

## THE MEANING OF CULTURAL SIGNS AND VALUES IN THE MANGGARAI TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE TRADITION, NORTH SATARMESE DISTRICT

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### Abstract

*This study aims to determine the cultural process of Manggarai traditional marriage, North Satarmese District, as well as to find out the meaning of traditional signs and the traditional cultural values in Manggarai traditional marriages, North Satarmese District. This is a descriptive qualitative research. The data sources used in this study are primary sources because the community leaders and traditional leaders in Manggarai are very helpful in getting information about this research. Data collection techniques used in this study were interviews, observation, and documentation. Analysis of the data used in this study is the recorded data is transcribed from the form of recordings and writings, the transcribed data is then translated into Indonesian, separates the transcription of data in the form of the meaning of signs and values related to the Manggarai traditional marriage ceremony, North Satarmese sub-district, Identification and grouping of data which is in accordance with the direction of the research study, and concludes the results of the analysis based on the previous description. The results showed that in Manggarai traditional marriages there were marriage processions, namely Pongo (pre-marriage), Tuke Mbaru (promising ceremony), Tukar Kila (ring exchange) Bantang (pre-wedding), Kawing (married), Paca (belis), Podo (delivering the bride to the the groom's village). The meaning of signs in traditional Manggarai marriages are gerep ruha (stepping on eggs), pentang pitak (cleaning mud), tukar kila (rings exchange), and paca (belis). Cultural values contained in Manggarai traditional marriages are, economic values, religious values, social values, moral values, and religious values.*

**Keywords:** Cultural Values, Marriage Procession, Sign Meaning, Traditional Marriage

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Traditional marriage of the Manggarai tribe, North Satarmese District. According to Soerojo (1995. 122) in (Narung & Permadi, 2019), marriage is not only an important event for those who are still alive, but also an important event for those who have died, namely the spirits of the ancestors of both parties also receive the attention of the his entire family hoping that the couple both get the blessing so that after marriage they can live in harmony and happiness as husband and wife should. According to law number 1 of 1974, the definition of marriage is “an inner bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife so that they can form a family (household) that lives happily based on the grace of God Almighty”. In this case, a marriage is considered valid if it is carried out according to the Marriage Law of each religion or belief and is registered by an authorized official in accordance with applicable law. The traditional cultural marriage procession of Manggarai, North Satarmese District, has its own meaning so that the Manggarai

people can maintain the customs of each generation. Alexander (2020) explains meaning is the relationship between the subject and the symbol. Meaning is basically formed as a function of the relationship between communication (symbols).

Culture is the actions and results carried out by humans that give meaning to the natural surroundings. In other words, culture is a manifestation of human efforts and results to maintain their life in a reality with nature with their thinking power (Setiawan, 2019). Therefore, in order to comprehend humans to the fullest extent possible, it is necessary to consider humans within the context of their respective cultures. Lumowa & Purwati (2022) said, humans are a type of animal that are not specialized. Biologically, organically, and physiologically, humans are not determined by their environment. The relationship between humans and culture is so close that humans are essentially cultured beings. So, culture is everything that concerns human activity in his life.

Meanwhile, Lubis (2022) explains about customs, namely customs are an implementation within the framework of a ceremony that is carried out for a specific purpose, including values and norms that must be obeyed by the people who accept it. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary, customs are rules that have been commonly spoken and practiced since ancient times: in the customary culture of Manggarai, North Satarmese District, all heirs have the right to be given to men. The form of cultural ideas consisting of cultural values, norms, laws, and rules, one with the other, becomes one system. The Manggarai community in North Satarmese District has wedding customs as a tradition that has been passed down by their ancestors from generation to generation, namely ceremonies carried out to form a family bond. In this marriage custom, the role of verbal and nonverbal communication is needed, with the aim of understanding the information, ideas, thoughts and decisions that will be conveyed.

Among the various tribes, the Manggarai tribe has its own traditions in terms of marriage, the procession that is carried out at a traditional Manggarai wedding has a series of events that are quite long. Manggarai traditional wedding ceremony which has its own characteristics. In the process of traditional Manggarai marriage, it is closely related to ethnographic studies. Ethnography is a special study that discusses culture or belief systems in an area (Sriyana, 2020).

