

## ČLÁNKY / ARTICLES

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# Czech Rap Music and Right-Wing Attitudes<sup>1</sup>

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**Czech Rap Music and Right-Wing Attitudes.** In this article we focus on the possibilities of the appropriation of rap music in the Czech Republic by far-right groups. In the first part we look at the relationship between far-right and music scenes in other European countries as well as in the Czech Republic, in particular the relationship to hip-hop. In the second part we look at two groups, Duoradikal and Fuerza Arma. Using the method of content analysis, we focus on the themes expressed by the two groups (and solo projects of their members), in order to see whether they could be labeled as White Power Music.

**Keywords:** Rap, Czech Republic, Hip-hop, far-right, subculture, skinhead, Autonomous nationalists

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## Introduction

There is an undeniable power to music and the lyrical content of songs. Whether it is the aesthetic, associational, or symbolic force of music (Futrell, Simi and Gottschalk 2006:

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275), it can be used in movements, cultural traditions or in everyday life (see also DeNora 2000). As Futrell, Simi and Gottschalk argue, “*the scholarship on music and movement culture tell us that music lyrics offer listeners narratives for making sense of their world, and music rituals allow participants to collectively experience the narratives and sounds in cognitively and emotionally meaningful way*” (2006: 277).

In this article, we are particularly interested in the use of rap music to promote racist and nationalist propaganda and far-right attitudes. First, we offer an overview of different approaches to the conceptualization of White Power Music, and of the instances where rap music was used to promote the White Power propaganda. In the second part of the article, we are looking at two particular Czech rap groups, Fuerza Arma and Duoradikal, which have been accused of promoting right-wing ideas in the past and which (unlike other groups that were accused of the same thing) had real links to the far-right. We provide a brief background to these groups and we use qualitative content analysis of their lyrics in order to see whether rap music production of these artists could be labeled as neo-Nazi (or NS, National Socialist) or White Power respectively.

Our main research questions are: **How were the hip-hop groups connected to the far-right in the Czech Republic presented? Is it possible to label them as White Power bands?**

## 1. White Power Music

If we talk about topics typical of White Power Music (WPM), there are two possible approaches. One is more general and the second one is more specific when it comes to their definitions. Nancy Love represents a very general (and comprehensive) approach in her book *Trendy Fascism: White Power Music and the Future of Democracy*. The author talks about two essential elements that are typical of WPM: “*I argue that two features distinguish white power music from many expressions of racism, sexism, and homophobia in popular music. It is 1) overtly racist and ultranationalist, 2) and directly associated with violence toward historically oppressed groups*” (Love 2016: 12).

However, in our view, this WPM definition is too broad. A more specific definition is offered by Kirsten Dyck, which points out that despite the significant degree of internal heterogeneity of the WPM scene, there is shared foundation on which the majority of WPM bands agree, and which goes beyond the usual, everyday racism. The author states: “*[T]he only unifying ideology for all groups across the genre seems to be a shared belief in a Jewish world conspiracy that threatens to breed the white race to extinction via biological race-mixing and intermarriage with partners from non-white ethnic groups, most other aspects of white-power ideology are subject to discussion and disagreement among and between different white-power groups and believers*” (Dyck 2016: 3).

Relatively brief definition of what White Power Music represents is provided by Langenbach and Raabe: *“It simply refers to the lyrics, which are based on nationalism, racism, anti-Semitism or the glorification of National Socialism/fascism. The term, therefore, embraces so-called “Rock against Communism” (RAC), “National Socialist Hardcore” (NSHC) and “National Socialist Black Metal” (NSBM).”* (Langenbach and Raabe 2013: 249).

Futrell, Simi and Gottschalk who studied the white power music scenes in the U.S., which include a different spectrum of music genres from rock, country to techno, identified fundamental topics expressed in the lyrics that include: *“Aryan nationalism, white power, race war, anti-Semitism, anti-immigration, anti-race-mixing, and white victimization”* (2006: 281).

Even though the Czech Ministry of Interior has been explicitly focusing on the issue of White Power concerts between 2001 and 2011, the definition of White Power Music appears for the first time only in the 2011 report, stating that *“White Power Music band uses racist or Nazi-oriented lyrics and speeches to openly or covertly endorse the idea of the common struggle of white nations in the context of the racial holy war”* (MVČR 2012: 19). Based on the previous reports it turns out that the Czech Ministry of Interior considers WPM a synonym for neo-Nazism, or more precisely right-wing extremism. This approach reflects the experience with Czech far-right scene, which was (unlike in West Europe) for a long time under the influence of the racist branch of skinhead subculture while other forms of far-right groupings were mostly marginal. Therefore, the concept of WPM blended with open neo-Nazism (represented by racist skinheads that formed most of the WPM bands) drawing on topics of world WPM scenes including the issue of race-mixing (relatively popular topic of WP skinheads, see Charvát 2018).

## **2. Far-right attitudes and hip-hop culture**

The dominant narrative pertaining to hip-hop culture<sup>3</sup> is centered around the notion that it represents an alternative platform for expression of people on the margins of the society. According to the origin myth, hip-hop culture was created specifically by young people of color from the boroughs of New York City in the late 1970s. Since then, rap music has become an integral part of today’s popular music worldwide, an international language. This global phenomenon has been appropriated in local settings in order to reflect the realities of the life of young people in dispersed areas, of different social, racial

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<sup>3</sup> While the terms hip-hop and rap are sometimes used interchangeably, it is important to note that within the hip-hop community, hip-hop is the umbrella term describing the lifestyle, attitudes and the culture that includes primarily four elements of expression: graffiti (art), DJing (musical component), breakdance and rap (spoken word).

and cultural background, creating what Alim, Ibrahim and Pennycook (2009) call Global Hip Hop Nation<sup>4</sup>. While some authors praise the power of hip-hop and rap music to bridge the racial divide and unite youth worldwide, others are more skeptical, pointing out other problematic issues within the community that tends to be highly male-dominated. As Rivers (2018) suggests, *“statements related to hip-hop culture as a facilitator of social inclusion and progression risk ignoring how hip-hop culture continue to be hostile toward alternative masculinities, homosexuality, and women, in addition to the ways hip-hop music has been adopted within certain contexts to promote racial division, ethnic purity and extremism”* (102).

