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**The Standard of Success Depicted in Indonesian Biographical Movie:
the Analysis of Narrative Structure in *Merry Riana: Mimpi Sejuta Dollar* Movie**

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ABSTRACT

The story of a successful character who survives from the bottom of society and all like grief is a scored box office movie. Merry Riana: *Mimpi Sejuta Dollar* is one of them. Along with romance and setting abroad has also become one of the triggers of success. By using Greimas A.J narrative structure, the film analysis illustrates that people with the low economic background to afford something, can be a successful person if they tried hard and unyielding. The standard of success depicted in this film is a financial success and romance so that they can be happy. However, the film contains beyond implied ideology that continues to legitimize or establish the view that success is just for you.

KEYWORDS: narrative structure, Merry Riana: *Mimpi Sejuta Dollar*, inspiring film, success, actansial

Today, the media and the stage dominate cultural production where there is no cultural activity or production that is not touched by the media. Film is a cultural product that continues to deliver and produce meaning where it can be used as an instrument of social progress and enlightenment and is based on the rules of cinematography with or without sound and can be demonstrated. As mass communication, film is defined as the messages conveyed in communication filmic who understand the nature, function and effect. In addition to providing entertainment, film is able to influence thoughts, attitudes, and behavior of the audience. Film can

make the audience carried away with stories and impressions, so the audience as Feeling and experiencing what happen in the film.

Theme options when choosing a movie is always associated with the dominant view of reality that is seen and experienced by the audience. The strength and ability of the film is proven able for covering many social segments that have the potential to affect the view of the spectators. Film is a representation of reality. As a representation of the reality, film is able to form and brings back the reality based on the codes of its culture. The relationship between film and society has always been understood in a linear that has meaning 'films influence and form communities based on payload message behind it, without ever vice-versa (Sobur, 2004: 127).

Today, in Indonesian cinema, film production has more diverse themes to be raised. Film itself has several genres, from comedy, drama, action, romance and horror. Besides, Indonesian film is not only about the story of the fictional characters, but it also is a real person who has been picked up/chosen as a story or biopic. In the genre of drama, romance or comedy are raised as a theme of biopic since it currently becomes the most popular one to be produced and often awarded as box office. Film that uses biographical themes focus on the story about the success of someone who originally nothing into something, from a middle class down and become someone who can be an inspiration to others. Usually, the main characters are portrayed to be success from the bottom with all like grief and through education and hard work like *Habibie - Ainun* (December, 2012), *99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa* Part 1 & 2 (December 2013 - March 2014), *Laskar Pelangi* (September, 2008) and its sequel, namely *Edensor* (December, 2013).

Setting is also an important point in these films, where the setting is taken abroad because the hero is told studying in abroad like Habibie in Germany, Rangga

in Austria and Ikal in France. It is also a form of representation or an inspiration for the audience, because studying abroad has its own prestige and many scholarships are a part of studying abroad. This aspect is in accordance with the choice of middle-class society where most of them go through the world of education.

Then in 2014, another one inspirational movie that picked up the story of a woman in the film is Merry Riana: *Mimpi Sejuta Dollar*. The story is indeed about the success of a woman who fights from the bottom with all like grief and study abroad in Singapore. This film is adapted from a true story and considered one of Indonesian biopic, which is able to inspire the audience. Since its release, the film has attracted a lot of attention of the audience. National audience of film lovers, especially lovers of Merry Riana are so interested in the life journey of Merry Riana who was able to achieve earnings of one million dollars by the age of 26 years. This film was selected to be nominated for Favorite Movie at the Indonesian Movie Awards and watched by more than 700,000 spectators. Even former president Habibie praises upon the film by saying that he is proud and congratulated for the film and all the players, which according Habibie Merry Riana film: *Mimpi Sejuta Dollar* is a film that inspires and deserves to be watched (Nessy : 2016).

For these reasons, this research attempts to reveal the meaning or discourse of what is kept in production and legitimized in the film. By using the theory of narrative structure A.J Greimas, this study Intend to analyze film of Merry Riana: *Mimpi Sejuta Dollar*. Hence, a text due to the use of this theory, the implied meaning of the text can be revealed.

