

Implementation of Bai'at in Strengthening Religious Moderation Attitudes among Students

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Abstract:

This study explores the role of the Bai'at Santri at the Islamic Boarding School (*Pesantren*) of Pangalengan in strengthening religious moderation among students. To achieve these objectives, the research employs a qualitative method with a positivist approach, enabling an in-depth exploration of data within its natural context. Data were collected through triangulation techniques, and the analysis was conducted qualitatively using an inductive approach based on existing facts. The findings indicate that the Bai'at Santri at the pesantren is not an extremist ritual, but rather a pledge by students to adhere to the pesantren's rules and respect the values of Islamic moderation. This activity supports the indicators of religious moderation developed by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, such as national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and accommodation of local culture. Through Bai'at Santri, students are expected to develop moderate attitudes, which include understanding differences, applying just laws, and utilizing science and technology to solve problems. This study concludes that Bai'at Santri is proven to be an effective strategy in strengthening religious moderation at PPI 259. This activity not only fosters tolerance among students but also reinforces the integration of moderation values into daily life at the pesantren. Future research is recommended to explore the long-term impact of Bai'at Santri on the surrounding community and to analyze factors that can enhance the effectiveness of religious moderation programs at other pesantren. Additionally, the perspectives of students and alumni should be considered to gain deeper insights into the influence of Bai'at Santri on their attitudes and behaviors after leaving the pesantren.

Keywords: educational strategy; Islamic boarding school; national values; qualitative research; tolerance.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has a diversity of cultures, religions, races, ethnicities, ethnicities, and languages (Hoon, 2017). Indonesia's cultural landscape is significantly influenced by its history as a crossroads of trade and migration (Clark & Pietsch, 2014). Positioned along ancient maritime routes between the Far East, South Asia, and the Middle East,

Indonesia has been a melting pot of various civilizations (Scheffold, 1998). The influx of traders and settlers introduced a multitude of cultural practices and beliefs, which have been woven into the fabric of Indonesian society. Over 1,300 distinct ethnic groups inhabit the country, each contributing unique customs, traditions, and languages to the national identity (Hannigan, 2015; Ricklefs, 1993).

Religious diversity is another cornerstone of Indonesian society. The nation officially recognizes six religions: Islam (the predominant faith), Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and various indigenous belief systems. This religious plurality has fostered a unique cultural milieu where syncretism often occurs; for instance, many Javanese practice a blend of Islam with traditional beliefs. Although the majority of the population is Muslim, the country also has many adherents of other religions such as Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and traditional religions (Akhmadi, 2019). Each region in Indonesia has a different culture, but they all unite to create a peaceful, just, and prosperous national life by the ideology of Pancasila. Muslims, as the majority, play an important role in maintaining harmony and harmony amid diversity, with the principle of not imposing beliefs on others (Lintang & Najicha, 2022).

Religious diversity in Indonesia brings positive sides, such as making it the most culturally diverse country in the world, but it also poses challenges in maintaining harmony and unity. For this reason, moderation is needed as an attitude that respects and accepts differences in beliefs, values, cultures, and political views, to reduce conflicts and build dialogue between different groups of society. The application of moderation values can be done through education, both in the family, community environment, schools, and Islamic boarding schools, as a way to solve problems with the right solutions (Prasetiawati, 2017).

The role of educational institutions in instilling religious moderation has a very important position. Moderation can be instilled in students to create a peaceful, comfortable, and safe environment from various threats. As a country with a majority of Muslims, cooperation is needed with scholars, religious leaders, scholars, and teachers who have an interest in diversity issues with understanding and information related to diversity in various scopes in building awareness together (Riyanto, 2022).

