

Editorial

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Archaeologists have known for some time that the most successful monuments have many layers of history embedded, not only in their structure, but in their built environment (Bradley 1993). The Tate Modern in London, opened on 11 May 2000, expresses the same principle in modern art. This archaeologically tested formula implemented at Tate Modern has proved to be a much more successful arena of political performance for the élite, and attraction to the 'people', than the other reclaimed flat brownfield site further down the River Thames at Greenwich, the site of the notorious Dome. Southwark on the south bank of the Thames, as partly explained by the Tate Modern Handbook (Massey 2000), has a long history. We need to turn to the Reports of the Surrey Archaeological Society to gain a fuller account of over three metres of history in this general area of the south bank of London; an important peat deposit, a Beaker settlement and a major presence in the Roman period from about AD 50. The second phase of Roman construction in the 3rd century produced imposing stone buildings (Sheldon 1978) which presaged the buildings of 'several magnates, ecclesiastical and lay . . . [who] competed with representatives of the King, the City and the county of Surrey to exercise some control over the area' (Turner 1987: 251) (see p. 463). One of these, the Bishop of Winchester's residence, has had much 'excavation' since the 1828 antiquarian beginnings. A more recent monument was the Bankside power station which Giles Gilbert Scott built to mirror the powerful monument of St Paul's Cathedral to the north of the river. It is the power station that has become the reclaimed monument. The structure had lain idle between its decommissioning and the initiation of an inspired idea of re-use. This resurrected building has now provided the successful location for an experiment in modern art and architecture. Archaeology revealed evidence of Chaucerian pilgrims (pewter and silver badges to record their devotion). The new religion of modern art has already produced a new set of pilgrims, enticed into the extensive gift and bookshop to gather their souvenirs.

Furthermore, this site has provided a shrine for a new trend in museology. Recent displays from both art and archaeology have turned away from chronological schemes towards what Nicholas Serota describes as 'promoting different modes and levels of "interpretation" by subtle juxtapositions of "experience"' (Serota 1996). The new displays in the prehistory section of the National Museum of Scotland collapsed chronology to address themes (ANTIQUITY 73 (1999): 485–6). This same model has been attempted in the Tate Modern, addressing themes of *Landscape, Matter, Environment; Still Life, Object, Real Life; History, Memory, Society; Nude, Action, Body*. In some themes there is a convergence between the trends of modern art and archaeology, in others they are foreign worlds. The theme of *History, Memory, Society* sounded promising and we were tempted to launch ourselves directly onto the fifth floor. Once we arrived, the convergence was, however, disappointing. The closest link was tenuous: an attack — by association with the apartheid regime in South Africa — on an icon of archaeological research, the Landrover (a 4-wheel drive vehicle of British origin, until recently of German and now American ownership). *History* here is very recent, dare we say superficial, and *Society* modern. *Nude, Action, Body* turned out to be more promising. There is clear influence of Etruscan sculpture on Alberto Giacometti (1901–1966) (see p. 463). His elongated human forms have strikingly similar qualities to bronzes from the town of Volterra in northern Etruria. However, the most promising link theme was within *Landscape, Matter, Environment*. In one case, this was simply the choice of material. Andreas Gurtzky presents the theme of archaeological landscape in Thebes West (1993), an aerial vision of an archaeological landscape. In other cases, the linkage was more conceptual. A single room contrasts the natural landscape of Monet (1840–1926) with the built environment of Richard Long (b. 1945). This statement contains much of current archaeological debate in consideration of landscape: the definition and weight of the *natural*, the

built and the conceptualized environment. The overall exhibition housed within these walls forms an interesting study of the relationship between past and present, and a reflection on some trends of convergence between modern art and archaeology. Landscape, above all, in its many and varied forms, is as fundamental a concept in modern art as in archaeology.

