

Creative Thinking and its Existence through Poetry

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Abstract

This study attempts to examine the possibility of achieving creativity through reading and writing poetry. The study is divided into two sections, the first one is an introduction which deals with the meaning and scope of "creativity" in general. Section one, as well as, includes the problem of limited creative thinking and its causes with some possible solutions. The second section of the study, concerns with the application of creative thinking possibility in poetic texts of important poets from the Romantic poetry and Modern poetry. These poets are William Wordsworth(1770-1850) from Romantic age and Grace Paley (1922-2007) from modern age.

Key words: Creativity, Limited Creativity, William Wordsworth, Grace Paley.

التفكير الابداعي وامكانية ايجاده من خلال الشعر

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الخلاصة

تحاول الدراسة الحالية اختبار امكانية تحقيق التفكير الابداعي من خلال كتابة الشعر. تنقسم الدراسة الى قسمين، الاول عبارة عن مقدمة تتناول معنى ونطاق "الابداع" بصورة عامة. كذلك يتضمن القسم الاول مشكلة التفكير الابداعي واسبابها وبعض الحلول الممكنة. القسم الثاني يهتم بتطبيق امكانية التفكير الابداعي في النصوص الشعرية لشعراء مهمين من الشعر الرومانسي والشعر الحديث. الشعراء هم وليام وردسورث (1770-1850) من العصر الرومانسي و كرايس بيلي (1922-2007) من العصر الحديث. كلمات مفتاحية: الابداع، الابداع المحدود ، وليام وردسورث، كرايس بيلي.

Section One: Introduction

Creativity: Definition & Scope

According to the Oxford dictionary the word "creativity" denotes a special way of making or creating something new. It is the ability to originate a thing that did not come to being before. Few opinions produce the idea of what is the meaning of creativity, some of these view-points refer to it as part of artistic creation of literature. In this sense, creativity turns to be perceptually grasped and is part of the imaginative talents of a writer. Others consider it as doing something original which is not existed before, means to bring up something special to its adopter. However, the act of creating is not limited to critical or academic fields in which there is only restricted number of people doing few activities. (Xerri and Vassallo, 2016: 19-20)

Creativity, meanwhile, covers those broader meanings of skillfulness and intelligence. It refers to a condition in which creative people do not gain things spontaneously, but they spend much time and effort in producing the different activities. Creativity, then, is an on-going process which needs to be developed and reinforced by imagination and talent. The main source of creativity occurs in the strong intention which springs from uniting the various senses that circle the artist's productive mind and cause re-vitalization. However, creativity depends on certain elements to be produced in an appropriate way. One element of creativity is the inspired mentality which provides the artist with the content to get rid of the monotonous everyday life and to escape the non-active process of living in society. The inspired mind, indeed, helps in finding the unusual and the challenging. The

inspirational mind enables the artist to do more than what is expected and to avoid monotony. And to have a full advantage of creativity, the artist works on his talents from childhood to the rest of his life searching all possible ways to enhance his skills. The act of inspiration comes with the help of surrounding environment including the friends, circumstances of life and the different experiences the creative person encounters. Most of the times, inspiration springs from natural sources and it gains outer support from the external environment. (Xerri and Vassallo, 27)

The second element of creativity is self-confidence. This element centers around one's self and depends largely on experience and strong inner intention for being. The idea of trust makes one open to new possibilities and challenges and be able to overcome difficult situations. Moreover, self-confidence defines the way one thinks about society, that is to say how creative people are more controlled and well-behaved since they avoid uncertainties in their society. In other words, creative persons search for new ideas and motivations away from indulging themselves in the core of society problems. The self-confident people have an additional sense of creativity, in that, they can feel whether their following work is going to be fruitful or not. (28)

