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## **GENDER ASPECTS OF WOMEN'S SERVICE IN THE ARMED FORCES OF UKRAINE: TRADITIONS AND MODERNITY**

The author of the article deals with some gender aspects of women's military service in Ukraine.

Military activity has traditionally been considered a purely male activity in many cultures. And these stereotypes changed very slowly. But today Ukrainians facing a dangerous situation must act and introduce innovations in many spheres including the Armed Forces. Russian full-scale invasion launched specific processes in Ukrainian society and women play a vital role in them. The popularity of military service among women in the last two years increased more than two times. They take an active part in the defense of their country even on the battlefield.

The author analyzes those traditional archetypes that could encourage female activity in the critical situation caused by war. It is underlined that there are some characteristic traits in the behavior of Ukrainian women that can be used not only in wartime but also after the victory for recovery and transformation of the whole society.

*Keywords: gender equality in military service, Ukrainian traditional female archetypes.*

War is always a severe test for any people. The Ukrainian people are not an exception. Historically, the population on this territory had to fight defending themselves from invaders. The Russian-Ukrainian war significantly affected not only men but also women who went to stand up for their native country. Some of the women are combating on the front line (there are about 5,000 servicewomen), and in general, the number of women in the Armed Forces of Ukraine has increased dramatically by 40% since 2021. According to the data of Ukrinform in January 2024 the general number of women in the armed Forces of Ukraine was more than 62 000, out of which 45 587 were servicewomen, and 6 500 were in leading positions (Ukrinform 2024, 1). There is a steady trend towards increasing the number of women in all categories of personnel in the Armed Forces. So, in 2014, the total number of women was 49,926, of which 16,557 were servicewomen, 1,633 female officers, 4,754 non-commissioned female officers, 9,707 female soldiers, 370 female cadets, and 33,369 civilian personnel. And as of March 1, 2023, there were 60,538 women in the Armed Forces. 42,898 of them are military personnel (Ukrinform 2023, 2).

The number of female officers has increased to 7,416, which is seven times more than in 2014, 11,215 female sergeants and senior officers, 22,832 female soldiers, 1,500 female cadets, and 18,101 civilian personnel (Ukrinform 2023, 2).

In many cultures, military activity has traditionally been considered a purely male activity. And these stereotypes change very slowly. However, according to the feedback of commanders of military units, it is female servicemen who perform their duties more thoroughly and diligently. They have a higher level of education. The main positive aspects of women's military service, according to their colleagues, are: high work capacity; internal self-discipline; responsibility for assigned work;

professionalism. Their presence softens the moral and psychological atmosphere in military teams, forces commanders and chiefs to be more restrained, and moreover there is an important point, the culture of relationships between servicemen in the team improves significantly. The share of violations of military discipline by women is minimal (Dubchak 2008, 3).

Recently, something started to change in matters of equality in the Ukrainian army, namely:

1. The Ministry of Defense canceled all restrictions on the access of female military personnel to all positions. If earlier women could serve mainly in positions of medical specialties, liaison officers, accountants, clerks and cooks, now a woman in the army can be a driver, grenade launcher, deputy commander of a reconnaissance group, commander of infantry fighting vehicle, repairman, machine gunner, sniper, etc.

Previously, a contract for military service was signed by women aged 18 to 40, while men did not have such a restriction. Now, from 18 to 60 years of age, representatives of both sexes can become contractors.

Regarding maternity leave, the duration specified in the medical opinion is counted towards the term of service in the military rank.

2. Women were given the opportunity to receive military education at all levels. Since 2019, the government of Ukraine has allowed girls to enter military lyceums. Women who see themselves as officers of the Armed Forces in the future have access to all levels of military education. They are allowed to master the same specialties as men, and then serve in a wide range of positions.

3. Systematic work has been organized to increase the level of competence of the staff to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men. Previously, trainings, seminars, meetings, educational programs, round tables with the participation of international organizations, experts and specialists on the equality of the Ukrainian army were not held. Currently, this work is ongoing in all military units.

4. Aspects of equality in the development of normative legal acts are taken into account. All documents developed by the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine undergo a gender review (Ministerstvo oborony Ukrainy 2023, 4).

