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# THE ATHANASIAN

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A publication of Traditional Catholics of America † Editor: Fr. Francis E. Fenton, STL  
Volume IV, No. 7 † October 15, 1983

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## The Virtue of Charity

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The three greatest virtues are faith, hope and charity - and the greatest of these is charity, that virtue whereby we love God above all things for His own sake and we love our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God. Charity, then, is the supreme, the principal, the paramount virtue. A synonym for charity here is love. We speak, of course, of supernatural love. (One of the most abused words of our day is "love" - another is peace." How often the word "love" is used when what is meant is lust, infatuation, passion.)

The ways in which the virtue of charity may be violated are numerous, one of which is through the spoken word (unkind remarks, sarcasm, words motivated by pride, jealousy, resentment, etc.). And how often so many speak uncharitably, in an un-Christlike manner - and how easy it is to talk in this way. Indeed, the frequency with which this sin is committed is due in part to the ease, the facility with which one can speak unkindly so that lack of charity in speech is habitual with many.

The solution is the obvious, but difficult, one: custody of the tongue, silence in speech. So difficult is this, however, that Sacred Scripture tells us: "He who offends not in speech, that same is a perfect man." As with all else involving the moral law though, and our duty to obey it, whatever God commands He gives the grace to accomplish. One spiritual writer tells us that silence is the first step to sanctification, to holiness. If this be true, then we cannot even begin to become holy unless we master the difficult practice of custody of the tongue.

And so, should not charity in the spoken word be an outstanding mark of the genuine Roman Catholic? Yes, it most certainly should be - but is it? "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples," said Christ, "if you have love for one another" - and the highest form of love is supernatural charity. Love the sinner; hate the sin. Nor

is it possible for one person deliberately to hate another if he sincerely prays for that individual.

And who, of all of the saints of the Church, might be an appropriate patron to whom to pray for grace in this matter of charity in the spoken word? How about one of the greatest of them all, Saint Joseph? He was the foster father of Christ and the spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He is both the patron of the universal Church and the patron of a happy death. And yet, as noble as person and as great a saint as he was and is, how remarkable that the entire New Testament does not record so much as a single word spoken by Saint Joseph! A most appropriate patron indeed for those who would sincerely seek the grace of God to observe charity in speech and to practice custody of the tongue.

Charity, then, is the greatest of all the virtues and so its observance should be a distinctive trait of every traditional Roman Catholic. But perhaps in no way is this virtue more frequently violated than in the spoken word. It was the motto of some saint and it might well be taken as a motto by most of us: "Let thy speech be better than silence, or be silent." †

*Pray  
the Rosary  
Daily*

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# Father Victor Mroz, O.F.M., Conv.

— Fr. Francis E. Fenton

How many truly and unreservedly traditional Roman Catholic priests are there in this country today? While I am unable to give an exact figure, my guess would be that there are somewhere around 35 at the most, a pitifully small number indeed. These are priests who have taken a public, uncompromising stand on behalf of traditional Catholicism; who are unwavering in every respect to the one, true and eternal Church of Jesus Christ; who believe and preach and strive to live in its entirety the same Faith possessed and taught by the Roman Catholic Church since its birth some 19½ centuries ago. These are priests who totally reject the Conciliar Church, refusing to have any part of it under any circumstances. These are priests who have remained faithful to the vows and promises they made on the day of their ordination and who, by the grace of God, are determined to remain faithful until death.

Father Victor Mroz is one of those priests. He is a Franciscan, a real one and so a rarity indeed among those who still profess to be members of that formerly great order of Roman Catholic priests. While his life has been a truly eventful one - ranging from his exploits as a chap-

lain with the Polish underground army during World War II to his dedicated priestly labors for 18 years in Japan - I will not attempt to detail the story of that life in this article. Suffice it to say that it is a life which in countless ways proclaims Father Mroz' deep love for God, his staunch dedication to the Church and his steadfast fidelity to the priesthood of Christ.

