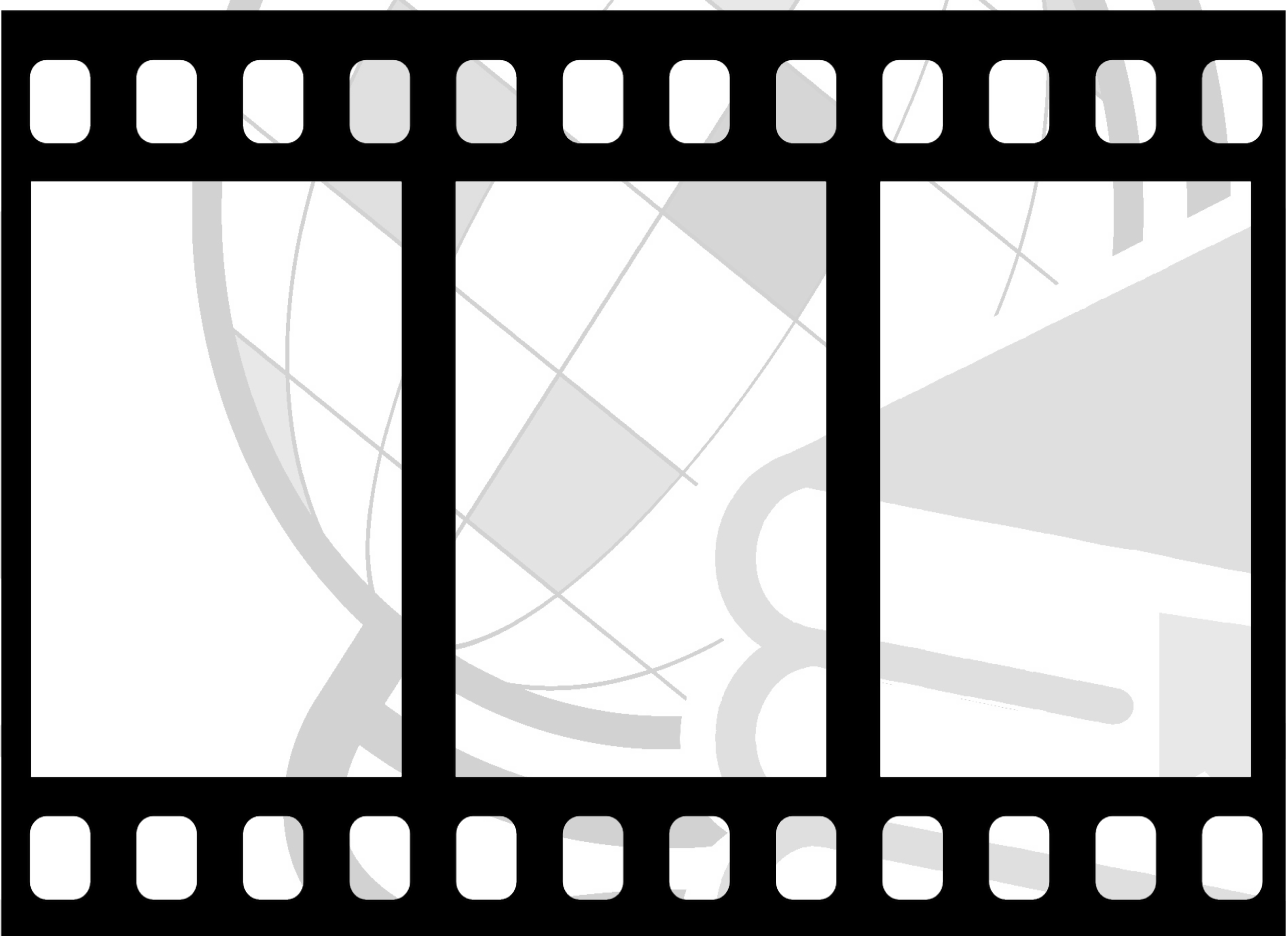


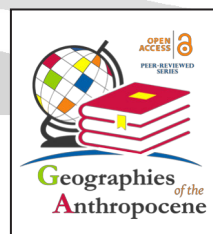
CINEMA, DISASTERS AND THE ANTHROPOCENE

Enrico Nicosia, Lucrezia Lopez (Editors)



Foreword by David McEntire

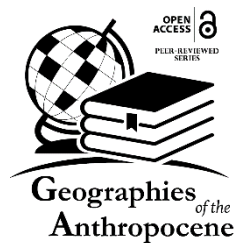
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Cinema, Disasters and the Anthropocene

Enrico Nicosia, Lucrezia Lopez

Editors



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Enrico Nicosia, Lucrezia Lopez (Eds.)

