

**Maria Drażyk**

# **The Marian Sanctuary in Gietrzwałd in the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Holy Virgin's Apparitions**

**G**ietrzwałd is a small town of 500 inhabitants, situated on the border of Warmia and Mazury regions, some 20 km south-west of Olsztyn. The present-day name Gietrzwałd appears in the documents around the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and probably is a polonized version of the German name of a village *Dytherichtswaldt*.<sup>1</sup> According to the German historian V. Rohrich the name could be derived from *dichterUrwald* (Virgin Forest) because the place was built in the virgin forest.<sup>2</sup>

Present-day Gietrzwałd is a well known Marian Sanctuary, a spiritual capital of the diocese of Warmia (diecezja warmińska) and a place of the only Apparitions of the Holy Virgin in Poland that were approved by the Catholic Church (the Apparitions took place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century).

## **1. The history of the cult**

There are two major reasons for which many pilgrims visit the Gietrzwałd Sanctuary: firstly – the miraculous picture of the Holy Virgin located in the church under the invocation of the Nativity of Our Lady, and secondly – the Chapel of the Apparitions of Our Lady, which is situated in the place where the Holy Virgin appeared and was seen by two peasant girls in 1877. Because of the fact that this year (2002) is the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of those unusual events, and because the pilgrimage movement to Gietrzwałd should first and foremost be associated with the Apparitions of the Holy Virgin, the issues concerning the miraculous painting of Our Lady will be treated further in the article.

The Apparitions of the Holy Virgin started on June 27 and continued until September 16 1877. The Virgin Mary appeared one hundred and sixty times to two peasant girls – 13-year-old Justyna Szafryńska and 12-year-old Barbara Samulowska.<sup>3</sup> The Apparitions took place in the time of constraint of the Polish Nation.<sup>4</sup> What seems to be important is the fact that the Holy Virgin spoke Polish. The exact course

of events is known thanks to Augustyn Weichsel, the then parish-priest of the Gietrzwałd parish, who was also a witness to the Apparitions.

Justyna Szafrzyńska was during preparation for her First Holy Communion. She was coming back home with her mother on the day when she passed her last catechism exam and hearing the sound of the church bell she started saying the Angelus (Angelus Domini) prayer. It was then when she saw a bright figure on the maple tree that grew by the church.<sup>5</sup> A beautiful Lady with long hair touching her shoulders was seated on a golden throne. Justyna also saw an angel descending from heaven who bowed and saluted Her. Shortly after, the beautiful Lady rose into the air and disappeared. This was the beginning of the Apparitions in Gietrzwałd. Father Weichsel after hearing the relation from the girl asked her to go to the same place the following day at the same time. This time Justyna went there with her friend Barbara Samulowska. The girls said the Rosary at the time of the Angelus bells, soon after that the tree became radiant. A golden circle arose around the maple, on which a golden throne ornamented with pearls appeared. Two angels assisted the Holy Virgin to the throne, two other angels brought the Infant Jesus who held the Earth in His left hand and put Him on the Virgin's lap. Two other angels held a glimmering crown over the Holy Virgin's head, above this one angel held the sceptre. Above the whole scene one more angel appeared pointing at a great cross without Christ on it. This revelation lasted for half an hour.<sup>6</sup> On June 30 the Holy Virgin appeared alone sitting on the throne and from that day on apparitions in such form happened every evening during the Rosary prayer. Justyna Szafrzyńska instructed by the priest asked the Holy Virgin *"what do you demand from us, Our Lady?"* and she received an answer *"I want you to say the Rosary prayer every day"*.<sup>7</sup> When the Virgin was asked *"who are you?"* She answered *"I am the Immaculate Holy Virgin Mary"*. The girls also asked the Virgin Mary how long the apparitions would take place and they heard *"I will come here for two more months"*. *"A miracle will happen – the sick will be cured"* She announced. The wish of The Holy Virgin was that the sick would say the Rosary prayer. During one of Her further Apparitions She made another wish – she wanted a brick chapel to be built. Inside of the chapel there should be a figure of the Immaculate Conception underneath which a linnen cloth could be placed for the cure of the sick. The figure was ordered in Munich. Then on September 8, the Feast of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary approached. The Holy Virgin was to appear in Gietrzwałd for the last time. She said *"do not be sad. I shall always be with you"*. In the evening of that day She blessed the nearby spring. The planned for that day raising of the statue could not take place because the delivery of the figure was delayed. It was delivered on September 12 and four days later it was consecrated and enthroned. Then the girls had the last Apparition during which the Holy Virgin asked again *"please pray the Rosary with devotion"*. 15 thousand people took part in the consecration ceremony.<sup>8</sup> Thus the Apparitions of the Holy Virgin in Gietrzwałd ended. They became famous among the people of the Warmia and Mazury region as well as all around Poland, still divided then by three empires. The news even reached America. Despite the time of harvest many pilgrims came to

Gietrzwałd from the first days of the Apparitions. During the week-days there could be some 2 thousand visitors, on Sundays there could even be 8 thousand people. From June 27 until September 16 1877 Gietrzwałd was visited by 300 thousand faithful and about 200 priests.<sup>9</sup>

The Gietrzwałd Apparitions had a great influence on both religious life and the political situation of the Warmia diocese. As they happened in the time of an intensified fight with any aspects of Polish nationality the Prussian authorities tried to counteract them at all costs. It is crucial to remember that the Holy Virgin spoke to the girls in their mothertongue i.e. in Polish. She asked people to say the Rosary prayer and to live their lives in sobriety. The Prussian authorities took the mass affluence of pilgrims to Gietrzwałd for a political manifestation organised by the Polish agitators.<sup>10</sup> Priest A. Weichsel was constantly tormented by the court and police summonses and eventually he was imprisoned when he refused to testify against the priests working in Gietrzwałd. The major aim of the authorities was to discourage priests from participating in the pilgrimages and from popularizing them among the people. Yet none of the authorities' actions could prevent the development of the pilgrimage movement to Gietrzwałd. One of the participants of a pilgrimage in the year of the apparitions wrote "The trains to Gietrzwałd were extremely crowded. The Prussian conductors ridiculed this pious crowd who filled the 70 carriages of the train...On every station there are hundreds of people, everybody goes to Gietrzwałd. Countless masses of people came to Gietrzwałd from all over Poland".<sup>11</sup>

