Background to the Leadership Styles Profile By Aubyn Howard, June 2016

The developmental approach to leadership paradigms and styles

Benefits of developmental stage model approaches

There are many different approaches to profiling leaders. These can be broadly grouped into personality type approaches, behavioural style approaches and developmental approaches, each with their relative advantages and disadvantages. However, developmental approaches are more dynamic than personality and behavioural approaches in several ways. Specifically, they:

- (i) show the connection between *inner* subjective perspectives (described as paradigms, worldviews or value systems) and *outer* behavioural and relational preferences and recognisable leadership styles
- (ii) provide a dynamic view of how individuals develop over time and identity common patterns, recognisable **stages** and **transitions**
- (iii) offer a framework for moving between the dimension of *individual* leadership styles and *collective* organisational cultures
- (iv) address the *situational* context of leadership style and shows how it relates to different types of organisation, stages of organisational development and different situational challenges

Overview of the developmental model applied to leadership

I will outline the model of leadership paradigms described by Frederic Laloux in his recently published work 'Reinventing Organizations' (2014, see chapter 1.1 for a fuller treatment of this whole topic), which is based primarily upon Ken Wilber's (e.g. see Integral Psychology, 1999) and Jenny Wade's (e.g. see Changes of Mind, 1996) meta-analyses of the various models that focus on different aspects of human development (e.g. ego-identity, cognitive, moral, value systems, etc.) at individual and collective levels and are founded on validated scientific research. The research work by Clare Graves on the emergence of value systems (probing people's conception of adult full maturity) and that of Jane Loevinger on stages of development of ego-identity have provided the foundations for later adaptation to the organisational domain – Spiral Dynamics builds upon Graves' work to describe value systems in organisational terms and The Leadership Development Framework uses a language specific to the stages of leader development and associated crises of transition. Although their delineations of actual stages are slightly different, it is relatively easy to see how both these and other systems derived from unrelated original research, are all describing the same essential unfolding pattern of human development and evolution, but from slightly different perspectives.

Laloux describes seven organisational paradigms that broadly follow the emergence of human consciousness and societal worldviews over thousands of years of human history, but also mirror the developmental stages that individuals follow as they grow up and mature in adulthood (at least in potentiality). These are; **Reactive, Magic, Impulsive, Conformist, Achievement, Pluralistic** and **Evolutionary**. It may help to think of these as ways of thinking and operating in the world, which are more or less activated within an individual, group, organisational or society depending upon history, circumstance and situational factors.

Over the course of human history we can trace the initial emergence of each new manifestation of consciousness and how the prevailing paradigm has then shifted from one to the other, but even in

today's global society, there are widely different mixes and expressions of these different paradigms in different societies, organisations and people. Although an individual (organisation or society) will generally have their centre of gravity within one or other value system, they are always expressing a unique mix of more than one, as influenced by their story and personality. In addition, everyone has the capacity for all the value systems to emerge, although the way in which this happens over time will always broadly follow the primary sequence (e.g. you can't fully activate at Pluralistic until you have in some way activated at Achievement, and so on). Graves made a particular point that the emergence of value systems are responses to situational challenges to which the previous way of thinking or operating are no longer providing valid or useful solutions (akin to Einstein's quote about problems not being solved by the same level of thinking that gave rise to them in the first place). The transition from one paradigm to the next is often characterised by an inner or outer crisis of some kind, for example a crisis of meaning for an individual for whom the Achievement paradigm no longer works, or the crisis of survival for an organisation which needs to outgrow a rigid hierarchical model if it is to compete successfully with new market entrants. Turbulence, upheaval or changing circumstances has driven human progress in the past (see the work of Jared Diamond, 2007) and in the same way it is the challenges facing today's organisations that will give rise to the new evolutionary paradigm emerging through new styles of leadership, cultural orientations and organisational models. At the same time, there is never a guarantee that this will happen, at least within today's organisations and often progress follows the birth of new organisations that are more agile or adapted to present day challenges, alongside the death of the old. Ken Wilber paraphrases Max Planck when he says "the knowledge quest proceeds funeral by funeral". The history of evolution in nature is littered with long forgotten extinct species and human evolution with disappeared civilisations (and organisations) that failed to adapt and evolve in response to a crisis.

