

GHANA

Ashanti

Activity: 1957-1964; 1980-2005

General notes

- Asante and Ashanti are synonyms (Minahan 2002: 187). The Brong and Ahafo are part of a region just North of the Ashanti homeland, and formed part of the periphery of the Ashanti confederacy until administratively removed in 1959 (Modern Ghana, ND: Online). Contrary to earlier versions of SDM, they are not considered part of the movement.

Movement start and end dates

- Nationalists mobilized in 1954 as the British began to move the Gold Coast colony toward self-government (Allman 1990; Hewitt & Cheetham 2000). 1954 is thus coded as the start date of the movement. However, since Ghana did not become independent until 1957, we only code the movement from 1957. We found no separatist violence before 1957, and thus code prior non-violent activity.
- In 1957 violent demonstrations broke out in Ashanti cities following the arrest of Ashanti leaders, the closure of the Ashanti assembly and the banning of regional political parties. A wave of anti-government terrorist attacks shook the new Ghanaian state as the Ashanti pressed for secession. This rebellion was firmly crushed in 1964 by the Nkrumah government, which established a one-party dictatorship. In light of a MAR protest score of 0 for 1965-69 we code no activity for that period. [start date 1: 1954; end date 1: 1964]
- Under Acheampong's rule (1972- 1978), the Ashanti appeared to play a key role in politics. Rawlings led his second coup and assumed the chairmanship of the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC). Although Rawlings cut back on the prominence of Ewes in his cabinet, Ashanti demands for greater representation and separate nationhood increased. MAR codes non-zero protest scores for 1980-84 and 1990-1995 but all subsequent years are coded zero. We found no self-determination movement in Lexis Nexis after 1995 either, and thus the end is coded as 2005 in accordance with the 10-year rule (Hewitt & Cheetham 2000; Keesing's; Lexis Nexis; Minahan 1996, 2002; MAR). [start date 2: 1980; end date 2: 2005]

Dominant claim

- According to Minahan (2002: 190), Ashanti leaders pressed for separate independence in the 1956/1957 Ashanti secessionist crisis but finally settled for autonomy within an independent Ghana. However, following the arrest of Ashanti leaders, the closure of the Ashanti assembly and the banning of regional political parties, violent demonstrations for independence broke out in Ashanti cities. The claim for secession in the first period of self-determination activity is confirmed by various sources, among which Mwakikagile (2001: 145) who writes that there were "strong secessionist tendencies among the Ashanti who wanted to separate from the rest of Ghana and have their own independent state." Allman (1993: 168) and Gocking (2005: 111) provide further evidence of a secessionist claim of the Ashanti in the period until 1964. [1957-1964: independence claim]
- For the second period of activity that started in 1980, the claim seems to have changed to autonomy within Ghana. Minahan (2002: 191) states that Ashanti demanded economic and cultural autonomy. [1980-2005: autonomy claim]

Independence claims

- See above. [start date: 1954; end date: 1964]

Irredentist claims

NA

Claimed territory

- The territory claimed by the Ashanti nationalists consists of Ashantiland, which includes the Ghanaian regions of Ashanti, Brong-Ahafo, and a small part of the Northern Region (Minahan 2002: 187). The territory described by Minahan matches the former Crown Colony of Ashanti [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashanti_\(Crown_Colony\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashanti_(Crown_Colony)). We code this claim based using data on administrative units from the Global Administrative Areas database for polygon definition.

Sovereignty declarations

NA

Separatist armed conflict

- Minahan (2002) suggests that a violent rebellion broke out in Ashanti in 1957 after the government had revoked the Ashanti's autonomy. The University of Central Arkansas confirms Minahan's account and suggests that the government declared a state-of-emergency on December 30, 1957, and that as many as 5,000 people were displaced as a result of the violence. Neither MAR, Marshall & Gurr (2003), nor UCDP/PRIO include Ashanti rebellion, however, and we were unable to find information on deaths, so we do not code separatist violence. [NVIOLSD]