One can possibly regard Planning as the third clear element which is responsible for arranging time and effort of the artist. Planning re-produces the past experiences and talents according to the individual's present situation. Indeed, planning is related directly to continuity, since it represents a challenge to keep creativity alive and active even in the most unhelpful conditions. Planning contributes to the process of following up our process one by one to avoid our previous mistakes and re-think in the future notes to increase vitality. This includes a strategy of analyzing the different works that creativity covers and polish them continually. The elements of creativity do not restrict only on planning, self-confidence and inspiration but there are many other elements which are based on the concept of motivation. The motivated sense allows the artist to produce the best portrait, graving or literary work depends on how much the works circle around a perfect meaning or message. The inborn talents should be surrounded by practice and experience, otherwise these gifts may fade away. The creative people like to do their works with attention and inner intention of giving a universal or personal message, yet they realize that their productions need time and patience. (Ritlyova, 2014: 95)

In the literary meaning of creativity, the scope of creative works covers various strategies like creative writing, role-plays and dramatic performance. These topics require a wide range of knowledge and practice in addition to cooperation with audience. Successful cooperation, then, needs a relatively frequent process of give and take relationship between the artist and his audience. (Ritlyova, 100)

Creativity, in a more realistic sense, includes events of everyday life, emotions and perceptions. It is the inner factor that helps artists and creative people to come up with real reflections of their society. They produce their works in response to the needs and problems they witness in their life which is usually pointless. The personal work that the artist results, thus, is only a crystallization of what he or she experiences in life. (Hassan, 2016:1645)

Most of creative works produced by artists depend on the ability of the artist to reflect the topic that people interest in. The artist uses his imaginative powers to answer the questions of his audience. The real situations that happen in life frequently represent the essence of which artists build their creative incarnations.

2.The Problem of "Limited Creative Thinking"

Wang (2019:110) considers the concept of creative thinking as the possible source of inspiration and motivation for artists to produce their innovative works. It gives time and energy to originate new self-expressive spaces which are hidden inside. Creative thinking does not only connect to subjects of beauty and aesthetics. But it may be seen as the principal factor for searching knowledge and innovation.

Sometimes, this view of creative thinking encounters several obstacles which prevent it from doing its perfect role. These problems include social, personal and cultural factors which constitute the blocks of creative thinking. Most of the obstacles attack the elements of creativity turning them into meaningless elements.

For example, the inspiration which represents the core of creative thinking may be absent or functionless. This usually happens when the creative artist loses courage and strong intention, which commonly occurs when the creative person becomes afraid that he or she may be mistaken or unable to do the work in a perfect way. The idea of fear does not only restrict to fear of encountering life, but it also refers to reluctance of losing effort and money or the inner fear which results from not facing the problem before. Anyway, these points contribute to the lack of inspiration and lead the creative person to hesitation and worry which are enough to get him back. (Tracy, 2016).

Another important point which stops inspiration is being passive. This happens when the creative person encounters repetition and routine. The creative inspired mind requires new ideas and wider scopes of learning not only doing the same activities again. Moreover, the problem of limited creative thinking occurs when creative persons fail to achieve planning. The absence of objectives and aims in life causes a big mess for the creative person's life. People critically recognize the confident creative person from others and they will automatically be attracted to the creative person who puts his goal straight forward and work continually to make it true. The lack of planning stands for a major factor of being uncertain about the outcomes of one's activities and helps in increasing the possibilities of loss and pointlessness. Some views regard the lack of planning comes as a result of the lack of improvement, that is to say creative persons follow unplanned ways of doing things in life because of repeated failures. (Wang, 2019: 117)

Not only this, but the lack of planning may include other factors of failure which also lead to the lack of the third element of creativity which is self-confidence. When it comes to confidence, things become more risky and problematic. The creative person, for example, meets a situation of rejection or opposition which causes a clear reason of being back and withdrawn. The pressure of society represents a crucial factor why certain people are uncreative. The creative person seems reluctant and scared from the idea of rejection from his society, especially at the first steps of his creative life. As a result of this the artist or creative person keeps far away from the social public opinions. (Tracy, 2016)

As a matter of fact, the reasons that lead to the lack of self-confidence have a more psychological impact on creative persons leading them to change into isolated passive figures. The creative person attempts to offer his or her work to the public, but feels afraid from the idea of being rejected or refused or even being criticized for thinking or behaving that way.