Inner and outer leadership

Let us now explore the dynamic between inner and outer aspects of leadership. This approach holds that leaders inner orientation, which is made up of *constellations* of beliefs, assumptions, motivations, mindsets and ways of thinking which we refer to as *paradigms* or *worldviews*, will broadly determine or give rise to their outer expression of leadership style, although the way in which this happens on an individual basis will be influenced by the leaders unique personality, preferences, skills, experience and so on. If we were to ask a broad mix of people working in organisations what 'leadership style' means to them, they will probably refer to styles in terms that describe their outer impact and way of operating, for example; controlling, egotistic, top-down, consensual, democratic, charismatic, motivating, encouraging, empowering, paternalistic, hierarchical and so on.

The developmental system we will outline provides a way to see the pattern behind these different outer styles and realise that there is a progression from less sophisticated styles to more sophisticated, from styles suited to simple organisational systems and challenges to those needed to deal with the complexities of today. According to the Gravesian model, alongside this progression to greater complexity, there is also a cycling between individualistic value systems and collectivistic value systems, in other words, from those that emphasise individual values to those that place greater value on teams, the whole organisation and even the wider knowledge community. At each turn of the cycle, the collective orientation is always enlarging, i.e. from tribe or group, to organisation or nation, to society or human kind.

The table below provides a quick summary of the characteristics of each paradigm and how they translate into corresponding leadership styles. Again, we are skimming the surface here and for a fuller treatment I recommend reading the first part of Frederic Laloux's book or dipping into Ken Wilber's comparative analysis (e.g. A Theory of Everything, 2000).

Leadership styles, Leadership paradigms (Laloux) and value systems (Graves/Spiral Dynamics) aligned

Leadership Styles	Leadership paradigm	Cultural orientation	Individual or collective
(outer impact) and other	(inner orientation) +	+ Organisational model	orientation and locus of
expressions	Graves thinking mode	+ Primary motivations	attention
Benevolent	Magic	Family	Collective – tribe, family or group
+	+	+ Circle	safety
Paternalistic/Maternalistic	Animistic (BO)	+ Belonging/Continuity	
Autocratic	Impulsive	Power	Individual – own needs and
+	+	+ Autocracy	wants
Egotistic/Dominating	Egocentric (CP)	+ Rewards/Respect	
Hierarchical	Conformist	Role	Collective – roles and rules
+	+	+ Hierarchy	within structures
Controlling/Processing	Absolutist (DQ)	+ Responsibility/Duty	
Enterprising	Achievement	Achievement	Individual – individual and team
+	+	+ Adapted hierarchy	performance
Rational/Driving	Multiplistic (ER)	+ Success/Winning	
Social	Pluralistic	Relationship	Collective – team and
+	+	+ Flatter hierarchy	organisational culture
Democratic/Relational	Relativistic (FS)	+ Participation/Self-expression	
Integrative	Evolutionary	Evolutionary	Individual – professional
+	+	+ Self-management	networks
Systemic/Evolutionary	Systemic (GT)	+ Learning/Freedom	
Holistic	Evolutionary	Evolutionary	Collective – global communities
+	+	+ Self-management	
Transformational/Evolutionary	Holistic (HU)	+ Transformation/Purpose	

Within each stage, there can be healthy and less than healthy expressions of leadership style, both depending upon the individual's level of psychological health and personal development, as well as the suitability of the leadership style to the organisational situation and challenges. It has been successfully argued (e.g. Manfred Kets de Vries, The Leader on the Couch, p24, (2006)) that in today's modern organisational environments (centred in the Achievement paradigm but with elements of Impulsive, Conformist and Pluralistic, according to historical, market and situational influences), that the people who rise to the top of hierarchical and competitive organisations are more likely to have some kind of personality pathology, certainly to be more self-oriented, egotistic or narcissistic, than the average person. Business folklore is littered with stories of charismatic, powerful business people who, at least on the surface have been highly successful, but around whom there has been much collateral damage in human terms. Only as the Pluralistic paradigm starts to become stronger is it more likely that genuinely empathetic, other-oriented, well-balanced, personality types are likely to become successful managers and leaders.

Full descriptions of Leadership Styles:

Benevolent – they lead as the guardian of a community. They tell stories, maintain traditions, and seek to preserve the wisdom of the past.

