

A Study on a New Humanistic Approach to the Dispute between Taiwan and Mainland China regarding “New Southbound Policy”

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Abstract

Tsai Ing-Wen government of Taiwan which was born in 2016 has been promoting "New Southbound Policy" very vigorously. It contains economic and trade cooperation with ASEAN, countries in South Asian and Oceania. New Southbound Policy which inherited Southbound Policy of the former regimes of Taiwan is not only an economic and trade policy, but also involves various collaborations, such as joint development of resources, cultural and educational exchange, and personnel training, etc. The aim of New Southbound Policy of Taiwan government is to reduce economic influence of China and to maintain national autonomy through the diversification of international exchanges. The "Sunflower Movement" which happened in 2014 has something in common with the New Southbound Policy: both reflect the Taiwanese people's consciousness of the anti economical subordination to Mainland China. The ostensible causes of Sunflower

Movement are ruling Kuomintang's unilateral move in the Legislative Yuan to force the CSSTA and anger of Taiwanese publics about it. On the other hand, we can say that the fundamental reason of it is general wariness of Taiwanese who object to receive the autocratic system of Mainland China.

Keywords : New Southbound Policy, Sunflower Movement, CSSTA, Tsai Ing-Wen, Democratic Progressive Party

1. Introduction

Taiwan's Tsai Ing-Wen government, launched in 2016, is focusing on the New Southbound Policy as part of its foreign and economic policies. The New Southbound Policy has succeeded to the Southbound Policy which the administrations of Lee Teng-Hui and that of Chen Shui-Bian had implemented since the early 1990s. The main objective of this policy is to create a new model of the coexistence of countries based on the principles of reciprocity and equality by Taiwan's cooperating with ASEAN, South Asian and Oceania countries in areas such as economic trades, science and technology, and culture and implementing resource development and talent exchange programs.¹ One of the characteristics of the New Southbound Policy which

¹ <https://www.newsouthboundpolicy.tw>

distinguish it from the Southbound Policy is that while the Southbound Policy targeted only ten Southeast Asian countries, the New Southbound Policy has included South Asian countries, such as India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan, and Oceania countries, such as Australia and New Zealand, in the target countries for international exchanges. In addition, it has been actively implementing talent exchanges and cultural and educational exchanges. In this respect, it is considered an upgraded and improved policy in comparison to the Southbound Policy which focused only on economic investments.

The most important external reasons the Taiwanese government is implementing the New Southbound Policy is to develop natural resources in Southeast Asia and Oceania and achieve economic development by promoting exports through the development of vast markets. In addition, the need to reduce both the influence of mainland China and Taiwan's dependence on mainland China in economy and trade through diversification in international economic and trade exchanges is also an important reason Taiwan is implementing this policy. In other words, the New Southbound Policy can be seen as a strategy to reduce the risk by dispersing eggs rather than putting them in a basket. The government of mainland China is criticizing Taiwan for "de-Chinization", and the New Southbound Policy is considered the implementation of "de-Chinization" in terms of economy and trade. The driving force for the Taiwanese government's implementation of the New Southbound Policy is the uprising of the Taiwanese who are concerned about the subordination of Taiwan to mainland China, and the most dramatic manifestation of this in recent years is the Sunflower Movement which occurred among the slogans and protests against the CSSTA in the spring of 2014. This study aimed to examine the

nature of the New Southbound Policy, which is the current economic and trade policy of the Taiwanese government, and the Sunflower Movement as a social movement and analyze the correlation between them and their significance.

On the other hand, the Taiwanese government's implementation of the New Southbound Policy is a testimony that the cross-Strait conflicts are intensifying. Therefore, this study attempted to explore a solution to the cross-Strait conflicts from a humanities perspective through the application of the New Humanism that prevailed in the United States in the early 20th century.

2. The Purpose of Taiwan's New Southbound Policy

Ten ASEAN countries with a total population of 600 million and India with a population of 1.2 billion are huge consumer markets of the future with great potential for economic growth. In addition, in these countries, factor costs such as land prices and wages are low, and the countries have a relatively stable political environment, so these countries are also recognized for their value as a place for investment by the countries around the world. Taiwan has been investing in Southeast Asian countries since the 1950s and has become one of the countries making the largest investments in Southeast Asia by the 1990s, and the economic performance of the first generation of investment emigrants is serving as the basis for the sustainable development of Taiwan's business with Southeast Asian nations.