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The book series “Geographies of the Anthropocene” edited by the International Scientific Publisher “Il Sileno” (Il Sileno Edizioni) will discuss

the new processes of the Anthropocene epoch through the various worldviews of geoscientists and humanists, intersecting disciplines of Geosciences, Geography, Geoethics, Philosophy, Socio-Anthropology, Sociology of Environment and Territory, Psychology, Economics, Environmental Humanities and cognate disciplines.

Geoethics focuses on how scientists (natural and social), arts and humanities scholars working in tandem can become more aware of their ethical responsibilities to guide society on matters related to public safety in the face of natural hazards, sustainable use of resources, climate change and protection of the environment. Furthermore, the integrated and multiple perspectives of the Environmental Humanities, can help to more fully understand the cultures of, and the cultures which frame the Anthropocene. Indeed, the focus of Geoethics and Environmental Humanities research, that is, the analysis of the way humans think and act for the purpose of advising and suggesting appropriate behaviors where human activities interact with the geosphere, is dialectically linked to the complex concept of Anthropocene.

The book series “Geographies of the Anthropocene” publishes online volumes, both collective volumes and monographs, which are set in the perspective of providing reflections, work materials and experimentation in the fields of research and education about the new geographies of the Anthropocene.

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8. Cinema and digital technology: new communication formats characterizing the scenarios of modern communication networks

Maria Laura Pappalardo¹

Abstract

In the context of the theme: “Cinema and Digital Technology” while aware of the validity of the new communication formats that characterize the scenarios of modern communication networks, it is considered essential to draw attention to an “old” but still “futuristic” method of presenting, learning about and studying the Anthropocene, the disasters produced by Planet Man, and to prepare proposals for possible rebalancing. Based on the experience gained during the “Festival Terra2050” held in Verona and Mantua, which addressed the theme of sustainable development in a multidisciplinary way, the aim is to draw the attention of the general public to cartography in relief. During the many cartographic exhibitions that took place during the Festival, relief cartography was an opportunity to present, illustrate, explain, debate and reflect on the many “impacts” produced by human societies. The three-dimensionality of the paper and the possibility, offered today by the new materials with which it is made, of representing the seabed, has allowed users, of different social backgrounds and ages (many students), to become aware of their own “weight” and role on Earth. A more punctual and widespread use of survey mapping would allow for greater responsibility on the part of each human being.

Keywords: maps, cartography, anthropocene

1. An indispensable premise

During the “Festival Terra2050 Credentials for Our Future” held in Verona and Mantua from 13 to 24 October 2021, it became increasingly urgent for citizens to be informed and to participate in discussions on the major issues of the common good, human rights, and the construction of the future for new technologies. generations, in a reference to the polis (i.e. the communities of

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citizens) as a space for reflection, confrontation, project that enhances and consolidates personal freedoms while building a far-sighted public ethic.

The event debated what Piccinini recently had to write about the Turning Point, a provocative term that geologist and opinion leader Braden used to stimulate scholars to reflect on the paths that science and culture are taking and which must be understood as the necessary turning point to avoid bringing the world into a chaotic structure anymore. It seems inevitable that progress can only be made in a world which is on the verge of chaos, because today's reality requires us to set limits beyond which the risk of an irrepressible fall becomes too high.

The questions which were tried to answer were: What are the timing of the turnaround? When will real sustainable development be achieved? When statements such as: a Planet tormented by thirst, the tragedy of refugees, plastic that kills, pollution record, the sound of war, where to live, discrimination, a bad story ... will they find definitive answers?

