

This book probes the nature of humankind and whether the degradation of people and society results because we are flawed beings; or does it occur due to the inadequacy of religious, philosophic, and psychological thought.

**EXISTENCE WITH AND WITHOUT TIME:
Discovering the True Nature of Humankind**


By Michael J. Zino

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Existence With and Without Time



DISCOVERING THE TRUE NATURE OF HUMANKIND

Michael J. Zino

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Preface

“Countless gods are waiting to become men.
Countless gods have already been men.
Man is a partaker of the essence of the gods.
He comes from the gods and goes to God.”

Excerpt from: *Seven Sermons to the Dead*
C.G. Jung

Dear reader, in the pages that follow I respond to those questions that are timeless because they are the most fundamental to our existence. What are we? Who are we? Where did we come from? Why are we here? What meaning does life have? What is the purpose of the world we find ourselves in? While some may consider such questions to be esoteric and the purview of the intellectual elite, that view is misguided and dangerous to our continued survival. To live without seeking the answers is like having a candle without a flame, forcing us to grope in darkness, stumbling and falling continually. Nonetheless, our responses to these queries are ultimately not as consequential as raising them; because in doing so, we are awakened to the possibility that humanity can become more than could have otherwise been imagined.

My intent in writing this book is to develop a theoretical approach that unmask the linkages among the aforementioned questions, and posits replies intended to recast the sense of self, what I call the self-portrait, shared by much of humankind. Pivotal to this undertaking is a subtle sensitivity that respects intellectual integrity and emotional well being, while recognizing the limitations of both thought

and sentiment. The empowerment of each of us as individuals and as members of society is an outcome that flows naturally from the blueprint that will be drawn. The need for such a construct has become compelling as we progress in scientific knowledge and technological expertise, but lag far behind in understanding ourselves and the nexus between the forms we see and that which is unseen.

The cornerstone for the conjectural structure that I shall sketch is the precept that everyone participating in this experience of existence is connected to a boundless unifying Source, longing for us to expand consciousness and become aware of the totality of our natural nature. Every person shares in an exclusive kinship that is personal and societal, and we are being encouraged to grow and evolve in a world that is fragmented and incomplete. Such a place provides the perfect setting for us to realize a potential that is limitless. The implications of these postulates as well as possible rational explanations for their occurrence will be explored.

I encourage and extol the virtue of maintaining an optimistic disposition and a passion for the sweetness of the ideal. Sadly, we have come to accept beliefs individually and collectively over two millennia that hinder private as well as communal ennoblement; they will be examined and impugned. The estrangement of the visible from the invisible will be vanquished. The attempted subjugation of the infinite by the finite will be ended through the recognition of the inseparable union of Divinity and humanity. This will transform our self-image, setting us free from the bondage of manipulated culpability.

The writer, as is true of the reader, brings a personal predisposition to this endeavor. My propensity is to assert the metaphorical meaning in sacred scripture. Accordingly, I consider myself to be a Christian without an organizational orientation who is guided and sustained by the words, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the son of man has no place to rest his head.”¹ Hence, join me as we trust and discover a way to reside again with Ultimate Reality in the Garden of Eden.

Note to Preface

¹ The biblical quote is from Matthew 8:20. The Revised Standard Version is used for all biblical excerpts, (New York: Penguin Books USA Inc., 1974).

“Man cannot endure his own littleness unless he can translate it into meaningfulness on the largest possible level.”

Ernest Becker
Denial of Death

Prologue: Glory Be, Perpetually

“Rather than love, than money, than fame,
give me truth.”

Excerpt from: *Walden*
Henry David Thoreau

Should you decide to read no further, the message of this book is captured in the seed of a single idea. Our essential being is found in the oneness that exists in opposites: the unity of the observable and the unseen, form and formlessness, the manifested and the uncreated, the conscious and the unconscious, the human and the divine. Upon looking into our essence we become the wholeness we behold and encounter Ultimate Reality, rising up to assist us on our journey. Travel the road you find yourself upon and experience the rebirth of the relationship with your Source. Feel the power and mystery of a new creation myth unfolding within your own being. We are forever at the beginning; relax and replace the negativity brought forth by fear. Discern the intelligence beyond our own that the intellect must serve to know your authentic nature and reason for living. Strive to be the deity you are destined to become.

