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ETYMOLOGY OF THE LEGAL-CANONICAL,
MEDICAL AND THEOLOGICAL
TERMS USED IN THE
*EDICT OF THE GENERAL VICAR
OF THE CATANIA DIOCESE CONCERNING
THE CAESAREAN SECTION
AND BRIDAL BLESSING*
BY VINCENZO MARIA PATERNO'

1. STATUS QUAESTIONIS

The purpose of this article is to present the etymology of the legal-canonical, medical and theological terms appearing in the decree titled *Edict of the General Vicar of the Catania Diocese Concerning the Caesarean Section and Bridal Blessing* (1.06.1742)¹.

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¹ Translation from old Italian into English was done by me, according to: Paternò 2001, 283-87.

2. TEXT OF THE *EDICT* AND ETYMOLOGY OF THE TERMS

[Introduction]

“Having we carefully considered the risk of perishing without baptism[1] the childbirths[2], which remain in the womb[3] of pregnant[4] women already extinct[5]; and as we are well aware, how much more erudite writers treat the cesarean section[6], and in particular the famous Father Teofilo Rainaudo, Father Lodovico Schildere, and Father Giorgio Gobat; it is our duty to give some satisfaction with the present *Edict* to the serious damage that could never be achieved” [Paternò 2001, 283].

Etymology of the terms.

[1] The noun *battesimo* [baptism] comes from the Greek noun *baptismos* and means “immersion” [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 116; Popowski 1997, 91].

[2] The noun *parto* [childbirth] comes from the Latin *partus*, which is past participle of verb *parere*, *parturire* (in Italian *partorire*) [to give birth] [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 748; Kubicka and Suwała 2008, 116].

[3] The noun *utero* [womb] comes from the Latin noun *uterus* /*utetus*, which means “abdomen; stomach”. Especially the Latin *ut-terus* is very interesting, because it is composed by particle *ut* [out of] and suffix *-terus* [further]; in the end we have the meaning of *utetus* as: “further, which is beyond the”. The definition of the womb [*uterus*]: “viscera placed on the lower abdomen in females, in which the fetus is kept and grows during pregnancy” [Bonomi 2000; Kubicka and Suwała 2008, 160].

[4] The adjective *pregnante* [pregnant] comes from the Latin adjective *praegnans*. The Latin term is composed by particle *prae* [before] and verb *agnare* [make lambs] – also applied to the birth of other animals, as human being. This Latin term has been used in the traduction of the *Vulgate*: the Gospel of St. Luke [Bonomi 2000; Kubicka and Suwała 2008, 124].

[5] The adjective *estinto* [extinct; dead; deceased] comes from the Latin verb *extinguere* (composed by *ex-* and *stinguere*) and means “to switch off”, “to burn out”, “to sting”, “to choke” [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 382].

[6] The expression *parto cesareo* [cesarean section] is composed by two words: *parto* [childbirth] and *cesareo* [cesarean]. About first term – see [2]. However, about *cesareo* it is to be said, that comes from Latin verb *caedere* [to cut] (past participle: *caesus*). Childbirth occurred through the mother’s womb section [Bonomi 2000]. As it can be seen, the name “cesarean sec-

tion” has nothing to do with the “emperor”, but comes from a Latin verb *caedere* [to cut].

[Part I]

“And first of all, we mind to all the rectors[1] and the chaplains[2] working in our Dioceses[3], to procure for all souls[4] their eternal happiness; similar, to not incurring in that divine indignation, expressed by the heavy words of Prophet Ezekiel: «*Sanguinem eorum requiram de manu vestra*». We order them, with the greatest concern, being called to administer the last sacraments[5] to pregnant women, they must to make the purpose of their more attention, to give baptism during the childbirth. Coming soon after the death[6] of mother, they order the cutting of the uterus; they order to the relatives, and family members, to put in the mouth a fistula of reed, which from the jaws to the lips free the channel of respiration[7] to the creature leaves; it must be supposed that child is still alive. The many experiences happened to the most zealous parish priests, one of which assures in a his letter addressed to us, having found a child alive twenty-three hours after the death of the mother” [Paternò 2001, 283-84].

