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Analysis of the Compositional Techniques and Musical Style of " Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso "

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Abstract

In 1863, The violin and orchestra piece "Introduction and Rondo Capricioso" was created by French Romantic composer: Charles·Camille·Saint-Saëns. It is a violin and orchestra piece written for Spanish violin master Pablo·de·Sarasate, who first appeared as Saint-Saëns. The piece was first performed by Sarasate under the direct command of Saint-Saëns in 1865 and is the most popular of his small musical works. It was later adapted by George Bizarre as a violin and piano accompaniment. The version played and the double piano version adapted by Debussy were played the most frequently. This article mainly analyzes the style characteristics and composition techniques of the piece, in order to achieve a point to surface approach, while summarizing, absorbing, borrowing, and innovating, and further deepening the understanding of the work and elevating one's own creative skills.

Keywords:

Saint-Saëns Introduction and Rondo Capricioso Music analysis Music Style

Introduction

Charles·Camille·Saint-Saëns (1835-1921) was one of the initial members, composers, art critics, organists, and pianists of the French National Music Association during the Romantic period. His representative works include the symphony No. 3 in c minor, op. 78 "Organ", the symphony poem "Danse macabre", and the band suite "The Carnival Of Animals". He involves a wide variety of musical forms and is the teacher of the famous French composer Gabriel Frey. He is also a highly accomplished pianist and organist who has been influenced by music since childhood and has great talent. He started holding solo concerts at the age of 10. It is said that his fingers are very long, and he can be said to be at ease when playing difficult music on the keyboard. At that time, a report attached a picture depicting his hands as tentacles of a squid, completely covering the piano keyboard, which was a highly exaggerated way of praising and acknowledging his playing techniques.

Saint-Saëns dedicated his two works, "Introduction and Rondo Capricioso" and "Third Violin Concerto", to Sarasate. Among them, "Introduction and Rondo Capricioso" quickly became a popular song after being premiered by Sarasate. It shares similarities with Sarasate's "Song of the Wanderers" and is also considered a

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sister piece of the music. Saint-Saëns once made it clear: "Music is my love, but I do not belong to any genre, I am a eclecticism.". His creation always contains a variety of elements, integrates a variety of styles, absorbs the essence of classicism and romanticism, and integrates other national music elements into his creation, which has the characteristics of integration. This "Introduction and Rondo Capriccio" is the best interpretation.

Due to the rapidly changing political situation in 19th century Europe, accompanied by the evolution and decline of various ideological and cultural genre and artistic styles, the rise and fall of Romanticism was closely related to European society and its cultural context. Due to the rise of the capitalist government and the influence of the French Revolution, the artistic works of the Romantic period tended to emphasize the expression of personal subjective feelings more intuitively in terms of artistic expression, and to integrate their own and other ethnic cultures and music languages, as well as their integration with sister art; In terms of expression of works, excellent performers emerge one after another, among which violinist Nicolo Paganini is an outstanding representative. Following closely behind, pianist Ference Liszt has become the star of the music industry. Their dazzling and mesmerizing performances and improvisational creations fully reflect the free and unrestrained romantic music; In the aesthetics of music, the collision between emotional theory and self-discipline theory sparks a unique fireworks.

Paris in the 1830s and 1940s was a hub of European thought and culture, where a group of passionate artists gathered and nurtured the new French fashion of the mid to late 19th century.

Unlike other ethnic music genres that pursue local flavor and folk elements, the French nation has always maintained a noble atmosphere, emphasizing elegance and delicacy, simple techniques, harmonious and balanced forms, moderate expression, delicate sound colors, and high interest and humor in melody style. [1]The music of the French national music school continues more of the elegant, simple, harmonious, balanced, delicate and exquisite styles of the Rococo period, but also has an exotic and rustic flavor. Representative figures include Saint Sa ô ne, Faurecia, and others.

1. Music analysis

What kind of musical structure or genre should "Introduction and Rondo Capricioso" explain? So there are two types of interpretations of the song, one is " Rondo." and the other is " Capriccio", both explanations are reasonable. After analysis, the structure of the entire piece is in the form of a rondo, and the colorful segments that appear multiple times in the piece give it a whimsical temperament. Therefore, the author tends to prefer the latter.