Additional places of residence, restrooms for the organization of proper conditions for the service of female servicemen, military uniforms – the financial component of these issues is always analyzed before the stage of planning the allocation of costs. Until recently, there was not uniform for women in the Ukrainian army. Finally, on February 1, 2024, for the first time, Ukrainian military servicewomen finally began to receive sets of summer field suits, specially made taking into account female anthropometric parameters (New Voice 2024, 5).

Each military branch commander received a full-time adviser. In addition, the function of freelance advisers on gender issues was introduced into the system of the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces of Ukraine – there are 81 freelancers and 74 – on a public basis.

Regular work is carried out on measures to prevent sexual harassment and other violations of human rights. In particular, cases of gender-based violence, including domestic violence and discrimination at the workplace.

Cooperation has been established with international partners: the UN structure “Women in Ukraine” started to function, in the OSCE, the NATO structure, as well as with national public organizations have similar units.

Ukraine continues to integrate NATO standards into the Armed Forces, in particular, in the field of gender equality. Our country follows the principles of UN Security Council Resolution No. 1325 and strategic planning documents that guarantee equal rights of women and men in the Armed Forces.

Against the background of all these processes, the question arises: what deep things motivate women to stand up for the protection of their native land, and not only their own children and family? Patterns of behavior formed over the years began to work actively in the collective unconscious. The critical situation in the life of the country intensified the process of manifestation of traditional national archetypes. Some researchers believe that it is thanks to archetypes that people can learn about themselves, understand what strengths they have, what shortcomings or weaknesses hinder their spiritual growth.

The kinship of the national archetype and universals of world culture is a prerequisite for the liberation of the spiritual life of the nation from the situation of one-timeness and perishability into the space of eternity, into the sphere of approval of the historical achievements of the nation and its dignity.

Ukrainian national archetypes manifest themselves as symbols in myths, fairy tales, folklore, rites, traditions, and are a generalization of the experience of our ancestors. Ukrainian culture and national archetypes have undergone a long period of formation and development from ancient to modern times. Their development was influenced by the natural conditions of the geographical location, territories, migration processes, history, neighbors, and the influence of other cultures.

Mykola Kostomarov, Dmytro Chyzhevskiy, Yevhen Malaniuk, Volodymyr Yaniv considered extraordinary lyricism, emotionality, desire for freedom as the main features of Ukrainian national character and explained that they were strongly connected with the nature of their native land. So, Ukrainian cordocentrism (perception of reality “with the heart”) has coexisted with atheism for thousands of years (an inseparable connection with the native land and dependence on it) (Svitlytska 2023, 6).

It is quite logical that one of the basic components of the mentality of Ukrainians is the archetype of the Woman, which combines the universal images of the mother as a symbol procreation and Berehynya (goddess of kindness, human, home and children’s protection), who cared of the family fire, peace, tranquility, love and land as a territory that must be sown, cultivated and protected.

Due to the fact that the nature of ancient Ukraine provided an opportunity to practice agriculture (fertile land, sufficient water), cult of fertility (women-mothers) became embedded in the mentality of the people as basic. Ancient Ukrainians equated the sowing of the earth with the continuation of the family, because the earth also comes from the woman, the future and well-being of the whole community depended on it.

It should also not be forgotten that precisely on the territory of the Black Sea and the famous Amazons lived in the Azov steppes. So, two features of Ukrainian character – the connection with the native land and individualism – are historically present and territorially justified. All direct ancestors of

modern Ukrainians – Tryplians, Cimmerians, Taurians, Scythians, Sarmatians and actually Slavs – worshiped Mother Goddess, protector of home comfort and well-being.

A peculiar tradition has developed to consider the archetype of Woman Berehynya a mental reference point for a Ukrainian woman. But often this image perceived somewhat incompletely – purely as a symbol of a housewife who cooks food and gives birth to children. In fact, the image of Berehynya encompasses many more features of Ukrainian national character. Cult of Mother Earth and protector of the family marked the worldview of Ukrainians in the form of respect for women. The image of a woman in ancient times was not only the continuation of the family and the home hearth, but also the connection with nature and protection of personal space, if necessary.