As a result, the researcher will make use of semiotic theory due to the fact that in this marriage custom, the significance of signals and the cultural values they represent are extremely dense and significant. In every event that is carried out there are meanings contained in the traditional event and have cultural values that cannot be separated in the traditional marriage of manggarai, North Satarmese sub-district. The meaning of the sign in a traditional Manggarai marriage is *gerep ruha* (step on the egg), because in a traditional Manggarai marriage it must have the meaning of the sign.

Based on the background that has been described, this study aims to determine the cultural process of traditional marriages, the meaning of traditional signs, and examine traditional cultural values in traditional Manggarai marriages, North Satarmese District.

## **2. RESEARCH METHODS**

This research uses descriptive qualitative research. According to Anggito & Setiawan (2018), a qualitative approach is a research approach that presents descriptive data in the form of spoken words from the actors of interest. This type of qualitative research is research that describes an object naturally. It is the situation in this object that the researcher must adjust descriptively. In this qualitative research it is intended that the

research carried out can find the results.

In conducting research, research requires appropriate information with the aim that its validity can be accounted for. This research will be conducted using two types of data, namely qualitative data and quantitative data.

- 1) Quantitative data is data made through calculations in the form of numbers.
- 2) Qualitative data is data obtained in the form of descriptions through social research.

Qualitative data, namely by explaining systematically, analytically and logically from the problem. The author uses qualitative data because this research data is data from informants obtained from informants who are considered to know the most in detail and clearly about the research being studied, namely the meaning of signs and cultural values in the Manggarai customary marriage tradition, North Satarmese sub-district. In addition, the data obtained from the results obtained accurate data.

This research uses primary data and secondary data. Primary Data According to Sugiyono (2014) that primary sources are data sources that directly provide data to data collectors. Data collected through first parties, usually through trail interviews, and others. In this study, interviews were conducted with Mr. Matias Nodes, (A 65-year-old man with a married status). Meanwhile, secondary data is a source of data that is obtained by reading, understanding, studying through other media sourced from literature, books, and documents. From this research it can be concluded that secondary data sources are a way of reading, studying, and understanding with the availability of other sources before the research is carried out. So the data sources used in this study include: primary data sources are data obtained from the perpetrators of the event or people who witnessed the event happening directly. Here the researcher uses primary sources because there are community leaders and traditional leaders in Manggarai who are very helpful in obtaining information about this research.

Data collection was carried out by interview, observation, and documentation. The interview was conducted by asking and answering the customary leader (Tu'a Golo) to obtain in-depth data or information regarding the meaning of cultural signs and values in the Manggarai customary marriage tradition, North Satarmese sub-district. In this case the observation was carried out by directly observing the meaning of signs and cultural values in the Manggarai customary marriage tradition, North Satarmese sub-district. Meanwhile, documents that are formed in writing, for example, diaries, biographies, regulations, and policies. Documents in the form of images, for example photos, pictures, sketches, and so on. The documentation that was carried out in this study was by taking a picture in the form of a photo, and recording the results of interviews with related informants with video or audio.

According to Majids (2017), qualitative data analysis techniques are efforts made by working with data, organizing data, sorting it into units that can be managed, looking for and finding patterns, finding what is important and what is learned and deciding what that can be shared with others. The steps of data processing carried out are as follows:

- 1) Record data is transcribed from recorded and written forms.
- 2) The data that was transcribed was then translated into Indonesian.
- 3) Separate transcription of data in the form of sign meanings and values related to the traditional marriage ceremony of manggarai, North Satarmese sub-district.
- 4) Identification and grouping of data according to the direction of the research study.

Summarize the results of the analysis based on the description that was done before.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section the researcher explains the data from the current study. Data from the current study were obtained from interviews and documentation. The interview was conducted to find out the meaning of cultural signs and values in the Manggarai customary marriage tradition. Here the researcher only explains 3 questions such as: What is the cultural procession of the Manggarai traditional marriage, North Satarmese District?, What is the meaning of the sign in the Manggarai traditional marriage tradition, North Satarmese District? All of these questions were asked in order to obtain accurate data according to the formulation of the problem in the current study.

