

Socio-Religious Life Depicted in Hoysala Temples: A Special Reference in The Reign of Hoysala Someshwara

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Abstract—Vaishnava, Shaiva, and Jaina temples were constructed under the Hoysalas' reign, but every other temple constructed during this time period is essentially the same. Understanding the social, economic, cultural, and religious life of the era is quite beneficial. With the exception of the temples at Govindanahalli and Tandaga, the temples constructed during this period are essentially the same in terms of their heights, wall decorations, sizes, and construction materials.

An excellent temple with an elevated jagati is Hosabudanur. Nevertheless, there are no wall sculptures in the temples at Nuggehalli. All things considered, the wall sculptures and the sculptures within the temples are quite beneficial for comprehending the social, cultural, and religious contributions made to Indian civilisation throughout Someshwara's time. The fourth frieze of the Nagarapuram Temples features carvings of the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavatas, and Puranic tales.

It's fascinating to observe the later structures during King Someshwara's reign, particularly in front of the temple that is connected to Mukhamantapas. All of these extra buildings were constructed utilising granite during the Vijayanagara dynasty. This provides the temples with another open courtyard. The additional granite constructions are straightforward and lack considerable embellishment in contrast to the Hoysala style, which features wall sculptures and pillar patterns.

During Wodeyar's rule in Mysore, some of the temples were also constructed with additional constructions during the Palegar era. The extra buildings are seen in temples such as Sadashiva Temple (Nuggehalli), Lakshminarayana Temple (Hosaholalu), and Lakshmi Narasimha Temple (Javagal).

These other structures remain intact. There is no spoiling or damage, and none of the frieze or wall sculptures-not even the eaves-are damaged. These wall sculptures and friezes can be appropriately maintained if any of these extra granite constructions are taken down or separated from the original Hoysala structures on any particular day. Despite their elegance, beauty, and attractiveness, the Hoysala temples pale in contrast to the Vijayanagara-

style Dravidian temples of the same era in terms of height and scale. The Vijayanagara kings likely kept this in mind when they expanded the Hoysala temples that were already there.

Index Terms—Someshwara, Temples, Hoysalas, Sculptures, Palegars, Dravidian style, Vijayanagara.

OBJECTIVES: -

Objectives of the study is to study the valuable historical monuments of the Hoysala Someshwara rule of Hoysala Dynasty of Karnataka region.

1. TO ANALYZE THE SOCIO-RELIGIOUS THEMES DEPICTED IN THE HOYSALA SOMESHWARA TEMPLES:

This objective involves identifying and interpreting the various themes related to social and religious life that are depicted in the temple sculptures, carvings, and paintings.

2. TO EXAMINE THE REPRESENTATION OF DAILY LIFE IN THE HOYSALA SOMESHWARA TEMPLES:

This objective involves studying the depiction of everyday activities, such as agriculture, trade, and domestic life, in the temple art and architecture.

3. TO INVESTIGATE THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN HOYSALA SOCIETY AS DEPICTED IN THE TEMPLES:

This objective involves analyzing the representation of women in the temple art and architecture, and understanding their social and religious roles in Hoysala society.

4. TO UNDERSTAND THE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF THE HOYSALAS AS DEPICTED IN THE TEMPLES:

This objective involves studying the depiction of various deities, rituals, and mythological scenes in the temple art and architecture, and understanding the religious context in which they were created.

5. TO EXPLORE THE CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND INFLUENCES REFLECTED IN THE HOYSALA SOMESHWARA TEMPLES:

This objective involves analyzing the depiction of various cultural and artistic influences, such as Chola, Chalukya, and Jain, in the temple art and architecture, and understanding the cultural exchange and synthesis that occurred during the Hoysala period.

These objectives provide a framework for exploring the socio-religious life depicted in the Hoysala Someshwara temples, and can help guide research and analysis on this topic.

METHODOLOGY: -

For this study I used the secondary data from the well-known books, articles, inscriptions which found in the temples and also website is selected for this study.

OUTCOMES: -

1. A comprehensive understanding of the socio-religious life depicted in the Hoysala Someshwara temples
2. Insights into the cultural, social, and historical context of the Hoysala dynasty and its temples
3. A detailed analysis of the iconography, symbolism, and themes depicted in temple art and architecture
4. A contribution to the existing scholarship on Hoysala art, architecture, and history.