An earlier exhibition held between 16 January and 3 April 2000 in the Royal Academy, north of the River Thames, made 'an archaeological expedition to the largely buried past of art at the turn of the [previous] century' (Rosenblum 2000: 27). It is interesting to note the contrasts. At the 1900 *exposition universelle* in Paris, 'most countries chose to present themselves [architecturally] by referring to the past' (Stevens 2000: 64) — an historic past. Where it occurs, archaeology is generally drawn into painting through classicism. Alma-Tadema, Bouguereau and Leighton frequently included the classical heritage in their works. Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema (1836–1912) was renowned for the texture of his marble and fabrics in Roman domestic scenes, based on detailed archaeological research. William-Adolphe Bouguereau (1825–1905) used his Prix de Rome to study Giotto and Renaissance masters. Frederic Leighton, First Baron Leighton of Stretton (1830–1896) cultivated an 'Olympian' Neoclassical style of painting. In an archaeologically more adventurous approach, Paul Jamin (1853–1903) explored the origins of Europe with narrative scenes from classical history and came closest to prehistory in his panel of *Lake Dwellers: the return of the menfolk announced*. Antonio Carneiro (1872–1930) added the uncertain symbolism of the Sphinx to a widow's fate. Only one fleeting instance, by Thomas Moran (1837–1926), is of a more remote and non-Western past: a romantic epic of cliff-dwellers of the American Southwest. The vast majority of painting in 1900 was directed towards depiction of and reaction to the then modern world.

In the Tate Modern, only Smith has touches of residual classicism, now strongly re-interpreted, and only Dali chose to rework classical mythologies. David Smith (1906–1965) used iron and steel to create sculptures evoking the blacksmith's art of the Iron Age, expressed in his *Agricola* and *Wagon* series. Salvador Dali (1904–1989) may have been inspired by classical myth, but this was radically transformed 'to conform to his bizarre obsessions' (Barson

et al. 2000: 140). Generally, the new flavour of archaeological impact is from non Western Culture and prehistoric archaeology, or related to archaeological practice. The non-Western is clearly visible in Gaudier-Brzeska's 1964 *Bird swallowing a fish*, in Jacob Epstein's sculptures and in much of the sculptural work of Georg Baselitz (b. 1938), which included an untitled human form of 1982–3 in wood. Joseph Beuys (1921–1986) selected archaeological display as one of his media: 'vitrines' of objects. Archaeological artefacts are incorporated in the 1991–96 installation of Hiller's *From the Freud Museum* (see p. 463). Susan Hiller (b. 1940) deliberately chose the medium of archaeological storage boxes to contain objects (including obsidian projectile points) which provided a set of personal associations. Her message is valid archaeologically and anthropologically: classifications and meanings change. However, in terms of the history of archaeology, it is a return to Cabinets of Curiosities.

In recent years there has been a convergence of art and archaeology. The Tate Modern handbook employs archaeological metaphor with an expectation of ready understanding: 'archaeological detail' substitutes for 'overlay' of paint in a description of one of De Kooning's works (Barson *et al.* 2000: 145). Mark Dion has more explicitly followed archaeological practice. His work on the Thames foreshore below Bankside was followed by classification and display. 'He makes us uncertain where science ends and art begins, or indeed quite what the difference is' Renfrew (1999: 21). However, whereas, in the last resort, the archaeologist Colin Renfrew operates two worlds, one archaeological, the other artistic, some have fused the two. Christopher Tilley, Sue Hamilton and Barbara Bender have practised an art which tells us more about themselves than about anything else, and what it reveals about them is, quite frankly, rather dull (Tilley *et al.* 2000). For Tilley, as Renfrew explains it for Dion, 'the process of the work often seems more important than the end product' (1999: 21). It is 'a form of Brechtian epic theatre' (Coles 1999: 25); as in any theatre, it is useful to have good actors. The key element for archaeologists is whether — following the classification of Serota — we should aim for experience or for interpretation, or a blending of the two. In our view archaeologists are rather skilled and exciting in interpretation, but if we aim principally for personal experience we risk

constructing a much duller, uninformed and uninteresting canvas.

There is an interesting postscript to Mark Dion's work in Italy. His dredging of the canals of Venice led to confiscation of his installation by the *Carabinieri* (the local police) (Fontana 1999: 48–54). All archaeological material in Italy belongs to the state even before it becomes part of an installation. By the same logic, an international travelling installation would become an illegal export. The Dion installation was the immediate legal property of the state (its constituent parts had been illegally extracted without a *permesso* from the Venetian canals) and is now housed in the Palazzo Ducale of Venice. Perhaps even performance artists could benefit from archaeological training (which includes the transferable skill of diplomacy!).

