canon, to the continuance of a "Chinese commercial culture," or *shangye wenhua* 華商文化 (pp. 92–93). Lacking an explanation about when this term comes into common use, readers might want more than a quick jump to the "will to profit" and its accompanying Weberian baggage (p. 93). Nonetheless, this chapter provides an excellent entrée for anyone hoping to make connections with Chinese business successes and failures in other contexts, especially those that restrict citizenship status for certain groups (p. 100).

The final chapter and conclusion take readers back to this book's main intervention, the argument that tradition is not ossified, transmitted information, but a living process and cultural practice. "Tradition as practiced by the Sino-Burmese continually refers to the past to make sense of the present," Roberts writes (p. 112). For her, there is perhaps no better illustration of this than public celebrations of Chinese culture in Rangoon. In the discussion of fieldwork around these celebrations, including conversations with lion dancers and martial arts practitioners, Roberts finds a thriving and dynamic Chineseness at play, one that emerges from "a way of living in Rangoon" (p. 130).

With *Mapping Chinese Rangoon*, Roberts has shown readers a way to do scholarly work in Rangoon, one that offers insights about collective identity, ethnographic practice, and the fluid range of possibilities that exist between the past and present.

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TRANSNATIONAL AND COMPARATIVE

From Idealism to the Ground: The Japanese Empire's Occupation of Southeast Asia

The Japanese Occupation of Malaya and Singapore, 1941–45: A Social and Economic History. By Paul H. Kratoska. 2nd ed. Singapore: National University Press of Singapore, 2018. xxvii, 407 pp. ISBN: 9789971696382 (paper).

Japan's Occupation of Java in the Second World War: A Transnational History. By Ethan Mark. London: Bloomsbury, 2018. xii, 386 pp. ISBN: 9781350022201 (cloth).

The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere: When Total Empire Met Total War. By Jeremy A. Yellen. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2019. xi, 288 pp. ISBN: 9781501735547 (cloth).
doi:10.1017/S0021911819002316

It is the same every year. When I teach my Asia-Pacific War course and my students hear for the first time about the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, first proclaimed by Japanese Foreign Minister Matsuoka Yōsuke in August 1940, they react in disbelief

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and ask: did anyone *actually* believe it? Their incredulity is well founded, as they had learned weeks earlier about Japan's colonial takeover of Taiwan and Korea, its invasion of Manchuria, and its aggressive actions leading to the Second Sino-Japanese War and the Rape of Nanjing.

They learned how the Japanese created ethno-racial hierarchies in areas they had taken over to rule, in which the local populations were deemed inferior to the Japanese and subsequently treated so. These racial prejudices permeated the battlefield and were seen in their treatment of Chinese prisoners of war and comfort women, who primarily came from Korea. While Japan initially used the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere to justify its actions in China, as it found itself bogged down in a war it could not win, it also used it to justify its actions as it proceeded to take over the Western colonies in Southeast Asia in conjunction with its attack on Pearl Harbor.

Buttressing the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere were principles of economic cooperation and amity, a regional bloc that would serve as a defense against communism and ensure economic success for the member countries initially comprised of China, Japan, and Manchuria. Its imagined scope would eventually expand to encompass all of Asia, including Southeast Asia and South Asia. The inherent problem with the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was that it was conceived during a time of total war when Japan already faced a lack of resources due to its unending war in China. Its problem with resources was ironically compounded by its easy takeover of the Western colonies, in that it now meant Japan required more men and materials to hold its ever-expanding defensive perimeters. By 1943, Japan's defeat was almost decidedly assured. Even if there had been a faint inkling prior to 1943 of making the sphere a reality, after 1943 there was no feasible way the Japanese government would have been able to create the political infrastructures and policies necessary to bring the Co-Prosperity Sphere to life (Yellen, p. 102). Yet, talk and propaganda concerning the sphere continued until 1945. Therein lies the rub. How are we to understand the rationale and persistence of an ideology that was so blatantly contradicted by the on-the-ground treatment of the people the Japanese ruled over? Were the Japanese pushing the Co-Prosperity Sphere ignorant of these realities? How did the people in Japanese-ruled areas respond to these ideas?

