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Leisure for Peace? Revisiting the Tourism-Peace Nexus

Al Chukwuma Okoli
Ikenna Mike Alumona

LEISURE FOR PEACE? REVISITING THE TOURISM-PEACE NEXUS

Al Chukwuma Okoli[1]

Ikenna Mike Alumona[2]

Abstract: Tourism is an important aspect of the contemporary international commerce. It accounts for a significant share of the foreign exchange of many nations, especially those with a thriving tourism sector. While scholarly works abound on the economic, cultural and social values of tourism, there has been a debate as regards the utility of tourism as an enabler for peace. This paper interrogates the pacific import of international tourism against the backdrop of the growing significance of the tourism sector globally. By way of a qualitative analysis of secondary data, anchored on the theory of internationalism, the paper interrogates the tourism-peace nexus in the light of emerging insights, positing that international tourism holds potentials that could be leveraged towards promoting international peace and stability.

Keywords: Internationalism; international tourism; leisure; pacifism; peace; tourism.

[1] Holds a Ph.D in Defense and Strategy. He is a double Fellow [Laureate] of Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa [CODESRIA] as well as a member of Amnesty International [AI]. A Senior Lecturer in the Department of Political Science at Federal University of Lafia in Nigeria, Dr Okoli is a specialist in Liberal Political Ecology, Security Studies, and Gender & Development. He has published and consulted widely in those fields. Email: okochu007@yahoo.com

[2] Associate Professor of Political Science and Acting Head of Department at Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (formerly Anambra State University), Igbariam, Anambra State, Nigeria. His primary research interests are in the areas of comparative political parties, electoral studies, peace, conflict and security studies. Email: ikennaalumona@yahoo.com

I. Introduction

> Travel has become one of the great forces for peace and understanding in our time. As people move throughout the world and learn to know each other's customs and to appreciate the qualities of individuals of each nation, we are building a level of international understanding which can sharply improve the atmosphere for world peace (John F. Kennedy as cited in Pratt; Liu, 2015, p.82).

The contemporary global system is characterized by, among other features, globalization. The reality of globalization is instantiated by the accentuated social, economic cultural and political integration of the world. One of the essential attributes of the globalization process is the phenomenon of mass tourism. In this regard, Pedersen (2017, p.30) notes that "Mass tourism, and the greatly increased economic integration and human connectivity that undergird it, has [sic], in many ways, been integral to the globalization processes of the twentieth century".

Tourism has been an important aspect of the contemporary international relations. Its strategic importance in the world's affairs is underscored by its place as a viable foreign exchange earner as well as employer of labour for many nations (Mathieson; Wall, 2016). But beyond and besides its economic import as an income cum-livelihood generator, tourism serves other critical social, political and cultural purposes. According to Banarou (2011), tourism helps in the promotion mutual understanding among people as well as the expansion of social, cultural and scientific cooperation among nations.

The thinking that tourism is an enabler of world's peace is noted in the various shades of inter-war internationalism (Iriye, 1997). This thinking is predicated on the normative proposition that "tourism is a vehicle of international understanding and peace…" (Perdersen, 2017, p.31). The proposition is based on a three-fold assumption: "First, it is assumed that tourism establishes contact between people. Second, it is assumed that this contact fosters mutual understanding and sympathy. Third, it is assumed that increased understanding and mutual friendship dampens conflict" (Perdersen, 2017, p.31).

The grand supposition implicit the above citation is the simplistic idea to the effect that tourism brings about peace. As Hacking (1994, p.5) succinctly puts it, "there is one easy way by which nations may come understand each other, and that way is a reciprocal interchange of tourists". This pattern of thinking has been congealed in the notion of tourism-peace nexus, which has become a matter of heated scholarly debate over the years. This paper attempts to re-engage this debate in the light of the dialectics of the international tourism industry, particularly in the prevailing era of global instability accentuated by terrorism and allied instances of armed

violence. Given the fact that tourism sector is sensitive and requires security and political stability (Becheur, 2011), what then is the future of the sector? The paper posits that in spite of the apparent rising vulnerability of the global tourism sector to violent occurrences, the sector has continued to hold significant potentials for the leveraging of international peace and stability.

