

Valerianus Bassianensis – A Pannonian bishop at the Council of Chalcedon?

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ABSTRACT

In his paper the author deals with the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon where a certain Valerian, the bishop of a settlement called Bassiana emerged several times. As he attended the synod of 448 at Constantinople as well, he lived in Constantinople most probably as refugee. Following E. Schwartz's correction, the author also comes to the conclusion that Valerian was mistakenly identified as the African bishop in the original Greek list and he was rather the bishop of the Pannonian Bassianae. He had to flee from his hometown to Constantinople because of the Hun occupation in 441 as his province already belonged to East Rome.

KEYWORDS

Church history of Pannonia, Huns, the Council of Chalcedon, Bassianae

The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon together with the imperial and papal correspondence before and after the council as part of the corpus are one of the most important contemporary sources for the historical events of the year 451 that has not been studied in detail yet. Dealing with the acts I have realized that it cannot be excluded a Pannonian bishop could have participated the council and his person has not been examined yet despite J. Zeiller's and T. Nagy's thorough monographs² on the Pannonian church history and their lists of bishops³ and the council has remained totally unknown in the newer studies as well. In this paper I intend to deal with the person of this bishop.

The official acts of the 16 sessions of the council held in October 451 were prepared around 454–455 in Greek language. The official corpus included the imperial letters of Marcianus and Pulcheria and several letters written by Pope Leo the Great, the acts of the synod of Constantinople in 448, the trial of Eutyches and the acts of the Robber Council at Ephesus in 449. The corpus contained the original Latin text of the speeches of the few Latin bishops (papal delegates and refugees as Valerianus), as well as their Greek translation. Later, in addition to the material of two sessions, the Latin quotations were removed from the Greek original (cp. Valerian's case: ACO II/1 p. 119,33–120,4 and the lack before his speech). Based on this version, three Latin translations were made in a short time in the middle third of the 6th century (Φ: Versio antiqua, antiqua correcta, Rustici), ⁵ and in the first half of the 6th century a monophysitist Syrian translation was completed, which contained the entire

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¹Maenchen-Helfen (1973) 131; Thompson (1999) 157.

²Zeiller (1918); Nagy (1939).

³Zeiller (1918) 138-148, 597-598; Nagy (1939) 208-227, esp. 217.

⁴A new, fuller list is given by Bratož, R., Die kirchliche Organisation in Westillyricum (vom späten 4. Jh. bis um 600) – Ausgewählte Fragen. In: Tamáska-Heinrich, O. (Hrsg.) (2011), Keszthely-Fenékpuszta im Kontext spätantiker Kontinuitätsforschung zwischen Noricum und Moesia. Castellum Pannonicum Pelsonense, 2. Budapest etc, pp. 239–241, Anhang I.

⁵Price and Gaddis (2005) 75–85; Mari, T. (2018). The Latin translations of the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon. *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies*, 58: 126–155; Mari (2020).

material of the Robber Council, and the Syrian list of signatories was also survived.⁶ In our point of view, the most important is the most complete list of signatories who signed the corpus canonum (with 452-457 names) that it is attached to the end of sixth ceremonial session (many of them signed later, but before 452, cp. Appendix) (III.6.1, SL VI.9).⁷ Its original Greek version did not survive (as opposed to the much shorter list of participants with 324 names). Even the Latin list prepared by Rusticus is incomplete therefore it must be completed with the list prepared by Dionysius Exiguus (VI.9D with 353 names) (Δ) and the Syrian translation (with 362 names) (Σ).8 The latter ones group the names on territorial basis (according to dioceses and provinces) and the lists begin with metropolitans. These can be complemented by the shorter, Greek attendance lists that close each session. These may go back to the same original list⁹ as of the sixth session (at least in the case of the first 338 names with minor, but logical, changes). 10 This original (lost) Greek territorial-based list must have been used in the case of the signatories of the corpus canonum as well.¹¹

In our point of view, the case of bishop Valerian is the most important¹² as his name occurs in the Latin and Syrian lists, but he attended and spoke in the Synod of Constantinople and the hearings in the case of Eutyches in 449 as well:

ACTA CONCILII CHALCEDONENSIS

I.330 (ACO II/1 p. 119,33-120,4 Greek) és 750 (ACO II/1 p. 169,38-39 Greek)

Ὁ εὐλαβέστατος ἐπισκόπος Οὐαλεριανὸς εἶπεν· ...

