of influence of a succession of sovereigns. Syrian cities served as centers of *mamālik* (sg. *mamlakah*), here best translated as "kingdoms" or "principalities," and the Ayyubid period saw an increased regularization of the Syrian *mamlakah* system. In the Mamluk period, the *mamlakah* divisions of the empire's Syrian territories became more systematized and the structures of provincial government more consistent.[18]

During the first decades of Mamluk rule, however, as the last Ayyubids were being divested of their Syrian holdings, the Mamluk system for Syrian provincial administration was not yet solidified. Thus, Ibn Shaddād's highlighting of the origins of the *jund* system and his subsequent use of the *ajnād* to organize his representations of northern and southern Syria could be seen as an early Mamluk-era attempt to bring some sort of order to a region that was in marked disorder.[19] This is not to say that Ibn Shaddād's use of the *ajnād* to organize the *A'lāq al-Khaṭīrah* acted as a policy recommendation for the Mamluk sultans, but it seems possible that Ibn Shaddād aspired to discursive order in making Syria Mamluk, even if the only ordering system at hand was the admittedly archaic *ajnād*. Furthermore, in the absence of contemporary administrative divisions by which to proceed in his representation, Ibn Shaddād's chapters cataloguing the towns, citadels, and rural areas associated with each of the six *ajnād* allowed him to provide a counterweight to the lengthy stand-alone representations he devoted to the cities of Aleppo and Damascus.[20] Thus, Ibn Shaddād established the geographical parameters and internal structure of the *A'lāq al-Khaṭīrah,* geographical parameters that explicitly demarcated Syria's borders and an internal structure that used the *jund* system to address each constituent part of the region systematically.

Personal Loss and Political Loyalty

The second major difference between Ibn Shaddād's representation of Syria and those prevalent in the discourse of place up to his time lies in the preface to the *A'lāq al-Khaṭīrah* in which Ibn Shaddād personalized his relationship to his native country and highlighted nostalgia as a prime motivation for his composition of the work. Juxtaposed with this evocation of nostalgia was a panegyric to his newfound Mamluk patron in Cairo, Sultan Baybars. Ibn Shaddād's firsthand experience of

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[18]For more on the Mamluk "*mamlakah* system," see Nicola A. Ziadeh, *Urban Life in Syria under the Early Mamluks* (Beirut, 1953), 11–24; and Le Strange, *Palestine under the Moslems,* 24–43.

[19]It must be said here, however, that Ibn Shaddād was not the first participant in the discourse of place to feature the obsolete *ajnād* in his representation of Syria. See, for instance, Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, 3:311–15.

[20]No manuscripts survive of his chapter on the *jund* of Homs, and it may never have been completed, but mention of it occurs in the table of contents Ibn Shaddād supplied at the beginning of the volume on northern Syria. See Ibn Shaddād (northern Syria), 7; and idem, *Description,* 1.

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Mongol aggression, which coincided for most Syrians with the shift from the decentralization and instability of Ayyubid rule to the centralization and militancy of Mamluk rule, infused the *A'lāq al-Khaṭīrah* with a sense of personal vulnerability mitigated by political optimism.

Although Syrian authors in the past had composed poetic representations of their hometowns that evoked feelings of nostalgia or homesickness, prose representations of Syrian localities had not generally communicated such explicitly personal perspectives.[21] One exception was Usāmah ibn Munqidh's preface to his monumental anthology of poetry dedicated to loss and place, *Kitāb al-Manāzil wa-al-Diyār,* in which he described his decision to collect such poetry as a strategy for dealing with his own grief after the loss of his hometown of Shayzar in an earthquake in 552/1157.[22] Not unlike Usāmah, Ibn Shaddād explained that the *A'lāq al-Khaṭīrah* was inspired by the destruction of his hometown of Aleppo. However, unlike Usāmah's Shayzar, lost to a natural disaster, Ibn Shaddād's Aleppo—and with it most of Syria—was lost to a political and military enemy against whom retaliation was possible. Consequently, Ibn Shaddād combined nostalgia with a strong statement of political loyalty to Baybars, whose aggressive response to the Mongol occupation restored strong and legitimate Islamic rule to Syria.