The archetype of Woman Berehynya has become so entrenched in the worldview of Ukrainians that even in the Middle Ages Ukraine was overtaken by the fate of European women, accused of witchcraft and burned at the stake. That is, Ukrainian people's worldview did not accept and did not get a foreign idea about sinfulness or the secondary nature of women compared to men. There is no father cult in Ukraine, ancient folklore sources and archeological findings confirm this.

The archetype of Woman became important in the formation of Ukrainian mental instructions and national features, as it is related to the value ideals of the family, without which a Ukrainian cannot imagine a full-fledged, meaningful life.

The following features of the national mentality are represented in the Woman archetype, as industriousness, love to work, and care which are characteristic points of the Ukrainian nation, the key to life success. Mother Nature is one of the varieties of the Woman archetype, which transforms into the archetype of Mother Earth, that in turn, is transferred to the paradigm of the native land – “Nenky-Ukraine”, creating the Motherland archetype. (Svitlytska 2023, 6).

Nowadays the theme of archetypes has high level of topicality. Scientists of many fields debate different aspects of male and female archetypes in national cultures. Because of that Ukrainian psychologist and sociologist, professor Donchenko O.A. proposes to develop a scientific direction in psychology “archetypal management, in which a person thinks and acts not so much as a person-individuality, but as a part of humanity-nature-cosmos” (Donchenko 2012, 7).

A common feature of Ukrainians is the dominance of emotions and feelings over thinking and will, which often made them vulnerable to aggressive and insidious actions of more strong-willed and collectively organized neighbors.

The formation of ethnic groups, peoples, and nations is closely related to their archetypes. The archetype determines the essence, form and method of communication of inherited, unconscious prototypes and structures of the psyche, which are transmitted from generation to generation. Archetypes are the basis for such formations: behavior, personal development and understanding of the world. That is, archetypes form mental and behavioral programmes, influence the peculiarities of behavior, thinking and vision of the world. The spiritual life of an individual is closely connected with archetypes, because in the process of creative activity of people with the help of archetypes, a corresponding sequence of images is formed.

The collective unconscious represents an extra-personal unconscious essence that is a prerequisite for the emergence of personal and collective experience of humanity, cultures and individuals. The collective unconscious is experienced in universal mental forms that are manifested in collective and individual behavior in archetypes.

It is characteristic trait of the consciousness of Ukrainians to bring to the fore not the formalism of the mind, but morality, the “heart”, as a metaphor for the intimate depths of the soul.

This archetype of the “philosophy of the heart” is revealed as: a principle of individuality and the source of humanity in P. Yurkevich philosophical system. Pamfil Yurkevich (1826–1874), a Ukrainian philosopher believed that “the heart is the treasurer and carrier of all bodily forces of a person; the center of a person’s mental and spiritual life; the center of all cognitive actions of the soul; the center of a person’s moral life, a tablet on which the natural moral law is engraved” (Filosofiiia sertsia 2016, 8).

Archetypes are essential for Ukrainian national culture and national mentality: sophistry of being, when real things are perceived not only in their natural status, but also as signs of God’s wisdom; family status of nature, symbolizing the unity of man and nature. Serhii Krymskyi (1930–2010), a Ukrainian philosopher, substantiated the idea of finding and analyzing archetypes as an effective method of researching Ukrainian national culture in the conditions of national revival and the search for a national identity that meets the requirements of scientific rationality (Krymskyi 2010, 9).

The concept of an archetype is related to the unconscious activity of people, which is a mandatory component of the human mentality that is characterized by “a deep level of collective and individual consciousness, which includes unconscious acts” (Dykina 2017, 10).

Examining the philosophical system of the Ukrainian philosopher Hryhorii Skovoroda (1722–1794), one can notice something in common with the German mystical philosophy of the 14<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> centuries. According to the Ukrainian philosopher, reality “consists of the interaction of three worlds, is a harmonious combination of the macrocosm, or the big world; microcosm, man; and the symbolic world, which the philosopher identifies with the Bible” (Novikov et al. 2023, 11). In his opinion, the microcosm is an expression of the inner man who embodies God (Butenko 2022, 12). The great elucidator of the Ukrainian mentality, H. Skovoroda, considered the greatest evil to be the violation of community, feeling, and connection of a person with his own being. For him, the basis was the harmonious combination and cooperation of man in time, place, measure and features (natural talents). Violating the connection of these four principles in his life, not only an individual, but also entire nations, become puppets in the hands of others.