RESEARCH METHOD

Types of Research

In the book *Doing Research on Cultural Studies* by Paula Saukko, he classifies the three methodologies in conducting research on cultural studies based on the research context. The first is the approach of lived experience, the second is the approach of text or discourse and the third is a macro approach to analyze the process of globalization (social context) (Saukko, 2003: 10). In this study, researchers will use the second approach that is discourse where this research using the type of Qualitative research methods.

Data Analysis

According to Bungin (2007: 78) that in qualitative research, data collection methods as well as a method of data analysis are that the data collection process also is the process of data analysis because once the data is collected, the researchers have analyzed it at the same time. The researcher will describe in more detail in analyzing the data in this study. Data are analyzed using the theory of narrative structure A.J Greimas exist in the film Merry Riana: *Mimpi Sejuta Dollar*. Data analysis procedure consists of several steps, namely;

- 1) Watching and listening to the film Merry Riana: Million Dollar Dream repeatedly while recording the data.
- 2) Collecting and classifying data into sequences per sequence that is supported by the dialogue in the film Merry Riana: *Mimpi Sejuta Dollar* and classifying sequences into the concept Greimas about three syntagmes (structure), namely (1) syntagmes contractuels (contractual structures by agreement), (2) syntagmes performanciels (performative structures are performance) and (3) syntagmes disjonctionnels (disjunctive structures are disconnection).

- 3) Classify and analyze the sequences per sequence into the concept of the six functions of models Greimas actants that subject, object, sender, receiver, helper and opponent.
- 4) Describe the data that is doing the interpretation of data obtained by analyzing the isotopy in the film where to find it first identifies four terms homology in the film Merry Riana: *Mimpi Sejuta Dollar*
- 5) In addition, the last step is to conclude the data of the analysis process steps above. That is what kind of discourse produced by the film Merry Riana: *Mimpi Sejuta Dollar* has found and given the criticism.

Narrative Structure A.J Greimas

At first, the one who developed the theory of structural research based on the fairy tale is Vladimir Propp. In his book, *The Morphology of the folk Tale* (1928) which is then translated by Noriah Taslim to be *Morfologi Cerita Rakyat* (1987), Propp examine the structure of the story by assuming that the structure of analogous story and the structure of syntactic have basic construction of the subject and predicate (Suwondo, 1994: 3).

Vladimir Propp concluded that the entire corpus of the story is built on the same basis, namely 31 functions. Each function is the basic unit of the "language" of narrative and explaining to meaningful actions that make up the narrative. Propp (1987: 93-94) also explains that those functions can be simplified and grouped into seven circles of action (spheres of action). Seventh circle of action that are (1) villain (2) the donor or provider (3) helper (4) sought-for person and her father (5) dispatcher (6) hero and (7) false hero.

Researchers in France are trying to develop principles and research results of Propp became the basis of a universal narrative analysis. Where one of the researchers

is Greimas. Greimas tells the relationships that occur between actants in a story. Naratologi Greimas is a combination of a paradigmatic model of Levi-Strauss with syntagmatic model of Propp. To explain the sequence of the narrative that emerged Greimas summarizing 31 functions proposed by Propp to 20 functions, which are then grouped into three syntagmes (structure), namely (1) syntagmes contractuels (contractual structures under agreement), (2) syntagmes performanciels (performative structures are performance) and (3) syntagmes disjonctionnels (disjunctive structures are disconnection). According to Hawkes (1977: 91-92) seven circles of action offered by Propp simplified by Greimas into three pairs of opposed that includes six actants, namely (1) subject versus object (2) sender versus receiver (destinateur vs destinataire) (3) helper versus opponent (adjuvant vs apposant). The sixth actant is not only occupied by human, but also inanimate objects and abstract concepts.

According to the theory of Greimas, a character may occupy several functions and roles in a scheme actant (Jabrohim, 1996: 12). In addition, according to Greimas (in Jabrohim, 1996: 13) actants is something abstract, like love, freedom, or group of characters. He also explained that actant is the smallest narrative unit, the syntax elements that have specific functions. The definition of the function is the basic unit of a story that describes the meaningful actions that make up the narrative. Six function actant in three pairs in the proposed oppositional Greimas when it will appear as described below.