Historical context

- The Ashanti are thought to have migrated to the region around modern day Kumasi in Ghana before the 13th century (Minahan, 2002: 41; 2016: 41). Multiple smaller chiefdoms were united under Osei Tutu with the founding of the Ashanti nation/ confederacy and multiple satellite states and chiefdoms in 1695 (Minahan, 2002: 41; 2016: 41; Danver, 2015: 17). This confederacy traditionally consisted of 16 Ashanti and 10 Brong states (Minahan, 2016: 41). An important cultural symbol is the Golden Stool, which represents dead ancestors of Ashanti royalty (Cheetham and Hewitt, 2000: 29). The golden age of the Ashanti nation was during the 18th century, trading in gold and slaves, to the Europeans in return for firearms. These firearms reinforced a martial society and fueled expansion of the Ashanti nation at the expense of other Akan groups (Minahan, 2002: 181; 2016: 41; Danver, 17).
- The Ashanti conquered the coastal Fanti states in 1806-1807, which brought them into direct conflict with the British Empire, who had banned the slave trade in 1807 (Minahan, 2002). Following the death of Asantehene (King) Osei Bonsu in 1824, there was the Anglo-Ashanti war 1824-1831 which led to a British defeat and reaffirmed boundaries with the Fanti. (Minahan, 2002: 189; Danver, 2015: 17). A short period of peace was followed by frequent raiding between the British Gold Coast and the Ashanti, including the sack of Kumasi, the Ashanti capital, in 1874. This severely weakened the Ashanti, who then faced a civil war from northern secessionists from 1883-1888. A Third Anglo-Ashanti war from 1893-1894 saw an Ashanti defeat, with a refusal to surrender seeing a fourth war from 1895-1896. This war saw the Ashanti royal family exiled to the Seychelles and the subject peoples of the

- Ashanti gaining autonomy. In 1899, the British governor of the Gold Coast demanded the Golden Stool of the Ashanti, leading to a final war with the Ashanti, led by Yaa Asantewaa, the exiled king's sister. Upon their defeat in 1901, Ashanti land was annexed by the British Empire and formally integrated into the Empire on 1st January 1902 (Minahan, 2002: 189-190; 2016: 41; Danver, 2015: 17; Shoup, 2011: 10).
- After WWI, the Ashanti demanded to have a separate colonial administration, especially from the Fanti (Minahan, 2002: 190). In 1935, the Ashanti Confederacy was resurrected, and the exiled royals restored (Minahan, 2002: 190; 2016: 41; Danver, 2015: 17). This territory was then integrated into the Gold Coast administration in 1946, with these areas becoming prosperous due to a boom in agriculture during early 1950's. However, the main concern of the Ashanti was domination by former subject peoples such as the Brong (Minahan, 2016: 41). In September 1954, the National Liberation Movement (NLM) was established, agitating for separation from the Gold Coast territory rather than joining a unitary independent state. This was largely triggered by the freezing of cocoa prices by Nkrumah, which threatened the prosperity of Ashanti agriculture. The NLM clashed with Nkrumah's party, leading to Nkrumah not entering Ashanti territory until 1957. These claims for a separate independence would continue into the independence era, but the crisis also led to Ashanti negotiating for autonomy within Ghana and a separate regional assembly upon independence. The claims for a separate independence of the Ashanti would continue after Ghana gained its independence on 6th March 1957 (Minahan, 2002: 190; 2016: 41; Hewitt and Cheetham, 2000: 29-30, 113). [1957: autonomy concession]

