



Critical Analysis of Foreign Involvement in Syrian Crisis

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Abstract: This paper gives an overview of Syrian history, present-day Syria, and politics in the run-up to the crisis. It also explains the genesis of the Syrian conflict, Arab Spring, Syrian civil war, and examines the different actors involved in this process. The Syrian crisis which resulting the worst humanitarian crisis in the region after world war II by killing more than 470,000 people and displacing half of the country population both internally or externally. It has also paved the way to regional and extra regional powers to indulge in the internal conflict of the Syria state and seek their interests through anyways, irrespective of hard way or soft way. This work also examined the key actors which fueling the conflict in Syria. Sectarian division and failed socio-economic conditions within Syria. The intervention of foreign powers as the main reason for deepening the crisis and prolonged the conflict.

Keywords: Syria, Civil War, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Regional Security, Sectarianism

1. Introduction

Syria, has a unique strategic and geographic locus in the historical events of the Arab world. In particular, correlating with the ancient Palestine territory with its boards, it had given a momentous aid to the ethical and divine development to the humanity than any other civilization. As it is on the map or the world, its antique significance is infinite and with world-wide influence. As the crib of Judaism and the origin place of Christian's, Syria initiated both major religions and gave rise to the third one Islam. Wherever the Christian, Muslims and Jewish souls are, they can turn to a holy place in Syria for Religious inspiration.

Just after the extent of Islam, the Syrian center Damascus, turn into the chair of the famous Umayyad Realm conquered by Spain, France and India in the Eastern Ward, and in Central Asia during the Abbasid Tenure, in West-Iraq, which gave the Arab biosphere an intellectual. The Greate imperative bequest of the world to the middle ages was Greek Philosophy and thoughts.

The Traditional Jewish Apostolic of Syria is the first-born in Antioch, after the Apostolic of Jerusalem. The Syrian language is, his endorsed language. And it was the prominent language throughout the Eastern Arab. Geographically realm of the Apostolic prolonged throughout Damascus, Jerusalem and Mediterranean region. Due to its inspiration throughout the region, its traces are still evident in the tags of many dwellings and hamlets. Despite its difficulties, conspiracies, persecution, and divisions all over decades the Syrian Old-style Apostolic survives till-date, throughout the world. Round-about 40, 00,000 Syrian Apostolic believers are there, half of them in Sub-continent and the othersized all over the world (Zakka, 2008).

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The ancient prestige of Syria does not ascend only from its influence to the character building of man-kind. But due its geo-strategic location and the connectivity of three major continents Europe, Asia and Africa and its effectiveness as a bond for scattering socio-ethnic impacts from its adjoining evolutions with commodities. Being the center of the adjacent East, which himself placed at the core of the primordial, Syria rapidly became the prime whisperer of values and beliefs.

2. Syria-The Longest and the Bloodiest Conflict of Arab Spring

There is a famous quote of well-known historian and prominent diplomat Henry Kissinger that “There can be no war in the Middle East without the participation of Egypt and no peace without Syria.” In the light of above quote it is clear that Syria is an active and important actor of war and peace politics in middle-east.

The Syrian crisis is the result of the Arab Spring which started in Tunisia and travelled to many parts of the Arab circle. It holds of Syria with alteration. In the other region the “change” and people’s upheaval fading with the backing of local and global players, but in Syria the uprising animation forced with an inadequate strike and evaded with it the risk of a regional or even global war. The contemporary catastrophe in the Syria that happened in March 2011, when a group school boys dispatched scribbles against government in the paths of “Dara” a southwestern city of Syria.

A widespread protest of students bagged the consideration of the dogmatic and community rifts in the Syria, when Bashar al-Assad used force instead of heeding to people’s demands. The vigor of the Assad regime to diffuse the rallies and protest only refined the well-power of the protestors. The current crisis in Syria discloses the dissimilarities with the Arab-uprising. Dissimilar, to the uprising with Egypt and Tunisia, there is a situation of insecurity in civil clashes erupt, sectarianism and struggle for power rather than the actual demands for civil rights and freedom. But still the impending of the Assad regime vestiges unreliable (Cakmack & ustaoglu, 2015).