The fundamental problem appeared very profound: the way in which mankind has taken technology and its development together with a homogeneous and one-dimensional paradigm: in this paradigm stands out a conception of the subject which progressively, in the logical-rational process, understands, and thus possesses, the object which is outside. to appear as much as possible from the Planet through the imposition of human action, which tends to ignore or forget reality itself. It seemed, therefore, easy, given these premises, to construct the idea of unlimited growth, assuming an unreal infinite availability of the assets of the Planet, to extort from it to the limit and beyond.

The new culture which has emerged as desirable for the years to come cannot be reduced to a series of urgent and partial responses to the problems which are emerging: environmental degradation, the depletion of nature reserves, pollution, the spread of poverty, housing problems, the pervasive discrimination, the pain for teachers and teachers. Hughi, to the difficulties of the economy ...

The speakers highlighted the need for: a different perspective, a thinking, a policy, an educational programme, a way of life that gives shape to resistance to the advance of the dominant paradigm, preferring less polluting production systems, supporting non-consumerist lifestyles, seeking equity and sustainability in all areas of existence.

Genuine sustainable development, it was loudly declared by those present, presupposes both respect for the human person and respect for the whole natural world, providing for a mutual connection in an orderly system. We are pleased to see that the time is ripe for a cultural revolution which will make us all aware of the need to embrace the concept of the "common good"

for sustainable development of society and the territory. In other words, to practice a far-sighted vision, to invest in the future, to care for communities, to pay attention to every being of creation, subordinating to it any interests of the individual that are contrary to it.

We must therefore get used to thinking about the future in a way that takes account of the complexity of the landscape and the need for interdisciplinary interventions.

The task of the geographer is to put a careful, lucid and punctual work on difference: it is necessary to work on the recognition of the individual parts and, in this sense, to work rigorously to restore aesthetics to be the daughter of ethics. It is important to learn to recognize, protect, and value the richness of differences found in every part of the territory, which must become a common cultural capital, in the construction of a new reality, even though we now live in a liquid society where everything changes rapidly, consumption becomes its main goal, and every value seems to "lose value."

2. The cartographic exhibitions

As part of the "Festival Terra2050 Credentials for Our Future" several cartographic exhibitions were held, opportunities to present, illustrate, explain, debate and reflect on the many "impacts" produced by human societies.



Figure 1 – *Part of exhibition “Mappe e carte antiche, a glance at the world of yesterday to understand what tomorrow has in store for us”, Porta Palio, Verona.*

During the Cartographic Exhibition “Some places are an explanation, others an enigma” which was set up inside the University Campus of Santa Marta in Verona, cartography, understood as a representation of the real environment around us, was seen in all its pragmatism. It has been shown that the cartographer must have the ability to understand the map in all its constructional aspects so as to be able to design it, direct its construction and, if necessary, provide the sketches needed to make it. At the same time, the map proved to be an indispensable help for people of all ages, children and adults, providing them with the tools they need to understand today’s reality and current issues. The exhibition “Mappe e carte antiche, a glance at the world of yesterday to understand what tomorrow has in store for us” saw the exhibition, inside Porta Palio, one of the historic doors of Verona, several important reproductions of ancient maps. It is well known that the history of cartography is the discipline concerned with describing the evolution of maps, the different forms they have taken, but above all the methods used to carry out surveys and to represent the data collected on solid supports or planes.

Today, it is believed that the first spatial representations appeared in the early stages of human history, as evidenced by numerous archaeological discoveries. Through this exhibition it was possible to discover the methods and thoughts of geographers and cartographers who lived in distant times, taking a close look at how they related and depicted their environment.

The Cartographic Exhibition “Itineraries of Verona Odysseys: Cartographic Narratives from the Past for a Sustainable Future”, prepared in the cloister of the Chapter Library of Verona began its reflections by analysing reproductions of ancient maps. The purpose of this exhibition was to illustrate the changes in the urban fabric of Verona and the relationship of the citizens with their city and the environment that surrounds it. Starting from the foundation of Verona in Roman times, the exhibition then focused on the history of Verona’s capital in medieval and modern times (with a particular focus on the fortifications) to conclude in contemporary times, narrating the Austrian occupation and the tragic flood of 1882, with the subsequent urban renewal. A corollary was the study of the Lessinia area, indispensable for Verona as a resource for industrial development, but also an area sensitive to the circulation of people and techniques.