I. INTRODUCTION

Throughout Karnataka's and South India's history, the Hoysala Dynasty is one of the most renowned and significant eras. When Someshwara was a child, his father, Narasimha II, was still in charge. Someshwara rose to become the king of Tamilnadu, while Kannanur served as the capital of Karnataka. Another Karnataka capital was Dwara Samudra. In the study of Hoysala history, the two inscriptions of Someshwara Swamy Temple are crucial. A comprehensive

genealogy of the Hoysala Dynasty from its beginnings under the name "Sala" until his rule is provided by one of the primary inscriptions found within the sole surviving Panchalingeshwara temple.

The temples in Nuggehalli, Javagal, Nagalapuram, Hosabudanur, Govindana Halli, and Tandaga that were constructed during the time of King Someshwara are extremely important. However, the architecturally remarkable "Panchalingeshwara temple" is unusual since only the "Chatushkuta" temple in Doddagaddahalli and the Panchakuta temple in Govindanahalli were constructed using chlorotic schist stone.

The Panchalingeshwara temple at Govindanahalli lacks raised Jagati, or horizontal friezes, in place of adhistana. The Shaiva temple's small-scale relief wall sculptures are intriguing since they show 24 distinct incarnations of Vishnu. Fourth friezes, which are usually carved with tales from the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavata, and Puranas, are notably blank in the temples of Nagalapuram.

The reign of King Someshwara is further made fascinating by the building of later era structures, especially in front of the temple belonging to Mukhamantapas. All of these extra constructions were constructed using granite during the Vijayanagara period. That serves as an extra open courtyard for these temples. The Hoysala style, which includes pillar patterns and wall sculptures, has more embellishment and ornaments than the other granite constructions.

II. BRIEF POLITICAL HISTORY

From the beginning of the 11th century to the middle of the 14th century A.D.¹, Before being overthrown by the Mohammadan kings of North India, the Hoysala dynasty thrived in South India, especially in the Karnataka region and certain parts of Tamilnadu. It is noteworthy that the Hoysalas had maintained their administrative and political dominance for about 400 years despite their Hindu and Jaina traditions.² No other South Indian dynasty in history may have had as much of an influence on the advancement and successes in the domains of literature, art and architecture, and the social and economic development of the country in general and South India in particular.

III. STYLES OF TEMPLE CONSTRUCTION

Significant changes had place in Southern Karnataka after the Gangas of Talakad fell. The Kalyana Chalukyas, who built several temples in the Dravidian and Vesara styles, reigned over northern Karnataka for about a century after the Rastrakutas. It is crucial to remember how the Badami Chalukya architectural style impacted the evolution of several temple art and architecture traditions in South India and Karnataka. The Kalyana Chalukyas also made a substantial contribution to the art and architecture of Karnataka temples by using soap stone to build exquisite temples.

Hoysala dynasty rulers also adopted same material for the construction with some modification and improvement in the style of temple construction as well as in the minute details of carving in the temple art.³ For the construction of classical style of temples by the Hoysalas also taken some important architectural elements from Nagara style of temples from North India and some important elements from Dravidian style also.⁴ The addition of star shapes to the outside walls of Garbhagriha and Sukanasi has also given the sculptors more room to create beautiful decorative carvings and wall decorations with intricate carvings, especially of gems and ornaments

This indicates that the development of temple building activities has been ongoing since the time of the Gangas in South Karnataka and the Badami Chalukyas in North Karnataka. The Chalukyas of Badami brought the Dravidian style of temple building to South India, with rock-cut temples like the Chikka Devalaya at Aihole and tiny temples like Bananthi Gudi at Mahakuta and close to Ravana Padi.⁶ This particular style of temple construction is a major contribution for the development, evolution and unique style of architecture is also continued in Tamilnadu during the Chola period.⁷ From the Badami Chalukyas to the Rastrakutas, Nolamba, Kalyana Chalukyas, Hoysalas, Vijayanagara, and even the Mysore Wodeyar's, it persisted in Karnataka.⁸

Between the Badami Chalukyas and the Kalyani Chalukyas, as well as throughout the Hoysala period, temples in the Vesara style were still being constructed. Following the Hoysalas, the usage of soapstone or chlorotic schist and the Vesara style of temple architecture all but vanished from India.

