PHILIP S. PEEK Ancient Greek I A 21st Century Approach



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Cover image: Athenian Fragmentary votive sculpture of Dionysus (?) Greek Ashmolean Museum. Photograph by Mary Harrsch, CC BY-SA. Cover design by Anna Gatti.

Introduction

This text contains twenty-five years of learning and teaching experience. During this time, I have had the pleasure of introducing ancient Greek to a variety of students and thank them for giving me the opportunity to teach them. In this book a guiding philosophy is to present as much as possible with as little as possible: où π o λ à à λ à π o λ ú ("depth not breadth"). Attempting to do so has been a labor of love.

Since teaching ancient Greek at BGSU, I used several different textbooks before settling on Chase and Phillips' elementary textbook. I began writing my own textbook as a reworking of their A New Introduction to Greek, a text that, though lacking in some essentials, I admire for its restraint. Using Chase and Phillips as a model for accomplishing much with less, I then built this book around the principles of memory, synthesis, and analysis. Students will memorize the top 250 most frequently occurring ancient Greek words, the essential word endings, the eight parts of speech, and the grammatical concepts they will most frequently encounter when reading authentic ancient texts. The logic behind this approach is obvious: students should learn first the vocabulary and concepts that they will encounter most often. The hope is that familiarity with the commonplace will turn more efficiently and effectively into a mastery of reading this beautiful language. Vocabulary outside of the top 250 is glossed as it is in texts with running vocabulary. Glossing these words on the same or adjoining page enables students to focus as much of their attention as possible on acquiring the reading skills that they will need as they progress in the language.

Many years ago, I had the privilege of learning from Drs. Hansen and Quinn and their text *Greek: An Intensive Course.* The authors, their book, and their teaching methodology were transformative for me. I hope that, in some way, I keep alit the flame of the Latin and Greek Institute and the excellence they instill in their students.

My Teaching Philosophy

The difficulties involved in teaching a subject that is as data intensive as Greek took me, early in my career at BGSU, to the Lilly Conference at Miami University

on how to improve teaching. There I listened to the keynote talk by Dr. Jeanette Norden, Professor Emerita of Cell and Developmental Biology at Vanderbilt. A neuroscientist by training and a researcher by passion, she came to teaching reluctantly. Assigned to teach the course no one wanted, she bucked the norms of her department and taught neurology from the point of view of what learning the students would have to apply once they became practising doctors. What had been a difficult rote-memory course became an even more demanding memory, logic, and diagnosis course, even though she significantly reduced the amount of memorization she required of her students. As I began assembling this textbook on learning Greek, her approach has been one of my guiding principles. I have taken every effort to keep the information to be memorized to a minimum and to combine memory, analysis, and synthesis as much as possible. I asked myself two questions: what memorized working information do I rely upon when reading ancient texts, and what method do I employ when diagnosing sentences, especially when I struggle to understand what is being said?

In thinking about this guiding principle and what people are capable of learning, it strikes me that survival and adaption are what humans do best. Suited to thrive in an infinite number of environments, homo sapiens is born ready to learn and to create and to communicate. As we age, we can lose touch with our innate ability to learn—so natural to us when young—especially upon encountering novel problems, like the learning of a new alphabet and of ways of creating meaning that differ from our current paradigm and understanding of how our native language works.

For this reason, learning and teaching start with belief. If we do not have faith, we and our students are doomed. Teachers must believe that their students are capable of more than they realize. Students must believe that they can excel and master physics, a second language, or the world that irrational numbers inhabit. They also must believe that they can memorize the large quantities of factual material that many subjects, including languages, demand.

An extreme example helps us to see what is possible. In the land that super-memorizers inhabit, people are able to memorize 500 random numbers in as little as 10 minutes. Grand master of memory Kevin Horsley holds the world record for memory and recall of 10,000 numbers of pi. Another supermemorizer, featured in the Netflix series, *The Mind Explained*, Yanjaa suggests that rote-memory is dead and creative-memory is its superior successor. Kevin, Yanjaa, and others show us how to use our creative mind to increase our ability to memorize many random items quickly. Their techniques are not dissimilar from those of the memory palace, possibly invented by Simonides of Keios. Since in an average elementary ancient Greek course students are responsible for memorizing about 1,200 items of discrete factual information, belief coupled with memorization techniques are essential to student success.