In effect, the paper is an attempt to contribute to the age-long scholarly discourse on tourism-peace nexus in the light of emerging insights from contemporary praxis. The paper briefly navigates the extant perspectives on the subject matter with a view to reviewing and transcending the existing corpus of knowledge in an attempt to advance the frontiers of theorizing. Minding the relativism of the tourism peace-nexus, the paper posits that tourism holds the prospect of engendering global peace and stability if the pacific gains and potentials of the sector could be pragmatically harnessed and mainstreamed. The thrust of this position is thematically prosecuted under four key sections that follow subsequently namely: conceptual and theoretical framework; perspectives on tourism peace nexus tourism as an enabler of peace; and conclusion

II. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

Four basic terms constitutes the conceptual frame of the paper, namely leisure, pacifism, peace and tourism. In order to have an operationally a shared understanding of these concepts in the light of their peculiar application herewith, it is germane to define and clarify them. This forms the crux of table 1.

Table 1. Conceptual Clarifications

Leisure	Pacifism	Peace	Tourism
An activity apart from work, family and society, essentially geared towards relaxation, recreation diversion or broadening of knowledge (Rop, 2013: 76- 77). Leisure is principally the end of tourism.	Belief in peace and non-violence as the best approach to international affairs (Mclean; McMillan 2003-390). Pacifism rejects war and high diplomacy as strategies of international politics. See also Okoli (2009).	Humane social relations characterized by absence of threats of structural and physical violence (Okoli; Okpaleke, 2016;-1-8). This encompasses negative and positive peace. See also Ibeanu (2006).	Temporary movement to destinations outside normal places of work and residence; the activities undertaken in those places; and this facilities enjoyed during the stay in those destinations (Mathieson; Walls, 1982)

Source: Authors' adaptation form the sources indicated in-text.

The paper adopts the denotative meanings embedded in the afore-stated as given. This is not without any prejudice to allied and applied nuances associated thereabout. Together, these terms and their conceptions form the frame of reference for the study.

To consolidate on the conceptual framework of the paper, it is apposite to explore further the concepts of peace and war/violence as they relate to the subject matter of the current discourse. Peace refers to the prevalence of harmonious relations among nations (Okoli; Okpaleke, 2016). It is contingent upon functional interdependence, instrumental bi- or multi-lateralism, and diplomatic engagements among states and non-state actors in the international system. On the other hand, war has to do with "armed conflict between two or more parties, usually fought for political ends" (McLean; McMillan, 2003: 564). Peace and war are diametrically opposed; hence it is often posited that peace is the absence of war or violence. However, situations such as 'cold war' or 'cold war' have often occurred in circumstances that bear overt trappings of peace in the international system. Armed violence at the intra- and inter-state levels usually engenders conditions that negate the prospects of international trade in all ramifications, including international tourism.

As regards the theoretical framework, the study appropriates the theory of internationalism. The origins of this theory are traceable to the ideological currents of the inter-war idealism that emphasizes the need for the world to transcend the barriers of nationalism and statehood (Halliday, 1988; Arora, 2011). In effect, the theory advocates for transnational or global cooperation based on the normative thinking that humanity is and should be part of a broader and transcendental global community that de-emphasizes the particularities of nation and state (Halliday, 2001; Radice, 2007).

The underlying logic of internationalism is that "Nationalism should be transcended because the ties that bind people are stronger that those that separate them" (Arora, 2011, p.2). Consequently, the theory admonishes nations to seek greater political, economic and cultural cooperation, unencumbered by the territorial limitations of the state; nay the ideological divides of nationalism.

The theory of internationalism has both normative and analytical essences. The normative side of the theory idealizes, rationalizes and prescribes an inter-dependent and cooperative world order characterized by international understanding and harmony. As an analytical category, on the other hand, internationalism seeks to describe, explain and predict the dynamics of centripetal relations that underpin the fast globalizing world (Radice, 2007). This includes the increasing internationalization, interdependence, and integration of people(s), cultures and nations (Iriye, 1997; Perdersen, 2017). There are two broad ideological

perspectives to the theory of internationalism, namely liberal and orthodox perspectives. The liberal perspective favours the diminution of the place and stake of the state system in the world affairs while the orthodox (conservative) perspective retains some faith in the immanence, vitality and relevance of the state in that context (Radice, 2007).