Islamic boarding schools are one of the educational institutions in Indonesia that have strong cultural roots in social capital to educate and instill the values of national and state life (Resya & Diantoro, 2021). Pesantren contributes greatly and has a strategic role in strengthening religious moderation and democracy because it is an educational institution that relies on the process of developing the potential of students who are Indonesian citizens. Islamic boarding school education aims to enhance human morality. In addition, pesantren education is also expected to create human beings who can practice Islamic teachings well, in daily life, physically and spiritually healthy so that there is a balance between the world and the hereafter (Mustari & Rahman, M. T, 2010). It is a vehicle to improve and develop the quality of human resources who believe in and fear God Almighty, ethical, civilized and highly insightful who have knowledge and skills, a steady and independent personality towards the future with full responsibility for the nation and state (AA, 2023).

In addition to the above, in the development of education in Indonesia, pesantren is one of the oldest education systems today and is considered an indigenous product of Indonesia's culture. This education has emerged since the 13th century. A few centuries later, the implementation of this education became more regular with the emergence of places of study. This form then developed with the establishment of places to stay for students (santri), which was later called pesantren (Burhanuddin, 2014). The basic principles taught in daily life interacting in the pesantren environment are the principles of *tasamuh* (tolerance), *tawassut wal 'itidal* (simple), *tawazun* (considerate), and *ukhuwah* (brotherhood). (Efendi, 2024). This is done because the purpose of the pesantren is to foster citizens to have a Muslim personality through the teachings of Islam and instill this religious sense in all aspects of their lives and make them useful people for religion, society, and the country.

Islamic Boarding School Number 259 Firdaus in Pangalengan District, Bandung Regency, is an Islamic boarding school educational institution with a dual degree system, which combines the curriculum of the Department of Religion and Islamic Unity. This pesantren includes RA, MI, MTs, and MA education, and emphasizes the values of harmony and moderation in religion, even though it is in a community environment with strong local beliefs. MA students at this pesantren are taught a moderate attitude and good social interaction without restrictions with the surrounding community. This pesantren also trains students to live independently and simply, as well as implementing *bait*, which is a code of conduct based on the Qur'an and Hadith, which is recited every day before teaching and learning activities.

The researcher observed that the Islamic Boarding School Number 259 Firdaus uses *bai'at* as a method to instill the values of religious moderation in Madrasah Aliyah students. This effort is carried out through character education and various Santri activities such as Muhadharah, leadership training, National Holiday Commemoration,

and journalism training. Students are taught to live independently, and simply, and values such as honesty, religion, discipline, creativity, and moderation. The regular bai'at held every week also emphasizes obedience to Allah, parents, and teachers, as well as the prohibition of bad deeds. This pesantren plays a role in strengthening religious moderation as part of efforts to ward off radicalism and extremism, by government policies. This study focuses on the construction of bai'at in the implementation of bai'at in strengthening religious moderation attitudes among students of Islamic Islamic Boarding School Number 259 Firdaus Pangalengan.

METHOD

In this study, the author uses a type of qualitative research as a research method based on the philosophy of positivism to view social reality, namely to reveal the object of the researcher in a natural or naturalistic way (Mustari & Rahman, 2012). The goal is for the object to be studied to develop as it is not manipulated by the researcher. The existence of researchers in research is a key instrument in taking samples, and data sources, analyzing, and constructing clear and meaningful social conditions (Silverman, 2013). The technique used for data collection is triangulated, and data analysis is qualitative or inductive based on facts by emphasizing the results of the research on meaning rather than generalizations (Murdiyanto, 2020).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A Case Study: Persis Islamic Boarding School of Pangalengan

Islamic Boarding School No. 259 of Islamic Union (Persatuan Islam —Persis)Firdaus Pangalengan is an educational institution under the auspices of the Persis which was inaugurated on February 17, 2013. Located on Jl. Situ Cileunca Cisangkuy, Margamekar Village, Pangalengan District, Bandung, this pesantren aims to provide comprehensive Islamic education services for the community, with the hope of giving birth to a generation of intelligent, skilled, and noble characters. Persis is a reform da'wah movement (*mujaddid*) that was established on September 12, 1923 in Bandung. This organization is based on "*wihdah*," which includes *wihdatul 'aqidah*, *wihdatul 'ibadah*, *wihdatus-suluk*, *wihdatul imamah*, and *imarah*. The goals include returning the ummah to the Qur'an and As-sunnah, eradicating bid'ah, and expanding Islamic da'wah (Interview with Latif Awaludin, 29/07/2024).

