

Theory Of Religion Georges Bataille

Art of indigenous peoples.

Sensible Ecstasy investigates the attraction to excessive forms of mysticism among twentieth-century French intellectuals and demonstrates the work that the figure of the mystic does for these thinkers. With special attention to Georges Bataille, Simone de Beauvoir, Jacques Lacan, and Luce Irigaray, Amy Hollywood asks why resolutely secular, even anti-Christian intellectuals are drawn to affective, bodily, and widely denigrated forms of mysticism. What is particular to these thinkers, Hollywood reveals, is their attention to forms of mysticism associated with women. They regard mystics such as Angela of Foligno, Hadewijch, and Teresa of Avila not as emotionally excessive or escapist, but as unique in their ability to think outside of the restrictive oppositions that continue to afflict our understanding of subjectivity, the body, and sexual difference. Mystics such as these, like their twentieth-century descendants, bridge the gaps between action and contemplation, emotion and reason, and body and soul, offering new ways of thinking about language and the limits of representation. Weird Mysticism identifies and evaluates a new category of theoretical inquiry by showing the influence of speculative writing on three intersecting critical categories: horror fiction, apophatic mysticism, and philosophical pessimism. Exploring the work of Thomas Ligotti, Georges Bataille, and E. M. Cioran, Baumgartner argues that these “weird mystics” employ an innovative mode of negative writing that seeks to merge new conceptions of reality. While exploring perennial questions about “the absolute,” the Outside, and other philosophical concepts, these authors push the limits of representation, experimenting with literary form,

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genre-bending, and aphoristic discourse. As their works reveal, the category of weird mysticism both conjoins and obscures the link between traditional mysticism and philosophical horror fiction, with weirdness itself being the central magnet that draws the seemingly disparate realms of horror fiction, philosophy, and mysticism together. Highlighting the theoretical stakes of the horror genre, Baumgartner's study reveals how the mystical potentially recuperates the limits of philosophical thinking, enabling reflection on—and possibly challenging—the limits of human understanding.

Georges Bataille (1897 - 1962) was a philosopher, writer, and literary critic whose work has had a significant impact across disciplines as diverse as philosophy, sociology, economics, art history and literary criticism, as well as influencing key figures in post-modernist and post-structuralist philosophy such as Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault. In recent years, the number of works published on Georges Bataille, as well as the variety of contexts in which his work is invoked, has markedly increased. In *Georges Bataille: Key Concepts* an international team of contributors provide an accessible introduction to and survey of Bataille's thought. The editors' introduction provides an overview of Bataille's work, while the chapters in the first section cover the social, political, artistic and philosophical contexts that shaped his thought. In the second part, each chapter engages with a key theme in Bataille's philosophy, including: art, eroticism, evil, inner experience, heterology, religion, sacrifice, and sovereignty. The final chapter addresses Bataille's literary writings. *Georges Bataille: Key Concepts* is an invaluable guide for students from across the Humanities and Social Sciences, coming to Bataille's work for the first time. Contributors: Giulia Agostini, Elisabeth Arnould-Bloomfield, Tiina Arppe, Marcus Coelen, Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi, Patrick French, Marina Galletti, Nadine

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Hartmann, Mark Hewson, Andrew Hussey, Stuart Kendall, Claire Nioche, Gerhard Poppenberg, and Michèle Richman.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells his followers to let go of earthly concerns by considering the lilies of the field and the birds of the air. Søren Kierkegaard's short masterpiece on this famous gospel passage draws out its vital lessons for readers in a rapidly modernizing and secularizing world. Trenchant, brilliant, and written in stunningly lucid prose, *The Lily of the Field and the Bird of the Air* (1849) is one of Kierkegaard's most important books. Presented here in a fresh new translation with an informative introduction, this profound yet accessible work serves as an ideal entrée to an essential modern thinker. *The Lily of the Field and the Bird of the Air* reveals a less familiar but deeply appealing side of the father of existentialism—unshorn of his complexity and subtlety, yet supremely approachable. As Kierkegaard later wrote of the book, "Without fighting with anybody and without speaking about myself, I said much of what needs to be said, but movingly, mildly, upliftingly." This masterful edition introduces one of Kierkegaard's most engaging and inspiring works to a new generation of readers.

