

ANDREI LEBEDEV

A NEW EPIGRAM FOR HARMODIOS AND ARISTOGEITON

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## A NEW EPIGRAM FOR HARMODIOS AND ARISTOGEITON

## 1. The New Text

In 1981 J. Vinogradov published a fragment of a lapidary epigram from Olbia (found in 1970 in Parutino) which has been included by P. Hansen in *Carmina Epigraphica Graeca* 2. 884.<sup>1</sup> In 1985 during the excavations of the supposed theater of Olbia a second fragment of the same stone was discovered. In his "Political history of Olbia" (1989) Vinogradov publishes the photograph of the joined fragments and provides the following reconstruction of the text, apparatus criticus and translation:

[Cπεῦς]εν (? ) ὁ μυριέτης χ[ρόνος οὐδ' Εὐρησιβίοιο? ]  
 [γοῦ]ν Λήθηι θεῖναι τῶ[ν ἀρετῶν τὸ κλέος,]  
 οὐ κτάν' ὅς ἄνδρα τύρα[ννον ἐλευθερίην δ' ἀπέδωκε]  
 πατρίδι καὶ λαοὺς ἀτ[ονόμους ἔθετο].

<sup>3</sup> ἐλευθερίην δ' ἀπέδωκε Burkert, Hermann: [ἐλευθερίην πάλι δῶκε] Peek (omnes privatim).

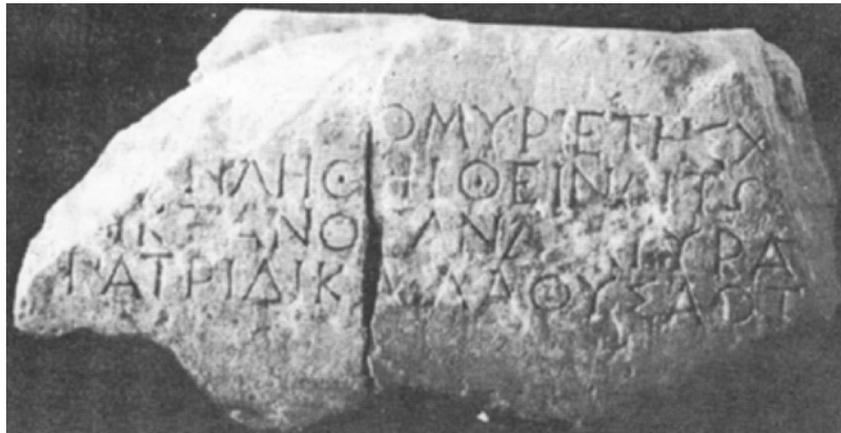
"The thousand-years time took care so that (the glory of the exploits of Heuresibios?) in truth would not sink into Lethe; he did not kill the tyrant, (but nevertheless restored freedom) to the motherland and (made) the people independent."<sup>2</sup>

According to Vinogradov the stone is a monument base; he dates the inscription to the first quarter of the fourth century B.C. and takes it as a proof of his theory that Olbia was tyrannical in the fifth century. C. 400 B.C. the tyranny allegedly fell, and grateful Olbiopolites erected a statue to the revolutionary local hero to mark the beginning of a new, democratic era in the Olbian history. The liberator is identified by Vinogradov with a certain Heuresibios, son of Syriskos, whose name is attested in two contemporary dedications to Ζεὺς Ἐλευθέριος (Vinogradov, *op. cit.* 135ff.). Vinogradov's supplements χρόνος, τύραννον, ἀτονόμους ἔθε- are certain. Burkert's ἐλευθερίην δ' ἀπέδωκε and Vinogradov's τὸ κλέος move in the right direction, but κλέος τῶν ἀρετῶν (instead of ἀρετῆς) sounds Byzantine and ἐλευθερίαν ἀποδιδόναι is unparalleled. All the rest is out of question. Cπεῦςεν is unintelligible; the combination οὐδὲ...γοῦν does not seem to be attested, and γοῦν itself is both impossible in this position and alien to the language of epos and epigram. Vinogradov's translation renders θεῖναι as intransitive with κλέος as its subject; but since θεῖναι is transitive and its subject can only be χρόνος, one would expect in line 1 after χρόνος a direct object of the initial verb rather than a name in genitive. It is surprising that the tyrannicide did not actually kill the tyrant; and it is even more surprising that for his failure to do so he was honored with a statue.