Reverendissimus episcopus Valerianus dixit: ...

Οὐαλεριανὸς ὁ εὐλαβέστατος ἐπισκόπος εἶπεν· ...

Valerianus reverendissimus episcopus dixit: ...

Valerianus's name can be found in the lists of the second session of Chalcedon and among the signatories of the *corpus canonum* too:

ΙΙΙ.2.11 Οὐαλεριανοῦ Βασσιανῆς

VI.9D et subscripserunt universi episcopi ...

Provinciae Africae II

352 Valerianus Bassianensis

353 Valerianus Afrus

 Σ (Syrian) Schultess 1908, 144 Nr. 361 Oual(e)rianos Basian(e).

The most interesting question is which city Valerian may have been bishop of. All lists coming from a common but lost Greek source (Bassiavý) point to a city called Bassiana. The Latin, Greek and Syrian name variants are quite clear: Bassianensis, Bassiavý, Basian (e). As his name was mentioned among the bishops of African diocesis it is logically supposed that his seat should be located somewhere in Africa. As no settlement called Bassiana is attested here it has been suggested that Bassiana should be identified with a place name mentioned among the signatories of the Maximianist synod held at Cebarsussi in 394. The list survived in one of Augustine's psalm commentaries, where the main variant of the name is *Prisianensis*, but other manuscripts kept the variant Bis(s)ianensis:

Synod of Cebarsussi (June 24, 393) August. Enarr. in Ps. 36 Sermo II.20 (PL 36, 381)

Secundianus Prisianensis (MSS Bissianensis) episcopus subscripsi.

It has been argued for the latter variant based only of the lists of Chalcedon therefore it seems to be more logical that the variant *Prisianensis* is corrupted from a place name Prisciana.¹⁶

It has also been emerged that Valerianus could have been the bishop of *fundus Bassianus* in Africa Proconsularis (Sidi Abdallah) that is attested in a mosaic verse inscription (CIL VIII 25425=CLE 1910=LCV 788=ILT 1184: *Splendent tecta Bassiani fundi cognomine Baiae*) but the only evidence for this possibility would be again the Acts of the council. Bigger *fundi* or *castella* in Africa might have been bishopric sees but these bishops were of a lower rank than their municipal fellows. Valerian's higher rank in the lists of Chalcedon than of his African fellows does not support this



18Leone (2012).

⁶Hoffmann, G. (1917). Akten der Ephesinischen Synode vom Jahre 449. Abhandlungen der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, 15. Berlin; Schultess (1908).

⁷Summarily Price and Gaddis (2005) 193–203.

⁸Schultess (1908) 120-144.

⁹The restored version of the original list (Γ): Honigmann (1943) 50–62.

¹⁰Price and Gaddis (2005) 197-201.

¹¹Schwartz (1937); Honigmann (1943) 41-80.

 ¹²Schwartz (1937) 50; ACO II/6, p. 51; Price and Gaddis (2005) I 194, n.
 207, II 38, 239, n. 59, III 202, 286, 30; Honigmann (1943) 74; Laurent (1944) 156–157, 165–166; Maenchen-Helfen (1973) 131, n. 617; Mari (2020) 62, 66.

¹³The emendation and abbreviation suggested by Gerland (<Marcianopolis) can be excluded because of the same letters of the Syrian translation:</p>
Laurent (1944) 166.

¹⁴Honigmann (1943) 74; Laurent (1944) 156–157, 165–166; Maenchen-Helfen (1973) 131, n. 617.

¹⁵Toulotte, A. (1894). Géographie de l'Afrique chrétienne, III.: Byzacène et Tripolitaine. Paris, pp. 63–64; Weidmann, C. (1998). Augustinus und das Maximianistenkonzil von Cebarsussi. Zur historischen und textgeschichtlichen Bedeutung von Enarratio in Psalmum 36, 2, 18–23. Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Klasse. Sitzungsberichte, 655. Veröffentlichungen der Kommission zur herausgabe des Corpus der Lateinischen Kirchenvater, 16. Wien, pp. 51, 58.

