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## **AN ANALYSIS OF VERBAL PARALLELISM ON EMINEM CURTAIN CALLS: THE HITS ALBUM**

**Adam Rizqullah<sup>1\*</sup>, Famala Eka Sanhadi Rahayu<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1\*</sup> English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences,  
Universitas Mulawarman, Samarinda, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences,  
Universitas Mulawarman, Samarinda, Indonesia

\*Pos-el: adamrizqulaha@gmail.com

### **ABSTRACT**

Songwriters or poets have their own styles in composing literary works, often by breaking conventional rules or employing parallelism to create aesthetic value and emphasize certain messages. One of these devices is verbal parallelism. This study aims to identify the types of verbal parallelism and their functions in Eminem's *Curtain Call: The Hits* album lyrics. To conduct this study, Leech's (1969) stylistic theory and a qualitative descriptive method were applied. The findings reveal six types of verbal parallelism: anaphora, epistrophe, symplech, anadiplosis, polyptoton, and holoiteuton. Among them, anaphora is the most frequently used across the analyzed songs. His frequent use of anaphora serves to underline central ideas or criticisms. For example, in lyrics expressing trauma, or personal experiences, the repetition at the beginning of lines intensifies the message, making it more powerful and difficult to ignore. The conclusion is that Eminem employs verbal parallelism in his lyrics as a stylistic device to strengthen meaning, create rhythm, and emphasize the messages he conveys.

**Keywords:** Eminem, Leech, Rap Lyrics, Stylistics, Verbal Parallelism,

### **ABSTRAK**

*Penulis lagu atau penyair memiliki gaya tersendiri dalam menciptakan karya sastra, salah satunya dengan menggunakan perangkat stilistika seperti verbal parallelism untuk menciptakan nilai estetis dan menekankan pesan tertentu. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis verbal parallelism serta fungsinya dalam lirik lagu Eminem pada album Curtain Call: The Hits. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori stilistika Leech (1969) dengan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan terdapat enam jenis verbal parallelism, yaitu anaphora, epistrophe, symplech, anadiplosis, polyptoton, dan holoiteuton. Dari enam jenis tersebut, anaphora merupakan bentuk yang*

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paling dominan digunakan pada lagu-lagu dalam album yang dianalisis. Penggunaan anaphora secara berulang berfungsi untuk menekankan ide atau kritik utama. Misalnya, dalam lirik yang mengekspresikan trauma, atau pengalaman pribadi, pengulangan di awal baris memperkuat pesan sehingga lebih kuat dan sulit untuk diabaikan. Kesimpulannya, Eminem menggunakan verbal parallelism dalam liriknya sebagai perangkat stilistika untuk memperkuat makna, menciptakan ritme, serta menegaskan pesan yang ingin disampaikan.

**Kata kunci:** Eminem, Leech, Lirik lagu Rap, Stilistika, Verbal Parallelism,

## A. INTRODUCTION

Language in song lyrics functions as more than a medium of artistic expression—it shapes how messages are conveyed and perceived by listeners. Among various stylistic techniques used by songwriters, verbal parallelism plays a crucial role in creating rhythm, emphasis, and emotional resonance. Meaningful lyrics are essential to enhance the listener’s experience. In the case of Eminem, his lyrical style demonstrates unique characteristics, particularly through the use of stylistic devices such as verbal parallelism, which serves both aesthetic and communicative purposes. Verbal parallelism itself consists of several forms that emphasize repetition in grammatical structures, making it a significant stylistic feature in both literature and music.

Style in literature refers to the distinctive way an author uses language through word choice, sentence structure, figurative expressions, and textual arrangement to create mood, imagery, and meaning. It represents how writers portray events, ideas, or emotions. In this context, verbal parallelism is particularly significant, as it involves the repetition of similar grammatical patterns to create rhythm, emphasis, and coherence. Parallelism can be found not only in literature but also in everyday speech, enhancing balance and persuasiveness in communication.