Southeast Asian countries also serve as a major supply source of foreign workers for Taiwan.

As of 2016, the number of Southeast Asian workers in Taiwan is estimated to be more than 500,000. If over 8,000 Southeast Asian students studying at a four-year university or a junior college in Taiwan, the so-called “new residents” who have obtained Taiwanese nationality and their children are included in the estimation, the number of Southeast Asians living in Taiwan is reported to be about 700,000.² Taiwan is trying to push ahead with its New Southbound Policy in earnest by using them as human resources.

In 2011, the Democratic Progressive Party of Taiwan stated in its 10-year-Policy as follows: “The cross-Strait economy and trade are important, but they do not mean the whole world. The Chinese market is part of the strategic move of positioning Taiwan in the global market. If we focus on the cross-Strait trade and neglect the world, Taiwan will be isolated more from the mainstream in the future global economic and trade system.” This statement shows that the Democratic Progressive Party and the Tsai Ing-Wen government will never give up globalization and they are determined to break away from the complete dependence on mainland China in economic trade and “seek balance in the global economic and trade strategy.”³ This New Southbound Policy, which is the result of the succession and improvement of the Southbound Policy of the previous administration, clearly shows that the government of the Democratic Progressive Party is determined to establish balance in economy and trade. In

² Liu Xiang-Ping, New Southbound Policy cannot to be De-Sinicization, Relations across Taiwan Straits Vol.226, No.4 (2016), pp.42

³ http://iing10.blogspot.tw/2011/08/blog-post_21.html

addition, it reflects the macroscopic view of protecting Taiwan's economic security from mainland China. Although there have been changes in the degree of emphasis on the policy over time, this has been the basis of Taiwan's economic and trade policies, whether the Nationalist Party or the Democratic Progressive Party came to power. Since the early 1990s, Taiwan has been taking the position that "if Taiwan relies too much on mainland China's market, it will be difficult to replace it with other markets in the future," and the Taiwanese government has made careful efforts to reduce its economic dependence on mainland China; for example, the Bureau of Foreign Trade has introduced an early warning system in case importing certain products from mainland China in excess of a specific percentage gives a shock to Taiwan's existing industries.⁴

Tsai Ing-Wen emphasized that exchanges with ASEAN countries, India and Oceania countries pursued by the New Southbound Policy are not merely aimed at generating economic benefits, saying that trade and investment are only one area of cooperation among many areas of cooperation, and Taiwan's multiple partnerships will be established through the connections between the two countries in many areas, including private exchanges, culture, education and research.⁵

The government and experts of mainland China are highly critical of the New Southbound

⁴ Liu Xiang-Ping, Comments on Tsai Ing-Wen's "New Southbound Policy", Taiwan Studies, Vol.6 (2015), pp.27-28

⁵ Liu Xiang-Ping, Comments on Tsai Ing-Wen's "New Southbound Policy", Taiwan Studies, Vol.6 (2015), pp.31

Policy. They think that Taiwan's New Southbound Policy deteriorates the relationship between Taiwan and mainland China and it includes the implicit political intent to deny the principle of "one China." They are concerned that Taiwan has abandoned "globalization" since the administrations of Lee Teng-Hui and Chen Shui-Bian and it is pursuing narrow "mainlandization, moving along the path of the rejection to Chinization and Taiwan's independence." At the same time, they are severely critical of the view that considers the so-called "official thinking", Taiwan's claim of independence and opposition to 'one country and two systems', as democratic thinking promoting Taiwan's interests and regards the support for "one China" as anti-democratic infringement upon Taiwan's interests.⁶

China's biggest concern about Taiwan's New Southbound Policy is that Taiwan is pursuing plural and reciprocal exchanges with countries such as ASEAN countries and India. China thinks that Taiwan's New Southbound Policy is not just an economic policy but a policy aimed at an overall value alliance. In other words, mainland China believes that the policy is intended to form an international solidarity space excluding China and eventually push ahead with Taiwan's independence, rejecting "one China" by forming broad and comprehensive relationships that encompass politics, culture, foreign relations and education with countries such as ASEAN countries and India.

