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Rule of Akbar in Kashmir: An Explanatory Study

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Abstract: ***Jammu and Kashmir are frequently referred to be "heaven on earth." According to the Farsi couplet, if there is heaven on earth, it is this, this, and this (Amir Khusrau) (Amir Khusrau). The couplet piqued the interest of various kingdoms interested in ruling over Kashmir. The Mughals had been interested in Kashmir since the beginning of their rule in India in 1526. Their first effort to take the tiny Himalayan country occurred in 1528, under the reign of Babur, the founder of the Mughal Dynasty. The Mughal army ultimately succeeded in annexing Kashmir in 1586, snatching its independence and lowering it to the status of a subah (province) of their empire after several failed military invasions over half a century. Since the death of Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin, Kashmir has seen intolerance, ferocious fanaticism, political maneuvering, and party strife. Sultan Muhammad, the ruler of Kashmir, had travelled to India to seek refuge from his uncle Fatah Khan as long back as the time of the Delhi Sultan, Sikandar Lodi. Sikander Lodi backed him up militarily, restored him to the throne, and drove Fatah Khan out of Kashmir. The Lodi family, however, did not attempt to take Kashmir. However, as time passed, several more weak kings followed in his footsteps, this time towards the Mughal Emperor. After being conquered by Babur, who established the Indian Mughal Empire, and later by Humayun's, both of whom failed, the Valley was finally taken over by Akbar the Great in 1586. He accomplished this by exploiting the Valley's chaotic administration. The goal of this study is to explore Akbar's rule in Kashmir and the important actions he implemented in Kashmir. Furthermore, more the study adopted historical and descriptive method to reach on conclusion.***

Keywords**: *Zain-Ul- Abidin, Skinder Lodi, Akbar the Great, Political Disrupt, Valley, Famine, and Religious Controversy*.**

1. INTRODUCTION

At the time of Babur's invasion of India, the kingdom of Kashmir was ruled by Sultan Muhammad Shah. The Valley was infested with disturbances due to the inefficient rule of the Sultan. Taking advantage of the weak rule of Muhammad Shah, Babur sent an army under the command of Kuchak Beg and Ali Beg to Kashmir, ostensibly to help a pretender to the throne of Kashmir, but really to bring it under his direct rule. The Kashmiri forces under Qazi

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Chak repulsed the Mughal attack. Next year, Babur found another excuse to invade Kashmir when Nazuk Shah, son of Fatah Khan, supported by some disgruntled nobles, approached Babur to help him secure the throne of Kashmir. Babur sent an efficient and compact force to help him. The Mughals won an easy victory and left the Valley only after payment of a large ransom and tribute.

Babur's successor, Humayun, also had a fascination for Kashmir. When Humayun's brother Kamran was the governor of the Punjab, the discontented party in Kashmir requested him to conquer Kashmir. But when Kamran with a large army invaded the Valley, the cruelty of Karman's soldiers drove the different Kashmiri parties into a temporary defensive union strong enough to beat the Mughals back. A civil war again broke out in Kashmir, and a faction of the nobles invented Humayun to conquer Kashmir. The Mughal commander, Mirza Haider Doulat, advised Humayun to invade Kashmir, which was then passing through factional anarchy. But Humayun did not accept the proposal because he thought that he would be confined in a country that was economically poor and politically unreliable. Ultimately, Mirza Haider Doulat, himself, led the invasion of Kashmir and conquered it. He read the Khutba and struck coins in the name of Humayun. From 1540 to 1551 A.D., Sultan Nazuk Shah was the nominal ruler of Kashmir and Mirza Haider Dughlat was the virtual ruler of the country. During his stay in the Punjab, Sher Shah Suri provided military assistance to fugitive Kashmiri noble Kazi Chak in his attempt to depose Kashmir's Mirza Haider Doulat. But the expedition did not succeed. Similarly, Sher Shah's successor, Islam Shah, attempted to bring Kaji Chak to the throne of Kashmir but failed. Mirza Haider Doulat made friends with Islam Shah and kept running Kashmir until he was killed in a fight in 1551 A.D.

