The Leadership of the "New" Italian Mayors

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Abstract

The years 2015 and 2016, in the Italian Government's agenda, should be remembered as the phase of the great constitutional reform: after several failed attempts – Joint Committees, reforms rejected by popular vote – Italian State institutions would be subjected to undergo a makeover in modernizing and efficiency way. So far, the only political-administrative institutions to be reformed effectively, during the 90's of the last century, were the local ones, primarily the municipalities. The reforms of the 90's are characterized by several trends: the centrality of the role of the Mayor; enhanced customization; greater accountability. The levels of political mediation were scaled down in favour of "direttismo". The demo-elected Mayor is now primarily aimed at consolidation of the consensus. The paper, based on the evidence so far available, tries to test the hypothesis that the achievement of consensus on the part of the mayors can connect to the kind of leadership that they exercise and the socio-professional profile.

Keywords: leadership; local government; mayors; personalization.

1. Old and New Policy

From the mid-70's of last century, according to many observers (Mény, 2001 Email; Inglehart 1992; Brooks, Manza 1994) we would have entered a new political era, post-post ideological and materialistic. The first indicator of that phenomenology – induced primarily by the crisis of the traditional system of mass parties (Kirchheimer 1966; Katz and Mair 1995; Pizzorno 1998; Calise 1994; Pasquino 2014) was established by the progressive affirmation of types of political "direttismo" characterized by an unmediated relationship between leaders and electors, and easily prone to populism and to the plebiscite (F 1999; Calise 2010; Canovan 1981; Taguieff 2002; Albertazzi, McDonnell 2008). In Italy, the aforesaid scenarios have found form of institutionalization only locally, since the early 90's, with the revolution induced by direct election of mayors.

To the demo-elected mayor there are attributed all levels of responsibility in local politics, in a dynamic of enhanced "direttismo" that hardly manages to be balanced with the needs and administrative constraints (V. 1997; V. 2014; C, Virgilio 2005).

Generally, five reasons (Borraz and John, 2004; Randle, 2004) are often cited for the rise of the elected mayor:

1) in response to the rise of the network society that otherwise disperses responsibility and a demand for greater accountability from political leaders
2) An attempt to reinvigorate democratic politics and civic engagement in the face of apparently widespread political apathy
3) and decentralising localist reaction against the rise of the power of the centralising state or super state (European Union)
4) The realisation by some local politicians in certain areas that they can make the most impact through elected mayors, not traditional party politics
5) The return of ' personality ' to the political agenda in place.

The recent experience of local government in Italy has undoubtedly highlighted the new dynamics of policy making which should be viewed in the imbalance between research and consolidation of consent on one hand, and the ordinary administrative management on the other hand (B 1999; Cilento 2000; Carmichael et al. 2002; Morello 2007; Canzano 2012).

The paper aims to develop the hypothesis that the performance of the Mayor during his electoral mandate, in terms of popular support, can be influenced by the style of leadership and his socio-professional array. Indeed the study of politics through the lens of analysis of the elite is not a new approach (2000 Only; Cilento 2013).

Locally, the political leadership has undergone profound changes: it has moved from the "mayor of the party" (Tarrow 1979) to the figure of ' "political entrepreneur" (Schumpeter 1954) to that of "policy entrepreneur" (Garcia 1998). This paper analyzes the potential impact of the type of leadership as a possible independent variable of the consent of

the mayor.

In the first part of the work we go through the main innovations introduced in Italy at the political-institutional level locally, since the 90's of the last century, highlighting the change occurred in roles of local politics. The second part analyzes the phenomenon of popular support linked to the figure of the "new" mayors and their ability to manage it in a more or less effective way.