Racial and ethnic background play an important role in the discourses of authenticity in hip-hop, along with masculinity, socio-economic status and the vicinity to the underground scene and hip-hop culture (McLeod 1999; see also Ochmann 2013). However, even wider spread of hip-hop was accomplished with the mainstream success of Eminem, as white youth all over the world had a role model to identify with (Hess 2005 Greal 2008).

When talking about hip-hop and rap outside of its birthplace in the U.S. we need to examine the forms of cultural translation and appropriation. The language and cultural differences play a central role, as Pennay suggests, *“musical transmission is better modeled as a selective osmosis”* (2001: 111) where the local youth picks and chooses the aspects they relate to. Subsequently *“a clearly imperfect transmission of the cluster of ideas surrounding this genre has led, as show, to the evolution of related but unique genre, marked by its own internal dynamics and reference points”* (ibid: 128). Hip-Hop and rap were received in Europe in its highly commercialized form, which means that they were embraced as a middle-class commodity first (Franz 2015; Oravcová 2016). These groups then adjusted the musical expression to reflect their lived experience.

The main question then becomes can hip-hop *“provide a legitimate forum for the dissemination of the white nationalist message?”* (Rivers 2018: 104). Czirják suggests that in order to introduce new content and new actors *“steps of decontextualization and recontextualization”* are required (176). It all comes down to one’s definition of rap and/or hip-hop. According to Walach (2010) there are two approaches to hip-hop. The first one, which he calls “instrumental”, happens when one appropriates the elements of hip-hop, hip-hop fashion or even slang. On the other hand, the “subcultural” approach to hip-hop suggest one must also have a so-called hip-hop attitude. In a similar vein, Pennay (2001) argues that “traditionalists” insist on the fundamental connection between rap

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<sup>4</sup> This “imagined community” is defined as “a multilingual, multiethnic ‘nation’ with an international reach, fluid capacity to cross borders, and a reluctance to adhere to the geopolitical givens of the present” (Alim 2009: 3).

and hip-hop, refuting the argument that rap can be appropriated without the knowledge of the history of hip-hop and its connection to African American community.

Rivers (2018), studying the discursive interactions on white nationalists and white supremacy online platforms related to the topic of hip-hop identified four major threads. These include (1) hip-hop as promoting anti-white agenda; (2) different arguments for hating hip-hop (as promoting violence, crime, misogyny and having an overall detrimental effect on society); (3) questions of cultural appropriation (who should and should not participate in hip-hop); and (4) Aryan forms of hip-hop (2018: 110).

These themes are also mirrored in the discussion of appropriation of hip-hop in Europe. Czirják (2015) for example focused on *“social processes that produce and reproduce neo-nationalist ideology through the appropriation of cultural content”* (Czirják 2015: 163). The author looked at the role Hungarian *“national hip-hop”*, on artists that *“articulate nationalist and national identity related themes through this genre”* (Czirják 2015: 173). The author also claims that hip-hop is considered a mainstream genre pertaining to minority groups, in the specific case of Hungary to Roma community. Therefore, it is perceived as antagonistic to Hungarian national culture and traditions (Czirják 2015). On one hand, there are artists who are plain speaking, have a political edge and anti-establishment attitude. These can come to be transformed into nationalistic discourse directed against the “other”. While not necessarily reflecting the attitudes of the artists, these can resonate well with the agenda of the radical right-wing system of reference. On the other hand, there are artists who support right-wing propaganda directly by performing at rallies or directly supporting known neo-Nazi organizations.

The discussions of nationalism with its connection to hip-hop is quite relevant also in the case of Germany. Putnam (2007) asks the question of the use of nationalist and National Socialist references in German rap music claiming that at the very core of hip-hop in particular, and music that supports right wing ideology in general, is precisely the need for a platform for the underprivileged and forgotten in the mainstream society to voice their opinions. Raphael-Hernandez (2004) explored this theme in her essay on the commonalities between African Americans and youth from former East German satellite cities, small towns and rural areas. Her argument is based on two main similarities. Both of these groups are products of (1) economically disadvantaged communities of the “aftermath” of Civil Rights Movement and German reunification respectively; as well as (2) the “individual responsibility” argument, stating that only hard work guarantees personal advancement at all levels (Raphael-Hernandez 2004: 285). However, since the opportunities for advancement are not readily available to everyone, these two groups sink to the bottom of the society experiencing despair over present and future, nihilism and violence. In case of African Americans this translates into higher crime rates and in the case of German youth their uncritical acceptance or even practice of right wing ideology (Raphael-Hernandez 2004: 286).

A specific case involving German rapper Fler caused much debated controversy in 2005. The rapper used Nazi symbolism on his album cover as well as references to slightly altered Hitler quotations in his lyrics (Putnam 2007; Franz 2015). While causing substantial moral panic, Franz (2015) argues that while interpreting these actions, the shock value or the marketing strategy of creating a controversy should not be forgotten. She insists that rather than seeing these references as a rise of the popularity of right-wing ideology or political Neo-Nazism, Fler used these as a *“flirtation with the taboo to increase the sales number”* (2015: 159). Schulze (2013) also argues the stance that extreme right-wing rap groups in Germany represent only fringe internet projects that have no apparent history or ties to hip-hop scenes (mainstream or underground) and who are simply using the format of the musical style of rap.

### 3. Far-Right in the Czech Republic

The roots of the Czech neo-Nazi scene date back to the 1980s. However, the onset of the Communist regime in 1948 ultimately broke any historical ties to historical organizations, and no such significant organizations emerged during the rule of the Communist Party. When the network for the reconstruction of the Czech far-right began to form again in the 1980s, it had to start anew, from scratch. Compared to the development in Western Europe, the formation of the Czech far-right after 1990 had a specific character. Skinhead subculture, or rather its racist branch, played an important role in this formation as since the late 1990s it has become de facto the hegemon of the Czech far-right, a phenomenon that was non-existent in Western Europe (Charvát 2007).

A window of opportunities for the formation of the far-right was shortly opened after the fall of "real socialism", thus allowing the emergence of the Republican Party (SPR-RSC), the first (and the only successful one, parliamentary) far-right party. These conditions also led to the rapid development of the racist skinhead subculture. The atmosphere of the early nineties, including the aggressive anti-communism and nationalism, supported the emergence of the extreme right (Mareš 2003). The popular band Orlík also played a crucial role in this process – it introduced the skinhead subculture in its racist form to Czech youth.

