

The Genealogy and Settlement Pattern of the Oromo of Gumma Kingdom (C.1820- 1880s)

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Abstract

The main Objective of this study is to unearth the history of the lineage of the Oromo of Gumma kingdom. In this study the research employed both the primary (oral sources mainly) and secondary sources and different data gathering instruments. The result shows that, the Oromo of Gumma, during their expansion into the present areas the area was inhabited by the pre-Oromo communities, Kaffa and Ennarya were the most known. The settlement pattern of the Oromo of Gumma was the earlier one to be settled in the Gibe region. Again, there were different tribes, clans and sub-clans of Maccaa inhabited in Gumma. Adami and Dagoye are among the major tribes and the remaining are sub and sub-sub clans of Maccaa. Their expansion brought about a cultural assimilation of these different non-Oromo ethnic groups and also expulsion of some pre-Oromo communities. Gumma Oromo have occupied the whole fertile and suitable highland areas.

Keywords:Genealogy, Gumma kingdom, pre-Oromo inhabited and assimilation

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I. General Historical Background

The kingdom of Gumma had occurred in the higher course of Dhidheessaa River. Gumma was the second Oromo kingdom to be formed in the Gibe region after Limmu- Ennarya [Mohammed Hassen, 1994:86 and Mordechai Abir, 1968:75-76]. The decade 1820s was a pivotal moment in the history of Gumma Oromo. It was a time when new form of administration was introduced to the Oromo of Gumma. Subsequently it witnessed rapid religious, political, economic and cultural development [Mohammed Hassen, 1994:18]. According to Huntingford, the population of Gummaa was estimated to be about 50,000 by 1880s [G.W.B.Huntingford, 1955:15]. The vast majority of the population of Gumma belongs to the Oromo while the rest are mainly the remnants of the pre-Oromo inhabitants of the region. Beginning from the nineteenth century some Amhara, few Tigray, Gurage and members of other peoples in Ethiopia have migrated to Gumma with the boom of coffee production [Informants: Kassa, Qasem,Alem, Yasen, Taju and Taye].

Moreover, according to oral informants during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I, there were few Sudanese, Italians and a large number of Arabs from Yemen who had settled in Gumma. The area East of Tulluu Argaa was the then quarter for Arab Yemen merchants, locally known as *Araboch Tara*. Many of these foreigners were engaged in a number of business activities in Gumaay\ Toobbaa and Dambii Dhidheessa. More than 150 Arabs Yemenites had settled in Toba and Dambii during the reign of Haile Selassie I, many of the Arabs merchants engaged in wholesale trade [Ibid]. So, based on the above general backgrounds this study asks in whom the major and the sub-clans those settled in the kingdom of Gumma.

II. Materials and Methods

The historical data used in the paper consists of two kinds of sources. The first category is secondary literature both (published and unpublished). In this category, the attempt was first started with reading written materials. The second sources category that is used in this study is oral sources, which has great contribution in the history of lineage study. The history of lineage has three sources. The first is oral tradition that is transmitted from one generation to another. Historical reconstruction on a certain topic of oral community requires a close assessment of oral traditions using the available written sources for cross-checking. Scholars argued that, "*All human history is oral in origin.*" Oral tradition is resourceful historical source that refers to human actions reported through speech and handed down from generation to generation [Bartls Lambert.1983]. Second, some individuals also commit themselves in documentary an organized genealogy of their family or tribe by their own initiative and will. The third source is the scientific study of genealogy that began in western European countries about 1500A.D and then continued among other English speaking countries [The New Encyclopedia Britannica; 1768; 606]. However, in this study the third source is not implemented. The study also interviews were conducted individually with 15 selected informants who were considered to be knowledgeable concerning relevant issues. All information gathered was therefore, crosschecked carefully by interviewing similar informants, referring to the relevant literature. For controversial issues, informants were interviewed in group (this approach is applied in the case of deliberate attaching of one's genealogical line with the more famous family). The same method was used for issues which were no longer well remembered. The oral sources were collected during and after March-