2. Changes in Local Politics and the "New" Mayors

The literature of the last century on the leadership is very detailed and extensive (2012 Regalia). In terms of our interest, some dimensions of leadership result to be more important because they are more directly related to the slope of the policy making; its individual/collective nature; the contextual nature of the structure and leadership styles; the ways in which the function of leadership builds the necessary consent to action (Calderon 2009b). These are dimensions that put on the line the ability and resources both cognitive and institutional and the two levels, in the case of the "new" mayors in Italy, are absolutely central. The institutional level of local government, since the 90s of last century, has passed through a number of important changes that have resulted, or were induced, in/from relevant regulatory provisions (V. 2014):

1. Law 142/1990, On the organization of local autonomies. New subjects are provided: the metropolitan cities; unions of municipalities. For the first time, it is recognized the statutory autonomy in municipalities and provinces;
2. Law 81/1993, On the direct election of the mayor and the president of the province. Conferring to the mayor a strong centrality, with power to appoint commissioners, officers, administrators of entities and agencies;
3. "Bassanini reforms", 1997-1998, On the decentralization of functions from the State to the regions and local entities, together with the simplification and reorganization of the state administration;
4. Reform of Title V of the Constitution, 2001. Redefined Autonomies, based on the principles of subsidiarity and rationalization of administrative functions;
5. The difficult and complicated implementation of the Reform of 2001, linked to the reform of the Constitution of 2006, rejected by the constitutional referendum;
6. Law on fiscal federalism, 42/2009, whose implementation has been extremely slow and difficult;
7. Provisions of the years 2011-2014, included in the financial budget, and aimed at intervening levels of large area, to establish metropolitan cities and resize functions and organization of the provinces.

Obviously the regulatory provision that has had the greatest impact on local governance, as well as on internal and external relations to the municipal administration, was undoubtedly the Law T81/1993 which introduced the direct popular election of mayors. Consequently, they have been set deep processes of change that contributed to redefine the role, especially the political role of the mayor. The most effective representation of the mayor role, before the 1993 reform, is definitely attributed to Tarrow (1979). Tarrow underlined the type of "notable mayor" who bases its power on personal and familiar prestige but, since after World War II, in Italy it is stated the figure of the mediator "mayor": "while the notable mayor builds its role in the community surrounding himself with a dense network of personal relationships, and the administrator mayor is inspired in its work by the principles of good governance the mediator, mayor adapts his strategy to the constraints imposed by the political system (...). It concerns a local political mediator that due to the nature of the patronage resources distribution system is forced to establish a network of political relations to obtain funds for their community "(ibid: 180). In this regard, we can talk about real "political entrepreneurs", with a wide network of contacts in both the local political system and the national one, which use their membership of political parties to obtain the resources in favor of their municipalities. The main consequence of that state of affairs (status quo) was in total irresponsibility found at any level of the local authority, political and bureaucratic, tacitly harmonized in the joining link of the party politics.As claimed by Recchi (1996, 88) "the inertia of the parties, at least locally, providing elements for evaluation and management to their representatives, also forced the elected to try to establish a relationship of trust with the political-administrative class controlling economic, legislative, technical and information resources, useful in the formation of municipal policies, acting as a hinge between the different fractions (communities) of the local elite." Recchi's considerations are supported by his survey of the existing differences in the role of Italian mayors set before and after the 1993 reform: the term role set refers to the "complex of role relations that individuals have as occupants to particular social position" (Merton 1968, 107). According to Rab's analysis, the post-reform of the mayor is primus et solus: the network of collaboration with the other owners of power resources, and consequently weakens the mayor results to be more alien to the rest of the local political world and personally inserted in a wide network of citizen-electors. If in the past had Tarrow outlined the figure of the mediator and concertative consociational "mayor" in the era of the "new mayors" V. coins different metaphors related to Greek mythology (V. 1997): Sisyphus (the efforts of managing), Tantalus (targets that

move away, the frustration), Damocles (the responsibilities and risks, insecurity). The mayor, since the 90s, though politically he is increasingly a king, he must rise up to the role of the hero in the titanic enterprise to conduct the administrative management of the local authority: we can easily say "The emperor has no clothes!"

Further classification of the types of pre-reform local government is the one developed by Goldsmith (1991), according to which are highlighted three ideal types: "1. The model of patronage, for which the main function of the local government is represented by the distribution of benefits to individuals or groups of particular individuals; 2. The model of economic development, which sees the function of local government in promoting economic growth and ensuring the necessary conditions in order that market forces operate without constraints, although not necessarily so unregulated; 3. The model of the welfare state, for which the role of local government is more closely related to the provision of redistribution services "(p. 23).