Facts and rote memory form just the base level of Bloom's revised taxonomy.

Fig. 1 Bloom's Revised Taxonomy with descriptions. This represents a visual of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy, Taken on July 14, 2008. Some rights reserved, https://www.flickr.com/photos/ ddmeyer/2666448493/

We all know that memorization is one essential aspect of learning. As teachers, we are obliged to teach students how to move from the base of Bloom's learning pyramid to the pinnacle, creativity. Ancient Greek, due to its complexity, is especially suited to helping us meet this obligation. The number of conceptual items Greek requires—including case functions for nouns, pronouns, and adjectives; definitions of parts of speech; verbal qualities; and grammatical constructions, such as the indirect statement, purpose and result clauses, and conditional statements—adds up to some sixty items. It is much harder for students to attain competence and understanding of these concepts than it is for them to acquire vocabulary.

Consequently, dividing our courses into memory-based learning and conceptand skill-based learning enables students to differentiate between rote learning and higher-level cognitive skills. Translate-and-parse quizzes help students acquire the skills of applying factual information to solve novel problems through analysis and synthesis. When translating, students develop a skill set that enables them to solve complex problems, for even simple **S**ubject **O**bject **V**erb sentences require from our students dexterity of thought. Translating develops their ability to synthesize. Parsing develops their analytical skills, which are widely applicable to any endeavor, as parsing develops in them a nuanced understanding of how languages work. Seeing a subject from the inside, as parsing encourages them to do, opens up doors to ever greater refinements in thinking and enriches their understanding, just as interpreting the *Iliad* from the inner world of its characters' choices, dreams, fears, hates, and hopes, gives us a greater understanding of the epic than does a plot summary that maps exactly what happens to whom when.

In the classroom it is also helpful to teach students metacognitive strategies. Teaching students metacognitive strategies empowers them to take charge of their own learning and to teach themselves. As they learn to apply factual information to solving the decoding of a collection of letters, words, phrases, and clauses written in a strange alphabet, with strange but meaningful endings and a novel word order, teaching them how to think about thinking develops in them the skills they will need as they journey through life.

Authentic content is another key to creating a rigorous course. About 10 years ago in second-year Greek I started using texts with running vocabulary for selfish reasons. Hitherto the amount of material I was able to get the students to read during a 50-minute class was abysmal and painful for both students and teacher. Upon adopting texts with running vocabulary in intermediate Greek, I was surprised by how successful the students were at reading and translating not a little bit more but a considerable amount more. We went from 10 lines of excruciatingly slow translation of the *Iliad* to 40–50 lines of impressive reading and translation work. I adopted this same running vocabulary approach in assembling the materials of this text. A benefit of doing so at the elementary level is that it freed me up to choose a variety of content-rich sentences from a number of different authors.

Compelling content is a great asset to any course. The humanities, with their content-rich media, such as film and literature, have an enormous capacity to create complicated ethical questions about what this or that character thinks, and what the whole film or poem or story may be saying. The humanities reflect our capacity for play, for empathy, and for the contrafactual. Imagined contrafactual worlds and ethical questions of utilitarianism (maximizing the good of everyone) and deontology (intrinsic rights and wrongs) are two of the biggest reasons why the humanities matter. They enable us to imagine alternate selves and fictive worlds that give us the capacity to transform ourselves and those around us. Understanding other people and ourselves lets us imagine new ways of being human. To change our world, our selves, and our society we have to think about what we ought to be like, as well as what we actually are like. Imagining ourselves as a different person allows us to become that different person; imagining new worlds allows us to create these worlds. The humanities invite us to play and help us imagine and feel and see and be more. Contrafactuals, imagination, fictions, and ethics matter, for how we read, teach, think, translate, write, live, and love. Ancient Greek even at the elementary level provides us with this rich content and with the ability to embrace ambiguity, diversity, and ambivalence about the lack of a definitive solution to life's difficult and meaningful questions.

