

Basic Income and Feminist Citizenship (s): In Terms of De-Commodification and De-Familialization

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1. Introduction

In recent years, various life situations incompatible with a welfare state have surfaced, such as homelessness, unemployment of youth, poor single mother households, drawing attention to the reality of social exclusion. In this context, various inclusion strategies to counteract exclusion have been sought as alternatives to the conventional institutions of the welfare state, comprised primarily of insurance and assistance benefits. Basic Income (hereafter, BI) is a policy concept rapidly gaining attention in recent years as one such inclusion strategy.

BI is the concept of an income that is paid unconditionally to all citizens as a personal right based on citizenship (e.g., Fitzpatrick 1999). It is said to be a social concept calling for turning away from a labor-centric view of society in order to break the strong linkage between labor and income. This is because entitlement to BI is completely decoupled from differences in labor. In this sense, it can be interpreted as a sort of critique of the welfare state based on the insurance/assistance benefits model, where paid-work continues to play a central role.

On the other hand, the modern welfare state has long been criticized by minorities, who tend to be marginalized within the welfare state. Objections from feminists are thought to be particularly important. Feminist critiques of the welfare state have been directed firstly at the family model (male breadwinner/female housekeeper model) assumed by the welfare state, and the androcentric concept of citizenship built on top of it. These have extended to critiques of institutions based on such citizenship, and gender division of public and private spheres.

In this manner, proponents of BI and feminists have critiqued the conventional welfare state in their respective contexts. Unfortunately, however, the intersection of the two has seldom been discussed so far. This is probably the reason that the debate on BI, which has started to become more active in recent years, has been criticized for being largely gender blind. On the other hand, feminism has tended to view BI critically, trivializing it as "payment for housework" without much further consideration. Due perhaps to such circumstances, there has been hardly any productive cross-fertilization between the two camps. However, if gender equity is thought to be an indispensable policy norm, studying its treatment within the new policy concept of BI ought to be important when considering feminist social policy. The present paper thus aims to analytically discuss the "intersection" of these two perspectives.

So what is the orientation of each? It can tentatively be argued that BI, which emphasizes

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freedom from the market while looking askance at labor differentiation, is oriented towards "de-commodification," whereas feminism, which emphasizes freedom from the family while questioning citizenship based on the conventional family model, is oriented towards "de-familialization."

Therefore, the aim of the present paper is to ascertain, through revisiting the concepts of de-commodification and de-familialization and their relationship to each other from a woman's perspective, whether or not BI has potential of becoming a new, feminist citizenship-based policy concept.

To this end, through discussion of Esping-Andersen's arguments that rehabilitated the concept of de-commodification, as well as feminist critiques of his views and his responses to them, an attempt is made to sort out the relationship between de-commodification and de-familialization from a women's perspective, and to reformulate both concepts (section 2). Furthermore, the two concepts are used in a typology of feminist citizenship models (sections 3 and 4). Lastly, the behavior of BI, generally said to promote de-commodification, is considered from the perspective of de-familialization to position it within a typology of feminist citizenship (section 5).

2. De-commodification and De-familialization: Keys to a Vision of Feminist Citizenship?

2-1 Esping-Andersen's Concept of "De-Commodification"

Needless to say, Esping-Andersen contributed to the rediscovery of de-commodification in the field of social policy. According to him, "de-commodification" signifies "the degree to which individuals, or, families, can uphold a socially acceptable standard of living independently of market participation." (Esping-Andersen 1990). "Market participation" here signifies participation in the labor market. Therefore, it can tentatively be said that he defines "de-commodification" as the degree to which the citizen as a worker can survive without depending on the labor market.

2-2 Feminist Criticisms of the "De-commodification" Concept and Responses to Them

It is no surprise that Esping-Anderson's concept of de-commodification was subject to many criticisms from feminists (e.g. Daly 1994; Orloff 1993; Lewis 1992). The focus of their criticisms was that de-commodification as espoused by him was predicated upon the already commodified male worker. To begin with, women have been excluded or marginalized from paid-work in the labor market. In this sense, women are in a so-called pre-commodified state, in which they have still not undergone commodification. Therefore, de-commodification may have potential to liberate men, but it has little relevance to women, who have not been commodified, it is argued. In general, women have undertaken much unpaid work under male domination within the home. In other words, women have been working without being paid (commodified) because they have remained within the home. It is argued that in this context, becoming commodified as labor in the labor market helps to liberate women from the family and male domination.