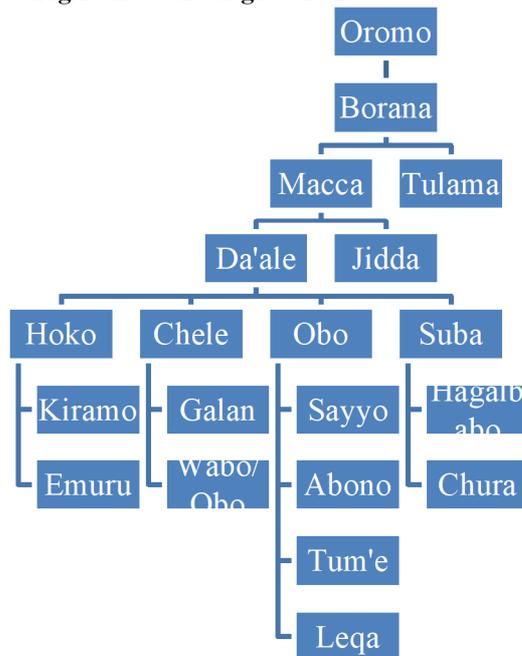
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III. Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

The New Encyclopedia, (1768:606) clearly defined that; genealogy is the study of the history of families, especially through studying historical documenters to discover the relationships between particular people and their families. A genealogy is also the history of a family over several generations for example describing who each person married and who their children were. Genealogy which is a Greek word *Geneo* and *Logy*, to means family or race study [Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau, 2006: 111- 113].

The source of G.W.B. Huntingford (1955:12) elucidate that the Oromo were divided in to more than 200 tribes. So the Oromo of Gumma state is one of this tribe that established itself in the Gibe region. There are also two Oromo confederacies called the Borana and the Barentuma [Bahrey: 1954: 133]. Among the Borana section of the Oromo maccaa and Tulama have common *caffee* assembly at a place called walabu [Huntingford, 1954:26]. After these two Borana confederacies expanded to the northern direction into two stages, they established the common *caffee* first at Oda Nabre in Fatagar near present Dukam, during Michile Gadaa(1554-1562) [Mohammed, 24-25]. Regarding the lineage of maccaa Bahrey point out that '' The father of the Boran was called Sapira. Sapira begot Dacha: Dacha begot Macha: Macha begot Jida Da'ale and these two brothers gave birth to numerous tribes. These are the sons of Da'ale: Hoko was the eldest, Chele the second, Obo the third, and Suba was the fourth, Jida begot Hakako his eldest son, Gudru his second and Liban his third'' [Bahrey, 1954: 45]. The sources of Bahrey also tells as the separation of maccaa into two confederacies called *Afre*, the confederacy of the four and *Sade*, confederacy of three [*Ibid*].

Fig.1. the Genealogies of Maccaa



Source, Bahrey, *History of the [Oromo]...*, pp. 44-45)

The accounts of Guluma explain that, the two Maccaa groups, Limmu and Jimma moved to the southwest of Bisil. After the maacaa Oromo crossed the Gibe River, some of the Limmu clans: Saper, Sigaro, Annu, Burayya, and Kilfo occupied the land between the Gibe in the east, the Didessa in the west, the Wama River in the north. To the south of Limmu, the land along the valley of the Little Jimma/ Gibe River and to the north of the Gojjab, excluding only the Yam and Bosha highland was inhabited. In the east and southeast respectively was occupied by the different Jimma clans such as Badi, Sadacha, Dagoye, while to the west of this in Gumma, was inhabited by Jarso, Badina, and Awalini clans settled. [Guluma Gameda, 1984: 43] After these different clans of Maccaa inhabited in the Gibe valley, they gave due concern for agricultural activity and became mixed agriculturalist [Tesema, 1986: 47-48, Enrie Karl.Knutsson, 1967:178-179].

IV. Discussions

The Gumma Oromo is one of the branches of the Maccaa. Both oral and written sources lacked when and in what way the Maccaa Oromo settled in the Gumma area. However, the following factors might facilitate the gradual settlement of different Maccaa clans in Gumma. When we see the settlement pattern of the Oromo of Gumma, it was the earlier one to be settled in the Gibe region. Again, there were different tribes, clans and sub-

clans of Maccaa inhabited in Gumma. Adami and Dagoye are among the major tribes and the remaining are sub and sub-sub clans of Maccaa genealogy those settled in Gumma [Informants: Adam Badii, Jihad Abba Bor and Abdisa Ayanna].