Autocratic – they lead decisively and from the front, they are in charge. They control power and reward loyalty. Their way is the right way.

Hierarchical – they lead by passing judgement according to a system of well defined roles and responsibilities. They follow the established right way to do things.

Enterprising – they lead by example and by creating opportunities for the team to succeed. They are driven to achieve goals. They constantly look for better ways to do things.

Social – They lead by building consensus and providing opportunities for people to grow and develop. They know there is no universally right ways to do things.

Evolutionary-Integrative – They lead by responding to situations in whatever style is needed, seeking to create synergy within the wider system. The right way is the way that works.

Evolutionary-Holistic – They lead by guiding others to be leaders and by creating the context for growth within a healthy system. They are constantly evolving a new way or path.

Dynamics of how leadership paradigms evolve

In our description above, we have left out the first worldview or paradigm, which Laloux labels Reactive, because it is rarely found overtly in todays' organisations, although echoes of humankind's evolution as small bands surviving as foragers or hunter-gatherers between 100,000 years and 20,000 years ago are still present in our deeper psyche and collective unconscious – for example within our instincts for fight or flight in response to perceived danger. In the same way all human being are deeply impacted and imprinted by the corresponding early experiences of dependent infancy, even though these first few months of life are beyond our conscious memory.

Magic-Animistic

The Magic-Animistic leadership paradigm which is expressed through a Benevolent leadership style is more obviously present in some form within organisations. The paradigm emerged in human history as part of the move towards tribal society some 20,000 years ago, and is often expressed and embedded through tribal or family like metaphors or rituals within organisations or teams, and may become reactivated at times of threat to survival of the group. The organisational model and culture associated with this paradigm does not provide fertile ground for innovation or in fact progress of any kind at all, as the underlying though form is one of the maintaining cycle, as in the cycle of the seasons and the performing of traditions passed on from generation to generation. The Magic-Animistic paradigm is most usefully found today in traditional family businesses which have remained untouched by the influence of technological progress. However, this doesn't mean that distorted expressions of associated leadership styles (e.g. patriarchal, paternalistic, materialistic) are not present in all types of organisation, usually as an consequence of psychological dysfunction of individuals who unconsciously meet unresolved psychological needs by taking up permanent parental roles beyond what is healthy in nurturing, mentoring or protecting those in their charge.

Impulsive-Egocentric

In historical terms the Impulsive-Egocentric paradigm started to emerge with chiefdoms and eventually empires between 10,000 and 5,000 years ago, and in psychological terms it represents the fully formed ego differentiating itself from parental symbiosis, and in this sense is the first truly individualistic (although very egocentric) worldview. The first Impulsive organisations appeared as small conquering armies and this still represents a powerful organisational archetype today. Although street gangs and criminal organisations today can still be quite close to this model, variations can also be found in small businesses and start-ups that are driven by the energy and ego of the founder and where 'their glue is continuous exercising of power in interpersonal relationship' (Laloux, p18). More commonly we find both healthy and dysfunctional expressions of power-oriented autocratic styles of leadership present in all types of relationship, often masquerading as more sophisticated styles (e.g. Achievement orientation – for good examples watch the Apprentice reality TV programme in the UK). From professional observation, a generous dose of autocratic leadership style, (founded on a degree of ego-narcissism or at least an inflated sense of self-worth) is very common in a typical start-up organisation and can be seen to be part of the mix in many successful small organisations. The reason might partly be that entrepreneurs need a degree of inflated self-belief to break through initial barriers and keep their business or project going against the odds. This can also be associated with very creative times for a business, but usually in support of the original business idea, innovation or purpose. Typically, such organisations arrive at a creative or innovative impasse at some point in their growth, unless the power-oriented leader is able to adapt his or her style, or has the wisdom to allow a succession of leadership to take place. This is the first crisis of organisational growth (see The Five Phases of Growth, Larry Greiner, HBR May-Jun 1998 for a different perspective on this).

Often this takes place by default at the point when business founders sell to a larger company or seek some kind of institutional investment, and whether willingly or not, the style of leadership changes and the organisational structure formalises and develops to distribute responsibility away from the power leaders and towards smaller units. Sometimes this transition process to a more formal organisational model either inadvertently kills off the original creative culture (with people leaving) or leads to conflict between the start-up founders and the new parent leadership.