After a dynasty or country has acquired stability in its political, economic, and social affairs, it is usually able to concentrate more on religious pursuits like art and architecture and carry out noteworthy experiments in the construction of temples. The biggest instances of this include the Vijayanagara period, the Ganga, the Rastrakutas, the Kalyana Chalukyas, the Hoysalas, and the Badami Chalukyas. Karnataka is rich in art and architecture now only because of the contributions these dynasties contributed to our culture, legacy, religion, and art history.

IV. VIRA SOMESHVARA'S PERIOD

Vira Someshvara's reign is superior to all of the Hoysala rulers in terms of these kinds of social and cultural activity. Someshvara, also known as Sovideva, succeeded his father, Narasimha II, after his death in 1234 A.D. Prior to that, Someshvara was known as "Maharajadhiraja" while he was in Kannanur in the year 1229 A.D.⁹ After winning his battle with the Yadavas of Devagiri, Someshvara arrived in Dwarasamudram that same year and was once more addressed as Maharaja.

This suggests that he was referred to as Maharaja or crowned as King or Maharaja during the time of his father, King Someshvara. The Hoysala domain in Tamilnadu, which had Kannanur as its capital, was also known as Vikramapura. The settlement, eight kilometres north of Srirangam, is now entirely ruined and hard to locate, although Hultzsch called it Kannanur.

Singhana (1210–1247 A.D.), Jaithugi, Krishna Kandhara, the Yadavas of Devagiri, Rajaraja-III (1216–1243 A.D.), Rajendra Chola of the Chola dynasty, and Sundara Pandya-I of the Pandya dynasty all ruled within the same time period as Vira Someshvara (1243–1267 A.D.).

The administrative, political, cultural, social, and religious achievements of King Someshvara may be studied through a variety of literary, archaeological, and epigraphic sources. Many of the major achievements of King Someshvara are recorded and examined here, using primary sources and frequent field research of temples constructed during his rule.

V. CONTRIBUTION OF SOMESWARA'S TEMPLE CONSTRUCTION

Temples in Hoysala are well known for their contributions to people's religious, social, and cultural life, dating back to the Hoysala era. The Hoysala temple is said to as a "Socio Economical and Religious institution by itself" for this reason. It may be supported by examining each temple to have a deeper comprehension of the social life that the sculptures portray in the temples.

It is now clear that building such temples requires a large investment over a lengthy period of time by one dynasty. Numerous inscriptions can be utilised as primary sources for upkeep, yearly festivities, and yearly repairs, even if there is no evidence of the amount spent on the establishment of such socioeconomic religious organisations. The temples received the land in their honour, and the products made there are utilised and accounted for there. The Village Head, Ministers, or Dandanayakas shall use the funds prudently and carry out the task in a systematic way. This well-thought-out strategy maintained the temples in good shape.

After the Hoysala monarchy, this system totally collapsed, leaving no one to continue maintaining the temples. Even when the country's Hindu, Jaina, or Buddhist-backed monarchy entirely disintegrated, the religious spirit of the populace also crumbled, and temples were neglected, with the majority of them either completely fallen or wrecked.

VI. THE MAIN INTENTION OF CONSTRUCTING TEMPLES

The main motivations for constructing temples for Buddhism, Jainism, or Hinduism are religious and emotional. During their reign, the Hoysalas constructed a significant number of temples for Shaivism, Vaishnavism, and Jainism, but they did not construct any Buddhist temples or carry on the tradition of rock-cut building. Many Jaina temples in other areas were either destroyed or subsequently internally transformed into other temple sects. Temples have been fully utilised for this purpose. Our ancient people, particularly those of Hoysalas, placed a great deal of value on our religion, culture, and social life.

The Hoysalas' social life, which includes Vira Someshvara's, is only a continuation of the past. A strong feeling of civic duty, public collaboration, and collective participation among individuals in socioeconomic and religious life are demonstrated by organisations such as the Village Assembly and temple contributions. The strong interest in the growth and development of such institutions had a major impact on their sustained existence. During the historical period under consideration, the family was the primary unit of society. King Someshvara and Hoysala Vishnuvardhana had made their homes in South India. The royal family and the middle class are examples of the rich class that can afford more.