Etymology of the terms.

[1] The noun *parroco* comes from the Greek verb *parechein* [to extend; to offer; to help]. *Parechein* is composed by *para* [before; at; near] and *echein* [to keep]. *Parroco* [rector] means “taking care for souls” [Bonomi 2000].

[2] The noun *cappellano* comes from the French noun *chapelle* [chapel]. Generally, a priest entrusted with the service of a chapel or oratory; the holder of a chaplaincy; a priest in charge of religious service in certain institutions [Bonomi 2000]².

[3] The noun *diocesi* comes from the Greek noun *dioichesis* [government; administration]. This Greek term derives from *dioicheo* [to administer; divided living]. Whence comes the sense of “divided living in town”, and then “to administer”. The Greek *dis* means “separation” and *oikeo* – “to live; to dwell”, as *oikos* – “home”. “Diocese” was the ancient territorial administrative district of Asia Minor and also of the Roman Empire – the age of emperor Constantine [Bonomi 2000].

[4] The noun *anima* derives from the Greek noun *anemos* [wind; blow]. Soul is the principle of life in every organized being [Bonomi 2000].

² Cf. *Cappellano*, <http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/cappellano> [accessed: 19.05.2019].

[5] The noun *sacramento* comes from the Latin noun *sacramentum* and is composed by verb *consacrare* [to consecrate] and own termination of verbal names – *mentum*. The Latin term means “consecrated thing”. In ancient times the Latins said this by oath, as the way in which a promise is made sacred. In Christianity – the sacred things instituted by Jesus Christ [Bonomi 2000].

[6] The noun *morte* derives from the Latin *mors* and means cessation of life [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 668].

[7] The noun *respirazione* comes from the Latin verb *respirare* [to breathe]. This verb is composed by particle *re* [before; ago] and *spirare* [to blow]. Draw the air into the lung and push it back out with the opposite motion [Bonomi 2000]. So, breathing is every single act of breathing [Sabbadini 2001, 880].

[Part II]

“We also order the same Rectors of Souls under penalty of excommunication[1] ipso incurrend for us reserved; that since in every account they must be present at the imminent death of the pregnant women, likewise, even imploring the arm of the secular justice[2], where it will be necessary; then to follow soon the cut above-mentioned: similar to washing with the waters of the baptism that creature[3] in the best form, which can be, or absolute, or conditioned: and where reasonably doubted by the rectors of the resignation of the kin of the defunct pregnant woman, at that cut; they had, in the strict duty of their office, to assist with their presence, attention and care until the end” [Paternò 2001, 284].

Etymology of the terms.

[1] The noun *scomunicazione* (*scomunica*) derives from the Latin verb *excommunicare* and is composed by *ex-* [past; former; ex] and *communicare* [to make participant]. Term means to exclude from the communion of the faithful [Sabbadini 2001, 958].

[2] The noun *giustizia* comes from the Latin noun *justitia* [justice]. This Latin noun derives from other noun: *jus* and means “right; reason”. In this case, justice means the exercise of the power to judge according to the laws [Sabbadini 2001, 465; Bonomi 2000].

[3] The noun *creatura* derives from the Latin verb *creare* [to produce from the root]. The creature means everything created, especially man [Bonomi 2000]. In this case it is an unborn child.

[Part III]

“We also order, under the same penalty, that if the experts were missing to carry out this operation, particularly in the newly-built villages, the rector is obliged to look for the best, who will be able to do. And in the case of lack, the rector can’t run away to the scruples to make that cut, after having learned it from the others, in order to not perish that soul bought with the Precious Blood[1] of the Divine Lamb[2]. It is enough, as guarantee, the dictates made by Van Espen, who stated in his canonical work: «Quum non rare contingat, nullum in Parochia reperiri, aut saltem hic et nunc haberi posse, qui peritiam, modumque convenientem aperiendi uterum, et extrahendi infantem habeat; portet, ut ipsimes Pastores, precipue rurales, huius rei aliquam notitiam a Perito aliquo accipiant, qua subinde, cogente necessitate uti possint.» [Paternò 2001, 284-85].

