

# SIXTY-FIVE YEARS ON THE 'JOURNAL' AND ITS PREDECESSOR

BY

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*Papers on Engineering Subjects*, predecessor of the present *Journal of Naval Engineering*, first appeared as an occasional publication in August 1920 with the blessing of the then Engineer-in-Chief, Engineer Vice-Admiral Sir

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## PAPERS ON ENGINEERING SUBJECTS.

No. 1. August 1920.

Issued by the Engineer-in-Chief's Department, Admiralty, for  
the information of Engineering Officers in H.M. Navy.

Nothing contained in this publication is to be understood to  
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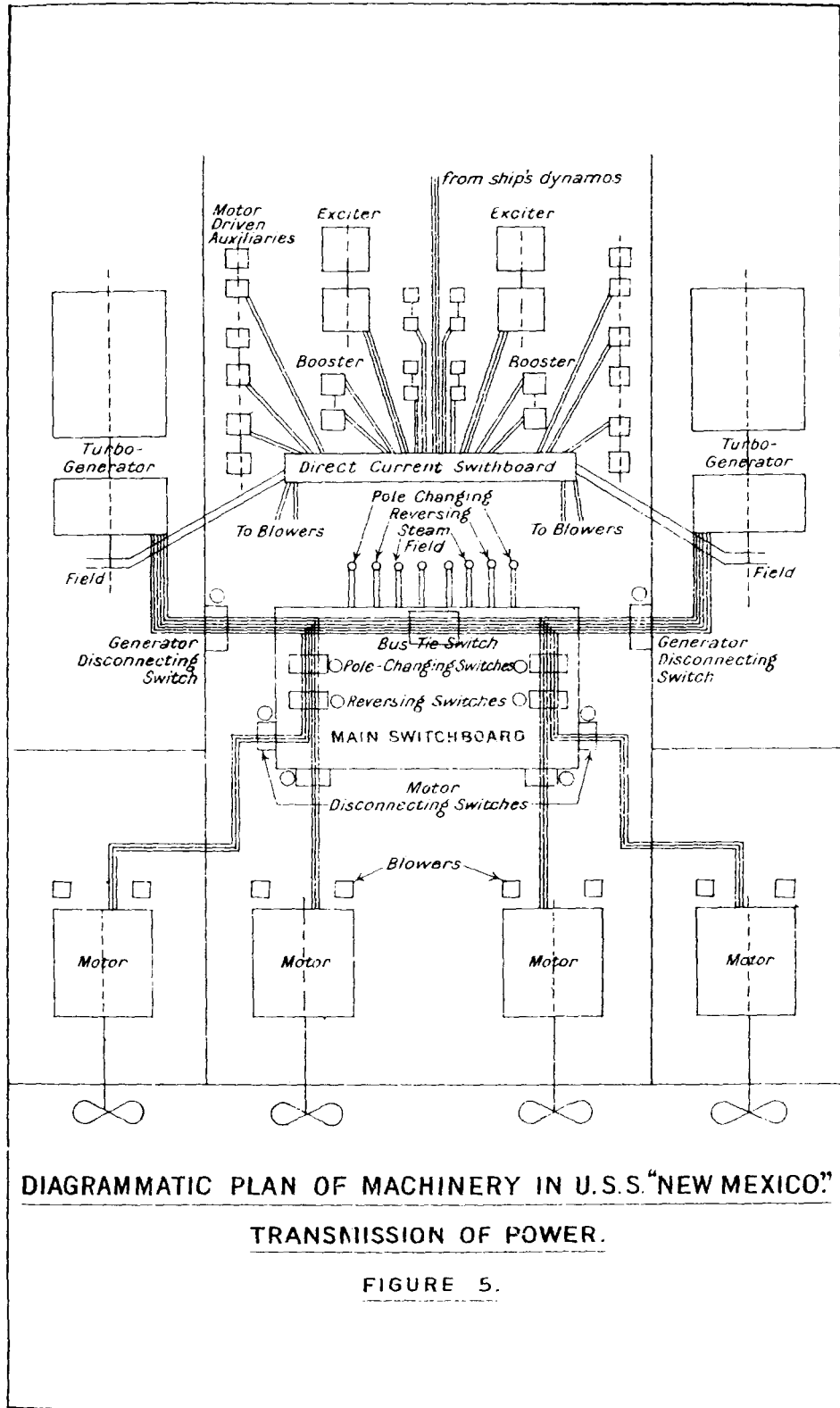
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may be retained for reference if required.*

