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HISTORICAL TOPONOMASTICS AND THE STUDY OF MEDIEVAL HUNGARIAN FORGED CHARTRES: CHRONOLOGICAL LAYERS OF THE PÉCSVÁRAD ABBEY FOUNDING CHARTER*

Charters written in Latin containing vernacular toponyms represent important sources in the early history of European toponymic system. Besides authentic and original charters, there are numerous forged charters and charters that can be read only in later copies. The umbrella term used for such documents is *charters with an uncertain chronological status*. From the perspective of historical toponomastics and linguistics, we may suppose the existence of multiple chronological layers in such documents. The author uses the example of the Pécsvárad Abbey Charter to introduce a method for distinguishing these layers using the charter's toponymic data and the methods of historical toponomastics. Primarily, it takes to identify possible chronological periods that can be reflected in the studied charter, followed by the subsequent linguistic analysis of the language forms attested in the document with a special focus on place names as the key elements of the charter's content. The author emphasises two techniques of analysing toponymic materials of charters that can help clarify the chronological attribution of specific forms: the comparative analysis of the Latin naming constructions largely used in Hungarian medieval charters and displaying a distinct statistical pattern in their evolution, and the method of toponym reconstruction which consists in establishing the possible evolution of the toponym based on a variety of linguistic, historical

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and geographical data and language laws. The first method helps isolate parts of the text that can relate to a specific chronological layer, while the application of the second leads to outlining the relative chronology of the toponym change and thus to attributing its form attested in the charter to a particular period of time. Although the analysis relies on one single Hungarian charter, it has wider-ranging consequences and may be applied to other Latin medieval sources that include toponymic units in other “vulgar” languages.

Key words: toponyms; charters with an uncertain chronological status; Latin naming constructions; historical toponomastics; method of toponymic reconstruction; medieval Hungary

1. The major part of Hungarian-language records from the earliest period of Hungarian written culture (11th–13th centuries) comes from medieval abbey charters written in Latin [Hoffmann et al., 2017, 72]: these documents contain, *inter alia*, vulgar (including Hungarian) proper names (toponyms and personal names) as well as common nouns, which makes such documents excellent sources for historical linguistics.

The linguistic study of charters started in Hungary at the end of the 19th century [Szamota, 1895], and in recent decades, scholarly research in this field has gained new impetus. As a result, the analytical methods applied to authentic charters have proliferated [cf. Hoffmann et al., 2018, 39–97; Kenyhercz, 2020]. Alongside with well-dated original charters, forged charters and those surviving in the form of copies have also caught the attention of linguists [Szóke, 2015; Kovács, 2018], which is explicable, taking into account the characteristic ways in which Hungarian charters have survived. With regard to the Hungarian language, the earliest written sources date back to the 11th century, but we are aware of only four such charters from this century that are recognized as original and authentic. Besides these four, there are numerous charters that can be read only in later copies, as well as charters that were expanded and interpolated centuries later. Moreover, entirely forged documents are also included in this category since in many cases the 11th century charters were used as templates by forgers [cf. DHA, 1, 70; Hoffmann et al., 2017, 71–78].

The charters included in the latter category are commonly called *charters with an uncertain chronological status* [Szóke, 2015, 16]. Their uncertain status is partly due to the fact that the spelling of proper names found in them does not unambiguously point to a particular period even if we know the time of copying, interpolation or forgery.

In the process of copying, the texts created earlier (sometimes centuries earlier) were re-written, thus, typically the text of a copied charter was not expanded, however, the spelling of some of the elements of vulgar origin was often modernised. The changes affecting the names are typically of orthographic and phonological nature, and it seems that such modifications across charters did not endanger their general authenticity [cf. Szentpétery, 1942, 404, 408; Kenyhercz, 2016, 13, 16].

In the case of interpolated documents and forged charters, the forged charter may include some onomastic units that did not exist in the original document used as a source, which means these were added later, at the stage of creating the final

document — a possibility which must also be taken into account [cf. Hoffmann et al., 2017, 75–76; Szőke, 2018a, 427–428].