For the past six years or so it has been my good fortune to be associated with Father Mroz in the traditional Roman Catholic apostolate. Currently he serves our TCA Mass circuit locations in Rochester, Minnesota; Essington (Philadelphia), Pennsylvania; and Buffalo, New York. To say that he serves them faithfully is probably an understatement because his priestly ministry is one which extends itself beyond the mere call of duty, a fact to which those traditional Catholics who know him well would readily testify. For Father Victor Mroz the writer of these lines has considerable admiration and respect. Would that the noble cause of traditional Catholicism had even a few more priests of his character and calibre! May the good Lord grant Father Mroz many more years in the service of the Church which he so ardently loves! †

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## *An Interesting Award*

The one individual perhaps most influential in the preparation of the Conciliar Church bishops' pacifist pastoral letter dealing with nuclear weapons and war is Father J. Bryan Hehir. Recently he received the Letelier-Moffitt Memorial Human Rights Award from the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS). So what? Well, the IPS is a pro-Communist organization in Washington, D.C. which, according to the late Congressman Lawrence McDonald, has, for many years now, "supported the Soviet position on every issue." The award bears the names of two men who were formerly associated with the IPS, Orlando Letelier and Ronni Moffitt. But Mr. Letelier was, in the words of Congressman McDonald, "a Soviet agent... (whose) job was to serve as an agent of influence... to promote Communist goals in the Western Hemisphere." Father Hehir has been quoted expressing his "respect" for Mr. Letelier.

The fact that a priest would accept an award from such an organization, and one given as a memorial to the likes of Mr. Letelier, reflects very poorly on such a priest, to say the least. But when that priest happens to be the chief foreign policy advisor of the Conciliar Church bishops and the individual bearing much of the responsibility for their notorious pastoral letter, is not this a very concrete indication (and there are many others) casting grave suspicion upon these bishops? And so, a question posed in previous issues of this newsletter, on whose side are the American Conciliar Church bishops, the side of the USA or its enemies? Many knowledgeable Americans would have no difficulty answering that question. †



# Arianism and the Council of Nicaea

— R. Lance Lohr, M.A.

**I**t is a common human experience to seek advice about a condition or situation that we do not feel entirely competent to decide about ourselves. Admittedly, in modern times some tend to be too dependent on experts, i.e., psychiatrists, psychologists, political scientists, sociologists, doctors. But in the good sense it is often prudent to seek the advice of a true authority. Sometimes the advice of one advisor is not sufficient - and so throughout the history of man those who have had to carry great responsibility have had a number of advisors. The history of the Church is no exception.

In the Old Testament we read that Moses had a council of seventy wise men to guide him in governing the Hebrews. Some time later the kings of Israel were known to seek the advice of consellers. In the years 49-50 A.D. the Church was still centered in Jerusalem in that St. Peter still lived there. It was a time when most Christians were still Jewish. A controversy arose as to whether or not the new gentile converts of St. Paul would have to accept the Law of Moses before being baptized. To settle the dispute St. James, the Bishop of Jerusalem, and St. Peter called together the leaders of the Church. At first St. Peter was influenced by those who, in effect, were Christian Pharisees and who insisted that the gentiles be circumcised. But St. Paul's firm opposition changed Peter's mind (Acts 15:1-21). While this was a Council in the broad sense, it was not a General or Ecumenical Council. It did show the primacy of Peter over the other bishops, a primacy that would be contested by schismatics and even Councils in later centuries.

As the Church spread it modeled itself after the administration of the Roman government. Even terms like diocese, chancery and many others were taken from the Romans. And, of course, the Roman Senate became the archetype for assemblies within the Church. As the Church grew, regional assemblies of bishops became fairly common. The first record of such Councils is of local meetings in Spain and France. And as it became necessary to settle disputes in doctrine, morals and discipline, Councils appeared elsewhere in the Mediterranean world. In the Eastern part of the Roman Empire they were called Synods. In the West they were frequently called Councils. Until the third century A.D. it was not unusual for priests and laymen to attend such meetings

and even to vote. But soon the tradition of only bishops voting became the rule.

