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Investigation of the Historical Development and Knowledge Guidelines of Contemporary Guangxi Vocal Music in China

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Abstract

This study used the qualitative research method. The objectives were to: 1) investigate the historical development of Guangxi vocal music in China. 2) Presenting guidelines for studying knowledge of contemporary Guangxi vocal music in China. There are three main informants. The research process includes literature reviews, field investigation methods, and interview methodologies. The study's results are as follows: 1) Since the beginning of the century, the "Nanning International Folk Song Festival" has been a new starting place for the creation of Guangxi vocal works. The "Guangxi Folk Music and Dance Symposium" laid the groundwork for Guangxi's new century vocal music compositions. The "China-ASEAN Music Week" was a success, and it has tremendously fostered song creation in Guangxi, particularly vocal music development with rich content and different styles. 2) Taking students to the exhibition of the development history of vocal music creation in Guangxi and studying the important collections of vocal music creation in different periods since the new period is the best way for students to understand the development trend of vocal music creation in Guangxi. Make students conduct fieldwork, collect, and analyze ethnic folk songs. Conduct a field study, engage with the musical elements in daily life, and experience the melody with regional characteristics. To promote music creation, an open, creative attitude and constantly innovative creative methods are required.

Keywords: Investigation, Knowledge, Guangxi Vocal Music, Chinese New Music, Composition

1. Introduction

Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region can be found in southern China. Slightly smaller than Laos, Guangxi has an area 220,400 km². It is bordered by Yunnan to the west, Guizhou to the north, Hunan to the northeast, and Guangdong to the east, the Gulf of Tonkin and Vietnam to the south and southwest. Guangxi was named by the Song Dynasty (960–1279) when the region was known as 'Wide South, Western Route', meaning the western half of land south of the Nan Mountains. The Yuan Dynasty (1206–1368) shortened its name to Guangxi – 'Western Expanse' – in contrast to Guangdong - 'Eastern Expanse' – when it made provinces out of these areas. In 1958, the province became the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. It is one of five provincial-level autonomous

regions, each of which is designated to provide some autonomy for a significant indigenous ethnic group. Thus, the governor of Guangxi must always be Zhuang, though the reality of China's political system means that this autonomy is in name only (Leet, 2023).

Songs, as a type of time art that appears in the form of sound, have obvious time characteristics and are extremely easy to spread. In its unique way, it records the changes of the times, the sorrows and joys of the nation, and the aspirations of the people. Songs produced in different eras can often reflect the spectrum of the era and record the changes in social history (Zeng, 2020). Guangxi is an ethnic minority autonomous region composed of twelve generations of inhabitants (Hong et al., 2015; Gustafsson & Sai, 2015; Li et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2019). Its cultural traditions and national arts have deep historical accumulations and distinctive regional characteristics. This is the root and soul of Guangxi music culture. Over the years, composers have worked hard to present their distinct national cultural characteristics and regional cultural features, striving to express the artistic demands of national cultural traditions. Tell history with music and tell Guangxi stories with music (Pen-Yeh, 1989; Huang, 2003; Yunyan & Nicolas, 2021; Baker, 2022). Since the establishment of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in 1958, the development of music and dance in Guangxi can be roughly divided into areas after the establishment of the district and before the reform and opening (about the end of the 1950s to the end of the 1970s), and after the reform and opening to the beginning of the new century (about the 20th century). The three stages from the early 1980s to the late 1990s and the new century to the present (after 2000) respectively represent the three development periods of "forming-recovering-rising" in the development of Guangxi music and dance culture (Huang, 2018; Wang & Kantasiri, 2022).

Guangxi's vocal music has advanced since its reform and opening. The convening of the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Party breathed new life into the stale Guangxi music scene. The creation of songs in Guangxi showed more diversified, richer, and open characteristics. during this period. Based on local musical materials, it absorbs, merges, or grafts foreign musical elements so that the works not only show their inherent local cultural characteristics but also optimize their quality, showing strong vitality. As a result of the expansion of vocal music creation themes and content, vocal music creation tends to diversify (Li et al., 2022).