2. From the methodological perspective, examining the charters with an uncertain status requires considering the possibility of existence of at least two types of chronological layers within the text of the charter. From the perspective of historical toponomastics and linguistics, we may suppose the existence of multiple chronological layers, each of which contains units with, presumably, very different source value. In order to adequately specify the historical linguistic features of particular toponyms (i.e., evaluate the linguistic features of the recorded name forms and their source value for historical linguistics), we first must determine whether the toponyms had been present in the original charter or whether they had already existed at the time for which the forger dates the document, or if they were added to the text only as a result of the forgery itself (i.e. determine their source value from the perspective of historical toponomastics). The differentiation of chronological layers from the perspective of historical toponomastics and linguistics is also necessary because this way we can avoid looking for early traces in the recording (orthography, phonological form) of a name that had not been included in the original charter serving as the source, and their existence at the given time cannot otherwise be presumed.

2.1. Using a charter with an uncertain chronological status from Hungary, the Charter of Pécsvárad,¹ I introduce the opportunities available when associating chronological layers with certain toponyms from the perspective of historical toponomastics. Although the analysis relies on examples from one Hungarian charter, it also has wider-ranging consequences and the method itself can be used more generally — in connection with other Hungarian charters or with similar documents in other languages, since charters of various countries were not created in isolation but rather as a product of European literacy, which obviously established the links and connections between them [Hoffmann, 2020, 385]. Therefore, Hungarian written culture practically emerged as one of the most important elements of connection to European societies and culture. The lively link between Hungary and foreign countries was ensured by the international composition of Hungarian church society, the presence of different monastic orders, papal and other church relations, and foreign study visits of the clergy involved in charter writing (mostly to France) [Szentpétery, 1930, 36, 259; Solymosi, 2006, 214].

In the following, through specific examples, I introduce those signs that may indicate the belonging of a specific toponym to a chronological layer and, through this, I discuss the possible benefits of specifying the source value of toponyms in charters with an uncertain chronological status from the perspective of historical toponomastics.²

¹ The Pécsvárad Abbey was a Benedictine monastery established at Pécsvárad (the settlement in Baranya County, Kingdom of Hungary) in the first decades of the 11th century [cf. DHA, 1, 63; Zsoldos, 2020, 114, 118].

² For additional studies in history, diplomatics and linguistics aimed at the determination of the value of sources with an uncertain chronological order, see [Szőke, 2020a, 276–283].

Of course, such analysis may also have its pitfalls as it is not certain at all whether we can find such methodological principles that would result in distinguishing the names belonging to different chronological layers. I have been studying charters with an uncertain chronological status for one and a half decades [cf. Szőke, 2006], and despite the opinions calling into question the value of such charters as historical sources [Kniezsa, 1928–1929, 190; Jakubovich & Pais, 1929, XXI], I have considered it important to use data derived from these charters for studies in historical toponomastics and linguistics [cf. Hoffmann, 2020, 387]. The most recent studies have clearly confirmed that the examination of other charter types besides original and authentic ones is also justified [Szőke, 2015, 37–148; 2017, 141–148; 2019a, 101–103; Kovács, 2018, 29–96].

2.2. According to a generally-held view, the Founding Charter of Pécsvárad is one of the forged charters created around 1220 that have survived under the name of St Stephen (1015)³; what is more, the forged document has survived not only in its original, but also in multiple copies (1343, 1403). The charter is dated as follows: +1015/+1158 [around 1220]/1323/1403/PR⁴ [cf. DHA, 1, 67–70]. Some arguments also suggest that the document may be an interpolated charter [Ibid., 63, 72]. Irrespective of whether the text of the charter is fully or only partly forged, it seems plausible that there existed a charter that was made at the time of St Stephen (1015), which must have been considered to be an important document at the time when the forged charter was created [Ibid., 68–70].

In the process of analysis, we can single out several chronological layers: there are linguistic layers of the 11th century (the time of the foundation of the abbey and the time of issuing the original charter), the 13th century (the time of creation of the forged charter), and the 14th–15th centuries (the time of copying the forged charter).

When preparing the critical edition of the Pécsvárad Founding Charter, it was established that there really was a survey charter listing the assets of the abbey that was written at the end of the 11th century [Ibid., 70]. This survey charter did not survive on its own but the largest part of its text was probably taken over by the forged charter. With this assumption, we can also assess the holdings of the abbey at the time of its foundation: the estates named in the forged charter of the 13th century can, therefore, be accepted as realistic with regard to the 11th century original. This also supports the idea of donating lands at the beginning of the 11th century since the donations made after the founder (i.e. the later estates) are included in the forged text separately [Ibid., 70, 77–80; Györfy, 1969, 203; 1977, 235–237].