¹⁶Thouvenot, R. (1969) Les origines chrétiennes en Maurétanie Tingitane. Revue des Études Anciennes, 71: 354–378, 363 (Prisianensis<Prisciana); Mandouze (1982) 1048 Secundianus 2.

Mandouze (1982) 1137–1138, Valerianus 2; Pellistrandi (1982) 1272;
 Fedalto, G. (2008). Liste vescovili dell'Africa cristiana: Secoli III–IX. Studia Patavina, 55: 393–571, esp. 551; Leone (2012) 20; Conant (2012) 79, 96.

identification. Another problem with this possibility is that the bishop(s) of this *fundus* were not attested elsewhere. On the other hand, the lower rank, the place-name *fundus Bassianus* named after his first owner (Bass(i)us) does not agree with female name *Bas(s)iana* used in the synod, the variant *Bassianensis* is an adjective formed from the place name Bassiana.

As an attested place name Bassiana does not appear in the extremely rich epigraphic¹⁹ and written African source material (including several synod files²⁰), it was correctly suggested by E. Schwartz that the compiler of the Greek original list of the synod made a mistake (adopted by Dionysius Exiguus and Syrian version) was wrong and he wrongly identified the bishop of the Pannonian Bassianae as African.²¹ The surviving lists, which listed signatories by dioceses and provinces, are incomplete (e.g. other African bishops were not listed in their place of order (VI.9 Aurelius SL 331, Restitutianus SL 338), as it is sure that three or four other African bishops could have attended the council (it depends on the supposed identification of Valerianus 2 with Aurelius²²): Aurelius from Pupput, Aurelius from Hadrumetum, Ianuarius from Macriana and Resti(tu)tianus (cp. Appendix). Puppi and Hadrumetum were colonies with harbour, but in the case of Restitutianus (and Valerianus 2) only their diocese is given: Afer (similarly to the case of Aurelius as his city, Hadrumetum was mentioned only once). Even if an African Bassiana would have existed because of the lack of other sources it must have been quite insignificant. In this case it remains unclear why the bishop of a small settlement was listed at the top of the provincial list. None of African bishops attended the Robber Synod in 449 as they were orthodox Catholics. Beside the delegates of the pope and the African bishops, no other western (Latin) bishops could participate in the Council because of Attila's campaign in Gallia (as Leo the Great's letters clearly show: Ep. 41 ACO II.2.4 p. 43 (Ep. 83.2), 46 ACO II.2.4 p. 47 (Ep. 102), 48 ACO II.2.4 p. 48 (Ep. 91)). The Africans were mentioned mainly at the very end of the lists. Aurelius, Ianuarius and Valerianus and Aurelius of Hadrumetum attended the synod of 448 at Constantinople or the hearings in the spring of 449 that is why it is correctly supposed that they were refugees because of the Vandal persecution, and they must have lived in Constantinople.²³ This observation is also confirmed by the fact that beside the Valerii who signed the symbola Aurelius and Restitutianus were also mentioned at the very end of the list of session 6 of the council of Chalcedon in the Greek and Latin versions (VI.1.322, 324). Between them, the name of Eustathius can be seen who was probably thought to be foreigner: ἔθνους Σαρακηνῶν/gentis Saracenorum) (VI.1.323: cf. SL 335, cp. ACO II/6, p. 25). Naturally, a flight from a bigger harbour town Hadrumetum or Puppi became more frequent as no continental route was necessary as in the case of settlements inside the continent.²⁴ Because of the omission in the case of the African and its place of order at the very end, it cannot be excluded that the compiler, first scribe of the original Greek list committed a mistake and both western Valeriani²⁵ identified as Africans as they were enumerated at the very end of the list. In the case of Valerianus Bassianensis his hometown was mentioned instead of his diocesis Africa (in most of the cases, the other Africans were mentioned only as Afer). His name could have been identified as African only because of his place in the list. The Latin translators could have observed this uncertainty that is why the Valeriani were omitted with exception of Dionysius Exiguus and the Syrian translation. Valerianus' separation can clearly be observed in the list (with 204 names) of the second session held on 13 October where his name can be found at the beginning of the list between the much more important bishops of Cyzicus, Cos, and Nicomedia, Corinthus, Chalcedon (III.2.11).26 It could have been quite obvious to the scribe to identify this Valerian as African because he was also a western, Latin-speaking refugee and only African bishops attended the council from the West with the exception of Pope Leo's delegates. As I mentioned above the list of the Africans was incomplete as Aurelius' and Restitutianus' names were omitted who participated in the synod and they must have been mentioned in the original