It is hard to see why in the 1989 edition (p.142) the *sigma* of the alleged ὅς is undotted. In the edition of the first fragment (VDI 1981 Nr.3.67) it is dotted and on p. 68 marks "from the *sigma* remains the upper bar." The photograph of the 1981 edition (between p. 56 and 57, fig. 2), which is very sharp and detailed unlike the 1989 dim photograph of the joined fragments, does not support even this; it shows that the letter before ἄνδρα has vanished virtually without trace: there is no evidence for *sigma*. Although the 1989 photograph is not as good for details, I think, it is sufficient to show that: 1) no additional evidence on this *sigma* has been found; 2) the space occupied by the alleged *sigma* is preceded by a break which almost doubles the distance between omikron and *alpha*. To fill the space we apparently need a wider letter than *sigma*, such as *nu* which, in fact, is the only possibility allowed by the text. The vertical preceding κτάνον cannot be interpreted as *upsilon* since the alleged upper right bar (presumably produced by the break) sticks into the top of *kappa* in remarkable contrast with three *upsilons* of the inscription; the vertical can be only *iota*. The reading οὐ κτάνον is certain. Keeping only the plausible supple-

<sup>1</sup> J.G. Vinogradov in VDI 1981 Nr. 3, 67 ff.; SEG XXXI 702.

<sup>2</sup> Vinogradov, *Politicheskaiia istoriia Ol'viiskogo polisa* (Moscow 1989) 142.



Vinogradov, *Polit. istoriia*, 141, fig. 5 (scanned from xerox copy)

ments of Vinogradov indicated above and modifying Burkert's supplement of l.3 and Vinogradov's supplement of l.2, I propose the following text:

[Φθίς]ει<sup>3</sup> ὁ μυριετή<sup>4</sup> χρόνος e.g. οὐρανὸν ἠδὲ καὶ αἶην (?)  
 [Πρὶ]ν λήθῃ θεῖναι<sup>5</sup> τῶ[νδ'] ἀρετῆς τὸ κλέος,  
 [Οἱ] κτάνο[ν] ἄνδρα τύρα[νον ἐλευθερίην τ' ἐκάωσαν<sup>6</sup>  
 Πατρίδι καὶ λαοὺς ἀοτ[ονόμους ἔθεσαν (vel ἐθέτην)<sup>7</sup>].

"The ten-thousand-years time will sooner destroy (e.g. heaven and earth), than bury into oblivion the glory of the noblesse of these men (i.e. of those buried here) , who killed the tyrant, saved freedom for the motherland and made the people autonomous."

In lines 1-2 we find an inversion of the simple archaic eternity formula Theogn. 252 ὄφρ' ἂν γῆ τε καὶ ἠέλιος (cf. 245 οὐδέποτε· οὐδὲ θανῶν ἀπολείς κλέος); "Midas epitaph" Peek *GV* 1171; *CEG* 1 ἀνδρῶν τῶνδ' ἀρετῆ[ς ἔσται κλέος ἄφθι[τον] αἰεὶ / [ὄφρ' ἂν ... νέμοι θεοί.

Although it is not possible to restore with certainty the second part of v. 1 because of too many possibilities, the difference in sense is minimal. The object of φθίσει in v. 1 in any case must be something majestic and proverbially eternal, capable to withstand the destructive power of χρόνος.<sup>8</sup> Conceivable alternatives to φθίσει are κρύψει and τήξει (or ψήξει). The former, favoured by θεῖναι "to bury", would require as object something like ἀνδρῶν ἔθνεα θνητῶν the latter some kind of πέτρῃ, possibly, the grave-stone itself or the bronze statue, εἰκόνα τήνδε, cf. *AG* 9.704 τήκει καὶ πέτρην ὁ πολὺς χρόνος, ἀλλ' ἀρετῶν / Ἀσκληπιοδοτοῦ τὸ κλέος ἀθάνατον... γέρα πατρίδι κτλ.<sup>9</sup> Φθίσει is preferable because it results in an elegant periphrasis of κλέος ἄφθιτον.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *CEG* 2.611 τὴν σὴν δὲ ἀρετὴν οὐθεὶς [φθί]σει α[ίων]; Ionia, Chios, Document 280, 6 οὐνομα δὲ αἰὼν οὐποτ' ἀμαυρῶσει τοῦμόν. Vinogradov cites *CIG* 2308 (Kaibel Nr. 854, Delos, 2 c. B.C.?) Εἰκόνα σου, Πολύκλειε, ἀνὰ πατῆδα τάνδε πολίται / θῆκαν· ὁ μυριετής δ' οὐ μαρναεὶ σε χρόνος. For reason of space, L. Koenen suggests [φθεί]σει (oral communication).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. also μύριος αἰὼν in glorifications of ἀρετή: Peek *GV* 33.13 and *CIRB* 145B.4 cited by Vinogradov, *ibid.* I take the opportunity to emend the meaningless μυρία δ' αἰὼν in *CIRB* 145B.4 to μύριος αἰών.