2. METHODLOGY

The current study is comprehensive and focuses entirely on gathering information from the past. This gives the impression that the target demographic might look at the research. The research is backed up by obligatory as well as voluntary sources of data. Secondary data obtained from supplementary sources, including books, websites, paper articles, as well as international journals and publications, was incorporated into the study.

Research Objectives

- To explain the role of Subedars in Valley during Akbar's reign.
- To analysis and discuss the significance and impacts of Akbar's rule in Kashmir.
- To highlight the measures for famine in Kashmir during Akbar's rule.

3. DISCUSSION AND RESULT

Akbar's Expeditions and Conquest of Kashmir

At the time of Akbar's ascension to the Mughal Empire, the political climate in Kashmir was ripe for his conquest. The demise of Mirza Haider Doulat in 1551 A.D. marked the beginning of a more ferocious and contentious war for Kashmir's monarchy. There were four aristocratic parties. Specifically, the Zains, Magres, Kapooris, and Kamis. The nation was

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irreparably split, and the ostensible rulers could do what they pleased. Kashmir was controlled by five monarchs in eight years. Ghazi Chak took the throne in 1560 A.D., and Hussain Shah quickly followed him. The Shahmir family had previously held the kingdom. At this point, Akbar started to actively engage in Kashmiri politics and try to seize control of it.

During the time of Chak Sultan's leadership, Akbar used the Shia-Sunniu war as a chance to increase his power in Kashmir. At Agra, the Sunni nobles petitioned Emperor Akbar for assistance. Akbar was pleased with their delegation of Kashmiri nobility who occasionally attended to him. With the ultimate goal of annexing the kingdom of Kashmir to his own empire, he guaranteed them of his full support. During the reign of Sultan Hussan Shah Chak (1563-70 AD), Akbar's interest in Kashmiri matters increased. Between Shia and Sunnis, there were severe disagreements. Akbar dispatched Mirza Muqim as his representative to Kashmir to look into the sectarian strife there. The Sultan gave him a warm welcome, sent him away with opulent presents, and proposed marriage to his own daughter to Salem, Akbar's son. However, Hussain Shah Chak's dishonest behavior toward the Sunnis and his advisors so incensed Akbar that he refused to accept the gifts and Hussain Shah Chak's daughter and send them back to Kashmir. When Hussain Shah Chak heard this, he became quite unwell. In 1569 A.D., he was compelled to cede the throne to Ali Shah. Ali Shah Chak, the new Sultan, acknowledged Mughal suzerainty and acknowledged Akbar as the ruler of Kashmir at public prayers. When Ali Shah passed away in (1578-1579), his son Yousuf Shah Chak took over as ruler.

A civil war broke out in Kashmir when Yousuf Shah assumed the throne, forcing Yusuf Shah Chak to leave and seek refuge under Akbar's protection. Man Singh led a sizable army that Akbar deployed in 1580 AD to help him retake the throne. When the Kashmiri nobility contacted Yusuf Shah and asked him to return alone without the Mughal army, the imperial army had advanced as far as Panjab. Yusuf Shah discreetly slipped out of the Mughal army, took control of Kashmir, and ascended to the throne. He gave the orders for the coins to be made in his name and the reading of the khutba.

Yusuf Shah was required by Akbar to visit his court in person and do tribute in 1584 AD. Yusuf Shah declined and instead sent Prince Yaqub and Haider, his two younger sons. However, this did not placate Akbar, who was wary of problems from the advisors of Yousuf Shah who had used him as their tool. They counseled Yusuf Shah against visiting the Mughal court in person. Yaqub secretly fled the Mughal army in 1585 as Akbar marched towards the north-western boundary after sensing some personal risk. At this point, Akbar once more dispatched an ambassador to Yousuf Shah to request that he either send Yaqub or visit his court in person. Yusuf Shah was doubtless eager to go, but his nobles cautioned him to treat the Mughal Emperor sternly and brace himself for opposition. Yusuf Shah therefore expelled the Mughal embassy. The Mughal ambassador returned to India as a result, having accomplished nothing. Because to the North-West problems and the significant Uzbek threat, Akbar would not leave Kashmir in a rebellious situation as time was of the essence.