Learning new factual information (endings and vocabulary) and thinking differently about this information can be stressful. Stress inhibits learning. We can assist students by informing them that learning information in order to teach it is less stressful. We can also create assignments that require them to demonstrate proficiency through teaching. Good teaching requires good learning. But there is a clear line between what students are responsible for and what we, their teachers, are. We cannot learn for our students nor can we make them understand the concept of a direct object. We can explain the concept as clearly as possible. We can give them practical exercises to assist their learning the concept. We can support and encourage and guide them. We can make them aware that mistakes are necessary, that setbacks and barriers are part of the process. We can make sure that they do not feel stupid or inadequate as they struggle. With love and empathy, we can care about them as students and as people. Ultimately it is they who determine whether they learn and how deeply their thinking goes.

And the potential is enormous. Recently, inspired by reading Use Your Perfect Memory by Tony Buzan; Deep Thinking: What Mathematics Can Teach Us about the Mind by William Byers; The Philosophical Baby: What Children's Minds Tell Us about Truth, Love, and the Meaning of Life by Alison Gopnik, Unlimited Memory by Kevin Horsley, and Teach Students How to Learn by Saundra McGuire, I added Learning Tips to my teaching repertoire. These Tips attempt to clarify the instructor's role in learning, as well as the student's (McGuire); to explain the mysteries of the learning process itself (Byers, Gopnik, and McGuire); to teach students how to learn (McGuire); to provide students with a variety of memorization strategies (Buzan and Horsley); and to introduce creativity and deep thinking to the process (Buzan, Byers, Gopnik, and Horsley). I have used this textbook in beta form for a few years. Most of its contents have proven their worth in the classroom. At the time of writing this introduction, the success of the Learning Tips is uncertain, though anecdotal evidence suggests that some students have had good results when they have consistently applied the principles they espouse. Dissatisfied with the results of applying the brute force of rote memory to my own learning, I have been pleasantly surprised by my ability to learn more efficiently when I use the strategies found in the Learning Tips.

Creative memory, deep learning, and thinking involve discontinuity. It is an approach to learning that goes beyond rote memory, analysis, and synthesis into the realm of the unknown that requires a transformation from old ways of thinking to new ways of understanding. It is a paradigm shift. We all understand that 1+1 = 2 and that 15 divided by 5 = 3. Those of us challenged by math have difficulty understanding that 1 + 1 can = 10 when we are in a binary conceptual

system. Learning to think differently and to imagine new paradigmatic ways of thinking is challenging. In Greek, one of the main concepts students must learn is that endings create meaning. The right side of their brain is engaged when they learn new information. As they memorize, process, and understand this new information, their understanding moves from the right half of the brain to the left. Thus learning involves both halves of the brain.

The right side of the brain processes new information. As we process this new information, the left half of the brain brings analysis, logic, and reason to what we have learned. In the end both hemispheres come to a shared understanding of our new knowledge. When we engage in further defining information, we use the left hemisphere. The left half of our brain rationalizes information and rejects anomalies. It looks out, holding the intense beam of a flashlight. If a gorilla walks through a volleyball game, the left side of our brain tends to miss the strangeness completely. When we consider ambiguities and contradictions, we use the brain's right side, which lights our way with the radiant glow of a lantern. Dissonance in the right side of our brain opens us to novelty, to new ways of thinking, to creativity. Dissonance is essential to our survival as a profession and as a species.

To sum up, just as we know that carbon dioxide emissions affect the weather but even with this knowledge cannot predict exactly what kind of storm will hit exactly where, so do we know the general qualities that create constructive learning experiences. The individual autobiographies and stories that make up our pedagogical lives are the irreplaceable narratives that comprise good teaching and good living, with no set solution to the complicated equation of good teaching and of good living, and with no application of a set formula for happiness and success. Belief, knowledge, analysis, synthesis, metacognition, care and creativity, and ethics and contrafactuals are general characteristics that enable us to provide students with opportunities to take charge of their own learning. Once they do, the doors to a well-lived life open wide. With this exhortation, I hope that I have given you things to think about as you practice in the great guild we have chosen to join.

For Instructors

In teaching with this book, I recommend experimentation and flexibility. The module on adverbs I assign as homework in a flip-the-classroom approach.¹ I then assess student learning of the material in the next day's class. At semester's

¹ Students are required to outline the module on adverbs before coming to class. In class I answer any questions they have about adverbs. Once their questions are answered, they take a proficiency quiz. In eighth grade, my daughter learned algebra by this method. She hated it and the teacher for the first month or so. Then she came to like the method and love the teacher.

start I spend a lot of class time chanting and teaching students how to memorize endings and vocabulary. Later in the term I assess their development of reading and translating skills by giving them translate-and-parse quizzes.