3. Civil War

The growing use of force by the government, resulted the flash point of civil war in mid-2011. The rebel bridges were formed to fight government forces and take control of large cities, towns and villages. The civil war caused over one million demise and half of the country population become refugee or migrant’s which create a communal disaster in the Syria. In 2012, the battles took over the capital, Damascus and Aleppo, the 2nd major city and economic hub of Syria. As Syrian began demonstrating across the country in March 2011 in the beginning of the Arab Spring, except some cases of ferocity, the mostly protestors were passive. The inhabitants demanded, an end to the corruption of security forces and government. The escalation of violence took place in response to the arrests and shooting of civilians immediately started by the government (Ford, 2019).

The Actors engaged in the war and crisis commit erotic ferocity and persecution and the ethnic humiliation which is linked that the raped women were pressurized to marry their rapist and also the hidden gears of the misuse. Due to the conflict mostly people survive under poverty line and children and women were the most vulnerable. A volunteer needy people joining armed groups with the incentive up to four hundred US \$ per month package to contribute to the first line in the war without the approval of their family and parents. In last few years over six thousand schools have been demolished and about 30% of the schools’ teachers and staff had been demises or wounded (Geneva International Centre for Justice, 2017).

Some other causes also backed the Syria indulging into the civil war. But the flash point of the war becomes the uprising in Arab and the rebellions insurgents. The government response to the peaceful protestors in the beginning was the primary cause of Syrian civil war. The contemporary civil struggle in Syria is no surprise to Syrians who have been familiar with civil strife all the ages of Syria’s existence and living under constant civil disturbance since its independence in 1946. When Bashar al-Assad took reign from his father in 2000, the unsuccessful Damascus Spring, which continued until August 2001, brought unsubstantiated hopes among the Syrian masses.

4. Sectarianism

Syria has gone through three distinctive stages concerning the dialectical relationship between governance and sectarianism. The first stage was from 1946 to 1963, when weak governance was accompanied with weak sectarianism; the second was from 1963 to 2010, in which weak governance was clearly associated with authoritarianism and while sectarianism played a small role at this stage, it became a crucial concept for a later period; the third stage being from 2011 onwards, wherein a combination of weak governance and strong sectarianism were provoked. (Naseef, 2020).

The rising of the protest in the beginning were non-violent and mainly comprised of the young generation without any sectarian division which only demands for the ending of government corruption, across the board accountability, socio- economic negligence and unequal distribution of the resources were the main subjects of the hatred of the protestors. Definitely, in the start the protestor deny any type of sectarian labels with mottos like “No

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Sunni-Shia, No Kurd and Arab” we want just liberty, however when the peaceful gripes have paved a way to civil war, the conflict soon took the shape of sectarianism, where Sunni majority opposition confronting with the Shia influenced regime. A vibrant polarity arose, where Sunni and Shia Alawites gradually consider each other accountable damages actually and apparently. Such conditions create a cycle of sectarian violence with more and more civilian causality on each side and the destruction increase day by day (Holf, 2013).

The Syrian protestors, the Syrian regime and the insurgent have tolerated the whole menace during crisis with no mechanism above the features of its routes. The Syrian conflict is complicated to the two coincident convergence a) religious convergence and geo-political convergence.

Syria’s misunderstandings have borne the brunt of all the emblems of the new alliances in the Syria, including the internal struggle of the Assad forces and the opposition backed from the foreign clients to buff the blazes of sectarianism and conflicting tales about who is fighting against whom. To make the announcements similarly to the previous Arabs proxies, the crisis is mingled with fake advertising and anonymity (Kargain, 2018).

Meanwhile in 2011, when demonstrations overdrawn in Syria, the Jihadist groups Hezbollah of Lebanon, backed by Iran, Iran himself and the Shia Islamist radicals, contribute the Assad regime politically and military. While the regime continued to garner Shia support, states such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey lent their support to the opposition, and this also served to shape the sectarian aspect to the crisis, the above mentioned actors connections in the Syrian conflict was provoking their goals and securing the regional paybacks and security unlike to the sectarian spirits and because the America and Russia became tangled in the conflict in terms of diplomacy and military, Syrian crisis is not just a regime versus opposition issue, relatively, it also assists as a proxy clash of regional and extra regional benefits.