<sup>5</sup> Ionia, Miletos, document 455.9 οὐ κλέος οὐδ' αἰὼν ἐπιλήεται.

<sup>6</sup> For ἐκάωσαν with dat. cf. e.g. *IG* II(2) 3639, 5 (Attica c.170 A.D.) ἀλλ' ἐκάωσαν, ἄχραντα ἀρρήτων θέμια Κεκροπίδαί.

<sup>7</sup> On the dual ἐθέτην see Hansen, *Glotta* LVI (1978) n. 8.

<sup>8</sup> Or οὐρανὸν ἠδὲ καὶ αἶαν or ἠδὲ θάλασσαν, ... ἠδὲ καὶ ἄστρα, ... ἠδὲ καὶ κελήνην etc.; something like οὐρανομήκεα πέτρην or οὐρεα μακρά is also conceivable.

<sup>9</sup> *MAMA* VIII Nr. 486.5-7 (Aphrodisias, 6 c. A.D.); L. Robert, *Hellenica* IV (1948) 114-126.

The first editor (*op. cit.* 144-145) rightly compares with lines 3-4 the epigram for Harmodios and Aristogeiton from the Chios collection dated c. 200 B.C.<sup>10</sup> and concludes (this I cannot accept) that the Olbian epigram imitates the Chian. The similarity may be even more striking if we read the Chian version as follows:

κτῆσαι τοῦτο ἐδόκη[σεν Ἀθηναίοισιν Ἀριστο-  
 γείτωνος αἰχμητ[οῦ κῆμα καὶ Ἀρμοδίου]  
 οἷ κτάνον ἄνδρα τύρα[ννον ἐλευθερίην τ' ἐκάωσαν]  
 ψυχὰς παρθέμενο[ι πατρίδι καλλιχόρῳ] <sup>11</sup>

1-2 suppl. H. Lloyd-Jones ap. Trypanis 3 ἐλευθερίην τ' ἐκάωσαν ego 4 [ ] suppl. exempli gratia.

It is hard to see why the heroes of the Olbian epigram are some unknown local tyrannicides rather than legendary Harmodios and Aristogeiton. There is a circle in the argumentation of the first editor: he connects the Olbian epigram with a local *tyrannomachos* on the ground of his theory of the "fall of tyranny" in Olbia c. 400 B.C., but the latter, in turn, is primarily based on this particular epigram. Vinogradov's original reason in 1981 for postulating a local tyrannicide was the comparison with the laws about *tyrannoktonia*: whoever kills the tyrant, will be honoured with a statue etc.<sup>12</sup> But the supposed liberator of the Olbian demos, as Vinogradov has to accept now, did not kill the tyrant. Consequently, he does not qualify for a statue, and the laws cited by Vinogradov in 1981 now become irrelevant. The hypothetical Olbian tyrannicide was inferred by Vinogradov in 1981 on the basis of his supplement ὄκ ἄνδρα τύρα[ννον ἀπέκτεινεν which has been refuted by the 1985 fragment.<sup>13</sup> The plurals τῶν (line 2) and οἷ κτάνον (line 3), the verbal coincidences with the Chian epigram, the literary character of the epigram make it obvious that the tyrannicides (sic) in question are Harmodios and Aristogeiton.