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Introduction

Existence With And Without Time is a contemporary nonfictional portrayal of the paradox that is humanity. Alternatively, it can be understood allegorically as the hero's journey and search for wisdom. The reader is asked to undertake an epic trek to discover our true nature and reason for being. You will receive the call to adventure and must combat a reluctance to follow it. The shadow side of each of us with its self-doubt and lack of self-esteem will have to be overcome. This is the first threshold that will be crossed, due to the subliminal encouragement of an ineffable Mentor. We shall have to outwit the threshold guardians and the shape-shifters to experience the presence and love of our incommunicable Mentor. The second threshold will then come into view, heralding change. We must cross the second threshold to approach and enter an innermost cave, finding fortitude and courage. We shall encounter allies and tricksters on our way to confront an obligatory ordeal and the dreadful third threshold. The reader, and the author acting as a guide, will cross the third threshold and be reborn. We shall then find the road back, returning with the elixir of enlightenment that will let us master two worlds—the temporal and the timeless. Thus, the fateful odyssey concludes having made use of intuitive intelligence and primal images drawn from the collective unconscious to explore as well as explain the past, the present, and the future.

M. J. Zino

Manhasset N.Y.—March 4th, 2022

Section I: OVERVIEW OF THE EXPERIENCE

“Had not a flash darted athwart my mind,
And, in the spleen, unfolded what it sought.

Here vigor failed the towering fantasy:
But yet the will rolled onward, like a wheel
In even motion, by the Love impelled,
That moves the sun in Heaven and all the stars.”

Excerpt from: *The Divine Comedy–Paradise–final stanza*

Dante Alighieri

Those who have chosen to be born are engaged in a mysterious pilgrimage, providing the opportunity for an unparalleled experience. While all roads are good, it is easy to quickly become lost should we fail to remember the place we originated from and the goal of our sojourn. Each of us is called to travel a distinctive path, sensing and feeling our

way, striving to become aware of what and who we truly are, where we came from, and the purpose for the quest we have embarked upon. It is up to us to fathom the significance of the sphere in which we have materialized and why our comprehension of ourselves is conflicted. Unique and unusual ideas about spirit beings, our genuine nature, spirituality, the world of the relative, and the realm of the Absolute have to be coaxed into consciousness. Inspiration necessary for the renewal of our self-portrait will attentively appear, making possible an encounter with Ultimate Reality, encouraging us to progress as individuals and as a society.

Chapter 11–Discovery, Ennoblement, and Awe

Many divergent outcomes are possible for the future of each spirit being and all of humankind. They are like fingers on a hand pointing in different directions, some agreeable and others distressful. The future we produce depends upon the quality of our relationship with Ultimate Reality: the mystery beyond the unity of duality manifested in the perpetual present moment.

To ensure an outcome beneficial to our continued development we must be awake and aware, focused on our essential being, not lost in the past or fantasizing about the future. It is vital that we live mindfully, imbued with the enigma of the oneness in opposites, joining the mundane and the celestial, the changing and the changeless, the immanent and the transcendent. This results in the vacuity necessary to discover our authentic nature.

Total emptiness makes room for completeness beyond what we normally think is practicable. Only then can the intellect be persuaded to acknowledge the existence of intuitive intelligence, and cajoled to accept the assistance it offers. It is when the cognitive mind recedes that sufficient space is available for the wholeness of our essence to be experienced. This entices the Absolute to respond to the splendor of its creation, permitting mutual recognition. Having found our way to the sacred soil of the fabled Garden of Eden, from which sprang forth the fanciful fruit that made a regal relationship possible, we savor the timeless incarnate in the instant that is now.

Recognition made possible due to our individuation coaxes connection, fostering a harmony of wills, actualizing the identity of opposites, uniting the intentionality of the conscious and the unconscious, the finite and the infinite. It is this oneness that enables humankind to persevere and say yes to the sorrow, sickness, and pain encountered in this finite world of the relative; feeling remorse and rapture, experiencing humility and pride, we continue to advance.

O Felix Culpa

O happy fault, the irresistible urge to think finds the intellect glorifying itself. The cognitive mind dominates our disposition and in the process produces a wasteland. We war with reality, always wanting, never satisfied, possessed by possessions, lost in the world of form including the forms of our own thoughts and emotions.

