrages, Ramallah is autonomous within its walls but the 35 Kms that separate it from Jerusalem are scattered over with "Check Points" (military barrages, temporary or not) including the one of Qalandia, now called the « terminal » similar to the one at the entrance of Bethlehem. The controls are the same as one in an airport. Between Taybeh and Jerusalem (25 Kms), a similar terminal is being built. In Bethlehem, it is in service since Christmas. The Palestinians, who did not have any incident with the Israeli army, have a magnetic ID card with the finger prints of all fingers stored in it. They have to show it, as well as an authorization to move, (valid three months maximum and given by the Israeli army) at every check-point, permanent or not that they meet during their journey. Cars with Palestinian number plates are not allowed to go out of the Palestinian territories.

Settlements continue to develop especially in East-Jerusalem. The newcomers settle in after Palestinian homes are either razed or requisitioned. They are now very close to the Siloam Pool and the Mount of Olives, right in the middle of a Muslim neighborhood. And yet, violence is largely on a down. After the signature of successive agreements since 1991, for the most recent of them, largely not applied, the population, as powerless as the international community, has resigned itself to accept the situation.

In Taybeh some families received expropriation letters for their lands. Rumors then propagated that it was a mistake. But past experiences leave a doubt. The same scenario happened in other places, the inhabitants therefore did not react to the letters, and their silence soon became fatal as it was interpreted as an acceptance.

Recent news tell us that the West do not wish to continue financing the Palestinian Authority. The Islamic

Republic of Iran seems to want to take over. As for the new Israeli government, it now wants to take unilateral decisions in the resolution of the conflict. All this leaves us very dubitative concerning the future of the region.

In these conditions emigration continues in the Christian communities and it is a very serious question for the Christian presence in the Holy Land in the short-term. The micro-projects developed by the Latin parish priest of Taybeh [though they help] are not enough to retain the youth in the village. All his ingenuity and goodwill are sometimes helpless. It is obvious that as long as the Palestinians will not figure a way to organize their lives in a stable manner in the region, those who can, will continue to join other members of their families already living abroad.

Our village continues to live in calm. A number of you have experienced it from your own eyes and can testify. The children's choir animates the Sunday-mass and other important celebrations. 8 of them are about to participate in a musical tour in France, organized by the "Ad vitam records" company, producer of the "D'Une Seule Voix" CD with numerous other partners. This tour will take place between May 14th and May 31st and will go through 14 cities in France [1]. Some pupils have taken the d.e.l.f. exam (diplôme d'Etudes en Langue Française - French Diploma given by the consulate). They are waiting for the results. Jiries, Kassam and Thaer, our 3 guides, are still ready to tour you around Taybeh in French, English or Spanish. The girls scouts managed to go to Jerusalem, for a day of preparation before Easter (their young age help them go through the military check-points). But the attraction of the souks and the old city shops was also hard to resist... The summer activities in French (both pedagogical and fun) are being prepared actively. The team of French animators is now complete. You are more and more visitors coming to Taybeh, pilgrims for a day, a night or a meal. It is always a pleasure to meet you. The presence of volunteers is very precious. They help us in our mission and allow us to have more time with you.

All the activities developed only exist thanks to your support, which allows us to live our mission of presence to the youth and inhabitants of this Christian village. To all we want to say a big thank you for all that has already been done. Whilst walking daily on the path opened by the Christ, dead and resuscitated in Jerusalem (in both figurative and literal senses), we pray for you, we confide Him your prayer intentions, known or unknown and give thanks to the Lord for your faithful friendship.

Sr Marie-Martine, Sr Claudine, Sr Martine
"La Sainte Croix de Jérusalem" in the Holy Land.

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III. "D'une Seule Voix": Taybeh's choir on a musical tour in France

Conducted by sister Victoire, 8 children members of Taybeh's Latin parish choir, will be part of a musical tour in France called "*D'une Seule Voix*", which will take place from May 14th to May 31st 2006.