Etymology of the terms.

[1] The noun *sanguis* comes from the Latin noun *sanguis* [thin blood, flowing in the veins; principle of the life]. *Sanguis* is something different from the other Latin term *cruor*, which means “thick blood, clotted, gushed from the wound” [Bonomi 2000].

[2] The phrase *Agnello Divino* is composed by the two words (noun and adjective) and in the theological terms means Jesus Christ – his chaste and meek figure. The noun *agnello* is a diminutive form of the Latin *agnus* [lamb] – diminutive *agnellus*. This Latin term corresponds to the Greek noun *amnos/agnos*. Some explain, that *agnos*, composed by *a-* [not; no] and *gonos* [bearing; to generate], means “has not yet generated”. Others say, that *agnos* means “pure, chaste, without vice”. Instead the noun *amnos*, composed by *a-* [not; no] and *menos* [anger], means “without anger, meek”. But these significant are more sentimental than real. In reality, the Latin *agnus* means “goat, male of the sheep” [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 30; Popowski 1997, 28; Kubicka and Suwała 2008, 22].

The adjective *divino* is form derived from the Latin *divus* [shining, heavenly]. The term indicates something that belongs to God, which proceeds from God [Sabbadini 2001, 335; Bonomi 2000; Kubicka and Suwała 2008, 57].

[Part IV]

“If ever happened, that the relatives of the extinct pregnancy under some vain pretext were opposed to this incision, or the cerulics[1] demanded a wage for something else not due to them for justice, to which the

forces of those relatives could not; then the rectors must first use all the pleasant means to come to the cesarean birth; and if otherwise, to give to both the penalty of excommunication *ipso facto incurrenda*, and to all those still, that impedere to put in instinct of eternal health[2] those souls enclosed in utero. Although in cases of occult pregnancies[3], and infamous[4], the rectors must proceed with those concerns which will be dictated by prudence[5] and morality” [Paternò 2001, 285].

Etymology of the terms.

[1] The noun *cerusico* derives from the Latin *chirurgus* [surgeon]. This Latin term comes from the Greek *cheir-urgos* and means someone, who treats diseases with the use of a hand bare or armed with instruments. In fact, *cheir* means “hand” and *urgos* (*ergon*) – “work” [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 192; Kubicka and Suwała 2008, 38]. In the *New Testament* (cf. Mk 2,17; 5,26; Lc 4,23; 5,31; 8,43; Col 21,16-17) the surgeon is called *iatros* – “physician, surgeon” [Popowski 1997, 287].

[2] The expression *eterna salute*. The noun *salute* comes from the Latin *salus* [integrity, safety, salvation]. The adjective *eterna* derives from the Latin *aeternus*, which is composed by the noun *aeuum* [age, duration, infinite] and the suffix *ternus*. *Areternus* means “which lasts forever; which has no beginning, neither half, nor the end”. Then, the expression *eterna salute* [eternal health] means “perfect state of well-being (of happiness) forever (without limits)” [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 384, 929].

[3] The expression *gravidanza occulta*. The noun *gravidanza* derives from the Latin *garvidus*, which is composed by *gravis* [who has weight] and the ending – *idus* [to indicate: “the lasting quality”]. Then *gravidanza* [pregnancy] means “carrying the baby in the womb” [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 475].

The adjective *occulto* derives from the Latin verb *occulere* [to hide from the eyes of others with a veil, to hide]. This term is composed by *ob* [before, against] and *coulere* [to grow, to breed] [Bonomi 2000]. Then, etymologically, the expression *gravidanza occulta* [occult pregnancy] means “a woman carrying a child in the womb in secret”.

[4] The noun *infame* comes from the Latin *infamem*, composed by *in* [not, no] and *fama* [fame, voice]. Then *infame* [infamous] means “bad face; shameful; spotted gravely and notoriously in honor” [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 529].

