



# Ecoteological Perspective on the Local Wisdom of the Kajang Tribe: A Literature Review and Its Implications for Islamic Education

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## Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis perspektif ekoteologi Islam dalam kearifan lokal masyarakat Kajang, memetakan penelitian terdahulu, serta mengidentifikasi implikasinya terhadap pengembangan pendidikan lingkungan. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis library research melalui telaah literatur terhadap berbagai jurnal ilmiah, buku akademik, dan hasil penelitian terkait ekoteologi Islam, pendidikan lingkungan, dan kearifan lokal masyarakat Kajang yang terbit pada periode 2020–2026. Analisis data dilakukan secara deskriptif-kritis dengan menekankan integrasi teori, temuan penelitian, dan identifikasi research gap. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai-nilai adat masyarakat Kajang seperti kamase-masea, penghormatan terhadap hutan adat, prinsip kehati-hatian dalam pemanfaatan sumber daya alam, serta larangan eksploitasi lingkungan memiliki keselarasan dengan konsep ekoteologi Islam seperti tauhid, khalifah, amanah, dan mizan. Kearifan lokal tersebut membentuk sistem etika lingkungan berbasis spiritualitas dan kolektivitas sosial yang berfungsi menjaga keberlanjutan ekologis masyarakat. Penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa nilai-nilai ekologis masyarakat Kajang memiliki relevansi kuat terhadap pengembangan pendidikan Islam ekologis melalui integrasi nilai religius, budaya lokal, dan kesadaran lingkungan dalam proses pembelajaran. Penelitian ini berimplikasi pada pentingnya rekonstruksi pendidikan Islam yang tidak hanya berorientasi pada aspek ritualistik, tetapi juga responsif terhadap isu lingkungan hidup berbasis nilai budaya dan spiritualitas lokal. Penelitian selanjutnya direkomendasikan untuk mengembangkan studi empiris mengenai implementasi pendidikan Islam berbasis ekoteologi masyarakat adat dalam konteks lembaga pendidikan formal maupun nonformal.

Kata Kunci: Ekoteologi Islam; Kearifan Lokal Kajang; Pendidikan Islam Ekologis

## Abstract

This study aims to analyze the perspective of Islamic ecotheology in the local wisdom of the Kajang community, map previous research, and identify its implications for the development of environmental education. The study uses a qualitative approach with library research through a literature review of various scientific journals, academic books, and research results related to Islamic ecotheology, environmental education, and the local wisdom of the Kajang community published in the period 2020–2026. Data analysis was conducted descriptively-critically with an emphasis on the integration of theory, research findings, and identification of research gaps. The results show that the traditional values of the Kajang community such as kamase-masea, respect for customary forests, the principle of caution in the use of natural resources, and the prohibition of environmental exploitation are aligned with Islamic ecotheological concepts such as tauhid, khalifah, amanah, and mizan. This local wisdom forms an

environmental ethics system based on spirituality and social collectivity that serves to maintain the ecological sustainability of the community. This study also found that the ecological values of the Kajang community have strong relevance to the development of ecological Islamic education through the integration of religious values, local culture, and environmental awareness in the learning process. This research implies the importance of reconstructing Islamic education that is not only ritualistic in orientation but also responsive to environmental issues based on local cultural values and spirituality. Further research is recommended to develop empirical studies on the implementation of Islamic education based on the ecotheology of indigenous communities in the context of formal and non-formal educational institutions.

Keywords: *Islamic Ecotheology; Kajang Local Wisdom; Ecological Islamic Education*

## Introduction

The environmental crisis has become one of the most serious global issues in the 21st century.(Jannah 2025) The phenomena of climate change, forest destruction, environmental pollution, loss of biodiversity, and exploitation of natural resources indicate that the relationship between humans and nature is experiencing a fairly deep ecological disorientation.(Andy 2025) Various studies state that the ecological crisis does not solely stem from technical-industrial problems, but is also related to the moral, spiritual, and paradigm crises of humans in viewing nature.(Nasr 1997) In this context, religion is seen as having a strategic position in building ecological awareness through an ethical and spiritual approach that is able to shape human behavior towards the environment.(Ardiyansyah, Zamroni, et al. 2025) In the Islamic tradition, the relationship between humans and nature is built on the principles of monotheism, trust, caliphate, and balance (mizan). Nature is positioned as an integral part of the signs of God's power whose sustainability must be maintained. Environmental damage is seen as a form of human deviation from the principle of balance that has been established by Allah SWT.(Banna and Rosyidah 2025) This perspective gave birth to a discourse on Islamic ecotheology that places environmental conservation as part of human religious responsibility. Islamic ecotheology does not only discuss normative doctrines but also encourages socio-ecological practices in the lives of Muslim communities.(Syauqi et al. 2025) The development of Islamic ecotheological studies in Indonesia shows an increasingly progressive tendency, especially when linked to