On the subject of the sultan, Ibn Shaddād gushed:

> I pastured among his flocks from rainy season to dry season, and I swaggered in the garments of his beneficence. And I made peace with my fate, now that it smiles upon me after the period of its scowling.[23]

However, clearly Ibn Shaddād had not forgotten his previously scowling fate, as

[21]Like Ibn Shaddād, Ibn al-'Adīm fled Aleppo after the Mongol invasion and settled in Cairo. He did return once to Aleppo before his death in Cairo in 660/1262, and on that occasion he composed a poem mourning the Mongols' destruction of his hometown preserved in the as yet incompletely published *'Iqd al-Jumān* of the ninth/fifteenth-century Egyptian historian al-'Aynī. For the manuscript reference and an excerpt from the elegy, see the editor's introduction in Ibn al-'Adīm, *Zubdat al-Ḥalab min Tārīkh Ḥalab*, ed. Sāmī al-Dahhān (Damascus, 1951–68), 1:37–38. However, unlike the *A'lāq al-Khaṭīrah,* neither the *Bughyat al-Ṭalab* nor the *Zubdat al-Ḥalab* features nostalgia or the Mongol invasion in their representations of Aleppo and northern Syria. For earlier Crusader-era examples of nostalgic poetic representations of Syrian cities, see the poems cited in Emmanuel Sivan, "Réfugiés Syro-Palestiniens au temps des Croisades," *Revue des études islamiques* 35 (1967): 135–47.

[22]Usāmah ibn Munqidh, *Kitāb al-Manāzil wa-al-Diyār,* ed. Muṣṭafá Ḥijāzī (Cairo, 1992), 3–4.

[23]Ibn Shaddād (Aleppo), 2.

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he continued:

> The reason for my leaving a country in which I passed my childhood and in which I had brothers and friends, a country that I will never forget, even with the passing of time, and the name of which will continue to be repeated by the mouths of inkwells and the tongues of pens, was the entry of the God-forsaken Mongols into my country and their rupturing of the union of Muslims inhabiting it.[24]

Thus, Ibn Shaddād identified Syria with childhood memories, never to be recovered, and the Mongol invasion with the disappearance of Muslim unity in Syrian territories.

After explaining that his composition of a history and topography of Syria sprang from his appreciation for the patronage of the Mamluk sultan, Ibn Shaddād switched back to a nostalgic note, adding that another motivation for his work was the love and longing he felt for his hometown of Aleppo and homeland of Syria. Anthologizing material on the subject of *al-ḥanīn ilá al-awṭān,* or "longing for homelands," had been a conventional practice in the early centuries of Arabic belletristic writing.[25] Harking back to this material, Ibn Shaddād justified his decision to open the *Aʻlāq al-Khaṭīrah* with a volume dedicated to the topography of Aleppo by quoting ʻAbd al-Malik ibn Qurayb al-Aṣmaʻī, a philologist of early third/ninth-century Baghdad:

> I have heard a Bedouin say that if you want to know a man, look at the manner of his showing love for his homeland, the manner of his longing for his brothers, and the manner of his crying for what has passed of his days.[26]

Then Ibn Shaddād described his own manner of longing:

> If it were not for the beneficence of the sultan and what God Almighty has made possible for him, I would spend all my time yearning for my homeland, and my soul would have become bewildered. But there is in his benefaction that which makes the

[24]Ibid.

[25]See Albert Arazi, "*Al-ḥanīn ilā al-awṭān*: Entre la Ǧāhiliyya et l'Islam: Le Bédouin et le citadin reconciliés," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft* 143, no. 2 (1993): 287–327; and Kathrin Müller, "*Al-Ḥanīn ilā l-awṭān* in Early *Adab* Literature," in *Myths, Historical Archetypes and Symbolic Figures in Arabic Literature,* ed. Angelika Neuwirth et al. (Beirut, 1999): 33–58.