³Stephen I, also known as King Saint Stephen, was the first King of Hungary (1001–1038) [cf. Györfy, 1994, 88–92].

⁴The following signs are traditionally used for dating charters: the plus sign, +, introduces the false date stated in the forged charter; the slash, /, separates the dates of its copies; the square brackets, [...], indicate the assumed date of the forged charter's creation.

3. In the following, I discuss how we can determine the source value of toponyms of the charter linguistically, namely by considering the Latin context of the toponyms and using the methods of toponym reconstruction.

It has been an important methodological innovation of recent decades that the vulgar (i.e. native language) elements of the charters should not be analysed separately from the Latin text but rather as a part of it [cf. Hoffmann, 2004; Szőke, 2018b].

As for the context of toponyms, the clearest indication of the early creation of some parts of a charter with an uncertain chronological status is the presence of text insertions that differ from the norms of subsequent times [Szőke, 2020b; 2020c]. The Charter of Pécsvárad (1015) studied here was written in an era when the norms of Hungarian written culture were just emerging, as the official apparatus responsible for this did not yet exist in its later form (royal chancellery and places of authentication) [Fejérváthy, 1885, 10–19; Szentpétery, 1930, 5]. A few examples in this regard are provided further.

3.1. Using a vulgar form of a name that only occurs in its Latin form in other (later) charters may indicate an early (11th century) trace.

In Hungary during the Árpád Era,⁵ there were relatively few places that could be named with a Latin exonym. This could apply, for example, to countries and larger rivers including the name of the Danube crossing multiple countries [cf. Hoffmann et al., 2018, 53–54]. In medieval charters, it was mentioned only in its Latin form — *Danubius* (sometimes *Danobius*) [KMHsz., 1, 86; Hoffmann et al., 2017, 88]. The medieval Latin name form used in Hungary can be traced back to the ancient Latin *Danuvius* [Hoffmann et al., 2018, 53].

The river is mentioned twice in the Charter of Pécsvárad. However, in both cases in Hungarian: *sexta Batatue nominatur, que ab oriente terminatur Duna*, i.e. “the name of the sixth (estate) is Batatue, which is bordered to the east by *Duna*”; *nona Chouas nominatur, que ab oriente terminatur Duna*, i.e. “the name of the ninth (estate) is Chouas, which is bordered to the east by *Duna*” [DHA, 1, 73].

The name *Duna* could be used already at the time of the Conquest⁶ in Hungarian [cf. Hoffmann et al., 2018, 124] and its presence in the Charter of Pécsvárad (due to its special character) may as well indicate a charter section preserving a trace of the charter from the age of St Stephen (1015). Unusual solutions in a charter with an uncertain chronological status can often be the result of forgery [Ibid., 386], but the very early existence of the charter could also be the cause of exceptional solutions. We should not disregard the fact that, currently, we are not familiar with the procedures characteristic

⁵The Árpád Era starts with the Conquest of the Carpathian Basin (around 895–900). The period was named after the Hungarian Grand Prince Árpád who was the head of the Hungarian tribal federation during the Conquest. It ends with the death of Andrew III (1301).

⁶Hungarian Conquest of the Carpathian Basin was a series of historical events ending with the settlement of the Hungarians in Central Europe at the turn of 9th and 10th centuries [cf. Györffy, 1994, 16–25; Kristó, 1996, 191–203; Róna-Tas, 1999, 332–338].

of charter writing in Hungary at the beginning of the 11th century, as well as with the effects of charter forgery on the recording of toponyms.

We may also identify several unusual phenomena among the toponyms of the first, authentic charter from Hungary that has survived in its original form, the Founding Charter of the Abbey of Tihany (1055) which, in light of later data, also seems to be unique. The case of the settlement name of *Fehérvár* (*fehér* ‘white’ + *vár* ‘castle’) is similar to the Hungarian-language mentions of the Danube in the Charter of Pécsvárad. The only Hungarian-language mention of Fehérvár, which served as the royal seat, is in the Founding Charter of Tihany, as opposed to several hundred Latin-language forms (*Alba*, *Alba Regia*, *Alba Civitas* etc.) [Gy., 2, 363–375, 382–384], similarly to the *Duna* record of the Charter of Pécsvárad as opposed to the “regular” *Danubius* [cf. Hoffmann, 2010, 138–139].