4.1 Second Mughal Expedition to Kashmir in 1585 A.D.

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When Akbar despatched Raja Bhagwan Das and Shah Rukh to conquer Kashmir in 1585, they led a force of 5 000 troops. Ahead of the Mughal army, Yusuf Shah came up and blockaded the Bhuliyas Pass in Kashmir. It was a hard-fought struggle, but there were no clear winners. For a few days, the Mughal army was in a precarious position. As the weather turned cold and wet, the corn harvest was curtailed. Heavy rains destroyed the bridges, submerging the pass. The harsh cold and famine in the Mughal camp took a tremendous toll on lives. A further piece of bad news arrived at the hands of Raja Bhagwan Das, who learned that the Yusuf zai mission led by Zain Khan was a complete disaster. Raja Bhagwan Das made the decision to begin talks aimed at bringing about peace. However, he sent a message to Yusuf Shah that the Rajputs cared little about their lives and that the might of the Mughal Emperor would not suffer significantly even if his men in Kashmir were completely wiped out. Due to bad weather, the Mughals had suffered defeat, but soon received reinforcement and would try again, which the Kashmir's would find hard to withstand. Yusuf Shah was persuaded by this simple reality, but his nobles were not. On February 14, 1586, he escaped from his camp and snuck into Raja Bhagwan Das's camp, where he remained until his death.

It was only Yusuf Shah who had surrendered to the Mughals, thus the Kashmiris immediately installed Prince Yaqub on the throne and went to war against the Mughals. The Mughals lost a lot of territory. More than a thousand hungry Mughal soldiers took refuge behind the fortifications. Due to hunger and freezing temperatures, the Mughals could no longer afford to stay in the area. Finally, the Mughals and Yaqub were able to come to some type of agreement. That the Khutba and coins would bear Akbar's name, and the income collected from mint, saffron, and shawls would be remitted to the imperial treasury, were agreed upon.. The Mughal army withdrew from Kashmir after signing this agreement. Emperor
Akbar commanded Yusuf Shah to join in his homage, and he agreed to do so.
On March 28, 1586, Raja Bhagwan Das brought Yusuf to Akbar in Attock. In any case, Akbar was not happy. When faced with unimaginable suffering, he refused to sign the peace pact that was imposed on his officers. The myth of Akbar's Kashmiri suzerainty had also been dispelled by Yaqub, who had the Khutba performed in his honour and coins produced in his honour. Finally, Kashmir's new ruler was an unfavourable prince to the Mughal Emperor.

Yousuf Shah remained imprisoned because to Akbar's reluctance to free him. It's likely that he altered his mind because Yousuf Shah was unable to control his sons or the nobles who had grown to be very powerful, because his first thought was to install him on the throne of Kashmir. Todar Mal was instructed to take charge of Yusuf Shah, who had been imprisoned. On the suggestion of Raja Man Singh, he was released from prison after 2.5 years. He was given a 500-horse mansab. In spite of this, he could not travel to Kashmir. He accompanied Raja Man Singh on a trip to Bihar. He died in September 1592 and was buried in Bihar, India.

4.2 The Final Mughal Conquest of Kashmir

Finally, Akbar dispatched Muhammad Qasim Khan Mir-Bahir to deal with Yaqub, who declared himself Sultan of Kashmir. Qasim arrived in Kashmir at a time when Yaqub's harsh religious stance had reignited Shia and Sunni hatred. Shamas Chak, Malik Hasan Chadur, Alam Sher Magre, and Yaqub's own Chief Minister Ali Dar had banded together against Yaqub. Disgusted by Yaqub's bigoted attitude, a group of Kashmiri nobility led by Sheikh

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Yaqub Sarfi petitioned Emperor Akbar to acquire Kashmir immediately.
On June 28, 1586, Qasim Khan marched from Lahore with a huge force to conquer Kashmir. When Qasim approached the Kartal pass, Yaqub arrived with a large force to fight him. Many of his nobles and warriors, however, abandoned him to join Qasim Khan. Yaqub became disheartened and escaped to Kishatwar. Shamas Chak attempted to halt the Mughal advance but was defeated as well. The road to Srinagar had reopened. The Mughals triumphantly invaded Srinagar on October 14, and the khutba was read in Akbar's name. This was Kashmir's final conquest.

