



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***BIOINFORMATIC ANALYSES OF METALLOME AND
STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF SIRTUIN FROM
Glaciozyma antarctica PI12***

FOONG PIK MUN

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By

FOONG PIK MUN

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science**

November 2014

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia
in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

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November 2014

Chairman: Professor Mohd Basyaruddin Abdul Rahman, PhD
Faculty: Science

Metal ions are essential elements that are extensively involved in many cellular activities. With rapid advancements in genome sequencing techniques, bioinformatic approaches have provided a promising way to extract the functional information of a protein directly from its primary structure. Recent studies have suggested that the metal content of an organism can be predicted from its genome sequences using bioinformatic approaches, and the variation of cellular metal contents is found to correlate with the bioavailability of metal ions in the adjacent environment. The focus of this study is targeted towards the analysis of metal composition of a psychrophilic yeast *Glaciozyma antarctica* PI12 isolated from sea ice of Antarctica. Since the cellular metal content of an organism is usually reflected in the expressed metal-binding proteins, the putative metal-binding sequences from *G. antarctica* PI12 were identified in respect to their sequence homologies, domain compositions, protein families and cellular distribution. The homologous metal-related sequences from *G. antarctica* PI12 were identified by BLAST using annotated queries available in the public database. Metal-binding protein domains in the sequences were also inspected to enhance the accuracy of prediction. Proteins with novel metal-binding sites were identified using SVMProt. All putative metal-binding proteins were assigned with Gene Ontology (GO) terms and predicted subcellular location for functional inferences. Most of the approaches have suggested that the metallome of *G. antarctica* PI12 was enriched in zinc, and descending in the order of Zn > Mg > Ca, Fe > Cu, Mn > Na, K, Co, Ni. Upon comparison, the metal composition of *G. antarctica* PI12 was found to be almost identical with those of its warm-counterparts. However, distinctive variations were noticed when compared with bacteria. The observations suggested that *G. antarctica* PI12 could have inherited a conserved trend of metal usage similar to modern eukaryotes that enriched in zinc.

Subsequently, sirtuin, a zinc-bound NAD⁺-dependent deacetylase was selected for further structural investigation. A predicted model was obtained through comparative modeling and its quality was evaluated. To investigate the role of zinc, the model and its apo (with zinc removed) were independently subjected to 10 ns molecular dynamics (MD) simulations coupled at temperature 277 K, 285 K and 303 K. The results suggested that zinc may function to retain the native conformation of sirtuin and prevent it from denaturing. It was also noticed that the structural flexibility of the protein was improved by altering its amino acid composition and enhancing solvent accessibility at certain regions. In conclusion, the metal content of *G. antarctica* PI12 was depicted through an integration of multiple bioinformatic approaches and its strategy in cold-adaptation can be inferred from the structural variation and dynamics studies of sirtuin.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Sarjana Sains