Most of the reasons that cause lack of creativity is the awareness to find new ways to spread creative works and to know whether or not this will be accepted. The modern society, in other words, depicts a picture of ideological variations which controls the

cultural development and the aesthetic dimensions of life. Due to cultural, political, social and religious sides in life, the creative persons challenge themselves to prove their own talents and productions. But within the quick changes of post-modern life's techniques and requirements, the artist starts to find ways to do the possible changes through which his talents become accepted. The ideological problems and the gender discrimination represent crucial subjects why certain creative abilities remain hidden and undiscovered. (Ibrahim, 2020: 425)

The creative artists, poets and writers feel a difficult condition concerning the humanistic meanings of life and they always look forward to discuss what possible solutions available in the ground. The youth find it unstable to discuss their internal needs and dreams, women also have a more restricted freedom concerning their aesthetic subjects. In some restricted cultures, there is a limited freedom when it comes to creative productions and values. (Ibrahim, 425) Such social norms suppose a kind of limited creative thinking that surrounds even the current endeavors of creativity done by artists and thinkers. The creative persons face an obvious challenge concerning their creative identity and defining personality.

The problem of limited creativity does not only relate to social restriction, but it is directly connected with ideological and perceptual ideas of the individual. It is, actually, related to a psychological condition under which the creative person remains negatively influenced by the external events around him. The problems of society reveal various levels personal or individualistic while others are related to the social public environment. The problems, however, could be summarized in three major fields which are: ideological, educational and social.

1. Ideological problems. The idea of limited creative thinking does not only work on the personal side of human properties, rather it is indirectly related to ideological thoughts of the community. In this sense, most artists find themselves in a circle of beliefs they should be connected to. The innovative new ways of doing something may be unwelcomed by others and this adds a sense of detachment in the creative mind. Furthermore, the subject of creative thinking seems to attract the attention of modern researches and this means that the creative person could possibly face many obstacles to prove his talents and make his works enthusiastic. This view makes it difficult for the creative people to persuade others with their products and to be indulged with the modern rapid movements of change and developments. Most cases of failed creativity result from the condition of inner impression of fear that creative persons suffer from. The ideology that creative people have is, then, a principal factor that restricts the creativity of persons and leads them to such disappointed condition of limited creativity. (Hanchett, 2015: 369-378).

2. Social problems. In dealing with social problems, creativity replies to what society imposes on the individual. The degree at which one's creativity plays a vital role in answering the subjects that individuals seek to understand. Some people prefer to stay away from the chaos of society and keep their creative voice covered. But the fact is that any society without innovation is considered imprisoned to some extent. The creative minds put a problem in the center, then they look forward to provide possible solutions. The necessity to problem-solving is very important for creativity aims. (John, 1965: 154-59)

3.The Educational problems. The educational problems are directly related to scholars and readers alike. Whether to simple or advanced levels, these problems result in some disadvantages for readers. There are several ways through which creative thinking can be more enhancing and problem- solving. Some of these ways are,

Innovation. This is a very essential point of creativity. The poets, for example, should not forget the necessity of being innovative and use novel ideas to construct their creative purpose. They, meanwhile, should be attentive how their works carry a different and new message.

Communication. Creativity could be a direct way for involvement in social communication. In any society, individuals are likely to spend time in groups and be more informative and presented. They like to share different ideas with each other and participate in wide spheres.

Confidence. One of the most important factors for creativity is self-confidence. Without confidence, readers can hardly be effective. It is probably the confidence that results in positive perspective about the future. The "linked" website (<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/impact-creative-thinking-education-yusuf-bozkurt>) denotes that when an individual encounters any difficult situation in life, he or she will be able to come up with good solutions to problems depending on their creative mind and confidence.