Therefore, skinhead subculture was the main force forming the Czechoslovak far-right after 1989 (in the period between 1998-2010 even dominating the whole far-right). The inner dynamics of this subculture influenced the public activism of the far-right, while oscillating between two positions: (1) sub-cultural (micro-political) and (2) activist (macro-political) (Marchart 2003). The emphasis on the subcultural position has led to a decline in public activities and subcultural “ghettoization”, while the rise of public activities has been linked to the rejection of subculture in favor of a political project (Charvát and Slačálek, in print). There were few attempts to abandon the subculture in

the Czech far-right, but the only successful one was related to the development in Germany. Here, around the year 2000, a new trend of copying the image, icons, and attributes of the far-left began to rise on the far-right scene (Schlembach 2013; Schedler 2014). This trend gained the name "Autonomous Nationalism" (AN) (Vejvodová 2008) and at that time, it penetrated into the Czech Republic as well. The agenda of Autonomous Nationalism included the rejection of the skinhead subculture and the attempt to open the far-right environment to other cultural trends.

The first AN group originated in the Czech Republic in 2004, but the development after 2006, with the peak of the AN activity being 2008-2010, followed by a decline in activity that leads to the decomposition of most groups around 2014/15 (Vejvodová 2011; Charvát in print).

The aim for AN is to engage in political activism and to expand the possibility of reaching out to the broader public, especially youth, which according to AN ideologist is not possible through the skinhead subculture associated mainly with neo-Nazism and violence (Schlembach 2014: 300). As it turned out, the desire for subcultural expression is much stronger than a political calculus. That is why AN attempted to open the far-right to modern influences such as hip-hop, graffiti, straight edge, or Black Bloc (Walach 2010). This tendency, however, has met with resistance from the orthodox part of the racist skinhead subculture.

As a result, roughly between 2008-2010 there was an attempt to step outside of the skinhead subculture. The aim was to reach out to the public, but this time without pretentious attempt to copy the mainstream, but rather with a sincere desire to get rid of subcultural burdens and to offer new alternatives, primarily for the youth. The policy was supposed to be the unifying element instead of the primary subcultural framework. However, the subcultural aspects did not disappear from the activities of the Autonomous Nationalists; they only changed the form and broadened the boundaries. In their attempt to copy the subcultural left, the AN began to appropriate their rhetoric (focusing on the "system," emphasis on social topics, ecology, etc., see Vejvodová 2008), as well as certain subcultural tactics and styles (hardcore, hip-hop, graffiti, veganism among others). The original racist skinhead subculture was criticized and partly mocked. There was also no attempt to explain the diversion from subcultures rationally (Revolta114 2011)<sup>5</sup>: *"We have to ask this question: what is more important to us, the subcultural or the national community? Which characteristics are more crucial to us? Those we share with a relatively small group like the fashion or music style or those we share with the whole nation – the culture, history, language, and fate?"*

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<sup>5</sup> Following the disappearance of the Autonomous Nationalists' websites (www.nacionaliste.com), Revolta114 became the main platform for groups influenced by the ideology of autonomous nationalism.

However, it soon turned out that even for the AN itself, it was not possible to get out of subcultural frameworks. In essence, they attempted to abandon one frame (the skinhead subculture) and replace it with the diffusion of a combination of several modern (but still subcultural) styles, including hardcore, hip-hop, graffiti, vegans, and others (Vejvodová 2011: 154; compare Schlembach 2014; Schedler 2014). The goal was to colonize popular and widespread styles and to use them for their benefit (with the intuitive idea that since such colonization was successful once, with skinhead subculture, this tactic would be work again, with other subcultures).

At the same time, it turned out that this approach was not acceptable to all members of the subcultural far-right, and there was a rather violent conflict between the "modernist" wing of the younger generation, represented by Autonomous Nationalists, and the "traditionalist" wing of older activists (identical conflict occurred in Germany as well, Schlembach 2014; Schedler 2014) centered mainly around the structures of the National Resistance (*Národní odpor, NO*). Generational clash as well as ideological discords were at the core of this conflict (Vejvodová 2011: 150). Autonomous Nationalists argued that it is important to adapt to modern conditions and to attempt to copy successful models used by the political opponents (i.e., the left-wing subcultures, cf. Walach 2010). Skinheads, on the other hand, were rejecting this approach by pointing out that to use cultural frameworks that originated from ideological enemies (left) or ethnic minorities (hip-hop) means to contradict the very roots of national-socialist ideology, which is built on the premise that inferior races cannot create anything successful and that creating a culture is an activity reserved exclusively for Aryans. From this point of view, Autonomous Nationalism represents a betrayal of the original ideas of neo-Nazism, and the orthodox wing regularly accused AN of anarchism. Based on this dispute, some members of the Orthodox wing began to emphasize the original skinhead image and to create (or rather re-create) their own bands. However, this tactic did not help to spread the ideas of neo-Nazism beyond the boundaries defined by the subculture of racist skinheads. Despite the indisputable attempts in the area of street art (created by specialized websites) and music styles (hardcore and hip-hop) (Walach 2010) there was no interconnection or spread of ideas that would influence the original subcultural scenes associated with hip-hop culture, graffiti or hardcore. On the contrary, these subcultures began to actively defend themselves (there are some texts that warn the subculture members about the neo-Nazi infiltration, see Czechcore 2006; Antifa.cz 2007; Antifa 2010a; Kids and Heroes 2013). Only limited number of groups of far-right activists welcomed the attempts at subcultural rebranding.

On the other hand, the hip-hop and the activist scene have also responded to the new development. Concerning the activist groups, the issue of the "NS hip-hop" and, in particular, the Fuerza Arma group were addressed in several texts by the Czech Antifascist Action (Antifa 2010). The cancelation of Fuerza Arma's performance at Hip

Hop Kemp in 2010 was probably related to this coverage. The hip hop portal Hip Hop Molotov, then, followed up with two texts (Hiphopmolotov 2012a, 2012b) that focused on the same trajectory – warning about the fact that Fuerza Arma and Duoradikal have some ties to the far-right environment. Concurrently, musical events dedicated to the fight against racism were also taking place. For example, Hiphop Wars event took place in 2011 (Romea 2011), in 2012 it was the event "Hip-hop against racism" that took place at Prague's Roxy club where the top Czech rappers performed (Kurzy 2012), followed by the release of a song called "Trvalo tři generace" (It Took Three Generations) by Lipo, Bonus and Kato, a protest against racism (Koule 2012).