There is significant good news from the British Academy to support research in the Humanities and Social Sciences, at a level of particular importance for Archaeology. As a response to a review undertaken by the British Academy in 1999–2000 (<http://www.britac.ac.uk/press/press3.html>), £500,000 has been allocated to grants of up to £20,000. This Larger Research grant is an important step towards filling the gap between Small Research grants of the British Academy (up to £5000) and much larger Research awards provided by the AHRB (up to £500,000). For archaeology, it means that there is now a national funding source for pilot fieldwork schemes, and it is very much hoped that this scheme will be expanded. (See *ANTIQUITY* 73 (1999): 488–90; 74 (2000): 256–7, 343–8).

Frameworks, consultations and new directions appear to be the current fashion in archaeology in Britain at the present time. No doubt the new century has provoked much new thinking, to promote an extraordinary level of activity by English Heritage and archaeological outfits throughout the country. The aims are to review policy, rewrite the priorities for the historic environment and consult with all and sundry in a manner which is wholly in keeping with the current government's professed ideals of openness, popularization and social inclusion. In tandem with these initiatives are current concerns for sustainability, cultural diversity and the long-term planning and conservation of the historic cultural resource. For

the last decade, archaeological policy in England has been directed by the *Planning Policy Guidance Circulars* 15 & 16, published in 1994 and 1990 respectively. These documents on 'Planning and the historic environment' and 'Archaeology and planning' provided a pivotal change in the operation of archaeology and conservation and made sites and the historic environment primary considerations in the planning process. Two major initiatives have emerged in the last few months building on these earlier agendas, one at a local and the other at a national level. The local initiative is the publication of the *Frameworks for archaeological research* in some regions of England. We have attended the launch of *Research and archaeology: Framework for the Eastern Counties* (Brown & Glazebrook 2000) which outlines the agenda and strategy for the region of Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Hertfordshire. A similar document has been produced for the area called the *Greater Thames Estuary*, covering the area of south Essex, London and north Kent (Williams & Brown 1999). Many more are to follow, hard on the heels of the new regionalization of the offices of English Heritage with the conservation focus now projected at regional level. As we discussed in earlier Editorials (e.g. *ANTIQUITY* 73 (1999): 486; 74 (2000): 255–6), regionalization is the order of the day, and London has ceased to be the hub of archaeological activity. Multi-disciplinary teams have been relocated to regional centres to liaise more effectively with the local interest groups and organizations and cover their extensive patches at a regional level.

The new Frameworks are not wholly novel, because there has been a steady development towards providing more focused research agendas in many regions. They have the aim not only of targeting resources towards appropriate needs, but also of making use of the growing Sites and Monument records that now provide remarkable detail and coverage of England's historic resource. The fact that 'Research' is so prominent will be a positive sign for many archaeologists, because archaeological work has for too long been overly responsive to developer needs, rather than the needs of the discipline and its quest for knowledge. From the 1960s onwards, much work was done for 'rescue' rather than research, building up the massive publication backlogs that have dominated government funding in the 1980s and beyond.

It would seem quite proper now, with those optimistic years of rather undirected archaeological activity well behind us, to be seeing a new era of carefully considered, regionally directed research. The East Anglian Framework consists of 'A Resource Assessment', 'A Research Agenda' and 'A Research Strategy', and also describes the next stage, the 'Research Project'. The booklet provides a clear chronological description and discussion of each major period represented in the region and examines the lacunae that still exist, and suggests means to tackle these through research designs. Archaeologists can be an apologetic bunch of people, because they are aware that to overstate the achievements of archaeological work will bring fewer resources for future work, and yet to be negative will simply bring the response that some areas of the past are inaccessible and unsolvable. The authors of the East Anglian report are properly aware of this, and each section is characterized by comments as quoted here from the Anglo Saxon and Medieval chapter (p. 23): 'The prolific number of sites should not be a cause for complacency . . . Despite the large volume of artefacts available for study from cemetery excavations, it is still far from clear what happened in the 5th century'. As an update and crib of a region's archaeology, these Frameworks are a useful and timely contribution, but will they be read by the academic archaeologists who, in one way or another, should be amongst the shakers and movers of change in archaeological research direction in the future? One imagines that not all those philosophical theorists indulging in speculative games with the past will wish to be engaged with agendas for practical research on the doorstep!