**ANALISIS BIOINFORMATIK METALLOME DAN ANALISIS STRUKTUR
SIRTUIN DARIPADA *Glaciozyma antarctica* PI12**

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Ion logam merupakan unsur penting yang terlibat secara meluas dalam pelbagai aktiviti sel. Dengan kemajuan pesat dalam teknik penjujukan genom, pendekatan bioinformatik telah menyediakan kaedah yang berpotensi untuk mengekstrakkan maklumat kefungsiannya sesuatu protein menerusi struktur primernya. Kajian-kajian terbaru telah mencadangkan bahawa kandungan logam bagi sesuatu organisma boleh diramal melalui jujukan genomnya dengan menggunakan pendekatan bioinformatik, dan variasi kandungan logam dalam sel didapati berhubung kait dengan bioketersediaan ion logam yang terdapat di persekitaran bersebelahannya. Fokus kajian ini disasarkan terhadap yis psikrofilik *Glaciozyma antarctica* PI12 yang diasingkan dari ais laut Antartika untuk menganalisis komposisi logamnya. Memandangkan kandungan logam dalam sel bagi sesuatu organisma kebiasaannya digambarkan pada protein terikat logam yang diekspresnya, jujukan protein yang terikat logam secara putatif dari *G. antarctica* PI12 telah dikenalpasti melalui jujukan homologi, komposisi domain, keluarga protein dan pengagihannya dalam sel. Jujukan homolog *G. antarctica* PI12 yang berkaitan dengan logam telah dikenalpasti melalui kaedah BLAST dengan menggunakan pertanyaan beranotasi yang diperolehi daripada pangkalan data umum. Domain-domain protein terikat logam yang terkandung dalam jujukan tersebut turut diperiksa untuk meningkatkan kejituan ramalan. Protein yang mempunyai tapak ikatan logam yang baru telah dikenalpasti dengan menggunakan perisian SVMProt. Semua protein yang terikat logam secara putatif telah ditentukan istilah ontologi gen (GO) and diramalkan lokasi subsele untuk penafsiran kefungsiannya. Kebanyakan pendekatan-pendekatan tersebut telah mencadangkan bahawa metallome *G. antarctica* PI12 diperkaya dengan zink, dan menurun secara tertib dari Zn > Mg > Ca, Fe > Cu, Mn > Na, K, Co, Ni. Secara perbandingan, komposisi logam untuk *G. antarctica* PI12 ditemui hampir serupa dengan yis yang lain. Walau bagaimanapun, perbezaan ketara telah dikesan apabila ia dibandingkan dengan bakteria. Pemerhatian-pemerhatian tersebut telah mencadangkan bahawa *G. antarctica* PI12 berkemungkinan mewarisi kecenderungan penggunaan logam yang serupa dengan eukariot moden yang diperkaya dengan zink.

Seterusnya, sirtuin, deasetilase bersandar NAD^+ yang terikat dengan zink telah dipilih bagi penyelidikan struktur yang selanjutnya. Satu model ramalan sirtuin telah diperolehi melalui pemodelan perbandingan dan kualitinya ditaksirkan. Untuk menyelidik peranan zink, model tersebut dan apo model (dengan zink disingkirkan) telah dijalankan simulasi dinamik molekul (MD) secara terpisah selama 10 ns dengan suhu yang ditetapkan pada 277 K, 285 K dan 303 K. Keputusan analisis mencadangkan bahawa zink tersebut berfungsi untuk mengekalkan susukan asli sirtuin dan mengelakkannya daripada terdenaturasi. Kajian ini juga mendapati bahawa kelenturan struktur protein tersebut telah dipertingkatkan dengan mengubah komposisi asid amino dan meningkatkan aksesibiliti pelarut pada kawasan-kawasan tertentu. Kesimpulannya, kandungan logam dalam *G. antarctica* PI12 telah digambarkan melalui integrasi pelbagai pendekatan bioinformatik dan strateginya dalam penyesuaian kesejukan boleh dikesan daripada kajian variasi struktur dan dinamik sirtuin.