3.2. Another feature adhering to the Latin context of toponyms is the naming structure that includes the toponym and a Latin verb meaning ‘named’ or ‘called.’

In such structures, the main constituent is always a Latin geographical term (*villa* ‘village,’ *fluvius* ‘river,’ *mons* ‘hill,’ etc.), which shows the type of place indicated by the name. The designating word and the clause including the vulgar element are attached to the main constituent by the Latin relative pronoun *qui*, *que*, *quod* ‘which, that.’ The designating word of the structures is mostly a third person singular verb in passive voice, e.g.: 1086: *predium, quod dicitur Ketel loca*, i.e. “estate that is called *Ketel loca*” [DHA, 1, 251]. More rarely, active third person plural verbs may also appear as designating words: +1092: *villa in Aureo Loco, quam vulgo Aranÿan vocant*, i.e. “village <...> that people call *Aranÿan* in vulgar language” [Ibid., 284]. The clause may also be replaced by a passive structure: 1055: *locus Mortis dictus*, i.e. “an area called *Mortis*” [Ibid., 150]. The role of the designating word may also be filled with the ablative *nomine* form of the Latin *nomen* ‘name’: 1055: *locus Kert hel nomine*, i.e. “area named *Kert hel*” [Ibid.]. In these structures, several verbs can occur with varying frequency. Without a doubt, the use of the *dico* ‘say, denote something by some name’ and *voco* ‘say, call, denote something by some name’ verbs is the most widespread, but the verbs *nomino*, *nuncupo*, *appello*, and *cognomino* with the meaning of saying, designating were also used in such a function by the writers of charters [cf. Hoffmann, 2004, 38–42].

The Charter of Pécsvárad includes close to 140 place designations⁷, from which thirteen feature a designating word, always next to the names of villages for which the charter also describes their borders and boundary marks. The designating word structures of the Charter of Pécsvárad differ from the “regular” structures of later charters. One of the differences is the main constituent, and in connection with this, the lack of the relative pronoun, e.g.: *Sexta Batatue nominatur* [DHA, 1, 73]. It is also

⁷By place designations, I mean toponyms, (temporary) descriptions of geographical places, as well as their appellative designations [cf. Szentgyörgyi, 2009, 63].

striking that we always find the third person singular passive form of the verb *nomino*: *secunda Chomur nominatur, decima nominatur Velente* [DHA, 1, 73–75].

The structures of the charter can be easily transformed into the structures used later on: *quinta Ylsan nominatur* → *quinta [villa, que] Ylsan nominatur*. Although the main constituent (*villa*) is not present in the structures directly, the sentence prior to the listing of the villages foreshadows the section on the 41 villages: *villas XLI* [Ibid., 73]. Later, the feminine endings of the numerals (*prima, secunda, vicesimaseptima*, etc.) in the records indicate that *villa* should be understood to be the main constituent of every naming clause [cf. Szőke, 2015, 141]. The text deviates from this only in the case of the last, 41st village as, in that case, *villa* is present again: *Quadragesimaprima est villa Neuýg iuxta Kana* [DHA, 1, 75].

We can deduce the occurrence frequency of such structures based on more recent studies of linguistic records. These indicate that the proportion of naming structures increased somewhat over time: for example, in the Founding Charter of the Abbey of Tihany (1055), only 16% of all place names are mentioned this way in the text, while in the Tihany Land Survey (1211), this is 24%, and in the 15th century version of the Founding Charter of the Abbey of Tihany, it is 25% [Hoffmann et al., 2018, 81]. This proportion in the Charter of Pécsvárad is 9%, which leads us to assume that this feature of the charter may be associated with the earliest (11th century) layer of the text. This is made even more probable by the incomplete form of the structures (not known from other charters) and maybe also by the fact that the writer of the charter did not create naming structures with the participle or the ablative of *nomen* (*nomine*) and he used the *nomino* verb only in the third person singular passive form.