5. Migration/Displacement

It was not predicted that the Syrian crisis will be initiated and yield the refugee soon in April-2011. Now that the crisis enters in the ten years after its beginning it is assessed to be almost 6.5 million displaced about two thirds of the populations goes abroad and became emigrants in the Iraq, Iran, Jordan and Lebanon and Europe. Currently the UNHCR reports 2.1 million registered Syrians in the neighboring countries and Europe, more than 24,000 Syrian registered in North Africa and 1.95 million were there in Turkey. To comprehend the entire portrait, it is essential to reflect the Syrian refugee who don’t have been the ability the ability to list themselves officially and also those who try to find illegal ways to stay abroad. The Syrian continue fleeing show that the number is uncertain.

The neighboring states along Syrian boundaries scraping to retort the basic necessities of the huge amount of displaced people and migrants which Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey horde today. These countries have been lavish despite the sensible prospects. The illegal or non-registered emigrants gradually demoted and side-lined became more helpless. Lebanon’s consistent borders cessation in the reaction of cross-border confrontation and deterrence and latest admittance time-frame put refugee life at danger. Lebanon and Jordan have a little harsh response and reject entry of refugee to Iraq from Syria and other assemblies without proper individuality documents (Fisher, 2014).

The International community courtesy rotated to Syrian crisis and the concerns of migrants initiated by the various actors in Syria. However, the Syrian refugee issue is not a new sensation. The middle-eastern states and the states outside the Middle East expected large number of refugees due to Syrian crisis in a periodical time.

6. Non-State Actors

6.1 ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria)

Islamic state of Iraq and Syria which is also known as Dash, is not only famous for terrorist activities, but also a mafia adept in misusing the long and ancient oil gloomy hub of at national and global level for oil resource and ammunition/arms smuggling. It is a traditional army forces that assembles and organize penetration that fascinated American military persons. It showed a refined intelligence-gathering which tackle a penetrate conflicting groups and quietly forces within their levels and by giving them promotions, steering them to war or grabbing the territory. It works like an advertising system which transmitting has messages and mission of new employment in the forces via electronic or social media. ISIS is also a haunted leftover of an even prior rival than al-Qaeda.

There are many intrigue concepts that, ISIS believe on cores of truth stubborn geopolitical facts to portray a universal initiative oscillated against it. The Syrian war-planes are currently flying from the same zone where U.S allegedly blitzing the targets in eastern Syria, on the other hand US think-tanks uphold that Assad regime has no future in Syria (Weiss & Hassan, 2017).

ISIS indicate himself is a tormented Sunni sectional in Iraq but in Syria thy are mistreated and offended Sunni majority, the group of resistance against a horde of opponents, the “infidel” America, the “absconder” Gulf states, the Shia autocracy in Syria, the “*rafidda*” of Iran and Baghdad.

6.2 Kurds

The Kurds, a racial and tribal community extent across, Iraq, Turkey, Iran and Syria, are struggling for liberty from their native Countries and demand for a separate land in the Middle East. Kurds have been the vigorous and accomplished warrior on the battle of Syria; Kurds are mostly engaged in military clashes in the Northern-Syria and move freely on Syrian soil. The Syrian crises is providing a feasible ground for Kurds for the creation of greater Kurdistan.

The Kurdish stance in the Syrian political sphere cannot be implicit unless observing the gigantic shadow posed by two local power axes: the KRG and the PKK. The KRG traced to the Gulf war, where a group recognized independent region in the Northern-Iraq and consequently backed with US annexation of Iraq in 2003. The major army within the KRG, *Massoud Barzani's Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP)* and *Jalal Talbani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK)* both begun to involved in combat for Kurdish rights in Iraq and Syria (Julien & Levy, 2013).

While Kurds had long-lasting accusations confront to Assad regime, they feel hesitation to be the part of the conflict. Till 2012 there were no armed rattles/clashes between the Assad forces and the Kurdish combatants. Which result the removal of governments forces from the Kurdish occupied terrain, but combat persistent on the other Kurdish sphere. That's why the Kurdish people protection units (YPG) have struggling to defend their areas against the Assad forces, Free Syrian Army (FSA) and the Jihadist groups who blatant the Kurds, o be conspirator of Jihad (Rath, 2020).