Section Two: Creativity in English Poetry

The importance of poetry lies in its artistic value as it is the way of most genres of literature. The use of the artistic expressions is a special instrument for emphasizing the poetic meaning. Literature, from its old ages, tries to answer the various questions that people have about their life and belief. And because of the necessity of offering philosophical interpretations of humans' existence, literature becomes the perfect medium through which humans communicate with their world. Poetry, novel and drama represent the artist's ways of expressing his inner needs and problems. At the center of poetry is the captivation of all emotions, thoughts and reactions to the external world. The poet crystalizes his experience through his words and weaves it with the different themes and inspirations which surround him. (Ahluwalia & Chatterjee, 2023: 15) This process is, with no doubt, creative since it involves a profound effort and continuous line of imagination with a strong event or subject. However, poetry is generally a limitless art. It is the art that transforms human experience into a written or crafted form by means of words. By the help of various literary and poetic devices, the poet's creative mind could be more influential and realistic. This study offers a possible way of enhancing creative thinking through mentioning some opinions from two English poets of different ages with their poems. These poets are William Wordsworth(1770-1850), from Romantic poetry, and Grace Paley (1922-2007), from post-modern poetry. This strategy shows how reading the English text is significant for encouraging creative thinking and forming an opened scope for further cross-cultural interests. However, in poetry, creativity is a necessity. It is the medium through which poets illustrate their free imagination and powerful artistic activity.

2.1 William Wordsworth(1770-1850)

One of the most influential poets in the history of English poetry, who focused on the significance of the poet's creativity, is the Romantic poet William Wordsworth (1770-1850). Wordsworth gained a wide reputation for his opinions about poetry and the

energetic mind of the poet. The choice of Wordsworth identifies the creativity of his age and clarifies the open sphere of imaginative energy. In his *Preface* (1800) to the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth clarified the importance for creative mind for the poet when defines poetry and the poet. According to him poetry is " the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (Ahluwalia & Chatterjee, 16). Wordsworth was unique in his opinions of poetry. In this sense, he mentioned a process of creative capacity that a poet must have to receive the inspiration of poetry. For him, poetry is "spontaneous", but it needs contemplation and longing for an aim to be produced. The poems, he added, are part of the creativity of the poet's mind. Therefore, poems can offer the creativity of their producer and reflect his strong meditative mind which tackles different subjects. To complete this process, Wordsworth, emphasized the vital role of the poet who is equipped with more than intellectual mentality which enables him to be creative. The poet, thus, is the major actor who uses his artistic imaginative power to produce a creative piece of art that answers his questions. The introduction of his *Lyrical Ballads*(1798) pointed out the view-point of Wordsworth in writing poetry. It showed his preference for the common, ordinary incidents and the role of imagination to color the experience.

In his poem *I Wandered A Lone As a Cloud* also called *Daffodils* (1807), Wordsworth produced a direct portrait about his extreme love for nature as the major source of poetic inspiration. The poem presents a long walking in the natural world and this process could easily operate the poet's creative ability. The opening lines of the poem suggest this meaning:

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze. (The World's Poetry Archive.
Poem hunter, 2004: 408)

The lines above explain the poet's profound imagination and artistic impression as he walks a lone through greenery lands. This view is very necessary to discover his inner art. The landscape of the daffodils along the way adds a natural admiration for the view. The shape of the daffodils shift and blow by the breeze near the lake serves to address the poet's emotional side.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance. (408)

The second stanza, however, presents a continuous effect under the natural walk along the way with his sister Dorothy Wordsworth on April 15, 1802. The poem is an example of Romantic poetry as it shows extreme attention to the natural world. The poet compares daffodils to the stars and mentions that they are countless just like the stars." They stretched in never-ending line" this refers to the linear way of arrangement of these flowers beside the trees.

The waves beside them danced; but they
 Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
 A poet could not but be gay,
 In such a jocund company:
 I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
 What wealth the show to me had brought:
 'Tis oft, when on my couch I lie
 In vacant or in pensive mood,
 They flash upon that inward eye
 Which is the bliss of solitude;
 And then my heart with pleasure fills,
 And dances with the daffodils. (The World's Poetry Archive, 408)

The third and last stanzas continue to shape the positive energy of the natural world which is essential factor for creativity. (Kirby, 2023). The landscape functions as a companion for the poet's journey in Nature. Daffodils seem to accompany the poet along his journey as they add a sense of togetherness and happiness. "They flash upon that inward eye/ Which is the bliss of solitude" they provide the poet with an isolated mood which creates his artistic imagination. "I gazed—and gazed—but little thought/ What wealth the show to me had brought" this line enriches the poet's creative mind while he is gazing at these daffodils continuously. The poet's ends the poem referring to the impact that daffodils have on his heart as he dances under their pleasure and wealth.

