



AN ANALYSIS OF THE BUDDHIST ADAPTATION OF THE BRU ETHNIC COMMUNITY, THA LONG VILLAGE, KHONG CHIAM DISTRICT, UBON RATCHATHANI PROVINCE

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Abstract

The objectives of the research were as follows: 1) to study the Buddhist adaptation of the ethnic community; 2) to study the Buddhist adaptation of the Bru ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province; 3) to analyze the Buddhist adaptation of Bru ethnic community. This study was carried out by means of qualitative research using an in-depth interview with 25 key informants. The obtained data were interpreted by descriptive analysis. The research results were as follows: The Buddhist adaptation of the ethnic community: ethnic community life has brought the Four Saṅgahavathu Dhamma in Buddhism as a guideline for self-adjustment. Ethnic communities have benefited each other by giving both Dhamma-dāna and Āmisa-dāna. All these Dhammas are linked by activities of multiculturalism. The Buddhist adaptation of the Bru ethnic community in five aspects: concept: attitude adjustment in line with social changes; conduct: adapting to others by creating friendships between ethnic groups; values: learning new things and transferring the way of life of the Bru people to enable learning among other tribes; economics: the Bru people live in areas with natural resources and their careers are more of a self-sustaining economy than technology; cultural traditions: the culture and tradition of the Bru people is the tradition of raising spirits in the house and Heet's spirits combined with Buddhist principles. The analysis of the Buddhist adaptation of the Bru ethnic community: Dāna: helping each other, sharing generosity; Piyavācā: even though they speak different languages, they converse with polite and gentle words; Atthacariyā: they live a life that supports the community by practicing oneself for the benefit of society; Samānattatā: they always behave according to the status of the community and value the equality between the groups.

Keywords: Buddhist Adaptation, Bru Ethnic Community, Four Saṅgahavathu Dhamma

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1. Introduction

Human being is social animal, living together as a group and relying on each other, not living alone in any way. Because humans have to do activities together all the time. They depend on each other and meet their basic needs. Therefore, when there is a group, there will be a difference in thinking, and expression of belief and expression as well as the way of life, it separates human beings into tribal groups, and diversity of ethnicity what separates one society from another is that culture, which is an integral part of humanity, is two inseparable and deeply interrelated. Meanwhile, culture arose to meet the social and psychological needs of man. The Lao PDR government organizes “Bru” people in the ethnic group called “Katang” [Department of Tribes, Lao PDR, 2008: 58] [1] In this regard, there is no clear proof of origin. But it is assumed that the Bru ethnic group is an indigenous people that have been prevalent in southern Laos and central Vietnam for a long time [Kiattisak Bangperng, 2015: 1] [2].

In Thailand, Bru people migrated from Lao PDR across the Mekong River to various points along the Lao-Thai border from Nong Khai to Ubon Ratchathani. It’s been around a century since the main cause of change in politics and government in Laos. Particularly when the French colonial rule over Laos used a tyrannical regime, exploitation of labor and tribute causing the Bru people who scattered in southern Laos to suffer moving immigrants to the Thai coast. However, Bru people are often called by the name “Kha” or “Suai”, which has an oppressive implication of social status. But they call themselves “Bru”, they live independently in the highlands, moving their fields (shifting cultivation) to the mountains. Bru people often say that they like to live with nature. They don’t like being disturbed by other people [Schlesinger, 2003] [3] The Bru people are a long-established indigenous group in southern Laos and central Vietnam, referred to as “Kha”, and were included under the rule of the expanding Kingdoms of Cambodia/Khmer, Lan Xang, Siam, and France such area. In ancient, the phenomenon of moving people back and forth on both sides of the Mekong River occurs periodically with various conditions such as seeking land and settlement, etc. [Kiattisak Bangperng, 2016: 542-569] [4] “Bru” is an ethnic group that speaks a language in the Mon-Khmer language family [Suwilai Premsrirat, 1999: 267-284] [5].