This fascinating book applies social theorist Georges Bataille's revolutionary thinking to psychotherapy, offering clinicians a new and valuable context for practicing therapy. In adding Bataille's ideas to several different psychotherapeutic modalities, this book makes the notoriously obscure thinker more accessible while testing the validity of his far-reaching work in the treatment room. Through an in-depth examination of several clinical case studies, the book demonstrates how to balance an understanding of the social and historical contexts of participants with a therapeutic approach that offers empathy for individual distress. It also

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explains how Bataille's innovative approach can be applied to work with couples, groups, institutions, and even one of Freud's classic case studies. Both the content and form of each chapter demonstrate the therapeutic value of a reflexive, critical approach to one's practice and exemplify how to write about it. Offering an unprecedented opportunity to imagine how Bataille's own interest in psychoanalysis and clinical psychology might have developed, this book will be of interest to both practitioners in the field and scholars of continental philosophy and social theory.

Considers Bataille's work from an explicitly philosophical perspective.

Argues that religion is the search for lost intimacy, discusses its connection to the general economy, and examines the sacrifice of war

The Tears of Eros is the culmination of Georges Bataille's inquiries into the relationship between violence and the sacred. Taking up such figures as Giles de Rais, Erzebet Bathory, the Marquis de Sade, El Greco, Gustave Moreau, Andre Breton, Voodoo practitioners, and Chinese torture victims, Bataille reveals their common obsession: death. This essay, illustrated with artwork from every era, was developed out of ideas explored in *Erotism: Death and Sexuality* and *Prehistoric Painting: Lascaux or the Birth of Art*. In it Bataille examines death--the "little death" that follows sexual climax, the proximate death in sadomasochistic practices, and death as part of religious ritual and sacrifice. Georges Bataille was born in Billom, France, in 1897. He was a librarian by profession. Also a philosopher, novelist, and critic he was founder of the College of Sociology. In 1959, Bataille began *The Tears of Eros*, and it was completed in 1961, his final work. Bataille died in 1962.

"Bataille enacts a "monstrous" mode of reading and writing in his approaches to other thinkers

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and artists - a mode that is at once agonistic and intimate. *Ecce Monstrum* examines this monstrous mode of reading and writing through investigations of Bataille's "sacrificial" interpretations of Kojeve's Hegel and Friedrich Nietzsche; his contentious relationship with Simone Weil and its implications for his mystical and writing practices; his fraught affiliation with surrealist Andre Breton and his attempt to displace surrealism with "hyperchristianity"; and his peculiar relations to artist Hans Bellmer, whose work evokes Bataille's "religious sensibility."--BOOK JACKET.

As the price of oil climbs toward \$100 a barrel, our impending post-fossil fuel future appears to offer two alternatives: a bleak existence defined by scarcity and sacrifice or one in which humanity places its faith in technological solutions with unforeseen consequences. Are there other ways to imagine life in an era that will be characterized by resource depletion? The French intellectual Georges Bataille saw energy as the basis of all human activity—the essence of the human—and he envisioned a society that, instead of renouncing profligate spending, would embrace a more radical type of energy expenditure: *la dpense*, or “spending without return.” In *Bataille’s Peak*, Allan Stoekl demonstrates how a close reading of Bataille—in the wake of Giordano Bruno and the Marquis de Sade— can help us rethink not only energy and consumption, but also such related topics as the city, the body, eroticism, and religion. Through these cases, Stoekl identifies the differences between waste, which Bataille condemned, and expenditure, which he celebrated. The challenge of living in the twenty-first century, Stoekl argues, will be to comprehend—without recourse to austerity and self-denial—the inevitable and necessary shift from a civilization founded on waste to one based on Bataillean expenditure. Allan Stoekl is professor of French and comparative literature at Penn State

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University. He is the author of *Agonies of the Intellectual: Commitment, Subjectivity, and the Performative in the Twentieth-Century French Tradition* and translator of Bataille's *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927–1939* (Minnesota, 1985).