The structure of this musical form is a rondo with an introduction and an coda, which can be mainly divided into the introduction part ,the rondo part and coda part.The main tonality is in A minor. The main theme appears a total of four times, and the episodes can be divided into three parts according to materials, appearing a total of five times. Has certain arched structural characteristics. The final coda is in the parallel mode: A major, with a gorgeous and gorgeous coda that contrasts sharply with the lyrical opening, creating a more cohesive feeling. This coda style inevitably reminds people of the commonly used tier de picardie in Beethoven's music. To avoid the tonal differences of minor main notes, the minor music is terminated by using a

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three tone raised half tone in the main chord, which is the same as the main chord in major, creating a sense of brightness in the auditory sense. The main melody of the song is in A minor, with a bright and brilliant coda in the parallel mode. The technique is similar to Picardy's Third .[①]

1.1 Introduction

Introduction (bars 1-36): Introduction can be divided into the first part (bars 1-18) and the second part (bars 19-36) according to materials, and the two belong to a parallel relationship. The first part consists of two sections introducing four parallel phrases (a+a1+a2+a3), which are carried out in a minor and form a termination (sii6-D-t). Emotionally marked as malinconico (melancholic), the melody is melancholic and graceful, with a singing quality, using weak intensity, and combining movement and stillness with the accompaniment voice. The second part can be divided into two parallel phrases (b1+b2) based on the comparison of emotional markers, with tonality still in a minor and openness converging on the Dominant chord. The first sentence [marked as animato (lively)] has a strong contrast in strength and intensity with the second sentence [marked as tranquillo (quiet)]. The second sentence goes from the quietness on the sound system to the “cresc molto” (quickly strengthening) in 34 bars, preparing for the connection to the main theme.

1.2 Main theme

Main theme A (bars 37-72): A musical form consisting of four parallel phrases (c+c1+c2+c3), with a square and integral structure, performed in minor A of the main tone, and transitioned into relative key (C major) in the third phrase. The beat shifts to the eighth or sixth beat, and the main melody's implementation of the syncopated notes makes the melody unique, while the accompanying voice is rich in rhythm., Finally, terminate with D/D-K46-D7-T and wrap up.

The later main themes A1, A2, and A3 are reduced and reproduced in the main theme A, with structural contraction, retaining only two phrases, both in a minor. Relatively unique is the final reprise of A3, where the lead violin serves as an accompaniment and performs a quick legato. The main melody is played by the accompaniment voice (band), with emotional markers marked as brillante (powerful and bright).

1.3 Episodes

Episode B (bars 73-89): A musical form consisting of two parallel eight bar phrases (d1+d2) and connecting segments, developed in C major, an open section.

Connection section (90-105): The main melody adopts the unique writing style of the violin's colorful sections, with fast up and down scale arpeggios, and the accompanying voice is prepared for the same duration of reproduction of the main theme.

Episode C (128-151): A piece of music consisting of two 8-bar phrases (e+e1) and new connecting materials. The e sentence [played by the accompaniment voice (band)] is performed on a minor, and the e1 sentence is then shifted to G major, repeated by the solo voice (violin) once. The new connecting material is played by the solo voice in a dazzling manner, adding momentum to the music, while the accompaniment voice pre-

① The Picardy third, also known as theTierce de Picardie in French, is a musical term referring to the use of a major chord at the end of a section that is otherwise in a minor key.

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pares for the appearance of the next key.

Episode D (152-199): A musical form consisting of four parallel phrases (f+f1+f2+f3) and connecting materials. It is introduced in C major and alternates between E minor and E major from the second phrase until the end of Interlude D. It is a closed section, with f2 and f3 phrases in A minor. The double note and floral repetition on the viola is very distinctive and also tests the player's skills. At the end of the connecting material, there is a violin solo transition, with fast up and down chromatic scales and continuous jumps playing, adding power to the sound effect. The upward shift of the sound zone allows for better integration into the theme reproduction. ②

The later episodes C1 and B1 did not show significant changes, and their tonality was mainly in F major.

