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Colonial Architecture and the Philosophical Meaning of Roof Shapes KAR. Bosccha House in Pangalengan, West Java

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ABSTRACT

K.A.R Bosscha's house in Pangalengan, West Java, is an example that reflects the combination of European design, climate adaptation, and adaptation to the surrounding environment. K.A.R Bosscha's house has historical value as one of the important buildings during the colonial period. This research aims to examine the philosophical meaning contained in the design of the K.A.R Bosscha House as a representation of the culture and social status of its residents. The research method used is qualitative research method. The results showed that the shape of the gable roof on the K.A.R Bosscha House does not only function as a functional element, but as a symbol that reflects the identity and values of the community in its day. Thus, the philosophical meaning of the roof shape of the K.A.R Bosscha House needs to be understood as part of the architectural heritage that must be preserved.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Architecture is one form of art that plays a significant role in reflecting the cultural identity and social values of a society. As a physical manifestation of culture, architecture not only functions as a container for human activities, but also becomes a silent witness to the development of civilization and social transformation that occurs in a society. In Indonesia, the legacy of colonial architecture is a reflection of the complex interaction between local culture and foreign influences that formed during the colonial period. According to Sumalyo (1993), colonial architecture in Indonesia is a unique cultural phenomenon, created through the mixing of immigrant cultures with the diversity of Indonesian culture.

In its development, the influence of Dutch culture on architectural design and urban planning in Indonesia is a reflection of the architectural concepts that developed in Europe at that time. This is inseparable from the role of the Dutch colonialists who brought modern architectural concepts to the archipelago. However, the concept underwent adaptation to suit the tropical climate conditions and the availability of local materials in Indonesia, resulting in a new form that still refers to the European style. This adaptation process resulted in unique characteristics that later became known as Indo-European architecture, reflecting a harmonious blend of Western and Eastern design elements.

One interesting example of colonial architecture that reflects this cultural acculturation is the Karel Albert Rudolf (KAR) Bosscha House, located in Pangalengan District, in the Malabar Tea Plantation area. This historic building is located in a highland area at an altitude of 1,534 meters above sea level, providing a unique perspective on how colonial architecture adapted to local geographic and climatic conditions. Currently, the Bosscha House has been transformed into a villa and museum that can be accessed by the general public, making it not only an architectural heritage but also a means of education and preservation of colonial history in Indonesia (Sarihati *et al.*, 2023).

Colonial architecture in Indonesia is a form of cultural heritage that reflects a blend of local values and foreign influences, especially from the Netherlands. The KAR Bosscha House in Pangalengan, West Java, is an important example of colonial architecture that not only has practical functions but also deep philosophical values, especially in the shape of its roof.

The roof shape of colonial houses at that time was designed to adapt to Indonesia's tropical climate conditions. For example, the roof of the KAR Bosscha house uses a steep design to facilitate the flow of rainwater, thus preventing leaks and structural damage. This is an adaptation of colonial architecture to the tropical climate that is also found in other buildings in the Southeast Asian region (Kumurur, 2018). In addition, the use of local materials such as wood and clay tiles reflects an effort to integrate with local resources, while reducing construction costs.

The philosophical meaning of this roof shape cannot be separated from the symbolism contained therein. The high and towering roof shape is often associated with spiritual values, reflecting the relationship between humans and God. In a colonial context, this also symbolizes the dominance of foreign powers trying to represent their cultural superiority through magnificent and monumental architectural forms (Wihardyanto & Sudaryono, 2020). In addition to the philosophical aspect, the KAR Bosscha house also reflects typical elements of Dutch colonial architecture, such as the use of large windows for cross ventilation and thick walls to keep the room temperature cool. This design is one of the main characteristics that distinguishes colonial architecture from local architectural styles.

According to Sahmura & Wahyuningrum (2018), these characteristics were not only designed for the comfort of the occupants but also became a symbol of modernity carried by the colonial government.

Bosscha House also has mark high historical as part from Dutch efforts to introduce style life and modern technology in the area colonies. However, this process No fully remove identity local. On the other hand, a hybridization process occurs in which the elements local absorbed and adapted with need colonial. For example, the use of local materials No only For reason economical but also for ensure building more durable and suitable with environment tropical Indonesia (Hardianto et al., 2023).