⁶ Liu Xiang-Ping, Comments on Tsai Ing-Wen's "New Southbound Policy", Taiwan Studies, Vol.6 (2015), pp.26

3. The “No Haste, Be Patient” Policy of the Taiwanese Government

Through economic cooperation with the countries of Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Oceania, Taiwan has achieved economic independence from the influence of the economy of mainland China, and is further attempting to “play the role of a strategic tool to control mainland China”, leaning on the US and Japan.⁷ If Taiwan actually intends to achieve political independence from China despite mainland China’s criticism of Taiwan’s behavior as “divisionism”, why does it want to achieve independence?

In 1992, China and Taiwan agreed to “one China” through the so-called “’92 consensus”, but as with different interpretations of “one China”, Taiwanese people’s opinions about unification with the mainland are diverse and divided. In recent years, the proportion of Taiwanese expressing skepticism about Taiwan’s complete unification with mainland China has been increasing. According to a survey conducted by the Taiwan Brain Trust (TBT) in April 2017 among Taiwanese people, 79.9% of the respondents answered that they wanted to maintain the current state of Taiwan’s separation from mainland China. In addition, assuming it was not possible to maintain the current state, 62 percent wanted Taiwan’s independence and 21.2 percent supported unification with China. In addition, regarding the perception about mainland

⁷ Shi Ding-Sha, The US Factors in The "New Southbound Policy", Taiwan Studies, Vol.4 (2017), pp.84

China, 72.8% of the respondents felt no feelings or had negative perceptions toward mainland China (39.6% and 33.2%, respectively), and only 19.9% showed positive perceptions. Regarding the question about self-identity, 83.5% of the respondents said they would choose to be Taiwanese if they had to decide whether they would be Taiwanese or Chinese, but 10.6% answered that they would choose to be Chinese.

When Taiwan joined the WTO and signed economic trade agreements such as ANZTEC and ASTEP with New Zealand and Singapore, the Democratic Progressive Party, the opposition party, and general Taiwanese as well as the Nationalist Party expressed their welcome and support for them. However, in the spring of 2014, about 500,000 Taiwanese citizens and students participated in the protests against the Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement (CSSTA) with mainland China, which were later named the “Sunflower Movement,” and actively voiced their opposition against the agreement. The “Sunflower Movement is thought to have resulted from Taiwanese’ difficulty in accepting a different political system and their fear about “one China.” If the majority of Taiwanese have a strong sense of homogeneity to mainland China as the “descendants of the Yan and Huang Emperors (炎皇子孫)” and have no dissatisfaction with accepting the political system of mainland China, they would not need to feel a strong sense of crisis about economic gains and losses and the influx of human resources within ‘a family.’ It is believed that the Taiwanese came to have instinctive repulsion after recognizing that they could actually experience in their lives the oppressive social system associated with the authoritarian political system with many repressive elements, including the suppression of human rights and the lack of freedom of speech in the mainland Chinese society.

Lu Xun (魯迅) stressed the importance of establishing sound personality, saying, “The most important thing is to build a man (立人)... To build a man, it is necessary to respect individuality and cultivate the spirit.” However, although the People’s Republic of China abolished feudal despotism which lasted for thousands of years, as the class struggles to strengthen the authoritarian communist regime, such as the Great Leap Forward, the Anti-Rightist Campaign, and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, continued, the humanity of the people became distorted and social ills became prevalent. Moreover, although China underwent reform and opening-up policies and it has been achieving continuous developments with remarkable economic outcomes in the 21st century, it still needs to have a long way to go to resolve the issues of freedom and human rights. China’s economic development, which has not been accompanied by the realization of democratic ideology, has led to the polarization of wealth, and, consequently, ordinary people in China are suffering from the “double pressure of the power of the government and market power.”⁸ The Taiwanese across the Strait have fears since they witnessed and know the past and present of the mainland Chinese society. In particular, Taiwan’s younger generations, who have experienced the “Wild Lily Movement”, introduction of the direct presidential election system, and regime change in the process of democratization after martial law was lifted in Taiwan in 1987, think of enjoyment of democratic values as a natural right of human beings. Therefore, it is natural that they have repulsion against the thought that Taiwan’s free democracy system will be replaced by mainland

⁸ Xu Zhi-Yuan, *The Temptation of Autocracy*, Geul Hangari Publishing Company, Seoul, 2012

China's authoritarian political system called "Chinese democracy."