Facing such severe yet legitimate criticisms from feminists, Esping-Andersen goes on to accept them and revise his arguments accordingly. He admits that his concept of de-commodification only makes sense for men, who are already commodified; he proposes "de-familialization" as a new complementary concept. According to him, "de-familialization would indicate the degree to which

social policy (or perhaps markets) renders women autonomous to become 'commodified', or to set up independent households, in the first place." (Esping-Andersen 1999=2000: 86) Furthermore he says that this word implies "policies that maximize individuals' command of economic resources independently of familial or conjugal reciprocities." (ibid.: 86) . Specifically, "de-familialization" implies independence from the "reciprocity of the family and the reciprocity of marriage," *i.e.*, from the role of caregiver of children, the elderly, etc. Therefore, his concept of "de-familialization" can be tentatively understood to mean the degree to which a citizen-caregiver can survive (by means of commodification) without depending on the family.

2-3 The Relation between "De-commodification" and "De-familialization" according to Esping-Andersen

Next, let us consider how Esping-Andersen understood the relationship between the concepts of "de-commodification" and "de-familialization." Firstly, it can be pointed out that "de-commodification" and "de-familialization" are genderized concepts, one of which is applied to men, and the other to women. This is apparent from the following: "The functional equivalent of market dependency for many women is family dependency. In other words, female independence necessitates 'de-familializing' welfare obligations."(ibid. 77) The above description shows that the concepts are each thought to apply to one of the genders and to correspond functionally with each other. In this context, men are positioned in the public sphere of the labor market where they engage in paid labor while women are placed in the private sphere of the family where they engage in unpaid labor, exclusive of each other.

The second characteristic of his concepts of "de-commodification" and "de-familialization" can be found in that "de-familialization" is viewed to be virtually synonymous with "commodification" (Song, 2004). For Esping-Andersen, the ultimate goal is none other than de-commodification; de-familialization is no more than "commodification" for the sake of de-commodification. At the risk of creating misunderstanding, it might be said that he understands de-commodification as a phased process: first women must be de-familialized, *i.e.*, commodified to become "men," after which they can be de-commodified. In other words, the two concepts are not construed to be mutually independent in practice. In fact, de-familialization (=commodification) and de-commodification could even be said to be in an antinomic relationship under such a concept of phases.

2-4 A Reformulation of De-commodification and De-familialization

Then, let me consider de-familialization without commodification in order to go beyond Esping-Andersen's genderized concept of phases. Concepts of de-familialization discussed by feminists in other contexts can be referred to in this regard. For instance, Lister proposes de-familialization as an indicator of "the degree to which individual adults can uphold a socially acceptable standard of living, independently of family relationships, either through paid work or through the social security system" (Lister 1994: 37). Here, the means for achieving de-familialization are not limited to paid-work, and thus de-familialization need not be through commodification. On the basis of the above analysis, de-commodification and de-familialization are defined as follows for the purpose of the present paper:

- De-commodification: the degree to which a citizen can survive without depending on the labor market.
- De-familialization: the degree to which a citizen can survive without depending on the family.

3. Three Citizenship Models in Feminism

Just as de-commodification is related to citizenship, de-familialization is also related to gender hierarchy in citizenship. How can women, who are caught between de-commodification and de-familialization, be seen in relation to citizenship? An attempt is made to answer this question below with reference to feminist citizenship theories.

3-1 The Dilemma of Conventional Feminist Citizenship - Equality vs. Difference

There could be said to be two conventional feminist attitudes towards citizenship. One is that citizenship of women should be based on "equality" with men, while the other is that citizenship of women should be based on their "differences" from men. Tentatively, those supporting the former shall be referred to as proponents of equality, and the latter as proponents of difference.

Proponents of equality emphasize participation of women in the public sphere and gender equality in pursuit of parity with men; they owe much to liberal feminist discourse. Their typical demands are for the participation of women in the labor market, *i.e.*, commodification, and prohibition of gender discrimination. Feminist citizenship derived from such a position could be called "gender-neutral citizenship" in that it calls for gender-neutral behavior in the public sphere. In this case, the citizen is generally conceived as a worker. However, concerns have been raised that such a stance may perpetuate and reinforce cultural male dominance by requiring women to adopt male values and grammar to "become more like men."