More next, architecture colonial as seen in the KAR Bosscha house also contains elements symbolic that reflects strength Dutch politics and economy at that time. Buildings the often designed with scale big and elements striking decorative, such as pillars big and ornamental stylish European classics. Pratama, Rahmadiano, & Nugroho (2022) emphasized that elements This No only functioning aesthetic but also for to plant impression majesty and eternity power colonial.

In the study more continue, important For to observe How adaptation architecture colonial to climate and culture local create identity new unique. For example, Zakiyah & Herwindo (2023) show that style colonial can integrated with element architecture traditional For create area with identity strong culture. This is also relevant in context KAR Bosscha house, where the presence element local become proof that although architecture colonial bring influence foreign, he still capable adapt with environment local.

On his journey, KAR Bosscha's house in Pangalengan reflect complexity architecture colonialism that is not only functioning as place stay but also as a medium for convey values philosophical, symbol power, and adaptation to condition local. This study give outlook that architecture colonialism in Indonesia is proof from dynamic cultural dialogue between strength colonial and society local.

The existence of Bosscha House with all its architectural uniqueness is real evidence of how a building can bridge two different cultures. Through its architectural elements, especially the distinctive roof shape, this building not only displays a functional aspect, but also holds a deep philosophical meaning. Research into the philosophical meaning of the roof shape of Bosscha House is important to understand more deeply how architecture can be a medium of expression of cultural and social values of its time, while also providing valuable lessons for the development of contemporary architecture in Indonesia (Saleha, 2024).

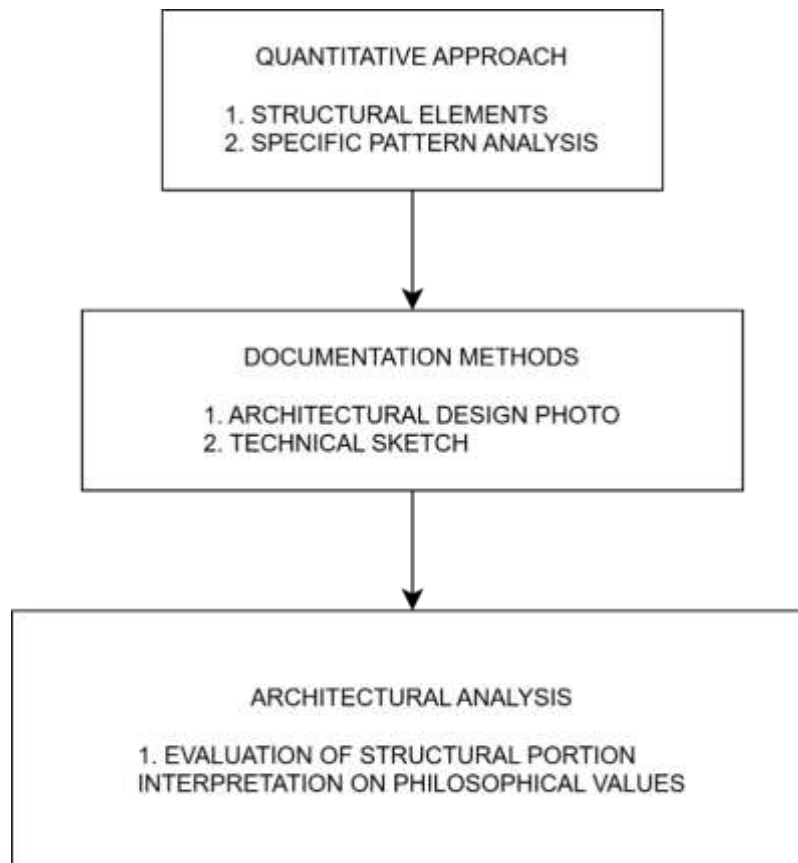
The architectural design of the Karel Albert Rudolf (KAR) Bosscha House is a reflection of the combination of European aesthetics and adaptation to Indonesia's tropical climate. Its saddle-shaped roof functions not only as protection from extreme weather, but also contains symbolic meanings that reflect cultural and social identity. The shape of the roof in colonial architecture often acts as a symbol of social status, while also reflecting the owner's attachment to the traditions and values that apply in society.

