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THE MASONIC WORD: TYPES AND FUNCTIONS

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In the sources that guide the Masons, and in the sources that they produce themselves, the term "Word" dominates in the meaning of a "text, an idea or a communicative unit". This determines the importance of the research. Its purpose is to identify the characteristics of the perception of the Word by the Masons, that is, to discover the typology of the unit and its functions. To achieve the goal, the methods of semantic, contextual and communicative analysis were used, allowing in their totality to propose, prove and formulate a holistic perception of a structurally complex unit. The main results of the study include the following. Firstly, the authors established the typology of the word: the Word of God, the Lost Word, the Master's Word, the Mason's Word, the Poetic Word. Secondly, the functions of the Word were determined: identifying, conspiratorial, magical, creative, enlightening. Thirdly, it was stated that the Word in the perception of the Freemasons became an ideal, an object and a tool. At the same time, the instrumental function, that is, one's own practice in the framework of the real world, implied a mystical desire for an ideal, that is, the Word of God, and rational and mystical knowledge of an object, that is, the Lost Word.

В тех источниках, на которые ориентируются масоны и которые продуцируют они сами, безусловно, доминирует понимание термина «слово» в значении «текст, идея, коммуникативная единица». Этим определяется важность темы исследования. Его цель – выявление характеристик восприятия слова масонами, то есть обнаружение типологии использования единицы и ее функций. Для реализации цели были использованы методы семантического, контекстного и коммуникативного анализа, позволяющие в совокупности предложить, доказать и сформулировать целостное восприятие структурно сложной единицы. В результате исследования, во-первых, обнаружена типология слова: божественное слово, потерянное слово, слово мастера масона, слово масона и поэтическое слово. Во-вторых, выявлены функции слова: идентифицирующая, конспирологическая, магическая, креативная, просветительская. В-третьих, установлено, что слово в восприятии масонов становилось идеалом, объектом и инструментом. При этом реализация инструментальной функции, то есть собственная практика в рамках реального мира, предполагает мистическое стремление к идеалу – божественному слову – и рациональное и мистическое одновременно познание объекта – потерянного слова.

Keywords: masons, masonic word, perception, semantics, differentiation, typology, functions.

Ключевые слова: масоны, масонское слово, восприятие, семантика, дифференциация, типология, функции.



Introduction

In the Masonic linguistic picture of the world, the word "Word" is consistently used in the invariant meaning "integral communicative unit, statement, text". Below come a few examples.

1. In the preface to his book, J. S. Nagy presents it to the reader in this way: "The Word before you is what I wish I had been given when I was Raised" [20, p. iv].

2. The fifth day of the creation of the world is described by the word, which is a phrase: "When the word was given, 'let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life,' the ocean swelled with the accumulation of its new inhabitants..." [21, p. 36].

This is connected, first of all, with the ancient archaic and biblical perception of the lexeme Word. In its content, it was identical with the idea and, in fact, was the nomination of a complete communicative unit. And such a unit, neither in modern nor in ancient ideas, can be reduced to a word as a set of graphemes restricted from two sides by spaces. It is important to remember that the word in the meaning "the unit of the lexical level of the language" arose much later than the word in the meaning of a text, an idea, a communicative unit. In those sources that the Masons are directed at and in those sources that they produce, it is the second understanding of the word that undoubtedly dominates.

The realizations of this meaning, if one follows the priority usage, are represented by the following types of words:

- 1) The Word of God – "the word coming from the deity".
- 2) The Lost Word – "the quintessence of all knowledge of the world".
- 3) The Master's Word – "the substitute word of the divine word".
- 4) The Mason's Word – "the word coming from a Mason".
- 5) The Poetic Word – "the word in the in a fiction text".

It is necessary to emphasize that the contexts of using all five of the listed units indicate that they are in a relationship which is much more complex than a simple polysemy or homonymy. On the one hand, they can be considered as the polysemy or homonymy of the genus-species type. On the other hand, they can be perceived as a single integral unit, which, depending on the context, actualizes one or another shade of its meaning. The cases of the free variation of these units in the context suggest that, with sufficiently precise detail, they may be identical. That is, one is dealing with a multifaceted semantic complex, which can be characterized as solidly separate or separately solid, depending on the point of view from which it is analyzed.