The Period Societies have provided important statements at a national level in the past and these have also been fed into the system over the years, with English Heritage's *Exploring our past* in 1991 and its follow-up, *Frameworks for our past* (Olivier 1996). A typical example was the Prehistoric Society's 1988 *Saving our prehistoric past* report, which outlined the need for preservation, problems of funding and personnel, research and rescue, fieldwork policy, science and conservation, publication and the consumers of prehistory. Nine recommendations were made, and a five-year plan proposed. Now, in the new era of Frameworks, the period interests have been narrowed further and a working party for the

Palaeolithic and Mesolithic section of the Prehistoric Society produced a new document (July 1999), *Research Frameworks for the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic of Britain and Ireland*. It lists strategic themes, field and survey projects and their publication, and finally education, display and information exchange as issues to be tackled in the paper. Palaeoliths are less coy than some subject specialists about their successes and open this short (12-page) document with a positive section on the background and achievements of their research. They make an excellent case for its importance at the national and international level, and the need for proper funding and support as well as for a clear research framework. Any potential research student of the period would be well advised to check the intentionally not 'over-long agenda of problems' that has been carefully drawn up, to see where they could slot an important and timely contribution in to this vibrant research field.

In similar vein, but only available on the web and not yet in hard print in the ANTIQUITY office, is the *Iron Age Agenda for Research* (<http://www.rdg.ac.uk/~lascrctn/IAAgenda.htm>). This is a lengthy document, following the now familiar Framework approach. Perhaps more needs to be said about the Iron Age than earlier periods, but said it is over some 35 pages. Alongside needs for improvements in chronology, research on settlements, landscape and people, material culture of every kind, issues of regionality and regional knowledge, the paper outlines the processes of change as key areas for research. By page 24 the Agenda for Action explains how data, archives, personnel and money are needed to enable Iron Age research to progress usefully in the British Isles. The final 8 pages are a very useful and up-to-date bibliography on the Iron Age. Presumably many more period Frameworks and their regional counterparts will be appearing soon; at least one cited in the Iron Age agenda is now in press (James & Millett in press).

📖 The second major initiative under way is the huge public consultation on *Strategies for the Historic Environment* (<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/about-us/policy/consultation-documents.html>) which, logically perhaps, has grown out of and alongside, the other frameworks and initiatives from English Heritage, in an attempt to define future directions. The new chairman of English Heritage, Sir Neil Cossons

is quoted and all sounds most positive and friendly:

England is blessed with a rich and diverse heritage which is all around us, in our towns and cities, villages and countryside. It is the map on which we create the future. The growing enjoyment and appreciation of this history by the public and millions of tourists underpins the need for new approaches to protect, sustain and enhance this priceless national asset.

The review is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create an integrated approach to managing this historic environment for the next century. Our commitment is to ensure that as many views as possible are sought so that the review can be as comprehensive as possible. We have commissioned extensive research by MORI into public attitudes towards the historic environment. The report will be published in the Autumn.

As we suggested above, there is much that is highly political in all this, because the next part of the press release, from which these quotes are taken, quotes Alan Howarth, the Minister for the Arts in the Department of Culture, Media and Sports:

When I launched the heritage review I wanted to initiate a national debate which would involve as many people as possible, so as to raise public consciousness of heritage policy issues and ensure that the best thinking was applied to them.

Five different working groups have been appointed, made up variously of those representing the Heritage — in all its varied complexions: practitioners, educationalists, professionals, a few academics, very few museum professionals and a great many people who represent the 'people's interests'. Doubtless this is all well and good, and no doubt there will be a mass of responses from the 3500 people and organizations to whom the documents have been sent. The working groups, focused on particular discussion papers, have been given friendly sounding names: *Understanding*, *Belonging*, *Experiencing*, *Caring* and *Enriching*, alongside a paper entitled *Our questions to you* which involves 20 questions for public response.

ANTIQUITY has made inquiries which suggest that there has been some really useful discussion in the working groups, which has then been watered-down in the printed version made available for consultation. Apparently the chairpersons of the various groups will each make assessments of the answers to the questions as

well as English Heritage, so that the danger of a single, homogenized response is avoided. In addition there is to be a MORI poll to collate public opinion on the historic environment in addition to the consultation data. Clearly, there is some sense of urgency from government to get the whole consultation completed so that key trends are identified.