The syntactical structure of the text allows a name of the hero only in line 2 after θεῖναι, but this possibility is ruled out by τῶ[v. The omission of name(s) does not square with Vinogradov's hypothesis, but it can be easily explained if οἷ refers to Harmodios and Aristogeiton. The name of Aristogeiton does not fit into hexameter. To avoid the cumbersome division, the author of the Olbian epigram omitted the names which were either inscribed separately or could be easily identified from the copy of the famous statue. Vinogradov's additional argument for the "fall of tyranny", the contemporary dedications to Zeus Eleutherios, is purely analogical and inconclusive. From the fact that in *two* rather exceptional cases the cult of Zeus Eleutherios was connected (*ad hoc* and by reinterpretation) with the end of tyranny, it does not follow that *all* instances of this cult mark the change of political regime: otherwise the whole map of Greece would be covered with monuments of liberation and even the imperial Rome would be the center of tyrannocentric democracy (cf. e.g. Νέρων Ζεὺς Ἐλευθέριος). It would be also possible to infer from the first instance of Zeus Basileus in inscriptions that in the third century B.C. Olbia became a kingdom, and from the cult of Zeus Olbios that life in Olbia at that time was happy. It has been rightly emphasized that the primary function of this god was the deliverance from external military danger, and only by transference—from political enemy or tyranny.<sup>14</sup> We may conclude that there is no evidence *at all* for the fall of tyranny in Olbia c. 400 B.C.; consequently, there is no sufficient reason to postulate a rise of tyranny in the fifth century and to look for alleged autocratic terminology in the apparently

<sup>10</sup> C.A. Trypanis, "A new collection of epigrams from Chios", *Hermes* 88 (1960) 69-74; *SEG* XVI 497; XVII 392; A.J. Podlecky, "Epigraphica Simonidea", *Epigraphica* 35 (1973) 32 ff.; Joseph W. Day, "Epigrams and History: The Athenian Tyrannicides, A Case in Point", in: *The Greek Historians, Papers Presented to A.E. Raubitschek*, (Stanford 1985), 25-46.

<sup>11</sup> Alternatively, one may consider the following reconstruction for lines 3-4:

οἷ κτάνον ἄνδρα τύρα[ννον Ἀθηναίους θ' ἅμα λαούς]  
 ψυχὰς παρθέμενο[ι αὐτονόμους ἔθεσαν].

<sup>12</sup> Vinogradov cited as parallels *SIG* 284 (*Inscr. von Erythrai* 2 [1973] 503 and *OGIS* 218 (P. Frisch, *Die Inschriften von Ilios* [1975] 25).

<sup>13</sup> Vinogradov's mistake is similar to that of Robert who connected the epigram from Chios with a local tyrannicide, despite the name of Ἀριστογείτων, and cited the very same laws about tyrannicides: *REG* 71 (1958) 249 ff., Nr. 379.

<sup>14</sup> K. Raaflaub, *Die Entdeckung der Freiheit* (München 1985) 138 ff.

democratic decrees of the Olbiopolites. Latyshev's view of the democratic constitution in fifth century Olbia remains unshaken.<sup>15</sup>

## 2. The Date of the Inscription and the Origin of the Stone

The lettering of the epigram is virtually identical with *IOSPE* I<sup>2</sup> 160, a dedication of a statue to Zeus Eleutherios, which was dated by Latyshev to the first half of the 3rd century B.C. A. Graham in *Gnomon* (1983) 462 accepts a Hellenistic date both for the epigram and *IOSPE* I<sup>2</sup> 160. Vinogradov, in accordance with his theory of the fall of tyranny, dates both inscriptions to the early fourth century B.C. I am inclined to a compromise between Latyshev's too late and Vinogradov's too early dates, namely the last third of the fourth century B.C. It is after the siege of Olbia by Zopyrion c. 330 B.C., the greatest military danger in the history of Olbia before Bourebista,<sup>16</sup> that the series of monumental dedications to Zeus Eleutherios is most likely to have been made. Finally, I would suggest that the Olbian stone with epigram is not a monument base.<sup>17</sup> There are two possible explanations of its origin. It may derive from the Olbian gymnasium of the early Hellenistic period;<sup>18</sup> the inscription (presumably, one of a series) may have been part of a lapidary text-book on the wall. The Chian collection of epigrams (including the Harmodios and Aristogeiton epigram) had a similar purpose. Alternatively, the stone with the epigram may belong to the Big Stoa which separated the Olbian agora from the Eastern temenos and which probably was dedicated to Zeus Eleutherios.<sup>19</sup> This was built, no doubt, under a strong political and cultural influence of Athens, as analogon to the Stoa of Zeus Eleutherios on Athenian Agora. Like the Athenian Stoa of Zeus Eleutherios, it may have been decorated with monuments glorifying democracy.<sup>20</sup> The stone with Harmodios and Aristogeiton epigram then probably comes from the wall of the Stoa under a niche housing a copy of the statue of the Athenian tyrannicides. Statues of Harmodios and Aristogeiton may have existed in Olbia from the time of the First Delian League (Olbia was certainly a member by 425 B.C.); the cult of Tyrannicides in the cities of *symmachoi* was part of the Athenian religious-political propaganda.<sup>21</sup>