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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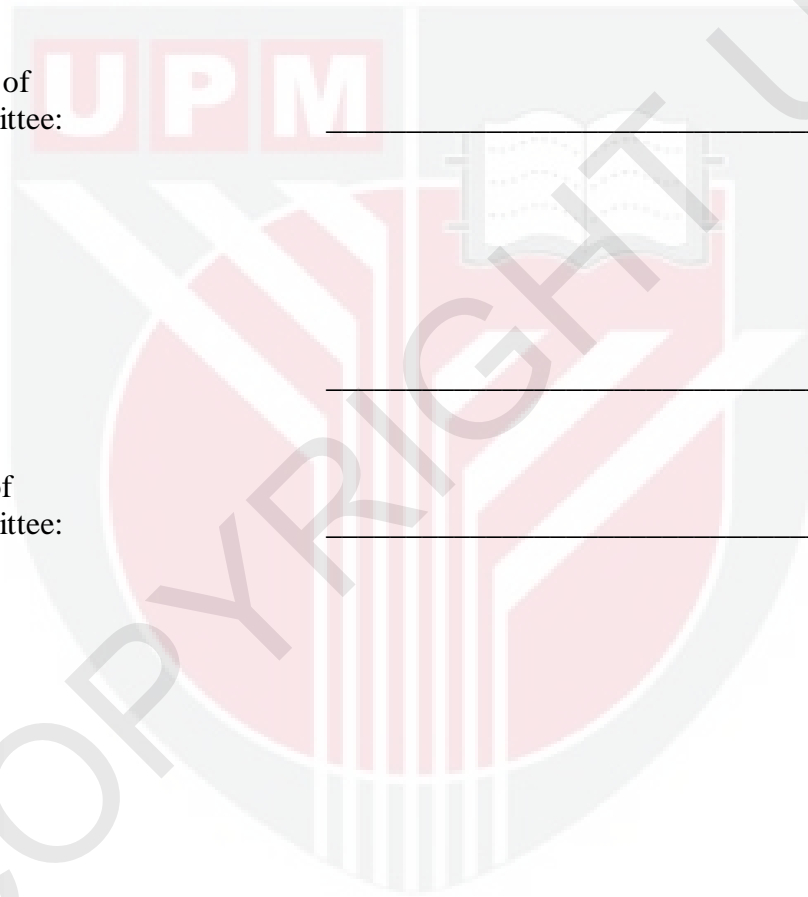
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------------------|---|
| °C | Degree Celsius |
| 3D | Three Dimensional |
| Å | Angstrom |
| Ala (A) | Alanine |
| AMBER | Assisted Model Building with Energy Refinement |
| Arg (R) | Arginine |
| Asn (N) | Asparagine |
| Asp (D) | Aspartic acid |
| atm | Standard Atmosphere Pressure |
| BLAST | Basic Local Alignment Search Tool |
| BLASTp | Protein BLAST |
| BLOSUM | Blocks Substitution Matrix |
| BRP | Best Representative PSSM |
| CATH | Class, Architecture, Topology and Homologous Superfamily |
| CN | Coordination Number |
| Cys (C) | Cysteine |
| DOPE | Discrete Optimized Protein Energy |
| DSSP | Database of Secondary Structure of Protein |
| E | Energy |
| EBI-GOA | European Bioinformatics Institute-Gene Ontology Annotation |
| FASSM | Function Association using Sequence & Structure Motifs |
| fs | Femtosecond |
| Gln (Q) | Glutamine |
| Glu (E) | Glutamic acid |
| Gly (G) | Glycine |
| GO | Gene Ontology |
| GROMACS | Groningen Machine for Chemical Simulation |
| His (H) | Histidine |
| HMM | Hidden Markov model |
| Ile (I) | Isoleucine |
| K | Kelvin |
| Leu (L) | Leucine |
| LINCS | Linear Constraint Solver |
| Lys (K) | Lysine |
| MD | Molecular Dynamics |
| Met (M) | Methionine |
| MGI | Malaysia Genome Institute |
| NAD ⁺ | Nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide |
| NCBI | National Center for Biotechnology Information |
| nm | Nanometer |
| NPT | Isothermal-Isobaric Ensemble (Number of particles, Pressure, Temperature) |
| ns | Nanosecond |

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| NVT | Canonical Ensemble (Number of particles, Volume, Temperature) |
| PBC | Periodic boundary conditions |
| PDB | Protein Data Bank |
| Pfam | Protein Families |
| Phe (F) | Phenylalanine |
| Phyre | Protein Homology/Analogy Recognition Engine |
| PIR | Protein Information Resource |
| pK _a | Acid dissociation constant |
| PME | Particle-Mesh Ewald |
| Pro (P) | Proline |
| ps | Picosecond |
| PSI-BLAST | Position-specific iterated BLAST |
| PSSM | Position Specific Substitution Matrix |
| rDNA | Ribosomal DNA |
| R _g | Radius of gyration |
| RMSD | Root Mean Square Deviation |
| RMSF | Root Mean Square Fluctuation |
| ROS | Reactive oxygen species |
| SASA | Solvent Accessible Surface Area |
| SAVES | Structural Analysis and Verification Server |
| Ser (S) | Serine |
| Sir2 | Silent information regulator 2 (Sirtuin) |
| SVM | Support Vector Machine |
| Thr (T) | Threonine |
| TIP3P | Transferable Intermolecular Potential-3 Point |
| TM-score | Template-modeling score |
| Trp (W) | Tryptophan |
| Tyr (Y) | Tyrosine |
| UniProt | Universal Protein Resource |
| UniRef | UniProt Reference Clusters |
| Val (V) | Valine |
| Zn | Zinc |