**Table 1. The Literary Elements Contained in Manggarai Traditional Marriages Are Torok or Poetry**

No	Element	Translation
1	<i>Pongo agu tiba meka: Denge di'a lite ema agu ende Ata poli pa'ang be le Mangan nggewit ite pong lonto Torok loce ca ami agu ite.</i>	Pre-proposal and reception Hear, O fathers and mothers Who have come to God's day. As for the reason we invite you to sit with us on this mat.
2	<i>Ai ami manga tura agu tombo kamping ite ai lonto laing loce dami lite ho'o wa cepa, rongko, agu tuak kudut mai pongo agu tiba meka empo dite.</i>	We would like to convey our intent and purpose to invite you to sit together at the pre-proposal and welcoming ceremony. And here are betel nut, cigarettes and palm wine for you to welcome the groom's family.
3	<i>oe tombo mu'u kanang lami kamping ite cau manuk lami tura agu tombo kamping ite kudut tiba meka pongo</i>	By carrying a rooster to get our point across. Tomorrow we will receive guests who will come to propose to your grandchildren.
4	<i>We'e Denge di'a Lite Morin agu ngaran Ata jari agu dedek nénggitu kole meucéki éma, céki ende ai diang kali lesan berkak mori agu ngaran</i>	Listen carefully, O God who protects and creates as well as you ancestors. The next day our baby will receive a blessing from God, the guardian and the creator in the Church.
5	<i>sembeng wua toko so'o nggér le gereja porong neho tae kali ga Ise sua paka wing do agu anak banar borek cala bocel Tai cala wa'i do koe wie tadang koe tae lesa neka cumang dungkan.</i>	so that as planned they both will have children and grandchildren. Keep away all obstacles and all obstacles both by night and during the day.
6	<i>tégi kole lami wancing nggaring we'ang gerak nai ngalis tuka ngengga pu'ung ise sua lawang agu wua tukad tai hitu tegi agu gésar dami porong neho tae pinga sina senget le.</i>	We also ask for your guidance and the light of your love, a gentle and wise heart for both of them and their children, that is our request to understand and hear our prayer.
7	<i>Torok tae persembahan perkawianan. Yo mori ata jari agu dedek, ata naring, hiang, agu suju lami. One lesa ho'o kami mori, anak serani hopi laing toni, halal laing bara mai ce mbaru dite ema Mori agu Ngaran</i>	God the creator we praise and worship. On this day we come to Your house Lord with surrender.

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8	<i>Ai leso ho ise tiba sakramen kawin, porom one sakramen kawin ho ise neka manga behas neho kena, neka manga koas neho kota.</i>	Today they will receive the sacrament of marriage, may they never be separated like a fence and like an array of stones.
9	<i>Wagal Mori agu Ngaran Baté Jari agu Dédek, nggitu kolé ami sanggén taung ende, ema iwo pa'ang be lé. Ai pung agu wangkan dami rintuk agu padir cama laing, pasék sapu sélék kopé weda rewa tuké para mbaru ngasang woé péang mai. Poro wake seler dé ngger wan saung bémbang ngger étan. Paténg déwa waé lesa hoga worok dé éta golo.</i>	Father in heaven. Today we gather wearing all the appropriate clothes for wagal custom. May life be strong like strong roots and lush leaves. May they always be strong in facing every challenge in life.
10	<i>Kawing Denge di'a le meu ende ceki ema le watu le tana nggtu kole ite Morin agu Ngaran ai gerak ho'o kudut ngger one gereja anak dami empo de meu landing tegi dami wie ho'o de manuk bakok kudut tei hang meu nggitu neng ite Mori agu Ngaran.</i>	Listen, O ancestors who inhabit the rock and land as well as you, Lord and owner, because today our child is going to church for your grandson.