#### **4. Right-wing attitudes in Czech rap music**

Hip-hop and rap music represent one of the "new" subcultures that were imported once the borders were open. With the new opportunities to travel and access to Western media and later the Internet, young people were able to follow up on the new trends. As mentioned above, the cultural translation and appropriation are highly selective processes and so was the case of the Czech Republic. Here white middle class men took up hip-hop in its commodified form primarily (see also Oravcová 2016).

Walach (2010) argues that in the more or less 25 years of Czech rap music production, the refusal of racism and taking a stance against right-wing extremists, including right-wing skinheads is a permanent theme in the repertoire of Czech rappers. These attitudes are expressed either in lyrics or by attending particular events "against racism" (Walach 2010: 52-53). In his article Walach was examining the possibility of hip-hop being infiltrated by the right-wing ideology and used as a recruitment of youth while concluding that it is highly unlikely.

The specific moment that has become typical for autonomous nationalism worldwide is the adopting of left-wing patterns, whether symbolic rhetoric or matters of style. This way, AN took over the Black Bloc tactics, but at the same time attempted to include hip-hop, graffiti, and SxE styles into the far-right environment, while incorporating into their rhetoric social and environmental issues as well as general proclamations to fight the "System." However, opening up to the new scenes did not have the desired effect. On the one hand, the incorporation of new styles did not lead to new recruitments (or were very limited), and on the other, conflicts with the older, openly neo-Nazi generation of activists emerged. Graffiti faced relatively small resistance (the writings on the walls always belonged to the strategies employed by far-right), even though there were disagreeing comments. "*While we punish graffiti as the leftist dirt destroying our cities, the autonomous nationalists intensely began to use graffiti in their propaganda*" (Blood and Honour 2012).

The case of hip-hop incorporation was much more complicated, since as music and subcultural style hip-hop was associated with the “black ghetto” environment. In his paper, Jan Šamánek (in print) focused on the possibility of hip-hop being used to spread propaganda by using critical discursive analysis of internet-based discussions within National Socialist groups (to find out how they perceive hip-hop in relation to the spread of their attitudes). If we are to understand hip-hop as a mere form that can be filled with unlimited content (versus hip-hop as a life style connected to non-European values and ethnic minorities and to drugs) the connection with Neo-Nazi values is quite possible. The author also argues that the far-right scene does not inspire to “infiltrate” Czech hip-hop scene, but to create its own sub-genre, the National Socialist Hip-Hop. In order to do that, hip-hop must first be detached from the cultural contexts it was created in, meaning all its non-European values. Then it has the potential to serve to improve the image of Neo-Nazi groups and recruit the youth. And only then it has the potential to influence the youth that has not developed and understanding of or is not interested in the hip-hop culture and its roots and history. Contributors to the largest Czech neo-Nazi internet forum, hooligans.cz supports this argument by stating: *"I am a racist and I hate drugs, I don't mind hip hop music, but I hate hip-hop as a lifestyle"* [Hooligans - Heiselpapier 29-7-2008 20:02].

However, not even this approach would 100% guarantee that the hip-hop would be accepted. Although AN has argued that it not be possible to address the current youth with the outdated Oi! Music style and that it is necessary to adapt to current youth styles, while adding that if the enemy develops something that works, it would be counter-intuitive not to make use of it as well, this approach was hitting to a deeper contradiction that - although often intuitively - many neo-Nazis perceived. The willingness to admit that people of color had invented something successful was in conflict with the basic racist narrative - the belief that inferior races in principle are not able to create anything meaningful and successful because they lack the very ability to create in the first place. To support the argument, we provide another statement from the hooligans.cz forum: *"Europe is the cradle of Aryan civilization is. So NS must be associated with the European subculture. Everything comes from race, including culture. So, while one builds temples and composes operas, the other builds slums and composes perverse and vulgar rap noise. RACE CREATES CULTURE, AND THESE ARE UNSEPARABLE"* [Hooligans - Wotan14 16-22-2010 0:30]. Similarly, Stabber (Tomas Kebza, a long-time neo-Nazi activist and representative of the traditionalist approach) spoke to the issue of hip-hop: *"For example, me personally, I do not like HC, but everybody has the right to listen to whatever they want. As long as it is not a negro rap and hip-hop, really, that has absolutely nothing to do with the legacy of the white race and the European culture and tradition."* (Hooligans.CZ 2008). It was this approach that ultimately prevailed on the far-right scenes, and the discrepancies between AN and the rest of the subcultural far-right led to its dissolution.

Inspired by these two articles (Walach 2010, Šamánek in print) and recent developments in Czech rap music, we look at two particular groups, Fuerza Arma and Duoradikal and their rap music production in order to see whether the claims that these can be labeled as White Power bands are valid. First, we will provide brief description of these groups and their affiliations with right wing parties, and then we will identify the core topics expressed in their lyrics using qualitative content analysis.

In this article we focus on the Czech scene. Although over time, some of the Czech hip-hop artists have been accused of nationalism or racism, real links to far-right structures exist only in the case of two formations: Duoradikal and Fuerza Arma. Only these groups were mentioned in the reports of the Ministry of the Interior (MVČR 2012 52-55, MVČR 2013 17), discussing in particular the background of Fuerza Arma. Both groups also gave interviews to the far-right media (Svobodný prostor in case of the Duoradikal and website of Radical Boys in the case of Fuerza Arma) and both were shared by far-right portals (Národní myšlenka shared track “V barvách betonový šedi” / In The Colors of Concrete Gray by Duoradikal and Revolta114, shared the track “Nezapomeneme” / We Won’t Forget by Pretorian, a member of Fuerza Arma).

