

GLOSSARY

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A

Anti-Judaism – a set of prejudices of a pseudo-theological nature serving as a pretext to persecute Jews. Although some of them had already existed before the birth of Christ, they essentially flourished when Christianity evolved as a basis for the desire to distinguish adherents to the new religion from Judaism. This led to efforts to exclude Jews from society, their isolation and the justification of general persecution, together with a false judgment of their religion and customs. In the Middle Ages, it prevailed in Catholic Church teachings and subsequently in certain branches of the Protestant church, mainly Lutheran. From the end of the 19th century on, it gradually shed its religious traits and assumed a form of ‘modern’ anti-Semitism. During the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church condemned it as the reason for growing Christian disdain for Jews and labelled it a cardinal sin. Other Christian churches followed suit.

Anti-Semitism – an ideology, political force and set of prejudices justifying a hostile attitude towards Jews. It is tied to the emerging concept of nationalism and has based itself on the tradition of xenophobia (hostility to other nations) and the century-old tradition of Church teachings in the spirit of anti-Judaism. It draws on racism by falsely distinguishing Jews as an anthropological race, called Semitic. In its broad meaning, it signifies a hostile attitude, verbal or physical aggression, unfavourable generalised judgments and prejudices toward Jews. According to many scholars, anti-Semitism became the chief ideological basis for the Holocaust.

Aryan appearance (known as proper appearance) – a euphemistic term used in German-occupied Europe to characterise

the appearance of a person that significantly deviates from the stereotypical image of a Jew propagated by the Nazis before and during the Second World War.

Aryanisation – a takeover of Jewish property (enterprises, stores, real estate, assets) by privately owned ‘Aryan’ firms or the state during Nazi rule in Germany. Some of the Jewish property was seized by forcing the owners to sell at well below the market price.

Aryan papers – false documents used by Jews hiding on the ‘Aryan side’ confirming their ‘Aryan’ persona. These were mainly: the *Kennkarte* (a personal identity card during the occupation), birth certificate, residence registration and employment record. Possession of baptism and registration certificates allowed the receipt of a *Kennkarte*, which is why many people sought to secure a baptism certificate either personally or through non-Jewish acquaintances, for instance, from priests. Underground organisations, including the Council to Aid Jews codenamed Żegota, produced Aryan papers for their members.

Aryan side – an area outside ghettos during the German occupation where Jews were not allowed.

B

Blackmailers – a common term for those living from blackmail and denunciation of Jews illegally leaving ghettos and hiding on the Aryan side. Upon the introduction of the death penalty for hiding or aiding Jews (15 October 1941), they became willing abettors of the Germans in murdering the Jewish population and Poles rescuing Jews. From 1943, Polish Underground State civil

and military courts passed death sentences against blackmailers as traitors to the state and the Polish nation.

D

Deportation – forced resettlement to a different region of a country or abroad combined with freedom restrictions, mainly for political reasons, on the basis of a decision taken by administrative authorities. It is applied to foreign nationals deemed a threat to the legal order, political system and economic interests of a state or to whom the status of a political refugee (political asylum) has been denied. In 1939–1945, Third Reich authorities deported Jews to death camps and forced labourers to work in agricultural and industrial sectors replacing men conscripted into the army.

Displaced Persons (DPs) – people driven from their homelands as a result of the Second World War. This was a term of the UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration founded in 1943) for people, who, as a result of war, were expelled or escaped from their countries. In January 1945, this organisation estimated the number of such people (DPs) to be 13.5 million, among whom 250,000 were Jewish. After several months and repatriation campaigns, that number decreased accounting for 1.5 million Poles, Ukrainians and Jews who did not want to return to their homelands and lived in what was called DP camps until their later emigration.