[5] The noun *prudenza* comes from the Latin verb *providere* [to see first; to foresee]. This verb is composed by *pro* [before] and *videre* [to see]. Then *prudenza* (the Latin noun *prudencia*) means “caution, prudence”; the Latin verb *providere* means “to procure before what you need; to have the eye on anything and watch over it” [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 837].

[Part V]

“Since dictates of more learned and serious writers, probably even in practice, that the mother is often praised, by the precept of charity[1], to suffer some new pain[2] from the cut: for her it will be a price of her eternal happiness. However, rectors will do the most of their duty teaching such doctrine, where they will explain, that the caesarean section will be good. Since now, after so many trials, the surgical art, with the certain instruments[3], can keep alive the pregnant woman, and the same time to let the creature to get out from the womb, and to baptize it” [Paternò 2001, 285].

Etymology of the terms.

[1] The expression *precetto della carità*. The noun *precetto* derives from the Latin verb *praecipere* [to take, to occupy first; to forecast; to predispose; to command; to teach]. This Latin verb is composed by *prae* [forward] and *cipere* [to take; to occupy]. The term *precetto* [precept] means: “what is recommended as a rule and teaching; command; prescription; order” [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 804].

The noun *carità* derives from the Latin *caritas* [good will; love] and corresponds to the Greek *charis*. This term means “selfless love for God and neighbor; compassion” [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 170].

[2] The noun *dolore* comes from the Latin *dolor* [pain]. This Latin term derives from the verb *doleo* and means “I feel bad; I regret” [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 339].

[3] The noun *strumento* derives from the Latin noun *instrumentum*, which comes from the verb *instruere* [to build; to lay; to arrange; to place]. This term means “everything with which and by which one operates; tool; device; machine” [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 1065; Kubicka and Suwała 2008, 87].

[Part VI]

“To the extent of such an important affair the rectors will use all the attention and care, to see, if the mother is died. Before coming to the cut, they must make sure, if she is really expired, using: the light of a wax candle approached to the lips[1], or the glass jar filled with water placed

on the navel[2] of pregnant; thanks to the movement of which, they will be able to make sure, if she is still alive or not. So make sure, that she already expired, all the most exquisite shrewdness will be used, not only to carry out the birth, but to examine, whether it is more than one child, in order to administer them the baptism” [Paternò 2001, 286].

Etymology of terms.

[1] The noun *labbro* (in text is used *labro*) derives from the Greek verb *laptein* [to lick]. This Greek term corresponds to the Latin *lambere* [to lick]; and respectively the Latin noun *labium/labrum*. Some say, that *labbro* [lip] comes from the Greek verb *labo* [I take] [Bonomi 2000; Kubicka and Suwała 2008, 92; Sabbadini 2001, 576]. In the *New Testament* is used term *stoma* [lip]: es. Mt 15,11; Lc 1,64.70; Rom 3,14 [Popowski 1997, 565].

[2] The noun *orifizio* (in text is used *orificio*) comes from the Latin noun *orificium* [navel] and is composed by *os* [mouth] and *ficere/facere* [to do]. Then navel [*orificio*] is “more or less narrow opening, which leads to a cavity in the animal body” [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 721].

[Part VII]

“And here deserves a special remembrance of the very strict debt, which the rectors[1] yearned not to wait but to prevent with their zeal the invitations of the dangerous infirmaries of their parish[2], to be always ready to help them, to rise them, in the right way of the true lovers of the souls: hearing their confessions[3], administering them viaticum[4] and extreme unction[5], deigning them with a constant and servant assistance in the last periods of their life, and maxims, where there are poor and in need of the help” [Paternò 2001, 286].

Etymology of the terms.

[1] The noun *piovano/pievano* derives from the Latin *plebanus*, which comes from the *plebs* [plebeians; people]. This term indicates “priest, who has the spiritual government of a people living in the perimeter of his parish” [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 780; Kubicka and Suwała 2008, 121-22].

[2] The noun *pieve* derives from the Latin *plebem* [plebeians; people] and means “country population, centered on a church”. Then parish, which has several rural villages below it [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 780].