'... brilliantly original ... brings cultural and post-colonial theory to bear on a wide range of authors with great skill and sensitivity.' Terry Eagleton

Georges Bataille's powerful writings have fascinated many readers, enmeshed as they are with the themes of sex and death. His emotive discourse of excess, transgression, sacrifice, and the sacred has had a profound and notable influence on thinkers such as Foucault, Derrida and Kristeva. *Bataille: Writing the Sacred* examines the continuing power and influence of his work. The full extent of Bataille's subversive and influential writings has only been made available to an English-speaking audience in recent years. By bringing together international specialists on Bataille from philosophy and literature to art history, this collection is able to explore the many facets of his writings.

Since the publication of *Visions of Excess* in 1985, there has been an explosion of interest in the work of Georges Bataille. The French surrealist continues to be important for his groundbreaking focus on the visceral, the erotic, and the relation of society to the primeval. This collection of prewar writings remains the volume in which Bataille's positions are most clearly, forcefully, and obsessively put forward. This book challenges the notion of a "closed economy" predicated on utility, production, and rational consumption, and develops an alternative theory that takes into account the human tendency to lose, destroy, and waste. This collection is indispensable for an understanding of the future as well as the past of current critical theory. Georges Bataille (1897-1962), a librarian by profession, was founder of the

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French review Critique. He is the author of several books, including *Story of the Eye*, *The Accused Share*, *Erotism*, and *The Absence of Myth*.

In these three works of erotic prose Georges Bataille fuses sex and spirituality in a highly personal and philosophical vision of the self. *My Mother* is a frank and intense depiction of a young man's sexual initiation and corruption by his mother, where the profane becomes sacred, and intense experience is shown as the only way to transcend the boundaries of society and morality. *Madame Edwarda* is the story of a prostitute who calls herself God, and *The Dead Man*, published in 1964 after Bataille's death, is a startling short tale of cruelty and desire. This volume also contains Bataille's own introductions to his texts as well as essays by Yukio Mishima and Ken Hollings.

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Images of suffering male bodies permeate Western culture, from Francis Bacon's paintings and Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs to the battered heroes of action movies. Drawing on perspectives from a range of disciplines—including religious studies, gender and queer studies, psychoanalysis, art history, and film theory—*Ecce Homo* explores the complex, ambiguous meanings of the enduring figure of the male-body-in-pain. Acknowledging that representations of men confronting violence and pain can reinforce ideas of manly tenacity, Kent L. Brintnall also argues that they reveal the vulnerability of men's bodies and open them up to eroticization. Locating the roots of our cultural fascination with male pain in the crucifixion, he analyzes the way narratives of Christ's death and resurrection both support and subvert cultural fantasies of masculine power and privilege. Through stimulating readings of works by Georges Bataille, Kaja Silverman, and more, Brintnall delineates the redemptive power of

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representations of male suffering and violence.

Essays discuss the work of Emily Bronte, Baudelaire, William Blake, Proust, Kafka, Genet, and de Sade, and examine the depiction of evil

Hegel's "highway of despair," introduced in his Phenomenology of Spirit, is the tortured path traveled by "natural consciousness" on its way to freedom. Despair, the passionate residue of Hegelian critique, also indicates fugitive opportunities for freedom and preserves the principle of hope against all hope. Analyzing the works of an eclectic cast of thinkers, Robyn Marasco considers the dynamism of despair as a critical passion, reckoning with the forms of historical life forged along Hegel's highway. The Highway of Despair follows Theodor Adorno, Georges Bataille, and Frantz Fanon as they each read, resist, and reconfigure a strand of thought in Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit. Confronting the twentieth-century collapse of a certain revolutionary dialectic, these thinkers struggle to revalue critical philosophy and recast Left Hegelianism within the contexts of genocidal racism, world war, and colonial domination. Each thinker also re-centers the role of passion in critique. Arguing against more recent trends in critical theory that promise an escape from despair, Marasco shows how passion frustrates the resolutions of reason and faith. Embracing the extremism of what Marx, in the spirit of Hegel, called the "ruthless critique of everything existing," she affirms the contemporary purchase of radical critical theory, resulting in a passionate approach to political thought.