E

Einsatzgruppen [*Einsatzgruppen der Sicherheitsdienstes (SD) und der Sicherheitspolizei (SIPO)*] – special units of the Security Service and Security Police conducting special assignments after the advance of the Wehrmacht. Their tasks included the liquidation or arrest of Third Reich opponents, members of the Polish intelligentsia and Jews. They carried out this mission applying absolute terror and mass extermination. The first one was established already in 1938 and was active during the occupation of Austria and later

Czechoslovakia. More units were formed in the summer of 1939 prior to the invasion of Poland. They functioned alongside forces launching that attack. New groups were created prior to the aggression on more European countries. Several weeks prior to the planned attack on the USSR (Operation Barbarossa), four Einsatzgruppen – A, B, C and D - were established alongside army units under an agreement between the Main Reich Security Office (RSHA) and the Wehrmacht Supreme Command. Each of them was to find and murder enemies of the Reich, including communists, Gypsies and all Jews. They operated from the Baltic states (Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia) to southern Ukraine (Crimea and the Caucasus). Wehrmacht and German police units were delegated to specific campaigns. In Lithuania and Ukraine, assistance was procured from local paramilitary formations. Einsatzgruppen soldiers brought their victims – men, women and children – to chambers, trenches, quarries, ditches and pits, forced them to hand over their belongings and took their clothes. They then shot and buried them in ditches. After the war, Einsatzgruppen leaders were tried in Nuremberg and in other court proceedings. Of a total of 24 defendants, 14 were sentenced to death. However, only four sentences were carried out and punishment for the others was attenuated.

Eugenics – a ‘science’ of improving humanity through selective breeding based on the theory of Charles Darwin. Its proponents sought to prevent reproduction of individuals with allegedly inferior features, e.g. through sterilisation or isolation from society. The eugenics movement was particularly popular at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries in Great Britain and the US until 1943, where sterilisation was allowed in cases of people deemed genetically ‘unfit’, particularly psychiatric hospital patients.

Extermination – a euphemism for mass murder (genocide, crime against humanity); actions serving to destroy specific groups of people due to their race, religion, nationality, conviction, social status or even

state of health through killing, mutilation or sterilisation, as well as destruction of their cultural heritage. Contemporary historiography no longer uses this term by finding it to be overly technical and thereby masking the scale of the crime of genocide.

F

'Final solution to the Jewish question'

[*Endlösung der Juden Frage*] – a euphemism used in official German documents for the mass murder of Jews in death camps.

G

Gas chamber – a special unit or site used to kill humans with poisonous gases. During the Second World War, stationary gas chambers operated in most German death camps, primarily in KL Auschwitz-Birkenau and KL Lublin (Majdanek). They were arranged as collective baths, where Jews were murdered in groups. Depending on their size, they could accommodate from several hundred to even 2,000 people. Starting from 1941, the Germans used Zyklon B in those chambers. Previously, automobile exhaust was used for the purpose (e.g. at death camps in Kulmhof, Treblinka, Belzec and Sobibor). Even earlier, under the euthanasia scheme for physically and mentally handicapped persons in Operation T4, experiments were conducted with carbon monoxide and fumes in special walled rooms or vehicles. There was also a gas chamber at the Dachau camp serving to test various types of combat gases on prisoners.

Genocide [Latin - *genocidio*] – the killing of an entire society or nation. In a legal sense, the term was coined by Rafał Lemkin, a Polish lawyer of Jewish origin, who demanded during the Second World War that Allied countries punish Germany for its crimes. For the first time, the crime of genocide was defined in an indictment as the 'extermination of racial and national groups in the civilian population [...] in order to destroy certain races and national elements as well as people, racial and religious groups and, in particular, Jews, Poles, Gypsies and

others,' as formulated against the key Third Reich war criminals at the Nuremberg trial. In 1948, the UN General Assembly adopted its Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which entered into force in 1951. Pursuant to the act, genocide includes the following acts committed *with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group* [an excerpt from Article II of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide].

Gestapo [*Geheime Staatspolizei*] – the secret political police of the Third Reich. It adopted the role of the police, but gradually expanded it to become the primary investigative body ruling on the placement in concentration camps. A Hitler decree from 17 June 1936 consolidated Gestapo structures and *Reichsführer SS* H. Himmler was appointed its head. In 1939–1945, the Gestapo became a part of the Main Reich Security Office (RSHA) as its Fourth Department as well as one of the most criminal aspects of the occupational terror apparatus (e.g. many Gestapo officers served in *Einsatzgruppen*). In 1946, the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg named it a criminal organisation.