Concessions and restrictions

- Immediately following the independence of Ghana, the NLM claims led to a series of riots in Ashanti areas. This led to the arrest of Ashanti leaders, and crucially the closure of the Ashanti assembly which was negotiated with the Ashanti to gain their approval for the post-independence political system (Minahan, 2002: 190-191; Hewitt and Cheetham, 2000: 113). [1957: autonomy restriction]
- In reaction to the unrest in Ashanti areas, as well as elsewhere in the country, Nkrumah introduced the Avoidance of Discrimination Act, outlawing parties based on ethnic, regional, or religious grounds (Hewitt and Cheetham, 2000: 113).
- On 4th April 1959, the Brong Ahafo Region Act created the Brong Ahafo region. This separated a region of traditional Ashanti domination from the Ashanti Confederacy (Modern Ghana, ND: Online). Although this can be considered a concession for the Bono/ Brong and Ahafo, it removed a section of land that was previously recognized as under the Ashanti Confederacy [1959: autonomy restriction]
- By 1964, the Ashanti rebellion was crushed by Nkrumah, ending organized claims for independence from Ghana by the Ashanti. By this point, Ghana had become a one-party state, limiting potential for alternative voices and claims to emerge (Minahan, 2002: 191).
- After the fall of Nkrumah, Ashanti nationalism re-emerged due to economic mismanagement. There was also some Ashanti who formed part of the Ankrah, Busia (an ethnic Brong), and Acheampong governments (Vogt et al, 2015; Cederman et al, 2010). Subtle conflicts between ethnic groups existed, such as between the Ashanti, Fanti, and Ewe, leading to persistent military coups and minor changes to the ethnic balance of the central government (Minahan, 2002: 191).
- In 1990 Rawlings promised a return to multiparty democracy, with the first election in 1992 (Minahan, 2002: 191). Minority Rights Groups (2020: Online) claim there was an upsurge in regionalist and ethnic sentiment throughout the 1990's due to the new freedoms on political representation brought about by a new constitution in 1992. This also involved rioting in Ashanti areas in opposition to the electoral victory of Rawlings (Minahan, 2002: 191). However, this new constitution reinstated the ban on political parties based on ethnicity, religion, or regions, as well as depoliticizing chieftaincies (Sefa-Nyarko, 2021: 305). This is seen with banning of the Ashanti Movement for Freedom and Justice (MFJ) in 1992 and a later accusation of the Ashanti Alliance for Change leading anti-Rawlings demonstrations in 1996 (Minahan, 2002: 191). Unlike other

groups, such as the Ewe, whose status was maintained by these constitutional changes, for the Ashanti they suppressed the voice of the claims for greater economic and cultural autonomy.

- Minahan (2002: 192) states that during the succession of the new Ashanti King Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, the Ghanaian government tried to influence the selection of the new king. No other sources mention this issue, so it is not coded. If more sources were found, then this could be a significant intrusion into the internal political life of the Ashanti community.
- The Local Government Act of 1993 devolved some executive power to local assemblies. This provided a limited amount of decentralization (Sefa-Nyarko, 2021: 305). In keeping with the codebook, we do not code changes at municipal level as a general rule, however.
- The 2000 election saw a new president, Kufour, an Ashanti of the New Patriotic Party (NPP). During Kufour's term until 2009, the Ashanti are coded as senior partners by EPR (Vogt et al, 2015; Cederman et al, 2010). However, ethnic politics was not a major part of the campaign. This also goes for subsequent presidents, including Nana Akufo-Addo (also Ashanti, president from December 2016, and another period of Ashanti coding as Senior Partner).
- The Chieftaincy Act of 2008 established the Chieftaincy as a political institution with customary rights within their area (Sefa-Nyarko, 2021: 305). This could be coded as a concession, but is after the movement's end date.

Regional autonomy

- As part of the post-independence political settlement, the Ashanti were granted a degree of internal autonomy and a regional assembly, but the degree of autonomy appears too limited to warrant a regional autonomy coding. The limited autonomy conferred upon independence was revoked soon after independence (see above).

De facto independence

NA

Major territorial changes

- [1957: host state change (new)]

EPR2SDM

<i>Movement</i>	Ashanti
<i>Scenario</i>	1:1
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	Asante (Akan)
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	45201000

Power access

- We draw data from EPR. [1957-1964: junior partner] [1980-1981: senior partner; 1982-2000: junior partner; 2001-2005: senior partner].

Group size

- We draw on EPR's group size estimate (15%). This approximately matches the estimate provided by Minahan (2002: 187). [0.15]

Regional concentration

- EPR codes the Ashanti (Asante) as regionally concentrated. So does MAR while noting that >75% of group members reside in their regional base. Minahan (2002: 187) suggests that the Ashanti make up 61% of the population of their local base and that more than 50% of all Ashanti in Ghana live there. [regionally concentrated]