At present, the Bru Ban Tha Long ethnic group has social interactions with outsiders and is open to changes in accordance with world trends, for

example, the opening of Tha Long Village of the Bru ethnic group as a tourist attraction has resulted in modern culture. There is a migration to move in and out of foreigners, resulting in an increase in population. The ethnic lifestyle that has entered Thailand in the period of approximately 60 years ago, which is the period of building a nation-state that emphasizes cultural unity, and Thainess, concepts related to being a multicultural society. It is a society composed of diverse groups of people with different social and cultural differences whether it’s religion, language, dress, living, etc. Because each group has beliefs, and faith in different religions and cultures [Anan Ganjanapan, 2019: 49] [6]. The concept of multiculturalism is the sum of all things with complex knowledge, beliefs, arts, culture, morals, laws, traditions, habits, and other behaviours the human expression [Chanatip Bunyakert, 1999] [7].

The Bru ethnic group has a unique identity. The existing cultural relationship is that different people have their own different cultures. Having this kind of mindset helps people in society to reduce cultural discrimination, to live together despite differences, and to respect each other’s rights and freedoms [Anan Ganjanapan, 2008] [8] and also includes identity which comes from the Pali word “Atta” combined with the word “Lasana”, where “Atta” means one’s self and “nature” means one’s own property. Identity is about defining and interpreting values. Those values are not necessarily universal, but multicultural or subculture-based. It gives rise to acceptance of social pluralism, unlike the identity in the early definition that must be built solely for the solidarity of society. But identity is a matter of earnest acceptance of the existence of the individual [Prasit Leepreecha, 2004] [9].

Bru ethnic group ceremony, traditionally, they have respected ghosts for a long time since their ancestors called “Heet Kha Khong Khom”. If we violate the tradition (be offensive to the spirits), we will be punished by the spirits of Heet, who can be freed only when they are presently paying homage to Phi Heet. Animism also gave rise to the tradition of raising house spirits. The Brus are believed to protect the villagers after the Brus return the Heet, a belief that came from Laos, turned to Buddhism. The Bru people entered the temple to participate in various rituals. They also sent their children to be ordained as well [Phanat Dokbua, 2010: 85-86, 90] [10] The Bru people regard the kinship system as the main priority and respect ghosts or Heets, particularly, the kinship group Heet together. Heet is what controls and determines the way of life. Which King of Heet or King Khot has the power to

supervise members to follow and ghost Heet will punish those who violate or commit an offense called “be offensive to the spirits”. This kinship system resembles an informal organization that monitors. It controls the behavior of people in the community and also causes socialization in the Bru people. Beliefs often appear in ritual form, where the word “ritual” refers to model or pattern worship practiced in religion. It is the commandment of various ceremonies, and the word rite refers to a traditional religious ceremony or important occasion. The ritual will give rise to special powers and power to community life. Traditions and cultures form a form of legitimate behaviour or ceremony and are accepted by the general public [DennySergeant, Global Ritualism, 1999: 29-35] [11].

Nowadays, technology has been developed affecting lifestyle changes and plays a role in human life, including government, education, economy, and culture. These things cause “Dynamic” lifestyle changes, caused by various factors, both internal factors, including population increase family and housing characteristics, material needs, acceptance of new traditions and cultures, lifestyles that have changed, beliefs, traditions, and cultures. And external factors cause changes in various fields. Both factors affect the way of life of the Bru people. There was a change in tradition. The Bru people then switched to Buddhism instead. There are people who go to the temple to make merit according to the Heet Kong of the Northeast who encouraged his children to become ordained in Buddhism. For this reason, the researchers are interested in studying the Buddhist Adaptation of the Bru Ethnic Community, Tha Long Village, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province and an analysis of the Buddhist Adaptation of the Bru Ethnic Community, Tha Long Village, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province and then present it to the society.

Research Questions

1. How is the Buddhist adaptation of the ethnic community?
2. How is the Buddhist adaptation of the Bru ethnic community Tha Long Village, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province?
3. How is an Analysis of the Buddhist Adaptation of the Bru Ethnic Community, Tha Long Village, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province?