Love your fault because it is the springboard for your transformation. The fracturing of our natural nature, which causes deprivation and discord, propels a metamorphosis. A change as preposterous and mysterious as the alchemist turning lead into gold is occurring in the midst of the unity of the profane and the pious.

We spirit beings long for perfection that is not part of this sphere. Stoked by recollections of a flawless form in an ideal realm, an underlying subliminal yearning is kindled for a permanent bond to soothe our privation. Trusting and embracing intuitive awareness, we sense and feel an unfathomable stillness and peace, signaling the presence and love of our Source, encouraging us to progress and be ennobled. Being attentive to the stirring of indistinct

inclinations that are largely unconscious, the spirit being is moved to express appreciation as well as gratitude, receiving assistance to succeed where the alchemist failed.

Conscious Intellect

The cognitive mind wants no part of this. The intellect fights the notion that something other than itself could be responsible for our advancement as individuals and as a species. It seeks control and resists impermanence, diverting attention with a ceaseless cascade of thoughts. A barrage of incessant internal chatter becomes our customary state, convincing us mistakenly that what we are enduring is necessary and inescapable. Manipulated by illusion, falsity replaces reality resulting in turmoil and irrationality. Always one more change, forever happening, never tranquil, constantly churning; and when the inevitable end comes into view the response is to discard, move on, and start over. While the ploy may work when dealing with material objects, the shallowness of this ruse becomes appallingly clear when personal adversity must be confronted and we are ailing, aged, and remain immature.

The cognitive mind is boundless in its inventive distortions, and unwavering in the belief that there should be no challenge to the dominance of the stewardship it exercises. The intellect has become the idol that humankind bows before for answers to all questions about existence, including those that are in fact unanswerable by logic alone. The ability to think and the power of reason are heavily relied upon to plan, guide, and implement almost all we do. When events unfold in ways that hinder our success, the reasoned mind is loath to acknowledge the possibility that we may be on the

wrong path and that some elusive indispensable insight may be goading us to segue in a different direction.

The supremacy of the cognitive mind in this sphere is the principal reason we suffer. While sorrow is a normal part of life, suffering is a product of our thinking. The analytic conceptual mind captures only a sliver of what is occurring, which is all it is capable of grasping through logical abstract thought. The totality of our essential being is overlooked because the reasoned mind narrows and limits what it perceives to fit that which it has the unaided capacity to comprehend. Consequently, we refuse to accept much of what is transpiring and insist things should be different. The intellect protests that countless events should not be happening because they are logically absurd. Just as paint is destined to disintegrate from the moment it starts to dry; people are destined to perish from the moment they start to breathe. It takes the intuitive intelligence of primal consciousness to resolve this dilemma, but the intellect has driven that primordial power back into the depths of the unconscious.¹

Unconscious Intelligence

Intuitive intelligence present in the unconscious communicates in ways that are not readily understood by the intellect and can cause us to be anxious, disoriented or even depressed. This is particularly true when the cognitive mind, acting as the supreme arbiter for directing our lives, supersedes intuitive awareness and dismisses mysterious musings as well as feelings intended to inquisitively influence our understanding of a situation. Hence, it is when things are going wrong and doubts emerge that the wisdom of

indispensable insight, residing in the unconscious, is most needed to unearth a solution.

Inspired intuitiveness, which has been driven back into the darkness of the unknown and unexplored by the emergence of the ability to think, fathoms facts evaded by the intellect. It knows that humankind is more primitive than we wish to believe. We remain much closer to the ape than the evolved creature modernity feigns. Inspired intuitiveness also comprehends that an appreciation of this reality is critical for our survival. Innumerable incessant thoughts cause us to be oblivious to the contribution it is making to advance our quest to grow and evolve as spirit beings. Intuitive intelligence implores us to work at being mindful, looking into our essence, seeking wholeness that will enable the conscious mind to respond sagaciously when faced with the need to make important decisions in life.