Kin

- EPR does not code ethnic kin while MAR codes ethnic kin in a neighboring country that does not adjoin the Ashanti's regional base. Minahan (2002: 187) suggests that there are Ashanti in neighboring Cote d'Ivoire, but he does not state how many Ashanti there are in Cote d'Ivoire. Several other sources confirm this. A population estimate was extremely hard to find; the only estimate we could find is from the Joshua Project, which puts the Ashanti population at 390,000. It should be added that the Joshua Project uses 'Akan' as its main label, which includes the Ashanti but also many other Akan groups such as the Baoule and the Agni. However, there are more than 8 million Akans in Cote d'Ivoire and the alternate names listed suggest that the Joshua Project entry really refers only to the Ashanti. [kin in neighboring country]

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Ewes

Activity: 1957-1980; 2017-2020

General notes

NA

Movement start and end dates

- Brown (1980: 578) notes that Ewe separatism began prior to Ghanaian independence and arose due to social and economic problems resulting from the Anglo-German and Anglo-French partition. Agitation to unite all Ewes in the Gold Coast began in the early 1900s and later targeted the reunification of the two Togolands. Before World War II, the Deutscher Togo Bund was founded; in 1943, the irredentist Togoland Union was founded; in 1946, the Comite de l'Unite Togolaise was founded. The Togoland Union later became known as the Togoland Congress Party. A referendum on unification with Togo was held in 1956. Unification won due to Ewe turnout. However, the colonial powers did not follow the election results. On Ghana's independence day, the Togoland Congress attempted an armed riot but was suppressed by the government (Brown 1980).
- The establishment of the German Togo Bund is not coded as the start date of the movement because, although the Ewe dominated, it did not seek "greater autonomy nor independence but rather the return of German colonial rule" (Greene 2010). Instead, we code 1943 as the start date of the movement, the year the irredentist Togoland Union (later Togoland Congress Party) was formed. Note that in the data set, we only code the movement from 1957, the year of Ghana's independence. We found no separatist violence before 1957, and thus code prior non-violent activity.
- Minor protests continued from 1957-1972. Brown claims that the second wave of separatism began in 1972 (Brown 1980: 575). According to Chazan, "Ewe militancy was partly a carryover from the period of antagonism to Busia, and it revived the troubles of Ewe absorption into Ghana that dated back to the 1956 referendum. In part also, Acheampong's forceful rejection of Ewe aspirations and his problematic relations with Togo (with its concentration of Ewe) fueled Ewe displeasure" (Chazan 1982: 465). Thus, the Ewe revived the sentiments of secession.
- We could not find evidence for separatist activity after 1977 and, according to Ziaba (2020), secessionism remained in hibernation between 1980 and 2017 (Ziaba 2020). Therefore, we code an end to the movement in 1980. [start date 1: 1943; end date 1: 1980]
- A second phase of the SDM began in 2017 when the Homeland Study Group Foundation (HSGF) announced its intention to become an independent state and joined the UNPO (UNPO 2017). This appears to have been triggered by years of relative economic and political neglect of the Volta region (Zaiba 2020). In 2019 the Western Togoland Restoration Front (WTRF) was founded, advocating for armed struggle, and in 2020 made a unilateral declaration of independence and undertook some violent activities, resulting in one death (Wilson Center 2022: Online).
- Following the claims for independence by the HSGF in 2017, members were arrested and charged with treason but were subsequently released. Later activity saw HSGF members being arrested, in 2019. After the HSGF's unilateral attempt to secede in 2020, many members were arrested. In 2022 six more were arrested after being caught collecting weapons (Wilson Center 2022).
- There has been ongoing activity of the SDM, particularly by the WTRF. Therefore, the movement is coded as ongoing. [start date 2: 2017; end date 2: ongoing]

Dominant claim

- Ewe nationalists campaigned for a united, independent Ewe state called Eweland already before Ghanaian independence. This demand became even stronger after Ghana won independence in 1957. The Greater Togo Movement sought to separate Trans-Volta from Ghana and unite it with the Ewes of Togo in a single state. Ewe secessionism again revived in the 1970s “with broad support for secession of the Ewe region from Ghana” (Minahan 2002: 593). According to the Minorities at Risk Project, there were Ewe threats of secession in the early 1970s. Furthermore, reunification of the Ewe of Ghana and Togo was also the goal of the Togoland Union, which later became the Togoland Congress Party (Brown 1980: 581f). Hewitt and Cheetham (2000: 113) suggest that the main demand was “that the Ewe areas should be joined to the neighboring country of Togo”.
 - o Until decolonization of both Ghana and Togo, this claim strictly speaking amounted to a claim for independence (as the intention was not to merge with French Togoland, but for both territories to gain independence and merge). After 1960, the claim was for the merger with a different nation-state and, thus, an irredentist claim as defined here. [1957-1960: independence claim; 1961-1980: irredentist claim]
- The second phase of the SDM began in 2017 with the HSGF making political claims for “self determination, secession and independence of Western Togoland from Ghana (UNPO). Similarly, the WTRF demands for independence, including with a declaration of sovereignty, indicates strong independence claims. [2017-2020: independence claim]