FIG. 1—THE COVER OF THE FIRST ISSUE  
(REDUCED IN SIZE)

George Goodwin. There was no editor appointed as such. In fact Engineer Commander C. J. Hawkes, O.B.E., B.Sc., R.N., the first Superintendent of the Admiralty Engineering Laboratory, who had been primarily responsible for the first appearance of the *Papers* had been offered the post, but in the event it was decided to publish within the E-in-C's department. Hawkes left the Service soon after the end of the first World War and held the post of Professor of Engineering at Armstrong College, Newcastle, until 1946.



DIAGRAMMATIC PLAN OF MACHINERY IN U.S.S. "NEW MEXICO"

TRANSMISSION OF POWER.

FIGURE 5.

10246. 32374/P33.

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FIG. 2—ELECTRIC PROPULSION, FROM 'PAPERS ON ENGINEERING SUBJECTS', No. 2, APRIL 1921 (REDUCED)

In his introduction to the first issue the Engineer-in-Chief stated that 'The object of this publication is to bring to the notice of Engineer Officers from time to time engineering information, not otherwise generally available to them, which is likely to prove of value and assistance in carrying out their official duties'. Sixty-five years have now passed and the time would seem appropriate for a review of the *Papers* and its natural offspring, for few of those of us of the older generation are likely to be around when the Journal achieves its centenary.

The scope of the articles in No. 1, which were all of a strictly technical nature and all anonymous, ranged from 'Recent modifications in boiler design', through 'Aluminium alloy pistons for submarine oil engines', to 'An investigation of metals used in the machinery of German warships'. There was, in addition, a section devoted to 'Notes on machinery defects and practice' including such diverse subjects as a 'Defect in Michell thrust block segment' (presumably in a power station since it involved a 5000 kW generating set) and 'Engine bearing defects developed when towing'.