Since the new century, Guangxi's vocal music creation has been a shining star. In December 1996, the "Huashan Conference," held by the Propaganda the Department of the Guangxi Party Committee became another new starting point for Guangxi's music industry. With the advent of the new century, Guangxi Vocal Music Creation has entered a stage of vigorous development. mainly reflected in first, the diversification of subject content. The second is the diversification of creative forms. There are vocal works that integrate artistry and skill and are suitable for vocal music. Teaching in music schools, various vocal competitions, and professional concerts; vocal works that express feelings in the context of popular songs; large-scale vocal music genres; musical theatre; and opera exploration.

2. Method

The research methods of this article are as follows: 1) Documentary data method: through collecting, sorting out, and identifying existing documents and forming a scientific method of understanding by studying these data. 2) Field investigation method: Field investigation is the basic method to obtain first-hand information. 3) Qualitative research method: Explain the collected data (Oun & Bach, 2014).

2.1 Research site

Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region is in southern China, between 104°28' 112°04' east longitude, 20°54' 26°23' north latitude, and the Tropic of Cancer traverses the middle part. Guangxi is an autonomous region inhabited by many ethnic groups. There are 12 ethnic groups in China, including Zhuang, Han, Yao, Miao, and others. Dong, Mulao, Maonan Hui, Jing, Yi, Shui, and Gelao. The Zhuang ethnic group is the most populous ethnic group in Guangxi and China. On March 5, 1958, the State the Council approved the establishment of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.



Figure 1: Map of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region

Source: <https://chinafolio.com/provinces/guangxi-province>, (2023).

2.2 Key informants

Key informants include retired musicians, retired singers, and academics. Three important informants have been identified. The artists we researched were casual informants; they were some of the audience members we encountered during the performance. The researcher has been conducting research at the "Guangxi National Vocal Music Brand R&D and Innovation Team" for the past four years, under the guidance of Professor Zeng Cheng, College of Music, Guangxi Arts University. Three top scholars and experts in the field of Guangxi music were interviewed for the singing analysis of Guangxi vocal works. They are all professors at Guangxi Arts University.

2.2.1 Professor Zeng Cheng, an outstanding vocal scholar in Guangxi



Figure 2: Professor Zeng Cheng

Source: Pang Yi, (2021)

2.2.2 Professor Wu Ninghua, Guangxi folk music research expert



Figure 3: Professor Wu Ninghua

Source: Pang Yi, (2021)

2.2.3 Associate Professor Chu Zhuo, Director of Guangxi Museum of Ethnic Music.



Figure 4: Associate Professor Chu Zhuo

Source: Pang Yi, (2021)

The criteria for selecting key informants are: They are the top experts in Guangxi music research and music professors. They have outstanding achievements in vocal performance, vocal music creation, and folk music fieldwork.

2.3 Research process

- 1) Developing research tools, including an observation form and an interview form
- 2) Data collection: both written and field data were gathered; field data was gathered through observations and interviews.
- 3) Data management Data were categorized and validated using triangular approaches.
- 4) Data analysis. The data was analyzed in accordance with the objectives specified.
- 5) The study results were edited and presented analytically and descriptively.
- 6) Research results are presented in academic papers and books at seminars and conferences, or they are published in journals or books.

3. Results

3.1 The historical development of Guangxi vocal music

The key informant, Professor Zeng Cheng, said: "From the early 50s of the twentieth century, with the reform and opening up of the twentieth century, the creation of vocal works in Guangxi was mainly based on the original folk songs." A group of Guangxi lyricists, songwriters, and vocal performance artists have worked hard to collect and research ethnic folk music. The creation of Guangxi vocal works During this period, there was not only a continuation of Guangxi folk songs but also the creation of a new situation in Guangxi vocal art. (Zeng & Huang, 2017) From 1949 to 1979, from the founding of the People's Republic of China to the time when the People's Republic of China reformed and opened up, Guangxi's vocal art has maintained tradition while introducing new elements. An unforgettable song recorded the development of Guangxi's vocal music industry. It reflects the spectrum of the times and records the changes in social history (Fang, 2016).