3. "Sitting around an old table they drew lines on the map"

The Cartographic Exhibition "Sitting around an old table traced lines on the map" exhibited multiple relief maps in the atrium of the Zanotto pole of the University of Verona. In the era of digital cartography and on-line satellite maps which, in some areas, reach incredible levels of detail, it might perhaps have appeared unlikely to many that traditional forms of cartography such as models would still survive. But the reality of the market denies this conclusion, indicating the sector of relief cartography even as a driving force, both in Italy and abroad, as only through three-dimensionality it is possible to acquire true knowledge of one's own territory and consequently realize careful rebalancing plans.

In order for active protection to be achieved, it is of fundamental importance to know one's own territories and relief cartography can play a fundamental role in this sense by involving more subjects. What the relief cartography presents are not plastered and museum landscapes but landscapes in evolution and transformation, which can be part of participatory and shared projects. Too many times, however, we only work with the desire to typify or classify the landscape in order to find the areas to be conserved and protected, and we do not stop to reflect on the fact that now all margins and borders, both those historical as well as natural ones, which made it possible to perceive the landscape in the contrast of its diversity. Before there was a landscape outside the walls and a landscape inside the walls, there was the city and the countryside, the hill and the forest. Now we live on a planet where the city is continuous, incessant, where it is increasingly rare to find places where it is possible to interpolate building facts and infrastructural interventions.



Figure 2 - Relief map of the Mediterranean Basin indicating the seabed, through this representation it is possible to become aware of the fragility of our continent. Source: LACasa della cartografia, Verona, 2022.

Unfortunately, however, it is an incomplete, indeterminate, hybrid urban landscape, whose identity must be rediscovered above all through the study of all those negative phenomena, which make it appear in a state of progressive decay and therefore cause fear of the irreversibility of the phenomenon. And the relief cartography shows all this: it shows the yesterday of a territory and today, what it was and what it is.

Landscape is, in fact, culture but also historical memory: an inseparable alchemy that offers us marvelous beauties on the planet but also, unfortunately, monstrously ugly works.

4. Conclusions

From the foregoing pages, I believe that the statement that it is ever extremely urgent to establish new interpretations and ways of reading-and among these fundamental are 3D representations of territories-for the identification of more innovative forms of governance is inescapable. A multi-sectoral and integrated approach is not enough; it needs to be aware of

the importance of involving multiple territorial actors in the construction of various landscape projects. Among these, those paths related to sustainable development, which highlight the complex interweavings present between the economic and social issues of local systems and the requirements of environmental protection, acquire added value. Only through the formation of a more innovative culture of the landscape, these spaces will be able to transform into territories of aggregation and social cohesion in which to rediscover the denied condition of urbanity and rurality, and, in doing so, aim at a landscape enhancement in its complexity.



Figure 3 - *Relief map of geological Sicily: through this representation it is possible to become aware of the particularity of our territories, of the richness of our subsoils and of the multiple potentials.* Source: LACasa della cartografia, Verona, 2022.

And if the active participation of the population is a fundamental component in defining the new culture of the landscape, it is necessary to promote knowledge of one's own reality through the dissemination of materials, for example, relief cartography, which contribute to favoring the creation and maintenance of eco- sustainable realities, with the consequent regeneration of landscape- environmental, territorial and socio-economic aspects. The confirmation of the importance of disseminating all those knowledges whose essential value is completely free from any utilitarian purpose, first of all geography which, by its free and disinterested nature, is

far from any practical and commercial constraint stems from what has been stated so far, has a fundamental role in safeguarding our planet. It has been written: “Is life widespread? Or is the Earth special, not just for us who inhabit it, but for the cosmos in the broadest sense?”



Figure 4 - Detail of the relief map of Barbaresco: through this representation it is possible to become aware of the particularity of our land and of the viticultural potential. Source: LACasa della cartografia, Verona, 2022.

As long as we only know one biosphere, ours, we cannot exclude that it is unique: complex life could be the result of a chain of events so unlikely that it took place only once in the entire observable universe, on the planet that is become ours. On the other hand, life could be very widespread and developed on every Earth-like planet (and perhaps in many other cosmic environments). We still know too little about how life began and evolves to decide between these two extreme possibilities...”.