One of the major reasons for these assemblies remaining essentially local was the fact that the Roman persecution of the early Church prevented bishops from safely travelling very far from their dioceses. The Edict of Milan, issued in 313 A.D. by the joint Roman emperors, Constantine and his brother-in-law, Licinius, changed this. The document stated: "We decree that anyone wishing to practise the Christian religion should be able to do so without the slightest fear of being harassed because of it." Thus the bloody persecutions of nearly three centuries ended. And it is from this time on that Ecumenical or universal Councils became possible.

The Church has had only twenty-one General or Ecumenical Councils in its 19½ centuries of existence. And if one studies the crises that forced the assembly of the world's bishops these meetings have all been justified. In recent times the word ecumenical has taken on a derogatory meaning for many good Catholics because it is associated with the post-Vatican II trend toward unity with Protestants and others at the expense of the true Faith. But the Greek word from which we derive the term ecumenical simply means universal.

Under persecution the faith of the early Christians was strong and uncluttered by theological disputes. But free of Roman oppression the Church began to investigate questions about its Founder. This was especially true of the Church in the East, which included Greece, Asia Minor, the Levant and Egypt. Two schools of thought soon developed. In Alexandria, a city in northern Egypt, the home and future diocese of St. Athanasius, scholars interpreted Scripture in an almost mystical way. This led them to take the spirit of the gospels and emphasize the divinity of Jesus. While at Antioch in Asia Minor, now Turkey, scholars had a rationalistic view of scripture, tending to interpret it literally and emphasizing Christ's humanity.

In 318 A.D. a priest named Arius returned to Alexandria from Antioch. He quickly became a popular preacher. In his book, *Thalia*, he wrote that God the Father had *made* Christ the origin of all creation and had adopted Christ as His son. But if Jesus had been created by God the



Father, as Arius taught, it would mean that the Blessed Trinity was not composed of equal persons. It would also mean that even though God the Son existed before all other creation there was a time when God the Son did not exist. So, logically then, God the Son was not eternal. And if He was not eternal how could He be God? As confusing as this may sound the conclusion is what is devastating. To accept Arius' teaching was to say that Jesus was not God!

Keep in mind that the Church had not yet made a definitive statement on the Person of Christ although most Christians of that time did believe that Christ was God. That belief is what had carried the faithful through the persecutions that had just ended. But now a crisis quickly arose. Was Arius correct?

Romans always prided themselves on their ability to maintain order. In the pagan world Roman emperors declared themselves chief priests and gods in order to subdue any disturbance that might arise within a local religion or cult. Most pagans accepted this authority with little difficulty. If you believe in a multitude of gods already, then one more matters little. Jews and Christians, believers in one God, rejected this feigned religious authority of the emperor, but in many ways they were still forced to accept it. We have a parallel of this even in the United States. The government condones and finances abortion; it mandates secular humanism and sex education in public schools; it even purchases birth control devices as part of foreign aid - all this and more paid for with Catholic tax dollars. And, while we have a moral obligation to oppose such measures, government continues to finance them.

The chaos caused by Arius' theories upset Constantine's empire. Roman order was disturbed. So the emperor felt it his duty to act. But this was not some local cult in turmoil; it was *the* religion of the empire. The most effective method to restore order was to call all of the bishops together to resolve the issue. So, as peculiar as it may sound today, the first Ecumenical Council of the Roman Catholic Church was called by the Roman emperor.

It was in 325 A.D. that Constantine called the bishops of the world to his summer palace outside the imperial Roman capital of Constantinople, near the town of Nicaea. Pope St. Sylvester was too old to attend but he did send representatives. This all came as a great surprise, especially to older bishops, some of whom were tortured themselves only a few short years before on the order of other Roman emperors! Tradition holds that 318 bishops were present, but with only one bishop from

Spain, one from Italy and one from France. Since Arianism was essentially an Eastern problem it was not odd that most Western bishops did not attend. It is probable that the rules of the Roman Senate were used. These allowed for anyone to speak, followed by general discussion and then a vote.