A work based on folklore, "Liu Sanjie" The singing fairy "Liu Sanjie" is an ancient legend spread in Guangxi folk and is a beautiful symbol of the hardworking, brave, singing, and dancing Zhuang people. The Caidiao opera and folk song and dance "Liu Sanjie," collectively created and performed by Guangxi literary and art workers based on this legend, embodies the painstaking efforts and wisdom of their generation of musicians. It has established a monument and brand for Guangxi music and has greatly promoted the development of Guangxi vocal music creation.

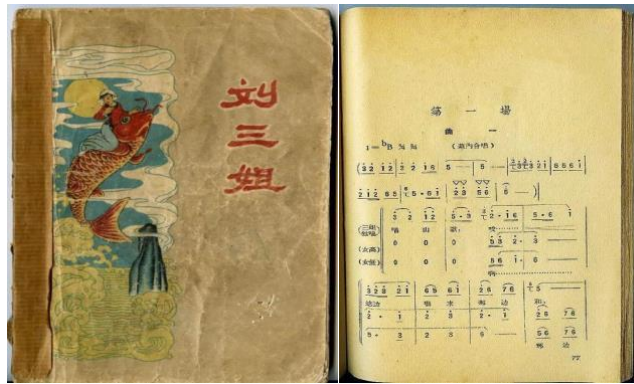


Figure 5: 1959 Caidiao play "Liu Sanjie" script and song "Folk Songs Are Like Spring River",
Source: Guangxi Museum of Ethnic Music, December, (2021)

In 1961, China's Changchun Film Studio adapted and produced the feature film "Liu Sanjie" based on the musical. In the film, "Folk Songs are Like Spring," "River" and "Where is there a vine wrapped in a tree?" adapted by the famous composer Lei Zhenbang and other beautiful songs are widely sung and popular at home and in abroad. This is the most glorious page in the history of Guangxi music (Zeng & Huang, 2017).



Figure 6: History of the movie "Liu Sanjie"
Source: Guangxi Museum of Ethnic Music, December, (2021)

Following the establishment of New China in 1949, the new social system provided people with meaning in their lives. Under the guidance of the cultural policy of the Communist the Chinese Communist Party, the country's literary and artistic creation, has entered a period of high growth. production. Guangxi vocal music creation has also entered a new historical era, with many new folk songs with colorful content and fresh, lively forms. It reflects the sincere love and warm praise of the people of Guangxi toward Mao Zedong, the leader of the Communist Party of China. At the same time, various cultural performances are organized by the central government and governments at all levels for the purpose of prospering the people's leisure life and developing cultural During this time, undertakings have also become very influential social and artistic activities. The more influential songs are "Chairman Mao Came to G," "Zhuang Man Always Follows Mao Zedong," "Zhuang Brocade Dedicated to Chairman Mao," and other phrases and songs (Zeng & Huang, 2017).

With the advancement of literary and artistic policies and the guidance of the "Double Hundred" policy, singing activities are generally carried out in urban and rural areas, and folk song competitions and mass song competitions are held. By composing the rhythm of the times and the voice of the people into a beautiful singing voice, Guangxi music creation has been developed and innovated. In March 1956, to promote and encourage music creation in Guangxi and to select outstanding works to participate in the "First National Music Week," the Guangxi Cultural Bureau and the Guangxi Federation of Literary and Art Federations jointly organized the first collection of music works. The works received in this event cover a wide range of content and themes, reflecting the most important events in Guangxi's struggle life and a new perspective on life. There are 46 pieces of final prize-winning works, all of which are included in the "Awarded Song Collection." Among the award-winning works, songs such as "Ye

"Le Tian Lai Ye Le Tian" (arranged by Lin Changchun) were selected as the performance repertoire for the Guangxi delegation to participate in the "First National Music Week" and became outstanding and influential works.



Figure 7: August 1956, "The First National Music Week", Tianjin, Shanxi and Guangxi delegation concert program

Source: Guangxi Museum of Ethnic Music, December, (2021)

In the mid-1960s, due to the "Cultural Revolution," Guangxi's music career was severely disrupted. The musical "Liu Sanjie" bears the brunt of criticism. The achievements of Guangxi's literary and artistic circles were completely rejected, and the art works withered. Many vocal artists have been criticized during the uprising against feudalism, bourgeoisie, and revisionism, denying the excellent traditional vocal music of history, denying the development of progressive vocal music, and denying the construction of revolutionary vocal music culture since the twentieth century. The only remaining Red Guard battle hymns and quotations from the Great Revolution Due to the influence of the ultra-Left trend of thought, the Guangxi music industry, like the whole country, has formed a whole set of deep-rooted "Left" literary and artistic concepts that only serve politics (Huang, 2018).