These data (and the name variants *Bassianensis* and Βασσιανή) confirm Schwartz's original hypothesis that Valerianus could have been the bishop of Bassiana in Pannonia secunda. The place name Bassiana is attested in

²⁶The usual order of bishops observed elsewhere, with minor changes, was as follows: II.96 (list of the participants who condemned Eutyches), III.1, IV.1, V.1: 5. Antiochia 6. Ephesos 7. Bizye 8. Cyzicus 9. Cos 10. Nicomedia 11. Corinthus 12. Calchedon. In the list of the second session Valerianus and Bassiana were inserted in this wrong place.



¹⁹An altar was erected by the *coloni* of an imperial estate (*coloni Bassenses*) in Numidia (Thavagel): AÉp 1894, 140: cp. Jacques, F. (1992). Propriétés impériales et cités en Numidie Méridionale. *Cahiers du Centre Gustave Glotz*, 3: 123–139, esp. 129, 136, Nr. 12.

²⁰Cp. Lancel, S. (1991). Actes de la Conférence de Carthage en 411, IV.: Additamentum criticum, notices sure les sièges et les toponymes, notes complémentaires et index. Sources chrétiennes, 373. Paris, pp. 1293–1536.

²¹Schwartz (1937) 50; ACO II/6, p. 51 and following him: Price and Gaddis (2005) I 194, n. 207, II 38, 239, n. 59, III 202, 286, 302; Mari (2020) 62, 66.

²²Honigmann (1943) 74-75.

²³Laurent (1944); Conant (2012) 76.

²⁴For the flight from Africa to the East see summarily Conant (2012) 76–82.

²⁵The solution suggested by Honigmann (Valerianus=Aurelius) with the adjective *Afer* and the Syrian variant Pap(h)ou (according to Schwartz, 1937, 54 it is corrupted) cannot be necessarily confirmed as the name in the Syrian translation 'WL'RYNWS can only be interpreted as Aurelius if the letters are confused. It must be mentioned that another African Valerianus could have attended the synod, too. If Aurelius and Valerianus are identical in the Latin version again only his diocese (Africa) was given. According to Laurent (1944) 165, they could have also been the bishops of the African settlements with very similar name Putput and Puppi. Gerland suggested that Valerianus was the bishop of Paphus in Cyprus as the bishops of the island can be found just above the African ones in the list (in this case the form Πάφου is correct). It cannot be excluded either that a simple deterioration of the text can be observed here as it was supposed by Schwartz and the Greek equivalent of the Latin adjective Afer (Άφρου) was misinterpreted by the Syrian scribe. Cp. Mandouze (1982) 1136–1137 Valerianus 1.

Pannonia inferior (Donji Petrovci) and Pannonia superior (a road station along the road Savaria-Brigetio in the region of Sárvár (It. Ant. 262,10²⁷) too. Perhaps there was a third Bassiana in Dacia superior as well. Recently, the funerary inscription of a legionary of the legio XIII gemina was published from Doliche (AÉp 2011, 1467)²⁸ whose hometown was given as follows: ex provincia Dacia sup(eriore) ter(r)i(torio) Bassiana.29 In our point of view, the Lower Pannonian Bassianae is important (the original name was in plural but in the late Roman period the variant Bassiana was used in singularis: e.g. ILJ 1745) as it was an important colony in the neighbourhood of Sirmium (earlier it was a municipium: ILJ 1048 that was elevated to the rank of a colonia in the Severan period: CIL III 6470⁴=10197, 10203, 10207, 15135, ILJ 1050, AÉp 2005, 1240, origo: ILJ 1745, Tit. Aq. 1498, AÉp 2009, 1078, RMD V, 447, CIL XVI 132) (see also Ptol. II.15.4, It. Ant. 131,6, It. Burd. 563,11, Rav. Geog. IV.19, Not. Dig. Occ. XI,46, XXXII,59 (Caput Basensis),