On November 25th 2004, 120 artists, Israelis and Palestinians, Jews, Muslims and Christians, all directly affected by the conflict in the Holy Land, give a concert in Jerusalem. Soloists or in groups, they sing of the same land, the same town - Jerusalem - the same desire to live in peace.

The success of this concert in Jerusalem, have led the organizers to want it to continue. France being at the beginning of this « cultural diplomacy » operation, the idea of a tour in the country was naturally essential. The tour will take place in May 2006.

For the tour Taybeh's choir will be associated for the very first time with the Efroni Choir, founded by Maya Shavit and compound of young Israeli Jewish girls between 12 and 18 years old, mostly from country areas and Kibbutzen. A first rehearsal together took place on Thursday April 27th in Jerusalem, during which the choirs met for the first time.

Tour dates :

La Roche-sur-Yon	Sunday May 14th 2006
Rennes	Tuesday May 16th
Lille	Wednesday May 17th
Rouen	Friday May 19th
Dunkerque	Saturday May 20th
Clermont-Ferrand	Sunday May 21st
Toulouse	Monday May 22nd
Bordeaux	Tuesday May 23rd
Lourdes	Wednesday May 24th
Marseille	Thursday May 25th
Besançon	Saturday May 27th

Strasbourg	Monday May 29th
Nancy	Tuesday May 30th
Paris	Wednesday May 31st

All concerts are free, in order to allow all to come.

A certain number of places will be reserved to welcome disadvantaged or underprivileged members of the public (notably the young from the suburbs). In the same way, with help from the towns, particular attention will be paid to welcoming the handicapped to these concerts



The Jerusalem concert on November 25th 2004.

Concert program:

First part of the concert (estimated 45 minutes)

D'une seule voix	<i>Musical creation</i>
Hezy Levy	<i>Jerusalem of Gold</i>
Karawan	<i>Ballade</i>
Khair Mustafa Shallat	<i>Takasim</i>
Révèrend Goussan Aljanian	<i>Patzmezdzer</i>
Le Chœur d'enfants de Taybeh et le Chœur d'Efroni	<i>Porke yorash</i> <i>Ya Rabbas Salami</i>

Second part of the concert (estimated 46 minutes)

Jerusalem Oratorio Chamber Choir	<i>Adôn Olam</i> <i>Eli Eli</i> <i>La Rosa</i>
Rola Bakhit	<i>Kalbi Maak</i>
L'Ensemble musical de Palestine	<i>Wedding song</i>
Janet & Menashe Ensemble	<i>Mocheto</i> <i>Borun Baruné</i>
Ashira	<i>Salam alichum, Aleichem shalom</i>
Eti Castro et Saz	<i>In one heart</i>

At the end of the show, all the artists reunited on stage to sing together:

Finale	Repeat of <i>Ya Rabbas Salami</i>
«Encore» (with all the artists)	Repeat of « <i>In one heart</i> »

Total length of the concert is estimated 2 hours (interlude not included).

Organizers:

«*D'une seule voix*»
Jean-Yves Labat de Rossi
Anne Dieumegard

Ad Vitam records
Le Prieuré - 23200 Saint-Avit-de-
Tardes
Tel. : 05 55 67 35 85

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IV. Lent in Taybeh

The three Taybeh parishes (Latin, Orthodox and Greek Catholic) follow the Orthodox calendar and this explains why Lent started in Taybeh's Latin parish a week later than all other Roman Catholic parishes elsewhere. An agreement between the parishes indeed exists in Taybeh to allow all celebrations to happen on the same day whatever parish you belong to. Every year, Christmas is celebrated on December 25th (following the Latin calendar) and Easter is celebrated following the orthodox calendar. A few commented pictures.

The welcome of Jesus in Taybeh



The tradition is only 4 years old. Before, the inhabitants of Taybeh used to celebrate the departure of Christ from Taybeh-Ephraïm on the 5th Sunday of Lent and to walk from Taybeh to Jerusalem to accompany Jesus to his Passion. The political situation and the necessity to obtain hard-to-get authorizations to go to Jerusalem, have led to an inversion of the "tradition".