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### 3.1. Data Analysis

Based on the research that has been done, the data consists of three parts, namely the wedding procession, the meaning of the sign of marriage and cultural values in the traditional marriage of Manggarai, North Satarmese District, so it can be analyzed as follows:

#### 3.1.1. Manggarai Traditional Marriage Cultural Procession

The basis of the traditional manggarai marriage is the love of husband and wife. proof of this expression must be confirmed in a customary event. The meaning of some of these sentences can be interpreted as the basis for the formation of a family that results from love between men and women. This love, so that it is put together in a traditional marriage process as a step to form a household. On the other hand, the foundation of the Manggarai traditional marriage, North Satarmese District, is the community's belief in the sacred values of existing customs. This belief has become a tradition and shows the strength of cultural history, especially customs in the process of forming a household life. In this wedding process we can see that the meaning of the presence of custom is very useful and must be preserved. Manggarai traditional marriage procession can be analyzed as follows:

a) *Pongo* (pre-proposal and receiving guests from the male family)

Before the bride and groom get engaged, they first carry out a traditional procession known as *reweng*. The purpose of this *reweng* event is that several male nuclear families come to the women's house to discuss matters related to *weda rewa tuke mbaru*, matters discussed at this meeting such as engagement dates, *belis* and other preparations.

From the quotation above, it is explained that pre-proposal, that is, the man comes to the woman's family. Situation where a representative from the male family together with the man concerned visited the house of the female family. In this stage the two parties who have their respective representations make an agreement regarding the *tuke mbaru* (engaged) talks. Apart from the male family who came in the form of a group, the contents

of the discussion at this meeting were also discussed, namely the amount of dowry charged to the parents which was borne by the men and also related to the wedding schedule. In other words, this engaged stage is the first step for a man to make an official proposal.

b) *Tuke mbaru* (engaged)

In this ceremony there is an official meeting between the extended family of men and women, through dialogue, negotiations which are driven by spokespersons (*tongka*) from each family. In this event, the male family brings *belis* and animals according to the agreement when they are fussy.

The quotation above explains that *Tuke mbaru* (*tuke*: goes up), enters *mbaru* (house). *Tuke mbaru* which means a man comes to propose to a woman to ask permission from the woman's parents to marry their daughter.

c) *Tukar Kila* (rings exchange)

If a man has found a woman as his future wife or vice versa, then both of them give a sign to each other. Where men and women give each other rings.

From the above quotation, it is clear that *Tukar Kila* is a bond of love between a man and a woman. Usually, when a *Tukar Kila* (ring exchange) has been held, the status of the relationship between the man and the woman is at the time of the fiancé. So that the bond is official, strong in custom. This symbol signifies that both men and women no longer accept proposals from other people. In the event of exchanging rings, there is an agreement between the two parties, if one of them violates the agreement, sanctions will be imposed. If the man cancels first, then the sanction that he gets is bringing *kaba ngalu rangga* (which means that he has to be paid horn to horn). Meanwhile, the sanction that women get if they cancel they have to prepare a pig to be given to the man in terms of the Manggarai people (*pongo wa ngaung*). This is in accordance with the customs of the ancient ancestors, *ela wase lima* which would be given to men as a sign of apology (*cemu ritak*), that is the consequence if one of the two decides to cancel the agreement that was agreed upon at the *Tukar Kila* (ring exchange).

d) *Bantang* (Pre-wedding)

“Conversations are closed or can also be called negotiations before marriage.”

The quotation above explains that this event involves the groom's family with representatives of the bride's parents negotiating the amount of dowry that must be given at the wedding. For example, the results of the negotiations are: 2 buffaloes, 5 horses, 50 million in cash.

e) *Kawing* (wedding)

*Kawing* is “a marriage between the two bride and groom as husband and wife which is confirmed in the Sacrament of Marriage and approved by family and relatives, both the extended family of the groom's side and the extended family of the bride's side.”

The quotation above explains that marriage is a union of two persons, a man and a woman, and goes through various series of processes. The two come together, tying a vow before the authorities to be eternally loyal. For the Catholic Church, marriage is a sacrament, that is, a sign and means that saves and unites, in which the union between the two is carried out by means of divine providence. For this reason, the sacrament of Marriage has various meanings, including, apart from manifesting the one and

inseparable relationship between Christ and His Church, but also means a means of presenting God who guides and accompanies, nurturing and cultivating love for one another in the sacred bond of marriage which is unbreakable and inseparable.

f) Certificate from the Church

After the bride and groom make their vows in front of the altar which is directly witnessed by the Pastor and the people present at the church, both are entitled to get an official marriage certificate.