VII. WOMEN CONTRIBUTION

During the Hoysala period, women were likewise free to express themselves. The construction and upkeep of temples and lakes were among the many social projects undertaken by great queens. They were renowned in the literary and artistic worlds. One of the first poetesses in Kannada literature and history was Kanti. Shanthaladevi, the queen of the Bharatagama family, has been likened to a diamond light. Property can be purchased, sold, and owned by women as well.

The greatest visual depictions of the cultural activities that occurred during the Hoysala period in general and King Someshvara in particular are seen in the sculptures found in most temples. In a classical temple, the best depiction of aquatic life and sports, especially those involving wrestling, gaming, music, dance, and dramatic plays, are three friezes from the bottom or above the raised jagati (Platform).

The first and second friezes from the bottom of almost all temples constructed during the reign of King Someshvara include elephants, horses, and sometimes camels. Jewels, textiles, and other objects have been used to adorn horses and elephants. The majority of these creatures have riders on their backs, such as soldiers, military commanders, princesses, and kings. The only way to identify these horsemen is by their clothing, headdresses, weaponry, decorations, etc.

The Hoysala period's flora and fauna, as well as aquatic animals found on some of the pedestals of sculptures of temples like Kedareshvara and Keshava in Nagalapuram, Tumkur district, and Keshava temple

in Nuggehalli, Hassan district, are the best living examples of wall sculptures that depict the natural, cultural, and aquatic eco-system.

Another important portrayal of women in social life may be seen in the wall sculptures. The four central lathe-turned pillars of Navaranga and the upper eaves of temples at Belur and Halebid are both examples of Madanika sculptures, which are often brocket figures. But some sculptures on temple walls also feature bracket figures. However, the sculptures here are in great relief. An attendant or helper is trying to help a woman who hurt herself by keeping her left leg on the throne—likely a dancer—by removing the throne. The outside of the Nuggehalli Sadashiva temple depicts this.

In most Hoysala temples and certain specimens from the Someshvara era, a naked woman is sculpted as a wall sculpture. This is the greatest example of symbolic art and is also quite lovely. Another snake has wrapped its hood and tail around the woman's front and both legs, and the lady is clutching a three-hooded snake in both of her uplifted hands above her head. Her intricately decorated high-heeled shoes and anklets are incredibly seductive. An outstanding example of this sculpture may be seen in the Kedareshvara temple at Nagalapuram. Some academics have called this sculpture Mohini, while others have called it "Visha kanya."

On the pedestals of the majority of Hoysala temples, including King Someshvara, the sculptors' names are written in Kannada from the Hoysala period. The walls of some of the most important Someshvara temples, such as Panchalingeshvara at Govindan Halli and other temples, bear the name of the renowned sculptor Mallitamma. Mallitamma was a prominent sculptor during Someshvara's reign, when most temples were constructed. The Panchalingeshvara temple in Govindan Halli now has two dwarapala statues with his initials on them.

The sculptor's name is "Honoja," and the Chennakesava temple in Aralaguppe simply has the letter "Ho" written on a number of pedestals and in between statues. The Nuggehalli temples have the name of the Hoysala era artist Baichoja and, in many instances, merely his beginning "Bai." This suggests that painters were free to write their names or initials on the sculptures' pedestals. It is clear that the

sculptures were made in total freedom during the Hoysala era since no slave labourer was allowed to write his name.

VIII. THE RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF THE TEMPLE

Similarities to other temple wall sculptures and garbhagriha sculptures are also apparent when examining the religious elements of the Hoysala temples built by King Someshvara. Many sculptures depicting both Vaishnavism and Shaivism may be seen on the external walls of both Shaiva and Vaishnava temples. Venugopala will stand in Threebhanga, Narasimha or Lakshmi-Narasimha would stand in Somabhanga, and Keshava will stand in Somabhanga if the temples are constructed in accordance with Thrikutachala. If it is a Shiva temple, the garbhagriha will have a Shivalinga.

In the navaranga or on either side of each sukhanasi doorway, there are two large devakostas with smaller terraced shikharas. Mahishasura Mardini will have a beautiful sculpture within the devakostas on the left, while Ganesha will have a sculpture inside the great Sukhanasi devakostas on the right. Almost as a rule, these two statues are usually housed within each devakostas in classically styled temples in Hoysala.