As a theoretical framework of this study, the theory of internationalism enables one to come to terms with the transnational and multicultural contours of mass tourism on the world stage. With its rising profile as an integral component of the contemporary international cultural and economic relations, tourism has provided the world with a veritable avenue for cross-cutting ties whose collateral dividends can translate to greater international understanding and harmony. To be sure, by bringing people of various sub-national and national backgrounds together within an ambience of conviviality, tourism wields the potential to leveraging behavioural outcomes that are capable of bringing about harmonious human and international relations. Such is the hypothetical nexus between tourism and peace. The implication of the foregoing is that nations could seek the advancement of peace through investment and promotion of mass tourism. This could be achieved through the development of tourism hubs and free zones within dedicated national and regional circuits. By so doing, the pacific dividends of tourism would be mainstreamed and propagated on the global scale.

III. Perspectives on Tourism-Peace Nexus

Tourism is a peacetime enterprise. It is an activity that thrives in an atmosphere of peace and stability. In other words, tourism, whether local or international, flourishes under the ambience of peace and security, whereas situations of strife and insecurity threaten its progress and sustainability (Moik, 2017). Ineluctably, therefore, there is surely a fundamental relationship between peace and tourism (World Economic Forum [WEF], 2017/2018).

While it is obvious that there is a kind of relationship between tourism and peace, the nature of such relationship cannot be taken for granted, or be simplistically understood. In the existing literature, there is an apparent consensus that tourism and peace are related. Nonetheless there has been an unresolved debate as whether the relationship is simply one of correlation or that of causation as well. While the pacifist-analysts (World Tourism and Travel Council [WTTC], 2016; Haile, 2017) are inclined to viewing the relationship as being correlational, causal and fundamental at the same time, the skeptics tend to be contending that the relationship is merely incidental, ancillary, but not necessarily causal (Baker, 2017; DePuma, 2015).

To situate the debate, the pacifists argue that while peace is indispensible to tourism, tourism in turn hold immense potential for the propagation of peace. Skeptists, on the other hand, concede that tourism requires peace to thrive (Pratt; Liu, 2015). Nonetheless, they do not agree to the proposition that tourism is inherently a peace-agent. For them, although tourism has the potential of boasting national and transnational interactions that are beneficial to peace, such interactions do not necessarily bring about harmonious relations (Patt; Liu, 2015). In fact, contradictions arising from such interactions could engender counter-productive outcomes, such as cultural 'shock' as well as ideological stereotypes/antipathies capable of bringing about conflicts (Mathieson; Wall 1982; Moik, 2017; Mir; Ahmad, 2018).

The pacifist position on the tourism-peace nexus amply resonates with the contemporary thinking on internationalism. It embodies three important perspectives that need to be shared herewith. The first is the contact theory which holds that mass tourism brings people of different localities, cultures and generations together and affords them the opportunity to learn and understand each other in a manner that fosters peaceful co-existence (WTTC, 2016). This interaction result in harmonious relations between people(s) and nations.

The second pacifist viewpoint has crystallized in what may be termed the 'economic expediency' perspective. This holds that peace is expedient to sustainable tourism (Upadhayaya, 2011). Consequently, tourism-dependent communities and nations are naturally inclined to making and sustaining peace because that is indispensable to their economic wellbeing. It is only rational of the people of such places to be peaceful and maintain peace in order to sustain the economic dividends of the tourism sector (Haile, 2017).

Lastly is the 'diplomatic bargain' perspective which presupposes that countries whose foreign policies prioritize aspects of cultural diplomacy (pilgrimage, tourism, sports) for some strategic reasons are likely to be predisposed to peaceful international relations. This diplomatic disposition thus makes it possible for such countries to cultivate and promote peaceful relations, even as a matter of necessity (Okoli, 2009; WTTC, 2016).