## 3. The Date and Origin of the Text

The date and the origin of our epigram is a more delicate question. The discovery of the Olbian epigram for Harmodios and Aristogeiton (henceforward O) shows that the epigram from Chios (henceforward Ch) is not a Hellenistic fiction as it has been thought by some. Thus Joseph W. Day's argument for an early date and Athenian origin of the Chian epigram is confirmed, but not his attribution to the Antenor base.<sup>22</sup> *Pace* Vinogradov, (O) cannot be attributed to a local poet, either. Both texts apparently are slightly divergent versions of the same Attic original which can be dated to the fifth century B.C. This common source of (O) and (Ch) (henceforward A) should be distinguished from *CEG* I.430. The latter

<sup>15</sup> Vassily Latyshev, *Issledovaniia ob istorii i gosudarstvennom stroe Ol'vii* (St.-Peterburg 1887) 213 ff. et passim; A. Lebedev, "The oracle of Apollo Didymeus and the democratic revolution in Borysthene-Olbia after 494 B.C.", in preparation.

<sup>16</sup> On this see J. Vinogradov, *Politicheskaia istoriia* 150 ff.

<sup>17</sup> The dimensions of the first fragment are: height 17 cm, width 19 cm, length 28 cm. (Vinogradov, *VDI* 1981 Nr. 4, 67); the length of the second fragment is not specified. I wonder how its only 19 cm in width surface could hold the two tyrannicides. There is no trace of any hole of fastening device on its upper side on the 1981 photograph.

<sup>18</sup> On the Olbian gymnasium of Hellenistic times see E.I. Levi, *Ol'via, Gorod epokhi ellinizma* (Leningrad 1985) 99 ff. who dates its construction to the late fourth century B.C.

<sup>19</sup> On the Big Stoa see E.I. Levi, *Ol'via*, 90 ff.; on the *προεὐχὴ Διὸς Ἐλευθερίου* see A. Lebedev, "The Achilles epigram from Berezan and the Olbian cult of Achilles Pontarches", in preparation.

<sup>20</sup> Pausanias mentions the allegory of Demokratia. R.E. Wycherley, *The Athenian Agora. Literary and Epigraphical Testimonia*, vol. 3 (Princeton 1957) 25 ff.

<sup>21</sup> H. Berve, *Die Tyrannis bei den Griechen* (Darmstadt 1967) I, 187; B. Smarczyk, *Untersuchungen zur Religionspolitik und politischen Propaganda Athens im Delisch-Attischen Seebund* (München 1990) 57 n. 68.

<sup>22</sup> Joseph W. Day, op. cit. [see n. 10] 40, 43.