Sender is someone or something that is a source of ideas and serves as the driving force of the story. Sender is a cause of desire for the subject or hero to achieve the object. Object is someone or something that is desired, sought and hunted by the hero or the sender idea. Subject or a hero is someone or something that has the task of to get the sender object. Helper is someone or something that assist or facilitate efforts to achieve the object heroes. Opposant is someone or something is blocking efforts in achieving the object of the hero. Receiver is something or someone that receives hunted subject (Zaimar in Suwondo, 1994: 5).

Based on the explanation Karnanta (2015: 18), in reviewing the text using the analysis of narrative structure Greimas also need to describe their concepts like structure textual include understanding the analysis of surface structure and deep structure, syntactic structure-narrative related to the relationship the characters or actants in the story and semantic structure of the narrative is relationship of the characters that have a certain semantic function in basic sentences story and the last one is isotopy that according to Greimas (in Zaimar & Harahap, 2009: 146-147) suggests these structural conditions must exist for the sake of the proper functioning of discourse. This can make the entire message can be captured as a single unit of meaning. Greimas states that language is polisemis, there is not only one meaning. Isotopy is to overcome the plurality of meanings. So, isotopy is the meanings of open area are peppered throughout the discourse. In discovering the isotopy then used four terms homology with the formula $A: B :: -A: -B$

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Narrative Structure of Film *Merry Riana: Mimpi Sejuta Dollar*

The narrative structure of Merry Riana film in this discussion is analyzed each sequence using Actantial models of A.J Greimas. The researcher divides the selected

scene into eight sequences in the overall story that began in May 1998 riots until finally Merry is success to get in a million dollar in Singapore. For more details, here is the analysis Based on the scheme of actantial models as well as the narrative syntagm.

Sequence 1 May 1998 Riots

First sequent in the film is when Merry and her family decided to go to Singapore because of the riots of May 1998 in Jakarta, but on the way, Mary and her family had been obstructed by demonstrators who took the money and their belongings so that her family is forced to sell their clothes at a cheap price to buy tickets to Singapore. Because the money is enough to buy a ticket for one person then Merry' father asks merry to leave alone and had to part with the family. This first sequence may be included in the implementation syntagm (syntagmes performanciel) indicated by dialogue Merry and Merry' father figures as follows:

Merry's Dad : *This is your ticket to Singapore.*

Merry: *How about you, mom and the others?*

Merry's Dad: *I only got one ticket. You remember Uncle Hans? Find him. -
This is his name card.*

Merry: *What are you doing? Dad? I don't want this. We leave together or we
don't leave at all .*

Merry's Dad: *You can't be here. You'll be safer in Singapore, even if you're
alone. Merry, listen to me.I promise that I'lljoin you. Now, leave and find
Uncle Hans,stay there.*

Based on the actantial function, the sequence can be identified as follows:

- a. Subject: Merry' s father is actant that asking all families to immediately pack while
There are some riots in Jakarta. Without knowing the goal, mother, brothers and

Merry packed and hurried up to the car which can be seen in the following dialogue:

Merry's Dad: - *Get ready.*

Merry's Mom : - *Where will we go, Dad?*

Merry's Dad : *Just get ready. Ria, pack your belongings. Hurry!*

- b. Object: Mary's father turns destination into Singapore, where he had relatives and planned to stay there so the object here is home's Hans in Singapore.
- c. Sender: The riots in Jakarta May 98 was the reason why Merry's father flee to Singapore because they are ethnic Chinese which at that time their ethnic slaughter and many victims are not only of their own ethnicity but other communities. So Sender in here are May 98 riots and Merry's father
- d. Receiver: By them in the middle of their journey to the airport Merry and his family had been obstructed by the rioters and attacked by them, hence Merry's father provides the money so that the rioters do not hurt his family. He finally can only buy one ticket and only Merry departing. Therefore, the receiver is Merry.
- e. Helper: Because the money had already given to the rioters, Merry's father did not have money. Then, Merry's father sell their clothes to the people at the airport so that eventually he could buy a ticket to Singapore so the helper here is the Merry's father because if he did not take the initiative to sell clothes, slow lorises Merry also cannot leave.
- f. Opponent: The rioters are actant that blocks the Merry's family to go to Singapore by taking money and goods of Merry 's family

Sequence 2 Alone

Second sequence is when Merry arrived at Singapore and she did not find Uncle Hans since moved away and being alone in a foreign country but eventually she

was able to meet with her friend, Irene that being enrolled in Nanyang Tehnological University (NTC) Singapore and hence Merry could eventually studied at that University and stay in Irene's dorm. In this sequence there is a narrative syntagm disjontionnels or termination which can be seen in the following dialogue:

Irene : - *So you just need a place to stay, right?*

Merry: - *Yes, until my dad comes.*

...