The three books reviewed in this essay, taken as a whole, offer us the ability to glimpse some of the answers to these questions. The books by Jeremy Yellen, Ethan Mark, and Paul Kratoska represent a new turn in Japanese colonial studies, which we are still currently in the midst of. The three-volume set on Japanese colonial empire published by Peter Duus, Ramon Meyers, and Mark Peattie in the 1980s and 1990s viewed Japan's empire in light of modernization theory.[1] It sparked an earnest examination of Japanese empire and its colonial policies, as well as inquiries into how the metropole affected the colonies. Since these pivotal studies were published, the responses to these books have paced the field since, with subsequent scholars building upon these foundations to go beyond understanding how Japanese interacted with those they ruled, to not only how the people in Japanese-ruled areas viewed the Japanese but also how their actions affected Japanese policies.

[1]Ramon Myers and Mark Peattie, eds., *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895–1945* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983); Peter Duus, Ramon Myers, and Mark Peattie, eds., *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895–1937* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989); Peter Duus, Ramon Myers, and Mark Peattie, eds., *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931–1945* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996).

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In order to understand Japan's purpose and intent in its colonies and the Western colonies it took over (and subsequently what happened to the people there), our inquiry must begin with the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere—Japan's rationale for its presence in China and Asia created *after* it moved into these territories. Rhetoric and propaganda about the sphere is akin to Nazi Germany's *Lebensraum* (living space), which was used to justify its expansion into Central and Eastern Europe.

We had to wait forty-four years, but Yellen's *The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere: When Total Empire Met Total War* was worth the wait. In his masterful account regarding the Co-Prosperity Sphere, Yellen argues that it was nothing more than "a failed dream"—an incoherent vision that was contested and an idea that never coalesced into a coherent policy that could be enacted. Yellen's account comes forty-four years after Joyce Lebra's *Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere* was published, providing in English numerous primary documents about the sphere from the proclamation of the New Order to other documents from an array of perspectives.[2] Lebra's account showed that Japanese ideas about the sphere varied dramatically, but she did not offer her own in-depth analysis about the concept and its trajectory throughout wartime.

Yellen agrees with Lebra's premise, but does so in his original and lucid account by focusing on two main viewpoints: that of Japan's political and intellectual elite (in Part I: The Imagined Sphere) and that of the national leaders in the Philippines and Burma (in Part II: The Contested Sphere). In Part I, a central figure Yellen examines is Matsuoka Yōsuke, Japan's foreign minister, whom Yellen characterizes as holding an outdated view of the world that could be divided into blocs of regional spheres of influence (Yellen, p. 70). Matsuoka's commitment to the sphere was a way that Japan could be assured of its own bloc of regional dominance. Interestingly, Yellen argues that Matsuoka also saw the sphere as a defensive posture against Germany, to ensure that Asia would not fall under its sway (Yellen, p. 44). Although he calls Matsuoka's "sphere of influence diplomacy" out of touch, he does not question Matsuoka's idealism, and his mask is never lifted. We are, therefore, left to wonder if Matsuoka sincerely believed such a sphere could be constructed (Yellen, p. 50). The foreign policy discussions Yellen elaborates on were divorced from the on-the-ground reality, and it seemed these discussions often could and did operate in an echo chamber. Yellen acknowledges that the policymakers and intellectuals often debated about achieving a new world order that showed the disconnect between the "capital and the realities on the ground" (Yellen, p. 99). He points out that most intellectuals and politicians talking about the sphere never discussed *how* the sphere would be enacted. If anything, continued talk of the sphere once defeat was mostly assured, Yellen argues, was meant to rationalize the war for the postwar period—to provide convincing evidence of Japan's true intentions and not, in fact, actual ideas that were meant to be enacted.