Research Objectives

1. To study the Buddhist adaptation of the ethnic community.

2. To study the Buddhist adaptation of the Bru ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province.
3. To analyze the Buddhist adaptation of Bru ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province.

2. Research Method

This research is qualitative research, fieldwork by in-depth interviews of An analyze the Buddhist adaptation of Bru ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province. It studies the target group. The researchers defined the research method or research model as follows;

4.1) This study is a documentary study and collecting data is from relevant documents and evidence from Tripitaka, books, and research reports. The document associated the relationship with and society.

4.2) Data from in-depth interviews with 35 sets from the main informant population regarding An analyze the Buddhist adaptation of Bru ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province.

4.3) Data is from observations participants, focus group together the key informants regarding regarding An analyze the Buddhist adaptation of Bru ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province

3. Research Results

The Buddhist adaptation of the ethnic community: Adaptation according to Buddhist principles by adopting the Buddhist principles of Sangahavatthu 4 (Bases of social solidarity) to adapt to the way of life of the Bru ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, so that the community knows how to give alms that is giving food, water, and necessary things to those in need, know how to help other families in the community by giving objects to others. Because giving alms is a contribution to helping others with things that are beneficial to those who suffer from the interview fieldwork. It was found that.

- **Dana (giving):** Able to support the lives of people in the community, sharing is the basis for the coexistence of people in the community, it can alleviate suffering initially. Giving things, and helping people with what they have for those who are in need or in need would be the greatest benefit, that is, the giver would be happy. The recipient is able to alleviate the suffering.

- **Piyavaca (kindly speech):** Able to speak and communicate, know how to say sorry, know how to say thank you with sweet words, heard and wanted to associate with speak with pleasant words, suggest something useful. Encouraging speech brings satisfaction to the listeners, having a good relationship with each other, and conversation with words that have a pleasant, polite tone. Understanding and sympathy for people in the community unity.

- **Atthacariya (useful conduct):** Useful behaviour, it has played a huge part in the adaptation, able to support the lives of people in the community with great benefits. Because of helping to practice oneself for the benefit of society. It is to help each other in both government work and village development work. Helping fellow village members during household activities; working to help society by sacrificing physical and mental energy; jointly solving problems, thinking together, and acting in a creative way for everyone in the community to live happily.

- **Samanattata (even and equal treatment):** Behaving in a consistent manner with other people in the community, knowing how to place oneself appropriately to one's position, having a stable mind, unshakable, easily changed both in times of suffering and happiness, behave with other people equally, stay together to give intimacy without being arrogant, behave like relatives in the community, do not bully others, live a discreet life without boasting and harming others, consistently positioned, give equality to everyone in the community equally.

The Buddhist adaptation of the Bru ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province in five aspects:

- **Concept:** The adjustment of the concept of the Bru ethnic is an adjustment concept resulting from social change, an environment suitable for living. Because the Bru people used to worship ghosts and then switched to Buddhism, making life easier. Traditional beliefs make life very difficult. When coming to live in a new society with different beliefs, adjusting the concept of the Bru people is to make life not difficult, change to survive in society and the rules of that society.

- **Behaviour:** Adapting to others must be good-natured, smile easily, pay respects, be considerate, try to adjust according to today's society, have a polite, humble speech, be a person who is not arrogant, come and visit always have souvenirs to make friends, help with every task, speak well,

have polite words, make friends, be sincere to each other have a sacrifice, not taking advantage of others, always respect others.

- **Values:** The Bru people have adapted to the values of Thai society in many aspects, including language, dress, and eating. There are using both Bru and Lao languages and the central language is used to communicate when appropriate. At present, Bru people dress according to modern society. As for ethnic outfits, they will be worn when there are events and important days. At present, the use of Bru language in the community is mostly used by older people. As for children and youth, they will use the Lao language and the central language as well. As a result, the Bru language used in the community may be lost in the future. Therefore, the teaching Bru language was opened by community leaders and local scholars to preserve and inherit the language and culture to remain.