is shorter and more economical: it introduces the "murder" theme from the start together with the names of the tyrannicides. There is no reason therefore to suppose that the second distich of *CEG* I.430 started with οἱ κτάνων. The distinctive features of (A), on the contrary, are the absence of the "murder" theme from the preambel and the words οἱ κτάνων in the epigram itself. The finale πατρίδα γῆν ἐθέτην belongs to *CEG* I.430 only and should not be implanted into (A). There can be little doubt that (A) is younger: its language echoes the formula ἐλεύθερος καὶ αὐτόνομος which belongs to the official language of Athenian decrees.<sup>23</sup> If the two epigrams correspond indeed to the two monuments, *CEG* I.430 would have to be assigned to the 510 B.C. Antenor base, and (A) to the Critias and Nesiotes monument (477/76 B.C.). The extreme popularity of the latter then would explain why in the Hellenistic period (A) was better known outside Athens than *CEG* I.430.<sup>24</sup> But this contradicts the firmly established attribution of the agora fragment to the Critias and Nesiotes base, and the matter is further complicated by the fact that (A) has all distinctive features of an epitaph, whereas *CEG* I.430 has none. It is therefore more probable that (A) belongs to the δημόσιον κῆμα of Harmodios and Aristogeiton in the Kerameikos mentioned by Pausanias 1.29.15. Such hypothesis is in line with the plausible restoration κῆμα in the Chian version by H. Lloyd-Jones.<sup>25</sup> The date of (A) therefore cannot be as early as 477 B.C., but we still will need at least some decades before the time of the Olbian copy when (A) had already become a kind of classic. If this conclusion is correct, and (A) indeed (as I believe) was inscribed on the grave of Harmodios and Aristogeiton in Kerameikos, it is *a priori* likely that the author of the epitaph was some famous fifth century poet who, presumably, won the public competition for the best epitaph. This squares well with the exceptional poetic quality of the Olbian epigram which far surpasses all known Olbian epigrams by local poets. The philosophical concept of the all-powerful χρόνος derives from Simonides,<sup>26</sup> and is typical for Greek tragedians of the fifth century. Sophocles and especially Ion of Chios come into consideration. If our attribution of the Chios collection of epigrams to Ion of Chios is correct,<sup>27</sup> the authorship of (A) is established automatically. But even if one doubts the attribution of all seven Chian epigrams to Ion, the appearance of the name of Ion in connection with the tyrannicide epigram still makes Ion of Chios candidate number one. It is only natural that Ion dedicated a copy of his prize-winning epigram to the gymnasium of his native Chios. The date of the composition of (A) in this case is between 451 and 423 B.C. The original Attic text of the fifth century from the *demotion sema* can be tentatively reconstructed from the Olbian and Chian versions like follows:

Cτῆσαι τοῦτο ἐδόκη[σεν Ἀθηναίοισιν Ἀριστο-  
 γείτονος αἰχμητ[οῦ κῆμα καὶ Ἀρμοδίου.]  
 [Φθίς]ει ὁ μυριετής χρόνος e.g. οὐρανὸν ἠδὲ καὶ αἴην]  
 [Πρὶν λήθῃ θεῖναι τῶ[νδ' ἀρετῆς τὸ κλέος,]  
 [Οἱ] κτάνο[ν] ἄνδρα τύρα[νον ἐλευθερίην τ' ἐάσαν]  
 Πατρίδι καὶ λαοὺς αὐτ[ονόμους ἔθεσαν (vel ἐθέτην)].

The variant ψυχὰς παρθέμενοι (line 6) in the Chian version may be explained either as contamination from the Agora inscription (*CEG* I.430), or by postulating an additional couplet quoted only in

<sup>23</sup> Strictly speaking, however, the author of the epigram uses the words ἐλεύθερος and αὐτόνομος separately and as synonyms which is quite in accord with the attested fifth century usage. I, therefore, cannot agree with Vinogradov that this usage points to fourth century B.C. as *terminus post quem* of the epigram. See also K. Raaflaub, *Die Entdeckung der Freiheit* (above, n. 14) 188 ff.

<sup>24</sup> M.W. Taylor, *The Tyrant Slayers. The Heroic Image in the Fifth Century B.C. Athenian Art and Politics* (Diss. Harvard 1990).

<sup>25</sup> The only alternative, μνήμα in the present context would mean the same.

<sup>26</sup> Simon. fr. 88 West ὅ τοι Χρόνος ὄξυς ὀδόντας, / καὶ πάντα ψήχει καὶ τὰ βιαϊότατα, cf. *PMG* 645; 570 χιλιετῶν ὕπερβορέων. J. Romilly, *Time in Greek Tragedy* (Ithaca, NY 1968).

<sup>27</sup> A. Lebedev, "The Chian collection of epigrams and Ion of Chios", in preparation.

(Ch), but not in (O). In the latter case the words [οἱ κτάνο[ν] ἄνδρα τύρα[νον] were probably repeated as refrain.<sup>28</sup>

All Souls College, Oxford

Andrei Lebedev

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