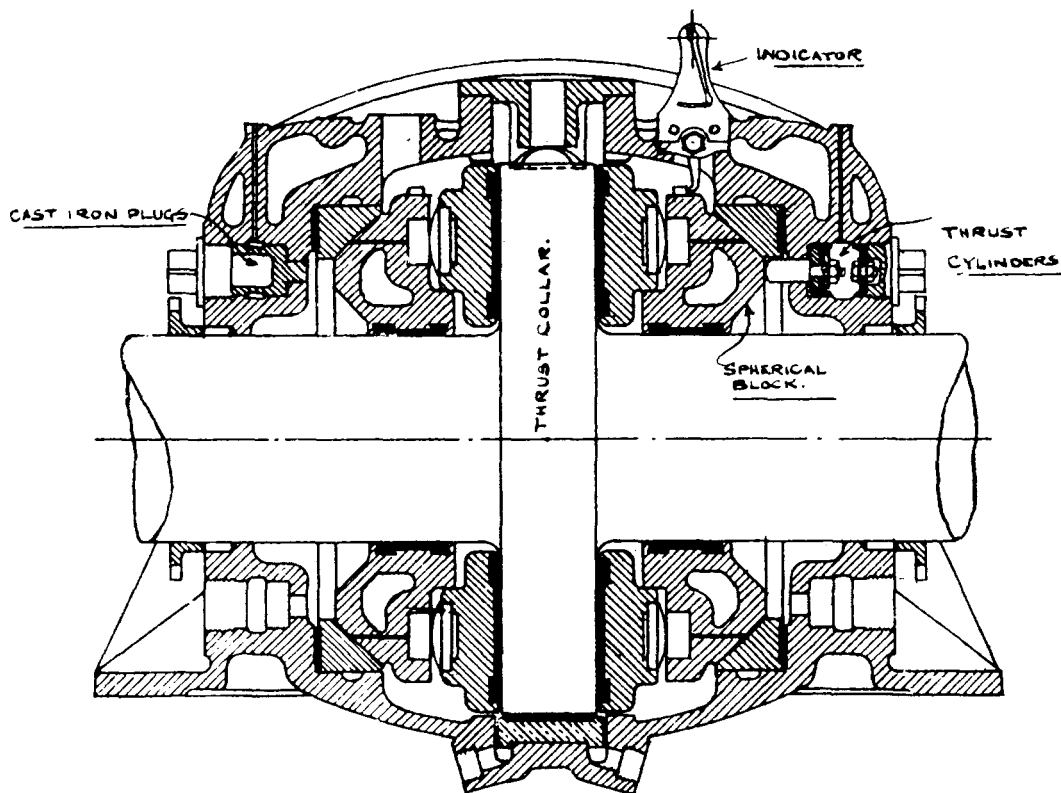


FIG. 3—MICHELL THRUST BLOCK FITTED WITH THRUST METERS, FROM NO. 3, APRIL 1922

No. 1 embraced a slim 39 pages plus illustrations and diagrams but with the publication of issue No. 2 in April 1921 this was expanded to a more substantial 82 pages. Evidently the publication filled a much wanted need since issue No. 6 in April 1924 comprised no fewer than 112 pages dealing with such matters as 'Notes on coal' and 'The induction micrometer torsionmeter' (the unloved Siemens-Ford torsionmeter which was to remain in use by the Royal Navy, albeit in a somewhat modified state, for the next sixty years). Interesting also was the first article dealing with the gas turbine which appeared in No. 7 (January 1927).

Publication continued intermittently through the 1920s and 1930s with little change in format or make-up, other than the inclusion of occasional articles of a historical nature such as 'Service motor boats, history, progress and development of machinery for' (No. 10, September 1928), until No. 16 which appeared with a weighty 189 pages in December 1937. Subjects then included 'Coal versus oil for the Navy', 'Stainless and heat resisting steels', and 'Notes' dealing with 'Fitting replace wheel to a Brown Curtis turbine' in H.M.S. *Hood*, etc. A general index to Nos. 1 to 12 was published in 1932. There was no issue in 1938 and with the outbreak of war in September 1939 publication ceased for the time being. There were more pressing problems demanding attention.