The authors are aware of the fact that with all the hermeticity of Freemasonry over the centuries, there existed, arose and even died various directions, which were sometimes conflicting with each other. Their interpretations of the basic terms and concepts could cause slight contentions or even significant disagreements. The confessional environment that differed significantly in dissimilar countries, the tradition with which one or another direction of Freemasonry identified itself and the language spoken and written by specific Masons could have had their influence.



But at the same time, the authors consider it necessary to declare and conduct a pan-chronic approach to the problem and use the analyzed material outside the chronological scale and without taking into account the Rites that existed in Freemasonry. This allows relying simultaneously on the sources of the early period of Freemasonry and appealing to its modern practices. The authors consider it necessary to emphasize the immutability of Masonic knowledge and Masonic practice, which should not be confused with the declarations of its "validity".

Freemasonry, for the most part, is the bearer of a single and unchanging picture of the world, and the concept of "word" studied in the article also has characteristics that have not been affected by circumstances and natural evolution over the centuries.

The authors understand the complexity of the stated topic and consciously seek to generalization and the inevitable partial simplification of the problem statement, which is necessary to identify the essentially important differential characteristics of the concept chosen for analysis.

The Types of Words

1. The Word of God. The high frequency of using the phrase "the Word of God" by various authors in various texts comes down to the stable formula "God creates the Universe with the Word and its local manifestations." The use of verbs of speech indicates that all the words of God are perceived as magical performatives. The formula duplicates the semantics of the beginning of the 1st chapter of the Gospel of John, is a projection of the primary importance of this position for the masons and remains relevant to them until today. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning [6]. It must be observed that "the Word" is used in the theological sense to convey to the mind the idea of "that Grand Being Who is the sole author of our existence... as well as the most clear and perfect elucidation of His power and attributes that the human mind is capable of receiving" [18].

The Word acquires a slightly different meaning in the solar myth of Hiram, an excerpt from which is given in the book of Papus [2]: "The Sun during the summer solstice excites the song of rebirth for everyone, and therefore Hiram, representing the Sun, has the legal right to give him the sacred word, that is Life". The Masonic symbol of the divine word is the candlestick, especially with seven branches. It is mentioned by G. Oliver: "The golden candlestick was a type of the word of God, or preaching" [21, p. 355]. A.G. Mackey [18] describes the candlestick like this: "...This candlestick, the symbol of the spirit of the Lord and the light of his countenance shining upon us through his eyes beholding and encouraging us in the noble and glorious work of fitting ourselves as living stones for the spiritual building which is to be our eternal dwelling place..."

2. The Lost Word. Masonic literature is replete with references to the Word of God and how it was lost. There are many variants of the myths of the Lost Word, but the main idea, retold in catechisms, is approximately as follows:



In the Building of Solomon's Temple Hiram was Master-Mason, and at high 12 at Noon, when the Men was gone to refresh themselves, as was his usual Custom, he came to survey the Works, and when he was enter'd into the Temple, there were Three Ruffians, suppos'd to be Three Fellow-Crafts, planted themselves at the Three Entrances of the Temple, and when he came out, one demanded the Master's Word of him, and he reply'd he did not receive it in such a manner, but Time and a little Patience would bring him to it. He, not satisfied with that Answer, gave him a Blow, which made him reel; he went to the other Gate, where being accosted in the same manner, and making the same Reply, he received a greater Blow, and at the third his Quietus [24].

W.L. Whilmhurst is sure that it is not only the calamity occurred while erecting a building in an eastern town; it is a moral disaster for universal humanity. The death of Hiram means that the faculty of Supreme Wisdom and Divine Truth, which are personified as Hiram, has been cut off from people. "Owing to that disaster mankind is here to-day in this world of imperfect knowledge, of limited faculties, of chequered happiness, of perpetual toil, of death and frequent bitterness and pain" [29, p. 39]. Freemasons labor in their Lodges to make themselves a perfect building, working hopefully that when the house of their earthly tabernacle is finished, the Lost Word of Divine Truth will at last be discovered [18].

For now the mason should be content with the substitute word, the Master's word. It permits him to work as a Master Mason until "the personnel of the Heavenly Lodge has been completed by raising of all the sons of men" [5, p. 36].