Irene : *I have an idea. How about if you stay in my dorm?*

Merry: - *Is it allowed?*

Irene : - *Actually, it isn't. There's a guard.*

...

Irene : - *You have your diploma with you?*

Merry: - *Yes. But I didn't come to study...*

Irene : *Show your diploma*

Based on actantial function, the sequence can be identified as follows:

- a. Subject: Merry
- b. Object: a place to stay,
- c. Sender: laptop, Irene
- d. Receiver: Merry
- e. Helper: Bu Noor, Irene
- f. Opponent: Mr. Haresh, dorm rules.

Sequence 3 Student Loan

In the third sequence, syntagm narrative work is syntagm disjontionnels or termination and contractuels under the agreement. It was said, in the movie scene when Merry in the state passed the university entrance exam, but she did not have the money

to pay for tuition and the cost of living during in Singapore she decided to use a student loan that is in the policy-campus. If Marry wants to take student loan, she need guarantor. Alva will be her guarantor with made an agreement so that Merry could continue to go to college. Alva asks Mary to prove that she can make money and do not bother him as long as Alva become guarantor. In this third sequence are syntagm disjontionnels or concentration is indicated through the display of the dialogue between Merry, Irene and the campus, an employee dormitory following:

Merry : *do you have student loan program?*

administrator: *student loan program has already close... Ah you lucky! It's still on and end 5 today at*

Merry : *okay, I will take this student loan*

administrator: *okay.. and who will be your guarantor?*

Merry : *what? Guarantor?*

administrator: *yes..! the guarantor is the one who will gurarante you for being here. A guarantor may be the students of this campus, at least two years of college already here. And meets all the requirements of college aged 20-60 years and never recorded bankrupt. It's clear?*

Merry: *do you know any seniors here?*

Irene : *that's him..*

Based on actansial function, the sequence can be identified as follows:

- a. Subject: Merry is actant in this sequence
- b. Object: student loan, Merry already passed the test and received by the NTC require tuition fees and cost of living in Singapore
- c. Sender: Irene is a character introduced Merry to Alva so Merry able to get a guarantor.

- d. Receiver: Merry
- e. Helper: Alva are seniors who are the guarantors Merry to get a student loan despite Alva stipulating for signing the contract but eventually he decided to help and Irene is also a helper in this sequence because she introduced Alva to Merry. In addition, social workers those give a job to Merry also a Helper here.
- f. Opponent: work permit, rules that prohibit receiving student workers in Singapore. Because Merry does not have a work permit, he had trouble finding a job while Alva gives the condition that she would want to be the guarantor if Merry can find a job in Singapore and can make money.

Sequence 4 Fraud

The sequence of the fourth is when Merry who want to pay her debts really do everything to raise money, work, scrimping and saving, and one of them is trying to start follow investment business by selling the dream sort of business Multi-Level Marketing. For the initial investment, Merry sell the only valuable thing she has that is her father's laptop. In this sequence there syntagm implementation (syntagmes performance) which can be seen in the following dialogue:

Irene : *what are you selling?*

Manager LML : *dream! Indeed, we have several products in this business but you must see that the dream can mobilizing human. but first investment you should make is 200 dollars then you will get access to our products, website, and get members to join. of every member who joins you get 100 dollars if you can get 10 members I will promote you as a menager and I'll tuck your income 10 times that of any members who join and you will be rich. You understand?*

Irene : yes

Manager LML: *nice! Are you ready to invest?*

Irene : *I am ready!*

Based on actansial function, the sequence can be identified as follows:

- a. Subject: Merry
- b. Object: pay off the student loan
- c. Sender: website
- d. Receiver: Merry
- e. Helper: Alva
- f. Opponent: MLM manager

Sequences 5 Stock Investment Business

In this sequence, syntagm narrative work is syntagm is organizing (syntagmes performanciel) visible in the scene in the film when Alva took Merry to start investing in the stock market business. Alva taught Merry and even gives her mobile phone so that Merry could monitor his money in the stock market through the phone. Because of it Merry be able to buy a laptop again and quit his part-time job until she is able to generate money fairly until he can contribute in an annual event that is held by the campus. Merry became famous for such contribution. Merry is happy because they feel has been successful in the foreign country.