This poem, just like most of Wordsworth's poems, describes the process of active creative thinking a poet must have in a very simple style. In Romantic poetry, the first important feature of a poet is creativity. It is, in fact, the poet's job of transforming the ordinary common experience into an extraordinary or supernatural message. In this way, poetry contributes to solve the major problem of limited creativity through offering the opened scope for poets and readers.

The romantic view of creativity results from the strong sense of admiration to the natural world. The exotic meaning of Nature represents an important factor for gaining creativity. In her *Romantic Creativity and the Ideal of Originality: A Contextual Analysis*, Millen (2010: 91) demonstrates the idea mentioned in S. T. Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* (1817) that creative thoughts raise from the romantic mind which mixes the inner emotion with external words and writing to produce fine poetry of novelty and innovation. Even in his *Lines Written in Early Spring* in 1798, from *The Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth established the connection of humans with the external natural world. The simplicity of language and diction relates the rustic pastoral life to the purity of Man's soul:

"...To her fair works did Nature link
 The human soul that through me ran;
 And much it grieved my heart to think
 What man has made of man..."

(cited in. Aprilliawati, 2010: 10)

The lines portray the creativity of the romantic mind as it shows possibility of the soul to be changed into a moving entity transforms from one place into another with the movement of the river and the seeds and air.

The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure:-
But the least motion which they made

It seemed a thrill of pleasure. (Aprilliawati, 10)

The pictures of the pure landscape lead the poet to lament the selfishness and cruelty of the world. The pleasure that results from the birds' voice and the brilliant thoughts that shine in his mind enable him to be creative and provocative. Yet these pleasures remind the poet of the hardships and corruption of the urban society. These poems, in fact, are only examples of the use of creative thought that poetry brings. The surrounding environment gives the poet a possible opportunity of offering a wide creative capacity and poetic freedom. (Aprilliawati, 11)

2.2 Grace Paley (1922-2007)

In modern time, however, the turning comes in the adaptation of creativity in modern artistic works. The modern creative art does not only concern with nature or landscapes, rather it shifts the attention into a process of appreciating creativity in terms of special skills or handicrafts. In modern age, creativity clarifies how poets create something from nothing. For this to happen, poets work through an on-going process of developing creative thinking.

This study, further, presents an example from modern poetry to enrich the meaning of the necessity for creative thinking in modern time and its possible achievement through poetry. In her *The Poet's Occasional Alternative* (2000), Grace Paley (1922-2007) mentions the way creativity is treated in everyday life. Grace Paley is an American playwright, poet, short-story writer and an activist. She gained the appraisal of critics and other contemporary poets after writing her two books of short stories. The "poetry foundation" website (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/grace-paley>) mentions that one reviewer, *America* reviewer, William Novak considers how Grace is "a writer's writer who focuses her talent and energy on the craft itself". Grace Paley belonged to a Russian immigrant parents who settled in New York. At Bronx, Paley was raised when her parents mixed the Russian and Yiddish languages. In New York, however, Paley learned the English and most of her writings reflect the influence of this mixture as well as the subjects she wrote about.

As far as her writings are concerned, Paley is well-known for her short stories involving her famous *Little Disturbances of Man*, published in 1959. She produced some poetry collections like, *Leaning Forward: Poems* in 1985, *New and Collected Poems* in 1992 also *Begin Again: Collected Poems* published in 2001. Moreover, Grace Paley worked as a university lecturer during her lifetime since she lectured at Columbia University, Sarah Lawrence College, City College of New York and Syracuse University.

Grace Paley's artistic opinions are various. She lived during the peace movement in America during 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. She earned a wide reputation for her mastery of dialect and minimalist writing style. In 1989, New York Governor Mario Cuomo called her the first official writer of New York. (Zimmerman, 2017).