In addition, modern researchers note that “an archetype is a universal image with a certain value-content orientation. Such orientation is determined by stable structures of the collective and individual unconscious and conscious, which determine the inclinations, aspirations, goals of people, revealing the national character” (Butenko 2022, 12).

Anthropocentrism as a characteristic feature of the Ukrainian folk worldview is strengthened ideologically by the archetype of the sophistry of the world, which was considered as the Book, the Text of God. This concept has been observed in Ukraine since the beginning of Kyiv Rus’, and continues in

the works of medieval polemicists, the works of Kyiv metropolitans and priests, philosophers and scientists.

Throughout the history of Ukraine-Rus', there was a struggle of man against the aggressive nomadic steppe, stretched from Mongolia to the Caucasus Mountains. In the history of mankind Ukrainians became an example of a rare victory of a settled civilization over the pressure of the wild steppe, which affected national self-awareness. A strong maternal instinct, individualism, the spirit of chivalry, a free self-sufficient individual, the need to survive in the conditions of a frontier civilization that resisted the barbarism of steppe raids, also had an impact on the history of the development of princely wives, the Cossack squads, traveling priests, Chumaks (representatives of a merchant class facilitating the trade in salt and other items), and the individual initiative of the townspeople, which took shape in the development Magdeburg law and guild traditions (Proskurova 2013, 13).

Following the archetypes of one's ethnicity is a leading prerequisite for its successful development. Gustave Le Bon (1841–1931), a French polymath, who noted that not only the living people, but also the dead ones play a significant role in the modern life of any nation. He was sure that they are the creators of human morality and unconscious drivers of people's behavior. From his point of view, the life of any nation and all manifestations of its civilization are a simple reflection of its soul. Neither chance, nor external circumstances, nor especially political institutions play the main role in the history of the people. The acquisition of a firmly established collective soul is the apogee of a nation's greatness. The decay of this soul always means a time of decline. The intervention of foreign elements is one of the greatest, most reliable means of achieving this disintegration. Peoples take centuries to acquire a certain mental makeup, and they sometimes lose it in a very short time. The road that leads nations to the highest level of their civilization is always very long, and the decline that accompanies their fall is often very rapid (Savytska, Spivak 2019, 14).

Prominent Ukrainian historian Viacheslav Lypynskyi (1882–1931), paid a lot of attention to the study of the foundations of the Ukrainian national archetype, who emphasized the perniciousness of popular emotionality for political state-building and the entire Ukrainian life. He was sure that Ukrainians' excessive sensitivity, with weakened will and planned actions, leads them to easy temper and quick cooling, aggravated by irritability to bright trifles and indifference to really important things. Ukrainian national characteristics can become a creative force when they pay more attention to the organizational component and permanent education of the mind and will among the people. Ukrainian emotionality, "note of the heart" can give good results only in combination with reason, logic, memory and will (Lypynskyi 1925, 15).

Long before Viacheslav Lypynskyi, Mykola Hohol (1809–1852) drew attention to all these features, who in his works reveals a whole series of contradictions in the folk character, in which two opposites, two different elements collided amazingly. In his opinion, European caution and Asian carelessness, naivety and cunning, as well as a strong effective beginning and excessive laziness, a desire for development and perfection and a desire to behave in such a way that despises perfection. The

rebellious spirit and individual will were not supported by the will realization, which allowed more organized and pragmatic neighbors to conquer the historical Ukrainian states.

Researcher of archetypes of the Ukrainian mentality O.O. Hordiichuk singles out “the main stereotypes of the behavior of Ukrainians, their emotional reactions that determine the specificity of the national character of Ukrainians” (Hordiichuk 2018, 16): the archetype of the Earth, the archetype of personal freedom, the archetype of Mother, the archetype of fate, the archetype of the dominance of the past over the future, the archetype of poverty, the archetype of the equality of sons and daughters of their Mother-Homeland, the archetype of educativeness, the archetype of formality (Hordiichuk 2019, 17).

Among the mentioned archetypes, O.O. Hordiichuk singles out the archetype of the Earth and freedom, which can be considered as the basic archetypes of mentality (Hordiichuk 2018, 16).