7 Foreign Intervention/Parties involved in the Syrian conflict

Foreign intervention played a key role in Syria's civil war but paradoxically it escalated struggle and extended the unending crisis. Few countries supported Syria in the war beside the ISIS and opposition but their encouragement for Assad's regime remained doubtful. Russia entered into the conflict becoming an Ally of the Assad's regime in 2015. The US supported the opposition against Assad backed by Russia (Hussain, 2019).

The participation of regional actors Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey and foreign powers U.S and Russia in the internal conflict of Syria make the situation complex in the region. After a long lasting displeasure and strains, the demonstrations against the Assad regime exaggerated in 2011 and swiftly worsened into bloody civil war. The actors engaged in the Syrian conflict has increased dramatically and the alliance and forefronts have moved frequently. Which harder the triumph of political dialogues in the Syria.

7.1 Saudi Arabia

While the United States directs violence from outside, Iran and Saudi Arabia stir up sectarian antagonism and violence from within the region. The two regional heavyweights are deeply engaged in endless competitions for regional preeminence, power, and influence. They are fighting proxy wars or intervening directly in countries like Iraq, Syria, and Yemen to further their respective interests. Both Iran and Saudi Arabia are diehard supporters of their sectarian co-religionists across the Middle East region; they also domestically suppress the opposite sectarian group in their respective states. In external relations, Saudi Arabia, being supported by other Sunni states, often collaborates with Iran's rival, to severely downgrade Iranian influence throughout the region, while Iran relies on its regional Shia allies, especially in Iraq and Lebanon, to thwart combined Saudi anti-Iran attempts (Nuruzzaman, 2019).

The ongoing tensions between Saudi Arabia and Syria, the former depicted the policy anticipated to understanding the Assad governments within Syria borders. Saudi Arabia engaged its impact on the resistance actors in Damascus, Beirut and in the Middle Eastern region. Due to Saudi engagement in Syrian conflict and warm gesture, first time after a long time Lebanese officials approved the entry of the opposition of the Assad regime, including those who had led the armed revolt against Hafiz-al-Assad.

7.2 Turkey

Turkey's attitude regarding the protests was sensible, moral and principled. Turkey perusing that the Assad government will hear that the protestor's demands confidently and thus focus on a normative beginning. This was the time where Turkey and Syria policy corresponded with the slant of U.S and other Western powers. Turkey deny the response of Egypt and Libya to the protestors, and assumed more pivotal and anticipatory position towards the famous Arab uprising in Syria, during this time Turkey foreign policy was evidently reliable and morally sympathetic (Ustaoglu & Cakmack, 2015).

However Turkey is worried, insecurity in Syria is the sole foreign policy testfronting Turkey today. The Syria is also worrying about the political role of and activities of Kurdish in Syria. The sustained struggle threatens regional peace and stability, and as the war not come to an end it will produce more refugee and humanitarian crisis and create insecurity to the neighboring countries. The drift of refugees has overwrought Turkey's dogmatic, communal as well as economic traits.

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Enlargements in Syria have both subsidized to improving an imbedded race between Turkey and Iran. The Turkey stance is mainly focus on the overthrowing of Assad regime, meanwhile the objective of Turkish policy is the creating no-fly space, buffer zone or a safe-corridor. The Turkey aim was to stop the drift of refugee from Syria to Turkey and to settle them inside the Syria and also to work for cause of downfall of Assad regime (Gevorgyan, 2019).

Turkey have been a big shared in the aftermath of Syrian crisis as of two major causes; Firstly, the incursion of migrants to the Turkey from Syria, Secondly the Kurdish concern and hint of the crisis. Syria crisis has been revived the Kurdish issue, Turkey is watching carefully and focus on the cross-border effects.