Overall, the debate on tourism-peace nexus is far from being over. The debate is getting rather viciously controversial considering the fact that the traditional pacifist assumption to the effect that tourism is an enabler of peace is being fundamentally questioned by the spate of terrorist attacks on international tourism sites. The incidents of Al-Shabab's terror against select tourism destinations in Kenya have been a major challenge to the country's tourism sector (Okech, 2015). But there are more apt and apposite examples elsewhere. For instance, there was a sudden drastic decline in the United States tourism and travel arrivals in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 2001 terrorist attacks by the Al-Qaida (DePuma, 2015; Moik, 2017). The

decline was such that the monthly average of arrivals was never attained for many months following the terrorist incident (Baker-2014; Moik, 2017). Developments such as the aforementioned have made it problematic for analysts to vindicate the positive linkage between tourism and peace. This challenge notwithstanding, this paper further explores the tourism-peace nexus with a view to leveraging a new understanding capable of edifying theory-building in that regard. This task constitutes the main concern of the next section.

IV. Tourism as an Enabler of Peace: A Scoping Discourse

To properly situate the substantive argument in this paper, it would be apposite to make a few preliminary remarks concerning the linkage between tourism and peace, even generically. In this regard, the observations made by the recent publication of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) would be germane:

(i)   "Open and sustainable tourism can be a force for peace, with causal mechanisms operating both at the individual and state levels" (2016, p.1)

(ii)   "Open tourism can broaden minds and opinions so that individuals may become more informed and tolerant of their fellow human beings" (p.1).

(iii)   "Tourism can also facilitate better diplomatic and trade relations between countries, fostering a more tolerant political climate" (p.1).

(iv)   "Countries with more sustainable and open tourism industries tend to be more peaceful" (p.3).

Although the above observations are formulated in probabilistic terms, they nominally presuppose that tourism is worth an agent or enabler of peace. The argument can also hold conversely: sustainable peace is a basic requirement for sustainable tourism. This cyclical (un-linear) essence of tourism-peace nexus has been aptly captured by WTTC (2016, p.13) to the effect that "While tourism may help to increase good relations with neighbours by promoting cross-cultural understanding, for example; having good relations (peace) with neighbours provides an enabling environment for increased tourism". Box 1 situates the views of some international organizations regarding the affirmative linkage between tourism and peace.

Box 1. International Organizations' Views on Tourism-Peace Nexus

The relationship between tourism and peace has also been endorsed by a number of international initiations (e.g., The UN Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, International Bureau of Social Tourism in 1963, The Helsinki Accord in 1975, World Tourism Organization's Tourism Bill of Rights; Tourist Code in 1985, United Nations World Tourism Organization's Sustainable Tourism-Eliminating Poverty 2003, etc.). Amidst the various desires and commitments for peace through tourism, the United Nations (UN) has identified tourism as an important means of creating peace in the world. The UN has focused on Peace and Tourism in its conference on Environment and Development on June 14, 1992, and made a note in the Amman Declaration on 'Peace through Tourism' adopted at the Global Summit on Peace through Tourism on November 11, 2000.

Source: Upadhayaya (2011, p.18).

The point being established in the foregoing discourse is that tourism within local and international contexts can, all things being equal, bring about conditions that support peace, and vice versa. Considered from another lens, tourism has the capacity to result in circumstantial dividends such as sustainable peace (Haile, 2017). While peace is necessarily a condition for sustainable tourism, it has also oftentimes become an important condition for the sustenance of peace. As WTTC (2016, p.4) brilliantly captures it: "Tourism can help support peace by putting pressure on government to cease fighting- whether on an international front or domestically in order to attract tourists. This is particularly important if tourism is an important sector for an economy".

So for a tourism-dependent economy, maintaining peace is a matter of existential expediency. In effect, for the county to continue to enjoy the goodwill and patronage of its local and international clientele of tourism customers, it must strive to present a positive national image in terms of indicators of peacefulness and stability (Haile, 2017). How do the foregoing hypothetical cases obtain in reality? A few empirical instances would suffice to substantiate the claims.

In 1979, the military government in Guatemala was pressured through an international tourism boycott led by the International Food and Allied Workers (IFAW). This was in view of the regime's human rights abuses as well as the associated domestic violence situation in the country. As a tourism-dependent economy, the country was threatened economically and diplomatically as a consequence of the boycott. Expectedly, the military regime desperately negotiated the boycott by way of critical trade-offs aimed at attenuating its authoritarian tendencies (WTTC, 2016).