The collective unconscious plays an important role in the mental state of peoples. Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961), a Swiss psychologist and psychiatrist, wrote in the work “On the archetypes of the collective unconscious” that the leading factors in the development of culture and behavior are symbolic forms that evolve slowly. In his opinion, symbols contribute to the formation of ethnic groups and nations and create the mental and organizational foundations of all social life. The collective unconscious appears with the help of the collective experiences of an ethnic group as certain unconscious reactions that are manifested in the universal prototypes inherent in this group, which are the subconscious bases and foundations of the behavior and thinking of each individual (Jung 1981, 18).

Certain attempts to describe the peculiarities of the formation of the Ukrainian female character can be found in historical novels of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, in the novel by the writer and historian Danylo Lukych Mordovtsev (the Mordovets’) “The Tsar and the Hetman”, the author compares the living conditions of a woman from Moscoviya and Ukraine. D.L. Mordovtsev (Mordovets’) (1830–1905), a native of the Don region, while describing the fate of Ukrainian women, explained that Ukraine was not under the dominance of Mongol-Tatars, who “swept by a hurricane, leaving traces of destruction everywhere, but there was no Tatarization here” (Mordovtsev 1990, 19). This peculiar life created a sympathetic and poetic kind of a free Cossack, who did not tolerate any restraint or reason... This same life created a peculiar type of Ukrainian woman who was never a slave. She grew up for years without seeing neither her beloved father nor her lovely brothers who fought on the steppes and the banner with the Tatars and Poles. A Ukrainian girl always married in love, because she lived freely, had the opportunity to see her boyfriends in the ‘street’, ‘evening parties’, in the ‘cherry garden’ or in the ‘dark meadow’, near the ‘well with cold water’ – she had time to understand who she was ready to start a family with, and give the birth to children. Even if her darling started to fight with Poles and Tatars somewhere, the Ukrainian woman hold her children and the household under the control. This type of independent Ukrainian woman was Paliikha [the wife of Semen Palii (1645–1710), a statesman and military figure of the Ukrainian Hetmanate – author’s note], “who was both the commandant of the fortress, the colonel in the town [Pavoloch – author’s note], and the hostess in her own house.” (Mordovtsev 1990, 19).

The study of archetypes is especially relevant today, as we try to understand “Who are we?”, “Why are we going exactly this way?” and how does it affect the construction of the image of the future we aspire to? The study of Ukrainian archetypes (2021) by Kateryna Khoptynska, a sociologist and an anthropologist, gives the chance to understand the deep motives of Ukrainian soul. There is a sense to work through archetypes, and then actively use them in social life. According to this researcher, there are four female and four male archetypes, which are tightly intertwined in the soul of almost every inhabitant of this territory. And in the foreground, at decisive moments of history, some of them come to dominant positions. The manifestation of archetypes can be high and low. Female and male characteristics of behavioral reactions do not always coincide with belonging to a certain gender. Women may have masculine traits, and men may have feminine ones. In Ukraine, women have well developed male archetypes due to the peculiarities of our life. Now, when we have on our territory a full-scale war, many women who were forced to go abroad with children had to work through these male models of behavior, fight quite hard for their families. And historically this has always happened in our country (Khoptynska 2023, 20).

Ukrainian men have developed female archetypes. Women complain that ‘there are not any normal men’. And because of this circumstance, we have conflicts constantly.

The complex of historical events that we lived through led to the fact that it was dangerous for men to show masculine behavior patterns, because they were killed and tortured for that. Their psyche subconsciously began to focus on safer models, and for women society could ‘forgive’ active behavior, considering it abnormal and ‘crazy’, so officials or community did not condemn such ladies.

Until recently, the typical behavior of a Ukrainian woman in the first half of her life was to focus her efforts on the birth and upbringing of children, on the family, and when the children grew up, they sought to do something for society. Today somewhat changes those plans, and young women begin to realize themselves a little earlier, start their own business, they are active. This activity before the period of maturity in our society is exposed to misunderstanding and, even, envious-hostile attitude. It is difficult for a young woman to realize her plans. That is why young ambitious girls and women often encounter manifestations of sexism and ageism. As for men, the opposite is true for them, in the first half of their lives, they travel somewhere, fight or search for themselves, and in the second half of their lives, they start to be interested in family affairs, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and relatives.