For the last 4 years, it is therefore the arrival of Jesus that has been celebrated in Taybeh. On the first Sunday of Lent, a VIP is invited to bless the icon representing Jesus. The icon then goes from family to family for evening evangelical prayers. On 12th March 2006, Mgr. Fouad Twal came to bless the icon. (See also. Newsletter #2)



During Lent 2006, Fr. Raed and the sisters of the Holy Rosary and of "La Sainte Croix de Jérusalem" visited all the couples married within the last three years, for a time of prayer and discussion on "Family". These times have also been an occasion for these couples to talk about their first years of marriage, their difficulties and their joys.

Palm Sunday procession in Jerusalem

Around a hundred inhabitants of Taybeh went to Jerusalem this year for the Palm Sunday procession. After Sunday-mass in Taybeh, 2 busses took all those who did get an authorization by the Israelis to go to Jerusalem, to the Mount of Olives, where the procession started at 2pm.



The procession goes down from the Mount of Olives to Saint-Anne Church in the Old City of Jerusalem. The Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, H.B. Michel Sabbah heads a prayer and says a few words before the scouts' parade starts.



The scouts' parade goes round the old city of Jerusalem by the north from Lions Gate (on the picture) to reach New Gate.

At 8pm, short after the end of the parade, the 2 busses drove the inhabitants of Taybeh back home, all very happy they could enjoy one of the very rare occasions when authorizations to go to Jerusalem are given to them.

Palm Sunday mass in Taybeh

A week after Jerusalem (where the Latin calendar is followed), Taybeh (where the Orthodox calendar is followed) celebrated Palm Sunday, during a mass aiming at being children-oriented.



Usually, a procession takes place in the village, gathering the three Christian communities after mass. The Greek Catholics start the procession. Once they reach the Latin church where they are joined by the Roman Catholics, and shortly after by the Orthodox. The three congregations then walk to the old Byzantine church of the Khader. Unfortunately this year, heavy (and unexpected) rainfalls meant the procession was going to take place inside the church. At the end of the procession, the children gathered around the altar.

Maundy Thursday

During the blessed week, Taybeh's Latin Parish welcomed the Italian deacon Lorenzo Paolino, a good friend of Fr. Raed. Celebrations started with the Lamentation song of Jeremiah.



As every year, 12 boys had been chosen for the washing of the feet. They were very proud to have been chosen for the role and each one of the 12 wore their newest white shirt.



After having had their feet washed, the 12 boys were given a small Peace Dove (Taybeh's ceramic workshop *best-seller!*) as a present.

Good Friday



Procession with the Holy Sacrament.



Burial of Jesus. At the end of mass, the tradition in Taybeh is to bury Jesus symbolically. A recumbent effigy is embalmed by young girls with perfume and is covered with flowers. Once the procession finished, the effigy is placed in front of the altar and everyone approaches to grab a flower to take back home.

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V. The Holy Fire arrives in Taybeh

Every year, shortly before the Easter vigil, the Holy Fire arrives in all Christian villages of the West Bank. The Holy fire is spread starting from the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem to all villages, where a little ceremony takes place when it arrives.

The parish priests of the three Christian communities in Taybeh await the arrival of the Holy Fire together with the congregation, and then walk together in procession towards the Orthodox church.



At around 5pm a convoy of cars sounding their horns brought the Holy Fire to Taybeh. Each one of the three parishes in Taybeh, Greek Catholic, Orthodox and Latin receives the Fire for the year to come.



The procession walks behind an icon of the Christ and behind the three priests holding the Holy Fire, and sings. Usually the procession is animated by the scouts, but this year's had to face with their absence.



Once at the Orthodox church, the procession walks three times around it before stopping in front of the entrance.



An ecumenical prayer uniting the three Christian communities of Taybeh, and the three parish priests ends the ceremony.

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VI. Lourdes 2006, Taybeh's unexpected presence

Thanks to the French association "Une Fleur pour la Palestine" in Toulouse, Taybeh will be unexpectedly present in Lourdes this year. The oil used for blessing will be from Taybeh and Taybeh's Peace Lamps will be distributed and presented to pilgrims. A quick look back on how it all happened.