3. The Master's Word. The Master's Word is considered a special word that one may obtain only after one is considered worthy of earning it. It can only be shared under specific conditions. The third-degree ritual places the main emphasis on the stage of ritual death. While the initiate is being led through the lodge blindfolded, three Brethren accost him, strike him on the head and chest, and knock him down. After this they tell him the Hiram legend. This ritual often causes such terror or loathing that the candidate immediately runs out of the lodge. As an alternative, some lodges place a Brother on the floor with his face covered in blood, and then have the candidate take his place. The Brethren teach the candidate the secret Master's word while lifting him from the floor and embracing him – hence the phrasing that one is "raised" a Master [8, p. 77].

The Master's Word means "chief or principal" word, as well as "universal or primitive" word [14, p. 137]. Masons travel East in search of instruction and West to propagate the knowledge they have gained. This suggests that the Master Mason has changed his orientation and started his westward journey. It is a journey involving the teaching and charitable nurturing of those who follow – with all the obligations that implies [14, p. 243].

I: How do I know all this to be so?

R: Am I known to you as a Master Mason?

I: I know you to be as such.

R: Then you have the Word of a Master Mason that this be all true [20, p. 55].



4. The Mason's Word. The Mason's Word is much more than just a word. It is also a secret sign passed from hand to hand, thanks to which Masons recognize and become familiar with each other. It can also be a meaningful absence of a sign, where it should be [25]. The letter of 1697, quoted Bro. D. Knoop, states that this signal is "as old as since Babel, when they could not understand one another and they conversed by signs. Others would have it no older than Solomon. However it is, he that hath it will bring his brother mason to him without calling to him or your perceiving of the signe" [17].

Some people believed that "masons identified each other by taking up some posture which was not eccentric enough to be noticed by anyone except a fellow mason, who would know what to look for" [28, p. 131]. "The form of giving the mason word" is a series of instructions to those admitting "the person to take the word", and indicates in a general way what was to be said to him and what he was to say. After he had taken an oath of secrecy, in which he swore not to reveal by word or writing any part of what he should see or hear, nor to draw it with the point of a sword, or any other instrument, upon the snow or sand, he was to go out with the youngest mason from whom he was to learn "the signe and the postures and words of his entrie" [17].

In one of the first catechisms "A Mason's Examination" (1723), the Entered Apprentice ceremony is described in the following way:

- (8) Entrusting by rotational whisper.
- (9) He puts "his Face in due Order" to receive the word.
- (10) He receives the word maughbin.
- (11) He recites the Rhyme.
- (12) The Master replies in Rhyme [11, p. 62].

Then Master takes some whisky and water in his hand and pours it on the head of the newly made apprentice. To confirm it, D.C. Smith refers to the Lodge minutes of 22nd January, 1741 and surmises there is the likelihood that the practice goes back to operative days [26, p. 101].

It should be noted that masonic rituals of identification and initiation of are also called the Mason's Word. D. Stevenson [28, p. 136] explains it as a consequence of post-Reformation protestant influence. The new Calvinist church in Scotland believed that the only reliable guide to truth lay in the Bible, often called the Word. This was carried further in the Wisdom of Solomon: "He made all things by his Word, and His Word killed unbelievers". Therefore, by naming their rituals the Mason's Word the Masons brought strong associations with ultimate truth and mysterious power.

5. The Poetic Word. Realized in creative practice, the desire of the Masons or the nature of their work with the word can be perceived as attempts to bring their Poetic Word to the divine word in the degree and possibility of influence on the world. This means that they wanted to endow it with the same measure of transformative power, to find such artistic manifestations that would affect the world, transform it only with verbal energy alone. Such characteristics include the understanding of the Poetic Word as a category external for the author, as the product of external influence on him, the result of the exposure to higher forces.



The category of the author is thus transformed into the category of an information translator who is endowed with a certain will and occupies a position between two worlds (the highest and the real) or belongs to both worlds at the same time. This characteristic is identical to the characteristic of the true mason: "Man in this chain is a being connecting spiritual with material; he is the last of the spirits and the first of the material beings" [4, p. 156].