William C. Kirby once said, "The Qing Empire collapsed, but the empire still exists." Internally, the People's Republic of China has an oppressive political structure with thorough top-down decision-making, excluding the participation of the general public. Externally, China is revealing its aspects of new imperialism, one by one, at least to Northeast and Southeast Asian countries. China has done large and small aggressions, such as defending Chinese fishing boats intruding into South Korea's exclusive economic zone and doing illegal fishing and having disputes with countries such as the Philippines and Vietnam, claiming sovereignty over 90% of the South China Sea. Overlapped with the powerful military forces of China, China's aggressive behaviors are causing uneasiness to the countries around China. It is unpredictable on what grounds or pretext and when China will attempt to spread the slogan of "one China" through Tibet, Xinjiang, Hong Kong, and Taiwan to other countries not included in the Great China region.

The "Sunflower Movement" seems to have erupted and subsided quickly during a very short period of less than a month, but an important message of "radicality" of the protesters who occupied the Legislative Yuan was rather a call for exercising the wisdom of "no haste, be patient," demanding that the government should be wary of radical exchanges and keep patience. One of the economic and trade policies that the administration of the Democratic Progressive Party which came to power with the support of "sunflowers" designed in response to the demand for "no haste, be patient" was the New Southbound Policy which seeks to avoid exchanges focused on China and diversify the countries for international exchanges.

5. Exploration of a New Humanistic Solution

As described above, the New Southbound Policy of the Taiwanese government is a policy which reflects Taiwanese' opposition and concerns about the undemocratic government system and hegemonic characteristics of mainland China, and the risk of the decline of Taiwan's public economy and collapse of its economic system due to the inflow of the capital and human resources of mainland China. It is part of Taiwan's strategies for self-defense in the face of the expansion of the huge national desire of mainland China, which is rushing in like the muddy currents of the Yellow River.

The New Humanism is a trend of cultural thought that was advocated by scholars such as Irving Babbitt and Paul More in the United States after the First World War and prevailed until the late 1920s. The New Humanism arose from the reflection on the problems of modern capitalist industrial society. According to the diagnosis and analysis of the problems of modern society by New Humanists such as Babbitt, modern society is politically and socially depraved and wars result from the destruction of traditions, moral decline, and overflow of desires. Babbitt argued that human beings should overcome the 'Law for thing' with the 'Law for man' through resurrection of the spirit of ancient humanism in order to heal the problems of modern society. Babbitt claimed, "If human beings pursue things and do not know man, a great war will

break out. This great trend is inevitable and it is an eternal, unchangeable principle.”⁹ From the perspective of the New Humanism, humanity is the root of social and political problems. In other words, the New Humanism presented the ethical methodology according to which the humanity of human beings includes dual oppositional relationships between good and evil and between emotion and reason and the inner self of human beings can be completed and social order can be established only by controlling emotion and desire with reason.

The New Humanism, which claimed the principle of dualistic humanity, criticized the two mainstream thoughts of modern civilization, romanticism and scientism, which came into being based on the so-called naturalistic theory of human nature theory since the Renaissance in the 16th century. From the perspective of New Humanists such as Babbitt, emotional romanticism represented by Jean Jacques Rousseau arose from rebellion against corrupt religious authority, but it is an absurd idea that rejects reason, excludes social restraints, and generates social chaos and overflow of unbridled feelings through claims of regression to nature or regression to premodern, prerational states. Babbitt also warned against scientism represented by Francis Bacon, saying that because scientific research belongs to the law of thing, it should never be considered absolute.