Persis 259 Firdaus Pangalengan Islamic Boarding School manages various levels of education, including Islamic Boarding School, Raudhatul Athfal, Diniyah Ula, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Madrasah Tsanawiyah, and Madrasah Aliyah. This pesantren also plays a role in the national education system and focuses on developing students so that they have work competence. The vision of the pesantren is to become an institution that studies Islamic science and knowledge to give birth to humans as the caliph of Allah. Its mission includes producing alumni with *ulul albab* personalities, having strong reasoning with *tafaqquh fiddin*, and practicing Islamic teachings in *kaffah*. The organizational structure of the pesantren is prepared to ensure the continuity of education in an orderly and according to the purpose (Interview with Najmy Adilla Syafrudin, 20/07/2024).

Bai'at santri is a typical routine at Persis Islamic Boarding School, generally carried out at the Madrasah Tsanawiyah and Muallimien levels. This activity involves students saying a pledge of allegiance to Allah SWT in front of the teachers before the lesson starts, usually done on Saturday or other days according to the policy of the pesantren. At the Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan, bai'at is held every Monday morning, combining the protocol of the Flag Ceremony and bai'at. Bai'at aims to instill the principles of the Qur'an and As-Sunnah in student activities, as well as internalize national values and pesantren. Bai'at functions as a tool for da'wah and the formation of the Islamic character of students and strengthens pesantren regulations (Interview with a boarding school administrator, 29/07/2024).

Implementation of Bai'at Santri

The Bai'at Santri activity at the Islamic Unity Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan is aimed at implementing educational values that are khaz or the pattern of the education system in Jamiyyah or the Islamic Unity Organization. In this case, the ideology of Islamic Unity shows that the term bai'at is not a bai'at that is misused by certain sects that are extreme or radical in the context of the movement of Islamic organizations. In this regard, the Head of the Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan, Latif Awaludin, stated as follows:

The existence of Bai'at Santri in the Persis Islamic Boarding School is because indeed in the educational guidelines organized by the Islamic Unity organization, students must comply with the guidelines of the Persis Santri discipline. The concept of Formal Education Persis is based on the Guidelines for the Islamic Unity

Education System and the Guidelines for the Implementation of Islamic Unity Primary and Secondary Schools. These guidelines are regulated in the Guidelines for the Implementation of Primary and Secondary Islamic Unity Chapter 1 Article 1 of 2006 and the Guidelines for the Islamic Unity Education System in 1996. This rule applies uniformly in all Persis educational institutions, regardless of location. This aims to foster good manners for students in association and the implementation of sanctions for students who commit violations. Meanwhile, the theological reason is that the existence of Bai'at activities is not an Islamization process that is always practiced by heretical schools in Islam that easily disbelieve others who are not loyal to the leader of the movement. In fact, bai'at here is a form of the student's oath of allegiance to obey the rules of the Islamic Boarding School and other rules that apply in educational institutions in general (Interview with a Leader of the Persis Islamic Boarding School, 01/07/2024).

Based on the presentation of the Leader of the Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan above, it can be seen that the Bai'at Santri activity at the Persis Islamic Boarding School is a form of campaign to straighten out moderate Islamic teachings. In this case, the term Bai'at is often associated with a person's oath of allegiance to convert to Islam and must disseminate the teachings of Islam in an extreme or radical manner (Hamzani & Aravik, 2021). Thus, it can be said that the Bai'at Santri activities at the Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan are Persis' cruel efforts to carry out Islamic teachings in a moderate manner and respecting differences and not inclusive. The Persis organization through educational institutions at the Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan with Bai'at Santri activities carried out shows that Persis students are committed to avoiding excessive or extreme attitudes (*ghuluw*) both in beliefs and religious practices. This Bai'at activity will require students at the Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan to follow the middle way, which does not tend to be too harsh or too loose, respects differences, and accepts diversity, both in religious and cultural views.