The constitution of the Marian cult in Gietrzwałd happened owing to the pilgrimages – the first and the most spontaneous aspect of devotion. The goal was to visit the Apparitions Chapel, the spring blessed by the then appearing Holy Virgin and to say a prayer in front of the miraculous painting of Our Lady.<sup>12</sup> The pilgrims came to Gietrzwałd mainly during Marian festivities – August 2 (the Feast of Our Lady of the Angels), August 15 (the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady), September 8 (the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lady – major indulgence), September 16 (the holiday of the Sorrowful Mother) and June 19 (the holiday of St. Peter and Paul – secondary patrons of the parish).<sup>13</sup> The Polish press from the years 1877-1881 informed that Gietrzwałd was visited by the pilgrims from Warmia, Western Prussia, the region of Poznań, Silesia and Galicia, the Russian sector of annexed Poland, also from Lwów and Warsaw (...) Despite the massive scale of the pilgrimages there was an atmosphere of prayer and piety.<sup>14</sup>

Gietrzwałd became then the most important pilgrimage place of Warmia. The revival of the religious life of the Warmia diocese and beyond was born there.<sup>15</sup> The awakening of the national consciousness and of the awareness of national ties with the Polish people from other parts of Poland took place among the Poles inhabiting the Warmia region. In 1878 the first Polish bookstore was opened there by A. Samulowski. Despite various difficulties the number of pilgrims before the World War I increased (up to 40 thousand per year), during the World War II it decreased up to 20 thousand, and right after the war it was only 6 thousand.<sup>16</sup>

As mentioned above, the parish church in Gietrzwałd is under the invocation of the Nativity of Our Lady. Already in the 17<sup>th</sup> century the painting of the Holy Virgin that is now in the main altar was greatly worshiped. The painting had already then been crown with a silver crown what can indicate the ancient origin of the cult.<sup>17</sup> The description of the picture from 1731 gives information about the votive offerings gathered around.<sup>18</sup> In 1733 the parishioners founded a new crown set with precious stones.<sup>19</sup> The cult of the miraculous painting of the Holy Virgin is still vivid now what can be proved by a great number of the votive offerings left by the pilgrims in token of gratitude for the received grace.

Canons Regular of the Lateran who have taken care of the Sanctuary since 1945 value greatly the propagation of both the Marian cult and of Her message. On September 10 1967 in the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Apparitions the miraculous Picture of Our Lady of Gietrzwałd was crowned by the then Primate of Poland, now the Venerable Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński. On February 2 1970 a title of a basilica was conferred on the Gietrzwałd church by the Apostolic See. In the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Apparitions, i.e. in 1977 the then Warmia bishop Józef Drzazga issued a decree approving of the cult of the Apparitions of Our Lady in Gietrzwałd. The decree states that this form of cult 'is not against faith and christian morality' admitting the authenticity of the events.

This year Pope John Paul II wrote a special letter in occasion of the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Holy Virgin's Apparitions in Gietrzwałd. In the letter he addresses the archbishop, the clergy and all the faithful of the Warmia archdiocese with these words: "(...) In my heart I pilgrimize to this Sanctuary to stand there, as I stood twenty years ago, among all the worshippers of Our Lady, and to thank Her for Her presence and Her motherly care. Together with you I want to listen intently to Her words: do not be sad. I shall always be with you (...)"<sup>20</sup>

## **2. The Sanctuary as an architectonic structure**

The architectonic structure of the Sanctuary consists of: the Basilica, The Chapel of the Apparitions, The Rosary Alley leading to the spring and the Stations of the Cross.

### **2.1. The Basilica**

The parish church under the invocation of the Nativity of Our Lady consists of two major parts: old – from the choir to the pulpit and new – from the pulpit to the main altar. The exact date when the first church was finished is unknown, however it is known that the new part was built in the years of 1882-1884<sup>21</sup>. The church is situated on a plan of a rectangle. The oldest monuments of art in the church are: a wooden Pieta from ca 1425 and a granite baptismal font now serving as a stoup. The church has seven altars from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The miraculous picture of Our Lady of Gietrzwałd is situated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century main altar.

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### **2.1.1. The picture of Our Lady of Gietrzwałd**

The miraculous image of Our Lady of Gietrzwałd comes probably from the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>22</sup> It was painted with oil on canvas of 100x122 cm. It can be classified as belonging to the group of Hodigitria icons [“she who indicates and guides along the road”]. The painter is unknown but the picture is assumed to have been painted in Poland. On the icon the Holy Virgin is dressed with a dark blue mantle, holding the Infant Jesus in Her left arm, and pointing at Christ with the right one. The Child is wearing a red tunic; His right arm is raised in the gesture of benediction and His left arm rests on a book. Luminous auras are painted behind the heads of the Virgin and the Child. In the upper part of the picture the angels hold a ribbon with an inscription: “AVE REGINA COELORUM, AVE DOMINA ANGELORUM” (Hail, O Queen of Heav’n enthron’d, Hail, by angels Mistress own’d) The background is an oblique chequered pattern; the squares are coloured in green and pink alternately. The picture has the so-called “dresses” – the sheet silver partly covered with gold, with forged ornaments, that covers the vestments of the Virgin and Child.<sup>23</sup>

### **2.2 The Chapel of the Apparitions**

In the Square of the Apparitions (Plac Objawień), near the church, there is a brick chapel with a figure of the Holy Virgin. It was built according to the wish of the Mother of God, still during the time of the Apparitions in 1877, it was consecrated on Sunday September 16 on the last day of the Apparitions. It is a place especially popular among the pilgrims. Many of them say their prayers here in contemplation. When the weather is good many pilgrims gather here to listen to a lecture about the history and meaning of this special place.

