

THE URBAN FUNCTION OF SUZHOU ON BASIS OF THE SHANGHAI-SUZHOU RELATIONSHIP

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ABSTRACT: Economic globalization and knowledge economy provide new opportunity for development of Suzhou, a historical city which has traditional intimate relationship with Shanghai. This paper aims at exploring the chances and challenges faced by Suzhou at the new century and makes the quantitative analysis of the urban function of the Suzhou Municipality through the studies of the Greater Shanghai Metropolitan Area and the Shanghai-Suzhou relationship. It reaches the conclusion that in the new century Suzhou shall make the integrated development with Shanghai to be built into the processing and manufacturing base with the high and new technology as the mainstay. In the meantime Suzhou shall also become one of the research bases for the advanced technology and the modern tourist city with beautiful eco-environment.

KEY WORDS: Shanghai-Suzhou relationship; Greater Shanghai Metropolitan Area; Shanghai-Suzhou integration

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1 INTRODUCTION

With the acceleration of the economic globalization, the gradual shaping of the new international division of labor and the development of the transnational corporations, the world urban systems have begun a new round of integration. On one hand, the cities all over the globe are entering a new phase of development, several of which have developed into the global cities or the world cities as the nodal-point cities of global information, ranking in the first grade of the hierarchical rank of the world urban system with the control and grasp of the lifeline of the global economy. On the other hand, with its unique superiority of convergence and dispersion, the extended area of metropolis plays a non-fungible, important role in the national and regional economic development. The Changjiang (Yangtze) Riv-

er Delta is the area with the greatest superiority of economic development in China and also the main area for the Chinese economy to participate in the globalization (GU, 1999). The metropolitan extended area of the Changjiang River Delta with Shanghai as its head is becoming the sixth great metropolitan area in the world. Shanghai is marching forward towards the target as one of the economic, trading and financial centers of the Asian – Pacific region and even of the world. Suzhou adjoins Shanghai and is one of the cities in our country which have the largest scale of economy and utilize the greatest amount of foreign capital. While accepting the strong radiation from Shanghai, it is also confronted with the huge pressure of competitions. In the interactive Shanghai-Suzhou relationship, the positioning of the urban function of Suzhou is also undergoing continuous evolution and becoming clarified.

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2 THE SPATIAL DEFINITION OF THE SPACE OF THE SHANGHAI-SUZHOU RELATIONSHIP IN GEATER SHANGHAI METROPOLITAN AREA

Metropolitan area is a kind of spatial form of the urban groups, and it is the concept of a functional region with the spatial linkage as the main characteristics, similar to Daily Urban System(DUS) in the United States, which lacks the well-defined quantitative standard. The metropolitan area in definition by the Administrative Department of Japan in the fifties is as follows: the regional scope being able to accept the functional service of certain aspect from the city with one day as the cyclic period and with 100 000 people in the central city.

With reference to the foreign standard for the studies of the metropolitan area, the Greater Shanghai Metropolitan Area shall be an extensive area with Shanghai as the core and include the four municipalities, i. e., Suzhou, Nantong, Jiaxing and Huzhou, as well as the cities and counties under their jurisdiction. The said area has the land area of 32561.5 square kilometers, the total population of 32.5062 million and the population density of 998 people/km² (1998). Suzhou is located in the inner-layer region of the Greater Shanghai Metropolitan Area and also in the urban tight ring within 100km away from Shanghai (The scope of the tight ring of an especially large metropolis generally falls within 100km). Its GDP amounts to 125 billion yuan(RMB) and GDP per capita 21 733 yuan(RMB) (1998). As a sub-center, Suzhou is closely linked with Shanghai, the core city. In terms of space, the future Greater Shanghai Metropolitan Area shall have Shanghai, the super city, as the center and Suzhou, the ultra large city, as the sub-center as well as Nantong, Huzhou and some other big cities as the centers of the next grade. The Shanghai - Nanjing Railway, the Shanghai - Nanjing Expressway together with the Shanghai - Hangzhou - Ningbo Expressway & Railway, the Sutong Bridge(under planning) and others shall serve as the radiating development axle so as to form the spherical and axial development of the urban groups.