The material covered in this book is designed to enable students to begin reading authentic texts as soon as possible. It is important for students to develop a process-oriented approach each time they translate. If an approach is logical and repeatable, students will continue to improve as they learn new material. I encourage students to become their own teachers and to use the answer key in the back of the book. Learning how to teach oneself is an excellent skill that they will take with them and apply throughout their lives. Using the answer key to learn how to learn develops this skill. For the student learning ancient Greek, finding a balance between working hard on a translation before turning to the answer is one that each will need to find for herself. I encourage you to encourage your students to find this balance as they teach themselves how to learn.

In assessing mastery of essential information, the quiz format works particularly well for me. Through quizzes, students can display mastery of concepts, endings, functions, skills, and vocabulary. Once the course is about a third of the way to completion, I regularly give translate-and-parse quizzes that present students with ancient Greek they have not seen before and that ask them to utilize the identification and reading skills that we have been developing in class.

For Students

Memorize the definitions of the eight parts of speech and acquire a deep understanding of how they work. Use your understanding of English to develop your understanding of Greek. Memorize the essential vocabulary for the Greek adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions. These words are not glossed in the text and the better you know them, the easier your development as a reader of ancient Greek will be. These words, for the most part, function just as they do in English and so, once you know their definitions, translating them is typically straightforward.

Greek nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and verbs are not as straightforward. They all use endings to create meaning. You must memorize these endings and their functions. Memorizing them is essential to your development in the language. If you cannot identify the word you are looking at and do so quickly, your translation and reading skills will not improve and you will become easily frustrated.

Once you identify a word correctly, create expectations for its function in the sentence based upon context and frequency. For instance, the majority of the time you encounter a noun or pronoun in the genitive case you will need to supply the preposition "of" in order to translate the word correctly into English. Consequently, when you encounter a genitive noun or pronoun, supply "of" right away. A percentage of the time you will be incorrect and context will require you to adapt your expectations, but most of the time you will be correct.

As you encounter nouns and pronouns, this process of identifying the form and then translating based upon the form's possible functions and function frequency is repeated time and again. For certain cases it is easier than others. Nominative nouns and pronouns typically have the function of subject and so, when you identify a noun or pronoun as nominative, expect that the word is the subject of the sentence. Other cases have more possibilities in their functions and, as a result, are a bit more complicated to anticipate. In these instances, be sure to apply critically the **Case and Function Chart**.² Most times a given noun or pronoun's function is obvious; at other times it can be narrowed down to one or two choices. Once you have narrowed down your choices, use context to figure out which one makes the most sense.

Easier to translate are adverbs, conjunctions, and prepositions because, as already noted, they function just as their counterparts in English do. Adjectives, nouns, pronouns, and verbs, however, create meaning through endings and so function differently from the way they do in English. Thus in order to translate them successfully, an adjustment in your thinking about how language works is necessary.

As you reflect on your own language and how meaning is created, you will note that meaning is created in English mainly through word order and prepositional phrases. In ancient Greek, meaning is created in three main ways: (1) through endings placed upon adjectives, nouns, pronouns, and verbs; (2) through prepositional phrases; and finally (3) through word order, though not decisively so as in English. This text strives to communicate as comprehensibly as possible the repeating patterns Greek uses in its creation of meaning through these three paths.

As you strive to understand these patterns, another suggestion that I recommend is for you not to write out an English translation of the Greek sentences and narratives. Rather read through the Greek several times so that, when you come to class, you can translate the Greek as easily as you would read aloud an English sentence.

Developing this skill takes more time initially than writing down a translation, but devoting more time at first to developing a reading approach will result in your taking much less time to translate sentences whose complexity keeps increasing as the semester wears on. As you translate from the Greek, you will find your vocabulary increasing naturally and find that your ability to understand how Greek creates meaning through word order also develops naturally.

² In a few instances the text cites Smyth, *Greek Grammar* and Boas, Rijksbaron, Huitink, and Bakker, *The Cambridge Grammar of Classical Greek*, abbreviated to SSG and CGCG in the text.