This book explores the relation between agape (or Christian charity) and social justice. Timothy Jackson defines agape as the central virtue in Christian ethical thought and action and applies his insights to three concrete issues: political violence, forgiveness, and abortion. Taking his primary cue from the New Testament while drawing extensively from contemporary theology

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and philosophy, Jackson identifies three features of Christian charity: unconditional commitment to the good of others, equal regard for others' well-being, and passionate service open to self-sacrifice for the sake of others. Charity, prescribed by Jesus for his disciples and named by Saint Paul as the "greatest" theological virtue, is contrasted with various accounts of justice. Jackson argues that agape is not trumped by justice or other goods. Rather, agape precedes justice: without the work of love, society would not produce persons capable of merit, demerit, and contract, the elements of most modern conceptions of justice. Jackson then considers the implications of his ideas for several questions: the nature of God, the relation between Christian love and political violence, the place of forgiveness, and the morality of abortion. Arguing that agapic love is to be construed as a gift of grace as well as a divine commandment, Jackson concludes that love is the "eternal life" that makes temporal existence possible and thus the "first" Christian virtue. Though foremost a contribution to Christian ethics, Jackson's arguments and the issues he takes up will find a broader readership.

Outlines a mystical theology and experience of the sacred founded on the absence of god. Originally published in 1943, *Inner Experience* is the single most significant work by one of the twentieth century's most influential writers. It outlines a mystical theology and experience of the sacred founded on the absence of god. Bataille calls *Inner Experience* a "narrative of despair," but also describes it as a book wherein "profundity and passion go tenderly hand in hand." Herein, he says, "The mind moves in a strange world where anguish and ecstasy take shape." Bataille's search for experience begins where religion, philosophy, science, and literature leave off, where doctrines, dogmas, methods, and the arts collapse. His method of meditation, outlined and documented here, commingles horror and delight. Laughter,

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intoxication, eroticism, poetry, and sacrifice are pursued not as ends in and of themselves but as means of access to a sovereign realm of inner experience. This new translation is the first to include Method of Meditation and Post-Scriptum 1953, the supplementary texts Bataille added to create the first volume of his *Summa Atheologica*. This edition also offers the full notes and annotations from the French edition of Bataille's *Oeuvres Complètes*, along with an incisive introductory essay by Stuart Kendall that situates the work historically, biographically, and philosophically.

"His fascinating and ambitious book provides a fully developed theory of violence as the 'heart and secret soul' of the sacred. Girard's fertile, combative mind links myth to prophetic writing, primitive religions to classical tragedy."--Victor Brombert, *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

Until his death in 1962, Bataille was an instrumental force in philosophical debate, acting as a foil for both Surrealism and Existentialism and advocating radical views that spanned the entire spectrum of political thought. Stuart Kendall chronicles these aspects of his intellectual development, as well as tracing his pivotal role in the creation of journals such as *Documents* and *Acéphale*, and how his writings in aesthetics and art history were the pioneering cornerstones of visual culture studies. Kendall positions Bataille at the heart of a prodigious community of thinkers, including André Breton, Michel Leiris, Jean-Paul Sartre, Alexandre Kojève, Jacques Lacan and Maurice Blanchot, among many others.