Jord. Get. LIII.272).30 These data confirm the list of Hierocles' Synecdemus (c. XIX) and the city was a bishopric seat from the 4th century. Why would have the bishop of the city fled directly to Constantinople in the middle of the 5th century? Based on the prenuptial agreement between Theodosius II and Gallia Placidia in 424 (more exactly after Valentinianus III's and Eudoxia's marriage in 437: Cassiod. Var. XI.1.9, Jord. Rom. 329) a part of Western Illyricum, most probably only Pannonia secunda was attached to East Rome.³¹ The province together with Sirmium and Bassiana was occupied by the Huns during the war against East Rome in 441 (Prisc. Exc. 8.77-78, 86, Iust. Nov. 11.1). The bishop could have fled to Constantinople following this war and he could not return as the province was part of Attila's Empire in the 440s and 450s. Later, Pannonia secunda (or Sirmiensis) or only a part of the province named after Bassiana (pars secundae Pannoniae, quae in Bacensi est civitate) belonged again to Constantinople (see the sources in Appendix: Hierocles Synecdemus c. XIX, Nov. XI Praef.).³²

Based on these data, we can conclude that Valerianus was rather the bishop of the Pannonian Bassiana than an African who together with the African participants of the synod lived as refugee in Constantinople. As no further data on Valerianus' life are available we can only suppose that after the collapse of the Hun Empire in 454 he could have returned to his seat.

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Honigmann, E. (1943). The original lists of the members of the council of Nicaea, the Robber-synod, and the Council of Chalcedon. *Byzantion*, 16(1942–1943): 20–80.

Laurent, V. (1944). Les évêques d'Afrique au concile de Chalcédoine (451). Bulletin de la Section Historique (Histoire – Géographie – Sciences sociales) de la Académie Roumaine, 25: 162–173.



²⁷TIR L 33. Trieste (Tergeste). Roma 1961, 28; Tóth, E. (1977). A Savaria-Bassiana útszakasz – Die römische Strassenstrecke zwischen Savaria und Bassiana. Archaeologiai Értesítő, 104: 65–75.

²⁸D(is) M(anibus) / et secur(itati) (a)e(t)e(rnae?) / et [qui]eti / [—]A[—]s / Vitalis / ex provinc/ia Dacia sup(eriore) / ter(r)i(torio) Bassia/na vixit an/ nis XXIII / Aur(elius) Valeri/anus dupl(ic)a(rius) leg(ionis) / XIII c(o)ho(rtis) III frat(ri) / carissimo / [f(aciendum) c(uravit)].

²⁹Facella, M., and Spiedel, M.A. (2011). From Dacia to Doliche (and back). A new gravestone for a Roman soldier. In: Winter, E. (Ed.), Von Kummuh nach Telouch. Historische und archäologische Untersuchungen in Kommagene. Dolichener und Kommagenische Forschungen, 4. Asia Minor Studien, 64. Bonn, pp. 207-215; Matei-Popescu, F. (2011). Territorium Bassianae din Dacia Superior [Territorium Bassianae in Dacia Superior]. In: Măgureanu, D., Măndescu, D., and Matei, S. (Eds.), Archaeology: making of and practice. Studies in honor of Mircea Babeş at his 70th anniversary. Pitești, pp. 351-362; Petolescu, C.C. (2012). Un nou toponim din Dacia Superior: Bassiana [A new toponym in Dacia Superior: Bassiana]. Studii și Cercetâri de Istorie Veche și Arheologie, 63: 137-140; Dana, D. (2014) Notices épigraphiques et onomastiques, II. Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik, 190: 166-167, Nr. 22. The origo and the given province can also be erroneous (in this case, the deceased soldier served in Dacia superior where his legion garrisoned), but the use of the word territorium refers more probably to a special kind of settlement, e.g. an auxiliary vicus, as territorium Arrabonensium or Matricensium in Pannonia: Bérard, F. (1993). Vikani, kanabenses, consistentes: Remarques sur l'organisation des agglomérations militaires romaines. Epigrafia e Antichità, 12: 61-90; Leveau, Ph. (1993), Territorium urbis. Le territoire de la cité et ses divisions: du vocabulaire aux réalités administratives. Revue des Études Anciennes, 95: 459-471; Kovács, P. (2006). A woman from Arrabona in Rome. In: Németh, Gy., and Forisek, P. (Eds.), Epigraphica, III.: Politai et cives. Studia sollemnia in honorem Geyzae Alfoeldy doctoris honoris causa Universitatis Debreceniensis. Hungarian polis studies, 13. Debrecen, pp. 165-170. On the other hand, the funerary inscription Tit. Aq. 1498 from Tác mentions the origo of the soldier who served in the legio II adiutrix at Aquincum as follows: ex regione Bassiane(n)si where the word regio was used as synonym of the territorium and the soldier's hometown was most probably the Pannonian Bassiana. In the case of the military diploma CIL XVI 132, the wife's origo was given as Bass(-). The recipient's hometown was Porolissum but he served in Pannonia where the military diploma was found (Vetus Salina/Adony). It seems highly probable that the soldier from Dacia married a Pannonian woman. Cf. RMD V, 447. Based on these data, the existence of a Dacian Bassiana is only a possibility.