It is interesting to note how much we read and how little we retain; nevertheless, we learn and move on. Humankind relies unknowingly on some obscure ability to bridge gaps and make sense out of that which is seemingly senseless. In many instances when we are perplexed, the answer appears and we wonder how the solution to the problem came to us. There is an interesting biblical account of Jesus at the age of twelve being separated from his parents. He was found in the temple sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking questions.² According to the story, all those who heard him were amazed at his understanding and answers. Accepting the veracity of the narrative, and suspending belief in some supernatural explanation for its occurrence, it is inexplicable how an uneducated youngster could have had the capacity to dazzle

the temple teachers with his knowledge and responses. This remains so, unless we assume he was drawing upon something other than solely the resources of the analytic conceptual mind. It may very well be that the intent of the passage is to demonstrate the mastery possible when the intellect becomes the servant of intuitive intelligence.

Everything we encounter in this life is in the process of constantly unfolding and changing; the changeless is detected using the ethereal vision of undifferentiated consciousness. Undifferentiated consciousness retains a communal sense of aliveness that harkens back to our original inception in which we were homogeneous. All of us shared the same psyche, which is sometimes referred to as the collective unconscious.³ It was a nascent existence in an invariable state where consciousness could not comprehend itself, which was a problem solved by the decision of spirit beings to be born and enter this world of form.

Our entrance into this sphere gave us the opportunity to differentiate ourselves, and draw upon the collective unconscious. That is the domain where intuitive awareness, which dominated existence prior to the advent of the cognitive mind, now resides. The collective unconscious contains the knowledge needed by humankind to grasp the hidden homogeneity in the design of consciousness, which subsumes both the living and the dead in the oneness of the many. Intuitive intelligence possesses great wisdom, but its usefulness depends upon the reasoned mind bringing into knowable reality the enlightenment it offers. Such an outcome is possible only when dualism is dispensed with, and conscious as well as unconscious discernment are unified.⁴

Chapter 17—The Future for Humankind

There are two things we can know with certainty about the future. It will arrive at the appropriate time, and we spirit beings shall be responsible for what it is like when it does appear. Humankind based on the choices it makes in the present will determine whether the future is transformational or tragic. That is what makes the sentiment expressed by Yeats in the epigraph to Section V of this book so prescient, and why it is unnerving. Yeats, after observing the seemingly dire state of human affairs, discerns that “surely some revelation is at hand.” The questions we need to answer are—what is that revelation, and how will it shape the future for our species?

The cognitive mind is inclined to accept the assertion that the way we ordinarily are is how we shall always be. This occurs because our view of the horizon is distorted by the limits imposed from adapting to the temporal world in which we are grounded. The intellect finds it difficult to grasp the dramatic change that has occurred, and is continuing to take place, in the behavior of humankind. Alternatively, intuitive intelligence is free from the distortion caused by being anchored to a mortal form. Events that seem to be happening at a glacial pace, which are nearly imperceptible to the cognitive mind, appear through the lens of inspired intuitiveness to be occurring almost instantaneously.

We are a young species in the embryonic stage of development. While this earth has existed for over four-billion years, Cro-Magnon man did not appear until about forty-thousand years ago. Less than three-thousand years have elapsed since *Homo sapiens* first learned how to write.

We have more in common with our primitive ancestors, who preceded us, than those yearning to be our evolved dynamic descendants. The responsibility, nevertheless, rests with us to decide whether humankind will continue to advance, or destroy itself and the planet we call home.

All the species that inhabit the earth with the exception of our own continue to progress solely through a process of natural selection. Given the startling strides made by humans over the last century, it is becoming increasingly obvious that our development is markedly different from that of any other species. We have arrived at the point in time when we must turn talents used mostly for material and technological advancement inward, and ennoble ourselves so that we better understand and value human existence. We are not alone as we face this challenge. The same indispensable insight in the unconscious that guided and assisted our forebears is available to us; to bring its wisdom into knowable reality, domination by the cognitive mind must cease.

Myth Unchained

Sooner or later we shall come to accept that this world is a place where events transpire in ways our intellect tells us are impossible. This irony is captured in the biblical parable of the wolf dwelling with the lamb as a child guides them.¹ The fable informs us that opposites are connected like two sides on the same coin; and to benefit from this powerful paradox we must be young or, more precisely, pliable. The unyielding cognitive mind finds it difficult to grasp and accept the truth concealed in contradiction when external attributes are involved. If the incongruity encompasses the authentic nature of humankind, it becomes almost impossible.