Another relevant case where the imperative of tourism have necessitated peaceful relations is that of cross-border tourism in Kashmir. To be sure, Kashmir is an important tourism destination situated between India and Pakistan. If hosts thousands of tourists from both countries, thereby presenting a window for cultural transnationalism in the indo-Pakistani axis. So, in spite of the longstanding military-cum-diplomatic tension between India and Pakistan, the Kashmir tourism attraction has continued to douse friction, especially at the level of citizen-to-citizen relations (Mir; Ahmad, 2018).

There are instances where the necessity for the sustenance of the gains of international tourism has formed one of the rationales for demilitarization and post conflict civil reforms. Cases in point are Rwanda and Panama (WTTC, 2016). In the case of Rwanda, for example, the quest for tourism development formed part of the reason for the de-mining and cleanup of the gorilla parks in the country. These parks have become important tourism sites in the post-conflict era. The role of tourism in peace-building is worthy of a further mention here. As the cases of Rwanda and Eritrea tend to indicate, the drive for international tourism resulted in massive investment in the travel and hospitality industries in the post-conflict era (Alluri, 2009). Apart from generating revenues in the form of foreign exchange, the development created multiple livelihood opportunities for individuals and households. Jobs and income opportunities were created through a variety of activities in the wider tourism sector, including crafts, entertainment, fashion, sports, etc. The productive engagement of the teeming youths in the afore-mentioned allied activities produced a multiplier stabilizing effects that have consolidated the post-conflict peace-building process.

To further situate the foregoing argument on tourism-peace nexus, the Tunisian example could be instructive. Mass tourism has been part and parcel of the Tunisian economic diplomacy narrative (Becheur, 2011; Jeffrey, 2017). During the regime of Ben Ali, the country built and sustained enormous international goodwill and recognition through international tourism. This is in spite of the country's apparent conservative Islamic worldview that many thought would not conduce to progressive international tourism. Consequently, the country became a veritable regional hub for international tourism within the Arab-Mediterranean axis (Jeffrey, 2017). Although this legacy dramatically nose-dived following the 2011 Revolution that ousted Ben Ali, Tunisian tourism sector quickly bounced back to viability and resilience, only a year after (see Figure 1).

Significantly, tourism rhetoric constituted a crucial component of the post-revolution national re-branding in Tunisia. Framed in the famous slogan of "I love Tunisia', the rhetoric sought to capitalize on the offerings of Tunisia's tourism heritage to re-launch her into global

recognition and fellowship. In effect, the political transformations of Tunisia from the era of authoritarianism, through the period of the Revolution, up to the current democratic transition, bears ample testimonial of the strategic import of tourism sector in the process of political and economic stabilization of a country.

Figure 1. The evolution os international tourist arrivals
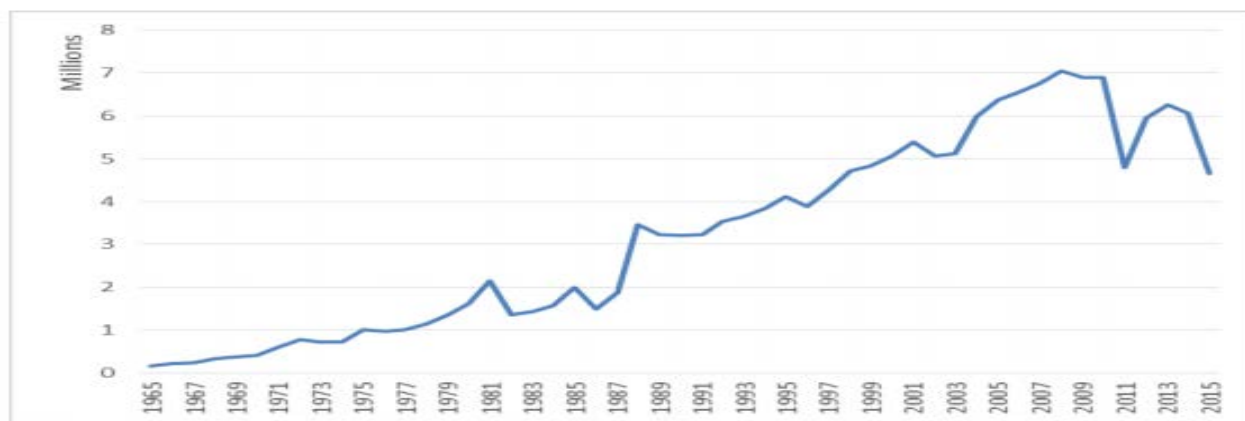
Source: Created from data available in Portail Open Data, 2016 and the Ministry os Tourism and Handcrafts, 2016.