Despite the fact that the Mughals had ultimately captured Kashmir, the Kashmiris did not give up their fight. Yaqub was still on the run. Shamas Chak had also fled, but they were not yet ready to acknowledge defeat. They served as a rallying point for Kashmiris who had not accepted the alien authority. Yaqub amassed an army of 8,000 soldiers and assaulted the Mughal army in Srinagar, but was defeated and escaped to Kishatwar. Shamas Chak assembled a 10,000-man army and invaded Srinagar, but he was beaten and retreated to Karnav. These defeats devastated Yaqub and Shamas Chak. Some of their supporters turned themselves in to Qasim Chak. But they were adamant about continuing their fight against the Mughals. They returned to the Valley and launched surprise attacks against the Mughals. The Kashmiri lords' discontent and vigour forced Qasim Khan to pursue a restrictive strategy. However, repression did not address any problems; rather, it exacerbated them. The Kashmiris made virtually daily raids on Srinagar, which so angered Qasim Khan that he petitioned Emperor Akbar to recall him.

Akbar replaced Qasim Khan with Mashhadi Sayyid Mirza Yusuf khan Rizvi. Mirza Yusuf khan Rizvi and his Rohilla contingents departed Lahore for Srinagar in the middle of October 1588 to take command of Kashmir operations. He pursued a policy of firmness and conciliation with Kashmiri nobles, gradually winning them over to his side. Yaqub's position became untenable as a result of his followers' desertions, and he was forced to flee to Keshtwar for the third time. Shamas Chak was similarly humiliated by Mirza Yusuf Khan Rizvi. Shamas Chak, convinced of the futility of continuing to oppose the Mughals, surrendered and was delivered to Akbar by Mirza Yusuf Khan Rizvi.
Akbar visited Kashmir after Mirza Yusuf Khan Rizvi had established peace and order in the valley. During the Emperor's visit, Yaqub Shah decided to give up his battle and submit. The Emperor pardoned him and bestowed a 500 mansab at and a small jagir in Bihar on him.

4.3 Significance and Effects of the Conquest of Kashmir
The Mughals' invasion and annexation of Kashmir had far-reaching consequences.
First and foremost, Kashmir was captured by the Mughal Empire and constituted a province of Kabul. Abul Fazl states in his classic work Ain-i-Akbari, "The Subah of Kashmir consisted of Kashmir, Pakhli, Bhimber, Swat, Bijore, Qandahar, and Zabulistan, with Kabul as its capital." As a result, the final ember of Kashmiri independence was extinguished.
Second, according to Dr. R. P. Tripathi, "the conquest of Kashmir created a huge influence on the half-subdued or rebellious Rajas of the highlands of Northern Punjab." In 1590 A.D., the Rajas of Nagarkot, Jammu, Man, Jeswal, and a dozen other rulers rushed to submit their submission and presents to Akbar. Ali Rai, the prince of Little Tibet, also sent gifts and gave Salem his daughter's hand in marriage in 1591. Their combined strength was believed to be

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one lakh soldiers and ten thousand cavalry, and their acceptance of imperial suzerainty contributed significantly to the protection of the Punjab and its borders."

Third, after a long period of bad governance, turmoil, and tyranny, the people of Kashmir now enjoy the blessings of peace and goodwill. They enjoyed peace and prosperity under the reign of the great monarch Zain-ul-Abidin, but they suffered greatly throughout the reigns of his successors. "It ushered in a new era for the Kashmiri people," says Dr. M. L. Kapur. They lost their independence, without a question, but they were also liberated from the particular gangsterism that had reigned in the country since the reign of Sultan Hasan Shah."