We analyzed all song lyrics by both groups, including the solo tracks of individual members of both bands. Apart from the collective albums, members of these groups also produced music as solo artists, sometimes collaborating with other members of their group, sometimes working alone. Therefore, at times it is complicated to separate the production of the members of each group. In the case of Duoradikal, Majkyno and Erko produced some tracks together under a different name than Duoradikal, and some tracks were produced solely by Myjakyno. In the case of the Pretorian (Fuerza Arma's most prominent character who adopted some of the topics of the Czech far-right), his solo tracks are still usually associated with his membership in the group Fuerza Arma. Therefore, we believe it is legitimate to include these lyrics in the analysis as well precisely because it is not possible to distinguish between the solo production and the collective one.

## **5. Methodological framework**

To answer our research questions, we use the method of qualitative content analysis (Dvořáková 2010). For the analysis, we use a set of data that includes written and recorded interviews, discussions on internet platforms, and the lyrics of both groups. Duoradikal were active on the scene only for a short time. Therefore the lyrics available were limited. For the purpose of this paper, we analyzed nine tracks (the group’s projects as well as solo work) to show the predominant themes. Since Fuerza Arma was active much longer than Duoradikal the data available are also more abundant, we analyzed 101 song lyrics.

We analyzed the lyrics of each song in a two-step process. First, we used the inductive method to identify the central themes that appeared in these lyrics (Dvořáková 2010: 98). We were not interested in their frequency (characteristic for quantitative content analysis); instead, we were looking for the main themes pertaining to our research questions, their form and the context of its usage. In the second phase, the axial coding, we focused on the relationship between the codes and categories, the basis for our interpretations (Hendl 2005). In order to increase the validity of our interpretations, we analysed the data set separately followed by a discussion of our results. We used this approach to decrease the possibility of our personal biases to influence our interpretations as well (Bengtsson 2016: 11)

Following the concept of White Power Music, we specifically focused on the codes pertaining to: hypermasculinity, nationalism, racism, anti-Semitism and Jewish conspiracies, anti-immigration, anti-race mixing, white victimization and White Supremacy. Our aim was to see how many (if at all) of these topics match the specific theme of White Power Music in order to verify whether the two groups (Duoradikal and Fuerza Arma) could be included in this category.

### **5.1. Duoradikal**

The group Duoradikal (DR) existed only for short period of time, from February 2011 until October 2012. Subsequently, the two members of the band (performing under the nicknames Majkyno and Erko) continued to cooperate until about 2013 and then Majkyno continued to perform as a solo artist until 2015. The beginning of the Duoradikal activities thus coincided with a time when the Autonomous Nationalists in the Czech Republic have already retreated from the scene as the space for the various hybrid tactics that have just begun as the result of the work of the Autonomous Nationalists opened up. From the beginning, Duoradikal presented themselves as a patriotic formation, with connections to the far-right structures, which is evident by the choice of media platforms they appeared on, and by the iconography they used. For example, Majkyno's Facebook page (formerly the group's page) design includes a Slavic spinning wheel, which incorporates the old-German Algiz rune used in Nazi-Germany as the "rune of life" (*Lebensrune*), a symbol very popular in the international neo-Nazi movement. The song "Svatováclavská" (For St. Wenceslas), an independent production of Majkyno, was composed and used as an invitation to the St. Wenceslas demonstration in 2012, the traditional event of the Autonomous Nationalists. It is not surprising, then, that on his pages Majkyno often referred to the right-wing organizations linked to the original neo-Nazi environment such as Generace Identity (Generation of Identity) and Pro-Vlast (For the Homeland).

Duoradikal always portrayed themselves as a rap band, although at the same time they suggested certain distance from the hip-hop subculture. During an interview for the far-right internet platform Svobodny Prostor in April 2012 the group addressed this issue

three times. First, they stated their goals: *“We want to make rap music in the Czech Republic in a Czech way, our own way, incorporating our culture! We want to address the problems in our society, what we don’t like, how we see things, bring our point of view. Our music is rap music, but rap fans are certainly not the only target audience for us.”* At the same time the group talked about the roots of the hip-hop culture (which, as we have seen, is perceived as highly controversial issues within the far-right circles): *“Rap is ideal as a form of expression, but we were not into it from the early age. We are not concerned about its provenience, whether it is black or white. For example, HC bands could not play the drums, because we believe they come from Africa. No matter the music genre, it is important to make it your own. Do it your way and not let yourself to be influenced. Then, also rap can become “white”. If some insist on dividing it like that.”* And finally, the issue came up again when the duo talked about their favorite artists: *“We do not really listen to rap that much. And when we do, we listen to Czech, Slovak and Russian rap. But only few of the artists, for example Fuerza Arma, Momo, Kali, Luger and others. We also listen to Orlík, Ondrej Ďurica, Conflict88, Project Vandal... ”.* The second group of listed artists belong to the nationalist (Orlík, Ďurica) as well as the openly neo-Nazi wing (Conflict88, Project Vandal) having some type of relationship to the subculture of racist skinheads. The interview ends with a clear statement: *“The hip-hop culture over here and the trends surrounding it are not appealing to us at all”* (Svobodný prostor 2012).

In their lyrics, Duoradikal construct their own notion of authenticity by claiming their masculinity, belonging to the so call “underground” (in comparison to the “soft” Czech rap), as well as having lived the “street life” involving street fights. In their songs we can find references to their hometown of Pardubice, described with a dose of patriotism. According to the group, the city has lot of social problems and is full of drug addicts (*V barvách betonový šedi, In the colors of concrete gray*) while referring to themselves as “Pardubice Patriots” (Svět DR, *The world of DR*).

A specific theme that stretches as a red thread through Duoradikal's lyrics is their relationship to martial arts. This is reflected both in specific texts (“Fightmusic”, “Do těla” *Train hard*) as well as in the overall image of the group. The emphasis on martial arts is linked to authenticity, which is redeemed by “blood and sweat” but also to a healthy lifestyle, especially the rejection of drugs. Drugs appear as an issue more often in DR texts, the group is attacking drug addicts and dealers, while they suggest the problem of drug dealers should be solved violently:

*I had enough of those fucked up high dealers  
an ax on those who sell the shit in the tunnel.  
Children go unattended; dealers are on the horizon,  
your children end up on the ground, under the influence of Meth.  
Zloději dětství (Childhood thieves)*

The theme of drug (ab)use is just one example of issues expressed in the production of Duoradikal that are in tune with the attitudes of far-right. Other themes include question of nationalism associated with the adoration of the Slavic heritage, and resistance against the “system”, in particular the criticism of the current state of the society, and the rejection of “minorities”. Nationalism represents a regular theme in the lyrics of DR, however, their version of patriotism is usually perceived as something inconsistent with the current system, being suppressed by force:

*The love for the homeland is still restrained in us.  
They teach us and force us not to fight,  
for our country, to silently obey everyone.  
Dvojí mírou – vlastenecká (Double standard – Patriotic)  
There is no need to be afraid to express your opinions  
Patriotic things, I am always proud to support  
Hanba všem Čechům bez cti a hrdosti (Shame on all Czechs without honour and  
pride)*

The already mentioned song “Svatováclavská” (For St. Wenceslas) generally aims to support the Czech history and identity. Even here we can find the verse referring to the threats to the Czech homeland: “*They died so we could live/ they were building a homeland that somebody wants to take away from us now*”. In this song the group is praising the work of the Slavic forefathers while warning against the new “system”. The nationalism expressed by DR is quite often mixed with racial themes:

*I proudly support my race, my nation  
I'm not ashamed of it.  
Patriot in the first place,  
So fucking what*

Hanba všem Čechům bez cti a hrdosti (Shame on all Czechs without honour and pride).

The references to the color of one’s skin are also present in another song, this time as a means of distancing themselves from the commercial rap, which only shows their familiarity with the image of rap artists worldwide.

*Radical World of DR, hard underground,  
we don't give a fuck about what is modern and trendy*

*All three of us are white,  
Do not expect rap from MTV  
Svět DR (The world of DR)*

The nationalism of DR is also connected to Pan-Slavic elements. The aforementioned track also includes verse: *“The Slavic culture gets stronger with every word/ Pride in our hearts, Czech language in our mouth”*. This theme, although not essential in the lyrics of DR, appears again in the solo production of Majkyno as one of the key elements.

There are two approaches to the criticism of the system, another significant issue addressed in the lyrics of Duoradikal. On one hand, the system means the government, as in the “Dvojí mírou – vlastenecká” song: *“In the meantime the government continues to steal and hold their position/ they eat all the meat and sere us the bare bones”*. However, the lyrics continue with the verse: *“I open my eyes, I don’t want to be controlled/ by the capitalist government holding us against the wall”*. The element of anti-capitalism is typical of the Autonomous Nationalists as well as the group DR. On the same note, the track “Absurdistan” (The Absurd Country) contains references to the hatred towards the government, that needs to be burned and destroyed.

On the other hand, the concept of the system in the group’s lyrics is quite often associated with criticism of minorities. In the song “Dvojí mírou – vlastenecká” the duo states: *“Fuck the system and the privileges of minorities/ To take a stand against them is a crime”*. Moreover, in the song “Absurdistan” the issue of the portrayal of minorities is connected to the media:

*So, put your hands up, revolution is coming,  
I still stand for us, the ones with the opinion of majority,  
Fuck the media and their oppressed minority.  
Absurdistan (The Absurd Country)*

On the same track, the verses continue: *“Reversed racism; no one is doing anything about it/ Gypsy has no respect, the barracks only contribute”*.

The assertion of masculinity in the lyrics of DR is not only evident by the references to the “street life”, but also by the blatant homophobia:

*I am sick of these human swine.  
That’s why he’ll be feeling like in Belgrade now,  
like a fucked-up fag on a gay parade.  
We want clean streets and our children safe.  
Zloději dětství (Childhood thieves)*

There are also several references to the skinhead subculture, or rather generally far-right wing iconography, present in the lyrics of DR. A direct reference is evident in the “Fightmusic” track: *“When you see the monsters with bald heads/ Take a good look around, people are standing with us”*. It is a question of interpreting the reference to “bald heads”, whether it means the skinhead subculture, or generally alludes to the short hair fashion of teens that regularly work out. We can also presume that within the skinhead scene this verse will be interpreted unambiguously as a reference to their subculture. The support of the band for the popular skinhead clothing labels Lonsdale and Everlast represent another point of reference. In the track “Svět DR” (The world of DR) in particular the band rejects the traditional hip-hop clothing brands in favor of *“Alpha industries, Pitbull and Lonsdale”*, brands popular among skinheads.

To sum up, the themes we identified in the lyrics of the group Duoradikal include: nationalism, questions of race, white victimization, homophobia, anti-minorities attitudes, and hatred towards the system. To a certain degree the band also addresses “foggy” conspiracy. On the other hand, anti-Semitism and Jewish conspiracies are missing, as well as clearly defined white supremacy, and segregation or anti-race-mixing issues. We do not find any mentions of National Socialism adoration, as we presumed. It is clear, therefore, that the group Duoradikal has fulfilled some characteristics necessary for inclusion in the WPM, but not all of them, especially the quite substantial ones, anti-Semitism and White supremacy, are missing.

## 5.2. Fuerza Arma

Fuerza Arma, the group hailing from Ostrava, represents a different example than Duoradikal. The band was active between 2009 and 2014. After a break the members of the group tried to renew the formation in 2016 but without a major success. There were two key personalities in the band – Daniel Katánik aka Clip, the leading member (especially at the beginnings), and a successful Thai boxer Jakub Gazdík also known as Pretorian.

Since its inception, Fuerza Arma has moved around the martial arts circles (MVČR 2012: 52-55) but has also established itself on the hip-hop scene. The band was promoted by Mafia Records, one of the hip-hop labels focusing on “Gangsta rap”. Fuerza Arma still has its tags on the hip-hop portal Rap City (7 articles from July 2013 to April 2016) and Hip-hop Land (5 articles from December 2014 to April 2016). In both cases, the solo production of Pretorian is included under the label Fuerza Arma, as we pointed out at the beginning of our article. In 2010, Fuerza Arma was even supposed to perform at the Hip Hop Kemp, the biggest hip-hop event in Czech Republic, but their appearance was canceled based on the group’s suspicion of the propaganda of racism and neo-Nazism.

Unlike Duoradikal, Fuerza Arma has always claimed their connection to hip-hop subcultures and the affiliation with the far-right movement was evident in the personal

relationships of the broader Fuerza Arma crew (MVČR 2013) rather than expressed in their lyrics. The inclination to far-right ideology started to appear later, especially under the influence of Pretorian (approximately after the release of the *Proti všem (Against all)* record in 2012) who addresses these issues more in his solo production.