In paper 1, *Understanding*, much effort has been expended on trying to provide definitions for the Historic Environment, and reference is made to the attempts to define it in earlier papers such as PPG15 & 16. Twenty-one paragraphs are devoted to providing definitions and in justifying how to arrive at a sense of the historic environment which will please everyone. Whilst this is admirable, it is also dense with political correctness, and paragraphs such as 18:

A definition in itself cannot explain or characterise the historic environment, evaluate its significance or suggest a response to change and management needs. It must, however, be flexible enough, alongside other tools, to be used to do this. It must allow all types of values, whether highly professional or intensely personal, to be brought together, so that assessments of importance can be agreed at local and regional as well as national level.

and 21:

The establishment view of what comprises the historic environment — 'our heritage' — can be seen as exclusive and beyond challenge. The word 'heritage' often carries this negative connotation, which is why it has not been much used in this paper. However, when a collection of things making up heritage comes across as more democratic and open, when localness and multi-cultural perspectives become more part of it, 'heritage' will become less excluding. . . .

These phrases are redolent of current political correctness. Later sections grapple with the issues of a changing world and society, and in paragraph 31 multi-cultural issues emerge:

Beyond England, similar forces will help to forge connections with historic environments and cultures which have a deep resonance with England's minority and ethnic communities. New values and insights will relate to shared histories: seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Caribbean defences and the physical remains of slavery, the development of railways and of modern industry in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in India, the legacies of penal settlements and the gold rushes of Australia and South

Africa — these stand at the heart of England's cultural diversity. They are relevant to all of us, and while England's conservation legislation is confined to its borders, the historic environment defined in this Paper extends beyond our borders and coasts to almost all corners of the world. We need to recognise this when deciding value.

Such definitions are useful; they say much about the current state of English/British Nationalism, because here the borders may include the world, but they do not extend across the terrestrial lines between Scotland and Wales, or mention Ireland. Even more people in Britain are the product of migrations from the Celtic fringes than are represented by the other minorities, but clearly it is not current policy to say so or to include these groups! However, even if the consultation is moulded in its geographic scope, there is much to be applauded by this clear recognition that there is need for all citizens of England (and perhaps Britain and even Europe?) to be included in a sense of past which engages their experiences, rather than just those of establishment history. What seems to be emerging is a hierarchy of historic environments, from the personal perception to the local, to the regional and to the national, each valid in its own way. In tandem with some of the current thinking in the social sciences, and thus in archaeology, the role of the individual is being redefined and acknowledged.

The paper goes on to discuss threats to the historic environment as a means to shape future policy to aid its preservation. Alongside the physical threats such as agriculture, development and erosion, Ignorance is cited as a major threat, and its remedy is suggested to be Research. Lack of staff and training is an issue, and so too are minority values and histories, which need to be recorded, and the concluding paragraph 39 identifies education, legislation and resources, which are addressed in other consultation papers.

The second paper, *Belonging* has a starting point that believes

everyone . . . should have the opportunity to: use, delight in and draw meaning from the historic environment; — enjoy access to information, activities and resources; — participate in the identification, understanding, use and conservation of the historic environment.

Specific questions raised at paragraph 4 echo the issue that is very much the current govern-

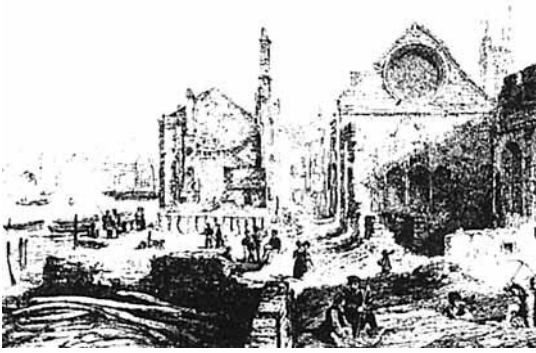
ment policy: social inclusion, and in this context, how heritage might contribute to this aim, especially through education and enabling the young to participate.