Alva : *I'm thinking about investing in the stock market. We're not the only one working for money. The money also works for us. I've tried to do it online. The profit is not bad. For the last 3 months, I get 300 dollars. It's not fantastic, but it's not bad to get extra money. What do you think? You want to try it?*

Merry: *(nod)*

Based on actansial function, the sequence can be identified as follows:

- a. Subject: Merry, Alva
- b. Object: a success
- c. Sender: Alva
- d. Receiver: Merry, Alva
- e. Helper: Alva
- f. Opponent: none

Sequence 6 Proposal

Sequent six is when Alva invited Merry to meet and propose her but Merry's phone rang and she got busy again with her work. Seeing behavior of Merry that increasingly obsessed with money, Alva advised and reminds her to stop, but Merry actually said that she would invest all her money to benefit a lot and she will soon pay off her debts so Alva will not be burdened again as her guarantor. Alva was very disappointed to see the attitude of Merry who is obsessed with money and Alva dissuades to propose Merry and go. In this sequence there syntagm implementation (syntagmes performanciel) which can be viewed when Alva invites Merry "I want talking with you but not here, tomorrow we could have dinner? And Merry replied "sure, just confirm where the place" while syntagm contractuels or by agreement is also found in this sequence which can be seen in the following dialogue:

Irene : *I'll still invest that airline company. I'll pay back all of my student loan
so I'm not a burden to you anymore.*

Alva: *okay*

Based on actansial function, the sequence can be identified as follows:

- a. Subject: Alva
- b. Object: proposal
- c. Reciver: Merry

- d. Sender: Alva
- e. Helper: no helper in this sequence
- f. Opponent: Merry's obsession to money

Sequence 7 Tragedy

In this seventh sequence depicted how Merry fall because her wrong decision. Merry goes through unfortunate again, she broke and ran out of money because it has invested all her money in the airline company. The company went bankrupt and all of the money also went bankrupt. Not only that, Merry also reported to have committed fraud related company "Success Forever" where in fact she is also a victim. Merry dealing with police and threatened with deportation from Singapore but Alva who is her guarantor contacted by police and he help Merry apart from these allegations. Syntagm narrative work is syntagm performancial or organizing, it can be seen in the following dialog;

Police : *a student reported that he had sent 200 dollars to a bank account that
you provide*

Merry : *I am also one of the victims, I also gave him 200 dollars too*

Police : *but you are the only one who sent them email*

Merry : *Okay, but ..*

Police : *fraud is a criminal act, foreign students who have violated the law
would be deported*

Based on actansial function, the sequence can be identified as follows:

- a. Subject: Merry
- b. Object: to get up and out of unfortunate
- c. Sender: Merry, Menager MLM
- d. Receiver: Merry

- e. Helper: Alva
- f. Opponent: Merry's email proof that she send to other victims.

Sequence 8 Success

Merry wanted to give up in despair, suddenly her mother came to see her and it gave her new strength. Merry then started all over again. She worked in the insurance company. With hard work she finally got a client who invested as much as one hundred thousand dollars because she had helped that client when in need of assistance. Merry was happy and she finally realized that life was not always about money, but more importantly how she could make other people happy because of her. Merry has been aware of her mistake then contacted Alva, apologized and admitted her mistake. Alva who still loved her, forgave her and they dated again. Syntagm narrative work in this sequence is the syntagm syntagmes contractuels (syntagm agreement), syntagmes performaciels (syntagm organizers) and syntagmes disjonctionnels (syntagm termination), which can be seen in the transcript the following monologue:

Merry : *Alva was right. Life is not always about money. Mom proved that to me. That 200 dollars from mom I used to get by until I get a job again. Maybe this is a second chance from. I have to start over again. Calculate again. This time, I have to finish everything.*

Based on the actantial function, the sequence can be identified as follows:

- a. Subject: Merry
- b. Object: a success
- c. Sender: Merry's Mother, Alva, Merry
- d. Receiver: Merry
- e. Helper: Bu Noor

Opponent: while prospecting Bu Noor to become a client, Mrs. Noor had one condition that Merry obtain a certificate of financial consultants in advance, but because Mrs. Noor like Merry's personality finally she still made the deal although Merry did not have the certificate.