It is therefore not just a question of answering the question, for example, of how much oil is left to exploit or whether we will be able to stop global

warming, whether the artistic beauty will win or whether even the ugly will have its revenge! When considering such a large problem, it is easy to feel confused, unable to make any changes. But we must avoid reacting in this way, all the crises and therefore also the one that our planet is experiencing and of which the signson the landscape are testimony to it, must be resolved only if individuals assume,at least in part, the responsibility.



Figure 5 - *The British Isles: through this representation it is possible to become aware of the characteristics of these territories in an innovative and responsible way.* Source: LACasa della cartografia, Verona, 2022.

Only by educating ourselves and others, doing our part to reduce degradation and pollution, enhancing the useful, geographically understood, can we make a difference. Geography, with its method of analyzing reality, and relief cartography, with its products, can help us heal from that partial blindness in the way of considering the effect of our decisions on the natural world which represents a great obstacle. the efforts being made to formulate sensible responses to the threats facing the environment currently. Studying the landscape and reading the objects present in it not in terms of mere beauty

and economic usefulness, but as the theater of human action, are a vital condition for finding the right balance in the relationship between man and his own living environment, to reverse that now widespread trend that sees us determined only to be indecisive, determined only to be irresolute, immobile in our movements, steadfast in instability, omnipotent in our determination to be powerless.

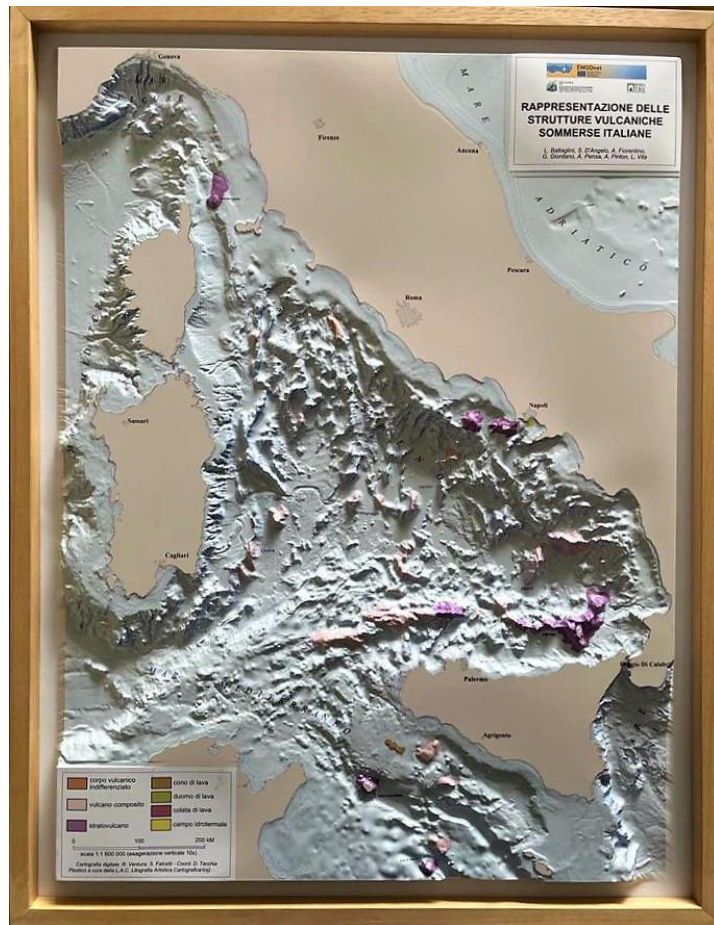


Figure 6 - Representation of Italian submerged volcanic structures: through this representation it is possible to become aware of the complexity of the Italian territory, in particular of the multiplicity of active volcanoes present in the Mediterranean, and to understand how they affect the future of many territories. In this representation the terrestrial part has been leveled to make the characteristics of the seabed more evident. Fonte: LACasa della cartografia, Verona, 2022.