3 HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF THE SHANGHAI-SUZHOU RELATIONSHIP

Shanghai is located at the T-shaped junction along the sea coast and the Changjiang River, and is the largest economic central city in our country. Suzhou adjoins Shanghai and borders on it with territory, and their geo-political relationship has profound historical and geographical basis.

In history, Shanghai once belonged to Jiangsu. More than 100 years ago, because of Shanghai unique geographical and economic location, the Western colonialists tightened their efforts to expand and colonize it and as a result, Shanghai was rapidly developed from a small fishing village into a big metropolis. The earliest and largest group of migrants were firstly the natives of Suzhou (SHI, 1992), who made great contributions to the economic development of Shanghai. Meanwhile, they enabled the connection between Suzhou and Shanghai to become extremely tight, which is still closely maintained even today and has made contributions to the economic development of the both sides. The most outstanding phenomenon is the fact that, at the establishment of the commune-run and brigade-run enterprises during the sixties and seventies, a large number of engineers, technicians and skilled workers from Shanghai spent their weekends on offering guidance to the production in the towns in Suzhou and providing assistance to Suzhou in the creation of the "South Jiangsu Model" which was well known all over the country later on and afterwards was propagated to various places in the whole country.

Both Shanghai and Suzhou belong to the Wu dialect area, and they share the similarity in the natural geographic conditions and the humanistic environment. Before the emergence of the modern mode of transportation, water transport was the main one of it in the area of South Jiangsu. The flowing exchange of personnel and materials were made between Suzhou and Shanghai through the Yangtze River, the Taipu River and some other rivers, big and small, which also formed the background of the Wu culture, common to both. The constructions of the Shanghai-Nanjing Railway and the Shanghai-Nanjing Expressway have shortened the distance of mutual ex-

change in both temporal and spatial terms and further deepened the degree of tightness in connection.

4 ENLIGHTENMENT FROM THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HONG KONG AND SHENZHEN

The Changjiang River Delta and the Zhujiang (Pearl) River Delta are both the economically developed areas in our country. Shanghai and Hong Kong are both the pivotal cities of the two deltas. Suzhou lies close to Shanghai as the same as Shenzhen to Hong Kong. The studies of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen relationship will offer enlightenment to the Shanghai-Suzhou relationship.

The development of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen relationship has undergone three stages: 1) As the first stage, at the beginning of the establishment of the special zone the objective of Shenzhen is to play as China's window for the opening-up of the mainland to the outside world, which function was decided by the Central Government. Hong Kong would be enabled to radiate towards the interior through Shenzhen so as to bring up the development of the Pearl River Delta. 2) As the second stage, following its successful development, Shenzhen re-evaluated itself as the economic center and the financial center of South China. Objectively speaking, this function evaluation is somewhat on the higher side and neglects its relationship with Hong Kong. This wording seldom occurred after 1995. 3) As the third stage, in its strategy for the 21st century, Shenzhen put forward that it was expected to build the city into the central city of the regional economy, the international city and gardening landscape city, and to strengthen the integration with Hong Kong. One important aspect of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen integration construction is to make the joint development of the high and new technology industries with Hong Kong, which possesses the superiority in terms of funds, market, information, management and so on, but lacks high-tech industries, high-grade technical talents and some important raw materials. Shenzhen has the extensive inland as its backing, and is possible to realize the mutual supplementation of superiority with Hong Kong through the adoption of the practical measures. It should be said

that this function evaluation is accurate, which is on the basis to grasp the relatively weak aspects in Hong Kong's economy and to utilize its insufficiency for the development of Shenzhen. Shenzhen's hi-tech is not started very early, but, due to its accurate function evaluation, the development is very fast. The Hong Kong-Shenzhen relationship has enlightened us that, in the course of the development in the new century, Suzhou shall obtain the win-win result only through finding its accurate position and handling properly of its relationship with Shanghai.