Bai'at Santri activities at the Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan which is intended to campaign for moderate Islamic teachings, this is in line with the concept of religious moderation developed by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia (Religion, 2019). In this case, according to the Religious Moderation Book published by the Ministry of Religion in 2019, religious moderation has several indicators which include the following:

1. National commitment: This means accepting the principles of the nation in Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution as well as its laws and regulations.
2. Tolerance: that is, an attitude of accepting and giving space for differences, and not interfering with the beliefs and views of others who are different.
3. Non-violence: that is, rejecting all forms of violence, both verbal and physical, that violate the law.
4. Accommodating to local culture: that is, an open attitude towards local culture as long as it does not conflict with the basic values of religious teachings (Agama, 2019).

Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan, as part of an educational institution managed by Islamic Unity mass organizations, has taught and applied various values of religious moderation in the context of Islamic teachings through its Bai'at Santri activities. The text of Bai'at Santri at Islamic Unity Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan has the content of religious moderation values in the context of Islamic teachings including *tawassut* (moderate), *tawazun* (balanced), *i'tidal* (fair), *tasamuh* (tolerance), *al-musawah* (equality), *shura* (deliberation), *islah* (reform), *aulawiyah* (priority), *tatawwur wa ibtikar* (dynamic and innovative), *tahaddur* (civilized), *wataniyah wa muwatanah* (nationality), and *qudwatayah* (exemplary).

The Bai'at Santri activity at the Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan which is combined with part of the protocol of Monday's Flag ceremony, has nine indicators that can be used to identify moderate individuals, namely: humanity, public welfare, justice, balance, obedience to the constitution, national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and respect for tradition (Maula, 2023). Article 29 paragraph 2 of the 1945 Constitution states that the state guarantees the right of every resident to embrace religion and worship by their religion (Yudianita et al., 2015). Then the normative basis in the development of religious moderation is also based on Article 22, paragraph 2 of Law No. 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights, which affirms the freedom of everyone to embrace religion and worship according to their beliefs (Indonesia, 1999). Furthermore, the basis of religious moderation also refers to the determination that is by Article 2 of Presidential Decree No. 83 of 2015 concerning the Ministry of Religion which stipulates the duties of the Ministry of Religion in managing government affairs in the field of religion to support the President (Haitomi et al., 2022).

Related to the description above, religious moderation is identified as a priority program to strengthen tolerance, harmony, and social harmony, which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Religion in PMA No. 18 of 2020 concerning the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Religion for 2020-2024. The PMA emphasized the importance of the Ministry of Religion as a professional institution that builds a pious, moderate, intelligent, and superior society to realize an advanced, sovereign, independent, and personality Indonesia with the foundation of cooperation (Tanjung, 2022). This is reflected in the attitude of the students at the Islamic Unity Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan who can appreciate their fellow friends even though their backgrounds tend to be different in terms of economy and regional characteristics.

The Islamic Union 259 Firdaus Pangalengan Islamic Boarding School has dual-degree educational institutions such as Muallimien/Madrasah Aliyah. In this context, what is meant by the dual degree system is that Madrasah Aliyah at the Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan runs the education system by the system that applies within the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia and on the other hand also runs the education curriculum that applies in the Islamic Union mass organizations. Therefore, the embodiment of the concept of religious moderation applied at the Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan in addition to being based on the Wasatiyah principle in the dimension of Islamic teachings is also adjusted to the concept of religious moderation which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Religion in PMA No. 18 of 2020 concerning the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Religion for 2020-2024 to strengthen tolerance, harmony, and social harmony.