7.3 Iran

The presence of Iran in the Syrian conflict and backing the Assad regime politically, security and military support not only linked fraternity drive, nor on the basis of Sectarian division or combined cooperative accords between them. Iran had been enormous self interest in the Syrian crisis, therefore from the beginning of the Arab spring Iran openly provide political, military and financial assistance to the Assad regime, as Iran think that the descent of Assad government will posed a threat for Iran internal security and its core interest in the region, to safeguard his interest in the region Syrian surpass the uprising in Syria and prolonged its hegemony over Syria (Tabrizi & Pantucci, 2016).

Backing the Assad regime and every thick and thin situation Iran reject any such idea of directly military intervention to the Syrian conflict as like such idea were imposed by the U.S in August 2013. As there were a dreadful liability on the Assad regime of using chemical weapons or weapons of Mass Destruction. Syrian conflict have succumbed the nuclear thriving negotiation between west and Iran which utterly touched in order to gain the compatibility of Iran nuclear arsenal. The geo-strategic relation of Iran and Syria are considered as operative, non-faltering and efficiently prominent in the Middle-Eastern region from the last 30 years. It is observed that the alliance between Syria and Iran is very persuasive and dominant actors in the strategic alliance of Middle East. As many of the observer think, that the West, and especially U.S, to assault or create some tension on the bilateral relations of the both countries, are futile. The phenomena to distinct Iran influence in Syria have become non-existing, and it is clear that the strategic ties between Iran and Syria have been advanced and irreparable (Abdalhamid, May, 2016).

7.4 Iraq

Iraq worrying that the downfall of Assad government in Syria will nurture the support of jihadist groups and upsurge the Gulf States influence in the region. Iraq is helping the Assad regime by given that political and military backing and permitting Iraqi forces to combat on grounds. The United Nation High Commissioner for Refugee (UNHCR) 2017 report estimates that about 2,256,000 Iraqi were displaced within the country. And also received many Syrian's refugee throughout the Syrian crisis. Internally Displaced Peoples (IDP's) matter has been a veracity for Iraq for many years, long before the outburst of the Syrian crisis.

Concerning the radicalization inclinations amid Sunni Arab, the attack of Mosul by ISIS can be taken as a key display. Accordingly, when ISIS revolved back to Iraq after its Syrian experience, in which the group fabricated its early military aptitude, a huge amount of Iraqi Sunnis had already been radicalized, or at least, they were tending for radicalization (Pirincci, 2018).

The effects of the Syrian crisis and the related developments on Iraq have been very different in comparison to the other neighboring countries. The crisis inevitably had an effect in terms of immigration and population movements. Although there was a lower rate of immigration from Syria to Iraq in comparison to the other regional countries, the problems posed by the IDPs were much deeper for Iraq than the others. This situation is closely related to the evolution of and rise in radicalization in Iraq. Hence, the incremental trend of radicalization affects all parts of the Iraqi society, who are either perpetrators or victims in this process.

7.5 Israel

Israel a key factor in the Middle Eastern politics also feels fears and insecurity from the Syrian conflict. The chemical weaponry capabilities of Syria is also disturbing Israel and its dread of rebels and jihadist groups. The ability of jihadist groups like al-Qaeda, *jabaht al-Nusra* and ISIS, to achieve such weapons was a vital factor of concern for Israel. Disassembling Syrian chemical weapons by the International community reassured Israel to some level.

Israel also have concerned about the struggle of power which create a power vacuum in Syria, this concern more threatening for Israel when ISIS captured the land from Assad control. Israel also worrying about the weapons in Syria ownership but strengthen give to Hezbollah, weapons obtained by any Jihadist group or opposition from foreign sources or any other means will encounter Israel security. Israel fearing of misusing Syrian weapons

Ullah et, al: Critical Analysis of Foreign Involvement in Syrian Crisis became threat for Israel Security and regional peace.

Israel is anxious about a possible consequence of the Syrian crisis, particularly on Jordan and Lebanon, as it may lead to the creation of another ungoverned and volatile being Israeli frontier (Kirmanj, 2014). Israel have a major part in weakening the ferocity in the region because of the persistence digging out Iran soldier from Syrian territory. Israel have comparatively cautious policy toward the Syrian crisis until 2020. Israel provide a low scale support to few Assad opponents actors near its boarder but less involvement.