5 SHANGHAI-SUZHOU RELATIONSHIP IN THE NEW PERIOD

If Suzhou and Shanghai were mutually reliant on each other in history; then, in the new century, there is more co-existence between reliance and competition in the relationship between them. The main reasons behind it are as follows:

1) The township industry in the Suzhou area has become the pillar of economy. During the 1980s, Suzhou relied on Shanghai's technique and market, utilized a great amount of the surplus labor, made active development of the township enterprises and brought up the prosperity and development of towns. Since the 1990s, with the establishment of five State-level development zones and ten provincial-level ones in the Suzhou Municipality, the urban development in the area of Suzhou has exhibited the tendency in which the development zones has acted as the dragon head and the city has provided the driving force for the co-prosperity of both the urban and rural areas. As for the township enterprises, many problems have occurred as a result of their own structures. After the 1990s, many development zones with the foreign capital as the motivating force came into the period of harvest, and the process of urbanization has entered into the new period in which the urban reform and development are the main theme. At present, 71 of the 500 largest corporations in the world have invested in Suzhou, and the scale of the foreign investment enlarges continuously. In 1998, Suzhou's actual utilization of foreign capital ranks only next to Shanghai in the whole country.

Table 1 Actual utilization of foreign capital by the main cities in the whole country in 1998 (unit: 100 million US \$)

City	Shanghai	Suzhou	Hangzhou	Guangzhou	Shenzhen	Wuxi	Changzhou	Nanjing
Actual use of foreign fund	48.16	28.42	3.84	27.16	16.64	10.51	5.06	8.36

Source of material: Statistics Yearbook of China for 1999, China Statistics Press, 1999. (in Chinese)

According to the investigations by the author, in 1998, 60% of the investment for the fixed assets of the whole society came from the foreign capital, of which 79% is concentrated on the secondary industry, 20% on the tertiary industry and 1% on agriculture. In the investment for the secondary industry, the invested funds were relatively concentrated on electronic information, mechanical and electric integration, fine chemical engineering and biomedicine. Motorola, Philips, Alcatel, Loreal, Unity and some other transnational corporations have set up their research and development institutions in Suzhou. 40% of the industrial products for export and 60% of the foreign capital are concentrated on the development zones. The output value of the hi-tech products of Suzhou accounts for 22.03% of the total output value of the hi-tech products of the whole province, higher than the proportions of Wuxi (20.95%), Nanjing (10.97%) and Changzhou (10.66%). The incomes from the sales of the hi-tech products and for export both ranked first in the province. Suzhou's value of export and import for foreign trade accounts for 34.9% of the Province's total, ranking first in the whole province. The high and new technical industries with the IT industry as the main direction have made rapid development. At present, the incomes from the sales of monitors, mice and some other products for export have all occupied important positions in the world, and have formed considerable scale and competition. The sequential order of the main industries in the whole municipality in terms of the industrial output value are machine building, light industry and textiles, chemical engineering and electronics. The proportions of the machine-building and electronics industries have both exceeded 25% in terms of output value, number of employees, profits and taxes. From the view of long-term development, the industry with the combination of machine building and electronics has a great

prospect for development. With restructuring, the township industries have begun to participate in the market competitions with a new look and are developing towards the direction of high and new technique with highly efficient management, and they are also gradually becoming the enterprises of developing the export-orientated economy and acquiring the considerable capability of absorbing the foreign investment.

2) Suzhou's relatively strong superiority for the development of the secondary industry. At the beginning of the 1980s, Suzhou started the endogenous type of economy with the rural reform and opening-up, the fast development of the township enterprises, and the traditional pillar industry predominated in industry. Up to the mid 1980s, Suzhou's output value of the township industries accounted for more than 80% of the total output value of the rural industry and agriculture, and the labor force engaged in the industrial and some other non-agricultural trades accounted for more than 50% of the rural labor force. Since the mid and late 1980s and the 1990s, the export-orientated economy with the basic characteristics of "export-import-expanded export" has come into being. The focal point in the economic development of Suzhou has been shifted from being driven by the township enterprises to by the export-orientated economy. A great quantity of products have been sold into the international market, and the foreign capital has displayed its importance, thereby accumulating experience and laying a foundation for the omni-directional opening-up of Suzhou's economy. The new aspects of economic growth with the development zones of various levels and types as the mainstay are emerging, and the proportions of the foreign-funded enterprises and the new & high technical industries in Suzhou's industries have been enlarged. According to the sequential order in terms of the industrial output value in 1998, the first five places were occupied by the textile industry, the

manufacture trade of electronics and communication equipment, chemical raw materials and chemical products, trade of electrical machinery and devices, and ferric metal metallurgy and metal processing by rolling. At present, the industries with the relatively high technical level are the manufacture trade of electronics and communication equipment, and the electrical machinery and devices, and those with the relatively low level of technique are the textile industry and the manufacture of ferric metal metallurgy and metal processing by rolling. The traditional industries and the high & new industries both share 50%. In the main cities of the Yangtze River Delta, the proportion of the number of employees engaged in the secondary industry in Suzhou exceeds 50% and ranks second, only next to Wuxi (see Table 2) and the proportion of the secondary industry in GDP exceeds 55% (see Table 3), exhibiting a formidable foundation.