local traditions and the cultural wisdom of indigenous communities.(Siregar and Herman 2025) Indonesia, as a multicultural country, has various indigenous communities that maintain ecological value systems based on local culture and religiosity. One indigenous community that has received widespread attention in environmental studies is the Ammatoa Kajang indigenous community in Bulukumba Regency, South Sulawesi. This community is known for its Pasang ri Kajang value system that regulates the harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and God through the principle of simple living (kamase-masea) and respect for customary forests as sacred spaces.(Kamaluddin and Mustolehudin 2020) The Kajang people view forests not merely as an economic resource, but as part of the spiritual system and collective identity of the indigenous people. Therefore, various customary rules are strictly enforced to maintain environmental sustainability, including prohibitions on illegal logging, excessive exploitation, and the use of certain modern technologies in customary areas.(Amirullah et al. 2025a) These values indicate that the Kajang people have a religio-cultural-based environmental conservation system that is passed down from generation to generation through Pasang ri Kajang.(Berkes 2018) From an environmental anthropology perspective, this system is a clear example of how local culture can function as an effective ecological instrument in maintaining natural sustainability. Several previous studies have discussed the Kajang people from various perspectives. A study conducted by Gibson highlighted the symbolic construction and identity of the Kajang community in maintaining traditional traditions

amidst the current of modernization.(Nurdin and Jamaludin 2024) Another study conducted by Zelfia showed that the value of kamase-masea forms a simple lifestyle of the Kajang community which has an impact on the ecological sustainability of the traditional area.(Zelfia et al. 2025a) Meanwhile, Nurfatimah's research confirms that the Kajang customary forest management system based on Pasang ri Kajang has proven to be able to maintain ecological balance sustainably.(Nurfatimah et al. 2025) However, most of this research still focuses on anthropological, socio-cultural, and general environmental conservation aspects. Studies that specifically integrate the perspective of Islamic ecotheology with the local wisdom of the Kajang community are still relatively limited. Furthermore, previous research has not linked the ecological values of the Kajang community with the development of environmental education based on local religious and cultural values. In fact, the integration between Islamic ecotheology and local wisdom has great potential in building a more contextual, humanistic, and sustainable environmental education paradigm.(Abdillah 2001) In the context of education, strengthening ecological awareness is not enough to be done through a cognitive approach alone, but requires internalization of spiritual and cultural values that live in the community.(Ardiyansyah, Tabrani, et al. 2025) Environmental education based on local wisdom is seen as more effective because it has a historical, emotional, and social closeness to students.(Orr 1991a) Therefore, the ecological values in Pasang ri Kajang can be used as a source of ecological pedagogy based on Islamic ecotheology that is relevant to the challenges of the contemporary environmental crisis. Based on this description, this study aims to analyze the perspective of Islamic ecotheology in the local wisdom of the Kajang community through a literature review, while identifying its implications for the development of environmental education. This research is important because it offers an integrative approach between Islamic theology, local

culture, and ecological education as an alternative for developing value-based environmental education in Indonesia. Thus, this research is expected to be able to provide a conceptual contribution to the development of Islamic ecotheological studies while strengthening the role of local wisdom in building ecological awareness in society.

