

Unit 4: Nominal Sentences

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Unit 4 Vocabulary

Numbers (1-10)

	Masculine	Feminine	English
ⲁ	ⲁⲓⲛ	ⲁⲓ	One
Ⲃ	Ⲃⲓⲛ	Ⲃⲓⲛ ⲛ	Two
ⲃ	ⲃⲓⲛ	ⲃⲓ ⲛ	Three
Ⲅ	Ⲅⲓⲛ	Ⲅⲓⲛ ⲁ	Four
ⲅ	ⲅⲓⲛ	ⲅⲓ ⲛ	Five
Ⲇ	Ⲇⲓⲛ	Ⲇⲓ	Six
ⲇ	ⲇⲓ ⲃⲓ	ⲇⲓ ⲃⲓ	Seven
Ⲉ	Ⲉⲓⲛ	Ⲉⲓⲛⲓ	Eight
ⲉ	ⲉⲓ	ⲉⲓ ⲛ	Nine
Ⲋ	Ⲋⲓ	Ⲋⲓ ⲛ	Ten

Occupational Nouns

Coptic	English	Gender	Irregular Plural
ⲁⲓⲛ	servant	M	ⲁⲓⲛⲓ
ⲁⲓⲛ	servant	F	ⲁⲓⲛⲓ
ⲁ ⲛ	writer	M/F	ⲁ ⲛⲓ
ⲁ ⲃⲓ ⲃⲓ	reader	M	
ⲁⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓ	reader	M	
ⲁ ⲃⲓⲛ	singer	M	
ⲁ ⲃⲓⲛⲓ	teacher	M	
ⲁ ⲃⲓ ⲛⲓⲛⲓ	iconographer	M	
ⲁⲓⲛⲓ	physician	M/F	
ⲁ ⲃⲓⲛⲓ	baptizer	M	
ⲁⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓ	prophet	M/F	
ⲁⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓ	psalmist	M	
ⲁⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓ	shepherd/shepherdess	M/F	

ⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ ⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ	archdeacon	M	
ⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ	deacon	M	
ⲁⲓⲁⲓ	priest	M	
ⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ	presbyter (priest)	M	
ⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ	bishop	M	
ⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ	metropolitan	M	
ⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ	patriarch	M	
ⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ	monastic	M/F	
ⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ	hermit	M	
ⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ ⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ	archimandrite	M	
ⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ	apostle	M	
ⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ	disciple	M	
ⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ	evangelist	M	
ⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ	martyr	M/F	
ⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ	beloved	M/F	ⲁⲓⲁⲓ ⲥ
ⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓⲁⲓ	general	M	

Lesson 1: Nominal Tripartite Sentences (Definite Predicate)

Sentences

A sentence is a set of words that contains a subject (what the sentence is about) and a predicate (what is said about the subject). The predicate always contains a verb.

- This is a sentence.
 - "This" is the subject
 - "is a sentence" is the predicate.
 - "is" is the verb
- That man is the ruler.
 - "That man" is the subject
 - "is the ruler" is the predicate
 - "is" is the verb
- John and Mike read many books this summer.
 - "John and Mike" are the subject
 - "read many books this summer" is the predicate
 - "read" is the verb
- Smoke rises.
 - "Smoke" is the subject
 - "rises" is the verb which serves as the whole predicate
- The boy is riding his bike down a long, windy road without stopping
 - "The boy" is the subject
 - Everything else is the predicate

Nominal Sentences

In Coptic, a sentence can be made in which a noun or noun equivalent serves as the predicate (i.e. without the use of a verb). This is called a Nominal Sentence. In English, this would look something like: "Very interesting, those books!" The subject is "those books" and the predicate is "very interesting." The verb is implied to be "be (is/are)" (i.e. "Those books 'are' very interesting.").

In Coptic, there are three patterns of nominal sentences:

- **A B** (Bipartite)
- **A <copula> B** (Tripartite)
- **A B <copula>** (Tripartite)

Copula

The copula is a connecting word; in particular, it is a form of the verb "to be" connecting a subject and a complement. In English, an example would be "You smell nice." Instead of "Your smell is nice" which uses the "is" conjugation of the verb "be," "smell" acts as a copula.