3) Bright prospect for the tertiary industry with tourism as the mainstay. Suzhou enjoys the prestigious fame of "Paradise", has a standing of more than 2500 years and possesses the profound resources of the Wu culture with a distant origin. In addition, it is located on the Taihu Lake Plain and has been bestowed with the beautiful scenery of the land south of the Yangtze River crisscrossed with the rivers and streams, which shows the bright prospect for the development of tourism. The ancient classic gardens in Suzhou are well known all over the world, and the State-level Taihu Lake Scenic Area also has very high international popularity. The cultural and natural resources are the richly endowed conditions for the development of tourism. On the other hand, Suzhou has relatively high superiority in terms of the number of tourists with 32.50 million population in the Greater Shanghai Metropolitan Area.

Table 2 Employment structure of the main cities in the Changjiang River Delta(1997)(%)

City	Proportion of employees in primary industry		Proportion of employees in secondary industry		Proportion of employees in tertiary industry	
	Region	Urban area	Region	Urban area	Region	Urban area
Shanghai	10.5	4.8	48.8	48.3	40.7	46.9
Nanjing	25.6	5.7	40.9	48.6	33.5	45.6
Suzhou	20.9	8.6	52.3	54.3	26.8	37.1
Changzhou	26.8	5.8	42.0	56.1	31.2	38.2
Wuxi	20.9	3.9	52.9	59.1	26.1	36.9
Hangzhou	31.7	8.8	37.3	44.2	31.0	47.0
Ningbo	32.5	21.5	44.1	41.5	23.4	37.0
Jiaxing	38.5	37.5	40.6	38.1	20.9	24.4

Source of material: Statistics Yearbook of China's Cities for 1998, China Statistics Press, 1999. (in Chinese)

Table 3 Economic structure of the main cities in the Changjiang River Delta(1997)

City	Proportion of primary industry in GDP(%)		Proportion of secondary industry in GDP(%)		Proportion of tertiary industry in GDP(%)		GDP (100 million yuan)	
	Region	Urban area	Region	Urban area	Region	Urban area	Region	Urban area
Shanghai	2.26	0.97	52.21	50.62	45.53	48.51	3360.21	2699.47
Nanjing	6.35	1.14	50.80	50.68	42.85	48.18	755.05	570.83
Suzhou	7.78	2.77	56.19	58.06	36.02	39.17	1132.59	197.95
Changzhou	9.44	2.47	56.54	60.90	34.02	36.62	470.11	141.58
Wuxi	4.75	1.12	58.72	55.25	36.53	43.64	960.01	315.00
Hangzhou	8.82	2.48	52.25	48.45	38.93	49.07	1036.33	523.88
Ningbo	9.51	3.70	56.97	47.91	33.52	48.39	897.43	329.17
Jiaxing	15.12	14.48	59.12	57.79	25.76	27.73	419.75	92.57

Source of material: Statistics Yearbook of China's Cities for 1998, China Statistics Press, 1999. (in Chinese)

6 SHANGHAI-SUZHOU INTEGRATION

In line with the above-mentioned conditions, under the background of global economic integration and China's joining into WTO in the near future, the development of the Shanghai-Suzhou integration will be an inevitable trend in the strategy of the industrial development for the 21st century. The Shanghai-Suzhou relationship with characteristics of both alliance and competition shall form the situation of mutual supplementation of each other's superiority and dislocated development. As the core city of the Greater Shanghai Metropolitan Area, Shanghai shoulders the responsibility of becoming China's first world city, and for industrial development, it shall be obliged to do something and not to do something. Meanwhile, as the sub-center of the Great Shanghai Metropolitan Area, Suzhou shall also be obliged to do something and not to do something.