### **Research Methods**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a library research type. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to understand, interpret, and analyze in depth the concept of Islamic ecotheology in the local wisdom of the Kajang community and its implications for environmental education through searching various relevant scientific literature sources.(Moleong 1996) Library research is used because the object of the research study is sourced from written data in the form of scientific journal articles, research results, academic documents, and other scientific works related to Islamic ecotheology, the local wisdom of the Kajang indigenous community, and environmental education. Methodologically, this study is descriptive-analytical using an interdisciplinary approach, especially theological, anthropological, and educational approaches. The theological approach is used to analyze the concepts of Islamic ecotheology such as tauhid, caliph, amanah, and mizan from the perspective of Islamic teachings.(Abdillah 2001) The anthropological approach is used to understand the value system and ecological practices of the Kajang indigenous people through Pasang ri Kajang as a form of local wisdom.(Koentjaraningrat 2002) Meanwhile, the educational approach is used to identify the relevance of these ecological values in the development of environmental education based on local culture and spirituality.(Orr 1991b) The data sources in this study consist of primary sources and secondary sources. Primary sources include reputable national and international scientific journal articles that discuss Islamic ecotheology, the Kajang indigenous people,

environmental conservation, and environmental education published in the period 2020–2026. The data collection technique was carried out through documentation studies by searching various scientific literature from academic databases such as Google Scholar, DOAJ, Garuda, Dimensions, and Crossref. The selected literature was adjusted to the criteria of theme relevance, source credibility, data novelty, and scientific reference traceability. In the data selection process, researchers identified, classified, and categorized literature related to the concept of Islamic ecotheology, Kajang local wisdom, and environmental education. The data analysis technique used a content analysis and critical analysis model. Content analysis was carried out by identifying the main themes, conceptual patterns, and interrelationships between ideas in the various literatures reviewed.(Krippendorff 2018) Furthermore, critical analysis was used to find trends in previous research, compare research results, identify weaknesses in previous studies, and find research gaps that form the basis of the novelty of this research.(Creswell 2014) To maintain data validity, this study used source triangulation techniques through comparisons of various scientific references that have different theme relevance and perspectives. Furthermore, the researcher also checked the relationship between theory and research findings to ensure the consistency of the academic arguments developed in this study. With this approach, this study is expected to produce a comprehensive conceptual construction regarding the perspective of Islamic ecotheology within the local wisdom of the Kajang community and its contribution to the development of environmental education based on local religious and cultural values.

## Results and Discussion

A literature search using Google Scholar, DOAJ, Crossref, Garuda, and Dimensions databases shows that studies on Islamic ecotheology and the Kajang indigenous community have experienced significant

development in the past five years. These studies come from reputable national journals like SINTA and international journals with strong relevance to this research topic.

The following is a review and analysis of previous research.

- A. Research conducted by M. Yunasri Ridhoh and Andi Alfian entitled “*Ecotheology of the Kajang People: The Encounter Between Ecology and Theology in the Indigenous Kajang Community of South Sulawesi*”.(Ridhoh and Alfian 2025) This study uses an anthropology of religion and ecotheology approach to analyze the relationship between the spirituality of the Kajang people and nature conservation. The results show that the Kajang people view the forest as a sacred space with spiritual and cosmological dimensions. The principle of kamase-masea, or simplicity of life, serves as a moral foundation for maintaining the ecological balance of the community. This study demonstrates that the customary values and spiritual beliefs of the Kajang people shape an environmental conservation system based on local religiosity. The academic implications of this study indicate that the ecological awareness of indigenous peoples cannot be separated from the theological constructions and belief systems that exist within the community. Its relevance to the current research lies in strengthening the argument that the concept of Islamic ecotheology in the Kajang community is not merely a normative doctrine but has become a socio-cultural practice passed down from generation to generation. The novelty of this research lies in the development of an Islamic educational dimension based on ecotheology and local Kajang wisdom, which has not been studied in depth in previous studies.
- B. Research by Gustia Tahir and M. Ilham through articles “*Eco-Sufism in Ammatoa Community: Harmonizing Islamic Values and Local Traditions for Environmental*

*Conservation in Kajang Bulukumba*".(Tahir et al. 2025) This study uses a qualitative approach with an eco-Sufi perspective to understand the ecological spirituality of indigenous communities. The results show that the Kajang community has developed an ascetic, simple, and harmonious lifestyle with nature as a form of implementing Islamic spiritual values. Environmental conservation is understood as part of human mystical awareness of God and His creation. The academic implications of this study indicate that Islamic spirituality has a significant contribution in building ecological ethics in society. This research is relevant to the current study because it demonstrates a substantive relationship between Islamic teachings and local traditions of the Kajang community in shaping environmental awareness. However, this research is still limited to the dimension of Sufi spirituality and has not yet developed its implications for Islamic education. Therefore, the current study has a novelty in constructing Islamic education based on eco-Sufiism and local Kajang wisdom as a paradigm for ecological education.