In Coptic, there are three copulas.

Masculine (am/is)	Feminine (am/is)	Plural (are)
ⲁⲓ	ⲁⲓⲓ	ⲁⲓⲓⲓ

In this section, we will study a couple forms of a tripartite sentence. In a future lesson, we will look at bipartite sentences. Tripartite sentences have three components:

- Subject
- Copula
- Predicate

It can take on several forms depending on whether the predicate is definite or indefinite. The rules for choosing the gender and number of the copula are as follows:

1. When both the subject and object are nouns and agree in gender and number with each other, the copula will also agree in gender and number with them.
2. If there is a disagreement in gender or number, then the copula in the masculine form (ⲁⲓ) is used.
3. If the subject is a pronoun in the 1st or 2nd person (i.e. ⲉⲃⲉⲛ ⲉⲃⲉⲛ ⲉⲃⲉⲛ ⲉⲃⲉⲛ ⲉⲃⲉⲛ) then the masculine singular form (ⲁⲓ) is used regardless of the gender and number of the object.

In a sentence, the subject is who or what the sentence is about (and more specifically, the noun or pronoun that performs the verb in the sentence); the predicate gives more information about the subject. For example, in English:

- "The man is a teacher" - the subject is "the man" and the verb here is "is" so the (indefinite) predicate is "a teacher."
- "The teacher is a man" - the subject is "the teacher" and the (indefinite) predicate is "a man."
- "The teacher is the man" - the subject is "the teacher" and the (definite) predicate is "the man."
- "This man is a teacher" - the subject is "This man", the verb is "is" and the (indefinite) predicate is "a teacher."
- "This man is my teacher" - the subject is "This man", the verb is "is" and the (definite) predicate is "my teacher."

Definite Predicate

There are several forms of a nominal tripartite sentence. The first structure is used when both the subject and the object are definite noun phrases. At this point, we can define a "definite noun

phrase" as any of the following; nouns with a definite article, nouns with a possessive article, nouns with a demonstrative article, pronouns.

Note that the word "predicate" is the more accurate term for what is referred to as the "object" below. However, "predicate" has a different meaning in Coptic than in English. In English, the "predicate" includes the verb (or copula). For that reason, I've chosen to use the word "object."

<Definite Subject> <Copula> <Definite Predicate>

<Definite Predicate> <Copula> <Definite Subject>

Definite Subject	Copula	Definite Object	Translation
ᠠᠨᠠ ᠤᠯᠤᠰ	ᠤ	ᠠᠨᠠ ᠶᠡᠮᠤ	This man is my father
ᠠᠨᠠ ᠤᠯᠤᠰ	ᠤ	ᠠᠨᠠ ᠶᠡᠮᠤ	This man is the father
ᠠᠨᠠ ᠤᠯᠤᠰ ᠵᠡᠮᠡ	ᠤ	ᠠᠨᠠ ᠶᠡᠮᠡ	This woman is the mother
ᠠᠨᠠ ᠤᠯᠤᠰ ᠵᠡᠮᠡ	ᠤ	ᠠᠨᠠ ᠶᠡᠮᠡ	This woman is their mother
ᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠ	ᠤ	ᠠᠨᠠ ᠶᠡᠮᠡ ᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠ ᠠ	These Christians are the children of God
ᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠ	ᠤ	ᠠᠨᠠ ᠵᠡᠮᠡ	The queen is my mother

What is the difference between the subject and object in this case? How do you know if the noun is the subject or the object? Does it even matter?

Consider the following [English] sentence: "I am the ruler." - What is the subject and what is the predicate/object? It is ambiguous! If the sentence is in response to the question "Who is the ruler?," then "the ruler" is the subject and "I" is the object. If the sentence is in response to the question "Who are you?" then "I" is the subject and "the ruler" is the object.

Application

Application 1:

This is an excerpt from the Reconciliation Prayer of the Liturgy of St Gregory.

	For you are the provider and the giver of all goodness
--	--

1.

Application 2:

This is an excerpt from the Diptych of the Liturgy of St Gregory.