Due to such concerns, there has emerged a new approach demanding citizenship based not on equality but differences with men. Such proponents of difference assert that the responsibilities of women in the private sphere, such as care of the elderly, child-rearing and housework, should be given more value and reappraised. For instance, Gilligan (1982) counterposes an "ethics of caring" against the "ethics of justice" which has been built upon an androcentric theory¹. He stresses the intrinsic importance of such an ethics. This ethical theory was welcomed for its reevaluation of caregiving work by women, which had been taken lightly compared to paid-work by men. A feminist citizenship derived from such a position could be considered to be a "gender-differentiated citizenship" in that men and women are evaluated in terms of different values (e.g., Young 1989). In this case, women citizens are generally conceived of as caregivers. However, concerns have been raised that such a position may perpetuate and reinforce male-female differences and gender divisions of public and private spheres, lapsing into cultural essentialism.

In that case, should citizenship of women be based on equality or differences with men? Should women be viewed as "workers" or "caregivers"? This contentious question has long been considered a dilemma for feminism.

3-2 Critical Synthesis of "Equality" and "Difference"

However, such a dilemma between equality and difference is not inevitable. The two are not necessarily in an either-or relationship. In fact, there have been attempts to provide a feminist

citizenship model that goes beyond this dilemma. There are attempts to emphasize the mutual interdependence of equality and difference so as to achieve their "critical synthesis" (Lister 2003).

For instance, the "Universal Caregiver Model" has been proposed in contrast to the "Universal Breadwinner Model" and "Caregiver Parity Model," which roughly correspond to "gender-neutral citizenship" and "gender-differentiated citizenship" (Fraser 1996). This is a citizenship model that calls upon men to engage in the unpaid work in the home that women have undertaken conventionally. On the other hand, Lewis has proposed the "Parent/Worker Model" that calls upon both men and women to engage in paid work as well as unpaid work in the home (Lewis 1997). Such models that are not defined by gender but go beyond conventional "either-or" type citizenship models have been called "gender inclusive citizenship" models by Lister (Lister 2003).

Indeed, such citizenship models that call upon men to engage in unpaid work in the home and require both men and women to be universal caregivers tend to overcome the gender division of public and private spheres characteristic of conventional approaches emphasizing equality or difference. However, it should be noted that all of these models demand that citizens play either of two roles: engage in paid-work or carry out unpaid work in the home. In other words, the model of the citizen is assumed to be the worker and/or the caregiver, regardless of how these roles are allocated between men and women. But can citizenship only be conceived in terms of the worker or the caregiver? Would it not be possible to develop a so-called "alternative feminist citizenship" which is modeled on neither the worker nor the caregiver, and conceive policies to ensure it?

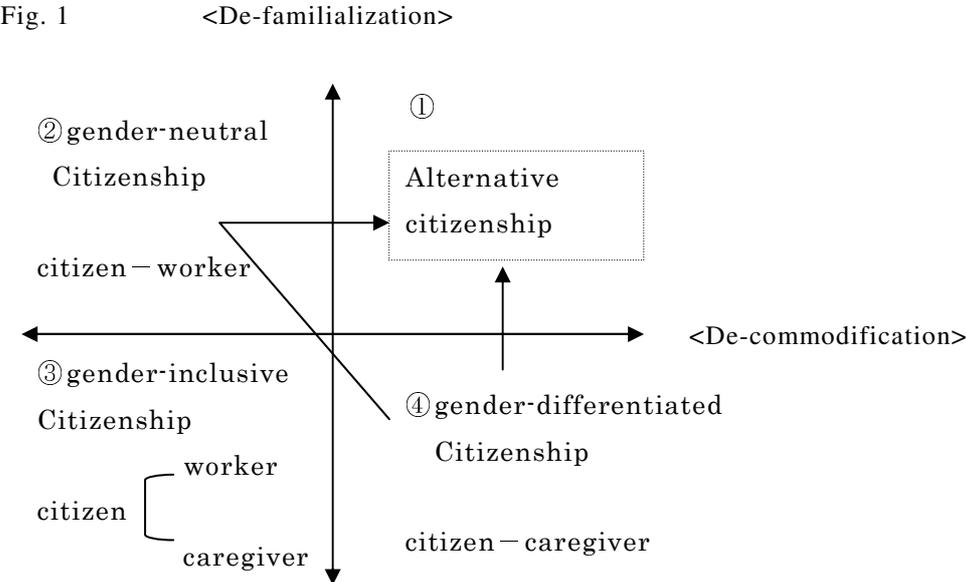
4. A Typology of Feminist Citizenship and "Alternative Feminist Citizenship"