### **2.3. The Rosary alley**

Some 400 metres away from the church there is a spring blessed by the Mother of God. The way leading to it is called the Rosary alley, because along this path 15 little chapel are situated. Each of them is linked with one of the 15 mysteries of the Rosary nad they are pictures painted on sheet-metal. The existence of the spring can be indebted to priest A. Weichsel as for some time it was covered up and forgotten. Only during the drainage works in 1870 it welled up again. Weichsel told the children to ask the Mother of God for benediction for this spring.<sup>24</sup> Three marble bass-reliefs depicting Moses hitting the rock with his stick and the Israelites drinking water on the desert have been placed above the spring water intake. A metal arbour with a statue of the Holy Virgin blessing the spring has been buit nearby.

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## 2.4. The Stations of the Cross

On the edge of the forest near the spring the Stations of the Cross are being built. The first four stations have been built so far. They are chapels with figures carved in marble. The places for the next stations are signed with birch crosses.

## 3. The pilgrim movement to Gietrzwałd

The Marian Sanctuary in Gietrzwałd is one of the most important centres of religious cult in Poland due to its uniqueness. There are about 800 thousand pilgrims visiting Gietrzwałd every year.<sup>25</sup> By analysing the dynamics of the organized pilgrimage movement to Gietrzwałd it can be stated that in the last 25 years (1977-2001) the number of visitors in the Sanctuary systematically increased, showing however some, usually minor, fluctuations. (Fig. 1-2) In the analysed period a significant increase of the number of pilgrims can be seen – chronologically it concerns the years of 1992 (the 115<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Apparitions and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the coronation of the picture – 117314 pilgrims), 1997 (the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Apparitions – 76485 pilgrims), 2000 (the year of the Great Jubilee of the 2000 Years of Christianity – 85939 pilgrims). However the pilgrimage movement reached a climax in 1977 (the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the apparitions of the Mother of God – 210799 pilgrims). A considerable decrease of the number of pilgrims was observed in 2001, when during the main indulgence ceremonies in Gietrzwałd there were 500 coaches less than the year before. *The Book of the Pilgrimages* says that the weather conditions that day were exceptionally bad – the intensity of the wind reached ca 100km/h and it was raining.

### 3.1. The seasonal character of the pilgrimages

By analysing the distribution of the pilgrimages in the course of the year it can be observed that the biggest number of the pilgrim groups come to Gietrzwałd in September (it has already been mentioned that the main indulgence ceremonies in praise of Our Lady of Gietrzwałd take place in September) (Fig. 3). It is characteristic that during this month (September) the average number of pilgrimages increased 9 times in the years of 1997-2001 (626 pilgrimages) as compared to the years of 1978-1981 (69 pilgrimages). Considerable increase was observed in the analogical period in April (above 5 times) and in June and October (above 4 times). The intensification of the pilgrimage movement to Gietrzwałd as well as to other centres of religious cult was indubitably influenced by the change of the political situation in Poland. Also the role of our great Countryman, pope John Paul II should not be neglected. His apostolic pilgrimages became a special invitation for us to visit the holy places. A considerable increase of the pilgrim movement can be observed in the period from May to August. In May and June the Gietrzwałd Sanctuary is visited