Figure 1 shows the trends and trajectories of international tourism in Tunisia from the standpoint of tourist arrival data. It indicates that the trend peaked around 2007, with a sudden drop in 2011 following the Revolution in 2011. Significantly, there was a bounce-back by 2012 and later on another major decline following the 2015 terrorist incident. The ability of the Tunisian tourism sector to survive shocks arising from adverse incidents underscores its resilience. More fundamentally, it demonstrates grave priority accorded to the sector by the government in view of the sector's strategic place and a prime foreign exchange earner.

Contemporary indicators in the global tourism sector point to the increasing and more abiding nexus between tourism and peace. A cursory perusal of the 2017/2018 World tourism rankings, published by the World Economic forum (WEF) indicate that most of the top-ranking countries have also enjoyed appreciable degree of peace and stability over the years, (WEF, 2018: 17-18). Most of these top-ranking countries equally topped the 2018 Global Peace Index published by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) in 2018 (IEP, 2018). The countries are Austria, Australia, Canada, Germany, Greece, Japan, Portugal, Singapore, and Switzerland (see table 2). It may be hazardous to tie the above correlation to a single predictor; nonetheless, empirical instances, such as the ones highlighted, tend to presuppose that tourism must have played a compelling role.

Table 2. Comparing Records from 2018 Global Peace Index and World Tourism Ranking

Global Peace Index[3]		World Tourism Ranking[4]
Ranking	Country	Country
1.	Iceland	United States
2.	New Zealand	Thailand
3.	Austria	Spain
4.	Portugal	Hong Kong
5.	Denmark	*Australia
6.	Canada	France
7.	Czech Republic	China
8.	Singapore	*Germany
9.	Japan	United Kingdom
10.	Ireland	Italy
11.	Slovenia	Turkey
12.	Switzerland	Macao
13.	Australia	*Singapore
14.	Sweden	*Japan
15.	Finland	*Canada
16.	Norway	Mexico
17.	Germany	*Switzerland
18.	Hungary	*Austria
19.	Bhutan	*Greece
20.	Mauritius	*Portugal

Sources: See footnotes 3 and 4. Note; * refers to countries that make both lists among the first 20.

Table 2 shows that 9 countries (representing approximately 41% of the whole) are listed on both columns. This is, perhaps, a tangential but cogent indication that tourism and peace are somehow positively correlated.

V. Conclusion

The tourism-peace nexus is not merely academic. It is a discourse that holds significant implications for the theory and praxis of tourism as an international endeavor. The debate is far from being over, for the contending issues are yet to be conclusively resolved. Hence, while the skeptists contend that tourism-peace nexus is more appropriately an idealist 'diplomatic propaganda' designed by the protagonists to promote the global tourism industry, the pacifists posit that the nexus holds a salient truth which can be explored in leveraging and mainstreaming world's peace and stability, especially in the era of globalization.

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[3] Institute for Economics and Peace [IEP] (2018).
[4] World Economic Forum [WEF] (2017/2018).

In effect, contemporary scholarship on the subject matter has been everything but unanimous. Perspectives have varied rather vigorously from affirmation to ambivalence and from optimism to outright denialism. Events in the international arena have not helped matters. Although the global tourism sector has been a veritable center of cross-culturalism, it has also, paradoxically, been a choice target of mass terrorism. The latter development has introduced a new dimension to the tourism-peace narrative; what may be termed terrorism-tourism nexus. Notwithstanding, the impact of tourism on global peace has been overly more positive than negative. To be sure, tourism-inclined nations have vigorously pursued and maintained peace through pacific national security and diplomacy. More importantly, the global tourism sector has, more than many other sectors, provided an avenue for mass interaction of people in a manner that boosts multi-culturalism. It is in the light of this fact that this paper submits that tourism holds immense potential for the achievement and maintenance of global peace.

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