An analytic typology of the three types of feminist citizenship discussed in Section 3 is developed below using the concepts of de-commodification and de-familialization reformulated in Section 2. Next, the positioning of "alternative feminist citizenship" is considered with reference to the discourse of feminists with a somewhat different orientation than those discussed above.

4-1 A Typology of Feminist Citizenship based on De-commodification and De-familialization

To reiterate, for the purposes of the present paper, de-commodification shall be understood as "the degree to which a citizen can survive without depending on the market" and de-familialization as "the degree to which the citizen can survive without depending on the family." According to this, firstly, "gender-neutral citizenship" that opposes male domination confining women to the home and demands access for women to paid work (equal to that for men) can be understood to promote de-familialization rather than de-commodification. The image of the citizen assumed in this model is that of the citizen as a worker. Secondly, "gender-differentiated citizenship" that demands a reappraisal of the caregiving work that women have undertaken within the home, rather than access to paid work, could promote de-commodification but not de-familialization in particular. Its premise is the citizen as caregiver.ⁱⁱ Thirdly, "gender-inclusive citizenship" that attempts a critical synthesis of the two is a model that conceives of the citizen as a worker and/or caregiver. Both de-commodification and de-familialization might be promoted at the individual level under this model. However, generally speaking, rather than trying to promote de-commodification or de-familialization as such, it could be said to aim to realign the gender biased vectors of both in the

direction of gender equity.ⁱⁱⁱ The above is illustrated in Figure 1. It is noteworthy that the first quadrant is empty. Section 4-2 delves into an "alternative feminist citizenship" that fills this gap.



4-2 The Positioning of "Alternative Feminist Citizenship"

The Italian Marxist feminist Mariarosa Dalla Costa can be mentioned as a feminist who contributed to making the previously hidden and neglected role of women in undertaking diverse unpaid work in the home more visible and socially recognized. She is well known for the slogan "wages for housework" which taken literally could be interpreted as keeping the woman engaged in unpaid work in the home (familialization) while demanding payment (commodification) for it. However, her aim is to expose to the light of day the significance of housework being unpaid, rather than to demand wages as such. She does not oppose paid work outside the home in favor of housework, as is often wrongly inferred. Rather, she is opposed to both types of work. On the one hand, she understands women's paid-work to be voluntary withdrawal from unpaid work in the home; this could be seen to lead to de-familialization. On the other hand, Dalla Costa, who is well known as a successor of the ideology of *autonomia*, links the issue of housework to "refusal of paid-work," which could also be seen to lead to de-commodification. In other words, when the question is posed in this way, she can be understood to be demanding de-commodification and de-familialization simultaneously. The feminist citizenship conceived along the lines of this discourse clearly does not fit into any of the three models mentioned above. Rather, one could perhaps find a model for "alternative citizenship" that fills the gap in the first quadrant.

Three types of feminist citizenship in addition to "alternative citizenship" have been discussed above. It should be noted to avoid misunderstanding that the present writer does not say that the relative superiority or inferiority of these models can be determined or that one is correct at the exclusion of the others. Each presents a mode of feminist citizenship; these modes need to be understood in relation to each other. It is possible that different models might exhibit similar behavior in real social circumstances, in which sense these models do not exclude each other but

may at times have affinity with each other.⁹⁾ That said, what policy concepts can be drawn up based on each of these forms of feminist citizenship?