Ghetto – a separated part of a city (street, district) for habitation by Jews. According to one hypothesis, this term originated from the Italian (*borghetto*) for an iron foundry on a Venetian island with a Jewish area in the early 16th century. After the creation of a ghetto in Rome by Pope Paul IV in 1555, similar ghettos appeared in all papal cities and in other countries of Europe. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the introduction of formal equal rights for Jews in many European countries ensured Jewish confined ghetto and otherwise free

residence in Christian areas, which, however, entailed cultural and custom assimilation by such Jews. For this reason the majority of the Jewish population (mainly its poorer section) continued to live in ghettos. During the Second World War, the Germans created physically separate ghettos in occupied Eastern Europe officially known as the *Jüdische Wohnbezirk* [Jewish residential area]. They allowed indirect annihilation of Jews concentrated there seeking their ultimate demise. Approximately 680 ghettos were established in occupied Poland. Some also existed in the Baltic states, Belarus, Ukraine and Czech territories. The largest ghetto was in Warsaw, where approximately 450,000 people lived within a confined space. Cramped quarters, lack of food and medicine and terrible sanitary conditions led to an extremely high death rate. In 1941, the Germans imposed death penalties on Jews leaving the ghetto without permission. One year later, the liquidation of ghettos began with their inhabitants sent to death camps. In an act of self-defence, Jews in several ghettos organised uprisings that did not halt their final annihilation, however. That lasted until August 1944, when the last ghetto in Łódź was razed to the ground.

H

Holocaust [Greek: *holokaustikós* – burnt offering, a sacrifice burnt entirely on the altar] – a term used to describe the persecution and killing of European Jews by the Third Reich and its allies during the Second World War. The religious context of this word has led to its rejection by many Jewish academics and theologians who use the Hebrew word 'Shoah' signifying complete doom and destruction to describe the plight of the Jewish people.

J

Jewish Combat Organisation (Polish acronym ŻOB) – an underground military organisation established in the Warsaw ghetto in October 1942 by the Coordinating Commission of the Jewish National Committee and Bund. It conducted military

training, collected weapons and prepared plans to defend the ghetto and the escape of Jews to the Kampinos forest in the event of deportation. Its commander was Mordechaj Anielewicz (Malachi) and it had approximately 300 soldiers (more than 20 armed groups established by Jewish organisations were represented in the Coordinating Commission). In January 1943, it fought the Germans during the self-defence of ghetto residents against deportations to death camps. As of April 1943, it took part in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Most ŻOB soldiers were killed and several dozen able to escape the ghetto continued their fight, primarily in guerrilla units. An armed ŻOB group also took part in the 1944 Warsaw Rising.

Jewish Military Union (Polish acronym ŻZW)

– an independent armed formation in the Warsaw ghetto founded by the Zionist Organisation, the New Zionist Organisation and the Betar youth organisation. The ŻZW included a group of soldiers from the Polish Army and former defence fighters against Germans who established contact with the Home Army. As a result, they received a significant quantity of weapons. The ŻZW had approximately 200 members and was headed by Paweł Frenkel. Despite unsuccessful attempts to merge with the ŻOB during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, both organisations cooperated with each other closely. Most ŻZW members died during the insurrection.

Judenrat – the Jewish Council, executive body of the German ghetto administration formed in occupied Polish territories in the autumn of 1939 and in the USSR from 1941/42. It was appointed by Germans from among representatives of local Jewish communities.

L

Lebensraum [German: living space] – a territory in Eastern Europe extending from the Baltic Sea, Black Sea and Crimea to the Urals, which, according to Nazi plans, was planned for settlement by the Germans. The plan assumed a 'cleansing' of that area of the

non-Aryan population (primarily Jews) and slave labour of Slavic nations exploited by the Reich.

M

Main Reich Security Office

[*Reichssicherheitshauptamt (RSHA)*]
– the headquarters of the state security police of the Third Reich and the security service of the Nazi party; one of twelve SS offices created in 1939 at the initiative of H. Himmler. Until 1942, the RSHA was headed by R. Heydrich and subsequently by E. Kaltenbrunner. The RSHA occupation police apparatus was responsible for German war crimes and crimes against humanity during the Second World War.