\ [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] † [] [] [] [] []

For you are God the merciful

Application 3:

The hymn $\square\square \cdot 2\square\square$ x.

Biblical Examples

ᵐᶜᵒ ᵑᵒ ᵐᶜᵒ ᱦᵒᵒ ᵕᵕᵕᵕᵕᵕ	He is the propitiation of our sins (1 John 2:2)
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Exercises

Exercise 1: Translate to Coptic

Translate the following into Coptic:

1.

Exercise 2: Translate to English

Translate the following phrases into English:

1. 三个空位 q 两个空位 五个空位
2. 四个空位 两个空位 一个空位 两个空位
3. 四个空位 两个空位 四个空位
4. 三个空位 两个空位 一个空位 四个空位
5. 五个空位 两个空位 两个空位 两个空位

Exercise 3: Practice Text

Translate the following text:

[illegible]

Resources

- "A Study in Bohairic Coptic" by Nabil Matar; p162
- See Moawad Daoud Lesson 2
- See Sameh Younan page 59 in the PDF
- ACTS 2990 Introduction to the Coptic Language (Bohairic) with Hany Takla Lesson 3A

Lesson 2: Nominal Tripartite Sentences (Indefinite Predicate)

Indefinite Predicate Sentences

There are two forms of nominal tripartite sentences when the object is indefinite. These forms are translated to English in the same way as the ones with a definite object.

The forms are:

<Definite Subject> <Indefinite Object> <Copula>

<Definite Subject>	<Indefinite Object>	ⲁⲓ /ⲁⲓ /ⲁⲓ	Translation
ⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲩⲓⲥⲁ	ⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲩⲓⲥⲁ	ⲙⲓ	my father is a man
ⲙⲓ	ⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲩⲓⲥⲁ	ⲙⲓ	I am a man
ⲙⲓ	ⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲩⲓⲥⲁ	ⲙⲓ	I am a woman
ⲙⲓ	ⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲩⲓⲥⲁ	ⲙⲓ	She is a mother
ⲙⲓ	ⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲩⲓⲥⲁ	ⲙⲓ	They are women
ⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲩⲓⲥⲁ	ⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲩⲓⲥⲁ	ⲙⲓ	He is a teacher
ⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲩⲓⲥⲁ	ⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲩⲓⲥⲁ	ⲙⲓ	This man is a physician
ⲙⲓ	ⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲩⲓⲥⲁ	ⲙⲓ	My brother is a physician
ⲙⲓ	ⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲩⲓⲥⲁ	ⲙⲓ	My father is a presbyter (priest)

<Indefinite Object> <Copula> <Definite Subject>

<Indefinite Object>	ⲁⲓ /ⲁⲓ /ⲁⲓ	<Definite Subject>	Translation
ⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲩⲓⲥⲁ	ⲙⲓ	ⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲩⲓⲥⲁ	my father is a man
ⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲩⲓⲥⲁ	ⲙⲓ	ⲙⲓ	I am a man
ⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲩⲓⲥⲁ	ⲙⲓ	ⲙⲓ	I am a woman

Application

Application 1:

This is an excerpt from

Application 2:

ᐱᐅ ᑭᓂᐅᐅᐅᐅ ᐱᐅ `ᐅᐅᐅᐅ      ᑭᐅᐅ    ᓂᐅᐅ    ᑭᐅᐅ    `ᐅ ᑭᐅᐅᐅᐅ ᐅᐅ	His clothing is from camel hairs (Matthew 3:4)
ᐅᐅᐅᐅ ᐅᐅ ᐅᐅᐅ ᓂᐅᐅ ᐅᐅ ᐅᐅ `ᐅᐅᐅᐅ ᐅᐅ	Joseph, her husband, was a righteous [person] (Matthew 1:19)
ᐅᐅ `ᐅᐅᐅᐅ ᑭᐅᐅᐅ ᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅ ᐅᐅ ᑭᐅᐅᐅᐅ ᐅᐅ	He is the one from a holy spirit (Matthew 1:20)
ᐅᐅ `ᐅ ᓂᐅᐅ    ᐅᐅ ᑭᐅᐅᐅᐅ                  ᐅᐅ    ᐅᐅᐅ    `ᖃᐅᐅᐅᐅ	an open tomb is their throat (Psalms 13:4)
ᐅᐅ ᓂᐅᐅ `ᐅᐅᐅ        ᐅᐅ ᑭᐅᐅᐅ        ᓂᐅᐅ ᓂᐅᐅ `ᐅᐅᐅᐅ ᐅᐅ	The judgments of the Lord are true judgments (Psalms 18:9)