Yellen sees the Co-Prosperity Sphere as important for two reasons. First, for its use in diplomacy and foreign relations. Second, after Matsuoka is sidelined, discussion of the sphere enters a second stage where it is reconceived as "a resource network to ensure Japan's 'self-existence and self-defence'"—"the brainchild of the military" (Yellen, p. 71). Yellen then shifts to discuss the Philippines and Burma and specifically President José Laurel, Ba Maw, and U Saw as patriotic collaborators in each of the respective regions. In the case of the Philippines, Yellen argues that Filipino cooperation was a

[2]Joyce C. Lebra, *Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere in World War II: Selected Readings and Documents* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975).

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matter of waiting out the Japanese and waiting for the Americans to come to the Philippines' rescue. In contrast, he presents the case of Burma and Ba Maw as someone who was truly enamored by the idea of creating an "Asia for the Asians" rhetoric. Chapter 5 is of particular interest. Yellen examines the Greater East Asia Conference in November 1943 and provides an alternative reading by arguing that both Laurel and Wang Jingwei used their participation to criticize Japan, trying to force it to grant more concessions and freedoms.

Both countries and their leaders had something to gain by collaborating with the Japanese: independence. Yet it is still hard to comprehend that they did so believing in the rhetoric of the Japanese when they were privy to the harsh treatment their people endured under Japanese occupation. In the case of the Philippines, this included the murder, rape, and massacre of civilians, which occurred as early as 1942. In Burma, the mistreatment and forced conscription into labor teams to work on the Burma-Thai Railroad was well known. Yellen argues that Laurel and Maw's cooperation was a "way to limit the excesses of the colonial overlord" (Yellen, p. 140). Whether this answer is a satisfying one is open to debate. Ultimately, for Burma, Yellen argues that, thanks to Japanese influence, the creation of the Burmese National Army became its most lasting legacy; for the Philippines, it is the diplomatic training that the Filipinos underwent while working for and under Japanese administration.

I have two small quibbles with Yellen regarding the latter half of his book. First, although he has a passing mention of guerilla activity in his section on the Philippines, which focuses primarily on Laurel, Yellen presents the Philippines' reaction to the Japanese as that of patriotic collaboration. There is a whole other story to the Philippines (and Burma), and that is of those who actively resisted the Japanese. As the *Reports of General MacArthur* state:

> After abortive efforts to draw the people of the Philippines into the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" by propaganda, quislings, bribery, and subversion, the Japanese were forced to resort to wholesale arrests, punitive expeditions, and summary executions in an attempt to stem a steadily rising tide of opposition. Repressive measures, however, only increased the determination of the Filipino patriot to resist.[3]

Adding the voices and thoughts of guerillas with regard to the Co-Prosperity Sphere would have presented a balanced assessment of what the sphere meant to the Filipino people. This is particularly pertinent in light of the brutal treatment civilians faced at the hands of the Japanese.

Secondly, when Yellen transitions in his book from the metropole to the Philippines and Burma, he writes that it is time to turn to the periphery of the wartime empire. The issue here is that this is only the periphery if you are viewing it from Tokyo. If you start from Jakarta, like Mark does, or from Kuala Lumpur, like Kratoska, the view of the Co-Prosperity Sphere and the Japanese occupation changes dramatically. While both the Philippines and Burma were granted nominal independence, the Japanese did not assume direct rule over them in the way they did in Malaya and Java. Kratoska's and Mark's deep dives into each society offer the reader the ability to appreciate several things. First, part of the challenge that the Japanese faced in occupying former

[3]Douglas MacArthur and SCAP, *Reports of General MacArthur: The Campaigns of MacArthur in the Pacific* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966), 1:295.

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Western colonies is that each area was distinct in the different ethno-racial hierarchies that existed. The Japanese had to navigate the politics and conflicts the different groups had not only with each other but also with the Japanese themselves.