7.6 Russia

The Russian stance towards the Syrian crisis is summarized with Russian clear and frank insistence on supporting the Syrian regime in its treatment with the protests despite the repressive behavior used by the regime while handling the protestors. Russia reservation about the descent of Assad government will intimidate its geo-strategic impact in the Arab region especially in Middle East, which leads the Russian doubts of dropping its military pedestals in the Middle East, adversely affects the Russian reputation in International power club, especially in the light of negative relations with the opposition and the fall of Assad's leading to the increased political exposure to Iran (Alougili & Alshawaf, 2018).

Moscow, one of the key International patrons of the Assad regime, and the persistence of the existing government is important for Russia to retaining his interest in the region. Since the beginning Russia has used twelve vetoes on Syrian issues in UNSC. Four of the vetoes stopped investigation of chemical weapons use in seven-year war of Syria. Furthermore, many other vetoes were against UN resolutions calling for sanctions against Syria, condemning Syria for war crimes, sanctions for using heavy weapons, condemning human rights violations, referring Syrian crimes into the International Criminal Court (ICC) and halting the shelling in Aleppo since 2011 (Rakhmatov, 2019).

Syrian crisis has become a watershed of sorts for Russia's foreign policy in the Middle East. It demonstrated that it was ready for an equal partnership and a new model of American-Russian interaction based on the common interests and shared ideas about the regional challenges and threats. Washington did not reciprocate. From that time on, Russia's stakes in Syrian settlement are on the regional leaders of The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Turkish Republic. Together they form a successful tripartite alliance.

7.7 United States

America attitude towards Syria since 2014 has counter-terrorism. To carryout actions against the Jihadist groups in Syria, US requisite control of northeast Syria. U.S avoid, direct military involvement in the Syrian conflict, however in 2015 U.S military intervention for the purpose to have trained and active local partner, which predominantly expert in the region, under special approval of American congress. The U.S forces will helped these local hired partners, to regain the land previously captured by the insurgents of Islamist state. In mid of 2020, nearly 600 U.S army persons remain in Syria to contribute to the native partner groups combat against Islamic state fragments (Hamud & Carla, 2020).

The trump regime has characterized the U.S policy for Syria which aims 3 main objective A) the permanent setback of the ISIS, B) A dogmatic ending to civil war, C) vanishing Iran influence in the region and removing of their force from Syria. The America and their partner in the conflict have increasingly pursued pressure on the Assad regime and contribute with Anti-Assad forces and Assad political rivals. Through these tactics and U.S and its partners tracking numerous objectives not only to deteriorate Iran influence in Syrian conflict, but also taking measures to break the Jihadist dregs in Syria and further satisfactory relation. U.S also focus to curtail the Spread of Russia influence through regional allies and local partners.

The United States has frequently claimed the exclusion of the Assad from power and support the Kurdish fighters in their war of freedom and owing the city on Manbij from ISIS control. U.S have a clear interest in the Middle East especially in Syria to counter the Iran-Russia alliance in the region, and to halt the Iranian hegemonic approach, reducing the influence of political Islam, ending ISIS safe zones, ensuring to avoid the use of chemical weapons decreasing threat to Israeli integrity and security (Ahmad, 2016).

8. Conclusion

The ongoing crisis have largely destroyed Syria. The conflict has a short and mid-term negative impacts on Syria's socio-economic and domestics order. But the worst impact is that, it is crunching down the country's domestic order and for long lasting the conflict. The large number of migrants and internally displaced peoples, challenging the governance within the region and beyond the region. The conflict also influencing the security structure of the various states along with Syria's borders and neighbors. The insurgence of various terrorist organizations intensifies the security threats of global terrorism.

As much the conflict drags, the Syrian goes toward becoming state which will not suffer only the Syrian's but the

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crisis will spread all over the region and become threats for the regional peace and stability. The actor's involved in the conflict directly or indirectly must fold away the maximum caution and flexibility, at least especially at this time in the country and in the area. The local challenges has been directly influenced by major powers supporting the states or their proxies.

The contribution of regional and global actors are severe and their implication for the regional peace and stability is enormous. It is noticeable that the instability and in-security in the region produced by the racial, ancestral and religious-sectional clashes, indulge the whole region and security dilemma, where security of one state become the insecurity of the others.

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