5. Policy Models of Feminist Citizenship

5-1 Nancy Fraser's Citizenship Model and Policy Concept

Fraser (1996), who advocates the above-mentioned "Universal Caregiver Model," goes beyond mere discussions of citizenship models to comment in depth on policy concepts conforming to them. Of these, policy concepts related to income support schemes in particular shall be discussed next.¹⁰⁾ According to her, the "Universal Breadwinner Model" in which all citizens aim to be breadwinners, is compatible with social insurance systems in which many benefits are linked to employment and are allocated mainly according to income levels. However, these need to be supplemented by public income support schemes for those who are unable to find employment. This is similar to the mechanism of the present day welfare state. On the other hand, the "Caregiver Parity Model" which seeks acknowledgement for women's work and responsibility in the home, advocates for a "caretaker benefit" as "remuneration for child-bearing, child care, housework and other labor in the household required by society." Participation Income can also be mentioned as a similar benefit payment system. According to Fraser, neither of these two models adequately promotes gender equality in today's context. On the other hand, she argues that the "Universal Caretaker Model" which aims for both men and women to share the burden of caregiving in the home, can achieve gender equality while deconstructing gender. Though she does not discuss income support schemes that would be compatible with this model, the caregiver benefit or Participation Income might be candidates in light of the model's principles.

Given the above, what sort of policy concept would be compatible with "alternative feminist citizenship"? In other words, how could a policy concept that simultaneously promotes de-commodification and de-familialization be developed? Whether BI can become a policy concept based on "alternative feminist citizenship" is examined below through a discussion of how BI, generally said to promote de-commodification, might behave in terms of de-familialization.

5-2 "Alternative Feminist Citizenship" and Basic Income

BI liberates people from being forced to work in order to survive by decoupling work from income. In that sense, it could be said to be oriented toward de-commodification. However, this orientation of BI towards de-commodification has often been criticized with the claim that "BI just gives rise to free riders." Needless to say, such criticisms are based on reproach towards not working (specifically, not engaging in paid-work in the public sphere or labor market). In response to such criticisms, feminists have asserted that there are more free riders in the private sphere of the home (Pateman 2006; Fraser 1996). They point out that it is the husbands that have been free riding on the multifaceted unpaid work of women in the home. Unfortunately, however, such free riding by the husband seldom appears on the agenda in discourse about BI when the issue of free riding is raised. This reflects the circumstances that conventional discourse on BI has been gender blind and that feminists have not contributed much to BI theory. However, feminist analyses of BI have at last started to appear in recent years.^{iv} BI is discussed below from the perspective of de-familialization

on the basis of these analyses.

5-3 BI for women: BI as De-familialization Policy

The attitude of feminism towards BI is ambivalent in a sense.^v This ambivalence is discussed below from a number of angles. To begin with, the aspects of BI that have been pointed out to be potentially positive for women could be summarized as follows. Firstly, BI, which looks askance at work and relativizes the status of the worker, could be said to uplift the status of women, who have been excluded or marginalized from the status of a worker. Secondly, a related point is that BI potentially promotes gender equality in the labor market by weakening the division between part-time work, which has tended to be allocated to women, and full-time work that has tended to be allocated to men. Thirdly, BI potentially provides women with autonomous income support bypassing the husband, as it is a benefit paid on an individual basis. Thus, it is argued that BI is generally conducive to feminist citizenship. As can be seen from the first and second points, the orientation of BI towards de-commodification can have a positive effect for women. It could be said to have great meaning particularly for single mothers who have been disadvantaged due to being caught between commodification and familialization. And as the third point indicates, BI may provide an opportunity for de-familialization through divorce to women who previously had no choice but to remain in the home within a married relationship for financial reasons, as it guarantees independent income for women. In this manner, BI could be said to be a policy concept that is open to both de-commodification and de-familialization, and appears to be an option for feminist social policy that is positive for women.