Parallelism refers to the repeated and balanced use of similar words, phrases, or clauses that follow a specific grammatical or syntactical pattern. In literary works, parallelism functions as a stylistic device to clarify meaning, highlight ideas of equal importance, and create coherence within the text. When applied effectively, parallelism provides rhythm, aesthetic value, and persuasive force, making it an essential tool in both literature and music.

Several previous studies have examined verbal parallelism and stylistic devices in different contexts. Fitriyanti (2017) analyzed Michelle Obama’s campaign speech and identified seven types of verbal parallelism based on Leech’s (1969) theory, showing how repetition strengthens the delivery of persuasive messages. Meanwhile, Sofyansyah (2022) conducted a stylistic

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analysis of *Distorted Harmony's Chain Reaction* album, focusing on morphological repetition through Arthur Quinn's theory. Although both studies provide valuable insights into stylistic repetition, they differ from the present research in two key aspects: object and focus. Fitriyanti examined speech, while Sofyansyah studied song lyrics using a different theoretical framework. In contrast, this study applies Leech's (1969) theory specifically to Eminem's rap lyrics, aiming to uncover how verbal parallelism functions within a musical and poetic context.

In this study, the writer is interested in analyzing Eminem's songs through stylistic analysis, with the focus on verbal parallelism found in the lyrics of *Curtain Call: The Hits* album. The writer chose Eminem's work as the object of analysis because he is one of the most influential rappers whose lyrics are recognized for their complexity, creativity, and emotional depth. The *Curtain Call: The Hits* album represents Eminem's most popular songs, many of which reflect personal struggles, social issues, and self-expression. These themes are conveyed through his distinctive lyrical style, where the use of parallel structures plays an essential role in reinforcing meaning, rhythm, and persuasiveness in the songs.

While verbal parallelism has been widely recognized for its stylistic and rhetorical functions in literature, its role within song lyrics, particularly in contemporary rap music, has received comparatively little attention. Eminem's works, which blend poetic craft with social and personal themes, provide a rich ground for exploring how this linguistic feature operates within musical expression. Therefore, the objective of this research is to identify the types of verbal parallelism that occur in the lyrics of Eminem's *Curtain Call: The Hits* album. It is expected that the findings of this study can inspire other researchers to conduct further stylistic analyses of different literary or musical works, particularly focusing on verbal parallelism as a significant stylistic device

## B. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Stylistics

Stylistics is a branch of linguistics that studies style and the use of language in literary and non-literary texts. Derived from the term style, stylistics examines how expression, diction, syntax, figurative language, and rhetorical devices create meaning and aesthetic effect (Leech, 1969; Leech & Short, 1981). This field not only analyzes the linguistic features of a text but also explores the author's creative intentions, cultural influences, and the interplay between form and content. By applying linguistic approaches, stylistics provides insight into tone, mood, and expressive choices that shape communication, making it a valuable tool for analyzing poetry, prose, speeches, advertisements, and song lyrics

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## 2. Verbal Parallelism

According to Leech (1969), verbal parallelism refers to the deliberate repetition of similar grammatical structures or patterns in equivalent positions within sentences or clauses. This stylistic device creates balance, rhythm, and emphasis in language. Leech (1969) categorizes verbal parallelism into eight types: anaphora, epistrophe, symploce, anadiplosis, epanalepsis, antistrophe, polyptoton, and homoioteleuton.

### a. Anaphora

Anaphora is a rhetorical device in which a word or phrase is deliberately repeated at the beginning of successive clauses, phrases, or sentences. Its function is to emphasize ideas, reinforce meaning, and create rhythm or lyrical effect. Unlike general repetition that can occur anywhere in a text, anaphora specifically occurs at the start of consecutive structures, making it an effective stylistic technique in speeches, poetry, prose, and song lyrics.

Example: *"Don't know much about history, don't know much biology" Wonderful World by Sam Cooke*

In this example, Sam Cooke's repetition of the phrase "don't know much" at the beginning of successive lines establishes a rhythmic pattern, illustrating the use of anaphora

### b. Epistrophe

Epistrophe is a rhetorical device where a word or phrase is repeated at the end of successive clauses or sentences. This deliberate repetition emphasizes key ideas, creates rhythm, and enhances the emotional impact of the text. Commonly used in speeches, literature, and even daily conversation, epistrophe helps make expressions more persuasive, memorable, and stylistically effective.

