

## Public State Services for Merchants in the Islamic East in the Book *Masalik al-Ibsar fi Mamlik al-Amsar* by Ibn Fadl Allah al-Amri, who Died 749 AH / 1349 AD

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### Abstract

*Commercial activity in the countries of the Islamic East required care for merchants and trade caravans and hospitality through the efforts made by the Arab Islamic state and the rulers of the provinces in the East to eliminate dangers, achieve political and administrative stability, establish security, conclude agreements with countries and kingdoms neighboring the East, and establish guard posts on the roads. In addition to that, there was the nature of the people of the East who were accustomed to welcoming and caring for guests and trade caravans passing through the cities and regions of the Islamic East. Many ribats and inns emerged in the cities, and these ribats became rest stops for merchants and travelers to stock up on what they needed for themselves and their animals for long journeys, in addition to what they found of security, reassurance, and peace during the buying, selling, and banking operations.*

**Keywords:** *Kazakh, English, Latin, origin, experience, research.*

### Introduction

Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds, and peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and all his companions. Trade in the Islamic East is an economic income in addition to its political importance due to the geographical location and the presence of agriculture, industry and natural resources that the region enjoys and the prosperity and development of markets. It has also become a center for craftsmen and professionals and the presence of a wide network of land and water roads in the countries of the Islamic East that connect the cities and regions of the East with each other. The presence of commercial centers helped organize the process of trade exchange and stabilize the prices of goods in the markets and organize broad commercial and economic relations between neighboring regions and cities. This study revealed to us the economy and its development that trade has reached in the Islamic East. The research was divided into two sections. The first section was about the personal and scientific biography of Ibn Fadl Al-Omari and the second section was entitled the services provided by the state to merchants in the Islamic East.

### The autobiography of Ibn Fadlallah Al-Omari

He is Ahmad bin Yahya bin Fadlallah bin Al-Majli bin Daajan bin Khalaf bin Abi Al-Fadl Nasr bin Mansour bin Ubaidallah bin Adi bin Muhammad bin Abi Bakr Abdullah bin Abi Bakr bin Ubaidallah Al-Salih bin Abi Salama Abdullah bin Ubaidallah bin Abdullah bin Omar bin Al-Khattab Al-Qurashi Al-Adawi Al-Omar [1]. Ahmad bin Muhyi Al-Din was nicknamed Al-Qurashi in reference to the Quraysh tribe to which he belongs (2) and he was nicknamed Al-Adawi because he belongs to Bani Adi (3) one of the clans of this tribe (4) and he was nicknamed Al-Omari because his lineage is connected to the Caliph Omar bin Al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) (5) and he was nicknamed the judge, the imam, the right hand of the kingdom of Islam because his father held the position of judge, so his father's title was added to him (6) and he was nicknamed the virtuous, eloquent, articulate, memorizer, the authority of the book, and the imam of the people of literature, one of the men of the time in writing, correspondence, and communication (7). He was nicknamed Al-Dimashqi because his family lived in Damascus (8) and he was one of the famous Egyptian writers and a writer of the secret book (9), because he held this administrative position in the state (10). He was known as the writer of poetry and prose and the writer nicknamed Al-Rais and on this basis these two nicknames were given to him which qualified him to refine his scientific and administrative

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personality later (11). Ibn Fadlallah Al-Omari was keen to emphasize the lineage of the one who became famous by the name Al-Omari and that he was proud of his lineage which is linked to the Caliph of the Messenger of God, may God bless him and his family and grant them peace (12). As for his nicknames, he was nicknamed Ibn Fadlallah Al-Omari, Abu Al-Abbas and Shihab Al-Din (13).

### **His birthplace and date of birth**

Ibn Fadlallah Al-Omari was born in the city of Damascus in the year (700 AH / 1300 AD), where he was raised and died, and he received his education there. His birth was precisely on the third day of the month of Shawwal in the year seven hundred, while some sources stated that he was born in the year seven hundred and one, and there are other sources that stated that he was born in the year (697 AH / 1297 AD) (14). He was born, raised, and died in Damascus, Syria, and he was a source of pride for it, as he was a source of pride for the Arab Islamic civilization.