However, as mentioned above, feminism has generally ignored or been critical towards BI. These criticisms could be roughly summarized as follows. Firstly, BI is interpreted as payment for housework and thus confining women to the private sphere (housework and caregiving). Secondly, confining women to the private sphere results in perpetuating and reinforcing the gender division of roles and of the labor market, perpetuating the husband's free riding in the home. Thus it is argued that BI generally perpetuates and reinforces the inferior status of women in terms of citizenship. These criticisms are discussed in turn below. The first point is a misunderstanding, simply speaking; BI is not payment for housework.¹⁴⁾ To expand upon this point, let us compare it to Participation Income, which is often discussed as a policy option similar to BI. Actually, many feminist concerns about BI are applicable to Participation Income rather than BI. Participation Income is a benefit paid for activities considered beneficial to society (Atkinson 1996). This policy concept has garnered the support of some feminists because it can serve as a benefit payment for housework, caregiving and other work in the home that is considered beneficial for society but in most cases remains unpaid. However, it carries the risk of confining women to the home, being a payment for the woman's "contribution" in the home. On the other hand, BI is an unconditional benefit payment, not a payment for housework or some other "contribution." It is paid regardless of whether housework is done. In this sense, it can be said to be a policy concept that is open to de-familialization, *i.e.*, liberating women from the home rather than confining women to the home.

As for the second concern that BI perpetuates and reinforces gender divisions of roles and the labor market, it is the flip side of the first and second arguments in favor of BI. On the one hand,

BI is said to reinforce gender divisions of the labor market, and on the other hand, is argued to promote gender equality in the labor market. This dichotomy could be said to be related to the reformist character of BI. For instance, Pateman (2006) says that this is an issue of the level of BI. It is argued that BI has a high risk of perpetuating or reinforcing the status quo if at a low level, but could have a transformative effect if above a certain level. In this light, the second concern does not seem to be absolute either. If BI at a certain level could be guaranteed, even if it could not be said to actively promote gender equality in the labor market, it could at least be said to relativize gender divisions of labor and open the way for de-familialization of women at least to a greater extent than the present androcentric model.

6. Conclusions

In this manner, BI, which is generally said to promote de-commodification, could also be said to be oriented towards de-familialization. Furthermore, it is not allocated in any fixed manner according to gender, so its orientation towards de-familialization is not necessarily linked to commodification. In this sense, BI could be said to be an option for new feminist social policy based on "alternative citizenship." The above discussion is summarized in Figure 2.

It is hoped that the present paper has helped somewhat to establish a foothold for discussion on the intersection between BI theory and feminism, an area in which productive discourse had previously been lacking.

Figure 2 Feminist Citizenship and Policy Models

Citizenship	Policy Models (see Fraser, N. 1996)		Compatible Policies
Gender Neutral Citizenship	Universal Breadwinner Model Citizen-worker based	Degenderized Citizen-worker Model ... promotes employment of women (women imitate men)	Insurance Assistance Benefits
Gender Differentiated Citizenship	Caregiver Parity Model Citizen-worker Citizen-caregiver based	Genderized Citizen-worker Citizen-caregiver Model ... Supports caregiving work of women (keeps gender role divisions)	Caregiver Benefit Participation Income
Gender Inclusive Citizenship	Universal Caregiver Model Citizen-caregiver based	Degenderized Citizen-caregiver Model ... encourages men to be caregivers (men imitate women)	Insurance Caregiver Benefit Participation Income
Alternative Feminist Citizenship	Citizen based	Degenderized Citizenship Model	BI

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- ⁱ Gilligan admits the intrinsic nature of the "ethics of caring" but warns against considering it as being intrinsic to women.
- ⁱⁱ It should be noted that this model is genderized. It is mainly women that are conceived of as caregiver-citizens, and such a concept implies the existence of citizens (men) as workers.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Actually, the vision of the Swedish Ministry of Employment referred to by Fraser as an example corresponding to this model is "to enable both men and women to be parents as well as to have paid employment." (*ibid.* 94, emphasis added).
- ^{iv} For instance, Pateman (2006), Parker (1993), and Robeyns (2000), etc. Recently, *Basic Income Studies*, a journal on BI research, published its first special issue on feminism (2008). It is noted that many of the discussions below are based on these papers.
- ^v Robeyns (2000) has aptly described this ambivalence in terms of "hush money or emancipation fee."
- ^{vi} Attention should be drawn, not to the misunderstanding itself, but to its background. It is because housework has been unpaid and women have borne the brunt of it that feminists have interpreted BI this way. Such misunderstandings are seen even among scholars who evaluate BI positively. For instance, some claim that BI is to be welcome as it recognizes housework and uplifts the status of women (Walter 1989).
- ^{vii} Pateman argues that an appropriate level is "a level sufficient for a modest but decent standard of life"(Pateman 2006).

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