6.1 Shanghai-Suzhou Industrial Alliance

1) With shifting of Shanghai's agriculture to the metropolitan type as the opportunity, full play shall be given to the relatively high level of agricultural science & technology of the both cities and the superiority of Suzhou's resources and processing capability. And joint efforts shall be made to foster a group of leading enterprises with certain scale and technical means for the production, processing and sales of agricultural products with relatively high added values, or with the integration of trade, industry and agriculture. A multiple of merging forms shall be adopted, and assistance shall be given to the construction of the bases for the agricultural produce and side products production and processing which can adapt themselves to the demands of both international and domestic markets as well as the bases of the foreign - exchange-earning agriculture, the biological agriculture and sight-seeing & leisure agriculture.

2) Full play shall be given to the comprehensive superiority of Shanghai's high & new technique and Suzhou's manufacturing and processing industries so as to optimize and regroup the structures of industry,

products and enterprises. On the basis of consolidating and improving the existing associative coordination, it is necessary to explore and expand the new ones.

3) In the course of building Shanghai's financial center, Suzhou shall take initiative to accept the radiation from Shanghai, strengthen cooperation, enable the stocks, bonds, foreign exchanges, borrowing and some other items of the financial market to inter-link with each other and take an active part in the raising and application of both the domestic and foreign funds.

4) Play shall be given to the superiority of Shanghai's international trading center function and Suzhou's superiority in production and sales. The cooperative system for commodity circulation should be perfect. The large-scale commodity or material collecting and distributing center should be jointly fostered and built, which is orientated towards the said region, the whole country and even the whole world.

5) Full play shall be given to the leading role of Shanghai's international shipping center. It is necessary to improve and elevate the operating functions of storage and transportation of the related ports and their relevant transportation routes in Suzhou Municipality, and gradually form the comprehensive shipping system and the network of storage and transportation with Shanghai as the center.

6) Play shall be given to the mutually supplementary superiority of the two places so as to have the omni-directional cooperation and implement the trans-regional chain operations. Through the joint participation in the planning, development, construction and protection of the tourist resources, the development of the tourism related with industries shall be brought up so as to form a new round of hot spots for tourist consumption.

6.2 Shanghai-Suzhou Industrial Division of Work

1) Shanghai is the management and service center of modern industry and the major base for the research and development of the high and new technology. Meanwhile Suzhou emphasizes on the processing function and is the export-orientated base for modern manufacturing. This function evaluation has been promoted

by the gigantic development of the transnational corporations in the two places over the previous five years. The transnational corporations have set up their sub-headquarters for regional development in Shanghai, and built the processing and manufacturing bases in Suzhou, thereby giving play to their own strong points of Shanghai and Suzhou and promoting the functional division of work in the Greater Shanghai Metropolitan Area.

2) Shanghai is an international metropolis and the largest area for opening to the outside world in the whole country. At the same time an important participant in Shanghai's international activities, including absorbing foreign capital, sponsoring various types of international conferences and cultural & academic exchanges, and providing tourist and leisure services, and so on.

3) Shanghai is the center of material flow and input-output pivot of the Yangtze River Delta and even the whole Yangtze River basin while Suzhou is the place of input for raw materials, energy and semi-finished products and place of output for the finished products. Suzhou exerts the action as transmitting station for Shanghai's outward radiation to some extent.

4) Shanghai is the primary city while Suzhou is the secondary city. The inter-city linking directionality between Suzhou and Shanghai is 37.5% (ZHANG, 2000), exceeding its linking degree with Wuxi, Changzhou and the six county-level cities under its jurisdiction. Suzhou is Shanghai's backyard garden. As Suzhou's classic gardens have certain international popularity, it has undertaken part of Shanghai's functions in tourism, consumption and leisure-enjoying. 30% of the total tourists visiting Suzhou come from Shanghai. Moreover, Suzhou possesses relatively strong function of international tourism.

7 FUNCTIONAL EVALUATION OF SUZHOU MUNICIPALITY

In line with the above-going characteristics, it is necessary to base on the main economic development force while determining Suzhou's urban functional evaluation.