The written information we have on the Gumma Oromo lineage is very limited, only their names are recorded in the tradition. Perhaps the amalgamation of different alien groups rendered the society to be extremely heterogeneous. However, based on oral tradition the study tries to record dominant clans and their settlement pattern in the kingdom as indicated below.

Adamii

In the history of Gumma Adamii (Adam) was the clan as well as dynastic name which was derived from a person known as Admii. According to Gumma oral tradition, he was a hunter who lived in the forest of Ebbicha Tola, the wooded region between the kingdom of Gumma and their formidable neighbor Nonno [Eerulli, Cnrico, 1922:286]. The Adamii (Adam) of Gumma were subdivided into four clans when Adamii became the main clan. These are Adamii Abba Diima, Adamii Abba Reebuu, Adamii Abba Booka and Adamii Abba Boraddo [Informants: Jihad Abba Bor, Taju Abba Dilebe and Adam Badii].

Daaggooyee According to Mohammed and other scholars, Oncho (1810-1830s), the son of Jilcha, unified the kingdom of Gumma. Before his unification Gumma was divided in two regions, the Daaggooyee region and the area around Cirra. The region of Dagoyee ruled by a certain man called Saarboraddoo (1809) but Cirra was ruled by Jilcha [Mohammed Hassen, 24-25]. From this we may discern that, the name Daaggooyee is the name of a locality as well as the name of an Oromo clan which lived around Cirra, later the capital of the kingdom of Gummaa [Eerulli, Cnrico, 1922:286]. The Daaggooyees are best known in the kingdom of Gummaa for farming their lands. Most of the Daaggooyees are those settled in the highland areas. Most of the kings of Gummaa were from the Daaggooyee clan. It consists of four main lineages, Ramso, Baabbo, Masa and Mamo [Informants: Jihad, Keder, Yasen and Shafe].

Badii Badii is other Gumma Oromo clan that has been sub-divided into seven lineage, (*balbala*) in Gumma 1, Badii Gura 2, Badii Chira 3, Badii Gimina 4, Badii Arerra 5, Badii Siibaa 6, Badii Gumbri and 7. Badii Sentayo. The first three clans are the majority and they are very common among the Gibe Oromo [*Ibid* and Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau, 2006:156].

Waata Among the groups mentioned by oral traditions concerning the Gumma Oromo clans, the Waata were the most isolated groups. It is claimed that other clans were prohibited to enter into marriage relation with them. Kulani states that the Waata of Gumma used to eat things which were considered taboo among other Gumma Oromo. The Waata clans are also considered inferior as they are occupational groups of hunters, artisan and ritual specialists [Kulani Gudena, 2010:62-63]. Deressa in his thesis did not mention the name Watta, he simply call them the “*ogeessa*” (artisan groups) [Deressa Bayesa, 2016:15]. Traditionally the Waata of Gumma was grouped into seven lineages [Informants: Nazef Jamal and Fiiraaf]. They are, Waata Goqemmano, Waata oddo, Waata Beddo, Waata Waramanno, Waata Abbayii, Waata Addawwa and Waata Qoree [*Ibid*]. According to, the accounts from Cerulli, the Waata groups existed in different parts of the region. However, when we came to the study area, the statistics of the Waata groups yet varies from place to place; they are being large in Gumma, less significant in Limmu and Jimma Abba Jifar. Pertaining to their religion, it seems that the majority of them were Muslims regarding this Cerulli claimed, “The watta have many customs common to the Muslim; they use some Arabic praises e.g. *Alham Dulillah*, “praise be to God!” but they have no knowledge of the Koran, and they are not reckoned as members of the same religion by either Muslims and Christians... however, the basis of their religion is clearly Muslim” [Enrico, 1922:342].

Eenoo The Eenoo families inherited Islamic cultures and continued the legacies of Shekota Guumaa. The *caliphs* (successors) of Shekota Gumma were often from this clan. The Eenoo groups in Gumma are settled in the highland areas. Geemba and Qawwee are the two lineage of Eenoo of Gumma Oromo state [Informants: Jihad, Ahemed and Shafe].