The real watershed in the definition of the role of local government and the mayor, especially from the empirical point of view, is constituted by the phenomenon of the crisis of political mediation determined by the deconstruction of parties (Malik 2006). Locally, the deconstruction of parties became evident since the 80s, debasing the widespread pervasiveness of parties, both in the social and institutional context, which had been strong in the mid-60s; the strong role of the parties is noted especially in the selection of political personnel (1979 Tarrow), based almost exclusively on criteria of party affiliation, with just relatively different mechanisms within the three main Italian parties (DC, PCI, PSI). "The local government showed a considerable stability and professionalization, being fully impervious to every personality that was not produced or otherwise recruited from parties ' circuit" (1997, V. 8). There were increasingly affirmed the processes of personalization and professionalization: "In Italy the activist of the party is not a militant who works in a subculture isolated policy, but a political entrepreneur who runs a variety of political contacts with its allies and with its opponents, both at local and central levels of the political system" (1979, Tarrow 193-194). Since the end of the 70s, signs of strong change were invested in the entire Italian political system (Mair 1992), including the local level: the first indicator was the weakening of traditional political "subcultures (2003 Diamonds) and the voting membership (Parisi and Pasquino 1977). It comes about to compromise the bond of connection between the center and periphery of the system. "The appearance, in the sense of the degenerative, personalization of politics intersects with the growing role of the political entrepreneur, already out of party control that works only for himself, because now the party move backwards in these competitions, leaving free space to figures (...) "(Canzano 2012, 28) and to" sub-groups that decides on everything, but who are not able, nor are they interested in developing a government project for the community. The assessor the entrepreneur policy powers personalization process of political power in the highest degree because it is competing with opponents, with party colleagues, with colleagues of the junta (Bailey 1992). Thus, new dynamics of political micro-personalization (one to one) affirmed and consolidated, which act as ballast to the phenomena of macro-personalization (one to many) more common in political post-modern society (Caballero 2010). The real turning point, as anticipated, occurred with the introduction of the direct election of the mayor, who in turn appoints the junta, not necessarily chosen among the councilors, on the contrary, especially in the early post-1993 experiences, basically composed of personalities from outside and foreign to politics. The traditional source of legitimacy of local power no longer consists of the party, but rather of the electorate.

The Law 81/1993 was moving on two different levels: the political and the administrative one. Regarding the first aspect, the personalization processes and enhancement of leadership of the mayor were formalized, only partially due to the introduction of direct popular election; regarding the second level, there were attributed to the head of administration a greater chance of influencing the functioning of the municipal bureaucracy. These two levels of innovation reflected two specific tendencies of contemporary politics in general: the accentuation of the degree of responsiveness and its increasingly growing recognition in individual politicians, generally the monocratic leaders of the executives; a new model of administration, the entrepreneurial type. The new and further concentration of power in the hands of the mayor has focused on his person all the expectations of the public and the related responsibility for the performance of the institution. The demo-elected mayor becomes the mayor of all citizens and not only the expression of a party or a coalition: and he is the mayor of all the citizens that he, without any filter or brokerage, will have to answer. For new mayors, as quoted by V. (1997), it has was foreshadowed the role of Superman. The possible reappointment at the helm of the municipality will precisely depend on his ability and capacity to respond to the needs of the local community; no longer, as previously occurred, by decisions and agreements between the parties or within them. In the era of the demo-elected mayors it was inevitable to change the relationship between the new leaders of local governments and parties. If the first experiences after the administrative reform were marked by a clear anti-party matrix, in subsequent years, the parties will rehabilitate themselves on some fronts: in the selection of candidates for mayor; in the composition of the junta; in the distribution of the charges (V. 1997). "If on one hand the figure of the mayor is strengthened by the demo-election, on the other hand it is weakened by the lack of political cohesion. Did we return to the "mediator mayor"?

Certainly not, but surely the "decision-maker mayor" emerged from the reform, strong in his personal resources, has to deal with political forces equipped with organizational resources whose interests are not always convergent "(Canzano 2012, 42). More generally, the hottest fronts and critics of the "new" mayors have proved to be: the relations between councils (junta) and majority parties and those between junta and councils; relations with the municipal bureaucracy; relations with the organizations of interest.