When translating ancient Greek into English, the requirements for how English creates meaning result in our rearranging the beautiful and effective arrangement of a given ancient Greek sentence. Were we ancient Greeks, no such rearranging would occur and we would hear and understand each word in the order it is presented to us. Reading the Greek several times, so that you can read it as easily as you would a sentence in English, develops this natural understanding of Greek and Greek word order and greatly increases your enjoyment of the language.

As you work your way through the text, remember that we all are language geniuses and that were we born in another time and place we would speak fluently a language other than English. And so, when Greek proves challenging and as you memorize more and more information, be sure to remind yourself of your innate language ability and to call to mind those first few days of class and how much you have learned since that time.

Dialects

This textbook uses a mixed dialect designed to enable you to read authentic texts written by a variety of writers using a variety of dialects, including Attic, Epic, and Ionic, though most forms are Attic or Ionic. Ionic $-\sigma\sigma$ - is used and not Attic $-\tau\tau$ -. Ionic $\sigma\phi\epsilon\tilde{i}\varsigma$ is presented as the third-person pronoun as are the oblique forms of $\alpha\dot{v}\tau\dot{o}\varsigma$, used in the Attic dialect. Infinitives, finite verb forms, and noun forms are generally uncontracted until after contract verbs are presented (Modules 10, 17, 19, and 24). Then a mixed approach is used, with deference given to the original Greek form. For detailed information on Herodotos' mixed dialect and on the Ionic-Attic dialect, see Appendices XI and XII. I address dialect differences throughout the book as opportunities arise.

Moral Philosophy

This text seeks to embrace change, difference, and diversity, recognizing that there is no one right way to solve life's difficult and interesting questions. It strives to make students comfortable with making mistakes and comfortable with engaging in debate and disagreement. It offers compelling reading selections in English and in Greek, chosen as starting points for contemplation, debate, and reflection. It recognizes we can do right for wrong reasons and wrong for right ones. The richness that deep thinking offers us can be absurd, ironic, perplexing, contradictory, and joyous. Current advances in quantum theory and practice seem destined to take us further along these interesting subjective paths.

Pronunciation

Over 20 ancient Greek dialects existed and, until one became standard in about 400 BCE, many alphabets. Although no one knows for sure how ancient Greeks spoke their language and their pronunciations varied from person to person and city-state to city-state and over time, I offer a set pronunciation system. It is the same as is used by Mastronarde at his website, **AtticGreek.org Pronunciation Guide**, with some simplifications made for the sake of speakers of American English.³

For the vowel sound of **eta** I use the more familiar **ay** as in d**a**te instead of ê as in the French tête, and for the short vowel sound of upsilon I use the more familiar short **u** as in p**u**t or long **u** as in b**oo**t instead of the short French **u** as in *lune* and long French **u** as in French *ruse*. For the diphthong u, I use the **wi** sound of **wi**t instead of combining the rounded vowel ÿ with semivocalic **i** as Mastronarde recommends.

Like Mastronarde, I also use the conventional pronunciations for the sounds of the letters theta and phi, pronouncing theta θ as the **th** of **th**in instead of the unaspirated **t** in **t**op, and pronouncing phi, ϕ , as the fricative **f** as in **f**oot instead of the aspirated **p** of **p**ot. JACT in their pronunciation system maintain the distinction between these aspirated and unaspirated sounds. Their system differs from the one I offer in these ways,

Η η: h**ai**r

 Θ θ : toy (note the exhalation of breath when pronouncing the *t*).

0 o: p**o**t

Y v: French l**u**ne or German M**ü**ller

 $\Phi \phi$: **p**ool (note the exhalation of breath when pronouncing the *p*). $\Omega \omega$: saw

If the pronunciation of ancient Greek intrigues you, see

- Allen, W. S. 1987. Vox Graeca: A Guide To The Pronunciation Of Classical Greek (Cambridge, TAS, Australia: Cambridge University Press)
- Daitz, Stephen G. 1984. The Pronunciation and Reading of Ancient Greek: A Practical Guide (Guilford, Connecticut: Jeffrey Norton Publisher)
- Danek, G. 1989. "Singing Homer," Überlegungen Zu Sprechintonation Und Epengesang, Wiener Humanistische Blätter, 31: 1–15
- Devine, A. M. and Stephens, L. D. 1994. The Prosody of Greek Speech (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press)

³ http://atticgreek.org/pronunc/pronunc_guide.html.