In January 1980, the Third Guangxi Literary and Art Workers' Congress was held in Nanning, Guangxi. This is another big gathering of literary and art circles in Guangxi, 20 years after the Second Guangxi Literary and Art Workers Congress in 1959. The conference made specific plans and arrangements for the further prosperity of literary and artistic creation in Guangxi. Since then, various types of literary creation seminars have been held in the autonomous region, creating opportunities for artists to broaden their horizons and improve their artistic accomplishments. At the same time, it laid the foundation for ideological guidance for the innovative development of professional music creation in Guangxi (Zeng & Li, 2020).

In April 1997, Guangxi's First Hundred Young Workers Creative Meeting was held in Nanning, Guangxi. The conference clarified the general idea of the development of Guangxi's literature and art and formulated and deployed the "213 Project." A series of important measures for the prosperity of literature and art and the implementation of high-quality projects, such as the establishment of the Guangxi "Five One Project" awards and the Guangxi Literary Creation Bronze Drum Award, were implemented. These measures have provided important conditions for stimulating the prosperity of Guangxi music creation.



Figure 8: A group photo of the participants of Guangxi's first 100 Young Workers Creative Conference

Source: Guangxi Museum of Ethnic Music, December, (2021)

The Guangxi government attaches great importance to the creative atmosphere full of the spirit of the times, the openness of creative thinking, and the relatively relaxed creative environment. Guangxi's vibrant music creators have ushered in a new era of music creation.

After entering the new century, the development of Guangxi's composition of songs has shown a leap forward in terms of the degree of innovation and the number of outstanding works. The successful holding of the "Nanning International Folk Song Festival" and the establishment of the "Gehai" brand building of "revitalizing the Bagui singing and dancing style" marked a new starting point for the creation of Guangxi vocal music works. "Nanning International Folk Song Festival" (its predecessor was the "Guangxi International Folk Song Festival," founded in 1993). Since the first was successfully held in 1999 and received a strong response, 22 years of spring and autumn have passed. On the stage of the previous Nanning International Folk Song Festival, the dialogue, collision, and fusion of traditional folk songs and modern, newly created songs frequently appeared, and then the colorful sound was wiped out.

In 2002, to strengthen the "Five One Project" boutique construction, Guangxi implemented the Guangxi songwriters signing system, which was the first in the country. This was organized by the Guangxi Musicians Association with the care and support of the Propaganda Department of the Party Committee of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and the Guangxi Federation of Literary and Art Circles. Fu Qing, Tang Li, Lin Haidong, Lan Qijin, Liang Shaowu, Mai Zhansui, Hu Hongyi, and seven others were among the first songwriters to be signed. In 2004, the Propaganda Department of the Party Committee of the Autonomous Region signed contracts with eight songwriters, including Li Jia, Lu Jian, Lin Hai, Qiu Yuanyuan, Wang Shisheng, Mo Junsheng, Liao Meicai, and Luo Dongbin, adding several creative forces to the Guangxi singing scene. The implementation of the contract system will be implemented specifically to incorporate the cultivation of literary and artistic talents and team building into the guarantee of the market management system and mechanism. A certain amount of funding will be given to provide a good creative environment for the contractor and give the corresponding task pressure. Almost every signed songwriter has lived up to expectations and achieved remarkable results. Carefully create a batch of very good-quality works. For example, "Carrying Good Days to Cross the Mountains" (composed by Fu Qing), "Yaoshan Green" (Mai Zhan Sui's lyrics), "Folk Song Brings the Moon Out" (Hu Hongyi's lyrics), "Green City Flower Rain" (composed by Li Jia), "The World is One Family" (licensed by Lu Jian), etc.