- C. Research by Fadhilah Utami Ilmi Rifai entitled "*Local Wisdom in the Historical Formation of Ecotheology Discourse in South Sulawesi*".(Rifai et al. 2025a) This study found that the local people of South Sulawesi have an ecological value system built through traditional customs, social solidarity, and respect for nature. These values then interact with Islamic teachings and shape the community's ecological awareness. The academic implications of this research indicate that ecotheology in Indonesia grows through a process of dialogue between religion and local culture. This research has important relevance because it strengthens the argument that the ecological values of the Kajang community did not emerge separately from the social and religious context of South Sulawesi society.

However, this research is still historical-cultural in nature and has not yet touched on the dimension of Islamic education. Therefore, the research to be conducted has a novelty in its effort to transform local ecotheological values into an Islamic education paradigm based on ecological culture.

- D. Research by Muhammadi Fuad Ikhwanasyah entitled "*PAI Learning Media Based on Dayak Local Wisdom and Ecotheology in Health Vocational Schools*".(Ikhwanasyah et al. 2025). The results of this study indicate that the integration of local cultural values and ecological awareness can increase students' awareness of the importance of preserving the environment as part of implementing religious teachings. The academic implications of this study indicate that Islamic education has great potential in building students' ecological character through the integration of local culture and religious spirituality. Its relevance to the research to be conducted lies in strengthening the paradigm of ecological Islamic education based on local wisdom. However, this study focused on the Dayak community and therefore did not examine the context of the Kajang community. Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in the development of ecotheology-based Islamic education for the Kajang community, which has a spiritual-ecological character that differs from other indigenous communities.
- E. Meilanny Risamasu's research entitled "*From Marginalisation to Mission: Akit's Indigenous Ecological Knowledge for Transformissional Ecotheology*".(Risamasu 2025) This research demonstrates that indigenous communities possess a holistic ecological knowledge system oriented toward sustainability. This ecological knowledge serves as a critique of the exploitative modern development paradigm. The academic implications of this research demonstrate that indigenous communities

can be a source of alternative ecological epistemology in building global environmental awareness. This research is relevant to the current research because both studies position indigenous communities as important subjects in the development of ecotheology. However, these studies did not specifically address the dimensions of Islamic education or the integration of Islamic religious values. Therefore, this research is novel in connecting the ecological knowledge of the Kajang indigenous community with the paradigm of ecotheology-based Islamic education.

- F. Abdul Rahmat's research is entitled "*Islam dalam Tradisi Erau di Kalimantan Timur: Implikasinya terhadap Ekoteologi Masyarakat*".(Rahmat et al. 2026) This study found that traditional rituals and religious traditions have a socio-ecological function in maintaining harmony between humans and the environment. The academic implications of this research indicate that local Muslim culture has great potential in developing an ecotheological paradigm based on religious traditions. Its relevance to the current research lies in its shared focus on the integration of Islam and local culture in environmental conservation. However, this study did not examine Islamic education as a space for transforming the ecological values of the community. Therefore, this research is novel in developing the pedagogical implications of the ecotheology of the Kajang indigenous community.
- G. Zelfia's research is entitled "*Model Komunikasi Ekologis dalam Pemanfaatan Sumber Daya Hutan secara Halal pada Masyarakat Adat Kajang*".(Zelfia et al. 2025b) This study shows that the Kajang community has an effective traditional communication system in building collective awareness of environmental conservation. The academic implications of this study indicate that cultural communication and religious values play a significant role in shaping the community's ecological

behavior. This research is relevant to the current study because it shows that the environmental awareness of the Kajang community is built through the collective internalization of cultural and religious values. The novelty of this research lies in the development of the Islamic educational dimension as an instrument for transforming the ecological values of indigenous communities.