The development of religious moderation among students who are members of the Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan, was strengthened by the statement of the Islamic Boarding School Leader, Latif Awaludin, which stated as follows:

Moderate Islam functions as a protector and guardian of the consistency of Islamic teachings by the guidance of the Prophet PBUH in the early days of the spread of Islam. Islamic moderation, which aims to embody the concept of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*, must include an understanding of existing differences, the application of current laws through Steinbach, a tolerant attitude in society, an emphasis on consensus in debate, and the use of science and technology to solve problems in modern society. Differences in attitudes should be considered an inseparable part of human life as social beings in society (Interview with the Leader of the Persis Islamic Boarding School, 01/07/2024).

Based on the results of the interview above, it can be said that the views of the Islamic Unity Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan regarding religious moderation have a belief that religious moderation is the implementation of Islamic teachings to be fair, namely balanced in all aspects of life, following the commands of the Quran, and doing good deeds (Abubakar & Mahfudz, 2021). Fair includes equality between rights and obligations, and Human Rights should not be reduced due to obligations. Moderate Islam functions as a protector of the consistency of Islamic teachings by the Prophet PBUH, with the aim of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* (Saputra et al., 2022). The attitude of Islamic moderation is instilled in the Santri through Bai'at Santri activities at the Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan which leads them to have an understanding of differences, the application of the latest law through istinbath, tolerance, consensus in debate, and the use of science and technology to solve problems in the community around the Islamic Boarding School environment by the concept of religious moderation in general.

Related to the description above, the Bai'at Santri activities carried out at the Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan have a character education dimension for students (*Santri*). In this case, the importance of character education is in line with the vision of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia in 2014 to require all schools in Indonesia to include character education in their curriculum, including in Islamic boarding schools such as Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan (Ali, 2018). The background of this policy is the desire to realize a national consensus based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. This consensus is strengthened through Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, which states that national education functions to develop abilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation, to educate the nation's life (Rahman et al., 2021). This education also aims to develop the potential of students or students to become individuals who have faith, piety, noble character, health, knowledge, capability, creativity, and independence, and become democratic and responsible citizens. This article shows that the expected behavior is closely related to educational goals, which is the basis for the importance of character education that is in line with the concept of religious moderation (Rahman et al., 2021).

Bai'at Santri activities carried out by the students, especially at the Madrasah Aliyah (*muallimien*) level at the Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan empirically also felt the impact on the students directly. This is as revealed by Cici Rosmayati Class 12 MA/Mualimien Islamic Boarding School of the Islamic Union No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan as a representative of Santri who was interviewed regarding the implementation of Bai'at Santri, she explained as follows:

Bai'at Santri activities are an obligation that must be carried out by Santri as long as they are in school at this Islamic Boarding School. This is also the same as other schools, such as public schools, with the reading of the Student Promise. For me, this Bai'at activity also provides benefits for us such as by promising to read the Quran every day, which can help us to memorize the Quran even more actively. Then this Bai'at Santri activity can also encourage us to be respectful or respectful of people such as we promise not to talk about others (*ghibah*), and the promise not to lie which can also lead us to be honest in association or interaction with friends. This is important to maintain solidity for the students themselves (Interview with Grade 12 students, 15/07/2024).

From the statement of the Santri representative above, it can be seen that this Bai'at Santri activity has an impact on the attitude of students and the daily behavior of Santri. The existence of the text of Bai'at Santri which states that Santri must promise not to tell lies and talk about the badness of others, provides a lesson for Santri to maintain their attitude in their association and respect others. The form of appreciation for others is in line with the elements in the concept of religious moderation, especially the element of tolerance. Religious moderation emphasizes the importance of a moderate, balanced, and tolerant attitude in interacting with others, especially in the context of diversity of beliefs and views. Respecting others, especially those with different beliefs or views, is the core of religious moderation, as it encourages the creation of a harmonious, peaceful, and inclusive environment (Awalita, 2024).