"China-ASEAN Music Week" has greatly promoted Guangxi's music creation. In terms of the creation of vocal works, songwriters in Guangxi took this platform to create a batch of new works with rich content and diverse styles. The Magnificent, composed by Cai Changzhuo and arranged by Mo Junsheng, is based on the beautiful scenery and humanistic customs of Guangxi. The melody is lovely, light, and cheerful. It depicts the great changes in the mountains and countryside in Guangxi, expresses the confidence and pride of the people of Zhuangxiang in building a better life under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, and sings a beautiful new era. "Beautiful Folk Song Girl," composed by Liang Shaowu and composed by Dai Wei, is inspired by the tone of Nahai Liao in Guangxi's Pingguo Liao Song. The ancient tones are perfectly combined with the modern melody, blending into one with a great Zhuang charm (Zhong & Liu, 2013).



Figure 9: 2021 China-ASEAN Music Week

Source: *Guangxi Arts University New Vocal Music Concert, November, (2021)*

3.2 The Guidelines for Studying Contemporary Guangxi Vocal Music in China

The key informant, Professor Wu Ninghua, a scholar of Guangxi ethnic music, said: "With the continuous change of mass media and electronic terminal products, the scope of universal coverage has gradually deepened and become wider and wider, which has had different degrees of impact on field workers and field objects." The connotation of "fieldwork" has also evolved with this change, and based on actual fieldwork based on field research, virtual fieldwork relying on the Internet and literature fieldwork relying on literature have been formed (Ninghua & Ziwei, 2019). Associate Professor Chu Zhuo said: "Ethnomusicology is not a book-to-book science, and every step of its progress is inseparable from specific fieldwork" (Zhou, 2022). Professor Zeng Cheng said: "Conduct thematic fieldwork on Guangxi national vocal music works, focusing on ethnic music creation, research, and performance" (Zeng & Li, 2020).

The core and foundation of Guangxi vocal music creation are folk tunes and folk song materials from various ethnic groups in Guangxi. Carry out field research, get in touch with the musical elements in life, and experience the melody with regional characteristics. In the early days of the founding of New China, music creators went deep into the countryside in Guangxi to carry out field investigations, collect and sort out the folk tunes of various ethnic groups, and extract and process the first batch of outstanding Guangxi folk song adaptations. To this day, conducting fieldwork remains the most important course in learning music composition. Guide students to carry out fieldwork, collect and organize materials, and lay the foundation for the further development, adaptation, and creation of music.



Figure 10: Researchers lead music students to conduct fieldwork.

Source: Pang Yi, (2022)

The Research and Practice of Local Music in Vocal Music Teaching in Music Education is based on collecting and sorting out the tones of ethnic folk songs. The mastery of many folk song materials and the use of skillful composition techniques are the prerequisites for shaping the style of Guangxi's national music. Choose topics from all aspects of life, use these musical materials as a basis, and find creative inspiration from them. An open, creative attitude and constantly innovative creative methods promote music creation.

Guangxi Arts University has done a very good job with the protection, transmission, and innovative development of Guangxi folk songs. It creates by taking the tone of national folk songs and combining it with the characteristics of Guangxi vocal music. Based on the history and tradition of the development of Guangxi's national music, it absorbs the world's advanced music culture and carries out colorful interpretations of Guangxi's vocal works, promoting the prosperity and development of Guangxi's vocal music works. The Zhang Tianqin plays and sings "Moonlight Love Affair," a song adapted from the Guangxi Chongzuo Zhuang folk song "Chicken Cry Tune." The work depicts a full moon hanging in the sky, moonlight filling the valley, and lovers witnessing the village's transformation into a rich one. The Zhuang Tianqin played tirelessly, singing more and more energetically until sunrise.



Figure 11: Guangxi Chongzuo Zhuang Tianqin playing and singing, "Moonlight Love Affair".

Source: Pang Yi, Guangxi Arts University, December, (2022)

The Guangxi Dongxing Jing nationality song and dance "The Wind Blows the Clouds," adapted from the traditional Kinh dance "Dancing Sky Lantern," The Jing, China's only maritime people, live on islands around Dongxing, Guangxi. In the early 16th century AD, they migrated to China from Tushan and other places in Vietnam.