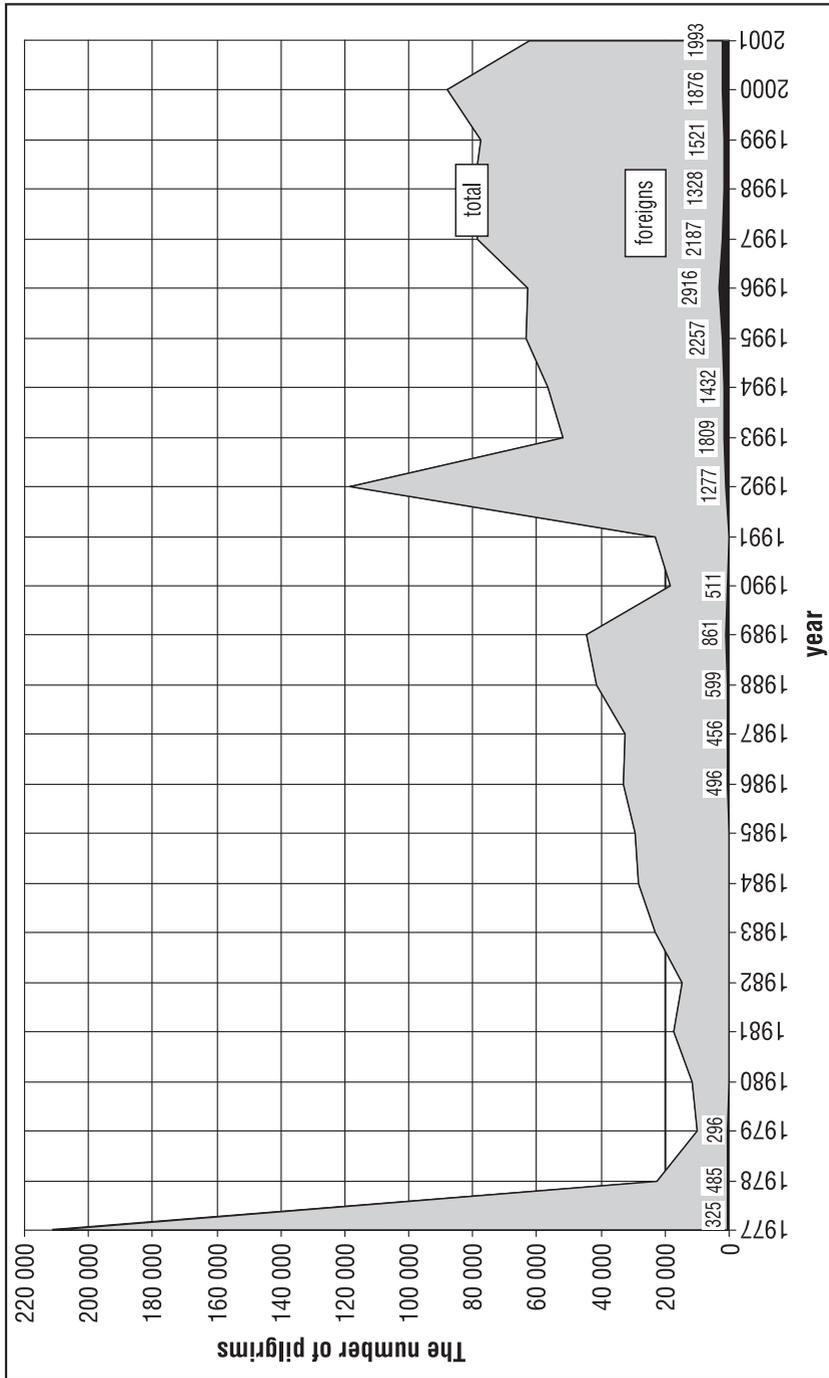


Fig. 1. Organized pilgrimage movement to Gietrzwałd in the years 1977-2002  
 Source: Own analysis based on *Pilgrimage Books in Gietrzwałd*

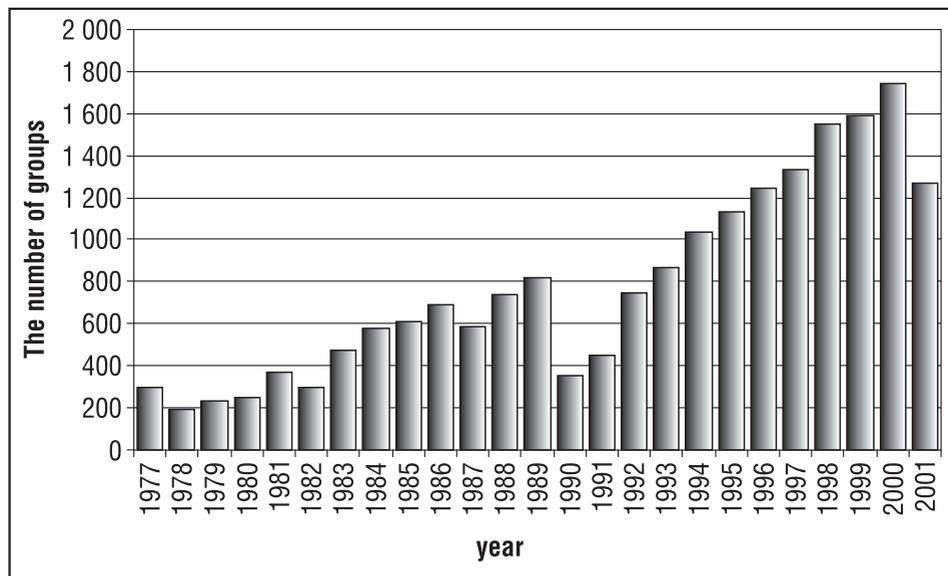


Fig. 2.

The number of pilgrimages coming to Gietrzwałd in the years 1977-2001.  
 (The data concerns pilgrims coming in the organised groups.  
 When the data concerning the number of pilgrims in the particular group  
 is missing the average number of 45 is assumed).

Source: Own analysis based on *Pilgrimage Books in Gietrzwałd*

especially by school children (specially after their First Holy Communion) and by young people. July and August are the months of a special mobility of the Poles. The vacation period is a good time for wandering and peregrination not only strictly touristic but also those with religious reasons. *The places of cult, sanctuaries, the centres of religious life (...) constitute the reference points for the spiritual life of the faithful. They inspire and stimulate their faith.*<sup>26</sup> In these months the average number of pilgrimages in the years 1997-2001 was 162 (July) and 144 (August), and in the years 1977-1981 – 46 and 53 respectively. From November until March the pilgrimage movement is minimal. The retreat or the meditation days for various communities are organised then.

### 3.2. The range of the influence of the Sanctuary

The range of the influence of the Sanctuary was worked out on the basis of *The Book of the Pilgrimages* from the years 1997-2001 (Fig. 4-5). The place of origin of the pilgrims was analysed (in accordance to a diocese they belong to) in the