Conformist-Absolutist

Here we are describing the organisational transition from Impulsive-Egocentric to Conformist-Absolutist. The historical emergence of Conformist started about 4,000 years ago, with the transition from chiefdoms to nation states and stable civilisations, and subsequent founding of the worlds' great religious traditions. This has been the prevailing organisational model ever since until the last century or two, and is still the backbone for much of what we would consider to be the establishment today – church, armed forces, government and universities for example. The Conformist-Absolutist organisational model is a significant progression from what comes before in that 'organisations can now plan for the medium and long term and they can create structures that are stable and can scale' (Laloux, p20). In order to grow, many organisations draw upon the Conformist-Absolutist paradigm by establishing clear roles, responsibilities and processes than enable this scaling. The build-up of bureaucracy, inertia and conformity that characterises this model as organisations become larger and larger (sometimes not through organic growth but by acquisition) can then become the problem. Again, this paradigm contains within it the seeds of its own destruction, or at least the death or organisations that fail to evolve beyond it in response to environmental change.

The accompanying change in leadership style is startling in its reversals away from autocratic self-orientation and opportunism – towards duty, responsibility and professional dedication. The Leadership Development Framework developed by Fisher, Rooke and Torbert (see Personal and Organisational Transformations, 2000 and Seven Transformations of Leadership, HBR April 2005) delineates two distinct leadership styles associated with this paradigm – the dutiful Diplomat, who conforms to and enforces the expected norm and the professional Expert, who is dedicated to excellence within their discipline and leads as a role model for those starting out in their profession.

Achievement-Multiplistic

The prevailing organisational and leadership paradigm in western society and certainly in business organisations, is Achievement-Multiplistic. In historical terms, this emerged in the shape of the western enlightenment something over three hundred years ago and has driven not just the explosion of scientific and technological discovery, the industrial revolution and economic growth, but also the growth and dominance of prosperous modern democratic societies. Three big breakthrough's accompany the emergence of this paradigm which inform the Enterprising style of leadership – innovation, accountability and meritocracy (Laloux, p26). In terms that we understand today, innovation really gets going with this paradigm and leadership style. Leaders operating from this paradigm can 'live in the world of possibilities, of what is not yet but could be one day'. There is no longer just one right way to do things but a multiplicity of possibilities. They challenge the status quo, always looking for better ways to do something and they are open to change, uncertainly and opportunity. Thus they challenged the morbidity and hierarchical inflexibility of Conformist-Absolutist organisations and invented departments that did not previously exist, including R&D, marketing and product development, as well as the project driven way of working that has superseded the purely process driven operating model of Conformist organisations. Most of what is consider to be good

leadership today is an expression of this paradigm and way of thinking – the Achiever leader encourages and enables teamwork, rewards and recognises performance and leads by example.

The Achievement paradigm contains within itself the seeds of new problems, and is itself now the barrier to the emergence of the next leadership paradigm. This is because it mitigates against a more multi-dimensional perspective of leadership becoming widespread (it doesn't see the point, because it is confident in its own superiority as a way of looking at the world). So the Achievement worldview and style of leadership has become part of the problem; by over-obsessing on the need for success in the short term (which feeds and is driven by the investment world); by focusing on success and winning rather than purpose; by over-emphasising the rational or cognitive in relationship to the emotional, social, spiritual and ethical dimensions of human beings; by maintaining the underlying limitations of the hierarchical system (as the hangover from the previous Conformist paradigm) and over-focusing on management – adding more and more layers of management as the answer to most problems, rather than stripping them away to release the creativity of those who are managed. There are interesting echoes here of the fault lines in our wider modern market-capitalist society, which have become increasingly apparent since the start of the global economic crisis in 2008. We are facing crises throughout business and society, from how to deliver better health services to how to respond to climate change, and increasingly people are beginning to realise that the answers to these crises may not come from the Achievement paradigm type of thinking.

If you are following this narrative, you might now be asking if there is a leadership paradigm representing a new shift in societal consciousness that addresses these issues of the prevailing Achievement paradigm. Yes there is, but before this arrives, there has been something of a diversion (albeit an essential and valuable one) – with the rapid emergence of the Pluralistic paradigm.