John Henry Newman in 1836 wrote very succinctly what the work of the Council was to be:

... it must be borne in mind that the great Council of Nicaea was summoned, not to decide for the first time what was to be held concerning our Lord's divine nature, but, as far as inquiry came into its work, to determine the fact whether Arius did or did not contradict the Church's teaching, and, if he did, by what tessera (test) he and his party could be excluded from the communion of the faithful.

At first some bishops wanted to accept only scriptural proofs of Christ's divinity, nothing philosophical. Others did not feel that any debate was necessary. Tradition held that Christ was God and that should be enough. Still others said that the world would not accept Scripture or Tradition, so there must be an attempt to explain rationally the Person of Jesus for both believers and non-believers as well.

After long debate the bishops accepted the Greek philosophical term *homoiousios* to describe Christ's relationship to His Father. In English we say consubstantial. In short, this means that Christ exists separate from the Father. He is a unique Person. And yet He exists equally with the Father in the Blessed Trinity. The bishops realized that they could not fully explain this awesome mystery. But they did rightly claim the authority to call the theories of Arius in error. So, in spite of the efforts of some friends in very high places, Arius was condemned. And the bishops, in order to try to prevent this heresy from arising again, composed the beautiful Nicene Creed of the Mass:

I believe in... Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God; begotten, not made; consubstantial with the Father, by Whom all things were made.

The Council of Nicaea resolved several other problems of the Church and issued twenty-seven canons, the first universal Canon Law. They dealt, for example, with the readmission to the Church of those who had denied the Faith. During the persecutions many Christians had escaped death or torture by a denial of their Holy Faith.

*Continued on page 6*

Many of these people were truly sorry for their sins and sought forgiveness. Although many Christians whose bodies still bore the marks of Roman torture did not want these people forgiven, the Council provided for their readmission to the Church. There were also conditions established for acceptance to the priesthood. And, finally, the date for Easter was agreed upon, that is, the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring equinox.

Keep in mind that a true Ecumenical Council acts in the name of the Church and consistent with apostolic tradition. The bishops are both teachers and legislators. They act, in union with the Pope, in order to clarify the truths of the Faith. St. Athanasius described this very well some time after the Council of Nicaea, which he had attended when only a deacon.

The fathers at Nicaea speaking of the Easter feast say "We have decided as follows." But about the faith they do not say "We have decided," but "This is what the Catholic Church believes." And immediately they proclaim how they believe, in order to declare, not some novelty, but that their belief is apostolic, and that what they write down is not something they have discovered, but those very things which the Apostles taught.

Constantine, more to show his authority than his good will, made the canons of Nicaea part of the civil law of the empire. We see, then, Papism, which is the claim by the civil government ultimately to control the Church.

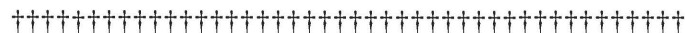
Several bishops were banished from their sees for rejecting the teachings of the Council. Unfortunately, Arius' friend, Bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia, who was the court minister of Constantine, some time later persuaded the Roman emperor to lift Arius' excommunication. Then Eusebius began to level all sorts of calumpnies and slanders at the strongest of the Nicene fathers. The political pressure from Constantine and his successors was so great that at one point even Pope Liberius gave in to the heresy. The two great defenders of Nicaea were St. Athanasius of Alexandria in the East and St. Hilary of Poitiers in the West.

Many of the faithful remained true in spite of the widespread heresy and in time the political support for Arianism was withdrawn, and the heresy literally collapsed. The Christian emperor Theodosius the Great shortly thereafter called the Second Ecumenical Council of the Church in 381 A.D., the First Council of Constantinople. †

## Mass Requests

Since I presently have some 80 Mass intentions to be fulfilled, I must ask that no further Mass requests be sent to me for the remainder of this year. I regret having to do this but, if I don't, I'll be forever behind in the fulfillment of my Mass commitments. While the law of the Church merely forbids the priest from accepting more Mass stipends than he can satisfy within a year's time, I personally would not be at ease if I were to have a year's accumulation of Mass intentions to fulfill. So, I will be grateful if no more Mass intentions were sent to me during the remainder of 1983.