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------------------|---|
| °C | Degree Celsius |
| 3D | Three Dimensional |
| Å | Angstrom |
| Ala (A) | Alanine |
| AMBER | Assisted Model Building with Energy Refinement |
| Arg (R) | Arginine |
| Asn (N) | Asparagine |
| Asp (D) | Aspartic acid |
| atm | Standard Atmosphere Pressure |
| BLAST | Basic Local Alignment Search Tool |
| BLASTp | Protein BLAST |
| BLOSUM | Blocks Substitution Matrix |
| BRP | Best Representative PSSM |
| CATH | Class, Architecture, Topology and Homologous Superfamily |
| CN | Coordination Number |
| Cys (C) | Cysteine |
| DOPE | Discrete Optimized Protein Energy |
| DSSP | Database of Secondary Structure of Protein |
| E | Energy |
| EBI-GOA | European Bioinformatics Institute-Gene Ontology Annotation |
| FASSM | Function Association using Sequence & Structure Motifs |
| fs | Femtosecond |
| Gln (Q) | Glutamine |
| Glu (E) | Glutamic acid |
| Gly (G) | Glycine |
| GO | Gene Ontology |
| GROMACS | Groningen Machine for Chemical Simulation |
| His (H) | Histidine |
| HMM | Hidden Markov model |
| Ile (I) | Isoleucine |
| K | Kelvin |
| Leu (L) | Leucine |
| LINCS | Linear Constraint Solver |
| Lys (K) | Lysine |
| MD | Molecular Dynamics |
| Met (M) | Methionine |
| MGI | Malaysia Genome Institute |
| NAD ⁺ | Nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide |
| NCBI | National Center for Biotechnology Information |
| nm | Nanometer |
| NPT | Isothermal-Isobaric Ensemble (Number of particles, Pressure, Temperature) |
| ns | Nanosecond |
| NVT | Canonical Ensemble (Number of particles, Volume, Temperature) |

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| PBC | Periodic boundary conditions |
| PDB | Protein Data Bank |
| Pfam | Protein Families |
| Phe (F) | Phenylalanine |
| Phyre | Protein Homology/Analogy Recognition Engine |
| PIR | Protein Information Resource |
| pK _a | Acid dissociation constant |
| PME | Particle-Mesh Ewald |
| Pro (P) | Proline |
| ps | Picosecond |
| PSI-BLAST | Position-specific iterated BLAST |
| PSSM | Position Specific Substitution Matrix |
| rDNA | Ribosomal DNA |
| R _g | Radius of gyration |
| RMSD | Root Mean Square Deviation |
| RMSF | Root Mean Square Fluctuation |
| ROS | Reactive oxygen species |
| SASA | Solvent Accessible Surface Area |
| SAVES | Structural Analysis and Verification Server |
| Ser (S) | Serine |
| Sir2 | Silent information regulator 2 (Sirtuin) |
| SVM | Support Vector Machine |
| Thr (T) | Threonine |
| TIP3P | Transferable Intermolecular Potential-3 Point |
| TM-score | Template-modeling score |
| Trp (W) | Tryptophan |
| Tyr (Y) | Tyrosine |
| UniProt | Universal Protein Resource |
| UniRef | UniProt Reference Clusters |
| Val (V) | Valine |
| Zn | Zinc |