Some Tips on Using This Book

If using a hardcopy, to minimize flipping back and forth, open the book with the spine flat and two pages visible. If using a digital copy, use the word search feature to find information.

Whichever version you are using, print and then keep at your elbow the **Case and Function Chart**, the handout on **Adjectives**, **Adverbs**, **Nouns**, **and Pronouns**, and the handout on **Verbs**.

Resist the urge to write down your English translation. Learn to translate into English while reading directly from the Greek. Resisting this graphical urge will improve your vocabulary retention and your reading ability.

Vocabulary

Ancient Greek has a rich vocabulary that permitted the creation of neologisms (new words) as needed. Aristophanes, the comic poet from Athens, created the longest attested word in the Greek language,

λοπαδοτεμαχοσελαχογαλεοκρανιολειψανοδριμυποτριμματοσιλφ ιοκαραβομελιτοκατακεχυμενοκιχλεπικοσσυφοφαττοπεριστεραλ εκτρυονοπτοκεφαλλιοκιγκλοπελειολαγώοσιραιοβαφητραγανοπ τερύγων.

It is the name of a dish with a recipe that called for fish, flesh, fowl, and sauces. It has 172 letters and 78 syllables. For information on the creation of neologisms in a variety of languages, follow this link:

Neologisms.4

In this text you memorize the top 250 most commonly occurring Greek words, about 18 words over a period of 14 weeks, starting with adverbs, conjunctions, and prepositions. The words marked by an asterix are in the top 250 and are to be memorized. I based this list on the list compiled by Dickinson commentaries, located here,

Ancient Greek Core Vocabulary⁵

and on my own many searches in,

Logeion,6

which I encourage you to explore on your own.

⁴ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2DzeDU6QMZM.

⁵ https://dcc.dickinson.edu/greek-core-list.

⁶ https://logeion.uchicago.edu/lexidium.

The definitions given in the modules are simplified. As you encounter each of the words in the wild you will develop a more nuanced understanding of the range of meanings some words have. Many words are straightforward, without much complexity. For example, $va\tilde{v}c$ means *ship*. Other words have many degrees of complexity. $\lambda \dot{o} yoc$ has a wide range of denotative and connotative meanings, including *word*, *speech*, *story*; *reason*, *account*; *value*, *esteem*, *talk*, *conversation*; $\tau \tilde{\phi} \lambda \dot{o} y \phi$ for the sake of argument, in word, i.e., falsely; $\dot{\epsilon} v \lambda \dot{o} y \phi$ in the rank of; *katà \lambda oyov according to the value* or *esteem*. As your vocabulary increases so will your ability to understand a word's possible meanings in a specific context. Join the course on Quizlet to access vocabulary flashcards and drills, https:// quizlet.com/class/19147013/.

As is true of most things in life, the top 250 list is not perfect and can be improved. Send me your suggestions.

Vowel Length

In the accent and pronunciation exercises and paradigms, macrons mark alpha, iota, and upsilon if long and not accented with a circumflex. Short alpha, iota, and upsilon are unmarked. In the glosses and readings vowels are generally unmarked for quantity.

A Word on the Title

For several years I have gone back and forth between two titles for this book: Ancient Greek I: A Reading Approach and Ancient Greek I: A Cognitive Approach. Upon reading Deep Thinking: What Mathematics Can Teach Us about the Mind (William Byers); The Philosophical Baby: What Children's Minds Tell Us about Truth, Love, and the Meaning of Life (Alison Gopnik); and Teach Students How to Learn (Saundra McGuire), I leaned toward Ancient Greek I: A Cognitive Approach. Finally, as I continued revising the modules, I settled on a third, Ancient Greek I: A 21st Century Approach, since I wish students to approach learning Greek from the standpoint of learning any subject in depth. Though this book has content that no other textbook on learning Greek contains, it is often traditional in its approach to grammar and morphology. As a stretch goal it asks students to imagine themselves as ancient Greeks and to process the language as a native speaker would.

To Instructors and Students

Should you have any corrections or suggestions for improving the text, please contact me.

Sincerely,

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