[26]Ibn Shaddād (Aleppo), 3.

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> émigré forget his homeland and that which returns one to the prime of his youth.[27]

Ibn Shaddād's representation of Aleppo as his hometown and Syria as his homeland, a representation infused with nostalgia as well as political aspirations and hopes for the future, revealed a sense of belonging to a territorial entity at once local and increasingly translocal. Ibn Shaddād was, in effect, explaining that he was growing out of his former category of belonging, that of hometown and homeland, and growing into his new category of belonging, that of the Mamluk Empire.

Throughout the rest of the work Ibn Shaddād reinforced the dual motivations for composing the *A'lāq al-Khaṭīrah*, memorializing the losses imposed upon Syria by the Mongols and celebrating the future of Syria as part of a Mamluk state under Baybars. The volume on Aleppo is full of premonitions and portents of the city's destruction by Mongol armies in 658/1260. In one passage a prominent Aleppan Shi'i remembers an ancient prophecy foretelling the ruin of his city:

> When the sultan al-Malik al-Nāṣir Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Yūsuf began to rebuild the walls and towers of the city of Aleppo and to restore the two markets that had been constructed on the eastern side of Aleppo's Great Mosque, transferring the silk merchants to one of them and the coppersmiths to the other, one of the notables, chief men, and bigwigs of Aleppo, Bahā' al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Sa'īd ibn al-Khashshāb al-Ḥalabī, said to me: "I am afraid that this prince is the one who settles in [Aleppo], renovates its walls, and restores its markets, only to have it all taken away." And that is exactly what happened, as predicted, in the year 658 [1259–60].[28]

Ibn Shaddād's many descriptions of the destruction wreaked by the Mongols in Syria are often followed by accounts of Baybars' subsequent rehabilitation of the landscape, as in the following example dealing with the citadel of Damascus:

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[27]Ibid., 4.

[28]Ibid., 14. Although the skepticism of the Ayyubid prince of Aleppo, al-Nāṣir Yūsuf, implied by the recounting of this prophecy may have been prompted by Bahā' al-Dīn ibn al-Khashshāb's position as a Shi'i, according to his biography in Ibn al-'Adīm's *Bughyat al-Ṭalab* he enjoyed warm relations with al-Nāṣir Yūsuf's grandfather, al-Ẓāhir Ghāzī, who appointed him supervisor of the Mashhad al-Ḥusayn, a Shi'i shrine dating from the Ayyubid period in Aleppo. See Ibn al-'Adīm, *Bughyat al-Ṭalab fī Tārīkh Ḥalab*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār (Beirut, n.d.), 5:2247; Morray, *An Ayyubid Notable*, 72; and Yasser Tabbaa, *Constructions of Power and Piety in Medieval Aleppo* (University Park, 1997), 112.

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> When the Mongols seized the country and occupied Damascus, they destroyed its battlements, tore down its towers, and demolished a lot of it. Then when our patron Sultan al-Malik al-Ẓāhir took possession of the citadel of Damascus, he renovated it, rebuilt it, and repaired what the cursed Mongols had destroyed of it.[29]

In juxtaposing the devastation visited upon Syria, particularly upon its urban infrastructure, with the restoration and renovation for which Syrians had the Mamluk sultan Baybars to thank, Ibn Shaddād represented Syria as simultaneously lost to the Mongols and won to the Mamluk Empire.

Ibn Shaddād did not, however, associate depictions of the Mongol invasion with images of salvation and rehabilitation in his representation of the Jazīrah. By the time the *A'lāq al-Khaṭīrah* was written in the mid to late 670s/1270s, Syria had been rid of Mongol occupation for over a decade, but the lands east of the Euphrates were either under Mongol suzerainty or were deserted no-man's-lands that hosted border skirmishes between Mamluks and Mongols through the first decades of the eighth/fourteenth century. Though Ibn Shaddād's Syria, once lost, found itself rescued, his al-Jazīrah remained lost. Ibn Shaddād opened the section on the Jazīrah with the following explanation:

> In what has preceded of our book we have presented an account of Syria and the passing down of its towns from the hands of one king or prince to another. Here, we are awakening sympathy for [Syria] with an account of the Jazīrah and its first and last rulers until the time of its passing out of the hands of Muslims into the hands of the Mongols, may God deliver it from them.[30]

Ibn Shaddād's representation of the Jazīrah in the *A'lāq al-Khaṭīrah,* therefore, was intended as an admonition, a cautionary tale meant to inspire continued vigilance along Syria's eastern borders. Consequently, he portrayed the Jazīrah as a corridor that had been effectively closed off for northern Syria, forcing Aleppo and its surroundings to look elsewhere—namely to the rest of Syria, Egypt, and the Mamluk Sultanate—for sustenance.

HISTORICAL TOPOGRAPHY

In emphasizing the rehabilitation of the Syrian landscape and redemption of the

[29]Ibn Shaddād (Damascus), 40.

[30]Ibn Shaddād (al-Jazīrah), 1:3–4.

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Syrian people by the Mamluk sultans, Ibn Shaddād produced what may be the first fully integrated historical topography of Syria—in other words, the first detailed physical description of Syria blended with a political and institutional history. The structure and organization of the *A'lāq al-Khaṭīrah* strongly suggest that Ibn Shaddād considered the way Syria ″looked″ a function of its recent history, particularly the history of the architectural patronage of its rulers.[31] A comparison with Ibn ʻAsākir′s *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq* and Ibn al-ʻAdīm′s *Bughyat al-Ṭalab* will clarify Ibn Shaddād′s contribution to the discourse of place in terms of historical topography. Whereas both Ibn ʻAsākir and Ibn al-ʻAdīm followed their topographical descriptions of Damascus and Aleppo with voluminous biographical dictionaries of the religious scholars and notables of each city, Ibn Shaddād embedded prosopography and a paean to each city′s scholarly tradition in the topographical description itself through his innovative madrasah chapters; and whereas Ibn al-ʻAdīm dedicated a separate work, the *Zubdat al-Ḥalab min Tārīkh Ḥalab,* to the recent political history of northern Syria and Ibn ʻAsākir satisfied his historiographical impulse with a lengthy chronicle of the early Islamic history of Syria in his introductory volume, Ibn Shaddād combined historiography and topography by explicitly tying political patronage to transformations of the urban and rural landscapes. Furthermore, though neither section survives, evidence from the extant manuscripts of the *A'lāq al-Khaṭīrah* indicates that Ibn Shaddād appended or intended to append lists of the Islamic rulers of Damascus and Aleppo to their topographies.[32] Thus, as the full title of the work, *Al-A'lāq al-Khaṭīrah fī Dhikr Umarā' al-Shām wa-al-Jazīrah,* implies, Ibn Shaddād saw places and princes as inextricably linked.

Ibn Shaddād′s volumes on the cities of Damascus and Aleppo make explicit their large debt to the earlier works by Ibn ʻAsākir and Ibn al-ʻAdīm, thus reinforcing the importance of intertextual authority in producing and reproducing a discourse of place in and about Syria, but reflect an increased attention to the architectural patronage of each city′s elites during Ibn Shaddād′s lifetime, particularly the last Ayyubids and the first Mamluks. Ibn Shaddād opened these volumes with short chapters on the etymology of the toponyms ″Dimashq″ and ″Ḥalab,″ précis of the ancient settlement of the sites, quick enumerations of their gates, and short descriptions of the construction and significance of their citadels. The citadel of Aleppo, commanding such a central position in that city′s topography and playing such an important role as both military fortification and royal habitation,

[31]For more on Ibn Shaddād′s interest in architecture, see Nasser Rabbat, ″Perception of Architecture in Mamluk Sources,″ *Mamlūk Studies Review* 6 (2002): 155–76.

[32]See Ibn Shaddād, *Description*, xiv–xv; idem (Damascus), 10.