Pluralistic-Relativistic

The emergence of new paradigms is seemingly speeding up as part of the evolution of human consciousness, society and culture. In the last 50 years or so, the Pluralistic worldview has developed at an astonishing pace and now pervades many spheres of society (e.g. the arts, academia, not-for-profit organisations, left-wing politics, etc.). This is the emergence of postmodernism, partly in reaction to materialistic modernism, of championing the people principle as a counter-balance to the profit principle, of the human perspective as antidote to the mechanistic clunkand-grind economic progress of the Achievement paradigm. The Pluralistic-Relativistic paradigm brought three significant breakthroughs within organisations (Laloux page 32): empowerment; values driven culture; and the stakeholder perspective. These developments are now embedded in most modern large organisations, alongside (but not instead of) Achievement-Multiplistic's principles of innovation, accountability and meritocracy. The paradigm is expressed through a more democratic, social, relational and humanistic style of leadership. People are increasingly nurtured, developed and consulted by leaders. This has certainly made organisations more human places to work, and improved the experience of work for many people. There is one problem - although there are examples of value driven businesses delivering improved shareholder value, there are also examples where it hasn't and even some cases where the Pluralistic paradigm and associated leadership style has become too dominant and performance has got worse, threatening the survival of the organisation (e.g. Prudential in the early 2000's). This has contributed to distrust between Achievement-Multiplistic and Pluralistic-Relativistic leaders, to a clash of value systems between Profit and People orientations, waging away beneath the surface. The deeper problem is that despite the human tone that Pluralistic leadership style brings (listening, empowerment, engagement, 360 feedback, etc.), people still do not trust their organisations and will not bring their whole selves to their work (and therefore their full creativity and innovative edge). The fact that they need to be

empowered by leaders, engaged by the organisation and enrolled in it's purpose, means by definition that at some point they have became disempowered (through the concentration of power at the top of organisations), disengaged and alienated from a purpose that they were not involved in coming up with it in the first place.

Part of the problem is yet again, that the adherents of the Pluralistic paradigm and style of leadership do not see the whole picture, and set themselves against the excesses of the previous materialistic worldview. On one level they maintain that no ones viewpoint is more valid than anyone else's, and on another they also secretly believe that theirs is the right one. Importantly, however, despite it's inherent contradictions, by bringing the human being and our emotions back into the picture, the relativistic perspective lays the ground for the emergence a truly transformative worldview, and evidence that this is finding its way into organisational and leadership expression has started to appear.

Evolutionary-Systemic

Management writers, gurus and consultants have been proclaiming the next great leadership paradigm for some time (e.g. Richard Barrett, The New Leadership Paradigm) and largely been missing the target (typically by oversimplifying and conflating the old paradigms and by over-idealising or over-identifying with the new one). What makes Laloux's work (2014) ground breaking is that he has carried out detailed research of a dozen large organisations where the new worldview has taken shape and describes the Evolutionary paradigm and associated leadership styles based upon evidence of what he found in common. Importantly, he properly draws out the sequence of previous paradigms, and shows how each new way of thinking and operating is both built on the gains of the previous one and is also an emergent response to it's inherent limitations. evolutionary organisations can work radically differently (at once they are more effective, innovative, ecological and human to work in) to the great majority that we know and experience today. Drawing from evidence, he identities three common characteristics or principles of evolutionary organisations self-management, wholeness and evolutionary purpose. He plays with the metaphor of organizations as living systems or organisms with a purpose of their own, in contrast to the clunky and alienating machine metaphor's that identify the Achievement paradigm or the social and family metaphors that signal Pluralistic.

Laloux explores how the structures, practices, leadership styles and cultures within evolutionary organisations reflect the principles of self-management, wholeness and evolutionary purpose. He identifies the two necessary conditions for the emergence of Evolutionary organisations – a sufficient level of psychological development of the top leadership (e.g. CEO or founders), and 'enlightened' owners who are willing to embrace and trust the Evolutionary worldview of thee leaders.