The main themes of Fuerza Arma's lyrics fall well within the gangsta rap genre, something that the band itself refers to as "criminal rap"<sup>6</sup>. The most frequent and elaborated theme is that of self-adoration, "ego trip" of the members of the band as well as the broader FA crew.

*Understand we are the FA, we can't be defeated  
We are the crew that rules over everyone here  
It's our destiny, our fate  
Game Over*

*Criminal rap, bitch, criminal rap  
Lock yourself at home, today the blood is gonna be raining outside  
Fanaticism in the eyes, for Fuerza Arma, 61!  
Alone against all the bitches, I will destroy this scene  
Intro*

The hatred towards the rest of the Czech rap scene is very evident in the lyrics of Fuerza Arma. Similar attitudes can be found in the "Tohle je válka" (*This is war*) song:

*Don't go out tonight, the blood will be raining  
From the street to the studio, faggots take the cab,  
In ambulances, 61 street rap Ostrava.  
When this record finishes, the whole Prague will be burning.*

Besides the self-representation, hatred towards Prague is a constant reference, along with the proclaimed homosexuality of every Fuerza Arma competitor. Other Czech rap artists are considered "too soft" and unauthentic, therefore the homophobic language:

*Rappers do not know what they're talking about, lying like little bitches  
You all need sex change surgery, you behave as hoes.  
Trans, homo, pussies, whores,*

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<sup>6</sup> Interestingly, the band is also affiliated to another group that is frequently labeled as criminal gang, the motorcycle club Hell's Angels. A reference can be found for example in the lyrics for "Gangland": "8,1 support you will know what Gangland is (...) red and white world, you'll understand what hell means, motherfucker".

*None of you has the balls to destroy me, you don't!*

64 Barz

Homophobia is quite regular in Fuerza Arma lyrics and functions primarily to assert the masculinity of the members of the crew. It is evident in the lyrics as well as in the overall image of the band (tattoos, martial arts, working out, fighting dogs, preferred clothing brands, short haircuts). These attitudes are exemplified in the song “Dosáhnout na nebe” (*Reaching the Sky*): “I am the only heterosexual rapper in the Czech Republic among all the Jan Zelenkas<sup>7</sup>” and in the song “Svatá válka” (*Holy War*): “Fuck the whole Czech homo-rap, fuck the whole Hip Hop Kemp”.

Hand in hand with the homophobic attitudes and emphasis on the tough masculinity comes the blatant misogyny of Fuerza Arma. The songs where women appear are almost exclusively (apart from the track “Bez tebe” *Without You*) built on the humiliation of women, who are seen as whores who do not deserve any respect. This theme appears regularly as a secondary motif as well as in songs that are describing the band's relationship to women such as “Blbá čůza” (*Dumb Hoe*) or “Projekt kurva” (*Project whore*). The general attitude towards women could be summed up in the following verses:

*You're a hoe just like the others*

*Good to fuck and throw away*

*Drink, take picture of the tits and not see again.*

Schody do nebe (*Stairway to Heaven*)

Much like the case of Duoradikal, the assertion of tough masculinity (and therefore authenticity) is supported by the references to violence and experiences with street fights:

*He's bigger than you, so thanks for the weapons,*

*With a big knife in your hand the situation changes.*

*No fair game, no! Fuck up and destroy,*

*That's street, no ring, no white towel.*

No tak ho sejmi (*Take him down*)

The locality and hometown of Ostrava also plays major role in the production of the band. Here as well the town is described as “concrete jungle” full of issues, dirt, drug addicts, and street violence that only the strongest individuals can survive:

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<sup>7</sup> Jan Zelenka is openly gay YouTuber who also briefly hosted a radio show on Radio Spin 96.2, Czech hip-hop radio station.

*Brought up, influenced by the streets of Ostrava,  
Only those living in this hell can understand  
Concrete jungle that created Fuerza,  
Created legends, Czech street rap cult.  
Cancelling our shows, monitored by the Police a.c.a.b.  
61*

The criminal lifestyle does not include women only, also money is a permanent theme in the group's lyrics. As they state: *"Making money, fuck bitches, that's what it's all about"* (Dělat love, jebat kurvy/ *Make Money, Fuck Bitches*).

*Gypsy dream, we want to be covered in gold.  
Hoodies on our heads, grams in our pockets,  
street business, street making money.  
Vítej (Welcome)*

The relationship to drugs changed during the existence of the group. While in the beginning, when the band claimed "criminal rap" and more generally "thug life", drugs were part of the game, including the selling of drugs as part of "street business". For example, in the song "Troublemaker" the lyrics included: *"My fans are not students from good families/ doped up like mutants, meth under their noses"*. In their later work (and under the influence of Pretorian) drugs are portrayed as something dangerous, especially harmful to children, which can be exemplified by the lyrics of the song "Betonová láska" (*Concrete Love*): *"I see small children that should be playing/ not with the drugs in hands though, taking them around the corner"*.

Hand in hand with the genre of "criminal rap" goes the negative relationship with the police. We will not find this aspect in the production of Duoradikal, even though it could be expected considering their activity within the far-right scene. However, in the lyrics of Fuerza Arma, dissing the police is a recurrent theme:

*Never give testimony, death to all the fucking police  
You never know who's watching, always cower your face  
Děti ulice (Street Kids)*

*Persecuted and questioned by the cops,  
Never, no collaboration with whores,  
Death to informants, those who betrayed and will betray,  
Remember, betrayal is never forgiven.*

Pouze bůh mně může soudit (*Only God Can Judge Me*)

Since Fuerza Arma became famous on the far-right scene, this narrative changed and became much broader. In the song “Betonový sen” (*Concrete Dream*) the band talks about the fact that the police were surveilling their performances and send shout outs to their fans in prisons. Similarly, in the song “Dosáhnout na nebe” (*Reaching the Sky*) the group claims that the police were also examining their lyrics, and finally in the song “Ostravští banditi” (*The Bandits of Ostrava*): “*Secret police all around us, we are the pain in their ass/ as during the red star era, there is no freedom*”.

Here we can observe certain influence of politicization of the band where the animosity towards the police is joined by the comparison to the Communist regime. The narrative of the band is then changed to a story of “modern dissidents”, whose voice is being silenced the same way it was done during the Communist dictatorship. This was also the element of tactical equipment of Autonomous Nationalists.