Both Kratoska and Mark approach their areas of study through different lenses. Kratoska's work is primarily concerned with the economic impacts of Japanese occupation, although he does examine social aspects as well. In contrast, Mark splits his study between two groups of Japanese and Indonesian individuals. The first involves the Japanese military propaganda squad (*gunsenden butai*) mobilized to go to Java as part of the 16th Army. The second includes various Indonesian members of the middle class and nationalists. The latter group includes individuals like Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta, who would eventually take charge of Indonesia in the postwar period.

Part intellectual history, part social and cultural history, Mark's meticulously researched and detailed study of the ideas behind Japanese and Indonesians' actions in Japan lives up to the subtitle of his work. It is truly a transnational approach to history, with Mark's extensive use of Indonesian sources, newspapers, and voices intermixed with that of Japanese sources and materials in order to provide a nuanced view of Japanese occupation. His analysis of the Japanese *bunkajin* (men of culture) involved in the Java propaganda squads is equally as incisive.

We get a sense from this work of the different backgrounds of those involved in promoting the Co-prosperity Sphere and how different groups reacted to Japanese propaganda in Indonesia. For example, in chapter 6, "Greater Asia Indonesian Style," we see specifically who gravitated toward the sphere more so than other groups (like the Muslims). We also see the futile attempts of some Japanese to court the Chinese population to support the sphere, which was popular with neither other Japanese nor the local populations, who saw Japan and China as natural enemies due to the war. From those framing the drive for Indonesian independence from a Muslim nationalist point of view, to those who saw Indonesia's traditions as primarily Hindu-Buddhist deriving from a "Greater Indian sphere," these nationalists saw the Japanese rhetoric and presence as an opportunity to achieve Indonesian independence, no matter the lengths they had to go to ignore certain aspects of Japanese propaganda or derive a connection between Japan and Indonesia (Mark, p. 151). Mark also illustrates that just as the native populations of Indonesia had distinct reactions to the Japanese, the motivations and ideals of the Japanese in Java were also varied, to the extent that the members of the Java propaganda squad were at times at odds with their own military administration and *Kenpeitai*, who complained that the propaganda squad was "going too far" with their endorsement of the Three A policy ("Asia's 'light,' Japan, Asia's 'mother,' Japan, Asia's 'leader,' Japan"), which they saw to be in defiance of Japan's national policy (Mark, p. 173).

For some Japanese involved, their commitment to the ideals of the Co-Prosperity Sphere were sincere. One such man, Machida Kenji, wrote that "the military goal of the propaganda squad from the very beginning was to liberate the colonies and achieve the independence of Java. 'Asia is One' and the 'liberation of Asia,' he added, were 'not at all a matter of fooling. I felt in this reason for living'" (Mark, p. 57).

One of Mark's main arguments about the Co-Prosperity Sphere is that both Japanese and Indonesians saw such a sphere as their best hope in a world order that increasingly offered no other options. When faced with Western imperialism, and rejecting Marxism or revolution, Asia for the Asians and the Co-Prosperity rhetoric and idealism were initially dreamed about as real solutions to a very desperate and critical existential crisis threatening Japanese and Indonesians alike. Mark, like Yellen, underscores the drama

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and threat of the post-1919 moment and Wilsonian internationalism in a way that forces the reader to take seriously the environment in which such lofty and contradictory idealism was created.

Mark focuses on Indonesian nationalists Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta, who collaborated with the Japanese during the occupation of Java. With his treatment of these two nationalists, we are able to get closer to answering the difficult questions of collaboration in a way that Yellen's account introduced. Mark painstakingly recreates the initial interactions between Sukarno and the Japanese commander Imamura in 1942. Using both men's autobiographies and other accounts, he deals head-on with the question raised by Yellen's work—how could Laurel and Maw collaborate with the Japanese when the Japanese had shown their true feelings regarding Asian cooperation and amity with their harsh and cruel treatment of the local populations, which often included torture, arrest, and murder?