Two other constraints of great importance have greatly affected the action of the "new" mayors: the time and the financial factor. Regarding the first constraint-relevant, as we shall see, even regarding the articulation of policy making (Caldwell 2009a)-it is immediately revealed, in the eyes of the "new" mayors, that the enormous work of reorganization of the offices and the municipal bureaucratic machine would have required a very long period of time, certainly well beyond four years, then became five, scheduled for the end of the mayoral mandate. In addition, the reorganization and rationalization of the municipal machine represented a certainly meritorious policy, but ill-suited to the needs of consolidation of popular consent to which the mayor to direct investor could not possibly escape. The benefits of such a reform would experience in the medium to long term and thus would not have any immediate feedback in the short term, for the purpose of a positive evaluation of the work of the mayor functional to his re-election. The other critical factor is related to the financial leverage: the progressive reduction of budgetary transfers by the central government in favor of local authorities, with the suppression, in more recent years, of a number of taxes of municipal level, have increasingly forced mayors to cope with the limited resources of the territory, of a private nature, or to write down the creativity in designing interventions and policies at no cost (Pai 2010; Carmichael et al. 2002; Morello 2007).

As mentioned earlier, we try to identify the nature of the leadership that has come to realize locally, in terms of policy change. For this purpose we use the analytical grid indicated by Callaghan (2009a). First, the leadership of the "new" mayors should be defined in individual or collective terms? Although the prevailing literature, in general, leans toward the collective identification of leadership (Bryson, Crosby 1992; Möllering 2007) and towards the desirability of establishing a "leadership networks" (Wallis, Dollery 1999) i.e. a distribution of leaders at all stages of the policy process from the agenda-setting to implementation (Calderon 2009a), the case of the first mayors tested immediately after the reform appear to be more fit in the figure of the leader "just in command" exclusively focused on its potential and personal resources , refractory to forms of conditioning by party or specific social sectors/interest groups. But the obvious disproportion between the high popular expectations and inadequate resources and instruments referred to the mayor capacity, has re-involved, especially since the late 90s, the validity of the collective dimension of leadership, as a prerequisite of the "new" mayors ' political success.

Regarding the "situational" or "contextual" character of the leadership of the mayors, i.e. if the historical and institutional context predetermines the style of action of leadership (both individual or collective) or, otherwise, whether the margin of discretion granted to the leaders are likely to make the outcome and the course of action unpredictable, in the case of the demo-elected mayors, being obliged to parameterize the variables of institutional context , the second prevails significally hypothesis: "in order to be understood leadership needs deep detailed reconstructions of contexts and situations, since it is precisely in the daily that the policy-making function of leadership operates, is transformed, produces new ideas, addresses new individuals to explore possible action opportunities" (Capano 2009b, 10). In the case of the mayors, the different level of consensus that they have obtained, as appropriate, strengthens the hypothesis that these concerns jointly situational dynamics and contextual, but definitely the individualizing.

Taken for granted that leadership is a "relational" and "positional" concept (Edinger 1975; Blondel, 1987), and therefore "the leader is identified as the one who is able to modify the actions of others" (2012 Regalia, 392), it is necessary to identify the means by which this effect is exerted. In the case of the mayors, the dynamics in question re-enter both in the field of hard power and in that of soft power (Nye 2009). The restoration of law as an essential condition of any form of civil coexistence has made it necessary, in many cases, the use of coercion; the revitalization of civil society and civic spirit determined by factors of strong popular identification in the values and principles of which are holders of the "first citizens", are a result of a work of conceptual elaboration and values that aims to create and consolidate a common vision and mission.

In analyzing the policy level, it will have to intercept the change that occurred in recent decades, and how much of it can be explained by the new dynamics introduced by the political-normative nature.

3. The "New" Mayors and the Consensus

The field of analysis and interpretation of the policy change does not escape to the methodological dilemma between an individual/situational approach and another one, at least intermediate, based on an intermediate level of generalizability of certain policies ' sequence, Tilly (2001; Falleti, Lynch: 2009) inspired by the pattern of path dependency (Pierson