1.4 Coda

Coda (309-342): The tonality shifts to the parallel major as the main tone (A major), and the speed increases to 120. The coda takes up a considerable amount of space, while the main melody is characterized by rapid arpeggios and the ups and downs of the scale, with strong intensity. The accompaniment summarizes the previous weaving forms, creating a magnificent and intense coda.

2. Analysis of creative techniques

2.1 Analysis of Music Development Techniques

2.1.1 sequence

The most commonly used musical development technique in the entire piece is sequence, which refers to the repetition or variation of the same musical segment at different heights.[2] According to the severity of interval changes, rhythm changes, or melody changes during overall displacement, modal progression can be analyzed from the perspectives of Modulatory Sequence and Sequential Modulation.

Sequence is a music development technique characterized primarily by movement, thus possessing strong motivational factors. The use of this technique plays an important role in the emotional and transitional aspects of the music. For example, continuous upward modeling is commonly used for emotional accumulation to gather energy for orgasm; Going down often has the effect of moving the sound area downwards, thereby achieving a quiet or pausing effect in music. This song uses a lot of modeling as its main development technique, playing an irreplaceable role in promoting and expressing emotions in the music.

As shown in Figure 2-1, this is the main theme melody, and its melody development technique is modeling. II is a real sequence of I, which plays a role in the development of melody, downward movement of sound regions, and transitional connection.

② Most existing papers categorize sections (128-199) into one section, which the author believes is too large and exceeds the scale of the episode in a single rondo form. Therefore, this section is divided into episode sections C and D.

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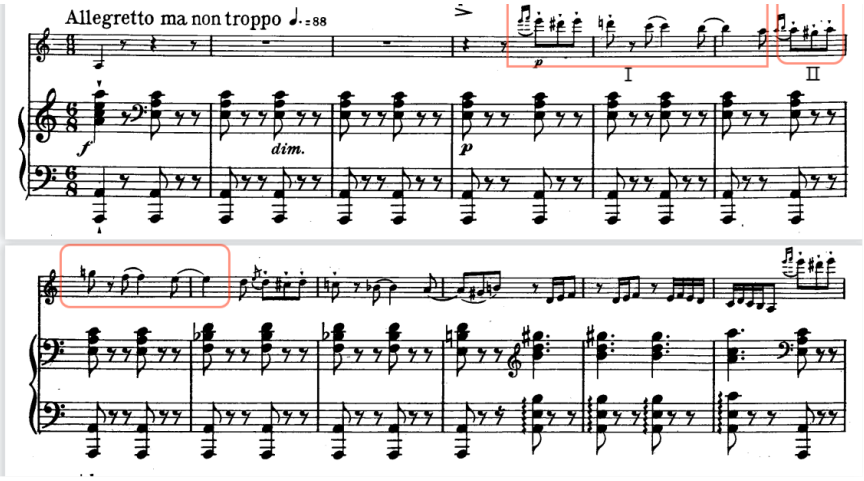


Figure 2-1

2.1.2 Repetition

Repetition is also extensively used in this song, and repetition can be divided from multiple perspectives, including strict repetition and varied repetition, rhythmic repetition and vared rhythmic repetition, original repetition and transpose repetition, etc. Repetition this development technique has the function of consolidating music themes, developing musical ideas, and can also be said to be the most direct creative technique for melody development. The appropriate use of this technique can deepen the impression of music image, understanding and memory of music content by repeatedly appearing the most distinctive and expressive themes or phrases in the song.

As shown in Figure 2-1-2, this melody is located at the junction of the paragraphs, and the band acts as the main melody voice, not only using strict repetition, but also using cutting and variation repetition techniques. After real repetition, one motive of the sentence was truncated, retaining the main vocabulary and developing it through repeated changes. The use of cutting has developed music, making the connections between music closer and the music more coherent. The subtle changes lie in the transposition of chords, and the combination of these two techniques ensures a smooth connection between the music and subsequent phrases.