³⁰TIR L-34 (1968). Aquincum–Sarmizegetusa–Sirmium. Budapest, p. 34: Dušanić, S. (1967). Bassianae and its territory. Archaeologia Iugoslaviaca, 8: 67–81; Milin, M. (2004). Bassianae. In: Šašel Kos, M. and Scherrer, P., The autonomous towns of Noricum and Pannonia, 2.: Pannonia II. Situla, 42. Ljubljana, pp. 253–268: Filzwieser, R. et al., (2021). Integrating geophysical and photographic data to visualize the quarried Structures of the Roman town of Bassianae. Remote Sensing, 13(12): 2384. https://doi.org/10.3390/rs13122384.

³¹Kovács, P.(2021). Amissio Illyrici. In: Vizi, L.T., and Horváth-Lugossy, G. (Eds.), A Magyarságkutató Intézet évkönyve, 2020. Budapest, pp. 329–343.

³²Based on the Synecdemus Bassiana was a bishopric seat: Zeiller (1918) 147–148; Nagy (1939) 209, fn. 73.

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APPENDIX

Bassiana in the Byzantine sources

Hierocles Synecdemus c. XIX (ed. Burckhardt 657,7-9 ιθ' Ἐπαρχία Παννονία, ὑπὸ ἡγεμόνα, πόλεις β' Σέρμιον Βασιανά.

Nov. 11 Praef. ... ut Primae Iustinianae patriae nostrae, pro tempore sacrosanctus antistes non solum metropolitanus, sed etiam archiepiscopus fiat, et certae provinciae sub eius sint auctoritate, id est ... et pars secundae Pannoniae, quae in Bacensi est civitate. ...

Other Valeriani at the council:

Valerianus Afrus [var. Valerius, Balerius] VI.9D.353, Papos/ΠΑ Φ ΟΥ Σ 362 = Aurelius Pupput?

Valerianus Marcianopolis XI.53

Valerianus Phoenicia Ep. 46

African bishops at the councils 448, 449, 451:

Aurelius Hadrumeti VI.9.301, τῆς Ἀδραμυτηνῶν πόλεως I.555.35, ἐκ τῶν μερῶν τῆς Ἀφρίκης, ex partibus Africanis, XVII.9.75, Ἄφρου I.3.341, III.1.303, IV.I.303, VI.1.322.

Aurelius civitatis (P)opitanae, τῆς Ὀππιτανῶν I.552.28 (Greek and Latin).

Ianuarius episcopus civitatis Macrianae II.161.29.

Resti(tu)tianus (var. Rusticus, Restigianus, Restianus, Rusticius) Ἄφρος I.3.343, III.1.305, IIII.1.305, VI.1.324, XVII.9.168, Ep. ad Leonem III Appendix p. 359.47.

Valerianus Afer VI.9D.353, Papos/ $\Pi A \Phi O \Upsilon \Sigma$ 362=Aurelius Pupput?

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