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understandably received a longer treatment than that of Damascus.[33] In this treatment, Ibn Shaddād demonstrated the close association of architectural patronage and urban topography that dominated the work as a whole, detailing the building projects initiated at the citadel complex by the Ayyubid prince of Aleppo al-Ẓāhir Ghāzī and his son al-ʻAzīz. These projects included both the renovation of military fortifications and the expansion and elaboration of the palace complex within the citadel, in addition to repairs and improvements made after a fire in 609/1212, until the Mongols′ destruction of the citadel in 658/1260.[34]

From the citadel sections, both topographies move immediately to accounts of the Great Mosques of Aleppo and Damascus and then enumerations of all the other mosques both inside and outside the walls of the two cities. The volume on Damascus reproduces Ibn ʻAsākir′s famous history of the construction of the Umayyad Mosque, as well as his inventories of the other mosques of Damascus, to which Ibn Shaddād simply appended brief enumerations of the mosques constructed since Ibn ʻAsākir′s time.[35] Ibn Shaddād′s main addition to this information was a chapter on the renovations and other building projects sponsored by the Ayyubid princes of Damascus and then by Baybars, including the *awqāf* established by the Mamluk sultan to support scholarly and socioeconomic activities in and around the Umayyad Mosque.[36] He also described four new Friday mosques constructed in the immediate suburbs of the city during the Ayyubid period, testifying to the urban sprawl associated with the influx of immigrants and refugees to Damascus during this period.[37] The chapter on the Great Mosque of Aleppo cobbles together similar information, relying mostly on material supplied by Ibn al-ʻAdīm.[38] However, as the *Bughyat al-Ṭalab* provides no comprehensive list of Aleppo′s mosques in the manner of the *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq*, Ibn Shaddād′s mosque list for Aleppo, which consists merely of the name of each mosque, was probably based on his personal familiarity with the city.[39]

The centerpieces of Ibn Shaddād′s urban topographies, however, are without a doubt their chapters on the madrasahs. These chapters, which may have been the first of their kind in the discourse of place, divide the madrasahs of Aleppo and

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[33]See Tabbaa, *Constructions of Power,* 53–96.

[34]Ibn Shaddād (Aleppo), 24–27.

[35]Ibn Shaddād (Damascus), 127–31, 157–66.

[36]Ibid., 75–81.

[37]Ibid., 86–88.

[38]Ibn Shaddād (Aleppo), 30–42. Since the *Aʻlāq al-Khaṭīrah* was composed after Ibn Shaddād′s emigration from his hometown, his mosque list for Aleppo may have been compiled primarily from memory.

[39]Ibid., 59–93.

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Damascus by school of law and then provide for each entry the name of the founder and the chief ulama active in the madrasah from the date of its foundation up to and, especially for Damascus, beyond the Mongol invasion of Syria in 658/1259–60.[40] In the *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq,* Ibn ʻAsākir mentioned those madrasahs housed in or connected to one of the mosques he inventoried, but furnished no other detail about their foundation or function. The three Madrasah al-Nūrīyahs that made it into Ibn ʻAsākir's mosque inventory, however, substantiate the conclusion reached in recent secondary scholarship that the reign of Nūr al-Dīn in Damascus marked the start of an efflorescence of the madrasah in Syrian cities.[41] Ibn Shaddād's lists reinforce this conclusion and capture the subsequent development of the madrasah system in Syria's two major cities.

Out of some ninety madrasahs Ibn Shaddād listed for Damascus, only a handful date from before Nūr al-Dīn's reign,[42] and only one of the approximately fifty listed for Aleppo predate the Zangid prince.[43] The vast majority of the madrasahs Ibn Shaddād described in both cities carried endowments established during the Ayyubid period, and, unlike his other topographical chapters, the madrasah chapters feature no building projects either carrying a new endowment or expanding an older one that date from the Mamluk period. Thus, these chapters celebrate the architectural legacy of the Ayyubid era, both the princely patronage of madrasahs and the increasing frequency of private patronage of such structures among both cities' civilian elites.[44] In fact, the nearly equal numbers of Shafiʻi and Hanafi madrasahs—and a significant number of Hanbali madrasahs in Damascus—endowed between the reign of Saladin and that of al-Nāṣir Yūsuf testify to the varied sources of such patronage in this period.