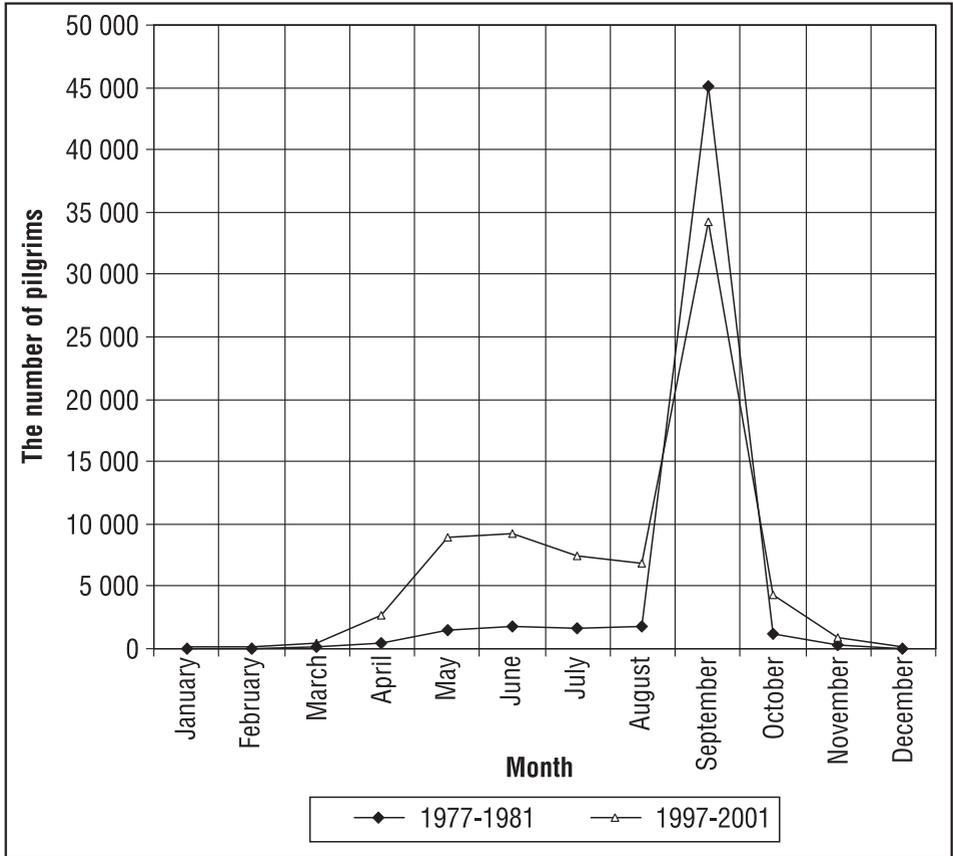


Fig. 3.

The distribution of the pilgrimages visiting Gietrzwałd in the particular months in the years 1977-1981 and 1997-2001 (the average monthly number of pilgrimages)

Source: Own analysis based on *Pilgrimage Books in Gietrzwałd*

months of: September (because of the greatest intensification of the pilgrim movement) and March and November (the off-season). It is obvious that the major role in the pilgrimage movement is played by the Warmia diocese, where Gietrzwałd is situated. The participation of pilgrims from the neighbouring dioceses – the dioceses of Elbląg, Ełk, Płock, Toruń and Łomża as well as Warsaw and Pelplin dioceses – is also quite considerable. Thus the pilgrim movement to Gietrzwałd in the mentioned above months is concentrated mainly in the region of the North-Eastern Poland. What seems important is the fact that during these months the pilgrimages from all the dioceses were noted down except for the ones from the Opole and Legnica dioceses.

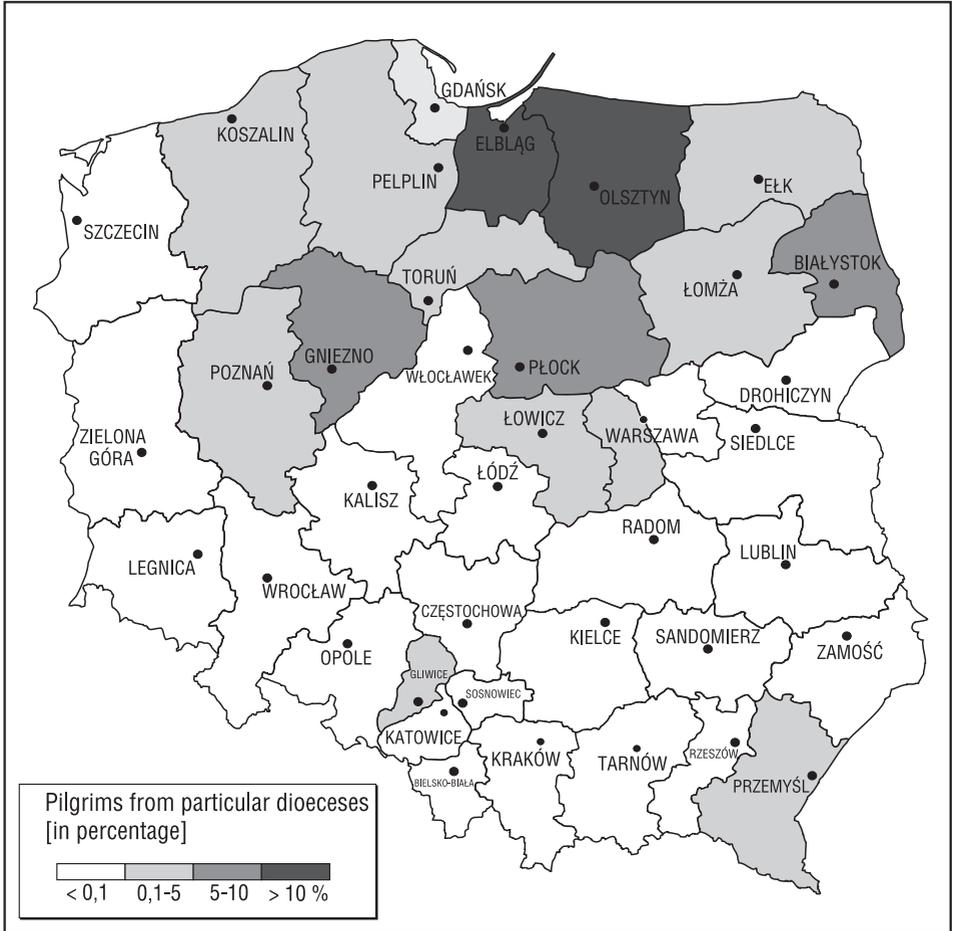


Fig. 4.  
The influence range of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Gietrzwałd  
in Poland in the years 1997-2001 (March)

Source: Own analysis based on *Pilgrimage Books in Gietrzwałd*

Gietrzwałd is more and more visited by the pilgrims on their way to or from Wilno (Vilnius). The idea of the rector of the Sanctuary is to make Gietrzwałd some sort of a haven for the pilgrims travelling from Western Europe towards the East (the Baltic countries, Belarus). Only in 2001 Gietrzwałd was visited by 19 groups of pilgrims on their way to or from Ostra Brama in Wilno (1,5% of the pilgrimages). There is also a considerable group of the pilgrimages from Russia, Lithuania and Belarus – together 13 pilgrim groups (1% of the pilgrimages).