Exercise 1: Translate to Coptic

Exercise 2: Translate to English

1. 1111 q 111111 11
2. 1111 11 1 2111 11
3. 1111 1111 11
4. 111 11111 11
5. 1111 211 11111 11
6. 111111 211 w111 11
7. 11111 211 21111 11

Resources

- "A Study in Bohairic Coptic" by Nabil Matar; p162
- See Moawad Daoud Lesson 2
- See Sameh Younan page 59 in the PDF
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Lesson 3: Nominal Bipartite Sentences

Nominal Bipartite Sentences

In the previous lessons, we studied several forms of Nominal Tripartite Sentences. They are enumerated here:

- <Definite Subject> <Copula> <Definite Object>
- <Definite Object> <Copula> <Definite Subject>
- <Definite Subject> <Indefinite Object> <Copula>
- <Indefinite Object> <Copula> <Definite Subject>

We defined a Tripartite Sentence as a sentence with three parts (hence the name), so naturally a Bipartite Sentence will be a sentence with two parts. We'll use the same building blocks as in the last two lessons.

We have two forms of Nominal Bipartite Sentences:

<Subject> <Object>

In this sentence structure, the copula or the "is/am/are" is assumed and understood by the context of the sentence. This structure is common found with personal pronouns as the subject, although it could be used with a regular definite noun as the subject. This structure is also commonly found when a demonstrative pronoun is the object.

<Subject>	<Object>	Translation
אני	אני נביא	I am a prophet
אתה	אתה משיח	You are the Christ
אנחנו	אנחנו יהודים	We are Jews
זה בן דוד	זה	This is my son
האיש	האיש נביא	The man is a prophet

<Object> <Copula>

In this sentence structure, the subject is assumed to be the relevant pronoun (i.e. it, he, they, etc.), and the object is what is specified. The object here can be an indefinite noun, a definite noun, a possessive noun, a pronoun, etc.

<Object>	<Copula>	Translation
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ⲁⲓⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	he is my father
ⲁⲓⲙⲓ ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉ	she is my mother
ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	they are my brothers
ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	he is the wise one
ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	she is the wise one
ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	he is a man
ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	she is a woman
ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	they are ships
ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	this is it (m.)
ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	this is it (f.)
ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	they are these

Naturally, this would take on a different translation when the object is a personal pronoun (since it doesn't make much sense to say "he is him" or "she is her").

<Object>	<Copula>	Translation
ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	it is I
ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	it is us
ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	it is you (m.)
ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	it is you (f.)
ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	it is you (pl.)
ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	it is him
ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	it is her
ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣⲉⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	ⲙⲁⲧⲁⲣ	it is them

Application

Application 1:

This is an excerpt from <>.

1.

Exercises

Exercise 1: Translate to Coptic

Translate the following into Coptic:

1.

Exercise 2: Translate to English

Translate the following phrases into English:

1.

Resources

"A Study in Bohairic Coptic" by Nabil Matar; p162

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Lesson 4: Negative Nominal Sentence Construction

Indefinite Pronoun -??-

An indefinite pronoun is a pronoun that does not refer to any person, place, or thing in particular. Some examples of indefinite pronouns in English are: "anything" - "something" - "anyone" - "anywhere" - "someone" - "somewhere" - etc. The infix -**𐎠𐎡𐎴**- is a noninflectional word element that is inserted between the noun prefix and the noun. It expresses the meaning "other" and can be used with definite or indefinite articles, demonstrative articles and possessive articles.