- **Economy:** Bru people have a variety of occupations such as farming, animal husbandry, fishery, cultivation, weaving, etc. used as a food source and sold. There is fishing in the Mekong River and Huai Tha Long to sell and find forest products and hunt animals for a living and sell them in the market. At present, there will be merchants coming to buy in the community which is much more convenient. In the past, fishing was not possible. There is a vegetable garden for consumption and a wholesale market. Some of the Brus open a tour boat business on the Mekong River as an eco-tourism venture. There is a resort opening Eco-tourist reception tent area is safe trekking, welcoming tourists to generate income for the community. The Bru people have knowledge of herbal medicine. Herbs from the forest are used to make traditional medicines to treat diseases and sell them as products. Open a famous food store such as Mekong fish dishes, and rare wild food to welcome tourists. A variety of wicker products of various groups such as bamboo weaving groups, pandan mats, herbal groups, and strange/different artifacts, were developed to be OTOP products of the Bru Tha Long community, to generate income for families and communities. The Bru people also have many other occupations such as foraging in forest products, folk healers, and general mercenaries, which include traveling to sell labor outside the village, both in Khong Chiam District in Ubon Ratchathani province or even in Bangkok.

- **Culture and tradition:** The traditional culture of the Bru people is the tradition of raising spirits in the house. The health tradition is something that all Brus must observe. The Bru people believe that it will make the family happy. When the Bru people

accept Buddhism, they also accept cultural traditions as well, making merit according to the Buddhist tradition, but retaining some of the traditional culture of the Bru people. Traditional culture is difficult to live in. Society had changed, and life has changed. There is an integration of beliefs between Buddhism along with animism. Therefore, it can be said that it is a cultural tradition that has a strong relationship with ghosts and Buddhism.

The analysis of the Buddhist adaptation of the Bru ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province

- **Dana (giving):** The Bru people have mutual assistance, namely alms, generosity and sharing, being kind to each other, including being generous in sharing happiness with each other both as objects and sharing kindness among family members, not being stingy, using or consuming things alone until making the community peaceful and livable from working together to develop the community to be prosperous.

- **Piyavaca (kindly speech):** The Bru people use Piyavaca, it means speaking with polite, gentle words, speaking with a mind that desires to know the time to speak appropriately and know how to use words, do not use words to cut to the heart of people or vulgar words, tough words, scolding, satirical, which will cause discord in the family and community, unity.

- **Atthacariya (useful conduct):** Able to support the lives of people in the community with great benefits because of helping to practice oneself for the benefit of society. It is to help each other in both government work and village development work, helping fellow village members during household activities.

- **Samanattata (even and equal treatment):** Conducting oneself in accordance with one's status, roles, and duties, and consistently positioning oneself, able to get along with others in community life consistently positioned, giving equality to everyone in the community equally.

4. Discussion

From an analysis of the Buddhist adaptation of the Bru ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province, it can be discussed as follow;

The Buddhist adaptation of the ethnic community: After the implementation of the Sangahavattu 4 in the Bru ethnic community, Ban

Tha Long, the Sangahavattu 4 are principles that bind other people's kindness, form goodwill, be helpful, or are principles of helping each other. There are 4 aspects: 1) Dana means giving, sacrificing, or generous, sharing one own for the benefit of others 2) Piyavaca is speaking with words that are sweet and beautiful, speaking with sincerity 3) Atthacariya is all kinds of assistance or behavior that benefits others 4) Samanattata is being consistent or have consistent behavior. It was consistent with [Chittakorn Phongam, 1996] [12] he gave his view that the Bru people are one ethnic group that has settled in Thailand. A study of the worldview towards the four-factor and things around Bru's surroundings, it was discovered that Bru had a vision of things. Those are different from the people who own the area which shows the existence of certain identities. But at the same time, some worldviews have been changed so that they can live happily with other people. However, Bru being a group is considered to be behind other groups. Bru people still see themselves as being inferior to those who came before or lived longer, leading to a modest lifestyle, including new cultural trends from both Isan society and central society that have come into Bru society have affected the changes in the way of life culture and towards Bru's worldview all the time.