### **His upbringing and the scientific status of his family**

#### **His upbringing**

Ibn Fadlallah Al-Omari grew up in Damascus in a scientific and cultural atmosphere since his early childhood, and he was devoted to studying religious sciences in the atmosphere of his family from the Al-Fadlallah family, which made him a great scholar, an eloquent writer, and a man of letters who was skilled in handwriting and writing, as he received knowledge from his father and a group of great scholars of his time, and he acquired his knowledge from all cultural and intellectual sciences and in the sciences of geography, history, arithmetic, countries, chemistry, astronomy, literature, jurisprudence, judiciary, and writing (15), and he had knowledge of the histories of the kings of the Mughals (16), India, and the Turks, and knowledge of kingdoms, paths, lines of regions and countries, trade routes, knowledge of the astrolabe, solving the calendar, and pictures of the planets (17). During the reign of Sultan Al-Nasir Muhammad bin Qalawun (18), he moved to Cairo and assumed the position of head of the Diwan al-Insha (19). Al-Omari enjoyed a prestigious position in society and gained great respect from King Al-Nasir while his fame and success were in the prime of his youth. He had close contact with famous scholars who attended the council of his father, Muhyi al-Din, while he held the position of secretary in Egypt and the Levant (20). He researched the histories of nations and their wonders, and was passionate about studying astronomy (21) in various countries, starting from the Levant and Egypt, all the way to the Hijaz and other regions. Al-Omari also enjoyed a prestigious position in society and gained great respect from King Al-Nasir while his fame and success were in the prime of his youth, as he was a brilliant imam in religion, a jurist, and a skilled writer. He studied with many scholars and men of letters of his time, and he had close contact with famous scholars who attended the council of his father, Muhyi al-Din, while he held the position of secretary in Egypt and the Levant (22). Ibn Fadlallah al-Omari demonstrated his distinguished skills in the arts of writing and sciences and moved to Cairo, where he was able to assume the presidency of the Diwan al-Insha. He made great contributions in the field of studies during his tenure in this position. Ibn Fadlallah al-Omari was one of the prominent scholars of his time, as he received his education in several important cities such as Damascus, Cairo, Alexandria, the Hijaz, and the Levant. He held several important positions during his life. Among his most prominent achievements was his contribution to the composition of his book, the encyclopedia (Masalik al-Absar fi Mamalik al-Amsar), which reflects the richness of his culture and knowledge in the field of writing and composition. His work in the Diwan al-Insha gave him the opportunity to learn about the secrets of the Mamluk state and the conditions of other Islamic kingdoms. It appears from our reading of Masalik al-Absar that al-Omari was a student of the best scholars of his time (23). He was distinguished by his strong memory and eloquence in writing. He was an imam in literature, history and composition. He participated in many scientific fields and was famous for his strong memory and mastery of language and narration (24). Al-Safadi described him as a virtuous imam who was skilled in writing and expression. He was distinguished by his intelligence and cleverness, able to express ideas in an eloquent and smooth manner. He had extensive knowledge of history, geography and astronomy, and used his language in an eloquent and appropriate manner (25).