The shift to an Evolutionary worldview is of a magnitude greater than any of the previous paradigm shifts we have described. It is variously called second-tier, higher-order or meta-something for this reason. From this perspective, the leader can work with the whole system of all the previous paradigms or worldviews and see the part they play in the evolutionary process. It is not just another worldview or paradigm, but one that can work with the health of the whole system of paradigms. More importantly for this topic, research has shown (e.g. by Bill Torbert, 2005) that Evolutionary leaders are by far the most successful at implementing large scale corporate transformation programmes. Clare Graves describes similar findings concerning creativity in finding creative solutions, when comparing groups of people operating from different paradigms and given complex tasks to perform, he found the Evolutionary group would find 'unbelievably more solutions than all the other groups put together', and of 'an amazingly better quality'. Laloux's research comes to very

similar conclusions – organisations with Evolutionary leaders are far more effective and innovative than similar organisations working under Achievement or Pluralistic leaders.

Shades of the evolutionary paradigm

The system we have described culminates with the Evolutionary paradigm. To some extent this conflates two distinct stages within Clare Graves' schema (GT/Systemic and HU/Holistic) and possibly three stages within the LDF (Strategist, Alchemist, Ironist). This is not a great problem when talking about organisational paradigms as transformational and radically different ways to look at organisation. However, when applied to leadership styles, I will maintain that it's important to make the distinction between GT/Systemic and HU/Holistic, using the Graves model. For example, the Systemic stage is more individualistic and the Holistic stage is more collectivist. I strongly recommend not losing sight of Graves' cycling between individual and collective orientations in the developmental spiral, as it helps create awareness of this dimensionality. In my practice of profiling leaders I have noticed quite distinct differences between these perspectives and expressions, that the Systemic paradigm invariably comes first, and that little of the Holistic paradigm is found in large modern organisations (so much so that for some years I took it out of my diagnostic tools, but with Laloux's work I am encouraged to bring it back). Therefore, in the profiling tool that we have developed we will make this sub-distinction within the evolutionary paradigm. So we will sometimes describe the later paradigms or styles together as 'Evolutionary' and sometimes as two distinct phases, Evolutionary-Systemic and Evolutionary-Holistic. This may be a little messy both is theory and practice, but I think it is also important that we follow Laloux's model as closely as we can as this is the one that I expect to take hold in mainstream discourse.

The need for a new Leadership Development Diagnostic

There are many good models that describe the way that people develop and some which focus specifically on how leaders develop. We have chosen Laloux/Graves as our core model because it can be used to describe both individual and collective cultural development, and integrates well with other models (Ken Wilber has also used it as his starting model when describing developmental stages). However, the standard Spiral Dynamics diagnostic tools are not user-friendly, so over the years I have developed my own short profiling tools. The Leadership Development Framework is in many ways a better leadership model because the stage descriptions are in a language specific to leadership. There is an excellent and well established LDF Profiling service provided by Harthill, but it can be costly and impractical to use for groups. I also suggest they have been complacent in not significantly updating the model (despite developments elsewhere in developmental psychology) and relying upon a sentence-completion tool that was designed by Jane Loevinger more than forty years ago. Although more of their 36 sentences are now organisational in context (a good boss..., teams..., change is...), there are still more family or gender-contextualised questions (which can be off-putting for some respondents).

We have therefore done two things. Firstly, we have brought the two models together within our own meta-framework (see a summary below, note that the stages here are in reverse order to the previous tables) and secondly, we have developed a new diagnostic tool that is set within an up to date organisational and personal development context, which we have called *The Leadership Styles Profile*. The tool also uses the output from Belbin 360 feedback as an additional input. We have aligned our Leadership Styles model and profile with the latest ground-breaking work by Frederic Laloux in his recently published 'Reinventing Organizations', which is recommended reading for anyone who wants a more detailed grounding in the application of developmental psychology to leadership and organisations.

Alignment of models and approaches

Graves/SD thinking	Leadership modality	Personal development	Frederic Laloux
modes	(LDF adapted)	phases	paradigms
Holistic (HU)		Transcendent	
	Ironist	Transpersonal	
Systemic (GT)	Alchemist	Post-conventional	Evolutionary (Teal)
	Strategist	Post-modern	
Relativistic (FS)	Relational		Pluralistic (Green)
	Individualist		
Multiplistic (ER)	Explorer	Conventional	Achievement (Orange)
	Achiever	Modern	
Absolutistic (DQ)	Expert	Personal	Conformist (Amber)
	Diplomat		
Egocentric (CP)	Opportunist	Pre-conventional	Impulsive (Red)
	Impulsive	Pre-modern	
Animistic (BO)		Pre-personal	Magic (Magenta)
			Reactive (Infrared)

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