The Buddhist adaptation of the Bru ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province in five aspects: Concept:

Adjusting the concept of people in the Bru community in order to make life less difficult, change to survive in society and the rules of that society. **Behavior:** Adapting to today's society, having a polite, humble speech, being a person who is not arrogant, coming and visiting with souvenirs to make friends, and helping with every task, speaking well, having polite words, making friends. **Values:** The Bru people have adapted to the values of Thai society in many aspects such as language. **Dressing:** eating, there are using both Bru, Lao, and the central language are used to communicate when appropriate. **Economy:** The Bru people rely on natural resources for their livelihood. They, therefore, have a variety of occupations such as farming, fishery, farming, weaving, etc. It is consistent with [Chanatip Bunyaket, 1998] [13] studies on learning and socialization of Bru ethnic group: Gender and Socio-Cultural aspects. The study was conducted in the community of Ban Wern Buek, Khong Chiam Sub-district, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province found that the way of life of the Bru Ban Wern Buek ethnic group is bound to nature which affects the occupation. However, the villagers of Ban Wern Buek Khon face the problem

of unsustainable use of resources. As a result, occupations such as weaving have to be extinguished. In addition, the way of life of the Bru people is tied to beliefs and adherence to traditions called Heet Kha Khong Khom and rituals that are always associated with ghosts. A culture that emphasizes men's influence on job roles in production, household production, and community work as well as access and control over the use of various resources. These all have implications for learning and socialization related to gender roles in the household. It was found that women had to bear more workloads than men.

The analysis of the Buddhist adaptation of the Bru ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province:

Behavior, values, economy and cultural traditions due to change of residence, most of the community's occupations cause problems as follows, namely the lack of generosity, the problem of lack of humility, the problem of lack of sacrifice and controversial issues and the conflict caused the community to lose peace. The application of the Sangahavattu 4 principles for the lives of people in the community is an important aspect of community development, a gathering of people in the community, knowledge management, community learning system, network connection within the community and outside the community, etc. The aforementioned support process has resulted in the strength of the community in various aspects, whether it is economic strength, political strength, social and cultural aspects, environment, or wisdom. The strengths of the community in various aspects will naturally lead to the ability and potential of self-reliance of the community, which will live together as a group as a society. People in the community must know how to help, and synthesize according to status. People in society will therefore have a love for each other. This will make the Bru ethnic people, Ban Tha Long, smooth and peaceful in the community. It was consistent with [Wilas Potisarn, 2003] [14] studies on the adaptation of Kuy people to a multicultural context in southern Isan. It was found that the Kuy ethnic group has settled in the South Isan region for at least 300 years and lives densely in Surin, Sisaket, and Buriram provinces. The process of adaptation of Kuy people has different systems of thinking depending on their background and social conditions, ecology according to government policy. Villagers used deteriorated areas for farming and the use of modern technology to rapidly deplete ecosystems related to plants and animals. But the villagers can still preserve the community ecosystem to some extent such as the cemetery, and social aspect, the Kuy also maintain

a kinship system, the "clan system". They try to learn Thai Isan (Lao), Thai Khmer (Khmer). The Thai government promotes the learning of the Thai language which can be used to negotiate a living. Economy, there are a variety of production methods, mainly for subsistence production, and increased production for sales. Rice production and cattle rearing invest a lot of money and modern technology incurring debt, creating difficulties and hardships. The alternative is to go out and sell labor outside the community and learn experiences from outside the community to apply to live.

Suggestions

Policy suggestion

- Should organize documents regarding the Buddhist adaptation of the ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province in the form of a book for convenience further research
- Should organize documents regarding the analysis of the Buddhist adaptation of the Bru ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province to be more concrete for the education of people in the community.