The quotation above explains that, after going through *bantang* (pre-wedding), the bride and groom prepare various documents needed as a requirement to marry Catholic in the Church. These documents include baptismal certificates, birth certificates, ID card, and other documents. After fulfilling the requirements, the bride and groom can carry out their wedding which is witnessed by the priest and the people present at the church. When they have promised their allegiance in front of the Altar, according to the Church they have been declared legitimate as husband and wife and are entitled to a Church certificate.

g) *Belis* (dowry)

The extended male family brings *belis* in the form of animals and money according to the previous agreement. Then, the woman comes to sit with the man to declare that the bride has officially become part of the man's family.

*Belis* is a set of dowries given by a *huna's* son (male family) to *Wina's* child (girl's family) which is usually based on an agreement during pre-wedding. The dowry was in the form of money and animals. This event was intended so that all villagers (*pa'ang agu ngaung*) would know that the two of them had officially become husband and wife. At that time, a pig or buffalo was slaughtered and distributed to all villagers, so the term “*wegak sa'i ela, sikat sai kina atau cikat kina wagak atau wagal kaba, lancing sili*” (killing or slaughtering pigs) appeared. By giving “*belis*” the dignity of the male family is honored or raised because the man is considered capable of paying the “*belis*” determined by the woman's family. The woman's family feels valued. The purpose of giving “*belis*” is as a reward for services or respect for the tiredness, pain and toil of the parents during childbirth and caring for the girl until adulthood. By giving “*belis*” will also appear a new kinship between women's and men's families.

h) *Podo* (carrying off the bride)

*Podo* is a ceremony to send a wife to her husband's village. The *podo* ceremony is the last part of the whole series of wedding ceremonies according to the customs of the Manggarai people. This ceremony is a ceremony to deliver (*podo*) the bride to the groom's house.

*Podo* is taking the bride and groom to the village of the husband or the groom's family. Only young people who joined or went during the *podo* event, only women and the elderly. During the *podo*, the children of *Rona* brought rice and pork with them. *Wina's* daughter will prepare money as a thank you money (*seng wali*) which will be given to people who go to accompany the bride.

### **3.1.2. The Meaning of Signs in the Manggarai Traditional Marriage Tradition**

The relationship between the symbol and the symbolized is not one-way. The word flower, for example, does not only have a reciprocal relationship between images called

flowers but associative can also be associated with beauty, tenderness, affection, peace and so on. Therefore, in addition to being able to display symbolic awareness, symbolic awareness can also represent ideas, images, and configurations of ideas that transcend the shape of the symbol and image of the object itself. Thus, the conception of the meaning of a symbol is basically a representation of semantic characteristics which in the abstract can also form a certain unit of meaning. Based on the above data exposure can be analyzed as follows:

a. *Gerep Ruha* (stomp egg)

The event of Stepping on the eggs is: stepping on a chicken egg by the bride when she goes/enters her husband's village for the first time. The eggs prepared are free-range chicken eggs. Then when the bride wants to enter the traditional house (*ngo one mbaru tembong*), she must step on the egg (*gerep ruha*) with her left foot at the front door to enter the traditional house, until the free-range chicken egg breaks. After that, she and her husband immediately sat on the mat (*loce*) or foot cushions (*tange wai*) in front of the main pillar of the traditional house. The main pillar is called *siri humpback*. The symbol of stepping on the egg is that women and men are already valid that they are not two but one.

b. *Pentang Pitak* (cleaning mud)

*Pentang Pitak* is one of the rituals that must be performed in the marriage ceremony. The Manggarai people are obliged to carry out the *Pentang Pitak* ritual when they arrive at the *meka weru* 'accepting a new bride' in the groom's village. The purpose of this event is to free all diseases from both male and female families.

c. *Tukar Kila* (Rings Exchange)

This symbol signifies that both men and women no longer accept proposals from other people. in the event of exchanging rings there is an agreement between the two parties if one of them violates the agreement then sanctions will be imposed. If the man cancels first, then the sanction that he gets is bringing *kaba ngalu rangga* (which means that he has to be paid horn to horn). while the sanction that women get if they cancel they have to prepare a pig to be given to the man in terms of the Manggarai people (*pongo wa ngaung*). This is in accordance with the customs of the ancient ancestors, *ela wase lima* which would be given to men as a sign of apology (*cemu ritak*), that is the consequence if one of the two decides to cancel the agreement that was agreed upon at the *Tukar Kila* (ring exchange).