"Love Song of the Pohui" is based on the pomp and circumstance of the Rongshui Miao Ethnic Pohui Guangxi. The asparagus dance and love songs sung at the Pohui are typical representatives of Miao songs and dances. Rongshui Miao Customs: You cannot blow asparagus or leave on the first day of the year. lunar month: on the second day of the first lunar month, you can blow asparagus, but you cannot go out of the village; the third day of the first lunar month begins as time for group activities and entertainment, and villagers rush around to meet the Pohui. Young men and women dressed in costumes and danced in circles. The atmosphere was cheerful, and the scene was warm.



Figure 12: Guangxi Rongshui Miao folk song "Love Song of the Pohui."

Source: Pang Yi, Guangxi Arts University, December, (2022)

"The Road Blocking Song" of the Guangxi Sanjiang Dong ethnic group is adapted from the "Road Blocking Song" and "Road Opening Song" in social activities such as festivals and marriages. With the purpose of "comparing singing talents, comparing knowledge, comparing wit, and enhancing "The Road Blocking Song" is a unique variety of colorful Dong folk songs that is used in many different situations.



Figure 13: Guangxi Rongshui Miao folk song "Love Song of the Pohui."

Source: Pang Yi, Guangxi Arts University, December, (2022)

4. Discussion

The findings of this study are consistent with the evolution of Guangxi's vocal music creation. On the basis of the previous Guangxi music research, further detailed research The most important thing is to precisely determine the starting year of the three stages of the development of Guangxi vocal music in the new period. This is an important research foundation for studying the history of Guangxi vocal music. The Guangxi national vocal music brand R&D and innovation team divides the Guangxi vocal music creation and development in the new period into three stages by studying the 72-year Guangxi vocal music development process (1949-2021) in Guangxi since the founding of the People's Republic of China and combining the actual situation of Chinese history with Guangxi history.

4.1 The Basis for the Division of the "New Period" of Guangxi Vocal Music Creation and Development

The division of the "new period" of New China is reflected in the "great historical turning point." The theoretical basis for the division of the "new period" is that different fields can be divided according to different research needs and according to different standards. Combined with the actual local conditions, delineate the stages in line with the local historical conditions. play a role in broadening horizons, enriching materials, and highlighting local characteristics. The development period of Guangxi music culture can be divided into three parts: before and after the establishment of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region; before China's reform and opening; after China's reform and opening up to the new century; and entering the new century to the present. The three stages represent the three development periods of "formation-recovery-ascent" in the development of Guangxi's music and dance culture.

4.2 The Different Characteristics of the Three Periods of Guangxi Vocal Music Creation and Development

In the early days of the founding of New China (1949–1979), Guangxi's vocal art adhered to the tradition and brought forth new ideas. One unforgettable song recorded the development of Guangxi's vocal music career. It reflects the spectrum of the times and records the changes in social history. During the period of China's reform and opening (1980–1999), a new period of Guangxi music development was ushered in. The new generation of Guangxi musicians forged ahead and gradually matured with the wave of the new period. Guangxi composers break through the shackles of thought and seek creative inspiration from Guangxi music. The creative method for creating publicity is constantly innovated, and popular vocal art works are composed. Entering the new period (2000-2021), in a good creative environment, Guangxi's rich folk music resources are the core and foundation of Guangxi's vocal music creation. The colorful interpretation of Guangxi vocal music works promotes the prosperity and development of Guangxi vocal music creation.

We can guide students to learn music creation step by step by combining the different styles and creation characteristics of the three stages of Guangxi vocal music creation development analyzed in this study. Based on

Guangxi music, this is a bold and innovative creation. Based on the history and tradition of the development of Guangxi's national music, it absorbs the world's advanced music culture and carries out colorful interpretations of Guangxi's vocal works, promoting the prosperity and development of Guangxi's vocal music works.

Guangxi, located in southern China, is a sea of folk songs. The territory is rich in national music resources and fine traditions. Each of the twelve ethnic minorities that have lived here for generations has a rich stock of folk songs with a wide range of content, providing a profound living soil and source for song creation and development in Guangxi. The researchers hope to contribute to the prosperity of Guangxi's vocal music creation and cultural improvement and enhance national self-confidence and pride through the study of "The Arts of Creation of Guangxi Vocal Music in the New Period (1949-2021)."

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