Fourth, the acquisition of Kashmir had significant economic consequences. Because Kashmir was on the way to Central Asian countries, it aided in the expansion of India's trade with those countries. There are also job prospects in India and other countries for Kashmiris. Fifth, the Kashmiris have equal potential to rise within their own country. The divide between Sunnis and Shias, as well as Hindus and Muslims, has likewise vanished. Gradually, the perspectives of Kashmiris broaden as well. Sixth, the acquisition of Kashmir ended Kashmir's centuries-long isolation and seclusion. Its captivating beauty drew visitors from all around Asia. Finally, the Mughal Emperors were enamoured by the allure and grandeur of Kashmir's beautiful valley. They frequently visited Kashmir and looked after the people's well-being. Kashmir became the summer residence of the Mughal Emperors from then on. A well-versed French physician. "It is not without cause that the Mughals dubbed Kachemire the terrestrial paradise of the Indies, or that Akbar was so relentless in his efforts to steal the sceptre from the hands of its native sovereign," Bernier says. His son Jahangir became so enamoured of this small country that he made it his favourite residence, and he frequently said that he would rather be denied every other province of his vast empire than lose kachemire." Dr. Bamzai adds that Kashmir evolved to enjoy a privileged position in the Mughal Empire, and the inhabitants gradually grew to be aware of their rights, with even minor grievances drawing the attention of the Central Government. In this context, George Forster stated during his visit to Kashmir in 1783 A.D., "The interests of this province were so firmly favoured at the court, that any complaint against its administrators was attentively listened to, and every attempt to molest the people repressed and punished."

Qasim Khan as the Subedar of Kashmir (1586-87)

Qasim khan was the first Mughal Governor or Subedar of the Kashmir province. His regime lasted for one year during which he remained busy in suppressing the opposition of Yaqub and Shamas Chak. He did not get the opportunity to reorganise administrative system of the province. The restlessness and the energy shown by the rebels obliged Qasim khan to follow a repressive policy, which, however, failed to crush them. Qasim khan grew so much disgusted that he requested the Emperor to recall him. Akbar replaced Qasim Khan by Mirza Yusuf khan Rizvi in 1587 A.D.

Mirza Yusuf khan Rizvi as the Subedar (1587-90)

Mirza Yusuf khan Rizvi was the Governor of Kashmir from 1587 to 1590 A.D., a period of three years. It was under him that the Mughal institutions and administrative system were first introduced in the valley. He engaged himself in mitigating the sufferings of the people and subduing the last remnants of the refractory elements which were still active in the country. In 1589 A.D., Akbar visited Kashmir for the first time. He personally studied the political condition and the administrative system of the Sabah and listened to the complaints

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of the people. The people of all the classes, high or low heaved a sigh of relief. His presence in the valley at a time when peace and order had been restored there after centuries of unrest and oppression warmed up the hearts of the people with new aspirations and promises.
Akbar respected the sentiments of all the people of Kashmir and declared that he would redress all their grievances. During the rule of the Chaks, the Sunnis were persecuted and the Brahmins could perform their religious ceremonies only after paying special taxes, fines and other tributes. But Akbar abolished Jazia and other obnoxious levies imposed upon the Hindu subjects. He, thus, stood for the fundamental unity of mankind. In this context, the chronicler Shuka writes, "He (the Emperor) announced that he would without delay reward those who would respect the Brahmins in Kashmir and that he would instantly pull down the houses of those who would take the annual tribute from them."

The people of Srinagar greatly resented the presence of Mughal soldiers in the city. These soldiers very often harassed and insulted the people. When it was brought to the notice of the Emperor, he ordered a new town to be built away from the civil population, where his soldiers and attendants would reside .The new town was called Nagar. It was well decorated and occupied by the Mughal soldiers. Shuka records, "When the Yavanas had gone out of the old city the people had a festivity, they always blessed king Jallaluddin (Akbar), and were happy."

The Emperor also ordered that no soldiers would inflict any loss on the cultivators or destroy crops. There are many instances which show that the Subedars under the direction of the Emperor took severe action against those who harassed the cultivators or in any way disturbed the peace of the province.
Akbar's first visit to Kashmir also produced some other fruitful results. For instance, it was on the Emperor's suggestion that some of the boats in the lakes and the rivers were turned into residential boats very nearly resembling the Shikaras or modern houseboats. He also promoted several industries such as shawl manufacturing.