Independence claims

- In the first phase, claims were primarily related to a merger with Togo. Until decolonization of both Ghana and Togo, this strictly speaking amounted to a claim for independence (as the intention was not to merge with French Togoland, but for both territories to gain independence and merge). After 1960, the claim was for the merger with a different nation-state and, thus, an irredentist claim as defined here. In the second phase, the claim was for independence (see above). [start date: 1943; end date: 1960; start date 2: 2017; end date 2: ongoing]

Irredentist claims

- Starting in 1943, there were claims for a merger with French Togoland. Until decolonization, this strictly speaking amounted to a claim for independence (as the intention was not to merge with French Togoland, but for both territories to gain independence and merge). Therefore, we code the start date not in 1943 but coinciding with Togo’s independence. In the second phase, claims have focused on independence. [start date: 1960; end date: 1980]

Claimed territory

- The territory claimed by the Ewe is the Volta region of Ghana (Minahan 2002: 592). The Volta region’s definition has changed over time. After Germany’s defeat in WWI, Eweland was divided into British and French Zones (Roth 2015). British Togoland included the Oti region, but later would extend all the way north towards Burkina Faso. We code the former British Mandate of Western Togoland and some additional territories based on a reference map by Fournies (2020).

Sovereignty declarations

- On September 1, 2020, the WTRF issued a unilateral declaration of independence (DW 2020). [2020: independence declaration]

Separatist armed conflict

- EPR codes the Ewes as in armed conflict in 1981 because Rawling's 1981 coup led to armed clashes that caused 30-70 deaths according to UCDP/PRIO. We do not code this incident as separatist violence since it is clearly related to the government. Since Rawlings assumed power in 1981 there have been no Ewe protests or Ewe rebellion, with the exception of some minor, non-separatist protests in 1996. This seems to be because Ewes are privileged in the administration of Rawlings, who is half Ewe.
- We found evidence for violent activities in 2020 which led to one death (see above). This is below the threshold. [NVIOLSD]

Historical context

- The Ewe originally occupied the area of Oyo, at the modern day Benin-Nigeria border, but migrated Westwards to the Volta region from the mid 15th to the early 18th centuries (Minahan, 2002: 590; 2016: 141; Shoup, 2011: 89).
- Europeans first visited the area, with the Portuguese in 1482, and many European nations established trade posts along the coast near or along the Ewes homeland. Ewe relations with the Europeans were largely good, with the notable exception of a war with the Danish in 1784. This relationship with the Europeans was sustained by the Ewe raiding neighboring peoples, such as the Ashanti, and selling captives into slavery. This was the primary economic role of the Ewe until the British outlawed the slave trade in 1807 (Minahan, 2002: 591; 2016: 141; Shoup, 2011: 89).
- German missionaries first visited the area in 1847, with conversions meeting moderate success among the Ewe (Minahan, 2002: 591). British and German interest in the area led to the eventual establishment of the British Gold Coast in 1874 and the German protectorate of Togoland in 1884, with the agreed borders in 1894 splitting some of the Ewe across colonial borders. During WWI, German Togoland quickly surrendered to British and French forces. The colony was partitioned by the British and French, a process formalized in 1922 by the League of Nations (Minahan, 2002: 591; 2016: 141; Shoup, 2011: 89). This partition substantially split the Ewe group, a move that marked the start of Ewe national consciousness and a nascent unification movement throughout the 1930's and 1940's that was resisted by colonial authorities. In 1946 the All-Ewe Conference was formed, which petitioned unsuccessfully at the UN to seek pre-partition borders to reunite the Ewe (Minahan, 2002: 591). Another organization representing the Ewe was the Togoland Congress, established in 1954, which sought the reunification of the Ewe (Shoup, 2011: 90).
- In 1956, French Togoland became an autonomous region within the French colonial administration, a region that would become an independent Togo in 1960 (Minahan, 2002: 592). In the same year, the British colonial administration under UN instruction offered a referendum on the future of Togoland, to either integrate it fully within the British Gold Coast as part of the latter's independence, or to maintain its status as a UN trusteeship to determine its independence or other arrangements (Brown, 1980: 582). The referendum went 58% in favour, so when the British Gold Coast gained independence in 1957 and became Ghana, the Trans Volta Togoland region became a part of Ghana. This sparked Ewe separatism in an independent Ghana (Minahan, 2002: 592; Roth, 2015: 239; Hewitt and Cheatham, 2000: 113).
- No concessions or restrictions were found in the ten years before the 1957 start date.