The modern conception of creativity is a process of making something is manipulated in Paley's poem *The Poet's Occasional Alternative* (2000) :

I was going to write a poem
I made a pie instead it took
about the same amount of time

of course the pie was a final
 draft a poem would have had some
 distance to go days and weeks and
 much crumpled paper (cited in. The World's Poetry Archive,
 2012:15)

Ironically, the poet uses the word "pie" to refer to the way of making a pie. The poem presents the idea of "process" to create a pie. In many aspects, the pie could be more acceptable than writing a poetic piece. For Paley, a poem is a creation that needs more time and may receive wide criticism from the public.

the pie already had a talking
 tumbling audience among small
 trucks and a fire engine on
 the kitchen floor
 everybody will like this pie
 it will have apples and cranberries
 dried apricots in it many friends
 will say why in the world did you
 make only one.

this does not happen with poems
 because of unreportable
 sadnesses I decided to
 settle this morning for a responsive
 eatership I do not
 want to wait a week a year a
 generation for the right

consumer to come along. (The World's Poetry Archive, 15)

"The pie already had a talking tumbling audience" this is an indication of the positive received point of view that a pie may get. It only needs "a fire engine on the kitchen floor" a process of creating a form of food from the simple details people have in their houses. "everybody will like this pie/ it will have apples and cranberries" the pie has no public objection or refusal, but it is possible to gain admiration from most people in the world. The poem, Paley affirms, needs more effort and patience for giving a universal message. It needs time and report to transform it into a living literary piece "I do not want to wait a week a year a generation for the right". Paley's writings, whether in short stories or poems, reflect vivid images of urban life accidents which she lived. The characters of her stories stand for a mixture of the modern life loss and enjoyment, past and present, the historical and the current. (Levy, 2015: 15) For Paley, the poem is not an easy artistic form. It needs to be accepted, created and formed in a unique way. It requires a lot of time and effort in addition to a creative mind to deal with the current experience to produce the idea. The first important step is to observe an incident, then a poet has to grasp the resulted feelings, imagines the picture he or she may release. Then comes the step of poem production which is either to be accepted or objected by audience. "I was going to write a poem/I made a pie instead it took" the first stanza declares the poet's decision of making a pie instead of creating a poem. The existence for creative thoughts is also presented in Paley's poem *Autumn* (1999), which indicates the poet's processing of creative art.

What is sometimes called a
tongue of flame
or an arm extended burning
is only the long
red and orange branch of
a green maple
in early September reaching
into the greenest field
out of the green woods.

(The World's Poetry Archive. 2012, 4)

The realistic scope of her poetry comes from choosing the urban present world away from the natural landscapes. The poem brings a picture of the natural world that encompasses the colors of leaves in Autumn. The creative thinking results from the poet's ability to create a portrait of Nature while she is living the moment in the modern Autumn.

at the
edge of which the birch trees
appear a little tattered tired
of sustaining delicacy
all through the hot summer re-
minding everyone (in
our family) of a Russian
song a story by
Chekhov or my father on

his own lawn (The World's Poetry Archive. 5)

The poem goes on to show creativity through stating a process of passing through different seasons and illustrating the impact these changes bring to life. The experience of the atmosphere creates a memory of Paley's past. "all through the hot summer reminding everyone" is a process of mingles a line of events through different moments and memories. (Vera, 1991).

Arcana (2015: 21-23) clarifies Paley's role in society as an active poet and short story writer. For Grace Paley, writing does not need a quick process, rather it is a creative imaginative capacity from the part of the poet. It is an art production, not a simple task of filling one's tome. During her lifetime, Paley showed sensitive impression towards the current issues of her society. she was an active voice for women's rights and social problems. Paley, in addition, used her writings and voice to illuminate her words and political viewpoints. She sought for contradicting the present unsatisfactory society for the sake of gaining justice and freedom.

Conclusion

Creativity, in its general meaning, covers the act of making something from nothing or producing new transformed forms. The need for creativity in modern time is a real necessity. People, all over the world, discuss the possibility of achieving creative thinking through art. The artistic creativity requires a special attention and proficiency with an opened mind. Limited creativity, moreover, represents an obstacle for free creativity and openness. And one of the possible ways to stop limited creative thinking is art, more specifically, poetry (literature). Most of the critical opinions on literary works prove the capacity of poetry to open new waves of artistic creation and innovation.

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