N

Nazi German camps - places of imprisonment, isolation, forced slave labour as well as mass killing of people organised by Nazi authorities across the Third Reich and countries it occupied. The first concentration camp was built in 1933 in Dachau. Others followed, such as Sachsenhausen (1936), Buchenwald (1937), Mauthausen and a women's camp in Ravensbrück (1939). By 1939, approximately 170,000 political prisoners passed through concentration camps in Germany. Their nature changed with the outbreak of the war through their transformation from centres for isolating regime opponents to instruments of biological extermination of defeated nations. New camps were built for this purpose, like Stutthof (1939), Auschwitz I, Gross-Rosen, Bergen-Belsen (all in 1940), KL Lublin (Majdanek) (1941), which generally served a gradual mass killing of prisoners. The turn of 1941 and 1942 saw the start of the construction of camps intended for the immediate killing of Jews in Chełmno on the Ner (Kulmhof), Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec, Auschwitz II Birkenau and KL Lublin (Majdanek).

NSDAP [*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*, National Socialist German Workers' Party] – a German fascist party founded in Munich in 1919. From 1921

onwards, its leader and ideologue was Adolf Hitler. Dissolved in 1923 after an unsuccessful Munich beer hall putsch and reorganised in 1925, the NSDAP sought unlimited power by exploiting public dissatisfaction over the consequences of the First World War and the post-war economic crisis. It adopted nationalist and social slogans (supported by racial theories, particularly strong anti-Semitism), called for a revision of the Versailles Treaty and gradually gained support from a considerable part of German society. On 1 January 1920, the NSDAP had a mere 64 members but in 1930 already 125,000. By 30 January 1933, it grew to more than 700,000 members, in 1933–1934 2.5 million and by 1935–1944 its membership totalled 8.5 million. The party's structure and organisation from 1921 was based on the leadership principle (*Führerprinzip*) meaning that the leader's will was supreme for the party and its members while he himself was not subject to any control. NSDAP formations were the paramilitary SA and SS branches. Moreover, the NSDAP had control over professional, social, cultural, youth and other organisations. In the Reichstag elections of 1933, it obtained 43.9% of the seats, as a result of which Hitler was appointed Chancellor on 30 January 1933. A period of totalitarian NSDAP government began in Germany. After the transformation of social and political life according to the National Socialist doctrine, the period of Third Reich's expansion began that led to the Second World War in 1939. The NSDAP political terror system rested on total surveillance, broad expansion of the police apparatus and concentration camps, elimination of all opposition, submission of all areas of life to strict control and rule by the party and state together with the introduction of the leadership principle. In its foreign policy, the NSDAP adopted a programme of conquering Europe (*Lebensraum*) accompanied by terror and genocide launched against inhabitants of occupied countries, particularly in Poland, where several million citizens were murdered. The racist NSDAP policy led to the annihilation of more than six million Jews

in occupied Europe. At the Nuremberg trial, the NSDAP was named a criminal organisation.

Nuremberg trial – a trial of key Third Reich criminals accused of four types of offenses: conspiracy to commit international crimes, crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity, conducted in Nurnberg in 1945–1949. The principle of criminal liability of statesmen for international crimes had been applied for the first time there and then. The trial of main war criminals at the International Military Tribunal took place between 20 November 1945 and 1 October 1946. The Tribunal included judges from France, Great Britain, the US and the USSR. The indictment covered 24 people and eight organisations and groups: the Reich's government, political leadership of the NSDAP, SS, SD, Gestapo, SA, as well as the General Staff and Chief Command of the Wehrmacht. In its judgment announced on 30 September/1 October 1946, the Tribunal sentenced 12 defendants to death, including H. Göring, J. von Ribbentrop, W. Keittel, E. Kaltenbrunner, A. Rosenberg and H. Frank. Three of them were given life sentences, including R. Hess, several were given prison terms while H. Fritzsche, F. von Papen and H. Schacht were acquitted. Those condemned to death were executed on 16 October 1946 with the exception of Göring (who committed suicide) and Bormann (not found). The SS, SD, Gestapo and the political leadership of the NSDAP were named criminal organisations. Additionally, twelve trials took place before the US Military Tribunal sitting between 9 December 1946 and 11 April 1949 at which, among others, doctors, lawyers SS members, frontline generals, Einsatzgruppen leaders, higher ministerial officials and others were tried. In total, 185 people were charged, 177 sat as defendants, four committed suicide and four were found incapable of being tried. Among the accused, 25 were given the death sentence (of whom twelve were executed and one extradited to Belgium, where he died), 19 sentenced to life and 98 to prison, whereas 35 were acquitted.