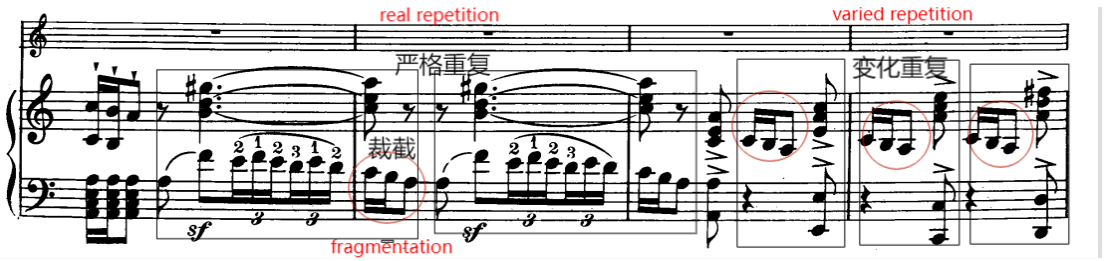


Figure 2-1-2 (at Sections 131-134)

2.2 The use of special chords

The entire piece has a main tone texture, with clear tonality and no overly complex chords or techniques used. Using classical techniques supplemented by some special chords or unexpected embellishments. As

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shown in Figure 2-2-1 (main theme A2:209-212), D7/S did not solve S as usual, but unexpectedly progressed to the N6 chord (also known as the Napolitan chord[③], which replaces the fifth chord with a minor sixth by lowering the second level, and is the most widely used and important chord in the subordinate group variable chord.), giving audiences a refreshing feeling. But some scholars also believe that the tonal harmony here shifts to D minor, which hinders the progression of the seventh to sixth order of D minor and creates a sense of tonality wandering. [3]According to Sposobin's book [4]"A Course in Harmony and Acoustics", when a subordinate is tuned to a Napoli chord, it is generally treated as the minor subordinate's TSVI6, which is directed towards the subordinate through its subordinate chord, creating a special obstacle for the minor subordinate. Both major and minor can be used.
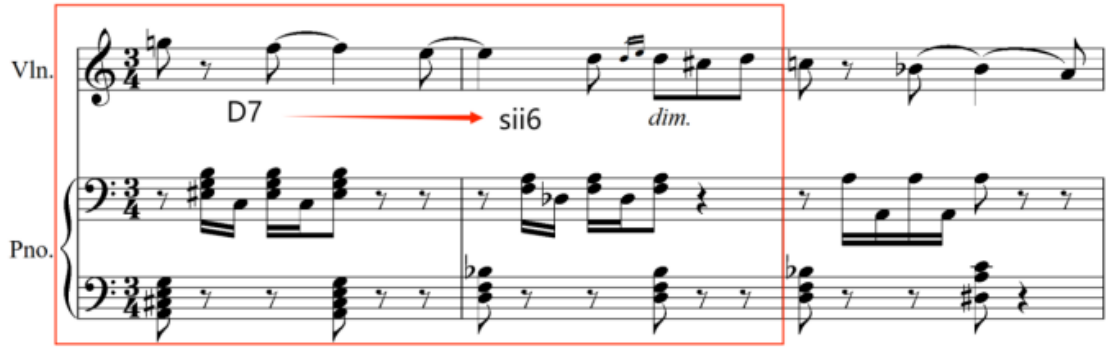


Figure 2-2-1

2.3 Application of musical instrument characteristics

2.3.1 Double stop playing method

In orchestral music, solo instruments have a lighter volume compared to orchestral instruments, but their colors are certainly vivid and highly expressive, and their performance is more free and their techniques are more flexible.

Except for the double bass, the commonly used technique for string instruments is polyphonic playing (double stop and chords). [5]When playing forcefully, using this playing method can increase the atmosphere and help increase the sound effect. The double stop writing method is often used in violin works.



Figure 2-3-1

2.3.2 Cadenza

The evolved from the improvisation at the end of an aria and is widely used in solo instruments. The perfor-

③ Napoli chord: In the 18th century, composers of the Napoli opera school (such as A. Scarlatti) first used this chord as a chord in minor (Frigia) and extensively used it in their own works, which can also be labeled as N6 or sii6.