As a result, it is helpful to turn to myth to discern the paradox that is our own essence. The insightful veracity of the myth we narrate, decipher, and embrace is conveyed by the metaphors chosen to communicate it.

Contemporary myths that emerge from the opaqueness of the unknown and unexplored are likely to have us spirit beings as their focal point. They will encourage humanity to value both individuality and the community of which it is a part. This will result in an increase in complexity, driving an expansion in consciousness needed for us to progress.² New myths, as has been the circumstance in bygone eras, contain and transmit the wisdom of intuitive intelligence, required for the continued development of our species. While modern myths are coaxed into knowable reality, we shall also find the courage to reinterpret ancient myths that will be as compliant to meeting the challenges of the future as they were to those of the past. New myths and the reinterpretation of old ones will unite rather than divide us. We shall be motivated to come together and surmount discord caused by differences in race, gender, creed, and geography. This will accelerate the speed with which consciousness expands and the interior alteration of humankind occurs, bringing an increasing tranquility to the inhabitants of this sphere.

If myths, moreover, are to inform the intellect, they can no longer be subjugated and held hostage to dogma: such as that of universal guilt.³ They must be released from servitude to institutional interests and organizations that interpret them concretely rather than metaphorically. Only then will humanity discover their essence is holy ground, where an encounter and relationship with Ultimate Reality is

made possible. We shall come to know that what appears daunting to the cognitive mind is child's play when inspired intuitiveness is listened to, and the heavy lifting is left to the Creator of the universe. We shall learn the significance of walking on water, standing on the surface of the subliminal, experiencing the completeness that ensues from seeing unity in the figurative and the literal. It is our destiny to follow the prompts of intelligence other than our own, hearing the call of the Absolute, revealing the role we each should play to ensure the future for humankind is forged with optimism and not diminished by pessimism.

Divine Intent Emerges

It should be obvious by now that our species is influenced by forces which cannot be grasped solely with the intellect. The plan for humankind will become understandable in fits and starts by sensing and feeling its contour. We shall be aided in our comprehension through the contradictions elucidated by both myths as well as the mythic symbols we make our own. Two of the most powerful mythic icons have proven to be the mandala and the cross. Both of these revered archetypal symbols are worthy of meditation because they convey paradoxes capable of befuddling the brain, while concurrently producing a state of awakened awareness that promotes enlightenment.

A mandala contains numerous, seemingly endless, repetitions of a circle enclosed in a square, and frequently has the image of a deity as its focal point. The cross is a similar sacred symbol that brings together four external points, which could be thought of as the four corners of the world, meeting at the center where the two bars of the cross converge and

unite the known with the unknown. The cross, just like the mandala, often has the image of a deity as its focal point. Within the Christian creed that deity is Jesus, who is proclaimed to be the Christ, a human as well as divine being with a direct connection to and knowledge of Ultimate Reality.

When the incongruity suggested by these symbols preoccupies the cognitive mind, intuitive intelligence is best able to present knowledge and wisdom required by us to advance as individuals and as a community. The crux of our epiphany will inevitably involve the necessity of securing a semblance of wholeness to achieve cerebral and emotional liberation. Wholeness causes individuality and community to come together voluntarily, cultivating complexity that coerces consciousness to intensify and expand. This change in consciousness is critical for humankind to fulfill the purpose for carnal creation by continuing to grow and evolve. Undeniably, we need to question and indeed ponder—why is our growth and evolution the objective intended for the inception of the heavens and the earth? We also must consider how we can be of assistance in accomplishing that objective speedily, while causing the least distress and grief for all spirit beings.

To find the answers we shall have to decide upon and maintain a practice without becoming attached to it that perpetuates self-respect and self-mastery. Such a tradition will keep us mindful and humble when we are active as well as inactive. This will prepare humankind to accept what the intellect tells our species is impossible as the mandala squares the circle, and the cross unites the finite with the infinite. We shall then be ready to grasp the major modification in

consciousness that has been made feasible, and which results in it being fully and forever differentiated.