2nd phase:

- Between the end of the first phase of the Ewe SDM and the start of the second phase in 2017, there were some changes to the constitutional arrangement for local government in Ghana. This includes the Local Government Act of 1993, which devolved some executive power to local assemblies, providing a limited amount of decentralization, distributed equally among the regions (Sefa-Nyarko, 2021: 305). Furthermore, in the 10 years prior to the start of the SDM in 2017, the

Chieftaincy Act of 2008 was passed. This established the Chieftaincy as a political institution with customary rights within their area (Sefa-Nyarko, 2021: 305). [2008: autonomy concession]

Concessions and restrictions

- At the time of independence, the Tongolese Congress attempted an armed riot in 1957, prompting a harsh crackdown on the Ewe movement. The 1957 Avoidance of Discrimination Act was introduced by Nkrumah, outlawing parties based on ethnic, regional, or religious grounds (Hewitt and Cheetham, 2000: 113). This forced the Togoland Congress Party to merge with other parties into the United Party (UP) (Modern Ghana, 2020: Online). The regional assemblies that represented the five original regions of Ghana were a part of the independence constitution. One of these regions was the Volta region where the Ewe SDM claims are concentrated (Graphic Online: 2020: Online). The Regional Assemblies Bill in 1958 effectively legislated the regional assemblies out of existence when the central government altered the compromise formula in negotiations with the UP, blunting their power. In 1960, Nkrumah threw out the independence constitution which included the regional assemblies. These moves led to Ghana effectively becoming a one-party state by 1961 (EAUMF, 2018: Online). We code a restriction from the Regional Assemblies Bill due to the weakening and subsequent abolition of regional assemblies in 1960. [1958: autonomy restriction]
- From 1960 Nkrumah pursued a campaign to merge Togo with Ghana. This led to persistent tension between Ghana and Togo and the closure of the Ghana-Togo border until 1966 (Brown, 1980: 582; Minahan, 2002: 592).

Regional autonomy

NA

De facto independence

NA

Major territorial changes

- [1957: host change (new)]

EPR2SDM

<i>Movement</i>	Ewes
<i>Scenario</i>	1:1
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	Ewe
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	45202000

Power access

- We draw data from EPR, which codes the Ewe as junior or senior partner throughout most of the movement's duration. The only exception is in 1970-71, when the Ewe were powerless during the

reign of Prime Minister Busia. Busia remained in power until January 13, 1972, so we extend the powerless code to 1972.

- It should be noted that EPR Atlas mentions that Nkrumah's 4th Cabinet from 1965 to 1966 had no Ewe members. This could mean that another powerless code could be given for 1966 (Vogt et al, 2015; Cederman et al, 2010). [1957-1969: junior partner; 1970-1972: powerless; 1973-1980: junior partner; 2017-2020: junior partner]

Group size

- We draw on the EPR estimate (13%). This broadly matches Minahan (2002: 589). [0.13]

Regional concentration

- EPR codes the Ewes as regionally concentrated, as does MAR, which in addition suggests that >75% of group members live in their regional base. Minahan (2002: 589) suggests that most Ewe live in an area including parts of Ghana, Benin, and Togo, where they make up 66% of the local population. [regional concentration]

Kin

- There are approx 2 million Ewes in Togo and around 230,000 in Benin (Minahan 2002: 589). This matches with MAR and EPR. [kin in neighboring country]

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