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Metal ions are one of the essential components for all life-forms. They usually present as cofactors in many proteins, and are involved in a wide-array of physiological processes by binding to substrates, regulating cellular activities, facilitating electron exchange reactions and stabilizing the protein structures (Andreini *et al.*, 2004; Degtyarenko, 2000). Lacking of these trace elements may cause the proteins to malfunction. The entire cellular metal content in a cell is coined as metallome. The comprehensive analyses in identifying these metals and how they are distributed in biological systems have emerged as a new interdisciplinary area termed as metallomics (Shi & Chance, 2008; Williams & Da Silva, 2000). Metallome is a dynamic system, and it could be influenced by any significant perturbation within a cell and its adjacent environment. This has resulted in organism-specific metalloproteome, which can be denoted as the functional division of metals in biology (Thiele & Gitlin, 2008). Each of these metals, with their unique chemistry, presents in the physiological systems with varied concentrations.

Recent studies have reported that the metal-binding proteins (i.e. proteins that recruited the metal ion for functionality) are actually widespread in almost all the living organisms, with some found to correlate with their respective habitats and metabolic preferences (Cameron *et al.*, 2012). Focusing only the prokaryotes, Zerkle *et al.* (2005) attempted to resolve the metal preference for 52 candidates with complete genomes aided by publicly available bioinformatic databases. The metal usage of prokaryotes was found to follow the trend in Fe > Zn > Mn > Mo, Co, Cu > Ni > W, V. An elevated requirement for nickel and tungsten was noticed in methanogens, which could be a biosignature for methanogenesis. Few years later, Andreini and her colleagues published their genome-wide predictions using multiple bioinformatics approaches with emphasizes on the content of zinc (2006b), non-heme iron (2007) and copper proteins (2008a) in archaea, prokaryotes and eukaryotes. They reported that the number of zinc-binding proteins was increased from prokaryotes to eukaryotes as the organismal complexity increased. In contrast, a considerable reduction was detected in the number of non-heme iron proteins, while the fraction of copper proteins was rather unchanged in these organisms.

There was another study conducted by Cameron *et al.* (2012) which was intended to characterize the metal usage of hyperthermophiles. The team employed the hyperthermophilic Archaea *Methanococcus jannaschii* and *Pyrococcus furiosus* as the targets of their study and the results were compared with that of the mesophilic bacterium *Escherichia coli*. They observed that the hyperthermophiles are actually demanded for more nickel, cobalt and tungsten. All these studies have suggested that zinc and iron are universal in living systems, with some scattered occurrence of other metals such as nickel and cobalt that are specifically ubiquitous in certain prokaryotes. However, the reference for metal usage in fungi examples is still missing.

The metal-binding proteins are encoded from the genes, therefore any drastic changes in the adjacent environment could impact the cellular systems that are reflected in the genetic drift (Thiele & Gitlin, 2008). As one of the greatest incidents on Earth, the rise of the atmospheric oxygen has critically influenced the acquisition of metals for biological usage, which in parallel, a driving force to the evolution of modern life. New survival mechanisms have to be developed in order to adapt the changes of the bioavailability of metal ions in corresponding to the presence of oxygen (Hong Enriquez & Do, 2012). An evolutionary shift in the trend of metal usage is therefore noticed in the speciation of metal in modern organisms as compared to primitive organisms (Dupont *et al.*, 2006; Zerkle *et al.*, 2005).

Rapid advancement of whole genome sequencing technology has geared the directions of major research towards unlocking the codes of inheritance. The explosion of high-throughput data has provided the researchers with a complete list of molecular components with detailed information on every gene present in an organism. However, regardless of the mass data generated from the protein encoding sequences, less attention have been emphasized in illustrating the relationship between metal ions and proteins (Andreini *et al.*, 2009). Meanwhile, majority of the experimental approaches that have been proposed and currently applied in metalloproteomics studies are usually laborious and complex. Some may also introduce biases and errors (Passerini *et al.*, 2007). Since the rapid advancement in genome sequencing techniques have generated mountains of sequence data each day, predictive tools that enable the scientists to sieve through an organism's genetic blueprint and subsequently analyze in detail the sequence(s) of interest are invaluable. By extracting the information directly from the sequences, bioinformatics approaches can readily solve the question of how many and which proteins may require metal ions to function properly. It is also capable to provide insights (such as the atomic details of DNA or protein structures) that are previously inaccessible by experimental approaches (Rulisek & Vondrasek, 1998; Wan & Xu, 2005). Hence, multiple bioinformatics approaches were incorporated in this study to identify the metal-binding proteins from the post-genome sequencing data.