Analysis of the philosophical meaning of the roof shape of the Karel Albert Rudolf (KAR) Bosscha House is an important step in understanding the contribution of these design elements in building the identity of colonial architecture. This study aims to reveal the symbolism contained in the roof design and how these elements reflect the values of society at that time. In addition, this study also explores the relevance of preserving colonial architectural heritage in the modern era, especially in efforts to maintain cultural identity amidst the rapid flow of globalization (Wihardyanto & Sudaryono, 2020).

Thus, this article is expected to provide a new perspective that architecture is not just a physical construction, but a manifestation of culture and community values. The results of the analysis are expected to contribute significantly to the development of architectural studies and the preservation of cultural heritage, especially in Indonesia which is rich in history and cultural diversity.

2. METHOD

This study uses a comprehensive methodological approach using three main methods to gain an in-depth understanding of the architectural aspects and socio-cultural values contained therein. The methods used in this study include:



2.1 Quantitative Approach

A quantitative approach was used to obtain objective data related to the physical aspects of the roof layout of the KAR Bosscha house. This study surveyed structural elements, spatial dimensions, and geographic contexts providing an empirical basis for analyzing how roof designs adapt to their surroundings. This approach allows the identification of specific patterns in architecture that reflect the relationship between function, aesthetics, and environmental context.

2.2 Documentation Methods

The documentation method was used to record visual and written data relevant to this study. The recording process included taking detailed architectural photographs, making technical sketches, and compiling field notes related to the philosophy of roof layout. This

documentation provides a rich source of data for understanding the cultural nuances and values expressed in the roof design of the KAR Bosscha house.

2.3 Architectural Analysis

Architectural analysis was conducted as a third method to deeply evaluate the design aspects of the roof of the house. This study includes an evaluation of the structural proportions, the use of materials, and the interaction of the building with the surrounding environment. Particular focus is given to the interpretation of the philosophical values embodied in the roof design, especially in the context of creating a balance between architecture and nature. Through this analysis, the study reveals how architectural elements contribute to social harmony and environmental sustainability, while strengthening the cultural identity of the building.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis conducted to understand the philosophical meaning of the roof shape of the KAR Bosscha House and to identify the cultural acculturation in this building involves a study of the architectural concept, roof shape, interior design, cultural acculturation, and spiritual symbolism. Cultural acculturation in architecture is manifested through building elements. In the context of the Bosscha House, the roof shape is one of the significant elements that reflects the blending of cultures and has a philosophical value that reflects the identity of colonial architecture that adapts to local conditions (Sarihati *et al.*, 2023).

3.1 Building Architecture

KAR Bosscha House is one of the cultural heritage buildings that has important values in history, education, science, and religion. In accordance with Law Number 11 of 2010, cultural heritage buildings must be preserved to maintain historical heritage. Documentation of cultural heritage archives is strong and accurate evidence if historical archives are getting closer, then cultural heritage can become a legacy that can strengthen historical value, so that the building can be protected, saved, and become a proud legacy (Sarihati *et al.*, 2023).



Figure 1. KAR Bosscha House Building
(Source: Personal Documentation, 2024)

In the context of Bosscha House architecture, *the empire style* uses a symmetrical layout with a wide terrace at the front and back that is juxtaposed with the characteristics of traditional Sundanese space organization. According to (Karsa *et al.*, 2023) traditional Sundanese space, it is divided into three parts based on its layout, namely *tepas imah* (front), *tengah imah* (middle), and *pawon imah* (back). The combination of these two styles reflects the acculturation of culture that is depicted in the organization of space. Identifying these

elements is important to understand how the blending of cultural characteristics produces philosophical values that are reflected in the design, including the shape of the roof, which is an integral part of the architectural identity of Bosscha House (Sitorus, 2017).



Figure 2. Side view of the building
(Source: Personal Documentation, 2024)

3.2 Roof Building Form

KAR Bosscha House is one example of architecture that integrates traditional Sundanese elements with the influence of European colonial architecture. The roof of this house adopts the *suhunan julang ngapak* form, which is a characteristic of traditional Sundanese architecture. The shape of the roof is characterized by protruding roof edges on both sides, accompanied by shields hanging from the front of the building (Khairani *et al.*, 2023).