Sadaachaa Historical sources stated that the Maccaa confederacy had comprised of the *Arfe* and *Sadacha*, it was the former which took the initiative during the separation of Maccaa and Tuulamaa from their common *Caffee* at odaa *Nabe*. The *Arfe* confederacy or union of the four was consisting of H o k e, Challiyaa, Guduru, and Liban groups. It was these four groups of *Afre* who had established the new *caffee* at Odaa Bisili during the Robalee Gadaa (1570-1578) [Mohammed, 1994:24 and 25]. The establishment of the new *caffee* has brought significant change to the Tuulama –Maccaa interactions as it made Mccaaa’s travel to the old *caffee* less important. The sadaacha Oromo groups also founded their new *caffee* at odaa Bisili during the Birmaji, Gadaa (1578-1586). The sadaacha a branch which settled in the Gibe region at present consist more than eighty five minor clans after reaching the kingdom of Gumma [*Ibid*]. Almost most of the elders could narrate the sadaacha lineage . The following are some of the lineage of sadaacha of Gumma Oromo. Abbulluu, Abeebie, Gutaa, Roobba, kiramuu, Balawwii, Dooyyoo, Morawa, Dhaayee, Baabbuu, Daarimu, Igguu, olee, Qiiqirii, Dorra’oo, Marawwaa, Dinuu, Gutala ,Balawwii... [Informants: Jihad, Debela and Abba Bora].

Bussaasee The Bussaasee were originally one of the non-Oromo groups. However, they came to be highly

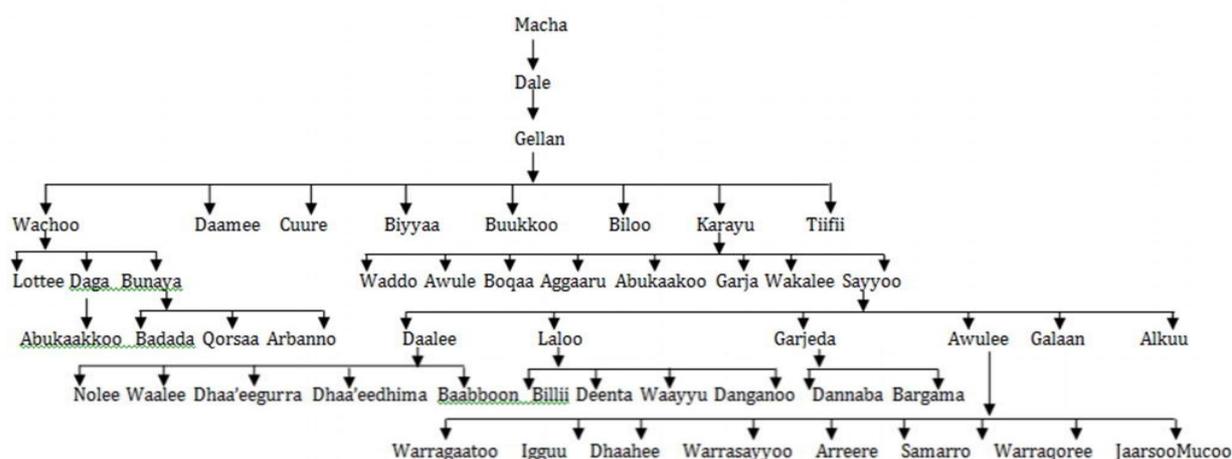
intermingled with the Oromo nations. They trace their origin back to the Kaffichoo, one of the Omotic language speaking ethno-linguistic groups in the southwestern part of the Ethiopian region. Deressa in his thesis stated that “The Oromo of Gumma kingdom is highly in-remixed with the people who those lived in the area before the coming of Gumma Oromo through adoption, and assimilation” [Deressa Bayessa: 2016:51]. Most probably the Bussaasee were among the peoples who lived in the kingdom of Gumma before the Oromo settlement. Supporting the idea of Deressa Bayisa, Dersaa Debu in his enlightening thesis indicates that in their sudden conquest of the non-Oromo the Oromo were forced to make considerable socio-political concessions to their clients (*gabaro*). They adopted many of the defeated people as members of their own clan with all the rights to share equally in the benefit of any triumph. The Oromo easily personalized to the new environment and coalesced with the indigenous people by imparting their language. The Oromo genius for assimilation quickly claimed any non-Oromo. This was made possible by the fact that the Oromo were well-equipped with flexible qualities which made the adjustment of their culture to new condition easy [Mohammed Hassen, 1994:20, Deressa Debu, 2008:27].