Freemasonry is considered to be a school of virtue. Therefore, for masonic authors, correct speech means not only skillful mastery of the poetic word; first of all, it is the purity of thoughts, freedom from the vice of personal criticism and an open channel for the wisdom of the soul.

On a thematic plane, the Poetic Word is a text which content is consciously oriented by the author on the value system of Freemasonry. Its author, as a rule, is a Mason, but the text can be very broadly addressed. The main linguistic characteristic of the Poetic Word is its non-egocentricity. The reported information is presented as existing outside the categories of authorship, time and place, that is, it is placed in a non-localized, existential, metaphysical plane.

The Functions of the Word

1. The Identifying Function. S.B. Morris [19] connects the emergence of the Masonic word precisely with its identifying function, that is, with the need to distinguish non-professional masons from professionals who were the members of professional associations: "During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Scotland, it became necessary to have a means of excluding cowans (that is nonunion or scab workers) from legitimate Mason's work". He assumes that the Masonic word was used as a private means of recognition in place of a union card.

This point of view does not contradict the opinion of most historians who agree that a number of basic ideas and practices of Freemasonry have their roots in stonemason's "lodges" or makeshift guilds organized on building sites in the late Middle Ages. S. Biaggetti [8, p. 27] confirms that they had secret signs or passwords to discriminate between trained masters and apprentices. J.S. Nagy [20, p. iv] speculates that for operative Masons the Master's Word was simple: "It was the ability to create a right angle so that they could use that creation to build superior work".

According to D. Stevenson [28, p. 9] between the late sixteenth century and the early eighteenth, what had been a clandestine guild of craftsmen became a popular fraternal society for learned gentlemen (non-stonemasons), who were attracted to the Mason's social fraternity, esoteric ritualism, symbolism and mythology.

Speaking about the symbolism of a long spiral staircase with three, five, seven steps or more, the Senior Deacon explains that "the five steps allude to... the five human senses which are hearing, seeing, feeling, smelling, and tasting; the three first of which, have over been highly essential among Masons: hearing, to hear the word, seeing, to see the sign, and feeling, to feel the grip, whereby one Mason may know another in the dark as well as in the light" [7, p. 48].



In this age of computer technology, masons invent new ways of identification and membership testing. The work of M. Bond and G. Danesis [10] is devoted to the description of protocols that ensure the safe exchange of information between computers and the ways of transferring them to the actual communication of people offline. In particular, the authors propose to use steganographic broadcast, interactive authentication, deniable authentication, and the Lie Channel.

2. The Conspiratorial Function. Freemasonry is recognized as a clandestine society, as it has all the characteristics inherent in such organizations. According to the classification of M. Parker [22], the first criterion is the long term of its existence; the second is that entry into the organization is marked by ritual. The third is the existence of a hierarchy and the need for initiation to move to a higher level. The fourth is the lack of information about daily activities and a surplus of information about the unusual and obscure.

Identifying the location, composition and other details of the organisation is impossible, since the information is transmitted only to its members. After the initiate was given the sign, the pose and the word of his lodge, he uttered an oath: "...to keep the keys thereof, under no less pain then having my tongue cut out under my chin, and of being buried within the flood mark, where no man shall know" [17]. The Masonic constitution prescribed that Masons should be cautious in their words and carriage, that the most penetrating stranger could not discover or find out what was not proper to be intimated. In 1798, President Adams observed that the Masonic society which possesses "the skill to know each other by marks and signs that no other person can divine" and "the power of... compelling all men... at all hours to keep a secret" <...> "may be perverted to all the ill purposes which have been suspected" [27, p. 333]. He was not the only one who came up with this idea. In the 1650s the Church of Scotland fearing that the Mason Word involved witchcraft summoned some masons before the general assembly of the church. They refused to reveal 'the Word' but suggested that the assembly should choose one of its members to be initiated and then assure the rest of the innocence of masonic secrets. No one dared to agree for fright of revealing that initiation involved some blasphemy. The inquiry was dropped [9, p. 58]. In 1822 in Russia, Freemasonry was banned by the highest rescript of Alexander I.