All these indicate that the thirteen toponyms included in the Charter of Pécsvárad with a designating word structure were most likely already included in the original charter from the 11th century.

4. Toponym reconstruction studies can also assist us in establishing the chronological attribution of certain names [Szőke, 2019a; Tóth, 2019, 25]. The procedure of toponym reconstruction means that we examine the names in the extensive, multidimensional system of relationships. The examination starts out from the name etymon with looking at the network of relationships of the name: the features of the source containing the name; the context of the name within the source; the totality of toponyms and name forms referring to the corresponding place; the geographical distribution of the name within a given area; the name category it belongs to [see Tóth, 2019, 17]; natural, social and toponymic environment of the referent.⁸

The Founding Charter of Pécsvárad mentions a place called *Scedluc* in the eighteenth position: *octavadecima Scedluc* [DHA, 1, 74]. There is a settlement named *Szellő* in Baranya County [cf. BMFN, 2, 255–261; FNESz., 2, 550], which is located exactly in that part of the county where the *Sedluc* settlement of the Founding Charter could also

⁸For the description of the approach see [Tóth, 2019; Hoffmann, 2019].

be localised [cf. Szőke, 2019b, 108]. Based on this, we may suppose that the *Scedluc* settlement mentioned in the Charter of Pécsvárad could be the earliest occurrence of today's *Szellő*, and the name may derive from the Hungarian *szőlő* 'grape,' a lexeme of Bulgarian-Turkish origin, with the analysed toponym possibly preserving its early form [Györffy, 1977, 236; DHA, 1, 19].

During the medieval era, *szőlő* represented the third most frequent name-constituting lexeme among Hungarian settlement names with a plant name base [Gallasy, 1989, 86–87]. This element probably refers to the vegetation of the settlement or to the activities carried out there, to viticulture [cf. Hoffmann et al., 2018, 331, 335; Szőke, 2019b, 110]. The historical and geographical description of Baranya County from the Árpád Era also informs us that viticulture represented one of the main branches of cultivation in this area [Gy., 1, 260]. Based on the names in the outskirts of Szellő settlement (e.g., *Erdő-szőlő* 'forest-grape' [BMFN, 2, 260]) and the description of their referents, grape growing flourished in the settlement even in the 20th century.

In case the analysed name is really of a plant name origin, today's name of the settlement may be regarded as featuring the dialectal *szellő* form of the *szőlő* noun [cf. Munkácsi, 1882, 60–61; MTsz., 2, 599; WOT, 2, 818].

Szőlő is an Old Turkic loan word of the Chuvash type in Hungarian language [Bárzsi, 1958a, 77; Gerstner, 2018a, 252] with a more general meaning of 'berry' [WOT, 2, 818–822]. For a long time, the Hungarian word was derived from the proto-Turkic **jidlak* ~ **yidlak* and its direct antecedent was considered to be the Old Chuvash **šidlak* ~ **šidläy* which could be adapted into Hungarian in the form of **šidläy* [cf. TESz., 3, 794; Ligeti, 1986, 2]. Starting from the proto-Turkic **yidlak*, we could suppose only a **šödlak* or maybe **širlak* form as the direct source of the Hungarian *szőlő*. However, according to Ligeti, these are difficult to be matched with the early *szĚlĚ* form of *szőlő*. As a solution, Ligeti proposes that, in the case of *szőlő*, we should start out from the Chuvash **šiyłak* that can be derived from the proto-Turkic **yigłak* [Ligeti, 1986, 29, 79, 294; EWUng., 2, 1455].

The idea of Ligeti was also partly accepted by the editors of [WOT]. From **šeley* adapted into Hungarian [cf. WOT, 2, 818], the early *Sceuleus* and *Zeuleus* [szĚlĚs] derivatives and the *sceuleu* [szĚlĚ] base word can be derived with regular sound changes (the vocalisation of the word-ending velar voiced spirant, the monophthongisation of the diphthong, the labialisation of the first syllable): **šeley* > *szĚlĚ* (1193: *Celeu* [OkISz., 938]) > *szőlő* (1210: *Sceuleus* [Ibid., 941]). Due to the *-dl-* consonant cluster in the middle of the word, the form *Scedluc* of the Founding Charter of Pécsvárad does not fit this sound change process.