d. *Paca* (belis)

*Belis* is a set of dowries given by a huna's son (male family) to Wina's child (girl's family) which is usually based on an agreement during pre-wedding. The dowry was in the form of money and animals. This event was intended so that all villagers (*pa'ang agungaung*) would know that the two of them had officially become husband and wife. At that time, a pig or buffalo was slaughtered and distributed to all villagers, so the term "*wegak sa'i ela, brush sai kina or cikat kina wagak or wagal kaba, lancng sili*" (killing or slaughtering pigs) appeared. By giving "*belis*" the dignity of the male family is honored or raised because the man is considered capable of paying the "*belis*" determined by the woman's family. The woman's family feels valued. The purpose of giving "*belis*" is as a reward for services or respect for the tiredness, pain and toil of the parents during childbirth and caring for the girl until adulthood. By giving "*belis*" a new kinship will

emerge between the woman's and the man's family.

### **3.1.3. Cultural Values in the Manggarai Traditional Marriage Tradition**

#### **a. Economic Value**

In the customary marriage system of the Manggarai people, it can be seen that gender applies, in this case the relationship is socially constructed, where things are felt very hard for the younger generation because a man who wants to marry a girl has to pay the amount of *belis* requested by the woman's family. The value of a woman is constructed by her parents with very fantastic values. Thus, a man cannot marry a girl according to custom if his *belis* is not in accordance with the agreement, because *belis* is a value that is upheld in the traditional marriage of the Manggarai community, there is no traditional marriage without *belis* because this is where the uniqueness or uniqueness of marriage lies. the customs of the Manggari people.

#### **b. Religious Value**

Catholic marriages cannot be easily divorced by humans. Catholic marriage is “eternal” and binding, because it is sealed by the Church. The sealing of the marriage bond is signified by receiving the sacrament of marriage. Through the sacrament of marriage, the Catholic Church confirms the couple before God and the people. “They are no longer two, but one” and “What God has joined together, man must not separate”, implies that God wants a legal relationship in marriage.

#### **c. Social Value**

The amount of *belis* is constructed by men by looking at situations and conditions based on a person's social status belonging to a woman's family, the higher a person's social status.

#### **d. Moral values**

Married couples have an obligation to be responsible for everything that happens in the household. As in fulfilling daily needs, and carrying out their duties and responsibilities as husband and wife.

#### **e. Religious Value**

The spirit of community life based on a sense of love is *Torok's* speech related to marriage. This ritual is commonly called *Wagal*. In his speech, *Torok Wagal* does not mention anything about dowry but contains prayers and hopes and advice so that the household to be built is strong and cannot be separated.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Marriage for the Manggarai people is not just building a relationship between two individuals but an alliance between two broader community groups, namely the relatives of the two bride and groom, marriage is an attempt to build a household life. Manggarai marriage has stages such as *pongo* (pre-engagement), *tuke mbaru* (engagement), *Tukar Kila* (rings exchange), *bantang* (pre-wedding), *kawing* (married), *belis* (wedding ring), *podo* (carrying off the bride).

The term sign can also be identified with a form that has meaning. Meaning is the relationship between signifiers and their objects. It should be noted, meaning has an important role in a sign because a sign contains meaning and information. There are two meanings of the sign in a traditional Manggarai marriage, namely: *Gerep ruha* (stepping on the egg) with meaning that a broken egg is the official symbol of entering the husband's family. Meanwhile, the water of the broken egg fills the layered leaves with a meaning, hopefully it will give birth to many children, arranged in layers like the leaves.

*Pentang pitak* (cleaning mud) ceremony uses a pig/goat slaughtered animal to invoke the ancestors with the aim of freeing all diseases from both male and female families. Culture is very closely related to society. Everything contained in society is determined by the culture that is owned by the community itself. Culture, something that is hereditary from one generation to another, is then referred to as superorganic. Culture contains the whole meaning of values, social norms, knowledge as well as all social, religious and other structures. In this case, the cultural values in the traditional manggarai marriage tradition exist, namely Economic Values, Religious Values, Social Values, and Moral Values

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