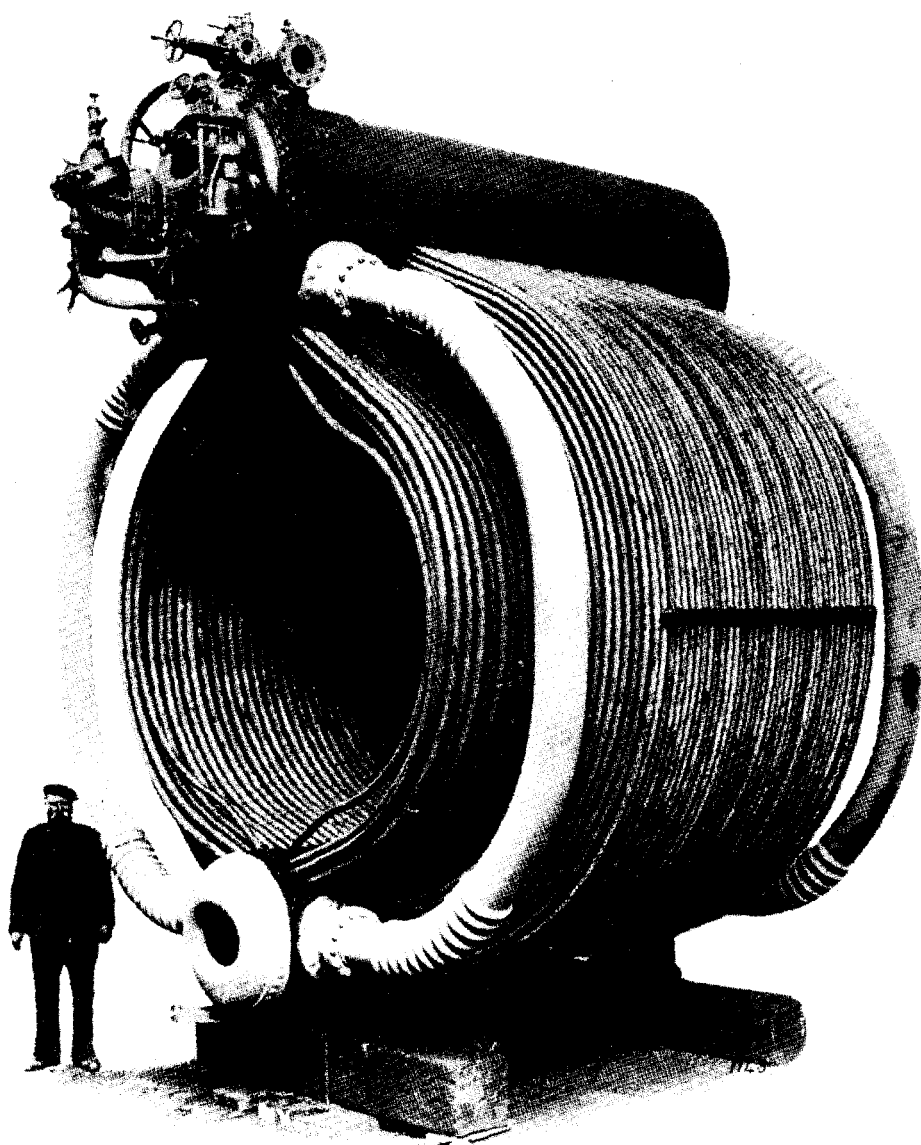
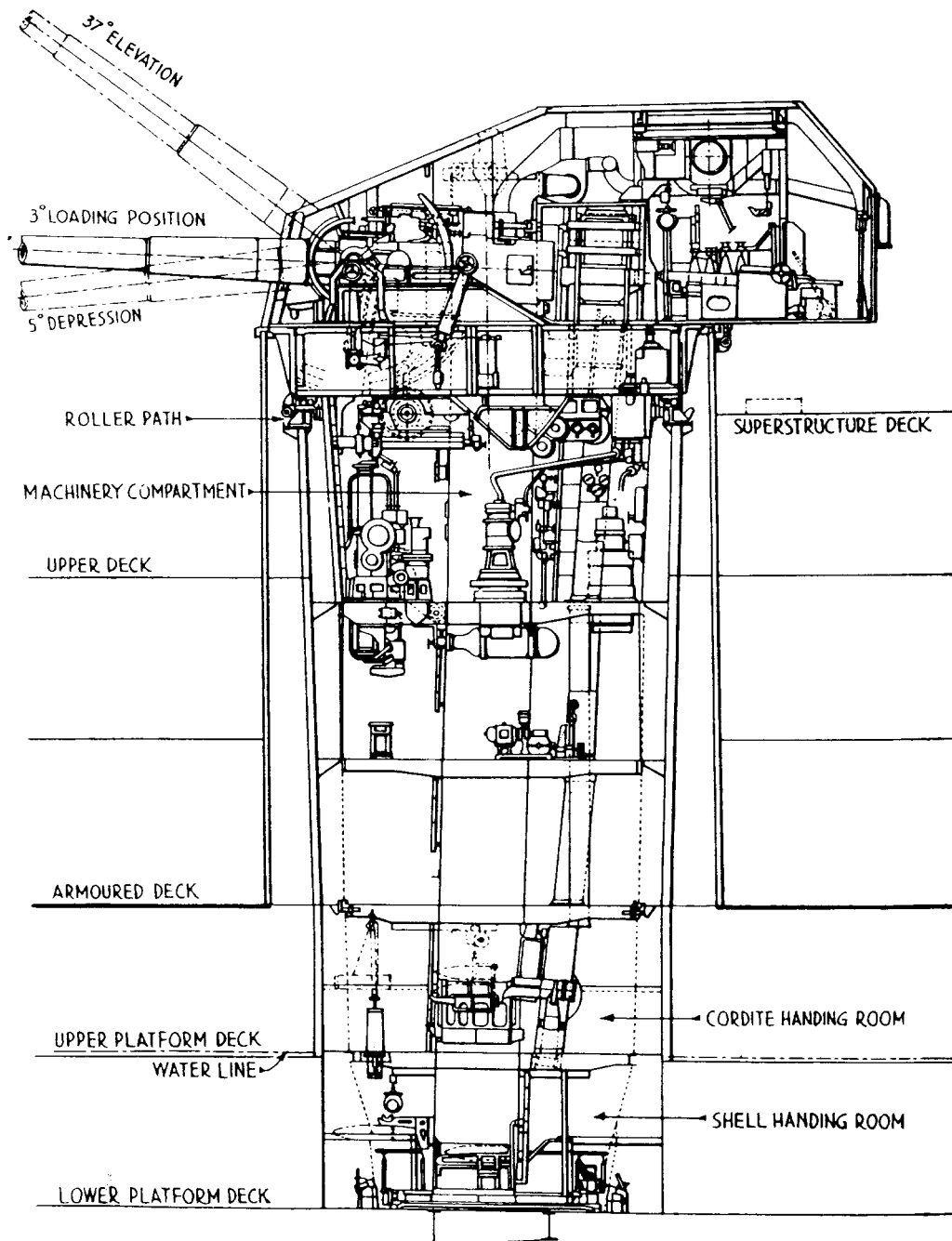