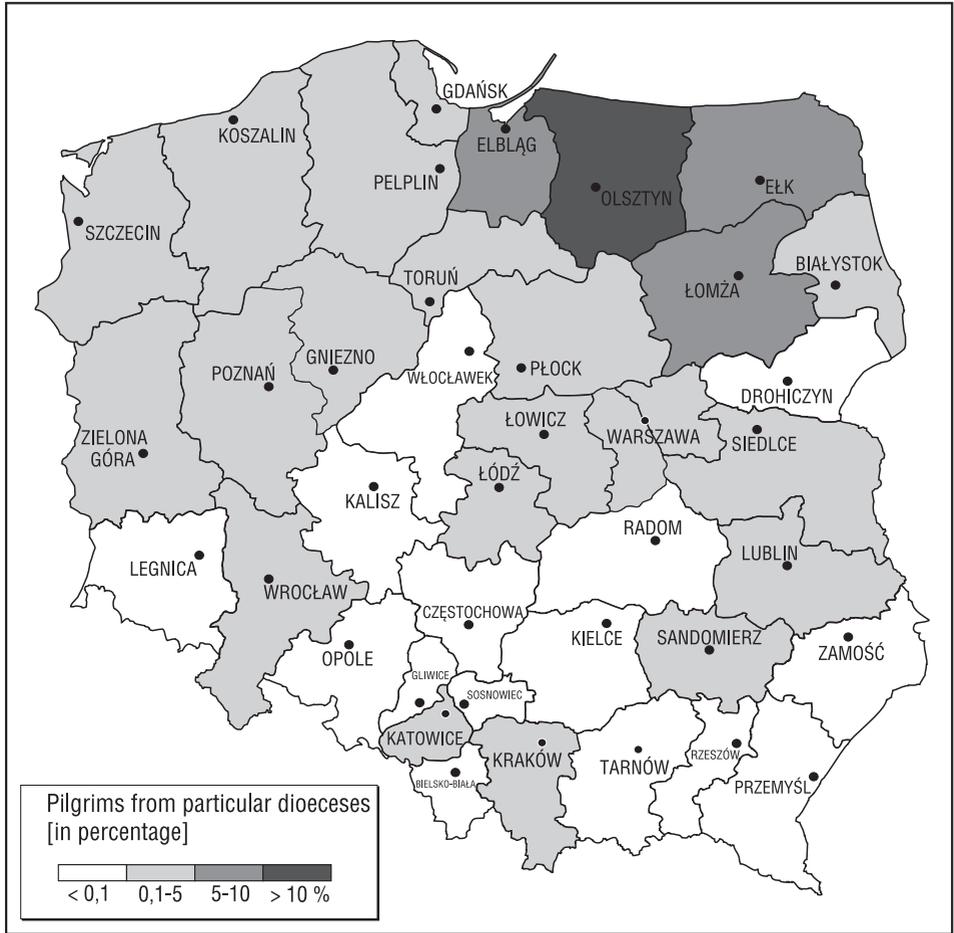


Fig. 5.  
The influence range of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Gietrzwałd in Poland in the years 1997-2001 (September)

Source: Own analysis based on *Pilgrimage Books in Gietrzwałd*

### 3.2.1 Foreign pilgrims

The foreign pilgrms visiting Gietrzwałd are about 2,4% of the whole number of pilgrims, 96% of which are European, 3,5% are American (North America), 0,2% come from Asia, 0,1% from Australia and Oceania (Fig. 6-7). The number of pilgrims from South America and Africa is considerably small and it is less than 0.1% of the total number of pilgrims. The German are the biggest group of foreign pilgrims (more than

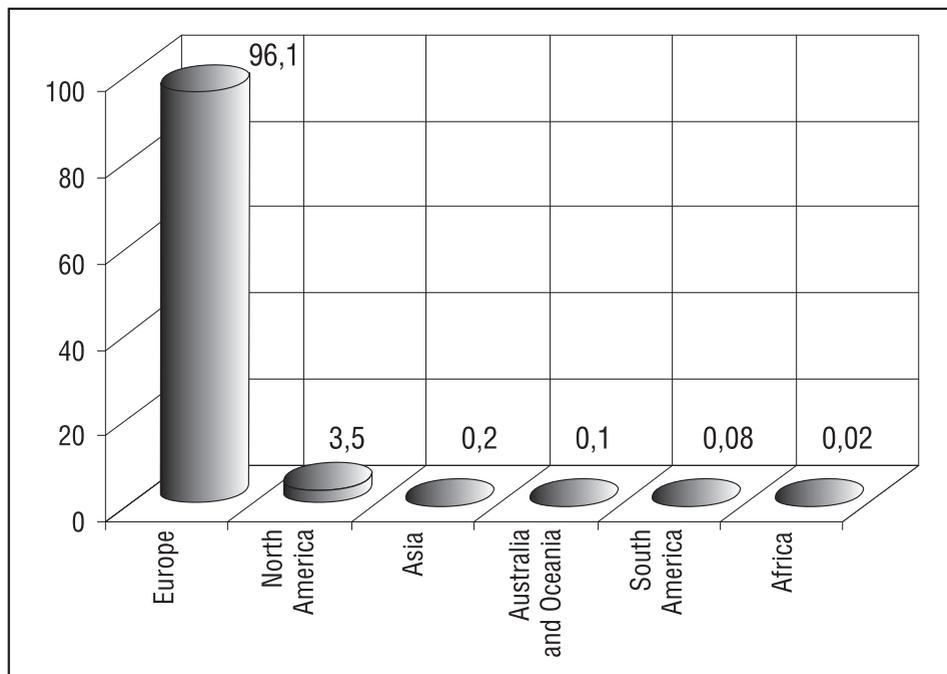


Fig. 6.  
The percentage of foreign pilgrims in the years 1977-2001.  
Classified according to the continents

Source: Own analysis based on *Pilgrimage Books in Gietrzwałd*

73% of the total). Most of them are the Polish emigrants who either used to live in the region of Warmia and Mazury and were subject to displacement after the World War II, or emigrated in the 1980s for economical reasons. Pilgrims from Lithuania, Bielorussia, France, Russia, USA and Ukraine constitute a considerably big group as well. Among the pilgrims from behind the Eastern border of Poland there is quite a big number of school children and young people, often of Polish origin.<sup>27</sup> In the analysed period the Gietrzwałd Sanctuary was visited by pilgrims from 53 countries, among which 29 were European. There were also pilgrims from such distant places as: Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, China or Venezuela, Brasil, Uruguay, South Africa and Togo.