*"She takes just like a woman, And she aches just like a woman" Just Like a Woman by Bob Dylan*

In this example, Bob Dylan uses the phrase "just like a woman" that is repeated at the end of each line. It is the counterpart to anaphora, where repetition occurs at the beginning of phrases.

### c. Symploce

Symploce is a form of verbal parallelism that combines anaphora and epistrophe, in which a word or phrase is repeated at both the beginning and the end of successive clauses or sentences. symploce not only highlights the central message but also enhances the memorability and persuasive effect of the text, making it effective in speeches, literature, and song lyrics.

*"I was shooting for the stars, I was aiming at the stars" Jupiter 5 by Infadels*

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In the example above, the phrase "I was" is repeated at the beginning of each line, and "the stars" appears at the end of both. This is an example where the same exact words are used in both lines.

### d. Anadiplosis

Anadiplosis is a type of verbal parallelism in which the final word or phrase of one clause or sentence is repeated at the beginning of the following clause or sentence. anadiplosis emphasizes meaning, builds rhythm, and often produces a climactic or persuasive effect in speeches, literature, and song lyrics.

*"All you need is love, love is all you need" All You Need is Love* by The Beatles

Here, the word "love" is repeated from the end of the first sentence to the beginning of the next. In this sequence, each clauses begins with the word that ended the previous clauses, reinforcing the connection between the ideas. Thus creating an anadiplosis.

### e. Epanalepsis

Epanalepsis is a type of verbal parallelism in which the same word or phrase appears both at the beginning and at the end of a clause or sentence. By repeating the initial element at the end, epanalepsis reinforces the central idea, adds rhythm, and enhances memorability, making it effective in poetry, speeches, and song lyrics.

*"Come to me, run to me, come to me now" Christmas in Prison* by John Prine

The phrase "come to me" is repeated at the beginning and the end of the sentence. This creates a circular, rhythmic pattern that captures the listener's attention and conveys a sense of emotional intensity.

### f. Antistrophe

Antistrophe is a form of verbal parallelism in which a word or phrase is repeated at the end of successive clauses or sentences. By placing emphasis on the sentence endings, antistrophe enhances memorability, strengthens persuasive effect, and adds stylistic elegance to speeches, literature, and song lyrics.

*"Cause is you liked it then you shoulda put a ring on it, if you liked it then you shoulda put a ring on it" Single Ladies (Put a Ring on It)* by Beyonce

The phrase "put a ring on it" is repeated several times at the end of phrases. This created a rhythm. It is similar to epistrophe, but while epistrophe involves repetition at the end of successive phrases, antistrophe specifically involves repetition at the end of successive lines of verse.

### g. Polyptoton

Polypotton is a form of verbal parallelism in which the same word is repeated in different grammatical forms or variations within a sentence or clause. This stylistic device highlights the flexibility of a word's meaning while maintaining a sense of unity.

*"Path to guide **our** darkness, every choice **we** make." Every Time She Smiles*" by Distorted Harmony

In this example, the words "our" and "we" are different grammatical forms of the same root word. Polypotton is often employed for stylistic effect, emphasizing the connection between the action and its consequence.

### h. Homoiteleton

Homoiteleton is a form of verbal parallelism in which two or more words, clauses, or lines share similar endings. This repetition of word endings or sounds produces rhythm and phonological harmony, giving the text a lyrical and memorable quality.

*"That's why darling it's incredible, that someone so unforgettable"*  
*Unforgettable* by Nat King Cole

In these lines, the repetition of the "-ble" ending in "incredible," and "unforgettable". This repetition creates a rhythmic and poetic effect, or to emphasize certain sounds or ideas within a sentence. Thus creating a homoiteleton.