O

Operation Reinhardt [*Aktion Reinhard*]

– a German code name for the campaign of liquidating ghettos and deportation of Jews to death camps with theft of their property. It was carried out in the General Government and Bialystok District (*Bezirk Bialystok*) from the spring of 1942 until the autumn of 1943. The campaign was named after Reinhard Heydrich, who had died in June 1942 from wounds in an attack by the Czech resistance movement. After Ernst Kaltenbrunner replaced him as head of the entire campaign, it was carried out within the framework of the 'final solution to the Jewish question' (*Endlösung der Juden Frage*). Most Jews, isolated in ghettos before, were killed on the spot or transported to death camps in occupied Polish territories (Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka) and murdered there. Some Jews, selected for their professional qualifications, were sent to work in weapons production. The campaign was conducted by the chief of the SS and police in the Lublin district, Odilo Globočnik.

P

Pogrom – an organised attack consisting of destruction and theft of property, rape and murder by a single social group against another group for the purpose of its intimidation, expulsion or murder. It is a common term used to signify bloody anti-Jewish acts in Russia at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Over time, it the term has come to signify all collective acts against Jews that have ever took place.

R

Race – a term applied to groups of people according to a certain set of hereditarily transmitted features, e.g. skin, eye and hair colour or the shape of face or skull. Contemporary genetic studies have cast doubt on the validity of such division by even questioning the anthropological distinction of people according to skin colour. Genetics have demonstrated such a high genetic variation within each skin colour that there can be no mention of race.

Racism – a worldview concerning inequality among people. It is based on the conviction that differences in physical appearance entail inalienable personality and intellectual disparities. The racist ideology maintains superiority of certain races over others. According to its assumptions, of paramount value is the survival of ‘superior’ races seeking to dominate ‘inferior ones.

Ringelblum Archive – an underground archive created by a group of activists working with Emanuel Ringelblum in the Warsaw Ghetto collecting and processing testimonies (accounts, documents, correspondence, daily press and other materials) on the fate of Jews during the Holocaust. Materials collected by Ringelblum’s associates were hidden in the Ghetto in April 1943. A considerable amount of them was found after the war and is stored in the archive of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw as one of the most valuable collections of materials documenting the Holocaust.

Roma and Sinti (commonly known as Gypsies) – an ethnic group or a non-territorial nation originating from India whose members form a diaspora in many countries of the world. They reached Europe south of the continent. In subsequent centuries they spread throughout Europe. Most adopted Christianity and some assumed Islam. They have a rich and original culture as well as their own language that has spawned many regional dialects and which has become a written language only recently. Following their nomadic lifestyle, the Roma traded in animals (mainly horses), crafts, silver and gold items, and played music. Initially accepted by societies in which they lived, many myths and suspicions grew around them with time. They were prohibited from owning land and frequently accused of espionage and theft. Just as Jews, they were held responsible for the killing of Jesus and other misfortunes. It was believed that the Roma kidnapped children, engaged in witchcraft and spread dangerous diseases. For centuries, it was accepted that they could be repressed at

will. The greatest persecution of the Roma took place in 1933–1945, when, similarly to Jews, they were locked in ghettos by Germans, then shot and murdered in death camps. Another victim of Nazi repression was the Sinti, an ethnic group stemming from the Roma who lived in Germany. The total number of the murdered Roma and Sinti is estimated at 500,000–600,000.