## His family

Ibn Fadlallah Al-Omari belongs to a large family with abundant knowledge and learning in the fields of literature and assumed the presidency of the Diwan Al-Insha in Egypt and the Levant for about a century. His ancestors settled in the city of Burullus in Lower Egypt with a sense of connection to Damascus. Many of the Al-Fadlallah Al-Omari family worked in the service of the Mamluk state in Egypt and the Levant and participated in the scientific movement (26). His father, Yahya Al-Din Ibn Fadlallah Al-Omari, was born in the year (645 AH) in the Karak region (27) (28). He was a prominent and influential figure in the Mamluk state. He held important positions in several periods and participated in the secretarial work with his brother Sharaf Al-Din. He spent his days in different stages under the rule of the princes of Egypt, starting with Al-Ashraf Ibn Qalawun, King Al-Muzaffar Rukn Al-Din Baybars Al-Jashnakir, and Al-Nasir Muhammad Ibn Aqlawun. Later, he was appointed to the position of secretarial work in Damascus instead of his brother, Judge Muhyi Al-Din Ibn Fadlallah (29). Then he returned to Egypt where Ala al-Din ibn al-Athir (30) was appointed as a judge. He continued in his position until he was struck with paralysis (31) and was unable to perform his duties. He was summoned by King al-Nasir who appointed him to the Diwan al-Insha in Egypt in the year 729 (32). He had a son named Judge Shihab al-Din who was responsible for reading the mail and carrying out the tasks of the Sultan. After that, King al-Nasir summoned Judge Muhyi al-Din and his son Judge Shihab al-Din to Damascus and Judge Sharaf al-Din ibn al-Shihab Mahmud (33) was appointed in their place. Then Judge Muhyi al-Din and his son Judge Shihab al-Din returned to the Diwan al-Insha in Egypt and continued in their position until the death of Judge Muhyi al-Din in the year 738 (34). His son Judge Ala al-Din continued in the position during the reign of King al-Nasir (34), then his son al-Mansur Abu Bakr (35), and after him his brother al-Ashraf Kujuk (36). Finally, his brother, King Al-Nasir Ahmad (37). Muhyi al-Din was a virtuous and complete man, a self-respecting scholar, calling people to his majesty. He had four sons (38). As for his uncle, Shihab al-Din Abd al-Wahhab bin Fadl Allah al-Umari, he was born in the year (623 AH) and was a skilled artist in the art of writing and a brilliant specialist in the art of calligraphy. He was distinguished by his superior skills in correspondence (39), which were evident in his rhyme, affectation, and skill in formulating texts. Shihab al-Din was known for his excellence, as he was skilled in handwriting and writing. He was easy-going and enjoyable with his sharp senses. He was appreciated by the Mamluk sultans and their princes, surpassing his brother Muhyi al-Din. Ibn Taghri Bardi described him in his book, *The Shining Stars*, with praiseworthy qualities when he said about him, "He was an imam in writing and composition, knowledgeable in the management of the kingdom, his handwriting was beautiful, and his mind was broad." (40) He had no rival in his time. He died in Damascus in the year (717 AH), leaving behind an artistic legacy (41). Judge Badr al-Din Ibn Fadlallah al-Omari, the uncle of Judge Shihab al-Din Ahmad Ibn Yahya, was born in the year (710 AH). He took over the office of the composition in the Levant and Egypt. He went with his father to Egypt and his brother Judge Alaa al-Din Ali brought him into the House of Justice and worked in the constitution in the year (743 AH). The people loved him. He was wise and the princes and notables submitted to him. He lived a long life and was the last to hold the position of secretary. He was a virtuous imam in composition and literature. He was one of those who held the position of secretary in Egypt from the Al Fadlallah al-Omari family. He died in the Levant in the year (746 AH) (42). His first brother is Alaa al-Din Ali Ibn Yahya, the second son of Muhyi al-Din, who held the position of secretary for Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad in the year 735 AH after the dismissal of his brother Shihab al-Din. He continued in this position until the death of al-Nasir and the rule of Sultan al-Muzaffar Haji and Sultan al-Nasir Hussein (43). His other brother Muhammad bin Ali bin Yahya Fadlallah was appointed secretary of the secret in place of his father during his death illness on Thursday, the 18th of Ramadan, 769 AH. He appointed his brother Izz al-Din Hamza to act on his behalf during the reign of Ashraf Shaaban bin Hussein. Then he returned to the secret of the secret on the 4th of Dhu al-Hijjah, 786 AH, until the rule of al-Zahir Baybars ended (44). He had a brother with the same name who was authorized by al-Abraquhi (45) and Muhammad bin al-Husayn bin Lafwi (46) and others. Thus, he was the fourth son of Muhyi al-Din. After his brother Ala al-Din, he assumed the position of secretary of the secret. He was from the Al-Fadlallah al-Omari.

## His sectarian tendencies and inclinations

Ibn Fadlallah al-Umari adopted the Shafi'i school of thought after Sheikh Shams al-Din al-Isfahani (48) gave him permission. He was one of the scholars of the Shafi'i school of thought and one of the jurists and scholars of his time. Ibn Fadlallah al-Umari studied and learned from the scholars of the Shafi'i school of thought and sought to spread it (49). It is also the school of thought that the Mamluks adopted during the era of their state.