7.1 Evaluation of the Regional Function

1) From the regional angle of the Yangtze River Delta, Suzhou is a backbone city in the extended area of the Shanghai-Nanjing-Hangzhou Metropolises.

As a whole for the moment, the connection between the cities located on the northern wing of the Yangtze River Delta and Shanghai is remarkably tighter than that between the cities located on the southern wing and Shanghai, and the degree of development in the extended metropolitan area on the northern wing is also superior to the cities on the southern wing. As the first station in the track joining with Pudong, Suzhou is a city which has the closest connection with Shanghai, and Shanghai's force of its radiation impact is the largest. Suzhou has become an ultra large city and its action in the extended metropolitan area is also increasing with each passing day (ZHANG, 2000).

2) Suzhou is a sub-center of the Greater Shanghai Metropolitan Area and an important pillar for the international metropolis of Shanghai. Shanghai is speeding up its steps in its march towards the international metropolis while Suzhou is situated at the outer layer of the Greater Shanghai Metropolitan Area, as part of Shanghai's direct sphere of influence. The GDP of Hangzhou, which is 200km away from Shanghai is 113.5 billion yuan (RMB) and the GDP per capita amounts to 21 724 yuan (RMB), both lower than Suzhou's GDP of 125.0 billion yuan (RMB) and GDP per capita of 21 724 yuan (RMB). Suzhou has become one of the important driving forces for the composition and promotion to the shaping of the Great Shanghai Metropolitan Area. Without Suzhou's participation, the Greater Shanghai Metropolitan Area is not complete and no due play will be given to its function. In the course of the composition and promotion to the shaping of the Greater Shanghai Metropolitan Area, Suzhou has played an extremely important role.

3) Suzhou is the core city in the urban group of the big cities of Suzhou, Wuxi and Changzhou. The three (ultra-) large cities of Suzhou, Wuxi and Changzhou have made parallel development and their built areas have been gradually connected together, exhibiting the tendency of concentrated development. The towns in

this region are characterized by their great quantity with the township density amounting to 1.83/100 km², relatively perfect township system and relatively high level of township development. Through the analysis of the inter-city linking directivity strength on the basis of the actual traffic among various cities along the Shanghai – Nanjing Expressway, it can be found that, apart from the very close linkage of Suzhou and Wuxi with Shanghai, the linkage among Suzhou, Wuxi and Changzhou is also relatively close (ZHANG, 2000).

The analysis of the development of the three cities, i. e., Suzhou, Wuxi and Changzhou, over the previous 20 years has demonstrated that, among the three cities, Suzhou is the city that has made the fastest development, which can embody the best developing direction as the export-orientated economy, the high and new technical industry, the environmental protection, the consumption conscientiousness and behavior, etc. in the Suzhou-Wuxi-Changzhou Metropolitan Area. Suzhou should strengthen its division of work and coordination with Wuxi and Changzhou for the joint composition of the powerful urban group which become the most powerful peripheral urban group of Shanghai.

7.2 Evaluation of the Industrial Function

7.2.1 Modernized and export-oriented industrial base as the center of the high and new technological industry

The export-orientated degree of Suzhou's economic development is becoming higher and higher. The pattern of opening-up in all directions has been formed in a comprehensive way. The utilized foreign capital has accounted for half of the total sum of the utilized foreign capital of the whole province. It has attracted the investment by many transnational corporation to Suzhou, and the scale of foreign investment is continuously expanding. 40% of the industrial products are for export purposes in the whole city and 60% of the foreign capital are concentrated on the development zones.

7.2.2 Region with the coordinated development of the three industries in GDP with the hi-tech industry as the center

It is necessary to develop the primary industry with the characteristic agriculture, sight-seeing agriculture, metropolitan agriculture and ecological agriculture as the mainstay, to speed up the development of the secondary industry, and develop the tertiary industry with the tourist trade as the lead, while making the simultaneous development of the consumptive service and the productive service.

8 CONCLUSION

To sum up, in the 21st century, Suzhou Municipality shall make the integrated development with Shanghai with the mutual supplementation of each other's superiority and the dislocated development, and shall be built into the base of the processing and manufacturing with the high and new technique as the mainstay, one of the research bases for the advanced technique and the modern tourist city with beautiful ecological environment.

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