Furthermore, the student representative added that his understanding of religious moderation is to treat everyone equally regardless of religious background. This is in line with the statement of Cici Rosmayati as a representative of Santri from the Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan in an interview, where she explained as follows: "As a pesantren student who understands religious moderation, I respect and treat everyone fairly, regardless of religion, ethnicity, or other background. They strive to establish good relationships and mutual respect with others" (Interview with Romayati, student, 15/07/2024).

The opinions of the students above are reviewed from the perspective of Islamic teachings, showing that religious moderation is the implementation of actions that have no justification for extreme attitudes or underestimate Sharia guidance or rules (Gunawan, 2023). The principle of balance in Islam is very clear in all aspects that are important for humans, both in worship, social relations, government, economy, and others. Islam emphasizes moderation, justice, and balance, and it has been agreed that moderation is a noble and recommended trait in Islam (Qoyyimah & Mu'iz, 2021).

In religious moderation, respect for others reflects an attitude of tolerance, which is one of the main principles. Tolerance involves accepting differences and not imposing one's own beliefs or views on others. Thus, the behavior of respecting others is one of the concrete manifestations of the practice of religious moderation, which aims to strengthen social harmony and avoid conflicts that can arise from differences (Gunawan, 2023). This kind of attitude was grown by Peantren to the students at the Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan through the Bai'at Santri activities that they carried out.

Based on the description of the analysis above, it can be concluded that the development of religious moderation attitudes among students as a form of implementation of Bai'at Santri Madrasah Aliyah at Islamic Boarding School No. 259 Firdaus Pangalengan is carried out by the students through their attitude in interacting with fellow friends and Asatids as well as the community around the Islamic Boarding School who appreciate and respect others. This is also a reflection of the promise of the students in Bai'at Santri activities with the content of their promise points which are not only to comply with the rules of the Islamic Boarding School but also to instill the essence of the lessons from the Bai'at that they say to be implemented in daily activities. It reflects the moderate attitude of the culturally dynamic Indonesian people (Sulaiman et al., 2022).

The social structure in Indonesia is influenced by both traditional hierarchies and modern dynamics. Age and social status play significant roles in interpersonal relationships; respect for elders is deeply ingrained in Indonesian culture. Additionally, collective values often take precedence over individualism; communal activities are common in daily life (Sapsudin & Wibisono, 2024; Suryatni & Widana, 2023). However, this diversity also presents

challenges. Issues such as ethnic tensions or conflicts over land rights can arise when different groups vie for recognition or resources. The need for dialogue and understanding among these diverse communities is essential for fostering social cohesion.

CONCLUSION

Bai'at Santri's activities at the United Islamic Islamic Boarding School (PPI) 259 Firdaus Pangalengan play an effective role as an effective strategy in strengthening religious moderation attitudes among students. This activity aims to instill educational values by the guidelines of the United Islamic Organization. In this case, Bai'at Santri is not an extremist ritual, but a pledge from students to follow the rules of the pesantren and respect the values of Islamic moderation. By participating in the Bai'at Santri, students at PPI 259 are expected to develop a moderate attitude that includes an understanding of differences, fair application of the law, and tolerance. In addition, they are expected to be able to utilize science and technology to solve problems, in line with the government's vision of creating a society that is faithful, noble, and respectful of religious moderation. Empirically, Bai'at Santri activities have a positive impact on the attitudes and behaviors of students, reflecting their commitment to religious moderation. Santri applies the principles of moderation by respecting and treating everyone fairly, regardless of religious or ethnic background.

Therefore, Bai'at Santri at PPI 259 Firdaus Pangalengan not only forms a tolerant attitude among students but also strengthens the integration of moderation values in daily life in Islamic boarding schools. For further research, it is recommended to explore the long-term impact of Bai'at Santri on the community around the pesantren and analyze factors that can increase the effectiveness of religious moderation programs in other pesantren. The research can also involve the perspectives of students and alumni to gain deeper insights into the influence of Bai'at Santri on their attitudes and behaviors after leaving the pesantren.

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