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Can secularism offer us moral, aesthetic, and spiritual satisfaction? Or does the secular view simply affirm a dog-eat-dog universe? At a time when the issues of religion, evolution, atheism, fundamentalism, Darwin, and science fill headlines and invoke controversy, *The Joy of Secularism* provides a balanced and thoughtful approach for understanding an enlightened, sympathetic, and relevant secularism for our lives today. Bringing together distinguished historians, philosophers, scientists, and writers, this book shows that secularism is not a mere denial of religion. Rather, this positive and necessary condition presents a vision of a natural and difficult world--without miracles or supernatural interventions--that is far richer and more satisfying than the religious one beyond. From various perspectives--philosophy, evolutionary biology, primate study, Darwinian thinking, poetry, and even bird-watching--the essays in this collection examine the wealth of possibilities that secularism offers for achieving a condition of fullness. Factoring in historical contexts, and ethical and emotional challenges, the contributors make an honest and heartfelt yet rigorous case for the secular view by focusing attention on aspects of ordinary life normally associated with religion, such as the desire for meaning, justice, spirituality, and wonder. Demonstrating that a world of secular enchantment is a place worth living in, *The Joy of Secularism* takes a new and liberating look at a valuable and complex

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subject. The contributors are William Connolly, Paolo Costa, Frans de Waal, Philip Kitcher, George Levine, Adam Phillips, Robert Richards, Bruce Robbins, Rebecca Stott, Charles Taylor, and David Sloan Wilson.

Despite Georges Bataille's acknowledged influence on major poststructuralist thinkers—including Foucault, Derrida, Kristeva, Lacan, Baudrillard, and Barthes—and his prominence in literary, cultural, and social theory, rarely has he been taken up by scholars of religion, even as issues of the sacred were central to his thinking. Bringing together established scholars and emerging voices, *Negative Ecstasies* engages Bataille from the perspective of religious studies and theology, forging links with feminist and queer theory, economics, secularism, psychoanalysis, fat studies, and ethics. As these essays demonstrate, Bataille's work bears significance to contemporary questions in the academy and vital issues in the world. We continue to ignore him at our peril.

In this comprehensive and engaging study Georges Bataille's central ideas – the sacred, community and eroticism – are explored in detail. Bataille's project to understand social bonds and energies at their most fundamental level and to re-energise society by challenging individualism is argued to be of continuing relevance to sociological thought. Bataille's infamous Collège de Sociologie is placed in the intellectual context of Durkheimian and Maussian sociology. Social

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effervescence, gift exchange, and the dual, ambivalent and volatile nature of the sacred emerge as the central threads of Bataille's thought, ideas which challenge both capitalist hegemony and the reductive notion of society as exclusively normative and repressive. The study concludes by applying Bataille's ideas to contemporary issues including de-secularisation and the rise of religious fundamentalism, the vicarious experience of transgressive violence, and finally, to consumerism and the violence of globalisation. The study seeks to reposition Bataille as a key figure in sociological theory.

For Bataille, 'the absence of myth' had itself become the myth of the modern age. In a world that had 'lost the secret of its cohesion', Bataille saw surrealism as both a symptom and the beginning of an attempt to address this loss. His writings on this theme are the result of profound reflection in the wake of World War Two. *The Absence of Myth* is the most incisive study yet made of surrealism, insisting on its importance as a cultural and social phenomenon with far-reaching consequences. Clarifying Bataille's links with the surrealist movement, and throwing revealing light on his complex and greatly misunderstood relationship with Andre Breton, *The Absence of Myth* shows Bataille to be a much more radical figure than his postmodernist devotees would have us believe: a man who continually tried to extend Marxist social theory; a pessimistic thinker, but one as

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far removed from nihilism as can be. Introduced and translated by Michael Richardson.