### 3.3. The “*łosiery*” – votive pilgrimages

The Warmia *łosiery* are a special kind of pilgrimage. The aim is not only to visit a miraculous place but also to fulfill vows taken by the parishioners. Thus *łosiery* are the votive pilgrimages. They initiated probably in the period between the 17<sup>th</sup> and

19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and most probably in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, because of the frequent wars, fires, famine and plagues (diseases).<sup>28</sup>

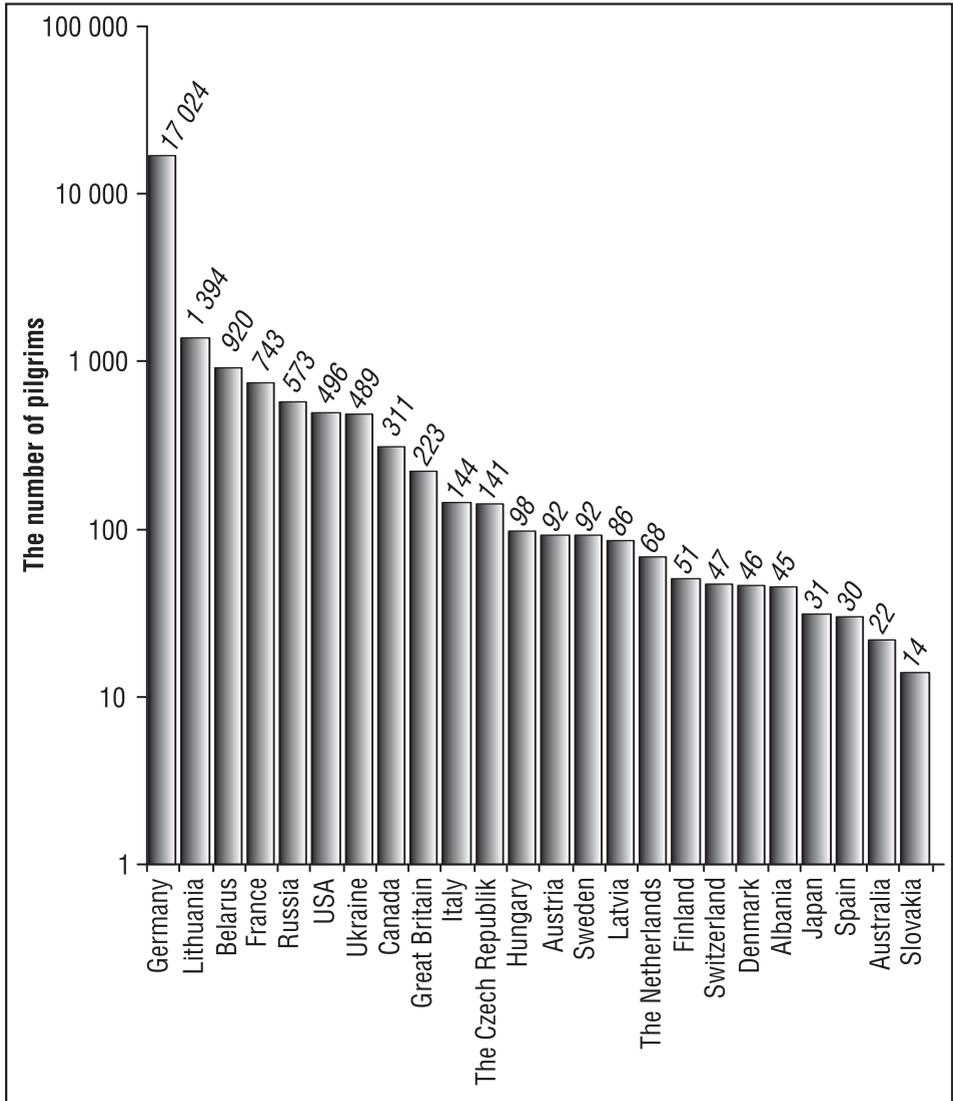


Fig. 7.

The number of foreign pilgrims in the years 1977-2001.  
Classified according to the continents.

The greatly affected by those misfortunes inhabitants of Warmia, took vows to God to make a sacrifice i.e. to go on a pilgrimage. In the Warmia region dialect *łosiery* means pilgrimage. These pilgrimages were very characteristic – there were *łosiery* from the diseases, the pest, heel and fire; there were also thanksgiving and Marian *łosiery* organised. Together with an obvious religious character they had folkloristic elements as well. The traditional *łosiery* in the Warmia region are now practically extinct. Only two such pilgrimages come to Gietrzwałd today and they have from a dozen to several dozen of participants. All the pilgrims gather near the Chapel of the Apparitions where they are greeted by the priest. After a common prayer and the act of sprinkling the heads with water they go to church to attend a service. There is an ancient custom of bringing ornamented candles as votive offerings from the pilgrims. Also a custom of ordering during Lent a votive Mass for the inhabitants of the particular vilages of the parish has become quite common.