Fr. F. Fenton



## Gift Subscriptions to *The Athanasian*

As of this writing, Christmas is still some 2½ months away. Since there is, however, but one more issue of this newsletter before Christmas, it is not too soon to suggest to our subscribers that they consider gift subscriptions (\$8.00 for eight issues) for their relatives and acquaintances as an appropriate Christmas gift. A card would be sent to the recipient from this office prior to Christmas notifying that individual of the gift and informing him or her that the subscription will begin with the first issue of 1984. Together with the notification card a recent issue of *The Athanasian* would also be sent. We would appreciate our newsletter subscribers' favorable consideration of this suggestion.



### SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS

The date on the envelope address label indicates the month and year in which the recipient's subscription is due for renewal. At the proper time, a subscription envelope will be enclosed with the newsletter. One may enter a new subscription at any time, of course, and will then receive the eight following newsletter issues.



# HELL

A recent survey of Conciliar Church Catholics conducted by the magazine, *U.S. Catholic* (a publication of the Conciliar Church), says, among other things, that 83% of those self-styled Catholics questioned expected to go to heaven themselves and also believed that those who die with mortal sin on their souls will eventually get to heaven as well. So much for hell and its eternity as far as Conciliar Church Catholics are concerned.

I don't suppose that there is any more unpopular subject on which to speak or write than the subject of hell. It is unpopular because it is disturbing and discomfoting. There are many alleged Christians who do not believe in its existence. There are many Catholics who do not like to be reminded of it. When they are, it sometimes upsets them and perhaps causes them a few sleepless hours. And that's why it's unpopular, because it can disturb one's equilibrium.

But popular or not, hell definitely exists, and we don't have to apologize to anyone for this clear teaching of our divine Lord. To believe in Him, and yet to reject or ignore one of the clearest doctrines He ever taught, is hardly being Christian. Some Christians would rather recall and stress Christ's gentleness and kindness and mercy, remembering only His words of consolation: "Come to me, all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will refresh you."; "Let not your heart be troubled nor let it be afraid." Yes, many of our Lord's words are very beautiful and tender and consoling. He was all-merciful, but He was all-just too. He condemned as well as forgave; He threatened as well as pitied; He was stern as well as gentle. He certainly minced no words when He called the Pharisees "hypocrites" and "whited sepulchres." He made a whip and drove the money-changers out of the temple. And He clearly taught the existence of hell as well as heaven.

Hell is a place of eternal punishment for those who die in mortal sin. Such is the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, and one which must be accepted by every one of her members. Its punishment consists in the privation of the presence of God, called the pain of loss, and in the suffering of dreadful torments, especially that of fire, called the pain of sense. Moreover, this two-fold, unimaginable suffering is of unending duration, beginning immediately after death and continuing for all eternity. Those souls that enter hell abandon all hope, for the sentence they receive is irrevocable, beyond appeal. And,

though many who dislike the whole idea of hell argue otherwise, this sentence of eternal condemnation is an absolutely just one. No soul goes there unless it deliberately rejects God and thereby takes the consequences. God wills all men to be saved and no one is lost except it be through his own fault. There is not a single soul in hell today but might have been in heaven or well on the way, had it availed itself of God's grace, and lived accordingly. One of God's greatest gifts to man is free-will, whereby man can avoid evil and do good, whereby he can merit heaven or deserve hell. And even though a grave abuse of that free-will may mean the eternal and indescribable torments of hell, God will not interfere with the exercise of this wonderful gift. Man is the only creature of the Almighty who has this precious power and, through its use or abuse, he can attain the joys of heaven or the pains of hell, both fully in harmony with the infinite justice and mercy of God.