Supposing a *-dl-* > *-ll-* (> *-l-*) change (1015: *Scedluc* > 1075: *Sceulleus* > 1168: *Scevlevs*), the analysed name can also fit into the line of historical evolution of the Hungarian *szőlő* [cf. Gombocz, 1907, 358; Benkő, 1953, 52]. The *-dl-* > *-ll-* change may also support the existence of Old Chuvash **šidläy* [cf. Fedotov, 2, 156]. The word-ending spirant of the lexeme adapted into the Hungarian language could

go through monophthongisation after vocalisation by creating a diphthong with the preceding vowel [Bárczi, 1958b, 134; Gerstner, 2018b, 113].

Summarising the information above, the *Scedluc* name of the Founding Charter of Pécsvárad can be identified as *Szellő* in today's Baranya County, deriving from the *szőlő* plant name. This also means that the *Scedluc* name can be included among the elements of the Founding Charter of Pécsvárad that were present in its no longer extant source of the 11th century, and considered as such in further historical toponymic research [Szőke, 2019b, 114].

5. If a forged document dated to the early centuries can help us identify the toponymic traces of the postulated time of the original document creation, this confirms the existence of the original charter created in the presumed period and may contribute to the better understanding of charter writing and copying practice. At the same time, this indicates the scope of those names which may preserve early characteristics in terms of historical linguistics: although approximately 140 place names in the Founding Charter of the Pécsvárad Abbey can be linked to the early 11th century based on historical and diplomatic arguments, it is also important to examine the features of toponyms from the perspective of historical linguistics and toponomastics. In this paper, I have presented some of the possible methods for this, the key ones being the analysis of the Latin-language context and the use of toponym reconstruction techniques that enables to establish the relative chronology of the name's evolution and, therefore, the attribution of its form attested in the document under study to one of the possible chronological layers.

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**ИСТОРИЧЕСКАЯ ТОПОНОМАСТИКА И ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ
ПОДДЕЛЬНЫХ СРЕДНЕВЕКОВЫХ ВЕНГЕРСКИХ ХАРТИЙ:
ХРОНОЛОГИЧЕСКИЕ СЛОИ
В УСТАВЕ ПЕЧВАРАДСКОГО АББАТСТВА**

Латиноязычные монастырские уставные хартии, содержащие топонимы на местных языках, являются ценнейшими источниками по ранней истории европейских топонимических систем. Наряду с аутентичными, оригинальными уставами существует множество уставов поддельных или дошедших до нас лишь в копиях. Такого рода источники именуются в венгерской научной традиции хартиями с неясным хронологическим статусом. С точки зрения исторической лингвистики и топонимистики, в таких документах справедливо

предполагать наличие нескольких хронологических слоев. Опираясь на анализ устава Печварадского аббатства и на методы исторической топонимстики, автор предлагает методiku выявления таких слоев. Разрабатываемый в исследовании подход предполагает предварительное определение возможных исторических периодов, которые могли найти отражение в тексте исследуемого документа, и последующий лингвистический анализ с особым вниманием к топонимам как ключевым элементам содержания источника. Автор подчеркивает значимость двух методик анализа топонимического материала, позволяющих прояснить хронологическую атрибуцию конкретных топонимов: сравнительный анализ широко используемых в латиноязычных венгерских хартиях латинских назывных конструкций, эволюция которых подчиняется определенной, статистически выявляемой закономерности, и методика топонимической реконструкции, предполагающая установление возможных путей эволюции имени с опорой на весь имеющийся массив историко-культурных, лингвистических, географических данных. Первая методика позволяет вычленить части текста, относящиеся к определенному хронологическому слою, в то время как использование второй методик позволяет устанавливать относительную хронологию эволюции топонима и, как следствие, приблизительно датировать ту его форму, которая зафиксирована в исследуемом источнике. Хотя предлагаемый анализ ограничен единственным документом, разрабатываемый автором подход может быть применен к широкому кругу латиноязычных источников, содержащих топонимические единицы на «народных» языках.

Ключевые слова: топонимия; хартии с неясным хронологическим статусом; латинские назывные конструкции; историческая топонимстика; метод топонимической реконструкции; средневековая Венгрия

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