The differentiation of consciousness through the unique aware presence that every spirit being is destined to become, once it occurs, is a development that is irreversible. Most importantly, it will provide the opportunity for each of us to engage in an unending ravishing relationship with our Source. We shall, thereby, fathom as well as implement with the least misery conceivable the divine design that contains the rationale for the existence of humankind. While we are but a speck in the universe, nonetheless, the consciousness of spirit beings represents a level of intricacy that far surpasses anything presently known to exist in the vastness of outer space.

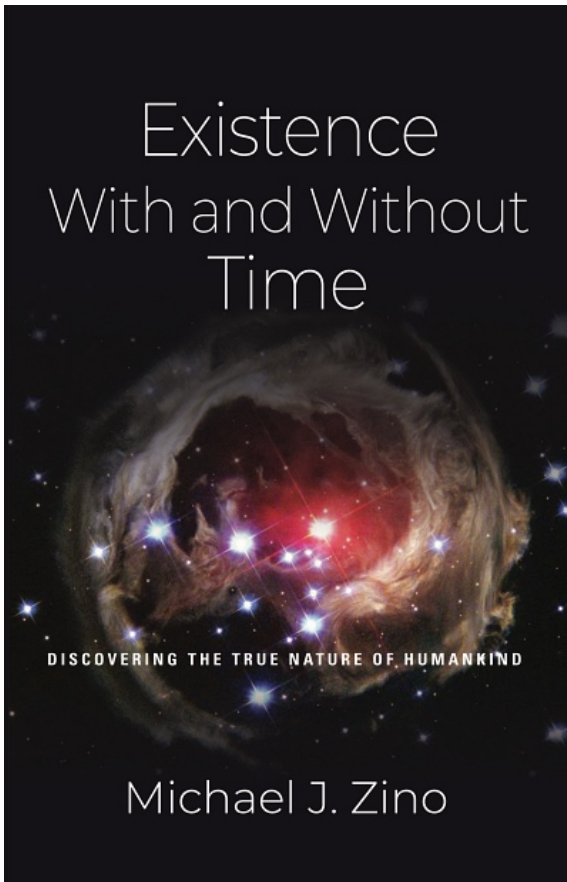
Reason Consents to Serve

Given the exalted position of humankind in the cosmos, it is not surprising that the intellect has attempted its own apotheosis. To bring this idolatry to an end, the cognitive mind will have to admit that it is not the root of thought being able to reflect upon itself. The future of our species depends upon a willingness to acknowledge the Cosmic Being that is the cause, whom we can come to know but never truly comprehend. The advancement of humankind is the manifestation of the will of that ethereal entity; and its inspiration underlies indispensable insight in the unconscious, which helps to move us forward and ensure our destiny will be realized.

Humankind, despite its lofty position, would be well-advised to heed the suggestion to “be wise as serpents and

innocent as doves.”⁴ It is in permitting itself to be guided by inspired intuitiveness that the intellect gains illumination, which cannot be taught or conceptualized. We chose to enter the world at this time to follow a path and fulfill a role no other person could. As a consequence of our undertaking, we possess an individuality that struggles mightily to become free of pious ignorance and misinformation. Spiritual autonomy is attained by striving to be awake and aware without being fixated on a specific approach. The analytic mind, unfortunately, lacks nerve and suffers from cognitive dissidence. It finds great difficulty accepting the veracity of what can be achieved when yielding to intelligence that is not its own. The intellect’s lack of audacity stems from a failure to see the formlessness that lies beneath our form, refusing to concede that what is worth growing to achieve is worth shrinking to receive.⁵

As consciousness expands humankind will undergo a metamorphosis that hastens its ennoblement, fostering both internal and external changes. The intellect will no longer fear being transformed, and will consent to be cured of its infirmity. This capitulation will enable an inner renewal, making us more open to the vastness of that which the cognitive mind now obstructs from our perception. Spiritually revived, we shall be more inclined to listen to the silent voice of the Absolute as it conveys a desire for our uniqueness to mature. It is in responding that we shall find uncaused joy and equanimity, cherishing the value of human existence for ourselves and everyone that chooses to enter this fragmented and incomplete world. The individual spirit being and the multitude will join in jubilation and gratitude, knowing we are all united through the bond with our Source.



This book probes the nature of humankind and whether the degradation of people and society results because we are flawed beings; or does it occur due to the inadequacy of religious, philosophic, and psychological thought.

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