It is considered that in a medieval freemason's guild secrets which an apprentice could learn were connected with their trade, for example, with the designing of an arch [16, p. 87–88]. Secrets that modern freemasons keep are personal: "They are rather those secrets which we instinctively keep locked up in the recesses and safe repository of our hearts... which, by a natural instinct, we are not in the habit of communicating to any but such of our brethren and fellows" [29, p. 72].

3. The Magic Function. To a considerable extent, the masons themselves contributed to creating public opinion that they possessed magic due to their occult knowledge and powers. An example of this is the poem "Muses Thenodie" created by H. Adamson in 1638.



For what we presage is not in grosse,
For we be brethren of the Rosie Crosse:
We have the Mason Word, and second sight,
Things for to come we can foretell aright [13].

Second sight is an uncommon ability that allows people to know what is going on in a different place or what will happen in the future. The Mason word, placed next to “second sight” unequivocally says that it has a direct bearing on the gift of prophecy.

Besides, non-masons considered the Mason Word supernatural, as it involved invisible communication. It consisted in the ability to identify fellow masons secretly and at a distance, without others present knowing how it was done – or even that it was being done. Therefore, people were inclined to believe that magic was involved in it, similar to those cases when a witch summoned a spirit.

D. Stevenson [28, p. 134] describes a case that occurred in 1695 in Scotland. Andrew Mackie observed a poltergeist phenomenon in his home. In addition to him, in the house there were five ministers and nine other respected citizens, who saw objects flying and fires starting, and heard strange noises. Ward The parishioners decided that since Mackie was a mason by profession, he received the Mason word in exchange for an oath to give the devil his first child. But the parish minister found out that Mackie had no idea what it was. So, again the Mason Word was regarded as a form of devil worship.

Nowadays, the belief in the magical power of the Masonic word does not become less, and there are people who do not mind trying to discover the ancient Masonic secrets. They are offered a book written by L. M. Duckette, who admits that he is both a freemason and a magician and offers various ways of spirit evocation [15].

4. The Creative Function. The presence of creative power in the Word of God is especially strongly emphasized: “Through Him all things were made, and without Him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and that life was the light of men” [6].

In addition to fixing to a certain biblical maxim, this set of statements is the basis for the formation of a look at other types of words. It is based on the assumption: since man is a projection of divine qualities, to a certain extent, the ability to control the world with the help of a word is transferred to him. Thus, the creative power of the divine word is transferred to the human word in its various manifestations. Out from the East, a word went forth: “Open the door to all the sons of men <...> and, through the work of all the Craftsmen of the Lord, extend the temple of the Lord, and this irradiate the worlds. Sound forth the word creative, and raise the dead to life” [5, p. 7].

Freemasons perceived creative practice as one of the ways to find embodiments of the creative function of the word. It is important that these searches were also stimulated by the decrees of the masonic science, which showed a distinctly priority attitude to verbal creativity. An example of such texts are the Freemasons’ architectural works, because “central to the pro-



cess of becoming and being accepted as a freemason is the preparation, presentation and discussion of short essays or 'planks' on a predetermined topic" [23, p. 795].

The high degree of significance of literary creativity for masons is manifested in the fact that in the ladder of Blue Masonry the highest, fourteenth degree was called "poetry production" [1, p. 106]. That is, the poem production was perceived not only as an indispensable element of the spiritual perfection of the individual, but also as its finale, summing up the virtues acquired by the individual. In the symbolic staircase of the Kadosh knights two degrees were called "grammar" and "rhetoric": "The seven steps of the staircase allude to... the several liberal arts and sciences, which are grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy" [7, p. 48–49]. All this indicates the importance of any verbal creativity for the Masons.

Such a high status of creativity cannot be accidental. Probably, it is explained not only by the goals of propaganda of the merits of the order, which implies mastery of the language. It is associated with the recognition that the Poetic Word has some exclusive functions in the process of human improvement.

The next function of the word – enlightenment is directly related to it.

5. The Enlightening Function. Enlightenment, which is carried out primarily through the word, is an important part of the social role of Masons:

With it the mind is lucid and clear,
It deems the word as own gear
That'll sweep the ignorance away [3, p. 9].