Initially, the roof of this house used wooden shingle material which created a natural impression and was in accordance with the principles of tropical architecture, but in 1949 the roof of the KAR Bosscha house underwent renovation, where the shingle material was replaced with roof tiles, while the modern traditional Sundanese roof shape was maintained, including the typical *julangan ngapak* shape (Sarihati *et al.*, 2023)

The roof of the building has four planes, where two sides of the roof widen to the side, resembling the flapping wings of a bird when viewed from the front, while the other two planes slope down from the side. This change illustrates the process of cultural acculturation that adapts traditional Sundanese elements in the context of colonial architectural influences, especially in the aspect of roof design that reflects a blend of aesthetics and functionality (Manduapessy, 2022).



Figure 3. House Roof Shape
(Source: Personal Documentation, 2024)

The shape of the roof of this house is called *Julang Ngapak* because it has a shape like a bird flapping its wings. The shape of the roof widens on each side and at the top it is shaped like the letter "V" so that overall the *Julang Ngapak* house resembles a bird flapping its wings.

This house is not just a structure, but a manifestation of the belief in protection and harmony with nature. With ornaments and spatial layouts full of symbolism, the Julang Ngapak house holds meanings from various aspects, both spiritual and social. This shows how important the existence of Sundanese traditional houses is for the existence of Sundanese society today (Ridwan *et al.*, 2024).

3.3 KAR Bosscha House Roof Concept

The roof concept of the KAR Bosscha house illustrates the acculturation between Sundanese culture and colonial influences, which is reflected in the various design elements applied. The roof structure adopts the typical Sundanese pyramid shape, but is modified with a steeper slope (around 45 degrees) following the colonial style to optimize rainwater flow in a tropical climate. The roof material uses traditional clay tiles produced locally, reflecting adaptation to local climate conditions (Ridwan *et al.*, 2024).

The uniqueness of this roof lies in its ornamental details that combine Dutch *gable elements* with Sundanese-style wood carvings on the *listplank* and *eaves*. The roof ventilation system is carefully designed using a combination of European-style *dormers* and *traditional Sundanese air vents*, creating optimal air circulation under the roof. The roof support structure uses a teak *truss system* reinforced with cast iron joints, demonstrating a blend of European construction technology with local carpentry skills (Arsitektur Zonasi *et al.*, 2024).

The eaves of the roof are designed to be wide enough (around 1-1.5 meters) to protect the walls and windows from rain splashes and create a shaded transition area around the building. The corners of the roof are decorated with *Art Deco style finials* combined with Sundanese carving motifs, creating an interesting *point* while strengthening the hybrid architectural identity of this building. The connection details between the roof and the walls use a copper gutter system designed with high precision, combining practical function with aesthetic value (Sarihati *et al.*, 2023).



Figure 4. Building Roof Concept
(Source: Personal Documentation, 2024)

The color and texture of the roof were deliberately chosen to complement the overall look of the building - the clay tiles used have a natural reddish brown color that matches the white walls and wooden elements of the building. The overall roof design not only serves to protect the building, but also becomes an architectural element that emphasizes the social status of the homeowner while respecting local traditions through intelligent adaptation to the local climate and culture.

3.4 KAR Bosscha House Spatial Planning Concept

The concept of the spatial organization of the KAR Bosscha house reflects a harmonious synthesis between the Dutch colonial *Empire Style* and traditional Sundanese architecture. In accordance with the transitional architectural style of 1890-1915, this house shows a systematic division of space but still respects local values. The philosophy of the roof of the house, which uses a combination of gable and shield roofs, is an important element that strengthens the hybrid identity of this building - with a slope influenced by the colonial style but still adapting the Sundanese limasan form to respond to the tropical climate.(Ramadhan *et al.*, 2024).

The public area of this house adapts the concept of *Tepas Imah* and *Voor Galerij*, starting with a drop-off area that leads to a spacious front terrace. The living room and family room are designed with large dimensions reflecting the social status of the owner, with circulation flowing from front to back following the *Empire Style* pattern. The roof in this area has wide eaves to provide shade in the transition area, creating a comfortable space to receive guests (Karsa *et al.*, 2023).