So in general the chart of the general scheme actansial models of the film can be seen below;

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Isotopy and Four Terms of Homology

From the above discussion of the narrative structure through the sequences per sequence in the film Merry Riana: *Mimpi Sejuta Dollar* can be identified four terms homology that shape the meaning and ideology contained in the level of deep structure of this movie. The following four terms of homology found in the film Merry Riana: *Mimpi Sejuta Dollar*.

1. Unfortune: Lucky :: Not unfortune: Not Lucky
2. Difficulty: Easy :: Not Difficult: Not Easy
3. Poor: Rich :: Not poor: Not Rich
4. Active: Lazy :: Not active: Not Lazy
5. Fail: Successful :: Not fail: Not successful
6. Rise: Fall :: Not rise: Not Fall
7. Strong: Weak :: Not strong: Not Weak
8. Success: Failure :: Not success: Not Failure
9. Happy: Sad :: Not happy: Not Sad

The four terms homology mentioned above can be said that the film of Merry Riana: *Mimpi Sejuta Dollar* in the level of surface structure discusses and tries to convey the meaning that people are poor and have difficulties must work hard. Although initially, the failure is not to make an excuse to surrender. Surrender. She must rise and be strong in order to be successful and happy. This pattern of success becomes a kind of hope for middle class people who are fighting for their success and happiness. The standard of success in this film is depicted as being success in a financial and romance matter, so then the happiness can be achieved. Society as movie lovers has a distinctive taste in liking a movie, the tastes of the audience can be seen in terms of social status, education and living environment.

Merry Riana Film: *Mimpi Sejuta Dollar* is the theme of success at a young age with her background as a middle class family from New Order era experiences adversity and becomes poor. The main character is even portrayed to be a hard worker and pursue her education; hence the middle-class of society feels represented or inspired by this film. Indonesian society is largely a middle-class people who flocked to the cinema to watch the film with the theme of biography as Merry Riana: *Mimpi*

Sejuta Dollar. Moreover, many middle class in Indonesia is originally from the lower classes who escalate themselves through education, they are "next grade" into the middle class while the middle-class tries hard to improve into "first class" by having the achievement like Merry Riana. Educational background would be a necessary condition for middle class people because most of them experiences/ experienced a change of life and view of the world through education.

Based on the eight four terms homology above, it can be said that the values and ideology in the film Merry Riana: *Mimpi Sejuta Dollar* is that happiness which is formed by the success of people, both the financial and romance matter. Merry that lives a hard life is finally obsessed with money that makes her losing Alva, the one who always helps and cares of her. When Alva leaves from her life, Merry's count is not accurate anymore and she realized that money is important but not everything. In the movie, Merry gets her million dollar after she becomes no longer so obsessed with money, along with that, she finally could understand that the balance between love and the material can bring happiness.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the film Merry Riana: *Mimpi Sejuta Dollar* above shows that the narrative story in the film, the receiver is only accepted by the actant Merry Riana and this is a critique on the successful discourse narrated in the film, where success is depicted in the film is only enjoyed by Merry. In the narrative story, Merry is also a subject, which would be reasonable if she finally could receive the results of her work, but the real success is a form of direct contribution to other people or society more generally which is not depicted in the film. The inspirational biographical film is often narrated the same and this film is one kind of those biopic which contain the implied

ideology that continues to legitimate and establish the view that success is just for yourself.

This film inspires people to succeed in life, stimulates people to continue and work hard for their dream as well as being not afraid of failure for him/herself. This kind of a narrative is something to be seen as “normal” where life seems running smoothly and even people tend to not realize it, therefore many other middle-class people can only enjoy the success for themselves. This film basically intends to show that success is for yourself. Because of her success, Merry is now more successful and even becomes a motivator who actively appears on television and increasingly brings fame to her name.

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