𐎠𐎡𐎴𐎧𐎺𐎠	the other man	Definite Article (m.)
𐎠𐎡𐎴𐎧𐎺𐎠𐎵	the other men	Definite Article (f.)
𐎧𐎺𐎠 𐎡𐎴𐎧𐎺𐎠	the other woman	Definite Article (pl.)
𐎠𐎡𐎴𐎧𐎺𐎠 * 𐎧𐎺𐎠	another man	Indefinite Article (s.)
𐎡𐎴𐎧𐎺𐎠𐎧𐎺𐎠	some other men	Indefinite Article (pl.)
𐎧𐎺𐎠𐎧𐎺𐎠	this other man	Demonstrative Article (m.)
𐎧𐎺𐎠𐎧𐎺𐎠𐎧𐎺𐎠	my other man	Possessive Article (1s.)

*Note that for the singular indefinite noun, the singular indefinite article **𐎧𐎺𐎠** is dropped. However, in the case of the plural, the plural indefinite article **𐎡𐎴𐎧𐎺𐎠** is kept.

Nominal Sentences: Negative Construction

All of the nominal sentences we have taken so far are of positive construction (e.g. "This man is my father"). Negating the sentence (e.g. "This man is not my father") is achieved by placing the particle **𐎧𐎺𐎠** (sometimes **𐎧𐎺𐎠𐎵**) before the object and **𐎧𐎺𐎠** before the copula. Below, we will discuss negating both types of bipartite sentences, and all four types of tripartite sentences that we have taken thus far.

When do we use **𐎧𐎺𐎠** versus **𐎧𐎺𐎠𐎵**? **𐎧𐎺𐎠𐎵** is used when the following letter is: **𐎧 𐎡 𐎠 𐎡 𐎧**

<Object> <Copula>

𐎧𐎺𐎠 𐎧𐎺𐎠	he is my father
𐎧𐎺𐎠𐎵 𐎧𐎺𐎠 𐎧𐎺𐎠	he is not my father
𐎧𐎺𐎠𐎧𐎺𐎠𐎧𐎺𐎠 𐎧𐎺𐎠	he is a bishop
𐎧𐎺𐎠𐎧𐎺𐎠𐎧𐎺𐎠𐎧𐎺𐎠 𐎧𐎺𐎠 𐎧𐎺𐎠	he is not a bishop

<Subject> <Object>

This sentence type cannot be negated. To negate it, you will need a copula which will make it a tripartite sentence.

<Definite Subject> <Copula> <Definite Object>

  	this man is my father
   	this man is not my father
  	this is the man
   	this is not the man

<Definite Object> <Copula> <Definite Subject>

 	my father is this man
 	my father is not this man

<Definite Subject> <Indefinite Object> <Copula>

	my mother is a teacher
	my mother is not a teacher

<Indefinite Object> <Copula> <Definite Subject>

☐ 女 2人 ☐ 男	I am a woman
☐ 女 2人 ☐ 男 ☐ 男	I am not a woman

Application

Application 1:

This is an excerpt from the Orthodox Creed.

光之光明 眞神眞神 受生非受生 有 一 眞神 眞神 眞神 眞神 眞神 眞神 眞神 眞神 眞神 眞神 眞神 眞神 眞神 眞神 眞神 眞神 眞神 眞神 眞神 眞神	light of light; true God of true God; begotten not created, of one essence with the Father
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1.   - he is begotten
2.    - he is not created
3.  \    \  - he is one essence with the father

Exercises

Exercise 1: Translate to Coptic

Translate the following into Coptic:

- 1.

Exercise 2: Translate to English

Translate the following phrases into English:

- 1.

Resources

"A Study in Bohairic Coptic" by Nabil Matar; p162

See Moawad Daoud Lesson 2

See Sameh Younan page 59 in the PDF

ACTS 2990 Introduction to the Coptic Language (Bohairic) with Hany Takla Lesson 3A

Lesson 5: Relative Nominal Sentence Construction

Relative Nominal Sentences

Application

Application 1:

This is an excerpt from <>.

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1.

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Lesson 6: Interrogatives

Interrogative Form

Application

Application 1:

This is an excerpt from <>.

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1.

Exercises

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