2000). "On the other hand, the configuration specifications, natures of policies requires giving absolute relevance to the policy context for them to understand and explain. On this basis, the use of causal mechanisms, i.e. to concepts that can travel from one context to another, it can be really useful if we want to build an explanation that is well-argued and amenable to cross-checking "(Callaghan, Howlett 2009). Callaghan (2009a) identifies the role of leadership and time as causal mechanisms. Central to our analysis it is the role of leadership. It should be pointed out what was the context of the management of local public policies before the reform: it was pointed out the strong party-mindedness of local policy making. "The party was at the center of relations involving administrators, lobby, transparency and resulted, at least in the most relevant policy, an overlap of roles between staff party and political-institutional as well as staff at the center of charges that were mostly in the hands of the same people. The results depended on the characteristics of the relationship between the partisan actors and maximizing of the degree of consent maximization arising from the fulfillment of expectations "particularistic dimensions (Canzano 2012, 23). As B (1999, 9) emphasized, "There are the inter and intra party dynamics that ultimately make the difference in opening or closing the access to the special interests, the implementation of inter-institutional relations between center and periphery and in the overall coordination of the actors affected by the various stages of the proceedings.And it is increasingly the figure of a politician-administrator who depends on a party that comes to assume-it succeeds or not-the role of the regulator ".

This leads us to consider the time factor, deepened by Calderon (2009a, 7): "The policies are developed through time sequences which can be linear or cyclic or even circular. The time dimension is therefore absolutely important from a point of explanation, and should not be underestimated even by decision makers who, preparing to change a policy, they cannot, or rather should not, forget time. "

The two levels of the politics and policies intersect in the analysis of the effectiveness, in terms of consent, of the action of the demo-elected mayors. As already noted, the political-regulatory context determined from the '90 placed the Mayor in front of the primary need to consolidate their consent in accordance with rules previously labeled as "direttismo". The achievement of the goal, in quick terms and financially very demanding, is annually measured by a survey prepared by the IPR Marketing Institute and published by the newspaper "Il Sole 24 Ore"; this is a ranking list of mayors of 101 Italian provincial capitals, based on the percentage (index) of satisfaction they get from their fellow citizens. In the following table, the Top 50 are found in the ranking in relation to the performance of 2014:

Table: The 51 most appreciated Italian mayors in 2014

Location	City	NAME AND SURNAME	Popularity index%	Profile
1	FLORENCE	DARIO NARDELLA	65	politician
2	BARI	ANTONIO DECARO	64	outsider
3	BERGAMO	GIORGIO GORI	63	outsider
4	REGGIO CALABRIA	GIUSEPPE FADOUL	62	outsider
5	TRENTO	ALESSANDRO ANDREATTA	61.5	politician
6	VERBANIA	SILVIA MARCHIONINI	61	politician
7	PADOVA	MASSIMO BITONCI	60	politician
7	TORINO	PIERO FASSINO	60	politician
7	POWER	DAKSHIN	60	outsider
7	BIELLA	ADAM CARTER	60	outsider
7	MODENA	GIANCARLO MUZZARELLI	60	politician
7	MONZA	ROBERTO SCANAGATTI	60	politician
7	LECCE	PAUL PERRONE	60	outsider
7	SASSARI	NICOLA SANNA	60	outsider
7	IMPERIA	CARLO CALIXTO	60	outsider
16	PISTOIA	SAMUEL BAI	59.5	politician
17	PRATO	MATTHEW BIFFONI'S PROFILE	59	politician
17	PESARO	MATTEO RICCI	59	politician
17	PESCARA	AB	59	outsider
17	VERCELLI	MAURA STRONG	59	outsider
21	REGGIO EMILIA	LUKE VALDEZ	58.5	outsider
21	GROSSETO	EMILIO BONIFAZI	58.5	outsider
21	CALTANISETTA	JOHN RUVOLO	58.5	outsider
21	RIETI	G. PANDIAN	58.5	politician
25	CUNEO	FREDERICK BALL	58	outsider