The Bussaasee in Gumma were fundamentally intermingled with the Oromo and adopted Islamic culture. Today it is very difficult to distinguish some of the Bussaasee from the Oromo since they speak the same language, Afaan Oromo and practiced the same religion, Islam. After Oromo had become well-established and organized themselves in Gumma especially in the 1850s and 1860s many groups of people migrated to Gumma crossing the permanent natural frontiers [Informants: Naser Abba Fiiraa, Fadelu and Kere].

One of peoples who crossed Gojab and moved continuously at different times into the study areas was the Omtic Daawaroo. They attracted each other and increased their number. Nevertheless, through time they were also integrated and mixed with Gumma Oromo. They were highly Oromized and Islamized. According to my oral informants of Gumma after the conquest of Gumma by Emperor Menelik, Amhara, settlers were large in number. In the post-1941 period, there were also the movements of people from central Ethiopia to the study area as administrators. The majority of these transplanted people were also integrated into the Oromo except for the minority settler’s. Especially since the officials were mostly young males; they were forced to marry from the indigenous people [Informants: Kamal Abba Ware, She Shamsu and She Hussen Ali]. The Bussaasee are not only known among the Gumma Oromo but Negaso also indicates that, “The Bussaasees are perhaps the most important non-Oromo people in the history of the Sayyoo” [Negaso Gidada, 1984: 79]. In different regions of Gumma many water holes, especially the mineral waters or the *hora* is named as, Hora Bussaasee or Laga Bussaasee which had been used by the Bussaasee later destroyed when the Oromo of Gumma started settle in the area. [Informants: Kamal Abba Ware, She Shamsu and She Hussen Ali] The Bussaasee of Gumma was sub-divided in to three. Madino Minjo and Dajamo [*Ibid*].

Galaan of the Guuma Oromo kingdom were sub-divided in to eight main *balbala* (lineage). Galaan Wachoo, Galaan Daamee, Galaan Cure, Galaan Biyyuu, Galaan Buukkoo, Galaan Biloo, Galaan Karayyuu and Galaan Tifii. Waachoo one of the sub-division of the Galaan has three branches. Waacho Loootee, waacho Bunayya and wacho Daga, Daga is also a sub-branch of Abbukaakkoo; Karrayyu is also categorized under Abbukaakkoo. According to the Gumma elders Karrayyu of Gumma has eight sub-divisions, waddo, Awullee, Bagaa, Aggaaru, Abukaako, Gajara, Wakalee and Sayyoo [*Ibid*].

Gelaan of Gumma Oromo State



(Source; *Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau History of the Oromo...*, pp.156-159 and Oral informants: Ahmed Yasen, Shaik Kader and Faris)

In short we do not have any information when and how the Galaan Oromo settled in Gumma. In addition to

this, its relation with that of the Galaan of Shawa needs farther study.