With respect to the way of overcoming the crisis of modern society where the law of thing is prevailing with the law of man, Babbitt suggested that man should acquire the “great old

⁹ Wu-Mi, *The Humanism of Irving Babbitt*, *Critical Review* Vol.19, Zhonghua Book Company, Shanghai, Jul. 1923

thoughts” of the East and West which contain all the practical experiences accumulated over hundreds or thousands of years, including the teachings of Buddha, Jesus, Aristotle, and Confucius.¹⁰ A modern Chinese educator and thinker, Wu-Mi (吳宓) became a student of Irving Babbitt in 1917, and Babbitt was a professor of the Department of Comparative Literature at Harvard University at the time. Since then, Wu-Mi criticized modern American and European societies and their cultures for the corruption of humanity and moral decline, and he was deeply impressed by the thoughts of Babbitt who explored the method for salvation of humanity in the ancient philosophical thoughts of the East and West. Wu-Mi, one of the Chinese intellectuals who were deeply remorseful about the national crisis of China and its people at the time, felt strong pride in Chinese thoughts and culture since Babbitt had a high regard for ancient Chinese thoughts and culture, including Confucian philosophy of ‘benevolence’, and this became the driving force of Wu-Mi’s endeavors to realize Babbitt’s New Humanistic ideals in China.

Wu-Mi divided views of life into three kinds: the Religious level based on religion and following the Mandate of Heaven, the Humanistic level corresponding to a Humanistic view of life based on morals and placing importance on ‘moderation’ and ‘magnanimity’, and the naturalistic level, which follows the principles of the survival of the fittest and the law of the jungle and the impulse of desire. He argued that the Chinese should overcome views disproportionately tilted toward the Naturalistic level of the ‘New Culture Movement’ which

¹⁰ Wu-Mi, Babbitt's Comment on Eurasian Culture, Critical Review Vol.38, Zhonghua Book Company, Shanghai, 1925.

took place in those days and create the true 'New Culture' by developing Humanism of the humanistic level, which is an intermediate level between the religious level and the naturalistic level. This is a Chinese application of Babbitt's New Humanism, which seeks to restore morality, the ultimate means of salvation of modern society, through the convergence of humanistic thoughts of the East and West. On the way of establishing humanism, Wu-Mi said, "The humanism of Confucius and Mencius is originally the basis of Chinese morals and traditional studies, and, today, it should be mastered by comparing and merging it with the thoughts of Plato and Aristotle to take the essence of the thoughts and merge it again with the theories and studies of great scholars in the West. ... Only by combining the achievements of the two civilizations of the East and West, can we expect to achieve the goal of creating a new culture."¹¹

The specific method that Wu-Mi used to realize the ideals of the New Humanism in China was the publication of a journal named the Critical Review and dedication to education. In China, the New Culture Movement had been actively carried out since the mid-1910s. The Critical Review was opposed to the proponents of the New Culture Movement considering Chinese traditional culture as a target of overthrow and separation, while blindly worshipping the evolutionary theory and pursuing modernity with the concept of linear development. According to its founding purpose, "helping Chinese unique cultures to flourish and incorporating new knowledge into existing knowledge,"¹² the Critical Review intended to introduce new cultural

¹¹ Wu-Mi, *Discussing the New Culture Movement*, Critical Review Vol. 4, Zhonghua Book Company, Shanghai, 1922

¹² *Introduction of the Critical Review*, Critical Review Vol. 1, Zhonghua Book Company, Shanghai

products selectively on the basis of the succession of traditions. Wu-Mi emphasized the importance of traditional culture, saying, “You need to add or reduce, polish, trim, fix, and repair old things to obtain new ones. ... Therefore, if you don’t know or understand the old, you can never tell anything about the new. Institutions, cultural products, theories, and studies all become new things by gradually conveying and passing down the existing things. There are no effects without causes.”¹³

As a result of Wu Mi’s persistent and dedicated efforts, a total of 79 issues of the Critical Review were published between 1922 and 1933. The articles of the Critical Review included criticisms of the New Culture Movement, articles introducing the New Humanism, writing on ancient Chinese literature, history and philosophy, and articles about introductions and translations of masterpieces of Western literature. The articles showed that the Critical Review’s criticism of the New Culture Movement did not represent the obstinacy of extreme conservatives who tried to stand in the way of the New Culture but academically pointed out the narrowness of the New Culture Movement camp that could not absorb the essence of classical thoughts while focusing on the modern and contemporary thoughts and literature of the West.