F. Bailey [5, 34] ascertains that the history of humanity is imprinted in the work of the three degrees of the Blue Lodge which reveals the rhythm of the threefold work of the Past, the Present and the Future. The Entered Apprentice is supposed to educate himself to become a more enlightened person, to seek knowledge with freedom, fervency, and zeal. The Fellowcraft Mason is supposed to produce and share knowledge. The Master Mason is supposed to continue his search for wisdom and understand that "there is no greater enemy than ignorance" [29, p. 271].

The word "supposed" is used here because a Mason is free to decide himself what his journey to will be like. As C.H. Claudy says, "The lodge puts before him the bread of truth, the wine of belief, the staff of power, and sets his feet upon the path that leads to Light... but it is for him to eat and drink and travel the winding path of initiation which at long last leads to the symbolic East" [12, p. 17].

But the ultimate goal of Freemasonry is the construction of the eternal kingdom of bliss and harmony, in which the ideals of freedom, equality and fraternity will triumph among all nations of the universe. The path to it lies through the re-education and enlightenment of all people. Therefore, every Mason knows that his / her obligations include not only those within the narrow Lodge, bordered by walls of stone and brick, but those in the Great Lodge, walled only by the dome of heaven.



Of paramount importance in the process of the personality formation, the masons assigned art, that is, the poetic word.

The main Masonic work is the revival of a man who is old, fallen, sinful, forked to the soul (the master of the house) and the body (the house, the instrument of the soul). It is this function that the Masonic poetry performs, uniting the brothers who sang: 'We make up the chain, weaving hands.' Only in this way, a broken chain of nature can be restored [4, p. 156].

So, for example, in his poem "If" Rudyard Kipling expounds the most important moral principles of Masonic ethics. This poem is a whole program of a person's life, an ideal model to be guided by in everyday reality. Firstly, it is the cultivation of a sense of inner freedom, opposed to both internal and external factors. Secondly, it is the development of high moral qualities, such as patience, mercy, simplicity and honesty, and so on. That is, a poetic word in the Masonic world-view system becomes an object with a clearly defined applied plane.

Regardless of the type of the Word and the function it performs, the ability to realize the positive energy of the Word is strictly dependent on a number of characteristics that, in their summary form, are related to the peculiarities of the speaker and the process of speech production, that is how and by whom the Word is pronounced or produced. The first characteristic suggests that the process should be accompanied by spiritual work and should correspond to the nature of the individual's behavior. The second characteristic suggests that the speaker should be marked by some sign of divine selectness.

It was placed outside the framework of traditionally understood human activity, carried out within the boundaries of the material world, and placed in areas that allow connection or contact with higher forces. Relatively speaking, in moments of qualified use of a Word or in moments of inspired creative practice, a Mason could feel close to God or equal with him.

Among other things, the listed characteristics of the existence of the Word among the Masons constructed such a special cultural and linguistic space, within the framework of which any particular individual could not feel as a fully associated element if he did not turn to the Word in his creative practice. The usage of the Word showed the fact of belonging to this space; it was a necessary but not sufficient condition for being included in this environment.

In the perception of the Freemasons, the Word became an ideal, an object and an instrument. At the same time, the realization of an instrumental function, that is, one's own practice in the framework of the real world, implied a mystical desire for an ideal, that is, the Word of God, and both rational and mystical knowledge of an object, that is, the Lost Word.

In this three-component model (a real instrument, an abstract ideal and a model, all endowed with creative power) with a simultaneous implementation of the components, one can see an analogue of a three-person Christian God, which at a structural level emphasizes the connection between the Word and the Deity.



Conclusion

Summing up the analysis of the contexts of usage and evaluations of the concept Word in Masonic poetic texts, one can formulate such a definition. A Word in the perception of Masons is a real object, in its external form similar to the traditionally understood verbalized text which always has a realized or potential transformative force spreading to the highest and visible worlds. Diachronically, such a word in its highest manifestations always goes back to God and, on the other hand, leads to Him.

It correlates with the general nature of the Freemasons' activity, which is realized mainly in the Word and through the Word. An active word or verbal activity, therefore, is the main point of application of the Masons' creative energy, their main occupation and the object of aspirations, which, in turn, can be directed to solving specific local problems that are not directly related to the Word. The approach to transformational tasks as carried out mainly through the Word, with the help of the Word, thanks to the Word can be considered one of the dominants of the world perception and the ideology of the Freemasons.

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