## 3. Song Lyrics

Listening to music is an enjoyable activity that offers emotional expression, such as joy, sadness, or discomfort. Songs, as a central element of music, are present in every culture and serve various purposes. According to Shamdama and Suleiman in Akporobaro (2006), songs are often rich in wordplay, rhythm, and melody. An important part of a song is the lyric, which functions like a short poem expressing strong emotions, thoughts, or perceptions of the speaker. Because song lyrics frequently employ repetition, parallel structures, and balanced phrasing to create rhythm and emphasis, they provide an ideal medium for examining verbal parallelism.

## C. METHODS

### 1. Research Design

Research design provides the framework for conducting a study in accordance with its objectives, data collection, analysis, and presentation of findings (Creswell, 2014). This study applies a qualitative descriptive method, which produces descriptive data and interprets the findings in the form of written or spoken words (Merriam, 1998). Since the data consist of Eminem's song lyrics from *Curtain Call: The Hits*, which contain various types of verbal parallelism,

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this method is considered appropriate to identify and analyze the stylistic features found in the texts.

## 2. Data and Data Source

The data source in the study would be the Eminem's album "Curtain Calls: The Hits Album" which consist Eminem famous song such as "My Name Is", "Lose Yourself", "Mockingbird", "The Real Slim Shady", "The Way I Am", "Stan", "Shake That", "Sing For The Moment", "Without Me", "Like Toy Soldier", "Cleanin' Out My Closet", "Just Lose It", "When I'm Gone" However, certain tracks from the album, such as "Intro" and "Guilty Conscience," are excluded from the data source for this study, because they do not demonstrate rhetorical patterns such as repetition and structural elements which are essential for a focused analysis of verbal parallelism in Eminem's lyrics. The data in this research are in the forms of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences in which verbal parallelism is used by Eminem in his song on the album.

## 3. Research Instrument

A research instrument refers to the procedures, devices, or tools used by a researcher to collect data and ensure the validity or reliability of the analysis (Zohrabi, 2013). In this study, the researcher functions as the primary instrument by directly observing and analyzing the lyrics. The data were obtained from genius.com, a widely used and reliable website for accessing song lyrics, including those in Eminem's *Curtain Call: The Hits album*.

## 4. Data Collection Technique

The first step, the writer described all of the data obtained from the documentation. Seconds, the writer reads and observes the text, and then classifies it based on the theory that was designed. Third, the writer analyzed the verbal parallelism of the song.

## 5. Data Analysis Technique

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), data analysis consists of three concurrent activities: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In this study, their framework was applied to analyze *Eminem's Curtain Call: The Hits album* song lyrics.

### a. Data Reduction

Data reduction involves selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming raw data into meaningful information. However, in this study, no reduction was carried out because the data are in the form of song lyrics, which are already complete, structured, and serve as the main source of analysis. Therefore, the

researcher only made notes and directly analyzed the lyrics to describe the real conditions and interpret their meaning.

### b. Data Display

Miles and Huberman emphasize the importance of organizing and compressing data into clear displays such as tables, charts, or diagrams to facilitate interpretation. In this study, the researcher presented the data in an organized manner and analyzed them using Leech's (1969) theory of verbal parallelism.

### c. Conclusion Drawing

The final step of Miles and Huberman's framework is conclusion drawing and verification. In this stage, the researcher interprets the findings by analyzing the types of verbal parallelism and their functions in Eminem's *Curtain Call: The Hits album*. The conclusions are presented as propositions and verified to ensure validity, reflecting both the stylistic features and the overall messages conveyed through the lyrics.

## D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Findings

The analysis of Eminem's *Curtain Call: The Hits* album song lyrics reveals a nuanced application of verbal parallelism as a stylistic strategy. Referring to Leech's (1969) classification of verbal parallelism, six types were identified across the data: anaphora, epistrophe, symploce, anadiplosis, polyptoton, and homoiteleton. The result presented the findings on the types of verbal parallelism used in Eminem *Curtain Call: The Hits* album song lyrics in below.