According to Sukarno's own retelling, the harsh rule of the Japanese and their poor treatment of the local people were necessary to awaken the nationalist consciousness in the people:

> The occupation will prove a magnificent opportunity to educate and ready our people.… But first our people, must be brought to suffering, because only then can they be awakened.… We know [the Japs] cut off people's heads with one stroke of their swords. We know their trick of forcing victims to drink quarts of water, then jumping on their stomachs. We're familiar with those agonized shrieks coming from *Kenpeitai* headquarters late at night.… I know all about their brutality. I know of Nipponese behavior in occupied territory, but okay I am fully prepared for a few years of this. I must rationally consider what they do for my people. We must be grateful for the Japanese. We can use them. If human beings stay in the groove of colonialism without anything radical to stir them or their colonizers, it is difficult to ever make a revolution. (Mark, pp. 187–88)

According to Mark, "Sukarno's strange, cruel logic … seems contrived and smacks of hindsighted apologetics" (Mark, p. 188). The fact that Sukarno tried to justify his collaboration is significant not in that his logic is questionable, but rather because it shows that the question concerning how these nationalist leaders could do what they did—working with the Japanese despite the terrible acts inflicted on their people—was one that Sukarno felt he had to address and mitigate in the postwar period.

Mark's insightful analysis of Sukarno's initial discussions with the Japanese reveals the careful calculations that were taking place. Was working with the Japanese worth the price to pay for independence? In many ways, Indonesian cooperation was due to a lack of a better plan or strategy to gain independence. As Mark argues, Sukarno was pretty certain the Japanese were going to win the war, in which case he was making a sure bet, even if he had to turn a blind eye to things that were warning flags, such that the Japanese were not going to allow Indonesians to express nationalism in their own way, but only under the guidance of the Japanese.

What happens when the Co-Prosperity Sphere becomes a dream realized? The second edition of Kratoska's *The Japanese Occupation of Malaya and Singapore, 1941–45: A Social and Economic History* came out about twenty years after the first edition was published in 1997. In it, Kratoska argues that the Japanese occupation brought economic devastation to Malaya, and that the significance of the Japanese

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gaining control over Malaya lay more in their ability to deny Malaya's resources to the Allied powers rather than gaining any useful resources from them (Kratoska, p. 3). There was never an "integrated economic sphere" in Asia; rather, Japan tried to force territories like Malaya to become self-sufficient, a policy that resulted in food shortages and inflation getting out of control by 1944. Japanese policies ruined the Malaysian economy, and the people suffered greatly because of it. As Yellen discusses in his book, most intellectuals conceded that the Co-Prosperity Sphere would work best as an economic bloc that engaged in trade with other blocs. Kratoska's book reinforces this contention by showing a potent example of how trying to make one country in the Co-Prosperity Sphere self-sufficient economically was not just impossible but disastrous, and that trying to create an integrated economic bloc among Asian countries during wartime was also a pipedream.

Whereas Yellen sees cooperation by Laurel, Maw, and other collaborators only because it would bring independence, Kratoska argues that cooperation was done for more self-interested personal reasons. Both Kratoska and Mark show that the diverse ethno-racial populations in each area had competing interests and were often at odds with each other, let alone the Japanese. Kratoska contends that the Japanese were highly attuned to race and their treatment of people depended on status: "natives, Chinese residents, citizens of enemy nations, citizens of neural countries, etc." (Kratoska, p. 94). His main premise is that in Malaya the Chinese cooperated reluctantly and the Malays were by and large neutral, but eventually grew to dislike the Japanese. The Indians saw Japanese support for independence actually erode their chances of attaining independence (Kratoska, p. 2). Few if any, in Kratoska's estimation, collaborated with the Japanese because they believed in Japanese objectives, unlike what Mark relates in his book, where he shows a wide array of Indonesian elites seeing commonalties between Japan's Co-Prosperity Sphere and Asia for the Asians as a way to reimagine a world without Western interference. Kratoska relates that people who lived under Japanese occupation recalled that they cooperated or did not resist the Japanese just so they could get by, or so they would not be punished or get in trouble (Kratoska, p. 123). While we get more of the "everyday response" to Japanese occupation, the manner in which Kratoska uses postwar recollections renders the voices fleeting and momentary, and we do not get a fixed idea of concrete personalities that anchor the narrative like they do in Yellen's and Mark's books. Instead, Kratoska keeps to generalizations based on ethnic groups, supported by individual statements that do not go beyond illustrating a certain point. These perspectives are nonetheless useful in characterizing the Japanese period in a mostly negative and destructive way.