It should also be mentioned that Gietrzwałd is an aim of the walking pilgrimages and this is not linked only with the indulgence ceremonies. A walking pilgrimage of several thousand people from the cathedral parish in Olsztyn visit Gietrzwałd every year. A pilgrimage from Ostróda is of similar size, though the pilgrims come from different parishes. Apart from the mentioned above two pilgrimages, pilgrim groups of up to several hundred people from the neighbouring towns and villages come to Gietrzwałd as well. It has already been established as a tradition that the Warmia Walking Pilgrimage from Olsztyn to Częstochowa come to Gietrzwałd for the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady.

### **3.4. The stay of the pilgrims in the Sanctuary**

The organised groups of pilgrims coming to Gietrzwałd are greeted by the local priests during the Holy Mass or during the Marian Appeal. The stay in Gietrzwałd first of all employs the participation in the Holy Mass, celebrated in the basilica under the miraculous picture of Our Lady; the Rosary prayer and the sacrament of penance. As mentioned above the Mother of God in Her Apparitions appealed for penance, reciting the Rosary and life in sobriety. In the Sanctuary today there is a custom of reciting three parts of the Rosary – first part before the morning Mass, second at Noon and third before the evening Mass. The memory of a woman who attended all these prayers for 50 years is still alive here. Pilgrims participate in the Rosary prayer not only in church but they also say the Rosary in groups or individually walking along the Rosary alley, meditating particular mysteries. The Chapel of the Apparitions is the most popular place for individual prayer, next to the basilica. Quite often groups of pilgrims can be seen celebrating the service of the Stations of the Cross.

Pilgrims take water from the spring home to give it to the sick and suffering. The guardians of the Sanctuary are constantly informed about new miracles, cures that are very often verified by the doctors. The stay in Gietrzwałd very often results in ordering a Mass in the intention of relatives and in buying the souvenirs like religious

books or other devotional articles, which certainly makes the bond with this sacred place stronger.

To end with it is worth mentioning that the Marian Sanctuary in Gietrzwałd constantly puts into life the appeal of the Holy Virgin from 125 years ago, which according to the words of the Holy Father is still a live issue.

*It seems that today, although we have new times, the words of the Virgin, so joyous for the Poles, have not yet lost their meaning. In the age of the opening for the world they mean so much for the Man's freedom, they still are the appeal for care to maintain Polish spirit in thought and in action, to maintain Polish culture and Polish national identity that was built in the course of ages on the foundations of love for God and Fatherland.<sup>29</sup>*

## Notes:

<sup>1</sup> S. Ryłko, 1992, *Dzieje parafii Gietrzwałd na Warmii po rok 1877*, Kraków, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> They both joined the Convent of the Sisters of Mercy. After the postulanship they went to Paris where they started the novitiate. On February 2 1889 they took the monastic vows. Justyna Szfryńska left the convent after 14 years when her vows were not valid anymore. Barbara Samulowska after a few years work in France left for a mission in Guatemala where during the 66 years of her life in the convent she served the sick. She died in the opinion of holiness in Guatemala on December 6 1950.

<sup>4</sup> In the years of 1772, 1793 and 1795 Poland was partitioned into Russia, Prussia and Austria. Gietrzwałd was in the area that after the partition belonged to the Prussian sector, where a strong germanization policy and a religious persecution were carried out.

<sup>5</sup> J. Roslan, *Sanktuarium Matki Bożej w Gietrzwałdzie*, Gietrzwałd, p. 6.

<sup>6</sup> *Sanktuarium Maryjne w Gietrzwałdzie*, Wydane nakładem Księży Kanoników Regularnych Laterańskich w Gietrzwałdzie.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> J. Obłąk, 1957, *Pani Ziemi Warmińskiej*, "Ateneum Kapłańskie", vol. 54, Włocławek, p. 48

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>11</sup> W. Nowak, 1977, *Historia obrazu i kultu Matki Boskiej Gietrzwałdzkiej*, "Studia Warmińskie", vol 14, p. 124.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124.

- <sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 124.
- <sup>15</sup> J. Obląk, 1957, op. cit., p. 59.
- <sup>16</sup> W. Nowak, op. cit., p. 125.
- <sup>17</sup> S. Ryłko, *Dzieje parafii ...*, p. 55.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 56.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 56.
- <sup>20</sup> John Paul II, *Letter in the occasion of the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Holy Virgin's Apparitions in Gietrzwałd*, "L'Osservatore Romano", Polish Edition, 10-11/2002, pp. 56-57.
- <sup>21</sup> S. Ryłko, *Dzieje parafii ...*, p. 41.
- <sup>22</sup> J. Roslan, op. cit., p. 55.
- <sup>23</sup> S. Ryłko, 1995, *Łaskami słynący obraz Matki Boskiej w Gietrzwałdzie*, Wyd. Św. Stanisława BM Archidiecezji Krakowskiej, Kraków, p. 14.
- <sup>24</sup> J. Piskorska, 1977, *Rozwój sanktuarium gietrzwałdzkiego*, "Studia Warmińskie", vol. 14, p. 440.
- <sup>25</sup> This is only an estimation of the data. In the *Books of the Pilgrimages* only the groups that come to the Sanctuary are registered and they are approximately 10-20% of the total amount of pilgrims visiting this place. So the numbers quoted in this article refer only to the organized pilgrim movement.
- <sup>26</sup> M. Ostrowski, 1997, *Turystyka w myśli Jana Pawła II*, "Peregrinus Cracoviensis", no 5, p. 147.
- <sup>27</sup> It concerns the former Soviet Republics.
- <sup>28</sup> W. Piwowarski, 1977, *Łosiere do Gietrzwałdu*, "Studia Warmińskie", vol. 14, p. 156.
- <sup>29</sup> John Paul II, *Letter in the Occasion of the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Holy Virgin's Apparitions in Gietrzwałd*, "L'Osservatore Romano", Polish Edition, 10-11/2002, p. 57.

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