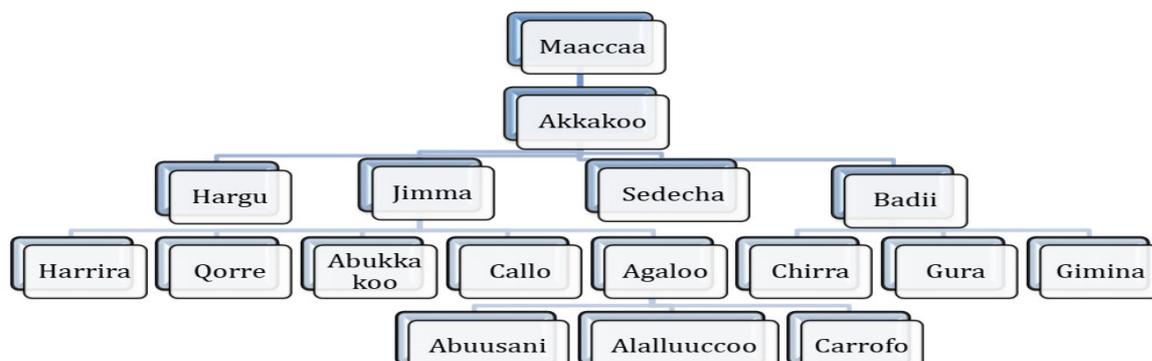
Naggade

The market of Gumma was the place where merchants from the north had probably lived since the beginning of the 19th century. Gradually the merchants were integrated into the Gumma clans. The Gumma Oromo who intermixed with the merchants or the *Naggades* are known as *Sanyii Negade* (the merchant's clans). According to oral sources *Saanyii Naggade* has more than 20 (twenty) *balbalaas* (lineages) in the kingdom of Gumma. The most important *Naggades* of Gumma were, *Tigrii, Ifaati, wasilii, Aragobba, Shariifii, Abjadii...* Perhaps these names are either associated with the place from where the merchants came or with the items of the trade they traded [Informants: Kamal Abba Ware, She Shamsu and She Hussien Ali].

Beedina

The Beedina of Guuma Oromo's are predominantly settled in the highland areas of Guuma kingdom. The Beediina were sub-divide into three main lineages. Gogga, Dello and Cooritee [Informants: Jihad, Adam and Kamal]. In addition to the clans and sub-clans we have seen above oral informants of Gumma Oromo tell as other inhabitants in Gumma kingdom as follows.

Akkakoo of Guuma Oromo State



Source: Oromo Culture Tourism Bureau, *The History ...*, pp.126-159, Oral informants: Jihad, Sheik Adam.

The other major occupational groups in the nineteenth century Gumma were the artisans and crafts men collectively known as *oggesa* (skilled one). Some of the *oggesa* were *dhofu* (weavers), *tumtu* (blacksmiths), *dugdus* (tanners), *gagurtu* (beehive makers and beekeepers). These *oggesa* belong to low social castes known as *hiri'u* (incomplete, not full men, sub-human). The smith made spears, sickle, axes, horse trapping, knives and the like. Tanners produced leather cloths, as shields and whips out of Buffalo hides. Leather used for the production locally made pillow, served for bed. The beehives made a honey barrels, a cylindrical object made of bark, bamboo or reads, and hung in trees. The potters made basins, dishes, water-jars, pot, and etc (Informants: Jihad, Kasema, Jamal and Faris). The social status of the craftsmen and artisans was characterized by Mohammed Hassen as follows:

All artisans and craftsmen belonged to a low social caste known as [hiri'u] (those shared out)...Secondly the artisans and crafts men did not have qabiye right, the right to communal ownership of land ...third the artisans and craftsmen were feared and stigmatized because they were thought to possess fantastic supernatural powers which enable them to harm others...The industry of the Gibe region depended on the skill and labor of the very people who were feared and stigmatized by the majority. This attitude has negative consequences. It did not allow the majority of the people to aspire to the acquisition of craft skill [Mohammed:131-132].

The kingdom of Gumma came into being at about ca.1820 as a state and was incorporated into the Ethiopian Empire in 1880s. Within this period seven kings were ruled Gumma successively. Like other Oromo monarchies succession to the throne was hereditary and the kings were from three Gumma Oromo dynasty, Adami, Dagoye and Badi [Enrico, 1922:297, Seena Aanaa Gummayi, 2003:5].

Conclusion

This study entailed "The Genealogy and Settlement pattern of the Oromo of Gumma kingdom (c.1820- 1880s)" presents genealogy and settlement pattern of the Gumma Oromo state. The interpretations of the data used were based on what was collected from different sources. Oral traditions that was collected from the elders of the study area was the main ones, According to different written materials and oral sources, during the expansion of Gumma Oromo into their present area, the area was inhabited by the pre-Oromo communities, Kaffa and

Ennarya were the most known. Their expansion brought about a cultural assimilation of these different non-Oromo ethnic groups and also expulsion of some pre-Oromo communities. Gumma Oromo have occupied the whole fertile and suitable highland areas. Know a day the tradition of counting the family tree among the study area is under serious threat due to several factors. This indicates the need for attention towards preservation and documentations. This indigenous practice is not well examined by professional historians. Thus, there should be a detail study of different aspects of the traditional knowledge and practices of counting the family tree or the genealogy.

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