Renowned as the coldest, windiest and driest continent on Earth, Antarctica is the fifth largest continents on Earth which is geographically isolated and permanently covered by ice and snow (Buzzini *et al.*, 2012). Although the Environment Protocol (or also known as Madrid Protocol) that aimed to protect the Antarctic environment and associated ecosystems has been implemented since 1998, this fragile region is continuously degraded at accelerated pace (Aronson *et al.*, 2011). Increased of anthropogenic waste from human activities is one of the major sources of pollution noticed in this region. Some of these toxic substances, including the heavy metals, are found to be accumulated in the food chains that have drastically affected the ecosystem nearby. The present study therefore targeted at a psychrophilic yeast *Glaciozyma antarctica* PI12 isolated from the sea ice of Antarctica, to investigate its metal composition and its possible link to the pollution issue in the respective area. Since it is also a precious source of cold-active enzymes that possess high specific activity at relatively low temperatures, this study will also provide an opportunity to explore its unprecedented biotechnology potential.

In order to investigate the role of zinc in protein, a zinc-bound NAD⁺-dependent deacetylase was selected among the lists of metal-binding proteins identified in *G. antarctica* PI12 for in-depth structural analysis. This versatile silent information regulator 2 (Sir2) protein, or commonly known as sirtuin, participates in transcriptional silencing and is evolutionally conserved from bacteria to mammals (North & Verdin, 2004). It also regulates cell apoptosis, microtubule organization and cellular responses to DNA-damaging agents (North & Verdin, 2004; Sakkiah *et al.*, 2012). In some organisms, sirtuin is found to restrict the intake of calorie during adverse condition to enhance stress tolerance, and may have association with cell aging (Calvo *et al.*, 2012; Guarente, 2013). Several studies have reported the structural and dynamics perspectives of sirtuin upon interacting with cofactor NAD⁺ and its potential inhibitors through molecular dynamics (MD) simulation (Hsu *et al.*, 2013; Sacconay *et al.*, 2013; Sakkiah *et al.*, 2013a; Sakkiah *et al.*, 2013b; Sakkiah *et al.*, 2012; Shi *et al.*, 2013). However the role of zinc is often omitted, although there is an indication that the removal of zinc can discontinue the enzymatic activity (Chakrabarty & Balaram, 2010; North & Verdin, 2004). Therefore, the structural and dynamic properties of the psychrophilic sirtuin were investigated in this study with the role of zinc highlighted.

1.2 Research Objectives

The current research aimed to decipher the complete list of the metal-binding proteins in a psychrophilic yeast *G. antarctica* PI12 genome and to predict its relative cellular metal usage from the expressed metal-binding proteins. With the aid of bioinformatics tools, the comprehensive analysis on the psychrophilic metallome are hoped to outline the metal-relationship between the organism and its adjacent environment, as well as to explore the functional role of metal ions in its cellular system. Since the zinc-binding sirtuin is reported to associate with various cellular activities and is renowned to enhance stress tolerance during adverse condition, the structural investigation on the cold-adapted sirtuin from *G. antarctica* PI12 may contribute to the understanding of sirtuin function.

Therefore, these objectives will be pursued in this study:

- To identify the putative metal-binding proteins from *G. antarctica* PI12 genome.
- To infer the functional roles of the putative metal-binding proteins.
- To compare the metal usage of *G. antarctica* PI12 with selected yeast and bacteria strains.
- To investigate the stability-flexibility relationship of the psychrophilic sirtuin at various temperatures.

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