25	LUCCA	ALESSANDRO TAMBELLINI	58	politician
25	COMO	MARIO LUCINI	58	outsider
28	VICENZA	ACHILLE VARIATI	57.5	politician
28	BRESCIA	EMILIO DEL BONO	57.5	politician
28	SAVONA	FEDERICO BERRUTI	57.5	outsider
31	LODI	SIMONE U.	57	politician
31	ASCOLI PICENO	GUIDO CASTELLI	57	politician
33	MASSA	ALESSANDRO VOLPI	56.5	outsider
33	UDINE	FURIO HONSELL	56.5	outsider
33	RAVENNA	FABRIZIO MATTEUCCI	56.5	politician
33	PORDENONE	CLAUDIO PALMER	56.5	outsider
33	BELLUNO	MARC MASSARO	56.5	politician
33	AOSTA	BRUNO GIORDANO	56.5	outsider
39	VARESE	ATTILIO FONTANA	56	outsider
39	PERUGIA	ANDREA ROMIZI	56	politician
41	PISA	MARCO FILIPPESCHI	55.5	politician
41	SONDRIO	ALCIDE MOLTENI	55.5	outsider
43	PARMA	FREDERICK PARKER	55	outsider
43	ANCONA	VALERIA MANCINELLI	55	outsider
43	VITERBO	LEONARDO MICHELINI	55	outsider
43	RAGUSA	FEDERICO PANDYA	55	outsider
43	PALERMO	LEOLUCA ORLANDO	55	politician
48	CATANIA	ENZO BIANCO	54.5	politician
48	CREMONA	GIANLUCA GALIMBERTI	54.5	outsider
50	PAVIA	MAX DANN	54	outsider
50	COSENZA	MARIO OCCHIUTO	54	outsider

Compiled by Data Governance Poll 2015, IPR Marketing, Il Sole 24 Ore

The 51 most popular mayors of Italy were classified, in the last column, based on their profile: "politicians" are considered to be those who come from an established party path, the "professional politicians" of Weber's memory; "outsiders" are considered to be those mayors who come from civil society, technicians and professionals (2010 Novel). The table shows that about 51 mayors were found, 22 appear to be mainly "political profiling" and 29 instead were "outsiders". This figure is merely indicative, may give rise to further reflection on the relationship between the profile of mayors and their ability to activate and consolidate popular support. All against the backdrop of a reflection on leadership types that suit the local political level in Italy.

4. Conclusions

4.1 The "new" mayors: political or "policy" entrepreneurs?

In previous sections, we tried to identify and to assume the role of leadership exerted by the mayor as an independent variable of the policy making change occurred in the area of local government: how much and how the action and the role of local leaders can influence the renewal - and effectiveness - of local policies; what types of levers and mechanisms must skillfully manage and enable the mayor to achieve optimal performance and consolidate administrative consent. Starting from the analysis of Capano (2009a), we begin to make distinctions between certain conceptual categories: leadership, policy entrepreneur and political entrepreneur. "The political leadership is attributed mostly to the role of the heads of the executive or political parties, while the leadership of policy is usually seen in terms of "entrepreneurship". The concept of "policy entrepreneur" is used, in fact, widely in the literature to identify those individuals capable of presenting new ideas in order to structure the agenda, to identify problems and find solutions "(Capano 2009a, 9). The political entrepreneur is the end of these processes: selects the ideas advanced by policy entrepreneurs, especially in times of crisis, defines the terms of political debate by building the agenda and the related cultural frame (Hwang, Powell 2005). Public officials, technocrats, academics, economists and representatives of interest groups are counted among the policy entrepreneurs, all profiles involved in the innovative processes of policy, with some form of access to decision makers. For its part, the political entrepreneur facilitates the formation of coalitions between different policy entrepreneurs (Blyth 2002) creating a bridge between the promoters of innovative ideas and institutions appointed to implement them,

impacting on the political-institutional agenda and on the political debate (Hwang, Powell 2005). Striving to create a transposition of that kind of speech at the local level, the "new" mayors have found themselves in a position to concentrate in them both the roles of political and policy entrepreneurs.

The elements of "direttismo" that have been consolidated in the area of local government make community leaders more subjected to the mechanisms of accountability on the part of the political community of reference. The choice of various policies to which to appeal and, above all, their management, differ not only on the basis of structural factors-economic development, strength of civil society, political composition of the junta, political subculture – but are also based on the quality and type the leadership of the mayor, in particular his/her ability to manage relationships with institutional and not-institutional actors.

The need to embody both the roles of political and policy entrepreneur requires the Mayor besides the charisma and the ability to communicate, also qualities of mediation skills between the actors of a policy and synthesis and translation of the instances decisions. Without being able to generalize, duly taking into account individual skills and sensitivity, theoretically the leadership roles described above would be better suited to professional politician, inside the party and administrative-institutional careers-institutional who is not a member of civil society, unrelated to the complex mechanisms of mediation and typical relationship of the political *milieu* . Such a hypothesis would require, of course, adequate empirical validation.

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