## Year of his death and place of burial

Ibn Fadl Al-Omari lived for forty-nine years, during which he displayed his scientific and administrative works in their most wonderful forms until death came to him on the Day of Arafah in the year seven hundred and forty-nine AH, and he was buried in Damascus in their cemetery in Al-Salihyah and was buried next to his father and brother at the foot of Mount Qasioun (50).

## Services provided by the state and the facilitations for traders in the Islamic East

The merchants were among the rich and luxurious classes in the Islamic East, Khorasan and Transoxiana, the province of Persia. They were distinguished by qualities that prevailed over the rest of the provinces of the Arab Islamic state. Among them were wealthy merchants (58), merchants of well-spent money (59), and rich people (60). Its people were wealthy and rich (61). In particular, the city of Siraf, which lies on the Persian Sea and is the port of Persia. Its buildings are made of teak, with interwoven construction. Its people are known for their noble architecture, and they are an example of fortification and improvement (62). The border areas in Transoxiana are also rich. (63) And they depended on the merchants in the border city of Badaghshan, which had markets, hotels, and baths, and with them the inhabitants of the Batam Mountains, (64) and those who lived near them, especially the people of Khwarazm. (65) And the merchants had a prominent role in society in the Abbasid era in the Islamic East in general. (66) And they had a respectable position because they were from the special and general class, along with the writers and men of knowledge. (67) And the Khwarazmian merchant was described as wearing two shirts and a robe over his trousers, like the nobles of the people and the sons of the caliphs. (68) And the merchant needed to polish his robe and turban and the beauty of his mount and clean its equipment. (69) And they had a political role in attending the ceremonies of the appointment of the caliphs and the governors of the regions. (70) The princes and inhabitants of the countries of the Islamic East took care of the trade caravans and their hospitality, by building walls, fortresses, and castles inside the cities in which markets and shops were spread, such as the city of Kerman, which is considered one of the gates of India, built in The sides of its roads are made up of houses and lodges on the roadside (71). Likewise, the residents of Kerman city used to welcome and take care of the caravan merchants passing through their city to facilitate their transactions through its lands, such as the trade center, which is the sea port, and the market site, which has the grand mosque and the merchants' residences in its villages, scattered in the villages towards Farsakhin (72). The city of Jurjaniya, which is the mother of Khwarazm, is a large, prosperous city with markets, suburbs, and a wall surrounding the suburb and the city (73). These lodges have become rest stops for merchants and travelers, where they stock up on what they need of provisions for themselves and their animals for long journeys, and the presence of security and reassurance in completing the process of buying, selling, and money exchange in the cities. As a commercial meeting place, it spreads along the trade routes (74) and in the Sharosna region adjacent to the land of Ghazya. Many lodges and inns emerged in the city of Dizak (75), the most prominent of which is the Khudaisar lodge. (76) In Samarkand, most of the streets were filled with running water between wells and a watering place built on a wall. (77) As for the generosity of the people in the Transoxiana region, it was as if they were in one house, no one would stay with anyone else. It was as if a man had entered his own house, and a host must have a guest who would come to him out of hatred, but rather he would exhaust his efforts in establishing his home without knowing anything about it. And he did not expect rewards, but rather believed in them, because of their generosity with their money, and they treat each person according to his ability in what he possessed. It is enough for you that you do not see a landowner receiving his provisions except that his concern was to acquire a spacious palace and a guest house, so you see him spending most of his day preparing what is suitable for whoever comes to him, and he is eager for a guest to come to him so that he can honor him. So if a guest arrives in the



people of Nakhiya, they compete over him. (78) The people of Transoxiana compete with each other. In such a case, he would even overwhelm their money, just as all other people compete in collecting and multiplying money (79).