Figure 5. Home Page View
(Source: Personal Documentation, 2024)

The characteristics of transitional architecture include the presence of a front porch (*voor galerij*), a back porch (*achter galerij*), and a main *room* that remains a dominant element in the transitional architectural plan. These elements are also found in the KAR Bosscha house building. Uniqueness organization room House This the more reinforced with existence pavilion side that reflects adaptation to need room colonial. Interestingly, the house This No use column Greek style or Roman, signifying evolution from classic *Empire style*. The roof material also shows adaptation to development of the times, where use shingles in construction beginning replaced with rooftile after renovation (Karsa *et al.*, 2023)

Circulation in House designed follow hierarchy clear space, from public to private, but still maintain flexibility that reflects values locality. Complex roof system No only functioning as protector physique but also as markers of different zones in home, with varying heights and shapes in accordance with function space below it. Transition between room refined with use of terraces and spaces the intermediary who creates gradation privacy, while continuous roof structure give visual unity throughout building. Organization the space created No only fulfil need functional but also reflects social status owner House at a time honor context culture local (Saleha, 2024).



Figure 6. House Building Layout
(Source: Personal Documentation, 2024)

3.5 Cultural Acculturation at KAR Bosscha's House

The cultural acculturation of the KAR Bosscha house represents a complex architectural dialogue between Dutch colonial traditions and local Sundanese wisdom. The philosophy of the roof of the house is the most obvious manifestation of this blend, where the basic shape of the Sundanese pyramid is modified with a steeper slope following colonial standards to adapt to high rainfall. The roof ventilation system combines the concept of European dormers with traditional Sundanese air vents, creating an effective solution for the tropical mountain climate (Wihardyanto & Sudaryono, 2020).



Figure 7. Roof Shape
(Source: Personal Documentation, 2024)

This cultural blend is increasingly visible from the choice of materials that combine European construction technology with local craftsmanship. The use of bricks and teak wood with a white paint finish reflects the *Indische Empire style*, while the *kangkungan* ornaments on the interior details emphasize Sundanese identity. The roof construction uses a teak wood truss system reinforced with cast iron joints, demonstrating the synthesis of European technology with local *craftsmanship*.

Adaptation to the Pangalengan mountain climate is seen from several elements that are typically European but functional for the local context. Natural lighting is optimized through wide openings that create cross ventilation, demonstrating a deep understanding of tropical architectural principles. Ceiling details with wood panels and *Art Deco touches* present a colonial aesthetic that is adapted to the local context (Wihardyanto & Sudaryono, 2020).



Figure 8. Building Interior
(Source: Personal Documentation, 2024)

The furniture in this house is a clear evidence of acculturation, where the typical colonial curved forms are executed with local materials such as solid wood and rattan weaving. The social interaction spaces are designed following a more open colonial pattern, but still maintain the hierarchy and spatial values of Sunda. The continuous roof system with wide eaves not only functions as physical protection but also creates a transitional space typical of tropical architecture. Ornamental details on the roof and interior demonstrate how elements from two cultures can be harmoniously integrated, creating a unique architectural identity with high historical value (Sarihati *et al.*, 2023).

3.6 Spiritual Symbolism

The KAR Bosscha house carries an architectural form that reflects the harmonious relationship between humans and nature, with the *julang ngapak* roof as the main element that not only has a structural function, but is also full of philosophical meaning. As a characteristic of traditional Sundanese architecture, this roof symbolizes protection and well-being for the occupants of the house. More than just an architectural element, the *julang ngapak* roof is also considered a symbol of communication between the human world and the spiritual world, making it a link between the physical and the metaphysical (Wihardyanto & Sudaryono, 2020).

As part of the cultural heritage, Rumah KAR Bosscha not only represents the values of traditional Sundanese architecture, but also implies European colonial influences that are seen in the application of more modern materials and construction techniques. Analysis of architectural elements, including materials, spatial organization, decoration, and natural lighting, shows that this house was designed to support spiritual practices and create a balance between humans, nature, and the surrounding environment.

Spiritually, the shape of the *julang ngapak* roof depicts harmony with the spiritual world, as if forming a communication path between the human world and the universe. The towering roof gives the impression that the house is connected to the sky, creating a sacred space for its inhabitants. Although the *julang ngapak* roof is a traditional Sundanese element, the colonial influence is seen in the changes in roof materials, such as the use of more modern roof tiles, depicting adaptation to functional needs in the colonial era without eliminating local cultural roots (Karsa *et al.*, 2023).