#### a. Anaphora

**“My girlfriend's pregnant too, I'm 'bout to be a father, My girlfriend's jealous 'cause I talk about you 24/7” Stan by Eminem**

The lines “My girlfriend's pregnant too, I'm 'bout to be a father, My girlfriend's jealous 'cause I talk about you 24/7” from Stan illustrate the destructive consequences of excessive idolization. The first line marks a crucial turning point in Stanley's personal life, yet this responsibility is overshadowed by his obsessive focus on Eminem. The repetition of the phrase “My girlfriend's” at the beginning of successive lines represents an example of **anaphora**, by repeating those words emphasizes the central role of the girlfriend in the narrative. these lines highlight how adoration and excessive admiration can warp priorities, harm relationships, and showcase the impacts of obsessive fan culture

#### b. Epistrophe

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**“Now, this looks like a job for me, So, everybody, just follow me, Feel the tension soon as someone mentions me, A nuisance, who sent? You sent for me?” *Without Me* by Eminem**

In this line from *Without Me*, Eminem presents himself as an essential figure within the rap industry. The lines “Now, this looks like a job for me / So, everybody, just follow me” emphasize his claim to be the one capable of reenergizing the music scene, while also positioning himself as a leader who commands attention. The phrase “Feel the tension soon as someone mentions me / A nuisance, who sent? You sent for me?” highlights his controversial presence, suggesting that even the mere mention of his name provokes public reaction. Moreover, the repetition of the word “me” at the end of successive clauses serves as an example of epistrophe, which reinforces his centrality in the discourse and creates a strong rhythmic emphasis. Through this stylistic device, Eminem underscores his indispensability while simultaneously embracing his identity as a provocative cultural disruptor.

**c. Symploce**

**“And I am whatever you say I am” *The Way I Am* by Eminem**

The phrase “I am” is repeated at both the beginning and the end of the sentence. The repetition of these words reflects that Eminem is frustrated that people judge him based on media and public opinion, rather than his true reality. But this is also a form of satire that Eminem chooses to let whatever other people say as a form of resistance.

**d. Anadiplosis**

**“Guess who’s back, back again” *Just Lose It* by Eminem**

In the lyric “Guess who’s back, back again”, Eminem has a meaning as a form of reintroducing himself after a long absence. And the repetition of the word back serves as an affirmation of Eminem’s return to the world of music and confirms his presence in popular culture and showing that his music remains relevant and impactful despite facing media criticism.

**e. Polypoton**

**“His palms are sweaty, knees weak, arms are heavy, He opens his mouth, but the words won’t come out, His soul’s escaping through this hole that is gaping, He goes home and barely knows his own daughter” *Lose Yourself* by Eminem**

These lines from “*Lose Yourself*” exemplify Eminem’s depiction of anxiety and the psychological burden of opportunity. So in the lyrics, Eminem tells about emotional pressure and the tremendous psychological impact, stage anxiety with symptoms such as sweaty palms and weak knees, and fear when words cannot

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come out at important moments. In the phrase "His soul's escaping through this hole that is gaping," it tells about the great feeling of losing control of himself when under pressure. and in the last lyrics, "He goes home and barely knows his own daughter" reveals a personal side, that the struggle to pursue dreams has an impact on his family relationships too. The repeated use of the pronouns "he" and "his", even though the words differ grammatically, they share the same root and refer to the same subject.

### f. Homoiteuton

#### **"When it whirls, when it twirls, two little beautiful girls" *Mockingbird* by Eminem**

The lyric "*When it whirls, when it twirls, two little beautiful girls*" reflects Eminem's struggle with the chaos of life while emphasizing his daughters as a source of love and purpose. The line demonstrates the use of homoiteuton, seen in the repeated *-irls* ending "*whirls,*" "*twirls,*" "*girls*". This repetition creates a rhythmic and cohesive effect, reinforcing the connection between life's turbulence and the central role of his daughters within it. The artistic choice highlights the juxtaposition of instability and innocence, underscoring Eminem's message that, amidst hardship, his children remain the most significant and cherished part of his life.