Of great importance are two temples with wall sculptures built during King Someshvara's reign. Both the Keshava Temple in Nuggehalli and the Panchalingeshvara Temple in Govindan Halli include sculptures of many manifestations of Vishnu on its outside walls. This is a list of all these Vishnu kinds. At the Panchalingeshvara temple, they are small and carved without the use of traditional friezes. At comparison, the Keshava temple's wall sculptures at Nuggehalli are of average size and bear the following names.

With the exception of the temples at Nuggehalli, the fourth friezes of the King Someshvara period's temples are the other spiritually significant sculptures on the wall. The little friezes surrounding the temple do not depict the entire Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavata, or other Jataka stories. Other important religious wall sculptures include Kubera, Indra, Vishnu in various forms, Govardhanagiridhari, Venugopala, Kalinga Mardhana, Gajasura Mardhana, Natya Ganapathi,

Natya Sarswati, and Nataraja. Numerous sculptures of Vaishnava and Shiva have been carved as religious cultural representations, including Mahishasura Mardini, Sridevi, Bhudevi, Shiva-Parvathi, Arjuna shooting the fish, Garuda carrying Lakshmi and Vishnu on his shoulders, Hanuman in Veerasana folding his two hands for namaskara, Lakshmi Narasimha, Ugra Narasimha, Yoga Narasimha with Yoagapata, Gopalakrishna, Rathi, and many more. Numerous decorations, such as tiny carvings embellished with different types of diamonds, cover even the majority of the semi-naked statues. According to art critics such as Prof. H.R. Raghunath Bhat and Prof. A.V. Narasimha Murthy, these intricate decorations sometimes mask the sculpture's natural beauty. These sculptures of Hoysala temples are interesting, expertly crafted, and beautifully sculpted.

In order for visitors to see and enjoy the beauty of these wall sculptures, raised jagati have been made available. These religious wall sculptures are carved in a single row and feature friezes depicting epic and other religious stories. On several of the pedestals of the wall sculptures, the painters' names or initials are clearly carved in Kannada from the Hoysala era. Among these sculptors, the names "Honoja" and "Baichoja" are noteworthy since they are absent from other Hoysala temples. Specifically, the term "Honoja" is exclusive to two temples: the Sadashiva Temple in Nuggehalli and the Keshava Temple in Aralaguppe. Additionally visible is Mallithamma's name.

Interestingly enough, though, no temple built by King Someshvara has the name Jakanachari. It's worth noting that these temples may include the sculptures of the well-known Jakanachari. The Hoysala dynasty encouraged a policy of progressive land restoration and provided incentives through tax exemptions, especially under the reign of Vira Someshvara. The Hoysala king Someshvara Kunjanambi Setti is said to have provided for the necessities of the great Chola, Kalinga, Malva, and Pandya monarchs. As the epitome of flawless truth and kindness, Kunjanambi Setti was not only a merchant prince but also a superb diplomat and the greatest person. He was given credit for negotiating peace and war.

IX. SOCIAL FEATURE OF THIS DYNASTY

Another important factor is that the educational system of the Hoysala era is also an intriguing sociological aspect of this dynasty. Both the Hindu and Jaina faiths continued to undertake religious teaching during the Hoysala period. Interestingly, nevertheless, Ramanujacharya relocates from Tamilnadu to Karnataka under Hoysala's rule. Together with a large number of his followers, Vishnuvardhana made a profound contribution to art, architecture, education, religion, and culture. During the Hoysala dynasty, Vaishnavism gained prominence due to Vishnuvardhana's conversion, eventually pushing Jainism to the side. As Hinduism has grown in prominence, so too has its impact on education. Since no superior Jaina temples were constructed during the time of Hoysala king Someshvara, this practice most likely continued throughout his rule as well. Similar to other historical Karnataka dynasties, the Hoysalas also imparted education at educational institutions such as Agraharas, Ghatikastanas, Matas, Brahmapuris, and temples.