The governors, leaders, and rulers of the country also competed in building charitable institutions to receive and shelter merchants and travelers coming to the Transoxiana region, which are ribats and caravanserais (80). The role of the governors also appeared in. Controlling the areas of economic importance, which are represented by the commercial areas in Khorasan, Transoxiana, and Khwarazm. The Samanids controlled them and preserved. The borders of the country and achieved growth and economy in them (81). One of the priorities was to maintain the security and safety of the roads and the safety of merchants and travelers, which led to economic and commercial activity. The states located on the Silk Road adopted security, protection, and comfort for travelers along the route from the East of the world to the West (82). When Termashirin converted to Islam (83), he converted to Islam and made it apparent in his country and spread it throughout his kingdom. He followed the Sharia rulings and emulated them. He honored the merchants coming to him from every direction. The roads before him were not opened to the merchants of Egypt and the Levant. To it. And the troubled in the land did not care about those who were passing through it. When Tarma Shirin became king, the merchants sought him out more. And they returned grateful to him until his country became. For them, roads were intended and a well-traveled path (84). And among the priorities of commercial dealings was interest and care. For commercial caravans. The ribats were made to accommodate the merchants and facilitate their commercial dealings, as they were known to be. People of cheerfulness and generosity (85). And he witnessed the remains of a house in Sogdia, the strings were struck. At the door of his house with the horses of the guests. What was in it. He remained undisturbed for more than a hundred years, not preventing a visitor from descending. Rather, he descended upon it at night, suddenly, a hundred and two hundred. And no more than people with their beasts. And their retinue of food, blankets, and fodder for their beasts. What sufficed them without any trouble. The owner of the house ordered that or took the trouble to provide his family and mother with cheerful hospitality, for everyone who witnessed it knew. (86) And the majority of the wealthy and rich people in the lands beyond the river. Spending their money. In building schools, ribats, roads and endowments. For the sake of jihad. And the faces of goodness and the construction of bridges (87) and the daughter of Lady Zubaydah, the wife of Caliph Harun al-Rashid. The daughter of Jaafar and the mother of Caliph al-Amin in the city of Badakhshan, which is adjacent to the Turks. A ribat (88) and the city of Badakhshan. And its location is in Turkestan. It is a small city with a fortified wall made of earth and it has markets, hotels, baths, merchants and money spent and it has cities, villages and extended works. And vineyards and trees and flowing springs and it is connected to the works of Qanuj and the lands of India (89) and as for Nishapur. All of them are inns and hotels for the residence of merchants. Each hotel specializes in a certain type of trade. In addition to the inns that are used. For buying and selling and inhabited by the masters of various craftsmen (90) and the inns and the edges of the roads and shops. Or a complex and people. To a wall. In the city of Samarkand. Except that it has a fountain water in the frozen. And also the city of Samarkand. Also, its outskirts are more than two thousand places. Frozen water is provided in it. It is necessary to stand between built watering places and erected copper fountains and fixed earthenware jugs. In the walls (91) and beyond the river. It is in this world a model of Paradise in the Hereafter. The traveler in it does not carry water or provisions, nor does he need a companion, nor does the road become difficult for him (92).

In the fourth century AH, after the stability enjoyed by the Abbasid state, trade advanced and reached the peak of its greatness. This was due to the political and administrative stability and the establishment of security. And their control over the trade routes in the regions of the East. And through the Samanids, who preserved the borders of the country (93) and through the establishment of ribats and their buildings for guards and post offices. Equipped with horses and what the traveler needs between one point and another until Ismail bin Ahmed Al-Samani endowed them with a lot of money for these ribats (94). The Ghaznavids also played a role in maintaining the safety and security of the roads. Among them was Mahmud bin Sabuktigin, who fought the Ghor in the year (410 AH / 1019 AD). And defeated them. After learning what they were doing of highway robbery operations (95). The Seljuks played an important role in protecting the trade routes in the countries of the East. From highwaymen and thieves. They appointed guards to work. And they generously gave them gifts. And they built ribats for the merchants to settle. And to establish a