## 2. Discussion

This study analyzes the use of verbal parallelism in the lyrics of Eminem's song "Curtain Call: The Hits Album" using Leech's (1969) theory. The findings indicate that Eminem uses six of the eight forms of verbal parallelism: anaphora, epistrophe, symplece, anadiplosis, polyptoton, and homoioteuton. Meanwhile, epanalepsis and antistrophe are not found.

In general, verbal parallelism in Eminem's lyrics serves three main stylistic functions: to reinforce meaning, to create rhythm and cohesion, and to intensify emotional expression. First, verbal parallelism reinforces meaning and thematic focus. By repeating key words or grammatical structures, Eminem draws attention to central ideas such as identity, struggle, and resistance. For instance, the use of anaphora in *Stan* ("My girlfriend's pregnant too, I'm 'bout to be a father, My girlfriend's jealous...") strengthens the narrative focus on personal relationships and emotional turmoil. Similarly, in *Without Me*, the repetition of "me" at the end of lines exemplifies epistrophe, emphasizing his self-referential commentary and sense of artistic centrality. Second, verbal parallelism contributes to rhythm and structural cohesion, aligning linguistic patterns with musical beats. Devices such as homoiteuton ("when it whirls, when it twirls, two little beautiful girls" in *Mockingbird*) demonstrate how repetition of sound endings enhances musicality and flow, making the lyrics more engaging and memorable. This rhythmic effect

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bridges linguistic and musical structure, showing how stylistic repetition shapes the auditory experience of rap. Third, verbal parallelism performs an emotional and persuasive function, heightening intensity and resonance. In *Lose Yourself*, for example, the repetition of pronouns in "his palms are sweaty, knees weak, arms are heavy" (polyptoton) reflects internal anxiety and determination. Through structured repetition, Eminem channels emotional tension and emphasizes psychological states, turning his personal narrative into a universal message of perseverance. These findings demonstrate that Eminem's lyrics reflect Leech's view that stylistic choices, particularly parallelism, emphasize particular meanings and enhance expressive power. The use of highly patterned repetition suggests that rap lyrics, like poetry, rely heavily on rhetorical devices to enhance aesthetic impact. The findings of this study support previous research (e.g., Andini, 2018; Sofyansyah, 2023), which shows that verbal parallelism is commonly found in both modern literary works and song lyrics, especially in genres that emphasize rhythm and emotional intensity. Eminem's strategic use of verbal parallelism demonstrates how rap music blends poetic structure and narrative expression. Rather than simply serving as musical entertainment, his lyrics demonstrate a complex stylistic skill, consistent with broader linguistic and literary traditions.

Overall, the diverse use of parallel structures demonstrates Eminem's ability to merge linguistic artistry with musical performance. His lyrics display deliberate stylistic control, where repetition is not merely ornamental but functional, reinforcing meaning, rhythm, and emotional depth. This confirms that rap lyrics, especially Eminem's, embody the principles of stylistics described by Leech (1969), illustrating how language patterns can elevate popular music into a complex literary form.

## E. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that in *Curtain Call: The Hits Album*, Eminem uses six types of verbal parallelism: anaphora, epistrophe, symploce, anadiplosis, polyptoton, and homoioteleuton. Overall, anaphora is the most frequently occurring type, particularly in the nine songs analyzed. Meanwhile, epanalepsis and antistrophe were not found in the research data.

Each type of parallelism has its own rhetorical function. For example, anaphora emphasizes a message with repetition at the beginning of a sentence; anadiplosis strengthens the connection of ideas; epistrophe concludes a line with repetition for emphasis; homoioteleuton builds musical effect through sound similarity; polyptoton exhibits variation in grammatical form; and symploce combines initial and final repetition to create structural balance.

Overall, these results indicate that Eminem consistently relies on structured repetition to build expressive power in his lyrics. The dominance of anaphora demonstrates Eminem's tendency to emphasize the main idea in each song,

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consistent with Leech's (1969) theory. This finding confirms that rap, especially Eminem's work, is not only of entertainment value but also contains stylistic richness that is important in the study of language and literature.

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