For our studies of the dynasty's history, culture, economics, administration, politics, religious practices, and architecture, we all rely on genuine source materials as epigraphical sources. Additionally, these epigraphical sources offer helpful details regarding the Hoysala and other dynasties. A thorough grasp of the aforementioned projects of the Hoysala kings, such as the building of tanks, reservoirs, irrigation systems, roads, and assistance for the impoverished, jobless, and suffering, as well as protection for people and livestock, can be obtained by examining these inscriptions. The inscriptions' allusions to the protections the Hoysala rulers gave their subjects are usually very important.

All of the Hoysala kings, including King Someshvara, shown a strong interest in industry. The traders and merchants formed their own guilds and trade unions, such as those for jewellers, horse and castle dealers, grain traders, jewellers, and others.

As a result, several academics have carefully examined the Hoysala king's contributions to culture, religion, society, education, taxation, art and architecture, administration, flora and fauna, and other areas.

Dr. T. Dayananda Patel has written research articles that examine the manner of transportation used throughout the Hoysala period, especially the time of King Someshvara, as it is shown in temple sculptures. Horse-drawn chariots, bullock carts, men carrying bamboo and wood things on their shoulders, animals used to carry goods, etc. are all very important.

The temples constructed during this king's reign at Hosaholalu, Govindan Halli, Nuggehalli, Nagalapuram, and Aralaguppe provide the greatest example of the social activities of the populace during that time. This suggests that nearly all of the sculptures in these Hoysala temples were made with a specific function in mind, and that they were constructed during the reign of significant Hoysala Kings, including King Someshvara. Religious, social, naturalistic (plants and animals), clothing for men, women, and animals, ecosystems, or other concepts that may be comprehended via the usage of these sculptures could have been among these uses.

Another important gift of the kings is the variety of musical instruments, including drums, flutes, the mridangam, the veena, the Nagari, and the Damaru, that are built from wood, animal skin, and other materials. Together with the sculptures of male and female deities, these instruments aid in our comprehension of the cultural value placed on music and dancing. Animals are used to deliver some musical instruments. The Hassan district contains one of the Someshvara-era inscriptions dated February or March of 1258 AD that was included in *Epigraphia Carnatica* Volume-VIII (Revised). The original inscription is translated as follows: Important information appears on page 612.

These bracket figures, also known as madanika sculptures, are no longer seen in temples constructed during the time of King Someshvara, such as Aralaguppe, Hosaholalu Nuggehalli, and Nagalapuram, where they were supposed to be positioned atop the four central pillars of the Navaranga. There is not a single Madanika sculpture in these temples. However, the sockets that were built in the pillar capital and above are clearly visible. This suggests that, as with previous Hoysala kings, dance and music were deeply ingrained in the culture throughout King Someshvara's reign.

This makes it possible to comprehend the proper cultural and socioreligious support that the monarch Someshvara gave via the artwork and building of the temples that were constructed during his rule.

X. CONCLUSION

The Hoysala dynasty ruled the State of Karnataka for a magnificent time that is essential to understanding Karnataka history. The temples constructed by King Someshvara are documented in two important inscriptions. An extensive inscription that covers the history of the Hoysala dynasty from Sala to his reign is found in the sole surviving Panchalingeshvara temple. The origins of the Hoysala dynasty may be inferred from a variety of inscriptions found in the districts of Chickamangalur, Hassan, Mandya, and Tumkur.

The temples in Nuggehalli, Javagal, Nagalapuram, Hosabudanur, Hosaholalu, Govindana Halli, and Tandaga that were constructed during the time of King Someshvara are extremely important. But in terms of architecture, the Panchalingeshvara temple is unique. It's interesting to note that the Panchalingeshvara temple at Govindanahalli lacks both horizontal friezes and elevated Jagati.

But in one way or another, every other temple built under King Someshvara's rule is very useful for comprehending the social, cultural, religious, and economic activities of the Hoysala era. The heights of the temples constructed under King Someshvara's rule, as well as their dimensions, wall decorations, and building materials.

King Someshvara's reign is also noteworthy because of the addition of structures from later times, especially in front of the temple that is connected to Mukhamantapas. All of these additional constructions were constructed using granite during the Vijayanagara period. That serves as an extra open courtyard for these temples. The Hoysala style, which includes pillar designs and wall sculptures, has more embellishment and ornaments than the additional granite buildings.

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