In discussing the doctrine of hell, it is well to note a criticism often leveled against the Church. It goes something like this: the Catholic Church secures obedience to her teaching through fear. Many of her members perform their religious duties because of the fear of hell which their Church inspires in them. Now, while it is undoubtedly true that some Catholics are motivated by the fear of eternal punishment to keep the law of God, what's wrong with that? Fear of hell is not the highest motive in the world for doing the will of God, it is true, but it is a worthy and an acceptable one, for Christ Himself employed it. It would be far better if love for God were the reason why every Catholic did the will of God, but that does not mean that the Christ-given motive of fear of hell is not a laudable reason for avoiding serious sin.

It is good, then, that we have a keen awareness of the existence of hell and a rational, salutary fear of its eternal punishments. God is all-good, all-merciful, all-loving, but He is likewise all-just, and in His justice He will destine to everlasting punishment any creature who is, because of mortal sin, at enmity with Him at the moment of death. God made us to share with Him the unending bliss of heaven, but He will not bestow that priceless treasure upon us at the expense of our free-will. Through its proper use we must merit heaven by cooperating with divine grace. The alternative is hell. Let us ever keep the tragic reality of its existence before us. A keen awareness of its eternal torment has been the cause of many a sinner's return to God, and has kept many another from falling again. To be indifferent to the stark fact of hell is surely the pinnacle of foolishness. †

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## TCA TRADITIONAL LATIN MASS SCHEDULE

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### COLORADO

**AURORA** (Denver area)  
OUR LADY OF VICTORY CHAPEL  
2566 Sable Boulevard  
(303) 364-8040  
Masses at 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.  
(every Sunday)  
Occasional weekday Masses

### COLORADO SPRINGS

OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY  
(303) 636-1575  
Mass at 10:00 a.m. Oct. 30, Nov. 20  
Mass every Friday at 9:00 a.m.

### DURANGO

OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY  
Centennial Savings and Loan  
1101 E. Second Ave.  
(303) 884-2526  
Mass at 10:00 a.m. Oct. 16

### STRATTON

OUR LADY OF FATIMA CHAPEL  
(303) 348-5454  
Mass on Nov. 6

### LOUISIANA

**OPELOUSAS** (Lafayette area)  
OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY CHAPEL  
Route 1, Box 195  
(318) 942-9053  
Mass at 11:00 a.m.  
Oct. 23, Nov. 13

### MINNESOTA

**ROCHESTER**  
OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY CHAPEL  
5820 Viola Road, NE  
(507) 282-5163 or 289-8522  
Mass at 10:00 a.m.  
Oct. 30, Nov. 13

### MONTANA

**GREAT FALLS**  
IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY CHAPEL  
2020 Second Avenue North  
(406) 452-8826  
Mass at 10:00 a.m. Oct. 23  
Mass at 11:00 a.m. Nov. 27

### NEW YORK

**BUFFALO**  
OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY CHAPEL  
231 McKinley Parkway  
(716) 537-9533  
Mass at 10:00 a.m.  
on first and third Sundays

### PENNSYLVANIA

**ESSINGTON** (Philadelphia area)  
OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY  
Ramada Inn  
Airport South, Route 291  
(215) 876-8737  
Mass at 10:00 a.m.  
on fourth Sunday of each month

### UTAH

**SALT LAKE CITY**  
OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP  
Hilton Inn  
154 West 600 South  
(801) 278-7501  
Mass at 11:00 a.m. Nov. 27

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## THE ATHANASIAN

Published by Traditional Catholics of America: † Fr. Francis E. Fenton, Editor † Miss Marie Rust, Secretary

**Eight issues a year:** (Jan. 15, Mar. 1, Apr. 15, June 1, July 15, Sept. 1, Oct. 15, Dec. 1)

**Subscriptions:** \$ 8.00 per year (via First Class Mail) for the USA, Canada and Mexico; \$12.00 per year (via Air Mail) for all other countries

**Additional copies:** single copy - \$1.00; 10 copies - \$8.00; 40 or more to same address - \$.70 each

**Mailing address:** P.O. Box 38335, Colorado Springs, CO 80937

**Telephone:** (303) 636-1575

Manuscripts sent to us for possible publication in *The Athanasian* should be typewritten, double-spaced and no more than seven pages in length. If not accepted, they will be returned to the sender.

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