We acknowledge more and more often that our landscape, the ugly one (following an aesthetic finding) of the huge suburbs, of the old and dilapidated peasant houses incorporated by the building development, of the artisanal and commercial areas that have invaded coasts, rivers and mountains, of the roads that have passed through valleys, woods and riverbeds, the one invaded by too much (excessive number of buildings, things, people) scares us. But the landscape, especially the ugly or useless one, is not a simple empty box to be filled or an abandoned object to be regenerated with any change of use! It is necessary to launch balanced and reasonable proposals which, in the first place, acknowledge that the pre-industrial landscape no longer exists, the beautiful landscape of bucolic memory, at least in most of the area where people live and work; we have this landscape, the one we have helped build over the last few decades. It is therefore useless to delude ourselves about rebuilding happy islands of pre-industrial landscape, much more useful and urgent is to reappropriate the common landscape as the Landscape Convention reminds us. According to the Convention, it is no longer possible to continue thinking that the territory is made up of beautiful parts and ugly parts; it is not enough to "save" the former, safeguarding, for example, historic centers while building, for example, useless suburbs in the meantime. It is necessary to move towards a sustainable redevelopment that on the one hand offers rules precisely where they have been lacking up to now (thus giving central places to the suburbs, public spaces, urban level services to improve not only the environmental quality but also the social one), from another intervenes by recycling disused and abandoned areas in which the past flanks the present, the local identity is preserved, leaving room for imagination and creativity to create new things that are a stimulus and inspiration for the sustainable development of the territories. A concept not always acquired concerns the fact that artificial interventions made by man in the landscape should not be feared but in harmony with it, but artificial interventions, that is, those that force the landscape and distort it. Roads, bridges and railways do not have to be demonized, if they are useful to re-evaluate and show off the space in which we live. The infrastructures become parts of the landscape: it is useless to get lost in discussing whether it is better to hide them or show them so as not to ruin the landscape. They must themselves become landscape; the challenge consists in the new culture that entrepreneurs, administrators, experts must acquire. A culture that envisions, when designing, for example, a road or bridge, to really take into account the landscape on which the infrastructure will be placed. It is in this logic that one should read, for example, suburban redevelopment projects that have a marked sensitivity to sustainable transport issues, as they promote interconnection and mobility based on clean energy

(the bicycle), encourage tourism and, often, allow people to enjoy beautiful places in the open air, where they can ride freely or take peaceful walks. "It is not new continents that the earth needs, but new men," so wrote Jules Verne long ago!

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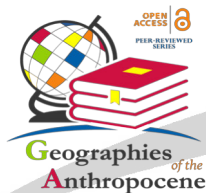
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The Anthropocene concept identifies a geological era in which human action leads to changes on a planetary scale with long-term irreversible effects. This volume collects insights into geographical research, with a specific look at the challenges of the future, and the potential of visual communication offered by cinema, documentaries and television series. In fact, fiction could represent the appropriate medium to examine the notions of the Anthropocene, being a language of global diffusion and highly evocative since it uses the engagement of narration and entertainment to convey messages of vital importance, arousing emotions in the viewer, shared awareness and, finally, responsibility. In the Anthropocene era, the challenge of climate change is not a problem of science but a failure of politics. And politics fails because the Great Acceleration has led to the good life and certainly a better life for people everywhere. Who is willing to give up the great stuff of the Great Acceleration? What would that new life look like? What kind of challenges does the future propose? Some of these questions, among others, are raised in the chapters of the present volume. The different geographical contexts and approaches, here collected, can play an important clarifying function, to reduce the complexity of (today's) social, economic, political, and technological reality, presenting a much deeper vision of reality than it appears to us, and at the same time offering us the means to navigate it. Thus, the volume deals with these issues in three sections, moving from narrative methods to the representation of ecological disasters and finally analysing a more specific topic.

***Enrico Nicosia** is a Full Professor in Geography at the Department of Cognitive Science, Psychology, Education and Cultural Studies at University of Messina (southern Italy). The scientific activity is documented by numerous publications in various fields of geography. The main research topics focus on sustainable land development policies and the role of the social-economic components on urban regeneration strategies, related to the organization of large events. His recent studies are directed at: the urban redevelopment, the transformation of the spaces of consumption, and Film induced tourism.*

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