Figure 9. The shape of the Julang Ngapak roof
(Source: Personal Documentation, 2024)

The roof shape of this building is also designed with attention to harmony with the surrounding environment, allowing good air flow and natural lighting to enter the house, creating a cool and comfortable atmosphere. This principle is in line with the teachings of traditional Sundanese architecture, which emphasizes the harmonious relationship between buildings and nature (Sitorus, 2017).

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research and in-depth analysis of the architecture and philosophical meaning of the roof shape of the KAR Bosscha House in Pangalengan, several things can be concluded as follows:

4.1 Acculturation of Colonial and Traditional Sundanese Architecture

KAR Bosscha House is a concrete example of acculturation between Dutch colonial architecture and traditional Sundanese architecture, which is seen in the design of the julang ngapak roof that combines practical functions with philosophical values. The julang ngapak roof, as a dominant element, not only functions as protection from tropical weather, but also reflects the principle of balance between nature and humans, in accordance with Sundanese architectural thinking that emphasizes harmony with the environment.

4.2 The Symbolic Meaning of the Roof of Julang Ngapak

The julang ngapak roof shape of the Bosscha House is more than just a physical structure. This roof contains a deep symbolic meaning, related to the spiritual concept of the Sundanese people who view the roof as an intermediary between the human world and the supernatural world. The symbolism of this roof shape also reflects the principle of Tri Hita Karana, which teaches the importance of a harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and God. Thus, this roof has a philosophical dimension that goes beyond its utilitarian function as a protector.

4.3 Synthesis Element Colonial and Traditional

Overall design house, there is clear balance between style Dutch colonial and elements traditional Sundanese. The use of modern materials such as concrete, glass and wood combined with interior and exterior elements typical Sundanese, such as carving wood and layout wide open, showing a effort For merge technology and style modern life with values

local. Organization room in House this also emphasizes principle openness and flow air natural, which is characteristics typical House traditional Sundanese, while element colonial give impression elegance and more functionality tall.

4.4 Adaptation against Development of the Times

Changes in roof material from shingle wood become roof tiles in 1949 show existence adaptation to development technology and needs more practical efficient , along with with change climate and availability of materials. Although Thus , the form gable roof base ngapak still maintained as element iconic that confirms identity architecture House This. This material transition process No only reflect development technology architecture , but also shows How values culture and tradition can maintained although happen change in aspect technical and functional .

4.5 Contribution to Development Architecture in Indonesia

In general Overall , KAR Bosscha House No only A building historical , but also a work architecture that reflects evolution thinking in design buildings in Indonesia, especially in the Pangalengan area . This house is symbol from interaction the culture that occurs during the colonial era, where mixed European influences with values local . With Thus , the house This No only own mark high historical value , but also provides contribution significant to development architecture in Indonesia, which depicts connection between Western and local cultures that are mutually supportive interact, and importance preservation values culture in modern context. KAR Bosscha House become examples that show How architecture can functioning as means For convey meaning philosophical, social, and cultural, as well as How building can adapt with change of time without lost his identity.

4.6 Importance Preservation and Learning Architecture Traditional

Bosscha House also shows importance preservation architecture traditional that remains relevant in the middle progress technology and development modern design. The existence of House This give lesson important about How elements architecture traditional , such as roof shape , use of local materials , and layout space , still own value that can be applied in design architecture contemporary . Preservation House this , and improvement awareness will importance inheritance architecture local , is step strategic For guard diversity culture and encourage development design sustainable architecture .

5. SUGGESTION

Based on the research results and conclusions, several suggestions that can be put forward for the development and preservation of the KAR Bosscha House are as follows:

1. It is necessary to make sustainable preservation efforts for the KAR Bosscha House as an architectural heritage that has high historical and cultural value.
2. Further documentation and research on the architectural details and philosophical meaning of this building is needed to enrich the understanding of cultural acculturation in Indonesian architecture.
3. The development of educational programs and cultural tourism at Bosscha House needs to be increased to introduce colonial and traditional architectural values to the wider community.

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