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mance of the Cadenza is free and difficult, and since Mozart, composers have standardized the writing style of the Cadenza. In this piece, a lot of fast scale ups and downs as well as arpeggios are used, especially in the coda. The bowing technique is mainly detache, supplemented by legato (Please refer to Figure 2-3-2 for details). The use of scales and arpeggios creates a brilliant and bright atmosphere. (Except for areas marked with legato, use detache more often.)

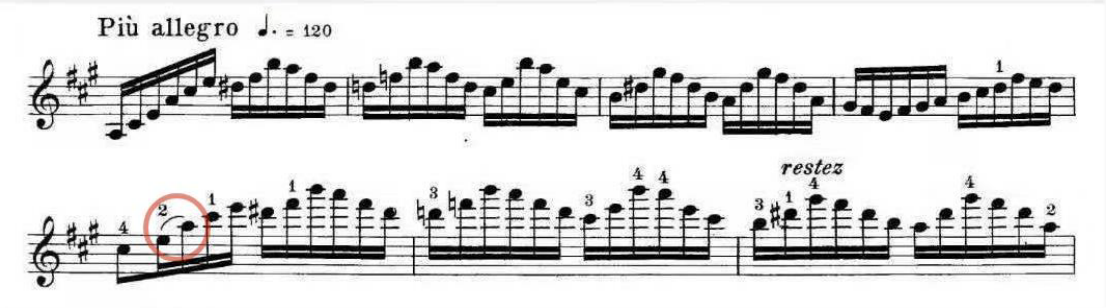


Figure 2-3-2

3. Music Style Analysis

In the 19th century, music that emphasized ethnic style was not only a characteristic of the nation, but also popular for creating with exotic tones. Properly incorporating exotic elements can undoubtedly add a romantic touch to music, especially in countries with prominent national personalities, such as Spain, which is highly favored by musicians. Many Romantic musicians create themes based on Spanish style rhythms, melodies taken from folk songs, and special orchestrations.

Spain is geographically adjacent to France, and cultural exchanges between the two countries are very frequent. The distinct personality traits of Spanish music attract French musicians, with many French composers writing music in Spanish style. The most famous include Bizarre's opera "Carmen", La Rochelle's "Spanish Symphony", Chabrier's "Spanish Rhapsody", Ravel's "Spanish Rhapsody", and so on. Although Saint-Saën's "Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso" is not explicitly stated in the title, this work draws on and inherits the fine traditions and creative achievements of Western European classical and romantic music in terms of art. At the same time, its content integrates ethnic elements and clearly reveals Spanish style. Spanish violin master Salazarti was a late 19th century acrobatic violinist who won the favor of the European public with his stunning violin skills. Composers dedicated their works to him, hoping to make them successful through his performance. There is a popular saying in the Western music industry that "behind a famous piece, there must be a famous performer." This is true.

The theme images of each part of the music in this song are distinct, and the music materials used are rich and diverse in style. Next, we will use music clips as examples to illustrate:

3.1 The embodiment of Spanish style

The manifestation of Spanish music form in this song mainly lies in the main theme. As soon as the theme is presented, the tone of Spanish style becomes clear. The appropriate decorative notes, weak starting bars,

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and the use of syncopation break the original principle of beat strength, reflecting the unique rhythm characteristics of Habanez dance in Spanish dance music.
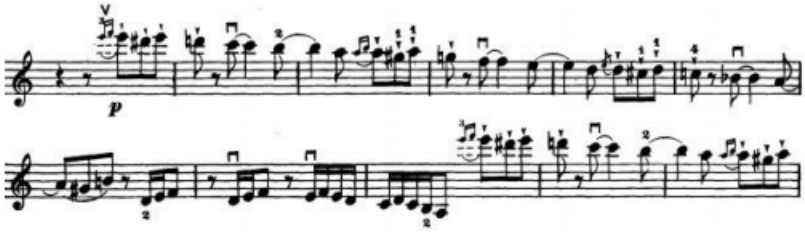


Figure 3-1-1 (Main Theme)