Kratoska's encyclopedic study provides an inside look into how exactly the Japanese administered Malaya. This has both benefits and drawbacks. On the positive side, Kratoska's intensive look at administrative records gives us a precise look at how much the Japanese interfered with everyday society, from banks to currency to rationing and food production, education, and propaganda. The negative side of this approach is that the narrative driving the story in some chapters often conveys the information in the records, which can be rather dry.

Kratoska takes a stronger argumentative tone in chapter 4, "Ethnic Policies," versus other chapters such as chapter 8, "The Estate and Mining Industries." In the latter, the main objective is to relay information about the decline of the rubber and mineral industries due to Japanese interference. Kratoska shows the data that confirms the idea that promoting self-sufficiency was a dismal failure: "without access to overseas markets, Malaya's economy was crippled for the duration of the occupation, and the collapse of

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the rubber and tin industries brought unemployment and widespread economic distress" (Kratoska, p. 249). Many of the policies they enacted in Malaya were similar to what they did in Japan and other colonies: forced savings, rations, and forced labor. The breadth and detail of Kratoska's account make it a definitive account of the period, one that can serve as a jumping off point for future scholars if they want to examine one specific aspect of Malay society in detail.

None of the books under review here have the same strengths, and for that we should be grateful. Scholars of colonialism and East Asia are greatly enriched by the amount of information we can gain from these three works in trying to understand not only the mentalities of the people the Japanese ruled but also the Japanese who proclaimed their mission of creating Asia for the Asians. Absent are caricatures of fanatical Japanese or empty propaganda without context; instead we get in these studies a careful analysis of who said what and why and how it was received. It is an exciting time for colonial studies in the Japan field.

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Transnational Japan in the Global Environmental Movement. By SIMON AVENELL. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2017. xi, 318 pp. ISBN: 9780824867133 (cloth).
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Japan is infamously known around the globe for episodes of environmental pollution and the ways in which the bodies of citizens have, often in horrific ways, exhibited the violence of unchecked industrial capitalism embodied in streams of cadmium, methylmercury, and other toxic chemicals. While in popular global imaginings Japan has produced plenty of victims of environmental pollution, the country has not produced many environmental activists. In *Transnational Japan in the Global Environmental Movement*, Simon Avenell argues against such imaginaries, suggesting that encounters with industrial pollution by people in Japan gave rise to what he labels an "environmental injustice paradigm" (p. 4) that has been a source of motivation for environmental activism both within and beyond the archipelago.

Covering the period from the 1960s to the 1990s, Avenell analyzes the productivity of local spaces and experiences for environmental activism, but then goes on to highlight Japanese environmental activists' encounters in transnational spaces. Complementing recent scholarship on pollution in Japan by Brett Walker, Peter Wynn Kirby, and Robert Stolz, among others, Avenell first explores how Japan's "big four" incidents of environmental pollution (Minamata Bay, Yokkaichi City, Jinzu River, and Agano River) spurred activists like Ui Jun and Harada Masazumi to address the horrors of industrial pollution in Japan.[1] Through interactions with victims of environmental pollution,

[1]Brett L. Walker, *Toxic Archipelago: A History of Industrial Disease in Japan* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010); Peter Wynn Kirby, *Troubled Natures: Waste, Environment, Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011); Robert Stolz, *Bad Water: Nature, Pollution, and Politics in Japan, 1870–1950* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2014).

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