From a protest against the separation wall...



In the village of Baziège, near Toulouse, on December 24th 2005, the association "Une Fleur pour la Palestine" organized a protest against the separation wall that is built in Aboud, a village in the West Bank. A wall made out of cardboard was symbolically built in a street of Baziège. The pedestrians could sign a petition against the wall and/or buy olive oil from... Taybeh.



...To Taybeh's presence in Lourdes

Out of the 600 liters of olive oil at the beginning of the day 200 were left over. The idea soon emerged that this oil could be sent to the nearby pilgrimage city of Lourdes to be used for blessing. But "Une Fleur pour la Palestine" wanted to do even more and allowed the order of 800 Peace Lamps from Taybeh, to be presented and distributed to pilgrims coming to Lourdes.

The presence of our lamps in Lourdes with its millions of pilgrims every year is a unique occasion for us to make huge publicity for the Peace Lamp Initiative. That is why we wanted to thank the association "Une Fleur pour la Palestine" for their precious work, all the more that the association's central activity is not the selling of olive oil or peace lamps, but the sponsoring of Palestinian pupils (through scholarships) in the Christian schools of Gaza and the West Bank. To know more about the association, click [here](#).

Several dioceses have also ordered small ceramic lamps from Taybeh to distribute to their pilgrims when they go to Lourdes. We would like to thank all the dioceses of Basse-Normandy, the diocese of Reims as well as the one of Lausanne, Geneva and Fribourg as they thought about Taybeh's ceramic workshop to provide them with the lamps they wanted.

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VII. Cardinal Daneels in Taybeh

A retreat-pilgrimage to the Holy Land

Cardinal Daneels, accompanied by two bishops and 25 priests, during a retreat-pilgrimage in the Holy Land, came to Taybeh for a two-day visit on April 23rd and 24th 2006. As cardinal Barbarin or Mgr. Rey, bishop of Toulon, before him, going on a pilgrimage with young priests from the diocese, is a more and more frequent way for bishops to have time to meet and pray together with them.



Staying at the *Charles de Foucauld* Pilgrim's hostel, cardinal Daneels and the bishops and priests accompanying him took part, on the second day, in the usual meeting with Fr. Raed and a mass celebrated by all priest and animated by Taybeh's Choir. During his homily the cardinal expressed a very interesting comment on the stay of Jesus in Taybeh-Ephraim.



Fr. Raed offers a Peace Lamp to Cardinal Daneels

Cardinal Daneels' comment on the stay of Jesus in Taybeh

"Jesus had to come to Taybeh-Ephraim. Just as his mission took him to Jerusalem, Nazareth or Capharnaüm, his stay in Ephraim was a necessity. Ephraim is not only a geographical place; it is a part of the human heart a natural need for the heart of all men.

All men need rest and a time of meditation and contemplation before taking big décisions. Jesus also needed this rest and meditation to accept his death. He chose Taybeh to spend this time that allowed him to overcome his very human fear of death, and accept the will of his Father.

All men, like the Christ, need at one point or another of their lives to find their own Ephraim."

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VIII. Taybeh to be twinned with Certaldo

Andrea Campinotti, mayor of the Italian village of Certaldo, 30 km of Florence, came to Taybeh for 2 days, accompanied by Lorenzo Paolino, to work on the possibility of a twinning between the two villages.



Andrea Campinotti, gives a picture of Certaldo's castle, symbol of the village to Mr. Daoud Khoury

After a visit of the village Mr. Campinotti met Taybeh's Municipal Council and its Mayor, Mr. Daoud Khoury. A list of projects was given to him, for it to be discussed by Certaldo's Municipal Council. Mr. Khoury has already been invited to Certaldo's summer festival next July. As for Mr. Campinotti, he promised to come back to Taybeh very soon in order to inform of the decisions taken by Certaldo's Municipal Council.

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IX. Taybeh and Deir Jarir reconciled !

After the events that took place in Taybeh on September 3rd 2005 (Click [here](#) for a reminder) a truce had been signed between the 2 villages. Since April 21st, an official reconciliation has been concluded, and we are delighted about it.