[3] The noun *confessione* derives from the Latin verb *confiteri* [to confess]. This verb is composed by *cum* [with] and *fateri* [to declare spontaneously]. The term means “to say a real thing; to manifest; to declare

openly”. Then confession is “declared recognition of a fault or wrong” [Sabbadini 2001, 242; Bonomi 2000; Kubicka and Suwała 2008, 44].

[4] The noun *viatico* derives from the Latin *viaticum* [provision for travel], which comes from the noun *via* [street; walk], as well as from the verb *viare* [to make way]. In the Christian world it means the Sacrament of the Eucharist administered to the dying, in order to arrange them for the great journey of eternity [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 1164].

[5] The expression *estrema unzione*. The adjective *estremo* derives from the Latin *extremus*, which is superlative of the adjective *exter/exterus*. *Exter/exterus* comes from *ex* [which is more out of all; out]. In this case *estremo* is a deadline in space or time; the most serious; the last step [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 383].

The noun *unzione* derives from the Latin verb *ungere/ungere* [to anoint; to grease; to spread oil or some fat]. Then, extreme unction [*estrema unzione*] means “to anoint with the holy oil of the dying”. Today the term “sacrament of the sick” is used [Sabbadini 2001, 1142; Bonomi 2000].

[Part VIII]

“The Holy Church puts the bridal blessing[1] in great consideration. It is fitting for us to excite the zeal of the rectors, so that they do not cease to exonerate the spouses[2] with great care, to come to the church, to attend Mass[2] *pro Sponso et Sponsa*, and to receive the blessing, and to not put that in trouble, as relatives, who should be exemplary for others, depriving themselves a lot. To overcome the reluctance to dictate our faith in such a different way, let the rectors strive to make them understand, how great is the fruit of this blessing forever, from which the admiration can be found; and this blessing is a rare and happy success for them. But it is necessary to warn them, that they are not worthy of this blessing, and for this reason, let them come to the church, to deserve to receive this blessing with great respect, so that they will be united in the marriage bond[3].” [Paternò 2001, 286].

Etymology of the terms.

[1] The expression *benedizione nuziale*. The noun *benedizione* comes from the Latin verb *benedicere* [good to say]. Blessing means to invoke good from God in favor for thing or person [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 120].

The adjective *nuziale* derives from the Latin noun *nuptiae* [wedding; the act of contracting marriage]. Then, bridal blessing [*benedizione nuziale*] means to invoke good from God during the contracting marriage [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 694, 700].

[2] The noun *messa* derives from the Latin noun *missa*, which in Roman civilization meant the dismissal formula of the superior to the inferiors; this Latin noun comes from the verb *mittere* [to send]. In ecclesiastical language, *missa* means the sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, according to the prescribed rite [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 646].

[3] The expression *vincolo del matrimonio*. The noun *vincolo* [bond] derives from the Latin verb *vincire* [to tie; to wrap; to gird]. Then bond [*vincolo*] means the imposition, constraint, legal, moral or social obligation [Sabbadini 2001, 1167; Bonomi 2000].

The noun *matrimonio* comes from the Latin noun *matrimonium* [marriage]. This Latin noun is composed by *mater* [mother; genetrice] and the suffix – *monium*. The marriage bond [*vincolo del matrimonio*] is the legitimate union of man and woman with the purpose of generating children [Sabbadini 2001, 636; Bonomi 2000].

[Part IX]