Academic suggestion

From the results of research on "An analysis of the Buddhist adaptation of the Bru ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province", therefore, the researcher would like to introduce the following academic suggestions:

- There should be training in the Buddhist adaptation of the ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province as a guideline.
- There should be prepared to collect methods and principles explaining the Buddhist adaptation of the ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, Khong Chiam District in terms of academic documents.

Suggestions for further research

From the results of research on "An analysis of the Buddhist adaptation of the Bru ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, Khong Chiam District, Ubon Ratchathani Province", the researchers also found that there are interesting topics as follows:

- There should be compared the form and methods of the Buddhist adaptation of the ethnic community, Ban Tha Long, and nearby villages in the same sub-district at present.
- Should study the Buddhist principles for use in the life of the Bru community in order to create happiness.

New explicit knowledge

The Buddhist adaptation of the Bru ethnic community, the Bru ethnic people have adopted the Sangahavattu principle as a way of life: Sharing is the basis for the coexistence of people in the community, reciprocal each other, combined relationships with self-benefit activities and social

and cultural surroundings. There is a culture and tradition of raising spirits, coordinating giving, living with dependence on natural resources for a career.

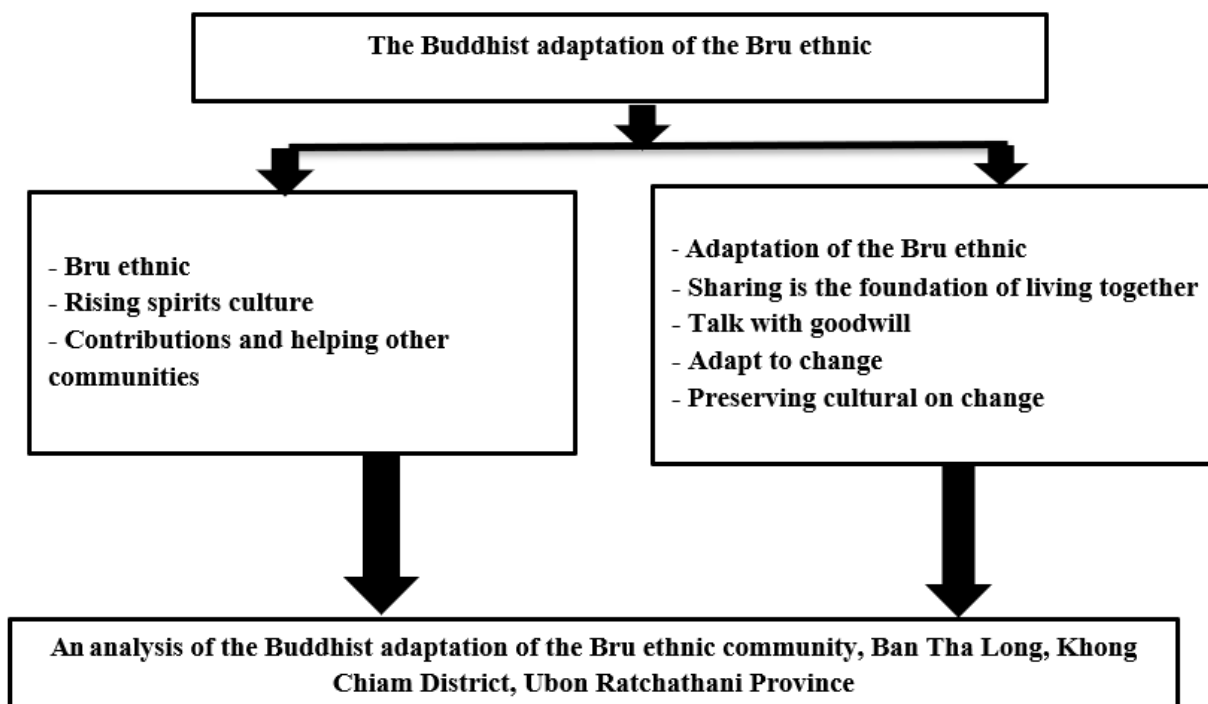


Figure 1 The Buddhist adaptation of the Bru ethnic

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