Participation, then, can be seen to have a critical role in nurturing a modern society that is at ease with its past and with its multi-culturalism. The issue has particular links to cultural identity, social inclusion and citizenship, quality of life and conservation, regeneration and sustainability.

Subsequent paragraphs discuss means to achieve this through education, life-long learning, institutions, media and the recognition of what constitute cultural assets. Education is given a prominent role here, and it is one stressed in these pages (ANTIQUITY 74 (2000): 1–4, 122–218). In England, the present National Curriculum falls short in providing a balanced approach to the past, as far as prehistory goes, and perhaps here lies a last chance (if indeed, this is the last public discussion for some time) to set the record straight, and get prehistory included again in school education.

Paper 3 *Experiencing* addresses issues of tourism and the need to widen access to sites and the historic environment, especially by the young, who are seen as the target group to be introduced if they are to become future participants.

Paper 4 *Caring* 'explores the implications of the very broad definition of the historic environment set out in *Understanding* for how we identify, value, manage and use it.' Issues about too much and too little protection for sites are raised, along with the concepts of sites rather than whole environments. The problems of the present regulatory frameworks are questioned in relation to 'balancing heritage and development needs'. The academic valuation of sites and heritage could be considered too rigid for many, and suggestions are made which would broaden the concepts of value, offering a more holistic approach. The aim of this becomes apparent later in the document, when the business of managing the historic resource is considered — how and what to designate as historic, how to provide responsible stewardship, how to encourage care by owners and communities, and how to regulate and legislate. Planning and the role of planning authorities, together with Regional Planning Guidance — a new initiative by government in the move towards more regionalization — completes the paper.



The 'Excavation' at the Winchester Palace, Southwark in 1828. An antiquarian attempt to uncover the history of Southwark. (From Turner 1987: 224, figure 9.1.)



Tate Thames dig 1999. An artistic attempt to uncover the history of Bankside. (From Coles 1999: 27.)



Man pointing (1947) by Alberto Giacometti (1901–1966). The influence of Volterranean Etruscan sculpture is clearly seen in this distinctive work. (From Barson et al. 2000.)



From the Freud Museum (1991–6) by Susan Hiller. Hiller has adopted an atavistic museological approach which harks back to cabinets of curiosities, and yet implicitly criticizes museological classification. (From Barson et al. 2000.)

Finally, paper 5 *Enriching* poses a number of social and economic questions about how the historic environment is perceived and managed. The question of whether the historic environment brings social benefits is aired in a discussion of Neighbourhood Renewal and the Urban Task Force. In the past, slum clearance may have brought some benefits in housing standards, but it destroyed communities and their historic environment, and perhaps sensitive regeneration is better than wholesale demolition. Thus the government has specifically asked for consideration of the regeneration of historic buildings and the integration of heritage in the process of urban renewal. Other discussion raises the problem of conservation *versus* new design, and the lack of constructive dialogue between these different interests. Issues of inclusion and exclusion fill 9 paragraphs, and echo new European legislation which aims to respect cultural diversity, along with the new motto 'Unity in Diversity'. Such aspirations should be welcome in the archaeological community who have long recognized that the past is quite as diverse as the present, and it is that very diversity which fills our research agendas. Parts 3 and 4 of the paper cover the economic competitiveness of conservation and the effective protection of the historic environment, making it sustainable across time and space. Its last section, on skills, points out a problem that was predicted a decade or more ago, that the conservation industry has failed to train and retain suitable craftspeople actually to undertake the work. As another part of education and training, skills training is an area needing as much regeneration as the historic environment itself.

A series of final questions focus on elements from each of the papers: some are direct and straightforward, whilst others are overly complex and diffuse. Question 4 is good: 'Which threats to the significance of the historic environment should be a priority over the next five, ten and twenty-five years?' Question 15 is too complex:

Is the market capable of providing and directing the resources needed to secure the future of all significant parts of the historic environment, and prevent them from entering an 'at risk' category? If not, what actions should the government take, for example by imposing duties on owners and regulators, or by providing incentives through the tax regime or through specific financial assistance?

We hope all readers of *ANTIQUITY* will have had the chance to respond to the invitation for comment. This has been a difficult task for us to advertise since the publication date (26 June) and the deadline of 4 August 2000 both occur between two publication dates of the journal.

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