“The rectors, therefore, will instruct the fiances[1], so that they stay far away from the abuse so pernicious to their souls. Let the rectors converse familiarly with each other, with due caution, without the living presence of their closest relatives, first, that they ratify their marriage *in faciem Ecclesiae*. They warn him clearly, however, about the near danger of sinning[2], if they go to dwell together in the same house at night. They will make them aware, by now, of being incurred in the excommunication *ipso facto* reserved to us and delegated to the vicars, rectors and chaplains of our diocese, according to Costantino Roncaglia, eminent theologian from the Congregation of Mother of God, in his moral work *De Sponsalibus*, in Chapter III, in Rule VIII on the question before. This punishment[3] was previously proposed and ordered by the zealous and wise prelate[4] of the Diocese of Lucca, with these precise words: *Sponsi de futuro sub eodem tecto pernoctantes sine nostra, vel Vicarii Generalis licentia, incidunt ipso facto in excommunicationem nobis reservatam*. Our present ordination and punishment we declare as binding. This document will have to be explained to the people several times a year, that he will keep them alive in memory and practice according to his own conscience[5]. And we order, that the present Edict[6] will be placed and kept in the sacristies[7] of the churches of our diocese. Vincenzo Maria Paternò, Trigona, General Vicar. Catania, 1st June 1742” [Paternò 2001, 287].

Etymology of the terms.

[1] The expression *novelli sposi* (used in the text) must be considered as *fidanzati/promessi sposi*. The noun *fidanza* derives from the Latin verb *fidere* [to have faith]. The term means “to promise solemnly to marry; promise of marriage” [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 409].

[2] The verb *peccare* derives from the Latin verb *peccare* [to make mistakes; to fail; to miss]. The origin of the Latin verb is unknown [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 756].

[3] The noun *censura* (used in the text) derives from the Latin verb *censere* [to rate; to determine; to decide]. In the ancient Rome the censor’s office, which had the right to examine the conduct of the citizens to impose blame on those of unregulated habits. In ecclesiastical language – a sort of ecclesiastical penalty imposed by canons, or by the pope, to those who do not obey the laws of the Church [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 183-84].

[4] The noun *prelato* derives from the Latin verb (*praefero*) in participle passive *praelatus* [favorite; responsible]. This Latin term is composed by *prae* [before] and *latus* [brought]. It is a title proper to the principal ecclesiastical superiors [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 813].

[5] The noun *coscienza* derives from the Latin verb *conscire* [to be aware]. This verb is composed by the particle *con/cum* [with; by; to] and the verb *scire* [to know]. The term means the awareness of what is happening in us [Sabbadini 2001, 272; Bonomi 2000].

[6] The noun *editto* comes from the Latin verb *edicere* [to speak]. It is composed by *e* [out] and the verb *dicere* [to say]. Then, the edict [*editto*] means “the ordinances pronounced by those with the highest authority” [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 352].

[7] The noun *sacristia* derives from the barbarian Latin *sacristia* [sacristia]. It means “place where the sacred furnishings are” [Bonomi 2000; Sabbadini 2001, 926].

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**Etymology of the Legal-Canonical, Medical
and Theological Terms Used in the
*Edict of the General Vicar of the Catania Diocese Concerning
the Caesarean Section and Bridal Blessing* by Vincenzo Maria Paternò'**

S u m m a r y

The purpose of this article is to present the etymology of the canonical, legal, medical and theological terms used in the 1742 decree of the Vicar General *Editto del Vicario Generale della Diocesi di Catania Intorno al Parto Cesareo, e Benedizione Nuziale*. The edict was written in the Italian language of the 18th century. The text was translated into English using the original spelling of the document.

Key words: linguistics; source text; particular law; Sicily

**Etymologia terminów kanoniczno-prawniczych,
medycznych i teologicznych w *Edict of the General Vicar of the Catania
Diocese Concerning the Caesarean Section and Bridal Blessing*
autorstwa Vincenzo Maria Paternò'**

S t r e s z c z e n i e

Celem niniejszego artykułu jest przedstawienie etymologii terminów kanoniczno-prawniczych, medycznych i teologicznych występujących w dekreście Wikariusza Generalnego z 1742 r., zatytułowanego *Editto del Vicario Generale della Diocesi di Catania Intorno al Parto Cesareo, e Benedizione Nuziale*. Wyżej wspomniany edykt został napisany w XVIII-wiecznym języku włoskim. Tłumaczenia na język angielski dokonano na podstawie oryginalnej pisowni dokumentu.

Słowa kluczowe: językoznawstwo; tekst źródłowy; prawo partykularne; Sycylia

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