- H. Amirullah's research is entitled "*Pantangan dan Larangan dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat Kajang: Analisis Etnografi terhadap Nilai Budaya*".(Amirullah et al. 2025b) The results of this study indicate that the prohibition on forest destruction and exploitation of natural resources serves as a cultural mechanism in maintaining the ecological balance of the community. The academic implications of this research demonstrate that local cultural norms have a very strong ecological function in maintaining the sustainability of the community's environment. The relevance of this study to the current research lies in strengthening the argument that Kajang traditional values have an environmental ethical dimension that can be integrated into ecological Islamic education. The novelty of this research lies in transforming these cultural values into an Islamic education paradigm based on ecological spirituality.
- I. Research by Fadhilah Utami Ilmi Rifai berjudul "*Implementasi Nilai Budaya Adat Kajang dengan Prinsip Kehati-Hatian dalam Pengelolaan Sumber Daya Alam*".(Rifai et al. 2025b) This study found that the Kajang community views excessive environmental exploitation as a moral and spiritual violation of tradition. The academic implications of this study indicate that the precautionary principle in the local culture of the Kajang community has significant relevance to the development of sustainable environmental ethics. This research is relevant to the current research because it shows that the local cultural values of the Kajang community have strong ecological and spiritual dimensions. The novelty of this research lies in

its effort to integrate the ecological principles of the Kajang community into an Islamic education paradigm based on local religious and cultural values.

Based on the overall results of previous studies and analyses, it is clear that the discourse on Islamic ecotheology in the context of the Kajang indigenous community shows increasingly significant academic development, particularly in the study of the relationship between religion, local culture, and environmental conservation. Various studies have demonstrated that the Kajang community possesses an ecological construct that is not only cultural but also contains strong spiritual and theological dimensions. Values such as *kamase-masea* (simplicity of life), respect for customary forests, the principle of prudence in the use of natural resources, and the prohibition on environmental exploitation demonstrate that the Kajang community has developed an ecological ethical system based on local religiosity that has been passed down through generations.

Theoretically, the results of previous research strengthen the argument that the concept of Islamic ecotheology cannot be understood solely as a normative doctrine in religious texts, but must be understood as a system of values embedded in the community's social and cultural practices. In this context, Islamic theological concepts such as *tawhid* (monotheism), *khalifah* (vicegerent), *amanah* (trust), and *mizan* (commandment) have substantive relevance to the Kajang community's environmental conservation practices. This demonstrates the integration process between Islamic teachings and local wisdom, resulting in an ecological paradigm based on spirituality and culture. Thus, previous research provides important theoretical contributions in expanding the study of Islamic ecotheology from a textual approach to a socio-cultural and anthropological one.

Furthermore, the analysis also demonstrates that indigenous communities hold a strategic position as a source of alternative ecological epistemology in addressing the global

environmental crisis. Research on eco-Sufism, ecological communication, customary taboos, and environmental governance in the Kajang community demonstrates that ecological awareness is developed through the internalization of spiritual, cultural, and social collectivity values. From the perspective of social construction theory, the ecological values of the Kajang community are not merely customary norms but are the result of cultural construction that shapes the community's sustainable ecological behavior. Therefore, this research strengthens the theory that environmental conservation will be more effective when built through a local cultural and spiritual approach rather than a purely legal-formal approach.

On the other hand, previous research also indicates a tendency for Islamic education to not optimally integrate ecotheological dimensions and local wisdom into the learning process. Most ecological education research focuses on developing learning media or general curriculum integration, but has not specifically developed an Islamic education paradigm based on the ecotheology of the Kajang indigenous community. Yet, the Kajang community possesses a system of ecological values that has significant potential to serve as a contextual learning resource for developing students' ecological character. From an Islamic educational perspective, these ecological values are closely linked to the goals of Islamic education, which emphasize the formation of individuals who are faithful, moral, and responsible toward social life and the environment.

Based on this, this study provides a new theoretical contribution by strengthening the paradigm of ecological Islamic education based on the local wisdom and spirituality of the Kajang indigenous community. This research positions Islamic ecotheology not merely as a theological concept but also as an educational paradigm capable of developing students' ecological awareness through the integration of religious values, local culture, and environmental ethics.