FIG. 4—A JOHNSON BOILER AS FITTED IN H.M.S. 'HYPERION', FROM NO. 16, DECEMBER 1937

The next issue appeared in April 1945 under the direction of Engineer Vice-Admiral Sir John Kingcombe, K.C.B., with Lieutenant-Commander(E) P. Lawrie, R.N.R., as the first editor specifically so appointed. He had previously held part-time a post as Secretary to the Engineer-in-Chief. Much



A TYPICAL GERMAN HEAVY TURRET ARRANGEMENT

FIG. 5—FROM No. 20, JANUARY 1946

material based on war experience, such as 'Brewing in H M ships' and 'Oiling at sea by buoyant hose', was included. Change was on its way and No. 22, the last of the *Papers on Engineering Subjects*, appeared in December 1946. By this time it was planned to publish quarterly and the content had already taken on something approaching that of today's *Journal*. With the change of title in April 1947 the transmutation was complete. Throughout the years, other

than a contents list, there had been no editorial matter whatsoever and indeed until September 1946 the editor was not mentioned and even then he remained, as now, strictly unnamed. The decision for change, actually taken in April 1946, provided for a wider distribution and divided the content into a Part I comprising officially sponsored articles and a Part II where the authors were allowed a little more independence and which included much more of general engineering interest.