Quli Khan as the Governor of Kashmir
Quli Khan was the governor of Kashmir from 1590 to 1601 A.D. He found that some influential Chak nobles had not yet reconciled themselves to the new regime and were likely to rise in revolt. Besides, the people of Kashmir in general, though now having a peaceful time, did not like the over lordship of the Mughal rulers. Quli khan, therefore, decided to follow a policy of ruthless suppression of the insurgents and one of conciliation towards the peace-loving subjects. The Chak nobles, who had not yet submitted to the Mughal rule, were severely punished. Even Shamas Chak and Hussain Chak, who had entered into matrimonial relations with the Emperor and his son, were not spared when they showed signs of unrest and rebellion. Qasim Khan had them murdered by the soldiers of Mulla Jamil.

Quli Khan undertook some building activities in the province. He supervised the construction of the huge wall that runs round the Hari Parbat hill and also the royal palace. About thirty thousand laborers were employed in the construction work and were paid at the rate of six annas daily if married and four annas daily if unmarried. About two hundred skilled workers from India were also employed. The labourers were well paid and no forced labour (beggars) was allowed. The total cost of construction for these works came to one crore and ten lakh

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Akbar Shahi rupees. When, after some years, the wall around the hill and the palace were completed, Quli Khan invited Emperor Akbar to pay another visit to the valley. Akbar, accompanied by Father Gerome Xavier, a Navaresse of high birth, and Benoist de Gois, arrived in Srinagar in July 1598. In 1605 A.D., Father Xavier recorded the short sketches of the Kashmiri people, which were published in Antwerp, Belgium. It seems that at the time of Akbar's second visit, the valley was in the grip of a severe famine. In his story about Akbar and his court, the Portuguese priest Pierre du Jarric told sad stories about the worst kind of famine.

4.7 Famine Relief measures

The famine conditions worsened due to the influx of Akbar's large retinue. Akbar, however, took many famine relief measures to mitigate the sufferings of the starving people. Large quantities of food grains were imported in Kashmir from Pakhli, Bhimbarand West Punjab. About one lakh people were distributed free meals daily in the Idgah. To provide employment to the famine stricken people, building activities were started. Conservation of bridges, roads and canals was undertaken .Luckily the crop that year was bumper and the famine conditions gradually subsided.

4.8 Mirza Ali Akbar as Governor (1601-06 A.D.)

The new Kashmir governor, Mirza Ali Akbar, did not make any changes to the administrative system of the province as established by his predecessors. Under him, however, Kashmir suffered heavily due to epidemics, famines, and floods. Akbar sent supplies of grains from Lahore and Sialkot to feed the famine-stricken people. It was during the time of Ali Akbar's governorship of Kashmir that Emperor Akbar died in Agra in 1605 A.D.

4. CONCLUSION

Akbar tried everything to subdue Kashmir's, but only a small minority supported him. Kashmiri Muslims lost their government jobs. Brahmans were chosen to use local talent, while Agra and Delhi sent Subedars. They had no administrative seat. Kashmiri Muslims' military service was curtailed to reduce their competitiveness. Other major Muslim families, like the Shah Mirs, Chaks, Magres, Rainas, Maliks, and Bhats, were dethroned.

In October 1586, the Mughal Emperor Akbar successfully conquered the state of Kashmir and annexed it to the Kabul province. Emperor Akbar appointed Qasim Khan as the region's first governor. In 1587 A.D., Mirza Yusuf Khan Rizvi succeeded Qasim Khan. Experienced and diplomatic, Mirza Yusuf Khan Rizvi was a Mughal officer. Shamas Chak was reprimanded by him, and he was forced to flee to the mountains. Additionally, he pushed Yaqub to give up after convincing him that continuing to resist the Mughals was pointless. In dealing with the Kashmir is, he adopted a conciliatory stance and gained the favour of their strong chiefs. Up till 1590 A.D., Mirza Yusuf Khan Rizvi was still in charge of Kashmir. The same year, Qali Khan was named governor by Akbar. A devastating famine struck Kashmir during his lifetime. He exerted a lot of effort to lessen the misery of the starving people. In 1601, Mirza Ali Akbar succeeded Qali Khan and maintained the throne until 1606 AD. In the year 1605, Akbar passed away while he was governor.

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