Thus, the novelty of this research lies in its effort to integrate three main dimensions simultaneously: Islamic ecotheology, the local wisdom of the Kajang community, and ecological Islamic education into a single, coherent conceptual framework.

Furthermore, this research also has academic implications for expanding the development of interdisciplinary studies between Islamic theology, environmental anthropology, and Islamic education. This study demonstrates that the modern environmental crisis cannot be resolved solely through a technocratic approach but requires the reconstruction of society's spiritual and cultural awareness of nature. Therefore, Islamic education needs to be directed toward developing ecological awareness based on local religious and cultural values as part of strengthening students' character in an era of global ecological crisis.

Based on the results of this synthesis, this study recommends that future studies should not only focus on conceptual analysis of Islamic ecotheology and local culture, but also expand into empirical research on the implementation of ecological Islamic education in formal and non-formal educational institutions, as well as in indigenous communities. Further research should also develop curriculum models, learning media, and pedagogical strategies based on the ecotheology of the Kajang community as a means of strengthening environmental education based on local culture and Islamic spirituality. Furthermore, future research could expand comparative studies between the Kajang community and other indigenous communities in Indonesia in developing a paradigm for ecological education based on local wisdom. Thus, this research development is expected to make a tangible contribution to strengthening Islamic education that is responsive to the global environmental crisis while remaining rooted in the cultural values and spirituality of local communities.

## Conclusion

Based on the results of the literature review and analysis of various previous studies,

it can be concluded that the perspective of Islamic ecotheology in the local wisdom of the Kajang community demonstrates a very close relationship between Islamic spiritual values, local culture, and environmental conservation practices. The Kajang indigenous community builds ecological awareness through a system of customary values derived from the Pasang ri Kajang (Kajang tradition) and reinforced by Islamic theological principles such as monotheism, khalifah (vicegerent), amanah (trust), and mizan (religious order). These values are reflected in a simple lifestyle (kamase-masea), respect for customary forests, a prohibition on excessive exploitation of natural resources, and a social system that places nature as an integral part of the community's spiritual life. Thus, the environment is not viewed solely as an object of economic exploitation, but as a divine trust that must be preserved for the sake of human survival and cosmic balance.

The results of this study also indicate that the local wisdom of the Kajang community is strongly relevant to the development of an ecological Islamic education paradigm. The ecological values entrenched in the Kajang community encompass dimensions of character education, spirituality, environmental ethics, and social responsibility that can be integrated into Islamic education. In this context, Islamic education serves not only as a means of transmitting normative religious knowledge but also as an instrument for transforming students' ecological awareness through the integration of religious values, local culture, and environmental conservation. Therefore, the development of Islamic education based on ecotheology and local wisdom is very important as a response to the increasingly complex global ecological crisis. Theoretically, this research strengthens the argument that Islamic ecotheology in the Kajang indigenous community is the result of a dialectic between Islamic teachings and local culture, resulting in an environmental ethics system based on spirituality and social collectivity. This research also confirms that indigenous communities have a significant contribution in

developing an alternative ecological epistemology that is more humanistic, religious, and sustainable than the exploitative modern development paradigm. Thus, this research makes a conceptual contribution to the development of interdisciplinary studies between Islamic theology, environmental anthropology, and Islamic education.

However, this research has several limitations. First, this is library research, so all data was obtained through a search of scientific literature without direct field observation in the Kajang community. Second, this research focuses more on conceptual and theoretical analysis and therefore does not examine the practical implementation of ecotheology-based Islamic education in formal or non-formal educational institutions. Third, the research limitations are also evident in the limited number of empirical studies specifically addressing the integration of Islamic ecotheology, the Kajang indigenous community, and ecological Islamic education. Based on these limitations, further research is recommended to conduct field research to obtain empirical data on the Kajang community's ecological education practices in social life and educational institutions. Future research should also develop curriculum models, learning media, and pedagogical strategies based on Islamic ecotheology and Kajang local wisdom as a means of implementing ecological Islamic education. Furthermore, comparative research between the Kajang community and other indigenous communities in Indonesia is also important to broaden the development of environmental education theory based on local culture and religious spirituality. Thus, further research is expected to provide a more applicable contribution to strengthening Islamic education that is responsive to global environmental problems while remaining rooted in the cultural values and religiosity of local communities.

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