Translated by Krzysztof Filjalkowski and Michael Richardson Winner of the 1987 Prix Goncourt for Biography Georges Bataille (1897–1962), philosopher, writer and founder of the influential literary review *Critique*, had an enormous impact on the thinking of Foucault, Derrida and Baudrillard, and his ideas have been the subjects of recent debates in a wide range of disciplines. In this acclaimed intellectual biography Michel Surya enters into a complicity with Bataille's oeuvre to provide a detailed exposition of its themes as they developed against the backdrop of his life. The essence of Bataille's life and work were defined by transience and effacement, reflecting a will both to contest the impermanence of things and to confront death. His troubled childhood, his relationships with surrealism and his paradoxical position at the heart of twentieth-century French thought are enriched here with testimonies from Bataille's closest acquaintances, making this a vivid and detailed study. Revealing the contexts in which he worked, and the ways in which his work and ideas took shape, Surya sheds essential light on a figure Foucault described as "one of the most important writers of the century."

Early Polemical Writings covers the young Kierkegaard's works from 1834 through

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1838. His authorship begins, as it was destined to end, with polemic. Kierkegaard's first published article touches on the theme of women's emancipation, and the other articles from his student years deal with freedom of the press. Modern readers can see the seeds of Kierkegaard's future career these early pieces. In "From the Papers of One Still Living," his review of Hans Christian Andersen's novel *Only a Fiddler*, Kierkegaard rejects the notion that environment is decisive in determining the fate of genius. He also puts forward his belief that each person needs a life-view or life for which and by which to live, a thought he explores further in the comic play *The Battle between the Old and the New Soap-Cellars*.

Having spent the early thirties in far-left groups opposing Fascism, in 1937 Georges Bataille abandoned this approach so as to transfer the struggle onto the mythological plane, founding two groups with this aim in mind. The *College of Sociology* gave lectures attended by major figures from the Parisian intelligentsia - intended to reveal the hidden undercurrents within a society that appeared to be bordering on collapse. The texts in this book comprise lectures given to the *College*; essays from the *Acephale* journal and a large cache of the internal papers of the secret society of *Acephale*.

Explores the strategies of design, contrast, and resonance in the works of Hezel, Heidegger, Bataille, Blanchot, Derrida, and Kierkegaard

An important literary and philosophical figure, Georges Bataille has had a significant influence on other French writers, such as Foucault, Derrida and Baudrillard. The Thirst

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for Annihilation is the first book in English to respond to Bataille's writings. In no way, though, is Nick Land's book an attempt to appropriate Bataille's writings to a secular intelligibility or to compromise with the aridity of academic discourse - rather, it is written as a communion . Theoretical issues in philosophy, sociology, psychodynamics, politics and poetry are discussed, but only as stepping stones into the deep water of textual sacrifice where words pass over into the broken voice of death. Cultural modernity is diagnosed down to its Kantian bedrock with its transcendental philosophy of the object, but Bataille's writings cut violently across this tightly disciplined reading to reveal the strong underlying currents that bear us towards chaos and dissolution - the violent impulse to escape, the thirst for annihilation.

Georges Bataille (1897-1962) was an essayist, poet, novelist and philosopher of excess. His philosophy emerges from the aesthetic avant-garde of the 1920s and 30s, when he was associated with the surrealist movement, and has since been explored by the major figures of poststructuralism and postmodernism. His classic works include *The Story of the Eye* and *The Accursed Share*. On Nietzsche takes up Nietzschean thought where Nietzsche left off - with the Death of God. Written against the backdrop of Germany under the Third Reich, the book explores the possibility of a spiritual life outside religion. In so doing it weaves an astonishing tapestry of confession, theology, philosophy, myth and eroticism - all shot through with the images of war. Translated by Bruce Boone Introduced by Sylvère Lotringer

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Keuze uit het werk van de Franse filosoof (1897-1962).

Religion and European Philosophy: Key Thinkers from Kant to Žižek draws together a diverse group of scholars in theology, religious studies, and philosophy to discuss the role that religion plays among key figures in the European philosophical tradition.

Designed for accessibility, each of the thirty-four chapters includes background information on the key thinker, an overview of the main themes, concepts, and concerns that occupy his or her attention, and a discussion of the religious and theological elements present in his or her thought, in light of contemporary issues.

Given the scope of the volume, Religion and European Philosophy will be the go-to guide for understanding the religious and theological dimensions of European philosophy, for both students and established researchers alike.

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