For a long time, Ukrainians had been forced to choose survival strategies, which hindered the development of high manifestations of archetypes (Khoptynska 2023, 20). In a certain period of time, urgent tasks that need to be completed come to the fore. First, it is necessary to realize: “Who am I?”, “What do I want?”, and a little bit later answer the question: “What do I believe in?” This process we can conditionally name as ‘a leveling up to higher archetypes from initial ego-forms’. Just after that each person must learn to interact with society. In the system of Kateryna Khoptynska, each of the archetypes has conventional names (Khoptynska 2023, 21).

Kaidashykha [this nickname originated after one of the main characters of the story written by I.S. Nechui-Levytskuyi “Kaidasheva simia” – author’s note] and Variiah are archetypes responsible for

communication with society. Unfortunately, our society is very severe. It is characterized by strict behavior patterns. It is required to have Variah and Kaidashykha's features of character for adequate existence in social environment, because they are warriors. They full of willingness to fight, compete, they clarify who is right or wrong constantly. That is why we have disputes in society like 'betrayal-victory' (active scandalous matrix). The uncertainty of our aspirations is connected precisely with this. On the one hand, we want paternalism, on the other – anarchy.

Kaidashikha is a female warrior, but in our society this is taboo. She is 'allowed' to be a housewife and mother. According to Kateryna Khoptynska (Khoptynska 2023, 20), women with a high level of manifestation of Kaidashykha type are engaged in big business, she can already have her own hotel, tourism business, school, hospital, kindergarten. They work as accountants at enterprises, head management offices, are heads of village councils or territorial communities. Such women are cramped in a small space. They need scope. For such female leaders of united territorial communities, for example, everything will be in order and they will strive to do the best for their territory, in case of competition between communities. Kaidashykhass do not really like to travel around the world, and moreover, they are not attracted by big politics. They fill comfortable in their areas, and at the same time, they are happy to meet investors and partners at home. As a manager, Kaidashykha will make every effort to put order in her sphere of influence. Unfortunately, the high manifestations of this archetype in our society are mostly in the shadow. A low manifestation of this archetype is often associated with scandal lady and corruption.

Ideally, Kaidashykha is a woman-mother, caring, rational, self-sacrificing, happy when her house is cleaned, the pantry is full, and guests come, whom she welcomes with pleasure. If she is dissatisfied, then such a woman does not give peace to her husband, she is in the position of a victim constantly and believes that the whole family does not appreciate her. It is quite clear that the grumpy woman in the bazaar wants the same thing as the head of the territorial community or the head of the farm, but due to consistently unfavorable conditions, lack of money and losses, all her strategies are reduced to self-defense. We can get out of this closed circle to a higher level only if a safe environment for such women will be created and cover the basic needs of society.

Under critical circumstances, Kaidashykhass show themselves as skillful warriors, for whom the defense of their own territory has grown from everyday life into a vocation and service. They, together with the representatives of the male archetype Variah, went to the front without long thinking, when the threat to the security of the country and, first of all, to the families loomed. In addition, the self-sacrifice of Ukrainian women, which is often criticized, under certain conditions becomes strength and feat (Khoptynska 2023, 19). It is the women of Kaidashykha's archetype who is a volunteer, especially now, during the war, taking care of the community, the family, children, the elderly and the sick. They bring order everywhere, while demanding the participation of others in this matter. Kaidashykha 'takes a lot on her shoulders' and actually carries the work of several people, and then 'breaks down' and feel dissatisfied and cannot work with such an attitude. It is difficult for them to determine what is happening to them. Therefore, working with such internal states, realizing what caused their occurrence, will help to cope with life's problems and troubles more easily (Khoptynska 2023, 21).

Within the framework of this article, we limited ourselves to a brief analysis of what traditional national archetypes influenced the decisions of a certain part of Ukrainian women who voluntarily went to the front and joined the ranks of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, decisively breaking gender stereotypes that women have no place in the army. The readiness of Ukrainian women to protect their land and all life during the period of large-scale invasion of an aggressive neighboring country is a high manifestation of those archetypes that were formed over many centuries under the influence of various (sometimes even catastrophic) historical conditions.

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