The early post-war *Journal*, edited by Commander(E) A. F. Smith, R.N., relinquished anonymity for authors and was expanded in its scope to embrace air engineering in addition to marine and gunnery engineering matters, while 'Notes' included a section bringing to notice 'Books and pamphlets of interest

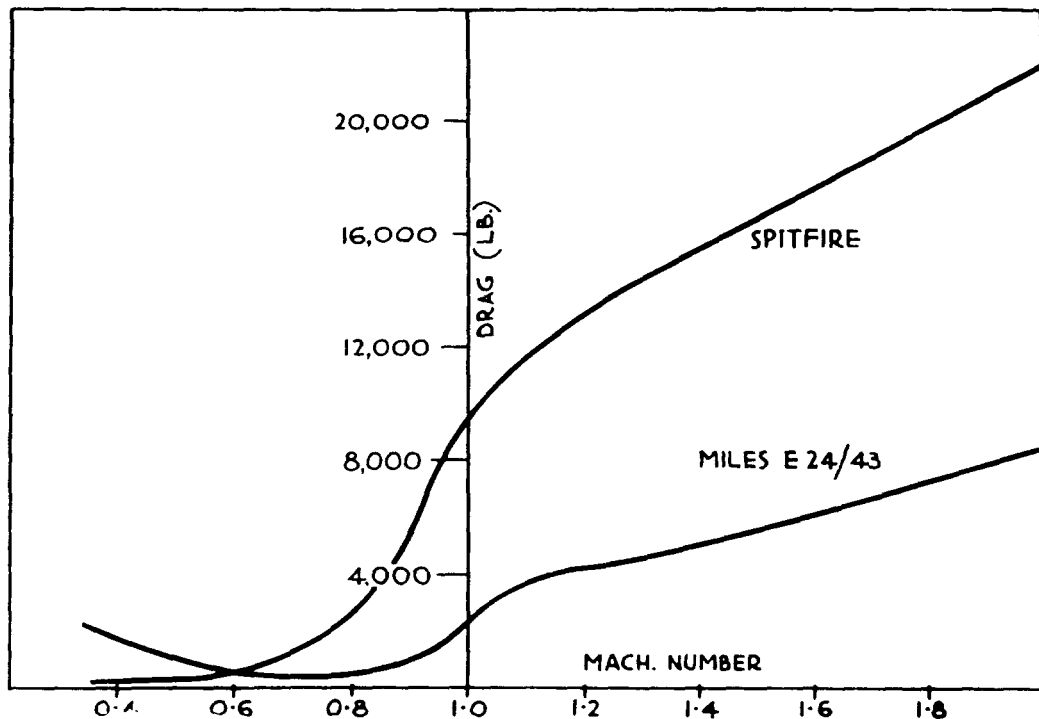


FIG. 6—DIFFERENCE IN DRAG BETWEEN M.52 (E.24/43) SUPERSONIC AIRCRAFT DESIGN AND A SPITFIRE, FROM 'JOURNAL OF NAVAL ENGINEERING', VOL. 1, NO. 2, JULY 1947

to engineer officers'. An example of the expansion into aviation matters was the appearance in Vol. 1, No. 2 (July 1947) of an article, reproduced from *Flight*, dealing with 'Supersonic flight' and the preparatory investigations leading to the design of the still-born Miles M.52 1000 m.p.h. project. Vol. 1, No. 3 (October 1947) introduced book reviews, an idea which did not re-emerge until 1983, while Vol. 3, No. 2 (July 1949) included a useful article on the mechanics of 'Electric shock'. Thus the *Journal*, by now under the editorship of Commander(E) P. Charig, assumed gradually its present role as a vehicle for the publication of a broad spread of articles dealing with all aspects of marine (post-EBD), aircraft, and weapons engineering, engineering policy, support matters, and training, plus material of historical interest to provide a background for today's developments. Close contact is maintained with the *Naval Electrical Review*, issued quarterly with its editorship based in H.M.S. *Collingwood*. Material of common interest was formerly printed in both on occasion since the two publications do reach different groups of readers.

Engineer Lieutenant-Commander Harold Merwood occupied the editorial chair through the late 1960s until he was succeeded by Commander Alan S. Craig, O.B.E., a former ordnance engineer, from 1972 to 1983. Thus the Journal today, somewhat expanded in size and scope, strives to maintain the standards set by its founders some sixty-five years ago. Long may it flourish as the record of naval engineering matters old and new; bearing in mind that there is much to be learned by a perusal of past experience.

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