Ibn Shaddād did not order the madrasahs he listed for Aleppo and Damascus

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[40]Ibid., 96–122; idem (Damascus), 199–266. See also the following partial translation and commentary on Ibn Shaddād's chapter on Aleppo's madrasahs: Dominique Sourdel, "Les professeurs de madrasa à Alep aux XIIe–XIIIe siècles," *Bulletin d'études orientales* 13 (1949–51): 85–115.

[41]For the history of the madrasah as an institution, see J. Pedersen (G. Makdisi), "Madrasa," *EI²*, 5:1123–54; and George Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges* (Edinburgh, 1981). For a study of architectural patronage, of which the madrasah formed a significant part, in Ayyubid Damascus, see R. Stephen Humphreys, "Politics and Architectural Patronage in Ayyubid Damascus," in *The Islamic World from Classical to Modern Times,* ed. C. E. Bosworth et al. (Princeton, 1989), 151–74. For the architectural innovations and symbolic meanings of madrasahs in Ayyubid Aleppo, see Tabbaa, *Constructions of Power,* 123–61.

[42]Ibn Shaddād (Damascus), 199–203 (nos. 1–3), 229–32 (nos. 35–37), 246–47 (no. 64).

[43]Ibn Shaddād (Aleppo), 96–98.

[44]This is a topic addressed in Humphreys, "Politics and Architectural Patronage"; and in Michael Chamberlain, *Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus, 1190–1350* (Cambridge, 1994), 27–90.

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patronage of its rulers as one aspect, albeit a central one, of that representation.

Thus, Frenkel has amassed considerable evidence of an ″Islamization″ of the Syrian countryside that was intended to legitimize Baybars′ rule in the provinces—in a political and physical sense, to make Syria Mamluk. Ibn Shaddād′s *Al-Aʻlāq al-Khaṭīrah* can be seen as the discursive corollary to this political and physical campaign. Drawing on a centuries-old discourse of place, Ibn Shaddād constructed a historical topography that integrated recent political history and architectural patronage with site-by-site inventories of Syrian cities and countryside. He self-consciously relied on his predecessors in the discourse of place, notably Ibn ʻAsākir and Ibn al-ʻAdīm, to fill out his representations of Damascus, Aleppo, and northern Syria, but furnished new information throughout the work, though especially on southern Syria, to bring his representation up to date, reflecting the most recent transformations of the Syrian landscape initiated by Mamluk sultans.

Though its timing, explicit dedication to Baybars, and details of Mamluk-sponsored construction projects in Syria rendered the *Aʻlāq al-Khaṭīrah* a discursive corollary to what Frenkel describes as Baybars′ ″Islamization″ of Syria, the strong presence of Ayyubid patronage in the work suggests significant continuities between the Ayyubid and Mamluk period in terms of Ibn Shaddād′s aforementioned association of princes and place. Particularly in the chapters dealing with northern Syria and those on the madrasahs of Damascus and Aleppo, Ayyubids appear as often as—if not more often than—Mamluks as founders, endowers, and patrons of the built environment. Though it was composed after the Ayyubid period had all but drawn to a close, the relationship between the Ayyubid princes and Syrian topography is much more explicit in the *Aʻlāq al-Khaṭīrah* than it is even in the introduction to Ibn al-ʻAdīm′s *Bughyat al-Ṭalab,* a product of Ayyubid-era Aleppo. Nonetheless, it was Baybars who was, in Ibn Shaddād′s frequent formulation, ″Ṣāḥib al-Diyār al-Miṣrīyah wa-al-Shāmīyah″ (Lord of the Egyptian and Syrian Districts), uniting Egypt and Syria as separate but equal—and equally Mamluk—territorial entities. And it is the presence of Baybars throughout the *Aʻlāq al-Khaṭīrah* that evokes its dominant category of belonging: that of the Mamluk Empire.

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