Not only the publication of the Critical Review but also his efforts to cultivate talent through

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¹³ Wu-Mi, *Discussing the New Culture Movement*, Critical Review Vol. 4, Zhonghua Book Company, Shanghai, 1922

education revealed Wu-Mi's unwavering belief in the New Humanism. Soon after he returned from studying in the United States, Wu-Mi started teaching as a professor at a university in 1921. Since he worked as a professor in the Department of English and English Literature and the Department of Western Literature at Southeast University from 1921 to 1924, he taught students as a professor at many universities, including Northeastern University, Northeastern University, Tsinghua University, Changsha National Provisional University, Southwest Associated University, Wuhan University, Chongqing University, and Southwest Normal University until he was no longer able to teach with the start of the Four Cleans Movement.

The time when Wu-Mi worked most actively was the period from 1925 to 1937, when he worked as a professor at Tsinghua University, his alma mater. In particular, in 1925, when he was appointed director of the Tsinghua Institute of Chinese Studies and was commissioned to run it for a year, he showed great enthusiasm in handling of all the tasks related to the institute, such as the establishment of the system and regulations, selection of students, and invitation of professors. As a result of Wu-Mi's devoted efforts, the Tsinghua Institute for International Studies was able to recruit masters of Chinese cultures, such as Liang Qi-Chao, Wang Guo-Wei, and Tschen Yin-Koh, as professors. In the Tsinghua Research Institute, according to its educational goals of "conducting profound academic research and cultivating professional human resources" which were set by Wu-Mi, many masters of Chinese culture provided in-depth education to students until it was closed in 1929. As a result, it produced many eminent scholars who later played a pivotal role in the field of Chinese humanities in the future, such as Wang-Li, Wu Qi-Chang, Xie Guo-Zhen, and He-Lin. The publication of the Critical Review

was a kind of cultural business, and the operation of the Tsinghua Institute of Chinese Studies was an educational business, but the foundation purpose of the Critical Review, “helping Chinese unique cultures to flourish and incorporating new knowledge into existing knowledge”, and educational goals of the Tsinghua Institute of Chinese Studies, “conducting profound academic research and cultivating professional human resources”, shared the common elements of ‘protection of traditions’ and ‘China-West convergence.’ The thoughts of the New Humanism, which claims that we should inherit traditional culture and scholastic achievements tested and proven during thousands of years of history and merge them with today’s culture and knowledge to create a ‘new culture’ with truly new values, thereby further cultivating the humanity of the human race to the next level of maturity to achieve peace and common prosperity, are definitely closer to idealism. However, as the problems of national and ethnic conflicts and wars, the gap between rich and poor, and environmental pollutions have continued to worsen, the fundamental way to improve the situation of the world today can only be found in the realization and practice of human beings themselves. Therefore, we cannot help but pay attention again to the New Humanism aimed at constructing a ‘new culture.’

6. Conclusion

The “one China” that the Chinese government wishes cannot be achieved by coercive indoctrination of Chinese national identity and pressure. When China actively puts into practice

freedom and democratic values both internally and externally, the people of the Greater China region will voluntarily agree to it and naturally proceed with the process of truly becoming “one China” with pride.

The tourism and distribution industries of South Korea have been suffering economic losses for a long time for China’s economic retaliatory measures against South Korea for THAAD deployment. If it is the essential nature of the Chinese socialist market economy that the state can intervene in private economic activities and exchanges for political purposes and distort their directions, then we need to explore a way out through the strategy of diversification as Taiwan has done rather than enduring the unpredictable risks. Fortunately, the government is starting a “New Southern Policy,” which is aimed at expanding international exchanges with Southeast Asian countries and India, just like Taiwan’s New Southbound Policy. When implementing the New Southern Policy, we should refer to the direction of the New Southbound Policy, but we need to exercise wisdom to further develop and upgrade it. We should not only promote economic and trade exchanges but also put into practice true human-oriented philosophy of sharing, including the improvement of humanities and education. To this end, as did the New Humanist scholars, Irving Babbitt and Wu-Mi more than 100 years ago, we should gain wisdom and insight from traditional culture and thoughts and harmonize the wisdom and insight with modern civilization through continuous efforts and practice. The time has come when we should join forces to build a new world of a new era where all the countries reject the oppressive international order created by hegemonistic thinking, countries maintain peaceful and equal relationships with each other, each nation develops its unique culture in various ways,

and people living in the countries enjoy affluent living and pursue happy dreams.

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