The band was also aware of their media portrayal and their perceived connection to extremist groups and far-right scene. Therefore, they address the issue in their lyrics distancing themselves and refusing the Neo-Nazi label:

*They say we're Nazi (what?)  
Cunt wake up (bitch)  
Tell me please how a Nazi could do rap  
(how the fuck)  
Co dělaj ted' (What Are They Doing Now)*

Here we move to the issue of the far-right influence on the production of Fuerza Arma. Can we find certain narratives that correspond to the strategies of Autonomous Nationalism? As was already mentioned, there are just five songs that include such topics (Nezapomenu 2010; Requiem pro ČR 2012; Dvojí metr 2013; Národe vstaň 2015; Evropa v plamenech 2017) which were mostly authored by Pretorian but were always connected to Fuerza Arma.

Nationalism is the main topic of these five songs although it is connected to other issues as well. These include the aversion towards the government, and the aversion towards minorities and immigrants. The song “Nezapomenu” (*I Won't Forget*) is basically a patriotic song that talks about the heroes from the past and defining themselves against Nazism as well as Communism. The song “Requiem pro ČR” (*Requiem for Czech Republic*) represents a critique of the political scene. The line “*I love my country, my beautiful land/ I am really ashamed of our Czech government*” is also the motto used by Autonomous Nationalists. The song also includes references to corruption of the government, the protection of criminals and the lack of means of protection for the ordinary people. In the

song “Dvojí metr” (*Double Standard*) Pretorian aims his verses primarily at the Roma minority as it includes popular narratives connected to Roma issues. While they claim the obligatory “I’m not racist” stance, they do comment on the “Roma Problem” issues, one of them being the question of housing:

*Why do Roma get new flats when they're not working?  
For free!  
Then they destroy it all and get another one right away*

These attitudes are in line exemplify the white victimization as the band claims that the Czech nation is actually the oppressed minority. The situation is, according to these narratives, caused by the conspiracy of the media and the establishment

*Media know about it very well and still they are silent  
Sometimes non-important twisted reports full of lies  
Our strong words while drinking beer must turn to action  
Because government will not do anything.*

In the track “Národe vstaň” (*Nation Get Up*) the band returns to the topic of national history. Additionally, they also criticize the European Union:

*I see parricide sitting at the Brussel table  
Thanks to these motherfuckers we are going to have huge problems  
Thanks to these pigs our culture will soon disappear  
They want to bring over culture that is completely foreign to us  
No immigrants, we don't want our land to be destroyed  
Where are the times when the people would fight for their nation?*

The song is also a call for revolution:

*It's about time to show that we're not just stupid sheep  
To show clearly that we do not want treasonous people  
When there is no other way, with weapons in our hand  
Nation stand up! It's time for revolution*

The last song, “Evropa v plamenech” (*Europe Aflame*) deals with the migration crisis. Unlike other lyrics, here they focus on Islam and Muslim community:

*You allowed the Trojan Horse to Europe*

*The nations are tormented in violence and hatred  
Against those that you hold so close in your arms  
Our ancestors fought against for centuries  
They were dying on the battle fields protecting the borders  
Gave their own lives to preserve our tradition  
Our culture for next generations  
And now, we are at war again thanks to the sell outs  
Evropa v plamenech (Europe Aflame)*

The imaginary “they” are responsible for the current state of affairs. “They” can be anyone from the government, European Union or the NGOs. It is important to note that the visual representations of the songs “Evropa v plamenech” and “Národe vstaň”, that were posted on the personal YouTube channel of Pretorian, contain the graphic design of pro-Vlast, one of the succession organizations of Autonomous Nationalists.

The song lyrics of Fuerza Arma include the topics of: nationalism (although mainly in the later production and solo production of Pretorian, who is the primary focusing on these themes), homophobia, resistance to the system (and police), anti-minority and white victimization and one case of an anti-immigration song associated with Islamophobia. In the Fuerza Arma lyrics, we also found topics typical of WPM, but to a lesser extent than Duoradikal. Again, the themes of Anti-Semitism, the Jewish conspiracy, and the clearly defined white supremacy are missing. The question of race is even less pronounced in the production of Fuerza Arma than in the case of Duoradikal. Fuerza Arma never uses the word “race” in lyrics and verbally distances itself from racism as well. Even more so than in the case of Duoradikal, only some of the characteristics necessary for inclusion into WPM are met.

## **6. Conclusion**

When comparing the formation and expressions of Duoradikal and Fuerza Arma, it was quite obvious that there is a clear difference between a group that is rooted primarily in hip-hop subculture, and only partly uses certain postulates of the far-right and, on the other hand, a group that came from the right edge of the political spectrum and use hip-hop only as an instrument for the expression of extreme right-wing propaganda.

Although Autonomous Nationalism became an essential element within the extreme right, it was unable to take charge and change the shape of the far-right as its activists had anticipated. On the contrary, due to the disputes between the orthodox (skinhead) and modernist (autonomous-nationalist) wing, the whole subcultural extreme right (see Slačálek and Charvát, in the press) dissolved.

As Walach (2010) assumed, there was a hip-hop formation formed in the far-right, the Duoradikal analyzed in our text, but this group only existed for a relatively short period of time, and it was not accepted by the whole far-right scene, and it did not go beyond it either. Duoradikal has gained some notoriety among the structures associated with Autonomous Nationalism, as reflected, for example, in the activities to support the St. Wenceslas demonstration, but beyond that it failed to break through the Czech far-right. Fuerza Arma was even less accepted in the far-right circles. The members of the group maintained some personal contacts with the members of the Czech far-right, but they did not participate on any of their activities.

This was also because hip-hop subculture, or rather some of its parts, were against this new trend, and the artists associated with the extreme right were pushed outside the main hip-hop scene. This also relates to the second band analyzed, Fuerza Arma. Neither of the two groups can be described as NS hip-hop. They were associated with neo-Nazism by the media, and this label was also taken up by some of the members of hip-hop subculture.

It is interesting to note that Duroadikal cannot be classified as NS hip-hop, instead – in accordance with the model of Autonomous Nationalism – the group tended to a specific form of Czech neo-fascism, even though the band had no problem working with references to race, which is more typical for neo-Nazi structures.

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