S

SA [*Sturmabteilungen der Nationalsozialistischen Deutschen Arbeiterpartei*, NSDAP Storm Troopers] – a paramilitary organisation formed in 1920 with the task of protecting Nazi party meetings and the dispersal of gatherings and manifestations of Nazi party rivals. It was dissolved in 1923 for its involvement in a Munich putsch. In 1925, it was organised anew by NSDAP members and in 1933 numbered approximately two million adherents. It played a significant role in the Nazis’ victory and consolidation of the totalitarian regime in Germany. When Hitler came to power, the SA became an official government organisation, which, together with the police, arrested and tortured political opponents and built concentration camps. It played a dominant role in the ‘Night of the Long Knives’, when elite auxiliary units, the SS (*Schutzstaffeln*), massacred SA leaders at the command of Hitler who feared a rebellion.

SD [*Sicherheitsdienst des Reichsführers SS*, Reichsführer’s Security Service SS] – the political intelligence service of the NSDAP organised by R. Heydrich in 1931 within the framework of the SS. The SD monitored citizens, particularly their foreign contacts, and staged political provocations. In 1939, it was incorporated into the state apparatus as the Main Reich Security Office. The SD’s political influence grew during the war, when it took part in the formation of Einsatzgruppen. In February 1944, the SD assumed chief functions of military intelligence (*Abwehr*). The International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg recognised it as a criminal organisation for its co-participation in Nazi crimes.

Shoah [Hebrew: total annihilation, catastrophe, destruction] – a term for the genocide launched against European Jews by the Third Reich and its allies during the Second World War.

Smuggling – a common word for the illegal supply of food and the only form of survival for thousands of Jews locked in ghettos.

Star of David – a six-pointed star; a symbol of the Jewish nation and Zionism.

Stürmer – the most popular Nazi periodical published in Bavaria starting from 1923. After the Nazis had assumed power, it reached several million readers throughout Germany. Its formally simple and harsh anti-Jewish articles alluded to historical sources of anti-Semitism with particular attention given to illustrations and caricatures. Their purpose was to arouse disgust towards the Jewish population among the readers by creating a terrifying image of the Jew devoid of human features. That helped strengthen the public conviction that Jews were not human beings.

W

Wannsee Conference – a meeting of 15 representatives of central institutions and the Third Reich occupation authorities headed by R. Heydrich concerning the coordination of the 'final solution to the Jewish question' (*Endlösung der jüdischen Frage*) that was most likely already resolved in the summer of 1941. The conference took place at the outskirts of Berlin on Wannsee Lake on 20 January 1942. The plan presented by Heydrich envisaged the deportation of eleven million European Jews to death camps in the East. After the Wannsee Conference, the Reinhard plan began to be implemented in occupied Polish territories.

Z

Zyklon B – hydrogen cyanide, a highly toxic chemical compound used for disinfection and as a rat poison. As a preparation of diatomaceous earth it was used to kill people in gas chambers during the Second World War. It works by inhibiting cellular respiration. Hydrogen cyanide poisoning is accompanied by respiratory paralysis with anxiety, dizziness and vomiting. Approximately 5–7 kg of zyklon is needed to kill 2,000 people.

Zegota (Żegota) – a codename for the Council to Aid Jews, an underground social organisation. It was established in December 1942 at the Polish Government Delegation for the Homeland after the transformation of the Temporary Committee to Aid Jews, which had operated as of September 1942 under the leadership of Zofia Kossak-Szczucka. Żegota included members of Catholic, leftist and Democrat political parties and social organisations. Its subsequent leaders were J. Grobelny, R. Jabłonowski and L. Feiner (after the Warsaw Rising). The Council worked with the Jewish section at the Internal Affairs Department of the Polish Government Delegation for the Homeland and was mainly financed by it (90%), whereby Jewish organisations provided the remaining funds. In 1943, regional councils appeared in Krakow and Lviv. Altogether, it provided help to several hundred thousand people. It worked together with the Directorate of Underground Warfare in countering extortionists and blackmailers, appealed for help to Jews and organised several escapes from work camps and transfer of escapees to Hungary. It ended its activity in January 1945.

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