system. The trade routes centered in Baghdad (96) and built Malik Shah. In the year (465 AH / 485 AH). He built the Minaret of the Horn to guide the merchants while they were walking at night. The roads became safe during his reign (97) and the trade caravans used to travel from the regions of Transoxiana to the farthest parts of the Levant without guards (98). The regions through which the trade routes passed played a role in protecting the caravans. By concluding trade agreements between Transoxiana and the border areas leading to China. And through the mountainous roads and through the lands of Khwarazm and the Bulgars. And guards were placed in all the areas through which they passed (99) and the city of Termez. It was the oldest crossing on the Oxus River during the Samanid era. On the way to India. And it had a large market (100) that ships used to pass through from every side (101) through the Oxus River. And it was a port for the trade carried from the north to Khorasan (102). Therefore, strong fortifications were built on the Oxus River. It relied on its people to resist attacks on the city (103). Bukhara, its villages and farms are surrounded by a wall twelve farsakhs long. It has seven gates. There are paths on the outskirts, including a path leading to Khorasan known as the Darb al-Maydan. (104) And there are more than ten thousand ribats in Transoxiana, and in many of them if the inhabitant is left he is fed and hung on his mount (105) and they are people of obedience to their sultans and submission to their princes to the extent that the one in charge of their affairs disposes of their money and affairs and all their conditions as the owner disposes of his property, and the one entitled to his right is relaxed in that, extending his hand, neither fearing nor the owner of the money complaining about the situation, both of them are kind-hearted, cheerful and content with his companion, and the people of this country mostly have motives that concern them with seeking knowledge and demonstrating for the truth, and emulating each other in good morals (106) and the people of Abhar are the most skillful and noble (107) and a return of a group of merchants to the countries of Transoxiana died One of them had great merchandise and money amounting to nearly eight hundred thousand dirhams, and he had no heirs. The deputies of the court were cautious about his money, and the Sultan of the region was informed of this, and he denounced it vehemently, and said, "What do we have to do with money? Otherwise, they are more deserving of their company and more deserving of his money." Then he called the merchants and ordered them to hand him over, but they refused, and said, "This man has no heirs from us or in his country, and we do not know of any heirs for him in general, and you are more deserving of him." The Sultan became angry and said, "No, by God, we do not take inheritance from someone who dies in our country, but as for this, the king of his country is more deserving of his inheritance." So they took him with them to Tauriz and gave him to its owner, because the man was from it. (108) As for Samarkand, its people were more chivalrous than others, and the entire country, its roads, alleys, markets, and lanes, were paved with stones. (109) As for their strength, it is well-known and widespread, and Al-Mu'tasim asked Abdullah bin Tahir about someone he could gather from the people of Khorasan and beyond. The river, so he sent to Noah bin Asad bin Saman and wrote to him, "There are three hundred thousand villages. If a knight and a foot soldier go out from each village, their loss will not be apparent to its people." (110) And their women have outstanding beauty. (111) And the women of the Kharkhiz are busy with the work, and the man is only responsible for the movement, planting, and harvesting. (112).

## Conclusion

Thanks be to God and His grace, through this research entitled (State Services for Merchants in the Islamic East) and specializing in commercial aspects and the treatment of the people of the East for merchants and the routes they take and their spread and their impact on economic life in the East, we have reached important results in this study, which are:

- 1 - Trade has a distinct economic importance in the course of human history and the development of civilization and the settlement of a large number of people on both sides of the trade routes led to the emergence of social, economic and administrative institutions and the organization of life in them.
- 2 - Commercial activity in the Islamic East required care for commercial caravans and hosting them across its lands by building ribats, inns, walls and gates on the roads and establishing markets, post offices and rest stops for merchants and travelers to supply and the nature of the people of the East is generosity and hospitality, so if a merchant or visitor came between them, they competed and disputed over him.

3 - Documenting commercial relations with the countries of the East and the role of merchants in transmitting news and cultures to all the regions they pass through, east and west, and the trade routes It linked China and the Arab Islamic state and the Hephthalites and immigrants to Europe and the states on the borders of China and the inhabitants of Central Asia who worked in trade between China and the Romans, as it enjoyed economic integration between its regions.

4- The Silk Road was one of the largest bridges connecting the far-flung nations, regions and peoples, as it linked China, Central Asia and Khorasan to the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad and Samarra, until trade continued to develop and advance until it reached the peak of its strength and greatness in the fourth century AH, due to the political stability imposed by the Abbasids.

5- The states located on the trade routes adopted the provision of security, protection, guarding the roads and the comfort of merchants and travelers. Among these states were the Tahirids, Samanids, Ghaznavids and Seljuks, which led to the prosperity of two eastern regions, Khorasan and Transoxiana, due to their geographical location and the connection of their internal cities with other cities and the provision of many commercial and economic opportunities.

6- The cooperation of Muslim and non-Muslim merchants in establishing international trade networks contributed to The spread of Islam and Arab culture, which encouraged justice and fairness in commercial transactions and the protection of the rights of merchants and travelers.

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