The main theme melody can be said to be the most vivid reflection of the Spanish style in the entire piece, but what cannot be ignored is the band's accompaniment, and the dance style rhythm that runs through the entire piece is the backbone of the entire piece's style. The rhythm of the dance music in eight or six beats, along with the appropriate combination of texture and melody, has created this dish of Spanish cuisine.
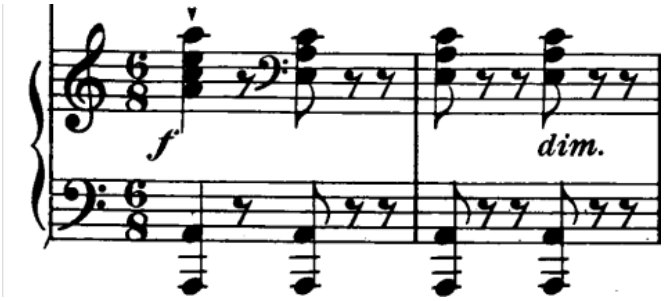


Figure 3-1-2 (Fabric Type)
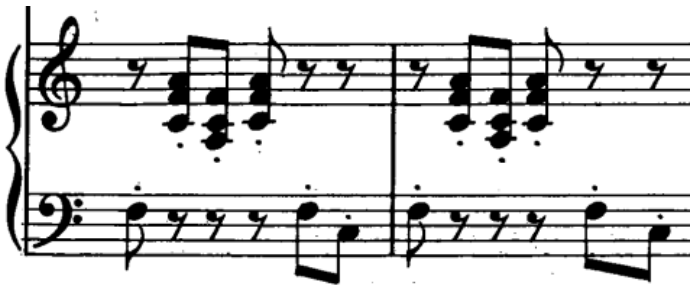


Figure 3-1-3 (Fabric Type)

3.2 The embodiment of French style

Baroque music disintegrated in France, and music and other arts evolved into the Rococo style (also known as the magnificent style). French style music has always maintained the tradition of objective rationality, lightness, brightness, and fluency passed down from the Rococo era, inheriting the aesthetic tradition of exquisite elegance and pursuit of inner charm, until the rise of the French national music school in the late romantic period. In the works of local composers in France, there is always a hint of preservation and disclosure of this charm.

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The interlude B (the first interlude) of this song is mainly motivated by weak rising dots, exquisite vibrato, and half beat weak notes. The melody is light and cheerful in the auditory sense, slightly playful, revealing a hint of Rococo style inherent in French style.
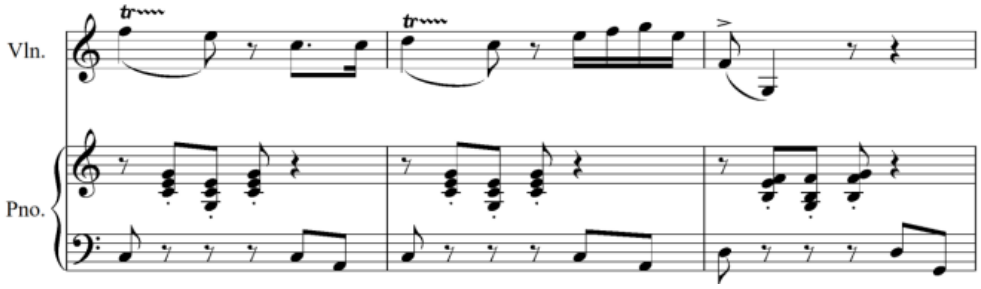


Figure 3-2-1

Saint-Saën music cannot be completely categorized as nationalist music. The cleverness of its music lies in the appropriate and clever use of ethnic elements. The song incorporates some ethnic factors appropriately, enhancing the color and fun of the music.

4. Conclusion

The Romantic music period was the most fruitful period in the history of European music development. It greatly enriched and developed the fine traditions of classical music, and had bold innovations. The music works of this period are still loved and welcomed by people today. This article starts from three aspects: background, music style, and compositional techniques. By referring to relevant literature and spectral analysis of Saint-Saën and the piece, it analyzes and studies his work "Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso".

Saint-Saën has always adhered to his creative principles of eclecticism and form. The creation technique of "Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso" is proficient, with rich colors and neat structure, which is a good embodiment of its principles.

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