Further details about this reconciliation will be published shortly.

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X. Document: Easter Message from Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem

EASTER MESSAGE

16.4.2006

Christ has risen. Yes, he has truly risen. Happy and Holy Feast of Easter

1. Every feast invites us to reflect on the meaning of our faith. The feast of Easter renews our courage and helps us to face the challenges of life, private and public, as well as the difficulties we meet in the various countries where our dioceses are located: Jordan, Palestine, Israel, and Cyprus. It invites us to renew our faith in God and our confidence in ourselves so that we can better contribute to the building up of our society, in which we are called to love everyone without distinction and beyond all religious or national barriers. The risen Christ, the triumph over death, and the return to life are all telling us: first, God is in our midst, "He has made his dwelling among us" (Jn 1, 14); second, "He is love" (1 Jn 4, 8); and third, He has made us capable of loving as He does: "He has given us his Spirit," says Saint John. "If we love each other, God remains in us, and his love is brought to perfection in us" (1 Jn 4, 13.12). By His death and Resurrection, Jesus made each of us a new creature and a New Man "in righteousness, holiness and truth" (Eph 4, 23-24). He filled us with His Spirit, and "the fruit of the Spirit," says Saint Paul, "is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, and self-control" (Gal 5, 22-23).

2. Our daily life seems to be very far from this vision of God-with-us, of His love for all, and of the fruits of the Spirit in us. In our daily life, we sometimes have the impression that the life of the Spirit, which produces charity, joy and peace, is an impossible dream, especially in our Holy Land which for many years has been witnessing hate, mutual rejection, and death. And, the actions of its leaders and the life of individuals and groups simply proceed according to this logic. Kill in order to live. Kill because we are being killed. Hate because we are afraid or because we are oppressed. These are the criteria according to which we are governed and we live in a holy land, in a land of the Resurrection, in a land in which God has spoken, and in which the three religions claim that they believe in God and listen to His word.

3. Despite this hard reality, we must proclaim and say that the land where God has spoken, where He

made known His love for all human beings, can remain the land of the Word of God, and not become just the land of the word of human beings where God's Word is replaced by attitudes of death and hate. We must believe in our capacity to love, all of us, Israelis and Palestinians. We are capable of loving and of making justice for ourselves and for others. We need a new beginning based on new principles and a new perspective on life in this Holy Land. We are capable of freeing ourselves from the death that has been imposed on us until now. We, Israelis and Palestinians, are capable of freeing ourselves from the fear that comes from violence and terrorism, from the occupation imposed by the law of the strongest, and by the logic of death and hate. You, who are killing, stop killing. You, who hate, stop hating. You, who occupy the land, give it back to its owners. Love and trust are more efficacious in reacquiring your lost freedom, your lost security, and your desired independence. Certainly, this language sounds strange to all those who hold power in their hands. Nevertheless, we also say to the governments: You, governments, who do not believe in this language, you also are capable of loving, of living, and of transforming in terms of life and peace the relations between the two peoples in this holy land.

4. Brothers and Sisters, who are celebrating the Resurrection of the Lord in our diocese and in the entire world, we wish you a happy and holy feast of Easter. To all the inhabitants of this Holy Land, Christians, Jews, Muslims, and Druzes, we wish you an abundance of the Lord's blessings. To the Jews, who are celebrating Passover in these days, we express the hope that the feast will be a source of blessing, love and justice for you and for all the inhabitants of the Holy Land.

The Prophet Isaiah said: "There will be a king who reigns uprightly and princes who rule with fair judgment" (Is 32, 1). We hope that this prophecy can become a reality in our land. For the moment, "the ambassadors of peace are weeping bitterly" (Is 33, 7), as Isaiah also said. We pray and we hope that our leaders can let themselves be guided by new perspectives and a new courage that will change the face of this earth and fill the minds and hearts of the people with security, justice and tranquility.

Happy and Holy Feast of Easter.

+ Michel Sabbah, Patriarche
Jerusalem, 11.4.2006

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XI. Contacts

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